

The Najdorf  g5
Revisited
Volume 1

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Key to Symbols

!	a good move	±	White stands slightly better
?	a weak move	∓	Black stands slightly better
!!	an excellent move	±	White has a serious advantage
??	a blunder	∓	Black has a serious advantage
!?	an interesting move	+−	White has a decisive advantage
?!	a dubious move	−+	Black has a decisive advantage
□	only move	→	with an attack
N	novelty	↑	with initiative
⊙	lead in development	↔	with counterplay
⊙	zugzwang	Δ	with the idea of
=	equality	▷	better is
∞	unclear position	≤	worse is
∞	with compensation for the sacrificed material	+	check
		#	mate

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Preface

The Najdorf Variation of the Sicilian Defence, named after the great Polish-Argentine grandmaster, is one of the most popular chess openings at all levels. It has been championed by many elite players, the three most notable being the world champions Robert Fischer, Garry Kasparov and Viswanathan Anand. It enjoys a reputation as a very theoretically sound and uncompromising weapon. The positions that arise in the Najdorf are among the most complex and double-edged positions you can get out of any opening, making it a very interesting, but also demanding choice. The Najdorf has been a part of my repertoire for many years, bringing me many good results.

This book is an ambitious project. I decided to thoroughly investigate the sharpest line of the Najdorf Variation, namely 6. ♗g5, and produce a master repository of the current state of its theory. The book you hold is the result of many months of research and analysis. It is one step ahead of the presently established theory, because I based a lot of my analysis on new correspondence and computer games. During my work, I discovered many subtle nuances as well as spectacular shots. The material can be challenging in its complexity, but also rewarding in its beauty.

The book is intended mainly for advanced and expert players. It is surely worth studying even for very strong grandmasters. In general, the higher your level, the more benefit you will gain from memorizing the lines from the book. However, weaker players can also benefit from studying the material and trying to understand the complex variations. It will certainly improve their tactical intuition. I included a large number of exercises (using critical positions from all the chapters), in which the reader is required to find the best continuation. I believe the process of solving these will greatly help the reader not only to memorize the lines, but also to enhance their tactical and positional skills.

My three most important sources were: Hiarcs 14zb Opening Book, an invaluable tool which provided a tree of the variations based on high-level correspondence and computer games; Parimarjan Negi's *1.e4 vs The Sicilian I* – a modern classic which hardly needs any introduction; and David Vigorito's *Playing the Najdorf: A Practical Repertoire*, which is (in my opinion) the best book on the Najdorf to date. For other sources see the bibliography.

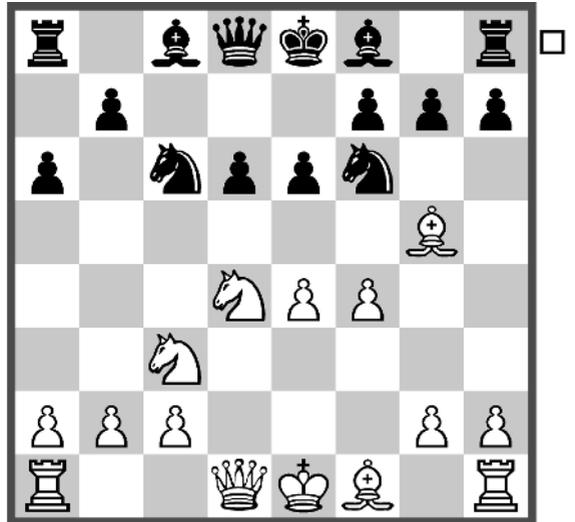
Armed with this book's knowledge, you can enter the tactical jungle of the 6. ♘g5 Najdorf with both colors with confidence. I wish you great success in this most exciting of chess variations!

Lukasz Jarmula,
Warsaw, September 2021



The 7...♞c6 Variation

- 1.e4 c5 2.♞f3 d6
3.d4 cxd4 4.♞xd4 ♞f6
5.♞c3 a6 6.♞g5 e6
7.f4 ♞c6?



1. e4 c5 2. ♘f3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. ♘xd4
 ♘f6 5. ♘c3 a6 6. ♖g5 e6 7. f4 ♘c6?



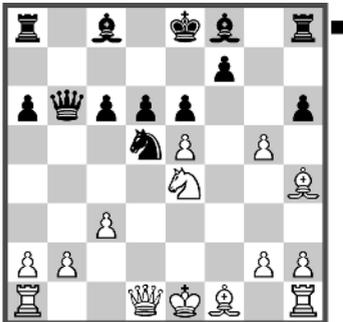
Position after: 7... ♘c6?

This move has been completely refuted in correspondence and computer games.

8. ♘xc6 bxc6 9. e5 h6 10. ♖h4 g5

This is Black's idea, but it weakens the kingside way too much.

11. fxg5 ♘d5 12. ♘e4 ♖b6 13. c3!



Position after: 13. c3!

Much stronger than the more popular 13. ♖d3. The point is that after ... ♖xb2 ♖b1 Black now longer has ... ♖xe5.

13... dxe5

A) 13... ♖xb2 14. ♖b1 ♖xa2 15. g6 fxg6 16. ♖f2 dxe5 17. ♖d3 transposes to the main line.

B) 13... ♖b8 14. ♖f3 Other moves also lead to a big advantage, but the text is most convincing. 14... ♖e7 15. b4!



Position after: 15. b4!

Stopping any queenside counterplay and preparing to take the c5-square under control. 15... dxe5 16. ♖f2 ♖c7 17. g6! A typical pawn sacrifice. After it Black will be two pawns up, but this factor is irrelevant if we consider the passivity of his position. A sample continuation is: 17... fxg6 18. ♖c4 a5 19. a3 ♖f8 20. ♖g3 ♘f4 21. 0-0 ♖f5

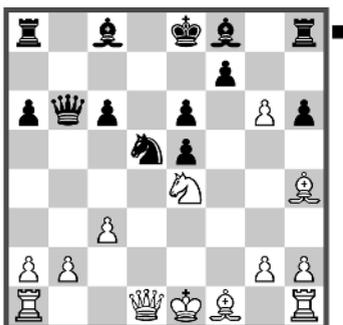


Position after: 21... ♖f5

22. ♖ad1 [22. ♘c5 ♘xc5+ 23. ♘xc5± should also be enough to win. Black's position is in ruins.] 22... ♔f8 23. ♘c5 axb4 24. axb4 ♘xc5+ 25. bxc5 ♔g7 26. ♘d6+ White wins at least the exchange, and with it the game.

C) 13... hxg5 14. ♘xg5 ♕xb2 15. ♖b1 ♕xa2 16. ♘e2+ After 0-0, White will have all the pieces in play, while Black is totally underdeveloped and their king is tragically weak.

14. g6!



Position after: 14. g6!

White sacrifices a pawn to destroy Black's structure and weaken his king.

14... fxg6 15. ♘f2 ♕xb2 16. ♖b1 ♕xa2 17. ♘d3

Black is three pawns up, but they are totally irrelevant. What matters is White's enormous lead in development and Black's weak king.

17... ♘e7 18. ♖a1 ♕b2 19. 0-0



Position after: 19. 0-0

19... ♖f8

19... h5 This prevents ♕g4, but obviously White has many other resources. 20. ♖b1 ♕a3 [20... ♕a2 21. c4+–] 21. ♕c2 ♕a5 22. c4 ♘b4 23. ♕d2+ Black is utterly busted.

20. ♕g4 ♖xf2

A sad necessity in view of White's large initiative.

21. ♕xg6+ ♔d8 22. ♘xf2 ♕xc3 23. ♖ac1 ♕d2 24. ♕h7+–

Materially Black is still fine, but one glance at the position suffices to conclude that he is dead lost.

Conclusion

This is the shortest chapter in the book, and justifiably so. The 7...♘c6? move simply doesn't stand up to the computer's scrutiny, as proven by correspondence and computer games.

