

Chapter 11

Introducing the Dangerfield Attack

If you are a class-level player, you probably hate facing the Dutch. After spending so much time studying the typical lines of your main opening, you find yourself staring down at that silly pawn on f5, knowing your opponent knows his opening better than you do.

Time to make your opponent an alien on his own planet.

The Colle-Zukertort possesses several appealing qualities. The “double-barreled” system I propose for meeting the Dutch Defense shares several of those qualities.

- Against many Dutch setups, White has a particular configuration to aim at.
- There are plenty of tactics, but they are generally thematic and strategically motivated (so mere mortals like me can find them).
- At the same time, the repertoire here should keep all the fun on White’s side of the board. Black finds himself with little in the way of counter-attacking options.

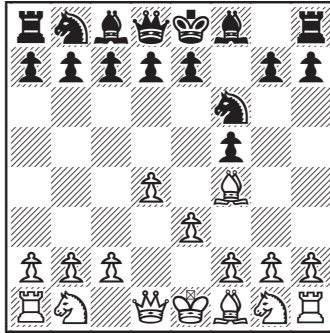
If you have ever found yourself matched against someone proficient in the Dutch, you likely appreciate this last point.

Finally, like the C-Z, the system described here is offbeat. In fact, “offbeat” is a mild term. It makes the rather synco-pated 1.d4 f5 2.g3 Nf6 3.Bg2 g6 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.0-0 0-0 6.b4!?! look like a main line. No matter what manual your opponent used for his repertoire, you can be reasonably confident he will soon be out of book.

Book Survey

Fundamentally, my system against the Dutch combines two threats, hence the “double-barreled” adjective. First, White hints at gaining fantastic piece placement by developing his dark-squared Bishop to f4 and then opening up the other with e3.

1.d4 f5 2.Bf4 Nf6 3.e3



Then, most of the time he will switch gears and aim for a powerful K-side pawn fusillade. For example, a common continuation is:

3...g6?! 4.h4

These two threats, actively placing both Bishops and storming the K-side, complement one another. In the Dutch Black's standard antidote against a K-side pawn raid is to set up a Stonewall formation, and that is precisely what Black does not want to do against 2.Bf4! Indeed, Aagaard writes in his *Dutch Stonewall*, referencing the position after 1.d4 f5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 d5, “This version of the Stonewall cannot be recommended. White’s fluid development soon leads to a dangerous initiative.” The reason for his disapproval becomes clear after 4.Nf3 c6 5.Bf4, “White should not be allowed the luxury of bringing out both Bishops.” In his summary he writes “Systems involving e2-e3 are not a threat to the Stonewall player unless White has already brought his Queen’s Bishop into play.” Aagaard gives no suggested method to meet this contingency.

Introducing the Dangerfield Attack

For this reason, I believe 2.Bf4 is vastly underestimated. It is certainly not well examined in the various opening manuals. A survey of recent books yields stunning results.

Book and Author	Year	Pgs
Dutch Defense by Christiansen and Silman	1989	1
The Dutch for the Attacking Player by Pedersen	1996	½
The Dutch Leningrad by McDonald	1997	0
Dutch Stonewall by Aagaard	2000	0
Classical Dutch by Pinski	2002	1
Understanding the Leningrad Dutch by Beim	2002	0
Play the Classical Dutch by Williams	2003	0
Starting Out: the Dutch Defense by McDonald	2004	0
Leningrad System by Kindermann	2005	¼
Win with the Stonewall Dutch by Johnsen et al.	2009	4
Dangerous Weapons: The Dutch Palliser et al.	2009	0

I've estimated the coverage in what I hope is a fair manner. Johnsen, Bern, and Agdestein give 1.d4 e6 as a repertoire line. For the Zukertort player, this means you are going to be playing 1.d4 e6 2.Nf3 f5 3.Bf4, so I counted coverage for those lines. Similarly, Pinski only spends 1/8 of a page on 2.Bf4, but two or three variations he gives in various annotated games land in our repertoire by transposition, so I included that coverage in the statistics. Lastly, though Aagaard spends 1½ pages describing how Black should not contemplate the Stonewall after White plays Bf4, he doesn't provide any guidance for what Black should do, so I indicated 0 pages for his book.

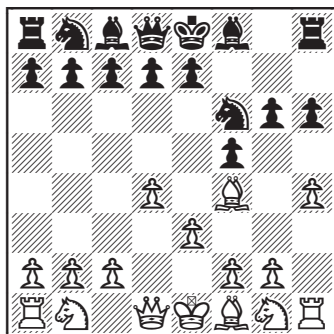
Many of these books treat lines where White plays Bf4 later, but there appears a decided tendency to omit move orders that allow White to use the double-barreled plan. For example, several manuals give coverage of 1.d4 f5 2.Nc3 with Bf4 coming later, but with that move order much of the fizzle has escaped from White's standard method of punish-

ing a Stonewall played against Bf4. The c-pawn is blocked. Similarly, Kindermann spends four times as much space on 1.d4 f5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Bf4 g6, as he does on 1.d4 f5 2.Bf4, but the Knight on f3 turns out to be misplaced as it blocks the Queen's access to the K-side.

The Move That Gets No Respect

Rodney Dangerfield built a career on the catchphrase "I get no respect." The authors of books written from the Black side of the Dutch have some pretty harsh words for 2.Bf4. In one of his books McDonald makes a blanket statement that any development using e3 rather than g3 is "completely harmless," and evidently does not consider Bf4 worth even a line of discussion. Pinski uses precisely the same phrase, "completely harmless," to refer to the same setups. Kindermann is particularly unabashed in his disdain. In one place he speaks of how "Bf4 has little to recommend it," and in another he groups it with a collection of odds and ends upon which he casts the aspersion "I would not recommend a single one of the White ideas in this section."

Yet Kindermann's suggested antidote to an early Bf4 is hopeless, saving Black from the fire only by transporting him to the frying pan. He recommends 1.d4 f5 2.Bf4 Nf6 3.e3 g6 4.h4! h6, allowing Black to close the K-side should White play 5.h5, but this gives White both an enduring attack and fantastic position so long as he knows the key, one-move refutation.



White to play and eviscerate

Do you see how White can exploit the vulnerability on g6 created by Black's 4...h6? (See next chapter for details.)

Only Aagaard and Johnsen et al. give much respect to this line, the latter giving several variations where White achieves \pm without any suggested improvements for Black. It is likely no coincidence that their books focus on the Stonewall variation, which they do not recommend Black adopt against Bf4.

Some of the invective laddled upon Bf4 can be attributed to the tendency of authors to favor the side from which their book is written. These are all books written from the Black side of the board, so it is not surprising to see negative sentiment concerning uninteresting side variations they hope the reader never actually has to engage.

However, these authors have been kind enough to describe the problems they see in an early Bf4, so it is appropriate to discuss these as well as the move's virtues. We shall do this in the next two sections.

Bf4's Supposed Vices

Contempt for Bf4 is commonly justified by referencing three shortcomings:

1. The Bishop is vulnerable to attack by ...h6 and ...g5.

2. Developing the Bishop in this way is inconsistent with White's desire to fianchetto his other Bishop.

3. Black's thematic ...e5 comes with tempo and practically guarantees equality.

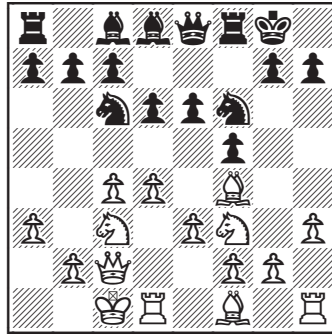
Hold on a sec. Why is Bf4 "inconsistent" with fianchettoing the light-squared Bishop?

If Black plays ...d6 and White plays g3, there is not much breathing room for a dark-squared Bishop on that wing.

Anyway, I contend these concerns lose significant potency if White castles long, or at least retains the ability to do so. White then welcomes the expansion of Black's K-side pawns, so the first point listed above is hardly a concern. It will, in fact, seldom even be a reasonable plan to consider. Similarly, the value attached to playing Bg2 depends on the assumption that White castles short. In typical play, White attacks on the Q-side while Black presses on the K-side. A Bishop on g2 helps defend White's King and also hinders Black's Q-side development, particularly in that Black has trouble safely playing ...Bb7. In our repertoire, however, lines with a Bishop on b7 are not particularly troublesome, especially as they leave e6, f5, and g4 with less protection.

With regard to the third point, Black has by no means solved all his problems once he plays ...e5. Indeed, the pawns on e5 and f5 are high-maintenance and can be real liabilities if White castles long. To see an example of this, consider a typical position suggested by Pinski (via transposition) after:

1.d4 f5 2.Bf4 e6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.e3 d6 5.c4 Be7 6.Nc3 0-0 7.Qc2 Qe8 8.h3 Nc6 9.a3 Bd8 10.0-0-0



After 10...e5 11.dxe5 dx5 12.Bh2, Black's pieces are tied down defending his e-pawn. White has a free hand to prepare standard opposite-castle operations: Kb1, Rg1, perhaps Nd2 (to safeguard e4) and/or Be2 (sometimes needed to defuse tactical threats against the Knight on f3 after g4).

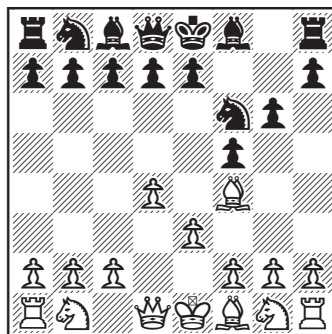
Bf4's Virtues

So, what does Bf4 have to commend it? Several things.

We have already mentioned how a Bishop on f4 dissuades Black from establishing a Stonewall setup, and the pressure on c7 and e5 is obvious. There are two more nuanced points worth noting.

First, Bf4 allows White to play e3 with a clear conscience, opening a transportation lane for the Queen. For example, many books grudgingly discourage Black from using the line:

1.d4 f5 2.Bf4 Nf6 3.e3 g6



And now the continuation mentioned above, 4.h4! Bg7?! 5.h5, is very dangerous. Kindermann suggests that 4...h6 is the antidote. But it does not save Black, as we shall see later.

Second, Black's flexibility is limited by the moves he makes while White is playing Bf4 and e3. For example, after 1.d4 f5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3, Black can play 3...Bb4. However, if White's move order involves playing Bf4, e3, and Nf3 before c4 and Nc3, Black will either no longer have the option of playing ...Bb4 (e.g. 1.d4 f5 2.Bf4 Nf6 3.e3 e6 4.Nf3 d6 5.c4 Be7 6.Nc3) or will have at least already moved his dark-squared Bishop once (e.g. 1.d4 f5 2.Bf4 Nf6 3.e3 e6 4.Nf3 Be7 5.c4 0-0 6.Nc3). Actually, my official recommendation in the latter case involves not allowing Black to pin a Knight on c3 even at the cost of the tempo. Playing 6.Be2 is preferable.

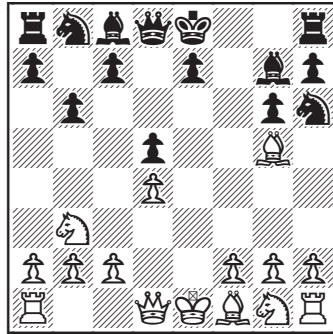
Why a New Response to the Dutch?

Players who use the lines suggested in the first volume of *Zuke 'Em* likely have *A Killer Chess Opening Repertoire* by Summerscale and Johnsen, and it is reasonable to question the time required to learn a new system. Obviously, only the reader can determine this. If you like playing the system in AKCOR and are comfortable with it, your study time is probably better spent elsewhere. That said, certain concerns are worth mentioning.

Summerscale's recommendation, 2.Bg5, is a strong move. Unfortunately, because of its strength, there is now a good deal of theory known. Right now it appears the wind is at Black's back in the main line:

1.d4 f5 2.Bg5 g6 3.Nd2 Bg7 4.e4 fxe4 5.Nxe4 d5! 6.Nc5 b6 7.Nb3 Nh6!

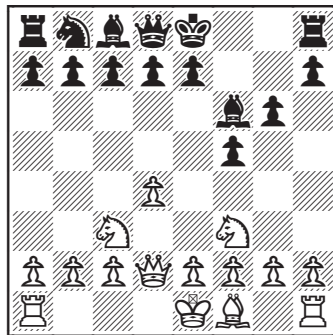
Introducing the Dangerfield Attack



If your opponent is building his repertoire from a book published after 2003, he probably knows this continuation, which looks very good for Black. It is frustrating to know your theory solidly as White and still get the worse position!

If you want to keep playing 2.Bg5 as your solution here, I would instead suggest the somewhat simplistic:

1.d4 f5 2.Bg5 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.Nf3 Nf6 5.Bxf6 Bxf6 6.Qd2!?

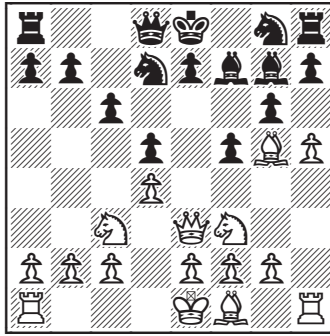


From here White can castle long, play e3, and then get down to business with h4. I'd be happy to play the White pieces in that position.

White's 3rd move has been recently criticized as looking poor after Black plays an eventual d5, but if you are aiming at the line given above, you should end up at pretty much the same place if Black continues 3...d5 4.h4 Bg7 5.Nf3 Nf6 6.Bxf6 Bxf6 7.Qd2.

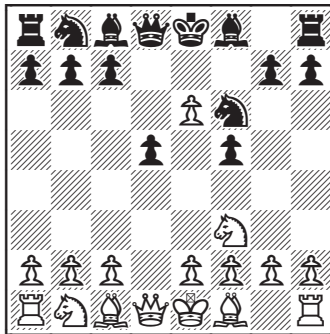
Chapter 11

If you are going to play these lines as White, be psychologically prepared for 1.d4 f5 2.Bg5 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.h4 Bg7 5.Nf3 c6!? 6.Qd2 Be6 7.Qe3 Bf7 8.h5 Nd7.



This and similar positions have occurred several times in strong competition, and Black can get a Q-side pawn storm brewing very quickly. Be warned! Indeed, we will be aiming for a much improved version of this in this book.

Unfortunately, a less easily addressed problem occurs in the Dutch Deferred (1.d4 e6 2.Nf3 f5). If you currently use AKCOR's recommendation, 3.d5, then I suggest you take a long, hard look at what happens when Black shows no rush to recapture his pawn after 3...Nf6 4.dxe6 d5!



Igor Naumkin has played this as Black several times with success. The good thing is that you can find another response to 1.d4 e6 2.Nf3 f5 while keeping 2.Bg5 as your standard way

Introducing the Dangerfield Attack

of meeting 1.d4 f5, should that be your aim. In our repertoire, there is no need to learn a separate line for 1.d4 e6.