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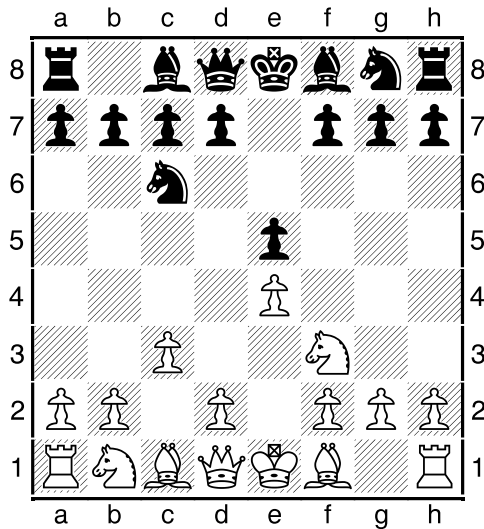
Ponziani's Opening

by Carl Gorka

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6

So far so good, this is a position that most chess players will know and white has lots of moves available. One that is not so well known is

3.c3



This is Ponziani's opening and it will make your opponent think for a bit.

3...d5

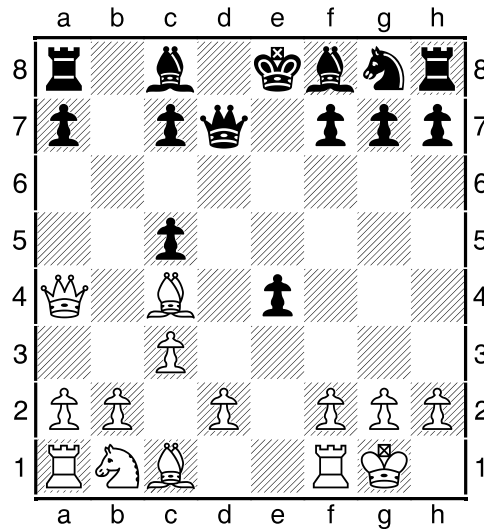
This is the real challenge, but definitely not the safest option 3...♘f6 the most sensible 4.d4 (4.d3 is a solid option) 4...exd4 5.e5 ♘e4 6.♖e2 f5 7.exf6 d5 8.♘bd2 d3 9.♗e3 ♕c5 10.fxg7 is a typically wild variation of this opening. 3...f5 is a very risky counter gambit

4.♞a4

One of the points of the c3 move was to let the queen out.

4...♙d7

4...dxe4 5.♘xe5 ♞d5 6.♘xc6 bxc6 7.♙c4 ♞d7 8.0-0 c5??



is a typical mistake trying to exchange white's aggressively placed queen 9.♙b5!;



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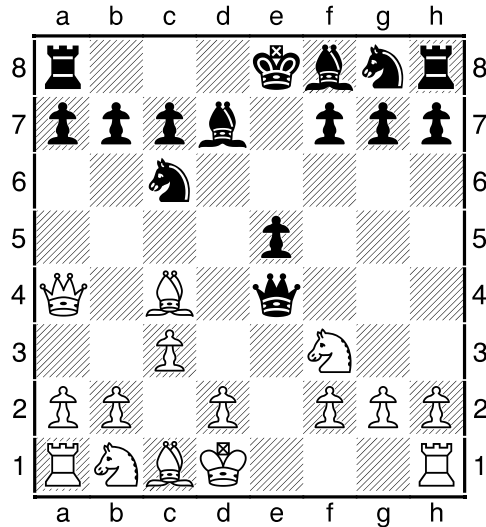
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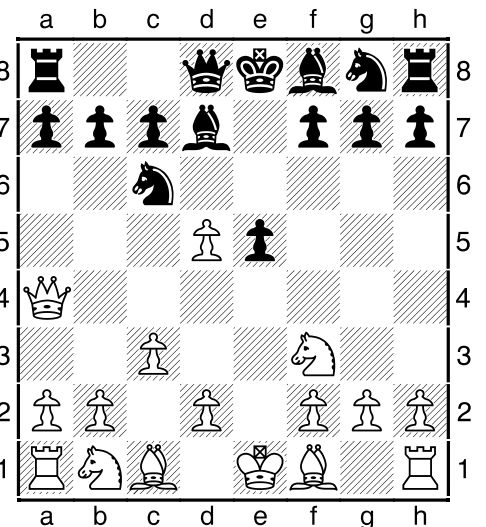
Another alternative 4...♖d6 5.exd5 ♗xd5 6.♙c4 ♖c4+ 7.♔d1 ♙d7??

And a couple of games to give you some inspiration



8.♙xf7+ Giving up a bishop, but winning a queen!

5.exd5 and it isn't easy for black to win his pawn back



Pavlov, Mircea – Haik, Aldo
Istres op Istres , 1976

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.c3 f5 4.d4 fxe4
5.♗xe5 ♗f6 6.♙g5 d6 7.♗xc6 bxc6
8.♗d2 d5 9.f3 ♖b8 10.fxe4 dxe4
11.♙c4 h6 12.♙xf6 ♗xf6 13.♗xe4
♗h4+ 14.♗g3 ♖xb2 15.0-0 ♙d6 16.♗f3
♔d8 17.♖ae1 ♙b7 18.♙e6 c5 19.d5 ♙a6
20.♗f7 ♗e7 21.♗xe7+ ♙xe7 22.♖f7
♙b5 23.♗f5 ♙f6 24.d6 cxd6 25.♖d1
♙g5 26.♖xd6+ ♔e8 27.♗xg7# 1-0

Chigorin, Mikhail – Gossip, George
USA-06.Congress New York (29), 1889

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.c3 d5 4.♗a4 f6
5.♙b5 ♗ge7 6.exd5 ♗xd5 7.0-0 ♙d7
8.d4 e4 9.♗fd2 ♗g6 10.♙c4 ♗a5
11.♗b3 f5 12.♙f7+ ♔e7 13.♗c4 ♗a6
14.♙g5+ ♔xf7 15.♗d6# 1-0



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