

# Lange-Lampert 1903

## Attack on f7

This game, played in 1903, features a surprising attack on f7 by white, involving three sacrifices. Lange opens with the *Guioco Piano*. “*Guioco Piano*” means “quiet game” in Italian, but as we’ll see, it can lead to some spectacular attacks!



**1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Bc5 4. c3**

c3 is the characteristic move of the *Guioco Piano*. The idea is to support the pawn move d4. Then, after exd4 cxd4, white will have a strong pawn center.



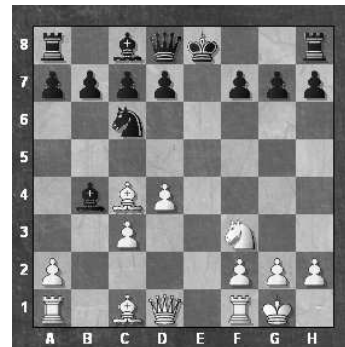
**4. ... Nf6 5. d4**

With 4. ... Nf6, black attacks the pawn on e4. White ignores the attack, because he intends to sacrifice the pawn for a lead in development.



**5. ... exd4 6. cxd4 Bb4+ 7. Nc3**

Sure enough, black elects to exchange pawns in the center. After 6. cxd4, there is an open diagonal leading to the white King, and black checks with the Bishop. White must respond to the check; he elects to block it with his Knight, leaving the e4 pawn undefended.



**7. ... Nxe4 8. O-O Nxc3 9. bxc3**

7. ... Nxe4 captures the e4 pawn. With 8. O-O, white secures the safety of his King, breaks the pin on the Knight at c3, and prepares to bring his rook into play. 8. ... Nxc3 9. bxc3 is probably bad for black, since it exchanges his better developed Knight (2 development points) for white’s less developed Knight (1 point).

Why shouldn’t black’s Bishop take the pawn on c3? Because white will respond with 10. Bxf7+! If Black’s King captures the Bishop with 10. ... Kxf7, it brings the King onto the a2-g8 diagonal. 11. Qb3+ forks the King and the Bishop, and after the King moves, 12. Qxc3 regains the Bishop.



**9. ... Be7 10. d5 Na5 11. d6!**

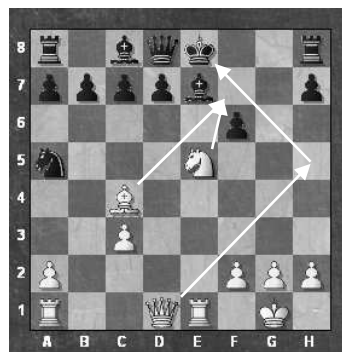
9. ... Be7 seems the only sensible move. While the Bishop has moved 3 times, it is at least developed, and it prevents a check along the e file. 10. d5 seems like a big surprise, but notice the Knight has no good square to move to! Ne5, Nd4, or Nb4 lead to immediate capture, and Nb8 undevelops it completely. The best is Na5, which does at least counterattack the c4 Bishop.

11. d6 is masterful. If black takes the Bishop with 11. ... Nxc4, then 12. dxe7 Qxd7 loses the Queen! 13. Re1 pins the Queen to the King, and black is lost. If 11. cxd4, it leads to an attack similar to what actually happened, so we'll go on.



**11. ... Bxd6 12. Re1+ Be7 13. Bg5 f6**

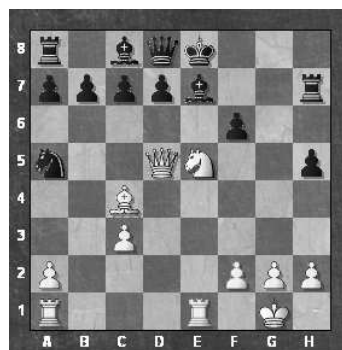
Black takes with the Bishop. White brings his Rook into the game with check, and since black still hopes to castle, he blocks the check with his Bishop. Bg5 puts a double attack on the pinned Bishop, and it seems only reasonable to block the attack (and attack back!) with the pawn. But this proves to be black's undoing.



**14. Bxf6! gxf6 15. Ne5!**

Having sacrificed two pawns, white now sacrifices his Bishop to open attacking lines for his Queen. As for the Knight, not only does 15. Ne5 get out of the Queen's way, it also cooperates with the Bishop to put a double attack on the f7 square!

Now, if black tries 15. ... fxf7, he'll be mated immediately by 16. Qh5+ Kf8 17. Qf7#. If black takes the c4 Bishop, the same thing happens. Black must defend h5!



**15. ... h5 16. Qd3 Rh6 17. Qd5 Rh7**

Black puts a defended pawn onto h5, but white attacks the h5-e8 diagonal again with Qd3. Black defends against 17. Qg6+ with his rook, but with 17. Qg5, white has a direct attack on f7! Black is trying to defend too many squares with just one piece: 17. ... Rh7 defends f7, but now white invades with 18. Qg8+!

The game concluded with 18. ... Bf8, blocking the check with the Bishop, but then 19. Ng6+ is overwhelming! Black blocks the direct check with the Rook, via 19. ... Re7. but then white has his choice of three different checkmates! He chose 20. Bf7#, see if you can find the other two.