

## Preface

I often see in chess forums people asking: “What is the current status of that line?” It is a good and reasonable question, but who could claim that he knows the answer?!

The contemporary information flood replaced the previous “bibles” like The Encyclopedia of Chess Openings written by famous top players, with huge megabases, compiled without much filtering. If you try to learn a new opening or reassess your old knowledge with the help of some specialised book, you’ll quickly discover that it would be a mission impossible. Most opening studies nowadays just reproduce some excerpts from databases, quoting piles of games, but wisely omitting straight recommendations. Naturally, it is much easier to hide in the shadow of someone else’s authority, but such an approach is of little use to the unfortunate reader, since it says what has been played, but not what should be. The other (“starting out”) approach is equally unproductive – the author chooses a couple of games of renowned experts, pretending that there are no other branches or new ideas around. When the reader starts playing the system, he suddenly discovers the existence of a whole universe of other lines and it turns out that the book answers no crucial questions at all.

Accordingly, I decided to produce a book with one main objective in mind – to give as much answers as possible, reassessing the outdated evaluations. The concept is simple – to digest all available material on the Queen’s Gambit Accepted, to separate it into branches, and offer a move-by-move presentation of the main ideas according to the latest tournament trends. The great experience of GM Konstantin Sakaev – two times junior world champion and two times Olympic champion with the Russian team in 1998 and 2000, helped me a lot for the first editions in 2003 and 2005. The third edition, however, has been prepared entirely by me, so you’ll often meet the usage of “I” instead of “us”, or the note (S.S.). I went through all the pages and replaced everything I felt obsolete. At the same time I left the structure of the book intact, in order to help readers of the old editions to quickly compare information and see what is new.

If you expect to learn how to win against the QGA, I should disappoint you right away. Black is holding firmly against all attempts and I cannot single out any system as most promising for White. Your weapon of choice will have to be selected among a wide range of systems of equal merit, depending mostly on your style of playing chess. I hope that the present book will become your secret trump in the battles.

*Semko Semkov, January 2008*