



# Ruy Lopez: Exchange Variation (Chess is Fun Book 27)

*Jon Edwards*

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1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5

Named after a 16th century Spanish priest, the Ruy Lopez grew in popularity towards the end of the 19th century and is a regular visitor to tournaments today. The basic idea is simple enough. White develops the bishop to attack the Nc6, the only defender of the e5-pawn.

3...a6

Black's most frequent response, putting the question to the bishop. White now often retreats the bishop to a4, preserving the bishop and aiming for long term pressure against the center and queenside with moves like c3, d4, and Nd2-f1-g3. When the bishop, it often retreats with time to c2 from where, if it gains activity along the b1-h7 diagonal, White's attack often succeeds.

This e-book will focus instead on the exchange on c6, an effort to gain control over the opening discussion.

4.Bxc6

White quickly exchanges the light-squared bishop for Black's queen's knight in the expectation that Black's doubled c-pawns, the immobility of Black's queenside, and the usefulness of White's kingside majority will outweigh the advantage of Black's bishop pair.

While White often enters the variation with the expectation of reaching a favorable king and pawn endgame, many of the games in this e-book are remarkably complex contents. I call your attention to Lasker-Capablanca, 1914, a classic encounter that deserves careful review, as well as the amazing games of Bobby Fischer in this line. I have included four here.

Jon Edwards won the 10th United States Correspondence Championship in 1997 and the 8th North American Invitational Correspondence Chess Championship in 1999. His correspondence ICCF rating of 2580 places him in the top 200 correspondence chess players worldwide.

He has written more than a 20 chess books, notably including *The Chess Analyst* (Thinkers Press, 1999) which chronicles the success in the US championship, *Teach Yourself Visually: Chess* (Wiley, 2006), a photographically based chess primer, and *Sacking the Citadel: The History, Theory, and Practice of the Classic Bishop Sacrifice* (Russell Enterprises, 2011).

Jon provides chess instruction in the Princeton, NJ area. He has taught chess to more than 1,500 students over 30 years.

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