Welcome back to our lecture series on the Caro-Kann System. In Part II of our lecture series we will take a look at the Advance Variation. This variation was previously considered inferior for many years. In New York 1927 Aron Nimzowitsch suffered a great positional defeat at the hands of legendary positional and endgame player Jose Capablanca. This caused the variation to be tossed away and forgotten by strong players. So the Advance Variation wasn’t seen for quite sometime. Now strong players are playing this system more and more these days.

I have chosen a positional line for review today. Now as before we will go over some the main ideas in the Advance Variation before reviewing the example line.

- White has the space advantage. This is recurring theme for the Caro-Kann System.
- White has the initiative. Another recurring theme.
- White ends up with either doubled or isolated pawns on d-file and sometimes c-file.
- White can be left with bad pawn structure in the endgame.
- White usually seeks play in the center. Otherwise they will be attacking on the kingside.
- Black sometimes retains the Bishop pair.
- Black structure can be solid. But in some wild attacking lines the Structure can become weak for both Black and White.
- Still the Main goal is to trade Queens and reach and endgame favoring Black.
- Black almost always gives up a pawn temporally. Usually the h or c-pawn.
- Black’s Dark Squared Bishop is usually stronger in the endgame due to White’s pawns being left on Dark Squares.
- Sometimes Black will never castle in Advance Variation. When he does castle there is choice between Kingside and Queenside. That will all depend upon the position.
Now I want to cover typical piece placement for the Advance Variation **ONLY**:

- The Light Squared Bishop is always developed first and almost always to f5.
- The Dark Squared is developed to e7 and later Bc4 or Bxc4. Possibly regaining a sacked pawn. In some variations this Bishop becomes blocked by the King’s Knight.
- The King’s Knight has quite a few different placements in the Advance Variation. Key outposts: Nf5, Ng6, Ne7-d5 Ne7-c8-b6-c4.
- The Queen seeks to be traded off on a5 mainly but anyway you find to do it. Remember exceptions apply if you have a better position retain the Queen.
- Rooks make their way to the d, c or b-files. Sometimes the King’s Rook finds his way to the *open* g-file.

The line I choose for us to review is very popular with the trendsetting 2700s players these days. Grischuk is the most notable player facing the line we will be reviewing. The following line was taken from Galkin - Ivanchuk, Khanty-Mansiysk 2007.

1. e4 c6  
2. d4 d5  
3. e5 Bf5
As you can from this White has a great number of moves to play. Every move you see you could see in a game. White can start direct play against the Bishop. Or go for a slow positional grind keeping his space advantage. Play in the center is another option.

4. Nd2 e6  
5. Nb3 Nd7

So far White’s play is based on preventing c5 which frees up Black’s cramped position. Black should continue his development and play c5 later. Of course Black could’ve played 5… c5!? If anyone wants to see the variation let me know. 6. Be3 transposes into another line.

6. Nf3 Ne7  
7. Be2 Nc8  
8. 0-0 Be7
Black has no real weaknesses for White to attack it is difficult for White to know where he should point his guns. Black is also cramped this might cause some players to believe they are losing for no reason but a lack of movement. This is not the case Black is fine. White is the one with something to prove.

9. a4 0-0
10. a5 a6
11. Be3 Na7
12. Ne1
It seemed hard for white to find a good way to continue his plans. I guess c2-c4 could’ve been played but then after 12. dxc4 Black just plays Nb5. Another option could be the waiting move 12. h3 the non-move if you see this move then just develop with Rc8. White didn’t choose these options now we just play!

12 ... c5!
13. Nxc5 Nxc5
14. dxc5 Nc6
15. Nf3 Bg4
16. Nd4 Bxe2
17. Nxc6 Bxd1
18. Nxd8 Be2
19 Rfe1 Rfxd8
20. Rxe2 d4

After a massive amount trading and nice desperado tactic from both sides the dust settles and Black is regaining his pawn with a better position. Black has good chances in this endgame. I hope everyone enjoyed this lecture and I’ll be back next week with The Panov Variation.