

Pin? What Pin?

Ruy López Teacher's Page

Ruy López de Segura coined the word “gambit”. Here he offers up an early lesson in the the double attack. López punishes Black for not accepting his **f**-pawn, breaking a soft pin on his **Queen** with a pair of checks around **f7**.

This game is from the first “world championship” tournament hosted by **Phillip II** in Madrid, Spain in 1575.

Ruy López de Segura White	Leonardo da Cutri Black
1. e4	e5
2. f4	d6 ¹
3. Bc4 ²	c6 ³
4. Nf3	Bg4 ⁴
5. fxe	dxe
6. Bxf7+	Kxf7
7. Nxe5+ ⁵	Ke8
8. Qxg4	Nf6
9. Qe6+ ⁶	Qe7
10. Qc8+	Qd8
11. Qxd8	Kxd8
12. Nf7+	Resigns

¹ **2. ...d6** allows White to trade a side pawn for a center pawn. Black's best chances in the King's Gambit lie in accepting the **f**-pawn and exploiting White's weakened King-side pawns or counter-punching with **d5**.

² It's not “Knights before Bishops” but it is “Develop with threat” at **f7** and López's Knight hops out soon enough.

³ It's even more important for Black not to risk losing time with too many pawn moves. This move might support following up with **4... d5**, kicking at the Bishop. But on the next move Black switches tactics.

⁴ The difference between a hard pin and a soft pin is...

⁵ ...is that you can break a soft pin with check.

⁶ The missing Achilles Pawn on **f7** creates a hole in front of the Black King for the Queen to strike.