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Capablanca: Move by Move

Cyrus Lakdawala

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Cyrus Lakdawala : Capablanca: Move by Move before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Capablanca: Move by Move:

63 of 65 people found the following review helpful. Get inside the mind of Capa!By R. IngramIf you are reviewing this book chances are you already know who Jose Raul Capablanca is. But in case you don't, he was the third world chess champion (1921-1927) after defeating Emanuel Lasker in his native country Cuba. Capablanca IMO was the greatest chess player of all time (sorry Fischer and Kasparov fans). Many called his style of play "simple" but not me, he just played the most economical by not wasting or making unnecessary moves. His style was very direct.

Capablanca, Move by Move is the latest book on him to be authored by Cyrus Lakdawala. But if you think this is just another book reprinting his famous games think again! Oh yes, many of his games are presented here, but what Lakdawala does here is invite the reader in a sort of 'guess the next move format'. In this way he makes the book essentially interactive with the reader. After getting you to think about what Capa's next move would be at certain points in a game, he gives you the move he made AND EXPLAINS THE REASONING WHY CAPA MADE IT. Also this is not a let's all praise Capablanca, the perfect chess player book either. Many, many games here Lakdawala is highly critical of some of the moves played by Capa and even points out a few outright blunders made by him. There's also a question and answer style format in each game where the author (rhetorically) asks questions in a given position that he feels the average player may have, then answers them for the reader, I think this is a really great way to engage the reader even further. Lakdawala breaks down the book into 5 sections. Those sections are: 1. CAPA ON THE ATTACK - In this section the author selects a handful of games that highlights Capa's attacking prowess. Capa was not known as an attacking player but when the occasion called, he was quite capable of whipping up some vicious assaults. Example game: Capablanca vs. Bogoljubow 1925 - The opening starts out normal enough with the queens gambit accepted. All is well on both sides, suddenly Capa sacrifices a bishop and all hell breaks loose. Bogoljubow desperately tries to find an adequate refutation, but the air around his king is getting mighty thin. 2. CAPA ON THE DEFENCE - You don't go eight years undefeated without being able to defend the utmost ridiculous positions and that's what we have here in this chapter. Example game: Alekhine vs. Capablanca 1927 - Alekhine was Capa's most bitter rival back in the day and there was no love between them. In this game Alekhine shocks Capa by sacrificing a bishop seemingly out of nowhere. What does he get in return for his investment? No less than four passed pawns racing up the board to the queening squares. You really have to see this. Any other player would have folded like a deck of cards, but then again, your name's not Capablanca! 3. CAPA ON EXPLOITING IMBALANCES - Capa was very good at deciphering where the weak zones on the board were (i.e. areas on the board that were poorly defended, lacked the man power and could be easily overrun). Here are a selection of games that show him fully taking advantage of this predicament. Example game: Marshall vs. Capablanca 1909 - Marshall comes out swinging in this game (as he usually does) and tries to sweep Capa off his feet but Capa plays it cool and let the exchanges calmly happen. Capa notices that on the queen side of the board, Marshall has 2 pawns vs Capa's three. Unfortunately for Marshall, Capa can do math and the march is on! 4. CAPA ON ACCUMULATING ADVANTAGES - Capablanca had a distinct style of what I call incremental build up. Many of his games would appear to be dry and at some point would be declared a draw by many observers while the game was in progress. A few moves later his opponents would be turning down their king in resignation. How was Capa able to do this in a clearly drawn position? Take a closer look. The answer lies not at the end of the game, but we have to go way back to the middle game to realize that Capa had set up a long term plan almost imperceptible to the naked eye to where even one lone pawn was enough for victory. Example game: - Lasker vs. Capablanca 1921 - The game is pretty much even throughout the middle game and even material is even but THE POSITION IS NOT! Capa has a very active rook and knight versus Lasker's counter part. Inactive pieces is like waiting for a slow death, you just don't know when it's coming. Lasker needs a plan fast! Someone? Anyone?... 5. CAPA ON ENDINGS - NO ONE ALIVE OR DEAD WAS MORE DEADLY IN THE ENDGAME THAN CAPABLANCA! I WILL REPEAT, NO ONE ALIVE OR DEAD WAS MORE DEADLY IN THE ENDGAME THAN CAPABLANCA! This was the phase of the game that was Capa's bread and butter. This is how he paid the bills. So many to choose from even Lakdawala acknowledges he had a difficult time trimming down games to include in this section of the book. Even with just a few pawns on the board, Capa still found a way to work his magic. In the endgame the slightest shift of wind in the position, even the smallest misstep spelled disaster for his opponents. Example game: Nimzowitsch vs. Capablanca 1913 - Nimzo tries to get cute and exchanges down to a bishops of opposite color ending (normally a drawn game circumstance) but he forgot who was sitting on the other side of the table. Soon he finds himself not fighting for a draw, but from actually losing the game! He probably wondered what happened to his drawing plan, well I could tell him, Capablanca, that's who! If you love chess, if you love great classic grandmaster games, if you love feeling like you can 'see' as Capablanca saw, this is a great book to have and you won't be disappointed. 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Worth every penny paid for it By Manuel Lopez Michelone Review in english and spanish... Some time ago I bought this book "Capablanca move by move", Everyman Chess, but I had no time to read it until a couple of months that I gave myself the task of a full reading. The author is Cyrus Lakdawala, who according to the back cover, is an International Master. I would add that it is a prolific writer who has openings works and game collections, not only about the Cuban genius. To his credit we can find: "1 ... b6 move by move", "The Scandinavian move by move", "The Classical French move by move", "Larsen move by move", among others. The format of the books "move by move" is interesting, because you can follow the game, with the author's comments, until suddenly comes a box warning for example, the possibility of a combination, or, how to plan next phase of the game (in the section of Capablanca in the end, for example). If one follows the comments and see the variants proposed by the author (many certainly consulted with some chess engine), you can learn chess and more about how the Cuban genius attacked the problems over the board. Maybe I find a couple of problems on this book. The first is that sometimes it seems that the author is too colloquial in his comments and

remarks and seems to me he wants to give to his analysis an informal halftone. Initially its ok, but he keep this informal tone and Im started to get sick of it, or at least that happened to me. Second, the collection of selected items is fine but suddenly puts some ggames that are expendable. For example, there is a really bad game against Nimzowitsch where he played awful and in fact the only merit of the Cuban was just to ddevelop his pieces while the old master danish master happily gobbled pawns. Another game, perhaps not widely known, is against Vera Menchik, where the Cuban crushes the best female player of that time. But we must be fair: there are too many games of Capablanca known and make another book about the most popular Capablanca's games would be just useless. Maybe that's why Lakdawala selected the games of the book.Overall, in my opinion it is a great book. Definitely worth every penny paid for this book.Hace tiempo compr este libro "Capablanca move by move", de Everyman Chess, pero hasta hace apenas un par de meses me di a la tarea de leerlo completo. El autor es Cyrus Lakdawala, que a decir de la contraportada del libro, es un Maestro Internacional. Yo agregara que es un prolifico escritor pues tiene obras tanto de aperturas como estas colecciones de partidas, y no solamente del genio cubano. En su haber podemos hallar: "1... b6 move by move", "The Scandinavian move by move", "The Classical French move by move", "Larsen move by move", entre otros.El formato de los libros "move by move" es interesante, porque se puede seguir la partida, con los comentarios del autor, hasta que de pronto viene un recuadro advirtiendopor ejemplo, la posibilidad de una combinacin, o bien, de cmo planear la siguiente fase del juego (en la seccion de Capablanca en el final, por ejemplo). Si uno sigue los comentarios ve las variantes que el autor propone (muchas sin duda consultadas con alg motor de ajedrez), podr aprender ms ajedrez y ms sobre cmo el genio cubano atacaba los problemas en el tablero.Quizs encuentro un par de peros a este libro sobre Jos Ral Capablanca. El primero es que en ocasiones me parece que el autor es demasiado coloquial en el libro y quisiese darle a sus anlisis un tono medio informal. Digamos que cae simptico al principio, pero despues empieza a caer mal, o al menos eso me pas a m. Segundo, la coleccin de partidas est bien seleccionada pero de pronto pone algunas que son prescindibles. Por ejemplo, hay una contra Nimzowitsch donde ste jug francamente mal y en donde el nico merito del cubano fue seguir con el desarrollo mientras el viejo maestro danes engulla peones alegremente. Otra partida, tal vez no muy conocida, es la que jug contra Vera Menchik, en donde el cubano aplasta a la mejor jugadora de ese tiempo. Pero habra que ser justos: hay muchas partidas demasiado conocidas de Capablanca y hacer otro libro ms de esas partidas que se han analizado hasta la saciedad pues hara innecesario este libro. Tal vez ah la razn de esta prticular seleccin.En mi opinin es un estupendo libro en general. El autor se ha aplicado para mostrarnos algunas obras de arte del genio cubano. Vale sin duda cada centavo pagado por este libro.21 of 22 people found the following review helpful. What a beautiful book!By murfeemanI waited months for this to finally be released in the US, and I'll be spending the next few months studying it! It's almost a stand-alone manual on how to play chess. Under the "search inside this book" feature that has provided, there is a very full description of the book's contents plus many pages of actual text. (Look under the picture of the book cover at the top left of the page). All I can add to that is it's a large, easy to use book with plenty of good sized diagrams and easy to read text. Everyman and Gambit are two publishers who have shown the way in their recent releases of how chess books should be written. The move-by-move concept, the question and answer feature, and the frequent quizzes make this an instructional book to study as well as being a pleasure to read. Capablanca's games will always be relevent!