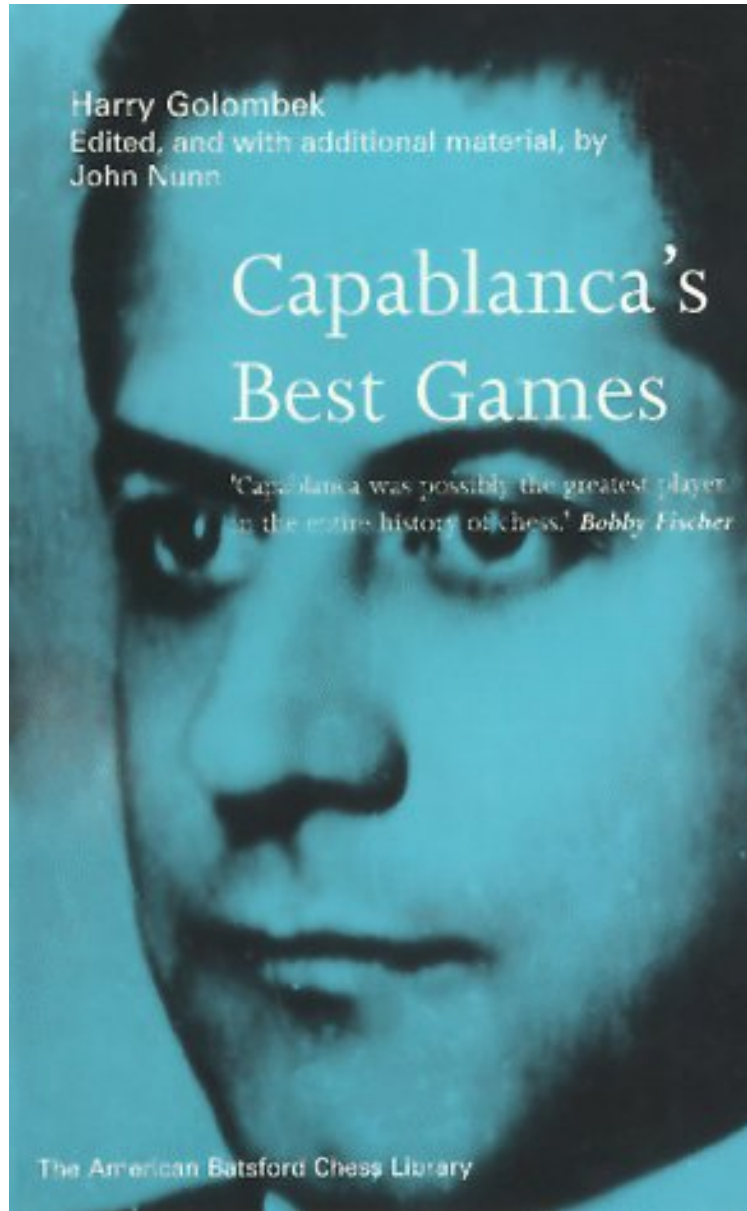


[E-BOOK] Capablanca's Best Games (New American Batsford Chess Library))

Capablanca's Best Games (New American Batsford Chess Library))

Harry Golombek

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Harry Golombek : Capablanca's Best Games (New American Batsford Chess Library)) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Capablanca's Best Games (New American Batsford Chess Library)):

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Classic Games Collection, Updated and EnhancedBy R. TobiasThis

is perhaps THE classic collection of Capablanca's games. This edition has been enhanced by being updated to algebraic notation. Also, it has been judiciously edited by GM John Nunn with numerous analytical corrections. (Unlike Nunn's very controversial editing of Fischer's 'My 60 Memorable Games', this is a welcome improvement, as Golembek, an IM, simply did not have the chess strength to fully understand Capablanca's ultra-sophisticated play). The verbal explanations in this book are copious, so it is a good way for developing players to try to grasp important strategic chess concepts. There is a decent amount of analytical lines given, but this is not a book of long, branching complex analysis. The games have been well selected, and there is a fascinating variety of games, including some slashing Kingside attacks, a type of game Capa was not known for, but in which he was very adept at when so inclined. There is a long and interesting appreciation of Capa in the form of a memoir by du Mont. Capa's results are summarized nicely, and very well written biographical intros to each chapter do an excellent job of concisely and often poignantly placing the games in the context of Capa's chess career. Capablanca's unique, clear positional style of play has influenced the play of many GM's, including former World Champion Karpov. His games are still recommended for study by chess instructors because of their clarity and logic. This book is a great source of material for study for developing players, and the games can also be studied from the standpoint of enjoyment and appreciation of fine chess. Warmly recommended.

30 of 32 people found the following review helpful. Lucid annotations by a player who actually knew Capablanca

By C. Dunn Algebraic version of Capablanca's Hundred Best Games of Chess, with some notes and editing by John Nunn. Golombek's annotations are easy to understand. A true chess connoisseur will prefer this to Reinfeld's 'Immortal Games of Capablanca'. A less obsessive person on a budget will prefer the less expensive alternative. If you don't have Capa in your library, you do not play chess.

Addendum: John Nunn writes in his introduction, "... one has the impression of strategic plans effortlessly consummated. This strong stylistic feature makes Capablanca a particularly good subject for Golombek's style of annotation, which eschews detailed analysis. Intricate variations would only obscure the overriding principles..."

What's funny is that Golombek writes in his preface, "This simplicity of perfection was the product of supreme art. Playing through a Capablanca game and fully understanding it after close study constitutes a liberal education in the art of chess. For this reason I have found it necessary to annotate the games as exhaustively as was within my powers."

Well, Nunn is a Grandmaster, so his standards may be very high! At any rate, Golombek's annotations are certainly much more thorough than Reinfeld's, but they are still textual, not deep in variations, and easily understood by anyone who has read a chess book before. If you can afford it, make this Capablanca collection your choice.

13 of 17 people found the following review helpful. Classic, but flawed.

By Tom I wanted this book for a long time. It's out of print, and the Batsford edition with editing by Nunn is hard to find. When I finally got a copy, I was delighted. Then, gradually, disappointed. It's not the games. Everything you've heard about Capablanca's games is true. They are clear, beautiful, and have a natural feeling to them that can only inspire admiration and envy in any chess player. The issue are the annotations. It's not that Golombek (Harry Golombek, original author and annotator) is a bad annotator, but there are two main flaws with his notes. The first is that the opening annotations are horribly outdated, because Dr. Nunn didn't update Golombek's opening comments to reflect theory circa 1997, when the new edition was released. While I understand not wanting to tamper with the original, leaving it as is leads to players getting questionable advice on certain openings. A good example is the Steinitz defense to the Ruy Lopez. I count at least three times that Golombek recommends a queenside fianchetto as the best scheme of development. That move is hardly ever played these days, because more effective methods of development were found for white. In such instances, a footnote briefly expounding on current theory would be very nice. The second and more major problem with the annotations is their lack of objectivity. Golombek clearly worshiped Capablanca. While I suppose this is forgivable as he was the dominant player of his era (and a much more likable person than Alekhine, without a doubt), it leads to unbalanced annotations. Capablanca was great, but he made mistakes as well. I wouldn't mind seeing more footnotes to textual annotations to go along with the corrections to variational annotations. All that said, this is still the best book around on Capablanca, and if you can get it for ~\$20, I'd still recommend it. Just don't pay \$100 or \$200, unless you just want it as a collectible. A subscription to New In Chess would give you a lot more bang for your buck.

Jose Raul Capablanca is generally regarded as the player in chess history with the most natural talent. Champions since have eulogized his phenomenal play, with many of them attributing their development as players to studying his games. Botvinnik said of him: "You cannot play chess unless you have studied his games." Kasparov: "Capablanca invariably chose the right option, no matter how intricate the position." Fischer: Capablanca was possibly the greatest player in the entire history of chess." High praise indeed, and this book is an indispensable guide for anyone who wishes to improve their future games by studying the past. Contains 100 of the finest games of Capa's career, with lively, detailed annotations.