

(Mobile book) Modern Benoni (Everyman Chess)

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*Andrew Dr Kinsman*

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**Andrew Dr Kinsman : Modern Benoni (Everyman Chess)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Modern Benoni (Everyman Chess):

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Douglas McMickle Good Book! 38 of 44 people found the following review helpful. A dog-gone good opening manual. By A.J. Goldsby I When asked by the editor of the Georgia State Chess Magazine to review the new book on the Modern Benoni by Kinsman, I thought this must have been fate K or a fortuitous - even a very serendipitous - event. You see I am a Master and I teach chess professionally. And the Benoni was one of the very first openings I ever studied in depth. I must have close to 30 books and

pamphlets on the Benoni that I have gathered over the years. (Like the book, Modern Benoni Dynamics [hard-back], by Steffen Zeuthen. 1976. I am told this is now something of a collector's item.) I first played the Benoni as a lower-rated player in the 70's. Eventually I gave it up as, "too complex," but later came back to it as a Master, (in the 1980's); on the advice of GM D. Gurevich. (He told me to have something very complex and double-edged to play against lower-rated players.) I still use this opening too - indeed I crushed a very strong master (2435 ELO) with this opening in one of the "Dos Hermanos/ICC (Internet) Qualifying Tournaments" earlier this year. (I do not give the game, as it is basically a blitz game and a relatively routine [Benoni] affair.) Upon first examining this book, you note that it is definitely well made - like all books from this publisher. (EVERYMAN Chess.) The bindings are securely sewn and glued in, and very sturdy. (Unlike some other chess books!) The "flex-cover" is thick and very durable. The pages are relatively opaque, (with little bleed-through); supple, and are acid-free. The ink used in the print is clear and bold and does not run if it becomes wet. (I also want to comment here on the publisher. Everyman Press probably has the highest standards of any modern-day publisher of chess-books. They obviously have editors, typesetters and proofreaders who at least know the moves of the game! And this was NOT true of publishers of chess books in the past.) The material is neat, clear, and very well organized. There are 10 chapters in three main sections. Just about every line that one could expect to have played against you is covered. The Sections are based on the opening variations, consisting of a total of 64 complete, well-annotated games presenting the material. (Approximately 145 total pages.) The blurb on the back cover reads: "The Modern Benoni (1. d4, Nf6; 2. c4, c5; 3. d5, e6); is one of Black's most dynamic Queen's Pawn Openings. From the third move, Black strives to create a permanent imbalance in the pawn structure, with exciting results. Both players must be utterly fearless in carrying out their plans; in the Benoni he who hesitates, is lost!" Truer words were never spoken. I would also like to add that this is a razor-sharp line and anyone who fears intense tactical battles should probably avoid it like the plague! IM Andrew Kinsman is a well-known player and trainer; who is an expert on the Benoni. He remains very objective; as we see one of his wins in this book, and then one of his losses. Section One covers the "Main Lines," (Classical) including the tricky lines that use an early h3 by White. Section Two covers The Four Pawns and the Mikenas Attacks, The "Flick-Knife" Variation, (The Taimanov); The Modern or Samisch Variation, (White pawn to f3); and other systems - such as the oddball line that GM Seirawan often employs. (Bd3 Nge2). Section Three covers the lines that avoid an early e2-e4 by White. (The "Knight's Tour" Variation by White.) This section also covers the line that features the use of an early Bf4 by White. This line was extremely popular in tournament praxis just a few years ago. When I first got the book, I tried to go through it in great detail. (Indeed, I have been through the book, cover-to-cover; many times!) I pulled up about a dozen games up on my database [program] and checked the game scores for accuracy. I then had my daughter pick out 4 games at random. (She chose - Games # 1, # 4, # 23, # 54.) I went over every move, note and line of these 4 games many, many times. I looked for: errors in analysis, misprints, and diagrams that have the incorrect position. I found no mistakes of this type. (But upon going through the book again later, I did discover that the diagram at the bottom of page # 14 has the wrong position. I also refer you to page # 56 of game # 23. {Lautier - Sutovsky; Tillburg, 1996.} In the variation after 22KRxd7?; Kinsman writes: "Plaskett points out the major improvement 22KRc7!; 23. d6, Rcc8; 24. Bg4, Rcd8; 25. Bxd7, Rxe5!; (Lautier only considered 25KRxd7; 26. Nc5) 26. Bg4, f5; ("-/+") and Black is winning. The game move results in a very advantageous ending for White." This is all basically true. But the first thing to note is that the move 24. Bg4?!, is vastly inferior to 24. Nf6+, which I found almost straightaway. After 24. Nf6+, Nxf6; 25. exf6, Bxf6; 26. d7, Rxe1+; 27. Rxe1, Rd8; 28. Re8+, Kg7; 29. RxR/d8, Bxd8; 30. Bb7, and White has a very large, if not a winning advantage. The other thing I want to point out in this variation, is that 26. Bg4 may not be the best move, again. It seems that 26. Rac1(!?) may be slightly better. I could show you more lines and variations of this type. But I won't as that simply would be showing off. My main point of this foray is: # 1.) Don't ever take anything at face value; #2.) No one's analysis is air-tight, improvements can always be found if one is willing to search; and # 3.) You must be willing to work very hard to really learn an opening. {I also wonder whether or not IM Kinsman uses a computer and a good chess analysis-engine to check all of his work.} And to be honest, many of these finer points - especially to the average player - may seem like so much splitting of hairs.) The next thing I did was to take out my many other books on this opening and make a list and see if all the pertinent lines were covered. And they are! In short just about everything you might need or want in a book of this type is here. A special bonus is the introduction. Here the author gives an over-view of the variations, including the fact that he examines - in detail! - the four main pawn breaks of this opening. He also considers what type of pawn structures may arise from such moves, and what the advantages and disadvantages of each formation are. (I wish chess books had done all this 25 years ago. It probably would have taken me a lot less time to become a Master if they had!! I cannot stress enough how important it will be to study this section if you purchase this book!) Another plus is the summary and a "schematic" at the end of each chapter. (The author tells you what lines are played and in which games you can find the analysis of these lines.) In addition to this, there is a very fine table of contents with a lot of useful information, and a very complete index of the complete games in the back of the book. The games and the analysis are modern, there are very few "dinosaurs" present here. The author also incorporates a great deal of material into some of the games, so that virtually every possible line is thoroughly covered. Additionally, the author always conveniently points out where a certain variation is analyzed, so you should

never be lost or groping about to find where your favorite continuation is examined. I would also like to point out that GM Topalov is the hero of this book, as he champions our defense many times with the Black pieces. References to his games are found throughout this entire book. (Hats off to the American Nick DeFirmian, he has also been a fairly regular adherent of this opening.) There is very little, if anything "wrong" with this book. I would advise the average player to purchase MCO-14 in addition to this book. But since this is what I advise ALL my students, this does NOT even amount to a real criticism of the author or this book. I do wonder about the choice of games. By pulling up all the lines in my database, with the ECO codes A70/00 to A79/99; using 2400 ELO as a cut-off point; it pulls up nearly 3000 games. When I sort these according to the average rating of both players, one begins to notice a few things that are relative to this book. The game with the two highest-rated participants would be Karpov-Topalov; Las Palmas 1996. (That game is in this book.) But many others, such as A. Karpov - G. Kamsky; (The FIDE World Championships, Elista, Russia; [#15] 1996.) are not in this book. Since the author does not tell us how he arrived at his criterion for selecting games, (Most chess authors DO NOT give this information either.); we are left to wonder. But I will say that ALL the main lines are well covered, and there is really no need to worry on this front. (If you are a "Theory Hound," you will see many of the most important games of the M.B. of the last 25 years covered in these pages!) [I should also note that if you thumb through the last 5-10 Informants, you would quickly see that every significant Benoni game of the last few years is not covered here. One is often left wondering exactly how an author choose 21 of 24 people found the following review helpful. A Group snapshot, out of focus By J. Miller The Modern Benoni lacks a really comprehensive tome. The older "The Complete Benoni" is the best attempt out there, but it is somewhat dated now, and could use updating. In my opinion, the Benoni, being vast and complex, has not really had all its secrets revealed to us. In general, while there are many lines, there seems to be two in particular that seem to put the viability of the Benoni defense into question. The Modern Main Line, or Modern Classical line, with h3, attempts to stifle the black counterplay. It comes close enough to doing just this that the Benoni has faded out of fashion. The accepted black counter with 9..b5 is not a fully acceptable answer. The endgame after 10 Bxb5 seems (in my opinion, not shared by all) to be winning for white. So the alternatives to 9..b5 have to be looked at. 9..Nh5 is recommended by Watson, but this leads to serious pawn structure damage for black. Is his activity enough to carry him through? I am not sure. Other 9th moves seem dicey as well. If masters felt this h3 line was not such a problem, well we would see many more Benoni games being ventured, but we do not. The verdict is still out on this line. This book does not help us, it actually is misleading as to the true state of theory. The other line to worry about is the Taimanov attack. This line has been around longer and has more theory. Still, in my opinion, the true verdict of several key lines is still not quite clear. Kinsman does better here, but his notes could use more depth. The Taimanov line really shot the Benoni into the realm of disreputable defenses. While several lines still have questions, one gets the sense that enough masters were put off by the problems of the line that serious discussions of the topic seemed to grind to a halt. I still have questions that are unanswered. My instinct tells me that black has enough resiliency to survive these positions, but I may never prove it. As for all the other lines, while there are many sharp and difficult positions, I get the impression that black can deal with them. The Benoni leads to many tense positions. Black must develop with a clear plan. One slip, and black can get his forces fouled up. Black has less space to work with, so a mistake in the opening might be fatal. Having said that, the dynamics of the benoni are very interesting. If one comes to understand the freeing sacrificial possibilities inherent in the black position, one can look forward to games where one sometimes blasts free of the white grip. This book has many examples to show the good, the bad, and the ugly. My instinct tells me the Benoni will probably remain on the margins of accepted theory, thus, I do not think theory will advance as quickly as it once did. This is a shame, but a fact one must accept. For the bold player wishing to blaze new paths, The Benoni is a good choice. I think one must accept the idea that the books will only show us but so much about this opening. One must have a bit of the daring explorer in them to play this. In order to face the dangerous lines I talked about, I think a player is going to have to do some work on his own, if only to help convince oneself that one can survive. In sum, I recommend this book, as a useful tool to help learn this opening. However, one should know the Benoni is an unstable opening choice, and involves significant risk. However, I think it can still be effective, and is a worthy choice for bold spirits who are willing to go ahead with intuitive guesswork instead of required moves ordained by theory.

The dynamic Modern Benoni Defence has undergone something of a revival over the past five or six years. It offers Black a fighting game right from the opening and is ideal for counter-attacking players who like to strive for the initiative right from the opening moves, such as the young Bulgarian star Veselin Topalov. This book considers every important variation, with particular emphasis on those which the reader is likely to encounter in his or her own games.

From the Back Cover The Modern Benoni (1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 e6) is one of Black's most dynamic queen's pawn openings. From the third move Black strives to create a permanent imbalance in the pawn structure, with exciting results. Both players must be utterly fearless in carrying out their plans; in the Benoni he who hesitates, is lost! Every important variation is considered, with particular emphasis on those that readers are likely to encounter in their own games. This book offers a full explanation of the latest theory and important thematic ideas and provides everything

you need to start playing the Modern Benoni straightaway. It is an ideal battle manual for competitive players. (6 x 9, 144 pages, diagrams)