

Mortal Games

Fred Waitzkin

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Fred Waitzkin : Mortal Games before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mortal Games:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Behind the Scenes or a World Champion By Bryan Castro I enjoyed this book immensely. I think Waitzkin does a good job of portraying Garry Kasparov's life both within the chess world and as a budding political figure and chess celebrity. This book does well in illustrating the hectic life that goes with being the strongest chess player in the world. It also shows both his strengths and weaknesses in his personality, which project themselves onto the chessboard as well. We see Garry sometimes as both the confident champion who towers over opponents both on the chess board and physically. We also see an insecure young man who has been forced to face the world early in his life because of his success in chess. In this book, you can perceive Waitzkin's paternal instincts kicking in, as he also has a son who is a world-class player. I think at times Garry looks to Fred Waitzkin as a father figure (or at least that's how the book makes it seem). Waitzkin's text descriptions of the chess matches Garry plays are interesting. I think even those who do not play chess can appreciate the intensity of the games. In all, I think this is a great book which shows us the personality of Garry Kasparov. 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. An inside look at Kasparov By TomGinTX This is not a great book, but it is a good book. Waitzkin gets to spend time with Kasparov before and during his last (5th) match with Karpov. There is a little biographical background about Kasparov scattered through the book. Most of the book concerns the time of the championship match. There is also a chapter on the Linares tournament that followed. Some things I found interesting about the book: (1) the behind-the-scenes view of Kasparov's preparation for the match. (2) the political turmoil in the Soviet Union.

Kasparov was working to end communism. (3) the descriptions of the games without moves and diagrams. (4) amusing anecdotes about the chess world. (5) a little bit of an update on Josh Waitzkin. Warning: There are no game scores or analysis in this book. It is all talk. That was fine with me. Searching for Bobby Fischer was a much more interesting book to me. I recommend you read that one. If you love Searching for Bobby Fischer, you will like Mortal Games. 5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Insight into the life of the world's greatest player By Stosh D. Walsh Waitzkin, who also wrote Searching for Bobby Fischer, provides a rare glimpse into the world of Garry Kasparov. In so doing, he gives the reader an opportunity to see the intricacies of international chess also. Waitzkin's friendship with Kasparov allows unique and intimate pictures of the World Champion both at, and away from, the chessboard. Kasparov's rival, Anatoly Karpov, and the political tension between the two men play a large role in the book. Also included are information about Kasparov's family and the political upheaval and turmoil they endured, as well as enlightening accounts of Kasparov's interactions with other chess masters at various events and competitions around the world. The very best chess players always seem to possess a strange and captivating element of personality, and Waitzkin does well to introduce the reader to Garry Kasparov's.

An inside look at the genius of chess player Garry Kasparov discusses his match against his sworn enemy, Anatoly Karpov, his tireless efforts to bring down Gorbachev, and his chess skills.

From Publishers Weekly Timed to coincide with the triennial chess world championship contest in September, this depiction of the brethren and of Armenian champ Kasparov will lend even more excitement to the event. (Kasparov is to defend his title against Englishman Nigel Short at still undisclosed venues and under new auspices to be determined by the contestants). Waitzkin (Searching for Bobby Fischer) catches readers up in the frenzy of grandmasters for whom chess is life itself, the ultimate challenge to ego. The book is organized with symmetry, concentrating on the two major events for Kasparov in 1990: the Azerbaijani pogrom against Armenians in Baku early in the year, which deeply politicized him and caused him and his family to flee and settle in Moscow, and the Fall championship contest with his nemesis Anatoly Karpov, barely won by the ill-prepared Kasparov. The book recalls their other challenges, going back to Kasparov-Karpov I in 1984, and introduces us to such renowned players as Gata Kamsky and Victor Korchnoi. Although Waitzkin, a chess zealot himself and father of well-known chess prodigy Josh, is clearly a Kasparov partisan, he doesn't altogether succeed in making the haughty, relentless, volatile champ sympathetic. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Kirkus sColorful combinations by Waitzkin (Searching for Bobby Fisher, 1988) as he castles through the manic world of grandmaster chess. Waitzkin first bumped into Garry Kasparov when the world champ played Waitzkin's 11-year-old son, Josh, and 59 other kids in a simultaneous match in Manhattan. Josh drew the game, earning him and his father entry into Kasparov's circle. The man with the highest ranking in chess history proves to be a high-strung, arrogant loudmouth, eager to promote Russian democracy, denounce Mikhail ("the criminal") Gorbachev, and ridicule his chess rivals as incompetents. The only opponent to give him serious trouble is Karpov, with whom Kasparov slugs it out through five arduous matches. Waitzkin devotes many chapters to a blow-by-blow account of one of these tournaments, a nail-biting affair that results in victory on the boards for Kasparov but moral triumph for Karpov, once despised as a Soviet pawn but here revealed as a normal bloke, lacking Kasparov's Brobdingnagian ego. As Waitzkin pushes towards the endgame, encountering park-side pawn-pushers, teenage prodigies who eat-sleep-and-breathe chess, and grandmasters who drive at 100 mph and accuse each other of paraphysical dirty tricks, readers may conclude that high-level chess outdoes Hollywood for daffiness. And just when things settle down--Kasparov announces plans to face English grandmaster Nigel Short in championship play this September--along comes Bobby Fischer to upset the apple cart. While suggesting that Fischer is mentally ill, Waitzkin also implies that he remains a chess genius and, in the eyes of the public, Kasparov's real rival. A Fischer-Kasparov Match of the Century? Stay tuned--and hope that Waitzkin is there to cover it. -- Copyright 1993, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.