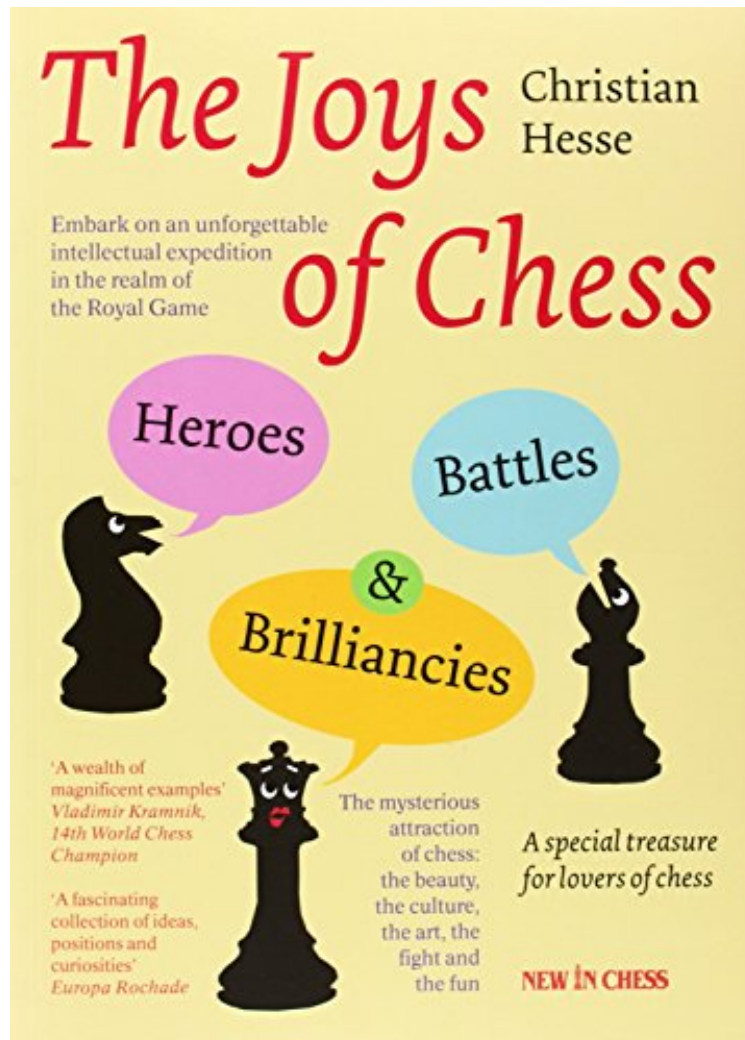


The Joys of Chess: Heroes, Battles and Brilliances

Christian Hesse

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#1190951 in Books The House of Staunton, Inc. 2011-07-16Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.35 x 1.05 x 6.89l, 1.80 #File Name: 9056913557416 pagesAuthor: Christian HessePages: 432 PagesPublication Years: 2011 | File size: 75.Mb

Christian Hesse : The Joys of Chess: Heroes, Battles and Brilliances before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Joys of Chess: Heroes, Battles and Brilliances:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. The Fireside Book of Chess for the 21st CenturyBy RealistIf you have ever read the old Fireside Book of Chess, this feels a lot like that did (minus the short fiction pieces). It has lots of short chapters on interesting, quirky topics. Although the writing can be a little pretentious, overall the tone is relaxed, with the author clearly excited to show the reader the next interesting/cool/surprising thing he found from the history of chess. It is definitely the kind of book one can read for a few minutes before one goes to bed, or, alternatively, one could go deeper and try to solve the puzzles and play out the games. Quite absorbing for lovers of

chess, and perfect for a rainy day. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Brilliant chess book this is! By Erling Simply fantastic, could have been a bit more critical about some of the chess-games presented, but this is overall great fun! 14 of 15 people found the following review helpful. 417 pages of rollicking chess fun By Christopher J. Falter Hesse's labor of love is the perfect antidote to all that hard work you've been investing in tactics puzzles and rook endgames. Crack it open and grab a breath of refreshing chess air for a few minutes, and you're bound to find something to make you smile. It's like getting one of the world's top grandmasters to read you Tarzan comics. (Which, I learned from this book, was Bent Larsen's chief duty as Bobby Fischer's second at the 1959 Interzonal tournament!) It's the first chess book that's given me a feeling of guilty pleasure: how can chess be this much fun? To give you a taste of what you can expect, here are a few of my favorite moments from the book: In "Retreats of Genius," Dzindzichashvili retreats almost all his pieces back to their starting squares...and wins decisive material. A disgruntled Garry Kasparov calls chess website publisher Frederich Friedel and says, "You are a dead man, Fred. You have put me in a very embarrassing situation." Friedel, you see, had posed a simple little problem to Kasparov, and when Garry's students couldn't solve it, the world champion spent a day on it and couldn't solve it either. For your edification, here is the possibly the world's most difficult chess problem: "A game begins 1.e4 and ends on move 5 in mate with the move knight takes rook. What was the game?" (The book has the solution, of course.) In the chapter on chess dreams, we see a theoretical novelty in the Sicilian Defense that came to Larry Christiansen as he slept. We also get to see a Nimzo-Indian that David Bronstein dreamed in its entirety. After a white blunder on move 14, black mates in 3, and "Bronstein can do that in his sleep." And with one hand tied behind his back, no doubt! Hesse puts a novel spin on chess sacrifices by comparing them to Einstein's $e = mc^2$, which is the equation that explains how a tiny bit of uranium can yield a massive explosion. A sacrifice, after all, can also translate material into incredible energy--on the chess board. Hesse illustrates this with a couple of spectacular sacs, including a 2-piece offer by the inimitable Mikhail Tal. In "the butterfly effect," we see a study in which white can give up a passed pawn on either h6 or h7. It looks inconsequential, but 9 moves later we see that the difference of just one square is the difference between a draw and a win. The catchy chapter title is a useful reminder that, in a possibly critical situation, you need to be careful about selecting between moves that look very similar. Several studies caught my eye. In the chapter on symmetry, we see a problem with all eight of white's pawns on the 4th rank and his king on f1, while black's pawns are all on the 6th rank with his king on f8. White to play and win. In the chapter on parity arguments, a problem has 31 pieces on their original squares--except white's h1 rook, which is missing. What was black's last move? Clever stuff. Hesse suggests an amusing parlor game for chess players: "the conqueror of the conqueror of Fischer." The goal is to see how many degrees of separation exist between you and Bobby, counting a victory over a difficult opponent as one degree. Count your victory over a strong player as one hop, then count his/her victory over a stronger opponent as the next hop, and so on, until you finally get to a grandmaster who defeated Fischer. Count the hops, and there's your Fischer number. I don't mind the rare moments when Hesse inserts himself into the book, as it illustrates how a patzer not unlike me can have a ton of fun exploring chess. I find his attitude to be charming and infectious. While the book is mostly just for fun, there's actually a fair amount of instructional value here: more guilty pleasure! If you're a chess player, this is a great book for your wishlist; or if you're looking for a Christmas gift or birthday gift for your favorite chess geek, wrap this book with a bow. It easily rates 5 stars. Full disclosure: The publisher provided a review copy of this book to me. I have endeavored to remain completely unbiased and helpful, and feel confident that the review reflects my commitment to objectivity.

This is the ultimate book for lovers of chess. You will embark on an unforgettable intellectual expedition in the realm of the Royal Game. The beauty, the battle, the culture, the fun, the art and the heroism of chess are the main themes of this fascinating and often surprising journey. Your private guide is Christian Hesse, a Harvard-trained professor of Mathematics and an avid chess player. Hesse has written a sparkling book that will give you many hours of intense joy. With a preface by former world champion of chess Vladimir Kramnik.

A wonderful cornucopia. (Judges of English Chess Federation Diplo: Towards more inclusive and effective diplomacy) Fantastic moves, beautiful combinations, historical blunders, captivating stories, and all this embedded into a plentitude of quick-witted ideas and contemplations as food for thought. (world chess champion Vishy Anand) One of the most ingenious and enjoyable books ever written on chess. (Der Standard) A bargain and a treat. (Andy Soltis New York Post) For sheer entertainment value The Joys of Chess deserves a gold medal. (Gary Lane, International Master CHESS Magazine) It is a wonderful selection. There is something for everyone. (Pete Tamburro Chess Life) Intelligently written and a pleasure to read. It is accessible for everyone, from those with a passing interest in the game to the most passionate of chess aficionados. (Brian Almeida ChessCafe.com) Rich pickings. This is quite a bargain. A good prize for any club competition or school library. (British Chess Magazine) This is a book to dip in at random and enjoy. It's hard to convey the amazing range of topics covered. (Joe Petrolito Australasian Chess Magazine) Does what it says on the tin. Do not hesitate to buy a copy and keep it by your bedside on cold winter nights. (Steve Giddins) A roller-coaster ride through the rich history of chess and chess literature in all its appearances.

Beautifully published in a format where short chapters and brief fragments with diagrams are in perfect harmony to divert and tickle any reader's mind. (Arne Moll ChessVibes)