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Craig Pritchett

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Craig Pritchett : Play the English: An active chess opening repertoire for White (Everyman Chess) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Play the English: An active chess opening repertoire for White (Everyman Chess):

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Nice repertoireBy GoosemeyerThe other reviewers have adequately

covered the content - what's there and what's not - so I won't go there. As an English (only) repertoire book it is still very light - there are only 30 games to cover c4 e5 and c4 c5 combined with a bit of c4 Nf6 thrown in. The annotations are helpful and thorough but this is just drive-by writing. If I have to choose between a few heavily annotated games or many lightly annotated games I would choose heavily annotated games every time, but surely these precious resources should at least be used wisely. Why then have a game each for the 7.d4 and 7.Re1 Hedgehogs? In a repertoire book with 30 games? I had problems with one of the author's other recent books on the Scheveningen because it lacked instructive guidance. This book is better but not great. Pritchett wrote two very well respected books on the Scheveningen and the Nimzo-Indian in the 70s (neither of which I have read) before restarting writing recently, and he seems to be stuck in a time warp with respect to reader's expectations of an opening book - particularly a repertoire book. So I am lukewarm on the content, but not negative. Why still a four star review? Because the repertoire itself is beautiful! It strikes an appealing balance between slash and burn and positional grinding and would appeal to what others have called an active positional player. The moves are natural enough that, after study, you would actually remember them too. The author deserves credit for constructing such an appealing, cohesive repertoire and explaining it well. If you find yourself interested in these lines, then I strongly recommend Chess Explained: The English by Zenon Franco which has considerable overlap and adds 28 deeply and instructively annotated games to the 30 in this book. It would not be a waste to get both. These positions are learnable. The English can be a grind. If you want a fun English repertoire, buy it.

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars
By G. E. Wallace
Lots of good info.

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Good, but could be better
By Theodore McBride
This is a good book, though the other reviewers are correct that it omits certain lines that transition to standard d4 setups such as the Dutch or King's Indian. I agree with that one fault, but to be fair 'play the English' does exclude lines such as the KID which are in all fairness defenses to d4. If you really want to play the English and are not a d4 player, you do almost have to learn how to play most d4 openings because in some cases it is impossible to avoid these lines without giving up a worse position. For instance, if your opponent plays c6 and d5 then you are basically obligated to play some sort of Slav, and if you don't know how you could be in trouble (in this particular case you could also play the caro kann, but that is even farther divorced from c pawn openings). So returning from that digression, the lines it recommends are very open and active and emphasize an early d4. They promise good piece play from a solid position, which are the sorts of openings I like to play. They are also not too theoretical as a rule, and even the lines that are theoretical are not the sort of theory that most players below 2000 USCF will know. I have played it quite a bit online, though not so much in long games yet, and I have found that I often get good positions without too much memorization. This repertoire allows you to develop your pieces and play for that early d4 break with a pretty easy small edge. I like it a lot. So yeah, it would have been nice if Pritchett had included lines against the Dutch, KID, QGD, etc, but that really would have made the book huge. Take this tome for what it's worth, and it's good. If you want a d4 book, Starting Out: play 1d4 by John Cox is a good one IMO.

The English is a sophisticated opening which is very popular at all levels of chess: from up-and-coming players to World Champions such as Garry Kasparov and Vladimir Kramnik. It has many attractions, including flexibility and diversity: White can play either aggressively or quietly, and positions are rich in both strategy and tactics.

excellent coverage and lucid explanations'- Sean Marsh, reviewing Craig Pritchett's Starting Out: Sicilian Scheveningen in Cleveland Chess
An excellent introduction into the world of the Scheveningen'- John Elburg, reviewing Craig Pritchett's Starting Out: Sicilian Scheveningen in Chess Book s