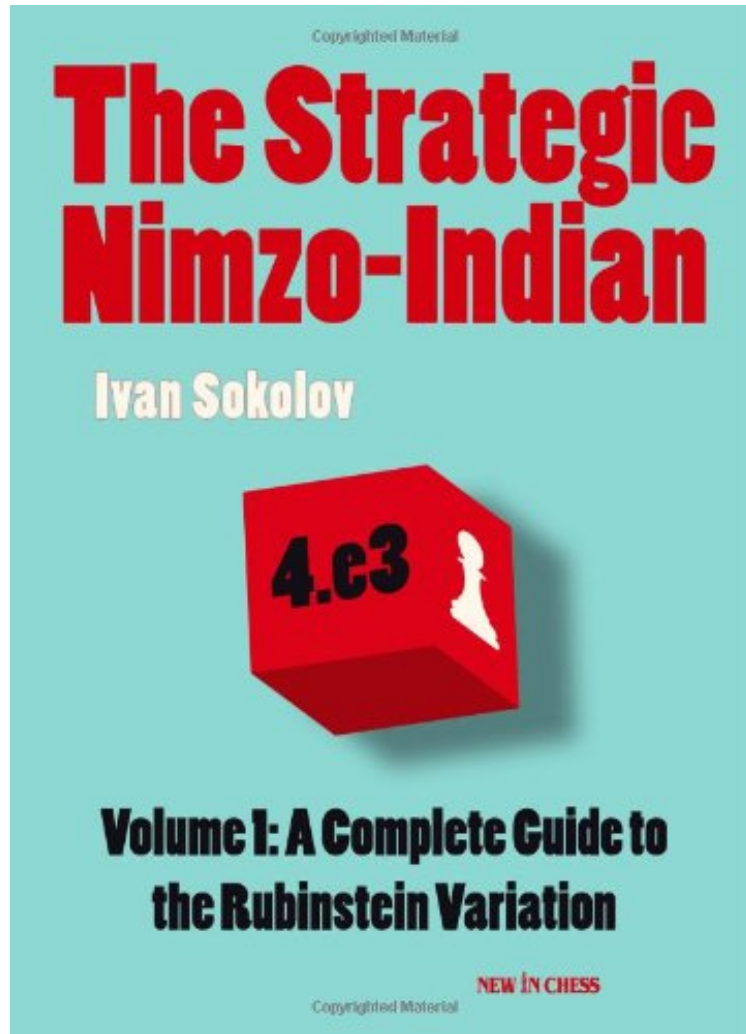


(Online library) The Strategic Nimzo-Indian: A Complete Guide to the Rubinstein Variation

The Strategic Nimzo-Indian: A Complete Guide to the Rubinstein Variation

Ivan Sokolov

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#1563585 in Books US Chess Federation 2012-07-16Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.18 x 1.00 x 6.78l, 1.71 #File Name: 9056913786384 pagesAuthor: Ivan SokolovPages: 416 PagesPublication Years: 2012 | File size: 16.Mb

Ivan Sokolov : The Strategic Nimzo-Indian: A Complete Guide to the Rubinstein Variation before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Strategic Nimzo-Indian: A Complete Guide to the Rubinstein Variation:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Badly editedBy Axel MullerUpdate:Initially I gave it 1 star. The editing and general layout of the book are as bad as can be. The chess content is very good though. That is if you disregard the constant referrals to two of his books, one never got published, the other is out of print ...Anyway, the

chess is good, but it's a challenge to read the book. Overall 3 stars: 5 for content ,0 for presentation. This is probably one of the worst edited chess books. With a decent format this book could have been easily 5 stars, but the way this book is presented is very disappointing. It feels like a first draft that was accidentally printed. I'm very sorry for GM Sokolov that he was let down by the publishers. I received this book last week and didn't have time to read all of it. So far I can say that I'm very happy about the chess contents. It's just so painful to read it. There is no index of variations to speak of. Instead of giving independent lines a vast number of lines are cramped in the comments. This adds sometimes several pages between moves of the main game. But I guess since the publishers didn't bother with an index of variations it doesn't matter anyway. The publishers employed the fairly common method of giving larger diagrams for the main line. Unfortunately, they got confused themselves and are not persistent in this approach, but who can blame them? As mentioned before variations seem to be all over the place. I just had a look at a game, black plays f5 and white takes the pawn en passant. In the following three diagrams we see a black pawn on f5 and a white pawn on f6. I must say, I'm not very impressed with this. Maybe New In Chess should get some inspiration from Quality Chess or maybe GM Sokolov should change his publisher ... A final complaint about the contents. I came across several references to the volume dealing with the 4. a3 line. Was this book ever published? I can't seem to find it. It's a bit annoying if a line is not given and the reader is instead referred to a book that doesn't seem to exist. I'm very sorry to give this book a one star rating, I like the work of GM Sokolov and would have loved to give him a 5 star rating. 21 of 27 people found the following review helpful. Probably the lowest rating I have ever given to a chess book on here. By WuvMuffin The problem whenever I buy chess books is that I tend to have huge expectations depending on the author and try and find some sort of redeeming value in those books if those expectations fall short. Most consumers think the same way as well so we base our "consumer instincts" on authorities (reviewers) and/or companies or authors we have long trusted, etc.. depending on whether we wish to continue making these "risk-free purchases." I think before this the lowest rating I gave was a four stars out of five to Neil McDonald's, "Ruy Lopez: Move by Move," and that book redeemed itself in readability by being focused and well-structured. With that being said, "Ruy Lopez: Move by Move" is to some extent somewhat theoretically non-critical in the same sense that Matthew Sadler's "Queen's Gambit Declined Trilogy" was and provided insight to some middle game positions not exclusive to the Ruy Lopez complex like the Boleslavsky Hole. Upon receiving this book I thought this book was actually an encyclopedia on the Rubinstein complex but learned after much reading is actually a repertoire with wide coverage, for White. I didn't mind this but I felt that some parts of the book were gorgeously written for it's insight and content while other parts felt very, very rushed (some parts were not very well covered in terms of width and some evaluations I could not understand as being "Better for White" when in actuality the evaluation was just too optimistic). But kudos to Sokolov for at least trying to take on covering most of the Rubinstein complex seeing as concrete evaluation in that variation is in my opinion, quite blurry to judge with or without a computer (in the Classical Fianchetto variation Sokolov would end a line in the notes with White being better while my computer would tell me it is equal and I agree with almost no experience in that line because of the exchange of mutual inconveniences in the position and that Black can still be able to improve his position while at the same time fending off White's somewhat less than effective minority attack in not the Carlsbad structure in which Black can happily play ...c5 whenever White plays b5, if of course, Black stays away from playing ...a6. Granted, his main line coverage against the Classical Fianchetto is a very convincing way of playing against that specific move-order (7.a3!), although there was one side line I was hoping he would cover but didn't). I also found his coverage against some of the 5. Bd3 Rubinstein to be overly optimistic for White but does think that the Hubner is a highly underrated system for Black and does cover that chapter in a surprisingly honest manner. Also, when I bought this book, I wanted to play the Karpov variation of the 5. Bd3 Rubinstein but after reading this chapter, I am quite convinced that only Karpov should play the Karpov variation because Sokolov seems to have found a naggingly small plus for White everywhere and this time I do not feel that he was being overly optimistic but granted, play and evaluation in the Karpov variation tends to be very concrete. His coverage in the Parma and ... Qc7 + ... Nc6 variations are excellent. Also, another evaluation from Sokolov I found blurry is in the following variation: 1. d4 Nf6. c4 e6. Nc3 Bb4. e3 0-0. Bd3 d5. Ne2 dxc4. Bxc4 e5. 0-0 Nc6. a3 Bd6. d5 Ne7. Ng3 Sokolov goes on to discuss how this position resembles a certain line in the QGA shows us a line where White plays in style of that QGA line he showed us and shows us how Black is fine. But then he shows us three ways White can get an advantage after 11. ... Nf5 to exchange a set of Knights. Two of the White lines Sokolov shows us discusses ways to turn Black's ... c7 pawn into a permanent weakness but neglects to give the reader any coverage on the position after Black plays the spineless 11. ... c6 with the idea of stimulating exchanges along the d-file as well as avoiding the aforementioned ... c7 pawn weakness. But you can't really blame the author for covering depth when the database is made for the width. His work on lines where White plays 5. Ne2 (Reshevsky variation) was very well written. He shows his readers why White should play c5 against 4. e3 c5 and why c5 doesn't work against 4. e3 0-0. Against 4. e3 0-0, he recommends that White play either lines with cxd5 in order to fix the structure and Fianchetto or lines with Ng3. Still despite my very mixed feelings about this book I also felt that this might be one of Sokolov's weakest works but definitely better than his book on the 4. Qc2 Nimzo Indian. I was quite impressed by his book on the Ruy Lopez and his Pawn Structure book which were pretty much recent. I would also say that it is slightly better

than Carsten Hansen's book on the 4. e3 Nimzo (although typical of Gambit Publications, it was easier to scour for specific lines in the Hansen book), but isn't on top of it in the width analysis department, but definitely beats Hansen's book in prose and depth of analysis. But I hope takes his time on his next book on the Nimzo-Indian Samisch because this book could have been flawless. Original analysis? Tons, but will be hard to sift through, but it's the insight that makes this book swell to work with. This book is definitely worth a Nimzo-Indian player's money if he/she plays either side of the Rubinstein. Sokolov annotates a lot of the lines in the notes as well as his main lines but if you don't mind working hard on trying to sift through this tome, you will most indefinitely be rewarded. At first I found this book to be very hard to go through due to the specific nature of the prose in the main line and the notes. But with an opening book like this, it's best if the reader takes one's time on this book rather than plowing through a book from the "Move by Move" series. But once you get used to the content, I suspect that this book will have quite a long shelf life. But reader beware, get this book only if there is a specific handling of the Rubinstein for White that you would like to get coverage for because Sokolov will basically recommend his entire book to you to go through until you find something (which also works, I guess) unless you have a good idea of what you want to do in this complex. But the one thing that would have made this book a perfect five stars would be the structure. The book is written in a strange quasi-full games format which actually makes this book very hard to use because of it's width and depth. I think a variation tree format or multiple games per chapter format would make this book a lot more user friendly because he would just cite a transposition in the notes into another line under two players which requires me to flip back 3-4 pages and actually find that specific line under another note. Anyways, sorry this review was so hard to read. I will definitely come back and re-structure this review some time soon.

10 of 11 people found the following review helpful. A Strong GM Reveals His Opening Preparation By Christopher J. Falter Sokolov has been playing the Rubinstein Variation of the Nimzo-Indian (1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Bb4 4. e3) throughout his long and notable career; he even used it to defeat then-world champ Garry Kasparov in 1999. The reader would expect Sokolov to deliver a high-quality and detailed analysis of the Rubinstein that includes some novelties, then--and the author does not disappoint. As Sokolov explains, with 4. e3 "White plays a natural developing move, ignoring for the time being Black's bishop on b4 and keeping his options open." The author divides the book into 4 parts based on black's responses: I) Various (black fourth moves other than castles kingside) II) 4...O-O Minor Lines III) 4...O-O 5. Bd3 d5 6. Nf3 IV) 4...O-O 5. Bd3 d5 6. Nf3 c5 7. O-O dxc4 8. Bxc4 Each chapter begins by introducing the main ideas for black and white. For example, in the Reykjavik Line (4...O-O 5. Bd3 d5 6. Nf3 d5 7. O-O Nc6 8. a3 Ba5), "Black does not want to determine the central pawn structure, he still keeps his bishop pair and wants to take on c3 under better circumstances, when it will create double c-pawns for White." Sokolov then provides his analysis of previous games for both sides, sprinkling in little comments about why a particular move order is chosen (e.g., "White has more space and Black has some concrete problems"). Sokolov's source games range from 1960s classics by Petrosian and Geller to Kramnik's innovations in 2011. Not infrequently he provides his own analysis for several critical moves, typically in a situation where he is revealing one of his novelties. In the Reykjavik line, for example, he overturns the consensus of easy black equality with a novel 13th move that culminates in a promising exchange sacrifice on move 20. He concludes each chapter with a summary; however, the quality is a bit uneven here. Usually he mentions which lines are critical and why (which is good), but occasionally he gives an uninformative generalization, such as "I advise the reader to study the material, trying to understand the general plans and the strategic motifs/rules, and then apply the lines he feels the most comfortable with." And practice your tactics while you're at it.... Sokolov's labor of love would make a good addition to the library of the strong club player and up who expects to play either side of the Rubinstein Variation. However, as Sokolov does not really explore the typical middlegames and endgames that ensue, I would not recommend it straight away to the beginning or intermediate club player. Sokolov does discuss the typical middlegames in his 2009 companion volume, the excellent *Winning Chess Middlegames: An Essential Guide to Pawn Structures*, which lavishes attention on Nimzo-Indian pawn structures and middlegame plans. In the introduction to this book, Sokolov recommends that studying his middlegame book before selecting opening repertoire lines, and I would concur. Read his excellent *Winning Chess Middlegames: An Essential Guide to Pawn Structures* first, and then come back to the present book for your detailed opening preparation. Full disclosure: The publisher provided a review copy of this book to me. My ratings of the publisher's books have ranged from 3 stars to 5 stars.

The Nimzo-Indian Defence continues to be one of the most important chess openings, an immensely popular choice both at club level as well as with almost all top players. It is a solid but flexible opening which gives rich tactical and positional play with winning chances for both sides. In this ground-breaking and well-structured book, one of today's greatest Nimzo-Indian experts, Ivan Sokolov, presents a complete guide to the important 4.e3 (Rubinstein) Variation and clearly explains the plans and counterplans for both sides. The Rubinstein is the historical main line and the most consistently popular. It requires a thorough positional understanding and Sokolov, renowned author of *Winning Chess Middlegames: An Essential Guide to Pawn Structures*, clearly presents the ideas, structures and plans in the various continuations. Besides in-depth explanations of strategy and concepts *The Strategic Nimzo-Indian* also contains quite a few new ideas and previously unknown resources for both Black and White. Ivan Sokolov not only provides you with

crucial up-to-date information and strategic lessons in the Nimzo-Indian Defence; after studying this book you will have become a better allround chess player as well.

This book is simply far superior to anything else I have seen written on this openingmy own book included. The narrative, the explanatory prose, the analysis, the countless improvements, new ideas and so on, makes this book phenomenally splendid. If you want to understand how to play this opening, then this book is a perfect place to start. (Carsten Hansen ChessCafe.com)The author is constantly pointing out the positional consequences of the various thematic ideas throughout the lines. There are times when his research will almost certainly change the future course of theory. Whatever your connection to Nimzo, make sure that you get hold of a copy. An absolute must.

(Grandmaster Glenn Flear)An outstanding book. Sokolov banks up his verbal assessments with concrete variations, but the prose is much more valuable for the layman rated below 2400, who will remember the helpful advice long after the analysis has been forgotten. (John Donaldson, International master, International Master Chess Today)About the AuthorIvan Sokolov is a top grandmaster who was born in Bosnia in 1968 and has been living in the Netherlands for many years. He was Yugoslav champion in 1988 and Dutch Champion in 1995 and 1998. In his rich career Sokolov has beaten world chess champions like Gary Kasparov, Vladimir Kramnik as well as Viswanathan Anand. His previous books include Winning Chess Middlegames and The Ruy Lopez Revisited.