

(Free pdf) Ruy Lopez: Move by Move (Everyman Chess)

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Neil McDonald

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Neil McDonald : Ruy Lopez: Move by Move (Everyman Chess) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ruy Lopez: Move by Move (Everyman Chess):

37 of 38 people found the following review helpful. Ruy Lopez Move By Move reviewBy WuvMuffinI had just received this book today and spent most of today reading through the book. After reading Giants of Strategy by McDonald I was not disappointed at all by what McDonald is trying to convey as I read through the book. Although it is a plan based White repertoire there are some variations that are missing, but at the same time, even if you take the Ruy Lopez for a test drive after reading this book at club level you won't be blown out of the water by some analytical update Carlsen made in the Breyer because the Ruy Lopez (as mentioned) is a plan based opening. Had it been

something sharp like the Marshall Gambit or the main line Zaitsev then being confronted by new analysis might be troublesome, but thankfully, McDonald provides pretty much a bulletproof repertoire. But however, there are some holes in some of the main lines and some sidelines. Allow me to elaborate: The Chigorin repertoire: Although McDonald covers structures in the Chigorin (closed d5-e4 chain (akin to the Old Benoni structures) and semi-Open with an open C-file) he more or less only covers the Keres variation (11. ... Nd7), 11. ... Bb7 and parts of the main line such as 12. ... cxd4 with the idea of Nc6 and Bd7 and 11. ... Oc7 12. ... Rd8. I remembered the recommendations that Mihail Marin gave from his book "A Spanish Repertoire for Black" and that he recommended 12. ... Bd7 (Petrosian System) and 12. ... Nc6 (Rubinstein System). I tried looking for transpositions into those lines from McDonald's book but I don't think he covered those variations, so coverage on how to combat these lines would be nice. At the same time I also don't believe I have any credibility in making this assessment seeing as I myself do not play nor study the Chigorin. The modest center vs the Berlin repertoire: I have some issues with McDonald recommending 4. Qe2 against the Berlin. As John Cox from "The Berlin Wall" pointed out, Black can transpose into the Worall Attack with a simple 4. ... a6. McDonald did not cover this. Thankfully putting the Bishop on a4 is thematic and White is very unlikely to be blown out of the water as long as he plays his pawns on c3-d3-e4. His coverage against 4. Qe2 Bc5 and explanations for positional features against 4. Qe2 Bc5 is excellent though. The Neo Archangelsk Defence vs. d3: I have some knowledge of this opening seeing as I play it as Black and often transpose into this line from the Berlin. My issue with his recommendation is that he wouldn't elaborate on more alternative moves from Black. I went through this section several times to make sure I haven't missed anything only to learn that he hasn't covered lines where Black plays Bb6 early or develops his light squared Bishop to e6 to contest with the White Bishop for the a2-g8 diagonal (well he does sort of comments on them, but not in great detail). Although McDonald claimed that in response to Be6 White should play Bc2 but missed an idea that Black could redevelop his Knight from c6 to e7 and play for the kingside with ... f5 and attempt to play in a fashion similar to Alekhine-Rubinstein Vilnius 1912 or the Zaitsev: an idea frequently occurring in the Boleslavsky Hole structures in the Sicilian, King/Old Indian structures and the Zaitsev main line. But this complaint is a mild complaint. Despite these flaws I still think this book is great for those who want to play either side of the Ruy Lopez. This book is a good survey for both colors because he/she must learn about thematic White maneuvers and motifs and compare and contrast those themes as to how Black plays against those motifs. Knowing the difference between playing against a4 and d4 as the Neo Archangel to knowing the difference between the Breyer's take on playing against a4 and d4. Also, learning how the Bishop move to b7 in the Zaitsev slows down the Nb1-Nd2-Nf1-Ng3 Knight hop and why g6 is played when a White Knight lands on g3. He even shows you Black playing the Marshall Gambit! As a repertoire for White I have found that the material on playing d3 as a great choice for White (seeing as I will say it again, plan based) and more likely to remain bulletproof against accelerating theory, although, there are some changes I would love to make to the current repertoire: 4. d3 Bc5 5. Nc3! as played by Peter Svidler against Kramnik is what I would recommend against the Berlin. There is something elegant about recommending this variation seeing as it fits in well with McDonald's recommendation against the Archangelsk as well. After Nc3 if Black plays a6 to create an escape for the c5 Bishop White can continue Ne2 with the idea of Ng3. If Black plays 5. ... d6 White can play Na4 and make an attempt to claim the Bishop pair. Thankfully this line just requires one to make use of a database. I did not like his recommendation against the Zaitsev. I felt that going into the main line with 12. a4 h6 is the better. And no, I am not recommending 13. Bc2 going into the labyrinth of insanity but actually 13. d5. I feel like this line is more compatible with the Breyer. Sadly there are many side variations for Black which is probably why McDonald felt reluctant to recommend 13. d5. Overall this is a very well written book and of very high quality seeing as it had been written by Neil McDonald (maybe a bit of a high praise on my part but *Giants of Strategy* was brilliant). This book is of course a repertoire book but really all repertoire books are just starter books. You're going to have to do some hard work with scouring theoretical tomes for ideas and move-orders, database work and of course analytical study to accompany your newfound general knowledge of the Ruy Lopez. Some of the main lines recommended might need to be expanded upon by the reader (Zaitsev, Chigorin, 4. Qe2 Berlin lines, "Moeller" lines (McDonald is quite clever in making his readers do homework isn't he?)). As for books to accompany this book, I highly recommend John Cox's *Berlin Wall* which will also help players on the White side play the Berlin proper, *Easy Guide to the Ruy Lopez* by John Emms has some lines that are still viable today such as his Zaitsev main line, the Vol 1 and 2 of *Opening for White According to Anand* and of course Mihail Marin's *Chigorin Repertoire*. Anyways, sorry for the lack of structure. I just sort of wrote down a scramble of things on my mind about the book. Overall highly recommended. 14 of 14 people found the following review helpful. Vintage McDonald By Goosemeyer Neil McDonald has two special skills as an author. First, he knows exactly which concrete features of a position his audience won't fully appreciate, and second he has an extraordinary ability to elaborate in such a way that you will grasp and retain the lessons. On the other hand, his opening books generally lack a systematic nature or any kind of meta-lessons. He was made for the illustrative games format. His books come across to me like a collection of beautiful vignettes, but lacking theme (an exception would be his *Starting Out: Queen's Gambit Declined*). It's almost inconceivable that the reader won't find enough such useful vignettes to warrant buying his books though. They're pretty much required purchases if the subject matter is interesting to you. In this latest offering we have a format where McDonald can be at

his best. These are deeply verbally annotated illustrative games, but with a strong thematic focus. He succeeds very well in opening up the Ruy Lopez to less experienced readers like me. The deeply annotated games are particularly appropriate for the opening, given that often you are still "in the Ruy" deep into the middle game, and he retains the thread well. He offers a pretty high quality starter-kit repertoire so that you can begin to play the Ruy to build some confidence, but addresses the historical mainlines with due diligence too. Obviously detailed instruction on the whole body of the Ruy would look like the Library of Congress, so he has some significant space limitations to contend with, but I think he remained at a consistent level of instruction throughout and didn't skimp on the essentials. No mean feat. If you stand back and reflect on the task that confronted him it must have been very daunting. So, in summary, a fine author, lots of detailed explanation, an introduction to the feel of the opening and associated middlegames, and enough thematic guidance that you will be able to improvise when you hit unfamiliar territory. You will need to back it up with some more theory but you won't regret buying it. PS: If you choose to play the Ruy and to face the Berlin proper, I can't recommend *The Berlin Wall: The Variation That Brought Down Kasparov* highly enough. Also, *Chess Blueprints: Planning in the Middlegame* is a general middlegame book that might be worth a look. Donaldson described it as "a guidebook to how to play middlegames arising from 1.e4 e5 (mostly the Ruy Lopez) primarily from White's perspective", but I haven't read it so I can't elaborate.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

Excellent introduction, amazing bang for your buck
By Tandoori Chicken (I have the Kindle edition)
I am a master-strength player gradually making the transition from "alternative" openings (I went from Colle/Torre to an Evans Gambit-based repertoire, for example, and am finally moving on now that many people seem to have twigged to ...Ne7/...d5 lines against the Evans) to a more main line approach. I found this to be an outstanding introduction to the positional themes, common plans, and basic theory of the Spanish. It is easily readable without board and pieces (or, alternatively, very good practice for developing that skill), and the portability of the Kindle format means I have basically been able to learn the Ruy five minutes at a time over a period of a couple of months. One feature I feel borders on "amazingly generous" is that here you have the backbone for TWO Ruy repertoires in one book. The first part of the book is an exploration of the "theory-light" d3 systems. (Caveat emptor: theory-light is now debatable for these lines as they have become quite popular at the highest level. Good news: they are good lines. Bad news: the theory is growing fast, although given the slower increase of central tension, lack of knowledge may not be as brutally punished as in, say, the Jaenisch.) The second part goes through the (historically) main lines where White aims to play d2-d4 in one go. I would estimate the material here is adequate for most games played against opponents up to around 2200, maybe higher depending on how theoretically prepared the opponent is. Stronger players will definitely want a deeper look. That is to be expected in what is clearly intended and marketed as an introductory tome. For anyone new to the Ruy Lopez, this is the book to buy.

Grandmaster Neil McDonald examines one of the most important openings of all, the Ruy Lopez. He shares his experience and knowledge, and continually challenges the reader to answer probing questions, thereby encouraging the learning and practising of vital opening skills.

From the Back Cover