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## Slav: Move by Move (Everyman Chess)

*Cyrus Lakdawala*

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**Cyrus Lakdawala : Slav: Move by Move (Everyman Chess)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Slav: Move by Move (Everyman Chess):

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Great book, Horrible binding By James P. Burkle I'm a USCF class B player. I bought this book a couple of weeks ago and I am very happy with the writing and instructional content. But I am very unhappy with the book's binding. The binding is sitting about 1/8th of an inch off the pages, and the glue is not evenly spread. This causes the binding to crease considerably where there are pockets of air. It looks like I've had this book for a year. Further, the book does not lay flat and requires considerable effort to hold open. It is stiff as a

board. As far as the writing, I find the QA style very conducive to learning. One thing is, this book requires you to do a lot of independent analysis. While Lakdawala dives into many of the more common variations, he leaves some of them almost entirely up to the reader to explore for themselves. For example, in games 14 and 15, he covers the 6. Ne5 lines where white's plan is to play f3 followed by e4, with either 10. e4 right away, or 10. Nxd7 first. In the 10. Nxe7 game (#15), he advocates 1. d4 d5 2. c4 c6 3. Nf3 Nf6 4. Nc3 dxc4 5. a4 Bf5 6. Ne5 Nbd7 7. Nxc4 Nb6 8. Ne5 a5 9. f3 Nfd7 10. Nxd7 Nxd7 11. e4 Bg6 12. Be2 e5 13. dxe5 Bc5 14. f4 Qb6. In the game, White plays 15. Rf1!?, but Cyrus addresses the alternative, 15. f5, which picks up the Bishop like so: "After 15. f5 O-O-O! his (white's) position will not be easy to defend." He then goes on to explain that he can't give any concrete variations, and that this is an intuitive sac. He's right. This position is extremely complex, and you don't want to have to analyze this for the first time over the board in a tournament game. In some variations, you play your bishop to g1 and take on h2. In others, you retreat the bishop back to d4 after playing to g1. In some variations, it is important that you recapture the g6 pawn with the h pawn so that your rook can come down the h file, and so that you can block white's light squared bishop check on g4 with your f pawn. In others, you recapture with the f pawn so your rook can occupy the f file. These are things you need to work out BEFORE you play this line, otherwise you will be toast, and this book doesn't hold your hand for it. Another example is the 6. Nh4 chapter. In the first game (#21), after 1. d4 d5 2. c4 c2 3. Nf3 Nf6 4. Nc3 dxc4 5. a4 Bf5 6. Nh4 Bd7 7. e4 e6 8. Nf3 b5 9. Bg5 h6, the Game move is 11. Bxf6, but Lakdawala poses the question himself "What about 11. Bh4?" He then goes on to show that this move is quite good and may be a novelty, without providing any promising antidote for black. The hopeful Slav player will have to work something out for themselves here, without Lakdawala's help. Enough of the bad. The game explanations and provided analysis are fantastic. In many positions Lakdawala points out things like "Black should avoid exchanging dark squared bishops, and prefer to weaken his kingside." This comment alone makes the next few moves in the position almost obvious, as you now understand the plan. The questions in the gray boxes are almost always pertinent, and the exercises are great to keep you engaged and thinking. Lakdawala also points out many key pawn structures that you should study, and seeing the game through to the ending is great for figuring out where to focus your endgame study. There is not an over abundance of "The game Anyovich v. Smith continued .....", something that other opening books rely way too much on. I find that my mind immediately starts to wander when I run into too much stuff like that. If the binding was better, I'd give it 5 stars. EDIT: I received this response from Everyman: "I'm sorry you've had problems with this title. I must tell you that I've not had any other complaints. We have actually changed printer now so hopefully other books in this series will not cause you the same problems. If you wish I can send an ebook version of this title, free of charge of course." I am trying to get them to replace my copy. 30 of 32 people found the following review helpful. Think "Nunn and Gulko meet the Slav." By Peter Hodges I will start with a disclosure: I know and like the author and admire his play. At 414 pages "The Slav: Move by Move" might seem a behemoth but, there is lots of white space and an average approaching 1.5 diagrams per page. In fact, I could only find one full page of text (79) without a diagram. This is not a "see variation A1b2" opening manual, but rather more like Viktor Moskalenko's opening books (without the photos of players). What you do get is complete games, fully annotated, along with Cyrus' repertoire recommendations. (Hey, kids! Middlegame and endgame instruction from a GM-strength IM for free!) The material (pure Slav, transpositions to Semi-Slav positions are mentioned but not examined) is broken up into 9 chapters; the longest, Chapter One on the mainline Dutch, starting at move 8, is a monograph in itself at 94 pages. Though written from the perspective of a career practitioner of the Black side, there is plenty of gold to be mined for White and Cyrus does a good job of briefly presenting alternatives to his main choices for Black (and these include improvements over known theory.) Cyrus keeps the material interesting with his signature humorous conversational writing style. So, this is definitely not "The Slav in a Weekend" (note to John Emms--I want full credit if you use this idea for a book series) but, if you are interested in taking a bit more time to learn and understand the Slav and if you are interested in improving more than your opening play, then this is the book for you. 12 of 14 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Start for a New Series By Mitch I own a book or two by Lakdawala. I agree, he's been a competent chess writer. His technical writing here really impresses. This is not a repertoire book aimed at chess professionals. This book aims squarely at helping the club player to really understand the Slav in general that's done with a question and answer format in this new Everyman Chess series. Here's an example: Lakdawala asks (p. 14) asks, "How can black reduce white to total paralysis?" MacDonald notes the move that was played and then clearly explains why the alternative was better. This is an openings book that aims at understanding the plans and strategic contours that arise during and after an opening. While others might find the discussion of how decisions in the opening affect middlegame and endgame to be a digression, that was not my perspective at all. I very much appreciated how opening considerations affect the resulting game. I believe "The Slav: Step by Step" fills an important segment in the market for chess books on the opening: the improving chess player who understands the basic considerations of positional chess but still needs assistance seeing how they play out over the board.

This is a new series which provides an ideal platform to study chess openings. By continually challenging the reader to answer probing questions throughout the book, Move by Move greatly encourages the learning and practising of vital

skills just as much as the traditional assimilation of opening knowledge. Carefully selected questions and answers are designed to keep you actively involved, and allow you to monitor your progress as you learn. This is an excellent way to study any chess opening and at the same time improve your general chess skills and knowledge. In this book, Cyrus Lakdawala examines the universally popular Slav Defence which has been his main choice against 1 d4 for many years. Here he shares his experience and knowledge of his favorite opening, presents a repertoire for Black and provides answers to all the key questions. \*Essential guidance and training in the Slav\* Includes a Slav repertoire for Black\* Incorporates an ideal approach to opening study

About the Author Cyrus Lakdawala is an International Master, a former National Open and American Open Champion, and a six-time State Champion. He has been teaching chess for over 30 years, and coaches some of the top junior players in the US.