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CHESS PRAXIS

The Praxis of My System by A. Nimzovich



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Within the second and third decades of this century the most controversial topics in chess were the novel theories of Aron Nimzovich, the stormy petrel of the chess world. It seemed to many that Nimzovich was trying to demolish the classical Steinitz-Tarrasch chess system on purely irrational grounds, for many of his moves seemed arbitrary and even ridiculous. Yet, using his system, Nimzovich won game after game, and when Nimzovich came to be rated among the top three or four players in the world, the ridicule that had greeted his system changed to serious question. It is now recognized that hypermodern chess, as Nimzovich's ideas came to be called, is an integral part of the chess configuration, broadening and deeping chess enormously.

"Chess Praxis" is the fullest exposition of Nimzovich's new analysis and theories, and it is beyond question one of the dozen most important books ever written upon chess. The history of the theory of chess has long been an attempt to derive principles and structures, beyond simply lists of moves, and Nimzovich has provided a new analysis of chess that has proved to be remarkably profound and useful. Abandoning momentarily the classical chronological division of the game into periods, he breaks chess down into important positional situations: restriction and blockade; centralization; over-protection and other forms of prophylaxis; the isolated queen's pawn; two hanging pawns; the two bishops; alternating maneuvers against enemy weaknesses when one possesses space advantage; and miscellaneous strategies of hypermodern chess. Under these headings Nimzovich reveals many striking and imaginative tactics under a wide variety of positional conditions.

The development of the author's ideas is both rich and extremely clear. Each possible maneuver situation is illustrated by at least two games, showing Nimzovich's surprising resources against such opponents as Alekhine, Capablanca, Tarrasch, Reti, Rubinstein, and Spielmann. Each game is closely analyzed.

This is a book which every serious chess player must own. It is not only the monument to a great transition period in chess, it is also packed full of specific hints, suggestions for improving one's game, and general understanding that will help almost any player.

Unabridged republication of 1936 edition. Translated by J. DuMont. Introduction by H. Watts. Game, opening, strategy indexes. 135 diagrams. 1 photograph. xi + 369pp.
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