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Jacob Aagaard


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EXCELLING AT CHESS



JACOB AAGAARD

EVERYMAN CHESS

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Jacob Aagaard : Excelling at Chess (Everyman Chess) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Excelling at Chess (Everyman Chess):

6 of 12 people found the following review helpful. A Young Man's HubrisBy MalamatiThis book was written 10 years ago, and I trust that Mr. Aagaard has matured, learned from experience, and acquired at bit more humility in the interim. He didn't have much of these qualities at the time he penned this book.Between his 'amygdala attack' (see the introduction), his constant second-guessing of the great and near-great among 20th century grandmasters, his training adventures with a neurolinguistic programmer, and his pronouncements about various aspects of how chess should be

played, he manages to produce what I found a boring series of essays. The title suggests that this book could assist the aspiring player to learn what it takes to really Excel at Chess. Instead, it gives memorable examples of how to distract yourself with your own insecurities (Mr. Aagaard had many at the time) and how to buck yourself up with steely resolve. In between, as others have observed, there are after-the-fact quibbles with very competent chess writers (John Watson and John Nunn among them), warmed-over IM judgments of world-champion performances over the board, and in general a pastiche of second-guessing and smug "how could he be so stupid?" "Want to improve at chess, young woman or man? Better you should get Tim Harding's "Better Chess for Average Players. or one of John Nunn's or John Watson's general instruction books, and absorb them from cover to cover. Jacob Aagaard can't hope to accomplish so much--though other authors may not be able to define what "semiotics" is. Or is that "are"? 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Non-forcing moves! By Mr. Thadeu Freitas I like the author's perspective about chess, particularly his focus on the concept of non-forcing moves. This concept was an eye opener for me as I am used to always searching for moves that are immediately threatening as opposed to focus on finding good squares for your pieces. I also thought the chapter on end games was strong and I believe his advice on how to study for openings was good as well. The author finishes the book with some exercises for the reader to practice and apply the theory. Overall, I was satisfied with the book. 31 of 38 people found the following review helpful. A bold, 21st century classic By Alan DeNiro This book sets itself apart from others of its ilk for a few reasons. First of all, Mr. Aagaard has an engaging voice that comes across in the pages. He comes across as a real human being who has had ups and downs with chess. He has a lot of wit and warmth interspersed with very forthright analysis. A rare combination! This does not mean, however, that the book is somehow not serious. Far from it; he has a thesis regarding positional play and he defends it with rigor. He's not "my way or the highway" but at the same time makes a convincing case regarding what it takes to take a quantum leap in playing skill. But wait, there's more: Mr. Aagaard's background in neuropsychology takes this book to a new level. He integrates fascinating info about cognition and perception and how it relates to chess. This is stuff that is compelling in its own right. Ultimately, I wouldn't have changed much with this book. It accomplishes exactly what it wants to, and points towards a "humanist" perspective on chess: train hard, but also realize that (a) it's a game between 2 human beings who must respect each other during the course of play, and (b) it's important to have fun. I really think this book will have a long shelf life--it certainly had a deep impact on how I approach the game.

Some players become good at chess, some very good, while others excel at the game. In this book Jacob Aagaard identifies the key factors that separate the very strong players from the rest. In *Excelling at Chess*, he includes chapters on when to calculate, how to evaluate positions, how to study theory, how to study the endgame and when to force the position. Anyone who follows the advice in this book cannot fail to improve their feel for the game. * Ideal for players who are serious about improving * Discusses all phases and aspects of the game * Packed with useful practical tips

From the Back Cover Some players become good at chess, some very good, while others excel at the game. In this book Jacob Aagaard identified the key factors that separate the very strong players from the rest. In *Excelling at Chess*, he includes chapters on when to calculate, how to evaluate positions, how to study theory, how to study the endgame and when to force the position. Anyone who follows the advice in this book cannot fail to improve their feel for the game. (6 1/4 x 9 1/4, 192 pages, diagrams)