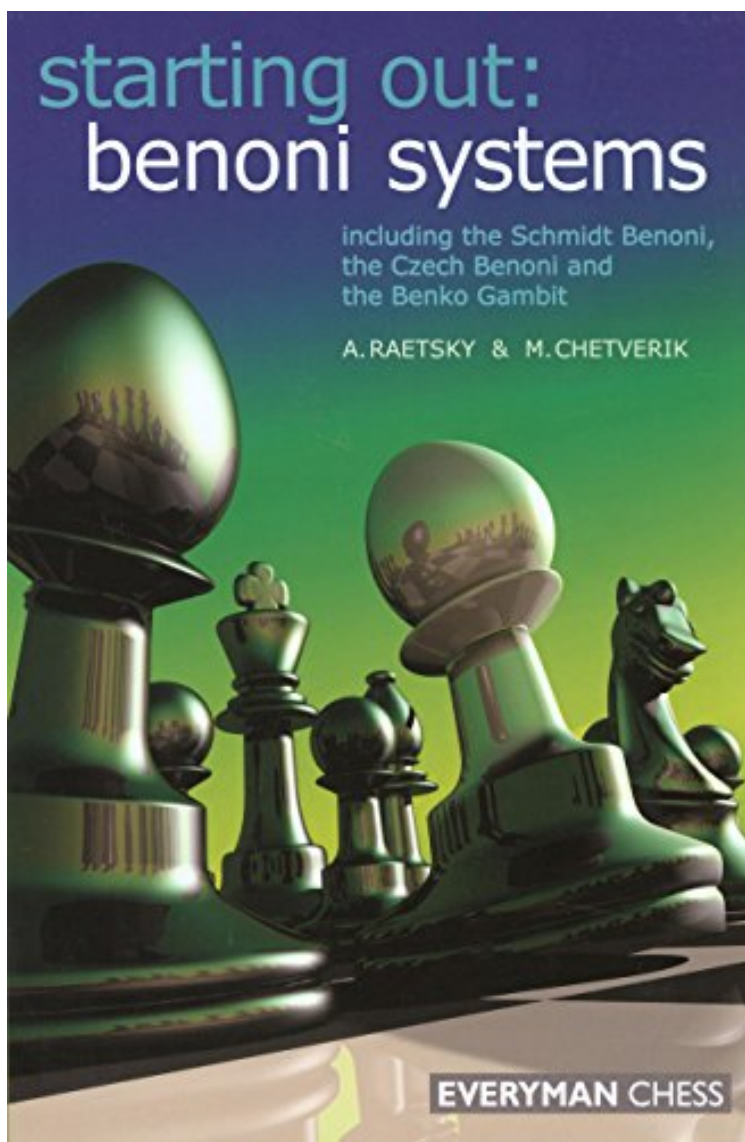


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Alex Raetsky, Maxim Chetverik

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Alex Raetsky, Maxim Chetverik : Starting Out: Benoni Systems (Starting Out - Everyman Chess) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Starting Out: Benoni Systems (Starting Out - Everyman Chess):

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Beautifully Balanced Introduction to the Benoni By WBSA very nicely balanced introduction to the various Benoni systems -- balanced both a) in terms of variations versus explanation and b) in terms of it not being written from the point of view of either the black or white pieces. The book

further provides a concise historical introduction to each of the numerous Benoni openings as well as the numerous transpositional possibilities. Note that this book does not cover the Modern Benoni -- that is covered in a sister publication. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Kindle Version not ReadableBy MWD This review is for the Kindle edition only. This version is so riddled with typographical errors as to render the book unreadable. Moreover, the errors are mostly with the chess notation, which is a problem since this is, you know, a chess book. On the very first page of the introduction there are several places where it indicates that the point of the Benoni is to meet 1.d2-d4 with "1...A7-A5." (I shudder to think of an absolute beginner reading this and thinking Fischer and Tal were pushing their rook pawn on move one all those years.) The move ...c7-c5 is referred to as "A7-A5" or "57-55" in many places throughout the text. There are other similar notation errors. Finally, there is no working Table of Contents in the Kindle edition. was great about a hassle-free return due to these quality issues. But my (previously high) opinion of Everyman Publishing has gone down a tick. This sort of thing shouldn't happen with a professional publisher. 15 of 19 people found the following review helpful. Everything except the Modern Benoni By Jill Malter The most important thing you ought to know about this book is that it does NOT cover the Modern Benoni. It covers the other Benoni systems. And some of them are plenty of fun to try in a chess game, even if you are not from the town of Benoni or know anyone named Benoni (or Benjamin). The first half of the book is spent on the Benko Gambit, which the authors insist on calling the Volga Gambit. Um, they can call it whatever they please. I'm calling it the Benko Gambit. In any case, Raetsky and Chetverik give a good description and overview of the Benko. There are 38 complete, analyzed games of it, about a third of which are from 2000 and later. And I think everyone ought to try playing this gambit with Black a few times. It sure is easy to learn it! The ideas are fairly clear. If the Gambit is accepted, the first few moves are automatic, and you blast away at White's Queenside with both your Rooks, your Queen, your Queenside Knight, and hopefully your fianchettoed King Bishop. If you manage to clean up White's Queen Rook and Queen Knight pawns, and keep your passed c-pawn, that's typically a decisive advantage. Oh, yes, if you have White, I'd suggest turning down the Gambit. White has good theoretical chances, but Black's moves are just too easy to find if White takes both pawns. This book has plenty of advice to give whether you take both pawns, one pawn, or none. The rest of the book is devoted to "other" Benoni systems. There are over 30 complete, analyzed games in these chapters as well. We see the Blumenfeld Gambit, Benko/Blumenfeld hybrids, Benoni/King's Indian hybrids, Czech Benonis, Schmid Benonis, Benoni-style responses to 1 d4 Nf6 2 Nf3, and so on. Still, maybe because I like reading the Harry Potter books, my favorite section was on the Snake. This is an unsound try by Black, and it is nearly unplayable, but I wanted to see what the book would say. And it gave it three fully analyzed games! I've tried the Snake in a game. Basically, instead of putting a pawn on d6, you put your King Bishop there, hoping to free it via c7 and eventually exchange it for the White Knight on c3 (the path the Bishop takes is what gives this opening its name). The biggest problem with the opening is that when you move your d6 Bishop, White often can put a pawn on d6, and that tends to be lethal. The Snake starts with the moves 1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 e6 4 Nc3 (the book also analyzes Snakes against 4 Nf3) 4...exd5 5 cxd5 Bd6. The line that gives Black the most trouble, in my opinion and in the authors' is 6 e4 0-0 7 f4. Now what? Well, I guess one can play something like 7...Bc7 and hope to survive. With luck, you may get a continuation like 8 e5 Ne8 9 d6 Ba5 10 Bc4 Kh8 11 Be3 f6 12 Qh5 g6 13 Qh6 Ng7 14 Bxc5 fxe5 15 fxe5 Bxc3+ 16 bxc3 Qa5 17 Bd4 Nc6 18 Qd2 Nxe5 (now the worst is over and anything might happen). But nobody does that. I've seen a couple of games from strong Masters with Black. They, the book, and I all recommend the desperate sacrifice 7...Nxe4. White will play 8 Nxe4 Re8 9 Qe2. What do you do next? The move the Masters both tried was 9...Bf8. And one of them won brilliantly. But the book says that the Black's best try (not good enough to equalize, but to at least have some chance) is 9...Na6 10 Nf3 f5 11 Nxd6 Rxe2+ 12 Bxe2 Nb4. When I tried this line as Black, I didn't know about 9...Na6. My game went 9...Bc7 10 d6 Bxd6 11 Qc4 Bxf4 12 Bxf4 d5 13 Qxc5 Rxe4+ 14 Ne2 Qe8 15 Bxb8 Rxb8 16 Qxd5 Bg4 17 Qd2 Rd8 18 Qc2 Rc8 19 Qd2 Rc6 20 Rd1 Rce6, and Black won. So I agree with the Masters and the authors: if you get in this position, try 7...Nxe4. I recommend this book.

Ideal for those wanting to understand the basics of Benoni Systems, this book is a study of all the crucial Benoni systems apart from the Modern Benoni. It presents diverse and practical options against the queen's pawn opening for dynamic, tactical players and solid, positional players alike. Included are such daring defences as the controversial Blumenfeld Counter-Gambit and the Benko Gambit, a favorite with uncompromising Grandmasters such as Veselin Topalov and Vassily Ivanchuk. On the other hand, Black also has the opportunity to adopt solid, respectable defences such as the Czech Benoni and the Schmid Benoni. Whether Black likes to sacrifice and take the initiative, or whether he prefers to play in a more restrained manner, there is something here for all types of players. In this user-friendly book, opening theoreticians Alexander Raetsky and Maxim Chetverik go back to basics, studying the fundamental principles of the Benoni Systems and its many variations. Throughout the book there are an abundance of notes, tips, and warnings to help improving players, while key strategies, ideas, and tactics for both sides are clearly illustrated. User-friendly design to help readers absorb ideas Concentrates on the key principles of Benoni systems Ideal for improving players

"They will fill a serious gap in the current chess literature, and I'm sure they will be extremely popular with amateur chess players."--Chessville.com