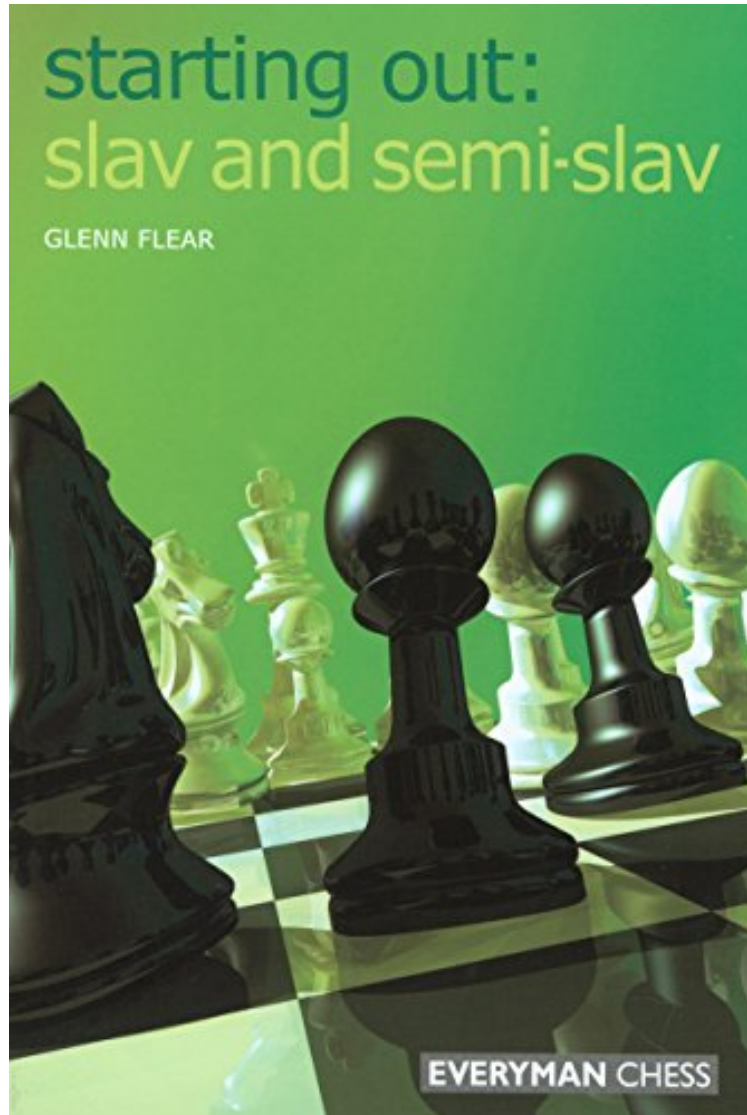


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Starting Out: Slav Semi-Slav (Starting Out - Everyman Chess)

Glenn Flear

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Glenn Flear : Starting Out: Slav Semi-Slav (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: Slav Semi-Slav (Starting Out - Everyman Chess):

34 of 34 people found the following review helpful. Slav Semi Slav Battle Manual By Murtuza Hashim The first half of this book deals with the Slav. Roughly 119 pages, and 39 games. The second half of the book deals with the Semi-Slav Botvinnik, Moscow, Meran, Anti-Meran at roughly 126 pages and 52 games. I like the way that this book is written

explaining the strategic ideas behind each variation. Also another nice thing about the book is the author recommends his favorite lines and the percentage statistics for white and black. This is nice to know but at the 1700-1800 level it is not very important. At the end of the book are a few quizzes where a position from a Slav or semi Slav is given, from games that were discussed in the book and you are supposed to guess the move. This is a good memory test to see if you remember the position and what to do in it. I wish there were other problems the author added that were original given with analysis so that it was not just a pure memory test. This book is a must read for any one who plays queen pawn openings as the Slav and semi-Slav and the positions explained in this book occur in many openings and it is nice to know the strategic ideas. It was a good buy, and I hope to see more books on the subject from the author. The author has also written several other books on the Slav, but in this book he has explained it to the masses.³³ of 36 people found the following review helpful. A practical and solid defense to 1 d4

By Jill Malter If you are a chess player who is looking for a defence to 1 d4, consider the ideas in this book. The book is up-to-date, with plenty of annotated recent games as examples. The book covers the lines resulting from 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6. Quite often, White continues with 3 Nf3 Nf6 4 Nc3. And, in this introductory book, Flear explains how to play either side of the major lines which follow: 4...dxc4 is the Slav. 4...e6 is the Semi-Slav. 4...a6 is the Chameleon, a waiting move that is considered part of the Slav. In some cases, White plays 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 e3. Black can now reply 4...g6, the Schlechter, which the author also has a chapter on. But there is a line which I think is a nuisance for Black. White can simply play 3 cxd5, the Exchange Variation. Black has to recapture, and the game becomes relatively easy for White. As the book shows, Black is not in serious trouble in this line, but I certainly would rather have White. There is a way, however, to pretty much avoid the Exchange Variation. As Flear shows, Black can play the Triangle. That's the move order I recommend. Black plays 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6. After 3 Nf3 Nf6 4 Nc3 c6, Black is playing a Semi-Slav and has avoided the Exchange Variation. White can still take the pawn on move 3, but it isn't as good a line. Most likely, White will play 3 Nc3. Now, Black plays 3...c6, blocking her Queen Bishop even more. This is the characteristic position of the Triangle. White's main choices are: 4 e3, after which Black has a choice: play 4...Nf6 and get to a Semi-Slav in which White's most dangerous move, Bg5, has been avoided. Or play 4...f5, transposing to a very playable version of the Dutch Stonewall (although White can still play 5 g4). 4 Nf3, after which Black can play 4...Nf6 and get into a Semi-Slav in which White does indeed have the option of playing 5 Bg5. Or play dxc4, the Noteboom, which is wild but okay for Black. 4 e4, the dangerous Marshall Gambit. This typically goes: 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 c6 4 e4 dxe4 5 Nxe4 Bb4 6 Bd2 Qxd4 7 Bxb4 Qxe4+ 8 Be2. White's idea is to allow 8...Qxg2, answering with 9 Qd6 Nd7 10 0-0-0 and an extremely dangerous attack. So Black tends to play 8...Na6. If you are going to play this line in tournaments, I think you'll need to study more than just this introductory book, however. Of course, that is not all Black has to learn. As I said, there is that variation where White plays 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nf3 Nf6 (you do not want to play 3...c6 here, after which White has too many good options) 4 Nc3 e6. This is the Semi-Slav, which the book spends over 100 pages on. White generally plays: 5 Bg5. This gives Black the choice of playing what Flear recommends, 5...dxc4 (the Botvinnik variation). Or trying the move I use, 5...h6 (the Moscow variation). Both require some work to learn, and Flear teaches us quite a bit about both moves. 5 e3, which leads either to the Meran variation or some Meran-avoiding sideline. The Meran variation the book recommends for Black is 5 e3 Nbd7 6 Bd3 dxc4 7 Bxc4 b5 8 Bd3 Bb7, a popular line which I've used for many years. This book is useful and easy to read. I recommend it.

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Good intro, but not enough overview

By cminny Like other Starting Out books I have used, this provides a useful introduction to the main lines of the Slav and Semi-Slav. My main complaint is that individual moves are generally well-explained, but the themes of different variations are not. For example, the most basic question of why one would play e6 to enter the Semi-Slav rather than, say, dxc4 is never discussed. I learned more about this from the two paragraph intro to the opening in Sam Collins's Understanding the Chess Openings than I did here. To give another example, in the Semi-Slav Meran, after 8 Bd7, Flear notes that there are three typical responses for black and he indicates which he prefers, but he does not say why he prefers that one to the others. I don't mean to be overly critical. Overall, I found the book quite useful, but not as useful as other Starting Out books I have consulted.

The very closely linked Slav and Semi-Slav Defences are two of the most popular and combative openings that Black can play against the Queen's Gambit. They have provided the battleground for thousands of exciting encounters between the world's chess elite, including Garry Kasparov, Vishy Anand, Vladimir Kramnik, Alexei Shirov, and Alexander Morozevich. Players of all levels are attracted to the Slav and the Semi-Slav because they are solid, dependable defences that do, however, promise abundant possibilities for dynamic counterplay. In this easy-to-read guide, Grandmaster and openings expert Glenn Flear goes back to basics, studying the essential principles of the Slav and Semi-Slav Defences and their numerous variations. Throughout the book there are an abundance of notes, tips, and warnings to guide improving players, while key strategies, ideas, and tactics for both sides are clearly illustrated.

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