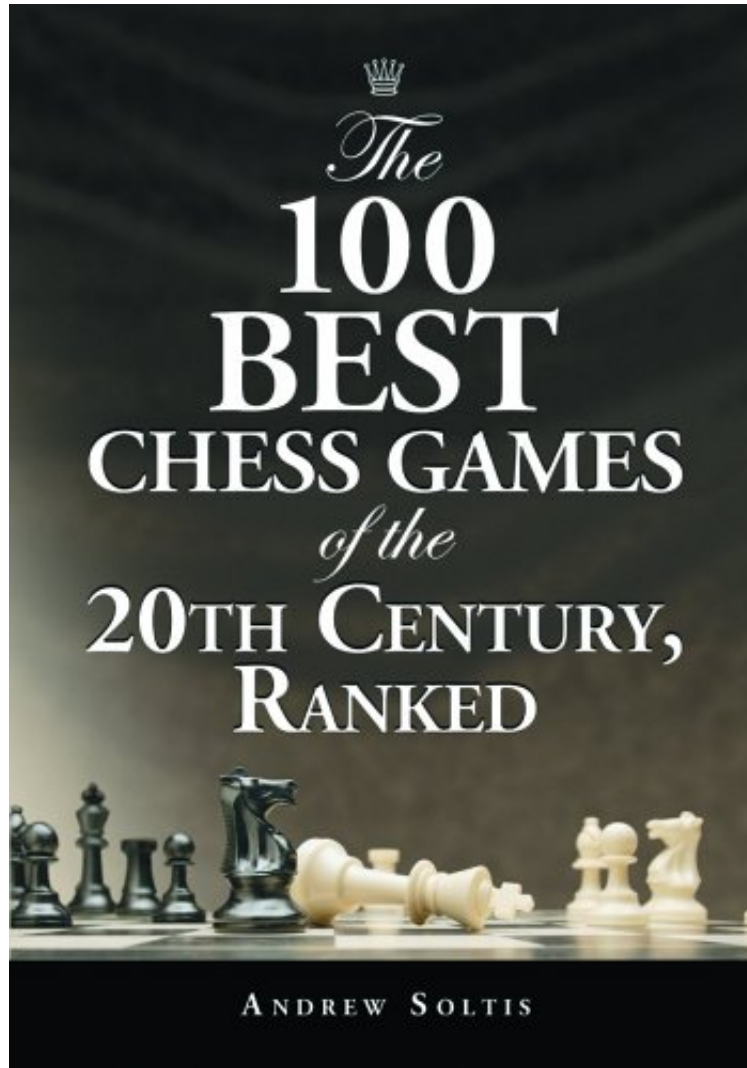


(Free download) The 100 Best Chess Games of the 20th Century, Ranked

The 100 Best Chess Games of the 20th Century, Ranked

Andrew Soltis

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Andrew Soltis : The 100 Best Chess Games of the 20th Century, Ranked before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The 100 Best Chess Games of the 20th Century, Ranked:

4 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Games selected are too subjective!!! By Wan Koon Yat Andrew Soltis is one of the best chess writer, I almost brought all the chess books written by him!! But for this book, I give it 5 stars because of his effort. But I totally disagree with his selection of games. Games, like football, we enjoy the excitement arises from complicated positions where both sides have chances. For football, we like scores. But if one side attacks well but the other side defends perfectly, how can one scores? In chess games, sometimes the best games were those games when both sides make just slight flaws, but the fighting spirit the the main factor. That is why, if you

ask me, which game I like most, I definitely would choose the first game of the 1971 candidate semi-final match between Fischer and Larsen!! Even I had played through this game many times, each time it still causes me excitement. The other one I love is the 13th game in the 1972 championship match between Spassky and Fischer. As another reviewer mentioned, some good games are definitely missed!! So I would recommend other readers to buy Mammoth's greatest games in History as a complementary. Anyway, any greatest games collection cannot miss Anderssen's "Immortal Game."!! 2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A great book... but with a few warts. By Bruce A. Monson Soltis is a prolific writer and generally puts out high quality books. And this is a good book. Also, McFarland isn't known for churning out garbage. I agree with some other reviewers that this book falls short of some of his other works (Soviet Chess 1917-1991 is a classic!), but disagree that it is just a 'paycheck' book. The annotations and game summaries of these 100+ classics is worthy of high praise alone. Still, some of his conclusions are questionable, especially compared with the many other 'best of the best' compilations out there (e.g., The World's Greatest Chess Games, by Nunn, Emms, Anand and Burgess is a prime example). In most of these lists there tends to be a selection of games that always get star status such as Rostlewski-Rubinstein (Lodz 1907) and Bogolyubov-Alekhine (Hastings 1922). And Soltis follows suit on these games and many others. But he also has some anomalies that suggest there are some flaws in his selection criteria. For example, his #1 game is Estrin-Berliner (a correspondence game)! Great game, but I'm with another reviewer who felt including correspondence games with these epic over the board battles is apples and oranges. They shouldn't be included simply because they don't have the same pressures and circumstances that over the board play has. It's comparable to including computer vs. computer games in the list. Just no place for it. In his defense Soltis does tell us up front that the games are being judged only "on their moves, not by other considerations." But taking games out of their historical context is a bit like claiming a "brilliant" tennis exhibition between Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic carries as much weight as if it had been played in a Wimbledon final. Perhaps this 'moves only' criteria helps explain the biggest aberration in the entire book: Karpov-Kasparov, game 16, World Ch. match, 1985. This masterpiece is relegated at number 89! Just eleven spots from being off the list completely! How could this be? Many consider this game to be the greatest of all time; top 10 at worst. Kasparov himself considers it his supreme creative achievement. It got graded down because of "opposition." Which is to say the loser did not provide the stiffest resistance. This is where Soltis' method breaks down in my view. Kasparov's ...d5 pawn sacrifice (which Soltis gives an '?!' mark) evidently marred the game in Soltis' view since it was later determined ex post facto that white had a good line against it (12.Be3). But by not going into the psychological aspects of this idea, which extended back to game 12 of the same match, he doesn't give credit (bonus points) for Kasparov's boldness in entering the line AGAIN at the most critical point in the entire match. Later in the game Soltis criticizes Karpov's resistance, citing move 17 as the key moment where he missed a better move (17.d6). But this misses the point that Karpov's actual move (17.Nab1) was not only logical but the primary move Kasparov had anticipated. In fact, Kasparov's 'home preparation' extended even beyond that, noting that with 19...Bd6! he had achieved the position he had been aiming for! The point is, even if Karpov did make a mistake or two they were not blunders or even obvious mistakes; they occurred while under extreme pressure and duress. Instead of trying to assign individual moves to his "Opposition" category he would have been better off following the criteria others have followed by applying it to the person himself and his/her historical strength. Was there any more formidable "opposition" than Karpov in the 1980s? What does it mean (in points) to dominate a player of that caliber to the degree Kasparov did here? Just so the reader understands the contention I am raising here, the score for "Opposition" in the Karpov-Kasparov game was only 14 points! By contrast, the score in Estrin-Berliner was 19! From a production standpoint it also would have been nice to have an indexed page listing all the games 1-100 with page numbers and the players. Maybe that was left out by design, not wanting people to just look at the list to see who got #1, etc. But if that's the case then why start at #1? Why not start at #100 and work your way backwards? I dunno. Small gripe, but an annoyance nonetheless. Just to reiterate my opening thoughts, this is an excellent book. An EXCELLENT book! But it has a few gaps. Call it character, like the gap between David Letterman's teeth. In fact, it is easily one of my favorites simply for the annotations and the selection of truly brilliant games. There is something for everyone in here, regardless of your skill level. Highly recommended. 22 of 25 people found the following review helpful. Annotation is lacking. By Randy I usually love all Soltis' books (I gladly own Bobby Fischer Rediscovered, Art of Defense, and Why Lasker Matters) but was disappointed in this book. The annotation/analysis found in his past works have always been detailed enough and typically geared for intermediate to expert class players. But, I almost feel like this book is just a glorified scoresheet on how he came to grade the best games of the century, not bothering to rehash what many authors have thus stated previously. Most games are summed up using a page or two. He sprinkles in some sparse annotation here and there, but after you are done with a game, you invariably feel like you missed out on some very important moves (or subvariations) in the game. Of course, many have opinions on games/players, but I buy books for enjoyment and most of all to learn. I would recommend you spending your money on another best of book (for example Graham Burgess' "The Mammoth Book of the World's Greatest Chess Games"), especially considering the price.

How does one determine the best chess games? What one may see as brilliant, another may see as simply necessary. Like some art lovers, chess fans claim that they know a good game when they see it, and that they know better from good. But best? How is this articulated? This book, itself a work of art, is brought together by the use of five criteria: the overall aesthetics (clever and relentless are insufficient qualities); the originality (e.g., not yet another white knight sacrifice in a Sicilian); the level of opposition (the loser played very well); the soundness (i.e., are the moves refutable with perfect play?), accuracy (few of the moves are second-best), and difficulty (the winner overcame major obstacles) of the game; and finally the overall breadth and depth (one wants a series of sparkling ideas, with no dry patches). The 100 best games were taken from an initial field of about 7,000 played from 1900 through 1999 that had already gained some attention in magazines, books and periodicals. Three hundred games were then selected that appeared to have features consistent with the criteria. The 300 games were evaluated with scores points given for each category of criteria. The games were then ranked, one to 100, by the score they received. No attempt was made to balance the selection according to period, nationality of players or opening. Also included is a chapter on the most overrated games of the twentieth century and one on games that would have made the list if... Includes 335 diagrams, an index of players and an index of openings by ECO codes.

Such thorough work has not been done before --The Washington Post Very useful...extremely beautiful...analysed in detail...demanding readers will be pleased...the dream of all chess editors and publishers --Quarterly for Chess History Highly successful work... should provide...much pleasure and fascination --ChessCafe.com About the Author Grandmaster Andrew Soltis is the author of dozens of chess books, including Soviet Chess 1917-1991 (2000: 2000 United States Chess Federation Historical Book of the Year), The United States Chess Championship (1997), Frank Marshall (1993; 1994 British Chess Federation Book of the Year) and The Book of Chess Lists (1984). The eight-time champion of the world-famous Marshall Chess Club, he is an editor and journalist at the New York Post and a columnist for Chess Life. He lives in New York City.