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## Not Just for Experts

Mark Donlan

*Attacking the King – for Experts*, by Rustam Kasimdzhanov, (DVD) 2009 ChessBase, Running time: four hours, \$39.95

Rustam Kasimdzhanov captured the chess world's attention when he won the 2004 FIDE knock-out world chess championship by defeating players such as Ivanchuk, Grischuk, Topalov, and Adams. Since then he has shown himself to be an eloquent and engaging personality with a wry sense of humor. On this new DVD in fritztrainer video format he offers an entertaining outline of historical and modern attacking chess.



The fritztrainer format works by showing a video of the presenter in one window, a chessboard in another and a notation window for the moves. All the windows are resizable. The moves and variations on the board are synchronized with the video and the format allows the presenter to highlight important squares or use colored arrows to further clarify exactly what's happening on the board.



The grandmaster from Uzbekistan has a fine command of the English language and states that his goal is to share his experiences and to provide a systematic explanation of the way he learned to attack the opponent's king. In the first part of the DVD he looks at one exemplary game or fragment from each of the first thirteen world champions indicative of their individual approach to conducting an attack.

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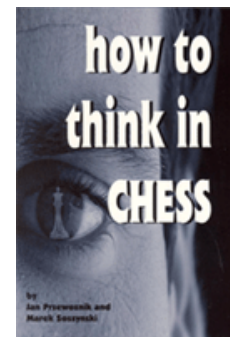
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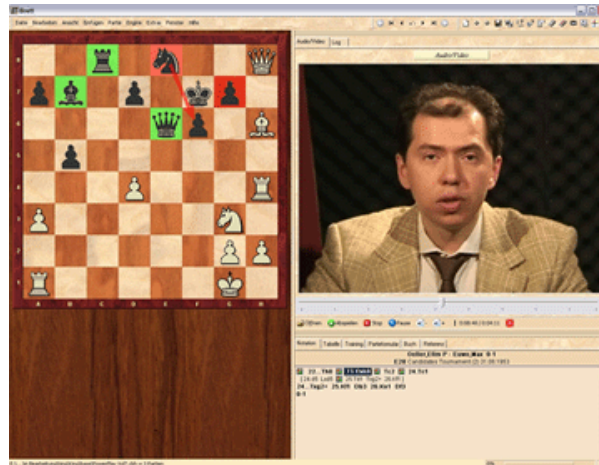
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In the above position, from the game *Geller-Euwe*, Zurich 1953, he demonstrates how Euwe still had some tricks up his sleeve even though “his best years were long since gone.” Kasimdzhanov relates how impressed he was when he first saw this example as a child. He was initially under the impression that White was attacking, but now he realizes that it was not White who was attacking, it was Black. He notes that White’s position may look imposing, but that White really cannot create any major threats. Meanwhile, Black has his rook on a very dangerous open file, the bishop is incredibly strong on its diagonal, and the queen is ready to join the battle from d5 or some other square.

He states that Euwe stunned his opponent with a magnificent attempt to start the final decisive attack by **22...Rh8**, giving a full rook in order to gain access to square c2. White must accept the rook or lose material as the h6-bishop is then hanging. Kasimdzhanov also demonstrates how Black fully separates the tasks of the different pieces, noting that the knight on e8 alone fulfills the entire defensive task of the black king and all the other pieces join in a fierce attack after **23.Qxh8**



**23...Rc2** He also points out the fact that the opposite-colored bishops favor the attacker, as White’s dark-squared bishop is completely useless because Black is generating threats along the light squares. However, here he indicates that Geller’s position was still tenable if only he had found 24. d5, which looks like desperation but in fact causes some disharmony in Black’s camp because after 24...Bxd5 25.Rd1 Rxc2+ 26.Kf1 Black’s threats are no longer decisive. And if 24...Qxd5, then 25.Ne4 or 25.Re4. He claims that the position is objectively a draw after 24.d5 and refers the viewer to the analysis that is available in chess literature on this position. Yet, he finds it unsurprising that White lost his sense of danger in a practical game and played **24.Rc1** and lost immediately after **24...Rxc2+ 25.Kf1 Qb3 26.Ke1 Qf1 0-1** Anything White tries leads to mate.

On the second part of the DVD he comments on the decisive stages of the attack in eight of his own games (or fragments), explaining which specific train of thought led him to success, while trying to present as many

diverse games as possible.



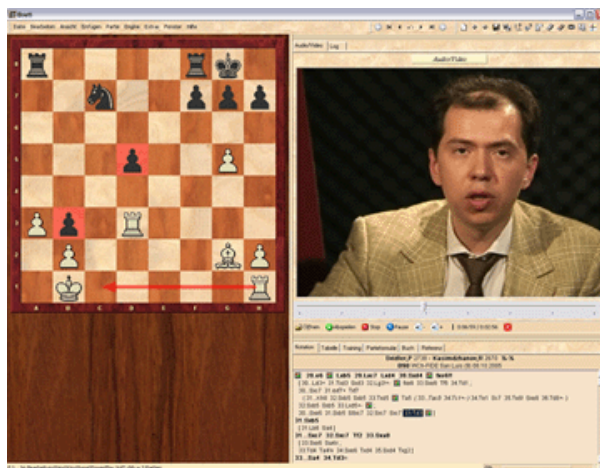
In the above position he talks about his draw with Svidler from the FIDE World Championship tournament in San Luis. He describes the position as the messiest he has ever encountered in which “everything is hanging.” He notes that “the position is such that if Black does not create something extraordinary, he will be lost.”

**28.e6 Bxb5 29.Bxc7 Bxd4 30.Nxd4**

Here he posits that the reader may well be wondering why he is demonstrating an endgame position, but he notes that “you can attack out of the most unexpected places” and that “sometimes you have to attack to save your skin.”

**30...fxe6!!**

30...Bd3+ 31.Rxd3 Nxd3 32.Bg3!+- fxe6 33.Nxe6 Rf5 34.Rd1; 30...Nxc7 31.exf7+ Rxf7 (31...Kh8 32.Nxb5 Nxb5 33.Rxd5 Ra5 (33...Rac8 34.Rc1 +-) 34.Re1 Nc7 35.Re8! Nxe8 36.Rd8+-) 32.Nxb5 Nxb5 33.Bxd5+-; 30...Nxe6 31.Nxb5 N8xc7 32.Nxc7 Nxc7 33.Rd3



**31.Nxb5 (31.Bb6 Na4) 31...Nxc7 32.Nxc7 Rf2**

Here he notes that Black has sacrificed almost all his pieces, but that White must pay attention because Black has mating threats.

**33.Nxa8**

33.Nxe6 Na4; 33.Rd4 Ra4! 34.Nxe6 Rxd4 35.Nxd4 Rxd2.

**33...Na4 34.Rd3= 1/2-1/2**

34.Be4?! dxe4 35.Rd8+ Kf7 36.Rc8 Rxb2+ 37.Kc1 Ra2 38.Re1 Nb2 39.Re2 Nd3+ 40.Kd1 b2 41.Rb8 Ra1+ 42.Kd2 b1Q 43.Rxb1 Rxb1 44.Rxe4

Black is two pieces down in the final position, but he managed to make a draw in a spectacular way, which left Kasimdzhanov “feeling very pleased” about this game. This segment runs nearly seven minutes.

Along with the twenty-one main segments, there are introductory and wrap-up videos bringing the running time to about four hours. The DVD also contains the whole training course in audio-format for Pocket Fritz 3. No additional software is needed to run this DVD as it comes equipped with the ChessBase 9 Reader that installs onto your hard disk. If you already have CB9 or one of the Fritz family playing programs, then you do not need to install the reader. The system requirements are Pentium-Processor at 300 MHz or higher, 64 MB RAM, Windows XP, Windows Vista, DVD drive, mouse, soundcard.

This is not the way to learn about the basics of attacking play and the “for Experts” in the title is perhaps unjustifiably misleading, as it holds no meaning with regard to rating, rather this is a chance to have a former world champion demonstrate a number of nice games and positions that captured his imagination. This DVD works best as a form of chess entertainment and it is something you are likely to return to multiple times.

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by Rustam Kasimdzhanov

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