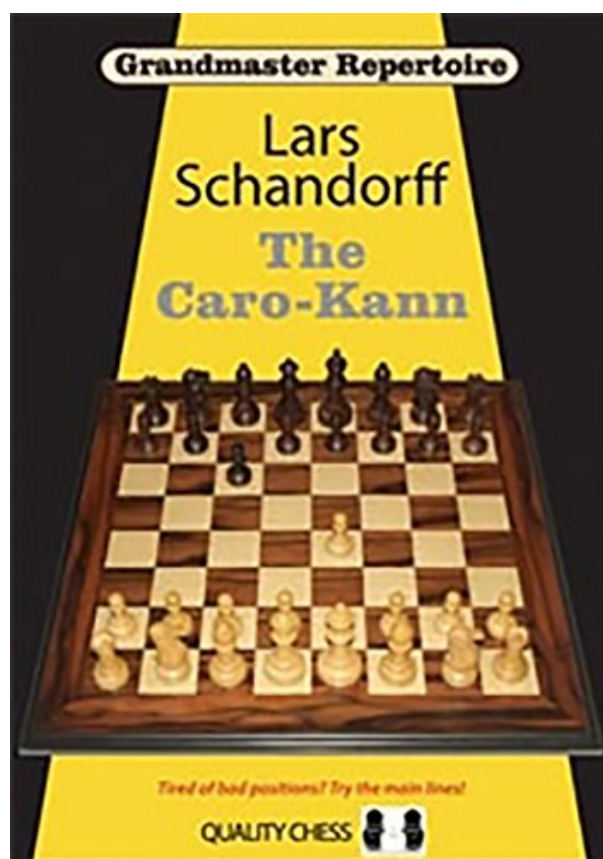
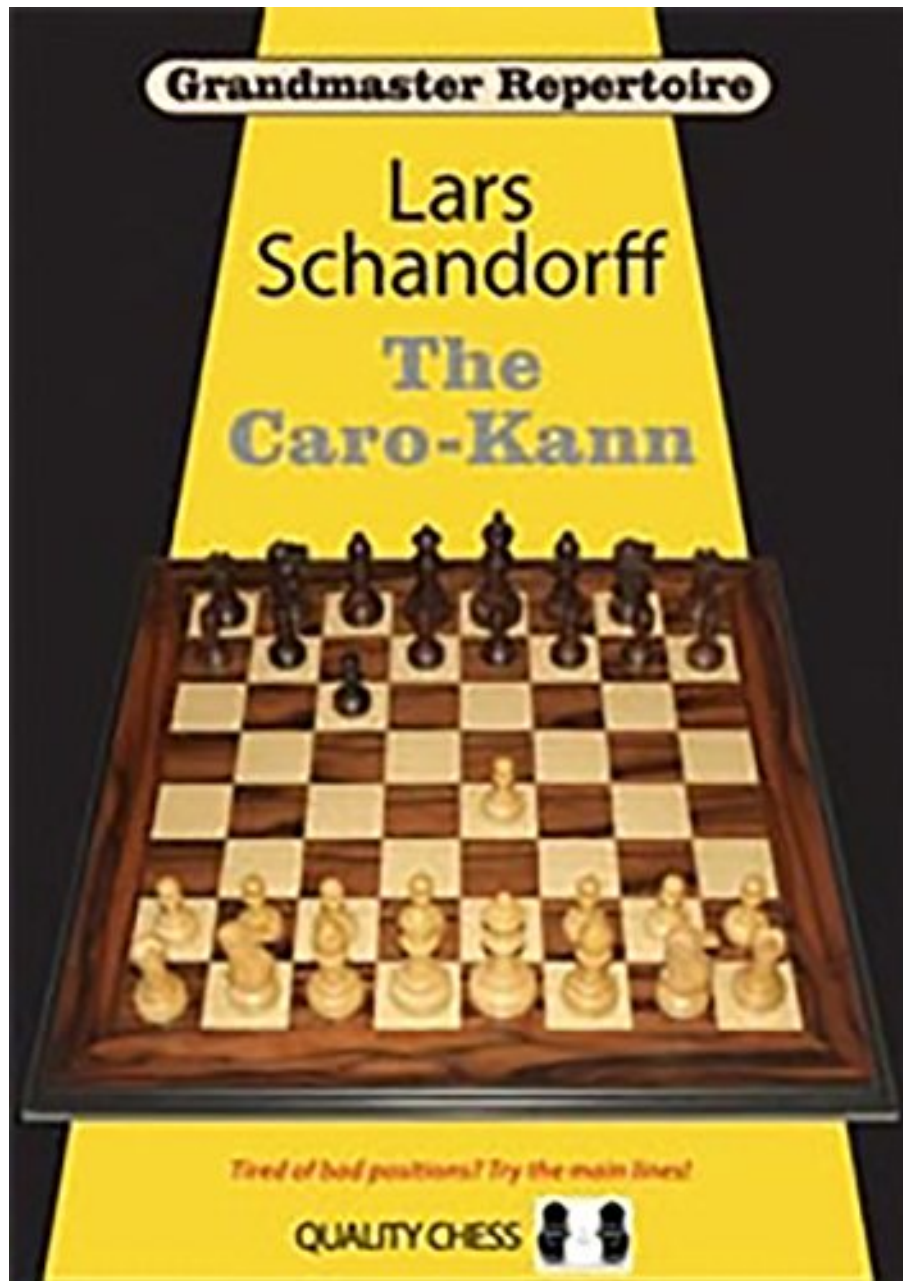


GRANDMASTER REPERTOIRE 7: THE CARO-KANN BY LARS SCHANDORFF



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Review

“I believe the best tribute I can pay to this book is that, shortly after starting reading it, I felt the temptation to play the Caro-Kann.”

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“Outstandingly impressive... a top-class repertoire based on the 4...Bf5 Caro-Kann... Schandorff emphasizes throughout that his approach is to equip Black to play for a win, and he does a fine job.”

Steve Giddins, British Chess Magazine

About the Author

Lars Schandorff is a chess grandmaster from Denmark who is renowned for his opening preparation.

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In chess the Caro-Kann opening is one of Black's most reliable answers to 1.e4. It is a regular favorite of elite players, who know that computer-aided preparation now threatens the sharpest lines of the Sicilian or Ruy Lopez (at the very least with a forced draw). The Caro-Kann is less susceptible to such forcing lines – Black sets out to equalize in the opening, and win the game later.

Grandmaster Lars Schandorff reveals a bulletproof chess opening repertoire and lucidly explains how Black should play the middlegame and endgame.

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- Dimensions: 9.50" h x 1.00" w x 6.75" l, .96 pounds
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- 250 pages

Features

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- Pages: 252 Pages
- Publication Years: 2010

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About the Author

Lars Schandorff is a chess grandmaster from Denmark who is renowned for his opening preparation.

Most helpful customer reviews

40 of 41 people found the following review helpful.

The best Caro-Kann book ever written

By Wallace H. Hannum

I've been playing the Caro-Kann as my main defense to 1.e4 for a few years.

I own over twenty books on the opening going back several decades. This is by far the best book on the Caro-Kann for those wishing to employ it as Black. It is repertoire book and so it doesn't cover ALL the critical lines, just those we'll face within the chosen repertoire. For a quick summary he commends 4...Bf5 and Kingside castling against 3.Nc3, he recommends the critical 3...Bf5 in the Advance, and the ...Nc6 "endgame" variation against the Panov-Botvinnik. For most of the 'minor lines' (e.g., the Fantasy, the Two Knights, KIA, etc.) Schandorff goes for the critical mainlines.

Schandorff gives many new ideas and is able to communicate his reasoning to the audience in a clear manner. I don't play ALL of the recommended lines, for example I prefer to castle queenside in the 3.Nc3 mainlines, but I think he makes a good argument for what he does recommend, and it often comes down to a matter of personal taste. However, he almost always chooses the most aggressive, combative lines which I think is both more fun to play and more challenging for our opponents. Many people think the Caro-Kann is passive or dull, but only those unfamiliar with the latest theory! This opening can lead to full-blooded, aggressive chess if you allow it. Afterall, 1...c6 is just a move, how the game develops is up to the BOTH players.

I think this book, combined with some independent study (perhaps Wells, Bologan's DVD, etc.) is enough to prepare players up to International Master strength.

Play the Caro-Kann and buy this book. You'll be glad you did.

15 of 15 people found the following review helpful.

Fallen Away Caro Player Returns!

By Lawrence Bernstein

For a moment I was tempted to give Lars' excellent treatise 4 instead of 5 stars because he omits the Smyslov-Karpov variation (...4.Nd7) from the book, so on consideration, I'll give it 5 stars instead of 6.

Seriously, this is a repertoire book in the truest sense of the word and Schandorff has convinced me to take up the ...4.Bf5 line in addition to ...4.Nd7 with his excellent and original analysis, in addition to the thoroughly annotated games.

This book has rekindled my passion in the Caro as I discovered I am not truly a Sicilian player -- I never felt 100% comfortable playing it and now know it will never be my staple reply to e4.

Ditto for ...1.e5 since there is just TOO much theory for a time-stretched businessman/dad like me to hunker down and impart at this stage of life.

But that's really superfluous since the Caro rocks! There's nothing like watching an aggressive e4 player hit his head on the stone that is the Caro-Kann.

The Caro is a super solid weapon for positional players like me that allows for vigorous counter-attack. As you'll see in many of the variations and annotated games, especially the extremely well covered lines of the Advance Variation, once the initiative passes over to Black, White's position can quickly cave in.

BUT... and this is a BIG caveat as Schandorff warns, you must know these lines of the Advance Variation COLD, particularly the forcing and tactical lines commencing with 4.Nc3, which Lars designates as "the Shirov Variation" after the adventurous Latvian/Russian tight-rope walker who popularized it. This line was pioneered to a large degree in the 1990s by Greek GM and author, Vasilios Kotronias and his then excellent book, "Beating the Caro-Kann."

If you do not know the theory of the Shirov Variation, then you should NOT play the Caro. But if you know the theory and understand the ideas, it is likely your opponent who will have something to fear, as there is a ton of scope for aggressive, tactical and often sacrificial play for Black. In fact, it is even necessary in many lines.

(Message to e4 players, the Caro-Kann is not the opening choice of wallflowers but fighters!)

NOTHING is left to chance in this book and it will be next to impossible for you to "get caught" in the opening.

Overview of what's covered:

- * The Panov Attack (vigorous attacking lines offered for Black. i.e. NO transpositions to the Nimo-Indian.)
- * The surprisingly dangerous (at club level) Exchange Variation
- * The deceptively simple looking but venomous Short Variation in the Advance.
- * The innocuous Two Knights
- * The positionally refuted Bayonet Attack in the Advance Variation. (Often encountered in blitz chess.)
- * The obscure Fantasy Variation (with transpositions to the Blackmar-Diemer (the choice of certain 'spaced out' club players, and dealt with on pg. 236, *not* in the chapter on the Fantasy).
- * The KID reversed
- * 2.b3 (obviously not a concern but this and all other "weird" choices are dealt with by Lars.)
- * Even the outlandish but tricky 2.Nc3 followed by 3.Qf3
- * And... of course, you will be completely equipped to handle the Classical (Steinitz) Variation with ...4.Bf5. (Note: I have not delved into these waters yet since I still play the line with ...4.Nd7 that Karpov championed for so many years. As I recall, Schandorff favors lines with K-side castling for Black.)

One of the best belly laughs I've had (okay...the only one) from an opening book comes with the variation, 2.f4. Schandorff: "Is White trying to play the Grand Prix Attack against the Caro?" (Okay, you may not share my amusement.)

As far as I'm concerned, this is now (2012) THE book on the Caro-Kann... far, far surpassing Egon Varnusz's long standing treatise on the Caro from the 1980s and the 2nd edition from the early 90s.

So, even if you're a ...4.Nd7 player in the main line, there is nothing to lament. Fortunately, it is not a variation as thick with theory as ...4.Bf5 and as long as you get in an early c5, and avoid sacs on f7 or e6 (unlike Kasparov against Deep Blue) by playing ...Nb6 first, there is nothing to fear. ...4.Nd7 is a variation of ideas and there are bountiful games online to keep you up to speed.

Moreover, and as mentioned, Lars delivers such clarity throughout that he's convinced me to take up the more ambitious line with ...4.Bf5.

Bottom line?

Lars Schandorff's "The Caro-Kann" is a deeply thought out repertoire book that is incisively written and explained. You'll have all the knowledge and confidence you need to face 1.e4 whether you're a 1600 player or even 2400.

This "fallen away" Caro player has returned.

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful.

a satisfied reader

By pocketknife

I am a 2200 chess player and this is the best opening book I have read so far for the following reasons:

1)

The recommended lines are all topical. E.g. in the 3Nc3 main line the short castle plan is recommended.

When I follow the today games (Eu championship, or Team World Championship) I see the recommended lines. Ok, a bit evolution happened but I understand the foundation of the positions.

2)

Good suggestions and relevant improvements are recommended.

In many books I see that the author gives a Fritz line as improvement without putting any real effort on it.

Now the improvements are explained, and well established.

The selected lines are explained, and alternative lines are indicated where the choice is only matter of taste.

3)

The Grandmaster Repertoire indicates that not just the main lines but all (or almost all) playable line are explained. And so it is. I don't expect to face unexplained sound white moves in the first 12-16 after learning this book.

4)

A good style of writing is helping the reading.

All in all a very good book which well worth the money and time to buy and read it.

See all 17 customer reviews...

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