

KNIGHT'S BOOK CL



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From Publishers Weekly The best features of this vibrant picture book set in the Middle Ages are found outside the story line, which concerns the skillful squire of an impoverished but valiant knight who jousts at a tournament and stays to prepare the host castle against an impending assault. The real contributions here are in Mitgutsch's artwork, which not only represents plot developments but illustrates peripheral concepts. For example, endpapers and other spreads constitute virtual pictorial encyclopedias of medieval objects (pennon, coronal, lozenge tip), pastimes (tilting at a dummy during jousting practice, archery instruction), etc. Other art depicts medieval technology (e.g., how roofs are removed from castle towers to aid in defending the building from marauders). Color and broad lines are favored over detail and precision. The work, accordingly, is more atmospheric than realistic,

but one has only to examine the foldout center spread to appreciate the merits of this tradeoff. Ages 7-10. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. From School Library Journal Grade 3-4-- In this cheery fictional memoir, Wolflieb recalls how, as a young squire, he accompanied his master, Sir Frank von Fidelstein, to the great tournament at Stolzenfels. There he met Lorin, the Duke's daughter, and helped prepare the castle for battle. Mitgutsch does not open any windows onto the late Middle Ages; his characters behave in unrealistic ways. Lorin not only knows how to read, but, with her father's approval (and in a flowing gown) she also takes weapons practice. The big, busy, watercolor cartoons offer neither the level of detail nor the funny byplay of those in Hindley's Knights and Castles (Usborne-Hayes, 1976). Several scenes are further crowded by handwritten labels, many of which are superfluous. Stick with nonfiction or books such as Lasker's Tournament of Knights (Crowell, 1986), which offer careful research and more believable story lines. --John Peters, New York Public LibraryCopyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. See all Editorial Reviews

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