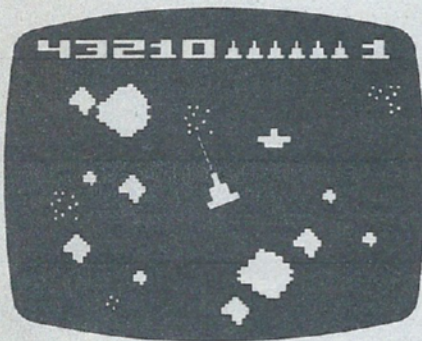


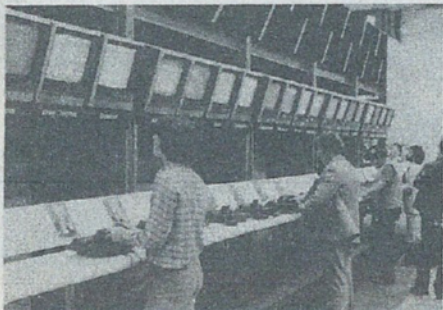
## CES, continued...



*Asteroids from Atari for their video computer system provides color and variations not found on the coin-op machine.*

Atari also introduced four new game cartridges, bringing the total line-up to 42. The new ones include Asteroids, the home video version of the popular arcade game. All of the action of the arcade game is captured in the home game and in addition the home game has many game variations and includes colored asteroids and ships.

Warlords is a game of defense and capture with a medieval theme. A king hides behind castle walls in each corner of the TV screen. The Warlord's role is to protect his king, defend his castle and destroy the opposing castle. Essentially, Warlords is a four cornered breakout/pong type of game with the added dimension of being able to both attack and defend at the same time.



*Each of Atari's 42 game cartridges had a separate video computer system and TV set at their booth.*

Video Pinball is an extended version of the dedicated Atari video pinball game marketed several years ago. It has all the equipment you would hope for—bumpers, spinners, dropped targets, roll-overs, and bonus multipliers. The fourth game introduced was Othello. Reviews of all of these and previous unreviewed Atari video computer games will appear in the June issue of *Creative Computing*. For more information write Atari Consumer Division, 1265 Borregas Ave., Sunnyvale CA 94086.

## Activision

At CES, Activision showed four new cartridges for the Atari video computer system. "Laser Blast" puts the player in command of a fleet of space craft under attack by forces on a hostile planet. To survive, the player must blast away attackers with his ship's laser while dodging radar directed laser fire from below. Laser Blast is one of the best space action games we have seen for the Atari. However a full evaluation will have to wait until the June issue of *Creative*.

"Tennis" is a very nifty game, differing considerably from the popular pong-type tennis games. In the game the player is on the near-side of a tennis court and uses a realistic-looking player who can serve, hit from the baseline, rush the net and hit anything from drop shots to cross-court passing shots. The graphics provide a unique perspective on the court, and the movement of play is so realistic that the ball even has a shadow following it.



*Laser Blast from Activision for the Atari video computer system has fast action and dynamite sound effects.*

Skiing features a wide-variety of slalom and down-hill ski runs at varying skill levels. The player controls a skier using the joystick controller and can race against the clock or glide easily down hill dodging trees and jumping moguls along the way.

For the bridge player, "Bridge" plays almost exactly like real bridge. The player controls the strength of hands to be dealt and the play of the game. Millions of hands can be dealt at random by the program. The computer bids as a partner and plays as opponents once a contract is established.

For more information, write Activision, 759 East Evelyn Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94086. Telephone (408) 245-5421.

## Chess Systems

This apparently was the year to bring over chess-playing computer systems from Europe as no less than three of the new introductions at the winter CES were successful European contenders.

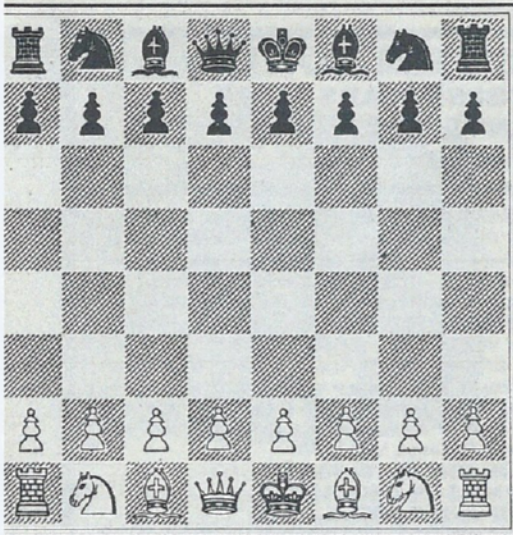
## Novag

Since 1978 the Novag chess computers have been among the most successful ones in Europe. There are four computers in the current line introduced in the United States and they are very impressive. The two top-of-the-line systems use the very powerful MYCHESS program written by Dave Kittinger. In this 24K program, the computer looks up to nine moves ahead and solves mate-in-7 problems. Moves are executed on an LCD chess board by simply touching the piece symbol with your finger-tip then the square that you want to move it to. As soon as your move is completed the computer responds automatically. The Savant system also allows you to trace backwards, take back a move, and to trace forward through a game. The Savant can be hooked to a printer which can print a graphical representation of the game at any point, a history of the game using standard chess notation, or a beginner's notation with graphical piece symbols. A portion of this printout is reproduced above.

The same MYCHESS program is also used in the Novag Robot Adversary system. This top-of-the-line computer has a robot arm which comes out and picks up pieces to make the move. For your side you simply move the piece to the next position. After all of the pieces have been cleared from the board, the robot has the ability to place them back on the board and start another game. Both the Savant and Robot Adversary have many famous games stored in their memory which you



*The Novag Robot Adversary is a tough contender with David Kittinger's MYCHESS program.*



can have the computer review in their entirety or halt at any point from which you take over one or the other players. An optional chess clock may be plugged into either unit to keep track of time as in a standard tournament. The chess clock can also be used as a tournament clock.

Novag Super Sensor IV uses an 8K program also written by David Kittenger. It has a wide variety of openings. Moves are indicated by LED lamps positioned vertically and horizontally along the chess board. The unit can solve chess and mate problems as well as play the game.

Novag Microchess measures only 4 1/2" x 6" x 1 1/2" and features sensor technology. It has a 4K program which plays on 8 different skill levels. Aimed at the novice, the Microchess unit can suggest moves or allow you to renege on your last move.

For more information on Novag write the American distributor, California Intermarket Center Ltd., 11444 Washington Blvd., Suite B, Los Angeles, CA 90066. Telephone (213) 821-1007.

## SCISYS

Another line of chess machines from Europe was introduced by Scisys. There are five units in the line, two of which incorporate a very easy-to-read LCD chessboard. One of these, Executive Chess, allows the player to move the pieces with a small cursor that moves around the LCD board. Not quite as easy to use as the sensory units from Novag, nevertheless, Executive Chess was very easy to use. With a memory capacity of 32K, this unit has 8 levels of play and includes now-expected features of automatic castling en passant moves and pawn promotions. It also solves mate-in-two problems and allows you to set up special opening positions.

The larger Chess Partner 2000 has similar features but is played with actual chess pieces on a sensory board attached to the computer.

The compact Chess Traveler system has eight skill levels. It can play against itself, solves mate-in-two problems, and plays either white or black. Moves are displayed on the more traditional LED display. For more information on these systems write SCISYS, 1 World Trade Center, Suite 7967, New York, NY 10048. Telephone (212) 432-8529.

## Fidelity Electronics

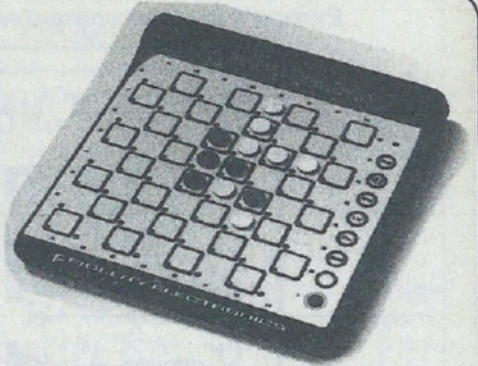
The reigning champion of the micro-computer chess world, Fidelity Electronics, introduced three new chess systems and three other game systems at the winter CES.

Champion Sensory Chess Challenger uses an even better program than the one that won the first microcomputer chess tournament in London last September and the North American Microcomputer Chess Tournament in San Jose. This unit thinks on its opponent's time to give it an overall faster response, has time controls which are user settable for both time and number of moves. It has the ability to back one or two moves if you decide to change the direction of your game and has an improved chess clock.

Decorator Challenger combines "old world craftsmanship and space age technology." The full size chess board is made of hardwood and is complete with hand-carved playing pieces. It has 10 levels of playing difficulty, plays 40 book opening variations with approximately 1200 book opening moves. As a teacher the unit will suggest your best move, teach end game situations and allows use of a problem mode to set up specific piece positions and problems. Like its cousin, Voice Chess Challenger, Decorator Challenger has a voice feature to tell you all the computer moves and repeat your moves in any one of four languages (English, German, French, or Spanish).

Mini-Sensory Chess Challenger is battery operated and uses the more traditional LED and beep-tone to indicate moves. However, instead of keying in moves, you simply press down on the piece you are moving and LEDs light up to show your "from" location. You then press the piece down on your "to" location and the computer knows which piece was moved and where it was moved to. This unit has three levels of play and includes mate-in-two problems. Like the larger units it is able to play either white or black, allows you to set up positions to work out problems, and allows you to change the level while playing a game.

The three other products from Fidelity include: Reversi Challenger; Card Challenger, which plays Gin Rummy or several other games available on plug-in cartridges; and Dame Challenger, a popular intercontinental version of checkers.



*Fidelity introduced Reversi (Othello) Challenger with sensory playing surface and nine skill levels.*

For more information write Fidelity Electronics Ltd., 8800 N.W. 36th St., Miami FL 33178. Telephone (305) 888-1000.

## Applied Concepts

New from Applied Concepts is the Great Game Machine. This is a multi-game machine which can play Chess, Checkers, Reversi, Kriegspiel and Blackjack simply by plugging in a different cartridge. Applied Concepts also has a line of individual machines which play each game on a dedicated basis. The top-of-the-line HANDroid has a robot hand which comes out and lifts the pieces on the computer side of the board. For more information write Applied Concepts Inc., 207 N. Kirby, Garland TX 75042.

## Mattel Electronics

Joining the dedicated computer chess marketing race is Mattel with a beautiful little unit; it has an LCD screen with cursor movement controls. The unit has four levels of play, allows a player to go back 1, 2, or 3 moves and gives hints on what move would be best in a particular situation.

A "save game" feature permits opponents to return to a match in progress up to several days later. Problems may be set up and the computer will exchange places with the player at any point in the game or even play itself.

Mattel also introduced a portable computer backgammon system with an LCD screen.



*Mattel Electronics introduced a handheld computer backgammon with LED display.*