

CHOICE PICKINGS

Tony Harrington presents a selection of the best games from the 4th European Microcomputer Chess Tournament.

This month's Micro Chess is given over to presenting games from the 4th European Microcomputer Chess Tournament. Last month's issue, you will recall, gave a round by round commentary, but we only had space for one full length game. This issue will flesh out that commentary with all the best games.

Many of you will want to know how the commercial machines performed. If your specific interest is home computer programs, see the feature on chess in the PCW Games Special, band-wrapped with this edition. Several of the games by the four commercially available home computer chess programs are given in that feature.

I have concentrated on presenting wins, though there are a few draws, where they had particular significance or interest.

I must apologise in advance for the inconsistencies in the style of these games scores. All the participating programmers seemed to have their own way of recording the score. I have attempted to smooth out some of the wider differences, so you will not find pieces designated at all.

The most common approach, as is usual with computer chess, is to note the square of the piece to move and the square it moves to. Captures are sometimes indicated by 'x' and sometimes not. The same, unfortunately, is sometimes true of checks. Pawn moves are sometimes indicated in full (that is, e2-e4) and sometimes simply by the destination square (that is, e4).

Round 1

Colossus vs Mephisto III

1	b1c3	d7d5	16	e1e2	g7g5
2	e2e3	g8f6	17	f4h3	f6g4
3	d2d4	c8g4	18	f2f3	d4d3
4	f1e2	g4e2	19	e2e1	e7c5+
5	g1e2	b8c6	20	g1h1	g4f2+
6	e1g1	e7e6	21	h3xf2	c5xf2
7	c1d2	f8e7	22	e1f1	f2c5
8	a1c1	h7h6	23	f3f4	g5xf4
9	f1e1	e8g8	24	d2xf4	f7f5
10	e2f4	e6e5	25	f4xh6	f8f6
11	d4xe5	c6xe5	26	h6g5	f6g6
12	e3e4	d5d4	27	f1f5	c5d4
13	c3d5	a7a5	28	d1b3	d4xe4
14	c2c4	c7c6	29	c4c5+	g8h8
15	d5xe7+	d8xe7	30	f5f4	e4d5

31	b3xd5	c6xd5	37	d5d7	h8g8
32	g5f6+	g6xf6	38	c1b1	d3d2
33	f4xf6	e5c4	39	d7xd2	b2c4
34	f6f5	c4xb2	40	d2d3	f8f7
35	f5xd5	a5a4	41	h1g1	c4e5
36	a2a3	a8f8	42	d3d4	resigns

Score: 1-0

Round 2

Mephisto vs Caesar — A real coffee-house game, one of my favourites from the Tournament.

1	d2d4	d7d5	15	e6e7	b4xe7
2	c2c4	dx4	16	f3e2	b8c6
3	g1f3	a7a6	17	f2f4	e7xa3
4	e2e3	b7b5	18	b2xa3	a5xb5
5	a2a4	g8f6	19	e2xb5	d8d1+
6	axb5	c8b7	20	f1f2	e5g4+
7	bxa6	a8xa6	21	f2g3	d1xa1
8	b1a3	b7xf3	22	b5xc6	g4xe3
9	d1xf3	e7e5	23	c6c5+	f8g8
10	flxc4	f8b4+	24	c5xe3	h7h5
11	e1f1	a6a5	25	c1b2	h5h4+
12	c4b5+	e8f8	26	g3h3	h1xa1
13	dx4	f6d7	27	b2xa1	resigns
14	e5e6	d7e5			Score: 1-0

Round 3

Advance 3 vs Constellation — This was a good win for Constellation, though Advance 3 walked into a trap that it really should have seen.

1	e2e4	e7e5	19	d4c4	d7e6
2	g1f3	b8c6	20	c4c5	f8d8
3	flb5	a7a6	21	c1f4	a8a7
4	b5a4	g8f6	22	b1d2	a7b7
5	e1g1	f6e4	23	b2b4	f6e7
6	d2d4	b7b5	24	c5a5	b7b5
7	a4b3	d7d5	25	a5b5	a6xb5
8	d4xe5	c8e6	26	f3e2	c7c6
9	b1d2	e4c5	27	h2h3	h7h6
10	a2a4	bxa4	28	d2f3	e7f6
11	b3xa4	c5xa4	29	f4e5	e6c4
12	a1xa4	e6d7	30	e2b2	d8e8
13	c2c3	f8e7	31	e5f6	e8e1+
14	d2b1	e8g8	32	f3e1	c8e6
15	d1xd5	c6xe5	33	f6d4	e6e1+
16	a4d4	d5xf3+	34	g1h2	e1e4
17	d5xf3	d8c8	35	b2a1	c4d5
18	fl4	e7f6	36	a1f1	e4f4+

37	h2g1	f4d2	41	g1f1	f3h1+
38	g2g3	f7f6	42	f1e2	d5c4+
39	flb1	d2e2	43	e2d2	h1xa1
40	b1a1	e2f3	44	resigns	

Score: 0-1

Round 4

Chess 2001 vs Advance 3 — One of the better end games, played reasonably well by Advance 3.

1	e2e4	e7e5	27	c2xd3	h7h6
2	d2d4	e5xd4	28	g5e3	a7d7
3	d1xd4	b8c6	29	d8xd7	f8xd7
4	d4e3	g8f6	30	d3d4	d7b6
5	c1d2	f6g4	31	e4d6	g8f8
6	e3f4	d7d5	32	d6xf7	f8e8
7	e4xd5	d8xd5	33	f7e5	a6b7
8	flc4	d5e5	34	e5d3	b2c3
9	f4xe5	c6xe5	35	d3c5	b7c8
10	c4b5	c7c6	36	c5e4	c3b2
11	b5a4	b7b5	37	e4d6	e8d8
12	a4b3	f8c5	38	h2h4	h6h5
13	g1h3	0-0	39	b3d1	d8d7
14	b1c3	c5d4	40	d6xc8	d7c8
15	0-0	(a7a5)	41	d1xh5	b6xa4
16	a2a4	b5b4	42	h5e8	a4c3
17	c3d1	c8a6	43	e8xc6	c3e2+
18	fl1e	f8d8	44	g1h2	b2xd4
19	d2g5	d8e8	45	c6f3	d4xe3
20	e1e4	e5g6	46	F2xe3	e2c3
21	d1c3	e8xe4	47	f3g4	c8d8
22	c3xe4	d4xb2	48	g4e6	a5a4
23	a1d1	a8a7	49	h2g3	b4b3
24	d1d8	g6f8	50	g3f3	b3b2
25	h3f4	g4e5	51	e6f5	a4a3
26	f4d3	e5xd3	52	h4h5	a3a2

Score: 0-1

Round 6

Constellation vs White Knight Mk. 11 — With a lot of help from White Knight, Constellation achieves a very nice mate — almost a brilliancy prize for this kind of Tournament.

1	e2e4	b8c6	6	0-0	c6c5
2	d2d4	e7e6	7	c1e3	c5xd4
3	flb5	a7a6	8	e3xd4	g8f6
4	b5xc6	d7xc6	9	b1c3	0-0
5	g1f3	f8e7	10	d1c1	c7c5

11	d4e5	c8d7	19	e5xd7	b6xb2
12	f1d1	a8c8	20	g3e5	e7f6
13	e5g3	f8e8	21	e5xf6	e8g8
14	f3e5	g8f8	22	d7f8	c8xf8
15	c1f4	f8g8	23	f6g7+	g8xg7
16	d1xd7	f6xd7	24	f7f8	g7g8
17	f4xf7+	g8h8	25	f8g6	g8g7
18	a1d1	d8b6	26	d1d8	

(checkmate)

Round 7
Chess 2001 vs Constellation

1	e4	c5	26	d8xf8+	g8xf8
2	b1c3	b8c6	27	g3h3	h6
3	f4	d6	28	h3e8	f8e7
4	g1f3	e5	29	h4	c6b6
5	f1b5	exf4	30	c8g4	c7e6
6	d4	cxd	31	g4e4	b6b5
7	d1xd4	c8d7	32	c4	b5b6
8	b5xc6	bxc6	33	g4	a5
9	c1xf4	e5	34	h5	b6c7
10	d4d2	d7c6	35	f3e1	f6
11	0-0-0	g8f6	36	e1f3	c7d7
12	h1e1	f8e7	37	exf	e7xf6
13	f4d6	0-0	38	d5e6+	f6e7
14	d2f4	d8e8	39	b3	d7d1+
15	d6c7	a8c8	40	b1b2	d1e2
16	c1b1	c6b7	41	b2a3	a4
17	f4g3	e8c6	42	f3e5	axb
18	c7d6	e7xd6	43	axb	e7d6
19	d1xd6	c6e7	44	e5d3	e2d2
20	e4e5	f6e8	45	f5e5	d6e7
21	c3d5	b7xe5	46	e5d5	d2a5+
22	d6xd5	c8d8	47	a3b2	a5d2+
23	e1d1	d8xd5	48	b2b1	d2d1+
24	d1xd5	c7c6	49	b1b2	d1d2+
25	d5d8	e8c7	50	b2a1	Here black lost on time.

Round 8
Mephisto vs Chess 2001

1	d4	d5	32	Rb1	R8c7
2	c4	c6	33	Kf1	Nf6
3	c4xd5	c6xd5	34	Kg2	Nd7
4	Nc3	Nc6	35	Bb2	e5
5	Nf3	Nf6	36	dxex	Rg6
6	Bf4	Bf5	37	Kf1	Nxe5
7	e3	e6	38	f4	Nf3
8	Bb5	Qa5	39	Rd1	Rg1+
9	Qa4	Qxa4	40	Kc2	Rxd1
10	Bxa4	Bb4	41	Kxd1	Ng1
11	0-0	Bxc3	42	Ke1	Nxh3
12	bxc3	0-0	43	Kf1	d4
13	Bb5	Rac8	44	Kg2	dxex
14	Bd6	Rfd8	45	Bc1	Nxf4
15	Ba3	Rc7	46	exf4	c2
16	h3	Na5	47	Rb2	Re6
17	Bc5	b6	48	Kg3	h5
18	Bb4	Nc4	49	f5	Kh8
19	a4	a5	50	Kh4	g6
20	Ba3	Be4	51	fxg6	fxg6
21	Rfd1	Bxf3	52	Rb5	Kg7
22	gxf3	Rdc8	53	Kg3	Kf7
23	Ba6	Ra8	54	f3	Kf6
24	Bxc4	Rxc4	55	Kh3	Kg7
25	Bb2	Rb8	56	Kg2	Kf7
26	Ra2	Re8	57	Kg3	Ke6
27	Rb1	Rc6	58	Kh4	Kf6
28	Kf1	Rcc8	59	Kh3	Ke7
29	Ke2	Kf8	60	Kg2	
30	Rg1	Ne8	Adjudicated a draw		
31	Ba3+	Kg8	Score: 1/2-1/2		

Round 9
Chess 2001 vs Caesar

1	e4e5	19	Nf3h4
2	Nf3Nf6	20	Ng5 Bxg5
3	Ne5d6	21	Bxg5 Rde8
4	Nf3Ne4	22	h3f6
5	d4d5	23	Bf4g5
6	Bb5+Bd7	24	Bd6Rhg8
7	Qe2c6	25	Re3Bf7
8	Bd3Qe7	26	Rfe1Bg6
9	Bf4Bg4	27	Bxg6 Rxe3
10	00Nd7	28	Rxe3 Rh8
11	Qe3000	29	Bf5b5
12	Nbd2 Nxd2	30	Re7Rd8
13	Nxd2 Qxe3	31	b4a6
14	fxe3 Bb4	32	Kh2g4
15	c3Be7	33	Bxg4 f5
16	e4h5	34	Bxf5 a5
17	exd5 cxd5	35	bxa5 b4
18	Rae1Be6	36	cxh4 Rg8

and Black resigned
Score: 1-0

And here, as promised in the December issue, the game between Chess 2001 and Artic's Spectrum.

White: Chess 2001. Black: Artic Spectrum. Bishop's Opening; Notes by John Nunn.

Chess 2001 was the highest-placed commercial entry and this was probably due to its superiority in quiet positions. It is unusual to see a computer find good positional moves but in this game Chess 2001 surprised me twice.

1	e2-e4	e7-e5
2	Bf1-c4	Nb8-c6
3	Nb1-c3	Bf8-b4

(Many of the programs in the PCW Tournament showed an excessive fondness for the development of the bishops at N5, followed by the exchange of bishop for knight. In this game three of the four bishops suffered such a fate, undeservedly so since normally bishops are worth slightly more than knights.)

4	a2-a3	Bb4xc3
5	d2xc3	d7-d6
6	Ng1-f3	Ng8-f6
7	Bc1-g5	0-0
8	Qd1-d3	Bc8-g4

(Here we go again! 8... Bc8-c6 was better.)

9	0-0-0	Qd8-e7
10	h2-h3	Bg4xf3?

(After this exchange Black is in serious trouble. His problem is not just that he is fighting with two knights against two active bishops, but also that the knight at f6 is pinned on a permanent basis. This was his last chance to play the bishop to e6.)

11 Qd3xf3 Nc6-a5
(Unless there is a special reason for doing so, it is bad to play a knight to the edge of the board. All the pieces have less mobility at the edge of the board than elsewhere, but knights suffer particularly badly.)

11... Nc6-d8 followed by ... Nd8-e6 attempting to repel the g5 bishop was more constructive.

12	Bc4-d5	c7-c6
13	Bd5-a2	b7-b5

(Black had to provide a retreat for his knight in case of b2-b4.)

14	Bg5xf6?
----	---------

(There is no reason why White should make this exchange voluntarily since there is no way Black can break the pin. 14 h3-h4 followed by h4-h5 or Rh1-h3 (heading for g3) would have been very unpleasant.)

14 ... g7xf6
15 Qf3-d3
(15 Rd1-d3! followed by Qf3-h5 would have been more dangerous.)

15	...	Rf8-d8
16	Rh1-e1	Ra8-b8
17	Kc1-b1	Qc7-f8
18	Rc1-e3	Qf8-c7

(As in the previous game pointless oscillations reduce Black's defensive chances.)

19 Re3-g3+
(Black's doubled f-pawns are his most serious weakness and it would have been more logical to attack them immediately by 19 Re3-f3 followed by Rf3-f5 and Qd3-f3.)

19	...	Kg8-h8
20	Kb1-c1	

(An incomprehensible move.)

20	...	Na5-b7
21	b2-b4	Rd8-g8
22	Rg3xg8+	Rb8xg8
23	g2-g4	a7-a5
24	Qd3-e3!	

(White's advantage has been steadily evaporating since move 14, but now Chess 2001 starts playing much more purposefully. The queen is heading for b6 to attack the weak Black queenside pawns.)

24	...	Rg8-c8
25	Qe3-b6	a5xb4
26	c3xb4	Nb7-d8

(Black's pieces present an abject appearance, huddled in a little group trying to defend his many weak pawns, but the next few moves show that White has trouble finding a way to step up the pressure.)

27	Kc1-b1	Re8-g8
28	Rd1-d3	Rg8-e8
29	Ba2-b3	h7-h6
30	c2-c4!	

(The exchange of pawns is forced, but then White has a new asset in his passed a-pawn.)

30	...	b5xc4
31	Bb3xc4	

(In the long run White should win even against best play since Black cannot defend c6, d6 and f7 while he is fighting the advance of the a-pawn, but in the event White has no need to put this plan into action for the Black monarch decides on a suicidal single-handed advance into hostile territory, with the inevitable consequences.)

31	...	Kh8-g7
32	Rd3-d2	Kg7-g6
33	Kb1-a2	h6-h5
34	Rd2-d1	h5xg4
35	h3xg4	Kg6-g5

(One is reminded of a helpmate problem in which both sides cooperate to finish Black off!)

36	Qb6-e3+	Kg5xg4
37	Rd1-g1+	Kg4-h4
38	Qe3-h6	mate

That's it for this month. Next issue we will look at the Budapest World Micro Chess Championship and the New York Computer Chess Championship.