

SELECTIVE SEARCH 109

THE COMPUTER CHESS MAGAZINE

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left - Garry Kasparov after winning game 3 of his match against X3D Fritz.

below - a measure of fame for *Selective Search* reader John Rhodes as he meets Malcolm Peinin London! - more inside as he then meets Kasparov!



36 page
Issue!
A Happy
CHRISTmas
to you all!

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- **PUBLICATION DATES**: Early Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, late Nov.
- **ARTICLES, REVIEWS, GAMES** sent in by Readers, Distributors, Programmers etc are more than **welcome**.

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■ **SELECTIVE SEARCH** is produced by **ERIC HALLSWORTH**.

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- All COMPUTER CHESS PRODUCTS are available from **COUNTRYWIDE COMPUTERS LTD, Victoria House, 1 High Street, Wilburton, Cambs CB6 3RB**. ☎ **01353 740323** for INFO or to ORDER.
- **FREE CATALOGUE**. Readers can ring **ERIC** at **COUNTRYWIDE**, Mon-Fri, 10.30am-5pm

CHESS COMPUTERS AND PC PROGRAMS... The BEST BUYS!

RATINGS for these computers and programs are on the back pages. This is not a complete product listing - they are what I consider to be current **BEST BUYS** bearing in mind price, playing strength, features + quality.

Further info/photos can be seen in **Countrywide's CATALOGUE**, available free if you ring or write to the address/phone no. on the front page.

Note the software prices! - some retailer prices seem cheaper, but there's a post & packing charge at the end!... **our insured delivery p&p is FREE to SS folk.** Adaptors are £9 extra. **Subscribers Offer:** buy from **Countrywide** and deduct **5% off dedicated** computer prices shown here.... **mention 'SS'** when you order.

■ PORTABLE COMPUTERS [por]

Kasparov

ADVANCED TRAVEL (was BRAVO) **£34.95** - Barracuda program! 160 BCF. Amazing value!

TOUCH SCREEN travel £49.95 - as Cosmic below, almost identical strength, with soft leather case
COSMIC £69 - hand-held Touch chess! Board displayed on screen, moves made by stylus pen, plus clocks, evaluations, hints etc.

COSMOS £99 - great value, 4½"x4½" plug-in board, strong Morsch '2100' program. Multiple levels + info display and coach system. Only a FEW left!

Novaa

STAR SAPPHIRE £179 - the long-awaited and very strong 200 BCF touch screen model. Fits just nicely in the pocket in carry case with pen

■ TABLE-TOP PRESS SENSORY [ps]

Kasparov

CHALLENGER £69 - Centurion '2000' program in newly designed board, and good value-for-money buy

BARRACUDA £79 - The Morsch '2000' prog. Compact and attractive board, display etc.

MASTER £139! - the Milano Pro program + features, but in smaller 13"x10" board, no laptop lid. Good info display. Includes plastic carry case.

Novaa

OBSIDIAN £129 - with carry case! Excellent

STAR DIAMOND £199 - long awaited, brilliant, strong new 200 BCF model. With carry case

Mephisto

MILANO PRO £249 - Morsch at RISC speed, big book, strong, good features, display, laptop lid

ATLANTA £349 - the fast hash-table version of Milano Pro=even greater strength. 64 led board

■ AUTO SENSORY [as]

Excalibur

GRANDMASTER £199! - big 2" squares, green & white vinyl auto-sensory surface. Looks great!

Mephisto

EXCLUSIVE - reduced prices! All wood board and nicely carved wood, felted pieces. Superb to play on, available with choice of 2 modules:-

with **MM6** - Morsch's 2100 program **£399**
with **SENATOR** - Milano Pro program **£499**

■ PC PROGRAMS from CHESSBASE on CD

All run **INDEPENDENTLY** + will analyse within ChessBase8. Great graphics, big databases+opening books, analysis, printing, max features
If a **NEW VERSION** should come out between **SelfSearch** arrival and your order, I'll always send the latest version!

FRITZ 8 £39.95 - by Franz Morsch. Extra chess knowledge for real **top strength** - a beautiful program! Superb interface, 'net connection, terrific Graphics. Excellent in both analysis and play, game/diagram printing. Good hobby levels, set your own Elo, many helpful features.

DEEP FRITZ 7 (8!) £75 - **new** program! for single, dual & quad processors, giving GM strength on multi-processor machines. The program which drew 4-4 with **Kramnik!**

JUNIOR 8 £39.95 - an updated version of the engine which drew 3-3 with **Kasparov**. Is very potent and aggressive, also highly suited to computer v computer chess.

DEEP JUNIOR 8 £75 for dual & single PCs!

HIARCS 9 £39.95 - **new** version by Mark Uniacke. Simply outstanding: knowledgeable & running faster+stronger than ever! All the latest superb ChessBase features + terrific graphics.

SHREDDER 7 £39.95 - Meyer-Kahlen's latest in his own & the latest ChessBase Interface. Feature-packed & knowledge-based playing stylish chess. **Deep version** (on the CD!) won the World Blitz Champs, and came 1= with Deep Junior for main title.

JUNIOR 7 £25 - 1 left! - top features in its ChessBase Interface etc. Strong: decent positional chess and aggressive with fast tactics!

DEEP JUNIOR 7 £40 - 2 left! - the multi-processor World Champion version of Junior 7!

POWERBOOKS 2003 £39 - turn your ChessBase playing engine into an **openings expert!** 7.6 million opening positions + 750,000 games!!

ENDGAME TURBO CD's £39 - turn your ChessBase playing engine into an **endgame expert** with this 4CD Nalimov tablebase set!

■ Other PC PROGRAMS on CD

CHESS TIGER 15 £46. The Lokasoft version of Christophe Theron's Tiger program and includes new Noomens opening book. ChessBase version also available **£39.95**. Both CDs also include main 4 piece Tablebases.

■ PC DATABASES on CD

CHESSBASE 8.0 for Windows £99 !!

The most popular and complete Games Database system, with the very best features. 2.3 million games, players encyclopedia, multimedia presentations, search trees, opening reports and statistics, superb printing facilities and much more, incl. 3 recent ChessBase magazines on CD!



NEWS & RESULTS - *keeping you right* *UP-TO-DATE in THE COMPUTER CHESS world!*

Welcome to, yes, another issue of *Selective Search!*

As you know some readers asked if I could keep them informed on subscription numbers each issue, so that they could anticipate the day when the number drops below 200 and *Selective Search* nears its final 6 issues:

- Issue 100 270 sent out
- Issue 105 221 sent out
- Issue 106 212 sent out
- Issue 107 203 sent out
- Issue 108 201 sent out!

Amusing, eh!? Most of the 30 subs due for renewal with 107 came in, and we got 3 new readers! As I start work in earnest on issue 109 let's hope the same will happen as the subs for 108 come in!

Occasionally readers ask me to let them know when their sub is due for renewal. The label on your envelope enclosing each issue always shows the number of the last issue covered by your current sub. so it's easy for you to keep a check on it, and make sure I've updated you correctly after a payment has been made.

Paul WALSH results

Paul has just completed a tourney which he's called the **Trans-Euro Cup**. Played as an all-play-all at 40/2, and the result is quite interesting:

Pos	Program	SelS 108 Elo	Score/9
1	Gambit Tiger 2	2637	6
2=	Ruffian 1.01 Shredder 532	- 2568	5½
4=	Shredder 7 Chess Tiger 14	2698 2635	5
6=	Fritz 7 Hiarcs 8 Junior 7	2666 2620 2616	4
9	Comet 850	-	3½
10	Crafty 19.01	-	2½

Other match games he's also played are:

- Shredder7-Fritz7 15½-12½
- Shredder7-Hiarcs8 8½-7½

In addition Paul - good man! - has just bought Hiarcs9 and Junior8 off me, so he's proposing to start a new and even bigger Tournament in the near future!

Chris GOULDEN results

Chris wrote a very useful **Winboard** article for us in SelS 107, and has recently been playing **32 Winboard engines** in double round **G/10** tournaments on Athlon/1720 hardware. You might wonder how he finds the time to do all of that, and the answer is that he's neatly followed the idea on the Ridderkerk site of breaking the engines up into 4 divisions of 8 programs in each.

Here is how the top division (the premiership!) went....

The first round was interesting as hot favourite Ruffian went down with White against Comet! A program called Little Goliath was fancied to have a chance of competing with Yace Paderborn, Pharaon, Crafty and Comet for 2nd. 3rd. and 4th. places, but it was also beaten, by LambChop, in round 1.

Ruffian beat Yace in round 2, but Comet leapt to 2/2 by beating LambChop.

In round 3 Yace beat Comet, while Ruffian beat Crafty as things began to settle down. At the half-way stage the scores were:

- 5/7 Ruffian
- 4½ Yace
- 4 LittleGoliath
- 3½ Comet
- 3 Pharaon, LambChop
- 2½ Crafty, Aristarch

Suddenly Yace fell into serious decline, losing to lowly Aristarch in round 8. It got a draw with Ruffian in round 9 to suggest the loss had been a temporary blip, but then lost to Comet in 10 and LittleGoliath in 12.

Amazingly Aristarch also beat LittleGoliath in round 10 so that, even though Ruffian only scored 2½/4 in rounds 8-11, it was already a certain winner when it beat LambChop in round 12. With its win over yace in this round

LittleGoliath seemed set for clear 2nd. place, but Pharaoh suddenly burst into life and, from a meagre 4/10, scored 3½ from its last 4!

Pos	Program: DIVISION 1	Score/14
1	Ruffian	10
2=	LittleGoliath 3.5 Pharaoh 2.62	7½
4	Comet B42	7
5	Aristarch 4.4	6½
6	Crafty 19.03	6
7	LambChop 10.99	5½
8	Yace Paderborn	5

I think it is now beyond dispute that **Perola Valfridsson's Ruffian** is by far the best of the non-commercial programs. If it had emerged 2-3 years ago it would have surely gained commercial status... maybe it still will.

In division 2, **Tao5.4** and **Thinker4.2** tied 1= leaving **Smarthink14** a bit behind - however its new version 16b2 has moved up to 9th. on the Ridderkerk list, so it should be worth looking out for in the future. The well-known **Gromit** didn't do too well either.

Pos	Program: DIVISION 2	Score/14
1=	Tao 5.4 Thinker 4.2f	8½
3	Pepito 1.58	7½
4=	Quark 2.05b Nejmet 3.06	7
6	Smarthink 14a	6½
7=	Gromit 3.8.2 Annon 5.21	5½

In division 3 the 4 year old version of **SOS** came a very creditable 2nd. **List** was lower than you'd expect considering it was in division 3, but here also there's a 5.04 version out now on the *ChessBase* site.

Pos	Program: DIVISION 3	Score/14
1	Delfi 4.1	10½
2	SOS 99.11.03	9½
3	GLC 2.18	8½
4	List 4.61	7½
5	Amy 0.81	6
6=	Francesca 0.09 KnightDreamer 3.2	5½
8	Amyan 1.59	3

The Baron won division 4, easily enough to

deserve a promotion! As Chris commented it was a shame to see the elderly statesman **The Crazy Bishop** languishing in bottom place. I was also very surprised, firstly that Chris had entered **Sjeng** in this division, and then that it did so poorly.

Pos	Program: DIVISION 4	Score/14
1	TheBaron 1.0.1	9½
2=	Wildcat 2.79 Leila 0.53h Resp 0.19	7½
5	Abrok 4.0	6½
6=	Dragon 4.43 Sienn 12.13	6
8	TheCrazyBishop	5½

New SAITEK range

The newly named Touch Screen Travel, Advanced Travel, Challenger and Master are, to be correct, basically re-badges of the Cosmic, Bravo, Centurion and Milano Pro. Program improvements are no more than one or two minor 'bug' corrections, mainly in a couple of opening book positions.

The boards are re-designed (they look a little smarter! which is good) and - here's the best bit - the prices have come down! Some by quite a lot!!

If you want to have a better look at them, and you don't automatically get one of our Countrywide Catalogues, then the best thing is to give me a ring and ask for one - this year in glorious colour. But here is a basic run down of the changes relating to the better machines, with black & white photos of the new models.

1. If you're buying a present for a **novice/hobby player** then the always popular Alchemist Plus is now called the **Talking Chess Trainer**. With 64 levels, 11 teaching modes, 16 stored Opening systems, take back, hints and bad move warning, plus the addition of a voice to encourage (or warn of bad moves), this is good value at **£34.95**.



2. The popular **Bravo** with its strong Barracuda

program is now called the **Advanced Travel Chess Computer!** The specs seem exactly the same! The Bravo was already brilliant value at £49.95, but the ATCC is only **£34.95!**

3. The Cosmic wasn't as strong as the Bravo, but used the new and popular touch screen technology. So no prizes for guessing its new name: **Touch Screen Travel Chess!** It also comes with a soft leather wallet/case. The games I played on the Cosmic and from which I gave it a 110 BCF grade were from the days when the Cosmic knew castling in its opening book, and would let its opponent castle happily enough... but it wouldn't castle for itself once out of book! We played games against the Excalibur Touch Chess and they came out 5-5. To be honest I've just not found the time to re-test it since the castling code was activated, but obviously it would be better. Indeed a game elsewhere in this issue against the Star Sapphire is quite impressive, so maybe it's around 120-125 BCF!? And the new price is **£49.95.**



4. The Centurion has gone and is replaced by the **Chess Challenger** which again uses the same 166 BCF (*SelfSearch*) program, with capture and tactical alerts, coach and study modes etc. It looks smart and the price has dropped from £79.95 to **£69.95**, which even includes the adaptor.



5. The Chess Academy (£149) is being replaced by the **Talking Chess Academy.** The board surround is in black instead of silver, but all features and the program appear to be exactly the same. The price is **£99.95**, but we have some of the original **Chess Academy** left and they are reduced to **£89.95** while stocks last.

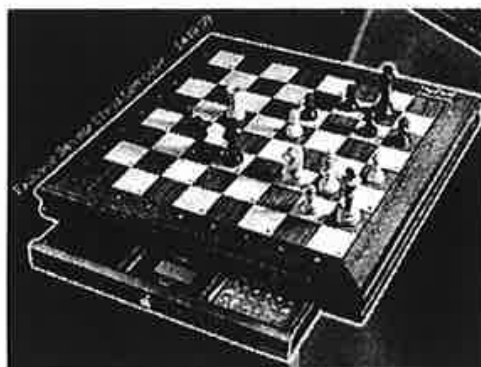
6. The **Master** replaces the Milano Pro. The playing engine and processor and all features

again are identical, but the board looks smart and comes with a plastic carry bag which replaces the hardtop lid which the Milano Pro had. The price is reduced to **£139.95** which again includes the adaptor. Obviously Saitek are hoping this will outsell the Novag paid Obsidian and Star Diamond at this price. But it isn't quite as strong as the Star Diamond, while the Obsidian, though weaker, has a slightly bigger board playing area and the carry case is a nicer fitted fabric type.



Incidentally the **Atlanta** (the hash table and faster version of the Master/Milano Pro) is now discontinued, but I have a small number left at **£349**, 'while stocks last' as they say.

7. The **Exclusive MM6** has come to the end of its days - I have 1 left at £399. After that only the **Exclusive Senator** will be available. This is the Master/ Milano Pro 188 BCF program and the new price which was recently reduced from £649 to £589 has now come down even more to **£499!!**



Reduced prices of course are great for the customers, and I'm hoping that sales numbers might get a decent boost through the Christmas period :-)) Hint, hint!

From Graham WHITE

This is from a series of Blitz (4+2) tournaments I am playing with thematic gambit openings.

Hiarcs 9 is winning so far, ahead of Shredder 7 and Fritz 7. Both Hiarcs and Shredder show hugely improved scores from their previous versions.

Gambit Openings G/4+2. Graham White

Pos	Program	Tot/56
1	Hiarcs 9	36½
2=	Shredder 7 Fritz 7 Gambit Tiger 2	32
5	Junior 7	29½
6	Chess Tiger 14	28
7	Hiarcs 8	25
8	Shredder 6	22
9	Nimzo 7	15

I'll send you some of the best games....

Just in time for inclusion:

[1] Chris GOULDEN (again!)

Chris has just sent me the results of his latest tournament, in which he mixed some commercial programs with the top amateurs.

Chris Goulden - Andover G/5

Pos	Program	/14
1	Shredder 7	10½
2	Ruffian	10
3	List 5.04	7½
4=	Fritz 6 Junior 6 Crafty 19.03	6
7	Anaconda 1.0	5½
8	Yace	4½

Chris writes: *'I was getting quite excited after round 12 as I thought I might be publishing the first tourney where Ruffian came out ahead of current top engine Shredder7. Ruffian had a ½ point lead going into round 13, but it lost to List while Shredder beat Anaconda, and that was its last chance.'*

A great result for Shredder and, especially, Ruffian, with this pair well ahead of List, a surprise 3rd. and doing pretty well to be 1½ pts clear of older Fritz and Junior versions, and the current Crafty

[2] Frank HOLT

Frank has now got all the current top versions, so his latest Table is of particular interest. As always Frank plays 2 game matches between every pair at each of Tournament 40/30, 60/60 and 40/60, and Blitz G/30, G/60 and G/90.

Frank Holt - Athlon 1800 mixed times

Pos	Engine	S7	J8	H9	F8	T15	Tot/48
1	Shredder 7.04	xx	7½	8	5½	8	29
2	Junior 8	4½	xx	6	7½	6½	24½
3	Hiarcs 9	4	6	xx	7	7	24
4	Fritz 8	6½	4½	5	xx	5½	21½
5	Tiger 15	4	5½	5	6½	xx	21

An astonishingly easy win for Shredder which, as Frank says is 'a worthy ratings leader... though not in the eyes of Big Business (Kasparov-Fritz!) even though it runs rings round Fritz8. I would say the other programs are very close to each other, and there's a big improvement with Hiarcs9'

Both Chris and Frank sent some games to accompany their results. There's not likely to be room for a 'Games Section' in this issue, but I'll try to make some in the January issue.

Carl BICKNELL on Brutus!

You asked for feedback on Brutus and I've been following its development with interest and have e-mailed chessbase numerous times. Here are some thoughts:

■ The effect of being able to add knowledge without a speed penalty seems to me to be exactly the same as running a high knowledge program on super fast hardware. In other words it's a great breakthrough but the advantages can be reproduced on any machine if one is willing to pay enough money for multiple processors etc.

■ "Brutus runs...very much faster than an Athlon / P4" - Chessbase. Wooooaaa there!! Lets just think about that statement. Is it really true? In terms of operations per second an Athlon / P4 must be WAY faster than Brutus. Intel / AMD are spending billions on cranking these things up to the max and no DIY chess card will compete with that. If Brutus is faster it must be in the sense that it can process more chess positions per second because of the inefficiency of generic processors that you get in P.C's. So in other words because Brutus is dedicated to playing chess it is probably much more efficient and therefore "faster". I make that point just because I don't think Chessbase have been plain about this and what I'm saying is that if Brutus is much faster as they claim, it is for different reasons to why Deep Blue was faster. Deep Blue was faster in the true sense of the word - whereas Brutus will be effectively faster...maybe.

■ Your point about people preferring to spend £1500 on a dual Athlon to get the same speed must be true. However, I've heard that Brutus is now going parallel so it might still be quite a bit quicker than P.C's yet - we'll

have to wait and see. In his book "Behind Deep Blue" Hsu makes the point that code entered in hardware is 100 x faster than in software - could this be true with Brutus?

■ Surely one excellent use of Brutus is to create some long overdue new dedicated machines of 2700+ Elo.
 ■ Let's assume for arguments sake that all singing & dancing Brutus is twice as fast as a dual Athlon running Fritz or some other top program. On speed alone what would that give it? Plus 20 - 30 Elo I reckon. As you can see from the grading lists the difference is MORE than that based solely on the quality of the program!! In other words my argument can be summed up like this: it's Morsh/Uniacke/whoever vs Donninger, with the latter having a 20-30 Elo head start. Is that enough to compensate for the fact that the other two seem to produce better programs? I doubt it. Not if you compare the results of Nimzo with Hiarcs, Shredder, Fritz etc etc.

Personally I really hope Brutus IS a monster. I hope it smashes the PC programs because it would generate lots of interest in chess which in the LONG term would be good for Hiarcs & co! Remember when Deep Blue was around everyone wanted their program to play it. Remember the excitement when Fritz took down the monster machine in that weird game as black? The problem was that IBM wouldn't let their Behemoth out of it's cage and both versions played what, a dozen public games? What a waste. But with Brutus we wouldn't have that problem - we'd own it!

Eric, feel free to quote any of this in the next SelSearch, even if you totally disagree with my views.

Bye for now, best wishes... *Carl*

Christmas Puzzle

I spotted the bare bones of the following article on the always interesting ChessBase web site. It seemed an excellent 'little' puzzle for *Selective Search* readers with their PC programs. Alas a couple of weeks later David Norwood beat me to it by showing the position in the Saturday *Telegraph*. But many of you might not have seen it - and he didn't publish the solution until later - so I decided to share it with you anyway.

The puzzle tends to be known as *Jim Plaskett's Chess Puzzle*, as it was he who showed the position to players at the Super GM Tournament in Brussels in 1987. No-one could do it, but the great **Mikhail Tal** later went for a walk round a local park and came back with a remarkable, beautiful solution!

'Jim Plaskett's Puzzle' - White to play & win



White's problem is that, if the pawn promotes with 1.d8=Q, Black has the fork Nf7+. Here is Tal's solution:

1. ♖f6+! ♔g7! 1... ♕g6?? 2. ♕h5+ 1-0
 2. ♕h5+ ♔g6 3. ♕c2+ ♔xh5 The computers of course all think Black is winning! 4. d8♚!
 Allowing the fork! ♖f7+ 5. ♔e6 Suddenly the PC programs show a mate for White!
 5... ♖xd8+ 6. ♔f5 e2 7. ♕e4 e1♖ If 7... e1♗
 8. ♕f3# 8. ♕d5 c2 9. ♕c4 c1♖ If 9... c1♗
 10. ♕e2+ m/2 10. ♕b5 ♖c7 11. ♕a4 ♖e2
 12. ♕d1 ♖f3 13. ♕xe2 c4 14. ♕xf3#

Sadly we must now own up, and admit that a fault has been found in the solution - these PC programs have a lot to answer for, spoiling such beauty! So can readers find the fault!

If I show you a new version of the puzzle which works, it might help! We've moved the Black knight from g5 to e5.

'JP's Puzzle' Corrected - White to play & win



1. ♖f6+! ♔g7! 2. ♕h5+ ♔g6 3. ♕c2+ ♔xh5
 4. d8♚! The moves are the same, but already now most PC progs are showing a mate for White! 4... ♖f7+ 5. ♔e6 ♖xd8+ 6. ♔f5 e2
 7. ♕e4 etc. mate/6

The fault: if Black plays 4... ♖g4 5. ♕c6 ♖f3 he has definite fighting chances for a draw!
 In the corrected version 4... ♖g4 no longer helps him as 5. ♕h4+ ♖f3 6. ♕xe5 mate/8

STAR Sapphire

NOVAG'S NEW PORTABLE UNDER TEST!

The first consignment reached me just too late to make any reference to it in our last issue - though a few folk picked up on its last minute inclusion on our page 2 'the BEST BUYS' section.

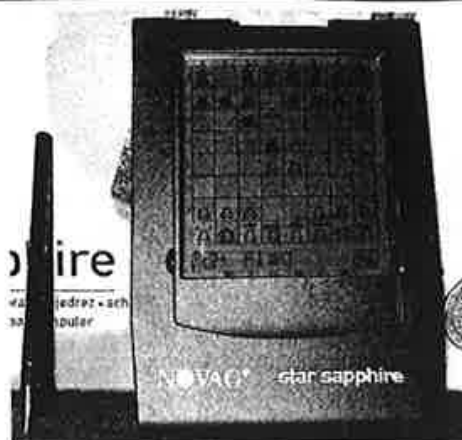
The first thing I wanted to check was that the playing engine and processor speed was the same as the Star Diamond, which had already made a promising appearance in the Rating List. Pleasingly the answer is, 'yes, it is', but less agreeable was the sight of the final display screen and chess figures en route to doing some speed and comparison tests.

These are not of the same high quality as those then still being shown on the Novag web site, as well as on the actual box containing the Star Sapphire. I immediately took my own photos of the real thing, and posted one on my web site. The fact is that to get a high quality screen with really good chess piece representation would require dot matrix technology and regrettably this would heavily increase production costs.

Disappointing... but surprisingly I soon got over this, finding it easier to get used to the figures than I'd at first expected once I'd started playing a game. Touching and moving the pieces with the stylus pen is very simple and quick, and I became even more encouraged when I started to access the cleverly arranged menus and features - okay, I needed a few brief references to the manual, but once you get into the swing of everything it becomes pretty straightforward.

Once I'd started to get more comfortable with the pieces the screen seemed okay, but the backlight does improve definition a little. It probably also reduces battery life somewhat, so I don't normally bother with it at all. It also somehow seemed nice to switch-off in mid-game and then switch back on again to find all the pieces on the screen just where you left them. Silly really, because almost all the computers have memory retention, it just seems better on the various touch screen models to see everything where you expected it to be.

There's a flip-over protective screen cover which probably needs to be treated with



respect if you want it to last for ever, but there's a decent carry case for the computer so it should be well safeguarded when it's in your pocket or briefcase.

Oh, yes, and that screw in the back holding down the battery compartment! I am told that's to comply with European regulations, apparently to stop children being able to get at your batteries... they are so dangerous you know! Well, maybe the kids are!

The basic specifications for the machine are the same as for the Diamond2/Sapphire2 - 123,000 position opening book etc. but the processor is different - a better processor but running slightly slower which seems to combine to produce a small speed-up. In fact entering all the early results into the Rating List indicated that the Star versions are a 60 Elo improvement over their predecessors. Novag says it should be 80, so we're not so far out!

One of our readers, **John Rhodes**, has just played a 6 game match between the new Star Sapphire and the original Sapphire 1! That will give us a good guide - as will his match against the Berlin Pro 68020 (next issue!).

But before we see how those games went, here's a couple of others. The first is grossly unfair, as I played it at the office against Hiarcs9 running on a P4/1800, but when the programs came out of the opening books they reached a very sharp position, which just shows how wary you need to be at all times. The second game might also seem unfair, this time being against the much lower graded Cosmic - but the latter put up a good show and we have probably under-rated it.

Star Sapphire - Hiarcs9

G/30. Opening D49

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘c3 e6 4.e3 ♘f6 5.♘f3
 ♘bd7 6.♙d3 dxc4 7.♙xc4 b5 8.♙d3 a6 9.e4
 c5 10.e5 cxd4 11.♘xb5 ♘xe5 12.♘xe5 axb5
 13.♚f3?!

Played from the Star Sapphire book, but Mark Uniacke and I think this is slightly doubtful. We prefer 13. ♖xb5+ ♕d7 14. ♖xd7 ♖a5+ 15. ♕d2 ♖xb5 16. ♖xf8 ♖xf8∞ 13... ♕b4+ 14. ♖e2 ♖b8 15. ♖g3 ♖d5



With this we finally put the StarS out of its book!

16. ♖f3! e5 17. ♔xg7?!

Tempting, but probably unwise. 17. ♖xe5+ ♖xe5+ 18. ♔xe5 is better but the resulting game rather mundane

17...e4!

Without its opening book Hiarcs would take over a minute to find this very strong move. Earlier in the search the more obvious 17... ♖g8 would top the list, expecting 18. ♗xf6 and now 18... e4. But e4 is actually stronger played at move 17 which is why we put it in the book there, otherwise ♖g8 could get played in fast time control games 18. ♗xh8+ ♔e7



Okay, so what should the StarS do now? It's a rook up, but its king has the Black army in its face

19. ♔f1?

The wrong way! Best was 19.♔d1 and now H9 would have played 19...exf3 as in the game, but here the presence of the king on d1

enables 20.♔d2 and White is probably okay – his king isn't in too bad a spot and both rooks are activated

19...exf3! 20.♔g7

If 20.g4!? ♖e5! threatens mate on e1 and White only has losing moves, e.g. 21.♔g1 ♕xg4 22.♖xb8 ♖xb8 0-1

20...fxg2+ 21.♔xg2 ♕h3 22.♔xh3 ♔xh1+



Material is back to equal but Black is still on the attack

23. ♖e2 ♜e1+ 24. ♔f3 ♜d1+ 25. ♙e2 ♜c2
26. ♜h4

There are no saving moves so this is no worse than anything else.

E.g. 26. ♔g2 ♚xe2 and if 27. ♕g5 ♖g8 0-1;

Or 26. ♔g5 ♖e4+ 27. ♙g3 ♜d6+ 0-1
26... ♙g8 27. ♔g5 ♖f5+ 28. ♙g2 ♜xg5+
29. ♙h1 ♖d5+ 30. f3 ♜h5 31. ♖f2 ♜d6
32. ♜d3 ♜g4 33. ♖e2+

and the StarS resigned just as H9 announced m/14 with 33... ♖e3 0-1

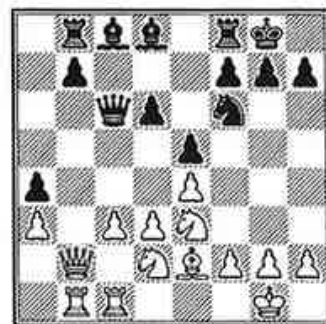
Cosmic - Star Sapphire

Played by John Rhodes. G/60. B23

**1.e4 c5 2.♘c3 e6 3.♘f3 a6 4.♙e2 ♘c6
5.d3?!**

This 'new' move by the Cosmic puts both machines out of book. Regular lines are 5.0-0, and 5.d4

5...d6 6.♙e3 ♖b6 7.♗b1 ♜f6 8.0-0 ♜d4
9.♙xd4 cxd4 10.♜d1 e5 11.c3 dxc3 12.bxc3
♖c6 13.♗b4 ♙e7 14.♜e3 a5 15.♗b2 0-0
16.♙ab1 a4 17.a3 ♙d8 18.♜d2 ♖b8 19.♙fc1



19...♙e6?

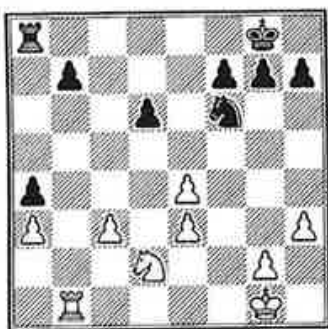
Better was 19...♙d7 protecting the a-pawn, then if 20.d4 ♙a5=

20.d4! ♙d7 21.h3?

Better was 21.♙b5! The timing of this move is important – right here it would give White a clear advantage 21...♙xb5 22.♙xb5 ♙xb5 23.♙xb5 ♙e8 24.♙dc4!± 21...♙a5 22.♙b5?!

Now it is not so good! Better was 22.dxe5 dxe5, and then 23.♙b5, though here the advantage to White is not so great after 23...♙c7 24.♙dc4 ♙b6

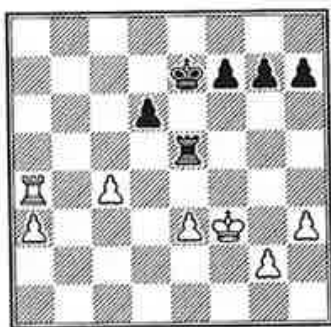
22...♙xb5 23.♙xb5 ♙xb5 24.♙xb5 exd4 25.♙xa5 dxe3 26.fxe3 ♙a8 27.♙xa8 ♙xa8 28.♙b1



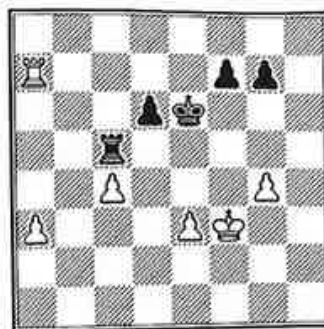
Amazing, the Cosmic is probably still just about level, as Black has some problem defending both the a and the b pawns 28...♙f8?!

The Novag decides to let the b-pawn go in order to activate its king and other pawns, so as to keep the Cosmic on the defensive. Initiative can be just as important in the endgame, but it's risky to go a pawn down at this stage and allow your opponent's rook onto the 7th rank!

29.♙xb7 ♙c8 30.c4 ♙e8 31.♙b4 ♙xe4 32.♙xe4 ♙xe4 33.♙f2! ♙e7 34.♙f3 ♙e5 35.♙xa4



The Cosmic is still a pawn up! 35...♙f5+ 36.♙e2 ♙g5 37.g4 h5! 38.♙a7+ ♙e6 39.♙f3 hxc4+ 40.hxc4 ♙c5



41.a4?

The cheaper Cosmic program isn't big enough to include knowledge for rooks behind pawns, so Novag is able to get right back into the game. With 41.♙a4 f5 42.gxf5+ ♙xf5 43.e4+ White would still be just ahead! 41...♙xc4 42.a5 ♙a4! 43.e4 f6 44.a6?!

Better was 44.♙xg7 ♙xa5=

44...g5?!

Quite a risk. 44...♙a3+ 45.♙f2 g5 46.♙e2! ♙e5 kept the draw in sight 45.♙e3!

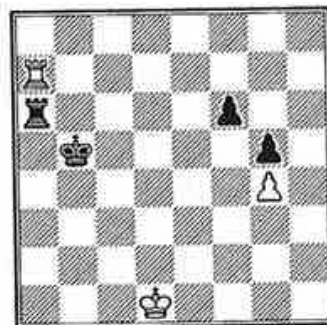
From this move it seems that the Cosmic might know something of how to use its king in the ending, but subsequent moves unfortunately suggest otherwise, otherwise it might well have won from here!

45...d5 46.exd5+?!

Do you know I think 46.♙a8! ♙a3+ 47.♙d4 ♙a4+ 48.♙c5 dxe4 49.a7 would have been close to causing a major shock! 46...♙xd5 47.♙f3 ♙c5 48.♙e2 ♙b5 49.♙d1?!

Here 49.♙f3 would certainly get the Cosmic the draw. But the game still isn't lost, it's a great effort against its illustrious opponent.

49...♙xa6



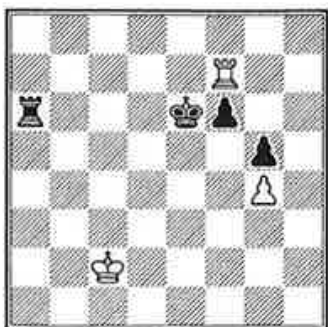
50.♙f7?

50.♙xa6 ♙xa6 51.♙d2 is a draw, but the persistent small endgame inaccuracies make it less and less likely that the Cosmic will now save the game, especially as the Star-S is now beginning to find the right moves towards a win

50...♔c5! 51.♔c1?

51.♔e2 had to be played. Now the game cannot be saved

51...♔d5 52.♔c2 ♕e6



And we would expect the Novag to win from here, which it does...

53.♖c7 ♖a4! 54.♕b3 ♖xg4 55.♖c6+ ♔e5
56.♖c5+ ♔d6 57.♖b5 ♔c6 58.♖f5 ♖f4
59.♖a5 g4! 60.♖a7 f5 61.♖h7 g3 62.♖g7 ♖g4
63.♖xg4 fxg4 0-1

A pretty courageous effort by the Cosmic. As the Star Diamond/Sapphire seem to be established at 200-205 BCF, this performance suggests that the Cosmic must be higher than the 110 BCF I have been showing - it may even be 125 BCF. I need to create some spare time to give it some games against a 140-150 BCF type opponent, and see if it can get one or two draws or wins against that.

Now we come to the other **John Rhodes** games, but before we do I must let you read a short e-mail he sent me. You will remember in our last issue that I printed an 'advert' for Kasparov's London visit to *Chess & Bridge* on Euston Road. John made it there....

I went to the Chess Centre to see Garry Kasparov and, due to catching an earlier train running late (!), I arrived in London sooner than expected and found myself at the head of the queue at 8:50am!

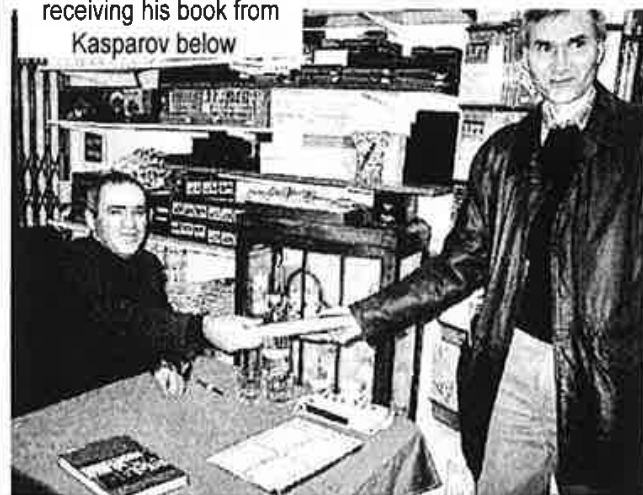
Within about 20 minutes others turned up and Malcolm Pein made us pose for some photos at the front of the shop, and later I had my photo taken with Kasparov as he handed me the signed book.

A very enjoyable morning!

Best Regards... John Rhodes



John Rhodes greeted by Malcolm Pein above, and receiving his book from Kasparov below



In John's first match the **Star Sapphire** played 6 games against the original **Sapphire1** which had a 2109 rating in our issue 108. If the Star Sapphire is 2210 as we showed there, then the 100 Elo gap should translate into a 3½-2½ win for the new program. Let's see!

We start with game 1, which is quite short and, as John says, impressive.

Star Sapphire - Sapphire 1

G/60. Game 1. Opening B99.

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6
5.♘c3 a6 6.♙g5 e6 7.f4 ♙e7 8.♙f3 ♙c7
9.0-0-0 ♘bd7 10.g4 b5 11.♙xf6 ♘xf6 12.g5
♘d7 13.f5



13...dxc5 All main line theory so far, though here. 13...xg5+ 14.b1 de5 is also played quite frequently 14.f6 gxf6 15.gxf6 f8 16.g1 d7 17.a3 17.g7 xg7 18.fxg7 g8 19.e5 is shown as giving White the advantage, though the continuation 19...0-0-0 got a draw in a game on my database 17...h6+?! 17...b6 18.h5 0-0-0 is also on my database and was a draw (isn't 18...b4 better?) 18.b1



18...c8?? Oh dear. Whilst 18...0-0-0 19.h5 f4 20.g7 certainly puts Black in difficulties, the game is by no means lost after 20...b8 21.xh7 xh7 22.xh7 f8 19.xb5+ If you check out 19.dxb5!! axb5 20.dxb5



you'll see that White could actually have won even more quickly! Even so, the finish in the game is also pretty swift! 19...f8 20.h3 f4 21.h4 e3 22.g3 axb5 23.dxb5 b8 24.xd6 h5 25.xf7 1-0

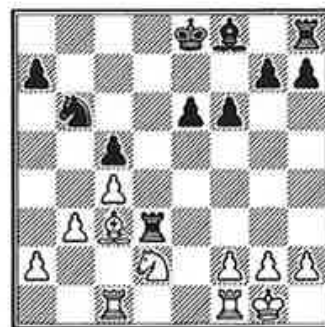
The Star Sapphire also won a lengthy game 2. John says: 'After the first couple of games I

thought it might be a whitewash, but game 3 was drawn' so bringing us to game 4...

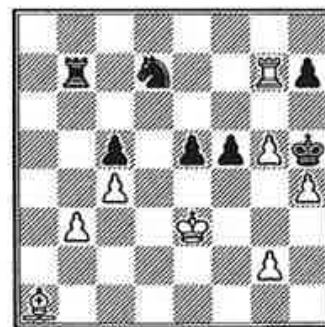
Sapphire 1 - Star Sapphire

G/60. Game 4. B01: Scandinavian Defence

1.e4 d5 2.exd5 f6 3.d4 xd5 4.c4 b6 5.f3 g4 6.e2 e6 7.0-0 c6 8.b3 xf3 9.xf3 xd4 10.xb7 b8 11.e3 xb7 The program books have gone quite deep, but here 11...c5 12.xd4 xb7 13.c3 d7 is preferred... Schulz-Schneider, 2001 1/2-1/2 12.xd4 xd4 13.xd4 c5 14.c3 d7 15.d2 d3 16.acl f6

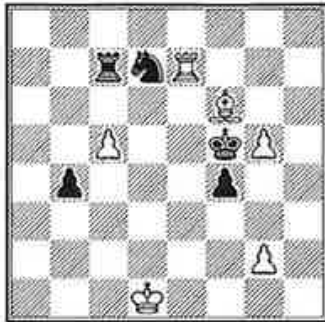


Now perhaps Black can get his development finished: the centre is reasonably secure and the f8-e can finally be extricated to release the h8-e... if White will allow him time! 17.f8d1 e7 18.d4 xd1+ 19.xd1 0-0 20.f4 f5 21.g5 xg5 22.fxg5 e8 23.e5 e7 24.d8+ f7 25.f1 b7 26.e2 d7 27.a1 White's passive play is in danger of letting the Star-S back into the game 27...e5! 28.e3 a5 29.a8 g6 30.h4 h5?! 30...a4 was better 31.g8! a4?! Black needed to admit his last move couldn't work and return the king to g6 31...g6 32.xg7 The pin on Black's knight will hurt him more and more as the game continues 32...axb3 33.axb3



Of course Black has problems, but there are still drawing chances. 33...xh4? 33...xb3+ 34.d2 a3 35.b2 a2 36.xh7+ g4 37.c1 f8 38.h6 e4 with a fighting chance for the draw 34.xe5!

This gives White a big advantage as the bishop cannot be taken 34...♔g4 35.♔e2 ♖a7 36.♔e1?! f4 37.♙f6 ♔f5 38.♙xh7 ♔e6 39.♙e7+ ♔f5 39...♔d6!? could have been tried in the hope of getting a position where the king protects the rook, so freeing the poor knight to get back in the game 40.♔d1 ♙c7 41.b4! cxb4 42.c5!



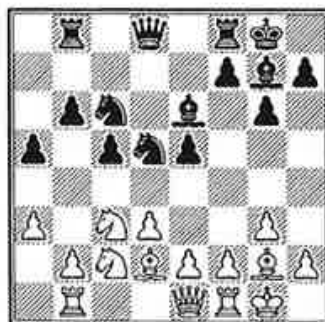
Exploiting the pinned knight again 42...♙xf6 No other choice really 43.♙xc7 ♔d5 43...♔xg5 doesn't work either: 44.c6! 44.♙f7+ ♔xg5 45.c6 b3 46.♔c1 ♔g6 47.♙xf4 ♔g5 Of course if 47...♙xf4 48.c7! 48.♙f3 ♔c7 49.♔b2 ♔e6 50.♙xb3 Hiarc's finds a forced mate here with 50.c7! but the game will be over soon enough anyway 50...♔f4 51.♙b7 ♔e5 52.♙d7 ♔c5 53.c7! Hurray 53...♙xd7 54.c8♙ 1-0

So, from a 2-0 start, the **Star Sapphire** suddenly only leads by 2½-1½, with 2 to play. But game 5 sees an amazing blunder!

Star Sapphire - Sapphire 1

G/60. Game 5. A37: Symmetrical English vs ...g6

1.c4 c5 2.♔c3 ♔c6 3.g3 g6 4.♙g2 ♙g7 5.♔f3 e5 6.0-0 ♔ge7 7.d3 0-0 8.a3 d6 9.♙b1 a5 10.♔d2 ♙b8 11.♔e1 ♙e6 12.♔c2 d5 13.cxd5 ♔xd5 14.♙e1?! Once again the big Novag books took the programs well into the game, but here the **Star Sapphire** varies. Both 14.♔xd5 and 14.♔e4 are in theory 14...b6



There's little or nothing in it – perhaps Black has a space advantage, but the White bishops

have plenty of scope 15.♔e3 ♔xe3 16.fxe3 ♙d7 17.♙d1 c4!? One of two good moves available to the **Sapphire1**. I think 17...f5! would also have been strong here, and both moves give Black an advantage at this stage of the game 18.♔e1 cxd3 19.♙xd3



19...♙fd8?! Too clever, and this really wasn't necessary. With the simple 19...♙xd3 20.exd3 ♔e7 21.♔e4 ♙h6 Black would have an enduring advantage against the hanging d and e pawns 20.♙xd7! ♔xd7 21.♙d1! ♔e7 22.♔f2



22...♔c6?! This isn't all that bad, but with 22...e4! Black would still be equal as, after 23.♔xe4 ♙g4! 24.♔c3, he has 24...b5 and definite compensation for the pawn. Easier to see when you've got a **Shredder** or **Hiarc's** to check your analysis with! 23.e4! ♔e8 24.♙xd8 h5?? But this is totally unfathomable, even though partly brought on by spending long thinking time on earlier, complicated moves! Obviously 24...♙xd8 has to be played, and then there is still plenty in the game. In fact White would have only a small advantage after 25.♔d5 ♔xd5 26.exd5 ♙d6 27.e4! f5! 28.♔e3, and is far from being sure of the full point. After the game John took moves back and tried to get the **Sapphire1** to repeat this amazing blunder, but it would not. 25.♙xb8 and suddenly White finds itself with the gift of two rooks for... nothing! 25...♔f8 26.♙xb6 1-0. Game 6 was drawn, so the **Star Sapphire** won 4-2!

[**Star-S matches v BerlinPro & MilanoPro... SS110 !**]

The UTZINGER & BUHLER TESTS

Kurt Utzinger and **Rolf Buhler** are new names to me, but they have an impressive and interesting web site which was brought to my attention by **Manfred Meiler** recently (see results of his *WM-Test* in *SelSearch* 108, page 18) during discussions over whether *Hiarcs9* is better on normal or aggressive.

In the main I have just drawn from the site the various recent tournament results, but for those interested in their comments and other statistics, the web address is:

■ <http://www.utzingerkurt.com>

The setup (**8 engines**) is **engine-v-engine** all-play-all 10 games each match.

The PC is an **Athlon 1.3/64 MB** hash each engine. The Time control: **60/2hrs** plus 30/1hr and G/30 finish. Ponder=off, 3/4-men tablebases in use. Except where stated all programs use their own books with book learning turned off. All games under ChessBase-GUI *Hiarcs8*. Testers: **Rolf Bühler**, Zurich / **Kurt Utzinger**, Wetzikon (Schweiz)

RK 2003 - Tournament table 1

Pos	Program	S7	King	J8	F8	DSing	CT15	Ruff	H8	Tot/70
1	Shredder 7.04	xxx	5½	4	6	7	8½	5	7½	43½
2	The King 3.23 skr settings	4½	xxx	5	6½	6½	6	7½	7	43
3	Junior 8	6	5	xxx	3	7	6	7½	7	41½
4	Fritz 8	4	3½	7	xxx	4½	6½	8	6	39½
5	Deep Sjeng 1.5	3	3½	3	5½	xxx	5	4½	7	31½
6	Chess Tiger 15	1½	4	4	3½	5	xxx	5½	6	29½
7	Ruffian 1.05	5	2½	2½	2	5½	4½	xxx	6	28
8	Hiarcs 8	2½	3	3	4	3	4	4	xxx	23½

It was a close win for Stefan Meyer-Kahlen's **Shredder**, but considering the many other tournaments and results, it is a further sign that its first place in both the SSDF and Selective Search rating lists is fully justified. Why is **Shredder 7.04** so strong? We believe it knows perhaps the best of all programs how to deal with the middle game. The endgame is still good, but not so much better than most other engines, though it can be seen that **Shredder 7.04** uses the endgame tablebases quite early and in a very efficient way.

In second place was **The King 3.23** (SKR settings), only half a point behind. In Tournament 1 it used the strong and narrow **Fritz7** general.ctg opening book. Please note that the same engine but with the wider and less strongly 'tuned for success' **remis.ctg** got 10½ points less out of its 70 games - see Tournament table 2. The influence of the opening books seems to be much higher than we have imagined.

For a long time it seemed **Junior 8** might come top, but the loss to **Fritz 8** ended its hopes. For many chessplayers **Junior 8** is something of a mystery, but of course a 'must have' program! The dynamic playing style often leads to very exciting winning games but also to games with errors that will hardly be seen with other top engines. We are still unable to give an objective appraisal of this most interesting program... what however can be said is that **Junior 8** depends more than other programs on its well optimised opening book, which surely contributes a great deal to the overall strength of **Junior 8**. This was seen in a tournament we interrupted but where all engines had to use the book **remis.ctg**. At the time we decided to stop this tournament, **Junior 8** had played 21 games and was in last place with only 7½ points.

With **Fritz8** in 4th. place there is a big drop between the top 4 and the bottom 4!

The performance of **Deep Sjeng 1.5** was a great surprise. Before starting our tournament it was being argued that the Belgium engine would not have much chance in this strong field. The main reason for its good result was the clear win of 7-3 vs Hiarcs 8, the win vs Fritz 8 and the draw vs Chess Tiger 15. To describe the playing style of this engine is not so easy. It prefers or plays stronger in closed and half-open positions. The classical e4/e5 openings do not suit it very well, and improvements should be made in the endgame.

As for **Chess Tiger 15** the main reason for its disappointment was the heavy loss by 1½-8½ vs Shredder 7.04. This looks strange and the question could the latter engine be a dreaded opponent for Chess Tiger 15. This is however not the case when we consider the rating lists or compare some results at faster time controls. But when we go to the SSDF list, with games also at longer time controls (tournament level 40/120) we find there that Shredder 7.04 won big by 30-10. We get the impression that Chess Tiger 15 finds good moves rather early and that playing strength does not considerably increase with more thinking time.

Ruffian obtained a very reasonable score of 40%. The amateur engine of Perola Valfridsson plays all phases of the game rather well and is a dangerous opponent for all other engines even though it suffered a crushing 2-8 against Fritz. The version 1.05 has not been released for public but it is perhaps not stronger than 1.01 with only minor corrections.

Hiarcs 8 was unable to win a single match. One reason for this - we noticed this in many games - the opening book does not work well for fighting other engines.

A final observation: Please note that it was just one tournament among many others and it is not wise to draw too many conclusions, which can be wrong.

Some statistics, out of 280 GAMES

- White Wins : 99 (35.4%)... performance 57%
 - Black Wins : 60 (21.4%)... performance 43%
 - Draws : 121 (43.2%)... rather high, possibly due to 'tight' opening books!?
-
- ◆ ECO A = 9 Games (3.2 %)
 - ◆ ECO C = 39 Games (13.9 %)
 - ◆ ECO E = 52 Games (18.6 %)
 - ◆ ECO B = 137 Games (48.9 %)
 - ◆ ECO D = 43 Games (15.4 %)

We see at a quick glance that the chess computer opening books clearly prefer open (1.e4) and half-open lines. Openings with code ECO A are represented in only nine games.

As already mentioned the choice of the opening books is very important. The same tournament would have gone completely differently had The King 3.23 SKR used the remis.ctg instead of the general.ctg.

RK 2003 - Tournament table 2

Pos	Program	Tot/70
1	Shredder 7.04	44
2=	Junior 8 Fritz 8	42
4	Deep Sjeng 1.5	34
5	The King 3.23 skr settings	32½
6	Ruffian 1.05	31
7	Chess Tiger 15	29½
8	Hiarcs 8	25

What caused the big drop in The King's score? Replaying all its games but using the less powerful and also wider 'remis' opening book resulted in the following big score changes which combined together to bring about a drop from 2nd. to 5th:

- Against Fritz8 it lost 4-6 instead of winning 6½-3½
- Against Deep Sjeng it also lost 4-6 instead of winning 6½-3½
- Against Ruffian it lost 4½-5½ instead of winning 7½-2½ !!
- Against Hiarcs8 it won 5½-4½ instead of winning 7-3

To test only the engines, we need to play with them all using the same opening book, an idea which we started and abandoned part way through. If, sometime, we did that, we would however be able to compare more exactly just the engines on their own, and then deduce which opening books worked best for their programs!

Since all of this we have of course also now tested **Hiarcs 9** and worked out a crosstable (see below) where all games of Hiarcs 8 have been replaced by the latest version of Mark Uniacke's fine program. And instead of 25/70 (35.7%) for Hiarcs 8, the Hiarcs 9 engine got 33½/70 (47.8%) thus giving clear proof of the improvements between the old and new versions. Frankly spoken we had expected an even better result, but the program in our opinion is a very strong one.

RK 2003 - Tournament table 3

Pos	Program	S7	King	J8	F8	H9	DSjng	CT15	Ruff	Tot/70
1	Shredder 7.04	xxx	5½	4	6	5½	7	8½	5	41½
2=	The King 3.23 skr settings	4½	xxx	5	6½	4	6½	6	7½	40
2=	Junior 8	6	5	xxx	3	5½	7	6	7½	40
4	Fritz 8	4	3½	7	xxx	6	4½	6½	8	39½
5	Hiarcs 9	4½	6	4½	4	xxx	5½	5	4	33½
6	Deep Sjeng 1.5	3	3½	3	5½	4½	xxx	5	4½	29
7	Chess Tiger 15	1½	4	4	3½	5	5	xxx	5½	28½
8	Ruffian 1.05	5	2½	2½	2	6	5½	4½	xxx	28

Since this we have played **Hiarcs9** in two 30 game engine-engine matches at G/90+30secs and results have improved to our expectations: v **Shredder7.04** 14-16, and v **Junior8** 15-15.

Note from Eric

I find the above all very interesting! I'm sure we all do! I have included in the text some of the conclusions drawn by the testers, **Kurt Utzinger** and **Rolf Buhler**, and the results and their views give us much food for thought!

Mark Uniacke (the Hiarcs programmer, as I'm sure you all know by now!) and I have been watching the Hiarcs9 games, played on our own PC's and also gathered from pgn and cbv files produced by other users. We've reached the same conclusion when it comes to opening books. The Hiarcs9 book is so much better than the one in Hiarcs8, not particularly because of the extra work I've put into it, but mainly because Mark has re-written the ChessBase coding for integrating the GM book with it. The result is that the default percentages make much more sense and for all general and human use it's a big improvement. But we've still kept it so that things like 1.c4 and 1.Nf3 can be played, and as a response to 1.e4, whereas everyone else seems to stick to 1...e5 or c5, we allow e6, c6 and Nf6 as well - to be played less often it's true, but they will get played. Some of our supporters have e-mailed urging us to get much more stingy, and are telling us that, to top any of the computer-vs-computer rating lists (which the engine is capable of doing) we have to make the opening book meaner. I guess Utzinger and Buhler are telling us the same thing!

But what do users want? I know that the different programs have their own supporters, a bit like football teams I guess. Many love Hiarcs - quite right too! I know of others who support Junior through thick and thin because of its risky 'you never know what it might do' style. It also has a narrow highly-tuned book! Others are great Shredder fans - it does play some superb chess and it's my second favourite. Fritz still sells more than any other, and its reputation for all-round quality is well deserved. Do these 'supporters' prefer to see the program they've got near the top of a computer rating list, even if by virtue of a mean book, or would they rather see their program playing the French, Caro-Kann and Alekhines (and many other lines) automatically, rather than having to key a few moves in to force openings the program would not otherwise play. I ask because I wonder what the aim should be for Hiarcs 10!

Open Dutch Champs 2003

The **Open Dutch** Championships for **PC programs** runs alongside the **Gebruikers Tournament** for **dedicated machines** each year. **Rob van Son** has sent me results, pictures and games from the Gebruikers event, and I will include some of that in this issue, and put the rest in issue 110.

Main Entrants - Open Dutch PC event

I have put these in a 'seeding' order based on reputation and hardware for the tournament.

1. ChessTiger	AMD/2400
2. TheKing	AMD/2200
3. Rebel	AMD/2800
4. DeepSjeng	dual AMD/2200
5. Ruffian	AMD/2800
6. Diep	dual AMD/2200

I would probably have put the dangerous **King** program top, but its hardware is a little below the others. Equally I may have **Deep Sjeng** a little low... though the few results I have for it so far suggest it is below other leading commercial programs, Utzinger's results (elsewhere in this issue) are better, and the dual processor might enable it to exceed my expectations! Likewsie **Diep**. It's a big test for the so-far amateur program **Ruffian**.

Let's see how it goes as I list the results between my forecasted main contenders and any others from IsiChess, The Baron, Tao, XiniX, Ant, Zzzzzz, Nullmover and GNU which manage to threaten or cause upsets....

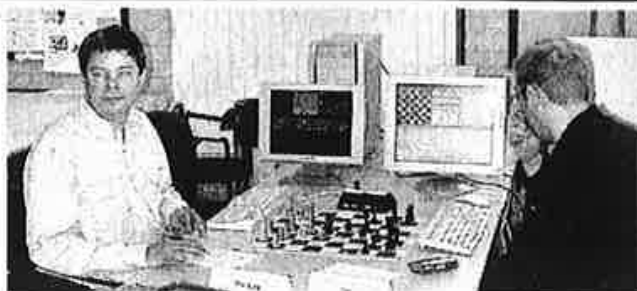
Round 1

Ruffian-ChessTiger	draw
XiniX-TheKing	draw !
DeepSjeng-Nullmover	1-0
Rebel-Ant	1-0
Diep-TheBaron	1-0

Round 2

ChessTiger-Xinix	1-0
TheKing-Rebel	1-0
Nullmover-Ruffian	0-1
IsiChess-DeepSjeng	draw
Tao-Diep	0-1

So **Diep** has made a great start (against non-fancied opposition) and is sole leader with its 2/2. ChessTiger, TheKing, Ruffian,



Johan de Koning's The King in play against Tao

DeepSjeng and IsiChess all have 1½.

Round 3

DeepSjeng-ChessTiger	draw
Ruffian-TheKing	1-0 !!
Rebel-TheBaron	1-0
Diep-IsiChess	0-1

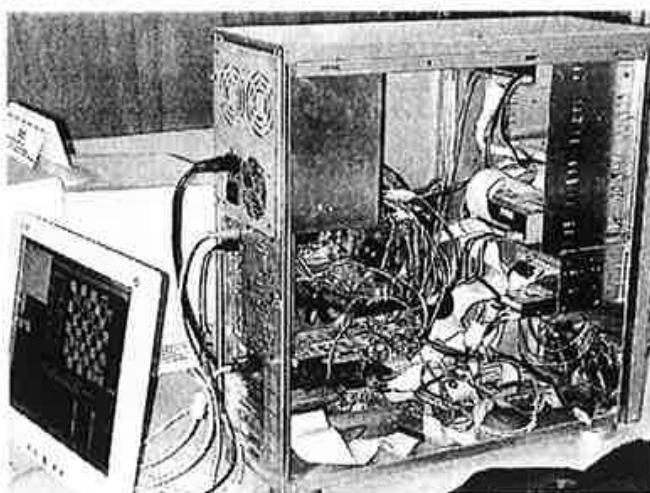
Diep's high position was short-lived, and now **IsiChess** joins **Ruffian** (what a win over TheKing!) in 1= place with 2½/3. There's a few programs on 2/3, it's early days yet!

Ruffian - The King

Round 3. Opening D45

1.d4 c6 2.c4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.e3 e6 5.♘f3
 ♘bd7 6.♙e2 ♙d6 7.♖c2 0-0 8.0-0 ♖e7 9.a3
 e5 10.cxd5 10.dxe5 ♘xe5 11.cxd5 cxd5
 12.♙d1 is the usual way of play here
 10...cxd5 11.♘b5 e4 Black maintains a
 small space advantage from here which
 makes it difficult for Ruffian to get into the
 game 12.♘e1 ♘b8 13.♙d2 ♘c6 14.♙c1 ♙b8
 15.♖b3 a6 16.♘c3 ♙d8 17.g3 ♙h3 18.♘g2
 ♙a7 19.♙a4 ♖d7 20.♘c5 ♙xc5 21.♙xc5
 ♙g4 22.♙xg4 ♘xg4 23.♙fc1 ♘f6 24.♖d1
 ♙dc8 25.♘f4 b6 26.♙5c3 ♘e7 27.♖b3 ♙xc3
 28.♙xc3 ♙b8 29.♘g2 a5 30.♙c1 ♖d8 31.♖b5
 ♘e8 32.b4 ♘d6 33.♖e2 ♙a8 34.bxa5 bxa5
 35.♙c5 ♘b7 36.♙c2 ♖d7 37.♘g1 ♘d6
 38.♙c5 ♖a4 39.♙c7





Diep's dual processor hardware system!

The rook's attack along the 7th rank is the first real sign of initiative for Ruffian, but the timing is perfect and it yields immediate dividends! 39...♖g6 The alternative was 39...♙e8 40.♘g2 ♗xa3 41.♗a6 ♕ef5 42.♗xa5 ♗b3 and the next few moves would be very tense! 40.♕xd5! ♗xa3 41.♙c6! There are various threats, including ♕c7 and ♕c1, or ♙a6. Black now has only difficult choices! 41...♙d8 If 41...♕f5 42.♗b5 threatening ♕c7 is obviously strong, but Black's chances are probably better than in the game after Ruffian's next 42.♗a6! ♕e8 43.♙c8! ♙xd5 44.♗c6!



44...♙g5 45.♗xe8+ ♕f8 46.♕c1! Now the Black ♗ must stay somehow on the a3-f8 diagonal to save the knight and the game 46...♗b4 47.♙b8 ♗d6 48.♙d8 ♗b4 49.♕d2 ♗a3 50.d5! Game over! Since move 39 Ruffian's play has been irresistible! 50...h6 51.♕e1 h5 52.d6 ♕h7 53.♗xf8 ♕g6 54.d7 ♗d3 55.♗h8 1-0

Round 4

IsiChess-Ruffian	0-1 impressive!
ChessTiger-Rebel	draw
TheKing-Ant	1-0
Diep-DeepSjeng	draw

- 3½ Ruffian
- 3
- 2½ TheKing, ChessTiger, DeepSjeng, Rebel, IsiChess, Diep
- 2 Tao, TheBaron, XiniX

It looks as if it's all over after the first day's games... but not yet!

Round 5

Ruffian-Diep	draw !
Rebel-IsiChess	1-0
DeepSjeng-TheKing	1-0 !!
Tao-ChessTiger	0-1
XiniX-TheBaron	0-1

So **Ruffian's** lead is cut to a ½ point, ahead of Rebel, DeepSjeng and ChessTiger.

Round 6

DeepSjeng-Ruffian	draw !
ChessTiger-TheBaron	1-0
Diep-Rebel	draw
TheKing-Zzzzzzz	1-0
GNUchess-IsiChess	0-1
Nullmover-Tao	0-1

- 4½ ChessTiger, Ruffian
- 4 DeepSjeng, Rebel
- 3½ TheKing, IsiChess, Diep
- 3 Tao, TheBaron

Round 7

IsiChess-ChessTiger	draw
Ruffian-Rebel	1-0 !
Tao-DeepSjeng	draw
TheKing-Diep	1-0
TheBaron-GNUchess	1-0

The important win for **Ruffian** moves it back into the lead a ½ point ahead of Tiger, while Rebel drops back a little.

Round 8

TheBaron-Ruffian	0-1
ChessTiger-TheKing	0-1 !
Rebel-DeepSjeng	draw
IsiChess-Ant	1-0
GNUchess-Diep	0-1

Round 9

Ruffian-Tao	1-0
ChessTiger-Nullmover	1-0
TheKing-IsiChess	1-0
DeepSjeng-XiniX	1-0
Rebel-GNUchess	1-0
Diep-Zzzzzzz	1-0

The King and Ruffian have each had 3 wins in a row, so this means:

- 7½ Ruffian
- 7
- 6½ TheKing
- 6 ChessTiger, DeepSjeng
- 5½ Rebel, Diep
- 5 IsiChess, TheBaron

And just when you think 'now it really is all over', with only 2 rounds to play....

Round 10

XiniX-Ruffian

1-0 huh ???



The Ruffian team try to work out what on earth is going on against lowly XiniX!

XiniX - Ruffian

Round 10. Opening B73

1.e4 c5 2.♘c3 ♘c6 3.♘f3 g6 4.d3 ♘g7
5.♘d2 ♘f6 6.♘e2 d5 7.0-0 0-0 8.♘f4 dxe4
8...d4 is usual. That's the end of the books
9.dxe4 ♖b6 10.♘b5 ♖d8 11.♖c1 ♘e8
12.♘d2 a6 13.♘c3 ♘e6 14.♖e1 ♖d7 15.♘d1
♖ad8 16.c3 ♘e5 17.♘e3 ♖c7 18.f4 ♘g4
19.♘xg4 ♘xg4 20.♘f2 ♘e6 21.♘f3 ♖a5
22.♘g5 ♘c4 23.b3 h6 24.♘f3



24...♘d3? Too aggressive. 24...♘e6 blocks his own e-pawn but, as White's pawn on c3 is now under attack, he would probably play 25.e5 and after 25...♘d5 Black's solved the problem and his position seems okay again

25.♘e5! ♘xe5 26.fxexh5 If 26...♘b5 to get the bishop out, 27.♘g4! and White has a strong attack 27.c4! ♘c7 28.♘d2 ♖b6 29.♘c3 ♖e6 30.♖h6! b6 31.♖ad1 b5 32.♘h3



And White is already close to the win 32...g5 33.♖xh5 b4 34.♘xg5 ♖g6 35.♖xg6+ fxg6 36.e6 ♘xe6 37.♘xe6 bxc3 38.♖c1 c2 39.♘xc5 ♖d4 40.♘xd3 ♖xd3 41.♖xc2 ♖d2 42.♖ec1 ♖d4 43.♖e1 ♖d2 44.♖e2 ♖xe2 45.♖xe2 ♘g7 46.♖c2 ♘f6 47.c5 ♘e6 48.♘f2 ♖f8+ 49.♘g3 ♘e5 50.♖c4 ♖c8 51.c6 ♘d6 1-0

Other round 10 scores:

GNUchess-TheKing	0-1
Diep-ChessTiger	0-1
DeepSjeng-Ant	1-0
Zzzzzzz-Rebel	0-1
Nullmover-IsiChess	0-1
Tao-TheBaron	1-0

- 7½ Ruffian, TheKing
- 7 ChessTiger
- 6½ DeepSjeng, Rebel
- 6 IsiChess

So three programs are in with a chance as we come to the last round, but Tiger needs both Ruffian and TheKing to drop at least ½ pts.

Jeroen Noomens operating Schroder's Rebel



Round 11

Ruffian-Zzzzzzz	1-0 !
TheKing-Tao	1-0 !
ChessTiger-GNUchess	1-0
TheBaron-DeepSjeng	0-1
Rebel-Nullmover	1-0
IsiChess-XiniX	1-0
Ant-Diep	0-1

Final Table

Pos	Program	Tot/11
1=	Ruffian TheKing	8½
3	ChessTiger	8
4=	DeepSjeng Rebel	7½
6	IsiChess	7
7	Diep	6½
8	Tao	5½
9	The Baron	5
10	XiniX	4½
11	Ant	4
12	Nullmover	2½
13	Zzzzzzz	2
14	GNUchess	0

Ruffian won the title on all the point count systems - having been at the top all the way through it had missed out on playing both Ant and the non-scoring GNUchess. As in the game against The King, which we showed earlier, Ruffian played some excellent chess. It has a strange opening book and plays quite a few unusual moves to take its opponent out of book. Annoyingly in prepared opening engine-vs-engine matches it plays from its book moves - with other engines you can turn the books off altogether and force them to search from the prepared positions you give them. But that issue obviously has no effect in a tournament like this, and this is a terrific result for it. It also finds some clever endgame tactics, but sometimes struggles in passed pawn situations due to lack of knowledge through being a (very) fast search program. If the search or tablebases see it, fine... if not it occasionally looks a bit dumb.

As a matter of interest **Rebel** is the new Rebel-12 from LokaSoft. It's a full Windows version which apparently manages to include nearly all the unique Rebel DOS analysis features. Of course being a non-ChessBase interface means that it isn't compatible with, and can't run within, Fritz, Hiarc & co. but if

someone works out how to get it to run within the ChessBase interface I'll certainly get some in at Countrywide.

The Baron - Ruffian

Round 8. Opening B82

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 e6 6.♙e3 a6 7.f4 b5 8.♚f3 ♙b7 9.♙d3 ♘bd7 10.g4 b4 11.♘ce2 ♘c5 12.♘g3 d5 13.e5 ♘fd7 *A new idea, and it seems okay!* 13... ♘fe4 14.0-0 ♙e7 *is usual* 14.♙e2 ♙e7 15.0-0 0-0 16.♙fc1 f6! 17.exf6 ♙xf6 18.♚f2 e5! 19.fxe5 ♙xe5



The open f-file will suit Ruffian's style 20.♘gf5 ♘h8 21.♚g2 g6 22.♘g3 ♚f6! 23.c3 ♘e6 24.g5 ♚e7 25.♙g4 ♘f4! 26.♚c2 bxc3 27.bxc3 ♘b6 28.h4 ♘c4 29.♙f2 ♙c8!



30.♙xc8 *If* 30.♘c6 ♙xg4 31.♘e7 ♘h3+ 32.♘g2 ♙xf2+ 33.♚xf2 ♘xf2 34.♘xf2 ♙f8+ *and White's material plus will be short-lived - he's in big trouble* 30... ♙axc8 31.♘h1 ♚d7! 32.♘gf5 gxf5 0-1

The winning RUFFIAN team, Valfridsson (programmer), Frank Quisinsky and another operator



OUR REGULAR ROVER, ROB VAN SON, MEETS COMPUTER COLLECTOR KURT KISPERT

Real art comes from Vienna!

Some time ago I went to Vienna for a couple of days and visited the many works of art located in this beautiful city. One of the highlights was my visit to Schönbrunn Palace. In 1770 the Hungarian baron and engineer **Wolfgang von Kempelen** presented there the very first chess machine, **the Turk**, to the empress Maria Theresa. Looking around in the splendid rooms I tried to imagine the atmosphere of that time.

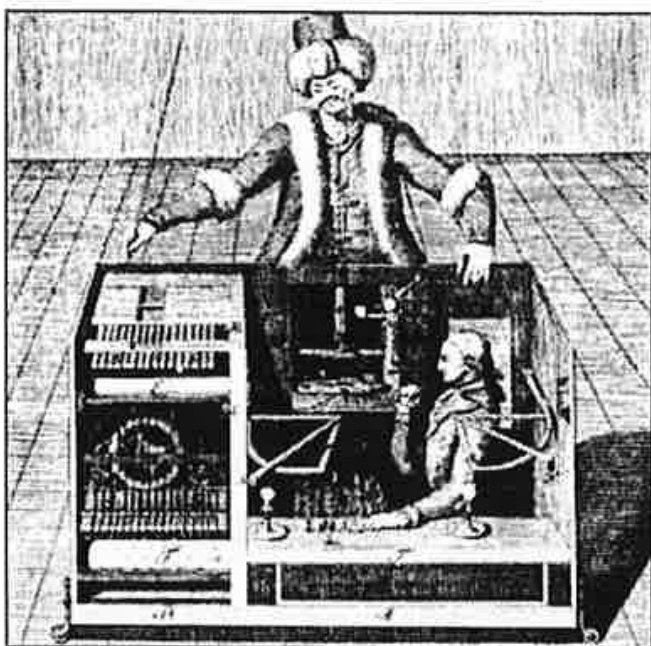
Besides visiting the many sights I had a special appointment with a man who has, for a long time now, been the proud possessor of many marvellous chess machines.

I am talking about the Viennese chess computer collector **Kurt Kispert**. I met Kurt through his unique website, which is entirely specialized in everything in the field of chess computers.

Nowhere on the internet have I been able to find a site that can even remotely touch the transparency, many-sidedness and beauty of Kurt's *Schachcomputer Homepage*!

Do you want to know what an old chess computer looks like or what its Elo-rating is? Are you interested in the history of computer chess? Do you want to share your opinion with other chess computer lovers?

These are just a few of the questions that a



Kurt Kispert

visit to Kurt's site will provide a quick answer to.

Kurt Kispert would have liked to participate in the 1st CSVN computer Gebruikers (users) tournament but found the distance between Vienna and Leiden too large. He did not give up, drummed up his many chess friends in Germany, Austria and Switzerland with the help of his question and answer forum on the internet, and in 2001 organized instead the first **D.A.CH. Oldie-Computer Tournament** in the South-German city of Kaufbeuren.

While I was visiting him he hardly gave me the time to drink my coffee, because he wanted to take me as soon as possible to the room where all his chess computers were lined up. I was very much impressed with his splendid collection of masterpieces consisting of many rare antique computers with wooden boards and reed-contacts, the very first series of Chess Challengers, chess robots that can independently carry out their moves, and many more marvellous machines.

In everyday life the 44 year old Kurt works as a financial administrative employee in a Viennese hospital, and spends almost all of his spare time on his wide-ranging hobby. Judging from the number of e-mails he receives every day it is safe to say that Kurt has a worldwide chess computer fan-club.

So I took the opportunity to ask this outstanding collector and webmaster a few questions!

Rob: Kurt, what made you start to play chess and how old were you at the time?

Kurt: I learnt to play chess from my father. He was an occasional player and taught me to play chess when I was ten years old. By practicing a lot, over the years I came to play chess at the level of an average club-player. I would be lying however if I said I have become a strong player.

Rob: Did you have any other hobbies at the time?

Kurt: I had many hobbies in those days, but my favourite pastime was football. I played football at an advanced amateur level until, in 1980, I was forced by injuries to start playing in a lower division. After this I participated in several other sports like tennis, table tennis and running. I no longer have time for these things because my present hobby, computer chess, has become very wide-ranging and time consuming.

Rob: How did you get interested in computer chess and was there at the time much to see and buy in Vienna or elsewhere in Austria?

Kurt: My interest in computer chess was roused in 1985 when a colleague gave me a Mephisto III chess computer, against which I often played and regularly lost. He gave it to me when he bought the new Mephisto Exclusive Amsterdam from the Schach Mattes Company in Vienna, for 2000 euro.

The Amsterdam module is the first world championship program (1985) of the English programmer Richard Lang. In 1986 the colleague replaced the module-set of his computer by the newer and stronger Dallas program of the same programmer. He thought that by playing often against this computer he would start playing better. When he did not succeed in that, he sold me the machine for 750 euro. However, in those days that was still quite a large sum for me to pay for a chess computer. Later-on I put the original Amsterdam module-set back in.

I would have liked to buy more chess computers at the time, but

the real good machines were just too expensive for me. Up into the early nineties I bought a number of other chess computers and modules like the Mephisto Modular MM V with the opening module HG 550, the Mephisto Polgar module, the CXG Sphinx Dominator and the Fidelity Kishon Chesster.

In the eighties there were only a few specialized computer chess stores in Vienna. Nowadays there is only the Schach Mattes Company.

Rob: When did you decide to start collecting chess computers and how did that come about?

Kurt: The transition from computer chess player to computer collector just happened. In 1997 I could use the internet at my workplace. There I discovered the forum of the Gambitsoft Company and that way I came into contact with many other chess friends. In addition I visited the websites of the eBay-auction and the German chess wholesale dealer Schach Niggemann, which offered used chess computers against a very favourable price. Magnificent antique chess computers in very good state were put up for sale at bargain prices because many people wanted to finance their new pc with them. That is very different from the large amounts you nowadays have to pay at E-Bay for a chess computer with for instance a beautiful wooden read contact-board.

Rob: I noticed that you have the very first Chess Challenger from the beginning of 1977 in your collection. How did you obtain this



chess computer, which is also very special because of the switched board-coordinates?

Kurt: I got the Chess Challenger 1 in the year 2001 from a German computer chess friend, Wolfgang Rausch, with whom I already had exchanged many old chess computers. But I don't think the first Chess Challenger is that rare. I know many collectors that have one. As far as I know there exist machines that are much rarer.

Rob: *You have a great number of antique chess computers in your collection that are characterized by the beautiful large wooden boards with elegant chess pieces, equipped with read-contacts with or without the possibility of changing the chess-module. I noticed for instance the Sargon 2.5 ARB (automatic response board) from 1980, the Mephisto ESB (Electronical Schachbrett) II from 1981, the Fidelity Prestige from 1982, the Fidelity Elite Avantgarde version 10 from 1990, the Saitek Renaissance Sparc from 1992 or the Tasc R40 from 1993. I suppose it isn't easy to obtain these show-pieces among the chess computers. How did you get these machines?*

Kurt: At the time I also thought it would be very difficult to get hold of the more expensive old machines. Fortunately I started collecting chess computers exactly at the right time. I was able to purchase the very beautifully made Tasc R40 cheaply at Ebay in the year 2000. The price I paid for it then was just a fraction of what you would have to pay for it now. To give you another example: "A few years ago I paid only 450 euro for a Mephisto Bavaria with the Genius 68030 module-set and the man who sold it to me was very pleased that he could still get that much money for it."

Many people thought that chess computers like old pc's would no longer have any value. I was very surprised that people disposed of their old machines so cheaply, while as a young chap I had been very keen on having these machines, but could not afford them. As a result I bought one chess computer after another and quickly broadened my collection.

Partly because of the contacts I had built up through my website, I was able to obtain beautiful classical chess computers. This way I bought a Fidelity Prestige and a chess robot, the Fidelity Chesster Phantom Eyeball, from a New York collector.

Rob: *Chess robots are also part of your collection. You have for instance the Milton Bradley, the Fidelity Phantom, the Fidelity Phantom Chesster, the Fidelity Chesster Phantom Eyeball, the Mephisto Phantom and the Excalibur Mirage. The most remarkable thing about these robots is their ability to move chess pieces by means of so called special magnetic tapes and motors located underneath the chess board. Kurt, can you tell me a little more about these robots?*

Kurt: Chess robots fascinate me highly and did get a special place in my collection. I will give you a listing of my robots and a short description of the differences and similarities between these machines.

- **Milton Bradley (1983)** - This chess robot, also known as the father of the Phantoms, came from the Milton Bradley Company (USA). Because of its complicated construction this machine was technically speaking a spectacular sight at the time, but this also made the machine more susceptible to failures. The Milton was obtainable in two models; one is named Milton and was intended for the European market and the other Grandmaster, attuned to the USA. Other than its successors this machine does not have a display to read the moves from and has a weaker program (Intelligent Software, London).
- **Fidelity Phantom (1988)** - This is the first chess robot brought on the market by the Fidelity Company in Miami (USA) and, other than the Milton Bradley does have a display. The program can be found in many other chess computers, like the Fidelity Par Excellence, the Elite Avant Garde 2100, the Kishon Chesster, the Peri Epsilon, etc.
- **Fidelity Phantom Chesster (1991)** - When this Phantom Chesster came on the market, Fidelity had already been taken over by the Hegener & Glaser (Mephisto) company from Munich while only the old brand name was being continued for this robot. On the outside the machine is no different from an ordinary Fidelity Phantom; only this Fidelity robot is equipped with a voice.
- **Fidelity Chesster Phantom Eyeball (1991)** - This is one of the rarest and most fascinating robots. Like the Fidelity Phantom Chesster it has a voice, but the voice is being activated by a movement-detector built into the front of the machine! The minute you stand in front of it, it will start to talk to you. The Phantom Eyeball then lets you know that it would like to play chess with you and subsequently tells you which

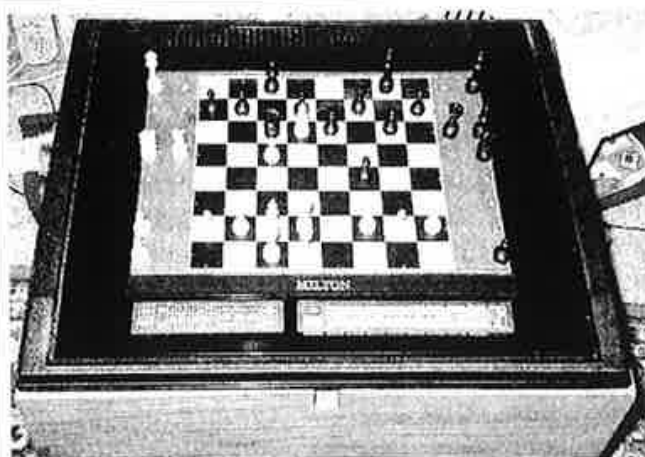
button you need to press for that.

- **Mephisto Phantom (1991)** - This robot is entirely identical to the classical version of the Fidelity Phantom, but was launched for the European market by the German Hegener & Glaser (Mephisto) company. It has the new Mephisto inscription, but on the bottom of the machine you can still see that it originally was a Fidelity-machine. All Phantom-robots have a program from Kathe and Dan Spracklen.
- **Excalibur Mirage (1997)** - The Excalibur Electronics Company, founded in 1993 by Shane Samole, son of Fidelity-founder Sid, brought in 1997 the chess robot Mirage on the market, which on the outside doesn't look very much like the old Phantoms, but on the inside does have the same technique. Unfortunately this machine is even more susceptible to trouble than its predecessors and because of that is no longer on the market. There are still some specialized stores that have a single specimen for sale. The program is from Ron Nelson and I expect that in the future this machine will also become a collector's item.

Rob: *But there were also robots that could independently move the pieces with a grasping arm. For instance the Boris Handroid from 1980 or de Novag Robot Adversary from 1982. Why don't I find these machines in your collection?*

Kurt: I know that from the Boris Handroid a few prototypes were made in 1980 and that it was never put upon the market. My Swiss chess friend, Rolf Bühler, informed me last year through the internet that he has one in his possession. At first I would not believe that, but had to when he proved it by sending me pictures of his robot. According to Rolf there should be at least one other Handroid, the whereabouts of which is unknown however.

The Novag Robot Adversary was actually taken into production in 1982 and put on the market. This robot is a real collector's item and there are only a few pieces left that are in good working condition. Even if you find someone who is willing to sell it, you will have to cough up a substantial amount of money. Nevertheless it is impossible to have each and every rare machine in your collection. You would have to be quite rich to be able to buy them. But I am interested in knowing which other collectors also own special chess computers.



Rob: *How many chess computers do you have at the moment?*

Kurt: I own almost 100 chess computers, but there are collectors who have many more. In the first place I would like to mention Hans-Peter Ketterling from Berlin, who claims to have over 500 and Karsten Bauermeister from Münster who has over 400 pieces.

Rob: *What is your most favourite chess computer and why?*

Kurt: A difficult question! I very much like the Novag Super Expert C with a program from Dave Kittinger because it does not play as strongly as for instance the Tasc R40 or the Mephisto Bavaria with the Genius 68030 module. Moreover I find the design of the machine very beautiful. Since I am an Austrian, the chess computer Peri Epsilon also has a special place among my favourite machines. Because this computer was produced in 1990 by the Austrian company Peri Spiele and in my opinion has a unique design. Looking at the small machines I find the CXG Sphinx Dominator very special because of its particular manner of playing which over the years gave me a lot of fun.

Rob: *Do you ever test your chess computers by having them play against each other?*

Kurt: I would like to let my chess computers play against each other, but I don't have the time. I would like to draw up a personal ranking list of my chess computers. I want to let them play against each other with a clock time of 30 seconds per move. In my opinion no one plays at a slow tournament level against a chess computer and I am curious how my ranking list will look using the clock time I mentioned. All the same I believe that in the end there will not be much difference

with the SSDF or *Selective Search* lists.

Rob: *Are you planning on expanding your collection any further?*

Kurt: Actually, since my 50th machine I have been saying that I am only going to expand my collection in a qualitative way. Yet whenever I think of selling some of my lesser quality computers, I can't bring myself to part with them. Fortunately my girlfriend is very positive about my hobby

Rob: *Isn't it a very expensive hobby to buy so many exclusive chess computers?*

Kurt: It depends on how you look at it, but I don't think it is an expensive hobby. Because I was able to obtain a lot of machines at a low price a couple of years ago, the whole collection did not cost me that much in the end. If I were to spread all the money I spent on them over a period of six years, it would amount to between 200 and 250 euro per month. Besides I can afford it to drive a landrover for which I only paid 7000 euro. I know of people that spend much more money on their car, but are just as stuck in traffic as I am. Looking at it in that light I actually think that my collection cost me next to nothing...!

Rob: *If a computer gets out of order, where do you have it repaired?*

Kurt: As a collector you naturally have to know who you can turn to with a defective chess computer. Fortunately a friend of mine is electrician and can remedy small defects on my chess computers. Also, I know mister Bucke in Munich (Germany), who only repairs Fidelity-machines. If they can't help me, I can always go to the German companies Niggemann, Elektroschach and Saitek. Luckily, up till now that has not been necessary very often.

Rob: *As you well know, the PC-chess program has largely taken up the place of the chess computer. What do you think of this and do you have chess programs yourself?*

Kurt: I have certainly not lost sight of the modern time. In the nineties I bought almost all well-known chess programs and couldn't wait for a new program to come out. However, since the year 2000 I lost more and more interest. There were a great many programs available, the pc hardware changed

quickly and updates of chess programs succeeded each other rapidly. Nowadays I only buy a new program when I really find it interesting.

I used to buy a new pc almost every year, but right now I still have a Pentium 700 Mhz at home and am very happy with it. Instead of buying a faster pc, I rather get an old chess computer. The programs I have on my pc now are already too strong for me anyway. I think it is much more elegant to sit behind a beautiful wooden board of a chess computer, drink a cup of coffee and play against a computer opponent that can be defeated.

Rob: *Kurt, you do have a wonderful, unique website, well-organized, with a lot of information on chess computers. A site where also a lot of pictures and links to other computer chess websites can be found. In addition there is a sell-buy forum on the site and a question and answer forum for everyone who wants information in this field. When and why did you decide to build a website?*

Kurt: That is an interesting story. I actually had no desire to have my own website, but some four years ago my friend Margit wanted her own site. Since I am the computer expert in the house, I was given the task to build the site and organize it further. I always thought it would be very difficult to make a homepage, but with programs like FrontPage 2000 it has become of childlike simplicity. Once I really had come to like it, I started to create a site for myself, which I have gradually expanded more and more in the past few years. I called my site Kurt's Schachcomputer Homepage and I regularly receive positive reactions from the many visitors from all corners of the world.

Rob: *Do you have plans for the future for your website?*

Kurt: I do have a great many plans with my website, but unfortunately I often lack the time to realize them. I did not foresee that my website would be visited by so many chess friends and the many positive reactions I get from them. If you only knew how many e-mails I receive daily.

Today there is still a lot of interest in old chess computers and luckily there is also quite a bit of information available on the subject. In this field I will be able to expand

my website further. I have already put the most important information about the Fidelity and Mephisto computers on my site, but I still would like to inform more about the other brands. And the presentation of my home page can also do with some changes. So there is enough work to do, you might actually say that it is never finished.

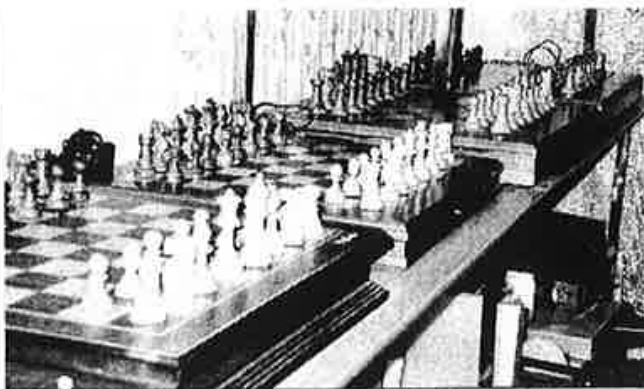
Rob: *In 2001 the 1st D.A.CH. Oldie-Computer-Tournament was played in Kaufbeuren Germany. The letters D.A.CH. stand for the German, Austrian and Swiss participants. Meanwhile the 3rd D.A.CH. tournament, that took place on 25 and 26 October, is already over. You did have a large part in the organisation. Can you tell me a little more about that?*

Kurt: When you informed me about the 1st CSVN Gebruikers tournament in Leiden, I would have liked to immediately drive over there with three chess computers. Unfortunately the large distance between Vienna and Leiden kept me from doing so. Yet I believed that it should be possible to also organize a similar tournament through my website and the many contacts with chess computer lovers. That is what I proposed to my (internet) chess friends. The tournament should be easy to reach for all interested persons from German language countries. Eventually we picked the South-German city Kaufbeuren.

The organisation of our tournament is not so difficult anymore because I found the ideal tournament leader in my Austrian chess friend Franz Wiesenecker. He makes sure that all kinds of matters concerning the tournament work perfectly. The German collector Alwin Gruber takes care of the hotel and the overnight-stays of the operators in Kaufbeuren. It is my task to give as much publicity as possible to this tournament through my website and internet forum. I hope that this way even more participants and their old machines will apply for the 4th D.A.CH. tournament which will probably take place in October 2004.

Rob: *In the Netherlands we have the Gebruikers tournament and in Germany the DACH tournament. Is it possible for the chess computer lovers in England to organise a similar tournament?*

Kurt: I think you have to find someone in England who has the willingness and the time



to build a chess computer website, like mine. With a good forum the English chess computer lovers can then come into contact with each other and this way organize a central location where they can travel to with their chess computers to play their oldies tournament. Should anyone be interested, I will be more than willing to provide the necessary help in the form of information and picture material.

Rob: *Do you believe the chess computer still has a future?*

Kurt: I believe there won't be much change in the next few years. Since about ten years the chess computer already has no longer a real future. Yet there are still many idealists who believe it is better to play against an equal opponent than against a big bruiser with an Elo of 2700, equipped with a screen and a mouse. Personally I believe that the chess computer is winning back ground because via the internet it is increasingly easy for many chess computer lovers to come into contact with each other and exchange their experiences that way.

Rob: *Kurt, thank you for this interview. We talked about your wonderful website. Would you like to tell the readers in the UK how they can visit this site?*

Kurt: You are welcome; it was a pleasure to be able to answer your questions. My website can be reached at the following address:

■ <http://www.schachcomputer.at>

I would like to take the opportunity to send my English computer chess friends the kindest regards from Vienna and I hope they will visit my website sometime soon.

KASPAROV - X3D FRITZ

MAN-MACHINE World Championship, New York USA, 2003

So here we are again. I know not everyone gets excited by these SuperGM - TopEngine matches - some even go so far as to suggest they're all fixed! (of which morre later) - but I always look forward to them. Readers might think it strange, but I am usually on the side of the GM (unless Hiarc is playing!), and there are 2 things I'm particularly on the lookout for:

- a top GM getting a good anti-computer position and still losing... on that day I will conclude that the PC programs have gone top
- or a PC program getting a terrific tactical position, but the GM wins

In the meantime the only thing I felt before this match was that, despite [1] the practice time Kasparov did get with the 3D system, and [2] every assurance from X3D that their virtual reality system was 'perfect', Kasparov was giving them an unnecessary advantage in what was sure to be another difficult contest. Of course if the sponsorship comes largely from X3D then Kasparov can't tell them he'll play the match but only on a proper board. However his suggestion that X3D was the future of chess, and one day all chess would be played this way did seem a little over-the-top. I reckon when 2 fellers sit down to play chess at their local club it will almost always for ever be over a board and pieces!

The match took place from 11-18 November at the NYC Athletic Club, on Broadway no less. Reporters, TV cameras (every match got 4½



hours tv coverage!), internet moguls, spectators of all nationalities, indeed anybody of chess importance (except me, I was too busy!) was there.

Kasparov G - X3D Fritz

Game 1. Opening D45

1.♟f3!?

Kasparov almost always opens with 1.e4 these days, at least against humans. But over the course of his 25 year professional career he has played just about everything and, more to the point, this is what he played successfully against Deep Junior!

1...d5 2.c4 c6 3.d4 ♟f6

4.♟c3 e6

The Slav Defense is well-known by Garry Kasparov! This choice is relevant because in Kasparov's last computer match, against Deep Junior in January 2003, he crushed the machine in this exact opening in the first game!

5.e3 ♟bd7 6.♞c2 ♟d6

6...b6 7.cxd5 exd5 8.♟d3 ♟e7 9.♟d2 0-0 10.g4 ♟xg4 11.♞g1 ♟df6 0-1 KasparovD-Junior, 2003

7.g4

A very aggressive move, often marked ? or ?! in computer opening books. It offers a pawn in exchange for attacking chances. If Black captures the pawn with Nxg5 White gets a lot of pressure on the open g-file. Kasparov has played this position three times, twice with white and once with black! He won all three games, and that includes the one against Deep Junior earlier this year

7...♟b4

A standard book move which takes the game away from the other Kasparov-DJ game we've mentioned:

7...dxc4 8.♟xc4 b6 9.e4 e5 10.g5 ♟h5 11.♟e3 0-0 12.0-0-0 ♞c7 13.d5 b5 14.dxc6 bxc4 15.♟b5 ♞xc6 16.♟xd6 ♟b7 17.♞c3 ♞ae8 18.♟xe8 ♞xe8 19.♞he1 ♞b5 20.♟d2 ♞c8 21.♟b1 ♟f8 22.♟a1 ♟g6 23.♞c1 ♟a6 24.b3 cxb3 25.♞xb3 ♞a8

Selective Search 109

26. ♖xb5 ♙xb5 27. ♖c7 1-0
Kasparov-DJ, 2003
8. ♙d2 ♖e7 9. ♖g1 ♙xc3
10. ♙xc3 ♙e4 11. 0-0-0

A new move instead of
11. ♙d3 ♙xc3 12. ♖xc3 0-0 (or
12... dxc4 13. ♙xc4) 13. 0-0-0
dxc4 14. ♙xc4 c5 which does
not have a particularly good
record
11... ♖f6!?



We are out of Fritz's book
and right away it is playing to
win a pawn by attacking the
unprotected knight on f3.

12. ♙e2

Kasparov protects his
knight and offers the f2 pawn
for capture. 12. ♙g2 would
have also protected the
knight and left the pawn safe!
12... ♙xf2?!

And Fritz takes the pawn,
which will give White a lot of
pressure against the Black
position in compensation for
the sacrificed pawn. It's a
materialistic choice by Fritz,
and programs working close
to a 1-3-3-5-9 value system
will go for it, not seeing
Kasparov's initiative as being
over-dangerous. The battle
of material vs initiative
continues! - Kasparov loves
to have the initiative and such
sacrifices are his stock-in-
trade.

13. ♖df1 ♙e4 14. ♙b4

Here the bishop prevents
the Black king from castling
by attacking the f8 square.
The attractive looking alter-
native 14. ♙e5 discovers an
attack on the Black queen,
but Fritz will have seen the
effective counterattack

14... ♖h4 15. ♙xf7?! 0-0!
16. ♙e5 ♖xf1+ 17. ♖xf1 ♙xe5
18. dxe5 ♖xh2. Black still has
its extra pawn and a clear
advantage.

14... c5!

This move apparently
came as a surprise to Kaspa-
rov, who went into a deep
think after playing his previ-
ous moves at great speed.
Fritz is cleverly giving back
the pawn in order to block the
bishop's diagonal and the
open lines towards the White
king.

15. cxd5 exd5 16. dxc5 ♖e7

Gets the queen away from
the discovered f-file attack,
and increases the attack on
the c5 pawn. Kasparov has
an edge in development, but
Fritz has a well-placed knight
on e4.

17. ♙d4!

Typically dynamic Kaspa-
rov, ignoring the threat to the
c5 pawn since capturing it
would cost Black a lot of time.
17... 0-0?!

Not 17... ♙dxc5? 18. ♙b5+!
♙f8 and the Black king, stuck
in the middle of the board,
kills its own rook! I don't
believe that any program
which chooses this line - and
some do - can hope to beat
Kasparov

18. ♙f5!



Kasparov's attack begins
to look quite dangerous with
this move!

18... ♖e5 19. c6

Kasparov goes for it as the
attack on the knight has also
opened the diagonal for the
b4-bishop to attack the rook



on f8. He is going to win a
rook for his bishop, a gain in
material, but he usually
prefers giving up material for
the attack. Now X3D Fritz will
have the initiative and more
active pieces.

19... bxc6

19... ♙df6? 20. ♙xf8 ♙xf8
21. g5+-

20. ♙xf8

20. ♙e7+?! ♙h8 21. ♙xc6
looks good, but Black has
21... ♖g5! and the counterat-
tack might be unpleasant for
White

20... ♙xf8 21. ♙g3

Now Kasparov has a
material advantage and
wants to trade pieces.

21... ♙dc5 22. ♙xe4 ♙xe4
23. ♙d3

Threatening yet more
exchanges

23... ♙e6 24. ♙xe4 dxe4

Having completed the
useful exchanges Kasparov
must find a way to convert his
material plus into a win
25. ♖f4



Note that this leaves the a2-pawn en pris! Will materialistic influences undo Fritz again?

25...d5

At present Fritz cannot protect the attacked e4 pawn and win the a2 pawn!

26.♖c5+

Activating the queen with check, forcing the Black king back and pinning the bishop against the queen. Many spectators expected Kasparov to offer to exchange queens here with 26.♖c3!

26...♔g8 27.♖g1?!

With the obvious, brutal threat of ♖xf7. But Fritz has a strong reply and it is thought that 27.♖d1 would have been more effective for Kasparov

27...♖b8!

A Fritz capture on b2 is much stronger than Kasparov's threat!

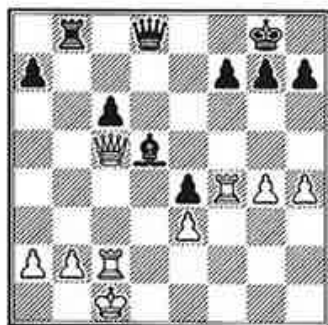
28.♖f2 ♖c7

Unpinning the bishop

29.♖c2

The excellent counter-threat is 30.♖xc5! as if bxc5 31.♖xc7 winning

29...♖d7 30.h4 ♖d8



31.g5?!

Probably the wrong pawn,

this attack is too slow. If instead 31.h5! ♕xa2?! 32.h6! **31...♕xa2!**

A surprise for Kasparov! Perhaps the pawn had sat immune on a2 for so long that he'd forgotten about it?! Not only does Black win a pawn but suddenly White's king is feeling a draught.

32.♖xe4?!

Almost accepting a draw as it becomes more difficult White to find a way of avoiding the repetition that now ends the game. Commentators expected 32.♖d2 which pushes the Black queen off the d-file after which Kasparov could continue his kingside push. 32...♖e8 33.h5! and still chances for a win perhaps. 32.♖xc6 was also suggested by some – 'and Black has nothing'. However 32...♕b3! 33.♖xe4 (probably best... if the rook moves away to anywhere but d2 it is mate next move (♖d1), and even if 33.♖d2 then ♖a5! threatens ♖a1 mate and White has to throw pieces away to stop it) 33...♕xc2 34.♖xc2 ♖b6 and clearly White has nothing either!

32...♖d3!

The threats around the White king leave Kasparov with limited choices.

33.♖d4?!

The only way I could find for Kasparov to keep playing for a win was 33.♖f5! which by both protecting f1 and attacking f7 still gives him some winning chances – I think! At present I haven't seen the idea mentioned elsewhere so perhaps I'm wrong, but I think Black must reply with 33...♖f8 (the other choice is 33...♕e6 when 34.♖f4 threatening ♖d2 is good) and now 34.♖e5 looks strong

33...♖xe3+ 34.♖cd2

Danger lurks, not the other

rook: 34.♖dd2?? ♖xb2! and if 35.♖xe3 ♖b1#

34...♖e1+ 35.♖d1

Again White's only move.

35.♕c2?? ♕b1+ 36.♕c3

♖c1+ 37.♖c2 ♖xc2#

35...♖e3+ 36.♖1d2 ♖g1+

It would be very risky for Fritz to now try 36...♖e8 and go for more than the draw, as 37.♖c3! ♖e6 38.♖d8 gives White more chances than Black.

37.♖d1

Now the draw is completely forced because White threatens mate on d8 and Black therefore has to play ♖e3+ again for the draw – any other move loses immediately. 'Good game' as Bruce Forsythe would say! 1/2-1/2

Fritz X3D - Kasparov G

Game 2. Opening C66

1.e4 e5 2.♖f3 ♖c6 3.♕b5 ♖f6

Following Kramnik's anti-Kasparov strategy, which then also worked against Fritz, Kasparov also opts for the Berlin Defence!

4.d3!?

Surprise! Perhaps not in that this keeps the queens on the board which is something the computers always need to aim for if possible. Good preparation I'd say, but White's development will be slowed. 4.0-0 ♖xe4 5.d4 ♖d6 6.♕xc6 dxc6 7.dxe5 ♖f5 8.♖xd8+ ♕xd8 leads to the Berlin

4...d6 5.c3 g6 6.0-0 ♕g7

7.♖bd2 0-0 8.♖e1 ♖e8

Better known is 8...♕d7 9.a4 a6 10.♕c4 ♕e6 11.a5 ♕xc4 12.dxc4 ♖h5 1/2-1/2 Ponomarev-Grishuk, 2001

9.d4 ♕d7 10.d5?!

Blocking the centre. Has Fritz played into Kasparov's hands after all?! I prefer 10.♖b3 but only 10.d5 is shown in my opening books

10...♖e7

The end of my books

11.♙xd7 ♖xd7

The structure reminds us of the King's Indian, an opening in which computers have traditionally not fared too well.

12.a4 h6 13.a5

A positionally justified advance of the a-pawn

13...a6 14.b4 f5 15.c4 ♖f6

16.♙b2

This move was criticised by many commentators, but I can't pretend I can see too much wrong with it myself.

16...♙b3!? was an alternative

16...♙d7 17.♙b1



17.♙c1 and 17...-- 18.c5 was expected

17...g5

Khalifman thought f5-f4 was better.

18.exf5

Well played Fritz. This was necessary, otherwise White will be overrun on the kingside

18...♙xf5 19.♖f1

With the following manoeuvres Fritz takes control of the square e4.

19...♙h7!? 20.♖3d2 ♖f5

20...♖g6 21.♖g3 ♖f4 22.♖de4! probably did not appeal to Kasparov

21.♖e4 ♖xe4 22.♙xe4 h5

23.♙d3 ♙f8 24.♙be1 ♙f7

25.♙1e2

This and the following moves were criticised. Fritz is not playing actively enough (i.e. it doesn't really know what to do and is waiting for a mistake!)

25...g4 26.♙b3



Fritz getting very deep very quickly. 'The best hardware its ever been on', according to its team

26.h3 was a possibility, here and the next move

26...♙af8 27.c5?!

27.b5 was better according to Khalifman - Hiarcs shows h3 top and b5 second

27...♙g6 28.cxd6? cxd6

28...♖xd6 was also good - whichever, Kasparov now has the advantage

29.b5 axb5 30.♙xb5 ♙h6

The black plan is now h5-h4-h3 (or g3) with attack. Most annotators now thought that Black had the advantage and were glad to see Kasparov playing so aggressively

31.♙b6



Threatens ♙xe5 because the queen on g6 is unprotected so the d6-pawn is pinned

31...♖h7 32.♙b4

This move prevents h5-h4, because otherwise g4 is hanging. With his next move Kasparov renews the threat of a further advance of the kingside pawns, but overlooks the fact that he's also cut the h6-bishop's protection of the rook on f8.

The commentators were at pains to remind spectators that Kasparov was in time trouble - they might have been nearer the truth mentioning that he'd been wearing funny glasses for nearly 4 hours! The clocks showed he had fully 12 mins left for 8 moves which isn't that much pressure!

32...♙g7?

Almost immediately after playing the move Kasparov jumps to his feet, snatches off his 3D glasses and shakes his head... he's not happy. But neither the commentary team nor the spectators seemed particularly aware that anything was amiss, both they and (until now) Kasparov were more interested in trying to see how he could prosecute his longstanding attack and get a breakthrough.

32...♙c8 would have been fine, certainly Kasparov is not worse and the unbalanced position means it's still 'game on'

33.♙xe5! dxe5 34.♙xf8 ♖d4?

It wasn't really wise to encourage exchanges, which will only help Fritz. With 34...♙d7 35.♙b4 ♙g7 36.♙xe5 ♙e7, Kasparov would have had some chance of saving the game - but only with best play. In fact he was probably preparing an after-game speech, 'it was something to do with the glasses'

35.♙xd4 exd4 36.♙e8

Threatens mate on h8

36...♙g8 37.♙e7+

Not 37.♙xg8+ ♙xg8

38.♙xg8 ♖xg8 and the White advantage disappears

37...♙g7

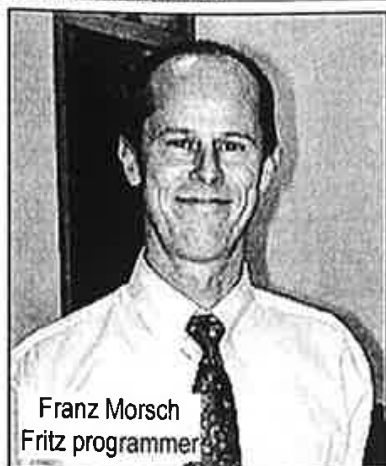
Or 37...♙g7 38.♙xg8 ♖xg8

39.♙xb7+-; 37...♖h8

38.♙xg8+ ♖xg8 39.♙xb7+-

38.♙d8

Once again threatens mate.



38...♖g8 39.♗d7+
39...♖g7 40.♗c8 ♗f6
41.♕g3 threatening the fork
♕xh5, and if 41...♖g5
42.♗xb7+ wins. 1-0

The big, continuing puzzle to many is 'How can the computers play chess so well in some games, and so badly in others?'. Yes, although that game was decided on a blunder, Fritz did play some good stuff in both games 1 and 2. Here's game 3.

Kasparov G - X3D Fritz

Game 3. Opening D45

1.♕f3 ♕f6 2.c4 e6 3.♕c3 d5
4.d4 c6 5.e3 a6

Diverging from game one, when the more common 5...Nbd7 was played. This sideline of the Slav with 5...a6 was criticized by Kasparov after the game. From the continuation here we can see why. X3D Fritz is playing from its opening book right into a position it doesn't understand at all! When Kasparov said this everyone looked over at poor Alex Kure, the man responsible for selecting and "training" Fritz's openings. Kasparov has little practical experience with this sideline and in both cases (once as white and once as black) the game continued with 6.b3. 6.c5!



Readers may find this marked '?' or '?!' in their computer's opening book, but that is because programmers want to stop their engines blocking the position. I imagine Kasparov would mark it '!!' for a game like this 6...♕bd7 7.b4 a5? 8.b5 e5 9.♗a4!

Given an exclamation mark by Gligoric and Wade in their 1972 book "The World Chess Championship". This move was apparently not in Fritz's opening book so it was now on its own.

9...♗c7 10.♕a3

The game is still following the Reshevsky-Keres 1948 World Championship encounter. 10.♕e2 e4 11.♕d2 g6 12.♕b3 ♕h6 13.♕d2 0-0 14.0-0-0 b6 15.bxc6 ♕b8 16.cxb6 ♗xb6 17.♗b5 ♗xc6 18.♗xc6 ♕xc6 19.♕a4 1-0 was Pachman-Fichtl, 1954 10...e4?

Closing the centre!
11.♕d2 ♕e7 12.b6



Varying from Reshevsky's 12.♕e2, though Kasparov said after the game that he had not realised they were following this. There remain

similarities however as, after 12...h5 (Keres saw that Black needed pawn counterplay on the kingside), 13.b6 was played, then 13...♗d8 14.h3 ♕f8 15.0-0-0. Kasparov is simply sealing the queenside a move earlier, and Fritz does not know that its life depends on pawn actions on the kingside to create a very sharp battle

12...♗d8 13.h3 0-0

This is where Keres would have played 13...♕f8 (Hiarcs' choice, that's encouraging!) or h5

14.♕b3

Closing in on the isolated a5 pawn. Black will be a pawn down and must counterattack vigorously on the kingside, which it fails to do

14...♕d6?!

Apparently this little trick move got a good laugh from the Grandmaster commentators. Perhaps only a computer would put its bishop right where the white pawn can capture it, and hope it's a trap Kasparov might fall for in his 3D glasses! 14...♕e8 15.♗b1 and now 15...f5 is the key continuation Fritz needed to play, then 16.g3 g5 which is necessary to force ...f4, but X3D Fritz has been taught not to move the pawns in front of its king. Now a double-edge battle is underway and White will have to watch out for Black's breakthrough on the kingside. In the game, Kasparov never had to worry about this at all since Fritz never touched its f-pawn.

15.♗b1

The Fritz move was a trap, but not a threat, so Kasparov just develops. Not of course 15.cxd6?? ♕xb6! winning the queen. Also 15.♕xa5? ♕xb6 16.cxb6 ♕xa3 17.♗xa3 ♗xb6 and it is Black who goes a pawn up as the knight is pinned to the queen

15...♗e7?!

Very disappointing, this has just gifted Kasparov two tempi. 15...♗b8 would have made more sense, keeping the bishop on the diagonal towards h2

16.♖xa5 ♖b8 17.♗b4!



Starting to clear the way to push his a2 pawn up the board. It's a simple strategy but unless Fritz finds some counterplay Kasparov will eventually break through and have a protected passed b-pawn with an easily won position. This is beyond any computer engine's understanding at present – indeed most (not Junior) think they are winning because of their pawn wedged on e4!

17...♙d7 18.♗b2

By over-protecting the f2 pawn Kasparov discourages any thought Fritz might have had of attacking down the f-file.

18...♙e6 19.♙d1 ♖fd7

Igniting the brief hope that Fritz had found the need to push its f-pawn!

20.a3 ♙h6 21.♖b3 ♗h4

Pinning the f2-pawn so threatening Qxe3+ next move. Kasparov treats the effort with disdain

22.♙d2 ♖f6

Apparently we are not going to get an f-pawn push

23.♖d1

The start of a quiet stroll over to the queenside. As Fritz has failed to produce any counterplay he can pretty well do what he wants.

23...♗e6 24.♖c1 ♗d8 25.♗c2

♖bd7 26.♖b2 ♖f8

Ironically Fritz was reaching incredible search depths because there are so few legal moves in the closed position. But even reaching 19 half-moves ahead it couldn't find the essential plan, and even still thought it was winning! Shredder7 also gives Black an edge, but only a small one (-0.11) whilst Hiarc9 just favours White (0.16)

27.a4

The a-pawn begins its march.

27...♖g6 28.a5 ♖e7



29.a6!

Apart from Junior the PC programs think this premature as Kasparov gives back the pawn so as to gain a protected passed b-pawn. He is ready to build up his forces for the final assault.

29...bxa6 30.♖a5 ♗db8

31.g3

The last piece in the puzzle is involving the rook on h1!

31...♗g5 32.♗g2

As well as getting out of the way of the rook note that, because the h1-rook is now protected, this also threatens to win Black's trapped bishop with h4. One feels that Kasparov is playing and Fritz is watching!

32...♙g6 33.♖a1 ♖h8

34.♖a2 ♗d7 35.♗c3 ♖e8

36.♖b4 ♖g8

For the first time Fritz showed a very small plus evaluation for White here. Its operators had been shuffling

their feet for some time. It must have been quite hard listening to the not-too-complimentary remarks coming from the commentary team who, unlike the program, could see exactly what Kasparov was up to

37.♗b1 ♗c8 38.♗a2 ♗h6

39.♗f1

Everything is now in place for the final strike, and all Kasparov has to do is reach the time control safely next move

39...♙e6 40.♙d1 ♖f6



41.♙a4 ♗b7

The only way to protect the c6-pawn. 41...♖h8 looks to offer Black the chance of a tempting pin after 42.♖bxc6 ♗d7, but unfortunately White just plays 43.b7!

42.♖xb7 ♗xb7 43.♖xa6

Kasparov is again a pawn up, and has a strong position as well, though the PC programs that I've checked ALL reckon his plus is less than a pawn! 43.♗xa6 would achieve much the same.

43...♙d7 44.♙c2

For the second time the queen steps out of a pin on the a-file. Now it's a simple matter of dominating the a-file, trading pieces, and pushing the b-pawn

44...♖h8 45.♗b3



The computer team resigned for Fritz here – a bit early for some speculators in New York, and on the 'net. Of course folk following the game with Fritz, Shredder, Hiarcs & co. loaded up would conclude that the PC still has chances – i.e. the evaluation isn't that bad (around -1.00/1.50 only). And maybe the bespectacled Kasparov would blunder again!

But the team also had the incessant discomfort of the commentary team's banter, which was a bit over-the-top by all accounts. Okay, Kasparov had played an anti-computer strategy and obtained a position Fritz didn't understand, and it was playing (this game) poorly. If it was that easy for him to do, why doesn't he do it every game?! Some say it's fixed – he can do it whenever he wants to! – and some believe it depends on how the opening and the first few moves after it turn out. If you can get the position closed the GMs usually win (barring mistakes), if the position stays tactical even the best GMs have to be very careful.

As for the conclusion of the game, the rooks will double on the a-file, penetrate to a7 or a8, force exchanges, and finally the push of the b-pawn will be unstoppable. For example 45. ♖b3 ♕e8 46. ♖ba3 ♖d8 47. ♕b4 f5 48. ♖a8 ♕f6 49. ♖xd8+ ♗xd8 50. ♗a4. 1-0

Why can't the programs be tuned to avoid blocked positions and to understand counter-tactics better?! One or two people noted that Crafty had the proposed pawn advance moves at the top or high in its search on more than one occasion. Bob Hyatt (its programmer) responded to the idea that Crafty might be a better opponent: *'Crafty would never play the sequence of moves as played by Deep Fritz in game 3. But that isn't to say it wouldn't have lost in a worse way for all I know.... if a program tries too hard to avoid blocked positions, the opponent can use that to force it to weaken things in other areas as it avoids blocking pawns. It might for example end up with pawn structure weaknesses that would quickly lose the game'.*

The sceptics came out in their hundreds after game 3, though it must be admitted that some 50% on the internet before the match started had forecast a 'draw by arrangement'. But I don't take much notice of the fact that half forecast 'bore' or 'fix', I reckon the cynics come out in much greater force than all the rest put together on most of these occasions!

If Fritz – or on other occasions against different GMs we've seen Junior, Hiarcs or Shredder – if one of them wins, will they do a Deep Blue and refuse ever to play again? I think not. Even so, I can understand the super-GMs don't want to lose, so if the risk-level is too high for their liking, they'll take a draw! Can't argue with that surely!

But if Kasparov wins, I cannot believe it would make

the next match any less marketable! If anything I think people would be even more interested next time. With maybe a different program on faster hardware, the challenge would be even more attractive. And Kasparov knows what the cynics are saying, that it's fixed etc., so I'm pretty sure he'd like to win if he felt he could.

Before the last game he said: *'I admit I'm not going into it as a 'must-win' game. I want to play good chess, make the best moves, and we'll see what will happen'.*

Here is the game, but printing and space deadlines mean that it's mostly just the bare bones for now.

X3D Fritz - Kasparov G

Game 4. Opening D21

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.♗f3 e6 4.e3 ♕f6 5.♗xc4 c5 6.0-0 a6 7.♗b3 cxd4 8.exd4 ♕c6 9.♕c3 ♗e7 10.♖e1 0-0 11.♗f4 ♕a5 12.d5 ♕xb3 13.♗xb3

I know that I said there wouldn't be much analysis, but we've really got to stop here and consider the implications and tension of this position, as Kasparov will know it very well!



Of course it's been seen many time before, but in 2000 Alexei Shirov unleashed a remarkable queen sacrifice with 13... ♕xd5!

His game against Gelfand who was White went: 14.♖ad1 ♜xf4! 15.♗xd8 ♗xd8 16.♗d1 ♜d5 17.♜xd5 exd5 18.h3 b5 19.♗xd5 ♖c6 20.♗xd8+ ♗xd8 21.♞c2 1/2-1/2

Much analysis was done to determine the soundness of Shirov's brilliant idea, and Kasparov must have thought it worked because, a year later he produced it in his 2001 blitz match with Kramnik, which went:

14.♖ad1 ♜xf4 15.♗xd8 ♗xd8 16.♗d1 ♜d5.

Now, instead of 17.♜xd5, Kramnik tried

17.♜e5 ♖f6 18.♜c4 ♗b8!

and then

19.♜a5?!

Subsequent analysis has shown that this can be improved on, but the K-K game now went 19...♜d7 20.♜e4 ♖e7



21.♜c4 ♖b5 22.♜e5 ♖e8 23.h3 b5 24.♞g3 ♗bc8 25.♜h1 a5 26.h4 a4 27.♜g5 h6 28.♜gf3 ♜f6 29.♗xd8 ♗xd8 30.♞f4 ♗d1+ 31.♜h2 ♜d6+ 32.g3 ♖c6! 33.g4 ♗d3! 34.♜g1 ♜xf3 0-1



Back to our own game! Kasparov, understandably in my view, feared what Fritz might have in store for him either in its opening book or

with its fast calculating speeds. So instead of testing the queen sac' again, he played...

13... exd5

This has also been seen often enough in GM practice!

14.♖ad1 ♖e6 15.♞xb7



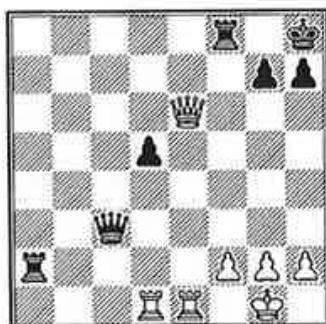
All still in theory to here, and the move Kasparov now plays has also been seen before. However the move I have as the 'main' line is 15...♖c5 which was played in Bacrot-Sasikiran, 2001 (1-0!), and Kramnik-Anand, 2001 (a draw).

15...♖d6 16.♖g5 ♗b8

17.♞xa6 ♗xb2 18.♜xf6?!

It almost looks as if Fritz now wants a draw!? 18.♗e2 ♗xe2 19.♞xe2 leaves White better - but only slightly, the game Dorfman-Karlov, 2000 ended in a draw after this.

18...♞xf6 19.♞xd6 ♞xc3 20.♜d4 ♗xa2 21.♜xe6 fxe6 22.♞xe6+ ♜h8



The game is almost over now and must be a draw

23.♞f1 ♞c5 24.♞xd5 ♗xf2 25.♞xf2 ♞xf2+ 26.♜h1 h6 27.♞d8+ ♜h7 1/2-1/2

Virtual reality+Virtual equality!



Every picture tells a story - Kasparov's happy with a 2-2 result and his cup

8th Gebruikers, 2003

Rob van Son has sent me the result, games and photos from this always interesting event for dedicated chess computers. My apologies to him as there just isn't room for it in this issue - blame it on Kasparov and Fritz!

To whet your appetite for full coverage in *Se/Search 110*, here is the list of entrants in our rating order, with a note of each of their UK prices when new, which I think is rather interesting!

2398 Elo. Tasc Turbo/R40! £—
2368 Elo. Tasc R30. £1495
2263 Elo. Meph Vancouver68030. £4995
2262 Elo. Meph Berlin Pro -1. £595
2262 Elo. Meph Berlin Pro -2. £595
2244 Elo. Meph RISC 1MB. £1295
2236 Elo. Meph Magellan -1. £789
2236 Elo. Meph Magellan -2. £789
2227 Elo. Meph Montreux. £449
2208 Elo. Novag Star Diamond. £199
2109 Elo. Novag Sapphire. £225
1986 Elo. Mephisto MM5. £495

Rob at the Gebruikers event in October this year, with his Novag Star Diamond which came 6=



RATING LISTS AND NOTES

A brief guide to the purpose of the HEADINGS may help everybody.

BCF. These are British Chess Federation ratings. They can be calculated from Elo figures by (Elo - 600) / 8, or from USCF figures by (USCF - 720) / 8.

Elo. This is the Rating figure which is in popular use Worldwide. The BCF and Elo figures shown in SELECTIVE SEARCH are calculated by combining each Computer's results v computers with its results v humans. I believe this makes our SelSearch Rating List the most accurate available for Computer Chess anywhere in the world.

+/-. The maximum likely future rating movement, up or down, for that particular machine. The figure is determined by the number of games played and calculated on standard deviation principles.

Games. The total number of Games on which the computer's or program's rating is based.

Human/Games. The Rating obtained and total no. of Games in Tournament play v rated humans.

A guide to PC Gradings:

386 & 486 based PC's have now disappeared from our top 50 listing. The GUIDE below will help readers calculate approximately what rating their program should play at when used on alternative hardware.

Pent-PC represents a program on a Pent/Pent2/MMX/K6 at approx.

150MHz, with 16-32MB RAM.

P3-PC represents a program on a Pentium3/K7 at approx. 500MHz, with 128MB RAM.

Users will get slightly more (or less!) if their PC speed is significantly different. A doubling in **MHz speed** = approx. 40 Elo; a doubling in **MB RAM** = approx. 3-4 Elo.

Comp-v-Comp GUIDE, if Pentium3/500 = 0

Deep prog on 8xP4/1000	120	Deep prog on 4xP4/1000	90
Deep prog on 2xP4/1000	60	P4/1800, Athlon 1500	60
P3-K7/1000	40	P3-K7/500	0
PPro2-K6/300	-40	PPro2-K6/233	-60
Pent/150	-100	486DX4/100	-180
486/66	-200	386/33	-300

RATING LIST (c) Eric Hallsworth. SelSearch 109 Dec 2003				Human/Games	
BCF Computer	Elo	+/-	Games Pos		
262 SHREDDER7.04 P3-PC	2701	12	1391 1	2663	20
260 JUNIOR8 P3-PC	2683	14	1043 2		
259 HIARCS9 P3-PC	2673	17	747 3		
258 FRITZ8 P3-PC	2668	13	1207 4	2687	8
258 FRITZ7 P3-PC	2666	12	1447 5		
256 CHESS TIGER15 P3-PC	2648	16	773 6		
254 GAMBIT TIGER2.0 P3-PC	2637	11	1692 7	2502	2
254 CHESS TIGER14 P3-PC	2635	12	1285 8	2665	13
253 SHREDDER6/632 P3-PC	2624	12	1316 9	2438	7
252 HIARCS8 P3-PC	2620	12	1492 10	2611	14
251 JUNIOR7 P3-PC	2615	12	1312 11	2661	12
251 FRITZ6A P3-PC	2610	10	2079 12	2576	53
250 GAMBIT TIGER1.0 P3-PC	2601	22	429 13		
248 REBEL CENTURY4 P3-PC	2590	21	480 14	2634	4
248 REBEL TIGER12 P3-PC	2589	15	872 15		
248 JUNIOR6A P3-PC	2588	10	1891 16	2581	22
246 HIARCS732 P3-PC	2574	9	2347 17	2427	19
246 HIARCS7.1 P3-PC	2569	12	1397 18		
246 SHREDDER5/532 P3-PC	2568	14	988 19	2602	15
244 SHREDDER4 P3-PC	2556	16	759 20	2560	15
244 NIMZ08 P3-PC	2554	12	1306 21		
243 NIMZ0732 P3-PC	2550	13	1208 22		
243 FRITZ532 P3-PC	2550	12	1458 23		
243 CHESSMASTER 6/7000 P3-PC	2550	24	348 24	2554	22
243 FRITZ516 P3-PC	2549	12	1359 25	2473	6
243 REBEL CENTURY3 P3-PC	2548	25	340 26	2615	6
243 GANDALF5 P3-PC	2545	20	495 27		
242 NIMZ098 P3-PC	2542	12	1307 28	2435	10
242 GANDALF4 P3-PC	2536	13	1115 29		
241 JUNIOR5 P3-PC	2532	11	1537 30		
240 HIARCS6 P3-PC	2522	13	1205 31	2552	24
240 SOS P3-PC	2520	14	974 32		
239 GOLIATH LIGHT P3-PC	2518	15	846 33		
239 NIMZ099A P3-PC	2516	14	1050 34		
239 REBEL CENTURY1.2 P3-PC	2516	21	458 35	2552	43
239 REBEL-10 P3-PC	2513	25	329 36	2558	17
239 REBEL9 P3-PC	2513	14	1059 37	2637	14
238 REBEL8 P3-PC	2509	19	548 38		
237 MChess PRO6 P3-PC	2502	17	699 39	2504	12
237 MChess PRO7 P3-PC	2501	14	1067 40	2560	2
237 CHESS GENIUS5 P3-PC	2498	13	1206 41	2419	6
236 MChess PRO8 P3-PC	2489	14	1026 42		
236 SHREDDER3 P3-PC	2489	34	177 43	2671	2
236 SHREDDER2 P3-PC	2488	15	875 44	2178	6
234 FRITZ516 PENT-PC	2474	29	256 45		
233 GANDALF3 P3-PC	2467	27	278 46		
231 HIARCS6 PENT-PC	2449	11	1686 47	2540	2
230 HIARCS5 PENT-PC	2447	19	585 48		
230 JUNIOR4.6 P3-PC	2445	43	115 49		
230 KALLIST02 P3-PC	2440	22	412 50		

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Please send ARTICLES, RESULTS, GAMES and SUBSCRIPTIONS direct to Eric... thanks!

RATING LIST (c) Eric Hallsworth. SelfSearch 109									
	Elo	+/-	Games	Pos	Human/Games				
BFC Computer	2367	16	821	1	2276	172	MEPH MILANO	1979	13
220 TASC R30-1995	2344	28	259	2	2272	172	MEPH MONDIAL 68000XL	1979	15
218 MEPH LONDON 68030	2344	28	259	2	2272	171	NOVAG JADE2-ZIRCON2	1975	39
214 TASC R30-1993	2318	12	1347	3	2326	171	MEPH MONTREAL-ROMA 68000	1969	9
214 TASC GENIUS2 68030	2314	18	657	4	2308	170	MEPH AMSTERDAM	1962	9
213 MEPH LONDON PRO 68020/24	2309	67	47	5	2392	169	MEPH ACADEMY/5	1957	9
210 MEPH LYON 68030	2282	15	869	6	2316	168	FID MACH2B	1948	27
210 MEPH RISC2 1H8	2281	20	517	7	2316	168	NOV SUPER FORTE-EXP B/6	1944	12
209 MEPH PORTOROSE 68030	2275	20	515	8	2340	167	MEPH HEGAA/5	1941	8
207 MEPH VANCOUVER 68030	2262	17	698	9	2347	167	KASPAROV MAESTRO D/10	1937	12
207 MEPH BERLIN PRO 68020/24	2261	12	1284	10	2217	166	FID MACH2C	1934	9
207 MEPH LYON-VANC 68020/20	2258	27	296	11	2327	166	KASP ADV TRAVEL-BRAVO-BARRACUDA	1928	15
207 KASP RISC 2500-512K	2256	25	337	12	2330	165	MEPH MM4/5	1928	15
205 MEPH RISC1 1H8	2243	9	2540	13	2232	165	MEPH MODENA	1921	8
204 MEPH ATLANTA-MAGELLAN	2234	15	923	14	2357	165	MEPH MODENA	1921	16
204 KASPAROV SPARC/20	2233	14	1077	15	2231	163	NOVAG RUBY-EMERALD	1910	17
203 MEPH MONTREUX	2226	16	840	16	2268	163	KASPAROV MAESTRO C/8	1907	27
203 KASP RISC 2500-128K	2221	77	36	17	2040	163	NOV SUPER FORTE-EXP A/6	1906	12
201 MEPH LONDON 68020/12	2211	77	36	17	2040	163	FID TRAVELMASTER	1905	19
201 KASP RISC 2500-128K	2209	9	2625	18	2270	163	MEPH SUPERMOND2-COLLEGE-MCARLO4	1904	27
199 NOVAG STAR DIAMOND-SAPPHIRE	2195	50	86	19	2215	162	FID MACH2A	1900	26
198 FID ELITE 68040-V10	2191	53	75	20	2215	161	MEPH MONTE CARLO	1891	28
197 MEPH VANCOUVER 68020/12	2179	9	2258	21	2121	161	KASP TRAVEL CHAMPION	1890	32
196 MEPH LYON 68020/12	2173	8	3302	22	2246	161	CONCH PLY-VICTORIA/5.5	1890	16
194 MEPH LONDON 68000	2153	61	58	23	2238	161	CXG SPHINX GALAXY/4	1889	9
194 MEPH PORTOROSE 68020	2152	10	1842	24	1800	160	KASP TURBOKING2	1880	14
192 NOV SAPPHIRE2-DIAMOND2	2142	19	589	25	2221	159	NOV EXPERT/6	1875	32
192 MEPH BERLIN 68000	2139	12	1311	26	2221	157	FID CLUB B	1863	12
192 FID ELITE 68030-V9	2136	15	917	27	2169	157	NOV EXPERT/5	1860	26
191 MEPH VANCOUVER 68000	2130	12	1320	28	2126	156	NOV SUPER FORTE-EXP A/5	1854	11
191 MEPH LYON 68000	2128	11	1642	29	2083	156	FID PAR E-ELITE+DES2100	1851	9
190 MEPH ALMERIA 68020	2124	14	1020	30	2152	155	NOV FORTE B	1849	10
188 MEPH MIL PRO-MASTER-SENATOR	2111	19	543	31	2169	155	FID AVANT GARDE/5	1845	11
188 NOV SAPPHIRE1-DIAMOND1	2108	12	1389	32	2139	155	MEPH REBEL	1844	9
187 MEPH PORTOROSE 68000	2099	11	1573	33	2111	154	NOV-FORTE A	1837	9
186 FID MACH4-DES2325 68020-V7	2091	9	2281	34	2179	154	FID CLUB A	1835	31
183 FID ELITE 2x6000-V5	2070	26	312	35	1888	153	KASP STRATOS-CORONA	1831	10
182 MEPH POLGAR/10	2057	18	632	36	2080	153	KASPAROV MAESTRO A/6	1829	15
181 MEPH DALLAS 68020	2052	14	973	37	2069	153	KASP TURBOKING1	1824	24
181 MEPH ROMA 68020	2052	14	1070	38	2033	153	CONCHES/6	1824	46
180 KASPAROV BRUTE FORCE	2042	14	1060	39	2182	153	MEPH SUPERMONDIAL1	1824	11
179 MEPH ALMERIA 68000	2032	14	1017	40	2093	152	CONCH PLYMATE/5.5	1820	9
178 NOVAG SCORPIO-DIABLO	2026	10	1015	41	2126	151	KASP SIMULTANO	1814	13
176 KASP NM6-COUGAR-COSHOS	2009	15	837	42	2072	151	NOV EXPERT/4	1812	14
175 MEPH NIGEL SHORT	2004	25	322	43	2136	151	SCI TURBO KASPAROV/4	1811	21
175 FID MACH3-DES2265 68000-V2	2000	6	5471	44	2107	150	FID EXCELLENCE/4	1807	11
174 NOV EMERALDCLAS-AMBER	1998	58	64	45	1959	149	CONCH PLYMATE/4	1799	24
174 MEPH DALLAS 68000	1994	11	1526	46	2076	148	FID ELITE C	1796	35
173 MEPH POLGAR/5	1985	8	2799	47	2076	147	FID ELEGANCE	1787	17
173 MEPH NM5/5	1985	11	1750	48	1850	147	MEPHISTO NM2	1781	17
172 NOV SUPER FORTE-EXP C/6	1981	8	2824	49	2000	146	SCI TURBOSTAR 432	1780	12
							FID EXCELLENCE-DES2000	1774	11
								1551	100