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As usual, greetings to all NEWS SHEET Readers and, at this time of year, my wife (Chris) and I send you our sincere best wishes for a happy CHRISTMAS.

An 'X' used to appear regularly when I was at school and got my sums wrong and this sadly applies to many folk at this time who mistakenly call it Xmas when it should be celebrated with its Originators Name included.

So - happy Christmas!

NEWS SHEET 11

Usually as I sit down at the typewriter I am reasonably well organised and have the 'contents' fairly well planned out. Not so for NS/11! I am currently awaiting 1 new Machine and 1 new Programme, both of which are due 'any day' and concerning which I had really hoped to give some 'promotion' through the NS by doing brief Reports for you, the Readers. I have learned to my cost in the past however that you can hang on too long for such things and one simply ends up having to go ahead without the awaited item anyway... but 2 weeks in arrears!

Currently eagerly awaited are the new SCISYS LEONARDO containing the basic Programme with an Up-grade Module following on in about 10 days, and the new MEPHISTO DALLAS Module which is the Up-grade for the AMSTERDAM Module. The LEONARDO is somewhere 'on its way' but, after learning last night that the DALLAS probably won't arrive until next week, I decided to make a start this morning anyway with the NS.

In fact this NEWS SHEET should have come out to you with a BOOKLET I am issuing of the TOURNAMENT held here a couple of weeks ago for 14 COMMERCIALY AVAILABLE CHESS COMPUTERS.. The Event was an 8 Round Swiss with a 3 min. per move Time Control up to move 60 and 1 min. per move thereafter. When Readers learn that Machines playing included not only the established MEPHISTO AMSTERDAM, NOVAG's EXPERT and SUPER CONSTELLATION and

FIDELITY's AVANT GARDE, but the newer NOVAG FORTE and FIDELITY PAR EXCELLENCE and the completely new MEPHISTO REBEL and CONCHESSE PLYMATE/8MHz as well as one or two others, the importance and value of the Tournament will be appreciated. The Booklet will come either in Printed form (a proper job!) or Photo-copied. Either way the Content will be the same with one or two Photos, Round-by-Round Summaries, Full Cross-table and Ratings, all the best Games (about 1/2 with Notes and light Analysis) and a few of the 'not best' Games... the Booklet will be available for Purchase by non-NEWS SHEET folk and it would be wrong to leave an impression that the Computers only ever play top class Chess. Actually there were only a few 'poor' Games - poor by virtue of quiet/boring play or bad moves, but as this occurred in a couple of the key meetings I have decided to include them in the Booklet rather than pretend they didn't exist so that all Readers can obtain an accurate impression of current standards (which are generally very high indeed).

The final 'style' of the Booklet will depend on response from the main Manufacturers/Distributors/Retailers to advertising opportunity as Income from this will be put towards the total cost to keep my own costs to an acceptable minimum. So far COMPETENCE and EUREKA have confirmed they will take advertising space and, if no-one else comes forward in the next day or so, I will have to 'make do' with photo-copying, probably - though this will have the effect of reducing the price of the finished item to 'outsiders' which may result in the Booklet reaching a wider audience.

Although I am editing the Booklet, the notes and analysis are being shared amongst all of the Machine Operators who helped run the Tournament as well as representatives of the Manufacturers who have been invited to analyse a game each on behalf of their Computer! I am optimistic that the whole thing will result in a really worthwhile effort for not only were there some very interesting,

exciting and cleverly-played Games, but the TOURNAMENT RESULT was quite an upset. Certainly all the Operators and myself at the Tournament expected the MEPHISTO AMSTERDAM to win... and I expect most Readers would forecast the same. In honesty most discussion concerned the likley 'runners-up' with REBELL, FORTE, PAR EXCELLENCE, PLYMATE/8 and AVANT GARDE each having their supporters. In the event the PAR EXCELLENCE came out on TOP, $\frac{1}{2}$ a point clear of a REBELL which in turn was a $\frac{1}{2}$ clear of a NOVAG EXPERT. A cluster came together a further $\frac{1}{2}$ point back (but all with a + score) and these included FORTE, AVANT GARDE, PLYMATE/8 and a second REBELL. Some thought and discussion on the various Machines, style of play, reasons for the Amsterdam's failure etc. will be included in the Booklet.

I am going to take the liberty of keeping you in suspense for the details in full which you will get in the Booklet, hopefully in 2/3 weeks. I am just awaiting (hopefully) another advert or two now, plus some final bits of Analysis from a couple of places. If neither LEONARDO nor DALLAS has reached me here by the time I close this Issue, I will put in a single duplicated Page in this format with the Booklet to give Readers initial observations of same. All Readers will get the Booklet FREE as a sort of NS/12... this should allow me to take a break till February for NS/13!

NEWS FROM THE MANUFACTURERS

MEPHISTO REBELL

Although this Machine is only just becoming available in Britain, HeGENER & Glaser kindly sent 2 Modules to the West Winds Tournament via Eureka and Paul Cohen. This is the commercial version of the Machine which performed so remarkably well in the 1986 World Championship in Cologne... and its performance in our Tournament in coming 2nd and 4= confirmed its high playing strength (Tourn. Av. was 1994). Although I would describe its Play as more defensive in style than either the Fid Par Excellence or Novag Forte, it nevertheless 'starred' in 5 or 6 tremendous games in the Tournament and, whilst these include 2 defeats involving some razor-sharp play, its win against Mephisto's Amsterdam was probably the best game of the week.

It is available in a hand-held version with disc or small stand-up pieces which

are magnetic and first-class for journeys, Chess study in bed etc... but you have to 'key-in' the moves 'blc3' etc on the Modules Keyboard. Even so the REBELL's Evaluation Functions, 5-Ply forward Analysis, Depth Search/Time etc. Info. are all available - it is also mains or battery usable and so becomes easily the best Portable buy as far as I can see... though its cost may approach £300. If you wish to use the REBELL Module in a 'proper' Board - no problem. It fits happily into any of Mephisto's 3 Auto-Sensory Boards from the Silver & Black (shades of the Los Angeles Raiders!?) to the full-size Munich Board. Once in an Auto-Sensory Board the Module recognises its elevated position and the keying-in is no longer necessary of course. The MEPHISTO REBELL in this form will make a real competitor for the FORTE and PAR EXCELLENCE... it will be dearer by some way, but on an auto-sensory Board of course. On the Exclusive S Board (Mephisto's middle-range) it will compete with Fidelity's Avant Garde, Novag's Expert and Conchess Plymates (the latter 2 having no Evaluation or Display Features however).

It is hard to find fault with a Machine which has generally impressed me (to the degree I have added one to my collection, which is probably the best advert!). However I will say that I find its Display slightly disappointing only in that it doesn't Scroll in the way that the Amsterdam, Forte or Avant Garde Displays do (enabling you to gather info. on Evaluation, Depth, Time usage, Expected Move etc. without pressing any buttons or doing anything at all!). There is no Scroll with the REBELL and a button must be pressed each time you wish to go from one piece of info. to another. The only other thing I have found is a slight uncertainty in the Machine concerning Draws by repetition. Such situations arise comparatively rarely in practice and so this 'failing' is not going to affect the Rebell's strength more than nominally. In fact, having found the problem I must confess to giving the Machine some hammer in this area and I find that, whilst it does play correctly sometimes in recognition of the 3-fold Repetition situation it doesn't always seem to appreciate when it ought to take the Draw (because it's losing otherwise), or when it should avoid same (because it's winning). A minor quibble probably - don't let it put anyone off - this is a really good middle-price winner. In fact, for the growing body of folk who, like me, enjoy pitting the Computers in

opposition to each other, because of its different style of play the REBELL makes a most interesting 'partner' with both the Novag FORTE and Fidelity's PAR E (or the AVANT GARDE which I have and is virtually the same) - it is equally true to say that FORTE v PAR E games are very interesting too, as they also have quite differing styles and preferences in their positional aims.

Currently REBELL v FORTE are at 10-10 in Games over 1,2 and 3mins per move.

The REBELL leads my AVANT GARDE by a somewhat startling 11-6 nearing the end of the 3min section. Most of the REBELL's lead came in the 1min part.

Both Matches are to go to 24 games in total, 8 over each Time Limit. An interesting idea is to repeat the same Openings at different Time Limits - this will clearly indicate relative Strengths if there is variation in a Machine's abilities at different speeds. On the other hand an accidental bias towards one of the Machines due to the smallish sample of Openings tending to favour one rather than the other could give a wrong overall impression of the relative strengths between the 2 Machines - 3 Time Limits over 16 Games is probably needed if any Reader feels like adopting this suggestion!

MEPHISTO AMSTERDAM/DALLAS

Recent NEWS SHEETS have referred to a Mephisto Cologne which was the name given to the Amsterdam up-grade for its earlier appearances. However Mephisto has now won (retained!) the WORLD MICRO CHAMPIONSHIP held in Dallas in November with this up-grade, (running on a 68020 Processor at a speed equivalent to 30MHz) and so it is to be called MEPHISTO DALLAS.

The Result of the World Micro is given in the brief detail in which I have it later in the NS, but I have no copy of any of the Games yet. However I consider myself fortunate to be in comparatively regular correspondence with its Programmer, Richard Lang, and he tells me that the Amsterdam's shortcomings in defending against passed pawns have been dealt with and it has been made more aggressive in its King-side attacks. There are other improvements of course, but these are the most noticeable.

Future purchasers of the Mephisto

Amsterdam will in fact now buy the MEPHISTO DALLAS; in this form it will be exactly the same as the Amsterdam in price, appearance, speed etc. However what I am presently calling the SUPER DALLAS will also be available! This will be a non-upgradeable 'one off' version but running on the 68020 Processor and attaining the same finished running speed (i.e. 30MHz!) as the World Champion! I hesitate to mention price because of Britain's worsening currency exchange with Germany (and most others!) but it will be around £1500-1600 I think. Nevertheless I am guessing a Rating of about 2300 (yes, 2300!) for this... with the basic 12MHz version coming in at about 2200.

The final possibility is for existing Amsterdam owners - we will be able to exchange our Amsterdam Module for a DALLAS Module (or Module Kit?! - not sure if it needs 'fixing' or just slots into the space left by the Amsterdam). The price to up-grade will be near to £150 probably. Eureka has kindly agreed to let me keep my Amsterdam for a while after I receive the DALLAS so that I can run a series of Games between the 2. I shall use a 'reverse-opening technique' making sure that both Machine's will play both White and Black from every position generated by their Opening Books over around 24 Games. Probably 1 or 2 mins per move will be enough to see the changes in Playing ability and I will report to Readers the resultant Elo gap between Amsterdam and Dallas at 12MHz and also be better able to estimate the strength of SUPER DALLAS following same.

SCISYS LEONARDO

This has already been launched in some parts of Europe and first copies are arriving in Britain right now. The 'basic' version contains an improved TURBO 24K in a Wooden Auto Sensory Board (large and beautiful I am assured by Paul Hales who has already seen one and is very enthusiastic about it). A 6MHz Module up-grade is also already out and I gather that this is an improved version of the TURBO KASPAROV which, with the extra bit of Speed as well, should enable this to compete on equal terms with the other 6502 Processing Rating List Leaders such as REBELL, PAR E, FORTE and PLYMATE/8 etc. Finally a further Module nears completion which will activate all the Machine's Display and Computer interaction Features (and add even a little

more strength I believe). As mentioned earlier, the basic LEONARDO is 'on its way' to me (somewhere) with the TURBO KASPAROV Module not far behind. If either does come before I complete NS typing, I will add some brief thoughts and initial reaction.

Other News

A bumper COMPUTER CHESS REPORTS is now out from the States; Senior Editor (and I.M) Larry Kaufman has done a terrific job on it with packed Chapters on various 1986 Tournaments; Reviews of all the new Machines and the plans of different Manufacturers; Annotated Games; Rating Lists (partly based on our own NS List which is a nice compliment); Problems; Rules; Ethics; End-Games; and a Chapter entitled 'How to Crush your Computer!'. Larry also discusses another value in owning more than one Chess Computer; this being a good idea for those Players who remain better than the Computers. He plays up to 6 of them at once in SIMULTANEOUS Games which not only sharpens his own play but enables him to test Machines which would otherwise not have much chance against him unless he gave them odds. I wonder if Hegener & Glaser will lend him 6 SUPER DALLAS Machines and how Larry will get on against them in a Simul!?

The effects of SPEED were discussed in NS/6 and an (at that time) fairly comprehensive TABLE given enabling Readers to calculate likely Rating improvements from Speed increases. As are most such Tables, the calculations were based on an increase of 100 Elo for a doubling of Speed or a 250 Elo plus per extra Ply. However that Table stopped at 12MHz (the max. Commercially available Speed at that time) whereas various Computers will undoubtedly be available during forthcoming months running at Speeds in excess of this (e.g. SUPER DALLAS at 30!). So it seems time to extend the list for NS Readers and also adjust it slightly to account for the fact that (as shown by Ken Thompson and David Levy in the ICCA Journal) the Elo improvements do not continue at quite the same Rate as the Speed increases. Whilst this only starts to have a real effect at Speeds still quite a bit greater than those with which we are dealing, nevertheless small adjustments are wise and are incorporated in the following Table.

1MHz	10MHz	32MHz	480
1.0	342	32MHz	480
1.5	359	34	487
2	376	36	494
3	415	38	500
3.6	485	40	505
4	500	42	511
5	532	44	516
5.5	545	46	520
6	558	48	525
7	579	50	529
8	598	52	533
9	615	54	537
10	629	56	540

Hopefully that will cover the next 12 months anyway! To use it you'll have to put your own brain into gear a little this time by finding the 2 Speeds you wish to compare and then deducting the lower figure from the greater. An e.g with the NOVAG EXPERT...

Nov EXPERT/4... 200
 Nov EXPERT/5... 232 = 32 more than 4MHz
 Nov EXPERT/6... 258 = 58 more than 4MHz
 and 26 above 5MHz

The NS will attempt to show the 'finished' running Speed to enable Readers to work out their own comparisons. For example the MEPHISTO SUPER DALLAS will be shown as MEPH DALLAS/30. It actually runs at a basic 14MHz but, by using the 68020 Processor, a 2.1x Speed Increase is obtained making the finished operating Speed virtually 30MHz. This Machine should achieve a +118 Rating over the basic DALLAS (472 - 354). Hope that's reasonably clear and helpful.

For Home Computer owners, here is the Programme to use to obtain the Speed Figure applying to any MHz (the formula is not quite the same as Thompson's and Levy's, but it is simpler and produces the same Results within +/-1% as far as I can tell).

```

10 PRINT"clear screen"
15 INPUT"Required Speed ";RA
20 G=INT(LOG(RA)*250/LOG(5.6+RA*3/200)
+.5)
25 PRINT"Rating SPEED";RA;TAB(15);"Gap";G
30 PRINT:PRINT"Another Y/N?"
35 GETZ$:IFZ$="Y"THENGOTO15:REM * or GOTO
10 if you'd rather clear screen
40 IFZ$="N"THENGOTO50
45 GOTO35
50 END
  
```

ADVERTISING

Mr. F. H. J. Green has a NOVAG SUPER CONSTELLATION for sale. 2yrs. old in v.g.c with average but careful use and still boxed. Wishes to up-date so £110. Apply to 'Fernbank', Shepherd's Way, Fairlight, East Sussex or telephone Mr. Green at 0424 813243.

TOURNAMENT RESULTS

1986 WORLD MICRO CHAMPS, DALLAS.

			(Ratings)
1	MEPH DALLAS/30	6 / 7	2376 (Estimated)
2	Fid Challenger/16	5½	2323
3	MEPH DALLAS/30	5	2262
4	Fid Challenger/16	4½	2208
	MEPH DALLAS/30	4½	2208
6	Recom/16	4	2159
7	Fid Challenger/16	3½	2100
	Recom/16	3½	2100
	Recom/16	3½	2100
10	Cyrus 68k	3	2057
11	Cyrus 68k	2½	2000
12	Cyrus 68k	2	1942
13	Chess Monster	1½	1889
14	Atari Kempelen	0	-

The FID CHALLENGER/16 was entered as FID 2533 in recognition of its victory over David Strauss (a 2533 rater) in the 1986 US Chess Open Tour.

Recom/16 is the MEPH REBELL entered privately by the Programmers and running at 16MHz

Larry Kaufman very kindly wrote me with the Results straight after the Event and told me that the DALLAS/30 was immensely strong in the Middle Game and exhibited clear improvements in the End Game; he said, however, that the FIDELITY/16 was still clearly the best when End-Games were reached and that, though he is basically a Mephisto Amsterdam/Dallas fan, he had had some very interesting talks with the Spracklens who programme for Fidelity.

Cyrus 68k was David Levy's entry and is to come out on equipment similar to that used in the London part of the Karpov-Kasparov Match. He states that the Tournament has shown up 6 (six) areas of clear improvement possibility which can all be dealt with for the Machine's release.

RESULTS from PLY 10/1986

MEPH AMSTERDAM 8/12; NOV EXPERT/4 7½;
MEPH MM2 7; NOV CONST/3.6 6; N.SUPER CONST 5;
MEPH BLITZ 4½; F.PRESTIGE 4

MEPH AMSTERDAM 12½/16; SCI TURBO 432 10;
SCI TURBO KASPAROV 8; MEPH BLITZ 5;
NOV SUPER CONST 4½

MEPH AMSTERDAM 26/30; MEPH MM2 14½;
NOV SUPER CONST 11½; MEPH MONDIAL 8

MEPH AMSTERDAM came 2nd of 10 scoring 6½/9 against humans rated 1925 (+125 = my standard 2050) = 2228
CONCHESS PLYMATE/6 came 2nd of 8 scoring 5/7 against humans rated 1764 (+125 = 1889) = 2060
FID PAR EXCELLENCE came 3rd of 9 scoring 4½/8 v humans rated 1743 (+125 = 1868) = 1918
NOV EXPERT/4 came 3rd of 10 scoring 5½/9 against humans rated 1725 (+125 = 1850) = 1939

17th NORTH AMERICAN, 1986

1	Belle	5 / 5	2459 estimated
2	Lachex	4	2309
3	N.EXPRT FORTE/12	3½	2220
4	BeBe	3	2135
	Sun Phoenix	3	2135
6	MEPH DALLAS/25	2½	2040
	Recom/16	2½	2048
	Cyrus 68k	2½	2048
	Fid Challenger/16	2½	2048
	Fid Parallels	2½	2048
	Chip Tests	2½	2048
12	Merlin	2	1991
	Vaxchess	2	1999
14	Ostrich	1½	1916
15	Waycool	½	1763
	Rex 3	½	1763

Larry Kaufman tells me that the EXPERT FORTE/12 is a bit-slice effort (one hopes a future commercial effort.... hint, hint!) running at 12MHz. In Matches afterwards it scored 2-2 v Cray Blitz and 3-5 v BeBe and also scored close to 50% in 'money' games against various USA 2400-2500 rated Players at Blitz. Its result above however includes a win against MEPH DALLAS/25 due entirely to an operator error when the DALLAS had a clearly won position.

Fid Parallels is 2 (I think) Processors working in parallel inside Fidelity equipment. It was improved for the Dallas World Micro and expected (by Fidelity) to win there; however the Parallels are excluded by virtue of the Rules so we wont know till another time!

In the Blitz Games for (fairly substantial amounts of) money, the DALLAS/25 scored 9/20 earning a Rating around 2400 US figures (thus around 2325 mine).

2nd US OPEN, 1986

Won by Fid Challenger/16 with 5/6 and a Fidelity Private Line/16, also 5/6. MEPH DALLAS/22 came 3rd with 4½/6. This Result was reported in NS/9 but I still lack Buchholz figures (though I have SB now) and some Machine Speeds. I reckon the winners Performed at around 2300, the DALLAS/22 about 2225, based on the Results of 'known' Machines such as REBELL, AVANT GARDE, EXPERT, PAR EXCELLENCE and FORTE which were running at Speeds very close to their commercial counterparts and all scored from 2½ to 3½/6.

The RATING LIST

RATINGS were reduced in NS/10 and now run approx. 75 below those used in the US and around 125 above those used in Sweden. I believe this has resulted in a much more accurate and acceptable relationship to the Elo 'human ratings' figures to which we are used in Britain. Readers more used to the British BCF Ratings can deduct 600 and divide by 8 and thus get an accurate comparative BCF figure if they prefer.

Before issuing this LIST I need to say something (unfortunately). I have been (gently) criticised by 2 Manufacturers for including PRICES with the Machine Ratings. I can see their point! My List, when showing a Rating plus Price can give a quite false impression of value for money if I'm not careful! For example a Reader could see a Machine rating at 2000 costing, say, £175 and conclude it must be a better buy than another Machine which rates the same but costs, say, £400. Of course, this may not be so at all. The 2nd. Machine may have an Auto Sensory Board instead of Press Sensory, may be in Wood; may have a Display or other valuable features that the cheaper Machine is lacking in the main. It can well be indeed that it is the dearer and not the cheaper Machine that is the better value for money!

The RATING LIST originally started because no Purchaser can judge a Machine's Playing STRENGTH from his/her visit to a shop. He may examine Price, Quality, Features, Display, Up-gradeability, Add-on Cartridges, easy-payment plans etc... and form his own views on these areas. But he cannot easily judge strength. Even after HUNDREDS of Games v other Computers and People it is noteworthy that the Swedish figures, my figures and the US figures still show variations. We are often in contact with each other discussing these points - and often adjustments are made as a result - but not always! There are areas in which we still disagree (nicely!). So how can a Purchaser hope to know with any certainty after a couple of quick Games at the place of purchase. Really, he can't... and thus the NS RATING LIST. Because a prospective Purchaser can compare Prices just as easily as he can compare Features, Functions, Appearance etc. I take the point that my showing of a Rating alongside a Price can give a wrong implication. On the other hand many Readers (and the NS is for the READERS rather than the MANUFACTURERS in the first place - though I know it has proved of much value to the latter as well! - and, as I say, many Readers LIKE the showing of prices! A tricky problem! I am leaving prices off this time - but am open to any views that Readers and Manufacturers would like to express.

Now, before I run out of space altogether, some Ratings!

RATING LIST, December 1986, by Eric Hallsworth

	HiTech	2334	9 NOV FORTE	2020		Psion/800	1910
1	MEPH DALLAS/30	2310	10 NOV EXPERT/5	2014	26	CONCHESS/4	1910
	Cray Blitz	2269	11 CONCHESS PLYMATE/6	2004		Ostrich	1902
	Fid Chall/16	2262	12 SCI TURBO KASP/5	2000	27	NOV QUATTRO	1885
	Sun Phoenix	2255	13 FID EXCELLENCE/4	1992		Vaxchess	1882
	BeBe	2213	14 NOV EXPERT/4	1980	28	MEPH SUPERMONDIAL	1857 ?
2	MEPH DALLAS/12	2190	15 CONCHESS/6	1966	29	SCI SUPERSTAR 36K	1854
	Belle	2172	16 SCI TURBO KASP/4	1966	30	FID PRESTIGE	1853
	Hecom/16	2155	17 MEPH MM2	1958	31	PSION QL	1845
3	N.Expert Forte/12	2151	18 CONCHESS PLYMATE/4	1956	32	FID ELITE A	1839
3	MEPH AMSTERDAM	2130	19 NOV SUPER CONST/5	1948	33	MEPH EXCL 3	1839
4	MEPH REBELL	2048	20 FID ELITE C	1940	34	CONCHESS/2	1837
5	NOV EXPERT/6	2042	21 FID EXCELLENCE/3	1940	35	FID ELITE B	1836
6	CONCH PLYMATE/8	2036	22 SCI TURBOSTAR 432	1938	36	NOV CONSTELLATION/3.61831	
	Advance 68k	2025	23 FID ELEGANCE	1931		Awit	1828
	Lachex	2025	24 NOV SUPER CONST/4	1917	37	FID SENSORY 12	1815
7	FID AVANT GARDE	2024	Orwell 85	1915	38	SARGON 4 AVE	1810
8	FID PAR EXCELLENCE	2022	25 MEPH BLITZ	1915	39	MEPH MONDIAL	1788

That, then, is it for now - I'll be sending out the BOOKLETS and news of MEPH DALLAS and SCI LEONARDO (providing it's in) with any other brief news as soon as it's possible. Hope you enjoy this - sorry there's no room for Games.

Eric