EDITORIAL NOTE from Eric Hallsworth: The purpose of the NEWS SHEET, established by me in 1985, and produced continuously by me since then, has always been to survey the CHESS COMPUTER scene, with special emphasis on reliable assessments of the PLAYING STRENGTHS of the many machines and programs now available.

PUBLICATION DATES: Early Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, and Dec

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ARTICLES, REVIEWS, GAMES sent in by Readers, Distributors, Programmers etc., are always welcome, and will receive fair consideration for publication.

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NEWS and RESULTS
from around the World

With the NEWS Columns in NS/49 largely giving up their space to the 28 page ANNUAL REVIEW, there is plenty to catch up on this time! I will try and cover as much as I can in brief - in some case fuller reports with games will appear in NS/51.

COMPUTER CHESS REPORTS

Larry Kaufman’s popular Review reached me late in 1993 and, as always, contains much of interest. He concedes that more has happened on the PC-program front than elsewhere, and the range of competing Software presents new purchasers with an almost mind-boggling choice.

NEW MEPHISTOS

He mentions 4 new MEPHISTO models at the top end of the range: an UPGRADE for the BERLIN, which he believes will be a 68020 version; an UPGRADE for Mephisto RISC 1MB; and a new 68030.

Thus far only the latter, the GENIUS2 68030, has appeared in Britain, and up to now in very small numbers. This is apparently due to the fact that there has been a compatibility problem with some boards where owners are upgrading from an earlier module.

Basically, however, the GENIUS2 68030 is available in or for either of Mephisto’s ‘upgradeable’ boards, the Exclusive and Munich. With all of the features of the VANCOUVER 68000/68020 programs, a slightly bigger and updated Opening Book, the GENIUS030 runs on a 33.33MHz processor with 768K RAM for Hash Tables.

As an UPGRADE the MODULE SET costs £999 [less some part-exchange allowance]. At the time of writing Mephisto are in the process of sending over the components we need to effect board changes where necessary. After that, hopefully, sales will boom. The GENIUS030 NEW is £1375 in an EXCLUSIVE board, and £1545 in the MUNCHEN.

These prices are little different than those which applied to the VANCOUVER as a 68020 at just 12MHz some 2-3 years ago, yet we have Richard Lang’s very latest program in Hardware running about 4 times faster than the ‘old’ Vancouver020! it is likely to achieve just over 2400 Elo points so, with all of the usual features associated with Richard Lang’s programs, this is the best wood-board value ever produced by Mephisto and challenged only by the TASC R30.

Whether there will be enough results in to include the GENIUS2 030 in the Rating List yet seems doubtful, as I only have 3 readers doing tests at the moment. However the Rating is forecastable as its speed will be around 60-65% of that of the PC GENIUS2 on a 486/66DX2. This means it should be within 40 or 45 Elo points of same, if not nearer... so my forecast is an NS Rating of around 2410-2415.

Current scores in are:
From Gerald MURPHY it leads 5-3 over Mephisto RISC 1MB
From Pete BLANDFORD it leads 4½-1½ over Mephisto RISC 1MB
From Chris BOOTH it leads 1½-1½ over Kasparov RISC 2500-128K

The BERLIN 2 is rumoured to be ‘at hand’... and I also hear the 68020 processor will be a fast one - probably 24MHz [or 25MHz says Larry in CCR]. This is likely to put it ahead of the RISC 2500-128K on the Ratings and, if the price stays close to £400 as I have been told, the Mephisto quality and the extra features [e.g. analysis available whilst in monitor mode and 50 game storage], will make it my choice for ‘best buy’ in the top press sensory range.

At this stage I am not sure whether existing BERLIN owners will be able to upgrade, in view of the fact that it is an internal program AND processor change. Certainly the program chips are easy to swap, but I don’t know about the processor.

The RISC 1MB upgrade apparently reached
News and Results

Swedish in early December, but the PLY Magazine folk there tell me there were immediate problems and all units were returned to Germany from where no further news was forthcoming until last week! I hear a second supply has now reached my friends at PLY, so we may soon know what to expect. It was not originally thought that the Upgrade would give much above 25 Elo extra, but now I think we should 'wait and see'.

CCR also refers to the new wood Mephisto MONTREAL. At £399 in Britain it represents excellent value in my view for anyone who wants to play on a 'proper' wood board etc. and have the added ease of LEDs on every square. The program is the very latest 68000 version prior to the introduction of hash tables by Richard Lang, so it will be similar to the ROMA 68000.

NOVAG RATINGS

Larry here refers to the NOVAG RUBY and EMERALD and their C.R.A Grading Test in the States. The advers over here show the achievement at 2203 USCF, with a conversion figure given as 188 BCF after correctly making a deduction to convert the higher USCF figures to Elo. The deduction I recommend is 100, and that is the figure which has been used, though some argue well that it should be 120.

However Larry's report quotes the result as being 22 less at 2181 USCF, and we also learn that it was an Action Rating, not 40/2, an important point which is not mentioned in British adverts! I deduct 80 Elo for Action Chess (and 160 Elo for Blitz), so 2181 - 80 (Action) - 100 (USCF->Elo) = 2001 Elo = 175 BCF! Mmm?! Why not turn to the back page NS RATING LIST right now, and see where it is on same?! QED.

Despite all that, let's admit fairly that both the £99 RUBY (especially) and £149 EMERALD are good value. Larry considers the slightly less-expensive 88-chip models, JADE and ZIRICON, to be significantly weaker - however the JADE is a plug-in portable rather than calculator style and some folk, like me, prefer that for travelling.

SAITEK PROGRESS

In the CCR discussion on Saitek's latest models there is some uncertainty as to why the Spracklens' SPARC program isn't producing better results than it is. Note that a 20MHz SPARC is about the equivalent of a 30MHz RISC (e.g. the TASC R30). Also there is a genuine 100,000+ position Opening Book, a 256K program which implies much extended chess knowledge, and 1MB RAM for fast hash tables, so the performance speed on tactical positions comes out less well than expected.

The CCR view is that the Spracklens' have stuck fairly close to their old brute force methods despite the apparent injection of some help from Franz Morsch, and the conservative selectivity fails to get it through the pyly at the speed you'd expect. Overall it appears to be about the same strength as the RISC 2500-128K.

Larry remains impressed with the RISC 2500, but notes in CCR that production defects crept in during mid-1993 rather tempering his enthusiasm. On this subject I noted that the 512K upgrades, when they were finally sorted out (though shipment to us supplies remains sadly slow), had a 100pF capacitor fitted to one of the 4 x 128K RAM chips. This seemed to be the solution to the 512K problem, and I believe that a similar pF capacitor is now fitted to one of the 4 x 32K chips in the 128K version.

Finally on the dedicated boards and the Kasparov machines specifically, Larry refers to the excellent tactical abilities of the h8 system TRAVEL CHAMPION and slightly faster still GK-2000 - 'tactically superb but positionally primitive' is Larry's view, but he still views them as well worthwhile and good value amongst the medium strength machines. Indeed I was rather taken to task by Andy Roland of Contemporary Games plc for not having the GK-2000 higher in my highly recommended' choices in Issue 49's ANNUAL REVIEW (It came second). Re-considering the NS Rating it has and the presence of the display (my own favourite feature improvement in the past 5 years), I conclude that first place might well have been deserved if I had the job to do again.

PC PROGRAM COVERAGE IN CCR

As I have done a brief report on the latest programs and upgrades elsewhere in NS I will not
News and Results

"pinch" any of CCR's coverage of specific programs, though I will make obvious use of Larry's comments regarding his own SOCRATES program in that discussion to both Socrates and KASPAROV'S GAMBIT.

However the question of PENTIUM processors is beginning to arise more often in conversation. As I am not at all likely to be buying one in the near future (I am not immediately in position to make clear recommendations or comments myself. So I quote Larry's views from his knowledge of the subject:-

"As for the future we can expect another jump in strength when today's programs are run on the new Pentium based machines. We timed three of our chess programs on a new 80MHz Pentium machine and got an average speed-up over a 486dx50 or 80dx2/66 (approx. equal at 75-80CMHz, Etc) of about 1.8 to 1, which should add 40 points to the ratings. The more expensive 66MHz Pentium machines should add another 10 points".

"Another jump can be anticipated when programs are written and/or compiled for the Pentium specifically", he concludes.

Whilst on this subject I HAVE been reading the Reviews of Pentiums in various PC Magazines. A notable comment was spotted in the January PERSONAL COMPUTER MAGAZINE Cover Story by Paul Bray, in which he says... "Frankly, we were disappointed". Later in the article he comments: "As for the name, Intel deliberately chose not to use a number (586 would have been more logical) so that it could retain copyright over the name. According to Viglen, although manufacturers can badge a machine as being fitted 'with Pentium CPU', they can't just slap a Pentium label on the front... so what we got were machines that looked little different from a high-end 486 PC, EITHER INSIDE OR OUT" [capitals added by me].

The remainder of CCR was taken up with their Rating List, some light coverage of SHUFFLE Chess, CHINESE Chess, a few games (including one or two from earlier Issues of NS and from the Uniform Platform Tournament won by HIARCS - see NS48), some new Positions to Test and Rate Computers, made up of 12 Positional Problems, 14 Combinational and 10 Endgames, and a critical discussion of the CRA (Computer Rating Agency) Tests.

I will look through the newest CCR positions, alongside one or two other 'new sets' which have come my way recently, and put whichever looks best into NS/51.

THE CRA TESTS

Regarding the CRA Tests, the Article in COMPUTER CHESS REPORTS by Phil Klett is concerned about the muddying of the waters caused by the offer of the Computer Rating Agency to give a 'certified' rating at either Action chess (game in 30) or Tournament chess (40/2).

The Manufacturer can suddenly have a choice, a possibility only recently introduced as all tests used to be at 40/2 to gain a 'certified' rating. Most now choose Action chess and then simply quote the earned rating as 'CRA certified' - which it is of course - but ignore reference to the game in 30 element. It seems this is even more rife in the USA than elsewhere!

The Computer-buying public is pretty well aware that he should always deduct some 80 Elo from Action chess ratings to obtain an equivalent Tournament Rating, and he will... providing he is told!

The original purpose of the CRA Tests, under USCF auspices, was to:

[a] Negate the tremendous exaggerations promulgated by Manufacturers and dealers;
[b] To supply the potential customer with accurate information which would assist him in making the right computer choice.

The USCF then barred the claiming of ANY ratings in its publications by ANY advertiser, unless the rating was CRA 'certified'. This sounds extremely fair, but the USCF (which SELLs Chess Computers!) assigned itself as the sole organisation responsible for the 'official' ratings, and charges a not inconsiderable sum for the Rating Test so that few machines have ever been tested.
A naturally inescapable human assumption is that a Computer WITHOUT a Rating MUST be inferior [otherwise the Manufacturer would surely have got it rated!], but the fact is that Chess Computer Manufacturers haven't always got as many $$$ to throw around as some would like to think. The confusion caused by allowing two different standards for the tests and then allowing them to be advertised without distinction has actually added to the confusion rather than removed some of it.

Generously, when suggesting that the consumer's best interests are only served by getting the Rating from a comprehensive and fairly based Rating List, where the Computers are tested under EQUAL conditions, CCR suggests people do better by checking the 'Eric Hallsworth list'.

**NS READERS’ RESULTS**

From Jeremy DEANE
CM4000 486/66 7½-2½ Meph VANCOUVER020

From Jurgen FAAS [all at 40/2]
HIARCS2.0 486/50 1½-2½ GIDEON3.1/30
HIARCS2.0 486/50 1½-2½ M CHESS PRO3.5 486/50
HIARCS2.0 486/50 2-2 NIMZO 486/50
M CHESS PRO3.1 486/50 1½-4½ Meph GENIUS2 486/50
Meph GENIUS2 486/50 11-9 The KING2.0/32-PC
Meph GENIUS2 486/50 6-0 SOCRATES3 486/50
M CHESS PRO3.5 486/50 2½-1½ CM4000 486/50
M CHESS PRO3.5 486/50 2-2 Meph GENIUS2 486/50
NIMZO 486/50 5½-22½ Meph GENIUS2 486/50

From Roy THOMAS [at 40/2]
Tasc R/30 6-0 Meph RISC 1MB

From Bill NEWTON [at 40/60]
Tasc R/30 5½-4½ GENIUS1 486/66
[In a series of Blitz and G/30 games, the GENIUS1 won 10½-9½]
Tasc R/30 3-7 M CHESS PRO3.1 486/66
[In a series of Blitz and G/30 games, the R/30 won by an astonishing 15½-4½]

From Frank HOLT

As usual Frank used various Time Controls and Playing Styles. Here are the results at time controls of at least 1 min per move [i.e. NS Ratings List acceptable], categorised under the R/30 playing styles.

Tasc R/30 offensive 6-4 Meph RISC 1MB
Tasc R/30 active 5-5 Meph RISC 1MB
Tasc R/30 normal 6½-3½ Meph RISC 1MB
Tasc R/30 solid 7-3 Meph RISC 1MB
Tasc R/30 defensive 6½-3½ Meph RISC 1MB

Frank has sent me a sample of the games, and I will try to include some next time as they are well worth playing through.

From Gary SEDMAN
CM4000 486/33 6-4 Meph LYON020

From Colin NEWBY
Meph BERLIN 3-7 Kasp RISC 2500-128 [G/60]
[In a series at 30 secs per move, RISC 2500 won 12½-7½]

From Javier ROS PADILLA.
This is a result he sent me towards the end of last year from the October 1993 MARCHENA ACTIVE [G/30] OPEN in which he entered his Chess GENIUS1 on a 386/40.

Indeed the GENIUS1 won the Tournament with 6/7. Also on 6 was IM Alexander VEINGOLD [2465 Elo], but GENIUS1 was awarded the Title on Total of Opponents’ Scores.

It’s successes included victories over Augustin LUQUE GARCIA [2345] and Anton RODRIGUEZ AGUILERA [2300], plus draw with 2nd placed Alexander VEINGOLD and 3rd placed Kai BJERRING [2360].

At the start of the Final Round BJERRING led with 5½, followed by GENIUS1, A VEINGOLD, Juan RODRIGUEZ AGUILERA [2245] and Oscar CASTRO, all on 5. When BJERRING lost to VEINGOLD, GENIUS1 had its chance of 1st place... if it could beat another of those placed joint 2nd!

**J R AGUILERA (2245) - GENIUS1 386**

**CENTRALLAND**

Marchena Open G/30, 1993

1. a3!?
News and Results

[Forgive me, but I cannot help smiling at such suspicion!]

1...g6 2.Nf3
[Of course GENIUS1 is now out of Book, which is what White wanted]

1...Nh6 3.b3 Bg7 4.Bb2 0-0 5.d3 Nc6 6.Nbd2 d5 7.c4 Bg4 8.g3 Qd7 9.Bg2
Rad8 10.0-0 a6 11.Re1 d4 12.b4 e5
13.b5 axb5 14.cxb5 Nb8 15.a4 Rfe8
19.Qc2 Qe7

20.Na5
[20.Ba3 first, then Qe6 21.Na5 is preferable]

20...b6 21.Nb3?
[21.Nb7! must be played surely, otherwise this
20.Na5 was pointless. After 21Nb7 Rd7 22.a5 is okay | think]

21...Ng5 22.Bg2 d3 23.exd3
[Or 23.Qc1]

23...Qxe1 + 24.Rxe1 Rxe1 + 25.Bf1
Bxb2 26.Qxb2 Rxd3 27.Kg2 Rdd1
28.Nd2 Nd7 29.h4?!
[29.f4 seems better]

29...Ne6 30.Bc4 Ne5 31.Nf3?
[Miscalculating the material result of the
exchanges. 31.Bf1 Ra1 32.Qc2 was expected,
and retains some drawing chances]

31...Nxc4 32.Qf6?
[Typical 2-in-a-row panic... on which subject I
have commented many times! 32.Qa2 Nd6
33.Nxe1 still retained some chances]

32...Ne3 + 33.fxe3
[33.Kh3 Rh1 + 34.Nh2 Rxe2 + 35.Kxe2 Ng4 +
wins the Queen and the game]

33...Re2 + 34.Kh3 Rh1 + 35.Nh2
[35.Kg4 h5# mate!]

35...Rh2 + 36.Kg4 h5 + 0-1

SCHACH & SPIELE MAGAZINE -
GERMANY

Due to an addressing error, which results in my
Schach&Spiele now visiting parts of the USA
before it reaches me, I am only just reading
through the Aug-Sep and Oct-Nov issues.

The quality continues to be first class, and covers
a wide range of subjects from which, in the main,
I can only fully comprehend the Games and
Results included. Amongst the results are:-

Tasc R/30 6-4 Meph VANCOUVER 68020 [40/2]
Tasc R/30 7½-4½ Meph RISC 1MB [40/2]
Tasc R/30 8-2 Novag SCORPIO [40/2]
Tasc R/30 8-2 Fid MACH4 68020 [40/2]
Tasc R/30 8½-1½ Novag SUPER EXPERT C/6
[40/2]
Tasc R/30 8½-1½ Meph ROMA 68020 [40/2]
Tasc R/30 7½-2½ Mephisto MM5
FRITZ2 486/33 2-8 Meph VANCOUVER020
FRITZ2 386/25 1½-4½ Meph VANCOUVER020
FRITZ2 386/25 4½-1½ Meph POLGAR

There is a splendid-looking STRATEGY TEST
comprising 24 positions and in which the
Computer is set to 40/2 and actually tackles
finding not only the IMMEDIATE move but the
NEXT FEW moves of the continuation, scoring
points for all it finds. Thus it may miss the first
move but can still pick up points for finding later
ones so that its overall quality [or otherwise!] of
chess knowledge and strategical simulation can
be assessed. Some positions are tested for 3 or 4
moves, others for 8 or 9... and some are pretty
hard. The programs I've tested on a couple of the
hardest-looking ones only scored points towards
the end.

Finding room in a future NS for these positions
will be a challenge, but I will try to do so as I
have enjoyed those I've looked at so far - as a
News and Results

Taster here is one from a SMYSLOV-TAL game which I found quietly interesting.

```
1... Be8 [4 pts]
2.Ng2 Bh5 [1 pt]
3.Kc2 Be2 [2 pts]
4.Ne1 Bf1 [2 pts]
```

Theme: Black, to play, needs to attack the h3/Pawn to force h4 and create an entry route for his King.

5.h4 Be2 [The Bishop has done its first job - move the h3/Pawn to create a hole at g4]
6.Kd2 Bg4! [Watching over the e2 square to stop Black's King coming over to the King-side. But not 6...Bh5 blocking his own King's entry route]
7.Kc1 Kg6!
8.Kc2 Kh5!

I'm sure the Computers will all have it by now - Black can play next either Bf3 and then the return to Bc6 to win the now-neglected a4/Pawn; or Bh3 and Kg4, depending which way White chooses with his 9th. move to go with his King.

PHOTOGRAPhS

Another benefit of Schach&Spiele which I can appreciate are the occasional photographs of new products. On the cover of the Oct-Nov Issue is a picture of the Mephisto GENIUS2 which played in the Munich World Championships - i.e NOT a commercial 68030, but one with a full-width front drawer containing a large display under which is an 80486 Processor running, reputedly, at 68MHz. There is actually a slot at the very front of the drawer into which one GENIUS2 floppy PC disk is inserted. My understanding is that around 15 of these have been made for commercial sale, thus legitimising its presence as the Mephisto entry in the Munich Manufacturers' Section.

What did you say? Oh... the price?! Around £9,999 I think.

SHUFFLE CHESS

Schach&Spiele, like CCR, also has an article on this version of the game, which BOBBY FISCHER is strongly in favour of. Will it catch on better than the 'Fischer Clock', which I thought was both an ingenious and effective idea, and interesting to use in play?!

The purpose of Shuffle Chess is to get rid of memorised openings and deny the opening theorists their hard-earned advantages by 'shuffling' the pieces on each players' first rank to create a potentially vast range of new starting positions. I'm not sure, but I THINK the Kings stay on e1 and e8, I BELIEVE that Bishops are 'forced' onto opposite coloured squares, and I PRESUME casting is not allowed. Apart from whichever of those provisions, the pieces for White's back rank are 'shuffled' and placed, and then Black's pieces are set-up to be exactly opposite White's. Thus there are no 'lucky' advantages to be gained from the shuffling.

Bobby Fischer believes this will make it harder for Computers to beat him!

Others might consider the opposite more likely to prove true, expecting that humans will be somewhat disoriented by their unfamiliarity with the positions which arise, and find opportunities to play 'natural' moves rarer particularly in the early part of many games. Of course this is something which doesn't affect Computers at all as they will simply think they are 'out of Book' a bit early!

Readers might fancy trying the idea out on their own Computers, which are easily changed by applying the POSITIONS SET-UP procedure to
the start position and putting the pieces on their different squares where applicable.

In the meantime Schach&Spiele have 2 games between FRITZ2 and JOHN SPEELMAN, with White's back rank reading: BQNKBR. Neither the Time Control nor Hardware Data for the PC used are given, that I can see.

Speerman played White in game 1 and won, mating the Computer in 33 moves.

Game 2 used exactly the same starting position but with Fritz2 as White. This ended with mate on move 37, with Speelman again the winner. The difference in their choice for opening development was immediate in both games - as both White and Black, Speelman's first move was with the b/Pawn to release the Queen and Bishop.

FRITZ2 however pursued immediate central control and, in game 1, NEVER gets to move his b7/Pawn at all... nor therefore his a8/Bishop. In game 2 he plays b3 only at move 11.

Have a look for yourself - to make sure you're set up correctly, here is the starting position:

![ Chessboard Diagram ]

---

**JON SPEELMAN - FRITZ2.**

Shuffle chess game 1.

1.b3 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.bxc4 Nc6 4.d4 Nf6 5.e3 g6
11.h6 Bf8 12.Ne5 Nf6 13.Nxf7 Nxf7 14.g5 e5
29.Rdh1 Rg7 30.hxg7 Rg8 31.Rd7 Rgxg7
h5 33.Rd8 mate. 1-0.

**FRITZ2 - JON SPEELMAN.**

Shuffle chess game 2.

1.d4 b6 2.a3 c5 3.Bd3 e6 4.c3 g6 5.Nb3 d5
10.exd5 exd5 11.b3 h6 12.Ne3 b5 13.Qc2 f5
18.Re1 Bxe3 19.Rxe3 Rxh3 20.Ng5 + Kg7
axb4 29.Ca2 bxc3 30.Qc2 Qb2 + 31.Qxb2 Rxb2
32.a3 Na5 33.a3 Nxb3 + 34.Kd1 c2 + 35.Ke2

Readers' thoughts, and SHUFFLE chess games against their Computers would be of interest!

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**PLY MAGAZINE - SWEDEN, and PC SCHACH MAGAZINE - AUSTRIA**

Both Magazines continue in regular production and provide excellent coverage in a generally similar format to my own, though with more contributors. Only lack of space deprives us of a few excerpts from their news, though the following Tournament Table from PC SCHACH is included as it is certainly of some significance:

---

**TOURNAMENT run by M. MEILER. [60/1 hour]**

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<th>KB</th>
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<td>1½</td>
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This GAMES SELECTION, from the 1993 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS, is bigger than the usual NS games coverage. The reason is simple - there is some GREAT chess on the following pages, do play through these games! Munich had some high class programs running on the most powerful hardware ever, and produced much subtle, clever and occasionally mind-boggling stuff.

KEY
[X0O] the ECO code
S 0-9 Round in the Software Section
M 0-9 Round in the Manufacturers Section

HIARCS - MIRAGE
[D36] S1

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Bg5 Be7
5.cxd5 exd5 6.e3 Nbd7 7.Bd3 0-0
8.Qc2 c6 9.Nf3 Re8 10.0-0 Nf8
11.Rb1 Bg4 12.Ne5 Bh5 13.b4 Bd6
14.f4 h6 15.Bh4 Be7 16.Bf5 N6d7
17.Bxe7 Qxe7 18.b5 Nxe5 19.fxe5
Reb8
[19...Re8 20.Nd1! fxe5 21.bxc6 bxc6 22.Qxc6
Rad8 may also favour White very slightly]

20.e4 Ne6 21.Qd2 dxe4?
[Give White the centre and excellent attacking chances]

22.Nxe4 Nf8 23.bxc6 bxc6 24.Rbc1
Rb6 25.Nd6 Qc7 26.Be4 Rab8 27.Qc3
Ra6 28.g4 Bg6
[Maintaining protection of the threatened 17. If 28...Bxg4? 29.Qxd4 and the combined threats of Qxa6, and Rxd7 attacking the Queen and threatening a destructive discovered check, cannot be met]

29.Bxg6
[See Diagram at the top of next page. Black resigned here, perhaps a touch generously?!
The HIARCS eval. was a healthy +328 -> Nhx6, and the game might have continued:
29...Nhx6 30.Qc4 Qb6, and now not 31.Rxf7??
Nxe5! Therefore 31.Qxf7+ Kh7 32.Qf2 Rf8 and
the game is nearly but not quite over yet] 1-0

ULYSSES - QUEST
[D02] S1

1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 e6 3.g3 Nf6 4.Bg2 c6
[QUEST/Fritz2 - from the ChessBase
opening book specialists - exits here, well before its opponent]

5.c4 dxc4 6.Ne5 Bb4+ 7.Bd2 Qxd4
8.Bxb4
[ULYSSES exits its book here, apparently leaving itself with material problems]

8...Qxe5 9.Na3 Ne4
[9...Qxb2? 10.Rb1 Qxa2 11.Qd6 winning]

10.Nxe4 Qb5 11.Nd6 + Nxd6
12.Qxd6 Qg5 13.Rd1 Nd7 14.0-0 Qf6
15.Rfe1 e5 16.Qe7 Qe6 17.b3 Rf8?!
[A most unexpected attempt by QUEST to free his position, ULYSSES leaves the opportunity to exchange hanging]

18.Rd2 f5 19.e4 fxe4 20.Rxe4
20...Qf5??
[If I'm not with this one at all. My FRITZ2 has
Rf6 (or Rf5?) earlier, encouraging 21.Re3! which
seems 'obvious'. E.g 20...Rf5 21.Re1 Qh7 22.Bh3.
Okay, so White is clearly winning, but I'm sure
it's better than in the game]

21.Rxd7 Bxd7 22.Rxe5 + Qxe5
23.Qxe5 + 1-0. A disappointing start for the
optimistic QUEST/Fritz folk, though ULYSSES
continued to score quite well throughout the
week.

TASC R30 - RISC 2500
[B34] M2

[On day 2 the R30 scored a massive 3-0=1
success over the RISC 2500, which put it in the
driving seat in the Manufacturers Section. Here is
the quickest of the 3 wins]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4
Nf6 5.Nc3 g6 6.Nx6 bxc6 7.e5 Ng8
8.Bc4 Bg7 9.Bf4 Qa5 10.0-0 Bxe5
11.Bxe5 Qxe5 12.Re1 Qf4 13.Re4 Qf6
[The R30's last Book move!]

15...Bf5?!
[And this is the 2500's final Book reply! If
15...cxd5 16.Nxd5 Qd6 17.Qd4 creates some
interesting possibilities, well beyond the depth of
my BCO and MCO]

[All forced and leaving White with a
commanding position]

18...Nh6 19.Bd5 Nf5 20.Ne4 Qxb2
exd6 24.Qxd6 + Kf7 25.Qd7 + Kf6
26.Re1 Qxe2??
[A gross blunder in practice, though typical of
a computer to play the move that loses slowest
even though it leaves the opponent only needing
to spot a move most novices could find. Humans
would certainly play for complications or tricks,
in the hope of confusing the opponent. E.g 26...Qb6
27.g5 + Kxg5 28.Qe7 + Kh6 29.Re4 is equally
destructive, but at least the opponent has had to
seek out a couple of winning moves instead of
being handed it on a plate.]

27.Qd4 + [1-0. The operators quickly
recognised that the RISC had thrown any
chances away with its 26th. move]

GIDEON PRO - NIMZO
[B84] S3

5.Nc3 a6 6.f4 e6 7.Be2 Be7 8.0-0 0-0
dx5 13.fxe5 Nfd7 14.Bxb7 Qxb7
15.Qh5 b4 16.Nce2 g6
[Only how does NIMZO go out of Book - GP
had finished at move 10, so here we have
another example of the careful preparation that
goes into these Championships]

Nb6 23.b3 Bc5 24.Nf3 Rxd1 25.Rxd1
Nd5 26.Bh6 Be3!
[Forcing the win of the c2/Pawn]

27.Bxe3 Nxe3 28.Rd3 Nxc2 29.Kg1
Na3 30.Rd4 a5 31.Rd7 Nb5 32.Ng5
Re7 33.Rxc7 Nxc7
[The exchange of Rooks seems to settle it in
Black's favour. However White fights back over
the next few moves with good King centralisation
minimising the advantage]

34.Ne4 Nd5 35.Kf2 Kf8 36.Nd6 Nc3
40.Nxa5 Kd7 41Nb7 Ne3 42.Kc5 Nd5
43.g3 h5 44.Nd6 Ke7 45.Nb5 f6
46.Nxf6 + Kxf6 47.Nd4 Ne3 48.Kxb4
Nf1 49.Ka5?!
[Making room for the advance of the Pawn,
but the King is very badly placed on the edge of
the wrong side of the board, as we will shortly
see]

49.e5
50.Ne2
Nh2
51.b4 Nf1
52.b5
Nd2!!

[Diagram
after
52...Nd2!]
53.Kb6?

[53.b6 Nc4 + 54.Kb5 Nxb6 55.Kxb6 Kg5 56.Kc5 g5 would be an interesting finish!]


[The difference between this and the alternative continuation via b6 at the Diagram is that White’s King is well out of it here, and Black must win]

63.Ne2 Kd5 64.Ng1 e4 65.Kb6 e3 66.Kb5 Kd4 67.Kc6 Kd3 68.Nf3 e2 0-1

The following Round 3 game was played between two of the programs still on maximum points. HIARCS, running on a Sun Sparc, has a small advantage over the Pentium-gang, but is well-out-speeded by the tournament favourite on its 150MHz DEC Alpha. Thus the bearing of the play show that it too is a contender for a top placing.

HIARCS - THE KING
[B21] S3

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dx4 3.Nf3 c5 4.e3

[Both programs go out of their Books already - as HIARCS uses a much smaller Book, it wins a small ‘moral’ victory]


[It’s all very even, but HIARCS now proceeds to outplay the DEC-Alpha 150MHz powered program, and it is well worth seeing how this happens]

21.Rc1 Nd7

[21...Nb7 may have been better, to maintain the Rook’s pressure on the d-file.]

22.f3 Bg6 23.Bb5 e5?!

[Did THE KING miss the back-rank mate factor, seen at the end of the exchanges which follow? HIARCS had expected: 23...f6 24.Rc7 here, when e5 becomes more playable]
[This endangers his Bishop by reducing its scope, as we shall see]

17...Nd5 18.Ra1 Bg5 19.Rf3 a6
[In his attempts to delay the Bishop capture White only succeeds in digging a bigger hole for himself by encouraging a dealy attack on e3]

22...Qe4 23.Rg3 h6 24.Rg4 Bxe3 +
25.Nxe3 Qxe3 + [A great win against the program which finished 10th with 5/9] 0-1

QUEST has made a miserable start with 1/3, but starts its comeback in Round 4.

QUEST - CENTAUR
[D37] S4

1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.c4 e6 4.Nc3 Be7
5.Bf4 0-0 6.e3 Nbd7 7.Bg5 Bb4 8.cxd5
Kh8 12.Nxd4 e5 13.Nf3 Qc7 14.Rc1 g6

[Has QUEST/Fritz2 fallen into this simple trap?
No - in fact despite the loss of the Bishop it considers that the damage done to Black's King protection is more than adequate compensation]

15.Bxg6 fxg6 16.Qxg6 Rf6?!
[16...Bxc3 + 17.bxc3 N5f6 is slightly better]

17.Qh5 + Kg7 18.Nxe5 Bxc3 + 19.bxc3
Nc5 20.Qg5 + Kh7 21.Ng4 Nd3 +
22.Kd2 Qd8 23.Qxd5 Bxg4 24.Qxd3 +
[And QUEST emerges 4 Pawns up!]

24...Bf5 25.Qd4 Ra6 26.Ra1 Qg8
27.Qh4 + Kg6 28.e4?! Qd8 +
[28...Rx2 + 29.Ke3 Bd7 30.Rxa2 Qxa2 was

worth trying, though 31.Rd1! Be6 32.Be5
threatening Qf6 +! turns out excellently for White]

29.Kc1 Be6 30.f4 Qxh4 [CENTAUR's operators resigned after seeing their program make this exchange which obviously simplifies White's task altogether] 1-0

The almost unknown NIMZO has made a remarkable 3 1/2/4 start, and shares the lead with GENIUS2 and HIARCS. So it's time we had a look at it in action.

HIARCS - NIMZO
[E32] S5

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Qc2 d5 0-0
5.a3 Bxc3 + 6.Qxc3 b6 7.Bg5 Bb7 8.f3
h6 9.Bh4 d5 10.e3 Nbd7 11.Bd3 Rc8
[Opening Books are now ended]

12.Ne2 c5 13.cxd5 exd5 14.0-0 Re8
15.Bb5 g5 16.Bf2
[This looks a most unpromising square for the Bishop to arrive on, but may in fact be the best in the circumstances]

16...a6 17.Bd3 cxd4 18.Qxd4 Nc5
22.Qd2 d4?!
[22...Qe7 looks better; or indeed Qc7 as expected by HIARCS]

23.exd4 Nf4 24.Nxf4 Bxf1 25.Rxf1

[Here it all depends on how you evaluate the material imbalance. The Computer programs - including NIMZO and HIARCS here - consider White is as good as a Pawn up... but it soon]
proves otherwise]

[The idea that you should exchange pieces when you have a numerical Pawn superiority doesn't necessarily hold good when the pieces also are materially imbalanced. 28.Bb5 Re6 29.Qd3 would do better, I think]

28...Rxc1 + 29.Qxc1 Ne3! 30.Qc6??  
[30.Qc3?]

30.Re6  
[30.Re7! threatening Rc7 looks even stronger]

31.Qc3  
[HARCS, which has evaluated a healthy plus around +60 to +145 since move 23, now goes to a small negative]

31...Nd1 32.Qc8?!  
[This could have been played 2 moves ago and without energising Black's pieces. Here perhaps 32.Qd2 Nxe2 33.Kxe2 Qh4 + 34.Kg1 holds near equality]

[HARCS was probably relying on the passed d/Pawn when playing this with a -95 evaluation. However Black's King can cope with the d/Pawn and the immediate Knight for Bishop exchange effectively ends White's hopes]

44...Nxe4 45.fxe4 b5 46.d6 Kf7 47.Ke2  
[47.Bxh6? b4 48.Ke2 b3 and we see the King is too late]

47...Rx e4 48.Kf3?  
[I have not been able to work out why Kd3 wasn’t better here - perhaps it is, but it is not like HARCS to misplace its King at this point of the game without good reason, so I won't insist!]

48.Rh4 49.Kg3 Rc4 50.Bxh6 Ke6 51.Bg7 b4 52.d7 Rd4 53.Bh6 [HARCS read -567 playing this, so Mark Unicke generously resigned... I know a few folk who would have played on now the Bishop can get back to c1, but it surely was lost unless NIMZOV threw a fit] 0-1

Most of the games we cover involve the Tournament Leaders or the Commercially available programs, for obvious reasons. But here is the shortest game of the week, played between 2 mid-table performers.

NIGHTMARE - SOS  
[A01] S6

1.b3  
[Immediately puts the apparently well-named S.O.S out of Book! However, S.O.S ended with 4/8, so it wasn’t the weakest entry by a long way. The leaders almost never meet the real tail-enders, so we miss some of that fun!]

1...e5 2.Bb2 d6 3.g3 Ne6 4.Nc3 Nf6 5.Bg2 d5 6.e4 d4 7.Nd5 Be6 8.Nxf6+ Qx f6 9.Nf3 0-0-0 10.0-0 g5 11.e4 h5 12.Rc1

[Black has plenty of chances in this sharp position, in which complications abound]

12...d3?!  
[12...Nb4 13.Ne1 Bc5 looks better, though 14.a3 Nc6 15.b4 Bf8 16.b5 Ne7 17.d3 holds close to equality for White]

13.c5 h4 14.b4 h3 15.Bh1 Bx02?  
[The prophylactic 15...a6 is sound enough, and Black probably retains some advantage due to the poor scope of the h1/Bishop.

If White still wants to play his b5 (the move that settles the game) then a4 must now come first. E.g after 15...a6 16.a4 Bg4!? 17.b5 is...]

[Black has plenty of chances in this sharp position, in which complications abound]
definitely good for White, Black needs to pin the Knight) 17.b5 Nd4 18.Bxd4 Rxd4 19.c6! It's nothing if not cheerfully complicated!

16.b5! Nd4 17.Nxd4 exd4 18.Qa4! Be6 19.Qxe7 Qe5??
[19...c5 isn't going to help Black that much, of course, after 20.Qa8 + Kd7 21.Qxb7 + Ke8
22.Qxc6 + Rd7 23.b6 but it's better than...]

20.c6 mate in 5! 0-0

M CHESS PRO[X] has been rather quiet so far! It has 3/15 from wins against 'unknowns' but a loss to GANDALF - also unknown until this win in Round 1... then it beat QUEST in R(3/1). Here it is against THE KING which, having added 3 draws to its early wins, is in need of some 1-0 results.

THE KING - M CHESS PROX
[A52] S6

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.e4
Nxe5 5.f4 Ng6 6.Be3 Bb4 + 7.Nc3
Bxc3 + 8.bxc3 b6 9.Nf3 0-0 10.f5 Nh4?
[The Knight will be in danger of an eventual g3 here, and 10...Ne7 was needed, even though
Black is losing with regard to development]

11.Nd2! Qf6 12.Bd4 Qg5 13.g3 Nxf5
14.exf5 Bb7
[Of course Black must not resign yet! Though
materially ahead White's uncastled King on the
open e-file, plus Black's unpleasant grip on the
b7/h1 diagonal ensure there are still chances]

15.Nf3 Qxf5 16.Be2 c5 17.Be3 Re8
18.Kf2 Qf6 19.Re1 h6
[An important prophylactic move]

20.Re1 Re6 21.g4 d6
22.g5 hxg5 23.Bxg5
Qg6 24.Qd2
Nc6 25.Nh4
Qh7 26.Bf3
Rae8
27.Rxe6
Rxe6 28.Bd5
Re8
29.Rg1!

[We now see that THE KING has a piece for 2
pawns AND some initiative - well played]

29...Kh8 30.Nf3 Na5?! 31.Bf6!
[Now who expected that! 31.Bxh7 seemed
'obvious']

31...gxf6 32. Qf4!
[Threatening 33.Qxf6 + Qg7 34.Qxg7 mate]

32...Qg7
[32...Qxd6! Qg7 34.Rxg7 Kxg7 35.Bxh7
Nxd7 36.Qd7! wins easily;
32...Rg8 33.Qxf6 + Rg7 34.Bxh7! Bxf6
35.Qd6 + wins]

33.Qh4+ Kg8 34.Rxg7 + Kxg7
35.Qg3 + Kh8 36.Bxf6 Rf8 37.Bg6 1-0

GENIUS2 - GIDEON PRO
[A50] S6

1.c4 b6 2.d4 Bb7 3.d5 e6 4.e3 Nf6
5.Nc3 c6 6.dxe6 dxe6 7.Qxd8 + Kxd8
[What do NS readers think of this Opening? I
must confess I greatly dislike Black's side of it
and, despite the fact it seems to fare quite
reasonably in practice, I cringe whenever I see
Kxd8, especially if I'm playing it!]

Bxd4 15.Nxd4 Nf4 16,0-0?! Ba6!
17.Rfd1?!
[17.b3 Nc5 18.Ra2 is a bit primitive, but saves
the Pawn]

17...Nxe2 + 18.Ncxe2 Bxc4 19.Rac1
Bxe2 20.Nxe2 Rxd8 21.b4 Ne5 22.h3
Rxd1 + 23.Rxd1 Rd8 24.Rxd8 Kxd8

[GIDEON has quite rightly exchanged
major pieces; the
endgame is certainly
much more
winnable
without the
Rooks]

25.Nd4
[GIDEON has played the last few moves exceptionally well]

[Cleverly restricting the White Knight's chances for the next time GIDEON plays Kb3!!]

39.g3 Kb3 40.Nxc3 Kxc3 41.Ke3 Ne5 42.f4 Nc4+ 43.Kf3 gx4 44.Kxf4 e5+ 0-1

At this stage in the Software Section another "unknown" called KALLISTO leads with 5/6. Queuing up on 4½ is a group of Commercial programs:- GIDEON, NIMZO, THE KING and HIARCS. As KALLISTO, now playing amongst the big boys, is about to lose 2 in a row to HIARCS and QUEST, let's stay with the ones WE can buy!

GIDEON PRO - THE KING
[D02] S7

1.Nf3 Nc6 2.d4 d5
[Both Books end... HERE! I suppose they've been a bit too clever for themselves]

[13.dxc6 exd2+ 14.Nxd2 bxc6 15.Qe2+ Be6 16.Qf3! and the simultaneous attack on c6 and f6 wins back the Pawn with a small plus in my view]

13...Nb4 14.Ne4?
[Missing the result of THE KING's dramatic-looking reply]

14...Nxe4!! 15.Bxd8 exf2+ 16.Kd1 Bg4!
[A lovely little combination]

[White is almost helping his opponent at times! - it’s as if THE KING’s convincing play a few moves earlier has got his nuts and bolts rattled]

30...Kd6 31.a4 g3 32.Rh6+ Bf6 33.Ka3 Ke6 34.axb5 axb5 35.b4 Ne3 36.Rc1 Rd1! 37.Kb2 Re1 38.Kc2 Kf7 39.Rh7+ 0-1

It is time we returned to the neglected Manufacturers Section. The R30 has 8½/12; GENIUS2 6½/10 with 2 to play against the RISC 2500 to catch up. Their private battle, R30 v GENIUS2, stands at 2-2, but day 8 sees a breakthrough....

MEPH GENIUS2 - TASC R30
[D27] M8

[Opening Books both end here]

12...Qd6 13.Bg5 f6 14.Bh4 Nf4 15.Qe4 Qb4 16.b3 Qxc3 17.Qxf4 g5?!
[It looks inviting, but doesn't work]

[21...Qa5 may have been worth trying, to create a route back to the king-side for his most important piece]

[A timely reminder of the presence of its other forces!]

28...Kc7
23.\textit{fxe5 Rf2 24.Re1 Rcf8 25.Ned4 Bxd4}
\textit{26.Nxd4 R\textit{gxg2! 27.Rb1}}
\textit{[27.Kxg2?? Nf4+! winning easily]}
\textit{27.Rff2 28.Qc3 Rg4 29.Rd1 Qa6!}
\textit{30.h3 Rf1 + 31.Kh2}
\textit{[31.Rxf1?? Qxf1 + ml2]}
\textit{31...Rx\textit{d1} 0-1}

Here is the last round game which QUEST 5½/8 needed to win to perhaps share, and HIARCS 6½/8 needed to draw to win the Software Title.

\textbf{HIARCS - QUEST}

[D48] S9

\textit{1.d4 c6 2.c4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.e3 e6}
\textit{8.Nxe4 Nxe4 9.Bxe4 0-0 10.0-0 c5}

[The Books both end here]

\textit{11.Bc2 cxd4 12.Qxd4}

[HIARCS sometimes over-positive approach with its Queen results in this. But the alternative is not so palatable: 12.Nxd4 Qc7! 13.Nf3 Ne5]

\textit{12...Bc5}

[HIARCS, actually showing +94 at this stage, expected Qb6? here here]  

\textit{13.Qc3 Qb6 14.Bd2 Rd8 15.Rad1 h6}
\textit{16.a3}

[Stopping the Q-side attack by a5 and Bb4 which HIARCS has been expecting. Its eval. reached +135 here, but starts dropping and reaches its lowest point of +7 at move 30]

\textit{16...Qc7 17.Rfe1}

\textit{[17.b4 here, rather than one move later, might have been better]}

\textit{17...b6 18.b4 Be7 19.Be4 Bf6 20.Qc1}
\textit{a5 24.Qc2 axb4 25.axb4 Ra3 26.Re3}
\textit{Rxe3 27.fxe3 Be7 28.Bd6?!}

[Initiating exchanges which don't appear to suit HIARCS in view of the eval. drop to +7 which occurs. Better might have been 28.Qb3]

\textit{28...Bxd6 29.Rxd6 Nf6 30.Rd4 Rxd4?!}

[Giving White an excellent body of central Pawns. HIARCS had expected 30...Qc7]
31.exd4 b5?! 32.c5 Qa8?!  
[HiARCS had expected 31...Qa6, and this also is of uncertain value. Nd5 now rather than on move 33 seems better]

33.c6 Nd5

[QUEST/Fritz shows around +45 here, whilst HiARCS has +80 playing its next. What do readers think?]

34.Qc5! g6?  
[34...Nc7 as expected by White, was surely better?! The HiARCS eval jumps to +181 now, and is constantly between +240 and 300 from move 36 to the end.

Note here that the idea 34...Qa1+ 35.Kf2 Qb2+ 36.Kg3 Qxb4?? is smashed by 37.Qxb4 Nxb4 38.c7! when the Pawn cannot be stopped]

35.Qxb5 Kg7 36.Qc5 Qa1+?!

[Checks which encourage the opponent to centralise it’s King are often seen from Computers, even now. The Queen is needed to watch over White’s advanced Pawns, and a QUEST advance of its own K-side Pawns, by say f6, was better]

37.Kf2 Nf6 38.Qc2 Qa8 39.b5 Nd5 40.Qc5 Qe2+?! 41.Kg3 Qa5 42.h3 h5 43.Kf2 f6 44.Qd6 h4 45.Qd7+ Kh6 46.Qe8 g5 47.Qxe6 Qxb5 48.Ng1 Kg6 49.Qe8+ Kg7 50.Ne2 Qa5 51.Qe6 Ne7 52.Qc8 f5 53.Qd8 Kg6 54.Qg8+ Kf6 55.Qh8+ Kg6 56.Qe5 Qb6 57.Qd6+ Kf7 58.Qd7+ Kf6 59.Kg1 Nb5 60.Qd5  
[And QUEST overstepped the time control, though it was going to lose anyway] 1-0

in the Manufacturers Section, the TASC machine started the final day ½ a point down with 2 games to play, so needed to win one (and draw the other, of course).

TASC R30 - MEPH GENIUS2

[C02] M9

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3 Nc6 5.Nf3 Qb6 6.Bd3 cxd4 7.cxd4 Bd7 8.0-0  
[The Milner Barry Gambit, which suits the R30's positive approach to chess]

8...Nxd4 9.Nxd4 Qxd4 10.Nc3 a6 11.Qe2  
[The move given in BCO. MCO has Re1, credits to Barcza]

11...Bb4  
[11...Ne7 BCO]

12.a3 Bxc3 13.bxc3 Qxc3 14.Bd2 Qc7 15.Rfc1 Bc6 16.Bb4 Ne7 17.Bd6 Qd8 18.Qh5 Ng6?!  
[The resulting opened f-file is bound to favour White in the immediate future, due to Black’s inability to castle. 18...h6 would result in a different continuation altogether]

[A strangely effective move after which the GENIUS2’s extra Pawn never looks to be sufficient to produce a win. Keeping the Black King pinned on g8 and the Rook trapped at h8 is White’s key, with the threat of Rc1-c3-f3]

24...Rd8  
[24...Rc8 25.Rc3 h5 may just have been better. If here 26.Qxg6, then Rh6 looks to keep Black just ahead]
25.Rc3 Qc8 26.a4 Re8 27.Qg5 d4
   [27...Qd8 28.Raf3 h5 (28...h6?? 29.Qxg6 with R1f7 to follow, I think giving mate in 5 or 6)
29.Qxg6 Rh6 30.Qd3 and White's pressure gives him/it good chances]

28.Rxd4 Qd7 29.Qg4 Qd8 30.Rdc4 Qb6
31.Qe2 Qb1 + 32.Rc1 Qb3 [The computer evaluations were close to zero by here, but the
rules disallowed early draw agreements and the game went to move 68 before the official \(1/2-1/2\)]

So, with GENIUS2 on 10/15, and the R30 on 9\(\frac{1}{2}\),
this was the latter's last chance, with Black!

**MEPH GENIUS2 - TASC R30**

[D02] M9

1.Nf3 Nc6 2.d4 d5 3.Bf4 e6
   [Both programs exit their Books very early right here, adding to the tension. Indeed MCO
has nothing on this after move 2, though BCO
produces 4.50 Bd6 5.Bg3 c5 from
Osmanovic-Lputian, 1983]

7.c4 0-0 8.Rc1 Re8 9.Be2 a5 10.a3 e5?! 

[A typically provocative R30 advance, produced
by the Computer itself as if knowing it HAS to win
one of these last 2 games. 10...Ne7 11.c5 Qd8
maintains material equality, but the R30 is left
with little immediate scope]

Nxe5 14.Nxe5 f6 15.Nf3 Bf5 16.0-0
Qd7 17.Bd3 a4 18.Bxf5 Qxf5
   [Hereabouts a Q-side breakout with b5 was
worth considering. In a few more moves
GENIUS2 will have a complete gripe on the game]

22.Kh1 Rb6 23.e4 Nf4 24.Rxc7 Qg4
25.Rg1 Rb3 26.Nd2 Rd3 27.d5 b5 28.f3
Qg6 29.g3 Nh3 30.Rf1 Re3 31.Qe6
Qe8 32.Qb7 Qf8 33.Qxb5 f5 34.Ra7
Rb8 35.Qc4 f4 36.d6 + Kh8 37.d7 Rd8
38.Kg2 Ng5 39.Rf2 Qd6 40.Qb5

[White was repeatedly shy about taking the a-Pawn. If 40.Qxa4 Rxf3 41.Rb8 (41.Nc4?? looks
deadly, but 41...Qh6!!) 41...Qh8 42.Rxd8 Qxd8
43.Rxg3 and the exchanges look to have secured
an easy win for White]

40...Qh6 41.Qe5 Qh3 + 42.Kg1 Re1 +
43.Nf1 h6

[Digaram]

44.Qa5?!
   [44.Qe8 + Kh7 45.Qxd8 looks immediately
killing... and probably is. But let's take it a little
further: 45...fxg3 46.Qg8 + Kg6 47.Ra6 + Kh5
48.Qc4! (otherwise WHITE loses!... work it out for
yourself, it's good stuff!) 48...gxh2 + 49.Kxh2
Rxf1 + 50.Qxd1 Qxb3 + 51.Ka1 Qxe4 + 52.Qd2 + 1

Phew.... so White does win it, but there were a
Couple of moments whilst I analysed it that I
thought the win was bust! It's hardly as
straightforward as it seemed at 44.Qe8 +]

44...fxg3 45.Qxd8 + Kh7 46.Qg8 +
Kxg8 47.d8Q + Kh7 48.Rxg7 + Kxg7
49.Qc7 + Kg6 50.hxg3 Rd1 51.Qb8
Kf7

   [The evaluations, once around + 400 for
White, are now down to +250 or so]

52.Qf4 + Kg8 53.g4 Ne6 54.Qb8 + Kf7
55.Qh2 Ng5 56.Qc7 + Kg8 57.Qb8 +
Kf7 58.Qf4 + Kg8 59.b4?
   [59.b5 looks to be a better way of keeping
winning chances on the board. The move played
gives Black a dangerous chance of his own
that will force White to take the draw]

59...axb3 60.Qb8 + Kg7 61.Qc7 + Kg6
62.Qc6 +

[Both Computer evaluations drop to 0.00 as
White is forced to take the draw, which was
agreed at move 68 again in fact]

62...Kg7 63.Qb7 + Kh8 64.Qc6 + Kg7
65.Qc3 + Kg6 66.Qc6 + Kg7 67.Qc3 +
Kg6 68.Qc6 + [\(1/2-1/2\). Should have been 1-0!]
A brief ADDENDUM to the report in NS/49's ANNUAL REVIEW, to keep readers up-to-date.

The various Programs are ordered by their Elo Ratings, at 26 Jan. 1994, based on results on 80486 processors at 50/66MHz ["e" signifies the figure is a latest estimate, and based on only a small number of games].

[2498c] MEPHISTO GENIUS2+, £119.99 for 3/4/586. By Richard Lang this is the GENIUS2 with Graham WHITE's new 163.000 position Opening Book. Adds more interest to an already great program. The very thought of starting one's own User Book from scratch - i.e. positions 0... ugh - is grim to many of us. But once you have Graham's Book installed, all its lines and variations are displayed at appropriate moments, and you can add to it or alter it in any way you like if you feel sufficiently competent. Those already with GENIUS2 can buy the Book for £29.99.

[2454] MEPHISTO GENIUS2, £89.99 for 3/4/586. By Richard Lang, an upgrade of his Chess GENIUS1 [2392] with new programming and extra Hash Table speed. Has pretty well all the features I can think of, including provision of analysis whilst in Monitor mode and overnight game analysis and print-out, but the diagram print is just ---bqk-nr format.

[2426] M CHESS PRO3.5, £99.99 for 27/3/586. The latest from Marvin Hirsch in the USA, whose M CHESS PRO3.1 rates at [2368]. I felt v3.1 was slightly over-rated, especially at Blitz and Action Chess, but am impressed with the Upgrade which claims a 240,000 position Book, and has endgame improvements and some clever changes to the middle game which make the program a challenge to play against. Still has no diagram print, nor an automatic provision of analysis when it is in Monitor mode. But it will analyse a game overnight and print out the results. Also it shows most (but not all!) of its Opening Book on screen.

[2406] MEPHISTO GIDEON PRO, £99.99 for 3/4/586. By Ed Schroder, who is well-known for MEPHISTO RISC, the GIDEON RISC Card PC programs, and MEPHISTO's Poigar, Milano and Super Milano/Nigel Short on 6502 processors. This, his first effort for PC's, is clearly strong, looks good on the screen, and has most features except analysis in Monitor mode, overnight game analysis, and diagram print.

[2371] HIARCS2/2.1, £69.99 for 2/3/586. By Mark Uniacke, version 2.1 is the current World Software Champion and 10-15 Elo better than v2. As I have had a small personal input into this British program, I am of course slightly biased when I keep referring to the steady improvement during the past 12 months! HIARCS2 has most of the important features and plays a very attractive game - some [and not just me!] believe THE most human-like. There is no overnight game analysis but it does show screen analysis in Monitor mode and has a Time Control which imitates the Fischer clock which is great fun.

HIARCS2.1 also works with the Opening Database BOOKUP8.1 [£99.85], a program which enables you to build up your own Opening Book and give personal ratings at the end of each line [using traditional symbols for =, +/ =, +/- etc]. BOOKUP7 then calculates these backwards to show the user which are the more reliable or advantageous lines at the moments where they diverge - a possibility which can avert potential disasters through persistent misuse of an opening. HIARCS2.1's value is that the BOOKUP file can be transferred to HIARCS which then rates the positions in each line at any selected Time Control, and transfers it's actual evaluations back to BOOKUP, maximising the benefits.

The HIARCS2.1/BOOKUP combination will also do full overnight game analysis + print-out!

[2341] CHESSMASTER 4000, £39.99 for 3/4/586. A Windows only version for PC's from Johan de Koning, the KING and R30 programmer. It offers massive display features with quality colour and 3-D boards, clicking clocks etc. and tries to combine these with good chess, though the fact that it is running under Windows both slows it
and apparently removes the memory you'd like for hash tables. I would still recommend the serious chess player stay with one of my top 4. Whilst there is no analysis in Monitor mode, the overnight game analysis can provide either evaluations or a move-by-move comment! These are usually fairly simple, but may be of value to beginners even if not to NS Editors trying to keep a critical readership interested! An MS-DOS version later in 1994 will give improved speed and strength.

[2273] FRITZ2, £79.99 for 2/3/4586. By Franz Morsch. This relates to ChessBase and can work from within ChessBase, thus providing the highest quality of user friendliness and DataBase facility, with game printout plus analytical comment, diagrams, Fritz2 evaluations from overnight analysis etc. Fritz2 POWERBOOKS [from £19.99] extend the Opening Book, but I am still looking forward to a hoped-for Fritz3 with more chess and endgame knowledge. The tactical strength of Fritz2 is terrific, but Larry Kaufman's comment about primitive positional and endgame play relates to all the Morsch programs currently available.

[2242] SOCRATES3, £79.99 for 3/4/586. Designed by Don Dailey and Larry Kaufman and apparently the very latest version of the SOCRATES2 program which won the ACM Tournament in mid-1993. IM Larry Kaufman (USA) has been involved in the programming, and admitted that he didn't think it was as strong as Chess Genius, but thought it should be about equal with M Chess Pro. However early results have not come up to this expectation. Annoyingly the original disc has to be placed into the A: drive every time you want to boot up. I know that copy protection is needed in some form or another, but this is ridiculous... your 120MB Hard Disc can store the accounts, letters, articles, publishing programs, mailing lists, games... in fact everything you need for home, pleasure and business. But if you want to play Socrates3, you'll need to take this one floppy original everywhere you go! On screen analysis is available in Monitor mode, and overnight game analysis with printout. However this needs you first to Save Game and that didn't always work correctly for me, sometimes leaving the a6/Rook off its square altogether when you re-Load the game, perhaps a hangover from the program's earlier days as REX when it had a similar problem.

[2209e] NIMZO, 3/4/586. By Chilil Donninger of Austria and now released in the language of its home country, then coming out later this year in English. The program has special facilities for blind users - if anyone can offer help towards the work required to translate all of this aspect for British blind players, please contact me.

[2199e] ZARKOV3, £79.99 for 2/3/4/586. By John Stanback the rating is currently showing 33 Elo below Zarkov2 [2232]. This can't be right even if we allow for optimism in the forecast 50 Elo improvement. It is faster tactically and 'feels' better and I am sure the early results do it an injustice. The Zarkov programs have always been well-featured - Monitor mode analysis, overnight game analysis and printout, diagram printing, user book facilities etc. though the screen display is disappointing, certainly in black/white. Strangely Zarkov3 no longer has the automatic analysis in Monitor mode, and you have to keep pressing buttons, which is a backwards step.

PLEASE NOTE: on this business of Analysis in Monitor mode - it is always possible to go to INFINITE level and keep pressing [GO] and [TAKE BACK] buttons where necessary, to get the same thing. But how much easier it is when it appears automatically throughout the game!

[2161] KASPAROV GAMBIT, £39.99 for 3/4/586. Supposedly developed from the SOCRATES2 program, KG is actually a CUT-DOWN version as far as the chess is concerned. This was to make room for admittedly excellent graphics, and digitised speech so a picture of Gary Kasparov can appear to tell you how well you're playing every time you find a good move [which is not so hard to do the way this version of the program plays some of the time!]. It also ignores the time controls you set. News in is that Kasparov GAMBIT running on a Pentium 60566/60 has scored 0/6 in the Harvard Cup for a <2187 grading. Not a good buy in this owners view!

[2135e] CHESS FRIEND. By Gyula Horvath, the program is known from Chess Tournament
8.b4 Bf5 9.Nbd2 0-0 10.b5 Nc5 11.Nxe5?
=In view of what follows this must be marked a mistake, however natural it looks. Therefore 11.Ba3 was the better move even though Nc4 would be an advantageous response, as in the actual game a move later.

11...Bxc5! 12.Nxf7

=Diagram. It's another fascinating position for comparing how different machines evaluate the sides' respective chances. Perhaps they have all favoured White up to here, but are any now beginning to see the value of development? For example GENIUS2/486 would not play the R30's Nxf7, but prefers 12.f3 at 1 min showing -57!

12...Ne4 13.Ke1 Nxf2 14.Be2 Nxb1 15.Nxb8 Rxb8
= The exchanges are over and Black has won a piece.

= The GM's don't think about this - multiple piece exchanges obviously favour him, and there was little the R30 could have done to avoid them.


A crushing round for the COMPUTERS which suffer a 5½-½ loss and some rather easy defeats in short games.

Round 6.

BATTLECHESS 4000 0-1 A IVANOV. 73 move Pirc Defence.
SOCRATES EXP ½-½ B GULKO. 81 move Modern... have you noticed that Gulko wore himself out fruitlessly with this in 2 long, drawn games with Black?
M ROHDE 1-0 M CHESS PRO. 55 move Tarassch.

Kasp GAMBIT (2250) - P WOLFF (2585)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5 4.cxb5 a6 5.axb6 g6 6.e4 Nxe4 7.Qa4 Nf6 8.a7 Na6 9.Nf3 Bg7 10.Bxa6?
= Presumably undervaluing the benefits of the invited pin. Simply 10.Nc3 is about equal.

10...Rxa7 11.Nc3 0-0 12.Qc4 Bxa6 13.Qxc5 Qb8 14.a4 Rc8 15.Qa3?
= Nicely tucked-away in bed. Night night! 15.Qe3 was better.

15...Rb7 16.a5 Rb3 17.Qa2 Ng4 18.h3!!
= Actually sending Black's Knight to where it wanted to go in order to force an exchange - but it's already hard to see any decent move for White even though three of his major pieces haven't moved yet!

18...Ne5 19.Nxe5 Bxe5 20.f4
= Probably best, as it encourages Bxc3 rather than Bxc3. 20.d5? was a wild try: 20...Bxc3 21.bxc3 (21.dxe7 Rxc1 + 22.Rxc1 Qb4 + l) 21...Bxc3 + 22.Bd2 Bxa1 wins with ease.

20...Bxc3 + 21.bxc3 Rbxc3 22.Bd2 Re2 +
= 1-0. 25.Kd1 Rxb8 26.Rb1 Rg7 27.Rxe7 Rb5 is winning easily for Black.

J BENJAMIN (2620) - SPARC (2300)

= Diagram next page.
During the past few months I have been compiling a bigger and stronger OPENING BOOKFILE for the PC Program, Mephisto GENIUS2. At last the file was completed on January 4th.

3.5 TIMES BIGGER!
The result of this work is an Opening Book which is 3.5 times the size of the original book, and which is now available for purchase. Although the file contains 3.5 times as many positions, I believe the effective repertoire of lines it will play in its Tournament Book is probably increased by a factor of 8 to 10, as it will play a much larger percentage of the theory within the Book. This is something I am sure any user will notice very quickly in comparing the Books. However, if Random Mode is selected, it plays even more lines and then it does have a really vast repertoire.

All of the theory which was input from various sources was also checked by the program itself, and I have consequently been able to add many lines that GENIUS2 itself recommended and which (touch wood!) satisfied me as being perfectly viable alternatives.

PLAYING STRENGTH INCREASED
Thus the program will now play lines that you will not see anywhere else! It even found many clear improvements to existing theory, so beware if you are playing against it and trusting in someone else’s recommendation! I was pleased to see that it played 2 of these (i.e. its own) lines in the test games against M CHESS PRO, and thus emerged with a won position on both occasions. One of these improvements is on move 22 in a Ruy Lopez!

An earlier test of the Opening Book when it was smaller (about two-thirds the finished size) resulted in GENIUS2+ scoring 67% against HIARCS2 MASTER, and 70% against M CHESS PRO, this over a total of 112 games at 30 secs per move. Now that the Book is 50% larger again, and the mistakes found during and since the first testing all sorted out, it should be stronger still. Indeed the finished Book contains some lines from the P.C.A INTERZONAL in December.

[NOTE from ERIC: The GENIUS2 will be shown as GENIUS2+ in the RATING LIST for results using Graham’s new Book. Users sending in results should be careful to refer to the Opening Book status so that we can assess the full value of Graham’s work for the current Book and future development]. Now back to GRAHAM...

In the past I have always felt that Richard Lang’s programs seemed to get their good results more despite the Opening Books than due to them. I believe that playing against the “MASTER” Book should give you every impression that you are up against a great opening expert. Many complicated lines, such as in the Sicilian Najdorf Poisoned Pawn or Dragon are analysed 20 to 30 moves deep.

Here are a couple of improvements found by GENIUS2 from the latest INFORMATOR:-

[Game code: gw1]

1. e4 e6
2. d4 d5
3. Nc3 Nf6
4. e5 Nfd7
5. Bd3 c5
6. c3 Ne6
7. Ne2 cxd4
8. cxd4 f6
9. exf6 Nxf6
10. O-O Bd6
11. Nf3 Qc7
12. Bg5 O-O
13. Ng3 Bd7
14. Rc1 Qb6
15. Bxf6 Rxf6
16. Bxh7 --

This is supposed to lead to a draw... 'with best play'

16. -- Kxh7
17. Ng5 Kg8
18. Qh5 Be8
19. Qh7 Kf8
20. Qh8 Ke7
21. Qxg7 Bf7
22. Nxf7 Rxf7
23. Nf5 exf5
24. Rfe1 Be5
25. Rxe5 Nxe5
26. Qxe5 Kd7
27. Qxd5 Ke8
28. Qe5

13. Bxe6

We are told that this gives White a winning attack.

13. 
14. Bxf6 gxf6
15. Nxe6 Bxe6
16. Rxe6 Be7
17. b4

INFORMATOR gives b4 as winning, showing
17...Qxb4 (if 17...Qf5?? 18.Qe2 wins, which is correct!) 18.Qh5 Kf8 19.Rae1 Re8 20.g3

However, as GENIUS2 quickly shows, 17...Qxb4 should be marked ?? due to 18.Rb1!! followed
by Rb7, when White really does win! Instead GENIUS2 plays:

17...Qc3! which puts the Queen on an excellent square, preventing Qe2?? and guarding the
f/Pawn. After 18.Qh5+ Kf8 19.Rae1 Bb4, White must take only the draw by 20.Re8+
Rxe8 21.Rxe8+ Kg7 22.Qg4+ etc.

Finally, purchasers of this MASTER Opening
Book-File will be able to obtain future upgrades.
Mephisto GENIUS2 SCREEN SHOTS

Commands | Levels | Options | Opponents | Display | Disk/Printer
---|---|---|---|---|---
B | B | B | B | B | B
7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7
6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6
5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5
4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4
3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3
2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2
1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1

Player | Player #
---|---
00:00 | 0:01:19 | 00:39 | 0:01:17
all in | 0:58:41 | all in | 0:58:43
01. | e2–e4 | e7–c5
02. | f2–f4 | >_

Searching: 02...e7–e5 (05/22) Depth: 04+16
Line: b8–c6 b1–c3 d7–d6 g1–f3 g8–f6 f1–c4 c8

Above: standard screen after 1.e4 c5 2.f4, showing 2...d5 as the only Book move.
Right: the screen with Graham White's greatly extended Book loaded. There are now 3 responses available to GENIUS2.
Below: After loading the Edit User Book File, we see the current order of preference of the 3 moves, and the number of positions in the Book associated with each move.

Edit user book. Size=

The User Book Edit option is the key to the work. It enables the user to swap the order of preference and even make adjustments to the response likelihood. Also to remove a line that doesn't work in practice, or leave it there as a 'negative' move (i.e., not to be played by GENIUS2, but known to it with the correct response in place should it meet an unwary opponent).

Lines which the user adds are incorporated at the end of each distinct series of moves, which makes life easier than having to use User Book Add after each individual move.

At this point MEPH has +87 --> Ra8, and it was surely time to take the Rook home and re-organise.

27...Nc6? 28Nb5

= NS51 Eval +212 --> Nb4. One false move and it seems the game is lost for Black... at least MEPH thinks so! We agree. With the Rook and Knight both on prise he must play 28...Nb4 attacking White's Queen.

= This saves the immediate situation, but MEPH analyses a winning sequence: 29.Qf2 Ra8 30.Qf7+ Kh8 31.Nc7 h6 32.Nxa8 Qxa8 33.Cxe6 Nd3 34.Bxd5.

= Our opponent is a Computer Scientist and, when sending 27...Nc6 (so not yet aware perhaps of MEPH's powerful response) he was already writing, a touch reluctantly perhaps, 'There is no doubt that computers are able to 'evaluate' positions and, from such evaluations, deduce a strategy (of sorts). I would probably concede that computers have a style (again, of sorts)'.

= We think he'll have to concede something else, namely THE GAME, even if it means he's out of sorts!

Corr 18 Vancouver 020-BCCS 2294

After 20...b4

= We left it with MEPH to play, in sight of possibly its first defeat. Our opponent, known to be a strong over-the-board player, has played an effective French Defence.

21.b3

= Eval with this was 21...a5. We think MEPH is optimistic here, and his position rather worse than the -21 figure.


= MEPH did expect the exchange which now follows, but the -27 before it dropped to -60 afterwards. By move 32 it was showing -103.

26...Qxf4 27.Nxf4 Bc6 28.g3 g5 29.Ng2 Kf7 30.Ne3 Kg6 31.Re2 Bb7 32.Kf1 a5 33.Kg1 h5 34.Re1 Re7 35.Re2 Re4 36.Re2 h4 37.Kg2 Rh8 38.Nc2 h3 +39.Kg1 g4 40.a3

= NS51 Eval -136 --> Bg5. MEPH has 'fiddled' somewhat unconvincingly at times, whilst our opponent has posted his moves rather rapidly, reflecting no doubt his confidence! Phil has a confession - 'I'd agreed to supply the evaluation at each move 'out of interest'. I wont be doing that again in a hurry'.

Corr 19 Vancouver 020-BCCS 2200

1.Nf3 e6 2.g3 f5 3.Bg2 Nf6 4.d4 Be7 5.c4

= We repeat the moves given in NS50, as the game had only just started. They show a rather interesting way of getting into the Dutch from what started out as a Reti Opening.


= 'If MEPH fancies that, it's okay with me!' so he sent the non-Book move on its way.
BCCS 2326 - Vancouver 020. Corr16.

(Diagram after
31...Qx12.
NS49 Eval
+263 ->
Qxb5)

32.Qxb5
Rxb3
33.Rh1 Bd3
34.Rxf2
Bxb5

(NS50 Eval +272 and White resigns with the
comment: 'I do not see your Computer making
any mistakes in the endgame. The Rook move
{33.Rh1} was my last desperate effort to save the
game, hoping for you to move the Queen rather
than attack mine with the Bishop'. 0-1)

Vancouver 020 - BCCS 2200. Corr17

(Diagram after
16.cxb6, NS49
Eval +42 ->
cxb6, planning
bxa5)

16.... cxb6
17.bxa5
Rx a5
18.Rb1 Bg5
19.Qd2 Nd7
20.Bb5

(NS50 Eval +30 -> Ra3. A finely balanced
game)

Here are the first moves from two of the latest
games to get started:


1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3 Nc6 5.Nf3
Bd7 6.Be2 Nge7 7.O-O Rc8 8.Bg5 cxd4
9.cxd4 h6 10.Bxe7

(This doesn't look right in giving Black 2 line,
activated Bishops. Our opponent is known to be a
strong 'over the board' [OTB] League player)

10.... Bxe7 11.Nc3 O-O 12.Rc1 a6
13.Qb3 b5 14Nb1 f6 15.exf6 Bxf6
16.Qe3 Qb6 17.Rcd1 Ne7 18.Bd3 Rc7
19.Rfe1 Nc6 20.Bg6 b4

(Diagram after
20...b4. NS50
and our
opponent has
MEPH in all
sorts of trouble
- the first
potential
defeat? We
leave it with
MEPH to play
for a change)


1.Nf3 e6 2.g3 f5 3.Bg2 Nf6 4.d4 Be7
5.c4

(NS50. An interesting way of getting into the
Dutch Defence, this looks as if it could be another
interesting game. MEPH, you may remember,
faced the Dutch in its County Match for the BCCS
against Surrey - a tough affair which ended in a
draw)

MEPH is also due to start a game against a 2494
rated BCCS member in a few days time, so we
look forward to that one!

JUST BEFORE THE FLAG FELL!

Some astonishing LATE NEWS overshadows all
the rest...SAILTEK [the Kasparov brand-name
machines] has purchased HEGENER &
GLASER [the Mephisto computers]! Of course
rumours were rife about 15 months ago, but it
seemed that the likelihood had gone by.

I have the Saitell press release on the subject
and this gives the encouraging impression that the link resulting from the acquisition should benefit both companies in the long term, without affecting the range of machines available to look like NS readers either in the immediate present or the future.

There is also a reference to: "...comprehensive service to the trade and increased range of fast selling products". The underlinings are mine and emphasise an intention in the deal which eyes the general public more than the chess player. Let's hope that competition between the programmers of these previous rivals is not diminished and efforts to make progress at the top end continues.

How it will affect either areas where current Mephisto and Kaspersky models clash at their price points... or the distribution and marketing arrangements and potential in Britain, remains to be seen. Hopefully some things will have clarified by NS51 and we will be able to assess the effects more specifically.