SELECTIVE SEARCH
The COMPUTER CHESS Magazine

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1997 WORLD MICRO
COMPUTER
CHAMPIONSHIP

Big win for almost unknown JUNIOR,
as Virtua, Shredder and MChess Pro
fail to keep up the pace.

Shocks for FRITZ
and KALLISTO.

Where were HIARCS, REBEL and
GENIUS?

RESULT & Tournament TABLE, early
REPORT, and details of the KEY GAMES.

ANNUAL REVIEW
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CONTENTS, Issue 73

2 Latest NEWS & RESULTS: DEEP BLUE and KASPAROV - any future?; HIARCS6 in Spain; REBEL8 v HIARCS6 & MChess PRO; Mephisto ATLANTA in destructive mood!; PC FILES; REBEL9
6 The 1997 WORLD MICRO COMPUTER CHAMPIONSHIP 14 Full WMCC TABLE
15 FRITZ Review 18 BS2830 - A superb new TEST, in FULL!
22 The 1997-8 BEST BUY GUIDE and REVIEW
32 "All-time" COMPUTER RATING LIST.

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NEWS & RESULTS
Computer Chess: Current Affairs!

DEEP BLUE turns DEEPER BLUE, then YELLOW!
23 Sep 1997, The INTERNET: "Just read on RÉUTERS's that IBM has officially de-
clined any further DEEP BLUE matches".

24 Sep 1997, Malcolm PEIN wrote in the
DAILY TELEGRAPH: "A third match be-
tween world chess champion Garry Kas-
parov and Deep Blue - the computer that
beat him last April - may never happen">

If Kasparov has given up his title for a mess
of pottage (cp. Esau in Genesis 25:29-34) it
is not surprising that he reacted angrily to
the news, accusing IBM was "quitting
whilst it was ahead".

He had, straight after his defeat, chal-
lenged DEEP[er] BLUE2/31 to a third and
deciding match - winner take all, including
Kasparov's version of the world title!

Yet it almost seems that
Kasparov actually
brought the worst upon
himself when, in a bit-
ter attack straight after
the match, he stated
that what had originally
been purported as a
"scientific experiment"
had become a "seriously
competitive challenge...
in an IBM created hostile atmosphere
which was very difficult for me to bear".

IBM, Hsu and the rest of the programming
team were more than taken aback by this
less-than-endearing side of Kasparov, and
some commentators wonder if the unpleas-
antlyness of his remarks might have really
been what has cost him a re-match.

At the time all the IBM team would say was
that, if there is a 3rd. match, "we hope Kas-
parov will play his own style of chess, i.e
not anti-computer chess".

But an IBM spokesman in New York
now says that Deep Blue's chess-playing
days are over, so that the hardware can be
used for investigating new projects in
healthcare, financial marketing and phar-
maceuticals.

On the other hand, with IBM's and Deep
Blue's prestige at an all time high, playing
the famous "hard to get" strategy could per-
haps increase interest and demand (not to
mention the financial rewards!) to unimag-
inable and irresistible proportions! Hope so!

Who COULD BEAT Deep Blue?
In the aftermath of 'the Event', the names of
Karpov and Anand were freely promoted on
the Internet chess section, as the two most
likely to succeed. In an Indian newspaper
as recently as October it was stated that dis-
cussions concerning an Anand-Deep Blue
match were under way, though IBM have
since denied the rumour.

Kasparov, arrogant to the end, said in a
recent interview, "There are only 4 players
who can beat DB in a match. They are Kas-
parov, Anand, Kramnik and Karpov".

One is tempted to ask on what basis he
included himself in the list, when he didn't!

Frank HOLT: Latest RESULTS
Frank continues to be our most prolific
British contributor and has, as promised,
now supplied us with two more results from
major matches he's been conducting.

Rebel8 P/100-MChess Pro5 P/100
Rebel8 normal 6½-5½ MChess Pro5
Rebel8 active 9-3 MChess Pro5
Rebel8 solid 8-4 MChess Pro5
Rebel8 defens 9-3 MChess Pro5
Rebel8 aggress 6-6 MChess Pro5

For comparison, here were the scores
against MCP6:--

Rebel8 P/100-MChess Pro6 P/100
Rebel8 normal 6-6 MChess Pro6
Rebel8 active 6-6 MChess Pro6
Rebel8 solid 5½-6½ MChess Pro6
Rebel8 defens 4½-7½ MChess Pro6
Rebel8 aggress 5½-6½ MChess Pro6

Clearly MCP06 is much better than
MCP5, though Frank did tell us at the time
that, in his estimation, no less than 14 of
the 60 games were affected by special
preparation in the MCP6 book.
Now to the result of the match Frank describes as an "epic" due to the very competitive nature of the chess played!

**Rebel8 P/100-Hiarcs6 P/100 Aggressive**
Rebel8 normal 6½-5½ Hiarcs6  
Rebel8 active 6½-5½ Hiarcs6  
Rebel8 solid 6-6 Hiarcs6  
Rebel8 defens 4½-7½ Hiarcs6  
Rebel8 aggress 3½-8½ Hiarcs6

Frank sent me some of the games, with EPD2DIAGrams of key moments, and I’ll try to find room for these in a future Issue. For comparison, here were the results with Hiarcs6 on Normal.

**Rebel8 P/100-Hiarcs6 P/100 Normal**
Rebel8 normal 5-7 Hiarcs6  
Rebel8 active 4½-7½ Hiarcs6  
Rebel8 solid 5½-6½ Hiarcs6  
Rebel8 defens 6-6 Hiarcs6  
Rebel8 aggress 6-6 Hiarcs6

It is noticeable that Hiarcs on its recommended Normal setting did much better than Aggressive when playing against Rebel on its own Normal and 'nearest-to-Normal' settings.

Hiarcs6 Aggressive only did better when Rebel was separated from its top settings!

So Hiarcs6 Aggressive has the best 'killer' setting for 'weaker' opposition (no slight intended, Ed, I recognise R8 is not playing its best chess on wider settings), whilst it is apparently best kept on Normal when faced with equal or almost equal opposition.

Frank is doing Hiarcs6-Geniu5 right now, but has also just bought Fritz5, so we may get coverage here as well soon.

**Hiarcs6 comes 2nd= in SPAIN; Another big 2600+ Elo grading!**

Hiarcs6, running on a Pentium MMX/200, has just come 2nd= in an important weekend Tournament in Spain.

According to the info I have at present the time control was G/25, and there were no less than 8 G.M.'s playing! Operator Amador Cuesta had set Hiarcs6 to G/20, allowing himself 5 mins to make all the move transfers, but in two long games the computer ran very short of time.

Top-rated was Giorgadze, with whom Hiarcs6 drew. In fact H6 lost no games at all, and Amador admits that his mistakes under time pressure certainly cost H6 at least one win in the 3 draws it had.

Being provisionally rated at 2000 - Hiarcs was (!) an unknown to the Tournament organisers - it had started off with 2 'easy' 21/25 move games against unrated players. These 2 wins soon put it against strong opposition where it had its other draws with GM's Segundo and G Hernandez, and beat GM Ubilava, and FM's R Santiago (2340) and J Hernandez (2400).

The win against Ubilava (2520) in round 5 was partially fortuitous - but they all count! The GM obtained a strong position from a Dutch Classical Stonewall, but lost a knight in a neat tactical trick after which Hiarcs6 announced a mate in 11!

The first encounter involving time trouble came in round 6 against top-rated GM, Giorgadze (2625). H6 stood slightly better but Amador made a mistake changing the time setting at move 61, with the result that Hiarcs was moving quicker than it needed, so he offered a draw which the GM quickly accepted.

Hiarcs met San Segundo (2495), the eventual winner of the tournament, in round 8 - and was offered a draw both before the game started and after move 71! Amador said "No" but, in the event, the game was drawn at move 44 anyway!

In the 9th round against Mexican GM Hernandez (2525), H6 had a completely won endgame. But it was running short of time on the main clock after Amador had transferred a move wrongly onto the main board. The "take back?" request was refused, so Amador had to alter the position in Hiarcs6's memory, via set-up. It was still winning!

But now the computer's time setting also had to be changed, because of the time lost in changing the position to the one now on the board.

Permission had been obtained to reset the clock once in such circumstances, but this time Amador accidentally re-set H6 to its 'instant' level, which is designed for play against beginners (!), and the win sadly evaporated into a draw around move 80.
The Hiarcs6 grading from its games v rated opponents was 2684 Elo. We certainly believe that computers tend to grade approx. 80 Elo higher than 'true' at G/25-30, so it is perhaps the equivalent of approx. 2604.

**Final result:**

8/9 San Segundo (GM 2495)
7.5 Hiarcs6, A Strikovic (GM 2560), E Ubilava (GM 2520), G Hernandez (GM 2525), G Del Rio (IM 2375).
On 7 were six players, incl. the top rated Gor- godze. 206 players competed in all.

**The Mephisto ATLANTA earns its keep!**

Countrywide Computers usually likes to enter either a dedicated computer or a PC program into the tournament at the Bury St. Edmunds Week-end Congress.

But readers may recall that no-one would play the Milano Pro in the final round last time, with its score on 3/4.

So this time we put one of the new Atlanta machines on our Stand, and challenged players to G/5 Blitz... *for cash!*

We - well, Mike Healey! :-) - put £5 in the kitty to start off, and added £11 for every game that the computer remained undefeated.

The 'pot' was pretty large by Sunday night, but Mike left with his money intact - the Atlanta gave up only one draw throughout the whole week-end, and actually won all the other, approximately 60, games!

"There were some pretty hairy moments", says Mike, "when I thought I was going to have to pay out. But when it was on top the Atlanta won some devastating games and, whenever it did get in trouble, it defended and counter-attacked at times quite brilliantly".

**SCORE UPDATES: Milano Pro, Diamond2 and Atlanta**

We've not done too much more with the Milano Pro or Diamond2 since the last issue of SS, but we have completed another 12 game match with the Atlanta, this time against the Mephisto Nigel Short.

The Atlanta won impressively and quite easily, by 9-3.

We also have the first results for the Sapphire2/Diamond2 through from Sweden. As often seems to happen with the Novags, the Swedish results are not quite as good as ours. It seems there is still a small fall-away in the success ratio of Kittinger's tricky type of program when the opposition has more time to sort out the created complications.

For example, whilst we have **Diamond2 4½-1½ up against Milano Pro** at G/30 (score was 3-0), in Sweden it's actually the other way round (just!), with **Milano Pro leading 10½-9½**!

Another of their **Diamond2 results** is **10-10 v Berlin 68000**, whilst it has a good 14-6 win against the original Milano, and leads 11-1 against the **Super Expert 6/C**.

Thus a rating comparison as I write (6/Nov) shows major variations between us, after allowing for the 80 Elo difference which traditionally separates the Swedish and British Elo scales.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Swe</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>Diff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Milano Pro</td>
<td>2079</td>
<td>2136</td>
<td>-57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diamond1/Sapphire1</td>
<td>2088</td>
<td>2138</td>
<td>-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diamond2/Sapphire2</td>
<td>2096</td>
<td>2190</td>
<td>+94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlanta</td>
<td>.....</td>
<td>2252</td>
<td>.....</td>
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</tbody>
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I expect (and hope!) these figures will start to come together as more results come through. Right now I would guess that the Swedish rating for Diamond2/Sapphire2 will maybe rise a little, whilst mine will go down a few points?!

**EPD and PGN files for PC**

Over the years I have accumulated a small collection of .pgn and .epd files relating to computer chess!

The .pgn files are mostly Games Collections from various Computer tournaments or matches:

**PGN LIST**

| Harvard Cup 1993, 95. |
| WCC 1995. |
| WIMCC 1993, 95, 96, 97. |
| Aegon 1996, 97. |
| Kasparov v Anand. |
| Kasparov v Deep Blue1 & 2. |
| Kamsky v Karpov. |
| Hiarcs6 v Hargott. |
| MCPv v Efimov. |
| Collection of (740) Fischer games. |
The .epd files contain sets of positions from various Test Suites. These are useful as many PC programs now can be set to import and automatically analyse a series of test positions, without you or me having to sit and watch. The program runs the test and creates a file to report the results of each position tested.

With EPD2DIAG it is also possible to view and/or print these positions one at a time. The very latest version of EPD2DIAG not only exports to a PRINT program via the Clipboard (as described in SS71, page 5), but also can now create .bmp and .gif files directly, making life even easier.

- **EPD LIST**
  - BT2830 test (hard, tactical)
  - Covax tests, 1 + 2 (very hard, tactical).
  - Exner test
  - LCT2 test (tactical, positional + endgame)
  - MR test (positional)
  - PCH test (50, all positional, from Gelfer’s Handbook)
  - Nolot test

- **PRICES (direct only from Eric)**
  - PGN files on disc £5
  - EPD files on disc, with EPD2DIAG £5
  - BOTH discs £8

Folk who have already purchased the previous version of EPD2DIAG from me can return the disc with a book of 1st. class stamps (take one stamp out to post the disc!), and I’ll happily upgrade it and complete your .epd file Collection!

**Thanks re KIMBO: meet SKY!**

I’d like to thank the MANY who’ve contacted me to say ‘sorry’ about Kimbo. Folk who visited Countrywide and met her were particularly upset, she was a super dog!

We’ve now got SKY, also from a Rescue Centre. Previously she’d been very badly treated. We like to rescue dogs – it reminds me that I’ve been rescued: “I once was lost, but now am found!” as goes the song Amazing Grace by converted slave trader, John Newton!

SKY will be one year old on Nov 23, and is looking lovely in the photo with Chris, my wife.

**REBEL9**

Sincere apologies are due from me to Ed Schroder, who kindly sent me a copy of Rebel9 on CD the minute it came out!

And no review this time! Sorry, Ed.

I had already done my Fritz5 review when R9 arrived, but expected to have room for both. However the News and WMCC pages etc have taken up so much room, it is having to wait until SS74.

Even so, I can say this: though I am pretty impressed with Fritz5, with its improvements and fine features... if you want really top strength as well, then Rebel9 is what you should be looking at!

I’m not sure if its rating will pass Hiarcs6 on the standard Pentiums – it will be a very close thing. But on Pentium Pro and MMX machines Rebel9 might make it!

Ed has re-coded relevant program parts into 32-bit, so there is a more than useful speed-up on the faster PCs! Whatever, there is no doubt that this is a very powerful program, blessed with lots of good features for chess enthusiasts and serious players.

There’s also a new opening book by Jeroen Noomen, of around 185,000 positions, with some very specific evaluation figures given for each line which will be of great interest. Learning has also been added, so that Rebel9’s opening play will ‘evolve’ according to its successes and/or failures within each owner’s PC.

Favourite features remain, such as the ability to simulate play at a range of different Elo settings, the 4 game Simultaneous facility, and useful chess evaluation insights from the Rebel ‘WarRoom’. Lots of fun!

**NEXT ISSUE**

- Dutch Open Computer Champs (played Nov-Dec).
- Ingo Althoeffer: 3-Hirn plays Shuffle Chess against GM Yusupov.
- Komputer Korner’s Korrespondence Kup: Result and analysed games from the Diep operator!
- Bill Reid finds out more about Rebel8.
- Test your Computer: 2 (SS72) results.
- Oh yes, mustn’t forget the Rebel9 review!
World Micro Computer Champs - REPORT & GAMES!

The 1997 and 15th. World Micro Computer Championship was held in Paris, from Oct.26 through to Nov.2nd. Credits are due to Titus Software, who provided the local organisation.

As usual, after the main Tournament, there was an extra day for a Blitz event and prizegiving ceremonies.

Another Paris company, AMD, supplied Pentium Pro 200MHz machines for those participants who wanted them. Others brought their own, very latest P/Pro.300's, and some software was on even more specialised equipment.

It is a shame that the programs aren't all on the same hardware, so that the Tournament would be a completely equal test, as a program running at double speed or even slightly more, clearly has a good advantage.

Pre-Tournament Favourites

Last year's winner Shredder was not especially fancied to repeat, despite being on an Alpha 533 - remember that many of the top commercial programs were missing in the 1996 Jakarta event.

The Israeli team had been unable to get visas for their entry with Junior, and some other programs withdrew as a protest. Others were put off by the costs of getting themselves and valuable PC equipment to and from Indonesia, and still others had different reasons for not entering, but that's another story!

Ferret was probably just favourite - though programmer Bruce Moreland is still an amateur (with, sadly, no interest in making his program commercial), Ferret was 2nd last year and has gained a tremendous reputation playing Blitz on the Internet in the States; it would be running on particularly fast hardware in Paris.

The fastest hardware of all belonged to Dark Thought, which was on an Alpha 767, though it was considered unlikely this would get DT home!

Referring to Ferret as an amateur program may lead readers to wonder why so many really good emerging programs remain 'amateur'. However there is rather more to producing a commercial program than 'just' playing good chess. They need interfaces, graphics and a myriad other features before they can even start to compete with those already on the market.

Many of the amateur programs have really good chess engines, but the screen (including the board!) is often in plain old scrolling text! A year's work could put this right, but our amateur friends are understandably only really interested in working on the chess side of their program.

Equally, whatever the myths, there's not much money to be made for most, even with one of the very top programs!

Junior3/3.5/4 comes into the 'amateur' and non-graphics department. Indeed versions 3/3.5/4 didn't even support proper hash tables, and only made 200K available! Despite this it has played very successfully in a team in the Chess Leagues in Israel and is another with a big reputation. Indeed the Swedish Chess Association has been testing the non-commercial versions for their PLY rating lists, and I have been including Junior3.5 on mine on the basis of their results, though it seems from these that it is approx. 100 Elo behind those at the top.

However JuniorX for Paris would be the first version to have a proper hash system and, as it would be on a PPro/300, there were strong rumours that it also could be a leading contender.

The latest commercial versions of MChess Pro(7) and Fritz(5) were obviously fancied, especially the latter which, of course, is still World Computer Champion from the 1995 event!

Internet regular Crafty, by Bob Hyatt, had its supporters, though its computer-computer results have been generally inferior those against humans at Blitz, which is where Hyatt concentrates his efforts.

France's Marc-Francois Baudot was
optimistic that his new version Virtual Chess2 could win, to celebrate the Championship being in Paris.

Kallisto also had its supporters, based on its fine Aegon result.

**Missing, and not in Action!**

Rebel, Hiarc3, Genius, MChess Pro, Nimzo and WChess were all missing from the initial list of participants.

Austria's Donninger, however, had entered Nimzo as Hydra, which caused some confusion when the questions over why certain programs were missing arose!

Rebel's Ed Schrodier stated a couple of years ago that he would not be entering computer-computer events anymore.

It's partly the cost, and partly he feels there is more to be learned using his automated testers over hundreds of games against the main commercial opposition, than in an 11 round WMCC event against all sorts.

But his main concern is the fact that the non-available amateur programs can be (and usually are) heavily prepared and booked-up in readiness for games against their easily available commercial opponents, whereas there is nothing the commercial programmer can do to prepare for the amateur programs which appear for just a few games a year.

Incidentally, and going off the subject momentarily, but that's a major reason why the Kasparov-Deep Blue match was not entirely fair - GK couldn't prepare properly for the unknown!

The extreme computer-computer case of this was the Gandalf victory over Hiarc3 in 1995, and all other commercial programs I've tested would have fallen into the early trap at that time. So it could have been Rebel itself or, indeed, any of the others getting the bad headlines!

Hiarc3 was entered originally, but wasn't there because Mark Uniake and the ICCA were unable to agree about his personal status. Hiarc3 is not Mark's job - he only works on it in his spare time at evenings and week-ends, as do the other helpers in his small team. So, although the program is commercially available - indeed it's currently the top rated! - Mark is not a professional chess programmer in his view. He'd like to be, and he thought he should be classed as an "emerging professional" - as were such as Chrilly Doninger with his Nimzo/Hydra program, and the programmers of Shredder and Goliath, which are also commercially available. But the ICCA said Mark could only enter as a professional.

I should add that this had nothing to do with the £1,000 entrance fee (from which non-professionals are exempt), as Mark tells me he offered to pay that anyway.

Cash was Marty Hirsch's problem with MChess Pro, as I understand it.

The early story was that he was too late in sending in his entry, but I have reported in a previous Issue that Marty has had to take up other work to support his chess computing. This is mainly because a German firm still owes him a considerable sum of money for MCP programs they purchased off him.

In the event I am told that major German distributor Ossi Weiner came up with the entrance fee for Marty, enabling him to play. Indeed, he took Hiarc3 place - a strange irony!

Genius is undergoing a rewrite of the code from 16-bit to 32-bit, and is still some way from being finished. Richard, understandably, didn't feel like entering with Genius5 after everyone's had a year to see what it does or doesn't do (or, more important, have in its opening book!).

**Some of the New Names!**

Now available commercially, Goliath is the new name for last year's Interchess.

The Crazy Bishop is programmed by France's Remi Coulom, who says the first code only hit the screen in Oct.96!

Chess Guru is by Joel Rivat, using bitboards and 64 bit programming and on some powerful hardware as it performs poorly on 16 and 32-bit machines.

**And some Old Friends!**

It's always nice to see the British amateur programs Woodpusher by John Hamlen and Francesca by Tom King entered. They were hoping to be drawn to play each other at some point though, based on the 1996
results, it was expected that Francesca might be higher up the table. Both are keen SS readers, so I’ll be after them for brief ‘on the scene’ reports later!

Finally would Ananse in v.3.0 manage a win - the only points it’s ever scored in WMCC events has been from byes so far. You have to admire programmer Banner- man’s persistence!

The Tournament! Rounds 1-4

- Ferret drew with Gandalf before beating 2 eventually lowly-placed opponents. Then it lost in round 4 to...
- Junior, which started in a rush, going straight to 3½/4. The round 4 win over Ferret sounded a warning!
- Shredder made an awful start! A draw with Crafty was fair enough, but losses against Gandalf and Chess Guru left it on an early 1½/4.
- Kallisto started badly, drawing with Arthur, Toledo and my friend Francesca, and losing to Chess Guru.
- Fritz5 astonishingly started with 3 draws and a defeat - all against opponents which all ended up in the bottom half of the table!
- MChess Pro7 was on standard PPro/200 hardware, so its win over Dark Thought in round 1 and an early 3½/4 was a very good start for it.
- Virtual was also one of the early leaders, though it had had a couple of easier opponents on its way to a promising 3½/4.
- Nimzo/ Hydra made a poor start, losing to Toledo (a newcomer who was to end up with a good score) and Arthur. 1½/4.
- After draws in rounds 1 and 2, Crafty played two weaker opponents and got nicely to 3/4.
- Chess System Tal started as if it meant business. Granted its early opposition was moderate, but 3/4 was just what Chris Whittington would have been hoping for.

And what of my old friends Woodpusher and Francesca?
- Francesca had 1½/4, thanks to a win over poor Ananse (as you’d expect on 0/4).
- Woodpusher had a ½ point more. It had lost to Ferret, but beat Dragon and got a useful draw with Goliath to reach 2½/4!

Round 2 – ECO B99

Gandalf-Shredder
1.e4 c5 2.¿d3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.¿xd4 ¿f6 5.¿c3 a6 6.¿g5 e6 7.f4 ¿bd7 8.¿f3 ¿c7 9.¿d3 ¿b6 10.¿b3 ¿e7 11.¿e5 ¿h6 12.¿h4 ¿c7 13.¿c4 ¿g5 14.¿xg5 ¿e5 15.¿e2 ¿f6 16.¿g4 ¿xg4 17.¿xg4 ¿xg4 18.¿xf6+ ¿xf6 19.¿xf6+ ¿xf6 20.¿xg4 ¿e5 21.¿xe5 ¿xg4 22.¿xg4 ¿xg4 23.¿xf6 ¿g8 24.¿f3 ¿xg3 ¿xf3 25.¿e5+ ¿e8 26.¿xg7 ¿b4 27.¿xb4 ¿d8 28.¿h7 ¿h7 29.¿xg8+ ¿xf7 30.¿xd8 ¿bb8 31.¿xf7+ ¿c8 32.¿c6 # 1-0

Round 2 – ECO C24

M-Chess 7.0-Virtual Chess II
1.e4 e5 2.¿c4 ¿f6 3.d3 c6 4.¿f3 d5 5.¿b3 ¿bd7 6.0-0 ¿d6 7.exd5 ¿xd5 8.¿e1 0-0 9.¿bd2 ¿c7 10.¿e4 a5 11.a3 ¿a4 12.¿a2 ¿e8 12.¿e1 14.¿a3 ¿g6 15.¿f5 h6 16.¿e5 ¿e5 17.¿b5 ¿e5 18.¿f5 ¿f4 19.¿xh4 ¿xh4 20.¿e1 ¿g6 21.¿h3 ¿g7 22.¿b4 ¿e7 23.¿ad1 ¿d8 24.¿c5 ¿a5 25.c3 ¿b6 26.¿e3 ¿ge7 27.¿e3 ¿g6 28.¿xc1 c5 29.¿a2 b5 30.¿m2 b4 31.¿c4 ¿xb3 32.¿bxc3 ¿d6 33.¿c6 34.¿h5 f5 35.¿d2 ¿b6 36.¿e1 ¿xb2 37.¿xh2 ¿fe4 38.¿xe4 ¿f7 39.¿xd5 ¿d5 40.¿g5 ¿e7 41.¿b5 ¿c3 42.¿f3 ¿b6 43.¿d3 ñxh3 44.¿xh3 ¿g6 45.¿e4 ¿e5 46.¿e3 ¿e8 47.¿c3 ¿f3 48.¿xh2 ¿cxd4 49.¿xa4 d3 50.¿d1 ¿f5 51.¿f5 ¿e7 52.a4 ¿a4 53.¿b1 ¿c5 54.¿b5 ¿d4 55.¿b3 ¿e5 56.¿c3 ¿d8 57.¿b4 ¿h4 58.¿d6 59.¿xg4 60.¿c4 ¿e7 61.¿b5 ¿d5 1-0. An early shock for last year’s Champion!

Round 3 – ECO D44

Chess Guru-Kallisto
1.d4 e5 2.¿c4 ¿f5 3.d3 ¿f6 4.¿c3 e6 5.¿g5 ¿c5 6.f4 ¿d5 7.¿e5 h6 8.¿h4 g5 9.¿xg5 hxg5 10.¿xg5 ¿bd7 11.¿f4 ¿b7 12.¿g3 c5 13.¿d5 ¿b6 14.¿g2 O-O O-O 15.O-O b4 16.¿a4 ¿a6
Round 3 - ECO C62
Francesca v.0,20-Ananse
1.e4 e5 2.d3 d6 3.c3 dxe4 4.cxd4 g6 7.O-O g7 8.e3 d6 9.h3 dxc6 10.h4 d6 11.h5 d5 12.h3 d6 13.d5 dxc4 14.b4 c6 15.d4 c5 16.d6 c6 17.d5 d4 18.d4 d5 19.dxc3 c4 20.dxc6 c2 21.d6 c7 22.b3 b6 23.d5 gxf5 1-0 Tom King would have been disappointed not to beat Ananse, but a win is a win!

Round 3 - ECO B95
Shredder-IsiChess
1.e4 c5 2.b3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.exd4 d5 5.c3 dxc6 6.c4 d6 7.d3 d6 8.a3 d7 9.d2 e7 10.O-O-O 0-9.f4 c6 7.g6 c8 9.f8 11.d8 c5 12.g4 h5 13.dxe6 dxe6 14.g5 e5 15.g6 f5 16.g3 dxe5 17.dxe5 dxe5 18.dxe5 dxe5 19.dxe5 20.dxe5 21.dxe5 dxe5 22.dxe5 dxe5 23.dxe5 dxe5 24.dxe5 dxe5 25.dxe5 dxe5 26.dxe5 dxe5 27.dxe5 dxe5 28.dxe5 dxe5 29.dxe5 dxe5 30.dxe5 dxe5 31.dxe5 1-0

Round 3 - ECO E12
Virtual Chess St-Ilbor

Round 4 - ECO B01
M-Chess 7-Goliath
1.e4 d5 2.exd5 cxd5 3.c3 c6 4.d4 g6 5.g5 d5 6.c3 b5 7.d3 d6 8.a4 b4 9.ae4 d4 10.cxd6 d6 11.d4 e5 12.d4 d5 13.dxe5 dxe5 14.dxe5 dxe5 15.dxe5 dxe5 16.dxe5 dxe5 17.dxe5 dxe5 18.dxe5 dxe5 19.dxe5 0-0 A crushing result for MCP against the latest commercial newcomer!

Now the first major coming-together!
Round 4 - ECO A22
Junior-Ferret

That puts new favourite Virtual 4½/5 in sole 1st place; it was to go further ahead in round 6...

Round 6 - ECO C88
Crafty-Virtual Chess 2
1.e4 e5 2.b3 c6 3.b5 d6 4.a4 d5 5.O-O c7 6.b3 b6 7.a5 c5 8.b3 O-O 9.a4 e6 10.d6 e7 11.d5 c5 12.d6 d4 13.dxe5 dxe5 14.dxe5 dxe5 15.dxe5 dxe5 16.dxe5 dxe5 17.dxe5 dxe5 18.dxe5 dxe5 19.dxe5 dxe5 20.dxe5 dxe5 21.dxe5 dxe5 22.dxe5 dxe5 23.dxe5 dxe5 24.dxe5 dxe5 25.dxe5 dxe5 26.dxe5 dxe5 27.dxe5 dxe5 28.dxe5 dxe5 29.dxe5 dxe5 30.dxe5 dxe5 31.dxe5 dxe5 32.dxe5 dxe5 33.dxe5 dxe5 34.dxe5 dxe5 35.dxe5 dxe5 36.dxe5 dxe5 37.dxe5 dxe5 38.dxe5 dxe5 39.dxe5 dxe5 40.dxe5 dxe5

Junior gets its second major head-to-head in consecutive rounds!
Round 5 - ECO B82
Virtual Chess 2-Junior
1.e4 c5 2.b3 d6 3.d4 exd4 4.dxd4 c6 5.c3 e6 6.d4 e5 7.b5 c6 8.d5 b6 9.e4 c5 10.dxc5 dxc5 11.d5 d5 12.dxe5 dxe5 13.dxe5 dxe5 14.dxe5 dxe5 15.dxe5 dxe5 16.dxe5 dxe5 17.dxe5 dxe5 18.dxe5 dxe5 19.dxe5 dxe5 20.dxe5 dxe5 21.dxe5 dxe5 22.dxe5 dxe5 23.dxe5 dxe5 24.dxe5 dxe5 25.dxe5 dxe5 26.dxe5 dxe5 27.dxe5 dxe5 28.dxe5 dxe5 29.dxe5 dxe5 30.dxe5 dxe5 31.dxe5 1-0

That puts new favourite Virtual 4½/5 in sole 1st place; it was to go further ahead in round 6...

Round 6 - ECO C88
Crafty-Virtual Chess 2
Fritz5-Kallisto
1.e4 e5 2.d2.c3 .d6 f6 3.g3 d5 4.exd5 .d5 5.d6 .g2 xe5 6.bxc3 .d6 7.0-0 O-O-O
8.0-0 .c6 9.d4 .g4 10.wd5 .c8 11.g5 .f5
12.e4 .g6 13.xg6 hxg6 14.xe4 .e7 15.d5 
16.wxe5 .e6 17.xf7 .xe5 18.d6 .h6
19.wxg5 .g6 20.xe7 .xh6 21.xf6 22.xe1
23.h1 a8 24.xg6 25.xg6 26.xf4 .h6 29.xf5+
30.xd5 .b8+ 31.xe5 .d8 32.xf5 .xh4
33.xh4+ 1-0 A nice return to winning ways!

Round 7 - ECO A34
Junior-M-Chess 7
1.c4 .f6 2.d2.c3 c5 3.g3 d5 4.exd5 .d5 5.a3
O-O 10.c6 bxc6 11.wxc6 .b8 12.0-0 b6
13.O-O g5 14.xc7 .xh6 15.m1a4 .b6
16.wc2 .b7 17.xd1 .a8 18.xc1 .x6
19.wb1 .b2 20.h3 .b6 21.h2 .b2 22.xc1
23.xc1 .c7 24.xc2 .c7 25.xc2 .c7 26.xc7
27.xc7 .b1 28.xc7 .a1 29.xc7 .b1
30.xc7 .c5 31.xc7 .c5 32.xc7 .c5
33.xc7 .c7 34.xc7 .c7 35.xc7 .c7 36.xc7
37.xc7 .c7 38.xc7 .c7 39.xc7 .c7
40.xc7 .c7 41.xc7 .c7 42.wd4 .c7
43.xc6 .c6 44.xc6 .c6 45.xc6 .c6
46.xc6 .c6 47.xc6 .c6 48..c6 .c6 49.a7 .a2
50.xc5 1-0

Round 6 - ECO D13
Kallisto-Capture
1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.exd5 cxd5 4.d4 .d6 5.xd6 .xg4
6.xd6 .e5 7.xd5 .xg4 8.a3 .b5 9.b4 .e6
10.xxe6 .xh5 11.xd5 .e5 12.xd5 .e5 13.xh4
14.xd8+ .xh8 15.xh8 .xh8 16.xf8+
17.xf8 .xh8 18.xf8 .xh8 19.xf8 .xh8
20.xf8 .xh8 21.xf8 .xh8 22.xf8 .xh8
23.xf8 .xh8 24.xf8 .xh8 25.xf8 .xh8
26.xf8 .xh8 27.xf8 .xh8 28.xf8 .xh8
29.xf8 .xh8 30.xf8 .xh8 31.xf8 .xh8
32.xf8 .xh8 33.xf8 .xh8 34.xf8 .xh8
35.xf8 .xh8 36.xf8 .xh8 37.xf8 .xh8
38.xf8 .xh8 39.xf8+ 1-0 So after 6 rounds we had:-
3½ Virtual
5
4½ Junior, MChess Pro7
4 Ferret, Arthur, Eugen7.2, Chess Guru, DiepV, Crafty

Round 7 - ECO C82
Virtual Chess 2-Ferret
1.e4 e5 2.d2.f3 .c6 3..b5 a6 4..a4 .a6
5.O-O .xe4 6.d4 b5 7..b3 d5 8.dxe5 .e6
9..c5 10.O-O .c8 11..c2 f5 12..b3
13..b6 14..d4 .xd4 15..d4 .xd4 16.exd4
17.xg3 .xg3 18..c3 .c3 19..c5
20..c5 .c5 21..c5 .c5 22..c5
23..c5 .c5 24..c5 .c5 25..c5 .c5
26..c5 .c5 .c5 27..c5 .c5 28..c5 .c5
29..c5 .c5 30..c5 .c5 31..c5 .c5 32..c5
33..c5 .c5 .c5 34..c5 .c5 35..c5
36..c5 .c5 .c5 37..c5 .c5 38..c5
39..c5+ 1-2/2

We would not have expected the next pair to be meeting like this, i.e. both standing almost out of contention on a mere 2½/2!
Round 7 - ECO C26
Round 8 - ECO C24
Eugen-Virtual Chess 2
1.e4 e5 2.d4 c6 3.d3 c5 4.g3 cxd4 5.gxd4 c6 6.c3 c5 7.dxc5 cxd4 8.g4 dxc5
9.xf6 gxf6 10.xe3 g8 11.xc4 g6 12.xe5 xg5 13.xf5 xg2 14.xg2 xg2 15.xg2 fxg2 16.xg2 xg2 17.xg2 xg2 18.xg2 xg2 19.xg2 xg2 20.xg2 xg2 21.xg2 xg2 22.xg2 xg2 23.xg2 xg2 24.xg2 xg2 25.xg2 xg2 26.xg2 xg2 27.xg2 xg2 28.xg2 xg2 29.xg2 xg2 30.xg2 xg2 31.xg2 xg2 32.xg2 xg2 33.xg2 xg2 34.xg2 xg2 35.xg2 xg2 36.xg2 xg2

The leaders after 8 rounds are:

* Virtual
* 6½ Junior
* 6
* 5½ Shredder, MChess Pro
* 5 Dark Thought, CS_Tal, Eugen7.2, Gandalf, Chess Guru, Goliath

Round 9 - ECO A05
Goliath-Chess System Tal

Round 9 - ECO A20
Junior-Gandalf
1.c4 e5 2.xf3 e4 3.xd4 c6 4.xc3 5.xc3 6.xc3 7.xc3 8.xc3 9.xc3 10.xc3 11.xc3 12.xc3 13.xc3 14.xc3 15.xc3 16.xc3 17.xc3 18.xc3 19.xc3 20.xc3 21.xc3 22.xc3 23.xc3 24.xc3 25.xc3 26.xc3 27.xc3 28.xc3 29.xc3 30.xc3 31.xc3 32.xc3 33.xc3 34.xc3 35.xc3 36.xc3 37.xc3 38.xc3 39.xc3 40.xc3 41.xc3 42.xc3 43.xc3 44.xc3 45.xc3 46.xc3 47.xc3 48.xc3 49.xc3 50.xc3 51.xc3 52.xc3 53.xc3 54.xc3 55.xc3 56.xc3 57.xc3 58.xc3 59.xc3 60.xc3 61.xc3 62.xc3 63.xc3 64.xc3 65.xc3 66.xc3 67.xc3 68.xc3 69.xc3 70.xc3 71.xc3 72.xc3 73.xc3 74.xc3 75.xc3 76.xc3

Woodpusher-Techno Chess
1.e4 e5 2.xf3 c6 3.d4 exd4 4.xc3 d5 5.xc3 dxc3 6.g3 7.xf6 gxf6 8.xg8 9.xd8 cxd8 10.xd8 h8 11.d4 xh6 12.xh6 xh6 13.xh6 xh6 14.xh6 xh6 15.xh6 xh6 16.xh6 xh6 17.xh6 xh6 18.xh6 xh6 19.xh6 xh6 20.xh6 xh6 21.xh6 xh6 22.xh6 xh6 23.xh6 xh6 24.xh6 xh6 25.xh6 xh6 26.xh6 xh6 27.xh6 xh6 28.xh6 xh6 29.xh6 xh6 30.xh6 xh6 31.xh6 xh6 32.xh6 xh6 33.xh6 xh6 34.xh6 xh6 35.xh6 xh6 36.xh6 xh6 37.xh6 xh6 38.xh6 xh6 39.xh6 xh6 40.xh6 xh6 41.xh6 xh6 42.xh6 xh6 43.xh6 xh6 44.xh6 xh6 45.xh6 xh6 46.xh6 xh6 47.xh6 xh6 48.xh6 xh6 49.xh6 xh6 50.xh6 xh6 51.xh6 xh6 52.xh6 xh6 53.xh6 xh6 54.xh6 xh6 55.xh6 xh6 56.xh6 xh6 57.xh6 xh6 58.xh6 xh6 59.xh6 xh6 60.xh6 xh6 61.xh6 xh6 62.xh6 xh6 63.xh6 xh6 64.xh6 xh6 65.xh6 xh6 66.xh6 xh6 67.xh6 xh6 68.xh6 xh6 69.xh6 xh6

Round 8 - ECO C45
Round 8 - ECO C24
M-Chess 7-Ferret
Round 8 - ECO C45
Woodpusher-Techno Chess
Round 9 - ECO A05
Junior-Gandalf
Round 9 - ECO A20
Junior-Gandalf

Now comes a very important one!

Round 9 - ECO A74
Shredder 2.0-Virtual Chess 2
A great attacking win by Shredder, giving Junior (7½) a half point lead after 4 successive wins. Virtual (7) has a half point lead on Shredder (6½).

Round 10 - ECO D42
Chess Guru-MChess 7
1.d4 d5 2...d3 f6 3.c4 e6 4...c6 c5 5.cxd5
½xd5 6.e3 c6 7...d3 cxd4 8.exd4 e7
9.O-O O-O 10.e4 d6 11.e5 fxe5
12.Wc2 h6 13...d2 g4 14...e5 c5 15...e5
Wb6 16...a1 Bd8 17...f4 c7 18.Wa5 c5
19.Wxb6 â6 20...c4 fxe8 21...a1 â4
22...e2 a6 23...h1 d4 24...b4 a5 25...xb5
axb5 26.f4 d3 27...a4 e5 28...d2 b4 29...a3
f8 30.Bc3 31...ed1 32...b1 a5
d3 33...e7 34...b6 35...h3 c5 36...a4
37...e5 c8 38...e3 c5 39...g7 ...e3
40...c3 fxe2 41...f6 d2 42...h4 ...d6 43...a4
bxa4 44...c4+ d4 45...c7 g5 46...g3 Bd3
0-1

Well, if ever there was a big one for the 1997 Title, this was it. Could the 1996 Champion halt Junior's progress, and keep itself and Virtual in with a chance?

Round 10 - ECO D18
Shredder 2.0-Junior
1.d4 d5 2...f3 f6 3...c6 4...xc4 5...c6 c5 6...e5
f6 7...c4 e6 8.O-O b7 9...h3
a5 10...h4 11...h5 12...g5 c5 13...g2
...g6 14...e7 ...e5 ...c6 16...e2 h5 17...g5
...d7 18...f4 19...d6 19...g6 20...xb7
...f4 21...e4 22...h4 h5 23...c6 24...c6
...d2 25...e6 ...d6 26...f6 27...cd3
...e6 28...ad1 ...e7 29...g1 O-O 30...g3...e6
31...g5 ...g7 32...c5 ...h8 33...g5 ...d7
34...a5 ...xh5 35...g4 36...f6 36...f5 ...c6
37...b6 ...ed2 38...a6 ...g4 39...xh2 ...xh2
40...e2 c7 41...w7 42...c2 42...a5
43...wd4+ e5 44...wd3 ...wa4 45...b5 ...wa2 46...h3
f1 48.4e5 wa1+ 50...g2 ...xe5 51...d6 ...h4 52...h1 ...g8
53...g2 ...h5 54...e2 ...g6 55...c6 ...c6
56...f6 ...g3 57...d4 ...h2 58...e5 ...h7 59...e3
...xh3 60...d2 ...g4 61...ec2 ...g5 62...d5...h5
63...ee6 64...e6+ 64...f6 65...e6 ...a4+
66...b3 ...c6+ 67...f6 ...d4+ 68...h6
69...h4+ ...h5 70...xh2 ...xc4+ 71...b1 ...e4+
72...b2 ...h6 73...wd6 ...f4 74...wc5 g5 75...wc6+
wc6+ 0-1

Now Virtual has to win!

Round 10 - ECO B92
Virtual Chess 2-Chess System Tal
1.e4 c5 2...f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4...xd4 f6 5...c3
6.e6 ...e2 e5 7...b3 ...e7 8.O-O O-O 9...e3
...e6 10...d2 ...bd7 11.a4 ...c8 12.a5 ...c7
13...f1 14...e4 15...f3 h6 16.h3
17...xb7 18...b5 ...d5 19...e2 ...f4
20...xf4 ...xf4 21.d4 ...f8 22...d2 ...e8
23...xf4 ...e6 24...d2 ...c7 25.b5 ab5
26...xb5 ...d5 27...d4 ...e5 28...c4 ...h8
29...d5 ...h5 30.g3 f6 31...c4 ...h5 32...g2
...e5 33...a4 ...g5 34...b5 ...d7 35...f4 ...h5
36...b4 ...g6 37...c3 ...h5 38...d5 ...c7 39...f5
40...h4 ...c1 41...b5 ...g5 42...e7 ...c7
43...g3 ...g1+ 44...h3 ...h1+ 45...f3 d5
46...d5 ...h1+ 47...f3 ...h1+ 48...e3 ...d5
49...d4 ...h4 50...d5 ...c7 51...d4 ...d7 52...a6
bxa6 53...a6 ...e1+ 54...f3 ...f1+ 55...e2
...h7 56...b6 ...e6 57...f3 ...b1 58...a5 ...xb6
59...wc3 ...ee7 60...g6 ...xg6 61...c6 ...b1 62...f2
...d7 63...a2 ...h1 64...xf6 ...w2+ 65...e3
...g3+ 66...d4 ...g1+ 67...d2 ...a1+ 68...a3
...xh6 69...xf6 ...h1 70...h2 ...d1+ 71...c2 ...g7
72...xh6 ...g1 73...h7+ ...f8 74...f2 ...c7+
75...d2 ...g7 76...h8+ ...g8 1-0 Phew! Virtual had some luck here, as CS_Tal probably had a draw by repetition at move 48 with ...e1+. I am told this showed as best move until the very last moment, but it got clever and changed its mind!

So the leaders, with 1 round to go:-
• 8½ Junior
• 8 Virtual
• 7½ MChess Pro7
• 6½ Shredder
• 6 Ferret, Dark Thought, Toledo, Hydra, CS_Tal, Chess Guru, Fritz 5

Neither in the next can win the Tournament, but it is still the play off for 3rd place.

Round 11 - ECO B50
MChess 7-Shredder 2.0
1.e4 c5 2...f3 d6 3...c4 dxc4 4.dxc4 e5 5...e5
e6 6...d3 6...d6 7...g4 ...bd7 8...g5 ...b6
9...xf6+ ...xf6 10...e4 ...w6 11...d5 b5 12...b3
...w7 13...c3 a6 14.g3 15...xc4 ...xc4
16...e4 ...e6 17...e5 18...xb5 18...xb5 ...d4+
19...c3 ...e5 20...w2 ...xb5 21...xb4 ...w4+
22...e1 ...e5 23...e5 h5 24...a1 ...d3 25...c2
...f8 26...g1 ...h8 27...b3 c3 28...g2 ...d5
29...a1 ...d8 30...b1 ...a8 31...a3 ...w5 32...h1
...c6 33...b4 ...f5 34...f1 ...w4 35...c1 ...b3
36...xh7 37...c3 ...c1 38...f3 ...f2 ...g5
39...e1 ...xa3 40...f4 ...ed5 41...b5 ...a5 42...g2
...xb5 43...e1 ...a4 44...h3 ...d3 45...h4 ...a5
46...w2 ...a5 47...e1 ...a4 48...g1 ...d8 49...f2
...d7 50...e2 e5 51...b4+ 52...h3 h4 53...c5
...b3 54...w4 ...e8 55...xg3 ...xb2 56...e3 ...h8+
57...g4 0-1
Who organises these things?! Well, it just so happens that Fritz5 has arrived in time at the right moment to 'play the hero' - if it can and show us what it's made of. Yes - they've paired it with Junior!

Round 11 - ECO C45

**Fritz5-Junior**

1.e4 e5 2.d3 e5 3.d4 exd4 4.dxe5 d6 5.dxc6 bxc6 6.e5 We7 7.We2 d5 8.c4 a6 9.b3 O-O 10.Wb2 c6b6 11.c2 e8 12.f4 g5 13.g3 f5 14.c2 dxe5 15.fxe5 dxe5 16.Wxe5 fxe5 17.e3 d7 18.d2 d5 19.fxe1 dxc4 20.hxc4 g4 21.Wd4 Wd8 22.fxe4+ Wb7 23.Wxe7 Wxd4+ 24.Wxe3 Wxe4 25.e3 Wf5 26.Wxf7 Wxc4 27.Wxh7 Wd5+ 28.Wxe2 Wxe2 29.dxc1 e5+ 30.b2 d5 31.h4 f5 32.We1 bxa2 33.h5 We5+ 34.d2 d4 35.h6 g5 36.f2 d5 37.f1 d3 38.b2 d3 39.g1 f4 40.hg6 c5 41.Wf2 a5 42.Wa8 1 d7 43.Wf1 h6 44.Wg2 h5 45.f4 g4 46.Wf4 a4 47.Wg1 h3 48.Wh3 Wc1 49.g2 Wh5 50.g6 b6 51.h5 Wd5 52.f8 Wf6 53.b5 54.f3 b6 55.b8 56.Wc7 a5 57.Wc2 a6 58.b3 a2 59.Wa1 b5 60.b2 a1=Wh 61.Wa8 Wb1 62.Wg1 Wxc8 63.Wa6 c4 64.Wc3 b6 65.Wb4 Wf3 66.Wd6 f1=Wh 67-0-1

And to finish, the game Virtual started having to win, in case Junior drew or lost. As we've seen, it didn't matter.

**Round 11 - ECO C90**

**Dark Thought - Virtual Chess 2**


\[ \text{Wd4 41.Wg2 Wc8 42.b5 Wf7 43.b6 Wb8 44.b7 c3 45.b3 e7 46.We2 Wa4 47.Wxc3 Wxb7 48.Wd6 49.Wd4 Wc3 50.Wf3 Wb7 51.Wc3+ Wb6 52.Wf8 Wxe4+ 53.Wh2 Wd5 54.Wa3 Wb7 55.Wd3 Wxd3 56.Wxd3 Wf7 57.Wd6+ Wb7 58.Wb6 Wxe5 Wf7 60.Wd6 Wc7 61.Wxe6 Wb8 62.Wf4 Wa7 63.f5 Wb7 64.Wg6 Wd7 1-0 ]

So Junior is the new World Micro Computer Champion. It appears in the final table to have won quite easily, with a big 1½ point gap - and I think it was deserved. It played against most of its main contenders, and a final score of 9½/11 is very impressive indeed.

Virtual Chess was amongst the leaders throughout, and thus played all its games against top opposition, so deserved 2nd.

After a poor start Shredder met some mid-table opponents, and recovered pretty well, especially with wins over Virtual and MCPro7 at the end.

The MChess Pro7 result, on a standard PPro/200, was also good. It had the hardest tournament of all in terms of strength of opposition, so did well to reach 7/11.

Fritz, Kallisto and maybe Crafty will be somewhat disappointed with their results; of Ananse we'll say no more!

The complete round-by-round FINAL TABLE is overleaf. First, here is the result of the 11 round BLITZ G/7 Tournament, which was of some consolation for a slightly disappointed Ferret:

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**WMCC 1997 BLITZ CHAMPS**

- **10** Ferret
- **9½** Shredder
- **9** Hydra(Nimzo), Junior
- **8** Fritz
- **8** Chess Guru
- **6** Diep, Chess Tiger, Dark Thought
- **5½** Virtual, SOS, Tsai, Capture, Isichess, Comet, Gandalf
- **4½** Crafty, The Crazy Bishop
- **4** Eugen
- **3½** Nightmare
- **3** XXX2
- **2½** Putzer
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<td>+11b</td>
<td>+30w</td>
<td>+5b</td>
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<td>+13b</td>
<td>+3w</td>
<td>+16w</td>
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Review - the brilliant FRITZ5!

Every now and then a new product comes along which is really good. This is one of them!

Franz MORSCH's series of FRITZ programs for the PC are already well known, and have a high reputation for their quality of features. Coming from the same stable as ChessBase has helped, so the board graphics, game analysis, printing functions and database facilities have always been first class.

PLAYING STYLE & STRENGTH

Regular readers will know, however, that I have had personal reservations about FRITZ programs! A bold statement, I know, about a program that has a blitz win over Kasparov in major competition, and beat Deep Blue to the World Computer Championship in 1995.

But, whilst freely admitting that they are tactically superfast, I've been disappointed in the lack of chess knowledge, resulting in poor positional and occasionally quite dubious endgame play, and doubtful game analysis and evaluations.

There were clear signs in Fritz3/4 that Morsch was tackling this, but the still understrength standard of positional matters left FRITZ3/4 still apparently languishing some 100-120 Elo below the market leaders HIARC6 and REBEL.

Pre-launch rumours for FRITZ5 abounded that a 30-40% speed increase had instead been invested in adding knowledge, and I think that's what they've done. It ought to put the program in much closer contention nearer the top!

I've not played it in so many games myself at present, but those I have are much more satisfying - the tactical speed is still all there, but with many clear moments of improved play in quieter positions demanding development, defensive repositioning or endgame preparation.

I have used it to watch how it prepares analysis of some recent games, and its work here has been a treat, especially now that its

Screen shot from move 13 of FRITZ5's analysis of ATLANTA v Mephisto NIGEL SHORT (see full game later) comments (yes, it adds its own remarks in English as well as variations to the game when it analyses!) are based on an inherently much better chess ability.

The price of FRITZ5 is £89.95. It comes on 2 CD ROMS and requires Windows.

A brief listing of NEW or especially enjoyable FEATURES!

- For beginners it will list and explain all possible moves! Can colour-mark threatened pieces and squares. In Coach mode gives valuable hints and advice - which can be heard vocally (Malcolm Pein's voice!) if you have sound on your system.
- The very large Opening Book is stored as a Variation Tree, which allows some useful statistics to be gathered such as winning %ages in different lines etc. The tree can be user edited and new trees created from games databases.
- Automatic Analysis can be of a whole game, with FRITZ5 [1] adding both text and variations and even quiz questions if required, or [2] 'Blundercheck' with variations and evaluations highlighting critical moments only, or [3] of selected moves with detailed variation trees being generated. The user is able to set time controls and variation thresholds for all of these.
- The HIARC6 engine can also be used to
generate the analysis. One could even do an Automatic Analysis with Hiarcs6 followed by a Blundercheck using Fritz5 and store/print both together for a really comprehensive check!

- There is a 360,000 Games Database on the CD, plus an Endgame Database. Some of these things, like the Opening Book, are very memory hungry, so there is the option to leave some files on the CDs, ready for access at appropriate moments.

There's a lot more, but it is well detailed in the 88 page Manual, which also gives a useful listing of chess figurine and commentary symbols and keyboard shortcuts.

Some parts of the Manual need reading a couple of times to make sure you set-up things like 'Blundercheck' correctly.

Also care needs to be taken saving a game to other non .cbh Databases - you have to store it in the new Fritz5/ChessBase6 .cbf format first, and then copy it from the Fritz5 Database to its new home.

However Fritz5 knows how to convert them, and they now reach my ChessBase! .cbf format database safely enough after an early mistake made by me... as they say RTFM - Read The Flipping Manual!

FRITZ5 in PLAY

Now an example of FRITZ5 playing chess. This is a game against REBEL8 which gives us a chance to see some improved Fritz endgame understanding.

Note: Fritz5 had a small speed advantage being on a slightly faster PC.

FRITZ5 P/120 (2500) – REBEL8 P/100 (2500) [C26] G/30 (round 1) Vienna Game.
Brief notes by ELH

1.e4 e5 2.əc3 əf6 3.əc4 əb4 4.əf3 əd6 5.0–0 0–0 6.d3 əbd7 7.a3 –0.06/9. F5's first move out of Book. Evaluations with a note of the depth of search can be stored with the game, so I have left a few in to show how F5 felt about its position during the game. 7...əxc3 8.bxc3 əb6 9.əb3 əg4 10.əe1 əe8 11.əb1 əc5 12.h3 0.22/9 12...əh5 13.g4 əg6 14.g5 0.47/11 14...əf7 15.əh4 0.66/12 15...c4 16.əxc4 0.91/11 16...əe5 17.əxg6 əxg6 18.əg4 əd7 19.əxd7 əbd7 20.əg2 əh7 21.əa2 əc8 R8 mounts an attack on the backward f2–pawn. 22.əe3 0.63/10 22...əh8 23.əed1 b6 24.əg1 0.31/10

24...əxe4?! Premature?! 24...əb8 25.əxd6 əxe4 26.c5 əxd6 27.əxf7 əxf7 results in similar exchanges to the game, but instead favouring Black. 25.c5! əxf2?! 25...əxf3 26.əc6 ədxe5 might have been better. 26.əxf7 0.72/10 26...əxd1 27.əxf6 əxf7 28.əc6 əf8 29.əxd6 əe7 30.əf2 əc7 31.əa4 1.19/11 31...əg8 32.a5 əxa5 33.əd8!

The threat of əc5 is decisively nasty! 33...əc7 34.əc5 əf7 35.əxf8+ 1.44/10 35...əe6 36.əe8+ əd5 37.əf8 əxc6 38.əe7! Forcing the exchange of rooks to leave a favourable material imbalance which guarantees White the victory. 38...əxe7 39.əxe7 əd5 40.əa3 h6 41.əh4 əc4 42.əa2 a4 43.əa3 hxg5 44.əxg5 1.72/14 44...a3 45.əa1 əd5 46.əc4+ 2.28/14 46...əxc4 47.əxe5 2.63/13 47...a6 48.əxg7 a5 49.əd2 4.44/14 49...a4 50.əa1 a2 51.əc4 əc5 52.əc2 5.44/13 52...əd5 53.əb2 əe4 54.əc4 əd4 55.əa3+ əxc4 56.əxc4 əd5 57.əb3 əed 58.əxa2 əf4 59.əf6 əe4 60.əb3 əf4 61.əc4 əe4 62.əc5 əe3 63.əd6 əf4 64.əe6 12.09/16 64...əg4 65.əf7 əf5 66.əg7 1–0

Now for something different. Here is the FRITZ5 analysis of a game in a Match we ran at Countrywide Computers between Mephisto's new ATLANTA and their very
popular NIGEL SHORT computer.

When ANALYSING a game FRITZ5 makes +/-, +/- type notes, rather than leaving evaluation figures behind. It is easy enough then to spend a few minutes going back over a game (and the variations F5 has produced) in Monitor mode, to add some F5 evaluations, so I've done that in a few places, and also added some diagrams.

Otherwise the text remarks and variations are untouched, just as Fritz5 produced them, copied over to ChessBase1!

Atlanta (2250) – Meph Nigel Short (2050)
C24. Bishop's Opening. G/30 (game 11)
Analysis by Fritz 5.00 (40s per move)

1.e4 e5 2.d4 c6 3.d3 3.e4 4.d5 4.d5 5.b3
d6 6.c3 b5
7.exf5
0.75/11 White gets kings attack
7...b4 8.e4 d5 9.d4 exd4 10.exd4

White threatens... what?... White gets strong play along the open e-file
10...f8 11.0-0 e6 12.eg5 d6
[12...d7 13.£e1 1.88/11 (13.£xe6?! fx6 14.£g5 £b8++) 13...e5 14.£e5 £xb3
15.axb3++]
13.£e1 2.06/12
Threatening £xf7... also see screenshot at start of article! [13.£xe6?! fx6
(13...£xe6?? 14.£e1++ 14.£e1 £d7; 13.£e1]
13...£h6
[13...£d7 14.£xf7 (14.£xe6?! fx6
15.£h6 £f7++ 14...£xf7 15.£g5 £g8
16.£xe6++)
14.£xe6 fx6 15.£g4 £f7 16.£e5+ £g8
17.£g6 h5
[17...£5 18.£xe5 £h7 19.£xd5
(19.£xf8?! £f8 20.£e6 £c5++ 19...cxd5
20.£xh6+ (20.£xf8++ is clearly inferior
20...£xf8 21.£c6 £c5++)]

18.£f3
4.03/12 [18.£h3 keeps an even firmer grip 18...£d7 5.41/11]
18...£h6

19.£xh6
[19.£xf8?! £f6 20.£xe6 £xe6 21.£xe6
£xe6 2.84/13; 19.£xf8+ Inferior is
19...£xf8 20.£xf8 £xf8 21.£xh6 gkh6
22.£xe6 a5++]
19...gxh6 20.£xf8 £xf8 21.£xh5 £h7
[21...£f6 cannot change what is in store for Black: 22.£h4 £h8 23.£ad1++]
22.£xd5!
finishing him off
22...exd5
[22...exd5 is still a small chance 23.£xe6
£d7 8.44/12]
23.£e8

13.28/13 [Threatening mate... how?]
23.£t6
[23...£d7 cannot undo what has already been done 24.£xf8 £xf8 25.£e1 £g7
26.£e6 £h8 27.£g6+ £f8 28.£f5+ £g8
29.£g6+ £h8 30.£f7 £e8 31.£xe6#
24.£e1 £g7 25.£g4+ £g5 26.£e1+ £g6
27.£g8+ £f6 28.£e6# 1-0]

Interesting?! Clever too! I could have printed this out direct from FRITZ5, but transfer to ChessBase is needed to export games to a Desktop Publisher for layout.
The new BS2830 Computer Chess Test

The BS2830, a difficult but interesting new TEST, comes from Hubert BED-NORZ and Heinz-Josef SCHUMACHER.

Thorsten Czub was keen that I should point out for the benefit of British readers that it is NOT to be confused with the BSE test for our (and only ours, so they say!) poor, infected beef!

It is, in fact, a follow-up to the popular BT2450 and BT2630 Tests by Bednorz and Toennissen. It is intended only for the stronger computers, and PC programs on decent hardware. Readers should not bother testing a computer with a grading below 2200 in the SS charts, as 2200 is the minimum "Elo" result possible!

It takes quite some time to complete, so I thought it would be ideal for this issue as some readers might be wondering what to do with their spare time during the Christmas and New Year holiday break. Or maybe for some it will provide a good excuse for a while to get away from noisy kids, constant partying or too much food!

**The METHOD**

Each position should be tested for 15 minutes. If the KEY MOVE is found, the TIME should be written down.

However the computer or program should be left until the 15 mins is finished as, in some cases, it may be found that the computer changes 'its mind' and goes off the move.

The computer only scores according to the TIME the move was chosen if it is still holding that move when the 15 mins is over!

It is possible a computer might choose the Key Move at, say, 30 secs. At 2 mins it goes out of the move, but then returns to it at 6 mins and then stays with it. Its score should be based on the 6 mins timing.

**ENTERING the RESULTS**

The MOVE CHOICE is the move shown by the computer or program when the 15 minutes are up.

If that Move is the Key Move, then a figure (mins and secs, or secs) should have been written into the Time space to show when it was found.

And if the final Move Choice is the Key Move itself, then the figure shown at Time can now be converted into a SCORE!

**The SCORING**

Bednorz and Schumacher have created a (very) complicated scoring system for adding and converting the scores to simulate an Elo rating!

It actually produces quite accurate ratings for some programs!

But the system itself proves unbalanced. E.g in the (admittedly unlikely) event that a program running on a Pentium/133 found all the solutions at 15½ mins, it would score nothing at all, and be graded at 2260 (the 'base' score under their method).

If the same program was now used on a Pentium Pro/200, it would find all the answers at around 8 minutes, and get a rating of 2680! A 420 Elo jump for a doubling in speed is, er, too much!

**MY METHOD** for scoring is NOT perfect either - but it is easier to do the calculations, and proves slightly more logical.

**The SCORE** for a correctly found solution is calculated by deducting the number of seconds taken from 934.

E.g1. Solution found at 3 mins = 180 secs. Score is 934 – 180 = 754.
E.g2. Solution found at 14 mins 50 secs = 890 secs. Score is 934 – 890 = 44.

If the Solution has not been found correctly, there is no score for that position.

At the end TOTAL up all of the scores; divide it by 40, and add the result to 2200.

Therefore the minimum score ("Elo") is 2200, and the maximum score ("Elo") is 2830. (27 results each scoring 934 = 25218. Divide by 40 = 630. Add to 2200 = 2830).

**My version** of the BS score method, where a program finds everything in 8 mins on a Pentium Pro/200 would give the program a 2200 rating on a Pentium/133, and a 2506 rating on the Pentium Pro/200. A 306 gap is still much too big, but its a bit closer to accuracy and is certainly easier to work out than the BS system of deductions and squaring results! Oh, yes... and do send in your scores!
1. \( \text{d2} \)


1. \( \text{exf6} \)


1. \( \text{g5} \)


BS2830_10: White to move

BS2830_13: White to move

BS2830_16: Black to move

BS2830_11: White to move

BS2830_14: White to move

BS2830_17: White to move

BS2830_12: White to move

BS2830_15: White to move

BS2830_18: Black to move


Move Choice

Time

Score

Move Choice

Time

Score

Move Choice

Time

Score

Move Choice

Time

Score

Move Choice

Time

Score

Move Choice

Time

Score

Move Choice

Time

Score
BS2830_19. White to move

1.\text{\textit{\textbf{e}}1}

Move Choice

Time

Score

BS2830_19. Black to move

1.\textit{\textbf{fxe3}}

Move Choice

Time

Score

BS2830_20. Black to move

1.\textit{\textbf{f8}}

Move Choice

Time

Score

BS2830_20. Black to move

1.\textit{\textbf{d5}}

Move Choice

Time

Score

BS2830_21. White to move

1.\text{\textit{\textbf{e}}4}

Move Choice

Time

Score

BS2830_21. White to move

1.\textit{\textbf{a1}}

Move Choice

Time

Score

BS2830_22. Black to move

1.\textit{\textbf{xd3}}

Move Choice

Time

Score

BS2830_22. Black to move

1.\textit{\textbf{d5}}

Move Choice

Time

Score

BS2830_23. Black to move

1.\textit{\textbf{xf3}}

Move Choice

Time

Score

BS2830_23. Black to move

1.\textit{\textbf{d5}}

Move Choice

Time

Score

BS2830_24. White to move

1.\textit{\textbf{0-0}}

Move Choice

Time

Score

BS2830_24. White to move

1.\textit{\textbf{d5}}

Move Choice

Time

Score

BS2830_25. Black to move
CHOOSING A CHESS COMPUTER

WELCOME to my 1998 BUYERS GUIDE of Chess Computers, Chess PC Programs and Databases/Tutorials etc... plus other material which will be of reference value during the year. What are the most important considerations when choosing a Chess Computer? I suggest:

- PRICE
- STRENGTH
- TYPE and QUALITY of BOARD
- RANGE of FEATURES
- EASE of USE
- RELIABILITY
- VALUE for MONEY

Not necessarily in that order!... individual purchasers will have their own ideas!

- PRICE. Self explanatory! The Recommended Retail Prices are shown for each of the listed products in this GUIDE.
- STRENGTH. The most important matter for most people. I give Elo ratings, taken from the RATING LIST featured in every Issue of the bi-monthly MAGAZINE, for every Computer reviewed. A guide to the rating methods used can also be found later in this Section of the mag.

Purchasers should aim to buy a Computer or Program which can play to between 100 and 200 Elo above their own standard. This is for your own benefit - you have something to improve up to and your Computer will be a welcome opponent and help for much longer! A Computer that is simply not good enough for you can be left on for an hour a move... and will still not be good enough most of the time!

Whilst most owners will have their eye on maximum strength, the Computers may also be used by someone else in the family who is much weaker or just beginning. A poor Computer cannot play well, but a good Computer can almost always be set to play below its best! All of the Computers in this GUIDE can 'play down' - i.e. be set to deliberately play weaker moves, often called 'Easy' mode. Additionally some have special teaching or training features, and I have indicated this where appropriate.

- Type of BOARD. These and how they work are described in the next Column.
- Range of FEATURES. All the Computers I have reviewed have an excellent range of features. The key details (e.g. number of levels, size and display) are shown. ALL can play fast (from 3 or 5 secs per move) and only make legal moves. Forget the early 1980's!

- EASE of Use. With every Computer reviewed the purchaser can pretty well unwrap it, switch on, put the pieces in their places, and immediately start playing as White. Setting levels, getting hints, taking moves back, and turning the board etc are almost as easy. Where there are more features, of course, there is more to get used to, but the Manuals are generally helpful and the Computers, especially those with a display, can usually be mastered pretty quickly.

- RELIABILITY. I have not recommended any Computer where I have concerns over reliability. All have a 1 year guarantee... which you are not normally likely to need!

- VALUE for MONEY. This is really in the eye of the beholder - sometimes it's a simple question of Strength/Price. In a previous GUIDE I categorised the Computers and then chose my own best three in each group. I now think that was too subjective (it also raised the hackles of some distributors!). Now the Categories are the Manufacturers themselves, and I have listed just my favourite products from each one. I believe that every Computer or Program earning a place in this GUIDE is good value for money.

BOARD TYPES

1. Portable Peg Sensory.
The pieces each have 'pegs' on the end which are gently pressed into the 'from' and 'to' holes in a plastic playing surface, to register the user's moves. When the Computer makes its move, it signifies the reply by lighting LEDs along the co-ordinates. The user presses the appropriate piece into the 'from' and 'to' holes, thus the Computer knows the piece has been moved correctly. Computers with a display will also show the moves in algebraic notation there. Playing area size will vary from 3"x3" to 4½"x4½".

2. Portable Calculator.
The user enters the algebraic notation of their chosen move into the calculator-style keyboard, and also moves the appropriate piece on the board being used. This may be an integral or separate magnetic set provided for portable use, or the users favourite wood board at home - or you might be playing 'blindfold' of course! When the Computer makes its move it will signify the reply using algebraic notation in the display window, and again the user manually completes that move on the board they are using.

3. Table-top Press Sensory.
These normally have a plastic playing surface,
with plastic playing pieces. To make the moves the user gently presses the 'from' and 'to' squares - using either their finger tip or the playing piece itself. The Computer signifies its moves by lighting the appropriate co-ordinate LEDs. The user presses the 'from' and 'to' squares when moving the piece, thus the Computer knows it has been done correctly. Computers with a display will also show the moves in algebraic notation there. The playing area is usually 8"x8".

Press sensors are always remarkably popular, as they enable a purchaser to get plenty of strength without spending too much!

4. Table-top Auto Sensory.
These are the de-luxe models: wood boards, larger than the Press-Sensory type, and also using wood felted pieces. To make a move the user simply lifts up the appropriate piece and places it onto its new square! Most Auto Sensory boards have a discreet but clear LED in the corner of each square. Thus when the Computer makes its move it will signify first the 'from' square and then, when the user has lifted up the appropriate piece, the 'to' square. Once the piece has been placed at its destination, the LEDs will go out and it's the users turn to move! Computers with a display will also show the moves in algebraic notation. Playing area size for wood boards varies - normally from 10"x10" right up to 16"x16"!

DEDICATED COMPUTER REVIEW

KASPAROV MODELS

TRAVEL CHAMPION 2100 (Morsch)
Portable - large peg sensory with hinged clip-over lid - 64 levels - saves game - selectable playing styles - display - position evaluation - clocks - recommended line of play - 50 ply take back - 35,000 move opening library - selectable book opening styles - electronic coaching features - extended playing range to help beginners - hand held version of GK-2100 and President - batteries only - board size 4½"x4½" I - great to play on - best peg sensory ever - 2040 Elo - £99.

EXECUTIVE (Morsch)
Table-top press sensory - 64 levels - saves game - 30 ply take back - display - position evaluation - recommended line of play - clocks - selectable playing & opening book styles - coaching features - neat, slim design + piece storage compartment and clip-on lid cover - mains or battery - 11"x9" - 1965 Elo - £99.

GK-2100 (Morsch)
Table-top press sensory - 64 levels - saves game - selectable playing styles - display - position evaluation - clocks - recommended line of play - 50 ply take back - 35,000 move opening library - selectable book opening styles - electronic coaching features - extended playing range to help beginners - good design with storage compartment for pieces - mains or battery - 16"x11" - 2040 Elo - £129

PRESIDENT (Morsch)
Wood auto sensory - wood, felted pieces - 64 levels - saves game - choice of playing styles - display - position evaluation - clocks - recommended line of play - 50 ply take back - 35,000 move opening library - selectable book opening styles - electronic coaching features - a lovely board to play on, remarkable value + quality + strength! - mains or battery - 14"x14" - 2040 Elo - £299.

MEPHISTO MODELS

NIGEL SHORT (Schroder).
Table-top press sensory - unlimited playing levels - saves game - full game take back and replay - excellent 2 line graphic display - position evaluations - recommended line of play - clocks - 27,500 position opening book - many fine training features - can be set to a specific grading in range from 1000 Elo upwards - will display all of its opening lines for book learning! - clip-on lid for journeys etc - one set of Staunton playing pieces and one magnetic disc set for travel - a fine all-round computer and deservedly a top seller - mains or battery - 13½"x10" - 2035 Elo - £199.

MILANO PRO (Morsch)
Table-top press sensory - 64 levels - 32 bit RISC processor at 16MHz - game memory save - 200 ply take back and replay - graphic display - position evaluation - recommended line of play - 50,000 unique positions opening book - electronic coaching features - a new machine with Morsch's latest program, and must be a top seller - 13½"x10" - clip-on lid for journeys etc - mains or battery - 2145 Elo - £249
ATLANTA (Morsch)
Table-top press sensory - 64 levels - 32 bit RISC processor at 20MHz + 512K hash tables - game memory save - 200 ply take back - graphic display
- position evaluation - recommended line of play
- 50,000 unique positions opening book - electronic coaching features - an even faster version of the Milano Pro, and clearly very strong - 13½" x 10" - clip-on lid for journeys etc - mains or battery - 2260+ Elo - £379

Mephisto EXCLUSIVE Board with a range of INTERCHANGEABLE, UPGRADEABLE programs.
EXCLUSIVE board: high quality wood auto sensory, with wood, felted pieces - mains only - 16"x16" - good choice of modules for varying playing strengths and features. The modules plug-in (and out) at the front of the board, so users can swap/upgrade between modules for the difference in cost. The following prices include board, playing module and display, all new.

A later version of the Kasparov PRESIDENT program, but paying the extra £££'s gets a bigger board and 'buys into' an upgradeable future! - 32 bit H8 RISC at 10MHz - graphic display - 64 levels - 35,000 opening book
EXCLUSIVE + MM6 2060 Elo - £449

Still promised from Saitek, but not yet available are the BOSTON (Morsch) modules - the Milano Pro program - and the NEW YORK (Morsch) modules - the Atlanta program.
Prices should be:-
EXCLUSIVE + BOSTON 2145 Elo - £599.
EXCLUSIVE + NEW YORK 2260 Elo - £699.

- SECOND-HAND modules are sometimes available and offer a small saving (you can hardly tell if a module is second-hand, it's the board which reveals that!). My ratings for some of the best buys for readers who may get the chance to purchase one are:-
REBELL (MM3) 1875 Elo
MM5/POLGAR 2020 Elo
LYON/VANCOUVER 68000 2160 Elo
LYON/VANCOUVER 68020 2210 Elo
LONDON 68000 2215 Elo
RISCI 2275 Elo
LONDON 68020 2250 Elo
RISC2 2320 Elo
LONDON 68030 2375 Elo

NOVAG MODELS

AMBER (Kittinger)
Portable peg sensory with hinged lid, a new design with taller pieces - 128 levels - saves game - 112 move take back - 9,000 position opening library - clear info rich display - position evaluation - recommended line of play - clocks - coaching features - mains or battery - a well-designed and compact 4"x7½" - board 3¾" square - good strength/price value - H8 processor - 2055 Elo - £129.

SAPPHIRE2 (Kittinger).
Portable keypad entry - separate 6" square playing board with magnetic disc pieces - unlimited levels - 64 game storage - full take back - 36,000 position opening library - 4-digit display with scrolling option - position evaluation - recommended line of play - clocks - mains or battery - the strongest portable so far! - 26MHz H8 processor - small hash table system - quite tricky playing style - vinyl carry bag - 2180 Elo - £224.

-This Novag keyboard design range is unique for 1600+ Elo computers. I note here my ratings for it's pre-decessors should a reader get the chance to buy one second-hand!

SAPPHIRE1 2140 Elo
RUBY 1940 Elo
SUPER VIP 1750 Elo

EMERALD CLASSIC PLUS (Kittinger)
Table-top press sensory - 128 levels - saves game - 112 move take back - 9,000 position opening library - clear info rich display - position evaluation - recommended line of play - clocks - coaching features - mains or battery - 14½" x 10½" - good strength/price value - H8 processor - 2055 Elo - £149.

DIAMOND2 (Kittinger).
Table-top press sensory SAPPHIRE2 program - unlimited levels - 64 game storage - full take back - 36,000 position opening library - 4-digit display with scrolling option - position evaluation - recommended line of play - clocks - 26MHz H8 processor - mains only - small hash table system - 2180 Elo - £249.

DIAMOND1 2140 Elo £199.
AUTO 'UNIVERSAL' BOARD
Novag's good looking, 81 LED wood AutoBoard will work plugged in to many of their own models. Particularly nice for playing the strong SAPPHIRE at home! Plus PC connection when running Dave Kittinger's WCHESS, also some Genius, Fritzinger and Rebel versions - £299.

OTHER MODELS
TASC R30-1995 version
Wood auto sensory, with piece recognition - a really beautiful board and easy to use in every way - wood-felted pieces - unlimited levels - saves game - select from 5 playing styles - big screen display housed in separate unit - position evaluations - clocks - display of board position - recommended line of play - full take-back and replay - 200,000 move opening book - mains only - 16"x16" main board - RISC processor at 30MHz - R30-1995 is 2405 Elo - £1245.
TASC R30-1993 version rates at 2350 Elo.

- There have been some design changes to the piece recognition system of the TASC board, which was temporarily unavailable during 1997. The new system offers the standard 64 LED system, which I prefer, at the above price, and soon an 81 LED system for probably £50 extra.

Fidelity CHESSER.
Table-top press sensory - an extended voice model which is both serious and fun with 345 phrases to coach, teach... and amuse - don't blunder a piece while anyone else is within listening distance! - a serious machine on its normal levels as it uses the Par Excellence/2100 program - ideal also for visually handicapped players who will hear the computer moves given in algebraic notation! - 1885 Elo - £169

PC SOFTWARE
Comparing chess computer programs is NOT an easy task -

1. there are so many.
2. they tend to get almost annual upgrades, so what is always intended to be 'latest' information sometimes doesn't last long!
3. just as each of us has our own favourite players and preferences for playing styles (e.g. Tal or Petrosian, Kasparov or Karpov), we can also have strong opinions on the various programs and their styles. Some will prefer the combative and sometimes very tricky play of top-rated HIARCS, others the sound, solid feel of the knowledgeable Genius program; still others would go for the fast tactical abilities of the improving Fritz series, or the all-round character and strong play of the highly rated Rebel.

All of the software in this review is for IBM compatible PCs, the minimum requirement is a 386; a 486 is okay, but a Pentium, Pentium MMX or Pentium Pro is highly recommended.

The software we review is for serious use - meaning that the main quality is not related to flashy graphics, a 3D board or crazy sound effects etc. All of the programs do have good, clear, easy to see chess boards and analysis detail, of course. But top of the agenda for these programs has been maximising strength and ensuring that the specific analytical features wanted by the more serious chess players have been provided, all running under easy to use feature systems, so that the chess takes priority.

After discussing my favourite programs the article continues with various TABLES. These include the ratings on Pentium/133 machines for each program. Where a new version has just arrived or is imminent, but user-testing has not yet started, I have shown the known rating for the current version and signified uncertainty over the 'new version' rating by inserting 'est'.

Other TABLES compare the difference the various PC PROCESSORS are likely to make to a program's rating, plus other rating matters!

In the following feature REVIEW of PC programs, the top 5 are listed in alphabetical order, to avoid any suggestion of bias!

FRITZ5 by Franz Morsch. A brilliant tactical program, Fritz is frequently the fastest to sort out the most complicated combinations and find any deadly tactical chances which are present in a position. Chess knowledge and endgame play have been greatly improved since v4 - that's the Fritz4, with a special opening book, which beat Deep Blue, Star Socrates (and the rest!) to the 1995 WCC title, so Fritz5 will be a real contender! Coming from the ChessBase stable, it is still 'no.1' for features such as game analysis, adding notes and variations, game storage, quality game and diagram printing, plus many useful coaching and training features. Windows and CD-ROM only. £89.
GENIUS5 by Richard Lang. A v6 is not expected until 1998, but a new Gold Collection offers some extras. Genius was long acknowledged as the one the rest had to catch and beat - until last year a Genius version topped every PC Rating List in my Magazine for very many Issues! The Windows Genius 5 has on-line help; multiple, moveable and re-sizeable windows for boards (2D and 3D); analysis etc; choice of piece sets, user can add personal game comments; ChessBase and PGN files fully supported. The opening book size is 220,000 positions. The CD-ROM contains Windows Genius 4 & 5 and DOS Genius1,2,3,4, 5; plus a 500,000 game Collection and Graham White's opening book. The DOS versions miss out on the Windows graphics quality and printing features, but enable maximum hash. £89.

HIARCS 6 by Mark Unlacke. A v7 is expected by Spring 1998. Acclaimed for its enjoyable and human-like style of play HIARCS uses high res. VGA and Super VGA graphics. It is an MS-DOS program for maximum hash and speed, but with PIF and Icon files provided for Windows. 143,000 tournament opening book with extra 300,000+ position study book; EPD, PGN and ChessBase files are all imported & exported. Analysis features incl. automatic 2nd and 3rd best moves evaluated simultaneously on request. Learning feature. Can set up board positions and play 'Shuffle' chess! I do most of the opening book for HIARCS (so am biased) but the improved hash tables and move ordering method in H6, added to the fact it has more chess knowledge than ever, have got it to the top of the Swedish and USA rating lists, as well as our own. The CD-ROM, includes both PC and Apple MAC versions of HIARCS. On disk is a PC version only. £89.

M CHESS PRO6 by Marty Hirsch. Another with a very competitive playing style (occasionally too much so!) and a very large opening book (approx. 300,000 positions) in which the Tournament book seems heavily geared for play against other programs. It's a shame that MCP seems in part to be aimed for playing other computers rather than for use by the folk who buy it, such as you and me! However MCPro5 won the WMC Champs and topped my ratings briefly during 1996. MPC6 is definitely better again, and it is never far from one of the top 2 or 3 positions in our ratings. A v7 has just been announced, expected any day! £89.

REBEL9 by Ed Schroder. Rebel programs have a good, positive chess feel and style, and Ed Schroder's efforts continue to result in useful upward moves in strength! The occasional graphics problems of Rebel8 seem to have been sorted out. Features include: VESA graphics support; PGN, EPD, NICBase file support; 5 playing styles; new 190,000 position opening book; can convert and use Genius and Fritz books, and also create User Books from game databases! extra 'specialist' books available; user can add own comments to games. 'War Room' feature for multiple info and line analysis; graphic board overview aids after-game analysis. Can play 4 games Simultaneously. Runs under DOS, Win3.1 and Win95; no installation limitations; on CD ROM. £89.

Some of the others:-

□ VIRTUA CHESS 1.9 by M F Baudot, available on CD-ROM. Virtua has not caught on at all, either in Sweden or Britain, so is largely untested. On a Pentium its grades in Aegon have suggested it may not be quite up with the best, and its showing amongst mainly amateur programs in the 1996 WMCC was also a disappointment, but the one or two owners I know always insist that it's better than its results! Win3/95. £79.

□ SHREDDER and FERRET came 1st and 2nd in the 1996 World Micro Computer Championships, but the value of their success must be put into perspective: Genius, Hiarc, MChess Pro, Rebel, ChessMaster, W Chess and Kallisto were non-participants!

Both remained amateur and non-commercial programs until recently, when SHREDDERI came onto the market, Win95 + CD only, price £79.

□ SHREDDER 2 has just been announced, Win95 only, CD ROM, £89. Ferret plays a lot of chess on the Internet in the States, and is highly respected there.

□ JUNIOR by Amir Ban and Shay Bushinsky in Israel. The 'Israel-factor' is important, as Junior has not always been able to play in the Tournaments the programmers would have wished to! An early version came 10 with 6½/11 in the 1995 WMCC but, though still non-commercial, Junior3.5 found its way to the PLY and SS Rating Lists earlier this year. A slightly better rated Junior4 has appeared in Sweden, but rumour is that the version entered for the 1997 WMCC shows yet more improvement. We'll see!

□ CS. TAL by Chris Whittington, England. Finally arrived in Oct.97 (2 years later than initial forecasts!). Designed to play in Tal's own dangerous style, this program is radically different
in concept to most others as it uses much speculative knowledge. It is sometimes as much a danger to itself as to its opponents, but can be an exciting opponent! DOS on CD only, £49.

CRAFTY, by Robert Hyatt, is a non-commercial program. It can be downloaded privately via the Internet for decoding and running under MS-DOS. It has a good Blitz record on the 'net against American players, and did well in the 1996 WMCC, though users' tests against Genius5 and Rebel8 were much less convincing.

NIMZO3, by the busy Chrilly Doninger, is a strong, tactically fast program which now appears on our rating lists. On CD-ROM only, it still appears to me to be a little behind the market leaders! £89. NIMZO'98 just announced - re-written for Win95 and 32-bit. £89.

CHESSMASTER 5500 by Johan de Koning, is Win95 only and just out. I'll report in SS as soon as I have some results and opinion, but initial comments suggest the chess engine is barely different from the one in ChessMaster 5000.

KALLISTO2/3? got the highest PC rating at Aegon 97, and should be available soon. I have Kallisto1.98, which has a not-too-easy-to-use interface etc with pretty ordinary features, and I've been sent the v2/3 program to run within it, which seems to be a fast, tactical type of program. Though clearly strong I have to say I'm surprised it did that well at Aegon. Watch SS in 1998 for a review and rating, once the new version with improved features comes out! £89.

PC AUTOBOARDS

It is possible to use some PC programs with a beautiful wood auto-sensory BOARD, thus still harnessing the full power and features of your PC and chess SOFTWARE. A PC BOARD can be connected to the serial port of any IBM PC. Game moves are then made on the auto-sensory PC Board. The advantages of playing etc on a 'proper' board are obvious - for the sheer pleasure of it, reducing eye-strain and, for club or tournament players, avoiding swapping from a screen used during preparation to a full-sized board in real play.

Tasc SMARTBOARD

The board is exactly the same as that of the R30 so users get piece recognition as well as an auto-sensory system. 16"x16" board. £399.

The newly designed SmartBoard is again available, after being temporarily withdrawn during 1997, but I haven't found out if the list of compatible programs has been updated yet since 1995/6. Best to check this before buying!

Also see the Novag UNIVERSAL board (p25).

ALL the TOP PROGRAM RATINGS

The 'standard' is now probably a Pentium at 133MHz with 16MB MB RAM. Therefore the gradings will be based on this configuration. TABLE1 considers what differences other processing power set-ups are likely to make.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE1: PC COMPARISONS</th>
<th>if Pentium/133 = 0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Processor</td>
<td>Add/Subtract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentium Pro/200</td>
<td>+60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentium/166</td>
<td>+20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentium/133</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentium/100</td>
<td>-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>486DX4/100</td>
<td>-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>486DX2/66</td>
<td>-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>486DX/50</td>
<td>-120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>486DX-SX/33</td>
<td>-160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>386DX-SX/33</td>
<td>-240</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GRADING CHESS PLAYERS AND COMPUTERS

What is a GRADING?!

The British Chess Federation (BCF hereafter) measures a player's ability by comparing their results against other rated players in official Tournaments and Matches. An average but regular Club player will have a grade of perhaps 130 or 140 BCF.

To complicate matters the rest of Europe, in fact nearly the rest of the world, use the Elo scale (invented by Professor Arpad Elo, and also used to grade table tennis players incidentally). There is a simple mathematical formula to convert a BCF Grade to Elo, and vice versa:

\[(BCF \times 8) + 600 = Elo.\]

E.g 175 BCF = \((175 \times 8) + 600 = 2000\) Elo

\[(Elo-600) / 8 = BCF.\]

E.g 2000 Elo = \(2000-600=1400/8 = 175\) BCF

There is another complication! In America they use a calculation method very similar to the Elo system, but all their internal gradings of Computer results in Tournaments and Tests seem to come out 120 higher than our BCF/Elo figures, though our USA friends deny this!

So purchasers have to check twice what they read on an advert or the computer's box. If it says 'graded 2400 in official USA test' or mentions USCF, deduct 120 straight away.

If it mentions Blitz or Active chess there's more to deduct.... read on!
TABLE2, the Grading Guide classifies various playing standards with a range of Gradings for the British and Elo.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE: GRADING GUIDE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Player *Standard*</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasional player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Hobby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club, Team standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County, Team standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gary Kasparov</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WHO will win? - BY how much!??

The BCF system is particularly easy to follow when we try to forecast the likely result of, say, a 10 game Match between 2 players. Our Chart alongside shows these expectancies.

After a Match (or even 1 game!) has been played, if the result is different to that expected, the respective players' BCF Gradings will be adjusted up or down accordingly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GAP between</th>
<th>Likely Score in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 players a 10 game Match</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 BCF</td>
<td>5% - 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 BCF</td>
<td>6% - 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 BCF</td>
<td>6% - 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 BCF</td>
<td>7% - 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 BCF</td>
<td>7% - 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 BCF</td>
<td>8% - 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 BCF</td>
<td>9% - 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 BCF</td>
<td>10% - 1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COMPUTER GRADINGS

The Computer gradings shown in this GUIDE are all taken from the RATING LIST which appears in our regular Magazine, and represent each program's results at popular time control settings from Game in 60 mins to 40 moves in 2 hours.

Our team of readers, and Countrywide Computers where I work most afternoons, not only play many Computer-v-Computer matches, we also enter Computers into official Tournaments with live Human players (!), and collate all these and other results from around the world to maintain a COMPUTER RATING LIST, which is as reliable and accurate as we can make it!

In the latter respect we owe a great deal to the massive amount of work done by the Swedish testers and their excellent "Ply" Magazine.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOP PC program ratings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiarc6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebel9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebel8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiarc5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MChess Pro6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genius5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genius3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genius4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiarc4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shredder1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fritz5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebel6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebel7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MChess Pro5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimzo3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ChessMaster 5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiarc3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ChessMaster 4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fritz4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fritz3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W Chess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalisto1.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS_Tal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comet32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zarkov2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socrates3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zarkov3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kasparov's Gambit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete Chess System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gandalf2.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FAST CHESS!

The ratings we give in "Selective Search" are for 'Tournament' games from G/60 through to 40/2, but a Computer playing against humans in an Active Tournament (Game in 30 mins) or a Blitz Tournament (Game in 5 or 10 mins) should always grade higher, as shown in Table3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Computer Improvement @ FAST CHESS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time Control</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tournament Chess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed/Active Chess (G/30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blitz Chess (G/5 org/G/10)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the standard of the chess played usually drops a little at fast chess, the Computers nearly always get higher gradings! Why? We believe that the Computers are less prone both to blunders through time pressure, and mental exhaustion through playing many consecutive games, compared with their human opponents. Therefore if you see claimed gradings based on Blitz or Speed Chess, remember to
make an appropriate deduction (just like the -120 from USCF) to reach a truer Elo figure for your prospective purchase!

REVIEW of 1997's MAIN RESULTS!

- January
  G.M Nigel Short beats Virtua Chess1.9 by 2-1 @ G/15
- February
- March
  Rebel7 wins Welser @ 40/2 with 9/12; Genius5 is 2nd; Hiarcs5, Nimzo3.5 and Hiarcs4 come 3= whilst MChessPro6 is 6th. with Rebel8 and Fritz/3 in a group at 7=.
- April
  Hiarcs6 PPro/200 beats I.M Deen Hergott by 4-2 @ 40/2 for a 2618 grading.
  Deep[er] Blue2 beats World Champion Garry Kasparov by 3½-2½ @ 40/2 for a 2850 grading!
- May
  In Aegon'97 @ G/90+30secs Kallisto3.1 gets the top Computer grading with 4½/6 and 2632. Rebel97 and ChessMaster5000 also score 4½. On 4/6 are Zugzwang, Dragon, Cilkchess, Nimzo3.5, Zarkov'97, The King, Chessica, Gandalf and Hiarcs6, whilst MChessPro6, Fritz4 and WCHESS score 3½, and Genius5, Ferret and Virtua get 3/6. 1996 WMCC Champion Shredder scores just 2½.
- June
  Rebel8 PPro/266 beats G.M Arthur Yusupov 6-1 @ G/5, 3½-3½ @ G/15, 1-2 @ G/30, for a match total 10½-6½.
  MChessPro6 beats I.M Igor Efimov by 3½-2½ @ G/90 for a 2596 grading.
- July
- August
- September
  Hiarcs6 scores 7½/9 for a 2684 grading in Spain @ G/30 and comes 2nd behind G.M San Segundo but ahead of 5 other G.M's and a smattering of IM's.
- October
- November
  The 1997 WMCC is won easily by Junior with 9½/11.

MEET THE PROGRAMMERS

Amir Ban & Shay Bushinsky (Israel). PC program JUNIOR.
  95: 10 = WMCC 6½/11.
  97: Easily 1st WMCC with amazing 9½/11.

M F Baudot & Jean Christophe Weill (France). PC program VIRTUA chess.
  95: 3rd= WMCC with 7½/11.
  96: lowly 6 = WMCC; 3½/6 =2348 Aegon.

Don Dalley/Larry Kaufman (US). PC programs REX and SOCRATES.
  93: 1st. ACM Tourn.
  94: 1st Harvard Cup.
  95: 2nd WCC.

Chirly Donninger (Austria). PC program NIMZO; also the CHESS232 PC Board and AUTO232 system.
  93: 3rd= WMCC.
  95: 3rd= WMCC with 7½/11.
  96: 3rd WMCC; 4½/6 =2599 Aegon.
  97: Under the name "Hydra" 4 = WMCC 7/11; on PPro 4/6 =2486 Aegon.

Marty Hirsch (USA). PC programs M CHESS and M CHESS PRO.
  94: 3rd Harvard Cup.
  95: 3rd Aegon; 1st = WMCC.
  96: 4/6 =2393 Aegon.
  97: 4 = WMCC 7½/11; on PPro 3½/6 =2332 Aegon.

Feng Hsing Hsu. Main-frame program DEEP THOUGHT/DEEP BLUE1½.
  95: 3 = WCC95. Lost 4-2 to Gary Kasparov in Match. Despite these reverses was almost certainly 10 BCF/80 Elo at least above the best PC programs
  97: Proved it in latest version and hardware format by beating Kasparov 4-2 in the return Match!

Bob Hyatt (USA). Main-frame program CRAY BLITZ; now PC program CRAFTY (non-commercial).
  96: 3 = WMCC.
  97: 8 = WMCC 6½/11.

Julio Kaplan. Kasparov SIMULTANO and many Saitek models, e.g TURBOSTAR.

Dave Kittinger (USA). All Novag models for many years, incl. current JADE2, ZIRCON2, SAPPHIRE and DIAMOND. PC program W CHESS (and Power Chess?).
  94: 1st Harvard Cup. 1st Uniform Platform.
  95: 5th Aegon
  96: 4/6 =2224 Aegon.
  97: On PPro 3½/6 =2247 Aegon.

Johan de Koning (Holland). Saitek RISC 2500, Mephisto MONTREUX, Tasc R30. PC programs THE KING, CHESSMASTER 4000/5000.
  93: 1st Aegon. 1st Welser. 2nd WMCC.
  94: 2nd Harvard Cup.
  95: 6th = WMCC; The King 4/6 =2379 Aegon.
  97: With Tasc R30 3½/6 =2221 Aegon.

Richard Lang (England). Mephisto MONTREAL, BERLIN/BERLIN PRO, VANCOUVER, GENIUS and LONDON. PC programs PSION and GENIUS.
  1985-95: World Champion 1st or 1st= @
every WMCC.

- 96: 4/6 =2210 Aegon.
- 97: On PPro 3/2 =2389 Aegon.

Stefan Meyer-Kahlen (Germany). PC program SHREDDER.
- 96: 3/6 =2086 Aegon; then 1st WMCC96, a major surprise!
- 97: 3rd with 7½/11 WMCC; on PPro 2½/6 =2148 Aegon.

Bruce Moreland (USA). PC program, Amateur status, FERRET.
- 95: 3 = WMCC.
- 96: 2nd WMCC with 8½/11.
- 97: 4= with 7/11 WMCC; on PPro 3/6 =2325 Aegon.

Franz Morsch (Holland). Kasparov G52000/2100, TRAVEL CHAMPION and PRESIDENT, Kasparov BRUTE FORCE, and new Mephisto models MILANO PRO, ATLANTA, BOSTON and NEW YORK. PC programs QUEST and FRITZ.
- 94: Shot to fame when FRITZ tied 1 with Kasparov in major International Blitz Tournament.
- 95: 1st WCC, beating Deep Blue! along the way! Then disappointing 6 – WMCC.
- 96: 3½/6 =2415 Aegon; poor 6 = WMCC96.
- 97: Disappointing 10 – with 6/11 WMCC; on PPro 3½/6 =2254 Aegon.

Ed Schroder (Holland). Mephisto MM5, POL-LAR, MILANO, NIGEL SHORT, RISC 1MB. PC programs GIDEON and REBEL.
- 92: 1st WCC.
- 93: 3rd Welser.
- 96: 4/6 =2525 Aegon.
- 97: On PPro 4½/6 =2619 Aegon!

Dan & Kathe Spracklen (USA). Most Fidelity models incl. PAR EXCELLENCE, MACH2/3/4. Also Kasparov SPARC.
- 1980-84: World Champions.
- 93: 2nd Aegon.

John Stanbeck. PC program ZARKOV.

Mark Unjicke (England). PC program HIARCS (also available on MAC).
- 93: 1st World Software Champ; 1st Uniform Platform.
- 95: 1st Aegon. 6 = WMCC95.
- 96: 4/6 =2384 Aegon.

Bart Westrate (Holland). PC program KAL-LISTO.
- 95: 10= 6½/11 WMCC.
- 96: 4/6 =2345 Aegon.
- 97: lowly 10= with 6/11 WMCC; on PPro 4½/6 =2632 Aegon.

Chris Whittington (England), CS_TAI.
- 95: 26= with 4½/11 WMCC.
- 96: 3½/6 =2158 Aegon.
- 97: 10= with 6/10 WMCC; on PPro 3/6 =2177 Aegon.

Note: WCC = World Computer Championships
WMCC = World Micro-Computer Champs

DATAQUEST for PC

CHESSBASE FOR WINDOWS

During the past few years ChessBase has steadily developed into an outstanding Database system for storing, studying, comparing and... enjoying chess games. Massive collections of great games, both historical and contemporary, are included when you buy, and there are annual additions on disk and CD ROM.

The latest release, ChessBase for Windows v6, has reached new standards for completeness and genuine ease-of-use throughout a massive range of features and operations.

Beautiful, high quality graphics ease the strain of working in front of the screen - simple icons for fast swapping between activities - powerful ECO openings classification - search multiple databases simultaneously for openings, themes or material - establish standard positioning of pieces in each opening - read and generate PGN format files - merge databases - two or more board windows can be viewed side-by-side or kept in filing card fashion - moves, variations and annotations displayed in full alongside board window - send games to printer in figurine notation with commentary symbols and high quality diagrams - or save file to a Desktop Publisher and prepare to create a personalised layout or your own Magazine!

Also NOW multi-media with hundreds of player profiles, photos and even videos!

M Basic Package with 260,000 games, 1,000 annotated. CD or disks £225.

M Professional package with 350,000 games, 20,000 annotated. CD or disks £325.

M Mega package with 590,000 games, 20,000 annotated, Alpha Utility, Endgame CD's + 1yr sub to CB Magazine! On CD only £449.

M Extras: HIARCS6 analysis module. The perfect companion (a must for most of us?) to use within ChessBase - obtain high powered analysis and evaluation of current position as you play through or enter a game - this special HIARCS for ChessBase module can show top-ranked, top
two, top three etc move recommendations.

Hiarc6 for ChessBase analysis module £45.
• It is a rumour that Junior will be available to work in the same way by Feb '98.
• N.B the analysis modules 'only' analyse... they won't play as an opponent. However the same £45 Hiarc6 (and maybe Junior?!?) engines will play when loaded into Fritz5!

BOOKUP for Windows
Whilst BOOKUP can be used as a DataBase for games storage, it is not really intended to be a competitor to ChessBase as its main purpose is for the close study and learning of openings.

'Books' (on disk) are available for training and studying of specific openings. Each diskbook has copious notes discussing main line theory, strategical concepts, traps etc. In addition users can create and build their own books or load-in PGN files of games in specific openings. At every point the owner can add his own notes and ideas, so personalising the whole process.

BookUp also now comes with the ZARKOV analysis module built-in, for on-screen analysis and evaluations. Files can also be exported to Zarkov (and HIARCS, REBEL or GENIUS), and any of these strong programs can prepare overnight, at any chosen time control, valuable analysis and evaluations for the specified positions. Results can then be imported back into BOOKUP files to create a permanent record.

Back-solving is a particularly useful part of BOOKUP! For complete games with 1-0, ½-½, 0-1 scores (e.g from a PGN file) or from positions evaluated by, say, Zarkov or Hiarc6, BOOKUP can 'back-solve' the end evaluations to value each line +/-, = at the start of the variation, enabling the user to assess at the root positions which lines are winning/equal/losing for either side! Thus which lines are best for playing and which may need further research seeking possible improvements, TN's etc for use in actual play. Research results can be kept on file as part of the 'book', and also sent to a printer for output in ECO-type format.

• BookUp for Windows £159 (on disk with Zarkov, and includes one free 'Book on disk').


CHESS MENTOR
The most popular and comprehensive PC chess course EVER, Mentor is useful for beginners though aimed more at the hobby and club player, with multiple lessons which go right up to Master class! As simple or tough as you want!

A truly massive course which now includes 15 superb, graduated modules covering all aspects of the game from openings, tactics, and positional factors, to long-term strategy and endgames. Can revolutionise anyone's chess understanding and strength - and the PC environment means the user can concentrate on the chess, moving forwards and backwards through the actual lessons and chess variations with ease.

The integrated 'hints' and 'counsel' sections available at each potential move of every single lesson (!) offer different levels of comprehensive advice according to your own requirements - highly recommended!

• Chess Mentor £199.95 (or with 'just' 5 basic Modules £69.95; modules then £22.95 each).

General SOFTWARE/PC remarks
There seems (happily!) to be no end to new products and upgrades in the field of software. And things can change so rapidly - new processors, new speed limits (!), new programs! What will 1998 bring?

Sometimes upgrades come out sooner than expected: e.g the Hiarc5=>6 when a small fault in 5 enabled Mark Uniacke to incorporate a worthwhile improvement he'd found to create '6' as an upgrade for a fairly nominal price (£15).

On the other hand at times a new product may emerge commercially without much of a trumpet blast at all - especially in Britain where the size of the market sadly does not allow the investment of huge marketing sums. So programs like Nimzo, Virtua and Shredder have arrived with barely a whisper. Nevertheless, I can usually get hold of these for readers and, indeed, sometimes there are already one or two in stock - if not they can probably be acquired with only a few days delay! If you're the first 'British buyer', maybe you can then do a review for other SS readers?!

Usually upgrading from version X to version X+1 of a program is possible at around ½ price. Upgrades should offer strength improvement and/or new features!... though sometimes they offer little of either! - it's not as easy to produce 100, or even 50 Elo a year as it used to be!

It normally takes a couple of weeks for reasonably expert opinion to come through as to the value of an upgrade - a little longer when testing a completely new program. Do feel able to ring me for news - I'll gladly share whatever info I have, and what I don't know I'll try to find out!
| Deep Blue 2    | 2750 | Nov Super Forte-Expert C/6 | 2011 | Mephisto MM2          | 1908 |
| Deep Blue 1   | 2650 | Novag Expert/Turbo16        | 2009 | SciSys Turbotar 432   | 1607 |
| Tasc R30-950  | 2402 | Mephisto Montreuil          | 1997 | Fidelity Excellence/3 | 1803 |
| Mephisto London 68030 | 2374 | Mephisto Roma 68000         | 1997 | Fidelity Designer 2000| 1803 |
| Tasc R30-950  | 2348 | Mephisto Academy            | 1988 | Kasparov A/4 module   | 1795 |
| Mephisto Genius 68030   | 2347 | Mephisto Amsterdam          | 1983 | Conchess/4            | 1785 |
| Mephisto London Pro 68020 | 2341 | Novag Super Forte-Expert B/6 | 1972 | Kasparov Prisma-Blitz | 1782 |
| Mephisto RISC2  | 2320 | Mephisto Mega4               | 1999 | Novag Super Constellation | 1781 |
| Mephisto Lyon 68030  | 2399 | Kasparov D/10 module        | 1966 | Kasparov Renaissance Basic | 1781 |
| Mephisto Portoros 68030 | 2393 | Fidelity 68000 Mach2C        | 1964 | Novag Super Nova      | 1776 |
| Mephisto Berlin Pro 68020 | 2391 | Fidelity 68000 Mach2B        | 1964 | Mephisto Blitz module | 1766 |
| Kasparov RISC 2500-512 | 2288 | Kasparov GK2000-Executive    | 1963 | Novag Supremo-SupriMVP| 1741 |
| Mephisto Vancouver 68030 | 2286 | Mephisto Modena             | 1953 | Fidelity Prestige      | 1740 |
| Meph Lyon-Vanc 68020/20 | 2281 | Mephisto MM4                | 1949 | Fidelity Elite A       | 1737 |
| Meph RISC1     | 2281 | Fidelity Travelmaster-Tiger | 1947 | Fidelity Sensory 12    | 1734 |
| Kasparov SPARC/20 | 2282 | Novag Ruby-Emerald          | 1939 | SciSys Superstar 36K   | 1719 |
| Mephisto Atlanta | 2257 | Meph Supermondial-2-College | 1936 | Meph Chess School-Europa | 1716 |
| Mephisto London 68020/12 | 2248 | Mephisto Monte Carlo        | 1936 | Mephisto Exclusive S/12| 1715 |
| Mephisto Montreux | 2242 | Novag Super Forte-Expert A/6 | 1933 | Conchess/2             | 1713 |
| Kasparov RISC 2500-128 | 2240 | Kasparov Travel Champion    | 1933 | Novag Quattro          | 1704 |
| Mephisto London 68000 | 2217 | Kasparov Advanced Trainer   | 1933 | Novag Constellation/3.6| 1703 |
| Fidelity Elite 68040-v10 | 2212 | Kasparov C/8 module         | 1925 | Mephisto Mondial2      | 1700 |
| Mephisto Vancouver 68020 | 2205 | Mephisto Monte Carlo        | 1921 | Novag Primo-VIP        | 1700 |
| Mephisto Lyon 68020  | 2201 | Conchess Pymate Victoria/5.5 | 1916 | Fidelity Elite B       | 1686 |
| Novag Sapphire2-Diamond2 | 2180 | CXG Sphinx Galaxy           | 1916 | Fidelity Elite original | 1680 |
| Mephisto Portoros 68020 | 2175 | Kasparov Turboking2         | 1913 | Mephisto Mondial1      | 1659 |
| Mephisto Berlin  | 2170 | Fidelity 68000 Mach2A        | 1912 | Novag Constellation/2  | 1645 |
| Fidelity Elite 68030-v9 | 2169 | Conchess Pymate Roma/6       | 1899 | CXG Super Enterprise   | 1632 |
| Mephisto Vancouver 68000 | 2157 | Fidelity Par Excellence/5    | 1899 | CXG Advanced Star Chess| 1632 |
| Mephisto Lyon 68000  | 2156 | Novag Expert/6               | 1897 | Fidelity Sensory9      | 1583 |
| Mephisto Almeria 68020 | 2150 | Novag Super Forte-Expert A/5 | 1886 | Kasparov Astral-Conquistor | 1578 |
| Mephisto Milano Pro | 2141 | Fidelity 68000 Club B        | 1885 | Kasparov Cavalier      | 1578 |
| Novag Sapphire1-Diamond1 | 2138 | Novag Expert/5               | 1882 | Novag Mentor16-Amigo   | 1549 |
| Mephisto MM4/Turb18  | 2130 | Fidelity Par Excellence      | 1874 | GGM+Steinlitz module   | 1548 |
| Mephisto Portoros 68000 | 2124 | Fidelity Elite+Designer 2100 | 1874 | Chess 2001             | 1547 |
| Fid Mach4-Des2325-68020-v7 | 2118 | Fidelity Chester            | 1874 | Mephisto 3             | 1531 |
| Fidelity Elite 2x68500-v5 | 2091 | Novag Forte B               | 1873 | Kasparov Turbo 24K     | 1529 |
| Mephisto Mega4/Turb18  | 2087 | Mephisto Rebell             | 1872 | SciSys Superstar original | 1527 |
| Mephisto Polgar/10  | 2079 | Fidelity Avant Garde        | 1864 | GGM+Morphy module      | 1522 |
| Kasparov Brute Force | 2078 | Kasparov Stratos-Corona     | 1863 | Kasparov Turbo 16K-Express | 1522 |
| Mephisto Roma 68020  | 2077 | Novag Forte A               | 1863 | Mephisto 2             | 1520 |
| Mephisto Dallas 68020 | 2068 | Mephisto Supermondial1      | 1858 | Conchess A0            | 1479 |
| Mephisto Almeria 68000 | 2063 | Fidelity 68000 Club A       | 1855 | SciSys C/C Mark6       | 1476 |
| Mephisto MM6      | 2060 | Kasparov A/6 module         | 1853 | CKing Philidor-Counter Gambit| 1473 |
| Novag Emerald Classic-Amber | 2058 | Conchess Pymate/5.5         | 1852 | SciSys C/C Mark5       | 1471 |
| Novag Scorpio-Diablo | 2056 | Kasparov Simultanio         | 1851 | Morphy Encore-Prodigy  | 1410 |
| Novag Jade2-Zircon2 | 2043 | Kasparov Turboking1         | 1850 | Sargon Auto Response Board | 1400 |
| Kaspar President-GK+TC2100 | 2037 | Conchess/6                  | 1845 | Novag Solo             | 1370 |
| Mephisto Nigel Short | 2032 | Fidelity Excellence/4        | 1837 | CXG Enterprise-Star Chess | 1360 |
| Mephisto MM4/10   | 2032 | Novag Expert/4              | 1836 | Fidelity Sensory Voice | 1340 |
| Mephisto Polgar/5  | 2014 | Novag Jade1-Zircon1         | 1835 | Chess King Master      | 1300 |
| Mephisto Milano   | 2013 | Conchess Pymate/4           | 1829 | Boris Diplomat        | 1250 |
|                   |      | SciSys Turbo Kasparov 4     | 1827 | Fidelity Chess Champion 10 | 1250 |
|                   |      | Fidelity Elite C            | 1822 | Novag Savant           | 1225 |
|                   |      | Fidelity Elegance           | 1814 | Boris2.5               | 1200 |