
Eric Hallsworth
Flat 1, Dol Hendre
Ffordd Dyfed
TYWYN, Gwynedd LL36 0ST
January 1986.

COMPUTER CHESS ————— NEWS SHEET 4

Dear Friends,

Greetings and best wishes for 1986.

not in the end!

As my own typewriter/duplicator system is currently in for repair and service needs, this News Sheet issue will be shorter than the last one but will have the addition of photo-copies of 4 game-scores from the MEPHISTO AMSTERDAM - FIDELITY ELEGANCE + CB16 Match which I am running. I have the Mephisto on loan from Eureka for the purpose of these Matches, each a 20 Game series at 40/2hrs. With the agreement of Eureka invitations have been sent to Fidelity, Contemporary Chess Computers and Scicys for such Matches with one of their Machines and Scicys are sending me a TURBO STAR KASPAROV in the near future which will be very interesting both for myself and News Sheet readers. CCC are busy with a Trade Show and post-Christmas work this month but indicated the possibility of a Match with a CONCHESS Machine after that. In the meantime the Match with the Elegance + CB16 proceeds and I am also expecting a couple of N/S readers for '2-3 day holidays' to bring their Machines for short Matches, probably at something like 1 min. per move.

NEW MACHINES

The world of COMPUTER CHESS continues to advance all the time despite the few who think it can't. Not only is there no comparison between the Machines of the 1980's with their predecessors, but steady progress appears to continue with all the main Manufacturers. MEPHISTO of course has the AMSTERDAM and MM2; SCICYS is adding a KASPAROV Openings Module to the TURBOSTAR plus new 16k. programmes called TURBO/12mhz and EXPRESS/8mhz; CONCHESS are bringing out the PLEMATE running at 4 and 6mhz with 2mhz to follow I think; FIDELITY has the new AVANT GARDE at 5mhz and 8mhz; and NOVAG the new EXPERT which I hear is selling well and for which I have complimentary comments from independent sources. All the Manufacturers are including more and more functions in their Machines - these vary from Machine to Machine but are all intended to help the Chess enthusiast enjoy his Computer more and improve his Chess at the maximum rate. Many have a large Openings Book built-in which is particularly valuable for study, especially when there are special functions to test variations forwards (and backwards in some!) from any position without having to go back to move 1 all the time. This point is especially worth looking out for when buying if you're a purchaser wanting to do some Openings work. (Most Fidelity and Scicys Machines need an extra Openings cartridge in them to bring them up to scratch here, you can check this before buying). All of the Machines mentioned above plus NOVAG'S SUPER CONSTELLATION, FIDELITY'S ELITE, ELEGANCE and EXCELLENCE, the CONCHESS 4 and 6, MEPHISTO BLITZ and basic SCICYS TURBOSTAR have much better Endings play ability than anything before and have gone well past the stage where they can be scoffed at in this area. If the truth be told, this is often the mortal's greatest weakness: and the latest Machines will eat you up in the End-game unless you know something of what you're doing. When will the improving end? I don't know, but it certainly hasn't stopped yet with the Manufacturers making increases in the computing speeds now as well as in the actual programmes. Brief details for speed conversions are in this letter later.

CORRECTION from NEWS SHEET 3.

The following 3 Mephisto Blitz scores were gained at Blitz Level and their effects have been removed from the Ratings Table - v Elite C 23-17, v Super C 28-22 and v. Turbostar 432 30½-9½.

LATEST SCORES (on-going Matches have the previously shown score in brackets)

MEPHISTO BLITZ * N.SUPER CONST 12-9 (8½-6½) 2070-1944. I had intended a fuller report with statistics and positions of this interesting Match as sent to me by Gerald Murphy but the Typewriter break-down means next time — sorry.
F.EXCELLENCE * SUPER ENTERPRISE 5-3 (3-1) 1936-1854
MEPHISTO MA2 * F.EXCELLENCE 17-5 (13-4) 2151-1817
MEPHISTO MA2 * SUPER ENTERPRISE 6½-1½ (3-1) 2084-1787
N.EXPERT * CONCHESS 6 1-1 2025-2030
MEPH AMSTERDAM * N.SUPER CONST 17-9 (2mins per move) 2113-2095
MEPH AMSTERDAM * F.EXCELLENCE 14½-1½ (2mins per move - I believe most of the Fidelity range play proportionally better at 3-5mins per move, but not to overcome this!?) 2258-1884
MEPH AMSTERDAM * N.SUPER CONST 1½-2½ 1890-2519
MEPH AMSTERDAM * N.EXPERT 1-0
N.EXPERT * MEPHISTO MA2 2-0 2505-1761
MEPH AMSTERDAM * F.ELEGANCE + CB16 5-2 2217-2040

The latter is the Match I am running, so let me say a word about that '+ CB16'. This is a large Openings Book add-on Cartridge increasing the Sensory 9 and 12 range by approx. 80Elo. Some feel that results against Machines indicate +100Elo is more accurate - others feel +40/50 applies in the better standard of play Elite and Elegance models. As the CB16 not only holds the Elegance onto more accurate paths for quite a few extra moves, but also leaves it with more time available for its remaining play, I believe it should certainly be +60Elo even in the better models such as the above and, presumably, the Avant Garde. Thus I rate the ELEGANCE with the Cartridge in (as for this Match) at 2045 (1985+60). With my much-loved Elegance and its CB16 I had rather hoped the AMSTERDAM would find itself faced with a real handful, and there have been some tense moments. The 2 Machines play in very different styles (the selective A/B strategy is used in the Amsterdam - and it works!) so the Machine's don't anticipate each other's moves quite so often and the play is often very exciting. I have heard it said that Computer v. Computer games can be boring, but not with these two (even my wife has been showing an interest and risked a game with the Amsterdam using its Instruction Mode! - you wont need to ask who won). However, in spite of the excitement, I must admit that the 5-2 score for MA (4-1=2) is a fair reflection of the balance of play so far in the MA's favour. Indeed a 3½-1 win for the MA at 30secs per move was a bit one-sided). The photo-copied Games give a good idea of the play and some dramatic moments in 2 of the Games. In one a fine defensive find by the Elegance serves it well; in another the Amsterdam is seen at its destructive best.

Eureka sent me the EXCLUSIVE S version which is the middle of their Board range for the Amsterdam Module and suited me fine as it is only 1" larger than the Elegance, fits on the desk side by side just nicely, and enables comparison in feel and appearance. (Before other Manufacturers say that I've never said nice things about their boards let me add for readers that Novag, Conchess and Fidelity all have Chess Computers available in fine wooden sets as well - e.g. my own Elegance which has always pleased me very much, the Novag Expert and Conchess's top two; Fidelity also have the Elite of course and the Mephisto boards can be fitted with MA2 as well as the Amsterdam. I haven't seen the latest from Solcys so can't comment for them yet). When side by side the Mephisto looks more than 1" bigger due to the playing surface being 2½" larger and the pieces being both larger and better (and felted). My Chess understanding has improved steadily through the different Machines I have and have had, but I have never used a Mephisto before and must say that I really like the Function/LCD display which enable you to see into the Machine's calculations and opinions as it searches for improvements for its move selections and up-dates them. I have found my 'board vision' improving quite a bit already through studying the Mephisto's forward thinking as it continuously rotates its current expectations for the next 3 moves with its current position evaluation. When it is your turn to move both Machines are able to display their current analysis for the next 8-ply. Certainly this latter function is on most/all of the current Machines and these facilities are of real value to anyone like me whose playing standard is below that of the Machine he is using. I shall certainly be interested to see what 'extras' of this sort are available on the other Machines I test but Mephisto gets full marks and leaves me wondering if they can think of anything else in this area.

However, as far as this Match is concerned, the Games must say the rest now.

There will be a score up-date in the next News Sheet but there is also the likelihood that a 2nd. Match may have started against the TURBOSTAR KASPAROV.

SPEEDS

Following the realisation that I had not shown which speed version of the F.AVANT GARDE was running in the Games v MEPHISTO AMSTERDAM in the last News Sheet, and finding that there are 5mhz and 8mhz versions of same, I thought it might be helpful to readers to show what effect it has on a Computer's Rating when a Machine is made available at an increased speed. With 4 and 5mhz models of the EXCELLENCE available in the States and other Machines such as the CONCHESS programmes running at 2, 4 and 6mhz, I hope you will find the Table useful

The calculations are based on the writings of Ken Thomson (Belle's programmer) in PCW ... 6 x speed = 250Elo; 1.8 x speed = 75Elo, and David Levy in his Chess Computer Handbook ... 2 x speed = 100Elo.

From this the following Table has been built-up:-

INCREASE	----- BASIC -----									
	2mhz	3	3.6	4	5	6	8	10	12	
2mhz	-									
3mhz	57	-								
3.6mhz	82	25	-							
4mhz	97	40	15	-						
5mhz	128	71	46	32	-					
6mhz	153	97	71	57	25	-				
8mhz	193	137	113	97	66	32	-			
10mhz	225	168	143	128	97	71	32	-		
12mhz	250	193	168	153	122	97	57	25	-	
	2	3	3.6	4	5	6	8	10	12	

Sorry - I can't get my alignments as neat with the borrowed Typewriter. Hope you can understand and make use of it.

For example, when we find the F.AVANT GARDE referred to in the last N/S was actually its slower (5mhz) version then, using the above Table we can estimate the 8mhz at 5mhz + 66Elo. Fidelity say the Avant Garde/8 with CB9 Openings in approx. is 2203 and, adding the 60Elo for 8mhz and 60Elo for CB9 you will see that their figure is not too much more than mine.

For another e.g. consider the CONCHESS/4 at 1990. From this the CONCHESS/6 would be 1990 + 57 = 2047. Actually, when my Ratings started the Conchess/4 was lower than it is now, at 1960, and the many Results I have for it have increased its Rating. However (hint) I have no Readers with a Conchess/6 sending me results and thus very few scores for it so it has not changed much from its initial figure. This explains why the 57 gap (that's where they started) is now down to 30. I am considering altering my Sharp Computer Programme so that all Machines using the same Programme but having different speeds are adjusted when any other Machine in that group is affected. I haven't decided yet - perhaps use a 50% adjustment. Eg. suppose that N.Const/2 goes up by 1.2 Rating points, then N.Const/3.6 goes up by 0.6 (incidentally these 2 have many results in for them and have always stayed consistently close to the 82 gap that 3.6/2 should produce). What do readers think? I am coming to the conclusion that it is something I 'should' do even though it means going back to the beginning!? Any comments would be appreciated.

Finally, concerning speeds, there is more to it than the simplified Table above depending on the actual processor in operation for example, but the above (I hope) gives a helpful guide for general situations.

Suggested RATING LIST, January 1986

1	Mephisto Amsterdam	2209
2	F.Avant Garde/8	2114
3	Conchess Plymate/6.	2087
4	F.Avante Garde/5	2048
5	N.Const Expert.	2032
6=	Mephisto MM2	2030
	Conchess Plymate/4	2030
8	Conchess/6.	2025
9	Mephisto Blitz	2024
10	F.Elite C/4	2011
11.	S.Turbostar Kasparov	2005
12	F.Excellence/5	2001
13	Conchess/4	1995
14	F.Private Line/4	1993
15	N.Super Const	1991
16.	F.Elegance/3.6	1985
17	S.Turbostar 432	1983
18	S.Turbostar 440	1972
19	F.Excellence/4	1970
20	F.Excellence/3	1930
21	F.Prestige	1928
22	F.Elite A	1922
23	Conchess/2	1915
24	F.Elite B	1905
25	Psion QL	1903
26	Mephisto Excl/12	1897
27=	N.Const 3.6	1885
	Sargon 3	1885
29	Colossus 4	1875
30=	F.Sensory 12/3	1874
	ARB Sargon 4	1874
32	Colossus 2	1859
33	White Knight 12	1848
34	Super Enterprise	1833
35	F.Elite Old	1830
36.	N.Const/2	1819

Here is Game 15 from the MEPH BLITZ v N.SUPER CONST Match. Hope you can read it okay. Watch for Novag's 27th. move offering a Rook whilst he pursues his attack!

GAM (15)
WIN FOR SC
18.11.85
RECOMMENDED
M. Blitz N.S. Const.

WHITE	F1-D4
1	♖-E4
2	♗-F3
3	♘-D4
4	♙-D4
5	♜-BE3
6	♝-C3
7	♞-BB5
8	O-O
9	♞-BA4
10	♞-AC1
11	♞-BG5
12	♞-BC2
13	♞-BF4
14	♞-ND2
15	♞-B4
16	♞-A4
17	♞-A5
18	♞-QB1
19	♞-QA2
	♜-E5
	♞-NC6
	♜-xD4
	♞-BC5
	♞-AF6
	♞-Nf7
	♞-NE5
	♜-C6
	♜-D6
	♞-BD7
	♞-AG6
	♜-F6
	O-O
	♞-e8
	♞-b6
	♜-D5
	♞-BC7
	♞-h5
	♞-d8

30	♞-BB3	♞-NF3 ch
31	♞-NF3:	♞-Bxf4
32	♞-AG	♞-B6
33	♞-B5	♞-KH8
34	♞-bxc6	♞-dxe4
35	♞-cxd7	♞-exf3
36	♞-NF3:	♞-Rxd7
37	♞-QA4	♞-N-G6!
38	♞-BC2	♞-F5
39	♞-RD1	♞-RE7
40	♞-RD4	♞-BB8
41	♞-RAD1	♞-NE5
42	♞-NE5:	♞-BE5:
43	♞-RH4!	♞-AG6
44	♞-RH3	♞-BC7
45	♞-aB5	♞-H6
46	♞-AB1	♞-AG5
47	♞-RE1	♞-RE1: ch
48	♞-RE1:	♞-AF4
49	♞-RE3	♞-AD6
40	♞-AE2	♞-AF4

41	♞-G3	♞-AD6
42	♞-RH5	♞-G5!
43	♞-AF3	♞-QE6
44	♞-AD1	♞-RD8
45	♞-AB1	♞-F4
46	♞-BF5	♞-AF6
47	♞-AC2	♞-RE8
48	♞-BE4	♞-KG7
49	♞-AD3	♞-AE6
50	♞-BG2	♞-RD8
51	♞-AF3	♞-AE1 ch
52	♞-BF1	♞-RD1
53	♞-AG2	♞-QE2
54	♞-F3	♞-AG2: ch
55	♞-KG2:	♞-fxg3
56	♞-hxg3	♞-BG3:
57	♞-BE2	♞-RE1
58	♞-KG3:	♞-RE2:
59	♞-KH2	♞-RH2:
60	♞-KH2:	♞-KF6

61	♞-KG3	♞-KF5
62	♞-KG2	♞-H5
63	♞-KG3	♞-B5
64	♞-KG2	♞-H4
65	♞-KH3	♞-KF4
66	♞-KG2	♞-KE3
67	♞-KG1	♞-Bxf3
68	♞-KH2	♞-G4
69	♞-KH1	♞-KF2
70	♞-KH2	♞-KH3
71	♞-C4	B5xc4
72	♞-KH1	♞-C3 easy
73	H1-H2	CE-C2
74	H2-H1	CE-C1D-
75	H1-H2	CE-C1-
	CHECK	♞-E3
02:45:06	03:48:42	