

PRESIDENT COLUMN

After two months as ICCF President, it is time to make an assessment of progress, by objectively analysing positive and negative aspects. What has been done this year and what must still be accomplished.

In general, ICCF is going in the right direction, even if progress is slower than might be expected with some tasks yet to be achieved.

Amongst the positive actions, we can enumerate:

- 1- the agreement made with John Knudsen for official ICCF gear. ICCF earns 50% of everything sold and National Federations can support this initiative, by encouraging players to purchase items from the excellent range of products, which all bear the ICCF logo.
- 2- the appointment of Gino Figlio as our Help Desk Administrator, which will improve service to users and reduce webserver costs. I am impressed by Gino and his dedication and quality of work. We will continue to be looking for more new officers. Capable persons are already on the list to become involved in important roles (Mickey Blake and Franklin Campbell will strengthen the Marketing Commission and Heinrich Lohmann the WTD team).

Of course ICCF welcomes any volunteer who wishes to help us in building the basis for ICCF's future, oriented to modernising and improving the quality service which we offer to CC players.

Clive Murden, who was appointed by the Congress in Argentina as Webserver Commissioner has now started his important tasks.

- 3- the excellent work done by Martin Bennedik (on a technical programming consultancy basis). Under the supervision of the WDSC, Phase 2 tasks have almost been completed and speedy progress is now being made so that the ICCF Webserver can be used for the administration and processing of results for all kinds of tournaments (ie embracing those played by post, Email and Webserver).

The engine for the calculation of ratings and the related database transfer to be within the webserver system, is currently being progressed well, under the careful supervision and dedication of our Ratings Commissioner, Gerhard Binder.

Another very important feature, which will soon be linked to the Webserver, will be provision of Direct Entry and Direct Payment facilities which are being progressed by Martin, working closely with DE Administrator and Finance Director, Michael Millstone.

Ongoing webserver development tasks are also progressing, to include improved screen layouts, more consistency with tables and better indexing of tournaments will be included in Phase 3, for which priorities are being established by the WDSC. Any suggestions for further improvement, or enhancements, of the Webserver should be sent to WDSC Chairman, Alan Borwell.

- 4- the ICCF Historical Research Committee, comprised of Ivan Bottlik, as Chairman, Prof. Carlo Pagni and Tim Harding, in January 2006, produced the first draft of the CC bibliography, which will include books, periodicals, bulletins and magazines devoted to Correspondence Chess. I personally support the idea to publish this draft on the ICCF Website www.iccf.com in pdf format, so that it could be downloaded by CC players and could be subject to completion, after any corrections found by readers.
- 5- according to the latest statistics, provided by the ICCF Finance Director, more than 80% of the National Federations have opted for (or have not rejected), the "enhanced" Direct Entry System. After an initial period of evaluation, there seems little doubt that other Federations will join the EDE programme, after they have seen the benefits of the system. Then there would be no need to have the designations of "standard" or "enhanced" Direct Entry.

ICCF is a family and our traditions must be respected, so that divergent opinions should be minimised, until we can reach a satisfactory consensus which is acceptable to all member NFs.

- 6- the start of the preliminaries of the XVII ICCF Olympiad and a very strong Final of the XV ICCF Olympiad to be played on the webserver (with the participation of 4 CC World Champions!). Another interesting news item to be reported, was the start of the first Ladies African tournament ever organised by ICCF. Thanks to Dr Ole Jacobsen, Deputy Zonal Director for Africa/Asia, the SFAI ladies tournament began in February with 13 players from 8 different countries including one FIDE IM and one FIDE FM.

After evocating the positive things, it is also logical to examine those which need to be improved.

1- the first item concerns the ICCF website. Thanks to the ICCF webmaster Evelin Radosticsz, the ICCF website has changed its looks (new design) in January 2006. I am convinced the layout could be further improved and the all web pages must be updated with much greater regularity, perhaps not on a daily basis, but it must contain current news and reflect all of ICCF's activities. The utilisation of space is poor and the tournament tables are no longer obvious or not easy to find - so access needs to be easier.

I am not being critical of anyone but, if we compare "iccf.com" with other CC websites (eg BdF, ASIGC, AJEC, SCCA), I think that you would agree the ICCF main site for the public, could be better. The ICCF website(s), and communications, will receive our attention in the coming weeks, as they are very important.

2- the second item is related to ICCF participation to the FIDE Olympiad in Turin. Selecting only 6 players, when you have a spectrum of dozens of very strong players, is never an easy task and, unfortunately, you make a lot of unhappy players/officials!

I recognize it is not a perfect team which will represent ICCF in Turin, but our main goal (and our budget for the event) was not to compete for a top place, but to show to the chess community that ICCF exists as an important chess organisation. Our aim is to promote CC around the World, attract more OTB players and invite NFs to join our organisation, if not yet affiliated to ICCF.

I regret that previous World CC Champion, Mikhael Umanskij and Ivar Bern the new World CC Champion declined invitations and I regret too that strong players like Ulf Andersson, Wolfram Schoen or Roman Chytilek were not among the invited players. Indeed, players like V. Grabliauskas or Marius Ceteras, could be very good representatives of ICCF, but with this reasoning, we could present two or three teams of practically the same level, so the choice was extremely difficult one for the Executive Board. However, I am confident that the selected players and their team captain will do their best to be ICCF ambassadors in Turin, from 20th May to 4th June. We wish them good luck and success!

3- the 2004 Statements of Account were issued to NFs in late February, after a two months delay (which could be expected). Ruth Ann Fay has spent five months sorting out the documents left by Grayling Hill and certainly merits to be thanked for the hard work done since she was appointed to this temporary task.

However, the ICCF finances need more constant attention and I am waiting for a report from our Auditor, before expressing my total satisfaction. Some detail will need to be corrected and new Finance Director, Michael Millstone (USA) is ready to take over his duties fully and I look forward to working closely with him.

As Michael is developing his knowledge of the required tasks of ICCF Finance Director and new Direct Entry administrator role, one of my intentions will be to ask for the assistance of previous Treasurer, Carlos Flores. His abilities re ICCF financial matters are very considerable and he would be of great help to Michael, in ensuring ICCF finances/accounts are restored to good health!

4- in order to improve ICCF finances, I will submit to Congress a proposal regarding new tournaments under the name "Money Prize Tournaments", to be played on the Webserver.

The MPT concept would offer something new and attractive to CC players who would like the possibility to win money prizes.

These events would be :

- to make our DE facility more effective.
- to generate money for ICCF and cover our running costs.
- to further promote the ICCF webserver
- to provide entry at any time (progressive tournaments)

- to augment the marketing fund to support developments

Outline details of the concept would be on the following basis:-

Each section with 11 players (10 games/player and no more than 4 players from the same country), with 3 groupings of levels viz.

Under 2000 ratings: ratings 2000- 2300 and players with ICCF rating over 2300), with an entry fee of 25 CHF (via the National Federation) or 35 CHF via Direct Entry.

Prizes: 1st CHF100, 2nd CHF 60, 3rd Free entry to a MPT
Prize money payable on completion of all games in a group.
(ICCF would guarantee that all monies are paid to winners.)

Probable Rate of Play: 10moves in 50 days, with ICCF rules.

National Federations through their respective Delegates will be asked in Dresden, to give their opinions on the project, but CC players could express their opinions through the TCCMB forum. It would be very useful to collect a wide range of views, before final decision are taken on MPTs in October 2006, in Dresden.

- 5- Another disappointing piece of news to report is a reduction of ICCF contributions for Chess Base Magazine. Due to a lack of helpers, we have been obliged to return to the publication of 3 issues, instead of 6 issues, per year. I highly recommend that Delegates and CC players send articles and annotated games to: Mr Pierre Ruiz Vidal, Email: pierre.ruiz-vidal@wanadoo.fr
Of course a similar request is made for ICCF AMICI articles.
- 6- Due to organisational problems, the new appointments of World Tournament Director and Finance Director and long discussions re Financial matters, webserver developments, DE scheme detail and ICCF's participation to the FIDE Olympiad in Turin, it was not possible for me to start with Presidents Commission activity. Some matters (Statutes, structural aspects, participation and/or use by other organisations of the ICCF Webserver, installation of an "Adviser Council", MPTs etc.) need to be reviewed prior to their submission to Delegates before the Congress in Dresden.

Now dear ICCF AMICI readers, you have an idea of what has been done during the last 2 months, and about our future plans.

AMICI SUMUS.

POINT OF VIEW

By Raymond Boger

Dear Chessfriends,

I am late as usual ... and this time only I am to blame – or rather Crohn’s disease, which is responsible for me not functioning as well as I had hoped. Since I have been on pretty heavy medication lately, I have had trouble performing my daily chores (wife, kids, work, CC games,...!). In addition I am webmaster for NPSF (The Norwegian CC Federation) and have just started to play board 2 for Norway in Olympiad 15 Final. Because of all this I am afraid I have to throw in the towel as editor/webmaster for ICCF AMICI.

But this is possibly for the best, after having seen the survey on iccf.com that has been running since September 2005 (Thanks, Evelyn!). According to this survey a majority of the respondents want a different style and layout on ICCF AMICI. Maybe it is only appropriate that I withdraw now, so we can bring in new people with new ideas and visions!

As I predicted with a 96% probability in the previous issue of ICCF AMICI, the Norwegian Ivar Bern has become the new CC World Champion. Congratulations, Ivar! Ivar has been kind enough to be interviewed in this issue as well. As me, he has also just started to play for Norway in Olympiad 15 Final – he on the top board. Our ambition is to fight for an Olympic medal, but only time will show how we fare!

I was very happy the day I received the news that ICCF was invited to play in the FIDE Olympiad in Turin, Italy. My first thought was that I had to go to Turin to watch the efforts of the ICCF team, my second thought was that Ivar Bern, the new World Champion just had to play on this team. Therefore I suggested to NPSF’s board of directors that they should nominate him, which they did. He was selected for the team, but unfortunately he had to withdraw due to the pressure of work and other commitments. Later, FIDE has withdrawn its invitation to ICCF, consequently there will be no ICCF team playing in Turin after all. Nevertheless, when you are reading these words, I am on my way to Turin! There I will follow the Chess Olympiad and especially the Norwegian team headed by wonderboy Magnus Carlsen (15). I will either write a full report, or at least publish a photo report, in the next issue of ICCF AMICI, or on my private website mychessweb.com. Hopefully I will also be taking part in some of the open tournaments that are being played in parallel with the Olympiad. I also look forward to meeting some of my CC friends there – you are coming, I hope??!

This being my final issue as “Chief” I wish to take the opportunity to thank all the people who have contributed to ICCF AMICI since we started up more than 2 years ago. Your contributions have been highly appreciated and I will not forget you. To those of you, whether Zonal Directors, Commissioners or Other Officials, to whom I have sent emails for 2 years without receiving an answer, even though you should be aware of your obligations to the ICCF rank and file: SHAME ON YOU!

So, the time has come for me to say thanks for the fun we have had together, and:

Enjoy the reading!.....

Correspondence Chess Reminiscence N°8 Eric RUCH

Brilliancy prices in Correspondence Chess during the 19th century.

There is no doubt that the beauty is one of the major difference between chess and other games. Brilliancy in a chess game and much more than just playing correct moves: the chess player has to become a real artist!

In his book published in 1939 "Les Prix de beauté aux Echecs", François Le Lionnais has not only defined the major rules that define a brilliant game, but he has also published an anthology of the chess games that have been awarded a brilliancy price, from the years 1870, when the concept of brilliancy prize has been introduced in the practice of chess tournaments up to the publication of the book. Unfortunately, some of the earlier master pieces played by Cochrane, La Bourdonnais, Anderssen, Kieseritzky or Morphy could received their deserved prices.

I will now present you some of these masterpieces that have been played by correspondence during the 19th century.

The **supplice** of Tantale

This game has obtained the brilliancy price of the best King Gambit game played in the correspondence tournament organized by the "*Cincinnati Commercial Gazette*". George Tatnall lived in Wilmington (Del.)/ The umpire of tournament was M. Reichhelm.

Kittson - George Tatnall [C37] 1882

Annotations by François Le Lionnais
"Les Prix de Beauté aux Echecs"

1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.♘f3 g5 4.♙c4 g4 5.♗e5 ♖h4+ 6.♕f1 ♘h6 7.d4 f3

The Silberschmidt gambit is a kind of Cochrane gambit.

6...f3 is differed and prepared by 6...♘h6.

8.g3

The most tempting move 8.gxf3 has been refuted by Staunton.

8...♖h3+ 9.♔f2 ♜g2+ 10.♕e3 f5 11.♘c3

And not 11.exf5? that would expose the white King to a strong attack.

11...c6 12.♘d3

In the past 12.♘d3 was used to be played. The text move introduces a new idea that seems correct: restrict and capture the black Queen. Correspondence chess is the right place to test the soundness of such a plan.

12...fxe4 13.♘f4

The black Queen is now in jail.

13...♘f5+ 14.♕xe4 d5+ 15.♙xd5 cxd5+ 16.♘cxd5 ♘d6+ 17.♕d3 ♜f2

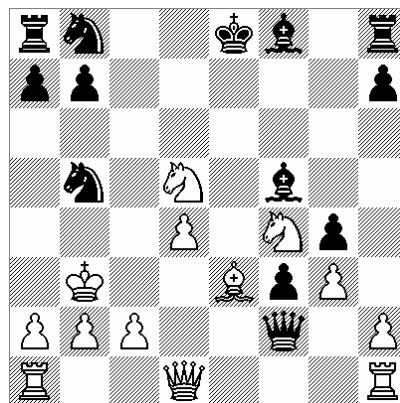
Tatnall was in a hurry to escape, but he did not analyze correctly the position. As was indicated by Reichelm, 17...♙f5+ 18.♕c3 ♜f2 19.♘c7+ ♔d7 20.♘xa8 ♙xc2 was much stronger.

18.♙e3

If 18.♘c7+ ♔d8 19.♘xa8 White would concede for having capture the Rook a8.

18...♙f5+ 19.♕c3 ♘b5+ 20.♕b3

By playing 20.♕c4 White could prevent the following combination, but the white King would have been exposed to killing checks. It seems that White will now obtain what he wanted.



20...♙xc2+!!

This move completely changes the situation of the game and allows the Queen to be safely exchanged

21.♜xc2 ♜xe3+!! 22.♘xe3 ♘xd4+ 23.♕c3 ♘xc2 24.♕xc2

Black is now a pawn ahead.

24...h5 25.♘ed5 ♘a6?

♘c7+ had to be prevented, but not with the text move, but by playing 25...♙d6 developing the Bishop. And it would have been Black who has obtained the brilliancy prize!!

26.♙ae1+ ♔f7 27.♙e5 ♙c8+ 28.♕b1 ♙c5 29.♙f5+ ♔g8

If 29...♔g7 30.♘e6+; or 29...♕e8 30.♙e1+ etc.

30. ♖g6

This move, threatening to capture either the Bishop or the Rook, wins at least a pawn.

30... ♖h6 31. ♗xf8 ♖xd5 32. ♖xd5 ♗xf8 33. h3 ♗b4 34. ♖f5+ ♗g7 35. hxg4 hxg4 36. ♖d1!

Very well played. If 36. ♖xh6 ♗xh6 Black would have had good prospects on the King side.

36... ♗g6 37. ♖b5 f2

The sacrifice of the Knight is not good. White can safely take it and will have time enough to stop the f pawn.

38. ♖xb4 ♗g5 39. ♖f4 ♖h2 40. ♖f1 ♖g2 41. ♖4xf2 ♖xg3 42. ♖f7 ♖g2 43. ♖xb7 1-0

The next game has obtained the brilliancy prize in the second correspondence tournament organized by the "Globe" of Saint-John in Canada.

J.-B. Stebbins lived in New-York and James-Ephraim Narraway in Ottawa.

J.-B. Stebbins, - James Ephraim Narraway [C22] 1893

Annotations by François Le Lionnais "Les Prix de Beauté aux Echecs"

1. e4 e5 2. d4 exd4 3. ♖xd4 ♗c6 4. ♖e3 g6 5. ♗d2 ♗g7 6. ♗c3 d6 7. f4 ♗f6

7... ♗ge7 is usually played in order not to obstruct the long diagonal for the Bishop at g7.

8. ♗d3

As the Knight f6 can go to g4 to threaten the Queen, it would have been perhaps better to play 8. ♗e2 — 9. ♗f3 — 10. ♗ge2

8... ♗d7 9. ♗f3 ♗b4 10. a3 ♗xd3+ 11. ♖xd3 ♖e7 12. 0-0-0 0-0-0

With the move 7. f4 White was expecting to attack the King on the King side.

13. ♖c4 ♗c6 14. ♖he1 ♖he8 15. ♗d5 ♖d7 16. ♗d4?

This attack is premature and cost some tempi and a pawn.

16... ♖xe4 17. ♗xf6 ♗xf6 18. ♖xe4 ♗xe4 19. ♗b5 d5!

This nice move outplays White plan.

20. ♖f1

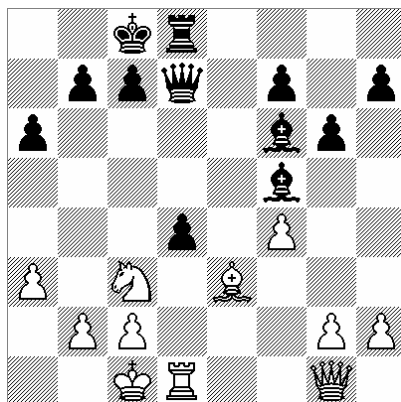
It was not possible to play 20. ♗xa7+? ♗b8 and the Knight is lost.

20... a6 21. ♗c3 ♗f5 22. ♖g1 d4!

Black has first stopped White's army, and now starts the counter-attack.

23. ♗e3?

White should have moved the knight. But White had no idea of Black next move

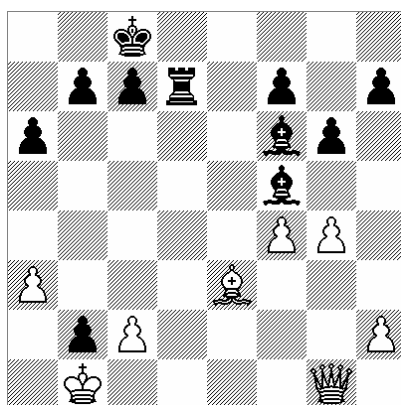


23...dxc3!!

A bad surprise. But, as we have already explained, this is not a real Queen sacrifice, since Black gets Rook, Knight and pawn for the Queen.

24.♞xd7 cxb2+ 25.♔b1 ♞xd7 26.g4

To prevent 26...♞g4 followed by 27...♞d1+



26...♞d3!!

Another sacrifice, even more beautiful as the previous one. If White does not capture the Rook, Black will play ...♞xa3 followed ...♞a1 mat.

27.♞c1

White could have resigned the game.

If 27.cxd3 ♞xd3+ 28.♔a2 b1♞+ 29.♞xb1 ♞xb1+ 30.♔xb1 and Black has a winning endgame.

If 27.gxf5 ♞xa3 wins.

27.♞c5 ♞c4 28.♞e1 ♞c3 29.— ♞d2 wins.

27...bxc1♞+ 28.♔xc1 ♞d4 29.♞e1 ♞e3 0-1

If 29...♞e3 30.♞b4 c5 etc.

This game has obtained the special prize of the most brilliant Vienna Gambit in a correspondence tournament organized by the "Southern California" M. Cecil F. Pierce lived in Los Angeles and M. W. Bennett in Phoenix.

Positional play in a romantic gambit!

Cecil F. Pierce – W. Bennett [C25] 1894

Annotations by Lipschutz published in the "*Times Democrat*"
and by François Le Lionnais "*Les Prix de Beauté aux Echecs*"

1.e4 e5 2.♗c3 ♗c6 3.f4 exf4 4.♗f3 g5 5.h4 g4 6.♗g5 h6

The following continuation, even less played, is safer: 6...d6 7.♗c4 ♗e5 8.♗b3 h6

7.♗xf7 ♗xf7 8.d4

This move introduces the Thorold attack in the Allgaier Gambit. It is also the best move in the Hampe Allgaier Gambit.

8...d6

8...f3 9.gxf3 ♗e7 is better than the text move.

9.♗xf4 ♗f6 10.♗c4+ ♗g7 11.0–0 ♗e7 12.♖d2 ♗d7 13.e5

A very strong move after which it seems difficult to find a correct defense. Black has to exchange the pawns immediately.

13...dxe5 14.dxe5 ♗g8

The best move. If 14...♗c5+ 15.♗e3 and if 15...♗xe5 16.♗xc5 ♗xc4 17.♖d4 ♗e6 18.♗e4 would recover the piece with a better position.

15.♗e3

Stronger than 15.♗g3

15...♗e8

If 15...♗xe5 16.♗d4 ♗f6 17.♖xf6 ♖xf6 18.♖f1 -- 19.♗xe5

16.♖e2 h5 17.♖ad1 ♖c8 18.♖f2 ♗h6 19.♗d5 g3

Cleverly, Black sacrifices a pawn to get their Queen into play. A detailed analysis of the position would demonstrate that there is nothing better

If 19...♖f8 20.♗xh6+ ♗xh6 21.♖c3+ ♗g7 22.♗xe7 ♖xf1+ 23.♖xf1 ♗xe7 24.♖g5+ ♗g6 25.♖f6+ ♗h7 26.♖f5 and wins.

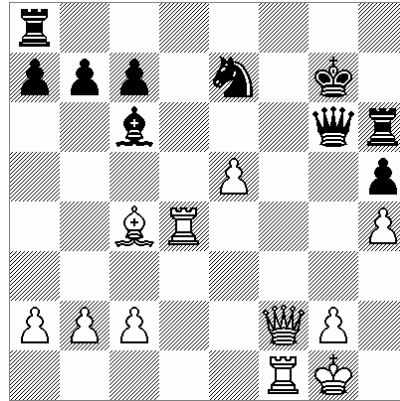
20.♖g3+ ♖g4 21.♗xh6+ ♖xh6 22.♗xe7

Well played. Black cannot capture the Queen due to 23.♗f5+ winning a piece.

22...♗xe7 23.♖f2 ♗c6 24.♖d4 ♖g6 25.g4

Very nice style. The sacrifice of the pawn forces the win of a piece.

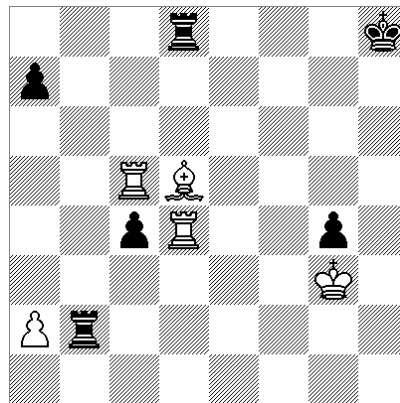
If White had played 25.♖f4 Black would have had some chances to secure a draw 25...♖g8 26.♗xg8 ♗xg8 27.♖f5 ♗h8 28.♖g5 ♖e6 29.♖f8 ♖h7.



25...hxg4 26.♖f7+ ♜xf7 27.♞xf7+ ♔h8 28.♞xe7 ♞xh4 29.♙d5 ♞d8 30.c4 ♞h5 31.♔g2 b5
 Black tries to exchange the pawns to obtain an endgame with Rook against Rook and Bishop.

32.♞xc7 ♞xe5 33.♞xc6 bxc4 34.♞c5 ♞e2+ 35.♔g3 ♞xb2 1-0
 White announces a mate in 16 moves!

Mate in 16 moves !



This game has obtained the special prize of the most brilliant Cunningham Gambit in a correspondence tournament organized by the the "Southern California" in 1894 - 1895.

W. Bennett - Sheldon [C35] 1894

Annotations by Lipschutz published in the "Times Democrat"
 and by François Le Lionnais "Les Prix de Beauté aux Echecs"

1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.♘f3 ♙e7

This move is weak and seldom used in a match.

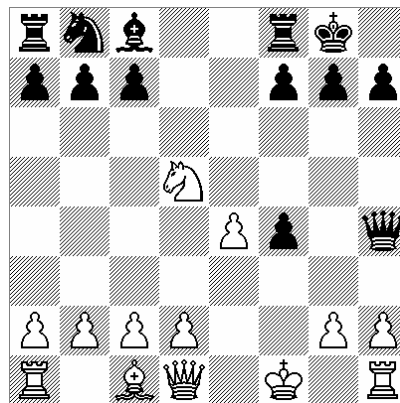
4.♙c4 ♙h4+ 5.♔f1

5.g3 — 6.0-0 is also played, but the attack is probably not as strong as after the text move.

5...d5 6.♙xd5 ♘f6 7.♘c3 ♘xd5 8.♘xd5 0-0 !!

A wonderful Queen sacrifice (F. Le Lionnais).

9. ♖xh4 ♗xh4



10.d3

Si 10. ♖xc7 ♗c6 11. ♖xa8 ♗d4 12. ♖c7 ♗g4 13. ♗e1 ♗e2+ 14. ♗xe2 ♖xe2 15. ♗xe2 ♗h5+ and wins (F. Le Lionnais).

10... ♗c6 11. ♗xf4 f5 12.e5 g5

Black starts an attack that is maybe too risky (F. Le Lionnais).

13. ♗g3 ♗h6 14.d4

It would be dangerous to capture the c pawn, in view of the reply 14...f4 followed by ...f3.

14...f4 15. ♗f2 f3 16.h3 ♗g4

This seems to be a strong move winning a pawn, but Black Bishop is blocked.

A better continuation would have been 16...fxg2+ 17. ♗xg2 ♗xh3+ 18. ♗xh3 ♗xf2+ 19. ♗xf2 ♗xh3

17.g3 ♗xh3+ 18. ♗g1 g4 19. ♗d3 ♗g7 20. ♗e1 ♗ad8 21. ♗e4 ♗d7

Black has probably overestimated the strength of their position when giving the exchange.

22. ♖f6+ ♗xf6 23. exf6 ♖xd4 24. ♗d1 c5 25. c3 ♖e2+ 26. ♗h2 ♗c7 1-0

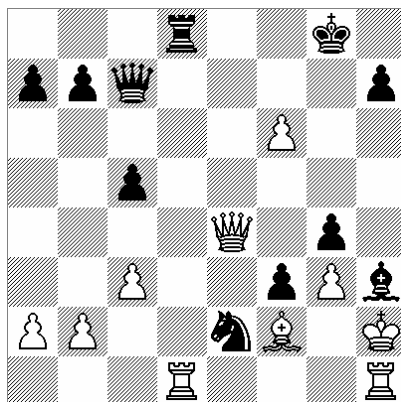
White announces a mate in 7 moves.

The superiority of White's position comes from the inactivity of the Black Bishop and from the fact that the Knight is too far away to protect his King.

26... ♗c7 27. ♗e6+ ♗h8 (27... ♗f7 28. ♗xd8#; 27... ♗f8 28. ♗xc5+ etc.) 28. ♗xc5 — 29. ♗d4 etc....

Mate in 7 moves

.



21 Questions to the new World Champion of CC Ivar Bern

1. At what age did you learn to play chess, and who was your teacher?

I learnt chess from my brother when I was 8, but he didn't know all the rules!

2. Which three chess books have been most important to you?

When I was a kid, my favourite book was "Solid Openings" by Bent Larsen. My first decent opening repertoire was based on that small book. "My System" by Aaron Nimzowich was important in shaping my understanding of chess. But my definite favourite is "Secrets of grandmaster play" by John Nunn and Peter Griffiths. 24 of Nunn's games with very instructive comments.

3. What do you think were your best games and most interesting or difficult games in the final?

The Kings-indian vs Lecroq is my favourite, but also the wins vs. Gallinnis and Danek. The most difficult and time-consuming games where the Sveshnikovs.

4. How many hours a day did you spend analysing the games?

In average, probably 10 hours a day for the first 1.5 years of the final.

5. Which hardware/software did you use?

I had a rather slow PC, a Pentium III 1000Mhz. "Normal" at the time was Pentium IV 2000Mhz.

I used the standard software: ChessBase 7 + Fritz 8. My database mainly consisted of games found on the internet.

6. Which engines did you use for analysis?

I only used Fritz8 and his twin Fritz8 (NoMMX). Their evaluations actually differ quite a lot in some positions.

7. Can you say some more about how you work with Fritz?

In short, we both generate lines/analysis, and then we check each other. Fritz generates suggestions most effectively in tactical positions, using "infinite analysis" or "deep position analysis". In quiet positions, it's more often up to the human to come up with a plan and generate some variations that can be "blunder checked".

8. How did you study the strengths and weaknesses of your opponents?

I didn't! Unlike the "Chess for tigers" approach "Play the man, not the board", I simply decided on my own playing style – to fight for the initiative with both colours, regardless of what my opponents had done in the past.

9. What can you tell our readers about your methods of opening preparation and analysis?

I use books, but I don't trust them, so I check the variations I consider playing thoroughly. When the final started, I hadn't studied opening theory for many years. So after deciding on playing style I bought some recent books on the openings I had chosen. I soon discovered that the books could not be trusted, especially when it comes to analysis dating from Fritz' "childhood". Even new opening books can contain huge errors. The main reason for this is that many writers simply quote/steal old analysis from the Informant, without this being mentioned in their book.

10. Did you find it useful to consult with other players, e.g in the chessclub?

I asked other players in the opening phase of the games, but after that I was faithful to my old buddy Fritz.

11. I know that you are an IM in OTB chess. How do you see the relationship between your CC and OTB activities?

I was stronger in OTB chess 10-20 years ago when this was my main priority in life, but I've spent a lot of time in the chessworld, so I still have a decent understanding of the game. This is definitely useful in CC.

In CC I work a lot with the computer, and only to a lesser extent with actual chess pieces.

I believe this can actually harm my OTB-strength. For example, I remember opening theory much better when I move pieces in the 3D physical world, compared to clicking on a 2D computer screen.

12. Is there a difference between playing women and men chess?

With the risk of being taken for a male-chauvinists-pig: my experience is that women are less resilient to a mating attack! But in 1993 I lost in OTB chess against the worlds strongest female correspondence player, Olita Rause from Latvia (elo 2695 - ranked 9th in the world), and in that game she attacked me!

13. Do you have any plans for future events?

I just started in the 15th Olympiad Final. I'm on board 1 for Norway, and meet the 16th Wch Tunc Hamarat + the 18th Wch Joop van Oosterom and several other high rated players. This is probably a much tougher challenge than the Wch!

14. What is the future for chess, and CC?

The future in chess I believe will be the duel between Magnus Carlsen and Sergey Karjakin. From a Norwegian point of view it's always a pleasure watching Magnus, who produces some spectacular games every time he plays a tournament.

The future of CC is definitely play by server. The 15th Olympiad is my first server-tournament. Finally everything that was annoying in postal chess has been eliminated: slow mail, lost cards and expensive repetitions, the possibility of writing errors, "time-cheaters"...

15. What music do you prefer to listen to?

I listen to a lot of really different stuff. I guess the only thing I don't listen to is country and opera. Some of my favourites in the different styles are: Can + Bo Hansson (prog-rock), Soundgarden + Monster Magnet (Rock), Neurosis + Tool (Metal), Funkadelic + James Brown (Funk), MC Solaar + Eminem (Hip Hop), Chet Baker + Jaga Jazzist (Jazz), Rokia Traore + Ali Farka Toure (from Mali), Bebel Gilberto (Brazil), Manu Chao...

I play guitar myself. At <http://www.myspace.com/autostradajazz> you can find information about my current band Syv. 15 years ago I played in a rock band called the Swamp Babies, who just got a contract to release a double CD in September.

Homepage: <http://www.theswampbabies.com> (PS: I'm not responsible for the "artwork"!).

16. What is your all-time favourite movie?

I'm not sure, but one that springs to mind is "Much ado about nothing" by Kenneth Branagh.

17. Who is your favorite writer?

I don't read much nowadays, but when I did, one of the last things I ploughed through was 20 books in the Discworld-series by Terry Pratchett. Fantasy of the most hilarious kind!

18. What is your favourite kind of food/drink?

I'm a simple man when it comes to food, I'd probably go for pizza and beer. Fritz is no gourmet either.

19. What is your best/worst character trait?

Tough question! To my knowledge, I'm an honest and trustworthy guy, but I guess being a bachelor for most of my life has made me develop certain household habits...

20. Has chess made you happy?

Oh yeah, but it has also made me sad and angry and totally disgusted with my self!

**"This is old news, right?" or
The European Champion's taking on CC**

Translated by ICCF-IM Valer Eugen Demian

Yeah, I know; you've heard it before: correspondence chess players are just cyber chess players faking it with a click of their mouse. Of course they are your 21st century version of your yesterday's play from the books, or of "My neighbor is a better chess player than yours" old tune. Personally I do not agree with this. Of course no OTB GM player would trade his title for the ICCF-GM one, but in essence a lot of the strong OTB players look at correspondence chess with respect. This is not

just a simple statement without proof, but rather a conclusion after talking to several OTB players. Moreover it is interesting to note the higher the rating an OTB player has, more respect and attention is given to correspondence chess. Possibly your regular OTB-GM will not know the name of the current ICCF World Champion, but maybe this is something ICCF could consider fixing in the near future!

Not long ago it was my pleasure and challenge to organize a chess festival in my native city of Alba-Iulia. Our VIP guest was no other than GM Dieter Nisipeanu, current European Champion. If you just found out about this chess festival, you might wish to read my report published by Chessbase at:

<http://www.chessbase.com/newsdetail.asp?newsid=2784>

Here I just want to elaborate a bit how correspondence chess was a relevant part of it.

Last May I gave Dieter a database containing some correspondence chess games. He was preparing for the European Championship and I thought he might want to have a look at some of them. Fast forward to the time of the festival; I asked him if he ever had the chance to look at it. His response came somewhat surprising, but refreshing:

“Of course I looked in the database before every game from European Championship, not only before the tournament”

For him this database seemed like a good possibility to still get an edge in home preparation, since everyone these days uses all sort of databases in general.

Our schedule and the nature of the festival – promoting chess with a VIP leading the way – did not give Dieter a chance to use any database before his simultaneous. Still he had to face 2 solid correspondence chess players: Boris Gusan (member of Romania’s ICCF Olympic team, Olympiad XVI preliminaries) and Daniel Cinca (our second board in the Preliminaries of the European Team Championship, 7th edition). None of them lives in Alba-Iulia, but both did everything necessary to be there and meet Dieter. Daniel for example traveled 300Km and got into the city at 2:00a.m. in the day of the festival.

I was also curious to see how they would hold their own. Both are category I OTB players in Romania, which means something around a rating range of (1800-2200). On top of this only Daniel still plays in OTB competitions. Boris plays rarely and no more than your regular blitz sessions with your buddies kind of thing. Given this data, how many would bet on a surprise for either?... Let’s see the games!

Nisipeanu,Dieter - Gusan,Boris [B04]

Alba Iulia - simul, 25.11.2005

[*Marius Ceteras*]

1.e4 Nf6

Normally Boris plays the Sveshnikov Sicilian in his CC games ,
but Alekhine Defence remains his pet opening.

2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.c4 Nb6 5.exd6 cxd6 6.Nc3 g6 7.Be3 Bg7 8.Rc1 0-0 9.h3

[The main line is 9.b3 , but Dieter likely wanted to avoid a
theoretical contest with a CC specialist.]

9...Nc6

[9...e5 10.dxe5 dxe5 11.Qxd8 Rxd8 12.c5 N6d7 13.Bc4 Nc6 14.Nf3 leads to positions
similar to the line 9.b3 e5 10.dxe5 dxe5 11.Qxd8 Rxd8 12.c5 N6d7 13.Bc4 Nc6 14.Nf3.]

10.Nf3 e5

[An alternative is 10...d5 11.c5 Nc4 12.Bxc4 dxc4÷ Gipslis,A-Mnatsakanian,E/Soviet
Union 1967]

11.dxe5 dxe5 12.Qxd8

This seems to be a theoretical novelty. [White has previously played 12.c5 Nd7
13.Bc4 ,
while in December 2005, so after the simul, Saltaev introduced the move 13.Bb5.]

12...Rxd8 13.c5 Nd5

[It was worth considering 13...e4!? 14.Nd2 (14.Nxe4 Nd5 15.b3 Nxe3 16.fxe3 Nb4©)
14...Bxc3 15.bxc3 Nd5 16.Nxe4 Nxe3 17.fxe3 Be6©]

14.Nxd5 Rxd5 15.Bc4 Rd8

[15...Rd7 16.Nd2]

16.Ng5 Rf8 17.Ne4

White gained a slightly advantage due to his pawn majority
on the queenside and better positioned pieces.

17...Nd4!

With the idea Bd7-c6.

18.Bxd4

[18.b4!??]

18...exd4 19.Nd6 Be5 20.0-0

[20.Rd1 b6!,,]

20...Bxd6 21.cxd6 Rd8



22.Rfe1 Rxd6

[22...Kg7 23.Bb3f]

23.Re8+ Kg7 24.Bb3! Rc6

Black defends too passively. [Better would have been 24...d3! 25.Rc7 (25.Rcxc8 Rxc8 26.Rxc8 d2 27.Bd1 Re6!=) 25...d2 26.Rxf7+ Kh6 27.Rh8 (27.Bd1 Be6!) 27...d1Q+ 28.Bxd1 Rxd1+ 29.Kh2 g5! 30.Rfxh7+ Kg6 31.Rc7 Rd2 32.Rg8+ Kh6 33.Rf8! Kg6 34.b3 Rxa2 35.Rg8+ Kf6 (35...Kh6? 36.Rd8!!±) 36.Rgxc8 Rxc8 37.Rxc8 Ra3 38.Rc3 a5 with good chances for a draw]

25.Rxc6 bxc6 26.Re7 Ba6

[The last chance was 26...Be6! 27.Bxe6 Kf6 28.Rxf7+ Kxe6 29.Rxh7 where Black could hope the rule "All rook endings are draw", would be confirmed again.]

27.Rxf7+ Kh8

[27...Kh6 28.f4! with the idea g4]

28.Rc7± Rc8 29.Rxa7 Be2 30.f3 c5 31.Kf2 Bd3 32.Bd5 c4 33.Ra8 Rxa8 34.Bxa8 Kg7?!

[34...c3 35.bxc3 dxc3 36.Ke3 Bf1 37.f4+-]

35.Be4 1-0

Nisipeanu,Dieter - Cinca,Daniel [D36]

Alba Iulia - simul, 25.11.2005

[*Marius Ceteras*]

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 d5 4.cxd5

A good choice for a simul, where the simultanist is interested to avoid double-edge positions.

4...exd5 5.Bg5 Be7 6.e3 c6 7.Bd3 Nbd7 8.Nge2

This set up was introduced by Marshall, but gained popularity in the 1980s when Kasparov scored two impressive wins against Ulf Anderesson and Boris Spassky. Perhaps it's worth mentioning that Kasparov used it first time in a simul given in Zurich 1988.

8...0-0

[8...Nh5 9.Bxe7 Qxe7 10.g4 Nh6 11.Ng3 h6 12.h3 Nb6 13.Qd2 Bd7 14.b3 g6 15.a4 a5 16.f3 h5 17.g5 Qd6 18.Nge2 Ng8 19.e4 Ne7 20.Qf4 Qxf4 21.Nxf4 0-0

22.Nce2 h4 23.Ng2 Kg7 24.Kd2 dxe4 25.fxe4 Rad8 26.Raf1 Rh8 27.Ne3 Rh5
28.Rfg1 Bc8 29.Kc3 Rhh8 30.Nf4 Rd6 31.Bc2 Na8 32.Nc4 Rdd8 33.Nxa5 Nc7
34.Rf1 b5 35.Rf3 Rhf8 36.Rhf1 bxa4 37.bxa4 f6 38.Nxg6 Nxg6 39.gxf6+ Kh6
40.Nxc6 Rd6 41.d5 Rxc6+ 42.dxc6 Ne6 43.e5 Nxe5 44.Re3 Ng6 45.f7 Ngf4
46.Bb3 Kg7 47.Re4 Rxf7 48.Bxe6 Nxe6 49.Rxf7+ Kxf7 50.Rxh4 Ke7
51.Rh8 Ba6 52.h4 1-0 Kasparov,G-Spassky,B/Barcelona 1989]

9.Qc2 Re8 10.0-0 h6

Not the most accurate move. [The main line is 10...Nf8 Here are two games of Kasparov, which influenced the development of this opening system

11.f3 (11.a3 g6 12.b4 Ne6 13.Bh4 a6 14.f3 Ng7 15.Bf2 h5 16.h3 Nh7 17.e4 Bh4
18.Qd2 Bxf2+ 19.Rxf2 h4 20.Bc2 Nh5 21.Nf4 Nxf4 22.Qxf4 Qf6 23.Qd2 Be6
24.e5 Qg7 25.Na4 Nf8 26.Qg5 Qh8 27.f4 f6 28.exf6 Bf7 29.Bxg6 Bxg6 30.f5 Kf7
31.Nc5 Bh5 32.Nxb7 Nd7 33.Nd6+ Kf8 34.Qxh4 Nxf6 35.g4 Re7 36.g5 Rd7
37.gxf6 Rxd6 38.Re1 Re8 39.Rxe8+ Kxe8 40.Re2+ Kf8 41.Re6 Qh6 42.Rxd6 Qe3+
43.Qf2 Qxh3 44.Qf4 1-0 Kasparov,G-Beliavsky,A/Moscow 1987)

11...Be6 12.Rae1 Rc8 13.Kh1 N6d7 14.Bxe7 Rxe7 15.Nf4 Rc7 16.Qf2 Nf6
17.e4 dxe4 18.fxe4 Rcd7 19.d5 cxd5 20.Bb5 Rc7 21.exd5 Bd7 22.Be2 Rc8
23.Qxa7 b6 24.Qa6 Ne4 25.d6 Nxd6 26.Nfd5 Re5 27.Qxb6 Nf5 28.Qxd8 Rxd8
29.Bd3 Rxe1 30.Rxe1 Ng6 31.a4 Nd4 32.a5 Kf8 33.Bxg6 hxg6 34.Rd1 Ne6
35.Nb6 Bc6 36.Rxd8+ Nxd8 37.b4 Ne6 38.b5 1-0 Kasparov,G-
Andersson,U/Belfort 1988]

11.Bh4 Ne4

Now the plan Nd7-f8-g6 is no longer possible, therefore Black must use this freeing manoeuvre in order to keep the balance.

12.Bxe7 Qxe7 13.Rae1 Ndf6 14.f3 Nxc3 15.Nxc3 Be6 16.Qf2 c5!

A very good reaction. Black accepts an inferior position with an isolated pawn, but definitely prevents White from playing e3-e4.

17.dxc5 Qxc5 18.Ne2 Rac8 19.Nd4+/=

White has a long term edge, but practice has shown that such positions with an isolated pawn are playable. A turning point in the evaluation of these positions was the famous game Flohr-Capablanca, Moscow, 1935 in which the Cuban genius proved the weak side can hold the position even in the endgame Knight vs Bad Bishop.

19...a6

I don't like this move. Normally White's only plan to win is to trade the rooks and exploit the weakness of the dark squares. Therefore Black must avoid to move his pawns on the light squares. [Better was 19...Re7 with the idea Rec7.]

20.Qd2 Qb6 21.Rc1 Rxc1 22.Rxc1 Rc8 23.Rxc8+ Bxc8 24.Qc3 Be6 25.b4!

Of course, Nisipeanu masters much better such positions. He doesn't miss the opportunity to fix Black's pawns from the queenside on light squares.

25...Ne8!

Swaping queens is a good idea here.

26.a4! Qc7 27.Qxc7 Nxc7 28.a5!+/-



White has a clear advantage, but converting it into a win is not an easy task at all. Now Black would have to bring his king to the center and set his pawns from the kingside on dark squares. It would have to be enough for a draw with an accurate defence.

28...Kf8 29.Kf2 Ke7 30.g4 g6?!

A move that clearly proves Black doesn't know this typical endgame. I recall that I have read somewhere the difference between a master and an amateur is made by the number of typical positions they know. Perhaps there is some truth in those words.

31.h4 Ne8

[31...g5!/?]

32.Ke2 Nf6 33.g5!

Now I think that Black might be lost. With all pawns positioned on light squares, his chances to survive are minimal. Additionally Black's task becomes more and more difficult because we are closing to the end of the simul and the number of opponents decreases. Thus Daniel had to play faster.

33...hxg5 34.hxg5 Ne8 35.Nb3 Bc8 36.Nc5 Nc7 37.Kd2 Ne6
38.Nxe6 Bxe6 39.Kc3 Kd6 40.Kd4 Bd7 41.Bc2 Be6 42.Bb3

[42.f4 Bg4 43.Bb3 Bf3 (43...Be6 44.f5!! Tired after 6 hours of walk and play, Dieter missed this winning idea. 44...gxf5 45.Ba2 Zugzwang! 45...Kc6 (45...f6 46.g6 Bg8 47.Bb1+-) 46.Ke5 Kb5 47.g6 fxg6 48.Kxe6 Kxb4 49.Bxd5 Kxa5 50.Kf6+-)]

42...Kc6 43.Ba4+

[43.Ba2? Kb5! 44.Bxd5 Bxd5 45.Kxd5 Kxb4 46.f4 Kxa5 47.e4 b5 48.f5 b4 49.Kc4 Ka4 50.e5 b3 51.Kc3 Ka3 52.e6 fxe6 53.fxg6=; White could have won by 43.f4! Kd6 (43...Kb5 44.Bxd5 Bxd5 45.Kxd5 Kxb4 46.e4 Kxa5 47.f5 b5 48.e5 b4 49.Kc4 Ka4 50.e6+-) 44.f5!! Same as above! 44...gxf5 45.Ba2 Zugzwang! 45...Kc6 (45...f6 46.g6! Bg8 47.Bb1+-) 46.Ke5 Kb5 47.g6 fxg6 48.Kxe6 Kxb4 49.Bxd5 Kxa5 50.Kf6+-]

43...Kd6 44.b5

[44.Bb3 Kc6 45.f4! still wins]

44...axb5 45.Bxb5 Bh3 46.Be8 Be6 47.f4 Ke7 48.Ba4 Kd6 49.Bc2?

[Nisipeanu misses a new opportunity to win by 49.Bb3! Zugzwang! 49...Kc6 50.Ke5! (The idea 50.f5 no longer works in view of 50...gxf5 51.Ke5 Kb5 52.g6 fxg6 53.Kxe6 Kxa5 54.Bxd5 Kb4 55.Ke5 Kc3 56.Kf4 Kd2 57.Bxb7 Ke2!!=) 50...Kb5 51.Bc2! Bg4 (51...Kxa5 52.Bxg6+-) 52.Kf6 Kxa5 53.Kxf7+-]

49...Bf5!

[49...Bf5 50.Bb3 Be4! (50...Be6? 51.Ba2! Kc6 52.Ke5 Kb5 53.Bb1+-) 51.Ba4 Bf5=]

1/2-1/2

Hope these two samples have changed a bit your perception about cyber chess players, or at least about two of them. Not bad for two guys away from their optical mice and silicon brains. Will I push it a bit too far thinking about a possible rematch under correspondence chess conditions? Yes, you think? Yeah, I'm just letting my carbon imagination run to the N-th ply here and still no horizon effect in sight J

THE WITHDRAWAL EFFECT

By Morten Lilleøren

Some years ago I played against an elderly english gentleman by the name of Bernhard Hanison. When playing, we exchanged a lot of thoughts, told a little about ourselves, and in general, enjoyed what we were doing. One thing he told me, amazed me: He was playing more than 100 games simultaneously.

Me myself, I have a rule (that I break now and then...) never to have more than 30 games going at the same time. The reason is simple: If I exceed that number, both my playing-strength and standard of life deteriorate. But not so with Hanison. He enjoyed it. We finished our games, waved each other goodbye and went on with our games and lifes.

Now, I'm a curious little bastard, so every now and then I take a look at tournament tables and ratinglists to see how my former opponents are doing. Some time after our games, I therefore noticed that his rating had dropped. And not only dropped - he'd gone from 2299 down to 1855. He couldn't have lost that much playing-strength within a couple of years. This is what I think had happened: For some reason he'd withdrawn from play for a time (illness?). Since he had many games going simultaneously, he lost them all.

Even if he had a legit reason for withdrawing, his ratingdrop couldn't be prevented. And the more games, the larger drop. My "theory" is confirmed by the fact that today Hanison is above 2200 again.

Why do I tell this story? Well, in 17.OL preliminaries, section 1, bd. 2 I was up against Khaled Chorfi. He's rated 1941. Nothing wrong with that. But the fact that he was a SIM and ranked at bd.2 in such a team competition, rouse my suspicions: And yes, some years ago(2002) he too had to withdraw from all his games. He had, during the 6 years before the withdrawal, been stable above 2400 (hence the SIM-title) and then dropped around 500 elo-points in one go.

Being a curious nature (see above), I started to look into the eloquary to see if I could find some other peculiarities. And indeed: The lowest rated GM is Ruben Berdichevsky from Argentine. He fell from 2633(2000) to 1843. As far as I can see, he had to withdraw from at least 5 tournaments. The lowest rated SIM is Abraham Raul Ramirez, also from Argentine. He fell from 2525 (1996) to 1826 today (I'm not sure why, but it is an oddity) And last, but not least: IM Jose Ortiz Elias from Peru, who fell from 2461 all the way down to 1539, more than 900 pts. If that'd been his elo today, he would have been among the last 25 on the entire ICCF-list. But he has started his trip up again, and is rated 1611 today.

There are other titled players below 2000, but I think I've made my point (and this is NOT written to "out" players). If an otb-player gets sick during a tournament, he withdraws from that game, loses 5-10 elo and stays away from chess until he's well again. Not so with us: We may have to withdraw from all our games,

and end up with a huge ratingdrop.

So what? Isn't it only a little side-step, and after some time the rating's back approx. where it started? (See Hanison above).

Yes - and no. My minor objection is that our low elo "ruins" the tournaments we take part in after the drop: I may have been mistaken, but when I checked, the 17.OL preliminaries, section 1, bd 2 dropped several title-categories down because of Khorfi's participation in that group. This means that to achieve a norm, one has to score much more points than what would have been necessary if he'd not participated. I didn't look too closely, but I think the other players have to score 1,5 point more in 10 games than they would have had to in 9 games if he hadn't played.

And, as you know, it's not possible to score more than one point in a game. This means that his rating forces the other players to make a better score against each others, if they want to achieve the same result as without him.

And this has to take place, amongst other things, against a player who is grossly underrated... Which brings me to my main point: Ratings are there to reflect a player's strength - nothing less and nothing more. Of course we're all underrated, but the examples above are in a category of their own. And surely, it contradicts the point of the whole rating system. It's simply no connection between the rating and the strength anymore. Which means that the system has failed.

What to do then?

I don't have any bright solutions to the problem. As long as it is a minor problem (for the system), the best thing is maybe to leave it as it is. But on the other hand, I don't think it's fair against the players who have a perfectly legitimate reason for withdrawal. If they start playing again, their starting-point is way below what they'd probably have if they enter as newcomers. And this fact points against a possible remedy:

- 1.They can start up again, accordig to the class-initiated rating that ICCF give new players (Masters have a preliminary rating of 2200 aso.), and
2. Even if they've played several hundreds of games in the past (as they all have), their rating for the next 30 games can be set as unfixed,as is done with newcomers today, and thereby speed up their "recovery". As I'm a novice in this field, I don't know what it'll do with the "pool" of all the players' elo. Hopefully it will not push it off balance and start a process like the greenhouse effect. Taking a step aside, this can't be said to be the biggest injustice in the world today. But there IS a small discrepancy, possibly one that can be dealt with! :o)

ChessWorld.Net Review

By William Shehan aka (Doc_Holiday)



My first exposure to chess came before I was six. My cousin taught me how to play, well let's say he taught me how the pieces moved. The first game he tromped me with scholars mate, I know the name now. We played often but he always beat me and did not offer any advice. He moved away and I had no one to play against so I did not get much practice for many years. Then while in the Army I played occasionally with a good friend of mine, but after that I took another decade off.

About two years ago I found out about "Correspondence Chess" and was hooked. The next few issues will be reviewing the many different sites that I have visited and what each offers. This issue I will be taking a look at www.chessworld.net.

ChessWorld.net was started in late 2001. It was developed and is maintained by Tryfon Gavriel, aka (KingCrusher), and his two fellow co-webmasters Janet Loxham and Nick Gavriel. On the site there is a statement by Tryfon that sums up why he started this site. "I am very keen on chess, and want this playing server to reflect my enthusiasm for the game. I have great ideas for this server, and I am trying to get the time to implement them. I want the site to meet chess players needs, and to be a useful resource for the chess community at large"

The site's statistics alone are impressive, as of the end of 2005 they are;

260,422 Members	1,810,357 Games	33,849 Tournaments
131 Leagues	3,157 Teams	207 Countries
6,886 Forums	2,245 Annotated games	553 Tips
860 Puzzles	428,794 Messages	3,344 Pictures

But what hooked me was the ease of play, the number of players, the diversity of the countries represented, and the many features. The features for "guests" are great and worth the visit to the site, but they are limited for example, guests can only play 5 games at a time, not import/export PGN's, no move preview, cannot take part in Polls or Forums. For a detailed list of Features [Click HERE](#).

One could play here happily as a guest but the little extras make it worth the \$22.50 US a year. The tools such as the Analyse, Conditional, and "Wait for game" options are fantastic! It is difficult to put into words how many details Tryfon et al put

into this site so as the saying goes, a picture is worth a thousand words and here is that picture.

In the following screenshot you get to see what a normal members game screen looks like. (Of course I show a game I am doing well in, what did you expect? and Thanks John for allowing me to use this example)

1. Member and Board Information.
2. Game Messages.
3. Conditional Moves
- 3a. Conditional Moves Pop-up board.
This is my favorite tool, a members only option. It allows you to play your next move in reply to your opponents . Excellent for forced moves, and keeping the game moving.
4. This area shows your waiting messages, game rating info, last move and other important information.
5. Menu area. For those of us still learning Openings the "Openings Identified" button is great. This area is customizable as is almost every option on the site.
6. Wait for Game Pop-up notification. Another of my favorites. This option allows you to go about your work and have the "Pop-up" tell when you when you have games waiting. I find it very helpful and am using it as I write this so I can keep on top of my games.



Mr. Gavriel was gracious to answer a few questions for me, so lets hear what he has to say.

Q. What is so special about ChessWorld.net in Comparison with the other internet chess servers?

A. In a nutshell, It's being driven and developed by a complete chess addict! I am trying to model my enjoyable experiences as a chess enthusiast. For example, I have played for Barnet chess club in a number of Leagues. I wanted the site to have team and league play as a high priority. I think therefore the site is becoming a reflection of my own passion and enthusiasm for chess. As well as my own drive to make it an exciting place, I think the members on the site are very enthusiastic and they make it great. There is a continual flow of improvement suggestions, which will keep me busy for a long while.

Q. What are your favorite features?

1. A true International chess club feel.

2. When one goes into the site, there is a sense of huge international chess club community. The international flags help create this feel, and there are members from over 200 countries to invite to play.

3. Team and League play. You can join multiple teams as long as they are in different leagues or even create your own teams. As team Captain you have the capability to set board order and reserve players, substitute players, etc. When there are five teams in a particular league, a league cross table can be automatically generated and all teams are paired against each other. Team play helps (sic) the site much more friendly.

4. Tournaments. The tournaments are very flexible in that you can join as many as you want, and don't have to wait several weeks/months for the next round to start.

You can also create your own customized tournaments by 'opening' - there is a huge openings databases where you can select openings code. You can even have the tournaments as "private", where you can invite selected friends and players if you want to. There are knockout type tournaments which have recently been introduced, and this is the type for this year's World Championship event (128 player knockout).

5. Friends and other chat facilities. There are a number of features to help maintain contacts with friends, including a friends list page, friends online notification, instant messenger details, messaging facilities. Communication is a central priority of the site to make it like a big social chess club. There are a number of forums on the site for a number of aspects of chess, and there are forums dedicated to the improvement of particular site features.

6. Rest of World Matches.

7. Powerful opponent finding facilities. This means that you can search for potential opponents by country, interests, rating, and a number of other combinations.

8. Annotated Games. You can annotate games using an online tool, and have others annotate your games (not necessarily your opponent). You can also request games to be annotated as well.

9. Tips and Learning areas. Members can share tips, and there are now hundreds in the Tips database. You can also find puzzles and other learning tools.

10. My stuff Customization options. As well as being able to configure board style- colour, size, piece, and sets, you can configure several things about the mechanics of moving including an "Are you sure you want to move there?". There is move highlighting of the last move played before that, so you can quickly reestablish the game context of a game you may have not looked at for weeks. The My stuff menu provides convenient access to every element of the playing experience.

11. What going on view facilities. You can view all sorts of things from this menu, including the top 100 and all the players rating list, the tournament norm holders, the members currently online, tournaments past and present including all thematic tournaments, check mate statistics and much more.

Q. What is the general time control of the games?

A. The time controls are as follows.

formula 1: 1 day per move

2 quick!: 2 days per move

Lightning fast 5: 5 days per move

Give me one full week!: 7 days a move

Give me 10: 10 days per move

10 in 50 (click to see stamps): 50 days for 10 consecutive moves, 10 days max per single move

Give me 15: 15 days per move

Q. Who are some of the strongest players on your server?

A. A few ICCF GMs have played Rest of world matches here including JudgeDeat (ICCF GM Peter Coleman), ICCF GM Hector Walsh, ICCF GM Thaler. FIDE IMs and GMs that have played here include GM James Plaskett, GM Patrick Wolff, IM Jeremy Silman, IM Michael Basman, WIM Natasha Regan and WGM Dembo, who is currently very active on the site. Of course IM George Botterill is playing a rest of world match currently, and has played several other individual games - he is a two times british champion and has a 2500+ ICCF rating I think.

Q. How would the top players measure up to the top ICCF or IECG players?

A. I believe that many of the ChessWorld.net - Internationally rated FIDE players would hold their own against the top ICCF and IECG players. Perhaps a match between organizations will sort out the men from the boys! But I do believe that because web-server chess facilitates many of the tedious administrative tasks associated with pure Email-chess, it maybe attracting a less "hard-core" set of chess players who may just want to use chess as a means of keeping in touch with friends.

Q. What's in store for ChessWorld.net members in the near future?

A. I am planning on implementing the huge numbers of suggestions in the Site Suggestions and Feedback forums.

So ends our little talk with Mr Gavriel. I want to thank him for taking time to answer the questions. I asked other members what they found to be the most interesting function of this site and the majority said "Meeting interesting/new people" and I would have to agree. I suggest that if you are looking for a site that offers competitive games, flexible time controls and plenty of opponents give ChessWorld.net a try.

To see the BBC World Broadcast about ChessWorld.net see below.
Here are the links to the recorded show

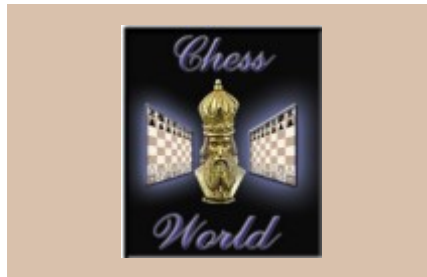
[Real player for the Click online show](#)

(Fast forward to 18:40 / 23:05 - 18 minutes 40 seconds in...)

[Windows media player](#)

(Fast forward to 18:40 / 23:05 - 18 minutes 40 seconds in...)

If you would like to challenge me click the image, log on and look for Doc _Holiday



Play [online chess](#) at Letsplaychess.com

Amici sumus play well and see you at the boards,

"Best Team Logo" competition in the ICCF

by J. Franklin Campbell, webmaster for the Champions League



Winner of "Best Team Logo" ... Alpine-Rookies

The ICCF Champions League team tournament is now in its second season, officially called "First Season" to distinguish it from the "Qualifying Season".

It is a relegation tournament, so teams that do poorly are relegated to the next lower league in the next season while teams that do very well advance to a higher league the following season. The Qualifying season sorted teams out into Leagues "A", "B", "C", and "D" for the First (regular) Season. However, a "Fast Track" league was also set up in the current season to allow new teams to qualify directly to the higher leagues for the next season.

I got involved about half way through the qualifying season when the webmaster of the Champions League web site Klaus Wrba suddenly was unavailable to continue in that job. It became my job to take over his duties and to keep the web site and all the CL tables updated. I was already playing for [Team CC.COM](http://TeamCC.COM), a group of four people involved in developing and maintaining the correspondence chess domain <http://correspondencechess.com>. That's a great thing about the Champions League ... it gave people an opportunity to form teams with their friends, even across national boundaries. For instance, our team had two from USA, one from Canada and one from Germany. Another good example is [The Gambiteers Guild](#) consisting of players from Canada, Denmark, Netherlands and the USA. My current team [Four Wise Arbiters](#) consists of players from England, Canada and USA. In this case we are all ICCF International Arbiters giving us a common interest. Teams were free to establish their own identities and many do, some with some specific common element that binds them together, whether it's the love of gambits, membership in a local OTB club or something else.

I personally felt quite excited about these opportunities to enjoy competition with friends, quite independent of the desire to win games and high placement for the next season. One thing I and others thought about were appropriate team logos to represent our teams. I asked a friend and fellow worker Tina Ciaramitaro, who is a professional graphics artist, to design a logo for our team based on some sketchy ideas I had. The result was a very exciting logo with a dragon breathing flames over a chess board field scattering the pieces.



How it all started

I determined that in the next season (the "First" season) I would make an effort to promote the concept of having fun in this event. The idea of players banding together across national boundaries and playing for the joy of it is a powerful one,

in my opinion. Some may play for titles and high ratings, even for championships, but most of us can't challenge at the very highest levels. We can still enjoy the Royal Game, though. Fun chess sites and team logos seemed a natural idea. In fact, a number of teams did create team web sites and interesting team logos. My first attempt during the qualifying season was to make a links page at the [Team CC.COM web site](#) listing all the team web sites I could find along with displaying the existing team logos. I spent some time with Google looking for web sites, and I actually found a couple that way! You can see this early display of logos from the qualifying season at [Team CC.COM links page](#).

After being appointed webmaster of the Champions League web site for the qualifying season I naturally extended this idea to the [official web site](#) for the qualifying season and created a [links page](#) displaying the team logos there. Of course, this is old stuff and some of the team web sites listed there have vanished, but you can see my first efforts. The team logos/links were divided into the leagues they qualified for in the following season.

The current season, unlike the qualifying season, is being sponsored. The sponsor allocated a set amount of prize money for the expected number of groups, but when the season started there were fewer groups than expected. After consulting with the sponsor I was delighted that, instead of simply moving a bit more money into the existing prize funds for winning certain playing prizes, some of the prize money was put into two new categories, "Best Team Web Site" and "Best Team Logo". Excellent! I want to thank the sponsor for being willing to award teams for non-playing activities. Is this a first in ICCF competition? See [Sponsor Awards Announcement](#) for the sponsor's viewpoint.

The deadline for submitting team logos for the competition was 31.12.2005. An amazing 55 logos were submitted! All eligible team logos are shown on the current [Logos/Links](#) page. The web sites won't be judged till after 30.06.2006 to allow the teams to provide additional content based on finished games. The logos have already been judged and the award announced. Complete information is shown below, or you can see [Winners of "Best Team Logo"](#) at the official web site. You can also read the sponsor's [Best Team Logo Press Release](#).

I was determined to recognize the best team logos, though there was only a single cash prize, so I asked the judges to choose the best two logos for each league. After that the judges chose the best logo from the top pick for each league. There were some excellent logos designed by the teams which showed both originality and excellent artistic skills. All teams are to be congratulated on their wonderful efforts and for participating in this fun competition.







My objectives in the judging was to set down some basic voting rules, select an outstanding panel of judges, and then to tally the votes and announce the winners. On the second count I think I did an excellent job ... the voting panel was a true all-star selection. The five judges are shown with their photos below. The judges were:

- **GM Tunc Hamarat** (AUS), 16th World Champion
- **SIM Josef Mrkvicka** (CZE), Former ICCF President
- **Hanon Russell** (USA), Webmaster/Owner of [Chess Cafe](#)
- **SIM John Knudsen** (USA living in GER), Webmaster/Owner of [Correspondencechess.com](#)
- **Clive Murden** (AUS), Webmaster of [CCLA \(Australia\)](#)

My thanks go to these five judges for accepting this job and for handling their judging duties in a professional and prompt manner. My thanks to the many creative team members who were responsible for these great logos. If you're planning to compete in a team event such as the Champions League I urge you to consider creating a web site and/or a team logo to add to the fun. For now check out the top logos from this event and get inspired!

Here are the top two logos for each league, as selected by our distinguished judging panel.

Group	1st Place	2nd Place
League "A"	 <p data-bbox="539 1420 732 1451"><u>Alpine-Rookies</u></p>	 <p data-bbox="983 1442 1225 1503">Champagne Chess (no web site)</p>
League "B"	 <p data-bbox="555 1973 716 2004"><u>Forster SC 95</u></p>	 <p data-bbox="986 1912 1222 1973"><u>Les Mousquetaires</u> <u>du Roi</u></p>

<p>League "C"</p>	 <p><u>Chess Club</u> <u>Potaiissa Turda</u></p>	 <p><u>The Norsemen</u> (no web site)</p>
<p>League "D"</p>	 <p><u>The Lewis Chessmen</u> (no web site)</p>	 <p><u>SK Joly Lysá nad Labem</u></p>
<p>Fast Track</p>	 <p><u>ChessOwls</u> <u>Smart View</u></p>	 <p><u>ChessOwls</u> <u>Intercontinental</u></p>

Our Judging Panel		
 <p>GM Tunc Hamarat Austria</p>	 <p>SIM Josef Mrkvicka Czech Republic</p>	 <p>Hanon Russell USA</p>

16th World Champion	Former ICCF President	Webmaster/Owner <u>Chess Cafe</u>
	 <p data-bbox="496 533 735 658">SIM John Knudsen USA/Germany Webmaster/Owner <u>CC.COM</u></p>	<p data-bbox="879 241 1059 501" style="text-align: center;">No Photo Available</p> <p data-bbox="863 533 1078 658">Clive Murden Australia Webmaster <u>CCLA (Australia)</u></p>



International Correspondence Chess Federation

Valer-Eugen Demian, Non-Title Tournaments Commissioner
1805 View Street, Port Moody, BC V3H 3Y3, Canada
Tel. +1-604-936-1757

Email: vdemian@shaw.ca

April 22nd, 2006

ANNOUNCEMENT

2nd ICCF WEBCHESS OPEN TOURNAMENT

Dear Friends,

ICCF is delighted to announce the start of the 2nd WebChess Open tournament on the server. This announcement will be posted at the ICCF website and distributed to all national federations. The following Frequently Asked Questions setup clarifies all information applicable for this edition.

What is the Webchess Open Tournament?

It is a tournament open to all correspondence chess players around the World, with or without any previous ICCF experience.

Who is in charge?

The responsible ICCF Officer for this tournament is Valer-Eugen Demian (CAN), ICCF Non-Title Tournaments Commissioner (NTTC). He will also appoint the Tournament Directors. Please direct all general inquiries to him at: vdemian@shaw.ca

Guido Bresadola (ITA) has been appointed Central Tournament Leader (CTL). He is in charge of registration, pairings and other tournament related issues. His email address is: asigc@galactica.it

How and when to enter?

Multiple entries are allowed. Go to the ICCF Webserver main page www.iccf-webchess.com click on “New Events”, find the tournament in the main list and click “Enter”. It allows you to register with a click of a button using one of the two methods available:

- a) Contact your national federation (NF). Provide your ICCF-ID (if you have one) and a valid email address you will use for this tournament. Your national federation will forward your entry to CTL Guido Bresadola (ITA).
- b) Qualified players may use Direct Entry (DE).

Third method available for **new players** to ICCF:

- c) New players to ICCF are allowed to enter 1 group for free. They should send their contact information: name, email address and country to Valer Eugen Demian NTTCC. If they wish to enter more than one group, all extra entries should be paid for as described above.

Registration is open as soon as DE is setup for this tournament and it closes on May 31st, 2006.

How much does it cost?

The payment is linked to the method of registration used:

- a) Registering via your NF. Receiving payment of the event fee and confirmation of your registration are handled by your NF.
- b) Registering via DE. All information is implemented. Pay the fee in one single transaction.
- c) New players to ICCF play 1 group for free.

What is the time frame?

The tournament will be played in three stages: preliminaries, semifinal and final.

Preliminaries will start in mid June 2006, with an approximate end date of Dec 15th, 2007. The other 2 stages will be scheduled accordingly at a later date.

How will I play?

Preliminaries will consist of groups of 7 (seven) players each. All games will be rated. The latest ICCF Playing Rules Webserver will apply for all stages as applicable. You can read them online at

www.iccf-webchess.com

by clicking on “Online Help” → “Server rules”.

How do I qualify from preliminaries?

Only the section winners will qualify for the semifinal stage. Ties will be broken according to the ICCF Tournament Rules, Article 5.

Is there a sponsor?

The sponsor for the 1,000 USD in prizes for the Webserver Open is ZPR Investment Management. ZPR is celebrating the investment theories and techniques of Professor Zavanelli that has resulted in its number one ranking for the best 5 year performance for Global Equity investing and its second place ranking for US Equity investing out of nearly 7000 money managers. Source is Pensions and Investments online; www.pionline.com and Morningstar. ZPR was also ranked by the magazine Wall Street On-Line as having the best risk adjusted performance for the last 3 years. ZPR's main website is www.zprim.com Its logo is a black chess Knight.

What are the prizes available?

Cash prizes only will be paid in the **final** stage based on the following structure:

1st place: 250 USD

2nd place: 200 USD

3rd place: 150 USD

4th place: 100 USD

5th place: 50 USD

The remaining 250 USD will be allocated for server maintenance. Ties for the prizes will also be broken according to the ICCF Tournament Rules.

We welcome with open arms regular ICCF players as well as new ones, eager to test their skills with us. It is our hope you will enjoy the experience on our server and will use this opportunity to make new friends around the World.

Play Webserver chess with ICCF! Join your National CC Federation and the ICCF community!

AMICI SUMUS!

Frank Geider
World Tournament Director (WTD)

Valer-Eugen Demian
Non-Title Tournaments Commissioner (NTTC)