

KORCHNOI DEFEATS NUCHESS IN HALF A JIFFY

As reported by Jaap van den Herik

On April 9, 1984 the Dutch city of Delft witnessed a combat between International Grandmaster Victor Korchnoi and the chess program Nuchess. The reader's mind might wander back to 1982 when, in the same town, Belle played Donner (See ICCA Newsletter, Vol. 5, No. 1). The main point of the game, played under normal tournament conditions, then was calibrating the strength of the world champion computer-chess program against the international grandmaster level. Now, two years later, ideas have evolved. The Dutch company ORGA-INFO, whose general manager, Ir. H. Stol, graduated from Delft University of Technology, organized this contest of skills, being convinced that even in a field where computers can reap glory, as in chess, a grandmaster, being creative, can still outplay any computer program (and will, for ever and a day?!). Since ORGA-INFO, as a Computer Consultant's Bureau, concentrates on the human element, the human participation was strengthened by involving two more human competitors, the grandmasters Jan Timman and William Lombardy. Their game, it was agreed, was to begin with the position created when Nuchess left its opening library.

THE BEST LAID SCHEMES O' MICE AN' MEN ..

The thought behind the scheme was that Timman and Nuchess (both playing Black) would follow different courses, so the games would offer instructive material for a comparison between humans and machines. Everything was arranged in apple-pie order. The time control had been settled at 40 moves in 40 minutes followed by 20 moves in five more minutes. The Cray-I computer on which Nuchess ran was only at the programmers' disposal in their time zone's early hours. The designers, David Slate and William Blanchard, had high notions about the program's performance. They expected an honorable defeat.

When the Dutch Parliament's Speaker, Dr. Dolman, ceremoniously had played the first move, 1. Nf3, for Korchnoi, Nuchess flashed back, 1. ... d5. Slate was given 2. c4, passing it on to his computer by way of Blanchard. Shortly afterwards, Slate's voice was heard in the hall: "We are out of book". This statement aroused understandable hilarity and commotion among the organizers. Lombardy and Timman, it was agreed, were not to begin after 1. Nf3 d5 2. c4, but they would start after Black's tenth move, so arbitrators decided, allotting its due share to human creativity.

Unfortunately, as seen below, Black's position was already untenable at the tenth move, and indeed Timman was doomed to lose. Lombardy finished off his opponent strategically, whereas Korchnoi did it tactically. The results did not differ. The only conclusion we can draw is that there is a long way to go before a grandmaster and a computer can be said to compete on equal terms.

STILL REASONABLE STRENGTH

In encounters with such discrepancies of strength, a computer's skills are not shown to their best advantage. Still, as Münnighof, a Dutch chess journalist, discovered, the skills are there. He was persuaded to play a speed-

Jaap van den Herik: Korchnoi Defeats Nuchess in Half a Jiffy

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chess game against Nuchess and hoped to beat the computer at its own game but lost The audience was forced to reconsider their judgement on the playing strength of computers. Münnighof did not grieve; in his report on the game he could state: "Man can still win against a computer; but I am also a man, so ..."

To revert to reporting our game:

White: V. Korchnoi

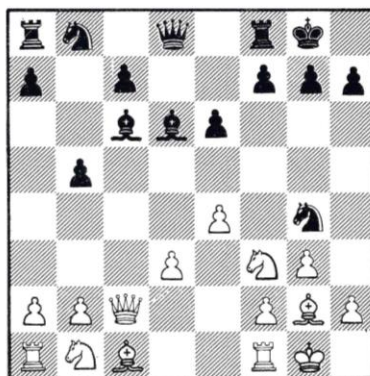
Black: Nuchess

1. Nf3 d5 2. c4 e6 3. g3 Nf6 4. Bg2 dxc4
5. Qa4+ Bd7 6. Qxc4 Bc6 7. O-O b5?

To chess-players, this move is a blunder as big as any. However, the program "considers" that its move will force White to play the Queen for the third time within eight moves, and that White subsequently will be stopped from developing a minor piece. In short, it "reasons" it has completely spoiled any bonus White might have derived from such development.

8. Qc2 Bd6 (Be7 is preferable) 9. d3 O-O 10. e4 Ng4?

A weak move not boding much good to Timman.



11. d4 f5? 12. Ng5 Qd7 13. Qb3 Bxe4 14. Nxe6 Bxg2
15. Nxf8+ Qf7 16. Qxf7+ Kxf7 17. Kxg2 Kxf8 18. Nc3 a6
19. a4 b4 20. Nd5 Nc6 21. Bf4 Bxf4 22. Nxf4 Nxd4
23. Nac1 Ra7 24. Rc4 Nf3 25. Rxb4 Kf7 26. Kxf3 Nxb2+
27. Kg2 Nxf1 28. Kxf1 Ke7 29. Rb8 c6 30. a5 Rd7
31. Rb6 g5 32. Nh3 g4 33. Nf4 Rd2 34. b4 Kd6
35. Rxa6 Rb2 36. Rb6 Rb1+ 37. Ke2 Ra1 38. Ke3 Ra3+
39. Kd4 Ra2 40. Nd3 h6 Black resigns.

By agreement, Lombardy and Timman take it from the tenth move, diagrammed above.

White: W. Lombardy

Black: J.H. Timman

11. d4 f5?

While Timman may have had good reasons to consider his position to have been lost, his move (the same as Nuchess') is disputable. Timman stated afterwards that 11. ... Be7 would have been better. Probably Timman was over-

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whelmed by the computer's play, which had already produced its move before the human players began.

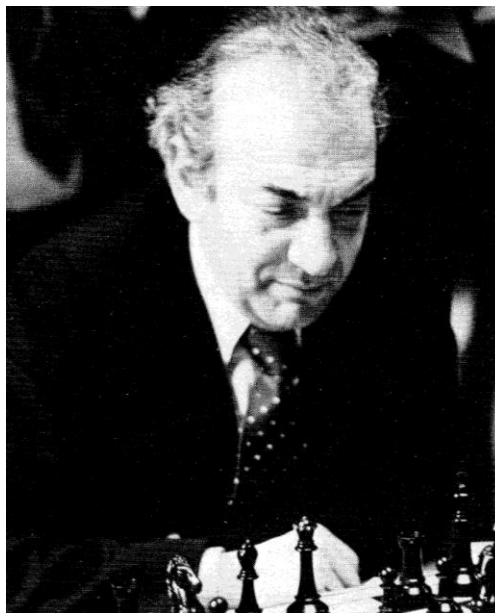
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|-----|-------|------|-----|------|------|-----|------|------|-----|------|------|
| 12. | e5 | Be7 | 13. | h3 | Nh6 | 14. | Bxh6 | gxh6 | 15. | Nc3 | b4 |
| 16. | Ne2 | Be4 | 17. | Qd2 | Bg5 | 18. | Nxg5 | hgx5 | 19. | Bxe4 | fxe4 |
| 20. | Qxb4 | Nc6 | 21. | Qc4 | Qd5 | 22. | Rac1 | Ne7 | 23. | Qxd5 | Nxd5 |
| 24. | Nc3 | Nxc3 | 25. | Rxc3 | Rad8 | 26. | Rfd1 | Rf3 | 27. | Rxf3 | exf3 |
| 28. | Rd3 | c5 | 29. | Rxf3 | cxd4 | 30. | Rd3 | Rd5 | 31. | Kg2 | Kf7 |
| 32. | Kf3 | Rxe5 | 33. | Rxd4 | a5 | 34. | h4 | gxh4 | 35. | Rxh4 | h5 |
| 36. | Rc4 | Kf6 | 37. | a3 | Rd5 | 38. | Ke3 | e5 | 39. | b4 | axb4 |
| 40. | axb4 | Rd1 | 41. | Ke4 | Rel+ | 42. | Kd5 | Re2 | 43. | f4 | exf4 |
| 44. | Rxf4+ | Kg5 | 45. | Rf3 | Rb2 | 46. | Kc4 | Kg4 | 47. | Rc3 | |

Black resigns.



Photo by
Louisa Lombardy

The grandmasters Lombardy and Timman are preparing to copy the opening moves from Korchnoi-Nuchess. To Timman's right, Mr. Stol suggests adopting 10 moves instead of 1.5.



Vice World Champion Viktor Korchnoi
in the match against Nuchess

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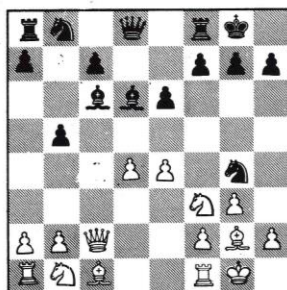
ORGA-INFO Delft Kortsjnoi-Nuchess

Voor dit bericht - een laatste nieuws - is maar weinig ruimte in dit nummer beschikbaar. Daarom nu kort, volgend nummer uitvoeriger, over het aantrekkelijke, lumineuze idee van de leiding van het organisatie-informatica adviesbureau ORGA-INFO Nederland b.v. om aan de ingebruikneming van een nieuwe behuizing luister bij te zetten door twee schaakpartijen. Een tussen Kortsjnoi en het schaakprogramma Nuchess van Slate en Blanchard; de tweede tussen Lombardy en Timman. En wel zo, dat het laatste paar pas zou beginnen te spelen in de stand waar Nuchess uit zijn openingsboek zou zijn. Tot schrik van regisseur Van den Herik meldde Nuchess (uit Chippoo Falls in de USA) dit al na drie 'halve zetten'. Besloten werd dat Lombardy dan maar moest beginnen na de tiende zet; in feite was het Timman die de eerste 'menselijke' zwarte zet deed.

Ik maak van onze ruimte- en tijd-nood een deugd door voor de lezers van Computerschaak en voor hun computers slechts de bedoelde 21 halve zetten te laten afdrukken. Dan kan door mens en/of machine nog meer vergelijkingsmateriaal worden geproduceerd dan op 9 april in Delft ten huize van ORGA-INFO. In het juni-nummer hoop ik uitvoeriger te kunnen berichten wat er mis ging en wat goed. Ook hoe amateur, sterke amateur Alexander in een bliksempartijtje tegen Nuchess werd gevloerd. En verder, niet in de laatste plaats, welke filosofie general manager Stol huldigde over creativiteit en intuïtie!

De 21 halve zetten waren (Kortsjnoi had wit): 1. Pf3 d5 2. c4 e6 3. g3 Pf6 4. Lg2 c4: 5. Da4+ Ld7 6. Dc4: Lc6 7. 0-0 b5 8. Dc2 Ld6 9. d3 0-0 10. e4 Pg4 11. d4 ... (40 zetten in 40 minuten).

Na 21 halve zetten in de partij, het partijtje (40 zetten in 40 minuten), tussen Kortsjnoi en Nuchess, tussen Delft en Chippoo Falls, was de volgende stand bereikt.



Van daaruit won Kortsjnoi (wit) als volgt van Nuchess (Slate & Blanchard):

11 f5 12 Pg5 Dd7 13 Db3 Le4: 14 Pe6: Lg2 15 Pf8: + Df7 16 Df7: + Kf7: 17 Kg2: Kf8: 18 Pc3 a6 19 a4 b4 20 Pd5 Pc6 21 Lf4 Lf4: 22 Pf4: Pd4: 23 Tac1 Ta7 24 Tc4 Pf3 25 Tb4: Kf7 26 Kf3: Ph2: + 27 Kg2 Pf1: 28 Kf1: Ke7 29 Tb8 c6 30 a5 Td7 31 Tb6 g5 32 Ph3 g5 32 Ph3 g4 33 Pf4 Td2 34 b4 Kd6 35 Ta6: Tb2 36 Tb6 Tb1+ 37 Ke2 Ta1 38 Ke3 Ta3+ 39 Kd4 Ta2 40 Pd3 h6 zwart geeft op.

De parallelle partij, tussen Lombardy en Timman verliep zo:

11 f5 12 e5 Le7 13 h3 Ph6 14 Lxh6 gh 15 Pc3 b4 16 Pe2 Le4 17 Dd2 Lg5 18 Pgx5 hg 19 Lxe4 fe 20 Dxb4 Pc6 21 Dc4 Dg5 22 Tac1 Pe7 23 Dxd5 Pxd5 24 Pc3 Pxc3 25 Txc3 Tad8 26 Tfd1 Tf3 27 Txf3 ef3 28 Td3 c5 29 Txf3 cd 30 Td3 Td5 31 Kg2 Kf7 32 Kf3 Txe5 33 Txd4 a5 34 h4 gxh 35 Txh4 h5 36 Tc4 Kf6 37 a3 Td5 38 Ke3 e5 39 b4 axb 40 axb Td1 41 Ke4 Te1+ 42 Kd5 Te2 43 f4 exf 44 Txf4+ Kg5 45 Tf3 Tb2 46 Kc4 Kg4 47 Tc3 zwart geeft op.

De verslaggeving in de kranten was vaak weinig precies. De discussie over creativiteit met manager Stol is nog niet af. Maar het beloofde vluggerdje Nuchess-Münninghoff kunnen we wel geven:

1 e4 c5 2 Pf3 Pc6 3 d4 cd4 4 Pxd4 g6 5 Pc3 Lg7 6 Le3 Pf6 7 Lc4 Da5 8 Pxc6 bc6 9 Dd4 0-0 10 Dc5 Dc7 11 Dxe7 Pg4 12 0-0-0 Pxe3 13 fe3 Db6 14 Td3 Tb8 15 Lb3 d5 16 Pa4 Da5 17 ed5 Lf5 18 dc6 Lxd3 19 cd3 Tfc8 20 Dxf7+ Kh8 21 Dc4 Tb4 22 Dc2 De5 23 e4 Tcb8 24 Pc5 Td4 25 Pd7 Dg5+ 26 Dd2 Dxd2 27 Kxd2 Tc8 28 Ld5 Tb4 29 b3 a5 30 Tf1 Lh6+ 31 Ke2 a4 32 ba4 Tb2+ 33 Ke1 Ld2+ 34 Kf2 Lf4+ 35 Kg1 g5 36 g3 Le3+ 37 Kh1 Td2 38 Pe5 Tb8 39 c7 Tc8 40 Pf7+ Kg7 41 Pd6 Txe7 42 Pe8+ Kh6 43 Pxc7 1-0

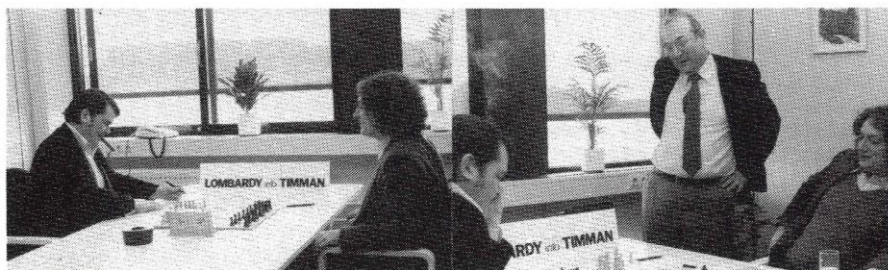


Foto links: Timman rookt niet; foto rechts: Timman niet echt bedreefd? (Foto's: mw L. Lombardy)

S. Kooi: Kortsjnoi tegen Nuchess

(Bron: CSVN tijdschrift Computerschaak mei-juni 1984) (photo copyright © by <http://www.schaakcomputers.nl/>) (600 dpi)

Willem Smit (37) is het gouden wonderkind van ons software-wereldje. Hij is de oprichter/eigenaar van de snelgroeijende *Datex-holding*, moeder van een snel uitbreidend groepje dochterondernemingen.

Een van de nieuwe dochterondernemingen is het informatie-adviesburo *Orga-Info Ned. B.V.* in Delft. Het klinkt allemaal snel en modern. Om de geboorte van de nieuwe dochter te vieren had Willem Smit grootmeester Viktor Kortsjnoi uitgenodigd om via een satellietverbinding een partij schaak te spelen tegen de snelst denkende computer ter wereld. Dat zou op het ogenblik de *Cray 1* in de Verenigde Staten zijn. Deze computer is in staat 72 miljoen stellingen te analyseren in anderhalf uur. Het menselijk brein gaat niet verder dan zesduizend.

Niemand minder dan Tweede Kamervoorzitter *dr. Dick Dolman* verrichtte de openingszet. Jaren geleden zei *Jan-Hein Donner* al in deze rubriek, dat er NOOIT een computer zal komen die het wint van de menselijke creativiteit. Voorlopig heeft hij gelijk. Want ook in Delft

Computer verloor weer



■ Kortsjnoi aan het schaakbord, terwijl de eigenaar van *Datex-holding*, Willem Smit, toekijkt.

bleek de computer al na dertien zetten kansloos. Kamervoorzitter Dolman, een fervent en verdienstelijk schaker, schudde tijdens de par-

tij een paar maal het hoofd over zoveel domheid van de „knapste” computer ter wereld. Binnen anderhalf uur won Kortsjnoi zijn partij.

Computer verloor weer – Viktor Kortsjnoi vs Nuchess op een Cray 1 supercomputer

(Bron: De Telegraaf – zondag 11 april 1984) (photo copyright © by <http://www.schaakcomputers.nl/>)

Related weblinks

<https://www.chessprogramming.org/Cray-1>
Supercomputer Cray 1

<https://www.chessprogramming.org/Nuchess>
Chess program Nuchess

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Viktor_Korchnoi
Viktor Korchnoi

https://www.chessprogramming.org/David_Levy
David Levy

https://www.chessprogramming.org/Levy_versus_Chess_1978
David Levy versus Chess 1978 & 1979

http://www.schaakcomputers.nl/hein_veldhuis/database/files/06-1984,%20Schakend%20Nederland,%20J.%20v.d.%20Herik,%20Levy%20-%20Cray%20Blitz%20en%20Kortsjnoi%20-%20Nuchess.pdf
Jaap van den Herik: Over Levy tegen Cray Blitz & Kortsjnoi tegen Nuchess