

Variant Chess

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Make cheques payable to : P. Wood
Address: 39 Linton Road, Hastings, East
Sussex, TN34 1TW, England.

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RANDOMISED CHESS

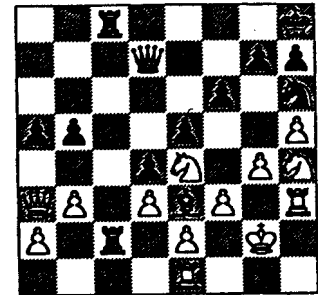
Randomised Chess has featured in *VC* before; there was a long article by Mr.M.Horne in issue number 6. Mention has been made of a tournament held in Brighton in April 1976 which unfortunately only attracted 10 competitors, (*VC7*). One game was published in the *Brighton and Hove Gazette* of April 23, 1976 with annotations by Mr. G. H. James. This is published below.

White and Black have separate randomisations.

White: Gluckman W.
RBBQKNNR
Black: James G. H.
QBRRBNNK
(Annotations by G.H. James).

This game was awarded the Best Game Prize.

1.c4 c5 Black wants to open lines quickly for the bishops and rooks and use the knights defensively. White's idea is to be as flexible as possible, but failure to place his rooks in the centre leaves him behind in development. 2.Nf3 b6 3.b3 d5 4.cxd5 Qxd5 5.Ne3 Qb7 6.Bb2 f6 7.h4 Bg6 8.h5 Be4 9.Nh4 Nh6 10.f3? Weakening the black squares on the Kingside. Better was 10.Bxe4,Qxe4,11.d3. 10...Bg3+ 11.Kf1 Bxb1 12.Rxb1 Qd7 13.d3 e5 Black now dominates the centre. 14.Qc2 Ne6 15.Rh3 If 15.Nhf5, Nd4 wins a piece. 15...Bf4 16.Nd1 Or 16.Kf2 Nd4 17.Bxd4 cxd4 etc. 16...b5 17.Nf2 Nd4 18.Bxd4 cxd4 19.Qb2 Rc6 20.Qa3 Rdc8 21.g4 Be3 22.Kg2 Rc2 23.Re1 a5 Threatening 24...Bd2 and 25...Bb4, trapping the Queen. 24.Ne4



24....Ng4! 25.fxg4 Qxg4+ 26.Ng3 Or 26.Kh2,Bf4+. 26...Bd2 27.R1h1 Bb4 28.Ng6+ Kg8 Not 28...hxg6 29.hxg+ Kg8 30.Rh8# 29.Qxb4 Rxe2+ White resigns.

I will be making attempts to find and publish other games from this tournament especially as there were several strong players participating, (the winner D. Springgay, G.H.James, D.N.L.Levy, D.Goodman). If any readers can assist in this I would of course be grateful.

Mr.M.Horne takes an interest in Randomised Chess and has been conjecturing whether Black's pieces should mirror White's, or whether the white and black pieces should be separately randomised, (with the exception of each player's Bishops which should run on different colours). Having a different randomisation for the white and black pieces leads to the possibility of one of the players gaining an advantageous array, which led Mr.Horne to favour a mirror-randomisation. However a telephone game between Mr. Horne and myself when both Kings were on the "g" file led to a certain stodginess in the opening and early middlegame play. In the following game, which was played in a tournament in 1992, the separate randomisation

produced an unbalanced position and dynamic play. The players' approach to the game obviously was another cause of the dynamism, but Mr.Horne, I believe, is now inclining to the view that separate randomisation is preferable to mirror-randomisation.

White: Murphy D.

QNBRNKB

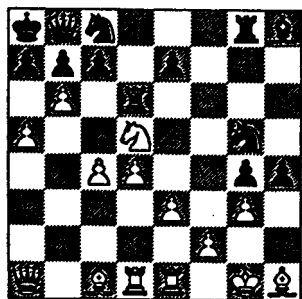
Black: Wooldridge L.

KQNRBNRB

"Medley" Tournament 18.1, 1992

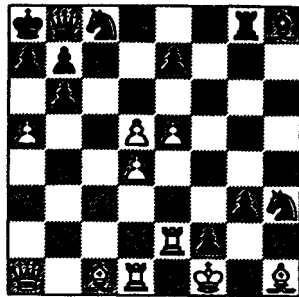
(Annotations by P. Donovan, with comments by the editor in *italics*.)

1.g3 g5 2.a4?! David thought 2.d4 would have been better. 2...d5 3.d4 f5 4.a5 Rd6 5.Ne3 f4! A lively pawn sacrifice. 6.Nxd5 Bc6 7.Nbc3 Ne6 Maybe just 7...e6. - Then 8.Ndb4 Bxh1 9.Kxh1 fxcg 10.hxcg Bxd4 11.Ne4, with a double-edged game. 8.e3 h5 Or 8...fxg 9.fxcg Rgd8 10.Qa2 h5. 9.b4 fxcg3 10.hxcg3 fxcg3 is perhaps better. 10...g4 11.b5 Bxd5 12.Nxd5 h4 Better is immediately 12...Ng5; with Nf3+ to follow cutting off the Bishop's diagonal. 13.c4 a6 is very strong here, eg. 13...Nd8 14.axb Nxb7 15.Qc3 Rd7 16.Qc6 Rgd8 17.Nb4 Nd6 18.Na6 Qc8 19.Nc5 and wins. If 13...c6, then simply 14.axb+ Qxb7 15.bxc6 Rxc6 16.Nb4. 13...Ng5 Now that Black can block by Nf3+ he should be all right. 14.b6 c5 forces Black to play 14.Rxd5, ie., if Rdd8 15.b6; while if Rd7 then 15.c6, and if then bxc, 16.Nb6+ wins, (or 15.. Rdd8, when cxb+ wins).

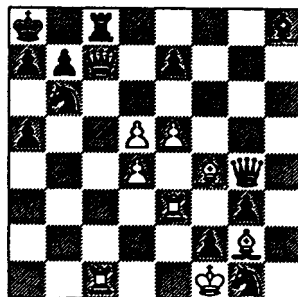


14...Rxd5 Nice move! - I beg to differ. Much stronger here is cxb and if 15.axb Nh3+ 16.Kf1 Nxb6, and if then 17.c5 Rxd5! 18.cxb6 Rf5. If 17.c5 is not played, Black's Kingside

attack is very strong. - If 15.a6, then Nf3+ stops everything. 15.cxd5 If 15.Bxd5, then e6 15.Bg2 hxg, followed by Nf3+. 15...hxcg3 16.e4 This, and the previous move, are the moves that turn the tide. 16...Nh3+ Black's 16th looks a bit odd as against 16...Nf3+. If 16...cxb6 then 17.e5, blocking out Queen and Bishop. - If 16...Nf3+, 17.Bxf3 gxf3, 18.Bf4 stops Black's attack. 17.Kf1 gxf2 18.Re2 cxb6 19.e5 g3 bxa5 should be played here.



20.Bg2 Perhaps unnecessary. White missed a6! (threatening d6), 20...Rg7 21.Qc3! with Rc2 to follow; White has too many threats, and Black must shed material. 20...Ng1 21.Re4 This aims to back up Bf4, but it's a lemon blocking the Bishop. It should go, if at all, to c2, but I would suggest 21.a6. - eg. 21...Nxe2 22.axb+ Qxb7 23.d6 wins. 21...Qc7 He must activate the Queen to have any chances. 22.Qa2 bxa5!? Interesting. Stopping a6. If 23.d6 then 23...Qb6 and White cannot take the Rook. 23.Bf4 Qb6 24.Qc4 Qg6 25.Re3 Preparing to take the "g" and "f" pawns followed by the advanced Knight. 25...Qg4 Attacking Rook and Bishop, but David whether by accident or design has a strong reply. 26.Rc1 Nb6 27.Qc7 Rc8 If 27...Qxf4, then 28.d6 Rb8 29.dxe7 with a crushing game, (if 29...Qxe3, 30.Qxb8+).



28.Qxc8+ Nxc8 29.Bxc3 Nh3 30.e6 Nb6 31.d6 Nc4 With two threats of mate .But it's just the last kick of the dying horse. 32.Re2 Qxd4 33.dxe7 Black resigns.

A most fascinating tactical battle - the kind of game that can result, I believe, more from a randomised opening than from the standard starting array. 1-0

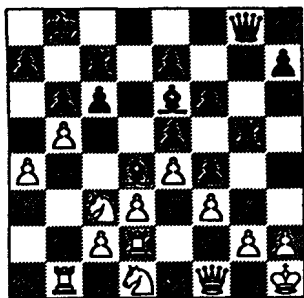
Obviously the "normal" chess starting array is a mirror-array, and this need not lead to stodgy play. Having the King centralised with the possibility of either Kingside or Queenside castling gives a certain degree of randomisation even in "normal" chess and this can create uncertainty and tension, often giving difficult choices to the players. A limited form of randomisation might be for the King to be placed only on the "d" or "e" file with the other pieces randomised, (either mirror or separate). If castling choices are to be kept, (potential further randomisation), the Rooks could remain in the corners and the other 5 pieces randomised. This might be interesting. I give a game played between computer programs recently where the Kings and Rooks are placed on their normal squares, while the remaining pieces have separate randomisation for White and Black. Castling is permitted.

White: Fritz 486 RNBKQBQR

Black: M-chess 286 RBBNKQNR

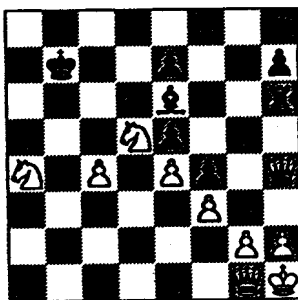
1.e4 Ne6 2.Bc4 c6 3.Bxe6 Both computers seemed to like this move and the reply 3...dxe6, although 3...fxe6 seems better. After 3...dxe6 the black queen is hemmed in. 3...dxe6 4.d3 Nf6 5.Nbc3 b6 6.f3 M-Chess, which throughout played a more active game, was expecting 6.f4. 6...Bd6 7.Qe3 e5 8.Qe2 Be6 5...b6 enabled the bishop c8 to be developed at a6 (or b7) but as e5 has been forced on Black, e6 is a better square for it. This has rendered b6 rather a waste of time and has left it as a potential weakness. 9.0-0 0-0-0 Both

"players" have castled into rather exposed positions, but Black has had to do this because of the problem of his Queen's development. 10.Be3 Rd7 11.a3 M-Chess was anticipating a4 here. 11...Kb8 12.Nf2 Nh5 Fritz, which altogether played a more solid and wary style of chess than M-Chess, gave as Black's best plan: h6,g6,Qg7,and Rhd8. Black's play is more interesting though. 13.Rad1 M-Chess expected b4. 13...f6 14.Rfe1 g5 15.Rd2 Nf4 16.Bxf4 gxf4 17.b4 The game is developing in a most interesting way. The players are attacking on opposite wings. M-Chess was expecting 17.d4 here. 17...Rg8 18.Rb1 Rg5 19.b5 Qg8 Fritz suggested c5 first; although the c5 square is taken from the bishop, there is the possibility of c5-c4 later. 20.Qf1 Rc7 If 20...Bxa3, then 21.bxc6 followed by Nb5; but of course c5 can still be played either on this or the next move. 21.a4 Bc5 The immediate threat is Bh3. 22.Kh1 Bd4 23.Nfd1



23.... Qc8 Fritz's rating of Black's game was gradually increasing; after the next few moves its increase was more rapid. Interesting is 23...Rh5, (threatening Rxh2+), 24.Ne2 Be3 25.Nxe3 fxe3 26.Rd1 cxb5 27.a5 Rxc2 28.axb6 Bb3 29.Rdc1 Rd2 30.Qe1 Ba4, and Black is rampant. 24.Rc1 Qe8 Black loses the momentum of the attack after these last two Queen moves as White defends his weak points, and although White is forced to give up the exchange he gets strong Queenside pressure in recompense. 25.bxc6 Qh5 26.Rf2 26...Qxh2+ is threatened with mate to follow. If 26.h3, then Bxh3 27.gxh3 Rg3 28.Kh2, (if 28.Rh2 Qxf3+), 28...Rxf3 and Black

is winning. 26...Bxf2 The exchange is the exchange, but from now on White's game gradually improves, (there are green shoots appearing.) 27.Qxf2 Rxc6 28.a5 Rg6 Fritz suggested f6-f5. White has been using a lot more time than Black over his moves. 29.Rb1 Rh6 30.Qg1 Ka8 31.axb6 Rxb6 32.Rxb6 axb6 33.Nb2 f5 The position is most interesting. White is the exchange down, but Black's Queenside is threadbare. The mate threat is needed to stop White's Queen coming decisively into the game. Meanwhile the White Knights can infiltrate. 34.Nba4 fxe4 35.dxe4 Qh4 36.Nxb6+ Kb7 37.Ncd5 Kc6 This is a mistake: Bxd5 should have been played, eg. 38.Nxd5 Rc6 39.Qf1 Kc8. M-Chess had about 5 minutes per move before the time control at move 40, but played badly under this "pressure". 38.c4 Kb7 39.Na4



39.... Bc8 Not the best. Again 39...Bxd5 is all right, eg. 40.exd5 Qg3 41.Nc5+ Kc8 Ne4, when Black can force a draw by Rh2+. Fritz gave 39...Bf7 40.Nc5+ Kc8 41.Nd3 Bxd5 42.exd5 Qg3, (when if 43.Nxe5 then 43...Rxh2+ and draws; and if 43.Qc5+, then 43...Kd8 44.Qg1 Kc8 also draws), 43. Nf2 Qg7, (threatening Ra6). Interesting is 44.Qa1, (44.Ne4 is simpler and should draw, 44...Rb6 45.c5 e4! when Black may be winning. 40.Nc5+ Kb8 Both computers actually lost on time. M-Chess, after thinking for 8 minutes, was three seconds over the time limit on move 40! 41.h3 If Bxh3, then 42.Qb1+ Kc8 43.Kg1! and White wins. The rest is a clean-up operation which Fritz smoothly accomplishes. 41...Rg6 42.Qa1 Qg5 43.Qb2+ Ka7 44.Nd3 Ra6 45.Nxe5 e6 46.Nb4 Rb6 47.c5 Rxb4 48.Qa3+

Ba6 49.Qxb4 Qxe5 50.Qb6+ Ka8 51.Qxa6+ Kb8 52.c6 Qc7 53.Qb5+ White wins.

A VARIANT FOR THE NINETIES.

Readers' attention is drawn to Murray's "A History of Chess," (page number 37), where he quotes the Arabic historian al-Mas'udi writing about 950 A.D. :

"But by far the most frequent use of ivory is for the manufacture of men for chess and nard. Several of the chessmen are figures of men or animals, a span high and big, or even more. During the game a man stands by, specially to carry the men from one square to the other. When the Indians play at chess or nard, they wager stuffs or precious stones. But it sometimes happens that a player, after losing all his possessions, will wager one of his limbs. For this they set beside the players a small copper vessel over a wood fire, in which is boiled a reddish ointment peculiar to the country, which has the property of healing wounds and stanching the flow of blood. If the man who wagered one of his fingers loses, he cuts off the finger with a dagger, and then plunges his hand in the ointment and cauterizes the wound. Then he returns to the game. If the luck is against him he sacrifices another finger, his hand, his fore-arm, his elbow, and other parts of his body. After each amputation he cauterizes the wound with the ointment, which is a curious mixture of ingredients and drugs peculiar to India, of extraordinary effectiveness. The custom of which I have spoken is a notorious fact."

"Variant Chess" recommends that this quotation should be brought to Mr. N. Short's notice immediately. He should be warned that this is the sort of thing that playing chess outside the jurisdiction of FIDE could lead to. Of course a Championship played under these regulations might command a higher fee...

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY OF JAPANESE CHESS

by Koichi Masukawa

The above was the subject of a lecture given in Paris at the annual "Collector's Society" meeting in 1992. The lecture was given by Mr. Masukawa and is a copy of his notes. This has already been published in the "Collector's Society Magazine" and Mr. Masukawa has kindly let me publish it here. I hope it will be new to most, if not all, of VC readers.

I would like to give an outline of the history of Japanese Chess, or SHOGI as it is known in Japan, and draw your attention to some of its characteristics. I would also like to make some comparisons between SHOGI and the form of chess commonly played in China called SHIANG-CHI.

From about the seventeenth century until comparatively recently it has been generally thought that SHOGI came from China. In what follows, I shall attempt to explain how this view came to be accepted. Then I would like to illustrate why I believe this theory to be erroneous.

At various stages throughout Japanese history, Chinese people brought much of their civilisation and culture to Japan. In turn, Japanese students went to China to study and brought back the fruits of their learning. In this way, both technological know-how and culture found its way to Japan. It therefore naturally followed that SHOGI too had come from China.

In a Japanese encyclopaedia called JIN RIN KUMMO ZUE published in 1690 we find an entry on the origin of SHOGI. We are told something to the effect that a Japanese intellectual by the name of MAKIBI KIBI went to China sometime during the eighth century. While he was in China, he learnt a kind of chess, probably SHIANG-CHI, that is, Chinese Chess, and upon returning to Japan brought the game back with him. Although there is no historical evidence for this story, from the seventeenth century up to the present day it has been widely believed as constituting historical fact.

In 1726, a government official in charge of the department dealing with cultural affairs under the TOKUGAWA Shogunate ordered the players of SHOGI and GO to disseminate knowledge of their skill. Actually, these official players belonged to what might be called, 'SHOGI families', or 'GO families'. That is, certain families who

passed on their skills from generation to generation, thus enabling them to maintain their status.

In a report drawn up by SOYO OHASHI, there is a statement something to the effect that SHOGI most probably came to Japan from China. The reasoning behind this is that Japan adopted Chinese characters as a means of transmitting the written word. And as Chinese characters are used to identify the pieces in both SHIANG-CHI and SHOGI, it followed that SHOGI came from SHIANG-CHI. This theory has been thought to be a reasonable one since, in contrast, International Chess and some other variants of chess differentiate the pieces by their shape.

Incidentally, when I say, 'pieces', I refer to what in International Chess is called material, that is, the pawns as well as the pieces. And for the sake of convenience, I would like to continue to use the words 'piece' and 'pieces' in this way.

To return to seventeenth century Japan then: There was little if any knowledge of the outside world. In general, people were ignorant of world history and therefore ignorant of the history of chess. Moreover, the Japanese people of that time thought that anything and everything that came from China was excellent. So to present SHOGI in an attractive light, the authorities of the day attributed Chinese origins to the game.

Since that time, many introductions to books on SHOGI have pointed to its supposed origin in China. As I am sure you are all very much aware, if you keep repeating some doctrine, no matter how erroneous it may be, people start to believe it as unquestionable fact. This is what has happened in Japan with regard to the origins of SHOGI. The view that SHOGI came from China continued up until the mid-1980s.

In 1975, I wrote an article for a SHOGI magazine in which I pointed out the error of this theory. Since then, I have also written a history of SHOGI in two volumes published by HOSEI DAIGAKU. The first volume came out in 1977 and the second came out in 1985. Once again, I showed why I believe the theory that SHOGI came from CHINA to be mistaken. And while the theory of the Chinese origins of

SHOGI still persists in some quarters, this belief has definitely declined.

Actually, academic or scientific research in the field of SHOGI is quite new. This is largely because SHOGI players, quite naturally, are more interested in playing the game than studying about it.

If we take a closer look at SHIANG-CHI and SHOGI we can find some differences which I believe to be quite significant. First of all, let's take a look at the board:

ONE: SHIANG-CHI is played on the lines of the board not on the squares as in SHOGI. The board is 9 lines by 10 lines. And the pieces move along the lines.

TWO: There is a river in the centre of the board called the KAKAI in Japanese. This river divides the two sides. The piece called the Elephant can not cross this river.

THREE: In SHIANG-CHI there is an area called the KYUKYU that is usually referred to as the Imperial Palace in English. The King and the Guards are not allowed to leave this area.

SHOGI on the other hand, as I said a moment ago, is played on the squares. The board being 9 by 9. Later on I would like to say a few words about an earlier variant of SHOGI called CHU-SHOGI which is played on a board 12 by 12 squares. Anyway, whatever the SHOGI, there is no area called a river, or even equivalent to a river. Neither is there an Imperial Palace. Therefore, all the pieces move in a comparatively free way as there are no restricting rivers or palaces.

So now let us take a look at the pieces:

ONE: The pieces in SHIANG-CHI are round and the name of each piece is indicated by a single Chinese character.

TWO: In SHIANG-CHI, each player has a total of 16 pieces. The pieces are red and black or dark blue. The senior or stronger player has the red pieces and the other player has the black or dark blue pieces.

THREE: In the initial set-up, the pawns are placed in the front on every other line. SHIANG-CHI has fewer pawns than any other form of chess, with the exception of the form of chess which is played in Korea, called by the rather similar sounding name of CHANG-GI.

FOUR: In SHIANG-CHI, there is a piece called the Cannon with special characteristics.

FIVE: In SHIANG-CHI, the names of the pieces on one side are written differently from the names of the pieces on the other side.

As you probably know, the pieces in SHOGI are five-sided and wedge-shaped. The names of the pieces are usually indicated with two Chinese characters.

The colour of the pieces on both sides is the same. A particular characteristic of SHOGI as it is usually played today, is that a captured piece may be used again as one's own piece. This characteristic has added considerable complexity and fascination to the game.

If SHOGI had come from China, it would more closely resemble SHIANG-CHI in the same way Korean Chess, that is CHANG-GI, does. However, as I have tried to point out, there are several differences between SHIANG-CHI and SHOGI - differences which I believe to be significant.

The forms of chess to be found in South East Asia, like International Chess, have pieces which resemble small statues, on the other hand, the pieces in SHOGI are flat and the name of each piece is inscribed on it. However, I believe these characteristics to be of minor importance. Rather, there are certain similarities which I believe to be relevant.

To begin with, the pieces move on the squares not on the lines as they do in SHIANG-CHI. In fact, the SHOGI of ancient Japan most closely resembles the form of chess played in Thailand.

So far, I have been dealing largely with the characteristics which make SHOGI and SHIANG-CHI different.

We know that SHIANG-CHI was played at least as early as the eleventh century. Emperor HUI ZONG who reigned from 1101 to 1125 often played SHIANG-CHI and the pieces he used are still in existence today. These pieces are,

in fact, no different from the pieces used by players of SHIANG-CHI today.

In 1973, some Chinese historians excavated a ship in a derelict port called QUAN ZHOU on the south coast of China. The port is thought to have been used from the eighth century. The ship, dated as being from the thirteenth century, was found to have been used for carrying cargo overseas and for trading. As excavation continued, some coins were discovered. And later on, some SHIANG-CHI pieces were found. There were both red and black pieces - eighteen in all. These pieces are at present kept in QUAN ZHOU Museum. Two things seem to be apparent from this excavation. One, SHIANG-CHI was played by people on the social level of a ship's crew as well as by the aristocracy. And two, there appears to have been no change in the game up until the present day.

Having spoken at some length on the differences between SHIANG-CHI and SHOGI, I would now like to go on to say a few words on the history of SHOGI, the Japanese version of chess.

Among the board games played in ancient Japan, TRICKTRACK or BACKGAMMON, and GO were the most common. It appears that SHOGI came after these games, some three hundred years later.

The first reliable document in which we come across the word SHOGI, is an essay entitled 'SHIN SARUGAKKI' written around 1058. Recently, some SHOGI pieces which have been dated at 1094 and 1095 were discovered in the ruins of an old government office in Hyogo in the west of Japan. It now becomes clearer that SHOGI was played in Japan in the eleventh century, however the eleventh century SHOGI pieces do not resemble the ones used in SHIANG-CHI. Rather they look like the pieces used in the SHOGI that is usually played today.

In an encyclopaedia compiled in about 1120 called 'NI CHU REKI', two kinds of SHOGI are mentioned. The first kind is simply called 'SHOGI'. We know how all the pieces move, and judging from the pieces, the game was played on a board of nine by nine squares. In fact, this game is rather similar to modern-day SHOGI, the only differences being that there is no HISHA, the equivalent of the Rook in International Chess, or KAKU, the equivalent of the Bishop. However, the game is rather simple when compared with the SHOGI of today. The second type of SHOGI played in the twelfth century is called

'DAI-SHOGI'. It was played on a board thirteen squares each way with a total of sixty-eight pieces, that is, thirty-four pieces to each side.

Of the two forms of SHOGI that were played in the eleventh and twelfth centuries the larger one gradually gave way to the smaller one. This was probably due to the political upheavals towards the end of the twelfth century when power shifted from the aristocracy to the SAMURAI.

In the fourteenth century another form of SHOGI appeared. The game was called 'CHU-SHOGI', (*Ed. This is sometimes known as "Middle Shogi"*), in contrast to the smaller and larger forms that came out earlier. CHU-SHOGI is played on a board of twelve squares each way. There are twenty-one different pieces not including promotions. The total number of all the pieces is ninety-two, that is to say, forty-six pieces on each side. There are many fascinating pieces with many complex and different moves. We can see from the diaries of Buddhist monks and the aristocracy, that up until the sixteenth century, CHU-SHOGI was a game that was played and enjoyed more than any other form of SHOGI.

There was also a game called SHO-SHOGI, which appeared in the middle of the fifteenth century. This game was very similar to the SHOGI which is generally played today. It was also similar to the smaller form of SHOGI that was played in the twelfth century. Unlike the SHOGI of the twelfth century, the SHOGI of the fifteenth century had at least two additional pieces. The two pieces are the ones I mentioned a moment ago, namely, the HISHA, that's the Rook, and the KAKU, that's the Bishop. There may have also been an additional piece called the SUIZO which may be translated as the 'Powerful Elephant'. Incidentally, this piece appears in CHU-SHOGI. It seems that CHU-SHOGI was as popular as SHO-SHOGI. Somebody would play CHU-SHOGI on one day, and then the same person would play SHO-SHOGI on another day.

At this point, I think I had better mention briefly another characteristic of SHOGI - that is, promotion. In SHOGI most of the pieces can promote once they enter the territory of the other side. This means the pieces are able to take on new powers. This is rather like the pawn in chess which can become a Queen upon reaching the final rank.

To continue then: It is thought that by the middle of the sixteenth century SHO-SHOGI evolved into the form of SHOGI which is generally played today. The military commander IETADA MATSUDAIRA, painted a picture of the SHOGI we know today in his diary in February 1587.

However, it is not known exactly when the 'drop' was adopted. By the word 'drop' I mean that a captured piece may be used again as one's own piece.

At the end of the sixteenth century some larger variants of SHOGI appeared. There was a member of the lower aristocracy called MINASE who used to make SHOGI pieces. Moreover, there is a list still in existence of the customers who came from 1590 to 1602. During the course of the thirteen years between 1590 and 1602 there were ninety-four customers, among which were aristocrats, Buddhist monks, military commanders, wealthy merchants and master craftsmen. Altogether seven hundred and thirty-five sets were made. Although most of the pieces were either for CHU-SHOGI or SHO-SHOGI, there were eleven sets of pieces which belonged to two of the larger variants of SHOGI. It is thought that these larger forms of SHOGI were never actually played but were made for ornamental purposes. This is easy to understand when one considers the sheer number of pieces and the amount of time it would take to play a game.

After the seventeenth century the popularity of CHU-SHOGI declined. I believe there are two main reasons for this. One reason is, there are no 'drops' in CHU-SHOGI as there are in SHO-SHOGI and modern-day SHOGI. That is, in CHU-SHOGI you can not use the pieces you have captured. The other reason is, the TOKUGAWA shogunate officially adopted SHO-SHOGI. There was a kind of family of SHOGI players who were appointed by the government to serve as SHOGI players to the SHOGUN. In this case SHO-SHOGI was used. There was a tradition that the SHOGUN should watch the players in action once a year. Actually, this did not happen very often. Instead a high official would take the SHOGUN's place on such occasions. This system did not exist in Europe for Chess.

Before IEYASU TOKUGAWA became SHOGUN, he was a powerful and influential feudal lord in the east of Japan. He often visited KYOTO, the then political capital of Japan. He probably did this in order to glean political and economic know-how. He used to hold banquets to which he would invite the influential members of society as a way to glean such knowledge. In addition, some players of SHOGI and GO would be invited as entertainers. In 1590, IEYASU TOKUGAWA, the GO player HONIMBO, and the SHOGI player SOKEI OHASHI, associated with each other. Players of SHOGI and GO were invited to temples and residences of aristocrats. Although these players would receive an honorarium they did not receive a regular salary.

In 1612, eight players of SHOGI and GO were taken on as permanent professionals by the TOKUGAWA shogunate. They served at the lower levels of the department dealing with cultural affairs. These players had the right to give ranks to other players. I have written about this system at some length in a book I wrote in 1987 called 'YUGEISHI NO TANJO', which may be translated as 'The Birth of the Professional Entertainers'.

From 1635, three families of SHOGI players and four families of GO players received salaries. These seven families received salaries from the government for the next two hundred and thirty years until the MEIJI Restoration.

When the TOKUGAWA shogunate fell in 1868 the salaries of these players were cut. They fell on hard times and by 1890 they disappeared.

From 1895 newspapers started to sponsor SHOGI players. Each newspaper drew up contracts with several players and carried diagrams of SHOGI games. This brought about the rebirth of professional SHOGI.

Nowadays, SHOGI players belong to the Japan SHOGI Association which is financially backed by newspapers, the Japan Broadcasting Association and some other publishers.

KOICHI MASUKAWA

DRIVE CHESS

Here is an odd kind of variant - the player who captures first loses. In German this is called "Treib" Chess. "Treib" has multiple meanings in German. "Drive" is the literal etymological translation in the sense of "to urge" or "to induce"

Erwin Gansler - Erich Bartel 8th March, 1961 1.Nf3 Nc6 2.g3 Ne5 3.d3 Nc4 4.Be3 Nd2 5.Bh3 e6 6.Nc3 Nf6 7.Ne4 Bd6 8.c3 Nd5 9.Nf6+ Kf8 10.Qc2 Nf4 11.Bg2 c6 12.Rd1 Qa5 13.a3 Qd5 14.Bb6 Qe4 15.Bd8 Be7 16.e3 h5 17.Qa4 Nb3 18.Nh7+ Kg8 19.Qd4 f6 20.Qe5 Qg6 21.Ba5 Bd6 22.h3 b6 23.Nd4 Qg4 24.f3 Qf5 25.Rd2 Ba6 26.Rc2 Bb5 27.Rf1 a6 28.Kf2 Nd2 29.b3 Ne4+ 30.Kg1 Ne2+ 31.Kh2 Nf2 32.Bb4 g5 33.Rd2 Bc4 34.Qf4 Rf8 ½-½

A variant of little interest. The defence is too strong for an attack to succeed....unless of course a player blunders badly. Drive Chess would appear a most excellent game for lifelong insomniacs.

ITALIAN PROGRESSIVE CHESS

Variant Chess 6 gave details of an international match between the United Kingdom and Italy in the above variation arranged by P. Novak and A. Castelli. This was in 1991. As was stated this was played in three groups, each group consisting of 2 players per side who played 2 games against each of the opposing players. The results given in Issue 59 of "Eteroscacco" were as follows:

| Italy | | UK | | |
|-------|--------------|----|--------------|---|
| 1 | Leoncini M | 4 | Horne M | 1 |
| 2 | Rallo V | 3 | Donovan P | 0 |
| 3 | Castelli A | 4 | Novak P | 0 |
| 4 | Buccoliero G | 4 | Jelliss G | 0 |
| 5 | Salvadori R | 4 | Tavener S | 0 |
| 6 | Figura S | 3 | Richardson I | 1 |

Italy therefore won by the rather overwhelming score of 22-2.

Here are all the games I have been able to obtain from this match. The three games that are missing all involve S. Tavener and I am assuming that he withdrew from these with the games unfinished.

I have sorted the games according to the openings employed. The openings are as named by M. Leoncini in an article in "Eteroscacco", (with the exception of the Jelliss Opening.)

In Italian Progressive Chess a check may ONLY be given with the last move of a sequence. This means for instance that move 7 in the first game is indeed mate.

A.Castelli - P.Novak 1-0

Orthodox Defence

- 1.d4
- 2.d5 Nf6
- 3.e4 e5 Bb5+
- 4.c6 cxb5 Ne4 Kd7
- 5.f4 Ke2 Nc3 Nxe4 Nc5+
- 6.Kc7 f5 Qd6 Qxc5 Qxd4 Qxd1+
- 7.Ke3 e6 Bd2 Kd4 Kc5 ~ Ba5 #

M.Horne - V.Rallo 0-1

Orthodox Defence

- 1.d4
- 2.d5 Nf6
- 3.e4 e5 Bb5+
- 4.c6 Bg4 Bxd1 Qa5+
- 5.b4 bxa5 Kxd1 exf6 Nf3
- 6.exf6 Be7 Kd7 cxb5 Nc6 Nxa5
- 7.Bd2 h4 h5 h6 hxg7 gxh8(Q) Qxa8
- 8.b4 b3 b2 ba1(Q) Nc4 Na3 Nxb1 Nc3 #

M.Horne - M.Leoncini 0-1

Orthodox Defence

- 1.d4
- 2.d5 Nf6
- 3.Bf4 Bxc7 Bxd8
- 4.Kxd8 Ne4 Nxf2 Nxd1
- 5.Kxd1 a4 h4 e4 Kd2
- 6.Kc7 Nc6 Nxd4 Nxc2 Nxa1 Nb3+
- 7.Ke3 h5 h6 hxg7 gxh8(Q) exd5 Qe5+
- 8.Kb6 f6 fxe5 Bg4 Nc5 Bg7 Rf8 Bh6 #

G.Buccoliero - G.Jelliss 1-0

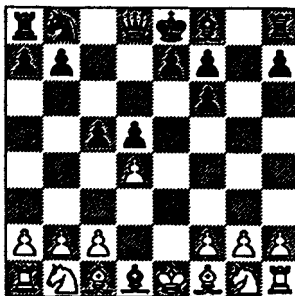
Semi-Orthodox Defence

- 1.d4
- 2.d6 Nf6
- 3.Nc3 Bg5 Bxf6
- 4.e6 Qxf6 Qxd4 Qxd1+
- 5.Rxd1 e4 Bc4 Bxe6 Bxc8
- 6.Ke7 Kf6 Nd7 Rxc8 Re8 h5
- 7.Rd5 Re5 Nf3 Nh4 f4 ~ Nd5 #

G.Buccoliero - P.Novak 1-0

Benoni Defence

- 1.d4
- 2.c5 Nf6
- 3.e4 e5 exf6
- 4.d5 Bg4 Bxd1 gxf6

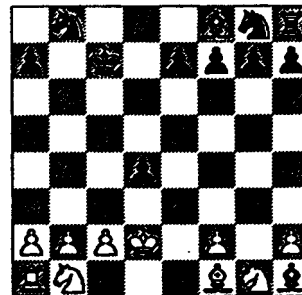


- 5.Nf3 Ne5 Nd7 Bb5 Nxf6 #

M.Leoncini - M.Horne 1-0

Trinacria Defence

- 1.d4
- 2.c5 d5
- 3.Bf4 Bc7 Bxd8
- 4.Kxd8 Bg4 Bxe2 Bxd1
- 5.dxc5 c6 cxb7 bxa8(Q) Kd2
- 6.d4 Bf3 Bxa8 Bxg2 Bxh1 Kc7



- 7.Ba6 Nc3 Ke2 Rd1 Rxd4 Rd6 Nb5 #

L.Richardson - S.Figura 1-0

Trinacria Defence

- 1.d4
- 2.c5 d5
- 3.e4 e5 Bb5+
- 4.Qd7 Qxb5 Qd3 Qxd1+
- 5.Kxd1 dxc5 c6 cxb7 bxc8(Q) #

L.Richardson - R.Salvadori 0-1

Pseudo-Roman Defence

- 1.d4
- 2.c5 cxd4
- 3.e4 e5 Na3
- 4.e6 Qg5 Qxc1 Qxd1+
- 5.Rxd1 Bb5 Ke2 f4 f5
- 6.exf5 Bxa3 Be7 b6 Ba6 Bxb5+
- 7.c4 cxb5 Rxd4 Ra4 Rxa7 Rxa8 Rxb8+
- 8.Bd8 Ne7 Nc6 Nxb8 d6 Kd7 Re8 Rxe5+
- 9.Kf3 h3 Ne2 Nd4 Nc6 Re1 Rxe5 Re4 Nxb8+
- 10.Kc8 d5 d4 d3 d2 f4 Be7 Bc5 Be3 d1(Q) #

Original articles, letters, and comments will always be welcomed from readers. It would be helpful if anything submitted for publication could be printed.

V.Rallo - P.Donovan 1-0

Pseudo-Roman Defence

- 1.d4
- 2.c5 cxd4
- 3.Na3 e4 e5
- 4.d6 dxe5 Bg4 Kd7
- 5.Bd2 Ba5 Bxd8 Be2 Bxg4+
- 6.e6 Nf6 Nxc4 Ne3 Nxd1 Kxd8
- 7.Kxd1 Ke2 f4 f5 f6 fxg7 gxh8(Q)
- 8.Kd7 Bxa3 Bxb2 Bxa1 Na6 Rxh8 Rg8 Rxc2+
- 9.Kd3 Nf3 Rg1 Rxc2 Rg6 Rxe6 Rxa6 Rxa7 Rxb7+
- 10.Resigns.

M.Leoncini - P.Donovan 1-0

Pseudo-Roman Defence

- 1 d4
- 2.c5 cxd4
- 3.Na3 e4 e5
- 4.e6 Qg5 Qxc1 Qxd1+
- 5.Rxd1 Bb5 Ke2 f4 f5
- 6.exf5 Nc6 Nxe5 Nf3 Bxa3 Nxc1+
- 7.Rhxc1 h4 h5 h6 hxg7 gxh8(Q) bxa3
- 8.Resigns.

A.Castelli - G.Jelliss 1-0

Nord-Barese Defence

- 1.d4
- 2.e5 exd4
- 3.Bg5 Bxd8 f4
- 4.Kxd8 Nf6 c6 Bb4+
- 5.Qd2 Qxb4 Nc3 Nd5 Qe7 #

P.Novak - G.Buccoliero 0-1

Senese Defence

- 1.e4
- 2.Nc6 d5
- 3.Qg4 Qxc8 Qxd8+
- 4.Kxd8 dxe4 Nf6 h5
- 5.d4 d5 dxc6 Bg5 Bxf6
- 6.Rh6 Rxf6 Rxf2 e3 e2 exf1(Q) #

P.Novak - A.Castelli 0-1

Senese Defence

- 1.e4
- 2.Nc6 d5
- 3.Qg4 Qxc8 Qxd8+
- 4.Kxd8 dxe4 Nf6 h5
- 5.d4 d5 dxc6 Bg5 Bxf6
- 6.Rh6 Rxf6 Rxf2 e3 e2 exf1(Q) #

(This is not a mistake. The moves of this and the previous game are identical.)

P.Donovan - V.Rallo 0-1

Senese Defence

- 1.e4
- 2.Nc6 d5
- 3.Qg4 Qxc8 Qxd8+
- 4.Kxd8 dxe4 Nf6 h5
- 5.d4 d5 Bg5 Bxf6 Kd7
- 6.gxf6 e6 exd5 Ne5 Kd7 Bh6+
- 7.f4 Nh3 Ba6 Bxb7 Bxa8 c4 cxd5
- 8.c6 cxd5 d4 d3 Ke6 Rc8 Rc1 Bxf4 #

P.Donovan - M.Leoncini 0-1

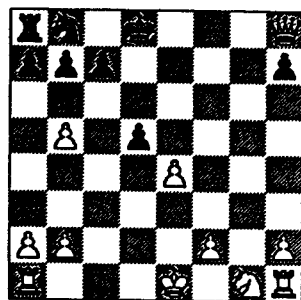
Senese Defence

- 1.e4
- 2.d5 Nc6
- 3.Qg4 Qxc8 Qxd8+
- 4.Kxd8 dxe4 Nf6 h5
- 5.Bb5 Bxc6 Nc3 Nxe4 Nxf6
- 6.exf6 bxc6 h4 h3 hxg2 gxh1(Q)
- 7.h4 h5 h6 hxg7 gxh8(Q) Qxh1 f3
- 8.c5 c4 c3 cxb2 bxa1(Q) Qc3 Qxf3 Qxh1
- 9.Resigns.

V.Rallo - M.Horne 0-1

Areto-Barlettano Defence

- 1.e4
- 2.e5 f6
- 3.Bb5 Nc3 d4
- 4.Nh6 exd4 Bb4 Bxc3+
- 5.Bd2 Bxc3 Bxd4 Bxf6 Bxd8
- 6.Kxd8 d5 Bg4 Bxd1 Be2 Bxb5
- 7.c4 cxb5 g4 g5 gxh6 hxg7 gxh8(Q)+



- 8.Kd7 d4 a5 a4 a3 axb2 Rxa2 bxa1(Q) #

R.Salvadori - S.Tavener 1-0

Aperta Defence

- 1.e4
- 2.e5 d5
- 3.Qg4 Qxc8 Qxd8+
- 4.Kxd8 Nc6 Bc5 dxe4
- 5.Bd3 Bxe4 Bxc6 Bxb7 Bxa8
- 6.Retired.

S.Figura - I.Richardson 1-0

Aperta Defence

- 1.e4
- 2.d5 e5
- 3.Qg4 Qxc8 Qxd8+
- 4.Kxd8 a5 dxe4 h5
- 5.Ba6 Bxb7 Bxa8 d4 Bg5+
- 6.f6 fxg5 Be7 Ke8 exd4 Nh6
- 7.h4 hxg5 Rxh5 Rxh6 Kd2 c3 Rxh8+
- 8.Kf7 Ba3 Bb2 Bxa1 g6 Kg7 Kxh8 Kg8
- 9.cxd4 d5 d6 dxc7 Na3 Nc2 Nxa1 Bxe4 c7xb8(Q)+
- Black resigns.

G.Jelliss - G.Buccoliero 0-1

Jelliss Opening

- 1.e3
- 2.d5 e5
- 3.Qg4 Qxc8 Qxd8+
- 4.Kxd8 a5 e4 h5
- 5.a4 h4 Nf3 Ne5 Nxf7+
- 6.Kd7 Nh6 Nxf7 Ba3 Bxb2 Bxa1
- 7.g4 gxh5 h6 hxg7 gxh8(Q) Qxa1 Bh3+
- 8.Kd6 Nc6 Nd4 Rh8 Rxh4 Rxh3 ~ Rxh1 #

G.Jelliss - A.Castelli 0-1

Jelliss Opening

- 1.e3
- 2.e5 d5
- 3.Qf3 Qxd5 Qxd8+
- 4.Kxd8 Bb4 a5 Ke7
- 5.a3 axb4 Rxa5 Rxa8 Ne2
- 6.Nf6 Ng4 Nxe3 Nc6 Nd4 Ndx2 #

R.Salvadori - I.Richardson 1-0

Irregular

- 1.e4
- 2.d5 Bd7
- 3.d4 Bb5 Ke2
- 4.dxe4 Bc6 Qxd4 Qxd1+
- 5.Kxd1 Nf3 Ne5 Nxc6 Nxb8+
- 6.c6 cxb5 Rxb8 e5 Be7 f6
- 7.c4 Be3 a4 axb5 b6 bxa7 axb8(Q)+
- 8.Kd7 Bc5 Bxe3 Ne7 Rxb8 Ra8 Rxa1 Rxb1+
- 9.Kc2 Rxb1 fxe3 g4 g5 gxf6 fxe7 e8(N)! Nxc7
- 10.b5 bxc4 c3 cxb2 Ke7 Kf7 Kxc7 Kf7 Ke6 h6, (a forlorn hope - IR).
- 11.Rxb2 Kd2 Ke2 Kf2 Kg3 Kg4 Kh5 Kxh6 Kg7 Rg2 Rg3!
- Black resigns.

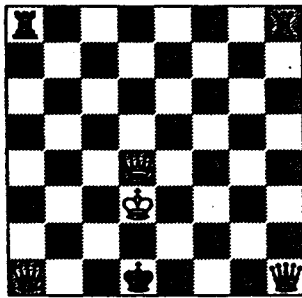
PROBLEM PAGES

By G.P. Jelliss

In view of the limited space, and the purpose of the journal, we will henceforth only accept originals in variant forms, (though orthodox may occur as part of a multiplet). We will also consider new types of play that are otherwise orthodox, such as:

MAXIMUMMING BY SQUARES: Black must play his longest moves, these being assessed by counting the number of squares passed over (instead of the usual geometrical distance). In the diagram Black has a choice of Ra-g8/a2, Rh-b8/h2, Qa-a7, Qh-b7/h7, all 6-square moves. Knight-move counts as 2 squares.

1. Ian G. RICHARDSON, UK



Mate in 3. Maximummer by squares. (a) diagram (b) a8=Q, h8=Q, a1=R, h1=R, + white Pe3 & black Ng8.

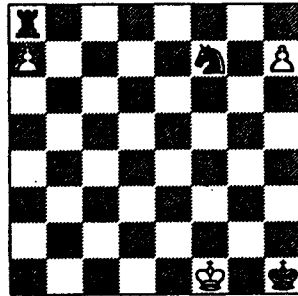
Two problems dedicated to M.Olausson & V.Nebotov follow.

CIRCE: Captured pieces reappear on their home squares, if vacant. For R, B or N the home square is the R, B or N home square of the same colour as the capture square; for P it is the P home square in the file of capture.

CHAMELEON CIRCE: (due to M.Olausson): A captured piece transforms according to the sequence N>B>R>Q>N and then reappears on the appropriate home square if vacant.

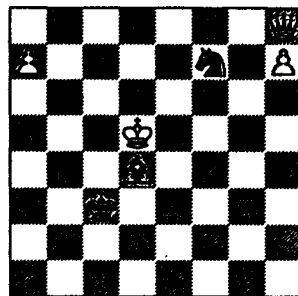
MUTANT CIRCE: (due to V. Nebotov): A captured piece transforms to rank of capturing piece before being reborn.

2. Ian G. RICHARDSON, (UK).



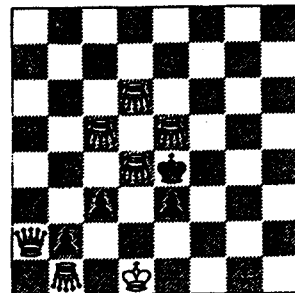
Helpstalemate in 4, (a) Chameleon Circe, (b) Mutant Circe.

3. Ian G. RICHARDSON, (UK).



Helpstalemate in 4, (a) Chameleon Circe, (b) Mutant Circe h7>f7.

4. V. NEBOTOV, (UKRAINE).



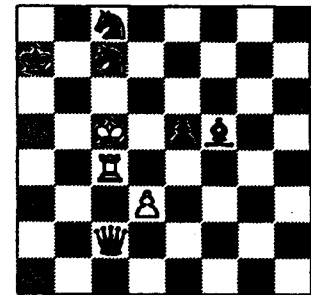
Grasshoppers, Helpmate in 2 Patrol Chess, (b) Gb1>d2.

GRASSHOPPER: moves and captures along queen lines by hopping over one man to the first square beyond the hurdle.

PATROL CHESS: (due to F.von Meyenfeldt): A piece cannot capture unless it is "backed up" by another man of its side.

ALL-MATE CHESS: (due to C.M.B.Tylor): A piece can only be captured by being "mated" as if it is a royal piece.

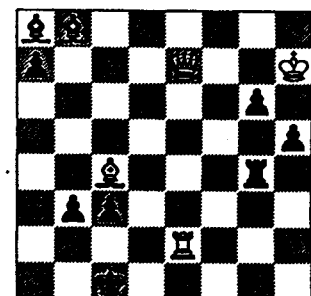
5. V. NEBOTOV, (UKRAINE).



Helpmate in 2, (a) Orthodox, (b) Patrol Chess, (c) All-Mate Chess.

ALSATIAN CIRCE: All positions must be legal in orthodox chess.

6. V. NEBOTOV, (UKRAINE).

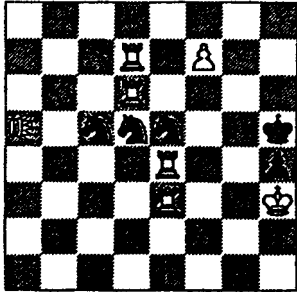


Mate in 2. Alsatian Circe.

Please continue to send your Solutions/Comments/Originals to G.P.Jelliss, 99 Bohemia Rd. St. Leonard's on Sea, TN37 6RJ.

LION: moves and captures along queen lines over one intervening piece (to any distance beyond the hurdle).

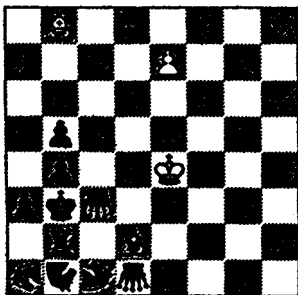
7. Erich BARTEL, (GERMANY).



Lion a5. Stalemate in 2.

ZEBRA = {3,2} - leaper
 CAMEL = {3,1} - leaper
 NIGHTRIDER = {2,1} - rider

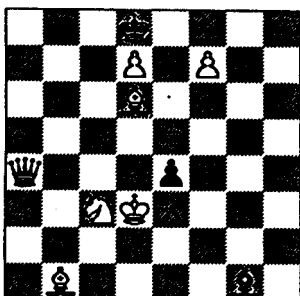
8. Erich BARTEL, (GERMANY).



Zebra a1, Nightrider b1, Camel c1
 Grasshoppers d1,c3.
 Helpmate in 2, 4 ways.

ANTICIRCE: The captured piece disappears, but the capturer is reborn on its own home square. Capture is illegal if the home square is occupied.

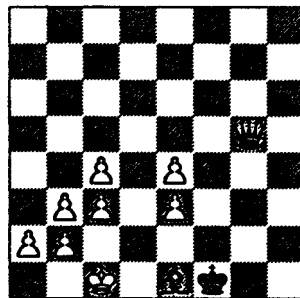
9. Christian POISSON, (FRANCE).



Anticirce. Mate in 2.

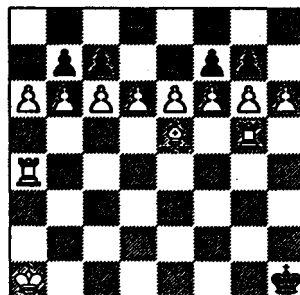
STAFETTENSCHACH (Baton chess): This is "single-series play" (VC6 p.80), i.e. no piece makes more than one move or one series of moves. Mates and stalemates, are orthodox. Castling counts as a king move. The rule is applied from the diagram position, (i.e. no need to consider what the last move might have been, to justify the next).

10. Peter ROESLER, (GERMANY)



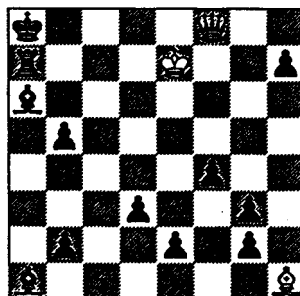
Stafettenschach.
 Series selfstalemate in 50.

11. Ladislav SALAI, (CZECH)



Circe. Mate in 2, 2 ways.

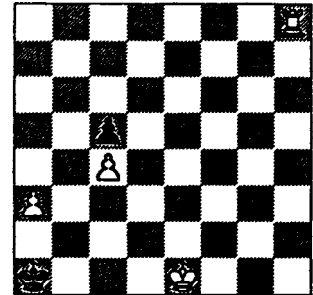
12. Michel OLAUSSON, (SWEDEN).



King - Circe. Helpstalemate in 16.

KING - CIRCE: The Circe rule applies to the kings also. So K can be "captured" and reborn, and is only "in check" (i.e. threatened with true capture) if attacked when its home square is occupied.

13. Michel OLAUSSON, (SWEDEN).



Serieshelpstalemate in 14.
 (a) Circe. (b) remove a3, c5, h8, add WBh8 for Chameleon Circe.

CHESSGI

In the February 1993 edition of "Chess" there is a letter from a Mr. Bruce Matzner of San Jose, California, USA where he remarks upon the rule in Shogi that in any turn to move a captured piece can be replaced by the other player on any open square on the board, (with certain exceptions). He suggests incorporating this rule into standard-Chess. He writes that in games played to date at his local chess club there have been encountered many surprises as established chess theory does not always help. "Try a game!" he says, " it is guaranteed to be different."

Mr. Matzner obviously does not know of the game of Chessgi which has this precise rule he mentions in his letter. This was one of the games played in the 1st Heterodox Chess Olympics, (1989-1992). There is an article by P. Novak on Chessgi in "Variant Chess" issue number 4.

Here is an amusing game sent to this magazine some time ago by Mr. Philip Cohen of the USA. Mr. Cohen has such appalling handwriting that I hope I have got the players and colours correct. (I'm fairly certain about the moves!)

Groenendyk - P. Cohen
 1990

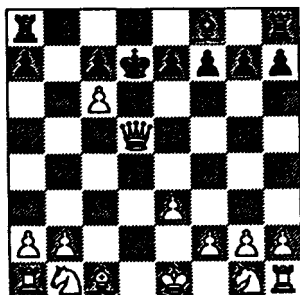
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nd4 4.Nxd4 exd4 5.d3 a6 6.Bc4 b5 7.Bb3 c6 8.0-0 Ne7?? 9.N *d6 mate.

Vinciperdi

This sounds rather grand, but the English equivalent is "Losing, (or Giveaway), chess" which sounds rather less exotic than the original Italian. The aim in this variant is to lose all one's pieces and if you can do that before your opponent you are declared the winner. Kings have no special status and are treated as just another piece ie. they can be captured and the game continues. Pawns are promoted to the piece of your choice. Capturing, if possible, is obligatory, although you can choose which piece to capture. Stalemate is a draw.

Vinciperdi is my choice as variant in the recently started Heterodox Chess Olympiad. I have investigated this variant and discovered how subtle and complex it can be - it has a charm all of its own. It also has well-developed opening theory, and its own grading list, (*P. Donovan says that in Italy a variant having its own grading list is nothing special!*).

A player needs to be constantly on his guard to avoid being sucked into a long series of forced captures that can lead to inexorable defeat. Here is an example from the previous Olympiad. **R. Magari, (Italy 1) - P. Yearout, (USA) 1-0**
1.e3 b5 2.Bxb5 Nf6 3.Bxd7 Bxd7 4.c4 Bb5 5.cxb5 Qxd2 6.Qxd2 Nc6 7.bxc6 Nd5 8.Qxd5 Kd7

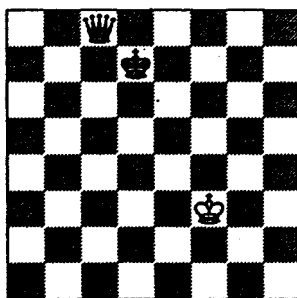


9.Qxf7! Kxc6 10.Qxg7 Bxg7
11.b4 Bxa1 12.b5 Kxb5 13.a4 Kxa4
14.Bb2 Bxb2 15.Nc3 Bxc3 16.h3
Bxe1 17.Ne2 Bxf2 18.Rd1 Bxe3
19.Nf4 Bxf4 20.g3 Bxg3 21.h4 Bxh4
22.Re1 Bxe1 White wins.

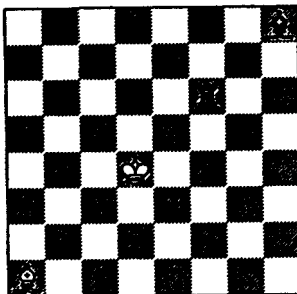
Here is a, (very), short game out of the VII Italian Vinciperdi Championship from the early 80s. Readers might like to finish the game off for White.

A. Kustrin - R. Cassano 1-0
1.b3 c5 2.d4 cxd4 3.Qxd4 e5 4.Qxd7 and Black resigned.

I hope to publish theoretical articles on Vinciperdi in future issues of VC. In the meantime here are a few problems.



This problem is taken from an article in the Russian magazine "64" in 1979 by E. Gik. White is to play and win.



This problem is by R. Sekhar and R. Shankar, (Bandalore, India). It was published in "Eteroscacco" in 1987. White is to play and win in 6 moves. Solutions on page 16.

2nd HETEROCHESSE OLYMPIC GAMES

After a delay of several months the commencing date for the above has finally been fixed for 15th May, although many games are being started earlier. Play is by correspondence and the terminating date is 14th May 1996, which gives plenty of time for errors.

The participating teams with their chosen chess variants are as follows:

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| CZECH-MORAVIA-SLOVAKIA | Triplets |
| ENGLAND | Circe Progressive |
| ESPERANTO | Mutation Progressive |
| ITALY 1 | Balanced Marseillais |
| ITALY 2 | Vinciperdi, (Losing, Give-away) |
| NORTH AMERICA | Avalanche |
| POLAND | Italian Progressive |
| UKRAINE | English Progressive |

Each country nominates one player for each of the variants, (although North America have nominated two players for some of them), and each of the players plays two games, (one with White and one with Black), with each of the other countries' representatives. Each player in each variant therefore plays 14 games, although as Poland is only represented in four variants, some only play 12.

Many of the players are playing more than one variant. The most that one player is playing is 4; this is Alessandro Castelli of the Italy 1 team. The only woman playing is Rasa Gadzinskaja of the Ukraine. The Esperanto team is for those players whose countries cannot raise the minimum of 4.

It consists of two Lithuanians, (Saulius Miliunas and Vitautas Ciegis), the other 6 places being filled by Italians.

The England team members and the variations they are playing are as follows:

| | |
|----------------|----------------------|
| P. Donovan | Triplets |
| | Circe Progressive |
| | English Progressive |
| G. Jelliss | Mutation Progressive |
| P. Novak | Balanced Marseillais |
| | Avalanche |
| D.B. Pritchard | Italian Progressive |
| P. Wood | Vinciperdi |

The Olympics are being organised by the Italian Heterodox Chess Association, (AISE), whom everyone should thank for their efforts.

OBITUARY

GIUSEPPE DIPILATO

The magazine "Eteroscacco" has announced the sad death of the above-mentioned which occurred in the morning of the 20th December 1992. He suffered a cerebral haemorrhage "Pino" was born at Barletta in Italy on the 28th January 1961 which means that he was only 31 years of age when he died, a tragically early age for such a talented player in so many forms of variant chess. He was a tax consultant by profession.

His particular strength was Italian Progressive Chess and he was the AISE champion in 1982, 1985, 1986 and 1988. He also contributed many extremely detailed and informative articles in this variant to "Eteroscacco", and his analytical work on the defence 2.e5 f6 to 1.e4 contributed to this being known as the "Areto-Barlettana". He also did important analysis in the defences 2.Nc6 d5 and 2.d5 e5 to 1.d4. His death has cut short a massive comprehensive review of the openings which he was writing. (However Part 1 of this unfinished work, "Progressive Chess Queenside Openings", has been published posthumously by "Eteroscacco").

He was also strong in many other variants and in the 1st Heterodox Olympics he scored 13 points out of a possible 14 in Marsellais Chess to top his section. He won the 10th Italian Championship in Vinciperdi.

This was the first game of Italian Progressive Chess that Giuseppe Dipilato won in a Progressive Chess tournament; it was played in 1978.

G. Dipilato - F. Galimberti

1.e4
2.d5 dxe4
3.d3 dxe4 Qxd8+
4.Kxd8 Bh3 Bxg2 Bxf1
5.Nc3 Be3 Nf3 Rxf1 0-0-0+!
6.Nd7 e5 Bc5 Ke7 f6 Bxe3+7.fxe3
Ng5 Rxf6 Rf8 Rdf1 Nb5 R1f7 #

CHESS BY TELEPHONE

by Malcolm Horne

If you are interested in playing chess variants, but suffer from a lack of opponents, then salvation may be at hand...

The telephone (or fax machine) could of course be used to speed up "postal" chess, but P.Wood, P. Donovan and I have been experimenting in recent months with playing chess variants by phone as if we were playing normal face-to-face games.

In our games we used a time limit of 20 moves an hour followed by 10 each half hour, (acute time trouble is to be avoided), and each move was phoned through separately. Here in the UK it's not expensive: just 5p a move. You get 38 seconds at off-peak long-distance rates to transmit your move, and that is more than enough time. So a game of 40 moves will cost each player only about £2, (40x5p).

This seems to us a very promising new approach for anyone with a phone line that is not too busy. The occasional interruption, (someone else ringing you up), should not matter too much.

We haven't experienced any major problems. You do have to be very careful with notation, and as a double check we've verified the board position every 10 moves using the simple Forsyth system. Only in one game, (out of eight played so far), were there a few small problems, but these were easily resolved.

A chess clock isn't essential as you will only be recording your own

time taken. Indeed I find it simpler to use the stop-watch on my wrist-watch. At a pinch an ordinary watch or clock could also be used.

International telephone chess isn't completely out of the question, provided there are no language problems, but obviously it will be significantly more expensive. (For example, a call from the UK to France, Germany or Italy costs 5p for every 9 seconds, so at a guess the cost of a game might be at least doubled.)

Between January and March this year P.Wood, P.Donovan, and myself played a small telephone variants tournament, and these were the results:

- (1) P. Wood 1 M. Horne 0 (RANDOMISED CHESS).
- (2) P. Donovan 1 P. Wood 0 (BOUNCY CHESS).
- (3) M. Horne 1 P. Donovan 0 (KOREAN CHESS, a variant of Chinese Chess).
- (4) P. Wood 0 P. Donovan 1 (ITALIAN PROGRESSIVE CHESS, best of four games).
- (5) P. Donovan 1 M. Horne 0 (CHINESE CHESS with an unusual starting position).
- (6) M. Horne 1 P. Wood 0 (GRAND CHESS, a 10x10 version of Western Chess).

| | + | = | - | pts |
|---------------|---|---|---|-----|
| 1. P. Donovan | 3 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| 2. M. Horne | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| 3. P. Wood | 1 | 0 | 3 | 1 |

If you want to follow up the idea of telephone chess please contact me. A "Guidelines for telephone chess" leaflet is available, giving some further hints and information.

MALCOLM HORNE, 10B Windsor Square, Exmouth, Devon EX8 1JU, England (tel: 0395-270280)

CHINESE CHESS

The UK
Chinese Chess
Championship
1992

by Patrick Donovan



Mr. Donovan's book is a clearly printed soft back of 85 pages produced, in his own words, on "an absolutely dreadful word processor". If that is so, he is to be congratulated on the result.

The first 26 pages are an introduction to the game of Chinese Chess with a fine clear account of the rules and how the pieces move, as well as an extremely informative account of Chinese Chess computers, current literature available in English, and more. There is also information about the chinese system of notation used in Chinese Chess.

Mr. Donovan writes well and imparts the information in a clear and interesting manner.

The rest of the book has 16 games from the Championship annotated by the author with a round by round account of the contest. Sixteen players took part, although not all played the full number of games. The winner was R. Aw who won all 5 of his games, followed by Guo Shulong and

Kwok Wai Leung with 4 points, fourth was P. Donovan with 3 1/2 points, and fifth C.K. Lai with 3 points. The annotations to the games include plenty of explanatory prose as well as analysis. About half the games have a diagrammed position which except for a couple are reasonably clear. There is a photograph of the contestants where Ms. Shulong comes out well, even if the people in the second row, including Mr. Donovan, do not.

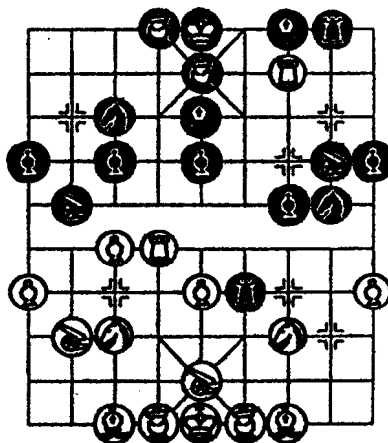
Notation

But the notation is the chinese style of notation. Although Mr. Donovan explains it well, it is, at least to a westerner, most difficult. For

example, the files are numbered from both White's and Black's point of view 1 to 9 right to left. Going through games and getting the pieces on the correct squares becomes a major task, and takes away much of the pleasure in the games themselves. What is wrong with plain algebraic?

The book is recommended to all those interested in Chinese Chess, and at £4 is a bargain. It can be obtained direct from the author at : Flat 2, 85 Enys Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN21 2DX.

C.T.Tsang - C.Hann



15.Rd9

This move is very tempting, placing another Rook in proximity to the black King and freeing a point for the move Nd5, (perhaps with c6 first as a sacrifice). Also Red has in mind the move Rc9.

15...Kf10 16.Ce3 Nxi4 17.Nd5

Of course not 17.Nxh4? Rxf1+ 18.Ke2 Rf2+ 19.Ke1 Ch1+ 20.Bi3 Ci1 and mates. However 17.Cf3 is a more consistent follow-up to Red's 16th move.

17...Rf2 18.Gde2 Ch3!?

An interesting move, but perhaps not the best. Black seems to have a strong attack through the simple 18...Nxg3 19.Cxg3 Ch1, threatening Rg2 or Rhh2, eg. 20.Cb3 Rhh2 21.Nc3 Rhg2 22.Cb2 Rxg1 23.Cxf2 Rg2 mate.

19.Cxh3 Nxf3 20.Ch9 Ce6

Threatening mate.

21.Be3 Nxe4 22.Rc7?

This loses a piece. 22.Kd1 is possible. Then 22...Cd6+ 23.Ke1 Ce6

may mean a draw by repetition. My preference would be for 22.Cb2 Rf5 23.Nxc7.

22...Nc3!

Threatening mate by 23...Rxf1 and preventing the Red King from running. Red is now lost.

23.Cb10+ Bc10 24.Cb1 Nxb1 25.Nxc7 Rxf1 mate.

If 25.Kd1 Cd6+, and if then 26.Ke1 then Na3 wins.

With the exception of the final one the annotations are taken from P.Donovan's book, (abridged with the notation converted to algebraic).

Quick-Play Tournament - Saturday 30th January 1993

The above was played at the Chinese Community Centre in Gerrard Street in the heart of London's Chinatown. Use of the venue was only available from 10am to 4pm, which left time for 4 rounds played under the Swiss-pairing system and a lunch break. The time limit was 30 minutes per player per game. Fifteen persons took part, (7 Chinese, 8 Westerners). Although the centre's premises are not over-large, for the number of entrants it proved an ideal venue. Mr.C.K.Lai and Mr.P.Donovan were enthusiastic organisers and free coffee and tea, (mundane tea-bags I'm afraid), plus a selection of tasty Chinese savoury snacks, also free, made the £2 entry fee magnificent value.

Out of form

The tournament favourite, Guo Shulong, was out of form and nearly came unstuck in round 2 against M.Trent. In round 3 she turned down a draw against P.Donovan when she stood worse, and both players were down to their last minute; then shortly after, she fell for a trap allowing a forced mate.

A last round draw between Kwok Wai Leung and P.Donovan meant they shared 1st place with 3 1/2 points; Patrick's extra pawn in an ending was useless. The 3rd and 4th

places were shared between Guo Shulong and C.T.Tsang with 3 points. Although the winners shared the prize money the destination of a small "silver"cup, (the Hong Wei Cup donated by Mr.H.Chung), was decided by the toss of a coin. By this means Mr.Donovan added to the number of his trophies. N.McLean won a subsidiary prize for being the "most improved player".

Despite a wide spread of strengths and only 4 rounds players soon found persons of their own level to play, (Mr.Donovan felt in retrospect that the tournament may have been better run in 2 sections selected according to strength).

New faces

Mr.Donovan remarked that there were a lot of new faces on the scene; attending their first Chinese Chess tournament were P.Wood, D.Yang, V.West, (the President of the British Shogi Federation), Eva Wilson, and Frank May, a Canadian who is a strong standard-chess player, very knowledgeable and enthusiastic about Shogi and its variants, and is a 4-Dan expert at Go. He admitted being very much a novice at Chinese Chess, but then won his first round game! Although he did not add to his score, Mr.May's advancement in Chinese Chess may be worth watching.

Most competitors would agree, I believe, that it was a most enjoyable day. Afterwards Mr.Donovan led a rather straggly party on a "long march" to the Festival Hall at Waterloo which was apparently the place for an after-tournament drink. I had to leave the group at Charing Cross unfortunately so I cannot report on events there.

The vivacious Irene Li took several group photographs, one of which is shown.

Chinese Chess Game

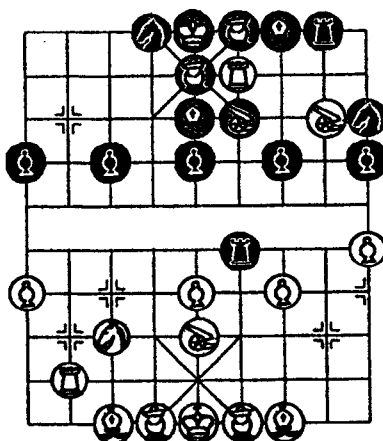
The following game with the notes is taken from the book "Victories All The Way" by Chinyang Daoren,



Left to right: N. McLean, Guo Shulong, Kwok Wai Leung, Patrick Donovan, C. K. Lai, and C. T. Tsang.

translated by C.K.Lai. This book was reviewed by G.Jelliss in VC 7. The games are wonderfully entertaining to play over.

- 1.Cbe3 Cbe8 2.Nc3 Nc8 3.Ra2 Rb10
- 4.Rf2 Gde9 5.Rf9 Ni8 6.Pi5 Rb4
- 7.Ni3 Rxc4 8.Ri2 Chf8 9.Nh5 Rc5
- 10.Nf6 Rf5 11.Nxe8 Bxe8 12.Ch8 Nd10 13.Rb2 Rh10



"White sacrifices the Cannon for the Bishop, and is well on the way to the execution of a brilliant plan of checkmate".

- 14.Cxe8+ Nxe8 15.Rb10+ Gd10
- 16.Cxe7+ Nc9 17.Rb8! Rf7
- 18.Re8++ Gde9 19.Rxe9++ Kd10
- 20.Rxf10+ Ne10 21.Rfxe10 mate.

"In this game notice how damage is inflicted against Black's defence by the Knight. The sacrifice of the Cannon on move 14 is a master stroke; from then on White's sequence of winning moves is simply irresistible and breathtaking!"

The 3rd World Xiangqi Championships

This was held from the 3rd to the 11th April in the Academy of Chess, Beijing, China. The March "Chinese Chess Newsletter" reports that the composition of the UK representative team for this event was :

- Team Leader: Mr. C.K.Lai
- Secretary : Ms. Feng Zhenjiao
- Players : Ms. Guo Shulong, Mr. Liu Si Hinh, Mr. Simon Li.

I was surprised that Mr.P.Donovan was not in the team, but he tells me that he was asked to compete but declined the invitation as he did not wish to undertake the long plane journey. The expense may well have been another reason..

STOP PRESS

The June "Chinese Chess Newsletter" reports that the UK players were Ms. Guo Shulong, Lin Si Hinh, and C.K.Lai, (not Simon Li). The winner of the Men's Team Event was China, 2nd. Chinese Taipei, 3rd. Hong Kong.

The winner of the Men's Individual was Xu Tianhong, (China); Women's Individual, Hu Ming, (China).



NEWS

2ND CHINESE CHESS WEEK

11-18 September 1993

M.Horne writes:

Last year's tournament was very successful, ("as enjoyable a week as I've ever spent": Patrick Donovan), and we're hoping for an even better event this year.

It will again be held in Exmouth on the East Devon coast, (10 miles from Exeter), with a rented self-catering holiday home as our base.

The cost for the whole week, (including accommodation but not food), should be in the £45-£60 range. Accommodation could also be booked for non-playing family or friends, (Exmouth is a good holiday centre with sea, coastal walks, and normal tourist attractions).

If practical, smoking will be allowed in some areas, but not in the playing room or the kitchen.

The main tournament will be one game a day, (mornings, starting Sunday 12th). 40 moves in 2 hours, then 20 in 1 hour. UKCCA repetition rules. Unfinished games will continue in the afternoon or evening. Otherwise afternoons will be free, and one or two optional trips out will probably be arranged - last year we went walking on Dartmoor).

Optional evening events will include a quickplay tournament, friendly games, Korean Chess or other chess variants, or anything that anyone wants to suggest. There will be a few small prizes or trophies, (tournament winner, quickplay winner, best game).

I have to book accommodation well in advance - if you're interested please send a £30 deposit per person, (or equivalent in foreign currency), with any cheques payable to me, by WEDNESDAY JUNE 23rd. All money will be returned if the event is cancelled. If you require a single room, (this will cost maybe £10-£15 extra), - please let me know when sending your deposit.

It may be possible to reduce the charge, (by up to 50%), for one or two players wanting to come but not easily able to afford the full amount - please enquire.

Entries after June 23rd: we will fit you in if possible, but the charge may be higher.

If you have any questions please contact me. We will probably be starting with a speed tournament on the evening of the first Saturday, and closing down early the following Saturday morning.

Write to: Malcolm Horne, 10b Windsor Square, Exmouth, Devon EX8 1JU, England.

CHINESE / KOREAN CHESS NEWSLETTER

Malcolm Horne's two-page newsletter number '3' dated April 1993 is now available and can be obtained direct from him at the address shown below. For a copy send a SAE, (or International Reply Coupon). As Malcolm says in the Newsletter, the Newsletter itself is free but donations of a few stamps or coupons help to defray costs.

This issue includes news and information on books, magazines, postal and telephone chess, plus Korean Chess rules and a few annotated Chinese and Korean games.

There is a wealth of interesting up-to-date material in this Newsletter. The editor of VC can unreservedly recommend it; it must be the finest 2-page magazine in the world!

Write to: MALCOLM HORNE, 10b Windsor Square, Exmouth, Devon EX8 1JU, England, (telephone: 0395-270280.

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CHESS VARIANTS

The world is waiting for this compilation by D.B.Pritchard which, it is to be hoped, will increase the popularity of non-standard forms of chess in this country and elsewhere.

Included are some 60 regional varieties of chess with 'major up-to-the-minute' sections on Burmese, Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Thai chess; over 120 commercial variants with sources of supply, space chess, four-handed chess; chess with exotic pieces on boards of all shapes and sizes and, (I quote!), much, much more.

Kriegspiel is treated in depth, but of more interest I feel is that Losing Chess, (Vinciperdi), and Progressive Chess are also treated 'in depth'. There is a lot of theory about these variants which is simply not available in the English language. Losing Chess in particular deserves to be much more widely known.

Many annotated games between leading masters are promised. Almost half the variants can be played with a standard chess set.

It is interesting that about half the variants are post-1970. As a total number of nearly 1,500 variants are promised that means that (get the calculators out), there have been on average between 35 and 38 new variants each year since 1970. (I should definitely increase the size of the magazine).

'99% of the contents will be unfamiliar to 99% of the readers' - I quote.

Unfortunately the publication date is 'late 1993/early 1994', so there might still be some wait before the book appears, (it is to be hoped that Mr.Pritchard is keeping up with the 3+ new variants that appear every month). The estimated price will be £25, (UK), but I understand there is a special subscription price of £19.99 for orders received before 1st July 1993. Further details from 'Cadogan Books', Mercury House, 195 Knightsbridge, London SW7 1RE, UK. The first 500 copies will be numbered and signed.

There is little doubt that this book will be eagerly sought by all variant chess enthusiasts, and it is to be hoped by standard-chess players and others too.

SHOGI NEWS

11th September 1993 - Royston Shogi Congress, (Shogi and Tori Shogi).

Contact: Phil Holland, 94 Green Drift, Royston, Herts SG8 5BT.

An annual subscription to the British Shogi Federation is £4 per year, which includes the magazine 'Shoten'. This seems very good value.

Contact: Richard West, 5 Weston Avenue, Royston SG8 5DR, (Tel: 0763-246995).

Results of Vinciperdi Problems

Problem 1
1.Kc4! (if 1.Kg4, then 1...Qd6!)
1...Qd8! 2.Kd4!

Problem 2
1.Bb2! (1.Bc3 Bg7 2.Bb4? Bf8! or
2.Ba5 Rb6 and Black wins) 1...Bg7
2.Bc3, (2.Ba3 Bf8 and Black wins)
2...Bh8 3.Bd4, (3.Bd2 also wins),
3...Rd6 4.Bxd6 Bxd4 5.Be5 Bxe5.