NEWS, INFORMATION, TOURNAMENTS, AND REPORTS

THE 16TH WORLD COMPUTER-CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP
Beijing, China
September 28 – October 4, 2008

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The 16th World Computer-Chess Championship took place in Beijing, China, from September 28 to October 4, 2008, together with the 13th Computer Games Championship, and the 2008 Conference on Computers and Games. The event was held in the beautiful Sky-line Resort located in Fangshan, southwest of Beijing. The friendly atmosphere of the playing hall turned the tournament into a most enjoyable experience, also encouraging an exchange of ideas amongst chess programmers. I am sure that the participants will concur with me when thanking Jaap van den Herik, David Levy, Mark Winands, Johanna Hellemons, and Xinhe Xu for the organization and hosting of the events. The organization was possible by the generous support of The Beijing Longlife group, the Northeastern University, the Beijing Institute of Technology, the Beijing University of Post and Telecommunications, the ICGA, and the MiCC-IKAT (Maastricht) as well as the TiCC (Tilburg).

A total of 10 programs participated in the event, amongst them all the top chess programs today. This resulted in a tournament of the highest quality, producing fascinating chess games. Table 1 contains the list of participants and their hardware specifications. As the table shows, all but two programs (FALCON and MOBILE CHESS) ran on parallel systems, utilizing 4 to 40 cores.

Program	Author	Country	Hardware
RYBKA	Vasik Rajlich	USA	Cluster, 40 cores
HIARCS	Mark Uniacke	UK	Intel Skulltrail, 8 x 4Ghz
JUNIOR	Amir Ban, Shay Bushinsky	Israel	Intel Dunnington, 12 x 2.67Ghz
CLUSTER TOGA	K. Himstedt, U. Lorenz, T. Gaksch, F. Letouzey	Germany	Cluster, 24 cores
SHREDDER	Stefan Meyer-Kahlen	Germany	Intel Core 2, 8 x 3.16Ghz
FALCON	Omid David-Tabibi	Israel	Intel Core 2, 2.1Ghz (using 1 core)
JONNY	Johannes Zwanzger	Germany	Cluster, 16 cores
SJENG	Gian-Carlo Pascutto	Belgium	Intel Core 2, 4 x 2.8Ghz
THE BARON	Richard Pijl	The Netherlands	AMD Opteron 270, 4 x 2Ghz
MOBILE CHESS	Huang Chen	China	Nokia 6120c

Table 1: Participants of the 16th World Computer-Chess Championship.

The tournament format was 9 rounds of round-robin, and the rate of play was 2 hours for 60 moves, plus 30 minutes for the rest of the game. After 9 rounds, RYBKA won the world championship with 8 points, followed by HIARCS with 7 points, and JUNIOR with 6 points (see Table 2). SJENG won the World Computer Speed Chess Championship with 6.5 points followed by RYBKA, FALCON, HIARCS, and SHREDDER with 6 points (see p. 171).

September 28: Round 1

The main clash of round 1 was between SHREDDER and JUNIOR. Each of the two rivals had won several WCCCs, and both were considered top contenders for the title. JUNIOR deviated from the main variations of Ruy Lopez with 3. … f5, and held the ground until obtaining a draw on move 56. At some point SHREDDER had two formidable connected passed Pawns in return for an exchange, but the advantage was not sufficient for victory. In another exciting game CLUSTER TOGA and HIARCS played a Sicilian Najdorf, leaving the opening book on move 27 in a complicated position. However, the game finished by threefold repetition on the 45th move, with most of the pieces still on the board. RYBKA defeated THE BARON by obtaining a clear advantage

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following a direct king attack, JONNY defeated SJENG in a long 78-move endgame, and FALCON easily overcame MOBILE CHESS with checkmate in 25 moves.

	Program	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Points	Rank
1	RYBKA	X	1	=	=	1	1	1	1	1	1	8.0	1
2	HIARCS	0	X	1	=	1	1	1	1	=	1	7.0	2
3	JUNIOR	=	0	X	1	=	=	1	=	1	1	6.0	3
4	CLUSTER TOGA	=	=	0	X	=	0	1	1	1	1	5.5	4
5	SHREDDER	0	0	=	=	X	1	=	=	=	1	4.5	5
6	FALCON	0	0	=	1	0	X	=	0	1	1	4.0	6
7	JONNY	0	0	0	0	=	=	X	1	1	1	4.0	6
8	SJENG	0	0	=	0	1	=	0	X	=	1	3.5	8
9	THE BARON	0	=	0	0	=	0	0	=	X	1	2.5	9
10	MOBILE CHESS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	X	0.0	10

Table 2: Final Standings of the 2008 World Computer-Chess Championship.

SHREDDER – JUNIOR
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 f5 4.Nc3 fxe4 5.Nxe4 Nf6 6.Nxf6+ Qxf6 7.0–0 Be7 8.Qe2 0–0 9.Qe4 d6 10.Bxc6 bxc6 11.d4 Bf5 12.Qxc6 Qg6 13.Qxc7 Bd8 14.Qc4+ Be6 15.Qc6 Rc8 16.Qxd6 Bc7 17.Qa3 Bd5 18.Qd3 e4 19.Qb5 Rcd8 20.Ne1 Qh5 21.h3 Rb8 22.Qd7 Rf7 23.Qg4 Qxg4 24.hxg4 Bc4 25.b3 Bxf1 26.Kxf1 Bg3 27.Be3 Bxf2 28.Ke2 Bxe3 29.Kxe3 g5 30.g3 Rf1 31.c4 Rg1 32.Kf2 Rh1 33.Kg2 Rh6 34.Rc1 Rf6 35.Rc2 a5 36.d5 a4 37.c5 Kf7 38.Rc3 Rd8 39.d6 Rf8 40.Nc2 Ke8 41.Ne3 Rf2+ 42.Kh3 Rxa2 43.Nf5 a3 44.Rc4 Ra1 45.Rxe4+ Kd7 46.Ra4 Kc6 47.Ra5 a2 48.Kg2 Rc1 49.Rxa2 Rxc5 50.Re2 Rb8 51.Rd2 Rb7 52.b4 Re5 53.Kf3 h6 54.Rd4 Re6 55.b5+ Kd7 56.Rb4 ½–½

CLUSTER TOGA – HIARCS
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Be3 e5 7.Nb3 Be6 8.f3 Be7 9.Qd2 0–0 10.0–0–0 Nbd7 11.g4 b5 12.g5 Nh5 13.Kb1 Qc7 14.Nd5 Bxd5 15.exd5 Nb6 16.Na5 Nxd5 17.Qxd5 Qxa5 18.Bd3 g6 19.Qb7 Rfe8 20.Be4 Qa4 21.Bc6 Rab8 22.Qa7 Rec8 23.c3 Ng7 24.h4 Nf5 25.Bb6 Rf8 26.Bf2 Rfd8 27.Ka1 Kg7 28.Be4 Re8 29.h5 Qc4 30.Qxa6 Bxg5 31.Rhg1 Kf6 32.Ba7 Rbd8 33.hxg6 hxg6 34.Bb6 Rb8 35.Qa7 Qe6 36.Rd3 Rh8 37.Rgd1 Rbc8 38.Bb7 Rcf8 39.Bc7 Kg7 40.Be4 Be7 41.Bb6 Bd8 42.Bf2 Bh4 43.Bb6 Bd8 44.Bf2 Bh4 45.Bb6 Bd8 ½–½

September 29: Round 2
After a reversed order of moves, the game between RYBKA and SHREDDER transposed into a sharp Keres Attack in the Sicilian opening (Scheveningen variation). However, the game quickly shifted to a positional combat, where RYBKA seized the initiative and defeated SHREDDER in 66 moves. In its game against CLUSTER TOGA, JUNIOR played the Poisoned Pawn variation in the Sicilian Najdorf, which fit perfectly JUNIOR's style of playing with fewer Pawns. Following an accurate endgame play by JUNIOR, the Israelian program defeated CLUSTER TOGA in 44 moves. In other games of this round SJENG defeated FALCON, HIARCS defeated JONNY, and THE BARON checkmated MOBILE CHESS in 26 moves.

RYBKA - SHREDDER
1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 d6 3.Nge2 Nf6 4.d4 cxd4 5.Nxd4 a6 6.h3 e6 7.g4 d5 8.exd5 Nxd5 9.Bd2 Nc6 10.Nxc6 bxc6 11.Bg2 Be7 12.0–0 a5 13.Ne2 h5 14.gxh5 Bf6 15.c4 Ne7 16.Nc3 Ra6 17.Qe2 Nf5 18.Rad1 Nd4 19.Qd3 Nf5 20.Qxd8+ Bxd8 21.h6 Nxh6 22.Na4 Be7 23.Be3 Nf5 24.Bb6 Kf8 25.Rfe1 f6 26.Bxc6 Rxh3 27.c5 Kf7 28.Be4 Rh4 29.Nc3 Rg4+ 30.Kf1 Rf4 31.Rd3 Rxb6 32.cxb6 Ba6 33.b7 Bd6 34.a4 Rxe4 35.Nxe4 Bxd3+ 36.Kg1 Bxe4 37.Rxe4 Ke7 38.Rc4 Kd7 39.Rc8 Nd4 40.b8Q Bxb8 41.Rxb8 Kd6 42.Kg2 g5 43.Rg8 Kc5 44.Rg6 f5 45.Rxg5 Kb4 46.Rg8 Kxa4 47.Rb8 Nc2 48.f4 Nb4 49.Kf3 Kb3 50.Rb5 Kxb2 51.Ke3 Kc1 52.Rxa5 Kd1 53.Rb5 Nd5+ 54.Kf3 Kd2 55.Rb8 Kd3 56.Rd8 Kd4 57.Re8 Ne3 58.Rxe6 Nc4 59.Kg3 Kd5 60.Re8 Kd6 61.Kh4 Kd7 62.Re1 Nd6 63.Kg5 Kc6 64.Re6 Kb7 65.Rxd6 Kc8 66.Kxf5 Kc7 1–0

JUNIOR - CLUSTER TOGA
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Bg5 e6 7.f4 Qb6 8.Qd2 Qxb2 9.Rb1 Qa3 10.e5 dxe5 11.fxe5 Nfd7 12.Ne4 h6 13.Bh4 Qxa2 14.Rd1 Qd5 15.Qe3 Qxe5 16.Be2 Bc5 17.Bg3 Qd5 18.Bf3 0–0 19.Qc3 e5 20.Nb3 Bd4 21.Nxd4 exd4 22.Rxd4 Qe6 23.Rd6 Qe7 24.Rd2 Nf6 25.Bd6 Nxe4 26.Bxe7 Nxc3 27.Bxf8 Nc6 28.Bxc6 bxc6 29.Rd8 Bb7 30.Rxa8 Bxa8 31.Be7 c5 32.Bxc5 Bxg2 33.Rg1 Ne4 34.Bd4 Ng5 35.Rxg2 Nf3+ 36.Ke2 Nxd4+ 37.Kd3 Ne6 38.Ke4 Kf8 39.Rf2 g5 40.Kd5 Ke7 41.c4 h5 42.c5 g4 43.Kc6 h4 44.Kb6 1–0

In the evening of this day, the participants made one of the most important discoveries of the tournament: discovering the resort pub! In all the following evenings the players met at the pub for a glass of beer, and frequently played an addicting card game brought by Johannes Zwanzger, the author of JONNY.

September 30: Rounds 3 and 4

In round 3, the game between CLUSTER TOGA and RYBKA reached the endgame phase already on move 22, after which the programs fought for another 55 moves in an equal position. In another long game, JUNIOR gradually outmaneuvered JONNY, checkmating it in 118 moves. THE BARON played the Petroff Defence against SHREDDER, and after following a main book line, the programs were out of book on move 22 in a completely balanced position, culminating in a draw. With the black pieces, HIARCS left the opening book with an advantage against FALCON, safely translating it into a victory. MOBILE CHESS put up a long fight against SJENG, but ultimately being checkmated in 46 moves.

The afternoon session saw more draws. Already in move 42, SHREDDER had a Queen vs. CLUSTER TOGA's Rook and Bishop. However, after a very long struggle, SHREDDER could not translate its advantage into a win, and on move 116 a draw by threefold repetition was reached. In a lively game, RYBKA directly headed for JONNY's King, and broke through its defences with a knight sacrifice on move 16. JONNY declined the sacrifice, but surrendered a few moves later with its King exposed to the attack by several white pieces.

With the black pieces against JUNIOR, FALCON played the 3. … f5 variation in Ruy Lopez, which worked successfully for JUNIOR in the first round. The balance remained undisturbed until move 81 when a draw was agreed. The game between THE BARON and SJENG ended in a draw. HIARCS defeated MOBILE CHESS. By the end of round 4, RYBKA and HIARCS were leading with 3.5 points, closely followed by JUNIOR with 3 points.

CLUSTER TOGA – RYBKA (round 3)
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 a6 3.c3 e6 4.d4 d5 5.e5 Bd7 6.Bd3 cxd4 7.cxd4 Bb5 8.Bxb5+ axb5 9.Nc3 b4 10.Nb5 Ra5 11.a4 bxa3 12.Qb3 axb2 13.Bxb2 Rxa1+ 14.Bxa1 Nh6 15.Bc3 Be7 16.Bd2 0–0 17.Bxh6 gxh6 18.0–0 Kg7 19.Nc3 Nc6 20.Qxb7 Qa8 21.Rb1 Bb4 22.Qxa8 Rxa8 23.Ne2 Kf8 24.Rc1 Ra6 25.h4 Ke8 26.Rc2 Kd7 27.g3 Ra3 28.Kg2 Ba5 29.Rb2 Kc7 30.Nf4 Bc3 31.Rc2 Ba1 32.Ne2 Kd7 33.Rd2 Ra4 34.h5 Ke7 35.Kf1 Rb4 36.Rd1 Bb2 37.Rb1 Rb3 38.Ne1 Ke8 39.f4 Ke7 40.Kg2 Na5 41.Rd1 Re3 42.Kf2 Rb3 43.Rd3 Rb5 44.Nc2 Nb3 45.Ke1 Rb7 46.Kd1 f6 47.exf6+ Kxf6 48.Ke1 Na5 49.Kf2 Rb8 50.Ne3 Nc4 51.Ng4+ Kg7 52.Ne5 Nd6 53.Kf3 Rb7 54.Kg2 Ne4 55.Ng4 Rb8 56.f5 exf5 57.Ne3 Kf6 58.Nxd5+ Kg5 59.Kf3 Rb3 60.Re3 Ra3 61.Nef4 Rxe3+ 62.Nxe3 Nd6 63.Ned5 Bc1 64.Nd3 Bd2 65.Ke2 Ne4 66.Nc5 Nc3+ 67.Nxc3 Bxc3 68.d5 Kf6 69.d6 Bb4 70.d7 Ke7 71.Ne6 Kxd7 72.Nd4 Ba3 73.Kf3 Bc1 74.Nxf5 Ke6 75.Ke4 Kf6 76.Nd4 Kg5 77.Ne2 ½–½

THE BARON – SJENG (round 3)
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5 4.g3 dxc4 5.Bg2 Be7 6.0–0 0–0 7.Qc2 a6 8.a4 Bd7 9.Qxc4 Bc6 10.Bg5 a5 11.Nc3 Ra6 12.e3 Rb6 13.Qe2 Nbd7 14.Nb5 Re8 15.Rfc1 Bxf3 16.Bxf3 c6 17.Na3 Bxa3 18.Rxa3 e5 19.dxe5 Nxe5 20.Bg2 Rb4 21.Qc2 Qb6 22.b3 Ned7 23.Bxf6 Nxf6 24.Rd1 g6 25.Rd6 Ng4 26.Bf3 Ne5 27.Be2 h5 28.Qc3 Qc7 29.Rd1 Qe7 30.Ra2 Qe6 31.Rb2 h4 32.Rd4 c5 33.Rxh4 Rxh4 34.gxh4 b6 35.Kg2 Qe7 36.Kg3 g5 37.h5 g4 38.Rd2 Qg5 39.Rd6 Qxh5 40.h4 Kg7 41.Rxb6 Rh8 42.Kf4 f6 43.Rb7+ Nf7 44.Bc4 Qh6+ 45.Kf5 Qh7+ 46.Kf4 Qh6+ 47.Kf5 Qh7+ 48.Kf4 Qh6+ ½–½

RYBKA – JONNY (round 4)
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0–0 Be7 6.d3 b5 7.Bb3 0–0 8.a4 Bb7 9.Re1 Re8 10.c3 Bc5 11.Bd2 h6 12.Na3 Qb8 13.Nh4 d6 14.Qf3 b4 15.Nf5 Bc8 16.Nxh6+ Kh7 17.Bxf7 Rf8 18.Nc4 bxc3 19.bxc3 Kh8 20.d4 Bxd4 21.Bg5 Nh7 22.cxd4 Be6 23.Qh5 Bxf7 24.Nxf7+ Kg8 25.Nh6+ Kh8 26.dxe5 Qe8 27.Qh3 Nxe5 28.Nxe5 1–0

JUNIOR – FALCON (round 4)
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 f5 4.d3 Nf6 5.0–0 Be7 6.Bc4 Na5 7.Nxe5 Nxc4 8.Nxc4 fxe4 9.dxe4 d5 10.exd5 Qxd5 11.Qxd5 Nxd5 12.Rd1 Nb4 13.Ne3 Bg4 14.Rd4 Bh5 15.Nc3 0–0 16.a3 Nc6 17.Rc4 Bd6 18.Bd2 Bf7 19.Ned5 Rad8 20.Bg5 Bxd5 21.Nxd5 Bxh2+ 22.Kxh2 Rxd5 23.Be3 Re8 24.b3 h6 25.Re1 Re7 26.Kg1 Kf7 27.Kf1 a6 28.f3 g5 29.Kf2 Kg6 30.g4 Na5 31.Ra4 Nc6 32.f4 gxf4 33.Rxf4 Rd6 34.Rh1 Kg7 35.Rh3 Rde6 36.a4 Re8 37.b4 Re5 38.Rhf3 Kg8 39.a5 R5e7 40.Rh3 Re6 41.Bc5 Re2+ 42.Kg3 Kg7 43.c3 Kg6 44.Rf5 Rc2 45.Rf3 Rc1 46.Kh4 Rd1 47.Rf4 Ree1 48.Be3 Rd3 49.Bf2 Rxh3+ 50.Kxh3 Re2 51.Kg3 Ne5 52.Bd4 Nc6 53.Rf6+ Kg5 54.Rf5+ Kg6 55.Bg1 Re7 56.Bf2 Rd7 57.Kh4 Rd2 58.Bg3 Ne7 59.Rf8 Kg7 60.Rf3 Ng6+ 61.Kh3 Rd7 62.Bh2 Kg8 63.Bg1 Ne5 64.Rg3 Kf7 65.Re3 Kf6 66.Bf2 Nd3 67.Bh4+ Kf7 68.Kg3 c5 69.Re4 cxb4 70.cxb4 Kg7 71.Kf3 Kg8 72.Ke3 Kf7 73.Ke2 Kg7 74.Bg3 Kg6 75.Bb8 h5 76.gxh5+ Kxh5 77.Ba7 Kg6 78.Kf3 Kf5 79.Ke3 Ne5 80.Rf4+ Ke6 81.Rh4 Nc6 ½–½

October 1: Round 5

In round 5 the three leaders overclassed their opponents without much difficulty. RYBKA outplayed FALCON in a positional game; HIARCS obtained a material advantage of 2 Pawns against SJENG, resulting in a comfortable victory; and JUNIOR easily defeated MOBILE CHESS. CLUSTER TOGA quickly defeated THE BARON in 29 moves. In the game JONNY vs. SHREDDER the Queens were off the board already on move 17, with the game ending in a draw after an additional 40 moves.

CLUSTER TOGA - THE BARON

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.d4 Nxe4 4.Bd3 d5 5.Nxe5 Nd7 6.Nxd7 Bxd7 7.0–0 Bd6 8.c4 c6 9.cxd5 cxd5 10.Nc3 Nxc3 11.bxc3 0–0 12.Qh5 g6 13.Qxd5 Qc7 14.Bh6 Rfe8 15.h3 Be6 16.Qg5 Qxc3 17.Rfd1 Qxd4 18.Bxg6 Qe5 19.Rxd6 Qxa1+ 20.Bb1+ Kh8 21.Kh2 a6 22.Qh4 Qe5+ 23.f4 Qa1 24.Rd1 f5 25.Bxf5 Qb2 26.Bg5 Bxf5 27.Bf6+ Qxf6 28.Qxf6+ Kg8 29.Qxf5 Re7 1–0

FALCON - RYBKA
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 a6 5.Bd3 Qc7 6.Nc3 Nc6 7.Be3 Nf6 8.0–0 Ne5 9.h3 Bc5 10.Kh1 d6 11.f4 Ng6 12.Qe1 0–0 13.Nf3 Bxe3 14.Qxe3 e5 15.f5 Nf4 16.g3 Nxd3 17.cxd3 b5 18.Rfc1 Qe7 19.Rc2 d5 20.Nxd5 Nxd5 21.exd5 f6 22.Qe4 Qf7 23.Rac1 Bb7 24.Rc7 Rac8 25.Rxc8 Bxc8 26.d6 Bb7 27.Qe3 Qd5 28.Kg2 Qxd6 29.Kf2 Rd8 30.d4 exd4 31.Qe6+ Qxe6 32.fxe6 d3 33.Rc7 Bc8 34.e7 Re8 35.Nd4 Bxh3 36.Nc6 h5 37.Ke3 Bg2 38.Kxd3 Bxc6 39.Rxc6 Rxe7 40.Rxa6 Re1 41.Ra3 g5 42.Rb3 Kg7 43.Kd2 Re5 44.Rb4 Kg6 45.Rd4 Kf5 46.Kd3 h4 47.gxh4 g4 48.Rd7 Kf4 49.Rf7 f5 50.h5 Kf3 51.Kd4 Re4+ 0–1

October 3: Rounds 6 and 7

Following a tour to the Great Wall and the Summer Palace on the previous day, on October 3 the participants returned for two more rounds. In round 6, RYBKA easily defeated MOBILE CHESS, while the other two programs at the top were both stopped by a draw. After a long series of maneuvers, HIARCS agreed to a draw against THE BARON. JUNIOR's sharp Sveshnikov was not sufficient to break through SJENG's barrier, with the latter holding the game until a draw was reached. In an instructive rook endgame, CLUSTER TOGA placed its rook on 7th rank against JONNY, winning the game in 61 moves. In the final game of the round, SHREDDER defeated FALCON after a long 74-move battle.

Round 7 was the liveliest round, with all the games ending in victories. In the main game of the round, HIARCS defeated JUNIOR, remaining in pursuit of RYBKA with 0.5 points behind. FALCON, despite having a huge hardware disadvantage against CLUSTER TOGA (FALCON was running on an average laptop, while CLUSTER TOGA ran on a 24-core cluster) managed to outsearch its opponent in an endgame position, winning the game in 87 moves. JONNY beat THE BARON by a direct attack on its King. RYBKA beat SJENG to remain at the top, and SHREDDER beat MOBILE CHESS.

CLUSTER TOGA – JONNY (round 6)
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.d4 Nxe4 4.Bd3 d5 5.Nxe5 Nd7 6.Nxd7 Bxd7 7.0–0 Bd6 8.c4 c6 9.cxd5 cxd5 10.Nc3 Nxc3 11.bxc3 0–0 12.Bd2 Qh4 13.g3 Qg4 14.Qxg4 Bxg4 15.Rfb1 b6 16.a4 Bc7 17.Kg2 Rae8 18.h3 Be2 19.Bb5 Re6 20.Re1 Bxb5 21.axb5 Rxe1 22.Rxe1 Bd6 23.Kf3 Rc8 24.Bf4 Bxf4 25.Kxf4 Kf8 26.Ra1 Rxc3 27.Rxa7 Rb3 28.g4 Rxb5 29.Ke5 h6 30.h4 f6+ 31.Ke6 Kg8 32.Ra2 Rb1 33.Ra8+ Kh7 34.Kxd5 b5 35.Rb8 b4 36.h5 b3 37.Kc4 Rc1+ 38.Kd3 Rd1+ 39.Ke3 Rb1 40.Ke2 Rb2+ 41.Kd3 Rb1 42.f3 b2 43.Kc3 Rf1 44.Rxb2 Rxf3+ 45.Kc4 Rf4 46.Kc5 Kg8 47.d5 Rxg4 48.d6 Kf7 49.Rb8 Rg1 50.d7 Rc1+ 51.Kd6 Rd1+ 52.Kc7 Rc1+ 53.Kb7 Rb1+ 54.Kc8 Rc1+ 55.Kd8 Rc5 56.Rb7 f5 57.Rb8 f4 58.Rb4 Rxh5 59.Rxf4+ Ke6 60.Rd4 Ke5 61.Kc8 1–0

HIARCS – JUNIOR (round 6)
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 f5 4.Nc3 fxe4 5.Nxe4 Nf6 6.Qe2 d5 7.Nxf6+ gxf6 8.d4 Bg7 9.c4 Bg4 10.dxe5 0–0 11.Bxc6 bxc6 12.e6 Re8 13.0–0 Qd6 14.Qd3 dxc4 15.Qxc4 Bxf3 16.gxf3 Qxe6 17.Qxe6+ Rxe6 18.Be3 f5 19.Rab1 Rd8 20.b3 Rd5 21.Rbc1 Be5 22.f4 Bb2 23.Rc4 a5 24.Re1 Ba3 25.Re2 Rg6+ 26.Kf1 Rd1+ 27.Re1 Rd5 28.Bc1 Bd6 29.Re8+ Kf7 30.Ra8 Rh6 31.Kg2 Rg6+ 32.Kf3 Rh6 33.Ra7 Rxh2 34.Rxc6 Rh4 35.Be3 Rh3+ 36.Kg2 Rh4 37.Rca6 Rg4+ 38.Kf3 h5 39.Rxa5 Rxa5 40.Rxa5 Kf6 41.Ra8 h4 42.Rh8 Kg7 43.Rh5 Kg6 44.Rg5+ Rxg5 45.fxg5 h3 46.a4 f4 47.Ba7 Bb4 48.Bb8 Ba5 49.b4 Bxb4 50.Bxc7 Kxg5 51.a5 Kg6 1–0

FALCON - CLUSTER TOGA (round 7)
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Be3 e5 7.Nb3 Be6 8.f3 Be7 9.Qd2 0–0 10.0–0–0 Nbd7 11.g4 b5 12.g5 b4 13.Ne2 Ne8 14.f4 a5 15.f5 Bc4 16.Ng3 Bxf1 17.Rhxf1 a4 18.Na1 a3 19.b3 Kh8 20.f6 gxf6 21.Nf5 fxg5 22.Qxb4 Rb8 23.Qxa3 Ra8 24.Qb2 Ra6 25.c3 Ng7 26.Nxg7 Qa8 27.a4 Kxg7 28.Qg2 Kh8 29.Nc2 f5 30.Nb4 Ra5 31.Nd5 Rxd5 32.exd5 f4 33.Bg1 Rb8 34.Qc2 Nf6 35.c4 Bf8 36.Qf5 Qb7 37.Rf3 Bg7 38.Rc3 Qb4 39.Kb2 Qxa4 40.Ra1 Qd7 41.Qxd7 Nxd7 42.Ra6 e4 43.Rxd6 Nf8 44.c5 e3 45.Kc2 Bxc3 46.Kxc3 Kg7 47.c6 Kf7 48.b4 Re8 49.Kd3 Ke7 50.Rh6 Kd8 51.b5 Kc7 52.d6+ Kb6 53.d7 Rb8 54.h4 Kc7 55.hxg5 Rxb5 56.Bh2 Rb4 57.Rf6 Ng6 58.Re6 Nh8 59.g6 hxg6 60.Rf6 e2 61.Rxf4 Rb3+ 62.Kc4 Rc3+ 63.Kb5 Rb3+ 64.Rb4+ Kd8 65.Rxb3 e1Q 66.c7+ Kxd7 67.Rd3+ Ke7 68.Bd6+ Kf6 69.Rf3+ Kg5 70.Rg3+ Kf6 71.c8Q Qe2+ 72.Kb6 Qb2+ 73.Ka5 Qa2+ 74.Ba3 Qd2+ 75.Kb5 Qe2+ 76.Ka4 Qd1+ 77.Rb3 Nf7 78.Qc3+ Ke6 79.Qc6+ Kf5 80.Qc5+ Ne5 81.Bb2 Qd7+ 82.Rb5 Qd1+ 83.Ka3 Qd3+ 84.Bc3 Qg3 85.Qd4 Kf6 86.Rxe5 Qxe5 87.Qxe5+ Kf7 1–0

JONNY - THE BARON (round 7)

1.Nf3 d5 2.d4 Nf6 3.c4 c6 4.Nc3 dxc4 5.a4 Bf5 6.e3 e6 7.Bxc4 Bb4 8.0–0 Nbd7 9.Qb3 a5 10.Nh4 Bg4 11.f3 Bh5 12.g4 Bg6 13.Be2 Nb6 14.g5 Ng8 15.f4 Ne7 16.Nxg6 hxg6 17.Na2 Bd6 18.e4 Nec8 19.Be3 Be7 20.Rf3 Qc7 21.Nc3 Rh4 22.d5 exd5 23.exd5 Kf8 24.dxc6 bxc6 25.Bf2 Rh7 26.Rd1 Nd7 27.Ne4 Ncb6 28.Bg3 Qa7 29.Rc1 Rc8 30.Kh1 c5 31.f5 c4 32.Rxc4 Nxc4 33.fxg6 Rh8 34.Bxc4 Qd4 35.Bf1 Ke8 36.Qb7 Rd8 37.Bb5 Qd1+ 38.Rf1 Qd4 39.Qc6 Rh3 40.Nd6+ Kf8 41.Nxf7 Nf6 42.Nxd8 Qxd8 43.Qe6 Qa8+ 44.Bc6 Qxc6+ 45.Qxc6 Rxh2+ 46.Bxh2 Kg8 47.Qa8+ Bf8 48.gxf6 gxf6 49.Rxf6 Kg7 50.Qxf8# 1–0

October 4: Rounds 8 and 9

In round 8, the top two contenders faced each other to fight for the first place. RYBKA with white pieces took on HIARCS with a very tactical Sicilian Kalashnikov, reaching a clear advantage before move 20, and winning the game in 35 moves. In the other games, JUNIOR beat THE BARON in its typical attacking style; the games SHREDDER vs. SJENG and JONNY vs. FALCON ended in draws; and CLUSTER TOGA defeated MOBILE CHESS.

In the final round, the game between JUNIOR and RYBKA turned into an exhilarating tactical battle, with RYBKA clinging to a draw by perpetual check. The other four games ended in victories, with FALCON, CLUSTER TOGA, HIARCS, and JONNY defeating THE BARON, SJENG, CLUSTER TOGA, and MOBILE CHESS, respectively.

RYBKA – HIARCS (round 8)
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 e5 5.Nb5 d6 6.N1c3 a6 7.Na3 Rb8 8.Nc4 Nf6 9.Bg5 b5 10.Bxf6 Qxf6 11.Ne3 Be7 12.a4 bxa4 13.Rxa4 Rxb2 14.Ncd5 Qg6 15.Bxa6 Bd7 16.Nc7+ Kd8 17.Qa1 Rb8 18.Bb5 Bg5 19.Ned5 Ne7 20.0–0 Nxd5 21.Nxd5 Bxb5 22.Ra8 Rxa8 23.Qxa8+ Kd7 24.Qb7+ Ke6 25.Nc7+ Kf6 26.Nxb5 Qh5 27.Nxd6 Rf8 28.Nf5 Kg6 29.Qb6+ Bf6 30.Ne7+ Kh6 31.f3 Qg5 32.Nf5+ Kg6 33.f4 exf4 34.h4 Qg4 35.Qd6 1–0

THE BARON – JUNIOR (round 8)
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.f3 d5 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.e4 Nb6 6.Nc3 Bg7 7.Be3 0–0 8.Qd2 e5 9.d5 c6 10.h4 h5 11.Be2 cxd5 12.exd5 N8d7 13.d6 Nf6 14.Bg5 Be6 15.Nh3 Rc8 16.Nf2 Nc4 17.Bxc4 Rxc4 18.Bxf6 Bxf6 19.Nfe4 Bg7 20.0–0–0 Rd4 21.Qg5 Qc8 22.Kb1 f5 23.Ng3 Kh7 24.Nge2 Bc4 25.Qe3 Qc5 26.Nxd4 exd4 27.Na4 Qxd6 28.Qa3 Qc6 29.Nc5 b5 30.Rhe1 Rc8 31.Nb3 d3 32.Rd2 Bh6 33.Na5 Qb6 34.Qe7+ Kg8 35.Nxc4 bxc4 36.Qd7 Rf8 37.Qd5+ Kh8 38.Qe5+ Bg7 39.Qe3 Qb5 40.a4 Qa5 41.Rc1 f4 42.Qf2 Qb4 43.Rdd1 Qb3 44.Rd2 Rb8 45.a5 Rb5 46.Re2 Rxa5 0–1

JUNIOR – RYBKA (round 9)
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 a6 3.c3 e6 4.d4 d5 5.e5 Bd7 6.dxc5 Bxc5 7.Bd3 Qc7 8.0–0 Ne7 9.Re1 Ng6 10.Nbd2 Qb6 11.Nd4 Nc6 12.N2b3 Ngxe5 13.Nxc5 Qxc5 14.Bf4 Nxd3 15.Qxd3 0–0 16.Qg3 Nxd4 17.Bd6 Qb6 18.cxd4 Rfc8 19.Be5 g6 20.Qf4 Qd8 21.Re3 Rc2 22.Rh3 f5 23.Rg3 Be8 24.h4 Qe7 25.Rc1 Rac8 26.Rxc2 Rxc2 27.h5 Bf7 28.a3 b5 29.Bd6 Qd8 30.h6 Qf6 31.Bc5 Be8 32.Qb8 Kf7 33.Qd6 Rc1+ 34.Kh2 Kg8 35.Re3 Qh4+ 36.Rh3 Qf6 37.b4 Re1 38.f4 Re4 39.Qb6 g5 40.fxg5 Qf7 41.Kg1 Rg4 42.Qd8 f4 43.Rf3 Qg6 44.Be7 Qb1+ 45.Rf1 Rxg2+ 46.Kxg2 Qe4+ 47.Kg1 Qe3+ 48.Rf2 Qg3+ 49.Kf1 Qh3+ 50.Ke2 Qe3+ 51.Kd1 Qd3+ 52.Rd2 Qb1+ 53.Ke2 Qe4+ 54.Kf1 Qf3+ 55.Ke1 Qh1+ 56.Kf2 Qh2+ 57.Kf3 Qg3+ 58.Ke2 Qe3+ 59.Kd1 Qb3+ 60.Rc2 Qd3+ 61.Kc1 Qxa3+ 62.Kb1 Qb3+ ½–½

HIARCS – SHREDDER (round 9)
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.f3 e5 7.Nb3 Be7 8.Be3 Be6 9.Qd2 0–0 10.0–0–0 Nbd7 11.g4 b5 12.g5 b4 13.Ne2 Ne8 14.f4 a5 15.f5 a4 16.Nbd4 exd4 17.Nxd4 b3 18.Kb1 bxc2+ 19.Nxc2 Bb3 20.axb3 axb3 21.Na3 Ne5 22.h4 Ra4 23.Bd4 Qa8 24.Qe3 Bd8 25.Rh3 Nc7 26.Rg3 Nc6 27.Bc3 Ne5 28.Bxe5 dxe5 29.Qxb3 Be7 30.Nc2 Rb8 31.Qc3 Ne8 32.Rd7 Bd6 33.Bc4 Qxe4 34.Bxf7+ Kh8 35.Qf3 Ra1+ 36.Kxa1 Qxc2 37.Bb3 Qc1+ 38.Ka2 e4 39.Qe3 Qc6 40.Ra7 Bxg3 41.Qxg3 Qb6 42.Ra3 Qd6 43.Qc3 Qe7 44.Qd4 Rd8 45.Ra7 Rxd4 46.Rxe7 Rd8 47.Rxe4 Ra8+ 48.Ra4 Rc8 49.Rf4 Ra8+ 50.Kb1 Nd6 51.f6 Rf8 52.h5 gxf6 53.gxf6 Nf7 54.Bxf7 Rxf7 55.h6 Rd7 56.Re4 Rd8 1–0

Table 2 (on p. 167) provides the final results and standings. Congratulations to Vasik Rajlich the author of RYBKA, and Hans van der Zijden the operator of RYBKA (who also fascinated everyone by solving the Rubik's Cube in 20 seconds) for winning the World Computer-Chess Championship.

THE 2008 WORLD COMPUTER SPEED-CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP
Beijing, China
October 1, 2008

Omid David Tabibi

Ramat-Gan, Israel

In the afternoon of October 1, 2008, the 2008 World Computer Speed-Chess Championship (WCSCC) was held. Unlike previous years, this year all the programs participated in the tournament, which was held as a double round-robin blitz tournament with each side having 7 minutes per game. SJENG was the winner of WCSCC with 6.5 points, followed by RYBKA, FALCON, HIARCS, and SHREDDER with 6 points. Table 1 provides the results and standings of the blitz tournament. Congratulations to Gian-Carlo Pascutto for winning the World Computer Speed-Chess Championship.

	Program	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Points	Rank
1	SJENG	X	0	=	1	=	=	1	1	1	1	6.5	1
2	RYBKA	1	X	0	=	1	=	1	0	1	1	6.0	2
3	FALCON	=	1	X	0	=	1	=	=	1	1	6.0	2
4	HIARCS	0	=	1	X	=	=	1	1	=	1	6.0	2
5	SHREDDER	=	0	=	=	X	1	=	1	1	1	6.0	2
6	CLUSTER TOGA	=	=	0	=	0	X	=	=	1	1	4.5	6
7	JUNIOR	0	0	=	0	=	=	X	1	1	1	4.5	6
8	THE BARON	0	1	=	0	0	=	0	X	0	1	3.0	8
9	JONNY	0	0	0	=	0	0	0	1	X	1	2.5	9
10	MOBILE CHESS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	X	0.0	10

Table 1: Final Standings of the 2008 World Computer Speed Chess Championship.

Photo by Reijer Grimbergen

Visiting the Great Wall