

## CHESS NOTES by J.H.J.

# Games on computer turn real players off

REGULAR readers will know that I do not hold computer chess programmes in high regard.

Some years ago, as part of a promotion drive, a local company offered quite substantial prizes in goods for beating a chess computer. Such was the quality of advertising that a veritable crowd of enthusiasts had appeared, although in truth, not many could actually claim to be chess players even though most could play chess.

Quite a number of similar machines were available for trials and eventually I was able to get a test game which went as follows:

White: J.H.J. Black: computer — 1, e4, c5; 2, Nc3, Nc6; 3, g3, g6; 4, Bg2, Bg6; 5, d3, d6; 6, Nge2, e5; 7, 0-0; Nf6; 8, h3, 0-0; 9, Bg5, Be6; 10, Qd2, Nd4 (with the threat 11, . . . Bxh3; 12, Bxh3??, Nf3+); 11, Nxd4, cxd4; 12, Nd5, Bxd5; 13, exd5, Rc8; 14, f4, Qb6; 15, f5, Qxb2 (at Blitz play the "machine" will grab any undefended material); 16, Rac1, Qxa2; 17, g4, Nxd5; 18, Bh6 (18, f6 may be better), Bxh6 (18, . . . ,

f6 is definitely better); 19, Qxh6, Ne3?? (no good is 19, . . . , f6, 20, fxc6, hxc6; 21, Qxg6+, Kh8; 22, Rf5, nor does 20, . . . , Rc7; fare better after 21, Ra1 followed by 22, Bxd5+. Probably the best try is 19, . . . , Nf6 so that if 20, g5, Nh5; 21, f6, Rxc2; 22, Rxc2, Qxc2; 23, Bf3, Qxd3; 24, Bxh5, Qg3 perpetual check); 20, f6, Nxf1; 21, Qg7++ (1:0).

The conditions of play were two minutes (!) each for the whole game which meant that as the machine was incapable of resigning a mate had to be delivered. Also for the game to count it had to be monitored by the sponsors.

Some time later my turn arrived and the game followed exactly the same moves as my trial, with mate being delivered in something short of a minute!

So this game highlights my dislike of the programmes that have insufficient variability inbuilt to change the moves. All machines play on till mate is delivered whatever the material deficit while at present none learn from their losses.