THE ACM'S 19th NORTH AMERICAN COMPUTER-CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP

Orlando, Florida
November 13-15, 1988

Supercomputing '88, sponsored by the IEEE Computer Society and ACM's SIGARCH, will host the ACM's 19th North American Computer-Chess Championship. This event usually attracts the best chess programs in North America and this year should be no different. The level of play is nearing the Grand-Master level as the programs continue to improve from year to year. The tournament will be a four-round Swiss-style event with two rounds on Sunday, November 13th, one on Monday, November 14th, and the final round on Tuesday, November 15th. A $ 2000 prize will be awarded to the authors of the winning program.

The ACM's 1987 North American Computer-Chess Championship was won by CHIPTEST-M from Carnegie-Mellon University, the work of a team of graduate students headed by Feng-hsiung Hsu. CHIPTEST-M defeated CRAY BLITZ, the current world champion and PHOENIX, the top Canadian program, in the final two rounds. These programs as well as most of the leading programs in North America are expected to participate.

Mike Valvo will serve as Tournament Director (TD). Valvo, one of the best blindfold chess-players in the USA, has served in this capacity for almost a decade.

For more information or to apply, please write or call: Monty Newborn, School of Computer Science, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H3A 2A7; Tele: 514-398-7079.

TOURNAMENT RULES

1. Each entry is a computing system and one or more human operators. A listing of all chess-related programs running on the system must be available on demand to the TD. Each entry requires at least one full-time operator (i.e., one operator cannot assist with more than one entry).

2. Participants are required to attend a meeting at 12:00 PM on November 13 for the purpose of officially registering for the tournament. Rules will be finalized at that meeting. The TD has the right to choose an alternate to replace any entry which fails to appear.

3. The tournament is a four-round Swiss-style tournament. The first and second rounds will be played Sunday November 13 at 1:00 PM and 7:30 PM respectively. The third round is scheduled for Monday, November 14 at 7:30 PM, the fourth round for Tuesday November 15 at 7:30 PM.

4. Trophies will be awarded to the first three finishers. The order of finish will be determined by the total number of points earned. If two or more teams have an equal number of points, the sum of the opponents' points, etc., will be used as a second factor. If a tie still remains, the opponents' opponents' points, etc., will be used.

5. A trophy will be awarded to the entry running on a computing system that is present in Orlando and finishes highest based on tie-breaking points and weights under 25 kilograms. That entry will receive the title of North American Small Computing System Chess Champion.

6. A trophy will be awarded to the highest-finishing entry written by an individual currently enrolled in a junior or senior high school. That entry will receive the title of North American Computer-Chess Junior Champion.

7. A prize of $ 2000 will be awarded to the program which finishes the tournament with the most points. In the event of a tie, the prize will be divided equally.

8. Unless otherwise specified, rules of play are identical to those of "human" tournament play. If a point is in question, the TD has the right to make the final decision.

9. Games are played at a speed of 40 moves per player in the first two hours and 20 moves per player per hour thereafter.

10. The TD has the right to adjudicate a game after five hours of total clock time. The adjudication will be made on the premise that perfect chess will be played by both sides from the final position. Every effort will be made by the TD to avoid adjudication.

11. A team may request the TD to stop its clock at most twice during the course of a game because of technical difficulties. The clock must be restarted each time after at most 15 minutes. If a team using a remote computer can clearly establish that its problems are not in its own computing system but in the communication network, the TD can permit additional time-outs.

12. Terminals located at the tournament site must communicate directly with remote computers, i.e., there cannot be any human intermediary at the remote location.

13. Each team that uses a terminal must position the terminal on the game table in such a way that the opponent has a good view of it. An operator can only (1) type in moves and (2) respond to request from the computer for clock information. If an operator must type in any other information, it must be approved ahead of time by the TD. (This might happen if there is noise on the communication line and, for example, a CR must be typed to clear the line.) The operator cannot query the system to see if it alive without permission of the TD.

14. If a failure occurs during the course of a game, the program parameters must be reset to their values at the time the game was interrupted. An operator error made when starting a game or when restarting in the middle of a game after a failure cannot be corrected!

15. If an operator types in an incorrect move, the TD must immediately be notified. The clock will be stopped. The game must then be backed up to the point where the error occurred. The clock of the side which made the error is left unchanged while the TD will back up the clock of the other side an amount equal to that lost. The TD may back up the clock of the side in error if it would otherwise force that side to lose the game on time, or leave it with less than two minutes per move until the next time control. In this case, the TD will back up the clock of the side in error to give it an average of two minutes per move until the next time control. If no record is available, the TD will assume each move by the side not in error required three minutes. Both sides may adjust program parameters after such an error with the consent of the TD. The TD may not allow certain parameters to be changed, e.g., the contempt factor.

16. A team must receive the approval of the TD to change from one computing system to another. The new system cannot be any more powerful than the original.

17. Each game is officially played on a chess-board provided by the Tournament Committee. The official clock is provided by the Tournament Committee.

18. At the end of each game, each team is required to turn in a game listing to the TD.

ENTRY FORM

THE ACM 19th NORTH AMERICAN COMPUTER CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP

ORLANDO,FLORIDA
13 - 15 November, 1988

Author(s) of the program: _____
Please indicate the order in which you wish names listed in any printed material about the tournament.
Note that this entry can be submitted only by one of the author(s) of the program.

Contact person (name and address for correspondence): _____
_____
Affiliation (e.g., Name of Company or University): _____
Work telephone: _____ Home telephone: _____

INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Name of Chess Program: _____
Experience (If the program hasn't participated in major tournaments recently or is better than previously results, please explain in some detail): _____

Rating: _____ Source of rating: _____
Language? _____ Memory space for program? _____ For search? _____
Opening book size? _____ # of nodes/sec (term. and non-term.) searched? _____
Any special hardware or software features? _____

INFORMATION ABOUT THE COMPUTING SYSTEM TO BE USED DURING THE TOURNAMENT

Name and manufacturer of the computer(s): _____
RAM size (bytes): _____ Word size: _____ Inst/sec/computer: _____

Location of computer?: _____

Do you want us to provide a TI Silent 700-equivalent at the tournament? (Yes or No) _____

If you plan to use a remote computer, how do you plan to communicate with it? (Over a data network or regular long distance lines?) _____
_____

Who will come to Orlando to represent your program? _____
Date: _____ Signature: _____

Deadline for entries is October 7, 1988. Return this form to Monroe Newborn, School of Computer Science, McGill University, 805 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3A 2K6.