

At the time I wrote the report I believed that my words adequately summarized the discussion. Even so, I hasten to add that, to my recollection, there were no denigrating or personal remarks made about you. No doubt over the years the organization and conditions of your event have changed, so perhaps the criticisms I heard are no longer valid.

May I leave it to you in your next Harvard Cup report to address these issues and correct any poor impression that you feel my article may have given the ICCA readership? As President of the ICCA it is my role to stimulate interest in computer chess. It is certainly not my plan or intent to undermine any human-computer events. With this in mind I should perhaps have chosen my words more carefully.

Intuition – is it there?

From *Professor A.D. de Groot*¹.

Dear Editors,

Why do the Editors of the *ICCA Journal* – intelligent persons, I presume – persevere in misrepresenting the intuition issue and stick to the strategy: Construct a strawman, then shoot? I quote Vol. 17, No. 3, p. 114: "By those holding that intuition is at the bottom and indeed, at the very unique rock bottom of all chess, computer-played games have been ridiculed as mere mechanical mock-ups, infinitely remote from human chess by human masters". Name me one living person who "holds that intuition (...) is at the very unique rock bottom"(sic) "of all chess"(sic) – nonsense even if the word "all" would be replaced by "human" – and who, at that, goes on "ridiculing computer-played games"?

Then: "The defensibility of these intuitionist views has now been challenged and – in your Editors' opinion – is on the verge of being falsified. None less than Kasparov has experienced a discomfiture: as the pace quickens the Championship fades".

First, "intuitionism", L.E.J. Brouwer's philosophical conception of the foundations of mathematics, is not at issue here. Second, conceptions of "intuition" as described in the preceding sentence do not exist. A variant: "By those holding that the athlete's physiology is at the bottom and, indeed, at the very unique rock bottom of all human racing, automobile racing contests have been ridiculed as mere mechanical mock-ups (...)." "Now the defensibility of physiologist views (...) is on the verge of being falsified." Hurray!

I think I have spoken for many others, when I said on the future of *hardware breakthroughs* – which I underrated, conceded (*ICCA Journal*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1987, p. 74): "If I am wrong I feel slain by brute force but not really unhappy". Do the Editors really feel that the calculating speed of computers and humans are more comparable than are racing speeds of cars and humans? And would it be possible to stop this strawman technique? Intuition as a basic *human* capability happens to be one of my favourite topics. About the idea and the word enough nonsense has been said in the past.

In tuition – hi-fi and high fee?

From *H.J. van den Herik and I.S. Herschberg*.

Dear Professor De Groot,

We take the unexpected opportunity of receiving your letter to congratulate you on your eightieth birthday.

For a start, we do not feel that apologies are in order for our provocative Editorial. It is a legitimate function for Editors to challenge their readership, even unto the limits of deadly seriousness. Indeed, probing the very borders of a subject is of the essence of all science.

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This does not imply a refusal of our personal apologies for a misleading use of the word 'intuitionistic'. On a jeweller's scale its weighing should be clear: as an adjective referring to intuition, most definitely not as an adjective referring to L.E.J. Brouwer's fundamental contribution to the foundations of mathematics.

In substance, we hold that intuition is a much-mixed entity. There is a low-fi component, being near to animal instinct, unquantifiable and a bad counsellor. When a World Champion, such as Kasparov, places reliance on it, he loses when pressed for time; he is apt to blunder, as are medical men when faced with the sudden trial of triage.

What now emerges, fortunately, is a hi-fi component, obtained at a price, which is simply access to information possibly possessed beforehand but to which a path was not available. As a case in point, we now find Kasparov striving for greater precision, for making his ideas operational: no longer content with vague classifications such as "a slight advantage for White, +=", he has now been induced by a computer's counsel to specify specific, over-the-board variations which let him rate them by their rationale. This is intuition at a fee, but at its finest.

We grant that this is all a deep matter, fit fodder for many a doctoral dissertation. Allow us to hope you will live to see those theses published and to enjoy them.

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