Kasparov, the World Champion publicly defeated in London, in August 1994, would not be content to count as being dethroned. He insisted on being reinstated as the World’s Top, even in the relatively specialized field of rapid chess, in a manner dazzling all and any. His wish was granted.

The Westdeutscher Rundfunk (WDR) to its eternal glory broadcast the occasion live from Cologne: it combined high drama with high technology. Imagine a soundproof booth enclosing Kasparov. It was as starkly furnished as could be, containing nothing but a wall clock. Apart from Gary, there was also an operator transferring the Pentium’s moves to the board, and a referee.

The camera did all it could to bring out Kasparov’s evident emotions: soundproof is not by any means identical with feeling proof. He was spared nothing: his head scratching, his nearly-mouthing his thumb, his desperate and incredious shaking his hand – all was shown in enlarged close-ups by the merciless camera.

On the second plane, there were the pundits assembled with a great show of informality. Their presence can be summed up as an ideal version of the best of the Viennese chess cafes.

The quintet of occupying this plane were: Claus Spahn as master of ceremonies (MC), Helmut Pfleger and Vlastimil Hort as commentators, Ossi Weiner representing CHESS GENIUS and Mr. Wüllenweber who operated FRITZ3 for comment on the game. The latter, the MC stated, was indispensable nowadays: no serious analysis of a game could do without a computer.

On the third plane, the computers were all and the humans were degraded — though some would say elevated — to the rank of intelligent operators. Besides reproducing the board as played, there was an extremely sensitive program to display instantaneously what Grandmaster Dr. Helmut Pfleger thought or wished to highlight or otherwise thought worthy of attention. Coincident with the word he spoke about a diagonal, any particular man, or any block of squares however queerly shaped, the program displayed it, highlighted it, bordered in yellow or otherwise distinguished on the intent.

Next of course, there was CHESSBASE, only slightly slower to react. The moment a move was made, the consultation of CHESSBASE, within the twinkling of an eye, produced data such as statistically from the position given the chances winning for White are now 61 percent.

Never has so large an audience being so well served, blow-by-blow and richly commented to boot. As to the games, the excitments can be read off from the moves played. In starkest summary on move 22, PENTIUM CHESS GENIUS renounced an easy win, on move 25 the program lost any chance to win, it richly had previously; on move 26 it spoiled the draw. Ours is not to inquire why, but very evidently PENTIUM bungled.

The second game was conservative to the point of being a bore. Kasparov, fully aware that he now would be proclaimed the winner when only drawing, aimed for a draw.
Kasparov - Pentium (NicKey SL 3.1.5)

Intel World Chess WDR Köln, 1995

(With on-line analysis by Fritz 3.0 given in square brackets; other comment is in parentheses)


Pentium - Kasparov (NicKey RE 21.1.3)

Intel World Chess WDR Köln, 1995


CALENDAR OF COMPUTER-GAMES EVENTS 1995/1996

October 14-15, 1995

The 6th Harvard Cup, to be held at the Computer Museum in Boston, USA.
Details from Christopher Chabris, P.O. Box 2967, Harvard Square Station, Cambridge, Ma 02238, USA.
Telephone: (+1) 617 876 5759, Fax: (+1) 617 491 9570. Email: cfc@isr.harvard.edu.

February 10-17, 1996

A six-game match between World Champion Kasparov and DEEP BLUE to be held in Philadelphia, Penn., USA. For details see p. 130.

1995 WORLD MICROCOMPUTER-CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP

D. Levy

At the time of writing the ICCA is in discussion with three (!!!) possible sponsorship finders for this year’s World Microcomputer-Chess Championship. Of course all three attempts may come to nothing but if any of them is successful we will hold the tournament in Europe, probably during late September or October.

Will anyone who is interested in taking part in the event please let me know, so that I can send you information if and when a definite arrangement is agreed.

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