# Editorial: Stay the course

Mark Winands [*]

*Department of Data Science and Knowledge Engineering, Maastricht University, The Netherlands*

We are living in confusing and hectic times due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As Editorial Board, we wish that you and your families stay safe and healthy. At the same time, we try to maintain the quality and pace of our publications as you are used to. It is therefore my pleasure to present you the first issue of this year. It contains two scientific articles. The first contribution, *A description language for chess*, by Manuel Cristóbal López-Michelone and Jorge Ortega-Arjona, presents a straightforward representation language for chess positions as patterns. By using this chess pattern language a computer program is able to find more easily similar chess configurations. Further, this language can be used to explain why some typical maneuvers actually work in some patterns.

The second contribution, *2048-like games for teaching reinforcement learning*, by Hung Guei, Ting-Han Wei, and I-Chen Wu, is about using games for educational purposes. They argue that games such as Threes!, 2048, and 2584 are highly suitable for this task due to their simplicity and popularity. These games can be characterized as single-player stochastic puzzle games, which consist of sliding numbered-tiles that combine to form tiles with larger numbers. The article proposes a guideline for using these games for teaching reinforcement-learning and computer-game algorithms.

It is our pleasure to announce that Karsten Müller and Yakov Konoval have produced the third volume of their 'Understanding Endgames' series, this time *Understanding Rook vs. Minor Piece Endgames*. Guy Haworth has written again a review on their latest contribution. Next, this issue contains six reports on computer tournaments that were held at the 22nd Computer Olympiad in Macau in 2019. In the next issue, there will be a contribution discussing the other event that was held in conjunction, namely, the Advances in Computer Games.

As some of you might know, Jacques Pitrat passed away on the 14th of October 2019. He was known for his work on chess programs and general game playing. In this issue, you can find his obituary.

Finally, I would like to end with some great news. David Silver has received the 2019 ACM Prize in Computing as a recognition of his work on ALPHAGO, the program that defeated the best human player in the game of Go. On behalf of the ICGA Editorial Board, we congratulate David Silver with this achievement.

<div align="right">Mark Winands</div>

[*]Corresponding author. E-mail: m.winands@maastrichtuniversity.nl.