CORRESPONDENCE

SOME CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS TO THE GROTTLING PROBLEM SET

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In the recent paper by Grottling [1] there are a number of mistakes in the problem positions which will make it difficult for other workers to reproduce and check their results. The specification of the solutions are also far too brief, and there are no references to the original Loyd positions. In this article I will attempt to clarify these three points.

The Loyd problems and solutions can all be found in White (1913) [2]. In the text which follows, the page references refer to this work, and within each page a number will identify the Loyd problem in White's book. In parentheses (no.) I give the Loyd number in Chess Strategy [3]. White does not include a complete solution set for each problem, so I have added to them where possible. The symbol * before a solution gives an alternative one discovered by a program of mine.

The corrections required to reference [1] appear to be only typographical and are as follows. Problem 1, white's Rh5 should be Rh4. Problem 4, white's Nd1 should be Nd8. Problem 5, black's Rc8 should be Re8. Problem 7, black's Nh5 should be Bh5. Problem 12, black's Bh1 should be Bg1.

The solutions given in reference [1] now follow together with some new solutions marked by *.

Problem 1. 2-mate. Page 242, No. 326. (129)
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1. Rf5,  R×B; 2. Ng5
*        K×B; 2. Nc5
*       ELSE; 2. Qa4
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Problem 2. 2-mate. Page 10, No. 2.
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* 1. Rg3, Pc3; 2. Rd3
*         Rf3; 2. Q×P
*         Re6; 2. Rg4
*         Nf5; 2. Rg4
*        ELSE; 2. Qe3
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Problem 3. 2-mate. Page 104, No. 99.
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* 1. Bf8, N×Q; 2. Qc2
*         Bb2; 2. Bh6
*         Qd2; 2. Rb1
*         Kb2; 2. Qa3
*        ELSE; 2. Qa1
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Problem 4. 3-mate. Page 136, No. 131.
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1. Qh2,  R×P+; 2. K×B
         R×B;  2. Re2+
         Nd4;  2. Q×B
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Problem 5. 3-mate. Page 126, No. 119.
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1. Ke2,  P=Q+; 2. Ke3
         P=N+; 2. Rf2+
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Problem 6. 3-mate. Page 132, No. 126.
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1. Bb7,  B×B; 2. Nd6
         R×R; 2. Bb8
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Problem 7. 3-mate. Page 132, No. 127.
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1. Rb6,  B×R; 2. Bb5
         N×R; 2. Rf3
         P×B; 2. Rf6
         Nc8; 2. Be2+
         Q×N; 2. Bf6
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Problem 8. 4-mate. Page 16, No. 11. (147)
1. Qg1, ?; 2. Bf2, ?; 3. BxP, ?;
4. Qc5

Problem 9. 4-mate. Page 48, No. 50. (102)
1. Bxa6, PxB+; 2. Pb7, Qe6; 3. Qc8
         Qc5; 2. Qe8, Qc6; 3. QxQ
         Qc2; 2. Be2, QxB; 3. Qc8+
         Nc3; 2. BxP, QxB+;3. KxQ

Problem 10. 4-mate. Page 226, No. 295. (504)
1. Rdh4, Rh7; 2. Bh6, Rf8; 3. Bf3

Problem 11. 4-mate. Page 158, No. 166. (461)
1. Rc8, Kb5; 2. Ne5, Kc5; 3. Pc4
                    Kb4; 3. Nd3+
                    Kb6; 3. Nd7+
         Kd5; 2. Ne5, Kd6; 3. Nb7+
                    Kd4; 3. Nb3+
         Kd4; 2. Pc3+ Kd3; 3. Re1
         Kb4; 2. Pc3+ Kc5; 3. Pd4+

Problem 12. 5-mate. Page 388, No. 591. (351)
1. Raf2, Pa4; 2. Kd2, Pa3; 3. Ra1, Pa2;
4. Ke1

Problem 13. 5-mate. Page 50, No. 54. (163)
1. Rh6, KxR; 2. KxR, Kh7; 3. Pg5, Kh8;
4. Pg6

Problem 14. 5-mate. Page 204, No. 255.
1. Bc1, Ph4; 2. Bf4, Bb7; 3. Bb8
                    Bc6; 3. Bc7
                    Bd5; 3. Bd6
                    Be4; 3. Be5

Problem 15. 5-mate. Page 404, No. 621. (299)
1. Re8, Re7; 2. PxR, Ke6; 3. Rf8, Kd5;
         Rg1+;2. BxR ....
         a7+; 2. BxR ....
5. P=B

Problem 16. 6-mate. Page 392, No. 602. (359)
1. Nh6, Kh2; 2. Ng1, Nb4; 3. Ng4+, Kh1
4. Ne2, Nd3+;5. Kf1

REFERENCES

[1] Grottling G.(1985), Problem-Solving Ability Tested, ICCA Vol. 8, No. 2, pp. 108-109.

[2] White A. C.(1913), Sam Loyd and his Chess Problems.

[3] Loyd S., Chess Strategy.

SPORTING GESTURE

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I was much surprised about Mr. Berliner's invitation to play his computer program. I could hardly have guessed that my game with Cray Blitz would have such weighty consequences.

I gladly accept his invitation, if only to prove myself right that even amateur players like myself have nothing to fear from computers in the near future. There is only one small problem: being an amateur, I never play for money. I would like to suggest to Mr. Berliner, if he is serious about the idea, to donate his 10,000 dollars, should he lose, to Sport Aid, surely the most appropriate charity.

THE RATING PROBLEM

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I notice a large amount of confusion with regard to computer chess over the use of the term 'rating'.

The use of 'rating' in an absolute sense loses meaning without reference. For example, different time limits on the same player obviously lead to different levels of playing strength; a 2200 human playing 5-minute games against himself at tournament speed would not win 50% although he has the *same rating*.

Laymen often have this confusion when I tell them that I do 'worse' against a computer at its faster (weaker) speeds than I do at tournament speed. This apparent contradiction is of course easily explained by the fact that I try to play at a similar rate to the computer, and computers 'suffer' comparatively less than humans when time controls are speeded up. In this sense the computers have a higher 'rating' at faster speeds, even though their absolute strength is less.

In order to clear up false claims and confusion, perhaps a standard time limit should be used for computer strength, such as the speed that USCF uses in its computer certification program. Any standard will do, so long as it is well known and adhered to. Also, by fixing this reference, one could claim something like 'This computer has a 2100 rating, but plays 2300 in 5-minute games' without confusion.

I would be interested in whether such a standard now implicitly exists, and the pros and cons of its use.

THE 1986 BEST GAMES

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I have an idea concerning the forthcoming world computer-chess championship to be held in Cologne, June 11-15, 1986. I presume that at some time after the world computer-chess championship, you will publish all the games played during the championship in a future edition of the ICCA Journal - say Vol. 9, No. 3 or 4.

Simply give each game a different identification code, and encourage ICCA members to send in their top 3 favorite games for the Tournament. The winners of the game with the most number of votes should receive a prize of some sort. The prize could be called 'The Edward Lasker Award' in memory of the late Edward Lasker.

It could consist of a medal or certificate which ever appears to be the most appropriate. On the last page of the ICCA Journal print a suitable application form along with the usual subscription information, and encourage ICCA members to send their votes to the address indicated on the application form.

The idea could be made to apply to other tournaments played by computers. I hope this idea meets with your approval.

The Editor's comment

The idea is admirable, its realization should rest with the ICCA Board. As for Cologne, the Award can be said to have been granted, spontaneously and nemini contra, to Hitech for its play against Schach 2.7 (2nd round). For details see elsewhere in this Journal.

Sportmanship

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In the final round of the World Championship Sun Phoenix was playing Bobby. After 39 moves Sun Phoenix was about to win a piece and a Rook and, of course, the game. In making its 40th move Phoenix crashed and several attempts to revive it failed. Bobby's programmers, Hans-Joachim Kraas and Günther Schrüfer, immediately got hold of the tournament director, Mike Valvo, and asked to resign (*on behalve of Bobby, ed.*). If Phoenix were unable to complete the game it would have lost. Bobby's programmers felt that Phoenix had played a good game and deserved to win.

That we were having hardware problems that might cost us the game, they felt was irrelevant to the real issue involved: playing chess. So they resigned. It turned out that we were able to eventually re-start Phoenix (using only one of its 20 computers) and make the 40th move.

My point in writing this letter is to praise the sportmanship of Kraas and Schrüfer. All the often it is easy to place winning above all else, no matter how that end is achieved. Perhaps there is a lesson in this example that we can all learn from.

Photo by M.T. Fürstenberg

THE BLITZKRIEG IN CLOSE-UP.
The decisive game which secured the victory for Cray Blitz (Harry Nelson) over its opponent Hitech (Hans Berliner).