

WSCC 2016: the World Speed Computer Chess Championship

Article

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WSSC 2016: The World Speed Computer Chess Championship

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The six competitors in the World Chess Championship (Krabbenbos et al., 2017a) also comprised the field for the ICGA's Speed Computer Chess event, a contest emphasising the merits of good static evaluation by the engines and both reliability and hand speed from the operators. In each of the five rounds, opponents played two games, one as White and one as Black. Blitz time controls, 5'+5"/move, were used.

Table 1
 The cross-table of game scores

#	Program	J	S	K	H	R	G	W	D	L	Score
1	JONNY		0, 0	1, 1	1, ½	½, ½	1, 1	5	3	2	6½
2	SHREDDER	1, 1		1, ½	½, ½	½, 1	½, 0	4	5	1	6½
3	KOMODO	0, 0	0, ½		½, 1	1, 1	1, ½	4	3	3	5½
4	HIARCS	0, ½	½, ½	½, 0		1, ½	½, 1	2	6	2	5
5	RAPTOR	½, ½	½, 0	0, 0	0, ½		1, 1	2	4	4	4
6	GRIDGINKGO	0, 0	½, 1	0, ½	½, 0	0, 0		1	3	6	2½

Table 2
 Opponents, game scores, accumulated scores and ranking, round by round

#	Program	1	2	3	4	5	W	D	L	Score
1	JONNY	S: 0, 0: 0, 5=	R: ½, ½: 1, 5=	G: 1, 1: 3, 4	H: 1, ½: 4½, 3	K: 1, 1: 6½, 1=	5	3	2	6½
2	SHREDDER	J: 1, 1: 2, 1=	G: ½, 0: 2½, 2	K: 1, ½: 4, 1=	R: ½, 1: 5½, 1=	H: ½, ½: 6½, 1=	4	5	1	6½
3	KOMODO	R: 1, 1: 2, 1=	H: ½, 1: 3½, 1	S: 0, ½: 4, 1=	G: 1, ½: 5½, 1=	J: 0, 0: 5½, 3	4	3	3	5½
4	HIARCS	G: ½, 1: 1½, 3	K: ½, 0: 2, 3=	R: 1, ½: 3½, 3	J: 0, ½: 4, 4	S: ½, ½: 5, 4	2	6	2	5
5	RAPTOR	K: 0, 0: 0, 5=	J: ½, ½: 1, 5=	H: 0, ½: 1½, 6	S: ½, 0: 2, 6	G: 1, 1: 4, 5	2	4	4	4
6	GRIDGINKGO	H: ½, 0: ½, 4	S: ½, 1: 2, 3=	J: 0, 0: 2, 5	K: 0, ½: 2½, 5	R: 0, 0: 2½, 6	1	3	6	2½

Tables 1-3 give the cross-table, the opponents, scores and progress round by round, and the details of the games. The results most at odds with the eventual placings were SHREDDER's 2-0 round one wins over JONNY and its second round loss with White to GRIDGINKGO. JONNY continued slowly with just two draws against RAPTOR and remained in joint last place for another round. However, as if someone had thrown a switch, JONNY then scored 5½ from 6 in the last three rounds, moving from last to first. This progress included a 2-0 result against KOMODO which took third place on the podium.

The games are available online (Krabbenbos et al., 2017b). Picking out some highlights, see Figures 1 and 2, one might mention first the elegant staging of a stalemate draw in the Round 2 HIARCS-KOMODO game 9

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after 256 moves. Pawns were locked together on opposite-colour squares from the opposing bishops and the end came four moves short of a surely unavoidable draw-claim.

In game 3, with nominally equal RPP on one side, NNP on the other, JONNY exchanged the Rook for a Knight and Pawn. SHREDDER then exploited White's more exposed king to mobilise its Queen and pick up the White pawns. With colours reversed, material was also asymmetric with SHREDDER's extra piece successfully defending against JONNY's pawn majority on both wings. In Round 5 game 29, KOMODO's **33. ... Qe8?** allowed JONNY to unleash a fully co-ordinated QRBN attack on Black's exposed King. KOMODO had to capture a rook at the cost of its queen and defeat swiftly followed. In game 30, with JONNY as Black, KOMODO had to defend against JONNY's excelsior h-pawn which was eventually halted on f3 – but only at the cost of Queen for Rook again.

In the end, JONNY drew level with the highly blitz-experienced SHREDDER to force a play-off. This it duly won 1½-½, its win coming as White in game 32. By move 37, JONNY had a passed pawn on e6 supported by another infantryman on f5 and it may be said that this was the focus of the remainder of the game. Thirty moves later, SHREDDER had to capture the converted pawn and resignation followed.

Table 3
Games and openings, round by round

#	Rnd	White	Black	Res.#m	ECO	Opening
01	1 a	GridGinkgo	Hiarcs	½-½ 48	E15	Queen's Indian Defence, 4. g3
02	1 b	Hiarcs	GridGinkgo	1-0 37	B85	Sicilian, Scheveningen, Classical Variation with ... Qc7 and ... Nc6
03	1 a	Jonny	Shredder	0-1 103	D45	Queen's Gambit Declined, Semi-Slav, 5. e3
04	1 b	Shredder	Jonny	1-0 74	D46	Queen's Gambit Declined, Semi-Slav, 6. Bd3
05	1 a	Komodo	Raptor	1-0 71	E12	Queen's Indian Defence
06	1 b	Raptor	Komodo	0-1 81	C80	Ruy Lopez, Open (Tarrasch) Defence
07	2 a	GridGinkgo	Shredder	½-½ 59	D46	Queen's Gambit Declined, Semi-Slav, 6. Bd3
08	2 b	Shredder	GridGinkgo	0-1 38	E90	King's Indian Defence, 5. Nf3
09	2 a	Hiarcs	Komodo	½-½ 256	A46	Queen's Pawn Game, Torre Attack
10	2 b	Komodo	Hiarcs	1-0 61	D10	Queen's Gambit Declined, Slav Defence
11	2 a	Jonny	Raptor	½-½ 66	E15	Queen's Indian Defence, 4. g3
12	2 b	Raptor	Jonny	½-½ 55	C67	Ruy Lopez, Berlin Defence, Open Variation
13	3 a	GridGinkgo	Jonny	0-1 80	D49	Queen's Gambit Declined, Meran, 11. Nxb5
14	3 b	Jonny	GridGinkgo	1-0 106	E11	Bogo-Indian Defence
15	3 a	Hiarcs	Raptor	1-0 59	B90	Sicilian Defence, Najdorf
16	3 b	Raptor	Hiarcs	½-½ 38	B97	Sicilian Defence, Najdorf, 7. ... Qb6 including Poisoned Pawn Var.
17	3 a	Komodo	Shredder	0-1 107	B43	Sicilian Defence, Kan, 5. Nc3
18	3 b	Shredder	Komodo	½-½ 62	D27	Queen's Gambit Accepted, Classical Variation
19	4 a	GridGinkgo	Komodo	0-1 28	A28	English Opening, Four Knights System: 1. ... e5 2. Nc3 Nc6 3. Nf3 N
20	4 b	Komodo	GridGinkgo	½-½ 28	A28	English Opening, Four Knights System: 1. ... e5 2. Nc3 Nc6 3. Nf3 N
21	4 a	Hiarcs	Jonny	0-1 103	C67	Ruy Lopez, Berlin Defence, Open Variation
22	4 b	Jonny	Hiarcs	½-½ 59	E04	Catalan, Open, 5. Nf3
23	4 a	Raptor	Shredder	½-½ 57	B85	Sicilian, Scheveningen, Classical Variation with ... Qc7 and ... Nc6
24	4 b	Shredder	Raptor	1-0 73	D45	Queen's Gambit Declined, Semi-Slav, 5. e3
25	5 a	GridGinkgo	Raptor	0-1 71	E99	King's Indian Defence, Orthodox, Aronin–Taimanov, Main
26	5 b	Raptor	GridGinkgo	1-0 53	C83	Ruy Lopez, Open, Classical Defence
27	5 a	Hiarcs	Shredder	½-½ 44	B49	Sicilian, Taimanov Variation ...
28	5 b	Shredder	Hiarcs	½-½ 67	D46	Queen's Gambit Declined, Semi-Slav, 6. Bd3
29	5 a	Jonny	Komodo	1-0 48	D24	Queen's Gambit Accepted, 4. Nc3
30	5 b	Komodo	Jonny	0-1 55	C54	Giucoco Piano ...
31 PO	a	Shredder	Jonny	½-½ 68	D45	Queen's Gambit Declined, Semi-Slav, 5. e3
32 PO	b	Jonny	Shredder	1-0 68	D46	Queen's Gambit Declined, Semi-Slav, 6. Bd3



Fig. 1. a) G09 HIARCS-KOMODO 254b, b) G03 JONNY-SHREDDER 78w, c) G04 SHREDDER-JONNY 69w, d) G29 JONNY-KOMODO 34w and e) G30 KOMODO-JONNY 55b.



Fig. 2. Game 9: HIARCS – KOMODO, position 256b – stalemate.

Congratulations to all the participants, particularly to World Champion JONNY, SHREDDER and third-placed KOMODO, for the contest which featured many closely fought and extended games.

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