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Chess endgame news

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Haworth, G. M. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9896-1448
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CHESS ENDGAME NEWS

G.M^cC. Haworth[1]

Reading, UK

More news reaches us of the achievements (Bourzutschky and Konoval, 2005; Bourzutschky, 2006) of the EGT-generating YK-MB team. Games and studies have been analysed, mzugs and particularly lonely full-point mzugs discovered, and their new DTC/DTZ record at 290 moves (Haworth, 2005) has been raised to 330 moves with the discovery of the KQBNKQB position 1k6/1b5q/N7/8/8/1Q6/8/B1K5+b. Krabbé (2006) also published the DTZ-minimaxing line provided. This feat leaves all the depth/length records for chess games, problems and studies well behind and is the first such record to pass the 300-move mark. The *ICGA Journal* looks forward to an exposition of the concepts, aims and objectives of their programme, and further discussion of the production logistics and the results produced by Konoval's code.

The *EGTs Online* project (Kryukov, 2006) aims to be an enduring web-source of all Nalimov 3-to-6-man DTM EGTs, using the distribution technologies of p2p EMULE, ftp and snailmail. This initiative is particularly welcome given the reduced presence of Hyatt's (2006) longtime ftp-service, now cut back to 3-to-5-man EGTs. Kryukov's index inevitably varies from optimistic to pessimistic about EGT availability but it is clear that:

- all 3-to-5-man EGTs are permanently available and all 3-3 (pawnless) EGTs are at least triple-sourced,
- all 4-2 EGTs files are available, all but a few of 164 files being at least triple-sourced,
- 49 of 65 3-3p and all 95 4-2p EGTs are available with increasingly multiple-sourcing, and
- the 16 3-3p DTM EGTs, not released by Nalimov, now constitute the wanted list (Steenhuisen, 2006).

The p2p software will distribute files that are shareable at the time but does not record what copies of a file have been downloaded to clients, or what potential sources might augment the current ones. These facilities could improve its utility.

The p2p project raises new questions as to how the data assurance challenge can be met, given a distributed and a-centric community of sources: how are EGTs to be reliably shared and confirmed manifestly correct? This issue is not very visible until a problem occurs, and in fact there have been very few problems. The incorrect KRPPKR.2.nbw file previously distributed by Chessbase has been purged from the system: other files which became corrupted in their owner's possession have been spotted. Sharers now seem to be making more careful and systematic use of the MD5SUM and DATACOMP checks available. In this regard, the flexible freeware Windows utility FSUM (Slavasoft, 2006) and Löfflmann's (2006) platform-independent utility JACKSUM will compute both the MD5SUM and the, as visible via EMULE, EDONKEY file-signatures. This author has proposed verifying EGTs against a *Data Assurance Certificate* exhibiting the results of consecutive computations of the MD5SUM, EDONKEY checksum and DATACOMP check, in that order.

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[1] SSE, The University of Reading, Berkshire, RG6 6AH, UK. email: g.haworth@reading.ac.uk