VIDEOMASTER

CHESS CHAMPION

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

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INTRODUCTION

The Videomaster Chess Champion is a newly-developed, scientifically based electronic microcomputer.

The programme contains the rules of international chess.

The Chess Champion is programmed to play at any one of 6 different levels of play, so as to suit all opponents, from beginners to advanced experts.

The technology is so advanced that the level of play can even be changed in the middle of a game without disturbing the position of the pieces.

Your Chess Champion is a genuine sophisticated computer, and as with larger computers, the information which you key into the machine must be totally accurate and precisely what you intend, otherwise the computer will react to the wrong information and subsequent problems will occur.

NOTE:
1) The player must strictly observe the rules of international chess.

2) Each move must be carefully checked before the machine starts to compute and prior to pressing the 'PLAY' button. To facilitate this, it is strongly recommended that all moves be written down. This will then enable the player to correct any mistakes made on keying in his move by using the 'C' key as explained later in these instructions.

3) **THE CHESS CHAMPION NEVER MAKES A MISTAKE.** In many thousands of hours testing the programme, no single mistake in the electronics of the machine has been detected. This cannot be emphasized too strongly. If you discover that the position of the pieces or the computer's reaction to your move appears incorrect or illogical, this can only be through human error, and it will then be necessary to recreate the position of the pieces at that point of the game by setting up that position through Mode B with the aid of your written notes (see later instruction on use of Mode B).

4) Since the computer is programmed to follow the rules of international chess, it assumes that the player will also obey the same rules. **IF YOU ENTER AN ILLEGAL OR IMPOSSIBLE MOVE, THE MACHINE WILL ACCEPT IT AND COMPUTE THE BEST REACTION TO THIS NEW SITUATION.**

5) **THE CHESS CHAMPION ALWAYS PLAYS BLACK.**

THE KEYBOARD

The keys bear the internationally accepted symbols for the pieces in their upper halves.

The lower halves bear the co-ordinates of the squares:
A — H and 1 — 8

There are also a number of command keys:

PLAY = ACCEPT — press once after entering and checking (on the LED display) your move.

MD = MORE DATA — used for castling, en passant, corrections and multiple moves

FP = FIND POSITION — recalls the position of the pieces still in play or also used for checking the position of pieces when, for example, a problem has been entered for the machine to solve

EP = ENTER POSITION — used to enter a given position, e.g. — a chess problem — a tournament position etc.
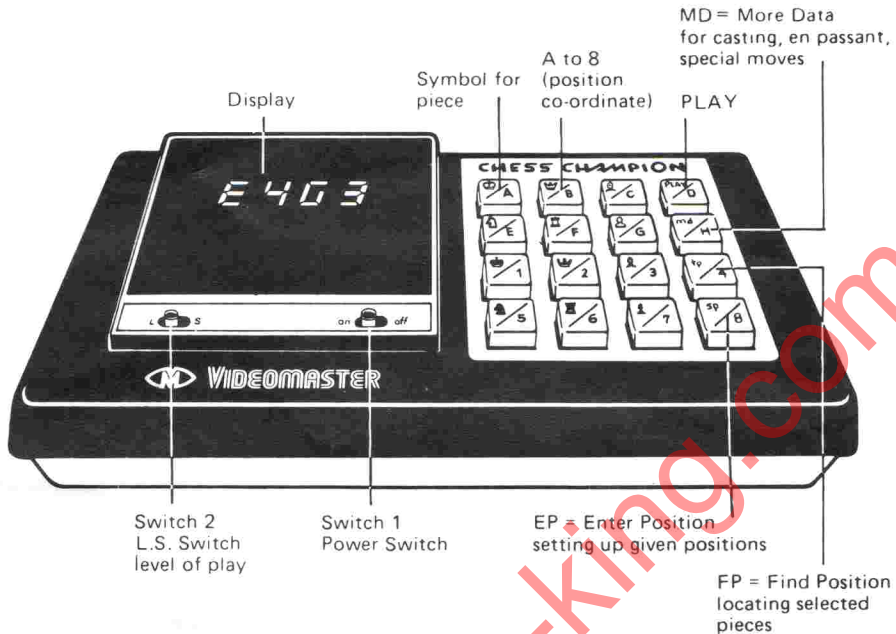NOTE: a complete fresh position can only be entered in Mode B

'A' KEY — Apart from its function in entering and finding the position of the white king, this key should be pressed at the beginning of every fresh game (Mode 'A'), when all the pieces should be on their standard squares.

'B' KEY — Apart from its function in entering and finding the position of the white queen, this key should be pressed at the beginning of games starting from a given position that is to be entered through the keyboard (Mode 'B').

'C' KEY — Apart from its function in entering and finding the position of the white bishops, this key CLEARS partly entered wrong moves from the display. This can only be done in the PLAY key has not yet been pressed. This key also lets you change the level of play in the middle of the game.

Power Switch — on — off

L.S. Switch — Used to set the level of play, together with a numbered key from 1 to 6 and mode key 'A', 'B' or 'C'.

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Display   Symbol for piece   A to 8 (position co-ordinate)   PLAY   MD = More Data for casting, en passant, special moves

Switch 2 L.S. Switch level of play   Switch 1 Power Switch   EP = Enter Position setting up given positions   FP = Find Position locating selected pieces

HOW THE SYMBOLS APPEAR ON THE LED DISPLAY

A = 𝖠   E = 𝖤   1 = 𝟣   5 = 𝟧

B = 𝖻   F = 𝖥   2 = 𝟤   6 = 𝟨

C = 𝖢   G = 𝖦   3 = 𝟥   7 = 𝟩

D = 𝖽   H = 𝖧   4 = 𝟦   8 = 𝟪

'B' is displayed as 'b' so as to avoid confusion with '8'
'D' is displayed as 'd' so as to avoid confusion with '0'

SETTING UP THE GAME

THE CHESS CHAMPION comes complete with an adaptor for a 240V AC power supply.
Ensure that your power supply matches this.
The current into the machine is 400mA 7.2V-8.4V.

LEVEL OF PLAY — What it means

Level 1 — beginner — the computer will reply at once
Level 2 — experienced beginner — reply within 15 — 20 seconds
Level 3 — average player — reply between 15 seconds to 20 minutes according to the complexity of the position
Level 4 — above average — reply takes from 20 seconds to 25 minutes

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Level 5 — These advanced levels are suitable only for very extended games
and e.g. correspondence chess, due to the length of time taken by the
Level 6 Chess Champion in computing its reply. If you are a very strong
player and wish to play at a level above level 4, it is recommended that
you start a game and play the first dozen or so moves at level 4
and then switch to the higher level required after the opening moves.
This will in no way affect the position of the pieces and will
considerably speed up the opening stages of the game.
If you reach a situation towards the end of a game on level 5
or 6, where it is obvious that the computer has a very limited
number of moves at its disposal (e.g. the Black King is in check),
to save time, it is recommended to switch down to level 4, before
keying in the white move that puts the black king in check.
If left on levels 5 and 6, the computer will use the maximum time
available to analyse the position.
Generally speaking the computer's response will take up to 10 hours
on level 5 according to the complexity of the problem and on
level 6, the most difficult level, the reply can take anything up to
2 days.
NOTE — it is recommended that you turn off the Chess Champion
between moves in correspondence chess and then set it up again
using Mode 'B' when you need to restart the game.

The Chess Champion flashes the chosen level on the LED display, while it is computing its move.

CHECK

- if the computer checks you, its move flashes on the display, instead of being steadily displayed; you must now make a move that takes you out of check.
- If you check the Chess Champion there will be no special display unless it is check-mate
- if you check-mate the computer it will display 'LOSE' in capital letters and acknowledge defeat

  On levels 5 and 6, the Chess Champion will see check-mate at least 2 moves ahead. If it sees itself forced into check-mate, the computer will resign with 'LOSE'

STALEMATE

If you reach a position where a white move places black in a situation where no move is possible, or the only possible move(s) would put the black king in check, the machine will display a move which indicates that its king is staying where it is, e.g. if the black king is on H8, the display will read H8 H8 and the game finishes in a draw by stalemate.
If white is in stalemate, there will be no legal move for you to key in and the game finishes as a draw at that point.

TEST PROGRAMME

To allow you to demonstrate the working of the Chess Champion a test game has been programmed into it, on level 1 only, which will allow you to check-mate the computer in a few moves:
Switch on the machine.
Slide switch 2 from 'L' to 'S' and back to 'L', machine displays 'L'.
Press level 1, machine displays 'bP'

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Press mode 'A', machine displays 4 flashing dots
Now enter the following white moves:

|	
E2E4 Press Play Machine (black) will reply	E7E5
F1C4	G8F6
B1A3	F6E4 (knight takes pawn)
D1H5	F8A3 (bishop takes knight)
H5F7 (check-mate)	LOSE

STARTING TO PLAY (MODE A)

Prepare your own chess board (see diagram). At this stage it is most important to emphasize that the positions of the pieces must be set up as shown in the diagram. For example, should the positions of the king and queen be reversed (a common fault for beginners) the machine will appear to be reacting illogically to your move. If you are also unused to the description of the squares by using the letter A to H and number 1 to 8, it is recommended that some time be spent on learning how to find a particular square quickly as this will then speed up the game. Of course, great care must still be taken in ensuring that the correct co-ordinates be entered for the move you are making.
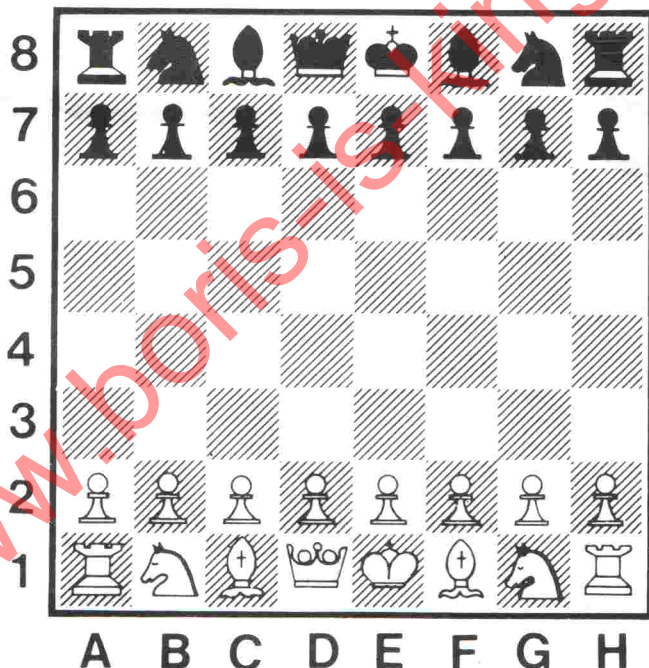
- — connect the adaptor to the CHESS CHAMPION
- — plug adaptor into mains and switch mains on
- — slide power switch to 'ON'
- — slide L.S. switch from 'L' to 'S' and back to 'L' (machine now displays 'L')
- — enter your choice of level of play 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 by pressing key 1 – 6 (machine now displays bP)
- — enter Mode 'A'. This opens the game with standard board layout. (machine displays 4 flashing dots)

(1) — make your opening move by moving your own (white) piece, then enter the move in the CHESS CHAMPION. Always enter both FROM which square and TO which square the piece is moving in this order. NOTE that the squares are always designated first by a letter, then by a number. Example: white pawn moves from E2 to E4. press the keys in the following order

'E', '2', 'E', '4'

The machine displays your move as you enter it. Now write it down on a piece of paper.

(2) — press the 'PLAY' key (the machine starts computing, and flashes the level — the number between 1 and 6 which you chose — to indicate that it must not be disturbed.

(3) — After a while the computer displays its reply to your move.

(4) — enter the CHESS CHAMPION'S reply on your chessboard, and note it down

(5) — go on in the same way, making and entering your own move etc. (computer's reply disappears as you begin to enter your own move).

SPECIAL MOVES

CASTLING

The Videomaster CHESS CHAMPION will castle on the first favourable opportunity and the display will show either:

O — OA for the queen's side
O — OH for the king's side

You will then have to move the pieces appropriately on the board. To castle yourself you will have to follow this procedure:
Enter the rook's move (e.g. H1F1 for king's side castling), then press the 'MD' key (instead of 'PLAY') and now enter the king's move (E1G1) and finally press 'PLAY'.

EN PASSANT

To take a pawn 'en passant' you must first enter the theoretical sideways move of your own pawn. Then press the 'MD' key; this caused the machine to await your next instructions, and meanwhile to display 4 dots. Now enter the forward move into the CHESS CHAMPION and finally press 'PLAY'.
e.g. position — white pawn on C5, black pawn moves D7 D5 white to move;
— move your white pawn from C5 to D6 on the chess board, and remove the black pawn from D5
— enter C5D5 — 'MD' — D5D6 — 'PLAY'

PROMOTING A PAWN

The computer will automatically promote any of its pawns that reaches the last row of the board to a queen; therefore a queen must be substituted for the pawn on the chess board. If one of your pawns reaches the last row you may promote it to any piece by using the 'MD' and 'EP' keys.
e.g. H7H8 — 'MD' — 'EP' — key in the piece desired — H8 — 'PLAY'
You may of course promote a second pawn to a second queen (or any other piece) by following the same procedure. Equally, the computer may also wish to promote a second pawn to a second queen.

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CORRECTING A MOVE DURING A GAME

If you have entered a move but have not yet pressed the 'PLAY' key, it can easily be cancelled by pressing 'C'. The machine displays 4 flashing dots to indicate that it is awaiting your move, which can now be entered.

If you have already pressed the 'PLAY' key, then the machine will respond with a move that you must first nullify.

1. Wait for the computer's reply.
2. Enter the reverse move
   e.g. if the computer moved D6E5, you must enter E5D6
3. Press 'MD'
4. Enter the reverse of your own (white) move
5. Press 'MD' again
6. Enter your fresh move
7. Press 'PLAY'

If the computer has taken a piece as a result of your own incorrect move the procedure is slightly different. Repeat moves 1 and 2. On move 3, instead of pressing 'MD', press 'EP'. On move 4, press the key with the piece that was taken then enter the co-ordinates of the square from which that piece was taken.

NOTE:— The machine responds to the 'EP' key by displaying 'EP'. There is no visible response to your pressing the key for the piece that you want to be restored as this cannot be displayed on the LED display.

Moves 5, 6 and 7 can then be entered as above. If you wish to then check the position of the pieces to ensure that the situation is as you intended, this can be done by using the 'FP' key as explained later.

CHANGING THE LEVEL IN THE MIDDLE OF THE GAME

The level can only ever be changed after the computer has replied to a move.

NEVER CHANGE THE LEVEL WHILE THE MACHINE IS COMPUTING I.E. WHEN THE NUMBER IS FLASHING

Slide switch 2 from 'L' to 'S' and back to 'L', the capital letter 'L' appears on the display. Now enter the new level (a number from 1 to 6) and the letter 'C'. The display will then carry 4 flashing dots to indicate that you may now enter your next move.

You may of course either raise or lower the level of play.

FINDING THE POSITIONS OF PIECES DURING THE GAME

The 'FP' key is used to find the positions of the pieces, but it should never be touched when the machine is computing (level flashing in display). 'FP' may only be used when it is white's turn.

Press 'FP' once; the display responds with 'FP'. Press the key for the piece you want and its position will appear in the right half of the display. If there are several pieces of the same kind on the board the machine will first display the top leftmost. Repeatedly pressing the same key will recall the rest, one by one ('FP' need not be pressed again) until all have been displayed, when 'OO' will be displayed. If there are no pieces of this kind left on the board, 'OO' will appear right away, of course.

To resume play, slide switch 2 from 'L' to 'S' and back to 'L'.

The machine responds by displaying 'L', so you enter any level from 1 to 6.

The machine then asks for the mode by displaying 'bP' and you press 'C'.
The four flashing dots indicate that you may now enter your move.

THE MD KEY ADDITIONAL FUNCTIONS

This key's function has already been explained with respect to castling, en passant and cancelling incorrect moves. It allows you to enter any number of moves without the computer reacting.
This allows you to manipulate the position either in your favour or against you.
It must be stressed that this key will only work if you have not yet pressed 'PLAY'.
It also allows you to correct a false entry made with the 'EP' key e.g. Black pawn entered on A7 instead of A6 key in 'MD' A6 — A7 'MD', then 'EP' to enter any other pieces.
THE 'PLAY' KEY IS AN ACTION KEY AND WILL ALWAYS CALL FORTH A COMPUTER MOVE IN REPLY.
The 'MD' key also allows you to make the machine (even though it remains black) make the first move. You enter your first move, press 'MD' then enter the move in reverse, before pressing 'PLAY'. Now the computer will attack!
e.g. E2E4 — 'MD' — E4E2 — 'PLAY' — computer plays
(see also chapter on Corrections during a game).

SETTING UP A GIVEN POSITION (MODE B)

Slide switch from 'L' to 'S' and back to 'L'. The machine now displays 'L'. Enter the level (any number from 1 to 6); the machine responds with 'bP'. Press 'B'.
Now the 'EP' key must be used to enter the pieces and their positions.
First 'EP' is pressed, then the symbol for the piece (no change in display), and finally the co-ordinates for its square.
e.g. white rook is to be on H1:
    'EP' — White rook key — H1
Then 'EP' is pressed again for the next piece.
For several similar pieces (e.g. pawns) the same key will be pressed several times to designate those pieces; this does not confuse the computer. The CHESS CHAMPION will keep count of the pieces entered and will not accept more than 8 pawns or two bishops, knights or rooks of each colour.
Check the positions of the pieces after entering them, using the 'FP' key (find position). Press the 'FP' key once then the key bearing the symbol of that figure. The machine displays 'FP' then the position of one of the corresponding figures. To run through all of them, just press that key repeatedly until the machine displays 'OO' meaning that there are none left. The CHESS CHAMPION scans the board from bottom to top and from left to right.
To recommence the game slide switch 2 from 'L' to 'S' and back to 'L'. The machine displays 'L'. Enter the level (any number 1 to 6) then the machine displays 'bP' and awaits your choice of mode. Enter 'C' and it responds with 4 flashing dots. You may decide whether white or black is to move.
WHITE to move. Simply enter your desired move, and press 'PLAY'.
BLACK to move. Keyin any possible white move. Press 'MD' key. Key in the reverse of the above move. Press 'PLAY'.
If you have not entered many pieces and feel that it is unnecessary to check their positions with the 'FP' key, you may begin play immediately after entering the last piece by following the same procedure outlined above using the 'L' 'S' switch, entering the level and keying in 'C'.

GENERAL REMARKS

One must never forget the CHESS CHAMPION is only a pre-programmed computer. The more complicated the position and the more the number of pieces on the board, the greater the advantage of the computer. On the other hand, the simpler and more straightforward the position, the greater the advantage of the human mind. This means that you must be prepared to resign in end-games that are very clearly to your disadvantage, which you would do were you playing against a human opponent. Otherwise the end-game will be drawn out as the computer will not immediately attack, but will wait until you move into a position where it can blitz you with a very quick mate.

It should also be noted that a computer can never be a perfect opponent, no matter how advanced its technology. A human will learn from mistakes and improve — a computer will not. You can only raise its level of play.

You can make the game more challenging by giving the computer an advantage in pieces, e.g. by mode B you play without your queen. This opens a perspective of many fascinating variations.

If you slide power switch 1 to 'OFF' or you interrupt the supply of power, the game will automatically be cleared, so that you must start afresh.

NEVER INTERRUPT THE COMPUTING OF THE VIDEOMASTER CHESS CHAMPION. DO NOT TOUCH ANY OF THE KEYS AS LONG AS THE LEVEL NUMBER (1 to 6) FLASHES ON DISPLAY.

If after some time spent computing its move, the flashing display changes from the level number to a dash, this simply means that the position is so complicated that the computer is searching deep into its logic for a reply.

Always remember to switch off the power between two separate games to ensure a completely fresh starting position.

CHESS CHAMPION 12 MONTH GUARANTEE

The following guarantee is additional and without prejudice to the purchaser's legal rights and does not restrict or remove such rights in any way.

Waddingtons Videomaster Ltd guarantees Chess Champion against defect for a period of twelve months from the date of purchase, provided that the following conditions are complied with.

1. The unit is returned direct to Videomaster.
2. The fault finding list is completed and returned with the unit.
3. If the alleged fault is a false move by the computer, a complete written list of all the moves made in the relevant game must be submitted with the unit.

If the above conditions are met, Videomaster will repair or replace the unit free of charge within the guarantee period.

VIDEOMASTER