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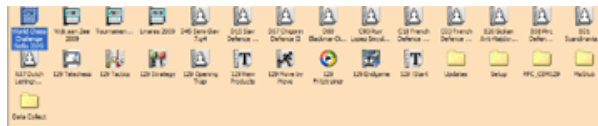
Mark Donlan

*ChessBase Magazine #129* (DVD), Edited by Rainer Knaak, 2009  
 ChessBase, \$26.95

*ChessBase Magazine* is published six times per year and has now reached its 129th issue, yet it may be one of the most underutilized resources available to chess players. I dare say that even subscribers may not take full advantage of it. But this is not due to any deficiency with regard to the product. It is because there is simply such an incredible abundance of material, so much in fact that each issue of *ChessBase Magazine* comes with a twenty-two page printed booklet that serves as a table of contents to the DVD.



The main stories in this issue are the tournaments at Wijk aan Zee and Linares and the Topalov-Kamsky match. Highlights include analysis from Karjakin, Carlsen, Radjabov, and van Wely, with extensive video annotations by Shirov on two of his games from the Bundesliga. Furthermore, there are eleven opening surveys, as well as two short repertoire suggestions in video format.



The material is divided as follows:

- World Chess Challenge Sofia 2009
- Wijk aan Zee 2009
- Tournaments129
- Linares 2009
- D45 Semi-Slav 7.g4
- D15 Slav Defence 4...a6 5.a4
- D07 Chigorin Defence II
- D00 Blackmar-Diemer-Gambit
- C93 Ruy Lopez Smyslov Variation 9...h6
- C18 French Defence Winawer 7.Qg4 Qc7
- C03 French Defence 3.Nd2 Be7
- B20 Sicilian Anti-Najdorf 2.Ne2 d6 3.g3
- B08 Pirc Defence Classical Variation
- B01 Scandinavian Defence 3.Nc3 Qe5+
- A87 Dutch Leningrad 7...Qe8
- 129 Start!
- 129 Opening Trap
- 129 Move by Move
- 129 Strategy
- 129 Tactics
- 129 Endgame
- 129 Fritstrainer
- 129 Telechess

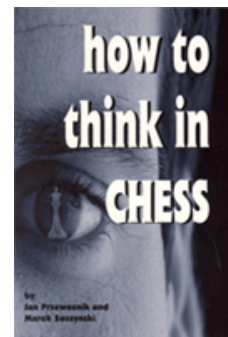
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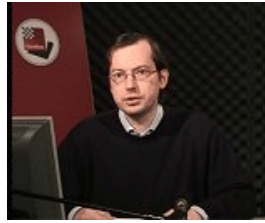
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- 129 New Products

After browsing the booklet, the place to begin is “129Start!.” If you have ChessBase 9 or 10, you will have to double-click the icon in the database browser. Otherwise, you are taken here immediately by the ChessBase Reader that comes bundled on the DVD. Here you will find links to all the contents as well as three introductory videos, one by GM Karsten Müller and two by GM Dorian Rogozenco.



GM Müller takes a little more than twelve minutes to introduce some of the highlights of the DVD. He informs us as to the number of annotated games from Wijk aan Zee and Linares, and looks briefly at the game Karjakin-Morozevich. Regarding the openings, he highlights videos by Lubomir Ftacnik on the Blackmar Diemer Gambit, and briefly examines the correspondence game Tinture-Masquelier, where “White’s initiative is not too easy to deal with.” He also shows the game Simon-Herbold from the video on a surprise weapon against the Sveshnikov by Oliver Ree and Pascal Simon, where White sacrifices a piece for three pawns, which can be quite dangerous over-the-board. The next survey he looks at is by Leonid Kritz on the Scandinavian with 3...Qe5+, noting that if you play this move, “your opponent will most likely underestimate you.” Following this he previews Alexander Kuzmin’s survey on the anti-Najdorf system in the Sicilian with 2.Ne2 and Martin Breutigam’s new pawn sacrifice against the Leningrad Dutch. Müller concludes with a mention of the columns “Move by Move” by Daniel King, “Tactics” by Oliver Reeh, and “The Opening Trap” by Rainer Knaak.

GM Rogozenco’s first video is devoted to an overview of Wijk aan Zee and Linares. He takes slightly more than sixteen minutes to examine the games Karjakin-Adams, Carlsen-Karjakin, Wang Yue-Radjabov, Caruana-Short, Grischuk-Aronian, and Ivanchuk-Anand. Keep in mind that many of these games are also annotated by the players themselves, often in video format.



In his second video, clocking at more than nineteen minutes, Rogozenco reviews the Topalov-Kamsky match, in which Topalov won the right to challenge Anand for the world championship. He examines Topalov’s victories in Games Two, Five, and Seven, and indicates that Kamsky’s poor handling of the clock led him to make losing mistakes. Rogozenco then presents the games Svidler-Stefanova, Bacrot-Lysyj, and Braun-Fridman from Open tournaments in Gibraltar and Moscow as well as from the German Individual Championship.

In “The Opening Trap” Rainer Knaak presents a line from the English Defense **1.d4 b6 2.c4 Bb7 3.Nc3 e6 4.e4 Bb4 5.Bd3 f5 6.d5 fxe4 7.Bxe4 Qh4 8.Qd4**, as played in Relange-Shirazi, and challenges readers to find the winning line for Black:



The game continued **8...Nf6! 9.Bf4 Nxe4 10.Qxe4 0-0 11.Nge2 exd5 12.cxd5 Bxc3+ 13.bxc3 Na6 14.g3 Qh5 15.c4 Rae8 16.Qc2 Qf3 17.Rf1 Nb4 18.Qd2 Nd3+ 19.Kd1 Nxf4 20.gxf4 Rxf4 0-1**

In Daniel King's "Move by Move" column nearly all White's moves are accompanied by training questions, with feedback given for the game moves as well as plausible continuations. Thus, as you play through the game, Berczes-Wells, 4NCL 2008, you will be challenged to input White's next move. It is no easy feat to replicate the moves of a 2500 player, but it is a good training exercise. The game is also given without the training questions with all the commentary included in the analysis.

Peter Wells's "Strategy" column has been a long-time feature of *ChessBase Magazine*. In this issue his focus is on weak squares, a subject he considers so fundamental that it would be negligent not to return to it from time to time.



In his first example, Bareev-Rivas, we see White taking the surprising decision to undouble Black's isolated b-pawns in order to then take advantage of the host of newly created weak squares by **15.Bxc5! bxc5**. Wells writes "after this transformation we should additionally be alerted to d6, b6 and the pawn c5 itself. Perhaps the latter is the most instructive. Sometimes it helps to see a weak pawn as just a weak square with a pawn on it! On b6 the pawn provides decent control of c5. Once it is on c5, there is no more cover for this square since White is in time to ensure that the further move ...b6 would involve unacceptable tactical costs" and that "the change in status of c5 from protected square to vulnerable point is particularly costly to Black." He further states "*that some squares may not be formal weaknesses in the sense that there exists the theoretical possibility of pawn cover, but still de facto weak since the costs of providing such pawn cover are simply too high.*" He goes on to give another six examples of the theme, with a second part to follow in *CBM #130*.

In "Tactics," Oliver Reeh presents his favorite combinations from *CBM #129*, this time focusing on positions that include knight forks. He includes twenty-seven games that contain seventy-five training questions,

with the position from Nielsen-Izoria receiving special attention by being offered in video format.



Reeh takes thirteen minutes to demonstrate the amazing tactical complications for both sides that ensued after **40...Ne4 41.Ne3 Rf2+ 42. Kg1 Rxh2 43.Nxd5 Rh1+ 44.Kg2 Rxa1 45.Bh4 Qe6 46.Ne7+ Kf7 47. d5 Qe5 48.d6 Nxd6 49.Qf3+ Ke6 50.Qg4+ Kf7 51.Qf3+ Ke6 52.Qg4+ Kf7 1/2-1/2**

Moreover, the first six examples from “Tactics” are printed in the accompanying booklet. You can download this page as a [PDF file](#), but be warned, you’ll have to get the DVD for the answers.

Six puzzles from Kartsen Müller’s endgame column are also presented in the printed booklet. The column itself features eight video clips with a total running time of thirty-four minutes that focuses on passed pawns. There is also a second topic on same-color bishop endgames in which Müller notes that “even endgames with bishops of the same color have a pretty high drawing tendency.” He provides a six-minute introductory video and examines six games on this theme, with many of them offering training questions for the reader to solve.

The “Fritztrainer” section includes five videos. Here you can find the video on the surprise weapon against the Sveshnikov that was mentioned above, as well as a presentation from Dorian Rogozenco on a transposition trick to reach the Sveshnikov, while Lubomir Ftacnik discusses his investigations of the Blackmar Diemer Gambit, and Andrew Martin has videos on the Czech Benoni and Alekhine Defense.

“Telechess” is written by GMs Juan Sebastián Morgado and Robert Alvarez. It presents reports and well annotated games from postal or email tournaments around the world. This issue features 8,025 games, thirty-three of which are annotated.

“New Products” is rather self-explanatory. Here you can view previews of new software that is about to be released by ChessBase. The featured products are as follows:

- *ChessBase Opening Encyclopedia 2009*, which incidentally is where all the opening surveys from *ChessBase Magazine* are published
- *Fritz & Fertig 4*, which is known in the U.S. as *Fritz & Chesster*
- *Fritz & Chesster* for the Nintendo DS game system
- *Power Play 10: Calculation* by Daniel King, which includes a ten-minute video excerpt
- *The Closed Sicilian* by GM Nigel Davies, which includes a fourteen-minute video excerpt
- *How to Beat Younger Players* by GM Nigel Davies, which includes a nearly twelve-minute video excerpt

As you can see, the contents of *ChessBase Magazine* can keep one

occupied for hours on end or at least until the next issue comes out. Players at all levels can benefit from the training material and opening surveys. In all there are 933 games from the period January through March 2009, about eighty of which are annotated. This does not include the 8,025 games in the "Telechess" section of course. The list of contributors reads like a who's who of top players and theorists, with names such as Carlsen, Caruana, Giri, Karjakin, Krasenkow, Marin, Radjabov, Stohl, and Tiviakov to name just a few. Once you try one issue of *ChessBase Magazine*, you will want to sign up for a subscription so as not to miss another.

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Edited by Rainer Knaak

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