

# ChessBase Cafe

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## Release your Inner Chess Publisher

It's good to be a publisher. Media barons from Hearst to Murdoch have attacked Presidents, fomented war, smeared celebrities, and created heroes. Oh, and occasionally delivered the news, too. When you are the publisher you are in charge and you can say what you want. You control the format and the content.

Unfortunately, it's expensive to buy your own newspaper or cable network. Home publishing your own print newsletter or magazine is a more accessible, although you still have to have significant expertise and pay for paper, ink, and postage at the very least. The solution for the non-millionaire wannabe publisher is the internet. It's great fun to publish your club's games online for all to see. Or you can build a shrine to your favorite player or to yourself.

[Over a year ago](#) we looked at using Fritz and ChessBase to export game text and diagrams to the web. This month we'll revisit the topic with an emphasis on the powerful online game replay features in ChessBase 8.

The convenience of online game replay is based on the simple fact that 99% of chess fans can't visualize an entire game in their heads from notation. Even many strong players can't go more than seven or eight moves without needing a diagram. If you're like most players, of your dozens of chess books you've probably read the parts after the diagrams many times without ever going through the rest. An example, one made easier by starting at the initial array: 1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Nf6 3.d4 Nxd5 4.Nf3 Bg4 5.Bc4 Nb6 White to play and win...

Online replay isn't just for visualization convenience. It can also be used for puzzles and even live event coverage, allowing people to log in and follow the latest moves with commentary, although this isn't very elegant. Nowadays live event broadcasting is mostly done on the web with Java or Flash applets that automatically update the moves or on online playing sites like ChessBase's Playchess.com and the ICC.



The most useful feature in the ChessBase 8 html output is the ability to include extensive analysis and variations that are all clickable. Instead of simply going through a game move by move you can click on any move in the notation and the board will jump to that position. Few replay applets have that ability and none do it very well.

In the game list window, select the game or games you want to publish and right-click the list. Select Output – HTML + Javascript Replay to launch the output dialog box. The Header will appear at the top of the page and will also be the title of the page.

If you're unfamiliar with the output pages I'm talking about, here is an example from the [X3D Fritz – Kasparov match website](#). This is the most elegant implementation of the ChessBase 8 html+javascript replay feature. The notation is in a scrolling frame on the right so you never lose sight of the board. If there are multiple games they are presented as links in a list below the board.

If you like, you can make that into a drop-down menu using the “Create Popup/List” option instead of “Create Links” on the Frames tab of the HTML output dialog box. I've heard a few complaints of tight browser security settings having trouble with the drop-down JavaScript in CB8 but I've not been able to duplicate it without turning JavaScript completely off. (Although if you're looking for bugs, the excellent Mozilla browser sometimes jumps ahead two moves when you click the move forward button.)

If you don't have many annotations in the games and if you want to display multiple games at the same time, you can select “Don't use frames” and the games will appear in tables one after another. This can be handy if you want to compare two games side-by-side, but it's hard to imagine any real advantage unless you just really hate frames. Also, if you want to incorporate your exported pages into your site and it uses frames, this might be necessary since

putting a framed page into another framed page is both difficult and ugly. [Here's an example](#) of putting a replay page into a frame website. [Another example](#) with the notation moved below the board.

Most of the above example pages can be done exported directly from ChessBase 8 without any subsequent modification. You can change the background color, the text font and color, and the table colors from the html output dialog. Variation text color is the same in the html output as it is in your notation options (Tools – Options – Notation – Variation Color). If you have html skills or an editor like FrontPage or Dreamweaver you can further customize the pages before you put them online.

You can even use most word processors to open and edit the ChessBase html files, although this isn't always a good idea and you should test the page before putting it online. For example, Word 2000 tends to add a bunch of garbage code to the page that can mess up the links to the moves.

Customizing can mean adding some links and text to the page or going much further and embedding the board into a page as if it were an animated diagram. That way you can build the replay board into a report without showing the notation at all, giving you more formatting options. This takes some practice, but can look nice. Here's a [quick example](#). All I did was output the game without frames and copy-paste the html table with the pieces into a separate table with the report text. Just make sure you don't delete all the extra code that contains the links to the moves, etc. To be on the safe side, whenever possible, bring your report text into the output page, not the other way around.

Another reason to delete the notation cell is to give interactive tactical puzzles without showing the solution or having to give the solutions on another page. Instead of a plain diagram you can have a replay board and the viewer can just play the answer whenever he's ready. [This page](#) is a good example of bad design. They export a tactics puzzle with CB8 but still make you go to another page to see the solution! Of course that's necessary if you want to show all the variations, but it's a much better user experience to be able to just click through the main line.

Actually, you can select "Subwindow for variants" in the output dialog so the user can play through the variations even without visible notation. A tiny browser window will pop up when you come to a variation. In it there's a link to move the board to the subvariation and another to return to the main line. Nice!

Some things you *can't* do. The board colors cannot be changed unless you make a few dozen new images yourself. So you're stuck with brown and browner. Note that you can't output from the game list of a PGN file. It won't give you an error or tell you the problem; it will just do nothing when you select your output option. First convert the games to ChessBase format.

## The E-mailbag

**Question** If I have a directory full of games...and I want them analyzed with a chess engine...is it possible to do this with Fritz or ChessBase? – **Eric Hicks**

**Answer** No, Fritz can't automatically annotate more than one database at a time, but you can do all the games in one database. You can put all the games into one database and then let it rip. Check out one of my [old columns](#) on auto-annotation.

**Question** When I delete a game in the database (ChessBase), a line is put through it but the game does not disappear from the list of games in the database. How do I get it to disappear entirely? Thank you. – **Donald**

**Answer** A feature, not a bug! Pressing delete is really just marking them for deletion. To permanently delete games you have to select the database and then go to Tools – Database – Remove Deleted Games. Or right-click the database icon in the database window and select Tools – Remove Deleted Games. After you do that you can't recover the games. If you have them with the line through them you can undelete them by selecting them and pressing delete again.

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All the ChessBase software described by Mig in this column, as well as many more ChessBase programs, are available in the [ChessCafe Online Catalog](#).

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***Mig wants your questions!! Send it along and perhaps it will be answered in an upcoming column. Please include your name and country of residence. Yes, I have a question for Mig!***

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 [TOP OF PAGE](#)

 [HOME](#)

 [COLUMNS](#)

 [LINKS](#)

 [ARCHIVES](#)

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