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Dadi Jonsson

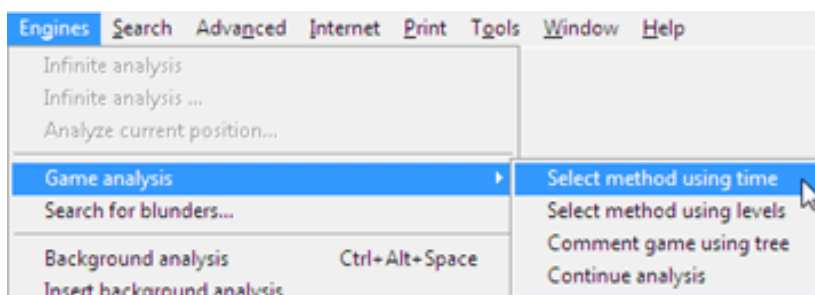
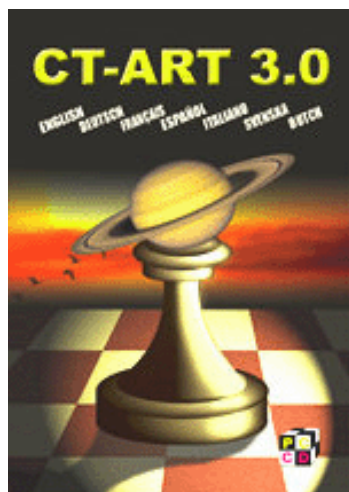
Game Analysis with Chess Assistant 9 Part One

In the two previous columns we examined infinite analysis with *Chess Assistant 9* (see the [ChessCafe.com Archives](#)). While this is a very useful tool for individual positions, it is not efficient for analyzing every move of the game. Nevertheless, *Chess Assistant 9* does offer a number of methods for automatic analysis of complete games. This month we will examine the “Game analysis” function.



“Game analysis” is simple to use; yet it allows for some advanced fine tuning depending on the users needs. One can select different chess engines, time settings and analysis methods for each phase of a game (opening, middlegame, and endgame). Every tournament game that you play should be subjected to such analysis and stored for future reference. Just remember that engine analysis is not a replacement for your own analysis, you should always first enter your own thoughts about the game and only then analyze it with *Chess Assistant*.

“Game analysis” is on the “Engines” menu as shown below.



We are interested in the two items at the top of the submenu:

- *Select method using time.* This is the simplest way to use “Game analysis” and the one I would recommend to beginners. We’ll be discussing this method below.
- *Select method using levels.* This allows you to control the analysis settings down to the smallest detail. Fortunately, the user interface is designed so that even a near beginner can take advantage of this method.

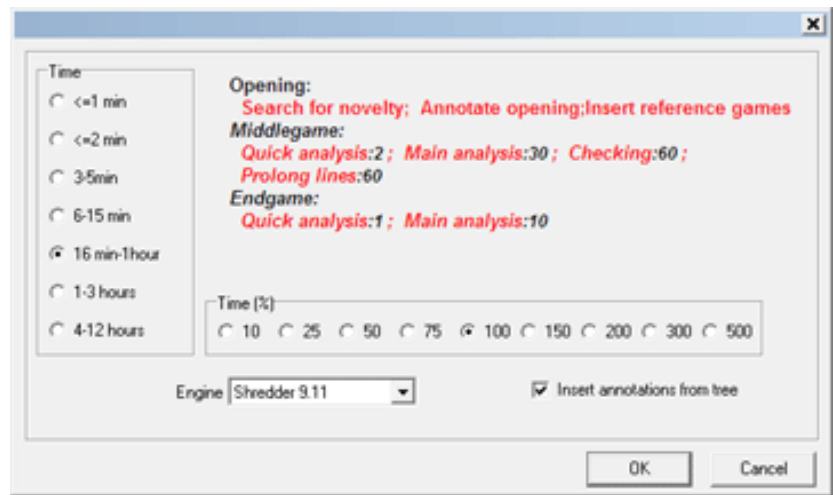
Select Method Using Time

Anyone can get impressive results by using the “Select method using time” function. Once it is selected, the following dialog box is displayed:

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Click here for the [Flash](#) version or here to download and install the [Full](#) version.



This screen contains everything needed to start “Game analysis” and, based on your choices, shows what methods of analysis will be used (red letters) for each phase of the game. The simplest method is to just choose how much time to allocate, click OK, and let *Chess Assistant* take care of the rest. However, let’s examine the available options in more detail.

Time: The “Time” panel has seven predefined time intervals, ranging from one minute to twelve hours. This defines how much time should be spent analyzing a single game. I have set the parameter to 16 min. – 1 hour. The time is specified as an interval rather than a fixed number because separate games may require widely different lengths of time. Even games with the same number of moves can be very different with regards to the depth of analysis that will be necessary, and there is no way to calculate beforehand exactly how long the analysis will take. In fact, the analysis of certain games will sometimes even exceed the specified interval. When deciding on time parameters, remember that longer is always better. This allows the chess engine to analyze deeper and returns more reliable results. For analysis of tournament games, I recommend at least one to three hours.

Time (%): This parameter acts as a percentage multiplier for the interval selected in the “Time” panel. In the image above it is set to 100%, which means that you can expect the game analysis to finish within the time specified (in this case 16 minutes – 1 hour). If the percentage was set to 200%, the time would be doubled (32 min.- 2 hours), and if set to 50%, the time would be halved (8 min. - 30 min.). So, by combining “Time” and “Time (%)”, you have great flexibility in choosing a time schedule for the analysis.

Engine: You can choose any of the installed engines for the analysis. Here I have selected *Shredder 9.11*.

Insert annotations from tree: As we saw in a previous [column](#), opening trees can contain verbal comments. When you select “Insert annotations from tree,” as I have done, *Chess Assistant* will insert the commentary from the tree into the game annotations. We’ll see an example later in this article.

After selecting the time setting and other parameters just click OK and *Chess Assistant* will begin its analysis.

The Results of “Game analysis”

The following description of the analysis results applies to both “Select method using time” and “Select method using levels.”

Player statistics

During opening analysis *Chess Assistant* searches the database for other games in the same opening by the same players. The results are then added as commentary to the game as

shown here.

```
[ SICILIAN def. PAULSEN var.,B43]
Gunnarsson Jon Viktor (ISL) +3 =5 -2
Kveinys Aloyzas (LTU) +15 =21 -5
```

The first line tells us that the opening is the Paulsen variation of the Sicilian Defense, which is identified by the ECO code B43. The next line shows that Jon Viktor Gunnarsson had the white pieces in this game. *Chess Assistant* found ten games in its database where he played this opening. He won three games, drew five and lost two. The last line displays similar information about Aloyzas Kveinys, who had the black pieces in this game. The three capital letters in parenthesis after each player's name is his country's abbreviation. The country codes are the same as those used in the FIDE rating list.

Verbal commentary

Chess Assistant can add verbal commentary to moves and positions in the game. The commentary is based on the *Chess Opening Encyclopedia 2006*, which is included with *Chess Assistant 9*. The below image shows an example from the Paulsen variation of the Sicilian Defense.

```
[...] 1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 a6
Paulsen Variation. This opening system,
introduced into practice by Louis Paulsen, a
famous German player of the 19th century, is
characterized by the black pawn moves e7-e6
and a7-a6, with the d-pawn being delayed at d7.
Some players use the Paulsen system as a
roundabout path to the Scheveningen, thus
avoiding the sharp lines of the Keres and
Velimirovic attacks. True Paulsen fans, however,
keep the pawn at d7 as long as possible, making
the most use of the dark-squared bishop
development to d6, c5, or b4. 5.♘c3 ♖c7 6.
```

As you can guess by reading this text, it is not computer generated. It was prepared by the Russian grandmaster and opening expert Alexander Kalinin, whose opening explanations can be very helpful for new and improving players. Note that not every opening line will feature such commentary.

Reference games

Chess Assistant 9 searches its extensive database, appropriately called HugeBase, for games that are relevant to the opening in question, and inserts fragments from them as annotations. The image below shows three fragments that have been inserted; notice that two of these are from games by the players of the main game being annotated. This preference for games by the players themselves is a very nice feature, but, of course, *Chess Assistant* also uses other reference games as well, as can be seen after the move 7...b5.

♟d3 ♞f6
 [6...♟c5 7.♞b3 ♟e7 8.♞g4 g6 9.♟g5 d6
 10.♟xe7 ♞xe7 11.O-O e5 12.♞g5
 ♟e6 13.f4 ♞d7 14.f5 f6 15.♞h6 ♟xb3
 16.cxb3 ...1-0, Carlsen Magnus 2625 -
 Kveinys Aloyzas 2517 , Reykjavik 12.
 3.2006 It (open)]

7.f4 ±/=
 [7.O-O ♞c6 8.♞xc6 dxc6 9.f4 e5 10.♟h1
 ♟d6 11.f5 b5 12.a4 ♞b8 13.♟e3 ♞e7 14.
 ♟g5 h6 15.♟h4 ♟b7 16.♞e2 ♟b4 ...1/2-
 1/2, Gunnarsson Jon Viktor 2411 - Trygstad
 Kristian 2312 , Saint Vincent 21. 9.2005 Cup
 European Club (final)]

7...b5
 [7...d6 8.♞e2 ♞c6 9.♞f3 ♟e7 10.O-O
 O-O 11.♟h1 ♞d7 12.b3 ♞c5 13.♟b2
 ♟d7 14.♞f2 ♞ac8 15.♞g3 f6 16.♟e2 b5
 17.a3 ...1/2-1/2, Kramnik Vladimir 2760 -
 Dorfman Josif D 2596 , France 2003 Ch
 France (team) 2003]

In the game between Vladimir Kramnik and Josif Dorfman, from the French Team Championship in 2003, Dorfman chose 7...d6. Then we are shown the moves of that game up to White's 17 a3, which is followed by "... 1/2-1/2." The ellipses indicate that the game was eventually drawn at a later point.

Evaluations from Chess Openings 2006

Chess Assistant also uses grandmaster evaluations from *Chess Openings 2006* for annotating the opening. The evaluations are Informant-style, and an example can be seen in the image above after 7 f4, where, according to GM Kalinin, White has a minimal advantage.

CAP evaluations

CAP is short for the Computer Analysis Project, an effort begun by Dann Corbit. It has been run as a distributed computing project by Convekta for several years and, through the participation of volunteers, tens of millions of positions have been evaluated. *Chess Assistant* comes with a large database of such positions, and these evaluations can be inserted at selected points in the game. As you can see in the image, these are presented as numeric evaluations (centipawns), although there is an option that allows you to display Informant symbols instead. Positive numbers mean a White advantage and vice versa for negative numbers. In this case the CAP evaluation of the position after 9 g4 is -0.22. All evaluations from the CAP database are followed by the text "CAP," so they will not be confused with evaluations computed by the chess engine during game analysis.

8...♟b7 9.g4 -0.22 CAP

Opening novelty

All chess players are interested in opening novelties and *Chess Assistant* will automatically find them for you during game analysis.

10. ♖ce2 d5 11. e5 ♜e4 12. ♙e3 ♜d7
 13. g5N
 [13. O-O ♙c5 14. ♖h3 ♖b6 15. a3 bxa3
 16. b4 ♙xd4 17. ♙xd4 ♖c7 18. ♖h5
 O-O-O 19. ♜xa3 g6 20. ♖h3 ♜d2 21.
 ♙xa6 ♙xa6 22. ♜xa6 ♜xf1 ...0-1, Strumpf
 Erik 2041 - Benda Ales 2166 , Halle 1994
 Ch Germany (juniors) (under 20) (w)]

This image displays a game fragment where White played an opening novelty on move thirteen. The novelty is marked with an “N” as is customary. Since this move is a novelty it means that one or more games feature a different move in this position. *Chess Assistant* will find those games in the database and insert them as reference games after the novelty. In this way *Chess Assistant* provides an overview of alternative moves. It may even insert games by players of varying abilities, or only games from higher rated players.

Chess engine evaluations

It only takes a few seconds to perform the analysis described above, but now we come to the longest part of the analysis. This is where the chess engine looks for mistakes and suggests improvements; the below image shows an example of the results of analysis by *Shredder 9.11*.

14. g4 ♜xd3 15. cxd3?! +0.22 *Shredder 9.11*
 [15. ♜xd3!? ♜b4 16. ♜d4 ♜c6 17. ♜d2
 hxg4 18. h5 gxf3 19. h6 ♙xe5 20. h7 ♜h8 21.
 ♙xe5 ♜xe5 22. ♖xe5 +0.85 *Shredder*
9.11]
 15...f6? +1.33 *Shredder 9.11*
 [♞15...d4 16. ♜e4 ♖c7 17. ♜b1 ♜b4
 18. gxh5 +0.22 *Shredder 9.11*]
 16. gxh5 fxe5 17. ♜xe5 ♜xf4 18. ♜xc6 ♖f6

Let’s first look at White’s fifteenth move, 15 cxd3. The engine’s evaluation of the position is +0.22, which means that it is just slightly in White’s favor. However, *Chess Assistant* sees that White could have played a better move, and so appends 15 cxd3 with a “dubious move” symbol. *Shredder*’s suggestion is displayed in square brackets and 15 Rxd3 is adorned with a “!?” meaning it deserves attention. At the end of the variation we see the evaluation of +0.85, which is higher than the evaluation of the game move. After Black’s 15...f6 (a blunder as White’s advantage increases to +1.33), we see another suggestion from *Shredder*, 15...d4, valued at +0.22. The sign in front of the first move in the variation stands for “better is” and is yet another commonly used Informant symbol.

Summary

As we have seen, full game analysis can be quite simple. By using the “Select method using time” of the “Game analysis” function, users only have to choose the time allotment for the analysis and click OK. As a result, *Chess Assistant* will produce the following information:

- Player statistics
- Verbal commentary
- Reference games
- Evaluations from Chess Openings 2006
- CAP evaluations

- Opening novelty
- Chess engine evaluations

Next month we will continue the discussion of game analysis and look at some slightly more advanced methods.

All the Chess Assistant software described by Dadi in this column, as well as many more Chess Assistant programs, are available in the [USCFSales Online Catalog](#).

Dadi 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 Dadi!](#)

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