CHINOOK The World Man-Machine Checkers Champion

Jonathan Schaeffer
Robert Lake
Paul Lu
Martin Bryant

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1609/aimag.v17i1.1208

Abstract

In 1992, the seemingly unbeatable World Checker Champion Marion Tinsley defended his title against the computer program CHINOOK. After an intense, tightly contested match, Tinsley fought back from behind to win the match by scoring four wins to CHINOOK's two, with 33 draws. This match was the first time in history that a human world champion defended his title against a computer. This article reports on the progress of the checkers (8×8 draughts) program CHINOOK since 1992. Two years of research and development on the program culminated in a rematch with Tinsley in August 1994. In this match, after six games (all draws), Tinsley withdrew from the match and relinquished the world championship title to CHINOOK, citing health concerns. CHINOOK has since defended its title in two subsequent matches. It is the first time in history that a computer has won a human-world championship.
His opponent was Chinook, a checkers-playing program programmed by Jonathan Schaeffer, a round, frizzy-haired professor from the University of Alberta, who operated the machine. Through obsessive work, Chinook had become very good. It hadn’t lost a game in its last 125—and since they’d come close to defeating Tinsley in 1992, Schaeffer’s team had spent thousands of hours perfecting his machine. Interesting Checkers Fact: A computer program called Chinook is the World Man-Machine Checkers Champion. It is the first computer program to win a human world championship, a feat recognized by the Guinness Book of World Records. LearnPlayWin.net. Skill Games Rules and Strategy Learn to Play, Play to Win.