

THE EXPERIMENTAL POSITIONS OF IDEAS IN KNOWLEDGE SYNTHESIS

A.J. Roycroft

London, England

Although I have (quite properly) never had access to the actual TI computer records of the 20 KBBKN experimental positions I was tested against, I do have my handwritten records. I have just checked the 20 starting positions as I have them and as they are published as table 1 (p. 6) in Michie and Bratko's article, "Ideas on Knowledge Synthesis Stemming from the KBBKN Endgame" (ICCA Journal, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 3-13). There are two discrepancies :

- No. 3 is totally different, namely WKc2, WBb1, WBc7, BKe8, BNg5;
- In No. 6 the Knight is initially on g3 (not a3).

The last discrepancy, in a footnote in the original article announced as a clerical error, is now satisfactorily solved.

With respect to No. 3, I may inform you that among my sheets there *is* a record of the printed position of No. 3 but the play stops after 10 moves, presumably because of a program bug — we had about three at various times.

GIVEN A QUEEN , WHAT PRICE THE ISSUE?

The Editors

Hans Zellner has been justifiably annoyed by the erroneous publication (Zellner, 1986) of his total-board numbers from the KQK endgame. The errors were noticed by Mr. Zellner himself as well as by Mrs. Hadek and Mondl (from Vienna), Mr. Van Dijken (from Enschede), Mr. Schlösser (from Brühl) and Mr. T. Pronk (from Noordwijkerhout). We hasten to correct the table in question.

KQK		
Legal positions: 144,508 (WTM)		
containing:		
2,448 mates in		1 move
5,012 mates in		2 moves
9,064 mates in		3 moves
19,964 mates in		4 moves
26,164 mates in		5 moves
32,064 mates in		6 moves
32,104 mates in		7 moves
15,000 mates in		8 moves
2,680 mates in		9 moves
8 mates in		10 moves

Needless to say, the results invalidate and replace the left-hand part of the table on p. 200 of Vol. 9, No. 4. The sequence of events, resulting in an erroneous publication even though the true facts were at hand with several authors (e.g., at Delft University of Technology, H.J.J. Nefkens' KQK database) inspired Mr. Zellner to recall E.W. Dijkstra's famous adage: "Testing can show the presence of bugs, but never prove their absence". The Editors concur while apologizing to their readers.

Reference

Zellner, H. (1986). Compressing Databases down to Micro Size. *ICCA Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 4, pp. 199-200.