

## NOTES

### A UNIFORM WAY TO REPORT DATABASE RESULTS

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During the past few years, many database results have been reported in this Journal and in other publications. Some database figures are agreed upon by the researchers, other figures have been shown to be incorrect or are still subjects of discussion. One of the problems is that the exact figures as published may depend on how the database is constructed. Some researchers tend to include more reflections in the database construction than others in order to reduce the amount of work to be performed.

Under these circumstances it may well occur that the figures presented are different but still correct within their respective contexts; of course, they are then difficult to compare. The obvious solution to this problem is to convert the figures to counts in terms of the *full* board without any reflections. This makes results strictly comparable and puts an end to all discussions which reflections should be included.

### MORE TRUTH ON KBBK DATABASE RESULTS

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It is perhaps personally saddening but certainly scientifically worthwhile to be forced to retract ones results. Accordingly, we are glad to refute, in part, most of the numbers of WTM positions in the KBBK endgame as published by us (Van den Herik and Herschberg, 1985). The correction of these numbers has been initiated by Hans Zellner's (1986a) work, about which he corresponded with the authors, while confirmation has come from one of our graduate students, Dirk Jan Out (1987).

Perhaps it is just as well to mention here that the correction is numerical only and applies only to table 1 of Van den Herik and Herschberg (1985, p. 144). The main results stand: the maximin for KBBK is 19 moves; the 16 (reflecting up to 120) positions with a 19-move maximin (*ibid.*, p. 145) are correct as is the sample mate; likewise, our refutation of the Berger position as a maximin of the KBBK endgame stands unchallenged, as do our improvements on Berger's analyses.

With admirable diligence, Hans Zellner (1986b) wrote to inform us of a large number of discrepancies in the figures for the numbers of mate-in- $n$  positions. In fact, he only was able to confirm our results for  $n = 3, 4, 17, 18$  and  $19$ . To quote but one instance, (mate-in-1), for Zellner numbered 1083 positions, whereas we had published 1024.

The matter seemed important enough to be re-investigated independently, a task willingly undertaken by D.J. Out as a research student. (Ken Thompson, though normally oracular in these matters, responded to a letter by us stating that he had not any pertinent data on KBBK directly available.)

D.J.Out started his research by confronting Zellner's (1986b) results with those published by us and his own manual results which gave him 1153 mate-in-1 positions. Since these differed by exactly 70 from Zellner's number the suspicion naturally arose that Zellner had overlooked a class of positions numbering