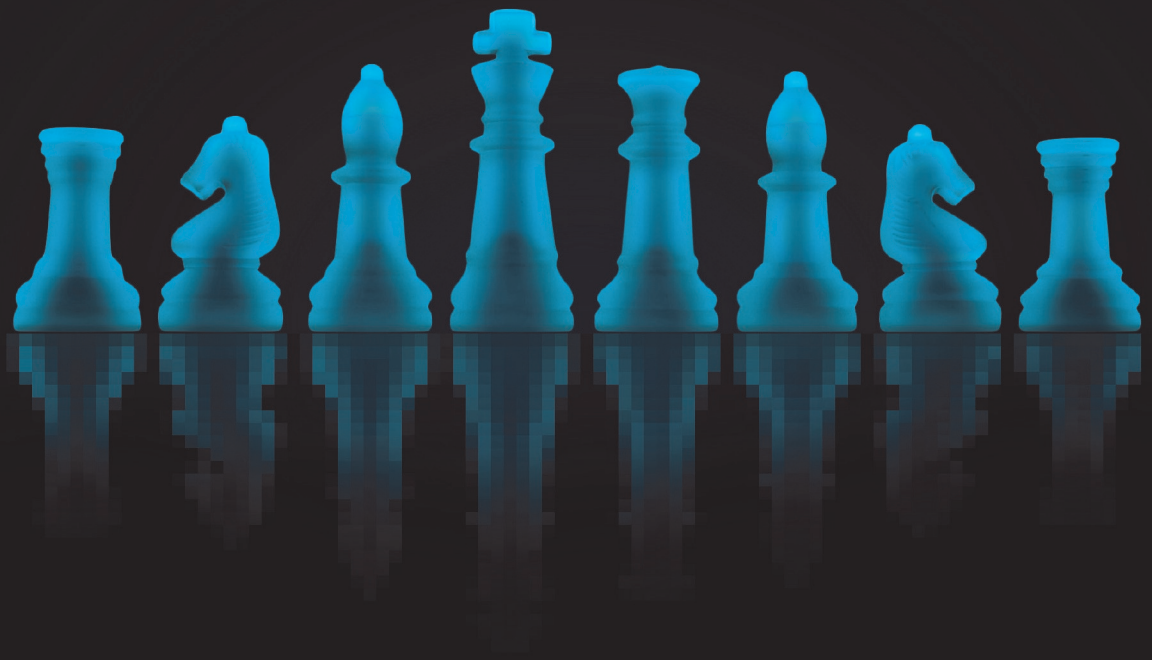
2019 Supplement Covering ChessBase 13, 14 & 15

ChessBase Complete



CHESS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Jon R. Edwards

ChessBase Complete

2019 Supplement Covering ChessBase 13, 14 & 15

Jon Edwards

Foreword by Karsten Müller

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by Jon Edwards

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Foreword

ChessBase programs are moving on, but the royal game is still the same

The title of Jon Edwards book, *ChessBase Complete*, was indeed a dangerous one. Such a project is never really complete, as time and technology move on.

So what do the new versions of ChessBase offer? Of course, you can still enter your games, annotate and analyze them with an engine. But the internet and the rapid management of a very large amount of data make much more than that possible. Edwards, who is a master of didactics as well as simple, understandable English, describes the new features very well, in great detail and reinforcing them with many relevant graphics. I only want to highlight a few features:

ChessBase 13: The “chess cloud” makes its appearance. This makes it possible for coaches working with students anywhere in the world to share games, repertoire suggestions and analysis and it makes it easy to publish games on the web.

ChessBase 14: Assisted Analysis and Tactical Analysis is the main new feature. This helps to analyze games quickly and automatically.

ChessBase 15: The Replay Training and Fast opening reference search and improved advanced searches. I especially like the trapped piece option to find tactical exercises for my students.

Finally, ChessBase is also gravitating more and more to the internet, with web applications for mobile devices. Edwards does a fine job describing the new features, for example, the online tactical training and the video portal, a feature which will also certainly grow in the future.

So the new versions of ChessBase are really fascinating. Following the success of Alpha Zero, engines using Monte Carlo techniques are advancing quickly. Several can already be used within ChessBase. Artificial Intelligence will without doubt open new windows not only in chess but in almost all aspects of

human life. ChessBase will certainly go in that direction even more in the future so that such a manual can never really be complete.

However, Edwards' excellent manual is in a way the missing handbook of the ChessBase program family. So explore the vast options and, last but not least, enjoy the eternal beauty of the ancient royal game through new windows!

GM Dr. Karsten Müller
Hamburg, June 2019

Introduction

Just months after the publication of *ChessBase Complete*, ChessBase released ChessBase 13. How time flies.

We now have ChessBase versions 14 and 15! Many of the new features are stunning and very valuable.

Those of you who have already upgraded will want to know how best to take advantage of all these new, powerful features. Those answers are here.

For those of you still back on ChessBase 12, there will two additional questions. Do I really need to upgrade? If so, should I upgrade directly to version 15? ChessBase's user interface and legacy functions have changed modestly, sustaining the utility of the first edition of *ChessBase Complete*.

This supplement does not replace but rather builds upon the original book. If you are new to ChessBase, please get a copy of that book.

There I explored 14 scenarios, essentially 14 chapters organized around key uses of the software. In order to make this supplement as useful as possible, I have throughout referred back to these scenarios. "Sc 13, p. 237" references Scenario 13, page 237 of *ChessBase Complete*.

You will have a comprehensive place to go for answers to your basic questions: How should I train, how should analyze, and how can I best teach the game?

I am happy to report that the new versions of ChessBase actually address difficulties that users faced, most notably having to do with installing and activating the software.

Do you need to upgrade from version 12, or even to buy this supplement? The answer lies within the next five sections of this book. If the new features excite you as much as they excite me, you will want to upgrade straight to ChessBase 15.

Every new version of ChessBase has introduced something new and special.

Rather than integrate these changes within the original scenarios, I have added five additional "sections."

Apart from some pleasing, refinements and cosmetic changes, the major addition to ChessBase 13 was its embrace of cloud computing and chess collaboration. Once again, I have tried hard to make sure that readers can actually understand and use the software without unnecessary stress. Those of you who are heavily involved in analysis will also appreciate the new Analysis jobs function, which permits to to organize and even interrupt and later restart your analysis!

The second and third new chapters focuses on the major additions with ChessBase 14 and 15. Know that if you go upgrade to ChessBase 15, everything in *ChessBase Complete* and in this supplement will be relevant to you.

ChessBase 14 introduces new forms of automated analysis that most users will find very appealing. Assisted Analysis and Tactical Analysis are exciting additional features to ChessBase. The strongest players will probably not trust such automated analysis, but then again, the features are so very easy to use that there's no good reason to avoid them.

ChessBase 15 adds remarkable new search capabilities but places its emphasis on younger learners. Playing through games now incorporates a strong educational approach, with a radar board, automated hints, and other pedagogical approaches that will appeal to chess learners.

The fourth new section examines the online environment that ChessBase has made available for computer, tablets, and smartphones. Tablets and smartphones certainly have limited processing power, but here you have access to the engines and the data placed in the cloud. With those enhancements in place, you can do meaningful ChessBase work from your network-connected, portable device wherever you might be. From a technical perspective, these new possibilities are impressive! If you now regularly use a tablet or smartphone, and that includes most readers of this book, you will soon be amazed at all you can now do while commuting to work on the train. Just don't attempt these features while driving!

For perhaps another brief moment in time, *ChessBase Complete* is once again complete. To the dedicated reader, I thank you and I hope to see you back here again for ChessBase 16!

Jon Edwards
July 2019

Section 2

ChessBase 14: Automated Analysis

Cool as they were, the new Cloud and analysis features in ChessBase 13 might not have been enough to induce legacy users to upgrade. ChessBase 14, by contrast, offers a range of additional features that many chess learners will find enticing. It is my sense that the developers sought, with ChessBase 14, to bring new features to address the needs of less advanced players in a major effort to broaden the appeal of ChessBase.

There is one change that will briefly unsettle some long-time users. ChessBase has introduced a revision of the menu structure to make it more akin to the Microsoft Office suite. There is no way to restore the menus to the look and feel of ChessBase 13. Fortunately, the underlying concepts of the user interface remain the same, and the adjustment required is relatively minor. I know that I am not alone in preferring the old menus. It sure took a while to get used to them and now, effectively, we have a slightly different channel lineup. All the legacy features remain, and I am happy to report, ChessBase has added some slick new possibilities.

In the Game Window => Analysis Tab, there are two notable new entries.

Assisted Analysis (See Scenario 9)

This new feature permits you to think about positions quite effortlessly and offers the promise of altering for the better the ways in which we interact as chess learners with our computers.

In the past, ChessBase called upon the default engine to assist move entry in an intelligent way, and to identify threats in the position. Now, using the engine in the background, you can click on any piece and immediate see the strength and utility of every one of its legal moves. Moves to green squares are strong. Moves to fellow squares are full of caution. Moves to red squares should be avoided. There are even shades of these colors. The more intense the green, the more promising the move. The darker the shade of red, the greater the danger.

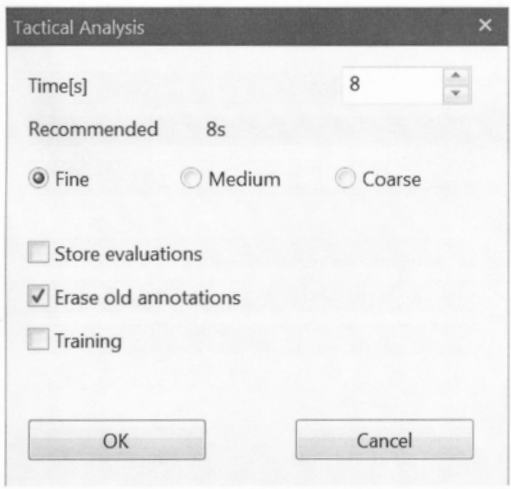
ChessBase has also added an interesting, undocumented features. A slight movement of the mouse identifies which piece most optimally moves.

Hint for Advanced Users: ChessBase is quite proud of this feature, but strong players may neither need nor want it. Feel free to check it off. It is turned on as the default.

Tactical Analysis (See Scenario 9)

ChessBase 14 adds a new form of game analysis. In the Game list, select a game, or a group of games, and then using the right mouse button, select Tactical Analysis. Or open the game and select ➔ Analysis ➔ Tactical Analysis

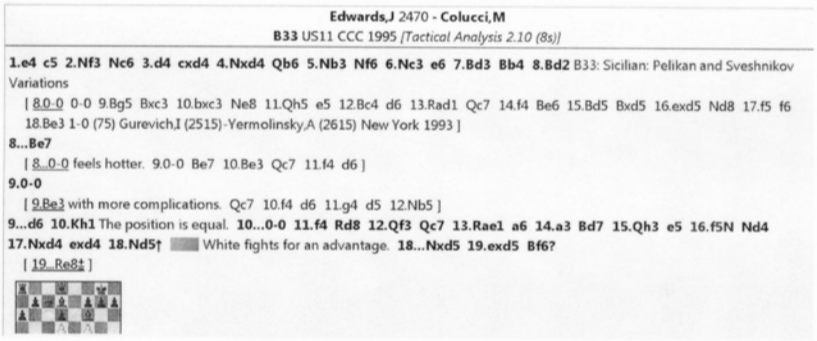
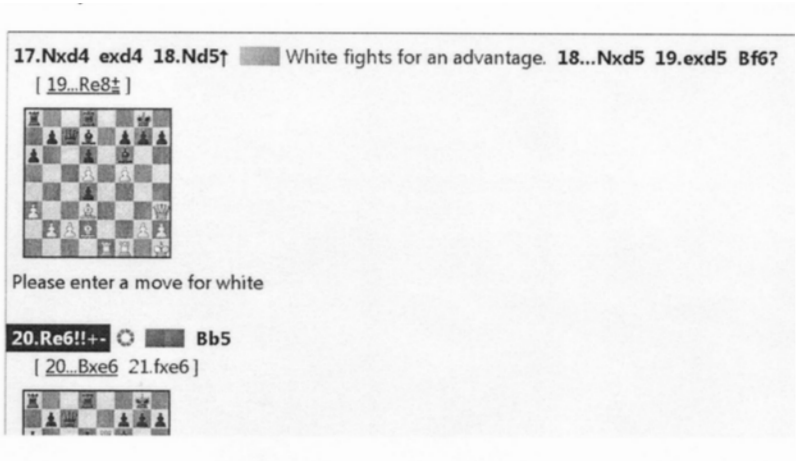
That brings up this dialog window:



Use Fine for games played between strong players. Coarse would be appropriate for games played by Amateurs. Click training if you want to generate training positions. Tactical Analysis proceeds through the game backwards, generated annotations. You can control the length of time involved by adjusting the Time, the number of seconds that the default engine will use in evaluating each ply.

If you apply this feature to a large group of games, perhaps to an entire database, set the task in motion before bedtime or a long time away from the machine.

Here, I have assigned the feature to a game that I played in the 11th US Correspondence Championship, a game that I well understand. The full analysis took about six minutes and produced annotations that consistently reached a depth of just 20 ply. The final result successfully identified the opening, added some references to relevant games, and noted the novelty.



In the middlegame,, the annotations were correct and crisp. I had asked for the inclusion of training positions, and the run provided not one but three, all the ones that I personally would have selected, all without having to create them myself.