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Chess Champion MK I ^[7]

The **Chess Champion MK I** was [Novag's](#) first [dedicated chess computer](#) released in September 1978. It had a [Fairchild F8](#) 8-Bit processor running at 1.78 MHz, with 2 KiB [ROM](#) and 256 byte [RAM](#).

The program was a [clone](#) of the *Data Cash Systems Inc.* [CompuChess](#) program, which was developed by [David B. Goodrich](#) & Associates ^[1], while other sources assume [David Levy](#) was involved in the development ^{[2] [3]}.

Since the cloned software was already more than a year old, it was a weak program even for that early time. Additionally the program could only play with Black, accepted illegal moves, and could even play without Kings. With its strongest level 6, it usually replied not until several days with a move found ^[4]. It was marketed in the US by [JS&A](#), and in Germany by [Horten](#) ^[5] and [Quelle](#) in different outward variations ^[6].

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Karpov Challenge

The MK I was sold in the USA by [Joseph Sugarman's](#) company as *JS&A Chess computer*. They challenged [World Champion Anatoly Karpov](#) and offered him \$50,000 and a percentage of each unit sold. Karpov first rejected, and later accepted to endorse the game, but offered to let *JS&A* spend the money on advertisement to spread the word ^[8] ^[9].

Legal Actions

Data Cash Systems vs JS&A

In 1979 *Data Cash Systems* took legal action against *JS&A* for breach of copyright ^[10], which failed ^[4] because it transpired that the copyright had not been adequately protected in terms of USA law ^[11] ^[12] ^[13].

Karpov's Endorsement

In the meantime [Peter Auge](#) had made his own arrangements with [Anatoly Karpov](#), presumably with connections to [FIDE](#) president [Florencio Campomanes](#) and [Alfred Kinzel](#), president of the [German Chess Federation](#) ^[15] ^[16], who was also involved the weak computer was distinguished in Germany with a "King's Diplom" ^[17]. Karpov appeared as advisor on the original Novag MK I boxes ^[18] ^[19]. The internals of Karpov's Novag advertisement salaries, not only for the MK I, but also subsequently the [Chess Champion MK II](#) ^[20], and [Chess Champion Super System III](#) ^[21], went public during the [World Chess Championship 1985](#) when a first [Spiegel](#) article appeared in September 30, 1985, which according to Karpov was discrediting him, and the disturbance of the [Jungwirth case](#) ^[22]^[23] was allegedly one reason he lost the title to [Kasparov](#), losing three of nine games short after in October 1985. Karpov's former German representative Helmut Jungwirth ^[24] was impeached of misappropriation of Karpov's salary afterwards ^[25]. Accordant to a further [Spiegel](#) article ^[26], Peter Auge had transcribed 22 checks to Jungwirth, in total \$446,177.50 from December 8, 1978 to January 17, 1981. Jungwirth claimed he paid Karpov partly cash and was also endowed for other services, which Karpov categorical denied at a hearing of witnesses in

Berlin [\[27\]](#).



Novag Chess Champion MK 1, German Edition, Box with Karpov Endorsement and "King's Diplom" from the [German Chess Federation](#) [\[28\]](#)

See also

- [Chess Champion MK II](#)
- [Chess Champion Super System III](#)
- [CompuChess](#)
- [JS&A Chess Computer](#)

Publications

- [Novag - Chess Champion MK I \(with Spassky packaging\)](#) pdf by [Hein Veldhuis](#)
- [Novag - Chess Champion MK I \(A\) \(with Karpov packaging\)](#) pdf by [Hein Veldhuis](#)
- [Betriebsanleitung Schach Computer Chess Champion MK I](#)
- [Partner für einsame Anfänger](#), [Der Spiegel](#) 40/1978, October 02, 1978 (German)
- [Horten macht's möglich: Schach-Computer für 250 Mark](#), October 13, 1978 [Computerwoche](#) 42/1978 (German)
- [Boris Spassky testete den "Chess-Champion MK 1 " von Horten: Der kleine Großmeister in der Aktentasche](#) October 27, 1978 [Computerwoche](#) 44/1978 (German)
- [Schachcomputer: Markt und Müll](#), [Der Spiegel](#) 49/1979, December 03, 1979, (German) [pdf](#)
- [Anatolij Karpow](#), [Der Spiegel](#) 1/1987, December 29, 1986, (German) [pdf](#)
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External Links

- [Scisys and Novag : The Early Years](#) from [Chess Computer UK](#) by [Mike Watters](#)
- [Chess Champion MK I](#) from [MESS Wiki!](#) (Multi Emulator Super System)
- [Novag MK 1](#) by [Hein Veldhuis](#)
- [Novag MK 1 Folder](#) by [Hein Veldhuis](#)

- [Chess Champion Mk 1](#) by [Tom Luif](#)
- [Novag Chess Champion MK I](#) from [Schachcomputer.info - Wiki](#) (German)
- [Novag Chess Champion MK 1](#) from [Kurt's Schachcomputer Homepage](#) by [Kurt Kispert](#) (German)
- [NOVAG MK 1](#) from [Museo Computadoras](#) (Spanish)
- [CHESS CHAMPION MK1](#) first German release with [Boris Spassky](#) as advisor, from [My Chess Computers - Prehistory](#)
- [CHESS CHAMPION MK1](#) French release with Karpov on the box, from [My Chess Computers - Prehistory](#)

References

1. [CompuChess](#) from [Schachcomputer.info - Wiki](#)
2. [Scisys and Novag : The Early Years](#) from [Chess Computer UK](#) by [Mike Watters](#)
3. [Chess Champion Mk 1](#) by [Tom Luif](#)
4. [Novag - Chess Champion MK I](#) by [Hein Veldhuis](#), Dutch and German pdf
5. [Horten macht's möglich: Schach-Computer für 250 Mark](#), October 13, 1978 [Computerwoche](#) 42/1978 (German)
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9. [The Adweek copywriting handbook: the ultimate guide to writing powerful ... - Google Books](#) by [Joseph Sugarman](#)
10. [DATA CASH Systems, Inc. v. JS&A Group, Inc., et al.](#)
11. [Scisys and Novag : The Early Years](#) from [Chess Computer UK](#) by [Mike Watters](#)
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13. [Data Cash Systems, Inc. v. JS&A GROUP, INC., 480 F. Supp. 1063 - Dist. Court, ND Illinois 1979 - Google Scholar](#)
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20. [CHESS CHAMPION MK II](#) with Karpov on the box, from [My Chess Computers - Prehistory](#)
21. [Scisys and Novag : The Early Years](#) from [Chess Computer UK](#) by [Mike Watters](#)
22. [Der Fall Jungwirth - Schachweltmeisterschaft 1985 from Wikipedia.de](#) (German)
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24. [Weißer Bauer zieht](#), [Der Spiegel](#) 19/1976, May 03, 1976, (German) pdf
25. [Anatolij Karpow](#), [Der Spiegel](#) 1/1987, December 29, 1986, (German) pdf
26. [Toljas teure Sprüche](#), [Der Spiegel](#) 33/1988, August 15, 1988, (German) pdf
27. [Haftstrafe für Helmut Jungwirth](#), [Hamburger Abendblatt](#), December 01, 1988 (German)
28. [Novag Chess Champion MK 1](#) from [Kurt's Schachcomputer Homepage](#) by [Kurt Kispert](#) (German)

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Computerworld	Sep 9, 2017
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Fairchild F8	Jul 31, 2015
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