CZUBATRONIC 2400 Release Notes

Newest version first. The End User License Agreement and the support contact at the end apply to every version.

Version 2026.2.1

Release date: 10 November 2026, Brandenburg

Console

- The memory budget of 2026.2 now applies only to the engines that play but do not analyse: the ChessGate personality engines, and any engine that does not honour `stop`. Every other engine takes the memory it asks for, as in 2026.1. In 2026.2 the budget of 4 GB held for every engine, so an engine such as Lc0 or a Stockfish derivative set to a hash table above it stopped with `ENGINE ERROR`, and `UCI OPTIONS` did not take a `Hash` value above 4096 (a customer with a 64 GB workstation, 10 November 2026).
- `ANALYZE` is as in 2026.2: the analysis belongs to Capa, Pioneer and Tacticon, and a personality engine in the machine answers `NO ANALYSIS BY THIS ENGINE: IT PLAYS, IT DOES NOT ANALYSE`.
- The diagnostic log says `no cap` for an engine that exited without one, and the cap in MB for a playing engine.

Version 2026.2

Release date: 6 November 2026, Brandenburg

Engines

- Two newer engines by Thorsten Czub come with the program: `CAPA 1.85`, the Windows version of Capa's BASIC line, and `CAPA C V37`, Capa's C engine. Both are in `ENGINE`, and in the `ENGINE MATCH` setup under the `CAPA` key, which opens a menu of the two.
- `CAPA 1.85` is the standard engine, in the place of `CAPA96`, which leaves the package: 1.85 plays the same line from the same book, at the same speed, and it honours `stop`, which CAPA96 did not (an interrupted CAPA96 had to be restarted). A standard engine remembered as CAPA96 from an earlier version means the standard engine again, without a warning. The engine display and the dialogs call the bundled Capas by their names, `CAPA 1.85` and `CAPA C V37`.
- `HISTORY` tells the bundled engines' own stories. The museum is for the emulated computers, but with Capa, Pioneer, Tacticon or Zukertort in the machine the screen shows where that engine comes from and how it plays; `MUSEUM` opens the index of manufacturers as before. Zukertort's story names the DCS Chess shop, where the other 48 ChessGate personalities are sold as engines; as plain text, since CZUBATRONIC opens nothing online.
- Capa 1.85 plays from its opening book, `ENGOPEN.TXT`, which sits beside it in the package. Capa reads the book from the folder it is started in, and the console starts every engine from its own folder.
- Capa C v37 has its opening book built in. Its UCI options (`ENGINE SETTINGS`, `UCI OPTIONS`) set its speed and its strength: `NPS`, positions per second, starts at the 125,000 of Capa on the Colour Maximite 2, and 0 gives it the full speed of the PC; `UCI_LimitStrength` with `UCI_Elo` sets a strength from 800 to 2400.

Console

- The ChessGate personality engines are playing engines. `ANALYZE` now leaves the analysis to Capa, Pioneer or Tacticon and says so when a personality engine, Zukertort among them, is in the machine: `NO ANALYSIS BY THIS ENGINE: IT PLAYS, IT DOES NOT ANALYSE`. The same applies to any engine that does not honour `stop`. Playing, takebacks and `MOVE NOW` are unchanged.

- Every engine runs within a fixed memory budget of 4 GB, or half the PC's memory where that is less. The console reports an engine that exceeds it, and the diagnostic log records the engine's memory peak.
- `MANUAL` in `ENGINE SETTINGS` shows the manual of the engine in use when one lies beside it (`README*.txt` in English, `LIESMICH*.txt` in German), in a window of its own that stays open while you play, with `ENGLISH` and `DEUTSCH` keys. Capa C v37 comes with Thorsten Czub's manual in both languages.
- `ABOUT` has its `CLOSE` key again. In 2026.1 the window opened without it and closed with the window's own close button only.

Version 2026.1

Release date: 24 October 2026, Brandenburg

Package

- The first version sold. CZUBATRONIC 2400 leaves the beta numbering: 2026.1 names the year and the release within it, and updates follow as 2026.2 and so on. The program is that of 0.9.43 Beta, signed and with the End User License Agreement.
- The program, its installer and the engines of our own inside the package are signed with a Certum code-signing certificate issued to Arne Bailliere, and the signatures are timestamped. Windows shows the publisher's name instead of "unknown publisher" at installation, and a build without a valid signature is not published any more. The same program as 0.9.43 otherwise.
- The installer shows, and both packages carry, the CZUBATRONIC 2400 End User License Agreement in place of the beta licence (`CZUBATRONIC_2400_LICENSE.txt`); the ABOUT text and the manuals follow it.
- The `BUY US A COFFEE` key on the DCS Chess logo and the supporter links in `ABOUT`, the installer and the documentation are gone: a sold product asks for no donations.

Console

- `SETUP` works again. From 0.9.37 to 0.9.43 the position setup opened a small empty window and stopped with an error ("'int' object is not callable"): the chess toolkit that replaced python-chess in 0.9.37 provides the castling rights of a position as a value where the old library offered a call, and the setup palette made the call (ticket CZ-20261024-0001, 24 October 2026).

Version 0.9.43 Beta

Release date: 22 October 2026, Brandenburg

Console

- The engine match leaves the board its room. The match panel at the left was meant to be 250 px wide, but its two output boxes widened it to 590 px at normal scaling and 830 px at a tablet's 150%, so on a 1920-pixel-wide tablet the board shrank to 300 px (measured, 22 October 2026). The panel now keeps its width, 36 characters of its output font, and the board gets the rest between it and the right panel. The panel has a grip on its right edge: drag it left and the panel narrows, the board growing from the left as well as from the right; the width is remembered. The keys under the output follow the width: one row while they fit, `CLOSE` below the other two when not, one key per row in the narrowest panel (until now `CLOSE` was cut off and lay over the other keys).
- During an engine match the engine display and `ENGINE OUTPUT` follow the engine of the side to move, the one thinking, four times a second; its last line stays after the game until `CLOSE`. Until now they kept showing the console's own engine, idle during the match: the previous game's line.
- The series score in the match panel reads as a table: one line per engine in the same form, `CAPA96 +0 =1 -2 0.5` under `PIONEERCPP +2 =1 -0 2.5` (wins, draws, losses, points). Until now one line held both engines'

points and then the first engine's tally, and wrapped in the panel into what looked like two different notations. A verdict line names who leads, `PIONEERCPP LEADS 2.5 - 0.5`, and the conclusion dialog of a series shows the same table with `PIONEERCPP WINS THE SERIES 3.5 - 0.5` or `THE SERIES IS DRAWN 2 - 2` (until now it read "CAPA96 +0 =1 -3. Score 0.5 - 3.5.", the score without a name).

Version 0.9.42 Beta

Release date: 19 October 2026, Brandenburg

Console

- The game survives closing the program, as a chess computer keeps its game when switched off. The running game, your side, the mode, the clock with both remaining times and the opponent engine with its level are kept after every change and at close, and the next start puts them back on the display before the first key is pressed, the clocks paused until you move; an engine other than the standard one is started for it, an emulated computer gets the game entered at its first move. `NEW GAME`, or a finished game, leaves nothing to resume. `SAVE` writes the same facts into the PGN as tags (the standard roster, `WhiteClock`/`BlackClock`, and `CZ` tags for the opponent, its level, your side, the mode and the clock setting), and `OPEN` on such a file continues the game as saved instead of showing a replay; any other PGN opens as before (a tester, 19 October 2026: save and load kept the moves only).

Version 0.9.41 Beta

Release date: 19 October 2026, Brandenburg

Console

- The Zukertort engine inside the package is rebuilt on the DCS chess toolkit (Zukertort v4.4, 19 October 2026): no part of the package carries python-chess any more, and the exception declared since 0.9.37 ends. The build's gate now reads an engine's module list and fails on a copy of python-chess inside any engine.
- `NEW GAME`, `OPEN` and `SETUP` end a running search at once. Until now the engine, or an emulated computer, went on thinking about the position of the game just left, and the new game's first search waited behind it: with an MM V at a slow level nothing happened for almost two minutes after `NEW GAME` (a tester, 19 October 2026). Now the search is ended the way `TAKEBACK` ends it since 0.9.40: an emulated computer gets its move key and its move is discarded, a UCI engine gets "stop", one deaf to it is restarted, and a reply held for the human-feeling delay is dropped; the reset for the new game follows at once.

Version 0.9.40 Beta

Release date: 18 October 2026, Brandenburg

Console

- The analysis is one continuous search for every engine: the engine analyses the position on the board, deepening for as long as the position stands, and is moved to the new position when the board changes. Until now an engine that cannot be interrupted (Capa, Tacticon, the personality engines) analysed in three-second slices, each a new search from depth one, so its line never deepened and the display restarted every three seconds (Stefan, 18 October 2026, with the Kortschnoi engine). Such an engine is now restarted for the new position once the board has rested for a moment, so stepping quickly through a replay costs one restart, not one per step. Tacticon is known not to answer "stop" and skips the four-second wait before that restart.
- `TAKEBACK` in a game against the engine: on your own turn it takes back the engine's reply and your move together, so you are on move again; while the engine is thinking, or holding its reply, it takes back your move alone and ends the engine's search at once, so the board is free immediately. Until now one press removed one ply only,

which after the engine's reply left the board on the engine's turn with the engine idle and its side locked, and during the engine's think left the board locked until the engine had delivered a move that was then discarded (Stefan, 18 October 2026). Under ANALYZE and in HUMAN VS HUMAN one ply per press, as before.

Version 0.9.39 Beta

Release date: 17 October 2026, Brandenburg

Console

- ANALYZE makes the board an analysis board in every mode: you enter both sides' moves yourself, take moves back and enter others, and the engine analyses each position; the status reads ANALYSIS: WHITE TO MOVE or ANALYSIS: BLACK TO MOVE, and in a game against the engine STOP ANALYSIS on the engine's turn lets it play on from the position entered. Until now the board refused every click while the analysis searched, in HUMAN VS HUMAN too (the analysis held the lock of the engine's own move and the status read BLACK THINKING), and out of the opening book a search runs until the position changes; against the engine its side was refused even between searches. A game could not be entered, and a move taken back could not be replaced (the first two tickets from the product page, 17 October 2026).
- The On-Screen Keyboard no longer opens by itself. From 0.9.36 it came up on every device whose Windows reports a touch screen, with a keyboard attached or not: whenever CHESS COMPUTERS opened (its filter field takes the focus) and on every tap into a UCI OPTIONS field, and the program cannot close it (the third ticket, 17 October 2026). OPTIONS now has TOUCH KEYBOARD, OFF unless you switch it on: ON opens the keyboard on a tap into a text field, never on a dialog opening; OFF leaves it to the KEYBOARD key, now in CHESS COMPUTERS as well as in UCI OPTIONS.
- An engine match ends on a repetition that has happened, not on one the side to move could claim: until now the match stopped the moment a threefold repetition could be claimed, one move early, so a game was declared drawn before that side had moved (a Botvinnik against Capablanca game of 17 October 2026: the draw came after Botvinnik's Kg1, because Capablanca could have repeated with Rg2+; he played Rc2). The fifty-move rule counts the same way, when the count is reached; mate, stalemate, insufficient material, the 75-move rule and a fivefold repetition end a game as before.

Version 0.9.38 Beta

Release date: 17 October 2026, Brandenburg

Under the hood

- A newer snapshot of the DCS chess toolkit, the library that replaced python-chess in 0.9.37, with the fixes its team made on 16 and 17 October (340 lines changed; the snapshot and its hash in docs/DCS_CHESS_TOOLKIT_SNAPSHOT.md). Nothing changes at the keys; the console's 142 tests pass on the new snapshot as on the old, and the build check again finds no module of python-chess in the program. The one declared exception stands as in 0.9.37: the Zukertort engine, a separate program inside the package, still carries its own copy until the engines are rebuilt.

Version 0.9.37 Beta

Release date: 16 October 2026, Brandenburg

Under the hood

- The rules of chess, the notation and the PGN reading and writing run on the DCS chess toolkit, a library of DCS Analytics' own, in place of the python-chess library used until 0.9.36. Nothing changes at the keys: the same moves, the same displays, the same files. Behind it, the program is free of python-chess and its GPL-3 licence

terms; the built package is checked for that at every build (`tools/check_no_python_chess.py`), and the console's 141 tests pass on the toolkit as they did on the library. The toolkit's snapshot and its hash are recorded in `docs/DCS_CHESS_TOOLKIT_SNAPSHOT.md`. One exception, named here so that nothing is claimed that is not so: the Zukertort engine is a separate program inside the package and still carries its own copy of python-chess; it is rebuilt on the toolkit when the engines follow, and the build check lists it until then.

Version 0.9.36 Beta

Release date: 16 October 2026, Brandenburg

Console

- Switching BOARD VIEW in OPTIONS right after the window was resized no longer trips over the keypad reflow still scheduled for the old layout (seen in the screenshot tool, 14 October 2026; no tester report).
- KEYBOARD in UCI OPTIONS opens Windows' On-Screen Keyboard, for a tablet without a keyboard: the level field of an emulated computer, and the form FORMS drops into it, could not be typed into on a tablet (Arne, 16 October 2026, 0.9.35). On a touch screen a tap into the field opens it by itself, as does a tap into the filter field of CHESS COMPUTERS. Windows' own touch keyboard does not come up for the console's fields (it serves only programs whose fields it recognises), so the console opens the classic On-Screen Keyboard, which takes touch; close it with its own key when you are done.
- The lists of CHESS COMPUTERS, THORSTEN'S CHOICE and SAVED ENGINES have a scrollbar, and a finger drag scrolls them instead of extending the selection; a tap picks the row (Arne, 16 October 2026: on the tablet the list could only be dragged through like a text selection). Shift or Ctrl with a click still picks several, a double-click still starts the computer.

Emulated chess computers (expert)

- TAKEBACK against the Mephisto Milano and its family, and the MM IV and MM V, no longer leaves the machine in its entry mode (the Milano shows `Spieler-Spieler`) without a move (Arne, 16 October 2026, on the tablet). After a takeback the plugin resets the machine, sets its level again and enters the whole game through the machine's edit mode; 0.9.34 pressed the machine's INFO for the live readout a fixed time after `go`, timed on a fast PC, and on the tablet the entry took longer, so the key landed in it. The console now asks the plugin (`isready`) and presses nothing until its answer, which comes once the moves are entered, whatever the machine's speed. Measured on the Milano with the presses forced into the entry: no move in 75 seconds before, the move after.
- The ACI Boris's questions end in a question mark: its ? and its P (the shape of its R without the diagonal, as in BORIS PLAYS BLACK) were shapes the console's segment font had not met, and a shape it has not met shows as # rather than a guess (a tester, 13 October 2026). Both were measured on the machine and are in the font.

Version 0.9.35 Beta

Release date: 13 October 2026, Brandenburg

The ENGINE chooser

- The words at the top of CHESS COMPUTERS say what its keys do since 0.9.32: USE starts the computer chosen without keeping it, IMPORT SELECTED keeps the ones chosen as saved engines (the text still said every computer became a saved engine).

Emulated chess computers (expert)

- The ACI Boris's moves from the first rank read right: its 1 is a shape of its own (the two vertical centre bars with a serif and a base), which the console's segment font now knows, so `G1-F3` no longer shows a question mark for the 1 (a tester, 13 October 2026).

- The ACI Great Game Machines (Steinitz, Morphy, Sargon 2.5, Capablanca, Gruenfeld, Sandy) show their moves from the eighth rank right: their fourteen-segment display draws B with both middle bars, a shape the font lacked, so `B8-C6` read as a question mark, 8, C6 (a tester, 13 October 2026: it looked like a fault of the eighth rank; the 8 was fine, the B was not).

Version 0.9.34 Beta

Release date: 12 October 2026, Brandenburg

Emulated chess computers (expert)

- The Mephisto Milano and its family tell the console their line, evaluation, depth and positions searched while they think, the way the machine shows them to an owner who presses `INFO` during its search: CZUBATRONIC presses `INFO` every three seconds through the search, the pages cycle and update as the search deepens, and the engine display's numbers follow (Arne, 12 October 2026: a request for the Polgar, and Franz Huber's word that the Milano's output can be streamed). Until 0.9.33 the Milano's pages were read after its move only. The family, each machine measured through the sequence on 12 October 2026 and answering with the same pages: the Milano v1.01 and v1.02, the Polgar v1.10 and v1.50, the Polgar 10 MHz v10.0 and v10.1, the Academy (English, the three German sets and the T+T prototype), the RISC 1MB and the Nigel Short (a Milano to the emulator). The Mega IV and the Monte Carlo have interfaces of their own and were not measured.
- When the move comes, the presses still queued are dropped, and three seconds later `INFO` goes twice more, so the machine's evaluation page stays on its display while you think; the clock page is the least interesting of its pages, and the console keeps the times itself (Arne, 12 October 2026). `CL` is never pressed at the move: it makes these machines take their move back and play another (measured). `MOVE NOW` drops the presses before the plugin presses the machine's key. The first press waits for the plugin to enter the moves (a quarter of a second a ply on these machines, measured), so no key of CZUBATRONIC's lands in the entry.

Version 0.9.33 Beta

Release date: 11 October 2026, Brandenburg

Emulated chess computers (expert)

- An emulated computer sometimes failed to start with `INVALID UCI ENGINE`, `Engine did not return uciok`, and started fine the next time (Arne, 11 October 2026, the Mephisto III-S Glasgow). The emulator itself was running and its display showed the machine's boot; its chessengine plugin never answered. The cause is a race in the emulator's own Lua thread code (MAME 0.220, as MessChess is built on it): the plugin's command-reading thread is started and only then its yield flag is cleared, so a `uci` that already waits in the pipe can be read and handed over in between, that hand-over is overwritten, and the thread sleeps for ever. On a busy PC that hit 3 to 7 of 12 starts. CZUBATRONIC now sends `uci` to an emulated computer only after the emulator has printed its first line, when that thread exists for sure: none of 12 starts failed that way on the same busy PC.
- The ACI Boris's words read as words: its R has a shape of its own, which the console's segment font now knows, and a shape that is a letter and a digit at once (O and 0, S and 5) is read as the row reads, so `BORIS AWAITS YOUR MOVE` and `GOOD BUT NOT GREAT` come out as the machine means them instead of `B0#I5 AWAIT5 Y0U# M0VE` (a tester, 11 October 2026). Its moves keep their digits.
- The Mephisto Milano's INFO pages of its first moves are read too: at the default level the evaluation page carries no evaluation and the line page one move, and the console read nothing from them, so the engine display showed only the machine's clocks (a tester, 11 October 2026). The depth and the line now come through; the evaluation appears as soon as the machine shows one.
- `NEW GAME`, `ENGINE SETTINGS` and the clock caption say that an emulated computer plays at its own level and pace, and the depth and time-per-move controls are greyed while one is in use: a tester set 30 seconds and the Milano moved after the ten seconds of its level. The level is set in `UCI OPTIONS`, as before.

- THORSTEN'S CHOICE said the Mephisto III-S Glasgow tells the console its move only; out of its book its four digits rotate through the line it considers, one move a second, its evaluation and its depth, and the LCD row shows that rotation (a tester, 11 October 2026; measured at level 5). The list says display: line, eval, depth now.

Display

- The LCD draws a letter it has no glyph for as its plain form: Maróczy as Maroczy, Hjørring as Hjorring, where it showed a question mark (a tester, 11 October 2026; 208 opening names of the ECO list carry such a letter). The top-bar dash of the Boris's moves is drawn as a dash.

Version 0.9.32 Beta

Release date: 11 October 2026, Brandenburg

The ENGINE chooser

- USE in THORSTEN'S CHOICE and in CHESS COMPUTERS starts a computer without keeping it: a machine tried for a moment no longer lands in SAVED ENGINES (Franz Huber, 11 October 2026). ADD TO SAVED ENGINES, IMPORT SELECTED and SAVE AS ENGINE in UCI OPTIONS keep one, and so does USE with the standard-engine box ticked, since the standard engine is found by its saved name at the next start. A computer that is saved already starts as saved, with its options.
- SAVE AS ENGINE in UCI OPTIONS keeps an emulated computer as one, at its own pace, and proposes the computer's name; it saved it as a plain UCI engine under its batch file's name before, and that engine was then asked to think against a clock.

Engine matches

- The standings of a series stand in the ENGINE MATCH panel from the first game on, under the game count: the points, and once a game is played the first engine's wins, draws and losses (CAPA96 12.5 - 7.5 TACTICON +10 =5 -5), so you see who leads while a game runs, not only between the games (Arne, 11 October 2026). Every finished series also writes one line into results.txt in the matches folder, beside its PGN files.
- BOARD VIEW in OPTIONS (STANDARD or MAXIMIZED) no longer ends a running engine match: the interface is rebuilt around the match, which goes on with its panel, its engines' texts, its names and its clock (Arne, 11 October 2026).

Version 0.9.31 Beta

Release date: 11 October 2026, Brandenburg

Emulated chess computers (expert)

- The digit displays of the emulated computers are read from the machines' own layout files now, the ones the emulator draws them with: which digits form a field, in what order, and where a point or a colon sits between them. Until now the console read every digit in one row by number, which is what made the Fidelity Elite Avant Garde's display nonsense (Franz Huber, 10 October 2026). A table exists for 156 computers of the list, and every one was checked on the running machine: 135 passed, 127 of them by showing their move through the table and 8 by their clock counting through it with nothing but a clock on the digits, and only those are in use. Among them the Elite Avant Garde V-models and the Excel 68000, which now show E7 E5 and their clock instead of nonsense, the four Fidelity Designers, whose clock now carries its colon, the ACI Boris, the Saitek Corona, Stratos and Turbo King, the Novag Constellation Forte, the Fidelity Champion, Voice and Sensory Challengers, and the Mephisto range from the MM I to the Monte Carlo. Twenty-one did not pass and keep their old reading or their blank: the original Elite Avant Garde and the 2100, the Elite A-S and Private Line, the Prestige, the Chess Challenger 1, the Chess-Master Diamond, the Fidelity Phantom, the Mephisto Montreux and RISC 2500, and the Saitek SC80.

Version 0.9.30 Beta

Release date: 11 October 2026, Brandenburg

Emulated chess computers (expert)

- `MOVE NOW` on an emulated computer asks its plugin for the key at once and asks again every six seconds until the computer moves. 0.9.27 to 0.9.29 estimated how long the plugin needs to enter the moves and held the key back that long, two seconds per move: on a game of 25 moves loaded from a PGN that was 73 seconds, while the plugin had set the position up in seconds (Franz Huber, 10 October 2026). The plugin drops a key press it cannot act on and takes the next, so no estimate is needed.
- A new game, an opened game and a set-up position are announced to the engine at once, not with your first move, so an emulated computer's reset runs while you think about your move (Franz Huber, 10 October 2026). Measured on the Saitek Analyst D++ after a game: `NEW GAME`, twenty seconds of thinking, and the first reply came 9 seconds after the move instead of 29. The console does not wait for the reset either; it keeps answering while the plugin works.
- The displays of the Fidelity Elite Avant Garde, Elite A-S, Prestige and Excel 68000 are not read at all any more: the console showed nonsense for them (Franz Huber, 10 October 2026, the Avant Garde V10; the others measured the next day). Their digits are ordinary seven-segment ones, but they sit sideways in two fields with separators between the pairs, and the console read them in a single row without the separators; reading them properly needs the arrangement from each machine's layout, which is a later job. The Fidelity Designer, Excellence and Excel Display read correctly and keep their display. Digits of nine to twelve segments on any other machine stay blank too; seven-, fourteen- and sixteen-segment digits read as before.

Version 0.9.29 Beta

Release date: 8 October 2026, Brandenburg

Emulated chess computers (expert)

- `MOVE NOW` on the first move of a game presses the computer's key sooner. The console holds the key until the plugin has reset the machine and entered the moves, and that hold was a flat 20 seconds for every computer; it is 3 seconds now, and 20 only for the Saitek Renaissance family, whose reset shows the LCD test and NEW GAME for 18 seconds. On later moves the key follows about two seconds after the move is entered, as before (Franz Huber, 8 October 2026: the Milano's `ENT` came ten seconds after `MOVE NOW`). The waits were measured on all thirteen computers of THORSTEN'S CHOICE on 8 October 2026: the Milano, MM V, Glasgow, Novag Expert and R30 take the key even at once; the four Fidelity Designers and the three Conchess lose a key pressed inside their reset or entry and take it at the console's moment; the Analyst D++ needs its 20 seconds. Every one of the thirteen answered within about four seconds of the key.
- `MOVE NOW` pressed in the first moment after your move, while the console is still ending the computer's last readout and sending the position, is kept and acted on as soon as the search runs; until now it was dropped without a word (seen on the Conchess Amsterdam).

Version 0.9.28 Beta

Release date: 8 October 2026, Brandenburg

Emulated chess computers (expert)

- `MOVE NOW` on the Mephisto Milano and the Fidelity Designer 2265 and 2325 presses their key once, not twice: 0.9.27 had the console press the Milano's `ENT` and the Fidelity's `MOVE` itself on top of the plugin's own press, after a survey of the plugin's interface files that missed the base interfaces they load (Franz Huber, 8 October 2026). The survey corrected: every one of CB-Emu's 248 computer interfaces presses a key on `MOVE NOW`, so every

imported computer gets its own move key, and whether a machine takes it as a move-now order is the machine's design.

Version 0.9.27 Beta

Release date: 8 October 2026, Brandenburg

Emulated chess computers (expert)

- An emulated chess computer starts once. Until now the console ran the emulator through a full UCI handshake as a check and then started it again for play, which doubled the start of every MessChess machine (Franz Huber, 8 October 2026).
- `MOVE NOW` on an emulated computer presses the machine's key only once its plugin has entered the moves on the board, then waits for the machine's answer at its own pace. Measured on the Mephisto MM V: a press inside the entry got no answer at all, a press after it was answered in 3 to 5 seconds, longer than the 4 seconds a UCI engine is given before the console restarts it. That restart booted the emulator and re-entered the whole game, after which the machine's move was refused (Franz Huber, 8 October 2026). The restart after a silent `stop` stays for UCI engines that hang (CAPA96). Which computers have such a key is the plugin's knowledge, and every computer of THORSTEN'S CHOICE has one (corrected on 8 October 2026 after Franz Huber's reading of the first version of this note, which had the Milano, the Fidelity 2265 and 2325 and the three Conchess without one).

Version 0.9.26 Beta

Release date: 8 October 2026, Brandenburg

Emulated chess computers (expert)

- The `FORMS` key beside the Level field in `UCI OPTIONS` lists the levels of THORSTEN'S CHOICE again: the Saitek Analyst D++'s `e1` to `e8`, its `f` and `g` controls, and every other computer of the bundle, as it already did for computers started from your own CB-Emu folder. The bundle's batch files name the emulator's folder relative to their own, and the lookup took that marker for a folder name (Arne, 8 October 2026).

Version 0.9.25 Beta

Release date: 7 October 2026, Brandenburg

Emulated chess computers (expert)

- The Saitek Analyst D++ shows its search properly now: the evaluation from the big LCD's right field (`-0.41`, with the decimal point in place), and the search depth and the move it thinks best so far from the machine's own memory, read through the console's plugin, so `SCORE`, `DEPTH` and the line are the machine's own figures while it thinks; its row on the LCD shows the three in the LCD's own order meanwhile, `3:g8f6 -0.43`, as Franz Huber suggested. The rest of the Renaissance family (Renaissance, Maestro, Sparc, Brute Force) reads the right field's evaluation the same way; their depth and best move wait for the same mapping of their own programs' memory, which differs from the Analyst D++'s. What 0.9.22 to 0.9.24 printed from the rest of that LCD line was noise: the left field is coded position by position in the LCD's own way, as Franz Huber explained, and is not read any more; only the right field stands on the LCD row (Franz, 7 October 2026).
- A move made within a few seconds of a Renaissance's first reply of a game waits for the three `SCROLL` presses that select its evaluation display, instead of losing them.

Version 0.9.24 Beta

Release date: 7 October 2026, Brandenburg

The ENGINE chooser

- THORSTEN'S CHOICE and CHESS COMPUTERS stand side by side in the ENGINE chooser, neither under the other: the first is the curated list, the thirteen classics with Thorsten Czub's portrait and the History Module's facts; the second is every computer of your CB-Emu, the MessChess list with its filter and the makers as keys, USE starting the one chosen and IMPORT SELECTED keeping several as saved engines. In 0.9.22 and 0.9.23 the full list hung inside the curated one as IMPORT MESSCHESS, the hierarchy the wrong way round (Arne, 7 October 2026).

Emulated chess computers (expert)

- The Conchess Plymate Victoria's lights stay on while you think: the machine ponders on your time and its evaluation, depth and expected line go on changing, and the display follows them until you move (the console ends the display with 0. just before your move goes in, which costs about a second, or the machine's plugin ends it after ten minutes). Until now the lights were read for nine seconds after the machine's move. The same for the Amsterdam and Glasgow programs' depth and line (Ulf Rathsman's circle, 7 October 2026).
- The Victoria's search depth was sometimes read from an evaluation the pondering machine had just changed its mind about (a "depth 16" that was a small advantage for Black); a depth is taken only from the short phase between two long evaluation phases now.
- A Conchess reply that came from the machine's own opening library leaves its display blank; the console shows BOOK then, as it does for an engine's book move. The emulated Victoria carries Ulf Rathsman's library of 27 variations: 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c5 came from it without a search, 4.Nf3 was the first move it thought about.

Version 0.9.23 Beta

Release date: 7 October 2026, Brandenburg

The ENGINE chooser

- The move times without a game clock no longer run from the moment the program starts: nothing counts before the first move of the game, as with the game clock; an engine playing White is timed from its first think (Arne, 7 October 2026).
- The promotion dialog opens only for a pawn that can really promote there. A pawn on d2 clicked onto your own rook on a1 opened it, since only the rank of the square was asked, not whether the move exists (Arne, 7 October 2026: an old bug).
- The key in the ENGINE chooser reads CHESS COMPUTERS again, the words a reader looks for; THORSTEN'S CHOICE is the headline of the thirteen inside it, and the caption under the key says that every other computer of your CB-Emu is there too. The emulator in use stands on a line of its own in the dialog (YOUR CB-EMU: <the folder you chose>, or that this edition includes it) instead of inside the introduction (Arne, 7 October 2026).

Version 0.9.22 Beta

Release date: 7 October 2026, Brandenburg

The ENGINE chooser

- THORSTEN'S CHOICE replaces CHESS COMPUTERS in the ENGINE chooser: the thirteen emulated classics Thorsten Czub picked, with his portrait, a few lines on what an emulated chess computer is, and for every machine the year, the programmer and what it tells the console about its search (evaluation, depth, line, or its move only), with the History Module's own words on its playing character under the list for the one chosen. IMPORT MESSCHESS stays beside it for every other computer of your CB-Emu, and now has the makers as keys

(MEPHISTO, FIDELITY, NOVAG, ...) beside the filter field, one press narrowing five hundred machines to a brand (Arne, 7 October 2026: as plain to a first-time user as to the one who wrote the emulator). The emulator is not part of CZUBATRONIC: the first press asks for your CB-Emu folder (Franz Huber's free emulator, from fhub.jimdofree.com and his thread on schachcomputer.info) and remembers it; the chooser says whether one is known, and a machine your CB-Emu does not have is marked `not in your CB-Emu` and not started.

- The saved engines are one list: SAVED ENGINES in the ENGINE chooser opens it, with USE, SET AS STANDARD, RENAME, REMOVE and NEW; the second list with its own USE key in the chooser itself is gone (Franz Huber, 5 October 2026: one list too many). The key shows how many are saved.

Emulated chess computers (expert)

- HINT and ANALYZE refuse with an emulated chess computer (NO HINT FROM A CHESS COMPUTER, NO ANALYSIS BY A CHESS COMPUTER): a machine asked for your move would make it its own, the emulator's game and the console's would part company, and the console waited for the machine's whole think with its window frozen (Arne, 7 October 2026: a Mephisto London on a tablet). Switch COACH off with a machine as well; it says nothing where the machine gives no evaluation, and speaks from the machine's own figures where it does (Milano, MM V, Victoria, Renaissance).
- HINT with an engine no longer freezes the window while the engine thinks: the search runs beside it, SYSTEM STATUS reads HINT: THINKING, and a move made meanwhile ends the search and drops the hint.
- The Saitek Renaissance and its modules (Analyst, Maestro, Sparc, Brute Force) show their search on the display: their big LCD has an info line of seven-segment characters which, in its third SCROLL mode, carries the evaluation and the move under consideration while the machine thinks (`-041- E5`: 0.41 against White, a move to e5). The console presses SCROLL three times for the machine after its first move of a game (the emulator's plugin resets the machine when a game begins, and the mode with it), from then on the line stands on the LCD's first row, above the Analyst module's own two rows, and the evaluation feeds SCORE during every search, from the machine's side. The clock the line shows between moves stands there too. The line is read from the LCD's segment lamps, as Franz Huber's plugin reads the machine's move (Franz, 7 October 2026).

Version 0.9.21 Beta

Release date: 5 October 2026, Brandenburg

Engine control

- The engine control is remembered across starts: FIXED DEPTH with its depth, TIME PER MOVE with its time, USE GAME CLOCK with the clock chosen in the TIME menu, and Pioneer's level. Until now every start went back to fixed depth 6 (Arne, 5 October 2026).

Emulated chess computers (expert)

- The FORMS key beside an emulated computer's Level field now lists what CB-Emu itself knows: Franz Huber's `level\Levels.txt` names, for every machine, the values the plugin takes and what each means (an MM V's `le 4` is `1 min/move`, a Designer's `a1` is `60 moves in 5 min`), so the list covers all the machines of a CB-Emu, not only the families CZUBATRONIC knew. Where the file gives a form such as `NORMAL m:ss`, the form is inserted with its placeholder selected, ready to be overtyped. Without the file (an older CB-Emu), the earlier lists serve the families they covered (Franz, 5 October 2026).
- UCI OPTIONS grows with its content, up to what the screen allows, instead of opening at a fixed height that cut the list of a computer with many options (Franz).
- The Conchess Plymate Victoria tells its evaluation, its search depth and the two moves it expects next, read from its LEDs the way its 1990 user's guide describes: after its move the console presses its ? key, reads the six piece lights and the two pairs of squares that light on the board for nine seconds, and shows score, depth and line on the display the way the Milano's are shown; the machine keeps analysing on your time, so the figures deepen while you think. The evaluation display has to be selected on the machine (level mode, the `0.` key once, STOP): the

console does that itself at the first move of every game, and a move played within a few seconds of the machine's first reply waits for those keys. After a move from the machine's book the lights stay dark, there was no search to show. The Plymate Amsterdam and Glasgow programs show depth and line (they have no evaluation display). The appendix to the Victoria's guide came from a reader whose friend wrote these programs; Franz Huber's CB-Emu reads none of this (5 October 2026).

- `IMPORT MESSCHESS` starts a computer straight from the list: a double-click, or `USE`, imports the one chosen and starts it at once, without the detour through `SAVED ENGINES`; `IMPORT SELECTED` still adds several at a time (Franz).

Version 0.9.20 Beta

Release date: 5 October 2026, Brandenburg. (0.9.18 was an internal build; 0.9.19 was online for a short while the same day and is replaced by this build, with corrected documents. Everything below is new since 0.9.17.)

Emulated chess computers (expert)

- The level of an emulated computer whose plugin takes it as text (the Mephisto Polgar, Academy and Milano, the MM IV and MM V, the Glasgow, the Fidelity Designer models, the Conchess Plymate models, the Tasc R30) now has a `FORMS` key beside the field in `UCI OPTIONS` that drops one of the accepted forms into it, and a line under the field that spells the grammar; the text stays editable. Franz Huber's plugin parses the text against that grammar and silently keeps the old level when the text does not fit, which is why an Academy stayed at ten seconds a move whatever was typed (Arne, 2 October 2026). A computer the console does not know keeps a plain field with a general hint. Options are still refused while the computer is thinking; set them between moves.
- `IMPORT MESSCHESS` moved from `SAVED ENGINES` to `CHESS COMPUTERS`, where one expects it (Franz Huber, 3 October 2026), and it no longer asks for the `MessChess.lst` every time: the list is found in the remembered CB-Emu folder by itself, straight in `MessChess` or in `MessChess\Hiarcs`; the file is asked for only when it sits somewhere unusual.
- `UCI OPTIONS` is wider: a range such as `0 .. 10000` beside a number was cut off (Franz).
- The readout of a chess computer with an alphanumeric display (fourteen or sixteen segments per character, the ACI Boris among them) is read correctly on the LCD; until now such a display came out as hieroglyphs because its patterns were read as seven-segment digits. The kind of display is recognised from the emulator's own output, so every machine with such a display is covered at once, and a shape that is a letter and a digit at the same time (S and 5, O and 0) is read the way the row reads: `D7-D5` as a move, `BORIS` as a word.

Version 0.9.17 Beta

Release date: 1 October 2026, Brandenburg

Coach

- The coach never names a move the board does not allow. Its "better" move is the reply the engine expected in its own line, and that line must now be the engine's own: its first move the move the engine actually played, its second a legal reply in the position. Zukertort, like every personality engine, sometimes plays a move other than the first move of its best line (the style decides between near-equal moves); the coach then took the reply from a line that was never played and, on 1 October 2026, printed `BETTER: A1F1`, a rook onto its own rook, and lit its way. After such a move the coach now stays silent for that turn and the diagnostic log says why.

Emulated chess computers (expert)

- `TAKEBACK` against an emulated computer works again. Franz Huber's plugin keys in only the last move of the position it is sent and takes the rest for entered, so after a takeback the machine was given a move onto a position it no longer had, and it never answered (Arne, 2026-10-01, Novag Super Constellation: the computer did not play after a takeback). CZUBATRONIC now notices that the game's moves no longer extend what the computer was

given, resets it (`ucinewgame`, which the plugin answers with a reset of the machine) and has the whole game entered again in the plugin's edit mode, the level set again; the display's `RAW LOG` says so. A computer whose plugin interface has no edit mode answers `bestmove ----`; CZUBATRONIC then says `NO MOVE: THIS COMPUTER CANNOT TAKE MOVES BACK, START A NEW GAME` instead of waiting an hour for a move.

- A Fidelity's move time on the LCD read `000q` when its last digit was a nine (Franz Huber, 2026-10-01): the Fidelity lights its nine without the tail (segments a, b, c, f, g), which the seven-segment table took for a lowercase q. It is a nine.
- `IMPORT MESSCHESS` finds the CB-Emu folder from wherever the `MessChess.lst` sits inside it: in `MessChess\Hiarcs` as MAKEALL leaves it, straight in `MessChess`, or in any other folder of it. Until now the folder two levels above the list was taken for CB-Emu, so a list straight in `MessChess` showed the MessNew machines only (Franz Huber, 2026-10-01).

The right-hand panel

- The grip between the engine display and `MOVE HISTORY` is back between them: in 0.9.16 it had moved under the move history's stepper keys with the panel's new order (Franz Huber, 2026-10-01).
- The move list's scrollbar no longer fails on a list squeezed to a line or two: its thumb's corner radius was half its width, more than the thumb was tall, and every redraw logged a traceback (29 in one probe of a 640 px window).

Version 0.9.16 Beta

Release date: 1 October 2026, Brandenburg

The right-hand panel

- `RESET LAYOUT`, a new button behind `OPTIONS` beside `SAVED ENGINES`: the panel width, the text size of the two lists, the height of the engine display and the window go back to the defaults of the current board view, a known-good state whatever was dragged or pressed (Arne, 2026-10-01: once a tablet's panel had been dragged and its lists zoomed there was no way back).
- At start, a remembered layout that does not fit the window (a panel dragged wide or a display dragged tall on a larger screen, a text offset) goes back to the defaults by itself, once, and the diagnostic log says so: the display's keys must never be out of reach.
- + and – next to `MOVE HISTORY` change the text size of the two lists only. The engine display's box has a height of its own now, in pixels, set by its grip and remembered as such, so the dot-matrix LCD no longer grows or shrinks with the move list's text (Arne, 2026-10-01: the zoom of the move list changed the LCD). A height remembered by an earlier version in lines is taken over once, at the base text size.
- A short panel (a 10-inch tablet, a small window) gives way in a fixed order: the clock shrinks first, further than before, then the engine display comes down to its floor of three LCD rows, then the move list to two lines and one, and only then the text size. The display and its six keys are never cut: they are laid out before the move history, which is what gives way, and its stepper keys stay even when its list is a single line (in 0.9.15 the display's keys vanished at one window size and the display itself at another, the move list being the part that pack reserved first).
- The grips keep their wishes: a remembered display height or panel width the panel cannot hold is reduced for the time being instead of clipping the panel, and comes back in a larger window.

Version 0.9.15 Beta

Release date: 30 September 2026, Brandenburg

Emulated chess computers (expert)

- An emulated computer gets ninety seconds for its UCI handshake instead of twenty: the Saitek Analyst D++ boots in twenty, the others in four to ten, and all of them take longer while the machine is busy, so a Fidelity could fail with `INVALID UCI ENGINE` although nothing was wrong with it (Arne, 2026-09-29). Batch-started engines and own-pace entries get the longer handshake wherever the app starts or checks one: at start, in the `ENGINE` chooser, in `SAVED ENGINES`.
- A Chess Computers edition runs its thirteen from its own bundle even when the settings hold an older entry for one of them, a batch file into the user's CB-Emu that an earlier standard build wrote, or another folder: the entry is pointed at the bundle at start and when the computer is chosen, its level and options kept (Arne, 2026-09-29: the installed edition started the Fidelity 2000 from his CB-Emu and the MM V from the source tree through such entries).
- An emulated computer ends when its engine is closed. The emulator runs on after the batch shell that started it, and closing an engine, switching to another, or a failed handshake only ended the shell, so every emulated computer the app had ever closed kept running at full speed in the background (Arne's machine held one from the day before with seven hours of CPU). The adapter now keeps a batch-started engine in a Windows job that ends everything in it: `quit` is sent to the emulator itself, its exit is awaited, and the job takes the rest.
- Loading an engine no longer freezes the console: a small `STARTING ENGINE` window names the engine and says what is happening, with a row of dots moving, while the handshake and the start run in the background; the engine takes over when it is ready. An emulated computer's boot of up to forty seconds used to stop the whole application meanwhile (Arne, 2026-09-29).
- The Mephisto MM V shows its evaluation live while it thinks. Franz Huber fixed his chessengine plugin for the MM IV, MM V and B&P families (forum, 2026-09-30): it took the digits of an INFO page for the machine's move and reported it, which is why `INFO` during the search ended the search on the MM V. The Chess Computers edition carries the fixed interfaces (`mm4.lua`, `bup.lua`; users of their own CB-Emu take them from Franz's post). With that, CZUBATRONIC presses `INFO` and then `1` at the start of an MM V's search, once the emulator's plugin has entered the moves on the board (two seconds per move, by the wall clock: the plugin runs the machine unthrottled while it enters them), and the machine's own evaluation, `0.09` on its four digits, stands on the LCD's first row and feeds the engine display's `SCORE` as the search goes on. The MM IV and its Rebel and TurboKit variants, imported from a CB-Emu, get the same keys.

The board on a tablet

- An engine executable gets forty-five seconds for its UCI handshake instead of twenty: Zukertort loads its personality data before it answers, and on a cheap tablet's processor that took longer than twenty seconds, so the engine was refused as no UCI engine (Arne, 2026-09-30). The emulated computers keep their ninety.
- `BOARD VIEW` in `OPTIONS`: `MAXIMIZED` puts the board at the left, flush with the top of the console and as large as the window's height allows; the fascia strip with the product name moves to the top of the right-hand panel in its own material and lettering, the `SYSTEM STATUS` window goes (the LCD's header rows carry whose move it is), and the deck becomes a keypad plate at the foot of the panel, a plain grid of five keys to a row with the DCS Chess logo in its corner, so nothing is lost on a small screen; the key captions are a size larger there (Arne, 2026-09-30: a 10.1" tablet used as a pure chess computer needs the board as large as it gets, and the captions were too small; readers on Android tablets sent a mock-up). The grip between the board and the panel still works, and the width it sets is remembered for this view on its own. `STANDARD` is the console as before; the choice is remembered and the interface rebuilt in place, like a scheme change.
- The captions printed above the keys are clear white now instead of ivory, in every view (Arne, 2026-09-30: the ivory did not read well as key text), and the first key of the deck says `NEW GAME`.
- The board's LEDs are bigger and brighter on the same spots, a tenth of the square with a soft glow, the coach's green ones most of all (Arne, 2026-09-30: on a tablet the small dots did not show, the green ones not at all), and the coach's better move lights its whole way: a long bishop, rook or queen move lights the green LEDs of every square from the first to the last, so the line of dots shows where the piece would go, a help since that move is not the one on the board. A played move and the hint keep to their two squares (Arne: for the normal game the start and the end are enough). `DIM` in `BOARD LEDS` keeps them quiet.

The chess computer museum

- A HISTORY key on the deck, in the engine cluster beside BOOK: press it and the machine tells the story of the computer living inside it (Arne, 2026-09-30). A reading screen appears at the left of the board, one more instrument of the console rather than a window over it (Arne: no overlays on the chess computer): a light yellowish LCD glass in a dark bezel with the article in the console's font, and its own keys under it. The board keeps its place, the screen takes the free margin beside it; HISTORY again or CLOSE puts it away. It opens on the article of the emulated computer in the machine: name and maker, year, programmers, hardware, program family, its story, its playing character, a "did you know", and the emulated variants of the family with the one in use marked. MAKER opens the manufacturer's history and its other computers, any of them a click away on the glass; MUSEUM the index of all manufacturers; SOURCES the research behind an article; BACK and CURRENT find the way back; ▲ and ▼ scroll a page. Reading about another computer changes nothing in the machine. The content is the CZUBATRONIC History Module's researched database in its audited form (v10, 2026-09-30: 66 cards researched again from model-specific sources, programmers and hardware filled in where the first pass had left them open, and Unknown kept only where the sources leave it so; 273 computer families, 496 emulator variants, 17 manufacturers), shipped with the program as data (retro_chess_app/data/history), read on the first press, shown as researched and never added to; it works offline. The computer is found by its emulator id, the batch file's name, never by its display name; an unknown id gives a plain notice and a line in the diagnostic log, and a missing or broken database leaves the console playing as before.

Version 0.9.14 Beta

Release date: 27 September 2026, Brandenburg

Emulated chess computers (expert)

- Every batch file that starts MessChess now carries -nowc (Franz Huber, 2026-09-27): without it the emulator saved the options of our batch files, video none among them, into the machine's ini file of the user's own CB-Emu at exit, and that machine's window stayed away in Arena and in MessChess itself afterwards, our plugin's name stuck too. 0.9.13's batch files did this; the ini files they rewrote are put back the first time 0.9.14 starts with that CB-Emu folder, and nothing of ours is saved into a CB-Emu again.
- MessNew machines (Franz Huber's newer MAME build, the entries marked new in MessChess.lst) get CZUBATRONIC's display-tap plugin too: it speaks both Lua interfaces now. Franz asked why the ch3008.bat had none.
- The IMPORT MESSCHESS list is sorted by the computers' full names (Franz).
- No clock runs before White's first move, as in the club and in most programs: the first move of the game costs nothing, the clocks start with it (a reader).
- The Mephisto Milano tells its search information. After its move, CZUBATRONIC's plugin presses the machine's INFO key three times on the app's request (a command file the plugin polls, the presses timed in the machine's own frames), and the pages that come by on its LCD, the line it expects, its evaluation with the depth, the positions it searched, are read into the engine display's numbers and the TABLE row: +0.12 at depth 5 with 1...e5 2.e4 Nf6 3.Nf3 and 14k positions, about twelve seconds after the move, while you think about yours. Pressing INFO during the search ends the search on the MM V, so the pages are read after the move. This exists for the Milano; every other machine shows its display and nothing more.

Version 0.9.13 Beta

Release date: 27 September 2026, Brandenburg

Saved engines (expert)

- An engine can be saved with its UCI options under a name of your own, the way Arena and Shredder keep engines: MM5 [level3], MM5 [level6], Schach III [hash, 64plies], as many as you like from one file.

Set the options in ENGINE SETTINGS, UCI OPTIONS, and press SAVE AS ENGINE; loading a saved engine starts its file, sends its options and shows its name on the display, in the notation and in the PGN. SAVED ENGINES, behind OPTIONS and in the ENGINE chooser, lists them: NEW takes an engine file, USE starts one, RENAME, REMOVE, SET AS STANDARD remembers one for the next start. In ENGINE MATCH SETUP a SAVED key beside BROWSE picks a saved engine for either side, so a series can be Tacticon against MM5 at level 3. While a saved engine runs, APPLY in UCI OPTIONS saves the values to it. The everyday keys are unchanged; nothing of this is needed for the bundled engines.

- CHESS COMPUTERS in the ENGINE chooser: thirteen emulated classics by name (Mephisto III-S Glasgow, MM V, Milano; Novag Constellation Expert; Saitek Analyst D++; Fidelity Designer 2000, 2100, 2265 and 2325 Display; Conchess Plymate Victoria, Amsterdam and Glasgow; Tasc R30), run in the user's CB-Emu (MessChess), whose folder is asked for once. A computer plays at its own level and pace (`go infinite`, MOVE NOW stops it) and shows only its move; a move that took time without any search output is no longer taken for a book move. ADD TO SAVED ENGINES keeps computers for matches and for a level of their own.
- IMPORT MESSCHESS in SAVED ENGINES takes the emulated chess computers of a MessChess (CB-Emu) folder: pick its `MessChess.lst`, choose the machines by name, and each becomes a saved engine with a batch file of its own in CZUBATRONIC's settings folder, carrying the emulator's full path (a batch file that relies on the current directory fails on a Windows where cmd is told not to search it). The engine file dialogs list `.bat` and `.cmd` files beside `.exe`.
- The Chess Computers edition, a test build for the readers who asked and not the product page's download: `installer\build_release.ps1 -ChessComputers` packages Franz Huber's MessChess trimmed to the thirteen computers (the emulator, its chessengine plugin, the ROM sets, and one batch file per computer in a form that runs from any folder, made by `tools\make_chess_computer_bundle.py` from a CB-Emu installation) as `_internal\cb_emu`, and `--smoke-test` starts the MM V from it. In that edition CHESS COMPUTERS asks for nothing: pick a computer and it plays. The standard build carries none of it.
- An emulated computer runs inside CZUBATRONIC, with no window of the emulator's: every batch file starts MessChess with `-video none -sound none -output console` (files already in the settings folder are brought up to date at start), and the machine's own display is read from the emulator's output lines and shown on the LCD's first row, in view whatever the rows below it show, as the machine shows it: the MM V's PLAY at power-on, E2E4 as your move goes in, E7E5 as it answers, the Glasgow's running dash while it thinks (Arne, 2026-09-27: the computer's output belongs on CZUBATRONIC's display, "we already made a user interface").
- The character LCDs too: CZUBATRONIC ships a small MAME plugin of its own (`retro_chess_app/data/mame_plugin/czubatronic`, loaded beside the chessengine plugin) that reports the display RAM of the machine's HD44780 controller, so the Mephisto Milano's two rows of sixteen appear on the LCD as the machine writes them, its move under consideration, the opening's name in German, its clocks; the Saitek Analyst's likewise. The bundle carries the plugin in the emulator's plugins folder; for a user's own CB-Emu the batch file names the app's plugin folder beside the emulator's, and nothing in the CB-Emu folder changes. The Tasc R30's graphic LCD holds pixels, not characters, and stays without. Below a computer's display the remaining rows always rotate through CZUBATRONIC's own lines, whatever ROTATE says (Arne: the machine's output first, the rest still coming by). The other two views show the machine's display in plain characters: TABLE, which has no depths to show for these computers, logs every text the display held since power-on with the time it appeared (`0:04 E2E4`, `0:09 E7E5`, the Milano's two rows joined with a bar), and RAW LOG carries the decoded display lines between the protocol lines, each with its time.

From the readers

- A click on a move in the list no longer leaves a blinking caret there.
- The replay status says how to leave: CONTINUE TO PLAY ON.
- Statuses too wide for the SYSTEM STATUS window go on two lines, broken at a space; the longest ones are shorter (COACH ON, WHITE TO MOVE, YOU PLAY WHITE).
- The setup palette is laid out like a cockpit: titled sections PIECES, POSITION, SIDES and ENGINE, the labels in a column at the left and the controls aligned at the right, keys of one height for a touchscreen, START PLAYING THIS POSITION at the bottom right. On a small screen or a tablet it is compact, smaller pieces and tighter keys,

and if even that is taller than the screen the content scrolls with the console's bar. The twelve piece buttons are two rows of the pieces themselves, the set on the board, white above black; ERASE PIECE, CLEAR BOARD and START POSITION sit under them. The chosen piece is named in SYSTEM STATUS.

- NEW GAME clears the engine display: the previous game's numbers no longer rotate on it.
- The – and + keys of a time per move step by a second (tenths can still be typed), and typing or stepping a depth or a time selects that control, as choosing a clock selects the clock.

Version 0.9.12 Beta

Release date: 26 September 2026, Brandenburg

Keys

- The captions printed above the keys, on the deck, under the engine display and under the move list, are drawn as smooth, antialiased text now instead of Tk's pixelated label text (a reader found the old captions unworthy of a professional program), and in a printed face: Bahnschrift, Windows' DIN, with a little letter spacing, like the legends on a chess computer's keypad. Same size, same cream; the keys keep their pitch.

Display

- Figurine notation in the move list: the piece letters are chess glyphs (from Segoe UI Symbol, a Windows font), NOTATION in OPTIONS switches between FIGURINES and LETTERS, remembered. PGN files keep letters either way. The list's columns are tab stops now, so they line up whatever the glyphs' width.
- The SYSTEM STATUS window's caption is printed at the deck captions' size, and its status text a point larger, in a window of the same size (the caption was the smallest text of the program).

Coach

- COACH, a fourth key with an LED under the engine display: while it is on, a move of yours that costs 1.7 pawns or more against the move the engine expected of you is called out on the display (COACH: BAD MOVE, Qh4 LOSES 2.3, BETTER: Nf3); SYSTEM STATUS asks TAKE IT BACK? YES / NO, the COACH key's LED flashes green and the better move flashes as green dots on the board while the question stands, and the engine holds its reply until you answer. No pop-up: the console speaks through its displays and keys.
- YES and NO: two keys under the engine display, the way the old computers answered a question on their display; the coach's question is the first. TAKEBACK and MOVE NOW answer the coach's question the same way. Six keys share the row now (DISPLAY, ROTATE, LIGHT, COACH, YES, NO); the key that lights the LCD reads LIGHT instead of BACKLIGHT. The verdict comes from the engine's own search, so after a book move the coach stays silent. Remembered between starts.

Hints

- HINT shows its move on the board: the move indicator's LEDs (or squares) flash on the from and to squares for a few seconds, and SYSTEM STATUS reads HINT: Nf3, instead of a text panel above the move list.

Analysis

- ANALYZE is continuous analysis of whatever position is on the board: step through the move list with the replay keys, make a move or take one back, and the engine's line on the display follows the position (until now it searched the game's position once, which a replay left behind). The key reads STOP ANALYSIS while it runs. While the analysis runs the engine does not play; HINT shows the first move of its line, and MOVE NOW ends the analysis and lets the engine play.

Engine matches

- PAUSE MATCH holds a match once the move in progress is played (or between the games of a series) and becomes CONTINUE MATCH; no clock time is charged while it waits. STOP MATCH ends the match, and CLOSE appears only when nothing runs, so the two no longer do the same thing. A reader running matches asked for both.
- When a match is over, stopped or finished, the mode from before it comes back: a game against the engine can be continued without switching from Human vs Human first. The engine does not move on its own after a match; your move, or MOVE NOW, starts it.
- During a match, and after it for as long as its game is on the board with the match panel open, the engine display and the status window name the two engines of the match (PIONEERCPP VS TACTICON) instead of the program's own engine; CLOSE hands the board back to it.

Positions

- Positions load from FEN and EPD files and from the clipboard. OPEN accepts .fen and .epd files as well as .pgn: the first position in the file becomes the start position of a new game. In the setup palette, LOAD FEN / EPD FILE and a FEN field (paste or type a position and press SET; PASTE takes the clipboard's FEN straight to the board, COPY puts the board's FEN on the clipboard) put a position on the setup board, where it can still be changed before START PLAYING THIS POSITION. Four CASTLING switches show and set the castling rights: a FEN brings its own, a hand-built position has none until switched on. The palette is sized from its content now, so it fits at any display scaling. A FEN with fewer than six fields is completed; an EPD's operations (bm, id and the like) are ignored.

Version 0.9.11 Beta

Release date: 24 September 2026, Brandenburg

Engines

- ucinewgame is sent to the engine once per game: before the first search after a new game, an opened PGN, a set-up position, an engine change or the next game of a series, followed by isready as the protocol asks. Until 0.9.10 it went before every search, so an engine that keeps a game of its own, such as the emulated dedicated computers run through CB-Emu or MessChess, restarted its game at every move and replayed the whole move list in edit mode; a reader running those engines reported it. A takeback stays within the game: the engine simply receives the shorter move list. Ordinary UCI engines never showed the difference, but they too now see one game instead of a new one at every move.

Version 0.9.10 Beta

Release date: 24 September 2026, Brandenburg

Fixes

- The three keys under the engine display, VIEW, ROTATE and BACKLIGHT, are back. The console scrollbar of 0.9.9 asked for a height of its own, seven centimetres as every Tk canvas does, and that request became the move list's: the list could not shrink below it, so on most windows the keys were pushed out of the panel, the more so with a larger text or after a drag of the grip.
- In the TABLE view of the engine output a long main line wraps under the MAIN LINE column only while that leaves room for a few moves. With a large text in a narrow panel the continuation now goes under the depth column instead of becoming a tower of fragments that read as blank rows.

Version 0.9.9 Beta

Release date: 24 September 2026, Brandenburg

Control deck

- The deck's keys are the controls of a classic chess computer: a small black rounded key of hard, shining plastic with its caption printed above it in cream, the same key as under the display, without the LED. Every key has the same width, so the keys sit on one pitch; a long caption goes on two lines above its key (`ENGINE` / `SETTINGS`, `PLAY FROM` / `HERE`). One row on a normal window, two at most on a small one: `NEW OPEN SAVE SETUP`, `TAKEBACK HINT MOVE NOW RESIGN FLIP`, `ANALYZE PLAY FROM HERE`, `ENGINE ENGINE SETTINGS MATCH BOOK`, `OPTIONS`; one row down to a window 960 pixels wide (the engine match key reads `MATCH` now, the dialog is still `ENGINE MATCH`). `SCHEME`, `PIECES`, `INDICATOR`, `MODE` and `ABOUT` have left the deck for the `OPTIONS` key. The DCS Chess logo stays beside the deck at the right. The board and the display get the room. Its dialog holds the scheme, the piece set, the move indicator (`LED` or `SQUARE`), the mode (Human vs Engine or Human vs Human), the beep volume and the `ABOUT` button. Readers of the forums asked for this: settings nobody changes during play took a row of their own.
- The beep's volume is adjustable there: `OFF`, `QUIET`, `NORMAL` or `LOUD`; a sample plays when you change it. The default is a little quieter than 0.9.8's.
- The number fields in `NEW GAME`, `ENGINE SETTINGS`, `POSITION SETUP`, the custom game clock and `UCI OPTIONS` have a big – and + key either side of the value instead of a spin box's tiny arrows, so they work on a touchscreen; the value can still be typed.
- Under the move list four keys like a CD player's, ■■ ■ ■ ■■, the same classic chess computer keys as the deck's and no wider than the keys themselves, in place of `PREV` and `NEXT`: to the start of the game, one move back, one forward, to the end. A finished game can be reviewed with them straight away; a game in progress is left alone.

Board

- The move indicator's LEDs are small dots of the brightest red on the grid crossings around the from and to squares, one per crossing like a modern electronic board's and with no glow, so they no longer lie over a knight; `BOARD LEDS` in `OPTIONS` sets them `BRIGHT` or `DIM`.
- The scrollbars are the console's own: a dark recessed channel with a slider of hard black plastic, the same material as the keys, in the move list, the engine output's `TABLE` and `RAW LOG` views, the `UCI OPTIONS`, `ABOUT` and interview windows. It drags, a click in the channel moves a page, and the mouse wheel works as before. The grey Windows bar was the last thing that broke the illusion of hardware.
- Resting the pointer on the DCS Chess logo (or tapping it) greys the logo out and brings out a key in the middle of it, `BUY US A COFFEE`, which opens the Buy Me a Coffee page; the `ABOUT` dialog's `SUPPORT DCS CHESS` opens the same page.
- Every dialog window has the console's dark title bar now, and the drop-down selectors in the dialogs (the game clock, Pioneer's level, an engine's choices) are in the console's colours instead of Tk's grey.

Engine matches

- A match can be a series: `GAMES` in `ENGINE MATCH SETUP`, up to 1000. The colours alternate each game, the `ENGINE MATCH` panel shows the game count and the score, every game is appended as PGN to one file in the `matches` folder under CZUBATRONIC's settings folder, and the series gets a line in `results.txt` there; a dialog sums it up at the end. `STOP MATCH` ends the series with what has been played.
- The fourth bundled engine can be chosen in the match dialog: the `BROWSE` button had been drawn over `ZUKERTORT`. The number fields there have the big – and + keys too.

Remembered between starts

- The window's size, position and maximised state are restored at the next start (fitted to the screen if it changed), so the saved panel split and text size mean something again. The scheme, the piece set, the move indicator and the beep level are remembered too.

Display

- The engine display never has fewer than three rows, whatever the panel's height and text size: its box keeps room for three rows at a readable dot size (64 px), and on a lower box the dots shrink before a row is lost. The + key next to `MOVE HISTORY` enlarges the text again; a saved wish for fewer display lines than that minimum had left it doing nothing. And a larger text no longer widens the right-hand panel: the two text boxes used to ask for 36 characters' width, which grew with the font and pushed the panel out over the board; they take the panel's width now.

Version 0.9.8 Beta

Release date: 23 September 2026, Brandenburg

Sound

- The beep sounds now. In 0.9.7 it never did, on any machine: the sound call refused to play from memory without waiting, and the program took that as "no sound device". The tone is played from a background thread now, a little longer (90 ms) and louder; a move gives one, check two.

Engines

- A fourth bundled engine, `ZUKERTORT`: one of playchessgate.com's historical personality engines, the play of Johannes Zukertort recreated from his games on the Pioneer engine technology. Choose it with `ENGINE`, or as a side in `ENGINE MATCH`. Like CAPA96 and Tacticon it plays at the explicit depth or time per move from `ENGINE SETTINGS`; its own `Skill Level` (800 to 3000) and `Style Weight` options are set in `UCI OPTIONS`.

Version 0.9.7 Beta

Release date: 23 September 2026, Brandenburg

Engine output

- `ENGINE OUTPUT` has three views, cycled with the `VIEW` key under the box: three keys in the style of the classic chess computers, each a red LED, a printed label and a long thin key. `VIEW`'s label names the current view; the choice is remembered. `DISPLAY`, the new default, is a dot-matrix LCD in the manner of the classic chess computers: at least 20 columns of 5x7 dots on a grey-green pane, the dots growing with the panel, the rows with the box (drag the grip), and more columns when the box is wide but low. It shows the latest depth's numbers (score, depth/selective depth, time; nodes and speed), then the main line wrapped to the module, page by page, rotating every two seconds and carrying on after the search; a box tall enough for everything shows it all at once. `TABLE` is the Arena-style line per depth of 0.9.5, now with every depth kept, long main lines wrapped under the `MAIN LINE` column and a scrollbar like the move list's; `RAW LOG` the engine's own text, scrolling too.
- The chess clock is one sheet of smoked glass now: the `CHESS CLOCK` title, both displays with `WHITE` and `BLACK` and the control line are printed on one pane of black glass behind one thin metal bezel with rounded corners; the panel's own frame around it is gone. The LCD sits behind the same kind of window. The recess throws its shadow in from the top, the polished edge of the glass catches the light and a soft reflection lies across the upper part: displays behind heavy glass, sunk into the console, instead of flat on the panel.
- The `ENGINE` box and `COMPUTER STATUS` are gone: they repeated what the clock's control line, the status bezel and the display already said. The display's top rows now carry the engine and its side (`CAPA96 · BLACK READY`), whose move and the opening; the search readout follows, fixed under them when the module is tall enough and page by page when it is not. Static, the live search comes first, then whose move, the engine and the opening.
- A panel width dragged in a maximised window no longer squeezes the board in a smaller one: the width in use is the saved preference clamped to what the window leaves for the board, re-applied on every resize. The fonts and

the clock grow at 60% of the panel's growth, capped by the panel's height, and the LCD's dots have a maximum size; a wide box gets a wider module instead.

- The upper fascia is a nameplate strip now: a hair lighter towards its upper surface, darker towards the bottom, a fine highlight along the upper edge and a darker lower edge that gives it thickness; the SYSTEM STATUS window is a small piece of smoked glass with a tiny LED behind it. The text-size messages no longer appear there.
- The right-hand panel frames hardware, not sections: the thin rules under ENGINE OUTPUT and MOVE HISTORY, the grip's line and the panel's own border are gone; the clock, the LCD, the LEDs and the keys give the panel its structure.
- Important: the two grips are still there but no longer visible. To make the right-hand panel wider or narrower, move the pointer slowly across the gap between the board and the panel until it becomes a horizontal double arrow, then drag. To share the space between the engine output and the move list, move the pointer across the gap between the display's keys and MOVE HISTORY until it becomes a vertical double arrow, then drag up or down. The manuals have a section on this, "Finding the grips".
- The board's move LEDs are the same LEDs as on the display's keys: a glow, the lens with its dark rim, a shine.
- One chassis: the brown panel around the board is gone, the board is mounted straight into the dark chassis with a hairline of depth, and the clock, the display and the move history sit on that same chassis, no bay of their own. The bottom controls sit on a lower control fascia in the header's material made darker: a fine cool highlight along its upper edge, the shadow of the edge below it, the rest flat and quiet. No frames around sections, only around the physical parts.
- A new piece set, 2D GLOSSY, in the PIECES menu: glossy Staunton pieces with a dark outline, cut from a rendered sheet, scaled by their king like the current set and standing on one baseline; the bishops' heads retouched where the render had drawn a groove from the ball down to the cross. It is the set the program starts with; 2D CURRENT and the others stay in the menu.
- The control panel's keys sit in clusters with a wider gap between them, so a key is found by its group rather than by reading every legend: NEW OPEN SAVE SETUP, then TAKEBACK HINT MOVE NOW RESIGN FLIP, then ANALYZE PLAY FROM HERE PREV NEXT on the first row; the engine keys, the SCHEME, PIECES, INDICATOR and MODE selectors and ABOUT on the second. The clusters follow one another across as few rows as the window's width allows, a cluster moving to the next row whole: two rows in full screen, three in a window of 1300 or 1400 pixels. PREV and NEXT have left the deck for the move list (below). The DCS Chess logo is a little larger now and sits at the right, centred on the rows beside it, with room around it; where the window is narrow, the upper rows run the full width above it.
- The control panel's buttons are keys too: raised caps in the console's colour with the legend printed on them, a lit top edge, a visible front and a shadow on the panel; they lighten under the pointer and sink while pressed.
- The move list is written on a sheet of its own: a surface a shade lighter than the chassis inside a dark recess line, with margins for the text, its colour mixed from each scheme's own so it fits every scheme. Under it sit PREV and NEXT, two small keys with an arrow beside each legend; stepping through a game now shows each replayed move on the board's move indicator, LED or square, which stayed dark in replay before.
- The splash screen carries the DCS Chess logo, big, in its bottom-left corner under the prompt; the living board sits a little lower, clear of the line above the title, brighter and with a soft light across it from the upper left. Closing the program shows a matching card for two seconds: the shutdown sequence (engine stopped, settings kept, goodbye) and the logo; any key or click ends it at once.
- The beep is the console's own: a short plain tone for a move and two for check, instead of the Windows system sound.
- The message boxes are the console's own: a dark panel in the scheme's colours inside a thin bronze rim, a small LED (green for a message, amber for a warning or a question, red for an error) and the title in the section-title gold, the message in cream, and keys like the control deck's. They open centred on the window, stay on top of it and block it until answered; Enter answers with the default key, Escape or the close button with the cancel answer. Until now these were the bright standard Windows boxes.

- Two more keys beside it, their LEDs lit while on: ROTATE (off, the readout is static: the numbers on the first line and the main line below, cut where the box ends) and BACKLIGHT. Backlit, the LCD takes the scheme's colour: amber on WALNUT, green on GREEN, white dots on bright blue on BLUE and GRAPHITE (red is no colour for an LCD). Both are remembered.

Version 0.9.6 Beta

Release date: 22 September 2026

Display

- The chess clock is a fluorescent display now: every lit segment throws a soft halo onto the glass, the phosphor has a hot centre, and the unlit segments stay as dark ghosts. Until now the digits were flat rectangles in one colour. The colour follows the scheme: amber on WALNUT, red on GRAPHITE, green on GREEN and BLUE.
- The thin vertical line between the board and the right-hand panel is gone. The grip is still there (the pointer becomes a double arrow on it); it just draws nothing.

Engine

- A game clock means the engine plays to the clock. Choosing any game clock switches the engine control to USE GAME CLOCK, so the engine searches as deep as its share of the time allows instead of stopping at a fixed depth; choosing No Clock brings the previous control back. In ENGINE SETTINGS and SETUP the FIXED DEPTH and TIME / ENGINE MOVE choices are greyed while a game clock is selected.

Version 0.9.5 Beta

Release date: 22 September 2026

Panels

- The right-hand panel can be widened: the thin vertical grip between the board and the panel drags to the left, the board yields, and the clock digits and the text of the move history and engine output grow with the panel. On large or high-resolution screens (a Mac display, for example) the panel and its fonts were too small. The width is remembered. The panel's height is the board's, so the engine output and the move history share what is left below COMPUTER STATUS: the output keeps its lines as long as the move list has its minimum, then gives lines, and when even the minimums no longer fit the text stops growing (the + button says so) rather than the engine output disappearing.
- ENGINE OUTPUT is structured the way Arena shows it: one line per depth with depth and selective depth, score, time, nodes and the main line with move numbers from the position searched, the newest line at the bottom, as many lines as the box has room for (drag the grip above MOVE HISTORY for more). The lines and the COMPUTER STATUS numbers follow the search while the engine thinks; until now they only changed when the move arrived. RAW LOG still shows the engine's own text, now the last 60 lines, wrapped at the words.
- The chess clock shows hours: 1:40:59 instead of 100:59, which the four-digit display had cut into nonsense for thinking times above an hour. The display has six digits now; below an hour it reads 45:59 as before.
- + and – next to MOVE HISTORY change the text size of the move history and the engine output in one-point steps, independently of the panel width; remembered as well.

Version 0.9.4 Beta

Release date: 22 September 2026

Game clock

- Any classical time control: `CUSTOM...` in the game clock list (New Game, Position Setup, Play From Here) asks for X moves in Y minutes (0 moves = the whole game), an increment per move, and then A moves in B minutes more (0 = the rest of the game), unused time carrying over. For example 40 moves in 5 minutes then 20 in 2, 60 moves in 60 minutes, or 40/40. The chess clock panel shows the control and the moves to the next time control for both sides, the computer budgets its thinking time from the real moves to the next control, and the saved PGN carries the `TimeControl` tag.
- The preset `40 MOVES / 120 MIN` was in truth 120 minutes for the whole game; it is now `40 MOVES / 120 MIN + 60 MIN`: 40 moves in two hours, then an hour for the rest of the game.

Appearance

- Splash music: J.S. Bach, Cello Suite No. 1 in G, Sarabande, performed by John Michel (a public domain recording), plays while the splash is shown and stops the moment it ends, whether by click, key or timeout. It uses Windows' own media interface, so nothing is installed; on a computer without sound there is simply no music. The splash now stays for up to ten minutes and shows three classic games in turn (the Opera game, the Immortal game, the Evergreen game).
- New splash screen: instead of pieces bouncing about, a real game runs at speed on a tilted, half-transparent board behind the start-up texts, with the current piece set: Morphy's Opera game (Paris 1858), captures, queen sacrifice and mate, looping.

Controls

- `MOVE NOW` has a second function (Franz): on your own turn the button reads `ENGINE MOVE` and makes the engine play your move; you take the other colour. Press it again after the reply and the engine plays on, so switching sides mid-game or letting the engine make several moves in a row no longer needs `SETUP`. While the engine thinks it reads `MOVE NOW` and interrupts the search as before. `F` does the same.

Panels

- The chess clock panel is always on (Franz). Without a game clock it shows move times: the side to move counts up from 00:00, so you see how long the engine needs at a given depth, the other side shows the time its last move took; under `TIME / ENGINE MOVE` the engine's display counts down from its time per move. With a game clock it shows the clock as before.
- The thin line between `ENGINE OUTPUT` and `MOVE HISTORY` is a grip: drag it down for more engine output (the principal variation and the raw log get room), up for more move list. The setting is remembered.

Engines

- Tacticon updated to the twin build v2.02 (the version with the draw fix). Same engine, same maximum of 7 plies; it is bundled under the same name, so nothing changes in the dialogs.
- Komodo (and any engine that quits when its input is closed) can be added: the UCI check used to write `uci`, `isready` and `quit` in one go and close the engine's input, which made Komodo 14 exit silently, so it was refused with `Engine did not return uciok`. The check now talks to the engine like a game does: `uci`, wait for `uciok`, `isready`, wait for `readyok`, then `quit`, with the same 20 seconds of patience, and it still reports the engine's own error when one dies (a Capa build without its book).
- `UCI OPTIONS` in `ENGINE SETTINGS`: every option the running engine advertises (check boxes, numbers with the engine's range, choice lists, text fields, buttons), for example the Kmoch switches of Capa 1.33 or Hash and Threads of a Stockfish. `APPLY` sends the changed values to the engine; they are remembered per engine file in `engine_config.json` and sent again every time that engine starts, including the restart `MOVE NOW` may trigger. `DEFAULTS` puts the engine's own defaults back.

Version 0.9.3 Beta

Release date: 22 September 2026

Fixes from beta-tester feedback

- `MOVE NOW` (F) now also works while the engine is still searching: it interrupts the search, the engine plays the best move it has found so far, and the human-feeling thinking delay is skipped for that move. CAPA96 cannot be interrupted at all (after a `stop` it stays silent for good), so for it CZUBATRONIC restarts the engine and asks for a quick move instead; either way a move arrives within about two seconds. Before, the button only worked once the engine had its move and was merely waiting out the thinking delay; during the search itself it did nothing, with every engine.
- UCI handling for other engines (older Stockfish builds and the like): the engine is asked `isready` after `ucinewgame` before the position is sent, it receives the whole game as `position startpos moves ...` so it can recognise repetitions (a bare FEN is sent only when the move list does not lead to the position), and engine output in any character encoding no longer breaks the connection.
- Tacticon: the bundled Tacticon searches to a fixed maximum of 7 plies, which takes it under two seconds; a `FIXED DEPTH` above 7 or a longer `TIME PER MOVE` has no effect on it, settings up to depth 7 do. The manual said otherwise; it now describes this. Capa and Pioneer follow the depth and time settings.

Version 0.9.2 Beta

Release date: 21 September 2026

Engines

- Loading a Capa build via `ENGINE` and `BROWSE UCI ENGINE` works again. In 0.9.1 the UCI check started the engine from the wrong folder, so a Capa .exe with its book `ENGOPEN.TXT` beside it was still refused with `Engine did not return uciok` (the engine had reported `runtime error 2`, file not found, which the dialog did not show). The check now runs from the engine's own folder. Capa engines need `ENGOPEN.TXT` next to the program file; if it is missing, the `ENGINE` dialog now reports the engine's own error (`runtime error 2`, file not found) and offers to copy the bundled book beside the engine. Capa's book moves light `BOOK YES` in the computer status: neither Capa build announces them, so a move that arrives without any search output is taken as a book move.
- The UCI handshake waits up to 20 seconds instead of 5 for `uciok` and `readyok`. A freshly downloaded engine can take several seconds to start on its first run (antivirus scan, book file), which used to be refused.

Engine matches

- Tournament clock for engine matches: `GAME CLOCK` in the match setup, for example 40 moves in 5 minutes, then 20 moves in 2 minutes more. Unused time carries over; 0 further moves means the rest of the game in the extra time, 0 first-period moves the whole game in the base time. The chess clock panel shows both engines' times, the match panel the moves to the next time control, and a side that oversteps loses on time (a draw if the opponent cannot mate). The saved PGN carries the `TimeControl` tag. Pioneer, CAPA96, Capa 1.32 and Tacticon all understand the clock commands.
- Matches at a fixed time per move no longer end with `ERROR: WHITE returned an invalid move: none`. Capa 1.32 checks its clock only between search iterations, so at 3 seconds per move it may first finish a 12-second iteration and obeys the stop signal only afterwards; CZUBATRONIC now waits for the move it is owed instead of giving up two seconds after asking. The same applied to `ENGINE TIMEOUT - MOVE NOT RETURNED` in Human vs Engine games. An engine that has really stopped running is reported as such, with its exit code.
- The game clock of the previous game no longer keeps running underneath an engine match (it flagged a side after a few moves: `WHITE TIME EXPIRED`).

Appearance

- The 2D CURRENT piece set keeps its proportions again: the king is the tallest piece, the pawn the smallest, every piece keeps its shape and is centred in its square. Queen, rook, bishop, knight and pawn are drawn a tenth larger relative to the king, and the king has the queen's base width and is a little taller than her. Previously each piece was stretched into one fixed box, which squashed the king and made the rook the biggest piece on the board.
- The ABOUT dialog shows the version number and the build time of the program file, so two builds of the same beta version can be told apart.

Installer and program package

- The installer is CZUBATRONIC_2400_0.9.2_Beta_Setup.exe, the portable edition CZUBATRONIC_2400_0.9.2_Beta_Portable.zip. The 0.9.1 downloads were replaced several times under the same name on 21 September while these fixes were being made, and some browsers and the web cache kept handing out the first one; from now on every build has its own download link, and the ABOUT dialog shows the build time.

Version 0.9.1 Beta

Release date: 20 September 2026

Fixes from beta-tester feedback

- Windows display scaling of 125 % and non-maximised windows: the move history no longer disappears when a chess clock is active. The window now opens at the size its panels need, that size is also its minimum, and the move history always keeps its space. If a screen is too small for everything, the engine-output area gives way first.
- The title CZUBATRONIC 2400 and the fascia marking PROFESSIONAL CHESS SYSTEM are no longer cut off or overlapping at larger font sizes.
- The SYSTEM STATUS display is sized for its text, so two-line messages such as WHITE PLAYED e4 / 5. BLACK THINKING are shown completely.
- All controls are always reachable: the button rows wrap to the window width: four rows at the standard width, two when the window is maximised. Previously HINT, ANALYZE, MOVE NOW and the MODE selector could lie beyond the right edge of a non-maximised window.

Engines

- Standard engine of your choice: the ENGINE dialog shows the current standard engine and offers Set as standard engine (remember for next launch). The remembered engine is checked at every start; if it is missing or fails the UCI handshake, CZUBATRONIC falls back to the bundled CAPA96 and says so. RESET STANDARD ENGINE TO CAPA96 clears the choice. The setting is stored in %LOCALAPPDATA%\CZUBATRONIC\engine_config.json.
- Engine time per move is entered in seconds (tenths allowed, for example 0.5 or 2.5) in New Game, Engine Settings, Position Setup and Engine Match, instead of milliseconds. The computer-status panel shows it as, for example, CONTROL 2.5S / MOVE.
- Human-feeling thinking time in Human vs Engine games: the computer no longer answers in a quarter of a second at fixed depth. Book moves, forced moves and recaptures come quickly, quiet positions take a few seconds, complicated middlegames longer, and now and then it thinks for a long time; with a game clock it never spends more than its share of the clock on this. MOVE NOW (F) makes it move at once. Engine matches, hints and analysis are not delayed. (Pioneer's calibrated per-level thinking windows remain the base for Pioneer.)

Appearance

- New application icon: a gold knight on walnut, shown in Explorer, the Start menu, the taskbar, the window title and every dialog. CZUBATRONIC also has its own taskbar identity now and is no longer grouped with other windows.

- The ABOUT dialog shows the version number.
- The DCS Chess logo sits in the bottom-right corner of the console.

Installer and program package

- The program is now installed as a folder (`CZUBATRONIC.exe` plus `_internal`) instead of a single self-extracting file. This fixes the upgrade error *"Setup was unable to automatically close all applications"* followed by *"DeleteFile failed; code 5"*: the old single-file wrapper survived Setup's attempt to close a running copy, without a visible window, and kept the program file locked. Starting is faster, and nothing is unpacked into the temp folder any more.
- If an older version is still running when Setup starts, possibly without a visible window, Setup now says so and offers to close it.
- New portable edition: `CZUBATRONIC_2400_0.9.1_Beta_Portable.zip` runs from any folder or USB stick without installation or administrator rights. While `CZUBATRONIC_PORTABLE.txt` sits next to the program, settings and the diagnostic log stay in its `config` folder.
- A diagnostic log is written to `%LOCALAPPDATA%\CZUBATRONIC\czubatronic.log` (portable edition: `config\czubatronic.log`) with startup, shutdown and error information for support requests.
- Closing the window while the engine is thinking is faster.
- The installer is `CZUBATRONIC_2400_0.9.1_Beta_Setup.exe`. Every build is additionally archived on the build machine under a name with build time and source revision, together with its SHA-256 checksum, so any file can be traced to its exact build.
- The version number is stamped consistently into the installer, the program's file properties, the manuals and the About dialog.

Known beta limitations

- Still unsigned: Windows SmartScreen may show a warning.
- On a Full HD screen at 125 % scaling the panels need slightly more height than the screen offers; the engine output then shows fewer lines while the move history keeps its minimum.
- The limitations listed for 0.9.0 still apply.

Version 0.9.0 Beta

Release date: 11 September 2026

Release status

This is the near-final public beta of CZUBATRONIC 2400. It is supplied free of charge for personal, non-commercial use under the included proprietary beta license. It may not be resold, redistributed, repackaged, rebranded, hosted, mirrored, or commercially exploited without prior written permission.

Self-contained Windows package

The official installer contains:

- Frozen 64-bit Windows application and Python runtime
- CAPA96, Pioneer, and Tacticon UCI engines
- CAPA96 opening data
- All four production piece sets
- Bundled Microgramma display font

- Opening-name database
- Full Thorsten Czub interview source and portrait
- Story of Capa article source
- End-user manual, release notes, and beta license

No Python installation, virtual environment, developer checkout, Downloads folder, or external engine installation is required.

Engines

- CAPA96 is the standard engine loaded at startup.
- Pioneer remains selectable and retains its calibrated Novice-to-Grandmaster ladder.
- Tacticon is bundled as a self-contained UCI engine.
- Other local UCI executables can be validated and selected.
- CAPA96, Tacticon, and external engines use explicit fixed depth, engine time per move, or game-clock allocation rather than unverified strength labels.
- Fixed-depth searches use depth-scaled safety deadlines to accommodate slower engines.
- Opening-book configuration is exposed when an engine advertises a compatible UCI option.

Engine matches

- Compact setup dialog with independent White and Black engine selection
- Pioneer, CAPA96, Tacticon, or browsed UCI engine on either side
- Shared fixed-depth, time-per-move or game-clock condition (for example 40 moves in 5 minutes, then 20 moves in 2 minutes more)
- Normal board animation and SAN notation during matches
- Fixed left-side panel with separate live output for both engines
- Start, stop, and close controls without replacing the normal playing engine
- Legal-move validation and clean process shutdown

Game controls and clocks

- Human versus engine and human versus human play
- Explicit New Game setup for non-Pioneer engines
- No Clock, 15/30 seconds per move, 3 minutes plus 2-second increment, 5/15/30 minutes per game, 40 moves in 120 minutes plus 60 minutes, and any custom control (X moves in Y minutes, increment, then A moves in B minutes)
- Traditional per-move test controls are advisory and do not forfeit at zero
- Whole-game clocks retain normal flag-fall behavior
- Embedded seven-segment clock remains visible through theme changes
- Correct automatic engine start when playing Black
- Stale searches are discarded safely when starting another game

Board and game workflow

- Legal chess through python-chess, including castling, en passant, promotion, mate, stalemate, repetition, and insufficient material

- New game, custom position setup, takeback, resign, board flip, hints, analysis, and Move Now
- Position setup now shows selected side-to-move and play-as choices, correct engine controls, game clock, legality validation, and an explicit `START PLAYING THIS POSITION` action
- Starting a custom position immediately triggers the engine when it owns the selected side to move
- PGN open/save with custom starting FEN support
- Clickable move history, previous/next replay navigation, and Play From Here
- SAN move notation and live engine telemetry
- LED or full-square move indicators
- Responsive board and piece scaling

Appearance

- Walnut, Blue, Green, and new Graphite ABS-plastic schemes
- Four selectable 2D piece sets
- Refined 1980s product fascia and built-in system-status display
- Warm electronic display typography and seven-segment clock treatment

About, interview, and credits

- Complete Impressum and creator responsibility statement for Arne Baillière
- Engine history for Capa, Pioneer, and Tacticon
- Full unabridged Thorsten Czub interview in a magazine-style reader
- Thorsten portrait in the interview masthead
- Separate Story of Capa article
- Computer-chess producer tribute and artwork credits
- DCS Chess supporter link
- Copyright, beta-license, redistribution, resale, repackaging, and warranty notices

Known beta limitations

- The installer is currently unsigned, so Windows SmartScreen may display a warning.
- Arbitrary engine-specific UCI option editing is not exposed.
- PGN replay follows the main line.
- All piece sets are 2D.
- Engine behavior and telemetry depend on each engine's UCI implementation.

Support and contact

DCS Analytics & Digital Consultancy Services

A business division of Universe Connect KG

info@digitalconsultancysolutions.com

https://buymeacoffee.com/arnebailliere