

Report on the MonRoi Personal Chess Manager electronic scoresheet.

The MonRoi PCM lives up to its claims. It is easy to use, and the security features are excellent. As with any electronic device, there is the possibility of tampering, but I think those risks are minimal at best. I believe that such tampering will be self evident.

The MonRoi PCM electronic scoresheet meets the criteria established and is certified for use in rated games.

Review (revision):

The MonRoi Personal Chess Manager acts and performs as advertised. The security and the ease of use are excellent. The response of the MonRoi team was excellent in support and a very quick turn-around with an upgrade. Below, are my comments from my original review, response, and changes made.

The MonRoi PCM uses their own software and security which makes it difficult to “hack” or alter without it being obvious. There is no hidden chess engine or communication device that allows contact from an outside source.

You need to access the “setup” screen and manually turn off the “chess rules” (Chess Rules checkbox = No) as the default value is Yes. You cannot change this setting during a game. **Upgrade:** The default setting is Chess Rules “No”, which allows any movement of a piece. Although this may increase the incidence of entry errors, it complies with the USCF proposed rules and certification guidelines. If an illegal move is made on the chessboard, the same move can be entered on the PCM.

Moves can only be entered using the display diagram. There is no apparent function to allow writing or recording the moves using chess notation. (It will display the entire game in symbolic chess notation). **Response: This is a design feature. Entering moves by notation (in an earlier version) found very little use, was cumbersome and time consuming. Entering moves on the diagram is faster and easier.** (Very true, I will bow to the majority on this one.) **Upgrade: English algebraic can be selected for displaying the scoresheet.**

Correcting errors or board position can only be done by retracting and making moves, or by selecting the move to be corrected on the notation screen, and entering the correct move. If several moves are missed (like in a time scramble) you cannot directly set-up the current position. You have to make moves to achieve that position. (Still true, but easier with Chess Rules off.)

The upgrade procedure requires a memory card, and a reader. A standard SD card and reader is used, that can be purchased at any electronics store.

The entry screen is a touch-sensitive screen. Several entries that I made inputting pre-game information such as tournament info, players' names, etc. had multiple types of errors, such as double entry of characters, incorrect characters, tracking of the cursor, and so on. **There are no problems when recording the moves.** I still have this problem, even after recalibrating the screen, but I am blaming my technique and lack of practice.

The unit is assigned to the original purchaser, and the name is coded into the unit. The name of that person is automatically entered in to the scoresheet. This could be considered a security feature and a theft deterrent. Loaning the device to someone else (like another family member) then becomes cumbersome as the user would have to explain to the TD and to their opponents as to why the scoresheet has someone else's name on it. **Response: This is a design feature for security reasons, and an anti-theft deterrent.** According to FIDE rules the scoresheet must remain at the board at all times during a game. If the unit is stolen, it has a permanent signature to identify the owner (and will be printed on every scoresheet).

If the unit loses power (the battery goes dead, or the unit gets turned off) the game is not saved. You cannot save a game unless you enter a result. You cannot enter the record mode while viewing a saved game. It is not possible to continue a game unless you enter all the moves up to that point as a new game. **Upgrade: If the unit loses power or is turned off during a game, the position is saved. When turned on it is returned to record mode, with the game intact. Excellent addition.**

There are no indications of any information being recorded or displayed in addition to the move itself, unless that move is a capture (e.g. exd4). Note, that even with chess rules “on” this only effects piece movement (e.g. a knight has to move like a knight). It allows moves that leave or place the king in check. It does not indicate that that move is illegal. Why should the device allow one type of illegal move, but not another? **This comment is moot, since by our certification (and now by the default setting) chess rules are “No”.** It does not indicate check, checkmate, stalemate, etc. Upgrade: you can manually enter check (+) and checkmate (#).

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