ChessCafe.com

ChessBase Cafe

Mig Greengard

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1-866-301-CAFE

ChessCafe.com is pleased to welcome Mig Greengard as its newest regular columnist. His column will explore how you can use various ChessBase software to improve your play and enjoyment of the royal game. Mig's popular *Mig on Chess* column has appeared in many places on the web since 1997 and currently resides at ChessBase.com. He was the editor-in-chief of KasparovChess.com, may it rest in peace. More recently he helped run the man-machine matches in Bahrain and New York. Mig has two cats, lives in New York City and runs the training website, ChessNinja.com.

We hope you enjoy *ChessBase Cafe* by Mig Greengard...

Inside Output:

Publishing with Fritz and Friends

You're reading this so you have a computer. You're at **ChessCafe.com** so you're a chess player. From those two facts we can surmise that somewhere on your computer you have some ChessBase software. Fritz, Junior, and the eponymous database program have become household names in the chess world in the past decade.

As with much of the technology in our lives, we are happy if we can get our software to do the basics. You might use Word all the time but have you ever clicked "compare and merge documents" or inserted a "spin button"? Me neither. But chess is more important than mere word processing, and if you've invested in

quality chess software you should make sure you are getting the most out of it. This column will help you do that with tutorials, training tips, and answers to your questions.

There will be something for you even if you are one of those savants who do things like program your DVD recorder, defragment your hard drive, and read instruction manuals cover to cover before plugging the device in. This isn't a review column, but we'll see some of the latest and greatest ChessBase products in action. We won't hold it against you if you don't have any ChessBase software yet. We know not everyone is ready to become smarter, wealthier, more attractive, and higher rated by joining the fun.

Your feedback, suggestions, and questions are very welcome and will be a regular part of the column. Send all correspondence to mig@chesscafe.com.

As the saying goes, *"Meum est propositum in taberna mori."* That has no relevance here, I just thought some Latin would help me fit in with the intellectual surroundings. With that out of the way let's get into our first topic.

Most ChessBase software is, logically enough, dedicated to chess play and chess training, and most of our columns will focus on these topics. But this month we are first going to look at some powerful and handy features for desktop publishing you might not know about. Even if you read the instruction manual cover to cover you won't find anything about these ways of putting your chess on paper or the internet.

Fritz 8 uses the same interface as Tiger 15, Shredder 7, and HIARCS 8. Everything covered here applies identically to these four programs. (ChessBase 8 also includes these publishing features, plus a few extras.) I'll refer to Fritz in this article but it doesn't matter which one of the above you have. You should have the latest internet update installed.

I often get e-mail asking about publishing games for the internet, or simply creating diagrams of different sizes and appearance. Many people think you need ChessBase 8 to print tournament bulletins or newsletters. You might be surprised to find that your playing program can do these things very well.
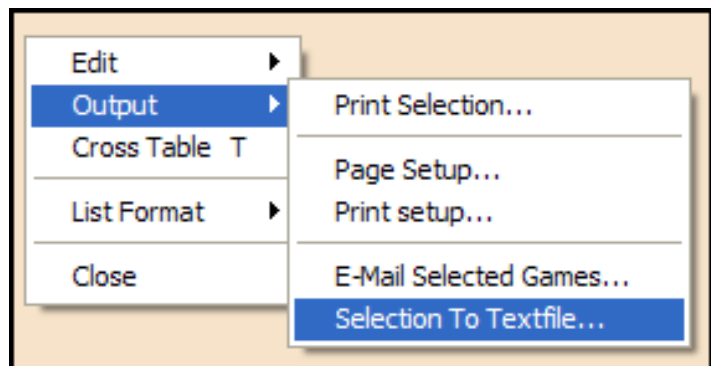
Let's say you just finished playing the most brilliant game since

Morphy walked the Earth. Of course you want to share it with the world, or at least your friends. We're going to walk through putting the game online with diagrams and also importing it into your word processor. Then we'll make some diagrams in different sizes with the help of your graphics program. Let's see Morphy do that!
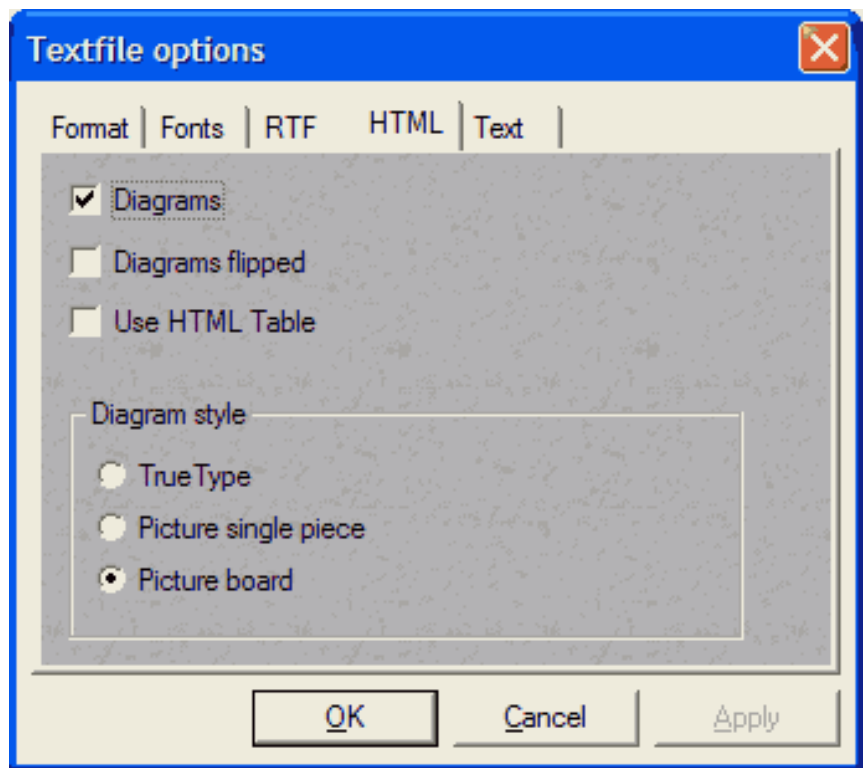
If you played the game against Fritz or online at Playchess.com it is already saved in a database file. If it was an over-the-board game you need to enter it into a new board manually and save it to a file.

Open the database that contains the game you want to publish. Open the game and where you want diagrams to appear when you publish, right-click on that move in the notation window and click "Insert Diagram". Add variations and text commentary if you like – perhaps giving yourself a few dozen well-deserved exclamation points – and save the game.

Now select the game (or multiple games) and right-click it in the database list and select "Output" and then "Selection to Textfile...".

This will launch the "Textfile options" window with five tabs.

On the "Format" tab select the HTML button and then click to the HTML tab. Check "Diagrams" and "Picture board" and click OK.

(Checking "Use HTML Table" on the HTML options tab is supposed to add table tags to the code, changing the formatting, but this didn't happen in my tests. An early reply from ChessBase says there is probably a bug in this latest version. At least it's a harmless and obscure one. Lately there have been some Microsoft security bugs so bad that they reboot your computer and possibly eat your lunch.)

Select a directory where you want to save the files and click okay. You'll get a confirmation. The files created are an html file with the game text and a separate image file for each diagram you made. The diagrams will have the same design as the board design you last used when you play, although they will always be the same size and without coordinates. So if you want wooden board diagrams or marble boards, change those settings in the Tools --> Design menu before you publish.

Now that you've got an html file and diagrams you can view the page in a browser or word processor, but of course you'd rather have them online where everyone can see them. If you don't have your own website there are various places that would love to give you one for free. Tripod, Geocities, Angelfire, and various others make it easy to create your own site even if you have no

experience at all. In five minutes you can register and upload your new files and the whole world will be able to see your games online. Playing games worthy of a global audience is up to you.

- [Google directory of free web hosts](http://...)
- http://www.tripod.lycos.com/
- http://geocities.yahoo.com/
- http://www.angelfire.lycos.com/

Look for the "free" link on those pages, they usually try to hide it. I've followed the above steps and created a free website at Tripod so you can see what yours might look like. http://chessbase_cafe.tripod.com/sample01.htm It took me longer to play those two blitz games than it did to export the files, open the Tripod account, and post everything to the web!

Of course you can edit and format the html page all you like after your ChessBase program exports it. For mysterious reasons none of these output features are documented in the user manual or online help. Maybe the CB boys in Hamburg just wanted to give us some fun toys to discover on our own. Or maybe the documentation was done in a big hurry, which you might guess from the way that around half the time the Tiger manual says Shredder instead!

You'll be able to figure out most of the other output features. If you choose RTF (Rich Text Format, which can include fonts, diagrams, and formatting, unlike plain text), you can then open that file in your word processor for editing and printing. This allows you much more control over the document than if you printed directly from Fritz. You can also format the diagrams in different ways on the RTF tab when you output.
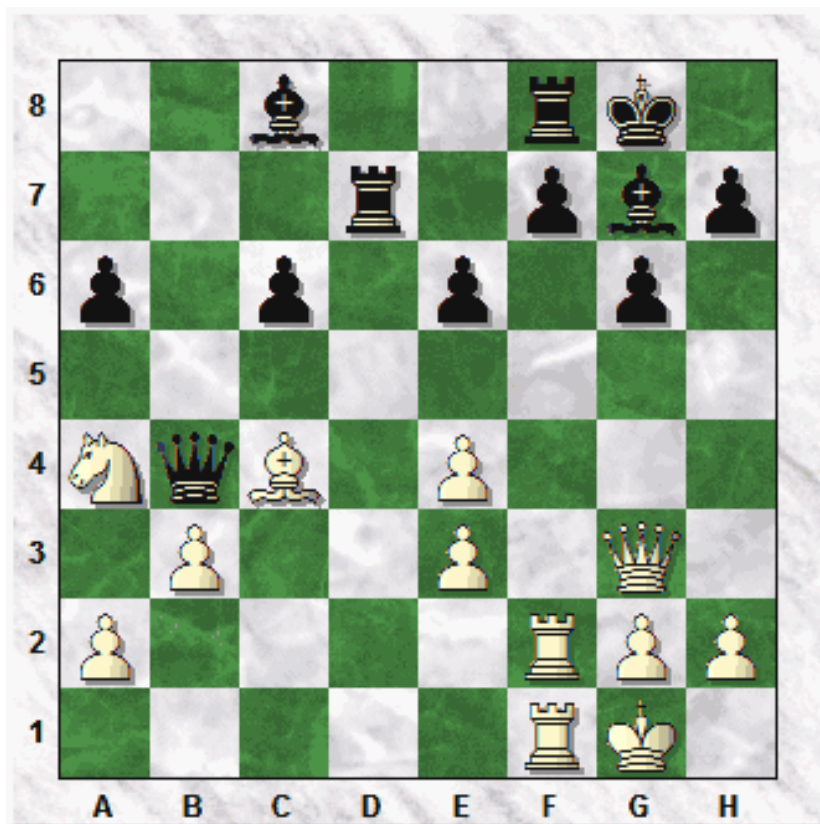
Shortcut: What you get in the RTF file is exactly the same thing you get when you use the copy command in a board window and then paste it into your word processor. But with the copy-paste method you can only do one game at a time. With the output method you can do all the games you select in the list at the same time.

You don't have control over the size of the diagram images you exported and perhaps you'd like to make bigger ones or smaller ones, or have them with coordinates like those below. For this we can use the "copy position" command under the Edit menu. If

you then paste it into a word processor document you'll get the familiar text diagram that uses the ChessBase fonts. You see these in every book and magazine and are best for printing.

But if you use the "paste special" command in your word processor you can select to paste a bitmap image, which is an exact picture of the board as it appears in the board window. This means the same size and with the coordinates if you have them turned on. These don't print as cleanly as the standard black and white font diagrams of course, and this is best used to make image files for the web.

To save image files you'll need to paste the position into a graphics editing program. You may already have something like Photoshop or Photopaint to use for this. Create a new document and paste and then you can save a diagram just like the one you see in the board window. This even works with the cool 3D boards, although it can be hard to see the position at a small size so 2D makes for better diagrams.

Advanced tip: If you use a plain color board for your diagrams instead of the fancy board designs you should export them from your graphics program as gif files instead of the jpg format Fritz uses. With a plain board a gif image will be four times smaller than a jpg and your web pages will load much faster if you use many diagrams.

NB: ChessBase 8 adds a special output feature that the Fritz interface programs don't have. This is the ability to create web pages with automatic game replay boards.
http://www.chessninja.com/replay/kasparovpetrosian.htm

You've probably seen these pages many times before and didn't know they were created with just a few clicks.

Your feedback, suggestions, and questions are very welcome and will be a regular part of the column. Send all correspondence to mig@chesscafe.com .

Mig wants your questions!! **Send it along and perhaps it will be answered in an upcoming column. Please include your name and country of residence. Yes, I have a**

question for Mig!

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