David Hodge being presented with the Paul Valois Cup by Paul's sister, Andrea Holt
(photo courtesy of British Chess News / John Upham Photography)

DAVID HODGE'S YEAR TO REMEMBER

The first winner of the Paul Valois Cup is David Hodge. It will be awarded yearly for outstanding performance in solving events, and his superb results in 2022 gave the judging panel an easy decision. The choice had already been made before the Winton BCSC took place, but David saved the judges any blushing by bagging the 2023 British Chess Solving Championship too. In 2021 and 2022, there was no Championship, due to COVID, so David did not get the opportunity last year, but he took part in multiple international solving events, was consistently among the leaders, achieved his IM title, and has put himself well en route to a GM title.

The 2023 Championship was no easy task, however, as Jonathan Mestel came close to adding yet another champion's title to his already remarkable number of wins. Third place, in contrast, was to a newcomer, Kamila Hryshchenko. Kamila arrived in the UK a year ago, because of the Ukraine war, and is now a British resident and a university student here; at only 20 years old, she may be the youngest solver to achieve such a fine result. All three represented the United Kingdom in the European Chess Solving Championship in Bratislava.

The return of our Championship, thanks to the end of COVID and particularly to the generosity of our sponsors Winton, took place in the elegantly imposing hall of Nottingham High School. As in earlier years, we also held a rating-limited solving event, and an Open which forms part of the World Solving Cup and so attracts strong overseas solvers. The Open was won by Kevinas Kuznecovas from Lithuania, another highly talented junior. His performance rating of 2775 was far above the GM level and, although he does not yet hold any title, the GM one beckons him as it does David.

Ian Watson

Welcome to new joiner David Carter (Stockport). Readers may gather (not least from the succinctness of this editorial) that we have a packed issue, with, hopefully, something for everyone to enjoy. The Winton British solving finals (for the first time since February 2020) and European solving finals are reported, and, as well as solving ladders celebrating the valued efforts of readers during 2022, we are beginning to catch up on informal tourney awards. We also have extended reflections on the remarkable composing life of Michael Lipton.

WINTON BRITISH CHESS SOLVING CHAMPIONSHIP 2023-2024

WBCSC STARTER 2023-24
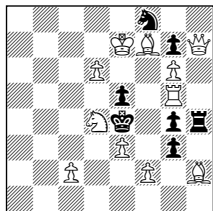
#2

The starter problem for this championship, again sponsored by **Winton**, is shown alongside. White, playing up the board, is to play and force mate in two moves against any black defence.

There is no entry fee, and the competition is open to British residents only. Competitors need send only White's first move, known as the key-move. Postal entries should be sent to: **Nigel Dennis, Boundary House, 230 Greys Road, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon, RG9 1QY** or email: <**winton@theproblemist.org**>

All entries should be postmarked or dated no later than **31st July 2023** and must give the entrant's name and home address. Juniors under the age of 18 on 31st August 2022 must give their date of birth. *Please mention that you saw the starter problem in The Problemist*.
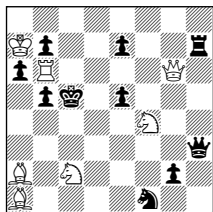
Receipt of the solution to the starter will only be acknowledged after the closing date, when all competitors will receive the answer, and those who get it right will also receive the postal round, which will contain 8 more difficult and varied problems. In due course the best competitors and the best juniors from the postal round will be invited to the final due to be held in February 2024. The ultimate winner of the final will win the right to represent Great Britain at the World Chess Solving Championships later in 2024.

PROBLEMS FROM WBCSC 2023 FOR SOLVING, By David Hodge

The set of problems in the Open section were as challenging as ever, with difficult problems in every round. Indeed there were five problems (out of the total 13) with at most one solver getting full marks.
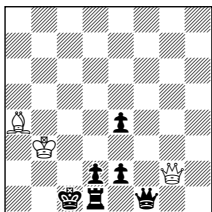
Even the first round contained some difficult problems, including **A** which has many good tries. The white queen currently plays no particular role in the position, so a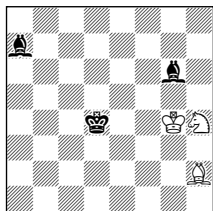 queen key move that creates a threat is called for. Mates by 2.Sd3 and 2.Se6 are already set for certain defences but White has quite a few threats available.

A Efim Rukhlis
4 Pr *Mat Plus* 1995

#2

B Martin Minski
Magyar Sakkvilág Original

Win

The first serious challenge for the top solvers came in round three with two difficult studies. No-one seemed to come close to finding all the right queen and rook moves in the first study **B**. The second study was also challenging, although both Kevinas Kuznecovas and Jonathan Mestel successfully saw to the end.

The H#4 **C** also proved particularly challenging in the limited 30 minute helpmate round. It amazes me how difficult it is to find helpmates with such limited material still. Even finding my second final mating position inside the last minute, I was unable to untangle the right move order in the time. A good challenge to the reader would be to see how many of the three solutions you can find in 25 minutes. None of the solvers present found all three in the time.

C Viktor Sizonenko & Iosif Grosu
Ideal Mate Review 1984

H#4 3 solutions

Winton BCSC 2023 Individual Results

1. Kevinas Kuznecovas	LTU	55
2. David Hodge	GBR	48.5
3. Jonathan Mestel	GBR	47.5
4. Nikos Sidiropoulos	GRE	47
5. Roland Ott	SUI	34.5
6. Kamila Hryshchenko	GBR	34
7. Ian Watson	GBR	32.5
8. Robert Włodarczyk	POL	28
9. Paul Cumbers	GBR	26
10. Les Blackstock	GBR	24

SOLVING IN SLOVAKIA – THE 16TH ECSC
By Ian Watson

Slovakia's capital, Bratislava, was in the media's eye at the end of May. Emmanuel Macron and Ursula von der Leyen were there to make major speeches. That, however, was merely the prelude to the (much more important) European Chess Solving Championship.

The politicians' conference was not the only meeting taking place; the city was also filled with Hell's Angels who had come from all over Europe and beyond; outside our hotel was an impressive array of Harley Davidsons. No hell-raising, however – they were peaceful and placid, mostly grey-haired and elderly – much like most of us chess solvers.

The results of the ECSC followed form – Poland won by several lengths. The Poles are all but invincible in the team event; and in the individual championship, too, where Piorun pipped Piotr Murdzia to the title. In the Open solving – the warm-up to the Championship – our own Jonathan Mestel nearly upset the Polish clean sweep, but a successful appeal by Murdzia for an extra point pushed Mestel narrowly into second place.

Our eventual sixth place in the team event was about par for the team we fielded. We did win two titles, however: Jonathan won the Seniors' and our new supersolver Kamila Hryshchenko won the Women's by a huge margin. Kamila's result was truly impressive; from a pre-ECSC rating of 1860, she gained over 150 Elo points.

There was a novel solving tournament on the Saturday evening: blindfold solving. A screen displayed the problems, but not as diagrams, instead as lists of the pieces and their squares. The competitors were given three minutes to solve each one, in their head, and write the key move. One point for giving the correct solution, but minus 0.9 for the incorrect key move. Extremely challenging, one would think, yet eight of the competitors got all ten problems right. Try your blindfold solving skills on these two:

(i) (W) Kc5, Qe6, Rb1. (B) Ka5, Sa8, Sa7, Pa4. #2

(ii) (W) Kf7, Qc7, Rd5, Rf4, Be4. (B) Ka8, Qb3. #2

The 'Baltic Combined' solving event required entrants to compose a single-solution helpmate in two and submit it to the controller before going to Bratislava. Then at the event, all those entrants had to solve all the submitted helpmates. You got a point for each one you solved correctly, and a further point for every entrant who did not correctly solve your problem. So, it was in your interest to make your problem as hard as possible, but it had to also satisfy the usual composing principles (so you couldn't fill the board with red-herring pieces). **A** is Ulrich Voigt's problem.

The more-mover **B** defeated most of the competitors in the ECSC.

One final problem for you to solve, a trivia question: which of the world's rivers has the most capital cities on it, and what cities are they?

Answers to all the problems are on page 175.

ECSC 2023 Team Results

1. Poland	260
2. Lithuania	237
3. Slovakia 1	227.75
4. Serbia	221.5
5. Germany	221
6. Great Britain	215.5
7. Israel	186.25
8. Netherlands	182
9. Ukraine	175.25
10. Finland	172.5

ECSC 2023 Individual Results

1. Kacper Piorun	POL	87.5
2. Piotr Murdzia	POL	86
3. Eddy van Beers	BEL	85
4. Ulrich Voigt	GER	81.5
5. Vidmantas Satkus	LTU	80
6. Kevinas Kuznecovas	LTU	79.5
7. Marko Filipović	CRO	78.5
8. Tomáš Peitl	SVK	76.5
9. Piotr Górski	POL	76
10. Nikos Sidiropoulos	GRE	74.5

Open Solving Tournament ECSC 2023

1. Piotr Murdzia	POL	55
2. Jonathan Mestel	GBR	54
3. Eddy van Beers	BEL	52
4. Miodrag Mladenović	SRB	51.5
5-6. Piotr Górski	POL	51
5-6. David Hodge	GBR	51
7. Vidmantas Satkus	LTU	50
8-9. Jakub Marciniszyn	POL	50
8-9. Kacper Piorun	POL	50
10. Kari Karhunen	FIN	49.5

A Ulrich Voigt
Baltic Combined Ty
Bratislava 2023
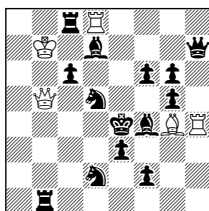
H#2

B James Pierce & Heinrich Meyer
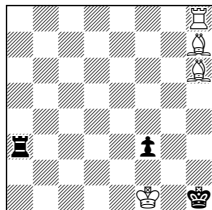*Deutsche Schachzeitung*
1874
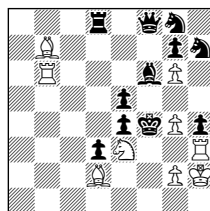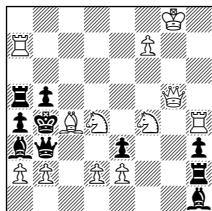

#6

A LINGERING LOOK AT THE LIPTON LEGACY

A survey of Michael's impressive output, by John Rice
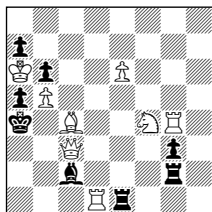
A Michael Lipton
Jerusalem Post 1960
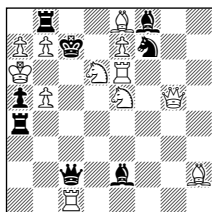
#2 v…

B Michael Lipton
1 HM *BCM* 1969

#2 v

C Michael Lipton
3 Pr *Schach-Echo* 1961

#2 v

D Michael Lipton
2 Pr *BCM* 1967

#2 v

E Michael Lipton
v 4 Pr *Die Schwalbe* 1956

#2 v

The issue of *Die Sclwalbe* dated January 1961 carried an article by Michael Lipton, then in his early twenties yet with over a decade's chess problem experience behind him, on the subject of "The half-battery with tries and changed play". This article turned out to be highly significant in the history of the 2-mover, as it drew attention to a simple arrangement of white pieces that could be worked in a wide variety of ways to produce intricate problems showing rich and varied play and offering substantial solver-appeal. Among the examples quoted was the simple miniature **A**, in which the white Bs give shut-off mates after defences by the bR and bP. 1.Bg7? (>2.Bh~) Ra1+/Ra2/Ra4/Ra5/Ra6/Ra8 2.Bb1/Bc2/Be4/ Bf5/Bg6/Bg8; 1…Kh2! 1.Bf4? Ra7! **1.Bg6!** (>2.Bh~) Ra1+/Ra2/Ra4/Ra5/Ra7/ Ra8/f2 2.Bc1/Bd2/Bf4/Bg5/Bg7/Bf8/Be3. It need hardly be said that Michael regarded the unprovided check in the diagram position as insignificant in the overall context of the problem, since it is obvious enough that one of the wBs must move to allow the other to answer the check. The point of the problem lies in the element of choice open to solvers in their search for the key, and in the changes between the virtual and actual play.

B undeniably displays greater subtlety. Here the half-battery is masked by the wBc4, standing on a flight-square. White threatens mate on c5 by the Q, which Black pins in one of the thematic variations. Captures of the Bc4 by bK and bQ activate the half-battery after one of the wSs has occupied e6 to threaten 2.Qc5. 1.Sfe6? (>2.Qc5) Rg2/Qxc4/Kxc4 2.Sc6/Sc2/Sf3; 1…Bd5! **1.Sde6!** (>2.Qc5) Rg2/Qxe4/Kxc4 2.Sd5/Sd3/Sg2. The byplay rounds things off neatly: 1…Ra~/ bxc4/Bd5 2.Qxb5/Qxa5/Sxd5.

The half-battery is used to good effect in **C**, with changed double shut-offs following the captures on d1. 1.Bd5? (>2.Rd4) Bxd1/Rxd1 2.Se2/Sd3; 1…Rd2! **1.Sd5!** (>2.Qa1) Bxd1/Rxd1 2.Be2/Bd3, and 1…Re3/Bb1 2.Ra1/Qb3. It must have irritated Michael that he had to add numerous Ps to get this problem to work. His insistence on economy of force, often to the exclusion of other desirable features, was well known. I recall an occasion in the late 1950s when he and I were composing a problem in a pub. How to guard one square in the bK's field was the question causing him anguish, as a wP was clearly not a possibility. Eventually he exclaimed, "Oh, let's add a knight and call it a day." The guffaw that proceeded from him when he realised he had made a rather good if unintended pun caused everyone in the pub to fall silent and stare at us!

In the works we have examined so far the half-battery has been at the centre of the play. In **D**, however, it is used as a means to an end, this being a cyclic Nowotny on c4, with 2 of the thematic mates changed. To get such an arrangement to work, a pinned black line-piece is needed, here the bQc2. 1.Sec4?, with 3 threats separated according to Black's captures of the try-piece: 1…Qxc4/ Rxc4/Bxc4 2.Sdxf7/b6/Qc5; but 1…Rxe8! refutes. So **1.Sdc4!** Qxc4/Rxc4/Bxc4 2.Sexf7/b6/Rc6, and 1…Bxe7 2.Qxe7. Needless to say, it annoyed Michael that he was unable to find a way to get all 3 mates changed. Can it be done?
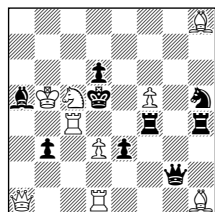
We're moving away from the half-battery now to examine some of Michael's other compositions, in which everything focuses on the interplay of white and black force. In **E**, dating from early in his career, we find Java-style dual-avoidance in both phases: 1.Se4? (>2.Q,Rd4) Qb2/Qg7 2.Sc3[Sf6?]/Sf6[Sb2?]; 1…Rxf5! **1.Re4!** (>2.Qd4) Qb2/Qg7 2.Rd4[Re5?]/ Re5[Rd4?]. In typical Lipton style the wQ is fully used to give additional mates: 1…b2/Bc3/dxc5 2.Qa2Qa8/Qe5 (1…Rxe4 2.dxe4).

Nowotnys feature again in **F**, quoted in Jeremy Morse's book of tasks and records. Astonishingly, there are no fewer than 8 Nowotnys here, on 4 squares on the f- and g-files. In each case the pair of threatened mates is separated by the captures by R and B. 1.f3? (>2.Be2/Rc3) cxd1S! 1.Bf4? (>2.Sd6/Rd4) Sxd7! 1.f4? (>2.Se5/Rd4) Sc6! 1.g4? (>2.Be2/Rd4) cxd1Q! 1.Rg3? (>2.Se3/Se5) Re4! 1.Bg3? (>2.Sd6/Rc3) Sd5! 1.Sg3? (>2.Se5/Rc3) Rd4! Key **1.g3!** (>2.Rc3/Se5) Rd4 2.Rxd4. Only 4 Nowotnys in **G**, but what economy! 1.Be5? (>2.Re7/Sg7) Sxh7! 1.Sd4? (>2.Sf6/Rd8) Re7! 1.Rd4? (>2.Sd6/Sf6) Re6! **1.Bd4!** (>2.Rd8/Sg7) Re7 2.Rxe7. Michael was justifiably pleased with this setting.

Michael had the good fortune to reach maturity as a composer in the late 1950s and early 1960s, a time when the 2-mover was developing in various directions. Themes and structural concepts were expanding rapidly, though not so much in Great Britain as in other European countries. The next few examples of Michael's work will focus on this period. **H** is a convincing setting of radical change: the 5 set mates stemming from moves of the bQ with shut-offs by the Se6 are eliminated by the key, which pins both the Q and the wS. The set play consists of 1…Qxb5/Qb8/Qh8/Qh5/Qg3 2.Sc5/Sc7/Sg7/Sg5/Sf4. Key **1.Sexd4** (>2.Rxe5), and now come unpins with dual avoidance: 1…Sac3/Sec3 2.Sc2[Sf5?]/Sf5[Sc2?]; also 1…Sg3/Rf2 2.Qf3/Qxf2. Like many of Michael's problems from this period, **H** was quoted in the book we wrote along with Barry Barnes, *The Two-move Chess Problem: Tradition and Development*. I recall sending Michael a batch of diagrams showing suggested problems for the book, among which I inadvertently included a blank diagram. Michael sent this back with the note, "Good economy but not much play".

Among the structural concepts worked by various composers at that time was mate transference, exemplified in **I**. In 3 phases White gives flights on different squares: 1.Sg6? (>2.Sh8) Rdxg6/Rhxg6/Kxg6 2.d8S/h8S/Qxf5; 1…Rxh7! 1.Bf6? (>2.Re,Rgf8) Rdxf6/Rhxf6/Kxf6 2.d8S/h8S/Qxf5; 1…Rxd4! **1.Se6!** (>2.Sd8,g5) Rdxe6/Rhxe6/Kxe6 2.d8S/h8S/Qxf5. The gift of different flights leads to a transference of mates again in the meredith **J**, in just 2 phases but with a changed mate thrown in. 1.dxc5? (-) Kxc5/dxc5/e4/S~ 2.Ra5/Qd8/Qg5/Qc4, but 1…Se4! refutes. So **1.dxe5!** (-) c4/dxe5/Kxe5/S~ 2.Ra5/Qd8/Qg5/Qe4.

The set play of **K** contains battery-mates with promotions, the promoted unit being determined by the need to guard the flight-square d6: 1…Rb8/Sb6/B~ 2.cxb8Q/c8S/cxd8Q; also 1…Kxd6 2.Qd5. The key **1.Rc6** (-), though perhaps a little obvious in view of the wBb4, forces the promoting P to choose differently after the same defences: 2.cxb8S/c8Q/cxd8S. When the bK takes the new flight with 1…Kxc6, the mate 2.cxd8S recurs. Finally, 1…Sxc6 leads to 2.Qg4 – a neat mate to round things off.

In **L** any move by the Bd4 will threaten 2.Sd4, but the wB must take care: Black must not be allowed to capture on e6 until one of the pieces able to effect the capture has been shut off. 1.Bb2? (>2.Sd4) Rcxe6/Rexe6 2.Sxe1/Sc5; 1…Qxe6! 1.Bc5? (>2.Sd4) Rexe6/Qxe6 2.Sb2/Sxe1; 1…Rcxe6! **1.Be3!** (>2.Sd4) Qxe6/Rcxe6 2.Sc5/Sb2. Cyclic mating permutation: the black units lose control of the white battery through self-pin.
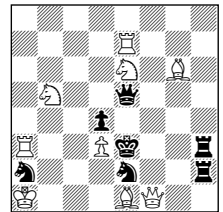
F Michael Lipton
Sp Pr *The Problemist* 1966
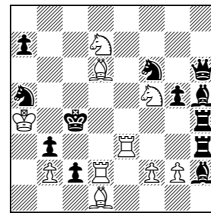
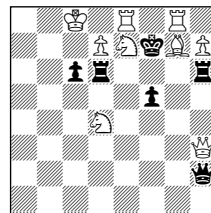#2 v…

G Michael Lipton
2 Pr BCPS Ring Ty 1966
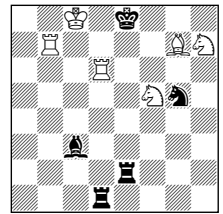
#2 vvv

H Michael Lipton
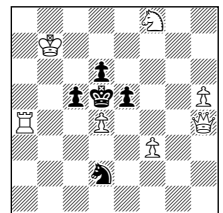1 Pr *Deutsche Schachzeitung* 1957

#2 vv

I Michael Lipton
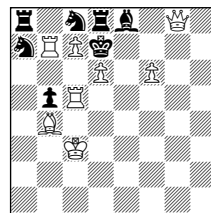C *Probleemblad* 1956

#2 v
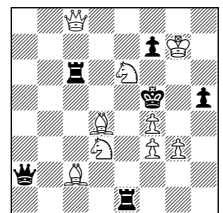
J Michael Lipton
2 Pr *American Chess Bulletin* 1961

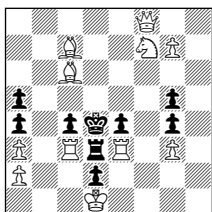

#2 v

K Michael Lipton
HM *BCM* 1962

#2*

L Michael Lipton
3 Pr BCPS-40 1959-60
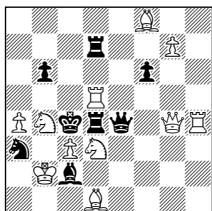

#2 vvv

M Michael Lipton
C *problem* 1960

#2* v

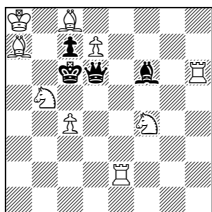**N Michael Lipton**
3 Pr *Die Schwalbe* 1966

#2 vvv

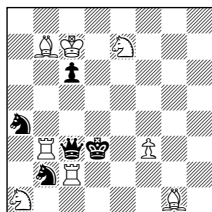**O Michael Lipton**
3 Pr *Die Schwalbe* 1962

#2 vvv
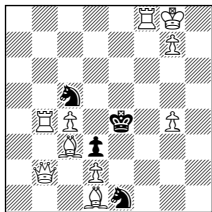
P M.Lipton & J.M.Rice
3 Pr *Die Schwalbe* 1957

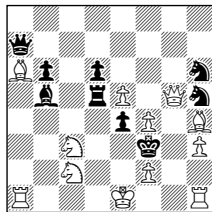
#2* v

Q M.Lipton & J.M.Rice
4 HM *Die Schwalbe* 1960

#2 vv

R J.M.Rice & M.Lipton
3 Pr *Probleemblad* 2005

#2 v...

S J.M.Rice & M.Lipton
1 Pr *StrateGems* 2000

#3

Michael was well known for his views on standards of judging, often feeling his problems were undervalued. But he was surely right to be unimpressed by the commendation awarded to **M**. Set 1…Rxc3/Rxe3/Kxc3 2.Bb6/Be5/Be5. The try 1.Se5? introduces the first changes: 1…Rxc3/Rxe3 2.Rxe4/Rxc4; 1…Kxc3! Key **1.Sd6!** (-) Rxc3/Rxe3/Kxc3/Ke5/Kc5 2.Sf5/Sb5/Qf6/Bb6/Rxe4/Rxc4. This combines a Rukhlis and a Zagoruiko, incorporating star-flights as an extra feature.

At first sight **N** looks similar, with its Rs standing beside one another. But the content is more complex, with changed play, transferences and pin-mates galore. 1.Be2? (>2.Se5) Rxd3/Qxd3 2.Qxe4/Qxd4; 1…Bxd3! 1.g8Q? (>2.Rc5/Rxd4) R4xd5/Qxd5/R7xd5 2.Qxe4/Qxd4/Qc8; 1…Rf7! 1.Qe6? (>2.Rc5/Rxd4/Qc6) R4xd5/Qxd5 2.Rxe4/Rxd4; 1…R7xd5! Key **1.Qe2!** (>2.Se5) Rxd3/Qxd3/Bxd3 2.Rxe4/Rxd4/Bb3. Some commentators were sceptical, claiming that the variations lacked sparkle, but the sheer quantity of play is impressive in itself.

O exemplifies threat correction – doubled! 1.Rxd2? (>2.Sd6) Be5 2.Rxe5; 1…Ra7! 1.Rd3!? (>2.Re3) cxd3/Kxd3/Bd4 2.Sd6/Sc5/Rxd4; 1…Be5! Attention now switches to the other wR: 1.Rxg5? (>2.Sc5) Bd4 2.Rxd4; 1…Ra5! Once again the threat must be corrected: **1.Rf5!** (>2.Bc2) gxf5/Kxf5 2.Sc5/Sd6. Unlike **M**, this problem was appropriately rewarded in its tourney.

The Lipton/Rice composing duo produced a large number of originals over a long period of around 67 years. Being always fascinated by half-pins, Michael came up with the basic layout of **P** and then we worked on it together. The black moves shown are just some of those possible. Set 1…Bg5/Qxf4 2.Sd4/d8S. 1.Sg6? (-) Bg5/Qf4 2.Se5/Se7. 1…Qc5! Key **1.Se6!** (-) Bg5/Qf4/Qxe6/Qxd7 2.Sed4/Sd8/Rxe6/Bb7. Halfpin Zagoruiko.

For **Q** we worked on an idea that had already brought me some success: self-pin of 2 different white units followed by unpins. For this example we found an extra resource that added a third phase and so turned the problem into a Zagoruiko. 1.Bc8? (-) Kc4/Sc4 2.Ba6/Bf5; 1…c5! 1.Bxc6? (-) Kc4/Sc4 2.Bb5/Be4; 1…Sd1! **1.Sxc6!** (-) Kc4/Sc4/Sd1/Sa~ 2.Se5/Sb4/Ba6/Rbxc3.

In **R** the wQ must somehow be brought into use. 1.Qa2? gives her access to a8: 1…Sc~/Sb3 2.c5/Qa8; but 1…Sa6! scuppers the plan. Moving Bc3 or Rb4 might work, but all attempts fail: 1.Be5? (>2.Qd4/Rf4) Se6! 1.Bf6? (>2.Qd4,e5) Sf3! 1.Ra4? (-) Sc~ 2.Qb7; 1…Sb3! 1.Rb5? (-) Sc~ 2.Re5; 1…Sd7! 1.Rb6? (-) Sc~ 2.Re6; 1…Sd7! So only **1.Rb8!** (-) succeeds: 1…Sb3/Se6/Se~ 2.Rbe8/Qb7/Bf3.

The idea for the 3-mover **S** was that a black Grimshaw should be answered by castling on each side. Our first setting had a checking key, and although it worked perfectly I thought a quieter introductory move might be a possibility. In the event the construction proved to be extremely difficult. **1.f5** (>2.Qe3+ Kg2 3.Qxe4) Bd3 2.0-0-0 (>3.Se1) Bxc2/Sg3 3.Be2/Qxg3; 1…Rd3 2.0-0 (>3.Se1) Rd1/Rxc3 3.Qe3/Sd4; 1…Rd1+ 2.Kxd1 (>3.Se1/Sd4) Ba4/Sg3 3.Be2/Qxg3.

Thank you, Michael, for your companionship and inspiration, not to mention that wonderful sense of humour of yours, displayed in your endless jokes and (mainly unprintable) limericks. The problem world will assuredly miss you.

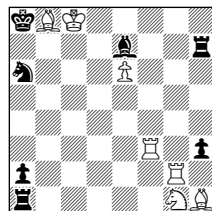# MEMORIES OF MICHAEL LIPTON (1937-2023), by Barry Barnes

John Rice's May *TP* front-page *In Memory of a true 'Original'* summarises Michael Lipton's brilliant academic rise (and rise) and the high honours awarded him. "Barry", he said of his CMG, "I'm half a Knight! How does *that* move?" John's selection from Michael's chess problems in this July issue enables me to make a more personal tribute of memories (only two problems) of our mutual friend.

In 1955, I raced up the steps to the fourth floor of an already faded St Bride's Institute, London, to attend my first BCPS meeting. I overtook and briefly acknowledged an elderly gentleman I could not have known was the BCPS President, A.C.Challenger (1872-1956). With everyone assembled, introductions were made, and my apology to ACC was graciously accepted. My *faux-pas* was rewarded by a lifetime's friendship with Michael Lipton *and* John Rice both in attendance. We were 18.

I was soon to find out that a young and iconoclastic Michael Lipton would bring (necessary) change to the BCPS. He had joined the BCPS when he was 13! The no less iconoclastic *TP* editor, C.S.Kipping, shared with the early-teenage Michael researches such as *Black Knight Grab in Miniature, #3s* (*TP* May 1952). Michael's passion for Miniatures and/or the most economical expression of chess problem ideas began then. No-one was better qualified to write his *The Scope of the Orthodox Miniature* (*TP*s May-September 2000). Aged 17, he gave a weighty BCPS Lecture, The *Herpai-Anti-Bristol* (*TP* September 1954). His further *TP* March 1957 Lecture, *The Modern German Two-Mover* called for an "agonising reappraisal of our (BCPS) short-comings". That caused fireworks! Undaunted, he published *Perpetual Revolution – The British Two-mover* in the Yugoslav *problem* and it was to that (former) country he took himself to rub shoulders with the 'greats' – Loshinski, Ellerman, Mansfield and a host of others – at the FIDE Piran Problem Congress 1958. His report is in *TP* May 1959. By the early '60s, Michael was editing the problem sections of *Correspondence Chess* and *Sunday Citizen*. He masterminded the highly successful BCPS Ring Tourneys (1957-1967) for recognition of prize-worthy originals being published then in at least four British national newspapers as well as the *Busmen's Chess Review*, *The Tablet*, *The Field* and *The Spectator*.

1 M.Lipton & B.P.Barnes
5 HM *Shakhmaty v SSSR* 1960

#2

Early memories include being invited by Michael to a gathering at his home in Kilburn. I was asked to open a bottle of champagne. His father read my expression of helplessness – "Don't worry. There's a case of it in the other room – go in there and practise"! I was astonished that Michael's father understood and praised the joint **1**, a *half-battery* (a theme which Michael popularised in this country). With its unprovided checks 1…Rc1+ and 1…Rh8+, it was anathema to most in a staid BCPS. Michael pushed at boundaries for the rest of his life. 1.Rxa2? (>2.Rf~) 1…Rh8+ 2.Rf8; 1…Rh5 2.Rf5; 1…Rh4 2.Rf4; 1…Rg7 2.Rg3; 1…Rc1+ 2.Rc3; 1…Rxa2 2.Rf2; 1…Rxg1 2.Rxa6; 1…B~ 2.Rf7; but 1…Bf6! 1.Rg7? Rxg1! 1.Ra3? B~ 2.Rg7, but 1…Bg5! 1.Rf7? (>2.Rg~) 1…Rh8+ 2.Rg8; 1…Rh5 2.Rg5; 1…Rh4 2.Rg4; 1…Rb1 2.Rb2; 1…Rc1+ 2.Rc2; 1…Rd1 2.Rd2; 1…Re1 2.Re2; 1…Rf1 2.Rf2; 1…Rxg1 2.Rxg1; 1…hxg2 2.Bxg2; but 1…Rxf7! **1.Rf6!** (>2.Rg~) etc.
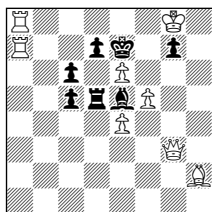
In the very early '60s, and in the company of Michael's Merle and my Jean, Michael – now a Lecturer in Economics – gave me an impassioned lecture on the inadvisability of my buying anything on hire-purchase. Merle (formidable, even then) told Michael sharply that he wasn't wrong, but that ordinary people on limited incomes (me) sometimes had no alternative but to pay for goods by instalments. He meant well! *No* thanks to Michael, I nearly lost my bride-to-be after he introduced me to the many Indian restaurants in Drummond Street near Euston Station. To impress Jean, I ordered a hot curry. So hot was it that she literally couldn't speak – and then wouldn't. With John and me in tow, Michael was bowed into a prestigious Gentlemen's Club in London – only for us all to be bowed out again as soon as we sat on soft leather and produced chess problem papers: "Gentlemen, no business is permitted here: this Club is for your *leisure*". Without forewarning, Michael, John and I descended on A.R (Bob).Gooderson's house in the shadow of the South Downs, and were pointedly asked to *listen* to the Proms being broadcast on the wireless (radio) before we spoke one word (hours later) about chess problems. Soon afterwards, we were on the radio! Michael, with his Balliol/All Souls connections, persuaded Terence Tiller, a producer at the BBC, to include chess problems in what would become TT's *Chess Treasury of the Air* (Penguin 1966). Michael waxed: I waffled. A touch earlier in 1965, the three of us had sat at my kitchen table to start *The Two-move Chess Problem: Tradition & Development* (JMR/ML/BPB Faber, 1966). Problem-theory of which we were all uncertain, we invented…

Understandably under-played by John Rice on the May *TP* cover was another of Michael's great talents – his instant ability to lampoon the ridiculous. John and I both guard his password-protected Limericks. Often rude, but always clever and joyful, they are not for the faint-hearted. They would make a niche market book! He was witty and erudite. Our 'in' jokes continued until the very end.

1

D Set 1…Bg7 2.Bxd7; 1…Rg7 2.Rxf6. **1.Rg7?** (>2.Bxd7,Rxf6); 1…Sc6 2.Sd6; 1…Qxe4+ 2.dxe4; 1…Sxd3! **1.Rc6?** (>2.Sd6) Bg7!; **1.Bc6?** (>2.Sd6) Rg7!; **1.Qc6!** (>2.Sd6) 1…Bg7 2.Qxd7; 1…Rg7 2.Qxf6; 1…Qxe4 2.Qxe4. A pretty scheme, with set Grimshaw, a Nowotny try, white Grimshaw tries refuted by the black Grimshaw, and changed mates post-key. Can it tolerate the wR and wB playing no part in the actual play?

F Andrei Lobusov
1 Pr *NZZ* 1979-80

#3

D Reto List
NZZ 27th June 1980

#2

E Milan Vukcevich
NZZ 30th November 1979

#3

E 1.Qe6 (>2.Qf5 >3.Se6,e6) 1…Rf5, B~ 2.Qd5+ Sxd5 3.Se6; 1…Bf5 2.Qc4+ Qxc4 3.e6; 1…c4 2.d7 (>3.Qb6) 2…Kc5 3.Qd6; 2…Qxd2 3.Qxc4; 2…Bxe6 3.Sxe6; 2…Sd5 3.Qxd5; 2…Sc6 3.Qd5,Qd6. Moves to the threat square defend by preparing checks, and lead to neatly differentiated square-vacating Q sacrifices.

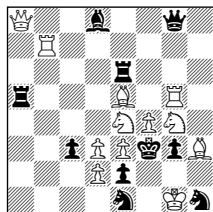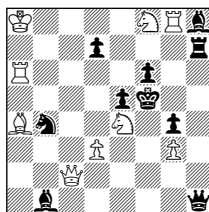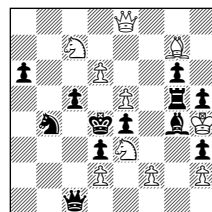**F** Set 1…Qxg5 2.Re7 **A** (>3.Sxg5) 2…g2 3.Sh2; 1…Bxg5 2.Rg7 **B** (>3.Sxg5) 2…g2 3.Sh2. **1.Bf6?** (>2.Se5+ either Rxe5 3.Bg4) 1…Rxg5 2.Rg7 **B** (>3.Sxg5) 2…g2 3.Sh2; 2…Rxe4 3.Qxe4; 1…Qxg5 2.Rb5 **C** (>3.Sxg5) 2…g2 3.Sh2; 2…Rxe4 3.Qxe4; 1…Sf2! **1.Bg7!** (>2.Se5+ either Rxe5 3.Bg4) 1…Bxg5 2.Rb5 **C** (>3.Sxg5) 2…g2 3.Sh2; 2…Rxe4 3.Qxe4,Se5; 1…Rxg5 2.Re7 **A** (>3.Sxg5) 2…g2 3.Sh2; 2…Rxe4 3.Qxe4. A clear scheme of cyclic shut-offs.

SYNTHETICS, edited by Zoran Gavrilovski

P. fah 137 (Poshta 2), Skopje MK-1001, North Macedonia

<zoran.gavrilovski@gmail.com>

Synthetic 380: Selfmate in two moves: **1.Re6!** (>2.e4+ Bxe4#), 1...cxd4 2.Qxf4+ Bxf4#, 1...Rxf2 2.Be4+ Bxe4#, 1...Sf3 2.Qd3+ Bxd3#.

**Synthetic 377**: No improvement.

SYNTHETICS SOLVING LADDER 2022

Synthetic	371	372	373	374	375	376a	376b	Year	Total
Maximum	**12**	**12**	**12**	**12**	**12**	**20**	**20**	**100**	
J.A.C.Alonso III	12	12	12	12	12	20		80	132.5
B.Chamberlain VII	12	12	12	11.5	12	20	19.5	99	**218**
M.Cioflâncă		12	12	12	12			48	48
S.Emmerson I		12						12	124
D.Johnston II	11.5	12	10	12	12	20	19	96.5	157
A.Kay XIX	6	12	7	12	7	12	7	63	181
S.Manikumar		11						11	70
T.Maraffai		11		12	12	20	18	73	145.5
C.G.S.Narayanan I		12						12	19
J.Matlak II		12	12	12	12	20	20	88	196.5
S.Radović II	12	12	12	12	12	20	20	100	**227**
N.Stolev	12	12	8		12			44	**232**
S.Taylor III	12	12	12	12	12	20	20	100	182
M.Uris II	12	12	12	12	12	20	20	100	136.5
N.Velmurugan I	12	12	12					36	57.5
R.Vieira I	12	12	12	12	12	20	20	100	110.5
P.Žuvić V	12	12	12	12	12	20	20	100	107.5

377 Valery Gurov
1 Pl Ukraine - Russia - Macedonia 2008-09

H#2 1.Ra5, 1.Qh4, 1.e2

2022 Championship: Congratulations to the winners **Srećko Radović**, **Stephen Taylor**, **Miguel Uris**, **Ricardo de Mattos Vieira** and **Predrag Žuvić**.

Ladder Ascents (1 ascent = 200 points): B.Chamberlain (VIII), S.Radović (III), N.Stolev (I).
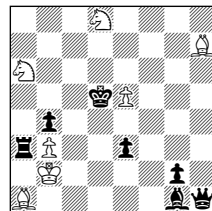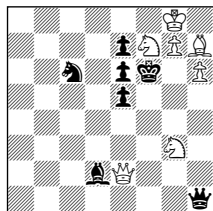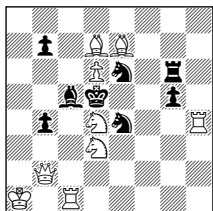
CHAMPIONSHIP ORIGINALS

C12074 Barry Barnes

#2 vvvv

**C12075 Alexey Gasparyan**
(Armenia)

#2 vvvv

TWOMOVERS: Kabe Moen, 5483 Park Avenue, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, 35406, USA (<kabemoen@gmail.com>)

THREE- and MOREMOVERS: Jim Grevatt, Lazybed, Headley Fields, Headley, Hants, GU35 8PS (<jim.grevatt@btinternet.com>)

Solutions to: Geoff Hicks, 6 Garstons Road, Fareham, Hampshire PO14 4EG (<g.hicks@woodhicks.co.uk>) by 31st December. Send comments by 15th November.

Judges for 2023: #2 **Zoran Gavrilovski**
#3 **Vlaicu Crişan**   #n **Jorma Paavilainen**

C12076 C.G.S.Narayanan
(India)
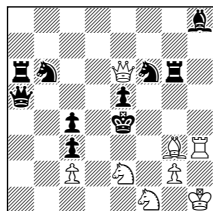
#2 v

C12077 Andreas Witt
(Germany)
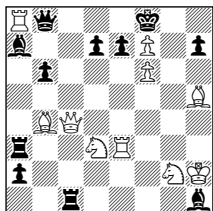
#2 vvvvvv (wK in check)

C12078 Charles Ouellet
(Canada)
in memory of Michael Lipton
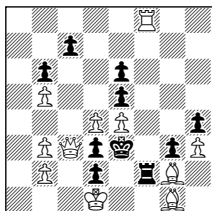
#2* vvv

**C12079
Luis Gómez Palazón**
(Spain)
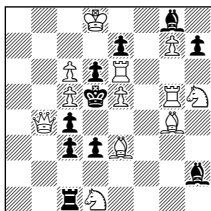
#2 vv

C12080 C.G.S.Narayanan
(India)
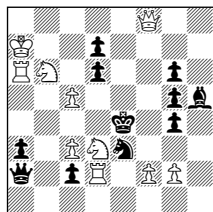
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**C12081 Hidajat Maruta &
Oey Gien Tiong**
(Indonesia)
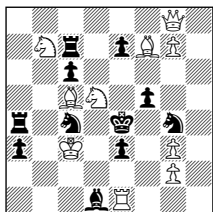
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C12082 Alexey Gasparyan
(Armenia)
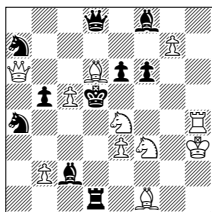
#3

C12083 Toshiji Kawagoe
(Japan)
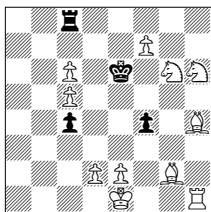
#3

**C12084
Petrašin Petrašinović**
(Serbia)
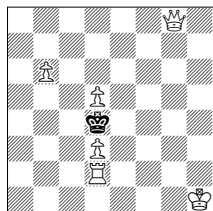
#4

C12085 Mike Prcic
(USA)
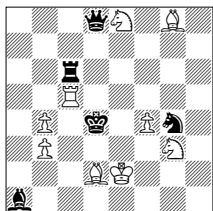
#4

C12086 Rolf Uppström
(Sweden)
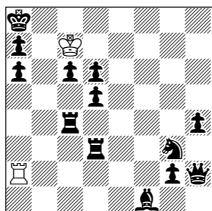
#8

C12087 Udo Marks
(Germany)
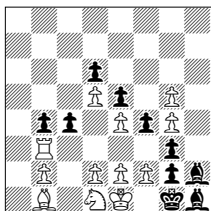
#18

Twomovers: We begin with a lightweight problem that adds a nice feature to a recently fashionable idea. There are several nice changes to discover in **C12075**, **C12076**, **C12077** and **C12079**. Yes, the wK is in check in the diagram of **C12077**. Exploring all the possible ways for White to counter this check and the subsequent play should leave you pleasantly surprised. **C12078** is inspired by Michael's article in *The Problemist Supplement* March 2021, p.147, in which Michael says "without fairy pieces or conditions, we can push the boundaries of the orthodox two-mover".

<div align="right">KM</div>

Three- and moremovers: First, an extreme task worked by British and Indian composers some 40 years ago, but now in a new setting. Welcome to Oey, working with Maruta who last featured 5 years ago. A good theme from Gasparyan, last featured 7 years ago. Welcome in this column to Toshiji Kawagoe with an improvement on a setting in a recent Supplement.

Petrašin continues his series of problems with give-and-take keys and ultra economy. Mike Prcic has a most unusual idea. Uppström continues his series of white minimals. Marks sets a series of stalemate traps.
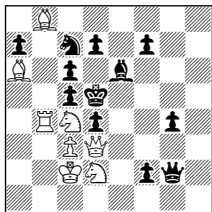
<div align="right">JGG</div>

SOLUTIONS (January)

C12036 (Barnes) 1.Qe3? (>2.S6e7) Bf6! **1.Qe2!** (>2.Qxg4) Kxg6/dxe2/Bxd1/Sf6/Sf4/Se6+ 2.Qe4/Bxc2/Qxd3/S8e7/S6e7/Qxe6. A traditional problem with a flight giving sacrificial key. It's nice how the threat from the try reappears and both knights mate on e7 (KM). Reciprocal capture and Zilahi themes (R.Łazowski). I had not heard of the Zilahi theme before but, by good fortune, I came across a definition in Peter Wong's *Glossary of Chess Problem Terms* as "a helpmate theme in which two white pieces exchange their functions of getting captured and giving mate." It strikes me that this is exactly what Barry has achieved in direct mate form and very nicely done too (G.K.Hicks).

C12036

#2

C12037 (Tkachenko) 1.c5? (>2.Qe6 **A**) but 1…d5 **a**! and 1…Bxc3 **b**! 1.Ba1? (>2.Qe3 **B**) but 1…d5 **a**! and 1...Bc3 **b**! 1.Kd3? (2>Bxd4) 1…d5 **a** 2.Qb8 and 1…Bxc3 **b** 2.Qxc3 but 1…a1=Q! **1.Qb6!** (>2.Qxd4) 1…d5 **a** 2.Qe6 **A**; 1…Bxc3 **b** 2.Qe3 **B**; 1.Rh4 2.Rf5. The author claims to show a Dombrovskis and Hannelius theme, which is technically correct. However, this is somewhat muted by the unconventional double refutations. The flight-taking try also leads to changed mates for these defences (KM). I was completely flummoxed by this because I did not pursue lines with double refutations. For me, the solver is being put in an impossible position in such settings having to second guess when convention is to be disregarded. Letting this kind of problem 'speak for itself' is a non-starter! I doubt if anyone will be surprised to know that I have not received a single solver comment for this problem (GKH).

C12037

#2

C12038

#2

C12038 (Ouellet) 1…cxb4 2.Qxd4. 1.Rb5 (>2.Qxd4) Sxb5/Qe4/Bf5/cxb5 2.Se3/Qxe4/Qxf5/Bb7. The problem shows an AB-BC-CD-DA cycle of defence motivations where A=unpin, B=direct guard, C=pin and D=unblock. The set mate returns as a threat. It's not my favourite theme but it is nicely done. The original matrix by Svitek, published in *Troll* 2019 has slightly worse white economy and a double threat (KM). The only solver comment received for this completely misunderstood the composer's idea (GKH).

C12039 (Yakimovich) 1.Qc3? (>2.Rf4) e5/Sd4/bxc3 2.Sd6/Qxd4/Saxc3 but 1…d4! 1.Qc5? (>2.Qxe7) e5/d4/Sd4/Sxc5 2.Sd6/Rf4/Qxd4/Sxc5 but 1…Sc7!

1.Qe8! (>2.Qxe7) 1…e5/d4,Sd4/e6/Sc7,Sc5 2.Rf4/Sd6/Qxe6/S(x)c5. A serious multi-phase problem with several changed mates but the reciprocal change stands out to me (KM). The try 1.Qc3? has relatively little connection with the other phases. But the other try and solution lead to reciprocal change of mates after 1…e5/d4 (GKH).

C12040 (Paslack) 1.f4? (>2.Be2) Bxf6 2.Qxh7 but 1…dxc4! 1.Bf4? (>2.Se5) Bxf6 2.Qxh7 but 1…gxf2! **1.g6!** (>2.Qf5) dxc4/gxf2/Bxg6/Sxc3 2.Bf4/f4/Bxg6/Rd2. A clear example of the Banny

C12039

#2

C12040

#2

C12041

#2

C12043
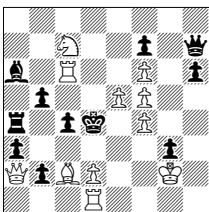
#3

C12044

#5

C12045

#7

C12047

#12

theme: 1A? a! 1.B? b! 1.Key! a/b 2.B/A. The way the lead battery pieces interfere with each other on f4 is a nice touch (KM). Good Banny theme (RŁ) A clever and pretty mechanism to demonstrate the Banny reversal. A joy to solve (GKH).

C12041 (Moen) 1.Sxc3? (>2.Qb5) Bxc3/Sd4(Sa7) 2.Rd4/Qxb4 but 1…Qd5! 1.Sd4? (>2.Qb5) Kd5/Qd5/Bc5/Sxd4 2.Qxc6/Rxd2/Qxb3/Rxd4 but 1…Sa7! **1.Rd5!** (>2.Qb5) Kxd5/Qxd5/Bc5/Sd4 2.Sf4/Sd4/Rxc5/Rxd4. The half-battery is well-worked; hopefully, I have found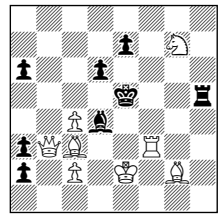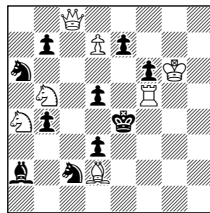 some original content. (KM) Good changed mates (RŁ) A familiar battery and key but nonetheless some interesting changed mates (GKH).

C12042

#3

C12042 (Lyubashevsky and Makaronez) 1.Rd1 (>2.Sc4+ Bxc4/Rxc4 3.Qd4/Qd5) Re4 2.Qd5+ Bxd5 3.Rxd5; 1…Rxd6 2.Qxd6+; 1…Rxe7 2.Bxe7+; 1…Rf6 Bxf4+. Nowotny threat, with one defence crossing the junction square and three giving the bK a bolt-hole (JGG). Rather obvious key introduces a Nowotny threat. Defence 1…Re4 passes the critical square but fails to a self block and vacation of e6 provides three more variations (GKH).

C12043 (Aliovsadzade) 1.Qb1 (>2.Rh1 ~ 3.Qg1) 1…Qxf5 2.Bxf5 ~ 3.Qe4; 1…Bb7 2.Sxb5+ Kd5 3.Be4; 1...Rb4 2.Rd6+ Kc5 3.Sxa6; 1…a2 2 Qxb2+ c3 3.Qxc3. The venerable Bristol theme doubled, with extra variations. In the original, the bK was on c5 and control of b6 was critical (JGG). For me, the second Bristol 2.Bxf5 is not pure as it also prevents the bQ from direct defence Qh3+ (GKH).

C12044 (Paizis) Tries 1.Rh2/Rh3? fxg3/f3! **1.Bg1!** fxg3 2.Rh3 g2 3.Re3 Ka7 4.Re8+ Ka6 5.Ra8 and 3…Kb6 4.Re7+ Ka6 5.Ra7; 1…f3 2.Rh2 f2+ 3.Rxf2 Ka7 4.Rf8+ Ka6 5.Ra8 and 3…Kb6 4.Rf7+ Ka6 5.Ra7. The bP has to be forced to choose, before the wR can move (JGG). Interest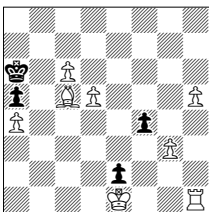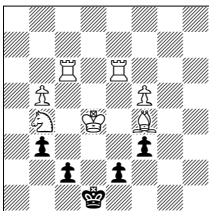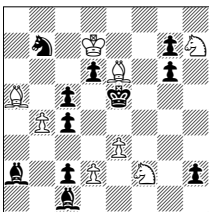ing doubling of the stalemate avoidance strategy leading to four distinct fourth-move arrivals. At move 5 the mates are repeated but the moves (i.e. from departure to arrival) differ. I will be surprised if this setting escapes at least partial anticipation (GKH).

C12045 (Palomo) 1.Sd3! b2 2.Sf2+ Ke1 3.Rh6 Kxf2 4.Be3+ Kf1 5.Rh1+ Kg2 (best) 6.Rg1+ Kh3 7.Rh6; 3…c1Q 4.Sd3+ Kf1 5.Rh1+ Kg2 6.Rg6+ Kxh1 7.Sf2. 1…f2 2.Sxf2+ Ke1 3.Sd3+ Kf1 4.Re3 c1Q (4…e1Q 5.Rxe1+ Kg2 6.Rg6+ Kh3 7.Rh1) 5.Rf3+ Kg2 6.Rg6+ Kxf3 7.Rg3; 3…Kd1 4.Kc3 c1Q+ 5.Bxc1 b2 6.Bxb2 (or Kxb2) e1Q+ 7.Rxe1. An unusual picture problem (JGG). It is always difficult to get interesting play in a shape problem but here there is a surprising amount of variety and several full length lines achieved. A pity about the dual continuation at move 6 (indicated above) and a closer look reveals that the wPs at b5 and f5 are camouflage, needed for the shape but not the content (GKH).

C12046 (Ehlers) 1.Rc2+ Kd1 2.Rxc4+ Kd2 3.Rc2+ Kd1 4.Rxc5+ Kd2 5.Rc2+ Kd1 6.Rc6+ Kd2 7.Bf4 Rhxf4/Rfxf4 8.Sf3/Se4+ 9.Sexd4/Sf3. Foreplan to prevent 7.Qa8! which would defeat a Plachutta interference (JGG). White has to block the bQ's defence to e4 and f3 by getting his R to c6. Then 7.Bf4 Plachutta works (GKH).

C12046

#9

C12047 (Schmitt) 1.Sg5 Kf6 2.Sge4+ Ke5 3.b5 Sxa5 4.Sxd6 Kf6 5.Sde4+ Ke5 6.Sxc5 Kf6 7.Sce4+ Ke5 8.Sg5 Kf6 9.Sh7+ Ke5 10.d4+ cxd4 ep. 11.Sg4+ Ke4 12.Sg5 model. Very subtle wS moves to eliminate bPc5 and then allow 10.d4+ cxd4 ep which blocks d3 (JGG). White's planned mating net 1.Sg4 Ke4 2.Sg5 can only work if bK's escape via d3 is stopped. To do it, w needs to decoy the bSb7 from its defensive duties before removing bPc5 so that wP>d4 forces the ep capture that blocks d3. When this is achieved the mating net works at move 11. To top it off, the final position is a centre-board model. Another stunning achievement by this composer (GKH).
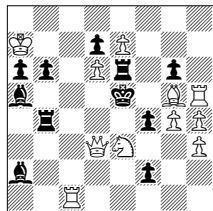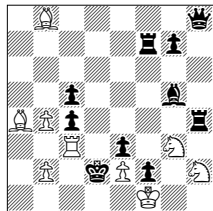
SOLUTIONS OF PROBLEMS FROM WBCSC 2023 (p.134 and p.159)

A 1.Qe4? (>2.Qxe5,Qd5,Qb4) 1…Qb3! 1.Qe6? (>2.Qxe5,Qd5) 1…Qb3 2.Qc8; 1…Se3 2.Sd3; 1…Qf3! 1.Qd3? (>2.Qd5) 1…Qf3 2.Se6; 1…e6 2.Qd6; 1…Se3! 1.Qg4? (>2.Se6) 1…Qb3 2.Qc8; 1…Qxg4 2.Sd3; 1…Rh6! **1.Qg3!** (>2.Sd3) 1…Qxg3 2.Se6; 1…Qd7,Qf5 2.Qc3; 1…e4,exf4 2.Bd4.

B 1.Qg7! Qf7+ 2.Qxf7 Rg1 3.Qc4+ Kd1 4.Qxe4 Rg3+ 5.Kb2+ Ke1 6.Bd1! Re3 7.Qh1+ Kf2 8.Qh2+ Kf1 9.Bxe2+ Rxe2 10.Qh1+ Kf2 11.Kc2 wins.

C 1.Bf7 Kf3 2.Bd5+ Ke2 3.Ke4 Sf5 4.Bd4 Sd6#; 1.Be4 Bg1+ 2.Ke5 Kg5 3.Be3+ Kh5 4.Kf4 Bh2#; 1.Bc5 Bg1+ 2.Ke5 Sf3+ 3.Kf6 Sg5 4.Be7 Bd4#.

D 1.Kb7! (>2.Sb5+ Kd5 3.Qc5+ Kxc5 4.Re5) 1…Be4+ 2.Rxe4+ Kd3/Kxe4 3.Qd2+/Qe1+; 1…Sd6+ 2.Qxd6+ Kc3 3.Sb5+ Kb3 4.Qb4; 1…Qxa3 2.Be3+ Ke4,Ke5 3.Bf4+; 1…Be2 2.Qd2+ Ke5/Bd3 3.Qxg5+/Re4+.

E 1.Rg2! (>2.Sxe7+ Kxf6 3.Sg8+ Kf5 4.Qe6+ Bxe6#) 1…Sd3 2.Qxc8+ Re6 3.Sh6+ Kxf6 4.Rf4+ Sxf4#; 1…Sc2 2.Rf2+ Rf4 3.Rh5+ Kg4 4.Se3+ Sxe3#.

HELPMATES SOLVING LADDER 2022

|	Jan	Mar	May	Jul	Sep	Nov	Year	Total
Maxima	**129**	**122**	**125**	**127**	**123**	**124**	**750**	
D.S.Barnes XXII	70	87	63	86	35	47	388	**758**
L.S.Blackstock XVI	129	122	125	127	123	124	750	**1404**
C.R.Blanden VIII	122	115	107	94	104	96	638	**902**
J.de Boer XIII	126	122	125	127	123	124	747	**773**
A.Bradnam	5	24	11	12	14	26	92	174
F.Cockerill XII	-	55	122	-	-	27	204	**887**
E.Davies	-	-	97	103	110	85	395	395
T.Fujiwara	-	65	50	60	55	-	230	293
S.Jacob V	129	122	125	124	119	120	739	**915**
J.Junnor VIII	108	95	73	102	99	76	553	**1177**
R.Łazowski XX	129	122	125	127	123	124	750	**1027**
T.Maraffai II	112	105	118	113	103	95	646	**1018**
R.C.Mylward XI	83	122	-	-	-	-	205	**839**
D.-I.Nicula VIII	129	122	118	127	123	124	743	**882**
S.Pantos II	111	60	122	117	68	57	535	**801**
V.Ramaswamy IX	125	-	-	-	-	-	125	524
M.A.Ridley XI	11	18	21	10	11	15	86	266
S.J.G.Taylor XX	129	122	125	127	123	124	750	**878**
C.M.B.Tylor VII	55	13	66	60	41	27	262	567

Occasional solvers: R.Dunn 19; H.Kalafut 129 (now **IV** - 424); and E.Schulze 49.

This year, by chance, the number of points available exactly matched the number required for an ascent (750). Even allowing for the fact that these days there are 20 originals for solving in every issue, the total points were still 18 up on those for the 120 originals the previous year (when the maximum score was 232). But even when there are more points available it still requires great skill and effort on the part of our intrepid solvers to harvest so many points. I know that back in the days when I was solver I'd have been daunted by recent sets, in which the 20 problems culminate in a large number of long problems. (Increasing skill and increasing computer assistance, combined with the difficulty in finding original things to say in shorter problems, lead composers more and more into long problems, which are sometimes very demanding for solvers.) Congratulations for ascents, then, to: **XXIII** D.S.Barnes; **XXI** R.Łazowski and S.J.G.Taylor; **XVII** L.S.Blackstock; **XIV** J. de Boer; **XIII** F.Cockerill; **XII** R.C.Mylward; **IX** C.R.Blanden, J.Junnor and D.-I. Nicula; **VI** S.Jacob; and **III** T.Maraffai and S.Pantos. In this connection, a word of apology to Dinu-Ioan Nicula – in 2017 I somehow deleted his pre-2017 points, now happily restored, entailing a meteoric rise from his ladder score published 12 months ago! Congratulations in particular to the three solvers who achieved 100% scores, **Les Blackstock**, **Romuald Łazowski** and **Stephen Taylor**. Ever a contributor of pointed comments and a scourge of units composers have left unnecessarily in their diagrams, **Les Blackstock** is this year's champion solver. Well done to him, but also well done to all those whose names appear.
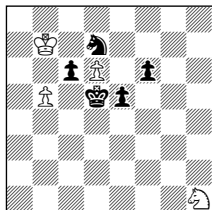
E1377 Serhiy Didukh
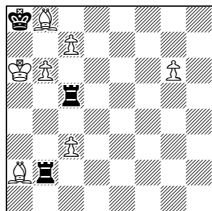(Ukraine)
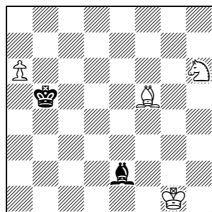
Win

E1378 John Nunn
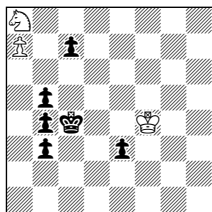
Win

**E1379 Marcel Doré &
Yochanan Afek**
(France / Israel)

Win

E1380 Guus Rol
(Netherlands)

Win

STUDIES, edited by Yochanan Afek

Jacob van Lennepstraat 49, 1053 HC Amsterdam, Netherlands

email: afekchess@gmail.com

Judge for 2023: **Árpád Rusz**

Originals: Once again we host a combative selection with just one peaceful conclusion. **E1377** is a logical super-miniature both in form and content, demonstrating a paradoxical benefit from tempi loss: **1.Kf2!** The bishop is forced to c4 and d5 where it can be attacked by the knight 1.a7? Bf3 2.Sf7 Kb6 is just a draw **1...Bc4 2.a7 Bd5 3.Sg8! Ka6** After 3...Kb6 4.Se7 Bh1 5.Kg1!! Bf3 6.Bg4! Be4 7.Sc8+ one tempo is lost by the king in check – 7...Kc7 8.Kf2 another by the misplaced bishop – 8...Bh1 9.Ke3 Kb7 10.Kd4 and we are in the main line **4.Se7 Bh1 5.Kg1!!** The idea behind this waste of two moves is to make the other side waste three moves and thus gain a tempo for the king's walk to b6. Black has to delay his plan Kb7-a8 because his bishop gets decoyed to bad squares. In the meantime 5.Sc8? Kb7 6.Ke3 Ka8 7.Kd4 Bb7 8.Kc5 (8.Be4 Bxe4 is a known fortress) 8...Bxc8 draws **5...Bf3** (One) **6.Bg4! Be4** 6...Bb7 blocks the entrance to the corner after 7.Sc8 **7.Sc8 Bc6** As 7...Kb7 is met by the fork 8.Sd6+ **8.Bd7! Bf3 9.Kf2 Bh1** (Three) **10.Ke3 Kb7 11.Kd4** Heading for a5 to support Bb5–Ba6+–Kb6 even at the price of the knight **11...Ka8 12.Kc5 Bb7 13.Kb6 Bxc8** Or else the knight will mate in no time **14.Bc6+ Bb7 15.Bxb7#** See Seletsky's **A** below as to how it inspired the composer to create this gem.

E1378 is the first British entry in our current tourney, and hopefully not the last one. Enjoy a subtle and seemingly new encounter by a queen against an infantry unit: **1.Sb6+ cxb6 2.a8Q b2** After 2...e2 3.Qe4+ Kc3 4.Qxe2 b2 5.Qd1 White wins easily **3.Qa2+!** 3.Qe4+? Kb3! 4.Kxe3 Ka2 5.Qa8+ Kb3! 6.Qg8+ Ka3! 7.Qg6 Ka2 8.Qg2 (8.Qc2 Ka1) 8...Ka3 only draws, as does 3.Qg8+? Kc3 4.Qa2 e2 5.Qb1 e1Q 6.Qxe1+ Kc2 7.Qe2+ Kb3! Draw **3...Kc3 4.Kf3!** Alternatively 4.Qb1? e2! 5.Ke3 e1Q+ 6.Qxe1+ Kc2! 7.Qd2+ Kb3 8.Qd5+ Ka3! 9.Qd1 Ka2 Just draws. Thematic try 4.Kxe3? Kc2 reaches a reciprocal zugzwang with White to play; it's a draw after 5.Ke2 (5.Kd4? even loses after 5...b3) 5...b3 because the winning manoeuvre in the main line only works when the second rank is not blocked by the white king **4...e2** 4...Kc2 5.Kxe3 transposes **5.Kxe2 Kc2** Or else Qb1 **6.Ke3!** It's the same reciprocal zugzwang, however with Black to play! **6...b3** 6...Kc1 is met by 7.Qd5! wins; for example, 7...Kc2 8.Qe4+ Kc1 9.Qc6+ Kd1 10.Qxb5 b1Q 11.Qe2+ Kc1 12.Qd2# **7.Qa8!** Switchback! **7...b1Q** After 7...b1S White wins on material, for example, 8.Kd4 b2 9.Qe4+ winning easily **8.Qg2+ Kc3** Or 8...Kc1 9.Qd2# **9.Qd2+ Kc4 10.Qd4#**

The hero of the French-Israeli co-production (**E1379**) is an agile knight that rushes from exile to play a key role in both attack and defence: **1.Kc7!** 1.bxc6? Kxd6 2.c7 Sc5+ Or in reversed order, draws **1...Sc5 2.b6** 2.bxc6? Sa6+ /Se6+ 3.Kd7 Sc5+ is a positional draw **2...Sa6+** 2...Ke6 allows the white knight the time to join the battle by e.g. 3.Sg3 Sa6+ 4.Kxc6 Sb8+ 5.Kc7 Sa6+ 6.Kb7 Sb4 7.Sf5 wins, whereas 2...Se6+ may even accelerate the defeat after 3.Kc8! Kxd6 4.b7 queening **3.Kd7 Sc5+ 4.Ke7 Sb7 5.d7 c5 6.Sg3!** 6.Sf2? c4 7.Sd1 Kc6 just draws **6...c4 7.Sf5! c3 8.Sd6 Sa5! 9.Ke8! Sc6** As 9...c2 loses to 10.d8Q c1Q 11.Sb7+ / Sc4+ wins **10.Sf5!** The agile knight goes back to defence! **10...c2 11.Se3+ Kc5 12.Sxc2 Kxb6 13.Sb4!** Attacking again. **13...Sxb4 14.d8Q+** The game is finally over.

E1380 by our Dutch guest, is a dramatic struggle for promotion ending up in a surprising aristocratic domination: **1.Be6!** 1.Bd5+? allows 1...Rxd5 2.b7+ Rxb7 3.c8Q Ra5+! 4.Kxa5 Rb5+ 5.Ka6 Rb6+ 6.Ka5 Rb5+ 7.Ka4 Rb4+ 8.Ka3 Rb3+ with perpetual check or stalemate! **1...Rb1 2.b7+! Rxb7 3.c8R!!** The minor promotion avoids the perpetual check after 3.c8Q? Ra5+ 4.Kxa5 Rb5+ 5.Ka4 Rb4+ draws **3...Rxc8 4.Bxc8 Rc7! 5.g7! Rxg7 6.Bf4!** Not 6.Be5? Rg6+ 7.Kb5 Rg5 drawing **6...Rc7! 7.Bf5! Rc6+ 8.Kb5 Rxc3 9.Kb4!** And the rook is dominated in mid-board by a powerful bishop-pair.

Reciprocal zugzwang is also at the focus of the Armenian entry (**E1381**): **1.Rc7!** 1.Bc3? / Bb2? is premature owing to 1...Rd8! 2.Rc7 (2.Kf7? loses to 2...Bh5+ 3.Kxe6 Ke4 4.Rb6 Bg4+ 5.Kf7 Bxd7 wins) 2...Sxe5 3.Rc8 Rxd7 4.Rf8+ Ke4 5.Bxe5 Kxe5 6.Rxf3 Rd1 Winning **1...Rd8 2.Kf7! Bh5+!? 3.Kg7! Bf3** 3...Sxe5 Allows 4.Rc5! (The rook ending after 4.Bxe5+? Bxe5 5.Rc6 Kf4 6.Rxh5 Rxd7 is lost for White) 4...Sf3 5.Rxh5 Rxd7 6.Kf7 Sg5+ 7.Kg6 Sf3 8.Kf7 Draws **4.Kf7! Kg5! 5.Bb2!!** 5.Bc3? Kf5! is mutual zz with White to play: 6.Kg7 (6.Bb2 / Ba1? loses to 6...Bh5+ 7.Kg7 Sb4! winning) 6...Sxe5 7.Rc5 Bd5 wins **5...Kf4** Or 5...Bh5+ 6.Kg7 Bf3 (Or 6...Sb4 7.Bc3 drawing) 7.Kf7 Kf5 8.Bc3! Positional draw **6.Ba1!!** Not 6.Bc3? Kf5 wins **6...Kf5!?** Or 6...Ke3?! 7.Bc3 Kd3 8.Ba5! Bh5+ 9.Kxe6 Bg4+ 10.Kf7 Sxe5+ 11.Kxe7 Draw **7.Bc3!** Mutual zz, this time with Black to play! **7...Bh5+!? 8.Kg7 Sxe5 9.Rc5** Draw.

E1382 is an eye-catching display of the Phoenix theme: **1.Qb8!** Other attempts to activate the poorly placed white queen fail: 1.Qxb7? Qxd6 2.Qc7 Qe6! 3.Qf4 (3.Bxf6+ Qxf6 4.b7 f4! 5.Qc5 [Or 5.Qc1 Qb6 draws] 5...Qa1+ 6.Qg1 Qb2 drawing.) 3...Bxb2 4.Kh2 Qe2 5.b7 Be5 6.b8Q Bxf4+ 7.Qxf4 Qxg2+ 8.Kxg2 Stalemate!; 1.Qa3? Qd8! **a)** Neither 1...Kg5? 2.d7! Qxa3 3.Bxa3 Bd8 (3...Kf4 4.Bd6+) 4.Be7+! Bxe7 5.a4 Winning **b)** Nor 1...Bxb2? 2.g3+! Kg5 3.Qxb2 Qxd6 4.Qg7+ Qg6 5.Qxg6+ Kxg6 6.a4 wins **1...Qxb8 2.Bxf6+ Kg3 3.d7 Qf4** The only way for counterplay **4.Bh4+! Kxh4 5.d8Q+!!** The sacrificed bishop is reborn with no delay! (Phoenix!) 5.d8Q+? Kg3 6.Qc7 Kh4! 7.Qxf4 is stalemate! **5...Kg3 6.Bc7 h4 7.Kg1!** Skipping the final pitfall: after 7.a4? Kf2! 8.Bxf4 g3 Black is the one who wins.

Serhiy Didukh refers to his original **E1377** above: "I composed this super-miniature after the improvement of Seletsky's famous study (**A**) with the smothered mate, which contained several analytical lines in the intro and a 'dead' Sa7. Black can trade queens on the first move 1...Qf8 and quickly lose. But the endgame looked interesting to me because Black could hold it if the white pieces were less active. That was a starting point of my journey through different ideas in this endgame before nailing a really crazy one": **1.Qg8+!** Queen goes to g5 with check **1...Ke7** 1...Kd7 2.Be6+! Ke7 3.Qf7+ Kd8 4.a8Q+ Bxa8 5.Qd7# **2.Qg5+ Kd7 3.Sd3!** This nice move exploits the drawback of Kd7. Black must save his queen and knight. After 3.Bxb5? Qxb2+ Black draws easily **3...Qf8+** The only check left – d2 is covered by Qg5 **4.Kg1 Sxa7** 4...Sd4 loses to a skewer following 5.Sc5+ Kd6 6.Qg3+! Kxc5 7.Qa3+ wins **5.Sc5+ Kd6 6.Ba6+ Kb8 7.Qg3+!** 7.Se6? is met by 7...Qd6! 8.Qg8+ Sc8 9.Qxc8+ Ka7 draws; logical try: 7.Qe5+? is refuted by 7...Ka8 8.Bb7+ Bxb7 9.Sd7 Qg8+! La petite différence compared to the main line **7...Ka8 8.Bb7+!** 8.Se6? is effectively encountered by 8...Qf3! **8...Bxb7 9.Sd7!** Not 9.Se6? Qf7! 10.Sc7+ Kb8 11.Sa6+ Kc8 with no mate in sight **9...Qd8 10.Qb8+! Qxb8 11.Sb6#** Smothered mate following three active selfblocks! Classic!

The Italian magazine *Sinfonie Scacchistiche* dedicated its last year's tourney to the memory of the composer Pietro Rossi (1924 – 2020). **B** displays a classical theme: all 3 underpromotions in the main line: **1.Rf5+! Ke2 2.Sb3!** After 2.Re5+? Kf1 3.Se4 (3.Rf5+ Ke2 4.Sb3 is a loss of time) 3...a1Q Black wins **2...cxb3 3.Ra5 Kf2 4.b8S! Bxg6 5.e8R!** As 5.e8Q? Be4+ 6.Qxe4 a1Q+ 7.Rxa1 is stalemate! **5...Bxe8 6.a7 Bg6 7.a8B!** To avoid the same stalemate: 7.a8Q? a1Q+ 8.Rxa1 Be4+ 9.Qxe4 **7...Bd3 8.Bc6 Bf1 9.Rf5+ Ke1 10.Kg1 Bc4 11.Ra5 Kd2 12.Sd7** 12.Ra4? Bg8! 13.Sd7 Kc2 14.Sf6 Bf7 15.Kf2 Kxb2 16.Bd5 Bxd5 17.Sxd5 a1Q 18.Rxa1 Kxa1 draws. **12...Kc2 13.Sb6** [/e5] **13...Bf7 14.Bb5 Kxb2 15.Bc4 Bxc4 16.Sxc4+ Kc3 17.Ra4 b2 18.Sxb2 Kxb2 19.Kf2 a1Q 20.Rxa1 Kxa1 21.Kf3 Kb2 22.Kg4 Kc3 23.Kxh3! Kd4 24.Kxh4 Ke5 25.Kg5 Ke6 26.Kg6 Ke7 27.Kg7 Ke6 28.h4 Kf5 29.h5 Kg5 30.h6** Finally winning.

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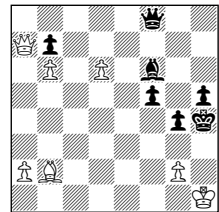
https://www.arves.org/arves/index.php/en/awards/awards-files

This and a lot more! Why not give it a go?

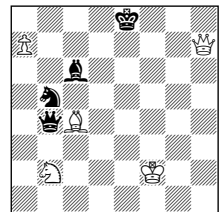**E1381 Alexey Gasparyan**
(Armenia)
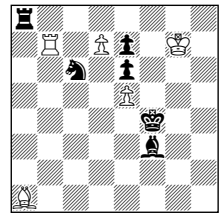
Draw

E1382
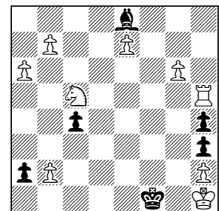**Beat Neuenschwander**
(Switzerland)

Win

A Alexander Seletsky
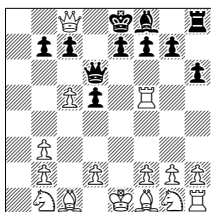1 Pr *Shakhmaty v SSSR*
(v) 1933

Win

B Jan Timman
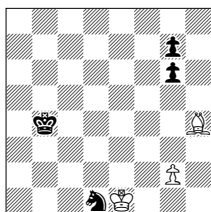1 Pr Pietro Rossi MT
2022

Win

R611   Andrew Buchanan
(Singapore)

PG 12.5   (15+11)
Game over!

R612   Paul Rāican
(Romania)

Vertical cylinder
Anticirce
Proca Retractor -16 & #1

RETROS,   Edited by Richard Dunn

11 Edinburgh Crescent, Kirton, Boston, Lincs. PE20 1JT

email: <richardjdunn2@gmail.com>

Judge for 2023-24: **Thomas Brand**

Originals: Andrew has come up with an interesting idea with **R611**; in chess problems, 'Game over' either means checkmate, stalemate, dead position (DP), draw by triple repetition (3Rep) or the 50-move rule. Clearly, in this case, it can only be 3Rep or DP, so which is it? Paul offers a Proca Retractor on a cylindrical board; as is usual with this type of Fairy Retro, the wK has to make repeated uncaptures to force Black into a position where he can be mated. Note that the wBh4 guards the a3 and a5 squares. More examples can be found in *Quartz* 55.
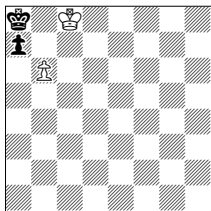
I am still desperately short of originals!

Definitions: See *A Glossary of Fairy Chess Definitions* for an explanation of Proof Game (PG n), Anticirce and Proca Retractor. **Vertical cylinder**: See the March issue for a definition.
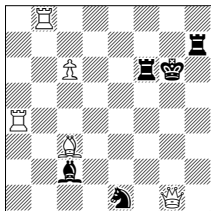
Difficulty ratings: **R611**: 3.0; **R612**: 4.0

This month's **Retrograde Analysis for Newcomers** is on p.167.

SOLUTIONS (January)

R602 (Seetharaman): (a) Uncapture Kc7xBc8 and 1.b7# (Kc7xSc8 and 1.b7+? 1…Sb6!). (b) Uncapture b6xRc7 and 1.b7# (b6xPc7? Black has no last move; b6xBc7 and 1.b7+? 1…Kb8!; b6xSc7 1.b7? not even check!). A worthy addition to the list of the other 2,334 problems that have been set for this position! (P.Fayers). More examples of Superguards can be found in the March issue of *TP* in the Fairies section of Selected Problems (RD).

R603 (Velmurugan): 1.e4 a5 2.e5 Ra6 3.e6 fxe6 4.d4 Kf7 5.d5 exd5 6.c4 dxc4 7.Qd6 exd6 8.Be3 Qg5 9.Bc5 dxc5 10.g4 Rf6 11.Bg2 Bd6 12.Bc6 dxc6 13.h4 Bf5 14.Rh3 Ke6 15.Rb3 Bd3 16.Rb4 axb4 17.Sc3 bxc3. White massacre (R.Łazowski).

R604 (Brobecker): Let's name the files s to z for the moment. We must have one wP and one bP per column, the bPs being above the wPs since no capture occurred. The first conclusion is that we have bPu7. We need a black shield on t3 to protect wRs4 from attack by bBu2 and a white shield on v2 to protect bSw1 from attack by wBu3. Only bPt3 is possible (a bS would attack the white shield on v2) and this also gives wPt2. For the same reason we have wPv2. Let's suppose that we have bPz6, then we would need a white shield on t4 to protect bPz6 from wBu3, but such a shield is not possible (wSt4 would attack bBu2), so our hypothesis is wrong and we have bPz3 and wPz2. Since wBu3 has moved, we know that wPx cannot be on x2; thus we have wPx4. We need a white shield on x1 to protect bSw1 from attack by wQy1; only wSx1 is possible (wBx1 would attack bPz3). We cannot have wPy4 (it would attack the black shield needed on x5); thus we have wPy3. We cannot have bPy4 because it would be attacked by wRs4 and no white shield can go on z4; thus we have bPy7. We need a shield to protect bRx6 from attack by wBu3; this shield cannot be on w5, so it is wKv4. From this we deduce that we have bPv6. We also need a shield to protect bPy7 from wBu3; we already saw that it won't be on t4 nor will it be on z6; thus it is wPs5. We need a shield on x5 to protect wPx4 from attack by bRx6, and only bPx5 is possible. We need a white shield on t5 or t7 to protect bPt3 from attack by wRt8. On t5, no available piece is possible (a wB would attack bRz7 since no white shield is possible on s6). So the shield is on t7 and must be a wB (wSt7 would attack bPv6). We deduce from this that we have bPs7. We only have on wS to act as a shield on the 8th rank, but with the vertical cylinder no black piece is on the 8th

R602

Superguards   (b) Pb6>c7
White just made a capture. Retract last move and #1

R604

Vertical cylinder – The board has been shifted sideways. Add all remaining units for a legal position with no unit attacking an enemy unit. Which is the a-file?
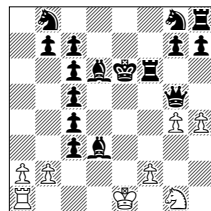
**R603**

PG 17.0   (8+16)

R604 final position

rank since wRt8 attacks both ways. So, the other black bishop has only one available square: w7. This implies bPw6. Also, due to a lack of space, the only possible square for the bQ is x7. The remaining bS cannot be on s2 or s1 because this would need wSs3 to shield it from attack by wRs4, but then wSs3 would attack bBu2. Thus, the only remaining possibility is bSu1. This implies wPw3. Finally, we need to place the remaining wS to protect bSu1 from attack by wQy1, and the only possibility is wSz1. Now we know that all bishops have moved from their starting position, so let's look at the position of the pawns on the 2nd and 7th ranks. Of all the shifts of those pawns, only the one with bPs b7, f7, h7 and wPs a2, c2, g2 can let all four bishops out. Thus, the t-file is the a-file (Composer). Fabulous puzzle – his best yet of this genre (PF).

R605 (Răican): 1.e3 b6 2.Ke2 Bb7 3.Kd3 Be4 [h7,a8=w][g2=b]+ 4.Kc4 Bxa8 5.hxg8=S Sc6 **6.Sf6#[d7=w][-f6][-d7] Qd3#[f1,c2.d2,e3=b][-d3]**+ 7.Se2 cxb1=Q 8.Qb3 **Qd3#[d2,e3=w][e2,b3=b][-b3][-d3]** 9.Kb5 **Sc3#[a2=b][-f1][-c3]**. Four checkmates in only nine moves; two are consecutive (Composer). Unsurprisingly, this defeated all our regular solvers (RD).
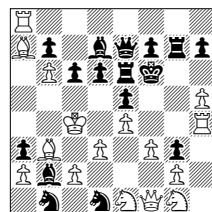
R605

R593v (Frolkin & Tkachenko): with **Qa8->a7** and **Pf6->f7** (see diagram). Retract 1.e2xSd3! Sc5-d3 2.Sc2-a1 Se6-c5 3.Sd5-c7 Sc7-e6+ White will unpromote both knights to provide Black with the necessary tempo at the crucial moment. 4.Se3-d5 Se6xBc7! The screen is uncaptured, but it is too early to retract it to b8. 5.Sg4-e3 Sc5-e6 6.Se5-g4 Se6-c5 7.Sg6-e5 Sc5-e6 8.Sh8-g6 Se6-c5 9.h7-h8=S Sc5-e6 10.h6-h7 Se6-c5 11.h5-h6 Sc5-e6 12.h4-h5 Se6-c5 13.h3-h4! Sc5-e6 14.Se3-c2 Se6-c5 15.Sg4-e3 Sc5-e6 16.Se5-g4 Se6-c5 17.Sg6-e5 Sc5-e6 18.Sh8-g6 Se6-c5 19.h7-h8=S Sc5-e6 20.h6-h7 Se6-c5 21.h5-h6 Sc5-e6 22.h4-h5 Se6-c5 23.g3xPh4! Sc5-e6 24.h2-h3! Se6-c5 (a necessary switchback, because the bS must have visited this square at least once) 25.Bb8-c7! Sc7-e6+ (switchback of bS) 26.Qa8-a7 h5-h4! The decisive tempo 27.Ka7-b6 S~-c7 and the cage is released.
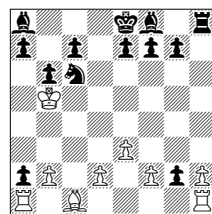
R593v
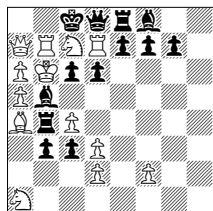
Release the position!

R556 (Weeth & Wenda, May 2020). Sadly, Dimitrij Baibikov has discovered a **dual**: …2.Ph2xBg3[g2] Bf4-g3+ 3.Pf2xRe3[f2] R~-e3+ 4.Kc3xPd4[Ke1] d5-d4+ 5.Kd2-c3 Re3-~+ 6.Ke1-d2 R~-e3+ 7.Ka7xQb7[Ke1] Rd8-d7+ 8.Be8xRa4[Bf1] Qa6-b7+ 9.Pe7-e8=B and forward 1.Pe8=BH+ Rxe8[Ra8]#. Klaus has informed me that he has been unable to find a fix. However, he has composed a new problem which incorporates the initial idea. It will be published later this year and will be dedicated to the memory of Günter who died in December 2020.

PG 9.0   (9+13)
Masand + #Remove

RETROS SOLVING LADDER 2022

	Jan	Mar	May	Jul	Sep	Nov	Year	Total
Maxima	**9**	**9**	**9**	**9**	**6**	**9**	**51**	
J.de Boer VII	9	9	9	9	3	9	48	**59**
B.Chamberlain VIII	9	3	6	9	3	3	33	40
P.Fayers I	9	6	6	9	6	6	42	**60**
H.Kalafut IV	9	-	-	-	-	-	9	12
R.Łazowski XII	6	6	6	-	3	6	27	**63**
C.Lytton V	3	-	-	3	-	-	6	**53**
T.Maraffai I	9	6	3	-	3	6	27	**57**
D-I.Nicula	3	3	6	3	3	3	21	**66**

Occasional solvers: Mark Thornton 3 (Sept); Joaquim Crusats 3 (Sept).

Three points awarded for each correct solution. Three points also awarded for finding cooks, of which there were two during the year: R593 (July; correction appears in January 2023 issue) and R599 (November). An incorrect version of R596 appeared in the September issue; points awarded for R596v published in March 2023 will be included in the 2023 ladder. Ascents (indicated in bold in the total scores) for passing 50 points were gained by **Johan de Boer** (VIII), **Peter Fayers** (II), **Romuald Łazowski** (XIII), **Cedric Lytton** (VI), **Tamás Maraffai** (II) and **Dinu-Ioan Nicula** (I). Congratulations to all, particularly to Johan, our champion solver with an almost perfect score, only missing out on R598. It is slightly disappointing to see a drop in the list of names; may I put out a plea for new solvers to join us!

SELFMATES AND REFLEXMATES, Edited by Stephen Taylor

Greenways, Cooling St., Cliffe, Rochester, ME3 7UB (email: sjgt@btinternet.com)
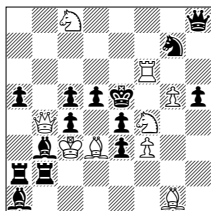
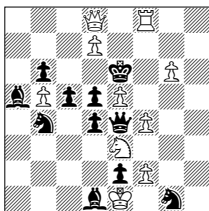Judge for 2023: **Živko Janevski**

S2950 Brian Chamberlain
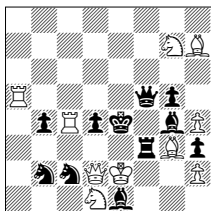
S#2

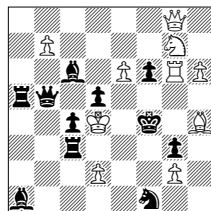**S2951 Waldemar Tura**
(Poland)

S#2
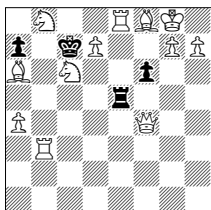
S2952 Abdelaziz Onkoud
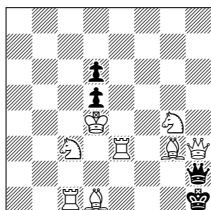(France)

S#3

S2953 Camillo Gamnitzer
(Austria)

S#4

S2954 Alexander Fica
(Czech Republic)
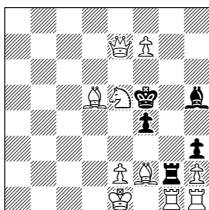
S#6 (b) Kg8>b4
(c) = (b) & Pa4>a3
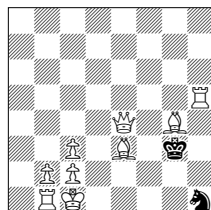
S2955 John Bowden

S#7

**S2956 Toshiji Kawagoe &
Stephen Taylor** (Japan/UK)
with thanks to Werner Keym

S#9

S2957 Jozef Holubec
(Slovakia)

S#15 (2 solutions)

Originals: Brian and Waldemar extract plenty from expertly-constructed mutual royal cages and, with admirably lucid play, I think you'll enjoy their 2-movers. Abdelaziz's very welcome first contribution to the column is likewise lucid and solver-friendly. Then we've a trio of contrasting familiar styles, typical of their respective composers. John's **S2955** is probably the easiest to solve, with fewer potential black king moves and fewer total units. A dainty 3-mover published by Werner in 2006 inspired **S2956**. Toshiji and I have added four further elements after changing one of its principal actors. Hopefully the result is still pleasant enough to tempt a range of solvers. There are **ladder points** for **S2950-S2956**.

Jozef's *non-ladder* **S2957** is *partially-tested*. With two surprising mates I suspect it'll be tricky to solve. Good luck if you try it. Though it also prompts a reminder that any comments on the problems are gratefully received: please do send them – despite perhaps only accompanying partial solution sets, or after perusing published solutions. Happy solving!

SELFMATES SOLVING LADDER 2022

	Jan	Mar	May	Jul	Sep	Nov	Year	Total
	43	**38**	**41**	**36**	**48**	**39**	**245**	
A.Bradnam	1	3	2	4	3	13	26	71
B.Chamberlain I	13	10	6	8	6	25	68	213
H.Kalafut III	43	-	-	-	-	-	43	392
J.Junnor	3	2	-	3	5	4	17	86
R.Łazowski XVI	43	35	41	36	47	39	241	**448**
C.Lytton II	20	3	6	8	6	7	50	156
T.Maraffai	15	10	5	8	5	8	51	389
D-I.Nicula IV	36	31	27	22	20	18	154	**472**
S.Pantos	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	189

Firstly, thanks indeed to the band of regular solvers who continue to send in their solutions. It was pleasing also in 2022 to welcome the return of a solver from my time as selfmates solutions editor. Perhaps, with original ideas harder to find and improved computer-checking making longer problems easier to produce, it's inevitable that solving ladders become the abode of dedicated specialists; but it would be nice nonetheless to welcome some new names too. Do give the selfmates a try! Remember: even gurus with ladder ascents in double digits started at the lowest rung a long time ago! With another impressive performance, our champion solver was once again **Romuald Łazowski**. Congratulations! Ditto, for ladder ascents, to **Romuald** (XVII) and **Dinu-Ioan Nicula** (V).

SOLUTIONS (January)

S2928 (Jordan) Set: 1…Sxe6 2.Bxc3+ Qxc3# & 1…Re3 2.Bxc3+ Rxc3#. Tries: 1.Qd5? (>2.Qxc5+) Se6 2.Bxc3+ Qxc3# but 1…Sd6! & 1.Qe5? (>2.Qxc5+) Sd6 2.Sxc4+ Sxc4# but 1…Se6!. **1.Qf5!** (>2.Qxc5+ Bxc5#) 1…Sd6 2.Sxc4+ Sxc4# 1…Se6(Sxf5) 2.Bxc3+ Qxc3#. White's queen must tread carefully to avoid upsetting the mates at c3 & c4 (Cedric Lytton). Great white sacrifices! (Romuald Łazowski) The queen acts cautiously, reaching her goal in small steps to avoid self-damage. Nice to see her capture being covered in the set play (Raul Jordan). This problem is beautifully composed (Spiros Pantos) – particularly as the wQ trilemma necessitates her initially attacking c4 whereon the threats 2.Qxc5+ and 2.Qb4+ cxb4# must be defeated simultaneously; hence Black's B/R battery (SJGT). The likely forcing moves 2.Sxc4+, 2.Qxc3+, 2.Qxc5+ & 2.Qb4+ led straightforwardly to the tries and solution (Alan Bradnam).

S2929 (Fica & Jelínek) (a) 1.Re3 e5 2.Rxe5+ Kf6 3.c3 Kg7 4.Re3+ Re5 5.b6 cxb6 6.Rd3 b5#; (b) 1.Bg7 e5 2.c3 e4 3.Qxe4+ Re5 4.Qh4+ Rg5 5.b6 cxb6 6.Bd4 b5#. Double wR switchback in (a) and simple switchbacks by wQ, wB & bR in (b) (Composers). A fine and elegant problem where, to annihilate the mobile e-pawn, each of White's set self-blocks is diverted in turn - depending on which orientation of the essential 5×5 bK trap White begins with (SJGT).

S2930 (Kočí) 1.Be7! 1…Se6? 2.Rc5+ Sxc4 3.Se4+ Sxe4#, 1…Sxd7(Sg6)? 2.Rc5+ Se5 3.Sa3 etc. −S#5; 1…a3! 2.d8S! Sd7,Sg6! 3.Rc5+ Se5 4.Sxa3 b1B,Q (or 4…b1S,R? 5.Rxe5+ Bxe5#) 5.Sxb1 ~ 6.Rxe5+ Bxe5#, if 2…a2? 3.Se6+ Sxe6 4.Rc5+ Sxc5 5.Se4+ Sxe4#. Clever and appealing multi-layered, albeit linear, logic. The bS seeks to avoid e6, whence sacrifices lie in wait at c5 & e4, but aiming for e5 White can capture it to force mate – if an earlier opening of the long diagonal hasn't allowed the wrong piece to arrive on e5 first. The subtle key is a square-vacation provision for a mechanism to force bSe6 should Black attempt to grab too many tempi with his queenside pawns… Some purists might quibble that 'cover' of White's forcing check by two pinned men is extraneous eye-candy; however, there's no obvious better method of controlling f6 & f3 anyway (SJGT).

S2931 (Răican) 1.Sd4 Kh7 2.Rfc5+ Kg7 3.Rb3 Kf8 4.Rf5+ Kg7 5.Kc3 Kh7 6.Rc5+ Kg7 7.Bd3 Kf8 8.Rc6+ Kg7 9.Sf5+ Kh7+ 10.Sg7+ Kxg7 11.f8S+ Kg8#. The striking wR pendulum to gain successive tempi for nest-building was a feature of Roland's original: 7b/5Pk1/1p2P3/4R1PP/1B2B3/1S1K1R2/2PP4/8, S#16 [PDB database, *P1195457*]. Unfortunately the intended double wK-gate, for rook self-block to reach b3 and for wPd5 shutting the pendulum, proved overambitious - especially with the wRs able to interchange roles! Paul's new Phoenix finale, after a long walk of the original wS, is a delightfully harmonious addition. Fingers crossed for soundness this time! (SJGT) Play of white batteries and white knight Phoenix (Composer).
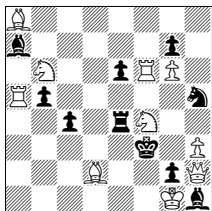
S2932R (Seetharaman) 1.Bc1! 1…Bb8/gxf6/e5/ Sxf6/b4   2.Sbd5/Sfd5/Rc6/Sfd5/Rd5   Re1#; 1…Bxb6+ 2.Be3 Bxe3#; 1…Sg3 2.Qxh1 gxh1R,Q#; 1…Sxf4 2.Rxe6 Se2#; 1…c3 2.Bb2 Bxb6#. Five thematic unpins of black pieces; 3 unpins on d5; Black mates on 5 different squares (Composer). Eight pleasant variations including four unpins of the black rook; 2.Bb2 is a very nice and not-too-obvious hideaway (CL). Tricky solving as I initially overlooked the response to 1…Sg3 (AB). A goodly number of variations! (RŁ) A beauty with many twists and turns (SP).
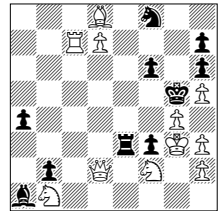
S2928
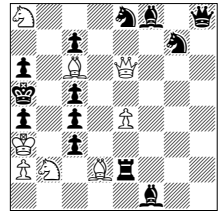
S#2

S2929
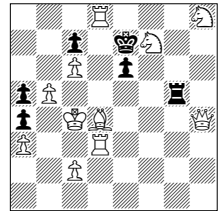
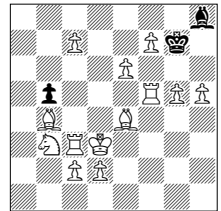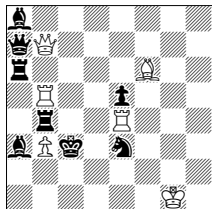S#6 (b) Rd8<>Sh8

S2930

S#6

S2931

S#11

S2932R

R#2

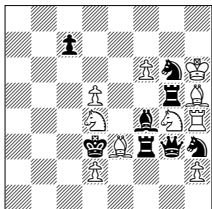# HELPMATES, edited by Christopher Jones

11 Severn Grange, Ison Hill Road, Bristol BS10 7QA (email: cjajones1@yahoo.co.uk)
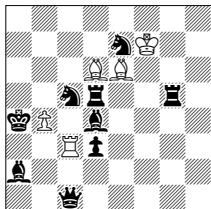
H4694 Nicolae Popa
(Romania)

H#2 2 solutions

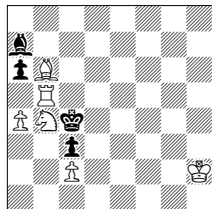**H4695 Ofer Comay**
(Israel)

H#2 (b) Sd4>a1

**H4696 Shaul Shamir &
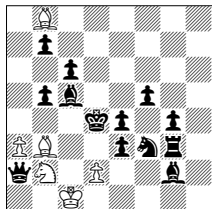Jean Haymann**
(Israel)

H#2 3 solutions

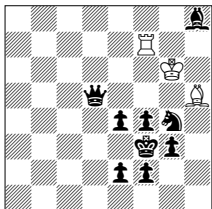**H4697 S. Manikumar &
K.Seetharaman**
(India)

H#2 4 solutions

**H4698 Mykola Vasyuchko
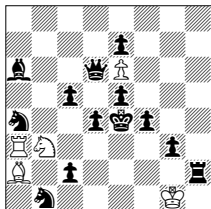& Mykhailo Galma**
(Ukraine)

H#2 (b) –Sb2
(c) & –Pe4 (d) & –Sf3

**H4699 Christer Jonsson,
Rolf Wiehagen, Jorge
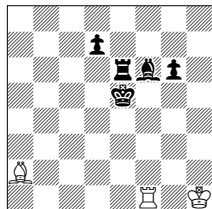Kapros & Paul Bissicks (†)**

H#2½ 2 solutions

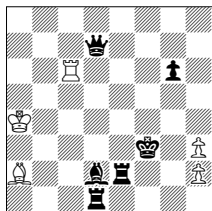**H4700 Michal Dragoun**
(Czech Republic)

H#2½ 4 solutions

H4701 Nikola Petkovic
(Serbia)
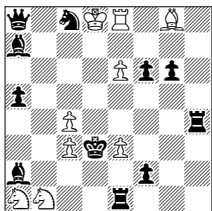*ded. to Marjan Kovačević*

H#3 (b) + ♟ e7

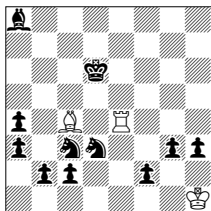**H4702 Nicolae Popa**
(Romania)

H#3 2 solutions
dedicated to Gerard Smits

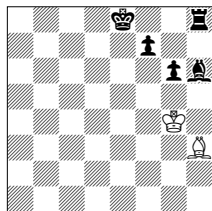**H4703 Mykola Kolesnik &
Valery Semenenko**
(Ukraine)

H#3 2 solutions

**H4704 F.Abdurahmanović
& Marko Klasinc**
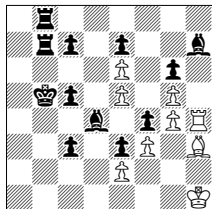(Bosnia & Herz. / Slovenia)

H#4

**H4705 Niels Danstrup &
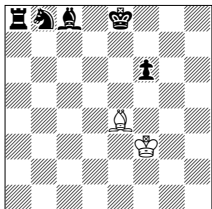Vidadi Zamanov**
(Denmark / Azerbaijan)

H#4 2 solutions

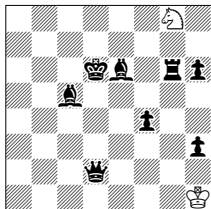**H4706 Evgeny Gavryliv**
(Ukraine)

H#4 2 solutions

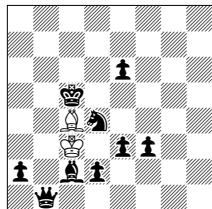**H4707 Zlatko Mihajloski**
(North Macedonia)

H#4½ 2 solutions
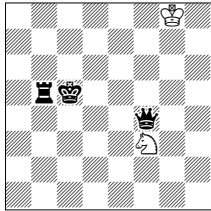
H4708 Marcos Roland
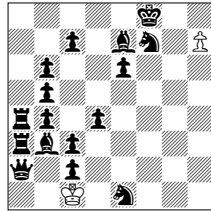(Brazil)

H#5 (b) Pf4>g5

H4709 Stephen Taylor

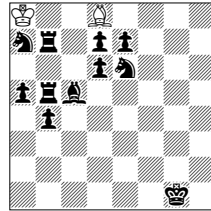H#5 2 solutions

H4710 Krzysztof Drążkowski
(Poland)

H#5½ Zeroposition
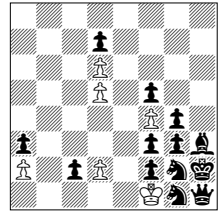(a) Sf3>a7 (b) Kc5>b4
(c) Sf3>d2

H4711 Marko Ylijoki
(Finland)

H#6½ 2 solutions

H4712 Ljubomir Ugren
(Slovenia)

H#8

H4713 Marko Ylijoki
(Finland)

H#11 (b) Pd7>d6

Judges for 2023: H#2: **Paz Einat** H#2½-3½: **Pierre Tritten** H#n: **Mike Prcic**

H4699 was a collaboration on which Paul Bissicks had been working at the time of his death – his co-authors are happy that it can serve as a memorial in being published here. You will see also that we have a couple of dedication problems, one of them by Nikola Petkovic, whom we are pleased to welcome to this column. He is one of 27 composers from 18 countries represented in this month's collection of originals.

There are some technical points to mention Note that **H4710** is a *zero position* – the diagram position is not for solving, only the three positions arising from the stipulated shifts. The twinning of **H4698** exemplifies the *striptease theme*, as the position is cumulatively divested of its components: thus the piece count in the four parts are (6+13); (5+13); (5+12); and (5+11). In **H4713** the twinning causes the d7P to *displace* the d6wP, so that the piece count goes down from (6+13) to (5+13). And the addition of a bP in part (b) of **H4701** lifts its piece count from (3+5) to (3+6). Once again, this collection shows composers increasingly moving toward longer problems, though I think there is enough in the shorter and 'middle-distance' problems for new solvers to get their teeth into.

The **2022 solving ladder** is on p.145.

SOLUTIONS (January)

H4634 (Kalotay) (dedicated to J.Mikitovics) 1.Rf4 Bf1 2.Ke4 Qe2#. 1.Kd6 Ra2 2.Kc5 Qa3#. Both wB and wR are forced to move as far as they can to allow the wQ to mate in each solution (S.Pantos). A very neat pair of pure Bristol clearances! (S.J.G.Taylor) The *purity* is what distinguishes this problem from many 'Bristol helpmates': the wB and wR are each 'dead wood' in one solution (though used, albeit disparately, once as a guard and once as a pinner, in the other), which is an unalloyed pleasure in direct mates but requires helpmate devotees to overcome instinctive worries about unused white officers (CJAJ).
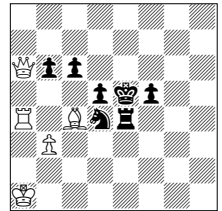
H4634

H#2 2 solutions
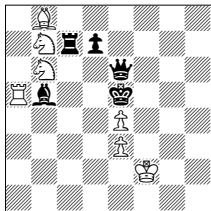
H4635

H#2 (b) Pe4>g5

H4635 (Witztum and Haymann) (a) 1.Qd6 Sc5 2.Rc6 Sbxd7#. (b) 1.d5 Sd6 3.Bc6 Sbc4#. An inventive and enjoyable problem! Both set pins are released during play: unhelpfully by a required white guard and helpfully by a black self-block, the latter enabling reciprocal c6 Grimshaws to shut off the piece freed by the former (SJGT). Goethart Inverted: A pinned black unit was incidentally unpinned by move B1 and must therefore be interfered with by B2 (Composers). Incidental unpinnings occur on both B1 and W1 moves, and it seems that it is the adverse consequence of the W1 unpinning that needs to be rectified by B2. As with H4634, comparison with direct mate problems, in which white officers inactive in one solution are not necessarily a worry, is invited; and in this case the choice as to which white officer will be inactive in the mate position is part of a rich strategic conception (CJAJ).
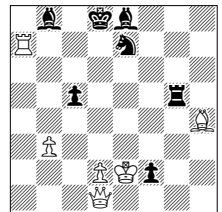
H4636

H#2 2 solutions

H4636 (Abdurahmanović and Klasinc) 1.Bh2 Qh1 2.Rg3 Qa8#. 1.Ba4 Qa1 2.Sc6 Qh8#. Well matched self-pins (L.S.Blackstock). Enjoyable to solve with the wQ going to each corner during the two solutions (S.Jacob).
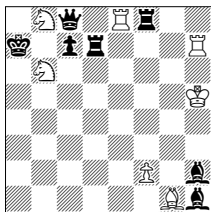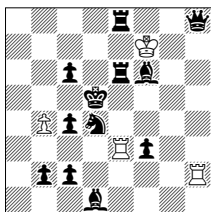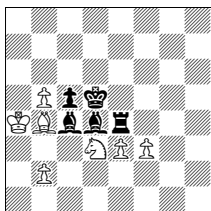
H4637

H#2 (b) Kh5>g6

H4638

H#2 (b) Pe3>(x)e5

H4639v

H#2 (b) Kd5>c1

H4640v

H#2 4 solutions
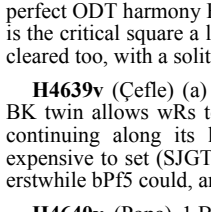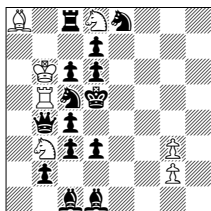
H4641

H#2½ 2 solutions

H4642

H#3 (b) Bh2>h5
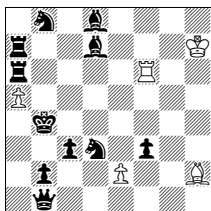
H4643

H#3 2 solutions

H4644

H#3 2 solutions

H4637 (Tar and Csák) (a) 1.Rd6 f3 2.Qe6 Rxc7#. (b) 1.Rd5 f4 2.Qh3 Rxc7#. Repeated mates, but wK positions cleverly force the choice between both pairs of black moves (C.M.B.Tylor). A rich strategic creation albeit easy to solve; three lines to b6/a,b7/b8 clearly need opening – by the bQ and by wP and bR playing symmetrically to close adjacent bishop diagonals; the wK determines which bR destination must be used as well as precluding 3 of 4 potential queen hideaways (SJGT).

H4638 (Jonsson) (a) 1.Bxc6 (Rexc6?) Rxb3 2.Re8 Sb7# (b) 1.Rexc6 (Bxc6?) 2.Ba8 Se6#. Bishops and rooks swap roles seamlessly (C.R.Blanden). The key is key! – in perfect ODT harmony Black self-pins a unit from the mating square, which in turn is the critical square a line guard traverses to b3; the second thematic line must be cleared too, with a solitary hideaway for its black incumbent (SJGT).

H4639v (Çefle) (a) 1.Se2 Rhxe2 2.Re5 Rd2#. (b) 1.Be2 Rexe2 2.Be5 Re1#. BK twin allows wRs to exchange roles, each capturing on the same square and continuing along its line to mate (CMBT) …a pleasant idea if necessarily expensive to set (SJGT). LSB pointed out, and the composer has agreed, that the erstwhile bPf5 could, and should, be omitted.

H4640v (Popa) 1.Bxd3 fxe4+ 2.Kc4 b3#. 1.Bxe3 Sf4+ 2.Kd4 Bc3#. 1.Re5 exd4 2.cxd4 Sf4#. 1.Re6 Bxc5 2.Be5 e4#. The composer pointed out that the erstwhile bPb6 could, and should, be omitted (CJAJ). Wonderfully varied play from a compact small force (LSB). A clever and economical melee; good fun to solve but I couldn't find any unifying pattern. Further, the move …Sf4 alone is repeated, whilst also being the only model mate (SJGT).

H4641 (Ložek) (in memoriam K.Mlynka) 1…Sxc5 2.Bf3 gxf3 3.Qb3 Sxb3#. 1…Sxe6 2.Bf4 gxf4 3.Rd8 Sxd8#. Great battery mates after wS switchbacks with capture (SJ). Interesting and witty. Essentially a H#1½ idea, it isn't easy to extend it without falling foul of double checkmates; Jozef has done well to devise a sound and artistically satisfying construction (SJGT).

H4642 (Smits) (a) 1.Kxa5 Be5 2.Sb4+ Rf5 3.Ba4+ Bc7#. (b) 1.Kc4 Re6 2.Bb5+ Bf7 3.Sc5+ Re4#. Stunning cross/double checks – really like this! (LSB) A fabulous problem despite the unavoidably dramatic twinning. Black's two self-blocks twice fire batteries that are cleverly countered by reciprocal formation and play of White's own battery (SJGT).

H4643 (Onkoud) 1.Sf5 Kb6 2.Sxd4 Rd3 3.Rf5 Re3#. 1.Rf5 Kb4 2.Rxd5 Se6 3.Sf5 Sg5#. Inversion of moves B1 and B3 (CRB) - a beautiful concept and realization: twice the wK releases one of wR/wS to mate while bR/bS reciprocally self-block the flight given by the mating move and f5; the former needing to transit through f5 determines their move order… One of my favourites this month (SJGT).

H4644 (Klasinc) 1.Bc3 Rda7 2.Kd3 Rxc3+ 3.Kxc3 Ra3#. 1.Bd6+ Kb6 2.Kd5 Rxd6+ 3.Kxd6 Rd3#. Theme Zajic with a motive interference of white line. First ever presentation! (Composer) Another of my favourites: an eye-catching wR/wR Zilahi with their sacrifices along the mating lines realizing the Zajic theme. Whilst the rook replacement on a3 is indeed striking, a small tweak enables both rooks to occupy viable mating locations that are forsaken during play for new squares along the same line, which I incline to prefer (SJGT) – as does the composer, who
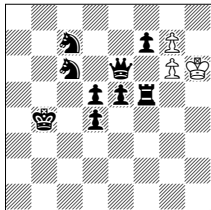
embraces the version diagrammed at right (1.Bd3 Ra8 2.Ke3 Rxd3+ 3.Kxd3 Ra3#; 1.Be6+ Kc6 2.Ke5 Rxe6+ 3.Kxe6 Re3#) (CJAJ).

H4645 (Ložek) 1.Rgxg2 Qxg2 2.Sxf3+ Qxf3 3.Kxb5 Qb7#. 1.Qxg2 exd3 2.Qxf3 dxc4 3.Qb7 c5#. The theme New Andra with Queens. Why "new"? Because this task has 2 solutions *without* twins! (Composer) Chameleon Queens with nice mates (CRB). A fine and imaginative, non-chameleon twin, Andra theme realization. My third contiguous favourite is possibly Jozef's best yet with its two subtle and very different uses for the wQ (SJGT).

H4646 (Gavryliv) 1…Ba8 2.Bb7 Bxd6 3.Ke4 Bc7 4.Kd5 Bxb7#. 1…Bh8 2.Bg7 Bxe6 3.Kd4 Bf7 4.Ke5 Bxg7#. Bristol with echo mates (SJ). Superb! Interesting diagram, excellent keymoves, delayed captures and pretty mates (CRB). The symmetry detracts (LSB).

H4647 (Shapiro) 1…a8=S 2.Kc5 Sxc7 3.Kb6 a7 4.Kxc7 a8=S#. 1…axb8=S 2.Se7 Sxd7 3.Kc6 axb7 4.Kxd7 b8=S#. Promoted S, captured and re-born on the same promotion square (W1=W4) in both solutions (CRB). Phoenix with Kozhakin, Kniest and Chumakov themes (RŁ). There is an interesting comparison with the 1994 forerunner (diagrammed at left) – 1.Kc5 g8=S 2.Kd6 Sf6 3.Ke7 g7 4.Kxf6 g8=S#. Only one line of play, but a delightful sacrificial move by the promotee to an unoccupied square (f6) (CJAJ).

**Gyӧrgy Bakcsi &
László Zoltán**
1 Pr *Thema Danicum*
57th TT 1994

H#4

H4648v (Jones) 1…Rh1 2.Sd3 cxd3 3.Bg3 (Be1?) dxe4+ 4.fxe4 Rd1#. 1…Rh3 2.b3 cxb3 3.Be1 (Bg3?) bxc4+ 4.Sxc4 Rd3#. SJGT points out that we can do without my bP at a4 (which had served as an antidote to a cook at an earlier stage), make c5 a bP, and reposition the wK (as diagrammed). Thank you, Stephen, for improving my insufficiently scrutinized supposedly final setting! (CJAJ) BP replaces bS and *vice versa* for mates on the same line; excellent (CMBT). Whilst I was pleased to work the contrasting Bg3/Be1 choice to add spice to what is otherwise a 'spare move' in this scheme, the dual avoidance may be felt to be imperfect for a reason akin to that spelt out in an article by Jan Rusinek on p.439 of the July 2022 issue – in H4648 (as in Rusinek's study if his bPh3 were omitted) the adverse effect of 3.Be1? in (a) is not only to intercept the h1-d1 line but also (were the h1R hypothetically able to go to d1) to guard d2 (there is no such hint of impurity in 3.Bg3? in [b]) (CJAJ).

H4649 (Ugren) 1…Ra5 2.bxa5 Rxg1 3.Rxd6 Rxh1 4.Rg6 Rxh2#. 1…Rxg1 2.Bf1 0-0-0 3.hxg1=R Rxf1 4.Rg6 Rxh1#. Nicely motivated R sacrifices (LSB). Two ingenious ways to get a black rook to g6 allowing the mate down the h-file (SJ). A novel and noteworthy achievement: the same mate is repeated using different wRs and different bRs, with an incidental Zilahi as a bonus. Bravo! (SJGT)

H4650 (Mihajloski) 1.Sd6 Bxb5 2.Ke6 Ba4 3.Kd5 Bxb3+ 4.Kc6 Be6 5.Bd5 Bd7#. 1.Rf1 Bc6 2.Qf8+ Kc7 3.Se7 Bxf3 4.Ke8 Bg4 5.Rf7 Bd7#. Brilliant double Rundlauf. The 1.Rf1 solution particularly hard to spot (LSB). Good wB minimal with 4- and 5-move Rundlaufs in opposite orientations and directions (CMBT). Excellent dissimilar Rundlaufs, the startling double-ambush rook key being their highlight (SJGT).
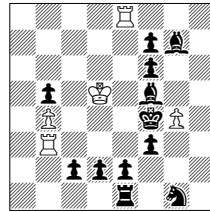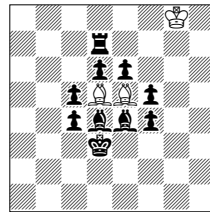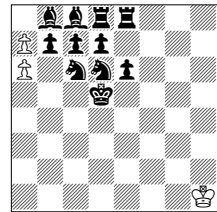
H4644v
H#3 2 solutions
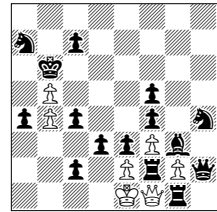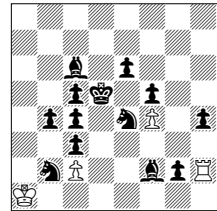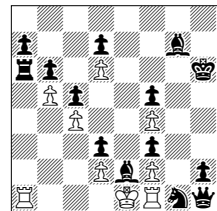

H4645
H#3 2 solutions
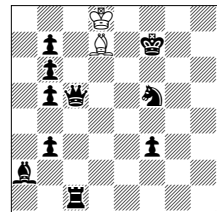

H4646
H#3½ 2 solutions

H4647
H#3½ 2 solutions

H4648v
H#3½ 2 solutions

H4649
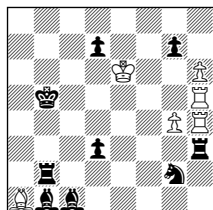H#3½ 2 solutions

H4650
H#5 2 solutions

FAIRIES, Edited by K.Seetharaman

11 (old no.21), Minor Trustpuram First street, Choolaimedu, Chennai, PIN 600094 India
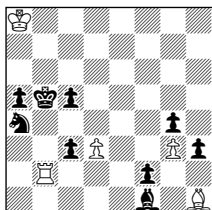
(email: seetharamankalyan@gmail.com)

Judge for 2023: N. Shankar Ram

**F3806 Michael McDowell
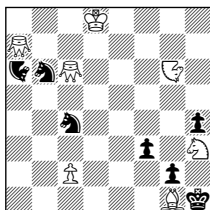& K.Seetharaman**
(UK / India)

#2   AntiKings

F3807 Brendan O'Malley
(Canada)

H#2 2 solutions
Anticirce

F3808 Indrek Aunver
(Estonia)

#2 v   Nightrider
Grasshopper

F3809 Maryan Kerhuel
(France)
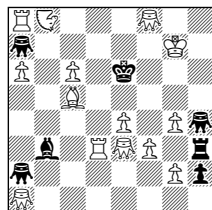
#2 vv   Nightrider
Grasshopper

F3810 Daniel Novomesky
(Slovakia)
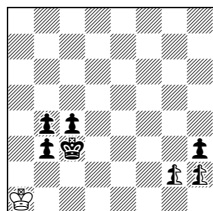
Ser-S#13
neutral pawns g2, h2

**F3811 Armin Geister &
Daniel Papack**
(Germany)
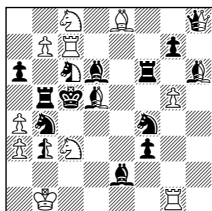
#3 AntiMarsCirce
Neutrals b3, c6, d5, h6, h8

**F3812
Tadashi Wakashima**
(Japan)
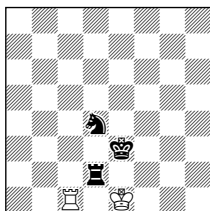
H#6 (b) Sd4>h6
Annan chess
Ultraschachzwang

F3813 Brian Chamberlain
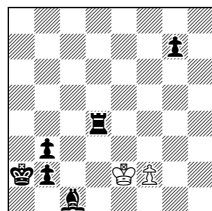
Ser-S#17

F3814 Branko Koludrović
(Croatia)
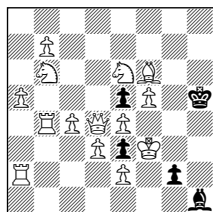
Ser-H=133   Circe

F3815 Sergey Smotrov
(Kazakhstan)
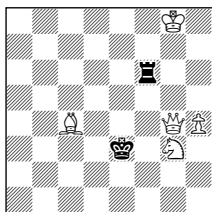
S#14 PWC

F3816 Tibor Érsek
(Hungary)
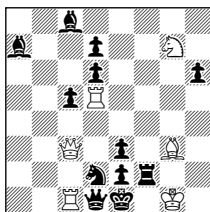
Ser-H=12   Madrasi

F3817 Vincent Reynaerts
(Belgium)
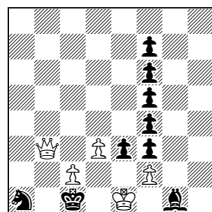
Ser-H#51 Degradation

    Welcome to Brendan O'Malley, Indrek Aunver, Tadashi Wakashima and Vincent Reynaerts. It was a delight working with Michael who makes an infrequent appearance in the Fairies column. We made more than one setting using *AntiKings* **(F3806)** in which the definition of check is inverted so that a king not observed by an opposing unit is in check and mate occurs when the king cannot immediately become observed. Sometimes this fairy condition is defined as a special king, but it is appropriately considered as a fairy condition by solving programs. In this example the black king is not in check as it is observed by Rh5, but a move such as Ka6 is illegal self-check. I am sure it is quite easy to solve. The next three should also be easy to solve and Maryan

shows threat correction in his **F3809.** Despite their length **F3810** and **F3813** should be easy to solve since White obviously must move a pawn! Both are series selfmates. Don't be deterred by the length of **F3814.** The way to self-stalemate will be found when you decide how to stop the bPg2!

The #3 **(F3811)** is quite complex since it uses the unusual *AntiMarsCirce*. In this fairy condition a unit (including Ks) can make non-capturing moves only to squares reachable from its home square and only if the home square is unoccupied. Captures are normal. The home square of course changes when the same neutral unit is to be moved by White or Black. For example if nSc6 were not pinned then Black could move it only to e7 since that is the only square reachable from its home square of g8. For White, the only move with nSc6 is nSxb4+, as non-capturing moves are not possible since the home square is b1 which is occupied. There is good dual avoidance play on the W2 move.

F3812 uses *Annan Chess* in which any unit, when standing one square directly forward of another unit of its own side, moves as that other unit. For example, the black move Kd3 gives double-check to the wK from Kd3

H=6½ Circe

moving as knight and Rd2 moving as king! In *Ultraschachzwang* Black moves only to check, and is in stalemate if he cannot do so. Vincent's **F3817** uses *Degradation* in which a piece landing on its second rank degrades to a pawn. The move Qb2 is not check since the queen becomes a pawn! This should also be easy pickings. Enjoy solving since there are many easy ones with interesting play.
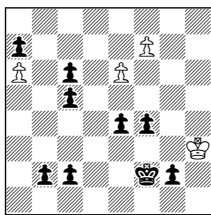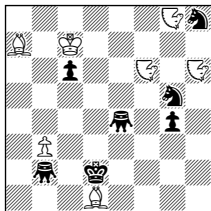
Correction of F3730 (May 2022). The composers submit a new version (after considering hundreds of positions!). The diagram at left avoids the cook and after extensive testing they hope it is sound. The last 5 moves are computer tested. They regret that all attempts to have a third white promotion (to knight) failed. 1…f8Q 2.c1B Qxf4[Pf7]+ 3.Bxf4[Qd1] exf7 4.b1R Qxb1[Ra8] 5.Bb8 Qf1+ 6.gxf1S[Qd1] f8B 7.Se3 Bxc5[Pc7]=.

F3770

#2* ♞ Grasshopper
♚ Kangaroo ♘ Leo

SOLUTIONS (January)

Welcome to returning solver Spiros Pantos who tried to solve many and thanks to Anirudh for his comments to some of the problems.

F3770 (Seetharaman) Set: 1…b5+ 2.Kc5. 1.Bc5? a3! 1.Bd6? KAxf4+! **1.Be7!** (-) 1…b5+ 2.Kb4; 1…b6 2.Kb5; 1…a3 2.Kc5; 1…Gd5 2.Kxd5; 1…exf4 2.Kxd4; 1…e3 2.Kd3; 1…d3 2.Kc3; 1…KAg3,KAb2 2.LEa8. Seven mates by wK. Also a changed and transferred mate. 4 blocks of Gb3 (Composer). Task of royal battery mates achieved with excellent economy (B.E.Chamberlain). Try 1.Bd6? neatly incorporated. Nice Chinese battery with bG hurdle safely blockaded 4 times (C.C.Lytton). SP gets the idea of my problem but falls for the try 1.fxe5!

F3771

H#2 2 solutions
♞ G ♘ Nightrider

F3771 (Tura) 1.Kc3 Nf7 2.Gh4 (Gb7?) Ne7#. 1.Kd3 Bd4 2.Gb7 (Gh4?) Nh5#. Nf6 and Ng8 exchange roles. Black line opening with dual avoidance (KS). I like the exchange of functions of the thematic Ns. Their path is cleared by Ge4 moving to the square that avoids re-hurdling that will interfere with the N's mating line (BEC). Function exchange between WNf6, g8 (mate/guard d2) with careful choice of bG move to avoid interposing at B3 (CCL). The dual avoidance of the Grasshopper on e4 is brilliant along with the exchange of the Nightrider functions (Anirudh Daga).

F3772 (Gockel) The composer has submitted the vastly improved version diagrammed, coordinating with Thomas Maeder. Set: 1…dxc5[-Sc2]+ 2.Bxd3[-c5]; 1…Qxg3[-Rd5] 2.Qe4; 1…bxc2[-Sc5] 2.Bxc2[-d3]. Try 1.Sxb3[-d6]? (>2.Rxe5) 1…Qxg3[-Rd5] a 2.Scd4 A (2.Sbd4+? dxc2[-Sd4]!); 1…Qxd5[-Rg3] b 2.Se3 B; 1…Rxb1[-Bg5] 2.Qxe5; 1…Be6! Key **1.Sxd3[-d6]!** (>2.Rxe5) 1…Qxg3[-Rd5] a 2.Se3 B (2.Sd4+? Qxd3[-Sd4]!); 1…Qxd5[-Rg3] b 2.Sd4 A (2.Se3+? Qxd3[-Se3]!); 1…Rxb1[-Bg5] 2.Qxe5.

**F3772v Hubert Gockel &
Thomas Maeder**

#2 Breton Adverse

Reciprocal change. The former twin setting is replaced by try and solution. Thomas wanted to avoid twinning and showed me how it could be done better. The diagram is the outcome of subsequent collaboration. We think that the meaty and specific by-play 1…Rxb1[-Bg5] justifies the role of Bb1 in the try. Moreover, the set play further increases the significance of this piece. Also note the three(!) different mates following 1…Qxg3[-Rd5] (H.Gockel). Thanks to the fairy condition, Qxg3 is a possible defence! In the try the mating knight must avoid

capture by the queen, but after the key, the mating knight is immune from capture due to self-check because of the fairy condition! But it must prevent capture of the d3 knight! Excellent logic. Reciprocal mates following bQ captures of each wR (KS). The following comments match the new version too! Nice reciprocal changes (BEC). Splendid dual avoidanc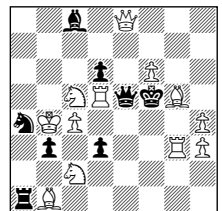e mechanism for reciprocal change after bQ captures (CCL). This double capture is very clever, enjoyable. It pushes the thought process (SP).

F3773
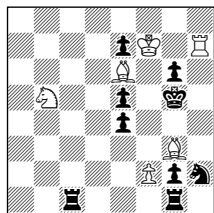
#3   Circe

F3773 (Gasparyan) 1.Kg7! (-) 1…Rc~ 2.Bf4+ exf4[Bc1] 3.Bxf4[Pf7]. 1…Rg~ 2.Sd6 (>3.Sf7,Sxe4) exd6[Sg1] 3.Sh3. 1…S~ 2.Rh5+ gxh5[Rh1] 3.Rxh5[Ph7]. 1…e3 2.f4+ exf4[Pf2] 3.Bh4. Three thematic variations and changed mate after 2.exf4. A well-known idea of exploiting reappearance of captured white pieces after black defensive moves (KS). A classic idea portrayed by the three thematic variations (AD). The key move vacates f7 for a possible 3.Sf7 (G.Foster). CCL responds that while he could guess the black defences and possible mates, the key move escaped him.
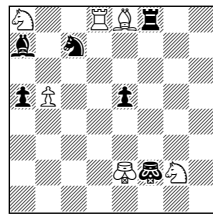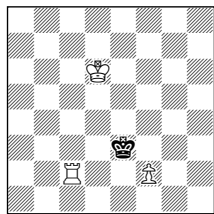
F3774 (Turner) 1.Rd1! (>2.Rf1+ rGd2#) 1…Bc5 2.Sb6+ Be3# (2.Sxc7+?!). 1…Rf6 2.Bf7+ Rf3# (Bc6+?). Black defends by observing the d6 square, which will allow the white king to run to h2 in the threat. The resulting checks have the added effect of pinning the black pieces to the line, necessitating the Pelle moves (Composer). The white checks unguard a flight for the black king simultaneously shutting off the B and R from returning to their starting squares (KS).

F3774

S#2 SAT ♔♚ Royal G

F3775

H#4½ 2 solutions
Koeko + PWC

F3776
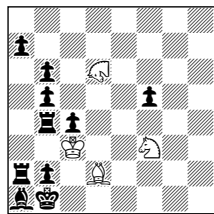
Ser-H#38
♞ Nightrider-Lion

F3777

HS#4   (b) Ba5>h6

F3778

H#16 (set H#13½)
BlackMaximummer
WhiteMaximummer

**F3775** (Taylor) 1…f3 2.Kxf3[Pe3] Rg2 3.Kf4 Rg3+ 4.Ke4 Ke5+ 5.Kd3 e4#. 1…f4 2.Ke4 Kd5+ 3.Kxf4[Pe4] Rc4 4.Kf5 Ke6+ 5.Kf4 e5#. Echoed mates, plus similarly-echoed key moves and mating moves (Composer). Great content for a Tanagra. Note that initially the black king is not in check due to the Koeko condition (KS). Echoed mates done beautifully with just 4 units (AD).

F3776 (Gasparyan) 1.Ra6 5.Ka5 6.Ra4 7.Ra2 9.Ka3 10.Ra4 11.Rb4 15.Kb7 19.Kxf3 27.Ka3 28.Ra4 29.Ra6 31.Ka5 33.Rb4 36.Ka2 37.Kb1 38.Ra2 NLh4#. A well-known scheme adapted for the Nightrider-Lion. The black king has to escape to get rid of Sf3. A wPf3 can't be used, as the black king can reach f3 only through e4. This is one problem that everyone can solve quicker than the computer! (KS). Famous Zeller trap escaped and then re-entered after removal of blocking wS. Nice to see it again and probably not many examples of re-entry (CCL). A smart idea with a pretty mate, demonstrating a familiar concept (AD).

F3777 (Onkoud) (a) 1.Qxe4+ Kxe4 2.Rc5 Sc7+ 3.Kxd6 Kd3 4.Bxf5+ Sxf5#. (b) 1.Qxd4+ Kxd4 2.Bg6 Sg7+ 3.Kxf6 Kd3 4.Rxd5+ Sxd5#. Active wQ sacrifices, switchbacks of bK and echoed play (KS). Great unity portrayed in the problem, where each move of the solutions match! (AD). The white Rb5/Bh7 exchange roles, either moving one square to self-block, or two squares to give the final check (GF).
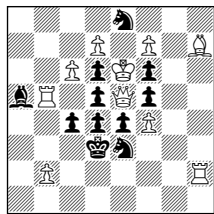
F3778 (Linss) Set: 1…Kg4 2.Kc2 Kf3 3.Kd1 Ke4 4.Ke2 b4 5.Kf1 Kd3 6.Kg2 Ke2 7.Kh1 Kf1 8.d3 b5 9.e5 b6 10.e4 b7 11.e3 b8R!12.d2 Rb1 13.d1S Rb8 14.Sb2 Rh8#. Solution: 1.Ke2 Kg4 2.Kf1 Kf3 3.d3 Ke4 4.Ke2 b4 5.Kf1 Kf3 6.d2 Kg4 7.Ke2 Kh3 8.Kf3 b5 9.Ke2 Kg4 10.Kf1 Kh5 11.Kg2 Kg4 12.Kh1 Kh3 13.d1B b6 14.Bh5 b7 15.Bd1 b8Q 16.Bh5 Qh2#. Mixed AUW in amazing setting. The maximummer condition controls the play of the two kings, with some inevitable repeated moves from the set play (KS). Uniqueness of the moves and the control of the condition in a 5-unit setting is marvellous! (AD). A regular solver found this difficult to solve.
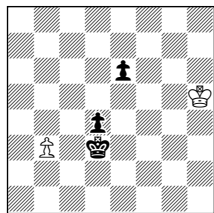
F3779 (Chamberlain) The stipulation means that Black will be forced to mate or stalemate White. The intention is: 1.e8=DG DGd1-b3-g8 2.Bd4 Kf8 3.Kd3 Qh2 4.e5! Kxe8# or a4=. Unusual combo-stipulation, but Hans Gruber finds a

cook: 1.Re1 DGg8 2.Bd4 Kxe7 3.Kd3 Qh2 4.e5 after which every black move either mates (Ke8, Ke6) or stalemates (a4, Kf8, Kd8, Kd7, Kf7). Hans suggests a better way of writing the stipulation is HS#=4 Quodlibet.

F3780 (Danstrup) (a) 1.Qg2 Be4 2.Qg6+ Kf4+ 3.Qg1 Se2 4.Qc1+ Kf3 5.Qe3+ Kg3#. (b) 1.Kg1 Sd4 2.Qb5+ Kg4 3.Qd5 Se2 4.Qh1 Bg2 5.Qh5+ Kg3#. Kg3# in both solutions, but the king comes from two different squares. In (a) the bishop mates, and the knight prevents the black king from moving. In (b) this is reversed. The knight finishes on e2 in both solutions. All pieces have a role in the final positions (Composer). This is an interesting fairy condition since paradoxically mate has to be given by a unit that continues being observed by the opposing side! Kg3# opens the wB line in the diagram while it opens the bQ line in the twin. A new type of battery! (KS).

F3781 (Kotěšovec) 1.Ah2 2.Axh6[NHh2] 3.Ac6 4.Ah1 5.Axa8[NHh1] 6.Ag2 7.Axc2[Ag2] 8.Af2 9.Axh1[NHf2] 10.Axg2[Ah1] 11.Axg7[NHg2] 12.Ag3 13.Axb3[NHg3]=.

1.Ab2 2.Axg7[NHb2] 3.Ac3 4.Ab1 5.Axg1[NHb1] 6.Ac1 7.Axh6[NHc1] 8.Aa6 9.Aa1 10.Axc2[Aa1] 11.Axc1[NHc2] 12.Aa2 13.Axa8[NHa2]=.

1.Ab8 2.Axb3[NHb8] 3.Ab7 4.Axg7[NHb7] 5.Aa1 6.Axc2[Aa1] 7.Ac7 8.Axa8[NHc7] 9.Axa1[Aa8] 10.Aa7 11.Axg1[NHa7] 12.Ab6 13.Axh6[NHb6]=.

1.Ag6 2.Axc2[Ag6] 3.Ac8 4.Ah8 5.Axa8[NHh8] 6.Ag8 7.Axb3[NHg8] 8.Af7 9.Axh6[NHf7] 10.Ah7 11.Axh8[NHh7] 12.Axg6[Ah8] 13.Axg1[NHg6]=. Echoes in four corners (Composer). Another classic from the treasure house of Kotěšovec! (KS).

Belated publishing of solution to F3548. This original by Mikael Grönroos (Finland) was published in November 2019. But while publishing the solution some other problem, its diagram and solution was published due to an oversight. With apologies to the composer we publish the correct solution now. 1.Kb7 f4 2.gxf4[Pf2] Ka8 3.fxe1Q[Bc1] Be3 4.fxe3[Bc1] Bd2 5.exd2[Bc1] Bb2 6.Bc3 dxc3[Bf8] 7.Bb4 cxb4[Bf8] 8.Bd6 Qxb4[Pb7]+ 9.b6 Qxb6[Pb7]#. Amazing play of the neutral men resulting in an excellent model mate with mating pawn cleverly shifted to b7 with the queen blocking it! (KS). Wenigsteiner (only 4 pieces) with fantastic mate after a total of eight captures (HK). Good fairy miniature (RŁ).

F3779
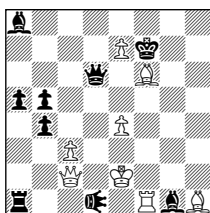
HS# or =4 (see text)
Madrasi + Checkless chess
⬛ Double Grasshopper

F3780
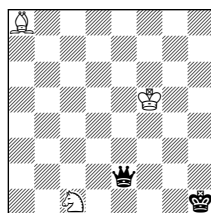
H#5 (b) Sc1>c2
Functionary chess

F3781
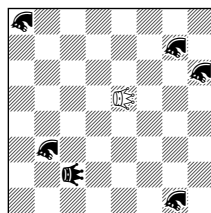
Ser-=13 4 solutions
PWC ◈⬛ Amazon
🐴 Nightriderhopper

F3548
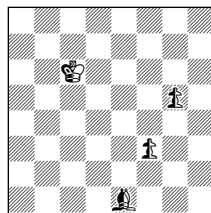
H#9 Circe All neutrals

PROBLEMS FROM WBCSC 2023 FOR SOLVING (continued from p.134)

The decisive round for this years British Championship proved to be the Moremovers, as it often is. Though in the slightly more unusual way, with the #4 **D** proving elusive to almost all competitors and the #7 proving much more straightforward. Perhaps it was the rich variety of sub variations on move three after three of Black's defences which resulted in many solvers rejecting the key even when they tried it. One of Black's move-one defences is particularly tricky to find.

The final round could very easily have been the decisive round for the British Championship, with the longer selfmate **E** being very soluble, despite no-one present achieving full marks. As frequently occurs there were two almost identical possible

**D Vladimir Aleksandrov &
Nikolai Belik**
Intellektualnye igry 1993
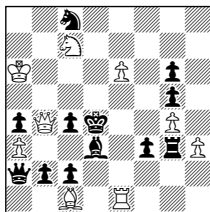
#4

**E Jorma Paavilainen &
Pauli Perkonoja**
2 Pr *Suomen
Tehtäväniekat* 2008-09

S#4

keys, distinguishable in just a single later variation. Perhaps just coming at the end of a difficult day of problems proved too much for all of us! Here is that final problem for those wishing to outperform the field from home.
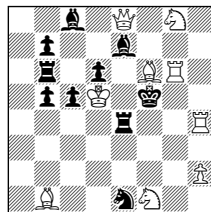
SELECTED PROBLEMS

TWOMOVERS, by Kabe Moen

A1 Marco Guida
1 Pr Szwedowski MT 2021
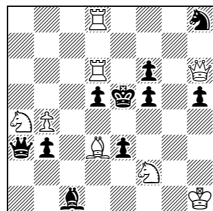
#2

A2 Marco Guida
1-2 Pr Lobusov-70 JT 2021
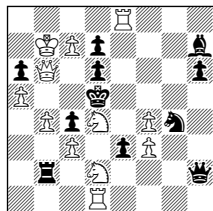
#2

A3 Marjan Kovačević
1 Pr *StrateGems* 2022
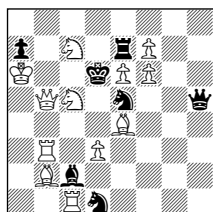
#2

A4 Wieland Bruch
2 Pr *StrateGems* 2016
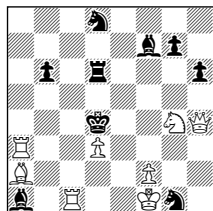
#2

Our regular contributor Marco Guida has consistently demonstrated a high level of composition for quite a while. **A1** shows a fresh take on the Ellerman-Makihovi theme. The Ellerman-Makihovi theme involves a set dual, often seen after a bK flight, and in this case we have the triple 1…Kd4 2.Qxf6,Qf4,Rxd5. The first try 1.Sh3? threatens two of the thematic mates 2.Qxf6 and 2.Qf4. However, 1…Kd4 is met by only 2.Rxd5, as there is no longer a guard on d3, but 1…Sg6! effectively counters. The next try is 1.Sc5? (>2.Rxd5) and we have 1…Kd4 2.Qxf6, but 1…Qa8! Finally, the delightful key gives an additional flight **1.Bxf5!** (>2.Rxd5) and we have 1…Kd4 2.Qf4. As it stands the problem successfully demonstrates the Ellerman-Makihovi and Bermistrov themes. However, what truly sets this matrix apart is the incorporation of the additional thematic mate after the black king takes an extra flight with 1…Kxf5 2.Qxf6. Although the method of separating mates by unguarding squares in the bK's extended field may not be groundbreaking, the inclusion of modern elements introduces an innovative twist to a familiar scheme.

Our next problem, **A2**, is an intriguing half-battery. The initial try 1.Sb5? threatens two thematic mates 2.Qxd6 and 2.Qd4. This try leaves the newly formed battery inactive, so it will probably not take solvers long to find 1…Qxf4! The next two tries and key cut one of the black lines controlling the battery. 1.Sc2? (>2.Qd4) 1…Qxf4/Rxb4 2.Se4/Sxb4, but 1…Qxd2! 1.Se2? 1…Qxf4/Rxb4 2.Sxf4/Se4 but 1…Rxd2! Finally, the key is **1.Se4!** threatening the other mate 2.Qxd6. The thematic defences are met by the exact same moves as the two previous tries: 1…Qxf4/Rxb4 2.Sc2/Se2. Once again the author has combined the old and the new. The three lines controlling the half-battery are a well-known device, but here they are embellished with the Barnes and Zagoruiko themes. Additionally, we see an interesting spin on the Vladimirov theme. The tries 1.Sc2? and 1.Se2? are defended (not refuted) by 1…Qxf4 and 1…Rxb4, however, post key these defences allow those same moves. Even though the problem does not exhibit the true Vladimirov theme, as the thematic defences are not refutations, the reversal effects leave a gratifying impression.

The US magazine *StrateGems* recently closed its doors after 25 years and **A3** took top prize in its last informal tourney. The matrix is a top-notch Zagoruiko. There are two important set mates 1…Kxc7 2.Qb8 and 1…Bxd3 2.Sb7. The first try 1.Qb4? (>2.Sb5) sets up a battery to handle 1…Bxd3+/Rxc7 2.Sxd3/Qd4, but 1…Sc3! The second try is 1.Sa4 (>2.Qc5) 1…Bxd3/Rxc7 2.Ba3/Qd5, but 1…Rxe6! The give-and-take key sets up a different battery **1.Qb8!** (>2.Sb7) 1…Bxd3+/Rxc7 2.Sb5/f8Q. Of course, the best play is saved for after the key as there is 1…Kxc5 2.Qb4 and an additional battery mate 1…Rxe6 2.S7xe6. Again it is interesting to analyze the pattern play which reveals a paradoxical Dombrovskis element. In the set play, 1…Bxd3 allows 2.Sb7. In the first try, 1…Bxd3+ defends against the threat of 2.Sb5. Finally, in the solution, 1…Bxd3+ defends against the threat 2.Sb7 but allows 2.Sb5.

Finishing with another *StrateGems* matrix, I have long admired **A4** with its open and elegant position. White must overcome several strong defences by making multiple threats. The first attempt 1.Qg3? (>2.Qe3,Qe5,Qf4) yields a neat forcing of the threats 1…Bc3/Bc4/Sf3 2.Qe3/Qe5/Qf4. Moreover, there is an elimination mate 1…Re6 2.Ra4, but 1…Bb3! refutes this try. The key makes three threats again **1.Qe7!** (>2.Qe3,Qe5,Qe4) 1…Bc3/Bc4/Bb3 2.Qe3/Qe5/Qe4. The solution also leads to three elimination mates, including a satisfying change: 1…Re6/Be6/Se6 2.Qb4/Qxg7/Qxd6. Thus we have a (partial) Karlström-Fleck after the threats with a triplet of interferences on the same square. Critics may not like the multiple threats, but I personally enjoy the challenge of finding the separating moves. Furthermore, the total defences are clear and make for a satisfying experience.

THREEMOVERS, by James Quah

It is a major achievement to incorporate thematic moves A-D and defences a/b in a Banny scheme in a three-mover, but in **B1** and **B2** there is the extra value-adding move E. See also B1 (July 2022) for an example to closely compare with **B2**.
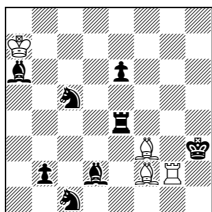
In **B1**, the Dresden (mutual obstruction type) and pseudo-le Grand constitute a familiar combination, and mate E arguably adds a correction feature. There are two logical tries 1.c6? A (>2.Bc5# C) 1…Sxe4! a and 1.e7? B (>2.Se6# D) 1…Qxe4! b. The key, not too hard to find, is **1.Qb3!** threatening 2.Bc3+ Bxc3 3.Qxc3. A black defender captures on e4 to defeat the threat, obstructing the other defender. The two rich variations are 1…Sxe4 a 2.e7 B (>3.Se6 D) Sxc5/Sxd2 3.Bxc5 C/Qxd3 E and 1…Qxe4 b 2.c6 A (>3.Bc5 C) Qxe6+/Qxd5 3.Sxe6 D/Qxd3 E. Let us focus on the mechanism that enables the pseudo-le Grand to work with the extra mate 3.Qxd3 E. For a threat 3.Bc5 C / Se6 D to become active, the mating square c5/e6 is unblocked by White. We see 3.Qxd3 E transferred between 2….Sxd2 and 2…Qxd5. If we see these as random defences, opening the line Bf5-d3 to permit it, then the move (2…Sxc5!?/Qxe6+!?) that prevents it can be seen as a correction defence. In each case, the error is to annihilate the pawn on the other mating square, thus enabling a thematic threat.

B2 shows the Swiss theme, with logical tries 1.Se6? A (>2.Qd4# E) dxc5! a and 1.Sdc6? B (>2.Qd4# E) Bxf2! b. These fail because the threat is weak and can be thwarted. **1.c4!** (>2.Sdc2 (>3.Qd4/d3)) provides a quiet threat, and provokes Black into playing a/b early. This changes the threat carried by A/B to something stronger. We have 1…Bxf2 b 2. Se6 A (>3.Sxg5 D) Bd4,Bh4 3.Q(x)d4 E and 1…dxc5 a 2.Sdc6 B (>3.Qe5 C) cxb4 3.Qd4 E. Now a double pseudo-le Grand feature is introduced by 1…Bf1 2.Sxf3 (>3.Qd4 E) dxc5 a/Bxf2 b 3.Qe5 C/Sxg5 D, as now E has become a good threat and we see the return of C/D. (In the corresponding variation of the comparison problem, the threatened mate was not E.)

In **B3**, there is paradox and a flavour of threat correction. White wishes to mate with 3.Sc2/Sf3, which is easily done half the time, when White plays 2.Bxg6/Rxa3. Before reaching this stage, the key looks obvious (1…e6/e4 are too strong). **1.Qe6!** (>2.Bxg6 (>3.Sc2)) shows the bishop vacating c2 for the knight, ensuring it guards e4. Also, 1…Rf8 2.Rxa3 (>3.Sf3) e4 3.Qxe4 is readily seen. In these cases, White only needs a safe move beyond e4 or c3 to mate after a square vacation. It's the other variations that are really striking. After 1…Sg3 (threatening 2…Sf5!) 2.Be4 (>3.Qd5, not 3.Sc2? Kxe4!) it looks like the bishop has not moved far enough. Now 2…Sf6? is no longer available, but we get 2…Kxe4/Sxe4 3.Rxf4 (3…Sxf4?)/Sc2. Analogously, the other variation is 1…b4 2.Rc3 (>3.R/Qxc4, not 3.Sf3? Kxc3!) bxc3/Kxc3 3.Sf3/Qxe5 (3…Kb4?). This appears to be an ideally integrated Keller paradox as the capture by the defender brings back the primary threat.

B4 shows a modicum of pattern play when three logical tries become second move continuations. 1.Bxd6+?/Rxd5+?/Qd3? are refuted by 1…Sxd6!/Kxd5!/Se3! After the key **1.h4!** (>2.Sg4+ Kxf5 3.Sxf4) the only sensible defences by Se4 are 1…Sxc5 a 2.Bxd6+ Kxd6 3.Sf7 A and 1…Sxf6 b 2.Rxd5+ Kxd5 3.Sg4 B. The pattern appears when the third variation links with the other two. After 1…Sxh4 2.Qd3 (>3.Q/Rxd5) now when Se4 defends, it opens the line Qd3-f5. We get 2…Sxc5 a/Sxf6 b 3.Sg4 B/Sf7 A neatly differentiated. It looks like reciprocal change of mates, with Black's thematic defences occurring at different times. There is also 2…Bd4 3.Qxd4.

MOREMOVERS, by Jörg Kuhlmann

While commenting on May's C1 I mentioned the nice *'lift'* Kxd5-d8 in the threat, which might be the cue for this month's **C1** (1st Prize reported in March 2021) with a king lift going up (Kh2-h5??) and a rook lift going down (Rh8...xh5). The logical try 1.Rg8?

B1　Zoran Gavrilovski
2 Pr *Die Schwalbe* 2021
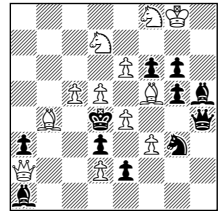
#3

B2　Valery Shavyrin
1 Pr *Troll* 2016
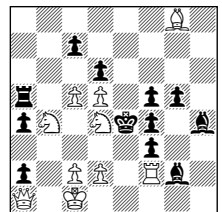
#3

B3　Aleksandr Kuzovkov
1 HM *Die Schwalbe* 2021

#3

B4　Valery Shavyrin
3 Pr Polish Chess
Federation Tourney 2021

#3

C1　Grigory Popov
3 Pr 8th FIDE World Cup
2020

#16　　　　　(4+8)

C1 repeated diagram

#16   (4+8)

(>2.Rh8+ Bh6 3.Rxh6+ Rh4 4.Rxh4#) is badly defended by 1...Bh6? (1...Bc3? leads into the solution) 2.Rg3+! Kh2 (2...Kh4? 3.Rg1+ Kh3 4.Rh1#) 3.Rg1! Re1 4.Rxe1 ~/Kh3 5.Rh1#, but refuted most easily and powerfully by 1...Rh4! 2.Rg1 (2.Bg2+ Kh2!) 2...Rh7+!! (Also 1...Bg5! 2.Rxg5 Rh4!) And 1.Rg1? (>2.Rh1#) fails to 1...Bf4! (1...Re1? abridges the solution.) – **1.Rg3+! Kh2! 2.R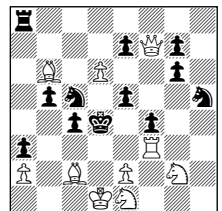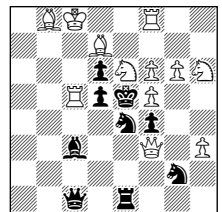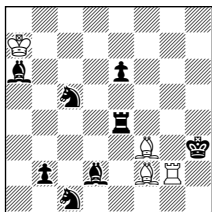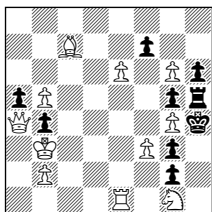g1!** (2.Rg8? Bf1! [most firmly; also 2...Bg5! 3.Rxg5 Bf1!, whereas 2...Bc3? leads into the solution] 3.Rg1 Ra4+!!) **2...Re1 3.Rg2+!** (3.Rg8? Bf1!) **3...Kh3!** (3...Kh1? 4.Rg4/Rg5+! Kh2 5.Rh4/Rh5#) **4.Rg8!** (4.Rg5? Bxg5!; 4.Rg6? (>5.Rh6+? Bxh6!); 4.Rg7? Bd3/b1Q!) **4...Bc3** (4...Bf1?/Rh4??) **5.Rg5! Re5 6.Rg3+!** (6.Rg6? Rh5!; 6.Rg1? Re1!) **6...Kh2! 7.Rg6! Bd2** (7...Rh5? 8.Bg1+! Kh3 9.Bg2+ Kh4 10.Bf2#! [Kh5?]; 7...Bf1 see below.) Is there a relevant change by comparison with the position after 1.Rg3+! Kh2! 2.Rg8? Yes, the defence Bf1 doesn't raise hell any longer. **8.Rg8 Bf1**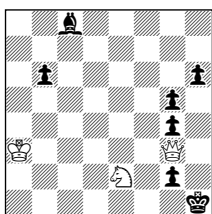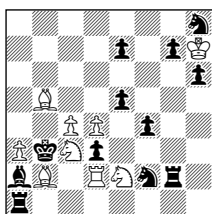 (8...Bc3? 9.Rh8+!) **9.Rg1! Bg2** (9...Re1?/Ra4+??) **10.Rxg2+ Kh3 11.Rg3+!** (11.Rg8? Rh5!) **11...Kh2 12.Rg8 b1Q** (12...Rh5? 13.Bg1+! Kh3 14.Bg2+ Kh4 15.Bf2# [Kh5??]; 12...Bh6? 13.Rg1! Re1 14.Rxe1 ~/Kh3 15.Rh1#) **13.Rh8+ Qh7+ 14.Rxh7+ Bh6 15.Rxh6+ Rh5 16.Rxh5#;** 7...Bf1 8.Rg1 Bg2 9.Rxg2+ Kh3! 10.Rg3+! Kh2! 11.Rg6! Bd2 12.Rg8 etc. You might feel sorry about the final row of captures on the h-file, which is not cricket. On the other hand, it's a funny rook lift going down the h-file, which counterbalances its toing and froing like a will-o'-the-wisp on the g-file.

C2 Aleksandr Sygurov
1-3 Pr *Shakhmatnaya kompozitsiya* 2020

#4   (11+9)

C2's try 1.Re3? f5! 2.Re5 f4! 3.Bxf4?? shows, that the wR is on the wrong file. Black's strongest set move 1...fxg6! threatens to become stalemate. This suggests the c-file for the wR. **1.Rc1!** (Zugzwang!) *1...fxe6 2.Rc2!* e5 3.Rxg2 e4 4.Bxg3#; *1...fxg6 2.Rc3!* bxc3 3.gxh5+ Kxh5 4.Qg4# (4...Kxg6??), 3...g4 4.Qxg4#; *1...f6 2.Rc4!* (>3.Bd8 f5 4.gxf5# [4...g4??]) **2...f5 3.gxf5+ g4 4.Rxg4#** (4.Bd8+? Rg5!); *1...f5! 2.Rc5!* fxg4 3.Bd8 gxf3 4.Rc4# (4...g4??), **2...f4 3.Bxf4! gxf4 4.Rxh5#.** Fantastic correspondence between the Pf7 and the wR (in italics above). The Pf7 performs the maximum of four alternative moves for a single black pawn without promotion, called *Pickaninny*. And the wR's responses, spread across the four variations, give the impression of a rook lift, Rc1-c5. Note the *distant self-block* on g6 and the pin mate on the 4th rank.

C3 Ivan Soroka
2 Pr *Pat a Mat* 2020-21

#11   (3+7)

C3's wQ wants to mate on the h-file via h6, but has to always keep Kh1 on the go. 1.Qf2? (>2.Qg1#) 1...Kh2 is fallacious because f4 is taboo for the wQ. Thus, *1.Qe3! Kh2 2.Qe5+!* (2.Qg1+? Kh3!) **2...Kh1!** (2...Kh3? 3.Qg3#; 2...g3? abridges the solution) *3.Qd4* (c5 is also taboo) **3...Kh2 4.Qd6+ g3?!** (nolens, volens! 4...Kh1? 5.Qxh6#) *5.Qxg3+!* – a pukka *rundlauf (round-trip)* by the wQ! (5.Qxh6+? Bh3!) **5...Kh1** – what has changed by comparison with the diagram position? Well, the Pg4 has vanished. **6.Qe3 Kh2 7.Qe5+ Kh1 8.Qd4 Kh2 9.Qd6+ Kh1** (9...g3??) **10.Qxh6+! Bh3 11.Qxh3#** (11...Kxh3??). Instead of a lift, the Qg3 twice uses the *spiral staircase* g3-e3-e5-d4-d6.

C4 Uwe Karbowiak
2 Pr *Sächsische Zeitung* 2018-19

#9   (9+12)

C4's *original plan* (3rd Prize reported in January) is 1.dxe5? (>2.Sd4#) 1...dxe2 2.Sxe2, but 2...Bb1+! gives check so that the bishop's interference with its Ra1 cannot be exploited by 3.Sc1?? A *preparatory manoeuvre (prep)* like 1.Bd7? Rg6? to interrupt b1-h7 is needed, but 1.Bd7? doesn't threaten anything. The *pre-prep* 1.Bc6? at least threatens 2.c5 (>3.Bd5#) 2...e6 3.Bd7 (>4.Bxe6#) 3...Rg6 4.Ba4+ Kc4 5.Bb5+ Kb3 6.dxe5 dxe2 7.Sxe2 (>8.Sd4#) 7...Bb1 8.Sc1#, but is too quiet a threat to refrain Black from even drawing. Therefore a *pre-pre-prep* provides *threat enhancement* by *passive annihilation.* **1.Ba4+! Kxc4 2.Bb5+ Kb3 3.Bc6!** (3.Bd7? Rg6 4.Ba4+ Kc4 5.Bb5+ Kb3 6.dxe5 Rd6! 7.exd6 dxe2/e5!) **3...e6 4.Bd7! Rg6 5.Ba4+** (an *intermediate manoeuvre* to return to b5) **5...Kc4 6.Bb5+ Kb3 7.dxe5! dxe2** (7...Rd6??) **8.Sxe2** (>9.Sd4#, not >9.Sc1+? Rxc1!) **8...Bb1** (no check!) **9.Sc1#!** (9...Rxc1??; 9.Sd4+? Ka2!). We see a simple and an *extended switchback* to b5 and, what is more, the *escalator* a4-d7 (in italics above).

STUDIES, by John Nunn

As usual, this month's selection is taken from recent tourneys, but this time I have chosen studies which, although not receiving a prize, are nevertheless very enjoyable. There are perfectly good reasons why excellent studies should not receive a prize, for example partial anticipation, but they still deserve attention.

The relatively short study **D1** contains a surprising amount of content. **1.h7+** (at first sight decisive, as Black cannot prevent the h7-pawn promoting) **1...Kf7** (1...Kg7 2.h6+ Kf7 is inferior because after 3.Bb3+ Kg6 4.h8Q Qb5+ 5.Kc7 Qc5+ 6.Kd7 there is no check on d5 and so no perpetual) **2.Bg6+** (2.h8Q? Qb5+ 3.Kc7 Qc5+ draws by checking along the fifth rank, but White also cannot play slowly since his king is too exposed to checks) **2...Sxg6** (2...Kg7 3.h8Q+! Kxh8 4.Re8+ Kg7 5.h6+ Kf6 6.Rf8+ Ke7 7.Re1+! wins for White after 7...Kxf8 8.Re8#, 7...Kd7 8.Bf5+ Kd6 9.h7 or 7...Kd6 8.Rd1+ Kc6 9.Be4+ Kb6 10.Rd6+ Kc5 11.Rf5+) **3.hxg6+ Kxg6 4.Rg2!** (an amazing move necessary to avoid a variety of stalemates; for example, the two lines 4.Re6+? Kf7! 5.h8Q Qb5+ 6.Kc7 Qd7+! 7.Kb8 {Black can give perpetual if he can capture the rook with check} 7...Qb5+ and 4.h8Q? Qb5+! 5.Kc7 Qc5+ 6.Kd7 Qd5+ 7.Ke7 Qe5+! both lead to either perpetual check or stalemate) **4...Qxg2 5.Rh6+!** (the other rook is also sacrificed; 5.h8Q? Qg3+ 6.Kc8 Qg4+ 7.Kd8 Qg5+ leads to a simple perpetual check) **5...Kxh6** (after 5...Kf7 6.h8Q Qg3+ 7.Kb7 there is no perpetual because the rook can interpose on any subsequent check; for example, 7...Qb3+ 8.Rb6 Qf3+ 9.Rc6 Qb3+ 10.Kc8 and the checks run out) **6.h8Q+ Kg6 7.Qg8+** and White wins the queen.
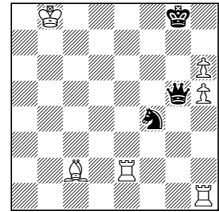
Win

In **D2** White is down on material, but Black's king is in a precarious position. **1.Rc6!** (the immediate check on the back rank leads nowhere after 1.Rh8+? Re8, so the rook moves to the other side of e8 to threaten mate) **1...Re8 2.Bg2** (threatening mate in one, and since 2...Kb8 fails to 3.Kxb6 f1Q 4.Bxf1 S7e6 5.Sa6+ Ka8 6.Rc8+ Rxc8 7.Bg2+ Black must block the long diagonal) **2...Se4** (2...Sf3 is inferior as White wins by 3.Rc7 Se6 4.Ra7+ Kb8 5.Sc6+ Kc8 6.Kxb6 with the decisive threats of Bf1-a6# or Bh3 followed by Rc7#) **3.Rc7!** (threatening mate by 4.Ra7+ Kb8 5.Sc6+ Kc8 6.Bh3+) **3...f1Q+** (after 3...Kb8 4.Rxg7 Re6 5.Bh3 f1Q+ 6.Bxf1 b5+ 7.Ka5 Black's king is too badly placed to survive very long, while 3...Se6 4.Ra7+ Kb8 5.Sc6+ Kc8 6.Kxb6 wins as after 2...Sf3) **4.Bxf1 Sc5+** (4...Se6 5.Ra7+ Kb8 6.Sc6+ Kc8 7.Kxb6 S4c5 8.Se5 Kb8 9.Bg2 wins) **5.Kxb6 Rb8+** (Black seems to be wriggling out as 6.Kxc5 is met by 6...Se6+) **6.Ka5!** (White keeps his attack going with this accurate king move) **6...Sb7+** (if Black loses material he will be doomed by his bad king position, so 6...Rxb4 7.Kxb4 and 6...Rd8 7.Rxc5 are hopeless) **7.Ka6** (7.Kb6? Sd6+ 8.Ka5 Rb7 defends) **7...Se6** (again it looks as if Black is escaping, since he is attacking the rook and threatening a check on c5) **8.Bg2!** (a genuinely surprising move, offering the rook with check) **8...Sxc7+** (8...Sed8 9.Kb6 is hopeless, so Black is forced to accept the sacrifice) **9.Kb6 Se6** (if the rook moves it's mate in two, while the lines 9...Sd5+ 10.Bxd5, 9...Sb5 10.Sa6! and 9...Se8 10.Sa6! all lead to a fatal zugzwang) **10.Sa6! Rh8 11.Bxb7#**. This fine study received 'only' a special HM due to an anticipation by Richter (*Šach* 2nd HM, 1940, HHdbVI database number 72321) which essentially consisted of the last three moves of this study. It's an entirely justifiable decision, but the introduction is excellent and it would be a shame if the study does not receive the attention it deserves as a result.
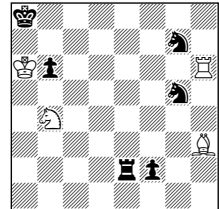
Win

In **D3** White is ahead on material, but his rook is attacked and Black's a-pawn poses a serious danger. **1.R6h4+** (removing the rook from attack with gain of tempo) **1...Kxa3** (1...Ka5 2.Rc2 Bg7+ 3.Kb3 and 1...Kb5 2.Kb3 lead to wins on material) **2.Rxa2+!** (White eliminates the dangerous pawn and hopes to win with his c-pawn; after 2.R4h3? Rc1+ 3.Kd4+ Kb4 4.Rb2+ Ka4 5.Rxa2+ Kb5 White's only pawn falls, leaving an ending with the drawn material balance of 2R v R+B) **2...Kxa2 3.Rh2+!** (the preliminary check is necessary so that White can interpose on c2 after a later ...Rc1+) **3...Ka3 4.c7 Bb4+** (the toughest defence; 4...Rc1+ 5.Rc2 Bb4+ 6.Kd3 Rd1+ 7.Kc4 and 4...Bg7+ 5.Kd3 Rd1+ 6.Kc2 win easily) **5.Kd3 Rd1+** (5...Rc1 loses to 6.Rc2) **6.Kc2 Rd5** (Black sets up a possible fork by ...Rc5+) **7.Rh3+ Ka4 8.Rc3!** (White sacrifices his second rook to force promotion) **8...Bxc3 9.c8Q** (it looks all over, as the bishop is still attacked and Qc4+ is threatened) **9...Rb5!** (a surprising defence, securing the rook and offering the bishop; the choice of square is designed to prevent a diagonal check by the queen) **10.Qg4+!** (10.Qxc3? Rc5 11.Qxc5 and 10.Kxc3? Rc5+ 11.Qxc5 both lead to stalemate, while 10.Qa8+? Ba5 11.Qe8 Kb4 lets Black off the hook) **10...Bb4 11.Qd7!** (the material balance is generally drawn, so White must achieve something quickly) **11...Ka5** (11...Ba5 lasts longer but loses all the same after 12.Kd3 Kb4 13.Qd4+ Ka3 14.Qa1+ and now either 14...Kb3 15.Qb1+ Ka4 16.Qa2+ Kb4 17.Qc4+ or 14...Kb4 15.Qc3+ Ka4 16.Qc6 Kb4 17.Qc4+) **12.Qa7#**. The final mate has been seen a few times before, but the original elements here are the stalemate defence and the fact that the queen arises by promotion.
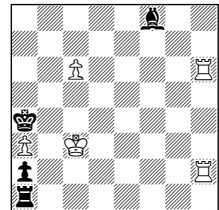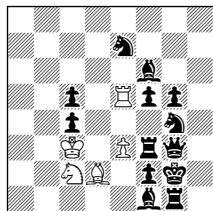
Win

HELPMATES, by Silvio Baier

In the genre of proof games, promotion themes are very popular. A special case of the Ceriani-Frolkin theme (a promoted piece is captured) is the Schnoebelen theme, in which the promoted piece does not move from its promotion square before being captured. Motivating this in the orthodox case requires the opposing king to exclude other promotions by entering certain squares. Schnoebelen queens do not exist, because it is always possible to promote to a rook or bishop as well. Schnoebelen promotions in orthodox helpmates are relatively rare. Here it seems even more difficult to find suitable motivations to necessitate promotion at all, and why only to a particular piece. While in orthodox proof games there are a number of presentations with three Schnoebelen pieces, in helpmates I have so far encountered no better than double settings in a solution line – and only four of them. I will present these in the following except for the one with promotion to rooks, which readers can still solve by themselves. It is H4673 in the March 2023 issue.
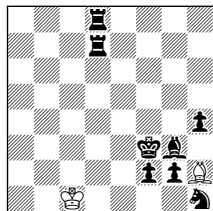
E1 Norbert Geissler & Raúl Jordon
1 Pr *Gaudium* 2021-22

H#3½ 2 solutions

E2 Valery Semenenko
5 Pr Vladimirov-80 JT 2015

H#5½

E3 Sergey I. Tkachenko, Andrey Frolkin & Leonid Lyubashevsky
The Problemist 2022

H#5

E4 Jakob Leck & Oliver Sick
1 Pr *Die Schwalbe* 2019

H#6

To get to the usual four problems, however, let's first look at **E1**, which appeared in Gunter Jordan's small magazine *Gaudium*. In the first solution 1…Se1+ 2.fxe1B Kc2 3.Kf2 Kd1 4.Qg2 Bxe1# the knight sacrifices itself to give the black pawn the opportunity to vacate f2, which is then occupied by the black king. While the white king is brought forward, Black has to block one more square before Bxe1 mates. Black does not want to promote, but must do so because of chess rules. In order not to disrupt the path of the white king to d1, only a bishop promotion is possible. Solution 2 is quite analogous: 1…Be1 2.fxe1S Kd2 3.Rf2+ Kd1 4.Kf3 Sxe1#. Again White has to sacrifice to allow the black pawn to vacate f2. This time the black rook occupies that square, while the black king is mated on f3. The white king must move to d1 again. The path is different this time, so Black must choose a different promotion piece. We see Schnoebelen in each case, plus first and fourth white moves to the same square, Zilahi and model mates. One detail I appreciate is the alternation of the active and passive blocks of the black rook and black queen. I plan to go into more detail about this type of exchange in a future issue. I consider **E1** to be a great problem, which suggests that Schnoebelen promotions distributed over several phases lend themselves to some other interesting presentations.

For two Schnoebelen promotions in a single solution, at least four moves are necessary, because the white king must be on at least two squares between the promotion and the capture in order to exclude other promotion types.

In **E2**, the black king on h2 is to be mated by the bishop on g1. For this, the white king must be brought forward. This requires, among other things, the promotion of two black pawns. Bg3 guards e1, furthermore f2 is guarded. Therefore, the white king must take the path via d1 and e2 to f1, which determines the type of promotions. The solution is 1…Bg1 2.f1S Bd4 3.g1B Kd1 4.Kg2 Ke2 5.Kh2 Kxf1 6.h3 Bxg1#. A nice problem, where I wonder that it should be the first presentation of this idea.
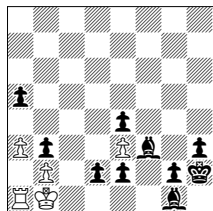
E3 uses a white rook as a mating piece. It is much more powerful than a bishop, so other paths had to be blocked by white and black pawns. Of course, the white king must also move towards the black king. The black pawns have to promote, choosing carefully not to prevent the white king from reaching e3. The promotion order is reversed compared to **E2**. Maybe **E3** doesn't look quite as elegant, but the idea is creatively implemented. 1.d1B Kc1 2.e1S Kd2 3.Bxe3+ Kxe3 4.Kg1 Rxd1 5.h2 Rxe1#.

For me by far the most impressive problem of this theme is **E4** with solution 1.Rh1 Bxh1 2.c1R Be4 3.Bd3 Kxd3 4.b1B+ Kd2 5.Sc4+ Kxc1 6.Ra3 Bxb1#. It shows an almost unbelievable extension. On the square c1 there is a black rook. It actively sacrifices itself and is immediately replaced by a promoted rook. Then the bishop on b1 sacrifices itself and is also immediately replaced by a corresponding promotion piece. These two do not move afterwards, but are captured in the following moves with a final checkmate. So we additionally see double phoenix on the theme squares – with perfect time economy. For me a great masterpiece and one of the best helpmates I have ever seen. I would give it the highest rating for the FIDE album without hesitation.
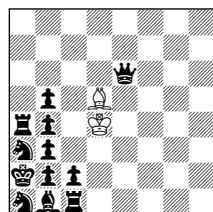
## SELFMATES, by Zoran Gavrilovski

This column is devoted to the recently published FIDE Album 2016-2018 (printed again by Peter Gvozdják), for which 1984 chess compositions and 215 selfmates (out of 1,108 submitted selfmates, i.e. 19.40%) were selected, including 15 selfmates in 2 moves, 84 selfmates in 3 moves and 116 selfmates in 4-n moves (the index in this section was compiled by Hartmut Laue). The list of composers featuring prominently in the selfmate section of the 2016-18 Album is led by Andrey Selivanov with 21.83 points, ahead of Mark Erenburg – 14.5; Gennady Koziura – 13.5; Aleksandr Azhusin – 12.83; Camilo Gamnitzer – 12. The selfmates which scored 11.5 (out of 12 maximum) points (both by Selivanov, 1st Pr Petkov-75 JT, *StrateGems* 2016-17; and 1st Pr 6th FIDE World Cup 2018) and 11 points (Diyan Kostadinov, 1st Pr Olympic tourney Baku 2016), as well as other highly ranked selfmates might be too familiar to readers, so I have decided to choose less prominent yet entertaining selfmates. My choice for the present column includes selfmates with rich thematic actual and virtual play.

F1 has the three tries by the white queen: 1.Qg3? (>2.Qd3+ Bxd3#) 1…Sf3! 1.Qf3? (>2.Qd3+ Bxd3#) 1…Sxf3 2.Sge4+ Bxe4,Rxe4#, 1…e1S! 1.Qf2? (>2.Qxd4+ Bd3#) 1…Sd~!. After the key **1.Qg1!** (>2.Qxd4+ Bd3#) a double black correction follows with mates by two black batteries: 1…Sc~ 2.Qe3+ Rxe3#; 1…Se5!? (closing the black rook's line e7-e3) 2.Sde4+ Bxe4#; and 1…Sd~ 2.R1c2+ Bxc2#; 1…Sf5!? (closing the black bishop's line g6-c2) 2.Sge4+ Rxe4#. The correction jump by each of the black knights interferes with the line of the front piece of one of the black batteries, thus allowing the other battery to deliver the mate. A side variation follows after a move by the unpinned bP: 1…e1~ 2.Qxe1+ Rxe1# (this is linked to the try 1.Qf3?).

F2 has a nice choice of key move that requires the solver to discover why the tries fail: 1.Bf8?,Be7? (>2.Sxe3+ etc.) 1…Sxg6! 1.Bb4? (>2.Sxe3+ etc.) 1…Sd3! **1.Ba3!** (>2.Sxe3+ Rxe3 3.Qxe5+ Qxe5#). Black defends by opening the bBh2's line with a random and three correction moves by bSf4, and varied strategy of the white play follows: 1…Sf~ 2.Rxe5+ Bxe5 3.Bxf3+ Rxf3#; 1…Sd3!? 2.Rd4+ exd4 3.Sb4+ Sxb4#; 1…Sg2!? 2.bxc4+ Rxc4 3.Sxe3+ Sxe3#; 1…Sxg6!? 2.Rc5+ bxc5 3.Se7+ Sxe7#. A side variation with repetitive white play is: 1…Bxc2,Rxc2 2.bxc4+ Rxc4 3.Qxe5+ Qxe5#.
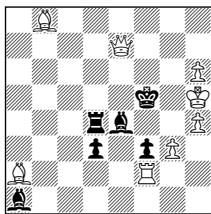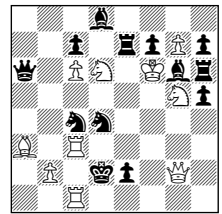
The choice of key move in **F3** is a nice foreplay to a complete cycle of white moves, achieved with only 14 units. 1.Bd5? (>2.Rxf3+ etc.) **x** 1.Bf7? (>2.Rxf3+ etc.) 1…Rd6! **y** **1.Bg8!** (>2.Rxf3+ **A** Bxf3+ 3.g4+ **B** Rxg4 4.Bh7+ **C** Rg6#) 1…Be~(Bd5) **x** 2.g4+ **B** Rxg4 3.Bh7+ **C** Rg6 4.Rxf3+ **A** Bxf3#, 1…Rd6 **y** 2.Bh7+ **C** Rg6 3.Rxf3+ **A** Bxf3+ 4.g4+ **B** Bxg4#.

The try play is a prominent part of the content of **F4** owing to the thematic refutations and the changed continuations in relation to the solution. 1.Bb1? 1…Sxe7 **x** 2.Qb6+ Kd5 3.Se3+ Ke5 4.Qc7+ Kxe6 5.Qxe7+ Bxe7# **y**, 1…Bxe7! **y** 1.Qb4? 1…Sxe7 **y** 2.Bd5+ Kxd5 3.Sf4+ Kc6 4.Re6+ Bd6 5.Kd8 Se7# **x**, 1…Sxe7! **x** **1.Re4!** 1…Sxe7 **x** 2.Rc4+ Kd5 3.Qb5+ Kxe6 4.Rc7+ Sd5 5.Re7+ Bxe7# **y**, 1…Bxe7 **y** 2.Sd8+ Kc5 3.Sb7+ Kc6 4.Re6+ Bd6 5.Kd8 Se7# **x**, 2…Bxd8 3.Rc4+ Kd5 4.Qb5+ Ke6 5.Bxd8 Se7# **x**. The black moves to e7 exchange their roles as refutation, first move and mating move.

F1 Evgeni Bourd
1-2 Pr Israel Ring Ty 2017-18

S#2

F2 Viktor Volchek
1 Pr Khramtsevich-50 JT 2017

S#3

F3 Aleksandr Mikholap
2 Pr Moscow Ty 2017

S#4

F4 Aleksandr Feoktistov
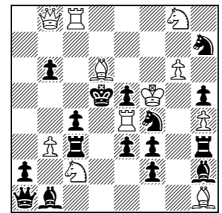1-3 Pr Kirillov-65 JT 2016

S#5

FAIRIES, by Geoff Foster

In **G1** each side has a *Double Grasshopper*, which moves by making two consecutive Grasshopper moves. The first G-move must be to a vacant square. Change of direction, including switchback, is allowed. This raises the possibility of a null move, but in this problem null moves are prohibited [Popeye does not allow null moves, but WinChloe does unless they are specifically excluded]. The fairy condition is *Parrain Circe*, in which captured units are reborn on completion of the move following the capture move. The length and direction of this following move is the same as the length and direction from the capture square to the rebirth square. A captured pawn may end up being reborn on its bottom rank (where it is able to move one square forward), which explains the three bPs on the 8th rank in the diagram. All this may sound a bit complicated, but fortunately each solution has just a single capture.

G1 Manfred Rittirsch
1 Pr *Julia's Fairies*
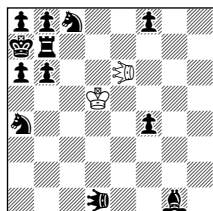2019-II

H#2½** Parrain Circe
🦗🦗 Double-G
(no null moves)

G2 Anatoly Styopochkin & Daniel Papack
Sp Pr *Julia's Fairies*
2019-II

HS#3½ 2 solutions

G3 Hubert Gockel
Sp Pr *Julia's Fairies*
2019-II

#2 Breton Adverse

H1 Alexandre Leroux & Andrew Buchanan
3 Pr *Phénix* 2018

SPG in 18.5 moves

There are two set plays (i.e. helpmate in 2 moves). The first set play is **1.Sc5 Kc4 2.Sxe6 Kb3(+DGd5)#**. The capture occurs on e6, followed by 2…Kc4-b3, with the captured DG imitating this move in being reborn one square south-west of e6, which is d5. The reborn DG gives a double-check mate: one check occurs via f7 (hurdles e6 and b7), while the other occurs via a2 (hurdles b3 and a6). The latter check relies on the fact that the a-file is open, which is why the bSa4 had to make the capture. The other set play is **1.f7 Ke5 2.fxe6 Ke4(+DGe5)#**. This time the move after the capture is 2…Ke5-e4, so the DG is reborn one square south of e6, which is e5. The double-check mate occurs via e7 (hurdles e6 and b7) and e3 (hurdles e4 and b6). This time the bSa4 is not able to make Black's moves, because a bSe6 could nullify both checks with 3.Sc5+! or 3.Sd4!

In the real play White has no tempo move, because the null move 1…DGe6 (using wKd5 as hurdle) is not permitted. The only real solution is **1…Ke5 2.f3 Kf5 3.DGxe6 Kg4(+DGf5)#**. White and Black create hurdles on f5 and f3 respectively to allow the bDGd1 to make the capture via g4. Note that 1…Ke4+? fails as the wDGe6 checks the bK via e3. The double-check mate occurs via d7 (hurdles e6 and b7) and f2 (hurdles f3 and b6), with the latter check giving another use to bPf3. In the three solutions the wK makes all of White's moves, while the wDG is captured by three different black units and reborn in three different directions.

In the helpselfmate **G2** the play revolves around wPc3, which is attacked by both half-pinned black units and also observed by a pair of white units. In each solution all three of those white units will either be annihilated or sacrificed. The first solution is **1…Rxc3 2.Kd4 Rc1 3.Se3 Bxa5 4.Qc3+ Bxc3#**. 1…Rxc3 annihilates wPc3 and pins bBe1, then 2.Kd4 the wK moves to its mating square while unpinning wSf5. The switchback 2…Rc1 unpins bBe1, then 3.Se3 self-blocks e3 while opening the line of bBh7. Then 3…Bxa5 annihilates wBa5 and pins bRc1. Finally 4.Qc3+ forces mate by 4…Bxc3#, with the pinned bRc1 doing guard duty. The second solution has perfect analogy with diagonal/orthogonal correspondence. **1…Bxc3 2.Ke3 Be1 3.Sd4 Rxc8 4.Bc3+ Rxc3#**. The bRc1/bBe1 exchange roles, as do the wQc8/wBa5. Also, the first move of one solution is the mating move of the other.
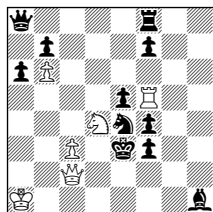
G3 uses the fairy condition *Breton Adverse*: when a unit is captured, another unit of the same kind belonging to the captured side must also disappear (if one exists). If there is more than one such unit then the capturing side decides which one to remove. Here 1.Rxe5 would seem to threaten 2.Sf5 and 2.Rxe4, but after the capture another black pawn must be removed, with the only sensible options being Pb7, Pf7 or Pf3. However, each one of these opens a black line.

In two tries each potential threat is avoided in turn. 1.Rxe5[-Pb7]? threatens just 2.Sf5, as bQa8 guards e4. The avoided threat occurs in 1…Qc2 2.Rxe4. There is also 1…f2 2.Qe2, but 1…f5! refutes. The second try 1.Rxe5[-Pf7]? threatens just 2.Rxe4, as bRf8 guards f5. The avoided threat occurs in 1…Re8 2.Sf5. Once again there is 1…f2 2.Qe2, but this time the defence works by opening a black line to e4, rather than by square vacation of f3. This try is refuted by 1…Qe8! Finally **1.Rxe5[-Pf3]!** avoids *both* of the virtual threats, as 2.Sf5+? Kf3! and 2.Rxe4+? Bxe4! However, the absence of bPf3 has yet another effect in allowing a new threat of 2.Qe2. The earlier threats return in 1…Bf3 (self-block) 2.Sf5 and 1…f3 (black interference) 2.Rxe4. The judge praised the excellent construction.
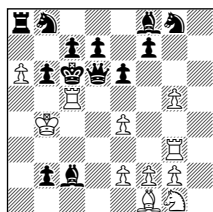
PROOF GAMES AND RETROS, by Andrey Frolkin

This time I would like to focus on retros from the recently published FIDE Album 2016-2018. Its retro section contains many highly sophisticated problems (the longest solution description requiring more than two pages), but this selection will contain lighter material. Yet all of these examples are unique in some way.

In **H1**, 10 successive checks are presented (breaking a relatively recent record by Joaquim Crusats). 1.h4 g5 2.hxg5 a5 3.Rxh7 a4 4.Rh3 a3 5.Rg3 axb2 6.a4 b6 7.a5 Bb7 8.a6 Be4 9.Ra5 Bxc2 10.d3 e6 11.Kd2 Ke7 12.Kc3 Kd6 13.Kb4 Qe7 14.Sc3. Now the stage is ready for the "checking performance". 13…Rh4+ 15.Bf4+ Rxf4+ 16.Se4+ Rxe4+ 17.dxe4+ Kc6+ 18.Qd6+ Qxd6+ 19.Rc5+.

H2 is a record for the largest number of captureless moves by two original knights of the same side interchanging their places. cf. PDB P0000107, 1988 (35 years ago!), which had 14 moves by the thematic knights and two captures. 1.f4 d5 2.f5 Kd7 3.f6 Kd6 4.fxe7 Bxe7 5.Sh3 Bh4+ 6.Sf2 Qf6 7.Sc3 Qd4 8.Sa4 Sf6 9.Sc5 Re8 10.Scd3 Re3 11.Sf4 Rh3 12.Sh5 Rxh2 13.Sg3 Bh3 14.Sd3 Sbd7 15.Sc5 Re8 16.Sa4 Re3 17.Sc3 Ke5 18.Sb1 Rc3 19.e4 Kf4 20.e5 Se4 21.d3+ Sd2 22.Qg4+ Ke3 23.Kd1 f5 24.Se2 Sf6 25.Sg1.

H3 is another record-breaker – in the category "longest deferred exact position" (disregarding the 50-move remis rule). The previous record was set by Hugo August back in 1942: 65 single moves. The new record level is 68. Quite impressive! White balance: 13 (pieces on the board) + 1 (dxe) + 1 (cxd>d1=B) + 1 (Rd7xc7++) = 16. Black balance: 12 + 1 (a2xb3) + 3 (the white f-, g- and h-pawns each had to capture once in order to promote) = 16. The only way to release the cage is to unguard c4 for the black king. In the diagram position, that square is guarded by three white units. A long retro story is to be told…

Retract: -1…Rd7xQc7++ -2.d4-d5 Sg6-h8 -3.c4-c5 Sf4-g6 -4.c2-c4 Sd5-f4 -5.Qg3-c7 Sc7-d5+ -6.Qg8-g3 h6-h5 -7.g7-g8=Q g3-g2 -8.g6-g7 g4-g3 -9.h5xSg6 Sf4-g6 -10.h4-h5 Sd5-f4 -11.h3-h4 Sc3-d5 -12.Bd3-b5 Sb5-c3+ -13.Bh7-d3 g5-g4 -14.Bg8-h7 g6-g5 -15.g7-g8=B e3-e2 -16.f6xBg7 Bh8-g7 -17.f5-f6 Be5-h8 -18.h2-h3 Bd6-e5 -19.f4-f5 Bc5-d6 -20.Sc4-b6 Bb6-c5+ -21.Se5-c4 g7-g6 -22.Sg6-e5 e4-e3 -23.Sh8-g6 e5-e4 -24.h7-h8=S d6xPe5 -25.g6xQh7 Qh8-h7 -26.g5-g6 Qh7-h8 -27.g4-g5 Qd3-h7 -28.g3-g4 Qd1-d3 -29.g2-g3 Qa1-d1 -30.f3-f4 a2-a1=Q -31.f2-f3 a3-a2 -32.a2xPb3 Kc4-b4 -33.e4-e5 b4-b3 -34.e3-e4 Bb3-a4 -35.Ra4-a5 (see **H3A** – the position that was inevitable 68 single moves ago).

Scrutinizing retro records may be a fascinating experience, but sooner or later one may get tired of them and yearn for something simple and charming. I daresay **H4** is just that sort of problem. 1.b3 Sf6 2.Bb2 Se4 3.Bxg7 Rg8 4.Bb2 Rg3 5.h4 Rf3 6.exf3 f6 7.Bb5 Kf7 8.Bxd7 Sc6 9.Bh3 Qd6 10.Bc1 Qh2 11.g3 e5 12.Bf1 Bh3 13.Bb5 Rd8 14.Ke2 Rd5 15.Qe1 Sd8 16.Bd7 Rb5 17.Kd3 Bb4 18.Kc4 c5 19.Kd5 Bf1 20.Bh3 Bd3 21.Bf1. One of the white bishops performs a double round-trip on the same route (Bf1-b5xd7-h3-f1-b5-d7-h3-f1), while the other white bishop restricts itself to a switchback manoeuvre (Bc1-b2xg7-b2-c1).

SELFMATE SOLUTIONS (continued from p.151)

S2933R (Armeni) 1.0-0-0? f4? 2.e4+ fxe3e.p. 3.h7! etc. but 1…b5!; **1.h7!** 1…f4 2.e4+ fxe3e.p. 3.0-0-0 b5 (3…e2? 4.Kb1 exd1Q#) 4.h8B (4.h8Q? ~ 5.Qg8,Qh5,Qh1#) b4 5.Bxb4 e2 6.Kb1 exd1Q#; 1…b5 2.h8B b4 (2…f4 3.e4+ transposes) 3.Bxb4 f4 4.e4+ fxe3e.p. 5.0-0-0 e2 6.Kb1 exd1Q#. Protracted demonstration of the Valladao theme (Brian Chamberlain). Exact double-promotion Valladao with model mate in a pleasant, clear-cut realisation (SJGT). At last: a long one I could do! Two promotions plus a careful key to guard d4 and release wBc3 just in time (CL).
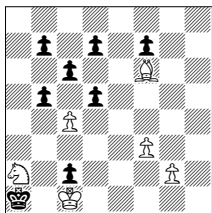
RETROGRADE ANALYSIS FOR NEWCOMERS

RQ22: I (Richard Dunn) intend to look at Retractors over the next few issues. At left is an extremely simple example which you should be able to solve quite quickly. In the diagram, Black is in check, and White has to retract the checking move; this can be achieved either by moving his bishop or by playing back the knight or pawn to c3, with the aim of mating the black king in one. *See solution on p.175.*

H2 Nicolas Dupont
1 Pr J.J.Lois-70 JT
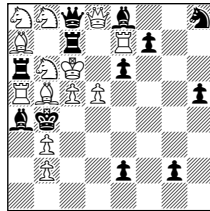UAPA 2016-17
dedicated to G.Donati
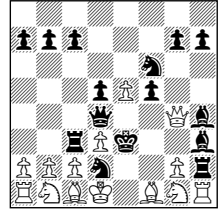
SPG in 24.5 moves

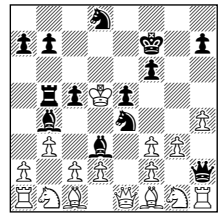**H3A** position 68 single moves ago
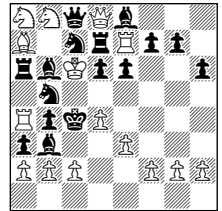
H3 Dmitry Baibikov
1 Pr *Probleemblad*
2017-18

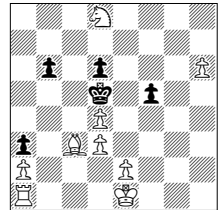What was the position 68 single moves ago?

H4 Ken Kousaka & Satoshi Hashimoto
1 Pr *Problem Paradise*
2015-16

SPG in 20.5 moves

S2933R

R#6

RQ22 Einar Oije
Die Schwalbe 1962

-1 & #1

BCPS AWARD: STUDIES 2022
By Gady Costeff

38 studies participated in the tourney. I enjoyed every one of them and I thank the composers for this experience. My thanks also to director Yochanan Afek for his tireless work in promoting our art.

I tried to understand each study, research its predecessors, and select for the award those that I considered as a substantial improvement. My choices reflect my preferences rather than any "objective" evaluation. I hope my comments to the studies will clarify these preferences.

(In the solutions below, just the main line has been given. Readers wanting a full analysis will find this in the issue of the original publication. In order to assist this, the page number and issue are given in the text.)

Steffen S Nielsen
1 Pr *The Problemist* 2022

Win

Serhiy Didukh
2 Pr *The Problemist* 2022

Win

Michael Pasman
3 Pr *The Problemist* 2022

Win

1st Prize E1328 Steffen S.Nielsen (January, p281): **1.Rg1+ Kb2 2.Sc4+ Sxc4 3.f7+ Se5 4.Bxe5+ Bc3+ 5.d4 Bb4 6.d5+ Bc3+ 7.d4 Bb4 8.d6 c1=Q! 9.Rxc1 Rh3! 10.Rc3!! Kxc3 11.f8=Q** MAIN A: **11...Kb2 12.d5+ Ka2 13.Bb2! Kxb2 14.Qg7+ Ka2 15.Qg2+** wins. MAIN B: **11...Kd2 12.Bf4+ Kd1 13.Bc1! Kxc1 14.Qc8+ Kb2 15.Qxa6** wins.
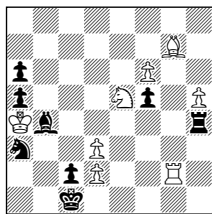
Almost every single move from 2.Sc4+ to 8.d6 opens one line and closes another, or has an otherwise arrival and departure effect, creating incredible thematic and emotional intensity. A second phase starts after 8…c1=Q! 9.Rxc1 Rh3! 10.Rc3!! Kxc3 11.f8=Q and then resolves in two perfectly matched variations with analogous bishop sacrifices.

The composer has produced at least 10 studies involving mutual pin/unpin combinations. For example, in the database **hhdbvi** 452 already uses a black pawn as one of the switching pieces, similar to the role of the d-pawn here, and 2044 already showed the black bishop repeatedly blocking the rook and guarding a promotion square. However, the author increased the intensity by adding a line opening and closing introduction with mutual knight sacrifices, doubled the core mechanism with a second d-pawn, and then added a brilliant concluding phase.

There are six clean sacrifices, only the necessary material is used, and with most moves entirely forced, there is little thinking to be done, other than to marvel at how the composer came up with this.

2nd Prize E1346 Serhiy Didukh (Originally July, p409, but note that this version of the study was submitted to the director and the judge on 6.12.2022; only the introduction has been changed, so the main body of the annotations remain for the reader's use): **1.Qb7+! Kxd6 2.Qxb6+ Kxd7 3.Qd4+ Ke7 4.Re3+ Kf8! 5.Qd6+ Kg7 6.Qe5+ Kh7 7.Qe7+ Sf7 8.Qxf7+ Kh6 9.Re6 Qd1+ 10.Kg2 Qf3+ 11.Kg1 Qd1+ 12.Kh2 g3+ 13.Kg2 Qh5 14.f3! Ra8 15.Qf6 Rg8! 16.Qe7! Rc8 17.Qb4! Rg8 18.Re7 a2 19.Qf4+! g5 20.Qxf5 Rg7 21.Re6+ Rg6 22.Qf8+**

The logical choice of 1.Qb7+ (1.Qxb5+?) is comprehensible only after 17.Qb4!!

With 5.Qd6+ 6.Qe5+ 7.Qe7+ the queen and rook chase the black king to h6. To stop mate, the black queen manoeuvres to h5, only to be incarcerated by 14.f3! The black defences seem solid until the subtle 15.Qf6! 16.Qe7 17.Qb4! defending h4 and eventually threatening 18.Qf4+ provides the decisive breakthrough. Since 17.Qb4! is necessary, the logic of avoiding 1.Qxb5+...16..Rb8! becomes apparent.

The play, covering the entire board, is rich, and requires real detective work to figure out why only the solution succeeds.
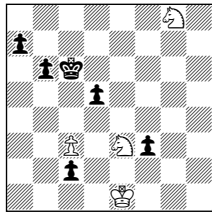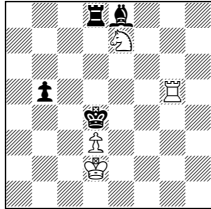
3rd Prize E1357 Michael Pasman (November, p500): **1.Kd2! f2 2.Se7+! Kc5 3.S7xd5 f1=Q 4.Sxf1 Kxd5 5.Kc1!! b5 6.Sd2! a6! 7.Kb2!! c1=Q+ 8.Kxc1 a5 9.Kc2! a4 10.Kb2! Kc5 11.Ka3 Kd5 12.Kb4** wins.

White wins the zugzwang battle with the capture avoidance moves 5.Kc1! 6.Sd2! and 7.Kb2! The logical try 6.Kxc2 a6!! is extremely valuable because it uses the a-pawn's tempo-losing capability. The logical try 2.Sf6? refuted by 5..a6!! is rich and interesting, but less convincing, since the main line 2.Se7+ check! is obviously stronger than the try.

E1334 Jan Rusinek & Piotr Ruszczynski (March, p321): **1.Kd2! Be8 2.Sf5+ Kxe4 3.Se7! Rb6 4.exd3+ Kd4 5.Rf1! Rxb8 6.Rf5! Rd8 7.Rg5!** Zugzwang **7...Rd7 8.Sc6#; 7...Bd7 8.Rd5#** or **7...b4 8.Ra5!** wins.

**Jan Rusinek &
Piotr Ruszczynski**
Corr. 3 Pr *Schakend
Nederland* 1979

Win

This is a correction of a 1979 prizewinner (41981), so it retains its original prize but is worth commenting on. When this study first appeared in 1979, it was only the fourth study to show a Grimshaw. The Grimshaw can be defined as a Nowotny without the sacrifice, and is therefore much harder to show, sixteen times harder based on the statistics. By replacing a bishop with a pawn and some further refinements, the authors corrected the study and added a crisp mutual zugzwang.

Rusinek & Ruszczynski
After 7.Rg5!

(Mutual) zugzwang:
7...Rd7 8.Sc6#;
7...Bd7 8.Rd5#;
7...b4 8.Ra5! wins

Bazlov & Kovalenko
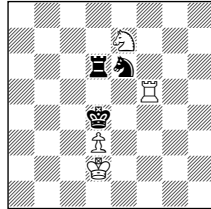
8...Sc5　9.Rd5+　Rxd5
10.Sc6#
If e.g. 8...Sg7 9.Ra5 wins

Although they are completely different studies, the critical position following 7.Rg5! is fascinatingly similar to the position after 8.Rf5 in Bazlov & Kovalenko, 2 Pr Polish Chess Federation tourney (34912).

Jan Timman
HM *The Problemist* 2022

Draw

Honourable Mention E1358 Jan Timman (November, p501): **1.Bf4 1...Re1! 2.Rxe1 Qg3! 3.Bxg3 Bf6 4.Re7! Bxe7 5.Qc6! dxc6 6.Rxc6 Sd8 7.Rg6! Sf7 8.Be5! Sxe5 9.Rxg7+! Kxg7** Stalemate.

Within a stalemate battle, Black sacrifices queen and rook and White responds by sacrificing his four officers. All the sacrifices close or open different lines. This is far more difficult to compose than reusing the same line as in the typical 37107, and it also avoids the monotony that repeated use of the same line may produce. An idea with scope for development.

Honourable Mention E1353 Árpád Rusz (November, p500): **1.Kc6+ Kc8 2.Qg4+ Kb8 3.Qg8+ Ka7 4.Qg1+ Kb8 5.Qh2+ Ka8 6.Qh8+ Ka7 7.Qd4+ Ka8　8.Qd5! Qb4! 9.Qg8+ Ka7 10.Qg1+ Ka8 11.Qa1+ Kb8 12.Qe5+ Ka8 13.Qd5! Qe7 14.Kb6+ Kb8 15.Qg8+** wins.

Árpád Rusz
HM *The Problemist* 2022

Win

White plays a 5-move triangulation to pass the move to Black. A new discovery with long moves and ultimate economy. Van Vliet, 1888, (90724) is the classic artistic study with queen and knight's pawn versus queen, and this is a pretty addition to the genre.

Commendation E1323 Ludek Sedlak (January, 280): **1.Kd7!** A: **1...Rd4+ 2.Kc7! Rc4+ 3.Kd7 Rb4 4.Kc6 Ke6 5.b6 Rc4+ 6.Kb5 Rc1 4.Kc6 Ke6 5.b6 Rc4+ 6.Kb5 Rc1 7.b7 Kd7 8.b8=S+! Kc7 9.Sa6+** draw; B: **1...Kd5 2.b6 Rf4 3.b7 Rf7+ 4.Kc8 Kc6 5.b8=S+!** draw.
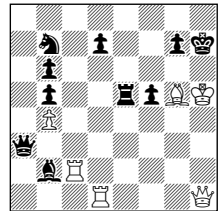
Ludek Sedlak
C *The Problemist* 2022

Draw

Three knight promotions, one each in the two main lines, importantly with different king placement so no duplication, and one in a try starting with 1.Kf7?, demonstrating the chessboard's asymmetry. This is done with economy and skill. On the other hand, such knight promotions are nothing new and Becker (65001) even shows a knight promotion of different pawns in three variations.

Commendation E1351 Daniele Gatti (September, 456): **1.Sf4! d3 2.Sxd3+ Kd4 3.Sc1 a1=S! 4.f4 Sc2 5.f5 Se1 6.f6 Sf3+ 7.Kf4 Se5 8.Se2+! Kd3 9.Sg1! Sf7 10.Sf3 Sh8 11.a4! c5 12.dxc6 dxc6 13.e5 dxe5+ 14.Sxe5+ Kd4 15.Sxc6+ Kc5 16.Se5 Kb4 17.Kg5 Kxa4 18.Kh6 Kb3 19.Kg7 a4 20.Kxh8 a3 21.Sd3 a2 22.Sc1+** wins

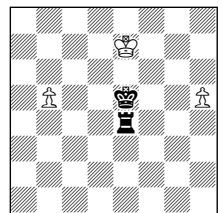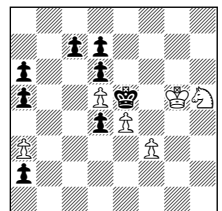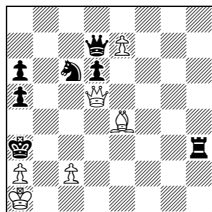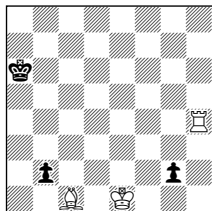**Daniele Gatti**
C *The Problemist* 2022

Win

Michael Pasman
C *The Problemist* 2022

Win

Ludek Sedlak
C *The Problemist* 2022

Draw

A 22-move battle, during which the white knight travels across the board, twice occupying c1 to control the black a-pawns. At the same time the black knight switches diagonal corners, which has been done 7 times, but here the thematic knight is also promoted for the first time.

Commendation E1344 Michael Pasman (July, p408): **1.c3! Rxc3 2.Qd2! Kb4 3.a3+! Kb5 4.Qxc3 d5 5.Bd3+ Kb6 6.Bb5!! Kxb5 7.Qd3+! Ka4 8.Ka2! Sb4+! 9.axb4 Qxe7 10.b5! Qb4 11.bxa6 Qb6 12.Qb1! Qe3 13.Qb2! d4 14.a7 Qe6+ 15.Kb1 Qe1+ 16.Qc1 Qb4+ 17.Ka1! Qb7 18.Qc4+ Ka3 19.Qa2+** winning.

19 moves of various tactics including mating threats, promotion threats, sacrifices, and skewers. The composer chose the longest conclusion, but it is also possible to provide thematic unity by using the unmentioned conclusion 14…Qf3 15.a8Q Qxa8 16.Qb3 mate, showing a Pa2 Excelsior, enhanced by no double jumping, and overcoming three black units initially standing in its way. There are only three studies with these features.

Commendation E1354 Ludek Sedlak (November, p500): **1.Rh6+ Kb5** 1...Kb7 2.Rh7+ Kc6 3.Rh6+ Kd5 4.Rh5+ Ke4 5.Re5+! **One!** (5.Rh4+? Kf3 6.Rh3+ [6.Rf4+? Kg3 loses] 6...Kg4 Black wins) 5...Kxe5 6.Bxb2+ Ke4 7.Kf2 draws **2.Rh5+ Kc4 3.Rh4+ Kd3** 3...Kb3 4.Rh3+ Kc2 (Or 4...Ka2 5.Ra3+! **Two!** 5...Kxa3 (5...Kb1 6.Be3 draws) 6.Bxb2+ Kxb2 7.Kf2 draws) 5.Rc3+! **Three!** 5...Kxc3 6.Bxb2+ Kxb2 7.Kf2 draws **4.Rd4+! Four! 4...Kxd4 5.Bxb2+ Ke3 6.Bd4+! Five! 6...Kxd4 7.Kf2** Draw. Four rook sacrifices and a bishop sacrifice.

The composer adds a fourth rook sacrifice compared with Matous (17208) with ideal economy.

We thank Gady for his interesting award, especially making use of CQL (the app he devised with Lewis Stiller) to extract relevant precursors and compile statistics. Claims should be directed to Yochanan Afek within three months, please.

BCPS AWARD: SELFMATES & REFLEXMATES 2020
By Ivan Soroka

Miodrag Mladenović
1 Pr *The Problemist* 2020

S#3*

Zoran Gavrilovski
2 Pr *The Problemist* 2020
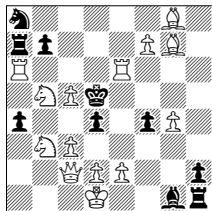
S#3

In 2020, a total of 57 selfmates and reflexmates were published in *The Problemist* and *The Problemist Supplement*. The level of the tourney was quite high, which enabled me to divide the award into two sections: S#2-4 and S#5-10. In view of the small number of reflexmates, I included them in the S#2-4 award. I apologize for the delay in preparing the award, caused by the war unleashed by Russia against Ukraine. It is hard to concentrate on chess composition when Russian missiles explode in your city, civilians die, buildings are destroyed and power cuts last for hours each day. The award is as follows.

Section A. S#2-4, R#2-4

1st Prize S2827 Miodrag Mladenović 1...dxc3 2.Sxc3+ Kc4 3.Re4+ Bd4#. **1.f8S!** (>2.Rf6+ Ke5 3.cxd4+ Bxd4#; 1.f8~? Rxa6!) 1...dxc3 2.Rf6+ Ke5 3.d4+ Bxd4#; 1...d3 2.Red6+ Ke4 3.Rd4+ Bxd4#; 1...Sc7 2.Re4+ Se6 3.Rxd4+ Bxd4#; 1...axb3 2.Reb6+ Kxc5 3.Bxd4+ Bxd4#; 1...Kc4 2.Rec6+ Kxb5 3.Sxd4+ Bxd4#; 1...Rxa6 2.Re5+(Re7+?) Kc6 3.S3xd4+ Bxd4#; 1...b6,bxa6 2.Re7+(Re5+?) Kc6 3.S5xd4+ Bxd4#. A panoramic problem with eightfold play of the Re6/Bg8 battery and a white rook's "cross" on e5, d6, e7, f6. Different white pieces play six times to the same d4 square on the 3rd move. A clear winner of the tourney. Bravo, Miodrag!

2nd Prize S2817 Zoran Gavrilovski 1.Qe8! (>2.Sc6+ Rxc6+ 3.Qe5+ Bxe5#) 1…Rd5+ 2.Qe5+ Rxe5 3.Se2+ Rxe2#; 1…Bxf3 2.Se2+ Bxe2 3.Qe4+ Qxe4#; 1…Rxb4 2.Qe4+ Kxc3 3.Rxd3+ Rxd3#; 1…cxb4 2.Rxd3+ Kc5 3.Qe3+ Rd4#; 1…Sg4 2.Qe3+ Sxe3 3.Sc6+ Rxc6#. Yet another achievement by Zoran in the field of cyclical themes. A six-fold cycle of White's 2nd and 3rd moves according to the pattern AB/BC/CD/DE/EF/FA. A well-known mechanism has been expanded to six variations with fivefold play of the black battery. More than 10 problems presenting six-fold cycles have been published and so the question

arises whether it is possible to raise the record to a 7-variation cycle. Zoran, please try to do it!

3rd Prize S2828 Aleksandr Pankratiev 1.Sc4! (>2.Rxe4+ Bxe4 3.Rf5+[A] Bxf5 4.Qxg4+[B] Bxg4#) 1...Sxc4 2.Be3+ Sxe3 3.Qxg4+[B] Sxg4 4.Rf6+[C] Sxf6#; 1...Rxc4 2.Bd6+ Qxd6 3.Rf6+[C] Qxf6 4.Rf5+[A] Qxf5#. A problem with a cycle of White's 3rd and 4th moves in the threat and 2 variations. After a nice key with white knight's sacrifice on c4, Black's two defences are focused on that square. The author skilfully used a familiar three-move cyclical scheme. The set play variations shown by the author do not add anything interesting to the problem's content.
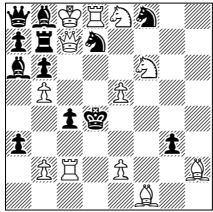
4th Prize S2816 Aleksandr Kuzovkov 1.e6! ~ 2.Rxc4+ Ke3 3.Qf4+ (A) Bxf4#; 1...c3 2.bxc3+ Ke3 3.Qxg3+ (B) Bxg3#; 1...Bxb5 2.Qf4+ (A) Kc5 3.Qd6+ Bxd6#; 1...Ke3 2.Qxg3+ (B) Kd4 3.Qe5+ Bxe5# (1...Sxe6,Sg6 2.Rxd7+ Ke3 3.Qxg3+ Bxg3#). Two pairs of harmonious variations with geometric motifs are related by Bristol and active play of the white queen. White's 3rd moves of the first pair become 2nd moves in the second pair.
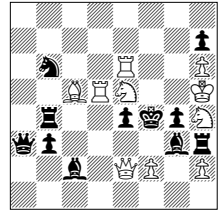
1st Honourable Mention S2783vv Brian Chamberlain
1.f3! (>2.Qe5+ Bxe5#) 1...exf3 2.e4+ Rxe4#; 1...Re6,Rxe3 2.fxe4+ Rxe4#; 1...Rf6 2.Qg6+ Rxg6#; 1...Sf6 2.Qg4+ Sxg4#; 1...Se6+ dxe6+ bxc5#, 1...Sxe8 2.d6+ bxc5#. A very good SOTF problem: three harmonious pairs of variations. The first pair features play by different white pawns to e4; the second pair presents the creation and subsequent play of black batteries plus white queen's sacrifice; and the third pair involves two defences by a black knight with play of the Pd5+Rc5 battery. It is unclear why the author chose 1.e2xf3 as the key instead of 1.f2-f3; the key 1.e7-e8B is also possible with wPf3 in the diagram position.

2nd Honourable Mention S2815 Eugene Fomichev & Sergey Khachaturov 1.Sd~? e5!, **1.Sb4!** (>2.e5+ Bxe5 3.fxe5+ Qxe5#), 1...Sf6 2.c8S+ Rxc8 3.dxc8S+ Qxc8#; 1...Re1(Rf1) 2.c5+ Sxc5 3.Sc4+ Bxc4#; 1...e5 2.Sb5+ Ke7 3.Sd5+ Bxd5#. A synthesis of two different pairs of variations. The first pair presents black Bristol; particularly spectacular is the variation 1...Sf6 with two white pawn promotions. The second pair, with play of the black battery Bf7+Rf8, is unfortunately not as good as the first one, on account of heterogeneity of White's play.

3rd Honourable Mention S2800 Gunter Jordan & Raúl Jordan 1.Rb4! (>2.Rxb3+ Qxb3 3.Qc2+ Qxc2#), 1...Qxa5 2.Rbc4+ Kd3 3.Qd2+ Qxd2#; 1...Qxb4 2.Qc2+ bxc2 3.Bxb2+ Qxb2#; 1...Rxb7 2.Qd4+ Bxd4 3.Re3+ Bxe3#; 1...Bxd5 2.Re3+ Rxe3 3.Qe1+ Rxe1#. A solid problem with a SOTF synthesis. The first pair presents black queen's ambush behind her pieces, followed by White's sacrificial opening of lines for her. In the second pair, Black opens lines for bR/bB, with sacrifices and change of functions of wR/wQ.

4th Honourable Mention S2824v Manfred Ernst & Stephen Taylor 1.Qh8!! (>2.Sxf4+ Qxf4#), 1...Rxa3 2.c4+ Kxc4#; 1...c4 2.Qd4+ Kxd4#; 1...hxg6 2.Qe5+ Kxe5#; 1...Qg1 2.Bxe6+ Kxe6#; 1...Ra4 2.Rxd6+ Kxd6#. A classical-style problem; after a remarkable key to the corner square h8 by the white queen, the black royal battery Kd5+Bb7 plays five times. The simple shifting of Ba8 to b7 and Pc7 to e6 (see diagram over page) adds one more

Aleksandr Pankratiev
3 Pr *The Problemist* 2020
S#4

Aleksandr Kuzovkov
4 Pr *The Problemist* 2020
S#3

S2783v Brian Chamberlain
The Problemist 2020
S#2
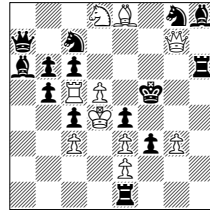
Brian Chamberlain
1 HM *The Problemist* 2020
S#2
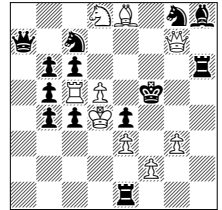
Eugene Fomichev &
Sergey Khachaturov
2 HM *The Problemist* 2020
S#3
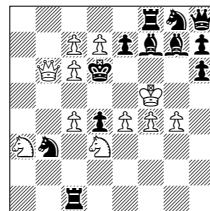
Gunter Jordan &
Raúl Jordan
3 HM *The Problemist* 2020
S#3
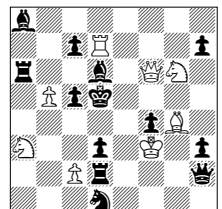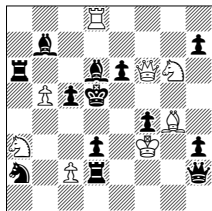

S2824 Manfred Ernst &
Stephen Taylor
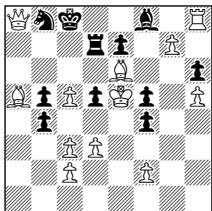*The Problemist* 2020
S#2

Manfred Ernst & Stephen Taylor
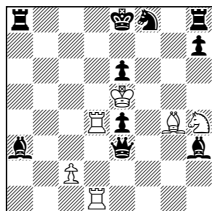4 HM *The Problemist* 2020
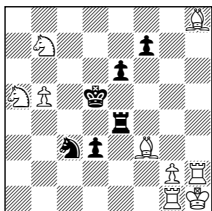
S#2

Gábor Tar
C *The Problemist* 2020

S#3

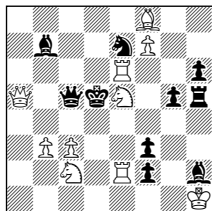**Gábor Tar**
C *The Problemist* 2020

R#2 Duplex

Anatoly Stepochkin
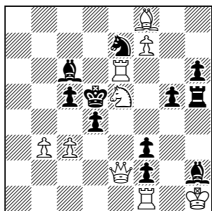C *The Problemist* 2020

R#2

Vilimantas Satkus
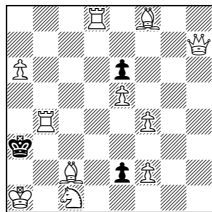C *The Problemist* 2020

S#2

S2806v

S#2

Marcin Banaszek
1 Pr *The Problemist* 2020

S#10

thematic variation with black royal battery play 1...Ra4 2.Rxd6+ Kxd6# – and now the key looks even better!

Commended S2793 Gábor Tar The attempts 1.cxb4? f3 2.Kd4 f4 3.g8B Bg7#, but 1...d4!; 1.f3? bxc3 2.Kd4 b4 3.Qc6+ Sxc6#, but 1...d4! come too early, failing to the same defence 1...d4. Therefore, White's key makes Black choose a particular defence in advance. **1.Kd4!** (>2.Qc6+ Sxc6#) 1...f3 2.cxb4 f4 3.g8B Bg7#; 1...bxc3 2.f3 b4 3.Qc6+ Sxc6#. Double Salazar.

Commended S2790R Gábor Tar 1.Bh5+! Sg6+/Ke7 2.Kf6/R4d3 0-0/exd3#; duplex: 1.Sd7+! Rxd7/Kxe6 2.Bf8/Sb8 Bh5/Rd8#. A duplex is rarely seen in selfmates/reflexmates. Interesting play in two variations. One of the solutions also involves kingside castling.

Commended S2823R Anatoly Stepochkin 1.Bd1,Bh5? (>2.Re1,Rh4) Re1? 2.Rf1 Rxf1#, but 1...Rh4!; 1.Rh6/Rh7? (>2.Bh5) e5/f5! 2.Rd6/Rd7#; 1.Rc1/Rb1? (>2.Bd1) S~/Sxb5! 2.Rc5/Rxb5#. **1.Ra1!** (>2.Bd1 Re1#) Se2 2.Rg1 Sg3#. It is clear that the key must be a departure of the Rg1 or Rh2. But what destination square should be chosen? An interesting problem for solving, with numerous tries. It is a pity that there is only one variation after the key.

Commended S2806 Vilimantas Satkus 1.Sc4? fxe2!; 1.Sd7? g4!; **1.Sd3!** (>2.R2e5+ Bxe5#) 1...fxe2 2.c4+ Kxe6#; 1...g4 2.Sf4+ Bxf4#; 1...Sc6(Sg6) 2.Rd6+ Bxd6#. White knight's threefold correction. The variation 1...fxe2 2.c4+ Kxe6#! is unexpected and nice, with half-battery play and line-opening for the Bb7. Sad is the role of the white Qa5, which is only necessary for pinning the black Qc5, the latter additionally guarding the white king's possible g1-flight after 1...f1S/B. The position can be improved – see **S2806v**, in which the white queen has a heavier workload and the wSc2 is gone. The Bb7 is shifted to c6, getting rid of the superfluous variation 1...Sc6.
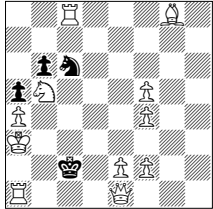
Section B. S#5-N

1st Prize S2796 Marcin Banaszek 1.Be4! (-) **1...e1Q** 2.Rb3+ Ka4 3.Bc6+ Ka5 4.Qc7+ Kxa6 5.Qb7+ Ka5 6.Rb5+ Ka4 7.Qa7+ Qa5 8.Qd4+ Qb4 9.Rc5+ Ka3 10.Qb2+ Qxb2#; **1...e1R** 2.Rb3+ Ka4 3.Ra3+ Kb5 4.Qb7+ Kc4 5.Rd4+ Kxd4 6.Ra4+ Kc3 7.Qb3+ Kd2 8.Rd4+ Kxc1 9.Qe3+ Rxe3 10.Ba3+ Rxa3#; **1...e1B** 2.Rc4+ Bb4 3.Rc3+ Ka4 4.Rd4 Ka5 (if 4...Kb5, 5.Qb7+ etc. & S#9) 5.Qc7+ Kxa6 (5...Kb5 6.Qb7+ Ka4 7.Sb3 Ka3 8.Bb1 B~ 9.Qd4+ Bxb4 10.Sc5+) 6.Qb7+ Ka5 7.Sb3+ Ka4 8.Bb1 Ka3 9.Sc5+ Bxc3+ 10.Qb2+ Bxb2#; **1...e1S** 2.Rb1+ Ka4 3.Qd7+ Ka5 4.Sb3+ Kxa6,Kb6 5.Qc6+ Ka7 6.Qc7+ K(x)a6 7.Rd6+ Kb5 8.Sd4+ Ka4 9.Bc6+ Ka3 10.Sc2+ Sxc2#.

At the moment of publication of the problem, this was the first-ever presentation of black AUW in a S#10. Obviously, it is simply impossible to compose such a problem without using a computer program. Each variation involves white battery play – unfortunately, with repetition of moves after 1...e1Q, 1...e1R. A considerable technical achievement of the author and his devoted assistant Gustav.

2nd Prize S2830 Gennady Koziura 1.Kb5! 1…a5 2.Ra7+ Kg8 3.Ka4 Kh8 4.Ra8 Kg8 5.Qc4 Kh8 6.Qxb3 Kg8 7.Rxe5+ Kh8 8.Bf5 gxf5 9.Re8+ Bxe8#; 1…a6+ 2.Kxb4 a5+ 3.Ka3 a4 4.Ra6 Ke8 5.Sxh7 g5 6.Sf6+ Kf8 7.Qc5+ Be7 8.Ra8+ Be8 9.Qd6 Bxd6#. Once again, a wonderful problem in the author's peculiar style. Two impressive echoed chameleon mates with change of functions in black bishops' play and active play by the white king in both variations. In the diagram position, there are no pieces at all on any of the 8 squares adjacent to the white king! It is a pity that 1…a6+ is not followed by white Rg7+Bh6 battery play.

Gennady Koziura
2 Pr *The Problemist* 2020

S#9

3rd Prize S2818 Valery Kirillov, Mykhailo Marandyuk & Grigory Popov. A problem of a logical character, in view of the try 1.Qb4? axb4+ 2.Ka2! It is clear that White must occupy the a2-square with his bishop; but after 1.Ba2? Black is stalemated. **1.Qf1!** Kd2 2.Rd1+ Kc2 3.Sd4+ Kc3. Now Black has the move 4… b5 at his disposal, which enables White to block a2. 4.Ba2! b5 5.Sxb5+ Kc2 6.Ra1 (rook switchback) Kd2 7.Qe1+ (queen switchback) Kc2 8.Qb4 axb4#. An elegant problem with double Bristol and switchback of three white pieces presented in a technically skilful way.

Valery Kirillov,
Mykhailo Marandyuk &
Grigory Popov
3 Pr *The Problemist* 2020

S#8

Special Prize S2821 Mark Kirtley 1.Qb8+ Sxb8 2.Rc8+ Bxc8 3.a8S+ Rxa8 4.Qd8+ Qxd8 5.axb6+ Kd6 6.Qh2+ Ke6 7.Qe5+ Kxf7 8.g8Q+ Sxg8 9.Sh8+ Rxh8 10.Qg7+ Kxe8 11.Qf8+ Bxf8#. An interesting, smart idea with switchback of all black pieces to the initial squares, for which obtrusive force is used. A similar concept, with switchback of white pieces to the initial squares, was implemented by the author in S1116 *The Problemist* 11/1986, P1081510.

Mark Kirtley
Sp Pr *The Problemist* 2020

S#11

1st Honourable Mention S2802 Camillo Gamnitzer 1.Qxf5+? Bf4+ suggests itself, but 2.Qb1. How about implementing the same plan by rook instead of queen? 1.Qf8? (>2.Rf7) but 1…Rb1! The try 1.Sh4+? Kf4? 2.Sg2+ Kf3 3.Qh5+ g4 4.Rf7! also fails: 1…gxh4! Moreover, 1.Bd4,Bb8? (>2.Rf2+ Ke4 3.Qxf5+ K(x)d4 4.Qe5+ Kd3 5.Qe3+ Bxe3#), 1…cxb5! Another foreplan is found, this time on the queenside: **1.Bg1!** (>2.Rf2+ Ke4 3.Qxf5+ Kd4 4.Qe5+ Kd3 5.Qe3+ Bxe3#) cxb5 2.Qb7+! Bxb7 3.Rf7! (>4.Rxf5+) Be4 4.Sge5+ Kf4 5.Be3+ Bxe3#. A brief but intense logic of the two sides' encounter, with changed functions of White's queen and rook. As always, Camillo's inimitable style is displayed.

Camillo Gamnitzer
1 HM *The Problemist* 2020

S#5

2nd Honourable Mention S2832 Anatoly Stepochkin 1.Qb4+? Kd4 2.Re4#?? **1.Be4!** (>2.Qxe3+ Sxe3#) Bf2 2.Bg2 (>3.Rxe3+ Bxe3 4.Qxe3+ Sxe3#) Be1 3.Qb4+ Kd4 4.Re4+ Kd5 5.Re8+ Kd4 6.Qc5+ Kc3 7.Be7 Bf2 8.Bd6 Be1 9.Qb4+ Kd4 10.Re4+ Kd5 11.Rd4+ Kxd4 12.Qc5+ Kc3 13.Qxe3+ Sxe3#.

If it were not for Re5, White could play 1.Qxe3+ Sxe3#. White's objective is to get rid of his Re5 without tempo loss. First the bishop is transferred to g2: **1.Be4!** (>2.Qxe3+ Sxe3#) Bf2 2.Bg2 (>3.Rxe3+ Bxe3 4.Qxe3+ Sxe3#) Be1. Now 3.Qb4+ Kd4 4.Re4+ Kd5 5.Rd4+!? Kxd4 6.Qc5+ Kc3 7.Qxe3+ Sxe3# suggests itself, but 5… Ke5! Therefore the next foreplan is not to let the black king get to e5. 5.Re8+ Kd4 6.Qc5+ Kc3 7.Be7 Bf2 8.Bd6 Be1. Now the rook can at last be sacrificed. 9.Qb4+ Kd4 10.Re4+ Kd5 11.Rd4+ Kxd4 12.Qc5+ Kc3 13.Qxe3+ Sxe3#. An interesting problem of a logical character with two foreplans, featuring successive mutual interference of white rook and bishop on e4. The matrix is well-known from problems by the same author, the tourney judge and other composers since the 1990s.

Anatoly Stepochkin
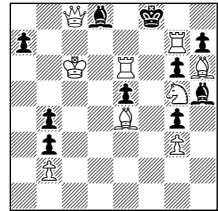2 HM *The Problemist* 2020
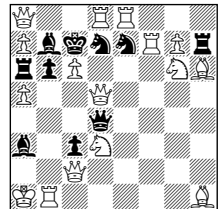

S#13

Sergey Smotrov
3 HM *The Problemist* 2020

S#23

3rd Honourable Mention S2833 Sergey Smotrov 1.Qc7+! K~ 2.Qe5+ Kg6 3.Qh5+ Kf6 4.Rf7+ Ke6 5.Qf5+ Kd6 6.Qf4+ K~ 8.Qd6+ Ke8 9.Qf8+ Kd7 10.Rf7+ Ke6 11.Re7+ Kd6 12.Rh7+ Ke6 13.Qf7+ Kd6 14.Qc7+ Ke6 15.Bc8+ Kf6 16.Qf4+ Kg6 17.Bf5+ Kf6 18.Bxg4+ Kg6 19.Qf7+ Kg5 20.Qg7+ Kf4 21.Qf6+ Kxg4 22.Rxh4+ Rxh4 23.Qf5+ Kxf5#. In the absence of the black
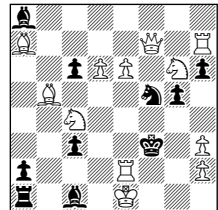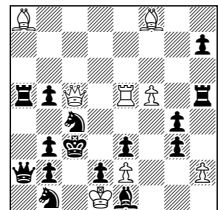
S2797 Cedric Lytton
The Problemist 2020
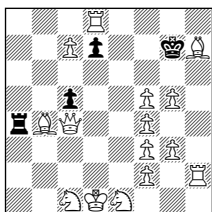
S#12

Cedric Lytton
4 HM *The Problemist* 2020

S#9

pawn on g4 (and wBb7), White would implement his main plan: 1.Qf6+ Kg4 2.Rxh4+ Rxh4 3.Qf5+ Kxf5#. After a long but unfortunately totally forcible manoeuvre the white bishop leaves b7 and is sacrificed on g4, eliminating the main obstacle.

4th Honourable Mention S2797v Cedric Lytton 1.Qc3+ Kf7 2.Bg6+ Ke7 3.Qxc5+ d6 4.f6+ Ke6 5.Qc4+ d5 6.f5+ Ke5 7.Qc3+ d4 8.f4+ Ke4 9.Qc2+ d3 10.f3+ Ke3 11.Bc5+ Rd4 12.Re2+ dxe2#. An interesting concept: systematic movement of the white queen, black king and the column of white pawns on the f-file. There are, however, a number of drawbacks littering the author's concept: the first two complete moves look superfluous; the queen's systematic movement is not "pure" – it would be proper to begin the manoeuvre from the c6-square: c6-c5-c4-c3-c2. Moreover, the use of the pair Bb4 and Ra4 is unjustified: the concluding mate is not a model one. Fortunately, the concept can be presented in a pure form in a shorter, 9-move solution ending in a model mate. I suggest that the author consider using the S#9 version.

5th Honourable Mention S2794v Manfred Ernst & Stephen Taylor 1.Rc2! 1…hxg5 2.Bxf4+ gxf4 3.Bc8 f3 4.Qf6+ Be6 5.Qe7+ Kd5 6.Bb7+ Kd4 7.Qd6+ [wQ<=>bK] Bd5 8.Qe5+ Kd3 9.Rc3+ Kd2 10.Qe2+ fxe2#; 1…h5 2.a4 bxa4 3.f8S a3 4.Bd3 a2 5.Qf6+ Be6 6.Qxf4+ Kd5 7.Be4+ Kd4 8.Bg2+ Kd3 9.Qc4+ Bxc4 10.Rd2+ Kxd2#. Two interesting variations with dissimilar content: the highlight of the first is the exchange of places by the queen and black king, while the second features the creation and play of the black battery Kd3+Bc4.

**Manfred Ernst &
Stephen Taylor**
5 HM *The Problemist* 2020

S#10

**Valery Kirillov &
Mykhailo Mishko**
6 HM *The Problemist* 2020
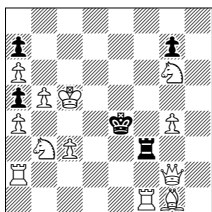
S#9*

**Jozef Holubec &
Stephen Taylor**
1 C *The Problemist* 2020

S#6

6th Honorable Mention S2805 Valery Kirillov & Mykhailo Mishko set: 1…Kd3 2.Qe2+ Kxc3 3.Qb2+ Kd3 4.Qb1+ Kc3 5.Rc2+ Kd3 6.Qd1+ Ke4 7.Re2+ Re3 8.Kc4 Rxe2 9.Qc2+ Rxc2#; **1.Bd4!** Kd3 2.Rd1+ Ke4 3.Bxg7 Ke3 4.Re1+ Kd3 5.Se5+ Kxc3 6.Qd2+ Kxb3 7.Qd5+ Kc3 8.Sd7+ Rf6 9.Sb6 axb6#. I just love block problems with radical change of play. In the diagram position, everything is set; but although White has a lot of moves at his disposal, none of them is a waiting one and so the entire play is changed.

1st Commended S2787 Jozef Holubec & Stephen Taylor 1.Bf4! 1…exd6 2.Se6 d5 3.Sdc3+ Re3 4.Rd3 b3 5.axb3 Rxd3 6.Qd1+ Rxd1#; 1…e6 2.Rxb4 e5 3.Qc1 Kg4 4.Bc8+ Kf3 5.Qe3+ Rxe3 6.Se1+ Rxe1#; 1…exf6 2.Bc1 f5 3.Qe3+ Kg4 4.Se5+ Rxe5 5.Bf3+ Kg3 6.Qe1+ Rxe1#; 1…e5 2.Rxb4 exf4 3.Qg2+ Ke3 4.Qd2+ Kf3 5.Se5+ Kg3 6.Qe1+ Rxe1#. Pickaninny theme, albeit without any interesting nuances.

2nd Commended S2808 Valery Kirillov & Evgeny Kirillov 1.Bf4? b6!; 1.Se6? b5! **1.Kh5!** 1…b6 2.Se6 b5 3.Sg5 b4 4.Ba7 Kh2 5.Qh3+ Rxh3#; 1…b5 2.Bf4 b4 3.Bh6 Kh2 4.Qg1+ Kh3 5.Bf5+ Rxf5#. Two variations ending in mate through double check in a light position.
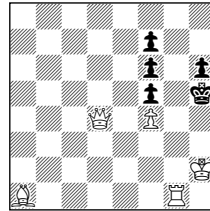
3rd-5th Commended S2831 Frank Richter **1.Rd1!** Kb8 2.Qf8+ Kc7 3.d8Q+ Kc6 4.Qff6+ Kc5 5.Qfd4+ Kc6 6.Qe4+ Kc5 7.Bb4+ Rxb4 8.Qc2+ Rc4 9.Qe7+ Kc6 10.Qa4+ Rxa4# & **1.Re1!** Kb8 2.d8R+ Kc7 3.Ba5+ Rb6+ 4.Ka7 Kxd8 5.Qf5 Kc7 6.Rd1 Kc6 7.Qd5+ Kc7 8.Ka8 Kc8 9.Qc4+ Kc7 10.Qa6+ Rxa6#. A miniature with two solutions, two promotions of the white pawn – to Q and R, and two echoed mates. Both solutions begin with spectacular and mysterious keys: 1.Rd1, 1.Re1.

**Valery Kirillov &
Evgeny Kirillov**
2 C *The Problemist* 2020

S#5

Frank Richter
3-5 C *The Problemist* 2020

S#10 2 solutions

3rd-5th Commended S2829 Jorma Pitkänen 1.Qd1+! Kh4 2.Bd4 h5 3.Kh1 Kh3 4.Bf2 h4 5.Rg4 fxg4 6.f5 g3 7.Bg1 g2#; and **1.Kg3!** Kg6 2.Kh4+ Kh7 3.Kh5 Kh8 4.Qf2 Kh7 5.Qh4 Kh8 6.Bxf6+ Kh7 7.Rg6 fxg6#. Two graceful solutions with active play of the white king ending in model mates; especially spectacular is the key 1.Kg3!

3rd-5th Commended S2811 Anatoly Stepochkin (a) 1.g8B+ Kf8 2.d8Q+ Re8 3.Qd6+ Re7 4.Qc1 Ke8 5.Qb8+ Kd7 6.Bae6+ Rxe6 7.Qbc7+ Ke8 8.Bf7+ Kf8 9.Qh6+ Rxh6#; (b) 1.Qh5+ Rg6 2.Qd5+ Re6 3.d8Q Kg6 4.Q8g5+ Kf7 5.Qc4 Ke8 6.Qd8+ Kf7 7.g8S Kg6 8.Qg4+ Kf7 9.Sh6+ Rxh6#. Again two solutions – with black rook pinned in the diagram position and four promotions of two white pawns. Unfortunately, the author failed to achieve Allumwandlung – promotion of pawns to all four possible types of pieces: QRBS.

Jorma Pitkänen
3-5 C *The Problemist*
2020

S#7   2 solutions

Anatoly Stepochkin
3-5 C *The Problemist*
2020

S#9 (b) Ba2>h4

[Many thanks to Ivan for his proposed award, which remains open for 3 months; please address all claims and/or other comments to Stephen Taylor – Ed.]
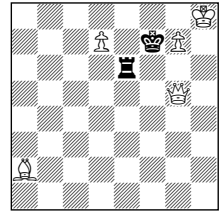
HELPMATE SOLUTIONS (continued from p.155)

H4651 (Ylijoki) (a) 1.Sc3 Re4 2.Sb3 Rxe3 3.Sd2 Kf2 4.Kd1 Rxe2 5.Qc2 Re1#. (b) 1.Kc3 Rf4 2.Bb4 Rxf1 3.Kb3+ Kxe2 4.Ka4 Rf7 5.Ka5 Ra7#. Two very neat, contrasting, solutions with different keys on c3 to free the wR; the problem feels nicely unified by its differing rook captures to unlock the wK cage combined with wholly incidental captures of bPe2 by different white units (SJGT). Forced unpins allow different mechanisms for wK release and good twinning (LSB).

H4651

H#5 (b) Sb5<>Pb6
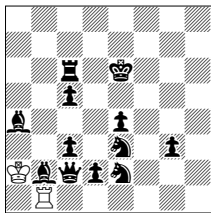
H4652v (Milewski) 1.Kf5 Re1 2.Kg4 Rxe2 3.Kh3 Rxd2 4.Sg4 Rd5 5.Qg2 Rh5#. 1.Qc1 Rxc1 2.Kd5 Rxc3 3.Bc2 Rxc2 4.Be5 Kb3 5.Kd4 Rxd2#. WR minimal with two very different solutions (CMBT). Engaging cornucopia of annihilations by the wR (SJGT) – SJGT suggests the 14-man setting diagrammed, which is accepted by the composer.

H4652v

H#5   2 solutions

H4653 (Ylijoki) 1...Sb7 2.Kc6 Sc5 3.Kd5 Sd3 4.Ke4 Sxf2+ 5.Kf3 Sxh3 6.Se3 Sxg1+ 7.Kf2+ Kxh2 8.Bf3 Sh3#. 1...Sc6 2.Kb7 Se5 3.Rc1 Sxg4 4.Rc8 Sxf2 5.Kb8+ Se4 6.Ba7+ Kxh2 7.Rf7 Sc5 8.Rb7 Sa6#. Astonishing achievement to get same-length solutions at opposite ends of the board! (LSB) A marvellous problem that works like a magic trick: it doesn't seem possible to free all the black units from the 1st rank in one instance, or to release the wK for an active role in the other… What a good thing Marko has returned to helpmate composition! (SJGT) Hear, hear!
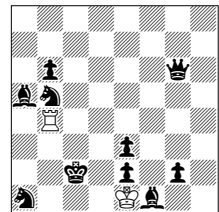
H4653
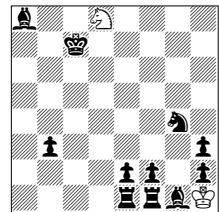
H#7½   2 solutions
(wK in check)

SOLUTION TO RETROGRADE ANALYSIS FOR NEWCOMERS (p.167)

Retract 1.Sc3xBa2+, then forward 1.Sxd5#. Not 1.Sc3xPa2+? – impossible position for black pawns, even assuming more captures were available.

Note that the Ba2 must have originally been the g or h pawn which promoted on f1.
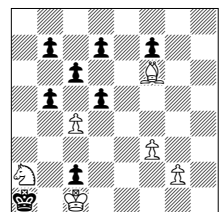
RQ22 Einar Oije
Die Schwalbe 1962

-1 & #1

ANSWERS TO ECSC PROBLEMS (p.135)

Blindfold solving: (i) 1.Qb3 (ii) 1.Kg8. **A** 1.Bc7 Bxd7+ 2.Sf4 Bxc6.

B 1.Bc8! Rxc8 2.Rg3 hxg3+ 3.Kh3 Sg5+ 4.Kh4 S~+ 5.Kh5 (>6.Sd5) and 3...Kg5 4.Sc4+ e3 5.Bxe3+ Kxg6 6.Sxe5. Not 1.Rg3? as the Black rook is covering the eventual Sd5.

Trivia question: the Danube; Vienna, Bratislava, Budapest, Belgrade.

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