To my wife

Werner Keym

PROBLEM CHESS ART

A SUBJECTIVE ANTHOLOGY

‘Chess, like love, like music,
has the power to make men happy.’
(*Tarrasch*)

This English e-book is a revised version of the German book ‘Problem-Schach-Kunst’ (see p. 136).

These problems are only in the English e-book:
no. 4, 36, 37, 77.1, 77.2, 124.2, 151, 157, 163.1, p. 132, p. 139

First edition: 07/04/2025
First update: 24/04/2025
Second update: 28/06/2025

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Cooperation and typesetting/layout:
Ralf J. Binnewirtz, Meerbusch

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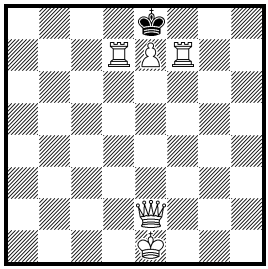
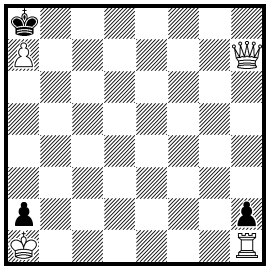
‘Logic will get you from A to B.
Imagination will take you everywhere.’
(*Einstein*)

No. 121



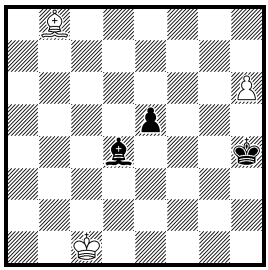
Mate in 2

No. 27



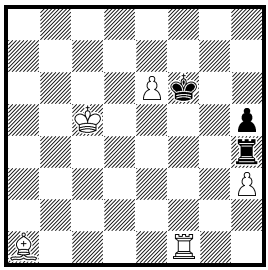
Mate in 3

No. 67



Win

No. 212



Last moves?

Every time you solve one of these beautiful compositions,
you will feel a great sense of happiness.

However, you should be careful not to get caught up in *Caissamania*,
a special disease that affects not only chess players but also problemists.

Chess composition is
the poetry of chess.

Preface

'Chess problems demand from the composer the same virtues that characterize all worthwhile art: originality, invention, conciseness, harmony, complexity and splendid insincerity.' (*Nabokov*)

For me too, chess compositions – at their best – are works of art. I appreciate their special aesthetics. And don't forget: you can enjoy them directly, free of languages, free of costs, wherever and whenever you want. 'Chess problems are a mental relaxation for individuals.' (*Grasemann*)

I myself prefer classical three-movers, moremovers and studies, especially with asymmetry, castling, pawn promotion. Another focus is off-beat problems: en-passant capture, rotation, adding pieces, retro puzzles, text problems, proof games, special stipulations, jokes, etc. Such curiosities are entertaining, exciting, funny – and often even computer-defying. Among these compositions, too, are many classics. Ideally, they are 'beautiful', that is perfect in form and content.

These preferences are reflected in the 250 selected examples in this book. They form an uninhibitedly subjective anthology. You can find compositions with replayable moves by clicking on the numbers marked in blue. Apart from some difficult tasks, some records and retros, I have limited myself to easily understandable, particularly beautiful compositions (see left side). It is beauty that enchants us.

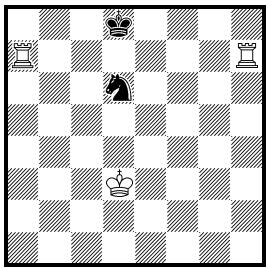
'Problem Chess Art' prefers to entertain, rather than teach. It is aimed at all chess lovers: players and problemists. Over-the-board chess and chess composition complement each other wonderfully: fight and art (cf. 'Problemschach-Song'). This applies for both: the greater your knowledge the greater your pleasure.

I would like to thank all those who supported me in many different ways: *Thomas Brand*, *Frederic Friedel*, *Hans Gruber*, *Martin Hoffmann*, *Bernd Schwarzkopf*, *Gerd Wilts* and especially *Ralf Binnewirtz*.

Werner Keym

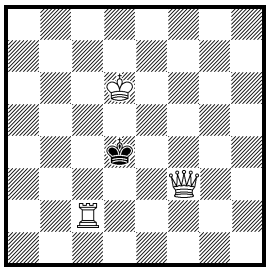
Two-movers

No. 1
Bonus Socius
13th century



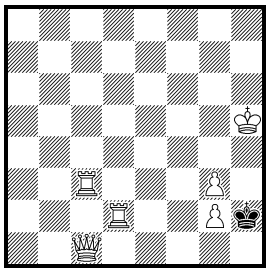
Mate in 2

No. 2
George E. Carpenter
Dubuque Chess Journal
1873



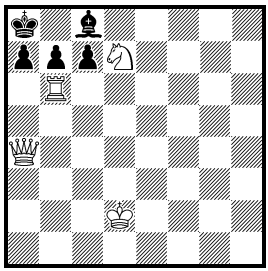
Mate in 2

No. 3
Ado Kraemer
Deutsche Tageszeitung
1922



Mate in 2

No. 4
Leonid Kubbel
Bohemia 1907



Mate in 2

'All genres are good,
except the boring.'
(Voltaire)

No. 1: Set play (Black to move): 1...Sc8? 2.Rh8# or 1...Se8? 2...Ra8#, hence 1...Sf7! and 2.Rh8+ is followed by 2...S×h8. So the waiting move 1.Kc2/Ke2? is refuted by 1...Sf7! as well.
Therefore the solution is **1.Rg7!** creating a symmetrical position with zugzwang for Black: 1...Sc8 2.Rg8# or 1...Se8 2.Ra8# or 1...Sf7 2.Rg8#.

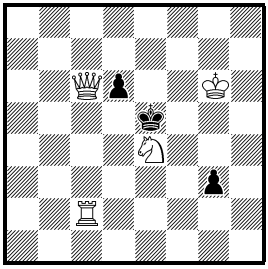
No. 2: Black is in a stalemate position. White must allow Black to move: **1.Qh3!** (guarding the square f5) zugzwang 1...Ke4 2.Rc4#. A little gem.

No. 3: Black is in a stalemate position. Which white piece will give a flight square to Black? There are four possible moves of the queen, six of the rook c3 and seven of the rook d2. The only successful move is **1.Rc8!** By it 'a line of attack is cleared when the obtrusive mass of a piece is moved away over the intersection point in the same direction as the piece which is to follow it' (*Grasemann*): 1...K×g3 2.Qc7#.

'Typical of this clearance is that the key rook is idle in the mate. But that is the great thing about it, the really exciting idea' (*Grasemann*). This form of clearance is called '**Bristol** clearance' because its first realization (= #50486) won the 1st prize in the Bristol Tourney 1861.

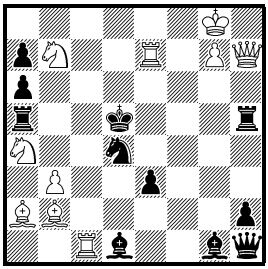
No. 4: A baffling key: **1.Qc6!** zugzwang
1...a6/a5 2.R×a6#/Ra6#
1...a7×b6 2.Qa4#
1...b7×c6 2.Rb8#
1...c7×b6 2.Q×c8#
1...B×d7 2.Q×b7#.
Sacrifices of queen, rook and knight.
Cf. #7160 and #1914.

No. 5
Gerhard Latzel
Die Schwalbe 1956
5th HM



Mate in 2

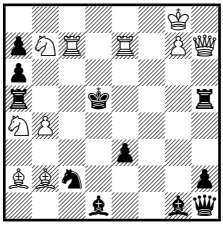
No. 6
Godfrey Heathcote
Hampstead and
Highgate Express 1905
1st Prize



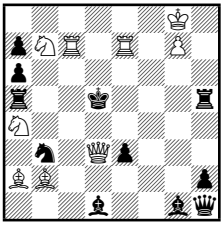
Mate in 2

No. 5: The tries and the solution of this fine miniature show a complete wheel of a white knight. After each move of the knight (except for 1.S×d6?) the mate 2.Qe4# threatens. These are the tries: 1.S×g3? Kf4!, 1.Sf2? g3×f2!, 1.Sd2? Ke6!, 1.Sc3? Kd4!, 1.Sc5? d6×c5!, 1.S×d6? zugzwang g2!, 1.Sf6? d5!.
And this is the right square: **1.Sg5!** [2.Qe4#] d5 2.Qf6#.

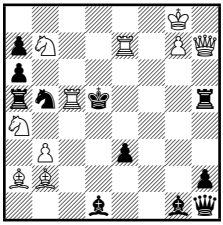
No. 6: In this famous problem a black knight operates a complete wheel on the squares c2, b3, b5, c6, e6, f5, f3, e2 and the mates are all different. **1.R1c7!** [2.Sc3#] 1...S∼ (see below), furthermore 1...R×a4/Rc5 2.Rc5#/R×c5#.



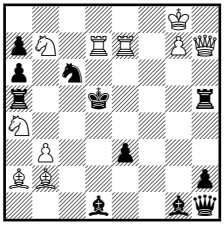
1...Sc2 2.b4#



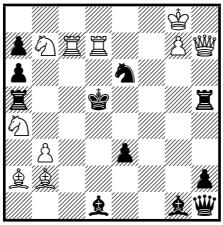
1...S×b3 2.Qd3#



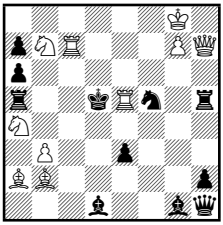
1...Sb5 2.Rc5#



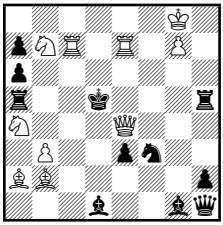
1...Sc6 2.Rcd7#



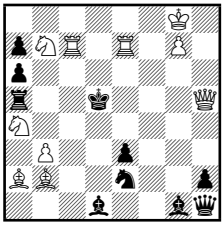
1...Se6 2.Red7#



1...Sf5 2.Re5#

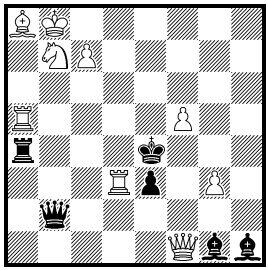


1...Sf3 2.Qe4#



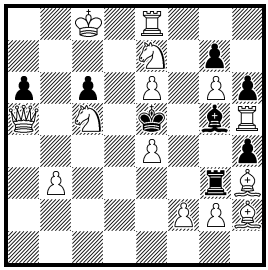
1...Se2 2.Q×h5#

No. 7
Arnoldo Ellerman
L'Alfiere di Re 1925
Guidelli MT 1925
1st Prize



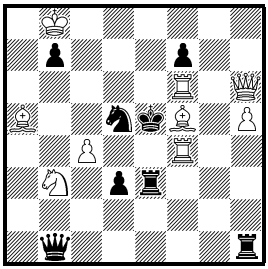
Mate in 2

No. 8
Eeltje Visserman
Probleemblad 1954
1st Prize



Mate in 2

No. 9
Peter Gvozdják
Olympic Tourney 2014
1st Prize



Mate in 2

No. 7: The moves 1.Rd3-d1/-d6/-d7/-d8 seem to allow the mate 2.Qf4#.

These are the tries:
1.Rd1? Qd2!
1.Rd6? Qd4!
1.Rd8? Qf2!

This is the solution: **1.Rd7!**

main lines:	side lines:
1...Qd4 2.Sd6#	1...Qh8+ 2.Sd8#
1...Qe5 2.Sc5#	1...Bf3 2.Qd3#
1...Qf2 2.Sd8#	1...Bf2 2.Q×h1#
	1...Rd4 2.Re7#

A traditional classic.

No. 8:

Tries	Solution
1.Kb7? Kd6!	**1.Kb8!** Kd6 2.Sb7#
1.Kc7? Kf4!	1...Kf4 2.Qc7#
1.Kd7? Kf6!	1...Kf6 2.Sd7#
1.Kd8? Kd4!	1...Kd4 S×c6#

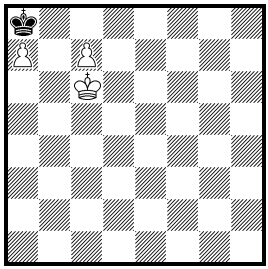
Brilliant construction.

No. 9: Here we admire perfectly changed and transferred mates. This is the first problem to show a fourfold cycle of mating moves: AB-BC-CD-DA.

1.Sc5? [2.Sd7#]	S×f4?	a	2.Bc3#	A
	S×f6?	b	2.Bc7#	B
	Qb5!			
1.Rd4? [2.R×d5#]	Sf4?	a	2.Bc7#	B
	S×f6?	b	2.Qf4#	C
	Sb6!			
1.Be4? [2.Qg5#,R6f5#]	S×f4?	a	2.Q×f4#	C
	S×f6?	b	2.Q×f6#	D
	Q×b3!			
1.Rb6! [2.Qd6#]	S×f4	a	2.Qf6#	D
	Sf6	b	2.Bc3#	A
	f6		2.Re6#	

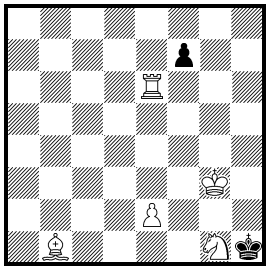
A modern classic.

No. 10
Knud Hannemann
Skakbladet 1929



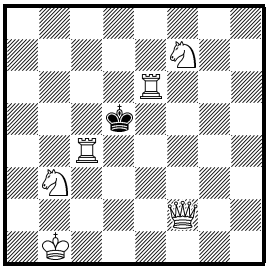
Mate in 2

No. 11
Axel Åkerblom
Svenska Dagbladet 1925



Mate in 2

No. 12
Werner Keym
Weser-Kurier 1968



Mate in 2

Cf. #607669, P1137254.

No. 10: The try is 1.c8Q+? K×a7 2.Qb7#. Black, however, cannot have moved last. So the the solution is **1.K×a7!** c8R! (1. . . c8Q? stalemate) 2.Ka6 Ra8#.

According to the Codex for Chess Composition (p. 135) the unconventional first move is permitted if this is deducible from retroanalysis.

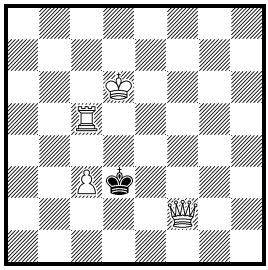
No. 11: Black cannot have moved last. So the solution is **1.f7×e6** Sh3 2.e5 Be4#, **1.f6** Sf3 2.f5 Rh6#, **1.f5** Kf2 2.∼ Rh6#, **1.K×g1** Rf6 2.Kh1 Rf1#.
A miniature with unexpected variety. Unfortunately there is no mate in 2 moves with White to play unlike no. 10, 12 and 121.

No. 12: This two-move miniature seems to be very easy: 1.Rb6!? K×c4 2.Qd4#. And just the same was the 'solution' of 223 of 237 entries in a solving contest of the daily newspaper *Rhein-Zeitung Koblenz* in 2002 – with or without the aid of a computer! – However, that is wrong because the last move before the position of the diagram had to be made by White, not by Black since the black king could not come from any of his neighbouring squares which are guarded by two or three white pieces.
So it is Black to play and the correct solution is **1.K×e6!** Rc7 2.Kd5 Qf5# and **1.K×c4!** Qd4+ 2.K×b3/Kb5 Re3#/Rb6#.

'I have no solution,
but I admire the problem.'
(Brilliant)

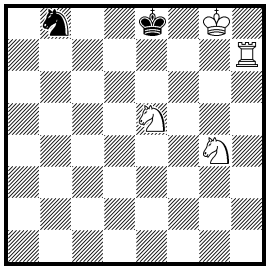
Three-movers

No. 13
Frank Healey
The Illustrated London News 1858



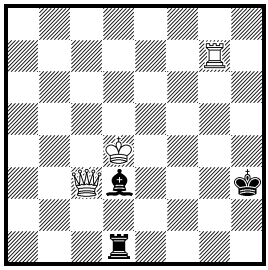
Mate in 3

No. 14
Alfred de Musset
La Régence 1849 (v)



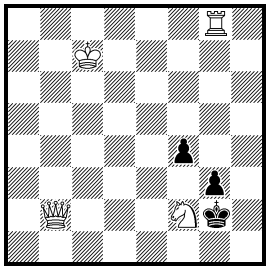
Mate in 3

No. 15
Gunnar Thorén
Svenska Dagbladet 1929
1st Prize



Mate in 3

No. 16
Sam Loyd
Chess Monthly 1857
1. Preis



Matt in 3 Zügen

'A thing of beauty is a joy for ever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
pass into nothingness . . . '
(*Keats*)

No. 13: **1.Kd7!** zugzwang 1...Ke4 2.Rd5! zugzwang 2...K×d5 3.Qd4#. Irresistible.

No. 14: **1.Rd7!** [2.Sf6#] 1...S×d7 2.Sc6 zugzwang ~ 3.Sf6#. This is a 'poem' of *Alfred de Musset* (1810-1857), a French poet, dramatist, and novelist.

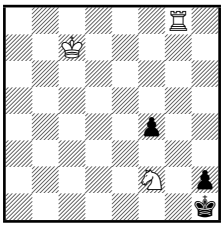
No. 15: The key is well-concealed. **1.Kd5!** then one little step 1...Rd2 (maintaining the tension of pin and battery in the position) 2.Rg6 (replying by one little step, but not 2.Rg8?) 2...~ 3.Qh8#. If 1...R~, then 2.Q×d3+ 3.Qh7#. If 1...Kh4/Kh2 then 2.Qf6+/Qe5+ 3.Q#.

'In Thoren's unforgettably elegant problem the real merit of economy lies not so much in the small number of pieces but much more in the attractive miniscule movements of such powerful chessmen in the main line.' (*Dickins/Ebert*)

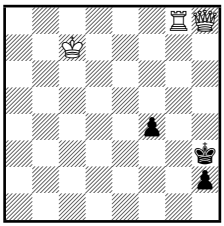
No. 16: **1.Sg4+!**
1...Kh1 2.Qh2+ g3×h2 3.Sf2# **{16A}**
1...Kh3 2.Sh2 [3.Rh8#] 2...Kh4,g2,g3×h2 3.Qh8# **{16B}**
1...Kf3 2.Qc2 zugzwang 2...g2 3.Qd3# **{16C}**
1...Kf1 2.Ra8 ~ 3.Ra1# **{16D}**
1...Kg1 2.Ra8/Rd8 (dual) ~ 3.Ra1#/Rd1#

'No. 14 [= no. 16] was an impromptu posed for *Paul Morphy*, who complimented it highly. It won the *Chess Monthly* prize, and has been a popular favourite for many years as showing four different styles of compositions in the variations: the brilliant queen sacrifice, the strategic play with knight, the waiting principle, and the long flights of the rook.' (*Loyd*)

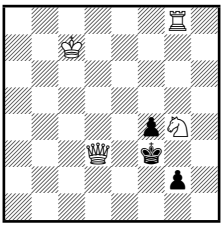
{16A}



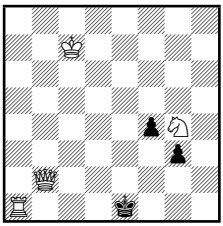
{16B}



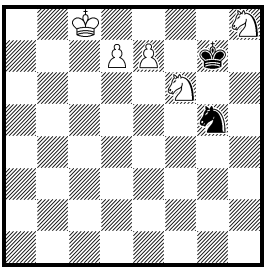
{16C}



{16D}

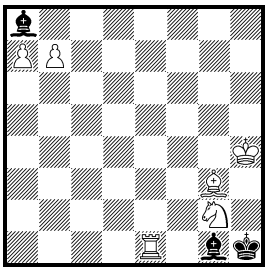


No. 17
Sam Loyd
Boston Globe 1876



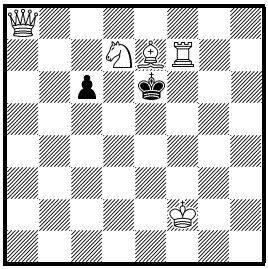
Mate in 3

No. 18
Sam Loyd
Holyoke Transcript 1877



Mate in 3

No. 19
Oskar Lauritzen
Svenska Dagbladet 1929



Mate in 3

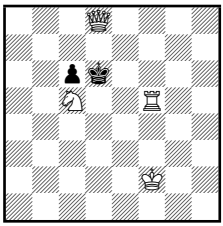
No. 17: **1.e8S+!** Kf8 2.d8S ∼ 3.Sg6#, 1...K×h8 2.d8S ∼ 3.Sf7#, 1...Kh6 2.d8S ∼ 3.Sf7#. Five horses! 'It is a pleasing problem with pretty mating positions, and I like it on account of having so many knights on the board at once.' (*Loyd*)

No. 18: **1.b7×a8S!!** K×g2 2.Sb6 ∼ 3.a8Q,B#, the famous distant knight promotion. 'The knight promotion attacks nothing, and seems entirely out of play; the move, therefore, is both pleasing and difficult.' (*Loyd*)

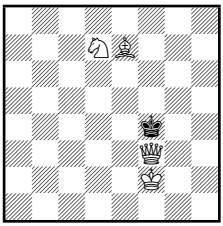
No. 19: **1.Rf5!!** zugzwang and three possible sacrifices:
1...K×e7 2.Sc5 Kd6 3.Qd8# **{19A}**
1...K×f5 2.Q×c6 Kf4 3.Qf3# **{19B}**, 2...Kg4 3.Qf3# **{19C}**
1...K×d7 2.Bc5 Kc7 3.Rf7# **{19D}**, 2...Ke6 3.Qc8# **{19E}**
1...c5 2.S×c5+ K×e7 3.Qf8# **{19F}**, 2...K×f5 3.Qe4# **{19G}**
Seven different pieces, six pieces move, seven dual-free lines.

My favourite Bohemian miniature.

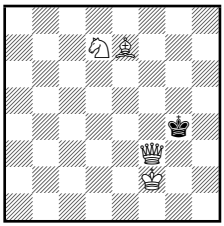
{19A}



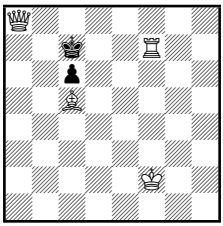
{19B}



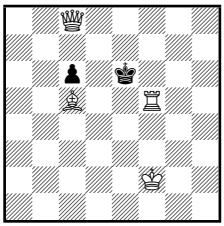
{19C}



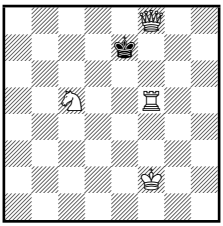
{19D}



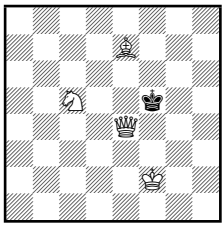
{19E}



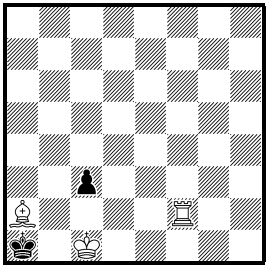
{19F}



{19G}

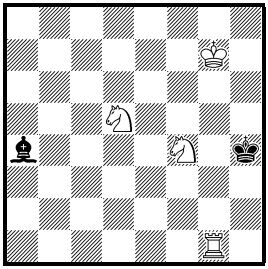


No. 20
Heinrich F. L. Meyer
Boy's Own Paper 1903



Mate in 3

No. 21
Wilhelm Maßmann
Neue Leipziger Zeitung
1935 2nd Prize



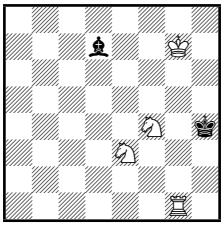
Mate in 3

No. 20: In 1845, the first **Indian problem** was published, named after its author *Henry A. Loveday*, a correspondent from Delhi in India. 'This problem ... made history in the world of the chess problem by introducing a strategic idea, battery formation with the avoidance of stalemate after a piece has moved across a critical square, over which the bishop passes to allow the rook to form a battery, so that the black king is not in stalemate.' (*Dickins/Ebert*)
Loveday's first realization was a four-mover with 13 pieces and 9 key moves (#63541). No. 20 shows the Indian idea in a perfect form: **1.Bg8!** c2 2.Rf7 Ka2 3.Ra7#.

No. 21: The basic attack 1.Se3? [2.Sf5#,Rg4#] is refuted by 1...Bd7! **{21A}** as well as 1.Se7? [2.Sf5#,Sg6#] by 1...Bc2! **{21B}**.
Solution: **1.Rg2!** [2.Sg6+ Kh5/Kh3 3.Sdf4#] 1...Bc2 2.Se3 Bf5 **{21C}** 3.S×f5# as well as 1...Be8 2.Se7 Bg6 **{21D}** 3.Se×g6#.

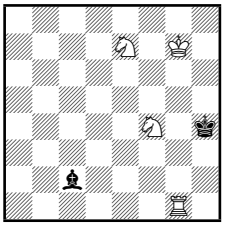
Problemists call this idea a **Roman**: a black piece having an effective defence against a threat is decoyed to a square from which it can still defend against that threat, but its new defence carries a harmful weakness. Here we see a perfect double Roman with the typical bishop moves forming a rectangle: 1) a4, d7, c2, f5 and 2) a4, c2, e8, g6.

{21A}



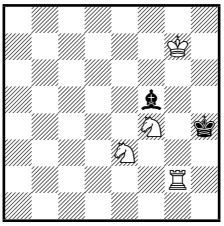
Try
After 1.Se3? Bd7!

{21B}



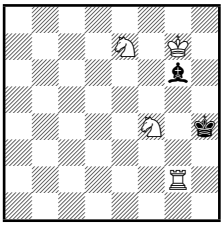
Try
After 1.Se7? Bc2!

{21C}



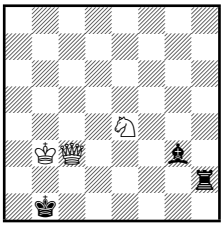
Solution
After 2.Se3 Bf5

{21D}



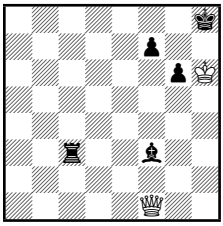
Solution
After 2.Se7 Bg6

Wilhelm Maßmann
Kieler Neueste Nachrichten 1933



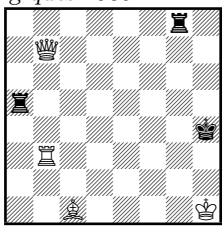
Mate in 2

Ado Kraemer
Deutsches Wochenschach 1914



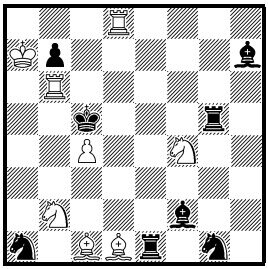
Mate in 3

Erich Brunner
Miniatures stratégiques 1935



Mate in 3

No. 22
Leonid Kubbel
Swjesda Minsk 1928
1st Prize



Mate in 3

Wilhelm Maßmann: **1.Sf2!** [2.Qe1#/Qb2#] 1...R×f2 2.Qe1# or 1.B×f2 2.Qb2#; side lines 1...Rh1/Be5/Bf4 2.Qb2#/Qe1#/Qb2#.

This problem shows the interference between non-like moving pieces, i.e. in two variations the rook and the bishop take in turn to cut the other's line. The critical square, the intersection point f2, will be occupied by a white piece (1.Se4-f2) followed by a capture. Problemists call this a **Novotny** (see the pioneer problem by *Anton Novotny* = #62493).

Ado Kraemer: **1.Qa6!** [2.Qf6+ Kg8 3.Qg7#] 1...Rc6 2.Qa8+ Rc8 3.Q×c8# or 1...Bc6 2.Qc8+ Be8 3.Q×e8#

This problem shows the interference between non-like moving pieces, i.e. in two variations the rook and the bishop take in turn to cut the other's line. The critical square, the intersection point c6, is not occupied by a white piece, there is no capture. Problemists call this a **Grimshaw** (see the pioneer problem by *Walter Grimshaw* = #65189).

Erich Brunner: Try: 1.Qe4+? Rg4! or 1.Qh7+? Rh5!.
Solution: **1.Qe7+!** Rag5 2.Qe4+ Rg4 3.Qh7# or 1...Rgg5 2.Qh7+ Rh5 3.Qe4#, side lines: 1...Kh5 2.Qh7+ Kg4 3.Qh3#, 1...Kg4 2.Qe4+ Kh5 3.Rh3#.

This problem shows the interference between two similar line-pieces (rooks). The critical square, the intersection point g5, is not occupied by a white piece, there is no capture. Problemists call this a **Holzhausen** (cf. #62614) or in a special form a Wurzburg-Plachutta.

No. 22: **1.Bg4!!** threatens the **Novotny** interference 2.Bf5 [3.Rd5#,Sd3#]

1...Ree5 (anticritical) 2.Rd5+ (**Holzhausen** interference) R×d5 3.Se6#
1...Rge5 (anticritical) 2.Se6+ (**Holzhausen** interference) R×e6 3.Rd5#

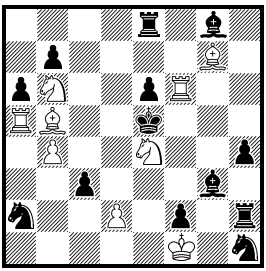
1...Bc2 (anticritical) 2.Bd2 Rd5 3.R×d5#
1...Bb1 (anticritical) 2.Bd2 Sc2 3.Sfd3#, 2...Rd5 3.R×d5#

1...Sh3 2.Bf3 Re4 3.Sfd3# or 2...Be4 3.Se6# **Grimshaw** interference
1...Sc2 2.Be6 R×e6 3.S×e6#

1...Re3 2.B×e3+ B×e3 3.Se6#
1...Re2 2.B×e2 Sg1×e2,Bc2 3.Se6#

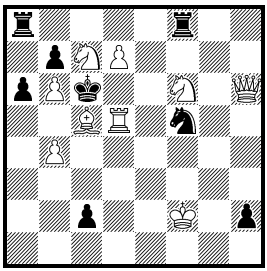
A fantastic construction with an immense strategic content.

No. 23
Sam Loyd
Checkmate Tourney
1903
1st Prize



Mate in 3

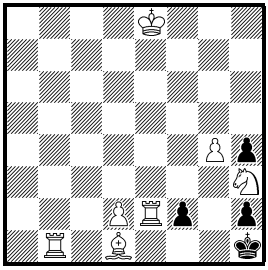
No. 24
Ado Kraemer
Erich Zepler
Neue Leipziger Zeitung
1935 (v) 1st Prize



Mate in 3

Cf. #49416, #54251, #194565, #98496.

No. 25
Ado Kraemer
Römmig Memorial 1954
1st Prize



Mate in 3

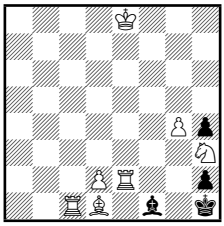
'Always luck is skill'
(*Gerland*)

No. 23: 'Two batteries point at Black's king, but while both e4 and d4 remain unguarded they are ineffective. This is one of those problems which can only be solved by a flash of inspiration, so there is no point in attempting to give a logical argument leading to the key. Some solve it immediately, while others puzzle for hours without finding the key.' (*Nunn*)
The solution is tricky, as so often with *Loyd*:
1.Ke2!! [2.Rf8+,Rf7+ K×e4 3.d3#,Bd3#] 1...f1Q+ 2.Ke3, now Black has ten different checks, but he cannot avoid mate next move.
The other lines are 1...f1S+ 2.Rf2+ K×e4 3.d3#,Bd3#, 1...Bf4 2.Rf7+,Rf8+ K×e4 3.d3#,Bd3#, 1...S×b4 2.Bd3+ Kd4/Sd5 3.d2×c3#/Rf6-#, 1...Kd4 2.Rf4+ e5 3.S×g3# and 1...K×e4 2.Bd3+ Kd4 3.Rf4#.

No. 24: **1.Ke1!!** [2.Sg4+ S×h6 3.Se5#]
1...c1Q+ 2.Q×c1 h1Q+ 3.Bg1#, 2...Re8+ 3.Be3#
1...h1Q+ 2.Q×h1 c1Q+ 3.Rd1#, 2...Re8+ 3.Re5#
1...Rae8+ 2.Sf×e8+ Rf6 3.d8S#
Threefold check provocation and three batteries with different white pieces: B-Q, R-Q, S-Q. An outstanding problem of two famous composers.

No. 25: Black can only play 1...Kg2? (2.R×f2+ K×h3 3.Rb3#) or 1...f1Q [2...Qf8+]. After 1...f1Q the move 2.Ba4 (Bb3,Bc2) 2...Q×b1 3.Bc6+ fails to 3...Qe4+!.
Tries:
1.d3? (against 3...Qb1-e4) Kg2! 2.R×f2+ K×h3!
1.Ba4? Kg2! 2.R×f2+ K×h3!
1.Rc1?/Ra1? f1Q? 2.Bc2 Q×R 3.Be4#. Super,
but there is an ingenious underpromotion defence:
1...f1B!! **{25A}** 2.Bc2 stalemate
1.Kf7? (on a light square) f1Q+ 2.Rf2 Qc4+!
1.Kd8? (on a dark square) f1Q 2.Rf2 Qd3+!
1.Ke7? (on a dark square) f1Q 2.Rf2 Qe1+!

{25A}



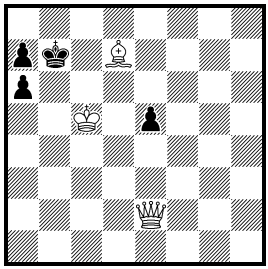
Try
After 1.Rc1? f1B!!

Paradoxically, only **1.Kf8!!!** works creating something extraordinary: a zugzwang position which allows Black an immediate check 1...f1Q+ 2.Rf2 [3.Bf3#]
2...Q×f2+ 3.Bf3# double check
2...Qg2 3.Bf3# pinning Qg2
2...Qe2 3.B×e2#
2...Q×d1 3.R×d1#

'Only for people with nerves of steel.' (*Grasemann*)

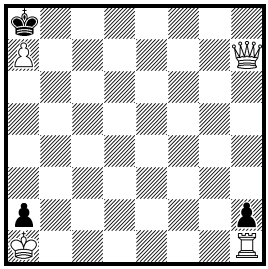
Some chess players and problemists prefer Bohemian compositions, others problems of the Logical or Strategic School (p. 134). However, all chess lovers like enigmatic compositions with totally unexpected key moves (No. 26 to 33).

No. 26
Otto Wurzburg
Bahn Frei 1895 (v)



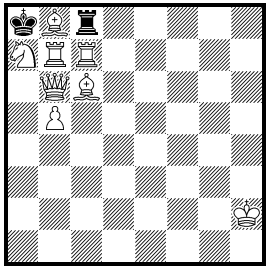
Mate in 3

No. 27
Philip Williams
Christmas Greetings 1904



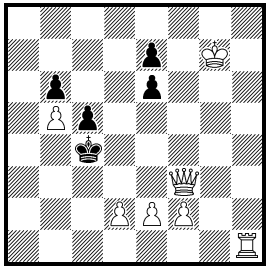
Mate in 3

No. 28
Paul Heuäcker
Deutschösterreichische Tages-Zeitung 1926



Mate in 3

No. 29
Johann Berger
Didaskalia (Frankfurter Journal) 1887



Mate in 3

No. 26: It is obvious that the queen must get activated. Frankly speaking a capturing key is bad in 99 of 100 cases. So the moves 1.Q×e5? 2.Qe8 and 3.Qc8 fail against 1...a6-a5 and 2...a7-a6 and the free square a7 saves Black's life. Yet how can White exclude this way out. This is the solution: **1.Bh3!** a5 2.Qa6+ K×a6 3.Bc8#. No. 26 is the well-known version; the original setting had an additional bPg5 to raise the difficulty.

There is even a miniature with two queen sacrifices (#56915).

No. 27: **1.Kb2!** a1Q+ 2.R×a1 h1Q 3.Q×h1#
This problem is perfect in idea and form, it is of incredible 'beauty'.

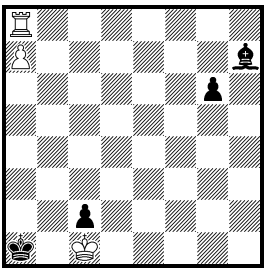
No. 28: This seems to be easy. If 1...Rh8+ then 2.Rh7 R×h7+/R×b8 3.R×h7#/R×b8#. However, if Black plays 1...Rd8,Re8,Rf8,Rg8 then 2.??. Here will only work **1.Kh3!!** 1...Rd8,Re8,Rf8,Rg8 2.Rc8! Rd3+,Re3+,Rf3+, Rg3+ 3.Bg3#. That's the point.

No. 29: The startling key move is **1.Rf1!!**, yes, no typo, 1.Rf1. The main line runs as follows: 1...Kd4 2.Qd3+ Ke5 3.f4#. Side lines are 1...e5 2.Rb1 e4/Kd4 3.Q×e4#/Qd3# and 1...K×b5 2.Rb1+ Ka4,Ka6 3.Qa8#, 2...Ka5 3.Qa3#/Qa8#, 2...Kc4 3.Qd3#. A rook in ambush.
'If Berger had only composed this problem, yet he would pass for a great master.' (*Loyd*)

Subtle problems with ambushs are a favourite theme of the 'puzzle uncle' *Fritz Giegold*.

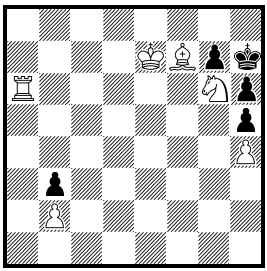
Gino von Moellwitz once compared the chess problem with a tree:
'the root is the riddle, the trunk the idea, the flower the art.'

No. 30
Jørgen Møller
Nationaltidende 1918



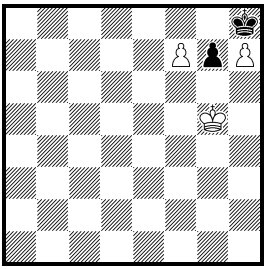
Mate in 3

No. 31
Fritz Giegold
Kristall 1952



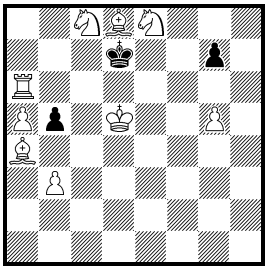
Mate in 3

No. 32
H. Hjorth
Skakbladet 1911



Mate in 3

No. 33
Werner Keym
Allgemeine Zeitung
Mainz 1963



Mate in 3

No. 30: The rook commits suicide: **1.Rg8!!** [2.a8Q,R#]
1...Ka2? 2.Rb8 ∼ 3.a8Q,R#
1...B×g8! 2.a8Q+ Ba2 3.Qh8#
Sacrifice on a line which is then opened by the capturing piece is termed 'annihilation'.

No. 31: Here, as in No. 30, the rook is sacrified. The key move **1.Ra2!** resolves the stalemate and puts Black under zugzwang. This is followed by 1...b3×a2 2.B×a2 with zugzwang again 2...K×g6 3.Bb1#. Who would have thought that? A typical *Giegold*.

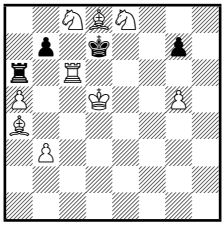
No. 32: The try is 1.f8S? g6 2.Kh6 g5 3.Sg6#, the solution, however, **1.Kxh7!** (1.g6? Kh6 2.g5 f8Q,R#) f8Q 2.g6 Kf6 3.g5 Qg7#. As far as I know the author's solution was the sequence with the promotion 1.f8S. After the publication experienced solvers pointed at the obvious fact of Black's being on the move.

No. 33: This composition is a solitaire among the classic problems. There are five tries and each has got precisely one refutation: 1.Ra8? b5×a4!, 1.B×b5+? K×d8!, 1.Sb6+? K×e8!, 1.Scd6? b5×a4!, 1.Sed6? K×d8!. Therefore many chess friends were at their wits' end because the high number of officers on the board encouraged them to make an effort at mating in a 'serious' manner.

In fact, however, it is a retro problem with a well-concealed key. The last black move could be neither Kc7-d7 nor Ke7-d7 nor Pb6-b5 (illegal check by Ba4) nor c6×Xb5 (illegal check by Pc6). It was bPb7-b5 and before that wRc6×Xa6+ **{33A}**.
Therefore the solution is **1.a5×b6 e.p.+!!** K×d8 2.b7 g6 3.Rd6# and 1...K×c8 2.Ra8+ Kb7 3.Bc6#.

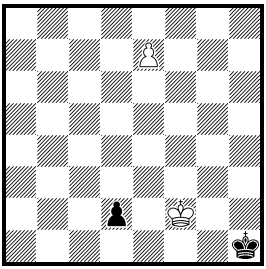
'A brilliant problem, although it conflicts with the established views of composition: capturing key and checking key.'

{33A}



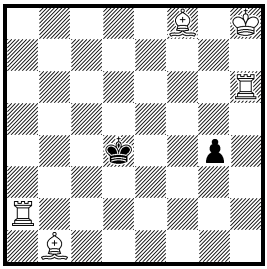
Next moves:
Rc6×a6+ b7-b5

No. 34
Allan Werle
Tidskrift för Schack
1945



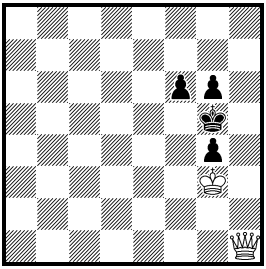
Matt in 4 Zügen

No. 35
František Skalík
Zlatá Praha 1904



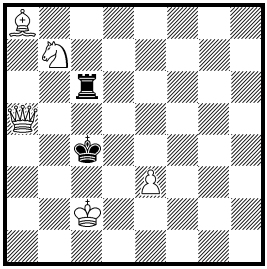
Mate in 4

No. 36
Carel C. Mann
De Amsterdammer 1893



Mate in 4

No. 37
Wilhelm Maßmann
Die Schwalbe 1943
1st Prize and Special Prize for Miniatures



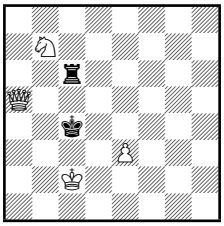
Mate in 4

No. 34: Try: 1.e8Q? d1S+! 2.Kg3 Se3 3.Q×e3 stalemate.
Solution: **1.e8R!** [2.Rh8#] 1...d1S+ 2.Kg3 Se3 3.R×e3 Kg1 4.Re1#.
Underpromotion on both sides.
'The setting with only two pawns has the maximum possible economy.'
(*Dickins/Ebert*)
Cf. *W. Maßmann's* five-piece problem #64748.

No. 35: **1.Ra3!** [2.Rh5 3.B+ 4.B#]
1...Kc4 2.Rh5 Kd4 3.Bc5+ Kc4 4.Bd3#, 2...g3 3.Bd3+ Kd4 4.Bc5#
1...g3 2.Rh5 g2 3.Bc5+ Kc4 4.Bd3#, 2...Kc4 3.Bd3+ Kd4 4.Bc5#
1...Kd5 2.Ra4 g3 3.Be4+ Ke5 4.Bd6#, 2...Ke5 3.Bd6+ Kd5 4.Be4#
1...Ke5 2.Ra4 g3 3.Bd6+ Kd5 4.Be4#, 2...Kd5 3.Be4+ Ke5 4.Bd6#
An exemplary cooperation between rooks and bishops.
'František Skalík' is a pseudonym of Josef Kerles.

No. 36: Any black move will allow immediate mate (1...Kf5 2.Qd5#, 1...f5 2.Qh4#), but White has no waiting move. So he starts by playing **1.Qa8!**. This allows 1...f5 to be met by 2.Qd8+ Kh5,Kh6 3.Qh8+ Kg5 4.Qh4#, but what about 1...Kh5,Kh6? The answer is 2.Qh8+ Kg5 3.Qh1! returning to the diagram position with Black to play: 3...Kf5 4.Qd5#, 3...f5 4.Qh4#.
'A triangulation in the grand manner.' (*Beasley*) Cf. P1366684.

{37A}

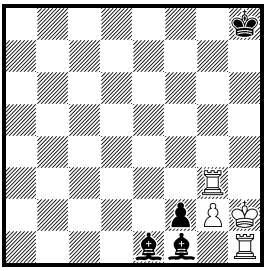


After 3.Sd8-b7

No. 37: Here, as in no. 36, any black move will allow mate. White starts with **1.Sd8!**. After 1...Rd6 2.Bc6 the rook returns to its starting square 2...R×c6. So does the knight: 3.Sb7. Now we have the diagram position without the bishop, yet with Black to move **{37A}**: 3...Rc8,Rc7 4.Sd6# or 3...Rh6 4.Qc5#. But that's not all. Black seems to be finding a way out by playing 2...Rd2+. But White answers with 3.Q×d2 Kc5 and 4.Qd4#.
The theme of the tourney was: one piece for one tempo. This piece is the bishop.
An ideal problem.

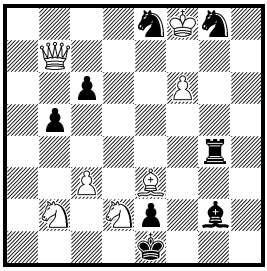
'It is easy to be heavy, hard to be light.'
(Chesterton)

No. 38
Georg Ernst
Fränkisches Volksblatt
1910 or 1911



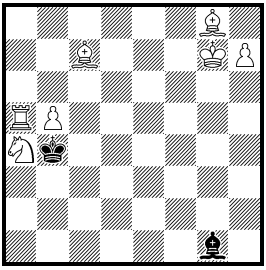
Mate in 4

No. 39
Johannes Kohtz
Carl Kockelkorn
Festschrift ASC
München 1911



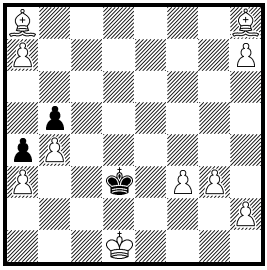
Mate in 4

No. 40
Ado Kraemer
Zürcher Illustrierte
Zeitung 1930



Mate in 4

No. 41
Ado Kraemer
Erich Zepler
Neue Leipziger Zeitung
1931 1st/2nd Prize



Mate in 4

No. 38: 1.Rg4/Rg5? [2.Kg3#] 1...Bd3! 2.Kg3+ Bh7
1.Rg6! [2.Kg3#] 1...Kh7
2.Rg5! [3.Kg3#] 2...Kh6
3.Rg4! [4.Kg3#] 3...Kh5
4.Kg3# at last.
The so-called magnetic theme.

No. 39: 1.Qh7? Re4!. Therefore **1.Qf7!** [2.Sd3+ Kd1 3.Qb3#] 1...Bd5 2.Qa7 [3.Qa1#] 2...Ra4 and now 3.Qh7 Re4/Be4 4.Qh1#/Qh4#. Spectacular queen moves b7-f7-a7-h7–h1/h4.

This famous problem covers the front page of the Album which commemorates the 25th Anniversary of the Academic Chess Club Munich in 1911 and carries the motto 'Eine Schwalbe' ('a swallow'). The authors' reasons for doing so are unknown. But there is no doubt that the *'German Chess Problem Society'* was founded and baptised *'Schwalbe'* in 1924 on account of that famous composition.

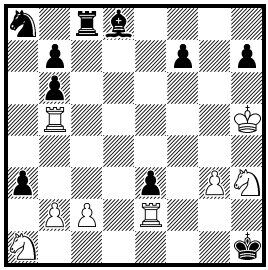
No. 39 is the first problem 'to show two critical decoys together (thus leading to a **Grimshaw**, see p. 17) without a sacrifice: the swallow theme. To do this they needed only a single piece, the queen, and she was then also used on her own for the exploitation of the **Grimshaw** interferences (swallow-form) – that was a great sensation of their time and set new technical standards.' (*Grasemann*) Further examples are #62200 and #62678.

No. 40: 1.h8Q? Bd4+ 2.Kh7 Ba1! (2...B×h8? 3.K×h8 Ka3 4.Bd6#) 3.Q×a1 stalemate. So **1.h8B!!** Bd4+ 2.Kh7 Bb2! 3.S×b2! (3.B×b2? stalemate) zugzwang 3...Kc5 4.Sd3#.

'The basic plan is to control the long diagonal by means of *1.h8=Q,B* and *2.Kh7*, with capture of the black bishop if it opposes, and then mate by *3...Ka3 4.Bd6#*. After *1.h8=Q? Bd4+ 2.Kh7* Black has the well-concealed move *2...Ba1!!*, after which the intended capture *3.Q×a1* [results in] stalemate. This stalemate is avoided by means of an underpromotion *1.h8B!! Bd4+ 2.Kh7*, but amazingly Black has another defence in *2...Bb2!!*, leading to stalemate again after the analogous capture *3.B×b2*, but White keeps the upper hand with *3.S×b2 Kc5 4.Sd3#*.' (after *Grasemann*)
'One of my favourites' (*Zepler*) and 'Mine too' (*Kraemer*).

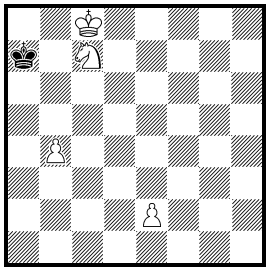
No. 41: 1.Ba1/Be4+? Ke3!
Therefore **1.f4!** zugzwang
1...Kc4 2.Ba1 ~ 3.h8Q ~ 4.Q#
1...Ke3 2.Bh1 ~ 3.a8Q ~ 4.Q#
Two spectacular corner-to-corner moves in an attractive position.

No. 42
Sam Loyd
New York Albion 1860



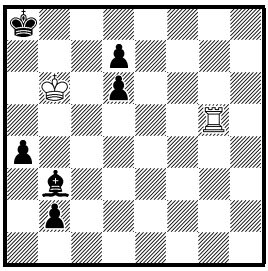
Mate in 5

No. 43
Poul Rasch Nielsen
Skakbladet 1951



Mate in 7

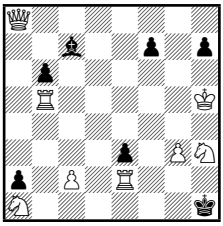
No. 44
Erich Zepler
Die Schwalbe 1931



Mate in 5

No. 42: This most famous five-mover obtained the 2nd prize set in a problem tourney in Paris in 1867. The motto for the full set was 'Excelsior' (Engl. 'Ever upward'), generally known as the title of the poem 'Excelsior' by *Henry W. Longfellow*. That term fits very well for this particular problem showing a white pawn's walk from the 2nd to the 8th rank, the so-called **Excelsior**.

{42A}



After 5.b7×Sa8Q#

1.b4! [2.Rd5,Rf5] 1...Rc5+ 2.b4×c5 a2 3.c6 Bc7 4.c6×b7 ~ 5.b7×a8Q#/B# **{42A}**.
1...Rc6 2.Rd5, 1...R×c2 2.S×c2, 1...Bg5 2.Rf5.

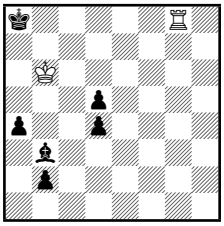
Loyd composed the problem in the Morphy Chess Rooms in 1858. 'It was quite an impromptu to catch old Dennis Julien, the problemist, with. He used to wager that he could analyse any position, so as to tell which piece the principal mate was accomplished with. So I offered to make a problem, which he was to analyse and tell which piece did not give the mate. He at once selected the Queen's Knight's Pawn as the most improbable piece, but the solution will show you which of us paid for the dinner.' (*Loyd*)

Before and after *Loyd* several Excelsior problems were published (cf. #189371), but 'none rivals the piquancy and imagination of *Loyd's* Excelsior.' (*White*)

No. 43: This **Excelsior** is totally different from *Loyd's*.
1.e3! Kb6 2.e4 Kc6 3.e5 Kb6 4.e6 Kc6 5.e7 Kd6 6.e8R! (6.e8Q? stalemate) 6...Kc6 7.Re6# or 5...Kb6 6.e8Q Ka7 7.Qe3#. A most economical rendering with an underpromotion and a long-range mating move of the queen.

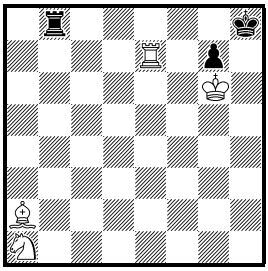
No. 44: To and fro.
1.Kc7! [threatens 2.Ra5#] 1...d5
2.Kb6 [threatens 3.Rg8#] 2...d4
3.Kc7 [threatens 4.Ra5#) 3...d5
4.Kb6 ~ 5.Rg8#. **{44A}**
'The tragi-comic effect is humorously enhanced in this problem by the repetitions and the white king's oscillations.' (*Dickins/Ebert*)

{44A}



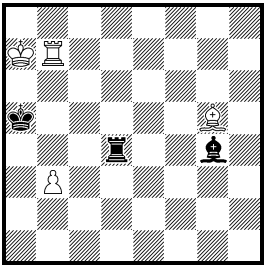
After 5.Rg5-g8#

No. 45
Hannes Baumann
idee & form 1998
Schweizerische Meisterschaft 1st Prize



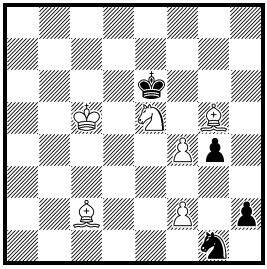
Mate in 6

No. 46
Theodor Nissl
Akademisches Monatsheft für Schach 1910



Mate in 6

No. 47
Stefan Schneider
Deutsche Schachzeitung 1956 1st Prize



Mate in 10

No. 45: This is one of the best logical-strategic miniatures as far as I know.

1.Re5/Re4? Rb6+! 2.Be6 Rb5/Rb4! 3.Rxb5/R×b4? stalemate.

The solution starts with the surprising key **1.Bf7!** zugzwang
1...Rc8 2.Re5! Rc6+ 3.Be6 Rc5 4.Bd5! Rc6+ 5.B×c6 Kg8 6.Re8# **Roman**
1...Ra8 2.Re4! Ra6+ 3.Be6 Ra4 4.Bc4! Ra6+ 5.B×a6 Kg8 6.Re8# **Roman**.

If Black plays 1...Rd8! (**Anti-Roman**) then follows 2.Sc2! zugzwang
2...Rc8 3.Re1! Rc6+ 4.Be6 R×c2 (4...R×e6+ 5.R×e6 6.Re8#) 5.Rh1+ Rh2 6.R×h2#.
2...Ra8 3.Re2! Ra6+ 4.Be6 Ra3 (4...R×e6+ 5.R×e6 6.Re8#) 5.Rh2+ Rh3 6.R×h3#.
In addition there is the logical try 1.Sc2? Rf8! 2.Bf7 Rd8!.

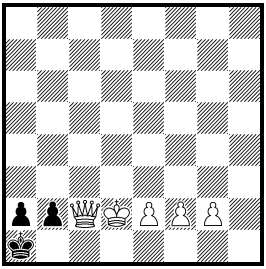
'A masterpiece which is sure of a place among the few immortal miniatures.' (*Rehm*)

No. 46: The black rook must guard the two squares attacked by the white bishop.
1.Bh4! (attacking squares d8 and e1) 1...Rd1
2.Bg3 (attacking squares c7 and e1) 2...Rc1
3.Bf4 (attacking squares c7 and d2) 3...Rc2
4.Bg5 (attacking squares d2 and d8)
and now the rook cannot guard the two squares any longer
4...Rc8 5.Bd2+ Rc3 6.B×c3# or
4...B∼ 5.Bd8+ Rc7 6.B×c7#.
A fine bishop round trip.

No. 47: Try: 1.f5+? K×e5 2.f4+ g4×f3 e.p.! So White will take a bishop round trip, capture the Pg4 and return to the initial position.
1.Ba4! Kf5 2.Bd7+ Ke4 3.Be8! (3.B×g4? h1Q!) 3...Kf5 4.Bg6+ Ke6 5.Bh5! Kf5 6.B×g4+ Ke4 7.Bd1! Kf5 8.Bc2+ Ke6 (the initial position without Pg4) and now 9.f5+ K×e5 10.f4#.
A marvellous bishop round trip in an elegant moremover with a king's pendulum in the middle of the board.

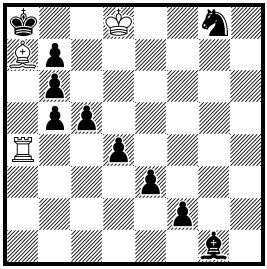
'Elegance is the restriction to the essentials
in its most beautiful form.'
(Rothmann)

No. 48
Samuel Barrett
Dubuque Chess Journal
1874



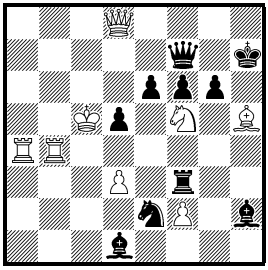
Mate in 12

No. 49
Alfred Karlstrøm
Die Schwalbe 1940



Mate in 13

No. 50
Konrad Bayer
Leipziger Illustrirte
Zeitung 1851



Mate in 9

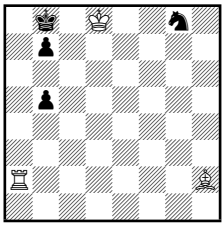
No. 48: 'This problem has been called a 'staircase' for many years because the white queen has to ascend six steps, as it were, to reach h8, from which she then falls straight down to square h1 to give mate. The idea is very economically expressed.' (*Dickins/Ebert*)
Here is the solution:

1.Qc3! Kb1	2.Qd3+ Ka1	3.Qd4 Kb1	4.Qe4+ Ka1
5.Qe5 Kb1	6.Qf5+ Ka1	7.Qf6 Kb1	8.Qg6+ Ka1
9.Qg7 Kb1	10.Qh7+ Ka1	11.Qh8 Kb1	12.Qh1#

No. 49: This is a counterpart to no. 48.
1.Ra3? b4!, 1.Ra1? f1Q!.
The introduction is **1.Ra2!** Bh2 (preventing 2.B×b6+ and 3.Bc7#) and then the manoeuvre begins:

2.B×b6+	Kb8	3.Ba7+	Ka8
4.B×c5+	Kb8	5.Ba7+	Ka8
6.B×d4+	Kb8	7.Ba7+	Ka8
8.B×e3+	Kb8	9.Ba7+	Ka8
10.B×f2+	Kb8	11.Ba7+	Ka8
12.Bg1+	Kb8	13.B×h2#	**{49A}**

{49A}



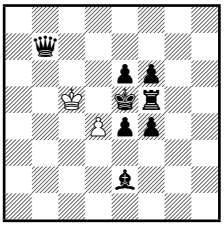
After 13.Bg1×h2#

No. 50: 'This famous problem by Konrad Bayer is known as the 'Immortal Problem' and has become one of the Classics of the Chessboard. It is perhaps one of the most difficult problems to solve. Few solvers would suspect that the black king will be mated on e5 by white pawn at d4, with five of his flight-squares blocked, the other three guarded by white king.' (*Dickins/Ebert*)

The solution is:
1.Rb7! Q×b7 2.B×g6+ K×g6 3.Qg8+ K×f5 4.Qg4+ Ke5 5.Qh5+ Rf5 6.f4+ B×f4 7.Q×e2+ B×e2 8.Re4+ d5×e4 9.d4# with a fascinating mating position **{50A}**.

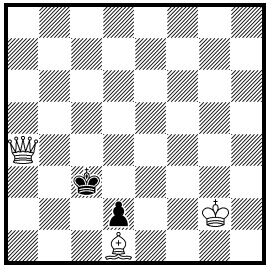
Bayer's contemporaries esteemed this composition highly, modern problemists do not like such a series of checks. Tastes differ.

{50A}



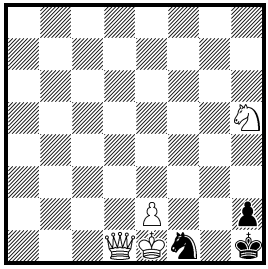
After 9.d3-d4#

No. 51
Vitali Kovalenko
Shakhmaty v SSSR
1978 Special Prize



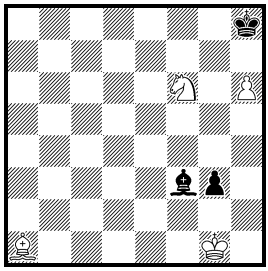
Mate in 4

No. 52
Herbert Grasemann
Deutsche Schachhefte
1950



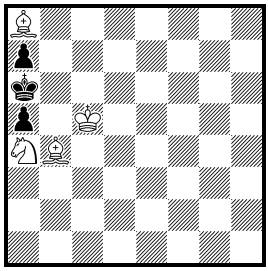
Mate in 4

No. 53
Johannes Kohtz
Carl Kockelkorn
Leipziger Illustrirte Zeitung 1866



Shortest mate?

No. 54
Valeri N. Voinov
Sem Shakhmatnykh Not
2020 Commendation



Mate in 4

No. 51: 1.Kf3? Kd3 2.Qb4 stalemate; 1.Qb5? Kd4 2.Kf3 Kc3 3.Ke3 stalemate.
1.Kh2!! an incredible move
1...Kd3 2.Qb4 Ke3 3.Qc4 Kf2 4.Qe2#
1...Kb2 2.Qb3+ Ka1 3.Bc2 d1Q 4.Qa3#.

No. 52: The attempt 1.Kf2? fails because of the queen's pinning power, so White tries to get rid of her: **1.Qd5+!** Kg1 2.Qh1+! K×h1 and now 3.Kf2 zugzwang ∼ 4.Sg3#.
An amazing queen sacrifice leads to the mate.

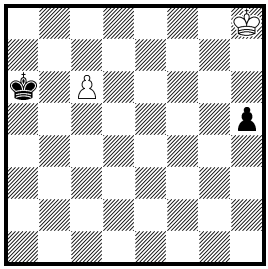
No. 53: The logical try 1.Bb2? [2.Ba3 3.Bf8 4.Bg7#] is refuted by 1...Bh1!! 2.Ba3 g2! 3.Bf8 stalemate. The solution preventing this stalemate trick is **1.Be5!** Bh1 2.B×g3 3.Bd6 4.Bf8 5.Bg7#.

This is a classical example of the self-incarceration of a black bishop which determines the correct white option. The usually published stipulation is 'Mate in 5'. I prefer the insidious stipulation 'Shortest mate?' in order not to give anything away.

No. 54: This seems to be easy: 1.Sb2? a5×b4 2.Sc4 b3 3.Kc6 b2 4.Bb7#. But why is there a question mark after 1.Sb2? Because Black cannot have moved last and is to play. So the solution is very different.
1.a5×b4! Sb2 2.b3 Bc6 3.Ka5 Bb5 4.a6 Sc4#, 2.Ka5 Bb7 3.b3 Sc4+ 4.Ka4 Bc6# or 3.a6 Bc6 4.b3 Sc4#. All these full-length lines (try and solution) are dualfree.
A perfect deception!

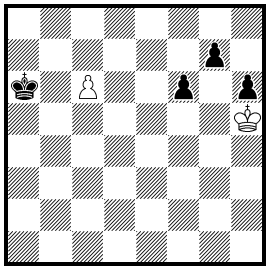
'True difficulty is the embodiment of the unexpected
in a relatively simple form.'
(Loyd)

No. 55
Richard Réti
Deutschösterreichische Tageszeitung 1921



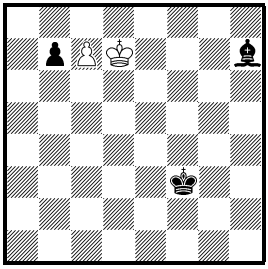
Draw

No. 56
Richard Réti
Narodni Listy 1928



Draw

No. 57
Alexander & Kirill Sarychev
Shakhmatny Listok 1928 (v)
Commendation



Draw

'The beauty of a move lies in the thought behind it.'
(*Tarrasch*)

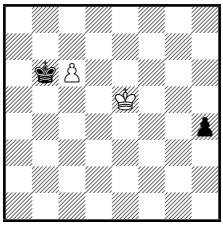
No. 55: Black can capture the white pawn in two moves and his own pawn is out of White's range. Nevertheless White starts with **1.Kg7!** (thus fulfilling two functions: the one, approach to attack Black's pawn, the other to defend his own pawn) **1...h4 2.Kf6! Kb6 3.Ke5!** (threatens 4.Kf4 and 4.Kd6) **{55A} 3...K×c6 4.Kf4** 1/2-1/2 **{55B}** or **3...h3 4.Kd6 {55C} h2 5.c7 Kb7 6.Kd7 h1Q 7.c8Q+** 1/2-1/2. If **2...h3**, then **3.Ke6,Ke7** (dual) **h2 4.c7 Kb7 5.Kd7 h1Q 6.c8Q+** 1/2-1/2. The impossible has happened.

This composition fascinates chess players and problemists as well. It illustrates the rule of the square in an unforgettable manner.

No. 56: Anyone who knows *Réti's* classic will not be surprised by the key move of no. 56: **1.Kg6!**. And it continues with **1...h5 2.K×g7 h4 3.K×f6** etc. as in no. 55. In some lines (e.g. 1...f5 2.K×g7 f4 3.Kf6 Kb6 4.Ke5 f3 5.Kd6 f2 6.c7 f1Q 7.c8Q) Black can retain an extra pawn after the promotions, but it is too weak and backward to affect the result. The position of the six-piece study is more realistic, that one of the four-piece study more aesthetic.

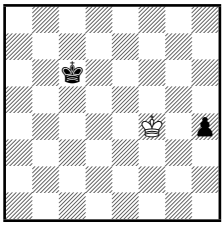
No. 57: The move 1.c8Q? would lose to 1...Bf5+ and the move 1.Ke6? to 1...Ke4 2.c8Q Bf5+. The paradoxical key move **1.Kc8!!** is followed by **1...b5 2.Kd7! Bf5+** (2...b4 3.Kd6 Bf5 4.Ke5!) **3.Kd6 b4 4.Ke5! {57A}** (the move 4.Ke5 recalls the move 3.Ke5 in *Réti's* study no. 55) **4...Bc8 5.Kd4** 1/2-1/2.
My favourite draw study.
You have a good chance of winning a bet, if you show this study to your chess friends and ask the question: Which is the stupidest white move?

{55A}



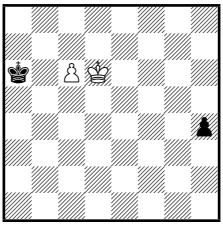
After 3.Kf6-e5

{55B}



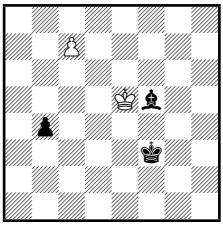
After 4.Ke5-f4

{55C}



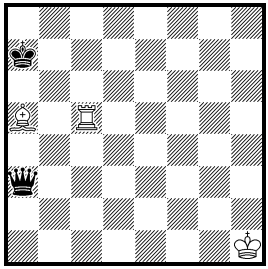
After 4.Ke5-d6

{57A}



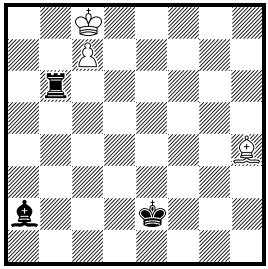
After 4.Kd6-e5

No. 58
Vitali Halberstadt
Sachove Umeni 1950
Réti-MT 1st Prize



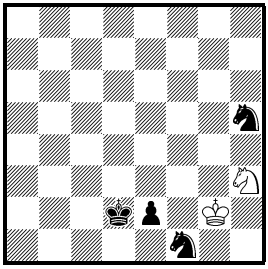
Draw

No. 59
Joseph Peckover
problem 1958-59
1st Prize



Draw

No. 60
Alexander Herbstman
Leonid Kubbel
Leningrad Central Chess Club Ty 1937
1st Prize



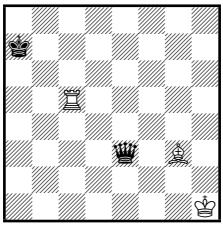
Draw

No. 58: This seems to be quite easy: **1.Be1! Qe3!** (1...Q×c5? 2.Bf2! Q×f2 stalemate) **2.Bg3!! {14A}** (2.Bf2? Q×f2 3.Ra5+ Kb7 4.Rb5+ Kc6 0-1) **2...Q×g3 3.Ra5+** and perpetual check on the a-file or **2...Kb6 3.Rc2! Q×g3 4.Rb2+** and perpetual check on the 2nd rank. Pleasant.

No. 59: **1.Kd8! Rd6+ 2.Ke7 Rc6** (2...Re6+ 3.Kd8 Rd6+ 4.Ke7 repeats the position) **3.Kd7 Rh6 4.Bf6! {59A}** (first offer) **4...Bb1** (4...R×f6? 5.c8Q Be6+ 6.Ke7 B×c8 7.K×f6 ½-½) **5.Ke6 Rh5 6.Bg5! {59B}** (second offer) **6...Rh8** (6...R×g5 7.c8Q Bf5+ 8.Kf6 B×c8 8.K×g5 ½-½) **7.Bd8 Rh5 8.Bg5** ½-½ by repetition. Beautiful idea shown twice in one line.

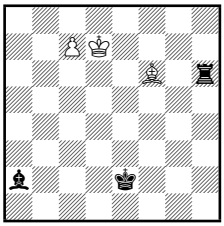
No. 60: The key move **1.Sg1!** attacks the pawn and prepares to meet promotion to queen with a fork. **1...Se3+** (1...Sf4+? 2.Kh1, the promotion 2...e1S leads at once to 3.Sf3+ S×f3 stalemate) **2.Kh3 Sf4+ 3.Kh2 Sg4+** (3...e1S 4.Sf3+ S×f3+ 5.Kg3 6.K×S and no mate by two knights) **4.Kh1 Sf2+** (4...e1Q? or 4...e1S? 5.Sf3+ S×f3 provide two more stalemates) **5.Kh2 e1S 6.Sf3+! S×f3+ 7.Kg3 Ke3 {60A}** stalemate with a wonderful symmetrical position. In general three knights win, yet not here.

{58A}



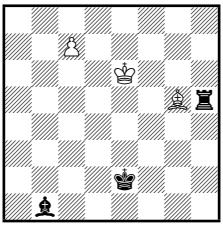
After 2.Be1-g3

{59A}



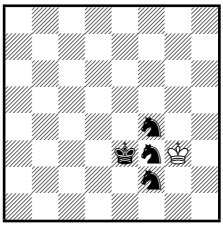
After 4.Bh4-f6

{59B}



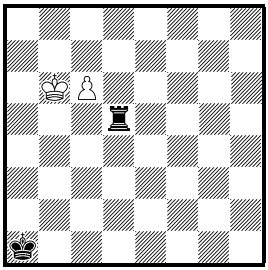
After 6.Bf6-g5

{60A}



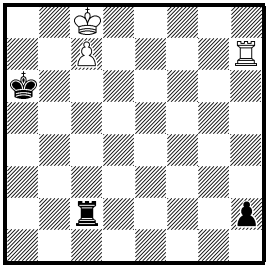
After 7...Kd2-e3

No. 61
Georges Barbier
Fernando Saavedra
Glasgow Weekly Citizen
1895 (v)



Win

No. 62
Emanuel Lasker
Deutsches Wochen-
schach 1890 (v)



Win

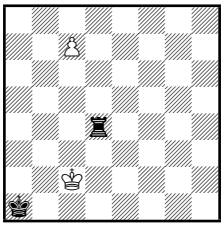
'Problem chess unites essentials of the riddle,
the arts and the science.'
(Speckmann)

No. 61: This is the most famous win study.
1.c7! Rd6+ 2.Kb5! (2.Kb7? Rd7 ½-½; 2.Kc5? Rd1 3.c8Q Rc1+ ½-½) **2...Rd5+ 3.Kb4 Rd4+ 4.Kb3** (dual 4.Kc3 Rd1 5.Kc2 Rd4 1-0) **4...Rd3+ 5.Kc2 Rd4! {61A} 6.c8R!!** [7.Ra8#] (6.c8Q? Rc4+ 7.Q×c4 stalemate) **6...Ra4 7.Kb3! {61B}** (attacks the rook and threatens 8.Rc1#) 1-0. Systematic movement, stalemate defence, underpromotion, king's return – all that with only four pieces. Immortal!

This study has a curious story. First there was a winning position derived from the game *Fenton vs. Potter* in 1875 (with bKh6), yet wrongly recalled and published by *Barbier* in April 1895. Shortly afterwards he published the position with bKa1 as a draw. Then *Saavedra* found the win 6.c8R which was published in May 1895: Kb6 c7 Ka1 Rd5 Black to move, White wins. So *Barbier* has 'composed' the stalemate defence and *Saavedra* the underpromotion. According to *Harold van der Heijden* the above setting (White moves and wins) was first published in *Bohemia* in 1902.

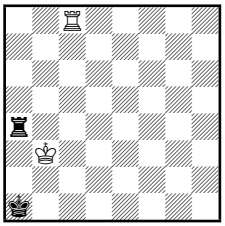
No. 62: This is a didactic endgame showing the so-called Lasker manoeuvre. **1.Kb8! Rb2+ 2.Ka8 Rc2 3.Rh6+ {62A} Ka5 4.Kb7,Kb8 Rb2+ 5.Ka7 Rc2 6.Rh5+ Ka4 7.Kb6,Kb7 Rb2+ 8.Ka6 Rc2 9.Rh4+ Ka3 10.Kb6 Rb2+ 11.Ka5 Rc2 12.Rh3+ {62B} Ka2,Kb2 13.R×h2 R×h2 14.c8Q** 1-0. There are different settings of this endgame. In the original one with bKa5 White wins by 1.Kb8,Kb7,Kd8,Kd7,Rh6.
'The interesting systematic movement of the pieces is of great practical importance and provides true pleasure.' (*Genrikh Kasparyan*)

{61A}



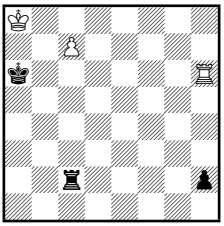
After 5...Rd3-d4

{61B}



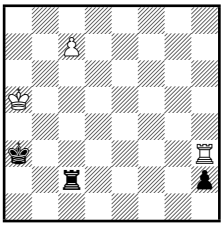
After 7.Kc2-b3

{62A}



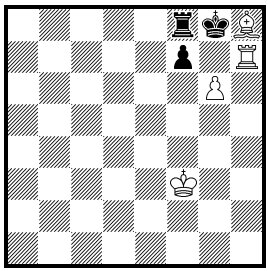
After 3.Rh7-h6+

{62B}



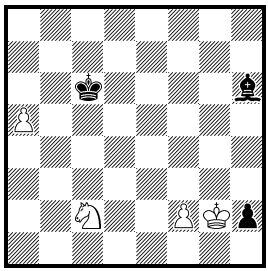
After 12.Rh4-h3+

No. 63
Szaja Kozłowski
Świat Szachowy 1931



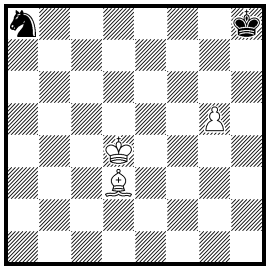
Win

No. 64
Richard Réti
Hastings and St. Leonards Post 1922



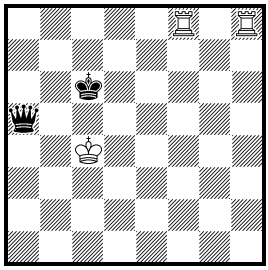
Win

No. 65
Gleb Zakhodyakin
64 1931 1th Prize



Win

No. 66
Harold M. Lommer
Rochester, Chatham and Gillingham Journal 1946 (v)



Win

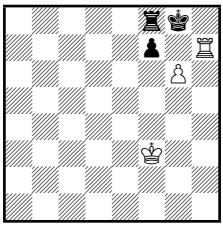
No. 63: The try 1.g7? Ra8 fails. White can conquer the black pawn by zugzwang (wKb7 wRe7 bRd8), it is true, but the bK moves to h7 and the bR to the g-file and draws (e.g. in the position Kf7 Rf1 Bh8 g7 Kh7 Rg2 after bRg2×g7+ B×g7 stalemate). If the bishop, however, was not here, White would win by 1.g7. So White removes his own bishop playing **1.Rg7+! K×h8 2.Rh7+ Kg8 {63A}** and now **3.g7** 1-0. Utmost short and sweet.

No. 64: **1.Sd4+!** (guarding b5) **1...Kc5**. This is the critical position. How does White make progress? If 2.K×h2?, Black replies 2...K×d4 3.a6 Bf4+ 4.Kh3 Bb8 or 2.Sb3+? Kb5 3.K×h2 Bf4+ 4.Kh3 Kb4 5.a6 Bb8 6.f4 Kb5 ½-½. So White cannot make progress. Fortunately, however, neither can Black. Therefore White can maintain the status quo with the unexpected mild retreating move **2.Kh1!! {64A}** 1-0. If the bishop moves, it is captured by means of a fork of the knight. If the king moves, White wins by 3.a6. Here the knight dominates the bishop.

No. 65: The bishop dominates the knight. **1.Kc5!** [threatens 2.Kc6] **1...Sc7 2.Kd6 Se8+ 3.Ke7 Sg7** (3...Sc7? 4.Kf7 Sd5 5.g6 and 6.g7#) **4.Bg6 Kg8 5.Bf7+ Kh7** (5...Kh8 leads to the final position one move sooner) **6.Kf6 Kh8 {65A} 7.Ke5!** (7.Kg6? Se6 8.B×e6 stalemate) **7...Kh7 8.Ke4!** (a tempo-losing triangle because the direct way 8.Kf4 fails to 8...Kh8 9.Kg4 Kh7 10.g6+ Kh6) **8...Kh8 9.Kf4 Kh7 10.Kg4 Kh8 11.g6! {65B}** and the knight gets lost. A light setting, all men move, no capture till the end, no complex side lines: a top study.

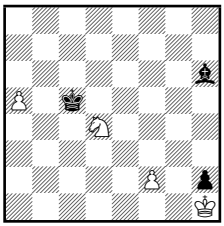
No. 66: Here the rooks dominate the queen. **1.Rh6+! Kd7 2.Rf7+ Ke8.** And now **3.Ra7!** attacking the queen and threatening 4.Rh8#. If 3...Q×a7?, then 4.Rh8+ and 5.Rh7+ winning the queen. So Black must play **3...Qe5** (guarding h8). Nevertheless White plays **4.Rh8!** followed by **4...Q×h8 5.Ra8+ K∼ 6.R×h8** 1-0. For some people this is too coarse, yet I like it.

{63A}



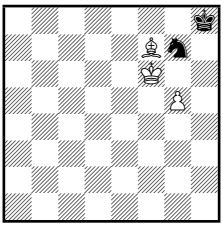
After 2...Kh8-g8

{64A}



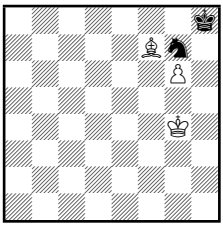
After 2.Kg2-h1

{65A}



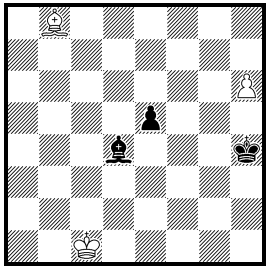
After 6...Kh7-h8

{65B}



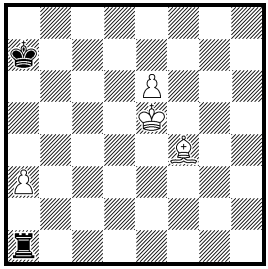
After 11.g5-g6

No. 67
Paul Heuäcker
Wiener Neueste Nachrichten 1930



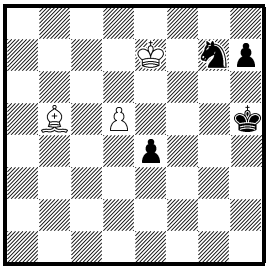
Win

No. 68
Herman Mattison
Rigasche Rundschau 1914



Win

No. 69
Ernest Pogosyants
Shakhmatnaya Moskva 1964 1th Prize



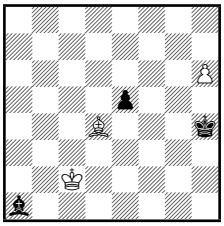
Win

No. 67: **1.Ba7! Ba1 2.Kb1 Bc3 3.Kc2 Ba1 4.Bd4! {67A} B×d4** (4...e5×d4 5.Kd3 1-0) **5.Kd3 Ba1 6.Ke4** 1-0. If you are not enthusiastic about this study, you should give up chess and play checkers.
Cf. #351387.

No. 68: 1.e7? Re1+ 2.Kf6 R×e7 3.K×e7 is drawn because of the a-pawn and the dark-squared bishop. **1.Be3+! Kb7 2.e7 R×a3** [3...R×e3+ and 3...Ra8] **3.Ba7! Ra1** [4...Re1+] **4.Kf4** (4.Ke4? K×a7) **4...Rf1+** (4...Re1 5.Be3) **5.Bf2! {68A} R×f2+ 6.Ke3** 1-0. One of *Mattison's* pearls.

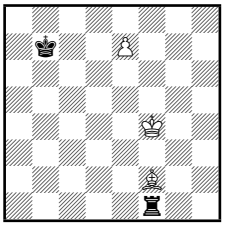
No. 69: **1.Kf6! Kh6 2.d6 Se8+! 3.B×e8 e3 4.d7!** (4.Bb5? e2 5.B×e2 stalemate) **4...e2 5.d8S!!** (5.d8Q? e1Q ½-½) **5...e1Q {69A} 6.Sf7+ Kh5 7.Se5+ Kh4 8.Sf3+** 1-0 or **5...e1S! {69B} 6.Sc6!** ∼ **7.Se7** ∼ **8.Sg8#**. Four (un)successful promotions. Spectacular!

{67A}



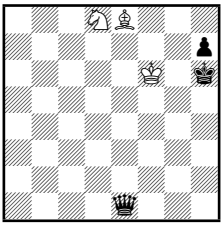
After 4.Ba7-d4

{68A}



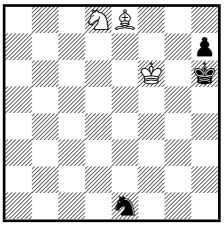
After 5.Ba7-f2

{69A}



After 5...e2-e1Q

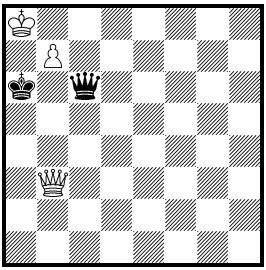
{69B}



After 5...e2-e1S

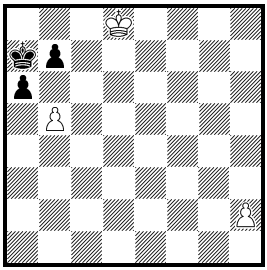
'To many people studies are the highest form of chess art. Closer to the game than problems, but distant enough to maintain elevated aesthetic criteria, endgame studies should be pure and perfect – sound, yet with no extras and waste.'
(*Levitt/Friedgood*)

No. 70
Louis van Vliet
Deutsche Schachzeitung
1888



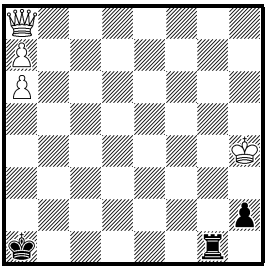
Win

No. 71
David Joseph
Sunday Express 1921
(v)



Win

No. 72
Ilham Alijew
(After P. Heuäcker)
EG 1999



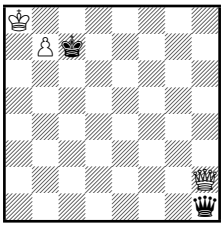
Win

No. 70: **1.Qb4! Qh1 2.Qa3+ Kb6,Kb5 3.Qb2+ Kc7** (3...Ka6 4.Qa2+ Kb6,Kb5 5.Qb1+ Q×b1 6.b8Q+ 1-0; 3...Kc5,Kc4 4.Qc2+ Kd4 5.Ka7 Qa1+ 6.Kb6 1-0) **4.Qh2+! {70A} Q×h2 5.b8Q+** 1-0 or **1...Qf3,Qd5 2.Qa4+ Kb6 3.Qb3+ {70B} Q×b3 4.b8Q+** 1-0 or 1...Qg2 2.Qa3+ Kb6,Kb5 3.Qb2+ 1-0. In a clever manner White's queen succeeds in sacrificing herself so that Black's queen will be captured in a skewer check when White's pawn queens. An evergreen.

No. 71: **1.b6+!** (1.b5×a6? b5 0-1; 1.h4? a6×b5 ½-½) **1...Kb8!** (1...Ka8? 2.h4 a5 ... 6.h8Q a1Q 7.Q×a1+ 1-0) **2.h4 a5 3.h5 a4 4.h6 a3 5.h7 a2 6.h8Q a1Q {71A} 7.Qg8!** (7.Q×a1? stalemate; 7.Qe8/Qf8? Qg7/Qa3! ½-½) **7...Qa2! 8.Qe8! Qa4! 9.Qe5+! Ka8 10.Qh8 {71B}**. Unique.
This anonymous version was published in *Československá Republika* in 1923. An often quoted setting is wKd8 b6 h7 bKb8 a2 b7. *Joseph's* original position was Kd8 Be1 a5 h6 Ka7 Ra6 a4 b7 with 1.Bf2+ Kb8 2.Bb6 R×b6 3.a5×b6 a3 4.h7.

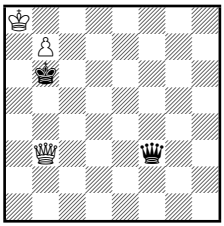
No. 72: Black threatens 1...h1Q+ 2.Q×h1 Rxh1+ 3.K∼ Rh8 0-1. Therefore White plays **1.Qh1!** (first corner-to-corner sacrifice) (1.Qh8+? Ka2 0-1) **1...R×h1 2.a8Q Rg1** [again 2...h1Q+] **3.Qh1!** (second corner-to-corner sacrifice) **3...R×h1 4.a7 Rg1 5.a8Q+ Kb2 6.Qb8+ K∼ 7.Q×h2+** 1-0.
This study is very similar to one of *Jindrich Fritz* from 1961 and that one to one of *Paul Heuäcker* from 1937: wKa5 Bf8 h6 h7 bKh1 Ra1 Bh8 a3. 1.Bg7 a2 2.B×h8 Re1 3.Ba1 R×a1 4.h8Q Rb1 5.Qa1! etc.

{70A}



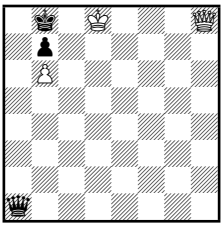
Line 1...Qh1
After 4.Qb2-h2+

{70B}



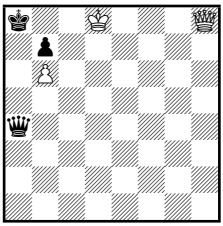
Line 1...Qf3
After 3.Qa4-b3+

{71A}



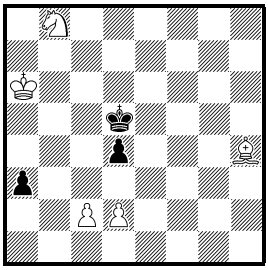
After 6...a2-a1Q

{71B}



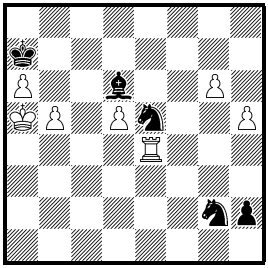
After 10.Qe5-h8

No. 73
Leonid Kubbel
Shakhmatny Listok
1922



Win

No. 74
Leopold Mitrofanov
Rustaveli MT 1967 (c)
1th Prize



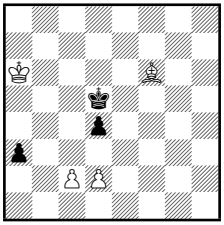
Win

'The rigidity of the material with which we have to compose
is a more formidable opponent than Lasker or Capablanca,
because these lifeless opponents do not have
any moments of human weakness'.
(*Weenink*)

No. 73: Here I quote *Dickins/Ebert*: 'a mate after death. **1.Sc6** (first sacrifice a piece!) **1...K×c6 2.Bf6** (to control a1, Black's queening square) **2...Kd5 {73A}** (back into action) **3.d3!!** (suicide, as a1 may now never be controlled) **3...a2** (on to glory) **4.c4+** (never miss a check, it might be mate) **4...Kc5** (seems safe – if d4×c3 e.p., White wins) **5.Kb7** (seems to be running away) **5...a1Q** (triumph, glory, victory ...) **6.Be7!!** (What's this? You've already committed suicide; you can't come back like this ... but, but, well, yes, I suppose it is Mate...).' 3.d3!! is one of the most splendid moves ever.

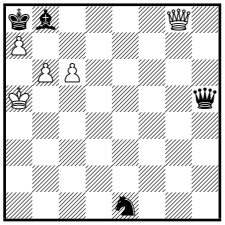
No. 74: Three comments in advance: A fantastic composition! An absolute masterpiece! Beyond this world!
1.b6+! Ka8 (not 1...Kb8 because of 4...Bb8) **2.Re1!** (the rook is sacrificed to obstruct the first rank to prevent [after 2.g7 h1Q 3.g8Q+ Bb8 4.a7] 4...Qa1+!) **2...S×e1 3.g7 h1Q 4.g8Q+ Bb8 5.a7 Sc6+ 6.d5×c6 Q×h5+ {74A} 7.Qg5!!** (7.Ka6? Qe2+ and perpetual check) with the famous deflection **7...Q×g5+** (on a dark square) **8.Ka6** (on a light square) **B×a7** (8...Qa5+ 9.K×a5 B×a7 10.c7) **9.c7! {74B}** (two white pawns win against three black officers!) **9...Qa5+ 10.K×a5 Kb7 11.b6×a7 {74C}** 1-0.
This setting was published in *Vecherny Leningrad* 1971.The original setting (with bSf3 instead of bSg2) leads to a draw (2...Sc4+).
Jan Timman's version (*New in Chess 2013*) with bSe3 (instead of bSg2) and wBh3 shows an additional sacrifice: 1.b6+! Ka8 2.Bg2 Sxg2 3.Re1 Sxe1 etc.

{73A}



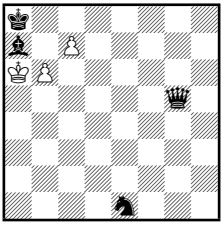
Before 3.d2-d3

{74A}



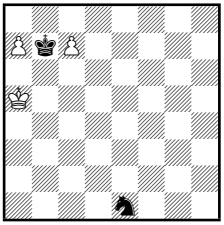
Before 7.Qg8-g5

{74B}



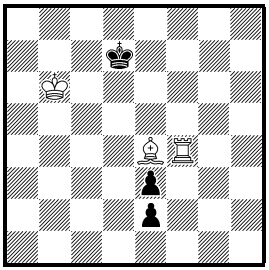
After 9.c6-c7

{74C}



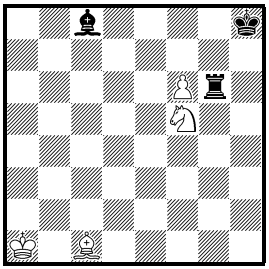
After 11.b6×a7

No. 75
Richard Réti
Kölnische Volkszeitung
1928 (c)



Win

No. 76
John Selman
Vladimir Korolkov
Lelo 1951 1th Prize



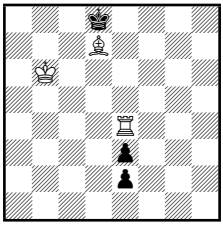
Win

No. 75: **1.Bf5+!** (1.Bc6+? Kd6 2.Rd4+ Ke5 3.Re4+ Kd6 4.R×e3 e1Q 5.R×e1 stalemate) **1...Kd6/Kd8 2.Rd4+ Ke7 3.Re4+ Kd8 4.Bd7! {75A}** (4.R×e3? e1Q 5.R×e1 stalemate) **4...e1Q 5.Bb5** and **6.Re8#**. Marvellous.
The diagram position is *H. Rinck's* corrected version from *Bohemia 1935*.

No. 76: **1.f7! Ra6+** (1...Rf6 2.Bb2 1-0; 1...Rg8 2.f7×g8Q+ K×g8 3.Se7+ 1-0) **2.Ba3!** (2.Kb1? B×f5+ 0-1; 2.Kb2? Rf6 ½-½) **2...R×a3+ 3.Kb2** (a king's walk is starting on dark squares to avoid bishop's checks) **3...Ra2+! {76A} 4.Kc1!** (4.Kc3? Rc2+ 5.Kd4 Rd2+ 6.K∼ Rd8 or 5.Kb4 Rb2+ and checks on the 2nd rank ½-½) **4...Ra1+ 5.Kd2 Ra2+ 6.Ke3 Ra3+ 7.Kf4 Ra4+ 8.Kg5 Rg4+ {76B} 9.Kh6!** (9.K×g4 B×f4+ or 9.Kh5, Kf6 Rg8 ½-½) **9...Rg8 10.Se7 Be6 11.f7×g8Q,R+ B×g8 12.Sg6# {76C}**.

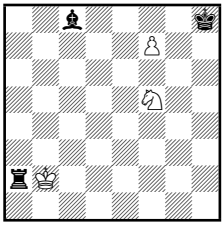
In 1940 *Selman* published the first setting (Kg4 Sf5 f6 Kh8 Rh1 Bg2, win; 1.f7), in 1949 the second (1st Prize: Kc1 Ba1 Sd4 f6 Kh8 Re3 Bc8, win; 1.Sf5). *Korolkov* published no. 76 in 1951. Both composers agreed to regard this study as a joint composition.
Here I like to quote *Beasley/Whitworth*: 'This study has everything: a simple initial position, a solution packed with subtlety and incident, and a stunning climax. In the words of *Harold Lommer*, it warms the heart.'

{75A}



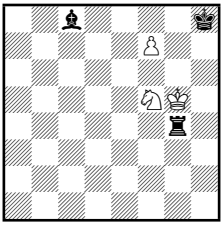
After 4.Bf5-d7

{76A}



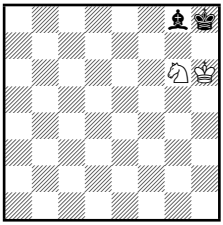
After 3...Ra3-a2+

{76B}



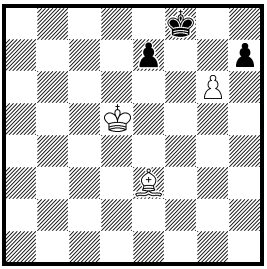
After 8...Ra4-g4+

{76C}



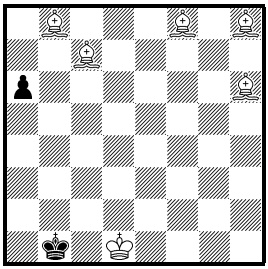
After 12.Se7-g6#

No. 77.1
Alexey Troitzky
Novoye Vremya 1895 (v)



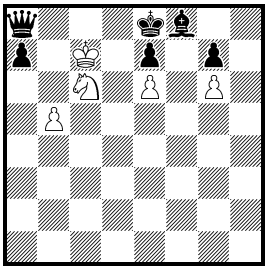
Win

No. 77.2
Alexey Troitzky
Bohemia 1905



Win

No. 78
Ernest Pogosyants
Die Schwalbe 1976



Win

No. 79: ***Werner Keym***, *Die Schwalbe 2024*
With as few pieces as possible compose a study in which White is winning. This winning position can be shifted and mirrored vertically and horizontally. All vertically shifted and mirrored positions are drawing positions, all horizontally shifted and mirrored positions are losing positions.

'Surprise is the greatest gift which human life can grant us.'
(*Pasternak*)

No. 77.1: Troitzky's miniature is his most famous study. The main line is **1.Bh6+! Kg8 2.g7 Kf7 {77.1A} 3.g8Q+ K×g8 4.Ke6 Kh8 5.Kf7 e5,e6 6.Bg7#**. Unfortunately, the move 3.g8B+ K×g8,Kf6,Kg6 wins as well. This (little known) dual reduces the value of the study.

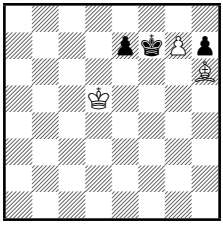
'To compensate', I present a completely different study by Troitzky.

No. 77.2: At first sight, White cannot hope to win, because he has only dark bishops; how can he cover the light squares? **1.Bce5! a5** (1...Ka2 2.Kc2 a5 3.Ba1 a4 4.Bbe5 a3 5.Kc3 leads to the same position) **2.Ba1 a4 3.Bbe5 Ka2** (better than 3...a3 4.Kd2 Ka2 5.Kc3 Kb1 6.Kb3 a2 7.Kc3 K×a1 8.Kc2#) **4.Kc2 a3 5.Kc3 K×a1** (5...Kb1 6.Kb3 a2 7.Kc3 K×a1 8.Kc2#) **6.Kb3+ Kb1 7.Ba1 a2 8.Kc3 K×a1 9.Kc2# {77.2A}** achieves what at first seemed utterly impossible.

No. 78: Those who see it immediately have it easy, those who don't will despair. Black cannot have moved last and is to play. **1...a5! 2.b6 a4 3.b7 Q×b7+ 4.K×b7 a3 5.Sb4 Kd8 6.Kb8 Ke8 7.Kc8 a2 8.Sa6,Sd5** (8.S×a2 stalemate) **a1Q 9.Sc7# {78A}**. As far as I know this is the sole study with Black to move for retroanalytical reasons.– I would like to add a white pawn on f4 in order to provoke the 'wrong solution' 1.f5!? a5 ... 9.Sc7#.

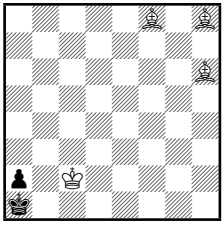
No. 79: The winning position is **wKe1 Ra1 bKg1 Rb2 a2 {79A}**, there follows **1.0-0-0+! ∼ 2.K×b2** 1-0.
Positions with bKd8 or bKh1 are not allowed since they cannot be shifted vertically and horizontally. The try bKd7/6/5? (instead of bKg1) fails because in the vertically mirrored position wKe8 Ra8 bKd2/3/4 Rb7 a7 White is not drawing, but losing. The try bKd7? and Pg2? (instead of bKg1 and Pa2) fails because in the horizontally shifted position wKf1 Rb1 bKe7 Rc2 h2 White is not losing, but drawing: 1.Rb7+ Kf6 2.Rh7.
This 'multiple study' seems to be unique.

{77.1A}



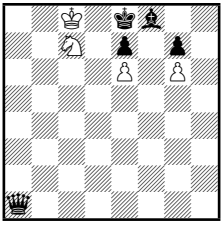
Before 3.g8Q+/B+

{77.2A}



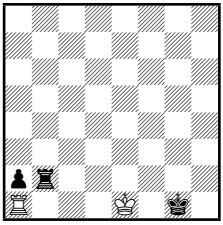
After 9.Kc3-c2#

{78A}



After 9.S-c7#

{79A}



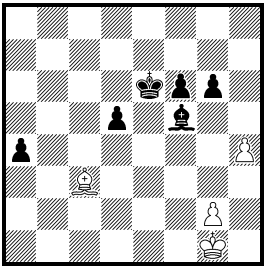
Winning position

Games

Best move ever played

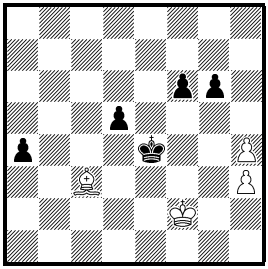
No. 80: ***Topalov*** **–** ***Shirov*** *Linares 1998*

{80A}



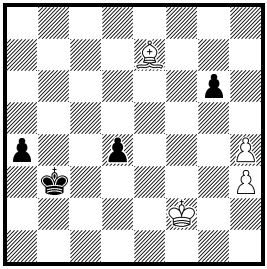
Before 47...Bf5-h3!!

{80B}



After 49...Kf5-e4

{80C}



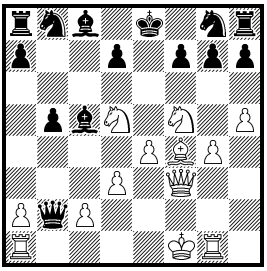
After 53...Kc4-b3

'There are chances for a draw with opposite-coloured bishops, especially if White can set up a blockade on the dark squares **{80A}**. However there are no chances to draw if you are facing an opponent without preconception and who has a pure ability to calculate out a forced win in the way Alexey Shirov did: **47...Bh3!!** The motivation for this deep and superbly paradoxical move is dynamic. The normal 47...Be4 (also attacking the g2-pawn) blocks the e4-square for the black king. It would be difficult to prove that no move other than 47...Bh3 wins, since Black has a two-pawn advantage, but it is quite clear that 47...Bh3 does win once you have calculated the lines clearly, and thus it is a quite superb move... **48.g2×h3** (48.Kf2 Kf5 is no better since White cannot stop ...Ke4 without giving up the g2-pawn) **48...Kf5 49.Kf2 Ke4! {80B} 50.B×f6** If White does not take this pawn then it will soon advance and Black will have three passed pawns (too much for White to deal with) **50...d4 51.Be7** This loses, but how else to stop 51...a3? **51...Kd3 52.Bc5** Otherwise just 52...Kc2 and White cannot stop both the d-pawn and the a-pawn **52...Kc4! 53.Be7 Kb3 {80C}** 0-1. Black cannot be stopped from playing a combination of ...Kc2 and ...d3, and afterwards ...a3 to deflect the bishop away from controlling d2.' (Levitt/Friedgood)

Many experts regard the Shirov move as the best move ever played.

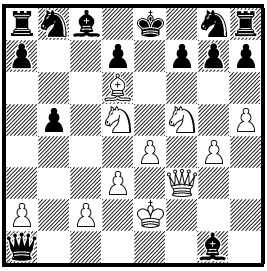
No. 81: ***Anderssen*** – ***Kieseritzky*** *London 1851*

{81A}



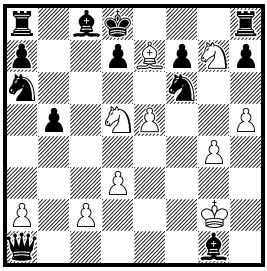
After 17. . . Qf6×b2

{81B}



After 19.Bc5×g1

{81C}



After 23.Bd6-e7#

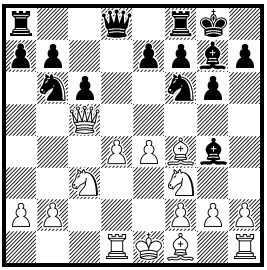
1.e4 e5 2.f4 e5×f4 3.Bc4 Qh4+ 4.Kf1 b5!? 5.B×b5 Nf6 6.Nf3 Qh6 7.d3 Nh5 8.Nh4 Qg5 9.Nf5 c6 10.Rg1 (a bishop sacrifice) c6×b5 11.g4 Nf6 12.h4! Qg6 13.h5 Qg5 14.Qf3 Ng8 15.B×f4 Qf6 16.Nc3 Bc5 17.Nd5 Q×b2 **{81A}** 18.Bd6!! (a brilliant move) 18. . . Q×a1+ (first rook sacrifice) 19.Ke2 B×g1? **{81B}** (second rook sacrifice; much better is 19. . . Qb2!) 20.e5!! (this blocks off the black queen) 20. . . Na6 21.N×g7+ Kd8 22. Qf6+! N×f6 (a queen sacrifice) 23.Be7# **{81C}**

All black officers are still on the board. However, White has sacrificed his bishop, his rooks and his queen to gain much time and to finish with a checkmate by his three remaining minor pieces.

'The difference between the game as a historical process and the problem as an artistic product means that questions such as priority, anticipation, originality and plagiarism play no role in the game, but an important role in the problem.'
(Grasemann)

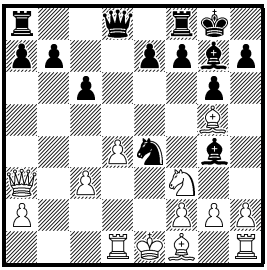
No. 82: ***D. Byrne*** – ***Fischer*** *New York 1956*

{82A}



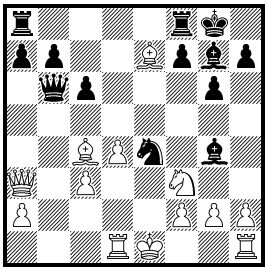
After 10...Bc8-g4

{82B}



After 13...Nf6×e4

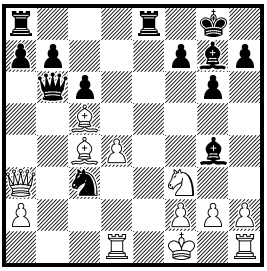
{82C}



After 15.Bf1-c4

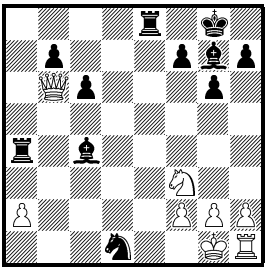
1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.d4 0-0 5.Bf4 d5 6.Qb3 d5×c4 7.Q×c4 c6 8.e4 Nbd7 9.Rd1 Nb6 10.Qc5 Bg4 **{82A}** 11.Bg5? ('Do not move a piece twice in the opening.') Na4! 12.Qa3 (12.N×a4? N×e4!) 12...N×c3 13.b2×c3 N×e4 **{82B}** 14.B×e7 Qb6 15.Bc4 **{82C}** 15...N×c3! 16.Bc5 Rfe8+

{82D}



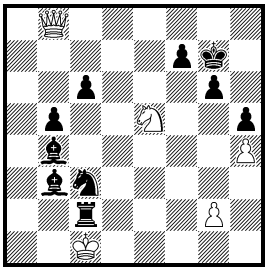
After 17.Ke1-f1

{82E}



After 25...Nc3×d1

{82F}

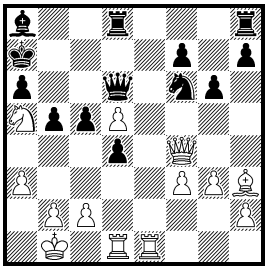


After 41...Ra2-c2#

17.Kf1 **{82D}** Be6!! (how deep this incredible positional queen sacrifice is, the next moves from 18.B×b6 to 25...N×d1 will prove) 18.B×b6 (18.B×e6? Qb5+ 19.Kg1 Ne2+ 20.Kf1 Ng3+ 21.Kg1 Qf1+ 22.R×f1 Ne2# with a smothered mate) B×c4+ 19.Kg1 Ne2+ (a smart knight manoeuvre to capture Pd4) 20.Kf1 N×d4+ 21.Kg1 Ne2+ 22.Kf1 Nc3+ 23.Kg1 a7×b6 24.Qb4 Ra4 25.Q×b6 N×d1 **{82E}** 26.h3 R×a2 27.Kh2 N×f2 28.Re1 R×e1 29.Qd8+ Bf8 30.N×e1 Bd5 31.Nf3 Ne4 32.Qb8 h5 33.h4 b5 34.Ne5 Kg7 35.Kg1 Bc5+ (a wonderful teamwork of the black officers is beginning) 36.Kf1 Ng3+ 37.Ke1 Bb4+ 38.Kd1 Bb3+ 39.Kc1 Ne2+ 40.Kb1 Nc3+ 41.Kc1 Rc2# **{82F}** Fischer was 13 at the time.

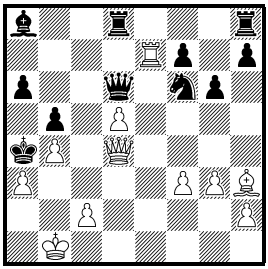
No. 83: ***Kasparov*** – ***Topalov*** *Wijk aan Zee 1999*

{83A}



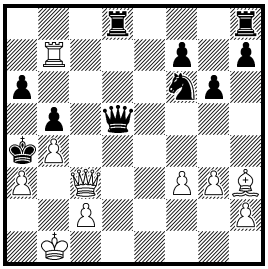
Before 24.Rd1×d4

{83B}



After 27... Ka5-a4

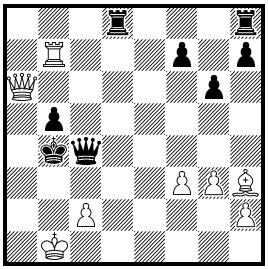
{83C}



After 30.Ra7×b7

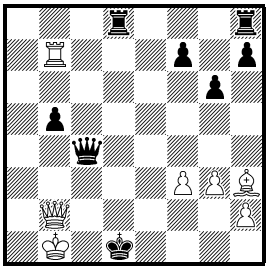
1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.Be3 Bg7 5.Qd2 c6 6.f3 b5 7.Nge2 Nbd7 8.Bh6 B×h6 9.Q×h6 Bb7 10.a3 e5 11.0-0-0 Qe7 12.Kb1 a6 13.Nc1 0-0-0 14.Nb3 e5×d4 15.R×d4 c5 16.Rd1 Nb6 17.g3 Kb8 18.Na5 Ba8 19.Bh3 d5 20.Qf4+ Ka7 21.Rhe1 d4 22.Nd5 Nb×d5 23.e4×d5 Qd6 **{83A}** 24.R×d4!? c5×d4? (24... Kb6! 25.Nb3! B×d5! ½-½) 25.Re7+! Kb6 26.Q×d4+! K×a5 27.b4+ Ka4 **{83B}** 28.Qc3 Q×d5 29.Ra7! Bb7 30.R×b7 **{83C}** Qc4 31.Q×f6 K×a3

{83D}



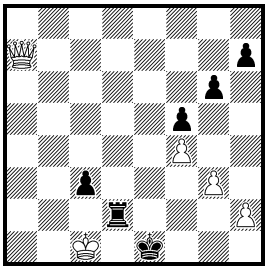
After 32... Ka3×b4

{83E}



After 35... Kd2-d1

{83F}



After 44.Qa4-a7

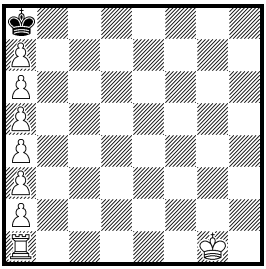
32.Q×a6+ K×b4 **{83D}** 33.c3+! K×c3 34.Qa1+ Kd2 35.Qb2+ Kd1 **{83E}** 36.Bf1!! Rd2 37.Rd7! R×d7 38.B×c4 b5×c4 39.Q×h8 Rd3 40.Qa8 c3 41.Qa4+ Ke1 42.f4 f5 43.Kc1 Rd2 44.Qa7 1-0 **{83F}**

'The best game of my life.' (*Garry Kasparov* himself)

Chess 960

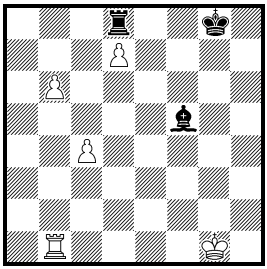
In Chess 960, often called Fischer Random Chess, in the initial game array the white king is located between the two rooks on one of the six squares (b1 ... g1). In case of castling on the left side, the king moves to c1 and the rook to d1 (on the right side K to g1 and R to f1) as usual. This enables new effects in problem chess.

No. 84
William Shinkman
Bader Al-Hajiri
Website T. Krabbé 2007



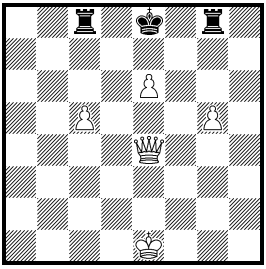
Mate in 8
Chess 960

No. 85
Geir S. Tallaksen
Østmoe
Aftenposten 2018



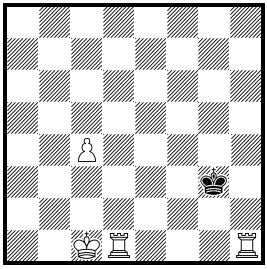
Win
Chess 960

No. 86
Werner Keym
Die Schwalbe 2021



Mate in 4
Chess 960
2 solutions

No. 87
Bernd Gräfrath
König & Turm 2002 (c)



White retracts 1 move, then mate in 2
Chess 960 2 solutions

No. 84: **1.0-0-0!** (K→c1 and R→d1) K×a7 2.Rd8 K×a6 3.Rd7 K×a5 4.Rd6 K×a4 5.Rd5 K×a3 6.Rd4 K×a2 7.Rd3 Ka1 8.Ra3#.
Shinkman's famous problem (with wKe1 instead of wKg1 and the same solution 1.0-0-0!) was published in *St. Louis Globe Democrat* 1887, yet a second solution (1.Kd2) was discovered 40 years later. However, by means of Chess 960 *Al-Hajiri* saved the famous problem 120 years later. Now it is immortal (again).

No. 85: White is allowed to castle, after the first move (1.c5 B×d7) Black as well. **1.c5! B×d7** (1...B×b1? 2.c6 Be4 3.c7 1-0) is not followed by 2.Rd1? because of 2...0-0-0! (= Kg8→c8) ½-½. The right move is **2.0-0-0!** Thereby White determines the initial squares of the kings (g1 and g8) and of the rooks (b1 and b8). So the black rook on d8 is no longer allowed to castle [Retro Strategy, cf. p. 127] **2...Kf7 3.R×d7+ R×d7 4.c6** 1-0. Know how!

No. 86: If you only give the two symmetrical solutions 1.Qb7 and 1.Qh7, you are wrong. The two correct solutions are: one conventional asymmetrical solution (1.Qa4+!) plus one solution that consists of two parts which exclude each other (1.Qb7! or 1.Qh7!) [Partial Retrograde Analysis, cf. p. 122].
This is the asymmetrical solution: **1.Qa4+!** Rc6 2.Q×c6+ Kf8 3.Qd7 Rg7 4.Qd8# and 1...Kf8 2.Qf4+ Kg7 (2...Ke7,Ke8 3.Qf7+ Kd8 4.Qd7#) 3.Qf6+ Kh7 4.Qh6#.
If 0-0-0 is allowed and 0-0 not allowed, then the second solution is: **1.Qb7!** Rc7 2.Q×c7 Rg7 3.Q×g7 Kd8 4.Qd7# and 1...Rg7 2.Q×c8+ (but not 2.Q×g7? 0-0-0!) Ke7 3.Qd7+ Kf8 4.Qd8#.
If 0-0 is allowed and 0-0-0 not allowed, then the second solution is: **1.Qh7!** Rg7 2.Q×g7 Rc7 3.Q×c7 Kf8 4.Qf7# and 1...Rc7 2.Q×g8+ (but not 2.Q×c7? 0-0!) Ke7 3.Qf7+ Kd8 4.Qf8#.
All lines are dualfree. A lucky find.

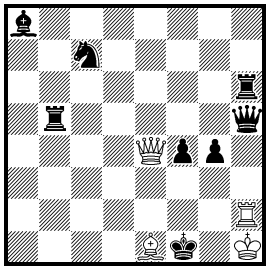
No. 87: **1)** Backward **Rd4-d1**, then **1.0-0** Kh3 2.Rf3#. **2)** Backward **0-0-0** (Kf1→c1), then **1.Rd4** Kf3 2.Rh3#. Nice reciprocal affair.

Addendum: In classical chess castling cannot be forced, but it can be in Chess 960; e.g. *Werner Keym, Stuttgarter Zeitung 2020, wKe5 Qh6 Sg5 bKg8 Rh8 f5 h7, Mate in 2, Chess 960.* 1.Kf4! zugzwang 0-0 (= Rh8→f8) 2.Q×h7#.

Selfmates

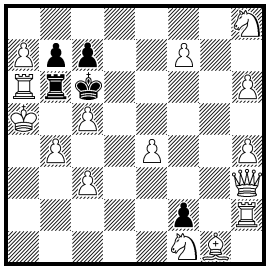
In a selfmate problem White forces Black to give mate in n moves. A selfmate in 2 includes 4 single moves. The earliest selfmate problems date from the 13th century.

No. 88
Rudolf Prytz
Chemnitzer Tageblatt
1925



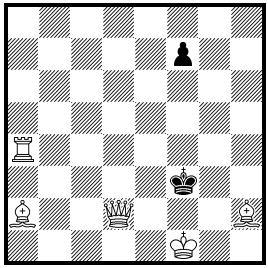
Selfmate in 2

No. 89
Henry Bettmann
Funkschach 1926
1st Prize



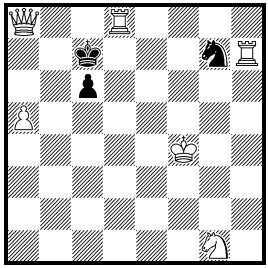
Selfmate in 3

No. 90
Andrey Selivanov
Uralski Problemist 2000
1st/2nd Prize



Selfmate in 5

No. 91
Bo Lindgren
Hans Peter Rehm
Probleemblad 1980
1st Prize



Selfmate in 13

The selfmate #68127 is very famous and very difficult.

No. 88: The solution starts with **1.Bd2!** [2.Qg2+ B×g2#]
1...Rb7 2.Qb1+ R×b1#
1...Rc6 2.Qc4+ R×c4#
1...Rd5 2.Qd3+ R×d3#
1...Sd5 2.Q×f4+ S×f4#
1...f3 2.Qe2+ f3×e2#
A perfect two-move selfmate.

No. 89: It was *Joseph Babson* who initiated the construction of problems in which the promotion of a black pawn to Q/R/B/S is followed by the promotion of a white pawn to Q/R/B/S. So the black Allumwandlung and the white All-umwandlung evoke an echo: QQ–RR–BB–SS. This echo AUW is called **Babson Task**.
No. 89 is the first realization of this task and is regarded as the 'Selfmate of the Millennium'.

The key is **1.a8B!**
1...f2×g1Q 2.f8Q Q~ 3.White×Q Black~ #
1...f2×g1R 2.f8R R~ 3.White×R Black~ #
1...f2×g1B 2.f8B B~ 3.White×B Black~ #
1...f2×g1S 2.f8S S~ 3.White×S Black~ #
Little flaws are the duals after 2...Qf2/Qg7.
Why do other promotions fail? Find out for yourself!

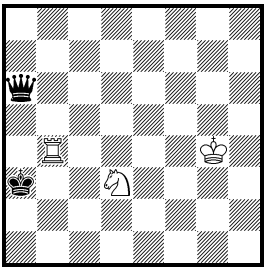
No. 90: The try 1.Ke1? f5? 2.Qd5+ Ke3 3.Bc4 f4 4.Bf1 f3 5.Qd1 f2# fails to 1...f6!
The solution begins with **1.Be6!** zugzwang
1...f7×e6 2.Qg5 e5 3.Bg3 e4 4.Be1 e3 5.Qg1 e2#
1...f6 2.Bh3 f5 3.Bg4+ f5×g4 4.Qe1 g3 5.Bg1 g2#
1...f5 2.Qd1+ Ke3 3.Ke1 f4 4.Bh3 f3 5.Bf1 f2#
Three echo model mates in a miniature. Wonderful!

No. 91: **1.Ke3!** c5 2.Qb8+ Kc6 3.Rh6+ Se6 4.Kd2 c4 5.Rd6+ Kc5 6.Rh5+ Sg5 7.Kc1 c3 8.Qb6+ Kc4 9.Rh4+ Se4 10.Rg4 c2 11.Rd4+ Kc3 12.Rg3+ S×g3 13.Se2+ S×e2#.
Grandiose systematic manoeuvre. Be sure to replay it!

Helpmates

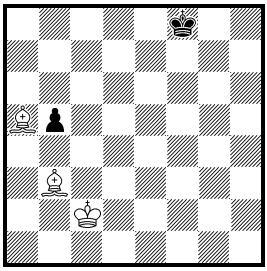
In a helpmate problem both parties co-operate to mate Black. Black to move; a helpmate in 2 includes 4 single moves. The earliest helpmate dates from 1854.

No. 92
Henry Forsberg
Pauly MT 1935
Revista de Şah 1935
1st Prize



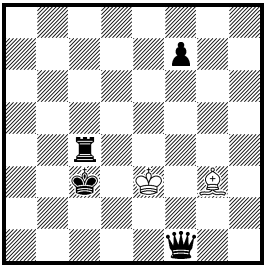
Helpmate in 2
b) bRa6, c) bBa6,
d) bSa6, e) bPa6

No. 93
Hilmar Ebert
Zdravko Maslar
Diagrammes 1980
Special prize



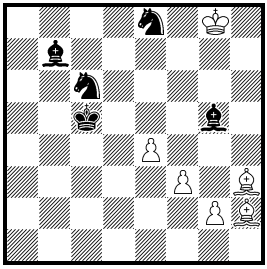
Helpmate in 5

No. 94
Torsten Linß
Probleemblad 2014
1st Prize



Helpmate in 8

No. 95
Fadil
Abdurahmanović
Osman Čatić
Mat 1981 2nd Prize



Helpmate in 3
3 solutions

A delightful helpmate with only three pieces is #97914.

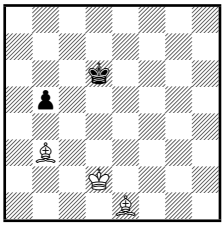
No. 92: This is an ideal chess problem.

a) 1.Qf6! Sc5 2.Qb2 Ra4#
b) 1.Rb6! Rb1 2.Rb3 Ra1#
c) 1.Bc4! Se1 2.Ba2 Sc2#
d) 1.Sc5! Sc1 2.Sa4 Rb3#
e) 1.Pa5! Rb3+ 2.Ka4 Sc5#

Key move by Q/R/B/S/P,
five different mating positions.

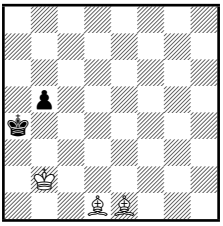
No. 93: **1.Ke7!** Be1 2.Kd6 Kd2 **{93A}** 3.Kc5 Bd1 4.Kb4 Kc2+ 5.Ka4 Kb2# **{93B}**.
A perfect double Indian
(cf. no. 20).

{93A}



After 2. . . Kc2-d2

{93B}

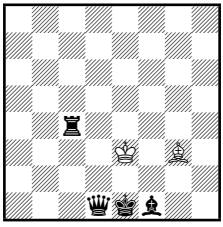


After 5. . . Kc2-b2#

No. 94: A fantastic helpmate with only six pieces.
1.f5! Bf2 2.f4+ Kf3 3.Kd2 Kg4 4.f3+ Bd4 5.Qd1 Kf4 6.Ke1 Ke3 7.f2 Be5 8.f1B Bg3# **{94A}**
Round trips of white bishop (Bg3-f2-d4-e5-g3) and white king (Ke3-f3-g4-f4-e3), self-pin and self-unpin of white bishop, black Excelsior (Pf7–f1) with underpromotion (f2-f1B).

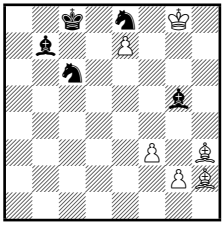
No. 95: Beautiful echo play of the pawns.
1.Kb6! e5 2.Kc7 e6+ 3.Kc8 e7# **{95A}**.
1.Bd8! f4 2.Kd6 f5+ 3.Kd7 f6# **{95B}**.
1.Be7! g3 2.Kd6 g4+ 3.Ke6 g5# **{95C}**.

{94A}



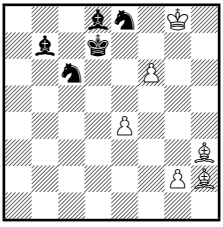
After 8. . . Be5-g3#

{95A}



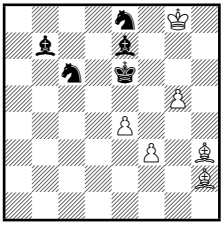
After 3. . . e6-e7#

{95B}



After 3. . . f5-f6#

{95C}

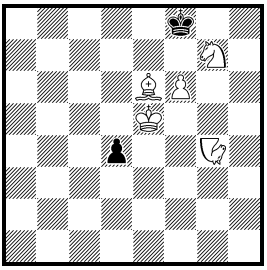


After 3. . . g4-g5#

Fairies

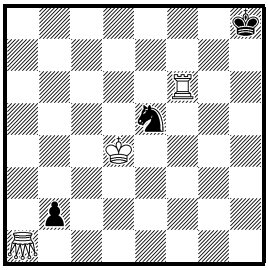
Since its origin the game of chess has evolved. Only the rook and the knight still retain their original movements. In the last 100 years the problemists invented new boards, pieces, rules, stipulations etc. Two famous 'new' pieces were created by *Thomas R. Dawson*, the 'father of Fairy Chess': the nightrider (1925) and the grasshopper (1912).

No. 96
Thomas R. Dawson
Die Schwalbe 1925



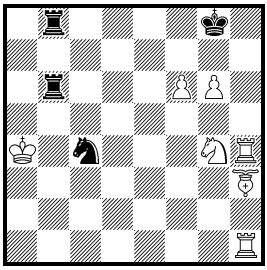
Mate in 2
♘ = *Nightrider*
b) Pd4→b4

No. 97
Thomas R. Dawson
The Problemist 1934



Helpmate in 3
♗ = *Grasshopper*

No. 98
aṣ-Ṣūlī
Before 946



Mate in 5
♗ = *Alfil*

To no. 96: A nightrider (N) is a fairy piece that moves in continuous knight leaps in a straight line in one direction to move or capture until it is blocked (Ng4-e3,-c2,-a1).

To no. 97: A grasshopper (G) is a fairy piece that to move or capture must hop over another man of either colour to the next square beyond that man, on queen lines. If there is no man to hop over, the grasshopper cannot move (Ga1-c3).

To no. 98: The Alfil (A) is the mediaeval type of bishop that can move only to the second square along its four diagonals, whether or not the intervening square is occupied (Ah3-f1, -g5). It is extinct in classical chess but lives on in fairy chess.

No. 96: **a) 1.Na1!** d3 2.Nd7# **{96A}**, not 1.Nc2? d3 2.Bb3+ d3×Sc2;
b) 1.Nc2! b3 2.B×b3# **{96B}**, not 1.Na1? b3 prevents Na1-b3-c5-d7.
Quite amazing if you see it for the first time.

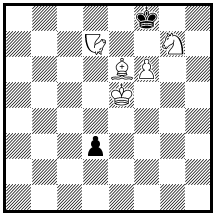
No. 97: **1.b1G!** Rg6 2.Gh7 Rg1 3.Sc4! Gh1# **{97A}**. The seven other moves of the knight fail, especially 3.Sd7? Gh1+ 4.Gc7! and 3.Sd3? Gh1+ 4.Gc2!. Clever!

No. 98: **1.Rh8+** K×h8 2.Af5+ Kg8 3.Rh8+ K×h8 4.g7+ Kg8 5.Sh6# **{98A}**. [There are many different settings (e.g. bRb2 instead of bRb6 with mate in 6 moves).]

There is a nice story connected with this problem known as **'Dilaram's Mate'**. A prince had wagered and lost his fortune to another prince during a chess session and in desperation offered as stake his favourite wife, Dilārām (meaning 'heart's ease'). When he seemed lost she called out: 'O Shah, sacrifice both rooks and not me.' Her husband understood what she meant, played accordingly and won the game.

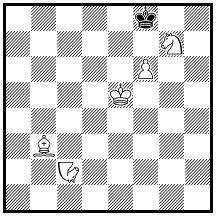
In those days the spectacular combinations were admired and preserved, yet not the games. So some problemists like to joke: 'the chess problems are older than the chess games.'

{96A}



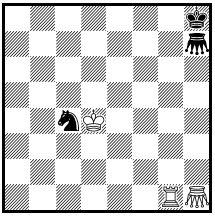
After 2.Na1-d7#

{96B}



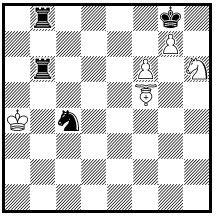
After 2.Be6×b3#

{97A}



After 3. . . Ga1-h1#

{98A}

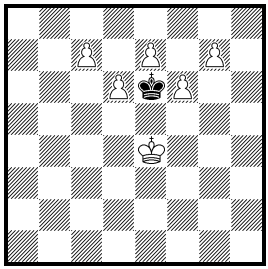


After 5.Sg4-h6#

Asymmetry

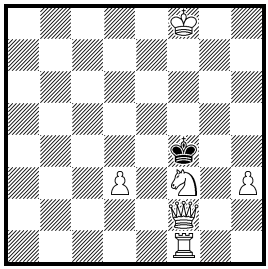
You will find more than three thousand symmetrical problems in *PDB* (K= 'symmetrical position'). Many of them have a symmetrical key, i.e. a move which keeps the symmetry of the position (e.g. no. 99). In general they are less interesting than the problems with an asymmetrical key as no. 100–124.

No. 99
Fritz Hofmann
Sonntagsblatt 1887



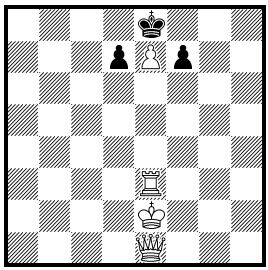
Mate in 3

No. 100
Valerian Onitiu
Chess Amateur 1924



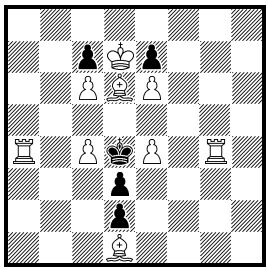
Mate in 2

No. 101
a) Bror Larsson
Eskilstuna-Kuriren 1945
b) Jan Hartong
Bulletin Ouvrier des Echecs 1948



Mate in 2
a) diagram
b) all 1 file to right

No. 102
Miroslav Stošić
problem 1971
1st Prize



Mate in 2

No. 99: Not 1.e8Q+? K×d6/K×f6 2.c8Q,R/2.g8Q,R stalemate, but **1.e8B!** K×d6 2.c8R! Ke6 3.Rc6# or 1...K×f6 2.g8R! Ke6 3.Rg6#.
Here stalemate is avoided by three underpromotions (B, R, R). This appealing content distinguishes no. 99 from many somewhat monotonous symmetrical problems in which the key move maintains the symmetry.

No. 100 to no. 124:
With asymmetrical problems, the question always arises as to why the move is successful on one side but not on the other mirror-image side. For this reason there is always a thematic try. This try is often simple: there is a lack of space on the left or right or above or below. The later the asymmetrical move is made, the more difficult it is to recognize. Stalemate motives are also unexpected. Exceptions (no. 119 – 124) prove the rule.

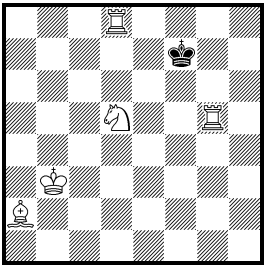
No. 100: 1.Qk2?? is impossible, therefore **1.Qa2!** zugzwang Kf5 2.Qf7#, 1...Ke3 2.Qd2# or 1...Kg3 2.Qh2#.
This simple miniature is an almost classic example: the key move leads either to a symmetrical mating position, if Black moves symmetrically, or to two different mirror-image mating positions, if Black moves asymmetrically.

No. 101: a) Thematic try: 1.Qb4? f6,f5!. Solution: **1.Qh4!** [2.Qh8#] d6,d5/f6,f5 2.Qa4#/Qh5#.

b) 1.Qk1?? is impossible. Solution: **1.Qa1!** [2.Qa8#] e5/g5 2.Qa3#/Qh8#.
The rare case of an excellent twin added to a) later on by a second author.

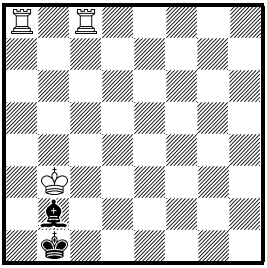
No. 102: Six tries of the bishop are refuted by six flights of the king:
1.Ba3? Kc3!
1.Bb4? K×c4!
1.B×c7? Kc5!
1.Bg3? Ke3!
1.Bf4? K×e4!
1.B×e7? Ke5!
Solution: **1.Bh2!** Kc3 2.Be5# and 1...Kc5/Ke3 2.Bg1#
Excellently constructed.

No. 103
Edith Baird
Chess Amateur 1924



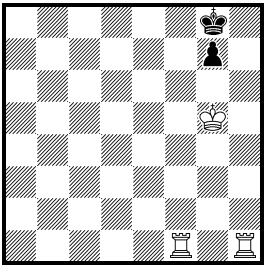
Mate in 3

No. 104
Heinrich Wagner
(after E. B. Cook)
Wiener Schachzeitung 1926



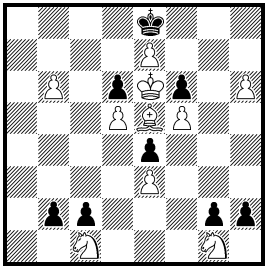
Mate in 3

No. 105
Herbert Hultberg
Tidskrift för Schack 1947



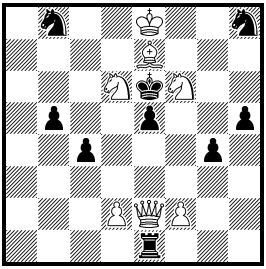
Mate in 3

No. 106
Thomas R. Dawson
Falkirk Herald 1914



Mate in 3

No. 107
Gerhard Latzel
Lippische Landes-zeitung 1951
Hon. Mention



Mate in 3

No. 103: *Edith Elina Helen Baird*, née *Winter Wood* (1859–1924) is regarded as queen of the diagonal symmetry. No. 103 is a very surprising example, it is 'symmetrical at opening and close': **1.Bb1!** Ke6 2.Bh7 Kf7 3.Bg8#.

No. 104: Thematic try: 1.Ra3? Bd4/Be5 ...
Solution: **1.Rc3!**
1...Ba3 2.K×a3 Ka1 3.Rc1#
1...B×c3 2.K×c3 Kc1 3.Ra1#
1...Ba1 2.R×a1+ K×a1 3.Rc1#
1...Bc1 2.Ra1+ K×a1 3.R×c1#.
Sacrifices of the rooks with zugzwang, star-flight of the bishop. Cf. #86993.

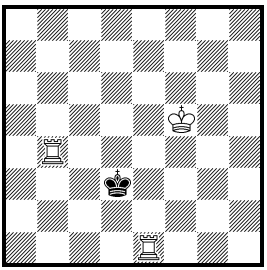
No. 105: Thematic try: 1.Rf6? g7×f6+? 2.K×f6 Kf8 3.Rh8#, but 1...g6! 2.R×g6+ Kf∼.
Solution: **1.Rh6!** g7×h6+ 2.K×h6 Kh8 3.Rf8#, 1...g6 2.R×g6+ Kh∼ 3.Rh1#.

No. 106: Thematic try: 1.B×b2? h1B! 2.b7 stalemate.
Solution: **1.B×h2!** b1B 2.h7 B∼ 3.h8Q#/R#.
A paradox: the surplus of space turns out to be a disadvantage for Black.

No. 107: Try: 1.d4? [2.d5#] e4 2.f4 [3.d5#,f5#] g4×f3 e.p. 3.Qi2??
Solution: **1.f4!** [2.f5#] e4 2.d4 [3.d5#,f5#] c4×d3 e.p. 3.Qa2#.
Only the mating move gives reason for the key 1.f4.
This problem shows a remarkable feature: the positions after the second white move both in try and solution seem to be the same, but they do not contain the same move rights as to what happens with the en-passant capture.

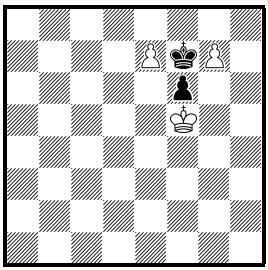
'A problem must possess a certain something that takes it beyond the boundaries of sober, practical play and gives it an individual character, it must have an *idea*.'
(Palkoska).

No. 108
Frithiof Lindgren
Aftonbladet 1928



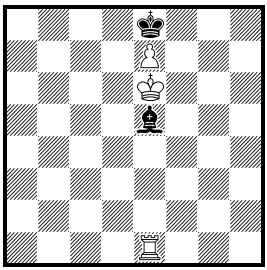
Mate in 4

No. 109
Otto Nerong
Essener Anzeiger 1929



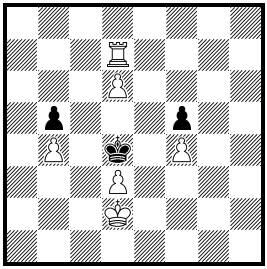
Mate in 4

No. 110
Erich Zepler
Die Schwalbe 1937



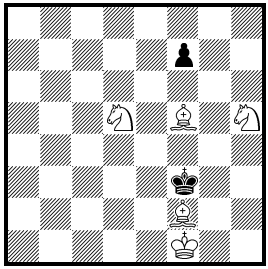
Mate in 4

No. 111
Wolfgang Pauly
Deutsche Schachblätter 1916



Mate in 4

No. 112
Josef Breuer
Die Schwalbe 1948



Mate in 4

No. 108: **1.Rc1!** Kd2 2.Ke4 K×c1 3.Kd3 Kd1 4.Rb1#
1...Ke3 2.Rb2 Kd4 (2...Kd3 3.Ke5,Kf4) 3.Rb3 Kd5 4.Rd3#
1...Ke2 2.Rb2+ Ke3 (2...Kd3 3.Ke5,Kf4) 3.Rd1 Kf3 4.Rd3#.
A rook sacrifice in a four-piece symmetrical problem.

No. 109: Try: 1.e8S? Ke7,K×e8 2.g8Q Kd7 3.Qf8 Kd8 4.S×f6+.
Solution: **1.g8S!** Kg7 2.e8Q Kh7 3.Qf8 Kh8 4.S×f6#
This is an impressive example of how the supposedly weak knight can be stronger than a queen. High economy and lines without captures; furthermore different refutations of the queen promotions: 1.g8Q+? K×e7!, but 1.e8Q+? K×e8!. (After *Schlosser & Minski*)

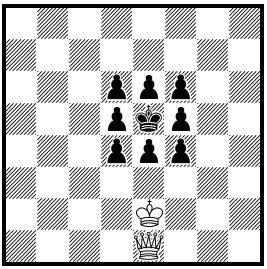
No. 110: Thematic try: 1.Rg1? Bg7! 2.Rc1 Bc3 3.Rc2 Ba5!.
Solution: **1. Rc1!** Bc7 (1...Bc3? 2.Rc2) 2.Rg1! Bg3 3.Rg2 B∼ 4.Rg8#.
A battle of feints pro and con stalemate.
Just like in football: feint left, pass right.

No. 111: Who would expect here two underpromotions? It is a rook if the bK moves asymmetrically aside, however a knight if he moves symmetrically.
1.Rh7! Kd5 2.d7
2...Kd6 3.d8S! Kd5 4.Rd7#
2...Kc6 3.d8R! (3.d8Q? stalemate) Kb6 4.Rd6#
2...Ke6 3.d8R! (3.d8Q? stalemate) Kf6 4.Rd6#.
Three model mates. One of *Pauly's* symmetrical masterpieces.

No. 112: **1.Ba7!** f6 2.Sb6 Ke3 3.Sc4+ Kf3 4.Sd2#. A symmetrical Indian.

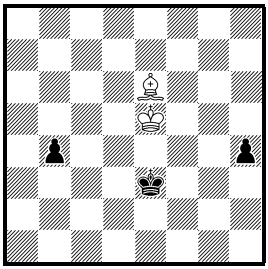
'With its beautiful setting and fine long-range withdrawal key move this miniature Indian seems unlikely ever to be surpassed for economy, simplicity and beauty. It is one of the finest examples of a Classic of the Chessboard.'
(*Dickins/Ebert*)
My favourite among the asymmetry problems.

No. 113
Pierre-Antoine Cathignol
diagrammes 1981



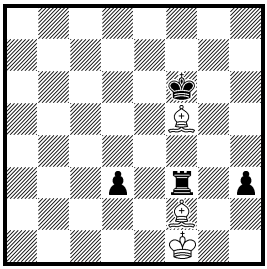
Mate in 8

No. 114
Alexey Selezniev
Deutsches Wochenschach 1917 (v)



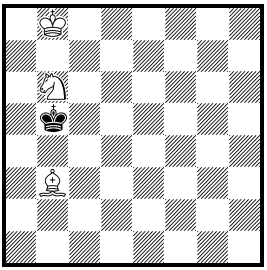
Draw

No. 115
Werner Keym
Allgemeine Zeitung Mainz 1965 (c)



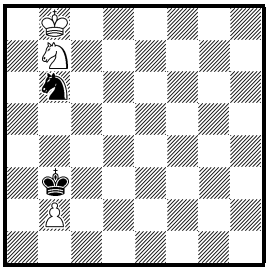
Draw

No. 116
Hilmar Ebert
Schach-Echo 1977



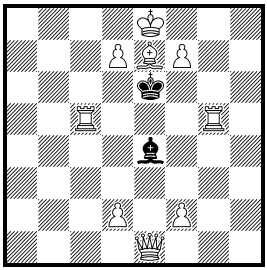
Helpmate in 3
b) Bb3→b4

No. 117
Henrik Eriksson
Stella Polaris 1967
1st Prize



Helpmate in 3

No. 118
Wolfgang Pauly
Asymmetry 1927 (v)



Selfmate in 5

See P0003924 with its mirrored positions.

No. 113: Among numerous ninepin problems (see *PDB* K='skittles setup') this is probably the first directmate with two white pieces only.
The solution is dual-free: **1.Kd2!** f3 2.Qh4 d3 3.Kc3 d4+ 4.Kc4 d5+ 5.Kc5 f2 6.Qh2+ f4 7.Qh5+ f5 8.Qh8#.
This works analogue if White plays 1.Kf2!? d3 2.Qb4 ... The difference arises if after 1.Kd2! Black plays 1...d3; then follows 2.Qa1+ d4 3.Qa5+ d5 4.Qc7#. After 1.Kf2? f3!, however, the chessboard is too small for 2.Qi1+??.
A fantastic chess problem with a staircase of the king and long-range moves of the queen to h8 and a1. Overwhelming.

No. 114: Tries: 1.Kd5?/Kf5? b3!/h3! 0-1; thematic try: 1.Kf6? Kf4! 2.Kg6 Kg3! 3.Kf5 h3 4.Ke4 h2 0-1. Solution: **1.Kd6! Kd4! 2.Kc6 Kc3 3.Kd5! b3 4.Ke4 b2 5.Ba2! h3 6.Kf3 h2 7.Kg2** ½-½. An instructive endgame for the theme 'Bishop against two Pawns'. Precise and beautiful.

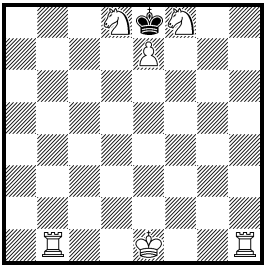
No. 115: Tries: 1.B×h3? d2! 2.Ke2 R×f2+ 3.Kd1 Rf3 4.B~ Rd3, analogous with 1.B×d3? h2. This is the thematic try: 1.Bg4? Rf4 2.B×h3 d2 3.Bg4 R×g4 4.Ke2 Rg2 5.Kd1 R×f2 6.Kc2 0-1.
1.Be4! (foreplan for the purpose of opening the line e4-h1) **Rf4 2.B×d3 h2 3.Be4** (3.Kg2? R×f2+!) **R×e4 4.Kg2 Re2 5.Kh1 R×f2** stalemate or **5...Kf5 6.Bg3 Kg4 7.B×h2 Kh3 8.Bg1** ½-½.
'Indeed, this miniature leaves nothing to be desired: finely founded key with delay of capture while occupying the rook (with decoy effect). Subsequently both bishops are sacrificed for the unexpected stalemate.' (*Schlosser* & *Minski*)

No. 116: To the left or right – depending on the colour of the bishop.
a) **1.Ka6!** Kc7 2.Ka7 Sc8+ 3.Ka8 Bd5#,
b) **1.Kc6!** Ka7 2.Kc7 Ka6 3.Kb8 Bd6#

No. 117: **1.Sd5!** (asymmetrical) Ka7 (asymmetrical) 2.Sb4 Kb6 (symmetrical position!) 3.Ka4 (asymmetrical) Sc5#. With five pieces only a successive double setting with an ideal mate – something like this can only succeed through co-operation.

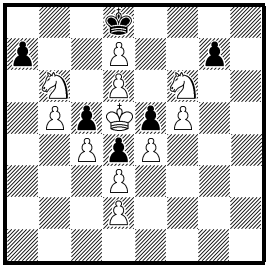
No. 118: Not 1.Bd8? Kd6 2.Qi1+??, but **1.Bf8!** Kf6 2.Qa1+!. This unpins the Be4. 2...Ke6 3.Qf6+! K×f6 4.d8B+ Ke6 5.Rc6+ B×c6#.
A timeless masterpiece with bishop promotion and sacrifices of queen and rook.

No. 119
Jan Knöppel
Springaren 1950



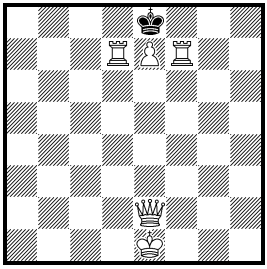
Mate in 3

No. 120
Thomas R. Dawson
Falkirk Herald 1914



Mate in 2

No. 121
Werner Keym
Die Zeit 2020



Mate in 2

No. 122: ***Karl Fabel***, *Die Schwalbe 1937. With the kings and two rooks construct a position in which White can mate in four different ways.*

No. 123: ***Werner Keym,*** *Die Schwalbe 1991 (v). In which mating position with the kings and a white piece did this piece have to make at least three moves from the initial game array to the mating position?*

No. 124.1: ***Werner Keym,*** *Eigenartige Schachprobleme 2010 (v). With four pieces construct a position in which White can mate in 1 move. None of these pieces must ever have moved.*

No. 124.2: ***Werner Keym,*** *Original (06/2025). In a mating position with the kings and the white queen the black king needed three moves from e8 to this position, the queen from d1 only one move. After the rotation of this position by 90°, 180° and 270° three positions arise in which the queen from d1 only needed one mating move as well.*

Variatio delectat – even with symmetrical compositions.

No. 119: The previous reasons for a white asymmetrical key (no. 100 to no. 118) don't help here. Castling makes the difference. **1.0-0!** K×e7 2.Sb7 Ke8 3.Rbe1#. A similar example with diagonal symmetry is no. 125.

No. 120: (11+6 pieces) is a famous retro problem (this is the original position, not the one with all the pieces shoved one file to the right). The white pawns captured the 10 missing black pieces, among them the Bf8. So the last move was not e7-e5, but c7-c5 with the solution **1.b5×c6 e.p.!** ∼ 2.c7#.
A special form of symmetry/asymmetry can be realized by means of Partial Retrograde Analysis (cf. no. 86 and p. 124 Pattern).

No. 121: There is a symmetrical try (White to play): 1.Qe5? K×d7/K×f7 2.e8Q#. The last move, however, cannot have been made by Black. So Black is to play: **1.K×d7/K×f7!** e8Q+ 2.Kd6/Kf6 Qe5#. Change of key move and mating move. Symmetrical miniatures with unusual first move are rare.
The position without the rooks (1.Qe5! K- 2.e8Q#) dates from the 16th century.

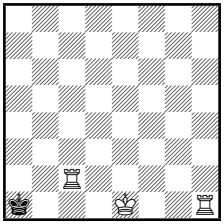
No. 122: Unique position is **wKe1 Rc2 Rh1 bKa1 {122A}** with 1.Kd2#, Ke2#,Kf2#,0-0#. As with no. 119, this is due to asymmetrical castling.

No. 123: Only in the mating position **wKd3 Qd2 bKd1 {123A}**. In this position the queen needs at least three moves from d1 to d2.

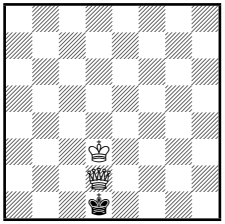
No. 124.1: Unique position is **wKe1 Qd1 Qg8 bKe8 {124.1A}** and 1.Ke7 Qdd8#. The last moves were Ph7×Xg8Q+ X-g8. So the kings and the queens must never have moved before. Difficult, because unexpected.

No. 124.2: The position **wKa6 Qd8 bKa8 {124.2A}** is unique due to two asymmetries: castling and initial position wKe1 wQd1. The bKe8 needed 3 moves (0-0-0, Kb8, Ka8), the wQd1 1 move (Qd1-d8#; if rotated then Qd1-h5#, Qd1×Xe1#, Qd1-a4#). Tries: 1) wKf8 Qh5 bKh8?, but the bK only needs 2 moves (0-0, Kh8; Qd1×Xh5#). 2) wKc8 Qa4 bKa8?, but in the rotated position wKa3 Qe1 bKa1 the wQ needs more than 1 move. Tricky.

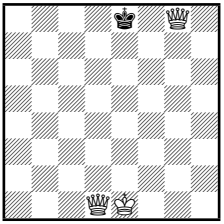
{122A}



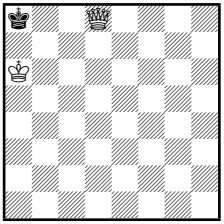
{123A}



{124.1A}



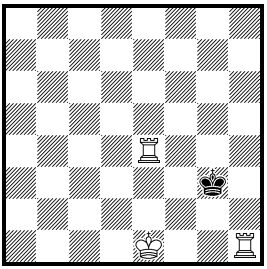
{124.2A}



Castling

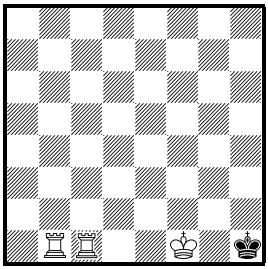
In 1936 it was resolved that in chess problems castling is permitted unless it can be proved that it is not permissible.

No. 125
Author and Source uncertain 1911



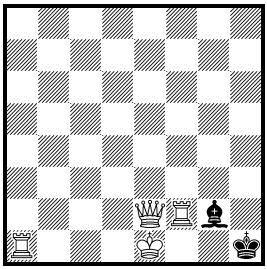
Mate in 2

No. 126
Werner Speckmann
Diagramme und Figuren 1965 (v)



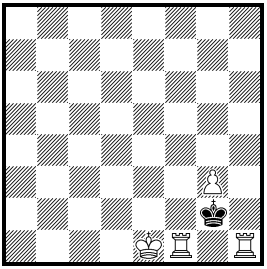
Mate in 2
b) all 1 file to left

No. 127
Bengt Giöbel
Polis-Tidningen 1945



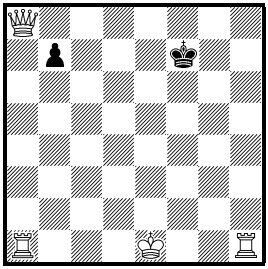
Mate in 2

No. 128
Sam Loyd
New York Albion 1857



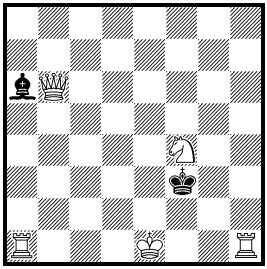
Mate in 3

No. 129
Ado Kraemer
Die Welt 1972
1st Prize



Mate in 3

No. 130
Werner Keym
Allgemeine Zeitung Mainz 1972



Mat in 3

See #604013, #209869, #62799.

No. 125: **1.0-0!** zugzwang 1...Kh3 2.Rf3#. A classic with diagonal symmetry. A symmetrical pendant (1.0-0-0) with five pieces is #127657.

No. 126: **a) 1.Kf2+!** Kh2 2.Rh1#; **b) 1.Rb2!** Kh1 2.0-0-0#.
Twin b) was published in *Deutsche Schachzeitung* 1971.

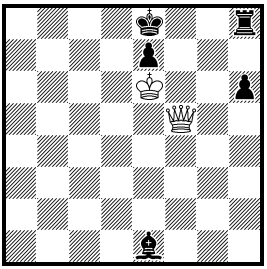
No. 127: White even sacrifices his strongest officer, but not 1.Qf3? B×f3! and castling is not permitted, yet just so with **1.Qe4!** B×e4 and now 2.0-0-0# works alright; after 1...Bf3? simply follows 2.Kd2#. The rook is allowed to jump over a guarded square, but not the king – how 'unjust'!

No. 128: There is a passive sacrifice of the rook Rh1: **1.Rf4!** K×h1 2.Kf2 Kh2 3.Rh4# or with castling in the 2nd move: 1...K×g3 2.0-0 Kh3 3.R1f3#. Immortal!

No. 129: Which castling is the right one? **1.0-0-0!** zugzwang
1...Ke7 2.Rhf1 b6/Ke6 3.Qe4#/Qe8#
1...Kg7 2.Rdf1 b6/Kg6 3.Qg2#/Qg8#
1...Ke6/Kg6 2.Qf8 ∼ 3.Rhe1#/Rdg1#
1...Kf6 2.Qf8+ Ke5/Kg5 3.Rhe1/Rdg1#.
Letztform with perfect economy and use of space.
Typical of *Hans Klüver*: He published this problem with the key 1.0-0-0 as the 1000th problem in *Die Welt*.

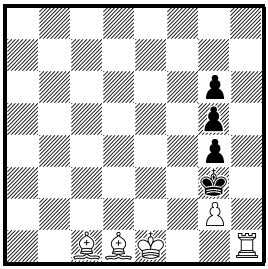
No. 130 shows both real white castlings. After **1.Se2!** [2.Rh4 ∼ 3.Qf2#] three dual-free lines follow:
1...Bc8 2.Ra4 [3.Qf2#] Kg2 3.Qc6#
1...Kg4 2.Qg6+ Kf3 3.Rh3#
1...Ke4 2.Qe6+ Kd3/Kf3 3.0-0-0/0-0#.
Strongest try is 1.Sd3? Ke4! 2.Rh4+ Kf5!.
'The thematic play consists of both long and short castling as an echo and is rich in tries – for a pawnless miniature certainly a rarity.' (*R. Schopf*)
A predecessor in two moves is #136013.

No. 131
Wolfgang Pauly
Deutsches Wochenschach 1910



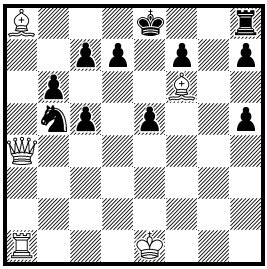
Mate in 4

No. 132
Gerald Anderson
Westminster Gazette 1917



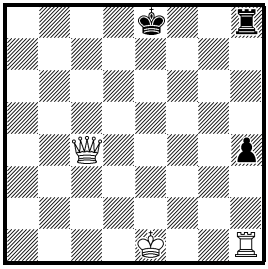
Mate in 4

No. 133
Alois Johandl
FIDE Turnier 1959
1st Prize



Mate in 4

No. 134
Hermann Albertz
Karl Henke
Die Schwalbe 1948
1st Prize



Helpmate in 2
With set play
(White to move)

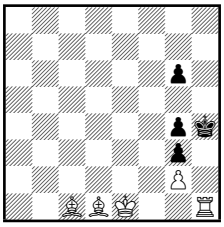
No. 131: Black is allowed to castle. He seems to defend himself successfully by moving his king or his rook from and to the starting square. So the initial position is revisited, it is true, but the right to castle is lost. No. 131 shows this idea in a miniature: 1.Qe5? 0-0!; **1.Qb5+!** Kf8 2.Qf5+ Ke8 3.Qe5! Bg3/Bc3 4.Q×h8#/Qb8#.
There are even renderings with both castlings, i.e. three times the 'same' position, yet with different rights to castle (#67373 and #527255).

No. 132: Castling is the only non-capturing move by an officer that cannot be retracted in one move. At least three moves are necessary to reach the initial position. With perfect elegance this is shown in the most famous switchback of castling: **1.0-0!** Kh4 2.Kf2 g3+ 3.Ke1 g4 4.Rh1# **{132A}**.
Here is a nice pendant: *Werner Keym, Eigenartige Schachprobleme 2010, No. 33, wKa1 Rb1 Bd6 bKe8 Ra8 a6 d7, Mate in 3.* Solution: 1.Rb1-f1! 0-0-0 2.Rf1-b1 (White can take back his move, but Black cannot.) ∼ 3.Rb8#.

No. 133: A rich content: A corner-to-corner key move from a8 to h1, a queen sacrifice and castling by both sides. **1.Bh1!** [2.Qa8#] 1...Sa7 (1...0-0? 2.Qa8 Sa7 3.Qg2#) 2.Qc6! d7×c6 3.0-0-0 0-0 4.Rg1# **{133A}** Brilliant.

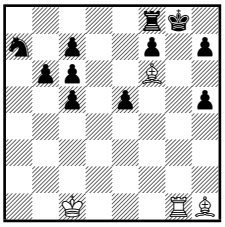
No. 134: The two castlings have a major role in the play. In the solution it is white castling **1.Rh7!** 0-0 2.Re7 Qc8# **{134A}**, in the set play (with White to play) black castling 1...Q×h4 2.0-0 Qh7# **{134B}**. A little jewel.

{132A}



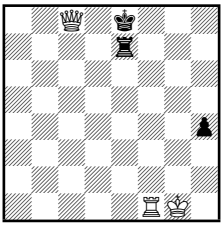
After 4.Rf1-h1#

{133A}



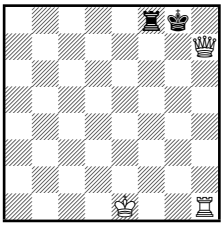
After 4.Rd1-g1#

{134A}



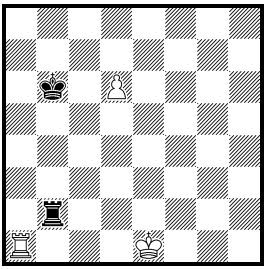
After 2...Qc4-c8#

{134B}



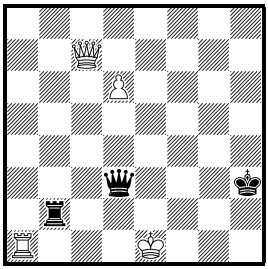
After 2.Qh4-h7#

No. 135
Alexey Selezniev
Tidskrift för Schack
1921



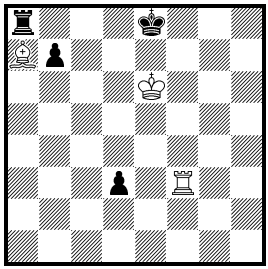
Win

No. 136
Martin Minski
Schach 2019
2nd Prize



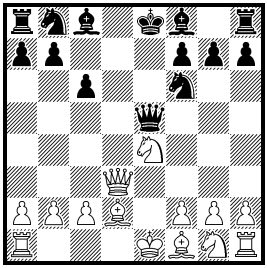
Draw

No. 137
Josef Moravec
Důvtip 1921



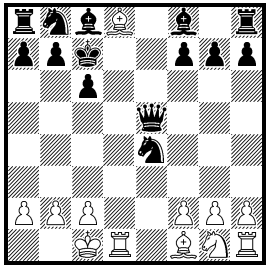
Win

No. 138
Réti – Tartakower
Free Game, Vienna
1910



After 7... Qa5×e5?

{138A}



After 11.Bg5-d8#

No. 135: This peppy study presents a typical double effect of castling. After 0-0-0 the white king attacks the rook and the white rook guards the pawn or attacks the king. Not 1.0-0-0? Ra2 2.d7/Kb1 Ra1+/Ra8! ½-½, but **1.d7! Kc7 2.d8Q+/R K×d8 3.0-0-0+! K∼ 4.K×b2** 1-0. Later on this was called the Selezniev motive. Many later studies show this motive with bRb2 or wRb7. According to the endgame tablebases the position of no. 135 is a draw(!), as they do not take into account the castling rule.

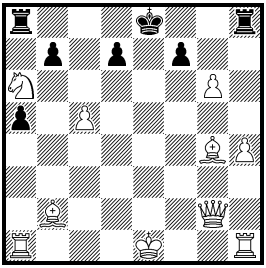
No. 136: White would draw by 1.0-0-0 if castling was allowed. But this is not possible because of the black queen. So White sacrifices his queen and thereby forces the black queen to move away and allow 0-0-0. **1.Qc8+! Kg2 2.Qg8+ Kh1 3.Qh7+! Q×h7 4.0-0-0+ Kg2 5.K×b2 Qd7** (5...Kf3 6.d7 ½-½) **6.Kc3 Kf3 7.Rd3+ Ke4 8.Rd4+ Ke3 9.Rd3+** ½-½. A fine miniature. White loses according to the endgame tablebases, as they have not implemented castling. Cf. no. 135.

No. 137: Black castling is permitted, hence 1.Rh3? is parried by 1...0-0-0! ½-½. Therefore **1.Bb8!** (now castling is temporarily prevented) **1...d2** (1...Ra6+ 2.Bd6 1-0 or 1...R×b8 2.Rh3 Kd8 3.Kd6 1-0) **2.Bd6!** (now castling is permitted again) **2...0-0-0 3.Rc3#**. Cunningly designed.

No. 138: 'Réti's Mate' – under this name the following combination entered into the history of chess: **1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5** (Caro-Kann) **3.Nc3 d5×e4 4.N×e4 Nf6 5.Qd3 e5? 6.d4×e5 Qa5+ 7.Bd2 Q×e5? {138}** (pins and threatens the white knight) **8.0-0-0!** (thereby the white king gets away from the pinning and seems to give up the knight) **8...N×e4??** Now not 9.Re1? Be7 10.R×e4 Qc7, but a mate in 3 moves: **9.Qd8+!!** (sacrifice of the queen) **9...K×d8 10.Bg5+ Kc7** (10...Ke8? 11.Rd8#) **11.Bd8#! {138A}**.
'An ordinary move in a problem is dull, a problem move in a game will shine.' (*E. Ramin*)

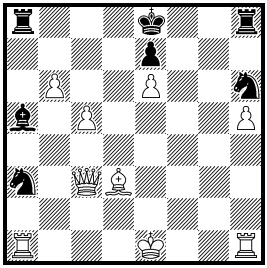
In a chess game two castlings at most can be executed, four, however, in a chess composition.

No. 139
Knud Hannemann
Skakbladet 1921



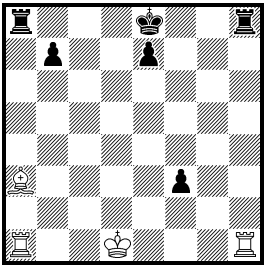
Mate in 4

No. 140
Werner Keym
Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung 2007



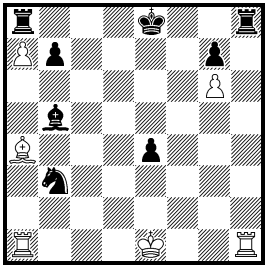
Mate in 5

No. 141
Hanspeter Suwe
'0-0' TT 1981
3rd Hon. Mention



Helpmate in 2
2 solutions
b) mirrored (wKe1)

No. 142
Werner Keym
Die Schwalbe 2006



Helpmate in 2
How many solutions?
b) Pe4→f4
c) Pe4→g4
d) Pe4→h4

No. 139: Black castles for the sake of defending and checking, White castles to avoid checking. **1.Qd5!** [2.Q×d7+/Q×f7+ 3.Q×f7#/Q×d7#]
1...0-0-0 2.0-0-0 (2.0-0? Rxh4) b7×a6 3.Be5 ∼ 4.Qa8#; 2...f5 3.Bf3 ∼ 4.Q×d7#
1...0-0 2.0-0 (2.0-0-0? Rac8) R×a6 3.Qh5 ∼ 4.Q#
1...Rh7 2.g6×h7 0-0-0 3.Q×d7+ R×d7 4.h8Q#,R#
1...f7×g6 2.Sc7+,Q×d7+,Qe5+ (dual) ... 4.#.
This is the first directmate problem with four real castlings. Cf. #191262.
A dual-free three-mover with four castlings is #221987.

No. 140: After 400 tries of construction (motto: '10% inspiration, 90% transpiration') I succeeded in composing this dual-free five-mover: **1.Bb5+!**
1...Kd8 2.0-0-0+ Kc8 3.Q×h8+ Sg8 4.Q×g8+ Kb7 5.Rd7#
1...Kf8 2.0-0+ Kg8 3.Qg3+ Sg4 4.Q×g4+ Kh7 5.Qg6#
1...S×b5 2.R×a5 0-0-0 3.Ra8+ Kb7 4.Qf3+ Rd5 5.Q×d5#
2...0-0 3.Rg1+ Sg4 4.R×g4+ Kh7 5.Qg7#
If after 2.R×a5 Black plays neither 2...0-0-0 nor 2...0-0, then there will be a short mate in 3 or 4 moves. Therefore all four castlings are necessary and real – this has been unique up to now.

No. 141: Two plus two equals four.
a) 1.0-0-0+! Bd6 2.Rd7 Ra8# and **1.0-0!** Bb2 2.Rf7 Rh8#.
b) 1.Rc8! 0-0-0 2.Re8 R×d7# and **1.Ke8!** 0-0 2.Rd8 Rae1#
Amusing.

No. 142: The more steps the pawn takes to the right, the more solutions and castlings arise.

	Number of solutions	and castlings
a) 1.0-0-0 B×b5 2.Sc1 R×c1#	1	1
a) + **b) 1.Sa5** 0-0-0 2.Rf8 Rhe1#	2	2
a) + b) + **c) 1.Bd7** 0-0 2.Rd8 Rae1#	3	3
a) + b) + c) + **d) 1.0-0** B×b3+ 2.Kh8 R×h4#	4	4

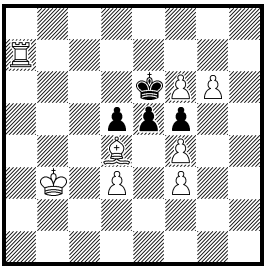
Magic.

Curious problems with four castlings are no. 238, #305115, P1374825, P1071907, P0534537, P1068482.

Allumwandlung and the Babson Task

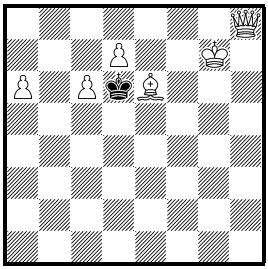
Composers and solvers of chess problems are always fascinated by pawn promotion, especially by combinations of four promotions to queen, rook, bishop and knight in the same problem, the so-called Allumwandlung (AUW).

No. 143
Niels Høeg
Tidskrift för Schack 1905
Nordisk Chess Fed. Ty
6th HM



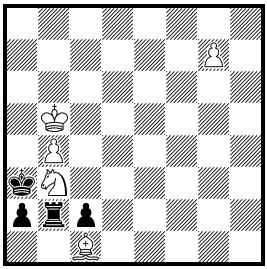
Mate in 3

No. 144
Zdravko Maslar
Politika 1961
Bilten 1962 1st Prize



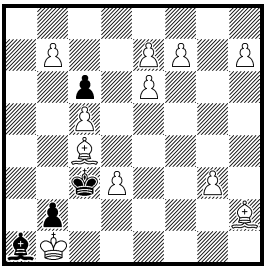
Mate in 3

No. 145
Matjaš Žigman
Delo-Tovaris 1970
1st Prize



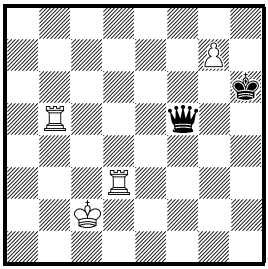
Mate in 3

No. 146
Friedrich Köhnlein
Deutsches Wochenschach 1903



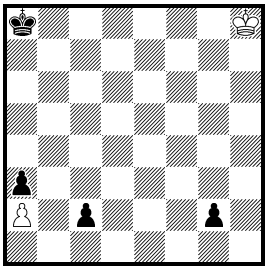
Mate in 4

No. 147
Sergiy Didukh
(after Y. Konoval and M. Bourzutschky)
Mat Plus Forum 2010



Black to move Win

No. 148
Rolf Trautner
(after J. Bebesi)
Die Schwalbe 1960



Helpmate in 7

See #36114, P0500526, #61192.

No. 143: This is the first (alternative) AUW of a white pawn on the same promotion square in the same move with a non capturing key – dualfree with 12 pieces only: **1.f7!** [2.f8Q ∼ 3.Qe7#]
1...Kd6 2.f8Q+ Kc6 3.Qc5#
1...e5×f4 2.f8R Kd6 3.Rf6#
1...e5×d4 2.f8B Kf6 3.Ra6#
1...Kf6 2.f8S e5×d4 3.Rf7#.
The classical AUW! According to his own words *Niels Høeg* needed twelve years to find this pattern of construction.

No. 144: The AUW was achieved even in the form of a miniature. **1.Qh5!**
1...Kc7 2.Qc5 Kb8/Kd8 3.d8Q#/c7#
1...Ke7 2.Qc5+ K×e6/Kd8 3.d8S#/c7#
1...K×c6 2.d8B Kd6 3.Qd5#
1...K×e6 2.d8R Ke7 3.Qe8#.
Laid down by the hand of a magician!

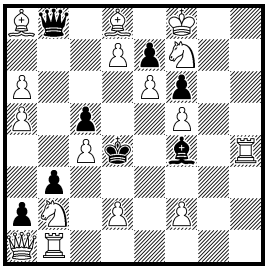
No. 145: Two thematic tries: 1.g8Q? a1B! and 1.g8R? a1S!.
1.Sd2! [2.g8Q]
1...a1B 2.g8R Ka2 3.Ra8#
1...a1S 2.g8Q Sb3 3.Q×b3#.
Two white and two black promotions in a very economical style!

No. 146: As early as in 1903 the successive AUW of four white pawns was presented in its letztform **1.f8Q!**
1...Kb4 2.h8B! (2.h8Q? Ka4!) K×c5 3.b8R Kd6 4.e8S#
1...Kd2/Kd4 2.Qf2+ Kc3 3.Qe1+ Kd4 4.Bg1#.
Even in only three moves a successive AUW (with 3 white pawns and 1 black pawn) was achieved without any duals (P1291184).

No. 147: **1...Q×b5 2.g8Q!** 1-0 or **1...Qc8+ 2.Rc3 Qe6 3.g8R!** 1-0 or **1...Qf2+ 2.Rd2 Qf1/Qf3/Qf4 3.g8S!/g8R!/g8B!** 1-0.
Unbelievable!! But true as a look at the tablebases proves.

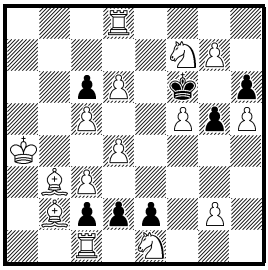
No. 148: **1.c1S!** Kg8 2.Sb3 a2×b3 3.g1B b4 4.Bc5 b4×c5 5.a2 c6 5.a1R c7 7.Ra7 c8Q#.
A successive Allumwandlung with only six pieces. Non plus ultra.

No. 149
Leonid Yarosh
Shakhmaty v SSSR
1983 1st Prize



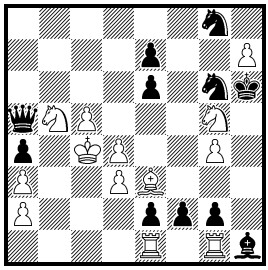
Mate in 4

No. 150
Werner Keym
(after K. Bachmann, M. Hoffmann, P. Hoffmann)
Die Schwalbe 2023



Mate in 4

No. 151
Daniele G. Gatti
(inspired by and dedicated to Gady Costeff)
EG 2025



Black to move Win

Joseph Babson initiated the construction of problems in which the alternative promotion of a black pawn to Q/R/B/S is followed by the alternative promotion of a white pawn to Q/R/B/S. So the black Allumwandlung and the white Allumwandlung evoke an echo: QQ-RR-BB-SS. This echo Allumwandlung is called **Babson Task**.

The first realization of this famous task was a selfmate problem from 1926 (no. 89). For a long time the experts considered a correct rendering in a directmate problem to be impossible – until 1983, when *Leonid Yarosh* composed three Babson problems in a row (#63610, #63609 = no. 149, #91264). The masterpiece no. 149 was called 'Moremover of the century'.

After 1983 *Peter Hoffmann* created excellent Babsons. In 1986 he composed the first Babson with dual-free main lines (#223020); weak points were the key and dualistic side lines. As to duals no. 150 is the best rendering up to now.

After the first sensation in 1926 (selfmate no. 89) and the second in 1983 (directmate no. 149) there followed the third in 2025 (no. 151): the Babson task in a study. An incredible achievement!

For further information on the Babson task see www.berlinthema.de, especially *Peter Hoffmann's* articles: "100 Jahre Babsontask im orthodoxen Direktmatt" and "Das produktivste Babson-Schema".

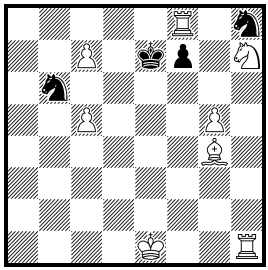
No. 149: The fantastic key move is **1.a7!!** [2.a7×b8Q,R,B,S #4]
1...a2×b1Q 2.a7×b8Q! [3.R×f4+,Q×f4+,Qd6+,Q×b3] Qe4 3.R×f4,Q×f4 Q×f4 4.Q×f4#/R×f4#, 2...Qe1/Q×f5 3.R×f4+,Q×f4+, 2...Q×b2 3.Q×b3 [4.R×f4#] Qc3 4.Qa×c3#,Qb×c3#.
1...a2×b1R 2.a7×b8R! [3.R×f4#] (2.a7×b8Q? R×b2 3.Q×b3 stalemate) R×b2 3.R×b3 K×c4 4.Qa4#, 2...Re1 3.R×f4+,R×b3.
1...a2×b1B 2.a7×b8B! [3.R×f4+,Sd6,B×f4] (2.a7×b8Q? Be4 3.Q×f4 stalemate) Be4 3.B×f4 ~ 4.Be3#,Be5#.
1...a2×b1S 2.a7×b8S! [3.R×f4#] S×d2 3.Qc1 Se4/S~ 4.Sc6#/R×f4#.
These are the main lines; duals are marked with underlining.
There are several side lines, some of them with duals.

No. 150: Tries are 1.g8Q,g8R,g8S+? K×f5!, 1.S×h6? d1S!. **1.g4!**
1...d1Q 2.g8Q! Q×d4+ 3.c4 Q×b2 4.Qg6#.
1...d1R 2.g8R! R×d4+ 3.c4 K×f7 4.Ref8#.
1...d1B 2.g8B! Kg7 3.c4 Kf6 4.d5#.
1...d1S 2.g8S+! Kg7 3.f6+ Kh7 4.B×c2#.
1...K×g7 2.f6+ K×f6 3.Rg8 ~ 4.Rg6# (only one line without promotion)
1...d2×e1Q?? #3, 1...d2×c1Q? 2.g8Q,R #4
[The problem by *K. Bachmann*, *M. Hoffmann*, *P. Hoffmann* (#227130) has a mate dual in one main line and in one side line.]

Compared to *Yarosh's* 'baroque' masterpiece (no. 149) no. 150 is a 'classical' presentation (without white queen, without black officers): four dual-free main lines without captures in the key move and in the promotions; a sole dual in a sub-variation of a side line. Nearly perfect.

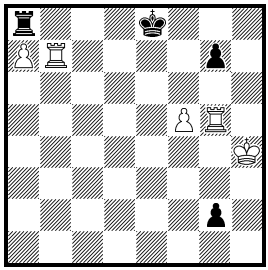
No. 151: Perhaps the 'Study of the century'?
1...f1Q 2.h7×g8Q! Se5+ 3.d4×e5 Qf4+ 4.Se4! 1-0
1...f1R 2.h7×g8R! (2.h7×g8Q? Se5+ 3.d4×e5 Rf4+ 4.Se4 Qc3+ 5.K×Q stalemate) **2...R×g1 3.Sd6 e7×d6 4.Se4+ Kh7 5.Sf6#** 1-0; **2...R×e1 3.R×e1 g1Q 4.S×e6+ Kh7 5.Rg7+ Kh8 6.R×g1** 1-0
1...f1B 2.h7×g8B! Kg7 (Q×e1? 3.Sf3+!) **3.c6 Q×e1 4.c7 Qb1 5.S×e6+ K×g8 6.c8Q+** (with check) **Kh7 7.Sg5+ Kg7 8.Qf5 Q×a2+ 9.Kc5 e1Q 10.Se6+ Q×e6+ 11.Q×e6** 1-0; 2.h7×g8S? Kg7 3.c6 Q×e1 4.c7 Qb1 5.S×e6+ Kh7 6.c8Q (without check) Q×a2+ 7.Kb4 Qb3+ 8.Ka5 e1Q+ 9.Kb6 Q×e3 10.Sf6+ Kh6 11.g5+ Q×g5 12.Sg8+ Kh5 13.S×g5 B×d3 14.Qc5 Q×b5+ 15.Q×b5 B×b5 16.K×b5 K×g5 ½-½
1...f1S 2.h7×g8S+! (2.h7×g8Q? S×e3#) **Kg7 3.S×e6+ K×g8 4.R×e2 S×e3+ 5.R×e3 Qd2 6.Ree1 Q×a2+ 7.Kb4 Qb3+ 8.Ka5** 1-0

No. 152
José Figueiredo
O Globo 1966
Valladao TT
1st Hon. Mention



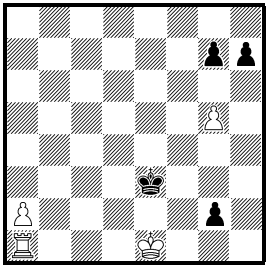
Mate in 2

No. 153
Werner Keym
Die Schwalbe 2005
Commendation



Mate in 3

No. 154
Jarl Ulrichsen
EG 2011



Win

Since the beginning of problem chess history the three special moves (castling, en-passant capture, promotion) have always fascinated composers and solvers, especially the combination of these moves, even if there is no thematic interdependence of such moves. When they are all found in a problem, the special term for such a task is Valladao task referring to *Joaquim Valladao Monteiro*, who organized a relevant theme tourney in 1966.
The first Valladao problem is probably P1360420 from 1867.

No. 152 to no. 158 are perfect Valladaos: 1) There is no promotion dual (such as a7-a8Q/R); 2) There is only one double move of the pawn with subsequent en-passant capture by the adverse pawn and not alternatively the single pawn move with the usual capture by the adverse pawn (e.g. a7-a5 b5×a6 e.p., not a7-a6 b5×a6).

No. 152: This problem has several tries and fine refutations. 1.Kd1?/Rh2? Sg6! and 1.Rf1? Sc8!. Correct is **1.0-0!** [2.Re1#] Sc4/Sd5/Sd7 2.c8S# or 1...f5 2.g5×f6 e.p.#

See #12446, P1184196.

No. 153: The three special moves succeed one another (successive Valladao): **1.Rh5!** [2.Rh8#] g5+ 2.f5×g6 e.p. 0-0-0 3.a8Q#. 1.R5×g7? Kf8!.
This is the most economical rendering of the (perfect) Valladao in a directmate problem. Whether a perfect Valladao would be possible in a directmate with less than 9 pieces?

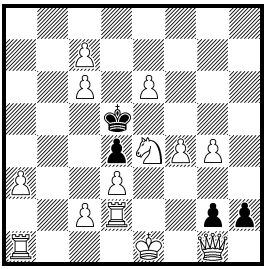
See #58390 for a double Valladao.

No. 154: The Valladao task was also mastered in studies. **1.0-0-0! h5** (1...h6? 2.a4! 1-0) **2.g5×h6 e.p.** (2.a4? h4 0-1) **g7×h6 3.a4 h5 4.a5 h4 5.a6 h3 6.a7 h2 7.a8Q g1Q/h1Q 8.Qa7+/R×h1** 1-0.
Letztform!

An excellent Valladao study with underpromotion is P1372934.

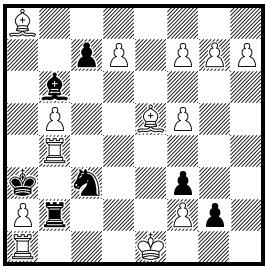
'In a good chess problem, correctness is essential,
beauty necessary, and difficulty desirable.'
(*Erlin*)

No. 155
Werner Keym
(after P. Hoffmann)
Die Schwalbe 2009



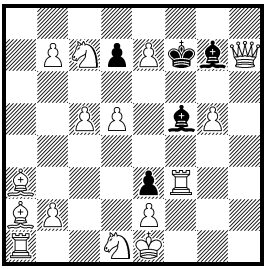
Mate in 4

No. 156
Geir S. Tallaksen Østmoe
ARVES-25 AT 2014
1st Prize



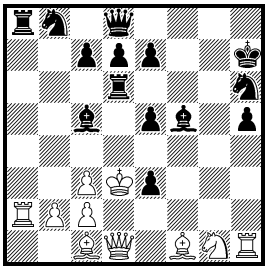
Win

No. 157
Peter Hoffmann
Original (04/2025)



Selfmate in 7

No. 158
Kostas Prentos
Andrey Frolkin
Die Schwalbe 2006
1st Prize



Position after the 26th black move

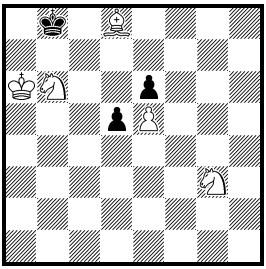
No. 155: *Peter Hoffmann* has been the only one so far to succeed in composing directmate problems with Valladao and Allumwandlung (#638423 and #638426). My setting is simpler and dual-free in the main lines. **1.0-0-0!** [2.c8Q 3.Qd7#] h2×g1S 2.c8Q Se2+ 3.R×e2 ∼ 4.Qd7#. 1...h1B 2.c8R K×e6 3.Q×d4 Kf7 4.Qf6#. 1...h1Q/R 2.c8Q Q/Rh7 3.c4+ d4×c3 e.p. 4.Qc5#. Side lines: 1...h2×g1Q/R 2.c8Q Q/R×d1+ 3.R×d1; 1...K×c6 2.c8Q+ Kb5/6 3.Q×d4; 1...K×e6 2.Q×h2 Kf7 3.Qh7+ Ke6/Ke,f8 4.Qd7#/c8Q,R#.

No. 156: It is best to limit yourself to the main line at first: **1.Rb3+ Ka4 2.Ra3+ K×a3** (2...K×b5 3.Bc6+ K×c6 4.R×c3+ 1-0) **3.f8Q+ c5 4.b5×c6+ e.p. Ka4 5.Qb4+ K×b4** (5...R×b4 6.g8Q 1-0) **6.B×c3+ K×c3 7.0-0-0 g1Q** (7...Bc7 8.Rd3+ K×d3 9.g8Q 1-0; 7...Rc2+ 8.Kb1 Rb2+ 9.Ka1 Kc2 10.Rd2+ K×d2 [10...Kc1 11.R×b2 Bd4 12.a3 B×b2+ 13.Ka2 g1Q 14.g8Q Q×f2 15.d8Q 1-0] 11.g8Q Kc1 12.Qc4+ Rc2 13.Qd3 g1Q 14.h8Q 1-0) **8.R×g1 Rc2+** (8...B×f2 9.Re1 B×e1 10.d8Q 1-0; 8...Bc7 9.Rg4 R×f2 10.Rc4+ 1-0) **9.Kb1 Rb2+ 10.Ka1 Kc2 11.d8R!** (11.d8Q? Rb1+ 12.R×b1 Bd4+ 13.Q×d4 stalemate) **11...B×d8 12.g8S! Bb6 13. h8B!** 1-0 (13.h8Q? Bd4 14.Q×d4 Rb1+ 15.R×b1 stalemate). To my knowledge, this is the first and only study/problem in which the six special moves are made by one player. Fantastic!

No. 157: *Peter Hoffmann* was the first to compose problems with Valladao, AUW and Excelsior walk, the so-called **Keym task**.
No. 157 shows promotions to wR and wQ (successive) and to bB or bS (alternative) in only 7 moves (with six times zugzwang and only twice check): **1.e8R!** d6 2.b8Q d6×c5 3.d6+ c4 4.b4 c4×b3 e.p. 5.Sb2 b3×a2 6.0-0-0 and now not 6...a1Q#/R#? but 6...a1B! 7.Bb4 Ba×b2# or 6...a1S! 7.Qb3+ S×b3#. An absolute top performance.
Cf. P1092157 S#8, P1092158 S#9, P1092159 S#9, P1403742 S#9.

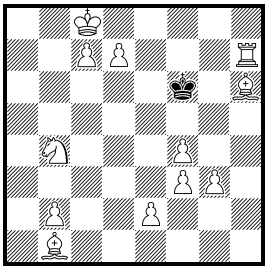
No. 158: This task was mastered for the first time in a proof game: 1.h4 a5 2.h5 a4 3.h6 a3 4.h6×g7 h5 5.g4 Sh6 6.g8B Bg7 7.g5 Bd4 8.g6 f6 9.Bd5 Bc5 10.Bc6 0-0 11.g7 Kh7 12.g8R b7×c6 13.Rg5 Ba6 14.Re5 f6×e5 15.f4 Rf6 16.f5 Rd6 17.f6 Bc4 18.f7 B×a2 19.f8Q Be6 20.Qf3 a2 21.Qd5 a2×b1S 22.Ra2 Sc3 23.d2×c3 c6×d5 24.Kd2 d4 25.Kd3 Bf5+ 26.e4 d4×e3 e.p.+. The four promoted officers are gone!
'A wonderful presentation of the Keym task.' (*Hendrik Juel*)

No. 159
Thomas R. Dawson
Pittsburgh Gazette
Times 1913



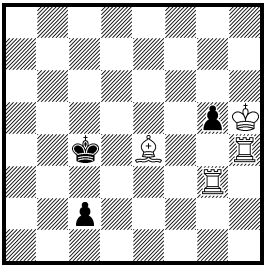
Mate in 3
b) Turn 90° (wKf8)
c) Turn 180°
d) Turn 270° (wKc1)

No. 160
Knud Hannemann
Skakbladet 1922



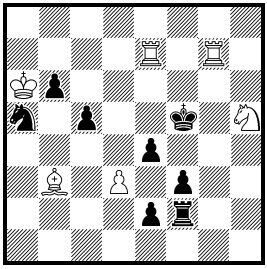
Mate in 2
b) Turn 90° (wKh6)
c) Turn 180°
d) Turn 270° (wKa3)

No. 161
Viktor Chepizhny
Bohemian JT 1962
5th Prize



Helpmate in 2
b) Turn 90° (wKe1)
c) Turn 180°
d) Turn 270° (wKd8)

No. 162
Ralf Krätschmer
Die Schwalbe 2010



Mate in how many moves?
b) Turn 90° (wKf8)
c) Turn 180°
d) Turn 270° (wKc1)

No. 159: Whichever moves the pawns make, the knight remains the winner.
a) 1.Sh5! d4 2.Sf6 d3 3.Sfd7#
b) 1.Sb4! f3 2.Sd5 f2 3.Sf6#
c) 1.Sc4! d2 2.S×d2 e3 3.Sf3#, 1...e3 2.Se5 ∼ 3.Sf3#
d) 1.Se5! d3 2.S×d3 c4 3.Sb4#, 1...c4 2.Sc6 ∼ 3.Sb4#

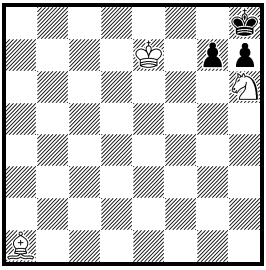
No. 160: A completely unexpected Allumwandlung.
a) 1.d8Q+! Ke6 2.Qe7#
b) 1.b8R! Kf4 2.Rf8#
c) 1.d8B! Kd4 2.Bf6#
d) 1.f8S! Kd5 2.Bb7#.
The Danish wizard!

No. 161: A most elegant quadruplet.
a) 1.c1R! R×g5 2.Rc3 Bc2#
b) 1.b5! Bc3+ 2.Kc5 Ba5#
c) 1.b3! Rb4 2.f6 Bf7#
d) 1.g2! Bf4+ 2.Kf2 Bh2#.
Cf. #347404.

No. 162: A rotary problem with an amazing result:
a) #1 1.d3×e4#
b) #2 1.Be5! ∼ 2.Bd4#
c) #3 1.Bb1! Rb7 2.R×b7 ∼ 3.Ba2#
d) #4 1.Be1! d2+ 2.B×d2 Sc3 3.B×c3 ∼ 4.Bb4#, 1...Sc3 2.B×c3 d2+ 3.B×d2 ∼ 4.Bb4#
#327690 is older but dualistic.

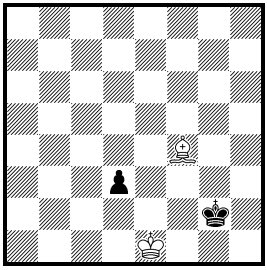
In rotary problems the pawns are usually decisive due to their different move possibilities, as can be seen in no. 159 to no. 163. But what if – as in no. 164 and no. 165 – there are no pawns on the board and castling is not possible?

No. 163.1
a) Alexander Galitsky
Shakhmatnyi Zhurnal 1900
b) J. R. Venning
Melbourne Leader 1916



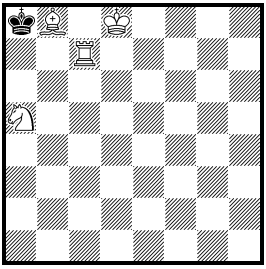
Mate in 3
b) Turn 180°

No. 163.2
Werner Keym
Landeszeitung für die Lüneburger Heide 2011



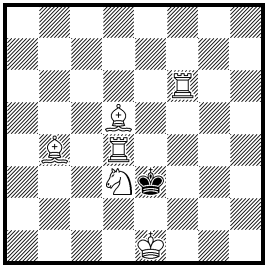
Add a piece for a mating position.
b) Turn 180°

No. 164
Adrian Storisteanu
Rex Multiplex 1983
1st Prize



Mate in 2
b) Turn 90° (wKh5)

No. 165
Werner Keym
Stuttgarter Zeitung 2020



Mate in 2
b) Turn 180°

No. 163.1: a) 1.Bf6! g7×f6 2.Kf8 f5 3.Sf7#
b) 1.Kc3! b1Q 2.Sc2+ Q×c2+ 3.K×c2#, 1. . . b1S+ 2.K-+ Sc3 3.B×c3#.

No. 163.2: a) The try is the addition of wQf1#. From which square could the queen have legally moved to f1? Correct is the addition of **bQe2#!**.
b) Here **+wQc8#** works, because c7-c8Q was possible last; the mate +bQ, however, is no longer available.

No. 164: a) The last move was bKa7-a8 b7-b8B+, therefore **1.Ra7+!** K×b8 2.Sc6# follows.
b) Black cannot not have moved last and is on the move: **1.K×h7!** Sf6+ 2.Kh8 Rg8#. White's moves are exchanged. Very pleasing.

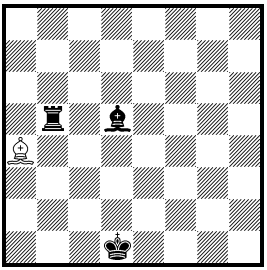
No. 165: a) Black cannot have moved last and is on the move. So not 1.Rc4? K×d3 2.Rf3#, but **1.K×d4!** Sf4 2.Ke3/Ke5 Bc5#/Bc3#.
b) No pawn is visible, no possible promoted piece is on the 8th rank, no asymmetrical king-queen position available, no castling possible – what is the difference to position a)?
In fact, there is now one last black move: Kc6×Pd6 c5×d6 e.p.+ d7-d5 B-e4+. Therefore not 1.K×e5? Sc5 2.Kd4/Kd6 2.Bf6#/Bf4#, but **1.Rf5!** K×e6 2.Rc6#
There are only officers on the board, but the invisible pawn is the hero.
First form and letztform!

Chess thinking is good.
Chess lateral thinking is better.

Adding pieces!

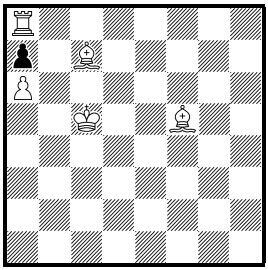
By adding pieces many options may arise, quite some of them turning out to be wrong. Therefore those problems are varied and attractive, often being a challenge as to retroanalysis. Here the aid offered by the computer is rather limited.

No. 166
Raymond Smullyan
Manchester Guardian
1957



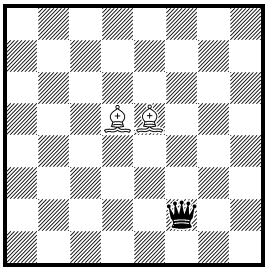
Add a wK

No. 167
Ernst O. Martin
Die Schwalbe 1933



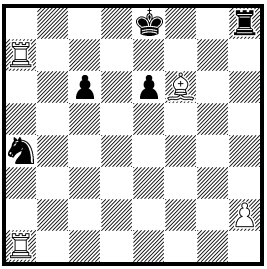
Add the bK
Mate in 1

No. 168
M. Techritz
Source unknown



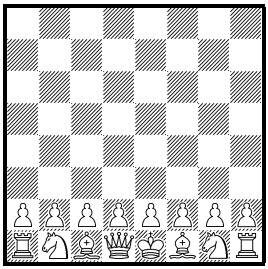
Add the kings
White to move
mates in 1

No. 169
Rafael Kofman
Vecherny Leningrad
1968 3rd Prize



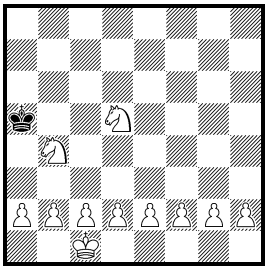
Add the wK
Mate in 2

No. 170
Sam Loyd
Chess Monthly 1858



Add the bK
Mate in 3

No. 171
Thomas R. Dawson
Asymmetry 1927



Add the wQ,
then stalemate in 1
b) Mirrored (wKf1)

No. 166: Correct is **wKc3**. The last moves were Kb3×Pc3+ b4×c3 e.p. c2-c4 B-d5+. An evergreen. – The economical record 'Which was the last move?' (K×P) by *B. Pavlović* (*Sahovski Vjesnik 1950*) has the mirrored position: wKf3 Bh4 bKe1 Rg5 Be5.

No. 167: If you add the **bKb7**, then Black is on the move. This results in three lines:
1.K×a6 Bc8#
1.K×a8 Be4#
1.K×c7 Rc8#.
Insidious.

No. 168: Add **wKf3 and bKh1**, then 1.K×f2#. Seemingly easy. The indication White to move prevents cooks such as wKc1 and bKa1 or wKh6 and bKh8 along with 1.Q-+ B×Q#.

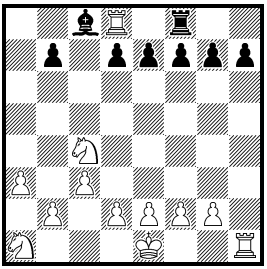
No. 169: Everything would be alright without the white king: 1.Rd1 0-0 2.Rg1#. Whichever square you choose it proves to be an obstacle, on square e1 as well. But there is one unexpected method we can have resort to, namely the **square e1** due to castling: **1.0-0-0!** 0-0 2.Rg1#.
Necessity is the mother of invention.

No. 170: It works with the bKh4 alone: **1.d4!**
1...Kg4 2.e4+ Kh4 3.g3#
1...Kh5 2.Qd3 ∼ 3.Qh3#.
The computer cannot find any other solution either.

No. 171: The queen is always on the left side of the king.
a) Qa1! and 1.a2-a4, not Qd1? and 1.c2-c4.
b) Qe1! and 1.f2-f4, not Qh1? and 1.h2-h4.
Classical asymmetry.
A related example with mate instead of stalemate is P1371182.

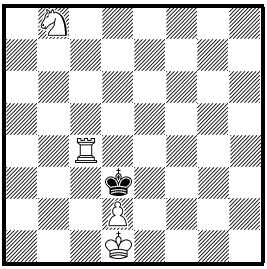
Tricky are #520836, P1000069, P1080515, curious #506142.

No. 172
Karl Fabel
Die Welt 1952



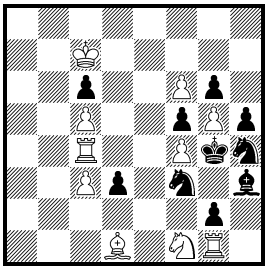
Add the bK
Mate in 1

No. 173
Werner Keym
Stern 1998



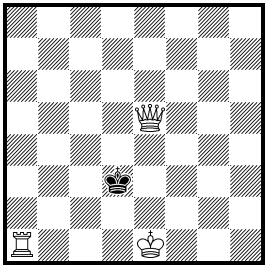
Add wSe5, wBe5,
wRe5 or wQe5.
Mate in how many
moves?

No. 174
Ralf Krätschmer
Die Schwalbe 2001
182nd TT 2nd Prize



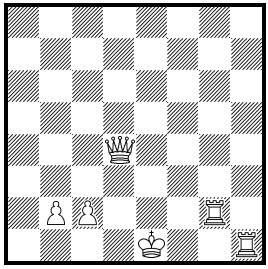
Add wPg7, wSg7,
wBg7, wRg7 or wQg7.
Mate in how many
moves?

No. 175
Werner Keym
Main-Post 1969



Add 1 wP
Mate in 1
b) R→h1, bK→f3

No. 176
Werner Keym
Allgemeine Zeitung
Mainz 1968



Add the bK
Mate in 1

No. 172 (12+8 pieces): The try +bKc1? followed by 1.0-0# is striking. The black king, however, never left the 8th rank, here is the genesis of the position: wS×Bf8, bS×Bc1, bS×Bf1, b0-0, bPa×Qb-b3×Ra2-a1X, wPh2×Rg3×Sf4×Se5 ×Xd6×Pc7×Qd8R. So +bKh8! and 1.R×f8# is correct. Surprising.

No. 173: Here is a mate in 0 moves by wSe5, in 1 move by wBe5 (1.Rd4#), in 2 moves by wRe5 (1.Rc3+ Kd4 2.Sc6#) and – that's the point – in 3 moves by wQe5 since in this position White moved last and Black is to play: 1.K×c4 Kc2! 2.Kb4 Sc6+ 3.Ka4/Kc4 Qa5#/d3#.
'Chess paradoxical in letztform: the stronger the pieces are the longer the mating will endure. Normally all that works in the opposite direction as was shown by *Knud Hannemann* [no. 188].' (*G. Murkisch*)

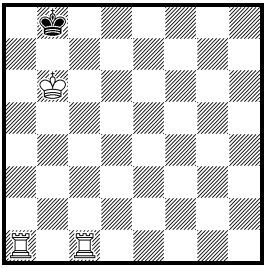
No. 174: The first problem with five additions (P, S, B, R, Q) was a retro problem (P1108924). No. 174 is the first 'ordinary' problem to master this task. The queen must avoid stalemate.
Pg7 #2: 1.g8S d2 2.Sh6#
Sg7 #3: 1.Se6 d2 2.Sd4 K×f4 3.S×f3#
Bg7 #4: 1.f7 d2 2.Bd4 K×f4 3.Bf6+ Sd4 4.R×d4#
Rg7 #5: 1.Re7 d2 2.Re2 Sd4 3.Re×g2+ K×f4 4.R×d4+ Ke5 5.Re2#
Qg7 #6: 1.Qe7 d2 2.Re4 f5×e4 3.Q×e4 Sf5 4.Q×f3+ Kh4 5.Qf2+ Sg3 6.Q×g3#

No. 175: The board is wrong (square h1 is dark). So the board must be turned by 90° (wKh5).
a) Not '+Pb3?' and '1.0-0-0#', but turned +Pf2! and 1.Rh4#
b) Not '+Ph3?' and '1.0-0#', but turned +Pf7! and 1.f7-f8Q#
'Very nice joke.'

No. 176: Here neither the black king is to place on 'c1' along with '1.0-0#' as his route via 'd1/d2' would have made castling inadmissible, nor on 'f3' along with '1.0-0#' which seems to be successful. But the square 'h1' is dark. So the board must be turned by 90° (wKa4). Then you add the black king on a6 (the square a6 was 'c1' before the rotation!) and mate by 1.b7-b8S#.
Cant castler and underpromotion. Numerous solvers were very enthusiastic. One of them wrote: "Deserves the 'Order for Combating Deadly Seriousness'."
My best (mean) retro miniature.

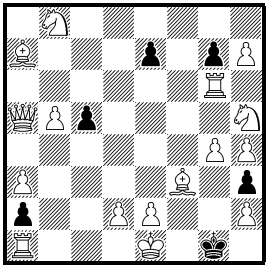
How many?

No. 177
Tivadar Kardos
Deutsche Schachzeitung 1971



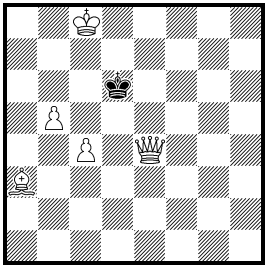
Mate in 2
How many solutions?

No. 178
Werner Keym
Die Schwalbe 1968
1st Hon. Mention



Mate in 2
How many solutions?

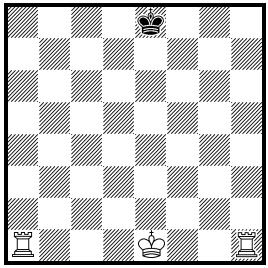
No. 179
Werner Keym
Die Schwalbe 1995



Add 1 pawn,
then mate in 1
How many solutions?

No. 180
Werner Keym
Die Schwalbe 1993, 2nd Commendation
What is the maximum number of squares that can become reachable for an unpinned white piece as result of a move by a) another white piece, b) a black piece?

No. 181
Werner Keym
Stuttgarter Zeitung 2019 (v)



How many different moves can the white king make?

No. 177: There are not 4 but 5 solutions! Here are the key moves:
1.Ka6, 1.Kc6, 1.Rab1, 1.Ra8+, 1.Rd1.

No. 178 (16+6 pieces): The two tries 1.0-0-0+? Kf2/K×h2 2.B×c5#/Rh1# and 1.b5×c6 e.p.+? K×h2 2.Qe5# fail because Black cannot have moved last. Reason: All 16 white pieces are present. The white pawns captured nine times (et al. Pb2×Xa3), the bBf8 died on f8. The move c7-c5? Rb6-g6+ (not Rb6×Xg6? for lack of a sacrificial piece!) did not happen last as in this case a previous black move would be missing. Therefore Black is on the move. White threatens 1.0-0-0+. The only thing that helps is **1.K×h2!**, but now follows 1...Kf2 2.∼ Rh1#. So there is only 1 solution!
The first two-mover with castling as well as en-passant capture as only tries and with Black to move as solution – in a relatively simple position.

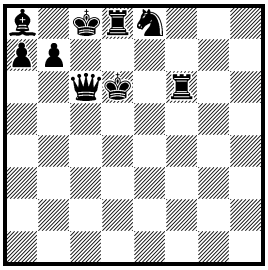
No. 179 It is not so easy to find all 4 solutions.
1) +bPb4 and 1.B×b4#
2) +wPb4 and 1.c5#
3) +bPc7 and 1.c7-c5 b5×c6 e.p.#
4) +bPe5 and 1.Ke6 Qg6#

No. 180: a) The maximum number of new moves to be performed is 12; these options become available for the wRh1 following 0-0 (castling is considered to be a king move!): e1, d1, c1, b1, a1, f2, f3, f4, f5, f6, f7, f8.
b) The maximum number of new reachable squares is 9, resulting from an e.p. capture, e.g. wQh3 g4 bPh4 and h4×g3 e.p.: g4, f5, e6, d7, c8, h5, h6, h7, h8. When first being confronted with the stipulation of this problem who would have thought of the two special moves, castling and en-passant?

No. 181: The last move could be 'bK×Xe8'. So castling seems to be allowed and the white king could make 7 different moves to 'd1, d2, e2, f1, f2, c1 (0-0-0), g1 (0-0)' – this is the planned failure.
The chessboard is wrong ('h1' is black!) and has to be turned by 90°. Then castling is not possible. The correct answer is therefore 5.
[In the original problem from 2019 the number of white moves was asked for. Answer: not 26, but 24.]

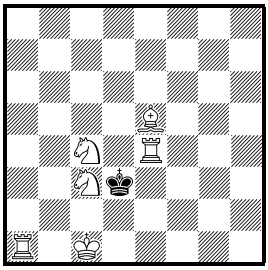
Problems out of the Box

No. 182
Gideon Husserl
Israel Ring Tourney
1966-71 1st Prize



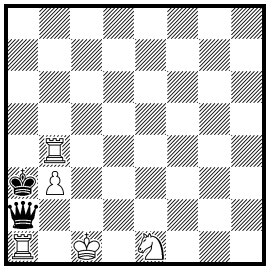
Colour the pieces

No. 183
Werner Keym
Basler Nachrichten 1968



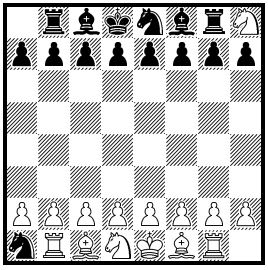
Minimover

No. 184
Werner Keym
Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung 2003



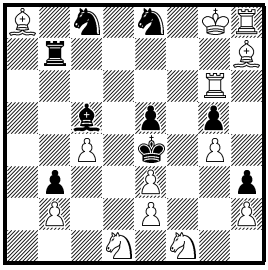
Mate in 1
White to move
b) Se1→d2

No. 185
Karl Fabel
Am Rande des Schachbretts 1947



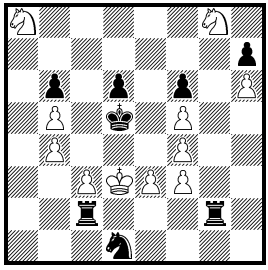
Mate in 1

No. 186
Karl Fabel
Rätselstunde 1952



White moves and does not mate

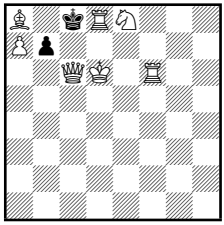
No. 187
Karl Fabel
Die Welt 1951



White moves and does not mate

No. 182: Solution: wKd6 Qc6 Rd8 Rf6 Ba8 Se8 a7 bKc8 b7 **{182A}**

{182A}



After c7×Sd8R+

No. 183: Not 1.Sb2#?, since Black did not move last and cannot move next. The stipulation 'Minimover' gives a hint. This problem must be shorter than a one-move problem. So White is castling, the first part is finished (Ke1-c1, before that bKc2-d3), the second must follow: **Ra1-d1#**. A more serious stipulation may be 'White mates immediately' or 'Mate in ½ move'.
Castling is very suitable for half move problems since the laws of chess prescribe that the king must move first, then the rook, each piece touched by one hand!

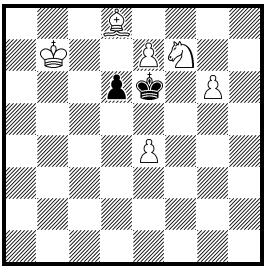
No. 184: **a)** The solution is trivial: **1.Sc2#!** **b)** This seems to be easy as well: 1.Ra4#?. But it is obvious that Black did not move last. Nevertheless the stipulation runs as follows: 'White to play'. That is possible only if White has just played Ke1-c1 as the first part of 0-0-0 and then plays Ra1-d1 as the second part. After that Black mates by **1. . . Qb2#!**. Mean!

No. 185: In all proof games from the initial array to the diagram position White has one move more than Black. So Black is to play. Therefore the solution is not 1.S×f7#?, but **1.S×c2#!**.
A classical parity problem (see *PDB* K='parity argument').

No. 186: There is no mate after **1.Rg6-c6+!** Rb7×h7. The black knights have a purely visual function. One white bishop is a promoted officer.

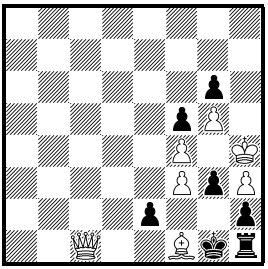
No. 187: After the introduction **1.c4+!** R×c4 there are two ways,
clockwise: 2.Sc7+? R×c7 3.Se7+ R×e7 4.e4+ R×e4 5.f3×e4#,
anticlockwise: 2.e4+! R×e4 3.Se7+ R×e7 4.Sc7+ R×c7 stalemate.
An original problem, which is wrongly overshadowed by no. 186.

No. 188
Knud Hannemann
Dagens Nyheder 1933



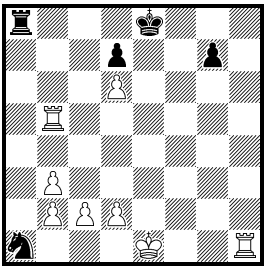
Mate in exactly
1, 2, 3 and 4 moves

No. 189
Niels Høeg
Skakbladet 1907
1st Prize



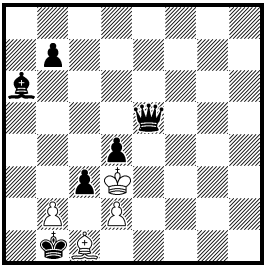
White forces the end of the game in 2 moves

No. 190
Werner Keym
Allgemeine Zeitung
Mainz 1993 (c)



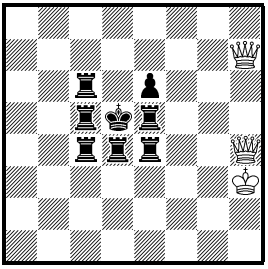
Mate in 3
In this position promoted pieces are
a) allowed,
b) not allowed.

No. 191
Werner Keym
Allgemeine Zeitung
Mainz 2002



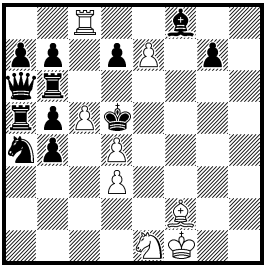
Has White been mated?

No. 192
Filip Bondarenko
Feenschach 1960



Win

No. 193
Hans Klüver
Funkschach 1926



White moves and wins the queen

No. 188: The solution of this curious n-mover is: **a) 1.e8Q#!**, **b) 1.e8R+!** Kd7 2.Re7#, **c) 1.e8B!** d5 2.Kc6 ∼ 3.Bd7#, **d) 1.e8S!** Kd7 (1...d5 2.Kc6 d5×e4 3.Sg7#) 2.Sc7,Sg7 (P1082707 is dualfree) d5 3.e5 d4 4.e6#.
Allumwandlung. The weaker the promoted officer, the longer the play.
Counterexamples are no. 173 and 174.

No. 189: The stipulation and the solution are amazing: **1.Qe1!**
1...e2×f1Q 2.K×g3 Q×e1# selfmate
1...e2×f1R 2.Q×g3# mate
1...e2×f1B 2.K×g3 stalemate
1...e2×f1S 2.Qf2+ K×f2/g3×f2 selfstalemate
1...g2 2.B×e2#
Allumwandlung!

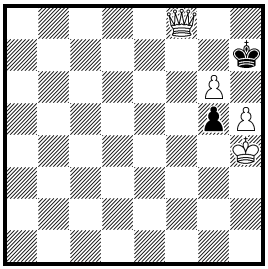
No. 190: Twins with this unusal stipulation have the same positions, yet different geneses and solutions. In case **a)** the last move was a2-a1S; both castlings are permitted, therefore **1. 0-0!** [2.Re5+ 3.Rf8#] 0-0-0 2.R×a1 ∼ 3.Ra8#. **b)** The last move was either bK-e8 or bR-a8 (earlier a2×Xb3, bSb3-a1 and wRa1→b5 via e1), 0-0 and 0-0-0 are not permitted. Therefore **1.Rf5!** S×c2+ 2.Kf2 ∼ 3.Rh8#. The first realization of such a twin. Cf. P1108610.

No. 191: Not so at all. The last moves seem to be bPb4×c3 e.p.+ (the well-known trick) c2-c4 b5-b4+, but then the position is illegal since the black king is locked in. According to the laws of chess Black has to retract the not allowed en-passant capture (bP on b4, wP on c4) and to move the Pb4 he has already touched, i.e. Pb4-b3. This position, however, is stalemate. So the result is a draw.

No. 192: **1.Qd8+!** Rd6 2.Qb7+ Rc5-c6 3.Qa5+ 4.Qb3+ 5.Qd2+ 6.Qf3+ 7.Qg5+ e5 8.Qf7+ 9.Qd8+ 10.Qb7+ 11.Qa5+ 12.Qb3+ 13.Qd2+ 14.Qf3+ e4 15.Qg5+ 16.Qf7+ 17.Qd8+ 18.Qb7+ 19.Qa5+ 20.Qb3+ Rdc4 21.Qd2#.
A merry-go-round!
'If you cannot give check, you will never be able to checkmate.' *St. Teresa of Ávila* knew about that as early as in the 16th century.

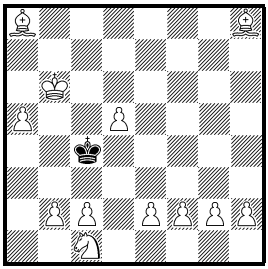
No. 193: is one of my favourites. Obviously White quickly conquers the queen by 1.Sc2!?. What will Black do against 2.S×b4+? Here is the unexpected answer: 1...Re6! and 2.S×b4# does not conquer the queen, but the king!! Solution: **1.e8S!** [2.Sc7+ ∼ 3.S×a6] Bd6 and only then 2.Sc2 B×c5 3.Sc7+ or 1...Rc6 2.Sc2 B×c5 3.d4×c5. Of 103 entries 78 were incorrect. An evil trap.

No. 194
Bruno Sommer
Deutsche Schachzeitung
1927



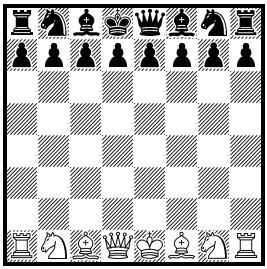
Mate in 0

No. 195
Mannis Charosh
Fairy Chess Review
1937



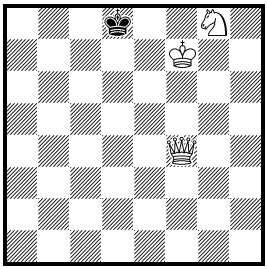
Mate in 0

No. 196
Lord Dunsany
The Week-End
Problems Book 1932



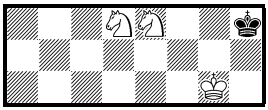
Mate in 4

No. 197
Eric Angelini
Europe Echecs 1990



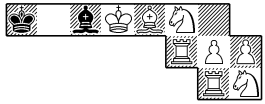
Add 1 square
Mate in 2

No. 198
Wolfgang Pauly
Chess Amateur 1920



Special Board
Mate in 5

No. 199
Thomas R. Dawson
Bolton Football Field 1911



Special Board
Mate in 21

No. 194: Both kings are in check. How can this be explained? White is capturing en passant. He has just moved his pawn to g6 and will now remove the bPg5. Thus Black is mated in 0 moves. Some prefer the stipulation 'Mate in ½ move' or 'Mate in less than 1 move'.

No. 195: The Ba8 cannot come from f1 (because of Pe2 and Pg2) nor it is a promoted officer (because of the 8 white pawns on the chessboard). Therefore the position is illegal. Turn by 180°: mate!

No. 196: Here bK and bQ are not on their original squares. Turn the position by 180°. Then it is legal and the solution is **1.Sc6!/Sd7!** (cook) Sf3 ... 4.Sd3#. – If the white rooks and knights change their places (Sa1 Rb1 Rg1 Sh1), the cook is removed and the solution is 1.Sg6! Sf3 2.Sf4 Se5 3.Q×e5 ∼ 4.Sd3# (*Werner Keym, Die Schwalbe 2012*).

No. 197: Add a square e9, then play **1.Se9!** K×e9 2.Qc7#. A classic of its own.

No. 198: As everybody knows, the endgame KSS vs. K is a draw – unless on a small chessboard. **1.Kf2!** Kh2 2.Sc1 Kh1/Kh3 3.Se2 Kh2 4.Sf1+ Kh1/Kh3 5.Sg3#/Sg1#.

No. 199: Move to the free square each time: S R S R B, R S R S B, S R S R K, S K R K, 20.Sf2 Ka3 21.Re3×c3#. This problem is called 'Revolver Practice'.

'Though this be madness, yet there is method in it.'
(*Shakespeare*)

Text problems

The following text problems, the authors of which are in some cases unknown, do not require any weary or complicated calculations; instead, they present some spectacular effects. Many of them are computer-defying and what matters most of all, they are unambiguous and unique in the best sense of the term.

No. 200: *Can 8 white pieces (KQRRBBSS) guard all 64 squares of the chessboard?*

No. 201: *Chessbase 1999. A game starts with 1.e4 and ends in the 5^{th} move with mate by "Knight captures Rook". How did the game go?*
[The world champions Botvinnik, Karpov and Kasparov despaired of this problem. I am sure that some problemists would soon have found the solution. Why?]

No. 202: ***Gerd Wilts***, *Eigenartige Schachprobleme 2010. In a game in 11 single moves, 6 checks were delivered. How did the game go?*

No. 203: ***Boris Tummes***, *Die Schwalbe 2024. With as few pieces as possible construct a drawing position (White to move). The clockwise rotation of this position by 90° results in a white winning position, by 180° in a white losing position and by 270° in an illegal position.*

No. 204: ***Werner Keym***, *Die Schwalbe 1984. With four pieces construct a position a) in which the ratio of the numbers of the possible moves of two white pieces is 3:1. After the clockwise rotation of this position by b) 90°, c) 180°, d) 270° the ratio is b) 2:1, c) 1:1, d) 1:2.*

No. 205: ***Werner Keym***, *The Problemist 1991. With three pieces construct a position in which the distance between the first and the second piece (measured between square centers) is half as long as that between the second and the third piece, but after a white move it is four times as long.*

No. 200: No, if the bishops occupy squares of different colours: at least one square will remain unguarded. Yes, if they occupy squares of the same colour **{200A}**. One would expect the opposite!

No. 201: 1.e4 Sf6 2.Qe2/f3 S×e4 3.f3/Qe2 Sg3 4.Q×e7+ Q×e7+ 5.Kf2 **S×Rh1#**. The world champions intuitively assumed that White gives mate; but that was not required. The problemists, however, are used to ask whether the requested move is white or black (5.wS×R or 5...bS×R).

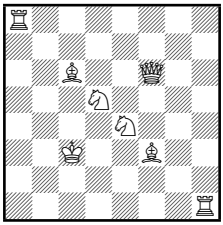
No. 202: 1.d4 e5 2.Kd2 Qg5+ 3.Kc3 e5×d4+ 4.Q×d4 Qg3+ 5.Qe3+ Qe5+ 6.Q×e5+.

No. 203: The drawing position is **wKf8 b3 bKh7 b7 {203A}**. In the position after the clockwise rotation by 270° (wKa6 f2 bKb8 b7) the check of Pb7 is illegal.

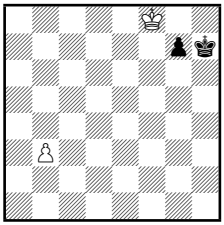
No. 204: The position a) is **wKd8 g6 bKe6 d7 {204A}**. The ratio of the numbers of the possible moves of the white king and the white pawn is 3:1. After the clockwise rotation by b) 90° (Kh5 f2) the ratio is 2:1, c) 180° (Ke1, b3) 1:1, d) 270° (Ka4 c7) 2:4 = 1:2.

No. 205: The mathematician says: $1/2 : 4 = 1 : 8$, but 8 length units do not exist on the chessboard; the maximum is 7 (e.g. between the square centers of a1 and h1/h8). Hence there is no solution.
The chess player, however, knows a solution: the position **wKe1 Ra1 bKg1 {205A}** and **1.0-0-0+**. The first piece is bKg1, the second wKe1, the third wRa1. There are 2 units from g1 to e1 and 4 from e1 to a1 which results in $2 : 4 = 1/2 : 1$. After 0-0-0 there are 4 units from g1 to c1 and 1 unit from c1 to d1 which results in 4 : 1. Quod erat demonstrandum.

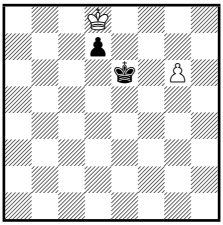
{200A}



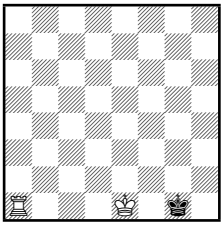
{203A}



{204A}



{205A}



No. 206: ***Werner Keym***, *The Problemist 1990. With the kings and a third piece construct symmetrical positions (i.e. the centers of the three occupied squares lie on a straight line) which remain symmetrical after a checking move. What can the third piece be?*

No. 207: *From a large quadrate, which consists of 64 small quadrates, two small quadrates are removed in the bottom left and upper right corners. Can the resulting figure be fully covered with 31 rectangles the area of which amounts to that of two small quadrates?*

No. 208: *Can a queen run through the nine squares of the quadrate a1-c1-c3-a3 in four moves?*

No. 209: ***Werner Keym***, *Die Schwalbe 2013. Prize. Every square on an ordinary 8x8 chessboard carries a number, a different one in each case. The sum of the numbers carried by those squares on which white and black pieces are arranged in a legal position remains unchanged at each stage after White's first, Black's first, White's second and Black's second move. On which of these moves is no capture made?*

No. 210: ***Werner Keym***, *Die Schwalbe 2006, 2nd Prize. With the two kings (on different coloured squares), one officer and one pawn, construct a position in which can be proved that a piece, in the course of the retro-play, cannot have occupied precisely 4 light squares. Same question with b) 5, c) 6, d) 7 light squares.*

'Plausible impossibilities should be preferred over
implausible possibilities.'
(*Aristotle*)

No. 206: Pawn through promotion (wKa1 Pa7 bKa5 and a7-a8Q+), rook through castling (wKe1 Ra1 bKh1 and 0-0-0+) and – which is the point – knight on a nightrider line (wKa1 Sc2 bKg4 and Sc2-e3+). Cf. no. 96.
Most chess friends were content with the two special moves promotion and castling – me too, the author! Clever solvers discovered the third solution and thus enriched my problem. It is one of my favourites.

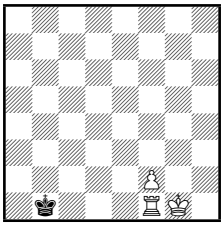
No. 207: No. Colour the quadrates of this figure in the way the chessboard squares are coloured. Then it will consist of 32 light and 30 dark squares, while each rectangle covers 1 light and 1 dark square. An elegant prove by means of the chessboard.

No. 208: Yes, if this quadrate is part of the standard 8x8 chessboard: Qc3-a1-a4-d1-b1. No, in case of a 3x3 board.

No. 209: These are the moves that fulfil the condition of the unchanged sum: (1) en-passant capture, (2) castling, (3) capturing move from the square carrying number 0. The right order of these moves is (1) by White, (2) or (3) by Black, (2) by White, (3) or (2) by Black. So on White's second move no capture is made.
Here is an example: 0 (bSg8), 1 (wPe5), 2 (bPf5), 3 (f6), 4 (wKe1), 5 (f1), 6 (g1), 7 (wRh1), 8 (bKe8), 9 (d8), 10 (c8), 11 (bRa8) and 1.e5×f6 e.p. 0-0-0/S×f6 2.0-0 S×f6/0-0-0.
We do not know the number nor the kind of the pieces nor the numbers on the squares, yet the solution is unambiguous.

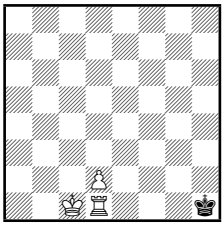
No. 210: Look at the four diagrams. A lucky find.

Solution no. 210a



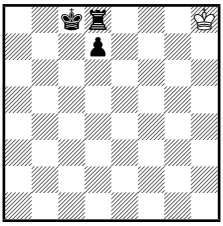
Last move: 0-0+, bK could not occupy d1, e2, f1, h1

Solution no. 210b



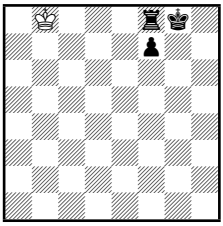
Last move: 0-0-0+, bK could not occupy d1, e2, f1, a2, b1

Solution no. 210c



Last move: 0-0-0+, wK could not occupy d7, e8, f7, a8, c6, e6

Solution no. 210d

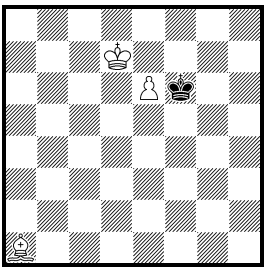


Last move: 0-0+, wK could not occupy d7, e8, f7, e6, g6, g8, h7

Retro problems

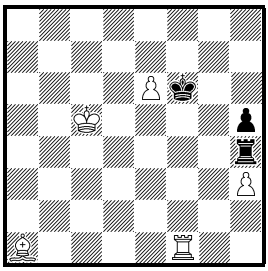
Retros are unconventional, surprising, often computer-defying, easy to extremely difficult, diverse, in short: fascinating.

No. 211
Niels Høeg
Skakbladet 1916



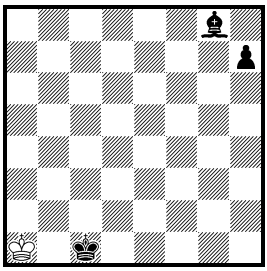
Last moves?

No. 212
E. A. von Vegesack
Danziger Neue Nachrichten 1941



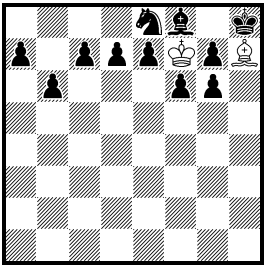
Last moves?

No. 213
Jan Mortensen
Fairy Chess Review 1956



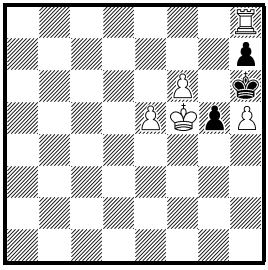
Black to move
Last move?

No. 214
Werner Keym
Die Schwalbe 1979
1st Special Mention



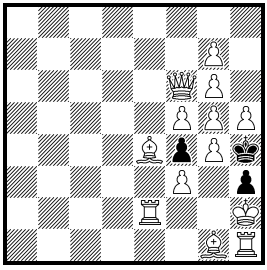
Last move?

No. 215
Friedrich Amelung
Düna-Zeitung 1897



Mate in 2

No. 216
Karl Fabel
Werner Keym
Basler Nachrichten 1967



Problem without words

Retro chic is good. Retro chess is better.

The economical records with the stipulation 'Which was the last move?' are the best known retro themes. For a documentation on the current records see www.dieschwalbe.de/download/artikel/Last-Move-Rekorde-Dokumentation.pdf. There are four types: type A (without check; no. 214), type B (Black to move; no. 213), type C (with check; no. 211) and type D (Mate).

No. 211: The last moves were **d5×e6 e.p.+!** e7-e5 d4-d5+, not f5×e6 e.p.+? e7-e5 for that still leaves the black king in illegal retrocheck.
'This pioneer setting by Niels Høeg is one of the handful of very economical examples with only three or four men, and it shows the simplicity, economy and originality that go to make up a Classic of the chessboard.' (*Dickins/Ebert*)

No. 212: Backward **f5×e6 e.p.+** e7-e5 Kd4×Sc5+ Se4-/×c5+. How else?

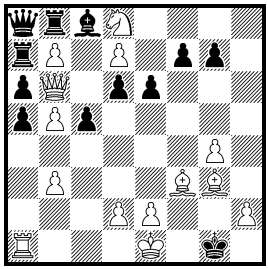
No. 213: This is a well-known position which completely anticipates *Raymond Smullyan's* mirrored version. The last moves are **Ka2×Sa1!** Sb3-a1+.

No. 214: The wK moved to f7 via a6 and c8. The last move was neither Bg8×Bh7? nor Bg8×Sh7? (both result in illegal positions), but **Bg8×Qh7!**, before that e.g. Qh1-h7, h7×Rg8B!, h2→h7, bKh5→h8, bRh6→g8, wKg8-f7, bSd6-e8, wKa6→g8. The bRh was needed as a sacrificial piece, so the last move could not be Bg8×Rh7?. This is my best last-mover.

No. 215: This is the most economical dual-free rendering of the e.p. key in a directmate problem (cf. the dualistic miniature #76061). It uses the typical position of wK, bP and wP side by side on the 5th rank, which excludes the simple step of the bP (here g6+-g5) as the last black move. The retro play bKg7-h6? is illegal as well. So the last move was g7-g5, therefore **1.h5×g6 e.p.!** Kh5 2.R×h7#.

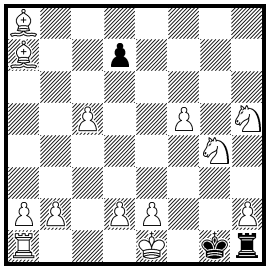
No. 216 (13+3 pieces): This is a joint problem by *Karl Fabel* and myself. He composed a one-mover with a forced mate by the en-passant capture, I found a more economical setting and the new stipulation. The white pawns have captured 13 times. Black captured 3 pieces: bPh×Sg, bPg×Sh and bPb×Pa→a1X (furthermore bPa→a1X). So for lack of a sacrificial piece the last move was not bPe5×Xf4? (with 1.Bf2#), but wPg2-g4 Kg4-h4 f2-f3+. Therefore **1.bPf4×g3 e.p.#!** is forced. This first realization fascinated the solvers.
A simple example is P0002356.

No. 217
Werner Keym
Die Schwalbe 1969
1st-3rd Hon. Mention



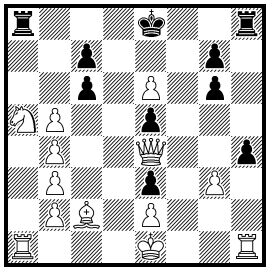
Mate in 1
b) wRd8 (instead Sd8)

No. 218
Werner Keym
Schach-Echo 1967 (v)



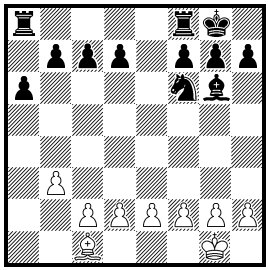
Mate in 1

No. 219
Werner Keym
Die Schwalbe 1971 (v)



Mate in 3

No. 220
John Beasley
The Problemist 1972



What was the first move of the white bishop?

With(out) previous play: P0001946, P0000917, P1108938.

No. 217 (14+12 pieces): The white pawns captured the 4 missing black pieces, among them the Bf8 (hence backward not e7-e6?) and the promoted officer X from g1 (earlier bPh×R/Sg→g1X), besides bPb×S/Ra. So the last move was c6-c5 or c7-c5.
a) Backward c6-c5? Qc7-b6+ b6×S/Ra5 B-f3 K-g1 B-d5/-e4+ is illegal, since the necessary retro moves b4-b5, a3×Bb4 (on a dark square), bBf8→b4 and e7-e6 lock up both black rooks within their cage.
Backward c7-c5! Qc6-b6+ b6×S/Ra5 Kd1-e1 (not B-f3 K-g1 since the wQc6, too, guards the squares g2 and h1) Kf1-g1 is possible. Hence castling is not permitted, therefore not 1.0-0-0#?, but **1.b5×c6 e.p.#!**.
b) Backward c6-c5! Qc7-b6+ b6×Sa5 B-f3 K-g1 B-d5/-e4+ is possible, because the cage is opened by wRh8-d8. Hence e.p. capture is not permitted, therefore not 1.b5×c6 e.p.#?, but **1.0-0-0#**!.
Try and solution are changed by a small modification. None of the 26 pieces may be on a different square. My best retro problem.
Cf. the first realization of the cage with the wQ (#506092).

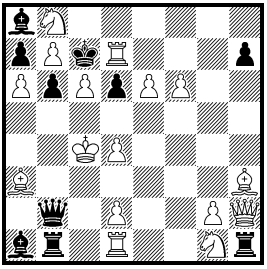
No. 218 (13+3 pieces): Bc1 died on c1, Ba7 is a promoted piece. Only wQ and wR are missing. Hence the last black move could not be either bPg2×Q/Rh1R? or Kg2×Q/Rg1?. Black is to play. As White threatens to mate by 1.0-0-0, Black plays **1.d7-d5!**, yet now follows 1. . . c5×d6 e.p.#.
The three 'naughty tricks': castling, en passant, unusual first move.
Cf. #137059, #465620, #303636, #551280.
One-move problems with the three tricks in the real play: P1011955, P1240506.

No. 219 (13+10 pieces): The computer delivers two solutions: 1.0-0-0 and 1.0-0, but it is wrong. The bPs captured Sc6, Be and Pg6. The wPs (wPh2×Xg3) captured 6 pieces, among them the promoted officer X from a1 (earlier a7→a1X). So w0-0-0 is not permitted. Therefore not 1.0-0-0!? . . . 3.Q/R# nor 1.Rf1? 0-0-0! 2.Q×c6 Rd1+, but **1.0-0!** 0-0-0/Ke7/Kd8 2.Q×c6 Kb8/Rd8/Kc8 3.Qb7#/Rf7#/Q×a8#, 1. . . Ra6 2.Qd3 ∼ 3.Qd7#. Cf. P0000902, P1108570.

No. 220 (9+12 pieces): wBf1 died on f1, bBc8 on c8. The promoted Bf6 comes from b1 (via a2). This requires five captures of the bPe. In the position with wPb2 and wBc1, however, only four white sacrificial pieces are available (Pa, Ra, S, S). Therefore wBc1 died on c1 and thereafter five white pieces (without Pa) could be captured: Q, R, R, S, S. The white Pa captured Q, B and S on its way to b8 where it promoted to bishop which moved to c1. The bishop's first move was **Bb8-a7!!**. Bb1-a2 was the first move of Bg6! A budding classic.
More elegant than *L. Ceriani's* classic 'First move of bQ?' (P0004903).

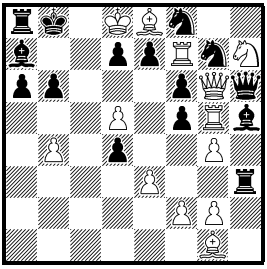
Three super retros!

No. 221
Niels Høeg
Retrograde Analysis
1915



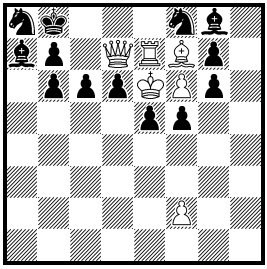
Last moves?

No. 222
Michel Caillaud
StrateGems 2001
1st Prize



Release the position!

No. 223
Harry Goldsteen
Die Schwalbe 2020
Special Prize



Release the position!

Seven **great retro records**:
En-passant capture before at least 71 single moves (P0000052)
Castling before at least 159 single moves (P0000024)
8 half en-passant captures (P0004873)
Last 60 single moves (P1353149)
33 consecutive checks in the last 66 single moves (P1185294)
96 moves of the same piece in a (dualistic) proof game (P0001856)
185 moves in a (dualistic) proof game (P1345778)

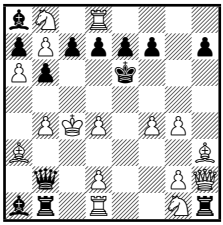
Three classical dualfree **length records** (without retro aspects)
226 moves in directmate (P1298048)
28 moves in helpmate (P0559197)
223 moves in selfmate (P1176536)

No. 221 (16+10 pieces): There is no capture by Black. The white pawns captured 6 times, hence there is no sacrificial piece for any officer. Solution: backward **1.Rd8-d7+!** forces d7-d6 2.f5×e6 e.p.+ (the well-known e.p. trick) 2...e7-e5 3.f4-f5+ Kd6-c7 (what else?) 4.b5×c6 e.p.+ c7-c5 5.b4-b5+ Ke6-d6 6.g5×f6 e.p.+ f7-f5 7.g4-g5+ **{221A}**.
Three white en-passant captures have remained unsurpassed up to now.

No. 222 (13+15 pieces): The bRh3 climbs the stairs up to c7, then moves to a5 (where a wPa5 is born which produces three tempi), then back to c7, then downstairs to h3. Backward: 1...Rg3-h3 2.Bh2-g1 Rf3-g3 3.Bg1-h2+ Rf4-f3 4.Bh2-g1 Re4-f4 5.Bg1-h2+ Re5-e4 6.Bh2-g1 Re6-e5 7.Bg1-h2+ Rd6-e6 8.Bh2-g1 Rc6-d6 9.Bg1-h2+ Rc7-c6 10.Bh2-g1 Rc5-c7 11.Bg1-h2+ Ra5-c5 12.b3-b4 Rc5×Pa5 13.b2-b3 Rc7-c5 14.Bh2-g1 Rc6-c7 15.Bg1-h2+ Rd6-c6 16.Bh2-g1 Re6-d6 17.Bg1-h2+ Re5-e6 18.Bh2-g1 Re4-e5 19.Bg1-h2+ Rf4-e4 20.Bh2-g1 Rf3-f4 21.Bg1-h2+ Rg3-f3 22.Bh2-g1 Rh3-g3 23.Bg1-h2+ Rh1-h3 24.a4-a5 h2-h1R 25.a3-a4 h3-h2 26.a2-a3 h4-h3 27.h3×Rg4 **{222A}**. Brilliant!
Another super retro by *M. Caillaud* is P1017636.

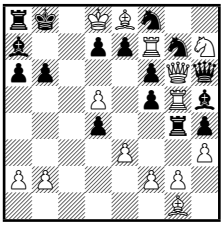
No. 223 (6+13 pieces): Backward 1...Sh7-f8+ 2.Be8×Rf7 Rf8×Sf7 3.Sg5-f7 Rf7-f8+ 4.Se4-g5 Rf8×Sf7 5.Sg5-f7 Rf7-f8+ 6.Sc3-e4 Rf8×Sf7 7.Sh6-f7 Rf7-f8+ 8.Sb5-c3 Rf8×Sf7 9.Sh8-f7 Rf7-f8+ 10.Sc7-b5 Rf8×Sf7 11.Sb5×Rc7! (not 11.Sb5×Qc7?) Rc8-c7 12.Sf3-g5 Rc7-c8 13.Sg5-f7 Rf7-f8+ 14.Se4-g5 Rc8-c7 15.Qd8-d7 Rf8×Rf7 16.Kd7-e6 Sc7-a8 **{223A}**.
Genesis of this position: bPh7×Pg6, bPa7×Pb6, bPd7×Pc6, d7-d8S, f7-f5, wPe5×Qf6, bPc7×Bd6, a7-a8S, h7-h8S.
5 knights and 2 rooks were uncaptured on the same square.
An absolute sensation!!
Goldsteen's own predecessor (#342239) was already called 'A God's gift'.

{221A}



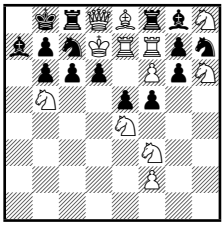
Next move g4-g5+

{222A}



Next move h3×g4

{223A}

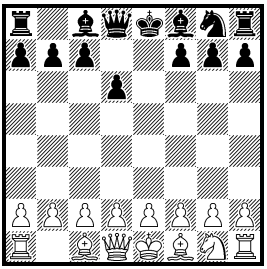


Next move Sc7-a8

Proof games

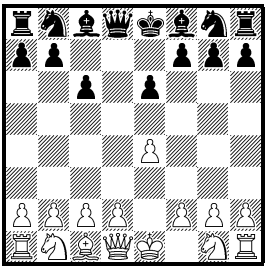
Since 1980 proof games (PG) have generally ranked in retro columns. Their inexhaustible themes and tasks are fascinating for composers and solvers. In these proof games the whole sequence of moves is running without any dual.

No. 224
Géza Schweig
Tükör 1938



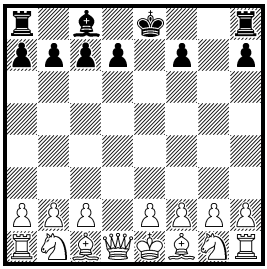
Position after Black's 4^{th} move

No. 225
Tibor Orbán
Die Schwalbe 1976 Lob



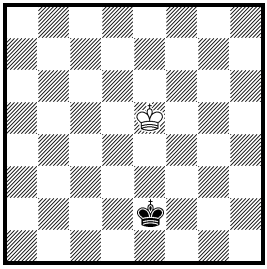
Position after Black's 4^{th} (!) move

No. 226
Werner Keym
Die Schwalbe 1992



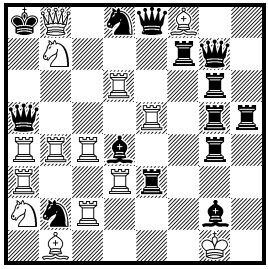
Position after White's 7^{th} move

No. 227
François Labelle
StrateGems 2012



Position after White's 20^{th} move

No. 228
Dmitri Pronkin
Andrey Frolkin
Werner Keym
Boris Tummes
Rund um die Retro-analyse 2021 (c 2022)



Position after White's 59^{th} move

No. 224: This problem and no. 225 are two famous puzzles which will attract attention at every chess club. In no. 224 the 'wrong' knight is amazing: 1.Sc3 d6 2.Sd5 Sd7 3.S×e7 Sdf6 4.S×g8 S×g8.

No. 225: Here it works already in 3 moves: 1.e4 e6 2.Bb5 c6 3.B×c6 d7×c6 or 2.Bc4 c6 3.B×e6 d7×e6. The stipulation, however, is 4 (!) moves. 1.e4 e6 2.Bb5 Ke7! 3.B×d7 c6 4.Be8 K×e8. 'A devilish trap.'

No. 226: 1.d4 Sh6 2.B×h6 g5 3.B×f8 Sc6 4.B×e7 S×d4 5.B×d8 Sb3 6.B×g5 Sc1 7.B×c1. A raid of the bishop with the effect of a billiard ball.

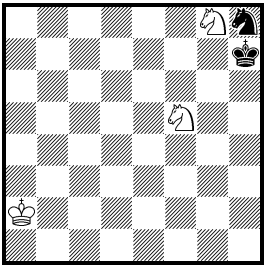
No. 227: 1.c4 e5 2.Qb3 Qh4 3.Qxb7 Q×h2 4.Q×b8 Q×g1 5.R×h7 R×b8 6.R×g7 R×b2 7.R×f7 R×a2 8.R×d7 R×d2 9.R×a7 K×d7 10.R×c7+ Kd6 11.R×c8 Q×g2 12.R×f8 Kc5 13.R×g8 R×g8 14.B×g2 R×g2 15.Sc3 R×f2 16.K×f2 K×c4 17.Kf3 K×c3 18.B×d2+ K×d2 19.Ke4 K×e2 20.K×e5.
The first and only unambiguous proof game with the two kings only.

No. 228: 1.a4 h5 2.a5 h4 3.a6 h3 4.a6×b7 h3×g2 5.h4 d5 6.h5 d4 7.h6 d3 8.h7 d3×c2 9.d4 a5 10.Bh6 c1R 11.e4 Rc5 12.Se2 Rh5 13.e5 c5 14.e6 Sc6 15.b8R a4 16.Rb4 a3 17.Ra4 c4 18.b4 c3 19.b5 c2 20.b6 c1R 21.b7 Rc4 22.b8R Qa5+ 23.Rbb4 Bb7 24.Sbc3 0-0-0 25.e6×f7 e5 26.Rc1 Bc5 27.f8R a2 28.Rf3 a1Q 29.Sa2 g1Q 30.Rfa3 Qg6 31.f4 Qe8 32.f5 g5 33.f6 g4 34.f7 g3 35.f8R g2 36.Rf5 g1R 37.Bf8 Rgg5 38.Sg3 e4 39.Bd3 e3 40.0-0 e2 41.Bb1 e1R 42.Rc2 Re3 43.d5 Rd7 44.d6 Rf7 45.d7+ Kb8 46.Qd6+ Ka8 47.Qc7 Sge7 48.d8R+ Sc8 49.Rdd3 Rhg8 50.h8R Sd8 51.Rh6 Bg2 52.Se4 Sb6 53.Sd6 Rcg4 54.Sb7 Sc4 55.Rhd6 R8g6 56.R1f4 Qg7 57.Re5 Sb2 58.Rfc4 Bd4 59.Qb8+.
I recommend to all, really all problem fans, to replay the fascinating moves of this game (especially the routes of the knights) at least once in their lives; the most convenient way to do this is interactively on the computer:
www.thbrand.de/2022/01/30/retro-der-woche-052022.
The length record for an unambiguous proof game improved from 15 moves (*Dawson* 1913) to 41,5 (*Fabel* 1954), 47,0 (*Caillaud* 1982), 57,5 (*Pronkin/Frolkin* 1989) and now 58,5.

Further favourite proof games:
2 castlings and 2 en-passant captures (P0000062)
13 moves for 1 tempo (P0001716)
Interchange of squares both of white and black rooks (P0008568)
Ra1, Qd1, Bf1 and Sg1 = promoted pieces (P1084087)
Ra1, Rh1, Ra8 and Rh8 = promoted pieces (P1425702)

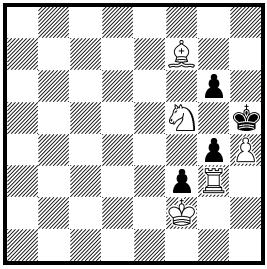
Retractors

No. 229
Günther Weeth
Stuttgarter Zeitung
2003



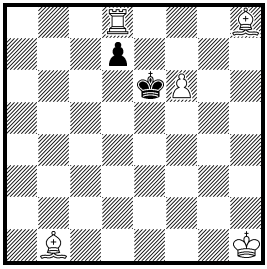
White retracts 1 move, then mate in 1

No. 230
Thomas R. Dawson
Chess Amateur 1920



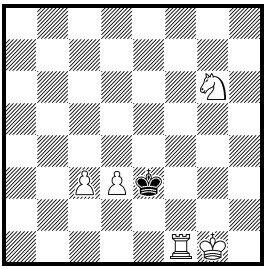
White retracts 1 move, then mate in 2

No. 231
Werner Keym
Stuttgarter Zeitung
2005



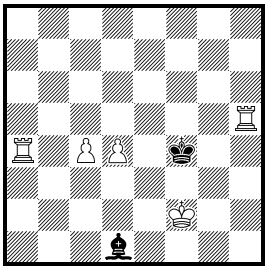
White retracts 1 move, then mate in 2
b) Bh8→f8

No. 232
Zvi Roth
Al-Hamishmar 1970
Commendation



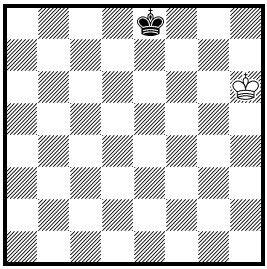
White retracts 1 move, then mate in 1
b) Turn 180°

No. 233
Mark Adabashev
"64" 1938



White retracts 1 move, then mate in 1
b) all 1 rank up
c) all 2 ranks up
d) all 3 ranks up

No. 234
a) Frederick Baird
Morning Post 1910
b) Julio Sunyer
Chess Amateur 1923



White retracts 1 move, Black 1 move, then helpmate in 1
b) wK→h5

The world of the retractors is diverse: help or defensive retractors, special types, short or long problems, easy or retroanalytically very difficult ones. The examples no. 229 to 234 are deliberately simple, yet surprising.

No. 229: Backward not Pf7×Bg8S? since 1.f7-f8S fails to the check of Bg8, but Pf7×Sg8S! and 1.f7-f8S#. A mate by four knights.

No. 230: This is *T. R. Dawson's* most famous retractor: backward h2-h4 and forward 1.h2-h4! g4×h3 e.p. 2.B×g6#.
There are even two miniatures with this idea: P0000030 and P1108952, moreover a well-known related two-mover (P0005851).

No. 231: **a)** Backward e5×f6 e.p. and 1.Ba2+ d5 2.e5×d6 e.p.#, 1...Ke7 2.Bf6#.
b) Backward e7×Sd8R, then 1.e8Q+ K×f6 2.Qe7# or 1...Kd5 2.Qe4#.
Two e.p. captures and two promotions in a miniature.

No. 232: **a)** Backward 0-0 and 1.Rh3#
b) Backward d5×e6 e.p. and 1.Rd8#
A wonderful realization of two special moves with six pieces only.

P0006005 and P0008226 show two castlings and Allumwandlung respectively.

No. 233: **a)** Backward c2-c4 and 1.d5#
b) Backward b4×c5, then 1.d5×c6 e.p.# (last move c7-c5 is supposed)
c) Backward b5×c6 e.p., then 1.d7#
d) Backward c6-c7, then 1.d8S#.
An evergreen!

No. 234: **a)** Backward Kg7×Rh6 Rd6×Qh6, then 1.Rd8 Qe6#.
b) Backward Kg6×Rh5 Rh8×Qh5, then 1.0-0 Qh7#.
J. Sunyer's two piece problem b) is the classic among the retractors.
F. Baird's original position was wKf5 and bKh2 (solution: backward Kg4×Rf5 Rf1×Qf5, then 1.Rf1-h1 Qf5-f2#).
This wonderful twin was not created by the authors, but later by problemists.

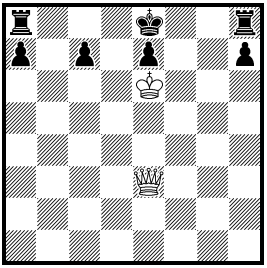
More delightful retractors: P0004566, P0006641, P0004817, P1004365.

'Life can only be understood drawkcab;
but it must be lived forward.'
(*Kierkegaard*)

Partial Retrograde Analysis and more

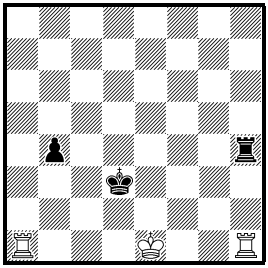
According to the articles 16.1 and 16.2 of the Codex for Chess Composition (p. 135) castling is permitted unless it can be proved that it is not permissible (positive right). The reverse applies to the en-passant capture: it is only permitted, if its permissibility can be proved (negative right). If several rights are mutually dependent, then the Partial Retrograde Analysis (PRA) convention applies (article 16.3). In short: *If several legal special move rights are mutually dependent, each of these rights should once be acknowledged; this also applies for the remaining rights.*

No. 235
Sam Loyd
Texas Siftings 1888



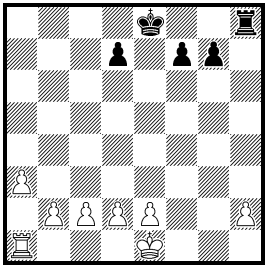
Mate in 3

No. 236
Werner Keym
Die Schwalbe 1972



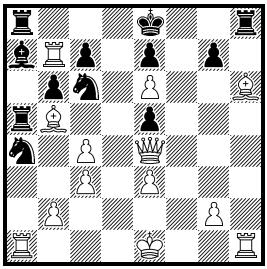
Helpmate in 2

No. 237
Luigi Ceriani
The Problemist 1931



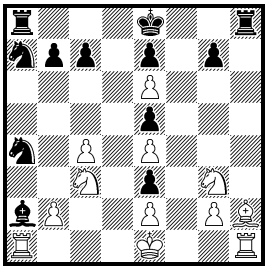
Helpmate in 3

No. 238 I
Werner Keym
Die Schwalbe 2008
1st Prize



Mate in 3

No. 238 II
Werner Keym
Stuttgarter Zeitung
2016



White gives check in 2

No. 235: Either b0-0-0 (Rh moved last) or b0-0 (Ra moved last) is permitted. The assumption that both are permitted (bK moved last) does not correspond with the PRA convention. Please note: **the PRA convention deals with move rights, not with the last move.** This move is certainly a possible aid to find out move rights in a problem, but in some retros (e.g. no. 238) it does not play a part.
So no. 235 has one solution which consists of two parts which exclude each other. If b0-0-0 is permitted, then follows **1.Qd4!** Rg8 2.Qd7+ Kf8 3.Q×e7#. If b0-0, then **1.Qg5!** Kd8 2.Qd5+ K∼ 3.Q×a8#. *Loyd's* PRA classic.

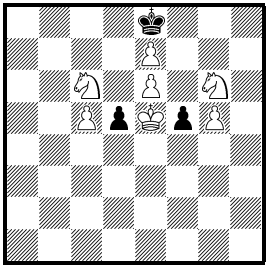
No. 236: If w0-0-0 is permitted, then **1.Kc3!** 0-0-0 2.Rc4 Rh3#. If w0-0, then **1.Kc2** Ra2+ 2.Kc1 0-0#. Letztform. – Cf. P0000859 (#2).

No. 237: If w0-0-0 is permitted (last move a2-a3, before that e.g. bK×Xe8), then **1.R×h2!** 0-0-0 2.R×e2 Rh1 3.Re7 Rh8#. If b0-0 is permitted (last move e.g. wK×Xe1), then **1.0-0!** a4 2.Kh8 Ra3 3.Rg8 Rh3#. Simply clever!

No. 238 I (13+12): Genesis of the position: Bf8 died on f8, bPd3×Xc2-c1B→a7; either a) wX×Pa a2→a8R→b7 and bX×Ph h7→h1R→a5 (only b0-0 and w0-0-0 permitted) or b) wX×Ph h2→h8R→b7 and bX×Pa a7→a1R→a5 (only b0-0-0 and w0-0 permitted).
In case a) the solution is **1.Rf1!** Kd8 2.Q×c6 Kc8 3.Q×c7#, in b) **1.Rd1** Kf8 2.Qg6 Kg8 3.Q×g7# or 1...R×h6 2.Qg6+ R×g6 3.Rh8#. So No. 238 I is 'only' a two-part PRA problem. Thematic tries are: 1.0-0? 0-0-0! and 1.0-0-0? 0-0!.
The first and only realization of a double paradox: if White can castle (0-0-0 or 0-0), he gives up precisely this right.

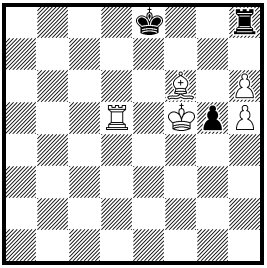
No. 238 II (12+12): Without promoted pieces the same paradox is presented by means of the stipulation 'check' instead of 'mate'. wBf1 died on f1, bBf8 on f8, promoted pieces come from a8 and h1 or from a1 and h8, they are captured on the e-file.
So the solution is either (if w0-0-0 and b0-0 permitted) **1.Rf1!** ∼ 2.Rf8+ or (if w0-0 and b0-0-0 permitted) **1.Rd1!** ∼ 2.Rd8+. Thematic tries: 1.0-0? 0-0-0! and 1.0-0-0? 0-0!. Furthermore 1.Sd5? Kd8! and 1.Sf5? Kf8!.
Very suitable to amaze chess players!

Pattern



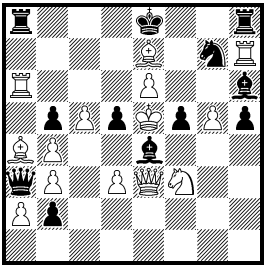
Mate in 2

No. 239
William Langstaff
Chess Amateur 1922



Mate in 2

No. 240
Werner Keym
Die Schwalbe 1972



Mate in 3

'Retroanalysis is higher mathematics of human logic,
abstraction and imagination.'
(*Lasker*)

Pattern: 1.c5×d6 e.p.? is not permitted, since f7-f5 could be the last move; in this case, however, works **1.g5×f6 e.p.!** ∼ 2.f7#. 1.g5×f6 e.p.? is not permitted, since d7-d5 could be the last move; in this case, however, works **1.c5×d6 e.p.!** ∼ 2.d7#. That is one solution which consists of two parts which exclude each other (PRA).

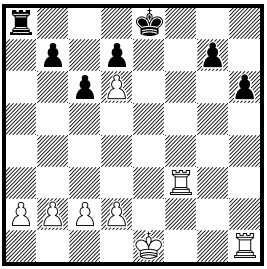
There are also problems in which three en-passant captures exclude each other: P0002175 (with duals), P1108940 and P1108101. Cf. no. 240.

No. 239: If 0-0 is allowed, then the last move was g7-g5 and the e.p. capture is allowed as well. Hence **1.h5×g6 e.p.!** [2.Rd8#] 0-0 2.h7#. If h5×g6 e.p. is not permitted, then the bK or the bR must have moved last. In this case the solution is **1.Ke6!** ∼ 2.Rd8#. A classic two-part problem.
Cf. #503539, #31754, #551496.

No. 240 (14+12 pieces): Genesis of the position: bPa3×Sb2, bPg×Ph→h1X; the white pawns captured 4 times (S, Pc, Pe, X).Therefore Pb5 comes from b7 (before that Rc6-a6+), d5 from d7, f5 from f7.
(1) 0-0-0 and 0-0 permitted, c5×b6 e.p. and c5×d6 e.p. not permitted, then **1.g5×f6 e.p.!** Bf4+ 2.Q×f4 S×e6 3.B×b5#
(2) 0-0-0 and 0-0 permitted, c5×b6 e.p. and g5×f6 e.p. not permitted, then **1.c5×d6 e.p.!** S×e6,R×h7 2.B×b5+ Bc6 3.B×c6#
(3) 0-0-0 and 0-0 permitted, c5×d6 e.p. and g5×f6 e.p. not permitted, then **1.c5×b6 e.p.+!** Q×a4 2.R×h8+ K×e7 3.Qc5# or 1...K×e7 2.Qc5+ Kd8 3.Qc7#,R×a8#,e7# (mate dual)
(4) 0-0-0 permitted, c5×b6 e.p., c5×d6 e.p., g5×f6 e.p. and 0-0 not permitted, then **1.Bf6!** S×e6 2.R×a8+ Sd8 3.R×d8#
(5) 0-0 permitted, c5×b6 e.p., c5×d6 e.p., g5×f6 e.p. and 0-0-0 not permitted, then **1.Bd6!** S×e6 2.R×a8+ Sd8 3.B×b5#.
The only five-part PRA problem without promoted pieces.
Cf. P0004881 (no dual, one promoted piece) and the four-part problems P0000891 and P0000884.

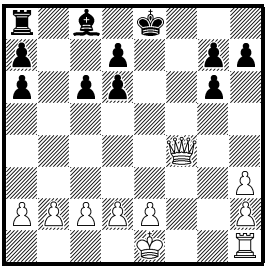
There is even a formal method to find out the partial problems of a PRA problem. It is suitable especially for complicated cases as no. 240. See P0003447.

No. 241
Herbert Hultberg
Tidskrift för Schack
1944



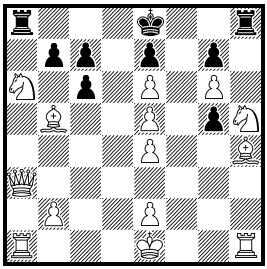
Mate in 2

No. 242
Niels Høeg
Die Schwalbe 1933



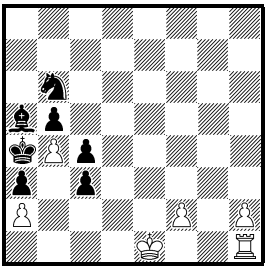
Mate in 3

No. 243
Werner Keym
Die Schwalbe 2010



Mate in 3
b) – Bb5
c) + bSh7

No. 244
Nenad Petrović
Problem 1954
1st Prize



Helpmate in 3
With set play
(White to move)

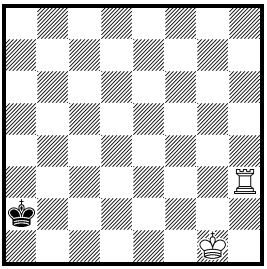
No. 241: There are two cases: Rf3 is a promoted piece, then b0-0-0 is not permitted, hence 1.0-0! ∼ 2.Rf8#. Or Rf3 comes from a1, then w0-0 is not permitted, hence no mate in 2 (1.Rh1-f1? 0-0-0!). Here the **Retro-Strategy** (RS) convention applies (p. 135): the castling which is executed first is permitted. Hence **1.0-0!** ∼ 2.Rf8#.
No. 241 anticipates *A. Lapierre's* well-known problem from 1956 (#31755).

No. 242 (10+11 pieces): Qf4 is a promoted piece (then b0-0-0 not permitted) or she comes from d1 (then w0-0 not permitted). Please try yourself, it's worth it. Solution: **1.Q×d6!** Bb7 2.0-0! (2.Rf1? 0-0-0!) ∼ 3.Rf8#.
The perfect RS classic.

No. 243 (14+9 pieces): This is a challenge for retro fans.
a) Either w0-0-0, w0-0 and b0-0 are permitted, then try 1.B×g5?/Rd1? 0-0! and solution **1.0-0!** Rf8 2.S×g7+ Kd8 3.R×f8#, 1...Kd8 2.Qd3+ Kc8 3.Qd7#.
Or b0-0-0 is permitted, then try 1.B×g5? 0-0-0! and solution **1.Rd1!** Rd8 2.S×c7+ Kf8 3.R×d8#, 1...Kf8 2.Qf3+ Kg8 3.Qf7#. So a) is a two-part **PRA problem**.
b) There are four cases, each with three permitted castlings. The case w0-0-0 and b0-0-0 and b0-0 which seems to be insoluble is eliminated by **1.0-0!** (according to the Retro-Strategy the castling which is executed first is permitted) 1...Rf8 2.S×g7+ Kd8 3.R×f8#, 1...Kd8 2.Qd3+ Kc8 3.Qd7#, 1...0-0-0 2.Sb4,Sc5 ∼ 3.Qa8#. So b) is a **RS problem**.
c) No castling whatsever is permitted. The try 1.B×g5? in a) and b) now turns out to be the solution in c): **1.B×g5!** [2.Q×e7#] S×g5/Sf6 2.Sf6+/S×f6+ ∼ 3.R×h8#. So c) is neither a PRA nor a RS problem, it is an ordinary problem that the computer quickly solves.

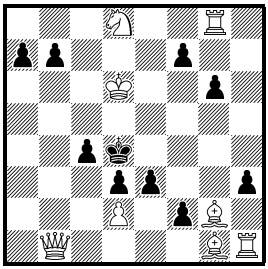
No. 244: This is the best known **A posteriori** problem (p. 135). If White to move, then 1.Rg1 B×b4 2.Rg7 Ka5 3.Ra7#. Solution: **1.c4×b3 e.p.! 0-0!** 2.Sd5 Rb1 3.Sb4 a2×b3#. Strictly speaking the en-passant capture is not permitted since wK or wR can have moved last. By subsequent castling, however, it is 'proved' that wK and wR have not yet moved. Thus the en-passant capture is legalised afterwards ('a posteriori'). 1.c4×b3 e.p.? would not be permitted, if 1...Ke2? followed. Somehow strange!
Cf. #358065, P0004340, P0577271, P0004485, P1072281 and bizarre P0004957 and very bizarre P0000758.

No. 245
Georges Barbier
Source unknown
(before 1885)



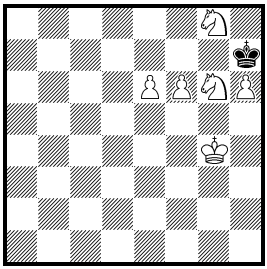
White retracts 1 move, then mate in 2
Game at odds

Nr. 246
Hieronymus Fischer
Deutsche Schachzeitung 1879



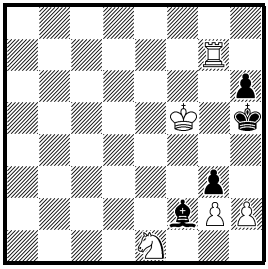
Mate in 1

No. 247
Werner Keym
(after F. Marshall)
Landeszeitung für die Lüneburger Heide 2018



With which knight does White mate in 2 moves?

No. 248
Sam Loyd
Chess Monthly 1859



Mate in 3
b) -Se1 Mate in 4
c) -Se1, -Ph2
Mate in 5

No. 245: That was an odds game. White started the game without wRa1 nor wRh1; Rh3 is a promoted piece. Therefore White retracts the move '0-0' (without wRh1) and puts the king on e1. Then he plays 1.'0-0-0' (without wRa1) and puts the king on c1 followed by 1...Ka1 2.Ra3#. Crazy.
No. 245 completely anticipates the well-known problem by *K. Fabel* from 1949 (P0004043).

No. 246: Take a careful look at the black pawns. Yes, there are nine. So one must be removed and here are the nine solutions:
(1) -Pa7 and 1.Qb6#
(2) -Pb7 and 1.Sc6#
(3) -Pc4 and 1.Qb4#
(4) -Pd3 and 1.Qe4#
(5) -Pe3 and 1.B×f2#
(6) -Pf7 and 1.Se6#
(7) -Pf2 and 1.B×e3#
(8) -Pg6 and 1.Rg4#
(9) -Ph3 and 1.Rh4#
Cf. P0002015 and P1097750.

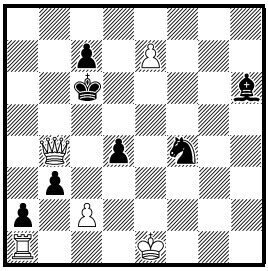
No. 247: With Sg6! Solution: **1.f7!** K×g6 (the knight is gone) and 2.f8S# (the knight is back again).
Cf. P1182118.

No. 248: 'King Charles XII at Bender' is the title of *Sam Loyd's* famous story on this problem. In it, Charles XII of Sweden is besieged by the Turks at Bender in 1713. He sets his minister, C. A. Grothusen, the task of solving the three-mover when a Turkish bullet shatters the window and sweeps away the knight. Grothusen jumps up, but Charles calmly asks him to solve the problem without the knight in 4 moves. The minister has barely thought about it when another bullet flies through the window and sweeps away the pawn h2. But even now Charles remains calm and asks Grothusen to solve the problem without knight and pawn in 5 moves.
a) 1.R×g3 B×g3/B×e1 2.Sf3/Rh3+ B∼/Bh4 3.g4#
b) 1.h2×g3 Be3 2.Rg4 Bg5 3.Rh4+ B×h4 4.g4#
c) 1.Rb7 Be3 2.Rb1 Bg5 3.Rh1+ Bh4 4.Rh2 g3×h2 5.g4# or
1...Bg1 2.Rb1 Bh2 3.Re1 Kh4 4.Kg6 ∼ 5.Re4#.

Pal Benkő added a wRg4 to the start position with the stipulation 'Mate in 2' and the solution 1.R4g5+ h6×g5 2.Rh7# or 1...Kh4 2.Sf3#. Thus he created a quadruplet: a) #2, b) -Rg4 #3, c) -Rg4, -Se1 #4, d) -Rg4, -Se1, -Ph2 #5. The great *Loyd* missed this chance of four problems and three bullets!

A New Year's Eve wager

No. 249
Werner Keym
Stuttgarter Zeitung
31.12.2005



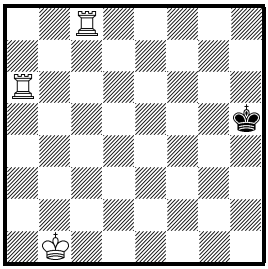
Mate in 3 without moving the queen

A New Year's Eve game down at the chess club is just coming to an end. Suddenly White wagers a bottle of cognac that he can mate in 3 without moving the Queen. The only mating sequence Black can see is 1.e8Q+ Kd5 2.Qb7+ c6 3.Qb×c6#, so he accepts the wager. White proudly shows what he has thought up: 1.e8Q+ Kd5 2.c4+ d4×c3 e.p. 3.Qe8-e4#. But Black objects, because he can plainly see that Qe8-e4 is a Q-move. White replies that he said 'without moving the Queen', meaning the Q already on b4. Opinions are divided on the matter. At this point a spectator intervenes and wagers that White can indeed mate in 3 without any Queen-move at all. Who wins the cognac, White, Black, or the spectator?

Solution of no. 250
The four men stand on B1, A6, C8, H5, which gives B-A-C-H and the year of his birth 1-6-8-5. If you invert the position you get BACH and 8314, and if you reflect it you get GHFA and 1685. Both of these are musicologically unsound.

A problem for musicians?

No. 250
Werner Keym
Die Schwalbe 2009 (v)



Mate in 2
Why would an inversion or a reflection of this position be musicologically unsound?

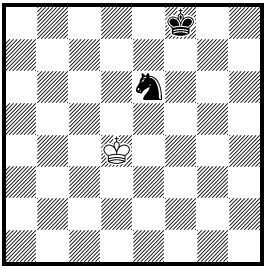
At the conclusion of a chess evening a lover of both problems and music shows an easy two-mover. The mating sequence is quickly found: 1.Rg8 Kh4 2.Rh6#. 'That's simple,' says the problem-lover, 'but there is another puzzle. If you invert or reflect this position, you can certainly still mate in two, but the musicological significance is lost. Is that simple as well?'

Solution of no. 249
The spectator. White can mate himself in 3 moves! 1.e8Q+ Kd5 2.c4+ d4×c3 e.p. 3.0-0-0+ Sd3#.
Hey presto, a Valladao for New Year's Eve!

Annexe: Solver and Composer

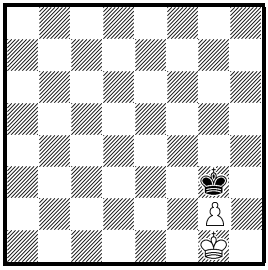
The stipulation **Illegal Cluster** (created by *T.R. Dawson* in 1933) means that the solver has to add certain pieces to the incomplete diagram position in such a way that an illegal position arises which becomes legal by the removal of any of the pieces (except the kings). So the first aim of an Illegal Cluster is to produce illegality. Illegal Clusters do not know idle pieces per definitionem. And **the solver is a 'composer'**.

A
Thomas R. Dawson
The Problemist 1933



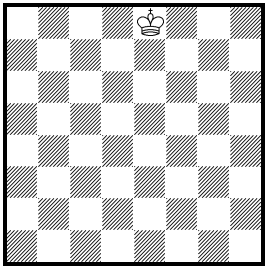
Add a black rook and a black bishop for an Illegal Cluster.

B
Thomas R. Dawson
The Problemist 1933



Add 6 black pawns for an Illegal Cluster.

C
Werner Keym
Die Schwalbe 2018 (v)



Add the black king and 10 white rooks for an Illegal Cluster.

D: ***Werner Keym***, *Die Schwalbe 2023 (v). Construct an Illegal Cluster with the kings, two officers and two pawns. If you remove a certain piece, a position arises in which can be proved that the black king, in the course of the retro-play, has captured at least once.*

E: ***Werner Keym***, *Die Schwalbe 2024. Construct an Illegal Cluster with the white king, rook, bishop, two pawns and the black king. Only a) the kings, b) the pawns are on light squares. 2 solutions.*

See the (a)symmetrical Illegal Cluster P1000555.

'Any chess problem can in principle be solved by trial, error and exhaustion, provided only that the problem is exhausted before the solver.'
(*Beasley*)

A: See position **{A}**. It becomes legal if you remove R or B or S.

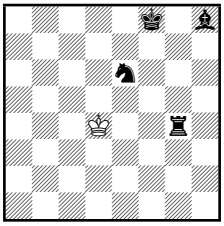
B: See position **{B}**. The black pawns must have captured 15 white pieces. That is illegal, but legal if you remove one of the seven pawns.

C: See position **{C}**. It becomes legal if you remove one rook, e.g. Rc6/Re6/Rf7 (last move: c7×Sd8R+) or Rc8 (last move: c7×Rd8R+).

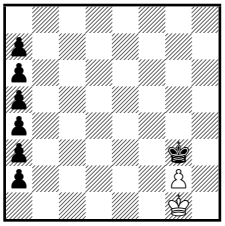
D: See position **{D}**. Before w0-0-0+ there was no legal black move. That works if you remove Bh1 (last moves: w0-0-0+ bK×Xg1 creating a white piece which has just moved). There is no piece on the board, the kind of the officers and the colour of officers and pawns are unknown, yet the position is unique. A lucky find.

E: a) See the mirrored positions **{Ea1}** and **{Ea2}**. Easy.
b) See the totally different positions **{Eb1}** and **{Eb2}**. Difficult.

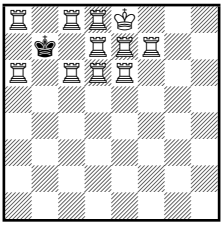
{A}



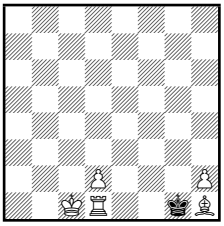
{B}



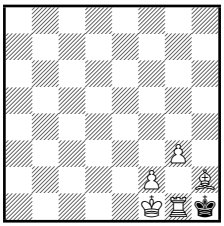
{C}



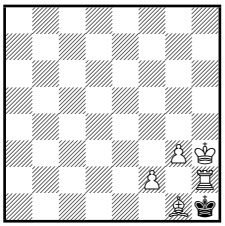
{D}



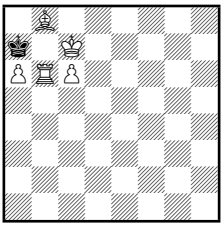
{Ea1}



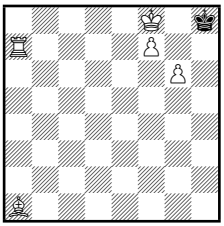
{Ea2}



{Eb1}



{Eb2}



Glossary

PDB (Chess Problem Database Server): a free collection of chess compositions. See https://pdb.dieschwalbe.de.
Example for a problem: P1143702 (= no. 2)

YACPDB (Yet Another Chess Problem Database): a free collection of chess compositions. See www.yacpdb.org.
Example for a problem: #3921 (= no. 2)

(v): later version of a problem/study
(c): later correction of a problem/study

Cook: a second solution making the problem/study unsound
Dual: a second continuation or line of play making the problem/study unsound or reducing its value

The **real play** comprises the moves executed in the course of the solution. The **virtual play** comprises possible moves, especially in (thematical) tries and in set play. In the **set play** Black moves first in a directmate or selfmate problem, White in a helpmate problem; the same party is mated.

Retrograde analysis or **retroanalysis**: process of proving what the 'history' of a given position must have been (e.g. earlier moves which do not permit castling)

The **genesis of the position** states the important moves from the initial position to the diagram position; these moves need not be unique.

Miniature: problem with at most 7 pieces
Letztform: best and unsurpassable realization

Bohemian problems are about beautiful mating positions; e.g. in a *model mate* each square in the black king's field is blocked or guarded only once {19E}.

Logical problems are about the reasons for the moves leading to the solution. White's immediate *main plan* is unsuccessful, but after the execution of a *foreplan* it works {21}.

Strategic problems generally present 'variations on a theme' {6}.
Some problems are logical as well as strategic {45}.

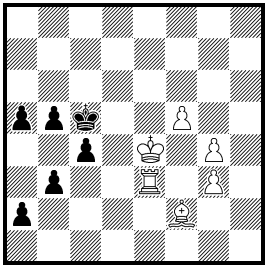
Codex for Chess Composition

Article 15 – First move [since 1974]
If the first move does not lie with the conventional party . . . , this should either be indicated in the stipulation or deducible from retroanalysis.

Article 16 — Castling and En-passant capture [since 2009]
(1) Castling convention. Castling is permitted unless it can be proved that it is not permissible.
(2) En-passant convention. An en-passant capture on the first move is permitted only if it can be proved that the last move was the double step of the pawn which is to be captured.
(3) Partial Retrograde Analysis (PRA) convention. Where the rights to castle and/or to capture en-passant are mutually dependent, the solution consists of several mutually exclusive parts. All possible combinations of move rights, taking into account the castling convention and the en-passant convention, form these mutually dependent parts. If in the case of mutual dependency of castling rights a solution is not possible according to the PRA convention, then the Retro-Strategy (RS) convention should be applied: whichever castling is executed first is deemed to be permissible.
(4) Other conventions should be expressly stipulated, for example if in the course of the solution an en-passant capture has to be legalised by subsequent castling (a posteriori (AP) convention).

See www.janko.at/Retros/Glossary/Castling-and-En-passant.htm.

Werner Keym
Die Schwalbe 2021
To Ralf Binnewirtz
on his 70th anniversary



Helpmate in 2
Duplex

I dedicated this problem to *Ralf Binnewirtz*, who has been a great support to me with my chess books, on his 70th birthday. The black pieces form the number 7, the white the number 0. When you publish this problem, please state his name.

Duplex means:
a) Black to move is mated by White.
b) White to move is mated by Black.

The solution is on p. 143.

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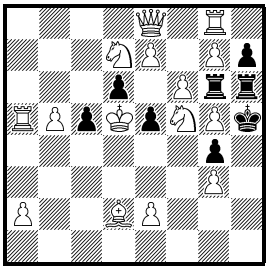
Index of names

W. Wolf
Deutsches Wochenschach 1911
Version W. Keym 2021



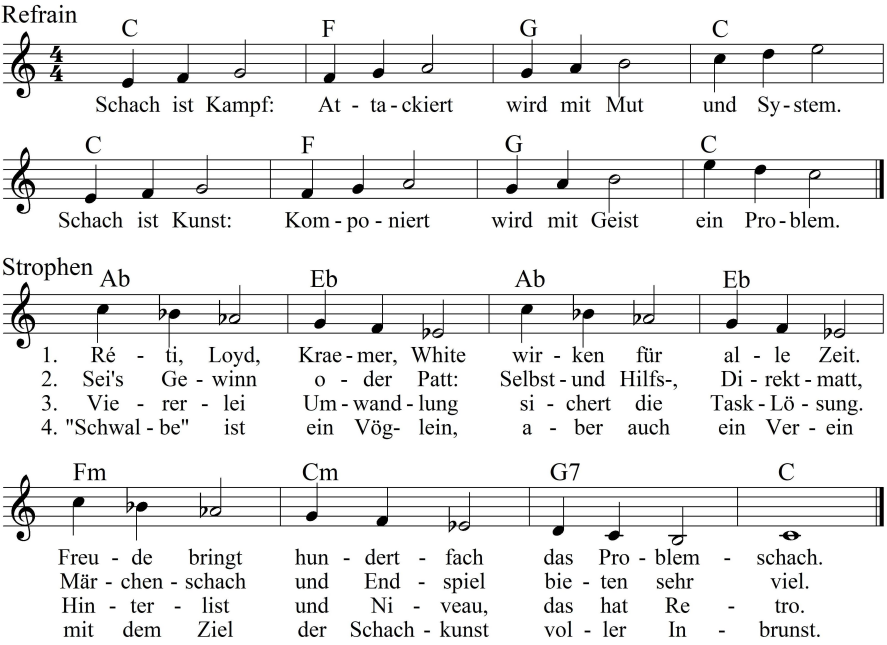
Mate in 3

The solution is on p. 143.

‘Problems, problems, problems, all day long.
Will my problems work out right or wrong?’
(*The Everly Brothers*)

Index of themes

Problemschach-Song



Text (v) und Musik: Werner Keym 2009

Problem Chess Song

Chess is fight: attacking with courage and system.
Chess is art: composing a problem with spirit.

1. Réti, Loyd, Kraemer, White work for all time.
Problem chess brings joy a hundredfold.

2. Be it win or stalemate: self- and help-, direct mate,
fairy chess and endgame offer a great deal.

3. Fourfold promotion secures the task solution.
Cunning and level, that's what retro has.

4. "Schwalbe" is a birdie, but also an association
with the goal of chess art full of fervour.

Translation: Frederic Friedel

Solution (p. 135): **a) 1.Kb4** Re2 2.Kc3 Be1#, **b) 1.Be1** a1Q 2.Rf3 Qd4#.

Solution (p. 139): **1.b5×c6 e.p.!** e4 2.Se3 K×g5 3.K×d6#.
Six squares are being cleared! The last move was c7-c5, not b6×Bc5 since only the light-squared bishop is missing. The original position from 1911 is wQb6, wBe8, -Pa2 (P0005860); the original stipulation is 'Mate in 3 by the Ra5 which does not move'.

64 and more

Patient: Will I live to be eighty, doctor?

Doctor: How old are you now?
Patient: Sixty-four.

Doctor: Do you drink?
Patient: Not very much.

Doctor: Do you smoke?
Patient: Not at all.

Doctor: Do you do any womanizing?
Patient: Certainly not, doctor.

Doctor: Do you like playing chess, by any chance?
Patient: No, doctor, I don't.

Doctor: Then why do you want to live till eighty?

The End

After the game the king and the pawn
go into the same box.