

Franz Pachl 75 Jubilee Tournament, being 239th Schwalbe Thematic Tourney

Preface by Tournament Director

To mark Franz Pachl's 75th birthday on 8th January 2026, "Schwalbe" organised a thematic tournament. Required were problems with exactly two fairy conditions, e. g. Anticirce and Circe or take&make and Symmetry Circe, etc. Fairy pieces were allowed. The solving program used had to be specified. If there were priority conflicts between the various fairy conditions, these had to be specified. There were two sections:

A) Helpmates in 2–4 moves

B) Helpselfmates in 2–4 moves

Franz Pachl took on the role of judge. The competition was announced in the October 2024 issue (328). By the closing date on 8th July 2025, 48 problems had been submitted by 19 authors of 8 countries with A) 31 and B) 17 problems being assigned:

Michael Barth (22, 23, 24, 25, 26*), Stephan Dietrich (2, 3, 4), Frank Fiedler (43,44, 45, 46, 47, 48), Norbert Geissler (18*), Armin Geister (20,27), Theodoros Giakatis (28*,29*), Hubert Gockel (30,31,32,33,34), Ján Golha (16,21), Maeshima Hiroaki (15), Ralf Krätschmer (17*,18*,19*), Rolf Kohring (42), Rainer Kuhn (5,6), Juraj Lörinc (1,13), Cosme Brull Mayol (35,36), Manfred Nieroba (7,8,9,10), Kostas Prentos (28*,29*), Pierre Tritten (11,12,14), Sven Trommler (26*,37,38,39,40,41), Dieter Werner (17*,18*,19*), (*=joint problems).

It is interesting to note that when using exactly two fairy conditions, WinChloe v4.09 and Popeye v4.93 were able to test exactly 26 problems correctly. WinChloe alone was able to verify 6 problems and Popeye alone 16.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all participants, as well as to the judge Franz Pachl for quickly preparing the award. I would like to send my congratulations to the successful authors. The problems that did not receive awards are once again available to participants. After the three-month period for objection, the prize money, which has been increased to 400 € by the judge, will be paid to the prize winners. Non-Schwalbe members should please contact the treasurer for bank details.

Rainer Kuhn

Award of 239th Thematic Tourney of Schwalbe by Franz Pachl (Ludwigshafen)

When Rainer Kuhn informed me that he was planning to organise a tournament to mark my 75th birthday, I began to consider requesting helpmates and helpselfmates with exactly two fairy conditions. I had recently been working intensively on composing such problems and was curious to see what combinations other authors would come up with. On 21st July 2025, he sent me 48 problems (31 helpmates and 17 helpselfmates). One helpmate (No. 45) was not thematic, leaving 47 problems (17 of which featured fairy pieces). I had to deal with 34 different conditions, some of which were new to me. The overall quality was quite good and I had no problems finding prize problems. It was difficult for me to draw a line between commendation and failure. Based on the 24 miniatures submitted, I decided to evaluate them separately in both sections. Here are my reasons for not including the following three problems in the award:

No. 28: Probably by the same author as No. 29. It has the same Anticirce-specific batteries (here with Lion instead of Leo and 6 pieces less) and white promotions to queen and rook, but without failing attempts with specific defence occupying the rebirth square of the fairy pieces. Therefore, I give preference to No. 29.

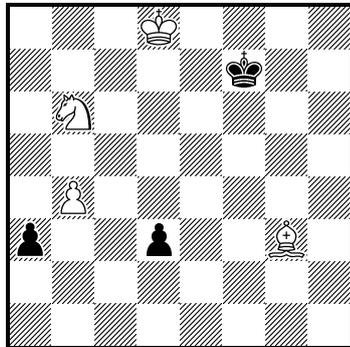
No. 32: This is also probably by the same author as No. 33, as it shows the same idea. Since No. 33 provides a specific reason for the first white move, making it much more subtle, I have decided to

include No. 33 in the award.

No. 43: Here, too, it seems likely that this problem is by the same author as No. 44. With the same idea, I have decided in favour of No. 44 because of the better multiple twinning.

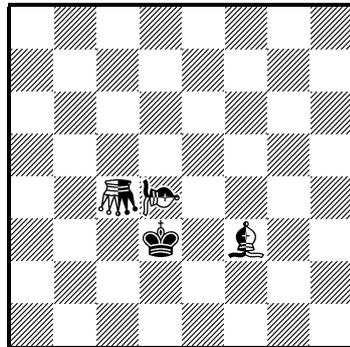
Section A1, Helpmates 2–4 moves – Miniatures

No. 12 Pierre Tritten
Section A1
1st Prize



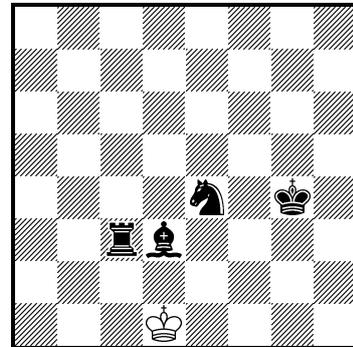
h#2.5 2;1.1;... (4+3)
Couscous Antircirce
Antimarscirce

No. 21 Ján Golha
Section A1
2nd Prize



h#3 4.1;1.1;... (0+1+3)
take&make (Priority)
Circe Parrain
♁ = Contragrasshopper
♁ = Gnu

No. 38 Sven Trommler
Section A1
1st Honourable Mention



h#3 b) ♔g4 → f4 (1+4)
c) ♔g4 → b5
Norsk Sjakk
Anti-Andernachchess

1st Prize (60 €): No. 12 by Pierre Tritten

I) 1...Bb2 2.a:b2[bP → c1=B] Kd1 3.Bc5 b:c5[wP → f8=Q]#

II) 1...Se2 2.d:e2[bP → b1=R] Bh6 3.Ra5 b:a5[wP → h8=S]#

The best miniature shows a mixed-colour AUW with a change of function of the white officers as sacrifice and guarding piece. The sacrifice activates the black pawns, which, after being promoted into a bishop and rook, serve as sacrifices for the wPb4, which promoted into a queen and knight on their original squares to checkmate.

2nd Prize (40 €): No. 21 by Ján Golha

I) 1.K:c4-f4 nGNf5[+nCGe5] 2.nKGg3 nCgb8 3.K:f5-e8 nBc6[+nGNc8]#

II) 1.Ke3 nKGh4 2.K:f3-h5 nCGh6[+nBf5] 3.nGN:f5-h7 nCG-h8[+nBf7]#

III) 1.nCGh4 nBe2+ 2.K:e2-h5 nGNe7[+nBf5] 3.nGN:f5-h3 nCGh2[+nBf3]#

IV) 1.nGNe2 nCG:e2-g1 2.nBd5[+nGNc4] nPc6 3.K:c4-d1 nBf3[+nGNf1]#

Fourfold echo in the mate positions in a Wenigsteiner without the wK. An astonishing find.

1st Honourable Mention: No. 38 by Sven Trommler

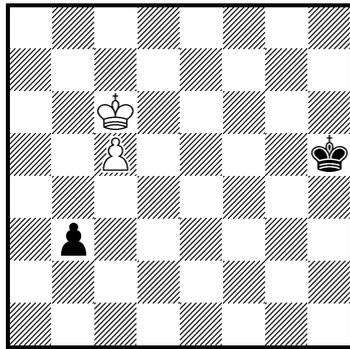
a) 1.Sf6=Q=w Ke1 2.Bf5=R=w Kf2 3.Rc8=B=w Rh5=B=b#

b) 1.Bb5=R=w Ke2 2.Rf3=B=w Kd3 3.Sf2=Q=w Bg4=R=b#

c) 1.Tc8=B=w Kc1 2.Sc3=Q=w Kb2 3.Bb1=R=w Ka3#

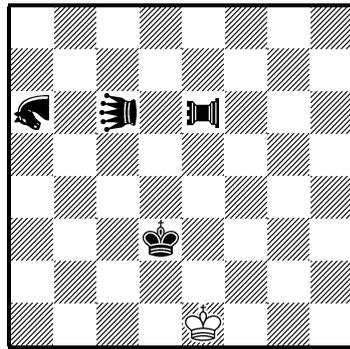
Cyclical battery formation, with each of the three officers appearing as rear battery pieces. Of course, a complete functional change cycle was not feasible, as the wQ cannot be used as a front battery piece. This function was taken over by the wK.

No. 40 Sven Trommler
Section A1
2nd Honourable Mention



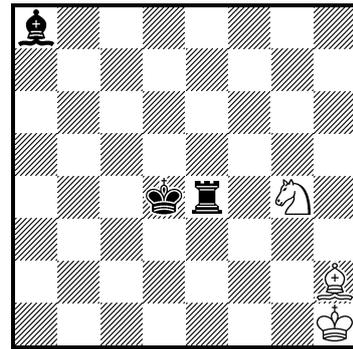
h#4 b) ♠b3 → d6 (2+2)
take&make (Priority)
Equipollentscirce

No. 37 Sven Trommler
Section A1
3rd Honourable Mention



h#3 b) ♚d3 → g4 (1+4)
c) ♚d3 → h8
Anti-Andernachchess
Mirror Antimarscirce
♁ = Eagle, ♂ = Moose
♔ = Sparrow

No. 35 Cosme Brull Mayol
Section A1
1st Commendation



h#3 b) ♙h2 → e1 (3+3)
take&make (Priority)
Circe Parrain

2nd Honourable Mention: No. 40 by Sven Trommler

a) 1.b2 Kb5 2.b1=S Kb4 3.Sc3 K:c3-a4[+bSb3] 4.S:c5-c6[+wPd8=Q] Qg5#

b) 1.d6 K:d5-d4[+bPe3] 2.Kh4 K:e3-e2[+bPf1=R] 3.Rd1 K:d1-d4[+bRc3] 4.R:c5-c6[+wPc8=Q] Qg4#

The only fourmover shows in minimal promotions of the black pawn to knight and rook, which transport the wPc5 to d8/c8 with promotion to queen. The checkmate position is absolutely specific, as the white queen cannot be captured by the black king thanks to Equipollentscirce. I would have liked to see a few more moves in a) that made use of the conditions.

3rd Honourable Mention: No. 37 by Sven Trommler

a) 1.EAe6-e8-f1=w EAf1-f1-c2=b 2.SWa6-a8-b6=w SWb6-b1-b2=b 3.Mc6-c8-d1=w Md1:b2#

b) 1.SWa6-a8-c7=w SWc7-c1-d5=b 2.Mc6-c8-f6=w Mf6:d5 3.EAe6-e8-d1=w EAd1-d1-f5=b#

c) 1.Mc6-c8-a5=w Ma5-a1-b7=b 2.EAe6-e8-f1=w+ EAf1:b7 3.SWa6-a8-a7=w SWa7-a1-h7=b#

Harmonious 5-stone cycle of sparrow, moose and eagle in the first, second and third moves with Mirror Antimarscirce specific mate-positions.

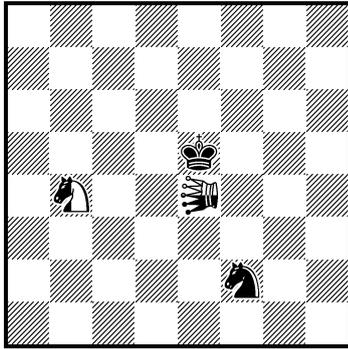
1st Commendation: No. 35 by Cosme Brull Mayol

a) 1.R:g4-e5+ B:e5-e3[+wSd5]+ 2.K:e3-a7[+bRb8] Sc7[+wBd5] 3.B:d5-b7+ Kg1[+wBc5]#

b) 1.R:e1-f2+ Kg1[+wBd1] 2.Bf3 K:f2-d2 3.B:g4-e5[+sKe4] Bb3[+wSe6]#

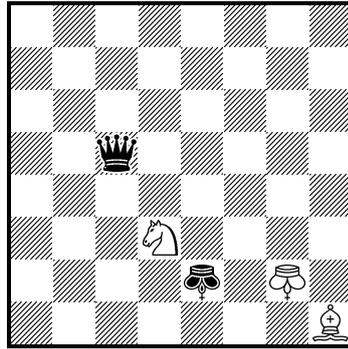
Two anti-identical but spectacular solutions with model mates.

No. 13 Juraj Lörinc
Section A1
2nd Commendation



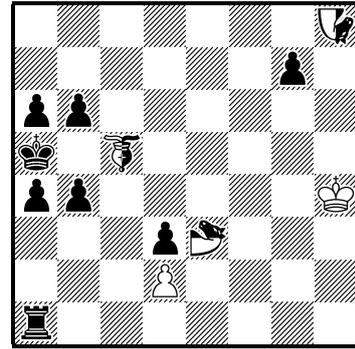
h#3 2.1;1.1;... (0+2+2)
Circe Parrain
Point Reflection
♁ = Lion

No. 44 Frank Fiedler
Section A1
3rd Commendation



h#2 b) ♔h1 → h2, (3+2)
c) ♔h1 → g6, d) ♔h1 → f7
Functionary Chess
♁♁ = Transmuting Kings

**No. 26 Michael Barth
Sven Trommler**
Section A2
1st Prize



h#2 3.1;1.1 (2+8+3)
Anticirce (Priority)
Volcanic Mirror Circe
♁ = Scorpion
♁ = Nightrider
♁ = Zebrarider

2nd Commendation: No. 13 by Juraj Lörinc

- I) 1.nSd5 nLI:f2 2.Ke6[+bSf3] nSc7 3.Kd5 nLle4#
II) 1.S:e4 nSc2[+nLlf2] 2.Sf6 nLlf7+ 3.Kd4 nLle5#

A fine chameleon echo in minimalist style. The knight block for the bK is quite appealing.

3rd Commendation: No. 44 by Frank Fiedler

- a) 1.Qf2+! Ke4 2.Qf1 Bf3#
b) 1.Qc7! Be5 2.Qc1 Sf4#
c) 1.Qf5! Sf2 2.Qh5 Bd3#
d) 1.Qc4! Bd5 2.Q:d3 Bf3#

4 mate-positions with the unobserved blocking bQ.

When replaying the solutions, I considered b) and c) to be unsolvable because the bK can move to squares controlled by unobserved white pieces in the mate-positions. However, the black king transmutes into a bishop or knight and thus controls these pieces. WinChloe v4.09 and Popeye v3.63 also see it this way and solve the problem correctly, but Popeye v4.93 strangely does not.

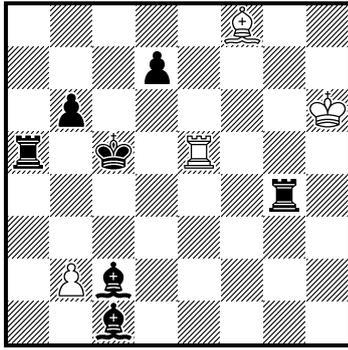
Section A2, Helpmates in 2–4 moves – Problems with more than 7 pieces

1st Prize (60 €): No. 26 by Michael Barth & Sven Trommler

- I) 1.nZRc6 nSO:c6[nSOc6 → c8][+nZRc8 → v] 2.Rc1 nSOc7[+nZRc8]#
II) 1.nSOd6 nN:d6[nNd6 → d8][+nSOd8 → v] 2.Rd1 nNc6[+nSOd8]#
III) 1.nNg6+ nZR:g6[nZRg6 → g8][+nNg8 → v] 2.Rg1 nZRc2[+nNg8]#

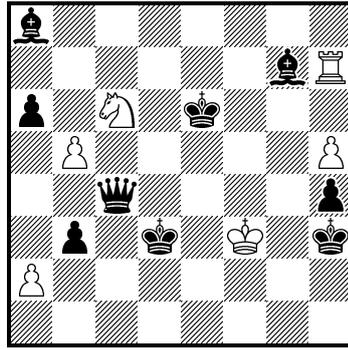
This is exactly what I wanted. A wonderful cycle with perfect interplay between the three neutral pieces. Cyclical volcano batteries are formed, with each neutral piece being used once as a front and rear piece, while remaining stationary to guard b5. The bR prevents the retreating piece from striking back by occupying the rebirth square. All in all, a success and the clear frontrunner.

No. 27 Armin Geister
Section A2
2nd Prize



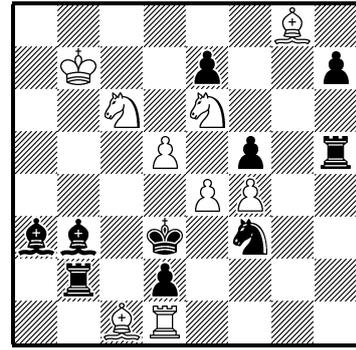
h#2.5 2;1.1;... (4+7)
Anticirce, Isardam

No. 30 Hubert Gockel
Section A2
3rd Prize



h#2.5 2;1.1;... (6+9)
Breton adverse
Royal Dynasty

No. 31 Hubert Gockel
Section A2
4th Prize



h#2 2.1;1.1 (9+10)
Breton adverse
Relegation Chess

2nd Prize (40€): No. 27 by Armin Geister

I) 1...b4 2.Bb3 b:a5[a2]+ 3.Ba3 a:b3[b2]#

II) 1...b3 2.Bg5 K:g5[Ke1] 3.Rga4 b:a4[a2]#

A profound strategy, peppered with Isardam effects and a good combination of the two conditions. The wPb2 plays an important role here. It opens the spectacle with a single and double move and, at the end, blocks the lines of bB/bR to the rebirth square of wB/wR. The seeming parries of bPd7 with interfering the lines of wB/wR are a substantial addition.

3rd Prize (20 €): No. 30 by Hubert Gockel

I) 1...a:b3[-bPh4] 2.Be5 (Bd?) S:e5[-bBa8] 3.Q:b3[-wPh5] S:d3[-bKe6]#

II) 1...b:a6[-bPh4] 2.Bd4 (Be5?) S:d4[-bBa8] 3.Q:a6[-wPh5] S:e6[-bKd3]#

The wRh7 shall checkmate bKh3. To do this, wPh5/bPh4 and two kings must be removed from the board. I really like the specific unpin of the wSc6 by bBg7, which is captured by the white knight to avoid a dual, thereby removing the pinning piece on a8. If it sacrifices itself on the wrong square, lines are opened up by the bQ that interferes with the checkmate. Two colourful, entertaining solutions with extensive use of fairy conditions.

4th Prize: No. 31 by Hubert Gockel

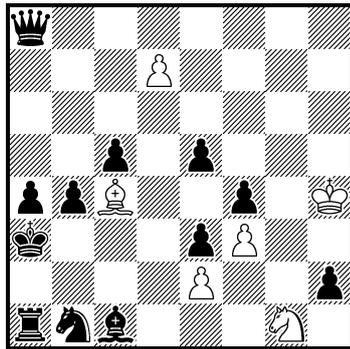
I) 1.K:e4[-wPf4] B:d2[-bPh7][d2=P] 2.Rh7=P B:h7[-bPf5]#

II) 1.K:e4[-wPd5] R:d2[-bPe7][d2=B] 2.Be7=P Sc5#

(2.Bc5? S:c5[-sBb3]#?? Selfcheck!)

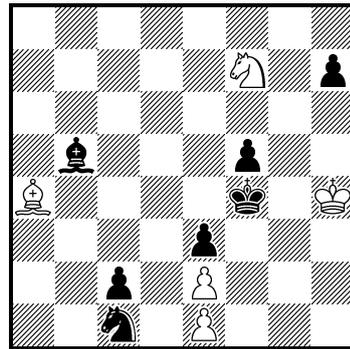
A good strategy with quite clever and specific guard of the d5 and f4 squares. In order to bring the e3 square under control, wB/wR degrade themselves to a pawn on d2, which prevents the bK on d5 or f4 from capturing due to selfcheck, and also remove a bP on the 7th rank so that the black long-range pieces disturbing the mate can degrade themselves into a pawn there in "Pronkin style".

No. 17 Dieter Werner
Ralf Krättschmer
 Section A2
 1st Honourable Mention



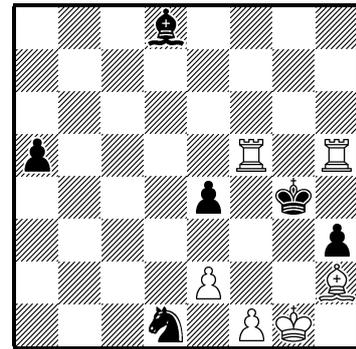
h#2 b) + ♗b2 (6+12)
 c) + ♘d1
 Breton adverse (Priority)
 Anticirce

No. 34 Hubert Gockel
 Section A2
 2nd Honourable Mention



h#2 2.1;1.1 (5+7)
 Breton adverse, Influencer

No. 33 Hubert Gockel
 Section A2
 1st Commendation



h#2 b) ♘d1 = ♗d1 (6+6)
 Breton adverse, Influencer

1st Honourable Mention: No. 17 by Dieter Werner & Ralf Krättschmer

- a) 1.h:g1=B[bL → f8] d8=B 2.Be7+ B:e7[-bBc1][wB → c1]#
 b) 1.h:g1=S[bS → b8] d8=S 2.Sc6 S:c6[-bSb1][wS → b1]#
 c) 1.Sb2 d8=R 2.h:g1=R[bR → h8]+ R:h8[-bRa1][wR → a1]#

Nice ¾ Babson. In order for the white promoted piece to checkmate by rebirth, Black must promote to the piece that disappears from the 1st rank thanks to Breton adverse after being captured by White.

2nd Honourable Mention: No. 34 by Hubert Gockel

- I) 1.Sb3[a4=P] Sg5 2.B:e2[-wPa4][e1=B] Bg3#
 II) 1.Be8[f7=P] Bc6 2.S:e2[-wPf7][e1=S] Sd3[e2=P]#

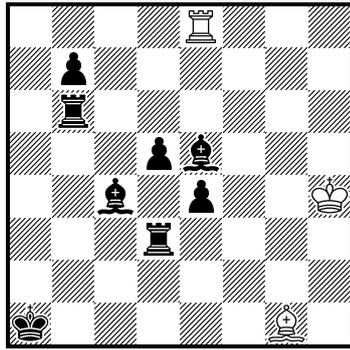
Breton adverse prevents Black from transforming the wPe1 into a mating piece, because to do so he would have to capture the wPe2, and the wPe1 would then be history. Therefore, he first transforms a white officer into a pawn, which is then removed from the board. This is simply a beautiful idea with a reciprocal change of function between the white and black officers in an elegant construction

1st Commendation: No. 33 by Hubert Gockel

- a) 1.Rh8? 2.Sf2[f1=S] 2.Se3[f2=P]# ?? illegal because of selfcheck!
 1.Bh4[h5=P]! Kh1! 2.Sf2[f1=S]+ Se3[f2=P]#
 b) 1.Rf8? 2.B:e2[-wPf1]! and the wPf1, which should have become a white bishop, is gone!
 1.Bf6[f5=P]! e3! 2.Be2 B:e2[-bBf6]#

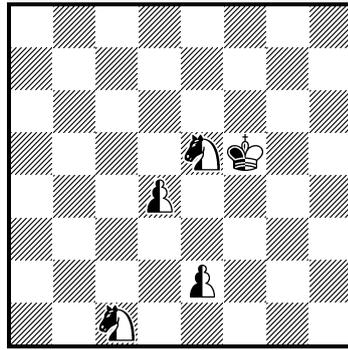
Because of Breton adverse, the two white rooks do not guard each other. White has no time to move the rooks away, as he has to deal with an obstacle in the way. Therefore, Black degrades the rooks to pawns and White clears the obstacles out of the way (in a) an illegal selfcheck by moving his king away, in b) a move with the wPe2, so that the white wPf1 is not taken off the board and can be transformed into a bishop).

No. 14 Pierre Tritten
Section A2
2nd Commendation



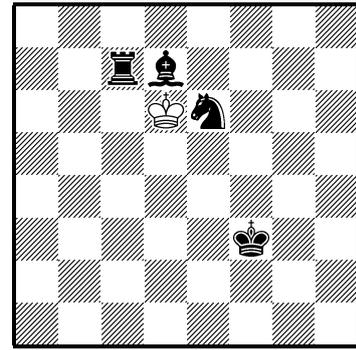
h#2.5 2;1.1;... (3+8)
KoBul Kings, Kamikaze

No. 16 Ján Golha
Section B1
Prize



hs#3.5 6;1.1;... (0+0+5)
take&make (Priority)
Circe Parrain

No. 41 Sven Trommler
Section B1
Honourable Mention



hs#4 b) ♔f3 → g3 (1+4)
Chameleon Chess, Masand

2nd Commendation: No. 14 by Pierre Tritten

I) 1...B:b6[bK=rR;-wB] 2.Bh8 Ra8+ 3.rR:a8[wK=rR] rR:h8[brR=brB]#

II) 1...R:e5[bK=rB;-wR] 2.Rf6 Bd4+ 3.rB:d4[wK=rB] rB:f6[brB=brR]#

Analogue solutions with function change of Rb6/Be5. In I), the bK is first converted into a royal rook and then into a royal bishop during the mating move; in II), it is the other way around. It's a shame about the cage in the middle of the board, which walls in the rB.

Section B1, Helpselfmates in 2–4 moves – Miniatures

Prize (60 €): No. 16 by Ján Golha

I) 1...nSf3 2.nP:f3-d2 nSb3[+nSe5] 3.nP:e5-d3 nKe6[+nSd6] 4.nK:d6-c4+ nK:b3-c1#

II) 1...nSb3 2.nS:d4-d3 nS:d3-f4[+nPe3] 3.nKe5[+nSc3] nSe6 4.nK:e6-d4+ nK:c3-d1#

III) 1...nSd3 2.nP:d3-f2 nSd3[+nSe5] 3.nP:e5-f3 nKg6[+nSf6] 4.nK:f6-e4+ nK:d3-e1#

IV) 1...nS:e2-e4 2.nSg6[+nPg3] nPg2 3.nPd5 nP:e4-g3 4.nK:g6-f4[+nSe3]+ nK:e3-f1#

V) 1...nSd7 2.nS:e2-e1 nKe6[+nPd3] 3.nSc2 nSb4 4.nK:d7-c5+ nK:b4-c2#

VI) 1...nKe6 2.nP:e5-f3 nSd3[+nSf7] 3.nP:d3-f4 nKe7[+nSd4] 4.nK:f7-e5+ nK:d4-e2#

The fact that these sixfold echo mates work flawlessly, with only five neutral pieces and two fairy conditions, borders on a minor miracle. It took me quite some effort to understand why the nK is checkmated at the end. A great feat of construction.

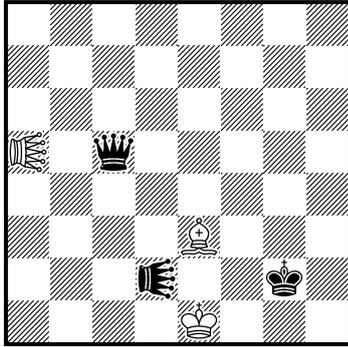
Honourable Mention: No. 41 by Sven Trommler

a) 1.Ke5 Sf4=B+ 2.Kd5 Bf5=R[f4=w]+ 3.Be5=R Rg5=Q 4.Re3=Q[g5=w]+ Rc5=Q[e3=b]#

b) 1.Ke7 Sg5=B+ 2.Kf8 Bf5=R[g5=w]+ 3.Bf6=R Rh5=Q 4.Rf3=Q[h5=w]+ Rf7=Q[f3=b][h5=b]#

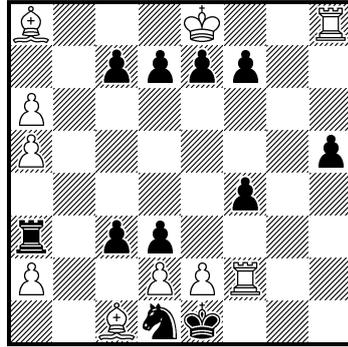
Harmonious puzzle in 5 pieces. It is surprising that in both solutions the same pieces move in the same order.

No. 2 **Stephan Dietrich**
Section B1
Commendation



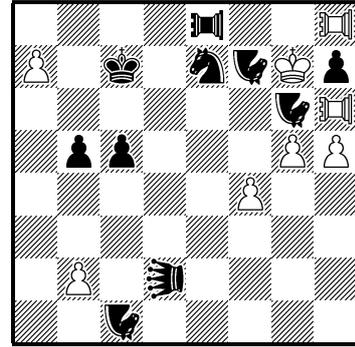
hs#3 2.1;1.1;... (3+3)
take&make (Priority), Circe
♙♚ = Locust

No. 18 **Dieter Werner**
Ralf Krätschmer
Norbert Geissler
Section B2
1st Prize



hs#2.5 (10+11)
b) ♔e8 → d8
Anticirce, Breton adverse

No. 29 **Kostas Prentos**
Theodoros Giakatis
Section B2
2nd Prize



hs#3 2.1;1.1;... (8+10)
Anticirce (Typ Calvet)
(Priority), Circe
♞ = Nightrider
♙♚ = Leo, ♛♜ = Pao

Commendation: No. 2 by Stephan Dietrich

I) 1.B:c5-d5[+bQd8]+ Kh2 2.Kf1 Qc7 3.LO:c7-h4[+bQd8]+ Q:d5-h1#

II) 1.Bd4 HE:d4-a2[+wBc1] 2.Bd2 Kg1 3.HE:c5-h1[+vQd8]+ HE:d2-f1[+wBc1]#

Very entertaining with the black pieces changing function as mating and guarding pieces.

Section B2, Helpselfmates in 2–4 moves – Problems with more than 7 pieces

1st Prize (60 €): No. 18 by Dieter Werner, Ralf Krätschmer & Norbert Geissler

a) 1...h4! 2.R:h4[wRh4 → a1][+bPd7] R:a5[bRa5 → h8][+wPd2] 3.Bd2+ c:d2[bPd2 → d7][+wBa8]#

b) 1...f3! 2.B:f3[wBf3 → f1][+bPe7] R:a2[bRa2 → a8][+wPe2] 3.Re2+ d:e2[bPe2 → e7][+wRh8]#

This selfmate with a magnificent combination of Anticirce and Breton adverse impressed me the most. Here we see two original solutions with the removal and replacement of pieces on both sides in exemplary harmony and analogy, and the twin formation is also excellent. It is worth exploring the motivation behind each individual move.

2nd Prize (40 €): No. 29 by Kostas Prentos & Theodoros Giakatis

I) 1.a8=Q N:g5[bNg5 → g1][+wPg2] 2.Qa2 LE:a2[bLEa2 → a1][+wQd1] 3.Qd7+ N:d7[bNd7 → d1]#

1...LEa5? 2.Q:a5[wQa5 → d1][+bLEa1]?? – illegal selfcheck

1...Nfe5? 2.Qa2 LE:a2[bLEa2 → a1][+wQd1] 3.Qd7+ N:d7[sNd7 → d1]++ 4.h:g6[wPg6 → g2][+sNg1]!

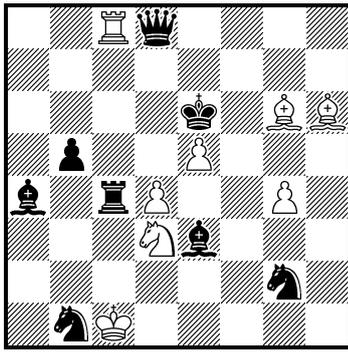
II) 1.a8=R LE:g5[bLEg5 → g1][+wPg2] 2.Rd8 N:d8[bNd8 → d1][+wRa1] 3.Ra7+ LE:a7[bLEa7 → a1]#

1...Nd8? 2.R:d8[wRd8 → a1][+sNd1]?? – illegal selfcheck

1...LEe3? 2.Rd8 N:d8[sNd8 → d1][+wRa1] 3.Ra7+ LE:a7[bLEa7 → a1]++ 4.h:g6[wPg6 → g2][+sNg1]!

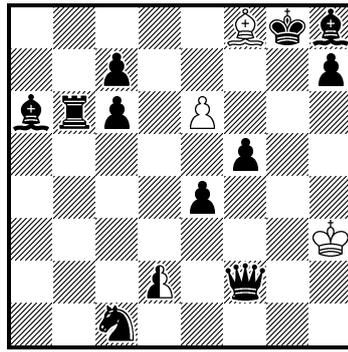
Excellent creations of Anticirce-specific batteries, which are forced to fire by the promoted white queen and white rook respectively. Why Black must capture wPg5 on the first move becomes clear when you look at the plausible failing attempts with interference of the battery lines. These fail due to a specific defence that occupies the rebirth square of the fairy pieces, which give double check. This is prevented in the solution, which is fabulous.

No. 25 Michael Barth
Section B2
3rd Prize



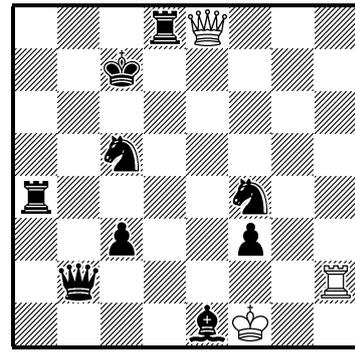
hs#3 b) ♞g2 → b7 (8+8)
Madrasi, Symmetry Circe

No. 42 Rolf Kohring
Section B2
Honourable Mention



hs#3.5 2;1.1;... (3+11+1)
Circe, Madrasi

No. 20 Armin Geister
Section B2
Commendation



hs#3 2.1;1.1;... (3+9)
Madrasi (Priority)
Functionary chess

3rd Prize (20 €): No. 25 by Michael Barth

a) 1.Be4 Qc7+ 2.R:c7[+sQf2] Sc3 3.Sc5+ R:c5[+wSf4]#

b) 1.Be8 Qg5+ 2.B:g5[+sQb4] Sd2 3.Sf4+ B:f4[+wSc5]#

I was hoping that there would be a problem involving Symmetry Circe, and this one is quite impressive. The wSd3 has its eye on the c5 and f4 squares, where it gives check in reciprocal exchange and is reborn after capture to force selfmate by interfering Madrasi lines. The black knight, offset in the twin, prevents it from leaving this line again. The fairy conditions shine by perfect interplay. Incidentally, Symmetry Circe prevents the bSc3 in a) from defending the check on c5 by capturing the wBe4.

Honourable Mention: No. 42 by Rolf Kohring

I) 1...nd1=nB 2.nBb3 Be2 3.nBd5 Sd3 4.e7+ c:d5[+nBf1]#

II) 1...nd1=nR 2.nRd8 Rb1 3.nRc8 Sb3 4.Bh6+ B:c8[+nRh1]#

Although Circe only intervenes in the mating move here, these are nevertheless two harmonious solutions in which the neutral battery rear piece is reborn – after being captured – on the 1st rank and the white piece cannot move away because of Madrasi. Before that, bB/bR move critically and are blocked by bS.

Commendation: No. 20 by Armin Geister

I) 1.Q:a4 Sfd3 (1...Sh3?) 2.Rf2 Q:f2+ 3.Qc2 Bd2# (3.Qa2? ZZ Bd2+ 4.K:f2!)

II) 1.R:b2 Ra1 2.Qh8 Bg3 (2...Bh4?) 3.Rb8 c2# (3.Rd2? ZZ c:d2+!)

One of the rare examples where mate is brought about by zugzwang. In a), a Madrasi line is interrupted, while in b), a line with functunary chess activation is opened. If the two black knights in b) were not superfluous, I would have ranked this problem one level higher.

With 50% of the problems awarded and 10 prizes, it was a very successful tournament. Many thanks to the authors; I thoroughly enjoyed working with their creations. I would like to thank Die Schwalbe for organising the tournament and my friend Rainer Kuhn for his excellent cooperation.

Franz Pachl

August 2025