

Variant Chess

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CHAKRA



This is a game that was invented by Christiaan Freeling and originally featured in issue 3 of *The Gamer* in 1981. It was also one of the variants in the book *100 Other Games to play on a Chessboard* by Stephen Addison published in 1983. To quote Mr. Freeling, "Chakra is a relatively orthodox chess-game. It is built in a logical, yet not entirely logical, way to create a home for a new piece. A supernumerary piece, as pieces that are not derived from normal chessmen are called in Fairy Chess, the Transmitter, is both source and justification of Chakra." (Mr. Freeling called his new piece the Transmitter which consists of two parts called chakras. Stephen Addison in his description of the game ignored the word 'transmitter').

The game is played on a normal 8x8 chessboard. Originally all the pieces were given new names. With the exception of two pieces Mr. Addison uses the existing chess piece names, although some of these have altered movements. I shall follow his lead.

Here are the rules with the original names of the pieces in brackets.

1) In place of a bishop, rook and 2 pawns, two new pieces are introduced.

2) The KING (Emperor) the QUEEN (Empress) and the KNIGHT (Ape) have the same movements and mode of capture as in normal chess.

3) The PAWN (Sword) has the same movements and mode of capture as in normal chess, *except* that there is no 'en passant' rule, and it may only be promoted to a piece *that has been captured*.

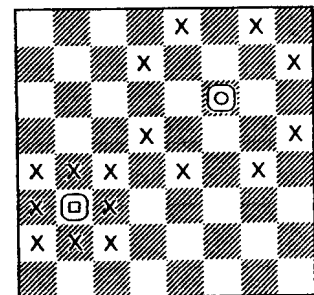
4) The ROOK (Samurai) has the option of moving any number of squares orthogonally, or one square diagonally. This is the same movement as the promoted Rook in Shogi.

5) The BISHOP (Monk) has the option of moving any number of squares diagonally, or one square orthogonally. This is the same movement as the promoted Bishop in Shogi.

Two new pieces are introduced.

6) The COURTESAN. Each player begins the game with two of these. She has the movement of the King, *and an additional power*. If the Courtesan is on the same vertical, horizontal or diagonal straight line as her King and there are no pieces on the line between them, she has the power of being able to move any number of squares along the straight line in either direction until she reaches the edge of the board or another piece.

7) The CHAKRA. Each player begins the game with two of these. Each chakra is basically a counter with a square drawn on one side and a circle on the other. A chakra with a circle showing may move as a knight. A chakra with a square showing may move as a king. At the beginning of the game all the chakras have the circle showing.



If any piece, (other than another chakra), could move to a square occupied by a chakra if the square were vacant, it may do so and come to rest on top of the chakra. In this case the chakra is unable to move until the piece on top of it has moved off it. A player's pieces may pass over a square containing a vacant chakra of the same colour, (*but not one of the opponent's*), as though it were empty.

The chakra is the only piece that cannot make a capture. It is also immune from capture by every piece except the opposing king. A chakra may only be captured if it is *vacant*, although a piece lying on top of a chakra may be captured as though the chakra were not there.

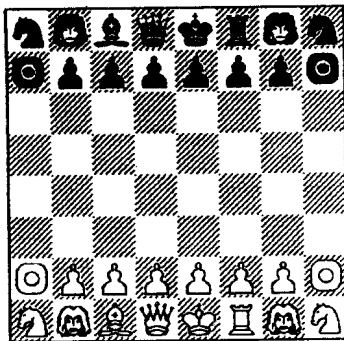
There are several factors that 'tie' a player's chakras together:

- a) If one chakra is occupied by its king, the opposing king may not capture or move on to the other chakra of the same colour.
- b) If one chakra is captured, the other chakra of the same colour is also removed, whether or not it is occupied. If the other chakra is occupied, the occupying piece remains on the board.
- c) If the player can move a piece on to one of his own chakras he may place it on the other instead, provided it is not occupied by another of his pieces.
- d) If a player's piece lies on a chakra and it could move to the other chakra of the same colour on its move, the player may miss his turn.

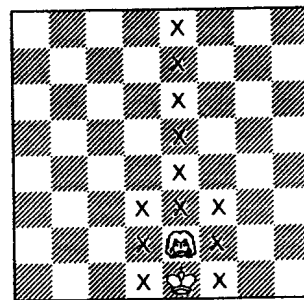
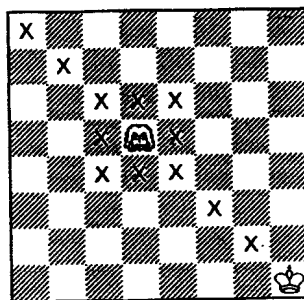
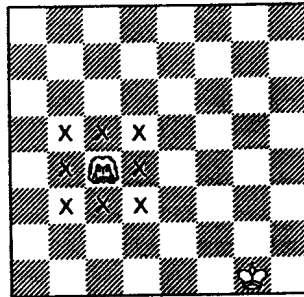
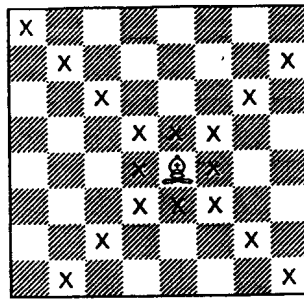
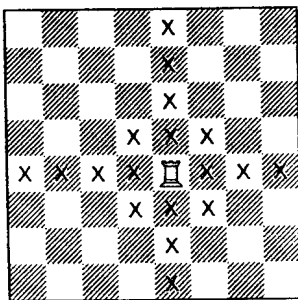
If on his turn a player moves a chakra, he may, at the end of the move, turn the chakra over. A player may also turn a chakra over instead of taking a turn.

N.B. If there are one or more vacant chakras, of either colour, on the connecting line between a Courtesan and her King, but no other pieces, the Courtesan still has the additional power of movement mentioned in (6), although she may not of course pass over an opposing chakra.

8) The initial positioning of the pieces is shown below.



The moves of the Rook, Bishop and Courtesan are shown.



Although Mr. Freeling has based his piece movements 'on mathematical principles rather than arbitrary choice', I feel it may well be possible, (and indeed better), to play the game with the rook and bishop having the same movements as in normal chess.

The game is interesting to play and leads to unusual situations. Although the rules relating to the chakra and courtesan may seem complicated, (I have tried to make the explanations as simple as I can!), most of the difficulties are overcome when one plays the game.

Perhaps readers could suggest possible rule changes, (variant Chakra?), also any games would be welcome. The game has similarities to...

Transporter chess

By Jens Nielsen

This was Invented by Torben Osted. Each player has a new piece, the transporter. Imagine it as a coin. In the startposition these are placed at e1/e8 under the kings. The transporter also moves like a king. It can move alone or bring the piece upon it with its move. A piece on a transporter can bring the transporter along or leave it when it moves. The move of a transporter is an ordinary move whenever it moves alone or with a piece. A transporter can never move your opponent's pieces; nor can the opponent's pieces move your transporter. Both the white and black transporter can be on the same square.

In the main it is probably in closed positions that you would move the transporter alone and 'lose' a tempo; if the mission is important enough it might be worth doing, for example to create a passed pawn, get both bishops on white/black squares, or avoid zugzwang. See also the following game, where a dangerous attacking piece is created.

A transporter can move freely all over the board; also under enemy pieces. A transporter cannot capture anything itself, only if it brings along a piece. It can, if it carries a rook for example, make a diagonal (*king*) move and capture, even though a rook doesn't move/capture with diagonal moves. A transporter can never be captured.

A pawn can be carried to the first rank; and no matter how often a pawn comes back to the second rank, it can make its doublemove.

The transporter cannot be promoted.

Here is the first game with these rules. Torben Osted was White. It was played in the second half of 1993. The position of the transporter is given in ().

- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.d4 Nxe4 4.dxe5 d5
- 5.Bd3 Nc6 6.h3 Bf5 7.Be3 Be7 8.c3 0-0(te8) 9.0-0(te1) Re8 10.Re1 Rd7(td7)
- 11.Qc2 Re6(te6)

The transporter has moved the rook to e6, and the bishop is still on e7. In a normal game it would now have been on f8.

- 12.Nd4 Nxd4 13.cxd4 Rg6(tg6)
- I hoped for the continuation 14.Kh2 Qd7 15.Nd2 Rh5(th5)! with the threat 16...Bxh3 etc. Even this very first game shows many possibilities using the transporter.

14.f3(?)

White now expected to win the Knight e4 or the Bishop f5, but...

14....Bh4 15.Re2(e2) Ng3

White had forgotten that Rg6(tg6) covers the bishop on f5; and now he has to move the rook again.

16.Rd2(d2)?

The transporter should have stayed on e2, so it could with a single move go to f3 and make the pawn attack/cover all its surrounding squares! The transporter could even move the pawn back to f2 and thereby repair the bad pawn chain.

In our next game we are using the transporter under a pawn much more. It has started with 1.(td2), and becomes a powerful piece which is cheap to sacrifice because its power - the transporter - is not lost, and can be used by another pawn or piece.

16....Bxd3 17.Qxd3 (tg5) 18.Nc3(?)

This was the last chance to move the transporter to e3. Now it comes too late.

18....(th4) 19.(te3) (tg3)

White's king cannot move now, and White's transporter is stopped. For example 20.(tf3) Nxf3(tf3)+ removes the capturing power of White's transporter and wins the exchange, or 20.Bf2(tf2) Nxf3(th3)+ 21.Kf1 Nxf2(tf2)+ wins the exchange.

Also note 20.Ne2 Nxf2(tf2) mate.

20.Rc2 Qd7

With the threat 21....Qxh3! 22.gxh3 Nf2(tf2)+ 23.Kh2 Rg2 mate.

21.Nxd5 Nxf3(th3)+

22.Ne7+! prevented Black from the queen sacrifice.

22.Kf1 Ng3(tg3)+

If now 23.Ke1,Nf4+

23.Kg1 Qxd5 24.Be4(te4)

White hopes at the least to get a powerful transporter/pawn with a strong pawn centre after 24....Nxe4 25.fxe4(25....Qe6? 26.f5(tf5)!), but...

24....Rh6!

If 25.Bxd5(td5) Nh2(th2)+! 26.Kxh2 Bf2 mate.

White saw 25.Bf5(tf5) Nxf5 26.Qxf5 Qxd4+ 27.Kf1 Bg3 (on the transporter!) 28.Qe4 Rh1+ 29.Ke2 Bf2(tf2) mate, so...

White resigns

Black had planned 25.Bf5(tf5) Bg5 26.Bh3(th3) Rxh3 27.gxh3 Nxf3(tf3)+ 28.Kf1 Ne3(te3)+ and White loses his queen.

Original articles, letters,
and comments will always be
welcomed from readers.
It would be helpful if anything
submitted for publication
could be printed.

ANGEL CHESS

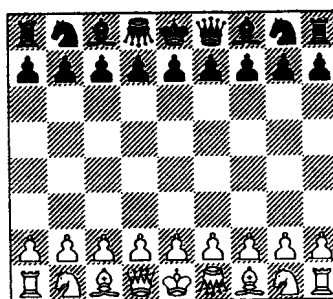
In the May 1934 issue of the *British Chess Magazine* there is an account of Angel Chess: a new variation. It is one of those variants that nothing was ever heard of again.

It was a variant that was placed on the market in America by Louis Paul d'Autremont, 1401 East First Street, Duluth, Minnesota, and was exhibited at the Chess Museum at a *Century of Progress, Chicago 1933*. The board is 9 by 8 squares, and the game has an extra piece called the Angel, which is placed at the right of the King and has the moves of the Queen and Knight combined.

There is a rule to the game, which is that a player cannot capture his opponent's Angel if in the next move his own Angel can be captured. This is to reduce the possibility of an even exchange of Angels, giving a chess game in which it is claimed the draw is practically eliminated. There is a supplementary rule that an Angel cannot check his opponent's King from a square threatened by any of his opponent's pieces except the King. A pawn, on reaching the eighth rank, must promote to an Angel. The remaining rules and moves of the pieces are the same as in chess.

The account in the *BCM* states that the average number of moves is less than in normal chess.

The initial set-up of the board and pieces is as below (Angels on f1 and d8).



The following illustrated game, (and a rather poor one at that), is given.

1.Ag3 Ac6 3.c3 b5 3.a4 Ba6 4.Ni3 Ni6
5.Ng4 d6 6.axb Bxb5 7.Na3 Ab6?
8.Qb3 Nd7 9.Nc4 (Why not QxB?) Ac5
10.Af3 Nb6? 11.Nxb6 cxb6 12.Axa8+
Kd7 13.Rxa7+ Ab7 14.Axb7+, and
mates next move.

The rules designed to keep Angels on the board and thereby greatly reduce the possibility of a draw are rather artificial and unnecessarily create complications.

For example, why should a pawn have to be promoted to an Angel? Presumably a player would want to promote to the strongest piece, an Angel, in the vast majority of occasions. The cases of underpromotion would be unusual and interesting; and under the rules forbidden.

Both a player's Bishops travel on same-coloured squares, which are not the same as the squares one's opponent's Bishops travel on. Although unusual this should not, I believe, be condemned out of hand. It could well lead to unusual and interesting play. But of course the initial piece array can always be changed if it is felt that there should be opposite-coloured Bishops. The Angel can switch places with the Bishop next to it for instance, in the same fashion as the Chancellor in 'modern' Chancellor Chess, (see VC11).

It might well be thought that both a Queen and an Angel is too much force for a player to have. If so the Angel could take the place of the Queen, and the game would be played on a normal 8x8 board.

Amazon

A combined Queen and Knight is better known as an Amazon. Under this name *The Oxford Companion to Chess* says it was first described in a 16th century manuscript now in Perugia. The piece was sometimes used in the next two centuries as a substitute for the Queen in otherwise orthodox chess.

In Murray's *HOC*, page 384, there is quoted, (from Twiss's *Chess*), a Mr.Coxe who was in Russia in 1772: 'Chess is so common in Russia, that during our continuance at Moscow, I scarcely entered into any company where parties were not engaged in that diversion; and I very frequently observed in my passage through the streets, the tradesmen and common people playing it before the doors of their shops and houses. The Russians are esteemed great proficient in chess. With them the Queen has in addition to the other moves, that of the Knight, which, according to Philidor, spoils the game, but which certainly renders it more complicated and difficult, and of course more interesting.' Murray also noted that in 1821 I.Butrimof, the author of the first Russian text-book of chess, protested against the practice of giving the Ferz, (precursor of the Queen), the power of three pieces and allowing it to gallop like the Kon, (horse or Knight).

In Dickins's *A Guide to Fairy Chess* further alternative names for combined Queen and Knight are given. These are: Omnipotent Queen, Terror, and General.

Malcolm Horne Interviewed



"A bit like exploring Africa in the 19th century...."

Malcolm Horne started playing serious chess at Southampton University about 1970. Subsequently he played for Islington, Gloucester and Exmouth.

He now concentrates on variants, only playing orthodox chess occasionally.

Over the last 5 years he has organised Chinese & Progressive postal tournaments, and edited the first 3 issues of the UKCCA magazine Chinese Chess plus various other newsletters. He ran a 'Deviant Chess Week' in Bournemouth 1989, and two Chinese Chess Weeks in Exmouth 1992/3.

How long have you been interested in variant chess games, and from where did that interest arise?

Well, for many years I played only orthodox chess. My knowledge of variants was just about zero - except perhaps for a pretty vague acquaintance with 3D Chess and Kriegspiel, both of which struck me as much too complicated.

Then in 1983/84 I spent six months over in Taiwan, where I was studying Chinese language, and of course I came across Chinese Chess. There was a book in English on it in the college bookstore, and I played my first ever game of it against an Australian friend - he won.

Then when I came back to Britain I investigated a bit further and discovered that Shogi existed. And then I found John Gollon's stimulating book *Chess Variations*.

But for several years there was hardly anyone to play these games with....which was very frustrating!

Why do you think that no chess variant has really caught on in western countries, except among a select circle of adherents?

Difficult to answer that. I imagine that almost everyone who likes variants has experienced that negative feedback you generally get from players of ordinary chess. Most people are very conservative I suppose, they're reluctant to try anything new. That applies to lots of things in life, not just chess.

Maybe we can only aim at a fairly marginal presence? There's quite a healthy number of variant players over in Italy it seems, which shows it can be done - but I guess that even there it's still a tiny minority.

What specific measures do you think might encourage wider acceptance of oriental chess games such as Shogi and Chinese Chess?

In a word: westernisation. I think it's bizarre to expect westerners, western beginners anyway, to grapple with Chinese and Japanese characters on the pieces, and decipher peculiar notation systems.

OK, I know that some people wish to preserve the traditions of these games....I'm interested in Chinese and Japanese culture and traditions myself...but still I'd be happy to see the games played with three-dimensional symbolic pieces. As for notation, the 'upside-down' Shogi algebraic system is perhaps not too bad, although I know you don't like it. (*Ed: I don't!*). But with Chinese Chess I'm afraid the Chinese C2=5 system really drives me up the wall. I just don't think it's very good.

Westernising the pieces and the notation would make the games so much more accessible. I don't fool myself that a massive number of western players would then flow in, but it would at least make a positive difference....surely?

What are your favourite chess variants, and in what order of preference?

Well, I still like ordinary chess, and so I'm interested in those variants which expand the board a bit and add one or two new pieces. The essence and style of the game remains much the same, but there's something new too, and added stimulus.

But you can't just enlarge the board to any size you like, and throw in any old pieces. You've got to think about balance, and about not creating something too complex. I do like the Chancellor, that's a combined Rook and Knight; it's a nice piece, and it's there in both the enlarged games that at the moment I like best. Namely Chancellor Chess itself and Grand Chess. Grand Chess, played on a 10x10 board and including Chancellors and Archbishops (B+N), is a fairly recent invention I think, from Christiaan Freeling in Holland. It has some interesting ideas, especially the Shogi-like early pawn promotion.

Of course there are really lots of other enlarged chess games which are very playable, but I guess one snag, one thing that restricts their popularity, is the need for a bigger board and extra pieces. You probably have to improvise your own, and I suppose that puts people off.

I tend to be less keen on, how can I put it, the more 'artificial' or rather complicated games played on a normal 8x8 board. But of these Avalanche Chess is quite entertaining, and Double Move (or Marseillais) is a decent game. I used to like Progressive a great deal, but I confess I've gone off it. Ideal for postal play of course, but the trouble is that to play it well you really have to put a LOT of time into it. Hours not minutes. And you can still get the envelope back and find you've just been mated!

Then there are the oriental games, Chinese and Korean Chess. Korean Chess is my favourite chess variant right

now. I'd probably put Chinese second, maybe Chancellor third....

Why do you rate Korean Chess so highly?

Well, it seems to have all the tactical excitement of Chinese Chess, but it also has a stronger positional flavour...and more interesting pawn play than Chinese Chess. That's what I think is missing in a lot of Chinese Chess games, the pawn play I mean. I find it interesting to compare Chinese and Korean and Western Chess, one with another. Western Chess has all these different pawn structures, it looks to me to be the richest and most varied game. On the other hand you can get stodgy or boring positions rather too easily; Chinese Chess doesn't suffer from that.

I can't be too precise about Korean Chess at the moment...I'm still in the fairly early stages of exploring it. But most of my games so far have been fascinating. Maybe there are snags....it might be that two strong players could too easily block each other out. But we're not in any danger of accumulating strong players in the West just yet!

Conversely, you don't rate Shogi very highly - why is that?

I don't want to say that Shogi is actually a bad game. Several people, whose opinions I respect, tell me that it is in fact a very good chess game, maybe the best of all. For me though, the opening is slow and quite boring, and the middle game too complicated....and I know others who feel the same.

Perhaps I simply haven't played it enough. I might be telling you in a year or two that I've changed my mind and really like Shogi.

On the other hand you can't play everything. And it also comes down to individual taste. No two players have exactly the same taste in variants, any more than they do in music. I like folk music, I'm not very keen on blues....but I'm not saying that folk music is the best of all, and that blues is rubbish. It's the same with chess variants.

What happened to the old UKCCA Magazine Chinese Chess? Why did you resign after editing only three issues?

Well, the magazine has folded for now, although I suppose it might start up again one day. Basically, after the seventh issue, Malcolm Chandler, the editor, dropped out of the Chinese Chess scene and there was nobody to take over.

I'd edited the first three of those issues, and yes I dropped out myself. It was the time of the student demonstrations in and around Tiananmen Square in Beijing in 1989. Then came the massacre, with about a thousand people being killed by government troops. I was appalled and very depressed; Chinese Chess seemed inconsequential at such a time.

I wanted to say something about Tiananmen in the magazine, and I remember suggesting that the prize fund at an upcoming tournament in London be donated to a fund for helping Chinese people in trouble. But the others in the

UKCCA didn't agree with me - they felt that as chess players we shouldn't get involved. And so I resigned. Some other people did agree with me, or at least sympathised. I still think we should have said or done something, however little difference it would have made.

Do you think the promotion and organisation of non-orthodox chess could be improved?

Not much to comment on here, as there's so little. We could certainly do with one or two populists, people with a flair for publicity or for persuading others that variants are worth taking seriously. I'm not really a populist in that way.

Most of all we need more players, rather than organisers. I'd be happy to organise more things if there were enough players to take part. The Chinese Chess Week has been successful, but other initiatives often haven't. I'd like to get more people playing by telephone - it's cheap and it's practical; but it's difficult to get anyone interested.

And then there's postal chess, but it's hard to organise anything other than the occasional Progressive tournament. There just aren't the players. My impression is that the majority of people simply prefer their chess face to face.

But you used to run a Chinese Chess Postal Tournament - what happened to that?

Yes. That started off quite brightly, back in 1989 I think. Twenty-something players from several different countries, and you could play against just one or two people, or several.

But after a year or two the rot set in and not too many games were being played. I'm afraid I got very fed up with the number of people dropping out in mid-game, or playing very slowly, or not sending in results - so I called it a day.

Postal chess can be great. In fact it's my favourite way to play, because you've really got time to study the position, avoid howlers, and even produce a game which approaches something like a small work of art. On the other hand, there are a lot of potential problems....I just mentioned some of them, but there are others too - getting stuck in a boring position, or a long endgame, or having an opponent who won't resign a lost position....

The Chinese Chess Week has been successful though, hasn't it?

Yes it has. I've been pleasantly surprised. Eight players in '92, fourteen in '93. Not huge numbers, but very healthy given the tiny number of people playing the game. Of course it's been boosted by people coming from Europe.

Maybe it can be built up in future years, although I actually like the fact that it's fairly small. It's much more intimate and friendly than the large-scale Western Chess tournaments I'm used to, where so much of the emphasis is on winning and losing. I want to steer clear of that. I've deliberately kept the prizes fairly low, (£30 first prize in '93), so that the competitive spirit isn't too rampant! Instead I've channelled money towards charity - Amnesty

International and the Red Cross in Yugoslavia. And that's something I'm very keen to continue with.

What about a Variant Chess Week?

Certainly. If enough people tell me they're interested. But just at the moment it might be difficult to get off the ground. Of course there already has been a variants week, in Bournemouth in '89, with just five of us. That was perhaps a bit too small.

To some extent, I'm incorporating variants within the Chinese Week. Anyone who wants to can concentrate on variants in the evenings or afternoons, outside of the main Chinese tournament in the mornings.

What are your other interests apart from chess?

Well, my main interest over the last 20 years or so has been the vegan and vegetarian movement in this country.

I've been quite involved in that on and off, less so now. I used to edit a magazine on veganism.

Chess, you could say, has been my No.2 interest. But there are other things too: walking, words and writing, languages, world cinema. Folk music I think I mentioned before....perhaps I should add that it's as a listener not a performer!

What do you see as the future of orthodox chess?

Ah, that's like asking about the future of life itself. I simply don't know.

But probably orthodox chess will survive. I wouldn't denigrate it, it's a great game. But I hope a few more people will explore variants in the future. Orthodox chess is quite well mapped out, and variants can offer a huge amount of new and exciting territory. A bit like exploring Africa in the 19th century...

GAMES & PUZZLES

Issue 1, (April 94), of this 'new magazine for the games player' has been produced and is for sale. Very welcome it is too. It is very similar in content to the 'old' *G&P* which was last seen in 1981 - and this is no bad thing. *G&P* actually shed its puzzles in 1981 and became *The Gamer*, which although not a bad magazine, gave maybe too big an emphasis to computer, war, and role-playing games. The last issue was dated Sept/Oct 1982. Since that time there have been several attempts to start up a similar magazine, the best of which was *Games International* which, after 16 issues, closed in July 1990.

G&P is a well produced 48 page A4 format magazine. The first thing to emphasise is that there is a lot of content. There is no padding; one can keep coming back to the magazine to find fresh things to read. There are articles on playing cards, chess, Go, draughts and bridge; as well as others on computer, postal and role playing games, which are interesting, but are not allowed to unbalance the magazine. There is a special article on Edmond Hoyle (of Hoyle's books on games) - I was not aware before that he lived to 97 - and a most welcome start of a series by R.C.Bell looking at games of different countries.

There is an information section where details of forthcoming events, clubs and 'gatherings' in a wide variety of games are listed, and 'contacts' if one is interested in playing particular games. There is also a 'Classified Ad.' section.

The number of pages devoted to the puzzles section has regrettably been reduced compared with the 'old *G&P*', and the number of puzzles on each page is also less than it was, despite the page size being larger. As compensation there is however a 3-page 'Theseus and the Minotaur' puzzle in another part of the magazine.

The review section is also smaller than it was. The games reviewed are not given ratings. This is a pity as the reviewer when giving a rating to a game has to stick his neck out to some extent, and say whether or not he *really* likes the game. The real duds are pinpointed.

Well in conclusion I am sticking my neck out and saying that I really like the new *Games & Puzzles*. It deserves to succeed.

Subscription - 1 year, (12 issues), is (UK) £19.95. Single issue - £1.95.

Write to: Games & Puzzles, 8 Arbor Court, Stoke Newington, London N16 0QU.

WORLD GAME REVIEW No.12

This is Michael Keller's magazine, the first one to come out since June 1992, (No.11). The previous one to that was the highly recommended 'Special Issue on Chess Variations', (No.10), dated June 1991, so the statement on the contents page that it is 'published irregularly' is quite correct.

Because of the gap between issues WGR12 might be termed a catching-up or consolidating issue. There is a 14-page index for WGR7-12, and an updated address list as well as a 'polyform update'. There is also a detailed mail-order sources list, and 5 pages on 'game news', giving details of games catalogues and magazines, including resumes of their contents.

The magazine has always concentrated on board games, card games and puzzles. The writing is of a high standard and the readership is assumed to be 'intelligent'.

There are many reviews in this issue: 20 commercial puzzles, as well as numerous board, dice, and card games; also many books, and a computer 'Games Pack'. All are detailed and give much information about the relevant game or puzzle. Two commercial chess variants are included: 1) **QuickChess**, (\$6.95), a 5x6 variant advertised as the '10 minute Chess Game', and a way to introduce new players to chess. There is one piece of each type, and five pawns. Castling is eliminated, and the pawns do not have an initial double step. The QuickChess rules also suggest that different starting arrays may be used to add variety to the game; 2) **Centre Chess**, (\$29.95), which has a circular board of 64 'wedges' arranged in four rings of sixteen. Unlike ordinary circular chesses the central wedges are extended so that they meet at a central point. A barrier divides the White and Black halves of the board. Pieces can pass through the central point to reach the other half of the board. It is stated that the variant player looking for something different will enjoy this game. Both these games were invented by Joseph A. Miccio, and can be obtained from Amerigames International, 15 Barlow Avenue, Glen Cove, NY 11542, USA.

There are also detailed rules on 'Amazons', (see page 79), some puzzles to solve, a new card game (Super Crazy Eights for Two), an article on the history of Stratego by David Pritchard, a roundup of games in the Esperanto language; and more!

It would be hard to find so much condensed information about this subject matter in any 52 pages. Recommended.

Subscription \$11 for 4 issues, (WGR12 has a cover price of \$4). Write to Michael Keller, 1747 Little Creek Drive, Baltimore, MD 21207-5230, USA.

ITALIAN PROGRESSIVE CHESS

Variant Chess Postal Tournament

This tournament has, except for one game between the two bottom-markers, now been completed. Each player played 2 games against each opponent. The winner is Ian Richardson with 7 wins out of 8 games. He lost one against Jouni Tolonen, who finishes second with 6 points. Third is Steve Boniface with 5 points. Paul Archer with 1 point, and Ian Smith with no points have one game unfinished.

The games with e4 and d4 openings are given below. The rest will be in VC14.

P.Archer - J.Tolonen 0-1

Orthodox Defence

- 1.d4
- 2.d5 Nf6
- 3.e4 e5 Bb5+
- 4.c6 Bg4 Bxd1 Qa5+
- 5.Bd2 Bxa5 exf6 fxg7 gxf8(Q)+
- 6.Rxf8 Rg8 Rg3 Bg4 Rd3 Rd1 #

S.Boniface - J.Tolonen 0-1

Orthodox Defence

- 1.d4
- 2.d5 Nf6
- 3.e4 e5 Bb5+
- 4.c6 Bg4 Bxd1 Qa5+
- 5.Bd2 Bxa5 exf6 fxg7 gxh8(Q) *(Paul Archer played gxf8(Q) in this series, and was mated in a different way.)*
- 6.e5 exd4 d3 dxc2 c1(Q) Bh5 #

S.Boniface - I.Richardson 0-1

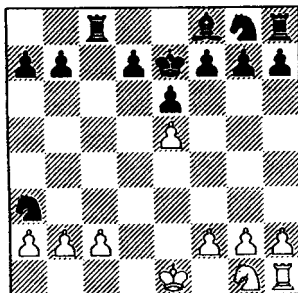
Pseudo-Roman Defence

- 1.d4
- 2.c5 cxd4
- 3.Na3 Nf3 Bf4
- 4.Nc6 Nb4 Qa5 Nd3 #

S.Boniface - P.Archer 1-0

Pseudo-Roman Defence

- 1.d4
- 2.c5 cxd4
- 3.e4 e5 Na3
- 4.e6 Qg5 Qxc1 Qxd1+
- 5.Rxd1 Rxd4 Bb5 Rc4 Rxc8+
- 6.Ke7 Nc6 Rxc8 Nd4 Nxb5 Nxa3



7.c4 Kd2 Kc3 Kb4 Nf3 Rd1 Rxd7 #
(Italian mate.) *(SB-Neat that, eh!?)*

P.Archer - S.Boniface 0-1

Benoni Defence

- 1.d4
- 2.Nf6 c5
- 3.e4 e5 exf6
- 4.exf6 d5 Bg4 Bxd1
- 5.Kxd1 Nf3 Bg5 Bxf6 Bxd8
- 6.c4 c3 cxb2 bxa1(Q) Kd7 Qxb1+
- 7.Kd2 Ba6 Bxb7 Bxa8 Rxb1 Rxb8 Ne5+
- 8.Ke6 Bd6 Bxe5 Bxh2 Bc7 Rxd8 Rxb8 g6
- 9.Bc6 Bb5 Bd3 Bxg6 Bxh7 Bg6 f3 c3 Bxf7+
- 10.Kxf7 Kf6 Kf5 Kf4 Kg3 Kxg2 Kxf3 Rb3 Rxc3 Re3
- 11.Resigns.

S.Boniface - I.Smith 1-0

- 1.d4
- 2.e6 d6
- 3.Bg5 Bxd8 Na3 *(SB-It's impossible to take White's Queen and stop mate.)*
- 4.e5 Bg4 Bxe2 Bxd1
- 5.dxe5 e6 Bf6 Nb5 Nxc7 #

I.Richardson - S.Boniface 1-0

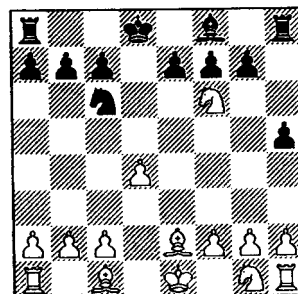
Sienna Defence

- 1.e4
- 2.Nc6 d5
- 3.Qg4 Qxc8 Qxd8+
- 4.Kxd8 h5 Nf6 dxe4
- 5.Nc3 Nxe4 Nxf6 Be2 h4 *(IR-In this series Be2 h4 are my own idea - I think they are an improvement on what has been played before.)*
- 6.exf6 Kd7 Nd4 Nxe2 Re8 Nxc1+
- 7.Ne2 Rh3 Re3 Rxe8 Rxf8 Rxd8 Rxc1
- 8.Resigns.

I.Richardson - J.Tolonen 0-1

Sienna Defence

- 1.e4
- 2.d5 Nc6
- 3.Qg4 Qxc8 Qd8+
- 4.Kxd8 dxe4 h5 Nf6
- 5.Nc3 Nxe4 Nxf6 d4 Be2 *(IR-I think h4, as played against Steve Boniface, is better than d4 in this series.)*



6.exf6 Nxd4 Nxe2 Ba3 Bxb2 Bxa1
7.Bh6 Bxg7 Bxh8 Kxe2 Nf3 Rxa1 Bxf6+
8.Ke8 b5 b4 b3 b2 bxa1(Q) Qxf6 Qa6+
(IR-I could have resigned here, but I'm glad I didn't because Black came up with a clever series 10.)

9.Ke3 Nd4 Nc6 Nb4 Nxa6 Kf3 Kg3 f3 Nxc7+

10.Ke7 Kf6 Kg5 Rc8 Rxc7 Rxc2 Rxa2 a5 a4 h4 # *(Italian mate - White is forced to check prematurely.)*

I.Smith - J.Tolonen 0-1

Sienna Defence

- 1.e4
- 2.d5 Nc6
- 3.exd5 dxc6 cxb7
- 4.Be6 Qd3 Bc4 Qxf1 #

I.Smith - S.Boniface 0-1

Sienna Defence

- 1.e4
- 2.Nc6 d5
- 3.exd5 dxc6 Qe2
- 4.Bg4 Bxe2 Bxf1 bxc6
- 5.Kxf1 Nf3 Ng5 Ne6 Nxd8
- 6.f5 f4 f3 Rxd8 Rxd2 Rd1 #

I.Richardson - P.Archer 1-0

Areto-Barlettana Defence

- 1.e4
- 2.e5 f6
- 3.Bb5 Nf3 d4
- 4.Qe7 Qd6 Qxd5 Qxd1+
- 5.Kxd1 Bh6 Bxg7 Bxh8 g4
- 6.c6 cxb5 d6 Bh6 Bxg4 Bxf3+
- 7.Ke1 Rg1 Rg7 a4 Ra3 Rc3 Rc8 #

I.Smith - I.Richardson 0-1

Long Defence

- 1.e4
- 2.d5 dxe4
- 3.Qf3 Qd3 Qxd8+
- 4.Kxd8 e3 e2 exf1(Q)+
- 5.Kxf1 d3 Bh6 Bxg7 Bxh8
- 6.c5 c4 cxd3 d2 h6 d1(Q) #

I.Richardson - I.Smith 1-0

- 1.e4
- 2.e6 d6
- 3.d4 Bg5 Bxd8
- 4.e5 Bg4 Bxd1 Kxd8
- 5.dxe5 Nc3 Rxd1 Be2 h4
- 6.Nf6 Nxe4 Nxc3 Nxd1 dxe5 Nxb2
- 7.Bb5 Rh3 Re3 Rxe5 a4 a5 Re8 #

ETEROSCACCO

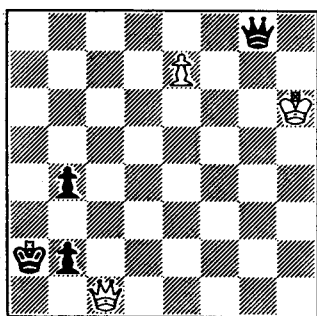
Italian variant chess magazine.
32 pages, quarterly. Highly
recommended. Write: A.Castelli,
62010 Vills Potenza (MC),Italy.

PROBLEM PAGES
By Stefanos Panagiotis

Another pre-eminent figure in the small world of fairy chess has recently passed away. Peter Kniest (*15-12-1914 — †15-12-1993) was without doubt best known as the editor of *feenschach*. His editorial career started when he was very young, under the influence of his older brother Albert, and included some ten years as editor of *Die Schwalbe*. He also published many books, notably the popular series of problemistic mini-autobiographies *Caissas Schloßbewohner*. With all this, one tends to forget that he was also a distinguished composer: he received the IM title in 1975.

I am glad to welcome Paul Răican and Mark Ridley as new solvers. A solver suggested that perhaps there has recently been too high a proportion of tough chess-nuts. The bill of fare depends more on what composers submit than on my choices, but this time we have a plentiful collection of easy-to-digest appetizers. I hope some new solvers will be tempted to have a go, and that I will not be accused of letting too many plain dishes pass through. If you feel you have not been challenged enough, you will oblige me if you could test Paul Byway's and Peter Wood's analysis of their studies on page 75.

44. Michel OLAUSSON

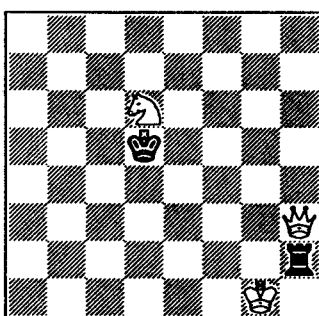


Helpstalemate in 2; Duplex.

We start with what is becoming our traditional helpstalemate. In a *duplex* the stipulation can also be satisfied with the colours reversed, i.e. in 44 White can help Black to stalemate him in two moves.

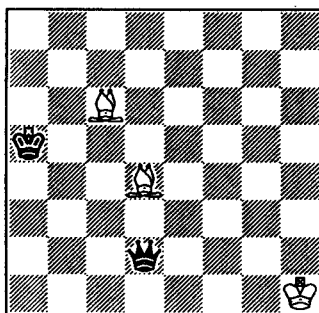
In *Circe* captured units are reborn on their game array squares, if vacant. (The colour/file of capture determining the specific square.) In 45 there is one orthodox, but four *Circe* solutions. Four "ways" is my shorthand for pointing out that two of these start with the same first move.

45. Zdeněk LIBIŠ



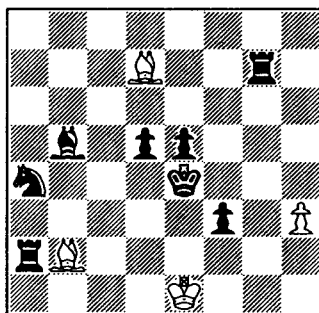
Helpmate in 2; (a) Orthodox, (b) *Circe*, four ways.

46. Valery A. NEBOTOV



Helpmate in 2; *Circe* (b) bK→b1, (c) bK→f5.

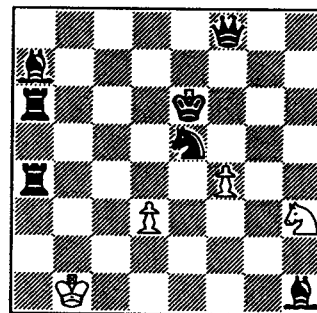
47. Michal DRAGOUN



Helpmate in 2; *Circe*. (b) Ke4→f3 (remove bPf3).

In 48 Black plays six successive moves, allowing White to mate in one. The theme shown is familiar, but there is enough of a sly touch to keep solvers amused.

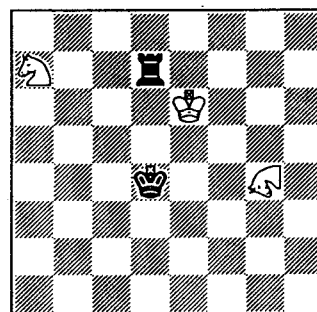
48. György BAKCSI & László ZOLTÁN



Series helpmate in 6.

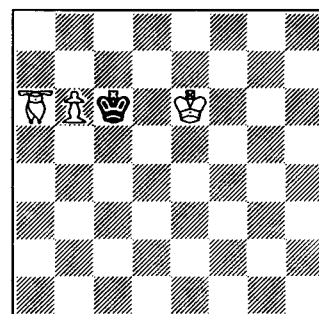
Solvers who skipped Edgar's longer direct-play problems in past issues should find this pair much more inviting. Both problems feature composite pieces: The *Dragon* is a combination of knight and pawn (the pawn has no promotion powers), while the *Princess* is a B+S combination. White plays first in 49, and the twinning is *progressive*, i.e. each change occurs in the previous part rather than directly from the diagram position.

49. Edgar HOLLADAY



Helpmate in 2 1/2; *Dragon* g4. (b) Dg4→g2; (c) then Sa7→e8; (d) then Dg2→b2; (e) then Se8→d8.

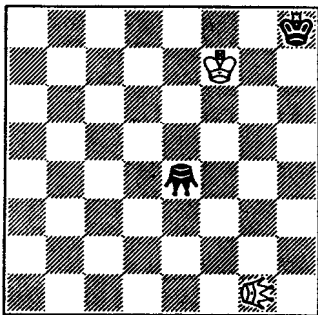
50. Edgar HOLLADAY



Mate in 4; *Princess* a6. (b) Pa6↔Kc6.

The *Grasshopper* moves on Queen lines by hopping over the first man it meets (the *hurdle*) to the next square beyond. The *Tiger* encores in 51. It leaps (like the *Lion*) over a hurdle to any distance beyond, but in *any* direction, not just Q-lines! For example, the Tiger on g1 could move to c7, or if the black Grasshopper was on f3 instead, to e5 or d7.

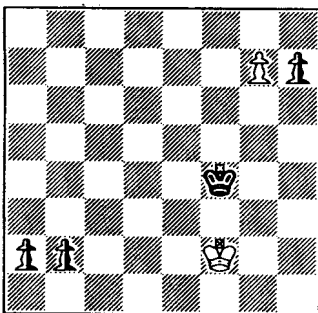
51. Aubrey W. INGLETON



Helpmate in 4; Tiger g1.
(b) White men one square left.

A *Neutral* man can be taken as white or black at the discretion of the side moving. (Thus, in particular, neither K can be left en prise to a neutral unit.) Neutral pawns promote to neutral pieces. When a neutral man is captured by White it is reborn as if it were black, and vice versa.

52. Erich BARTEL

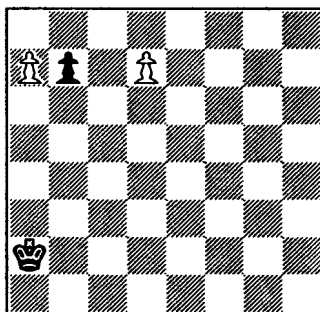


Helpstalemate in 3; Circe, Neutral Pawns a2, b2, h7.

Reflecting Kings, when in check, add to their own powers of movement those of the checking piece(s). So, if the bK were on b6 in 53, after a8=S+ the bK could move as either K or S. In addition to the two solutions in three moves, there is a set play with White playing first. In *Platzwechsel* (German for place-exchange) Circe a captured

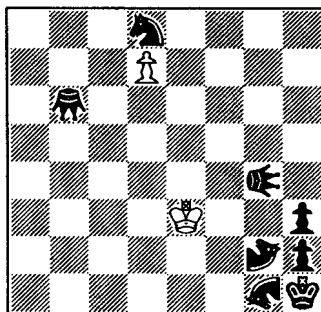
unit is reborn on the square vacated by its captor. In effect, captor and captive exchange places. The *Camel* and *Zebra* are the (3,1) and (3,2) leapers respectively. The *Equihopper*, also featured in 56, leaps over any occupied square to a square in the same distance and direction beyond. Thus the hurdle is the midpoint of the line segment joining the initial and final squares (e.g. E_{g4}-c2 in the diagram). No prizes for guessing the theme of 54!

53. Stefanos PANTAZIS



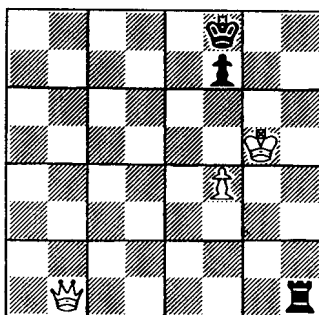
Helpmate in 3; Reflecting Kings.
Set play & two solutions.

54. Erich BARTEL



Helpmate in 2; Four Solutions, PWC (Platzwechsel Circe), Camel g2, Zebra g1, Equihopper g4.

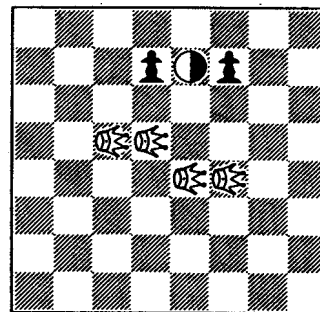
55. Paul RĂICAN



Selfstalemate in 4; Maxi, Grid Chess. Two solutions.

In a *Maxi* (or *Maximummer*) Black is constrained to play his longest legal move. (Distances are calculated between the centres of the squares.) In *Grid Chess* every move, to be legal, has to cross at least one of the grid lines. So the two Kings could safely sit right next to each other, if both were situated in the same 2x2 grid square.

56. Ulf HAMMARSTRÖM



Stalemate in 7; Equihoppers, Imitator e7.

The *Imitator* is a restriction on the mobility of each unit: each move is accompanied by a simultaneous parallel move of the I, which behaves as a shadow of the moving unit. A move is illegal if the Imitator's move is impossible (because it is blocked by a piece, or the board edge). The convention for imitating hoppers' leaps is that the Imitator must also have a hurdle; for example, in 56 E_{d5}-f3 is illegal because there is no hurdle at f6 for Ie7-g5.

Valery Nebotov explains that his *Brian-Circe* was so named in honour of Brian D. Stephenson, editor of *The Problemist Supplement*. He likes my proposed name of *Shield Circe*, and will adopt it, but would like to dedicate this new genre to Brian.

Solutions to originals in VC 12

30 Eugene A. Dugas.

- (a) 1.a1=B h8=Q 2.Be5 Qxe5=
- (b) 1.c1=R h8=Q 2.Rh1 Qxh1=
- (c) 1.a1=B g8=S 2.Bf6 Sxf6=

Six-man AUW with ideal stalemates in parts (b) and (c). Erich Bartel answers my question on whether the diagram position adds anything in the

negative. So we will go with a zero-position, omitting (a). This was Gene's original intention in any case.

31 Norbert Geissler.

1.b1=S g8=Q 2.Sd2 Qa8 3.Sf3 Qxf3=
1.b1=B g8=R 2.Bg6 Rxc6 3.g2+
Rxc2=

Another miniature helpstalemate AUW. "The pinning variation is interesting." (EB) Erich is reminded of the economy record by Alfred Gschwend, Feenschach 1961: wKf3, Pg7 & bKh1, Pf2; h=2, two solutions:

(1) 1.f1=B g8=R 2.Bg2+ Rxc2=
(2) 1.f1=S g8=Q 2.Sg3 Qxc3=
and he comments: "THE classic!!!"
Indeed, I agree, and had quoted this myself in the USPB a while ago.

32 Edgar Holladay.

(a) 1.Sf5 Kc7 [1.— Kd8 2.Kc6 or Kd6 (in 6); 1.— Kc8 2.Bb5 or Kc6] 2.Bb5 Kb6 [2.— Kb/c8 3.Kc6 (in 6); 2.— Kb7 3.Se7 or Bc6+; 2.— Kd8 3.Kc6 or Kd6 or Bc6] 3.Bc6 Kc7 4.Se7 Kb6 5.Kc4 Ka6/5 6.Sc8 Ka5/6 7.Bb5/Kb4=; 5.— Kc7 6.Kc5 Kd/b8 7.Kd/b6=

1.— Ke8 2.Ke6 Kd8 [2.— Kf8 3.Se7 (in 5)] 3.Kd6 Kc8 4.Ba6+ Kb8 5.Kc6 Ka7 6.Bb7 Kb8 7.Kb6=
(b) 1.Ba5+ Kd7 [1.— Kb7 2.Bb6 (in 5); 1.— Kc8 2.Kd6 or Sb8 or Se5] 2.Kd5 Ke8 [2.— Kc8 3.Kd6] 3.Ke6 Kf8 4.Se7 Kg7 5.Bd2 Kh8 6.Kf7 Kh7 7.Sg6=; 5.— Kf8 6.Bh6+ Ke8 7.Sc6=

Edgar asks me to mention two lines in tries omitted from the solution of his 21: (a) 1.Sb5? Kc6 2.Kc4 Kd7? 3.Bg4+ Ke7 4.Be6 Kd8 5.Bc5=; (c) 1.Bh5? Ke6? (Kd6!) 2.Ke4 Kd7/6 3.Bb6 Ke6 4.Bg6 Kd6 5.Bf5=

33 Bakcsi & Zoltán.

(a) 1.Ka4 2.Rxb2 3.Rxb1 4.Rb2 5.Ka3 c3= (b) 1.Bd5 2.Bxa2 3.Bc4 4.Bxe2 5.Bh5 Qxh5=

Minimals with the black initial array were once dubbed Minimaler SPASS = Schwarzer-Partie-Anfangs-Stellung (Spaß = fun, joke)... "Surprising that most white units are actually involved." (A. W. Ingleton)

34 Ulf Hammarström.

1.Kd8 Sc6+ 2.Ke8 Bg6+ 3.Kf8 Bd6+ 4.Kg8 Se7+ 5.Kh8 Be5≠

The must-check condition makes it possible to show three switchbacks with just four men. Orthodox h≠ with triple switchback (Rückkehr) was first

set in miniature by E. Albert, Feenschach Aufsätze v/1963: wKc8, Sa7; bKe6, Rd6, Pb6, c5, d5; h≠4: 1.Rd7 Kb8 2.Kd6 Sb5+ 3.Kc6 Kc8 4.Rd6 Sa7≠

35 George P. Sphicas.

1.a8=B 2.bxa4 3.Kxa5 (Sb8) 4.cxb8=B 5.Bd6 6.b8=B 7.bBc7 8.Bxc2 (Qd8) 9.Bb6+ Qxb6 (Bc1)≠
"The B-promotions are not unexpected, but very pretty." (AI)

* 36 Aubrey W. Ingleton.

1.Tc6 Ta5 2.Te2 Kd3 3.Ta6 Kc2 4.Ka1 Ta8≠
1.Ta5 Tc1 2.Kb1 Kc3 3.Te1 Kb3 4.Ka1 Th1≠
1.Kb2 Ke4 2.Td2 Te3 3.Ta2 Kd3 4.Ka1 Kc2≠

Dual in the last solution: 1.Kb3 Ke4 2.Ta2 Te3 3.Kb2 etc. (P. Răican)

This seems hard to fix; a pity, as this was a fine material study, getting much interesting chess out of 4 men.

37 Vladimir Gurvich.

1.Bc6 2.Sf3 3.Sd4 4.Sb5 5.Bc4 6.4Bxb5 (Sg8) 7.Kc7 8.Se7 9.Sxc6 (Bc8)≠ (All units except Ks neutral.)
"Ingenious use of Madradi-Circe to produce double-check mate." (AI)

38 Erich Bartel.

Let $L = \sqrt{50}$ -leaper:
(Black) 1.Kh8 Lxg7 (Lg8) 2.Kh7 Lf1 3.Kh6 La6=
(White) 1.Kg6 Kf8 2.Kh7 Lxb2 (Lb1) 3.Kh8 La8=

In the stalemate of Black there is an interesting try that brings up a controversy regarding Anticirce: After 2.Kh7, why not Lh1 3.Kh8 Kg6? The answer is that it depends! If one interprets "if the rebirth square is occupied the capture is illegal" to mean that the square is occupied *before* the capture, then no capture can take place *on* a rebirth square and Black can play 4.Kg8! If, on the other hand, the moment *after* the capture is meant, then such captures are legitimate, and the 2.— Lh1 line would indeed be a dual or cook. Unfortunately there is no general agreement, and two of the main exponents of the genre have diametrically opposed views (see recent articles in *diagrammes* and *Phénix*). Perhaps of a greater practical significance is that both computer programs for testing fairies (Popeye, which was used to test this problem,

and Chloe) can handle the first variety only. This impedes natural selection, and although one would not in general want to have the confusion of (identically named) very similar fairy genres, in this case I would like to see one of the programs at least become able to test both flavours.

* 39 Valery A. Nebotov.

Intention: 1.Qd7 Kc6 2.Rc8 Qe3 3.Kd8 Qe8 4.Qd6 Kd7 5.Qf8 Ke7≠
But half a move can be saved by sacrificing the bQ: 1.— Kc6 2.Qd7 Qxd7 3.Ke7 Qe8 4.Rc8 Kd7 5.Kd8 Ke7≠ (AI) The first cook in my watch, and I rather suspect not the last, so keep your knives sharpened. Is this sound if shortened by a half move? Most of the content is retained, but the bQ is then uneconomical.

40 Paul Răican.

B will denote the reflecting Bishops
1.Qa8 Bc1 (Bd2/Ba3/Bb4/Bc5 2.Qh1/Bd2/Bc1/Bb2) 2.Qb7 Bd2 (Bb2/Ba3/Bb4/Bc5 3.Bd2/Bc1/Bb2/Ba3) 3.Qh1 Bc1 4.Bd2 Bb2 5.Bc1 Ba3 6.Bb2 Bb4 7.Ba3 Bc5 8.Bb4 Bxb4≠
[1.Qb7? Bc1! 1.Qh1? Bd2!]
"Careful handling needed to shorten the pin to the limit." (AI) Works rather like a Nim game, with one pile the distance between the Bs, and the other the wQ's tempo moves.

Here is an alternative version for the judge's consideration: 8/5R1P/3k2PK/7P/3P4/bB4P1/3B4/S7; s≠7 (1.Ra7 Bb2 2.Rb7 Bc1 3.Rg7 Bb2 4.Bc1 etc.)

41 Peter Wong.

(a) -1.Ke1xQd1 (Ke8) Qd7xQd8 1.1Qd5 Qb6≠ (b) -1.Ke1xQd1 (Ke8) Qc6xPb7 1.dQd7 b8=Q≠
I had made clear that in this problem a piece captured on its rebirth square disappears (making the initial retraction feasible), but Paul Răican points out that in earlier Kamikaze Circe problems such pieces would be reborn.

LADDER Scores:

Maximum	47	(= 24+23),
A. W. Ingleton	33	(= 15+18),
E. Bartel	23	(= 14+9),
P. Răican	19	(= 0+19),
I. G. Richardson	19	(= 6+13),
M. A. Ridley	6	(= 0+6).

Send your solutions, originals and comments to:
710 Dobson St. #2,
Evanston, IL 60202 (USA).

OUR STUDY CORNER

We start with the solution to Paul Byway's 43 from our previous issue. Nobody attempted this, so I give the composer's analysis (to this, and the two new original studies below). The position was wKc3, Bc6, Pb2; bKh4, Bi4. (White to play and win.)

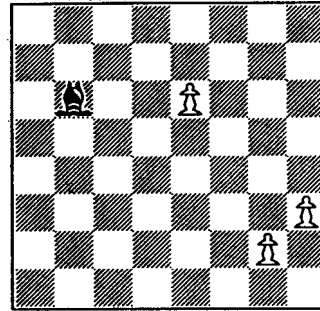
- Solution:** 1.b4 Bf1⁽¹⁾ 2.Bd5⁽²⁾ Kg5⁽³⁾ 3.Bc4 Bh3⁽⁴⁾
 4.b5 Kf6 5.b6⁽⁵⁾ Bc8⁽⁶⁾ 6.Kd4 Ke7 7.Kc5⁽⁷⁾ Kd7⁽⁸⁾
 8.Bb5+⁽⁹⁾ Kd8⁽¹⁰⁾ 9.Kc6⁽¹¹⁾ Bd7+ 10.Kd6 Bf5—j1⁽¹²⁾
 11.b7 Bc8 12.b8=B Bf5—j1⁽¹³⁾ 13.Bc7+ Kc8 14.Ba6±
- ¹ 1.— Kg5 2.b5 Bf1 3.b6 Ba6 4.Kb4 Kf6 5.Ka5 Bc8
 6.Bb5 Bb7 7.Ba6 Bg2 8. Bc8 Ke7 9.Ka6 wins
- ² 2.Kd4? Kg5 3.Bd5 Kf6 4.Bc4 Bh3 5.Kc5 Ke7 6.Ba6 (to prevent the bK reaching b8) Bg2 7.Bc4 Kd8 8.Kb6 Kc8 9.Ka7 Bc6 or 3.Kc5 Kf6 4.Bb5 Bi4 5.Bc4 Be8 6.Bd5 Ke7 7.Bc6 Bi4 8.b5 Kd8
- ³ 2.— Bb5 3.Kd4 Kg5 4.Kc5 Ba6 5.Bc4 Bc8 6.b5 Kf6 7.Kd6
- ⁴ 3.— Bg2 4.b5 Kf6 5.Kb4 (not 5.Kd4 Ke7 6.Kc5 Bh3 7.Kb6 Bd7 8.— Bxb5 or 7.b6 Kd7 8.Ba6 Bg2) Ke7 6.Ka5 Bb7 7.Kb6 and the King reaches a7
- ⁵ 5.Kb4? Ke7 6.Ka5 (6.Kc5 Kd8 7.Kb6 Bd7) Bc8! 7.b6 Bb7 8.Bf1 Kd7 9.Bh3+ Ke7 10.Kb5 Kd6 11.Bg4 Ke7 12.Kc5 Kd8 13.Kd6 Bg2 = The Zugzwang position of Dehler and Chéron.
- ⁶ 5.— Bg2 6.Kd4 Bb7 7.Bd5 and now: (a) 7.— Bc8 8.Kc5 Ke7 9.Kc6 Kd8 10.Bc4 Bh3 11.Kb7 ~ 12.Ka7
 (b) 7.— Ba6 8.Kc5 Ke7 9.Kc6 Kd8 10.Be6 Bc8 11.Bc4 Bh3 12.Kb7 ~ 13.Ka7
- ⁷ Threatens 8.Kc6
- ⁸ 7.— Bb7 8.Bd5
- ⁹ 8.Bd5? Ba6 = (threatens K-c8-b8) or 8.Bf1? Bb7! 8.Bh3+ Kd8 9.Kd6 (Be6) Bf3=
- ¹⁰ 8.— Ke7 9.Kc6 Kd8 (9.— Bd7+ 10.Kc7) 10.Bc4 Bg4 11.Kb7 ~ 12.Ka7
- ¹¹ 9.Kd6? Bb7 10.Bd7 Bf3 11.Be6 Bb7! = This is the position of Dehler and Chéron. (=/-)
- (a) 12. Bd7 (12.Bd5 Kc8) Bf3 13.Bf5 (g4) [if 13.Bc6 Bxc6 14.Kxc6 Kc8] 13.— Bg2! 14.Be6 Bb7! (only move) =
 (b) 12.Kc5 Bf3/g2 but not 12.— Ke7 13.Bd5! Followed by:
 (b1) 13.— Bc8 14.Kc6 Kd8 15.Bc4 Bg4 16.Kb7 ~ 17.Ka7
 (b2) 13.— Ba6 14.Kc6 Kd8 15.Be6 Bc8/Ke7 16.Bc4! 13.Bd5 Be2 14.b7 (14.Kc6 Kc8=) Kc7! =
- ¹² 10.— Bc8 11.Bc4 Bb7 12.Be6 wins. This is the position of Dehler and Chéron again.
- (a) 12.— Bf3 13.Bd5 Bxd5 14.Kxd5 Kd7 15.Kc5 Kd8 16.Kd6 etc.
- (b) 12.— Ba6 13.Kc6 Be2 14.Kb7 Bf3+ 15.Ka7 Be4 16.Bc4 Bf3 17.Ba6 Be4 18.Bb7 Bf5 19.Bf3 Bc8 20.Bg4 13.— Bc8 14.Bc4! Bf5 15.Kb7! Be4+ 16.Ka7 Kc8
- ¹³ 12.— Bb7 13.Bd7 ~ 14.Bc7±

We continue with a Losing Chess study. The basic rules are that each side must capture when able, and Ks have no royal properties (so pawns can promote to Ks). Stalemate is considered a draw. See Peter's articles in previous issues for examples and some endgame theory.

57 Solution: 1.h4⁽¹⁾ Be3⁽²⁾ 2.h5 Bg5⁽³⁾ 3.e7! Bxe7 4.g4⁽⁴⁾ Bb4 5.g5⁽⁵⁾ and Black cannot win: e.g. 5.— Bc3 6.g6 Bb4 7.h6 Bf8 8.h7 Bb4 9.h8=K =

- ¹ (A) 1.g4? Bc7 and now:
 (i) 2.g5 Be5 3.g6 Bg7 4.h4 Bh6 5.h5 (5.g7 Bxg7 6.h5 Bh6) Bg7 6.h6 Bxh6 7.g7 Bxg7 8.e7 Bf8 and Black wins.
 (ii) 2.h4 Bf4 3.h5 Bh6 4.g5 Bxg5 5.e7 Bxe7 6.h6 Bg5/f8 7.h7 Bh6 8.h8=K,Q,B,S/h8=R Bg7/Bf8 and Black wins.

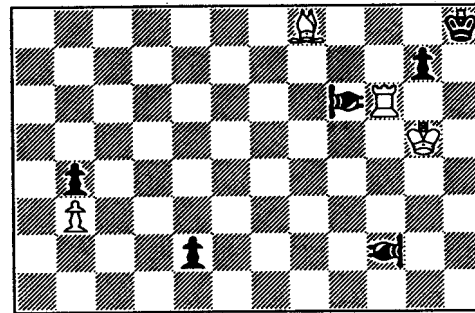
57. Peter C. WOOD



White to play and draw.

Losing Chess (Must-Capture-Chess or Vinciperdi).

58. Paul V. BYWAY (After P. Keres)



White to play and draw. Fers j2, 'Modern' Courier i6.

- (B) 1.g3? Be3 2.g4 Bb6! 3.g5 (3.h4 Be3 4.h5 Bh6 etc.) Bb4 4.g6 Bg7 5.h4 etc. as in (A).
- ² If Black waits, White achieves an easy draw by promoting the h-pawn to a King.
- ³ 2.— Bh6? 3.g4 B~ 4.h6 Bxh6 5.g5 & 6.e7±
- ⁴ 4.h6? Bf6 5.h7 Bg7 6.g4 (6.g3 Bf6) Bh8 7.g5 Bf6
- ⁵ 5.h6? Bc3 6.h7 Bh8 and Black wins.

Recall that in Modern Courier Chess the Fers is the historical piece, i.e. the (1,1) leaper, but that the 'Courier' is the combined (0,2)+(2,2) leaper. This is not a common fairy piece, but it has been amusingly named the Alibaba, as it is a combination of the Alfil and the Dababa... Paul writes that this is based on an unsound study by P. Keres, Chess World 1933. [3B3k/5pp1/5R2/p4pK1/P7/8/p7/8; Draw]

- 58 Solution:** 1.Ri6+⁽¹⁾ Kx16⁽²⁾ 2.K15⁽³⁾ Kk7⁽⁴⁾ 3.Bf6 e1=Q⁽⁵⁾ 4.Bh4 Qxh4 =
- ¹ 1.Rj8+? K17 2.Bc3 bxc3 3.Re8 c2 ±
- ² 1.— Kk8? 2.R11 and White eventually wins with the bP.
- ³ 2.Kj5? e1=Q 3.Bj6+ Qxj6+ 4.Kxj6 K17 and now:
 (a) 5.Kxi6 Kk6 6.Ki5 Kk5; or (b) 5.Kj5 Fk3 6.Ki5 Kk6; or (c) 5.Ki5 Fi3 6.Kj5 Kk7 7.Kxi6 Kk6 etc. ±
- ⁴ (a) 2.— e1=Q 3.Bj6+ Qxj6=
 (b) 2.— e1=B 3.Bf6 Fi1 4.Be5 Fj2 5.Bf6 Fk3 6.Bg7
 (c) 2.— K17 3.Bj6 Fi3 4.Be1 Fh2 5.Bxb4 Fg3 6.Bd2 Ff4! 7.b4 Fe5 8.b5 Fd6 9.b6 draw.
- ⁵ 3.— e1=B 4.Bxj2 draw: White threatens to sacrifice his B for the b-pawn.

Solutions are accepted at any time before the publication of the next issue (containing the solutions). To make sure, however, that your comments and updated ladder score appear in the next column, please send your solutions up to 6 weeks after you receive *Variant Chess*.

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN CHESS AND OTHER BOARD GAMES IN CHINA

by Koichi Masukawa

I shall talk about old Chinese board games with reference to the work done by H.J.R.Murray earlier this century.

I have always found it a strange story that Chinese chess was in some way connected with astronomy or astrology. Several monographs have been written on the subject quoting *A History of Chess* by H.J.R.Murray. I wish to point out a few errors from which this misconception may have arisen.

a) Murray in Chapter 7 of his book HOC wrote the Chinese name of chess in Chinese character *Kanji*, (the Japanese name *Kanji* is mistaken but I shall not go into this here (Editor: Peter Blommers has pointed out that 'Kanji' in Japanese means 'Chinese character'.)). Chinese characters are ideograms and Siang has many meanings as he correctly stated, but Siang does not mean astronomy, and Siang K'i, (Editor: Old spelling of *Xiang Qi*), therefore cannot be translated as the Astronomy game. Siang K'i does pose a problem as it has two meanings:- one, 'Chinese chess', (Editor: literally *Elephant game*), the other 'ivory pieces of a board game', but not chessmen.

b) Until recently Japanese and possibly Chinese scholars thought there was only one meaning for Siang K'i, that of Chinese chess. Old Chinese documents, for example the 4th century BC. poetry of Qu Yuan, contained references to Siang K'i; as a result many people concluded that Chinese chess already existed at this time. Also it was believed that the origin of board games was connected with astrology, so it was assumed that Chinese chess, a board game, was in some way connected with astrology.

c) I doubted that the origin of Chinese chess was as early as it was thought to be by the Shogi players of the 18th century. I was aware that the old Chinese board games, for example *Ryu-po*, (Editor: Peter Blommers has pointed out that *Ryu-po* is the Japanese rendering of *Liu-po*. (the Japanese cannot say the 'l'), the 'liu' part meaning 'six'), played from 5th century BC. until around the 3rd century AD., used dice. *Ryu-po* was nearly as complicated as the goose-game and other board games found in ancient tombs. Examples of such board games are exhibited at the British Museum. *Ryu-po* however was different from the game of chess or *chaturanga*.

d) After the second world war many *Ryu-po* boards were unearthed in various districts of China. They were made of several different materials, for example wood, stone, semi-precious stone, ivory etc.. The word for ivory *Ryu-po* games pieces is written 'Kanji' which is identical to the ideogram for Chinese chess.

e) Confusion of the two words must have begun with the misreading and misinterpretation of *Kanji*. (ie. Siang K'i: ivory pieces of old board game *Ryu-po*, and Chinese chess.)

Of course Murray misread the word as he could not have known of the existence of the game *Ryu-po*, see chapter on race games and war games in *History of Board games other than chess*.

Prior to the second world war Japanese researchers believed that *Ryu-po* was partly related to astrology and divinity. Today this opinion has been discredited. If one relies solely on documented records one often forms wrongful conclusions. Research workers who had, until the present time, only the old Chinese documents to study, thought there was only one meaning for Siang K'i, that of Chinese chess. New evidence has now been unearthed which relates Siang K'i to ivory pieces of the *Ryu-po* game. This should come as no surprise as the Chinese played the popular game *Ryu-po* from about the 5th century BC.

No real evidence has been found for the 'existence' of Chinese chess before the 11th century AD; it is only later documents which suggested it may have originated in the 8th century AD. Li Song Fu wrote in his 1981 book *A History of Chinese chess* that the origin of Chinese chess is not clear and positive proof does not exist until the 11th century AD.

It is my opinion that Chinese chess dates from a period somewhat earlier than this. With the continual energetic investigation of historians and archaeologists into newly excavated material, it is to be hoped that they will soon succeed in providing some firm evidence of this. Moreover as the oldest chessmen discovered in Japan at the temple in Nara date from the first half of the 11th century, it is fair to surmise that if Chinese chess was transmitted from Central Asia to Japan as is generally thought, it must have existed in China prior to that date. However I do not believe that Chinese chess originated before Christ or that its origin has any connection with astrology.

Mad Mate

While researching for the review to *Games & Puzzles*, I discovered this variant from *G&P* 79 in 1980. It is apparently 'Alex Randolph's game'. Normal chess rules apply except that captured men change sides and are kept in hand, as in Shogi. A man in hand may be dropped on the board onto any vacant square, this counting as a move. Promotion is only to a man which the opponent has in hand. The game is similar to Chessgi, (see VC4 for differences in the rules).

Murray Chandler, (now GM and editor of the *BCM*, the magazine that fled Hastings to avoid the competition), won a small tournament. Here is one of his wins.

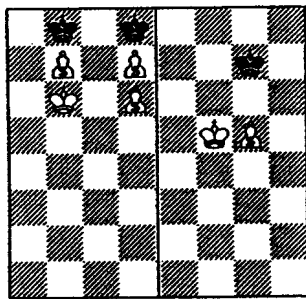
Tim Leeney - Murray Chandler

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.d3 d5 3.Bg5 Nc6 4.e3 e5 5.Qe2 Bd6 6.Nc3 Be6
7.O-O-O O-O 8.h4 d4 9.exd4 exd4 10.Ne4 Bxa2 11.P*h6
Be7 12.hxg7 Kxg7 13.Qd2 P*c3 14.Bh6+ Kh8 15.Qg5 P*d2+
16.Rxd2 P*g6 17.P*g7+ Kg8 18.bxc3 Nxe4 19.dxe4 Bxg5
20.gxf8*(Q)+ Qxf8 21.P*b1 P*b2+ 22.Kd1 Bxh6 23.N*f6+
Kh8 24.R*g8+ Qxg8 25.Nxg8 R*c1+ 26.Ke2 N*f4 mate.

SUPER-PAWN

By Ian Richardson

One day as I was puzzling over a variant problem containing a berolina pawn, (moves diagonally, takes straight), it occurred to me that it would be interesting to consider a pawn that was both a normal and a berolina pawn! I quickly realised that it would be very strong, and coined the name 'super-pawn'. Its strength is shown by the two mates shown on the left of the following diagram. These are similar to typical mates by generals in Shogi.



P = Super-pawn.

When it comes to play, I considered two methods:-

1) All pawns are normal on odd-numbered moves, and berolina on even-numbered moves.
2) The player can choose which type of pawn he is pushing or capturing with at any time. One feature of Super-pawn is that it stops opposite pawns getting blocked, as happens with normal, or berolina, pawns. In method 1 they can be blocked for one move, but will be released on the next move. In the case of method 2, the opposite pawns cannot approach each other without threat of capture, and because of this I at first dismissed this method from my consideration.

Using method 1, alternate normal and berolina play, Peter Wood and I played a game at Exmouth, (Chinese Chess Week), with pawns and kings only. (He won!) There were several snags:

- 1) It was difficult to remember whether the move was odd or even.
- 2) White has an advantage. (always first to unblock), and the game had to be handicapped.

3) To avoid difficulties, (ambiguities), it was found necessary to assume that the king was in check when placed on any of the squares in front of the pawn, and this seemed artificial if moves were alternating.

4) When a pawn queened, the game was as good as over. Allan Brown, (inventor of the Ogre Chinese Chess computer), suggested restricting promotion somehow. We tried several possibilities, but none seemed perfect.

When I came home from Exmouth, I felt very dissatisfied with all this, and decided to try method 2. I found to my joy that it gave an interesting game after all, and all the snags listed above disappeared, except for the matter of promotion. Here I have decided to restrict promotion to 'super-rook' - the '+Rook' or 'Dragon' of Shogi, which moves and captures like a rook, but also diagonally to/on adjacent squares. (Ed. See second diagram on page 66). (At the board, an inverted rook can be used.)

Before going on to the game, readers might like to play, (by method 1 or 2), from the position on the right of the diagram above left. The method of play in the game and in the studies that follow is method 2 - with free choice of moving as a normal or berolina pawn at any time. Note: 1) first move of a berolina type pawn can be for 1 or 2 squares, 2) super-pawns on their start-squares can capture (or check) only pieces or pawns on the next rank. 3) there is no 'en-passant' rule, (it would be difficult to explain).

Sample game

Pawns and Kings only, from the normal starting positions. An obvious strategy, followed here, is to build up a pawn majority on one wing.

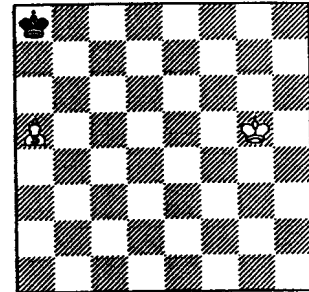
1.h4 a5 2.e-g4 d-b5 3.g3 b6 4.d-f5 c5
5.f3 f6 6.b3 g6 7.Ke2 Kd7 8.Ke3
Kd6 9.Ke4 Ke6 10.h5 gxh 11.gxh a4
12.bxa bxa 13.g4 b5 14.f-g5 fxg
15.gxg b4 16.f4 c4. Now, to attack or defend? White attacks. 17.f5+ Kf7 - a mistake by Black. He should play Kd6. and then both sides will promote at least one pawn. 18.g6+ hxg
19.fxg+ Kg8 20.h6 (threatening mate) 20....Kf8 21.h7 (threatening

mate) 21....e5+ (to gain a move)
22.Kxe5 a3 23.Ke6! axa 24.h8(+R)#

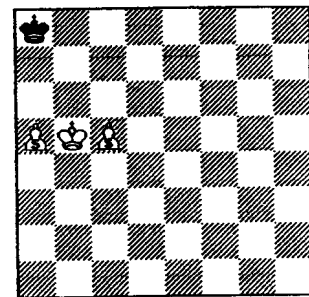
Whereas this game ends with promotion, the super-pawn is remarkably strong against a super-rook. In the following position Black to play cannot force a win.

White: Kh4, Pe6. Black: Ka5, +Rd1.

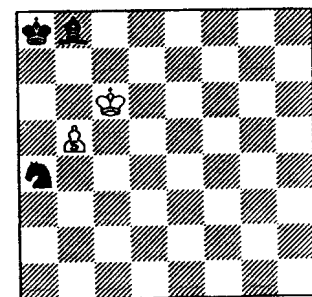
Studies to illustrate power of super-pawn and super-rook.



White mates in 8 by: 1.b6 Kb8
2.Kf6 Kc8 3.Ke7 Kb8 4.Kd7 Ka8
5.Kc6 Kb8 6.c7+ Ka8(a7) 7.c8(+R)
and mate next move.



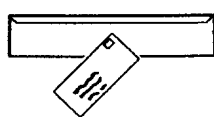
White mates in 5 by: 1.Kc6 Kb8!
2.d6 Ka7, (if 2....Kc8 3.c7#, and if
2....Ka8, 3.a6 etc.). 3.c7 Ka8
4.c8(+R) Ka7 5.+Rb7#.



Mate in seven

Solution. 1.a6 Bf4! 2.b7+ Ka7
3.c8(+R) Nc5 (forced) 4.Kxc5 Bc3+
5.Kc6 Ka6 6.+Rb7+ Ka5 7.+Rb5#.
If 1....Nc3, mate in 6:- 2.b7+ Ka7
3.c8(+R) Ka6 4.+Rxb8 Ka5 5.+Rb3
and mate next move.

If 1....Ba7, 2.b7#!



LETTER BOX !

Chinese Chess

From Paul Byway (*Hoddesdon, Herts*).

I have been surprised and, frankly, appalled at the tone of some approaches to the presentation of Xiang-Qi in the west: I think the Chinese could reasonably expect more respect for their culture. Xiang-Qi and its representation should be appreciated as it is and not turned into a pale imitation of Chess. Any changes should be restricted to finding suitable translations of name and symbol for our easier understanding.

Notation

Algebraic notation is good for representing positions: it's not so good at showing play where there are two points of view. There is, for instance, no concise way of describing the bishop sacrifice at R7 or the knight outpost at K5: for this you need descriptive notation. This is particularly useful when the game is unfamiliar, as I discovered while working on Modern Courier Chess: the move Bk3 doesn't mean much until familiarity from long practice brings vision, but B-KN3 can be placed immediately. The price you pay is a longer notation and two-way numbering of ranks. The elegant Chinese descriptive notation, (*Ed.: used in China; by David Woo, (Xiang-Qi Review); and C.K.Lai*), has two-way numbering of files instead, but is almost as compact as short-form algebraic. (I would improve it by replacing 'r' and 'f' by '1' and '4' respectively, eg. +C-2.). After playing through a few games I can now read the excellent *50 games of GM Li Laiqun*, (*translated by C.K.Lai*), and begin to visualise the board. If I read an algebraic score my mind is a blank - and probably a good thing too, since I'm so familiar with this notation in a different context. It's pretty clear that, for demographic reasons if no other, Chinese descriptive will not be displaced as the international standard: this being so it would be helpful if VC were to adopt it. If it is felt that algebraic notation would be helpful in introducing Xiang-Qi I believe it should be used sparingly - being clearly understood to be a transitional arrangement only. In any case I can't think of a good reason for changing the name of one of the pieces, (Guard for Queen): Murray's usage was more consistent.

Diagrams

The problem with diagrams is that, given the size they must be, the Chinese symbols are too complex to be easily legible. It doesn't matter so much that they are unintelligible even when they can be read, but having different symbols for the same piece is unhelpful. A simple solution was provided long ago by Murray - replacement of the Chinese characters by capital letters of the Latin alphabet. His use of a rather elongated board was another aid to clarity. I'm happy to see that VC has retracted somewhat from the 'Frankenstein's Monster' of westernised diagrams, (*Ed.: only 'somewhat'*), but in my view Murray provides the best model. In this way the distinct character of Xiang-Qi is retained while understanding is improved.

Names

I'm looking for a suitable set of 'original and genuine' names for the pieces. Let's start by making it clear that this means more than a set of names that some people at some time have agreed to proclaim as standard: there seems to have been a great deal of this already. From this point of view the 'Asian Xiang-Qi Federation' names, contaminated as they are by chess, have no particular status even if they have achieved a fixed form. Furthermore I don't think we should concern ourselves too much with standardisation between countries - just compare the names of Chess pieces within Europe. We can readily go quite a long way towards a suitable set of terms as follows:- the four divisions of the Indian army were adopted into Chaturanga as Chariot, Horse, Elephant and Soldier. These names were carried to Persia, the Arabs, Europe and China. Half the Chinese Elephants were at some time re-titled Assistants: this is a complication we could well do without. The Chinese introduced the Cannon and this name seems to be as standard as one could hope for in this field, (the efforts of the AXF notwithstanding.) The Indian Rajah was adapted to the local culture thus: Shah, King, and in China, General.

The last piece is the most difficult but even here there is uniformity of meaning if not of name. Mandarin, Minister, Counsellor, Firzan (=Vizier); all carry the sense of a high functionary. The use of Assistant is a bad idea given that this name has been applied to the Elephant. Demotion to some kind of sentry (Guard) is even more depressing - where did that one spring from? ; that the initial letter clashes with General is a further complication. Counsellor suffers a similar

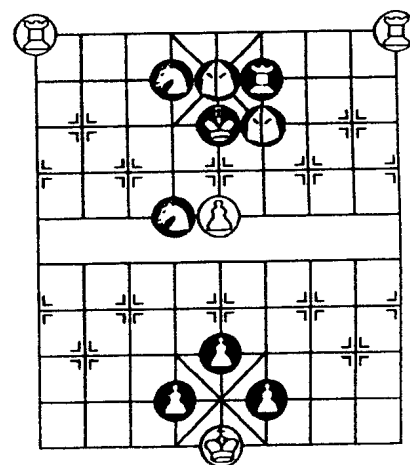
clash with Cannon, Chariot, so it has to be Mandarin or Minister. Those who prefer mundane names will go for Minister, but for me it has to be Mandarin, which has the cultural reference and that slightly antiquated air which clings to names like Cannon, Knight. Perhaps past political events have affected the use of Mandarin and Guard? I was pleased to see that you point out in VC12 that Rook is merely the untranslated Persian/Arabic for Chariot: that solves the last problem. One could say that it is fitting that the only piece with a move in common with chess shares the name also.

Editor: In a later letter to me Paul Byway makes some additional points.

The King and Pawn are the names I object to most strongly, because, (without any history of their own), they have clearly been lifted straight from international chess. On reflection it would be better to use capital X, (greek letter CHI), for Chariot.

This now gives: **Chariot(X), Horse(H), Elephant(E), Mandarin(M), General(G), Cannon(C), Soldier(S).**

Thus there is no possibility of confusion with chess names.



From *Xiang-Qi Review*. Red to play and force mate. *Solution in next issue.*

Randomised Chess

From Hugh Myers (Editor of the *Myers Opening Bulletin*, Iowa USA).

I have nothing against Randomised, (or Shuffle), chess as an independent game, just as an 'improvement' on chess. The attitude expressed by M.Lawrence in VC12, that a 'typical correspondence game' is a battle of the books; when a

game should not be a contest between past masters, is wrong for more than one reason. It's like saying that players of ball games shouldn't get coaching or refer to books on technique; they should only start from scratch, with results based on nothing but innate ability. Why fear openings only? What about the player who has an advantage because he has lots of books on endings and middle game themes? But as for openings, I enjoy having opponents who refer to 'the entire gamut of opening literature'. That literature is full of mistakes, and much of it becomes obsolete every year. Chess players study; it's part of the game, and part of their ability is how well they evaluate what they study, not just how well they research it and memorise it. Chess isn't just a question of 1-0 & 0-1, nor of ratings and prize money, as too many pros seem to think. It's a challenge to overcome strong opposition and to play brilliant games; those who think winning is everything can get all the wins they need by playing patzers and computers on their lowest levels.

What does Randomised chess do anyway except make study more difficult and perhaps start the middle game sooner? I see the main thing as easing the fears of weak players who have been embarrassed by losing games in less than 20 moves. Maybe Mr. Lawrence would like to see improvement of tennis by changing the weight of the balls and the height of the net after every game.

Computers

You and I disagree about the potential of 'perfection' of opening play by computers. So far there's little indication of it. One reason is that the strongest computers are stuffed with libraries of contents of defect-filled opening books, and master games which often have incorrect moves which are not always seen as incorrect until new games show that they were. GM opinions have been proven wrong many times. So a computer usually doesn't 'compute' during the opening; it refers to a file. But can it? Yes, if utilised properly, and I have credited innovations to computers. Here too there is programming weakness, in that computers don't get enough evaluation instruction for unclear positions. The reason the progress will be slow is that there are so many millions of variations. The computer has to be given the opportunity to evaluate each one, and humans with talent have to evaluate the computer's choice: computers make

mistakes too, and they often choose one move in one time frame, but a different one - but not always a better one - when allowed more time. The human element will be there for a long time. And if the day comes when everyone plays perfect openings, (something that's hard to believe), then that's when rules should be changed. But even then...we would still have middle games and endings.

From Max Lawrence (Editor of *Transcendental Chess*, New York USA).

In response to Mr. Hugh Myers' commentary, we wish to point out that Transcendental Chess is not randomized chess, as games are always played in pairs, with a transposition feature which makes the game form absolutely unique. We have no idea what 'Shuffle Chess' is, except to note that Bobby Fischer reportedly became interested in it after we sent him our prospectus and sample magazine.

Since Mr. Myers publishes a bulletin on ortho chess openings, we would not expect him to be enamored with a concept which trashes such openings at the very outset. We certainly agree with him that current chess literature is loaded with errors in analysis, but we do not agree that randomization results in the middle game being started sooner. Quite the contrary, randomization in conjunction with the transposition privilege makes the opening so difficult, that the slightest imbalance in player skills shows up in just a few moves. Not only that, but in TC, a player can 'blow' a game with just one poor transposition. If two players are more or less equally skilled, the opening in TC can be just as long or longer than in ortho chess, as each player tries his damndest to impede the development of his opponent's pieces.

There is a vast difference between opening theory and opening praxis. In our club we allow the use of books and computers without restriction of any kind, and even encourage the use of books dealing with theory, be it opening or otherwise, because the idea behind TC is to force a player to be on his own from start to finish. Any idiot can copy opening moves from a book or push buttons on a computer. This is about as challenging as turning on the radio.

Our club was formed for the benefit of experienced postal chess players who are not afraid of a challenge and are willing to work hard at chess analysis. Those who are not, simply get slaughtered in a hurry. The vast majority of chess players are either too lazy or incapable of serious study, and

therefore play postal ortho chess, so that they may freely copy from books or push computer keys. Bully for them!

Amazons

From Michael Keller (Editor of *World Game Review*, Baltimore USA).

I would like to clarify a couple of points concerning NOST and the game of 'Amazons'. I was the one who translated the rules of the game from the original Spanish. The term 'arrow' is my translation of the Spanish word meaning projectile, (*proyectil*). I did so in reference to the legendary race of female warriors who used bows and arrows. Although 'amazon' is widely used in chess variants for 'queen plus knight', I think there could be no more appropriate name than 'Amazon' for a queen-like piece which fires arrows.

I also introduced the game informally into NOST in 1992. The first NOST tournament is already underway. NOST tournaments are open to members, (contact Philip M. Cohen, 50 DeKalb Avenue, Apt. S6, White Plains, NY 10605-1445, USA).

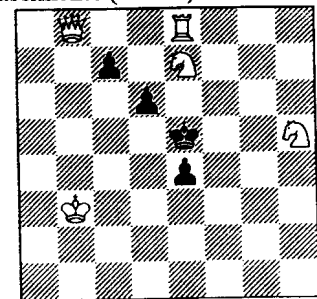
Editor: If any readers would like to play Amazons in a postal match UK v USA, please let me know.

En Passant Piece Capture

Editor: Hugh Myers has told me that his recollection is that the Swedish player he refers to in his letter in VC12 who endorsed en passant captures by pieces, is Folke Ekstrom.

Ken Whyld points out that his 'Quotes and Queries' column in the March *BCM*, has an item on this topic. Here is a problem from that column published with permission, from the *BCM*.

This is a composition by **Rui C. Nascimento** (Lisbon)



Mate in Two. Pieces can capture en passant. *Solution on page 80.*

NEWS

MATCH BCCA v ITALY

A variant-chess match has been arranged between a 'British Chess Correspondence Association team' and an Italian team. It will be over 8 boards. Each player plays two games against his opponent. The Italians have chosen 'Italian Progressive' as their variant on four of the boards; the BCCA choices are the other variants. The BCCA players and variants are:

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1) Patrick Donovan | Circe Progressive |
| 2) David Pritchard | Italian Progressive |
| 3) Ian Richardson | Circe Progressive |
| 4) Peter Wood | Italian Progressive |
| 5) Paul Archer | Italian Progressive |
| 6) Steve Guy | Italian Progressive |
| 7) Patrick Connelly | Chinese Chess |
| 8) Dik ter Haar | Marseillais Chess |

VINCIPERDI

Wood - Vanous.

Ian Richardson has found an alternative method of winning following the diagram on page 51 of *VC12*. This is: 10...Ra7 11.Nxd6 Rb7 12.Nxb7 Nh6 13.Nxa5 Nc6 14.Nxc6 Rf8(or a8) 15.Nxe5 Rxf2 16.Kxf2 Nc7 17.Nxc7 h6 18.Nxh6.

Ian has also taken up my challenge of finding a good and original dice game using one chess-set, 5 dice, plus 1 doubling die, (page 59). This will appear in *VC14*; it is really good! For other readers the challenge still stands.

ERRATA

A few errors were spotted on page 60 of *VC*, by David Woo.

Xie Jun retained her World Title; her challenger was N.Joseliani; in the Xie Jun - Xie TianShun game, in the notes following 19.Cf7+ Cg8, 20.Rh8+ should read 20.Rh0+; in the diagram in the right-hand column, Red's 'f' guard should be on e2.

Several readers have pointed out that the diagram to the first Chancellor Chess problem on page 54 is incorrect. Replace the d7 pawn on f7.

2ND HETERODOX OLYMPIAD

In the team competition, England is at present in 3rd place; behind Italy 1 and the Ukraine.

3RD CHINESE CHESS WEEK

10-17 September 1994

Malcolm Horne writes:

This will again be held in Exmouth, on the East Devon coast, with self-catering accommodation provided. The cost for the whole week, (excluding food), will not be more than £70, (probably around £60). If a single room is required add £15. Accommodation can also be booked for non-playing family or friends.

The main tournament, (11-16 Sept.), will be one game per day in the mornings, 40 moves in 2 hours. Excluding unfinished games afternoons will be free. Optional evening events will include a knockout quickplay tournament, a round-table discussion, friendly games and analysis. For those interested in chess variants there will be plenty of opportunity to play these. There will be a few prizes, and some money will be raised for charity.

Accommodation has to be arranged well in advance. If you would like to come send a deposit of £30 per person, (or equivalent in foreign currency), with any cheques payable to me, to arrive by MON 20TH JUNE. If entering after this date the charge may be £15-£20 higher. If you are unemployed or on low income, efforts will be made to reduce the cost if there are difficulties in affording the full amount. Please enquire or mention this when sending your deposit.

If you have any questions please contact **MALCOLM HORNE, 10B Windsor Square, Exmouth, Devon EX8 1JU, England**. More details will be sent out in July to anyone who has booked.

Exmouth is a good holiday centre with a sandy beach, good coastal walks, and normal tourist attractions.

CHINESE / KOREAN CHESS NEWS

The latest issue of this interesting 2-page newsletter is now out. Crammed full of up to minute information on the games in question. Includes 3 complete games. It is FREE on receipt of a SAE or International Reply Coupon. Write to **Malcolm Horne, (address above)**.

Malcolm is also planning a small book or booklet on **Korean Chess**. However at present he does not have as much information on the game as he would like. He is trying to locate some 'master games', and needs to clarify some of the minor rules, (which seem to be subject to regional variations). If anyone knows any chess-playing Koreans, or can help, please get in touch with him.

CHANCELLOR CHESS

Forms are being sent to readers who may wish to enter for the *Variant Chess* Chancellor Chess postal tournaments.

AISE POSTAL INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Entries are invited for international tournaments in the following variants, (deadlines are in brackets).

Italian Progressive Chess (31.7.94)

Avalanche Chess (31.7.94)

English Progressive Chess (1.10.94)

4th Team Championship (3 player) -

Italian Progressive Chess (1.10.94)

Except for the team championship which is free, the entry fee is \$3 or equivalent value. The rules of the variants will be sent on request. Write to **A.Castelli, 62010 Villa Potenza (MC), Italy**.

BRITISH CHESS SOLVING CHAMPIONSHIP 1994-95

Here is the starter problem - White to play and mate in 2 moves. Solutions are invited from anyone resident in the British Isles. Give key move only and send to **Brian Stephenson, 9 Roydfield Drive, Sheffield S19 6ND**, postmarked no later than 30th June 1994. Please indicate where you saw this starter problem. Please also accompany your entry with the entry fee of £2 and a SAE for receipt of the postal round. Cheques and postal orders payable to BCPS please. The postal round will be sent out late in July.

The winner will be offered a place in the British team for the World Chess Solving Championship in 1995. A prize of £50 will be awarded to the first randomly drawn correct answer to the starter problem.

