Variant Chess

The magazine to expand your chess horizons, and with that your chess pleasure.

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FOOTBALL CHESS

To commemorate the great contributions made to the World Football Cup of 1994 by the two mighty footballing nations of England and France, what follows is an English adaptation of an article in French, taken from Joseph Boyer's Nouveau Jeux D'Echecs Non-Orthodoxes, (1954).

Vive la France! Up England!

This elaborate game was invented in 1940 by Henri Boissier of Lausanne, Switzerland, and was so well thought of at that time that several Swiss and German newspapers published problems. The game has a somewhat distant connection with chess other than it is played on a chequered board - extremely big - and that the players and the ball are moved round it as the Queen at Chess, according to certain rules. The exception is the goalkeeper which moves as a Rook - horizontally. But what is remarkable is that the rules of football are used, and many of its manoeuvres are realised and transposed to the board in a quite simple manner: passes, offside, corners, etc.. The game is said to lend itself to numerous and fine combinations.

The game is played on a board of 23x17 squares representing the pitch, between two opponents, each having a team of 11 players: 1 goalkeeper, 2 backs, 3 half-backs, and 5 forwards. The goalkeeper is a special piece; the 2 backs are also somewhat special. The halves and the forwards are alike. In addition there is the ball (abbreviated to B). The diagram shows how the players and the ball are placed at the kick-off at the start of each half, and after a goal.
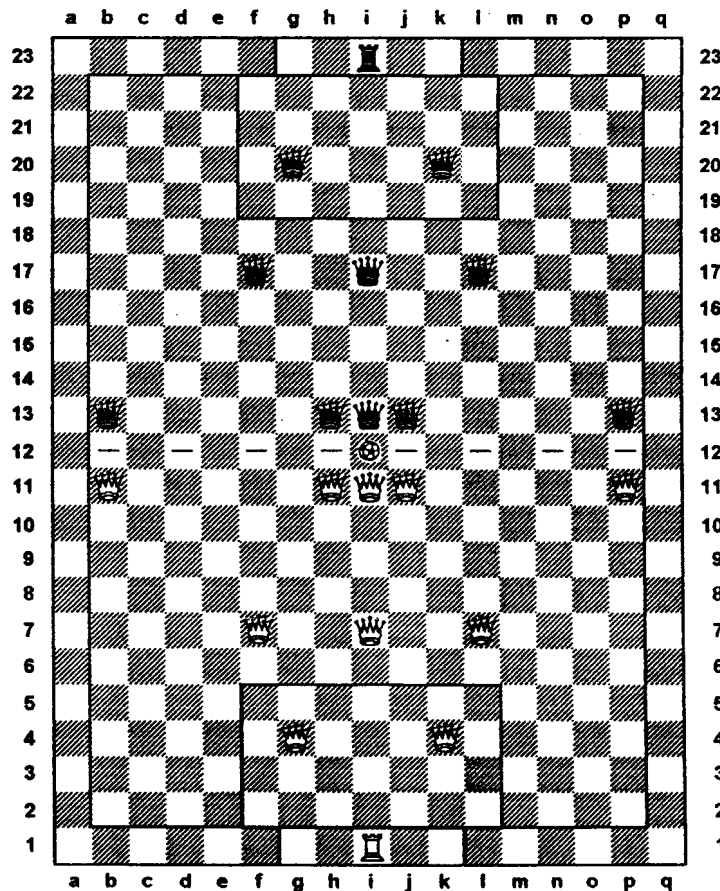
The lines on the pitch show the half-way line, mark off the penalty and goal areas, and, limited to one square round the perimeter, show where the ball is out of play. A match consists of two halves of 45 minutes, and each player must execute 23 moves (turns) per half. If one player exceeds the time limit (23 minutes for 23 moves) his opponent is awarded a goal*[1]. At half time the players change ends, but keep their own colours. The half time break must not exceed 10 minutes. Other time limits can be fixed by mutual agreement e.g.. a game can be over when a certain number of goals have been scored.

Apart from the goalkeeper who can only move on the five squares g, h, i, j, k, on ranks 1 or 23 of the goal area, all the pieces and the B move as a Chess Queen. Pieces cannot be placed on an occupied square, nor pass over another piece, except in the special case when they can jump over the ball. Each piece plays in two manners: with the B, or without the B. The B can only be played by a piece. To do this the piece must be on the same line as the B, at any distance without a piece intervening. The B can be moved (kicked) as far as one likes. When the B is kicked and placed on a square, the kicking piece can remain where it is, or follow the line of the ball and be placed on *any square up to where the B finishes*. These rules do not apply to the goalkeeper, who can only play the B in front of the goal area on the same line as itself; when kicking the ball he can only send it as far as the half-way line, and cannot follow the ball - he must remain on the square from where he kicked it. If a piece is played without the B, it can be placed adjacent to it. The two backs can move at will around the field as the halves and forwards do, but one or other of them must always remain in its own penalty area. If this rule is not observed, a back cannot score a goal*[2]. If a piece is on a square adjacent to the B, it can jump over it and kick it in the opposite direction, but only if the square to be jumped to is unoccupied. A piece can also jump over the B without playing it.

The players play alternately, and there are 3 kinds of move:

1) A *simple* move without B: simple displacement of a piece.
2) A *simple* move with B: this takes 3 forms - a) moving the B, b) jumping the ball without displacement, 3) jumping the B with displacement.
3) A *double move* with B. This is permitted when a piece kicks the B, or jumps over it without playing it. Another piece of the same side can then continue the play. It must always be 2 different pieces which execute the two parts of the double move. In the double move it is not permitted to make one move with the B, and the other without the B; but jumping over the B without kicking it has, in this particular instance, the same value as a move of the B being kicked.

The *double move* can thus have 4 forms:
1) 2 pieces successively playing the B, with or without a preliminary jump. (Passing).
2) 1 piece plays the B, and a second jumps it without playing it.
3) 1 piece jumps the B without playing it, and the second plays it.
4) 2 pieces successively jump over the ball without playing it.

The centre forward of the team who starts the game executes the kick-off by first advancing to h12 or j12, to the right or to the left of the B, followed by dispatching it with or without a double move. Thus if White starts, he can place his centre forward on j12, (in the kick-off position this is not classed as a move). The B can then for example be kicked to c12, and (according to the rules) the kicker can follow up and be placed on say e12. Then the left winger on b11 can kick the B to j19, and place himself on

h17. This double move at the start will be noted thus: Double move: j12-(Bc12)-e12, and b11-(Bj19)-h17. Each move of the B is indicated by a) the initial square of the piece which kicks, b) the square where the B arrives, and c) the square the kicking piece finishes. For *simple* moves without the B, there is indicated, a) the departing square and, b) the arrival square, of the piece.

The penalty area consists of 28 squares in front of the goal. The defending team must never have more than 5 pieces there (not including the goalkeeper) and a maximum of 4 on rank 2 or 22 directly in front of the goal. This is to avoid a 'water-tight dam'. There are no such restrictions on the attacking team.

On the 8 squares which surround the B there can only be placed a maximum of 6 pieces, no more than 3 for each team: a minimum of 2 squares is therefore allowed free to allow the B to be played. If the B is played onto a square where the neighbouring squares are occupied by more than 3 pieces of one team, that player must eliminate the blockage of the B by one or several *simple* moves without the B. Each of these moves is followed by a move of the opponent.

The squares on files 'a' and 'q' are *in-touch*: the B can not be played there, only pieces can be placed there.

The squares behind the line to the right and left of the goal, (a,b,c,d,e,f and l,m,n,o,p,q - on ranks 1 and 23), are *behind the by-line*. If the defending team sends the ball there (the only instance where the B can go on exterior squares) the attacking team takes a corner kick. To execute this the B is placed on the nearest *corner* square (b2,b22,p2,p22) to where the B left the pitch. The nearest attacking piece to the B is then placed on the square behind it (a2,a22,q2,q22) and the B is kicked along rank 2 or 22 in front of the goal. If the corner cannot be taken on the side where the B was sent*[3], it is taken on the other side of the goal. If it is impossible to take the corner on either side, the players are sent back to the starting position and a kick-off takes place.

Offside only occurs inside the penalty area. The attacker is offside if, after a move by *either* of the players, no piece of the defending side (except for the goalkeeper) is between him and the opposing goal line. The offside attacker cannot score a goal, and on the next move that piece must be withdrawn to an onside position (*forfeit* move). If there are several pieces offside, they must be withdrawn one after another in any order. These withdrawals must be made by *simple* moves without the B. *Each* of these moves is followed by a move of the opponent. The defending team can deliberately, by an adroit manoeuvre, put his assailants offside. These *forfeit* moves can not only quell an attack, but put the opponent's goal in danger as well.

If simultaneously a player has to eliminate both an offside and a blockage of the B, he must first of all eliminate the offside.

Here is a sample game showing progress from the kick-off to a goal:
1. *Having placed the centre-forward on j12:* **Double-move j12-(Bg12)-i12, and h11-(Bk8)** *(after jumping over the ball)*-h11. 1....p13-(Bh5)-i6 2.k4-h4 2....i6-h6 3.Double-move: g4-(Bo12)-m10 and p11-(Bh19)-j17 3....g20-g19 4.b11-h17 *(threatening a goal at k23)* BUT: 4....Double-move: g19-(Bk19)-h19 and k20-(Bk1) Goal!

This game has no pretensions to quality. For example Black could have shut the k-file easily enough on his 4th move.

A very interesting problem by H.Kluever shows a rescue manoeuvre on the file, by a clever utilisation of the rules of the corner.
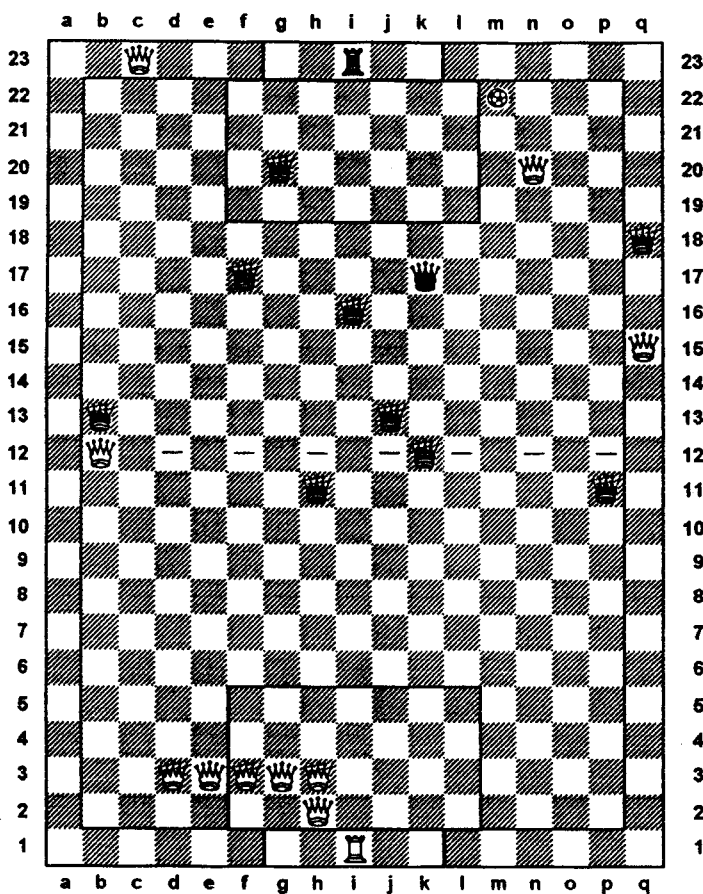
White scores a goal in 3 moves.
Solution.

1.b12-m23 *(threatening 2.m23-(Bm21) and n20-(Bk23) goal)* **1....q18-(Bl23)-n21** *(the only defence, for if 1....i23-k23 then 2.m23-(Bm19)-m21 and q15-(Bi23) goal)* Corner! The ball is placed on p22, and n20 at q22 *(rule of the corner)* **2.Double-move: q22-(Bc22)-e22; and c23-(Bc1)-c3** *Another corner! The ball is placed on b2, and h11 at a2 (rule of the corner) - this clears the 'h' file!* **2....a2-(Bc2)** *or* **d2,e2,f2,g2** **3.Double-move : d3** *or* **e3,f3,g3,h3,** *(after jumping diagonally over the B) -(Bh7) or* **h6,h5,h4,h3; and h3** *or h2* **then kicks the B into the goal at h23.**

Editor: There are some faults in a few of the minor rules. In the text I have marked these with an asterisk *.

1) A player could be 2 goals ahead and deliberately lose on time to win the game. An improvement would be that after a player exceeds the time limit (and his opponent is awarded a goal) he is allowed an extra minute from his opponent's time. However if his opponent has less than 2 minutes left, that opponent can declare that the half is ended.

2) The regulations with regard to backs are not satisfactory. It seems better to say that any one player (excluding the goalkeeper) of the defending side must always remain in its own penalty area. If the rule is not observed, on his next move, instead of a double move, his opponent can make a triple move.

3) In what circumstances can a corner be taken? My suggestion: the 5 squares horizontal to the kicker on the 2nd. or 22nd. rank must be vacant, (e.g.. a2-e2; a22-e22; q2-l2; q22-l22).

Note: Malcolm Horne has suggested that a player adjacent to the B, before kicking, should have the option of a King move (staying adjacent to the B) in addition to jumping the B. He feels the game flows better.

MODERN COURIER CHESS

The Fers (○) moves 1 square diagonally: the Courier (○) is a monochrome Knight (on c3 it can leap to a1, a3, a5, c5, e5, e3, e1, c1). An unmoved Fers has the option of a Courier's leap on to a vacant square. An unmoved King may take a double step to a vacant square provided it can be seen as 2 legal single moves, and he is not in check. Starting Array: RNCBFQKFBCNR.

Here is a win by Paul Byway. The game is annotated by him.

Roy Talbot - Paul Byway
Hoddesdon October 1992
1.e4 e5 2.c3 Nj6 3.d4 d6 4.Fe3 h5 5.f3 Fh6 6.h3 g5 *(4.Fe3 and 5....Fh6 show developing opening theory: formerly the Courier was developed on this square. White has sketched out a promising development on the queenside, but 6.h3 is bad, weakening black squares round the King. Black, on the other hand, overlooks the loss of a pawn.)* 7.dxe5 dxe5 8.Bxe5 Nc6 9.Bh2 Ce6 10.Bb3 g4 11.Ce1 *(After this common manoeuvre, a Courier can rapidly appear on the opposite wing. White offers a pawn for development.)* 11....Bxj2 12.Nl3 Bd8 13.Na3 a6 14.Nc2 *(A mistake: the minor exchange is probably worth half a pawn in*

MCC.) 14....Na5 15.Nd4 Nxb3 16.axb3 Fg6 17.Cj3 i6 18.Rj1 Ch8 *(White overlooked this: the Courier is assumed to be worth about 2 pawns.)* 19.Cg3 Cf6 20.Ce5 c6 21.Qd3 Cxd4 22.cxd4 Bf6 23.f4 Rd8 24.f5 Cxe4 25.Qxe4 Fxf5 26.Qf4 Bh8 27.Bi3 f6 28.Cc5 Fg5 29.Bxg5 *(Over-optimistic)* fxg5 30.Qxg5+ Bg6 31.Rf1
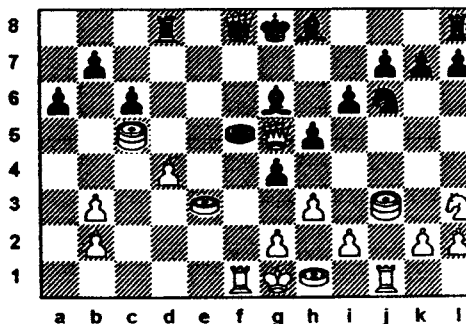
(Logical; but now the weaknesses round the white King make themselves felt.) 31....Bf6 32.Qi7 Bi3+ 33.Kf2 Fe4+ 34.Ff4 *(34.Ke1 Bh4+ 35.Ke2 Fd3+ wins; nor is my opponent the man to volunteer for 34.Qf4 Qxf4+ 35.Fxf4 Rxd4.)* 34....Ri8 35.Qc7 Rc8 36.Qe5 Re8 37.Qc7 Bd8 Resigns. *(38.Qxb7 Qxf4+ 39.Ke2 Fd3+ 40.Kd1 Fc2#)*

SHAHMOT

Shahmot is described as taking the game of chess to a new social level. 'From one on one to mega fun!!!'

Shahmot is designed as an extension to ordinary chess. It is split into three parts:

1) SHAHMOT. This is a 2-player game, one against one.

It is similar in nature to normal chess.

2) ALLIANCE. This is a team game for 2,3, or 4 players.

a) For 2 players.

Each player has 2 armies that are allied together. The game is over when both of the enemy Kings have been captured.

b) For 3 players.

One team has 2 players each controlling one army. The other 'team' of 1 player controls the other 2 armies. The game is over when both of one team's Kings have been captured.

c) For 4 players.

Both teams have 2 players, each of which controls one army. The game is over when both of one team's Kings have been captured.

3) FEUDALISM. This is a 4-player game where each player is independent and controls one army.

The object is to be the sole survivor at the end of the game. Once a player has captured an enemy's King, that player then acquires control of the captured King's remaining pieces.

The 3 parts of Shahmot can be played on three sizes of board; the Alpha, Beta, and Gamma. One of the three boards can be purchased and 'inserts' can be separately purchased, if required, so as to change the size of the board. As I have only the smallest Alpha board, I shall confine my remarks to the games which can be played on that board.

SHAHMOT. This is only played on the Alpha board as shown. There are 4 levels. The explanation of level 1 is rather ambiguous, but I take it to be the normal chess set-up in the 8x8 square in the middle of the board. The set-ups for levels 2,3,and 4 are shown below.
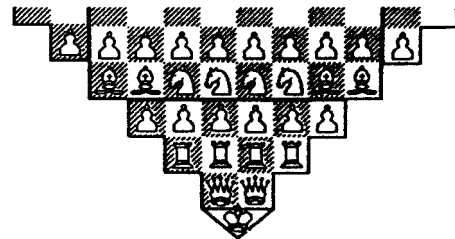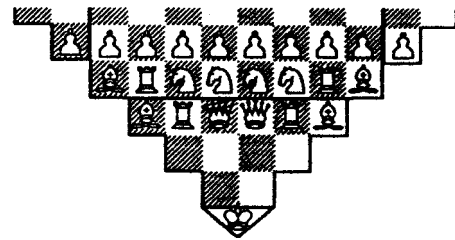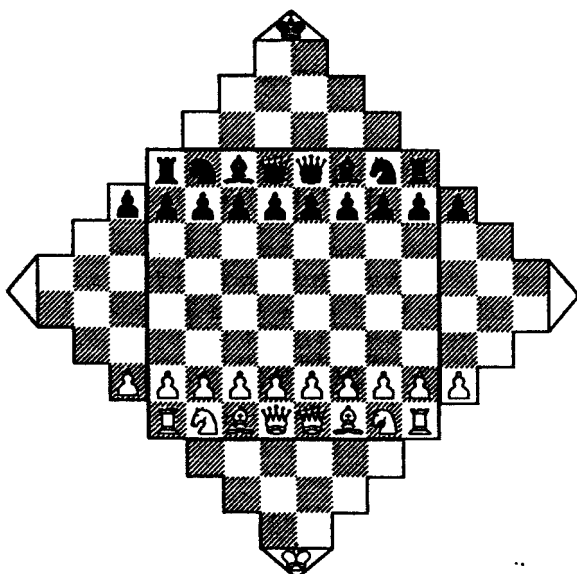
ALLIANCE & FEUDALISM. These also have 4 levels. Only level 1 is played on the Alpha board and this is shown below.
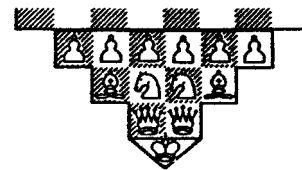
Level 2 needs the Beta board; level 3 and 4 need the Gamma board. Levels 2,3, and 4 need more pieces than is provided with the Alpha board.

Standard (Alpha) edition games are equipped with four sets of chess pieces (2 sets of 31 pieces, and 2 sets of 13 pieces).

In play normal chess rules apply except as follows:

a) Pieces move out of and into the triangular corners.

b) Castling has been replaced by SPRINT. On its initial move the King has the option of moving two squares away in a straight line. It must not move through or out of check. The straight line must be unobstructed.

c) A game ends not in normal mate, but when the King is actually captured. When a player cannot get out of check he must pass.

d) On the Alpha board, pawns promote on the 'normal' eighth rank.

There is also a gambling guide based on point values of the pieces.

I have tested the 2-man game (Shahmot) in play. After advancing one of the 2 centre pawns, a nasty pin is threatened by the Bishop on the Rook - tactics start to happen straight away. The presence of 2 Queens and the enlarged board makes the game open and encourages attacking play. Because the King is deprived of close pawn protection, it is more exposed to dangerous attacks.

The Queen is a very powerful piece in Shahmot, and it can make much use of the open central area of the board, especially from the two corners (East and West) where it not only moves along the two diagonals, but along both of the long central 16-square ranks. To give some comparison, on an orthodox 8x8 board, from the central squares the Queen has access to 27 squares - on the Alpha board the Queen has access to 43 squares. From the corner on an orthodox board, 21 squares - on the Alpha board, 46 squares. At the starting position on an orthodox board,

the vacant squares comprise 50% of the total number, on the Alpha board, 67%. This makes for a certain practical difficulty; the openness of the board means that pieces are liable to be inadvertently placed *en prise*.

I feel that although the game is certainly playable, and the extra Queen to some extent compensates for the extra space, the balance does not quite feel right.

However the board and the additional men provided are really geared to Alliance and Feudalism. But there are difficulties when 4 chess-armies have to be addressed. These playing difficulties do not just apply to Shahmot's multi-army and multi-player games. Major Verney's book *Chess Eccentricities* (1885) gives quite a few varieties of 4-handed chess, and there have been others - many are given in Michael Keller's *WGR10*. Four-handed chess had a certain vogue in the late 18th and the 19th century, particularly in Germany; and in Britain too, especially after Major Verney's books were published. It was played in the Four-Handed Chess Club, which used to meet at the Holborn Restaurant in London. According to the *Oxford Companion*, this club lasted for half a century. However, whatever 'popularity' it did have, did not last.

The rules of chess are based on a 1v1 game, and do not easily transfer to a 4-man game. To make the game 'playable', extra rules and compromises have to be made. I have played Alliance as a 2-man game, as described in the rule book, where each player controls 2 armies. I found it tedious to play and do not recommend it. Played with 4 players Alliance could be interesting, and I believe this to be the most appropriate form of Shahmot. Feudalism, where each of the four players is on his own, is just a free for all.

Verney's *Chess Eccentricities* devoted many pages to dealing with correspondents who had problems with the rules. There are inherent difficulties in playing 4-handed chess (FHC). The main ones are: a) what happens when one of the Kings is mated? b) the movement of pawns, and their promotion.

a) - In Verney's FHC, when one player's pieces were checkmated they remained frozen on the board - the remaining pieces had to play round them. But....the checkmate was not permanent, it could be removed. When it was, the pieces came back to life again. In Altenberg's FHC of 1792 the Kings of the team giving checkmate could not expose themselves to check from the frozen pieces.

Shahmot is different. The checkmated King is removed, and the pieces that are left can be used by the *remaining partner of the same team*. However there is an option that a King in a checkmated position can just be 'checked' instead of taken. When this happens that player loses his turn and his pieces are frozen. They can subsequently be brought to life as in Verney's game.

b) - Although some forms of FHC have partners playing side by side, it is more natural and has proved more popular for partners to be opposite as in Bridge. In Verney's FHC, following orthodox chess, pawns promote when they reach the rear rank of their opponent. However they can only reach this following captures. This led to the strange rule that when pawns reached the last row of their partner (straight forward) they had then to go backwards until they reached their original position, when they could move forward again. Other FHCs had complex pawn movement options, which sometimes involved having to mark the pawn in some way so it could be recognised. In K.Enderlein's FHC of 1837, a pawn could be promoted at the back rank of both the partner and the opponent's. In Shahmot a pawn is only promoted at the back

piece-rank of the partner (straight forward); a commonsense solution. If wished a pawn may be promoted to a lost King.

Michael Keller says (*WGR10*): 'The majority of four handed variants are played on a cross-shaped board, consisting of an 8x8 board with a wing added to each of the four sides. Most often the wings are 3x8, but 2x8 and 4x8 have been tried.' Verney's FHC is played with 3x8 wings.

One game mentioned in Murray's *HOC* is Kieseritzky's FHC played on a board in the shape of an 8-rayed star. The game was invented about 1835, and was featured in Livonus's *Das Baltische Vierschach* 1855, and *Schachzeitung* 1865. Shahmot is played on a 4-rayed star. As was stated earlier about the 2-man game, the balance does not seem quite right. Queen and Bishop on the same strong diagonal rewards attacking play; but there seems too much power.

Anthony L.Britton, the inventor of the game, says, 'the ability to play with 4 players on the same shape board as when playing with 2 players, should enhance the popularity of chess as a whole.' I have a certain sympathy with this quest for finding some opportunities to remove the anti-social character of the 2-man game; to try to give chess a more social character as in Bridge. But maybe multi-player chess where each player has an army in one quarter of an expanded board is not the way to achieve this. In chess, players' actions do not interact with and influence each other in so interesting a manner as in many other games, for example Monopoly and Scrabble (possibly 4-handed Go may also work quite well).

One way to increase the social or fun factor is to play a normal game of chess, Chinese chess or other appropriate variant, with teams of say 3 players, with each player making one move out of 3 - and no communication. I have played Chinese chess this way. It is enjoyable and can be instructive. It is a good and friendly way to enjoy chess with players of varying abilities.

Although I have reservations about Shahmot, the pieces and board are well constructed, and a lot of effort has gone into the attempt to popularise this game. However the rule book, although attractively produced, is often confusing to use, as relevant information can be difficult to find when needed. The rules could be better 'focused'.

The game can be purchased from: **Britton Enterprises, PO Box 19239, Portland, Oregon 97280, USA.**

CHINESE CHESS

A 1-day tournament was held at the Singha Thai restaurant near Clapham Junction in London on Sunday 19th June. It was organised by C.K.Lai; there were 9 participants. 5 rounds were played, each player having 45 minutes on the clock per game. It was a strong tournament, keenly contested. C.K.Lai was the leader with a 100% score after round 3, including a win against the Thailand player, David Young, when his opponent resigned rather too early - Mr.Lai's clock flag was just about to fall. He lost both his last 2 games however. This was David Young's only lapse, and he emerged joint-winner of the tournament with Guo Shulong, each scoring 4 points. Paul Byway scored 2 points - this was his first tournament in Chinese Chess, and his play was most creditable. There was a welcome reappearance in CC circles from Chris Hann; but no Patrick Donovan, whose absence from the scene is a pity for so talented a player.

The final scores were Guo Shulong, David Young, 4; Liu Si Hinh 3 1/2; C.K.Lai, Kwok Wai Leung, 3; Chris Hann, 2 1/2; Paul Byway, Michael Trent, 2; Peter Wood 1.

AVALANCHE CHESS
By Paul Novak

Avalanche Chess was invented by Ralph Betza of the U.S. postal club NOST in the late '70s. As in all the best variants a simple rule change produces a very different game: after each normal move (which must be legal) you move an opponent's pawn one square towards you (no captures) - unless all his pawns are taken or blocked. Check may be given with either or both halves of your move, but must be removed with the first part of the move. En passant capture is illegal. The <u>owner of a pawn</u> chooses its promotion regardless of who moved it to the 8th rank. If every legal pawn push puts you in check, you lose (self mate), even if you mated on the first part of your move! Tactics and strategy are very complicated as initially the pawns are treacherous, being pushed to undefend pieces or squares, or open lines or diagonals - the fool's mate is 1.g4/e6?? Qh4/f3# ! But come the middle game and their value increases with each passing move as they inch their way down the board towards you like space invaders.

The first example illustrates the power of the avalanching pawns and also the very high standard of play that was reached in NOST games:
**J.McCallion - T.Gardner** *Played in 1987.*
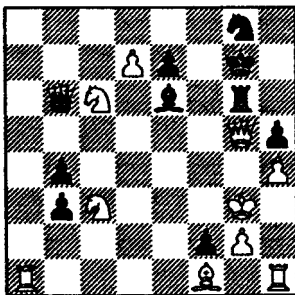
Play continued 1.Qxg6+/b2! *(not allowing Black's 'h' pawn to molest White's King)* 1....Kxg6/d8(Q) 2.Qxb6/b1(Q)! *(White had planned 2.Rb1/b3 blockading the pawns but saw the brilliant trap 2....Qe3+//3.Kh2// Qh3/g3# ! - for if 4.Bxh3/f1 Black chooses a N and takes the white King!) 2....Qe1//!* 3.Nxb4// *(and not 3.Qxb4//?? Qe3+// again)* 3....Nh6 4.Nd3//! **Resigns.** *White's play flows beautifully.*

When I first played Avalanche I didn't play too badly but there was a whole world of tactics that I didn't realise you could do - namely *Planet-Yearout*. The NOST champion Paul Yearout discovered
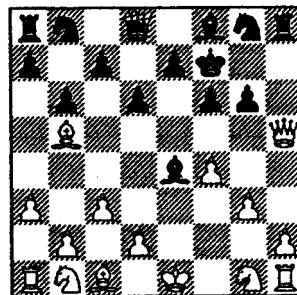
things that I don't like to think how long it would have taken me to figure out myself.

After the moves **1.e4/f6 e6/f3 2.Bb5/g6 Bd6/g3...**
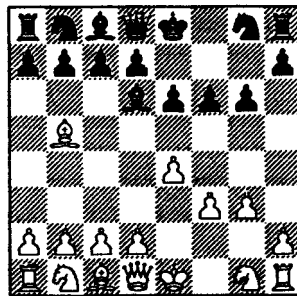
*...White can play* **3.Qe2/h6!!** *for 3...Bxg3+/h3 is answered by 4.Qg2/d6+!*

1.e4/f6 h5/f3 *(a good move in Avalanche)* **2.Bb5/b6 Bb7/c3 3.f4/g6** *(apparently a mistaken push, as without this White would threaten Qxh5/d6# !)* **3....Bxe4/g3? 4.Qxh5/d6+ Kf7/a3**


5.Be8/g5+!! *and mate next move!*

P.Yearout - R.Culbertson *Played in the early 80s.*
1.e4/f6 d5/f3 2.Bc4/d4 c5/g3 3.Bb5+/d3!? *(Correct is 3.Bb5+/c4 winning a pawn. Now Black's 'd' pawn is very strong.)* **Kf7/c3! 4.f4/c4! Be6/g4!** *(Not 4....Qd5/e5? 5.Qh5+/e6! g6/h3 6.Be8/g5+! and mate next move. Play now becomes extremely complicated with the black King exposed in the middle of the board, but his pawn wedge is driven into the heart of White's position)* **5.f5/h6 Qd5/e5!** *(if 5....Bd5/e5 6.e6+! (PY))* **6.fxe6+/a6 Kxe6/a3**
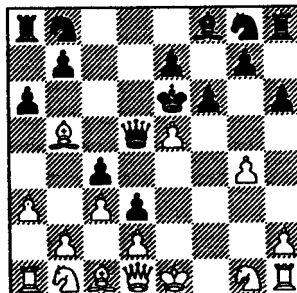
7.Bxc4/f5! *(A very good move breaking the grip of the black pawns. 7.Qf3/a5 sets the trap 7....Qxb5? (8.Qf5+ and 9.e6+), but 7....Qxe5+ 8.Kf1/b6 Qxb5 9.Qxa8 looks good for Black, as does 7.Nf3/a5 fxe5/h3)* **7....Qxc4/g5 8.Qf3/b6!** *(This looks a lot better than 8.Qg4/f5+ Kxe5/h3 9.Nf3+/b6 Kd6/h4)* **8....Nc6/h3 9.Qe3/h5** *(There are a lot of possible moves here eg. 9....Qh4+/c4 followed by 10....Qxc4; 9....Rd8/h4; 9....Kf7/h4; or the interesting piece sac 9....Nf6/g6....but taking the pawn allows a horrible pin: 9....Nxe5/h4? 10.Nf3/a5 Qd5/b3 11.O-O/b5 and Black can't stop Re1 because if Kd6 12.Qf4 keeps the pin. Also bad is 9....Nd4/h4? 10.cxd4/a5)* **9....Qd4/c4 (?!) 10.Nf3/a5 Qxe3+/g6 11.dxe3/a4 Nxe5/h4 12.Nxe5/f4 Kxe5/e4**
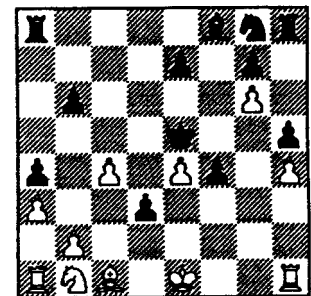
13.Bxf4+/b5!! *(This intuitive sacrifice wins, but I think any other move loses. Pawns are suddenly worth much more than they were a minute ago.)* **13....Kxf4/e5 14.Kd2/b4** *(14.O-O+/d2? loses: 14....Kxe5/b3 15.Nxd2/b4 axb3/c5 16.Nxb3/e6 Bxc5/a4! 17.Nxc5/b3 Rh6/a5 wins.)* **14....bxa3/c5 15.e6/a2!!** *(Shutting in the black KB - the natural 15.Rf1+/a2 fails to Kxe5/c6 16.b4/a3 axb1(Q)/c7 17.Rfxb1/a2 axb1(N)+/c8(Q) 18.Rxb1/e6 Bxb4+// and Rxc8 winning.)* **15....axb1(Q)/b3 17.Rhxb1/a3 Kf5/b4 17.Re1/a2 Nf6/c6 18.Rf1+// Kxe6/b5 19.Rfe1+// Kd5/b6 20.Re6//!** *(An echo of the fifteenth move - 20.b7 or c7/e6?, Bb4+ wins for Black.)* **20....Rc8/c7 21.Rxa2// Rxc7/b7 22.Ra5+// Kxe6/b8(Q) 23.Qxc7// Nd5// 24.Qc4// Kf6//!** *(A bolt from the blue - White can't take the N and must watch out for the Bishop fork after he pushes e6.)* **25.Kxd3/e6 Nf4+//! 26.Ke4/e5 Kxg6// (If 26....Nxg6//?, he gets mated.) 27.Rxe5// Kh7// 28.Kxf4/g6 Bb4//** *(Here I wondered about 28....Bd6//. At first Bd6// looks very strong, but White has 29.Kg5//! Rf8// 30.Qe6//! wins.)* **29.Kg3/g5**

And White mopped up in a few moves.

PERSONAL NOTES
By Peter Blommers

At the Chess Collectors' meeting in Amsterdam at the end of November 1993, Peter Blommers wrote notes about various lectures, and gave some of his own ideas relating to them.

What strikes me when I play a game like Xiangqi or Shogi is the fact that the games are so perfect. In both games everything seems to be balanced. In Xiangqi the river, nine-castle, Cannons, the holes in the Pawn line, the blocked Elephants and Knights; in practical play all elements fall perfectly together. In Shogi the balance between major and minor pieces, the drops, the limited Knights and Lances, the vertical-capturing Pawns, the general forward direction of the game, the elaborate promotion system. It is difficult to believe that games like these are the result of a slow evolutionary process, they look more like the result of a momentary brilliant flash of insight, a grand concept. Such must have been Murray's sentiments when he called chess the mind-product of a single individual, the Philosopher.

Yet historians of Shogi tell us that 10th century Shogi was almost exactly modern Shogi, but without the drops, Rook and Bishop, and in fact was more like a children's game than a superior game. It stayed in existence for some half a millennium, and then suddenly blossomed into a mega-game capable of getting millions busy for another half-millennium. The wonders of history never cease to amaze me.

Game principles tend to cluster. Differentiation of pieces goes well with the concept of a crucial piece, displacement capture and promotion (chess). Uniformization of pieces goes well with leap, custodian or encirclement capture, total elimination of forces or optimal possession of the playing ground (draughts, Go). Dice and race-tracks, and storage & sowing make two other game principle clusters. New mechanisms are hard to come by and most newly invented games are just old wine in new baskets in my opinion. Maybe all newly invented games.

I believe that the origin of chess has to stay in the dark not just because of lack of data and artefacts, but also because a game first and foremost is a concept. Comparable with a language, but man-invented, not naturally grown. A game is a set of rules, like a language, but not a medium as such. A meta-language is possible, a meta-game hardly (the meta-game concept in fantasy role playing games is a matter of detailment of rules). When we imagine how games actually transported themselves across the borders of civilizations we are constantly at a loss. The vertical Pawn capture in all East Asiatic chess games: did somebody forget a rule during his travels? Or did it show (force of logic: the simple version is the original) that chess came from East Asia instead of going there? In our studies we constantly switch between concept and artefact....... So, again, I suppose the digging of data and artefacts is all we can do. And much, they say, is still lingering there in the texts and earth of the far East. Let's dig that up, is my suggestion.

ITALIAN PROGRESSIVE CHESS

Five more games from the *VC* postal tournament - see *VC13*

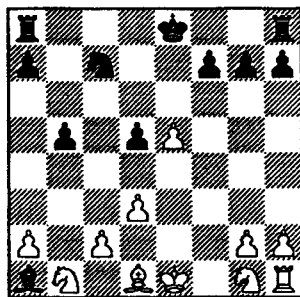**P.Archer - I.Richardson 0-1**
1.Nh3
2.d5 e5
3.Nc3 Nd5 Nxc7+
4.Qxc7 Bf5 Bxc2 Bxd1
5.Kxd1 b4 b5 b6 bxc7
6.Na6 Nxc7 Ba3 Bb2 Bxa1 f5
7.g4 gxf Bg2 Bxb7 Bxa8 Ba3 Kc2
8.e4 e3 exf2 f1(Q) Qxh1 Nb5 Nc3 Qb1 #.

J.Tolonen - P.Archer 1-0
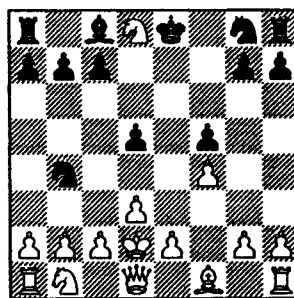1.d3
2.e5 Nf6
3.Bg5 Bxf6 Bxd8
4.d5 Bg4 Bxe2 Bxd1

5.f4 fxe5 Be2 Bxd1 Bxc7
6.Na6 Nxc7 Ba3 Bxb2 Bxa1 b5

7.c4 e6 Bf3 cxd5 e7 d6 Bc6 #
(A very nice finish.)

J.Tolonen - I.Richardson 0-1
1.d3
2.e5 Bb4+
3.Bd2 Bxb4 Kd2
4.d5 f5 Nc6 Nxb4
5.Nf3 Nxe5 Nc6 Nxd8 f4

6.Nxd3 c5 c4 d4 Nf6 Ne4 #
(IR-I'm proud of this mate - it was prepared when I sent move 4.)

J.Tolonen - I.Smith 1-0
1.d3
2.Nf6 c5
3.Nc3 Bg5 Bxf6
4.c4 cxd3 dxc2 cxd1(R)+
5.Kxd1 Nb5 Rc1 Rxc8 Nc7 #

J.Tolonen - S.Boniface 0-1
1.d3

2.Nf6 Nc6
3.Bg5 Bxf6 Bc3
4.Nd4 Nb5 Nxc3 Nxd1
5.a4 Nd2 Ndf3 Kxd1 Kd2
6.e5 e4 exf3 fxg2 gxh1(Q) Bb4+
Resigns.

♦

2nd Heterodox Olympiad
V.Ciegis *(Lithuania)* v
D.B.Pritchard *(England)* 0-1
1.d4
2.Nc6 Nxd4
3.Na3 Nf3 e4
4.d5 dxe4 Ne6 Qxd1+
5.Kxd1 Ne5 Bc4 Bxe6 Bxf7+
6.Kd8 Nh6 Nxf7 Nxe5 Ng6 Bg4+
7.f3 fxg4 Nc4 Ne5 Nxg6 Nxh8 Bd2 *(The position looks grim for Black, thanks to the wasted Knight moves; ironically he is saved by a Knight move.)*
8.a5 a4 a3 axb2 b1(N) Rxa2 Rxa1 Nc3 #

PROBLEM PAGES
by Stefanos Pantazis

Welcome to Valery Krivenko, and welcome back to Alex Ettinger and Michel Olausson rejoining our solving ladder. A pleasure to see some new faces amongst our composers as well: Branko Koludrović from Croatia, Sergey Tkachenko from the Ukraine, David Dana-Bashian from the USA, and Torsten Linß from Germany.

59. Michel OLAUSSON
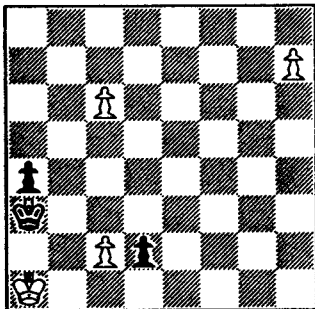
Helpstalemate in 2; (b) Pc2→b3, (c) Ph7→b7, (d) Pd2→h2 in (c).

A gentle but interesting start, once again with a helpstalemate. Note that the last twinning change is from (c) rather than the diagram position.

We have not had any retros in our column for a while, so a gentle glance backwards is in order, as I am planning to publish an article by Nikita Plaksin on 'retro-excelsiors' in our next issue. The light 60 requires no retroanalysis: after each of two different move retractions by Black, there is a two-solution helpmate in one (for a total of 2x2 = 4 solutions).

60. Branko KOLUDROVIĆ
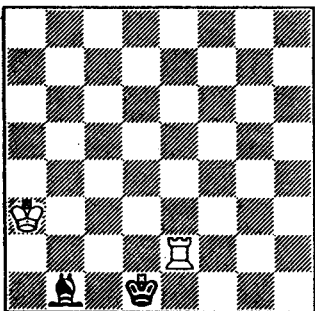
Black retracts one move for a Helpmate in 1; Four ways (2.2.1).

In contrast to this 'non-analytic retractor', which was practiced as far back as Mrs. Baird, the 'SPG'-genre of 61 is quite recent, but has quickly become the most popular type of retro. Some purists would regard it as more of a neighbour than a citizen, however! How could the position of 61 arise after Black's 10th move? (In an orthodox game.)

A head-spinning chess variant suitable for leisurely correspondence games is SPG-Chess: In a chess game (with orthodox or variant rules) the winner is the first player to show that the opponent's last move yields a position that could arise from a sequence of moves (of shorter or equal length) other than the one played. I would suggest treating mate and stalemate as a draw (most games are likely to end long before this...).

61. Sergey TKACHENKO
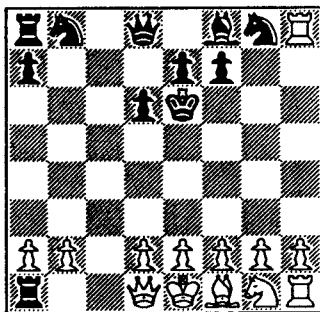
Shortest Proof Game in 10.

62. David DANA-BASHIAN
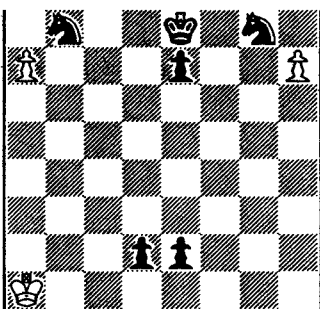
Helpmate in 2; Horizontal Cylinder.

A lot of composers these days get their start in fairy chess. The main reason is that one need not be extremely erudite or lucky to hit on something new. Constructing good problems, however, is as difficult as in any other field. And to create a significant problem one needs to know what can

be, or has been achieved with orthodox means. For example, the task shown in 62 and 63 is almost certainly impossible in a 'straight' helpmate in 2, although some efforts have come tantalizingly close. A modification of the playing field suffices in 62. Two edges of the board can be glued together to form a cylinder. If the 1st and 8th ranks are identified we get the *Horizontal Cylinder*. Sb8 could move to a2, c2, d1; as well as to a6, c6, d7.

63. Torsten LINSS
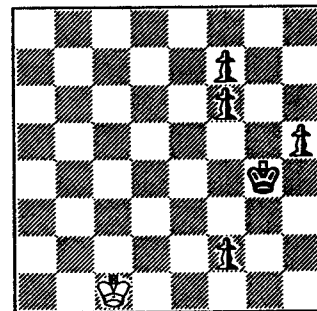
Helpmate in 2; Couscous Circe, Neutral pawns.

With some extra fairy fuel, Torsten performs the task with absolute economy: in *Couscous Circe* captured men are reborn on the capturing unit's rebirth square. For example, after wRxd6 the black unit from d6 is reborn on a1 (whatever its nature). Pawns reborn on their promotion rank promote instantly, with the *capturer* choosing the type of the promotion. The combination with *Neutral* pawns causes no difficulty; just remember that they promote to neutral pieces (which can be taken as white or black at the discretion of the side moving). So when a neutral man is captured by White it is reborn as if it were black, and vice versa.

Once again Edgar dons the mantle of Saint George to tame the *Dragon*: a combination of knight and pawn (the pawn has no promotion powers). White plays first in 64, and as you will see there are really two problems in this remarkably compact package.

In *Circe* captured units are reborn on their game array squares, if vacant. (The colour/file of capture determining the specific square.) In 65 White plays the sequence of 11 consecutive moves leaving black forced to give mate. The final result may not be unexpected, but
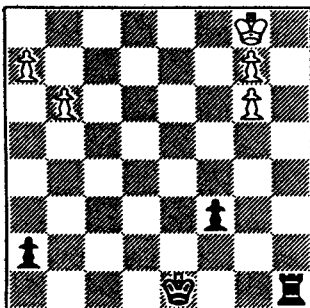
I hope most solvers will have some surprises along the way.

64. Edgar HOLLADAY
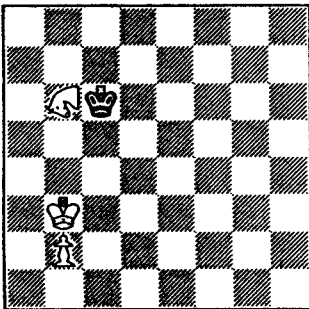
Helpmate in 2 ½;   Dragon b6.
(b) Db6→a6, (c) wK→a7, (d) wK→a8.

65. George P. SPHICAS

Series selfmate in 11;   Circe.

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, Zebra*, and *Giraffe*, are the (1,3), (2,3) and (1,4) leapers respectively. The *Berolina* pawns, used in part (b), capture forwards, in the direction orthodox pawns move, and move in the direction orthodox pawns capture.

Another task which has proved unattainable in an orthodox h≠5 is shown through the use of the Imitator in **67**. Recall that 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, etc.). Our young friend from Sweden was not aware of it, but *Variant Chess* is a very appropriate place for the publication of this problem, as the first attempt at this

task with the use of an Imitator was published in our predecessor, *Chessics*, by Thomas Brand (in 1984). It proved unsound, so Ulf's problem could well be the first correct realization. (Note that the wK is jettisoned to avoid cook troubles.)

66. Erich BARTEL
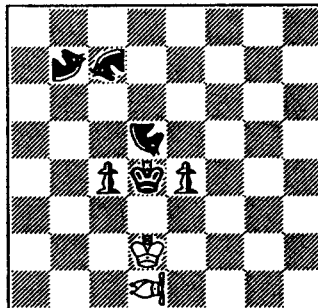
Helpmate in 2; Two Solutions, PWC (Platzwechsel Circe). Nightrider d5, Camel b7, Zebra c7, Giraffe d1.
(b) Neutral Berolina Pawns c4/e4.

67. Ulf HAMMARSTRÖM
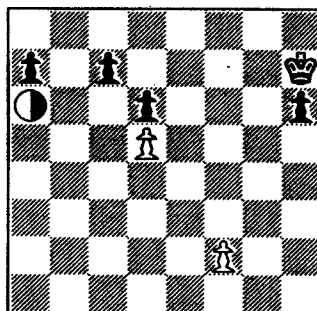
Helpmate in 5;   Imitator a6.

And finally a picaresque tale with cooks, but a happy ending: **68** was first published in VC7 (iii/1992) with the bB on f5. Kjell Widlert (see his award on pp. 90-92!) was intending to give this the Fourth Hon. Mention, commenting: "Very traditional in style, but the form is superb. I particularly like the wK shields from all three directions." However, a last-minute cook was found forcing this off the award. When I wrote to Ian, he pointed out that he had noticed the cook himself and sent a correction with bBd7 which was—for whatever reason—never published in VC, so he sent it to *The Problemist* instead as a New Year's wish problem (iii/1993). I would have been happy to reinstate this "very sweet miniature" (P. Valois)

in the award (if Kjell approved), but then I saw another cook! So where is the good news you ask? Well, as you can see below, there is a square between f5 and d7 where the bB can be safely placed! I hope Cedric will agree to consider this in his judgement of our 93-94 tourney. As for solvers, they can send in the cooks to the two earlier versions (easy to find *if* you know they are there!).

68. Ian SHANAHAN
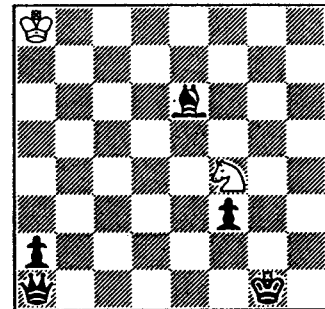
Series helpmate in 11.

1.Bc8 2.Qh8 3.Qh1 4.Ba6 5.a1=R
7.Rg2 9.f1=S 10.Sh2 11.Bf1 Sh3≠

44 Michel Olausson.
(Black) 1.b1=R e8=Q 2.Rb3 Qxg8=
(White) 1.e8=B bxc1=R 2.Bh5 Rh1=
"Twice pinning of promoted piece" (Composer) "Wot!? No AUW?" (A. Ingleton)

45 Zdeněk Libiš.
(a) 1.Ke5 Kxh2 2.Kf4 Qg3≠
(b) 1.Kd4 Qxh2 (Rh8) 2.Kd3 Qd2≠
      1.Kc5 Sb7+ 2.Kb4 Qb3≠
      1.Ke5 Sc4+ 2.Kf4 Qg4≠
      1.Ke5 Sf7+ 2.Kf4 Qf3≠
"Echoed Circe mates neatly engineered. Pity Rh2 is needed to stop duals." (AI) But also gives some point to the diagonal-orthogonal echo between (a) and (b): Kxh2 becomes a selfpin in Circe.

46 Valery A. Nebotov.
(a) 1.Qxd4 (Bc1) Bb5 2.Qb6 Bd2≠
(b) 1.Qa5 (tempo) Bb2 2.Qa2 Be4≠
(c) 1.Kg4 Bf2 2.Kh3 Bd7≠
Note tries 1.Qb4? in (a) and 1.Qa2? in (b). "Well done. Three *varied* Circe BB mates." (M. Olausson)

47 Michal Dragoun.
(a) 1.Rxb2 (Bc1) Be3 2.Bxd7 (Bf1)

Bd3≠ (b) 1.Sxb2 (Bc1) Bf4 2.Rxd7 (Bf1) Bg2≠ "Excellent variation of Circe models, plus double change of black capture." (MO) Dual avoidance in one capture motivated by having to lose control of the mating square, and in the other by avoiding to gain control.

48 Bakcsi & Zoltán. 1.Rxf4 2.Bd4 3.Qc5 4.Rd6 5.Bc6 6.Kd5 Sxf4≠ "Nice packing sequence." (AI)

49 Edgar Holladay.
(a) 1.— Df2 2.Rc7 Kd6 3.Rc4 Sb5≠
(b) 1.— Dg3 2.Rd5 Ke7 3.Ke5 Sc6≠
(c) 1.— Sc7 2.Ke4 Sa6 3.Rd4 Sc5≠
(d) 1.— Sg7 2.Re7+ Kd6 3.Re4 Sf5≠
(e) 1.— Kf5 2.Rd6 Kf4 3.Rd5 Se6≠
Note tempo move 2.Rd6 in (e).
"Pleasing set—especially final diagonal flip." (AI) One solver comments "disappointingly similar; several possible mating nets not used." But of course, this is the whole point: a good problem has to have some unity. The role of thematic relations of a formal or strategic kind is taken by the echo in the Bohemian-style problem. And an echo is most pleasing when it is not automatic, but only one of several possibilities of the material used.

50 Edgar Holladay.
(a) 1.b7 Kb6 2.b8=PR Ka5 3.bPRc7+ Ka4 4.PRc5≠
(b) 1.b7 Kb6 2.Kd6 Ka6 3.b8=PR+ Kb6 4.PRc7≠   "I liked this!" (I. Richardson) "Very nice with two Princess promotions." (MO)

❋ **51 Aubrey W. Ingleton.**
(a) 1.Kh7 Kf6 2.Kh8 Kg6 3.Gh7 Tg8 4.Gf5 Te2≠
(b) 1.Kg8 Td7 2.Ge8 Th7 3.Ge6 Tb5 4.Kh8 Kf7≠ Echo, but also
Cook: 1.Ge8 Kf6 2.Kh7 Tf8 3.Gg8 Tf4 4.Kh8 Kg6≠ (found by P. Răican and I. Richardson) "Tiger uses G & wK as hurdles at the same time." (IR)

52 Erich Bartel.
1.b1=nS h8=nR 2.axb1=nB gxh8=Q 3.nBf5 Qf6= "Slightly spurious use of Circe to contrive AUW" (AI)

53 Stefanos Pantazis.
Set: 1.— d8=Q 2.b6 Qd5+ 3.Ka6 a8=R≠
1.Ka1 a8=Q+ 2.Ke5 Qa5+ 3.Kb8 d8=R≠
1.b5 d8=Q 2.b4 Qd5+ 3.Ka4 a8=R≠
Sometimes more is less, so some may prefer an alternative setting with just the two exact echoes bK→f6:
1.— a8=Q 2.Ke5 Qa5+ 3.Kb8 d8=R≠
1.— d8=Q+ 2.Ka6 Qd5 3.b6 a8=R≠

54 Erich Bartel.
C=Camel, Z=Zebra, E=Equihopper.
1.Sf7 d8=C 2.Sxd8 (Cf7) Cxg4 (Ef7)≠
1.Se6 d8=G 2.Sxd8 (Ge6) Gxh3 (e6)≠
1.Sc6 d8=Z 2.Sxd8 (Zc6) Zf4≠
1.Sb7 d8=E 2.Sxd8 (Eb7) Eb5≠
One of Erich's favourite themes (fairy AUW) combined with a half-wheel of bS switchbacks, shown thanks to PWC in a remarkably light position. "Easy but fun." (AI) (Some did *not* find this so easy!)

55 Paul Răican.

1.Kf6 Rh8 2.Qh7 Kg8 3.Kg7 f5 4.Kh6 Kf8=
1.Kg4 Rh8 2.Qh7 f5+ 3.Kh5 Kg7 4.Qh6+ Rh6:=
"The pin rather than capture of the Q is a clever touch." (IR) "Ages before I realized Q could be pinned..." (AI) Fine first solution with forcing of 'short-move' K switchback and grid-specific pin. Not surprisingly, it was the plain second solution which proved elusive.

56 Ulf Hammarström.
1.Ed4 (Ic7) f6 (Ic6) 2.Ed3 (Ic4) d5 (Ic2) 3.Eg8 (Ie6) f5 (Ie5) 4.Ee5 (Ig5) f4 (Ig4) 5.Ec5 (Ie4) f3 (Ie3) 6.Eb7 (Ic7) f2 (Ic6) 7.Ee3 (Ie4)=
1.— d6 (Ic6) 2.Ef4 (Ie6) f6 (Ie5) 3.Ee7 (Ig7) f5 (Ig6) 4.Eb6 fe4:/f4 5.Ef4/Ef3=   This messy scrummage defeated all solvers, except for one who admitted to some computer help!

LADDER Scores:		
Maximum	81	(= 24+23+34),
A. W. Ingleton	63	(= 15+18+30),
P. Răican	50	(= 0+19+31),
I. G. Richardson	45	(= 6+13+26),
A. Ettinger	32	(= 0+0+32),
E. Bartel	23	(= 14+9+0),
M. A. Ridley	23	(= 0+6+17),
M. Olausson	21	(= 0+0+21),
V. Krivenko	17	(= 0+0+17).

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

Informal Tourney Award: VARIANT CHESS 1991-92

It is sad that this award marks the end of a lovely magazine, *[Thanks to Peter Wood, this has fortunately proved premature in the meanwhile! S.P.]* but the quality of the tourney was worthy of the occasion. Out of 69 originals, 8 had to be eliminated for various flaws. Among the rest there were some that did not quite live up to the fairy character of the magazine, showing hackneyed ideas without new points, and on the other hand some that were quite unorthodox, but really more bizarre than good. The great majority had something of interest, however, so I can present a long list of honours.

First Prize: 113 Bartel & Bartel. I always find the four-corner echo a most impressive "ultimate theme", with its optimal use of the space available. It has very rarely been done in minimanner form, but this is a perfect three-piece setting with very good twinning (a single man moved). Of course there is only one mate possible in each

case, but to find the accurate and quite different lines of play is a great achievement. Human intelligence had to select the material that made this possible, even though the computer may have helped with the drudgery.
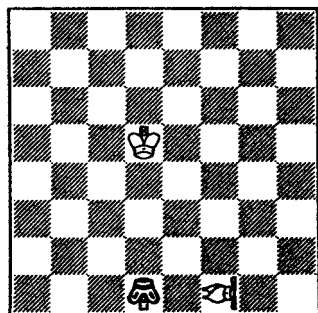
Second Prize: 124 G. Sphicas. Neutral AUW has been done in Series s≠ several times before, even with the minimum material of Ks+4nPs. This example stands out by its complex sequence of moves with very precise timing, by having all promotions on a single square (a8), and by the good work of the wK.

Third Prize: 96 P. Wong. I must admit to not being very friendly with the obscurely-moving bouncer, but this is another admirable setting of the four-corner echo task with varied play. Only the twinning in (d) is inferior to the First Prize. (Incidentally, the solvers' solution to (d) seems to be the correct one—the composer must have made a mistake. The alternative positions suggested by GPJ are
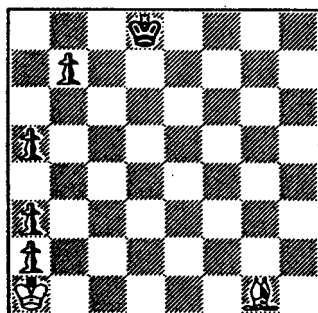
unsound.)

First Hon. Mention: 88 Bartel. [with wPc3] An ingeniously simple fairy promotion cycle, very profession-

ally constructed: only the theoretical minimum of material is used.

☆❀☆❀☆❀☆❀☆

113 El. & Er. Bartel	124 George P. Sphicas	96 Peter Wong	88 Erich Bartel
First Prize, VC 1991-92	Second Prize, VC 1991-92	Third Prize, VC 1991-92	First Hon. Mention
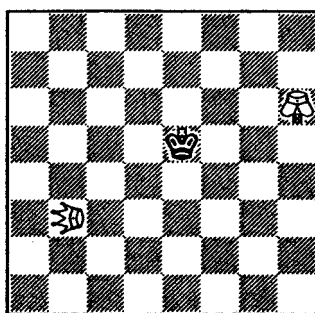
h≠3　(b) Ff1→a3; (c) →b7; (d) →f8　Fers f1, Royal Gnu d1	Series s≠14　　Circe, Neutrals	h=4　(b) Ah6→g4; (c) →b1; (d) BOb3→d7.　Royal Alfil h6, Q Bouncer b3	Sh≠2　4.1.1; Circe Maléfique Giraffe b2, Antelope c1
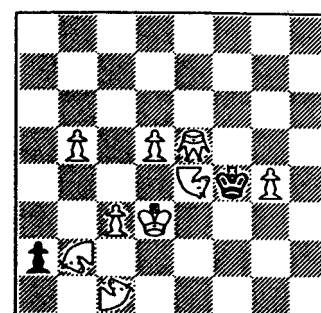
Solutions:

113 Bartel & Bartel. (G = Royal Gnu, F = Fers)
(a) 1.Ge3+ Ke4+ 2.Gg4 Kf3+ 3.Gh1 Fg2≠
(b) 1.Ge3+ Kd4+ 2.Gc2+ Kc3+ 3.Ga1 Fb2≠
(c) 1.Ga2 Fc8 2.Gb5 Kc6+ 3.Ga8 Fb7≠
(d) 1.Gf2 Ke6 2.Gg5+ Kf6+ 3.Gh8 Fg7≠

124 Sphicas.
1.Kxa2 (a7) 2.a8=nB 3.bxa8=nR (nBc8) 4.nRxa5 (a7)
5.a8=nQ 6.nQb7 7.nBd7 8.nRd5 9.Kxa3 (a7) 10.a8=nS
11.nSc7 12.nBb6 13.nBa5 14.nSxd5 (nRa8)++ nRxa5 (nBc1)≠

96 Wong. (BO = Bouncer)
(a) 1.Ke4 BOd1 2.Kf3 BOd2 3.Kg2 Af4 4.Kh1 Bh2=
(b) 1.Kf6 BOd3 2.Kg7 BOg6 3.Kh7 BOg8+ 4.Kh8 Ae6=
(c) 1.Kd4 BOd1 2.Kc3 BOc2 3.Kb2+ Ad3 4.Ka1 BOb1=
(d) 1.Kd6 BOd8 2.Kc6 Af8 3.Kb7 BOb8+ 4.Ka8 Ad6=

88 Bartel. (A = Antelope, GI = Giraffe)
1.a1=G 2.Gxc3 (c7) c8=A≠　1.a1=A 2.Axd5 (d7) d8=N≠
1.a1=N 2.Nxg4 (g7) g8=GI≠　1.a1=GI 2.GIxb5 (b7) b8=G≠

Second Hon. Mention: 70v F. Mihalek†. (a) and (b) together form an excellent illustration of the promotion-to-fairy-pieces-on-diagram-only rule. Dennison Nixon's comment "an outstanding find" is doubly true with the addition of part (c), which *is* sound; one of those gifts from Caissa which fit the pattern as if they were intended from the outset. It is of small consequence that this mate is

Third Hon. Mention: 73 M. Olausson. One of those entries both unorthodox and good, with a strong paradoxical flavour. With neutrals you would expect at least two solutions (with Black and White reversing their roles), and you would expect the converse interchange in (b) to be solved as in (a) but backwards—and none of this really happens due to the cleverly placed Ks.
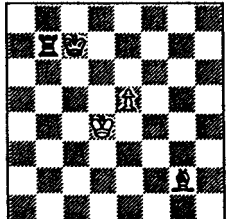
Fourth Hon. Mention: 104 Zoltán & Bakcsi. The echoed play makes a fresh impression. I would have liked it even better if both solutions hadn't ended with the same move Kc1.

Fifth Hon. Mention: 97v N. Plaksin. [with Pb2→b3, Bd3→c4] The large board makes five Q uncaptures possible, preceded by one Q promotion in the West (b8), and three in the East (g8). The effect is rather orthodox; I believe more unusual things are possible on this board.

First Commendation: 116 Wong. The problem must be almost impossible to solve, so I don't want to encourage composition in this style, but I am impressed by the two large tours of the board edge (clockwise and counter-clockwise) by the white R-bouncer. I also appreciate the fact that all 8 black Q-bouncers meet different fates in (a) and (b)—only the pairs f1/h3 and g8/h7 are simply reflected.
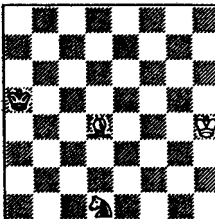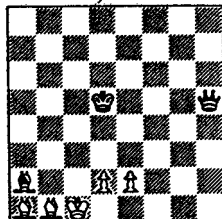
☆❀☆❀☆❀☆❀☆

70v F. Mihalek†	73 M. Olausson	104 Zoltán &	97v N. Plaksin	116 Wong
2nd Hon. Mention	3rd Hon. Mention	Bakcsi; 4th HM	5th Hon. mention	1st Commendation

h≠3　b) b Princess g2; c) b Empress b7	Help interchange in 2 Neutrals;　b) d1↔d4	h≠3　Two solutions	Last 9 single moves? "Superschach" Princess d1, e2	h=11　Two solutions Bouncers, Royal BOa1
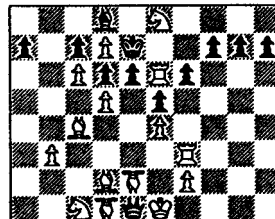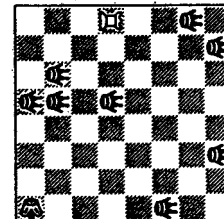
Solutions:

70v Mihalek.

(PR = B+S = Princess, E = R+S = Empress)
(a) 1.Kc8 e6 2.Rc7 e7 3.Bb7 e8=Q≠

(b) 1.Rb6 e6 2.PRb7 e7 3.Kc6 e8=PR≠
(c) 1.Bc6 e6 2.Kd6 e7 3.Ed7 e8=E≠

73 Olausson.
(a) 1.nBb2=nS nSc3=nB+ 2.nBd4 nSd1
(b) 1.nSf3=nB nBb3=nS+ 2.nSd4 nBd1

104 Zoltán & Bakcsi.
1.Qf3 Kc2 2.Ke4 e3 3.Bd5 Kc1≠
1.Bc4 Kb2 2.Kd4 e4 3.Qc5 Kc1≠

97v Plaksin.
In *Superschach* two Princesses (B+S) join the initial array.
Retract 1.f2xQe1=Q+ Ba5-d2 2.e3xQf2 Qb4-e1 3.d4xQe3 Qb8-b4 4.c5xQb4 b7-b8=Q 5.b6xQc5 a6xb7 etc.

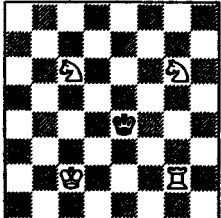**116 Wong.** (Q = Queen Bouncer, R = Rook Bouncer, K = Royal Bouncer)
1.Qb6-b7 Ra8 2.Qb7-c6 Ra7 3.Qb5-b1 Rxa5+ 4.Kb2 Ra1
5.Kc3 Rxb1 6.Qd5-d1 Rxd1 7.Qf1-g2 Rh1 8.Qg2-f3 Rh2
9.Qh3-h4 Rxh4 10.Qh7-g7 Rh8 11.Qg7-f6 Rxg8=
1.Qg8-g7 Rh8 2.Qg7-f6 Rxh7 3.Qd4-h1 Rh5 4.Qh3-g2
Rxh1 5.Qg2-f3 Rg1 6.Qf1-e1 Rxe1+ 7.Kb2 Ra1 8.Kc3
Ra2 9.Qa5-b4 Ra4 10.Qb5-c6 Rxb4 11.Qb6-b8 Rxb8=

Second Commendation: 69 E. Holladay. The greatest impression is made by the picturesque position, but the content is satisfying too: three very different mates united by the initial wK moves and by their "not-quite-model" character.
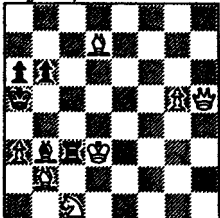
Third Commendation: 84 Nebotov & Tylor. A somewhat bizarre fairy form where I am not quite happy with the rules: when a K is attacked, play stops after the attacking move, but before the accompanying removal of the
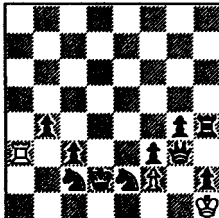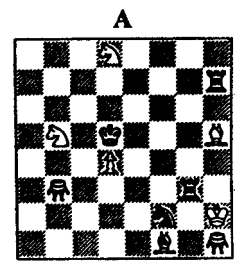
target, i.e. in the middle of the move—and not one move before as in orthodox chess. This is a good problem anyway, showing two specific square-vacations (b3 and c3) by black 'selfmates'. The key is only perfunctory.

Fourth Commendation: 120 F. Sabol. A spectacular manoeuvre to clear h1 for Rd1≠, but in a single line of play only.

Fifth Commendation: 122 Bartel. An exact echo differing only in the position of one piece (bK). The capture in one solution provides unexpectedly lively play.

Sixth Commendation: 110 Dragoun. The idea with the white and black play on c4/c6/e4/e6 combined with four unpins of Bh5 is excellent, but the construction is sloppy. The lions are not justified by the play, and it is in fact easy to save *five* pieces as in diagram (A). In that form, the problem would have been placed much higher.
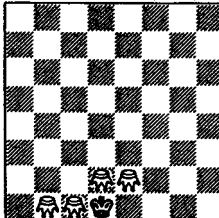
A
h≠2   (b) Sd8→d6;

Seventh Commendation: 99 Plaksin. Four corner Q promotions, an amusing idea, but Queens (rather than Rs) are not forced by retro arguments alone: the solution would still be unique with rooks on a1/h8 in the diagram, and only the extra condition about minimum R moves stops rook promotions on a8/h1.

Stockholm, March 1993   Kjell Widlert

69 E. Holladay 2nd Commendation	84 Nebotov & Tylor; 3rd Comm.	120 F. Sabol 4th Commendation	122 Bartel 5th Commendation	110 Dragoun 6th Commendation	99 Plaksin 7th Commendation
h≠2.5 0.3.1....	≠2 All-Mate Chess	h≠3 Circe	h≠3 Two solutions	h≠2 Two solutions (b) Sd8→d6; Lions	Minimal number of Rook moves?
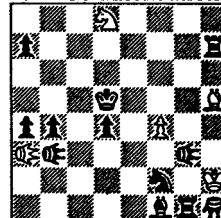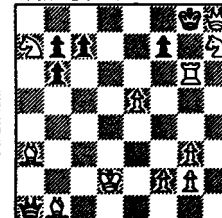
Solutions:

69 Holladay.
1.— Kc3 2.Kf3 Sd4+ 3.Ke3 Re2≠
1.— Kb3 2.Ke3 Re2+ 3.Kd3 Sf4≠
1.— Kc1 2.Kd3 gSe5+ 3.Kc3 Rg3≠

84 Nebotov & Tylor. (* = mated unit)
1.Qg4 (>2.Qb4≠) Rc4(*b3)/Bc4(*c3)/Kb4/b5
2.Sb3/Bc3/Qf5/Qb4(*b5)≠

120 Sabol.
1.Qb8 Rxc3 (c7) 2.Rh8 Kxh2 (h7) 3.bxc3 (Ra1) Rd1≠

122 Bartel.
1.Ke1 Gd1+ 2.Kf1 Gd3+ 3.Ke1 Ge3≠
1.Kxd2 (Gd8) Ge3 2.Kc2 Gd3 3.Kd1 Gd2≠

110 Dragoun.
(a) 1.Gh3 Be8 2.Bc4 Bc6≠   1.Lh3 Bg4 2.Se4 Be6≠
(b) 1.Bh3 Be2 2.Gc6 Bc4≠   1.Sh3 Bg6 2.Le6 Be4≠
(Same solution for 110v with L=gG.)

99 Plaksin.

Retract 1.g7xRh8=Q++ b2xRa1=Q with Ph7→h1=Q, Pa2→ a8=Q. Thus the original Rooks did not move, with Rg6 a promoted pawn which moved once from g8. Q-promotions on all 4 corners.

Computer tested are: 113, 88, 70, 104, 69, 120, 122, 110. Please test the remaining problems! Send all claims of cooks or anticipations to the problem editor by December 1st. A prize (a year's subscription to the USPB) is offered for the best set of cooks (speed being the tie-break).

Apologies to all participating composers for the late appearance of this award, which was submitted in a timely way by the judge. George Jelliss had been planning to publish a special issue with the remaining awards, and other loose ends, but this proved impossible.

GAMES WORKSHOP

CHANCELLOR CHESS

Ian Richardson suggests chess with two Chancellors per side. Out of the many possible opening set-ups he likes:
a) 8x8 board; the two Chancellors replace a Rook and a Knight.

    Black - RCBQKBNC
    White - CNBQKBCR

b) 10x8 board; the two Chancellors are extra.

    Black - RNCBQKBNCR
    White - RCNBQKBCNR

He considers that Malcolm Horne's set-up is good for Chancellor Chess on a 9x8 board with just one Chancellor. Two Chancellors could be used on a 9x8 board, but it is difficult to know which piece to replace.

Editor: The Queen is the obvious choice for removal. The array would then be:

    Black - RNCBKCBNR
   *White - RNBCKBCNR*

Malcolm Horne mentions that (b) is probably just a less interesting form of Capablanca Chess. In this form of chess the Chancellor and Archbishop (B+N) are used on a 10x8 board, (see *VC6*).

He adds that maybe both (a) and (b) suffer from introducing too many major pieces and thereby upsetting the balance between the weak and the strong.

◆

BOUNCY CHESS

From Bob Newman:

I played through the game from issue 10, and liked it a lot. I am not sure about the rules though. The Knights are not bouncing at all; they are getting two moves for one when they are at the edge of the board. And the Kings and Bishops are bouncing wrongly. And so is the Archbishop who I met once. They would be 'right' on a Chinese Chess board, but western pieces move on the squares, not on the vertices, (let us pause a moment to enjoy the notion of a bouncy Elephant). So a truly bouncy Bishop moving from d1 to h5, through the centres of the squares, would hit the edge of the board where h5 meets h6, and would rebound into h6, and on to g7 and f8, where a further rebound could take it to e8, d7, and so on. The bouncy Bishop could change from white squares to black, or vice versa, each time it bounces. This must make our Really Bouncy Bishop quite powerful.
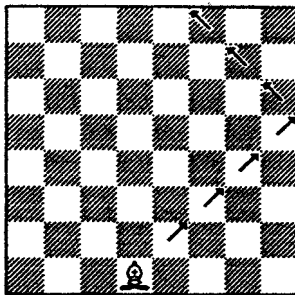
I can't see that there is any such animal as a Really Bouncy King, but the Really Bouncy Bishop appeals a lot. As for the Really Bouncy Queen, perhaps she is just a touch too potent.

Editor: To recap. - in Bouncy Chess the Queens, Kings and Bishops can bounce off vacant edge squares at 90°, Knights at any angle, Pawns and Rooks not at all. You cannot escape zugzwang by rebounding to your original position.

Although no-one seems interested in playing this variant, I like it. It is maybe over-complex. Perhaps just allowing the Bishop (ordinary or RBB) to bounce, would make it more popular. Or not allowing the Knight to bounce.

◆

PROGRESSIVE CHESS

Also from Bob Newman:

Is not the ban on castling across check just another instance of the 'en passant' principle? I never did understand why it should be illegal to castle out of check, though. This seems morally irreproachable to me.

The rules for Progressive Chess state, *'En passant is only possible if the double pawn move has not been continued further forward, and the en passant capture has to be made on the first move of the next sequence'*. The castling rule may be consistent with the c.p. principle, but this certainly isn't. I therefore propose to an unsuspecting world **Progressive En Passant Chess (PEP)**.

Rules are as for Progressive Chess, except that all the following pieces are vulnerable to e.p. capture:

a) A pawn making its initial 2-square move can be captured as if it had moved only 1 square, as in standard chess.

b) Any piece moving more than once in the same sequence which alighted on squares where it was en prise, eg. N moving from b1 to c3 to d5 could be captured e.p. on c3 by a R on c6.

Several ep. captures may be possible at the start of a sequence. Each ep. capture must be made by a piece, to which pieces were en prise en route to their destination.

A single non-ep. move removes the right to make any more ep. captures in that sequence.

Of course any 'posthumous' captures made by a piece taken ep., remain valid.

Under the PEP rules the game between David Murphy and Patrick Donovan in *VC1* is not finished.

David Murphy - Patrick Donovan
1st UK Postal Progressive Chess Tournament 1988/89.
1.d4
2.d5 Nf6
3.Nc3 Nf3 Bg5
4.Ne4 Qd6 Qg3 Qxf2#
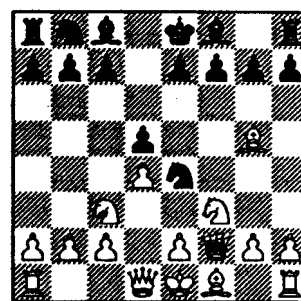
Here Murphy can play 5.hxQg3 ep., Rh6, Rd6, Nxd5, Nxc7# (Black cannot capture the Rook ep. at h6 because he is in check - from the N that cannot be taken, ep. or otherwise.)

Editor: An interesting idea?

◆

MUTATIONS

From Paul Byway

Following on from the idea of replacing the Queen by a Chancellor, how about a list of allowed mutations?
For example:
R >> Lance, Cannon
N >> Chinese Knight, Nightrider
B >> Alfil, Courier, Cannon
Q >> Amazon, Chancellor, Mann, Fers

I also fancy replacing the Queen by a Corona (Knight + Courier).

The idea would be to have a tournament and choose one mutation before each round - perhaps by chance.

Editor: I like this suggestion. It would be a good way to introduce chess variants to 'non-believers' at a chess congress - as a special event.

◆

Original articles, letters, and comments will always be welcomed from readers.

MAD MATE

The Mad Mate tournament mentioned in *VC*13, which took place in 1980, was organised by Raymond Keene and Andrew Whiteley. The final scores were: Murray Chandler 3, Andrew Whiteley 2, Roger Lancaster 1, Tim Leeney 0. Here are three more games from this event published with permission from *Games & Puzzles*.

In Mad Mate 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. Pawn promotion is only to a man which *the opponent* has in hand. The asterisk denotes a dropped piece.

Tim Leeney - Roger Lancaster

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.Ng5 d5 5.exd5 Na5 6.Qe2 Nxc4 7.Qxc4 Nxd5 8.N*f3 P*f6 9.P*e4 fxg5 10.exd5 Bd6 11.O-O O-O 12.Nc3 B*a6 13.N*b5 Bd7 14.Re1 Re8 15.a4 g4 16.Ne4 gxf3 17.Qb3 B(a6)xb5 18.axb5 N*d4 19.Qd3 Bxb5 20.c4 N*f4 21.Qc3 Nde2+ 22.Rxe2 Nxe2+ 23.Kf1 R*g1 **mate**.

Andrew Whiteley - Roger Lancaster

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 P*d5 5.Nc3 Bb4 6.Bd3 c5 7.Be3 c4 8.Be2 Nf6 9.Bf3 Qa5 10.Ne2 b5 11.O-O Bxc3 12.bxc3 Nbd7 13.g4 Nb6 14.g5 Nfd7 15.Re1 Na4 16.Bf4 Nxc3 17.Nxc3 Qxc3 18.N*c7+ Kf8 19.Bxd5 N*h3+ 20.Kf1 Nxf4 21.Bxa8 N*d2+ 22.Qxd2 B*h3+ 23.P*g2 g6 24 R*e8+ Kg7 25.P*h6 **mate**.

Murray Chandler - Andrew Whiteley

1.c4 g6 2.d4 Bg7 3.Bc4 d6 4.Nf3 Nf6 5.c5 Ne4 6.Nbd2 Nxd2 7.Bxd2 d5 8.Bb3 Bg4 9.h3 Bxf3 10.Qxf3 N*e4 11.N*g5 Nxg5 12.Bxg5 N*e4 13.B*h6 Nxg5 14.Bxg5 N*e6 15.Be3 c6 16.O-O O-O 17.Rad1 Nd7 18.c4 Nb6 19.cxd5 cxd5 20.P*h6 Bh8 21.N*c3 P*e4 22.Qg3 Rc8 23.N*h5 Qd7 24.Nxe4 dxe4 25.Bxe6 fxe6 26.P*g7 Rf5 27.N*f4 B*g5 28.gxh8*B Bxf4 29.Nxf4 Rxf4 30.Bxf4 N*e2+ 31.Kh2 Nxg3 32.fxg3 N*f5 33.Bg7 Nxg7 34.hxg7 Kxg7 35.Bh6+ Kxh6 36.N*g4+ Kg7 37.R*f7+ Kh8 38.B*g7+ **Resigns**.

♦

DRAGONFLY
By Christiaan Freeling

'Mad Mate' is very similar to the game of Dragonfly which has been sent to me by Christiaan Freeling, the well-known games inventor from the Netherlands. Christiaan considers the game as one of his most deadly efficient chess games.
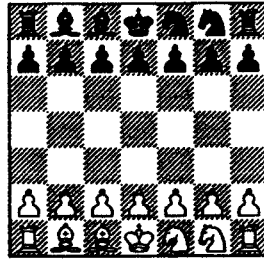
Dragonfly is a 7x7 chess game featuring King, Pawns, and a set of pieces based on the Rook / Knight / Bishop moves. All pieces (except King and Pawns) are double-faced, showing the same piece in either colour. Captured pieces are reversed and may be re-entered as in Shogi.

Because pieces are always in the game, (either on the board or 'in hand'), but pawns disappear when captured, the balance will eventually turn one way or the other. Draws are extremely rare.

The game has 2 Rooks, 2 Bishops, and 2 Knights, which are as in Chess, but for the dropping option. The King is as in Chess. Pawns are basically Chess pawns, but lack the option of an initial double step. They are promoted upon reaching the back rank, to any piece *the opponent* has in hand. If the opponent has no piece in hand, a pawn may not move onto the back rank.

A piece in hand may be entered on any vacant square at the cost of a turn.

Castling is as in Chess.

Two sets of Chess pieces are useful. Captured pieces are then exchanged for the same piece in the other colour.

As one can see the rules are almost the same as 'Mad Mate'. The Queen has been eliminated though and this seems a good idea. In the original Shogi there is no piece with the range of the Queen - although the promoted Rook and Bishop have enhanced powers compared with the originals.

It is surprising that Chessgi type games are not played more often. Play is complex and interesting. Draws are rare too. In fact it would be an ideal way to decide tied World Championship candidate matches.

OBITUARY

ROBERTO MAGARI

Eteroscacco reports the death of Roberto Magari. He was born in Florence in 1934, and died in Sienna in 1994, after a grave illness.

He was one of the founding members of the Italian Heterodox Association (AISE) in the middle 1970s and contributed numerous articles to *Eteroscacco* on Progressive Chess and especially Vinciperdi. He was the very first winner of the AISE Progressive Chess Championship in 1975, and he tied for the 4th Championship in 1978 with Mario Leoncini. In Vinciperdi he won the first AISE Championship in 1975 and followed this up by winning the 2nd, 4th, 7th, 9th, and 10th (equal with Aldo Kustrin). This last was in 1991/2. In the 1st Heterodox Olympiad he was a member of the Italian first team, and scored 6 1/2 points out of 8 in Vinciperdi. In Italian Progressive Chess he played in 152 recorded games attaining a success rate of 64.38%.

He was an exponent of 2.Nc6 d5 to 1.e4 in Italian Progressive, gaining many notable victories. This defence was named the Sienna Defence, after the town where he lived.

He was the co-author with Mario Leoncini of the book *Manuale di Scacchi Eterodossi* which was published in Sienna in 1980.

Roberto Magari was a mathematician of the highest class. He gained a degree in mathematics at Florence; afterwards he attained the highest seat in logical mathematics in Italy. He had the distinction of having introduced the study of logical mathematics into Italy, (logical formulae, logic of mathematics, mathematics of logic etc.). He obtained an international reputation by inventing a form of algebra which carries his name. He was much influenced by Bertrand Russell. He was also interested in the problems of morality, writing two important works: *Morale e Metamorale* and *Un Approccio Probabilistico ai Problemi Morali.*

In a moving tribute in *Eteroscacco*, Roberto Salvadori pays tribute to his extraordinary capacity for the generalisation of problems, for his acute originality, and great intellectual honesty. He finishes by saying that he feels he has lost a part of himself.
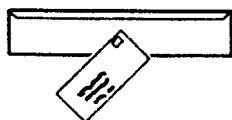
LETTER BOX !

VARIANTS OF CHESS

From George Jelliss *(Hastings)*

I was amused by the fine distinction of George Hodges (*VC*11 p.47) between Variants of Chess and Chess Variants. This made me think of Men of Kent and Kentish Men. I can never remember which are north and which south of the Medway! "Variant Chess" is the study of the effects of changing the rules of chess, either singly (monovariants) or in combination (multivariants) and the history of such changes. Could I appeal to inventors of new variants to have the courage to see the consequences of their new rules through to the logical conclusion? In too many cases it seems to me that they have a good idea, and then spoil it by hedging it about with all sorts of provisos.

Xiangqi Piece Names

Paul Byway (*VC*13 p.78) proposes changing the translations given to the names of the Chinese pieces on the grounds of respect for Chinese culture, but surely it would show greater respect if we simply used transliterations of the Chinese names, at least of those pieces distinctive to Chinese chess. This is indeed already done by problemists who call the Chinese knight the **Mao** and the Chinese cannon the **Pao**. Paul appears to agree at one point that **Rook** (derived from Persian for Chariot) is an acceptable name for the Chinese piece, which has all the properties of the normal chess rook. On the same reasoning then the mediaeval names, still used by problemists, **Fers** (meaning counsellor) and **Alfil** (Arabic version of the Persian for Elephant) are equally acceptable for the corresponding Chinese pieces. The problemist's name for a piece that moves one square orthogonally is **Wazir** (taken from a piece in Timur's Great Chess). This leaves us with only the Chinese pawn to name. The Chinese have two names for it: Ping and Tsu. To avoid two pieces beginning with P we arrive at **Tsu**.

The above proposed names for pieces in Chinese chess follow the general principle that the earliest name for a piece should be preferred to later suggestions, to avoid proliferation of unnecessary names, or multiple meanings. The name **Elephant** has been given confusingly to numerous different pieces. May I make a plea that it be used in variant chess for the Fers with forward Wazir move? This is the Elephant as used by Rudrata (c.900AD) and in Burmese and Thai chess (and apparently, if Mr Masukawa's interesting theories are correct, the source of the Gin in Shogi). The Fers move symbolises the Elephant's legs and the Wazir move his trunk and tusks. The slow movements of this piece are also far more pictorially appropriate to an Elephant than the great leap of the Alfil is.

ASIAN XIANGQI FEDERATION

From David W. Woo *(Editor of Xiangqi Review)*

On the name translations of the pieces, I remember a newspaper article that I read dated around the time of the last Asian Cup Tournament (November, 1992). It was an interview with the current AXF secretary (and also president of the Singapore Chinese Chess General Association) CHAN Fook Loi. He was quoted announcing the word (acronym) "C-H-A-R-G-E-S" for the seven types of Xiangqi pieces. The word also signifies, he said, how the game will forge ahead (charges) outside of Asia and into the world. So apparently now the **Rook** (previously Chariot), **Cannon** (formerly Gunner), **Soldier** (formerly Pawn), and **General** (previously King) have been designated; while **Elephant** and **Horse** remain unchanged, and the A now is for **Advisor**, not Assistant any more.

While this kind of change seems sudden and irrational, I can tell you from my experience, that is the way they do things in the AXF. They would often announce or adopt some system, and then change it overnight, without reasons. But then the most outrageous thing is that they would not even have the courtesy of informing other promoters, who are doing their job for them, on these abrupt turnarounds. When I was among the members of the AXF's two committees, I got caught a few times. I was sending out information over here in the US and Canada, as they requested, and then learnt from other sources that the system had changed, causing a lot of embarrassments and confusions. That's the chief reason I decided to cut my ties with the AXF. The sad thing is that the majority of WXF (World Xiangqi Federation) staff are also from the AXF, so it will be the way things will be handled for times to come. Basically, there are simply too many politicians in Asian organizations, and the majority of the "management level" people just do not care too much about Xiangqi outside of Asia, in spite of their mottos. To internationalize the game, I don't think we can rely much on Asian promotion efforts. We just have to take charge and do things as we see fit.

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VINCIPERDI

From John Beasley *(BCM Problem Editor.)*

I prefer the name 'Losing Chess'. When we played it at school in the fifties stalemate was a win for the player stalemated and the same seems to be true of the game as played in the 30s.

Ed: This is the NOST stalemate rule. However AISE has made stalemate a draw since its VP championships started in Italy in 1975. Now from Eteroscacco a study by W.Dittman using the NOST rule. White plays and wins. Solution next issue.

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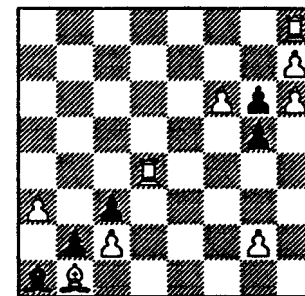
SUPER-PAWN

From Stefanos Pantazis

The term 'Super-pawn' is already in use (since 1967 - *invented by Dr. Speckmann*) in fairy chess to describe a pawn that moves any number of squares orthogonally forward, and captures by moving any number of squares diagonally forward. Moreover, a combination of Berolina and orthodox pawn (without any promotion restrictions) has been used (since 1969) under the name 'doubler' or 'twin' pawn'. The current name seems to be 'complete pawn'.

Editor: Michael Keller (WGR10) mentions another 'Super-Pawn Chess', where the 'd' and 'e' pawns can move and capture up to 3 squares forward or 1 square sideways.

ERRATUM

Stefanos Pantazis also points out that on page 77 of *VC*13, the Super-Pawn mate in 5 in the last column is cooked. There is a mate in 3:

1.axb6 Kb8 2.c6 Kc8/Ka8 3.bxc7/cxb7#

NEWS

CHINESE CHESS

11th European Champioship

This will be held in Holland on 24-25th October at Sporthallen Zuid, Ijsbaan 9, Amsterdam. Please contact Mr.Ding Wa Chong, Oltmanstraat 20, NL-3842 ZX Harderwijk, Netherlands, for more details.

Other events:

20 - 21 August - Jarvenpaa, 2nd Finnish Open.

Write to: Raimo Lindroos, Ahokuja 2, 04430 Jarvenpaa, Finland.

For a full list of future Chinese Chess events across Europe write to: Francis Corrigan, 7 rue des Batignolles, 75017 Paris, France.

ITALIAN PROGRESSIVE CHESS AISE P.R.BASE Version 3.0

This is the latest version of the P.R.Base dated April 1994. This current version has 9090 games compared to the previous version dated November 1992 which had 7791 games. Italian Progressive is the most widely played postal variant. It is easy to see why: play is complex and exciting with surprising turns; and games are over comparatively quickly. It is ideal for postal play.

Version 3.0 can be purchased as a packed 160 page spiral-bound book, or as a floppy disc. The games are sorted into openings, and to pinpoint any particular line there is an easy-to-use index. Players' records are also listed. From these indexes one can find interesting statistics.

For pioneers 1.f3 and 1.h3 have still to be played on move 1.

Out of the total number of games White has won 51%, Black 45.6%, Draws 1.7%, Unfinished games 1.7%.

Renato Salvadori has played the most number of games, 600, achieving 55.58%; closely followed by Alessandro Castelli - 593 games, 60.88%; and Roberto Cassano - 533 games, 68.48%. The best overall performance seems to be that of Mario Leoncini who has achieved 80.19% over 371 games, while the late Guiseppe Dipilato achieved 75.85% over 443 games. Out of the present Italian experts Deumo Polacco has 77.98% from 361 games; Luca Stefanelli 78.12% from 128

games and Giancarlo Buccoliero 77.08% from 168 games. The prolific variant games player, Aldo Kustrin, has a surprisingly low percentage of 28.92 from 325 games.

All the above players are Italian. Special mention should be made of the husband and wife partnership from the Ukraine; Jaroslav Gadzindkij has 78.28% from 145 games, while Rasa Gadzinskaja has 74.83% from 145 games. There are few British players. From these Steve Boniface has 59.09% from 22 games; Patrick Donovan 52.78% from 36 games; George Jelliss 37.50% from 56 games; and John Sturgess 31.82% from 44 games.

This book/disc is highly recommended for serious players of Italian Progressive Chess. It is probably essential if anyone wishes to lock horns with the top Italians in international tournaments.

The price is most reasonable.
Floppy disc version: 10,000 Lire.
Book version: 25,000 Lire.

Write to **A.Castelli, 62010 Villa Potenza (MC), Italy.**

ITALIAN PROGRESSIVE CHESS

VC Tournament 1993/4 - Final Scores.

	IR	JT	SB	PA	IS	TOT
I.Richardson	-	10	11	11	11	7
J.Tolonen	01	-	01	11	11	6
S.Boniface	00	10	-	11	11	5
P.Archer	00	00	00	-	11	2
I.Smith	00	00	00	00	-	0

AISE POSTAL INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

4th Team Championship *(3 player)* - Italian Progressive Chess

If anyone would like to play in this please let me know. I will fit players into teams. The starting date of the tournament is 1.10.94, so let me know well beforehand. *Entry is free.* More than one team can be entered.

The rules of this variant have been given in previous issues of *VC*, but I will send them to anybody on request.

CHANCELLOR CHESS POSTAL TOURNAMENTS (see *VC*13)

The following entries have been received:

Chancellor Chess: Brian Grant, Deana Morris, Paul Archer, Malcolm Horne, Toby Howes.

Progressive Chancellor Chess: Ian Richardson, Paul Archer, Peter Wood, Toby Howes, Marco Fabbri (Italy), Aldo Kustrin (Italy).

Play commenced on the 1st August.

COMPUTERS

Novag Chinese Chess (about £80).
Write to: Eureka Electronics Ltd., Unit 4, Hove Business Centre, Fonthill Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 6HA.

Software Programs
Oxford Softworks - Intelligent Strategy Games 10, includes *Chinese Chess.* Price around £35.
Write to: Oxford Softworks, Stonefield House, 198 The Hill, Burford, Oxfordshire OX8 4HX.

Battle Chess 2 is a (weak) *Chinese Chess* program available from computer software outlets at around £25. The OS program above is better value.

Shogi Master Although far from perfect this is the only *Shogi* program available in this country. Price about £35 from Ishi Press International Ltd, 20 Bruges Place, Bayes Street, London NW1 0TE.
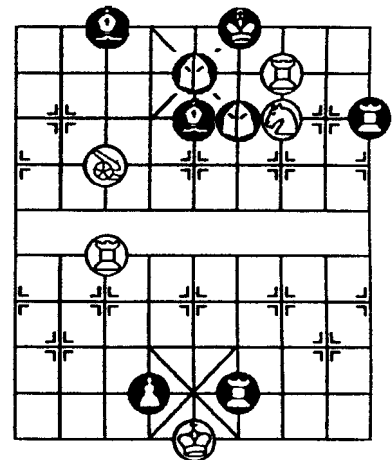
ERRATA

The Rev'd P.R.Kings has pointed out that in *VC12*, page 63, the names of the German magazines should read *Problem Kiste* (Kiste means chest or box) and *Die Schwalbe* (the swallow).

SOLUTION

Chinese Chess position on p. 78 of *VC*13.
1.Ra8+ Gd8 2.Re0+ Ge9 3.e7+ Kf8 4.Rxd8+ Gxd8 5.Re8+ Nxe8 6.f7 mate.

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Chinese Chess

Red to play, mate in 5. Solution next time.