

Variant Chess

Journal of the British Chess Variants Society

B. C. V. S.

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Formation Of The B. C. V. S.

At the Inaugural Meeting held on Saturday 4th January the title of 'The British Chess Variants Society' was formally adopted for the group publishing *Variant Chess*, with the appointment of President, Secretary, Treasurer and Editor as shown in the panel alongside. We welcome the involvement of John Beasley as Secretary.

A separate sheet inserted with this issue gives the proposed Constitution of the Society, drafted in meticulous detail by our new Secretary, and announces a Special General Meeting to adopt the Constitution, to be followed by the first Annual General Meeting of the Society, these meetings to be held at our President's home (Badgers Wood, Hascombe Road, Munstead, Godalming, Surrey) commencing 11.30 a.m. on 10th May 1997.

UK Variant Championships (Postal Play)

Also enclosed with this issue (to UK members only) is a circular inviting entries to a series of UK Championships in chess variants. The rules of suggested variants are outlined on the back of the circular, and an entry form is provided on which you can name the variants you wish to play. You can nominate any variants, not just those listed on the form. Championships will be organised in any variant for which there is sufficient demand, i.e. at least four players. The editor hopes to prepare a series of small booklets giving the detailed rules of the chosen variants and including example games and problems. Do not send any entry fees yet. Notification of the chosen tournaments will be sent out following the AGM.

We propose to feature Grand Chess (10×10) and Fischerandom in the next, or next-but-one, issues so if you have any interesting games in these or similar expanded or randomised variants, please send them in.

If not — get playing!

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EXTINCTION CHESS

by Peter Wood

Last issue I discussed English Progressive Chess; this time I turn to the less heavy Extinction Chess, a variant invented by Wayne Schmittberger of the USA. The former name of this was Extinction of the Species, which is a fine description of the variant.

The rules are simple:

1. The chess pieces for each side are divided into six separate species. These are of course King, Queen, Rook, Bishop, Knight and Pawn. The game ends when one of the species becomes extinct (i.e. one player has no piece of that species left), and the player to whom that happens loses.

2. Check and checkmate of Kings are abolished

3. Castling is still possible, but because of rule 2 the restrictions regarding the King being attacked, or passing over a square that is attacked, do not apply.

4. Pawn promotion may extend the life of a species, but a player promoting his last pawn loses the game (since Pawns are then extinct). Promotion to King is possible.

5. All other rules are the same as in orthodox chess.

AISE have organised postal tournaments since 1990. Any reader interested in playing in the next AISE postal tournament should contact **A. Castelli**, 62010 Villa Potenza (MC) Italy. The price is L5000 or equivalent, closing date 1.4.97.

But the game is also ideal for over-the-board play. Played as light entertainment, in a pub say, or with a fairly rapid time limit, it makes a welcome and enjoyable break from orthodox chess or more serious variants. Games tend to be on the short side, but there can be interesting and unusual tactics involved. It is a game that is easy to learn, and I recommend it to readers.

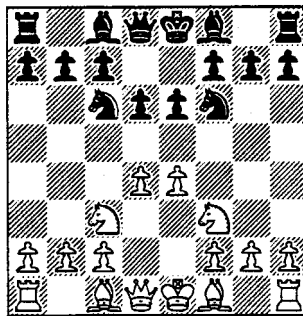
Let us look at a few simple tactics:

Aldo Kustrin – Piero Pugnali
AISE Grand Prix 1992

1. e4 b6 2. Bc4 a6 3. Qf3 b5??
4. B:f7 Resigns. (Note here that 4. Q:f7 loses — Black just plays 4... K:f7, winning.)

Patrizio Fontana – Gianluca Scovero
AISE Grand Prix 1990

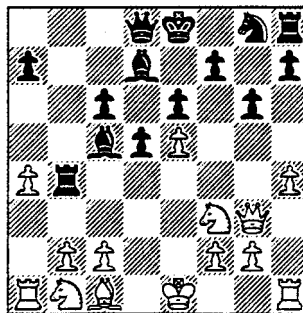
1. e4 e6 2. d4 d6 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. Nf3 Nc6



(White now threatens to pin both the Black Knights against the major pieces. This is a popular tactic.)
5. Bb5 g6?? (Loses immediately.)
6. Bg5 Be7 7. B:f6 Resigns.

Roberto Cassano – A. Castelli
AISE Grand Prix 1993

1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. e5 c5 4. Bb5 Bd7
5. a4 Nc6 6. d:c5 B:c5 7. Qg4 g6
8. B:c6 b:c6 9. h4 Rb8 10. Nf3 (By his exchanges White has left himself open to a Black attack on the Queenside; he has three vulnerable pieces.) 10... Rb4 11. Qg3



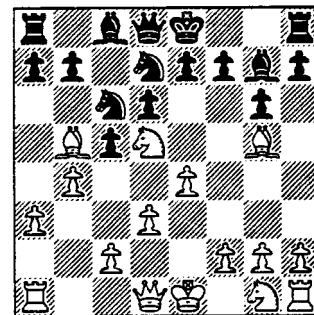
11... R:b2! White resigns. (If 12. B:b2 Qb6 with a double attack

against b2 and f2. If 12. Bd2 Bb4. If 12. a5 R:c2 13. Bf4 B:f2)

The following game was played over-the-board at Hastings last autumn; it was one of a series of games. Neither player had played the game before.

Peter Wood – Ray Kearsley
Friendly 1996

1. e4 c5 2. Nc3 Nc6 3. Bc4 g6 4. d3 Bg7 5. a3 d6 6. Bb5 Nf6 7. Bg5 Nd7 8. Nd5 Qa5 9. b4! (Forcing the Queen to retreat.) 9... Qd8



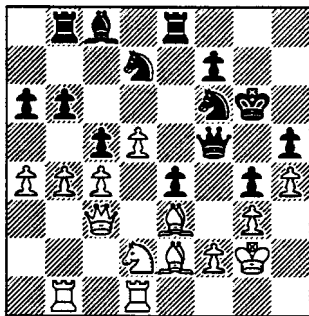
10. B:c6? (10. B:e7 would have won outright: 10... N:e7 11. N:e7) 10... b:c6 11. c4 f6 (Not 11... c:d5, because of 12. Qa4!) 12. Bc1 0-0 13. f4 Bh6 14. Nc3 e5 15. g3 f5 16. Bb2 e:f4 17. b:c5 d:c5 18. Qa4 Rb8 19. Bc1 Bb7 (If 19... Qg5, then 20. Q:c6 Ne5 21. Qd5 wins.) 20. Nd5 f:e4 21. d:e4 Ne5 (Decisive.) 22. Qc2 c:d5 23. c:d5 Qa5 (If 23... f3, then 24. Bb2) 24. Kd1 Ba6 25. Nh3 Bd3 26. Qa2 Qa4 27. Ke1 Q:e4 28. Kd1 Q:h1 29. Kd2 Q:c1 and wins.

Now a couple of postal games by Alessandro Castelli. They are good examples of the kind of strategy that one would do well to adopt. A solid defensive structure should be formed. Any exchange of minor pieces and Rooks should be made with caution. Excluding the question of pawn promotion, which in this game would be extremely rare, only three such exchanges can take place; the safety of both sides' remaining Bishop / Knight / Rook is of prime consideration when allowing an exchange. Obtaining and keeping the initiative is important, and to that end the Queen is an ideal piece to probe

the enemy position and attack any weaknesses, especially when piece exchanges have taken place.

Alessandro Castelli – Paul Yearout
AISE Grand Prix 1992

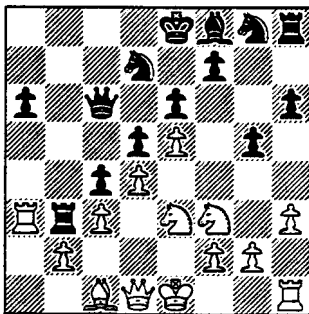
1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nf6 3. d3 d6 4. h3 h6
5. Be2 Be7 6. 0-0 0-0 7. Nh2 d5
8. e:d5 Q:d5 9. Ng4 e4 10. Ne3 Qd8
11. d4 c5 12. d5 Bd6 13. Nc4 Re8
14. Be3 a6 15. a4 b6 16. N:d6 Q:d6
17. c4 Qe5 18. Qb3 Nbd7 19. Rd1
- g5 20. g3 Qf5 21. Kg2 h5 22. Nd2
- Kg7 23. Qc3 Kg6 24. b4 Rb8
25. Rab1 g4 26. h4



- 26... c:b4 (Black should look to blockade the white pawn on d5.)
27. R:b4 a5 28. Rb5 Re5 29. d6 Nc5 (29... R:b5 30. c:b5 is hopeless too.)
30. B:c5 Resigns.

Roberto Salvadori – A. Castelli
AISE Grand Prix 1993

1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. e5 g6 4. Nf3 h6
5. Bd3 c5 6. c3 c4 7. Bc2 g5 8. h3
- Bd7 9. Ba4 Qa5 10. B:d7 N:d7
11. Na3 b5 12. Nc2 Qb6 13. a4 a6
14. a:b5 Q:b5 15. Na3 Qc6 16. Nc2
- Rb8 17. Ne3 Rb3 18. Ra3



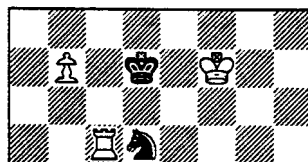
- 18... Qb5 (Threatening 19... R:a3
20. b:a3 Qb1) 19. R:b3 c:b3 20. Nd2
Nb6 21. N:b3 Qa4 22. Nf1 Nc4
23. h4 N:b2 24. Qc2 Nd3 25. Q:d3
Q:b3 26. h:g5 Qa2 White resigns.

RECIPROCATING REFUSAL CHESS

by Cedric Lytton

It was nice to see the note on **Refusal Chess** (VC20, p.219). One conspicuous drawback is the symmetry between two equally good moves, either of which may be played first, followed (if refused) by the other. Michael Crumlish (now Michael Moyne) overcomes this with **Reciprocating Refusal Chess**, i.e. initially (at the start of a game, or in the diagram-position of a problem) White has no right of refusal and Black has one, but if he uses it then White has one—and if he uses that, Black again has one, etc. Thus the right of refusal passes each time it is exercised.

Michael Crumlish
The Problemist, March 1985



Reciprocating Refusal Chess
Mate in 2, (b) –♘d5, +♙b4

In MC's problem White must now offer his moves in the right order, and the unwanted dualising symmetry is destroyed. It may be worth noting that the rule extends to the putative Black 2nd move (the move by the mated player) but not to the capture of the mated K, so that the mates are 'half-fairy'. It is certainly noteworthy that White's four key moves over both parts constitute a most economical direct-mate Allumwandlung.

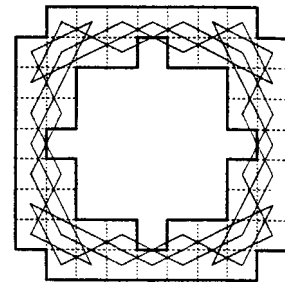
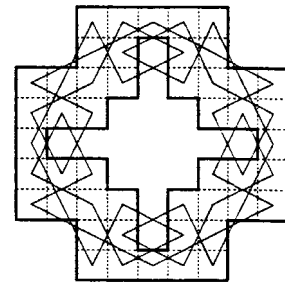
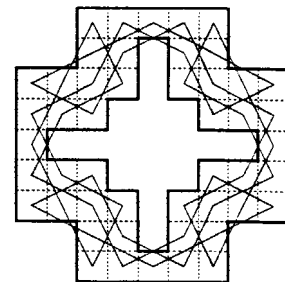
Solution to example problem

- (a) 1. b8Q S any 2. Qc7†
If 1.b8Q, 1.b8S† Kd8 2. Rc8† (Kxe8) 1.... Kd6 2. Rc6† (Ke5) and if 2.Qc7 2. Rc7† (Kd6) or similar.
(b) 1.b8R Kd6 2.Rd8†
If 1.b8R 1.b8B Kd8 2.Rd5† (Ke8) and if 2.Rb8 2.Rb6 (Kd7).
Strikethrough indicates refusal.

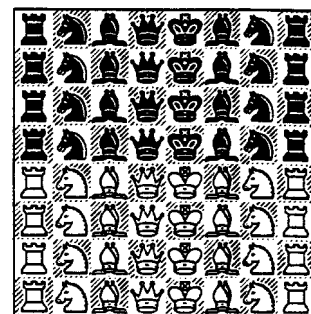
Puzzle Corner

by George Jelliss

Octonary tours of maximum length on a 9x9 area are of 48 moves. Numbering as before the first two are: 10.8.12.4.7.11.5. (the 4.7 being taken either across diagonal or median) third is 10.8.12.13.7.11.9.



Francis Bowers challenges the reader to solve the following enigma in fewer moves than he has used.



Remove one piece then by moving one piece at a time to the vacant cell transpose the white and black forces in fewest moves.

THE PROTECTOR

a new variant piece

by Stephen Lewis

The majority of orthodox and variant chess pieces are capable of attacking and capturing other pieces. Their powers of defence are usually more rudimentary, being simply the ability to block an attack by placing themselves in the way. The Protector is a new variant chess piece which is unable to capture or give check or mate — although capable of being captured itself. Its role is one wholly of defence which it is able to effect through either of two squares simultaneously. Just like any piece, other than the King, it can block an attack by being placed between the attacking and threatened pieces. However, it is also able to block all lines of attack directed through any vacant square adjacent to it. This it does by simply pointing at that square. By being able to block a line of attack through a square it does not occupy, a more efficient form of defence is possible since the Protector need not be in danger from the attack itself.

The blocked square may be changed by either rotating or moving the Protector. Rotation constitutes a move, whereas the Protector is not allowed to rotate when moving between squares — it must land facing the same direction. Without powers of capture, the Protector may be allowed the freedom to move like a Queen as it will not be quite so powerful. However, sub-variants of the Protector are feasible which are permitted to point and move in only orthogonal or diagonal directions. (Alternatively, versions may also be conceived which are allowed to move in only orthogonal or diagonal directions but are not allowed to point in these ways.)

Just as no piece may move through a square occupied by another, neither may a piece travel through or land upon a square blocked by a Protector. In this way, a

Protector may also block the potential occupation of an important square. A piece may, however, find itself occupying a square towards which a Protector comes to be pointed, should a player choose to rotate or move it so. As a Protector has no powers other than defence, this will have no effect upon that piece. Thus any check or mate delivered by that piece is not cancelled the Protector only blocks lines of attack through vacant squares. Similarly, a Protector may not nullify a check or mate by pointing to the square occupied by its King, whereas it may nullify a check by being rotated or moved to block a square in the line of such an attack. Capturing a Protector and thereby removing its blocking influence introduces a new way of effecting a discovered check or mate.

For documented games, the figurine appropriate for the Protector is a shield, pointed at one end and double scalloped at the other. In this way, the pointed end may be used to indicate the square being blocked. For purposes of recording games, the notation: Pd4(e5) may be used to mean 'Protector on d4 blocking e5'. If used in a full game (on a 9×9 or 9×8 board), each Protector should begin in the array by pointing off the board and thereby blocking no squares. (Protectors allowed to point orthogonally should begin games pointing off the board orthogonally. Those allowed to point only diagonally should point towards the imaginary square behind their King.) In this way, a move must be used up in order to create a blocked square. Given its role in protecting the King, the Protector's starting position should be next to its King on the other side from the Queen.

Unorthodox pieces which, like the Protector, may not capture but have powers of influence over adjacent squares are to be found in Ultima (Robert Abbott, 1961) where the Immobilizer paralyzes all opposing pieces on adjacent squares and in Unorthodox Ultima (John Thayer, 1967) where the Neutralizer deprives the piece next to which it moves of its powers of capture so that

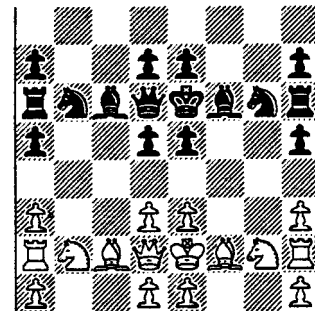
it must first move away to regain them before being able to capture again. In Renaissance (also called Baroque Renaissance) (Matthew Monchalin, 1975), the Pusher pushes an opposing piece away by one square, provided that that square is vacant. Pieces which influence empty squares seem to be rare.

Cylinder Chess

by George Jelliss

Following on from the last issue: it is of course also possible to form a cylinder by joining the black and white sides instead of the king and queen sides, giving **Horizontal Cylinder Chess**, but on such a board the normal game-array is illegal, since both kings are in quadruple check. (Round Chess as described in VC22 is a form of horizontal cylinder chess on a board 4×16.)

Suggestions for a legal opening position for Horizontal Cylinder Chess are invited. My proposal is as follows:



Here the pawns can be taken as moving normally, or the four rear pawns can be taken as moving opposite to normal (in which case they would be shown upside down). White can open by attacking an undefended rook with his queen by 1. e4, but if the 'phantom capture' rule is in force this can be met by 1. ... e5-f4.

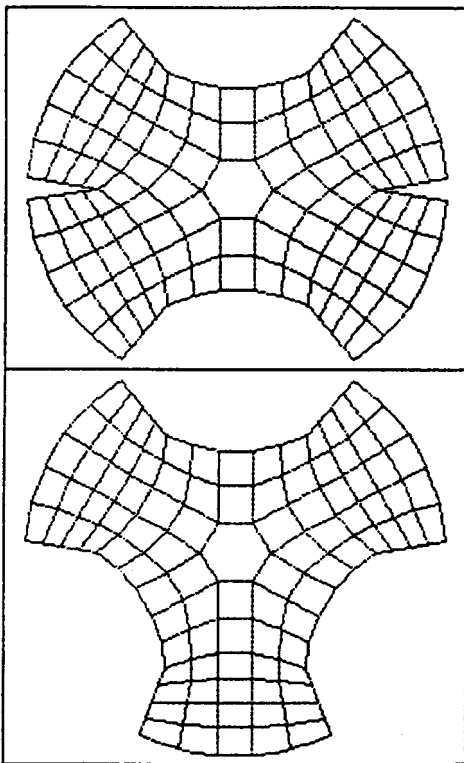
Our problems editor points out that in the K. Hannemann problem the set play is illegal since Black has no last move (Ra8-h8?). I think this can be corrected by adding a pair of mutually blocking pawns, say h2, h3.

GAMES GALORE!

by David Pritchard

Badgers Wood, Hascombe Rd., Munstead,
Godalming, Surrey GU8 4AA.

DUCHESS Duchess is a proprietary variant for 2 to 6 players (partnerships played). The game was developed over a period of 12 years by Alan Blair. It is not yet on the market but it can be played on the Internet (<http://www.tiac.net/users/duchess/terms.html>). My thanks to Lex Kraaijeveld for the information. The board looks a bit like a hub cap. There is a main playing area of 37 squares (well, spaces) of which the central pivotal space is in the shape of a hexagon. In addition there are six petal-shaped extensions each of 20 (4x5) spaces giving a board total of 157.



Board arrangements for four and three players.

Each side has 15 pieces: 1 x King, Queen, Knight, Duchess, Fortress, Wizard; 2 x Rook, Bishop; 5 x Pawn. These are set up initially on the three outside ranks of each extension: (a1-e1) RWKFR; (a2-e2) BNQBD; (a3-e3) P P P P P. If less than six are playing (odds on), the players are seated symmetrically round the board (a bit difficult if there are five) with the unmanned extensions excluded.

The moves of the new pieces are: Duchess: as B or N; Fortress: as R or N; Wizard: as K but any piece (including a W) adjacent to a friendly W (own or partner's) can be teleported, instead of moving, to any other vacant square

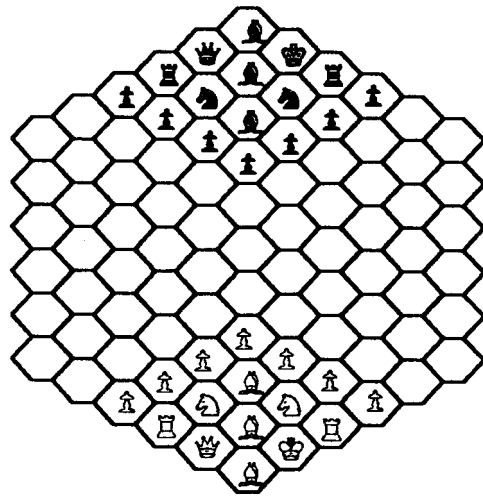
adjacent to a friendly W. Pawns move one square orthogonally in any direction and capture one square diagonally ditto. Promotion to any previously captured piece is on the central hex, known as the Vortex.

Everything else pretty much as in orthoChess, including advice: 'It is advantageous to take as many of your opponent's pieces as possible.' You and partner(s) must checkmate all of your opponents' Kings to win.

HEXAGONAL CHESS Back in 1979 Dave McCooley and Richard Honeycutt developed a two-player hexagonal chess variant designed to be as close to orthoChess as possible. The game doesn't seem to have a name: it can be found on Hans Bodlaender's web page. Dave McCooley's e-mail address is dave@lynx.com. if you feel like writing to him.

The board is hex-shaped and is composed of 91 hexagons. Each player has 1 x K, Q; 2 x R, N; 3 x B; 7 x P. The sides are compactly deployed initially (see diagram) with the moves of the pieces corresponding exactly to those of Glinski's but with a different pawn capture and a slight modification of the pawn move — in this game the central pawn has not the initial two-square option (to prevent White occupying the key central hex on the first turn). Promotion is on any of the 11 end hexes; e. p. possible but no castling.

The game was invented without knowledge of Glinski's version and differs from it in three ways: (1) The initial array; (2) the pawn capture (a one-step bishop move instead of Glinski's one-step rook move); and (3) the stalemate rule (stalemate loses in Glinski's game).



McCooley has some interesting observations. Firstly, knights can triangulate (move whilst retaining control of a hex). Secondly, a king can overtake an advancing pawn from behind by moving diagonally. He notes also that whereas $K + N + N$ can mate a bare king, $K + B + B$ or $K + B + N$ cannot. $K + Q$ does not win against $K + R$ but $K + R$ beats $K + N$ or $K + B$.

I don't want to sound like a Woeful Willy but does anybody play hexagonal chess these days?

FOR CHESSPLAYING DIPLOMATS Diplomacy is a wonderful game although not I fancy to the taste of all chessplayers. The key feature of Diplomacy is simultaneous movement — the players write down their orders which are then revealed and executed, certain rules governing any orders that are in conflict. There are three types of order: move, support and hold, and every unit must be assigned one of them. There have been at least three attempts to marry this requirement to chess: Diplochess (Edi Birsan, 1973), Diplomatic Chess (Mark Larzelere, 1974) and now Diplomacy Chess (Joao Pedro Neto, *Eterosacco* 75).

All three games have simultaneous movement but each has its own procedure for resolving clashes. In Diplochess, pieces are assigned values (Q = 9, ..., K = 0), the higher-ranking piece taking precedence. In Diplomatic Chess, a four-player game on the 8x8 board, conflicting moves are resolved by comparing the powers, including those of support units, of the pieces involved, again the higher-ranking taking precedence but with pawn moves executed first. In Diplomacy Chess, if two pieces are ordered to the same square, the stronger piece captures the weaker (K has highest ranking); if of equal strength (e.g., B & N), neither moves. Conflict is also assumed if two units pass over the same square. Again, neither moves. The inventor suggests that Diplomacy Chess is played as a progressive game; he also suggests allowing conditional moves ('If e6 is free, play X otherwise play Y'). However, he does not include support moves in the variant for fear of infringing copyright!

It is felicitous that the game names are different. In the same issue of *Eterosacco* there are three new Ralph Betza games, Earthquake Chess, Taxi Chess and Trapdoor Chess. Unfortunately, there already exist variants with these names. The confusion was unnecessary. Betza should have checked: alternative names are easy to come by.

ISOLATED PAWNS

by David Pritchard

45. DOUBLET CHESS This game was invented by Kevin Lawless. If you move a N, B or R you may also move its twin, thus making a triple check possible. Obviously it will be advantageous to hang on to pairs as long as possible. Thought: does castling give you the right to move the other rook in the same turn? And if you promote to N when you have both Ns on the board can you move all three in a turn?

46. LUMINOUS CHESS Luminous Chess is a Macintosh application on the Internet which illuminates squares under attack for both orthochess and Freeling's Grand Chess (10x10). One player's pieces cast a red light, the other player's a blue, overlapping and combining

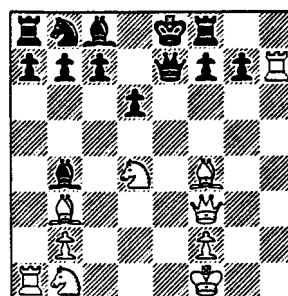
where appropriate and showing instantly the influence exerted over any square on the board. It should not only help reduce blunders but should also stimulate ideas, a useful aid for beginners (and me).

47. PACIFIST CHESS The Argentinian journal *El Acertijo*, at present being restructured, offers (issue 23) this variant by Hilario Long in which all violence is rejected. The game starts in the orthodox manner. You may neither take nor threaten the opponent's men. The game ends when one player has no legal move. The winner is the player whose king is farthest from its initial position, measured in orthogonal (not diagonal) moves. Draws are of course possible; cf Static Chess (*ECV*).

48. CHESSapeak CHALLENGE The inventor of this variant J. Bruce Jones (see *VC18*), recognising the relative weakness of the knight on the enlarged board, has put out (Oct. 96) an amended rule that affects its move. A knight initiating its move within its own triangle of squares (see diagram *VC18* p.174) moves as a Giraffe (1,4 leaper); elsewhere on the board it behaves in an orthodox way. Certainly this change allows a knight to enter the fray quicker but on the debit side it actually reduces its choice of moves in some positions and severely limits its usefulness in defence. I would have preferred to see the knight's move extended to include that of the Camel (1,3).

49. SWISS ENTERPRISE Fabrice Liardet organised a variants tournament in Geneva on 5th October last. It attracted 19 entrants, something of an accomplishment in view of the fact that Switzerland has never been able to raise a team for an A.I.S.E. event. Seven different eight-minute games, selected by the competitors, were played. These were Avalanche C, Chessgi, Marseillais C, Omni-C, Rifle C, Three-check C, N-relay. The tournament was won by Rodolphe Francey ahead of Jean-Pierre Vegh and Jacques Sauvin.

Here is a lively Rifle C game from the event (no obligation to capture; displacement capture included as well as 'rifle capture'): **White J. Sauvin Black P. Emery**
 1. e4 e6 2. Qf3 Qg5 3. Bc4 Bb4 4. Kf1 Nh6 5. h4 *xh4
 6. *xh6 *xg2 7. Ne2 Qc5 8. Bb3 *xc2 9. d4 *xd4
 10. *xe6 Rf8 11. Bf4 Qe7 12. a3 *xa3 13. Rxh7 *xe4
 14. Nd4 d6?



15. *xb7 a5 16. Qxa8 Ba6+ 17. *xa6 Kd7 18 Ba4† and mate follows 1-0.

I see Fabrice Liardet has announced another tournament (free entry!) in Geneva on 21st December. Games included are Alice C, Atomic C, Two-move C, Extinction C, Madrasi C, Push C, Triplets, Losing C and one or two others.

50. POCKET GAMES SETS Syu Creation have brought out no less than 20 pocket games sets with magnetic pieces. All sets are very sturdily made and include illustrated rules. Amongst the games available are Chess and Shogi. Shogi is part of a new series of *Great Games of the Orient*. Go and Mah-Jong complete the range to date — perhaps Xiangqi will come next? Sorry: I don't have prices. Write to Syu Creation Ltd, 21 Wisbech Road, Thorney, Peterborough PE6 OSA.

51. FARNHAM VARIANTS EVENING Farnham Chess Club held a variants evening on 23rd Dec organised by Bill Lowe and myself in which a dozen different variants were played. The winner was Mike Smart of Guildford; second place was shared by Clive Frostick, Phil Stimpson and myself. Everyone seemed to enjoy it.

52. RAINBOW CHESS Ken Whyld alerted me to this chess game — it can hardly be called a variant — which has recently enjoyed support in Hungary. Rainbow Chess is just boring old chess but with the pieces differentiated by colour (the kings red, the queens purple and so on). The theory is that the eye detects colours quicker than shapes or symbols, so less time is necessary for recognition leaving more time for creative thinking. The idea came from Pal Suvada who patented it some thirty years ago in the US. Five events were held in Hungary during the past year including the Speedy Chess Championship (112 entrants!) and the Blitz Championship of Budapest in which eight Grand Masters and nine International Masters took part.

There is another angle to the game (I quote): "The rainbow is an eternal symbol of hope for mankind". There is an old adage that the only safe gamble is to play Snap with a man who stutters. Add, perhaps, to play Rainbow Chess with someone who is colour-blind?

53. CRO PRESTIGE Mike Pennell has sent me brief details of this game, invented by Ivica Pesut, which is based on the machinations of the Croat political system. The board has 129 cells with 20 pieces a side. It would appear that some at least of the pieces have chess-type moves. Cro Prestige won a gold medal in the Games category at INPEX.

54. MAH-JONG, ANYONE? Jan Morris, the travel writer, observing old men playing Xiangqi in a Beijing park, referred to the game as draughts, an excusable error. Clive Anderson in *Great Railway Journeys* (BBC2 30 Dec. 96), watching a game of Xiangqi in Datong, less excusably referred to the game as Mah-jong. I am sending copies of *VC* to both celebrities.

Not for the Faint-Hearted

by Peter Wood

Michael Howe of Middletown, Connecticut, USA, is a prolific chess (and other) game inventor. Several games of his are being played by NOST, and some others have been featured in *Eteroscacco*. These are Full Belt Chess, Follower Chess, Mirror Chess, and Asymmetric Chess. 'Experimental' postal tournaments have been organised for these last four by *Eteroscacco*. Here is one of his games.

FULL BELT CHESS.

The rules of orthodox chess apply in addition to the following:

1) Each rank and file is a conveyor belt, and the edges are considered connected, so that the belts are continuous loops. Note that the edges are not considered connected for orthodox moves.

2) After his orthodox move, a player must make a belt move. He does this by imagining rotating the belt any number of squares in either direction and repositioning the units accordingly. He may rotate any belt that contains units, except one containing a king.

3) A player may not rotate the same belt rotated by his opponent on the previous half-move.

4) A player may not rotate a belt so that the position does not change.

5) The King must escape check by an orthodox move.

6) There is no castling or en passant capture.

7) Pawns which reach the eighth rank by orthodox move or capture promote; those that reach the eighth rank by a belt move do not.

8) White may not give check on the first move.

9) The standard array may be used but the author prefers the diagonally symmetrical array BBNNRRQK left to right. This forces the action to occur on both wings simultaneously and helps prevent pieces (rooks especially) from neutralising each other during belt moves on files).

10) Games may be played with either of two checking options: a) Check may be given by orthodox moves or belt moves. b) Belt moves which result in check are illegal.

In recording a game, the orthodox move is given first, then a slash, and then the belt move. A belt move is recorded by the file or rank that is the belt, a dash, and the number of squares the belt is rotated. Squares are always counted up the board from white's side to black's for file belts, and from left to right from white's perspective for rank belts. Here are two short games, from the above opening position..

Vito Rallo - Lorenzo De Angelis

1.Nc1d3/g-1 Bg1:f2/f-4 2.Qg2:f3/b-5+! Ka8b8/f-6+
3.Qf1:f2/a-5 mate.

Gianluca Vecchi - Lorenzo De Angelis

1.Nc1d3/g-4 g3g2/b-7+ 2.Kh1g1/5-6? Bh8:e5/h-3 mate.

Space Chess

by George Jelliss

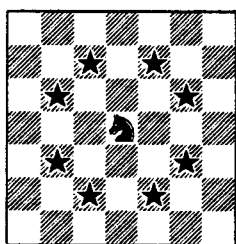
By **Space Chess** I mean any form of chess that uses a three-dimensional board and in which the rules for the pieces, other than the pawns, are the same in all lines and planes of the board. This latter condition is added to exclude such games as Parton's Alice Chess, using two boards, or Beatty's Total Chess, using four boards, in which the moves between the boards are by 'lift'.

For descriptions of the two main types of space chess known hitherto, those by Maack and Kobetliantz, and numerous others, I will have (for reasons of space) to refer the reader to David Pritchard's *Encyclopedia*. Here I outline the general principles and follow this with a new game of my own, provisionally called Cuboid Chess.

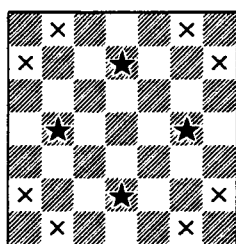
Three-dimensional 'boards' are shown by means of a set of 2-dimensional boards representing successive slices through the 3-dimensional region, the labels of the boards, A, B, C, ... acting as the third coordinate. The boards used hitherto have nearly always been cubes $n \times n \times n$, for some number n , or a box-shape $a \times b \times c$. Cuboid Chess however is played within a very roughly spherical volume (a $6 \times 6 \times 6$ cube with a 4×4 area added to each face).

A $4 \times 4 \times 4$ space chess can be played on the normal 8×8 board, the four layers A, B, C, D being the four quarters, but the chequering may be misleading.

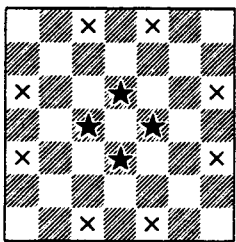
A move in three dimensions is represented by three coordinates (r, s, t) , indicating that the move is equivalent to r (wazir) steps right, s steps forward and t steps up. (Or respectively left, backward and down if the numbers are negative.) We express the 'pattern' of the move by the corresponding positive or zero values $\{r, s, t\}$. The length of an $\{r, s, t\}$ move is $\sqrt{r^2 + s^2 + t^2}$.



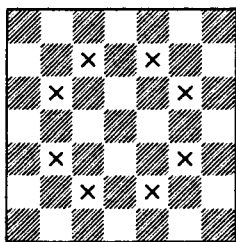
D



E



F



G

Some moves of $\{1,2,3\}$ \times , and $\{0,1,2\}$ \star from the centre, Dd4, of a $7 \times 7 \times 7$ board.

If all three numbers are different and none is zero an $\{r, s, t\}$ -leaper can move in 48 different directions! The simplest leaper of this type is the $\{1, 2, 3\}$ -leaper, or $\sqrt{14}$ -leaper, called a **Hippogriff** in Kogbetliantz's game. If one pair of the coordinates is taken to specify a move on one of the layers of the board, then the third coordinate represents a move up or down. Thus a $\{1, 2, 3\}$ -leaper either moves vertically one layer and makes a $\{2, 3\}$ zebra move or vertically 2 and makes a $\{1, 3\}$ camel move or vertically 3 for a $\{1, 2\}$ knight move, as illustrated by the marks \times in the figure. In each case there are 16 choices of move ($8 \text{ leaps} \times 2 \text{ vertical ways}$) whence 48. Since this piece has an even number of odd coordinates it is confined to cells of one shade in the chequering.

Fortunately when there is a zero coordinate or two coordinates are equal the number of moves to be considered reduces considerably. Any 2-D move can be made in 3-D space in each of the three coordinate planes passing through the cell initially occupied by the moving piece. In this way each 2-D (or 1-D) piece defines a corresponding **Space Piece**. Thus the **Space Rook** makes moves of type $\{0, 0, n\}$ in 6 directions (up-down, left-right, and to-fro), where n can take any value except zero, the **Space Bishop** makes moves of type $\{0, n, n\}$ in 12 directions and the **Space Knight** moves $\{0, 1, 2\}$ in 24 directions (shown by the marks \star in the figure).

Moves with all three coordinates non-zero are 'true' 3-dimensional moves, and pieces making them are 'essentially' 3-D pieces. The simplest is the **Sprite**, which is the $\{1, 1, 1\}$ -leaper, or $\sqrt{3}$ -leaper. Its corresponding line piece, the $\{n, n, n\}$ -mover, or $\sqrt{3}$ -rider, is called the **Unicorn** in Maack's game (but 'Fool' in Kogbetliantz's).

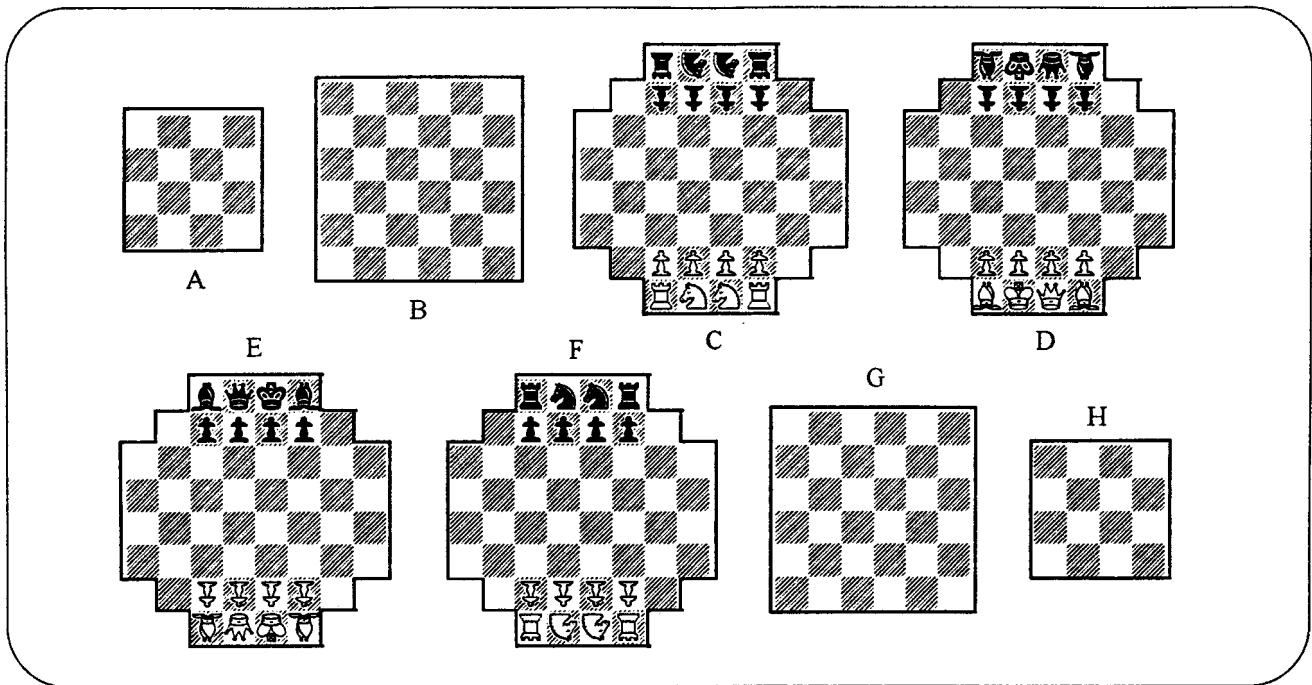
The Rook moves through the faces of the cubic cells, the Bishop moves through the edges of the cubes, and the Unicorn moves through the corners. Thus a Unicorn has a choice of 8 directions of movement. A Rook has access to all the cells of the board, in a series of moves, but it takes two Bishops to patrol the whole space, and four Unicorns.

The King in two-dimensions can be defined either as a Wazir + Fers or as a piece that moves to every 'adjacent' cell (by which we mean any cell that has a boundary point in common with the initial cell). In three dimensions these two definitions are not equivalent. From the definition of Space Piece given above it follows that a piece that has the usual King moves in any plane is properly called a **Space King**. A piece that moves to every adjacent cell in space is a Wazir + Fers + Sprite which I call a **Cubi(c)-King**. The royal pieces in the Maack and Kogbetliantz games are of this type. The Cubi-King moves to all 26 outer cells of the $3 \times 3 \times 3$ cube around it.

The choice of the Cubi-King rather than the Space King as the 3-D monarch is supported by the fact that one Space King could stalemate another on a cubical board (e.g. on Aa1 and Bb2) which may be considered an undesirable property for the royal piece, or at least not analogous to the 2-D case.

In Cuboid Chess however I use Kings of both types.

Cuboid Space Chess

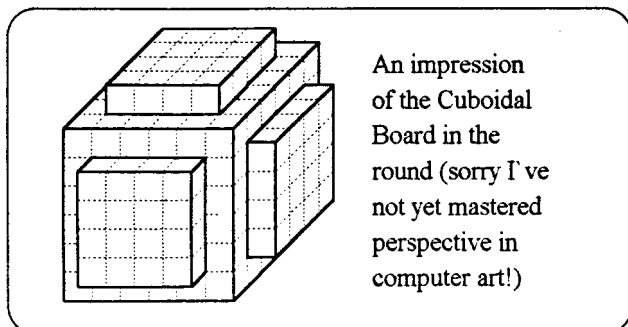


The **Space Queen**, is of course Rook + Bishop (used in Kogbetliantz's game under the name 'Favourite'). Its more powerful cousin, the **Cubi-Queen**, runs in the directions that the Cubi-King walks, i.e. Rook + Bishop + Unicorn. Both types of Queen are used in my new game.

In Cuboid Space Chess there is a Royal Family of four: Space King and Queen and Cubic King and Queen. All are Royal, but the Queens are permitted to pass through check. The aim is to capture any one of the four. Thus checkmate occurs if any one of the four pieces is in check and the check cannot be parried without leaving at least one of the four in check. The Space King, being the weakest of the four is the piece most likely to be attacked, but forks and skewers can also be fatal.

This weaker type of checkmate is to counterbalance the increased mobility of all pieces in space (which, as Schmittberger has pointed out, see *EVC* p.310, makes normal checkmate difficult if not impossible.)

It is convenient to call the R + U a **Cubi-Rook** and B + U **Cu(bi)-Bishop**. A pawn moves like a king but forwards only (i.e. towards the opponent's side), so we can have **Space Pawns** and **Cubi-Pawns**, the latter having the added Sprite capture move.



The opening position for 'Ordinary' Cuboid Chess is shown above. Two normal, but distinguishable sets are needed. The upright symbols are Space pieces and the inverted symbols Cubi-pieces. The Royals occupy the central cells of the 4x4 home base. The inverted Knight is the {1, 2, 3}, but other pieces can optionally be substituted.

Let us finally examine some other distinctive space-piece possibilities. The 3D-moves with coordinates non-zero and less than 3 are: {1, 1, 1} {1, 1, 2}, {1, 2, 2} and {2, 2, 2}. The first and last are Unicorn moves.


The {1, 1, 2} move is of length $\sqrt{6}$, and I call the corresponding rider a **Sexton**, it is confined to cells of one colour like a Bishop, and can reach all the cells of that colour (PUZZLE 1: Show how the Sexton gets to a diagonally adjacent cell in fewest moves.)

The {1, 2, 2} move is of length $\sqrt{9} = 3$. Thus the **Threeleaper**, becomes of special interest in Space: besides its 1-D move {0, 0, 3} it has this 3-D move. Unlike the Threeleaper in two dimensions, which is confined to 1 cell in every 9, in three dimensions it can get to every cell of the board! (PUZZLE 2: Show how the Threeleaper gets to the next cell in the rank in fewest moves.)

In Space we also encounter two other double-pattern fixed-distance leapers before we reach the familiar 5-leaper, these are the $\sqrt{17}$ -leaper or **Space Giraffe** which moves {0, 1, 4} and {2, 2, 3} and can reach any cell, and the $3\sqrt{2}$ -leaper or **Space Tripper** which moves {0, 3, 3} and {1, 1, 4}, and is confined to one colour.

In 'Advanced' Cuboid Chess the inverted R, B and N represent Threeleaper, Tripper and Giraffe, the {0, 0, 3} and {0, 3, 3} moves being blockable.


Puzzle answers: 1: $(1, -1, 2) + (-1, 2, -1) = (0, 1, 1)$.
2: $(2, -1, 2) + (1, 2, -2) + (-3, 0, 0) = (0, 1, 0)$.



PROBLEM PAGES

conducted by *Ronald Turnbull*

Highland Cottage, Gatelawbridge, Thornhill
Dumfriesshire DG3 5EA



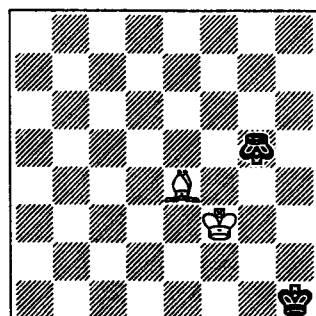
After a slow start, originals for VC are now piling onto the Gatelawbridge heap. Incidentally, before becoming the launchpad for quarterly bouts of problemism, Gatelawbridge was chiefly noted for its large sandstone quarry now used as a rubbish tip. This is mere factual background, not intended as a warning to composers ...

At present my policy is that no more than two by any composer will appear in any issue; and that accepted problems shall wait no more than six months for publication. Calculation with the calendar should lead to the conclusion that if you send me more than four problems, I'll send some back. Problems won't always be published in order of receipt: problems that illuminate those of the previous issue will come forward, as will any that form artistic bunchings with others.

**Original Problems
To Solve**

Despite its length VC153 is the easy one that I hope everyone'll be able to solve. It's Stephen's response to the long kangaroo in VC22, and his perverse reaction to what he sees as an excess of switchbacks and Allumwandlungen.

(153) Stephen EMMERSON

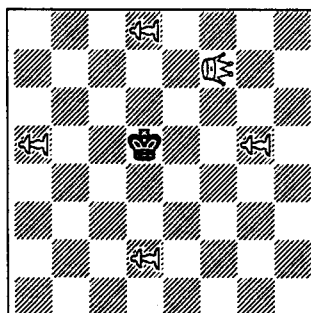


Kinghopper b4
Serieshelpmate in 41

This is the debut appearance of the **Kinghopper**. He's a short-range grasshopper who must be adjacent to his hurdle. [Moves 2-sq on Q-lines, but intervening square must be occupied.] In diagram, KH on e2 could move to g4 only. This KH isn't royal, doesn't get check given to it. (Fairy units are taken to have arisen by promotion, so that diagram as originally sent, inverted, was an illegal position.)

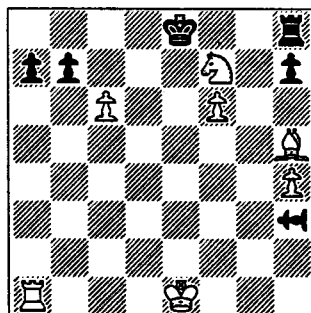
Our main editor presents another mutated grasshopper, one that's lost its power to leap. The **Jabber** of VC154 and 155 moves on Q-lines to the square immediately before some other unit. In VC155, black J if on d5 could move to e6, g5 and capture c6.

(154) George JELLISS



Jabbers & Equihopper
Add WK then Helpmate in 5
How many ways?

(155) Ronald TURNBULL



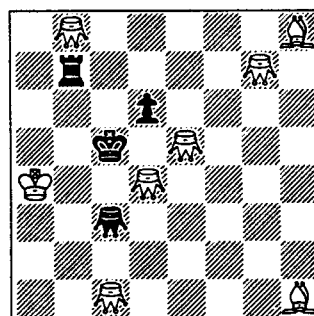
Jabber h3, Mate in 2
(b) J → e3 (c) J → b4
(d) J → a3 (e) J → b5.

(The related **Jibber**, which has no capture power, was invented by C. D. Locock, *FCR* April 1937.) I'm sure VC readers will want to do some jabbing: I got mine in quickly!

In VC154 you should only find one square for WK. **Equihopper** leaps across hurdle anywhere on board to square symmetrically opposite. In diagram, Ef7 can play to b3 (over BK), h3 (over WJ).

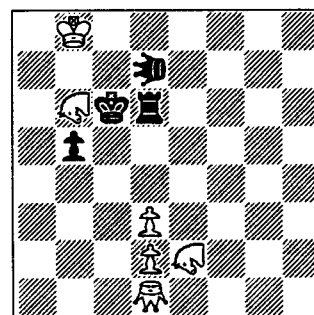
More insects have vigorously hopped here all the way across Europe from the Ukraine. The **Grasshopper** moves on Q-lines to the square immediately beyond a unit, the 'hurdle'. In VC156, WGe5 can move to c7, b5 and capture on c3.

(156) Nikolay VASYUCHKO



Grasshoppers
Helpmate in 2, 2 ways

(157) Nikolay VASYUCHKO



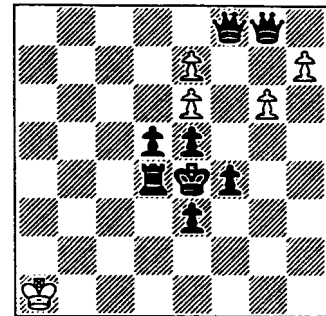
Grasshopper, Nightriderhoppers
Kangaroo, Helpmate in 2
(b) interchange b6 ~ b5

The **Kangaroo** moves like the grasshopper, but over two hurdles; in VC157, KAd7 can move to a4 or capture on d2 (in VC a Kangaroo counts as an insect!). **Nightriderhopper** grasshops along straight lines of knight moves. If NHe2 were black it would be giving check.

If you can deal with the menagerie of VC158, there'll always be a job for you at Edinburgh Zoo (famous actually for penguins; now how would that work as a fairy piece?) **Zebra**: long knight, leaps (2,3). This Zebra can move to a8, f7, etc. **Nightrider** moves as knight but can keep going. So bN f2 can move to b4, but bK obstructs it from reaching c8. Pawns may promote to Q, R, B, S or to any fairy unit present in the diagram. The position of VC158 is, regrettably, illegal. Unlucky 13 black pawns in game array!

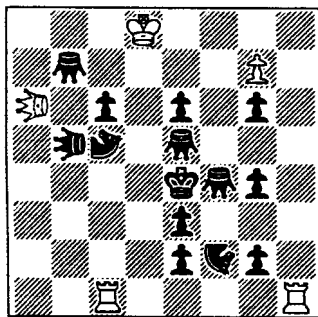
In **Isardam** moves leading to Madrasi-type paralysis are illegal. 'If a unit (not K) stands where, in the absence of this rule, it could be captured by a similar unit, the position is illegal. Moves to such positions are illegal.' So in VC160 Bg5 doesn't give check, and the Pd5 can't move — it is 'spiked'. Stephen and I explored quite deeply into Isardam, and laid out our discoveries in the January *Problemist*. VC160 is described, perhaps unhelpfully, as a back-to-front battery.

(162) John RICE



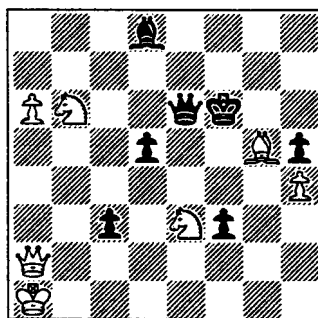
Andernach Chess
Helpmate in 2, (b) Pe5 → d3

(158) Erich BARTEL



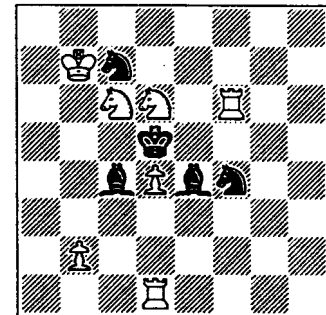
3 Grasshoppers, 2 Kangaroos,
Nightrider f2, Zebra c5
Serieshelpmate in 3, 4 ways

(160) Stephen EMMERSON



Isardam Chess, Mate in 2

(163) John RICE

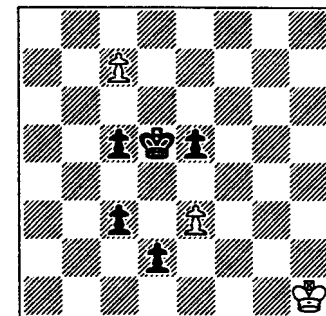


Anti-Andernach Chess
Mate in 2

In **Madrasi** if two units of the same sort attack each other, they are paralysed and lose all powers except that of paralysing. Kings excluded. Strictly: 'If a unit (not King) stands where, in the absence of this rule, it could be captured by a unit of the same sort, it may not legally move.' A **Moarider** is a Nightrider whose knight-moves are made as fers-move (non-capturing) then wazir-move.

Our theme of the month is **Andernach**: a unit that captures changes colour (Ks excluded). And **Anti-Andernach**: a unit that moves without capturing changes colour (Ks excluded). Anti-Andernach gives more problems to the composer than to the solver, as mating moves, and two-move keys, must almost always be captures.

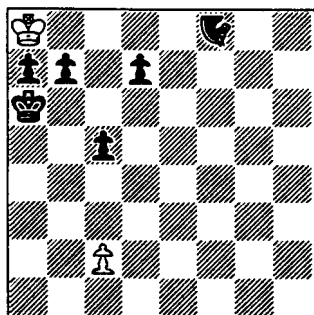
(164) Vlaicu CRISAN



Anti-Andernach Chess
Helpmate in 2, (b) c5 → f3

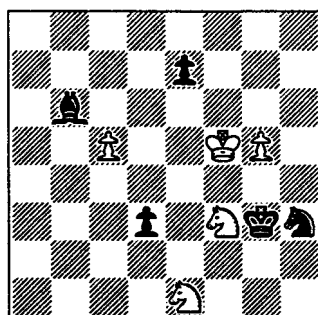
The four lucid little two-movers VC161-4, from Romania and Surbiton, require no comment. Simply enjoy.

(159) V. PERETYATKO



Madrasi Chess, Moarider
Helpmate in 7

(161) Paul RAICAN



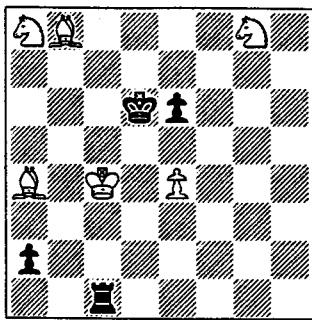
Andernach Chess
Helpmate in 2, (b) Bb6 → g2

Anti-Circe's a form where hundreds of interesting, solvable two-movers are waiting to be composed. VC165 is a useful introduction.

Captured pieces disappear, but the captor is reborn on its normal Circe square. If that square is occupied, the capture is illegal. So WK isn't in check from BR as a8 is occupied.

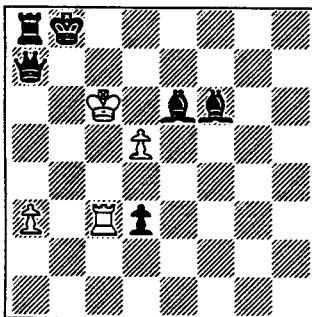
(Kings are included. The usual convention is that units may not capture on their own rebirth squares.)

(165) Erich BARTEL



Anti-Circe Chess
Serieshelpstalemate in 3
4 solutions

(166) V. NEBOTOV &
A. KHANDURIN (?)



Helpmate in 2

- (a) Orthodox Chess
- (b) Patrol Chess
- (c) Immune Chess, 2 ways

Patrol Chess: a unit (including King) may capture only from a square on which it is defended. In diagram, BQ×P, WP×B are the only legal captures. 1... WRb3 doesn't give check. **Immune Chess:** no rebirths, but units may be captured only if their home square is vacant. Kings are excluded, though I feel that the more inclusive 'King Immune' is the preferable form for this stipulation. This one almost got swept away in the confusion of column change-over, and if it's misattributed, my apologies to composers concerned.

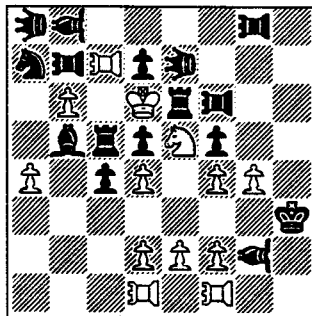
Solvers may feel that my liking for soluble problems is all very well, but that 14 easy ones in a row is taking it too far. So here are three toughies to finish.

King Circe: captured kings, too, are reborn on game-array square. So WK isn't in check as e1 is vacant.

The sideways pieces are Chinese. Leo (chinese queen) moves like queen but captures across an intervening unit of either colour. So black La8 has no move but can capture on a4. Vao (chinese bishop) and Pao (chinese rook) similarly.

VC167 is another illegal position, Black and White would have to have started with eleven pawns each. But not really a heavy setting, as only seven units per composer (the 29th one, on a8, is my contribution).

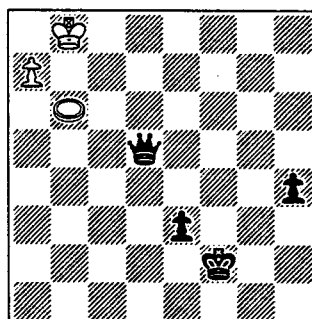
(167) C. FRANKISS, J. LORINC,
M. RIDLEY & B. STEPHENSON



King Circe, Chinese pieces
Reflexmate in 2

Having opened a can of worms with 'Piece Augsburg' and 'Pawn Augsburg', I'm still trying to digest the contents ... suffice that in VC168, b6 is R+S+B, and can move as any of these or separate into components, but d5 is Q and can't separate into B+R, pawns are included, but compound promotions don't occur.

(168) Paul RAICAN

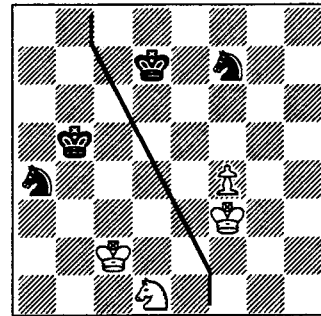


Augsburg Chess, R+B+S b6
Maximummer Selfmate in 4

- (b) Pa7 → b7, 2 ways
- (c) Kb8 → c7, 2 ways
- (d) Kb8 → h6

Peter Fayers' Knight-Spirits are fully explained on the following pages. Here are two examples for solving. VC170 has an astonishing mating position. I'm keeping space in VC24 for more S-Spirits. How about a nice mate-in-two?

(169/170) Peter FAYERS



Knight-Spirits
both Helpmate in 3

LADDER SCORES


	VC	20	21	22	
Maximum		22	15	11	total
A.Ettinger	129	18	-	7	154
E.Bartel	116	12	11	7	146
I.G.Richardson	111	15	10	4	140
M.A.Ridley	74	12	2	5	93
V.Krivenko	68	14	-	5	87
V.Crisan	77	-	12½	-	89
M.Olausson	63	7	0	-	70
A.W.Ingleton*	155	17	10	8	40
P.Raican*	146	15	11	7	29
P.Fayers	9	8	0	7	24
S. Emmerson	-	-	10	7½	17
H.Bodlaender	-	15	-	-	15
G.P.Jelliss	-	-	-	5	5
P.C.Wood	-	-	-	3	3

Lapsed solvers: R.Cassano 17, G.Vecchi 9. The asterisk * indicates a ladder ascent of 150 points. A.Ettinger has been awarded 18 points for VC20. **Scoring:** 1 point each. 1 point for cook (cook + intention 2 points). Half-point for keymove, or for all-but-one lines in helpmate. Scores rounded down to nearest full point.

Corrections


VC21: VC130, for which a cook was claimed is sound (P.Raican and A.Ettinger, who has computer tested it).
VC22: Introductory problem (B) with imitator is insoluble — the mate is not mate (noted by PR, AE and Mark Ridley).

Solutions to VC22 appear on page 59.



SPIRITS OF THE KNIGHT

by Peter Fayers

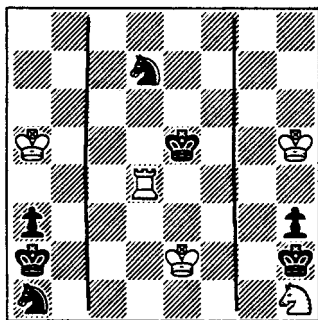


I have recently become fascinated by Augsburg Chess, more so than any other fairy form. The ability of normal units to gain *and lose* powers appeals to me no end.

However, I soon ran out of inspiration; there seems to be a limited number of 'special effects' that can be demonstrated with Augsburg even allowing for the differences between Pawn-Augsburg and Piece-Augsburg — thank you, *Variant Chess*! So I stretched my imagination further and invented a new fairy form, which I call '*Spirits of the Knight*' (a catchy title, but a bit long, so we will abbreviate it to S-Spirits). This (I think) is virgin territory for exploring effects of units gaining or losing extra powers.

1. When a knight is captured, its spirit lives on, joining the captor and endowing it with the power to move as a knight in addition to its normal movement.

(A/B/A) P. FAYERS



Spirits of the Knight
Helpmate in 3/ 3/ 2½

Looking at problem A, this solves by 1 Sc2 Ka4; 2 Ka1 Kb3; 3 a2 Kxc2♯. The white king, having captured the knight, is now inspired (i.e. it hosts the spirit), checking and thus mating the black king.

Well, nothing new there; this idea is the basis of Absorption Chess, and can be traced back centuries to Radha-Madhava (a variant of Indian Chess, according to the *ECV* p.152).

However, I did mention that units can also *lose* these extra powers, and so we have:

2. S-Spirits are flighty, and will immediately leap to another unit if its host moves to a square an S-leap away from that unit.

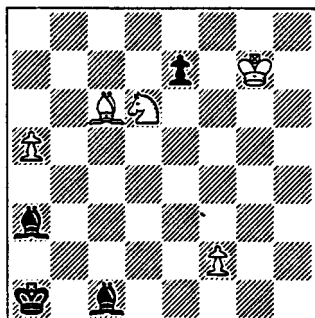
In problem B, after 1 Kf5 Rxd7, the rook is inspired. Now; 2 Kg4 Rf6, the rook has moved to an S-move from the black king, so the spirit transfers, allowing 3 Kh2 Rf2♯. Yes, mate, as (e.g.) on 4 Kg1?? the spirit would leap to the wK, allowing KxK!

A word on terminology. We use the dollar sign for the spirit: placed after the move, it means that the unit has acquired the spirit; placed in the middle of the move, it means that the spirit has transferred to another piece, and at the front of the move it means that the spirit has remained with its host during the move. With this terminology (suggested by RT, and a vast improvement on what I had been using in the first draft), the solution to B would be written: 1 Kf5 Rxd7\$; 2 Kg4 Rf6\$g4; 3 \$Kh2 Rf2♯

At this stage we need to clarify what happens when there is a choice of units to which the spirit may leap; the answer is simple: Nothing.

3. Where there are two or more units a knight-leap away from where the S-Spirit ends its move, it doesn't transfer; it remains with its current host.

(C) P. FAYERS



Spirits of the Knight
Serieshelpmate in 7

In problem C, after 1 Bxd6 black may not then play 2 \$Bf5?? Faced with a choice of Pe7 and Kg7 to move to, the S-Spirit would stay with Bf5, checking the white K, illegal in the middle of series-play.

This problem involves one of the reasons I like Augsburg, the ability to change the parity of bishops. In this problem all three bishops change colour, allowing a smothered mate of the black king on a1. With that rather broad hint, try it yourself!

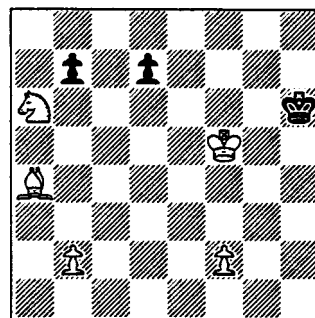
Now things start to get complicated. I feel that what we have is too restrictive; an S-Spirit will only move when its current owner wants it to. So I developed a rule that enables the opposition to entice it away.

4. A Spirit will also leap to any unit that ends its move a knight's move away.

(Note, that although I mentioned 'the opposition' in regards to this rule, this is not restrictive. S-Spirits are totally impartial, and under both rule 2 and rule 4 will transfer its allegiance to either a friendly or an enemy unit without fear or favour).

As an example, problem A' is formed from problem A (which is invalid under the modified rules) by making the Sa1 white, and changing the stipulation to H♯2½ (for convenience of printing we also transfer it to the h-file.) With white to move first: 1 ... Kg4; 2 Kxh1\$ Kf3; 3 h2 Kf2\$♯. On moving to f2, the white king attracts the spirit, which transfers its allegiance. (This dictates the wK path: 2 ... Kg3? would lure the spirit away prematurely.)

(D) P. FAYERS

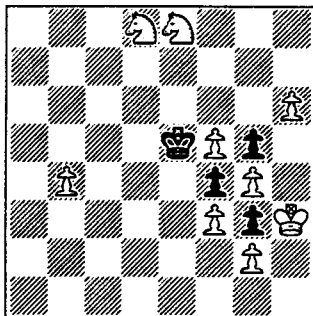


Spirits of the Knight
Helpmate in 3

As implied in the examples, by 'unit' we include Kings and Pawns — any unit can host a Spirit of the Knight. You should be able to solve problem D in seconds, except perhaps for working out which of white's plausible mating moves actually does, and why the other doesn't.

This really is all there is to it. I know that the rules are extensive, but hopefully S-Spirits will provide a fruitful new source of fairy problems. Here are some more examples.

(E) P. FAYERS

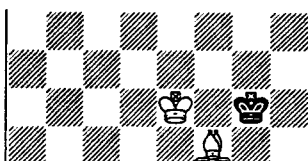


Spirits of the Knight
Reflexmate in 3

In the reflexmate E, the wK and black pawns are locked solid — we have to engineer for the bK to be able to deliver mate. We start with the brutal key 1 Sc6†, forcing 1 ... Kd5, after which 2 Sd6 leaves both knights en prise, and black has no option but to take one of them.

F was provided by your problem editor. (This should be obvious from the diagram. As his VC129 conjures up an en-passant capture without any black pawns on the board, and likewise in VC152, the complete dearth of rooks in the diagram means that the solution naturally involves castling, it seems almost inevitable that a 'Spirits of the Knight' problem from Ronald wouldn't have any mundane features like knights in it!)

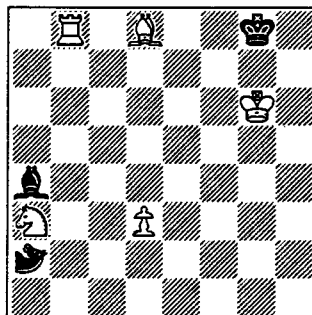
(F) R. TURNBULL



S-Spirits, Helpmate in 2

So, this problem involves some retroanalysis. Purists may point out that, in strict retro terms, there must always be a total of four (knights plus S-Spirits) on the board at any one time. I agree. I acknowledge that these rules are incomplete. What happens when a host with an S-Spirit familiar is captured? Can a host have more than one familiar at a time? And so on, and so on. I haven't tried to resolve these questions because I haven't needed to. As and when anybody wants to use one of these situations to show some special effect, they are quite at liberty to decide for themselves what happens, thereby setting the standard for other composers in the future.

(G) P. FAYERS



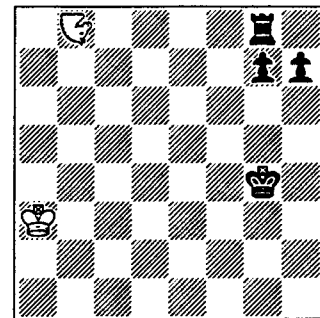
Spirits of the Knight
Camelrider a2
Mate in 2

In the meantime, problem G shows a new slant on an old theme, and again demonstrates that the possession of an S-Spirit familiar can restrict, as well as enhance, mobility. Sorry about the Camelrider; I wanted to set this with the traditional Rook-Bishop Nowotny effect, but in order to avoid the W Bishop being able to block the bR line, I either had to use a grid, or a 12x12 board with a Nightrider as the key piece. The setting with the Camelrider seemed the cleanest of the three possibilities.

Did I just say 'Nightrider'? OK, as a final little demonstration, I have decided that nightriders have spirits too. Problem H shows one weird effect of this — a long-range smothered mate by a lone King! (More an exercise than a problem. I am not really into nightriders.

Specialists in this field are invited to demonstrate the efficacy of their spirits.)

(H) P. FAYERS



Nightrider b8
N-Spirits, Helpmate in 3

I'll probably decide that camels and zebras (and their riders) have spirits as well. — When I need to.

ADDENDUM

Ronald reminds me that this journal is read by people who actually play variant games, as well as problemists, and so as a service to them I will try to fill in the holes I mentioned, in order to end up with a playable game you can try out. I would suggest:

5. When an inspired unit is captured, the spirit remains, transferring its allegiance to the captor.

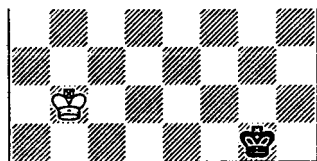
6. The astral plane over the chessboard only contains enough ethereal energy to support one spirit.

When a second knight is captured, the first spirit is released from the purgatory of the chessboard (a phrase used with considerable feeling), and goes to its Valhalla. (This gives an interesting possibility: a player can get out of check by capturing a knight elsewhere on the board!)

I believe that these two extra rules are all that is needed to make the variant playable, and a neat consequence is that, once a knight is captured, there will always be one (and only one) spirit on the board, making it fairly easy to keep track of.

I look forward to seeing some game scores!

(I) R. TURNBULL



S-Spirits
Helpstalemate in 2
Partial Retro-Analysis

With these last rules in mind, I leave you with problem I, another offering from your problem editor, a helpstalemate.

With thanks to Cedric Lytton, for his encouragement, help, and unparalleled (in a human, at least) cook-finding ability.

Solutions to Knight-Spirits:

A, A', B: In text. C: 1 B×d6\$, 2 \$Bf7; 3 Ba2\$c1; 4 \$Bf4; 5 Bg6\$e7; 6 gBb1; 7 e5\$c6 \$B×e5†. D: 1 b×a6\$ b4\$; 2 d5\$ f4\$; 3 Kh5\$ Bd1† (3 ... Be8?; 4 \$Kg7!). E: 1 Sc6† Kd5; 2 Sd6 K×c6\$; 3 b5† Kd5\$f4†. 2 ... K×d6\$; 3 (b5\$??) h7! Kf7\$g5†. F. Black in unreal check unless wBf1 already inspired, so: 1 Kg1 Bg3\$e2; Kh1 Kf1\$g3† G: 1 Sb5! (2 B~) B×b5\$/C×b5\$ 2 Bf6/Be7†. H: 1 Kf3 Ne2; 2 K×e2\$ Kb4; 3 \$Kh8 Kb5\$†. I: If wK inspired, 1 Kf1 \$Kd3; 2 Ke1\$† Ke3=. If bK inspired, 1 \$Ke2 Kc3\$†; 2 Kd1\$† Kd3=.

Solutions to the
Originals in VC22

Comments are by: Erich Bartel, Yves Cheylan, Stephen Emmerson, Alex Ettinger, Peter Fayers, George Jelliss, Mark Ridley and Ronald Turnbull.

143 S. Tkachenko 2. b1(S) 3 S×a3 5 S×a5 8 S×a4 9 Sb6 Ra1. Unique path for BS determined by need to avoid checking WK. Some found this too easy, but others didn't — we're not all experts! (RT)

144 E. Bartel 1 Pr c3 1... ba 2 Pr×a1 K×h8 3. Pr×f6 and 1... bc 2 Qa8 f5 3 Qf8 (also 1... K×h8 2 Pr×f6). All W officers en prise (EB). Most enjoyable of the set, if a little congested for the content. All 3 combinations present. Nicer if Q & E could be actively sacrificed (SE). Pity about the short line (GJ). Pointedness and

simplicity render forgivable the constructional defects, viz unprovided check on a1, BK flight h8, 3 threats where none required, pinning key and short mate variation. (RT).

145 E. Bartel 1 Kg2 2 h1(L) 3 La2 4 L×f7 (Lf8) 5 La2 6 Lh1 7 Lc6 8 Kh1 Kg3. SE, PF, AE suggest a twin with BKf1, WK×Lf3. Circe perhaps underused but spectacular underuse of the box of chess pieces (RT).

146 L Richardson Intention (a) 1... Bd3 2 Kd6 Bb5† 3 Kv5 Rd5 (b) 1... e5 2 Kd7 Bb6† 3 Kc6 Rd6 but multiple cooks.

147 N. Vasyuchko 9 Ke8 10 KAd8 18 Kd2 19 KAd1 20 KAd6 30 Kg6 31 KA h6 37 Kb6 38 KAA6 39 KAf6 46 Kf5 Se7. Hard-to-find final position (RT). SE's comment takes the form of VC153. Using go-stones to mark possible K and KA paths ... wife came in, shook her head in dumb disbelief at resulting chessboard and walked out despairingly (unsuccessful solver, name withheld).

148 P. Fayers (~) denotes change of colour. 1.h4 g5 2.hg (~) Sf6 3.R×h7 (~) Se4 4. Sh3 S×d2 (~) 5. Sf3 R×h3 (~) 6. Sh4 R×h4 (~) 7. Rf3 g×R (~). Failed to find a solver.

149 R. Turnbull, S. Emmerson & P. Fayers (a) 1 d3 Sc6 2 d4 S×d4 (~) 3 Sc6 Rb8 4 S×b8 (~). (b) 1 d4 Sc6 2 d5 Sd4 3 Q×d4 (~) W×d5 (~) 4 Qd1. (c) 1 d4 e6 2 d5 ed (~) 3 d6 Be7 4 de (~). Really a nice idea and funny solutions! (EB).

150 A. Ingleton 1 Sa7 Kb2(Pb7) 2 b6 Ka3 3 Ka4(Bf1) Bg2 4 La5(Bc1)† Ka6 5 Be3 Ka7(Sb8). Proved difficult to solve; am glad this has now been corrected (MR). If a neutral checks then next move the neutral checking piece can be moved back where it was unless the mating move is irreversible. With neutral king the potential king capture must also be unavailable to the opponent, so with all neutral men the check must necessarily be by a neutral pawn.

151 Y. Cheylan 1 ghS(Sg8) c8S 2 hgS(Sb8) Bh7(Bf1)†† these are checks white-to-black as b1, f1 vacant; but not self-checks black-to-white as c8, g8 occupied. Naughty to suggest AUW (SE). Very subtle (EB). Sequence of S-promotions is not new; with orthodox men in Antircirce I showed five specific S-promotions in H†2½. But all-neutral introduces peculiar difficulties (YC). Solvers will agree with those last two words!

152 R. Turnbull Mate in 0 by: Add WRd1† White just castled and Black's preceding move was +Bh2, played from the pocket (not Bg3-h2 which is an

uncheck, and thus illegal) so Black can't interpose +Bf1. Try: Mate in ½ by Add WRa1 and complete castling (this line spotted by Cedric Lytton). Try: Mate in 1: Add WSG3 and play 1.+Bf2†

Tourney Announcements

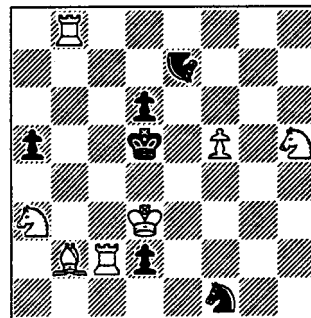
The Problemist Supplement

Announces a formal tourney for ‡2 and ‡3 using chinese pieces (Leo, Pao, Vao, see VC167, plus Mao, knight that can be blocked on the ortho-intermediate square, e.g. Ma1-b3 only if a2 is vacant). No twins, other fairy pieces or stipulations. Strategy preferred to pattern. Judge Brian Stephenson. Entries to T. Linss, Friedensstrasse 10, 01097, Dresden, Germany by 30/9/97.

World Chess Composing
Tournament of the FIDE.

The theme for Section G (Fairies) is printed 'Vaulting Kings', however the definition and the fine demo by T. Tauber make it clear that what is meant is Transmuting Kings: an orthodox king which, when in check, moves like the checking unit or units. (See Mark Ridley's note VC17 p.149)

T. Tauber 1997



Rois Transmutés, Nightrider e7
Mate in 2

1 Rb5?? selfcheck! 1 Kc3 (2 Rb5†)
1... Kc6† 2. K(as N)a7!† (2... Nc3??)
1... Kc5† 2. Ke4† 1... Ke5† 2. Kg1†

Mates in 2, one or both kings transmuted, nightriders and grasshoppers allowed, but no other fairy piece or stipulation. Entries through your national federation by 1 May 1988. (RT has composed in this genre and will be glad to exchange ideas with fellow-Britons.)

The Destiny of Chess

by Michel Deza (*École Normale Supérieure, Paris*)

Chess, like any game of normal form, has a unique result if both White and Black play in the best possible way. This result (we discard games stopped by agreement) is one of W_+, B_+, W_0, B_0 , denoting respectively win for White, win for Black, draw with last move by White, and draw with last move by Black. It is not possible at present to compute which of these results should be the finale of an 'optimal' game; which is the 'destiny' of chess.

But perhaps one can approach this problem indirectly by considering simpler games or problems with similar 'destiny'. Can we identify small variations of the rules which do not affect the destiny of chess? Here are three ideas in that direction: two in terms of variant chess and a third one in terms of enumeration.

I. Rotation Chess. In this variation, the board is turned round after each t th move of Black. For $t = 10$ or 15 the game was actually played in England. Let T be the maximal number of moves in an optimal chess game. Clearly, for $t \geq \lfloor T/2 \rfloor$, [where $\lfloor x \rfloor$ indicates 'integral part of x '] the destinies of rotation t -chess and orthochess are the same. But how about $t = \lfloor T/2 \rfloor - 1$? For smaller t the difference between those games should increase. How does the destiny of rotation t -chess vary (if it does vary) with diminishing of the period t ?

II. Time Chess. Suppose now that both White and Black do not care about winning, but merely care about the length (i.e. the number of moves) in the game. Remember that ending a game by agreement is excluded. Suppose White to have *Shiva* temperament — to minimise the length of the game — while Black (*Vishnu*) wants to maximise it. The game is again in normal form. So there exists a number N which is the length of any such game when both play optimally. Probably any such game would have the same result, in terms of W_+, B_+, W_0, B_0 , as usual chess. In fact, it looks as if for both purposes — to win or to control length of the game — one needs first to get material advantage to carry them out. Time Chess can be fun as a role-playing game; it can be interesting also to estimate N .

III. Optimal versus Typical. It has been remarked that ideal beauty is not far from the average of variation of all involved parameters. In this vein it will be interesting to compare the destiny of chess with the relation between the numbers w_+, b_+, w_0, b_0 , denoting the numbers of all possible games with results W_+, B_+, W_0, B_0 , respectively. I believe that (a) $w_+ = b_+$ and (b) $w_0 + b_0 \gg w_+ + b_+$ [where \gg means 'much greater than']. If true, this will point to the draw as the probable destiny of chess.

A way to check (a) will be to show that for any feasible position in chess, the opposite position, i.e. one differing only by interchange of colours White-Black, is also feasible. Clearly, feasibility of both opposite positions will imply that all possible games going via those

positions contribute equally to w_+, b_+ and to w_0, b_0 . Co-feasibility of pair of opposite positions implies the same for any pair of positions subsequently derived from them; so it will be enough to show co-feasibility for opposite 'initial' positions. For example, for each game with double-step of pawn as first Black move one can give an opposite game with two single steps of pawn as first two White moves.

I believe also in (b) because, probably, for each possible winning game, one can find a lot of draws by replacing one or two last moves by some sequences of moves fixing a legal draw. One may ask: does there exist a (feasible) position in which any modification of the last move stops the game?



A rotation game under the $t = 10$ rule, played between C. D. Locock (white) and T. R. Dawson (black) in 1913, is recorded in the *Encyclopedia of Chess Variants*, where David Pritchard comments that if a win is not in prospect when the board reversal is getting close, it may be good tactics to play weakly: 1. e4 e5 2. d4 e×d4 3. Bc4 Nf6 4. Nf3 Bb4† 5. c3 d×c3 6. b×c3 Bc5 7. e5 Ke7 (weakening the Black position) 8. Qc2 a6 9. 0-0 and Black, with two moves to make before sides are switched, announced mate in seven moves.

This was one of a series of games under various different rules played between these two about that time. A game of Reflex Chess, won by Locock, was apparently published in one of the Pittsburgh papers. If anyone can track it down *Variant Chess* readers would like to see it.



The editor has just been reading *Astounding Days: A Science Fictional Autobiography* by Arthur C. Clarke in which he mentions the story *The Fairy Chessmen* by Lewis Padgett (a pen-name of the husband and wife team of Henry Kuttner and C. L. Moore) in *Astounding*, the sf magazine, for Jan/Feb 1946. After quoting Padgett's description of Fairy Chess, Clarke writes (p.184):

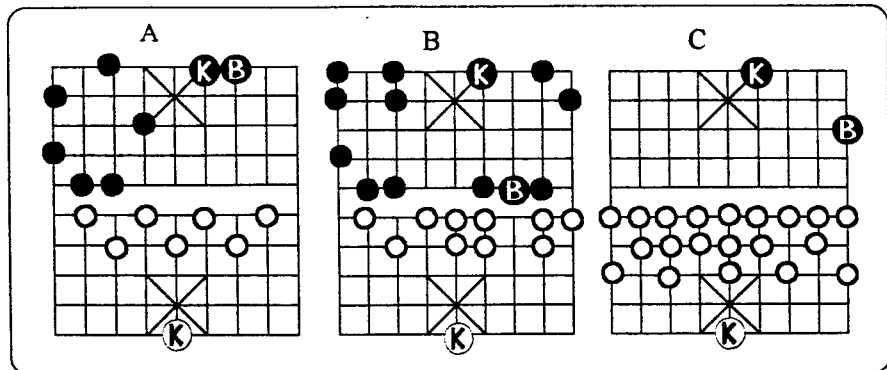
"In 1951 I had the privilege, though it was completely wasted on me, of watching a game between Lord Dunsany (one-time chess champion of Ireland) and Dr Dawson, who if I remember correctly was the editor of *The Fairy Chess Review*. Dawson told me that he had also played many games of three-dimensional chess — and one in four dimensions, though not on a full 8×8 board."

"This way, I decided, lay madness, and it confirmed my resolution never to learn the rules even of old-fashioned two-dimensional chess."

Later (p.197) he writes: "When I met Lord Dunsany in 1951 ... I took the train from Charing Cross, got out somewhere in Kent, and walked to Dunstall Castle. I remember that I was carrying a novelty — one of the first truly portable radios ... I was also carrying a copy of *The Charwoman's Shadow* ... Lord Dunsany inscribed his name on the first page; it was the only time I have ever seen anyone use a quill pen. ..."

**THE END IS
NIGH**
by Paul Byway

20 The Finches, Hertford
Hertfordshire SG13 7TB



This time I must begin by alerting prospective correspondents to the fact that my address, given above, has recently changed. And so to business.

Losing Chess

It doesn't seem to be at all easy to compose a decent losing chess study. In VC14, page 95, there is one from *Eteroscacco* by W. Dittman which uses the NOST rule — stalemate is a win for the player stalemated. (For new readers: 7R, 7P, 5PpP, 6p1, 3R4, P1p5, 1pP3P1, bB6). Now, I hear, via Peter Wood and Fabrice Liardet, that a second solution has been found by Richard Forster.

It goes as follows: 1. Rd1 (d7) (instead of 1. Rd6) g4 2. g3! g5 3. Ba2 b1=any 4. Bxb1 Bb2 5. Rf8 Bxa3 6. h8=K Bxf8 7. f7 Bxh6 8. Kg7 Bxg7 9. f8=any Bxf8 10. Rd6 Bxd6 11. Ba2 Bxg3 12. Bd5 B any 13. Bf3 wins.

It is possible to avoid this second solution by adding a Black pawn at d6, but there may be other flaws to find later in the play. Another approach would be to replace the White Rook at d4 with a Knight at c8, but this would allow 1. Rf8 as an alternative. After demolishing the Dittman study Richard was inspired to compose one of his own, but this in turn was demolished by IZNOGOU. I hope he manages to mend it.

Xiangqi

Now the Xiangqi endgame of Knight against Bishop comes under scrutiny. In an earlier article it was seen that the Knight can always defeat a Guard, but the Bishop can put up a successful defence.

Consider: White Ke1, Nf8, Black Kd0, Be8. This is the position

from theorem 20 in *Chinese Chess Endings* by Chu Shi and Liang Bing, translated by C. K. Lai. The play is as follows: 1. Ke2 Kd9 2. Ne6 Bg0! (2... Bc6? 3. Nc7† Kd8(d0) 4. Ke1! wins) 3. Ng7 (The fork 3. Nf8† is answered by the blocking move 3... Be8! drawing: players of western chess could easily overlook this tactic) 3... Kd0 4. Nf9† Kd9 5. Ke3 Bi8 6. Nh8 Kd0 draw.

This position is known as 'a door in the East, a door in the West' and is worth remembering. The Knight can stalemate the King or the Bishop, but not both. To summarise: the King and the Bishop should be on opposite sides of the centre file and as far apart as possible, then Black draws.

What happens when White holds the centre file and both Black pieces are on the same wing is shown in the three diagrams, A, B, C, above.

If the Knight has crossed the river White wins, unless the knight occupies a marked point. If the knight has not crossed the river White can only draw, unless the knight occupies a marked point.

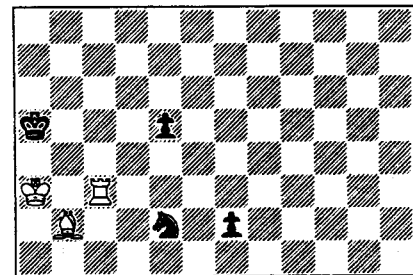
From this we can state the following rule: If the White King occupies the centre file and the White Knight has crossed the river and both Black pieces are on the same wing, then White wins: otherwise it's a draw. This is only a summary of findings, and not an absolute rule. Each position depends upon a tactical sequence: if White stumbles on the road he may well find that the win has evaporated. As an exercise I give at the end solutions to the following problems (i): diagram A with Nh0 and (ii): diagram C with Nc6 at the end. The case of Black Bishop at e8 hardly needs a diagram. There are

seven squares from which the Bishop can be captured on the move: apart from these there are only two squares from which White can win. Problem (iii): What are they?

Modern Courier Chess

The following is a repair job on a faulty study by the Platov brothers: 87 in Timothy Whitworth's collection.

P. Byway after the Platovs



White to play and Draw

Solutions to Xiangqi

- (i) Diagram A with Nh0. 1. Ng8† Kf9 2. Ni7 and now: (a) 2... Bi8 3. Nh5 Bg6 4. Ng7† Kf8(f0) 5. Ke2. (b) 2... Kf8(f0) 3. Nh9† Kf9 4. Ng7† Kf8(f0) 5. Ke2.
- (ii) Diagram C with Nc6. 1. Nb8 Bg6 2. Nd9† Kf9 3. Nc7 Kf8(f0) 4. Ke2 Kf9 5. Nb9 Kf8(f0) 6. Nd0 Bi8 7. Nc8 Bg6 8. Nd6 followed by 9. Nf5 and 10. Ng7.
- (iii) When the Black Bishop is at e8 and the White Knight is at f8 or i7, White wins by 1. Nh9† Kf9 2. Ng7†.

Solution to MCC

- 1. Rc5†/i Kb6/ii 2. Rc1/iii Nxc1 3. bxe5 g1=Q/iv 4. Bd4† Qxd4 stalemate.
- /i 1. Rc2 g1=Q 2. Rxe2 Qc5† 3. Ka2(b3) Qc4(b5)† 4. K~ Qxe2.
- /ii 1... Ka6 2. Rc6† K~ 3. Rg6.
- /iii 2. Rxe5 g1=Q 3. Re6† Kb7 4. Re7† Kc8 5. Re8† Kd7 6. Rxe2 Qc5† 7. Kb3 (a2, a4) Qb5 (c4)† 8. K~ Qxe2.
- /iv 3... Ne2 4. Bh2 Kc5 5. Kb2 Kd4 6. Kc2 Ke3 7. Kd1 Kf2 8. Kd2 Nd4 9. Kd3 Nf3 10. Bd6 draws.

Xiangqi Miscellany

by Peter Wood

AU REVOIR AMSTERDAM

This is the latest book by C.K.Lai. It is a collection of 30 games played mostly at, or in, the last three European Xiangqi championships. Twenty of the games were played by the author himself. Those who have played C. K. know that his games never lack interest. Sometimes his results are disappointing, but on occasion he can soar to the heavens, to use a 'Laiarian' expression.

Included in the book are the five games of the match between Lu Qin, twice Champion of China, and Xu Yinchuan, the present Champion of China and highest rated player, which took place at the European Championship last September. There are light notes on these by the author.

It is a pity that the Championship organisers do not make more effort to get the games of the top players at these events available for publication.

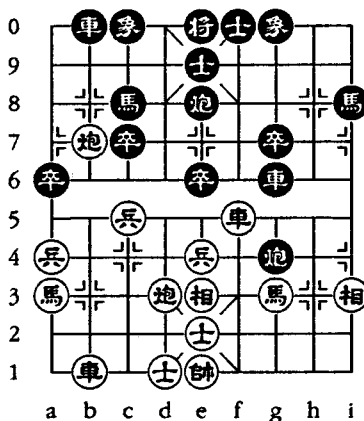
The book provides a useful record of games, and background material of the events. It is obtainable from C. K. Lai, 12 Lagan House, Sumner Road, London SE15 5RB. Price: £6.99.

Here is the last round game that gained C. K. Lai the 1994 Championship.

European Ch. 1994, Amsterdam.
Huang Shnech Kung (Germany) - C. K. Lai - Notes by the winner.

1. Che3 Cbe8 (I realised I was taking a gamble.)
2. Ng3 Nc8
3. Na3 Ni8
4. Rb1 a6 (Testing the water. But it is an idle move, and weakens the pawn.)
5. Rh1 Chg8
6. i5 (This really surprised me. I had the impression from this 'mirror move' that my opponent was unworried.)
- 6.... Ri9
7. Rh5 Rd9
8. Gfe2 Rd6
9. Rf5 i6
10. i:i6 R:i6
11. Ced3 C:g4
12. Bce3 Rb0
13. Cb7 Gde9
14. c5 Rg6

15. Bi3 Ri6
16. Big1 Rg6
17. Bi3 Ri6
18. Big1 Rg6
19. Bi3 e6



20. Cc3 Ch8 (This follows a series of manoeuvring. I was pleased with this move, which threatens the central Bishop. Pressure is building up.)

21. Ri5 Ch3
22. Nc2 C:a4
23. Big5 Rh6
24. c6 Na9
25. Cb6 Bce8
26. Rb3 Ca5
27. Ri1 c:c6
28. Cb9 c5
29. Na3 C:g5
30. Gd3 Cg4
31. Rb6 c4
32. Cc1 a5
33. Nc2 a4
34. Ri4 Chh4
35. Ri5 a4-b4
36. Rg5 Cf4
37. Ra5 Rg6
38. Nh5 Cf9
39. R:a9 Ch1
40. G1e2 Gf8
41. Cb7 Rg1+
42. Gf1 R:f1+
43. Ke2 Rf2+
44. Ke1 G8e9
45. C:h1 (Red missed
45. Ce7 with real threats.)
- 45.... C:a9
46. Na3 Rh2
47. Cg1 Kd0
48. Rd6+ Cd9
49. Rb6 R:h5
50. Cd7+ Cb9
51. Nb5 C:b5
52. R:b0+ Kd9
53. Cg5 Cf5
54. Rb5 Nh6
55. Cg4 Nf7 and Black won. (In the end, I can say I was lucky enough to be on the winning side.)

(PW: Because of both players' time pressure the final moves of this game were not written down. Black finally forced mate.)

THE UK XIANGQI (CHINESE CHESS) CHAMPIONSHIP 1996

This took place on Sunday the 8th December at the True Buddha School 'Zhen Du Tang' in the Caledonian Road in London. This sounds quite grand, but in fact the

playing room was too small for the number of players competing (the overflow played their games in a room downstairs next to the Buddhist 'chapel', and in round 2 had the calming influence of chants and tinkling bells to enhance the concentration). Twenty players took part in the contest, almost twice what it has been in the last couple of years. The number is still disappointingly low however, as was the number of non-Asian competitors, which was two. Most of the competitors were Chinese, but there were also a couple of strong Vietnamese players.

As is usual the games were all hard fought with never the sign of a short draw. Five rounds were played during the day, with players having 40 minutes on their clock in each game. The pairings were decided by the 'Swiss System'. With few exceptions all the best players in the country were competing.

The winner of the tournament was Guo Shulong, who started with four straight wins and then held off the challenge of second-placed Chen Fazuo of Hastings in the last round to draw and clinch the title. Guo Shulong played all her main rivals, and well deserved her victory. This is the second time she has won the UK Championship (she also won in 1994) and has proved herself the best player in the country. She returned to China for six months or so after Christmas, and will no doubt get plenty of hard practice while she is there.

Second placed Chen Fazuo, who fought desperately hard to win the last round game, is probably Guo Shulong's main rival in this country. His time will surely come.

Third place was taken by the ever-youthful Thai player David Young of Clapham in South London, whose results have been consistently good over the last few years.

Last year's winner of the Championship, Wang Shunqi of Southend, unluckily lost to the winner in round 3 after an horrendous time scramble, and then was well beaten by Chen Fazuo in round 4. Paul Byway, with 2 points, had the best non-Asian score — a

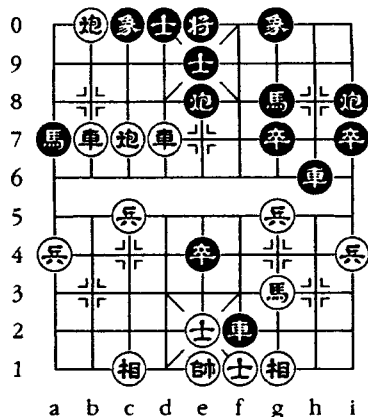
disappointing result for him nevertheless. Despite the tenseness of the games, the tournament was played in a most friendly atmosphere.

Guo Shulong 4½; Chen Fazuo (Hastings), David Young 4; Shin Nam Fay (Kennington), Ng Fa Sang (Surrey) 3½, etc. (Tie breaks were decided by 'sum of opponents' scores'.) Here is a game:

UK Championship, December 1996
Guo Shulong - Chen Fazuo

Notes by Chen Fazuo.

1. Che3 Ng8 2. Ng3 Rh0 3. g5 Ci8
4. Ri2 Ce8 5. Nc3 Nc8 6. Rb1 Ra9
7. c5 Rh6 8. Rd2 Rf9 9. Rd5 Rf2!
10. Nb5 Gfe9 11. Cec3 e6! 12. Gde2 e5
13. C:c7 Ba8 (Better is Nce7)
14. Rd7 e:e4 15. N:a7 N:a7
16. Cb0+ Bc0 17. Rb7



- 17.... d4+ (Too slow. Much better is Rf3. Then if 18. Bce3 e:e3 19. Kd1 (or 19. B:e3) 19.... R:g3 — it is very difficult for Red; she is probably losing. If 18. C:g7 Rc3 19. Rb1 (or 19. Rd1 f4+ 20. Bce3 f3) 19.... Nc8)
18. Kd1 Cd8 19. C:a7 Rff6
20. Caa0 Bge8 21. Ke1 Ra6 22. Ca7 i6 23. Cba0 Rad6 24. R:d6 R:d6
25. Nf5 Rf6 26. N:d4 Ci7 27. R:g7 C:i4 28. g6 Rb6 29. c6 Ce4+
30. Bge3 Rb0 31. C+a9 Rb9 32. Ca0 Cd5 33. a5 Cg5 34. f6 Rb7 35. R:g5 R:a7 36. Cb0 N:f6 37. Rf5 Ng8 38. Ne6 B:c6 Draw agreed.

SOLUTION

Here is the solution to the XQ mate in 3 problem in VC22 p.39.

1. Nd2+ Cd9 2. Nf1+ Rd2 (or C moves) 3. R:g0 mate.

NEWS & NOTES

SHOGI

5/6 April 1997 - 13th British Open Championship - £5 entry fee, players of all strengths are welcome. Details from **Mike Brewer, 11 St. Donatt's Rd, London SE14 6NU.** The Annual General Meeting of the British Shogi Federation precedes the tournament at 10 am.

Steve Lamb won the Bracknell tournament on 16th November with 3/3; **Anthony Denver-Fedder** won the Hythe tournament on 7th December with 4/5. The number competing at this event was unusually low - only 6 players took part.

In the latest European Elo list, Mike Sandeman is placed 4th and Stephen Lamb is 5th.

Players wishing to join the Postal Shogi League should contact **Phil Holland, 94 Green Drift, Royston, Herts, SG8 5BT.**

A postal Dai-Dai shogi championship is being organised by **Victor Contoski, 4110 West 12th Street, Lawrence, Kansas 66049, USA.**

XIANGQI

11 May 1997 - Willesden tournament. Write for details to **C.K.Lai, 12 Lagan House, Sumner Road, London SE15 5RB.**

The 1997 European Xiangqi Championship will take place at the Royal Festival Hall in London on the weekend of 23/24 August. It will be part of the wider *Mind Sports Olympiad*, the main organisers of which are Ray Keene and David Levy. I understand that Xiangqi will be played on other days of the event also. More details in VC24.

The **Bank of China** plan to sponsor a tournament in the Autumn.

Xie Jun, the recently deposed World Ladies' Chess Champion, was playing in the Hastings Premier tournament this year. She dined several times at the Shanghai Restaurant and took the opportunity to play the proprietor, Chen Fazuo, a couple of games of Xiangqi. Chen won both games. Sadly the scores of these games were not recorded. Chen was runner-up in last December's UK Chinese Chess championship - he is now frantically learning orthodox chess!

ITALIAN PROGRESSIVE CHESS

The *Variant Chess* postal tournament, begun last Autumn, has now finished with the final scores thus: Peter Wood 5 (out of 6), Ari Luiro 4, Steve

Boniface 2, Peter Coast 1. The games and a report should appear in the next issue.

The **4th AISE Team Championship** (3 players per team) has been won by Italy-1 (Cassano, Forzoni, Rallo) with 6/7 beating Ukraine-2 (Lesnicenko, Kulik, Petruk) *ex aequo* on tie break. The rest of the scores were Germany/Switzerland 5½, Italy-2 4; Russia 3½; Ukraine-1 3; Sweden 2½; Czech Republic 0. It is to be hoped that the UK will be able to raise a team for the 5th championship!

Some of the analysis in the Ian Richardson v. Peter Coast IP game on page 9 of VC21 is incorrect. After the diagram (8/ 2ppkp1p/ 7n/ 8/ 4K2P/ 2P2P2/ 2P1P3/ 7R) it is stated that White has a won game now he has promoted to a Rook. Several people have pointed out that this is wrong. Black can play 10. Nf5 N:h4 N:f3 Ng1 N:e2 Nd4 N:c2 Nd4 Ne2 N:c3+, when the position is drawn. White can take the black Knight and the c and h pawns, but so long as the black King keeps between the d and f pawns, W can do nothing. In fact King and bare Rook do not win against King, unless the defending K is on the edge of the board.

3RD HETERODOX OLYMPIAD

No news. (Is bad news?)

GRAND CHESS

The Yerevan tournament reported on in VC22 (page 31) was not an all-play-all event as your reporter originally thought. Players could play as many (or as few) games as they liked. The winner of the event was **Vardan Melkonyan** (Armenia) with 12/12; second was Tan Wei Sin (Malaysia) with 5½ out of 7. The players' ELO grading ranged from 2250 to 2350. Courtesy of Hans Bodlaender I have received all the 34 games from this event, and a full report will appear in a future issue.

IS ANYONE OUT THERE?

The above is the name of an 'occasional' newsletter on chess variants of which so far 5 have been produced. John McCallion, who writes a most readable column in NOST magazine, is the editor. *Eteroscacco* rates the material as extremely interesting. We will give our assessment of it in due course - after we have seen a copy! For those readers who cannot wait for this, write to: **42-65 Kissena Boulevard (#324), Flushing, New York 11355, USA.**

The Colchester Game

based on notes from various correspondents

The Editor mentioned in VC21 p.9 having heard a radio news report early in September 1996 of a dig at a Romano-British burial at Colchester that had unearthed a games board, with the very unusual discovery of the pieces actually in position, as if a game had just begun.

Correspondents, Derick Green, Malcolm Horne, Lex Kraaijeveld, Tom Marlow and Ken Whyld wrote to me about the game, sending newspaper cuttings, references and comments, the results of which are surveyed here.

Newspaper articles I have seen are by a reporter in *The Colchester Express* 9/96, David Keys *The Independent* 6/9/96, John Duncan and Alan Watkins *The Guardian* 6/9/96, William Hartston *The Independent* 9/9/96, and Raymond Keene *The Spectator* 14/9/96.

The latest information I have, sent by Tom Marlow, is from *Essex Archaeology* issue 13 (1996) published by Essex County Council (from County Planner, K. W. Boddie, County Hall, Chelmsford).

amphora, and a large wooden box. Inside the latter was placed the board game, the dead person's cremated bones, and various instruments, including some which are likely to have been part of a medical kit."

"Stanway is a high status funerary site dating from the late 1st century BC and ending in around AD60. The site is where members of the British nobility were buried."

Keys gives the date of the burial as around AD50, and says that the site overlooks the city, at that time known as Camulodunum.

It seems the burial rite for the nobility involved the destruction of the grave goods, but not for lower status burials: "several of these graves contain evidence suggesting that they were the burial places of high-ranking aides to the people in the chambers ... a clerk, an armour bearer and a doctor"

"The game board was made of two pieces of wood, hinged so that it folded inwards lengthways. Its corners were strengthened with right-angled strips of copper alloy.

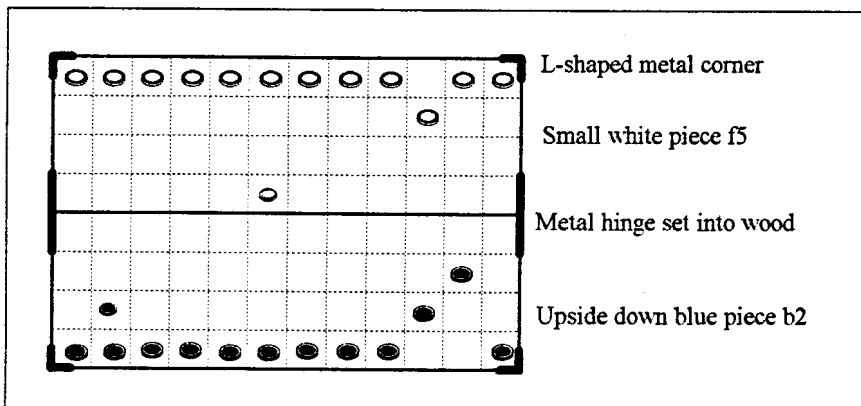
which is a ratio of 1.43, while *The Spectator* says 22×14 in, which is 1.57; they cannot both be right.)

Keys in *The Independent* says quite categorically that the board was chequered, but this seems very questionable if only traces of the wood remain.

"The counters are of opaque glass in the shape of thick chocolate drops. They lay on the board as if at an early stage in a game. There are twenty six in all, one half white and the rest dark blue. Each player seems to have had twelve standard counters, plus a thirteenth which was of different rank. White's thirteenth counter was much smaller than the rest, whereas Blue's differed solely by being placed upside down on the board." The following play is suggested to account for the position:

"Each player sets out his twelve standard counters in a line down one side of the board. Each then places his thirteenth counter on a vacant cell of his choice. Blue decides to play defensively and places his extra counter close to the left-hand corner of the board (as he sees it). White is bolder and puts his extra counter in the middle but in his half of the board. Play starts in earnest with Blue advancing his third counter in from the right one square. White responds by doing the same with his facing counter. Blue then advances his counter second from the right by two squares." ... "The Stanway grave almost certainly belonged to a Briton so that the game is not necessarily Roman, although the counters were certainly of a standard Roman type."

Nearly all the reports mention the Roman *ludus latruncularum*, though since the rules of this game are unknown (and according to R. C. Bell's *Board & Table Games* was played on boards 7×8 , 8×8 or 9×10) this hardly helps. Games of the *tafl* family are also suggested, but these normally start with one side in the centre, and the other round the outer edges, and use a more square board. It doesn't seem to be a form of back-gammon. Perhaps it was a game of the doctor's own invention — his ashes were on the board.



I quote from this source: "The game board was one of a range of extraordinary objects in one of the graves excavated at Stanway this summer by the Colchester Archaeological Trust. Other items in the grave included a copper-alloy 'strainer' (which was rather like an ancient form of teapot), a copper-alloy pan, a pottery dinner service, a samian bowl, a flagon, an

The wood had rotted away completely apart from where it was in contact with the metal corners, counters and hinges. The overall proportions of the board (3:2) and the positions of the counters suggest that it was marked out as a grid to make 12 by 8 squares, and the absence of dice shows that the game was one based purely on skill." (The account in *The Guardian* gives the dimensions 50×35 cm