Variant Chess

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The First Tourney in Logical Progressive Chess

by Paul Byway

In a letter to the editor of *Variant Chess* (then Peter Wood) in Autumn 1995 (*VC*18, p.179) I wrote, as part of the on-going correspondence at that time about the rules of progressive chess: "The en passant rule is only a consequence of the double pawn-move rule. Castling and the double pawn-move rule were introduced as special rules to speed up the [orthodox] game. In the context of progressive chess it is absurd to have these rules as well. The game hardly needs speeding up: therefore they should both be dropped." This suggestion was immediately taken up by Peter and a tournament in 'Logical Progressive Chess' was announced. Besides the two instigators this attracted Peter Coast and from Italy the well known names in Italian Progressive Chess of Vito Rallo and Fabio Forzoni: it was gratifying to have such a strong field. The results of the tournament are summarised in the following table, with **Forzoni** the clear winner:

	F	R	W	C	B	total
Forzoni	××	11	10	11	10	6
Rallo	00	××	10	10	11	4
Wood	10	10	××	10	01	4
Coast	00	10	10	××	01	3
Byway	10	00	01	01	××	3

First figure gives result as White second as Black

The average length of the games was 8 or 9 moves. The overall score from 20 games was 13 wins by White, 7 by Black, with no draws. Ten games were won by material superiority in the endgame, two by positional advantage There were some pretty mates: the three Italian mates all being by Rallo. A knight was developed to the edge on seven occasions — five of them by Forzoni! Only three openings were tried: **1.e3** (7/10) **1.Nf3** (4/5) **1.d3** (2/5). The scores of the games, classified by openings, are given on the following pages.

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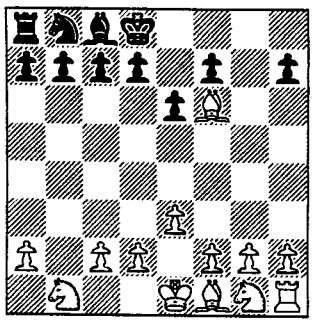
Contents

1. e3
****
2. e6 Nf6
3. Q-f3×f6×d8†
This occurred in three games.

Coast – Byway
4. K×d8 b6 B-a6×f1
was comfortable for Black.
5. K×f1 h3 N-f3-g5×f7†
6. K-e8×f7 Rg8 B-a3×b2×a1
7. B-b2×a1 Na3 g3 f3 d3 d4
8. P-c6-c5×d4-d3-d2 R-c8×c2 d1Q‡
(0-1)

but Rallo lost twice after
4. K×d8 B-a3×b2×a1
5. (!) Bb2×a1×g7×h8-f6†



Coast – Rallo
6. Ke8 d6 N-d7×f6 Bd7 Kd8
7. B-a6×b7×a8-c6×d7 Ke2 Nh3
8. N×d7-e5-g4×f2×h3-f2×h1 c6
9. P-d3-d4-d5×e6×f7 K-f3-e4 h3
f8Q† | Resigns (1-0)

Forzoni – Rallo
6. Ke8 d6 N-d7×f6 Ke7 Rb8!
(! from Forzoni) | 7. N-c3-e4×f6-d7
×b8 d3 Kd2 | 8. P-f6-f5-f4-f3×g2
×h1Q Q×h2×g1 | 9. P-c3-c4-c5-c6
×b7×c8Q Q-g8×g1 Bh3 | Resigns
(1-0)

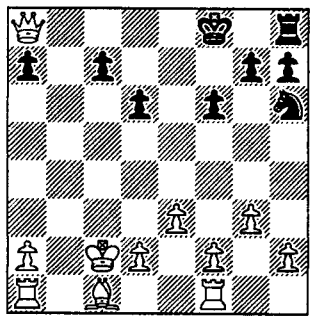
****
2. e6 d6
seems to give Black sufficient play.

Wood – Byway
3. Q-h5-g5×d8†
4. K×d8 B-d7-b5×f1
White's plan of exchanging queens, which does not pick up a minor piece in this line, proved to be inadequate.
5. N-f3-e5-d7×b8 R×f1
6. R×b8 P-d5-d4×e3-e2×f1Q†
7. K×f1 d3 B-e3×a7×b8 Nd2 B×c7†
8. K×c7 B-b4×d2 Ne7 R-a8×a2 Kd8
R×a1† | Resigns (0-1)

Forzoni – Byway
3. Nh3 Nc3 Bb5†
gave a better result (development!)
4. B-d7×b5-e2×d1
5. N-f4×e6×d8 K×d1-e2
6. K×d8 P-d5-d4×c3×d2×c1N†
7. aR×c1 P-e4-e5-e6×f7×g8Q Q×h8
8. Nc6 Kd7 Ba3 R×h8 Nb4 B×b2
N×a2×c1† | 9. R×c1-b1×b2×b7×a7
-a8×h8×h7×g7† | 10. K-c6-c5-c4-c3
×c2-c3-d4-e5-f6×g7 | 11. K-d3-d4-c5
-c6×c7-c6-d5 Pf4 Pg4 Ph4 Pf5 |
Resigns (1-0)

****
Forzoni – Coast
2. e6 Nh6
looks promising.

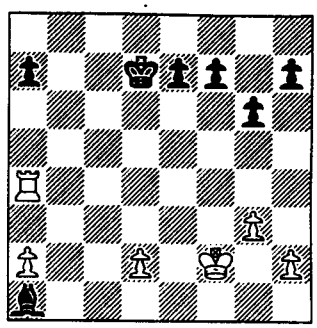
3. Nh3 Nc3 g3
4. Q-f6×c3×c2×d1†
5. K×d1 b3 N-g5×e6×f8
6. K×f8 d6 B-h3×f1 Na6 f6
7. P-b4-b5×a6×b7 R×f1 Kc2 ba8Q†



8. Kf7 R×a8-e8×e3×g3-g1×f1×c1†
9. Kd3 R×c1-c6×d6-d4-h4×h6×h7
×g7† | Resigns (1-0). *Perhaps Black could have won with 8. Kf7 R×a8 N-g4×h2×f1×d2-b3×a1† | 9. Kc3 P-g4-g5×f6×g7-g8R R×a8-h8×h7† (a tempo short of Kd4! winning) | 10. Ke6-d5 N-b3×c1-d3×f2-g4-f6×h7 c6.*

****
Forzoni – Wood
2. Nc6 Nh6
was good for Black

3. b3 Nh3 Nc3
4. d6 B×h3-g4×d1
5. K×d1 N-b5-d4×c6×d8
6. K×d8-d7 N-f5-g3×h1×f2†
7. K-e2×f2 B-a6×b7×a8 Ba3 g3
8. g6 B-g7×a1 R×a8-b8×b3×e3×a3
9. P-c3-c4-c5×d6×c7-c8R Rc3×a3-a4



10.K-c6-b5×a4-b4-c4-d4-e4-f5-g5
Bd4† | 11. K-f3-e4×d4-e3-f2 P-d3-
d4-d5-d6×e7-e8Q | Resigns (1-0)
Black could have won with: 10. K-c6 -b5×a4 P-h6-h5-h4-h3 B-c3×d2-g5 11. g4 K-g3×h3-g2-f1 P-h3-h4-h5 ×g6-g7-g8Q | 12. K-a3×a2-b1 P-a6 -a5-a4-a3-a2-a1Q Qa2 Bh4 Qf2‡

****
Coast – Forzoni
2. Nh6 d6
gave Black a good lead in development to compensate for material loss after
3. Q-g4×c8×d8†
4. K×d8-d7 Nc6 e6
5. B-a6×b7×a8 f3 B×c6†
6. K×c6 P-e5-e4×f3×g2×h1Q
7. Kf2 Nf3 d3 Bd2 Nc3 R×h1 Ke1
8. N-f5×e3 P-g6-g5-g4×f3 B-e7-h4‡
(0-1)

****
Wood – Rallo
2. Nf6 d6
compare with the previous line
3. Q-g4×c8×d8†
4. K×d8 N-g4×f2×h1
5. g3 B-g2×h1×b7×a8
6. N-c6-a5-b3×c1 Kd7 e6
7. Ne2 Na3 R×c1 N-c4×d6×f7×h8
| Resigns (1-0)

****
Coast – Wood
2. Nf6 g6
followed an eccentric course:
3. Q-f3×f6×h8
4. e6 Q-f6×h8-g8
5. B-d3×g6×h7×g8×f7†
6. K×f7 B-g7×b2×a1-b2×c1
7. N-c3-b5×c7×a8-b6×c8-d6†

8. K-e7×d6 N-c6-e5-g4×f2×h1 Ba3 9. P-h3-h4-h5-h6-h7-h8Q Q-a8×a7 ×a3† | 10. K-c6-b6 N-f2-e4×d2-b1 ×a3-c4×e3×g2† | 11. K-d2-d3-c3-b3 N-f3-e1×g2-f4×e6-f4-d3 | Resigns (1-0)

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1. Nf3

****

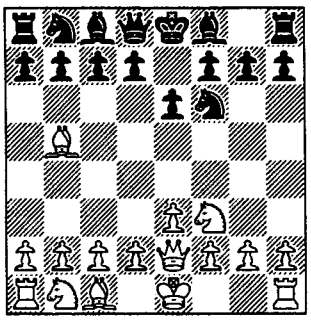
2. e6 Nf6

was the reply in 4 games out of 5.

Rallo – Byway

3. e3 Bb5 Qe2

worked out well for White.



Perhaps

4. N-c6-d4×e2×c1 could be tried.

Played was:

4. b6 B-a6×b5×e2
5. K×e2 b3 B-b2×f6×d8
6. K×d8-c8 B-a3-b2×a1 Na6
7. N-c3-b5×c7×a8 Ng5×f7×h8
8. B-b2-Ba3 N-b4×c2×e3-g4×f2×h1
9. K-d3-c4-b5-a6×a7 N-f7-g5×e6 N×b6‡ (1-0)

Wood – Forzoni

3. e3 Ke2 Nc3

If this was meant to protect the Q it failed, but led to a fine positional battle.

4. N-e4×f2×d1×c3†
5. bc3 B-a3×f8-e7×d8

After series 5 Black has no pieces developed and no material compensation.

6. K×d8-e7 N-c6-b4×c2×a1
7. N-e5×f7×h8 Kf3 B-a6×b7×a8 (Kf3 here was a neat touch)
8. P-d6-d5-d4×e3×d2-d1R R×h1×h2
9. K-e3-d4 N-f7-g5-f3×h2 B-e4×h7 g3 | 10. B-a6-c4×a2-b1×h7-g6-f7-e8 Pg6 c6 | 11. P-g4-g5 N-g4-f6×e8-c7 -b5×a7-b5-a3-c4 | Resigns (1-0)

Rallo – Wood & Forzoni

3. d3 Be3 Kd2

This seems bizarre, and suggests that Rallo is playing directly for Italian Mate. The advantage of development over material is seen in:

Rallo – Wood:

4. N-d5×e3×d1×f2
5. K-e1×f2 N-e5-c6×d8
6. N-c6-d4-f5-g3 K×d8 N×h1†
7. K-e3-d2 Pd4 e3 Nc3 Be2 R×h1
8. P-h6-h5-h4-h3×g2×h1Q Q×h2 ×e2† | 9. N×e2 K-d3-c4-b5 P-d5×e6 ×f7 N-d4-c6‡ Italian mate (1-0)

Rallo – Forzoni:

4. N-g4×e3×d1 Na6
5. N-c3×d1 N-e5-c6×d8
6. B-a3×b2×a1 Ke7 R×d8 Pd6
7. d4 e3 B×a6×b7×c8-b7×a8
8. P-e5×d4-d3×c2 R×a8 cd1N N×f2 ×h1 | Resigns (0-1)

In the second game Rallo avoided opening a file for R at series 5 when he could have captured e or f pawn.

****

Rallo – Coast

2. e6 b6

3. d3 Be3 Kd2

Third time lucky for this series.

4. B-b7×f3×e2×d1
5. Bg5 N-c3-b5 Kc3 N×c7‡

This was Italian mate, but owing to a misunderstanding about the rules he had to do it all again: 6. Q×c7† 7.Kb3 P-d4-d5-d6×c7-c8Q‡. (1-0)

---

1. d3

****

2. d6 f6 occurred three times.

A weak line, which lost twice, was:

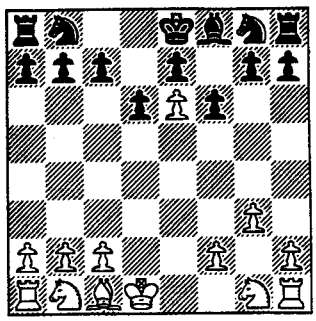
Byway – Coast & Rallo

3. g3 B-h3×c8
4. Q×c8-f5×d3×d1†
5. K×d1 P-e3-e4-e5-e6 (*diagram*)

The cramping effect of the pawn is not worth the time expended.

Byway – Coast

6. N-d7-c5×e6 Pg6 B-h6×c1
7. Nc3 R×c1 Kd2 N-f3-g5×e6×c7†
8. Kd8 R-c8×c7×c3×g3-g1×c1×h1
9. P-h3-h4-h5×g6-g7×h8Q Q×h7×h1 Kd1 | 10. P-a6-a5-a4-a3×b2-b1B B×a2-d5×h1-c6 | Resigns (0-1)



Byway – Rallo

6. g6 B-h6×c1×b2 Nc6 Kf8
7. Nc3 Nh3 R-b1×b2×b7×a7×a8†
8. Nd8 P-f5-f4×g3×f2 N-f6-e4 f1Q‡ Italian mate. (0-1)

Wood – Coast

3. B-h6×g7×h8 got a better result, but Black didn't seem to be doing badly, even with ?Qc8 in series 4.

4. B-g4×e2×d1 Qc8
5. g3 B-h3×c8×b7×a8
6. B-g7×h8 B-f3×a8×h1 Kf7
7. P-c3-c4-c5×d6×c7×b8Q Q×g8†
8. K×g8 f5 B×b2×a1 B-e4×d3×b1 Kf7 | 9.P-g4×f5-f6×e7-e8R Kd2 Re1×b1×a1 | Resigns (1-0)

****

2. d6 Nf6

This natural line occurred twice.

Byway – Wood

3.N-c3-e4×f6† After this White had nothing and fell into a mating net.

4. ef6 B-g4×e2×d1
5. B-g5×f6×d8 R×d1 Kd2
6. P-d5-d4 K×d8 Be7 Re8 Bg5‡ (0-1)

Byway – Forzoni

3. B-g5×f6 Pf3 took a leaf out of Black's book and was rewarded with a quick mate of his own.

4. ef6 B-h3×g2×h1
5. Nc3 Qd2 Ne4 Qe3 N×f6‡ (1-0)

****

A question mark hangs over 1.d3. White needs a convincing reply to 2. d6 f6. More experience is needed to test the significance of White's 65% score.

****

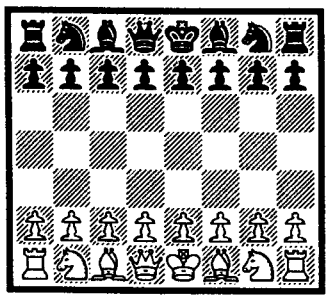
Experts may like to check how many of these openings were 'invented' and how many were 'borrowed' from the Italian Progressive canon.

RESHAPING THE CHESSBOARD

Introduction
by George Jelliss

Numerous proposals have been put forward over the years for altering the shape of the chessboard. Here we examine some of the possibilities that modify the board slightly, perhaps requiring modification of the opening position, but do not enlarge the board to an extent that would need the addition of new forces to cover the space, nor reduce it so much that some pieces are made redundant.

The simplest such variants are those that omit or add ranks, changing the square to a rectangle. The minimal case is the 8×4 board where there are no vacant squares at all, but White has immediate mates by P×f3. Play on the less compressed 8×5, 8×6 or 8×7 boards however seems perfectly possible.



Also on lengthened boards 8×9, 8×10 and so on, though on larger boards it would seem advisable to increase the forward move-power of the pawns, and perhaps the knights.

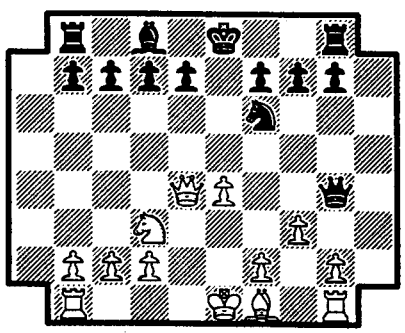
On these longer boards (and other enlarged boards) I have peviously proposed the use of **Opting Pawns** (VC6, p.70) which are able to make the optional double forward move wherever they are on the board. The double move remains subject to en-passant capture if it passes over a square guarded by an opposing pawn. An opting pawn on the third-from-last rank can thus reach the promotion rank in one move, unhampered by e.p. capture since no pawns inhabit the back rank.

Probably the best known variant with a reshaped board is **Morley's Game**, described in the delightfully written little book of reminiscences by F. V. Morley, *My One Contribution to Chess* (1947), in which he adds a 'corridor' of six squares to each side of the board.

Much of the book is about his father F. W. Morley, a mathematician who in 1899 (though this is not mentioned in the book) discovered 'Morley's Theorem', an elegant and surprising result which shows that the trisectors of the angles of any triangle meet in three points that are the vertices of an equilateral triangle (For an account see H. S. M. Coxeter's *Introduction to Geometry*, 1969).

F. W. Morley was also an occasional chess player and before emigrating to the USA in 1887 to become Professor of Mathematics at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, he stopped off at Simpson's Divan on 17 September 1886 to play three games with the famous H. E. Bird, losing two and winning one, which went as follows (old style notation seems appropriate on this occasion): 1. P–K4 P–K4 2. Kt–KB3 Kt–QB3 3. P–Q4 P×P 4. Kt×P B–B4 5. B–K3 Q–R5? 6. Kt–QB3 B×Kt 7. B×B Kt×B 8. Q×Kt Kt–B3 9. KKtP–Kt3 Q–Kt5 10. B–K2 Q–K3 11. P–K5 Kt–Kt1 12. Castles (Q's side) P–QR3? 13. B–Kt4 Q–QB3 14. P–K6 Kt–B3 15. P×QP ch. B×P 16. B×B ch. Kt×B 17. KR–K1 ch. K–Q1 18. Q×KtP R–K1 19. R×R ch. K×R 20. R–K1 ch. K–Q1 21. Q–Kt8 ch. and White wins.

Later in the book F. V. Morley transfers this game to the new board:



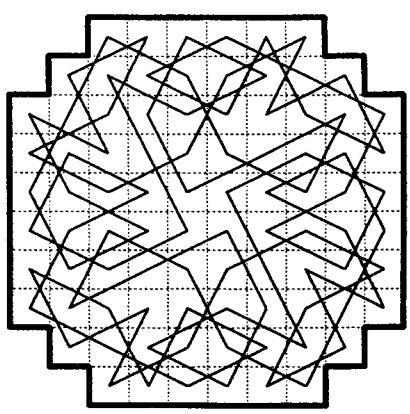
After White's 9th move.

He remarks that "Between players who wished to stick to the old openings the first 8 moves might well have been the same." ... "On the ancient board, Bird at his 9th move was in serious trouble." But on the corridor board he could play 9...Q–KRC4 (KRC being 'King's Rook's Corridor'). "Whether that is or is not a good move I must leave to more competent analysts."

In chapter 6 he describes chess as a '***dromenon***' which is "...a pattern of dynamic expression in which the performers express something larger than themselves, beyond their powers of speech to express and a therapeutic rhythm in which they find release and fulfilment..." (from Jane Harrison *Ancient Art and Ritual*). Could that be why we play Variant Chess?

In the last two chapters of *My One Contribution to Chess* F.V.M. makes a second contribution to the subject by adding further corridors to the other sides of the board, behind the kings, to make a 'double corridor board' which restores perfect square symmetry. He gives knight's tours on the two new boards, constructed by Euler's method.

In this he was anticipated by Ernest Bergholt who had used this 88-cell board in 1918 to illustrate his method of constructing tours in 'perfect quaternary symmetry'. (This is in fact a form of binary symmetry giving an impression of quaternary symmetry on boards where true quaternary symmetry is impossible. It is a mixture of rotary and axial quaternary symmetry.) This example is among the memoirs on the subject that he sent to H. J. R. Murray:



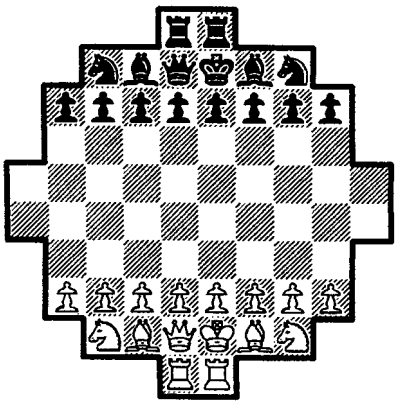
Troitzky Chess

by Paul Byway

Inspired by a remark of the famous end-game study analyst Troitzky that checkmate by two knights is possible if you add two extra squares to the board behind each back rank I expand this idea into a proposal for 'Troitzky Chess'.

The following is a quote from the preface of Troitzky's *Collection of Chess Studies*: "Tchigorin and Schiffers became my good friends and both were much interested in my experiments to devise a game of chess for four players, and a game complicated by the addition of four extra squares to the board." Further detail is not given there. Does anyone know if he wrote more fully on these ideas elsewhere?

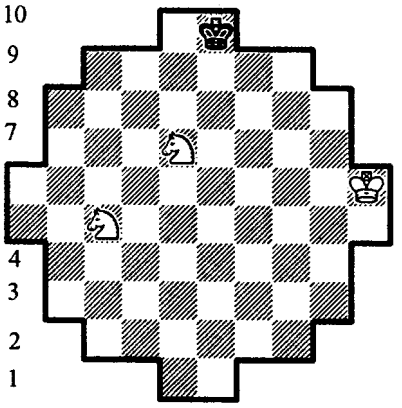
As well as adding the four squares proposed by Troitzky, I also remove the four corner cells, putting the rooks initially in the royal annexes instead. Then, for symmetry, I also add extra squares at the ends of the central ranks, to give a near-circular board.



Pawns promote on the farthest square of whatever file they are on. Castling is by king swapping places with an adjacent rook. Since the rooks are initially in the annex, under this castling-by-interchange rule you could have doubled centralised rooks after 1. 000!? It seems that a corner rook stops the wing unravelling, so in Troitzky chess devastating wing attacks may be normal. After From's Gambit (1.P-KB4? P-K4!) Black threatens to win the rook's pawn with check, and White is in a bad way.

The centre game: 1. P-K4 P-K4 2. P-Q4 P×P 3. Q×P 000 4. 000 NQB3 is probably slightly better for Black. 3. Q×P threatens the QRP, but it might be poisoned, for if he takes it Black would reply NQB3 gaining time and the wing is secure.

On this board, as Troitzky showed, N + N can checkmate, with the aid of the K. Here is an illustrative endgame.



1. Nd7 Kg9 2. Ki7 Kh9 3.Kh7 Kg9 4. Ki8 Kf10 5. Kh8 Ke10 6. Kg8 Kf10 7. Kf8 Ke10 8. Nc9† Kf10 9. Nd9‡

Values of the pieces on this board: The rook is valued at 4½ pawns and it needs to be centralised, since its range is then greater. The mobility of the knight (measured by the average number of moves it can make from each square on the open board) is increased from 5.25 to 5.65 and of the bishop from 8.75 to 9.35 while that of the rook reduces from 14 to 13.76.

George Jelliss notes that alternative opening positions are possible in which all eight pawns are guarded initially, e.g. with K and Q in the annex and the other pieces moved inward one file, but castling, if permitted, would need to be redefined once again.

Open Plane Chess

by George Jelliss

In this final idea I propose doing away with the board edges altogether! Without some restriction on moves, the kings could retreat indefinitely and no mate would be possible.

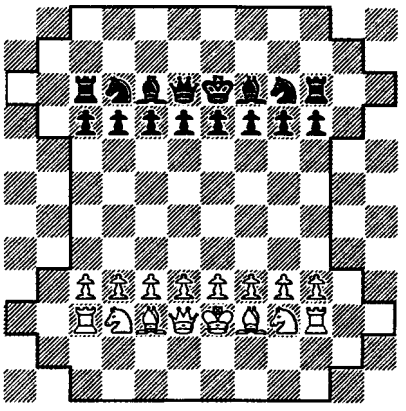
Rule (1): No group of n men may have more than $\surd n$ cells between it and the nearest man. Where the root is taken to the nearest whole number.

This rule ensures the forces do not lose contact by drifting off into far separated groups. In the opening position the white and black groups of 16 are separated by $\surd 16 = 4$ cells, which is thus at the required limit.

When $n = 1$ the rule implies that: No man may move to where it is more than two king moves from the nearest man to the arrival cell. This stops the mobile pieces riding off into the distance.

A further implication of the rule is that: A move that results in a group violating rule 1 is prohibited. Thus if piece A is the only piece two king moves from piece B, then piece B can only 'orbit about' piece A.

Initially the 'board', in the sense of all cells where a single piece may exist, is 12×12, but as the game progresses the outline may change. The cells to which actual single moves can be made will cover a smaller area than this, as illustrated here for the opening position.



Rule (2): A pawn promotes when it reaches a cell where it is not blocked, yet cannot move. This is because to move would take it more than two steps from any other man.

These concepts should also be extendable to **Open Space Chess**.

Alternatives to rule 1 allowing capture by 'stranding' men, or groups of men, might be worth considering, but I've not found a workable formulation. With only two kings left whoever moves would win by moving away, which seems unsatisfactory.

Fischerandomisation

by Peter Wood

FISCHERSCHACH

Rochade Europa reported a Shuffle chess tournament in Leipzig which attracted 26 players. The tournament was labelled as Fischer chess, but his reported castling rule* (see *VC*18, p.174) was not adopted.

The pieces were separately randomised for each of the 5 rounds, the only restriction on this being that Bishops were on different coloured squares. Black's randomisation was the same as White's (mirror image), and there was no castling.

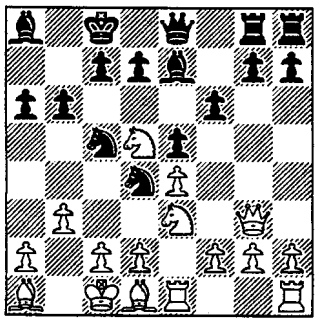
The winner of the tournament was U. Voigt of Leipzig with 5 out of 5; second was R. Schone of Potsdam (ELO rated 2355), third equal were A. Peters of Leipzig and R. Voigt of Bohlen, all with 4 points. Out of the 65 games only 8 were drawn.

Here are two games. Unfortunately, presumably because of time pressure, the full scores are not available. The notes are from *Rochade Europa.*

K. Damering — K. Hauer

Randomised a/h: BNKBQNRR

1. e4 e6 2. b3 f6 3. Nc3 Nc6 4. Qe3 Be7 5. Nb5 b6 6. Qg3 e5 7. Ne3 a6 8. Nc3 Nd4 9. Ncd5 Nfe6 10. Re1 Nc5



11. B:d4? *(11. d3)* **11.... N:e4 12. Qf3 e:d4 13. N:e7+ Q:e7 14. Nc4 d5 15. Nb2 Qa3 16. R:e4 d:e4 17. Qf5+ Kb8 18. Kb1 Qc5** *(Exchanging Queens leads to the destruction of Black's pawn structure, giving White more counterchances. 18.... Qb4 is better.)* **19. Q:c5 b:c5 20. Na4 c4 21. b:c4 Ka7 22. c3 e3 23. f:e3 d:e3 24. d:e3 B:g2 25. Rg1 Rb8+ 26. Bb3 Be4+ 27. Kc1 g5 28. Nc5 Bg6 29. Nd7 Rbe8 30. N:f6 R:e3 31. Nd5 Re5 32. N:c7 Rf8 33. Rg2** The game was eventually drawn.

U. Voigt — R. Schone

Randomised a/h: NRRBBKNQ

1. d4 b5 2. Nf3 Nb6 3. e3 Nf6 4. Be2 c6 5. b3 d5 6. Ne5 Ne4 7. f3 Nd6 8. c3 c5 9. Nc2 c4 10. Nb4 f6 11. Ng4 h5 12. Nf2 Bg6 13. Rb2 Rb7 14. Na6 Nd7 15. b4 Nf5 16. e4 Ne3+ 17. Kg1 d:e4 18. N:e4 Rb6 19. Nac5 N:c5 20. N:c5 Rbc6 21. Bd2 Nd5 22. a4 a6 23. g3 e6 24. f4 h4 25. Bf3 h:g3 26. h:g3 Q:h1+ 27. K:h1 Bf7 28. Ra1 g5 29. a:b5 a:b5 30. f:g5 f:g5 31. Nd7+ Kg7 32. Ne5 R6c7 33. Ra6 Bf6 34. Ng4 Be7 35. Rb1 Rc6, and W won some moves later.

Despite these interesting games that resulted with no castling, I believe that the option to castle (often taken for granted) enhances the game. The Fischer rule* is too complicated in my opinion; I would keep the K and Rs on their original squares, just randomising the other pieces (making sure that Bishops are on different coloured squares).

* Fischer castling rule: 'the King must stand between the Rooks. Castling either side is permitted, but the final castled position must be identical to an orthodox castled position, e.g. Ra1, Kb1; castle 000: Kc1, Rd1'.

COMPUTERANDOM

In *VC*20, p.197, it was predicted that computer companies would add a few variants to their programs as a selling point. In the latest *Countrywide Computers* leaflet advertising Hiarcs 5 we read: **'*(it)* can even play Shuffle Chess'**. Well it is a start!

Variants Tournament at Hampstead Martin Blaine Memorial

by Mike Pennell

An evening tournament at Hampstead on August 6th attracted 12 entrants (7 from the Hampstead Club) and consisted of 2 rounds of losing chess, 2 rounds of pocket knight chess and 2 rounds of randomised chess. Although a plug in Ray Keene's chess column in *The Times* a couple of days before the event resulted in a few telephone enquiries the weather on the night of the tournament was rather unkind so not all promised entrants turned up.

Peter Wood made the journey from Hastings and John Beasley came from Harpenden but the winner was chess bookseller Mike Sheehan from Surbiton with 4½ who edged out Peter Wood (placed second on sum of opponents' scores).

Mike Sheehan won a hand-painted chess set from Peru while Peter Wood had to be content with a copy of Victor Keats' autobiography *Memoirs of a Chessnut.* Other prize winners were Gordon Cadden (Hampstead) 4, Bruce Rotherham (Hampstead) 4 and John Beasley 3½. Non prizewinners had to be satisfied with offers of packs of free chess postcards.

Mike Pennell organised the tournament and donated the prizes. The tournament was named after Martin Blaine, one-time Hampstead President, who died in 1995 and who played the following game of randomised chess on Board 3 of the match Combined Universities v. Hampstead in 1953, reported in the *BCM* at the time.

I. J. Good — M. Blaine

Randomised a/h: NRKBBNRQ

1.e4 e5 2.Ne3 c6 3.Nf5 Ne6 4.g3 g6 5.Nd6† Kc7 6.N×e8† R×e8 7.Nb3 Bg5 8.Bg4 Rbd8 9.c4 Qf8 10.h4 Bh6 11.Be2 Nb6 12.Kc2 a5 13.a4 Qb4 14.d3 Q×a4 15.Bc3 Nc5 16.Ra1 Q×b3† 17.Kb1 Nba4 18.Ra3 N×c3† 19.Ka1 Qa2†! (0-1) *20.R×a2 Nb3‡*

MIND SPORTS OLYMPIAD

by Peter Wood

This lavish event took place at the Royal Festival Hall, London, from Monday the 18th to Sunday the 24th August. Credits and congratulations all round: an enormous amount of effort must have gone into organising this mind sports bonanza and as a reporter and competitor I pronounce it a success. Those who could and should have attended missed a great event.

The sheer amount of games and events was staggering: chess, Chinese chess, shogi, backgammon, go, draughts (both the 8×8 and 10×10 varieties), bridge, mastermind (the game), rummikub, a jigsaw puzzle competition, IQ tests, memory tests, MENSA testing, computer programming ..... the list goes on and on.

Randomly walking round the six floors of the building one stumbled across rooms where gin rummy and mah jong were being played, stratego and othello tournaments on the open balcony overlooking the Thames, chess games being demonstrated by the side of a staircase, an art exhibition and R. C. Bell's display of antique games on the top floor, and in an appropriate darkened recess, Magic the Gathering.

On the last day the large main hall was packed with people at separate tables in rows (like an exam room) solving the *Times* crossword puzzle. In a Games Workshop one could learn to play new games and then try them out, or in another area hire games and play them (a good way to involve the children, although a particularly noisy Hippo game had to be removed on about the third day). There was truly something here to involve everyone.

Not least the event gave people who play only one game (chess for example!) an opportunity to see that other challenging games *do* exist and to learn them; to make them less blinkered perhaps. Your reporter was much attracted to 10×10 draughts — a world game virtually unknown in this country; and the hunt is on in the loft for that old Stratego set.

The most popular new game that people wished to learn was without question Owari (aka mancala), the seed laying game from Africa. There were always great crowds playing on the demonstrators' splendid wooden equipment, or just spectating.

Chess variants being demonstrated at the commercial tables were Bee Brain Super Chess Honeycombe Hexadoug, by its inventor, thickset bearded Doug Reid, and Chaturanga and Enochian Chess by Steve Nicholls. There were two chess variants played: Shogi and Xiangqi.

The strong **5-day Shogi tournament** was won by **Eric Cheymol** from France with **Tony Hosking** second (a fine result — he must have read his own book carefully) and **Steve Lamb** third. This was actually a 10 player all-play-all tournament and unusually everyone beat all those below them in the final table and lost to all those above them (no draws).

Both the 15 minute weekend Shogi events were won by **Mike Sandeman**, beating Y. Sumi (Japan) into second place on the Saturday, and T. Shiose (Japan) and Paul Smith (equal second), on the Sunday.

The **5-day** 10 round **Chinese Chess** event was won by **Woo Wei Cheung** of France with 9 points, half a point ahead of **Chen Fazuo** (England), who was leading until the 8th round when he lost against the German Norbert Schaefer. **David Young** was in third spot. **Billy Lo** won the junior prize — he had entered originally for just the western chess tournament in the morning, and only learnt Chinese Chess on the first Monday of the tournament. Appropriately he also won the junior IQ event.

The **European Chinese Chess Championship,** which took place on the Saturday and Sunday, was a prestige event — it was the first time it had been held in this country for almost 10 years. It attracted 33 competitors, including 9 players from France, 5 from Holland, 4 from Germany, and one from Japan. All the top English players were competing. It was a very hard fought 7 round tournament.

On the first day the reigning champion T. T. Dang (France) lost to Say Ty Hua (France), while Chen Fazuo, after fortuitously drawing against Claus Tempelmann of Germany in round 3, then lost against Wang Shunqi, who was suffering dreadfully from a heat rash and played with a towel round his neck and half his face.

Chen Fazuo pulled himself together on the last day and won all three of his games, the last round one quickly against K. D. Phung of France. Say Ty Hua, by winning against Laurent Kim (France), had the same number of points as Chen. This left the crucial game in the last round as that between Dang (half point ahead of the field) and Wo Wei Cheung. In a long tense struggle Cheung finally overcame Dang in the endgame and thus ensured there was to be a new champion.

Three players were tied for first place on 5½ points. On board count (30: 29½: 28½ points) **Say Ty Hua** became **European Champion**, with **Woo Wei Cheung** second, and **Chen Fazuo** third. These two events were a great success for Chen and confirm him as England's leading player, and indeed as one of Europe's best players too. In this tournament congratulations are also due to Khan Hoa La (England), beating W. O. Cheung (Holland) in the final round, he finished in equal fourth place with Dang, a splendid result for him. The best non-asians were Paul Byway, Claus Tempelmann, and Norbert Schaefer on 4 points. The first named had a good victory against C. K. Lai in the last round.

Chinese grandmasters Li Laiqin and Xu Yinchaun were present for the European Championship. Li Laiqin gave a simultaneous display on the Sunday when he conceded about 3 draws in some 18 games.

All in all it was a most enjoyable and stimulating week. Skandia, the main sponsors, are supporting the Mind Sports Olympiad for the next two years. All those who missed it this year, let's see you next year!

Conflict Chess

by Derick Green

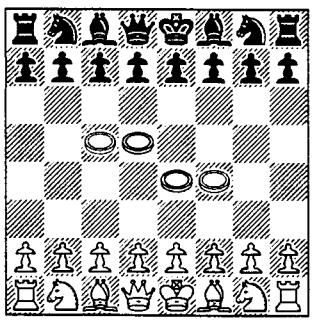
These are the rules to a chess variant that I hope may appeal to both chess players and board wargamers. There are many compromises but I feel that Conflict Chess manages to retain the spirit of both chess and board wargames. A chessboard and pieces are set up as in standard chess. Two six-sided dice will also be needed.

(1) **Movement.** All pieces move as in standard chess, with two exceptions: (a) Pawns have the option to move one square diagonally forward without capture. (b) The King moves the same as the Queen in standard chess and there is no castling.

The Kings and Queens are 'Leaders' while the Rooks, Knights and Bishops are 'Officers'. There is no check or checkmate since the aim is to remove the opponent's Leaders, i.e. the King and Queen and any promoted Officers (see rule 4 below).

For a Pawn to be able to move it must be within four squares of an Officer or Leader. For an Officer to move it must be within four squares of a Leader. These conditions apply from the start of the move. (*David Pritchard notes that the loss of one Leader may severely limit officer movement* — this is intentional.)

(2) **Terrain.** At the start of the game four coins are placed in squares e4, f4, c5 and d5. These squares are now Terrain squares.



Pieces may move onto but not through terrain squares. Knights may not jump over terrain squares. Line pieces may move freely along the diagonal a1-h8.

(3) **Combat.** Each piece has a combat strength which is also used in defence: Pawn 1, Knight and Bishop 2, King and Queen 3. The Rook if attacked uses the combat strength of the strongest attacking piece. When supporting an attack, the Rook uses the combat strength of the strongest friendly piece. A Rook attacking alone counts 2.

For an attack to take place a piece must have moved into the attacking position that turn. To perform an attack, a piece or pieces must be able to make a legal move to the square occupied by the defending piece. Any number of pieces may combine their combat strengths into a single attack. If the defending piece occupies a terrain square its combat strength is doubled.

Attacker and defender roll a six-sided die and add their respective combat strengths. The highest total wins. In the event of a tie the defender wins. The odds are always in favour of the attacker.

If the attacker wins, the defending piece is removed from play and one of the attackers must be moved into the now vacant square. (Or in other words, the capture is permitted. It is additional to the move already made.)

If the defender wins, the defender may move one of the attacking pieces back to its starting position. In the case of Pawns, Rooks or Knights, the choice of replacement square is that of the victor, but must be a legal placement, i.e. white knights on either b1 or g1, rooks on a1 or h1, pawns on the second rank within the triangle of diagonals from the capture square. If there is no legal vacant square the piece is removed from play.

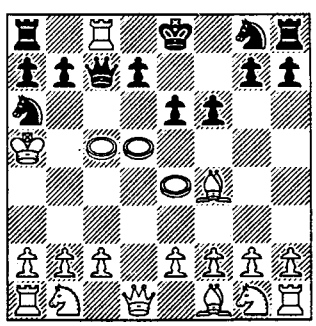
(4) **Promotion.** Upon reaching the opponent's back rank, a Pawn promotes to an Officer and an Officer promotes to a Leader.

Example Game

The following is a short game score. This is not offered as an example of good play but rather as a (*colourful! — Ed.*) example of general gameplay.

White Derick Green — Black Matthew Brown

1. d4 e6 2. Bf4 Bc5 3. Ka5 (K + P versus B: K = 3, P = 1, B = 2, doubled because of terrain square. White die roll 5 for a total of 9. Black die roll 3 for a total of 7. So **Pd4×Bc5**.) **Na6 4. c5-b6** a diagonal Pawn move (B + P versus Pc7. White total 7. Black total 3. So **Pb6×Pc7**.) **f6** (blocking the chance of an attack on the Queen by B in addition to P). **5. c7-b8R** (R versus B. White Rook 2 + die roll 3 = 5. Black Bishop 2 + die roll 2 = 4, so **Rb8×Bc8**) **Qc7** (K + Q + R versus R. Black K3 + Q3 + R3 + die roll of 6 = 15. White R3 + die roll of 1 = 4. So **Ra8×Rc8**).



6. Kb6 (K + B versus Q. White 9. Black 7. So **Kb6×Qc7**) **Kd8** (K + R + N versus K. Black 9. White 9. So **K-e8.** Black K is returned home.) **7. Kd8** (K versus K. White 6. Black 4. So **Kd8×Ke8**). 1-0.

PROBLEM PAGES

conducted by Ronald Turnbull

Highland Cottage, Gatelawbridge, Thornhill
Dumfriesshire DG3 5EA, Scotland

One of the livelier chess columns is the one in the *Sunday Express* conducted by 13-year-old IM Luke McShane. The boy's not so enmeshed in the crudities of the competitive game that he can't appreciate a problem, and he's starting off — where else — with Sam Loyd. I quote from his column: "If Black, annoyingly, copies each White move, mate in 4 from the game array".

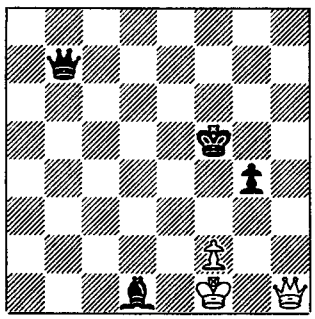
Teasingly, McShane supplies no solution to: "with same stipulation, selfmate in 8". Can anyone, or their library, come up with a solution?

(As it happens the general editor has a collection of Synthetic Games of this type, orthodox and variant, to be published soon — If readers know of other examples, or have composed new ones he would be pleased to hear about them —write to GPJ.)

(Sam Loyd, solutions page 99)

Simonet's problem I have been selfishly holding back against a time of shortage. But it's so nice I can no longer keep it to myself.

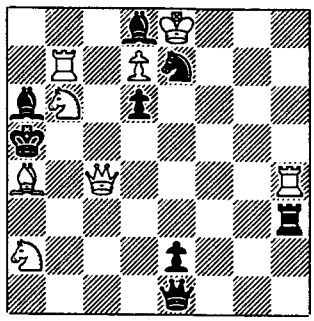
(192) The late André SIMONET



Maximummer, Selfmate in 2

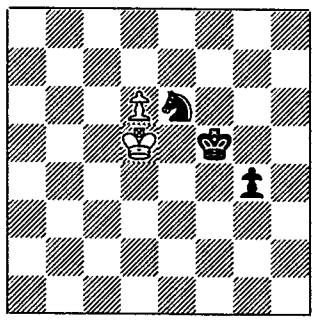
Circe continues to turn up neat, enjoyable problems. (Captured units are reborn on game-array square if vacant. R or S on game-array square same colour as capture-square. P on same file.) In **Anti-Circe**, the captor is reborn on its game-array square, and if that square is occupied the capture is illegal.

(193) John RICE



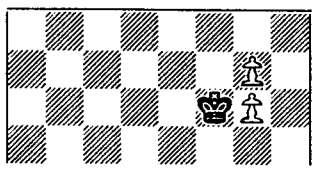
Circe Chess, Mate in 2

(194) Luigi VITALE



Circe Chess, Helpmate in 3, 2 ways

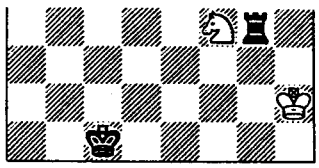
(195) Ronald TURNBULL & Mario VELUCCHI



Anti-Circe, Helpmate in 2½, 2 ways

In **Mars Circe**, a unit is reborn before capturing, and the rebirth square must be vacant. In (196) WS guards e2, f3, h3, and if BR moves to a dark-square it gives check. Stephen claims this as equalling the length record for wenigsteiner Mars Circe SH‡, but the result lacks the heavy turgid quality sometimes found in 'task' problems.

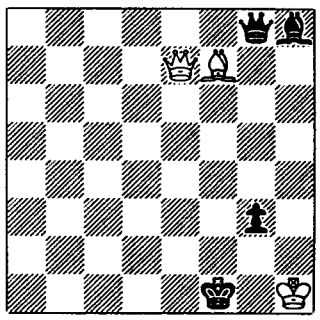
(196) Stephen EMMERSON



Mars Circe
Serieshelpstalemate in 11

Circe Parrain: a captured unit is reborn, after the following move, transported from the capture square by a vector equal to that move. If result is occupied or off the board, no rebirth. So in (197), if 1.B×g8, Black could play 1....Be5 (+BQd5)†, or 1....Bb2 (+BQa2), or 1....Ba1(no rebirth). From this somewhat contrived stipulation Valery Nebotov produces sparkling simplicity.

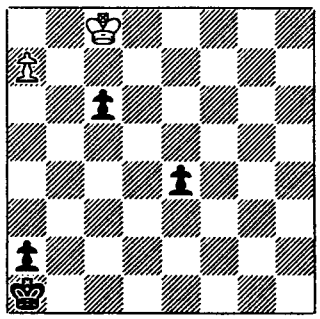
(197) Valery NEBOTOV



Circe Parrain, Mate in 5

Bicolores: check is given by units of either colour. *(This used to be known in English as Sensitive Kings which I find more descriptive — GPJ)* In (198), 1.Kb1?? is illegal self-check by Black.

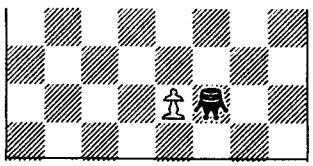
(198) Mario VELUCCHI



Bicolores, Helpstalemate in 3
(b) e4 ✈ e7

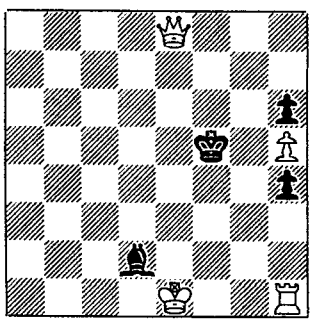
Koko (Kolnlische Kontakt): moves must be to a square adjacent to an occupied one. So in (200), WK is not in check as 1....B×K?? is illegal. Meanwhile with (199) our judge reminds you that you only need a board and two chessmen for our Theme Tourney One.

(199) Stephen EMMERSON



Koko with Grasshopper
Helpstalemate in 8 (2 variations)
Helpstalemate in 9 (2 variations)

(200) Ronald TURNBULL

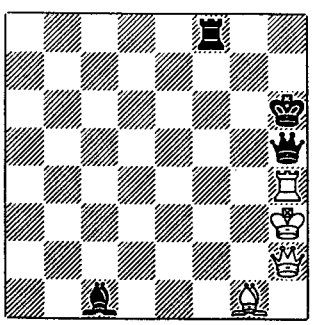


Koko, Mate in 2
(b) remove WPh5

Madrasi: two units of opposite colour (not kings) attacking each other are paralysed and may not move or give check.

Duplex H‡2: There is also a solution in which White moves first and is checkmated on Black's second.

(201) Luigi VITALE



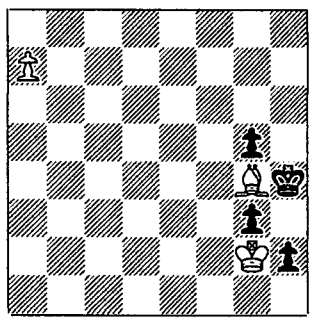
Madrasi Chess
Helpmate in 2, Duplex

Isardam: moves leading to Madrasi-type paralysis are forbidden. So in (202), if Black 1....h1Q†, 2.a8Q! defends as Q×wK now illegal.

After digging up several treasures in this difficult and interesting form, Stephen Emmerson and I public- spiritedly opened the gates to the rest of the world in an article in *The Problemist*, with immediate results in the form of theme tourneys at Kingston (Britain) and Andernach (Germany).

(202) and (203) are not tough, and are 'entry-level'. So enter: we smile, we invite you to entangle yourselves within the sticky web...

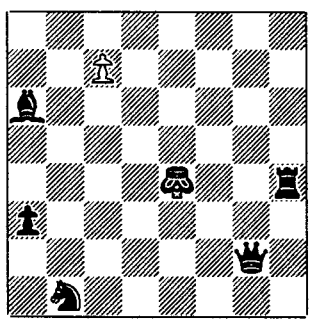
(202) Erich BARTEL



Isardam, Helpstalemate in 1½
(b) a7 → b7

The Royal **Dummy** in (203) has no power of movement.

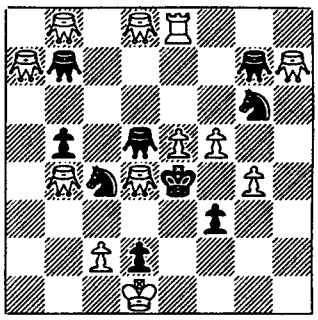
(203) Stephen EMMERSON



Isardam, Helpmate in 2, 4 ways
Royal Dummy e4

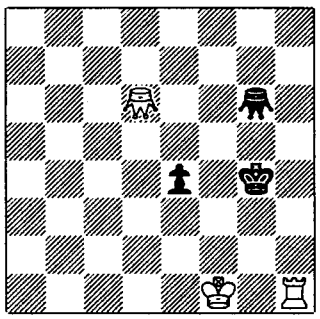
(204) shows the power of a swarm of **Grasshoppers**, which move along queen lines to the first square beyond the hurdle. There are two solutions, each with two continuations on Black's second move (sometimes written 2.1.2.1). (205) manages with fewer Grasshoppers.

(204) Nikolay VASYUCHKO



Grasshoppers
Helpmate in 2, 2 ways
each with 2 variations

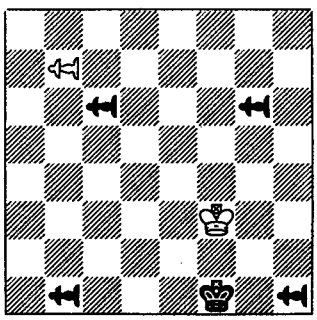
(205) Ian RICHARDSON



Grasshoppers
Helpmate in 3, 2 ways

The **Jabber** is a Grasshopper that bangs its head on the hurdle and falls back on the square before. In (206) Black could play 1.Jc6-e4, giving check from J h1. Those whose problems have suffered under our cruel appraisal will not be surprised that jabbing comes so naturally to us editors. But are the rest of you still too tender-hearted to jab?

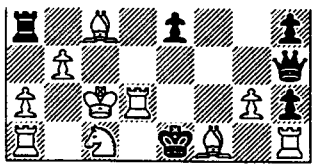
(206) George JELLISS



Jabbers, Serieshelpmate in 10

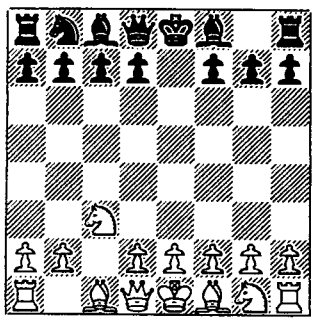
Anti-Andernach: unit that moves without capture changes colour. If anyone else wants to compose any Anti-Andernach two-movers, this journal will be happy to receive them as they give it considerable pleasure...

(207) John RICE



Anti-Andernach
Mate in 2

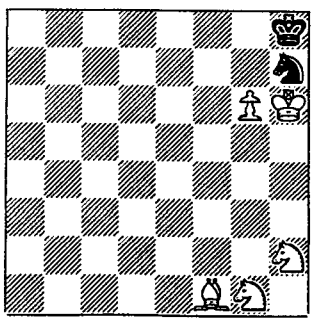
(208) Mario VELUCCHI



Anti-Andernach
Position after White's 4th move.
Game so far? 2 ways

Einstein: unit that captures gains mass P>S>B>R>Q (Qs unchanged). Unit that moves without capture loses mass Q>R>B>S>P (Ps unchanged). Pawns do not promote and if on promotion rank are powerless. Pawns on home rank may capture, and move forward 1, 2 or 3 with en passant on either intermediate square.

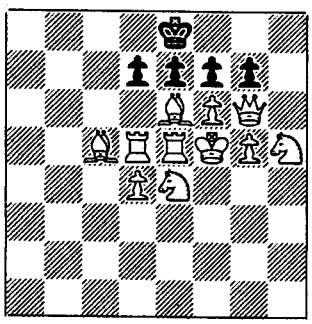
(209) Valery NEBOTOV



Einstein Chess
Serieshelpmate in 10

Which leaves us with only one tough one for this issue — so, to those who like their brains left trembling like beached jellyfishes, apologies: for even (210) isn't altogether impossible. In **Kamikaze**, the capturing unit (but not king) is removed from the board as well as the captive. Irwin christens this 'the serried ranks of Titipu'. According to 'The Mikado', these warriors 'never tremble, or they conceal it if they do'. However, the literary reference offers little help to solvers - or is it just too subtle for me?

(210) Irwin STEIN

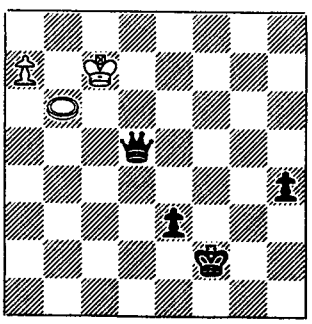


Kamikaze, Seriesselfmate in 15

Composers: I never dreamt you took my words so seriously... It's great to have so many pleasingly soluble problems, but it would also be nice to have one or two stinking difficult ones!

Paul Raican has sent a correction of his Augsburg problem (168). It is still irregular Augsburg as the BQ is not permitted to separate into R + B. However, it would appear to be sound considered as Augsburg, White only.

(168, version) Paul RAICAN



Augsburg, R + B + S b6
Maximummer Selfmate in 4, 2 ways
(b) Kc7 ✈ h6, also 2 ways

****

Solutions to Sam Loyd imitative play games (*Le Sphinx* 1866):
Mate: 1:c4 c5 2:Qa4 Qa5 3:Qc6 Qc3 4:Qxc8‡ or 1.d4 d5 2.Qd3 Qd6 3.Qh3/Qf5 Qh6/Qf4 4.Q×c8‡
Selfmate: 1.e4 e5 2.Ke2 Ke7 3.Ke3 Ke6 4.Qf3 Qf6 5.Se2 Se7 6.b3 b6 7.Ba3 Ba6 8.Nd4† forcing e×d4‡

****

SCORING:
VC24: Maximum = 26
(21 plus 5 cooks
in 176, 177, 180, 186, 189)
Stephen Emmerson 21
Paul Raican 16
Aubrey Ingleton 14½
George Jelliss 13½
Erich Bartel 10
Ian Richardson 10
Luigi Vitale 5
Mark Ridley 3

VC23 late points
A Ettinger 14
Luigi Vitale 3½

****

CORRECTIONS:

(154) Stephen Emmerson's extra code-lines in the Popeye programme have found short solutions in this Jabber problem: but, embarrassingly, I've filed the cook itself somewhere invisible.

(168) Raican, see in the previous column, for solving.

(188) Note that this should be a joint composition, credited to Fayers & Emmerson, half each.

****

I am delighted to present John Rice's award for problems appearing in *Variant Chess* 1995-96 (next page). He is to be thanked not only for his thoughtful judgment, but also for presenting it while the problems themselves are still fresh in our minds. Any claims of cooks, anticipations etc to me, before publication of VC26 please.

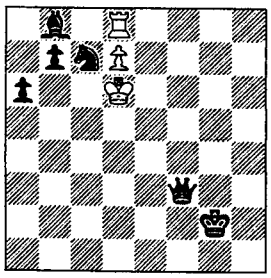
****

Variant Chess 1995–6 Award in Composing Tourney

by John Rice

I have much enjoyed judging this tourney, but it hasn't been an easy task, mainly because the standard of the published problems turned out to be pretty uniform. However, in my view five problems stand out from the others, so these get the prizes.

1st prize: (109) Paul Raican

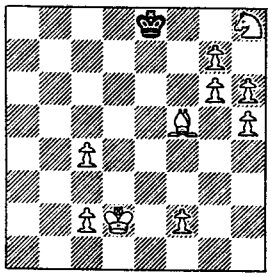


Selfmate in 6: Maximummer

1.Re8 1...Qf8† 2.Re7 Qf1 3.d8S Qf8 4.Sf7 Qc8 5.Se5 Qh3 6.Rd7 Qa3‡ 1...Qa3† 2.Ke5 Qf8 3.Re7 Qf1 4.d8Q Qf8 5.Qd5† Qf3 6.Kd6 Q×d5‡

Selfmate maximummers are this composer's speciality, and this is a very attractive example, with two ingeniously varied lines, each involving promotion of the WP and precise control of the BQ.

2nd prize: (122) George P. Sphicas

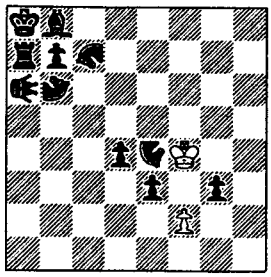


Circe & Neutrals, Seriesselfmate in 11

1.g×h8nS (Sb8) 2.nSf7 3.nB×g6 (g7) 4.nB×h5 (h7) 5.h8nB 6.g×h8nR (Bf8) 7.nR×h6 (h7) 8.h8nQ 9.nQb2 10.nBe7 11.nS×h6 (Rh8)†† K×e7 (Bc1)‡

Again a speciality of the composer, this time a series-mover. The 4Ps top right all get promoted on h8, a considerable task in itself, and when it's combined with subtle Circe and neutral effects a very good problem results.

3rd prize: (105) Erich Bartel

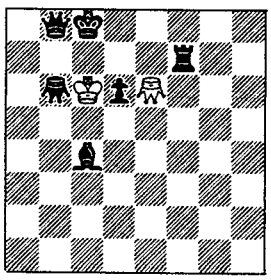


Camel b6, Zebra c7, Kangaroo (X) a6, Nightrider e4, Seriesmate in 7, 4 ways.

1.Kg4 2.f4 ... 6.f8N 7.N×b6‡ 1.f3 2.f×e4 ... 6.e8Z 7.Zc5‡ 1.f×g3 ... 6.g8C 7.Cd7‡ 1.f×e3 2.e×d4 ... 6.d8X 7.Xa5‡

The combination of Albino with 4 fairy promotions is skilfully done. I hope the composer is happy with a BPg3 (as suggested by A. Ettinger).

4th prize: (103) Günter Glass

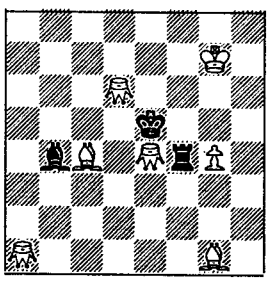


Circe, Grasshoppers, Helpmate in 4

1.Be6 (Ge8) Gb8 (Qd8) 2.Rb7 Gb6 (Gb1) 3.Rb8 Kd6 (d7) 4.Gb7 G×e6‡

Not the least attractive feature of this well-constructed helpmate is the final mating position, with the WG immune from capture.

5th prize: (115) Nikolay R. Vasyuchko



Grasshoppers, Helpmate in 2, 2 ways

1.R×e4 Gf4 2.Bd6 fGd4‡ and 1.B×d6 Gb4 2.Re4 bGd4‡.

Umnov and Zihali effects, reversal of black moves and perfect construction make for a very nice problem.

Honourable mentions:

1st HM: (119) Kapros. This composer knows what is required to produce a satisfying problem: reciprocal interferences by the 2 black Edgehogs and the 2 white Es, coupled with orthogonal/diagonal correspondence, provide a fitting memorial for the inventor of the Edgehog.

2nd HM: (124) Gartser. An amusing illustration of the curious effects obtainable on the grid-board: a most appealing miniature.

3rd HM: (149) Turnbull, Emmerson & Fayers. Humour is the predominant feature here too, with a witty use of Andernach chess.

4th HM: (138) Shvichenko. The echoed mates turn an ordinary idea into a nice problem.

5th HM: (118) Vasyuchko. A well-controlled series designed to get the Kangaroo one square to the NW for self-block purposes.

Commendations: A further ten problems seem to me to be worth a commendation. They are given in order of appearance.

(85) Hammarström: a neatly controlled switchback.

(92) Vasyuchko: nicely coordinated solutions.

(97) Sphicas: each promoted unit waits before moving to its final square.

(101) Bartel: entertaining use of Mirror Circe rules, with neat twinning.

(107) Turnbull: the key introduces two excellent variations to add to the set play.

(111) Shvichenko: promotion to Q on different squares leads to two contrasting solutions.

(117): Bartel: round-trip by the WK helps the Kangaroo to get to b8.

(139) Pankratiev & Müller: familiar Circe reciprocal change, but neatly done.

(150) Ingleton: neutral K makes for difficulty solving, but the sequence is attractive.

(151) Cheylan: add Anticirce to total neutrality and you get a fiendishly difficult problem, but the effects are commendable.

Congratulations to the composers of the honoured problems, and thanks for giving me a lot of enjoyment.

John Rice, June 1997.

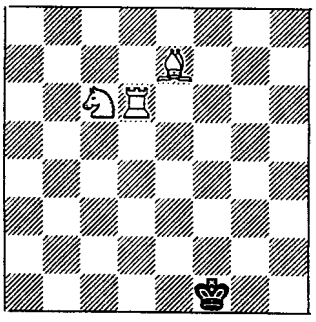
AUGSBURG CHESS

TIP OF THE ICEBERG?

by Ronald Turnbull

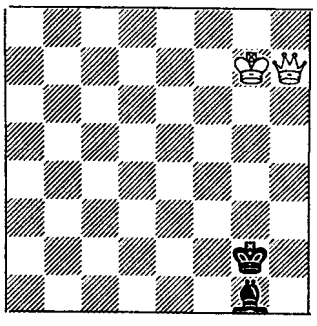
Pieces of the same side may combine (Problem A) and separate (Problem B). This simple definition conceals a multitude of disputable points: and while many will enjoy such dispute for its own sake, it's a shame to spend a lot of time making up some chess problem only to find you've composed it within a non-existent stipulation.

(A) Arno Tüngler
Problemkiste 1996



Augsburg Chess
Seriesmate in 3, 3 ways

(B) Erich Bartel
Diagramme und Figuren 1969



Augsburg Chess
Helpmate in 2, 2 ways + set play

1: A unit (excluding K) may move onto a square occupied by a same-colour piece, forming a combined unit. (Thus the P enters combination by orthogonal move, not by diagonal capture: also combinations such as S + S are quite OK).

2: A combined unit may move as any of its components.

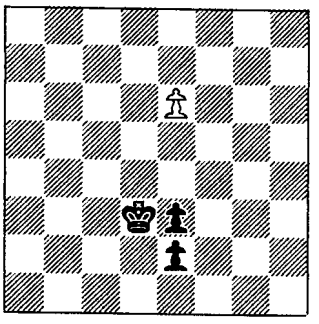
3: Any part of a combined unit may move, leaving the remainder behind on the departure-square.

4: CASTLING: any combination containing an unmoved game-array rook may castle.

5: The game-array queen is considered as a combined piece and may separate into R + B. (The King, however, is not separable into Wazir + Fers). All subsequent combined pieces are separable, so that we may talk without ambiguity of Amazon (R + B + S) etc.

6: PROMOTION: if a combination including pawn moves to the promotion-rank, each pawn-part promotes to S, B, R or Q (Problem C).

(C) R. Turnbull & P. Fayers
after H. Schiegl, Feenschach 1969



Augsburg Chess
Helpmate in 4

*7: PAWN ON HOME RANK: A pawn on home rank may capture diagonally in the normal way, and move forward 1-sq. (So, of course, may any combination containing P.)

*8: EN PASSANT: A combination containing a pawn that moves forward two squares from the pawn rank can be captured en passant by any combination containing a pawn that can move (by a pawn move) to the intermediate square.

Rules 1 to 6 have been used extensively in German magazines. The material I have been helpfully sent by Erich Bartel, from the very city of Augsburg, is inconsistent as to rule 7. In *Die Schwalbe* 1997, a combination including pawn may not abandon its pawn on the home-rank. However, in *Probleemkiste* 1996, the power of Rule 7 is attributed to combinations including pawns, and by implication to solo pawns. Even if we forbid abandonment of pawns, we must attribute some (possibly null) additional power of movement to combinations including pawn on the home rank. So we don't actually solve anything by forbidding pawn-abandonment. I therefore propose the adoption of *Rule 7.

No problem has been offered involving en passant: *Rule 8 is the simplest and most reasonable of various possibilities.

It now becomes clear that various problems, not all of them by Peter Fayers, seen in this magazine and elsewhere, are deviant Augsburg or worse. Rules used by Peter differ from Augsburg in three respects:

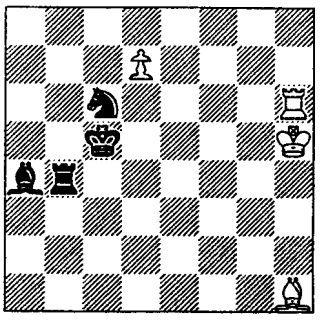
E1: Pieces may combine, but not kings, and NOT PAWNS either (not even when moving to promote).

E2: The game-array queen is not separable, and Qs are distinct from (R + B)s.

E3: A pawn may promote to any combination seen in the diagram, or generated during play.

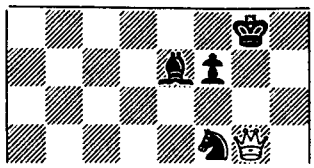
I feel that, while minor variations of existing stipulations are to be discouraged, this particular non-Augsburg is sufficiently different from the real thing to deserve to exist; and Peter has named it '**Iceberg**' on the spurious ground that 'Eye' is the English for 'Aug' (which it is) and that 'Berg' is homophonic with 'Burg' (which it isn't). Problems D and E).

(D) A. Bulavka & A. Mikholap
Problemist 1995



Iceberg Chess
Helpmate in 2, zeroposition
(a) –Bh6 (b) –Rh1

(E) R. Turnbull, Original



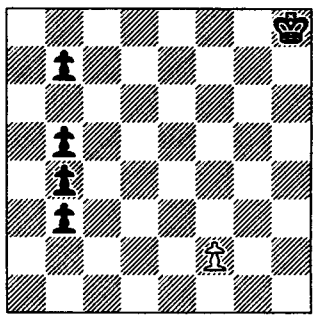
Serieshelpstalemate in 4
(a) Augsburg, (b) Iceberg

Note that in Augsburg, combination is seen as a new way of moving orthodox pieces. In Iceberg, combination is a way of producing new fairy pieces. This difference may produce further distinctions between the two forms when they are combined with Madrasi, say, or Circe.

It is, however, already established that in Augsburg Maxi, the move-length is not multiplied when a combined unit makes the move.

King-Augsburg, and a hopelessly complex **Augsburg-both-sides-at-once**, have been seen in Germany and elsewhere. However, due to the corrupt nature of Peter Fayers' wordplay, there's little space for hybrids between Augsburg and Iceberg. (Highbury?) Therefore, having contemplated problem F, you are requested to forget that you ever saw it as it spirals away to the limbo reserved for those composed in non-existent stipulations.

(F) R. Turnbull, Original



Pawn-Iceberg
Helpstalemate in 6
Solutions to Augsburg page 106

Solutions to the Originals in VC24

Comments by Erich Bartel, Stephen Emmerson, Aubrey Ingleton, George Jelliss, Paul Raican, Ian Richardson, Mark Ridley, R. Turnbull, Luigi Vitale.

171 Grigoryan. 4:g1R 5:R×g6 11:g1B 12:B×e3 13:Bb6 16:e1S 19:Sa4 b4 'Kindergarten': pawns and underpromotions only - EB. Nice easy start - SE Originality doubtful, but enjoyability undeniable - RT

172 Zarur. 1:Rf3 etc? Re8 etc! 1:Rf7. Neat miniature where W gets BR to show his hand first - MR. To omit Ks is only a pretence at economy - SE

173 Rice. 1:a4 (2:Qd4) 1... R*a4 (or B*f6)/d*e4 2:Bd3/Bb3 also 1... Q*b6/Sc5 2:Q*d5/Q*b4 Difficult key, good variety - SE. Neat unpins of WB, rest is embellishment - RT. Duals after a7,c7*Q, as these are real refutations of threat - EB

174 Bartel. 1... e8S for 2:e1B 5:Bg7 S×g7 b)1... e8Q for 2:e1R 3:R*e8 5:Rg7 Qf8 Neat, but lightweight certainly - IR.

175 Emmerson. Remove BS and move WRc2 to h2. Can you see the mate in 2? 1:Rd2! (2:Sc2#). 1... S*e3(bSb8) 2:Rd6 S - 3:R*S(wRh1) Ka2 4:Ra1 1... Sd4 2:Rf2 Se2,f3 (for 3:Sg1) or Sc2 3:R*S Ka2 4:Ra1 Pawns prevent check from e6 - could start wKd8 (with unprovided checks). Even with the pawns, economy still outstanding, as is achievement of sixfold grab of BS - RT a lot of time for solving! - LV.

176 Emmerson. -pBh6 (forced) for either -pBg8: 1:+pBg8 +pBh6, which is now mate as Black's pB has been deployed and can't interpose; or for Kg7 (+Q)†: 1:Kh8 +pBg7 - uncaptured piece not bishop, as this would be White's pocket one, illegalising the mating move. or THIRDLY Kg7(+S): 1:+pBh8 +pBh6 COOK by IR, PR. WSb5? Or accept as third solution?

177 Richardson. 1:Ke7 (+P) Kh5 (+P) 2:Kf7 (+P) Kh4 (+P) 3:Kg7 (+P) h6 - mate, as any further BK move creates illegal pawn-structure. COOK (many solvers) 1:Kg7 K- 2:Kh6 g5† 3:Kh7 g6, while GJ cooks in orthodox sentinels 1:Kg6 Kf3 (h3) 2:Kh6 Kg3 3:Kg5 f4 (h4). Start WKh4 to cure? One solver offers solution where mate delivered by WK. This interpretation of Alsatian has been given some credence (J. M. Trillon, *Diagrammes*), on grounds that BK can't move without creating illegal pawn and therefore doesn't check WK. However, this requires special stipulation: position with adjacent Ks is illegal under orthodox and therefore under Alsatian.

178 Lorinc. 1:Ke4 Kg4 2:Le3 Lh1† 3:Ld3 Sf3 and 1:Ke5 Sf5 2:Lf7 Kh6 3:Kf6 Sg7 Pretty - SE. Bein oeuvré et bon exercise pour les solutionistes - PR. A real prima echo with ideal mates. I like it - EB. Perfect - GJ. With mating position restricted, indeed unique, achievement of chameleon echo (same mating position on different-coloured squares) is not particular reason to celebrate. Echo, per se, is a dull theme. This, however, is a delightful and perfectly constructed chess problem - RT

179 Raican. 1:Bd1 ROg3 2Ke2 Bc4 and 1:Bb4 ROg7 2:Kc3 Bc1 (verify) Two well-produced model pin-mates: difficult but well worth while. Spent ages trying to mate BK on d3 - SE

180 Jelliss. 1:Kb7 2:JWc7 3:JWc4 4:JWg4 but SE, PR COOK 1:Kd8 2:Ke7 3:Rg4 4:JW×e6, and SE's computer solves in 3 by 1:Kb7 2:JWc7 3:Rf4 I like the idea of pieces having the added power of nothing. But tricky beasts - SE

181 Rice. 1:g4 with 7 continuations Clever variations, especially unpins of Nd5 - IR

182 Lorinc. 1:Qe5 Sd6 2:Rb5 Sc5 and 1:Bd6 Se5 2:Rd3 Sd4 Good correspondence - SE. Pity different B force used in the two parts - AI. Change of unpinning, blocks and mates. A wonderful problem! - EB. La symmetrie n'est pas adequate aux problèmes - PR. Form does not permit intense fairy effects, and this would be completely satisfying as an orthodox helpmate - RT

183 Richardson. 1:B×a8 3:S×b8 5:S×a7 6:S×c8 7:a7 10:Kb8 11:b7 12:Q×f7† A very nice series - GJ

184 Bartel. .3:h6 S×d2 4:hg B×g7=P 5:R×h7 R×h7=P A good puzzle - SE. Much too straightforward - GJ.

185 Velucchi. 1:Bh2S Ka6 2:Sf3P gfS 3:Bd7S Sd4P 4:c5 dcS 5:Sd8P Sb7P Unexpected P-mate (SE). Fiendish! - AI. No thematic content, only really hard work to solve - EB. Anticipated *Quartz* 3. Composers please take care not to send versions of same composition to two outlets. (Originals sent here that are not accepted will usually be returned within one month.)

186 Raican. Apologies to composer: this has two solutions. 1:Sa6† Kb6 2:Sb8 Q×b8† 3:Ke7 Qh2 4:Rd6 Qa2 5:c7† S×d6 6:c8S† S×c8 7:Kd7 Qg8= and 1:Sd7† Kb4 2:c7 Q×c7 3:Sb8 Qh2 4:Rd6 Qa2 5:Kd7 Qh2 6:Rb6† S×b6+ 7:Kc6 Q×b8=. But sadly also computer-cooked in 6: 1:Sa6 2/3 Rb5† Sc7 4:Ra5† 5:Kd7 6: Kc7 and others (SE) Bellissimo! - LV, of second solution.

187 Lorinc. 1:Ree5 for 1... R×g7$ 2:Re8$† cb$ and not 2:Rhf5$†? Rg3, e7$ 1...Bxg7$ 2:Rhf5$† and not Re8$† Bf6$ Lovely dual avoidance: very neat - SE

Solutions continued on page 104

THE END IS NIGH

by Paul Byway

20 The Finches, Hertford
Hertfordshire SG13 7TB

Losing Chess

So much came in on this subject that much of it must be held over to the next issue. There are a couple of points arising from this activity.

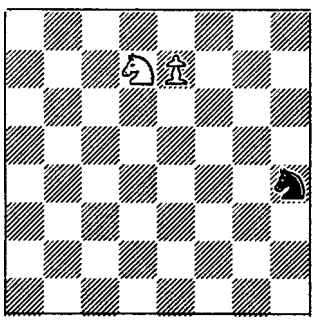
(1) My study from VC18 proves to have a second solution: 2.a8=K Qe1 3.Kab7 Qh4 4.Kbb6 Qh8 5.Kbb5 wins. Apparently the Israelis don't alow promotion to King so I must append the stipulation 'Israeli Rules' to that one.

(2) In VC23 a second solution was given to Dittmann 1987, but John Beasley justly points out that Dittmann stipulated 'in ten moves' so was no doubt aware of alternative but longer solutions.

Fabrice Liardet is writing a book and is interested in hearing of anything published, especially studies and the history of losing chess. The address to write to is: 11, rue François Durafour, CH-1220 Avanchet, Genève, Switzerland.

Here is a study he composed as an illustration of the elementary endgame.

#22 F. Liardet



Losing Chess:
White to play and win.

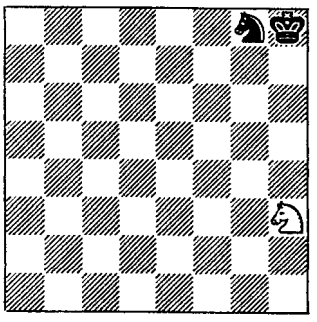
Solutions to the numbered Endgame Studies are on page 104

John Beasley has performed a great service to all fans of the Losing Game by gathering together as much as he could of the scattered material on endgame theory and studies, and making it generally available.

(He has produced a 10-page listing 'Published material on endgame theory and endgame studies in Losing Chess'. The oldest reference in it is to P. Schellenberg, Dresdner Schachkalender, 1901, a game-like ending. He also mentions Verney, Chess Eccentricities, 1885; this has an article on 'Take Me' Chess but merely describes the game without giving examples of play — GPJ.)

Please bring to his attention anything that so far may have been overlooked. (Address on front cover.) There follows one of John's recent compositions: much more to come in the next issue!

#23 J. Beasley



Losing Chess:
White to play and win.

STUDIES FROM GAMES

Several candidates have come together by chance at this time, so I make a feature of them.

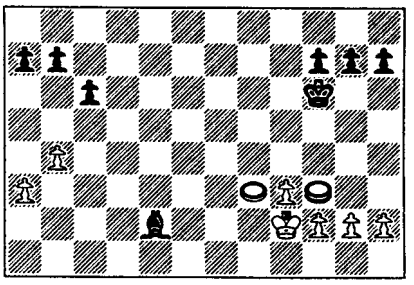
Modern Courier Chess

To start with, a position from play in MCC, which will serve as an excuse for some general remarks.

A concept which is sometimes useful, as here, is that of a 'pseudo-piece'. When a Fers enters the area of a Courier the two can be considered in combination, and such a combination I call a **Friar**. If they move on squares of different colour we have a **Greyfriar**, most useful in attack: otherwise we have a **Blackfriar** or **Whitefriar**, solid in defence. In the initial array White has, on the Queen's side, a white-squared Bishop and a Blackfriar: the Blackfriar stands defensive to the black-squared B of the opponent, which is a much more mobile piece.

Elementary piece values suggest that F(1½) + C(2½) = B(3) + P(1), but such calculations mean little in MCC, from the width of the board and the number of short-range pieces.

Position from Play



Modern Courier Chess
Position after Black's 54th move

Position is all, and the diagram is undoubtedly much to the advantage of the Bishop. White's immediate problem is the distant pawn majority. The Courier can't stop the c-pawn because it covers the wrong files; the Fers is trapped on the King's side by the Bishop, and after 55. Ch1 b6 56. Gf2 c5 57. b×c5 b×c5 58. Ff3 B×f3 Black wins: therefore the White King must abandon the King's side. Play continued: 55. Kh2 b6 56. Kg3 c5 57. b×c5 b×c5 58. Kf2 Bb5 59. Ke3 l6.

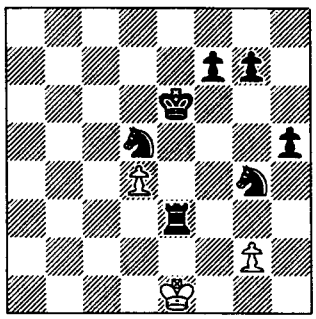
Can White defend his King's side successfully? I thought it unlikely: the play that folowed will not give the answer! 60. k3 Ki5 61. Cj1 j6 62. j4† Kj5 63. l3 Be8 64. k4† Ki6 65. l4 Bk2 66. Ch1 k5 67. l×k5 j×k5 68. i2 Bg6 69. Cj3 Kh6 70. Cl5 Bi8 71. Cl3 Ki6 72. Fj3 (White now seems to be safe unless Black can attack the base of the pawn chain).

72...Kh5 73. Kd2 Bh7 74. Kc3 Bg8 75. Cj1 Kg4 76. j5 l5?? 77. j6 Bi6 78. k×l5 Resigns! The result of incautiously trying too hard: but White still had one tooth left! If 76...Kg3 77. Cl3 Kh3 78. i4 Kh4 79. j6 Bi6 80. Cj5 Ki5 81. j7 B×j7 82. c×j7 wins, so Black cannot break through and should retreat at once.

Italian Progressive Chess

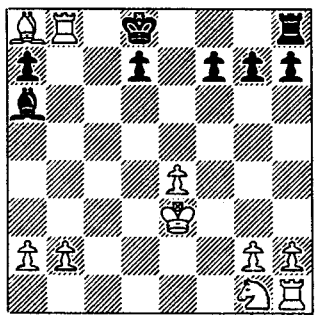
Now we turn to Italian Progressive Chess and a study from an idea of George Jelliss, from the game G. Jelliss v. T. Howes 1995 (VC17, p.144).

#24 P. V. Byway



Italian Progressive Chess: White to play and win (series 17)

I follow with an interesting position from P. Wood v S. Boniface VC24 p.67.



Position after series 7

As an experiment, this position is set as a competition: if I get at least three replies I shall set some more and report ongoing scores. Points will be awarded for correct answers in a progressive sequence: one point for the first, two for the second, ...

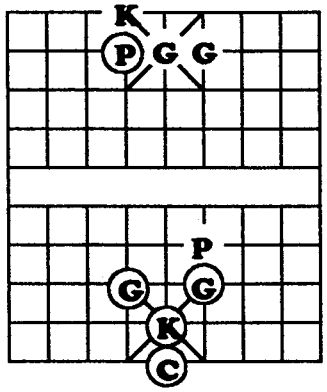
The questions for this position are: (i) Give Black's winning series eight. (ii) How does White win if Black plays 8. Kc7, K×b8, h5, h4, h3, h×g2, g×h1Q, Q×g1+. (iii) How does White win after 8. Ke7, R×b8, R×b2, R×g2, R×g1, R×h2, Ke6.

Three correct answers will count for 1 + 2 + 3 = 6 points. If an extra, essentially diferent answer is given to one of these three, then four points are available and so on progressively. This applies also to a demonstration that my intended solution is wrong, to a definite solution to the MC position, and to any cooks and second solutions found elsewhere in this article.

Xiangqi

To finish with we have quite a difficult study in Chinese Chess.

#25 P. V. Byway



Xiangqi: Red (circled letters) to play and win.

This is a position from the game Voon Sinn Lieu v Chen Fazuo, with colours reversed, given on p.88 of VC24 and generally agreed to be drawn at the time. Everyone overlooked a subtle manoeuvre by which red can force a win.

Solutions to Studies

#22 Liardet. Losing Chess.

1. Nf6! [1.e8K Nf5; 1.e8RNg6; 1.e8N Nf5 2.Nc7 Ng3= 1.Nb8(b6) Ng6 2.e8B Nf8 3.Bg6 n×g6; 1.Nc5 Nf5 2.e8B Ne7] 1...Nf5! [1...Ng6 2.e8B is worse and other moves allow 2.e8K] 2.e8B Nd4 [2...Nh4 3.Bb5! followed by a N move and eventually a bishop sacrifice] 3.Nd7! [the key move] 3...Nb5 4.Bf7 Na7 5.Be6 Nb5 6.Bc4 any 7.Bb5 wins.

This endgame illustrates the following rules: (a) N v N on the same colour. The player to move wins. (b) B + N v N. The winning plan is to play the knight to a square of the same colour as the bishop, which is then sacrificed. The resulting N v N ending is won.

#23 Beasley. Losing Chess.

1.Nf4 [1.Ng5? Kh7 2.N×h7 Nf6. 1.Nf2(g1)? Kh7 and now Black will have his King at h7, win the N v N battle without allowing the White Knight to sacrifice itself to the Black King, and then win with K v N.] 1...Nh6 2.Ng6, N-any [K-any 3.Nh8 wins immediately] 3.N×h8 [winning with N v N.]

#24. Byway. Progressive.

17. Kf1, g3, Kg2, Kh3, Kh4, K×h5, K×g4, Kh5, g4, g5, g6, g×f7, Kg6, K×g7, Kf8, Ke8, f8N Italian ‡.

White has played seventeen unique moves to transfer the King from e1 to e8 and give Italian mate! Incidentally, this study confirms a remark made some time ago, to the effect that these 'Italian Mate' positions are usually won in Scottish Progressive also.

#25. Byway. Xiangqi.

The solution depends on the fact that, in general, a cannon and two guards will defeat a pawn. Even with one guard Red can drive the pawn forward by playing the cannon to the third and second ranks, and then win. In the game Black draws because the cannon was pinned and could not be freed without destruction of the last guard. The solution here is essentially a way of gaining a vital tempo. **1.C5=6 K4=5** [1...G5+4 2.C6+7 P6+1 3.C6=9 and 4.C9–5. 2...P6=5 3.K5=6 P5+1 4.G4–5] **2. C6=4 P6=5** [2...P6+1 3.C4+7 P6+1 4.K5+1. 2...K5=4 3.C4+3. 2...P6=7 3.C4+7 P7=6 4.C4=9 P6+1 5.C9–5] **3. C4=5 P5=6** [3...P5=4 4.K5+1 K5=4 5.C5=6] **4. K5+1 K5=4** [4...P6=7 5.P4=5 G6–5 6.C5+8 P7=6 7.C5–4 P6=5 8.K5–1 P5=4 9.K5=6 K5=4 10.G6–5 if 7...K5=6 8.C5=4 P6=5 9.K5–1 P5=4 10.K5=6] Now we have returned to the initial position, except that Red has gained a tempo for K5+1 and the guard is defended. **5.P4=5 G6–5 6.C5+8 K4=5 7.C5–3** and wins after reorganising his pieces; e.g. **7...P6=5 8.K5–1 K5+1 9.K5=6 P5=4 10.G6–5** ...

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Solutions to VC24 concluded

188 Fayers & Emmerson. 1:Sc4 K×c4$† 2:Ka5$† Sb7$† 3:Ka4 Sc5$a4 (as before) 1:Ka5 Sc4† 2:Ka4 S×b2$† 3:Ka3 Sc4$a3 held me up for quite a while - SE, solving!

189 Turnbull. 1... cd$ 2:Ka8 $pb6 and 1:Ka8 c5 2:Sb6† cb$ and 1...c5 2:Sb6† cb$ 3: Ka8$ b7 but SE, PR DUAL full-length line by 2... Kc7 or 3:Kc7$ and most seem to consider 1...cd$ as short cook rather than set-set-play

190 Fayers. 1...Kc7 2:Ka7 Kc8 - now shown that, in diagram, neither K was inspired, so WP is - 3:Ka8 $b6 1...c5 2:Ka7 c6 (in diagram, WK must have been the inspired, so that should read 2... c6$) 3:Ka8 $b8Q As in 176, double switchback changes nothing but status.

191 Emmerson. 1:Bg1

GAMES GALORE !

by David Pritchard

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

ZANY CHESS. Prince Joli Kansil is a true games buff. His commitment is exemplified in his adopting the middle name of Quintin. Why? So that his initials read JQK (Jack, Queen, King). Apart from being an expert Bridge and Backgammon player, Joli runs his own games company (Xanadu Leisure) in Hawaii and has invented a number of well-known games (Marrakesh and Krakatoa are two of his best-known along with Bridgette).

Until now, he has had only one CV to his credit, Mexican Chess (*ECV* p.194) but he has just invented another, Zany Chess, named after his son Zane. Zany Chess is the subject of a feature article for *Games* magazine, probably published by the time you read these words. It's a chess card game with a difference, the difference being the degree of choice available to the players. It was introduced at Alan Moon's Gathering of Friends, a private games event covering several days, in Connecticut in April 1997. Required are a pack of cards (two jokers) and a chess set.

The pack is shuffled and placed face down. On turn, a player draws the top two cards off the stock. The cards correspond to pieces as follows: K = King, Q/J = Queen, 10/9 = Rook, 8/7 = Bishop, 6/5 = Knight, 4/3/2 = Pawn. The Ace and Joker have special meanings.

If, as usually happens, the cards are of different suits and indicate different pieces the player chooses which piece to move. If the cards indicate the same piece the player has no choice. If the cards are of the same suit (a flush) the player has the option of playing both pieces in either order (or the same piece twice if so indicated).

When a double is indicated (two cards of the same rank) the player may either make a legal chess move (any piece) or may move the piece indiacted twice. So 6C & 6D means the player can (1) make an ordinary chess move; or (2) move each knight once; or (3) move a knight twice.

Ace indicates **jeopardy**, meaning you can move any man threatened by the opponent but you may not capture.

Joker indicates **switch**, meaning you can switch the positions of a pawn and any piece, including the King.

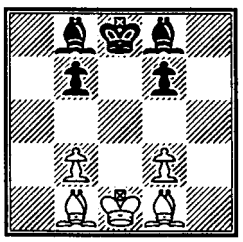
There are three other possibilities: **double jeopardy** (two Aces): player may move two pieces that are under attack or make a single orthodox move with any man. **double switch** (two jokers) allows you to switch two pawns with two pieces (or switch one pawn twice) or make a choice move (since this is a double). And **nullo** means that you cannot move (or don't have) the piece(s) indicated. In this case you move a pawn. If you can't move a pawn either, you must move the King. When check is given the attacked player does not draw cards but makes any legal chess move.

Promotion is only to a captured piece. There are one or two other rules to cater for special situations. For example, a switch move can leave a pawn on the first or eighth rank. If on the first rank, a pawn has a two-square option. If on the eighth rank and no friendly piece has been captured, the pawn waits there until one is available (or it is captured).

Castling is modified. Either a Rook or King move must be indicated. Either K or R or both can have previously moved and the King can castle also if it is on d1/d8, but not out of check. If cards of the same suit (flush) indicating K & R are drawn, one card can be used for castling and the other to move the King or a Rook.

My only comment, based on a couple of games, is that the rewards for double jeopardy, and even more double switch, seem rather niggardly.

PATRICIA CHESS. Chess games played on small boards (Minichess) usually suffer from limited strategy. I am not sure if that is true of this game by Rob Nierse, named after the inventor's wife, taken from Hans Bodlaender's web-site pages. Board 5×5; a1 black. Each side initially has a King, two Bishops and two Pawns. The opening array is shown. I say initially because the pieces, but not the pawns, change roles during play. Since pieces can also change sides, colour becomes irrelevant and the ideal seems to be flat wedge-shaped pieces that indicate their allegiance by the way they are pointing, as in Shogi.



The King is better described as the royal piece as after it moves it becomes a Queen. When the Queen moves it reverts to King and so on. In either incarnation its capture means the loss of the game. Similarly the Bishop is transformed into a Rook and back again to Bishop when the Rook moves. All of which is reminiscent of Pribylinec's Virtual Chess (see *VC*24). An opening play example given is: 1. Kc2=Q† Bc4=R†.

Pawns move one square at a time and stay pawns until they are promoted. A pawn promotes to Knight on either of the two rows occupied by the hostile pieces at the start of a game. On the fourth rank, promotion is optional but is compulsory on reaching the fifth rank. Notice that a promoted pawn remains a Knight: it never reverts.

Captured pieces change sides and can be dropped in the rank they were captured on any empty square instead of making a move on the board, as in Shogi. A pawn dropped on the 4th rank does not promote on that move; whilst a pawn may not be dropped on the 5th, where it would be immobilised. Optional rules are also offered.

ISOLATED PAWNS

by David Pritchard

61. GRAVITATIONAL CHESS. In Gravitational Chess (*ECV* p.131) a piece, after making a normal move, is pulled back one square towards its own baseline. If either square is occupied by a friendly piece, the move is not possible; if occupied by a hostile man or men, one or both are captured. Kings and Pawns are orthodox.

John Beasley has come up with a shortest helpmate from the starting position: 1.e3/4 h5/6 2.Q-g4-g3 f6 3.Q×g7-g6 (the Pf6 cannot go to f5 since then Black has the defence N-f6-f7). George Jelliss adds: 1.e3/4 g5 2.Q-h5-h4 f6 3.Q-h6-h5 and, even better 1.e3/4 c5 2.B-a6-a5 d6 3.B-b6-b5 (now if Q tries to interpose at d7 gravity pulls it back to d8, or similarly N-c6-c7, while N-d7 or Bd7 are illegal: d8 blocked by Q of same colour). These effects are similar to those in Alice Chess. In each case the two Black moves can be made in either order. Are there any more solutions?

62. UNIDENTIFIED CV? Kenneth Wright of New Jersey appeals for help in identifying what he believes to be a CV. He has inherited pieces, manufactured pre-1930 possibly in the U.S.A., but without a board or rules. Each side has 14 men, one side in bronze the other in pewter. The units are: 2 cannons with soldiers, 2 mounted cavalry, 4 lunging infantry, 5 upright marching infantry and a single castle (bronze) and munitions wagon (pewter). The latter two may be the royal pieces. A 7×7 board seems a good possibility but the game could equallly well be a war-cum-chess game played on a larger board. I am not very hopeful of reader response. (*The numbers of pieces suggest to me a triangular corner arrangement, say upright infantry a5–e1 with lunging infantry a4–d1 acting between them, and with one corner cell, say a1 or b2, occupied by a missing piece, or vacant* — GPJ).

63. COPYCAT CORNER. I see (*Science et Avenir* April 1997) that Peter Yaspan's spherical board (1970) has just been reinvented by William Gramolt who got the idea after playing a naval wargame on a chequered tablecloth. Gramolt's board has 128 squares but no mention is made of (the clearly identifiable) chess pieces or their moves.

64. QUANTUM CHESS. Stephen Tavener was unimpressed by any of the versions of Quantum Chess (presumably the game I reviewed in *VC*17). Instead, he has come up with his own version. He first defines an unobserved square as one which isn't under attack from either side and an unobserved piece as a piece on an unobserved square. His rule for play then runs: Make an orthodox move or move any unobserved friendly piece to any vacant unobserved square. Thus for example Ra1-b4 is legal as an opening move for White. The game seems worth investigating.

65. MINOTAUR CHESS. This is another game by Frank M. Truelove (see *VC*24, IP 60) with some help from others. It is based on a role-playing game called Chaos and named after the Minotaurus, a piece described by A. S. M. Dickins in his *Guide to Fairy Chess* (originally suggested by J. de A. Almay *Fairy Chess Review* 1940). Having read the story line (two pages of close-set type) and the rules (every chess piece has been renamed), studied the array (the board is set diagonally between the players) and absorbed the object ('Take your opponent's Totem and any Avenger created') I have decided not to take up valuable *VC* space describing the game until at least 25 readers demand it. However, there is an alternative. I see the game is described on Hans Bodlaender's Chess Variant Pages on the internet. Lock onto **WWW:http://www.cs.ruu.nl/-hansb/d.chessvar/**.

66. BIBLIOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT. The rising interest in variant chess prompts the thought that books on variants should prove sound investments. Most of those published are long since out of print and difficult to find, but the search could be worthwhile.

You would be lucky to pick up a copy of Fiske's *Chess in Iceland* (1905) for under £125.

Boyer's two paperbacks published, if I remember correctly, at the equivalent of 5/- (25p) back in the 1950's, are star buys, provided you don't pay the earth for them. (*The editor has both Boyer books in his library, but cannot recall the price he paid for them. The first volume, published 1951, has 8/6 pencilled on the fly-leaf, and is advertised at the back of the second volume, 1954, at a price of 300 francs. The trouble with these two books is that they were printed on poor quality paper which is rapidly yellowing and becoming brittle. — GPJ*)

The bookseller Treglowan, who specialises in chess books, is currently offering two copies of Verney's *Chess Eccentricities* (1885) at £150 each and a copy of Verney's monograph on four-handed chess (1881) at £20. In the Macdonald Ross chess library sale in 1987, an author's presentation copy of the former, together with a copy of the latter, went for a mere £25 against the auctioneer's estimate of £40–£60.

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Solutions to Augsburg Chess

(A) 1.Rc6 2.(R+S)e7 3.(R+B+S)e3 or 1.Bd7 2.(R+B)c6 3.(R+B+S)f3 or 1.Se7 2.(B+S)d6 3.(R+B+S)g3.
(B) set: 1....(R+B)c2† 2.Kh1 Be4 play: 1.Bh2 (R+B)g6† 2.Kh1 Be4 or 1.Bf2 Be4† 2.Kg1 Rh1.
(C) 1.e2 e7 2.e1=(B+B) e8(R+B) 3.(B+B)c3 Re2 4.Bd4 Bb5.
(D) (a) 1.Bc6 d8=(B+S) 2.(B+S)b5 (B+S)b6.
(b) 1.Sb4 d8=(R+S) 2.(R+S)b5 (R+S)c6.
(E) (a) 1.Kh8 2.f5 3.(S+P)e7 4.(B+S+P)g6 (R+B)×g6.
(b) 1.Kh7 2.Se7 3.(B+S)g8 4.Sf6 Q×f6.
(F) 5.b1=(B+B+S+S) f8=(B+B+S+S)
6.(B+B+S+S)h7 (B+S)×h7 =.

George Hodges and the Shogi Variants

by Peter Blommers

Not many people know this, but the very first publication of The Shogi Association was *Middle Shogi & How To Play It* (November 1975), a comprehensive booklet on what is probably the best chess variant in existence. A few weeks later, the superb magazine *Shogi* saw the light of day (January 1976), which was to run, at first quarterly, later bimonthly, till its 70th issue in 1987, containing a wealth of informative articles.

It was the aim of TSA, and its director, George Hodges, to present Shogi to the West in the best possible way, so that the game could find a permanent footage globally, and not just locally in its home base Japan. In this undertaking TSA succeeded smoothly, though not at the speed that its originator had anticipated: the national bodies of players had to form themselves first and get established, a process not without pain and conflict, an inevitability when a multiplicity of individuals have to walk the same footpath (not yet an avenue).

Like chess, Shogi had spawned many variants in the course of its history, most of which fell by the wayside when Shogi-with-drops (modern Shogi) suddenly out-classed them all in the 16th century. "Games that died in their country of origin, it makes me suspicious," Larry Kaufman, an early Western convert to the game, said to me in 1979. Well, that was before the games were actually published, beginning in that same year 1979.

The treasure trove that opened then was of an unprecedented level, it was really a superb set of games. Take all the chess variants in Murray's book *A History of Chess*, add them all together, and you still have a fraction of the variation extant in these Shogi variants. Did you ever find 'Hook Movers' (Rooks that switch directions during their course), or 'Fire Demons' (Pieces that eat all 8 adjacent pieces at once), or 'Emperors' (Promoted Kings that can hop to any square on the board) anywhere else? I bet you didn't.

What were the flaws in these games that made them suffer under Shogi's pre-eminence then? Until this day I couldn't find any. They are all great chess games in their own right. The format could have been a factor, but that is far from certain. My guess is that the drops in Shogi provide the same variety that is present in all these variants which are almost all non-drop games. This makes sense historically (the variants were born before the invention of drops) but also structurally, for large chess games are unplayable with drops. Why? Because you would not need all these many pieces in a drop-variant.

Readers who have John Gollon's book *Chess Variations* (1968) will recall Gollon's rendering of a Middle Shogi game (he called the game Tsui-Shogi, a misreading of Murray's Tsiu-Shogi, which is nowadays spelled Chu-Shogi). Gollon and his friends assumed that Middle Shogi was also played with drops, and, lacking the correct info from the source (the playing community in Japan) they unintentionally produced a so-called 'natural experiment', actually showing why Middle Shogi cannot be played with drops. Most pieces in Gollon's specimen game do not move and a small stream of captured, dropped and counter-dropped pieces running from King to King emerges, doing the battle and degrading the other pieces into mere bystanders.

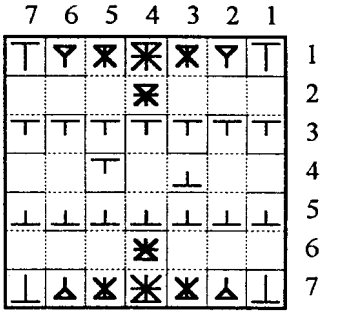
Before actually outlining these games individually let me give a short summary of the history involved. There is no doubt that Shogi belongs to the world-wide diffusion of chess games, all apparently stemming from a sole ancestor. Shogi, contrary to one's expectations, did not come through China, for it hardly bears any resemblance to Chinese Chess (Xiangqi) or its relative, Korean Chess (Changgi). Shogi is much more like Thai Chess, and a sea-route connection with South-East Asia is now commonly accepted.

Also, Shogi must be older than Chinese Chess, for it resisted the latter's adoption in Japan. The first mention of 'Shogi' as a name is in the early 11th century. Most variants were in existence when drop-Shogi was invented around 1570, but a few were of a later date. I will discuss the games in order of size. I write from the viewpoint of a player, not that of an historian.

Tori Shogi

The name means 'Bird Shogi' and all the pieces, not surprisingly, have the names of birds. The format is 7×7 and the date of invention is 1799. Being a relatively recent game and played on the right format, this is a game with drops.

(See Variant Chess 10 p.19 and 11 p.36 for a detailed account of Tori Shogi by Ian Richardson.



Key

	Swallow		**Falcon**
	Quail		**Crane**
	Phoenix		**Pheasant**

The editor diagrams the opening position for Tori Shogi, using graphic symbols similar to those introduced for Shogi in VC24. Peter Blommers prefers the Japanese characters to be used: for these see VC10.)

Pawns (swallows) can be double-dropped, unlike in normal Shogi, and there are other slight differences, but in general this is the game most like normal Shogi,

although its pieces are altered considerably in order to make a playable game on the smaller format.

Despite eight surviving historical game scores, coming from the group around the inventor, nobody knows how to play the game properly, due to lack of theory. Which makes it all the more interesting to many of us, precisely for that reason. The game is played by small pockets of players in Japan and the UK, the only Western country actually having held tournaments for it. The format of the game also makes it a favourite postal game. The Postal Shogi League runs competitions for both Tori and normal Shogi. I sometimes hear the complaint that the game is 'too limited', but hardly subscribe to this view, for games can be very different.

Shogi

The standard form needs no introduction. Format 9×9 and simply the best game in the world, but, being no world champion in any game, my opinion can be easily discarded. Cross swords first, then lay the swords aside and play a game of Shogi. Your needs will be fulfilled.

(*On first reading, the editor thought this said 'Crosswords first', with which he can agree, but if it is advocating Fencing or Duelling he would advise caution!*)

Wa Shogi

The name means 'Harmonious Shogi', but in the reading 'Yamato' the character 'Wa' can also mean 'Japan'. The format is 11×11 and the date the end of the 17th century (the Genroku Period, a period of cultural blossoming in Japan). The unique feature of this game is that the whole back rank consists of entirely different pieces, so there is no left–right symmetry here.

Whether or not this was a drop-game depends on what view one has about its antiquity. If the Genroku manuscript is taken as reporting an older invention then absence of drops is to be assumed. The problem is, the game is playable both ways, and is fun played both ways.

Played without drops, the task of the player is opposed to that of a Chu-Shogi player: in a Wa game, the pieces must try to keep contact, in a Chu game, they are first and foremost in each other's way. Postal Shogi League players informally organise a Wa-competition among themselves.

Chu Shogi

The name means 'Middle Shogi', its format is 12×12 and its date mid-14th century. The game was a favourite of the imperial court and no doubt a sign of education of the player.

Being a larger chess game, the game features a reserve King. As John Gollon rightly once observed, the object of the player of larger chess forms is to prolong the game, rather than to win it. In itself, of course, reserve Kings run counter to the core idea in chess, i.e. the trapping of a crucial enemy piece.

In Chu Shogi, the strong pieces are behind the pawn-formation, and the weaker pieces at the back row, so in opening, players reverse these two classes, in the process producing distinctly different games (no opening theory possible in these larger games). Six historical scores exist.

Heian Dai Shogi

'Dai' means 'great' and 'Heian' was a period (around AD 1000). This early variant on 13×13 is only partly known and quite archaic in nature. It is not an interesting game and accordingly not canonised by George Hodges (he did not produce sets for them). Pawns are on the third row and there is a central piece on the second row directly in front of the King, as in Tori and in Wa, and ancient 9×9 Shogi.

Dai Shogi

The name means 'Great Shogi' and the format is 15×15. Most pieces resemble those of Chu Shogi and not without logic Chu is assumed to be a condensed form of Dai.

The game existed at least in the 16th century. Lists of sets sold by makers exist from that period for the games of Chu, Dai, Dai Dai, Maka Dai Dai and Tai.

The impression is comparable to Chu play, though George Hodges himself denies that to large extent. The uneven number of files means a completely symmetrical initial set-up, unlike that of Chu, which has different columns in the centre necessarily.

Tenjiku Shogi

The name means 'Heavenly Bamboo Shogi', but Tenjiku was the Japanese name for India. This has nothing to do with the origin of chess though, the name is just a fancy way of labelling the game 'exotic'. And that is exactly what it is.

The Fire Demon reigns supreme here, eating all eight adjacent enemy pieces, and games can be over before one knows it. The format is 16×16. The game is, mind you, played postally and often over at the 13th or 16th move!

An error in the rules is sometimes assumed, but the obvious counter to this is the observation that the players are beginners most of the time. A complicated set of rules of pieces flying over other pieces exists, and not unreasonably some conceptual influence of Chinese Chess is assumed here. The date is end 17th century (Genroku Period) or an unknown number of centuries earlier (same as Wa).

Dai Dai Shogi

The name of course means 'Great Great Shogi', the format is 17×17 and the initial array markedly asymmetric. A favourite of many players. Here, Hook Movers are around. This, and the next two variants, are 16th century or earlier.

In this and larger games promotion is through capturing a piece, not by reaching some zone on the board.

Maka Dai Dai Shogi

The name means 'Great Great Great Shogi', the word 'maka' being a corruption of Sanskrit 'maha', also meaning 'great' (compare 'Maharaja' = 'great King'). Unlike Dai Dai, with which it has much in common, this game has again a symmetrical initial

set-up, and it is here that the promoted King can fly to any square (no luxury with Hook Movers around on an emptying board!). The format is 19×19.

Tai Shogi

The name, for a change, means 'Great Shogi', for 'tai' also means 'great'; Grand Shogi could be a translation and indeed that is what the game is. No longer empty holes in the initial set-up but simply solid stacks of pieces and pieces, row after row. More than one reserve King. Format, a modest 25×25.

Kyoku Tai Shogi

'Extremely Great Shogi', on 36×36, fortunately exists only in initial array without known moves of many of the pieces. The series had to end somewhere. Hodges naturally did not produce the game. Players could make up the missing rules of course, but why start using an historical set of data? Invent your own megalo-game in that case. Any format will do, and any weird set of rules, for chess games seldom do not work.

Conclusions

From the above list it is obvious that the games are a heterogeneous collection, the members of which come from different periods and were played by different in-crowds of players. The four large games Dai, Dai Dai, Maka Dai Dai and Tai are related, and are related to Chu. Wa and Tenjiku are possibly related. Tori stands alone. Heian Dai and Kyoku Tai can be forgotten.

More variants existed. There is a three-player Shogi from early this century, and a four-player Shogi which was recently invented. Hodges produced the last game provisorally (by using a normal Shogi board and providing the correct number of pieces; the rules naturally are the most important addition; a correct board would need really square squares — the Shogi squares are normaly actually rectangular).

Also omitted from this discussion of Shogi variants are all games that can be thought of as 'fun games' (although all games are supposed to be fun) such as An-nan Shogi, Hasami-Shogi, Mawari-Shogi, Mini-Shogi, and so on.

Were the Shogi variants actually played or just a bunch of fantasised nonsense? The existence of the lists of sets would seem to prove actual existence, but unfortunately no pieces of any game apart from Shogi and Chu Shogi have ever been found.

It may be that the pieces were small scraps of paper with a brushed set of characters on them. Shogi traditionally names its pieces with two characters. Shogi professional Tanigawa played Chu Shogi that way with his brother, the latter told me.

Chu Shogi survives in Japan up to the present day, though it leads a marginal existence; Japanese-made sets exist. For all the others George Hodges produced facsimile sets (plastic pieces, vinyl boards and rule leaflet in a tube, readily postable) and it is to him that I have to refer the interested reader. Opponents can be recruited through the Postal Shogi League, or taken from among one's regular Shogi opponents. Convert (*or browbeat?*) someone in other cases.

Explore how nicely the set of Generals is extended in all these games from Gold to Silver to Copper to Iron to Stone to Wood to Clay with according weakening of the piece in question and enjoy the fancy of the genius of Japanese chess. If you ultimately stick to 'just Shogi' imitating all those millions of Japanese players, that is fine too, because Shogi all by itself is too marvellous for words.

Advice: First learn Shogi proper, then start with Chu Shogi, then take up Tori, then the rest. Japanese characters are not difficult to learn, once you have started doing so.

For Shogi Variant sets, write to: George Hodges, P.O. Box 77, Bromley, Kent BR1 2WT, UK (tel: 0181-466-6564). Buy his Middle Shogi Manual, which contains all you need, and then some.

For possible opponents, write to: The Postal Shogi League, Phil Holland, 94 Green Drift, Royston, Herts SG8 5BT, UK.

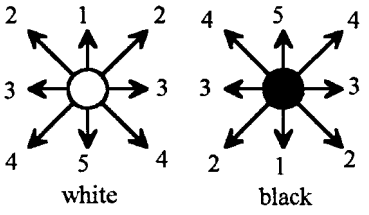
Generalised Generals

by George Jelliss

Peter Blommers' remarks about all the different types of 'General' in Shogi, which is 'the Game of the Generals', reminded me of this analysis I did of all the different possible types.

They are pieces that have the moves (and captures) of the chess King but not necessarily in all the eight directions. Since we can include or exclude each of the eight directions this gives us $2^8 = \mathbf{256}$ possibilities.

However the Generals used in Shogi and its variants are all symmetric between right and left, and with this restriction the number reduces to $2^5 = \mathbf{32}$.



We can describe these by numbering the directions as above:

1 = directly forwards
2 = diagonally forwards
3 = sideways
4 = diagonally backwards
5 = directly backwards.

and listing the moves used in numerical order.

A dummy (-) or side-mover (3) can move neither forwards nor backwards. The 6 other non-forward movers (4), (5), (34), (35), (45), (345) are of little use unless they can be dropped immediately behind enemy lines. In the next column we list the 24 pieces with forward moves.

It is difficult to work out a systematic nomenclature for these pieces other than the numerical coding: suggestions are invited.

The prefix ana- might be used for 'non-retreating', thus (13) would be 'ana-wazir'. The non-advancing (35) would be 'kata-wazir'

Bold type marks those that are symmetric fore-and-aft as well as left-right. The dummy, wazir, fers and king in this group are also

symmetric under 90° rotation and diagonal reflection (provided the cells are true squares).

The underlined names translate Japanese titles from Shogi variants, others are from Fairy Chess or newly proposed (*). The Japanese pieces tend to be called 'drunk' if they move sideways and 'blind' if they have no directly forward move, but using these terms systematically results in some very odd names — the 234 would be a blind drunk elephant!

(1): foot soldier (*fu-hyo*) or swallow or sparrow
(2): stone general or goose (as in Fox and Geese)
(12): iron general or forward-mover*
(13): ana-wazir*
(14): wyvern* or wazir-fers hunter
(15): adjutant (*chu-jin*) or go-between
(23): ana-condor*
(24): fers or cat-sword
(25): yale* or fers-wazir hunter
(123): ana-king* or evil wolf
(124): elephant or silver general (*gin-sho*)
(125): copper gnrl (*do-sho*) or policeman*
(134): marshall*
(135): wazir or angry boar
(145): guerilla* or gorilla*
(234): condor *
(235): yen *
(245): cowardly elephant*
(1234): drunk elephant (*sui-zo*) or falcon
(1235): golden general (*kin-sho*) or violent wolf
(1245): crane or ferocious leopard (*mo-ho*)
(1345): drunk gorilla*
(2345): blind tiger (*mo-ko*)
(12345): king (*o-sho*) or jewelled gnrl (*gyoku-sho*)

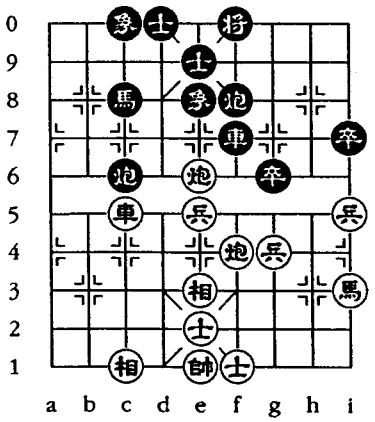
Xiangqi Miscellany

by Peter Wood

Paul Byway and Chris Hann are the strongest of a small band of 'non-asians' who participate at present in Xiangqi events in this country. Here is a game played by Paul Byway at the Bank of China event on April 20th. The annotations are by him.

Xi — Paul Byway

1.c5 Ng8 2.Cbe3 Nc8 3.Nc3 g6 4.Rb1 Rb0 5.Ni3 Ca8 6.R:b0 N:b0 7.Ri2 Bge8 8.Rf2 Gfe9 9.Rf9 Ca9 10.Rf5 Na8 11.Nd5 Cc9 *(Perhaps 11....Rf0 or 11....a6.)* **12.N:e7 N:e7 13.C:e7 a6 14.i5 Nb6** *(Surely 14....Rf0 now.)* **15.Cc3 c6? 16.C:c6 Ca9 17.C:a6 Rf0 18.Rh5 Rf7** *(After bad errors on moves 14 and 15, I find (perhaps) a correct path here. The central Cannon must be dislodged - but I am 3 pawns down at the moment.)* **19.Ce6 Cf8 20.Gde2 N:a4 21.Bge3 Re7** *(Breaking the pin.)* **22.Re5 Nb6** *(I am more wary of a Knight being cut off these days.)* **23.c6 Nc8 24.Rc5 Cc9 25.e5 C:c6** *(Now the deficit is cut back to 1 pawn and with (hopefully) a sound position I feel better.)* **26.Ca4 Kf0 27.Cf4+ Rf7** *(My opponent gave the impression of having overlooked this.)*



28.Nh5? *(Blundering a piece away. I do not see why — he should simply exchange Cannons.)* **28....C:f4 29.Cf6+ Ke0 30.e6 Cf2 31.C:c6 B:c6 32.R:c6 Na7 33.R:c0 Nb5 34.Rc5 Nc7 35.e6-f6 Rh7 36.f:g6 Ne6 37.Re5 Nd8** *(At last the Knight has a secure base, but my opponent has a lot for a Cannon.)* **38.Ng7 Cf0 39.Ne8 Cf8 40.Nd6 Rd7 41.Ne4 Nf7** *(I am feeling a bit better again: the Red Knight has been driven back, and my pieces are better co-ordinated than they were.)* **42.g6-f6 C:f6 43.Rh5 Cb6 44.Rb5 Ch6** *(I am looking for possible mating threats around here.)* **45.g5 Rc7 46.Ba3 Rc4 47.Nf6 Rc3 48.Nd7** *(Now I must watch out for Nc9+, followed by Rf5.)* **48....R:e3 49.Nc9+ Kf0 50.Kd1 Ch1+ 51.Kd2 Ch2+ 52.Gf3** *(If 52.Kd1, I take the Bishop, gaining another tempo with the mate threat.)* **52....R:f3** *(It is better to control the 'f' file and leave him with 2 pieces that cannot defend each other.)* **53.g6 Nd6 54.Rd5 Nf5 55.Bc5 Nh4 56.Rg5 R:f1 57.Rg3 Ng2+ 58.Kd3 Rd1 mate.** *(In the end, and despite some bad moments, I feel quite pleased with the game.)*

—| XIANGQI BOOK REVIEW |—

Battle in Singapore

(*by C.K.Lai*)

The latest book by the author is an account of the Xiangqi World Cup held in Singapore in 1995. There are 68 games, mostly from the event, some with (very) light notes. The background information includes personal experiences of the English team at, before and after the event. There is a discussion about the Singapore Xiangqi Association's plan of using westernised pieces alongside the traditional flat pieces (which was eventually dropped), and the author's dealings with Professor David Li, author of *First Syllabus on Xiangqi – Chinese Chess*, who himself visited Singapore.

There is much of interest in the book, but the author has a habit of leaving things somewhat 'in the air'. A letter from David Li (p.7) mentions

a position from *Checkmate in Two* which he considers has only one answer, compared to three mentioned in the book. Lai quotes this, but does not state if Li is right or not.

There is a long quotation from the Chinese Xiangqi Association where the history of Xiangqi is touched upon. The impression is gained that *in the early 12th century* Xiangqi pieces were changed from 3-dimensional to flat, the Kings were then not allowed out of their palaces, the board was changed from a black and white squared one with 64 squares, and the pieces instead of moving in the squares now moved on the intersections. I have checked many authorities, including articles by Myers and Beauchamp in earlier issues of *Variant Chess*, and not one of them confirms any of the above. However this period in Xiangqi history is, shall we say, 'hazy', and I find it difficult to rebut what the CXA has said even though I strongly suspect it is largely nonsense, and was only inserted for support in the argument for the introduction of westernised Xiangqi pieces.

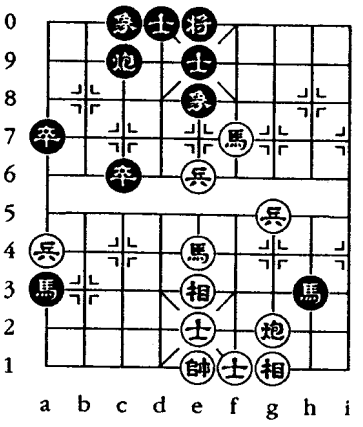
The diary of the personal experiences of the English team gives the impression of having been written on loose leaf sheets and then dropped on the floor, with no subsequent attempt to put them back in order when utilising them to write the book.

However there are a lot of good things in this book, and it is probably the best printed of all the author's works. There is a good wide selection of games, (although a few diagrams would not have come amiss), and the chat is interesting. The author's enthusiasm and love of the game shines through. It is C. K. Lai's best book for some time, and the price is most reasonable at £5.99. Write to the author at: **12 Lagan House, Sumner Road, London SE15 5RB.**

From the book I give the game from round 2 between David Young and the eventual World Cup winner, Lu Qin. David told me recently that the pressure on him in this game was tremendous, as naturally it attracted a large amount of interested spectators. He should be congratulated on his performance, for it was only in the later stages that Lu Qin's greater experience told. 'It was real, at one time the Champion was sweating!', David Young said after the game.

Lu Qin — David Young
Singapore World Cup 1995

1.Che3 Ng8 2.Ng3 Rh0 3.g5 Cbe8 4.Nc3 Nc8 5.Rb1 c6 6.Cb7 Ch3 7.Rh1 C:e3 8.R:h0 N:h0 9.Bc:e3 Ni8 10.Cc7 Rb0 11.R:b0 N:b0 12.Nf5 Na8 13.Cb7 Nc9 14.Cb2 i6 15.N:e7 Nd7 16.Ci2 Nh6 17.Cg2 Ng4 18.Gde2 Cc8 19.Nf9 Gfe9 20.N:f7 i5 21.i:i5 N:i5 22.Nf5 Bge8 23.Nd6 Cc9 24.e5 Nb6 25.Nf7 N:c4 26.Ne4 Na3 27.e6 Nh3



28.Gf3 Nc2+ 29.Cd2 Cb9 30.Kd1 Nd4 31.e7 c5 32.Nd6 Bc6 33.G1e2 Cc9 34.e7-d7 c4 35.Ke1 c3 36.Ca2 Nc2+ 37.Kf1 Nf4 38.C:a7 Nh5 39.Ne4 B6a8 40.Ca5 Ni7 41.Ce5+ Be8 42.d8 Bac6 43.d9 Cb9 44.Ng9+ Kf0 45.Cf5 Kf9 46.Nf7+ Resigns *(46....Gf8 47.Nh8 mate.)* An instructive game.

Champion of Champions

On the 18th June at the Chinese Centre in the Stockwell Road in London, there was arranged a *Champion of Champions* competition. It was an invitation tournament open to all past UK Xiangqi champions. Unfortunately this worthy venture had only two entrants: C. K. Lai and Li Tak Kuen, the joint winners in 1993. A match was arranged, which was won by C. K. Lai 2-0. The winner has now taken up an offer from the Forshang World Cultural Foundation of Taiwan to participate in a prestigious Xiangqi event to be held in Las Vegas in September — the first annual Forshang Cup. The prize money is reputed to be 30,000 US dollars. One of the side events is a trip to the Grand Canyon (or is it Cannon?).

——| REVIEWS |——

All Kinds...Best If Unusual!
(by Mario Velucchi,
Via Emilia 106, Pisa, Italy 56121)

A little 16-page pamphlet, by one of our regular problem contributors, of his original chess / mathematical problems, which have been published in a wide range of sources.——GPJ

Telescacco

The ASIGC correspondence chess magazine, now has a chess problem column conducted by Vito Rallo (Via Manzoni 162, CS-91100, Trapani, Italy). No sign of variant chess in it yet though, other than helpmates.——GPJ

Scacchi Progressivi — Matti Eccellenti
(by Alessandro Castelli)

This is the fifth in the *Manuali di Eteroscacco* series produced by AISE. It is a collection of 416 Italian Progressive mates divided into various categories. These categories are: opening mates, mates by the different pieces, special mates (relating to castling, pinning, en passant, promotion, discovery), mating batteries, the Italian mate, and miscellaneous mates. Some categories overlap of course. Lovers of the Italian mate have 147 in the category devoted to it, plus quite a few others in other categories.

The diagrams are clear and the material well presented. There are no complete games, each numbered position has a diagram before the mating sequence, and another showing the mating position. In between are the moves of the final sequence. One can of course use the positions as practice in finding the mating sequence, but, as one has to ascertain from the sequence itself

how many moves need to be made, one must glaze one's eyes somewhat in so doing.

The book should not be looked upon as a dry instruction book, but as a collection of mating sequences and positions, many of these being quite beautiful. Going through the collection will I am sure enrich one's store of tactical ideas in this most popular variant. Although there is a useful index of the tactical ideas, a players' index should perhaps have been included as well. 97 pages. Price L15000.——PCW.

Scacchi Marsigliesi

(by Alessandro Castelli)

This is everything a book on one particular variant should be. There are 129 pages giving everything that one could possibly want to know about Marseillais Chess. There are chapters on explaining the game, its history, the relative value of the pieces, the strategy of the game, the openings (47 pages), the middlegame, the endgame (15 packed pages giving detailed information, broken down into sections on the various categories of pieces), problems, results of tournaments, games (29 pages giving 498 games in the order of the openings employed). There is a useful index, but unfortunately not one of the players of the 498 games.

Classical Marseillais, where two moves are played on every turn, has given way completely to Balanced Marseillais, where White plays one move on his first turn and thereafter two moves are played. The Classical form is not mentioned in the opening section and, as far as I can see, all 498 games are played as Balanced Marseillais.

Alessandro Castelli is the leading exponent of Marseillais Chess in the world, and has been for many years. Since 1980, out of 17 tournaments he has taken part in that are quoted in the book, he has had 11 first places, 3 second places, and 3 below that. The reader cannot fail to learn to play this variant better after going through this book, for clearly the author knows what he is talking about. He has created here 'a labour of love'. Highly recommended. Price: L25000.

——PCW.

Both the above two books are in Italian, A4 size, and ring-bound. One does not need to know much of the language in order to appreciate their contents. Order from: **Alessandro Castelli, C. da Potenza 11, I-62010 Villa Potenza (MC), Italy.**

Quartz

Subtitled - *a periodical dedicated to chess composition* - is edited by Paul Raican (address: Frasinului 2/E/2 RO-8800 Tulcea, Romania), with the assistance of Ion Murarasu and Vlaicu Crisan, and published in Romania, though the text is in French. Number 4, Spring 1997, has articles on 'consequent' series helpmates, seven classic problems, the Vallodao theme in retros, plus original problems and solutions. Our own Ronald Turnbull is judging the fairies and retros and Mark Ridley the help-plays for 1996/7.——GPJ

Rochade Europa

En passant to the notes on the randomised chess games given earlier, PCW recommends *Rochade Europa* as a good magazine to subscribe to. The cost is 60 DMs per year for addresses outside Germany, which compares very well with UK magazines. There are 90 pages or more each issue packed with chess news, articles, cartoons, photos and so on. There is a regular Janus Chess column. [**Superchess** is the name that **Janus Chess** is described under in the *ECV* (p.295). It is reported that Horst Baecker was declared first Master of Superchess after a tournament in Saarbrucken in 1978.]

Especially good are the long articles on chess history and detailed reviews of computer programs. Some knowledge of German is necessary for these of course. Those who intend buying computer software could recoup most of the magazine price by taking advantage of the significantly lower prices for this from the firms advertising therein. **Write to: Carsten Kohler, Vogelsbergstrasse 21, 63477 Maintal, Germany.**

Knight's Tours & Random Paths

Mario Velucchi has sent GPJ a copy of a Technical Report (TR-CS-97-03 dated February 1997) by Brendan D. McKay of the Computer Science Department, Australian National University, Canberra, ACT 0200, Australia, in which the total number of (geometrically distinct) knight's **closed** tours of the 8×8 chessboard is reported to be 1,658,420,855,433 of which 608,233 are symmetric. The first figure awaits independent confirmation, but the second confirms a result reported by D. E. Knuth.

The corresponding figures for the 6×6 board are a mere 1,245 tours of which 17 have binary symmetry and 5 quaternary symmetry (results confirmed by Knuth 1992).

Mario has done some work himself, reported in *Scacchi e Scienze Applicate* on random paths. of chessmen. If a drunken party consisting of K, Q, R, B, N set out from a1 for h8 in what order are they likely to arrive? The answer appears to be B, Q, R, N, K, taking respectively about 45, 55, 70, 210 and 265 moves to get there. In other words, the rook makes enough moves to tour the board once, the knight three times and the king four times!

THIRD HETEROCHESS OLYMPICS

There are five teams in this event which will start soon. It is a disappointing number of teams, especially as the event has been postponed a year in order to give further time for teams to participate. The teams are: England, Italy 1, Italy 2, Poland, and the USA.

The variants are as follows, with the English team member shown in brackets: Avalanche C (Peter Coast), Dynamo C (Patrick Donovan), Liars C (Toby Howes), Losing C (Paul Byway), Mutation Progressive (George Jelliss).

The English team was selected from the players who answered the adverts in the News pages of *VC*19 and *VC*20 in 1996.——PCW