

Variant Chess

Founded by George Jelliss

The magazine to broaden your chess horizons

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Change of Editor

2 The new volume opens with a new editor. First I must
2 thank John Beasley for bringing his long and wide
3 experience to the service of 'Variant Chess'. He has
4 given much help and advice during the changeover
5 and will continue to have a significant input in the
6 future. The style of the magazine will continue broadly
6 unchanged, though no doubt my own foibles will
8 reveal themselves with the passage of time. 'Variant
9 Chess' is for - and largely by - the readership, so if
10 there is some subject which hasn't had the attention it
12 deserves, let me know. And start work on that article!

Steve Smith

16 The very existence of 'Variant Chess' as we know it
today owes much to the chess fonts designed and sold
by Steve Smith of America. It is therefore with great
sadness that I have to record his untimely death.
According to reports received he died in the summer of
injuries sustained when a car hit him from behind
Wyoming highway. I had only the slightest of contacts
with him, when purchasing fonts for 'Variant Chess',
but in that brief interlude he impressed as courteous
and helpful beyond the call of duty. A number of
correspondents, both here and in America, have had
nothing but praise for *someone who made a difference*.
Our sympathy goes out to his family.

Steve Smith's fifteen year old son Adrian states that
he intends to continue his late father's chess font
business 'Alpine Fonts', but is unable to respond to
requests for new fonts, or new versions of existing
fonts. He may be contacted as follows:

email: alpine@wavecom.net

website: <http://partae.com>

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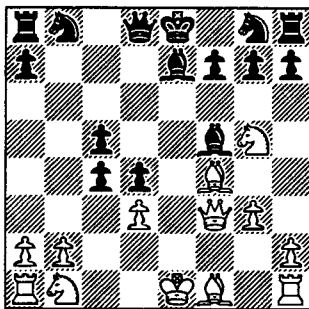
EXTINCTION CHESS

by Malcolm Horne

Here are a couple of friendly postal games between Ian Richardson and Malcolm Horne, played in 1997-98. In Extinction Chess there is no check or checkmate. The aim is to eliminate any one of the opponent's species (types of piece). - Ed.

Malcolm Horne - Ian Richardson.

1 e4 e6 2 d3 Bb4!? 3 c3 Be7 4 f4 e5!? As a relative novice at Extinction Chess I was perplexed by moves two and four from Ian. He later explained them as an attempt to swap off or expose the minor pieces. If now 5 fxe5 he planned 5...Bg5. Ian: "Development does matter of course, and I suppose I lost the game through ignoring it, but I think 'Extinction' from move one." 5 Nf3 exf4 6 Bxf4 d5 7 e5 c5 8 e6!? Bxe6 9 g3 I'd intended to follow up the pawn sac with 9 Ng5. Fine for me if 9...Bxg5? 10 Bxg5 Qxg5 11 Qe2 winning. Not so fine if 9...Qd7 or Bf5. So I changed my mind, but his bishops remain a target. 9...d4! Very useful. He is trying to open the game up, and my king is getting exposed. 10 c4 b5!? But here I was more afraid of 10...Qa5 11 Bd2!? Qb6 when Black may be better. 11 Ng5! Better than it was on move 9. Nothing else looked healthy anyway. The game now gets very complicated; Black has several options but 11...Bxg5? loses to the same trick as before. 11...Bf5!? 12 Qf3! bxc4?! Maybe too slow. I expected his Bf5 (the queen's main target rather than the Ra8) to slip back to d7 or g6:

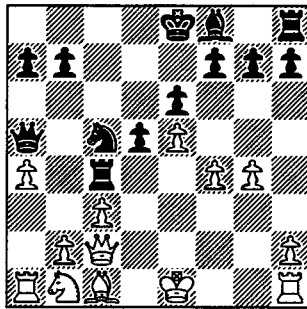


13 Nxf7! This took a lot of finding. At first I didn't think it worked, and I only came back to it because I couldn't

find anything else I really liked. And then I saw the follow-up (which Ian overlooked). 13...Kxf7? He has to try 13...Qd7 (covering the Bf5) or possibly 13...Qc8, but White has most of the threats. 14 Bg5! Now it's over. The two black bishops are too exposed. After 14...Bxg5 15 Qxf5 they both disappear, or else the king does. 14...Nf6 15 Bxf6 Resigns. If Black takes on f6 then 16 Qxa8 wins. And 15...Qa5 only delays. Trickier is 15...Bxd3 but 16 Bxd3 gxf6 17 Bxc4 and then 18 Qxa8 wins.

Ian Richardson - Malcolm Horne

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5! 3 e5 c5 4 Bb5 Bd7 5 Bxd7 Varying from Cassano - Castelli (VC 23 p 46), which continued 5 a4 Nc6 6 dxc5 Bxc5. 5...Nxd7 6 f4 Qa5 7 c3 Rc8 8 Nf3 cxd4 9 Nxd4 Ne7 10 g4?! To prevent ...Nf5, but my knight was heading for c6 anyway! Better to castle. 10...Nc6 11 a4?! And here 11 Nb3 or Nxc6 both look preferable. Black has a worrying queenside attack (with B, N, Q and K all targeted), but White can still kick. 11...Nxd4 12 Qxd4 Rc4 13 Qd3 Nc5 14 Qc2:



14...d4?? 14...Re4 keeps the pressure on, but I must admit I thought 14...d4 virtually won the game. 15 b4! Rxb4 16 cxb4 When playing 14...d4 I'd seen this simple line but thought 16...Qxb4, hitting K and N, won instantly. But in Extinction there's no check and White can just reply 17 Qxc5! eliminating my remaining knight. So White wins instead! 16...Resigns. It's easy to forget the king isn't a special piece (I've done it before). Had the king not been involved perhaps I would have looked beyond 16...Qxb4. Next time I play Extinction I think I will rename the king (to counsellor maybe?) to remind me.

BCVS COMPETITIONS

A single ray of light emerges from the encircling gloom! I refer of course to the announcement, on the back page, of a correspondence tournament for Hostage Chess: I hope it gets the support it deserves. News elsewhere is not so good. Malcolm Horne remarks that a poor response is probably a function of our small numbers. No doubt he's right, but similar problems have arisen in all the chess clubs I have known. I do know of a solution which has been relatively successful. The competition is run as a ladder or internal rating system. You play at your leisure against whoever you want., and adjust your card at the end. Everyone starts with 100 points (say) with plus or minus 10 for win or draw, and adjusts for the rating difference. In my experience it worked very well. As one of the stronger club members I found that I was eventually treading water if I dropped half a point in ten games -- so everyone felt they had something to play for. The built in flexibility would no doubt be helpful to those with other calls on their time. Of course certain rules are needed, so that A and B don't play each other exclusively for instance. I have the impression that just such a system was described in 'Chess' or 'BCM' forty or more years ago: If you know of this article, send me a copy! -- and let me know your views.

Anthony Hornyak and Allan Brown have expressed an interest in playing XiangQi: if I can find the time I'd like to join them. Can we tempt two or three more to make a really good tournament?

The Editor

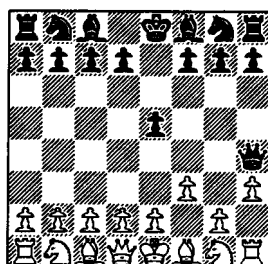
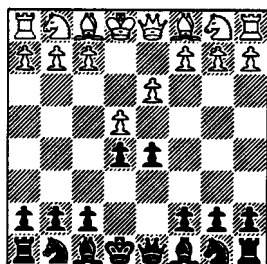
A WILD WEEKEND IN GENEVA

by John Beasley

No, not a weekend of wine, women, song, and general debauchery, though wine and song both played a minor role in the proceedings. Rather, a weekend of variant chess organized by Fabrice Liardet in which the games played became steadily wilder - or so it seemed to those taking part. Unlike last year's Losing Chess weekend, this one was not consciously international and I was the only foreign participant, but the date happened to coincide with my journey back from a visit to my daughter's husband's family in Moravia.

The weekend started with an all-play-all Bughouse tournament which attracted nine teams (eighteen players). In this game, also known as "Tandem Chess" and in Geneva as "match à quatre", the two members of a team sit side by side, one playing White and one Black, and when a player captures a man he gives it to his partner. The partner can then drop it on to any vacant square, either immediately or later, instead of playing a normal move. The game is traditionally played at blitz speed, and this is almost essential because of the "sit" option. Consider the position below.

B



A

Suppose White is to play on both boards. A's White can only play g3, after which Black will play ...Qxg3 mate and B will win; the first mate or flag-fall decides the match. So team A's only chance is for White to wait until B's White has played, after which A's Black will be able to capture a pawn for White to drop on f2. But if B's White has used less time than A's, he simply *won't move*, and A will have the choice of losing on time or allowing mate. This applies whether the time limit is one minute or one hour, so a slow time limit merely increases the time spent waiting. In practice, there tends to be a lot of squinting at the clocks to see who is ahead - except with computer timekeeping, when clocks can be compared to the microsecond and eyestrain is unnecessary.

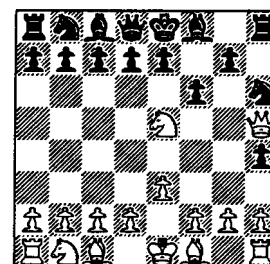
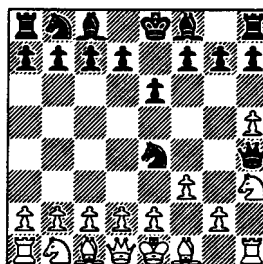
So it's a fast fun game, made more fun if the players in a team are allowed to help each other (the tournament rules stated that all forms of communication between team members would be permitted, "particularly if noisy"). Even so, it offers scope for a fair amount of skill, and despite my fondness for piquant terminology I cannot help feeling that

the name "Bughouse" is unfortunate. It is a much better game than the name implies.

This occupied Saturday afternoon. Sunday featured a Chessgi tournament (a player who captures a man adds another man of the same kind to his own force, which he can subsequently drop on any vacant square in place of an ordinary move). This is a game which appears to favour sharp attacking play, and such games always give the underdog a chance. In the last round, having lost 9 out of 12 and finding myself facing Fabrice (11/12 and leading the field), I could raise a laugh by announcing in a loud voice, "Monsieur, cette fois le zéro sera à toi," and then make the joke stick by actually winning the first game. I lost the second, but who cares? As Michael Green wrote about Coarse Rugby, this sort of thing makes up for all the 40-nil losses when it rains all afternoon and you get kicked on the knee.

The Geneva name for Chessgi is "Crazy House", and after Chessgi we played "Stupid House": a version of Bughouse in which the players of a team have the same colour. A player who captures therefore passes a man of his *opponent's* colour to his partner, who *must* place it on the board in place of his normal next turn. This is a really stupid game, and panic-stricken instructions to partners not to do so-and-so could be heard echoing round the room. But again, the "sit and wait" strategy comes into play. Consider the position below.

B



A

This is reciprocal zugzwang, in the sense that whichever team moves first will lose. Suppose it is A. A's Left plays g3 (to play Nf2 would allow immediate mate), and his opponent naturally plays ...Qxg3+ and hands the captured pawn to his partner - who promptly kills his opponent's attack by plonking it down on g6!

We played Three-check Chess (a player wins either by giving mate or by giving three checks, not necessarily consecutively). This is another game which gives the underdog a chance by rewarding sharp attacking play, though I think it unduly favours White ("One-check Chess" would be a forced White win) and I suspect it needs to be played with biased clocks. We played Extinction Chess "à quatre", and indeed the "à quatre" rule can be applied to many games. Most importantly of all, we *played*. Fabrice's club is relatively large, fielding ten teams and producing its own magazine, but a turn-out of eighteen for a local variant chess event speaks for itself.

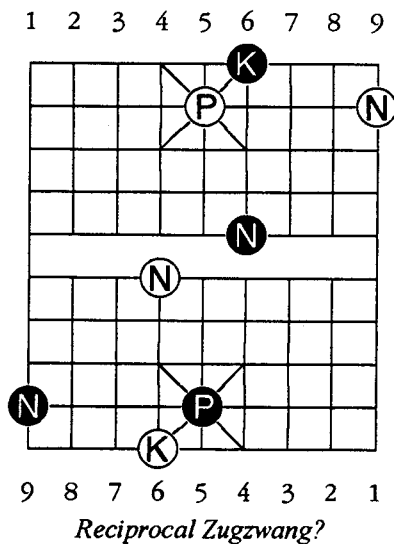
XIANGQI

by Paul Byway

Since we are a variant chess magazine, let's spare a thought for variant XiangQi. I find the rules covering repetition very difficult. David Woo has done a brilliant job of explaining them in *XiangQi Review*, and as I read I think I understand - but when I turn away it's all gone! It would be so much simpler to modify the rule for Chess: - *A move which, for the third time, would bring about the same position with the same colour to play, is an illegal move.* What could be simpler?

While we're about it, I have on occasion heard calls to increase the number of decisive games - and elsewhere, boasts that XiangQi doesn't suffer as many boring draws as Chess. In fact, a count of modern master games suggests that about 40% are drawn. XiangQi turns out to be very similar to Chess in this way, as in many others. Still, I have a suggestion: For its first two moves (until it has crossed the river) a pawn can only move forwards; for its next two forward moves (until it has drawn level with the palace) it may also move sideways; for its last two forward moves (to the back rank) why not allow it to move backwards as well? The increased power of the pawn should lead to more decisive games: for instance the endgame of pawn *versus* guard would now be a win instead of a draw.

John Beasley brings to my attention the following curious position:

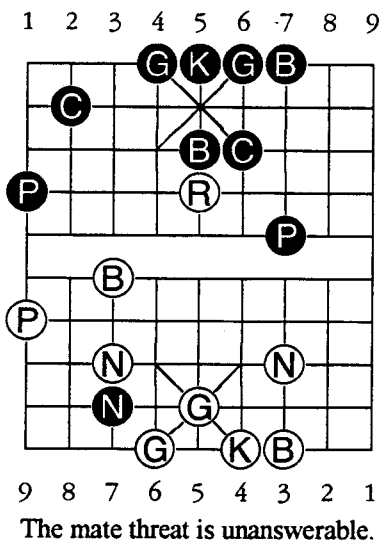


The question is: what is the true result? Is it the case that whoever is to move loses? Originally the knight at 91 was at 84, but John at first overlooked that 1 N6-8 blocks its path: I have done the same - too many times to count. He missed another blockade though, for in this position White can play 1 N6-5 (only move) N1-3+ 2 N5-7 N6-5 3 N1-3+ N5-7 and another symmetrical position. White now has the choice that Black had on move 2, but what is best play and who wins - I have no idea. Let me have yours.

Here's a lively game from this summer's Willesden tournament.

Jimmy Tang Paul Byway

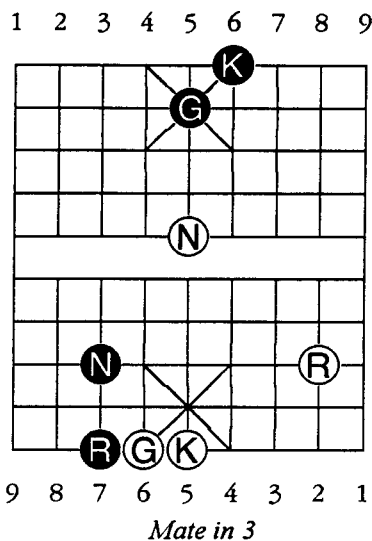
- | | |
|-------------|-------|
| 1. B7+5 | P3+1 |
| 2. N8+7 | N2+3 |
| 3. C8-2 | N8+9 |
| 4. C8=7 | B3+5 |
| 5. R9=8 | N3+4 |
| 6. C2=4 | P9+1 |
| 7. P1+1 | N9+8 |
| 8. R8+4 | P9+1 |
| 9. N2+3 | N8+7 |
| 10. R8=3 | P9=8 |
| 11. R1+9 | P8=7 |
| 12. B5+3 | P7+1 |
| 13. B3-5 | N7-6? |
| 14. P5+1 | N6+7 |
| 15. R1-3 | N6-5 |
| 16. G4+5 | N4+3 |
| 17. R1=5 | N5+6 |
| 18. G5+4 | N3+1? |
| 19. C7+5 | R1=3 |
| 20. C7-1 | R3+5? |
| 21. B5+7 | N1+3 |
| 22. K5=4 | C8=6 |
| 23. G4-5?? | C2-1 |
| 24. Resigns | |



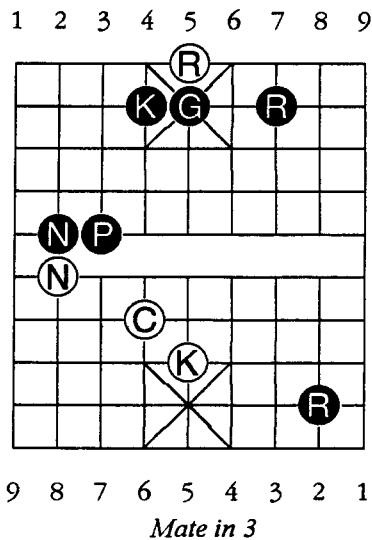
Black's 13th was a poor move: N4+6 or R1+1 should have been preferred. His 18th, looking for a N+C mate, was negated by the reply. The rook sacrifice only worked because White played the line I had foreseen: if instead 23 R5=4 Black is in trouble.

We finish with two more problems from the tourney in *Scacchi e Scienze Applicate Vol.14, No.16, 1996*. The solutions will be found on page 16.

Lin Yuan China



David Woo U.S.A.



Postscript

At the recent Mind Sports Olympiad, the prizes in the main events were taken by Woo Wei Cheung (France), Say Ty Hua (France), and young Chen Li (UK) from Glasgow. Chen Li was being trained as a professional in Beijing before she gave it up to come to college in the United Kingdom.

REVIEWS

by David Pritchard

GAMES

Omega Chess is played on a 10x10 board with four extra squares, one diagonally adjacent to each corner square. Each side has 22 men; the standard 16 chessmen plus two extra pawns and two each of two new pieces: Wizards and Champions. The move of the Wizard can best be described as that of a camel plus a fers (i.e., extended knight's move or one square diagonally). The Champion moves two squares in any direction (like a queen), leaping the intervening square, or one square orthogonally. For the historian and problemist, this is an alfil plus a dabbaba plus a wazir. The starting position has the board with a white square in the left-hand corner, the normal piece line-up (kings facing each other) but with the Champions in the corner squares outside the rooks. The Wizards occupy the four extra squares and the pawns the 2nd/9th ranks. The game is chess with a single amendment: pawns can move up to three squares initially. If you find chess too easy or just plain boring, this could be the game for you.

It is easy to condemn a game like this on the grounds that adding pieces don't in principle make for a good game and at worst are a commercial ploy. But can one for instance compare Omega Chess with Modern Courier Chess? I think you would have to know both games well to answer that, so I will not pass judgement. What can be said with confidence is that the the folding board and the felted plastic men (full-sized king) are of excellent quality, the overall design highly professional and the price under the circumstances remarkably low. Incidentally, the board you can turn over and use as a normal chess board.

A monthly international quickplay tournament has been announced; the first, it is claimed, for any chess variant. The inaugural tournament took place 9th-11th July in Budapest, the regular venue for the event which will cover the first Saturday of each month. Cash prizes (dollars, not

forints)! If you are interested, contact me for details.

Here for the record is a recent GM quick-play match; ranks 0-9, files a-j: *White Alex Sherzer Black Judit Polgar* 1 f4 d5 2 Nd2 Ng7 3 Wa2 Cc7 4 Ng2 f7 5 Wj2 (*White has now brought both his Wizards into play*) Wa7 6 e4 dxe4 7 Nxe4 Bb4 8 Be1 Nd7 9 c3 Be7 10 Wi5 0-0 11 d4 Cc6 12 Bd3 b5 13 b4 Wd6 14 Cc2 Wj7 15 Ch2 Wi4 16 Nh4 Wh5 17 Wd1 We3 18 Kg0 c7 19 i4 Wg4 20 Be2 Wd5 21 Rc0 Bb7 22 Nc5 Nxc5 23 bxc5 Qd8 24 Qh3 Wxh4 25 Bxh4 Bxh4 26 Wxh4 Ch7 27 Wg2 Ce4 28 Cxe4 Wxe4 29 Qj3 j7 30 i5 i6 31 Wxg7 hxg7 32 Ri3 Ki8 33 Qj4 Rh9 34 Rj3 Ci7 35 Re0 Qf6 36 Bc0 e6 37 Bb1 Wf5 38 Wxf5 exf5 39 Re8 Rh8 40 Rje3 g6 41 Qi3 Qg7 42 j4 b4 43 R8e5 bxc3 44 Rxc3 Bxh1+ 45 Kxh1 Rxb1 46 Ra3 Ch7 47 Rxa8 Ch5 48 Ra9 Qh7 49 Ree9 Cj3+ 50 Qxj3 (*White has no option: K and Q are forked by the Champion*) Qxh2+ 51 Resigns.

Obtainable from **Somac Inc., 207 Huron Street, Stratford, Ontario N5A 5S9, Canada.** Pay by Visa or Mastercard in \$CAN; price, including postage to Europe, works out at about £17. A collector's item. There is a web site that also discusses the evolution of Chess:

www.omegachess.com.

BOOKS

Chess Braintwisters

by Burt Hochberg

(Sterling Publishing Co. Inc. - price?)

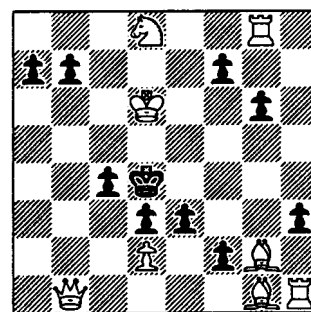
This collection of odd-ball braintwisters could be better described as puzzles rather than problems - even some of the stipulations are puzzling (e.g., mate in 0 moves). Variant Chess figures prominently throughout thanks in part to our own John Beasley who, together with the immortal T.R.Dawson, hogs the list of contributors.

Burt Hochberg is well known as the former editor of *GAMES* magazine. He is not a problemist, as he makes clear, having invented only one chess problem in his life: *How many queens of the same colour can you arrange on the board so that no*

queen attacks any other? Well? Eight? No, sixty four - Queens of the same colour don't attack each other!

This is a deal easier than the rest of the puzzles in the book (110 plus) although some at least are hardly difficult. Many are old favourites, interspersed with several original compositions. The puzzle below is one I have frequently baffled chess players with - but then I never gave them the sound advice that accompanies it here: 'If you have trouble solving this puzzle set up the position on an actual board.'

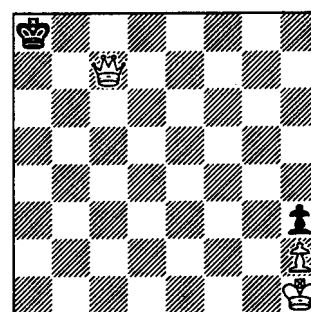
H. Fischer (1910)



Mate in one

The following puzzle, stunningly simple or difficult depending on whether your mind is in gear or not, was new to me:

J Beasley (BCM 1987)



Fuddled men: White mates in two

Fuddled men have had too much to drink and can't make two moves in succession. An immobilised piece (one that has just moved) makes no threat because it's fuddled.

The end of the book has a 12-page crash course in chess. You may feel you can skip this. Verdict: A pleasant way to go berserk.

Solutions to the puzzles on page 16.

SYMMETRIC FULLY RANDOMISED CHESS

by George Jelliss
and Peter Coast

This tournament ran from Aug 98 to Sep 99. Peter Coast is the winner on 4½ points: George Jelliss, Robert Reynolds and David Richardson 2½.

	PC	GJ	RR	DR	
PC	xx	½1	11	10	4½
GJ	½0	xx	01	01	2½
RR	00	10	xx	½1	2½
DR	10	01	½0	xx	2½

INTRODUCTION

Orthodox chess rules apply except as follows:-

(1) The four pairs KQ, RR, BB, NN are arranged symmetrically on the back rank. This ensures, in particular, that the positions do not have all the heavyweight pieces on the same wing, and that the two bishops are on opposite colour squares.

There are 24 ways of arranging the 8 pieces symmetrically with K to the right of Q, and in a tournament with 4 players, playing 2 games against each opponent, there will be 24 arrays. The idea was to make use of this coincidence and assign all 24 arrangements at random. However, an error in typing out the pairing sheet resulted in one arrangement occurring twice and another being omitted. Fortunately this does not seem to have spoiled the tournament.

(2) White places K to the right of Q, but Black then chooses, before the first move is made, whether to place his K to the right or left of Q.

(3) Castling:- (a) with an even separation K0000R becomes 00RK00 and (b) with an odd separation K000R becomes 0RK00 with K on the central space.

PLAYERS' COMMENTS

GJ:- Once the opening phase is over, randomised chess is too much like the orthodox variety for me. I prefer more radical variants. The title 'Symmetric Fully Randomised' was perhaps not well chosen, since while left - right

symmetry is maintained the Black - White symmetry is not, and randomisation is restricted rather than full.

DR:- Thanks for a well run and enjoyable tournament.

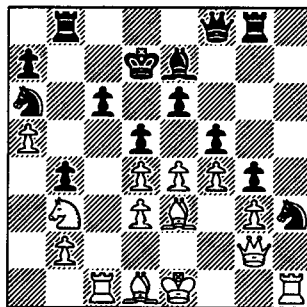
RR:- I feel that some starting positions were either very favourable or very unfavourable and appeared to give one side a significant advantage from the word go. In some of the games it seems quite difficult to develop the pieces. Moving pawns to develop bishops, for example, can hinder the development of a knight. Even so, it was an enjoyable tournament to play in.

THE GAMES

Coast - Jelliss



1 d4 Ng6 2 e4 b5 3 Nd3 e6 4 a4 b4
5 a5 Ba6 6 f3 Be7 7 Ne3 c6 8 Ba2
Bxd3 9 cxd3 Nf4 10 Bf2 g5 11 g3
Nh3 12 Nc4 h5 13 Be3 Nc7 14 Ne5
f6 15 Nc4 d5 16 Nd2 Qd7 17 Nb3
Na6 18 Rc1 Qc7 19 Qc2 Kd7 20
Qg2 Nf4 21 Qd2 Nh3 22 Qg2 g4 23
f4 h4 24 Bb1 hxg3 25 hxg3 Qd8 26
Bc2 f5 27 Bd1 Qf8 draw agreed



(No progress seems possible unless one player makes a pawn capture, which would probably be to the capturer's disadvantage - GJ).

Jelliss - Coast



1 e4 e5 2 b4 Nf6 3 f3 d5 4 exd5
Nxd5 5 a3 f6 6 Nf2 a5 7 b5 Bc5 8
Ned3 Qa7 9 Nxc5 Qxc5 10 Ne4 Qe7
(Poisoned pawn! 10...Qxc2 11 Rb2 -

PC) 11 d4 exd4 12 Bb2 c5 13 bxc ep,
Nxc6 14 Bxd4 Nxd4 15 Qxd4 Qxa3
16 Bb5 Ne3 17 Ra1 Nxc2 18 Rxa3
Rxd4 19 Rxa5 Red8 20 Be2 Ne3 21
Ra3 Nc4 22 Rb3 Nd2 23 Re3 Nxe4
24 fxe4 Re8 25 Rd1 Rxd1+ 26 Bxd1
Bd7 27 Kg1 Bc6 28 Bc2 Re5 29 Kf2
Kg8 30 g4 h5 31 h3 hxg4 32 hxg4
Kf7 33 Kf3 Ke6 34 Re1 Rc5 35
Bb3+ Ke5 36 Resigns. (This was the
last game to be completed).

Coast - Reynolds



1 e4 Ng6 2 b4 d6 3 d3 e5 4 g3 Bd7
5 Ne3 Bh3+ 6 Bg2 Bxg2+ 7 N1xg2
Nb6 8 0-0 (Kg1,Rf1) 0-0 (Kg8,Rf8)
9 Nf5 Bf6 10 N2e3 Qe6 11 c4 c6 12
Qa3 a6 13 c5 dxc5 14 bxc5 Nc8 15
Nc4 Nge7 16 Nfd6 Nxd6 17 Nxd6
Qd7 18 f4 Ng6 19 fxe5 Bxe5 20
Bxe5 Nxe5 21 Qb3 b5 22 d4 Ng4 23
Rf4 a5 24 Qf3 Nh6 25 Rf1 b4 26
Qb3 Ra8 27 d5 Ra7 28 Kg2 Qc7 29
Qc4 Qd7 30 Nf5 Nxf5 31 Rxf5 Kh8
32 d6 g6 33 Rf6 Qg4 34 h3 Qg5 35
Qd4 Black resigns.

Reynolds - Coast



1 d4 f5 2 Bd2 Nb6 3 Nf3 h6 4 b3 d5
5 a4 c6 6 a5 Nd7 7 c4 Nf7 8 Nc3 e5
9 e3 e4 10 Nh4 Nh8 11 g3 g5 12
Ng2 dxc4 13 b4 Nf6 14 Ba4 Qe6 15
Qb2 b5 16 axb (ep) axb6 17 d5 Nxd5
18 Nxd5 cxd5 19 Bc3 Ng6 20 Bb5
Be5 21 Ba6 Rc7 22 0-0 (Kg1,Rf1)
Bxc3 23 Qxc3 Qe5 24 Qa3 0-0
(Ke8,Rd8) 25 Qa4+ Kf8 26 Rfd1 Qf6
27 Ne1 Ne5 28 Ra2 Nd3 29 Nxd3
cxd3 30 Rad2 d4 31 Qa1 Kg7 32
Rc1 Rc3 33 exd4 Rxc1+ 34 Qxc1
Qxd4 35 Resigns.

Coast - Richardson (notes by PC)



(Asymmetrical randomisation raises the possibility of the initial position being favourable to one player. I felt

this was the case here: a natural approach by both players quickly led to a positionally won game for White.) 1 c4 e5 2 b4 f5 (Both players are thinking of an attack on the opposing K. White's centre is stronger because of the better, as it turns out, position of Qb1 and Na1.) 3 Nb3 Ne7 (Black makes a concession in the interests of development. Bg6 would block in the Q, but g6 may be better overall.) 4 d4 g5 5 Bc3 e4 (This is, I believe, a further concession which gives W a very good game: d6 holds the centre, in particular d4, better.) 6 d5 Qg8 7 e3 Qf7 8 Nd4 (Now Black has real difficulties with his development.) Na6 (The N is a spectator for the rest of the game, but 8...c5 9 Nb5 Qg6 10 Bxc5 Rxc5 11 Bd4 is hardly attractive.) 9 Ng3 d6 10 Ne6 Rg8 11 Bh5 Ng6 (White now has an overwhelming position without having had to do anything. The initial position must have been favourable!) 12 f3 Bd7 13 Nxd8 Rxd8 14 fxe4 f4 15 Nf5 Rdf8 (Looks like the wrong rook, but Rgf8 can be simply answered by exf4, inter alia.) 16 Nh6 Qe7 17 Nxg8 Rxd8 18 Bxg6 Rxd6 19 Qd3 (My aim now is to neutralise Black's counterattack and win the resulting ending.) h5 20 e5 Rg8 21 e6 Bc8 (I think Be8 must be objectively better.) 22 exf4 gxf4 23 Rxf4 Qg5 24 Qf3 h4 25 Rf1 b6 26 Bf6 Qg6 27 Bxh4 Black resigns.

Richardson - Reynolds



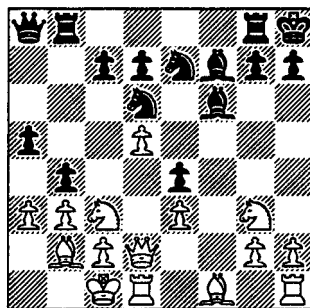
1 b4 c6 2 e3 d5 3 Bb2 e5 4 Nf3 f6 5 Nc3 Be6 6 Be2 Nd6 7 a4 0-0 (Kg8,Rf8) 8 d3 N8f7 9 b5 c5 10 0-0 (Kh1,Rg1) d4 11 exd4 cxd4 12 Ne4 Nxe4 13 dxe4 Nd6 14 Bd3 Nc4 15 Bxc4 Bxc4 16 Qe1 Bd6 17 Rd1 Qe6 18 g4 Rac8 19 Nh4 g6 20 f3 Bc5 21 Rg2 Rc7 22 Bc1 R8f7 23 Qg3 Qc8 24 f4 Bd6 25 f5 g5 26 Nf3 a6 27 b6 Rc6 28 h4 h6 29 a5 Bb4 30 hxg5 hxg5 31 Rh2 Rh7 32 Bd2 Rxd2+ 33 Qxh2 Bxd2 34 Rxd2 Qd7 35 Qg3 Qg7 36 Rh2 Rc5 37 Nxd4 Rxa5 38 Rh5 Bf7 39 Ne6 Bxe6 40 fxe6 Ra1+ 41 Kg2 Rd1 42 Qc3 Rd8 43 e7 Qxe7 44 Qb3+ Kf8 45 Qh3 Qd6 46 Rh8+ Kf7 47 Qh7+ Ke6 48 Qf5+ Kf7 49 Rh7+ Kf8 50 Rxb7 Qd2+ 51 Qf2

Qd6 52 Ra7 Qc6 53 Kh2 Draw agreed.

Richardson - Coast
(notes by PC)



(White here happens by chance to have the orthodox opening position.) 1 b3 e5 (I decided to try to maintain e5 as a protection to my K.) 2 Bb2 f6 3 d4 e4 4 d5 b5 (I now felt I had a natural way of keeping central control by holding on to e4, preventing c4 and developing my minor pieces.) 5 Nc3 Nd6 6 f3 f5 7 fxe4 fxe4 8 a3 Bf6 9 e3 Bf7 10 Qd2 Ng6 (I felt I had come out of the opening well - ahead in development, because my king is already safe - an advantage of the opening position - and competing in the centre.) 11 Nge2 Ne7 (? This is a superficial move motivated by greed. Further development moves such as Rge8, Qb7 and a5 look more natural.) 12 0-0-0 a5 13 Ng3 b4 (? This gives up too much in the centre for the attack to be effective.)



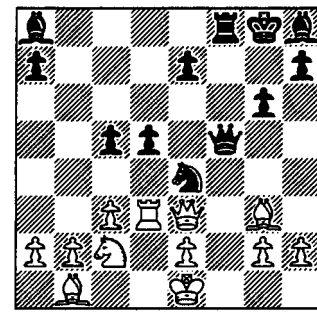
14 Ncxe4 Bxb2+ 15 Kxb2 bxa3+ 16 Kxa3 Nxe4 17 Nxe4 Bxd5 (The pawn is regained, but at a high cost. Black's king now becomes the target.) 18 Ng5! h6 19 h4! (Now Qd3 is threatened and it's difficult to see a sensible counter. Black has succeeded in developing White's Rh1 without the necessity of its moving, the centre is weak, and White's king is secure. Desperate measures are called for.) 0-0 (Kg8,Rh8. Undevelops the R, but needs must...) 20 e4 a4 21 b4 hxg5 (What else? 21...Bc6 22 Bc4+ Kf8 23 Qf2+ is hopeless.) 22 exd5 Rxd4 23 Rxd4 gxf4 24 Bc4 d6 25 Qg5 Re8 26 Bb5 Black resigns. (Black lost this game through poor play: his position after 10 moves was satisfactory, and

probably distinctly better. The opening position, I feel, gave him an advantage in that the K was well protected and the minor pieces nearer the centre, allowing quick and natural development.)

Jelliss - Reynolds



1 d4 d5 2 c3 g6 3 Nc2 b6 4 Rd3 c5 5 f4 Nd7 6 Bf2 Nd6 7 Ng3 Nf6 8 f5 Nde4 9 Nxe4 Nxe4 10 Bg3 Qc8 11 fxg6 fxg6 12 0-0 (Ke1,Rf1) Rf8 13 Rxf8+ Rxf8 14 dxc5 bxc5 15 Qe3 Qf5



16 Qf3 Nxd3 17 hxg3 e5 18 Ne3 Qg5 19 Qg4 Qxg4 20 Nxg4 e4 21 Rd1 h5 22 Nf2 Be5 23 Nh3 Bxg3+ 24 Kd2 d4 25 cxd4 cxd4 26 e3 d3 27 Rc1 Bd5 28 Rc5 Rf5 29 Ra5 g5 30 Rxa7 g4 31 Nf4 Bxf4 32 exf4 Rxf4 (I never even saw the idea of 31...Rxf4 32 exf4 Bxf4+ but it looks quite interesting - RR) 33 Ke1 h4 34 Re7 h3 35 gxh3 gxh3 36 Re5 Bf7 37 Rg5+ Kf8 38 Rg1 h2 39 Rh1 Rh4 40 Kf2 d2 41 Bc2 (moves at last! - GJ) Bh5 42 Kg3 e3 43 Resigns. (After 43 Kxh4 e2 44 Kxh5 e1Q 45 Rxh2 Qe5+ and cannot stop 46 Qxh2)

Reynolds - Richardson



1 c4 d6 2 d4 b6 3 e4 Qb7 4 f3 f5 5 d5 g5 6 Bd3 f4 7 Qb1 Rf7 8 Nb3 e5 9 dxe ep Nxe6 10 Bc2 h5 11 Nd4 N8g7 12 Re2 Nxd4 13 Bxd4 Ne6 14 Bxh8 Kxh8 15 b4 c5 16 Red2 Nd4 17 Qb2 Rg8 18 Rxd4 cxd4 19 Rxd4 Rgg7 20 Rxd6 (? - DR) Kg8 21 Bb3 Rd7 22 c5+ Rdf7 23 c6 Qc7 24 e5 Bxc6 25 Qc3 Bd5 26 Qxc7 Rxc7 27

Rxd5 Kf8 28 Kg1 g4 29 Kf2 Ke7 30 Nd2 g3+ 31 hxg3 fxg3+ 32 Ke3 h4 33 f4 Rg4 34 f5 h3 35 f6+ Ke8 36 e6 hxg2 37 f7+ Ke7 38 Nf3 Rc3+ 39 Kd2 Rxf3 40 Rd7+ Kf8 41 e7+ Kg7 42 f8Q+ Rxf8 43 e8Q dis ch! Black resigns.

Richardson - Jelliss

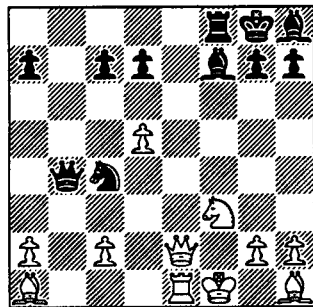


1 g3 d5 2 b3 f6 3 Ne3 c6 4 Nd3 e5 5 0-0 (Kf1,Re1) Ng6 6 Kg1 h5 7 Rf1 Bd6 8 c4 e4 9 Ne1 h4 10 gxh4 Nxh4 11 f4 f5 12 N1g2 g5 13 fxg5 Qxg5 14 Qe1 Rg8 15 cxd5 f4 16 b4 fxe3 17 Bf6 Qxg2+ 18 Resigns. (18 Bxg2 Rxg2+ 19 Kh1 Rxh2+ 20 Kg1 Rg8+ etc.)

Jelliss - Richardson



1 d4 f5 2 Nd2 Nf6 3 f3 b6 4 b3 Nd5 5 Nc4 b5 6 e4 fxe4 7 fxe4 Rxf1+ 8 Kxf1 bxc4 (DR's opening seems to have been on the assumption that g8 was Q, since he tried to play Qf7+ here, but the transposition of K and Q at this point doesn't seem to spoil his subsequent game!) 9 exd5 Bxd5 10 Qh5 Bf7 11 Qe2 Nc6 12 bxc4 Rf8 13 Nf3 Qb4 14 d5 Na5 15 Re1 Nxc4

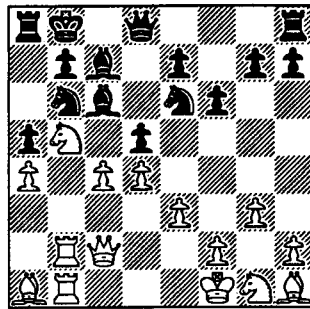


16 Qxe7 (It's all jolly exciting isn't it as someone says - GJ) Nd2+ 17 Kf2 Qb6+ 18 Qe3 Bxd5 19 Bd4 Ne4+ 20 Kg1 c5 21 Ba1 g6 22 c4 Bxa1 23 cxd5 Bd4 24 Nxd4 cxd4 25 Qxe4 d3+ 26 Re3 d2 27 h3 d1Q+ 28 Kh2 Qd6+ 29 g3 Rf2+ 30 Resigns. (Can't help but feel I miscalculated there somewhere. Counterplay against bK was blocked by pawns. Now it all seems to reduce to Q v B - GJ)

Reynolds - Jelliss



1 b4 d6 2 d3 f6 3 c4 a6 4 Nc3 Nb6 5 Qc2 Ne6 6 e3 c5 7 Rb1 cxb4 8 Rxb4 Bc6 9 a4 a5 10 Rb2 Bc7 11 Reb1 Qd8 (Thinking of Q-side castling, but White's attack gave no time for that - GJ) 12 Nb5 Nd7 13 d4 d5 14 g3 Nb6



15 Nxc7 Bxa4 16 Qxa4 Nxa4 17 Rxb7+ Kc8 18 Nxe6 Qd6 19 Bxd5 Rb8 20 Rxb8+ Qxb8 21 Rxb8+ Kxb8 22 Bc6 Nb6 23 c5 Nc4 24 Ke2 Ka7 25 Bc3 Rb8 26 Bd5 Black resigns. (White can win the a-pawn and force the c-pawn through - RR)

STING

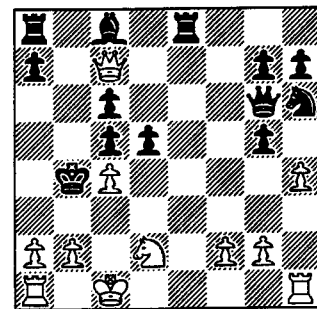
by George Jelliss and Ian Richardson

An experimental BCVS tournament in this variant, in which the kings are scorpions, i.e. have the added power of a grasshopper, was proposed in March 1998. (A grasshopper moves on queen lines, leaping over a piece of either colour to land on the square immediately beyond. - Ed.) Three entries were received, so the tournament went ahead, but Colin Carter withdrew leaving a head to head match between George Jelliss and Ian Richardson. This was completed in March 1999, one win each.

The better of the games is given below, with notes by both players: I.R. sums up:- We set out to play an adventurous scorpionic type of game and I think we achieved that, having explored the possibilities of scorpions pretty thoroughly.

Ian Richardson - George Jelliss

1 e4 e6 2 d4 c5 3 c3 Qb6 4 Nf3 Kg6 (deliberately trying out provocative scorpion play) 5 Kg3 Bd6+ 6 e5 Be7 (both knight checks at e5 and h4 now countered) 7 d5 exd5 8 Qxd5 Qc6 9 Ng5+ Kb6 (long moves may carry the king through check) 10 Qb3+ Kc7 11 Bb5 Qg6 (check converted into pin. IR:- I made a note a couple of moves back: 'avoid Qg6', and then forgot!) 12 h4 (also considered was 12 f4 d6? 13 f5 Bxf5 14 exd6+ and Q(B)xd6 is illegal self check, so Kxd6 15 Rd1+ Kf8) Nh6 13 Kg1 (I was expecting 13 h5 here but 13...Qf5 would be strong) d6? (trying to bring Bc8 into play, but with adverse effects along other lines) 14 Bf4 d5 15 e6+ Bd6 16 Bxd6+ Kxd6 17 e7 Nc6 18 Bxc6 bxc6 19 Nd2 f6 20 c4? (sacrificing the knight for an attack on the Black king) fxg5 21 Qg3+ Kxe7 22 Qc7+ Kb4 23 Ke3 Re8+ (also creates a bolt-hole for the king at h8) 24 Kc1 (interesting is 24...Re1+ 25 Rxe1 Kxe1 26 Ke3+ Qb1 27 Rxb1 mate)



24...dxc4 25 b3 Ka3!? (26 Qa5+ Kxa1 27 Qc3+ Ka3 28 Nxc4+ or 26...Kd6 27 Nxc4+ look decisive for White. IR:- I was tempted to allow Kxa1 but discretion prevailed) 26 Rb1 Kc3 27 Ka1! (stopping Kh8 at the cost of another knight) Kxd2 (IR:- The knight was poisoned, but not fatally I fear; the scorpion's sting may prove to be the stronger poison!) 28 Rb2+ Kxg2 29 f3+ Kxf3 30 Rf1+ Ke4 31 hxg5 Nf5 32 Qf4+ Kd5 33 bxc4+ Ke6 34 Qc7 Ne3! 35 Rd2 (IR:- It was touch and go for a while. I tried the swap of rooks for queen in desperation.) Nxf1 36 Rd6+ Kf5 37 Rxg6 Kxg6 38 Qf4 Re1+ 39 Resigns (IR:- After 39 Ka3 Kb6! 40 Kxa8 would be suicide (threat of Re8, Bb7), and if 40 Qf2 Re3+ 41 K~ Bh3! and Black's pieces are safe).

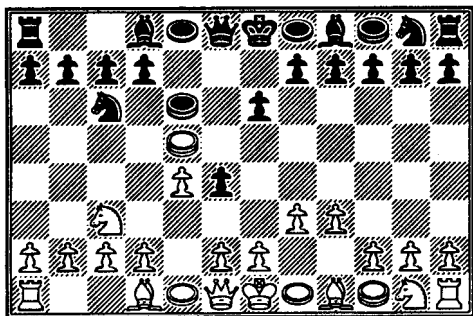
MODERN COURIER CHESS

by Paul Byway

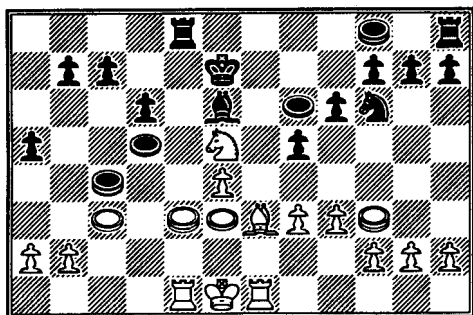
Here is a game from the correspondence match-tournament (1994-1996) involving Peter Wood, Roy Talbot and your new editor. (Results:- PB 2, RT 1, PW 0). I hope to give the other two games in the next issue.

Peter Wood - Paul Byway

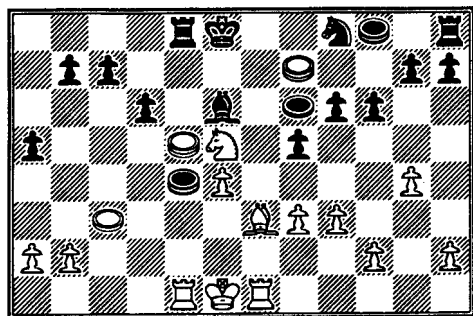
1 e4 e5 2 Ce3 Nc6 3 h3 g6 4 i3 Ce6 5 Nc3 f5 6 Cxe5 f4



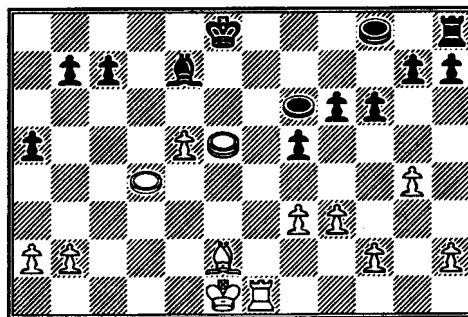
7 d4 Nxd4 8 Nb5 Nxb5 9 Qxb5 Fc6 10 Qb3 Qf7 11 Qf3 (White lays siege to f4) g5 12 g3 Qg6 13 Kf1 Nj6 14 gxf4 gxf4 15 Qxf4 d6 (To save the c-pawn) 16 Ce3 Qxe4 17 Qg3+ Qg6 18 Nj3 Qxg3 19 Bxg3 Bf6 (Here the bishop attacks both wings and is safe from a courier) 20 Ni5 h5 21 Fc3 Fh6 22 Nj3 i6 23 f4 Cc4 (Black goes pawn grabbing: White replies in exemplary fashion) 24 Ff3 a5 25 Nh4 Bxc2 26 Bxc2 Cxc2 27 Cj3 Fd5 28 Nf5 Re8 29 Rg1 Kf7 30 Re1 Cc4



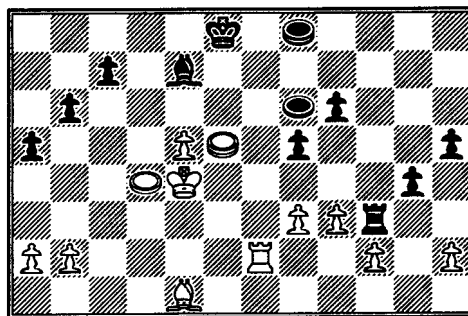
(The White initiative reaches dangerous proportions: with his next he hopes to open up the kingside) 31 k4 Ni8 32 Cl5 j6 33 Cj7 Fe4 34 Fxe4 Cxe4 35 Ch7+ Kf8 36 Ce5



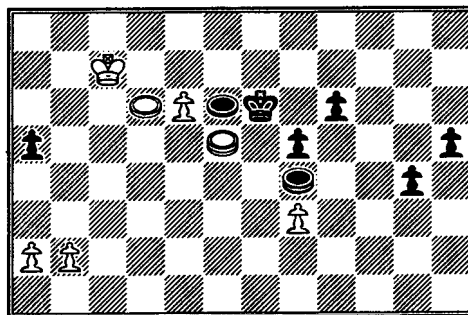
Bd8 37 Rxe4 Ng7 38 Bf2 dxe5 39 Rxe5 Rxe5 40 fxe5 Nxf5 41 Cxf5 Be7 42 Fd4 (Against White's central pressure Black has an undeveloped kingside. After much thought I decided there was no time to develop the rook, except in situ.)





42...l5 43 k5 jxk5 44 Bxk7 Rk8 45 Be1 b6 46 Ke2 Ch8 47 Kd3 Rj8 48 Rg2 k4 49 Ke4 Rj3



(This has not turned out well for White. If a mating attack doesn't succeed he has a long term strategic weakness, for the kingside pawns are vulnerable to the Black courier. His next is surely wrong.) 50 Bh4 Bxh4 51 ixh4 Cj6 52 Kd5 Cxh4 53 Rc2 c5 54 Fxc5 Rxj2 (If the rooks come off the Black king cannot be dislodged from e8) 55 Rc4 Fg5 (A vital move) 56 Fd6 Rx12 57 Rc8+ Kg7 58 Rc7+ Kg6 59 e6 Rd2+ 60 Kc6 Rc2+ 61 Kxb6 Rxc7 62 Kxc7 Ff6



63 Kd7 k3 64 Fe5 k2 65 Fxf6 k1Q 66 e7 Qd1+ 67 Kc7 Qc2+ 68 Kd8 Cxf6+ 69 Resigns (It's all over. But even if White had won the queen for the e-pawn, Black's i-pawn (not the l-pawn) would have won the game because the White courier covers the wrong files).

NB The fers  moves one square diagonally. While unmoved it has the privilege of a courier leap (indicated here by italics). The courier  moves to the second square in eight directions, jumping over the first like a knight.

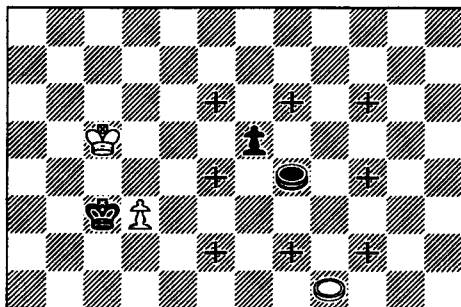
THE END IS NIGH !

by Paul Byway

Being newly taken up with editing 'Variant Chess', I have tried to lighten the load by raiding my larder: some good things were left there, for fear that they might prove too difficult, but it's time to dust them down and bring them out !

The first study collection I bought was the excellent 'Leonid Kubbel's Chess Endgame Studies' by Timothy Whitworth: the introduction gives an early stalemate study which the composer later elaborated. Unsurprisingly, my second MCC study faithfully followed this pattern: here is my later version

#68 Paul Byway



Draw

The possible moves of the Black courier are highlighted. It can be seen that the White fers, which moves like a one-stop bishop, is trapped against the first rank. Since his pawn is also under attack, how is White to save himself?

1. Kc5-d5

Unfortunately for White, the obvious counterattack fails: 1 d4 g4 2 d5 g3 3 d6 g2 4 Fh2 Cxh2 5 d7 g1Q+ wins. Nor is there any hope in 1 Fh2 Cxh2 2 Kd5 g4 3 Ke4 Kd2 4 d4 Ke2 5 d5 g3

1. ... Kc3xd3
2. Kd5-e5

An offer of the fers doesn't work if Black is careful: 2 Fh2 Ke3! (Cxh2? would lead back to the main line) 3 Ke5 (Ff3 Cf2) Kf3 4 Kf5 g4 5 Fg1 g3 6 Kg5 Cf2 7 Kh5 Kg2 8 Kg4 Ch2 wins. Now the Black pawn must run for his life.

2. ... g5-g4
3. Ke5-f5

Attempting to bring the fers into play still comes to grief after 3 Fh2 Ke3! 4 Fg3 Ch6 5 Kf5 Kf3 6 Fh2 Cf4 wins.

3. ... g4-g3
4. Kf5-g4 g3-g2
5. Fi1-h2 Ch4xh2
6. Kg4-f3 g2-g1Q (R)

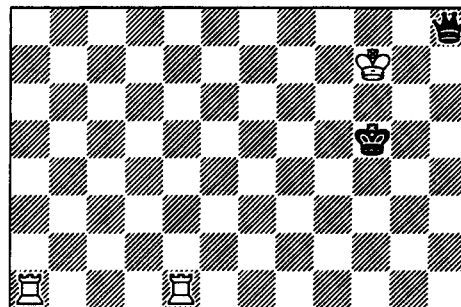
Stalemate. The alternative is 6 ... g1B(N,C,F) 7 Kg2 and draws.

Of course, I haven't told you everything by any means. You might like to consider how White is going to draw if Black plays 1 ... g4 or 1 ... Kd2 instead of 1 ... Kxd3.

COMPETITION 9

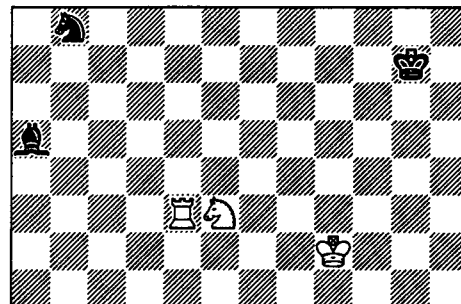
Here are three for solution: the answers will be given in the next issue. #69 should prove to be easier than the others.

#69 MCC



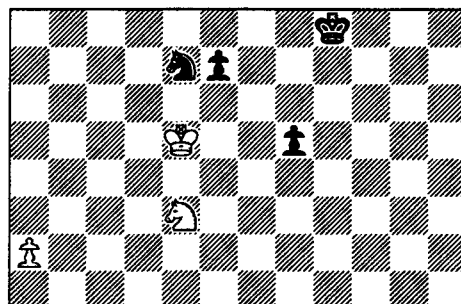
Win

#70 (After L.I.Kubbel) MCC



Win

#71 (After V & M Platov) MCC

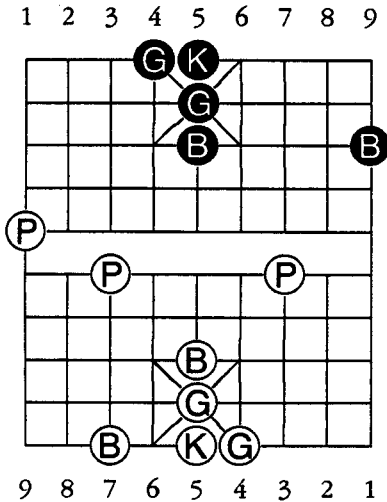


Win

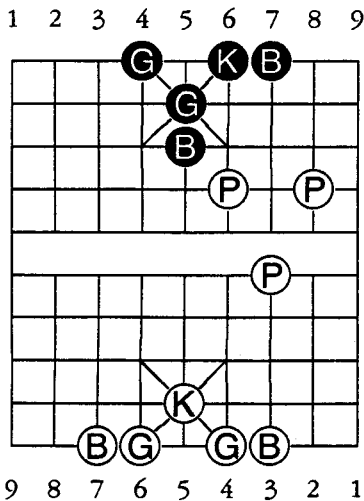
The original of #70 contained a White pawn, which had no purpose other than to convert the final position from a draw to a win. #71 is an idea of the Platovs which could not be successfully shown on the smaller board: this version also doubles the solution. It seems surprising that Black should lose, except that his king is some distance from the action.

XIANGQI

At the European Championship in 1997 I watched Norbert Schaefer fail to win with 3 pawns against a complete set of defensive pieces (a difficult theoretical win). In the Shanghai Cup this summer I reached a similar position against Leung after Black's 33rd move. He has just exchanged rooks, judging it to be his best chance. He was right: I drew.

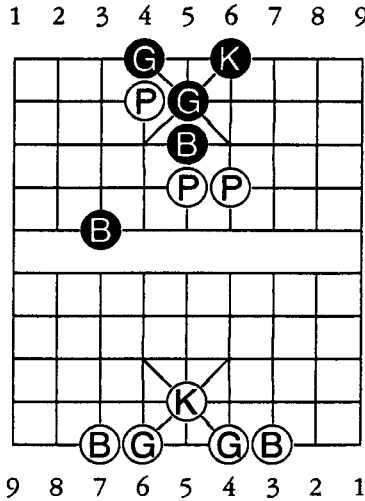


We see that with 3 pawns, at least one can cross the river unopposed, so for any 3 all must eventually cross. The game continued: 34 P9+1 K5=6 35 G5-6 B9+7 36 P9=8 B7-9 37 P8=7 B9+7 38 P7=6 B7-9 39 P7+1 B9+7 40 P7=6 B7-9 41 P=5 B5-3 42 P6=5 B3+1 43 P=6 B1-3 44 B5-3 B3+5 45 K5+1 B5-3 46 P6=5 B3+1 47 P=4 B1+3 48 P4+1 B3-1 49 P4=3 B1-3 50 P3=2 B3+5 51 P5=4 B9-7.



Now the third pawn can cross the river. The next step is to manoeuvre a

pawn to 68 (the elephant's eye): meanwhile Black has been trying to lure me into unwise exchanges. 52 P3+1 K6+1 53 P3+1 B5+3 54 P4=5 K6-1 55 P5=6 B3-1 56 P3=4 B1-3 57 P4=5 B7+5 58 P2=3 K6+1 59 P3=4 K6-1 60 P6=7 B5+3 61 P7+1 B=+5 62 P7+1 K6+1 63 P7=6 K6-1

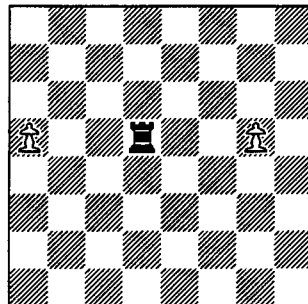


My play in this second stage was not very accurate: it becomes too bad to show from here on. The final stage is to conquer the guard's corner at 47 - this needs both pawns and the king. So White should play P4=3, P5=4, P3+1, K5=4 (key move) and after P4+1 mate cannot be long delayed.

CIRCE LOSING CHESS

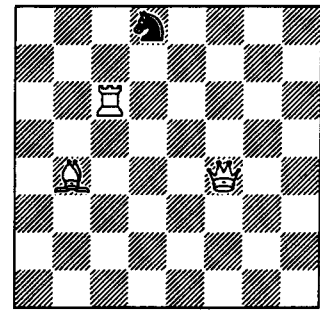
Now here's a perverse variant if ever I saw one: as fast as you give your pieces away they come back! Captured pieces re-appear on the home square of the colour on which they were taken; and pawns on the second rank of the same file: they only vanish if said square is occupied.

#72 R. Turnbull



Win (in 6)

#73 I. Richardson



Win (in 6)

This may be as promising a field for studies as Losing Chess itself. The solutions will be found on page 16.

Solutions to Competition 8

#65 6 ... Nf8(Ke7), a5, Ra6, Rc6, Rxc3, Re3 mate.

#66 8 ... Ke6, Kd5, Nb3, Nd2, Nb1, Re8, c5, c4 Italian mate.

#67 9 Kf3, Bxf6, Be7, f5, f6, f7, g7, g8, Qxh7, Qxe4 mate.

Correct solutions were received from John Beasley, Ian Richardson, Fred Galvin and Ronald Turnbull.

JB) for #67 gave the alternative ...f7, f8Q, Qf4, Qxe4 mate.

IR) for #67 gave both routes and the following:- shift Pf6>e6 and find 9 Bd4, Be3, Ke2, Kd3, f5, f6, f7, f8Q, Qc5 Italian mate. For #66 also gave 8 ... Ke6, Kd5, Re8, Re2, Rxc2, f4, Nc6, Nb4 mate. In Scottish Progressive only this wins immediately.

FG) for #67 gave both routes. For #66 gave 8 ... Ke6, Kd5, Re8, Re2, Rxc2, f4, c5, c4 Italian mate, and the Scottish prog. follow up:- 9 Bxc4+ 10 Ke5, b5, bxc4 mate.

RT) in addition gave two quite different solutions to #66. (a) 8 ... Rxb8, Re8, Nxb5, f4, f3, f7, g7, g8, Qd5 mate and (b) 8 ... Kf6, Ke5, Kf4, a6, axb5, Nb3, Re8, Re3 Italian mate.

The scores are now:-

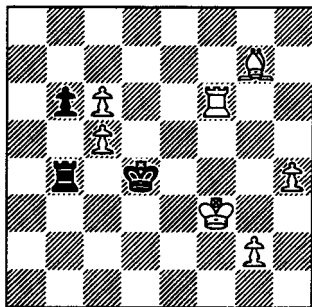
Ian Richardson	28
Fred Galvin	27
David Pritchard	14
Ronald Turnbull	10
John Beasley	3
Stefano Bruzzi	2

PROBLEM PAGES

by Ronald Turnbull

As Autumn leaves fall sadly into the rising seas of the warming globe - as the sun passes to darkness behind the moon of Cornwall - as the deer-stalking season descends onto the mountains of Scotland - what better way to pass the lengthening evenings than with a nice little two-move problem in Fairy Chess? Nearly every thing this time is in three halfmoves, or in two. And some are easy as well as short! One of these is a new correction to a previously published problem. This will allow those with huge memories or databases to score a point over those who are merely clever solvers.

291 - A. ETTINGER



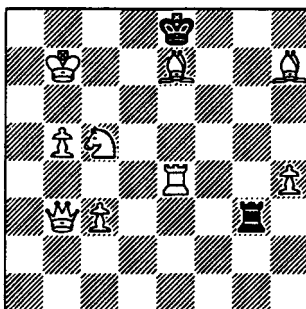
Patrol Chess; helpmate in 2
b) Rb4 to e5

Patrol Chess (291) isn't all that easy. A piece may only capture or give check if it is guarded by one of its own side. So the only moves of wR that give check are 1...Rd6,Rf4 (check from wR) and 1...Rf7,Rg6 (check from wB). Successful solvers may start to wonder if this could be set with three or even four solutions.

Magnetic Chess (292-3) was offered in VC31 (Spring 1999), with the suggestion that the genre would be a paradise for composers. No mention, though, of the poor solvers who must contend with several units moving with every move. Ian wondered if 293 might be "too easy". I did not find it so. No Black moves: White makes two moves (without check to either side) and then mates. Remember that Black can counter check by attracting

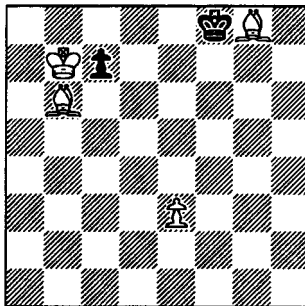
away the checking unit.

292 - I. RICHARDSON



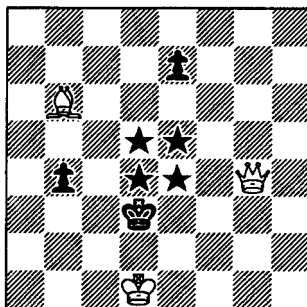
Magnetic Chess
Mate in 2

293 - I. RICHARDSON



Magnetic Chess
Series mate in 3; b) wK b7 to a6

294 - I. RICHARDSON + RT

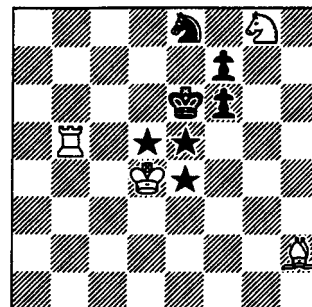


Actuated Revolving Centre
Mate in 2

Readers with scientific minds should now construct a quick wordplay on the fact that magnets when they encounter electrical windings induce circular motions. The "Actuated Revolving Centre" of 294-6 is the four squares de45. When a unit lands on, or departs from, these squares, they rotate by 90° clockwise. Note that check is only

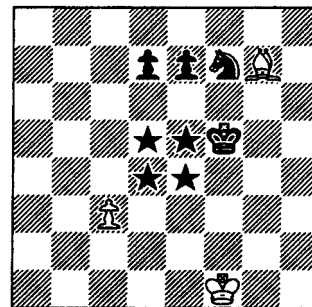
assessed after any rotation. In 294, with stationary centre, White could mate by 1 Qd4. With ARC, the move has to be played as 1 Qe4(Qd4) but 1...Kxd4(Kd5)! escapes. In 296, Black makes 6 moves so that White can then mate.

295 - R. TURNBULL



Actuated Revolving Centre
Mate in 2

296 - C. LYTTON



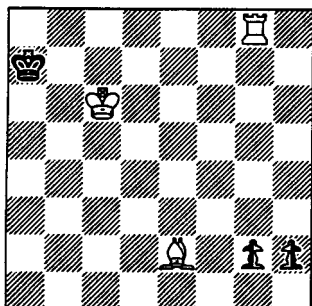
Actuated Revolving Centre
Series helpmate in 6

297 combines neutral pawns with Circe (both seen last issue) and is another seriesmover. Black makes three moves so that White can stalemate in 1. bK is already immobile, and the problem is to deprive Black of moves of the neutrals - made harder by the Circe rule whereby they pop back after White tries to get rid of them by capture. If wR captures on g2, nP (considered Black) is reborn on g7.

The next two combine the Scorpion (Kings have added power of Grasshopper) with Anti-Circe: a captured piece is removed from the board as in orthodox, but the captor is reborn on its array square. This will

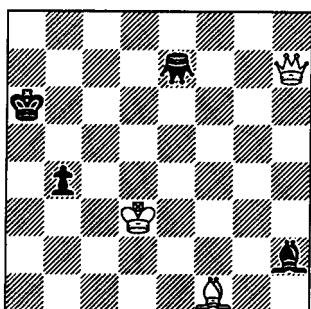
apply also to capturing kings. If the rebirth square is occupied, the capture is illegal. Scorpions were introduced in VC31 (Spring 99). They are reborn on e1, e8. As composers have sent me little, I add one of my own in the same genre.

297 - E. BARTEL



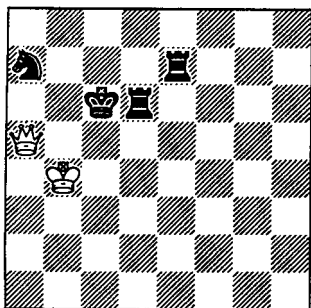
Circe; neutral pawns
Series helpstalemate in 3, 2 solutions

298 - V. NEBOTOV



Anticirce, Scorpions + Grasshopper
Helpmate in 2, 2 solutions

299 - R. TURNBULL

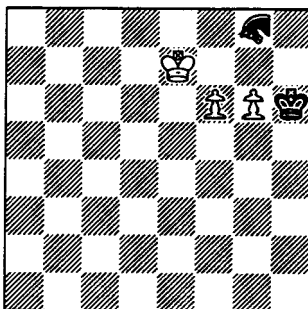


Anticirce, Scorpions
Helpmate in 2, b) add bPb5

Finally a longer seriesmover, where the Scorpions are joined by a Flamingo: this unit leaps (knightlike) with a vector of (1,6). So this one can reach a7, f2 and h2 only. Here Black

moves 8 times so as to let White mate in 1. Note that 1 Kg5?? is illegal check to both sides.

300 - V. NEBOTOV



Scorpions, Flamingo
Series helpmate in 8

There are two more originals for solving in the article on Messigny Chess, and two in 'The Proliferate Problem'.

Solutions to VC32 (Summer 99)

Page 63 no 9 (Turnbull): note that there should be a wN on c4. A thousand apologies. Please try again, it's not hard, solution below.

Solvers: Erich Bartel, George Jelliss, Cedric Lytton, Ian Richardson.

281 (Rice): set 1...Kf1 2 Rh1. 1 Ra1 makes no threat as 2 B*b4(bPb7)/Bc3/Bd2/Bf2/Bg3 P*B! and 2 B*h4(bPh7) is self-check. 1...Kf1 2 B*b4! The transferred mate (after 1...Kf1) is a lucky bonus - composer. There should have been a wP on b2 to stop 1...b3 with its nasty multiple continuation; apologies to composer - RT.

282 (Richardson): 1 Nd3 2 N*e5(Bf8) 3 Ng4 4 Rd1 5 R*g1(Rh8) 6 N*f6(f7). Essentially a problem in Progressive Circe, but no player would be foolish enough to leave K among so many potential self-blocks - RT. Like 281, very simple - EB. Difficult - SE.

283 (Richardson): 1 NRh4 Kd8 2 NRa2+ Kc8/Ke8 3 NRd6/Nc7. Flight-taking key undesirable but seems necessary with this force, and at least it's the less useful flight that goes - RT. Retreating White 2nd nice, but doesn't compensate for flight taking key - CL.

284 (Willmott): 1 Ke7 NRf3 2 Ke8 NRc6 and 1 Kg6 NRf6 2 Kh6 Kf7. Harmonious distant interplay of 2 NR, though the shadow of a de Musset looms (Alfred de Musset, *La Régence* 1849, wKg1, Rb2, Ne4g5, bKe1, Nb1: #3: 1 Rd2 Nx2 2 Nc3!) 2 knights could do the same - CL. Two nice ideal stalemates - EB.

285 (Willmott): 1 Ke5 Gf4 2 Ng5 Gh6 3 f6 f4 and 1 f5 Gg3 2 Ke4 Bg8 3 f4 Bh7. The most difficult problem - IR. In the 2nd, much nicer, mate, wP is redundant. Still, wB switchback, bP occupying 4 sq, quite active wG, nice varied solutions - CL. 2 nice mates, but more accidental than thematic - EB.

286 (Nebotov): 1 a8G 1...Kf5/Kh6/Kh7/Kxh5 2 f8R/f8B/f8N/Gh1. Dragon-promotion mate impossible, so DR just a constructional convenience - SE. Easy key to spot, but enjoyable to work through, and good economy - IR.

287 (Bartel): 1 Kd3 Ge2 2 Ke4 Ge5 3 Kf5 Gg5 4 Kg6 KGF5 5 Kh6 Ge5 6 Kh5 KGd5 and 1 Kc4 Gd3 2 Kd5 Gd6 3 Ke6 Gf6 4 Kf5 Gf4 5 Kg6 KGF5 6 Kf7 KGF3. 2 points available, but no solver found both. Echo - composer.

288 (Bartel): 1 f1O NRh4 2 Od7 NRd2 3 Oc7 NRc4 4 h1O NRf2 5 Oe7 NRd6=. Nightrider runaround - GJ. Orphan problems often distressingly difficult, but not this one - RT. Solved without a board, but pleasant - CL.

289 (Raican): 1 Kb4 Rc6 2 Rc5 Rd3 3 Bd5 Be6 4 Kc4 b4= and 1 Be6 Rd4 2 Rd5 e5 3 Rd6 Rc4+ 4 Kd5 Bf7= and 1 Rg7 Bh7 2 Bg8 Rg6 3 e6 Rf7 4 Kd6 b4=. Every solver found at least two cooks, the shortest (CL, EB) being 1...Rd4 2 Bd5 Rc7+ 3Kd6 Be6 4 Re5 f5=.

290 (Eureka, Ken Whyld Xmas 98). Berolina Pawns, with 1 c7 Qd7 2 Kb6 and not 2 Ka8 Qc6+ 3 Kb8 Kd8 4 Ka7 QxP or 2 Kb8 Qc6 or Kb7 Kd8.

Page 63 no 9 (Turnbull): 1 Ne5 makes no threat but neutral rooks must keep guarding c7,c5. 1...nRd7-b7 2 nRxc7 and 1...nRb5-d5 2 nRxd7. Crude key, but I wanted to keep it simple and easy - RT. Overburdened nRs once they've done each other in. But strong key was first I tried - CL. All play is the same - SE.

Solutions to Ian Richardson's Synthetic Games

Z1 (starred moves have duals)

a) 1 b4 f6* (or f5) 2 b5 f5* 3 b6 f4* 4 bxc7 b6* (or b5) 5 cxd8=S Bb7 6 f3* (or f4) Sa6 7 Sxb7 Sb4* 8 Sa5 Sd3 mate
b) 1 f4 b6* (or b5) 2 f5 b5* 3 f6 b4* 4 fxg7 b3* 5 gxh8=B Sh6* 6 Bg7* Sf5* 7 Bd4* Sh4* 8 Bf2 Sf3 mate

Z2 (some duals as well as arbitrary B move at move 5) 1 f3 f6 2 Kf2 Kf7 3 g3 Kg6 4 Kg2 Kg5 5 Qe1 any 6 Qf2 Kg4 7 Qc5 mate

Points: Max 14
GJ 9, CL 11, IR 10½, EB 9, SE 8.

Apologies to CL and to Aubrey Ingleton, whose VC31 solutions were overlooked. VC31: CL 12, AI 8.

MESSIGNY CHESS

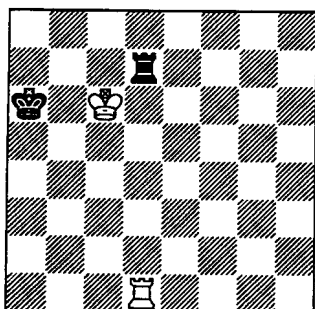
by Ronald Turnbull

Messigny Chess has been seen a few times in Variant Chess recently. It is interesting but tricky: here I round up a few of the simpler effects.

Instead of an ordinary move, a player may exchange the squares of two pieces of the same kind but opposite colours. The opposing player may not immediately reverse the exchange; nor may he make an immediate further exchange with either of the pieces just exchanged.

Kings are included (except in the form Messigny Rex Exclusive). A rook or king that exchanges back to its array square does not regain the power to castle. A pawn returning to its home rank may later be captured en passant. A pawn moving two squares forward by exchange is not susceptible to capture en passant.

1 - RT



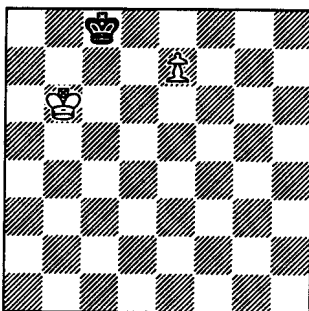
Helpmate in 2, duplex

So in position 1, White's 1 Ra1+ is not mate. Black can escape either by King-swap, or by swap of the checking piece R↔R. There are two ways to avoid escape by King-swap: either the wR must guard the wK as well as attacking the Black one, or White's mating move must itself be K↔K. Similarly, to avoid escape by rook-swap, either the bR must guard the bK, or the mating move must be R↔R.

With the force of Diagram 1, only a K↔K mate is achievable. So 1 K↔K Ra1 2 Ra7 K↔K. The duplex solution, where White starts and Black mates, runs 1 R↔R Ra1 2 Ra7 K↔K. The same moves, but by different players... we seek thematic correspondence between the

phases of a helpmate, but perhaps this example overdoes things.

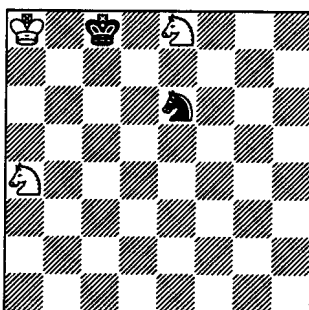
2 - Stephen Emmerson, RT



Helpmate in 2, 2 solutions

The solution for Diagram 2 is at the end of the article, and:-

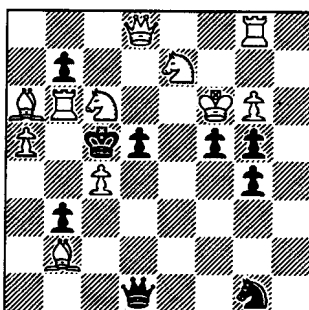
3 - RT after J. Auclair



Helpmate in 2, with set play

the more difficult diagram 3 is an original for solving.

4 - U. Avner
3HM, Messigny 1998



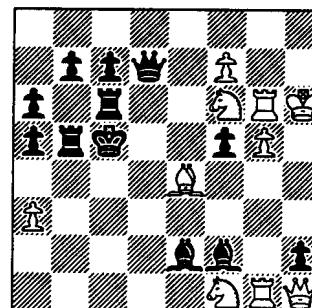
Mate in 2

The inaugural tourney at Messigny 1998 turned up some impressive problems. In Diagram 4, White's obvious mating pieces are the R and B - as Black is without matching pieces to swap away against. However, 1 Rb5/Ba3 allow 1...Kxc4/K↔K. This

leads us to notice the set-play 1...dxc4/g5↔g6 2 Rb5/Ba3.

The guard on wK prevents king-swap escapes by Black, but such a guard can also be exploited to make a king-swap threat by White. Key 1 Ne5 threatens 2 K↔K mate. And now, after 1...dxc4/g5↔g6 2 Ba3/Rb5! The move that formerly didn't work after each Black move is now the one that does work. This is the difficult Le Grand theme.

5 - M. Caillaud
Prize, Messigny 1998



Reflex mate in 2

In Michel Caillaud's prizewinner, we have a reflexmate. If either side can give mate then it must, and White's aim is to offer Black just such an opportunity. wK is already guarded, which prevents premature king-swaps by Black. The key 1 Ng8! unguards h7 so that 2 Kh7 will allow K↔K mate.

The army around bK cannot be dispersed. Black's simple defence is to attack h7 by 1...Qxf7. White now regards his own king 2 Qxh2 so that 2...Qxg6 is mate (no 3 Q↔Q). Black's more subtle defence is to arrange a White guard on h7.

- 1...hgQ 2 f8Q+ Qg1↔f8 mate
- 1...hgR 2 f8R Rg1↔g6 mate
- 1...hgB 2 f8B+ Bg1↔f8 mate
- 1...hgN 2 f8N Ng1↔g8 mate

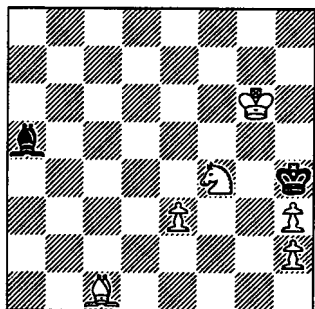
Note that under the 'no unswap' rule, White may not swap away the mating bB with either of his own.

The Babson theme - matching promotions by White and Black - followed by matching swapmates, and the fifth swap, that of the Kings, happening in the threat. Will there ever be a better Messigny problem?

Such heavyweights are hard to compose. It isn't easy to deal with all the swapping refutations available to

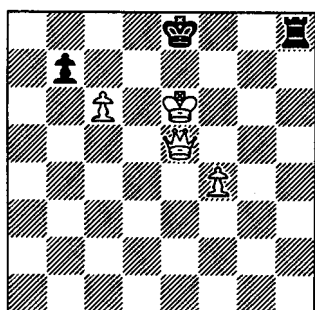
Black. For merer mortals, it may be advisable to try helpmates, or very simple positions. In the next position, an original for solving, the slippery Bishop must be induced to guard its own King.

6 - RT



Mate in 3

7 - RT



Mate in 2

The final diagram isn't quite as simple as it looks, but almost! If Black gives check White can reply with 2 K\diamondK mate. Thus quiet moves by White queen won't work - 1 Qe6? Rh6+! Aggressive moves fail for the opposite reason: 1 Qxh8+? K\diamondK! However, it seems that 1 c7, or equally 1 cxb7, can be followed by c8Q or b8Q to mate, as Black can't castle. Ah, but he can, if his move previous to the diagram has been a pawn-swap!

Solution to #2

2 (Emmerson, Turnbull) 1 Kb8 Kc6 2 Kc8 e8Q (not e8R? 3 K$\langle\rangle$K) easy solution by RT; 1 K$\langle\rangle$K e8R 2 Kc6 K$\langle\rangle$K tricky solution by SE. Switchback, underpromotion, and no dull correspondence between solutions.

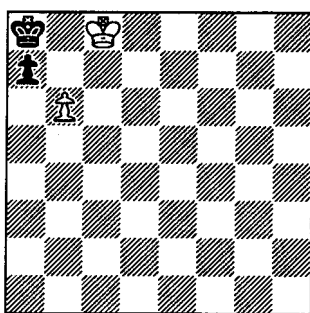
Thanks to Jérôme Auclair for elucidating (in words and diagrams) the mysteries of Messigny.

THE PROLIFERATE PROBLEM

by Peter Fayers

Well, at least that's how it translates into English. Actually, I prefer the German: "Das Vielvaterproblem". Either way, it means the Father of Many Problems, which is a pretty accurate description. Albert Kneist, when he published A back in 1932, could have had no idea that this position would eventually become a cult among Problemists.

A - Albert Kneist
Deutsche Marchenschach Zeitung



Helpmate in 2

This problem lay unnoticed for seventeen years until 1949, when Robert Durvall saw some retro-analysis possibilities, and in the *Fairy Chess Review* published it with the simple "Who wins"? (B).

In the same year Julius Dohm-Luttgens and Erich Gleisberg noticed that the position is a sound series-mover, and in *Schachmatt* published it as "Serieshelpmate in 8" (C).

Even these two didn't get the ball rolling too much, and it was another five years before Bror Larsson revived the problem, publishing it in *feenschach* in 1954 as "White retracts then Mate in 1". (D). This time the idea caught on, and in the mid-fifties fifteen more different problems appeared in German magazines, all offering different stipulations to the same position.

Eventually inspiration dried up, leading W Karsch to declare in *feenschach*, "Now there can hardly be anything more to find in this position".

For a while it seemed that he was right, as nothing more appeared for nearly twenty years, apart from a

brief spurt by Nils Bakke who produced nine separate problems which were published in 1971. Most of these, however, involved very contrived conditions (eg "black may only promote to a rook").

Enter the Brits. In 1975 Anthony Dickens created a couple of new originals, and ran a competition in *The Problemist* for the best new VV problem. This was won by Andreas Thoma in an amazing tour de force: White retracts then Selfmate in 12; Circe, Maximummer (E).

There were an incredible 30 sound entries for the competition, which, at the time, just about doubled the existing number of VV problems.

The flood-gates were well and truly open, and a steady stream of new ideas came from all over the world until, in 1983 three of our German colleagues, Hilmar Ebert, Hans Gruber and Jorg Kuhlmann published them all (making the number up to a round 100 with some new ones) in the first edition of their book, "*Das Vielvaterproblem*".

This only seemed to inspire more activity, and a mere six years later a second edition of the book was published, now with three hundred different stipulations to the above diagram. And still they keep coming, with more being printed in problem magazines on a regular basis (although sometime the stipulations get a bit contorted - as in Valeri Nebotov's recent original in *Problemkiste* (F) Help series double-stalemate in 1+3, Kamikaze Mars Circe, c8,a8 = Royal Fers)

"Now there can hardly be anything more to find in this position."

Really??? Hans tells me that the total is now approaching seven hundred, and that they plan a third edition of the book when it gets to a thousand.

The solutions to the Vielvater problems A-F are on page 16.

Here are my modest contributions to this heritage. G and H are originals for ladder points - send solutions and comments to Ronald Turnbull please.

G - Peter Fayers Stalemate in 2, S-Spirits (See VC23)

H - Peter Fayers & Ronald Turnbull Messigny chess a) Series-stalemate in four b) Series-stalemate in five c/d) wK-->a5 & repeat a/b)

NOTICES

BCVS Library

The BCVS Library is now established, and George Jelliss is willing to receive visitors by arrangement at 5 Biddulph Street, Leicester. LE2 1BH. A map and catalogue are available from George. Biddulph Street is about fifteen minutes' walk from Leicester station (direct trains from London St. Pancras, Derby, Nottingham, and Sheffield). Leicester is also conveniently accessible by road, but parking in or near Biddulph Street is difficult.

A small amount of the material in the library of the British Chess Problem Society relates to chess variants rather than chess problems, and would no doubt have been offered to our library instead had this been in existence at the time. George Jelliss has a BCPS Library catalogue, and John Beasley (as BCPS Librarian) is willing to receive visits from BCVS members who would like to consult such of this material as is not duplicated in our own library.

Competition

David Pritchard writes to report a recent visit from Professor John Leslie, the inventor of **Hostage Chess** (see the article in our previous issue for a full description of the game). The Professor has sponsored a correspondence tournament in **Hostage Chess**. The first prize will be two years' subscription to *Variant Chess*. The second prize will be one year's subscription. David is willing to act as controller for this competition, so get your entries in now! You will find his address on the front page.

Correction

In the article on **Hostage Chess** in the last issue, in the diagram at the top left of page 55, alert readers will have noticed that each side has nine pawns! Delete a White pawn from the top left, and a Black pawn from the bottom right, of the diagram.

Mixed Variants

Malcolm Horne writes from Exmouth:- 'The "Mixed" postal tournament announced in VC32 is not going ahead'. It seems that lack of interest is the cause. He further writes:- 'Experiments with the BCCA have also ground to a halt'. Here lack of interest seems to be combined with certain elements of hostility towards 'non-chess' activities. (*Certain it is that the heretic is always more severely treated than unbelievers: Ed.*)

SOLUTIONS

XiangQi problems (page 4)

Lin Yuan

- 1 R2+7+ K6+1
- 2 N5+3+ K6+1
- 3 R2-2+ mate

David Woo

- 1 N8+6+ G5+4
- 2 R5-1+ R7=5+
- 3 N6+5+ mate

David Pritchard puzzles (page 5)

Puzzle 1

There are nine black pawns on the board. Remove any one to mate in one.

Puzzle 2

1 Qb6 K~ (now the queen is immobilised) 2 Kg1 Now the black king is in check, but it can't move because it's fuddled -- checkmate.

Circe Losing Chess (page 11)

#72

- 1 a5-a6 Rd5xg5 (g2)
- 2 a6-a7 Rg5xg2
- 3 a7-a8R Rg2-g8
- 3 ... Ra2 4 Rxa2(a8) Rxa2(h1) 5 Ra1 wins
- 4 Ra8xg8 (a8) Ra8xg8 (h1)
- 5 Rh1-h8 Rg8xh8 (a1)
- 6 Ra1 h1 wins

There are many possibilities to explore. For example: 3 a8B R~ 4 Bg2 Rxc2(f1) 5 Bxc2(a8) Ra2 6 Ba8 Rxa8(f1) 7 Ba6 (Bg2 is a draw by repetition) Rxa6(f1) 8 Bxa6(a8) Rxa6(f1) 9 Bxa6(a8) and a draw by repetition.

#73

- 1 Rc6-e6 Nd8xe6 (h1)
- 2 Rh1-d1 Ne6xf4
- 3 Rd1-d5 Nf4xd5 (h1)
- 4 Rh1-c1 Nd5xb4
- 5 Rc1-c2 Nb4xc2 (h1)
- 6 Rh1-a1 wins

A very attractive systematic movement.

Vielvater problems (page 15)

- A 1 a6! (a5?) b7+, 2 Ka7 b8Q#
 - B Black has no last move, so White has just played. Black wins by axb.
 - C 5 a1B ... 8 Ba7 b7#
 - D White retracts Kc7xNc8 and plays b7#. Not back Kc7-c8? as this leaves Black in retro-stalemate.
 - E Retract Kd7xRc8. Play 1 b7+ Kxb7(Pb2); 2 b4 Rc1; 3 b5 Rc8; 4 b6 Rc1; 5 bxa7 Rc8; 6 a8Q+ Rxa8(Qd1); 7Qh1+ Ka6; 8 Kc7 Rh8; 9 Qh6+ Rxh6(Qd1); 10 Qd6+ Rxd6(Qd1); 11 Kb8; Rxd1; 12 Ka8 Rd8#
 - F Black: 1 axb6(bPb7,wPb2) then White: 1 b4; 2 b5; 3 b6=
- Apologies that space precluded explaining the rules for this one, but as is so often the case with Vielvater problems these days, it takes longer to explain the stipulation than to solve the problem!

QUERIES

Through the Looking Glass Backwards: VC32, page55. Douglas Carey asks if castling is not illegal because the king must be moved first, and is thus momentarily in check? I don't think so. It's a practical rule of play, but on the board castling is thought of as a single operation.

What do I think of White's chances in the following position? asks Peter Wood. Very little is the answer. If the Black rook is repositioned White will be hard put to it to defend everything.

