

Variant Chess

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The magazine to broaden your chess horizons

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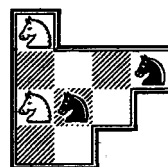
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Crazy Knights - by David Pritchard

This not a game but a puzzle by Ili Kaufmann marketed by Philos Spiele in Germany. Because only knights are involved and it is played - if that is the right word - on an odd shaped board, I suppose it might qualify as a sort of chess variant.

The sturdy board is made of an attractive tropical wood as are the pieces which are printed on flat tablets corresponding in size to the squares. The object is to exchange the positions of the white and black knights in as few moves as possible. The solution given runs to 40 moves, claimed to be a minimum.

I doubt if this puzzle would daunt a competent problemist and one wonders how the product is justified unless someone has a lot of bits of wood of this shape they want to get rid of.



Volume Five

With this issue of *Variant Chess* we reach the end of volume five. Towards the back you will find an index to this volume. Many thanks to John Beasley for this, and for many other contributions since he gave up the editorship. Peter Fayers asks me to remind you that the subscription covers four issues, even if I don't manage to produce them in a twelve month period.

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DYNAMO CHESS (PART III)

by George Jelliss

We return here to George's long article on this variant, with some examples of competitive play. More examples, and a description of the game, will be found in VC 36 and VC 37.

AISE GRAND PRIX 96

Fabio Forzoni

George Jelliss

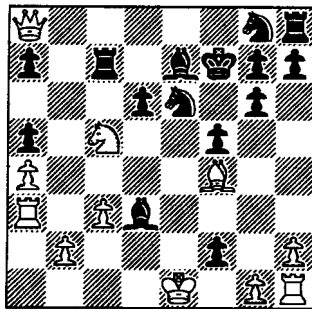
- | | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| 1. Qd1-d3/d2-d6 | Bc8-d7/d7-f5 |
| 2. Nb1-c3/ | Qd8-b6/c7-a5 |
| 3. Nc3-d5/ | Qb6-d6/d6E |
| 4. Nd5-c7+/ | Ke8-f7/f7-g6 |
| 5. Bc1-d2/ | Ra8-c8/Nb8-d8 |
| 6. Nc7-e6/ | Nd8-e6/Ne6-f4 |
| 7. Bd2-f4/Nf4-g5+ | Ne6-c7/Ng5-e6 |

Saving the king and queen in one bound!

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------|
| 8. Qd3E/Qd6E | Bf8-b4/e7-a3+ |
| 9. Ng1-e2/e2-c3 | Bb4-e7/a3-d6 |
| 10. Bf1-c4/Ne2-b5? | Bd7-c6/Nb5E |
| 11. Ra1-a3/a2-a4 | Bc6-e4/b7-d5 |
| 12. Ne6-c7/Nc7-a8 | Na8-b6/ |
| 13. Bc4-b3/ | Be4-d3/c2E |
| 14. Nc7/d5-e3+ | Nb6-d5/ |
| 15. Bb3-d5/Nd5-e6 | Ne6/Nc7-a8 |

Deja vu

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 16. Bd5/Na8-c6 | Rc8-c7/Nc6-c5 |
| 17. Bd5E/g2-a8Q | e3-f2/f2-g1+ |



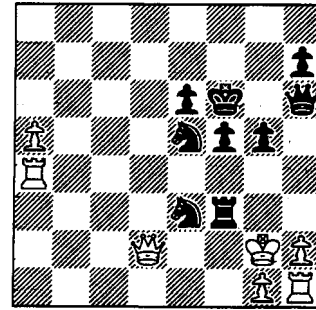
The check is incidental, the aim is to shut the rook out of play

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| 18. g1/f2-e3 | Bd3E/f5-b1Q+ |
|--------------|--------------|

Both queens now back in play

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 19. Bf4-c1/e3E | Be7-h4+/ |
| 20. Ra3-f3/c3-g3+ | Bh4-f6/ |
| 21. Qa8-d5/ | Qb1-b4/b2E+ |
| 22. Ke1-f2/ | Ng8-f6/Bf6-e4 |
| 23. Qd5-e5/Nc5-d5 | Rc7-c2/Bc1E+ (?) |
| 24. Qe5-e2/Be4E | Qb4-c5/d6-e7 |
| 25. Qe2/Rc2E | Qc5/Nd5E |
| 26. Qe2/Ne6-e3 | Ne3-g4+/ |
| 27. Kf2-g2/ | Qc5-h5/a5-e5 |
| 28. Qe2-c4+/ | e7-e6/e5-e4 |
| 29. Qc4-d4/ | Ng4-e5/ |
| 30. Qd4-a7/a7E+ | Kf7-f6/Nf6-f5 |
| 31. Rf3-f4/ | Rh8-c8/ |

- | | |
|------------------|---------------|
| 32. Qa7-f2/ | Qh5-h6/ |
| 33. Rf4-e4/e4-b4 | g7/g6-g5 |
| 34. Qf2-d2/ | Rc8-c3/ |
| 35. a4-a5/ | Rc3-f3/g3E |
| 36. Re4-a4/b4E | Nf5-e3/g7-f5+ |



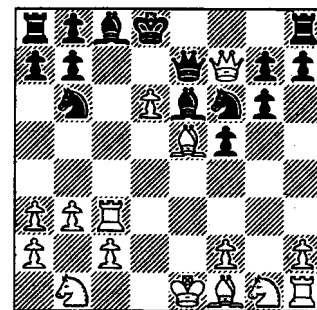
- | | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| 37. Qd2-c1/Ne3-d2 | Qh6-g5/g5-e3+ |
|-------------------|---------------|
- White resigns

AISE GRAND PRIX 97

George Jelliss

Fabio Forzoni

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| 1. Bf1-e2/e2-c4 | Nb8-d7/d7-f6 |
| 2. Qd1-d5/d2-d6 | e7-e6/ |
| 3. c4-c5/ | Nd7/c5-b3 |
| 4. Bc1-b2/b2-a3 | Ng8-f6/f6-e4 |
| 5. Qd5-c4/e6-d5 | f7/Nf6-f4 |
- i.e. stationary pawn pushes N two squares*
- | | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| 6. Be2-f1/Qc4-d3 | Nf4/g2E |
| 7. Qd3-e4/e4-g6+ | Nf4-e6/ |
| 8. Qe4-e6/Ne6-e7 | Qd8-e7/Ne7-f6 |
| 9. Qe6/f7E | Nd7-b6/Bf8-d7 |
| 10. Qe6-f7/d5-e6+ | Ke8-d8/ |
| 11. Bb2-e5/Ra1-c3 | Bd7-e6/e6-f5 |
| 12. d6-c7/c7-b8+ | b8/c7-d6 |



- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 13. Bf1-b5/ | |
|-------------|--|
- The beginning of a chancy attack, not thoroughly worked out*

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| 13. Rc3-c5/Bc8E | Be6-f7/Qf7E |
| 14. Bb5-c6/ | Qe7-e4/Be5-e2 |
| 15. Ke1-f1/ | Nf6-e4/Qe4-d2+ |
| 16. Be2/Ra6-d3 | Ne4/Rc5-a6 |
| 17. Nb1-c3/ | Qd2-c2/c2-b2 |
| 18. Rd3-d4/d6-d7 | Qc2/b3E |
| 19. Bc6/d7-e8Q+ | Ne4-f2/f2E |

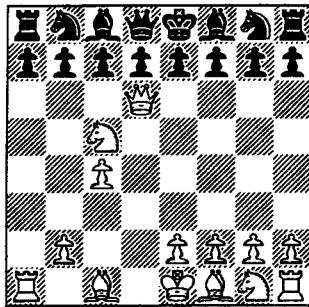
The check comes from the rook at d4

20. Bf7-d5/a2E
 21. Qe8/Rh8E+ Black resigns

Fabio Forzoni

George Jelliss

- | | |
|------------------|--------------|
| 1. Qd1-d3/d2-d6 | Bc8-e6/d7-f5 |
| 2. Nb1-c3/ | Be6/a2E |
| 3. Qd3-d6/d6-d7+ | Be6-d7/d7E |
| 4. c2-c4/Nc3-c5 | Bd7-c8/f5-d7 |



All Black men back at home

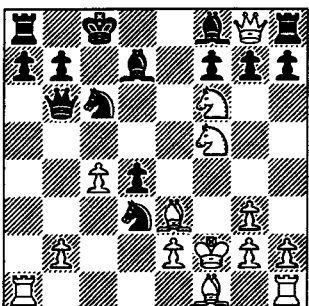
- | | |
|-------------|--------------|
| 5. Nc5-e6/ | f7/Ne6-d5 |
| 6. Nd5-f6+/ | Ng8/Nf6-e4 |
| 7. Ng1-f3/ | c7-d6/Qd6-e5 |

At last! A Black piece moves!

- | | |
|-------------|---------------|
| 8. Ne4-f6+/ | Ng8-f6/Nf6-e4 |
| 9. Qe5-e6/ | g7/Nf6-e5 |

I have just noticed that this is an illegal push - neither player noticed it at the time

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------|
| 10. f2/Nf3-f5 | Ne5-d3+/ |
| 11. Ke1-f2/f2-g3 | Qd8-b6+/ |
| 12. Bc1-e3/ | Ke8-d8/Bf8-e8 |
| 13. Qe6-d6/d6-c6 | Nb8-c6/c6-d4 |
| 14. Nf5/e7E | Bc8-d7/d7-e6 |
| 15. Qd6-f6/e6E+ | Kd8-e8/Be8-f8 |
| 16. Ne4-f6/Qf6-g8+ | Ra8/Ke8-c8 |



- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| 17. Qg8/Rh8E | Bd7-f5/Nf5E |
| 18. Qg8-f7/f7-e6 | Bf5-g6/Nd3-e4+ |
| 19. Nf6/Ne4-d2 | Bg6/Qf7E |
| 20. Be3/Nd2E | Qb6-b2/b2E |
| 21. Be3-d4/d4-b6 | Qb2-c3/Ra1-b2 |
| 22. Nf6/h7E | Qc3-g3/g3E+ |
| 23. h2/Qg3-f4 | Qf4-g3/h2E+ |

Fabio Dulcich

George Jelliss

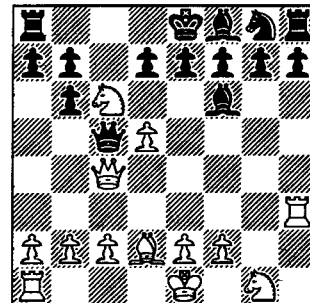
- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. Qd1-d4/d2-d5 | Qd8-c7/c7-b6 |
| 2. Bf1-g2/g2-h3 | Qc7-c3/Bc8-c7+ |

I follow the convention of writing the check at the end of the whole move rather than after the first part.

- | | |
|------------------|---------------|
| 3. Nb1-d2 | Qc3-f3/h3E |
| 4. Ng1-f3/Qf3-e5 | Qe5-g3/h2E |
| 5. Nf3-g1/ | Qg3-g6/Bg2-g3 |
| 6. Bc1-e3/Nd2-f4 | Qg6/Bg3-g2 |
| 7. Qd4-c4/Nf4-e4 | Bc7-h2/Nb8-e5 |
| 8. Ne4-d6+/ | Qg6-d6/Nd6-c6 |
| 9. Rh1-h3/Bh2-h4 | e7/Ne5-e4 |

i.e. the pawn e7 stays where it is and pushes the knight forward one square: see the pawn rules

- | | |
|--|---------|
| 10. Bg2E/Ne4E | |
| i.e. the bishop suicides, pulling the knight with it | |
| 10. Bh4-f6/ | |
| 11. Be3-d2/ | Qd6-c5/ |



- | | |
|------------------|--------------|
| 12. Nc6/a7E | Qc5/d5E |
| 13. Nc6-d8/ | Qc5-b6/b6-a7 |
| 14. Nd8-f7/f7-h6 | Qb6/b2E |
| 15. Qc4-c8/c2-c7 | |

Now White commences a persistent - and eventually successful - assault on the Black king

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------|
| 15. Bf6-e5/Ra1E | |
| 16. Qc8-d7/d7-e6+ | Ke8-f7/Nf7-g6 |
| 17. c7-c8Q/ | Ra8E/Qc8E |
| 18. Ng6/Rh8E | Bf8-e7/e7-d6 |
| 19. Ng6-e5/Be5-c4+ | Kf7-f6/ |
| 20. Qd7-f5/e6-g4+ | Kf6-g7/g7-h8 |

Black is being backed into a corner.

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------|
| 21. Qf5-g5/Ne5-f5+ | Kg7-g6/ |
| 22. Qg5-f5/Nf5-d5+ | Black resigns |

George Jelliss

Fabio Dulcich

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. Bf1-e2/e2-c4 | Bf8-g7/g7-h6 |
| 2. Qd1-d3/d2-d4 | Bc8-d7/d7-f5 |
| 3. Bc1-g5/h6E | Ng8-f6/ |
| 4. Qd3-c4/c4-a6 | Bg7-f6/Nf6-e5 |
| 5. Bg5-h6/ | Bd7-c7/ |
| 6. Qc4-e6/f7E | Qd8-d5/d4E |
| 7. Qe6-c6/Bc6-b6+ | Rh8-d8/Ke8-c8 |
| 8. Bh6-f4/ | Bf6-e5/Ne5-d4 |
| 9. Be2-f1/a6-d3 | Qd5-e4/Qc6-d5+ |
| 10. Ke1-d1/ | Rd8E/Qd5E |
| 11. Bf4-e5/Be5-d6 | Bb6-d4/Nd4-e3+ |

White resigns

The last instalment should appear next time.

THE FIRST UNOFFICIAL LOSING CHESS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

(continued from VC 39)

by John Beasley

The first part of this report gave the overall results and the first half of the games. This second part briefly discusses the openings played, and gives the remaining games.

Losing Chess is an extremely sharp game, as witness the fact that only one game in the present championship was drawn, but its very sharpness means that it tends to suffer from stereotyped opening play; if a player departs from known paths, he finds all too often that he has blundered the game away. It may therefore be of interest briefly to survey the openings played in the tournament. I have considered only moves by players who scored over 50% and in games won against such players by lower-scoring opponents.

The standard 1.e3 continued to attract the most adherents, but 1.g3 was played regularly by Peter Wood (+2, -2) and once each by Vincent van der Bilt (lost to Tim Rimmel) and by Fabrice Liardet (beat Lenny Taelman). There were also three instances of 1.c4, which appears to be gaining in popularity as a "positional" opening aiming to gain territory rather than to introduce immediate tactics. Its results here were mixed, since it provided Tim Rimmel with his only loss, but it gave Andrzej Nagorko a win against Fredrik Sandström and Marten Wortel won with it against Johan Bosman.

With Black against 1.e3, 1...b6 was the most popular choice, but the ancient 1...b5 2.Bxb5 was played twice (Peter Wood tried 2...Bb7 against Vincent van der Bilt and lost, Andrzej Nagorko continued 2...e6 against Johan Bosman and drew) and there were occurrences of 1...e6 (Fabrice Liardet against Tim Rimmel, losing) and 1...c5 (Tim Rimmel against Andrzej Nagorko, winning). 1...c5 was also played twice against 1.g3, successfully on both occasions (Tim Rimmel against Vincent van der Bilt, Andrzej Nagorko against Peter

Wood). I don't know whether this will prove to be the opening of the future, but Fabrice Liardet refers to it as "the modern 1...c5" in his annotations to his game against Fredrik Sandström and it is certainly receiving serious attention at present.

I was also told (I think I have remembered this correctly) that the line 1.e3 b5 2.Bxb5 c6, played in the 1924 Klüver-Dawson game featured in VC 35, has now been proved by computer to be a win for White, the analysis going to 63 ply!

The future of Losing Chess is not easy to assess. The relatively small range of openings in regular use suggests that there must be some risk that computers will eventually find the best-play result from the standard initial position; on the other hand, "giveaway" games appear in general to be harder to play well than conventional games, and the difficulty of Losing Chess endgame analysis suggests that it is no exception. Versions independent of the present initial position would not be difficult to conceive, and in a suitably developed form one of them might just become one of the standard intellectual games of the future.

Round 4 (continued)

Bosman - van der Bilt: 1.e3 b6 2.Ba6 Nxa6 3.Qe2 Nc5 4.d3 Nxd3 5.Qxd3 g6 6.Qxg6 fxe6 7.Bd2 b5 8.c4 bxc4 9.a4 c3 10.Nxc3 Ba6 11.Ke2 Bxe2 12.Ngxe2 Qc8 13.a5 Qa6 14.Rae1 Qxe2 15.Nxe2 d6 16.Ng3 e5 17.Nh5 gxe5 18.h4 Nh6 19.Rh3 Nf5 20.g3 Nxe4 21.gxe4 Kf7 22.f4 exf4 23.exf4 Ke6 24.Rxe6 Be7 25.Rxe7 h6 26.Rxc7 Rae8 27.Rxa7 Rh7 28.Rxe7 d5 29.Rxe6 Re7 30.Rxe5 Re8 31.Rxd5 Rd8 32.Rxd8 0-1

Nagorko - Sandstrom: 1.c4 e6 2.e3 b5 3.cxb5 Ba3 4.Nxa3 Ba6 5.bxa6 Nxa6 6.Bxa6 Rc8 7.Bxc8 Qxc8 8.Qg4 Kf8 9.Qxg7 Kxg7 10.g3 Qb7 11.Rb1 Qxh1 12.Nc2 Qxg1 13.Ke2 Qxc1 14.Rxc1 Ne7 15.Rh1 Nc8 16.a4 Kf6 17.Ne1 d5 18.e4 dxe4 19.Ng2 e3 20.dxe3 Ke7 21.a5 a6 22.Kd3 Na7 23.Rd1 Kd7 24.f4 e5 25.fxe5 Ra8 26.e6 fxe6 27.e4 c6 28.e5 Nb5 29.Rg1 c5 30.Ne3 c4 31.Nxc4 Nc3 32.Kxc3 h5 33.Nd6

Kxd6 34.exd6 Rf8 35.g4 hxe4 36.Rxe4 e5 37.Rg2 Rf2 38.Rxf2 e4 39.d7 e3 40.Rf8 e2 41.d8R e1K 42.Rd1 Kxd1 43.Kc2 Kxc2 44.h4 Kxb2 45.h5 Kc3 46.h6 Kc4 47.h7 Kc5 48.h8R Kc6 49.Rh4 Kb7 50.Ra8 Kxa8 51.Rh5 Kb8 52.Rb5 axb5 53.a6 Kc7 54.a7 b4 55.a8B Kd8 56.Bc6 Ke8 57.Bxe8 b3 58.Bf7 b2 59.Be6 b1N 60.Ba2 Nd2 61.Bb1 Nxb1 1-0

Meulenbroek - Taelman: 1.c4 c5 2.g3 b5 3.cxb5 Ba6 4.bxa6 Nxa6 5.b4 cxb4 6.Ba3 bxa3 7.Nxa3 g6 8.Bh3 Qc8 9.Bxd7 Kxd7 10.Qa4 Qc6 11.Qxc6 Kxc6 12.d4 Kb5 13.Nxb5 Rb8 14.Nxa7 Rb1 15.Rxb1 e5 16.dxe5 Nf6 17.exf6 Bg7 18.fxe7 Rf8 0-1

Beasley - Kraaijpoel: 1.h3 d6 2.e3 Bxh3 3.Nxh3 b5 4.Bxb5 g5 5.Bxe8 Qxe8 6.Nxg5 f5 7.Nxh7 Rxh7 8.Rxh7 e5 9.Rxc7 Qa4 10.Rxa7 Qxa2 0-1

Kamminga - Wortel: 1.e3 c5 2.Bb5 e6 3.Bxd7 Bxd7 4.g3 Qh4 5.gxe4 g5 6.hxe5 Nf6 7.gxf6 Bg7 8.fxe7 Bb5 9.gxe8Q Kd8 10.Qxh7 a5 11.Qxf7 Bf1 12.Qxe6 Bc4 0-1

Snuverink - Wood: 0-1

Round 5

Nagorko - Rimmel: 1.e3 c5 2.Bb5 c4 3.Bxc4 d5 4.Bxd5 Qxd5 5.Qh5 Qxh5 6.b3 Qxh2 7.Rxh2 Be6 8.Rxh7 Rxh7 9.Kf1 Bxb3 10.cxb3 g5 11.Ba3 Bg7 12.Bxe7 Bxa1 13.Bxg5 Bc3 14.Nxc3 Nf6 15.Bxf6 Rh4 16.Bxh4 f6 17.Bxf6 Kd8 18.Bxd8 b5 0-1

Liardet - van der Bilt: 1.e3 b6 2.Qh5 c5 3.Qxh7 Rxh7 4.Bc4 Rxh2 5.Bxf7 Kxf7 6.Rxh2 Na6 7.g4 c4 8.c3 Nb4 9.cxb4 c3 10.dxc3 Nh6 11.Rxh6 gxe6 12.c4 Kg7 13.a3 b5 14.cxb5 Qb6 15.Nd2 Qxb5 16.Rb1 Qxb4 17.axb4 h5 18.gxe5 d6 19.f4 Bh3 20.Nxh3 d5 21.e4 dxe4 22.Nxe4 Kg6 23.hxe6 Bh6 24.Neg5 Bxg5 25.fxe5 e5 26.b5 Re8 27.b6 axb6 28.b4 Rb8 29.Bf4 exf4 30.Nxf4 b5 31.Kf2 Ra8 32.Ra1 1-0

Kraaijpoel - Bosman: 1.e3 b6 2.Ba6 Nxa6 3.Kf1 c5 4.c3 h5 5.Qxh5 Rxh5 6.b4 cxb4 7.cxb4 Nxb4 8.a3 Rxh2 9.axb4 Rxe2 10.Rxa7 Rxa7 11.Kxg2 d6 12.d3 b5 13.Ne2 Ra3 14.Bxa3 Qa5 15.bxa5 Bg4 16.Bxd6 Bxe2 17.Bxe7 Bxd3 18.Bxf8 Bxb1 19.Rxb1 Kxf8 20.Rxb5 g5 21.Rxg5 Ke8 22.Rxg8 Kf8 23.Rxf8 f6 24.Rxf6 0-1

Sandstrom - Meulenbroek: 1.a4 b5 2.axb5 a6 3.Rxa6 Rxa6 4.bxa6 Nxa6 5.e3 Nc5 6.Ba6 Nxa6 7.Qe2 Nb4 8.e4

Nxc2 9.Qa6 Nxe1 10.Qxc8 1-0
Wortel - Taelman: 1.e3 b6 2.Qf3 c5
 3.Qxa8 c4 4.Qxb8 e6 5.Bxc4 Qg5
 6.Bxe6 Qxg2 7.Bxf7 Qxh1 8.Bxg8
 Rxg8 9.Qxc8 Qxh2 10.Qxd7 Qxg1
 11.Qxa7 Qxf2 12.Qxg7 Qxe1 13.Qxf8
 Qxc1 14.Qxe8 Qxc2 15.Qxg8 Qxb2
 16.Qxh7 Qxb1 0-1

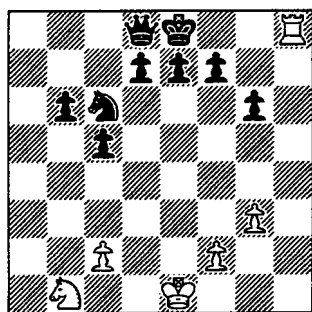
Wood - Kamminga: 1.g3 g5 2.b3 b6
 3.h4 gxh4 4.Rxh4 f5 5.Rxh7 Rxh7
 6.e4 fxe4 7.d3 exd3 8.Qxd3 Rh4
 9.gxh4 Na6 10.Qxa6 Bxa6 11.Bxa6
 Kf7 12.Bb7 Rc8 13.Bxc8 Qxc8
 14.Nd2 Bh6 15.Nb1 Bxc1 16.Na3
 Bxa3 17.Rc1 Bxc1 18.a3 Bxa3 19.b4
 Bxb4 20.c3 Bxc3 21.Nh3 Bxe1 22.Nf4
 Bxf2 23.Nh5 Bxh4 24.Ng7 Kxg7 1-0

Snuverink - Beasley: 1.e3 e6 2.b4
 Bxb4 3.Qg4 Bxd2 4.Qxg7 Bxe1
 5.Qxf7 Bxf2 6.Qxh7 Bxg1 7.Rxg1
 Rxh7 1-0

Round 6

Rommel - Bosman: 1.c4 c6 2.b3 b5
 3.cxb5 cxb5 4.Nh3 e6 5.b4 Bxb4
 6.Ng5 Bxd2 7.Qxd2 Qxg5 8.Qxg5 Kf8
 9.Qxb5 g5 10.Qxg5 Ne7 11.Qxe7
 Kxe7 12.Nc3 e5 13.Nb5 Nc6 14.Nxa7
 Nxa7 15.Bf4 exf4 16.f3 Ba6 17.h3
 Bxe2 18.Kxe2 Rag8 19.Rh2 Rxg2
 20.Bxg2 Kd6 21.Bf1 Kc5 22.a4 Kc4
 23.Rf2 Nc6 24.Bg2 Kb5 25.axb5 Na7
 0-1

Sandstrom - Liardet (prize for best ending; for analysis of the whole game see *Farbice Liardet's web site www.pion.ch*): 1.g3 g6 2.b4 b6 3.Nh3 a5 4.bxa5 Rxa5 5.d3 Rxa2 6.Rxa2 Bh6 7.Bxh6 Nxh6 8.Ra6 Bxa6 9.Qc1 Bxd3 10.Qxh6 Bxe2 11.Qxh7 Rxh7 12.Bxe2 Rxh3 13.Bf3 Rxh2 14.Rxh2 c5 15.Bc6 Nxc6 16.Rh8:



“Black to play and win!” says *Fabrice's* diagram at this point. 16...c4 17.Rxe8 Qxe8 18.Kd2 Qh8 19.Kd3 cxd3 20.cxd3 Qc3 21.Nxc3 d5 22.Nxd5 e5 23.Nxb6 e4 24.dxe4 f5

25.exf5 gxf5 26.g4 fxg4 27.Na4 Nb4 28.f3 gxf3 29.Nc3 Na2 30.Nxa2 f2 31.Nc3 f1N 0-1

Wood - Nagorko: 1.g3 c5 2.b4 cxb4 3.Na3 bxa3 4.Bxa3 e6 5.Bxf8 Kxf8 6.e3 Qh4 7.gxh4 g5 8.hxg5 Nf6 9.gxf6 Kg7 10.fxg7 e5 11.gxh8Q d5 12.Qxe5 Na6 13.Qxd5 Bd7 14.Bxa6 bxa6 15.Qxa8 a5 16.Qxa7 Bc8 0-1

van der Bilt - Kraaijpoel: 1.e3 b6 2.Qh5 c5 3.Qxh7 Rxh7 4.Bc4 Rxh2 5.Bxf7 Kxf7 6.Rxh2 c4 7.c3 b5 8.g4 Nc6 9.Rh6 gxh6 10.d3 cxd3 11.b4 Nxb4 12.cxb4 d2 13.Kxd2 h5 14.gxh5 Nh6 15.Nh3 Ba6 16.Ke2 Qb6 17.Kf3 Qxe3 18.fxe3 Kg6 19.hxg6 Nf7 20.gxf7 d5 21.Nd2 Re8 22.fxe8N Bg7 23.Nxg7 d4 24.exd4 e5 25.dxe5 Bb7 26.Kg2 Bxg2 27.Nf5 Bxh3 28.Ne4 Bxf5 29.Bg5 Bxe4 30.Rb1 Bxb1 31.Bd8 Bxa2 32.e6 Bxe6 33.Bb6 axb6 1-0

Taelman - Kamminga: 1.e3 c5 2.Bd3 c4 3.Bxh7 Rxh7 4.Na3 Rxh2 5.Nxc4 Rxg2 6.Nd6 exd6 7.Ne2 Rxf2 8.Kxf2 Qf6 9.c3 Qxf2 10.Qb3 Qxe3 11.Qxb7 Qxe2 12.Qxc8 Qxd2 13.Qxb8 1-0

Wortel - Snuverink: 1.e3 c5 2.Bd3 Nf6 3.Bxh7 Nxh7 4.Qh5 Rg8 5.Qxh7 g6 6.Qxg8 Na6 7.Qxf8 Kxf8 8.g4 Kg7 9.Ne2 Nb4 10.a3 Nxc2 11.Kf1 Nxa3 12.Rxa3 Qb6 13.Rxa7 Qxb2 14.Bxb2 Rxa7 15.Bxg7 Ra3 16.Nxa3 c4 17.Nxc4 b6 18.Nxb6 d6 19.Nxc8 d5 20.Nxe7 g5 21.Nxd5 f6 22.Bxf6 0-1

Meulenbroek - Beasley: 1.c4 b5 2.cxb5 Ba6 3.bxa6 Nxa6 4.a4 Nb8 5.Nc3 e6 6.Nd5 exd5 7.e4 dxe4 8.Bd3 exd3 9.Qc2 dxc2 10.b4 1-0

Round 7

van der Bilt - Rommel: 1.g3 c5 2.c3 g6 3.g4 b6 4.d4 cxd4 5.Qxd4 d6 6.Qxd6 Bxg4 7.Qxg6 hxg6 8.Bd2 Qxd2 9.Nxd2 Bxe2 10.Kxe2 Rxh2 11.Rxh2 e6 12.Rh6 Nxh6 13.b4 Bxb4 14.cxb4 Nf5 15.Bh3 Nd4 16.Bxe6 Nxe2 17.Nxe2 fxe6 18.Ng3 Nd7 19.Rh1 Nf6 20.Rh7 Nxh7 21.a4 b5 22.axb5 a6 23.bxa6 Rxa6 24.Nf5 gxf5 25.Ne4 fxe4 26.f3 exf3 27.b5 Rc6 28.bxc6 f2 29.c7 Nf8 0-1

Liardet - Taelman: 1.g3 g6 2.Nh3 c6 3.e3 g5 4.Nxg5 Qa5 5.Nxh7 Rxh7 6.Ba6 Nxa6 7.e4 Rxh2 8.Rxh2 Qxd2 9.Nxd2 Nf6 10.Nc4 Nxe4 11.Qxd7 1-0

Bosman - Nagorko: 1.e3 b5 2.Bxb5 e6 3.Bxd7 Bxd7 4.Na3 Bxa3 5.bxa3 Bc8 6.a4 Qxd2 7.Bxd2 e5 8.Qh5 Bg4

9.Qxe5 Kd8 10.Qxg7 Nf6 11.Qxg4 Nxg4 12.Nf3 Nxh2 13.Nxh2 Rg8 14.Kf1 Rxg2 15.Kxg2 Nd7 16.c4 Nf8 17.Bc1 Ke7 18.Kf1 Rd8 19.Bd2 Rxd2 20.Rb1 Rxf2 21.Kxf2 a5 22.c5 c6 23.Rb5 cxb5 24.axb5 a4 25.Rb1 a3 26.b6 h5 27.Nf1 h4 28.b7 Ng6 29.b8K h3 30.Nd2 Nf4 31.exf4 f5 32.Kc7 Kf8 33.Kd8 Kg7 34.Rb8 h2 35.c6 h1K 36.c7 Kg1 37.Kxg1 Kf8 38.Ne4 fxe4 39.f5 e3 40.f6 e2 41.Ke7 Kxe7 42.fxe7 e1K 43.Kf1 Kxf1 44.c8R Ke2 45.e8B Ke3 46.Rb5 Kf2 47.Bg6 Kf1 48.Rd5 Kf2 49.Bh7 Kf1 50.Rc4 Kf2 51.Bg6 Kf1 ½-½

Kraaijpoel - Sandstrom: 1.e3 b5 2.Bxb5 Nh6 3.Bxd7 Bxd7 4.c4 Bb5 5.cxb5 Qxd2 6.Qxd2 Nc6 7.bxc6 Ng4 8.Qd4 Nxf2 9.Kxf2 f6 10.Qxa7 Rxa7 11.Nf3 Rxa2 12.Rxa2 g5 13.Nxg5 fxg5 14.Rg1 Bg7 15.h4 Bxb2 16.Rxb2 gxh4 17.g3 hxg3 18.Kxg3 Kd8 19.Nc3 Re8 20.Rb8 Kc8 21.Rxc8 Rxc8 22.Kf2 Rg8 23.Rxg8 h5 24.e4 h4 25.e5 h3 26.Kf3 h2 27.Ne2 h1K 28.Kf4 Kg1 29.Rxg1 e6 30.Kf5 exf5 31.Nc3 f4 32.e6 f3 33.e7 f2 34.e8R fxg1K 35.Re3 Kh1 36.Rf3 Kh2 37.Rg3 1-0

Beasley - Wood: 1.h3 b6 2.e3 g5 3.Ba6 Nxa6 4.Qf3 Nb8 5.Qxf7 Kxf7 6.f4 gxf4 7.exf4 e5 8.fxe5 Ba3 9.Nxa3 Qf6 10.exf6 Nxf6 11.Nb1 Ng4 12.hxg4 d5 13.Rxh7 Bxg4 0-1

Meulenbroek - Wortel: 1.c4 e6 2.c5 Bxc5 3.d4 Bxd4 4.Qxd4 Qg5 5.Bxg5 Kd8 6.Qxg7 e5 7.Bxd8 d6 8.Bxc7 Nc6 9.Qxh8 Nce7 10.Bxd6 Bd7 11.Qxg8 Nxg8 12.Bxe5 Rb8 13.Bxb8 Bc6 14.Bxa7 Bxg2 0-1

Kamminga - Snuverink: 1.e3 c5 2.Bd3 Nf6 3.Bxh7 Nxh7 4.Qf3 Qc7 5.Qxf7 Kxf7 6.g3 Qxg3 7.fxg3 e6 8.b4 cxb4 9.Na3 bxa3 10.Bxa3 Bxa3 11.Rc1 Bxc1 12.Kf1 Bxd2 13.Ne2 Bxe3 14.Kf2 Bxf2 15.Rf1 Bxg3 16.Rxf7 Bxh2 17.Rxd7 Nxd7 18.c4 b5 19.cxb5 Ba6 20.bxa6 Bf4 21.Nxf4 Ndf6 22.Nxe6 Rab8 23.Nxg7 Nh5 24.Nxh5 Nf6 25.Nxf6 Rh7 26.Nxh7 Rf8 27.Nxf8 0-1

Play-off (15 minutes per player)

Rommel - Liardet: 1.e3 b6 2.b3 e6 3.Ba6 Nxa6 4.Nh3 Ba3 5.Bxa3 c6 6.Bc5 bxc5 7.c4 Rb8 8.b4 Nxb4 9.Qc1 Nxa2 10.Rxa2 Rxb1 11.Rxa7 Rxc1 12.Rxd7 Kxd7 13.Ng1 Rxe1 14.Ne2 Rxe2 15.e4 Rxf2 16.e5 Rxg2 17.h3 1-0

A SHOGI VARIANT?

by David Pritchard

The novelist John Griffith London, better known as Jack London (*Call of the Wild*, *White Fang*), wrote a little known book, *Star Rover*, first published in New York in 1915 just before he died, under the title *The Jacket*. It was republished as *Star Rover* in 1963. I quote from the book: 'I taught Oppenheimer the chess Adam Strang had played in Cho-sen centuries ago. It was different from Western chess and yet could be fundamentally the same tracing back to a common origin, probably India. In place of our 64 squares there were 81 squares. We have eight pawns on a side, they have nine, and although limited similarly, the principle of moving is different. Also, in the Cho-sen game, there are 20 pieces and pawns against our 16 and they are arranged in three rows instead of two. Thus, the nine pawns are in the front row, in the middle row two pieces resembling our castles, and in the back row, mid-way stands the King flanked in order on either side by Gold Money, Silver Money, Flying Horse and Spear. It will be observed that in the Cho-sen game there is no queen. A further radical variation is that a captured piece or pawn is not removed from the board. It becomes the property of the captor and is thereafter played by him. Doubtless the Asiatics have been playing this for thousands of years. Won't you believe me when I tell you I didn't invent it?' and elsewhere he writes: '...the game proved quite similar to Japanese game (sic). They are far more alike than is either of them like the Western game.'

The first reaction on reading the above might be that London is describing shogi. But there may be two objections to this. We have 'The middle row has two pieces resembling our castles' (implying that the pieces are identical, thus not the rook and bishop of shogi?) and also London specifically states that Cho-sen chess is 'quite similar to Japanese game'. The author in his early years travelled the world as a common sailor and presumably therefore is writing from experience. How familiar he was with the chess family of games I have no idea.

Start with the name Cho-sen. This was the name given to Korea by the Japanese when they occupied the country in 1897. In that year London was 21 (his first novel, I think, was published in 1903 when he had given up the sea). Thus it appears from the name that London saw or read about the game in Korea. What game? In view of the Japanese occupation and the large Japanese community in Korea at the time, could London have simply been witnessing a game of shogi whether played by Japanese or Koreans? In shogi the rook and bishop are both large pieces and although they carry different symbols (kanji) could London have assumed that they were identical (i.e., perhaps he thought the symbols stood for K-side rook and Q-side rook?) or was he puzzled by the bishop symbol, hence 'resembling our castles' as though he wasn't sure? In shogi the rook is commonly moved first so perhaps London did not watch a game long enough to see a bishop moved. He apparently knew shogi but possibly not very well and did not realise it was the same game. Or were the players

engaged in a shogi variant, perhaps of their own invention, where two rooks or two cannons were used rather than the rook and bishop of shogi?

Another puzzle is that opening sentence ('the chess that Adam Strang played in Cho-sen centuries ago'). Was this simply fiction or was it what London believed to be a fact (whoever Adam Strang may have been)?

Lev Kisluk of Moscow has a radical explanation which I find difficult to accept. He argues that the rooks were probably cannons, and Korean cannons at that (the pieces must leap to move which could hardly be described, I would have thought, as 'resembling our castles'). Bear in mind that changgi is little played, even today. The first Changgi association was not formed until 1956. In London's time my guess (no more) would be that shogi was more commonly played in Korea than changgi. Apart from the explanation that the game described by London was a shogi variant, the evidence surely points to the game being shogi? Kisluk goes on to assert that 'it is reasonable to assume that Choson (Kisluk updates the spelling) chess pieces have the same shape as changgi pieces have, i.e., symmetrical octagons or circles.' Reasonable? I cannot see anything in London's text to suggest this. Perhaps a reader has a different interpretation?

After I had received this from David I unpacked my books, languishing in the garage since I moved house. So it was that I re-discovered the following piece.

from *Pebble In The Sky* by Isaac Asimov

"Grew told him of variations of chess. There was four-handed chess, in which each player had a board, touching each other at the corners, with a fifth board filling the hollow in the center as a common No Man's Land. There were three-dimensional chess games in which eight transparent boards were placed one over the other in which each piece moved in three dimensions as they formerly moved in two, and in which the number of pieces and pawns were doubled, the win coming only when a simultaneous check of both enemy kings occurred. There were even the popular varieties, in which the original position of the chessmen were decided by throws of the dice, or where certain squares conferred advantages or disadvantages to the pieces upon them, or where new pieces with strange properties were introduced.

But chess itself, the original and unchangeable, was the same - and the tournament between Schwartz and Grew had completed its first fifty games."

Grew - Schwartz: game 51

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Be7 6.0-0 b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.d3 0-0 9.Nd5 Na5 10.Nxe7+ Qxe7 11.Ne1 Nxb3 12.axb3 Nd7 13.f4 f5 14.exf5 Rxf5 15.Nf3 Bb7 16.Bd2 exf4 17.Nd4 Rg5 18.Nf3 Rg4 19.h3 Rxc2+ 20.Kxg2 Qg5+ 21.Kh1 Ne5 22.Qe2 Qg3 23.Qg2 Nxf3 24.Bc3 Nd4 25.Qxb7 and Schwartz announced mate as follows: 25. ... Qxh3+ 26.Kg1 Ne2+ 27.Kf2 Qe3+ 28.Kg2 Qg3+ 29.Kh1 Qh3 checkmate.

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE JUNGLE GAME

by John Beasley

Among the games in R. C. Bell's *Board and Table Games from Many Civilizations* is a chess-like game called the "Jungle game" in which two armies of animals try to invade each other's dens. I had assumed this to be a children's game or even something invented to sell to tourists, but I was in correspondence last year with Pwee Keng Ho of Singapore and he offered to send me a set. So it is clearly a living game, and doubtless it is also played elsewhere.

The game is played on a board with 9 rows and 7 columns, and each player has eight animals: Elephant, Lion, Tiger, Leopard (J in the diagram below), Wolf, Dog, Cat, Rat. These are ranked from 8 down to 1, and the general rule is that an animal can capture one of equal or lower rank but not one of higher. However, a rat can kill an elephant (my copy of Bell has walked, but my memory is that it gets into the elephant's ear and burrows its way into the brain). Additionally, each den is surrounded by traps, and an animal on a trap square can be captured by any opposing animal.

The initial array is as follows:

```

1 . ! * ! . t
. d . ! . c .
r . j . w . e
. ~ ~ . ~ ~ .
. ~ ~ . ~ ~ .
. ~ ~ . ~ ~ .
E . W . J . R
. C . ! . D .
T . ! * ! . L
    
```

The dens are on d1 and d9, the traps on c1/e1/d2 and c9/e9/d8, and the move is one square forwards, backwards, or sideways. However, the board contains two areas of water, bc456 and ef456, and only the rat can swim though the lion and tiger can jump across. An animal may not occupy its own side's den. There are some further rules affecting minor detail, and there is a more complete description in the Chess Variants page (www.chessvariants.com).

I have no complete game to offer, but the diagram below (which is unlikely to be original) illustrates a curious endgame situation.

```

. . ! * ! . .
. . d ! . . .
. . . . . . .
. ~ ~ . ~ ~ .
. ~ ~ . ~ ~ .
. ~ ~ c ~ ~ .
. . L . . . .
. . . ! . . .
. . ! * ! . .
    
```

Diagram 1

Black to play soon loses. 1...Cd5 2.Ld3 Cd6 3.Ld4 Cd7 4.Ld5 Cd8/Ce7 5.Ld6 Ce8 6.Ld7 gives the position below:

```

. . ! * ! . .
. . d ! c . .
. . . L . . .
. ~ ~ . ~ ~ .
. ~ ~ . ~ ~ .
. ~ ~ . ~ ~ .
. . . . . . .
. . . ! . . .
. . ! * ! . .
    
```

Diagram 2

and after 6...Cf8 (say) White plays 7.Lc7 D-- 8.Lc8 and Black cannot defend both d8 and c9.

If White has the move in Diagram 1, play proceeds 1 Ld3 Cd5 2.Ld4 Cd6 3.Ld5 Cd7 4.Ld6 Cd8/Ce7 5.Ld7 Ce8, when we have Diagram 2 with White to move and there may seem to be no way through: after 6.Lc7 Dc9 7.Lc8 Db9 both traps are guarded, and the lion will have to retreat. An elephant would indeed be unable to win from here, but a lion can play 7.Lc3! and the parity is changed. White will now come forward again, and this time he will reach Diagram 2 with Black to play.

An immediate jump 1.Lc7 from Diagram 1 would also change the parity, but Black would reply 1...Cd3 and he would reach White's den first. So White cannot change the parity by jumping forwards; he must work his way forwards step by step, and then jump back.

The main difference between this game and ordinary chess lies in the capturing rule, and the elephant's vulnerability to the rat has caused me to wonder about chess games with scissors-paper-stone captures (scissors cut paper, paper wraps stone, stone blunts scissors). A simple possibility: (a) each man moves like a chess king, (b) the king can capture or be checked by any man, (c) other men capture only in XPS order (X = scissors), and like men cannot capture each other. I suspect that the players should start by placing their men on the board alternately, but for a first example I have chosen a simple systematic layout. The play that follows is unlikely to be free from blunders.

```

p x k s p
x s p x s
. . . . .
S X P S X
P S K X P
    
```

1.Sa2-a3 (moving to b3...d3 loses a man) Se4-e3 2.Pa1-a2 Ph5-h4 3.Pa2-b3 Xa4xPb3 4.Sa3xXb3 Pc4xSb3 5.Xb2xPb3 Sb4xXb3 6.Pc2xSb3:

```

p x k s .
. . . x p
. P . . s
. . . S X
. S K X P
    
```

6...Xb5-b4 7.Sb1-b2 (trying to keep his outpost) Xb4xPb3 8.Sb2xXb3 Pa5-b4 9.Xd1-c2 Sd5-c4 (now White *must* retreat) 10.Sb3-b2:

```

. . k . .
. p s x p
. . . . s
. S X S X
. . K . P
    
```

Black clearly stands better. 10...Sc4-c3 11.Sd2-d1 (to bring up Pe1 against bSc3, but it's too late) Se3xXe2 12.Pe1xSe2 Sc3xXc2+ (destroying White's last pair of scissors) 13.Kc1xSc2 Pe4-d3+ 14.Kc2-b1 Pb4-b3 with ...Pd3-c2 and ...PxSb2 mate.

It's a curious game, where all depends on the local preponderance of men of a particular type. More work needed, of course.

MODERN COURIER CHESS

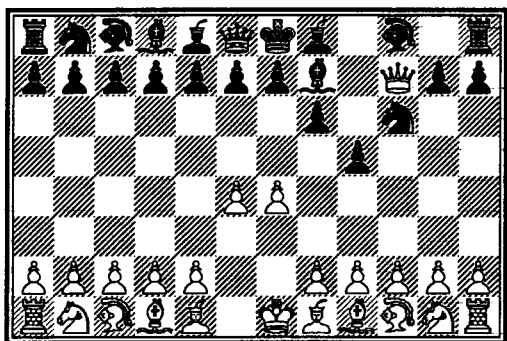
by Paul Byway and Roy Talbot

We have been thinking about the opening of the game in VC 39, and in particular about the defence. Some promising new ideas are under investigation, originating with the opening sequence 1.g4 i5 2.f4 Nl6. The analysis has thrown out several branches, notably 2. ... h6 or j6 and the alternative 2.Nj3. In this piece we consider the following limited problem: can the move 2. ... h6!? stand up to an immediate raid on the kingside by White's queen.

1. g2-g4 i7-i5
 2. f2-f4 h7-h6!?

2. ... h6!? defends the Pi5, puts a guard on g5, and by opening a line for the bishop Black hopes to deter 3.e4. On the other hand the move is a provocation and loses a pawn by force.

3. Qf1-j5+ Bi8-h7
 4. Qj5xj7 Nk8-j6

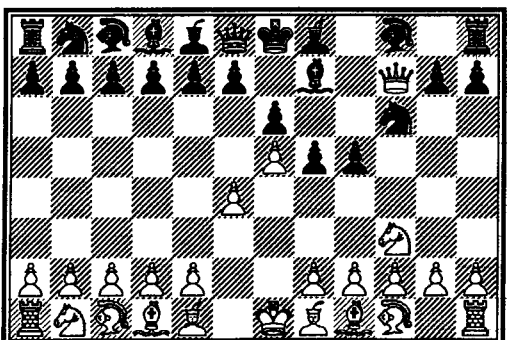


4. ... Nl6 5.Qxk7 Rk8 6.Qxl7 Bj5 wins the queen; so White must play 5.Qj3, Qh5 or Ql5. Black now has 5. ... Fj6 with compensation for the pawn. The question is: how much?
 4. ... Nj6 traps the queen and threatens an immediate draw by repetition. There is no escape by 5.Qxk7 Rk8 6.Qj7 Bi8 7.Qi6+ Bh7 8.Qj7 etc. so White attempts to open another line of retreat.

5. g4-g5 h6-h5

We shall now examine two continuations

- (A) 6. Nk1-j3?! g7-g6

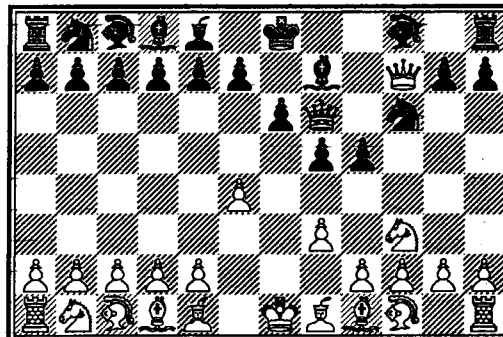


Black renews his threat to force a draw by repetition after driving off the knight with 7. ... i4.

7. h2-h3 Fh8-h6!?

Another guard is needed for i5 because of 7. ... Bi8 8.Qi6+ Bh7 9.Qxi5

8. g5xh6 Qf8xh6



Now Black actually threatens to win the queen.

9. h3-h4 i5xh4

9. ... i4 10.Nk5 is less satisfactory. It seems that Black must try ...l6 or ...Qj4+

10. Nj3-k5

After 10.Nxh4 e5 Black is a fers down, but still developing with threats, whereas White has no obvious way to save his queen, for Qxk7 always fails to ... Rk8.

10. - 17-16

11. Qj7-k6 l6xk5

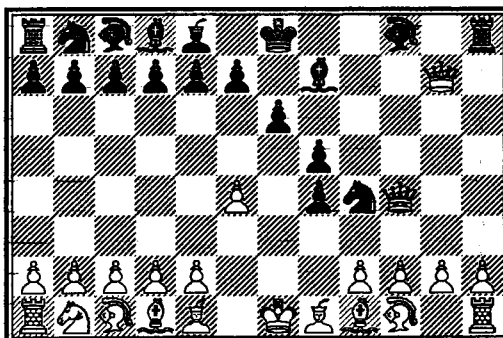
12. Qk6xk5 Nj6-i4

13. Qk5xk7

The only move to avoid loss of the queen.

13. - Qh6-j4+

Black has a strong attack.



- (B) 6. j2-j3 e7-e5

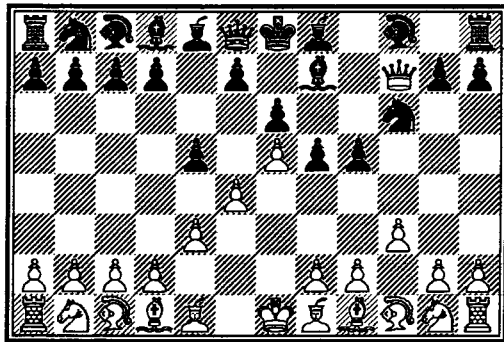
6. ... g6 7.Bk3 Fh6 8.gxh6 Qxh6 9.h4

7. e2-e3

7.Bk3 exf4 8.Bxi5 Bi8 9.Qxk7 Rk8 10.Bxj6 Rk7 11.Bxk7 Bxg5 and Black is better. The bishop must move to avoid being trapped by Fj6, and 12.Bf2 removes the threat of 12. ... Bxc2 13.Bxc2 Qc5+ regaining the bishop. After this Black is better, so White should probably choose 9.Qi6+ and a draw.

7.i4 exf4 8.ixh5 Bxg5
7. -

g7-g6



7. ... exf4 allows White the option of 8.Bxh5 Nxh5 9.Qxh5 when Black's position looks a little ragged. Possible is 9. ... Qc5 10.Qxi5 Fj6 11.Qh5 Bxg5 12.Cc3 Qe7 13.Nl3 and the outcome remains unclear.

8. Bi1-k3

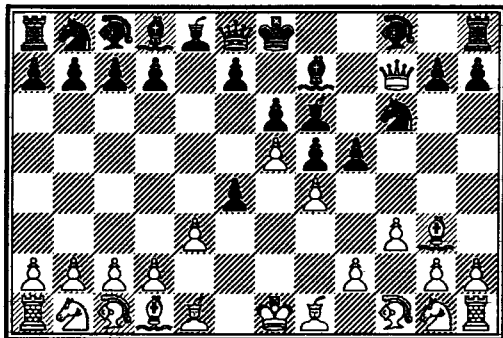
8.h4 exf4 9.hxi5 Qxi5 (9. ... Bi8 10.Qxk7 Rk8 11.ixj6 Rk7 12.jxk7) 10.Bk3 Qg3+

8. - e5xf4

9. h2-h4

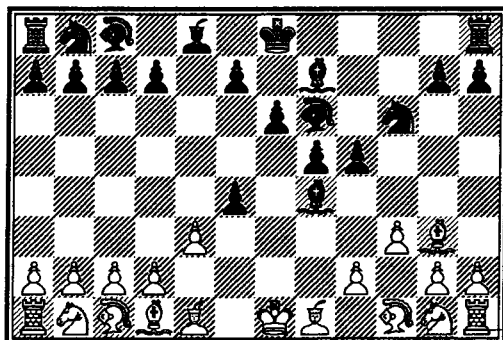
9.exf4 Fh6 10.gxh6 Qxh6 11.h4 Bxh4

9. - Fh8-h6



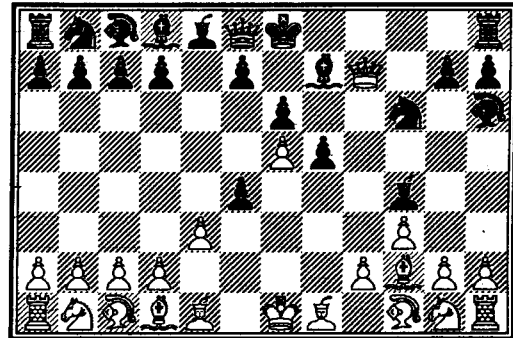
In this position Black seems to have sufficient resources, as shown by the following continuations:

(B1) 10. g5xh6 Bd8xh4
11. Qj7-i7
11.Qxk7 Qxh6
11. - Qf8xh6
12. Qi7xh6 Cj8xh6



And Black is better.

(B2) 10. h4xi5 Fh6xi5
11. Qj7-i7
11.exf4 Fj4 12.Bj2 Qi5
11. - Fi5-j4
12. Bk3-j2 Cj8-l6



12. ... Ch6 13.gxh6 Bxj2 14.Qxk7 is better for White.

12. ... Ch8 13.i3 Ri8 14.Qxk7 Rk8 15.Ql6 Fk5 wins.

As it is 12. ... Cl6 renews the threat of perpetual attack because the courier may not be captured.

13. i2-i3 Rl8-i8

14. Qi7xk7 Ri8-k8

15. Qk7-j7

15.Qxl6 Fk5!! and the queen is lost

15. - Rk8-j8

16. Qj7-i7 Rj8-i8

17. Qi7-h6 Qf8xh6

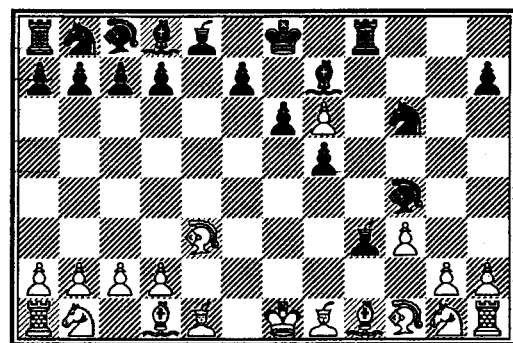
18. g5xh6 Fj4xi3

19. Bj2-i1

20.Bk3 Fj4(j2) and the bishop is lost.

19. - f4xe3

20. Cclxe3 Cl6-j4



Black is about to win a pawn with a big advantage. 21.Bk3 Fh2+ 22.Kf1 Nl5 and once again the bishop has nowhere to go.

Conclusion

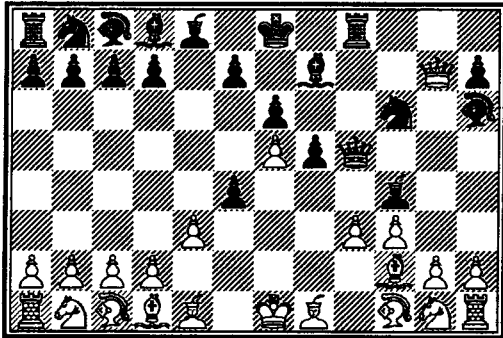
It seems clear that White's king-side raid is premature. Other lines in need of investigation will include: (a) 2.Nj3 (b) 2. ...j6 and 2. ...Nl6 (c) 3.e4!? Bxe4 4.f5 Nl6 (to avoid mate) 5.Nc3 Bc6 with perhaps 6.d4 or 6.Ff3 or 6.k4

MODERN COURIER CHESS

Postscript to the article

Thoughts on a Black alternative in part (B2)

14. - Qf8-i5



15. Qk7xi6

15.ixj4 Cxj4 16.Bk3 Rk8 17.Qj7 Bi6

15.Ni2 Rk8 (or 15. ... Fxi3 16.Bk3 as Black has no convenient checks.) 16.Qxl6 Fk5 17.j4 and White still lives

15. - Qi5-g3+

16. Fh1-g2 Fj4xi3

17. Bj2-14 Bh7-j5

18. Bd1-f3 Bj5xg2

19. Bf3xg2 f4-f3 wins

CASTLES IN THE AIR

By Jed Stone

The BCVS Correspondence Games Section

Welcome once more to 'Castles in the Air' - the home of the BCVS postal games section. Though it has only been a short while since your last visit we've had the builders and decorators roving round the stately rooms like a troop of worker ants and much has changed. As of May we switched our internal control system to a monthly communication called 'The Castle'. This zips round the world via e-mail, or plods about via the postal services, to pop up in the homes of the active players. It contains the names and games currently in active service and the results of any completed games.

At the moment we have two Ladder Leagues set up, one for Alice Chess and one for Hostage Chess. These are ongoing events and all players are free to challenge anyone to a game within three 'rungs' of their current position. Once the result is in, then points are awarded and the victor moves up and the loser down the ladder. At the moment there are four games going on in the Alice Ladder and eight in the Hostage one. The first Hostage result recently came in and a victory has been recorded for John Leslie (inventor of the variant) and this has placed him at the top of the ladder. The current Ladder standings are thus:-

ALICE LADDER

| Player | R | G | W | D | L |
|--------------|------|---|---|---|---|
| Peter Coast | 1000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Jed Stone | 1000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| George Davis | 1000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Paul Yearout | 1000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Allan Brown | 1000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

HOSTAGE LADDER

| Player | R | G | W | D | L |
|--------------|------|---|---|---|---|
| John Leslie | 1050 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Peter Coast | 1000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Jed Stone | 1000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Paul Yearout | 1000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Allan Brown | 950 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

In the near future we hope to set up a Challenge Ladder. This will run in the same manner as the other two but will feature any chess variant game and allow players to obtain an opponent for their favourite variant. Interested parties will post their challenges in 'The Castle' and the results will be recorded on the usual ladder basis.

On the tournament front a **Modern Courier Chess** Tournament has been underway for a while and a **Scottish Progressive** Tournament has just started. Two further tournaments, one in Hostage Chess and the other in Alice, are on the starting blocks. They will probably be knockout tournaments played over several rounds. In the near future we are looking to start a further tournament in **Hexagonal Chess**.

We have also set up a '**Scottish Progressive Chess Joust**'. As the name would suggest this is a one-on-one tournament in which the winner is declared 'Champion' and plays again against a fresh opponent. The idea is to stay champion as long as possible racking up as many straight wins as you can in an attempt create a record that will be difficult to beat. This too will be an ongoing competition.

We are working on a 'build-as-you-go' basis creating answers that fulfil the requirements of the interested players so if you are interested in playing any variant chess by post or e-mail contact me at either of the addresses below and I'll send across the latest edition of 'The Castle' so you can get up to speed with current events. We're on the move. We're going places drawing the map as we go. You're welcome to join us.

Contact :-

Jed Stone Postal Chess Organizer
7, Harstoft Avenue Worksop Notts S81 OHS England
e-mail: jedstone@talk21.com

THE END IS NIGH!

by Paul Byway

Competition 15 generated a good response, but nobody managed to score 100% although more than one found that #104 was cooked.

#102 caused unexpected difficulty, the solution being: 8. *Kd6, Kc5, Kd4, Kxe4, Nc2, Bh3, Rg8, Rxe2* Italian mate.

#103 was harder than it looked, I'm pleased to say: 9. *Kb7, Kb8, Nb7, a5, a6, a7, a8=B* stalemate! A knight move would give premature check and so is illegal; Black therefore has no move. If 9. *Nb3, Kb7, a5, a6, a7, a8=Q, Qc8, Qxc5, Qc6+* then Black has 10. *Ke3, h5, h4, h3, h2, h1=B, Bd5, Bxb3, Ba4, Bxc6+* and wins. Also 9. *Nc4, Ne3, Ng2, Nxf4, Kb7, a5, a6, Ne6, Nxc5+* is answered by 10. *Kd5, h5, h4, h3, h2, h1=Q, Qh6, Kxc5, Kb5, Qxa6+* and wins.

The tricky point in #103 is that check on the 9th move is allowed, but on the 8th move it's illegal so White must stalemate himself on the 7th. In this connection the prize for self-criticism must go to Fred Galvin for the following:

"Oh, it is legal to check on the last move of a series? Duh! 'I die. My body dries up and crumbles into dust. The dust is blown away on the wind and poisons the land and all die.' Oh, the embarrassment!"

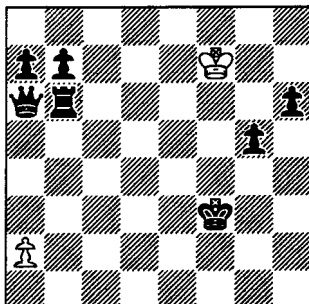
Don't take it so hard Fred; it took me weeks of fiddling around before I really appreciated that point.

#104(a) is straightforward; everybody found 9. *a4, a5, axb6, bxa7, a8=Q, Qxa6, Qxh6, Qxg5, Qb5* wins. But that was only the easy introduction, designed to lull you into a false sense of security.

#104(b) is unhappily cooked by the mundane 9. *a4, a5, axb6, Kxg6, Kxh6, Kxg5, bxa7, a8=Q, Qxb7+* and although White will lose his queen *K+R v K* is a draw. The position can be corrected: replace the rook on a6 by a queen and this line no longer works. White must now find the intended

solution, which is: 9. *a4, a5, axb6, Kxg6, Kxh5, bxa7, a8=B* stalemate which we now see is a variation on the theme of #103. Sorry about that!

#104a RT & PB (Correction)



Italian Progressive (series 9)
(a) as the diagram Win
(b) add black pawn g6 Draw

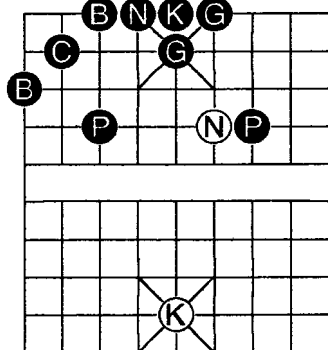
NB #104a designates a correction, to be followed by b, c, etc. if necessary. Not to be confused with the 2 parts of the composition (a) and (b).

Current Scores: IR 46; FG 44; DP 29; CL 15; RT 13; PW 3; JB 3; SB 2

I reviewed *The Five Dances of HuaShan* in VC38. Here, as a taster, is the first problem in that booklet:

#105 Shu Ming Li & C.K.Lai

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9



9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

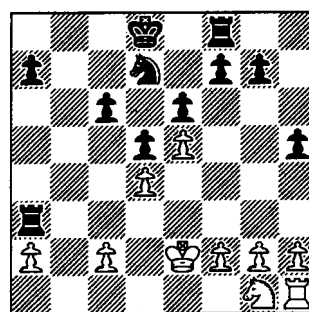
Mate in 5

1.N4+6 (check) C2=4. 2.N6-8 (both bishops immobilised) C4+1 3.N8+7 C4-1 4.N7-6 C4+1 5.N6+4 mate. Black can try 2. ... P7+1 and 3. ... B1+3 but 4.N7-6 blocks the bishop from covering the centre file; nor can the 7-file pawn get there in time.

COMPETITION 16

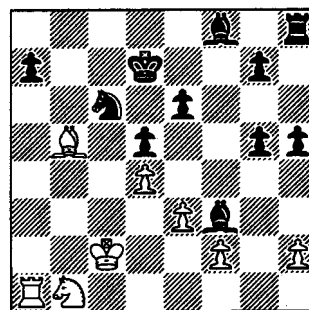
Three more positions from Italian Progressive Chess for you. The colours have been swapped in #108 to lose a redundant move. In the previous competition I detected some uncertainty as to the length of the solution - this time rest assured that all end in mate with the first series. As a player, I don't think that I should actually have any sympathy! It is, after all, usual not to know that there is a combination to be found.

#106 Gadzinsky - Ciegis (1993)



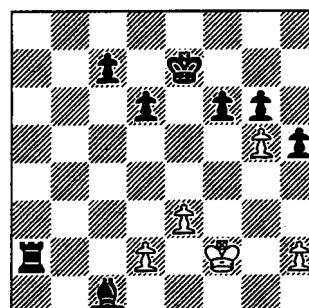
Win (series 9)

#107 Kulik - Rets (1994)



Win (series 9)

#108 Bielefeld - Bar (1992) (colours reversed)



Win (series 9)

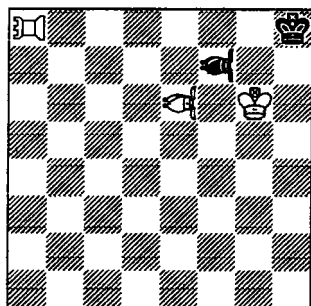
Player meets problemist - and they try to find some common ground in a shared interest in 'Chinese' pieces. My thanks to Ronald and to Peter Fayers.

CHINESE WHISPERS

by Ronald Turnbull

So-called 'Chinese' pieces appear in some Western problems. These play on the Western board but imitate the capturing action of the Cannon. The Pao, or 'Chinese Cannon', moves like a Rook but captures only on a square (on a Rook-line) that is beyond some obstructing unit of either colour. So in A, the white Pao on a8 could move along the back rank as far as g8 but does not give check. However the arrival of any third unit on the back rank will place Black in check.

A - P. BYWAY, R. TURNBULL



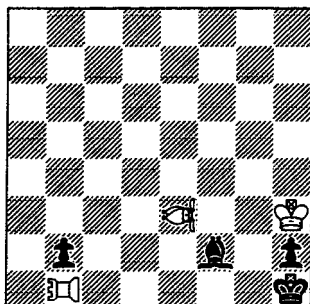
Mate in 3

The Vao and Leo (Western inventions) are the equivalent Chinese Bishop and Queen. Black may not play 1...VAe8/g8 as these are self-check. As 1...Kg8 is also self-check from the White Vao, we see that Black is stalemated in the diagram.

A Chinese piece gains in attacking power by being further away. This in itself is profoundly non-Western, and reflects the subtler military thinking of the Orient. The white Pao is, accordingly, superbly placed in what is a fairly gamelike position - that is, if anyone ever played Western chess with Chinese pieces (and maybe they should). In this position, White can eventually squeeze out Black Vao with 1.VAc8+ VAe8 2.VAd7+ VAF7 3.VAe8+ VAg8 4.VAF7+ VAh7. 5.PAb8 (say) Kg8 (forced!) and 6.VAd8#. The quick win, however,

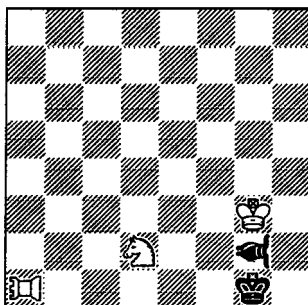
has a rather surprising first move... 1.Kh6! VAg6/h5 2.Kg6 (or Kxg6) and 3.VAc8#.

B - P. BYWAY, R. TURNBULL



Mate in 3

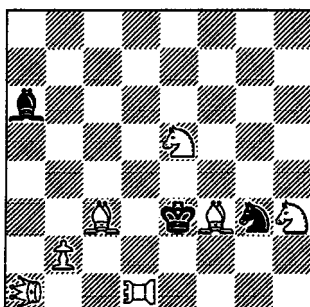
C - P. BYWAY, R. TURNBULL



Mate in 4

B seems already won, as after 1...VAg3/h4 (Black's only moves) 2.Kg3 and 3.VAf1#. bPxf1?? doesn't remove the check to bK! However, this pawn does spoil White's waiting move 1.PAa1, and 1.Kg3 is stalemate! The solution is at the end, as is that for the more difficult C.

D - R. TURNBULL



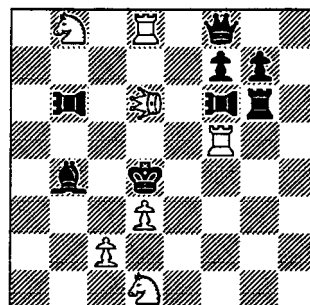
Mate in 2 (try), no wK

Positions so far have been relatively gamelike. D is pure problem

- not least in the absence of the White King. (Some composers would put him in anyway, even though he has nothing to do here.) A try is a white attempt that fails to just a single black defence - but we wouldn't bother to draw attention to it unless it was part of the point of the problem. The try that matters here is 1.LEa2? - guarding d2 to threaten 2.Bd2 (note that as white's B undefends d4, his PA takes over the square...) 1...Bd3 2.Bd4 and 1...Nf12.LEe6; but 1...Ne4! refutes the try.

However, the keymove 1.PAd6! (threat 2.Bd4) swaps everything around: 1...Bd3 2.Bd2 and 1...Ne2/f5 2.PAe6.

E - R. TURNBULL



Mate in 2, no wK

Another purely problemistic (and also I think fairly problemistic) position is at E. wNb8 can have no possible role but to give mate on c6 - this is a defect in the problem, perhaps leading quite quickly to a move of white's Leo to threaten 2.Nc6. The keymove won't be a check (too obvious and crude), and if we're lucky we try 1.LEd7 before 1.LEd5. Or if we're clever - remembering 'stronger when further away'.

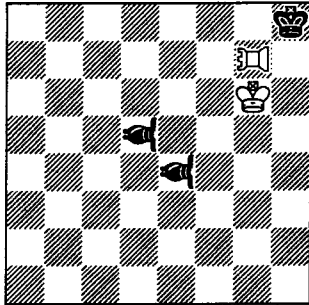
1.LEd7! (threat 2.Nc6).

Two defences matter most: 1...PAf6 2.LEa7 - Black cannot refute the double-check by 2...PAb6 - d6 because the other PA is in the way! And similarly, 1...PAbd6 2.LExg7. There is also 1...Qc5 2.LEa4 along the same sort of lines.

The helpstalemate F asks the two sides to collaborate (Black starting) so as to give stalemate on White's second move. Despite this unconventional aim, the play is basically gamelike. It

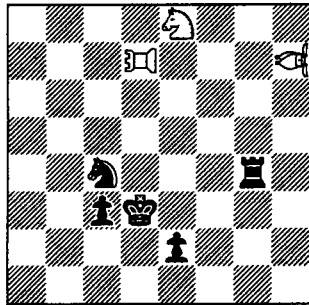
should be possible to find at least a couple of ways of doing it, surely? All four are given at the end.

F - P. BYWAY



Helpstalemate in 2, 4 solutions

G - R. TURNBULL



Helpmate in 2, b) wN to e7

In G, the two sides collaborate so as to give mate. The black units that block the King will be able to interpose into a check, so again the double-check seems a good idea. The black hurdle must be placed where it can't eliminate both checks at once by moving out of one line and into the other.

Thus we have 1.Rg5 Nd6+ 2.Rd5 Nf5 (3.Rxf5 no good!) and part b), after moving wN to e7, has 1.Ne3 Nf5+ 2.Rg6 Nd6 (3.Rxg6 no good!).

Finally, note 360 by Alex Ettinger in the Problem Pages - surely very easy with all these explanations!

Solutions not given in text:

B: 1.VAd2 threatens 2.VAe1+ VAg1 3.VAf2# - the black VA can't leave g1 - while if 1...VAe3 2.VAe1+ VAc1 3.VAd2#, matchingly.

C: 1...Kh1 attracts Sf1#, and most moves of black VA allow 2.Sb1#, but 1...VAf3/g3 hold the position. However, the retreating key abandons these readymade mates; 1.Nb3!

1...Kf1 2.Nc1#, 1...VA any 2.Nc1+ VAb1/d1/e1 3.Ne2 - mate by double check - and 1...Kh1 2.Nc1+ VAf1 3.PAb1 Kg1 4.Ne2.

F: 1.Va8 Kf7 2.Veb7 PAxb7; 1.Vh1 PAg8 2.Vdg2 PAxg2; 1.Vf7 Kxf7 2.Vb7 PAxg7; 1.Vg8 Kf7 2.Veh7 PAg6. Retreats, blocks and captures: the line where neither of the black pieces is captured is particularly pleasing.

XIANGQI

2nd Non-Asian Tournament at Paris

This was held on the 1st and 2nd of June. Unfortunately the number of non-Asian entries was too low (about 14) and so the organizers opened it up to Asian players as well. As a result first place was disputed between Hua Say Ty and Dang Tran Trung who drew with each other and beat everybody else: the former had the lucky tie-break. Third to fifth prize-winners were He Zhi Min (Italy), Huynh Long and Paul MounghKhot (France) and Zhu Yue Ping (Italy) - all with 5 / 7.

In accordance with the original idea there were five prizes for the non-Asian competitors, and after six rounds Peter Wood was leading with 3½ points, just ahead of six players on 3. Norbert Schaefer had to catch an early plane and so he and Claus Tempelmann agreed a draw. Most of the other hopefuls lost and so all depended on the game between Uwe Frischmuth and Joel Janin. Uwe won in fine style and got the cup; he showed great fighting spirit throughout, saving two lost games on day one. The other prizes went to Norbert, Claus, Peter and Joel.

Olivier Thill of France wasn't there this time, but I stumbled across his Internet homepage a few days later. There I found a free utility (xqthill.zip) (203KB) for producing XiangQi diagrams and transcripts; the diagrams can be copied to Word or PhotoEditor. I haven't tried this application myself, but it can be found at:

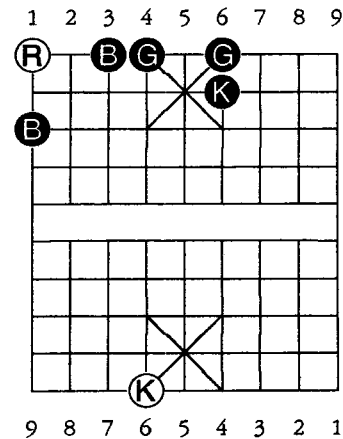
<http://olivier.thill.free.fr/xqthill/xqthill.htm>

Pascal Tang was there though, and I suggest you go looking for his XiangQi playing program Xie Xie.

Another discovery on the Internet is the Home Page of Pham Hong Nguyen:

<http://www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/Grid/6544/>

Here you can find VSCCP (Very Simple Chinese Chess Program), but of more immediate interest: an endgame database called EON. This first version only considers the endgame Rook v. 2 Guards and 2 Bishops, but has produced interesting results. It seems that more than 84% of positions are won (about 70% inside 17 moves), so the usual claim of draw doesn't tell the whole story. Just playing around with the program gives an insight into the way this endgame should be played. Here is an example.



1.R9=8 G6+5 2.R8-4 K6-1 3.R8=4 K6=5 4.R4=5 K5=6 5.K6=5 K6+1 6.R5=4 G5+6 7.K5=4 G4+5 8.R4=3 G5-4 9.R3+2 G4+5 10.R3+1 K6-1 11.R3=5 and wins.

The UK XiangQi (Chinese Chess) Open Championship 2002

This will be held at the Vietnamese Community Centre, 56B Courland Grove, London SW8 (nearest underground: Stockwell) from 9.30am to 7.00pm on the 11th August 2002. Entry fee £10 by 8th August 2002 to:- C.K.Lai, 12 Haslam Street, London SE15 5GD. Trophies + 3 cash prizes. The three highest competitors will be promoted to XiangQi Masters.

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Games, men, rules, conditions

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PROBLEM PAGES SOLUTIONS VC39

by Ronald Turnbull

Comments: Fred Galvin, Alex Ettinger, Peter Fayers, RT

352 (Turnbull) Set 1...e1R/Q 2.e8Q/R and 1...g1R,ghR/g1Q,ghQ 2.g8Q/R. Key 1.g8B! 1...g1Q,B/ghB 2.Bd5/Ba2. Nice dual avoidance, but rather a pity that all other moves of g2 allow both solutions - AE. I was expecting AUW, if not full Babson - PF. One solver, despite (because of) having seen an earlier version, offered 1.e8B. But this makes no threat and can be answered eg 1...e1N 2.Bc6 ghB!

353 (Millour) Promotions on g1, so threat on h3, but where is the key? 1.Kxa2(Ke1)! self-pins 3 times. 1...hgQ(Qd8)/hgR(Rh8)/hgB(Bf8) all unpinned by occupying home squares for 2.Rxg7(Ra1)/Ra2/Qc3 and 1...hgN(Ng8) 2.cb(b2) - looks like AUW but in fact the N-line is merely byplay, and not hard really once you've found the key - RT. IR's claim 1.Bc2 mate made me think, but 1...Bxc3(bBf8) not self-check from wR as a1 is occupied.

354 (Reeves) 1.f5 c4 5.gxf1N bxa8R. The 'Seven Zloty' (or something like that) theme - impossible in orthodox and not shown before in such close approximation to orthodox. Harder to compose than to solve - RT. Ingenious - AE. Easy when you've found it! - IR.

355 (Jones) 1.Rf8 3.Rxg2 (R now pinned, can't move, so K may) 9.Kxg3 (aha! now K can't move further without giving check to Black, which is forbidden at this point in the series: so R may move. Popeye disagrees, maintaining that W has now stalemated himself.) 11.Rxd6 (pinned again) 14.Kxe6 (again can't move without checking) 16.Rg8. Interesting. We've had conditions overriding each other (eg Bichrome Messigny vs Messigny Bichrome); here we have condition vs stipulation. This works as Seriesmate Single-Combat, but not as Single-Combat seriesmate (and Popeye obviously agrees with me!) - PF. Who says he's expecting twins... congratulations Peter. I agree with Popeye - IR. (He's quite right, and I've had to award him the solving point.)

356 (Lytton) 1.Kxb1 f8Q 2.Ka1 Qb4= b) 1...f8Q 2.abN Qa3+! Composer was aware of the duplex in b) (Black starts) 1.Kxb1 f8B 2.a1B but preferred to ignore it as too obvious. Quite neat! - AE. Interesting that

CCL has arrived independently at a key idea of Dead Reckoning, just months after Andrew Buchanan and myself (www.geocities.com/anselan/DRtpturnbull.html)

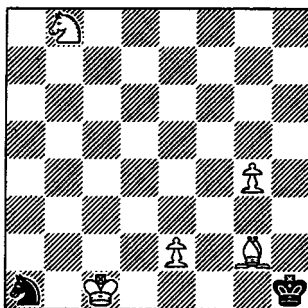
357 (Vitale) 1.Bb8 Nd3 2.Kc2 Kxe3 3.Kd1 Ba4# and 1.Nd5 Kxd5 2.Bd4 Kxd4 3.Ka3 Kc3= Model mate and ideal stalemate - this is the 'Tema Argentino' - AE.

358 (Vitale) 0...Be4 1.Ke6 Kb5 2.Nd6+ Kc6 3.Rc8# or Re7 Bd5# and 0...Kb5 1.Ke7 Kc6 2.Nd6 Kc7 3.Rc8# or Nf8 Nc6 three repeated moves and a bystander wN in one solution, but a fearsome puzzle - RT. But AE and IR dual the first solution 0...Bh1 etc. I am too exhausted from this to try for the second solution! - AE.

359 (Millour) At first glance it seems impossible to anything at all from the almost-empty diagram. At second glance we may think something might be said about the bottom right-hand corner. In fact the deductive chain is reasonably simple, and very pleasing: so much so that I've felt it worth reprinting the diagram and going into some detail. In Monochrome Chess, a move must be between two squares of the same colour. So Knights never move at all (with the two in the diagram being promoted pawns) and a pawn must capture 4 or 6 times to promote. 0-0 and e.p. capture are allowed.

Where, and by what, were the Rooks captured?

359 - R. MILLOUR



Monochrome Chess

1 White just gave check, from f1 or h3 or by a capture-move from the direction of a8. In any of these cases, Black's previous move was not Kg2-h1 (from occupied square or from position of impossible check). Neither was Black's previous move Pb2xh1=N - again, from an illegal position of check to White. So, to give Black a previous move, White's last move was a capture: and indeed, a capture of something other than a Rook (bR on g2

would have no immediately-previous move).

2 Bottom right corner: with bK on g4, must have played wPg2xf3+ bKh3: only legal if wBf1 had already disappeared. So g2 is promoted.

3 Black has captured on on f1 (with e2, g2 still in place). This captor wasn't bK or bB, blocked by white pawns from f1. An original bR can only reach 8, 6, 4, 2 ranks, and the original bQ moves on dark squares. So the captor was a promoted piece X (= Q or R).

4 The four promoting pawns have made 16 captures, the wP g4 has captured twice, the wB just captured, and f1 died at home and not by pawn-capture. Counting through the captures, we determine that
a) Knights have been captured by pawns on b1, g8 and b8

b) wP has died on b2 and so the unit captured on a1 wasn't Bishop.

5 Leading to the following pawn-trajectories:

White c-pawn: c4, xPd5, xPe6 e.p., xPf7, xNg8=B and Bx(X or B)g2+

White f-pawn: f4, x(B or Q)e5, xRd6, x(Q or B)c7, xNb8=N

White g-pawn: x(B or X)f3, xRg4

Black b-pawn: b5, xPa4, xRb3, xQ(a2 or c2), xNb1=X or b5, xQ(a4 or c4), xRb3, xPa2, xNb1=X

Black c-pawn: c5, xPd4, xBc3, xPb2, xRa1=N

So all rooks were captured by specific pawns, on specific squares, though in one case the capture-move's start-square is indeterminate. The composer tells me that this hasn't been achieved before in miniature.

360 (Ettinger) 1...f4 ('threat' 2.Bd5) 2.d4 Ma3; 1.d4 f4 ('threat' 2.Ma3) 2.d3 Lg4; b) set as previous; 1.d3 f4 ('threat' 2.Lg4) 2.dc Bd5. Cyclic Le Grand, shown in orthodox helpmate but dualled, RD Wertheim 1PR Israelhelpmate but dualled, RD Wertheim 1PR Israel Ring Tourney 1967. (Wh Ka3 Rd1 Bd3b8 Sf4 Pc3e2f6 Bl Kc5 Pb6b7c6d6e3f5f7 H#2* b) after key) - Poor Wertheim! I remember him showing me this problem with great pride - AE.

It was fun, but I've had about as much fun as I can stand, so I'm calling it quits till the next issue - new solver FG. I rate these either fairly difficult (six) or impossible (355, 357, 359) - IR.

Scores (so far) FG 5, AE 6 1/2, PF 5, IR 5

In 347 (VC38) IR replaces Chinese Pf3 with conventional Pf3. In the diagram there are (i) Lxh1 & fg3 mate and (ii) fg3+ & PA-e4 mate as unwanted solutions. (Ed)