Variant Chess

Founded 1990

The magazine to broaden your chess horizons

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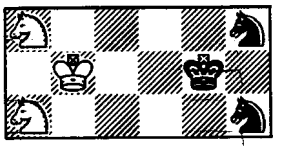
Card Chess

This game was invented by Herbert Ramsden, a Harley Street doctor, and published in a 3d rule book by Sherrat & Hughes (1899).

The game is played on a 3x6 board. Each plaayer has 12 cards representing chessmen; the usual pieces plus four pawns. At the start of a game the king and two knights are positioned on the board as shown.



The kings do not move. White starts. A turn consists of either playing a card from hand to the board or moving a man on the board in accordance with the rules of chess, the pawns excepted. Pawns move one square orthogonally in any direction *(i.e. as a wazir)* but diagonally, again in any direction, to capture. The aim is checkmate. A card may be played, either from hand or by a move on the board, on top of an existing card of either colour. However, if played from hand, the card must be of at least equal value to the piece it covers. In this respect, the scale of values is given as Q,R,N(sic),B,P. Cards that are covered have no powers. The king commands the squares next to it. If an unguarded hostile man is placed adjacent to the king. it can be be captured by the king. This counts as a move but the king does not move. Fool's Mate is given as 1.Nb3 N(either)d2 2.Nc1 (White could of course equally play 1.Nb1). Any card played to cover the attacking knight will be unguarded next to the attacker's king and thus will be captured. Black can avoid the mate in a number of ways; e.g. P*d2. ***(DBP)***

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PICTURE PROBLEMS IN SHOGI

by John Beasley

None of the present *Variant Chess* team is a regular Shogi player, and the game has received little attention in recent issues. But as librarian of the British Chess Problem Society I now have charge of two books of Shogi problems given to the late Bob McWilliam by Yoshio Kadowaki (Bob was the BCPS's second-hand book dealer for many years and made numerous friends), and some of these are of a nature which even I can understand.

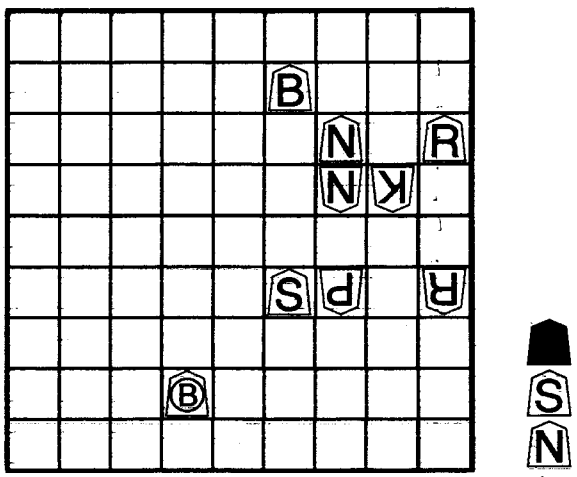
The basic difference between Shogi and "Western" chess is that a captured man is added to its captor's army, and can be dropped on a vacant square to further his attack or bolster his defence. The main rules:

- As in Western chess, the aim is **checkmate**.
- **King, Rook, Bishop** move as in Western chess.
- **Knight** ditto, but forwards only (Nc3 only to b5/d5).
- **Lance** moves as rook, but forwards only.
- **Gold General** and **Silver General** move one step only. Each can move straight or diagonally forwards, otherwise they are complementary: gold moves only to the side or straight back, silver only diagonally back.
- **Pawn** moves and captures one step forward.
- The **board** is 9x9, and each player starts with 20 men (K, R, B, 2N, 2L, 2G, 2S, 9P).
- A man (not king or gold) which moves to, from, or within its opponent's three back ranks may **promote**. Rook and bishop add king movement to their normal powers, other promoted men move as golds.
- A player may **drop** a captured man on a vacant square instead of playing a normal move. A pawn may not be dropped to give mate (a piece may), nor may it be dropped on a file where the player already has a pawn. A man is always dropped in its unpromoted form, even if it had been promoted before being captured.

There are some further rules affecting minor detail, but the above will suffice for what follows here.

Because captured men are recycled, there is no lightweight "endgame" phase, and a typical Shogi problem is a stylized middlegame mating task. In practical play, a player who has embarked on a sacrificial mating attack must normally proceed by continuous checks, since the slightest let-up in the pressure will allow the opponent to take the initiative and start dropping for a counter-attack. In problems, this is crystallized into a formal convention, whereby the attacking side's king is omitted from the board and continuous checking is mandatory. But despite this conventional difference, the problem remains closely related to the parent game, and problems provide useful practice as well as enjoyment. They also provide an excellent introduction to some of the game's tactics.

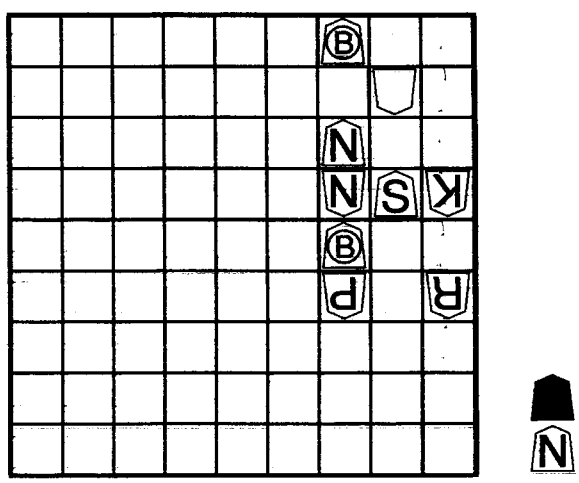
An important subclass of Shogi problem is the picture problem, where the main line ends in an exotic mating position. My first example is from a book by Kadowaki and T. Mikami, and is by the latter. Only the moves in bold are in the book, and my analysis of the sidelines should be treated with caution. I have left some of them as exercises for the reader, and those new to the game may enjoy working out the details (my answers are on page 31). I use a-i for the files; normal Shogi notation is right-to-left numeric. I had occasional difficulty interpreting the source, but I trust that what follows is correct.



The attacker has five men on the board and two in hand, and his opponent has four men on the board and everything else in hand (by convention, these are not shown). The promoted bishop on d2 moves as B+K.

Play starts **1.Sf4-g5**, and 1...Kh5 allows mate in two: the rook on i7 moves to h7 and promotes, 2.Rh7+, and the promoted rook (now moving as R+K) mates on h6. Hence **1...Kh6xi7**, and the attack continues **2.Bf8-g9+** promoting. Now 2...Kh7 is met by 3.Sh6, with 3...Ki6 4.+Bi7 Kh5 5.+Bg5 and 3...Ki8 4.Si7+ (+S moves as G and still guards h7) Ki9 5.+Bh9, and the reader may care to deal with 2...Ki8 and 2...Ki6. In the main line, the defender drops, **2...X*h8**, and we'll consider individual cases in a moment.

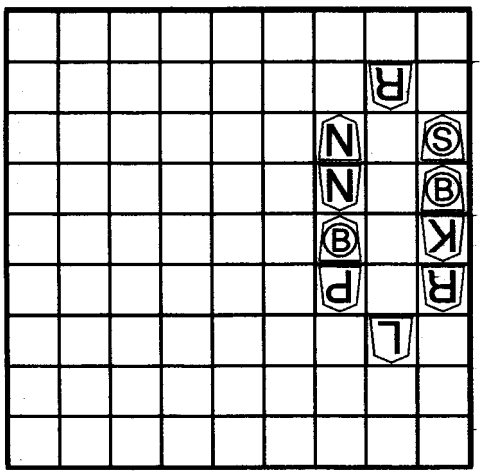
Play continues **3.Sg5-h6**, and if 3...Ki8 then 4.Si7+ soon forces mate. Hence **3...Ki7-i6**, and **4.S*h5** forces **4...Ki6xh5**. There follows **5.+Bd2-g5 Kh5-i6**:



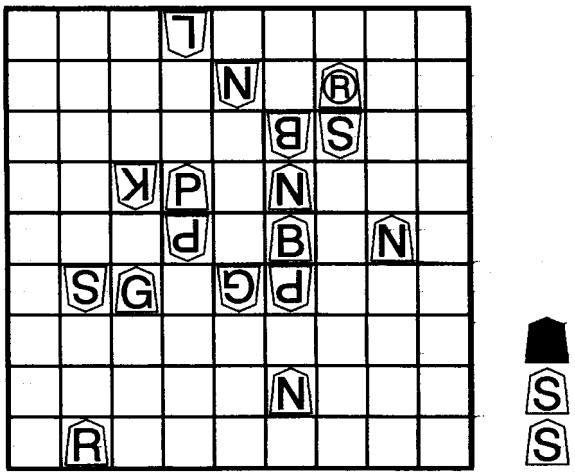
+Bg5 guards h4/h5/h6 etc; what about 6.Si7+ Ki5 7.N*h3? This gives mate if the man on h8 is a pawn or knight, and

also works if it is a bishop, gold, or silver (these can capture on i7, but +Bg9 recaptures and mate still follows). This leaves only rook and lance to worry about, and in what follows we shall assume h8 to be a rook.

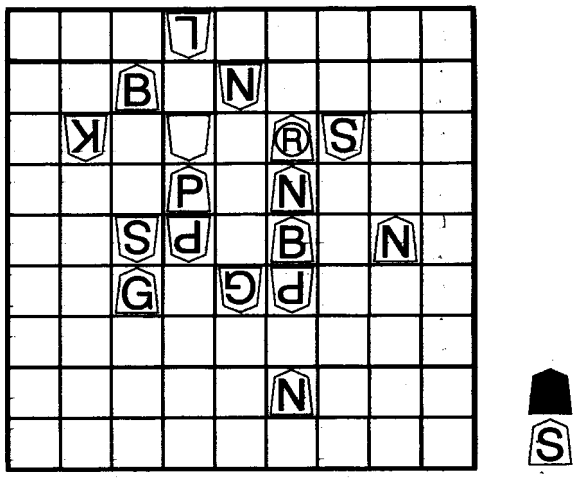
In this case, the attack continues **6.+Bg9-g8**, and the capture 6...Rxg8 would leave h3 unguarded and allow Si7+ and N*h3 as before. So the defender must drop on h7, and the only piece available that continues to guard h3 is a lance: **6...L*h7**. (Had he dropped a lance on h8 he would now have a rook to drop on h7, but the sequel would be the same.) But the respite is only temporary. After **7.Sh6-i7+ Ki6-i5** the sacrifice **8.N*h3!** drags the lance off the diagonal g8-i6, **8...Lh7xh3**, and **9.+Bg8-i6** gives mate:



Our second example is by Kadowaki himself, and won the prestigious Kanju Prize in 1963. As before, analysis not in bold is by myself.

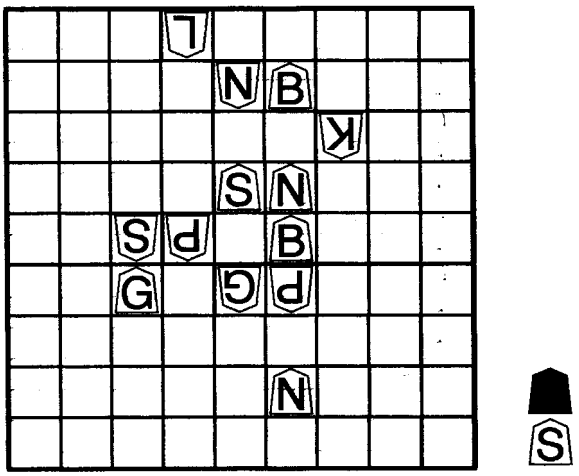


The attack starts with **1.S*c5**. A king move will allow one of the rooks to come into play (1...Kb7 2.Rxb4, 1...Kc7 2.+Rxf7), hence **1...Sb4xc5**, and now comes **2.Rb1-b7+!!** It is natural to capture, **2...Kc6xb7**, and **3.+Rg8xf7** brings the other rook into play and gives the attacker a bishop to drop. The best reply is a defensive drop on d7, **3...X*d7**, and we note that the man dropped cannot be a knight (all four are already on the board) nor a pawn (the defender already has a pawn on the d-file). There follows **4.B*c8** dropping the newly captured bishop:



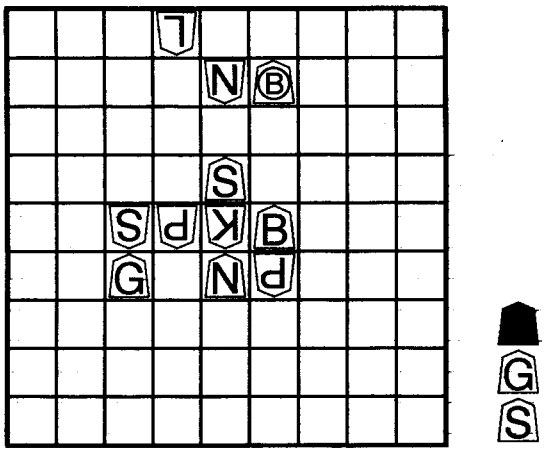
4...Kxc8 allows **5.d6xd7+** with mate soon to follow, and winning lines after other moves are given on page 31.

But this isn't the main line. Go back to move 2, and play **2...Kc6xd6** instead of Kxb7. The attack continues **3.+Rb7-e7! Kd6xe7** (3...Kc6 4.S*b5 mate) **4.+Rg8xf7** (a bishop to drop) **Ke7xf7** (4...Kd8 5.+Rd7 etc, 4...Kd6 5.B*c7 Kc6 6.Bb6+ Kxb6 7.S*b5 Ka5 8.+Ra7) **5.S*e6 Kf7-f8 6.Nh5xg7+** (a new silver to drop) **Kf8xg7** (6...Ke9 7.Nxe8+ Kxe8 8.S*e7 and 9.+Nf8) **7.B*f8!**:

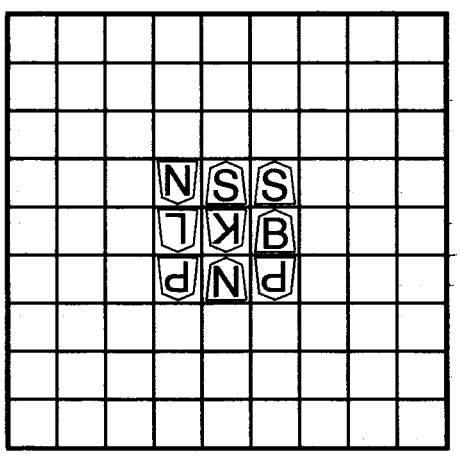


7...Kg7-h8 (7...Kxf6 as after move 9, 7...Kxf8 see page 00) **8.Bf8-g9+ Kh8-g7** (8...Kxg9 9.S*g8 Kh8 10.Sh7+ etc) **9.+Bg9-f8** (this is the same position as after move 7 except that the bishop has promoted) **Kg7xf6** (9...Kh8 10.+Bg8 etc) **10.Nf2xe4** (a gold to drop) **10...Kf6-e5**

(10...Kg5 11.G*f4 mate) and the final stage is at hand:



11.G*d4 (to make the defender block this square, thus releasing Gc4 from guard duty) **d5xd4 12.Gc4-d5 Ld9xd5** (now the lance no longer guards d6, and the two remaining guards are not enough) **13.S*d6 Sc5xd6** (13...Nxd6 14.+Bg7 etc) **14.+Bf8xd6 Ne8xd6 15.S*f6 mate**:



I hope this has introduced readers unfamiliar with Shogi to some of its tactics, and I shall be pleased rather than offended if it prompts someone to offer us some rather more expertly presented Shogi material for future issues.

CHEBACHE

by David Pritchard

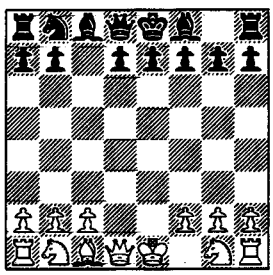
This is a strategy board game (inventor: Scott D. Pardee), marketed in the U.S. by Pardee Games, that claims to be a marriage of chess, backgammon and checkers (draughts), hence the name. The catch-all title may be a good marketing ploy, but basically this is a backgammon variant, and quite a good one at that. The chess element arises from the fact that one of the pieces on each side is a king and if the opponent manages an an inverted V-formation of pieces facing it the king is checkmated and the game is over. However, the main thrust of the game is to bear off all your pieces as in backgammon. By no stretch of the imagination, in my opinion, could **Chebache** be really considered a chess variant.

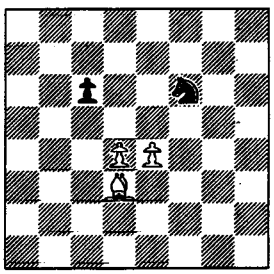
ALICE CHESS GAMES

from Ivan Dirmeik

White *Dave Hurd* **Black** *Ivan Dirmeik*

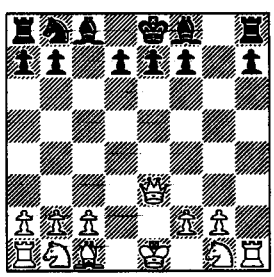
1.	e2-e4	c7-c6
2.	d2-d4	Ng8-f6
3.	Bf1-d3?	

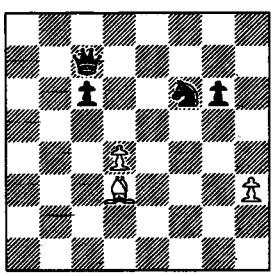




e4-e5 was better

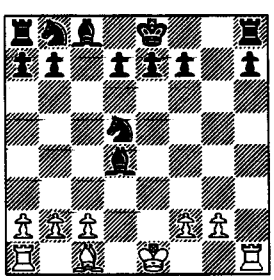
3.		Nf6xe4
4.	Qd1-f3	Qd8-c7
5.	Qf3-e3	Ne4-f6
6.	h2-h3	g7-g6

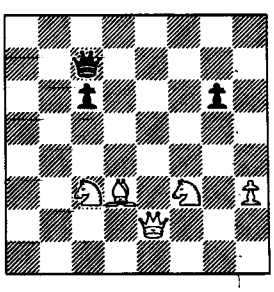




7.	Ng1-f3	Bf8-g7
8.	Nb1-c3	Nf6-d5
9.	Qe3-e2	Bg7xd4

Winning a second pawn





10.g2-g3!!

This excellent move stops Nd5-f4 forking White queen and bishop.

10.		0-0
11.	Bd3-e4	Nd5-f6
12.	Ra1-b1?	

Not necessary; the White pawn on d2 is already guarded by White queen

12.		d7-d6

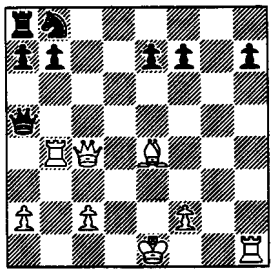
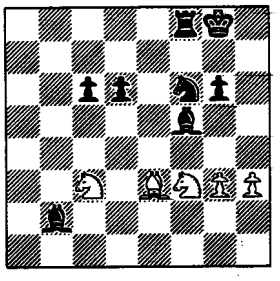
Intending d6-d5

13.	Bc1-e3	Bc8-f5

14. Rb1-b4 Qc7-a5

Pins the White rook

15. Qe2-c4 Bd4xb2

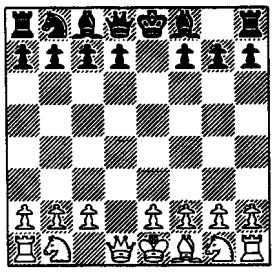
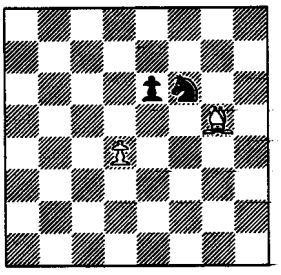



The White rook is already lost

16. 0-0 Qa5xb4
17. Resigns

White *Ivan Dirmeik* **Black** *Dave Hurd*

1. d2-d4 Ng8-f6
2. Bc1-g5 e7-e6

3. g2-g3 Bf8-e7
4. Bf1-g2 0-0
5. Ng1-f3 Nf6-e4
6. Bg5xe7

Bg5-h4 leaves little future for my black-squared bishop

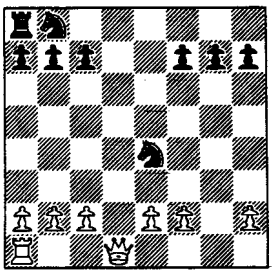
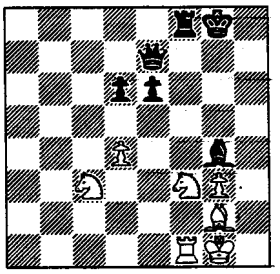
6. Qd8xe7

Blocks in his queen

7. 0-0 d7-d6

Blocks in his queen even more

8. Nb1-c3 Bc8-g4

9. Bg1-h1

My best defence

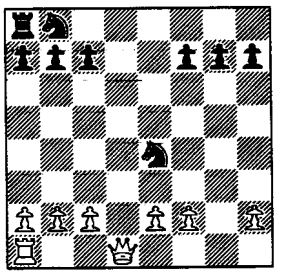
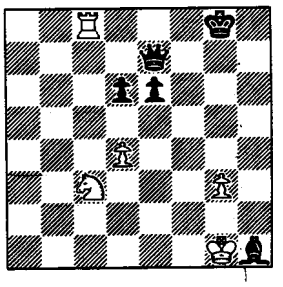
9. Bg4xf3?

Fatal

10. Rf1xf8 Bf3xh1?

Necessary was f6 or g6 or h6 to create a flight square for the king.

11. Rf8-c8 mate

White *Ivan Dirmeik* **Black** *Dale Sullins*

Dale Sullins' first game of Alice Chess

1. d2-d4 e7-e6
2. g2-g3 Ng8-f6
3. Bf1-g2 g7-g6?

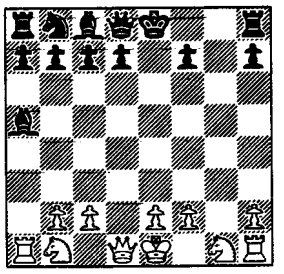
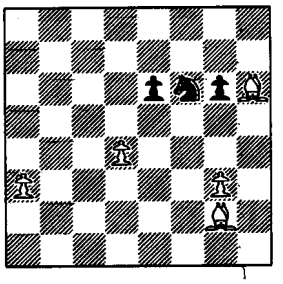
A mistake as the reply prevents Bf8-e7

4. Bc1-h6 Bf8-b4?

better would have been Bf8-e7

5. a2-a3 Bb4-a5+?

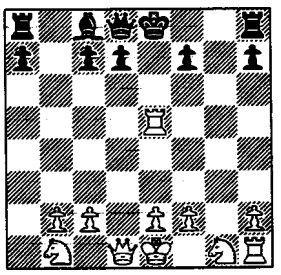
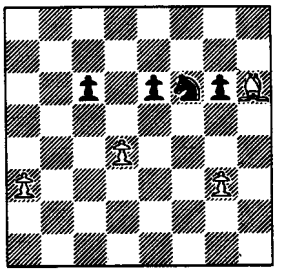
An oversight

6. Ra1xa5 Nb8-c6
7. Bg2xc6 b7xc6

f7-f5 was better, to provide a flight square for the king

8. Ra5-e5 mate

FOOTBALL CHESS

by David Pritchard

Well, not exactly. Trademark Toys are marketing a Manchester United souvenir chess set with the pieces representing famous players from the 1968 side facing famous players from the 1999 side. Football supporters playing chess? Not something I would invest in.

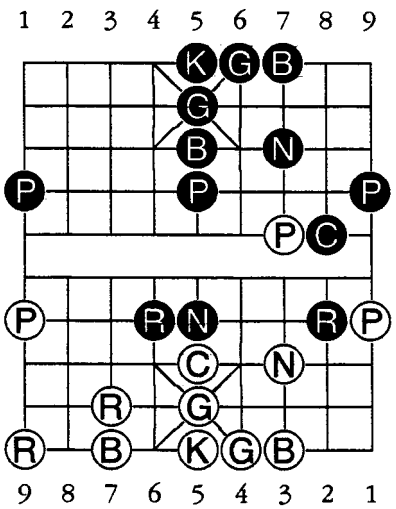
XIANGQI

from Frank Pisani

Frank sent me some interesting examples of endgames and problems. They appear regularly in the Chinese publication *Herald Europe Monthly.* But first a game from the 2002 Tower Hamlets Tournament.

Red *Chen Fazuo*
Black *Frank Pisani*

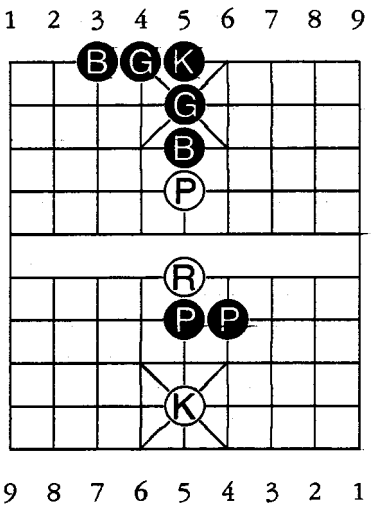
1.	C2=5	N2+3
2.	N2+3	N8+7
3.	P5+1	B3+5
4.	R1=2	R9=8
5.	R2+6	P7+1
6.	R2=3	N7-5
7.	N8+7	C2+1
8.	R3=2	P3+1
9.	R2-2	N5+7
10.	P5+1	G4+5
11.	N7+5	C8+2
12.	P5=4	R1=4
13.	P4+1	C2=6
14.	P7+1	R4+6
15.	P7+1	C8=3
16.	R2=7	R8+8
17.	G6+5	C6=8
18.	C8-1	R8-2
19.	C8=7	C8+1
20.	P3+1	C3+4
21.	R7-3	N3+4
22.	P3+1	N4+5?



23.	N3+4	R8=7
24.	N4+2	N7+8
25.	C5+4	N8-7
26.	C5=8	R7+3
27.	C8+3	K5=4
28.	B7+5	R7=8
29.	R7+8	K4+1
30.	R9=8	resigns

...and now the endgame exercises

(1) August 2001



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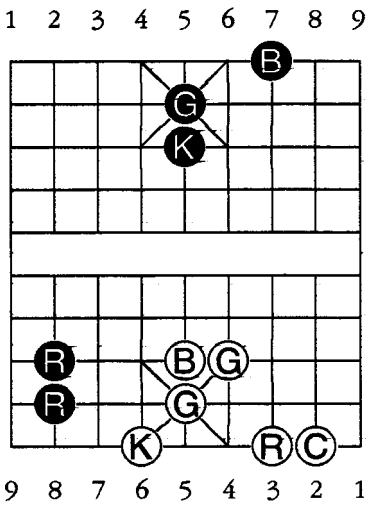
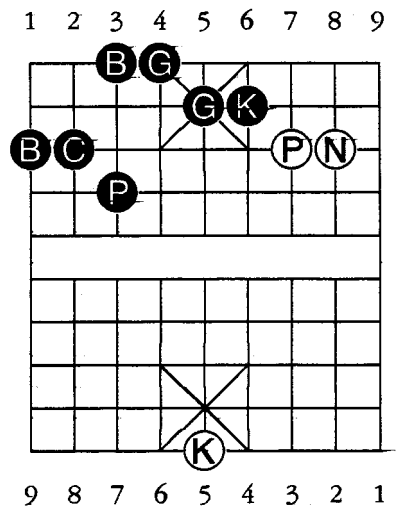


(3) October 2001



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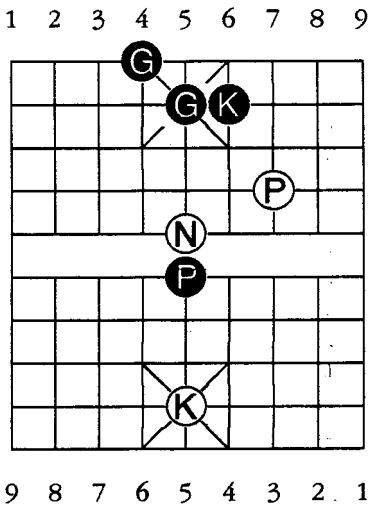
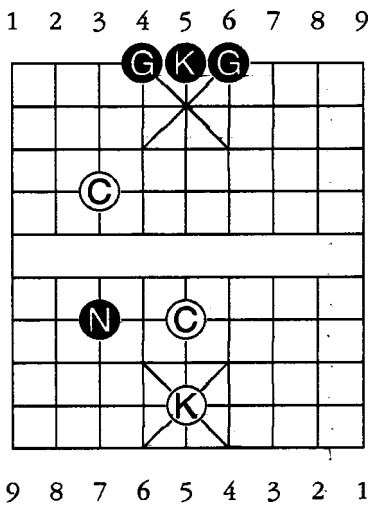
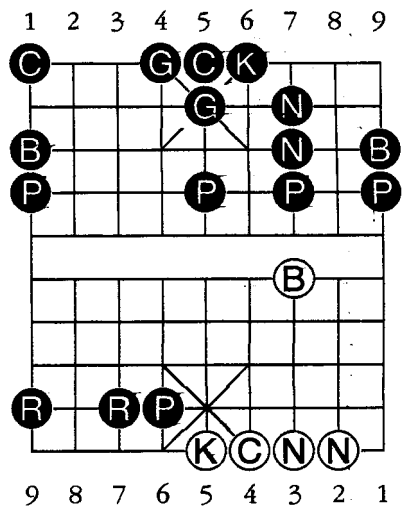


(5) June 2002



(6) June 2002



The solutions will be found on page 31. It seems that the solution to #3 depends on avoidance of repetition.

CASTLES IN THE AIR

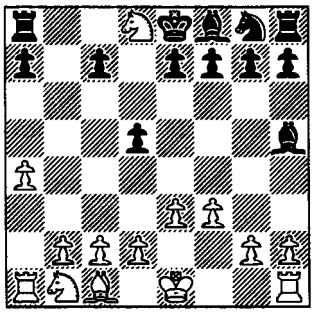
from Jed Stone

This time we have the final report of the first Progressive Chess tournament. Steve Boniface won a close contest with four wins from six games. Two of the game scores are not to hand.

PROGRESSIVE CHESS TOURNAMENT 2002

T2/1 *White* Steve Boniface
(0-1) *Black* Jed Stone

1.a4
2.d5,Nc6
3.e3,Bb5,Bxc6+
4.bxc6,Bg4,Bxd1,Bh5
5.Nf3,Ne5,Nxc6,Nxd8,f3



6.d4,dxe3,Rxd8,Rxd2,Bxf3,Rdl mate.

T2/2 *White* Steve Boniface
(1-0) *Black* Allan Brown

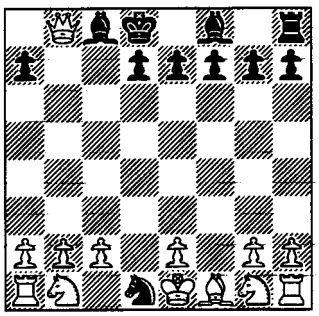
1.a4
2.d5,Nf6
3.e3,Nf3,Bb5+
4.Bd7,Bxb7,e5,Qd6
5.axb5,Ra6,Rxd6,Rxf6,d3
6.Black resiqns??

T2/3 *White* Steve Boniface
(1-0) *Black* Colin Muskett

1.h4
2.e5,Nh6
3.d4,Bg5,Bxd8
4.Kxd8,e4,d6,a5
5.e3,Bb5,Qd3,Qxe4,Qe8 mate

T2/4 *White* Jed Stone
(0-1) *Black* Steve Boniface

1.d4
2.Nf6,c5
3.Bd2,Ba5,Bxd8
4.Ne4,Nxf2,Nxd1,Kxd8
5.dxc5,c6,cxb7,bxa8=Q,Qxb8



6.e5,h5,Rh6.Bc5,Rd6,Bf2 mate.

T2/5 *White* Jed Stone
(1-0) *Black* Allan Brown

1.e4
2.d5,Bd7
3.exd5,Bb5,Bxd7+
4.Qxd7,Qxd5,Qf3,Qxd1+
5.Kxd1,d4,c4,Be3,Kd2
6.Nc6,Nf6,e5,Be7,exd4,dxe3+
7.fxe3,e4,e5,exf6,fxg7,Nc3,gxh8=Q+
8.Kd7,Bf6,Bxh8,Re8,Re1,Rxa1,Rxg1, Rxh1
9.g4,g5,g6,gxf7,f8=Q,Na4,Nc5 mate

T2/6 *White* Jed Stone
(1-0) *Black* Colin Muskett

1.d4
2.d5,Bd7
3.e3,b3,Ke2
4.Nh6,Bf5,Bxc2,Bxd1+
5.Kxd1,Bd2,Ba5,Bxc7,Bxd8
6.Nc6,Nxd4,Nc2,Nxa1,Kxd8,e5
7.g4,g5,gxh6,hxg7,gxh8=Q,Kd2, Qxf8+
8.Kd7,a5,a4,axb3,bxa2,axb1=Q,d4, Ra2 mate

T2/7 *White* Allan Brown
(0-1) *Black* Steve Boniface

1.e4
2.e5,Nh6
3.d4,Bg5,Bxd8
4.Ng4,Ne3,Nxd1,Kxd8
5.Nc3,Rxd1,dxe5,e6,exd7
6.a5,Ra6,Rc6,Bb4,Rxc3,Re3++ mate.

T2/8 *White* Allan Brown
(1-0) *Black* Jed Stone

1.e4
2.Nh6,e5
3.d4,Bg5,Bxd8
4.Kxd8,d5,Bg4,Bxd1
5.Kxd1,Nc3,Bd3,dxe5
6.dxe4,e3,exf2,c5,Nc6,fxg1=Q+
7.Kd2,e6,exf7,Bf5,Nd5,Re1,Re8 mate

T2/9 *White* Allan Brown
(1-0) *Black* Colin Muskett

T2/10 *White* Colin Muskett
(1-0) *Black* Steve Boniface

1.e4
2.e5,Nh6
3.d4,Bg5,Bxd8
4.Ng4,Ne3,Nxd1,Kxd8
5.Nf3,Nxe5,Kxd1,c4,Nxf7÷
6.Ke7,Kxf7,d5,c5,cxd4,dxc4
7.a4,a5,a6,axb7,bxc8=Q,Ra6,Qe6 mate.

T2/11 *White* Colin Muskett
(1-0) *Black* Jed Stone

1.e4
2.e5,Nh6
3.d4,Bg5,Bxd8
4.Kxd8,d5,Bg4,Bxd1
5.Kxd1,Nc3,exd5,dxe5,Nf3
6.f6,fxe5,c6,cxd5,Bb4,Bxc3
7.a4,a5,a6,axb7,Rxa7,bxa8=Q,Qxb8 mate

T2/12 White Colin Muskett
(0-1) Black Allan Brown

FINAL POSITIONS

Name	P	W	L	Pts
S.B.	6	4	2	12
A.B.	6	3	3	8
J.S.	6	3	3	6
C.M.	6	2	4	4

NEW TOURNAMENT ENTRIES SO FAR

Avalanche: *Paul Yearout, Jed Stone*
Progressive: *Paul Byway, Jed Stone*
Modern Courier Chess: *Robert Reynolds, Paul Byway, Roy Talbot*

BYZANTINE CHESS ENDGAMES: QUEEN VS PAWN

Authored by Ernst Saperow Posted by Hans Bodlaender
on the premier variants web site www.chessvariants.com

The queen of Byzantine Chess is a weak piece: it moves only one square diagonally and (like the bishop) is slightly stronger than a pawn. The simplest endgame 'Q vs P' may occur rather often and it is reasonable to know what is expected in this endgame.

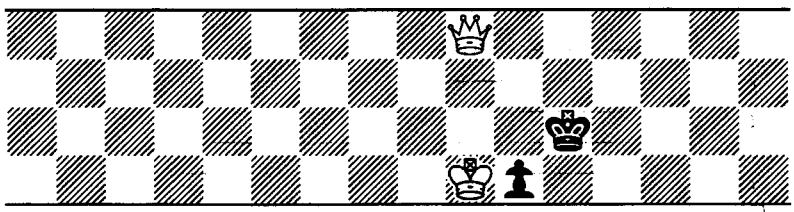
The White queen may move only on the light squares, while the dark squares are available to the Black queen. If the pawn stands on a square whose colour corresponds to that of the queen, the queen is called 'bad'; otherwise the queen is 'good'. In fact there is some resemblance to the endgame 'bishop vs pawn' in international chess.

The pawn of Byzantine Chess is not promoted on the circular board, therefore the player with the queen always has the advantage. But it is not evident whether he can capture the pawn, which would be sufficient to win the game *(by 'Bare King')*.

The essential endings may be divided into four classes: (1) 'bad' queen vs flank pawn, (2) 'bad' queen vs central pawn, (3) 'good' queen vs flank pawn, (4) 'good' queen vs central pawn. The diagrams are framed in the standard notation for the 16x4 round board accepted by the *Circular Chess Society*.

(1) 'bad' queen vs flank pawn

d4 d3 d2 d1 e1 e2 e3 e4 e5 e6 e7 e8 d8 d7 d6 d5

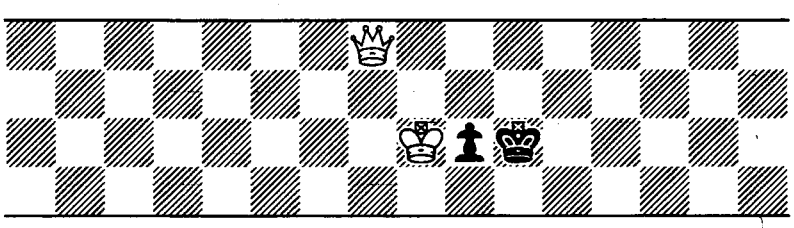


a4 a3 a2 a1 h1 h2 h3 h4 h5 h6 h7 h8 a8 a7 a6 a5

A position of mutual zugzwang which has crucial significance for this endgame. The Black left-going pawn is stopped and the Black king can guard it from the two squares g8 and h8. If the Black king moves first **1. ...Kg8-h8**, he will be deprived of a return to g8 by **2.Qe6-f7**. If White moves first he cannot win. Had White another piece, the necessary tempo could be obtained immediately; but the queen is not capable of this trick, because it returns to the same square in an *even* number of moves (the queen's trajectory consists of squares of one colour).

(2) 'bad' queen vs central pawn

d4 d3 d2 d1 e1 e2 e3 e4 e5 e6 e7 e8 d8 d7 d6 d5

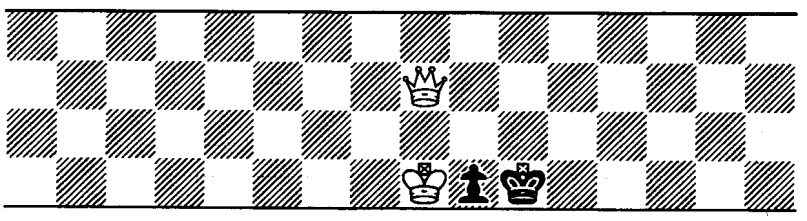


a4 a3 a2 a1 h1 h2 h3 h4 h5 h6 h7 h8 a8 a7 a6 a5

A central pawn can also be defended against a 'bad' queen. Here the left-going pawn has blocked the motion of the queen. If the queen runs around the board and appears behind the pawn, the approach to the pawn will be cut by the Black king.

(3) 'good' queen vs flank pawn

d4 d3 d2 d1 e1 e2 e3 e4 e5 e6 e7 e8 d8 d7 d6 d5

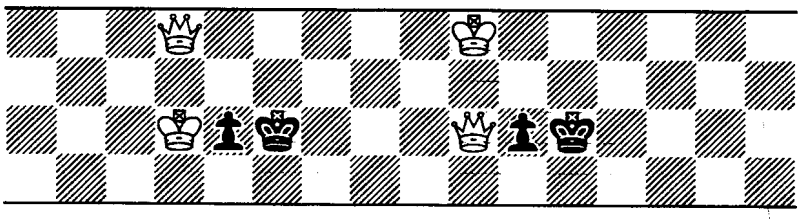


a4 a3 a2 a1 h1 h2 h3 h4 h5 h6 h7 h8 a8 a7 a6 a5

The weaker side may be able to push the pawn in order to obtain a position with 'bad' queen. Nevertheless, playing against the 'good' queen may also be successful. The given position of mutual zugzwang is the key to this ending. If Black moves first the White queen will take the square h7 under control and deprive the king of his return (**1. ...Kh7-g7 2.Qf5-g6**). If White moves first the Black king is able to defend the pawn.

(4) 'good' queen vs central pawn

d4 d3 d2 d1 e1 e2 e3 e4 e5 e6 e7 e8 d8 d7 d6 d5



a4 a3 a2 a1 h1 h2 h3 h4 h5 h6 h7 h8 a8 a7 a6 a5

In the position to the left the Black king guards the left-going pawn but is in zugzwang. The square g2 will be controlled by the White queen. Can White succeed if he moves first? It is clear that the queen can freely come to the blocking square in front of the pawn, so the answer lies in the position on the right, and White wins whoever has the move. Either **1.Ke6-e7** or **1. ...Kg8-f8 2.Qg6-h7** does it.

In conclusion we can say (1) a central pawn never survives against a 'good' queen. (2) a flank pawn may survive, thanks to zugzwang, against a 'good' or 'bad' queen. (3) a central pawn always has good chances against a 'bad' queen.

O'DONOHUE CHESS

by David Pritchard

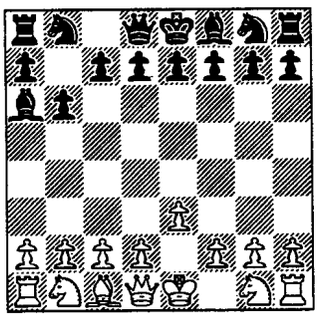
This game was invented by Michael O'Donohue, our new member in Australia. It is a simple variation of Alice Chess but one that may have considerable potential as a game and as a tool for problemists. Play on both boards must be legal. The usual Alice rules with one exception: a move to a square occupied on the other board is not illegal; the man simply remains on the board on which it moved. So for example in castling the king and rook may be separated, one staying on one board whilst the other moves to the second board. An *en passant* capture can only be made if the pawn making the capture stays on the same board. In other words, the corresponding square on the second board is occupied.

LOSING CHESS WHAT IF ... ?

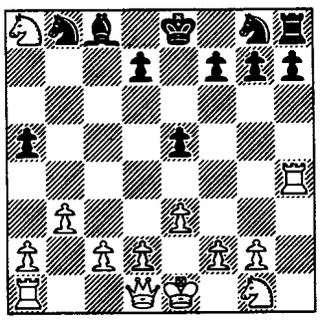
by John Beasley

In *VC* 39 and 40, we gave most of the games in the 2001 "Unofficial Losing Chess World Championship". It has occurred to me that it might be interesting to go through them with the aid of Stan Goldovski's *Giveaway Wizard*, and to see what lay behind the moves played. A first sample follows. I have left some lines for interested readers to find themselves; *Wizard*'s answers are on page 31.

From Round 1, White **Lenny Taelman**, Black **Andrzej Nagorko**. **1.e3 b6 2.Ba6**. Now 2...Bxa6 would have allowed a known quick win:

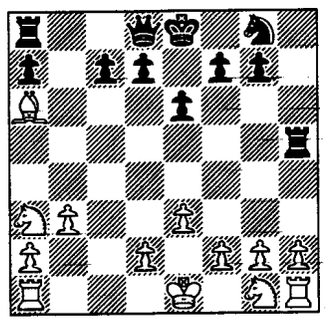


Put the bishop back on c8, and substitute **2...Nxa6 3.b3 e6 4.Ba3 Bxa3 5.Nxa3 Nb8** (presumably to avoid 6.b4 Nxb4 etc, though this doesn't seem immediately disastrous) **6.h4?** (but the game shows that this is) **6...Qxh4 7.Rxh4 b5 8.Nxb5** (inserting 8.Rxh7 Rxh7 doesn't help) **8...a5 9.Nxc7 e5** (all other moves lose, but this wins). Now came **10.Nxe8 h6** and White resigned, but 10.Nxa8 is perhaps more interesting:

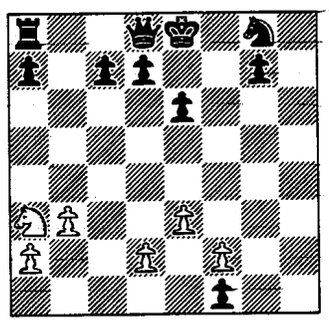


Two different Black moves now give an immediate win, but the play after each is essentially the same.

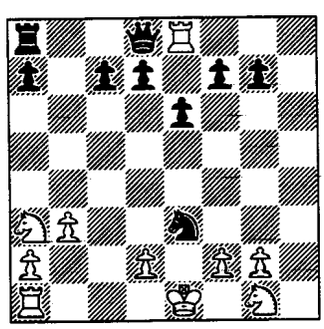
Also from Round 1, White **Marten Wortel**, Black **Johan Bosman**. **1.c4 b5 2.cxb5 e6 3.b3 Ba6 4.bxa6 Nxa6 5.Ba3 Bxa3 6.Nxa3 Nb8** (this time the threat of 7.b4 is more dangerous because White can release a2: 7...Nxb4 8.Rb1 Nxa2 9.Rb8 etc) **7.e3 Na6 8.Bxa6 h5? 9.Qxh5 Rxh5**:



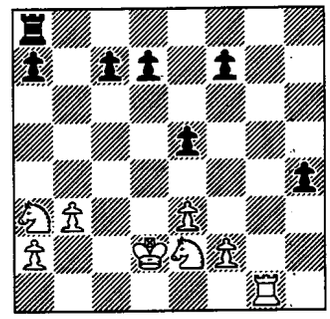
White missed an immediate win here, but his **10.Bd3 Rxh2 11.Rxh2** is also strong. It threatens Bg6 followed by Rh5, g4, Nf3, Ke2, and Rf1, with a win after every promotion:



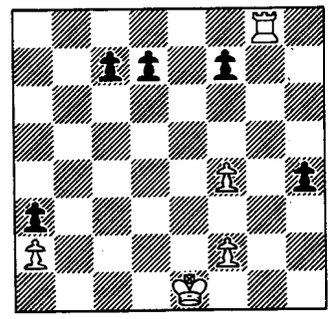
Black's actual **11...Ne7** prevented this at the cost of conceding his king (the king is a flexible and valuable piece, not to be given away lightly). Play continued **12.Bf5 Nxf5** (12...exf5 13.Rh6 gxh6 14.g4 and as before) **13.Rh8! Nxe3 14.Rxe8**:



14...Nxg2 would win White's king in return, but after 15.Rxe6 Nxe1 16.Raxe1 the d-file will be opened for the Black queen. Hence **14...Qxe8 15.dxe3**, but now Black is completely passive, and he is surely lost even though there is no forced win within my computer's horizon. Play continued **15...Qh8 16.Kd2 e5 17.Ne2** (threat Rh1 etc) **17...Qh3 18.gxh3 g5 19.h4 gxh4 20.Rg1**:



White threatens Rg8 followed by Ng1 and Ke1, hence **20...Rg8 21.Rxg8**, and Black has only pawns against White's king, rook, and knight. He tried **21...a5**, and after **22.b4 axb4 23.Ke1** (many moves now force the win) **23...bxa3 24.Nf4 exf4 25.exf4** we have this position:



The winning replies to the various Black moves are typical, and readers new to the game may find it instructive to work them out.

This was joint winner of the best game prize (the oversight at move 10 only came to light later), and it is typical of good contemporary play.

We started with a known short win, and here is another. I opened my games as White with **1.h3**, on the grounds that my opponents knew the standard openings better than I and by playing something unusual I might reduce my disadvantage. It's a poor opening, because it is so passive, and it gave me no points, but what would have happened had someone played the normally strong **1...e6** in reply?

HOW TO MAKE SOME FAIRY CHESS PIECES

from Bernard Hempseed
(Greetings from Christchurch, New Zealand)

Fairy chess is a fascinating and interesting variation of regular chess. There are many new pieces with different powers and different methods of play present themselves. New pieces can be given any powers desired and any rules can be adopted. However there are a number of more or less standard pieces in the fairy world. One of the problems of playing fairy chess is finding pieces that are different from the regular pieces so as not to cause confusion when playing. One solution has been to use some pieces from a completely different set, say a fantasy set, but this upsets the visual symmetry as any new pieces should ideally harmonise with existing pieces but be sufficiently different to be easily identifiable. Commercial fairy pieces don't seem to be available so the easiest solution is to make your own. Many people play regular chess with a standard "Staunton" design solid plastic set with a king height of around 95mm and these pieces are ideal to augment and use with the fairy pieces described below. Apart from two pieces, the powers and names are not given as the owner can class them as he/she pleases.

Firstly, obtain an identical solid plastic set. Additional items needed are; a hobby type fine bladed hacksaw, a file, and some quick setting two part epoxy glue. Five minute "Araldite" or similar works well. The object is to cut and rearrange some of the parts of the pieces to create new fairy pieces. While various other combinations are possible the ones described here are simple and easy to make. Each cut made should be perpendicular to the axis of the piece and after cutting, file off any rough edges or burrs. The following describes one colour's pieces; repeat the process for the other colour. Although these instructions state to glue pieces as you go it is probably easier to cut all pieces first and then glue them.

Piece 1. Take the rooks. On each cut off about two thirds of the castelated part leaving about one third of the top on the base part. Care needs to be taken on this cut as it is the hardest one to do. Cut off two pawn tops just below the collar under the ball and glue these parts on to the rook bases.

Piece 2. Take each knight and cut off the small protrubance above the ears. File this area flat and then glue on each the rook top, previously cut off. It needs to be positioned so that most of the knight's nose is visible. The back of the new top should be in about the same line as the back of the base of the knight. This piece obviously combines the power of a rook and knight and is known as a "chancellor" or "minister"

Piece 3. Take each bishop and cut off the very top knob above the mitre. Now cut off the mitre just under the top collar. Take the king and queen. On the king cut off the cross but leave the small circle just under it. Then cut off the king's head just above the top collar, i.e. at the point where the inwards sloping stops. On the queen cut off the crown again just above the top collar. Take a bishop's mitre and glue one each on to the king and queen bases. Because of the unequal heights of the king and queen the height of resulting pair of pieces are slightly different in height but it is not enough to be of concern. The resulting pieces may be called an "archbishop" or "cardinal" and moves as a combined bishop and knight. The parts left over from the above may now be used to create three single pieces.

Piece 4. Take one bishop's base from the previous step. Glue on the king's head the normal way up.

Piece 5. Take the other bishop's base and glue on the cross from the king.

Piece 6. Cut about one third off the top ball of a pawn. Clue on to what is left the queen's crown, again the normal way up.

After all this there will be (for each colour) three pairs of pieces and three single pieces. Five pawns will be left and these may come into use on larger boards such as 10 x 10 which are sometimes used. It would be unlikely that all these pieces would be used in a single game but by having a variety of pieces a variety of games may be played.

Some Fairy Chess Pieces

Although hundreds of pieces with varying powers have been invented, the following are commonly encountered, but may be called by different names.
Archbishop or **Cardinal**. Combined knight & bishop.
Chancellor or **Minister**. Combined knight & rook.
General or **Giraffe**. Combined knight & queen.
Camel. Moves as a knight but in a 2 x 4 box.
Wildebeeste. Moves as a knight or camel.
Grasshopper. Moves like a queen to an occupied square (enemy or own) and jumps over the piece, which is not captured, and on to the next square. If the square is vacant then end of move If an enemy piece occupies the square it is captured. If a mover's piece occupies the square then the move is not possible.

Improvising Non-Standard Chess Boards e.g 10 x 8, 10 x 10 etc.

One simple way of making non standard sized chess boards is to use a computer, spreadsheet program, and laser printer. Cell sizes can be extend both ways so experiment a little to create one cell of about 45mm square. Check by printing out a page and measuring the cell size. When the correct settings have been found duplicate them on to further cells. A block of 4 x 5 squares should fit on to an A4 sheet especially if the margins are adjusted. Shade alternative cells by using a fine pattern for the background. A pattern looks better than solid black. Put a narrow border around each cell. Print out sufficient copies, perhaps on cream paper, to make the board. Trim the sheets as required, and making sure the white corner square is in the correct place, glue them down to a piece of 10mm customwood or similar. Use a non-liquid glue, such as a glue stick, to stop cockles in the paper. Finally cover the board with a sheet of self-adhesive clear plastic. Make a different sized board on the back if desired.

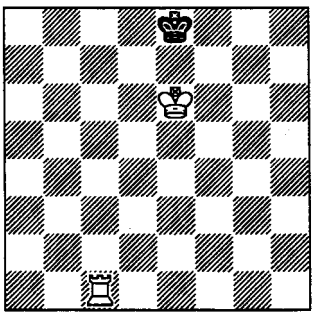
PARADOXICAL ENDINGS IN ALICE CHESS

by John Beasley

When I was preparing the Ronald Turnbull tribute article for *VC* 41, I was reminded of some work we once did on endgame positions in Alice Chess. Ronald included some of it in an article in *diagrammes* in 1999 and I have discussed some positions in *British Endgame Study News*, but we don't seem to have reported it fully.

The basic Alice rule is that there are two boards **A** and **B** side by side, board **B** being initially empty, and after making his move on one board the player takes the man moved and transfers it "through the looking glass" to the corresponding square on the other board. A player may move on either board, but the move must be legal on the board on which it is made (in particular, it may not leave his king in check), the destination square on the other board must be vacant, and if the man moved is the king it must be free from attack on the new board as well.

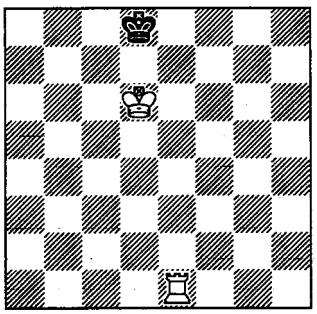
The elementary endings with K+Q, K+R, K+2B, and K+B+N against a bare king are all won, and much as in ordinary chess; the attacker must sometimes play waiting moves to ensure that the mating piece ends on the same board as the defender's king, but there is no real difficulty. Diagram 1 gives a simple illustration.



1 - White to play wins (**B** empty)
(#1 in orthodox, #4 in Alice)

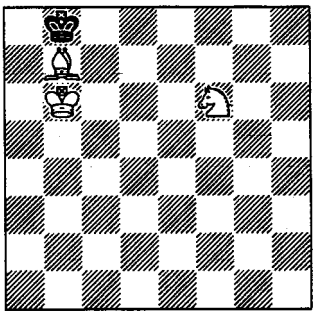
Board **B** is assumed empty (this will be true of all our diagrams unless otherwise stated) and in ordinary chess White would mate in one by 1.Rc8. In Alice, this is the only move *not* to win! The rook goes to board **B**, and now what is Black to do? 1...Kd7/Ke7/Kf7 are illegal on board **A**; 1...Kd8/Kf8 seem all right when played on **A**, but they transfer the king to **B** and now he is in check there. White hasn't given mate, he has given stalemate.

So White must think again, and the neatest way to proceed is **1.Rc1-e1** (rook to **B**). Most other rook moves also lead to mate in four, but by moving to the e-file White cuts down Black's options at move 2. The position is now symmetrical. Black plays say **1...Ke8-d8** and transfers his king to **B**, and White pursues him by **2.Ke6-d6** (wK to **B**). All the men are now on **B**, which looks like this:



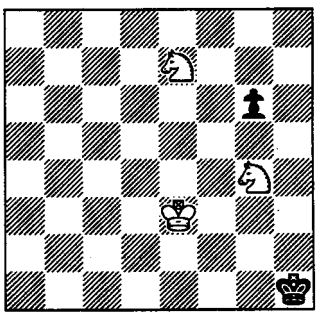
Black to play (all men on **B**)

The rest is easy: **2...Kd8-c8** (bK back to **A**) **3.Re1-b1** (wR to **A**) **Kc8-d8** (bK to **B** again) **4.Rb1-b8** (wR to **B**) and this time it is genuinely mate. We may note that whereas the mated king and the mating piece must be on the same board, pieces guarding or blocking squares may be on either.



2 - White to play wins (**B** empty)
(#1 in orthodox, #4 in Alice)

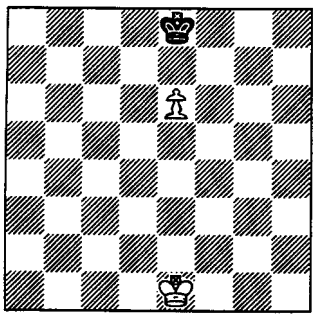
2 (*diagrammes* 1999) is a little more subtle. Again the orthodox mating move 1.Nd7 gives stalemate in Alice, but if the White bishop were on a6 there would be an orthodox mate in two by 1.Nd7+ Ka8 2.Bb7 and this does carry across: 1.Nd7>B Ka8>B (Black may not be in check but he still has no other move) 2.Bb7>B. Can we get the bishop to a6 in two moves? Yes, by **1.Bb7-c8!** In ordinary chess, this would be suicidal, but in Alice the bishop escapes to **B** where it is free from capture. Moreover, it continues to prevent ...Kc8 (a player cannot move to a square which is occupied on the other board), so Black has only **1...Kb8-a8** (to **B**). Now **2.Bc8-a6** (back to **A**) **Ka8-b8** (to **A**) gets the bishop to a6 as required, and **3.Nf6-d7** (to **B**) **Kb8-a8** (to **B**) **4.Ba6-b7** (to **B**) duly finishes matters. We may note that **2**, unlike **1**, has a unique solution as a four-move problem, and it was originally published as such.



3 - White to play wins (**B** empty)
(drawn in orthodox, #4 in Alice)

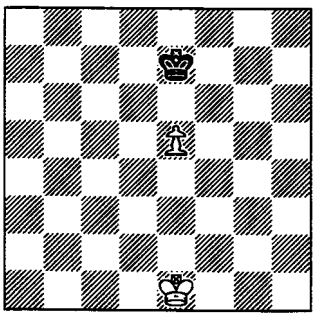
The possibility of blocking a square against the king by occupying it on the other board gives the attacker an additional option, and people have wondered whether the ending K+2N v K might not be generally winnable in Alice. In fact it isn't; as in orthodox chess, mating positions exist, but they cannot be forced against best defence. But the trick does allow some endings to be won in Alice which are only drawn in orthodox chess, and **3** is a simple example. In orthodox chess, 1.Kf2 g5 leaves White forced to relieve stalemate; letting the king out to the g-file is hopeless, and if the knight on g4 moves then either 2...g4 or 2...Kh2 will hold the draw. In Alice, after **1.Ke3-f2** (to **B**) **g6-g5** (to **B**), **2.Ng4-h2!** (to **B**) relieves the stalemate without letting the Black king move, and the rest is easy: **2...g5-g4** (back to **A**) **3.Ne7-f5** (to **B**) **g4-g3+** (moving to **B** and giving check

there) **4.Nf5xg3** (capturing on **B** and then transferring back to **A**) and it's mate. In the final position, only wNg3 and bKh1 are on **A**, but the Black king has no escape; ...Kg2 and ...Kg1 would leave him in check after his transfer to **B**, and ...Kh2 is impossible because h2 on **B** is already occupied.



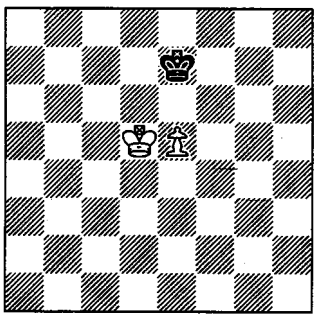
4 - White to play wins (**B** empty)
(drawn in orthodox, won in Alice)

A position with K+2N v K+P is unlikely to arise in real life, but the same trick can sometimes be played in endings with K+P v K and this is of much greater practical importance. **4** is hopelessly drawn in orthodox chess, but in Alice we have **1.e6-e7** (to **B**) **Ke8-d7/f7** (to **B**) **2.e7-e8Q** (back to **A**) and the rest is routine.



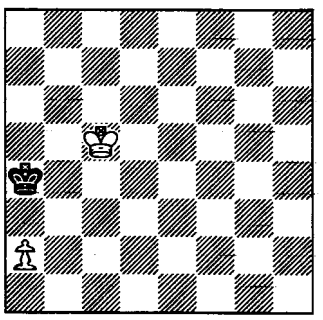
5 - White only draws (**B** empty)
(drawn in orthodox and in Alice)

In **5**, the pawn is one square further back, and Black can defeat the attack: **1.e5-e6** (to **B**) **Ke7-d8/f8!** (to **B**) **2.e6-e7** (back to **A**) **Kd8/f8-e8** (to **A**) and the pawn will fall. 1...Ke8>B would have lost, but by retreating diagonally Black loses a move and this brings him on to the right board to attack the pawn. Nor does it help White to bring his king up. He can certainly preserve his pawn, 1.Ke2>B Kd7>B 2.Ke3>A Ke6>A 3.Ke4>B, but there follows 3...Ke7!>B 4.Kd5>A Kd7>A 5.e6>B Ke7>B 6.Ke5>B Ke8!>A and Black can hold out.



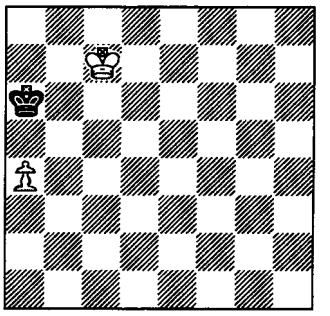
6 - White to play wins (**B** empty)
(drawn in orthodox, won in Alice)

Black holds the draw in the play from **5** because he can get his king to the square immediately in front of the pawn and on the same board. White's king is nearer in **6**, and he can prevent this. In ordinary chess, after 1.e6, Black can pay 1...Ke8 drawing, but 1...Kd8/Kf8 lose. In Alice, after **1.e5-e6** (to **B**), 1...Ke8>B produces a position equivalent to **4**, and 2.e7>A Kd7/f7>A 3.e8Q>B wins as before. All right, play **1...Ke7-d8/f8** (to **B**) as in **5**, but now the orthodox manoeuvre forces the pawn through and the Alice board transfers make no difference: **2.Kd5-d6** (to **B**) **Kd8/f8-e8** (to **A**) **3.e6-e7** (to **A**) **Ke8-f7** (to **B**) **4.Kd6-d7** (to **A**) and 5.e8Q>B will follow.



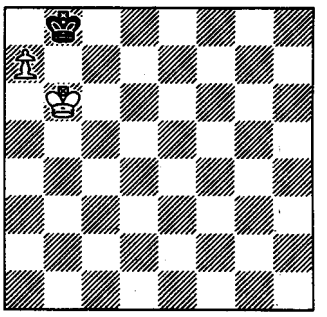
7 - White to play wins (**B** empty)
(drawn in orthodox, won in Alice)

Perhaps the most surprising of these K+P v K endings is **7**, a slightly simpler version of which appeared in *diagrammes*. Ronald put my name to this earlier version in his article, but in truth it owed at least as much to him as to me. In ordinary chess, this is the deadest of draws; in Alice, things are more interesting. **1.a2-a3** (to **B**) effectively forces **1...Ka4-a5** (to **B**), since if 1...Kb3>B then 2.a4>A and the pawn will run, and **2.Kc5-c6** (to **B**) forces **2...Ka5-a6** (to **A**) similarly (2...Ka4>A 3.Kb6>A Kb3>B 4.a4>A etc). There follows **3.a3-a4** (to **A**) **Ka6-a7** (to **B**) **4.Kc6-c7** (to **A**) **Ka7-a6/a8** (to **A**), after which all the men are back on **A** (case 4...Ka6 shown):



White to play (**B** empty)

Play continues **5.a4-a5** (to **B**) **Ka6/a8-a7** (to **B**) **6.a5-a6** (to **A**) **Ka7-a8** (to **A**) **7.Kc7-b6!** (to **B**) **Ka8-b8** (to **B**) **8.a6-a7+** (to **B** giving check there) and now all the men are on **B**:



Black to play (all men on **B**)

Black obviously plays **8...Kb8-a8** (to **A**) and the draw in ordinary chess would be assured, but now comes the final subtlety: **9.Kb6-c5!** (to **A**). Black has only **9...Ka8-b7** (to **B**), and White replies **10.a7-a8Q** (to **A**) and soon mates (10...Kc7>A 11.Qa7>B Kd8>B 12.Kd6>B Ke8>A 13.Qe7>A). The moves 9.Ka5/b5>A also win, but 9.Kc5>A forces mate most quickly.

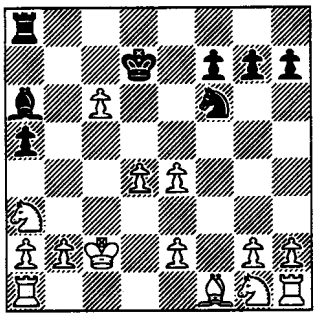
Who would have thought that a defenceless rook's pawn could be forced through to promotion so simply?

THE END IS NIGH!

by Paul Byway

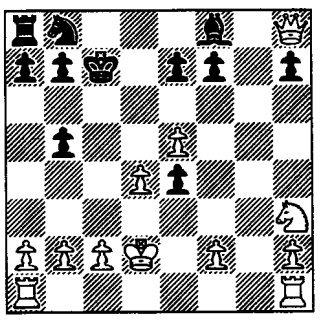
COMPETITION 18

#115 Rallo - Castelli (1989)



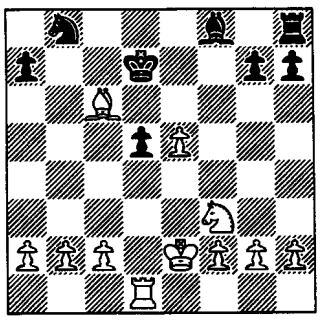
Black Win (series 8)

#116 Dipilato - Leoncini (1981)



Black Win (series 8)

#117 Scovero - Rallo (1988)



Black Win (series 8)

SOLUTIONS TO COMPETITION 17

#112 8. Kc5, Kb4, Kb3, Kb2, Kc1, d5, d4, Bf1 mate

#113 9.Qxb8, Qf8, b6, b4, bxc5, Kc3, Kb4, Kb5, c6 Italian mate

#114 9.Ne2, Ng3, Nxf5, Bh3, Nc3, Nd5, Rg1, Rg8, Nxh6 mate

Correct solutions were received from Fred Galvin, Cedric Lytton, David Pritchard, Ian Richardson, Ronald Turnbull and Peter Wood.

Fred remarks: "It doesn't bother me, but the position (#112) is illegal. Maybe this is the case with the rest of your 'colours reversed' positions: Black has made 12 captures in 12 moves." In #113 (Scottish Progressive version) he thinks White must take another path: 9. Qxb8, Qa7, Qxc5, Qe5, Kd3, Kd4, Kc5, b4,Qxe6+ and wins. I don't think this is a White win; I prefer 9. Qxb8, Qe5, b4, bxc5, Kd3, Kd4, Qxe6+ and White wins easily after 10. Kxe6, Kf5, Kg4, Kg3, Kxg2, Kf2, g5, g4, g3, g2.

Cedric notes (#114) that White has an easy win by 2.Bxh1, 3.Ke3, 8.c8=Q, 9.Qxh8

ISOLATED PAWNS

from John Leslie

John Leslie has been commissioned to produce a book on Hostage Chess. "A wonderful bit of luck," he writes; "please help me to exploit it by sending your best Hostage games (perhaps with comments/ game analysis) to me at 64 Forbes Avenue, Guelph, Ontario N1G 1G4, Canada. Games selected for publication would be ANON versus ANON."

from C.K.Lai

The World Xiangqi Championship is to be in Paris during 2nd - 10th August 2003, with unlimited non-Chinese, Vietnamese players able to participate.

from Ken Whyld

Crazy Knights:- this is almost the same as an old problem, which if I remember correctly (and that is by no means certain!) appeared first in 'Cricket & Football Field' (Bolton), about a century ago. It might have been by Taverner. The board there was slightly more pistol-shaped, and the puzzle was called 'The Revolver', for both passive and dynamic reasons.

In a sense all fairy chess compositions are variants but I would not call one so unless it could be used for the playing of individual games.
PS 359 is fascinating.

from Peter Wood

50/60 variant chess games (boxed), variant magazines and books for sale. Apply to P.Wood, 39 Linton Road, Hastings, East Sussex, TN34 1TW.

from David Pritchard

Paul Yearout's rather unlikely Hostage Chess position (VC41 page 16) illustrates not a flaw, but actually one of the game's attractions! I have twice managed in Hostage games to get a position where my seventh-rank pawn theoretically attacked my opponent's king. I was then in the happy situation that all my pieces (other than the king or pawns) were invulnerable. Victory is certain in situations like this unless the defender can safely capture the pawn or quickly move his king away. In short, Black's position in the diagram is the result of a defensive error (or more likely several errors!) such as one finds in any game of chess or variant chess.

from the editor

This piece found on the internet caught my attention because A. P. Kazantsev, in addition to his other talents, was a composer of chess endgame studies.

In the late 1940s, a Soviet engineer and science fiction writer, A.P. Kazantsev, suggested that the famous Tunguska meteor of 1908 (which leveled trees as far away as 25 miles, and roasted 200 reindeer) might have been an exploded, nuclear-powered spacecraft from another world – making this the Siberian equivalent of a purported alien landing mishap in

Roswell, New Mexico four decades later. (Extraterrestrial rocket jockeys apparently can manage interstellar travel. It's the landings that befuddle them.) But the failure to find any tell-tale indications of nuclear reactions at Tunguska, and a better understanding of how rocks from space can explode in our atmosphere, has quelled this idea.

Obituary

Sadly we have to report that Derick Green, only 42 years old, has died of cancer. He subscribed to the *Games and Puzzles Journal* and contributed five articles on games. His widow wrote: 'Derick was a great fan of your magazine and going through all his back issues helped to keep him going when he was unable to do much physical activity towards the end of his illness.'

SOLUTIONS

Losing Chess
(see page 26)

First diagram (1.e3 b6 2.Ba6 Bxa6). 3.c4 Bxc4 4.Qf3 (a standard tactic - White cannot release a2, but he doesn't want to capture the bishop and so gives himself an alternative) Bxa2 5.Qxa8 Bxb1 6.Qxb8 Qxb8 7.Rxa7 Qxa7 8.d3 (or e4) and it's easy.

Second diagram (Taelman - Nagorko, what if 10.Nxa8). 10...h5 11.Rxh5 (11.Qxh5 Rxh5 12.Rxh5 leaves White with a rampant rook) Rxh5 12.Qxh5 f5/Kd8, or 10...a4 11.Rxh7 Rxh7 12.bxa4 Rh5 and much the same. A rampant queen can often give herself up fairly quickly, but here Black's move ...f5 or ...Kd8 deprives her of all possibilities.

Third diagram (Wortel - Bosman, the win after 9...Rxh5). 10.h4 Rxh4 11.Rxh4 Qxh4 (White presumably discounted this line on the grounds that the queen would soon be able to give herself up, but...) 12.Nb5! Qxf2 13.Nxa7 and Black gets a rampant rook instead (13...Qxg2 14.Kf1! Qxd2 15.Ke2, or 14...Qxf1 15.Bxf1).

Fourth diagram (threat line ending ...exf1). Promotions to K, Q, R allow six giveaways to the promoted piece. B permits d3, Nb1, f3, f4, and two giveaways to the e-pawn. N compels e4 and b4, but now Nb5 and Nxa7 release the Black rook and the b-pawn can give itself to Black's c-pawn.

Final diagram (after 25.exf4). White threatens 26.Rg6 fxg6 27.f5 gxf5 28.f4 and the king will sacrifice itself to the h-pawn. 25...h3 doesn't help. 25...f5 is met by 26.f3, after which rook and king give themselves to the h-pawn in turn. This leaves the game continuation 25...f6, but it is no better: 26.f5 followed by 27.f4, and again rook and king go to the h-pawn (Black resigned after 26...d5 27.f4).

Opening 1.h3 e6. White wins by 2.b4 Bxb4 3.Bb2 Bxd2 4.Bxg7 Bxe1 5.Bxh8 Bxf2 6.Qxd7 Bxg1 (6...N/B/Q/Kxd7 7.Rh2 and it's easy) 7.Rxg1 and either 7...Qxd7 8.Bd4 etc or 7...N/B/Kxd7 8.h4 Qxh4 9.Bd4. It's the little move Rh2 in the bracket that is crucial; the ancient line 1.e3 b5 2.Bxb5 Bb7, where this move is not available, has been shown by computer to be won for White (see *VC* 41 p 8). Such is the hair-trigger nature of Losing Chess.

XiangQi problems
(see page 22)

(1) 1.R5=7 K5=6 2.R7+3 K6=5 3.P5=6 K5=6 4.P6=7 K6=5 5.P7=8 K5=6 6.P8+1 K6=5 7.P8+1 K5=6 8.P8=7 K6=5 9.P7=6 K5=6 10.R7=5 and wins.

(2) 1.R3+7 G5+6 2.B5–7 K5–1 3.R3+1 K5–1 4.R3+1 K5+1 5.R3=4 R2–5 6.C2=5 R–=5 7.R4–2 R2–6 8.R4=5 R2=5 9.K6+1 and wins

(3) 1.P3+1 K6–1 2.P3+1 K6=5 3.N2–4 C2–1 4.N4+6 C2=4 5.N6–8 P3+1 6.N8+7 P3+1 7.N7–6 C4+1 8.N7+4 mate *(this must depend on the repetition rule).*

(4) 1.P3+1 P5=4 2.P3+1 K6–1 3.N5+3 P4=5 4.P3=4 K6=5 5.N3–5 P5+1 6.N5–7 P5=4 7.N7+8 P4=5 8.N8+7 checkmate

(5) 1.C7=5 N3–5 2.C++2 G6+5 3.K5=4 stalemate

(6) 1.N3+4 G5+6 2.N4+6 G6–5 3.N6+4 G5+6 4.N4+6 G6–5 5.N2+4 G5+6 6.N4+5 G6–5 7.N5+4 G5+6 8.N4+5 G6–5 9.N6+4 checkmate

Shogi sidelines
(see page 18)

First problem. 2...Ki6/i8 can be met by 3.S*h7, since 3...Kxh7 allows 4.Sh6 and thereafter as in the text; alternatively, 3...Ki5 4.N*h3 Kh5 5.Sxg6 Ki6 6.^Bg8 and mate on h7, or 3...Kh5 4.Sxg6 and the same moves in a different order. Unfortunately I tried dealing with 2...Ki6 before I had worked out the answer to 2...Kh7, and the sacrificial drop on h7 took a long time to find.

Second problem. In the line **2...Kxb7**, **4...Ka8** leads to 5.S*b7 Ka9 (5...Ka7 6.Sa6^ Ka8/b8 7.^Sb7 Ka9/Kc9 8.Bb9^ and as below) 6.Bb9^ Kxb9 7.Bxd7, and if 7...Ka9 then the man just captured on d7 can be dropped for mate (we saw earlier that it could not be a pawn or a knight, and every other man has a mating drop); alternatively, 7...Lxd7 8.^Rf9 forcing a drop on c9, after which the man captured by the attacker on d7 can be dropped with decisive effect, or 7...Kc9 8.Bc8^. If **4...Kb8** then 5.S*b7 and the same, plus the lines 5...Kc9 6.Bb9^ Kd8 7.dxd7^ Ke9 8.^dxe8 and 5...Kc7 6.Bdxd7^ Lxd7 (6...Kb67.Sa6^ at once) 7.^Rxd7 Kb6 8.Sa6^. If **4...Ka7** then 5.S*a6 Kb6 (5...Ka8/b8 6.Sb7^ etc) 6.Gb5 Kc7 7.dxd7^ etc. If **4...Kc7** then 5.dxd7^ at once, with 5...Kb6 6.S*b5 Ka5 7.Ba6^. If **4...Kb6** then 5.S*b5 with similar lines, or 5...Ka5 6.Ba6^. Finally, if **4...Kc6** then again 5.S*b5, 5...Kxd6 being met by 6.^Bxd7 (either bishop) Lxd7 7.^Bxd7 Ke5 8.^Be6.

In the **main line**, **7...Kxf8** can be met by 8.S*f7 Kg7 (8...Kf9 9.Bh7) 9.Sg6^, after which the defending king must retreat and mate is not far away.

I am sure some of these lines could be simplified.

PROBLEM PAGES VC41 SOLUTIONS

Comments: Cedric Lytton, Ronald Turnbull

361 (Vitale) 1.e3 2.Qf3 3.Qf8 4.Bd3. Sweet - RT. Not quite easy - pure mate and short pawn move - CCL.

362 (Broner) 1.Ra1 (prevents black K<>K to threaten 2.Ra8#). 1...Kh8 2.Rha2 to threaten 3.K<>K#, with 2...Kg8 3.Ra8. Black's threatened refutation becomes White's threatened mate, forcing K switchback. Near-Bristol manoeuvre with wRs. The key, taking a bK flight, is poor, but the idea is fine and deserves development - RT. The virus has entered the bloodstream - CCL.

363 (Vitale) 1.Nc6 Kxc6 2.Bd4 Bxd4+ 3.Kc4 Bc5 b)Nc4 Kxc4 2.Bc3 Kxc3 3.Kf1 Kd2 - conventional aesthetics would want a second midboard stalemate, unconventional (and CCL) look for a piquant pin, but LV offers a tricky to find edgestalemate - RT.

364 (Vitale) 1.Kh7 5.Kxd4(wPd2) 11.Kxd2 15.Kxf6 17.Kxd8(wNg2) 18.Ke2 d8Q. The rather nice Circe self-guard mate lifts this K-trek - CL.

365 (Ettinger + Lytton) Why not 1...Rc8 2.a5 Rc2=?? Because Black just captured on a6! If that captive was wR, 1...Rc8(wRc6) 2.a5 R6a2. Any other victim gets in the way; but allows 1...Rb8(wBb6) 2.a5 Bg1; 1...Rd8(wEd6) 2.a5 Eg3-a3; 1...Rf8(wNf6) 2.a5 Ng4; 1...Rg8(wQg6) 2.a5 Qh5 - five-part retro analysis. A retro position really does have to be legal, obliging the cumbersome stipulation explanation or else a sixth wP line - RT.

366 (Richardson) 1.Nc6 Ne4 2.Ne5 Nf4 b)1.Nd5(bNe5) Nd5(bNe4 wNe5) 2.Nd4(bNd5d4 wNe4) Ne5(bNe5e5 wNd4e4) - shame the easy bit gives no clues for part b)! - RT. Kids climb on merry-go-round while adults look on - CCL.

367 (Richardson) 1.Be5(bBe4) Bd4(bBd4 wBd5) 2.Bf6(wBe5) Bxf6 (mate must be from NE not SW of the Centre) b) 1.Bh7 Be4(wBd4)+ 2.Bae4(wBd5 bBd4) Bxd4(wBc5 wBd5) (apparent mate with bBg8 doesn't work, 3.Bd5!) But CCL shows that the solution to b) also works (with minor change) in a) - 1.Bh7 Be4(wBd4)+ 2.Be5(wBd5 bBe4) Bd4(bBd4, wBc5, wBd5). So part a) becomes a 2-solution, though regrettably with the unwanted bB now staying alive in one line.

368 (Grushko) 1.Kb3 Gd7 2.Nxd8(wBc1) Bb2 3.Nb7 Gxb7(Nb1) 4.Ka2 Gxb1=; 1.Ka2 Ga1 2.Nxd8(wBc1) Gd1 3.Nf4 Gb1 4.Nb2 Bxb2= apart from the capture on move 2, completely different routes to the same stalemate. Very satisfying construction - RT. G-paths combine to form letter C, and neither solution easy - CCL.

369 (Grushko) 1.Gb1 Ng3 2.Kd1 Kc3 3.Kc1 Ne2 b)1.Kd1 Kg1 2.Ke1 Nd2 3.Gd1 Nf3 c)Kb1 Kd2 2.Gd1 Gd4 3.Ga1 Nc3 - beautifully matched mating positions - RT. (b,c) shifted chameleon echoes with neat provision of white hurdles for black G. a) crust on the pie - CCL.

370 (Richardson) The apparent 1.Ke7 Rd3+f1 2.Ke6 Rf2+e1 fails as Black isn't even in check - the longest move of e1-Rook is to a1+e5! 1.Kd7 (not self-check!) Rb1+d3+ 2.Kc6 Rc3+d4. Good square-bashing exercises - CCL. Score: CCL 10½ (max 11)

321 (Raican) Zvolen Proof Game correction: 1.b4 f5 4.bc fg 5.cd=B gf=N 6.Bxe7 Nxf2 7.Bb4 Bxb4 8.Kf1 g6 9.Kg2 Bc3 10.Kf3 Nf6 11.Ke4 0-0 12.Kd5 Rf7 13.Kc6 Rf8+ 14.Kxb7 Rf7+ 15.Kxa8 Na6 16.Kb8 Bb7 17.Kc7 Rf8 18.Kd6 Ra8 19.Ke7 Bb4+ 20.Kxf6 Bf8.

Sentinels (*VC* 41 pp 5 and 15), note by JDB. Ronald points out a couple of errors in the exposition of the mate in 6 with Sentinels in my tribute article. A new pawn only arrives after a piece move, not a pawn move, so my try "1.f5 (+f4)" isn't, and "the business with the bRh6 wasn't an add-on, but a rather messy way to deal with an intrinsic cook". He gives the full solution as follows:

1.Kb2 (+a3) is not mate, nor even check, because of the new pawn.

1.B- (+P) threatens 2.Kb2 by generating the 8th pawn: one Black counter is to capture the new pawn.

The thematic try 1.Bc6 (+g2)? is refuted not by 1...Bxg2? 2.Bb7+ Rxb7 (+a7), when 3.Kb2 gives mate, but by 1...Rxc6 (+h6) 2.Kb2+ Kb7 (+P)! 3.R2xa7?? and there is a new bP in the way.

So White must force more black pawns on to the board.

Play 1.Bf3 (+g2) threat 2.Kb2

1...Rc6 2.Bxc6 Bxg2 3.Bb7+ Rxb7 4.Kb2 as described

so 1...Bxg2 2.Be4 (+f3) Bxf3 (+g2) 3.Bd5 (+e4) Bxe4 (+f3), with 3...Rc6 now leading to a full-length line 4.Bxc6 Bxe4 5.Bb7 (+c6)+ or 5.Bxe4 (+c6) "dual here I think, though I haven't checked Popeye"

4.Bc6 (+d5) Rxc6 (+h6) 5.Kb2+ Kb7 (no added pawn!) 6.R2xa7# with, sadly, the thematic mate only occuring in a short variation 4...Bxd5 (+c4) Bb7#.

So "the business with bRh6 isn't a final flourish, but a botch to eliminate a cook. While it does also depend on the exhaustion of black pawns, I'd have preferred the problem without it"

VC	34	35	36	37	38	39	41	2000-3	To VC33	Total
Alex Ettinger	8	7	9	9	6	6		45	39	84
Stephen Emmerson		7	11	8	6	12		44	10*	54*
Peter Fayers						5		5	47	52
Fred Galvin						5		5	-	5
Cedric Lytton	11	10	10	9	9	12	10	71	110	181 = 31*
Ian Richardson	5	5	9		6	5		30	73*	103*
Mark Ridley		1	3	2				6	119	125
Luigi Vitale			5	4				9	-	9

* = ladder ascent. CCL's score includes 12 late points for VC31 and 9 for VC32, MAR's 1 late point for VC33. Unchanged from VC33: Erich Bartel 69, Aubrey Ingleton† 143*, George Jelliss 57, Paul Raican 60.