

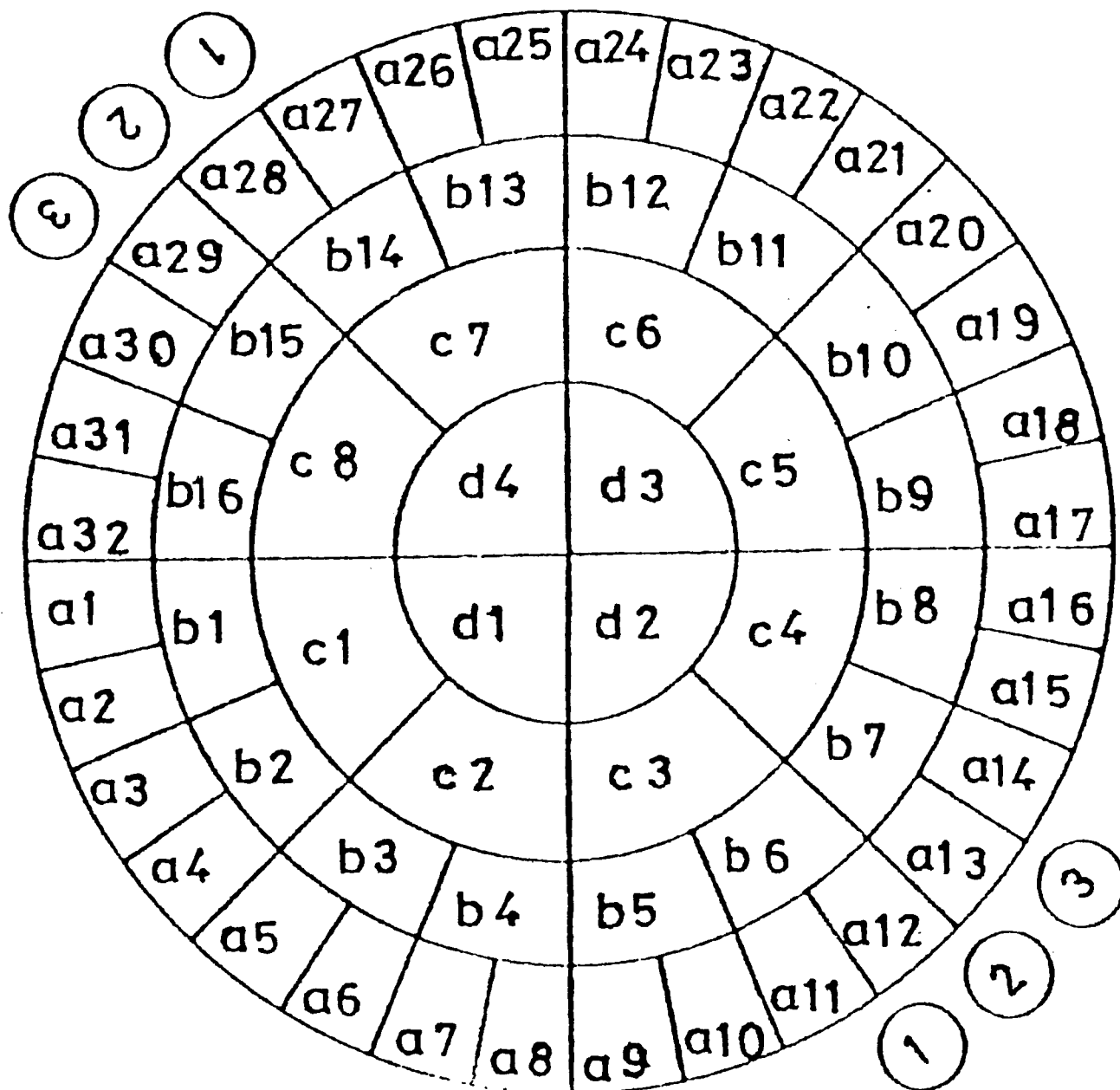
Variant Chess

THE MAGAZINE TO BROADEN YOUR CHESS HORIZONS

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Beaming up and beaming down

Zaitsev's Superchess

Playing with Verve

MODERN COURIER CHESS

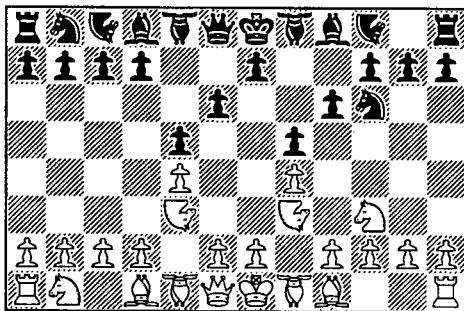
by Paul Byway

Another game from our latest postal tournament, and I flatter myself that this one is an important game. My early view - that the 'shape' of the opening should involve e4,h4 attempting to muffle the opponent's bishops - is taken on board by Robert and gets a good examination. Board 12 x 8; fers (inverted bishop on diagrams) moves one square diagonally, courier (inverted knight) jumps two squares laterally, vertically, or horizontally; back rank RNCBFQKFBCNR; king or fers can make a double move at its first turn, but not to capture nor out of or through check. White was **Robert Reynolds**, Black **Paul Byway**.

1 e2-e4 e7-e5
2 Cc1-e3 f7-f6

A new try - with the idea 3 f4 exf4 4 Qxf4 g5 5 Qf2 Nj6 to be followed by h5.

3 Nk1-j3 Nk8-j6
4 h2-h4 h7-h5
5 Cj1-h3 i7-i6



I retain the option of F or C to e6 or h6; White can elect to play f4 or g4 if he wishes - with difficult choices for Black. I think I can keep the balance after 6 f4 exf4 7 Qxf4 g5 8 hxg5 fxg5 9 Cxg5 Qxf4 10 Bxf4 and now ...Ni4 looks OK.

The decision to play F or C to e3,e6,h3,h6 is an outstanding problem in this opening. White chooses the attacking option; I prefer to prevent Ni5.

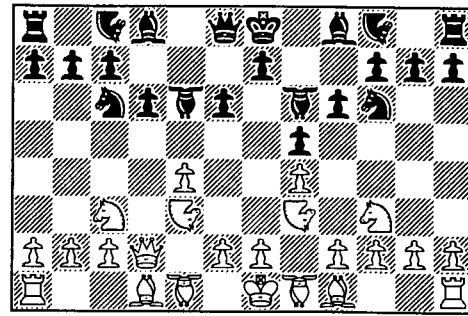
6 Nb1-c3 Fh8-h6?!

Black can consider ...Ce6 or ...Ch6 instead, intending to restrain f4 or g4. White can force a sharp fight. After 7 g4 there is a triple attack on h5. If 7 g4 g6 8 gxh5 gxh5 9 Cxh5 Nxh5 10 Bxh5 ixh5 11 Qj5+ with an unclear position. After 8 g5 there is ...fxg5 or ...i5 9 gxh6 i4 with complexities. If 7 d4 exd4 8 Bxc7 Nc6! 9 Bxd8 Nxd8 10 Qc4+ Ne6.

Actually the outcome shows the move is a mistake. I should have played ...Nc6.

7 d2-d4! e5xd4
8 Qf1-c4+ Fe8-e6
9 Qc4xd4 Nb8-c6
10 Qd4-d2 d7-d6

Let's take stock (diagram at top of next column). We see



that Black has been induced to abandon the strongpoint e5 - as in the old Steinitz defence to the Ruy Lopez - to the advantage of White who has a strong bishop and the half-open d-file with pressure on the queenside. The superbly placed Qd2 also inhibits my eventual ...Ki7.

11 f2-f4 f6-f5

Intended to block out the bishop and establish Black in the centre. 11 g2-g4 also leaves him with complex problems.

12 e4-e5 d6xe5

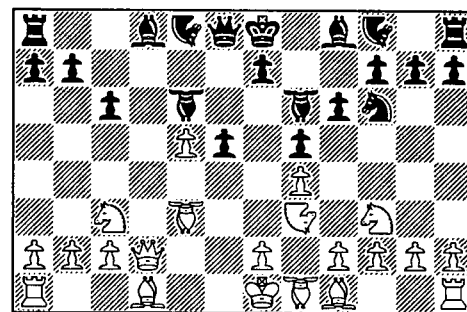
13 Ce3xe5 Nc6xe5

A difficult choice. I take a small (?) material loss to reduce pressure on the Q-side. With luck the isolated pawn might fall. My next kills much of the activity of his QN and QB. I also give myself the option of ...g5 in some circumstances and increase the scope of my QB. Do I have enough compensation?

14 f4xe5 c7-c6

15 Qd6 will be answered by ...Bb6+ and ...Qf7, preparing to drive the Q off.

15 Fe1-e3 Cc8-e8



15...Ce8 is a subtle move. I prepare for ...Rd8 without committing the bishop and the courier has excellent prospects at e4, g4 and i4. I also retain the option of the 'Guardians of the gates' formation - that is Fe6,h6 and Ce8,h8. Four extra minor pieces (compared with chess) cover most of the central squares and make it extraordinarily difficult to attack the central king.

In this sort of position ...Ni4 can be answered by Cxh5 ripping open the king's position. A wild player would therefore consider the consequences of k2-k4.

16 Fe3-f4?

Blocking the f-pawn doesn't look so bad - but Robert is unlucky. To the surprise of us both, it turns out to be a catastrophic error.

16 Bd8-b6+

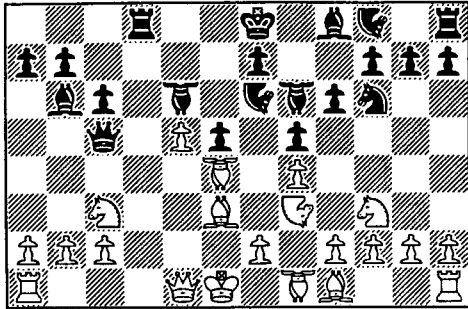
This is very dangerous for White. Kh2 can be answered by

Ni4+ and after Kf1 mate is threatened by Qc5. If Ff4-e3 then ...f5-f4.

- 17 Kg1-f1 Ra8-d8
- 18 Qd2-e1 Qf8-c5

Had White played 18 Qe2 I would now be threatening mate.

- 19 Bd1-f3 Ce8-g6



Attention turns to the escape square e2 and the value of 15 Ce8 becomes clear. If White has to capture this courier on e4 or g4 Black's white-square bishop will enter the fray.

- 20 Nj3-h2

A miserable move to have to play, but 20 Rd1 Qg1+ 21 Ke2 Cg4+ 22 Bxg4 Rxd1 costs material.

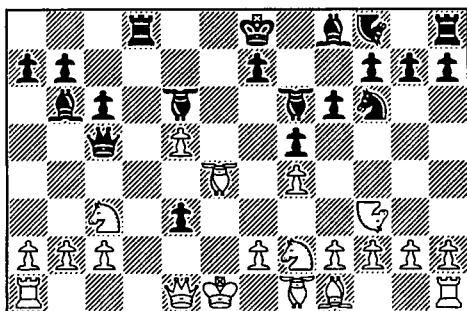
- 20 Cg6-e4

- 21 Bf3xe4

21 Nxe4 fxe4 22 Bd1 Rd2 23 Qxd2 Qg1+ 24 Ke2 Qf2 mate.

- 21 f5xe4

- 22 Ch3-j3 e4-e3



White hopes to live long enough to disentangle his king-side. I take the risk of giving his knight a great square in order to force matters on the queen-side. If 23 Rd1 e2+ and now 24 Kxe2 Qc4 mate, 24 Qxe2 Qg1 mate, 24 Nxe2 Rxd1 25 Qxd1 Qf2 mate.

- 23 Nh2-f3 Bi8xc2

- 24 Bi1-g3 Nj6-i4

I don't see an immediate breakthrough - but the bishop has nowhere to go, so I take a little profit.

- 25 Ra1-c1 Ni4xg3+

- 26 Qe1xg3 Bc2-d3+

- 27 Kf1-e1 Qc5-b4

- 28 Resigns

I'm still generating threats. If 28 b3 Qa3 and ...Qb2. White has had enough!

FOLLOW-MY-LEADER

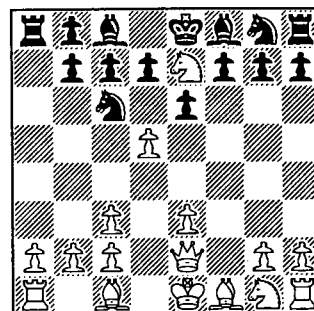
material mainly from David Pritchard

David Pritchard tells me that **Kazan Chess** (see VC 49 page 74) appears to be an extension of the games known as Follower Chess and Follow-the-Mover Chess. Neither of these is in the *Encyclopedia of Chess Variants*, having been received too late for inclusion, but he tells me that they will be among the hundreds of new games to be included in the second edition and he has invited me to quote his present draft entries. Follow-the-Mover Chess appeared, with some game scores, in VC 18.

FOLLOWER C Michael Howe (1993) Usual array. White starts with an orthodox move. Thereafter a player on turn makes an orthodox move followed by an unorthodox move. The latter consists of moving any friendly piece onto the path of the piece just moved. The path is the square vacated plus any squares passed over. The path of a N is considered to be any vacant square in the 2x3 rectangle. A follower (unorthodox move) may give check. No castling or e.p.

FOLLOW-THE-MOVER C aka FTM C Gianluca Vecchi (1994) OrthoChess except that after making a move a player may transfer any friendly man, except the K or the man just moved, to the vacated square. The K must escape check with an orthodox move and a P cannot be transported to the 8th rank. Here is a postal game: *White G.Vecchi Black A.Kustrin* 1 Nf3 Nf6 2 Ng5(Qf3) Ng8(Raf6) 3 Qxf6(Raf3)?! gxf6(hg7) 4 Nxf7(Nbg5) fxg5(af6)?? 5 Nxh8(Bcf7) mate.

The latter is one of the games that appeared in VC 18, and the final blunder is instructive. VC 18 reports that Patrick Donovan liked the game and also tried his hand at **Progressive FTM Chess**, winning the following experimental game as Black: 1 e3(Qe2) 2 Nc6(a7b8), e6(Qe7) 3 Nc3, Nd5(d2c3), Nxe7 4 Nd4, Nxe2(Rad4), Nxc3, Rd1 mate. Patrick remarked that if White had ended series 3 with Nxe7(f2d5) instead of the simple Nxe7, there would still have been a win but it would have been more difficult :



Answer (I think) on page 95.

THAI CHESS

Further to the notes in VC 45/47/48, René Gralla has drawn my attention to a statement of the rules on the web site <www.thailandlife.com>, and Paul Michelet's friends Kai Tuorila and Seesagoon Krishanachinda have pointed me to some more web sites. A brief reminder: "queen" (inverted Q in diagrams) one diagonal step in any direction; "bishop" (inverted B) one diagonal step in any direction, or one step straight forward; pawns start on rank 3, promote on rank 6, promotion only to queen; kings start on d1/e8.

It will be recalled that Paul Byway and I questioned an alleged rule which appeared to mean that the theoretical win with three queens against a bare king could not always be realised in practice. The rules as given on the web site <www.thailandlife.com> clarify matters. Apparently a player whose opponent has been reduced to a bare king is given $M - N$ moves to force mate, where M is as follows :

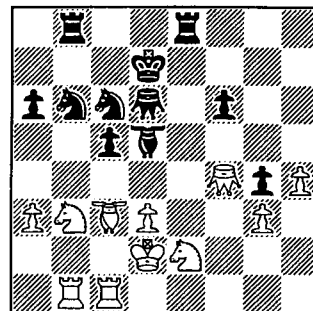
2 rooks	8
1 rook	16
no rook, 2 bishops	22
no rook, 1 bishop	44
no rook or bishop, 2 knights	32
no rook or bishop, 1 knight	64
no rook, bishop, or knight	64

and N is the total number of pieces still on the board. So with king and three queens against king, $M = 64$ and $N = 5$, and the player has a wholly adequate 59 moves to give the mate. These are rules informally stated by a player, not extracted from an official document, but they make reasonable sense even though there are obviously cases with two rooks where mate cannot be realised in the time allowed.

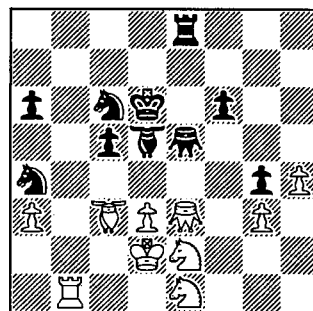
One web site drawn to my attention by Seesagoon Krishanachinda was <www.ishipress.com/makrook.htm> which includes two games from the 1990 Thailand Championship and a sample chess column (text, one game, one ending) from a Thai newspaper. The newspaper column is presented as a graphic and decoding the examples is not easy (the image on my screen is far from clear), but the championship game scores are in ordinary computer

text (transcriptions by Sam Sloan) and can be extracted and pasted across. He says that Suchart Chaivichit was the best Thai Chess player at the time and had been rated as high as FIDE 2420 at our own chess, while Veeraphol Sunthornpongsathorn had been rated at FIDE 2330. So we are looking at games of good quality.

In the first game, Suchart Chaivichit had the Black pieces against Kiart Fufuengmongkolkij. 1 Nd2 Qd8-c7 2 Ne2 c5 3 Bc1-c2 Ne7 4 Qe1-f2 Bf8-f7 5 b4 Nc6 6 e4 d5 7 Qf2-e3 g5 8 Bf1-f2 h5 :

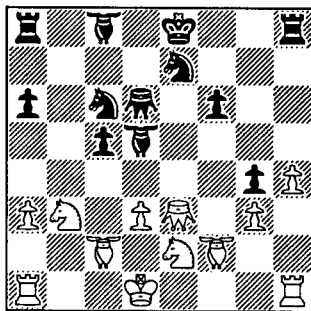
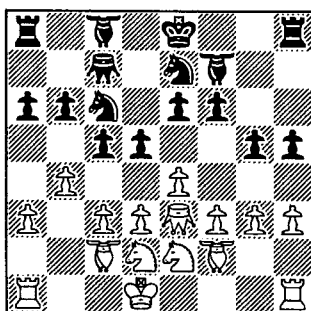


25 Na1 Qd6-e5 26 Qf4-e3 Kd6 27 Nc2 Na4 28 Ne1 Rxb1 29 Rxb1 :

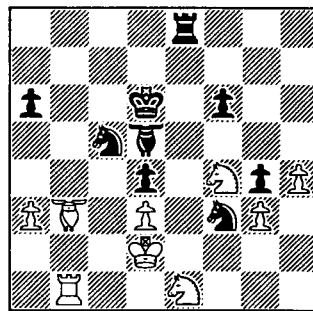


29...Qe5-d4 30 Qe3xd4 cxd4 31 Bc3-b2 Ne5 32 Bb2-b3 Nc5 33 Nf4 Nf3 :

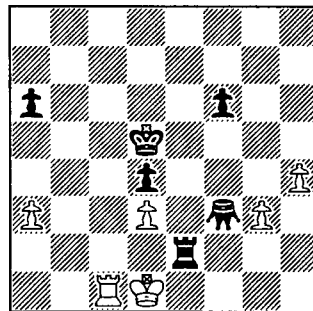
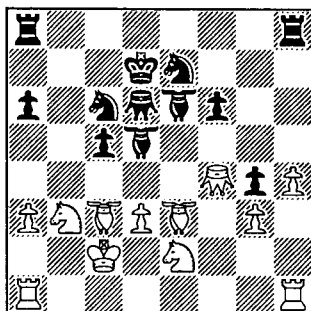
9 bxc5 bxc5 10 h4 g4 11 fxg4 hxg4 12 exd5 exd5 13 Nb3 Qc7-d6 14 c4 Bf7-e6 15 cxd5 Be6xd5 :



16 Bc2-c3 Bc8-d7 17 Qe3-f4 Bd7-e6 18 Bf2-e3 Kd7 19 Kc2 :

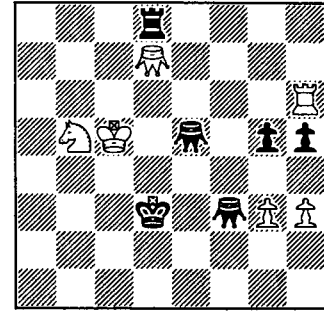
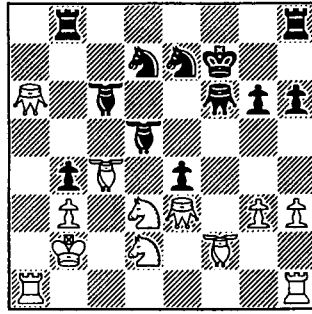
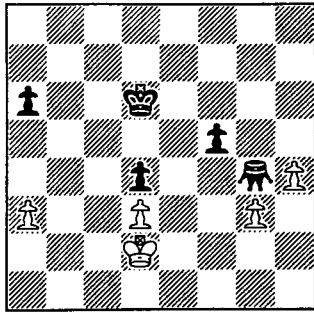


34 Nxf3 gxf3=Q 35 Nfd5 Re2+ 36 Kd1 Kxd5 37 Bb3-c4+ Kc6 38 Bc4xc5 Kc5 39 Rc1+ Kd5 :



19...Rac8 20 Kd2 Rcb8 21 Rab1 Nc8 22 Be3-e4 Nb6 23 Be4xd5 Be6xd5 24 Rhc1 Rhe8 :

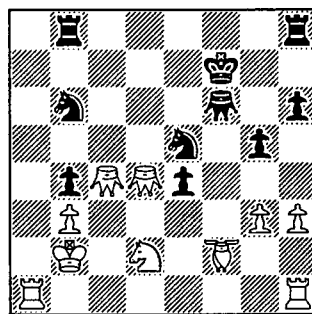
40 Rc8 Re6 41 Rd8+ Ke5 42 Kc2 f5 43 Kd2 Qf3-g4 44 Kc2 Rc6+ 45 Kd2 Rd6 46 Rxd6 Kxd6 and now the text says "White Resigns" :



I must confess I do not see why, and indeed I think White can organize himself so as to meet any attack that Black can mount (details on page 95). However, there are some errors in the game score which I have silently corrected and I have to wonder whether this might not be another, the actual finish having been "draw agreed" and not "White resigns".

In the second game, Veeraphol Sunthornpongsathorn had the White pieces against a player identified only as "Nakorn". 1 Nd2 Bf8-f7 2 Bc1-c2 f5 3 Qe1-f2 Bc8-b7 4 e4 Qd8-e7 5 d4 Nd7 6 Qf2-e3 Qe7-f6 7 Bc2-d3 b5 8 Kc2 a5 9 Bf1-f2 Ne7 10 Ne2 c5 11 dxc5 Nxc5 :

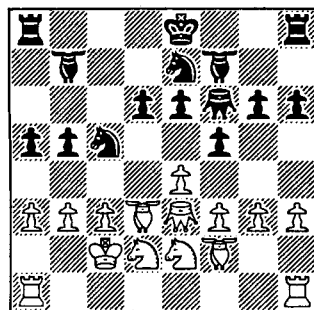
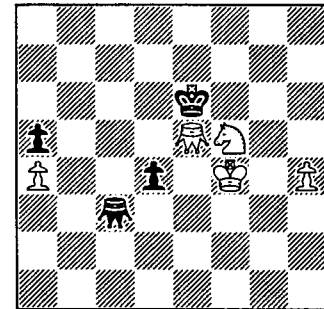
24 Nf4 g5 25 Nxd5 Bc6xd5 26 Qa6-b5 Ne5 27 Bc4xd5 Nd5 28 Qb5-c4 Nb6 29 Qe3-d4 :



29...Nxc4 30 bxc4 Nd3 31 Kb3 Nxf2 32 Rhf1 Rhd8 33 Ra7+ Kg6 :

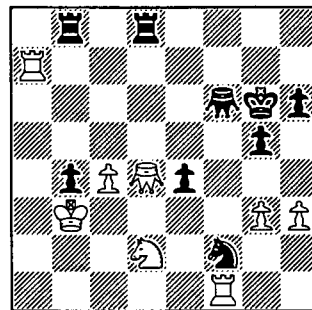
It would be an impertinence for me to comment on these examples in any detail, but some of the manoeuvring is obvious enough and I hope they give a feel for the game.

I haven't transcribed the newspaper game score yet, but the ending starts from this position :

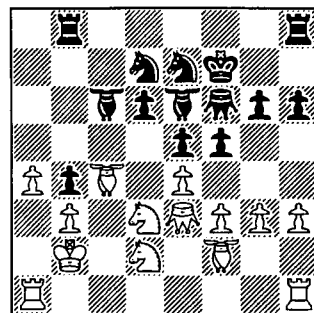


12 Qe3-d4 Nd7 13 a4 b4 14 cxb4 axb4 15 Kb2 e5 16 Qd4-e3 Bf7-e6 17 Bd3-c4 Bb7-c6 18 Nc1 Kf7 19 Nd3 Rab8 :

34 Rxf2 Rxd4 35 Ra6 Rf8 36 Nf1 Rd3 37 Kxb4 Rf3 38 Rxf3 exf3=Q :

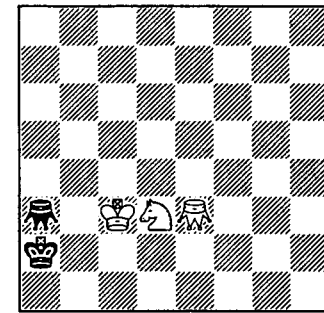
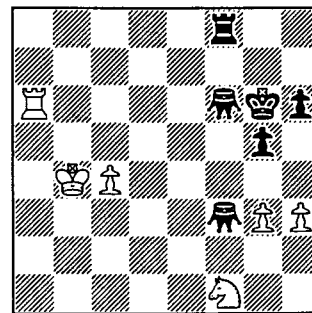


1 Qxd4 Qxd4 2 Nxd4+ Kd5 (now we shall eventually reach N+Q v Q) 3 Ke3 Kc4 4 h5 Kb4 5 Kd3 Kxa4 6 Kc3 Ka3 7 h6=Q Ka2 8 Qg5 Kb1 9 Ne2 (my instincts would have been to play 9 Kb3 winning the pawn, but the win with K+N+Q v K can take up to 45 moves and the line given here is much quicker) a4 10 Qf4 Ka2 11 Nc1+ Kb1 12 Nd3 Ka2 13 Qe3 a3=Q :



20 a5 d5 21 exd5 Be6xd5 22 a6=Q e4 23 fxe4 fxe4 :

39 Ne3 h5 40 c5 Re8 41 Nd5 Rf8 42 c6=Q Kf5 43 Qc6-d7 Qf6-e5 44 Kc5 Ke4 45 Rh6 Ra8 46 Nc3 Kd3 47 Nb5 Rd8 and a draw was agreed :

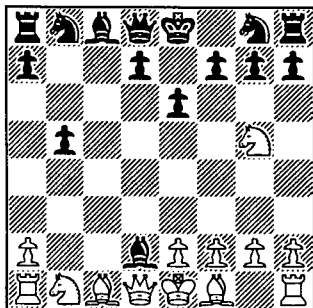


Now Black is hemmed in, and it's mate in a few: 14 Qd2 Ka1 15 Kb3 Kb1 16 Nc5 Qb2/Qb4 17 Na4 Qa3 (say) 18 Nc3+ (18 Kxa3? only draws) Ka1 19 Qc1 and mate next move.

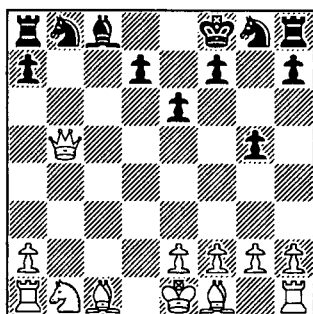
LOSING CHESS : WHAT IF ...

The most popular opening in Losing Chess continues to be 1 e3, but 1 c4 is gaining in support and nine of the games in the 2001 "First Unofficial World Championship" started with it. That said, six were won by Black and the opening provided tournament winner Tim Remell's only defeat, so perhaps the fashion will be only temporary. As usual, I am relying on Stan Goldovski's program *Giveaway Wizard* for the analysis.

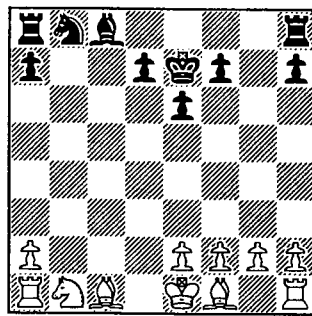
From Round 6, Tim Remell against Johan Bosman. 1 c4 c6 (VC 41 carried a report that 1...d5 had been proved by computer to be a forced loss) 2 b3 b5 3 cxb5 cxb5 4 Nh3 e6 (the position after 4...g5 5 Nxc5 is unclear, to me at least) 5 b4 Bxb4 6 Ng5 Bxd2 and White has no fewer than six possible captures :



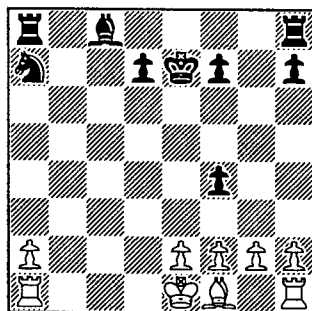
7 Qxd2 (7 Bxd2 Qxg5 8 Bxg5 loses off-hand but I think most of the others are playable) Qxg5 8 Qxg5 (8 Qxd7 Bxd7 9 Bxg5 again loses) Kf8 9 Qxb5 (White was probably quite glad to get rid of this pawn, which has cramped his game) g5 :



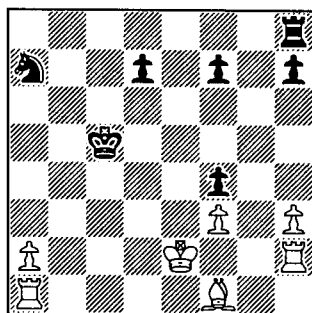
10 Qxg5 (the alternatives are suicidal) Ne7 11 Qxe7 Kxe7 :



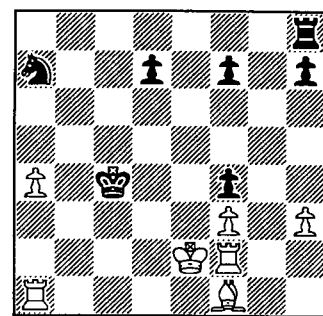
The opening complications are over, and Black seems to me to have a slight advantage in space. 12 Nc3 e5 (threatening 13...d5 etc) 13 Nb5 Nc6 14 Nxa7 Nxa7 15 Bf4 exf4 :



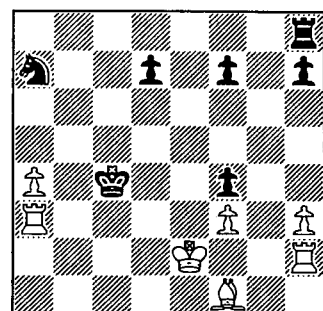
Black has an extra knight (normally good), White an extra pawn far from promotion (normally bad), and if Black can disentangle his men on the a-file he ought to have the advantage. 16 f3 Ba6 17 h3 Bxe2 18 Kxe2 Rag8 (disentanglement achieved) 19 Rh2 Rxc2 20 Bxc2 Kd6 (threatening ...Kd5 and ...Ke4, after which ...f5, ...d5, and ...Nc6 will give White a rampant bishop) 21 Bf1 Kc5 and the threat is now ...Kb4 and ...Kb3 forcing open the a-file :



We'll look at 22 Ke3 in a moment, but the move actually played was 22 a4, and after 22...Kc4 White's 23 Rf2? gave Black a forced win (diagram at top of next column, answer on page 95).

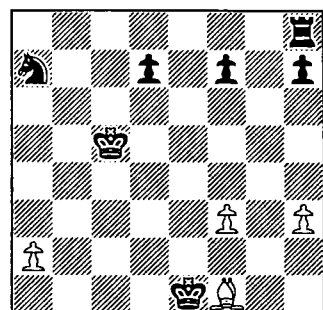


However, White's game was difficult. My computer finds forced wins for Black after all moves except 23 a5 (which may merely delay matters) and the curious 23 Ra3 :



This lets Black force the rook out into the open, but after 23...Kc3 24 Rxc3 the rook can give itself away, and after 23...Kb3 24 Rxb3 Rb8 25 Rxb8 it is Black who is likely to be reduced to pawn moves. Indeed, any move other than the retreating 23...Kc5 and 23...Kd5 may be good for White.

Now let us go back to 21...Kc5, and try 22 Ke3 followed by say 22...fxe3 23 Rf2 exf2 24 Re1 fxe1K :



White must let Black take the bishop (25 Bg2 loses offhand), but this will leave him only pawn moves and a position with so many pawns so far back offers very little hope. My computer took several hours to prove Black's win, but readers may do better; one answer is on page 95.

ZAITSEV'S SUPERCHESS

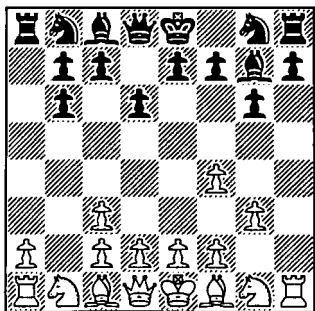
by David Pritchard

Chess variants are the Great Ephemera. For the vast majority, it's a microsecond of publicity followed by an eternity of oblivion. A few of the long-forgotten deserve perhaps a better fate. One such I believe is Superchess. This needs qualification since there are a lot of variants that boast the name. The one I have in mind was invented by GM Igor Zaitsev in 1991. Usual board and array. The rooks, bishops and knights have the added power of a king, though not to capture. Pawns can move one square forwards, including diagonally forwards, or sideways. Again, captures must be orthodox. No castling. A tournament in Russia in the same year (1991) is memorable only for the fact that Mikhail Tal finished last on half a point. Here the tournament winner overruns another GM (unorthodox moves are given in full):

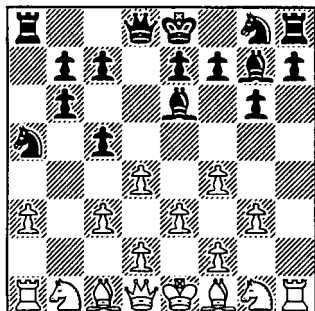
White I. Zaitsev

Black Y. Averbakh

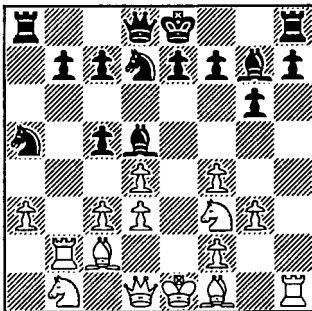
1 h2-g3 a7-b6 2 g2-f3 g6 3 f4 Bg7
4 b2-c3 d6 :



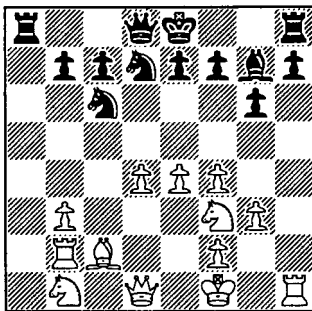
5 e3 Nc6 6 c3-d4 (centralising pawns seems to be a sensible strategy) d6-c5
7 c3 Be6 8 a3 Na5 :



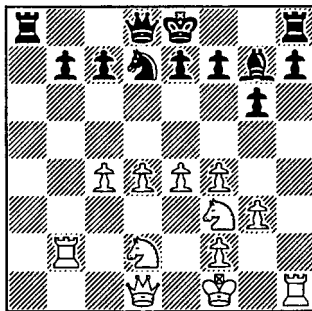
9 Bc1-c2 (effectively negating Black's last move) Nf6 10 d3 Nd7
11 Ra1-b2 cxd4 12 exd4 b6-c5
13 Nf3 Bd5 :



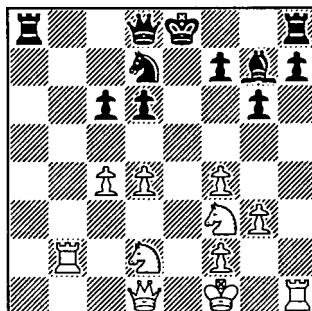
14 d3-e4! Bc4 15 a3-b3! Bxf1
(helping the king to a safe haven at g2) 16 Kxf1 cxd4 17 cxd4
Nc6 :



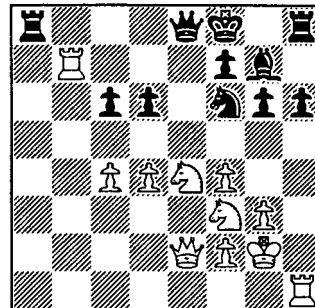
18 Bc2-c3! Nc6-b5 19 Bc3-c4! Nd6
20 Nbd2 Nxc4 21 bxc4 :



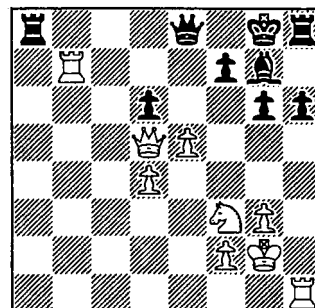
21...b7-c6 22 e5 c7-d6 23 exd6
exd6 :



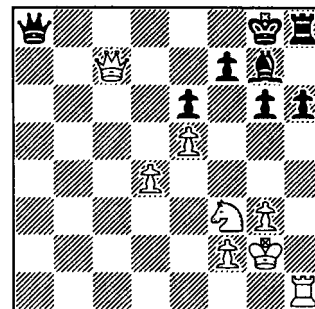
24 Ne4 Nf6 25 Qe2 Kf8 26 Rb7 h6
27 Kg2 Qe8 :



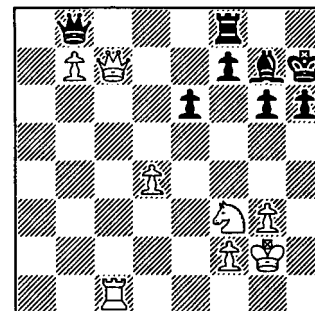
28 f4-e5! Nxe4 29 Qxe4 Kg8
30 c4-d5! cxd5 31 Qxd5 :



31...d6-e6! 32 Qc4 Rc8 33 Rc7 Rxc7
34 Qxc7 Qa8 :



35 e5-d6 Kh7 36 d6-c6 Rf8 (Ng5+ followed by Qxf7 mate was threatened) 37 c6-b7 Qb8 38 Rc1 resigns :



39 b7-c8(Q) is threatened.

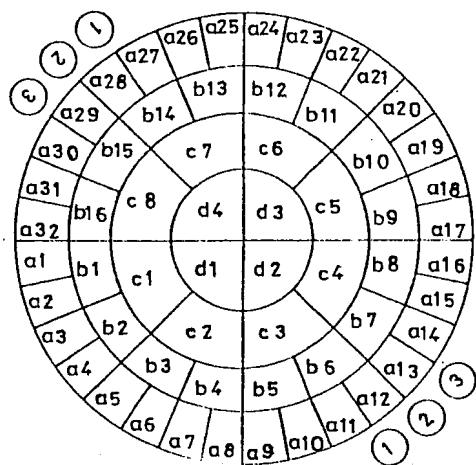
IN THE LIBRARY

4D Strategy II by J. A. Ball, B. W. Uzzell, and T. Stafford (published for the British 4D Association, 1980)

This is the game referred to in *The Encyclopedia of Chess Variants* as "Fourth Dimension aka 4D" (page 121). It is a proprietary game and was originally covered by UK and US patents, but these have presumably expired and it would appear that any proprietary rights that may still exist are not being exploited. A recent Google search for the phrase "British 4D Association" yielded only the reference in our own library catalogue, and a letter to the address given in the booklet, asking what was still available and at what prices, came back "not known at this address".

It's actually a very interesting game, and I can well believe the statement in the *ECV* that at its peak there were about 30 active groups in the UK. The *ECV* gives only an outline of the rules and the present booklet assumes they are already known, but I think the details can be inferred with reasonable certainty from the examples given.

The game is played on a circular board with 60 ordinary cells and six "time-warp" cells, three for each player :

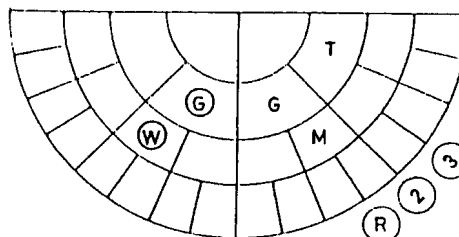


The basic rules are as follows.

- Each player has one Time-Lord, two Guardians, three Rangers, and six Warriors. White's men start WRRW / WWRGTGW on cells b3-b6 / a5-a12, Black's on the cells diametrically opposite (T on a25).
- A turn normally contains three actions, a move, a "beam-up", and a "beam-down", each by a different man.
- A man can move to any adjacent cell (for example, from b4 to c2, b3, b5, a7, or a8). All men move the same.
- If a player's time-warp cells are empty, a man can beam up to the first of them (cell 1). A marker is placed on the board to indicate the board cell it has come from.
- A man in one of the time-warp cells can beam down to any vacant board cell not more than two away from the marked cell (for example, if the marker is on b4, to d1, c1/c2/c3, b2/b3/b4/b5/b6, or a5/a6/a7/a8/a9/a10).
- If a man in one of the time-warp cells does not beam down, it must advance within the cells (from 1 to 2, then from 2 to 3). A man in cell 3 *must* beam down.

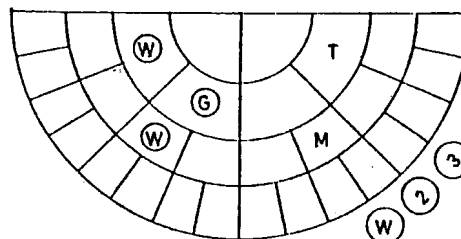
- In general, the men are ranked in order T > G > R > W, and a man may attack and capture a weaker man on an adjacent cell (one capture only per man per turn, and capturing is not compulsory). Exceptionally, however, the ranking of T and W is reversed. A Warrior may therefore attack and capture a Time-Lord, not vice versa, and this is how the game is won.
- As long as a player has at least three men, he *must* end each turn with a man in one of his time-warp cells. This rule was added by the British 4D Association to enable the stronger side to force a win in certain endings.
- The move within a turn may occur at any point, but the beam-down must always precede the beam-up.

The flexibility given by this last rule is shown by two simple examples. In the first, White, whose men are unringed, beamed up a Ranger from b6 at his last turn (the ring around this Ranger is the boundary of the time-warp cell it is occupying, it doesn't indicate that the Ranger is Black), and the marker M shows the cell it came from :



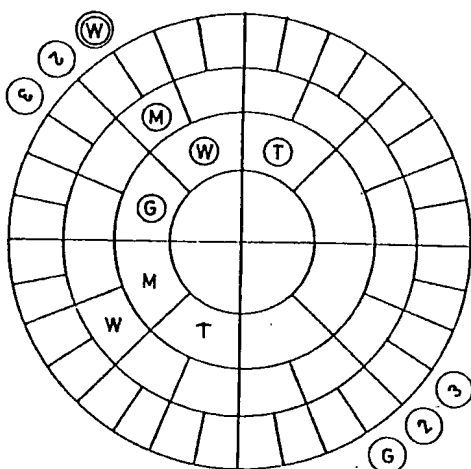
White beams down the Ranger to b4 and captures the Warrior on b3, **R>b4:Wb3**, beams up the Guardian on c3, **Gc3>**, and moves his Time-Lord to the now vacant cell c3 and captures the Guardian on c2, **Tc4-c3:Gc2**.

In the second example, the move comes first :



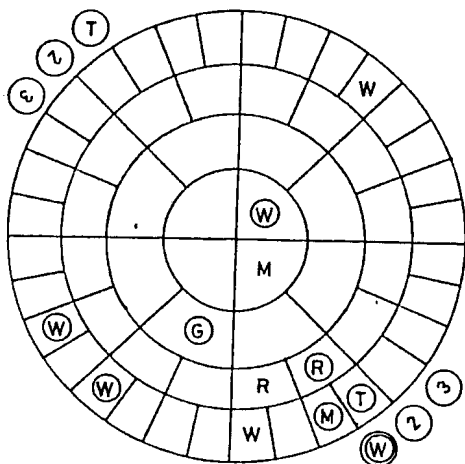
This time White's first action is to move his Time-Lord to c3 and capture the Guardian on c2, **Tc4-c3:Gc2**, after which he can beam down his Warrior to c2, **W>c2**, and by thus occupying c2 he stops Black from playing Wc2:Tc3 next turn. If White has no other men, this completes his turn; if he has one or more men on the rest of the board, he must complete his turn by beaming one of them up.

The next example (top of next page) shows a case in which a player should *not* make a capture. White moves his Time-Lord to c1 (the fact that there is a marker on a cell does not prevent a man from moving there) and captures the Guardian on c8, **Tc2-c1:Gc8**, beams down his Guardian to the now vacant cell c8, **G>c8**, and beams up his Warrior from c2, **Wc2>**. But why didn't he capture the Warrior on c7, playing **G>c8:Wc7** instead of the simple **G>c8**? Because it would have allowed Black to play



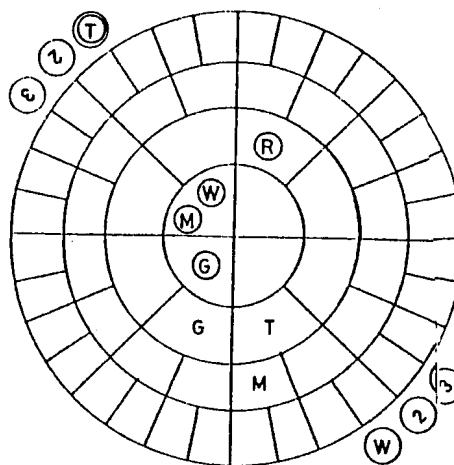
Tc6-c7:Gc8 and then beam down his Warrior to the now vacant cell c8, capturing the White Time-Lord on c1 and winning the game. The Black Warrior must be left on the board to obstruct c7 and prevent Black's counterattack.

Our next illustration comes from a sample game which is expounded in detail. Black, at his last turn, beamed up his Time-Lord from d2, and White replied by beaming up a Warrior from a11 (this time it is White whose men are ringed). It is now Black's turn :



When the Black Time-Lord beams down it will have to come back within two cells of its point of departure d2, in other words to one of the central cells d1-d4 or to a cell in one of the arcs c1-c6 and b5-b8, and we notice that an arrival on most of these cells will expose it to an immediate attack from a Warrior on d3, a3, or a5. The only cells free from this objection are b7 and b8, and White can meet these by beaming down his Warrior to a13 and b7 respectively (both cells are within two of a11). Black can of course postpone the evil day by playing T1>2 and then T2>3, but White will temporize also, W1>2 and W2>3, and Black will run out of turns first. In some positions like this, the player under threat can use his two turns to create a haven for his Time-Lord (for example, if there were no White Guardian on c2 Black could try Rb5-b4 and then Rb4-b3, knocking out the Warrior on a5 and then beaming his Time-Lord down to c2), but there is no such possibility here and in practice Black resigned.

As in all truly practical chess variants, the end game is of interest. We note first, and trivially, that a player who has lost all his Warriors cannot win, and slightly less trivially that he will almost certainly lose (because his opponent's Time-Lord, being now invulnerable, will simply stalk the board and mop up his remaining Guardians and Rangers one after another, after which he will have no way of capturing his opponent's remaining Warriors). It follows that sacrificing a Ranger or Guardian for the opponent's last Warrior doesn't merely force a draw, it almost certainly wins. The ending T+R+G+W v T+G+W (one Ranger ahead) is regarded as won, but only with difficulty and with the aid of the special rule that a player's turn must leave a man warped; the ending T+G+2W v T+G+W (one Warrior ahead) had not been completely resolved in 1980, but was believed to be won in most situations. The ending T+G+W v T+2R+W (a Guardian for two Rangers) should be an easy win "because your Guardian can chase one Ranger while your Time-Lord protects your Warrior from the other Ranger". One of the most difficult cases of the ending T+R+G+W v T+G+W is played through twice with Ball and Uzzell taking the stronger side in turn (both duly win), and I give one set of moves. Black starts :



- | | | |
|----|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | ..... | Wd4-d3, T>d4, Gd1> |
| 2 | W>b6, Tc3>, Gc2-c3 | Td4-d1, G>c4, Wd3> |
| 3 | T>b4, Wb6>, Gc3-b6 | Td1-d4, W>d1, Gc4> |
| 4 | Tb4-b5, W1>2 | Rc6-c5, G>c2, Wd1> |
| 5 | Gb6-c3, W>b6, Tb5> | Td4-d3, W1>2 |
| 6 | Gc3-c4, T>a12, Wb6> | Td3-d4, W>c1, Rc5> |
| 7 | Gc4-b7, W>a14, Ta12> | Wc1-d1, R>b10, Gc2> |
| 8 | Gb7-c4, T>b7, Wa14> | Td4-d3, G>c3, Wd1> |
| 9 | Gc4-b8, W>a15, Tb7> | Td3-c5, W>d3, Gc3> |
| 10 | Gb8-b7, T>b6, Wa15> | Wd3-d2, G>c4, Tc5> |
| 11 | Tb6-a12, W1>2 | Rb10-c5, T1>2 |

and White's Warrior will be lost as soon as it beams down (if it beams down say to a13, Black will beam down to b8 and knock out White's Guardian, and then move his own Guardian to the vacant cell b7 and knock out the Warrior).

The book consists of a mere 40 A5 pages, yet it contains a vast amount of information on tactics, openings, middle and end game play, and strategy. If the owners see this and care to tell me where supplies can now be obtained, I shall be delighted to give them publicity in a future issue of VC.

PAWN PLAY IN XIANGQI

The XiangQi rook and horse are recognizable equivalents of our own chessmen, and the cannon, although quite different in its tactics, does not change the basic strategy of the game. The pawn (strictly, "soldier") is quite different. It is purely an attacking piece, the defensive duties being undertaken by guards and elephants, and it does not promote; instead, it is normally used as a direct attacking weapon against the opposing palace.

10	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	.	.
9	.	.	.	:	k	:	.	.	.
8	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	.	.
7	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	.	.
6	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	.	.
5	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	.	.
4	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	.	<u>P</u>
3	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	.	.
2	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	.	.
1	.	.	.	:	<u>K</u>	:	.	.	.

a b c d e f g h i

The diagram shows the basic win with king and pawn against king. Red (capitals, underlined) plays up the board; the king moves one step horizontally or vertically (not diagonally), and is confined to the "palace"; pawn one step forward in its own half, one step forwards or sideways in its opponent's half, capturing with its ordinary move; kings cannot face each other on a file unless there is at least one man in between. Red starts **Pi5, Pi6, Pi7** (or Ph6 etc, the pawn now being able to move sideways), **Pi8, Pi9, Ph9, Pg9**, and Black, having played an odd number of moves within the rectangle d8-e10, will be on e10, d9, or e8. Red continues **Pf9** guarding e9 and taking over the guard of f10, and Black must play to d10 or d8. This allows the Red king to move to the e-file, **Ke1**, and after Black's move to d9 we have **Ke2!** (tempo, forcing Black to d8 or d10) followed by **Pe9** and a win by stalemate. Something similar is always possible provided that the pawn is not already on its last rank.

King and pawn alone cannot force a win if Black's king is accompanied by even a single defensive piece, but the ending K+G+P v K+G is usually won. Paul Byway gave the following example in VC 34 :

10	.	.	.	:	k	g	.	.	.
9	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	.	.
8	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	.	.
7	.	.	.	:	<u>P</u>	.	.	.	.
6	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	.	.
5	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	.	.
4	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	.	.
3	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	.	.
2	.	.	.	:	<u>G</u>	:	.	.	.
1	.	.	.	:	<u>K</u>	:	.	.	.

The guard moves one step diagonally, and is confined to the palace. Play starts **1 Pe8 Ge9 2 Ke1**, and Black must play **2...Gf10** or the equivalent **...Gd10** if he is not to lose his guard. Red replies **3 Pd8** moving his pawn to the opposite side from his opponent's guard, and the main line continues **3...Kd10** (we shall look at Black's other moves in a moment) **4 Kd1 Ge9** (4...Ke10 5 Pd9 Ge9 transposes) **5 Pd9+ Ke10 6 Ke1 Gf8** (6...Kf10 loses at once, and if the guard moves elsewhere 7 Kf1 forces 7...Ge9 unconditionally) **7 Kf1 Ge9** (7...Kf10 8 Pe9 as below) **8 Gd1 Gf8 9 Kf2** and either **9...Ge9 10 Ke2** pinning and winning the Black guard :

10	.	.	.	:	k	.	.	.	.
9	.	.	.	:	<u>P</u>	g	.	.	.
8	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	.	.

K

or **9...Kf10 10 Pe9** with an immediate and elegant pin stalemate :

10	.	.	.	:	:	k	.	.	.
9	.	.	.	:	<u>P</u>	:	.	.	.
8	.	.	.	:	:	g	.	.	.

K

If instead **3...Ke9** then **4 Kf1 Ke10 5 Pd9** and much the same, and similarly if **3...Ge9 4 Pd9**. It's an ending which repays detailed study, and we may notice that the position after **2 Ke1** is reciprocal zugzwang (Red to play here could not win).

If the attacker has more pawns he can overcome more defenders, and three pawns have a theoretical win even against a full set of defensive men (two guards and two elephants). Paul Byway discusses this difficult ending in VC 33. Zhu Baowei's book *Basic Xiangqi Checkmate Methods* has a quite different example, an atypical but amusing position in which three pawns win against a rook :

10	.	.	.	:	k	:	:	.	.
9	.	.	.	:	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	.	.	.
8	.	.	.	:	:	:	:	.	r
7	.	.	.	:	<u>P</u>	.	.	.	.
6	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	.	.
5	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	.	.
4	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	.	.
3	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	.	.
2	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	.	.
1	.	.	.	:	<u>K</u>	:	.	.	.

The perpetual check which would save Black in our own chess is not allowed in XiangQi, so Red can play **1 Pd7 Re8 2 Kf2! Ri8** (Black must concede either the e-file to Red's king or the 8th rank to his pawn, and if he chooses the latter Red plays Pd8 and Pdd9+ and gets K+P against K) **3 Ke2** (not 3 Pf10 threatening 4 Pfe10 mate, when Black has 3...Rf8+ 4 Ke2 Re8+ 5 K~ Rxe9) **Re8+ 4 Kd2!** :

10	.	.	.	:	k	:	:	.	.
9	.	.	.	:	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	.	.	.
8	.	.	.	:	:	r	:	.	.
7	.	.	.	:	<u>P</u>	.	.	.	.

K

4...Rd8 loses at once because XiangQi pawns capture with their ordinary move, and **4...Rf8** allows **5 Pf10 Rxf10 6 Pd8** and mate by **Pdd9**. Hence **4...Re7** (now **5 Pf10** will be met by **5...Rxd7+ 6 Ke2 Re7+ 7 K~ Rxe9**) **5 Pd8 Rd7+ 6 Ke2 Rxd8** (one pawn taken, attack halted?) **7 Pe10+** (no, the rook's occupation of d8 will prove fatal) **Kd9 8 Pe9+** with another elegant finishing position :

10	.	.	.	:	<u>P</u>	:	.	.	.
9	.	.	.	:	k	<u>P</u>	:	.	.
8	.	.	.	:	r	:	:	.	.

K

In the three further examples that follow, all taken from *Basic Xiangqi Checkmate Methods*, a pawn again does most of the work, but the attacking side has at least one other attacking piece (rook, horse, cannon) and a preliminary manoeuvre by the men other than the crucial pawn immobilizes much of the Black force. The elephant moves two steps diagonally, the intervening point being vacant, and is confined to its own half of the board; the horse moves one step vertically or horizontally and then one diagonally, and again the intervening point must be vacant; the cannon moves like a rook, but can capture only if there is one and only one man between it and its victim. I have slightly simplified the first example. In the second, it is the pawn on g4 that reaps what others have set up for it.

```

10 . P e g : k e h .
 9 . . . : : : . . .
 8 . . . : : g . . .
 7 . . . . . . . H
 6 . . . . . . . .
 5 . . . . . . . .
 4 . . . . . . . .
 3 . . . : : : . . .
 2 . . . : : : . . .
 1 . . . : K : . . .
    
```

```

10 . . . : : g e . .
 9 . P . k : : . . .
 8 . . . g : : . . e
 7 . . . . . . . .
 6 . . . . . P . .
 5 . . . . . . . .
 4 . . . . . P . .
 3 . . . : : : . . .
 2 . . . : : : . . .
 1 . . . : K C . . .
    
```

```

10 . . . : : : . . .
 9 . . . : c k . . .
 8 . . . : : g R . .
 7 . . . . . . . .
 6 . . . . P . . .
 5 . . . . . . . .
 4 . . . . . h . .
 3 . . . : : R . . .
 2 . c . : G : . r .
 1 . . . G : K . . .
    
```

VERVE

George Jelliss has drawn my attention to a new chess game "Verve" by David Potter, which uses a computer as the playing medium and exploits possibilities which are not available using a conventional board and men. In particular, a player sees the board only through the eyes of his men, not from an all-seeing viewpoint on high, and players move in "real time" and not necessarily in strict alternation. The quotations that follow were taken, selectively but I hope fairly, from the web site <www.vervechess.com> as it was on September 19.

Hidden information

"In order to hide information, Verve does not let you see the board directly. Instead, you see the board through the eyes of your men. Your computer displays your view of the board, showing all of your own men, and any of your opponent's men that your men can see. Squares that your men cannot see are shown in less intense shades and appear to be empty even if they actually contain enemy men.

"Your men have extensive fields of vision. From the middle of an empty board, a queen can see 52 of the 64 squares; a rook, 39; a bishop, 30; a knight, 29; a king, 25; and a pawn, 10. Each man's field of vision includes its movement pattern and an envelope of diagonally adjacent squares, so your fields of vision include:

- enemy men blocking your moves;
- enemy men you can capture;
- enemy pawn threats;
- enemy pawns guarding squares to which you could move; and
- the enemy king if it is in check, closely blockaded, or guarding a square to which you could move a closely blockading man."

Real time play

"In Verve, you and your opponent move independently in real time, instead of alternating moves as in chess. So it is possible to make two or even more moves in a row. In spite of this significant difference between the

two games, Verve preserves chess tactics and endgame techniques. In order to do this, Verve retains the instantaneous move of chess; men do not, as in other real time strategy games, move over a period of time interacting with each other as they move. Also, Verve implements rules that amount to a relaxed form of the alternating move of chess. As a result, barring surprises and blunders, you and your opponent take turns moving during combinations and in the endgame.

"Verve also implements a tradeoff between initiative and the availability of information. The basis of this tradeoff is that all moves cost information, and the loss of information increases dramatically as you move more quickly. So if you play too quickly, your opponent will let you take the initiative, but you will give up too much information. And if you play too slowly, your opponent will take the initiative, giving up too little information in return."

The trade-off between initiative and information

"As mentioned above, in order to implement a tradeoff between initiative and information, Verve attaches an information cost to each move, and the loss of information increases dramatically as you move more quickly. The rule that creates this loss of information is that, when a man moves, it temporarily loses its vision. The time it takes to recover its vision is $2^{2n-t-10}$ minutes, where n is the number of moves you have made, including the current one, and t is the time at which you move, in minutes since the beginning of the game.

"As an exception to this rule, a man can always see the enemy king if in its field of vision. This exception ensures that in an endgame against the lone enemy king, your queen, rook or pair of bishops can see the king in order to force checkmate, regardless of your rate of play."

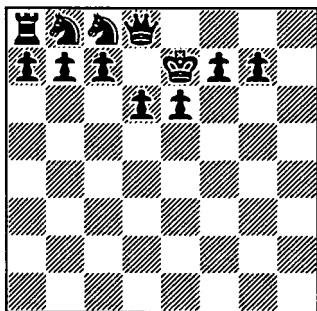
There is a lot more detail, but I think these extracts give the flavour. If you want to try the game, visit its web site <www.vervechess.com>.

PROOF GAMES

by Peter Fayers

It was not so much editor's nightmare last time as composer's nightmare – one of my originals was cooked:

21 - PF, Variant Chess 2005

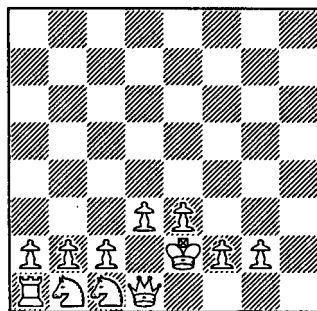


After Black's sixth

My intended solution was 1 a4 d6 2 Ra3 Bh3 3 Rxh3 e6 4 Rxh7 Ne7 5 Rxh8 Nc8 6 Rxf8+ Ke7. However, George Jelliss points out that White can start 1 h3! d6 2 Rh2 (or N any) Bxh3 3 Rxh3, using the KR to do the capturing instead of the QR.

Not to worry, I will take the opportunity to pass on a tip for correcting cooks in proof games. In cases where White has a spare tempo, as here, try it with Black playing first. If it works, flipping the board North to South (and making the solution half a move shorter) will do the trick:

21(v) - PF Original

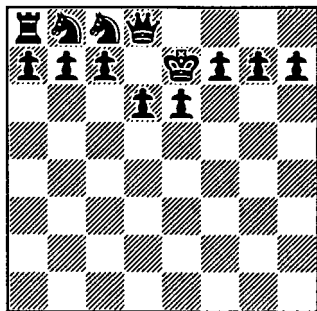


After White's sixth

This is now sound. (I hope!). I could extend it to "After Black's Sixth" by removing the wQ, but left it like this to more clearly show the technique.

John Beasley has also, by accident, produced a version of 21, due to a misunderstanding over the diagrams when I submitted my last article – he thought there was a black Pawn on h7:

22 - JDB Original

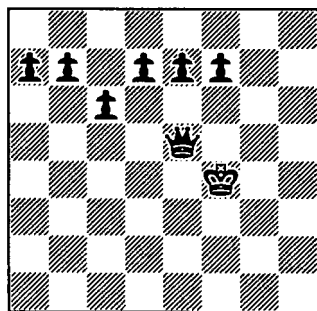


After Black's sixth

This variation seems sound, and produces a quite different solution. We could have produced a nice twinned problem between us, except that my half was cooked!

When George told me of the cook, he also submitted 23, extending the idea a few more moves:

23 - GPJ Original



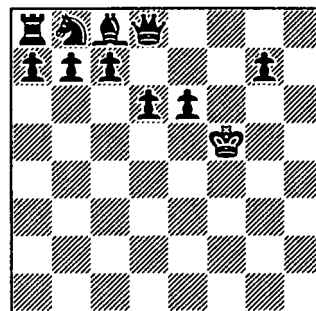
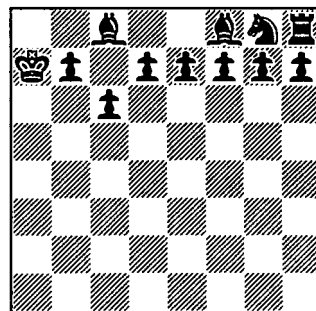
After Black's ninth

What I particularly like about this is the try 1 e4 h5 2 Qxh5 ... which isn't refuted until the eighth move.

To take the exchanges of ideas full circle, 23 gave me inspiration to complete the set of problems I started last time. I wanted to do a problem with each of P, N, B, R and Q creating the carnage in the Black ranks, but found it too difficult to tame the Queen; which Pawn advanced to let it out? Did it advance one or two squares? The sequence of captures was also hard to get sound (play

through the try in 23 to see what I mean). However, I find that, by using George's "King-walk" idea, I could overcome these problems and complete the set. (Of course, I also had to find a substitute for 21).

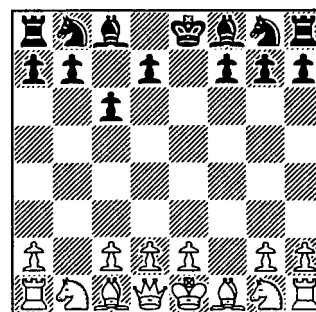
24-25 - PF Original



Both after Black's sixth

Fill-up-the-page time once again, so here is another example of John and myself joint-composing a twinned problem due to a misunderstanding between us. This one combines Fast Chess (Ps can move P-two at any time) and Glasgow Chess (Ps promote on the 7th rank). For a hint, refer to my article in VC 48.

26 - PF & JDB Original



Fast Glasgow Chess
a) After White's fifth
b) After Black's fifth

CASTLES IN THE AIR

by Jed Stone

Like an aged professor with a number of learned tomes by the chess masters of the past tucked securely under his arm, postal chess potters on. At least so I am assured by Paul Yearout with whom I have played (lost) numerous correspondence games over the years. World wide he still corresponds with thirty or so fellow enthusiasts who have resisted the volcanic eruption of computers into the chess world and still stick stamps on envelopes and rely on man power to take their moves to their opponent. I am down to three though one of those is now well over due and may have fallen by the wayside.

No matter, our leagues, whether they move by stamp or electronics still plod steadily onwards. The Hostage and Alice have witnessed no great upheavals of late. Ivan Dirmeik still reigns as number one on the Alice ladder with Paul Yearout a close second. John Leslie is clinging to the top of the Hostage ladder by his fingertips with Peter Coast just behind and Paul Yearout hot on their heels. A single game in either case could change the positions very easily.

The new Challenge League now has a number of games on the move. They are mainly divided between Dynamo and Avalanche Chess though Three Kings and Extinction have recently pushed their way on board. Paul Yearout definitely owns the top of this league mainly because he plays a far better game of both Avalanche and Dynamo than I do. It is, however, still early days and with a number of games being played towards a conclusion the position at the top may swing in another direction very shortly.

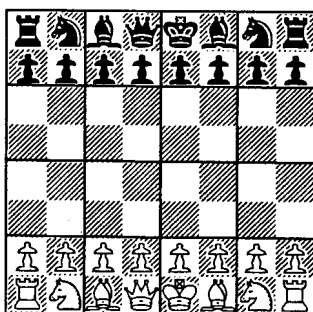
Till next time, bye for now. JS

"Three Kings Chess" is new to me, but can be found on page 314 of the Encyclopedia: "Normal set-up except that the rooks are replaced by additional kings. Object is to capture any one of the opponent's kings (there are no checks)." - JDB

PLAID CHESS

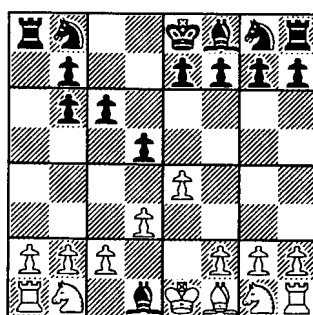
JDB thinking aloud...

I am giving Progressive Chess a miss this time (aficionados will find Paul Byway's usual competition pieces in The End Is Nigh) in favour of another look at Plaid Chess (see VC 45). This is Progressive with the additional rule that every move, captures of the king included, must cross a grid line :



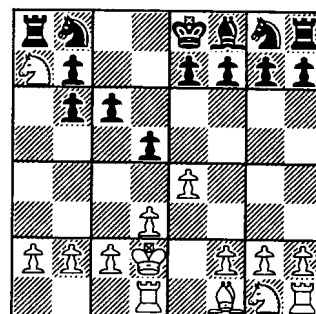
So 1 e4 doesn't threaten the usual 3 Bc4 Qh5 Qxf7; at Plaid Chess this isn't even check, let alone mate. However, 1 e4 (or any other move, for that matter) does threaten mate by 3 Nc3 Nb5 Nxc7, and Black's first task is to do something about this.

In VC 45, we tried meeting 1 e4 by 2 c6 Qb6 guarding c7, and if 3 d3 Be3 Bxb6 then 4 d5 Bg4 Bxd1 axb6 :

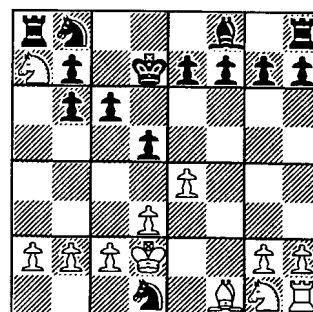


If now 5 Nc3 Na4 Nxb6 Nxa8 Kxd1 then 6 h5 Rh6 Re6 Nf6 Nxe4 Nxf2 mate; if Rxd1 instead of Kxd1 then 6 e5 Ba3 Bxb2 Bc3 mate; and if Nc7+ then 6 Kd7 Bg4 and again mate on c3.

All this looked good for Black, but White can defuse the rook on a8 another way; he can play 5 Nc3 Nb5 Na7 Kd2 Rxd1, using the grid rule to prevent the rook from barging down the file and bringing his king off the bottom rank :

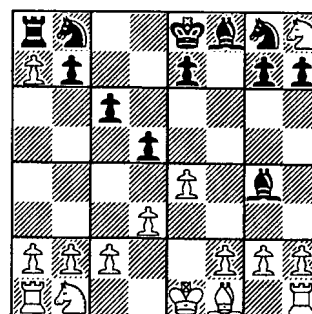


I can now see no mate for Black - can any reader do better? - and White has threats such as 7 g3 Bh3 Nf3 Ne5 Nxf7 Nb5 Nc7. So Black in turn must surely spend a move getting his king away from the edge, and he will not have time to take both White rooks. Can he even take one? Try 6 Kd7 Nf6 Ng4 Nxf2 Nxd1 and a move to come:



Black's final move must prevent 7 e5 Nb5 Nc7 Ne2 Nc3 Na4 Nxb6; if e5 or e6 White has alternative mates in seven (answers on page 95); and other tries allow mate in six at most.

So at turn 4, should Black abjure axb6 and play something like Bg4? But 5 bxa7 shuts up one rook and Nf3 Ne5 Nxf7 Nxh8 takes off the other :



No, Black has an answer (again see page 95), so perhaps Bg4 is playable.

I find this game fascinating, and will be delighted to hear from any reader who would care to join me in further exploration.

THE END IS NIGH!

by Paul Byway

Solutions to Competition 25

- #145 7 Ne4 Bh3 Rf1 Rf6 Rd6 Nf6 Ne8 mate
- #146 7 Nd7 Nf6 e5 Rh3 Rc3 Rxc8 Re8 mate
- #147 7 Kg3 exd5 d6 dxc7 Be2 Re1 Bb5 mate
- #148 9 Kg3 Bd5 a4 a5 a6 a7 a8=Q Qa7 Nf7 mate
- #149 7 Kf3 Kg4 Nd2 Ne4 Nf6 Rxd1 Rxd7 mate
- #150 7 Kc1 Nf7 Nxb6 Bb5 Rxd1 Rxd7 Rf7 mate
- #151 1 Cd1+ Pe4 2 Pd7+ Pd4 3 Pd8 G10e9 4 Pd9+ Ke10 5 Pd10+ Kf10 6 Cf1 mate

Congratulations to Ian Richardson for successfully tackling the XiangQi problem. John Beasley raises the question of Red's play if Black, at move 2, moves his king to the centre file instead of blocking the check with the pawn. Well - it seems to me that the Black pawn is now pinned and is lost after the Red cannon moves to the centre file. The next stage is to place the pawn on the centre file, advance it, and win two guards for a cannon, finally stalemating Black with the pawn. Note that it would be a terrible error to sacrifice the pawn and leave only the cannon - for that would be a draw. But it's likely to be the first instinct of a player of 'western' chess. #158 is the next trial - and Red's cannon and pawn now have to outmanoeuvre horse, elephant and two guards.

The progressive positions contained two solutions that were padded out with extraneous moves, which was generally noticed. Fred Galvin would prefer me to replace 'White wins' with 'mate in ..'. A fair point - although I always do mean that unless I state otherwise.

There was a fair crop of alternative solutions - one at least being very fine. Here they are:-

- #148 9 Ke2 Ng6 Nf4 Ne6 Nxd4 Kd2 Kc3 Kb4 Nf5 Italian mate

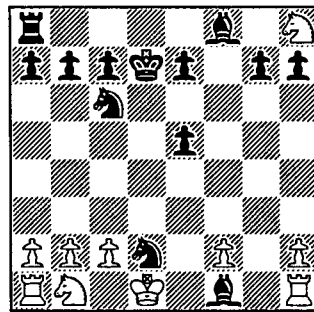
- #149 7 Na3 Nc4 Na5 e3 Bc4 Bxf7 Nxb7 Italian mate
- #150 7 Kc1 Bd3 Bxb7 Re1 Rxe5 Re7 Ng6 mate

The current scores:-
FG 90, IR 84, DP 60, PW 35, JB 29, CL 24, RT 19, NE 2, SB 2.

Competition 26

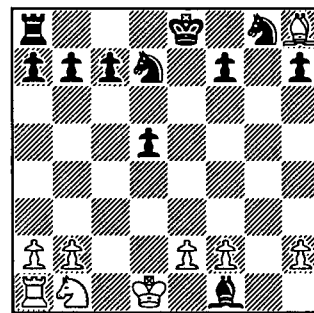
Colours have been reversed in #157. #158 is again from the treatise on Cannon plus Pawn.

- #152 Gadzinskaja - Kocan (1992)



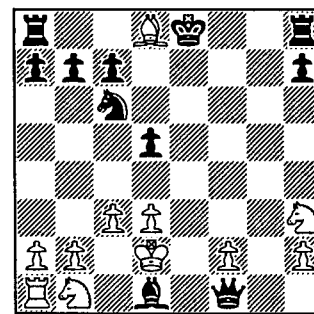
White wins (series 7)

- #153 Rocca - Tonelli (1985)



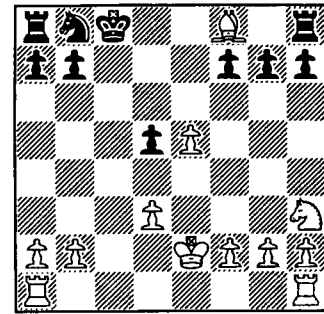
White wins (series 7)

- #154 Kocan - Dorochoy (1992)



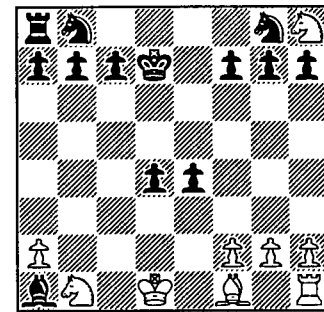
White wins (series 7)

- #155 Sveikauskas - Ciegis (1991)



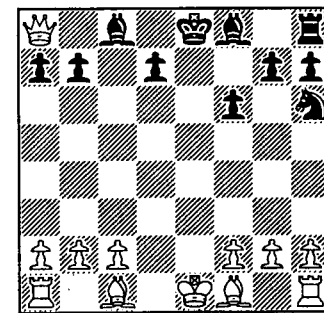
Black wins (series 8)

- #156 Fontana - Sarale (1992)



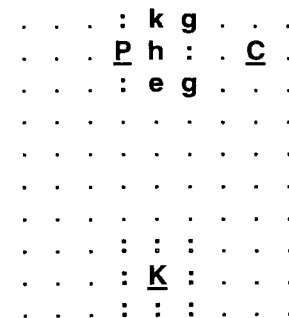
White wins (series 7)

- #157 Kyncl - Buccoliero (1991)



Black wins (series 6)

- #158 Author unknown



Red to play and win

SOLUTIONS

VC 49 proof games (page 74). 18 (PMF) 1 f4 d6 2 d5 Bd7 3 f6 Bc6 4 fxe7 Qd7 5 exf8R+ Ke7 6 Rxb8 Nf6.

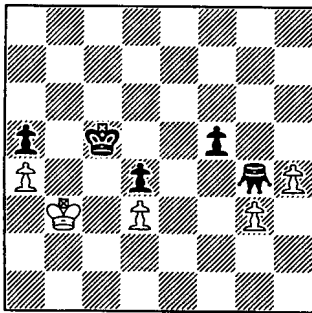
19 (PMF) 1 Nf3 e5 2 Nxe5 Ne7 3 Nxd7 Nc6 4 Nxf8 Be6 5 Nxe6 Rf8 6 Nxd8 Nxd8.

20 (PMF) 1 b3 e5 2 Ba3 e4 3 Bxf8 Ne7 4 Bxe7 d6 5 Bxd8 0-0 6 Bxc7 Rd8.

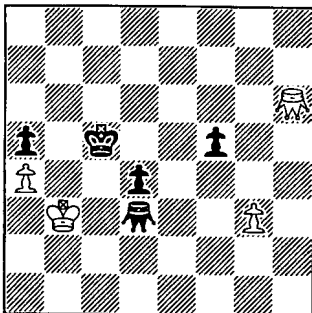
21 (PMF) see article on page 90.

Progressive FTM Chess (page 83). I don't know what Patrick had in mind, but Nd4, Nf5(Rad4), Nh4, Nf6(Bh4) appears to be sufficient.

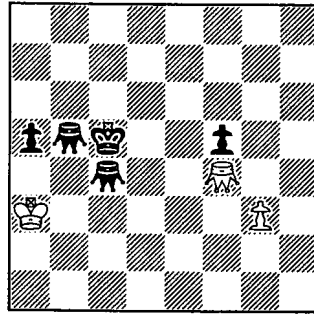
Thai Chess (page 85). White starts by playing his king to b3 and his a-pawn to a4 :



He marks time on a3 and b3, and if Black loses touch with c4 he will advance and do damage (three queens are needed to mate a bare king, so the capture of two pawns will ensure the draw). Black's only hope is to take on d3, but this lets White promote on h6 :



Even if Black makes a second queen on d3 and is allowed to take White's a-pawn, he cannot win. White will put his king on a3 and mark time with his queen on f4 and g5 :



and if Black brings his king to say f3 to disturb this, White will put his queen on f4 and mark time with his king on a3 and b2. So Black will never get a dark-square queen, and he cannot win without one.

Losing Chess (page 86). **Diagram at top of third column:** Black won by 23...Nc6. White resigned after 24 Bg2 Kb5 25 axb5 Na7, and 24 Ke2 fxe2 25 Bxc4 would have been no better.

Final diagram: simplest, after taking the bishop, is to play bR to b8 and bKK to c5/d5, to wait while wPPP advance to a6/f6/h6, and to play ...Rb7 and ...Nc8. Now any promotion can be met by a three-man giveaway, and bPPf7/h7 will be left blocked. Nor does it help to play 25 Be2 Kxe2 26 a3/a4/h4 giving away the f-pawn; Black again plays bR to b8 and bKK to c5/d5 and waits, and gives away four men at the end instead of three.

XiangQi (page 91). **First diagram.** 1 Kh9+ Kf9 2 Pxc10 Gde9 (2...Gfe9 is no better) 3 Ke2! and Black is almost completely tied up :

10	.	.	P	:	:	:	e	h	.
9	.	.	.	:	g	k	.	H	.
8	.	.	.	:	:	g	.	.	.
7	.	.	.	:	:	.	.	.	.
6	.	.	.	:	:	.	.	.	.
5	.	.	.	:	:	.	.	.	.
4	.	.	.	:	:	.	.	.	.
3	.	.	.	:	:	.	.	.	.
2	.	.	.	:	K	:	.	.	.
1	.	.	.	:	:	.	.	.	.

He can only move his guards to and fro, and play might continue 3...Gd8 4 Pd10 Gfe9 5 Pe10 Gd10 (5...Gf8 allows mate by 6 Hg7) 6 Pf10! (Red removes the elephant and horse first) Gde9 7 Pxc10 Gd10 8 Pxc10 Gde9 9 Pg10 Gd10 10 Pf10 Gfe9 11 Pe10 :

10	.	.	.	:	P	:	.	.	.
9	.	.	.	:	g	k	.	H	.
8	.	.	.	:	g	:	:	.	.
7	.	.	.	:	.	.	.	.	.

K

11...Gf8 still allows 12 Hg7 mate, so Black must sacrifice a guard, after which Red will easily pick up Black's remaining guard and win by stalemate (for example, 11...Gd10 12 Pxd10 Ge9 13 Pe10 Gd8 14 Hf7 Kf8/Ge9 15 Hg6(+) Kf9/Gd8 16 Hh8+ Kf8 17 Hf7 etc).

Second diagram. After 1 Pc9+ Kd10 2 Pc10+ Kd9 3 Cf9 Black is again almost completely tied up :

10	.	.	P	:	:	g	e	.	.
9	.	.	.	:	k	:	C	.	.
8	.	.	.	:	g	:	:	.	e
7	.	.	.	:	.	.	.	.	.
6	.	.	.	:	.	.	p	.	.
5	.	.	.	:	.	.	.	.	.
4	.	.	.	:	.	.	P	.	.
3	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	.	.
2	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	.	.
1	.	.	.	:	K	:	.	.	.

His only legal move is 3...Pg5, after which we have 4 Pxc5 Eg6 (only legal) 5 Pxc6 Ei8 (only legal) 6 Ph6 Eg10 (only safe) 7 Ph7 Ei9 (only legal) 8 Ke2! Eg10 (only legal) 9 Ph8 Ei8 (only legal) 10 Pxi8 and wins by stalemate.

Third diagram. Black threatens ...Rh1+ with mate next move, so Red must do something drastic: 1 Rxf8+! The capture 1...Kxf8 is forced, and now the pawn can advance: 2 Pf7+ Kf9 (2...Ke8 3 Pf8+ Kd8 4 Rd3 mate) 3 Pf8+ Kf10 4 Pf9+ Ke10 5 Pf10+ Kd10 6 Pe10+ (not 6 Rd3+, when Black can interpose his cannon on d9) Kd9 7 Rd3 mate.

Plaid Chess (page 92). **Fourth diagram,** after e5, 7 Nc8 Nf3 Ng5 Nxf7 Nfd6 g3 Bh3; after e6, 7 exd5 h4 Rh3 Re3 Rxe6 Nc7 Nxb6. There may well be others.

Fifth diagram, 6 dxe4 exd3 Nf6 Ne4 dxc2 cxb1Q, showing how a promotion can occur in natural play even under grid rules.

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Our middle pages feature a game which apparently had a considerable vogue and then lapsed; David Potter's "Verve" is new, a "super-Kriegspiel" which exploits the computer's ability to act as a games board and show each player only what he can logically see. And there is a further look at Thai Chess, Plaid Chess, and much else.

A little-known book. From David Pritchard: "Little-known variants are one thing, little-known books on variants are another. Amongst the latter must be *En marge du jeu d'échecs* by Bruno Faidutti, published by Lille University in 1990 (don't trouble writing to Lille because they don't have any left). The book is described as a 'histoire de l'histoire du jeu d'échecs en Europe'. The text, which is illustrated, covers the period from the Alfonso ms to about 1900, although Capablanca chess earns a diagram. A few non-chess games get a mention, like hnefatafl, tablut and rythmomachia. The text is supported by an impressive 17-page bibliography."

BCVS NOTICES

Stop press. Sad news from Paul Byway of the early death of **Steve Boniface**, who took part in several of our 1990s Progressive tournaments (see VC 4/13/14/24). More next time.

VC publication dates. Publication of VC in February, May, August, and November has proved awkwardly close to the publication dates of my existing *British Endgame Study News*, and I have produced VC 49 and VC 50 to a 12-week schedule to move them gently apart. From the start of next year, VC will carry a nominal date of January, April, July, and October, publication being targeted for the 15th-20th of the month, and if an issue has not appeared by the end of the month it will be reasonable to write and enquire what has happened.

E-mails to Paul Byway. Paul's private address is out of service, and he is handling VC correspondence at his work address. It would not be appropriate to publicize this in VC, but I will forward e-mails to him, and if you have sent him a recent e-mail without reply please repeat it to me and I will ensure he receives it.

More quickies. David Pritchard's article in VC 49 prompted John Leslie to send this Hostage Chess game (see VC 46/48): 1 f4 e5 2 fxe5 Qh4+ 3 g3 Qe4 4 Nf3 Bc5 5 c3? Qxb1 6 Rxb1 (N-P)*f2 mate, and Herman Kok was presented with the following Circular Chess brevity at Lincoln (see VC 46): 1 b3 c5 2 d3 a6 3 Bd2 Nh6?? 4 Ba5+ and mate. At Zaitsev's Superchess (page 87), can anyone beat 1 f3 e6 2 Kf2 h7-g6 3 Kg3 Qh4?

CALENDAR

Nothing is to hand as at press date, but I imagine the usual **Circular Chess "Chrimbo Challenge"** will be held in Lincoln during January, and I will pass on details when I have them.

Notices for VC 51 should reach me by **December 1**, though later notices will be fitted in if practicable.

Administrative factors reduced this year's **Circular Chess** championship to four rounds, and when Francis Bowers had to concede a draw in Round 1 everyone thought it would be 2000 champion Herman Kok's turn again; but a raiding party from South Lincolnshire included an unknown 19-year-old in Michael Jones, who proceeded to beat Herman when they met in the last round. Dave Stamp took another half point off Francis to come second, and several of us shared third place. Sadly, no game I watched or played in justified quotation in a full-length article, but one of Herman's wins appears alongside.

3D Chess. Further to last time's article about David Beatty's Total Chess, Fred Galvin asks "An idle question about 3D chess: has anyone ever tried playing 3D with double moves? Offhand the idea seems to make sense, because with double moves a rook could control a plane, just as it controls a rank or file in normal chess." Yes, it makes sense, and something like it has indeed been done; see Wayne Schmittberger's Three-Dimensional Hook Move Chess (page 310 in the *Encyclopedia of Chess Variants*). This isn't quite the same, but the idea is similar.

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