

Variant Chess

THE MAGAZINE TO BROADEN YOUR CHESS HORIZONS

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Moderato

VOICE

A - mong the rocks and
Ich hört' ein Bäch - lein

PIANO

mp

6 6

hea - ther I..... heard a ti - ny.... rill; It.....
rau - schen wohl aus dem Fel - sen - quell, hin -

spar - kled in the sun - light, And prat - tled down the....
- ab zum Tha - le rau - schen, so.... frisch und wun - der -

hill. I know not how it drew me, I
- hell. Ich weiss nicht wie mir wur - de, nicht



Winning the Miller's Daughter

Opening play in XiangQi

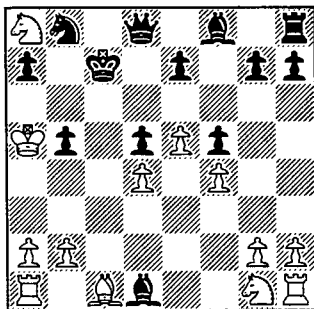
Substitution Chess

PROGRESSIVE CHESS : THE "ITALIAN MATE"

The English (formerly British) Chess Federation's monthly *Chess Moves* accompanied its obituary for David with an article on chess variants which he had submitted well over a year before, and among the examples was a Progressive game ending in an "Italian mate" (the defender could escape check only by giving check, and since the giving of check before the last move of a turn was prohibited under Italian rules this counted as mate). This caused a reader of *Chess Moves* to send me an e-mail asking what was going on, and I don't think he was too impressed with the explanation. I am aware that David and several other expert players have liked the Italian rule, perhaps because it allows the production of elegant and spectacular finishes without the need to check out the uninteresting mopping-up lines that have to follow under traditional rules, but from the point of view of encouraging people to try the game it appears wholly undesirable. Tell a mainstream chess player new to Progressive that giving check before the end of a sequence terminates it, and he will say Yes, this is sensible and reasonable; tell him that such a move is artificially prohibited, and he will look at you as if you were mad.

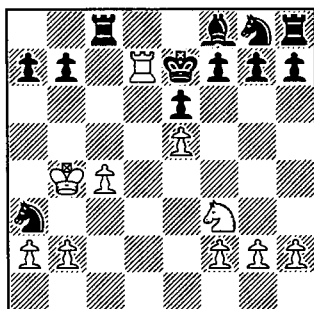
And - surely a key question - how many games ending in "Italian mate" would still have been won for the same player even under traditional rules? To throw a little light on this, I have examined all the "Italian mate" games I could quickly and easily find in VC, and a list appears opposite. I merely looked up "Progressive Chess" in the indexes and then looked for the words "Italian mate" in the text, so it is possible that there have been cases I have overlooked, but I hope I have included the great majority.

The first was a game Dipilato - Leoncini quoted by David in VC 3: **1 d4 2 Nf6 d5 3 e4 e5 Bb5+ 4 c6 Ne4 Kd7 cxb5 5 Nc3 Nxe4 Ke2 f4 Nc5+ 6 Kc7 Bf5 Bxc2 f5 b6 Bxd1+ 7 Kd2 Kc3 Kb4 Na4 Nxb6 Ka5 Nxa8!** (David's exclamation mark) :

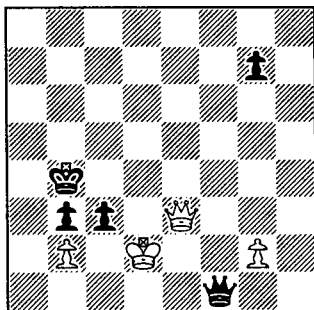


It was indeed a pretty way to win a game, but no "Italian rule" was needed to make it possible; White will have nine moves at his next turn, and each of Black's four king moves can be met by a mate in eight at most.

This appears typical, and there seem to be only two games in the list where the "Italian rule" allowed the victor to claim a win that might not have been his under traditional rules (I have not considered the possibility that he might have had an alternative win earlier in the play). These were Boniface - Archer, which ended

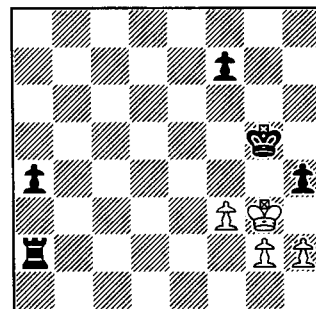


and Kxd7+ appears to leave no mate in 9, and Dipilato - Cassano, where the final position was



and Qxc3+ would leave Black unable to do anything useful in less than 17 or so. In all the rest, the winner would have had a mate next turn anyway, and in only two cases would he even have needed his full quota of moves.

There was also the curious case of Richardson - Tolonen (VC 13 page 71), which ended with this position



and White resigned thinking he was being forced to check prematurely (which indeed he was, but after Kh3 he would no longer be in check himself, so his lack of a legal move later in his turn would be "Italian stalemate" rather than "Italian mate" and the result should have been a draw - see the discussion in VC 18, page 179, and VC 19, pages 193-4). In fairness to the rule, however, Black was merely showboating, and he had other ways to win.

There was much discussion of the "Italian rule" in the early days of VC (see for example VC 1 page 11, VC 3 page 36, and VC 4 page 47), and among the arguments put forward was the pragmatic and sensible one that the Italians were at the time the leading players and the tournaments organized by them used the rule, so we should get used to it even if we disliked it. That argument now seems less applicable, and the argument that most of the games in the published database were played under the rule is relevant only in the relatively few cases where the result would have been different under traditional rules. VC is published for a society, it is not my private fiefdom, and if readers consider that there are arguments in the rule's favour that I have not given I shall be happy to print them next time; but the rule is an unnatural and artificial one, and I would advise anyone mounting a tournament now, and hoping to attract players who have not tried the game before, to revert to the natural and traditional rule and to save himself a lot of complicated and unconvincing explanation.

| Issue of VC | Pages | Players | "Italian mate" announced in | Legal replies under traditional rules | Mate next turn available in at most |
|-------------|---------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 3 | 36 | Dipilato - Leoncini | 7 | 4 | 8 |
| 9/15 | 8/97 | Castelli - Novak | 7 | 1 | 8 |
| 9 | 9 | Donovan - Rallo | 8 | 1 | 6 |
| 13 | 71 | Boniface - Archer | 7 | 2 | - |
| 21 | 7 | Byway - Jelliss | 7 | 3 | 6 |
| 24 | 67-68 | Boniface - Wood | 8 | 3 | 8 |
| 24 | 68 | Coast - Wood | 8 | 1 | 7 |
| 29 | 4/16 | Byway - Pritchard | 7 | 4 | 9 |
| 29 | 4/16 | Byway - Tremaine | 5 | 1 | 5 |
| 31/32 | 43/61 | Beasley - Byway | 6 | 1 | 6 |
| 32/33 | 61/11 | Crasto - Gatto | 8 | 1 | 4 |
| 36/37 | 69/86 | Mapelli - Dipilato | 10 | 3 | 7 |
| 37/38 | 86/102 | Cesaro - Viola | 8 | 1 | 6 |
| 39/40 | 117/131 | Gadzinsky - Gadzinskaya | 8 | 1 | 8 |
| 41/42 | 12/30 | Dipilato - Cassano | 10 | 2 | - |
| 43/44 | 45/63 | Manzini - Caressa | 9 | 1 | 11 |
| 44/45 | 63/14 | Cesaro - Salvadori | 9 | 1 | 9 |
| 44/45 | 63/14 | Cassano - Hammarstrom | 9 | 1 | 8 |

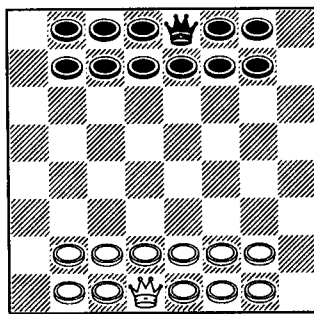
Progressive Chess : Games ending in "Italian mate" quoted in VC 1-51 (please report any errors or omissions)

WINNING THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER

In the days before everything in the countryside was done at the behest of multinational combines, the miller and his daughter were leading figures in rural society. The miller was a monopoly provider of an essential service, and even when honest he could hardly help becoming wealthy; the daughter was universally declared in legend and song to be of surpassing beauty (which may sometimes have been a tactful way of saying that she was not so utterly repulsive as to outweigh the lure of the parental riches). Andrew Perkis has translated this eternal scenario into chess terms, and he has produced what seems to me to be one of the more amusing of the "themed" forms of chess. Each player has a Miller's Daughter and eleven Princes, the pieces have step moves as chess kings and jump moves as in Halma, and there is something rather pleasant in the thought of a group of princes frantically clambering over each other in order to get their hands on a baseborn but wealthy young lady.

The game is played on an 8x8 board and an ordinary chessboard may

of course be used, but the board in the diagram sent to me by Andrew has its squares attractively coloured cream-brown-cream-brown and grey-pink-grey-pink in alternate rows. The initial array is as shown below :



and the moves are as follows.

(a) Step moves. Any piece, prince or MD, may move one step in any direction, orthogonally or diagonally (i.e. as a chess king).

(b) Jump moves. Any piece may jump an adjacent piece of either colour, orthogonally or diagonally, and sequences of jumps are allowed, but in the case of a prince the overall effect must be to move the man towards the opponent's back line (though horizontal or even backward jumps may be made along the way). This restriction does not apply to jumps of the MD. In the initial array, White's MD can jump d1-f3-h1;

d1 now being free, the prince at f1 can jump f1-d1-b3 next move (or even f1-d3-d1-b3 if desired), but it cannot jump f1-d1 and remain at d1.

Additionally, an MD must always have a "liberty", namely an empty square to which she has a step move. The player's first move must give her this liberty, and each later move must preserve it or give another in its place.

A prince cannot be captured; an MD can, by moving a prince to her square, and this is the normal way of winning the game. In addition, a player can win by surrounding his MD with a fortress which the opponent can never penetrate (which to a chess player is a curious way of winning, but has apparently been prompted by Andrew's work on Halma variants), and he can draw by moving his MD to a square adjacent to the opponent's MD (when they declare an "alliance" and presumably abjure men for ever, no doubt to the great inconvenience of the local corn growers). In the absence of a fortress, a threefold repetition of position is a draw.

The game is a recent development and examples of play are as yet few, but it strikes me as amusingly simple and as having features which appear novel. Andrew can be contacted as <harwoodperkis@onetel.com> if you want to find out more.

AN INTRODUCTION TO XIANGQI OPENINGS

by Paul Byway

Editor's introduction. Our recent articles on cannon, horse, and pawn play in XiangQi have introduced some of the piece-by-piece subtleties of the game, and the next stage is to look at some examples of competent play in the opening. The first time I played myself, I cheerfully opened e4-e5 thinking to gain space in the centre just as I would in any other game, and at XiangQi this move is disastrous; the man at e5 cannot be defended, my opponent played Cb8-e8 to knock it off, and I had a lost game right from the start. I have therefore invited Paul, as the most experienced player in the present VC team, to write something on elementary sound opening play, and I am delighted that he has been able to do so.

A brief reminder of the rules. Opening array:

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 10 | r | h | e | g | k | g | e | h | r |
| 9 | . | . | . | : | : | : | . | . | . |
| 8 | . | c | . | : | : | : | . | c | . |
| 7 | p | . | p | . | p | . | p | . | p |
| 6 | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . |
| 5 | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . |
| 4 | <u>P</u> | <u>P</u> | <u>P</u> | <u>P</u> | <u>P</u> | <u>P</u> | <u>P</u> | <u>P</u> | <u>P</u> |
| 3 | . | <u>C</u> | . | : | : | : | . | <u>C</u> | . |
| 2 | . | . | . | : | : | : | . | . | . |
| 1 | <u>R</u> | <u>H</u> | <u>E</u> | <u>G</u> | <u>K</u> | <u>G</u> | <u>E</u> | <u>H</u> | <u>R</u> |
| | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | h | i |

King moves one step horizontally or vertically (not diagonally), and is confined to the palace; guard one step diagonally, confined to the palace; elephant two steps diagonally (no jumping), confined to its own half of the board; horse one step vertically or horizontally and then one diagonally (i.e. as knight but without jumping); rook as in our chess; cannon as rook, but can capture only if there is one man between it and its victim; pawn one step forward in its own half of the board (there is a "river" across the centre), one step forward or sideways in its opponent's half, and captures

with its normal move. The players are Red and Black; stalemate is a win; perpetual check is not allowed; the kings may not face each other on a file with no intervening man. For present purposes, I have translated to standard VC algebraic notation, but a leaflet giving the Chinese descriptive notation is available for readers who are tempted to explore the books and web sites recommended (the Chinese number the files 1-9 from right to left as seen by the player making the move, so the opening "5,7 Cannons" puts Red's cannons on the e and c files). Now over to Paul. - JDB

When it was suggested to me that I might write on this topic I readily agreed - for I have been thinking about it for some time and there is undoubtedly a shortage of useful information in English. The subject is extensive and I expect to return to it at intervals; therefore I shall begin in a leisurely fashion with some remarks of a general nature. After that we will move straight away to an overview of the 5,7-Cannons - a sound and popular mainstream opening.

There are some competent elementary introductions available in English, but the content is usually slight. An exception is *Chinese Chess* by H. T. Lau which is widely available. This is valuable as a source of data - but the reader needs to work at it. For instance in the end games it's not always clear whether you're looking at a general result or the sole exception to it. The games should not be relied upon as examples of modern opening theory; they were probably synthesised with a view to showing sacrifices and sparkling mates.

Eventually I did come across literature that was directly comparable to the stuff familiar to a serious player of international chess - some of it even in English. David Woo of *The Chinese Chess Institute* did us a great service by making available modern Grandmaster games from recent tournaments with commentary in English; regrettably I believe he has ceased operations. Worth looking up on the internet are German and Canadian sites. A recent and first rate acquisition of mine is *Deceptive Play*

in Xiangqi Openings and Counter-measures, published by the Asian Xiangqi Federation and the Chinese Xiangqi Association. I can't speak highly enough of this booklet - but we need two dozen more of this sort for comprehensive coverage. A second layer of translation into more idiomatic English would be useful.

It is now time to look at our first opening and I can assure you that the annotations are by modern master players and can be relied on. As we all lack a wide and deep background in Chinese Chess the student will need to work hard, gleaning information even from what is not said and the moves that are not made. I play the following opening myself and I chose it partly because it is possible to develop all the pieces without understanding the subtleties of pawn play.

5,7 Cannons

1 Ch3-e3 Hh10-g8

Here the alternative for Black is to counterattack with the *Same Direction Cannons* variation (SDC) ...Ch8-e8.

2 Hh1-g3 Hb10-c8

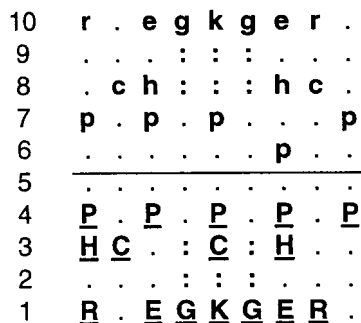
| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 10 | r | . | e | g | k | g | e | . | r |
| 9 | . | . | . | : | : | : | . | . | . |
| 8 | . | c | h | : | : | : | h | c | . |
| 7 | p | . | p | . | p | . | p | . | p |
| 6 | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . |
| 5 | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . |
| 4 | <u>P</u> | <u>P</u> | <u>P</u> | <u>P</u> | <u>P</u> | <u>P</u> | <u>P</u> | <u>P</u> | <u>P</u> |
| 3 | . | <u>C</u> | . | : | <u>C</u> | : | <u>H</u> | . | . |
| 2 | . | . | . | : | : | : | . | . | . |
| 1 | <u>R</u> | <u>H</u> | <u>E</u> | <u>G</u> | <u>K</u> | <u>G</u> | <u>E</u> | . | <u>R</u> |

The *Central Horses (or Screening Horses) Defence* is generally agreed to be Black's soundest choice; each horse is defended and the central pawn is defended twice. This is an important point because breakthrough on the central file is a major theme for Red. With experience comes a realisation that the horses can be played in either order. Each choice leaves a range of other defences available.

3 Hb1-a3 Ri10-h10

4 Ri1-h1 Pg7-g6

It's probably more common for Red to play the rook first - with another range of options. Horse to the edge leaves plenty of options for the left cannon and is very common. Partly this has to do with structure. In xiangqi there is no static structure in the chess sense, but the position can be stabilised by dynamic links. Here the Ha3 defends Pc4 and prevents a killer H check at c2; after Pa5 the H will advance via b5. The H is defended by Ec1 which can later be linked to Ee3 after a central cannon move; this allows a left side cannon to defend Hg3 which in turn defends Pe4 and Pi4 as well as a rook or cannon penetration to h1. The Ee3 will also support the typical pawn advance Pc5 or Pg5. The elephants and guards, after Gde2 or Gfe2, form the 'castled' position for the king. This is the delicate network which makes sense of **3 Ha3**. And what do we do with the rooks? After **3 Rh1** Red often plays to the opponent's pawn rank with the aggressive Rh7 (*cross river rook*). A more positional approach is to play Rh5 (*riverbank rook*) which can support a pawn advance, particularly Pa5, Hb5. The left hand rook, after Ra2, can cover the entry points on the second rank, and deploy to the d or f file. It's perhaps worth discussing two points about the Black side which frequently arise. (1) He can easily win a pawn with ...Ca8, ...Cxa4 but it's not worth it. The cannon ends up in a *cul-de-sac* and Red gains valuable tempi. As far as pawns go, life is cheap in Xiangqi; don't do it! (2) Black can challenge and offer a rook exchange on the file with Ci8; he *never* does so until Red has potentially wasted a tempo with Rh5 or Rh7 - but after the Red rook move it's a standard play.

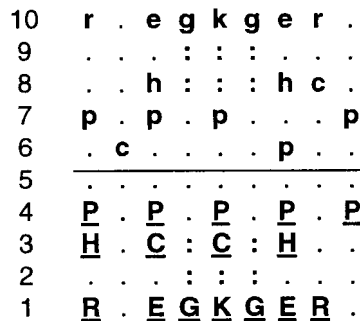


With his last move Black restricts

Red's horse and opens a path for his own. Against Red Hc3 Black could also have chosen Pc6 - but here it is not effective. Commonly such a pawn move is answered by the opponent: Pc6 by Pg5 and Pg6 by Pc5 in order that one horse, at least, will have an outlet. Here Red has other plans. In later articles we will meet a wider range of openings and generally the older steadier openings involve Red Pg5, whereas the more modern, aggressive openings feature Red Pc5.

5 Cb3-c3 Cb8-b6

Red intends Rb1 developing his other rook to the open file; Black counters with the threat of Hh6, advancing the horse, activating his left cannon and driving the Red rook off the file. An alternative for Black is ...Rb10 ; Rb1 and now Black plays ...Cb4 or ...Ch4. "Both lines will lead to complicated offensive and defensive lines". *From now on double quotes will indicate master commentary.*



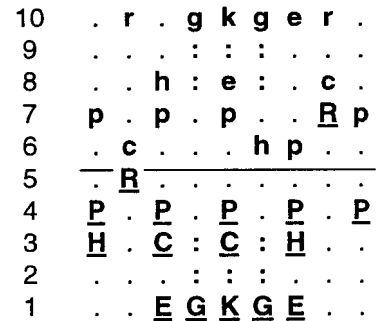
6 Rh1-h7 Hg8-f6

Red's intended move to the river bank is no longer good, and he moves to the opponent's pawn rank instead. This in turn threatens to blockade Black's left hand horse, which advances while it has the chance. You should be clear that if there is a threat now it is ...Pg5 and *not* ...Nxg4.

**7 Ra1-b1 Ra10-b10
8 Rb1-b5 Ec10-e8**

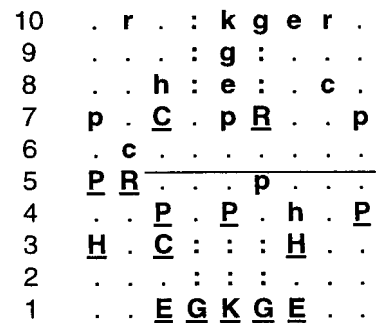
Red activates his rook and Black strengthens his defence (*diagram at top of next column*). Our master commentator now considers 9 Cxc7 but says "the more safe and stable play is Pa5". Red should continue the

attack only after the left hand rook is defended. Robert Lin in his book gives the line:



**9 Pa4-a5 Gd10-e9
10 Cc3xc7 Pg6-g5
11 Rh7-f7 Hf6xg4
12 Ce3-c3 Pg5-f5!**

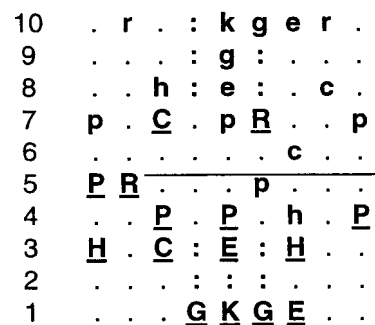
Red moves the cannon away to leave the horse stranded. On c3 it defends the forward cannon and puts pressure on the Hc8.



Now Rbxf5 loses the exchange and if Rfxf5 Cg8 ; Ece3 (Rg5? Cg6!) Cbg6 Black has good counterattacking chances.

13 Ec1-e3 Cb6-g6

with counterattack and tremendous complications.



On the next page, we shall look at what might follow 9 Cxc7.

We now return to the diagram at the top of the previous column, and consider the alternative move 9 Cxc7.

```

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

9 Cc3xc7 Pg6-g5
10 Rh7-f7 Hf6xg4

Now 11 Cec3 loses a rook to ...Ce6+ and after 11 Rxg5 Hxe3 12 Egxe3 Rb7 13 Cc5 Ch2 Black is better.

```

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

11 Ce3-e2 Ch8-h3

An aggressive move. It is sounder for Black to play ...Rb7 12 Rxg5 Rxc7 13 Rxg4 Ch3 with a favourable position.

12 Rb5xg5 Ch3xa3
13 Ec1xa3 Cb6-b1
14 Ea3-c1

```

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

Now Black's horse is trapped, but he has an attack thanks to his cannon on the bottom rank. There are two variations.

(A) 14...Rb3? 15 Rxg4 Rd3 16 Cxe7+ Hxe7 17 Gfe2 Rd2:

```

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

18 Kf1! (Black is still playing for attack. If 18 Rxe7? Rh2 19 Kf1 Rhxe2! 20 Hxe2 Rxd1+ 21 Kf2 Rf1 mate) Gde9 19 Rxe7 Rh2 20 Rf7 Rhxe2 (desperate; if ...Kd10 22 Ce5 with a winning material advantage) 21 Rxf10+! Gxf10 22 Ce7+ Kd10 23 Cxe2 Rxd1+ 24 Kf2 and Red should win, having the material advantage.

```

10 . . . k : g e . .
9 . . . : : : . . .
8 . . . : e : . . .
7 p . . . . . . p
6 . . . . . . . .
5 . . . . . . . .
4 P . P . P . R . P
3 . . . : : : H . .
2 . . . : C K : . .
1 . . c E r : : E . .
    
```

(B) 14...Rb4! 15 Rh7! (the only move, otherwise Red will lose quickly) Rxh7 16 Cxh7 Rxc4 17 Rxg4 Rxc1 18 Ci2 Hb6.

"Now, the position has become more complicated, in which Red has the material advantage while Black has superiority in his offensive."

```

10 . . . g k g e . .
9 . . . : : : . . .
8 . . . : e : . . .
7 p . . p . . C p
6 . h . . . . . .
5 . . . . . . . .
4 P . . P . R . P
3 . . . : : : H . .
2 . . . : : : : C
1 . . c r G K G E . .
    
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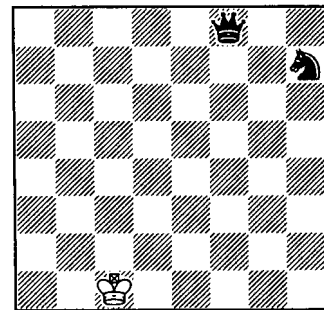
Wow! I'd hate to play these positions. The moral is to stick with 9 Pa5 I think.

LOSING CHESS

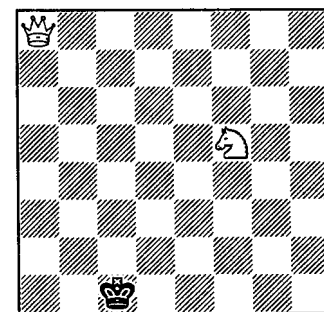
We only have room for one column this time, so let's have a look at some simple endings.

Q+N v K is usually a draw, but either side can win if the opponent is badly placed. 1 and 3 came to light in the course of an exhaustive analysis by computer, but I think they can fairly be set for solution by hand (in 1, don't let the knight leave the edge; 2 was a pre-computer discovery by Fabrice Liardet (he used it as a target position in a study in VC 26). K v N is normally a win for the king, so sacrificing the queen loses unless the knight can go too. All are White to play and win; answers on page 127.

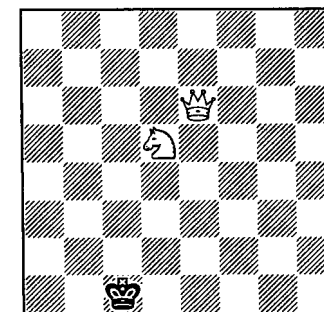
1 - JDB by computer (1998)



2 - Fabrice Liardet (1997)



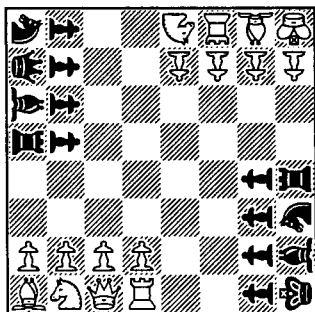
3 - JDB by computer (1998/9)



EXCAVATIONS

Chatty Chess (Ian Richardson).

When I was going through David Pritchard's files in November, one game which struck me as unusually interesting was Ian Richardson's "Chatty Chess". This was described by Ian in VC 1, but I think it bears a return visit. The partnership game most widely played at present is the two-board game "Bughouse", but numerous single-board games have been invented over the centuries, and most seem to have four properties: (a) the board is much larger than normal, typically having a three-rank extension on each side; (b) the object of play is to mate or capture both the opposing kings, so there is a need for a rule to determine what happens to the remaining men of a player whose king has fallen; (c) partners sit exactly opposite each other; (d) promotion is therefore somewhat unsatisfactory, the options being to have it either on partner's back rank (so losing the element of penetration of enemy territory), or on an opponent's back rank (which is possible only by capturing since the normal pawn move is parallel to this rank), or not at all. Ian's "Chatty Chess" is different in all respects. It uses an ordinary board and men; only one partner has a king, the other having a queen instead, so one mate is sufficient; partners sit offset from each other, not exactly opposite; and each player's initial array occupies only four files, so the natural advance of his pawns takes him into the territory of one of his opponents. A possible starting array is shown below :



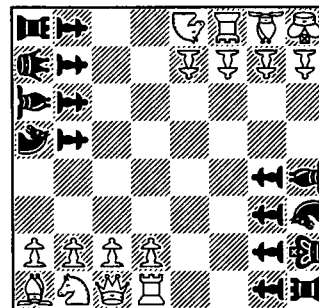
I call this a "possible" array because

there is no fixed rule; White's attacker (with the queen) places his men first, then Black's attacker, then White's defender (there is no requirement that the bishops be on different colours), and finally Black's. Play then proceeds in the same order. There is no pawn-two and no castling, and a pawn may not stray into its partner's half of the board (White cannot play dxe or exd, Black cannot play 4x5 or 5x4). For the first four moves, each player must move his own men except to get out of check; after this, a player may move any man of his own colour. The name "Chatty Chess" derives from the Chaturanga-like layout and from the element of communication between the partners, and Ian suggests a gentle formalization of this in VC 1. It is rather different from the rule in force during Fabrice Liardet's Bughouse meeting at Genève in 2000: "All forms of communication between partners are permitted, the noisier the better" (my translation).

In the sample game in VC 1, repeated in the *Encyclopedia*, White's defender appears to blunder the e7 pawn in the opening, and its removal overloads the g-pawn and lets Black smash in with a rook sacrifice at move 3 - when did you see this at any other form of chess? What might happen without such a blunder is difficult to say. My first thought was that Black had a distinct advantage since his attacker's pawns could advance on White's king without compromising the safety of his own king, but this will take a little time, and if White's attacker sets his men as shown he has at least a temporary initiative: if Black puts his king as in the diagram and does not set a knight or bishop to guard g1, White will have a mate with his first move.

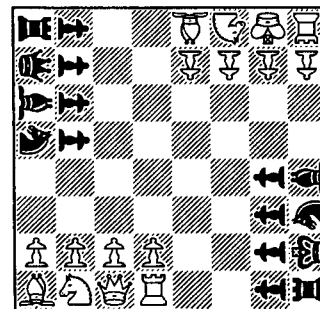
Yet I wonder. Ian makes the point that White's a-pawn and Black's 1-pawn will become distant passed pawns in the ending, since the enemy pawns cannot step backwards and interfere, and cannot these and the other two passed pawns be exploited even in the middle game? Suppose Black puts his rooks on the corner squares, using them to support his own passed pawns instead of attacking his opponent's. I have in mind an

array something like this :



The advance of Black's 1-pawn will force White to assign at least one man to long-term blockade duty, and after the pawn has advanced to e1 the rook may be able to move to f1 and boost the attack on White's "K-side" while still supporting the 1-pawn. In the meantime, the advance of the 8-pawn will directly attack White's king.

All right, sauce for the gander. Cannot White choose the same set-up for his king's quarter?



Yes, he can. But now, anything White can do on the h-file, Black can still do on the 8-rank, and Black can do it first; furthermore, Black's queen can move to the 8-rank in one, whereas White's queen is not so easily able to reach the h-file.

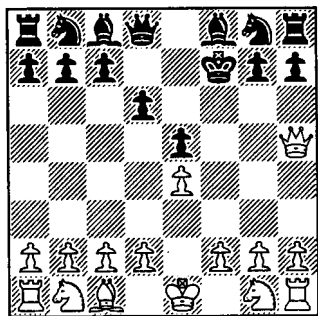
All this is conjecture, and perhaps misguided conjecture. What most impressed me on playing through the sample game was the way in which the two partners could combine to exploit any blunder and create a smashing attack. It's a little difficult to say why this is, but in the early "move only your own men" phase the two partners can combine against a particular opponent, perhaps the defender, and he has only one move to their two. I think Ian was on to something here, and I am sure it deserves further investigation.

SUBSTITUTION CHESS

material from Fabrice Liardet

This is Fabrice's "Ambiguous Chess" as described in VC 49, with a slightly simplified mode of play. In the game as originally specified, a player pointed at the square he wished to move to, and if two or more men were able to play to this square his opponent chose which of them should do so. In the revised version, originally formulated to allow play with clocks though it is applicable in all circumstances, the player makes a normal move and hits his clock, and if his opponent wishes he may substitute some other move which would physically have ended on the same square (for example, if White opens 1 Nf3 Black can substitute f2-f3, and if a player promotes his opponent can substitute a promotion to something else). He does this in his own clock time, and before making his own move. But the key word is *physically*. As we shall see, a player is allowed to substitute a move that will leave his opponent's king open to capture, thereby winning at once, and it is in this that the special flavour of the game resides.

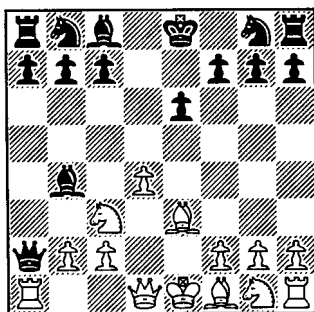
Fabrice gives two simple examples on his web site <www.pion.ch>. The first goes 1 e4 (this must be accepted since no substitution is possible) e5 (ditto) 2 Bc4 (Black could substitute c2-c4, but White's knight would then be able to play to c3 without allowing the substitution of c2-c3 whereas now Black can keep it at home) d6?? (but this is fatal) 3 Bxf7+! Kxf7 4 Qh5 and Black's king cannot escape :



He can try say 4...Ke6, but White will substitute 4...Be6 and then take

the king; he can try 4...g6, but White will substitute 4...Kg6.

Fabrice's second example goes 1 e4 d5 2 exd5 Qxd5 (threatening mate by Qe4, the interposition of Q/B/N on e2 being impossible since Black will substitute Ke2 instead) 3 d4 (now 3...Qe4+ can be met by 4 Be3) e6 (White would have done better to substitute 3...Be6) 4 Be3 (preventing check from e4, but there is another check which is even more dangerous) Bb4+ 5 Nc3 (Nc3 and c2-c3 are the only moves that do not let Black substitute something leaving the king en prise, and Black prefers to let the knight move stand for reasons we are about to see) Qxa2! :



The queen cannot be taken, because if White tries Rxa2 Black will substitute Nxa2, nor can White defend b2 (Q/Bc1 will be met by substituting Rc1, Rb1 by substituting Nb1). So Black will play 6...Qxb2 threatening mate by 7...Q/Bxc3, and White will have nothing but a few delaying moves such as 7 Ra3.

George Jelliss, David Sedgwick, and I tried the game out in its original form after the AGM last year, but the results said more about our inexperience than about the game itself. Fabrice gives some advice from which we could have benefitted (my translations).

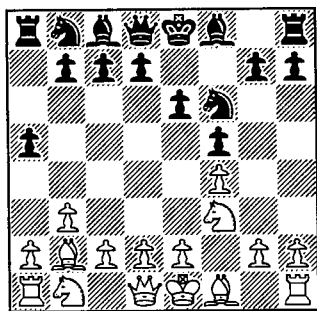
- "As you might imagine, it is usually best to play moves for which no substitution is possible; except in the case of a capture, it is rare for all the moves ending on a given square to be useful."
- "Checks in the opening are very dangerous, and it can be a good idea to prepare a flight square to which the king alone has access, for example the square f2. A check

should not be parried by interposition unless the resulting pin can be quickly liquidated. A pinned piece is a gross weakness; as we saw in the second example above, it effectively prevents a friendly man from coming to any of the squares it commands."

- "An important difference from ordinary chess is that it is not only pawn moves that are likely to be irreversible. This can be a potent source of blunders. For example, a move by the queen which would be quite safe at ordinary chess may well expose her to danger here, because she cannot claim the right to retreat to d8 as long as the king also has access to that square."
- "Another difference concerns local battles between a single piece and a group of pieces. The pieces in the group often tend to get in each other's way, and this favours the lone piece. Commando raids by single pieces are therefore to be taken very seriously, whereas in ordinary chess they are generally doomed to failure."
- "Forcing the advance of a passed pawn is much more difficult than in ordinary chess. Such a pawn can be effectively supported only by a rook or queen pushing from behind; if another piece tries to control the square in front of it, the pawn's advance will become impossible because the opponent will be able to make the piece move instead. And even with a rook behind it, a passed pawn is easily blockaded by a piece (if the blockader is attacked, it simply retreats, and again the pawn's advance will be open to substitution). As a result, an isolated passed pawn is of little danger, whereas two united passed pawns remain very strong."
- "Finally, knights on their home squares are often difficult to get out, and they seem of little value in the end game. It may therefore be a good idea to send them on commando raids early in the game. The opening 1 f4, 2 Nf3 is surely one of the best, developing a knight and at the same time giving the king a flight square."

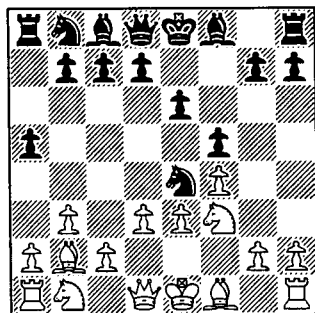
When I was writing this article, Fabrice had eight specimen games on his web site, but he and his opponents were still feeling their way and I am now rather less dispirited about our own performance. If even a game's inventor can sometimes overlook things, perhaps the rest of us should not be too disheartened. I am therefore refraining from giving complete games, and am concentrating on some instructive moments.

The first was a win by Fabrice in a "partie libre", which I take to have been an offhand game without clocks. The opening moves **1 b3 f5 2 f4 Nf6 3 Nf3 e6 4 Bb2** seem innocuous enough, but I have my doubts about **4...a5** :



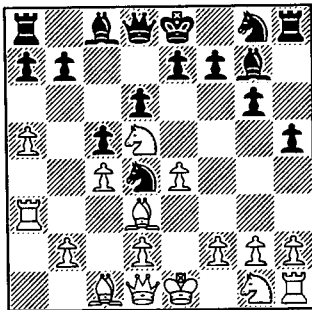
As White, I think I would try **5 Bxf6** here. He can demand **5...gxf6** in reply (if **5...Be7??** he simply puts the king there instead), and Black's K-side has been significantly weakened. There is nothing like a forced win and I think Fabrice is not entirely convinced, but I think I would give it a try at least once.

Back to the game. The actual continuation was **5 e3 Ne4**, and now **6 d3?** lost the queen :

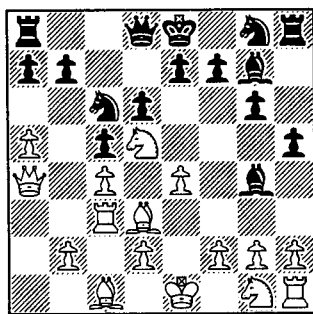


Black simply plays **6...Bb4+ 7 Nc3 Bxc3+ 8 Bxc3 Nxc3**, and wherever the queen tries to run he can substitute a move by something else.

In the next example, a ten-minute game with clocks, Fabrice had Black against Laurent Bartholdi, and has just played **8...h5!** threatening **...Bg4** :

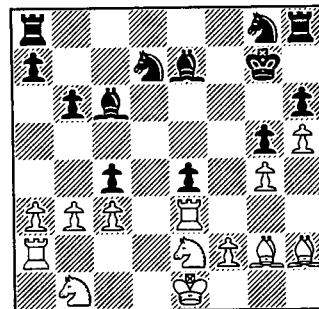


9 Rc3? "Letting this move stand was a gross error by Black, who failed to see what White had in mind. He should have substituted **9 Nc3**, after which **9...Bg4** would indeed have won the queen." **9...Bg4?** "Black presses blindly ahead with his plan. **9...Qxa5?** at once was bad on account of **10 Ra3! Bg4** (the Black queen has no square) **11 Rxa5 Bxd1 12 Nc7+**, but he could have played **9...Nf3+ 10 Qxf3 Bxc3 11 Nxc3 Bg4 12 Qe3 Qxa5!** followed by **13...Qa1 14 Nb1** with a position far from clear." **10 Qa4+ Nc6?** "**10...Nb5! 11 cxb5 Bxc3 12 bxc3 Kf8!** and Black has lost a trifle of material but is still alive."

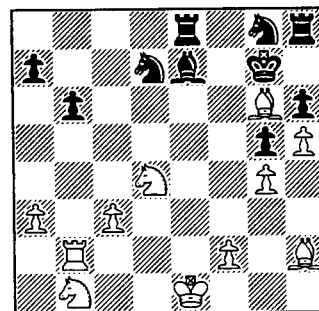


Fabrice describes White's next move as "crushing"; answer on page 127.

No queens in our third example (diagram at top of next column), won by Matthias Carno, but in this game very few men are needed to embarrass an enemy king. Black has just played **23...c4?** to smash up White's Q-side pawns, but any advantage this might have brought is outweighed by its concession of d4 to the White knight. Black's actual **24 b4** won comfortably enough, but even stronger would have

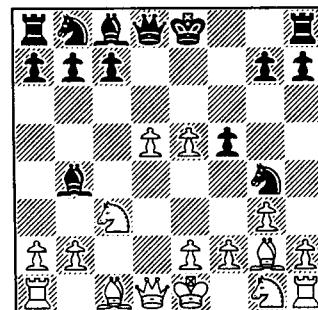


been **24 Nd4 cxb3 25 Rb2 Bd5 26 Rxe4! Bxe4 27 Bxe4 Re8 28 Bg6** :



This threatens **29 Ne6#**, and Black "certainly won't make old bones" (it seems that the idiom is the same).

After I had gone through the games on the web site, I looked again at our own, and David Sedgwick's game against myself had its moments. **1 d4 d5 2 c4 f5 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 cxd5 e5** (when playing a game familiar neither to myself nor to my opponent, I tend to regard quick development as well worth a pawn or two) **5 dxe5 Ng4** (threat **6...Nxf2** and if **7 Kxf2** then **7...Qh4#**) **6 g3 Bb4 7 Bg2** :



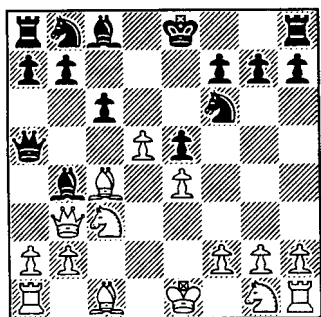
An immediate **7...Nxf2 8 Kxf2 Bc5** fails because White can substitute **8...c5**, but I played **7...Nc6** to threaten it, and after various vicissitudes we eventually agreed a draw at move 50. However, I think Black had something better; answer on page 127.

EXTINCTION CHESS

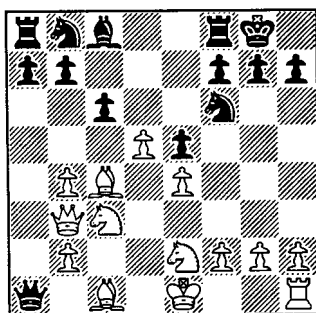
material from Fabrice Liardet

A game from the popular BrainKing web site <<http://brainking.com>>. The objective in Extinction Chess is to capture all the opponent's men of a particular kind: the king, or the queen, or both rooks, or bishops, or knights, or (at least in theory) all eight pawns. The king has no special significance, and the symbol "+" denotes any threat to capture the last man of a kind.

White **Jonathan Perron**, Black **Fabrice Liardet**, by correspondence. Notes by Fabrice, my translations. **1 d2-d4 d7-d5 2 c2-c4**. One of the nice things about Extinction is that most of the normal openings remain playable, subject of course to the taking of a little extra care... **2...d5xc4?!** But here we see an opening which doesn't seem too appropriate. **2...e5!?** is a more adventurous possibility, which seems well suited to Extinction; **3 dxe5?! d4** gives Black an advantage in space and seems good, a pawn behind being of little importance in this game. A slightly more solid variation is **2...e6**. **3 e2-e4 e7-e5 4 d4-d5!** Although rather an insipid move at ordinary chess, this is excellent at Extinction; it gives White an advantage in space (in particular to the queen, who absolutely must become active), and if Black tries the normal counter ...c6 he weakens his Q-side. We shall see just this in the game. **4...Ng8-f6 5 Nb1-c3 c7-c6** Dangerous, but what else can Black play to give his queen some scope? **5...b5!?** is an interesting pawn sacrifice, but after **6 Nxb5 c6 7 Nc3** it seems that White still has the edge. **6 Bf1xc4 Bf8-b4 7 Qd1-b3 Qd8-a5 :**

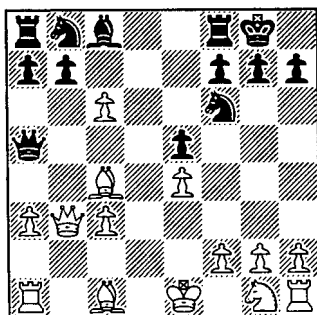


8 a2-a3! An immediate attack by **8 dxc6?! Nxc6 9 Bxf7+** achieves nothing: **9...Ke7 10 Bg5? Nd4+ 11 Qc4 b5+! 12 Qd3 Kxf7** and Black is a safe piece up (but not **11...Nc2+?** **12 Kd1 Nxa1 13 Nd5+! Kxf7 14 Nxb4#**). **8...Bb4xc3+**. A difficult decision. It is tempting to embark on the line **8...0-0?! 9 axb4+ Qxa1 10 Nge2**, with a lasting pin on the bottom rank (if the king moves off the line, the rook will become vulnerable instead):



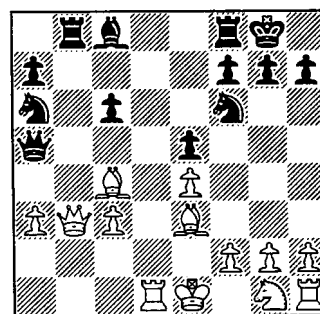
However, the pin does not compensate for Black's out-of-play queen and the greater vulnerability of his pieces. Here, as very often, the gain of the exchange is not an advantage, because the result is a minor piece (here the Bc8) which is more difficult to protect than the rook (here at h1). There might follow, for example, **10...b5!?** **11 Bd3 a5 12 dxc6 axb4** (12...a4+ **13 Qc2 Na6 14 Nd5**) **13 Nd5 Nxd5 14 Qxd5** and the Black knight will soon be mated.

Back to the game. **9 b2xc3 0-0**. **9...b5 10 Be2 a6!?** might perhaps have been an improvement, but White still seems to stand slightly better. **10 d5xc6!** Just at the right moment, and creating a lasting weakness on the Black Q-side :



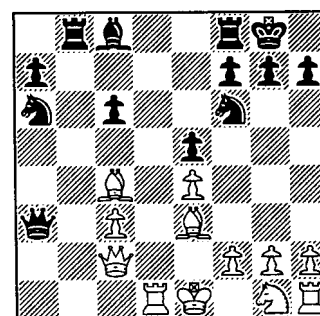
10...b7xc6. Black's problem is that **10...Nxc6 11 Bd5** (threat **12 Bg5**)

seems altogether too dangerous for his knights; **11...Rd8** appears necessary, threatening to sacrifice the exchange against one of the White bishops, but it allows **12 Bxf7+ Kh8 13 Be6+ Rd7** (13...Nd7? loses at once to **14 Qc4**, pinning the second Black knight) **14 Qc4** (say) and Black is pinned all over the place without any prospect of activity. **11 Bc1-e3 Nb8-a6**. This way Black at least obtains the b-file as compensation for the d-file which is destined for White. **11...Nbd7** would leave the Black pieces too exposed: **12 Rd1 Rb8+ 13 Qc2 Oxa3 14 Rxd7 Bxd7 15 Qd3+ Be8 16 Bg5+** and the Black knight will be mated next move. **12 Ra1-d1 Ra8-b8+ :**



13 Qb3-c2! During the game, I thought **13 Qa2?** was better, since **13...Qxc3+?** is impossible on account of **14 Bd2+ Qd4 15 Bxa6+ Bxa6+ 16 Bg5#** (simultaneous attack on the queen and the last Black knight). However, I was wrong: **13...Nc7!** and Black holds out. **14 Rd6?** (threat **15 Rxc6**) appears very dangerous, but Black gets in first: **14...Nxe4! 15 Rxc6 Nxc3+ 16 Qc2 Rb1+ 17 Bc1 Rxc1+ 18 Qxc1 Na2#**. Alternatively, **14 Rd3!?** **Rb5! 15 Ne2 Rc5** with a very complicated position.

Back to the game. **13...Qa5xa3 :**



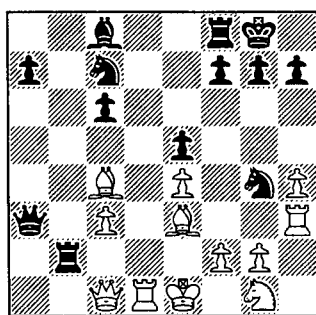
At this point, White missed a mating combination which was very far from

obvious (answer on page 127). He actually played **14 h2-h4?** to activate his second rook, which was entirely logical but too slow. **14...Na6-c7.** The position is now very interesting, the various advantages of the two sides seeming to compensate for each other in a sort of dynamic equilibrium; even if the analysis seems to show that Black must have the last word, we shall see that the difference is a mere hair's-breadth.

On White's side, the d-file cuts Black's position in two, and is therefore stronger than the b-file controlled by Black. The bishop pair is active and commands an impressive array of squares, and the surviving knight is incomparably more secure than the bishop at c8.

On Black's side, the two trumps are the possibility of getting a rook to its seventh rank and the very strong position of his queen, simultaneously threatening and defending (she guards the square d6 which would be a point of invasion for the White rook or queen).

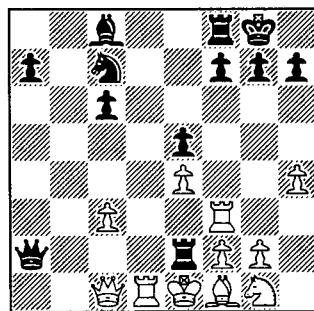
15 Rh1-h3 Rb8-b2+ 16 Qc2-c1! Nf6-g4! The viability of Black's position depended on this move! After the loss of the dark-squared bishop, the bishop on c4 becomes vulnerable, and White no longer has his hands free for the attack.



17 Rh3-g3! White can avoid immediate collapse only by focussing on the Black king. **17 Rd2?** would have been disastrous: **17...Nxe3+ 18 Rxe3 Qc5+ 19 Bf1 Rxd2+** and wins because the rook at e3 is attacked by the Black queen. Nor would saving the bishop by **17 Bg5** have worked, because **17...Nxf2!** leaves the rook at d1 without a good square while the rook at h3 is also attacked (but of course not **17...h6??**

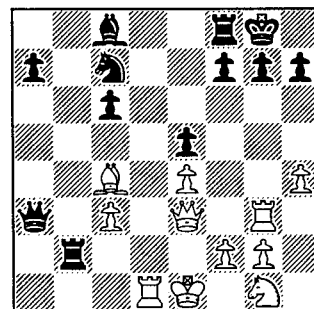
18 Rd8+! and all of a sudden it is the Black rooks which disappear from the board). **18 Rg3** is therefore forced, so that after **18...Nxd1 19 Qxd1** the pawn at g2 will be protected. Even so, the vulnerability of the knight at g1 lets Black win a piece by **19...Qc5+ 20 Be3+ Qxc4 21 Od6+ Na8**, and this will be decisive.

17...Ng4xe3+ 18 Qc1xe3! The line **18 Rxe3? Qa4+ 19 Bf1 Qa2 20 Rf3** (the only move to protect f2) **Re2#** shows the thematic mate against which White must try to defend himself :



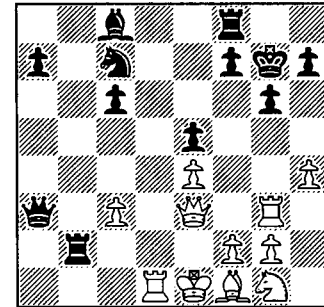
Neither the king, not the bishop, nor the knight can take the rook because each is the last survivor of its kind.

Back to the game :



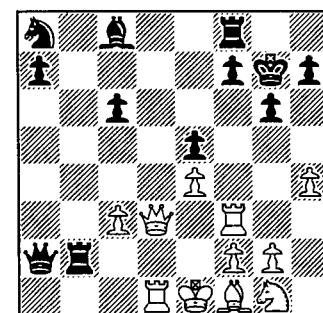
18...g7-g6! Black must safeguard the position of his king before going on the attack. **18...Qa4+ 19 Bf1 Qa2??** would allow **20 Rxf7+ Kxf7 20...Kh8** doesn't help, **21 Rxf7+! Qxf7 22 Qxa7+ Rb7 23 Qa5+ Ne6 24 Qa8#**) **21 Qg5+ Kh8 22 Qe7+** and wins. **19 Bc4-f1.** A necessary preliminary to the activation of the White queen (19 h5 Na8 20 Bf1 would transpose). If **19 Qg5??** then **19...Qc5+ 20 Bf1 Rxf2+** and wins. **19...Kg8-g7.** The impulsive move **19...Qa2??** would lead to **20 Rd7+!! Bxd7 21 Qd3+ Bc8 22 Qd6+ Na8 23 Qxc6#.** On the other hand, Black

must still defend his K-side if he wants to win: **19...Na8 20 Qg5** (threat **21 Rd8+**) **f6+ 21 Qh6 Qa2 22 Rxc6+! hxc6 23 Qxc6+** with perpetual check.



20 Rg3-f3? The logical and best move was **20 h5!** to push back the Black king, but analysis seems to show that Black would have won in any case: **20...Na8 21 h6+ (21 hxc6 hxc6 22 Qg5 f6+ 23 Qe3 Qa2) Kh8! 22 Qf3 (22 Qg5 f6+ 23 Qh4 g5+ 24 Qh5 Qa2) f5** (but not **22...f6?? 23 Rd8+! Rxd8 24 Qxf6+ Kg8 25 Qxd8#**) **23 exf5** (threat **24 Qxc6#**) **Qc5** (threatening **24...Rxf2#** and forcing White's reply) **24 Rd2 Rxd2 25 Kxd2 Qd6+!** (pointed out by my opponent) and **26...e4#** by discovered attack on the rook at g3.

20...Nc7-a8! The only move to win, taking the knight away to neutralize the resource **Rd7+.** **21 Qe3-d3.** There is nothing better. The idea of White's previous move was to play **21 Qg5 f6+ 22 Rxf6**, but this is clearly met by the prosaic **22...Qxc3+. 21...Qa3-a2 :**



and now the threat **22...Re2#** (after which none of White's four pieces can take the rook) can be parried only by **22 Re3**, when we have **22...Rxf2#** and the bishop is mated instead. White therefore **resigned.**

If a game of this standard is typical, the site would seem to be well worth playing on.

PROOF GAMES

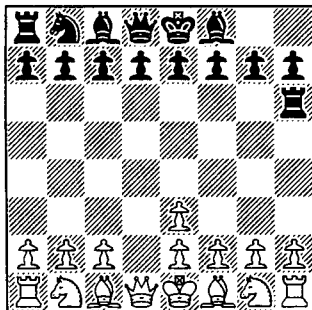
by Peter Fayers

While researching Full Belt Chess in VC 23, I came across my article on Spirits of the Knight in the same issue. Indulging in a little nostalgic vanity by re-reading it for the umpteenth time, it occurred to me that, of the twenty of so Spirits problems I have composed, none were proof games. And so ...

A reminder of the rules. (1) When a Knight is captured its spirit lives on, empowering its captor with the ability to move as a Knight in addition to its own move. (2) Spirits are flighty, and will leap to another unit if its current host ends its move a Knight's move away and no other units are similarly placed. (3) A unit may take over the spirit by either capturing the current host, or ending its move a Knight's move away. (4) Only one Spirit can exist at a time; when another Knight is captured, the previous Spirit expires. Full rules are in VC 23.

In the game scores, we use \$ for the Spirit. "Bxa6\$" (\$ behind) means that the bishop acquired the Spirit, under rule 1 or rule 3. "\$Bb5" (\$ in front) means that the Spirit moved with, and stayed with, the bishop. "Bxb7\$Qd8" (\$ in the middle) means that after the move Bxb7, the Spirit leapt to the queen on d8 using rule 2.

35 - PMF Original



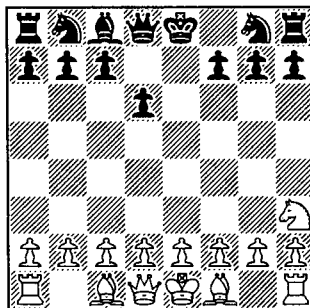
After White's 5th, SotK

Consider 35. The black Rook h6 has escaped from behind an unbroken Pawn-chain (the Houdini effect), so some spirited play has occurred. We need to capture the N early on, so let's

ignore the Pe3 for the moment and start 1 d4 Nh6 2 Bxh6\$. We now have a Spirit on the board, and can attract it to the Rook using rule 3 by playing 2...Rg8\$. Then the Bishop, having done its work, goes home by 3 Bc1. We could play the R to h6 here, but (a) we need one more Black move, and (b) we need to somehow get the wP back to e3. So instead 3...\$Rf6 4 Pd5\$: now the Pawn has the Spirit, and we finish 4...Rh6 5 \$Pe3.

Note that the moves \$Rf6 left the Rook a Knight's move away from (eg) Ph7, but as there were several such units, the Spirit stayed with its current host. Had we played immediately to h6, this would not have been the case, and the Spirit would have leapt to bPf7 under rule 2. At the end I could have moved the white Pawn to anywhere on the Knight-wheel centred on d5, and chose e3 as a red herring to disguise the solution: it appears to have made a capture, and blocks the c1-h6 diagonal. Mean and sneaky I know, but we composers are like that.

36 - PMF Original



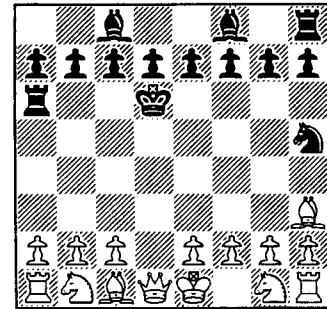
After Black's 4th, SotK

Of course, the immediate theme that came to mind was Bishop + N-move = Turbulence, and 36 was composed in seconds. You shouldn't have too much difficulty with it.

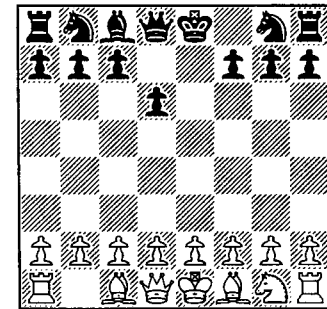
These simple examples would have been deemed too easy by our problem editor at the time of VC 23, and so I would have extended them and fleshed them out for publication. 37 extends the idea of 35, adding a second Houdini unit, and painting the herring an even deeper shade of scarlet. In 36 I would simply move the wN back, leaving the board with all white pieces at home, removing the

focus from h3, and creating the much harder 38. You should recognise the theme of 39 straight away, but 40 is the exception that proves the rule. No more hints - you're on your own.

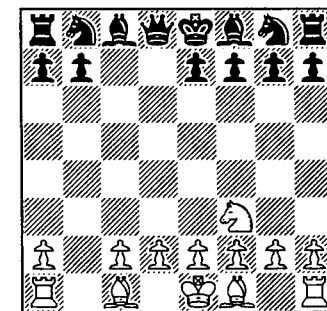
37 - 40 PMF Original



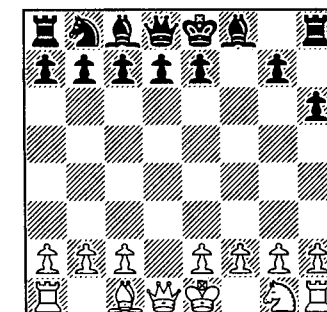
After White's 9th, SotK



After White's 5th, SotK



After Black's 6th, SotK



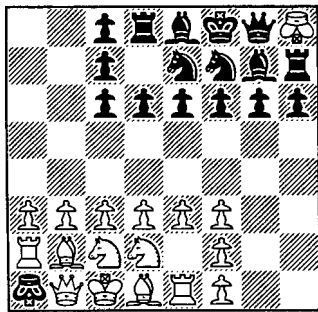
After White's 6th, SotK

ISOLATED PAWNS

material from David Pritchard

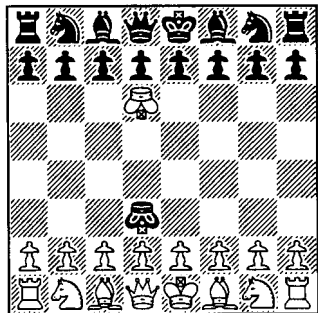
Yes, some more from David. I have taken temporary custody of his chess files so as to finish the *Encyclopedia*, and in going through them I have come across a few games which he doesn't seem to have reported in *VC*. It has therefore occurred to me to resurrect his title, and to see if I can write them up in an approximation to his normal crisp and racy style.

Anti-King Chess (Peter Aronson, 2002). An anti-king is a king that is in check only when it is *not* attacked by any opposing man. Each player has both an anti-king and an ordinary king, and the object is to checkmate either of them. There are two flavours. In the first, the array is



and the pawns move one step diagonally forward and capture straight ahead (i.e. as Berolina pawns but without the opening two-step). No castling, but an unmoved king or anti-king may make a knight's leap to any empty square (even to escape check).

In the second version, everything apart from the anti-kings is orthodox :



Kings do not attack anti-kings, so an anti-king next to a hostile king and not

attacked by any other man is not attacked and so is in check.

Earthquake Chess (Ralph Betza, 1996). We already have James Gutzweiler's "Earthquake Chess", in which each player in turn kicks the table before making his move. (JDB note: In the book from which I learnt the game when young, one of the ways of losing was given as "wilfully upsetting the board and men", and I was deeply disappointed when I found that this was not in fact part of the official Laws of Chess.) The present variant is much gentler. The board is divided in two, and the two halves are displaced either vertically or horizontally. The same idea can be used in almost any board game.

Mirror Chess (Michael Howe, c. 1994). As orthochess except that after each move the player may place a mirror horizontally or vertically between any two squares and reflect everything in a field defined by the nearer boundary and the square the same distance away on the other side (thus after 1 f4 White can put a mirror between f5 and f6 and reflect everything from f3 to f8, after which the f-file holds - P - - p b - B from the top and Black is in check). Restrictions: a reflecting field may not include the king; it may not include a square that was in a field created by the opponent at his last turn; the king must get out of check by an orthodox move; a pawn may not promote by reflection (no apparent prohibition on reflection to the first rank). E.p. capture abolished, but a rook which has been reflected away from and then back to its initial square may still castle if it has not moved as a rook. White would seem to have a considerable advantage. Fool's mate: 1 f2-f4 plus mirror between d5 and d6 (reflecting Pd7 to d4 and Q to d3) Qd3-g3 plus mirror between h2 and h3 (reflecting Ph2 to h3 and R to h4).

Thunder Chess (Fergus Duniho, 2001). Usual board and men plus plenty of spares, and the men should be small enough to allow two of them to occupy the same square. Usual array, but replace the queens by R+B.

Rules:

1. A simple piece (K, N, B, R) may combine with a non-royal simple piece of either side by moving on to its square. The new piece belongs to the player who made the move. Like pieces may not combine. A non-royal piece may not move to combine with a K. Compound pieces may not combine further.

2. Additionally, when a simple non-royal piece (N, B, R) is attacked, it may promote by moving to an empty square. N promotes to R+B, B to B+N, R to R+N.

3. When a non-royal compound piece captures a piece, it demotes to the piece whose move it has just used.

4. When a royal compound piece captures a piece, it demotes to a K.

5. The player may split a compound piece into its components by moving one of them away and leaving the other behind.

6. There is no castling.

7. Pawns promote only to N, B, or R.

8. The object remains to checkmate the opponent's royal piece, whatever its current moving power may be.

Toulousain Chess (Jean-Louis Cazaux, 2003). Board 12x12; 1 x K, Q, Gryphon, Lion; 2 x R, B, N, Cannon, Elephant, Camel; 8 x Corporal; 12 x P. Gryphon one square diagonally, then optionally any number of squares horizontally or vertically as long as the road is clear; Lion as K, or as N, or two squares vertically or horizontally (jumping permitted); Cannon as in xiangqi; Elephant one or two squares diagonally, jumping permitted; Camel as 3-1 leaper; Pawn as in orthochess but with two-step move allowed at any time, e.p. permitted; Corporal as pawn but may also advance one square diagonally without capturing. Pawn and Corporal promote on the last row to Q, Lion, or Gryphon, and may take each other en passant. Board coloured red and black in honour of Toulouse rugby club. Array: a1-11/a12-112 (a1 black) CnCmCoCo...CoCoCmCn; a2-12/a11-111 ERNBGKQLBNRE; 12xP.

I shall be interested to see what Peter Fayers makes of some of these!

THE END IS NIGH !

by Paul Byway

Solutions to competition 27

#160 8 b4 b3 bxa2 a1=R Na6 Re8 Reel Rad1 mate; #161 8 Be6 Bxb3 Bc4 b4 b3 bxc2 cxb1=Q Bb4 mate; #162 7 Kxd1 h4 Rh3 Rf3 Rxf6 Nd6 Ne8 mate; #163 6 Kc6 Bc5 Nd7 Ne5 Re8 Nf3 mate; #164 6 Ke6 Bb4 Rxd8 Bd7 Ba4 Bd1 mate; #165 8 g5 g4 g3 gxf2 f1=Q Nc6 Nb4 Bh6 mate. #166 1 Pg10 freezing everything but the rook and threatening a cannon mate ...Rh2 2 Ci5 Ri2 3 Ci3 Ri1 so the rook is reduced to oscillating between two squares - but Red needs a further idea. 4 Ke2 Ri2+ 5 Ke3 Ri1 6 Ge2 Ri2 7 Gf1 Ri1 8 Ke2 Ri2+ 9 Ke1 Ri1 10 Cc3 and with this switch of attacking front mate cannot be prevented. Recently I read a piece of guidance which advised you to leave the opponent's guards on the board while you have a cannon left; this puzzle shows why.

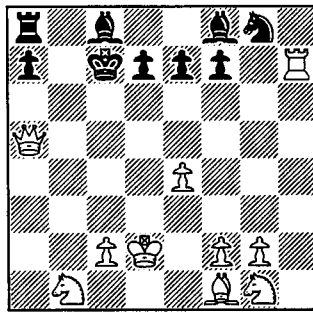
Fred Galvin gave 15 (!) solutions to #160 - and Ian Richardson gave a comprehensive solution to the Xiangqi puzzle #166. Congratulations to you both. Ian raises an interesting point in connection with #166 and one I am not competent to answer. Red can play 5 Ke1 and now what? The answer depends on the repetition rules; if you know what it is please let me know. If both players can repeat it is a draw; if Black must vary he loses (a second solution!); but perhaps Red must vary. I confess I have not mastered the rules of repetition (which differ between Chinese/Asian Federations anyway!)

The current scores:- FG 108, IR 95, PW 35, JB 35, CL 24, Roberto Cassano 21, RT 19, NE 2.

Competition 28

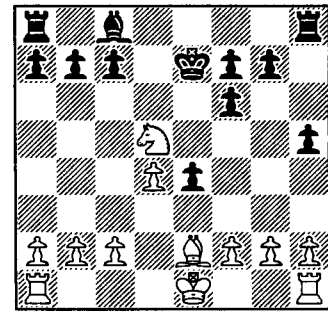
#173 is from the excellent book *Basic Xiangqi Checkmate Methods* by Zhu Baowei, recently featured by JDB. #174 (non-competition, solution opposite) is from the recent Poplar tournament. I won a piece in the midgame and then came under strong counterattack; how did Black win?

#167 Buccoliero - Buccoliero (1992)



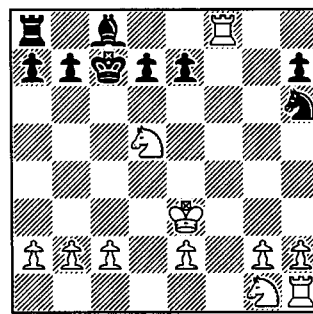
Black wins (series 8)

#171 Cassano - Magari (1988)



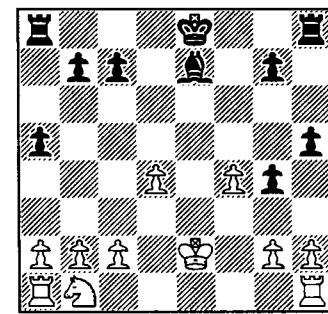
Black wins (series 8)

#168 Wojnar - Leoncini (1992)



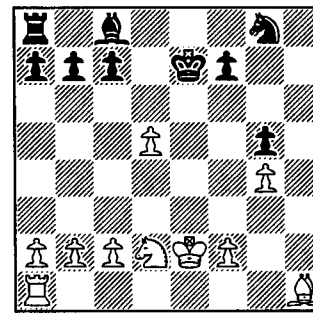
Black wins (series 8)

#172 Rallo - Viola (1990)



White wins (series 9)

#169 Rallo - Leoncini (1992)



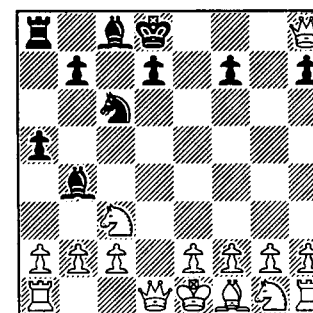
Black wins (series 8)

#173 Using the King

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10 | . | . | . | : | : | : | . | . | . |
| 9 | . | . | . | : | : | : | . | . | . |
| 8 | . | . | k | : | : | : | . | . | . |
| 7 | . | . | | P | : | : | . | . | . |
| 6 | . | . | h | . | : | : | . | . | . |
| 5 | . | . | . | . | : | : | . | . | . |
| 4 | . | . | | c | : | : | . | . | . |
| 3 | . | . | | G | : | : | . | . | . |
| 2 | . | . | : | : | : | : | C | . | . |
| 1 | . | . | : | K | : | : | . | . | . |

XiangQi : Red to play and win

#170 Figura - Gatto (1989)



Black wins (series 6)

#174 Tran Tan - Byway (2006)

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10 | C | . | e | g | k | : | . | . | . |
| 9 | . | . | P | g | : | . | . | . | . |
| 8 | . | . | : | e | : | . | . | . | . |
| 7 | . | . | . | p | : | . | . | . | . |
| 6 | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . |
| 5 | . | . | . | h | . | E | . | p | . |
| 4 | . | . | . | . | . | . | R | c | . |
| 3 | . | . | : | K | : | : | . | . | . |
| 2 | . | . | . | . | : | : | r | . | . |
| 1 | . | . | . | G | : | G | . | . | . |

XiangQi : Black to play and win

SOLUTIONS

VC 51 proof games (see page 107).

27 (PMF) 1 Nc1-d3/g:6 Bg6xd3/f:4
2 Qg7-f7/g:2 Bd3xf5/f:4.

28 (PMF) 1 Nd1-e3/d:3 d1xe1R/e:7
2 Nc1xd3/d:5 Re8xd8/e:1.

29 (PMF) 1 b2-b3/g:7 Bg7xa1/b:1
2 Bb2xa1/g:1 Qb1-b2/b:6. (When solving prior to publication, I found this one particularly attractive - JDB)

30 (GPJ) 1 d4 a5 2 Bxa5 Nb6
3 Bxb6 c5 4 Bxd8 cxd4 5 Bxe7 Rd8
6 Bxf8 Qc8.

31 (GPJ) 1 f4 g5 2 fxg5 e6 3 Rxf7
Bf6 4 Rxf8+ Kg7 5 Rxh8 Bf7 6 Rxc8
Qxc8.

32 (GPJ+JDB) 1 c3 f5 2 Qxf5 Ng6
3 Qxg6 c5 4 Qxe8 Bc7 5 Qxc8 c4
6 Qxb8 Rc8.

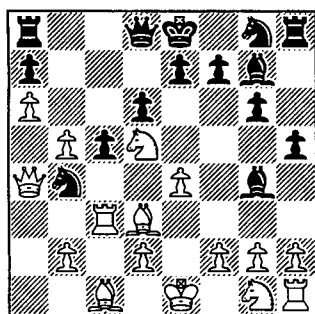
33 (GPJ) 1 e4 d5 2 exd5 Bc6
3 dxc6 h6 4 cxb7 Kh7 5 bxc8N Rg8
6 Nxe7 Bxe7.

34 (GPJ) 1 Nb3 c5 2 Nxc5 e6
3 Nxe6 f5 4 Nxf8 Bg6 5 Nxc6 Bc7
6 Nxc8 Kxh8.

Substitution Chess (page 121).

Bartholdi-Liardet, after 10...Nc6:

11 a6! left Black without resource. The knight at c6, and then the rook at a8, could no longer be defended. The game actually finished 11...b5 12 cxb5 (12 Qxb5 Kd7 13 Qb7#) Nb4 (12...Bxc3 13 bxc6 and wins) :

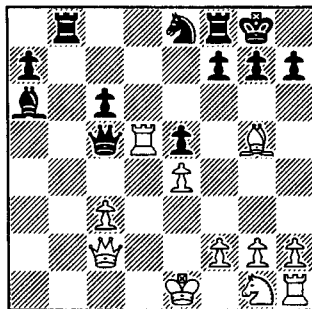


An immediate advance of the b-pawn now fails because Black can substitute Nb6, but it is a simple matter to get rid of the knight first: 13 Nf6+ exf6 14 b6+ and Black resigned (14...Nc6 15 Qxc6#).

Sedgwick-Beasley, after 7 Bg2: I think 7...Qxd5 would have won. If White captures on d5, Black substitutes Nxd5 and takes the king;

if White does nothing, Black plays 8...Qxd1, and 9 Kxd1 will be met by substituting Nxd1; if White tries 8 Kf1 to unpin the knight, Black substitutes Bf1 and again plays 8...Qxd1; and if White tries to block the line by 8 Qd2 or 8 Bd2, Black puts the king there. The only move not to lose at once appears to be 8 Qd3, after which Black can play 8...Qxg2 with at the very least a massive gain of material.

Extinction Chess (page 122). White could have won by 14 Bc1+! Qc5 (if 14...Qe7 then 15 Bxa6+ Bxa6 16 Bg5#, and if 14...Qa5 then 15 Rd6, threatening Bxa6 followed by Rxf6, and the penetration by the rook is decisive) 15 Bxa6+ Bxa6 16 Bg5+ Ne8 17 Rd5+!! :



17...cxd5? allows the immediate fork 18 Qa4#, and if the queen moves White can win by hunting down the Black knight and bishop: 17...Qb6 18 Rxe5+ Nc7 (18...Nd6 19 Qd1+ with 19...Nc8/Nb7 20 Qd7# or 19...Bc4 20 Qa4#) 19 Re7+ Na8 20 Qa2+ Bc8 21 Rxa7#, or 17...Qa3 18 Rxe5+ Nc7 (18...Nd6 19 Be7#) 19 Re7+ with 19...Na8 20 Rxa7# or 19...Nb5 20 Qe2#, or 17...Qc4 18 Rxe5+ Nc7 (18...Nd6 19 Qd1+ with 19...Nc8 20 Qd7+ Nb6 21 Qxa7# or 19...Nb7 20 Qa1#) 19 Re7+ Nb5 (19...Na8 20 Rxa7#) 20 Qb2+ Nd6 21 Qa3# and again mate by simultaneous attack on the two vulnerable Black pieces.

Losing Chess (page 118). In 1, the only way for White to win is to keep up the pressure on Black's queen while the knight is still on the edge. After a nondescript move such as 1 Kc2, Black will bring his knight forward to f6 or g5, and now the queen will be able to hide behind it.

Hence 1 Kb2 (threatening 2 Ka3, and the only move to win) Qe8 (1...Qa3 leaves Black with N v K, 1...Qd8 allows 2 Kc3 shortening things, and other moves lose at once) 2 Kb3 Qh5 3 Kc2 Qe8 4 Kd3 (4 Kd2 also works, though less crisply) Qb8 (4...Qf8 5 Kd4), and now simplest is 5 Kc3; after 5...Qe8 6 Kc4 or 5...Qa8 6 Kc4/Kd4 the queen has no good move. Against a non-resigning opponent who plays out N v K to the bitter end, White can force the eventual win one move sooner by playing 5 Kc4 instead of Kc3, but details like this are normally of interest only to a computer.

2: 1 Qa6 Kb2/Kb1 (which apparently makes the queen run for cover, but...) 2 Qa1! Kxa1 3 Nd5 and we have one of the exceptional positions where knight wins against king.

3: 1 Qa6 (the same first move with a similar motivation, though the details will be different) Kb1 2 Qa2! Kxa2 3 Nb4 and again we have an exceptional position where knight wins against king.

XiangQi (opposite). "No guarantees!" saye Paul. "This is a game and not a composition. I give the game continuation; if you can see an improvement let me know!" 48...Rg3+ 49 Ke2 Rxc5 50 Rh9 Rg2+ 51 Ke3 Hc4+ 52 Kf3 Hd2+ 53 Gfe2 Rg3+ 54 Kf2 He4+ and Red resigned. "A point of interest:- it seems that Black's edge pawn and cannon take no part in the game. Can I remove them without affecting the result?"

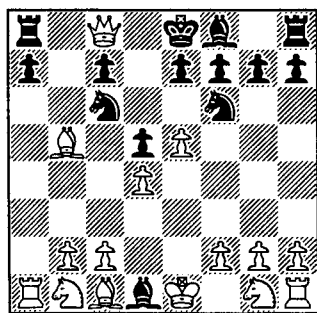
I used *Basic Xiangqi Checkmate Methods* for my articles in VC 47-50, and was duly relieved to see Paul's endorsement. The book was written by Zhu Baowei, translated by Zhang Quansheng, and published by the World Xiangqi Federation and the Chinese Xiangqi Association, and "a fine job they have done between them" (PVB). Position #173 is 'game 3' from the introduction, which demonstrates the use of each piece in turn before the book moves on to the harder stuff.

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Tributes to **David Pritchard** continue to come in, and that from Peter Michaelson in Denmark is typical: "I enjoyed very much receiving his kind and informative letters, and it was a great pleasure for me to be his pen friend for 17-18 years". Another of his correspondents was Andrew Perkis, whose "Miller's Daughter Chess" is reported here. I understand that Andrew will be demonstrating this and some of his other games at MSO Cambridge (see opposite).

Progressive Chess. In the Brodie-Elkies game in VC 49, Fred Galvin wonders whether 5 axb7, bxc8Q+ might not have been better for White :



Can any reader see a good reply?

BCVS NOTICES

The **Annual General Meeting** will be held at 2 Beechwood Avenue, Coulsdon, Surrey on **Saturday 10 June** (business meeting in the morning starting at 1130, informal tournament in the afternoon). UK members will find a formal notice with this issue of VC, and members abroad who are in the UK on the day will be welcome also (but to help with the admin, please tell us in advance if you are likely to be coming).

Do you fancy editing an issue of VC ? The question is a serious one. I collected the *Encyclopedia* material from Gloucestershire in February, and it immediately became clear that if I was to get the new edition finished within a reasonable time I would have to reduce my commitment to VC. As far as I am concerned, therefore, the next VC will not be until October, but we are a members' publication, and if any member would like to come forward as Acting Editor of an interim issue we shall be delighted to hear from you. Even an eight-page or twelve-page issue to keep things ticking over will be welcome (we can always adjust the subscription rate to reflect the material provided).

So if you have ever thought about editing a magazine, but have wondered what you would be letting yourself in for, now may be the time to find out. In the circumstances, it would be unrealistic to expect any contribution from myself, but I will put you in touch with the rest of our regular contributors, and I am sure they will be willing to provide material as usual.

CALENDAR

George Jelliss tells me that there will be a British Museum exhibition "Across the Board" ("around the world in 18 games") at the **New Walk Museum and Art Gallery, Leicester**, until **April 30**. He has sent me one of the handouts, and it appears that the Lewis chessmen will be a star exhibit.

This year's **Cambridge Mind Sports Olympiad** will be held at the **Netherhall Upper School & Sixth Form College, Cambridge**, on **Saturday/Sunday 6-7 May**. Visit

< www.gen.cam.ac.uk/msocam/ >
for details, entry forms, etc.

This year's **Circular Chess World Championship** will be held on **Saturday 20 May** at **Lincoln Castle**. Visit the Circular Chess web site

<www.circularchess.co.uk>
for details and an entry form.

Notices for the October issue of VC should reach me by **September 1**, though notices received later will be fitted in if it is at all practicable. **There is also a "News and Notices" page on our web site, and notices for this can be accepted at any time** (send by e-mail to Sue). Readers and organizers alike are reminded that this is a "no charge, no responsibility" service, and that we merely pass on information which we have spotted or received in good faith.

Falconry (see VC 49 page 73). Among the letters to David passed on to me has been one from Yori Ribakov announcing a web site

<<http://falconrychess.ru>>
which appears to offer possibilities of play at all levels. It is in English, and I am sure they would welcome a visit.

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