

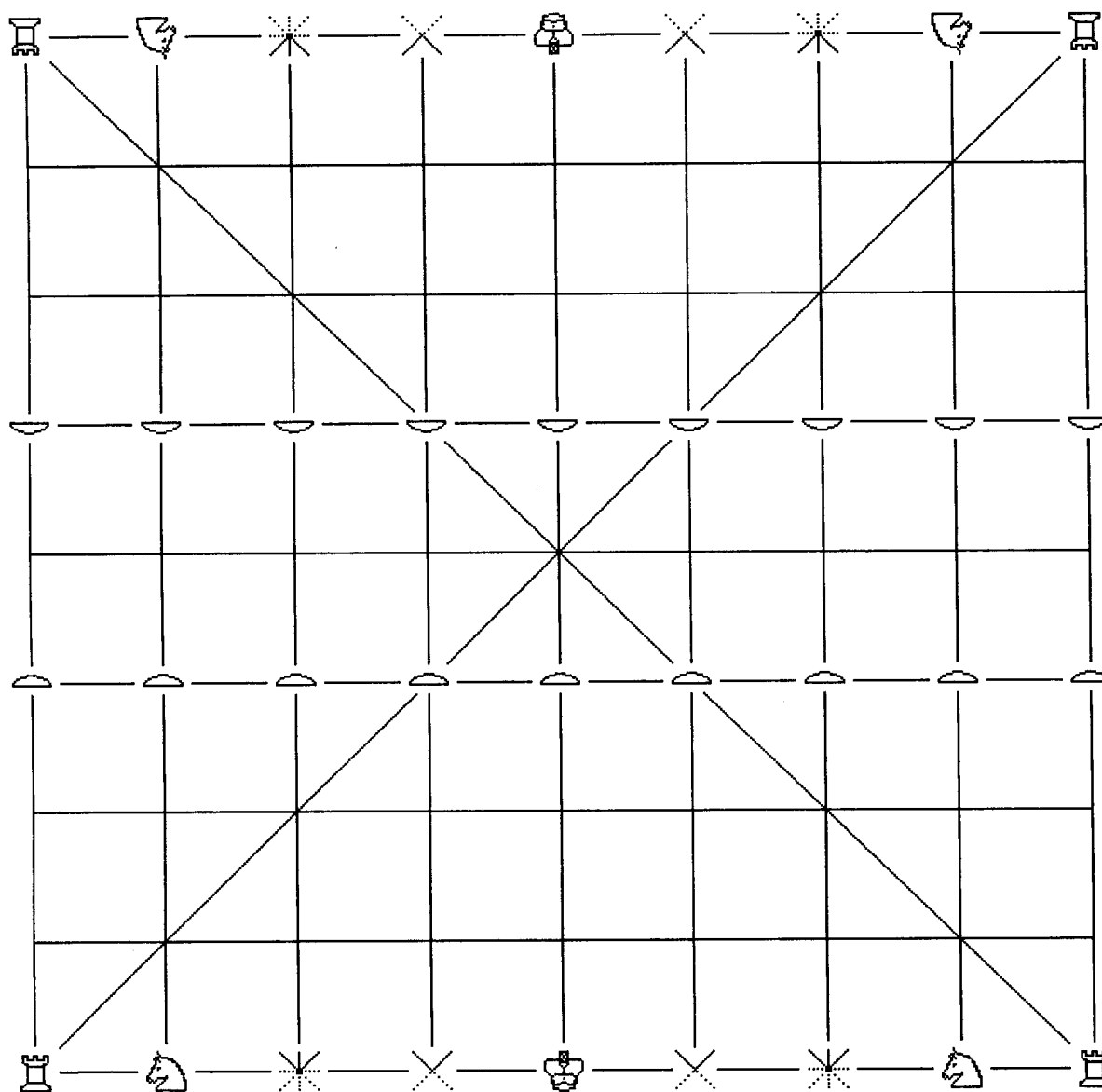
# Variant Chess

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Cambodian Chess *does* have two forms

Ambiguous tactics

In praise of Checkers

## ECV 2 FOOTNOTES

There are inevitably places where the text of the new *Encyclopedia* has proved to need correction or amplification, and VC offers a convenient place to report them. My thanks to all my correspondents.

**Kriegspiel** (pages 33-36). A recent clear-out of old papers reminded me of an eight-page typed pamphlet "Kriegspiel" by Fred Galvin. It bears no date but would appear on internal evidence to be from 1958-62.

Its interest from our point of view is that it has the umpire automatically announcing the possibility of a pawn capture in the way I have always encountered when playing myself, but which David had apparently not met. Typically, the umpire says "No" or "Yes" to the player trying the move, and after "Yes" he says "White has moved" or "White has captured on ..." followed as appropriate by "Black is in check on the longer diagonal" [on the shorter diagonal, on the file, etc] and "Black has a pawn capture". A capture en passant is explicitly announced, but in other cases the identity of the man captured is not disclosed. Fred's accompanying comment is of interest (typography converted): "The rules of Kriegspiel are by no means uniform: there are many local variations. There are no 'official' rules of Kriegspiel. The above rules are those I am used to playing with, and in my opinion they make the best game." Fred then gives some alternative versions of the rules, one of which is the original version with "Any?".

Fred's pamphlet cites three sources for the rules of Kriegspiel: *The New Complete Hoyle* by Richard M. Frey (1947, I think), *The Official Blue Book and Encyclopedia of Chess* by Richard Harkness, and the *Chess Correspondent* for May-June 1951. I have not seen any of these myself, so I am unable to say whether the deviation from the original "Any?" rule was due to Fred and his circle or whether it comes from one of these, but Fred tells me that Frey's 1957 paperback *According to Hoyle* gives

the "Any?" rule. His pamphlet also mentions the Boyer books and G. F. Anderson's problem book *Are there any?*, but these again have the rule in its original "Any?" form.

I therefore went through all 32 notes and cuttings which David had filed under "Kriegspiel", and found that 14 assumed or explicitly stated the "Any?" rule, a further 12 made no assumption (either because they were merely general descriptions or because they discussed positions where the question did not arise), Fred's pamphlet recommended the rule as described above, one other paper gave it as a permitted option, and four described other rules. On this evidence, I don't think David can be blamed for concentrating on the "Any?" rule, and not singling out the Galvin rule for any particular mention. However, the Galvin rule, whether imported or independently reinvented, is now in my experience standard in France, and I think it excellent; it simplifies and speeds up the game without significantly changing its nature. It is of course possible to construct positions where the "Any?" rule leads to one result and the Galvin rule to another, but I don't think these happen often enough to be of importance.

**Scaci Partonici** (pages 42-3). Parton's booklets as cited on page 43 and perhaps elsewhere should be *Cheshire Cat Playeth Looking Glass Cheessys* and *100 Squares for Chess and Damante* (not Diamante). The insertion of hyphens between the words of the former appears to depend on the view taken on the typography of the booklet's front cover.

**Koopa Chess** (page 45) is due to Ralph Betza (thus Philip Cohen, citing the Chess Variant Pages).

**Reinforcement Chess** (page 53). The first edition included a statement that the basic concept "was suggested by L. Tressau of Leipzig as long ago as 1840", but the details that followed appeared to be those of the "Double Chess Game" which now has a separate entry and I took the reference to have been to this game. There

should perhaps have been an explicit note to this effect.

**Ambiguous or Substitution Chess** (page 62). Fabrice Liardet points out that on the Internet, where most games are now played, the original name and mode of play have been retained.

**"Buckzo's Game"** (page 112) should be **Buczko's Game** (and in the index).

**Balbo's Game** (page 116). A note from Ken Whyld preserved in David's files suggests that the inventor was in fact "G." Balbo, the source's "M." standing merely for "Monsieur".

**Ninerider Chess** (page 140). From Philip Cohen, edited: "I'm almost certain this is my invention, but if I couldn't find the original rulesheet in 1979 I'm not likely to find it easily now. I see Michael Howe attributes it to me and Wayne Schmittberger in the Chess Variant Pages, the RWS part being, I believe, just the K/Q interchange."

**Regional and historical games** (page 237 and onwards). It should perhaps have been stressed that in the absence of an "official" body with authority over a game there can be no "official" rules, and where a game is widely played there may be considerable variation: certainly in minor detail (for example, in equivalents of the "fifty-move" and "three repetitions" rules), and perhaps even in the moves of the pieces. However careful foreign observers such as ourselves may be, we are inevitably limited by the knowledge of our informants, and the completeness and accuracy of this is not always easily judged. Western chess *does* have "official" rules, but how many players, encountered in a café or even in a chess club, could give a foreign observer a complete and reliable account of them?

**OrthoChess** (page 242). The most recent change to the "fifty-move" rule does not postdate the first edition. There have indeed been minor changes to the laws since that edition appeared, but this particular change dates from 1992.

**Korean Chess** or **Changgi** (pages 250-1). Peter Blommers and Peter Michaelsen have dictionaries giving the spelling Janggi. Peter Michaelsen draws my attention to a rule given in the book *Chinesisches Schach - Koreanisches Schach* by David Wurman, Frankfurt am Main 1991, whereby in some regions and provinces of Korea the players usually agree before the start of the game that there is no double or triple check. This means that, if a King is threatened by several of the opponent's pieces, the attacking player must announce by which man he intends to give the check, and his opponent need only defend against this man. Wurman recommends that European players should ignore this rule, and allow multiple checks as usual.

**Vietnamese Chess** or **Co-Tuong** (page 251). Peter Michaelsen draws my attention to the chapter "Chinesisches Schach in Vietnam" contributed by Pham Cong Thanh to the Wurman book mentioned above. According to this source, Co tuong is identical with Xiangqi except for a special rule which is followed only in some provinces of Vietnam. Under this rule, a Chariot is not allowed to move so as to attack a General from behind (active attack), though if a General moves into the line of fire of a Chariot standing behind him the attack is valid (passive attack). Suppose Red Gf3, Black Chariot (R) i1; Ri1-f1 (active attack) is not permitted. Now suppose that the Black chariot is already on e1, and that Black also has soldiers on g2 and g4; now the chariot passively attacks e3, which is valid, and he can mate by Sg4-g3 or Sg4-f4. This rule, which has been passed down only orally and is not recommended, appears in no Vietnamese rule book.

Peter also tells me, quoting further information from Lev Kisliuk, that the variants mentioned in the second paragraph were not historical games but modern creations. Apparently the inventor bewailed the absence of a chess game specific to Vietnam and produced three variants to fill the gap, later replacing them by the 10 x 10 variant described.

**Shogi** (page 252 and onwards). On page 253, below the diagram, "9xS" should be "9xP". The later statement that Black starts and plays down the board (on page 255, in the entry for Chu Shogi) is not correct. A 1995 book *First Step to Shogi*, published under the authority of the Oyama Memorial Museum, has the player who starts playing *up* the board, and Peter Blommers tells me that this is the normal convention.

**Tenjiku Shogi** (pages 256-7). Peter Blommers questions the statement that Tenjiku is "not related" to the other large shogis. "Tenjiku is 'not related' only in the sense that it is *later* than the foursome Dai, Dai-Dai, Maka-Dai-Dai, and Tai, which, in everybody's view, belong together. The larger shogis are all elaborations of Chu."

Peter also tells me that Tenjiku literally means Heavenly Bamboo, and was an old Japanese name for India. The alternative name Exotic Shogi apparently derives from Hodges.

**Wa Shogi** (page 257). "Violent Stage" should be Violent Stag. Peter Blommers, like Wayne Schmittberger, prefers the game with drops, but he stresses that no such preference can be more than a personal opinion; no game scores have survived, nor have any composed problems.

**Small Shogi** (page 258). Peter Blommers tells me that this is not modern, but is simply Sho Shogi (9x9 shogi) as opposed to Dai and Chu Shogi. There were two forms, a 42-piece form with just the Drunk Elephants and a 46-piece form with the Ferocious Leopards as well.

**Cannon Shogi** (page 258). Peter Michaelsen draws my attention to a minor inaccuracy: pawns move and capture as in Korean Chess. "The game is no doubt also playable with Chinese/Japanese pawns, but I chose to make them 'Korean' in order to get a better balance between the pawns and the new cannon pieces." The pawns promote to Gold Generals, exactly as in Shogi.

**Blind Shogi** (page 261). Peter Blommers tells me that this is Tsuitate Shogi (Screen Shogi) in Japanese. He thinks that the source is an early Hodges magazine, perhaps *Shogi* 2.

**Indian Chess** (pages 262-6). A faulty edit took out intended references to Bhagavathi (Replacement) Chess and to **Radha-Madhava**, not mentioned elsewhere in the text, "in which the power of a captured piece is added to that of its captor" (as in Absorption Chess).

**Makruk** or **Thai Chess** (page 268). Further to my note about draws in contemporary master play, Peter Michaelsen quotes a Thai player named Poompat writing in the Chess Variant Pages: "Thai Chess gained much popularity in the 1990s, with 5-7 televised national events/year, but after lots of published analysis, the knowledge of Thai Chess techniques + strategies seem to have reached the peak. Sadly, almost all serious games between similar-level pros are draws. Now, they have to invent tie-break games called 'Makpong' (Defensive Chess) wherein the player who checks the opponent's King such that he has to MOVE the King wins. BAD IDEA!"

**Cambodian Chess** (pages 268-9). Contrary to my editorial assessment, there is independent evidence for the game reported by Hill. See overleaf.

**Shatra** (pages 271-2). In the diagram, the White array should mirror the Black (bishops on the third rank).

**The Jungle Game** (page 292). Peter Blommers tells me that this is Shou Dou Qi in Chinese, literally Animal Fighting Chess.

**Chessball** ["Kamzalov"] (page 299). "Kamzalov" should be "Kamzolov" (and in the index).

**Panzyk's Four-Handed Chess** (page 346). Although this is correctly classified as an all-play-all game, the game credited to "a German doctor" was a partnership game and should have appeared in chapter 35.

## CAMBODIAN CHESS ...

Almost the first thing Peter Blommers did on receiving the new edition of the *Encyclopedia* was to tell me that the authority for the form of **Cambodian Chess** reported by P. A. Hill does *not* reduce to "a single informant whose statements are at variance with all other known testimony". He himself has a photograph of a set, and the Japanese games collector Okano Shin possesses one which was on display at an exhibition "Chess Games of the World" at the Shogi Forum in Tokyo in 2002. Peter has since sent me extracts from three books in Japanese in which the game is described, with translations of the relevant passages: page 98 of *Chess Games of the World* by Umebayashi and Okano, page 90 of a Makruk booklet by Okano, and page 182 of *The Traditional Chess Variants in the East Asia* by Okano (ISBN 978-4-902567-15-1, published in 2007). These descriptions agree with Hill's in almost everything apart from nomenclature.

Specifically, the game is played on the intersections of a 9x9 lattice, which is crossed by two diagonal lines in the manner of a Burmese chess board (a detail not mentioned by Hill). The 18 men are Kwon (royal piece, moves as chess king), 2 x Neamahn (official, moves one step diagonally, cannot capture backwards), Kwos (elephant, moves as chess king, cannot capture backwards or sideways), Seh (horse, as chess knight), Tuuk (boat, as chess rook), and 9 x Trai (fish, moves and captures one step forward until it enters the enemy camp, when it adopts the king's move); baseline

Tu S Ks N Kn N Ks S Tu

with 9 x Tr on rank 4. The diagonal lines appear to play no role apart perhaps from conveniently identifying the centre of the board.

As can be seen, this bears out Hill's description in everything apart from the elephant's capturing move (Okano prohibits sideways captures, Hill allows them) and the names of some of the men. Okano calls the game Shatrong, but this is the result of a double transliteration (from Cambodian phonetics into Japanese characters, and thence into English) and Peter prefers "Chatrong". Okano's piece names are similarly the result of a double transliteration.

The set shown by Okano features attractively turned men, all of circular cross-section apart from the horses, and they are generally similar to those shown in plate 120 of *Chess* by Hans and Siegfried Wichmann (Hamlyn, 1960). The Wichmann text gives the number of men in their set as 32, which would suggest that it was a makruk set, but no doubt similar men were used for both games.

I have no idea what the game is like to play, but I have printed a board on our front cover, with symbols to indicate the initial array, in the hope that readers may be tempted to try it, and this can easily be put under an expanding photocopier if something larger is needed. In the absence of genuine Cambodian men, ordinary kings, rooks, and knights can be used for the kings, boats, and

horses, and at a pinch I suppose that queens and bishops could be used for officials and elephants though I would personally improvise something else (I dislike seeing a "queen" or "bishop" which does not in fact behave like a queen or bishop). The fishes can be anything which can be turned upside down to indicate promotion. Cockle, mussel, or walnut shells would provide an elegant solution, bottle tops a less elegant one.

As for the apparent absence of the game from the streets of Phnom Penh in 2003, Peter suggests that this may have been a minor consequence of the mass killings of the Pol Pot era. At any rate, the game definitely existed, and perhaps there are places where it is still played; and I owe David and various other people an apology.

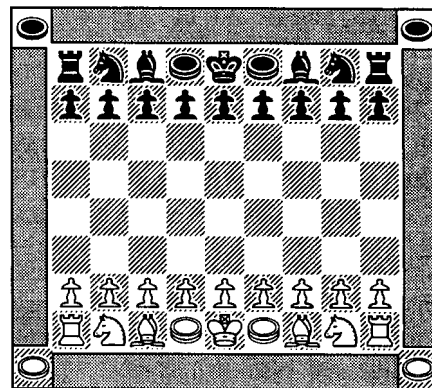
## ... LAOTIAN ...

Peter has also sent me a copy of page 94 of the book by Umebayashi and Okano, which contains a description of a game **Mak Fuk** from Laos. However, it appears next to the description of Makruk and the game is given no description of its own, and Peter suggests that it is merely Makruk with Laotian terminology.

## ... AND BULGARIAN ?

One mystery (Cambodian Chess) is clarified, another takes its place. Mats Winther has drawn my attention to Bolyar Chess, allegedly a historical Bulgarian variant, and the source for this also describes Abagoren Chess, allegedly once played in Macedonia and West Bulgaria. However, we now have doubts about their authenticity.

Let us look first at the alleged games themselves. **Bolyar Chess** is played on a 9x8 board with additional corner squares (76 squares in all), the men being King, General (arises only on promotion), 2 x Bolyar (draughts kings in diagram, next to chess king), Bishop, Knight, Rook, Boat (draughtsmen, in the corners), 9 x Pawn :



Rules governing movement and capture :

- King, Knight, Rook, Pawn as in chess.
- General as chess Q.
- Bolyar moves as chess Q, captures as chess R.
- Bishop moves and captures as chess B, and in addition

can move, but not capture, one square straight forward.

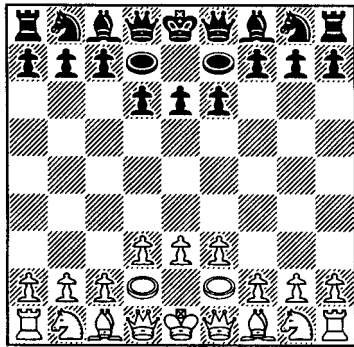
- Boat can move (leap) up to two squares orthogonally forwards or sideways, or diagonally forwards, or in one of the knight's four forward directions. It can capture up to two squares orthogonally in any direction.

Promotion :

- Pawns, and all pieces except bolyars and generals, promote to bolyar on reaching the last rank.
- Bishop, knight, and boat also promote on far corner squares: bishop and knight again to bolyar, boat to general.
- In the case of a promotion by knight or boat on a far corner square, boats are added on any empty home corner square.

Originally no pawn-two or castling, though these were later added. Object checkmate. Allegedly still played in the nineteenth century, but now fallen into oblivion.

**Abagoren Chess** uses a 9x9 board, King, 2 x Queen, Bishop, Knight, Rook, Prince (draughtsmen in diagram), 9 x Pawn, also Emperor, Boat, General by promotion :



- King moves one square straight or diagonally forward, captures one square away in any direction.
- Queen captures as chess Q in any direction but limited to two squares in the backward directions, moves as chess Q but only forward.
- Bishop captures as chess B in any direction but limited to two squares in the backward directions, moves as chess Q but only forward.
- Knight captures as chess N in any direction, moves as chess N or Q but in each case only forward.
- Rook captures as chess R in any direction but limited to two squares backward, moves as chess Q but only forward.
- Prince captures on any square not more than two away, leaping permitted; moves similarly but only forward.
- Pawn as in chess, but no pawn-two.
- Emperor as chess K.
- Boat as chess R.
- General as chess B, and in addition can move (but not capture) one square orthogonally in any direction.

Pawns promote to boat on the last rank, kings to emperor, other pieces to general; promotion may be accompanied by the return of the king to a square on the first rank. There are also rules, not entirely clear to me, relating to the reinstatement of a captured man on a home corner square and the creation of a new pawn by an emperor.

So why are we doubtful? For two reasons: the alleged provenance of the information, and the nature of the games themselves.

The immediate source is a site

<<http://bgchess.hit.bg>>

which offers three pairs of pages in Bulgarian and English, one as a lead-in, one describing Bolyar Chess, and one describing Abagoren Chess. Mats became interested in Bolyar Chess and made a better presentation of it, and the original contents of the English page on this game now seem to have been replaced, without authorization or acknowledgement, by his. However, Mats did not include all the background detail, and this, so far as non-Bulgarian speakers are concerned, has now been lost. Mats to myself: "...he had a long section about how he happened upon the material, in a bookshop in London, etc., and there was mention of the game in old letters, etc. It sounded authentic. Now this all is removed." There is some background detail in the Bulgarian pages, and in so far as I can judge from a session with a Russian dictionary and a certain amount of guesswork the information came from a journey made in 1844 by the London player Adolf Zytogorski, who on his return to London wrote to his friend Thomas Wilson Barnes that Bulgarians played these two games; and the rules of both games are described as "opisani prez 1845 godina ot Adolf Zhitogorski".

Zytogorski was a Pole (his name originally had a dot over the Z, hence the Cyrillic transcription "Zh"), who left his native land following the failure of the uprising of November 1830, settled in England, and became a leading figure in London chess circles. Barnes also was a leading figure in London chess. But why should information on 19th-century Bulgarian games surface for the first time in a London bookshop early in the 21st century? Why is there nothing in Bulgarian sources? No such source appears to be cited. Why did there appear to be no reference to the matter in the *Chess Player's Chronicle*? The *Chronicle* carried articles on variant and historical forms of chess, and Zytogorski had contributed an extensive analysis of the ending  $K + R + B \text{ v } K + R$  to it in 1843; an article offered on the subject would surely have been welcomed. And if the material came from a British source, why is the English in the description of Abagoren Chess so bad? Why didn't the writer copy from Zytogorski's alleged original instead of attempting to translate from the Bulgarian? I don't normally criticize foreigners' English, but some of this is bad to the point of being unintelligible.

As regards the games themselves, two obvious questions arise: why should two games from the same region have rules so utterly different (for a start, no two men with the same name, apart from the pawn, have exactly the same moves), and is Abagoren Chess, where unpromoted men appear to move backwards only to capture, really playable?

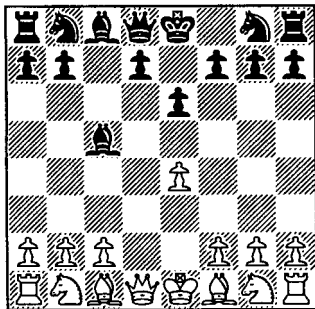
I have been suspicious before, and have been proved wrong. Perhaps a Bulgarian speaker among our readers will show me to have been wrong again. But it all seems very implausible, and until the source material is presented for inspection I am afraid I shall remain suspicious.

# AMBIGUOUS TACTICS

by Fabrice Liardet

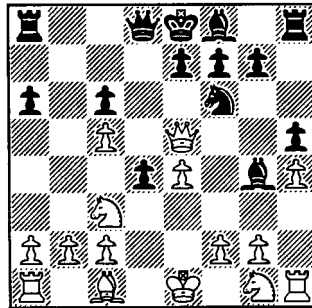
Every chess variant has some original tactics that make it special. The present article reviews six tactical patterns that occur in the very young variant of Ambiguous Chess.

Recall that in Ambiguous Chess a player only chooses the destination of his move, it is his opponent who decides which of the possible men moves there. On promotion, the piece is chosen by the opponent of the pawn's owner. There is no check, checkmate or stalemate rule, the goal is to capture the king. For clarity I will nevertheless use the term "check" for a threat to capture the king, and "mate" when the king will inevitably fall next move.

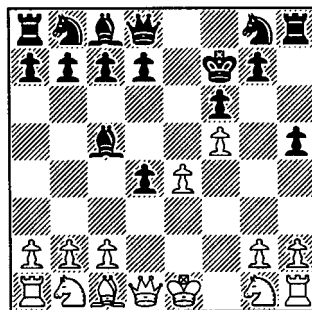


**1. King suction** (Fabrice Liardet - Laurent Schneider, Branking 2006, after 1 d4 c5 2 dxc5 e6 3 e4 Bxc5?). **4 Qxd7+! Kxd7.** The attacker decides which piece recaptures, so it is much easier to draw the enemy king into the open in Ambiguous Chess than in Standard Chess. **5 Bb5#.** Why is this mate? Black seems to have three safe squares available for his king, d6, c7, and e7, and in addition he can apparently interpose the knight on c6. However, each of these is "ambiguous". If Black tries to play to d6, White moves the black bishop there, and takes the unmoved king; if he tries c7 or e7, White moves the queen there; and if he tries to interpose on c6, White leaves the knight where it is, and puts the king himself there!

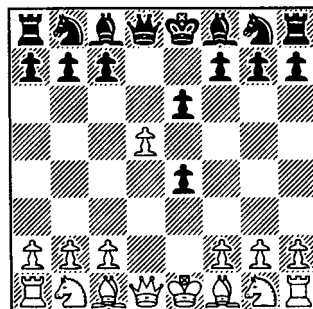
**2. Decoy** (Laurent Schneider - Fabrice Liardet, Branking 2006, diagram at top of next column).



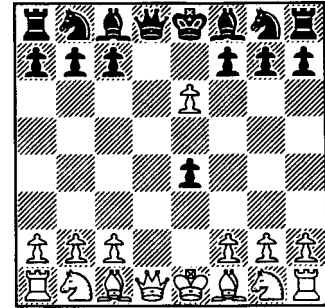
After the king suction **1 Qxe7+!! Kxe7**, the Nf6 is decoyed by **2 Nd5+!** This knight must be captured and White makes Black take with the Nf6, leading to **2...Nxd5 3 Bg5#**. This is another tactic which is much more effective here than in Standard Chess.



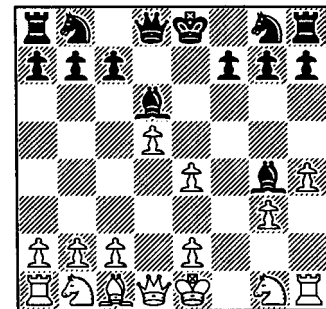
**3. Interception** (example by John Beasley). **1 Bh6!** threatens **2 Qxh5#**, and if Black tries "capture on h6" White chooses **1...Nxh6** and **2 Qh5#** still follows. But there is nothing better for Black, except for the spite check **1...Bb4+ 2 Kf1**.



**4. Queen block** ("Matarilevich" - Filip Rachunek, Branking 2006, after 1 d4 d5 2 e4 dxe4 3 d5 e6). Black can survive an immediate check on b5 by blocking on c6, but after **4 d6!** the pawn must be taken (the threat is **5 d7#**, and if **4...Kd7** then **5 dxc7#**). So **4...Qxd6**, and the black queen controls c6, allowing White to suicide her: **5 Bb5+ Qc6 6 Bxc6+**.



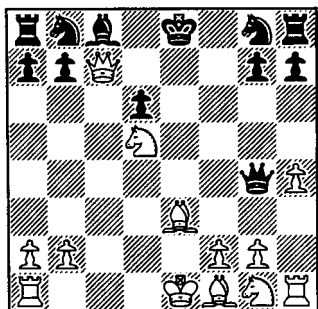
**5. Pin** (variation from the previous game). This would have arisen had White played **4 dxe6?** After **4...Bb4+ 5 Nc3** the white knight is pinned. In Ambiguous Chess, pins are especially strong, because no friendly piece can move to a square accessible to the pinned piece. So **5...Qxd1#!** is mate. White cannot take the queen because it is his pinned knight that would be chosen to capture, letting the black bishop through to capture the king.



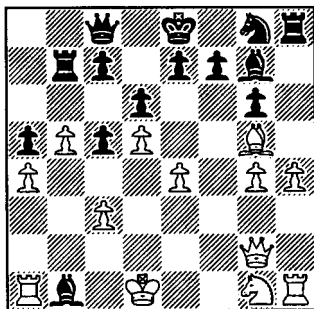
**6. (Not so) friendly control** ("Harry" - Fabrice Liardet, Branking 2006). The white king has an escape route through f1-g2. The classic way to play the attack would be by the king suction **1...Bxg3+ 2 Kf1 Bxe2+!**? **3 Kxe2 Qc8**, but White can fight on with **4 Qd4**. Less obvious but much more effective is **1...Bxe2! 2 Qxe2!** (the exclamation mark is for Black's choice) **Bxg3#**. Now the white queen has been lured into controlling f1; indeed she controls all squares around the white king, effectively paralyzing him. White could have avoided mate only by **2 Kf2** abandoning the queen.

This tactic can feature other pieces, but the queen in front of her king remains its most striking example.

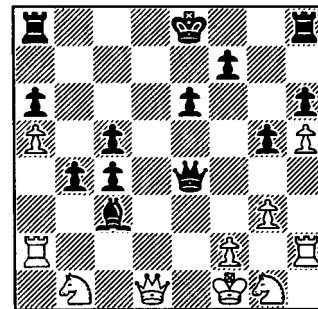
Opposite are six exercises using these patterns. They are not easy, especially if you are new to the game, so there are hints. Answers on page 19.



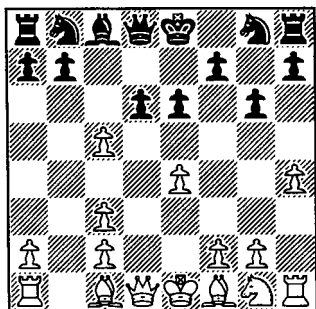
1 - Black to play and mate  
(relatively easy)  
Hint : King suction



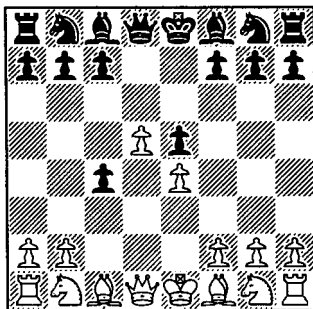
2 - Black to play and mate (medium)  
Hint : Decoy and a touch of friendly control



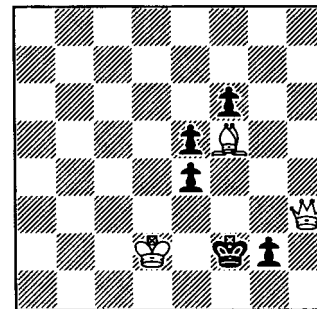
3 - Black to play and mate  
(hard)  
Hint : Interception



4 - White to play and win material  
(hard)  
Hint : Queen block and king suction



5 - Black to play and mate  
(hard)  
Hint : Pin



6 - "Mate in three" : White to play and win the king in four moves (very hard)  
Hint : Friendly control

## BUGHOUSE VARIATIONS

Although Bughouse is a recent innovation, its origins are already shrouded in mystery. The earliest reference in David Pritchard's files appears to be a passing mention by Ralph Betza on page 19 of *Nost-algia* 174 (October 1974), which I quote in full:

"I just remembered some important Chess Variant news -- New England Double Bughouse Chess is alive and well and flourishing in skittles rooms everywhere. NEDBC is a sort of Chessgi with two-man teams, AB vs. CD. A is Wh. versus C, B is Bl. vs. D; When A captures a piece from C he hands it to B, who then has it in his reserve-board to use in his game against D. Each guy has 5 minutes (2 clocks are used, one for each game in the normal manner)."

These are exactly the modern rules, so even at that stage the game had matured into its contemporary form. It is therefore difficult to tell whether modern simpler versions are genuinely new, or whether they are merely reinventions of versions which had been tried prior to 1974 and been rejected in favour of what has become the real thing.

**Bug For Two** was played by Sergiy Vasylykevych and his brother at a time prior to the Internet when they could not find a third and fourth for ordinary bughouse and had only one clock anyway (see Georg von Zimmermann's *Bughouse Chess*, reviewed last time, pages 108-9). Players

move in order White A, White B, Black B, Black A, pressing the clock after each move. This takes away the "Sit!" strategy, since play is automatically synchronized, and would appear to produce a game closer to Chessgi than to true bughouse. For all that, it might be worth resurrecting as a two-player game in its own right.

**Richmond Exchange Chess**, which was brought to my attention by David Sedgwick last December, would appear to be essentially the same game but played by partnerships. David sent me a posting by Stewart Reuben on the English Chess Federation website, relating to its invention at Richmond Junior Chess Club on Saturday December 9.

Stewart gives an unusual but highly valid reason for administrative disapproval. He starts with the uncompromising statement "I passionately loathe Exchange or Bug-House chess" and ends with a cry from the heart:

"But why do I have such antipathy to Exchange Chess? It is because the children often fail to sort out the pieces and it gets left to the organiser. Peter Sowray [the director of the club] ... solves this by making the main rule that, at the conclusion of the session, the pieces must be reassembled into normal sets ..."

I am reminded of a rule which is occasionally used in problem-solving competitions, that a competitor receives one point for writing his name at the top of his solution paper. If you have ever conducted such an event, you will understand the need for this.

# A REMARKABLE MAGIC TOUR IN THREE DIMENSIONS

Some correspondence with Awani Kumar, whose pioneering 12x12 diagonally magic knight's tour was reprinted in VC 43, has reminded me that it is some time since we last reported developments in this field. We can never expect to receive state-of-the-art work for first publication, because the leading workers in the field use more specialized outlets which they all see. However, it is a subject in which many of our readers have at least a passing interest, and an occasional report on what has been achieved appears to be in order. I have therefore asked George Jelliss to bring me up to date, and among other things he has sent me a remarkable tour on a 4x4x4 cube which Guenter Stertenbrink constructed in 2003.

To set the scene, let us look briefly at two "ordinary" magic squares (in other words, not knight's tours) :

4 9 2	07 12 01 14
3 5 7	02 13 08 11
8 1 6	16 03 10 05
	09 06 15 04

Fig 1

Fig 2

Figure 1 is Chinese, believed by tradition to be many thousands of years old; Figure 2 is 11th-century Arabic. (Source: W. S. Andrews, *Magic squares and cubes*, Dover, 1960, pages 122-5.)

Figure 1 has the property that each row and column adds to the same amount, 15, and so do the main diagonals. We shall call such a square "diagonally magic", the number 15 being called the "magic constant". The same is true of Figure 2, the magic constant now being 34, and in addition the "broken diagonals" such as a2-b3-c4-d1 and a2-b1-c4-d3 also add to the same amount. We shall call such a square "pandiagonally magic". This particular square has further properties: the values at the corners of any 2x2 square within it add to the magic constant, and the values at any pair of antipodean points (points two rows and two columns apart, such as a1 and c3) add to half of it.

Now to knight's tours. The first successful attempt to create a magic knight's tour was by William Berkeley in 1848, but his tour was only "row and column magic": the rows and columns added to the magic constant (260 for an 8x8 square), but the diagonals did not. Continuing attempts to find a diagonally magic knight's tour on an 8x8 board were unsuccessful, and eventually a co-ordinated set of computers was told to perform a comprehensive search. This showed that there were 140 row-and-column magic tours, but that none of them was diagonally magic; to obtain a diagonally magic tour, it was necessary to go to a 12x12 board. All this was reported by George in VC 43.

I was therefore very interested when George reported Guenter Stertenbrink's discovery of a closed-loop 4x4x4 tour which was magic not only along rows, columns, and "lines through", but also on the four "space diagonals" :

53 16 43 18	310 033 222 101
42 19 56 13	221 102 313 030
15 54 17 44	032 311 100 223
20 41 14 55	103 220 031 312
02 59 32 37	001 322 133 210
29 40 03 58	130 213 002 321
60 01 38 31	323 000 211 132
39 30 57 04	212 131 320 003
47 22 49 12	232 111 300 023
52 09 46 23	303 020 231 112
21 48 11 50	110 233 022 301
10 51 24 45	021 302 113 230
28 33 06 63	123 200 011 332
07 62 25 36	012 331 120 203
34 27 64 05	201 122 333 010
61 08 35 26	330 013 202 121

Fig 3

Fig 4

The "space diagonals" join opposite corners: 53-40-11-26, 18-03-48-61, 20-01-46-63, and 55-38-09-28.

Closer investigation discloses some interesting patterns. Suppose that we reduce all the numbers by 1, so that they run from 0 to 63, and put them into quaternary notation (where the successive digits represent sixteens, fours, and units, instead of hundreds, tens, and units). This gives Figure 4, and the row-and-column magic property becomes obvious: in each row, column, and line through, we have a 0, a 1, a 2, and a 3 in the "sixteens" positions, the same in the "fours" positions, and the same again in the units positions. The sums are therefore automatically the same, and no further arithmetic is necessary.

There is more. In Figure 2, we saw that antipodean pairs added to half the magic constant. Antipodean pairs here are two away in row, column, and level, and it is soon seen that we cannot hope for the same property; their values are either both odd or both even, but the magic constant is 130, half of it is 65, and two odd or two even numbers cannot add to an odd one. But if we look more closely, we see that all the odd pairs add to 64 and all the even pairs to 66, and this is consistent enough to be useful. Suppose the board chequered in the usual way, the cell holding value 1 being dark. All the dark cells now have odd values, and all the light cells even values. But the cells in a space diagonal are alternately dark and light, so a space diagonal consists of two dark cells and two light, and since these are antipodean pairs the sum is automatically 64 + 66 = 130. Furthermore, the same is true also of the 60 broken space diagonals. So Figure 3 is not merely diagonally magic with respect to the space diagonals, it is pandiagonally magic.

Figure 3 has further properties for which readers may care to look, and its construction will repay examination. It is built from a sequence of diamonds and squares, normally alternating but with two squares together at 29-32 and 33-36, but of course there is a lot more to it than this. It is one of the most fascinating sets of numbers which has come my way since I started taking an interest in such things over fifty years ago.



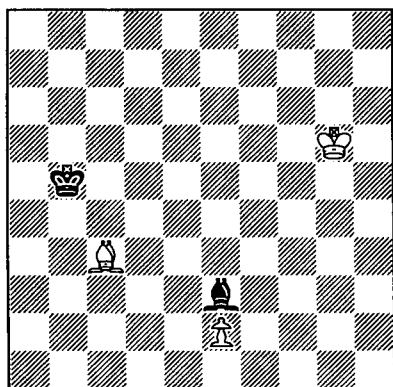
## NEW GAMES

**Deca-Chess** and **Hyper-Chess** by Jon Alex Coby;  
**Seirawan-Chess** by Yasser Seirawan.

Of all developments of chess, the most frequently put forward over the years has been the addition of knight power to one or more of rook, bishop, and queen. The oldest such games known to David Pritchard were the 16th-century Amazon Chess with Q+N and Carrera's R+N and B+N game of 1617, and his files included some thirty reinventions including Bird's in 1874 and Capablanca's in the 1920s. We now have some further entrants in what is frankly a grossly overcrowded field. Should I therefore dismiss them without further ado?

In fact no. It is true that they differ only in assemblage from what has gone before, but in each case the inventors have thought about the implications of what they were doing and have gone to some trouble to produce a playable game, and they have accompanied the statement of its rules with some sensible pieces of analysis. This in itself is a reason for giving them a proper hearing.

The first of these games to reach me was Jon Coby's **Deca-Chess**. Board 10x10; extra pieces are Duke (R+N) and Prince (B+N); pawn captures as usual but its non-capturing move can be one or two squares at any time and up to three squares initially, e.p. permitted throughout; baseline RNBDQKPrBNR; castling moves the king three squares towards the rook. No detail of this is new (even the name has been used before, albeit without the hyphen) and only the extended pawn move distinguishes the game from its predecessors, but this extended move changes the flavour both of the ending and of the middle game. Try the following, which is one of over sixty Problems (38 Combinations, 24 Endings) in the instruction book :



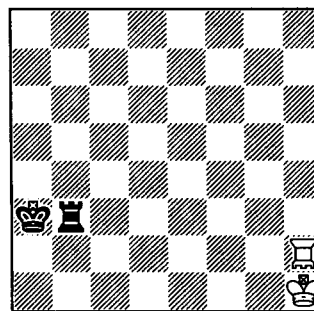
Answer on page 19.

Coby subsequently produced a 12x12 **Hyper-Chess**, which has been through several variations. The version on which he appears to have settled features the Duke and Prince as above, Wizard (Q+N), Squire (moves like K but is not subject to check), and three flavours of Pawn: Hyper (can promote to any piece), ordinary (can promote to any piece except Wizard), and Squire (can promote only to

S, R, B, or N). Baseline RNBPrDWKQSBNR; pawn-row SpPHpHpPSPpPHpHpPSP; pawn (any flavour) can move one or two squares forwards at any time and up to four squares initially, e.p. always permitted; castling moves the king four squares towards the rook.

Yasser Seirawan's **Seirawan-Chess** approaches matters differently. The new pieces are Elephant (R+N) and Hawk (B+N), but the normal 8x8 board is used with the normal initial array and the extra men are brought into play as the game proceeds. Specifically, when a player first moves a piece from its initial square, he may place his E or H on the square vacated; when castling, he may place either E or H on either of the squares vacated, but he cannot place both. Promotion is allowed to any piece.

As with the Coby games, the virtue of this game rests less with the game itself, whose only novel feature is that the Elephant and Hawk are brought into play during the game instead of being present from the outset, than with the accompanying examples. Here is a neat systematic mate using the Elephant (elephant on h2, ordinary rook on b3) :



Answer again on page 19.

As a matter of personal taste, I have to say that I find "added knight power" games not particularly interesting. They may give an increase in tactical complexity, but they offer nothing really new. (Compare games where the extra pieces are weak and therefore expendable, when the ability to swap "weak piece for two pawns" and smash the enemy pawn line adds an extra strategic dimension to the game.) But each of these games offers something over and above the extra pieces, and their relative conservatism makes them readily accessible. Coby's games are being played by post (he would like to hear from further players interested in taking part), while Seirawan-Chess has been played in a tournament in Vancouver.

Both games are being marketed, but the samples sent to me by Coby were very much home-made prototypes and I have seen only photographs of Seirawan's proposed men. However, I approve of inventors who support the rules of their games with good examples of play, and I wish them well. I don't have prices, but I do have web references

<[www.pacifier.com/~jcoby](http://www.pacifier.com/~jcoby)>

<[www.chessmastery.com/seirawan-chess.html](http://www.chessmastery.com/seirawan-chess.html)>  
 and I am sure that enquiries will be answered.

# MODERN COURIER CHESS

by Paul Byway

We don't seem to have had any MCC since VC 51, so a brief reminder. Fers (inverted B in diagrams) moves one square diagonally, Courier (inverted N) leaps two squares orthogonally or diagonally. Baseline RNCBFQKFBNCNR (12x8 board). Unmoved K or F can make a double move, but not to capture nor through check. - JDB

White Paul Byway, Black John Beasley, from our postal tournaments T2/3.

- 1            f2-f4            f7-f5
- 2            i2-i4?!

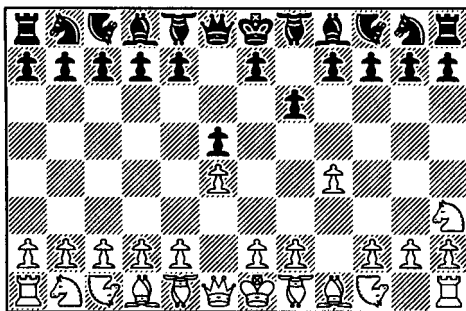
Premature, because it rules out a possible Qj5+. I have in mind a twin pillars formation with g3, j3, Bj2 (or k3), Fh3, Nl3, and an eventual e4. Possible was 2 Nc3 h6 3 d3 g5 4 fxg5 hxg5 5 g4 fxg4 6 Qj5+ i6 7 Qxg5+ but Black has 3...Ce6 4 e4 fxe4 5 dxe4 Cxe4 6 Nxe4 Bxe4 7 Bxj7 Nj6 with the better game. The whole question of White's best plan here remains open.

- 2            ...            h7-h6

2...Nj6 3 j3 h5 4 Fh3 h4, or 4 ixh5 Nxh5 5 e4 or g4 with complex play.

- 3            Nk1-13

With the idea: 3...g5 4 g3 g4 5 e4 and later Nc3, eventually attacking the head with h3; but this is ineffective. White has gone wrong already by overlooking the strength of ...Cc8-e6.



- 3            ...            g7-g5
- 4            g2-g3            g5-g4
- 5            e2-e4            Cc8-e6

Black worried about 6 exf5 Bxf5 7 Fh3 Qg7 but it looks as if this is more dangerous to white than black. Unclear is 7 Ch3 (gxh3;Bxj7) Bg6 8 Ch5 (threatens the fork f5 and the Pj7).

- 6            e4-e5            Nk8-j6
- 7            j2-j3            h6-h5
- 8            i4xh5            Nj6xh5
- 9            Fh1-h3

Taking advantage of the pin to develop.

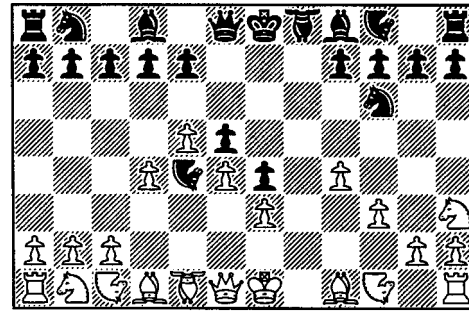
- 9            ...            Fe8-g6
- 10          Fh3-i4            Nh5-j6
- 11          d2-d4            Fg6-h5

- 12          h2-h3

Looking forward to Nd2 (against C), c3, Ce3, Ff2, Qg2.

- 12          ...            Fh5xi4?!
- 13          h3xi4            Ce6-e4

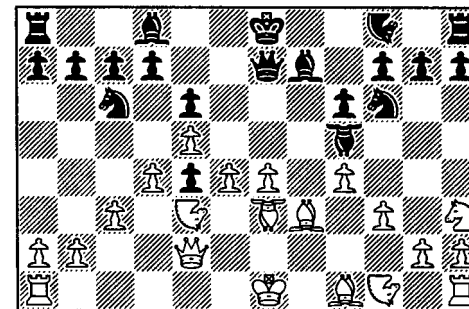
I feel a lot better about my position after the pawn exchange. Sacrificing a knight for the Ce4 at the right time, especially if I get a pawn as well, will not trouble me in the short term considering the relative activity of these pieces. The Courier cannot be allowed to remain in that unassailable spot.



- 14          Nb1-d2            e7-e6
- 15          Nd2xe4            f5xe4
- 16          Bd1xg4            i7-i6
- 17          c2-c3            Bi8-f5
- 18          Bg4-h3

Hoping to get the pawn roller moving. There is no point in exchanging to give myself another backward pawn.

- 18          ...            Qf8-g7
- 19          Qf1-e2            Fh8-h6
- 20          g3-g4            Bf5-h7
- 21          Fe1-g3            Fh6-i5
- 22          Cc1-e3            Nb8-c6



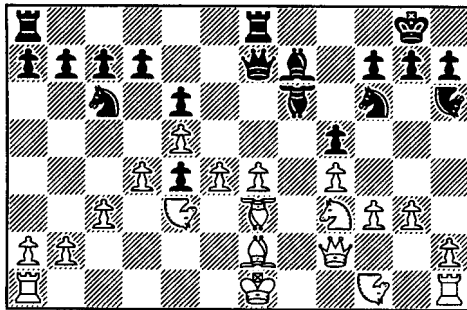
- 23          Bi1-j2            Bd8xj2

24 Nxj2 would perhaps be better.

- 24          ...            Fi5-h6
- 25          Qj2-i2            i6-i5
- 26          Nl3-j2            Cj8-16
- 27          Nj2-h1            Kg8-i7
- 28          Nh1-i3            Rl8-g8
- 29          k2-k3            Ki7-j8
- 30          Bh3-g2            Kj8-k8

White's bishop move screens the king, threatens the pawn and opens a path for the courier - which has good prospects; f5, h5 and j5 are all important squares. I think

that after moving to k8 the Black king is less secure than before.

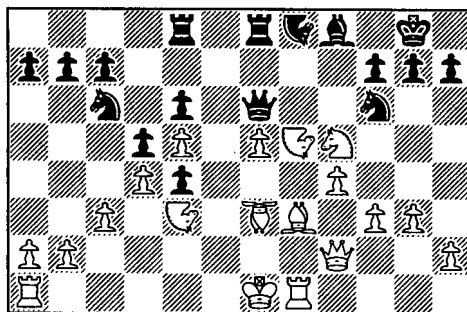


- 31 Cj1-h3 d7-d5
- 32 Ch3-h5 Bh7-i8
- 33 Rl1-h1

I took a risk in leaving Black a protected passed pawn at e4, but didn't want to open avenues of counterattack. Anyway I can transfer my attention to e6 and I seem to be moving forward in the centre.

- 33 ... C16-j8
- 34 g4-g5 Qg7-g6
- 35 Bg2-h3 Ra8-e8
- 36 Ni3-g4 Fh6xg5
- 37 f4xg5 Cj8-h8
- 38 Ng4xi5 Resigns

His centre giving way under the pressure, Black decided to resign, for there is little prospect of counterplay.



Results of the two MCC correspondence tournaments :-

T2	PB	JB	RR	RT	
Paul Byway	*	=	+	+	2.5
John Beasley	=	*	+	-	1.5
Robert Reynolds	-	-	*	+	1.0
Roy Talbot	-	+	-	*	1.0

T3	PB	JB	RR	
Paul Byway	**	=+	++	3.5
John Beasley	=-	**	++	2.5
Robert Reynolds	-	-	**	0.0

Entries are invited for the next correspondence tournament in Modern Courier Chess (T4), to start this autumn. I'm happy to state that the players in T2/3 are ready to go again. Games may be played via e-mail by mutual consent. Please send entries to PVB as soon as possible. Entrants can receive a printout of all the games from T2/3 if desired.

## ISOLATED PAWNS

**Early chessmen?** Roberto Cassano draws my attention to an article in the June issue of *L'Italia Scacchistica* describing four ancient pieces found in Albano, a village near Roma: are these the earliest known European chessmen? I am afraid my immediate reaction has to be cautious. If genuine, they would be some 500-1000 years older than the earliest chessmen hitherto known anywhere, let alone in Europe, and to justify such a radical rewriting of the accepted chronology I would want to see some cogent supporting evidence in documentary or other form. Look at

<[www.italiascacchistica.com/n1193.htm](http://www.italiascacchistica.com/n1193.htm)>

if you want to make up your own mind.

From Mats Winther: "I became interested in Parton's **Gorgona Chess** and **Gorgon Chess**, so I implemented them in Zillions, and, what do you know, it works! It is a very curious variant." He gives a web address

<<http://hem.passagen.se/melki9/gorgonchess.htm>>

and invites people to try it.

Jurgen Stigter has drawn my attention to two pre-war booklets relating to chess variants: **Marineschach** by Oskar Balasiewicz, Wien, c. 1936, and **Neuland des koeniglichen Spiels** by Alwis Goerig, Grulich, 1929. The first was privately published, possibly in quite a small edition, and appears to refer to a sea battle game on an 11x11 board that was not known to David Pritchard. The second refers to "Reformschach" and "Freischach", both names which have been used more than once, but from the date I suspect that the first reference is probably to Voss's game (*ECV* 2 page 60) and the second to either Brunner's game or Felisch's (both on *ECV* 2 page 76). More when we know it.

Concerning **Looking Glass Chess** (*ECV* 2 page 95), Alain Brobecker questions the need for two boards: 'Isn't it the same if we just say players have two royal queens instead of king+queen? Both "royal queens" can castle short or long, and a player loses as soon as one of his queens is checkmate. A pawn can promote to normal queen, but not to royal queen.' I must confess that this looks all too justified. He adds that it means checks by royal queens are illegal.

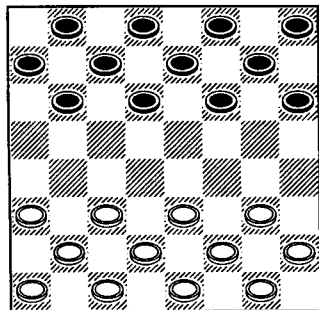
Alain has sent me some more material on **Retrograde Othello** (not to my surprise, he had solved the missing problem on page 163 before *VC* 54 appeared in print). He also tells me that at Messigny this year they played **Switching Chess** (a player can exchange pieces of identical colour as a move). Alain Villeneuve won the tournament. For the first time in many years, I didn't go; the holiday centre where the meetings are held was taken over by a chain a couple of years ago, and it had become clear that the new management had given orders that money be saved in the kitchen.

## IN PRAISE OF CHECKERS

It was announced in July that the game of checkers ("draughts" in England) had finally been solved; analysis by computer had shown that if both sides played without error from the normal initial position, the result would be a draw. The high proportion of draws in championship matches had caused this long to have been suspected, though the final proof required 18 years of work by Jonathan Schaeffer and a team at the University of Alberta. Does it follow that checkers as a game is now dead?

In my opinion, no. All right, victory over the board is possible only if the opponent makes a mistake, but this has always been true, and the same is true of every game of a similar kind. However, there is more to a game than the question of whether one of two particular non-expert players makes a catastrophic blunder before the other does, and the many beautiful positions that have been discovered can still be admired even when the overall result has been worked out. So to mark the solution of checkers, let us look at some of the classic positions and manoeuvres that have been discovered over the centuries.

The game is played on the dark squares of a chessboard, and each player starts with twelve men on his back three rows :

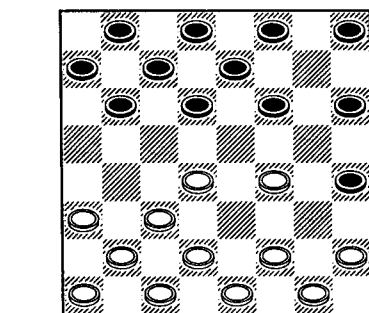


Each man can move one square diagonally forwards provided that the destination square is empty, or, if a square diagonally adjacent and in front is occupied by an enemy man and the square beyond is empty, it may jump over that man and remove it

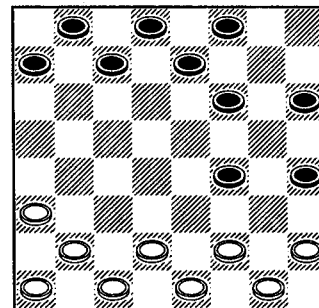
from the board. Furthermore, if after such a jump another man may be jumped, it can and indeed must be, and so on until further jumps are impossible. When a man reaches the opponent's back rank, it becomes a "king" (indicated by the placing of a second checker on top of the first), and on subsequent turns it can move and jump backwards as well as forwards. A player must capture (jump) if he can, and he must continue capturing as long as a capture is available; but if he has two or more captures available, he may choose which to make, and he need not choose that which will lead to taking the largest number of men. A jump to a back rank by a man terminates the turn even if a capture by the new king is immediately available. The object is to capture or block all the opponent's men. Other "draughts" games have different rules, but I think the name "checkers" applies only to the present form.

Simple rules. A child could learn them, and millions have done so. But a mere "children's game" it is not.

Millard Hopper, whose book *Win at Checkers* (Dover, 1956) includes some opening "blitzkriegs", says that the "Canalejas" trap which follows dates from 1500. **1 f6-g5** (in checkers, Black starts, so the first move of a pair is always Black's) **2 g5-h4** (moving away from the centre so early in the game is likely to be weak, though beginners often do it) **3 g3-f4** **3 g7-f6** (and this definitely loses) :

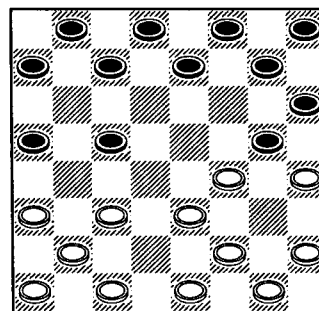


**3...f4-e5** **4 d6^f4** (Black must capture, the symbol "^" indicating that the move is a jump) **d4-c5** **4 b6^d4** (again Black must capture) **c3^e5^g7** **5 h8^f6** and so far Black is a man up (see diagram at top of next column). However, there is more to come :



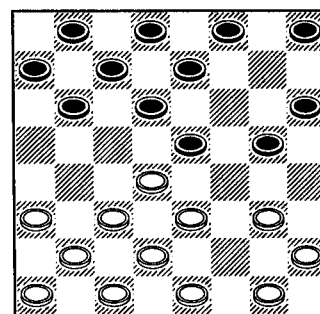
**5...f2-g3** (giving another but winning three) **6 h4^f2 e1^g3^e5^g7** and White has come out a man ahead (a routine win in expert hands).

Two more examples given by Hopper. **1 d6-c5 e3-f4** **2 f6-g5 d2-e3** **3 b6-a5 g3-h4??** :

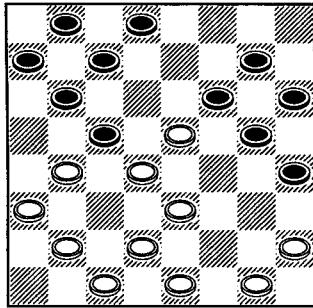


**4 c5-b4!** and White has an unenviable choice. If **4...h4^f6** then **5 b4^d2** knocks out the key defender at e1, and after **5...e1^c3** **6 g7^e5^g3^e1** Black is two men up (6...e1-f2 will exchange the new king on e1 for an ordinary man, but Black's advantage is still overwhelming); if **4...a3^c5** then **5 c7-d6!** **h4^f6** **6 d6^b4^d2 e1^c3** **7 g7^e5^g3^e1** and the same.

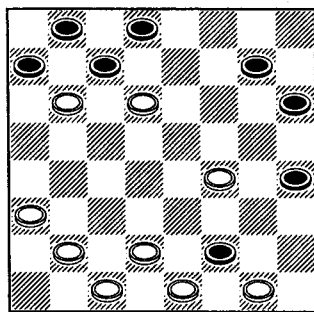
**1 f6-e5 e3-d4** **2 g7-f6 f2-e3** (a common and sensible opening) **3 f6-g5** (apparently sacrificing a man, but it comes straight back) :



**3...d4^f6** **4 g5-h4 g3-f4** **5 e7^g5 c3-d4** **6 h8-g7 b2-c3** **7 g7-f6 a1-b2** **8 d6-c5 f4-e5** **9 f8-g7 c3-b4??** :



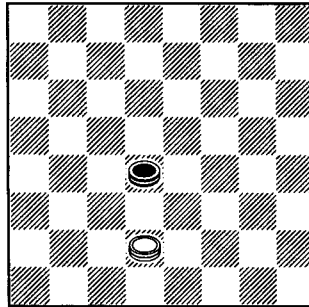
10 h4-g3! h2^f4 (10...b4^d6 at once makes no difference) 11 g5-h4 b4^d6 12 b6-c5! d4^b6 13 f6^d4^f2 :



White must now play 13...g1^e3 or 13...e1^g3 14 h4^f2 g1^e3, after which Black plays c7^e5^g3 and later picks up the helpless man on b6.

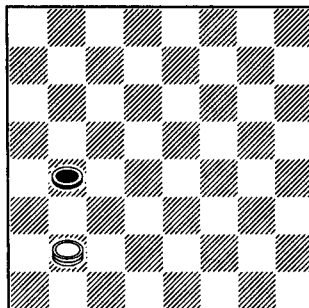
But the real subtlety of checkers only becomes apparent in the endgame, and in this respect it has been singularly ill-served by some of its elementary treatises. I have in front of me the 1950 edition of Hoyle, together with the seventh edition of a pamphlet *An Elementary Guide to the Scientific Games of Draughts and Chess* by A. Belasco (Horace Marshall and Son, September 1912, price One Penny, 250,000 sold of earlier editions), and in each case the solution to one of the positions that follow is presented as a single bare line up to the winning side's 41st move, without examination of any sideline and with little or no commentary. All right, printing in those days was vastly more laborious and expensive than it is now, but this skimpy treatment will surely have deterred many potential enthusiasts. The exposition that follows starts from square one and perhaps goes too far in the other direction, but I am sure that readers who already know most of it will skip and rejoin us at a suitable point.

Let us start with the fundamental ending of **king against king**. In chess, this is a dead draw; in checkers, it can sometimes be won. Consider the position below (in this and the diagrams that follow, all pieces are kings unless otherwise stated) :



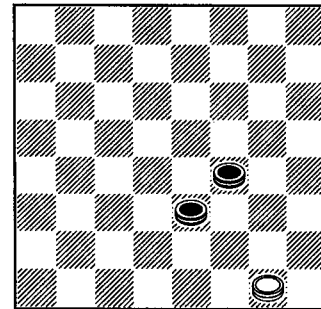
Here, White to play loses. He can only retreat, d2-e1 or d2-c1, but Black follows him down and White must give himself up next move. However, if Black is to play he can hold out. He retreats to what checker players call the "double corner" b8/a7, and White cannot winkle him out. If, Black being on b8, White plays to b6, Black can go to a7; if White then goes to c7, Black goes back to b8.

This is the simplest example of what checker players call "having the move". In a king-against-king duel, one side always has the initiative, and can compel the other to seek safety in a double corner. Indeed, even "man against king" can be a win if the man has this initiative. In the example above, White being to play, Black will win even if he has merely a man on d4. But move the position two files left (Black man b4, White king b2), and matters are different :



Now White to play will go to a3, Black will play to c3, and White will slip past him to b4 and will reach the double corner b8/a7.

**Two kings against one** is normally a win. Suppose that the lone king has taken refuge in a double corner :

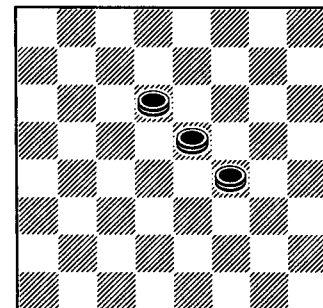


This may seem promising, but Black can winkle him out: 1 f4-g3 g1-h2 2 e3-f4 h2-g1 3 g3-h2 g1-f2 4 h2-g1 f2-e1 5 f4-e5! (5 f4-e3 allows 5...e1-f2, when Black will have to retreat and try again) e1-d2 6 e5-d4 and whether White tries 6...d2-c1 or 6...d2-e1, Black plays 7 d4-c3 and will capture next move.

There are a few cases in which the two kings to play cannot win (a3/c1 or a1/c1 against c3, a1/b2 against b4). However, these are rarely important. Normally, the two kings can quickly sort themselves out, and then play to a position giving the standard win.

**Two kings against two** is drawn unless one side can quickly prove otherwise. **Three kings against two** is one of the classic checker endings. Since two kings win against one, the attacker need only force an exchange, but it may not be easy. There are two main methods of defence.

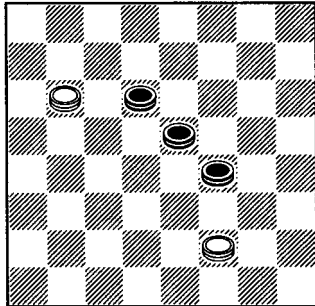
In the first, the defenders separate and go to different double corners. To beat this, Black plays to say d6/e5/f4 :



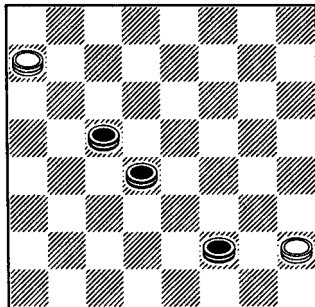
Now a White king on b8 or h2 will allow an immediate exchange, so White is effectively restricted to a7-or-b6 and g1-or-f2 (if White plays

a king away from a double corner, say to a5, d6-c5 takes this king out of the game, and Black can then play out a two-against-one win against the other). There are hence three cases.

(a) White on b6/f2 (which gives a position symmetrical about the diagonal a1-h8) :



Black plays **1 e5-d4**, White replies say **1...f2-g1**, and Black follows him down by **2 f4-g3**. To play **2...g1-h2** would allow **3 d4-e5** forcing an exchange, hence **2...b6-a7**, and **3 d6-c5** threatens **4 g3-f2** again forcing an exchange. **3...g1-h2**, therefore, but Black's reply **4 g3-f2** gives White an evil choice :

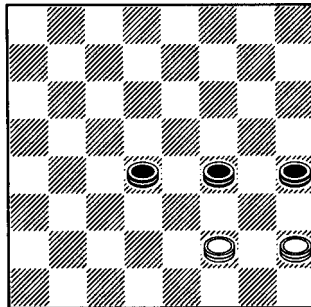


If **4...a7-b8** then **5 c5-b6** and an exchange will follow (say **5...b8-a7 6 f2-e3**). If **4...h2-g1** then **5 f2-e3** and again an exchange will follow.

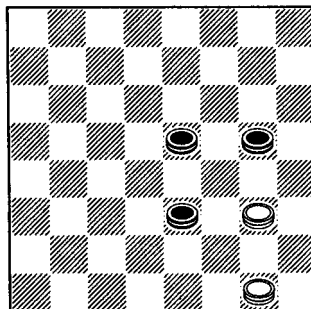
(b) White on a7/g1 (symmetric). Black again plays **1 e5-d4**, and soon transposes into the line above (say, **1...a7-b8 2 f4-g3 b8-a7 3 d6-c5**).

(c) White on a7/h2 (asymmetric). There is now no direct transposition, but Black can play **e5-d4**, **d6-c5**, and **f4-e3** to reflect his position about the diagonal a8-h1, and White, after the same number of moves, will be in one of the symmetric configurations **c7/g3** and **b8/h2** which we now know how to handle. In effect, by playing to reflect the position about the diagonal a8-h1, Black has lost a move.

In the second method of defence, the defenders go to the same double corner. This position is often quoted :

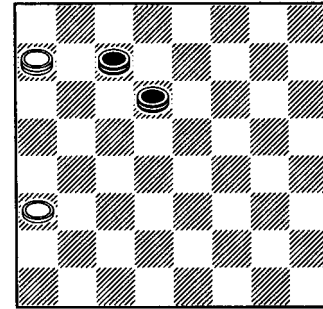


If White is to play, Black soon wins (**1...h2-g1 2 f4-g3 f2-e1 3 d4-e3 g1-h2 4 g3-f2** with an exchange, or **1...f2-e1 2 d4-e3 h2-g1 3 f4-g3** and the same). With Black to play, Hopper gives the clever **1 d4-e5 h2-g1 2 f4-g3 f2-e1 3 g3-h2 e1-f2 4 e5-f4!** (allowing **4...f2-g3 5 h4^f2 g1^e3^g5** gaining two for one, but **6 h2-g3** then gives Black a one-against-one win) **f2-e1 5 h4-g3 g1-f2 (5...e1-d2 6 f4-e3) 6 h2-g1!** (a second sacrifice) **f2^h4 7 f4-g3 h4^f2 8 g1^e3** with another one-against-one win. However, it seems to me that no sacrifices are needed. Just as effective appears to be **1 f4-e3 h2-g1 (1...f2-e1 2 e3-f2) 2 h4-g5** (but not **2 e3-d2**, when **f2-g3** gains two for one) **f2-g3** (if **2...f2-e1** then **3 g5-f6**, with **3...e1-f2 4 d4-e5** or **3...g1-h2 4 f6-e5** and **5 e3-d2**) **3 d4-e5** and what is White to do?

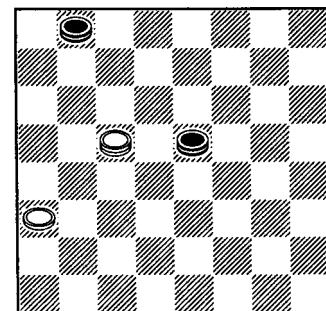


**3...g3-f2** allows **4 g5-f6** with an exchange, **3...g3-h4** allows **4 e3-d4** similarly, and other moves lose a king (**3...g1-h2 4 g5-h4, 3...g3-h2 4 e5-f4**).

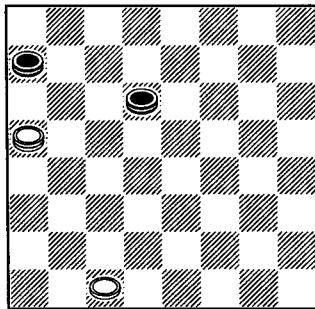
All this has been standard theory. The examples that follow, known as the First, Second, Third, and Fourth Positions, show some of the further discoveries made over the years.



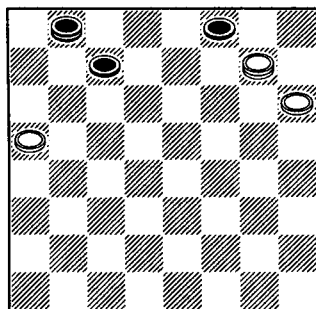
This is the so-called **First Position**. The piece at a3 is a man, and if it were at a5 Black would win at once (**1 c7-b8 a7-b6 2 b8-a7**, or **1...a5-b6 2 d6-c5**). So, in general, it is Black rather than White who wants the man to advance. Play starts **1 c7-b8 a7-b6 2 d6-e5** (2 **b8-a7 b6-c5** forcing an exchange and drawing), and Belasco and Hopper give two lines: **2...b6-a7 3 e5-d4 a7-b6 4 b8-a7** (safe now) **b6-c7 5 d4-e5 a3-b4** (delay will be worse, **5...c7-b8/d8 6 e5-d6 a3-b4 7 a7-b6 b4-a5 8 b6-a7) 6 a7-b8 c7-b6 7 e5-d4 b6-a7 (7...b4-c5 8 b8-c7 b6^d8 9 d4^b6** with a one-against-one win, **7...b4-a5** see move 3 in the line below) **8 d4-c3 (8 b8-c7 b4-c5** forcing a drawing exchange) **b4-c5 9 b8-c7 a7-b8 10 c7-d8 c5-d6** (nothing else is better) **11 c3-d4 b8-a7 12 d4-c5** and **2...a3-b4** (this is the same position as after **6...c7-b6** in the line above) **3 e5-d4 b4-a5 4 d4-e5 (4 b8-a7 b6-c5) b6-c5 5 b8-a7 c5-b4 (5...a5-b6 6 e5-d6 with a one-against-one win) 6 e5-d6 b4-c3 7 d6-c5 c3-b2 (7...c3-d2 8 c5-d4** winning quickly) **8 a7-b8** (the other king comes round to deal with White's king while the king on c5 looks after the man on a5) **b2-c3 9 b8-c7 c3-b2 10 c7-d6 b2-c3 11 d6-e5 c3-b2 12 e5-d4** etc. But Belasco and Hopper give only the moves in bold, and among lines not considered is **2...b6-c5** (below). Hoyle does give this; answer on page 19.



Hoyle gives an earlier "First Position" (Black men c3/f2, White king g7, man c1), which adds an extra twist. Black crowns his men (f2-g1, g1-e3, c3-e1), and if the White man advances we reach known ground. If White stays put, Black pushes his king back to the double corner and plays as for a two-against-one win, eventually reaching :

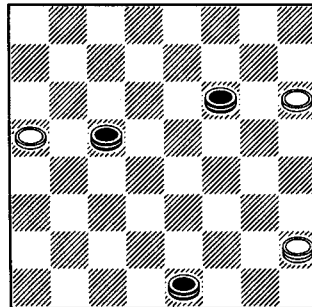


With no man on c1, the move would be d6-e5, but this now fails because White can play a5-b4 and then mark time on c3 and b2; if Black steps on b4 or d4, White plays to c3 and exchanges. The line is 1 d6-c5 a5-b6 2 c5-d4 b6-c7 (2...b6-a5 3 d4-c3 and wins at once) 3 d4-e5, soon forcing c1 forward with a win as before.

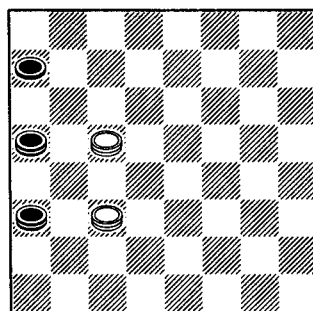


This is the **Second Position** (kings on b8 and g7, men elsewhere). 1-3 b8-c5 g7-f6, and if Black tries 4 c7-d6 White will play 4...f6-e7, aiming for 5-8...e7-a7 and 9 a5-b6, and will draw (if after 5 d6-e5 e7-d8 Black tries 6 c5-d6, 6...d8-e7 will drive him back since d6-c7 loses a man). So the man on f8 must run first: 4 c5-d4 f6-g5 5 d4-e5 g5-h4 6 e5-f6 h4-g3 7-8 f8-d6 g3-e3 9 d6-e5 e3-f2 (even a man can sometimes force a king back to a double corner - if instead 9...e3-d2, 10 e5-d4 etc wins at once) 10 e5-f4 f2-g1 11-13 f4-e1. Now it is the turn of the man on c7: 14-17 e1-c5 and 18-23 c7-e1. Black has crowned

his men, but White can play to h2, and how is Black going to clinch the win?



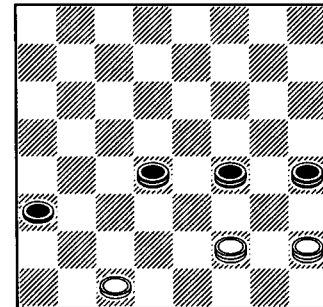
Answer again on page 19.



In the absence of the kings on a3 and c3, the **Third Position** (Black man on a7) would be a simple draw: 1 a5-b6 c5-d6 2 b6-a5 d6-c5 etc. The extra kings allow Black to win, but the first stage is spectacular: 1 a5-b6 c3-d4 (c5-d6 now allows b6-c5 forcing an exchange, as does c5-d4) 2 b6-c7 (2 a3-b2 allows 2...c5-d6, after which Black must go back and try again) d4-c3 3 c7-b8! But if instead Black tries 3 c7-d8, 3...c5-d6 forces 4 a7-b6, and 4...d6-c7 5 b6-a5 c7-d6 gives a draw.

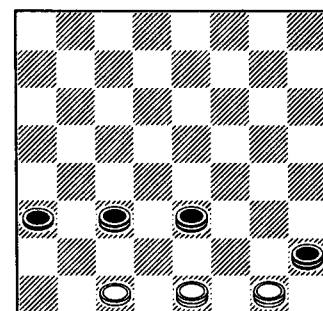
White must now release his grip, and the win is achieved by playing one Black king round to f8 and threatening d6 with the other. White cannot afford an exchange, so this will make him relinquish c5. Belasco gives 3...c3-d4 4 a3-b2 d4-e5 5 b8-c7 c5-b4 6 c7-d8 b4-c5 7 b2-c3 e5-d6 8 c3-d2 c5-d4 9 a7-b6 d6-c7 10 b6-a5 c7-d6 11 d2-e1 d6-c5 12 e1-f2 d4-c3 13 f2-e3 c3-b2 14-16 d8-f6-e5 b2-c3 17 e3-f2 c3-d2 18-22 f2-h4-h6-g7 d2-c3 23 g7-f8 c5-b6 24 e5-d6, and Hoyle adds some variations. But all this strikes me as needing no more than reasonable care; it is the initial retreat to the corner that stays in the mind.

The **Fourth Position** depends on the situation below :



This is one of our three-against-two wins spiced with extra men on a3 and c1, and the man on c1 spoils our earlier winning lines. However, if Black is to play he can exploit this man for an alternative win, playing to d2 at an appropriate moment and forcing White to capture.

The play goes 1 d4-e5 f2-e1 (1...h2-g1 yields more quickly, 2 f4-g3 f2-e1 3 g3-h2 etc) 2 h4-g3 h2-g1 (if 2...e1-d2 then 3 g3-f2 cuts White's position in half) 3 g3-h2 e1-f2 4 f4-g5 (an immediate 4 e5-d4 would allow 4...f2-e3 gaining two for one) f2-e1 5 g5-h4 e1-f2 6 e5-d4 f2-e1 7 d4-c3 e1-f2 8 c3-d2! (the sacrifice is only temporary) c1^e3 9 h2-g3, and if White tries to save his king on f2 by 9...f2-e1 Black has 10 g3-f2 gaining two for one.



The actual "Fourth Position" is shown above, and Black to play wins by 1 h2-g3 g1-h2 2 g3-h4 h2-g1 3 c3-d4 (careful! - if Black plays 3 e3-f4, White attacks the king on c3 by 3...c1-d2, and wherever it goes he has a two-for-one by 4...d2-e3) g1-h2 4 e3-f4 etc. But if White is to play, Black cannot win.

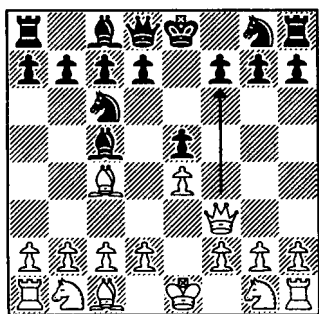
In truth, a fascinating game. Please report any errors.

# PITFALLS OF INVENTION

by Peter Fayers

A series of postings on the Retro Corner <www.janko.at/retros> e-mail list made an interesting case study in how a seemingly simple idea for a new variant can open up a huge can of worms. Let me first point out that the contributors are, for the most part, not such much players as logicians and philosophers - far more interested in dissecting rules and finding paradoxes than actually playing the game.

The original idea was for **En Passant Chess**: any unit can be captured en passant. Consider the classic Scholar's Mate, 1 e4 e5 2 Bc4 Bc5 3 Qf3 Nc6 4 Qxf7:



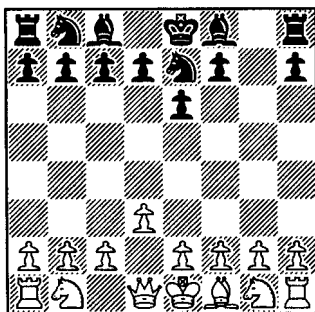
This isn't mate because: 4...e5xQf4 or 4...g7xQf6 or 4...N/QxQf6.

This evoked a lot of interest, firstly pointing out that similar ideas had been mooted in the past. David Bronstein has proposed to extend the en passant capture of pawns, to give the right for pieces too. E.g. 1 d4 h5 2 Bxh6. More surprisingly, the idea already exists in orthodox chess; "A player may not castle through check" is just another way of saying "Kings may be captured en passant".

One early proposal we quickly agreed on was the question of capturing a Knight en passant. It was suggested that it could be captured on the orthogonal intervening square, as if it were a Chinese Knight (Mao). But why? A Knight moving b1-c3 leaps over any units, enemy or friendly, on b2 or c2, so why should it be affected

by an enemy unit landing there mid-move? No reason at all. So, on the basis of this logic, we agreed that Knights cannot be captured e.p.

Naturally I joined in the debate by composing a proof game, just as a proof of concept:



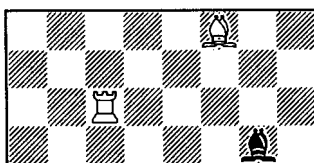
After Black's third. Game Score?

This evoked the question "If Bg5 was captured en passant on e7, it never reached d8, so how did it capture the bQ?" After much philosophical discussion as to the nature of "capture e.p.", including metaphors of billiard balls, laser weapons, supply trains and rugby tackles, the consensus was that units should be restored: if a captor is subsequently captured "in passing", it could never have reached its target and made the capture in the first place.

So the diagram should have bQd8, in which case the problem in no longer valid, White's 3rd move could have been simply 3 Be7.

However, taking it one step further, this restoration rule must also apply to Kings. That means in the Scholar's Mate position, after 4 Qxf7, Black may play 4...KxQf7 with impunity; the K cannot be captured by the Bishop as 5 Bxf7 would be intercepted by 5 Pd7xBe6 ep.

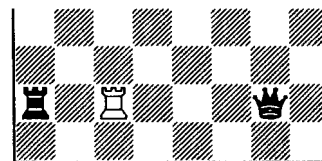
All well and good, except:



Play 1 Bd6 Bxe7 ep 2 Rxf6 ep. As the black B never reached e7, the white B wasn't captured, and so reached d6. But if we restore wBd6, the wR could never have got to f6 ...

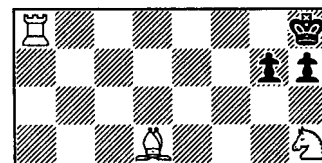
This paradox forced the additional rule forbidding consecutive e.p. captures, formally "a unit making an en passant capture may not itself be captured en-passant whilst making that move". The rationale was a ruling on simultaneous movement: Black is entitled to start moving Bh4 to e7 as soon as White start moving Bf8, in order to capture it en passant, but White cannot start moving Ra5 as Bh4 starts, because he is still moving his bishop ! Whereas we can accept a player starting his move whilst his opponent is still moving, we cannot allow a player to start a second move (Rb6-c6-d6...) while still making his previous move Bf8-e7.

So far so good, but then a new controversy surfaced - can units be captured en passant along the line of movement? Instinct says no, but the rugby analogy says yes - tackles can be made both from directly behind and directly in front of the player, as anyone who watched the great Gavin Hastings in his heyday can attest. So, in the position below:



If W plays 1 Rf2, Black can reply RxR ep, leaving the bR on either of d2/e2, or QxR ep, leaving the bQ on d2/e2. But what if W plays 1 Rxcg2? can the bQ capture Qxe2 in self-defence? Well, Gavin Hastings could quite happily flatten anyone running straight at him, so again one has to say yes, self-defence ep captures along the line of movement are allowed.

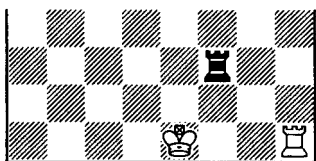
Ah, yes, but ...



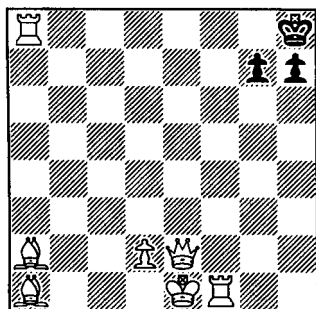
Despite appearances Black is not checkmated, in fact not even in check. The capture 1 RxKh8 would be met by KxRg8 ep, and then 2 BxKg8 would be met by KxBf7. The only



way a King can be checked is by a Knight, or by a line piece from an adjacent square. In the diagram, W can checkmate by either 1 Bf7# or 1 Nf6#. From this it is apparent that the ending K+RvK is drawn: in the position wKa6, wRc8, bKa8, Black is stalemated.



This gets murkier still when combined with the "no consecutive ep captures" rule. In the position above, W can play 1 Kf1 with impunity, but castling is illegal. Work that one out!



Reductio ad absurdum, we can end up with a position like this. Here, the black King is not in check, but White can checkmate with 1 Pd3#. I'll leave it to the reader to work out why.

This article was collated from material posted by Franco Fedeli (Italy), Noam Elkies (USA), Joose Nom (Finland), Guus Rol (Netherlands), Pascal Wassong (France) and Andrew Buchanan (Globetrotter). After writing it, I checked in ECV, and sure enough EP chess is mentioned, invented by the Knights of the Square Table (NOST) back in 1978. It gives the basic rule, and the first edition gives an example opening. With these rules captured pieces are reborn, eliminating all the paradoxes, but they do allow a Knight to be captured en passant, which seems totally illogical to me (and completely unthematic to me - JDB).

So there you have it; the combined brains of logicians and philosophers

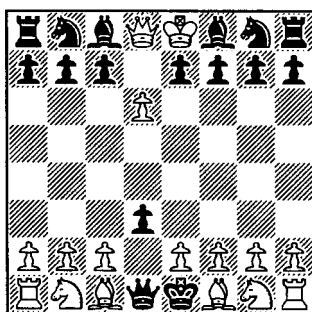
come up with an abomination like that giving 1 Pd3#, whereas the players invent a straight-forward variant. There's a moral in there somewhere ...

## PROOF GAMES

by Peter Fayers

The good news is that the NOST definition means my e.p. proof game above is valid - it shouldn't take very long to solve. Also, I have received a trickier problem from Michael Grushko. This uses **Messigny Chess**: Instead of taking his normal move, a player may swap any of his units with an opponent's unit of the same type. The next player may not then immediately use either of the units in another swap. In 49, White for his next move could swap Ra1 with Rh8, provided neither unit was swapped by Black's last move.

49 - Michael Grushko, Original



After Black's 4th, Messigny

The Retros Corner drew my attention to a puzzle website

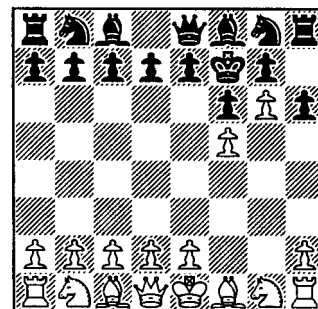
<[www.greylabyrinth.com](http://www.greylabyrinth.com)>

with a new type of chess problem which is similar to proof games. You are given a game score, but instead of being told which specific units move, are only told the type of unit. This can either be Human (K, Q or B), Animal (N or R, harking back the early days of chess when the Rook was the elephant), or Pawns (which, being mere foot-soldiers, are not considered human, a trait followed by the officer class over the centuries.) Captures (and type captured) and checks are noted. Given this limited information, you are then asked to work out the

final position. An example composed by "Coyote":

White	Black
1 Pawn	Pawn
2 Pawn	Pawn
3 Pawn	Human
4 Pawn	Human
5 Pawn checkmate.	

From this, it is possible to work out the final position on the board:



Note the difference to a Proof Game - the sequence of moves does not have to be unique, only the resultant position. Here many pawns moves are transposable. The Black moves could have been tidied up by putting them in sequence Pawn, Human, Human, Pawn, which fixes the individual moves, but the sequencing of the White moves is beyond redemption.

Not only the sequence of the moves, but the actual paths the units take can be ambiguous, as long as the final position is fixed. Another example from Coyote:

White	Black
1 Animal	Animal
2 Animal	Animal
3 Animal	Animal
4 Animal x Human	Animal
5 Animal x Animal	Animal
6 Animal x Pawn	checkmate.

Finally, a "Proof Game" example. In this one, again by Coyote, every single move in the game, and their sequence is fixed. A fine achievement.

White	Black
1 Animal	Animal
2 Animal	Animal
3 Animal x Pawn	Animal
4 Animal x Animal	Animal
5 Animal x Animal	Animal
6 Animal x Animal	Animal
7 Animal x Animal.	

Solutions on page 19.

# THE END IS NIGH !

by Paul Byway

## Solutions to competition 30

- #183 7 Ba6 Bxb7 Nc3 Nd5 Ke2 Rhd1 Nf6 mate. #184 9 g6 gxh7 b4 b5 bxc6 cxb7 b8Q Qe8 h8Q mate.
- #185 9 c4 a4 a5 a6 axb7 b8Q Qxc7 Qf4 Bh3 mate. #186 8 Kd6 Bd4 Re8 Re1 Rxa1 Bg4 Bxf3 Rd1 mate.
- #187 8 Kd7 Ng4 e6 Bc5 Bxf2 Ne3 Rxc8 Rxc2 mate. #188 8 Bc4 c5 Ke6 Kf5 Kg4 Rd8 Rd2 Re2 mate.
- #189 1 Pf7+ Kf9 2 Cf3+ Rf5 3 Pf8+ Kf10 4 Pf9+ Ke10 5 Cb3 Rb5 6 Cc3 Re5+ 7 Kd1 Rd5+ 8 Ke1 Ec6 9 Ce3+ Ee8 10 Ce7 Rd6 11 Cb7 Rb6 12 Cb10+ Rxb10 13 Kf1 wins.
- #190 1 Cf1+ Rf6 2 Pxf8+ Kf10 3 Pf9+ Ke10 4 Pf10+ Rxf10 5 Cc1 Rf3+ 6 Gxf3 Kf10 7 Cf1+ Ke10 8 Ke2 wins.

Ian Richardson gave alternative solutions to #186 and #187. They run as follows:-

- #186 8 Kd6 c6 Kxd5 Bc5 Kd4 Re8 Re1 Bb4 Italian mate. #187 8 Kf7 g6 Bg7 Rxc8 Rc3 Re3 Re1 Nf3 mate.

The current scores:-  
FG 134, IR 115, JB 42, RC 39, PW 35, CL 24, RT 19, NE 2.

## Competition 31 is alongside.

A note from Roberto Cassano on the game Brodie-Elkies (VC 49) as commented on in VC 53 (TEIN, page 146). My suggestion for Black's 6th has been played before. Roberto finds 4 games - all won by Black. They continue from the diagram

7 Bd2 Bxb4 c4 cxb5 bxc6 Ke2 \*\* where White's last is different in each case.

Benedetto-Polacco (1990), Mapelli-Leoncini (1990) ...Nf3 8 h5 h4 Rh5 Rxe5 Rb8 Rxb4 Rxd4 Ng3 mate.

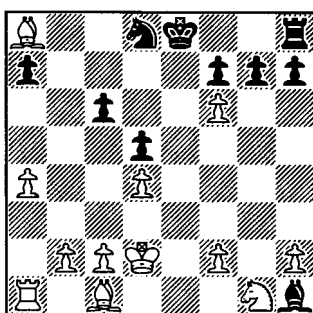
Viola-Polacco (1990) ...Rxa7 8 g5 g4 g3 gxf2 fxc1Q Rg8 Rg3 Re3 mate.

Cassano-Bertello (1990) ...Ra5 8 g5 g4 g3 gxf2 Rg8 Rg3 Rf3 f1Q mate.

Roberto suggests 5 exf6 fxc7 gxh8Q Nc3 Bxc6+ (+34 =1 -5).

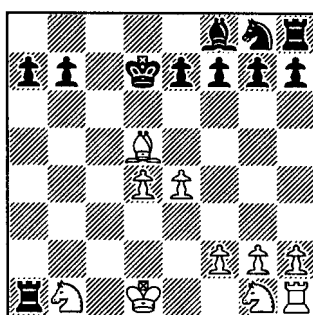
More on this later, perhaps.

#191 Del Frate - Castelli (1988)



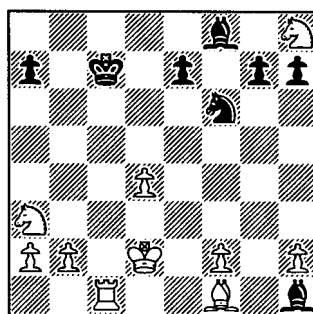
Black wins (series 8)

#192 Cialov - Petruk (1993)



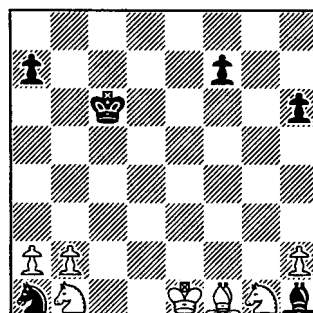
White wins (series 7)

#193 Sala - Gadzinskaya (1991)



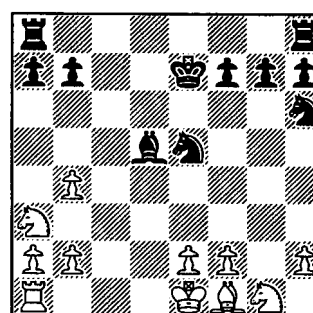
Black wins (series 8)

#194 Gatto - Wolff (1991)



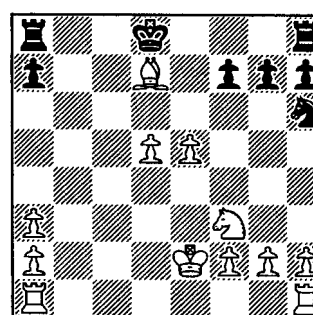
White wins (series 9)

#195 Rallo - Manzini (1988)



White wins (series 7)

#196 Genik - Gadzinskaya (1993)



Black wins (series 8)

#197 Cannon + Pawn #11

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

XiangQi : Red to play and win

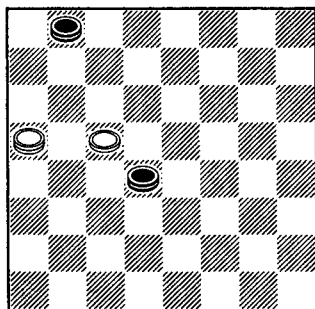
#198 Cannon + Pawn #16

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

XiangQi : Red to play and win

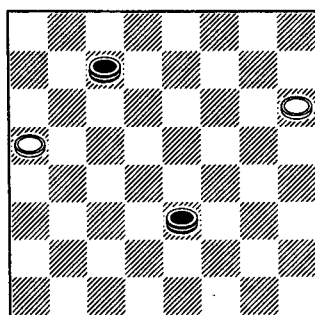
# SOLUTIONS

**Checkers** (pages 14-15). "First Position", after 2...b6-c5. Hoyle gives 3 b8-a7 a3-b4 4 a7-b8 b4-a5 5 b8-a7 c5-b5 6 e5-d6 rejoining the second line given. Most of the alternative White moves lead into play we have already seen, but one that does not seem to have been considered is 3...c5-b4. I play 4 e5-d4 b4-a5 5 d4-c3 a3-b4 6 a7-b8 (not 6 c3-d4, when 6...b4-c5 draws) b4-c5 7 c3-d4 :



Now there are three lines: 7...a5-b6 8 b8-c7 b6^d8 9 d4^b6 with a one-against-one win, or 7...c5-b6 8 b8-a7 b6-c7 9 a7-b8 c7-d8 10 d4-c5 with two independent one-against-one wins (b8 against d8, c5 against a5), or 7...c5-d6 8 d4-c5 d6-e7 9 c5-b6 gaining two for one.

"Second Position". Black continues 24-25 e1-e3 h2-h2 26-29 e1-c7 to change the guard on a5, and then advances the king on c5: 30-33 c5-g3. This pushes White back once more to h2, and 34 f6-g5 forces the exchange 34...h2^f4 35 g5^e3 :



The man on h6 is now free and will become a king, but after 36-37 e3-c5 and 38 c7-b8 the new king has to go to one of the squares f6/h6/d8/f8/h8, and 39 c5-b6 a5^c7 40 b8^d6 gives a one-against-one win.

**Deca-Chess** (page 9). Take away the bishops, and it's easy: 1 f4 Kc7 2 f6 Kd8 3 f8 and e9 is covered. As is, 1 Be2! Bxe2 2 f4 Kc7 (2...Bc4 3 f6 Bf7 4 Kh8 etc) 3 f7 Bb5 4 Kh8 Kd8 5 Kg9. The book gives more analysis.

**Seirawan-Chess** (same page). 1 Ec2+ Ka4 2 Ec4+ Rb4 (2...Kb5 3 Ed4+ forking K and R) 3 Ec3+ and so on up to 10 Ec8+ Rb8 11 Ec7 mate - or, if we prefer, we can play 3 Ec5+ and drive him down instead of up.

**Ambiguous Chess** (pags 6-7). 1 (Ricardo Poleschi - "PolarBear", Brainking 2006) 1...Qe2+! 2 Kxe2 Bg4+ 3 Kd3 (the only "unambiguous" square) Bf5# and it's already mate.

2 (Reza Kassaei - Fabrice Liardet, Brainking 2006) 1...Bc2+! (queen decoy) 2 Qxc2 (2 Ke1 Bxc3#) Qg4+ 3.Ke1 Qe2+! (both a queen decoy and a friendly cover of f1) 4 Qxe2 Bxc3#.

3 (Fabrice Liardet - "Matarilevich", Brainking 2006) 1...Bd2! and White cannot avoid a queen check on d3, so he must prepare an escape to g2. 2 Rh1 lets in 2...Qd3+ 3.Kg2 Qe4#, so the only hope is 2 Rh4 Qd3+ 3 Kg2 gxh4. Now the threat is 4...Qe4+ 5 Kh2 hxg3+ 6 Kxg3 Rg8+ 7 Kh2 Qh4#, and there are only two possible defences : 4 g4 Qd5+ 5 Kh2 Bf4#, the game conclusion, and 4 f4 Qd5+ 5 Kf2/h2 hxg3+ 6 Kxg3 Rg8+ 7 Kf2 (7 Kh2 Bxf4#, 7 Kh4 Qh1#) Q/Rg2#.

4 (Fabrice Liardet - "CryingLoser", Brainking 2006) 1 Bg5! Qc7 (only square, but now a block on c6 will be a queen block) 2 Bb5+ Kf8 3 Be7+ (trying for a king suction - 3...Kxe7 4 cxd6+ winning the queen) Kg7 4 Bf6+! (this king suction sacrifice cannot be accepted either - 4...Kxf6 5 Qd4#) Kf8 5 Bxh8 winning a rook.

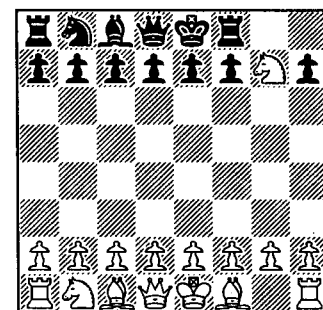
5 (after 1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 e4 e5 4 d5?) 4...Bb4+ 5 Nc3 Qxd5! Thanks to the pinned knight on c3, the black queen is immune, and she threatens 6...Qxd1#. 6 Qc2 is still met by 6...Qd1#, but White can try 6 Qd3, when capture of the white queen wins only a piece. But Black can make further use of the squares controlled by the White knight : 6...Qxe4+! 7 Qe3 Qc2! 8 Qxe5+ Be6 and White is helpless against the two pin-mating threats of 9...Qd1# and 9...Qe2#.

6 (composed problem, Fabrice Liardet, www.brainrook.com, 2006). The orthodox 1 Qe3+ is not an option, since Black will choose 1 Ke3 instead. The solution is the waiting 1 Kd1! 1...Kf1 now allows 2 Qe3#! with a winning stalemate, 1...e3 is clearly impossible, so Black plays to g1. Does White choose Kg1, or a suitably weak promotion piece? No, he chooses 1...g1Q+!! But after 2 Qf1+! Black must capture, as e3 and g3 are available to his pawn and queen. White selects 2...Kxf1, and 3 Bh3# is mate because the black queen can move to the would-be escape square f2. A black rook or bishop is not powerful enough to paralyze its king (1...g1R+? 2 Qf1+ Kxf1 3 Bh3+ Kf2+, 1...g1B+ 2 Qf1+ Kg3!), while 1...g1N protects the mating square.

**Proof games** (pages 16-17). En passant example: 1 d3 g5 2 Bxg5 e6 3 Bxd8 Nxe7 e.p.

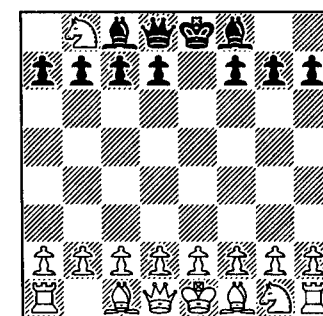
49 (Grushko): 1 d4 d6 2 Qd3 K~K+ 3 Q~Q Qd1 4 P~P d3.

Second Coyote. 1-4 Ngxf8 Nge6 5 Nxe6 Rf8 6 Nxf7 :



Peter normally sends me text without solutions (I slot in my attempts when sending his proofs) and I found it took quite a while for the penny to drop.

Third Coyote. 1 Nc3 Nf6 2 Nd5 Rg8 3 Nxe7 Nd5 4 Nxf8 Ne7 5 Nxe7 Nc6 6 Nxc6 Rb8 7 Nxb8 :



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I had originally scheduled this issue for October, but more than enough material was to hand by early August and I saw no point in waiting. My apologies to intending contributors who worked to my advertised copy date of "September 1"; your offerings will head the queue for VC 56. I draw particular attention to pages 6-7, where Fabrice Liardet shows the unexpected and amusing depth of his "Ambiguous Chess".

**Towards ECV 3?** No sooner had ECV 2 appeared than people started asking about a sequel: would there be continuing editions of "Pritchard", just as there have been of Hoyle?

The short answer is that the rights to the continuing use of David's name rest with his family, and even if it is done it is unlikely that I shall be doing it. However, I am using VC to report imperfections in ECV 2 (for a first instalment, see pages 2-3), and in due course David's files will be made available to future researchers. More about this next time.

## BCVS NOTICES

**E-mail addresses.** Please note that **Peter Fayers's** address has changed, and that **Paul Byway's** is now back in service and messages to him need no longer be routed through myself.

**Jackets for ECV 2.** The final stages of work on ECV 2 went unexpectedly quickly, and I suddenly found myself with a book ready to go to print but no design for a jacket. The initial copies therefore went out unjacketed. The distributors have now produced some very attractive jackets, and if you bought or received an unjacketed copy I can arrange for one to be sent to you. There will be no charge.

Although he had put nothing in his will, **David Pritchard** had expressed an informal wish that we should have his variant chess books and magazines for our library, and Peter Fayers and I recently went down on George's behalf to collect them. Our sincere thanks to Elaine and Wanda for this. More when we have had a chance to go through and see just what is there.

**VC 56** remains scheduled for January (and even if it is ready early I shall hold it back to avoid the Christmas post). Copy date is **December 1**, though early receipt always is helpful.

Space for a quickie. In one of his booklets, David had starred this win by Roberto Salvadori at **Progressive Put-Back Chess** (a captured man is immediately put back on the board).  
1 e3 2 d5 Nc6 3 Qf3 Qxd5 (replace on e6) Qxd8+ (b8) 4 Kxd8 (d1) Kd7 Nf6 a5 (diagram alongside) 5 Nf3 Nd4 Nxc6 (d6) Bb5 Nxb8 (d8)!!

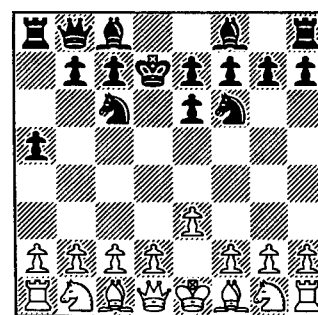
## EVENTS

Conditions at Great Yarmouth for the British Championship meeting were not conducive to out-of-hours events, but Mike Adams and Mike Gunn ran a short **variants tourney in David Pritchard's memory** which was won by Julien Shepley. Mike and Mike will be running a similar tourney at **Guildford on Monday 17 December** starting at 1915 at the club venue (the Guildford Institute), and they hope to run one at **Hastings in the White Rock Hotel on New Year's Eve**. Contact Mike Adams <mike@guildfordchess.fsnet.co.uk> for confirmation and further details.

This year's **Circular Chess Championship** at Lincoln produced yet another first-time winner, this time in the shape of Kevin McCarthy. No Francis Bowers this year, but last year's winner Herman Kok was in the field.

I presume that the usual "Chrimbo Challenge" will be held at the Tap and Spile (Hungate, Lincoln) on a Sunday in January (well worth going, if only for the "Old Rosie" cider). No details are yet to hand, but no doubt the Circular Chess web site

<www.circularchess.co.uk>  
will have them in due course.



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