

Award of the 7th YCCC, Section C: all genres, free theme

This section was open to all genres and themes, without any restrictions in contents. It was commented and evaluated by eighth judges, who used a scale from 0 to 4 to mark the entries. No entry was incorrect or completely anticipated, so 30 compositions found their places in the award. **The final rank presents average marks, after the lowest and the highest marks were excluded:**

Rank	Composer	Problem	JUDGES								Average excl. min and max
			PE	OC	MC	MMD	AS	VC	GC	HG	
1	Ural Khasanov	4	3	2.5	4	3	3.5	3.5	4	3.5	3.42
2	Yaroslav Utkin	17	3	3	3.5	4	3	2.5	4	3.5	3.33
3	Tran Ngoc Duy Anh	7	2.5	2.5	3.5	3.5	3	3	3.5	4	3.17
4	Danila Pavlov	26	3.5	2.5	3	4	3	2.5	4	2.5	3.08
5	Ruslan Stetsenko	13	3	3	3.5	3.5	3	2.5	3	2.5	3.00
6	Anton Nasyrov	28	3	2	3	2.5	3.5	3.5	3	3	3.00
7	Dylan Schenker	20	2.5	3	3.5	2.5	2.5	3	4	2.5	2.83
8	Ilija Serafimović	27	3	3.5	2.5	3.5	3	2.5	2	1.5	2.75
9	Ben Smolkin	16	2.5	2.5	3	3	2.5	2.5	3	2	2.67
10	Taras Rudenko	5	2.5	2	2.5	3.5	3	2.5	2	3	2.58
11	Samat Galyaviev	21	2	2.5	3	2.5	3	2	3	2.5	2.58
12	Toshimasa Fujiwara	29	2	2.5	2.5	3	2.5	2.5	2	3	2.50
13	Andrii Sergiienko	18	1.5	2	2.5	3	3	2	3	2	2.42
14	Anirudh Daga	23	2	1.5	3	3	2.5	3		1.5	2.40
15	Georgy Yeruslanov	1	2.5	2	2.5	2	2.5	2.5	3	2	2.33
16	Nikita Ushakov	22	2.5	2	2.5	2.5	3	2		2	2.30
17	Ivan Belonozhko	15	2	1.5	2.5	3	2.5	2	2	2	2.17
18	Răzvan-Andrei Burjă-Udrea	14	1.5	1	2.5	2.5	2		2	2	2.00
19	Mihnea Costachi	6	2	2	2	1	2		2	1.5	1.90
20	Velan Mangai Sivakumar	2	1	2	2.5	3	1.5	2	1.5	1.5	1.83
21	Andrija Zdravković	24	1	1.5	2	2	2.5	1.5	2	2	1.83
22	Mikhail Shalashov	10	1	1.5	2	2.5	1.5	2	2	1.5	1.75
23	James Malcom	9	2	2	1.5	0.5	2	2		1	1.70
24	Daniyar Farzaleev	11	1	1.5	2	2	2	1.5	1	2.5	1.67
25	Sohum Lohia	19	1	1	2.5	1	2.5	2	2	1.5	1.67
26	Ilnur Makhmutov	3	2.5	1	2	2	1.5	1.5	1.5	1	1.58
27	Aynur Makhmutov	8	1.5	1.5	2	2	1.5	1.5	1	1.5	1.58
28	Kevinas Kuznecovas	12	1.5	1	1.5	2.5	2	1.5	1	1.5	1.50
29	Mykhailo Barkulov	25	1	1	1.5	1	2	1.5	1	1	1.17
30	William Dolmer	30	1	1.5	1.5	0.5	1.5	2	1	0.5	1.17

PE - Paz Einat ; OC - Ofer Comay ; MC - Michel Caillaud ; MMD - Michael McDowell ;
AS - Andrey Selivanov ; VC - Vlaicu Crisan ; GC - Gady Costeff ; HG - Hans Gruber

General comments:

HG: This is a very entertaining set of submissions, some ambitious, some starting from scratch, some unusual – as it should be in a YCCC. The question of anticipation might be quite challenging, of course, but I wonder how strict search should be done. Of course, if identical (or nearly identical) positions are found, this is detrimental. But showing that similar problems exist should not be a too serious drawback here (otherwise it might be difficult to publish any orthodox helpmate or two-mover, at least as long you are not a world-class composer).

MC: Along with No.4, Nos. 13 and 17 are helpmates in 2 moves escaping “first level” database search. My guess is that behind them are ambitious composers already mastering the database use... We agreed that anticipations are not too important but escaping anticipation is remarkable.

1st Place – No.4 – Ural Khasanov
7.YCCC 2023



h#2 8 solutions 7+6

1.g6 Sf5 2.gxf5 Qe3#

1.g5 Sf4 2.gxf4 Qd5#

1.Re1 Se7 2.Rxe3+ Qxe3#

1.c6 Sg2 2.cxd5 Qxd5#

1.Kf3 Qxc1 2.Kxf2 Qf1#

1.Ke5 Qb4 2.Ke6 Qe7#

1.c5 Qe2 2.Kd4 Sf5#

1.a1=B Qd1 2.Be5 f3#

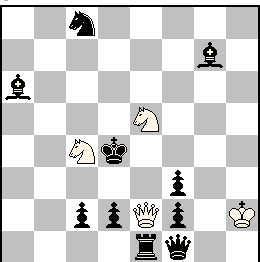
GC: 4 pairs of solutions, 3 of them with perfect harmony. The economy helps the thematic content stand out.

OC: 4 pairs! But I would prefer it without the 4th pair which is not a real pair because there is not enough common elements between the two solutions.

VC: An impressive task by any standard!

MC: reminds some works by Michal Dragoun (not anticipations)

Michal DRAGOUN
SuperProblem 2019
6° Prix



h#2 6 solutions (4+10)

1.Ff8 Dxf1 2.Fc5 Dd3#

1.Fb7 Dxe1 2.Fd5 De3#

1.Fxe5+ Dxe5+ 2.Rd3 Cb2#

1.Fxc4 Dxc4+ 2.Re3 Cg4#

1.Rc5 Dxd2 2.Rb5 Da5#

1.Rd5 Dxf3+ 2.Re6 Df7#

In No.4, 2 excellent pairs (with captures of white Knights) and 2 “more” less convincing. Not sure the “modern trend” of “more” is “better”. Anyway, it reveals the excellent technical skill of the composer.

PE: Looked at the 1st pair – no anticipations

HG: Eight solutions are quite an achievement, and pairs of solutions can be identified. It can even be accepted that the mates in the first and second pair are the same, as once they are captures, the other time capture-free. The mates by other pieces than the queen in the fourth pair provide a good variety.

MMD: The last pair of solutions do not match as well as the others, and, as with No.29, the strategy is minimal (the third pair of solutions contain no strategy whatever).



1.Rxc6 Sc7+ 2.Kc5 Rc3#

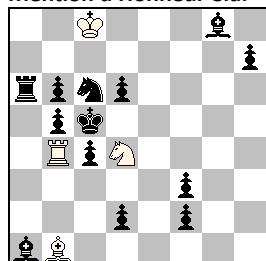
1.Kxc6 Rc3+ 2.Kb5 Sc7#

1.Sxe6 Rh5+ 2.Kd4 Rxd6#

1.Kxe6 Rxd6+ 2.Kf5 Rh5#

MC: Black King and other black piece(s) play on 2 same squares: the “Compass theme” that was systematized by Abdelaziz Onkoud. The strong combination with a Zilahi pair and double exchange of white moves appears to be new, though thematic search is difficult as Compass (Boussole in french) is not a Winchloé keyword... The matrix search produces another Compass but quite different, with another combination of themes (no exchange of white moves):

Mikhaïlo GERSHINSKY
Alexandre PANKRATIEV
Jubilé G. Kozyura-64 2019
Mention d'Honneur e.a.



1.Cxb4 Fé4 2.Fé6+ Cxé6#

1.Fxd4 Fd3 2.ç3 Txb5#

1.Rxb4 Fç2 2.Ra5 Cxç6#

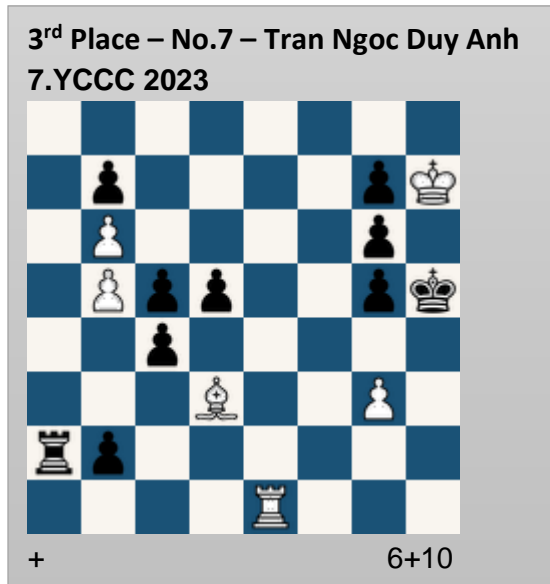
1.Rxd4 Txç4+ 2.Ré3 Té4#

HG: Very well designed pattern of two pairs of solutions, both showing two captures of white pieces and reciprocal white moves. The mate Rh5 is a bit artificial, requiring three black pawns. But there is a crystal-clear idea.

MMD: Ambitious idea, and well composed.

GC: In each of two pairs, the two black captures of a white piece lead to white first and second move interchange. Sophisticated idea.

VC: Two pairs of solutions with reciprocal white moves. Original, although there is no deep strategic motivation (bK moves most of the time).



1.Be2+ g4 2.Bd3! Switchback No.1 **2...cxd3 3.Re5+ g5**
4.Re1! Switchback No.2, Theme: intermediate move before executing plan (lure black's rook into a bad square) [4.Re6? b1=Q 5.Kxg7 Qb2+ 6.Kh7 Qh8+ 7.Kxh8 Re2 Black's rook is protected] **4...Ra1 5.Re6! b1=Q 6.Kxg7 Qb2+ 7.Kh7 Qh8+ 8.Kxh8 Re1 9.Rxe1 Kg6 10.Re5!** Theme: intermediate move before executing main plan (force black's pawn to move forward to close the long diagonal) [10.Re7? d2 11.Rxb7 d1=Q 12.Rg7+ Kh6 13.Rh7+ Kg6 = White cannot play b7 because black's queen threaten a check on the long diagonal] **10...d4 11.Re7! d2 12.Rxb7 d1=Q 13.Rg7+ Kf5 14.b7 +-**

GC: Logical choices on moves 4 and 10. The play is controlled by white's mating threats. The alternative setting Bd3->Bf1 is a nicer starting position but abandons one of the switchbacks. A matter of taste.

OC: Two switchbacks with a sacrifice and a kind of Roman theme (4.Re1! and not immediately 4.Re6?).

VC: Clever play of white pieces, in spite of the reduced black interplay. The promoted bQ sacrifice is also very nice. The unnatural initial position of pawns is more than compensated by the clear main line.

HG: Really inventive and with a crystal-clear and substantial solution.

MMD: It at least has an idea that is understandable for me.



1.Sxe3 Bf1 2.Kf3 Sg5#
 1.bxc4 Sc5+ 2.Kd4 Sc2#
 1.Bxe6 Sd5 2.Kf5 Bd3#

MC:- Cyclic Zilahi with preventive selfblocks. Many other examples can be found. Even if the matrix is new, having many realizations of the theme can diminish the value. BUT in the case of 13, we ALSO have a cycle of white pieces that enhances the value with the following scheme :

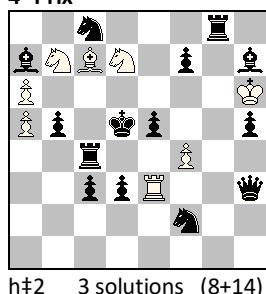
1.X captures A (preventive selfblock) B plays 2.bK plays C mates

1.Y captures B (preventive selfblock) C plays 2.bK plays A mates

1.Z captures C (preventive selfblock) A plays 2.bK plays B mates

With this added constraint on the first white move, the number of realizations is strongly reduced. A search with Winchloé is possible, with one of the few results:

Victor CHEPIZHNY
Shahmatnaya Kompozitsiya 2019
4° Prix



1.Fxé3 Cf6+ 2.Rd4 Fxé5#
 1.Txç7 Txd3+ 2.Rç6 Cxé5#
 1.Dxd7 Fd8 2.Ré6 Txé5#

A much heavier position and extra non-thematic white officer, but added feature that the mates are on the same square (of course quite excellent!).

MMD: A cyclic Zilahi to compare with Nos. 1 and 21. No.13 has greater unity in the play, with a white cycle of captured, moves, mates. The construction is good, but there must be a suspicion of anticipation.

PE: No anticipations on this specific arrangement of the BK and the three thematic white pieces (and even with only two of the white pieces) with three self-blocks on the capture squares.

OC: Cyclic Zilahi such that the first capture creates a selfblock. Nice and economical.

HG: In the second and third solution, the captures give the black king access to the mating square. In the first solution, the black knight vacates the square f1 for the white bishop. Good, but well-known theme with a bit too many pawns.

VC: Cyclic Zilahi. Pity the last solution doesn't end with a model mate.

5th-6th Place – No.28 – Anton Nasyrov
7.YCCC 2023

h#22 10+9

1.Bc2 b5 2.Bxb1 Kxb1 3.Kb8 Ka1 4.Kc8 Kb1 5.Kd8 Ka1 6.Ke8 Kb1 7.Kf8 Ka1 8.Kg8 Kb1 9.Kh7 Ka1 10.Kg6 Kb1 11.Kf5 Ka1 12.Ke4 Kb1 13.Kxd4 Ka1 14.Kxe5 Kb1 15.Kd6 Ka1 16.e5 Kb1 17.e4 Ka1 18.e3 dxe3 19.d2 e4 20.d1=B Be3 21.Bg4 Bd4 22.Be6 e5#

VC: Long and seemingly original sequence of moves (C+ Gustav). Pogats achieved the same idea (bB Phenix and wP mate on a square occupied initially by another wP) but only in 18 moves – see below.

Pogáts, József
 idee&form, 1995

h#18 8+8

1.Bc3-e1 f4-f5 2.Be1-f2 f5-f6 3.Bf2xg1 Kh1xg1 4.Kd8-e8 Kg1-h1 5.Ke8-f8 Kh1-g1 6.Kf8-g8 Kg1-h1 7.Kg8-h7 Kh1-g1 8.Kh7-g6 Kg1-h1 9.Kg6xf6 Kh1-g1 10.Kf6-e5 Kg1-h1 11.f7-f5 Kh1-g1 12.f5-f4 Kg1-h1 13.f4-f3 g2xf3 14.g3-g2+ Kh1-h2 15.g2-g1B + Kh2-g3 16.Bg1-f2+ Kg3xg4 17.Bf2-h4 Bf1-g2 18.Bh4-f6 f3-f4#

HG: Good play, and the late József Pogáts certainly would have agreed that in such 'long helpmates', length is a merit, every move more counts.

MC: Agreed with Hans that length is a quality for this kind of problem. Neat that both captured wPe5 & bPe6 are replaced in their diagram position, also that sacrificed wBd1 stands on the Phenix promotion square.

MMD: Anticipated by the Pogats. I appreciate the comment Hans drew attention to, but I don't agree with it.

7th Place – No.20 – Dylan Schenker
7.YCCC 2023

= 4+6

1.Ne5 [1.Nc5? Nxc5 2.Kb8 Nc3 3.a8=Q Bxa6 4.Qxc6 N3e4]
1...Ke7 [1...Nxe5 2.Kb8 Bxa6 3.a8=Q Bb5 4.Qa3+ Kf7 5.Qe3]
2.Nxd7 Kxd7 3.Kb8 Nd4 4.a8=R [4.a8=Q? Nb5 5.a7 Nc7]
4...c5 [4...c3 5.a7 c2, 4...Bxa6 5.Rxa6 Kd6 6.Kb7 Kc5 7.Ra5+ Kb4 8.Kb6 c3 9.Rc5]
5.Ra7+ Kd8 6.Rc7 Bxa6 7.Rxc5 Ke7 8.Ka7 Kd6 9.Kb6 Bb5
10.Ka5 Nb3+ [10...Kxc5] **11.Kxb5 Nxc5 12.Kxc4** ½-½

OC: A nice underpromotion with 1 stalemate with the promoted rook and another near the end of the solution. Nice!

GC: The play is natural, largely avoiding technical captures, and is highlighted by 4.a8R!! and 10.Ka5! Knight d3 would be better placed on f3 or g4.

HG: Gady Costeff points out that Sd3 might better be placed on f3 or g4. (The try 1.Sc5 is not so important, and then the knight would not be en prise in the diagram.) The second stalemate (10.- Kxc5) comes as a surprise, as well as the first after rook promotion (5.- c2). The play around the stalemates is rather coarse, so that overall there is little elegance.

MC: Gady indicates that wN would be better on f3,g4 but the try 1.Nc5? seems to be of some importance for the composer...

VC: Fierce struggle, with a surprising white under promotion and two stalemates.



1.Rcxf7+?
1.Rxg3+?
1.Sd5!-(2.Sh4+ Kxe4 3.Bg2#)(2.Rcxf7+?,Rxg3+?)
1...Rxd5 2.Rcxf7+ Kxe4 3.Rf4#/Rg4#
1...Bxd5 2.Rxg3+ Kxe4 3.Bd3#
1...Rh8 2.Sf6 ~ 3.Rc3#/Rxg3#
1...Bxc2 2.Sc3 ~ 3.Rxf7#/Rxg3#
1...Kxe4 2.Bd3+ Kxd5 3.Sf4#
2... Kf3 3.Rxg3#/Sh4#

OC: This is a brilliant Novotny which, as in the original Novotny, becomes effective only after the capture which creates a selfblock. The additional pair 1...Rh8 2.Sf6 and 1...Bxc2 2.Sc3 is a splendid addition.

MMD: Interesting Nowotny which requires the anticipatory self-block effect to operate.

GC: Novotny on d5. Duals on Rxd5 detract.

VC: Good variations, in spite of some minor mating duals. The strong unprovided flight 1...Ke4 slightly detracts the overall impression

MC: The "minor" duals are annoying.

HG: Too many duals in important lines. I consider the duals as serious.



1.Bd4+ [1.Kb8 f1=Q 2.Bd4+ Bc5 3.b4 g1=Q 4.Bxg1 Qxg1 5.a5+ Ka6, 1.a5+ Ka6] **1...Bc5** [1...Nc5 2.Ne5 f1=Q 3.Nd7+ Ka6 4.Rxc5 Bxc5 5.Bxc5 b6 6.Bxb6 g1=Q 7.a5 Qxb6 8.axb6 Qxd3 9.b7 Qxd6 10.b8=Q Qxb8+ 11.Nxb8+ Kb6 12.Nd7+ Ka6 13.Ne5 g2 14.Nf3] **2.b4** [2.Rxc5 Nxc5 3.Nxb7 (3.Ne5 f1=Q 4.Nd7+ Ka5 5.Bxc5 b6 6.Nb7+ Ka6 7.Bxb6 Qf8+ 8.Nxf8 Kxb6) 3...g1=Q 4.Bxc5+ Ka6 5.b4 Qb1 6.Nfd6 Qxb4 7.Bxb4 f1=Q 8.Ne8 Qf2 9.Bc5 Qxc5 10.Nxc5+ Ka7] **2...Bxd4** [2...f1=Q 3.Rxc5 Nxc5 4.Bxc5+ Ka6 5.Nxb7] **3.Kb8** [3.Ra5 Bc5 4.Ra8 Bxb4 5.c5+ Kxc5] **3...Nc5** [3...Bc5 4.a5+ Ka6 5.Ne8 Ba7+ 6.Ka8, 3...f1=Q 4.Nc8+ Ka6 5.Ra5#] **4.a5+ Ka6 5.Ne8 Nd7+** [5...Ne6 6.Nd8 Ba7+ 7.Ka8 f1=Q 8.Nxe6] **6.Ka8 Nb6+** [6...Bb6 7.axb6 Nxb6+ 8.Kb8 Nd7+ 9.Kc7] **7.axb6 Bxb6** [7...f1=Q 8.Ra5+ Kxb6 9.Ne5 Qf7 (9...Bxe5 10.c5#) 10.Nxf7 g1=Q 11.c5+ (11.Ne5 Bxe5 12.c5+ Qxc5 13.Rxc5 g2, 11.Ra7 Qa1 12.Rxa1 Bxa1) 11...Bxc5 12.Ne5 Qd4 13.Nc4+ Qxc4 14.dxc4 g2 15.Ra7 g1=Q 16.Rxb7+ Ka6 17.Nc7#] **8.Ne5 f1=Q 9.Nd7 Qf4 10.Rf5 g1=Q** [10...Qxf5 11.Nb8#] **11.Rxf4 Bd8 12.d4**

Qa1 13.Rg4 [13.Rf7 g2 14.Nd6 Qa3 15.Rg7 Bc7 16.Nb5 Qxb4 17.Nxc7+ Ka5 18.Rg5+ b5 19.Rxg2 Qe7 20.Nc5 Kb6 21.N5e6 Qa3+ 22.Kb8 bxc4] **13...Qa3 14.Rg7 Qxb4 15.Nb8+ Ka5 16.Nxc6+ bxc6 17.Ra7+ Kb6 18.c5+ Kb5 19.Nd6#**

OC: Very colorful play

GC: A 19 move king hunt concludes with a mate with two active selfblocks. It would lift the study if the main line had more paradox and surprising moves.

MC: Many precise moves maintaining black King in a mating net display strong technique but the result is somewhat lacking clarity (lengthy note variations).

HG: It is often a small path between interesting by-play and boring, but difficult and analytic play. It is the finesse of moves that makes the difference, and the purpose WHY particular moves are played rather than THAT they have to be played. Here there is little finesse, except the final mate which, however, is too much disguised in a jungle of variations.

VC: The initial position is rather clumsy and the main line or theme is not easy to decipher.

MMD: This is just the sort of mass of analysis that turns me off the modern study. I'm sure it's terribly clever, but it does absolutely nothing for me.

10th-11th Place – No.5 – Taras Rudenko
7.YCCC 2023

h#3.5 3 solutions 2+9

1...exf6 2.Sg7 fxg7 3.Bf3 gxh8=Q 4.Bd1 Qb2#
 1...exd6 2.Sc7 dxc7 3.Rb8 cxb8=Q 4.Bd2 Qb1#
 1...e6 2.Sg7 e7 3.Rc8 e8=Q 4.Rc2 Qxe1#

HG: Well-done with queen promotions on three different (maximally distanced) squares and mates on three different squares. A pity that 2.Sg7 is repeated, but at least for a different purpose.

MC: Not very original but no anticipation found. Repeated 2.Sg7, though with different motivation, is a flaw. Static black King and various mates make fresh impression compared to numerous examples with promotions to white Queen and “mechanical echoes”:

Viktoras PALIULIONIS
Sachmatija 2012

h#4 3 solutions (2+3)

1.Tb6 f6 2.Té7 fxé7 3.Rb5 é8=D+ 4.Ra6 Da4‡
 1.Té6 fxé6 2.Td7 éxd7 3.Rb6 d8=D+ 4.Ra7 Da5‡
 1.Tg6 fxg6 2.Rb6 gxh7 3.Ra7 h8=D 4.Ra8 Da1‡

VC: Three Q promotions on distant squares - nicely engineered. The repetition of 2.Sg7 seems unavoidable

MMD: Very good unity. The minimal form is good, even if not completely original.

PE: A variety of longer helpmates with 3 wQ promotions exist, but I found no direct anticipations.

10th-11th Place – No.21 – Samat Galyaviev
7.YCCC 2023

h#2 3 solutions 5+4

1.Qxa3 b4 2.Ka6 Bc4#
 1.Rxd7 Bc4+ 2.Kb6 Ra6#
 1.exd5 Rb3+ 2.Kc6 Se5#

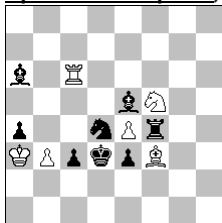
HG: The first white move in the first solution should be made by the knight in order to complete a cycle of moving white pieces. An elegant setting of the Zilahi. Many examples do exist showing this theme.

VC: Cyclic Zilahi, but no model mates in two solutions. No anticipations, the closest setting being shown below with similar black play. The repetition of Bc4 spoils the fun.

Угнівенко, Олексій Мефодійович

Шевченко, Віталій Іванович

Проблеміст України, 2015 (44/Н469)



h#2 3 solutions 6+8

1.Sd4xf3 Rc6-d6+ 2.Kd3xe4 Sf5-g3 #

1.Sd4xf5 Rc6-c5 2.Kd3-d4 Rc5-d5 #

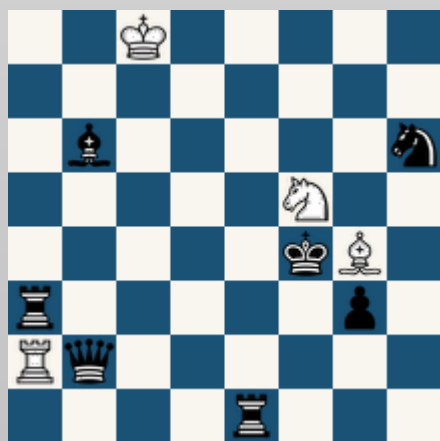
1.Sd4xc6 b3-b4 2.Kd3-c4 Bf3-e2 #

MMD: Basically anticipated by Lundstrom (though much more economical than No.1) and lacking the complete white cycle shown in No.13.

GC: Economical. Pb2 active in one solution.

OC: The first capture enables the black king to go to its final square

12th Place – No.29 – Toshimasa Fujiwara
7.YCCC 2023



h#2,5

4+7

b) Pb6 -> b5

c=b) & Pg3 -> e3

d=c) & Sh6 -> f6

a) 1...Sd6 2.Rae3 Ra5 3.Sxg4 Rf5#

b) 1...Rxb2 2.Re5 Rd2 3.Ke4 Rd4#

c) 1...Bd1 2.Qe5 Rg2 3.Sxf5 Rg4#

d) 1...Rxa3 2.Kg5 Ra7 3.Kg6 Rg7#

OC: Two pairs of solutions (HOTF), with a very economical setting and interesting play in both twins. The question is how to allow wR to get into the game, and there are two ways – to open a line for him, or to capture the pieces that close the lines in the setting. It is good that the two HOTF pairs are connected to each other: the black piece that moves in the first pair is captured in the second.

VC: The highly unified play excuses some minor blemishes in twinning. The whole strategy is based on

self-blocks. wB and wS play each only in one solution.

HG: Extremely bad twinning and coarse captures by White. But this problems shows a challenging and complex theme in an open position. Such good ideas are an ideal basis to develop technical skills – better than the other way round (good technical skills do not suffice if you don't have good ideas).

MMD: Downgraded a little by the consecutive twinning, also the fact that b) and d) don't match as well as a) and c). Like so many HOTFs the strategy is minimal.

13th Place – No.18 – Andrii Sergiienko
7.YCCC 2023

#2 try 9+8

1. Nh3? ~ 2. Nf2#
 1...Kd3 2. Qf5#
 But 1. ... Nf5! / Rf3!

1.Sd3! ~ 2.Sf2#
 1...Rxd3 2.Qf4#
 1...Rf3 2.Qxf3#
 1...Qxd3 2.Re7#
 1...Kxd3 2.Qf5#
 1...Sf5 2.Qe5#

HG: The try does not really contribute, and then two refutations may rather be considered as a weakness. Nice variation play with a mate with three effective pins after the granted flight. Old-fashioned, but a clever idea.

VC: There is no set mate after 1...R:g3/S:g3 providing a flight. The flight giving sacrificial key, the threat and the 5 variations are nicely done. The triple pin-mate 1...K:d3 2.Qf5# is absolutely superb!

MMD: The try is irrelevant, other than that the composer found a theme name he could attach to it.

14th Place – No.23 – Anirudh Daga
7.YCCC 2023

PG in 5.5 then #1 0+30
 b) e5>f8, f1>e4

a) 1.g3 e5 2.Bh3 Ba3 3.Bxd7+ Ke7 4.Be8 Qd5 5.Kf1 Qxh1
 6.Qe1 Bh3

b) 1.g3 d5 2.Bg2 d4 3.Be4 d3 4.cxd3 Qxd3 5.Qb3 Qc2 6.Qa3
 Qxc1#

MC: A puzzle with 6 pieces (a3,c2,e1,h1,e7,e8) having a different identity in the diagram. I am not a fan of zero-positions (who is?) but I feel here that it would make a better presentation than the clumsy twinning.

VC: Two funny Tacu enigmas (C+ Jacobi). The double change in the twin looks like a zero position. There are many pseudo-imposters in each solution.

MMD: From Quartz 43 I've discovered what a Tacu's Enigma is, but being unfamiliar with the genre I don't know how to assess this twin objectively. As there are two sound and quite different proof games leading to similar positions I view this as an achievement.

HG: There are some 'unexpected' pieces on squares of the initial game array, bQc2 in a) and wQe1, wKf1, bQh1, bKe7, wBe8 in b). This shows that the twins are not balanced, b) is much more interesting, and the twinning with two changes is very weak.

15th Place – No.1 – Georgy Yeruslanov
7.YCCC 2023

h#2 3 solutions 5+9

- 1.Kc4*b3 Rd5-b5 + 2.Kb3-a3 Bc3*b2 #
- 1.Kc4*d5 e3-e4 + 2.Kd5-e6 Sb3-c5 #
- 1.Kc4*c3 Sb3-d2 2.Kc3-c2 Rd5-c5 #

VC: Cyclic Zilahi. The matrix and play seem familiar but there is no full anticipation. Pity there is no model mate in the 2nd solution!

Anders Lundström
Tidskrift för Schack, 1981

h#2 5+3

- a) 1.Kxe4 Re2+ 2.Kd4 Be5 #
- b) bPd3-->e5
- 1.Kxf4 Sf6 2.Kf5 Rf2 #
- +c) bSc5-->h4
- 1.Kxg2 Bd5 2.Kh3 Sf2 #

HG: A nice theme which, however, already has been explored intensively. In the second solution, the white bishop should move instead of the pawn, then there would be a cycle of white pieces (captured, moving, mating). The two groups of black pieces that serve a blocks only in one solution are a technical weakness. The comparison problem (Lundström) shows the cycle, and with only 8 pieces, but using a twinning mechanism.

MC: Having 3 solutions instead of twins is a valuable effort, however, f5 and g6 are of no use and 2 more units can be spared by lifting the position 2 ranks up. Indeed databases are necessary tools for today's composers. Cyclic Zilahis in h# are over-explored. A "modern trend" can be to do "more":

Victor SIZONENKO
The Problemist 2017

h#2 6 solutions (5+11)

- 1.Rxf5 Fç8 2.Ré4 Cf6‡
- 1.Rxd6 Cb6 2.Rç6 Tf6‡
- 1.Rxd7 Tf7+ 2.Rd8 Fxç7‡
- 1.Cxf5 Ff8 2.Rf7 Fxç4‡
- 1.Fxd7 Ff8 2.Fç8 Fxç8‡
- 1.çxd6 Tf6+ 2.Rd5 Fb7‡

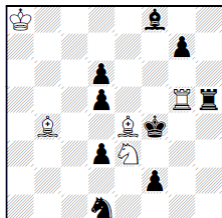
With 3 more solutions added to the basic cyclic Z (same as in 1). This trend found a way to the FIDE Albums...

MMD: Lundstrom basically anticipates this problem and No.21. Both lack the full white cycle seen in No.13.

PE: Several problems have used the same position of thematic pieces for the same theme:

Andreas SCHONHOLZER

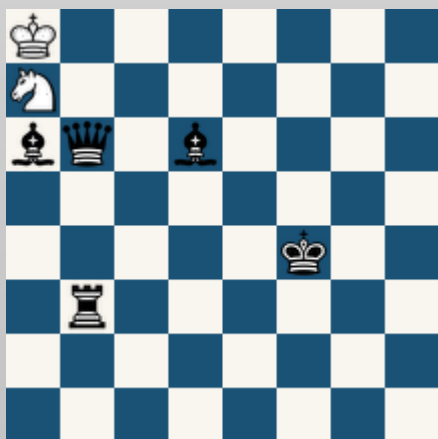
e4 e5 2010



h#2 3 solutions (5+9)

- 1.Kxe3 Rg3+ 2.Ke2 Bxd3#
 1.Kxg5 Bd2 2.Kh6 Sg4#
 1.Kxe4 Sc4 2.Kd4 Rg4#

16th Place – No.22 – Nikita Ushakov
 7.YCCC 2023



h#6 zero 2+5

- a) Sa7 -> d4
 b) Bd6 -> f6
 c) Rb3 -> d4

- a) 1.Bb5! Sf3 2.Qd4 Kb7 3.Re3 (3.Bd3?) Kc8 4.Bd3 Kd7
 5.Ke4 Ke6 6.Bf4 Sd2# (Ideal Mate)
 b) 1.Qe6! Sc6 2.Re3 (2.Bd3?) Ka7 3.Bd3 Kb6 4.Bf5 (4.Re4?)
 Kc5 5.Re4 Sb4 6.Ke5 Sd3# (Ideal Mate)
 c) 1.Bc4! Sb5 2.Qc5 Kb7 3.Qe5 Kc8 4.Ke4 Kd8! (Tempo
 move) 5.Kd5 (5.Bc5?) Kd7 6.Bc5 Sc3# (Ideal Mate)

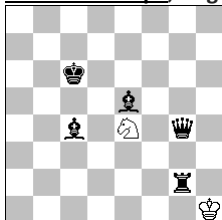
HG: Repeated moves often are a weakness, and here they are (Kb7, Re3, Kc8, Bd3). The description of themes (is it taken from HelpmateAnalyzer – don't trust too much such formal analyses, it is better to point out the essence of the idea rather than single effects that just happen during the solution) is artificial. Zero position is acceptable when there are three or more twins. Here we have a nice achievement, but it is rather the pleasure of soundness that the contents that satisfy.

VC: Three ideal mates. Pity a zero position had to be employed. The repeated white moves Kb7-Kc8 are unavoidable.

With the same material see below:

Bernd Horstmann

Rochade Europa, Aug 2011



h#6 twins 2+5

- a) 1.Qg6 Sg5 2.Rd2 Kg1 3.Rd5 Kf2 4.Kc5 Ke1 5.Kd4 Kd2 6.Qe4 Se6 #
 b) bBc4-->h3: 1.Rd2 Sf2 2.Qf4 Kg1 3.Bf5 Kf1 4.Rd4 Ke2 5.Kd5 Sd1 6.Ke4 Sc3 #
 +c) bQg4-->c3: 1.Rg6 Sg3 2.Bc7 Kg1 3.Kd6 Kf2 4.Qc6 Ke3 5.Bd7 Kd4 6.Re6 Sf5 #

OC: Three mirror mates. A difficult task.

MMD: Sorry, but I'm not a fan of this sort of helpmate, which leaves the impression that the composer just put dozens of positions through a testing program until it produced ones that he could link by the use of zeroposition. Not my idea of composition.

17th Place – No.15 – Ivan Belonozhko
7.YCCC 2023

1.Bf1! ~ 2.Rh1#
 1...gxf1=Q/gxf1=R 2.Rh2#
 1...gxf1=S 2.Sf4#
 1...Sg4 2.Bxg2#
 1...Rg5+ 2.Sxg5#

MMD: Lightly set. A good sacrificial key enables promotions with arrival effects which separate the mates. The Theme B variation involving underpromotion is excellent.

HG: Pro and con of the key! Pro: sacrifice. Con: pin. Con: bringing into play a piece from off-side. Two different promotions, and 1.- Sg4 offers a mate to the key piece. Old-fashioned, but economical.

VC: There is no set mate after 1...Rg3 providing a flight. Threat + 4 variations are nicely done

PE: For comparison:

H.J. TUCKER
 Australian Columns 1916-17 1° Prix

1.Qd1! [2.Rxf1#] 1...Qxe1 2.Bxg2# 1
 ...Qxh1,Qg1 2.Qxe2# 1...Qf2 2.Sg5#
 1...exd1=~(+) 2.Bd6#

18th Place – No.14 – Răzvan-Andrei Burjă-Udrea
7.YCCC 2023

1.O-O ~ 2.Rxf6#
 1...Be7 2.Rxe7#
 1...Bc5+ 2.Sxc5#
 1...f5 2.Re1#
 1...Bf5 2.gxf5#
 1...Sd5/Se8 2.Bxd5#

MMD: Simple play, but nicely done with a good leading variation to force the castling key.

HG: Experimenting with castling and a set of variations. Having two different variations by the same piece (here the bishop a3) is particularly interesting. Overall, this problem is conservative (or 'old-fashioned') in style.

VC: The castling key exposing wK to a check, underlined by the try 1.Rf1? f5!

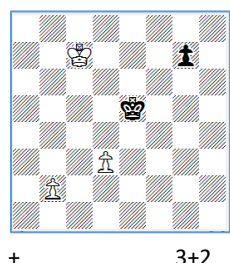


1.e6 c3 2.bxc3 Bxe6 [2...fxe6 3.f6 bxc3 4.f7 c2 5.f8=Q c1=Q 6.Qc8+ Kb5 7.Qxc1 +-] **3.Nxe6 fxe6 4.f6 b3** [4...bxc3 5.f7 c2 6.f8=Q c1=Q 7.Qc8+ Kd5 8.Qxc1 +-] **5.f7 b2 6.f8=Q b1=Q 7.Qc8+ Kd5 8.Qxe6+ Kc5 9.Qd6+ Kc4** [9...Kb5 10.Qb8+ Kc4 11.Qxb1 +-] **10.Qc6+ Kd3 11.Qg6+ Kxc3 12.Qxb1 +-**

VC: The wPb2 wins the game! Natural position, active play of all pieces, accurate moves and clear main line.

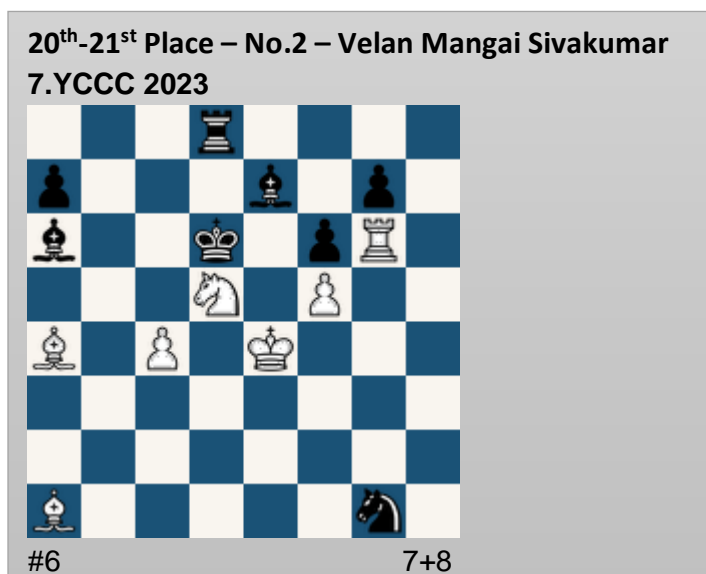
GC: Typical skewers for a queen endgame. Grushko, Phenix 2001 is an anticipation.

M. Grushko
Phenix 2001



1.b4 g5 2.b5 g4 3.b6 (or 3.Kd7 – minor dual) 3...g3 4.b7 (4.Kd7) 4...g2 5.b8Q (5.Kd7 – minor dual) 5...g1=Q 6.Kd7+ Kf5 7.Qf8+ Ke5 8.Qd6+ Kf5 9.Qe6+ Kf4 10.Qf6+ Ke3 (10...Kg3 11.Qg5+ Kf2 12.Qxg1+ Kxg1 13.d4) 11.Qb6+ Kxd3 12.Qxg1 1-0

HG: Economical and transparent, but the moves are just ordinary, i.e. “good OTB moves” with little artistic flair.



1.Bb2! (2.Ba3#) Bb5 2.Bxb5 Rc8 3.Be5+ Kc5 4.Bd4+ Kd6 5.c5+ Rxc5 6.Be5#

1...Rc8 2.Be5+ Kc5 3.Bd4+ Kxc4 4.Rg2 Se2 5.Rxe2 Bb4 6.Se3#

(1...Kc5 2.Ba3+ Kxc4 3.Rg2 Se2 4.Rxe2 Bb4 5.Rc2+ Bc3 6.Se3#/Rxc3#)

MMD: Intriguing problem. The weaknesses in the defences (putting a white guard on c4 and removing the masked attack on d5) are not immediately obvious.

OC: The main idea is the try which is not mentioned (1.Be5+?) and the solution 1.Bb2! Rc8 2.Be5+!

MC: The problem has a logical structure with try 1.Be5+? Kd4 2.Bd4+ Kxc4 3.Rg2 Rxd5! (or 3...Se2 4.Rxe2 Rxd5!) enlightening the foreplan in order to decoy bRd8 (main variation =1...Rc8)

HG: Some variations in an open position, but there are always short (1-move) threats and strong moves in the OTB sense. A pity that there is a dual mate after the flight.

VC: Attractive play in the main line with a nice pin-mate. The unprovided flight and short threat slightly detract the overall positive impression.

GC: 5.c5+ Rxc5 6.Be5 mate is a nice, though known, element. Otherwise several black moves are delays, rather than active defences, which suggests the problem could be shorter.

20th-21st Place – No.24 – Andrija Zdravković
7.YCCC 2023



#2 9+5

1.Sb4! threat: 2.Sf5#

1...Sxb4 2.Bb2# 1...Qxb4 2.Rd8# 1...cxb4 2.Rc4#

HG: Threefold sacrifice, old-fashioned and simple, but a clear idea.

VC: There is no set mate after 1...Q:d2 providing a flight. Threat + 3 variations, but key piece out of play.

MMD: A good old fashioned sacrificial key.

GC: Enjoyable despite the simplicity.

22nd Place – No.10 – Mikhail Shalashov
7.YCCC 2023



h#2 2 solutions 4+5

1.Ka7 Kc5 2.c6 Bb6#

1.Ba7 b8S 2.Bb7 Bxc7#

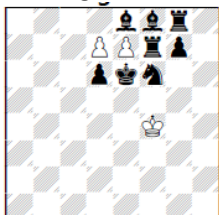
VC: Two heterogeneous solutions bringing some fresh air. I liked the FML chain from the second solution more.

MMD: Good use of the pieces in both parts, Model mates.

HG: Manoeuvring in the cage, but there is only a weak relation between the solutions.

PE: Something to compare:

Chris FEATHER
Broodings 2007



1.Rxe7 Kg5 2.Kf7 d8S+
1.Bxd7 e8S 2.Be7 Sc7+

h#2 (3+8) C+
2 solutions

23rd Place – No.9 – James Malcom

After Juraj Lorinc

(<https://pdb.dieschwalbe.de/P1391129>)

7.YCCC 2023



=342

11+15

1. Kh4 15. Kb6(a6) 16. Ka6(b6) 17. Ka6 31. Kh5 d5 62. ... d4 93. ... e5 124. ... e4 155. ... f5 186. ... f4 217. ... f3 248. f6 279. ... f5 310. f4 341. Kh5 Kh8 342. Kxh6=

HG: Nice, but well-known. The triangle manoeuvre should be unique, of course. Not too much progress compared to the Lörinc problem (some other version of this problem have been published).

VC, PE: The (minor) dual Ka7/Kb7 like in the original spoils the overall impression.

OC: The dual is bothering, but this is a record, probably.

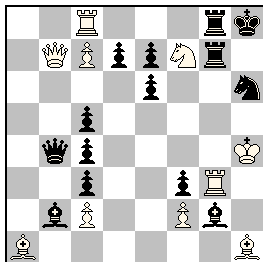
MC: Some strange feeling of emptiness... No creativity (and no record). The problem by Juraj could easily be 342 moves with wKh5, bKh7 (I imagine he wanted 1.Kh5?

1.Kh3!). So, No.9 brings nothing except stalemate instead of mate (at least the mate has Madrasi effect)... The obvious way of adding moves by having the tempo loss 1 rank higher has already been done:

Gerald Ettl

après Juraj LORINC

Sachová skladba 2003



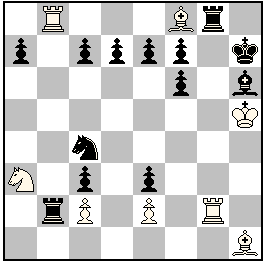
‡363 Madrasi (10+14)

1.Rh3!

Also more moves can be done using a shorter tempo circuit compensated by more moves by black Pawns:

Imants DULBERGS

Mat-Pat 1998



=400 (8+13)

Madrasi

1.Rh4!

GC: The judge is too stupid to understand this.

24th-25th Place – No.11 – Daniyar Farzaleev
7.YCCC 2023

#3 10+14

1.Rg5! ~ 2.Sf4#
 1...Bf5 2.Bb3+ Rxb3 3.Sxc7#
 1...Sf5 2.Bxe5 ~ 3.Sf4#
 2...dxe5 3.Rc5#

HG: The poor key brings into play two white pieces and creates a short threat. Then there are good defenses by unpinning, in the second move a black piece is decoyed. Some good elements, but 24 pieces and coarse moves are high costs.

VC: The interesting variation 1...Sf5 with quiet continuation requires a second one of similar quality.

MMD: Both continuations are simply long threats. The

pawns at a6 and g7 appear to be superfluous.

GC: The additional threats: 2.Rc5+ and 2.Rxe5+ mean that white has too much power.

24th-25th Place – No.19 – Sohum Lohia
7.YCCC 2023

+ 5+4

1. Rb1+ axb1=Q 2. Rxb1+ Kxb1 3. Bd5 a2 4. Bxa2+ Kxa2 5. e5 a3 6. e6 Kb3 7. e7 a2 8. e8=Q a1=Q 9. Qb5+ Ka3 10. Qa5+ Kb2 11. Qb4+ Ka2 12. Kc2

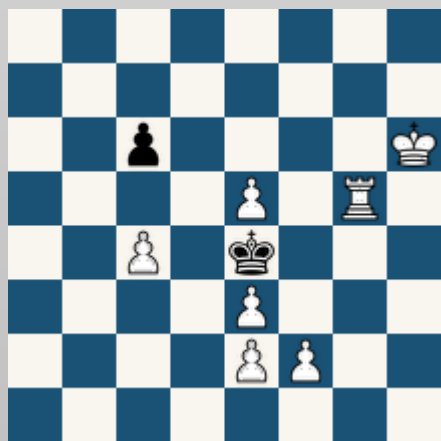
VC: After a clear yet forced introduction releasing the set stalemate, the white sacrifices lead to a well-known ending. I particularly liked all pieces are active during the play.

GC: Slight originality: with 4 units this has the unique Kd2 placement but there are many similar studies with Kd3.

HG: Gady Costeff points out that there many similar studies with white king d3.

Too coarse introduction for a very familiar finale.

26th-27th Place – No.3 – Ilnur Makhmutov
7.YCCC 2023



1.Rh5! c5 2.Kg5 Kxe5 3.Rh6 Ke4 4.Re6#

VC: Exchange of places between wK and wR, based on continuous zugzwang. Only one line, though.

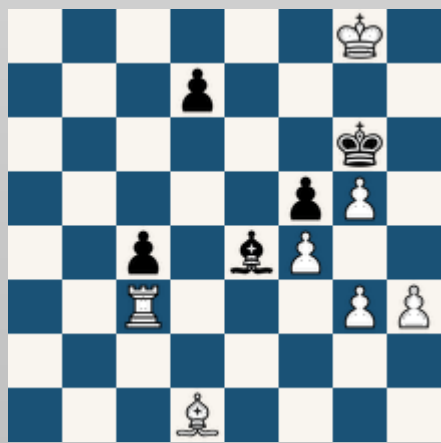
HG: Easy zugzwang manoeuvring of the white rook and the white king - a platzwechsel in 'old style'.

MMD: A little too simple, but good for a first effort. The platzwechsel is incidental.

GC: A cute example of what a problem composer means by "King's Indian", as opposed to a player. Nice play though not thematically ambitious.

PE: I couldn't find an anticipation.

26th-27th Place – No.8 – Aynur Makhmutov
7.YCCC 2023



1.Rc3-d3 c4*d3 2.Bd1-b3 Be4-d5+ 3.Bb3*d5 threat:
4.Bd5-f7 #

2...d7-d5 3.Bb3-a4 threat:4.Ba4-e8 #

1...Be4*d3 2.h3-h4 Bd3-e2 3.Bd1*e2 threat:4.h4-h5 #

HG: The short variations do not contribute substantially. The problem focusses on the sacrificial key, but then the means are coarse: 1-move threats and captures.

VC: The sacrifice of the out of play wRc3 leads to a nice finish after the bBe4 line is shut-off by bPd5.

MMD: A visually good key, but the check at d5 makes it too obvious.

GC: Nice key. The play after the key is weaker.

28th Place – No.12 – Kevinas Kuznecovas
7.YCCC 2023

h#2.5 2 solutions 6+6

1...Sb6 2.Bg8 Bg6+ 3.Ke6 Re3#
 1...Sxf6 2.Be4 Rb5+ 3.Kf4 Sxh5#

HG: 2.5 moves is a good length, both challenging and interesting. Here we have an open position and play covering large parts of the board, ending in beautiful mates. The move 2.Bg8 is particularly fine, but the two captures detract a lot, and the idleness of the white bishop in the second solution is a major weakness.

MMD: Two quite different mates and one does not use the wB. Construction could be improved: bSh5 is superfluous, bRf6 could be a bP and selfblocking bPs could replace the wPs. 2.Bg8 is nicely forced, the bB otherwise acting as a cook-stopper.

VC: Pity the wBe8 is not used in the second solution. It is always hard to find a second solution of the same quality as the first, I know!

GC: The first solution is excellent, the second is much weaker.

29th-30th Place – No.25 – Mykhailo Barkulov
7.YCCC 2023

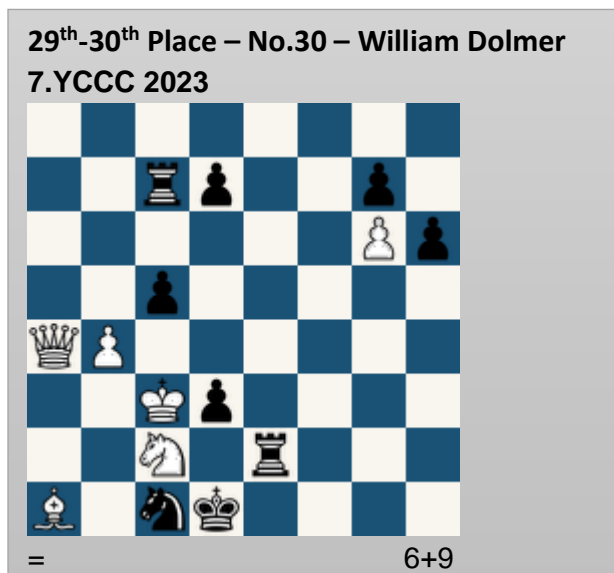
+ 7+10

1.Na2! [1.Bd7?? a2 White can't checkmate and black eventually win Move has board annotations]
1...Qxa2 [1...Qxd1 2.Bxd1 h3 3.Bg4 h2 4.Bd7 h1=Q+ 5.Kb6+ Qc6+ 6.Bxc6#]
2.Bd7 [2.Kb6?? Bc7+!! 3.Kxc7 Qxc4!! 4.dxc4 (4.Bd7+ Qb5 5.Bxb5+ Kxb5 +-) 4...a2 +-]
2...Qxc4 [2...Qxc2 3.Bxc2#] **3.Kb6+** [3.dxc4?? a2 +-]
3...Qb5+ 4.Bxb5#

HG: Two white bishops on light squares could more easily be accepted if they form strong thematical contents. Here there are a few intriguing ideas, but the position is too crowded, and the main line is disappointing (short and coarse moves, with no surprise effect).

VC: Unnatural starting position and very short sequence of moves, with no Black real counter-play.

MMD: Two promoted pieces and little content. 1 point for having a go.



(the excerpt)

*Ne3+ ke1 qd1+ kf2 b5 rxe3 qxc1 d5 qd2+ kf3 bb2 re2 qd1
d4+ kc4 d2 b6 rc6 kb5 rc8 ba3 ke3 qg1+ rf2*

See the whole solution of 1500 moves at

<https://lichess.org/study/X4mz9ZN/WHDMZCkY>

VC: The main line is not clear. Such a main line would make an endgame study enjoyable by mere humans, not the claim of 1500 moves without cooks!

HG: There are many possibilities to have fun, and this might be one. Can it be proven that each move is unique?

(Wouldn't this be the greatest miracle in mankind?) Nowadays there are many computer-generated compositions in which you are astonished THAT they are sound (even if we don't understand it, but the computer says so), which, however, the observer/solver a) cannot understand (and verbalise the contents), and b) cannot explain, because there is no clear evidence for the WHY of moves (which may constitute logic or aesthetics). This is an extreme example, and my score does not mean that I do not accept the authors way of performing, but I cannot memorise and enjoy it.

The judges:

PE - Paz Einat ; OC - Ofer Comay ; MC - Michel Caillaud ; MMD - Michael McDowell ;
AS - Andrey Selivanov ; VC - Vlaicu Crisan ; GC - Gady Costeff ; HG - Hans Gruber

August 2023