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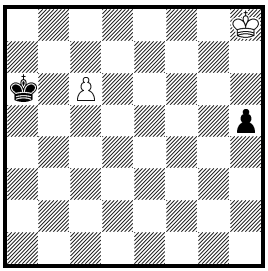
'Chess, like love, like music, has
the power to make men happy.'
(*Tarrasch*)

Preface

'What is a classic'? It's a question that has been asked many times, in literature ('What is a classic'? by *T. S. Eliot* 1944), in the visual arts, in music – and in chess. *Anthony Dickins* and *Hilmar Ebert* gave the following answer in their book '100 Classics of the Chessboard', 1983: 'By a "Classic" we mean a Game, a Study, a Mating or Winning Combination, a Problem, or an idea expressed on the chessboard, that is of note, being striking for excellence or originality, or historically famous.' Here is an immortal example:



White to play draws

This study by *Richard Réti* (no. 12) is about the rule of the square. The black king stands within the square a6-c6-c8-a8 and after 1.c7? Kb7 2.c8Q+ K×c8 he can capture the queen and win. The white king is outside the square d1-h1-h5-d5 and cannot do the same. But he has a plan and with **1.Kg7!** he approaches *both* pawns. **1. . . h4** is followed by **2.Kf6! Kb6 3.Ke5!** [threatening 4.Kf4 and 4.Kd6] **3. . . h3** (3. . . K×b6 4.Kf4 draws because of the square) **4.Kd6 h2 5.c7 Kb7 6.Kd7 h1Q 7.c8Q+** draw or **2. . . h3 3.Ke6/Ke7 h2 4.c7 Kb7 5.Kd7** etc. draw. The impossible has happened. Amazing!
As so often in art: the greater your knowledge the greater your pleasure.

'Anything but Average. Chess Classics and Off-beat Problems' is aimed at all chess lovers: players and problemists. Over-the-board chess and chess composition complement each other wonderfully: battle and art. A game is a struggle between two people, a composition is the product of an individual. A chess game lives from mistakes, the chess problem dies from them. A game perfectly played by both sides often leads to a colourless draw, a perfect chess composition is an everlasting source of pleasure. Anticipation or plagiarism is irrelevant for the chess player, for the chess composer it means bad luck or violation. It follows:

GAME + COMPOSITION = CHESS

Dickins/Ebert's book was published in 1983 and is out of print. Almost forty years have passed and we are now living in the digital age. Computers play chess better than people, solve problems quickly and without errors, and store all their knowledge in huge collections. Newly discovered and newly composed classics are added. It was therefore very difficult for me to select around 100 games and compositions. Ultimately, it was personal taste that decided.

In the **second edition** I have modified the structure of my book and added forty problems. It is a delightful anthology of 400 chess games, combinations, endgame studies, problems, puzzles, riddles. Immortal games by *Anderssen, Lasker, Fischer, Kasparov, Shirov, Carlsen* and famous studies by *Barbier-Saavedra, Troitzky, Réti, Pervakov* and classical problems of all kinds as well as top compositions (selected as 'Millennium problems' by 38 experts in 2000) are presented and explained with additional diagrams, moreover compositions with asymmetry, castling, pawn promotion.

Another focus is off-beat problems: en-passant capture, rotation, adding pieces, retro puzzles, text problems, proof games, special stipulation, jokes, tales etc. Such curiosities are entertaining, exciting, witty, funny – and often even computer-defying. Among these compositions, too, are many classics. Ideally, they are 'beautiful', that is perfect in form and content.

In making a final selection from thousands of problems, the very useful *Problem Database* (*PDB*) of *'Schwalbe, the German Chess Problem Society'*, provided valuable support (see p. 192). On the one hand, I found suitable examples in the *PDB*. On the other hand, I could point out relevant problems in the *PDB* and thus give additional information whilst saving space.

'Anything but Average' prefers to entertain, rather than teach. In order to enable enjoyable reading and solving, both the diagram and the solution are on the same page. Numerous additional diagrams are designed to promote understanding and pleasure. Comments that are not mine are in quotation marks. References to predecessors, cooks, etc. are welcome.

I would like to thank all those who supported me in many different ways: *Ernst Bachl (†), Thomas Brand, Frederic Friedel, Andrey Frolkin, Hans Gruber, Günter Lauinger, Godehard Murkisch, Bernd Schwarzkopf, Günther Weeth (†)*, and especially *Ralf Binnewirtz* – without *Ralf* this book would not exist.

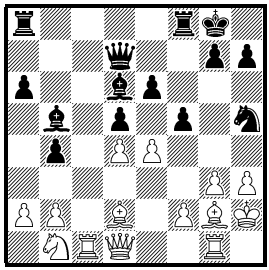
Werner Keym

The Immortal Zugzwang Game

No. 4: *Sämisch – Nimzowitsch* *Copenhagen 1923*

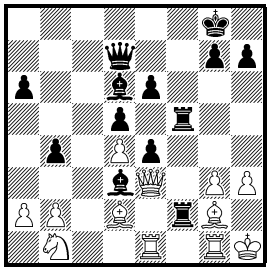
Friedrich Sämisch (1896-1975) was one of the best German chess players in the twenties. He finished third behind *Alekhine* and *Nimzowitsch* at Baden-Baden in 1925. *Aron Nimzowitsch* (1886-1935) was a very strong player and finished first in some of the greatest tournaments. Furthermore he was an important chess writer ('My System').

{4A}



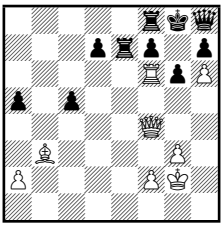
After 20.e2-e4

{4B}



After 25.Rc1-e1

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.g3 Bb7 5.Bg2 Be7 6.Nc3 0-0 7.0-0 d5 8.Ne5 c6 9.c4×d5 c6×d5 10.Bf4 a6 11.Rc1 b5 12.Qb3 Nc6 13.N×c6 Bxc6 14.h3 Qd7 15.Kh2 Nh5 16.Bd2 f5 17.Qd1 b4 18.Nb1 Bb5 19.Rg1 Bd6 20.e4 {4A}
20. . . f5×e4! *Nimzowitsch's* own comment: 'This [knight] sacrifice is based upon the following sober calculation: two pawns and the 7th [2nd] rank and an enemy queen's wing which cannot be disentangled – all this for only one piece!' **21.Q×h5 R×f2 22.Qg5 Raf8 23.Kh1 R8f5 24.Qe3 Bd3 25.Rce1 {4B} 25. . . h6!!** zugzwang: a brilliant move! Four examples: 26.Bc1 B×b1 or 26.Rc1 Re2 or 26.Kh2 R5f3 or 26.g4 R5f3 27.B×f3 Rh2#.



After 50. . . a7-a5

The Immortal Zugzwang Game of Computers

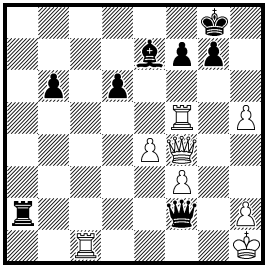
AlphaZero – Stockfish *London 2017*

51.g4!! zugzwang. **51. . . d5 52.B×d5 Rd7 53.Bc4 a4 54.g5 a3 55.Qf3 Rc7 56.Q×a3 Q×f6** what else? **57.g5×f6 Rfc8 58.Qd3 Rf8 59.Qd6 Rfc8 60.a4** 1-0.

No. 10: *Carlsen* – *Karjakin* *New York 2016*

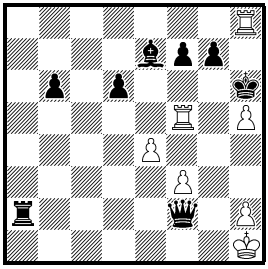
Magnus Carlsen (b. 1990), world champion since 2013, defended his title against *Sergey Karjakin* (b. 1990) in 2016. After drawing 6-6 in classical games they played four rapid games. This is the end of game four.

{10A}



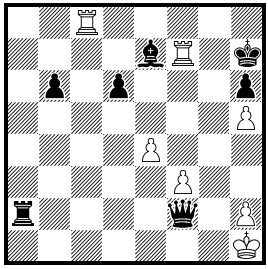
Mate in 3 (or 8)

{10B}



The virtual end (1)

{10C}



The virtual end (2)

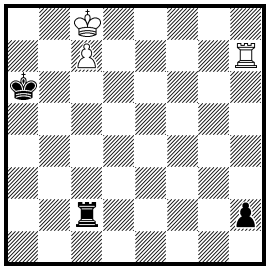
{10A} Grandmaster *Svidler* said that he was sure that *Carlsen* would play 49.Qg3, but the game ran as follows: **49.Rc8+! Kh7 50.Qh6+!**
Black resigns for if 50...K×h6, then 51.Rh8# **{10B}** or if 50...g7×h6, then R×f7# **{10C}**.

If 49...Bf8, then mate in 7 moves by 50.R×f8+ K×f8 51.R×f7+ Ke8 (51...Kg8 52.Rf8+ Kh7 53.Qf5+ and 54.Qg6#) 52.Rf8+ Kd7 53.Qf7+ Kc6 54.Rc8+ Kb5 55.Qc4+ Ka5 56.Ra8#.

Being pressed for time in a rapid game yet *Carlsen* finds a spectacular combination and by a stunning queen sacrifice wins the game and the match.

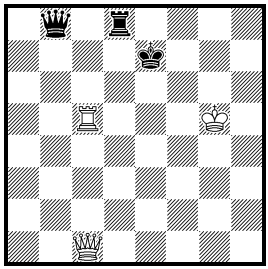
Unlike no. 9 the moves of this rapid game are not lost:
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 c5×d4 4.N×d4 Nf6 5.f3 e5 6.Nb3 Be7 7.c4 a5 8.Be3 a4 9.Nc1 0-0 10.Nc3 Qa5 11.Qd2 Na6 12.Be2 Nc5 13.0-0 Bd7 14.Rb1 Rfc8 15.b4 a4×b3 e.p. 16.a2×b3 Qd8 17.Nd3 Ne6 18.Nb4 Bc6 19.Rfd1 h5 20.Bf1 h4 21.Qf2 Nd7 22.g3 Ra3 23.Bh3 Rca8 24.Nc2 R3a6 25.Nb4 Ra5 26.Nc2 b6 27.Rd2 Qc7 28.Rbd1 Bf8 29.g3×h4 Nf4 30.B×f4 e5×f4 31.B×d7 Q×d7 32.Nb4 Ra3 33.N×c6 Q×c6 34.Nb5 R×b3 35.Nd4 Q×c4 36.N×b3 Q×b3 37.Qe2 Be7 38.Kg2 Qe6 39.h5 Ra3 40.Rd3 Ra2 41.R3d2 Ra3 42.Rd3 Ra7 43.Rd5 Rc7 44.Qd2 Qf6 45.Rf5 Qh4 46.Rc1 Ra7 47.Q×f4 Ra2+ 48.Kh1 Qf2

No. 24
Emanuel Lasker
Deutsches Wochenschach 1890 (v)



Win

No. 25
Henri Rinck
Basler Nachrichten 1926

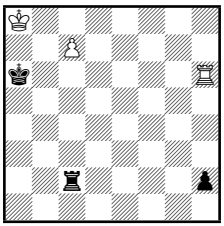


Win

No. 24: This is a didactic endgame showing the so-called Lasker manoeuvre. **1.Kb8! Rb2+ 2.Ka8 Rc2 3.Rh6+ {24A} Ka5 4.Kb7,Kb8 Rb2+ 5.Ka7 Rc2 6.Rh5+ Ka4 7.Kb6,Kb7 Rb2+ 8.Ka6 Rc2 9.Rh4+ Ka3 10.Kb6 Rb2+ 11.Ka5 Rc2 12.Rh3+ {24B} Ka2,Kb2 13.R×h2 R×h2 14.c8Q** 1-0. There are different settings of this endgame. In the original one with bKa5 White wins by 1.Kb8,Kb7,Kd8,Kd7,Rh6.
'The interesting systematic movement of the pieces is of great practical importance and provides true pleasure.' (*Genrikh Kasparyan*)

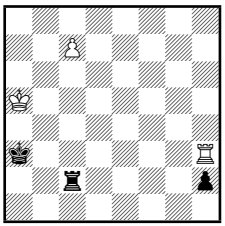
No. 25: 1.Rc7+ Rd7! (1...Kd6? 2.Qc5+; 1...Kf8? 2.Qf4+; 1...Ke6? 2.Qe3+ Kd5 3.Qd3+ 1-0) **2.Qc5+** (2.Qe3+? Kd8! 3.Qc5 Rd5+! ½-½) **2...Kd8 3.Kh6!! {25A}** zugzwang 1-0, e.g. 3...Qxc7 4.Qf8# or 3...R×c7 4.Qf8+ Kd7 5.Q×b8 or 3...Ke8 4.Rc8+ or 3...Rh7+ 4.R×h7 Qh2+ 5.Kg6 Qg3+ 6.Qg5+. Other moves of wKg5 would draw (3.Kg4,Kh4,Kh5) or even lose (3.Kf5,Kf6,Kg6). 3.Kh6!! is one of the most splendid moves ever.

{24A}



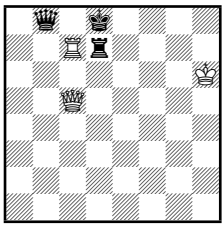
After 3.Rh7-h6+

{24B}



After 12.Rh4-h3+

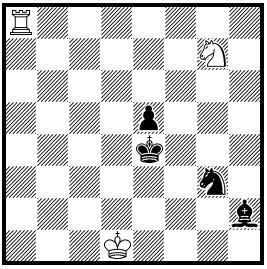
{25A}



After 3.Kg5-h6

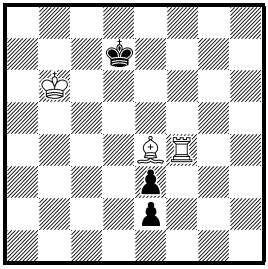
'In 1999 the editors of [the Dutch chess magazine] *Probleemblad* scraped together some famous compositions that came to mind and supplemented them with a few 12-pointers from the recent FIDE albums, and so were able to present four nominees in each category. To their relief, the election form that was added to *Probleemblad* 2000-1 proved a success: 38 participants voted in one or more categories . . . ' (*Probleemblad* 2000-3, May/June).

No. 47
Mark Liburkin
'64' 1935
2nd Prize



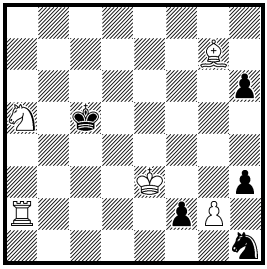
Win

No. 48 ♥
Richard Réti
Sämtliche Studien
version:
Henri Rinck
Bohémia 1935



Win

No. 49
Abram Gurvich
Genrikh Kasparyan
All Union Physical Culture and Sport 1955
1st Prize



Win

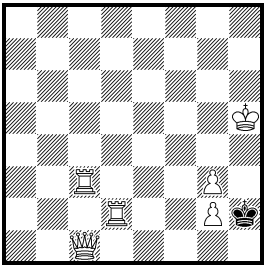
No. 47: 1.Ra2 Bg1 2.Rg2 Kf3 3.R×g1 Kf2 4.Re1 e4 5.Se6 e3 6.Sc5 e2+ 7.Kd2 Sf1+ 8.Kc1 K×e1 9.Sd3#

No. 48: 1.Bf5+ (1.Bc6+? Kd6 2.Rd4+ Ke5 3.Re4+ Kd6 4.R×e3 e1Q 5.R×e1 stalemate) **1. . . Kd6/Kd8 2.Rd4+ Ke7 3.Re4+ Kd8 4.Bd7!** (4.R×e3? e1Q 5.R×e1 stalemate) **4. . . e1Q 5.Bb5** and **6.Re8#**. [Marvellous. WK]

No. 49: 1.Bd4+(1.R×f2? S×f2 2.g2×h3 S×h3 3.B×h6 Kd5 4.Kf3 Ke5 5.Kg3 Sg1 6.Kf2 Sh3+ ½-½) **1. . . Kd5 2.Ke2 h2 3.Ra1 f1Q+ 4.K×f1** (4.R×f1? Sg3+) **4. . . K×d4 5.g4** (5.Ra4+? Ke5 6.Rh4 Sg3+ 7.Kf2 h1Q 8.R×h1 S×h1+ 9.Kf3 h5 ½-½) **5. . . Sg3+ 6.Kg2 h1Q+ 7.K×g3** win.
'The domination and capture of a queen with so much space in a study is baffling.'

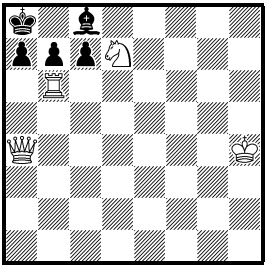
1st place of the Millennium studies = no. 19.

No. 53
Ado Kraemer
Bochumer Anzeiger
1926



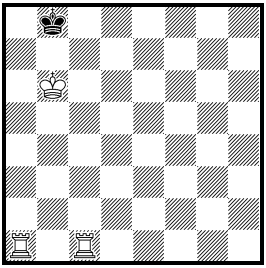
Mate in 2

No. 54
Vladimir Alexandrov
Kubbel MT 1991



Mate in 2

No. 55
Tivadar Kardos
Deutsche Schachzeitung 1971



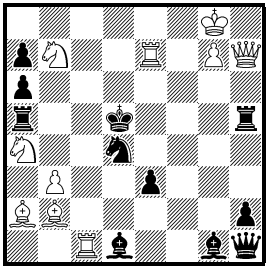
Mate in 2
How many solutions?

No. 53: Black is in a stalemate position. Which white piece will give a flight square to Black? There are four possible moves of the queen, six of the rook c3 and seven of the rook d2. The only successful move is 1.Rc8! By it "a line of attack is cleared when the obtrusive mass of a piece is moved away over the intersection point in the same direction as the piece which is to follow it" (*Grasemann*): 1.Rc8! (clearing the mating line c7-g3 for the queen) 1...K×g3 2.Qc7#. "Typical of this clearance is that the key rook is idle in the mate. But that is the great thing about it, the really exciting idea" (*Grasemann*). This form of clearance is called '**Bristol** clearance' because its first realization (= P1036903) won the 1st prize in the Bristol Tourney 1861.

No. 54: 1.Qc6! zugzwang
1...a6/a5 2.R×a6#/Ra6#
1...a7×b6 2.Qa4#
1...b7×c6 2.Rb8#
1...c7×b6 2.Q×c8#
1...B×d7 2.Q×b7#.
Sacrifices of queen, rook and knight. A baffling key!
Cf. ***Max Euwe***, *Kikeriki 1927 (v)*, Ka7 Qh2 Rd1 Kc8 Rd8 c7 d7, #2; 1.Qd6!.

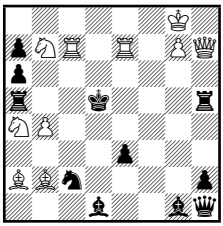
No. 55: A two-mover with only four pieces, this seems to be very easy. Are you a good solver who will find all the solutions? Please try.
1.Ka6! Ka8 2.Rc8#; 1.Kc6! Kc8 2.Ra8#; 1.Rab1! Ka8 2.Rc8#; 1.Ra8+! K×a8 2.Rc8#; 1.Rd1! Kc8 2.Ra8#.
Be honest. Have you really found five solutions?

No. 56
Godfrey Heathcote
Hampstead and
Highgate Express 1905
1st Prize

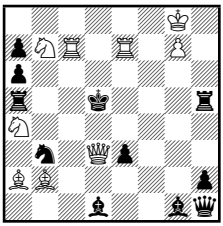


Mate in 2

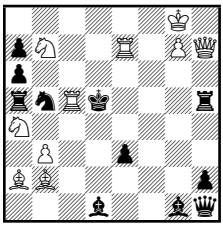
No. 56: In this famous problem a black knight operates a complete wheel on the squares c2, b3, b5, c6, e6, f5, f3, e2 and the mates are all different. 1.R1c7! [threatens 2.Sc3#] 1...S∼ (see below), furthermore 1...R×a4/Rc5 2.Rc5/R×c5#.



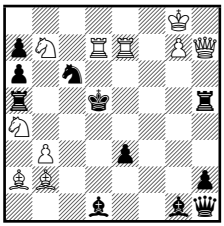
1...Sc2 2.Pb4#



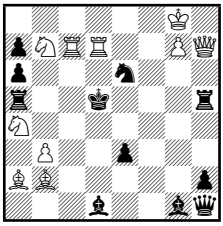
1...S×b3 2.Qd3#



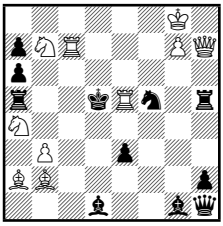
1...Sb5 2.Rc5#



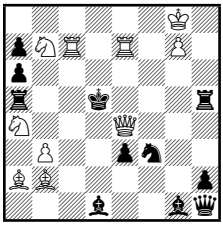
1...Sc6 2.Rcd7#



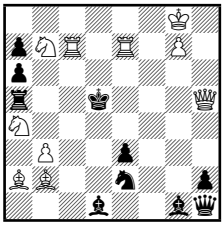
1...Se6 2.Red7#



1...Sf5 2.Re5#

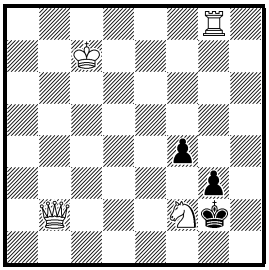


1...Sf3 2.Qe4#



1...Se2 2.Q×h5#

No. 76 ♥
Sam Loyd
Chess Monthly 1857
1st Prize

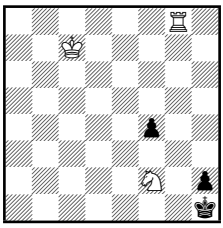


Mate in 3

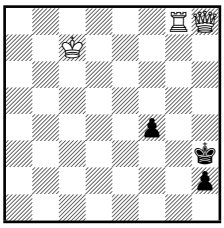
No. 76: 1.Sg4+!
1...Kh1 2.Qh2+ g3×h2 3.Sf2# **{76A}**
1...Kh3 2.Sh2 [3.Rh8#] 2...Kh4,g2,g3×h2 3.Qh8# **{76B}**
1...Kf3 2.Qc2 zugzwang 2...g2 3.Qd3# **{76C}**
1...Kf1 2.Ra8 ∼ 3.Ra1# **{76D}**
1...Kg1? 2.Ra8/Rd8 ∼ 3.Ra1/Rd1#

'No. 14 [= no. 76] was an impromptu posed for *Paul Morphy*, who complimented it highly. It won the *Chess Monthly* prize, and has been a popular favourite for many years as showing four different styles of compositions in the variations: the brilliant queen sacrifice, the strategic play with knight, the waiting principle, and the long flights of the rook' (*Loyd*).

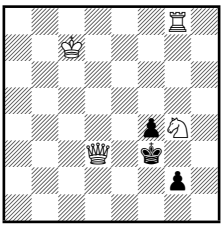
{76A}



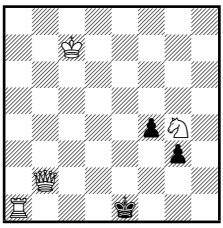
{76B}



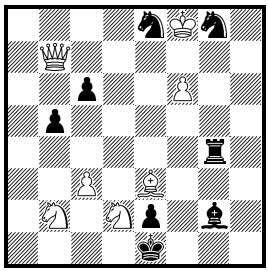
{76C}



{76D}

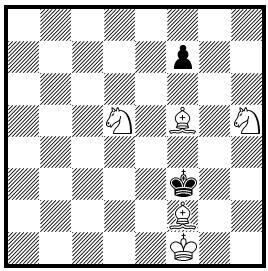


No. 112
Johannes Kohtz
Carl Kockelkorn
Festschrift ASC
München 1911



Mate in 4

No. 113 ♥
Josef Breuer
Die Schwalbe 1948



Mate in 4

No. 112: 1.Qh7? Re4!. Therefore 1.Qf7! [threatens 2.Sd3+ Kd1 3.Qb3#] 1... Bd5 2.Qa7 [threatens 3.Qa1#] 2...Ra4 and now 3.Qh7 Re4/Be4 4.Qh1/Qh4#. Spectacular queen moves b7-f7-a7-h7–h1/h4.

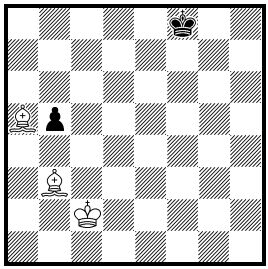
This famous problem covers the front page of the Album which commemorates the 25th Anniversary of the Academic Chess Club Munich in 1911 and carries the motto 'Eine Schwalbe' ('a swallow'). The authors' reasons for doing so are unknown. But there is no doubt that the *'German Chess Problem Society'* was founded and baptised *'Schwalbe'* in 1924 on account of that famous composition.

No. 112 is the first problem 'to show two critical decoys together (thus leading to a **Grimshaw**, see p.54) without a sacrifice: the swallow theme. To do this they needed only a single piece, the queen, and she was then also used on her own for the exploitation of the **Grimshaw** interferences (swallow-form) – that was a great sensation of their time and set new technical standards.' (*Grasemann*) Further examples are P1052715 and P1051657.

No. 113: It is not easy to find the key. 1.Ba7! f6 2.Sb6 Ke3 3.Sc4+ Kf3 4.Sd2#. A symmetrical **Indian** (see p. 50).

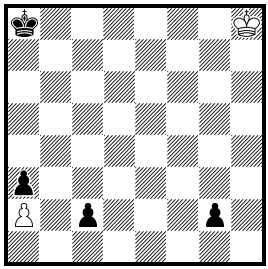
'With its beautiful setting and fine long-range withdrawal key move this miniature Indian seems unlikely ever to be surpassed for economy, simplicity and beauty. It is one of the finest examples of a Classic of the Chessboard.'
(*Dickins/Ebert*)

No. 135
Hilmar Ebert
Zdravko Maslar
Diagrammes 1980
Special Prize



Helpmate in 5

No. 136 ♥
Rolf Trautner
(after J. Bebesi)
Die Schwalbe 1960

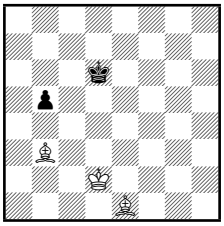


Helpmate in 7

No. 135: A perfect double helpmate Indian with only five pieces.
1.Ke7! Be1 2.Kd6 Kd2 **{135A}** 3.Kc5 Bd1 4.Kb4 Kc2+ **{135B}** 5.Ka4 Kb2# **{135C}**.
There are two interferences of the white king, on square d2 in view of Be1 and on square c2 in view of Bd1, and two batteries, wKd2-c2+ and wKc2-b2#. Problemists call that a double Indian (see no. 77).

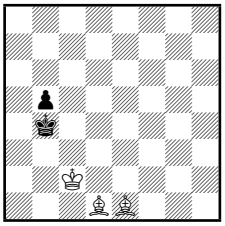
No. 136: This helpmate shows a successive Allumwandlung with only six pieces:
1.c1S! Kg8! 2.Sb3 a2×b3 3.g1B b4 4.Bc5 b4×c5 5.a2 c6 6.a1R c7 7.Ra7 c8Q# **{136A}**. Non plus ultra.

{135A}



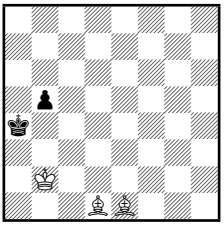
After 2. . . Kc2-d2

{135B}



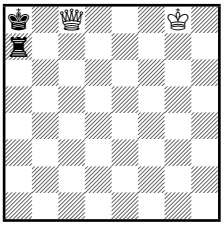
After 4. . . Kd2-c2+

{135C}



After 5. . . Kc2-b2#

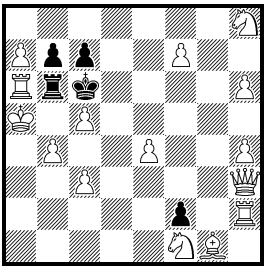
{136A}



After 7. . . c7-c8Q#

'Elegance is the restriction to the essentials
in its most beautiful form.'
(*Rothmann*)

No. 142
Henry Bettmann
Funkschach 1926
1st Prize



Selfmate in 3

It was *Joseph Babson* who initiated the construction of problems in which the promotion of a black pawn to Q/R/B/S is followed by the promotion of a white pawn to Q/R/B/S. So the black Allumwandlung and the white Allumwandlung evoke an echo: QQ–RR–BB–SS. This echo AUW is called **Babson Task**.

No. 142 is the first realization of this task. Little flaws are the duals after 2... Qf2/Qg7.

No. 142 = 1st place of the Millennium selfmates (p. 87).

No. 142: The key move pinning bPb7 is **1.a8B!** followed by

1... f2×g1Q 2.f8Q!
2... Q×c5+ 3.b5+ Q×b5#
2... Qd4 3.c3×d4 R×a6#
2... Qe3 3.S×e3 R×a6#
2... Qf2 3.Q×f2,R×f2 R×a6#
2... Q×f1 3.b5+ Q×b5#
2... Qg2 3.R×g2 R×a6#
2... Qg3 3.S×g3 R×a6#
2... Qg4 3.Q×g4 R×a6#
2... Qg5 3.h4×g5 R×a6#
2... Qg6 3.S×g6 R×a6#
2... Qg7 3.Q×g7,h6×g7 R×a6#
2... Qg8 3.Q×g8 R×a6#
2... Qh1 3.R×h1 R×a6#
2... Q×h2 3.S×h2 R×a6#

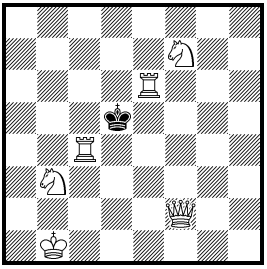
1... f2×g1S 2.f8S!
2... Se2 3.R×e2 R×a6#
2... Sf3 3.Q×f3 R×a6#
2... S×h3 3.R×h3 R×a6#

1... f2×g1R 2.f8R!
2... R×f1 3.R×f1 R×a6#
2... Rg2 3.R×g2 R×a6#
2... Rg3 3.S×g3 R×a6#
2... Rg4 3.Q×g4 R×a6#
2... Rg5 3.h4×g5 R×a6#
2... Rg6 3.S×g6 R×a6#
2... Rg7 3.h6×g7 R×a6#
2... Rg8 3.R×g8 R×a6#
2... Rh1 3.R×h1 R×a6#

1... f2×g1B 2.f8B!
2... B×c5 3.B×c5 R×a6#
2... Bd4 3.c3×d4 R×a6#
2... Be3 3.S×e3 R×a6#
2... Bf2 3.R×f2 R×a6#
2... B×h2 3.S×h2 R×a6#

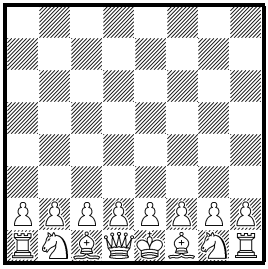
Curiosities

No. 156
Werner Keym
Weser-Kurier 1968



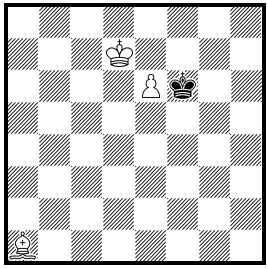
Mate in 2

No. 157
Sam Loyd
Chess Monthly 1858



Add the black king.
Mate in 3 moves

No. 158
Niels Høeg
Skakbladet 1916



What was the last move?

No. 156: This two-move miniature seems to be very easy: 1.Rb6!? K×c4 2.Qd4#. And just the same was the 'solution' of 223 of 237 entries in a solving contest of the daily newspaper *Rhein-Zeitung Koblenz* in 2002 – with or without the aid of a computer! – However, that is wrong because the last move before the position of the diagram had to be made by White, not by Black since the black king could not come from any of his neighbouring squares which are guarded by two or three white pieces. So it is Black to play and the correct solution is 1.K×e6! Rc7 2.Kd5 Qf5# and 1.K×c4! Qd4+ 2.K×b3/Kb5 Re3/Rb6#. According to the Codex for Chess Composition (p. 193) the unconventional first move is permitted if this is deducible from retroanalysis.

'One of the most elegant miniatures showing the perfect disguise of Black's turn to move with the black king in the middle of the chessboard.' (*Weeth*)

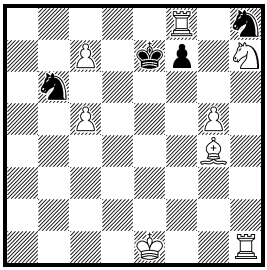
No. 157: Add bKh4 and then 1.d4! Kg4 2.e4+ Kh4 3.g3# or 1...Kh5 2.Qd3 ~ 3.Qh3#. According to *S. Loyd* (and to the computer!): unique!

No. 158: The last moves were d5×e6 e.p.+! e7-e5 d4-d5+, not f5×e6 e.p.+? e7-e5 for that still leaves the black king in illegal retrocheck.
'This pioneer setting by Niels Høeg is one of the handful of very economical examples with only three or four men, and it shows the simplicity, economy and originality that go to make up a Classic of the chessboard.' (*Dickins/Ebert*)

From Valladao to the Keym Task

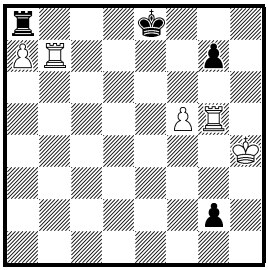
Since the beginning of problem chess history the three special moves (castling, en-passant capture, promotion) have always fascinated composers and solvers, especially the combination of these moves, even if there is no thematic interdependence of such moves. When they are all found in a problem, the special term for such a task is Valladao task referring to *Joaquim Valladao Monteiro*, who organized a relevant theme tourney in 1966.

No. 215
José Figueiredo
O Globo 1966
Valladao TT 1st HM



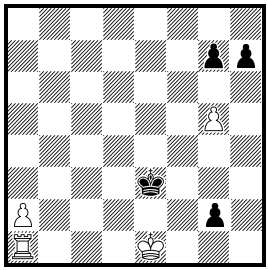
Mate in 2

No. 216
Werner Keym
Die Schwalbe 2005
Commendation



Mate in 3

No. 217
Jarl Ulrichsen
EG 2011



Win

No. 215 has several tries and fine refutations. 1.Kd1?/Rh2? Sg6!; 1.Rf1? Sc8!. 1.0-0! [thr. 2.Re1#] Sc4/Sd5/Sd7 2.c8S#; 1...f5 2.g5×f6 e.p.#; 1...Sg6 2.R1×f7#. This two-mover is a *perfect Valladao*: 1) there is no dual of the promotion, 2) there is only the double step of the pawn with the subsequent en-passant capture by the adversary pawn and not the simple step of the pawn with a normal capture by the adversary pawn besides. – The first Valladao problem is probably P1360420 from 1867.

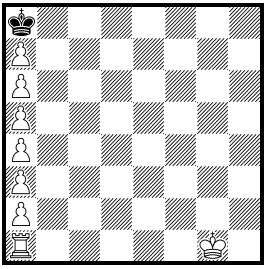
In **no. 216** the three special moves succeed one another (successive Valladao): 1.Rh5! [thr. 2.Rh8#] g5+ 2.f5×g6 e.p. 0-0-0 3.a8Q#. 1.R5×g7? Kf8!. This is the most economical rendering of the (perfect) Valladao in a directmate problem. See P1049843 for a double rendering.

No. 217: 1.0-0-0! h5 (1...h6? 2.a4! 1:0) **2.g5×h6 e.p.** (2.a4? h4 0-1) **g7×h6 3.a4 h5 4.a5 h4 5.a6 h3 6.a7 h2 7.a8Q g1Q/h1Q 8.Qa7+/R×h1** 1-0. Letztform! An excellent Valladao study is P1372934.

Chess 960

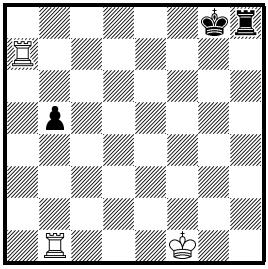
In Chess 960, often called Fischer Random Chess, in the initial game array the white king is located between the two rooks on one of the six squares (b1 ... g1). In case of castling on the left side, the king moves to c1 and the rook to d1 (on the right side K to g1 and R to f1) as usual.

No. 232
William Shinkman
Bader Al-Hajiri
Website T. Krabbé 2007



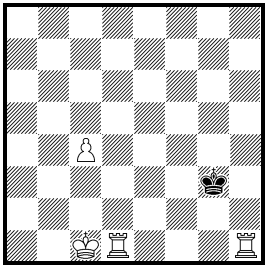
Mate in 8
Chess 960

No. 233
Werner Keym
Die Schwalbe 2020



Mate in 4
b) Mate in 4
Chess 960

No. 234
Bernd Gräfrath
König & Turm 2002 (c)



White retracts 1 move, then mate in 2
Chess 960 2 solutions

No. 232: 1.0-0-0! (K→c1 and R→d1) K×a7 2.Rd8 K×a6 3.Rd7 K×a5 4.Rd6 K×a4 5.Rd5 K×a3 6.Rd4 K×a2 7.Rd3 Ka1 8.Ra3#. [w0-0-0]
Shinkman's famous problem (with wKe1 instead of wKg1 and the same solution 1.0-0-0!) was published in *St. Louis Globe Democrat* 1887, yet a second solution (1.Kd2) was discovered 40 years later. However, by means of Chess 960 *Al-Hajiri* saved the famous problem 120 years later. Now it is immortal (again).

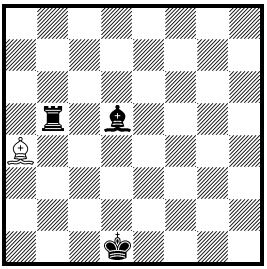
No. 233: a) 1.R×b5! Rh1+ 2.Kg2 Rb1/Rc1,Rd1,Re1/Rf1,Rg1+,Rh2+ 3.R×b1/Rb8+/K×R K-/R8/K- 4.Rb8#/R×R#/Rb8#. **b)** 1.R×b5? 0-0+! (Rh8→f8). By 1.0-0-0! (Kf1→c1 Rb1→d1) it is proved that the initial square of wK is f1, hence f8 for bK, so b0-0 is no longer permitted. 1...Rh1 2.R×h1 b4 3.Rd1 b3 4.Rd8#. Cute. [w0-0-0 excludes b0-0, see Retro-Strategy p. 173].
Cf. ***Werner Keym***, *Die Schwalbe 2020*, Kc6 Qg1 Bd2 a5 f5 Kc8 Rb8 Rd8 b2 h6, #5 Chess 960; 1.Qg7? Rd6+ 2.K×d6 0-0-0+!, 1.Qa7! Rd6+ 2.K×d6 0-0-0+ (2...Rb7 3.Qa8+ 4.Qc6+ 5.Qd7#) 3.Kc6 Rd6+ 4. K×d6 b1Q 5.Qc7# or 1...0-0 2.Qg1+ Kf7 3.Qg6+ 4.Qe6+ 5.Qd7#. Surprise. [b0-0-0, b0-0]

No. 234: 1) Backward Rd4-d1, then 1.0-0 Kh3 2.Rf3#. **2)** Backward 0-0-0 (Kf1→c1), then 1.Rd4 Kf3 2.Rh3#. Nice reciprocal affair. [w0-0-0, w0-0]

Adding pieces!

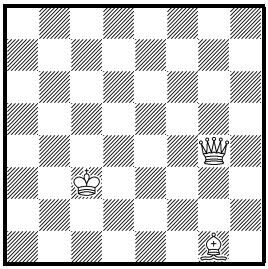
By adding pieces many options may arise, quite some of them turning out to be wrong. Therefore those problems are varied and attractive, often being a challenge as to retroanalysis. Here the aid offered by the computer is rather limited.

No. 235
Raymond Smullyan
Manchester Guardian
1957



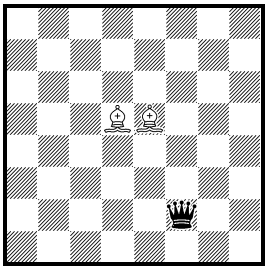
Add the white king.

No. 236
Sam Loyd
Le Sphinx 1866



Add the black king
a) for a stalemate
b) for a mate
c) for a mate in 1
d) on a square where he can never be mated

No. 237
M. Techritz
Source unknown



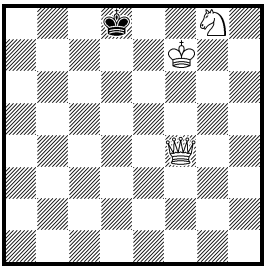
Add the kings.
White to play mates in 1

No. 235: The solution is wKc3. The last moves were Kb3×Pc3+ b4×c3 e.p. c2-c4 B-d5+ (cf. no. 301). The last move record for K×P by *B. Pavlovic* (no. 304) has the (mirrored) position: wKf3 Bh4 bKe1 Rg5 Be5. An evergreen!

No. 236: a) Kh1, **b)** Ke3, **c)** Ka8 and 1.Qc8#, **d)** the bK can never be mated by the queen and a dark-squared bishop on g7.

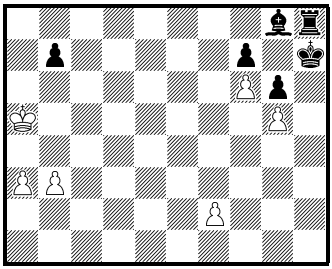
No. 237: Add wKf3 and bKh1, then mate by 1.K×f2#. Seemingly easy. The simpler stipulation 'Add the kings. Mate in 1' would allow two additional solutions: wKc1 and bKa1 with 1.Qb2+/Qd4 B×b2/B×d4# as well as wKg6/wKh6 and bKh8 with 1.Qf6+ B×f6#.

No. 283
Eric Angelini
Europe Echecs 1990



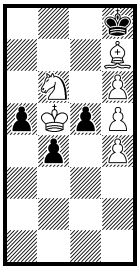
Add 1 square to the board.
Mate in 2

No. 284
Rolf Wiehagen
feenschach 1992



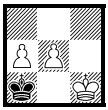
10×8 board (a1–j8)
Helpmate in 5

No. 285
Werner Keym
Anything but Average 2020



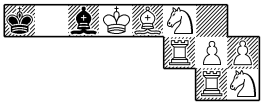
4×8 board (e1–h8) from the beginning.
Shortest mate
b) mirrored (wKg5)

No. 286
Werner Keym
Die Schwalbe 2016 (v)



3×3 board (a6-c8)
Mate by two minor pieces in 5 moves

No. 287
Thomas R. Dawson
Bolton Football Field 1911



A special board
Mate in 21

No. 283: Add a square e9, then play 1.Se9! K×e9 2.Qc7#.

No. 284: 1.b5 g4 2.b4 g5 3.b4×a3 g6 4.a2 g6×h7 5.a1S h8S#. A perfect rendering of the 100 Dollar Theme (cf. p. 118) – on a 10×8 chessboard.

No. 285 (initially 8+8 pieces, now 6+4): **a)** 1.h4×g5! 2.g6 3.g7# (possible last moves e7-e5 Bg6-h7). **b)** The dark-squared Be7 could not come from f1, wPs captured 3 times, bPh captured 2 times to let the wPh pass (h2→h8B!), last move f7-f5. So 1.e5×f6 e.p.! ∼ 2.f7#. That does not work on a 8×8 board.

No. 286: You certainly expect a mate by B + B/S since S + S cannot mate on the 8×8 chessboard. The solution is surprising: 1.a8S! Ka7 2.Kc7 Ka6 3.Sb6 Ka7 4.Sc8+ Ka6 5.b8S# with a mate by S + S – on the 'right' chessboard.

No. 287: Move to the free square each time: S R S R B, R S R S B, S R S R K, S K R K, 20.Sf2 Ka3 21.Re3×c3#. This problem is called 'Revolver Practice'.

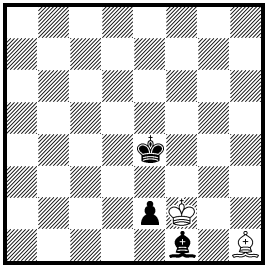
Retros for beginners

The economical records with the stipulation **'Which was the last move?'** are the best known retro themes. In a most economical rendering a unique move (e.g. K×B) is proved to be the last one by retroanalysis. The following criteria apply to the economy: a minimum of 1) pieces, 2) officers (Q, R, B, S), 3) major officers (Q, R), 4) queens. B and S are equal in evaluation.

There are 60 different last moves (records): K, Q, R, B, S, P moves (6 different moves); K, Q, R, B, S, P captures Q, R, B, S, P (30); P moves and promotes to Q, R, B, S (4); P captures Q, R, B, S and promotes to Q, R, B, S (16); P does a double step (1); P captures en-passant (1); long and short castling (2).

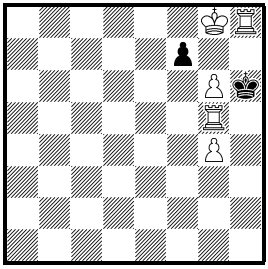
Furthermore there are various types. **Type A:** it is not stated who is on the move; neither king is in check. **Type B:** it is stated who is on the move; neither king is in check. **Type C:** a king is in check. You will find these records in my book 'Eigenartige Schachprobleme' or *PDB* (K='economy record' and K='type A') or *www.janko.at/Retros* or *www.anselan.com*.

No. 302
Sveto Štambuk
problem 1951 2nd Prize



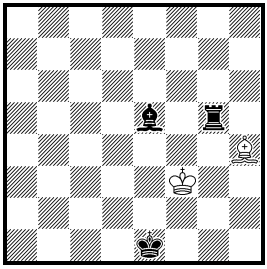
Last move?

No. 303
Luigi Ceriani
problem 1951



Last move?

No. 304
Branko Pavlović
Sahovski Vjesnik 1950



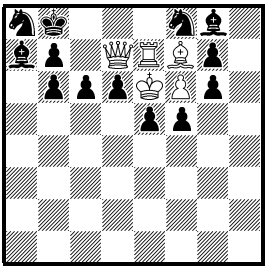
Last move?

The most famous last move record is no. 158 by *Niels Høeg*. No. 302-304 are **type C** records. In **no. 302** the last moves were Kg2-f2+! f2-f1B+.

No. 303: Which of the following five moves could be the last one: h7-h8R+ or g7×Q/R/B/Sh8R+? There was no previous black move before h7-h8R+ or g7×Q/B/Sh8R+? Hence it was g7×Rh8R+ Rh7-h8+.

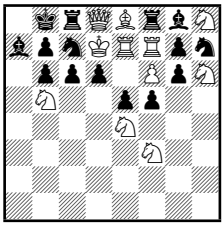
No. 304 shows the well-known double check of rook and bishop: backward Kg3×Pf3! g4×f3 e.p.+ f2-f4. In 1957 *Raymond Smullyan* presented this 'trick' in his puzzle no. 235.

No. 328
Harry Goldsteen
Die Schwalbe 2020



Release the position!

{328A}



Next move Sc7-a8

No. 328 (5+13 pieces): Backward 1...Sh7-f8+ 2.Be8×Rf7 Rf8×Sf7 3.Sg5-f7 Rf7-f8+ 4.Se4-g5 Rf8×Sf7 5.Sg5-f7 Rf7-f8+ 6.Sc3-e4 Rf8×Sf7 7.Sh6-f7 Rf7-f8+ 8.Sb5-c3 Rf8×Sf7 9.Sh8-f7 Rf7-f8+ 10.Sc7-b5 Rf8×Sf7 11.Sb5×Rc7! (not 11.Sb5×Qc7?) 11...Rc8-c7 12.Sf3-g5 Rc7-c8 13.Sg5-f7 Rf7-f8+ 14.Se4-g5 Rc8-c7 15.Qd8-d7 Rf8×Rf7 16.Kd7-e6 Sc7-a8 **{328A}**. A sensation: 5 knights and 2 rooks are uncaptured on the same square. 'A God's gift.' Cf. P0002345 and P0000096.
Genesis of the position **{328A}**: a7×Pb6, d7×Pc6, h7×Pg6, bBc8-h3, bSb8→b4, bSg8×Pf6→f2, bRh-h4, bK→, f7-f5, bQ→f6, wRa→e8, d7-d8S→, e5×Qf6, wK→d7, wRh→h8, bBh3→h7, e7-e5, c7×Bd6, bBf8→d8, bRa8-c8, a7-a8S→, bK→a8, bBd8→a7, bK-b8, bSb4→c7, wQ→d8, wRe8-e7, wBf1→e8, wRh→f7, bB-g8, bR-h8, bB-h7, bR-f8, bBg8, h7-h8S, wS→b5, wS→e4, wS→f3, wS→h6, bSf2→h7.

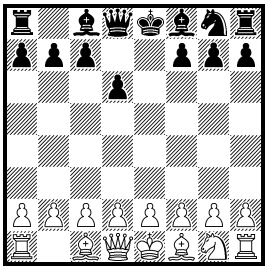
Six other **great retro records**:
– En-passant capture before at least 71 single moves (=P0000052)
– Castling before at least 159 single moves (=P0000024)
– 8 half en-passant captures (=P0004873)
– 33 successive checks during the last 66 single moves (=P1185294)
– 96 moves of the same piece in a (dualistic) shortest proof game (=P0001856)
– 185 moves in a (dualistic) shortest proof game (=P1345778)

Three classical **dual-free length records** without retro aspect:
– 226 moves in a directmate problem (=P1298048)
– 28 moves in a helpmate problem (=P0559197)
– 223 moves in a selfmate problem (=P1176536)

Proof games

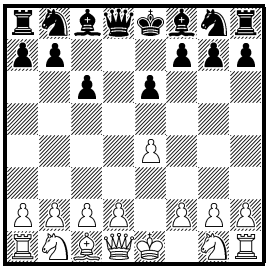
Since 1980 proof games (PG) have generally ranked in retro columns. Their seemingly inexhaustible themes and tasks are fascinating for composers and solvers. You will find thousands of them in *PDB* (K='unique proof game'). Unique or unambiguous means that the whole sequence of moves is running without any dual.

No. 332
Géza Schweig
Tukon 1938



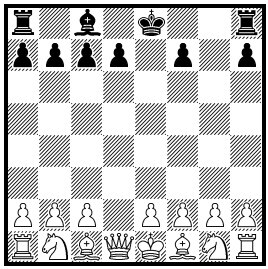
Proof game in 4.0

No. 333
Tibor Orbán
Die Schwalbe 1976
Commendation



Proof game in exactly 4.0

No. 334
Werner Keym
Die Schwalbe 1992



Proof game in 6.5

No. 332 and 333 are two famous puzzles which will attract attention at every chess club.

In **no. 332** the 'wrong' knight is amazing: 1.Sc3 d6 2.Sd5 Sd7 3.S×e7 Sdf6 4.S×g8 S×g8.

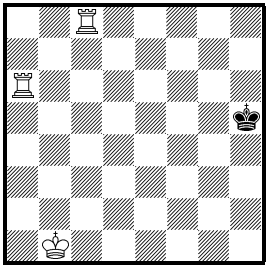
In **no. 333** a solution in 3 moves is simple (1.e4 e6 2.Bb5 c6 3.B×c6 d7×c6 or 2.Bc4 c6 3.B×e6 d7×e6), but the stipulation is 'exactly' 4 moves. Solution: 1.e4! e6 2.Bb5 Ke7! 3.B×d7 c6 4.Be8! K×e8. 'A devilish trap.'

No. 334 presents the raid of a bishop having the effect of a billiard ball: 1.d4 Sh6 2.B×h6 g5 3.B×f8 Sc6 4.B×e7 S×d4 5.B×d8 Sb3 6.B×g5 Sc1 7.B×c1. White and black homebase position.

'Retroanalysis is higher mathematics of human logic,
abstraction and imagination.'
(*Emanuel Lasker*)

A problem for musicians?

No. 400
Werner Keym
Die Schwalbe 2009 (v)

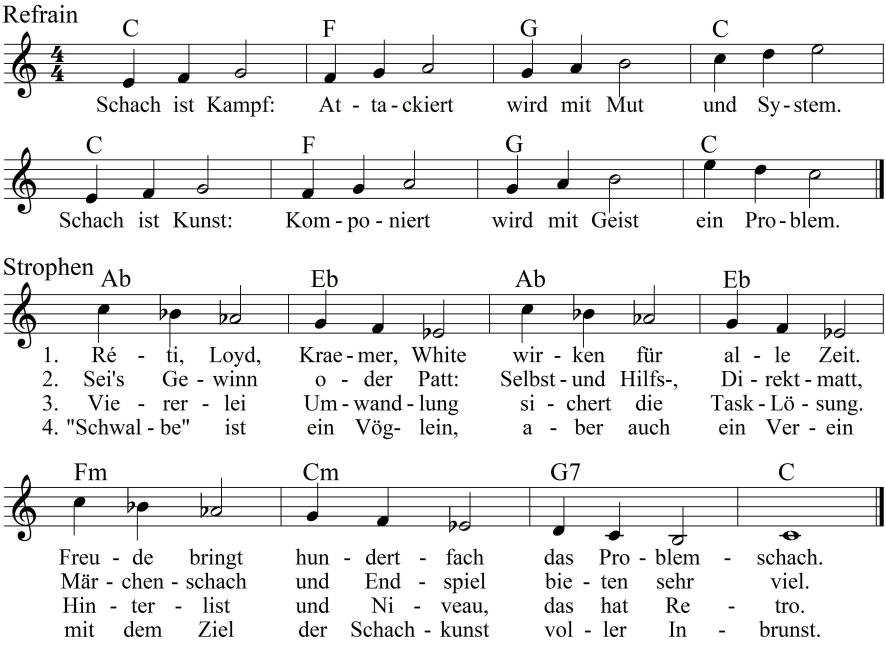


Mate in 2 moves
Why would an inversion or a reflection of this position be musicologically unsound?

At the conclusion of a chess evening a lover of both problems and music shows an easy two-mover. The mating sequence is quickly found: 1.Rg8 Kh4 2.Rh6#. 'That's simple,' says the problem-lover, 'but there is another puzzle. If you invert or reflect this position, you can certainly still mate in two, but the musicological significance is lost. Is that simple as well?'

Solution
The four men stand on B1, A6, C8, H5, which gives B-A-C-H and the year of his birth 1-6-8-5. If you invert the position you get BACH and 8314, and if you reflect it you get GHFA and 1685. Both of these are musicologically unsound.

Problemschach-Song



Text (v) und Musik: Werner Keym 2009

Problem Chess Song

Chess is fight: attacking with courage and system.
Chess is art: composing a problem with spirit.

1. Réti, Loyd, Kraemer, White work for all time.
Problem chess brings joy a hundredfold.

2. Be it win or stalemate: self- and help-, direct mate,
fairy chess and endgame offer a great deal.

3. Fourfold promotion secures the task solution.
Cunning and level, that's what retro has.

4. "Schwalbe" is a birdie, but also an association
with the goal of chess art full of fervour.

Translation: Frederic Friedel