

British Endgame Study News

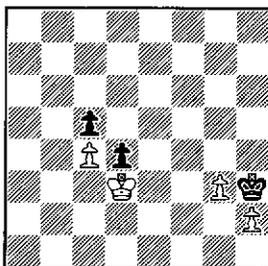
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by Kling and Horwitz
White to play and win

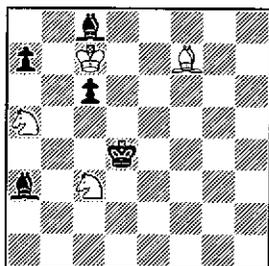
This issue. Our middle pages are devoted to an attempt to throw more light on the intricacies of Q+N v 2R (but it is far from being the last word and I hope readers will come forward with more), and there is a special number devoted to British studies from the 1950s. And there are several obituaries, that for František Macek being by far the most important.

Books from Georgia. As I hoped, I have indeed been able to obtain a supply of "Isosif Krikheli : Endgames" (see special number 34), and copies are available from me at £5 including UK postage (usual 10% extra to mainland Europe, 20% elsewhere). I also have a small stock of David Gurgenzidze's two books containing his own studies, "Best studies" and "Best studies 2", and these are available at the same price.

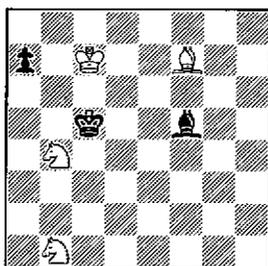
What's in a name? Friends who know of my interest in music sometimes ask me if I am the John Beasley who is apparently well known as a pianist and composer (seven movies currently available on DVD from Amazon). No, that is another John Beasley. Neither, I regret to say, do I have any connection with the DiMarcos Beasley who played on the wing for the USA in last year's World Cup and did rather well. But what is certainly mine is a little book *Piper on the mountain* which has just been published by Peacock Press and discusses the art of improvisatory play on a solo wind instrument. £6.50 from myself including UK postage (usual 10%-20% extra for postage elsewhere), or whisper the magic number "ISBN 0-907908-84-5" to your local bookshop or music shop and perhaps save yourself the postage.

Spotlight. No errors to report this time, but Ken Whyld draws my attention to a discussion in the *BCM* for June and July 1995 (pages 317 and 379) on the Reichhelm pawn ending 1 on page 228 of our March issue. The earliest setting of the idea appears to be that above, from 1851. Reichhelm's clearance sacrifice is missing, but the position is more natural, and the win is perhaps even more surprising because the White pawns start so much further back: 1 Ke4 Kg4 2 h4 Kh5 3 Kf4 Kh6 4 g4 Kg6 5 h5+ Kh6 6 Ke4 Kg5 7 Kf3 Kh6 8 Kf4 Kh7 9 g5 Kg7 10 g6 Kh6 11 Kg4 Kg7 12 Kg5! d3 13 h6+ Kh8 14 Kf6 d2 15 Kf7 d1Q 16 g7+ and mates as before.

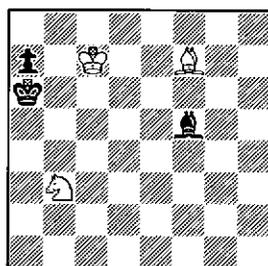
Recently published British originals



1 - win

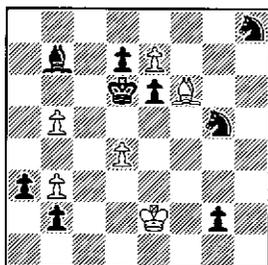


1a - after 3...Bf5

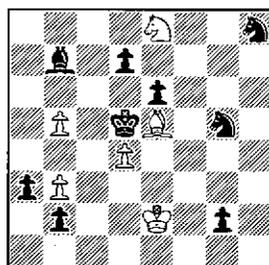


1b - after 6 Nb3

My trawls for this column seem to have overlooked Mike Bent's 1, which appeared in *The Problemist* as far back as November 2000. 1 Nb1 puts a second Black bishop under attack and three minor pieces will win against one, so Black's only hope is the counterattack 1...Bb4. White now has 2 Nxc6+ Kc5 3 Nxb4 winning a piece, but Black can play 3...Bf5 and get it back (see 1a). However, there is a cost. 4 Na6+ Kb5 5 Nd2 forces Black to play 5...Kxa6 if he is not to forgo the capture for good, and 6 Nb3 suddenly threatens mate (see 1b). Black can avoid this mate, of course, but only at the cost of his bishop: 6...Kb5 7 Nd4+, 6...Bd3 7 Nc5+. "Archetypal Mike Bent: clear, clean and punchy," wrote Ian Watson, who has printed several of Mike's recent studies in his column in *Correspondence Chess*.

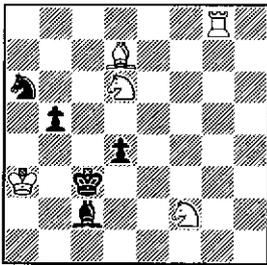


2 - draw

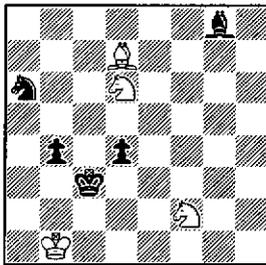


2a - after 2 Be5

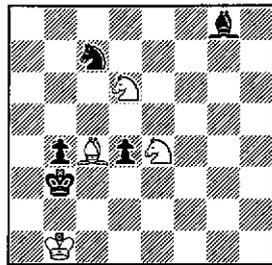
The trouble with trying to produce play which is "clear, clean and punchy" is that a lot of men may be required to guard flight squares and cut off unwanted sidelines, and the result can look more like a problem than an endgame study. Even so, the fun can justify the expense. Mike's 2 appeared in the March 2001 *Problemist*. 1 e8N+ Kd5 2 Be5 threatens mate by 3 Nf6 (see 2a), and if 2...g1N+ then 3 Ke3 and mate is inevitable. Try 2...Ke4 aiming for f5; no, 3 Nd6+ Kd5 4 Ne8 repeating the position and reinstating the threat. All right, try 2...Nh7 guarding f6; no, 3 Kf3 (threat 4 Nc7 mate) Ng5+ 4 Ke2 (but nothing else, as is easily seen) and again White has forced Black to repeat the position.



3 - win (Black to move)



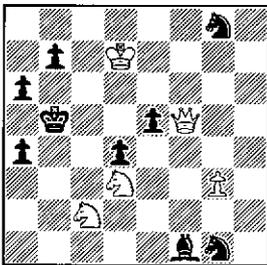
3a - after 3...Bxg8



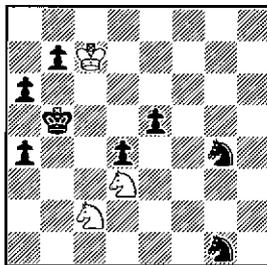
3b - after 6 Bc4+

3 appeared in March last year. A simple introductory flourish **1...b4+ 2 Ka2 Bb3+ 3 Kb1 Bxg8** gives 3a, and once more White must find a way of winning a piece.

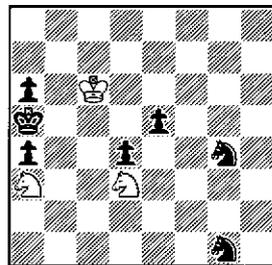
The natural way to start is **4 Nfe4+** and if **4...Kd3** then **5 Bb5+**, but what happens after **4...Kb3**? The answer is again **5 Bb5**, because after **5...Nc7** (**5...Nb8** is no better) we can change tack and go for the bishop instead: **6 Bc4+**! (see 3b). If he is to save his bishop, Black must capture the intrepid intruder, **6...Bxc4**, but this allows mate in two: **7 Nc5+** with either **7...Ka3 8 Nxc4** or **7...Kc3 8 Nde5**.



4 - win (Black to move)



4a - after 4...Nxcg4



4b - after 12 Kc6

4, which is very strictly for fun, appeared last September. Again there is a simple introductory flourish, but it is not without subtlety because after **1...Bh3** White must interpolate **2 g4** to gain a tempo. His queen still goes, **2...Bxg4 3 Qxg4 Nf6+**, but now he has time for **4 Kc7** guarding b6. The inevitable capture **4...Nxcg4** gives 4a, and White must play for mate.

The first step is **5 Na3+** forcing **5...Ka5**, and now comes an out-and-back knight manoeuvre: **6 Nc4+ Kb5 7 Nd6+ Ka5 8 Nxb7+ Kb5 9 Nd6+ Ka5 10 Nc4+ Kb5 11 Na3+ Ka5**. These six moves have removed the pawn on b7, and **12 Kc6** adds to the pressure (see 4b). It threatens Nc4 mate and so forces **12...Ne3**, and now White can play **13 Kc5** and his king is four moves away from each of the Black knights; Black has no defence against **14 Nb4** and **15 Nc6** mate.

Alain Pallier, who has been receiving originals for *The Problemist* for the last two years, is standing down, and in future they should be sent to Yochanan Afek, van Boetzelaerstraat 26/1, CW 1051 Amsterdam, NL - Nederland, afek26@zonnet.nl, fax 0031-20-6861965. Please rally round!

On the reciprocal zugzwangs with Q+N v 2R

Last autumn, Noam Elkies sent me Ken Thompson's win-draw reciprocal zugzwangs with Q+N v 2R (they have since appeared in a supplement to *EG* 147), and as a first step towards understanding them I have been doing some tabular analysis.

There are 905 positions in total, but Black's rooks will have to defend each other if he is to survive for any length of time and it is natural to concentrate on positions where they are already on the same rank. There are 45 such positions with the rooks on rank 1, 96 with them on rank 2, 240 on rank 3, and 164 on rank 4, total 545. These can be further classified by considering the position of the Black king:

bK	bRR on row 1					bRR on row 2					bRR on row 3					bRR on row 4				
	a	b	c	d	All	a	b	c	d	All	a	b	c	d	All	a	b	c	d	All
8	0	2	1	2	5	1	1	4	2	8	2	2	7	2	13	3	3	4	6	16
7	1	0	5	3	9	1	2	5	3	11	6	4	6	5	21	3	3	7	8	21
6	0	0	2	4	6	1	1	5	4	11	9	6	13	12	40	1	2	8	11	22
5	1	1	2	3	7	2	3	6	9	20	11	9	7	5	32	6	5	7	1	19
4	1	0	1	4	6	2	7	0	4	13	13	12	15	6	46	5	2	3	5	15
3	1	3	0	3	7	2	1	3	0	6	14	14	14	30	72	1	4	6	8	19
2	2	0	1	0	3	2	3	5	12	22	9	4	0	1	14	4	2	9	9	24
1	0	0	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	5	1	0	1	0	2	3	8	9	8	28
All	6	6	13	20	45	12	20	29	35	96	65	51	63	61	240	26	29	53	56	164

Table 1 : Subclassification by square of bK

Thus with bRR on rank 1, there are no reciprocal zugzwangs with bKa8, two with bKb8 (or g8), one with bKc8, and so on. Tables 2-4 show further subclassifications.

wK	bRR on row 1					bRR on row 2					bRR on row 3					bRR on row 4				
	a	b	c	d	All	a	b	c	d	All	a	b	c	d	All	a	b	c	d	All
8	3	5	0	0	8	10	5	5	2	22	16	13	7	13	49	7	10	3	7	27
7	6	2	0	0	8	9	1	1	2	13	16	6	4	6	32	12	5	4	8	29
6	6	1	0	0	7	11	2	0	4	17	11	9	7	5	32	5	6	4	5	20
5	5	1	1	0	7	9	4	2	0	15	6	2	4	4	16	3	7	11	8	29
4	6	1	1	0	8	4	0	2	2	8	9	7	7	3	26	0	0	0	0	0
3	5	0	0	0	5	1	2	3	1	7	3	2	1	1	7	9	8	5	3	25
2	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	9	13	9	13	44	2	6	5	2	15
1	0	0	1	0	1	3	4	6	0	13	10	8	4	12	34	3	5	7	4	19
All	31	10	4	0	45	47	18	19	12	96	80	60	43	57	240	41	47	39	37	164

Table 2 : Subclassification by square of wK

What, if anything, do such figures tell us?

If an ending is "generally drawn", we can expect a reciprocal zugzwang to be a position in which at least one Black man is poorly placed. As table 1 shows, this is not the case here; on the contrary, the Black men are more likely to be found away

wN	bRR on row 1					bRR on row 2					bRR on row 3					bRR on row 4				
	a	b	c	d	All	a	b	c	d	All	a	b	c	d	All	a	b	c	d	All
8	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	2	4	3	2	11	0	0	1	3	4
7	1	4	1	1	7	1	7	2	0	10	5	2	6	7	20	3	5	2	2	12
6	3	1	0	1	5	5	4	4	2	15	7	8	4	3	22	13	4	8	7	32
5	7	1	1	1	10	9	2	3	0	14	9	3	9	14	35	9	3	4	4	20
4	4	2	0	0	6	4	4	1	2	11	6	4	17	6	33	0	0	0	0	0
3	6	1	1	1	9	10	0	1	7	18	1	0	1	2	4	7	7	6	6	26
2	6	0	1	0	7	1	1	0	1	3	4	7	20	11	42	5	12	21	26	64
1	0	0	0	0	0	8	4	6	6	24	10	13	23	27	73	3	1	0	2	6
All	27	9	4	5	45	38	22	18	18	96	44	41	83	72	240	40	32	42	50	164

Table 3 : Subclassification by square of wN

wQ	bRR on row 1					bRR on row 2					bRR on row 3					bRR on row 4				
	a	b	c	d	All	a	b	c	d	All	a	b	c	d	All	a	b	c	d	All
8	0	0	1	0	1	1	2	1	0	4	1	8	4	3	16	4	0	2	4	10
7	1	3	1	0	5	1	2	2	3	8	4	13	3	5	25	3	4	2	5	14
6	4	1	3	1	9	2	5	3	7	17	6	10	7	15	38	4	6	8	8	26
5	2	4	3	2	11	2	6	5	1	14	4	12	10	10	36	8	9	10	8	35
4	1	3	4	1	9	1	6	4	5	16	4	11	10	11	36	0	0	0	0	0
3	2	1	1	4	8	3	4	4	6	17	0	0	0	0	0	4	10	11	9	34
2	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	18	16	13	14	61	6	10	14	3	33
1	0	0	0	0	0	5	6	5	4	20	5	8	9	6	28	1	3	3	5	12
All	12	12	13	8	45	15	31	24	26	96	42	78	56	64	240	30	42	50	42	164

Table 4 : Subclassification by square of wQ

from the edge of the board than on it. Conversely, if an ending is "generally won" we can expect any reciprocal zugzwang to feature a badly placed *White* man. Some such positions do indeed appear, but they are hardly present in overwhelming numbers and the queen is more likely to be placed strongly than weakly. So what is going on?

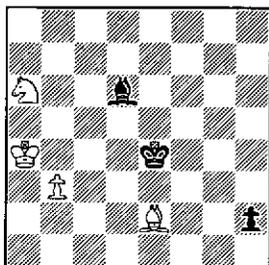
There is a fortress with the rooks on rank 3, the Black king in the region c1-f2, and the White king shut off, and in September I suggested that Q+N v 2R might be like Q v 2B and Q v B+N: a fortress exists, but Black can exploit it only if he can reach it fairly quickly. John Nunn points out a difference. With Q v 2B, the queen alone can normally prevent Black from setting up the fortress. With Q+N v 2R, the help of another piece is needed, and the winner must exploit some special feature of the position under analysis; such a feature may arise in quite a high percentage of positions, but there appears to be no general winning strategy, and in the absence of such a strategy the ending cannot be called "generally won". I have condensed this from an e-mail, but I think the summary is a fair one.

This suggests a possible explanation for the numerical data. Away from the known fortress, the ending is "usually won" in the sense that dropping the men in sensible positions normally produces a White win, but there is no systematic winning procedure, and there are positions not easily characterized where Black can hold out. If readers can throw further light, I shall be delighted to report their findings.

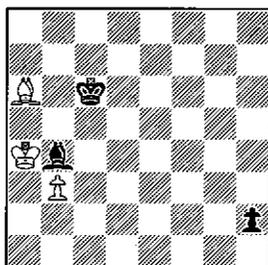
From the world at large

The March *Problemist* contains an interesting and surprising article by David Shire suggesting that the classical study may provide a better introduction to composition than the problem. I say "surprising" because David is a composer of two-move problems, and the two-mover and the study are at opposite ends of the compositional spectrum. This is not a source from which I would have expected such an article.

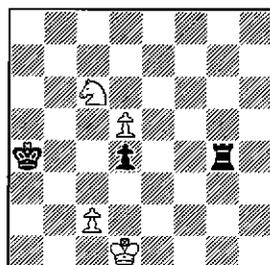
Two of David's 12 examples have already appeared in *BESN*, and five more are in *Endgame magic*. Here are the others.



1 - draw



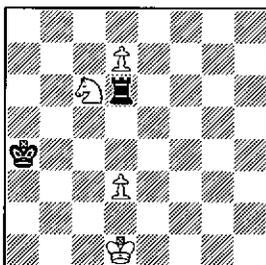
1a - after 3...Kc6



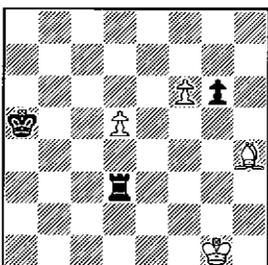
2 - win

1 is by V. & M. Platov, *Moskauer Deutsche Zeitung* 1907 (David gives only dates, and I am relying on other sources for the details). How can we get wB to the long diagonal? Not by 1 Nc5+ hoping for 1...Bxc5 2 Ba6, because 1...Kc3/Kf4 wins. **1 Bb5 Kc6 2 Nb4+ Bxb4 (2...K-- 3 Bc6) 3 Ba6 Kc6** (see 1a) **4 Bd3! h1Q** (4...Kd5 5 Ba6 repeats the position, so it's now or never) **5 Be4+**, and **5...Qxe4** is stalemate.

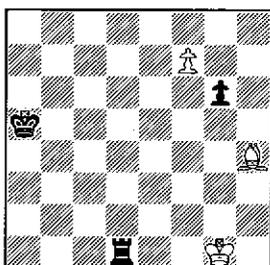
2 (V. & M. Platov, *Sbornik etyudov* 1914) has the boot on the other foot. **1 d6** seems to win offhand (wP will soon cost bR), but **1...d3** sets a trap: **2 cxd3 Rg6 3 d7 Rd6** (see 2a), and 4 d8Q Rxd3+ 5 Qxd3 will be stalemate. So White makes a rook, **4 d8R**, and after **4...Rxc6 5 Rb8** David is happy to say "win" (bK is cut off from wP).



2a - after 3...Rd6



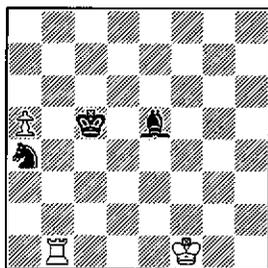
3 - win



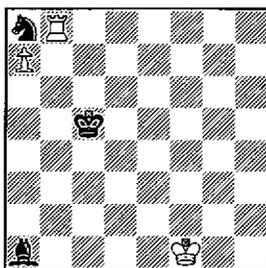
3a - after 6 Kg1 Rd1+

3 (V. & M. Platov, *Deutsche Schachzeitung* 1908) features the Grand Old Duke of York. **1 d6 Rd1+** (1...Rxd6 2 f7 Rd1+ gives 3a at once) **2 Kg2/Kh2 Rd2+ 3 Kh3**

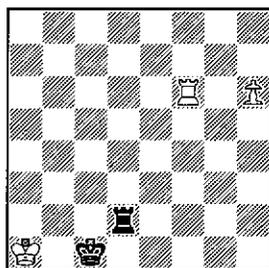
Rxd6 (no choice now, 3...Rd3+ 4 Bg3 and it's easy) **4 f7 Rd3+ 5 Kg2** (now 5 Bg3 Rf3 and 5 Kg4 Rd4+ 6 Kg5 Rd8 both fail, so wK must come back down the hill) **Rd2+ 6 Kg1/Kh1 Rd1+** (see 3a) **7 Be1+!** (the only way to make progress) **Rxe1+ 8 Kg2** (up the hill once more) **Re2+ 9 Kg3 Re3+ 10 Kg4 Re4+ 11 Kg5** (with bRd1 and wBh4, this interrupted the diagonal and allowed ...Rd8, but now it is playable) **Re5+ 12 Kxg6 Re6+** (now what? - 13 Kg7 allows 13...Re7 pinning) **13 Kg5** (and down again!) **Re5+ 14 Kg4 Re4+** and **15 Kg3 Re3+ 16 Kf2** or **15 Kf3 Re1 16 Kf2**.



4 - win



4a - after 3...Ba1



5 - win

4 is by G. M. Kasparyan, 2 Pr *Tijdschrift KNSB* 1959. **1 a6 Nb6 2 a7 Na8 3 Rb8** seems decisive, but Black has **3...Ba1!** (see 4a) and 4 Rxa8 will be met by 4...Kb6 etc; with bB hidden on a1, wR cannot attack it and gain a tempo. So White must bring up wK, **4 Ke2 Kc6 5 Kd3 Kc5** (5...Nc7 6 Rc8 Kb7 7 Rxc7+ Ka8 8 Kc4 Be5 9 Rd7 Bh2 10 Kb5 Bg1 11 Ka6 and wK arrives just in time) **6 Ke3!** (to lose a move) **Kc6 7 Ke4 Kc5** (7...Nc7 8 Rc8 Kb7 9 Rxc7+ Ka8 10 Kd5 and again wK will be in time) **8 Kd3 Kc6 9 Kc4** and so on. Not **6 Ke4 Kc6 7 Ke3 Nc7!** and this time wK is too far away.

David ends with Troitzky's 5 (*500 Endspielstudien* 1924), "trivial but perfect": **1 h7 with 1...Rh2 2 Rf1+ K-- 3 Rf2+ and 1...Rd8 2 Rc6+ K-- 3 Rd6+!**

If I can summarize David's comments, he likes these for their clarity and conciseness, unobscured by diffuse and tedious introductory play. "If the really juicy bit comes ten moves down the line," he asks, "how many solvers will get there?"

František Macek

News from Bohemia of the death of František Macek on March 19, a few days before his 94th birthday. We know him as a study collector, but Emil Vlasák tells me that he was much more than this. A professional soldier until the events of 1968 caused his premature retirement, he helped to set up the chess club of the Central Army Institute, a focal point for the strong Czechoslovak players of the 1950s and 1960s, and acted as an indefatigable supporter, book publisher, and doer of the necessary hard work.

His study collection is now with Harold van der Heijden, who is gradually merging it into his own and has so far found 1,136 that he did not already have (quite apart from the many that Macek had sent him earlier). Thus does what starts as a private hobby become a resource for future generations; if you want a memorial, look around.

News and notices

Meetings. The next *EG* readers' meeting will be at 17 New Way Road, London NW9 6PL, on **Friday July 4** at 6.00 pm; non-subscribers welcome, but please bring £5 towards the buffet (except on a first visit). Bring the latest *EG* with you!

Obituaries (see also page 239). **Donald Stallybrass** died earlier this year at the age of 82. Although not recently active in the field, he composed a few studies in the 1960s (see our special number 32 for an example), and *EG* 1 lists him as one of the eleven who were at John Roycroft's *EG* foundation meeting in March 1965. I never met him, but I have been told that he was a sincere and practising astrologer, and that those who did not share his faith sometimes found correspondence rather difficult.

This next item is not definitely known to be an obituary, but everyone I have asked seems to have lost contact with **Arthur Spuris**, who used to be a familiar figure at chess events of all kinds (I remember seeing him some years ago at a meeting where that splendid 1925 film *Chess fever* was shown). He came from Latvia, and I once asked his help regarding some material in the Lommer archive (Harold Lommer's wife Valija was from Latvia). He gave me the impression of being generous rather than wealthy, and if he has indeed gone he leaves a very pleasant memory.

Busts rediscovered by computer. *EG* 147 contains some sharp remarks about the claiming of "computer-discovered" busts which had been reported in print long ago. Yes, but... I too have been guilty of this, and no doubt will be many times more. Computer testing is now so powerful and so easy to invoke that the incentive to see if a study is already known to be unsound is negligible; an editor or columnist with a deadline to meet will rely on his own judgement and *ad hoc* testing. I will gladly acknowledge anticipation of a bust if I know of it, or if it is subsequently brought to my attention, but it is not realistic to expect a columnist to search the literature every time he puts a study on the computer and is told there is a flaw.

Tourneys. Entries (no set theme) are invited to a tourney to celebrate the 80th birthday of Pietro Rossi. Send entries marked "Rossi 80 - JT" to Marco Campioli, via De Amicis 10, I - 41049 Sassuolo MO, Italy, e-mail marcocampioli@interfree.it, to arrive by **May 26th, 2004**. Prizes: 250 euros, 150, 100.

World Chess Composition Tournament (see March 2002 page 200, etc). From David Sedgwick: "Entries submitted for WCCT7 are being circulated to team captains. Comments restricted to originality, soundness, and thematicity are invited." David will be pleased to supply copies on request to those interested (23 Tierney Court, Canning Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 6QA, telephone 020-8656-7682).

Anybody wishing to give notice in BESN of any event, product, or service should contact the Editor. There is no charge and no account is taken of whether the activity is being pursued for commercial profit, but notices are printed only if they seem likely to be of particular interest to study enthusiasts. Readers are asked to note that the Editor relies wholly on the representations of the notice giver (except where he makes a personal endorsement) and that no personal liability is accepted either by him or by any other person involved in the production and distribution of this magazine.