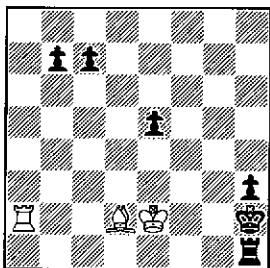
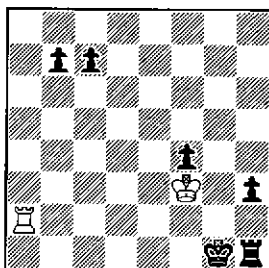




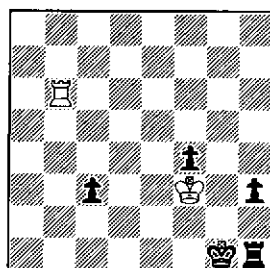
## Recently published British originals



1 - win



1a - after 2...Kg1



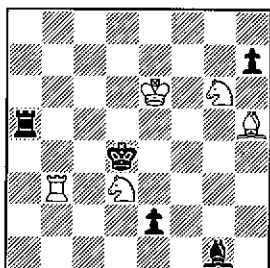
1b - 3 Rb2, after 6...c3

Sadly, there seems to be only Mike Bent's 1 to report. How did you get on?

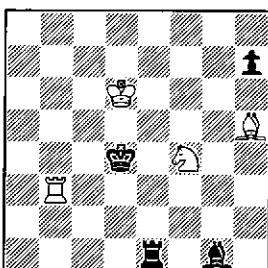
The first move is **1 Bf4+**, and after **1...exf4 2 Kf3+ Kg1** we have **1a** and any move by **bK**, **bR**, or **bPh3** will allow mate. So how can we remove those **b** and **c** pawns? Try **3 Rb2 b6 4 Rc2 c5 5 Rb2** winning the **b**-pawn: no, **5...c4 6 Rxb6 c3** gives **1b**, after which **7 Re6** only draws and **7 Ra6** even loses. So it's **3 Rc2**, and after **3...c6 4 Rb2 b5 5 Rc2 b4 6 Rxc6 b3** we have **1b** with **wRc6 / bPh3** and **7 Rd6** wins (**7...b2 8 Rd1+ Kh2 9 Rd2+ Kg1 10 Rxb2** and mate next move). If instead **1...Kg2** then **2 Ke3+** and **3 Bxe5** wins. Hardly a typical Bent study, but quietly attractive.

## Timothy's twenty

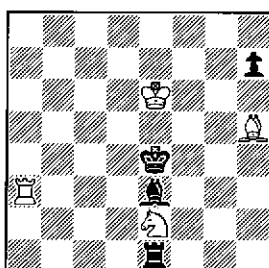
A delightful package came through my door earlier this year. Timothy Whitworth had produced a file containing what he regarded as his 20 best endgame studies, and would the BCPS Library like a copy? Very much so, I said. Timothy tells me he has no plans to publish this, and indeed 17 of its studies have already appeared in *BESN*. However, *BESN* is written to size, and the file has Timothy's commentaries in full.



1 - win



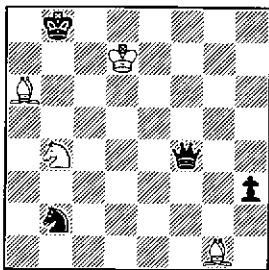
1a - after 3...Rxe1



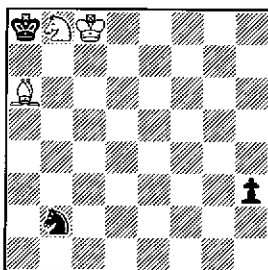
1b - after 6 Ra3

**1** (composed with Mike Bent, *BCM* 1993) is one of the three we have not seen. For once, I have space to give Timothy's comments in full at least as regards his text,

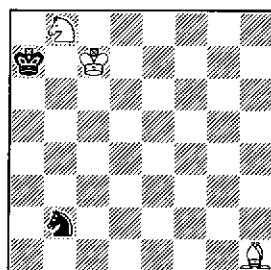
though **1** cannot match his generous layout. **1 Ngf4 e1Q+**. “Two pieces down, Black plays to recover some material. If **1...Re5+**, then **2 Nxe5** (or **2 Kd6** etc, as in the main line) **2...e1Q 3 Ne2+ Kc5 4 Nd3+** wins.” **2 Nxe1 Re5+ 3 Kd6 Rxe1** and we have **1a**. The Bourzutschky-Konoval results reported in our June 2006 issue suggest that **4 Rh3** will now lead to a win on material (the pawn will soon go), but any such win will be impossibly long-winded and I think we should ignore it. **4 Ne2+ Ke4**. “Or **4...Kc4 5 Bf7** mate.” **5 Ke6**. “Threatening **6 Bf3** mate.” **5...Be3 6 Ra3!** (see **1b**). “By covering a1, White leaves the black rook without any safe move.” **6...h6 7 Bg4 h5 8 Bxh5** wins. “Black is in a squeeze: any move will be fatal.”



2 - win

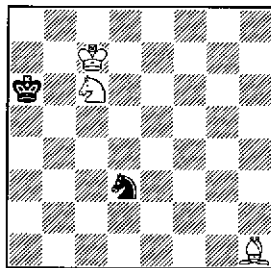


2a - after 4 Nxb8



2b - after 7 Bh1

We saw **2** (composed with W. H. M. Lemmey, *BCM* 1979) in special number 23, but it bears repetition and again **1** have space for Timothy's own commentary. **1 Bh2**. “White must pull the queen away from its dominating position.” **1...Qxh2**. “If **1...Nd3**, then **2 Bxf4+ Nxf4 3 Nc6+** leads to mate in two more moves.” **2 Nc6+ Ka8 3 Kc8**. “Now Black has no choice but to sacrifice the queen.” **3...Qb8+ 4 Nxb8** (see **2a**) **Ka7**. “**4...h2** allows a mate in two moves, and **4...Na4** allows a mate in three.” **5 Kc7 h2**. “Or **5...Nc4(d3) 6 Bxc4(d3) h2 7 Nc6+ Ka8 8 Ba6** with mate next move.” **6 Bb7 h1Q**. “Black has to sacrifice another queen to avert immediate disaster.” **7 Bxh1** (see **2b**) **Nd3**. “If **7...Nc4**, then **8 Bb7 Na5 9 Bd5 Nb7 10 Nc6+ Ka8 11 Na5(d8) Ka7 12 Nxb7** wins.” **8 Nc6+**. “Moves by the bishop are ineffective: **8 Bb7 Nb4 9 Nd7 Na6+ 10 Kc8 Nb4 11 Bg2 Ka6** draws, or **8 Bg2 Nb4 9 Bb7(f1) Nd5+** draws.” **8...Ka6** (see **2c**) **9 Bg2! Kb5 10 Bf1 Kc4 11 Ne5+** wins.



2c - after 8...Ka6

There are several things I like about this. White triumphs with an implausible minimum of material. Each of the eight men makes at least one move, even the **h3** pawn which appears at first sight to be a mere blocker placed there to restrain the queen. The two knight moves **7...Nc4** and **7...Nd3** require quite different replies. The move **9 Bg2**, deep in the solution, is elegantly unique. Each phase leads naturally into the next, White overcoming one hurdle only to find another placed in his path (I think Jonathan Levitt would say that the study has “flow”). And all this in a study sent to a normal mainstream magazine, with no question of tourney participation.

## Alternative views on the FIDE Albums

Three readers were moved to send comments on my remarks in the March *BESN*, and I have found their observations of considerable interest. One has told me that his remarks were not intended for publication; here are the others, in order as received. I have had to edit, but I hope I have done so fairly.

From David Friedgood. 'I am unhappy not so much with your views as with the question of to how to deal with the situation we composition buffs find ourselves in. The problem is that the moment we had a composing tourney back in the 19th century we began the backward slide into competition, rather than the ascent into art for art's sake. It has simply gone too far and there is no going back. (Actually, I think that competitiveness is an inalienable characteristic of chess and that we have never had a chance to be pure artists. Many would indeed even argue that competition has raised composition to the heights it has attained.)

'I have a lot of sympathy for the Albums, as they are the equivalent of *Chess Informant*, the player's source of the best master chess during a period. So I'd like to turn your question round a little and ask: What sort of anthology would it be that actually did collect the best compositions regardless of whether they were original? Even if due acknowledgement were given to the anticipator, wouldn't we be in danger of creating an industry of plagiarists?

'I am willing to accept the Album as being fairly representative of the best (probably) unanticipated compositions published during the relevant periods. This is not art for art's sake by a long chalk, but it's not likely to be much better anywhere else. And I would certainly support two accompanying Album sections with reduced points: one for database studies (points awarded would be valued at, say, a fifth of full Album points) and one for improvements on extant works (value of, say, a third of full Album points).'

From Hans Gruber. Hans is one of the team which in recent years has been undertaking the massive task of producing these albums.

'I completely agree with your view on the album - the worst thing that ever happened to the album is that it is (mis!)used for title production. For this very reason some eminent composers do NOT send their problems (Millour, Kutzborski, in earlier times Grasmann). **BUT:** The case you were referring to (the actions of a study judge) did not demonstrate how "bad" the world is, but rather the opposite. A large number of chess composition enthusiasts strongly opposed this opinion when it was discussed in Wageningen (van der Heijden, Widlert, ...) (myself also).

'The current editors (Blondel, Ellinghoven) strictly follow the anthology idea (which is expressed, for example, in much more adequate solutions, theme descriptions, etc, as compared with earlier albums). Even many title-holders do not care about titles - they just cannot avoid receiving them because they want to have their compositions in the anthology. For example, Hans-Peter Rehm (who is even a grandmaster...).'

Hans later reminded me of an incident some years ago when it was "decided" (his inverted commas) to use a then freshly printed album to select world composition champions. This immediately caused some leading members of the production team to say that they would discontinue work on the albums if they continued to be connected to the world championships, and subsequent "world composition champions" have been decided by other means. He also tells me that many members of the group refuse to take part even in these.

My thanks to David and Hans for these contributions. If I am allowed briefly to reply to the debate, let me make two points.

Firstly, reshaping the albums as anthologies won't remove the fundamental dichotomy to which I was drawing attention, it will merely resolve it another way.

Secondly, I have become very definitely one of those who regard chess composition as scientific discovery and not as artistic creation. In a sense, all possible endgame studies were created when the rules of the game were laid down, and all we are doing is digging them out. And can selection from a finite set count as an artistic activity? Certainly the result can have an aesthetic appeal, but it is the appeal of an elegant mathematical theorem, a state-of-the-art suspension bridge, or even a beautiful landscape; something which is *there*, which follows from the laws of nature rather than being specially created by man. And while one can - perhaps - have points and prizes for artistic composition, can one properly have them for scientific discovery? It doesn't seem to work too well in real life, where there have been notorious cases of ill-feeling when the senior man has received the credit for the junior's work, or when two members of a team have received Nobel Prizes and the third has not.

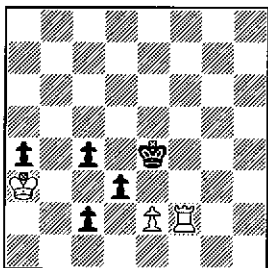
## ***EG* : changing of the guard**

It is announced in *EG* 168 that ARVES is merging its two magazines *EBUR* and *EG* into a single magazine. This will carry the name *EG*, and will effectively be a continuation of *EG* supplemented by articles that were previously considered to be more the province of *EBUR*. John Roycroft, now in his later 70s, is stepping down as editor, and in future *EG* will be edited by Harold van der Heijden. It is however very pleasant to see that John is continuing as a contributor.

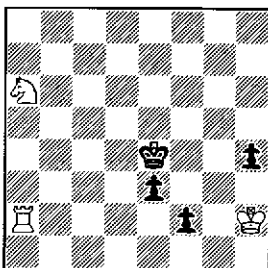
A feature of the new regime will be an increase in the roles played by specialist contributors, and a particularly welcome development is the arrival of Emil Vlasák as the editor of a regular "computer news" column. Emil has long struck me as being the most perceptive of the commentators on computer endgame matters - he can make people like myself seem very superficial - and I was delighted when I heard that *EG* had secured his services. But for all that, I am not going to say "read *EG* if you want the latest on computer matters". Whether a particular snippet of information appears first in *EG* or in *BESN* depends on the point in our respective production cycles when the news happens to arrive. The first item on the next page will be seen by readers of *BESN* before it appears in *EG*; it would have been different had the news broken six weeks later.



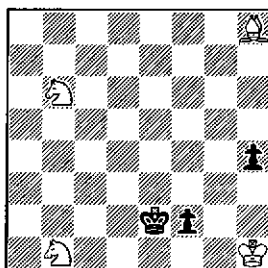
**Two Sehwers studies in context** (see special number 49). Timothy Whitworth, agreeing that the h-pawn in study **11** is worth its place, points out that the study can be seen as the culmination of a series of three, each featuring one more sacrifice.



3 - draw



4 - draw

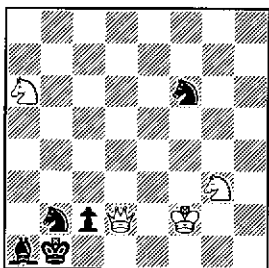


5 - draw

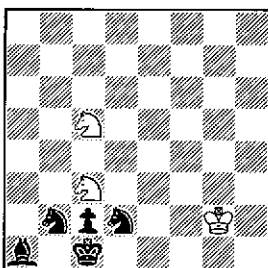
Horwitz (3, *Chess Monthly* 1881) sacrifices a rook: **1 exd3+ cxd3 2 Rxc2.**

Troitsky (4, *Novoye vremya* 1896) adds a knight: **1 Nc5+ Kf3 2 Rxf2+ exf2 3 Ne4.**

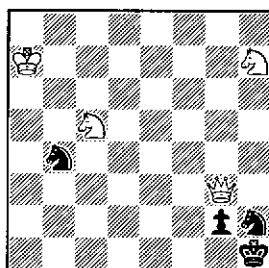
Sehwers (5, *Endspielstudien* 1922) makes it three minor pieces: **1 Nd2 Kxd2 2 Nc4+ Ke2 3 Ne3 Kxe3 4 Bd4+.**



6 - win



6a - after 4 Nc5



7 - win

Steve Giddins contrasts **6** (*Rigaer Tageblatt* 1900, **1 Ne2 Ne4+ 2 Kg2 Nxd2 3 Nc3+ Kc1 4 Nc5** giving **6a**) with Gurvich's **7** (*Bakinsky Rabochi* 1927, **1 Ne4 Nd3 2 Qf2 Nxf2 3 Ng3+ Kg1 4 Ng5**). In his book *Etyudy*, Gurvich writes: "Many years later, the author discovered that a similar combination, but in a less elegant form, had already been seen in a study by J. Sehwers. Sehwers had additional, superfluous material, and, most importantly of all, the queen was sacrificed not on an empty square, but by capturing a pawn, which was about to promote" (Steve's translation).

Steve's view: "There is indeed an extra Black bishop on the board, but Gurvich's second point, about the queen not being sacrificed on an empty square, is not true at all. Given that he himself regards that as his main 'improvement' over Sehwers' original, I would suggest that he has done Sehwers something of an injustice."

I agree. Indeed, I would say more, because the subtle move **2 Kg2** of **6** has no counterpart in the Gurvich; and if the extra bishop is thought a defect, can it not be removed by shifting **wNa6** to **a7** and everything else one file left?

## News and notices

**Meetings.** Last summer, I tried the experiment of hosting a Saturday afternoon study meeting here in Harpenden. The general feeling was that we should do it again, and so there will be another meeting here in **Saturday June 16**, with a light buffet lunch at 1230 and gentle chat from 1400 onwards. Harpenden is about 25 miles north of London (M1, A1, former "Thameslink" railway), and a map will be sent on request (or type "AL5 4NX" into an Internet streetfinder program).

The next *EG* readers' meeting will be at 17 New Way Road, London NW9 6PL, on **Friday July 6** 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.

**Book printing.** When I took over the material for David Pritchard's *Encyclopedia*, I came across a reference to the printers he had approached (Biddles of King's Lynn). The quotation they had given him had lapsed, but it was reasonable to invite them to quote again, and in the event they gave me a first-rate job at a price which was well within my budget. On this evidence, I would not hesitate to recommend them to anyone who has a full-length book to be printed, or is in a position to influence the placing of book printing contracts by others.

**Correspondence.** The completion of work on David's *Encyclopedia* has removed my excuse for dilatory response to correspondence, though whether it will lead to any improvement in performance remains to be seen. However, I believe things to have been up to date early in May, so if you have an unanswered item from April or earlier please accept my apologies and send me a repeat.

**Spotlight** continued. When discussing Berger's alterations to Crosskill's analysis of  $K + R + B \vee K + R$  in special number 50, I referred to some pages from *Schachzeitung* 1864 which I hadn't seen. Hans Gruber and Harold van der Heijden have now sent me copies of these, and they throw no light; the main lines at least appear to be a direct translation of Crosskill's into algebraic notation. I haven't checked the variations.

David Friedgood gently questions my treatment of the van Reek study on page 357 of the March issue, where I say that after 1...Kb2 the line 2 Nd4 c1Q 3 Ra1 fails because Black can play 3...Qxa1. "Well yes, but there are lots of other things he could play too! The point is that 3 Ra1 scarcely arises as a move, because it is no longer check."

And Timothy Whitworth and Steve Giddins have sent notes on the relation between certain Sehwers studies and some others, which I report on page 367.

*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.*