

# British Endgame Study News

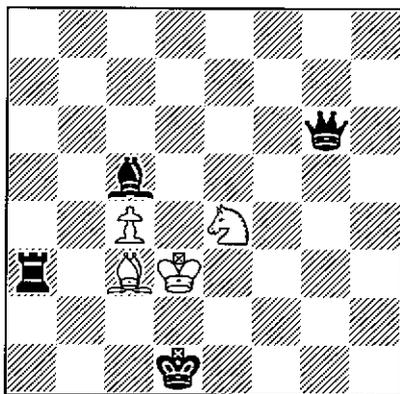
Special number 26

September 2001

*Edited and published by John Beasley, 7 St James Road, Harpenden, Herts AL5 4NX*  
ISSN 1363-0318

## *The Problemist* years - the draw studies

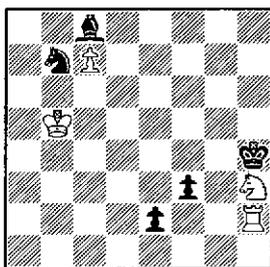
*by Adam Sobey*



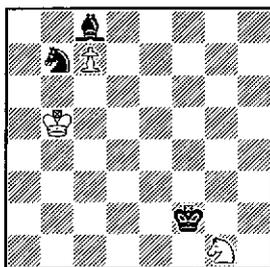
An ideal stalemate with two men pinned!

## The Problemist years - the draw studies

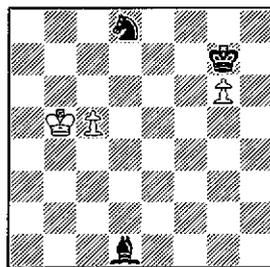
During my sub-editorship of the studies column in *The Problemist* - a period of over 32 years - very significant developments occurred. At the outset, the computer, as an aid to study composition and verification, simply did not exist. The data bases were beginning to be constructed, but on nothing like the scale of today, and such admirable inventories of worldwide composition as Harold van der Heijden's data base existed in much reduced form only on cards. Nor could one test the accuracy of the composer's intention. Little wonder, then, that many unsound pieces appeared, and even won prizes, only to be demolished for anticipation and unsoundness.



1 - draw



1a - after 3...Kxf2



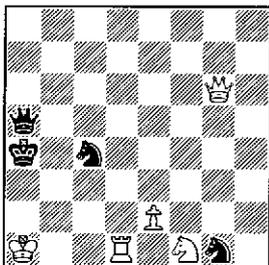
1b - draw (Troitzki, 1896)

This review - in two parts - will discuss firstly the draw studies and, in a later article, the win compositions. It is fitting, then, to begin with an "unsound" piece, but one that certainly threw dust in my eyes. 1 is by Jaan Stanton, provisionally awarded First Prize in the 86-7 Tourney. White must act quickly to deal with the advanced BP's, 1 Ng1+ Kg3 2 Rxe2 f2 3 Rxf2 Kxf2, after which (1a) we reach a position in which W can only draw if the P on c7 can promote - in fact to underpromote - so the Bc8 must be decoyed: 4 Nh3+ Bxh3 5 c8N Bxc8 6 Kb6. Alas, this part of the study is pure Troitzki (1b, see *1234 modern end-game studies*, No. 288, 1 c6 Bg4 2 c7 Nb7 3 c8N etc), so out goes an excellent study through anticipation. Of course, if the sub-editor (and the judge) really knew their '1234', this casualty would not have happened. Sic transit . .

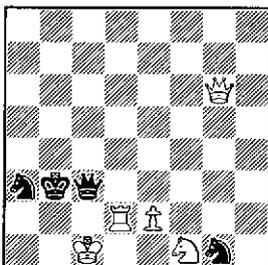
That's the hazard of running a column! Today neither a technical inaccuracy nor an anticipation would hold one up for long, and a judge has all the backup he needs from the computer to enable him to focus on the subjective aspects of Tourney awards. We all know how difficult it is to add a move to the front end, to enhance a study and bury deeper in the solution the 'bang' move. Many a fine piece has failed through this embellishment: in achieving the sought for extension, a leak has occurred, and the study fails. However, it need not all be gloom. Sometimes a study found to be incorrect returns in modified form to carry off the prize. Let us see . .

A case in point was the Rusinek prize winner 2 (First Prize 76-7, wKf8, Rd8, Pf6, bKc5, Rg1, Bf2, Nb3). Thought to be sound by solvers, judge and editor, it was later

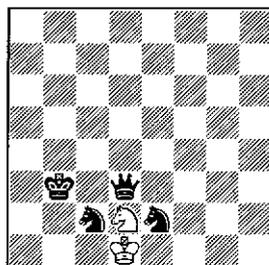
bust. A correction duly won First Prize in 78-9: it has minimal changes from 2, namely Rg1 to b1 and BKc5 to b5. The elegant pin-stalemate of this revision, after **1 f7 Rg1 2 Ke8 Re1+ 3 Kd7 Nc5+ 4 Kc8 Ra1 5 f8Q+ Ra8+ 6 Kc7 Bg3+ 7 Rd6 Rxf8**, has stood for several years, but alas computer checks by JDB for this article have blown it apart (**4...Re6!**). Thus are we all confounded!



3 - draw

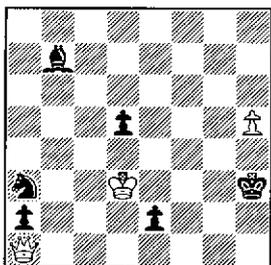


3a - after 3...Qc3+

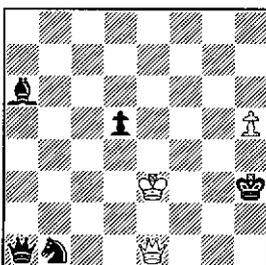


3b - after 7 Nd2+

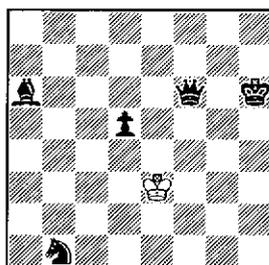
What a risky business is composition, for composers must avoid both the Scylla of anticipation and the Charybdis of unsoundness. Here are some stalemate compositions that have successfully sailed through. **3**, by Pachman (1st Prize 80-1), is the epitome of a brilliant study: an initial position fraught with possibilities, and a very good key, putting his R en prise. After **1 Rd2 Kb3+ 2 Kb1 Na3+ 3 Kc1 Qc3+** we have **3a**. Now **4 Kd1** allows Qa1 mating, and **4 Rc2** allows Qe1, so **4 Qc2+ Nxc2 (4...Qxc2 insufficient) 5 Rd3**. Who's pinning who? **5...Nxe2+ 6 Kd1 Qxd3+**. Now **7 Nd2+ (3b)** for a stunning stalemate. The movement is fully dynamic, a feature which only the best composers can achieve.



4 - draw (Black to move)



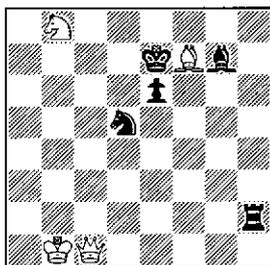
4a - after 4...a1Q



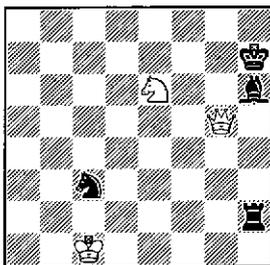
4b - final position

From time to time, the judge makes a comment that barely applies. One such case, in the latest Tourney, concerned Kudelich's 2nd prizewinner (4). It is B to play. The judge - my successor Alain Pallier - commented: 'A nice mirror stalemate, apparently not previously shown, and obtained with great economy of means', but he considered 'Black to move' a detraction. **1...Ba6+ 2 Kd2 e1Q+ 3 Qxe1 Nb1+ 4 Ke3 a1Q (4a) 5 Qh1+ Kg4 6 Qf3+ Kg5 7 Qf4+ forcing B to capture on h5. 7...Kxb5 8 Qf5+ Kb6 9 Qf6+ Qxf6**, giving a mirror stalemate (**4b**). Only Pd5 is static, and the 'Black to

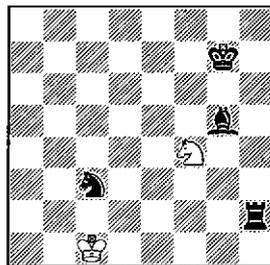
move' stipulation enables all 3 B pieces to come into play in a natural way, as well as putting a question to the WK.



5 - draw

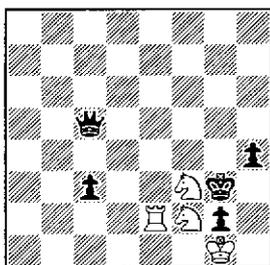


5a - after 5...Bh6

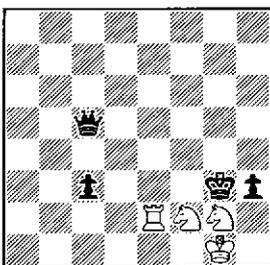


5b - 8...Bxg5 stalemate

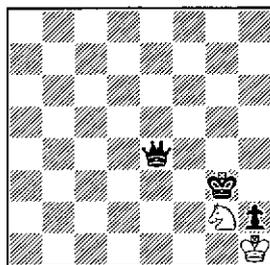
We shall see other examples later, but first let us see how a master composer adds to the idea, with a pin. Two examples are given. Firstly Vukceвич gaining 2 Pr (70-1) with 5. After 1 Nc6+ Kxf7 2 Nd8+ Kg8 3 Qg5 Kh7 4 Nxe6 Nc3+ 5 Kc1 Bh6 (5a). Now 6 Nf8+ Kh8 7 Ng6+ Kg- 8 Nf4+ Bxg5 (5b), a brilliant, and unexpected pin-stalemate. Only the BR is unmoved, with the WN making a spectacular series of six moves!



6 - draw



6a - after 2 Nxb2

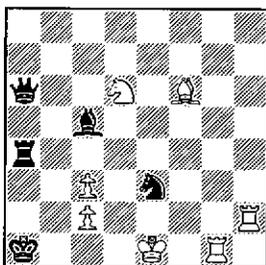


6b - 7...Qxe4 stalemate

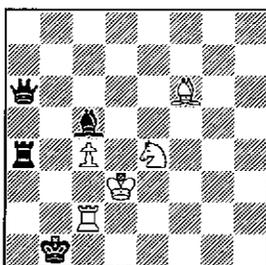
In the second example, Afek (formerly Kopelovitch) has achieved a chameleon echo pin-stalemate. 6 is his 2nd Prizewinner (74-5). 1 Ne1 h3 2 Nxb2 (6a) c2 3 Rxc2 h2+ 4 Kh1 Qxc2 5 Ne4+ Kh3 6 Ng5+ Kg3 7 Ne4+ Qxe4 (6b). Pin-stalemate 1. If 2...hxb2 3 Re3+, B has nothing better than 3...Qxe3, since if 3...Kh4 4 Rxh3+ Kg5 5 Rxc3, giving the B-square echo. A masterful achievement!

To realize a stalemate with one man pinned is a great achievement. Lewandowski went one better with his 82-3 1st Prizewinner - a double pin ideal stalemate (7, see top of next page). The play goes off like a firecracker: 1 c4+ Ka2 2 Ke2 Nxc2 3 Ra1+ Nxa1 4 Kd3+ Nc2 5 Rxc2+ Kb1 6 Ne4 (7a). W threatens mate by 7 Nd2!, so 6...Ra3+ 7 Bc3 Qg6 8 Rb2+ Kc1 9 Rc2+ Kd1 10 Rd2+ Ke1 11 Rd1++ Kxd1 (7b). A remarkably dynamic construction, with only Bc5 static. A sub-editor feels enormously privileged to have received such a stunning study.

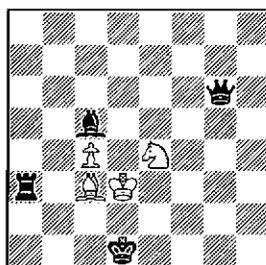
After that real taste of honey, let us look at some alternative - if more prosaic -



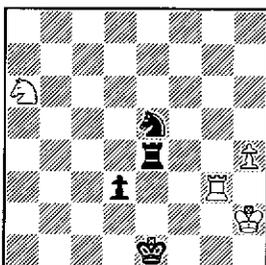
7 - draw



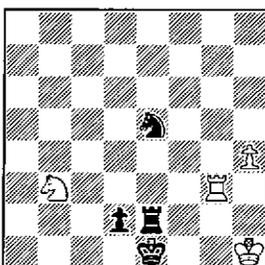
7a - after 6 Ne4



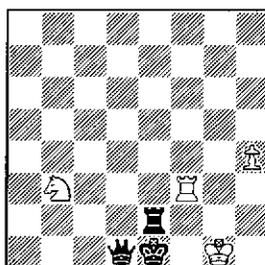
7b - stalemate!



8 - draw

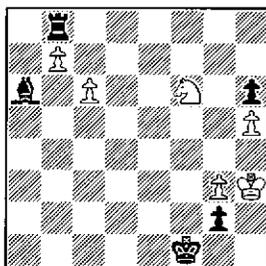


8a - after

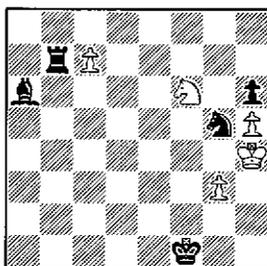


8b - after 5 Kg1

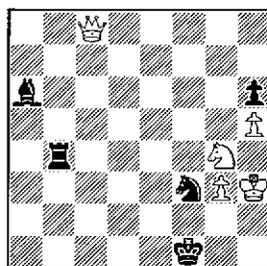
ways to force the draw. 8, by Joița (1st Commendation 82-3), shows repetition of position, over the minimum length. 1 Nc5 Re2+ 2 Kh1 d2 3 Nb3 (8a) (the d-P cannot be stopped) Nf3 4 Rxf3 d1Q 5 Kg1 (8b). W takes advantage of the awkward position of B's pieces to threaten mate! 5...Rf2 6 Re3+ Re2 7 Rf3 Rf2 etc - a minimal length pendulum as the R's flip flop.



9 - draw

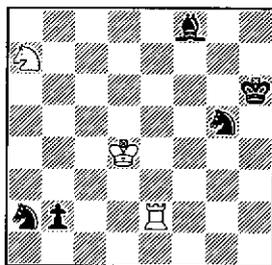


9a - after 4...Rxb7

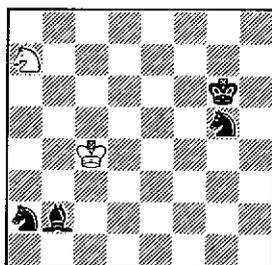


9b - after 7 Kh3

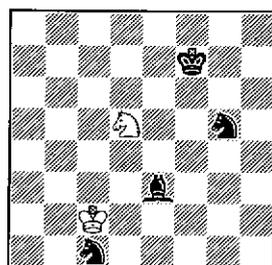
Sochniev's 9 (3HM 86-7) is neat. After 1 c7 B untangles the b and c pawn threats by 1...g1N+ 2 Kh4 Nf3+ 3 Kh3 Ng5+ 4 Kh4 and now 4...Rxb7 (9a). Now B thinks he's winning with Rb4+ and Bxc8 if W promotes, but 5 c8Q Rb4+ 6 Ng4 (Not 6 Qg4 Bc8 7 Qxb4 Nf3+ is mate!) Nf3+ 7 Kh3 (9b) Ng1+ 8 Kh4, and B never has time to digest the WQ!



10 - draw

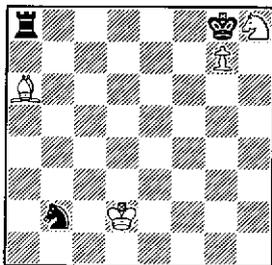


10a - after 3...Bxb2

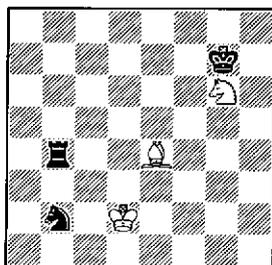


10b - after 7...Kf7 8 Nd5

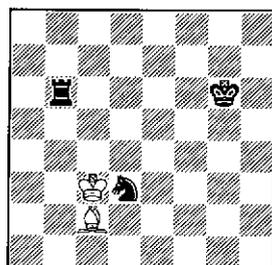
10 by the consistently successful Gurgenzidze won a special HM for constructional finesse in 94-5. 1 Rxb2 fails. 1 Rh2+ Kg6 2 Rxb2 Bg7+ 3 Kc4 Bxb2 (10a) 4 Kb3 Bd4 5 Nc6 Nc1+ 6 Kc2 Be3 7 Ne7+ K- 8 Nd5! (10b). A fine running of the gauntlet.



11 - draw

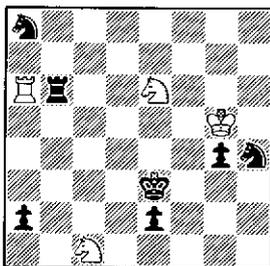


11a - after 4...Rb4

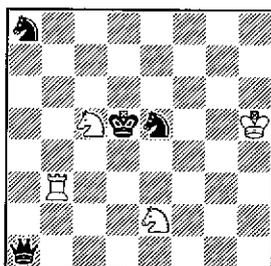


11b - after 8 Bc2

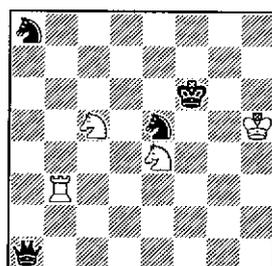
11 shows reduction to insufficient material and won First Prize in 94-5 for Marc Lavaud. 1 Bb7 Rd8+ 2 Kc2 Kxg7 3 Ng6 Rb8 4 Be4 Rb4 (11a) 5 Bd5 Kxg6 6 Kc3 Rb6 7 Bb3 Nd3 8 Bc2 (11b), and W reduces the position to a "book" draw of R/B.



12 - draw



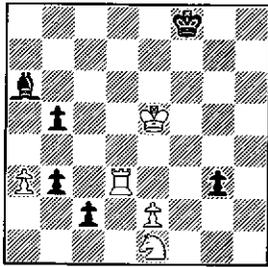
12a - after 6...Kd5



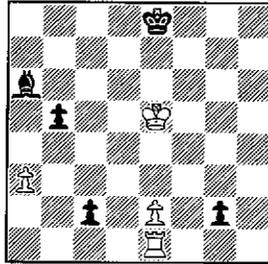
12b - 6...Kf5, after 8 Nge4+

Occasionally a study combines two distinct lines. 12 won first Prize for V. Anufriev in the 98-9 Tourney. After 1 Ra3+ Rb3 2 Rxb3+ Ke4 3 Nxe2 Nf3+ 4 Kxg4 Ne5+ 5 Kh5 a1Q 6 Nc5+ B has i) 6...Kd5 and ii) 6...Kf5. i) continues 6...Kd5 (12a) 7 Rb1 Qa5 8 Rb5 Qa7 9 Rb7 Qa3 10 Rb3 with a perpetual attack on B's Q.

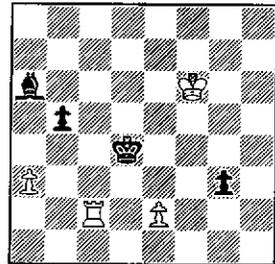
ii) leads to perpetual check **6...Kf5 7 Ng3+ Kf6 8 Nge4+ (12b) Kg7 9 Rb7+ Nf7 10 Ne6+ Kg8 11 Rb8+ Kh7 12 Nf8+ Kg7 13 Ne6+**. A very nice 'hybrid' construction.



13 - draw

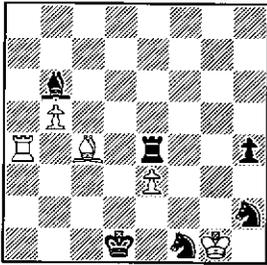


13a - main line, after 5 Re1

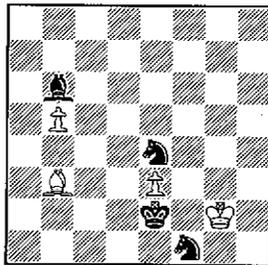


13b - 1...bxc2, after 6...Kd4

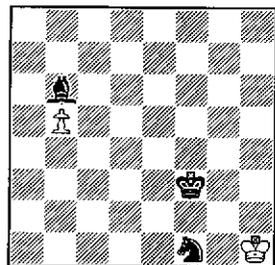
Kwiatowski and Lewandowski's 13 won First Prize (88-9) and judge, George Botterill, commented: "A very pleasing symmetry and a very difficult study to solve. A virtuoso performance by a WR coping with a horde of BP's." The main line runs: **1 Nxc2 g2 2 Rd8+ Kf7 3 Rd7+ Ke8 4 Rd1 bxc2 5 Re1 (13a) b4 6 axb4 Bxe2 7 Ke4! Bd1 (or 7...Bf1 8 Kf3+) 8 Kd3+**. An important sub-plot follows **1...bxc2 2 Kf6! Ke8 3 Re3+ Kd7 4 Rd3+ Kc6 5 Rc3+ Kd5** (the BK can safely head S as WR cannot hold both BP's) **6 Rxc2 Kd4 (13b) 7 Kf5 Ke3 8 Rc3+ Kf2 9 Rf3+**.



14 - draw



14a - after 5...Nxe4



14b - final position

At this stage, the reader may feel that Koko had a point:

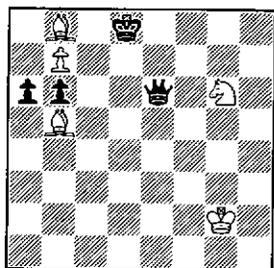
"The idiot who praises, with enthusiastic tone,

All centuries but this, and every country but his own".

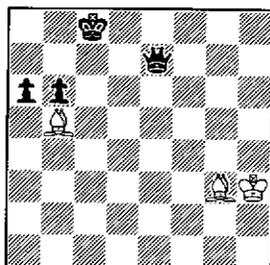
So where are the British prizewinners? One, by John Roycroft and John Beasley, was in Special Number 21, and showed a BQ reduced to alternating moves by a mere handful of pawns. Mike Bent has also figured in the awards, and 14 (4th Prize 88-9) is a neat piece, about which the judge (George Botterill) said: "wittily rattles along to a gorgeous stalemating finish. Play proceeds like a squabble to grab material, then suddenly shifts to a higher plane." Let us see: **1 Bb3+ Kc2 2 Rxe4 Nf3+ 3 Kg2 h3+ 4 Kxh3 Ng5+ 5 Kg2 Nxe4 (14a)**. Has B. a decisive material plus? **6 Bc4+ Kxe3 7 Bxf1 Nd2 8 Kg1 Kf3+ 9 Kh1 Nxf1 (14b)**. Stalemate! Mike at his most entertaining.

Of over 800 studies published in the column the largest individual contribution has

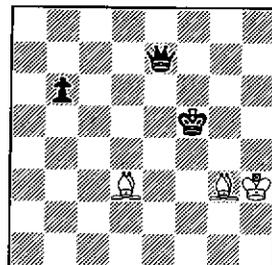
come from Mike, who has always enjoyed a big following from solvers. They know what to look for, and to tread warily when the introductory play has been cleared. They are never disappointed, when they discover the Bent hallmark, an unexpected subtlety set deep into the solution.



15 - draw

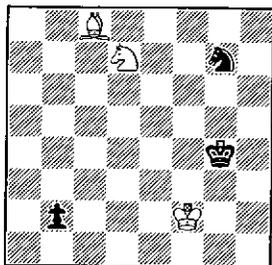


15a - after 5...Qxe7

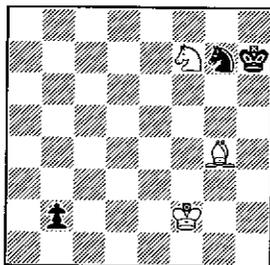


15b - after 9 Bd3+

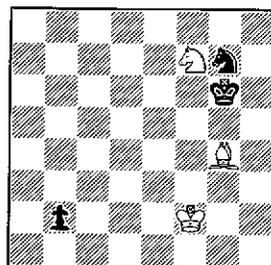
Not all memorable studies are leading prizewinners. Timothy Whitworth's 15 was "only" 9th in van Reek's 86-7 award, but I like it very much, with its good - nay, precise - key, and flowing play **1 Bg3 Qd5+ 2 Kh3 Qxb7 3 Bh4+ Kc7 4 Bg3+ Kc8 5 Ne7+ Qxe7 (15a) 6 Bxa6+ Kd7 7 Bb5+ Ke6 8 Bc4+ Kf5 9 Bd3+ (15b)** and B must take the perpetual attack, thanks to W's first two moves.



16 - draw



16a - after 3...Kh7



16b - after 3...Kg6

It is fitting that the final study should come from the Supplement, created to provide a less fierce forum than the magazine proper, both for composers and solvers. Ronald Turnbull's 16 got an HM in the 92-3 award, and rightly so, for a delightful miniature on classic lines, with a pure echo. After **1 Ne5+, Kf4, h4, g5** allow the WS to control the b-P, so **1...Kh5 2 Bg4+ Kh6 3 Nf7+** and now the BK has a critical choice: i) **3...Kh7 (16a)** or ii) **3...Kg6 (16b)**. i) **3...Kh7 4 Bf3! b1Q 5 Be4+ Qxe4 5 Ng5+**; ii) **3...Kg6 4 Be2! b1Q 5 Bd3+ Qxd3 6 Ne5+**. 'But it needs heaven-sent moments for this skill.'

Several of these composers, and more British ones, will figure in the companion piece 'The Problemist years - the win studies'. From modest beginnings, the column has reached out to the world's best composers. The selection presented here is but a sample of the panoply that has graced the pages of *The Problemist*.