

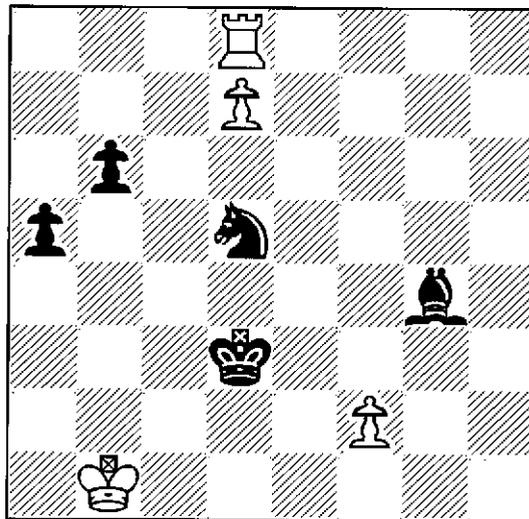
British Endgame Study News

Special Number 3

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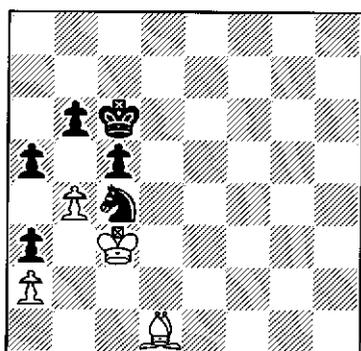
Some British Studies from 1994-95



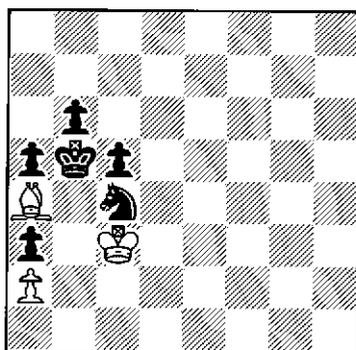
White to play and draw

Some British studies from 1994-95

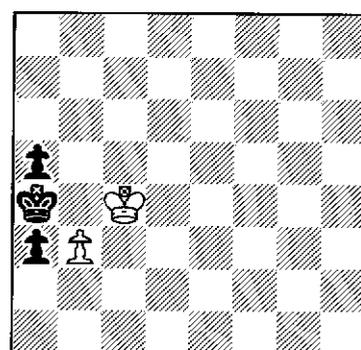
Our regular series "Recently published British originals" effectively started from the middle of 1995, and in order to give coverage of earlier years I am starting a series of special numbers gradually proceeding backwards. The intention is that every British composer who has had an original study published in a magazine or newspaper column of standing will be represented either in the appropriate special number of *BESN* or in our regular issues, though composers who have published more than one study in a period may be quoted selectively.



1 - win

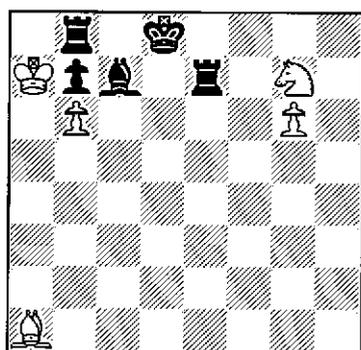


1a - after 2 Ba4+

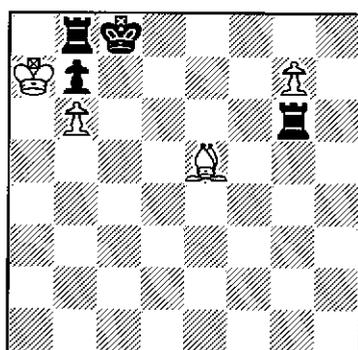


1b - 6 axb3 mate

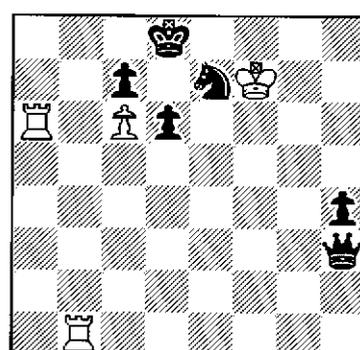
Let us start with Nicolas Worthing's 1, which was published in Adam Sobey's column in *The Problemist* in January 1994. The trouble with the obvious move 1 Kxc4 is that Black will play 1...b5+ and 2...cxb4 and then advance and exchange off the a-pawn, and after 1 b5+ Kxb5 the knight-winning pin 2 Be2 will eventually allow a similar advance. The move that works is the sacrifice 2 Ba4+ (see 1a), and if Black declines the sacrifice by 2...Ka6 then 3 Kxc4 will indeed win. Black plays 2...Kxa4, therefore, and what follows has been known since the 1840s but is still attractive: 3 Kxc4 b5+ 4 Kxc5 b4 5 Kc4 b3 6 axb3 mate (see 1b). Has any reader seen this mate in play? I imagine that it is not completely unknown.



2 - draw



2a - after 4...Rg6

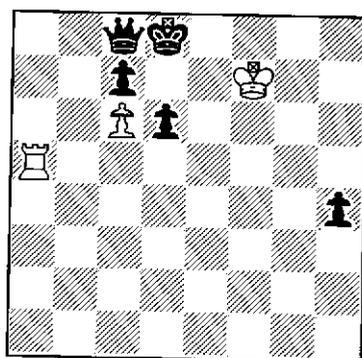


3 - draw

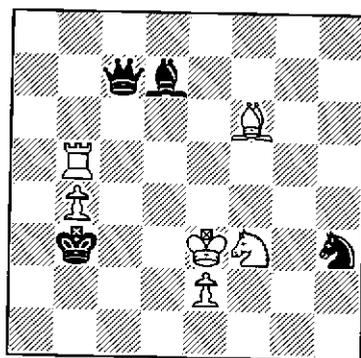
David Blundell's 2 appeared in the same issue of *The Problemist*. The opening moves are straightforward: 1 Bf6 (pinning bR and threatening 2 Nf5) Be5 (immediate

counterattack is necessary) **2 Bxe5 Kc8**. Now wB is threatened, and if it captures bRb8 (or moves to any other square) Black will play ...Re4 and mate on the a-file. Hence we must sacrifice wNg7 and enlist the g-pawn: **3 Ne6 Rxe6 4 g7**. The threat of promotion forces **4...Rg6** (see 2a), and now comes the key move: **5 Ba1!!**. The point, here and later, is that Bb2!./Be5 can be met by ...Rg2!./Rg5 respectively, ambushing bR behind wB and mating if it moves away, while Bf6 can be met by ...Rg1 forcing Bb2!./Be5 next move, and Ba1 could be met by ...Rg6 similarly if bR were not already there. But bR is indeed on g6, and so we have a draw by corresponding squares: **...Rg2!./Rg5** can be met by **Bb2!./Be5!**, blocking the rank and utilizing the fact that ...RxB will be stalemate, **...Rg1** can be met by **Bf6**, and **...Rg6** by **Ba1** again.

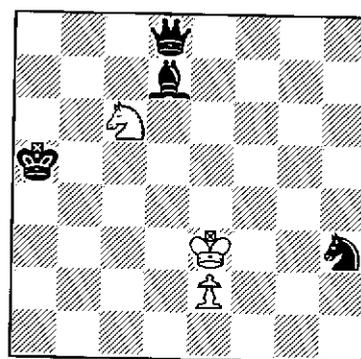
3 was published by George Berguno in *Schakend Nederland* in December 1994. The bQ must be taken out of play, and White must choose his moves with care: **1 Rb8+ Nc8 2 Rxc8+ Qxc8 3 Ra5** preventing a check on f5 (see 3a). If he plays **1 Ra8+ Nc8 2 Rxc8+ Qxc8 3 Rb5** instead, we have 3a with wRb5 instead of wRa5, and Black can play **3...Qa8** (threatening **4...Qxc6** and **4...Qa2+**) and win quickly. But in 3a White threatens mate by **4 Rg5** and **5 Rg8**, and if Black tries to bring bQ into the open by **3...Qg4/Qh3** White simply drags him back by **4 Ra8+ Qc8**, after which **5 Ra5** repeats the position. The alternative is **3...Qb8**, threatening a relieving check on b3, but the reply is **4 Ra3**, covering b3 and threatening a new mate by **5 Re3** and **6 Re8**, and if Black plays **4...Qc8** to prevent this (**5 Re3 Qf5+**) White again repeats the position by **5 Ra5**.



3a - after 3 Ra5

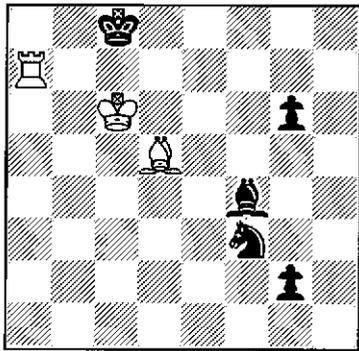


4 - draw

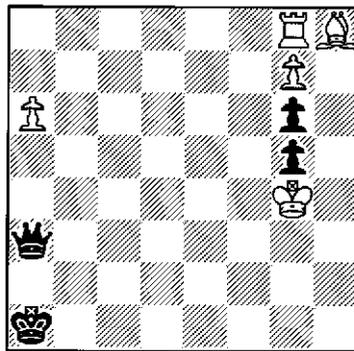


4a - after 5 Nc6+

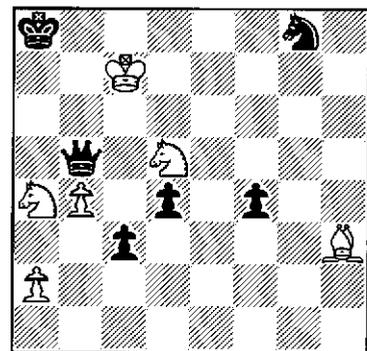
Our most prolific composer is still Mike Bent, and **4** was in a trio of three originals published by Timothy Whitworth in the November 1994 *BCM* to mark Mike's 75th birthday. "I don't go for difficulty," Timothy quoted Mike as saying, "more for the twist at the end." For all that, or perhaps because of that, Mike's studies are always good to solve, and maybe this one was slightly wasted in a magazine which normally prints solutions alongside diagrams. The lead-in play is simple but elegant: **1 Nd4+** (White has nothing after **1 Nd2+ Ka4**) **Ka3** (1...Ka4 leads to the same thing, and after **1...Ka2** we have **2 Ra5+ Kb1 3 Ra1+ Kxa1 4 Nb5+/Ne6+** and **5 Nxd7**) **2 Ra5+ Kxb4** (**2...Ba4 3 Nb5+**) **3 Be7+ Kxa5 4 Bd8! Qxd8 5 Nd6+**. Now wK has five flight squares, see 4a, but Black must play **5...Bxc6** to save bQ, and suddenly he has none: stalemate!



5 - draw

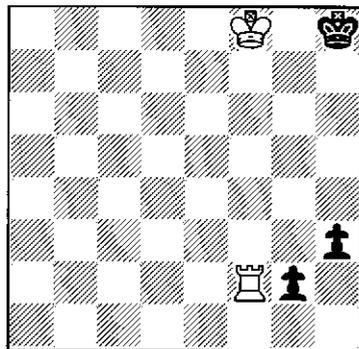


6 - win

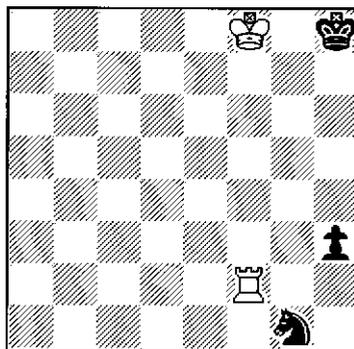


7 - draw

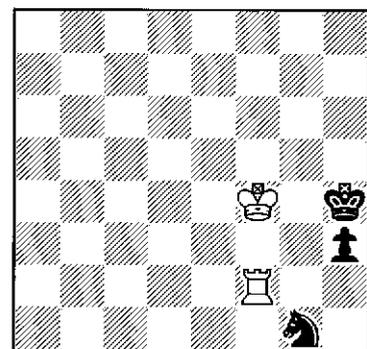
Mike also features in the set above, which comprises the three studies I set for the 1994 World Chess Solving Championship. This annual event is primarily a problem-solving competition, and there are those, including myself, who think it should be made honestly and unashamedly a problem-solving competition and the endgame study round should be dropped. However, as tournament director I had to accept the rules as they stood. If you want to try your luck, give yourself 75 minutes (the actual competitors had 100, but solving is more difficult under the stress of championship conditions) and see how you get on. Competitors were told in advance that each study had a clear main line and that only this main line had to be written to gain full points (there had been arguments in the past over which variations had to be written out to gain points and which could be taken as "obviously" won or drawn), and also that study 6 had been proved correct by computer. The solutions are on pages 6 and 7.



8 - win



8a - after 2 Rf2

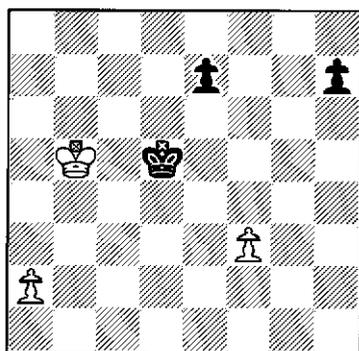


8b - after 6 Kf4

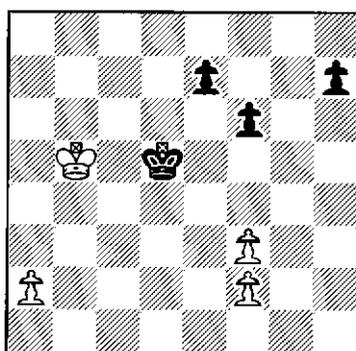
Paul Byway has recently been our most prolific composer after Mike, and 8 appeared in the Swedish magazine *Springaren* in June 1994. Two advanced pawns normally win against a rook, but White has mating threats. 1 Rf4 can be met by 1...Kh7, but 1 Rf3 threatens to win the pawns as well (1...Kh7 2 Rxh3+ and 3 Rg3+) and so Black must "sacrifice" one potential bQ by promoting to bN: 1...g1N. Now 2 Rf2 paralyses both bN and bP (see 8a) and bK must come down to help: 2...Kh7 3-5 Kf5 Kh4 6 Kf4 (see 8b). A retreat by 6...Kh5 will now allow 7-9 Kxg1, so Black must try 6...h2, but White still wins quickly: 7 Rxh2+ Nh3+ 8 Kf3 K-- 9 Rxh3.

Paul has also been making a name for himself as a study repairer. 9 is a neat but flawed study which was published by K. Kupchevsky in 64 in 1931. After 1 a4 Kd6

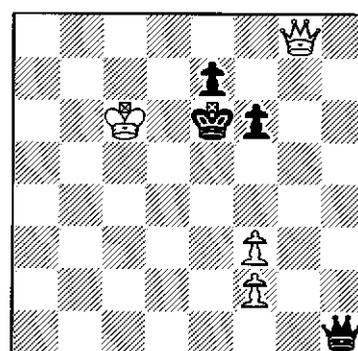
2 **Kb6**, Black has to choose between 2...h5 3-6 a8Q h1Q 7 Qc6+ Ke5 8 f4+ K- 9 Qxh1 and 2...Kd7 3 Kb7 h5 4-7 a8Q h1Q 8 Qc8+ Kd6 9 Qc6+ and the same. However, if he plays the less obvious move 1...Ke6! he is still threatening to stop the a-pawn (2 a5 Kd7 3 a6 Kc8), so White must still play 2 **Kb6** to head him off, and now Black can escape White's attack: 2...h5 3-6 a8Q h1Q 7 Qc6+ Kf7/Kf5 etc.



9 - win intended

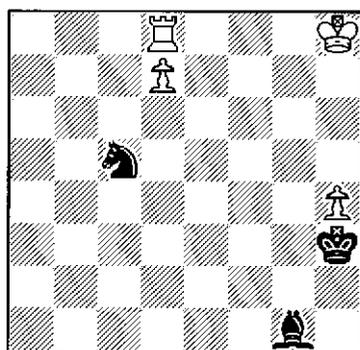


10 - win (correction of 9)

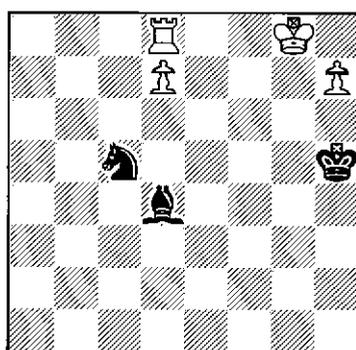


10a - 1...Ke6, after 7 Qg8+

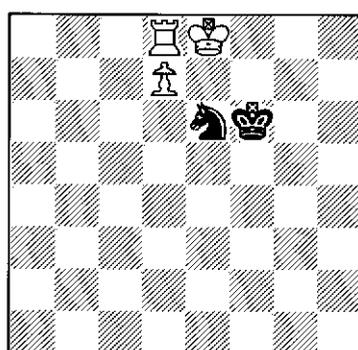
Paul's version 10 converts the flaw into a second variation. After 1 a4 Kd6 2 **Kb6** we have Kupchevsky's play as before, while after 1...Ke6 we have 2 **Kc6!** h5 3-6 a8Q h1Q 7 Qg8+ (see 10a) Ke5 (7...Kf5 allows mate in two) 8 Qd5+ Kf4 9 Qe4+ Kg5 10 f4+. This excellent piece of rescue work won Paul an equal 1st-3rd Honourable Mention in the tourney held to honour the 200th anniversary of the death of Philidor.



11 - win

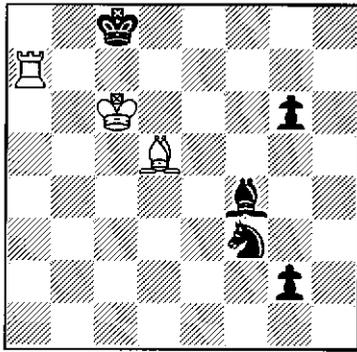


11a - after 4 Kg8

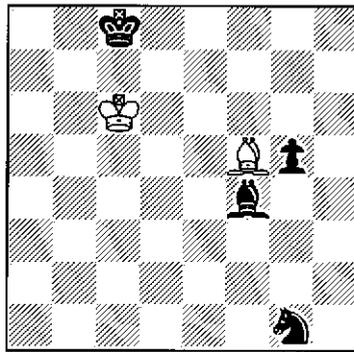


11b - after 9...Ne6

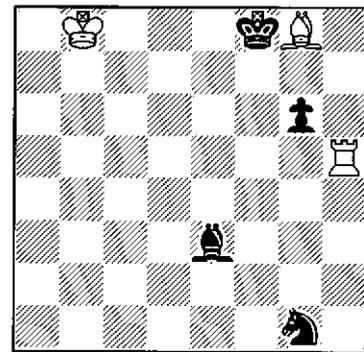
Andrew Miller showed 11 at an *EG* readers' meeting early in 1994, and I promptly solicited it for the October 1994 issue of *diagrammes*. Play unfolds 1 h5 Kh4 (1...Be3 2 Kh7 etc wins, or 1...Bd4+ 2 Kg8 Bf6 3 h6! Bxd8 4 h7 Bf6 5 h8Q+) 2 h6 Kh5 (2...Bd4+ 3 Kg8 Kh5 4 Kf7 Kxh6 5 Kh8+ etc) 3 h7 (3 Kh7 Bd4! and White is in zugzwang) Bd4+ (3...Kh6 4 Kg8 Bd4 5 h8Q+ Bxh8 6 Kxh8 zugzwang) 4 Kg8 (see 11a) Kg6! (4...Kh6 5 h8Q+ etc) 5 h8Q Bxh8 6 Kxh8 Kh6 (can't bK now hide below wK for ever?) 7 Kg8 Kg6 8 Kf8 Kf6 9 Ke8 (no he can't, 9...Ke6 will allow 10 Rc8 Nxd7 11 Rc6+) Ne6 (see 11b) and now comes the final subtlety: 10 Ra8 allows the fork 10...Nc7+ and 10 Rc8 blocks wK and allows the perpetual check 10...Ng7+ 11 Kd8 Ne6+ 12 Ke8 Ng7+ (13 Kf8 Ne6+ 14 Kg8 Ke7), so only 10 **Rb8!** wins (10...Nc7+ 11 Kd8 Ne6+ 12 Kc8).



12 (repeats 5) - draw



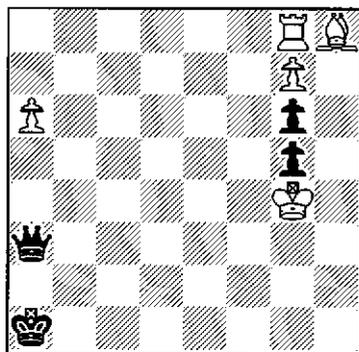
12a - 1 Ra1, 3 Be4, 4 Bf5+



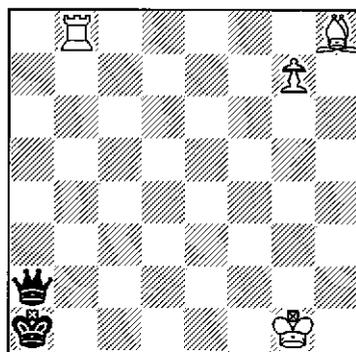
13 - draw

Well, how would you get on in a World Solving Championship? The standard is not as high as it might be, although rather better than in the days when I was a competitor myself. In 12, which was a contribution of my own, White can decoy and pen bN, 1 Ra1 g1Q 2 Rxc1 Nxc1 3 Be6+ Kd8 4 Bg4, but Black can bring bK down to g5 and rescue it. Better is to lure bPg6 forward by 3 Be4, and then after 3...g5 4 Bf5+ (see 12a) Kd8 5 Bg4 we have a striking positional draw first exploited by Gurvich: neither bN nor bP can move, wK and wB can keep bK penned behind the diagonal c8-f5, and bB can do nothing on its own. However, at the position shown in 12a Black can play 4...Kb8 instead of 4...Kd8, and now bK can gradually work its way down the board and join up with the other Black men.

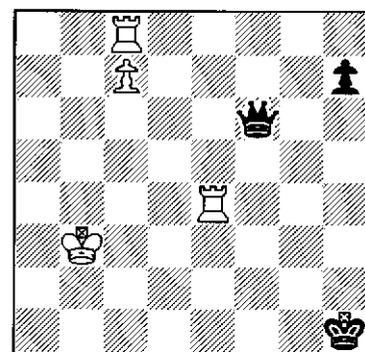
White must therefore insert the preliminary check 1 Ra8+ Bb8, and now after 2 Ra1 g1Q 3 Rxc1 Nxc1 4 Be4 (4 Bf7 is insufficient on account of 4...Nf3 5 Bxc6 Ne5+) g5 5 Bf5+ we have 12a with bB on b8. Black is now forced to play 5...Kd8, and after 6 Bg4 the Gurvich draw is duly obtained. Gurvich's setting is shown in 13 (1st Prize, *Dagestan Committee for Physical Culture and Sport* 1952); the solution is 1 Rh8 Kg7 2 Bh7 g5 3 Bf5! Kxh8 4 Bg4 Kg7 5 Kc7 Kf6 6 Kd6 etc, and Gurvich gives analysis to refute alternative moves by White (the discussion in his 1961 book *Etyudy* occupies over a page). It pioneered the theme in good style and I am not ashamed to acknowledge my debt, but I think my setting is a little the more natural.



14 (repeats 6) - win



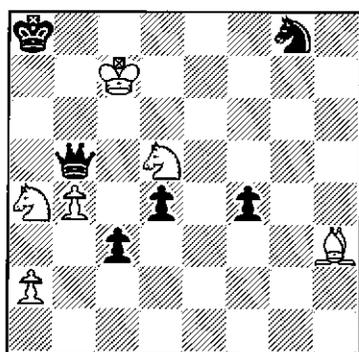
14a - after 8 Kg1



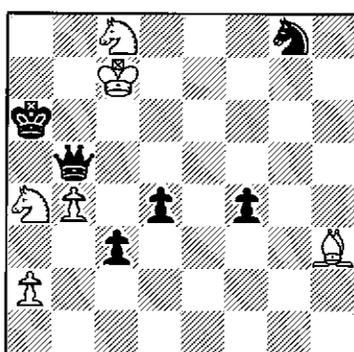
15 - win

14, which was also my own, is not nearly as good a study, and was included only because of the WCSC requirement that the problems be computer-tested as far as possible. A computer-proven study was available; it appeared adequate, if hardly

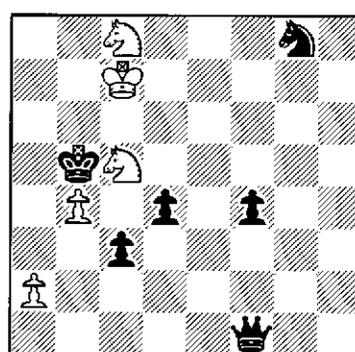
outstanding; therefore it was used. After the opening move **1 Rb8**, which prevents bQ from using the b-file, we have **1...Qa4+ 2 Kxg5 Qa5+ 3 Kxg6 Qxa6+ 4 Kg5** (wK must keep to the g-file to avoid a check on a diagonal) **Qa5+ 5 Kg4 Qa4+ 6 Kg3 Qa3+ 7 Kg2 Qa2+ 8 Kg1** (see 14a), and now comes a little twist which a few solvers lost points by overlooking: **8...Qa7+ 9 Kh1**. After a different White move at any point, Black can force perpetual check; after a different Black move, and at the end, White has a mate in 10 at most. I have discussed the computer-testing of this study in *EG* 119, but the important practical point relates to perpetual check: perpetual checks involving only three moving men (here bQ, wK, wR) can now be verified on a typical home computer, and those involving four moving men on a university machine. Once again the study had a predecessor, though in this case it was one of my own (*15, The Problemist* 1972): **1 Rh4+ Qxh4 2 Rg8 Qh3+ 3 Kb4 Qh4+ 4 Kb5 Qh5+ 5 Kb6 Qh6+ 6 Kb7**. This is in a different class from 14 both in quality and in difficulty, but its prior publication prevented its use in the competition.



16 (repeats 7) - draw



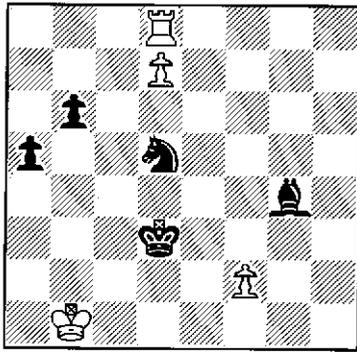
16a - after 2...Ka6



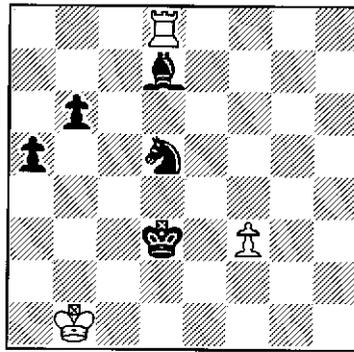
16b - after 4...Kb5

16 was Mike Bent's contribution. After **1 dNb6+ Ka7 2 Nc8+ Ka6** (see 16a) the immediate check **3 Nc5+** can be met by **3...Qxc5+ 4 bxc5 c2**, but the sacrificial pin **3 Bf1** diverts bQ (mate is threatened, and after **3...d3** we have **4 Bxd3 Qxd3 5 Nc5+**) and after **3...Qxf1 4 Nc5+ Kb5** we have 16b. Now comes the good move: **5 a3!!** It threatens mate by **6 Nd6**, and we have a draw by alternate check and mate threat: **5...Kc4 6 Nb6+ Kb5 7 Nc8** etc. Mike has been composing several studies recently to the theme "a sacrifice followed by a quiet move", and it can be a very effective recipe; the look of sheer delight on one solver's face when he finally spotted the crucial move **5 a3** was something I shall long remember.

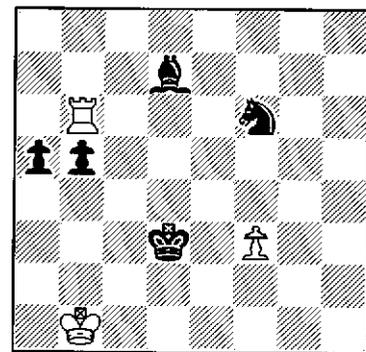
If you think these studies were rather easy for a world solving championship, I shall not disagree with you. The leading solvers were handing in their papers within half an hour, and this was too soon. Unfortunately it is extremely hard to find studies which are both difficult and clear-cut, and clarity is essential if arguments are to be avoided. I actually examined over thirty original studies while preparing the competition, but a standard chess-playing computer program (Genius on a 486/25) demolished seventy per cent of them; and by the time I had also eliminated those with side variations more difficult than the main line, a couple which were too similar in theme to problems used elsewhere in the competition, and those which were even easier than what was actually used, I was left with precisely three.



17 - draw

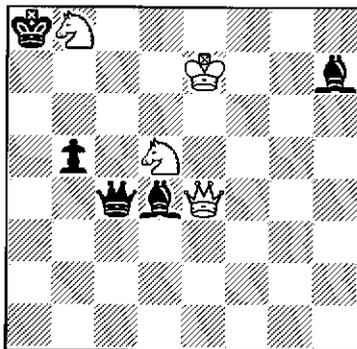


17a - after 3 Rd8

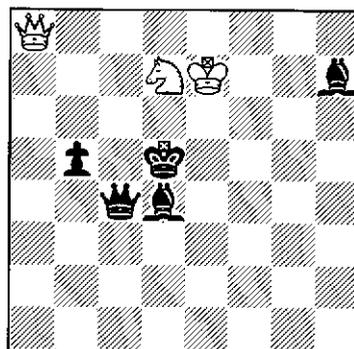


17b - 3...Nf6, after 5 Rb6

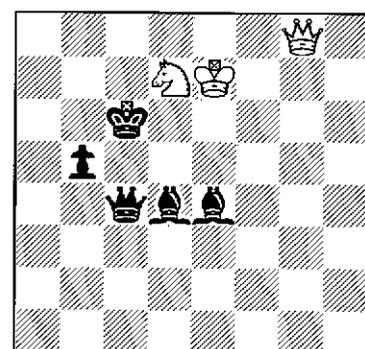
Our front cover study, John Roycroft's 17, won 2nd Honourable Mention in a tourney to celebrate the 60th birthday of the Rumanian composer Emilian Dobrescu. The solution starts **1 f3!** (we shall need a guard on e4 later in the play) **Bf5** (1...Bxf3 2 R-- and 3 d8Q) **2 Rf8 Bxd7 3 Rd8** (see 17a) and how is Black to keep his material advantage? After **3...Bc6**, bB is tied to the defence of bN, and **4 Rd6 Bb7 5 Rd7 Ba8 6 Rd8 Bc6 7 Rd6** hunts it to distraction. **3...Be6** leads to **4 Rd6 Bf7 5 Rd7 Bg8 6 Rd8**; Black can try **6...Bh7** hoping for **7 Rxd5+? Kc4+**, but **7 Rd7 Bg6 8 Rd6 Bh7 9 Rd7** holds the draw. The bB has now been hounded along three diagonals (c6-a8, e6-g8, h7-g6), and **3...Nf6** provides a fourth. White plays **4 Rb8**, and after **4...b5 5 Rb6** (see 17b) **Ne8** (to save bN and guard d6) bB must defend bPb5 and **6 Rb7 Bc6 7 Rb6 Bd7 8 Rb7** draws.



18 - win



18a - after 6 Qa8+



18b - after 9...Kc6

Let's finish with a Mike Bent frolic. 18 is from *The Problemist*, July 1994: **1 Nb6+ Ka7** (1...Kxb8 2 Qa8+ Kc7 3 Qd8+ and 4 Nxc4) **2 Qa8+ Kxb6 3 Nd7+ Kc7 4 Qb8+ Kc6 5 Qc8+ Kd5 6 Qa8+** (see 18a) **Qc6 7 Qa2+ Qc4** (7...Ke4 8 Qg2+ and 9 Qxc6) **8 Qg2+ Be4 9 Qg8+ Kc6** (see 18b) **10 Qc8+ Kd5 11 Qa8+ Qc6 12 Qg8+** and mate next move. Unsophisticated, perhaps, but I enjoyed solving it.

It is not my present intention to quote any more British studies published in 1994-95 in BESN, but if any reader thinks I have omitted any that I ought to have included, whether by himself or by someone else, please will he bring them to my attention. Our next special number of this type is currently scheduled for June 1997, and will cover studies published in 1993 and perhaps 1992.