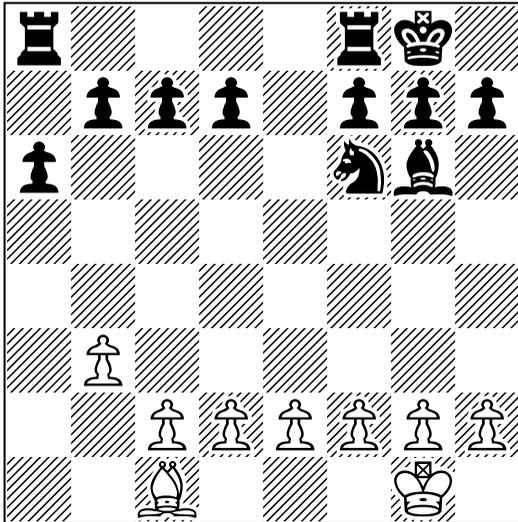


John Beasley

51 Flights of Chess Fancy

and a few other frolics



What was White's first move
with a bishop?

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ISBN 978-0-9555168-1-8

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Typeset by the author

Originally printed by MediaPRINT Ltd, The Print Cabin,
381 Luton Road, Harpenden, Herts AL5 3NF

Published by the author at 7 St James Road, Harpenden, Herts AL5 4NX
June 2009 (version with minor corrections April 2011)

Introduction

This is the third, and will be the last, of my little chess vanity-books. *Some flights of chess fancy* (1989) was a typical problem composer's vanity-book of the period, and contained between a half and two thirds of what I had published up to then. But while the advent of home computers and "desktop publishing" vastly increased the amount that people could *write*, there was no corresponding increase in the time they had for *reading*, and I deliberately restricted *More flights of chess fancy* (2000) to the 25 positions that I thought people could work through before becoming bored. The present book contains slightly more than twice as many, so I am expecting readers to be selective, but the positions are grouped by type, and the reader who finds a particular chapter not to his or her taste can easily abandon it and move on to the next.

Some flights concentrated on problems, but included a few endgame studies. *More flights* contained problems only. The present book gives precedence to endgame studies, which have been my main interest in recent years, but it repeats my favourite problems from *Some flights* and *More flights* with one or two recent additions, and there are a few items from fields other than chess.

In the endgame study chapter, I have put the solutions immediately below the diagrams, but each new position is always at the top of a column and normally at the top of a new page, and the reader who prefers to solve for himself should find it easy enough to cover the text and have a go before reading on. In the problem chapters, the diagrams appear first without solution, and the solutions appear overleaf below fresh diagrams. In many cases, particularly in the endgame study chapter, I have added a few words saying how the position was discovered. Perhaps these brief descriptions will help to show that chess composition is not the arcane mystery which it is sometimes thought to be, and will tempt readers into having a go themselves.

I am sometimes asked by a budding composer how many studies or problems he or she needs to produce for the exercise to be worth while, and my answer is very simple: one good one. Whether anything that follows meets this criterion is perhaps another matter, but I hope it will at least raise a passing smile.

Harpenden, Hertfordshire, England, June 2009.