

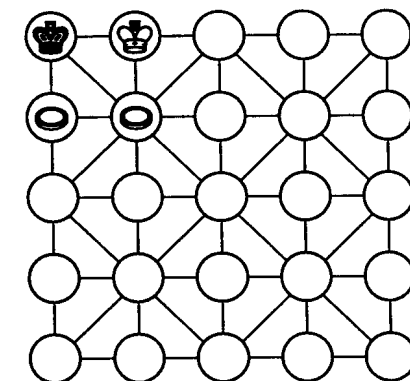
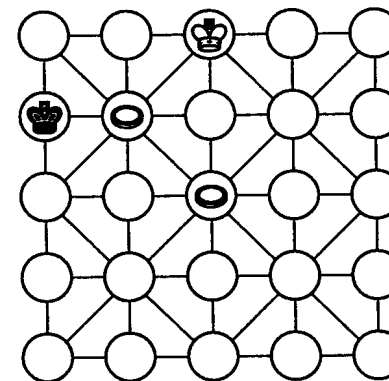
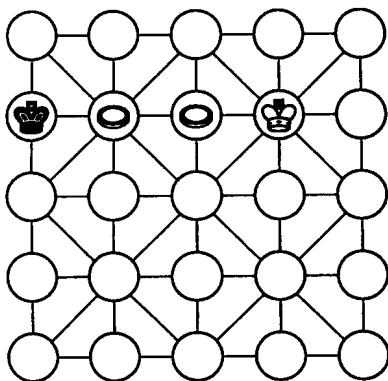
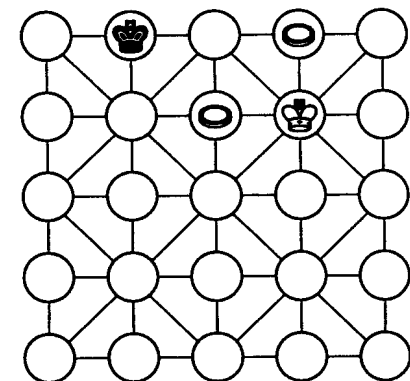
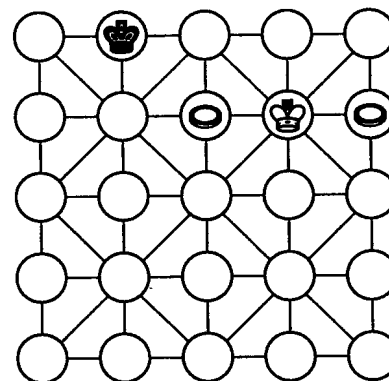
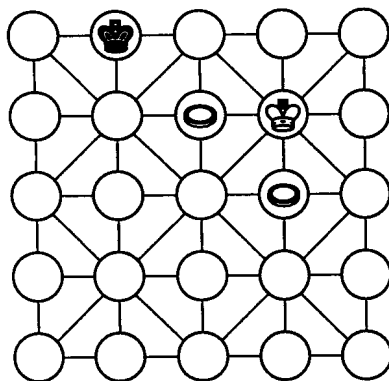
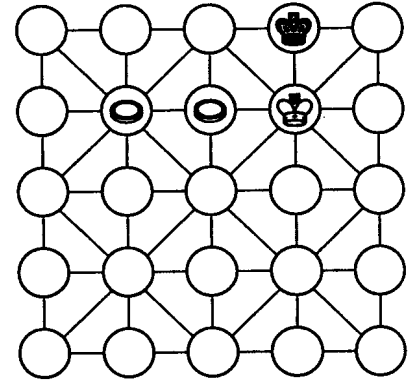
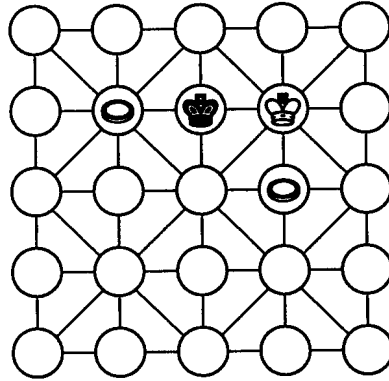
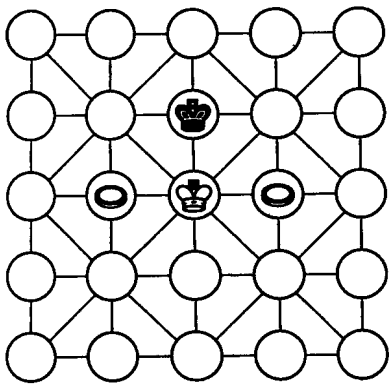
Variant Chess

THE MAGAZINE TO BROADEN YOUR CHESS HORIZONS

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Winning at Nam Dinh Chess

Variant Kings

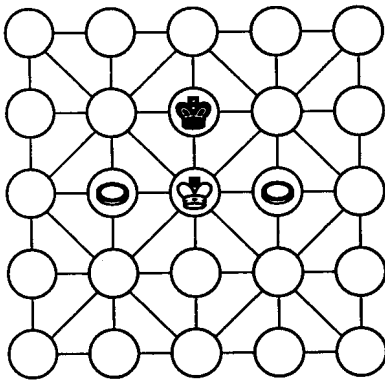
Gravitational Chess

NAM DINH CHESS : THE FINAL STAGE

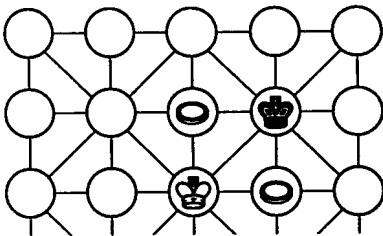
In last times's article on Nam Dinh Chess, I said that last-minute analysis had shown that a king and two men could force a win against a bare king (I had previously thought that the defender could hold out if he played accurately). Let's see how it is done.

Nam Dinh Chess is played on the 5x5 Alquerque board. Kings and men alike move one step at a time along the given lines (in either direction) into an adjacent empty space. Men cannot capture; kings capture by jumping over an adjacent man of their own colour and landing on the cell immediately beyond, capturing the man on it. Checkmate and stalemate both win.

To win with king and two men against king, White starts by playing his king to the centre and his men to say b3 and d3. Black cannot now play to a3 or e3 (he will be in check), and in fact he does best to play to c2 or the equivalent cell c4 :

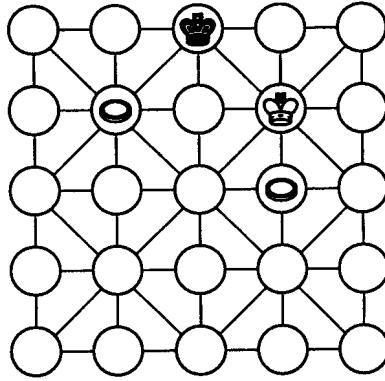


White now plays say 1 b3-b4, and if 1...Kd4 then 2 b4-c4 wins quickly :

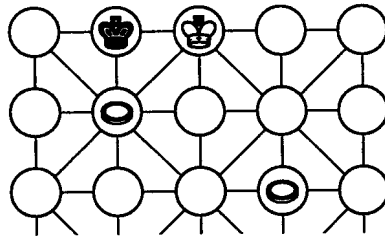


If 2...Kd5 then 3 d3-d4 stalemates at once, and if 2...Ke5 then 3 Kd4 and Black is trapped (3...Kd5 4 c4-c5 Ke5 5 c5-d5 Ke4 6 d3-e3 Ke5 7 e3-e4).

Better is therefore 1...Kc5, when the move is 2 Kd4 :

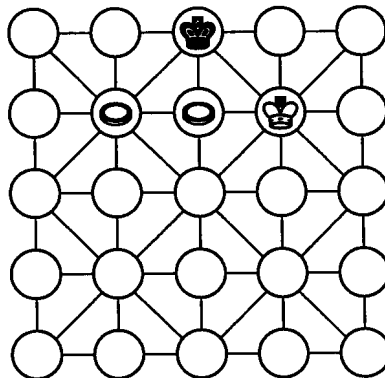


If now 2...Kb5 then 3 Kc5, trapping Black in the top left corner :



This is a pattern that will recur. White's king guards a3 over b4, so his king and man on b4 are sufficient to keep Black's king penned in, and his second man will walk up at leisure and deliver the *coup de grace*.

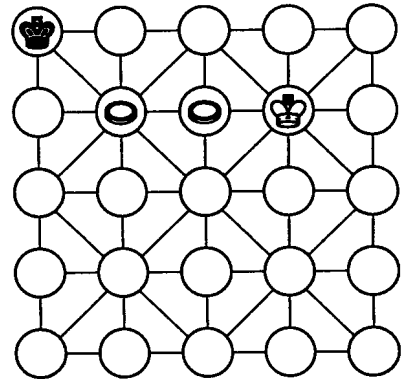
If instead 2...Kd5 then 3 b4-c5 trapping Black in the top right corner, leaving 2...Kc4. The natural counter is 3 d3-c3 Kc5, and now 4 c3-c4 :



If 4...Kb5 then 5 Kc5 as before; if 4...Kd5 then 5 b4-c5 and Black will be trapped in the top right corner...

But he won't be, he can just sneak out, and for a long time I thought that 4...Kd5 gave Black a draw. Eventually I saw a way to win: White can run the man on b4 right round his

own king and back to b4, in the process driving the Black king to the top left corner. In detail: 5 b4-c3 Kc5 6 c3-d3 Kb5 (if 6...Kd5 then 7 c4-c5, and now Black does get trapped in the top right corner) 7 d3-e3 Kc5 (7...Ka5 8 c4-b4 Ka4/Kb5 9 Kc5) 8 e3-e4 Kb5 9 e4-e5 Kc5 10 e5-d5 Kb5 11 d5-c5 Ka5 (no choice now) 12 c5-b4 :



There follows 12...Ka4 (12...Kb5 13 Kc3 stalemate) 13 Kc5, and now it's easy: 13...Ka5 14 c4-c3 Ka4/Kb5 15 c3-b3 Ka5 16 Kb5 (simplest) Ka4 17 b3-a3 Ka5 18 a3-a4.

Alternatives now become visible. White doesn't in fact forfeit or even delay the win by playing 5 b4/c4-c5 (even though he cannot trap Black in the top right corner, he can play his other man to d3, and then drive Black to the bottom right corner). Nor need he play 4 c3-c4, because 4 b4-c4 does just as well: 4...Kb5 (now 4...Kd5 does get Black trapped in the top right corner) 5 c3-d2 (White needs to lose a move) Kc5 6 d2-d3 and we have rejoined the line above. But 4 c3-c4 followed by the round trip from b4 is undoubtedly the elegant way to win, and we may note how a White king on d4 and a man on c4 keep Black restricted to c5 and b5 (the king guards b4 over c4, and if ...Ka5 then c4-b4 followed by Kc5).

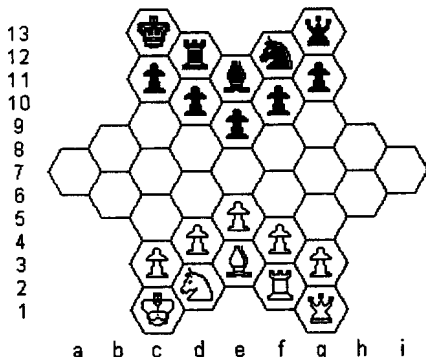
Other starting positions for the Black king either let White transpose into the line above or give him a quicker alternative win.

As a piece of elegant "book", this seems to me to be at least on a par with the standard three-against-two wins at checkers. It may or may not be new to the European games literature, but I am sure the experts in Nam Dinh have long been familiar with it.

POLGAR SUPERSTAR CHESS

Árpád Rusz has sent me three of his games from the recent championship (see the back page), and though they were imperfect (his words) I have found them instructive. He tells me that each player had 20 minutes for the whole game, and that writing down the game score was compulsory. For the rules, see VC 61.

In his first game, White against Tom Shutzman, White set **Be3**, Black **Be11**, White **Kc1** (in all the games he sent me, the players put their bishops at the front and their kings in a back corner), Black **Nf12**, White **Rf2**, Black **Rd12**, White **Nd2**, Black **Kc13**, White **Qg1**, Black **Qg13** :

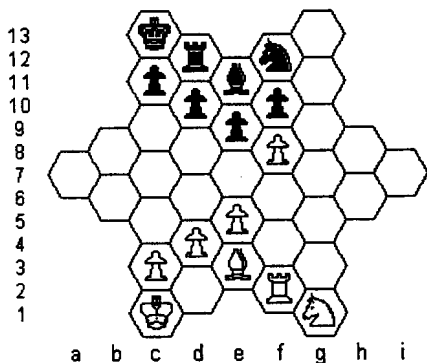


Play started

- 1 **f4-f8** **g11-g9**
- 2 **g3-g7** **g9xf8**
- 3 **g7xf8**

and the queens came off,

- 3 ... **Qg13xg1**
- 4 **Nd2xg1** :



Black now played

- 4 ... **e9xf8**,

which was surely a mistake. White could simply have recaptured with

the rook, tying Black's bishop to the defence of the f10 pawn, but his actual

- 5 **Ng1-f6**

was much stronger; it attacked Black's bishop, which was still unable to move (I feel that Black should have advanced his d-pawn long ago), and forced the counterattack

- 5 ... **Nf12-g7**.

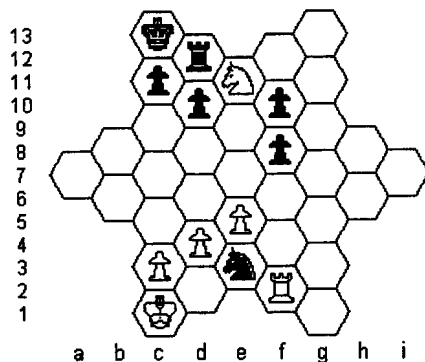
Black duly answered White's

- 6 **Nf6xe11**

by

- 6 ... **Ng7xe3**,

from which I deduce that bishops are regarded as stronger than knights.



White could now have chivvied the knight away and then picked up the f-pawns, but he won more crisply by

- 7 **Rf2xf8**.

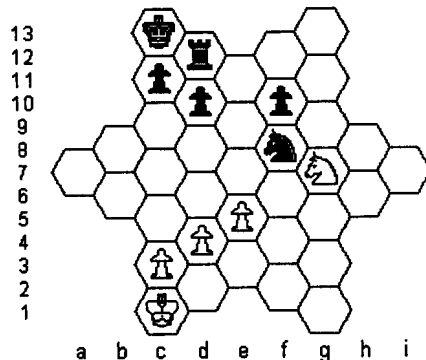
A further capture on f10 would give White an easy win, he soon being able to create a passed pawn on the e-file, so Black played

- 7 ... **Ne3xf8**

only to discover that the removal of the pawn from f8 had given White a second threat :

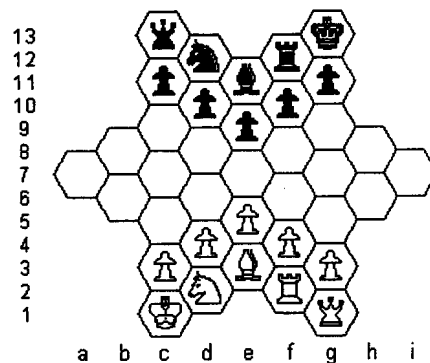
- 8 **Ne11-g7**.

Black resigned because mate by Nf12 could not be prevented :



Even advancing the c-pawn wouldn't have helped, because a knight on f12 would cover c11 as well as c13.

Árpád's game with White against Ksenia Burdová, who came fifth overall, was a little disturbing. Black misplayed the opening, wasted time on threats easily parried, and seemed to have got herself hopelessly cramped by move 10; yet she eventually lost only through a blunder under time pressure, and should probably have been able to hold out. White **Be3**, Black **Be11**; **Qg1**, **Rf12**; **Kc1**, **Qc13**; **Nd2**, **Kg13**; **Rf2**, **Nd12** :



- 1 **f4-f8** **e9xf8**.

Again, I feel that this capture must be wrong. I would have played 1...d8, to let the bishop out and to make at least some sort of a claim on the central cell e7. As it was, White played

- 2 **d4-d8**

and Black was immediately in trouble. She tried

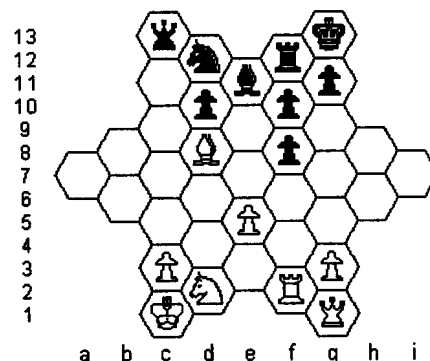
- 2 ... **c11-c9**,

but after

- 3 **Be3-g5** **c9xd8**

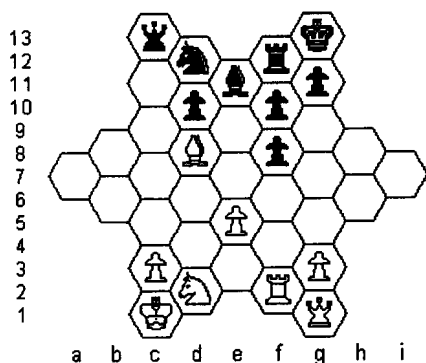
- 4 **Bg5xd8**

the bind was as strong as ever :



Can Black now give back the pawn with 4...f6 and follow up with the freeing move ...f8? I doubt it. 5 Nxf6 threatens the bishop, and if Black saves it by 5...Nb8 6 c7 Bd12 White has 7 g7 keeping the pawn firmly back on f10.

Recapitulation diagram :



In the event, Black played

4 ... Nd12-b8

threatening mate on c2, but after

5 c3-c7

she could see nothing better than the ignominious retreat

5 ... Nb8-d12 .

Now

6 Nd2-f6

threatened to take the bishop, but Black countered by

6 ... Nd12-e7

threatening 7...Nh6 winning White's queen. But this too was easily met,

7 Rf2-f4 Ne7-h6

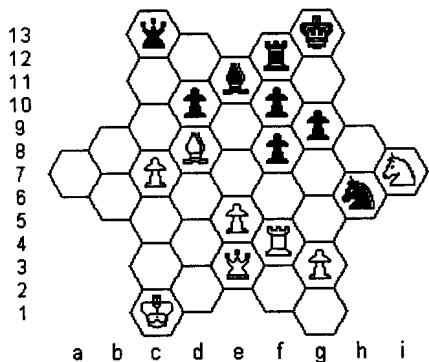
8 Qg1-e3 ,

and while Black was spending time on short threats White was developing. There followed

8 ... g11-g9 ,

and White disdained the capture of bishop for knight (his knight being far more active than Black's bishop) and played

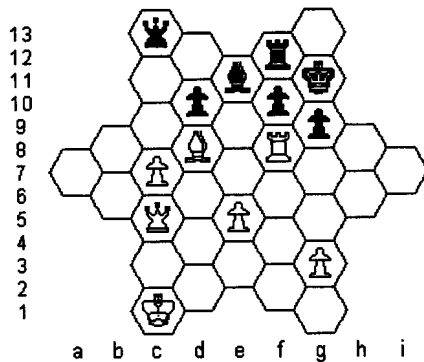
9 Nf6-i7 :



Now Black's leading f-pawn was dead (the recapture ...g9xf8 would allow a quick mate on the file), and she was losing it under conditions at least as bad as if she had given it up voluntarily at move 4.

Play continued

9 ... Nh6-e7
 10 Rf4xf8 Ne7-d12
 11 Qe3-c5 Nd12-g11
 12 Ni7xg11 Kg13xg11
 and Black had become wholly passive, but could White break through?



In the event, he did so,

13 Qc5-e7 Qc13-d12

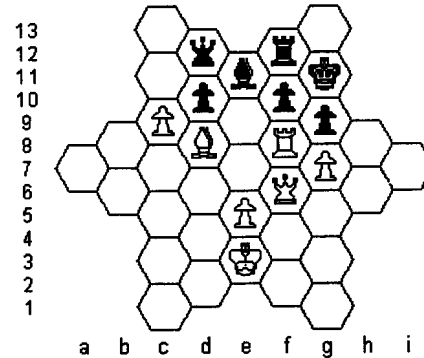
14 Kc1-d2 Qd12-c13

15 Kd2-e3 Qc13-d12

16 Qg7-f6 Qd12-c13

17 g3-g7 Qc13-d12

18 c7-c9 ,



but only because Black played

18 ... d10xc9

leading to

19 Bd8xc9 Be11xc9

20 Qf4xc9 Kg11-g13

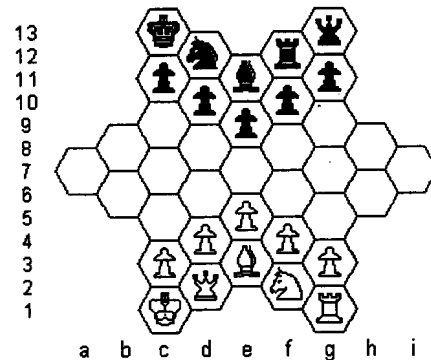
21 e5-e9 Kg13-g11

22 e9-e11Q .

18...Qc11 would have held out, and with hindsight Árpád thinks the game had become a draw once the knights had come off.

All of which raises an unpleasant question: can Black kill the game from the start by setting Qc13, Nd12, Be11, Rf12, and Kg13, advancing his c and g pawns to the W formation c9-d10-e9-f10-g9, and defying White to break through? I suspect that a doubled Q/R on the g-file may be needed to do anything about it.

Árpád's sixth-round win with Black against Csaba Schenkerik effectively decided the tournament. Be3, Be11; Nf2, Rf12; Qd2, Nd12; Kc1, Kc13; Rg1, Qg13 :



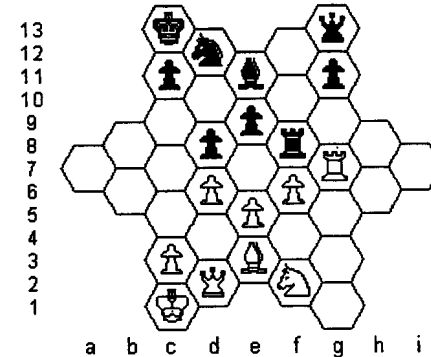
This time, play started

1 f2-f4 d10-d8

2 d2-d4 f10-f8

3 g3-g7 f8xg7

4 Rg1xg7 Rf12-f8 ,



giving a very different formation from those seen hitherto. White continued

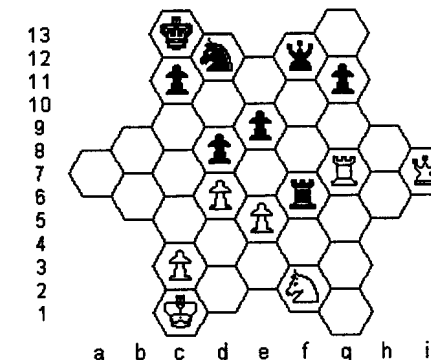
5 Be3-i7 Qg13-f12

6 Qd2-g5

presumably intending 6 Bxe11 Qxe11 7 Rxg11 winning a pawn, but Black got in first :

6 ... Be11xi7

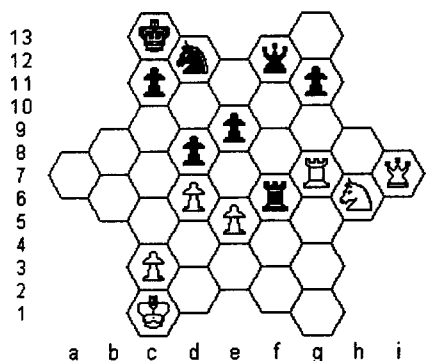
7 Qg5xi7 Rf8xf6 .



8 exf6 Qxf6 9 Qe3 e5 would surely

have been good for Black (he would have had two passed pawns for his rook, one being only one step from promotion), so White settled for being a simple pawn down :

8 Nf2-h6 .



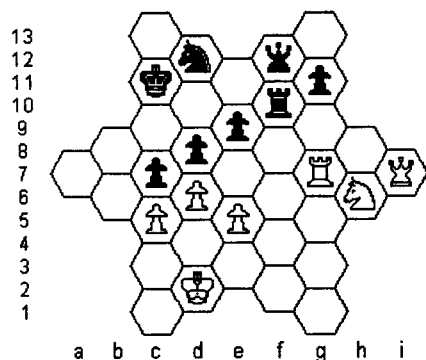
White now threatened Rxh7, so Black played

8 ... Rf6-f10

to unpin his knight. Play continued

9 Kc1-d2 c11-c7

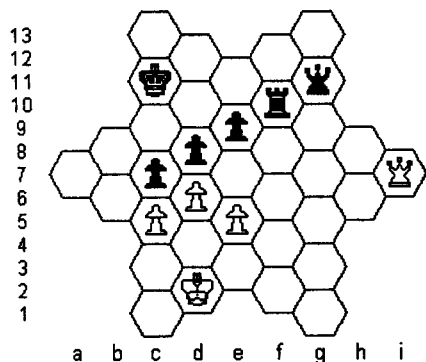
10 c3-c5 Kc13-c11,



and now that Black's men on the diagonal i7-c13 were free to move White decided to trade rook for pawn by

11 Nh6xg11 Nd12xg11

12 Rg7xg11 Qf12xg11 :



I can see no immediate tactical necessity for this, and I am not at all

sure that it was right. By permanently attacking the pawn on g11, White's rook was tying the Black queen or knight to its defence, and now this pressure had gone. Perhaps White felt that an extra Black rook on a file devoid of targets would be of little use to its owner, but the sequel would prove otherwise.

White continued with the pawn exchange

13 d6xc7 d8xc7 .

This loosened his position by opening the diagonal from g9 to the pawn on c5 and at first I was inclined to query it, but in the event Black never found it convenient to use this diagonal, and the exchange had benefits for White both in creating a target on c7 and in opening the lines g5-c9 and d2-d12 for his queen. In any case, pawn exchanges in the endgame normally favour the player who is material down and will be happy to draw.

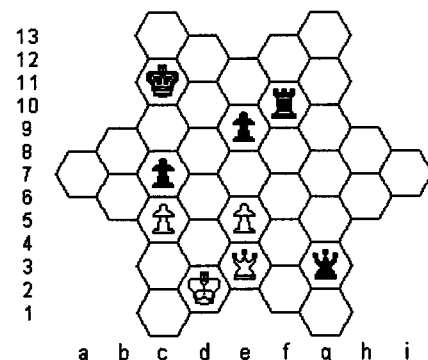
Play continued

14 Qj7-e3,

and

14 ... Qg11-g3

threatened 15...Qf4 taking off the queens :



This exchange would have been fatal for White, because not only would the rook then bar White's king from the f-file and allow Black's own king to walk round to g5 and f4, but it would also provide Black with an unlimited supply of tempo moves. Even a rook remote from the scene of action may be decisive a pawn ending.

White therefore played

15 Kd2-c3,

allowing

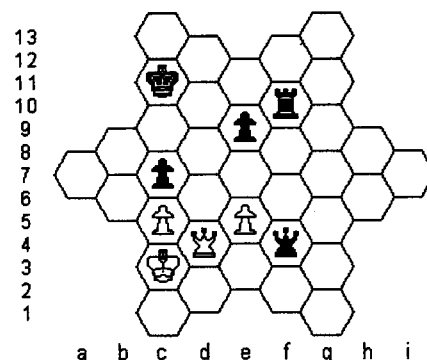
15 ... Qg3-f4

to be met by

16 Qe3-d4

avoiding the queen exchange. But

White was now completely tied up,



and I thought 16...Rf12 would have forced White to allow the exchange of queens, but Árpád points out 17 e7 Qf6 18 Kc1! when 18...Qxd4 is stalemate and 18...Qxe7 19 Kc3 Qf6 20 Kc1 e5 21 Qe3 Qf4 22 Kc3 is still far from being a Black win.

Black's actual move

16 ... e9-e7

won a pawn, since the new stalemate trap 17 Qe3 could be met by 17...Rf12 18 Qd4 Rf6 putting White in zugzwang (Árpád), but it allowed

17 Qd4-d8

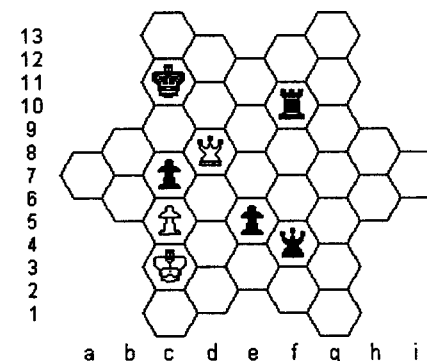
bringing White's queen into play. However, did not

17 ... Qf4xe5+

18 Kc3-d2 Qe5-f4+

19 Kd2-c3 e7-e5

ensure Black's promotion, the only question being whether White could give perpetual check ?



No! 20 Qd10 would have forced stalemate (Árpád). But both players missed this (as did I, analysing later at leisure), and the game concluded

20 Qd8xc7+ Kc11-d10

21 Qc7-d6+ Kd10-e9

22 Qd6-c7+ Ke9-f8

23 Qc7-d6+ Kf8-g7

24 Qd6-d10+ Rf10-f8

25 Qd10-g13+ Kg7-h6 .

VARIANT KINGS

Readers who have been with us from early days will recall the articles on "Fairy Kings" by Mark Ridley which appeared in *VC* 17/18/20/21. Mark recently sent me a copy of an updated version which appeared earlier this year in the English-language Serbian problem magazine *Mat Plus Review*.

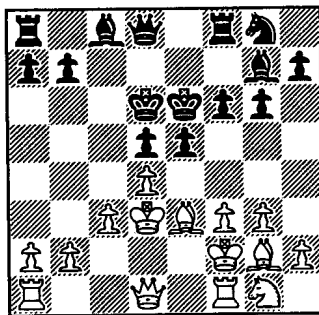
There are several games in the *Encyclopedia* featuring variant kings, but on the whole they are more usually found in problems. Given that the object of play is to capture the enemy king, his move in ordinary chess seems to be about right: he is weak enough for hounding him down in the ending to be practicable, but strong enough for him to be able to play a useful role in helping to round up his opponent. Changing his move is all too likely to upset this delicate balance of power, and this will affect all earlier play for material advantage. If he is strengthened, a bare king may be able to hold out even against K+Q; if he is weakened, the cooperation which allows K+R and perhaps K+P to force a win against a bare king may vanish.

The latter point is illustrated by **Knightmate**, also known as **Mate the Knight**, where the kings are replaced by royal knights and the knights by non-royal kings (castling allowed, and promotion to non-royal king but not to knight). In the ending, N+Q v N is an easy win (a queen can round up an enemy knight on its own), but N+R v N is only a draw (mating positions can be constructed but not forced); N+P v N is basically drawn unless the stronger side can prove otherwise, but there is an obvious "opposition" concept and some of the details are tricky.

A "First Knightmate Open" was held in Cincinnati in 1991, and the game featured in at least one of the "Championships" organized by NOST. *Nost-algia* 330 and 338 printed two game scores, the first being repeated in *Eteroscacco* 56, and David Pritchard's files contain a further three, but they were largely exploratory and only the second *Nost-algia* game strikes me as being

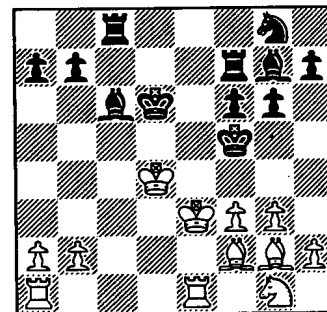
of sufficient interest and quality to justify reproduction here. This was from the First Knightmate Open, played at a time limit of "30/30", and was won by David Moeser. Notes in quotation marks are by him, as is "?!" to White's move 28.

1	d2-d4	d7-d5
2	c2-c3	g7-g6
3	Kb1-c2	Bf8-g7
4	Kc2-d3	f7-f6
5	g2-g3	Kg8-f7
6	Bf1-g2	c7-c6
7	f2-f3	Kb8-c7
8	Kg1-f2	Kc7-d6
9	e2-e4	e7-e5
10	e4xd5	c6xd5
11	Bc1-e3	0-0
12	0-0	Kf7-e6

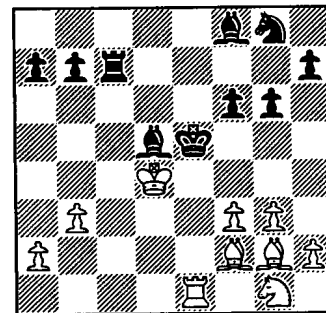


Both players have castled their knights into relative safety (a precaution omitted in some of the other games, usually with unhappy consequences). The fianchetto appears to be standard practice, since if the g-pawn is left at home the risk of a check on h2/h7 by queen or bishop is very strong (the castled knight does not defend this square, and the usual defensive knight on f3/f6 is not available). The advance of the f-pawns, opening diagonals through to the castled knights, is more surprising, but if the f-pawn is left at home, White for example playing g3, Kg2, Kf3, Bg2, and 0-0, the fianchettoed bishop becomes a target because the castled knight does not defend it.

13	Kf2-e2	Bc8-d7
14	Be3-f2	Bd7-c6
15	Ke2-e3	Ke6-f5
16	Qd1-c2	Qd8-e7
17	Rf1-e1	Qe7-f7
18	c3-c4	e5xd4
19	Kd3xd4	d5xc4
20	Qc2xc4	Ra8-c8
21	Qc4xc7	Rf8xf7



22	Ra1-c1	Rf7-c7
23	Kd4-c5	Kd6xc5
24	Rc1xc5	Bg7-f8
25	Rc5-c2	Bc6-d5
26	Rc2xc7	Rc8xc7
27	b2-b3	Kf5-e5
"May be too defensive."		
28	Ke3-d4?!	



David now gives 28...Rc2 29 Re2 (29 Kxd5 Rxf2 30 Re2 Rxe2 31 Nxe2 Kxd5 and Black is a piece ahead) Rc1+ 30 Nh3 Be6+ 31 g4. The consequences of this are not clear to me, but Black's actual choice appears to ship a pawn without compensation.

28	...	Ke5xd4
29	Bf2xd4	Bd5-f7

"Prevents White from winning a piece with Re8 and Bc5."

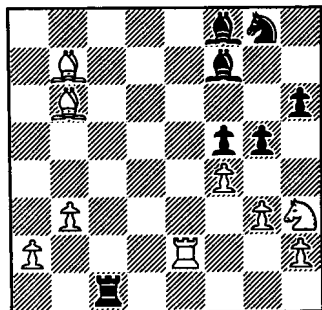
30	Bd4xa7	Rc7-c2
31	Re1-e2	Rc2-c6

Black can temporarily force the White knight into the open by 31...Rc1+, but it doesn't appear to lead anywhere.

32	Ba7-e3	f6-f5
33	f3-f4	Rc6-c7
34	Be3-b6	Rc7-c1+

34...Rd7 would have held on to the b-pawn, but being already one pawn behind Black presumably decided that attacking was the better option. It is however very much a forlorn hope. It is curious how White's bishops seem much more powerful than Black's.

35	Ng1-h3	h7-h6
36	Bg2xb7	g6-g5



37 Bb7-g2

This saves White from worrying about ...Rf1 either now or later. In contrast,

37 ... Bf7-h5

and Black's next are surely wrong. The light bishop is needed in defence.

38 Re2-d2 Bh5-g4+?

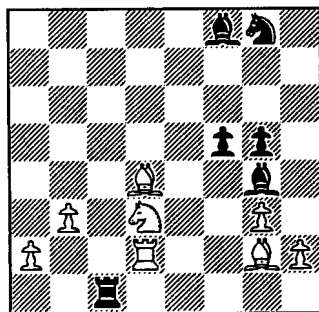
39 Nh3-f2 Ng8-f6

This seems rash and Black will retract it two moves later, but his attack has petered out, and White threatened Bd5+ with various unpleasantnesses to follow.

40 f4xg5+ h6xg5

41 Bb6-d4+ Nf6-g8

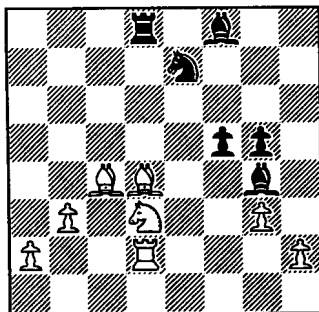
42 Nf2-d3



42 ... Rc1-c8

43 Bg2-d5+ Ng8-e7

44 Bd5-c4 Rc8-d8?



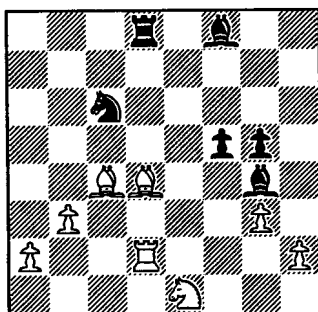
Temporarily pinning the bishop, but after

45 Nd3-e1

the bishop is free again and it is the Black rook which is vulnerable. The

immediate threat is 46 Bf6+ winning it, so Black tried the counter-attack

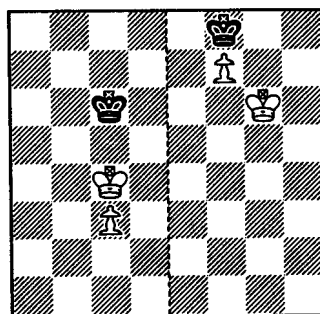
45 ... Ne7-c6.



White now played 46 Bc3 to save his attacked bishop, but both sides were in time trouble (Black's flag was to fall at move 57, White having 1½ minutes left), and I think 46 Bb5+ would have won at least the rook (46...Nb8 47 Ba7 mate, or 46...Na5 47 Bb6+ Nb7 48 Ba6 mate, or 46...Nb4 47 Bc3 mate, or 46...Ne7 47 Bf6+ Ng6 48 Rxd8 and 48...Bb4+ then 49 Nd3).

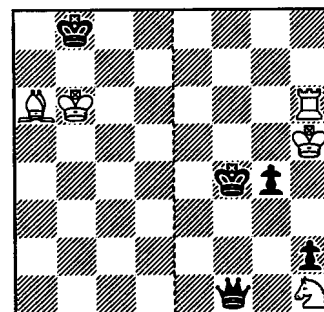
I am going to leave the game here. It is by no means perfect, but it is instructive and I think it fairly illustrates the nature of the variant.

Another variant which has been tried in play is *Sting*, where the king is given the added power of a grasshopper (slides along Q-lines until it meets an obstacle, hurdles this obstacle, and lands on the square immediately beyond). The normal endgame wins with K+Q v K and K+R v K are unaffected, but some results with K+P v K are changed.



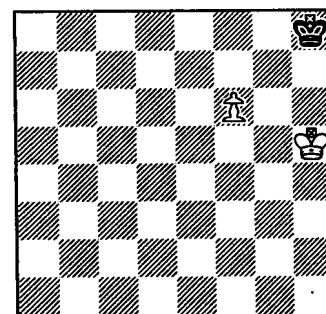
Both these are reciprocal zugzwang in ordinary chess. In *Sting*, the position on the left remains reciprocal zugzwang, but Black draws on the right even with the move (after 1...Ke7, his king prevents 2 Kg7).

There was a complete if somewhat experimental game in *VC* 33, and there were some fine problems and endgame studies in *VC* 31-32. Here are two endgame studies, one simple, the other perhaps less so.



In each case, the kings move as K+G, and White is to play and win. The position on the left is a study version of a problem by Ronald Turnbull from *VC* 31, that on the right a study by Ronald also from *VC* 31. The start on the right is obvious, 1 Rf6+ Ke3 2 Rxf1, but Black can fork king and rook by 2...Ke2+ and now things get interesting. Answers on page 139.

Sting, although apparently conceived for use in problems, has proved playable as a game. I am not so sure about *Transmuting Kings*, not in the *Encyclopedia* and so far seen only in problems, where a king in check loses its normal power and temporarily takes the power of the man checking it (so, after 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4, the "Blackburne's Shilling Game" trap 3...Nd4 4 Nxe5 Qg5 fails because 5 Bxf7 is mate). However, the variant has generated some interesting problems, and the position below may amuse :



White is to play and win both in ordinary chess and with *Transmuting Kings*. Answer again on page 139.

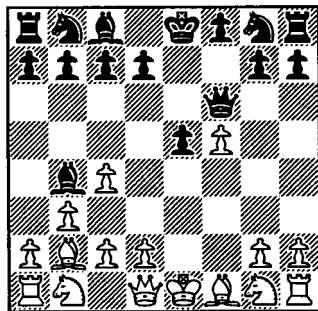
IN THE LIBRARY : MAGNETIC CHESS

David Pritchard's extensive holding of *Nost-algia*, kindly passed on to us by Elaine and Wanda, is proving a valuable source of game scores. Thousands of game scores are now available on the Internet, but most were played casually or at fast time limits and the standard of the participants varies widely; an editor has to wade through a lot of dross to find something worth reproducing. The *Nost-algia* games, having been played slowly by post, tended to be of higher quality, and its columnists have already done a first filtering for me. It does mean that those of our readers who are former NOSTs will be receiving material that they have already seen, but ten years or more have passed and perhaps some of the commentary will be new.

In **Magnetic Chess**, a man (other than a king) landing on a square pushes the nearest friendly man on the same rank or file either to the edge of the board or until it is blocked by another man (like poles repel) and pulls the nearest enemy man similarly (unlike poles attract). Kings are not affected; castling magnetizes the rook. A pawn pushed to the promotion rank promotes to a piece of its owner's choosing; a pawn pushed back to the first rank has a two-step option. There is no *en passant*.

Nost-algia 367 introduced the game to its readers and gave two specimens, one being particularly amusing and instructive.

- 1 e2-e4 (e7-e5)
Bf8-b4 (e4-c4, b3-b2)
- 2 Bc1-b2 Qd8-f6 (f7-f8, f2-f5)

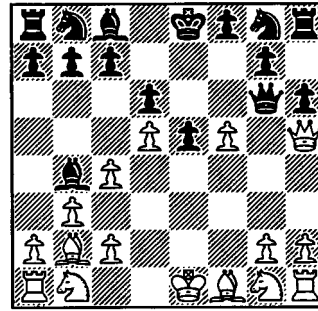


Nothing very remarkable so far. White's opening move pulled his opponent's e-pawn forward to e5, releasing Black's bishop; Black promptly moved this bishop, pulling White's e-pawn across to c4 and his b-pawn forward to b3; White's second move had no magnetic effect; Black's second move pushed his own f-pawn back to f8 and pulled White's f-pawn forward to f5, and set a trap. As White, would you play 3 Qh5+ here? It looks good, particularly since the pulling forward of Black's h-pawn will weaken the h5-e8 diagonal even further.

John McCallion's opponent saw no reason not to; he did indeed play

- 3 Qd1-h5 (h7-h6) + ,
only to find that he had walked into

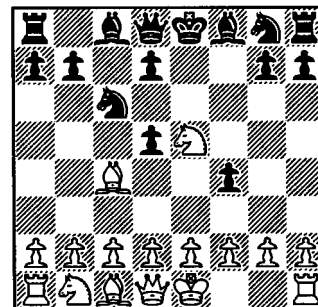
3 ... d7-d6 (Qf6-g6, d2-d5) +!



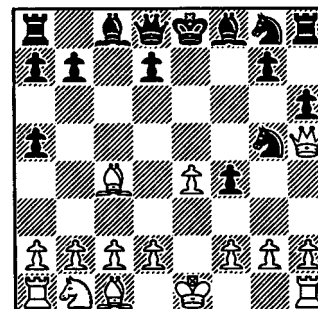
Black's innocent little d-pawn move pushed his queen across to g6, blocking White's check, and pulled White's d-pawn forward, discovering a check of his own. White was faced with the loss of his queen, and resigned.

Nost-algia 375 contained the best game of Magnetic Chess I have yet seen. White was Tony Gardner, Black Mike Smolowitz; Tony's note at move 12, mine elsewhere.

- 1 Ng1-f3 (f7-f4)
e7-e5 (e2-e4)
- 2 Bf1-c4 (c7-c5)
Nb8-c6
- 3 Nf3xe5 (c5-d5, e4-e2)



I didn't believe this; why on earth was White giving away two pieces and shutting in his queen? Well, 3...Nxe5 pulls White's e-pawn forward again and repels his own d-pawn, clearing the diagonal c4-f7, and allows White to play 4 Qh5+ (Ne5 to g5, Ph7 to h6) :



If now 4...Ke7 then 5 Qd1 pushes White's d-pawn to d6, check, when 5...Ke8 allows 6 Qh5+ with a quick mate and 6...Kg6 brings Black's king right out into the open. Black can perhaps improve in this by playing 4...g6 (Ng5 to g3),

since after 5 Qxg6+ (Ng3 back to g5) Ke7 the White queen can no longer play to d1, but it all looks rather unpleasant.

In the game (diagram after White's third move), Black took the bishop :

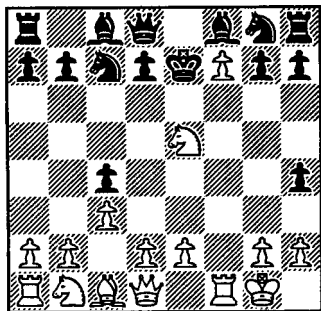
3 ... d5xc4 (Nc6-c7, f4-h4, c2-c3) ,

but this allowed

4 0-0 (f2-f7) +

once again forcing Black's king into the open :

4 ... Ke8-e7 :



Now

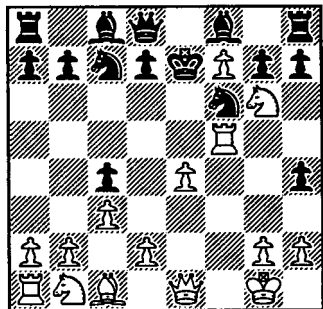
5 Qd1-e1 (e2-e4)

threatened Qxh4+, and after

5 ... Ng8-f6 (Rf1-f5)

White invested another piece by

6 Ne5-g6+ :



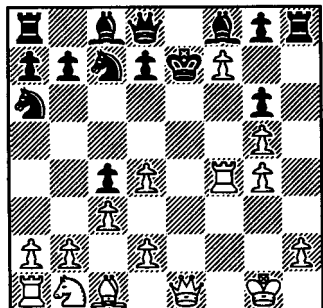
Black had to take or lose his rook,

6 ... h7xg6 (g7-g8, Nf6-a6, g2-g5) ,

and

7 Rf5-f4 (e4-d4, h4-g4) +

gave another vicious check by discovery :



This looked decisive (7...Kd6 8 Rf6+, and Black cannot

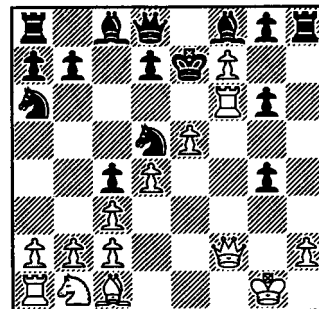
parry the check by ...Ne6 because this will pull White's queen forward to e5), but Black showed that he too had mastered magnetic trickery :

7 ... Nc7-d5 (g5-e5) .

However,

8 Qe1-f2 (Rf4-f6, d2-c2)

cleared the line for White's remaining bishop,



and if Black tries 8...Rh5 to keep this bishop out of g5 he finds that he has pulled White's e-pawn to g5 (and his h-pawn to h4), and 9 Qe2+ forces mate next move.

Black actually played

8 ... g8-g7 (g6-g5) ,

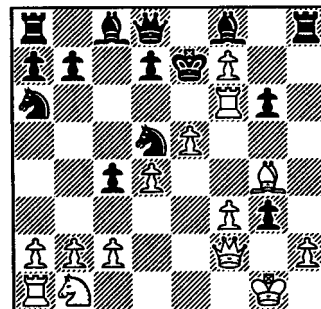
and after

9 Bc1xg5 (g7-g6)

he followed up with

9 ... g4-g3 (Bg5-g4, c3-f3)

to pull the bishop off the dangerous diagonal (and to block the f-file so that ...Nxf6 no longer allowed Qxf6 mate) :



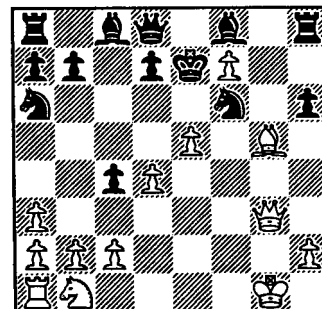
But

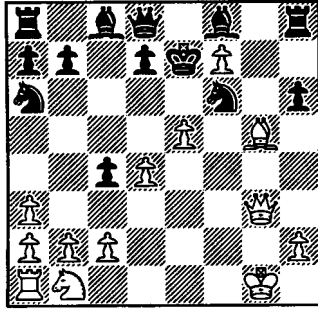
10 Qf2xg3 (Bg4-g5, f3-a3)

pushed the bishop straight back again, and Black's queen was dead. He played

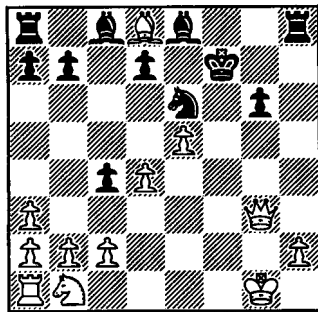
Nd5xf6 (g6-h6)

to get as much as possible for it,





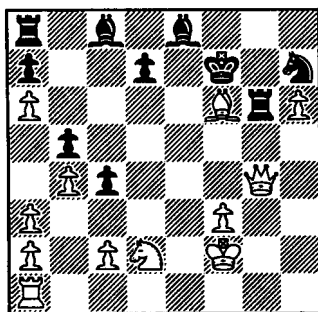
but
 11 **Bg5xf6 (Na6-e6, h6-g6) +**
 Ke7xf7
 12 **Bf6xd8 (Bf8-e8)**
 gave



and Black could not take the bishop by 12...Nxd8 because it would have pushed his own bishop from e8 to g8 and allowed 13 Qe3 (e5 to e8Q, check) with a quick win.

White now had queen and two pawns for rook and bishop and Black's king was still exposed, so barring accidents the win was assured, but the game nevertheless contained one or two further points of interest.

12 ... **Rh8-h6 (g6-f6, h2-h5)**
 13 **Nb1-d2 (d4-d6)**
 b7-b5 (e5-c5, b2-b4)
 14 **Kg1-f2 Ne6-g5 (c5-f5, Qg3-g4)**
 15 **Bd8xf6 (d6-a6, Rh6-g6, f5-f3)**
 Ng5-h7 (h5-h6)

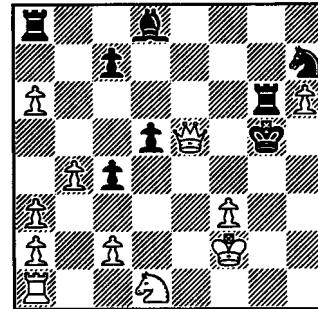


16 **Qg4xd7 (a7-c7, Nd2-d1) +**
 Black could not play ...Bxd7 because it would have pulled White's knight to d6 and checked his king, so he played
 16 ... **Kf7xf6,**
 and after
 17 **Qd7xe8 (Bc8-d8)**

the threat of Qc6+ appears to have prompted him to play
 17 ... **Kf6-g5.**

This seems to have been the first mistake in over a dozen moves of what Tony Gardner rightly called "sterling" defence. White pounced by

18 **Qe8-e5 (b5-d5) +**



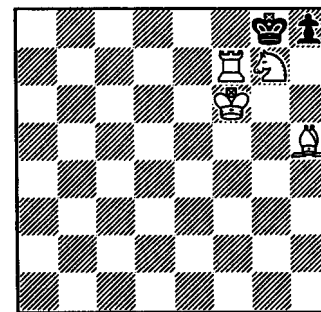
and **Black resigned.** After 18...Bf6, attacking the queen and pulling White's f-pawn forward to block the check, White would have played Qe3+ saving the queen, followed by Rb1 pushing the b-pawn to promotion.

Tony Gardner seems to have been NOST's leading exponent, and he describes Mike Smolowitz as "my fiercest opponent". He contributed an article on the game to *Nost-algia* 375, in which he wrote as follows:

"Initiative is retained by the application of consistent pressure upon the enemy King. The art of hunting the King is taken to new heights, and, since lines open up quickly, sacrifices which ordinarily might seem dubious may become useful."

He included this game as an example, and it could hardly be a better illustration. I don't know whether Black was indeed lost after move 3, but I can see no improvement to any of his moves.

Magnetic Chess has also attracted problemists, and the smaller number of men in a typical lightweight problem perhaps makes for easier comprehension. The following elegant trifle was recently sent to me by Peter Coast :

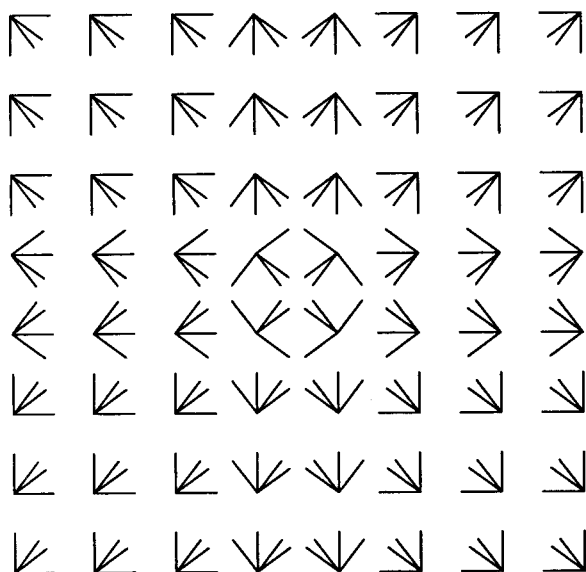


White to play and mate in two

Black threatens ...hxg7 giving check, so White must either (a) provide a mate in reply to this move, or (b) move or push his knight away so that Black cannot take it, or (c) give check himself. Answer on page 139.

COMPLEMENTARY FIVE-LEAPER TOURS

The move of the **Five-leaper**, a composite 5,0 and 4,3 leaper, takes it a distance of five units in any direction, and it has a property shared by no other leaper on an 8x8 board. The knight has two moves when in a corner of the board, three when one step from a corner, and so on up to eight when in the centre; the 7,7 leaper has one move when in a corner, no move at all when anywhere else; but the five-leaper has precisely four moves wherever it may be :



Many years ago, this property caused me to wonder if it might not be possible to find a pair of closed five-leaper tours such that two of the four moves from each square featured in one tour and the other two moves featured in the other. My desultory attempts at the time led nowhere, but I was not surprised to read on George Jelliss's Knight's Tour Notes web site that the task had been achieved by Tom Marlow. George reported that Tom had sent him the tour in November 1991, but it was not published until issue 18 of *The Games and Puzzles Journal* in March 2001. It bears repetition, both for the result itself and for the elegance of the method used to obtain it.

Tom's brainwave was to couple the assignment of a move to a trial tour with the barring of the diametrically opposite move and its reverse (so, if a move a1-a6 is added to a trial tour, the diametrically opposite move h8-h3 is henceforth barred, as is its reverse h3-h8). Not only does this massively reduce the number of options the computer has to examine during the later stages of the calculation (George has told me that Tom did the calculation by computer), but if we can find a tour satisfying this constraint we have obtained a complementary tour at the same time: all we have to do is to rotate the tour we already have through 180 degrees.

Tom did indeed find a tour satisfying the constraint :

```

20 47 62 55 6 21 46 63
31 42 57 50 11 34 29 44
2 59 16 9 52 3 36 17
13 22 39 26 19 14 23 38
54 5 28 45 64 61 56 7
51 48 35 30 43 58 49 10
32 41 24 37 12 33 40 25
1 60 15 8 53 4 27 18
    
```

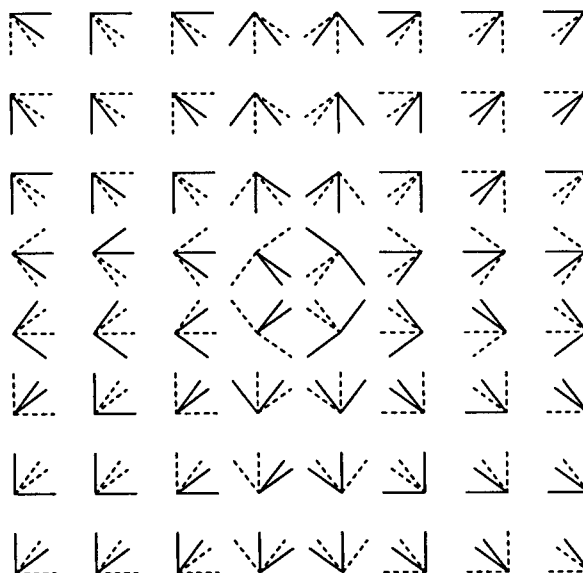
If we rotate this through 180 degrees, we get

```

18 27 4 53 8 15 60 1
25 40 33 12 37 24 41 32
10 49 58 43 30 35 48 51
7 56 61 64 45 28 5 54
38 23 14 19 26 39 22 13
17 36 3 52 9 16 59 2
44 29 34 11 50 57 42 31
63 46 21 6 55 62 47 20
    
```

which does indeed use the moves that the first tour does not. Tom renumbered the second tour to start from a1, but this renumbering is not necessary and the relation between the tours is perhaps clearer if we don't.

The complementary nature of the two tours is made even clearer by putting them in graphical form, full lines showing the moves used in the first tour and dashed lines those used in the second :



I don't know whether Tom stopped once he had found the first tour of this kind, or whether he went on to prove it unique. But even if he stopped at the first one he found back in 1991, today's computers are so much more powerful that a complete enumeration might now be possible. It would be interesting to have the results.

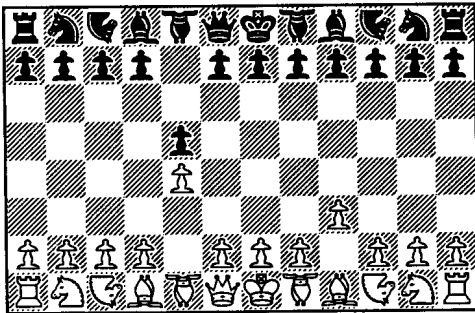
MODERN COURIER CHESS

by Paul Byway

Fers (inverted B in diagrams) moves one square diagonally, *Courier* (inverted N) leaps two squares orthogonally or diagonally. Unmoved K or F can make a double move, but not to capture nor through check. - JDB

White Paul Byway, Black Robert Reynolds; from the recent correspondence tournament.

- 1 e2-e4 e7-e5
- 2 i2-i3

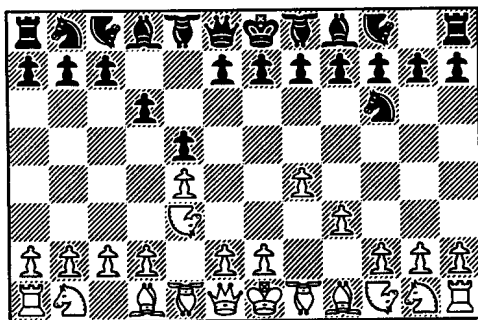


An opening refinement that has been tried recently; the action of the bishop at d8 is blunted and h2-h4 is prepared. Freeing up the square i2 maximises options for the three kingside minor pieces (by the way, remember that in MCC the bishop is classified as a major piece).

- 2 ... Nk8-j6
- 3 Cc1-e3

There are two things to say here. Tactically I fear that 3 h4 g5!? will smash up my defensive screen on the black squares, whereas after 3 Ce3 Nc6 4 h4 all is well. The second issue is strategic. I intend e4 and h4 to muffle the opposing bishops and natural development leads to a dilemma; should one put a fers or a courier on e3, h3? In the past I have favoured the fers, leaving Cc1, j1 to anchor the position. There is no doubt though that Ce3, h3 is an aggressive forward-looking move and I resolved to experiment with it in this tournament.

- 3 ... d7-d6
- 4 h2-h4

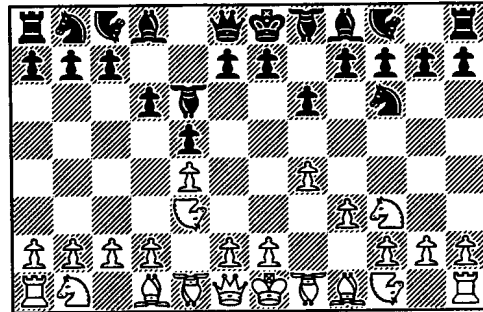


- 4 ... Fe8-e6

Played in my style! He could increase pressure on the black

squares with 4...g6, supporting a central strike by 5...f5. If White is careless we could then see 5 Nc3?! Bxh4!? 6 ixh4 Qj4+ 7 Bh2 Qxj2 8 Nj3 (8 Nl3 looks better) Ni4 and the bishop must be given back.

- 5 Nk1-j3 h7-h6



Played to prevent Ni5. I agree with the idea but think it weakens the white squares too much; I play on this later. It is better to play ...h5, ...i6, ...Fh6 in my opinion.

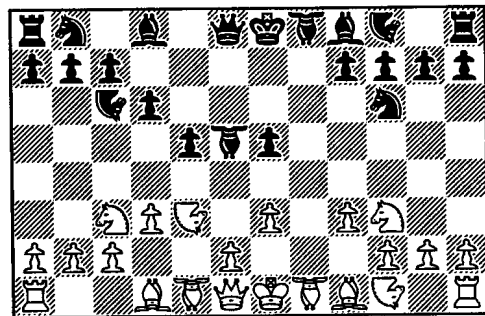
- 6 Nb1-c3 Cc8-c6

Attacking e4 a second time, but I don't think the courier belongs here. Don't move a piece twice in the opening they say, but here the 2-move development ...N-d7-f6 covers some important squares and is worthy of attention.

- 7 d2-d3 g7-g5

RR thinks this was too loosening. I think the real mistake was not to play ...i6 first.

- 8 g2-g3 f7-f5
- 9 e4xf5 Fe6xf5
- 10 h4xg5 h6xg5



Time now for the planned strike. 8 g3 was necessary preparation, bringing the queen out on the white squares.

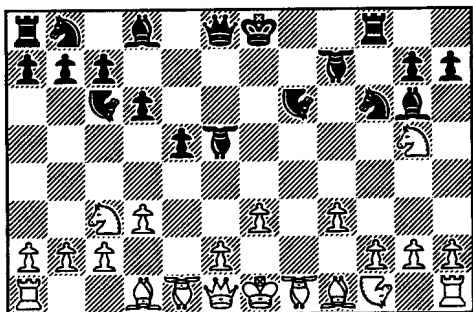
- 11 Ce3xg5 Fh8-h6

Allows me to open up his king. It was better to play 11...Bxg5 and now 12 Qj5+ Nh7 13 Bxj7 or 12 Bxj7 Bxj7 13 Qj5+ regaining a bishop. Overall White gives a courier for two pawns, which should be even. I'm not convinced that Black has much to fear; his position is ragged but he emerges with a lead in development that could be dangerous.

- 12 Cg5xi7 Fh6xi7
- 13 Nj3-k5 Cj8-h6
- 14 Nk5xj7 Rl8-j8
- 15 Nj7-k5 Bi8-k6

My idea doesn't look so good now; Black has a formidable lead in development (diagram at top of next page).

GAME REVIEW



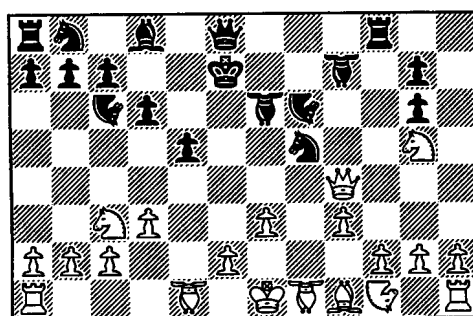
16 Bd1-i6+ Kg8-f7

I think it was better to play 16. ...Nh7 to prevent the block on j5; the king is not safer on f7.

17 Bi6-j5 Nj6-h5

18 Bh5xk6 17xk6

19 Qf1-i4 Ff5-g6



At this stage I concentrate on developing with threats, restricting the activity of the black pieces and defending my king.

20 Cj1-j3 Nh5-g7

21 Qi4xi7 Qf8-h8

This offer relieves White of all worry; "the rest is a matter of technique".

22 Qi7xh8 Ch6xh8

23 Fe1-e3 Nb8-d7

24 Fh1-h3 Nd7-f6

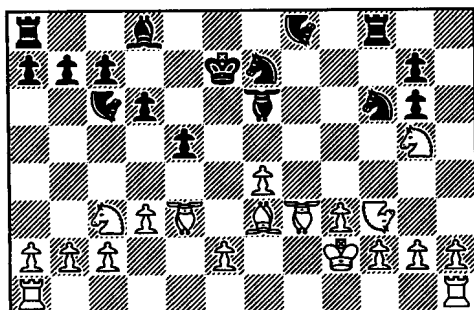
25 g3-g4

Squares f5 and h5 are denied to the Black pieces and the bishop prepares to emerge.

25 ... Nf6-h7

26 Bi1-g3 Nh7-j6

27 Kg1-i2 Resigns



White will centralise his rooks and play f4; Black has seen enough.

Shuuro, a recent invention of Alessio Cavatore, is a chess variant with two distinct features: the players choose their own armies, each man having a point value and the player having to keep within a given total, and the board is seeded with plinths, placed at random, which can be occupied only by knights and block the moves of all other men. The first is an old idea (see for example *The Game of Calculation* noted in 1806, *ECV 2* page 77); the second is more novel, and imports something of the flavour of terrain-based war games. I asked for a specimen game score between players of reasonable competence, but none was forthcoming, and what follows has had to be based on my own analysis.

The game is played on a 12x12 board, with eight plinths and typically with 25-30 men per side (a normal array of 15 men plus king uses up almost five-eighths of the permitted point total). The men start on the first two or three rows and there is no pawn privilege beyond the normal two-step move from the second rank, so there is likely to be an extended period before the foot-soldiers come into contact. This slowing-down of the game is contrary to nearly all other variant chess development from the fifteenth century onwards.

As regards the plinths, Steinitz is reputed to have said that if he could establish a knight on d6 or e6 he could go to sleep, because the game would win itself, and a knight on a plinth in enemy territory would seem to be even more powerful; it can be displaced only by another knight, and one of the player's key tasks is to decide how many of his points to invest in knights (he has to make this decision before the plinths are placed on the board). But once the last knight has been exchanged off, the plinths become merely blockers, and they significantly disrupt the normal flow of the endgame. I would expect this normally to hinder the attacker rather than the defender, and in expert company to make the game relatively drawish.

To place the plinths, the board is divided into four 6x6 squares, and a pair of dice is used to select two squares in each of these quadrants. The plinths in each player's half of the board are placed independently, raising the possibility that the resulting placements may greatly favour one side (a player in our "Symmetric Fully Randomised Chess" tournament of 1998-99 remarked in *VC 33* that some starting arrangements were either very favourable or very unfavourable, and appeared to give one side a significant advantage from the word go). However, if this is found to be a problem it would be a simple matter to agree to roll the dice for one side's plinths only, and to make his opponent's mirror them either diametrically or on the file.

The game is attractively presented, but because the armies start so far apart I fear that regular chess players will find it too slow, and I suggest that what we have is better regarded as a basis for further experimentation than as a finished game. If you are tempted to try your hand, you can obtain a set for £34.99 from **River Horse LLP**, 1 Sunny Row, Wollaton, Nottingham NG8 2EA, UK (info@riverhorse.eu).

EXCAVATIONS

Carlos Nafarrate's **Gravitational Chess** was described by David Pritchard in the words "Problem theme but perfectly playable as a game". It first appeared in a special number of the German problem magazine *feenschach* to commemorate the 70th birthday of Peter Kneist, and John McCallion subsequently featured it in *Nost-algia*. All men other than kings and pawns are subject to gravitational effects, and after moving are pulled back one square towards their own first rank. Neither square may be occupied by the player's own men, but an enemy man on either square is captured. A move is not legal if the subsequent gravitational slip is not possible (so a Black king on h8 with a White pawn on h7 cannot be checked other than by a pawn).

John McCallion was never afraid to try out new games in public, and in *Nost-algia* 360 he reported two trial games against Ernest Park. He lost both, and described the evening as "one of the most traumatic of my life, and David Pritchard is as much responsible as Ernest Park". Notes in quotation marks are by him, as are question and exclamation marks. In the first game, John took the Black pieces.

1 e2-e4 e7-e6?

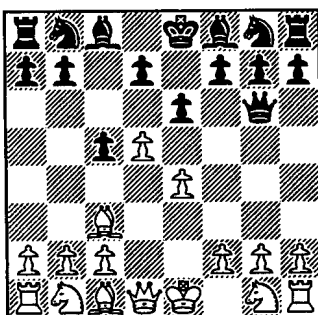
"An honest opinion. Things do not get any better."

2 d2-d4 c7-c5

3 d4-d5 Qd8-g5-g6

The first move with a gravitational component.

4 Bf1-c4-c3!



"Not only defending the e pawn because the Queen would end on e5, but also threatening both g7 and g6."

4 ... e6-e5
"This pawn is safe because of the White one on e4."

5 Bc1-f4-f3 d7-d6

6 a2-a4

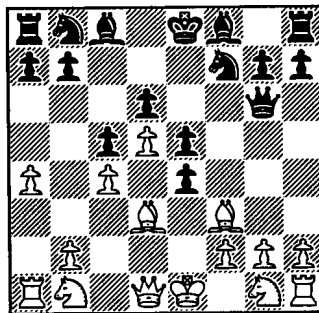
"The gravitational pull of the first rank is especially a nuisance for the Knights."

6 ... f7-f5?!

7 Bc3-d4-d3 Ng8-f6-f7

We may note that in this game knights are monochrome, and bishops change square colour with each move.

8 c2-c4 f5xe4



9 Bf3xe4-e3

"We both thought this was astute avoidance of a trap, but after Bd3xe4-e3, ...Qg6xb1xb2?? is met by Qd1-b3xb2!"

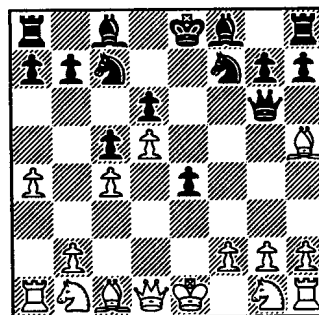
9 ... e5-e4

10 Bd3-c2-c1

The bishop's only legal move.

10 ... Nb8-c6-c7

11 Be3-h6-h5!



11 ... Qg6-e6-e7

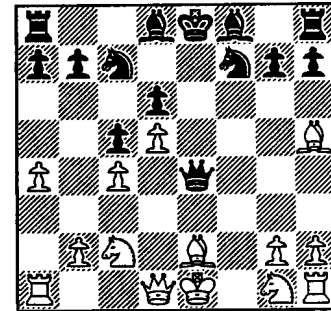
"The only salvation. I am paying the price for my amateurish development of the Queen, By now, I was not at all fond of the variant." If 11...Qf5-f6 then 12 Bxf7xf6, the check after the first part of the move being ignored.

12 Nb1-c3-c2 Bc8-d7-d8

"What splendid development!"

13 Bc1-e3-e2 e4-e3?!

14 f2xe3 Qe7xe3-e4



15 Ng1-f3-f2

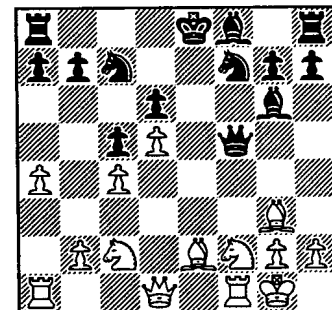
"Another attack on the Queen! One would think that I had not read Garry Reynold's column for beginners!!" This was a regular *Nost-algia* feature.

15 ... Qe4-f4-f5

"At least attacking the Bishop."

16 Bh5-g4-g3 Bd8-g5-g6

17 0-0



17 ... 0-0-0??

"Nevertheless, it is very difficult to find a satisfactory move."

18 a4-a5??

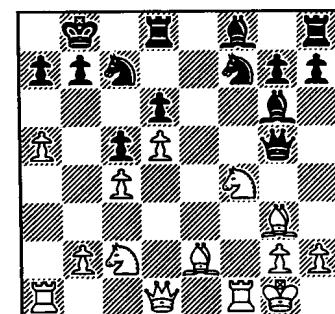
"Bg3-h4-h3 wins the Queen!"

18 ... Kc8-b8

19 a5-a6 b7-b6

20 Nf2-e4-e3 Qf5-g4-g5

21 Ne3-f5-f4!



"Threatening g6 and g5. Ernest is at last on the right track."

21 ... Qg5-f5-f6

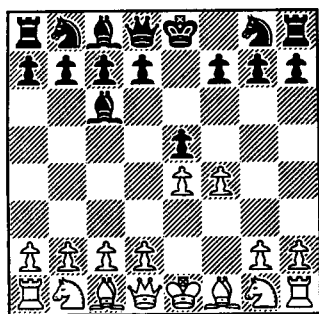
22 Be2-h5-h4!

and Black resigned, "dejectedly, in dreadful positional health".

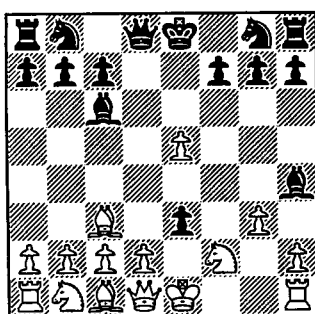
"The look on my face, as well as my complaints, told Ernest that it was time to play something else, but I unwisely decided to try it again – provided I had the White pieces for a change :-"

- 1 e2-e4 e7-e5
- 2 f2-f4 Bf8-c5-c6

"Developing, certainly, but NOT attacking e4."



- 3 Ng1-f3-f2 d7-d5
- 4 f4xe5 d5xe4
- 5 Bf1-c4-c3 Bc8-h3-h4
- 6 g2-g3?? e4-e3!



"I resigned and this time we did call it a night [...] The opinion of losers is usually suspect, especially when winners disagree with their conclusions, but I have to admit that the concept did not fulfil its promise to me. Nevertheless, suggested improvements might appear in future writings..."

John added a final note :

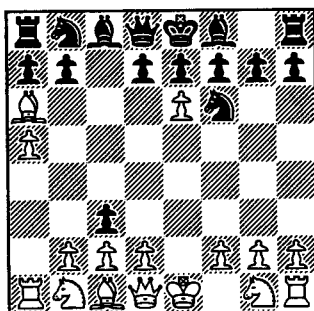
"It is somewhat comforting to think that what I call "Anti-Gravity Chess", where a unit is pulled towards the eighth rank, is probably worse. After for example 1 e4 e5 2 exd5, 2...Be6-e5 threatens a2/a1 and h2/h1; 3 Oe2-e3 pins the Bishop and threatens a7/a8."

Might we call this Political Chess, on the principle that hot air rises?

ISOLATED PAWNS

Banana Skin chess (see page 136). Peter Fayers has been having some thoughts about the rules.

"Suppose a game starts 1 e6 c3 2 Ba6 Nf6 3 a5, giving this position :



"If now Black plays Pb7-b3, can White capture en passant? Or does the bP whizz past too quickly? Better still, as it whizzes by, does Pa5 lunge forward to b6, miss, slip on a banana skin itself, and end up sliding all the way to d8 and capturing the black Queen?"

"Now that *would* be interesting!"

Goats and Tigers (mentioned on page 107 of VC 61). Andrew Perkis sends me a copy of pages 61-63 of *Medieval Games* by Salamallah the Corpulent, also known as Jeffrey A. DeLuca (published by DeLuca in 1995, available from Kadon Games). These pages describe various games played on the Alquerque board and versions thereof (he uses the spelling "Alquerque"), and I find on page 63:

"The Nagas [of Northern India] also played a version of the tiger and goat hunt game on a regular Alquerque board. In this version a tiger was placed in each of the four corners of the board, and tigers captured goats by leaping over them. The player who represented the goats had to enter his goats into play one at a time alternating with the moves or captures by the tigers. The tigers moved in rotation until all twenty goats had been entered into play. After all goats were in play the tigers could move in any order. The object of the game, for the goats, was to trap the tigers so that they could not move when it was their turn."

Boyer's "Nouveaux Jeux d'Echecs Intéressants". Looking through VC 2 recently, I came across the following note by David Pritchard :

"The reference ... is from neither of Boyer's books but to the later (scarce) manuscript addition (30 games). This is unfortunately undated, however it does offer the author's two books by post and quotes prices in old francs. Since the new franc was introduced in 1959, I must assume that the ms is 1959 or earlier." (VC 2 page 24.)

Even if we read "manuscript" as including "typescript", there seem to have been at least three Boyer manuscripts. The first was a three-page typescript headed "Quinze Nouveaux Jeux d'Echecs Intéressants" in capitals (hence the absence of accents). The British Chess Problem Society library holds an original, apparently a carbon copy, annotated "Recd Feb 15 '57." in the handwriting of C. E. Kemp (a problemist of the period and friend of T. R. Dawson), and we have a xerox copy of it. It described fifteen games.

The second was an unheaded one-page document produced on the same or a similar typewriter and describing five further games. Again the BCPS has an original, apparently a carbon copy, and we have a xerox.

The third was a five-page document headed "Nouveaux Jeux d'Echecs Intéressants", once more in capitals, of which David had a well-used carbon copy which is now in our possession. This document, produced on a different typewriter but similar in style, described thirty games, did indeed offer Boyer's books for sale, and was almost certainly the source that David had in mind in VC 2.

It would therefore appear that all references in ECV and hence ECV 2 are to this third document, and in dating it to 1957 on page 367 of ECV 2 I was confusing it with the first. It is only now that I have realised that they were distinct.

And David had a fourth small document in French, a third of a page produced on a third typewriter but again similar in style, containing a description of the 81-cell version of de Vasa's hexagonal game (ECV 2 pages 209-210).

PROOF GAMES

by Peter Fayers

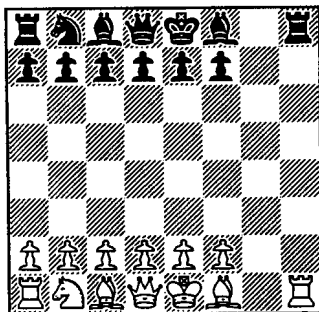
Alain Brobecker has been busy with his computer again, this time looking for synthetic games in Banana Skin chess. In this variant, as soon as line pieces start to move they step on a banana skin and slide as far as they can in the intended direction. This also applies to Pawns moving forward, thus if White starts with the Ruy Lopez 1 e4 the Pawn slides forward and ends up on e6. King and Knight moves are normal.

84 - Alain Brobecker, original.

Banana Skin Chess. Find the game score that finishes 4 Qb4-a4#.

As you would expect, I couldn't resist trying a proof game in this new variant. The idea of Pawns sliding forward immediately suggests rapid promotion, which should be enough of a hint for you to solve 85.

85 - PF, original



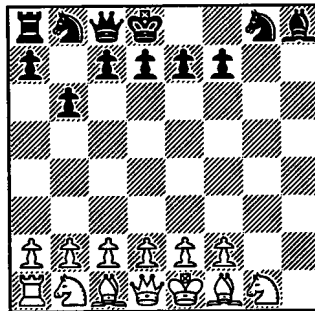
After Black's 6th, Banana Skin Chess

We are honoured to have received two originals from Bernd Gräfrath from Germany. Bernd is the world's leading composer of proof games in Losing Chess, and if you persevere and solve these you will understand why. 86 is quite straightforward; but shows a theme I have never seen before. P_{b6}, B_{c8} out and capturing somewhere in SE corner, Q&K side-stepping and B_{f8}-g7-h8 account for all but one of Black's moves – take it from there.

Bernd's next problem is a lot trickier, it had me stumped until I

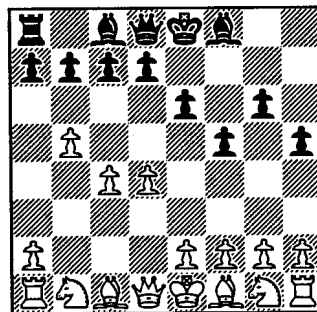
realised I was barking up the wrong tree. Or rather, I was asking myself the wrong question. The right question is given as a hint at the end of this article.

86 - Bernd Gräfrath, original



After Black's 8th, Losing Chess

87 - Bernd Gräfrath, original

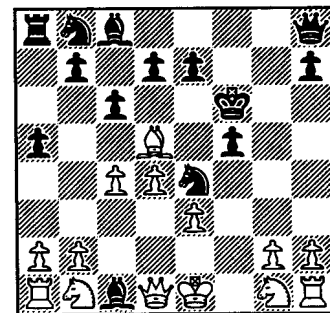


After White's 9th, Losing Chess

Looking through VC 61 searching for inspiration, I came across an Extinction Chess game. I had considered this before, but dismissed the idea – the play mechanics are the same as orthodox chess, only the objective differs. Or so I thought, until I came across a couple of proof games by Joost de Heer, of The Netherlands. I had overlooked the slight change in the rules, as stated in ECV2, whereby a Pawn may promote to a King. Also, Joost relies on an assumption not explicit in ECV, that the players aren't stupid. ECV states that there is no check or checkmate, which implies that a player may leave a lone survivor en prise, i.e., can lose the game by a blunder. These proof games disallow that: any attack on the last member of a species is regarded as a check, and all checks must be parried; it is illegal to leave such a piece en prise.

You shouldn't have too much trouble solving 88. All Black's moves are visible from the diagram, hence P_{g7} and R_{h8} were captured at home. P_{f2} moved at least as far as f6 before capture, which leaves only two spare W moves to capture g7 and h8. The only way this could happen is by f6xg7xh8, promoting, with the promoted piece being captured on h8.

88 - Joost de Heer
3rd Place, Nunspeet 2005

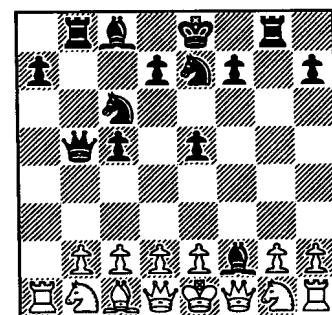


After Black's 10th, Extinction Chess

Which brings us to a convention in Proof Games. In any such game that includes a promoted piece which is subsequently captured, you must be able to demonstrate the specific promotion. So in the above problem, the game score must prove the specific piece type P_{f2} promoted to.

There are various techniques for how we can do this. 86 and 88 show two different methods, and 89 shows a third. Twice.

89 - Joost de Heer
Probleemblad, 2006



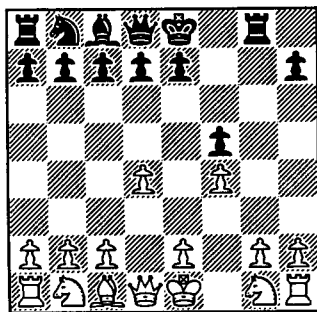
After Black's 10th, Extinction Chess

Finally in VC 61, I came across the back page filler, Highcastle Chess. Irresistible. The first of these

problems virtually composed itself, and show a theme that I use regularly in these columns (and elsewhere). (Hint!)

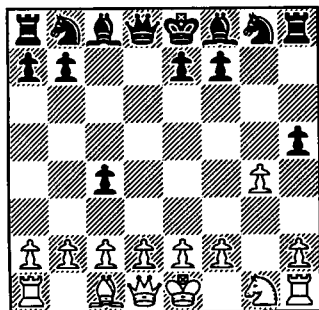
The last one took a lot longer, and involved much correspondence between myself and JDB (who kindly tests these problems for me) to get sound. I am rather pleased with the outcome, as it combines two of my favourite themes for what I believe is the first time.

90 - PF original



After White's 6th, Highcastle Chess

91 - PF original



After Black's 5th, Highcastle Chess

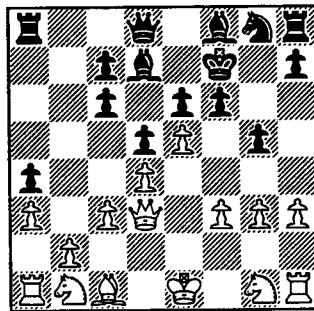
Hint for 87: No W units have been captured, so Nb8 was captured somewhere it was unguarded. How many moves (at least) must it have made? So how many moves (at most) can Ng8 have made?

To say that I "test" these problems for Peter is putting it a little strongly. I am normally fully stretched just trying to find his intended solutions, and certainly would not claim to have proved exhaustively that there are no others. But yes, any error that does slip through in these pages is at least a shared oversight. - JDB

AVALANCHE CHESS

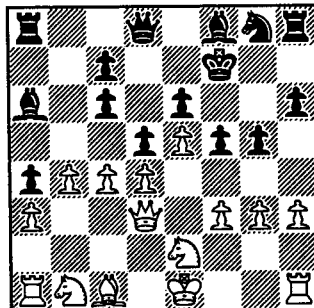
In *Nost-algia* 370, Nov/Dec 1998, John McCallion congratulated Joe McCarty "for finally overtaking Paul Yearout in their prolonged games of *Avalanche Chess*", and thanked him for sending *all* the games (his italics). He described the following defeat as "the most thematic and interesting", and it makes a pleasant page-filler. Paul was White; rules as last time.

- 1 e2-e4/f6 e7-e6/f3
- 2 Bf1-c4/g6 Nb8-c6/c3
- 3 d2-d4/a6 d7-d5/e5
- 4 Bc4-b5/a5 Bc8-d7/h3
- 5 Bb5xc6/g5 b7xc6/a3
- 6 Qd1-d3/a4 Ke8-f7/g3



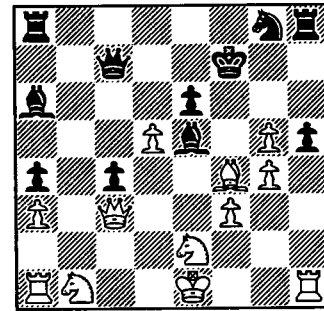
There is little point in castling at Avalanche, because the pawns that normally protect the castled king have long since been pulled forwards; he may well be better off staying in the centre. Even so, the point of this move escapes me.

- 7 Ng1-e2/f5 Bd7-c8/b3
- 8 b3-b4/h6 Bc8-a6/c4



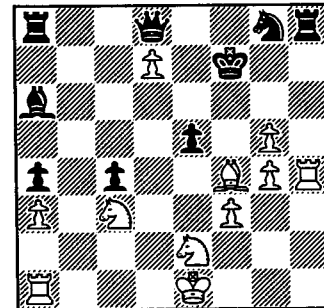
- 9 b4-b5/c5 d5xc4/b6
 - 10 b6xc7/c3
- Typical Avalanche cut and thrust.
- 10 ... Qd8xc7/g4
 - 11 Qd3xc3/f4 Bf8-g7/h4
 - 12 h4xg5/h5 Bg7xe5/d5
- Skewering queen and rook, but ...

13 Bd1xf4/c4!



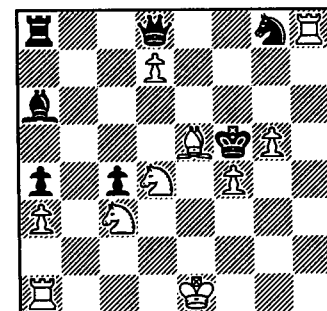
"Paul knows the immense value of unobstructed pawns!"

- 13 ... Be5xc3/d6+
- 14 Nb1xc3/h4 Qc7-d8/d7
- 15 Rh1xh4/e5



Black cannot take the rook or bishop because of the pawn pull to g6.

- 15 ... Kf7-g7/g6
- 16 Bf4xe5/- + Kg7xg6/g5
- 17 Rh4xh8/- Kg6-f5/f4
- 18 Ne2-d4/- +



Black's king must advance (to retreat to g6 would be self-check from the pulled f-pawn), and after

- 18 ... Kf5-g4/f5
- 19 Ke1-f2/-

he resigned. The threatened mate can be postponed only by a spite sacrifice on h6.

If any reader can see a significant improvement on Black's play from move 13, please will he say so.

THE END IS NIGH !

by Paul Byway

Solutions to competition 37

- #239 8 e3 e2 Kd7 Nf5 Ng3 Nxf1 Ng3 exf1Q mate.
- #240 7 Nd6 c4 c5 Nf3 Ne5 Bd2 Ba5 mate.
- #241 7 d4 Nf3 Nxe5 Bh3 Re1 Bf4 Nxf7 mate.
- #242 9 d6 dxe7 e8R Ke4 Kd5 Nc3 Ne4 Nf6 mate. This is only 8 moves; add a neutral move (eg c3). FG also gives the Italian mate 9 c3 d6 dxe7 Ke4 Ke5 Nd2 Ne4 Nd6 e8Q and an unusual double queen mate 9 Kg3 f4 f5 fxg6 gxf7 f8Q d6 dxe7 e8Q.
- #243 7 dxe5 Ng5 Rd1 Na3 Nb5 Nxc7 Ba3 mate.
- #244 8 Kd7 h5 Nh6 Nf5 Bh6 Rg8 Rg4 Nxd4 mate. Alternatives: 8 Kd7 Nf6 Nd5 Nc3 Rg8 Bh6 e5 e4 (IR), 8 Kd7 e5 f5 Bh6 Ne7 Rg8 Nc6 Nxd4 (JB), 8 Kd7 f5 Nf6 Ne4 Bh6 Rg8 Rg2 Rxf2 (FG).
- #245 1 Hb10+ Gd10 2 Hc8+ Ge9 3 Nd10+ Kxd10 4 Pd9+ Ke10 5 Pd10 mate.
- #246 1 Rxd1 Gf8 2 Rd10+ Kxd10 3 Rxf8 Pff2+ 4 Rxf2 Pxf2+ 5 Kxf2 draw.

The current scores:- FG 183, IR 156, JB 87, RC 77, PW 35, CL 24, RT 19.

Here's an extra (answer on page 139). Despite appearances it doesn't come from 'Cannon + Pawn'.

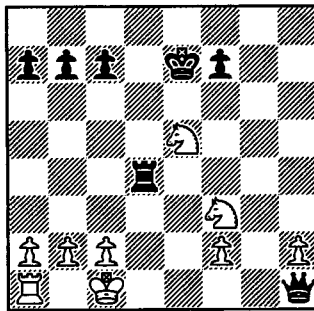
'Subtleties in Practical Endgames' (page 108 example 2)

10	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	h
9	.	.	.	:	:	:	.	.
8	.	.	:	k	:	<u>P</u>	.	.
7	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
6	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
5	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
4	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
3	.	.	:	<u>C</u>	:	.	.	.
2	.	.	.	:	:	.	.	.
1	.	.	:	<u>K</u>	:	.	.	.

Red to play and win

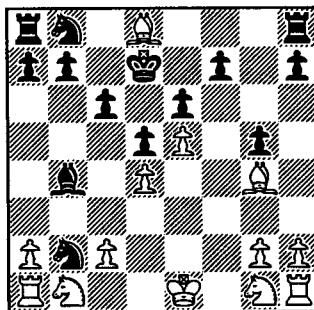
Competition 38 is alongside.

#247 Miliunas - Kyncl (1991)



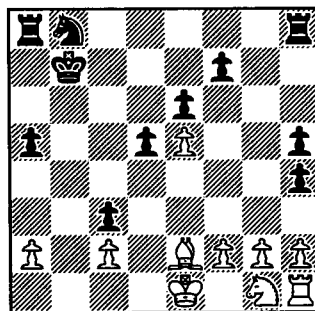
White wins (series 9)

#248 Biagini - Guerrini (1989)



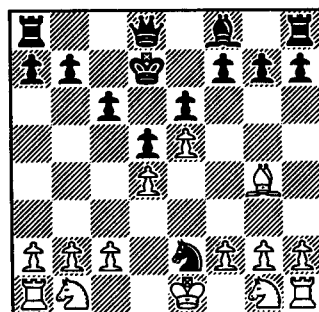
White wins (series 7)

#249 Sarale - Buccoliero (1992)



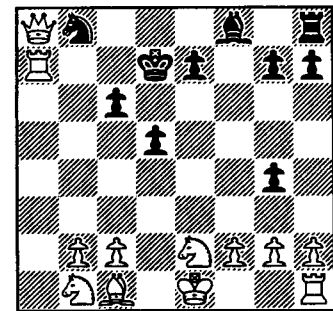
White wins (series 9)

#250 Lantillo - Kustrin (1990)



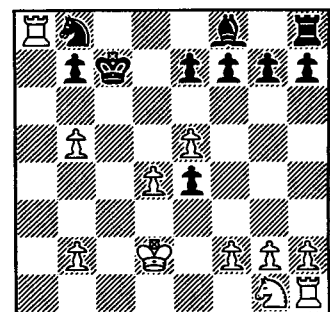
White wins (series 7)

#251 Tokarev - Woronowicz (1991)



Black wins (series 8)

#252 Mazza - Cassano (1985)



Black wins (series 8)

#253 'Five Dances' #45

10	.	.	.	:	:	:	<u>R</u>	.	.
9	.	.	.	:	g	k	.	.	.
8	.	.	.	:	:	:	<u>R</u>	.	.
7	.	.	.	p	.	.	.	<u>C</u>	.
6
5
4
3	.	.	:	<u>C</u>	:
2	.	r	:	<u>p</u>	:
1	.	.	<u>K</u>	:	:

Red to play and win

#254 'Five Dances' #102

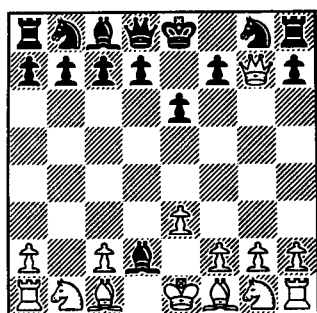
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9	.	.	:	k	:	.	.	.
8	.	<u>H</u>	:	e	<u>H</u>	.	.	.
7
6	<u>R</u>	.	.	.
5
4
3	.	.	h	<u>E</u>	:	.	.	.
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Red to play and win

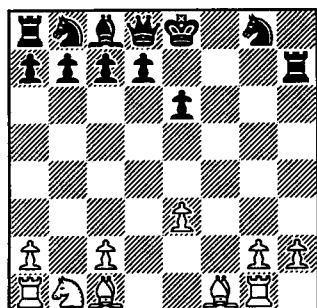
LOSING CHESS

There being a little space left, let us have an opening trap from the 2001 championship (VC 39/40).

As Black against Johan Snuverink, I met 1 e3 with 1...e6, and ran into 2 b4 Bxb4 3 Qg4 Bxd2 4 Qxg7 :



Taking the opponent's king is often good, so I played 4...Bxe1, but 5 Qxf7 Bxf2 6 Qxh7 Bxg1 7 Rxg1 Rxh7 left me with a rampant rook :

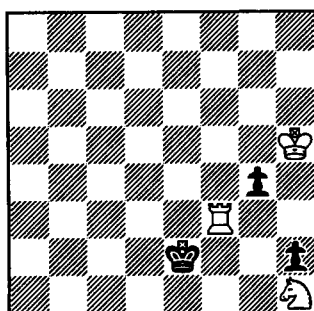


Nor would 5...Kxf7 have helped (6 Nf3 Bxf2 7 Ba3 etc), nor 6...Rxh7 (7 Bb2 etc), nor 6...Bxe3 (7 Bxe3 Rxh7 8 Bxa7). Some of the lines are complicated, but the computer always finds a win and 4...Bxe3 was essential.

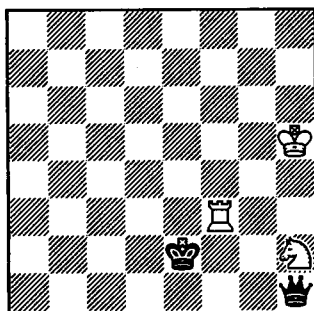
SOLUTIONS

Sting (page 127). On the left, Black to move would have to play 1...Ka8, allowing mate by 2 Bb7. White to move can win by 1 Kc6 Ka7 (1...Ka8 2 Kc7 Ka7 3 Bc8, giving a reflection of the original position but with Black to move) 2 Kb5 Ka8 (3...Kb8 4 Kb6 at once) 3 Ka5! Kb8 (White's king prevents 3...Ka7) 4 Kb6, and White has successfully lost a move. Ronald credited the discovery of this lone-bishop mate to Ian Richardson.

On the right, after 1 Rf6+ Ke3 2 Rxf1 and the fork 2...Ke2+, play 3 Rf3 :



Now White's rook and Black's g-pawn are both pinned, even ...gxh3 being impossible. So Black continues 3...Kd1 to keep White's rook pinned, and after 4 Nf2+ Ke2 5 Nxg4 does he not win by 5...h1Q+ forking king and rook? No, 6 Nh2+!! blocks the check, defends the rook, and sets up a final fork of king and queen :



This is one of the best variant chess studies I have seen. It was very well received, and deservedly so.

Transmuting Kings (page 127). With ordinary kings, 1 Kh6 (simplest) Kg8 2 Kg6 etc. 1 Kg5 also works (1...Kh7 2 Kf5 etc, 1...Kg8 2 Kg6 as before), but not 1 Kg6 when 1...Kg8 draws.

With Transmuting Kings, neither 1 Kh6 nor 1 Kg5 works (the pawn's promotion can still be forced, but K+Q v K is not a win), but the previously unsuccessful 1 Kg6 does the trick. After 1...Kg8, 2 f7 is mate, the pawn-transmuted king being helpless however long a forward move we give it from the first rank.

Magnetic Chess (page 130). 1 Rf8+ (White takes his third option) with two mates: 1...Kxf8 2 Bf7(Nh7), the bishop guarding the flight square and

pushing the knight to give the mate, and 1...Kh7 2 Bg6(Ng8), the bishop giving the mate and pushing the knight to guard the flight square. If instead White tries 1 Ne6, hoping for 1...h7 2 Rf8, Black escapes by 1...h6.

Proof Games (pages 136-7).

84 (Brobecker) 1 c6 Nxc6 2 Qa4 Nb4 3 Qxb4 d3 4 Qa4#. Neither Bc8 nor Qd8 can interpose – they will slide right past d7.

85 (PF) 1 h6 Nxh6 2 Rxh6 gxh6 3 g8R h1R 4 Rxh8 Rxg1 5 Rxh7 Rg8 6 Rh1 Rh8. Both Rh8 and Rh1 are promoted g-Pawns.

86 (Gräfrath) 1 h4 b6 2 h5 Bb7 3 h6 Bxg2 4 hxg7 Bxh1 5 gxh8R Qc8 6 Rxh7 Kd8 7 Rxh1 Bg7 8 Rh8 Bxh8. A promoted piece returns to its apparent game-array square, then goes back to its promotion square to get captured. The promoted piece could not have been a Q as then White would have had to capture a8 on move 8.

87 (Gräfrath) 1 b4 Nc6 2 b5 Na5 3 d4 h5 4 Qd3 Rh7 5 Qxh7 f5 6 Qxg8 Nb3 7 Qxb3 g6 8 c4 e6 9 Qd1. Who would have thought, from the diagram, that it was the Queen that had done all the damage!

88 (de Heer) 1 f4 Nf6 2 f5 Ne4 3 f6 a5 4 fxg7 f5 5 gxh8K Bh6 6 d4 Bxb1 7 e3 Kf7 8 Bc4+ Kf6 9 Bd5 Qxh8 10 c4 c6#. Promotee must be K as anything else would have checked the bK at some stage.

89 (de Heer) 1 f4 e5 2 f5 Bc5 3 f6 Ne7 4 fxg7 Bf2 5 g8K c5 6 a4 Qb6 7 a5 Qb5 8 a6 Nbc6 9 axb7 Rxg8 10 b8K Rxh8. Both promotions to K needed to get out of check.

90 (PF) 1 d4 Nh6 2 Bxh6 Pf7-Pf2 3 Bxg7 Pf5-Bf1 4 Bxf8 Rxf8 5 Bc1 Rg8 6 Pf6-Pf3. Turbulent Priests.

91 (PF) 1 Pg2~Pg7 g2 2 Nc3 gxf1B 3 Nc3~Pc7 Bh3 4 Nxd7 Ph7~Bh3 5 Nxf8 Bxf8. The Phoenix (a unit apparently on its game array square which is in fact a promoted pawn) is a Turbulent Priest.

Xiangqi (opposite). 1 Kd1 Ke9 2 Ci3 Ke8/10 (here and later, moving to the f-file will help White - Ke1, Ca~, Ca10, wait for ...Kf10, CxH) 3 Ci9 Ke9 4 Pg9+ Ke8/10 5 Ph9 Kf8/10 6 Ke1 Hg9 7 PxH stalemate.

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The background to *VC* (*VC* 61 page 112). George Jelliss writes:

"Naturally I was most interested in Ian Richardson's account of Malcolm Horne's Deviant Chess Week back in 1989 which was one of the origins of *Variant Chess* magazine. Readers may be surprised to know that, although Malcolm and I were co-editors of the first volume, we never actually met in person. Putting together the issues was all done by post. I forget now how we came into contact, perhaps it was through David Pritchard.

"Between the end of *Chessics* and the beginning of *Variant Chess* (1987-89) I produced *The Games and Puzzles Journal* which included variant problems, under the heading Caissa's Kaleidoscope. *Variant Chess* was first advertised there (p.166)."

George adds that PDF versions of *Chessics*, *The Games and Puzzles Journal*, and volume 1 of *Variant Chess* can now be downloaded from his web site

<www.mayhematics.com/p/p.htm>
free of charge.

NOTICES

VC 63 is scheduled for January. Copy date for contributions is **December 1**, but early receipt is always helpful.

Losing (Giveaway) Chess. As a tribute to the late Stan Goldovski, Klaas Steenhuis has set up an account on the Free Internet Chess Server with the account name "stayalive" which lets people play against his Wizard program. As at July 11, it had played 2654 games, scoring over 92% against all comers (+2405, =83, -166).

Thank you, Klaas. I am sure all Stan's friends will be glad to read this.

Five-leaper tours. George Jelliss reminds me that, in addition to the complementary tours described on page 131, Tom Marlow also found 58 row-and-column magic tours (42 closed, 16 open), two being also magic along the principal diagonals. Two of them appeared in *VC* 6, and all can be found on George's Knight's Tour Notes web site

<www.ktn.freeuk.com/9f.htm>.

Polgar Superstar Chess. The World Championship announced last time duly took place in Pardubice, and resulted in a win for Árpád Ruzs with 7/9 ahead of Csaba Schenkerik, Tom Shutzman, and a computer program each with 6/7. I was surprised at this last, because I would have thought that the game was simple enough for a computer to be effectively unbeatable, but while it did indeed avoid defeat it only won three games. Apparently Tom Shutzman is Susan Polgar's ten-year-old son. For some game scores from the event, see pages 123-125.

EVENTS

I have received no details yet, but I presume that the traditional **Guildford Variants Tournament** will be held on a **Monday late in December**, that there will again be a **Variants Tournament at Hastings on New Year's Eve**, and that the usual **Circular Chess Chrimbo Challenge** will be held at the **Tap and Spile, Hungate, Lincoln**, on a **Sunday in January**. If interested readers care to get in touch with me, I will pass on details as I receive them.

Next year's **World Quickplay Hnefatafl Tournament** will take place on **Fetlar on Saturday 31 July**. This year's champion is Tim Millar from Somerset, who has been playing for over 15 years. Sam Clark, also from Somerset, won a junior event. But I thought Alfred the Great had kept the Vikings out of Somerset ...

I regularly receive details of **Xiangqi** tournaments from C. K. Lai. They rarely arrive at the right point in our production cycle for quotation here, but if individual readers would like to receive them I shall be very pleased to forward their names for addition to his mailing list.

Paul Byway tells me that this year's UK Championship was won by Huang Chunlong with 4½/5, beating David Young on tie-break. They met in the last round, David skilfully holding out with two cannons against a rook. Shao Nan Fei and Wang Jianzheng shared 3rd and 4th places with 4/5, and Paul himself scored 3/5. He added that it was good to see Peter Wood breaking a lance again.

Variant Chess is the journal of the **British Chess Variants Society**

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