# 5-DAYS COMPOSING TOURNEY

AWARD

Theme: helpselfmates in 2-6 moves where at least two white pieces are pinned in the mate. The pins must be created during the play (they must not exist already in the diagram position). Fairy pieces and conditions are allowed.

I must thank Julia for asking me to run this tourney, and fellow Scandinavian Niels Danstrup for doing a prefect job as a controller. I received the problem anonymously, and the composer names were added at the end.

I had noted in my files that the example problem was more of a simple exercise and that the main idea should be used in a larger setting. I was hoping such compositions would appear in this tourney – and of course they did! There were 21 entries (one of them in two versions), several of them quite good, all of them C+.

The theme seems to have been suitably free: many different methods of producing 2+ pins during the play were used (directly or indirectly, by white or black moves, etc), so there were only a few cases where two problems used a similar structure.

1st Prize Michal Dragoun
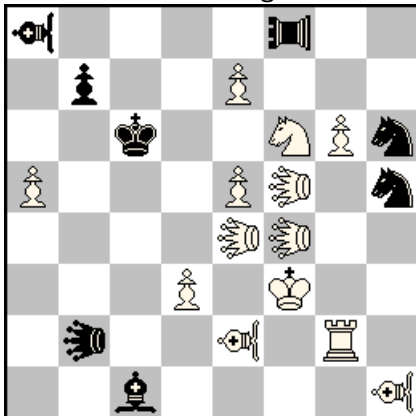
hs#2,5   3 sol.
Leo, Pao, Vao

1...Sxf4 2.Rg3 Sxg6 3.LExg6+ Kc7#
1...Sxf5 2.Rg4 Sxe7 3.LExe7+ Kc5#
1...LExf6 2.Rf2 LEh4 3.LExh4+ Kd7#

A Chinese third-pin (do you know a better name – it doesn't work like an orthodox third-pin) becomes a double-pin by a black capture + withdrawal from the pin-line, of course in a pseudo-cyclic fashion. But that's not all: the black piece that annihilates one of White's thematic pieces later sacrifices itself so that LEe4 can make a discovered check without the possibility of return (which would stop the mate). **And** Rg2 blocks the white flight-square that the active black piece used to guard. **And** the white pieces that are annihilated each guard one black flight-square, so there are different mating-moves too! This is a wonderful collection of analogous effects.

"The Ramans do everything in threes" (Arthur C Clarke, *Rendez-vous with Rama*). How did they hear of this tourney?

## 2nd Prize Michal Dragoun
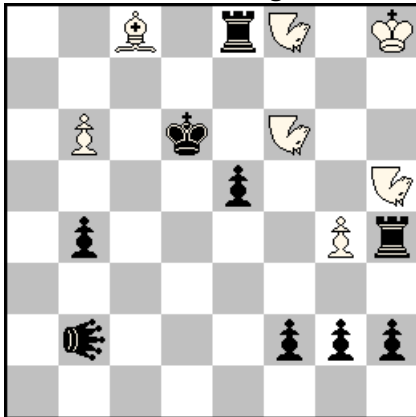
hs#3,5   3 sol.
Nightriders; Lion b2

1...Rxg4 2.Ng7 f1=N 3.Ng8 Nd5 4.Nh4+ Rxh4#
1...Re7 2.N8h7 h1=LI 3.Ng7 LIc6 4.Nfe8+ Rxe8#
1...LIb5 2.Ng8 g1=LI 3.Nh7 LIc5 4.Nb2+ LIxb2#

Here we have three initial pins which are transformed in each solution to a double-pin, by a black direct unpin followed by two indirect white unpins in a chain. Each mate also uses a self-block by a promoted bP. (It is a slight pity that we have two LI promotions and one N promotion; three similar or three dissimilar promotions would have been more harmonious.) The lions are not essential to the main idea of chained unpins, but the matrix makes good use of them. The composer also sent another version of the problem, with three self-blocks by a N instead of by promoted pawns, but I prefer this as the other version had a guarding wN that was useless in one solution.

## 3rd Prize Michel Caillaud
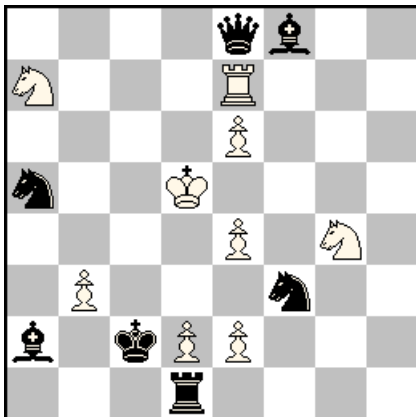
hs#3,5   b) wBe7

a) 1...Kxb3 2.Sb5 Qa8+ 3.Rb7 Rxd2+ 4.Sd4+ K~#
b) 1...Kxd2 2.Se3 Qh5+ 3.Bg5 Bxb3+ 4.Sc4+ K~#

One of the obvious thematic lines is used for creating a bK battery, while the other is transformed into a pin of a white piece forcing the K battery to fire. But for that to work, so that the bK really must move, we need a double check using a second pinned piece. This is provided by Qe8 plus the piece on e7. All very logical and elegant ... but there is the weakness that one white S is unused in each phase. I am ready to accept this flaw, but of course one could dream of having a wQe7 and the twinning Sa7>g4 (which is cooked). Was that the composer's original plan?

## 1st Hon. Mention
Mark Erenburg
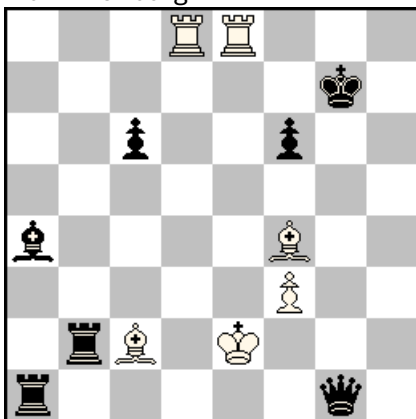
hs#3   2 sol.

1.Bc1 Qf2+ 2.Kd1 Rb7 3.Rd7+ Rxd7#
1.Bd2 Bb5+ 2.Bd3 Ra7 3.Re7+ Rxe7#

Elegant play by the bishops to form two double-pins – the existing pin of Bc2 is transformed in different ways. It is a pity that the mates are so similar, but at least they occur on different files so they aren't exactly concurrent.

The composer is probably aware that Pc6 can be saved if the position is pushed one step to the right (and the bB one step to the left), but that leaves one of the white bishops without a guarding duty. It is worth a bP to have both thematic Bs do double duty.

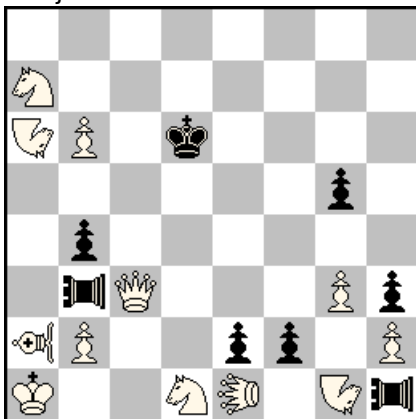**2nd Hon. Mention**
Menachem Witztum &
Emanuel Navon
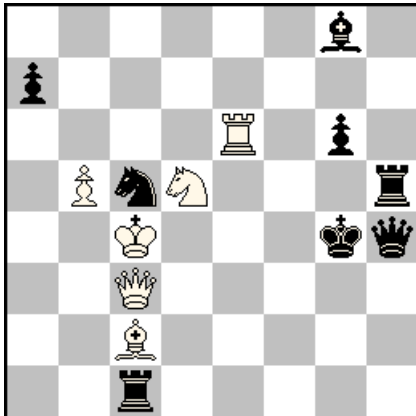
hs#2,5   b) Pa7>a5

a) 1...g5 2.Rb6 axb6 3.Bf5+ Kxf5#
b) 1...Rg5 2.Sb4 axb4 3.Qf3+ Kxf3#

A very natural idea is to have two white half-pins turn into
double-pins by white withdrawal moves. Two entries
used that pattern, and I prefer this because of the added
sacrifices to the bP and the two self-blocks on g5.

3rd Hon. Mention
Juraj Lörinc

hs#2,5   3 sol.
Leo, Pao, Vao; Nightriders

1...fxe1=VA 2.g4 VAh4 3.Qf6+ VAxf6#
1...fxg1=VA 2.Nxb4 VAxa7 3.Qd4+ VAxd4#
1...exd1=LE 2.Nc5 LEh5 3.Qe5+ LExe5#

As in the 1st Prize, a Chinese third-pin is transformed into
three different double-pins by black action – in this case
promotions to mating units. This is much less
harmonious and would have gained interest if the mates
had been less similar, or if the promotions had been
entirely similar or dissimilar (instead of 2x Vao, 1x Leo).

Unfortunately the wSa7 is unused in a).


4th Hon.Mention
Ralf Krätschmer
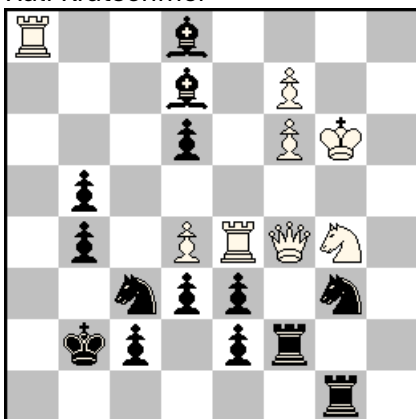
hs#4   b) Sg4<>Sg3

a) 1.Re6 Sf1 2.Kf5 Kb3 3.Ra3+ Kc4 4.Sxe3+ Sxe3#
b) 1.Re7 Sxf6 2.Kxf6 Kc1 3.Ra1+ Kd2 4.Se4+ Sxe4#

The wK walks into a double pin on the f file after the wR
has prepared everything by setting up an anticipatory
self-pin on the e file. Meanwhile, the black K walks into a
hole where a bS mate can be forced after Ra8 closes the
exit door. The twinning is nice, but there is a weakness in
that Bd8 is unused in part a).

5th Hon. Mention
Mario Parrinello &
Marco Guida
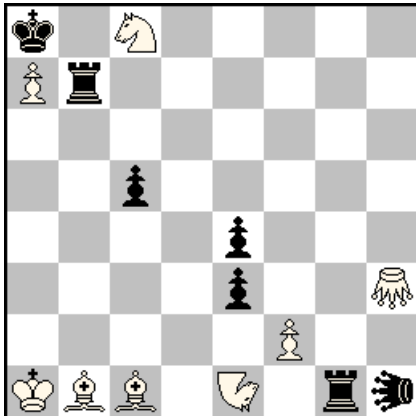
hs#3   b-c) Gh3>h4,h5
Grasshopper h3, Nightrider e1,
Kangaroo-Lion h1

(A kangaroo-lion hops over exactly two hurdles to land on any square beyond)

a) 1.Bxe3 Rg3+ 2.Bc1 Rgb3 3.Ga3+ Rxa3#
b) 1.Bxe4 Rg4+ 2.Bb1 Rgb4 3.Ga4+ Rxa4#
c) 1.Nxc5 Rg5+ 2.Ne1 Rgb5 3.Ga5+ Rxa5#

The only entry with triple-pin mates, thanks to the kangaroo-lion: if Rg1 leaves, we already have a triple-pin on the first rank. All solutions end with this pin constellation, but fortunately each of the thematic pieces is active in one solution – performing a switchback to open a crucial line for the mating combination. Inherent weaknesses of the matrix are the very similar solutions (it's almost the same play three times) and the use of three different fairy piece families.

6th Hon. Mention
Ofer Comay, Paz Einat,
Menachem Witztum &
Ricardo de Mattos Vieira
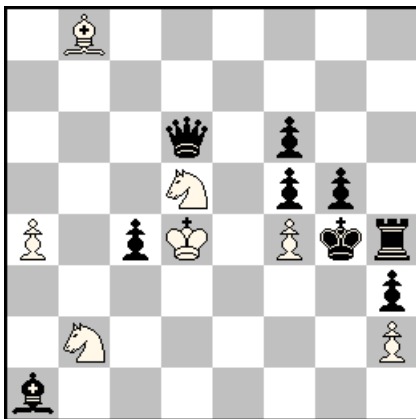
hs#4,5

1...Qc7 2.Sc3 Kxf4 3.Sbd1 Rg4 4.Se3 Qd6+ 5.Sed5+ Kf3#

Quite an unusual setup: wSd5 is pinned in the diagram and in the mate, but the problem is still thematic in this tourney because it's not the same S! In fact, the two white knights exchange their pin lines in the play.

The problem raises the question of whether it is possible to have two pinned white knights (or rooks, bishops) exchange their places. With just one of them pinned in the diagram the idea has even been doubled by Arno Tüngler 2007 (W#280929), but I don't think it has been done with both thematic pieces already pinned. There's a challenge for you!

Comm. Mario Parrinello
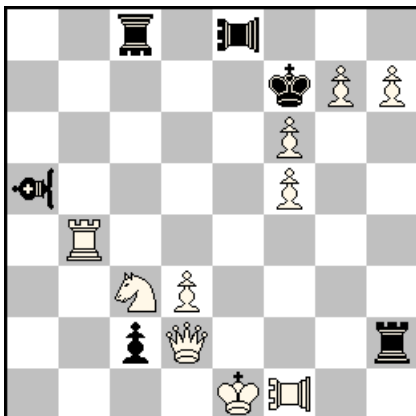
hs#2   3 sol.
R lions, B lion; Triton c8

A triton (marine R) moves like a rook, but captures like a R locust: it hops over a hurdle, capturing it in the process.

1.Qg2 TRc5 2.Qd5+ TRxd5-e5#
1.Sb5 TRc6 2.Sd6+ TRxd6-e6#
1.Rd4 TRc7 2.Rd7+ TRxd7-e7#

Another natural idea: a Chinese third-pin is transformed into three different double-pins by white action. The logic is simply such that one of the thematic pieces forces Black to put a hurdle somewhere on the e file. The clever idea is how to force a hurdle to go there when White cannot check there (which would be a self-check); the triton solves this problem.

**Comm. Marco Guida,
Mario Parrinello &
Francesco Simoni**
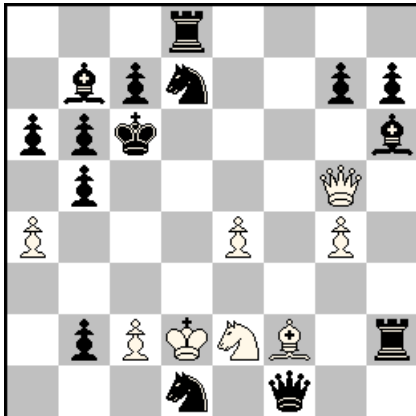
hs#2   b) Sd7>d6

a) 1.Sf4 g6 2.Qf6+ Sxf6#
b) 1.Be3 a5 2.Qxb5+ Sxb5#

The setup is reminiscent of the example problem, but the white half-pin is used differently: one of the pieces indirectly unpins Qg5, thereby pinning itself when the wQ moves. The point that motivates the heavy position is the dual avoidance: the solutions are differentiated by the openings of f1-f6 or f1-b5. Luckily Qf1 isn't added just for this purpose, nut also guards e1. I would have liked to see more interesting B1 moves than the present unguards.

**Comm. Menachem Witztum &
Emanuel Navon**
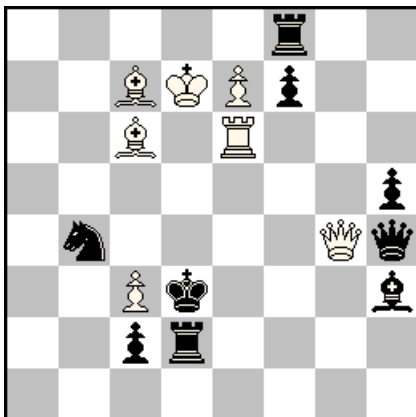
hs#2,5   b) Sb4>a6

a) 1...Qf2 2.Ba4 Qa7 3.Qc4+ Kxc4#
b) 1...Qg5 2.Ba5 Qb5 3.Re3+ Kxe3#

The logic is fairly simple: one of the half-pinned pieces sacrifices itself to force the K battery to fire; one of the white Bs is directly pinned by the black Q; the other wB hides away. I count it as an advantage that those wB moves are really hideaways and don't guard any flight square. The differentiation of the solutions is also simple: the wB standing on a square that is guarded by the bS is the one that must go away and hide.

Comm. Abdelaziz Onkoud
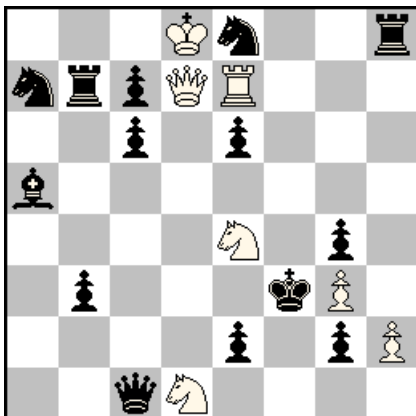
hs#2,5   2 sol.

1...Rb4 2.Rxe8 Rd4 3.Sg5+ Qxg5#
(1...Rb5? 2...Rd5 ... 4.Rxg5!)

1...Bc3 2.Qxe8 Bf6 3.Sd2+ Qxd2#
(1...Bd2? 2... Bg5 ... 4.Bxd2!)

One of the thematic pieces Qd7/Re7 self-pins on e8 to allow a mate across its former square; the other is actively pinned by Black. The dual avoidance effects add interest: both Rb7 and Ba5 have alternate pinning squares, but will guard the mating squares from there. Another good feature is the fact that Black's R and B take turns guarding c7. The drawback of it all is that the position is necessarily fairly heavy.

Comm. Mark Erenburg
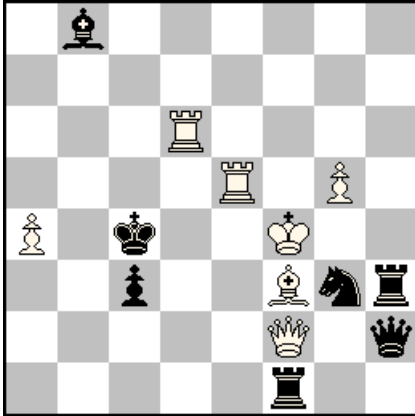
hs#2   b) Pg5>f5

a) 1.Rb5 Qg1 2.Qd4+ Qxd4#
b) 1.Rb6 Qg2 2.Be2+ Sxe2#

This is the second entry where two half-pins turn into double-pins, realized in a simple but elegant fashion. I particularly like the play of the black Q.

Jūrmala, 31 July 2024

Kjell Widlert