

***Black to Play*, a retrospective introduction by the author (2012)**

The book, first published in 1994, was the idea of the publisher Friedrich Chlubna (1946-2005), a very good friend whom I had known for more than thirty years. He expected a serious study but was typically good-humoured when he received something quite different! He later assured me that this book was the most successful of all his publications, but I know neither by what criterion he was judging nor whether he was perhaps erring on the side of kindness; that would have been in character. In fact it was his publishing schedule which determined the nature of the book! He was by then largely financially dependent on his chess publications and could therefore allow me only a few months to produce the typescript; also, as is always the way, it happened at a time when I was extremely busy with career work. So the book was written in a tearing hurry, which explains its most noticeable characteristics. First, there are numerous mistakes: for example, I completely overlooked the imperfect white economy in problem 26 and was therefore too hard on problem 27. Next, lacking time for serious research and assuming that the book would be decidedly ephemeral, I chose a provocative approach, putting forward some views which I do not espouse in the hope of stimulating others to take a more critical approach to the often facile helpmate genre. Thus I find promotion themes quite interesting but I decided to disparage them because they had been grossly overworked in the orthodox helpmate: goading composers into trying something new was part of my idea. The most serious part of the book is probably chapter 9; in essence it had already been written (as material for a potential series of articles) before the book was thought of. Finally the chatty style, with spoken-language contractions such as “don’t” etc., was chosen to fit the provocative intentions: I can write proper English when necessary, as (I hope) my translation work and my articles in *Orbit* and numerous other magazines demonstrate! Although I believed (and believe) that the text contains sufficient signposts directing the reader away from gravity into more subversive paths, I cannot deny feeling a curious mixture of admiration and amusement when I recall the reactions of a few readers who took everything in dead earnest... unless of course they were pulling my leg?

Certain incorrect problems were quoted intentionally (and explained in the text) but there were two (40 and 116) whose unsoundness was not known to me at the time. Subsequently various composers published corrected and/or improved versions of these and other works in a variety of places. Researchers will easily find details in the databases. In the present re-publication, however, it has seemed best to leave these problems as they were in 1994 rather than quote other interpretations which are sometimes very far from the originals. One completely anticipated problem (37) has now been presented correctly.

Although obvious errors in spelling and the like have now been corrected, no attempt has been made to remove the dated features of the book: the references to computer matters, now hilariously archaic, the countries in the index which would now be different, the 1991 picture of me who have certainly changed beyond recognition, and so on. It is also worth mentioning that the book appeared too early to do proper justice to the recent great spread of the helpmate in the countries of the former USSR; that part of the story would be very different nowadays! Now might be a good time for someone to write a more definitive helpmate book.

In the present version most of the publisher’s conventions have been kept, for example “H#” (I very strongly prefer “h#”), or “three move problem” rather than “three-move problem”. However I have restored the proper English distinction between black/white (adjective) and Black/White (noun).

I should like to end by commending and thanking a good many composer friends who took my not always fair criticisms in very good part; it seems appropriate to single out Peter Gvozdjak (problem 9) for a special mention!

CJF

Note: Out of consideration for the author and his readers, the 1991 picture of CJF has not been reproduced here.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

“Chess art is one degree of abstraction higher than the game of chess. In one sense we can say that the helpmate is the purest of all the chess arts, the nearest to art for art’s sake. If there exists somewhere, on an unknown planet, a race of beings who play chess and whose artistic inclination is stronger than their aggressive instincts, then it is probable that they will have invented the helpmate before the direct mate.” *Jean Oudot*

This is a book about helpmates. Why do we need a book about helpmates? What is a helpmate, anyway?

Let’s take the second question first and return to the other later.

In English, one meaning of the word helpmate is as a synonym for wife, which allows me to start very appropriately by thanking the person who solves all my problems. The chess meaning, however, is usually defined as “a kind of chess composition in which Black plays first and helps White to checkmate Black in the specified number of moves”. In some languages the corresponding term, something like “cooperative mate”, suggests the two sets of chessmen working together rather than one side being the active helper and the other the passive helped. As we shall see, that is a better way of viewing this kind of composition; but an even better term, if only it made sense, would be something like “possible mate”.

T.R.Dawson (1889-1951), famous for his attempts to systematise chess composition, wrote in *Caïssa’s Wild Roses* that “Normal chess may be regarded as consisting of (1) a playing space, ... (2) six men, ... and (3) various limitations on move freedom, such as the principle of opposition to the adversary ...”. Well, that is one limitation which helpmates do **not** have, and it makes them logically anterior to forms or chess problem, such as the directmate (White checkmates Black in the specified number of moves, against any defence) or the selfmate (white compels a resistant Black to give checkmate) which do have such an opposition.

The playing space and the powers of the pieces can be defined mathematically, as can the possible sequences which lead to mate in a given number or moves. It is only when the principle of opposition comes in that chess enters the realm of the unmathematical, the impossible to define.

What is a good move? Does that idea have an objective meaning? Lasker used to win games by playing moves which were not always good but seemed to make his opponents respond with worse ones! In helpmates there are no good moves, no bad moves, just the ones which lead to the solution and the ones which do not. As Sam Loyd (1841-1911) wrote, when presenting what he claimed to be “a new school of problems” in his story *The Sin of the Nuns* (1860): “... the query is merely: How could it possibly happen that White effected a mate in three moves?”. This idea of the helpmate as “possible mate” is echoed 75 years later by A.C. White (1880-1951) when he describes it as “the most nearly mathematical form of the chess moves, for its essence is always the pure demonstration of a possibility... the Quod erat demonstrandum of the chess board”.

The sin of the nuns in the story was to have paid attention to an admirer in church and subsequently to have accepted from him some apples which he let down in a basket over the convent wall, leading them, implausibly, to view their regular chess game in a different light from usual!

The sin of Sam Loyd was to have stolen the idea from the real inventor, and his punishment was that his helpmate, unlike the apples, was cooked.

The real initiator is now generally thought to have been Max Lange (1832-1899), in an article in the Berlin Chess Association’s *Schachzeitung* in 1854. Lange’s first effort at helpmates was also unsound, though no specific sin of his is recorded. The intrusion of nuns into this irreligious business may be explained by the fact that Lange was unwise enough to make some tentative connection between the non-aggressive nature of helpmates (which he called “mate compilations”) and the Christian message, a juxtaposition which was bound to excite Loyd’s mischievous sense of humour.

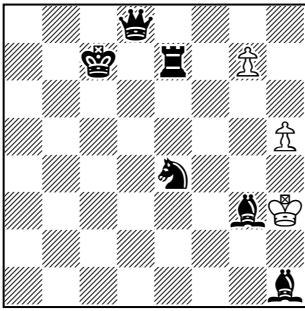
Leaving piety aside, Lange wrote that the new idea might conjure up “very humorous and ingenious situations, which could often be extremely hard to handle, too”. He was wrong about humour, of course, since helpmates are a very serious business (you may rest assured that the present writer has no sense of humour at all) but how right he was about everything else!

The ingenuity of composers proved boundless but the hard to handle worm of unsoundness continued to infest their apples for a very long time, until the advent of that other Apple, the computer. Loyd rescued his first helpmate by adopting the cook as solution and this, too, established a much to be followed tradition.

BLACK TO PLAY

1 A.Barbe

Leipziger Illustriertes
Familienjournal 1861

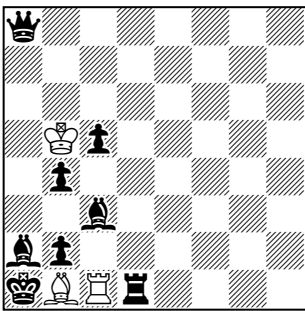


H#3

1. ♖d7 g8♚ 2. ♚e7 ♜xg3+
3. ♜d8 ♜b8.

2 W.A.Shinkman

Detroit Free Press 1884



H#3

1. ♖h1 ♜g1 2. ♗g8 ♜xg8
3. ♖xh1 ♜xh8.

The first helpmate to be sound as first published was probably 1. I leave you to discover the cook which is stopped by the WPh5; since it is accurate it might perhaps have served as a second solution.

Perhaps surprisingly, Loyd did not go on to compose many more helpmates (perhaps half a dozen) and the new form went through a kind of dark age, the only helpmate tourney before 1922 being the one organised by the *Dubuque Chess Journal* in 1871, in which both first and second prizes went to W.A.Shinkman (1847-1933). Shinkman probably composed about 20 helpmates in all and was the first composer to attain real quality. 2 shows admirable use of the whole board and a sense of paradox (pieces that get in the way and must be eliminated) pointing forward 50 years.

The real flowering of the helpmate genre, however, began in the 1920s. In a famous broadcast on Hamburg radio in 1925 Franz Palatz gave the main credit for this to the then editor of the unorthodox problems section of *Magyar Sakkvilág*, Norbert Kovács. He it was who suggested the second helpmate tourney, which was carried out by Dawson in *The Chess Amateur* in 1922. Both the helpmate itself and the special Hungarian interest in it have flourished ever since. I make no apology for the large number of Hungarian helpmates you will meet in this book; it seems to me a just reflection of the importance of that nation's contribution to the genre.

To trace the history of the helpmate since the 1920s would require a documentary approach which is not my purpose here. The development is in any case made harder to follow by varying rates of progress in different places.

The single line helpmate, as exemplified in 1 and 2, soon seemed very restrictive and ways of introducing variety were sought. Nowadays hardly any helpmates in under five moves are single liners. The helpmate with set play (if Black's first move is omitted there is an alternative line of play, but no waiting move exists which will preserve it) came in in the twenties. For a long time it was regarded as the ideal format but eventually its limitations caused it virtually to die out. Twinning (the use of closely related positions with different solutions) was much cultivated in the 1930s, for example by C.M. Fox, and has maintained its popularity. The multiresolution form (a single position with more than one solution) was initially frowned upon by some (Dawson included, I suspect, though I don't

think he said so in so many words) but gradually came to dominance. The reasons for these changes will become apparent in chapters 3 and 4.

In the 1930s and 1940s the Hungarians investigated paradoxical themes involving tempo and capture of white pieces, while Dawson and Fox produced the first simple halfpin examples and everyone looked for echoes and new combinations of promotions. For many years the leading composer was Dr György Páros and it was largely as a result of his influence that by the 1960s the modern strategic style was ready to take over. All it needed was the stimulus of improved technique which is exemplified in the work of another Hungarian, György Bakcsi, that of Fadil Abdurahmanović, a Bosnian, and above all in that of the Georgian, Josif Kricheli.

Despite ideological opposition from the USSR in the 1970s, a largely self defeating exercise energetically countered by that finest of promoters of the genre, Gerhard Jensch, in his famous *Schach-Echo* column, the helpmate is today one of the most popular of all forms of composition. It is favoured in this no doubt partly by the abyss of alphabetical gobbledygook into which the two move directmate has sunk (alas, not without trace!), but most of all by its own thematic richness and the clarity of its presentations.

All the ideas briefly touched on in the last paragraph will be expanded in later chapters, but first we must turn to the second question which was raised at the outset: Why do we need a book about helpmates?

In the late 1960s, when I had finished training all my chess opponents to beat me every time, I turned to problems and was amazed to find that there didn't seem to be a book about helpmates. When I returned to composing at the end of the 1980s after a break lasting several years I was even more amazed to find that there still wasn't a book about helpmates. There are some writings in Hungarian (e.g. by Lindner and Páros) but they are not easily accessible; and there are collections of problems, of course. However, they either have no text (e.g. FIDE Albums) or the text is very limited indeed. Janevski's & Stolev's book *The Modern Helpmate in Two* is full of interesting compositions, ranging in quality from the brilliant to the unspeakable, but the only text consists of brief section headings and a thematic index, both inevitably open to subjective interpretation.

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Now by training I am a teacher of languages with a degree in comparative literature, so what I was looking for was a book of criticism of helpmates, just as one would seek to read works of literary criticism when studying, say, Grillparzer, Manzoni or Galdós, for there is no reason why the great composers of chess problems should not attract the same serious attention as the great figures of world literature.

As you see, in the end I have had to write the book I might have wished to read. At least the material (though not, alas, the author) has become considerably richer in the interim! Consequently this book is not merely a collection of good helpmates. Indeed it is not even a collection of good helpmates! I am rather dubious about collections consisting entirely of “best compositions”; they tend to make beginners desperate and solvers uncritical since everything is *so so* wonderful. So this book contains a number of excellent helpmates, a great many very interesting but not entirely perfect ones and a very few downright bad ones. At least, that’s my opinion, but the point about criticism is that it challenges you to form your own views. By setting out his opinion and explaining how he arrived at it the critic provokes you into agreement or (ideally) disagreement and thus invites you to consider why you hold the views you do. When you say to yourself, as you will, “That ass Feather has got it wrong again because...” the truth of the first half of your sentence will be self evident; the interest will lie in the words which follow the “because”. And that is what the helpmate needs, a genuinely critical approach from its adherents, not critical in the sense of looking for things to blame, but critical in the sense of giving evidence of analytical thought.

Regrettably, that kind of critical approach is not often encountered. With notable exceptions, helpmate judges do not provide genuine criticism, they prefer to talk of “personal preferences”. Nervous of giving offence, they forget Hermann Albrecht’s wise dictum: “It is not the composer but the problem which receives the award.” They praise the construction of problems without investigating whether it could be improved. Sometimes they don’t even solve the problems. With notable exceptions, editors are indiscriminating in their choice of what to publish, reckoning, quite erroneously, that if it’s sound it’s publishable. With notable exceptions, where the editor makes a sustained effort to promote thoughtful appreciation, solvers’ printed comments are often vague and anodyne. With notable exceptions, composers do not polish and refine their work as they could and should. Why bother, if nobody is going to look at it critically?

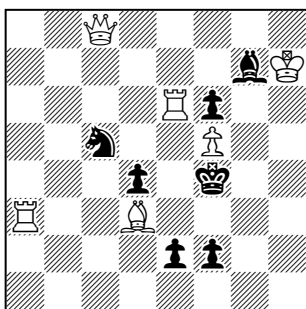
Whether cause or consequence of the above, helpmates have a reputation for being easy. Easy to compose, easy to solve. What causes their popularity also causes them to appear superficial. Palatz was already seeking to counter this accusation in his 1925 broadcast when he pointed out that of the 250 entries to the *Chess Amateur* tourney only 78 proved correct, but this argument is useless today when computer testing makes it a hundred times easier to produce a sound helpmate and (such an incentive to idleness is it!) ten times harder to produce a well constructed one. Pick up one of the leading magazines which publish at least half a dozen or so helpmates per issue and I guarantee that you will be able to improve the construction of one or two of them without enormous effort.

Although they often have a clarity which may be lacking in other types of problem, helpmates are in fact not necessarily easy to solve, it is just that obvious and unoriginal thematic content often makes them appear so. Many of the problems in this book are given with solutions and analysis, but there are also some for solving, so you can form your own conclusions by trying them.

Nor has it ever been easy to compose **good** helpmates. The two move helpmate section of the first World Chess Compositions Tourney of the FIDE (1972-5) was won by a remarkably elegant and thematically striking problem by Fadil Abdurahmanović, then as now reckoned one of the more skilful composers in the genre. This problem can be found as 581 in the FIDE Album. By the strange logic of these tourneys this problem was later considered to anticipate **3**, which beat it into print and was certainly composed quite independently. The irony was compounded by the fact that Abdurahmanović was the judge for the tourney in which **3** competed. He very understandably felt that he could not judge Kricheli’s problem objectively and suggested that it should compete in the next tourney of the same magazine. Unfortunately that never seems to have happened and the problem has been forgotten, having been subsequently rejected for the Album, in which Abdurahmanović was again one of the judges! He must have felt that this problem was some kind of ghost sent to haunt him.

None of this curious story would be important were it not that Kricheli’s setting is not just very like Abdurahmanović’s, it is clearly superior, saving two men by better construction. Kricheli’s is the version which ought to be remembered. So we see that even apparently unbeatable problems by outstanding composers can be improved upon. Really good helpmates are not easy to compose!

3 J.M.Kricheli *Schach-Echo* 1974



H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖d7 ♜e4+ 2. ♚×f5 ♜a5;
1. ♖b3 ♜e4 2. ♚e3 ♜c1.

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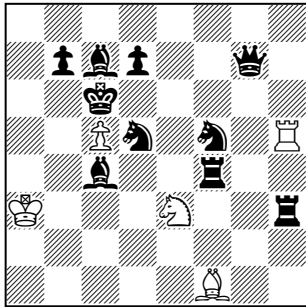
One comparatively recent development which makes it harder for helpmates to shake off the reputation of facility is the quick composing tourney which is now a popular event at most gatherings of problemists. Short helpmates invariably feature, naturally, because any fool can dash one off in a quarter of an hour! The genius of some composers is such that one or two masterpieces have resulted, along with an enormous amount of rubbish which gets a great deal of publicity and does great harm to helpmates. If only organisers would try a quick synthetics tourney instead!

Another difficulty helpmates face is the lack of sound documentation. The ideological war waged by the USSR meant that in the 1970s especially the helpmate was seriously underrepresented in the FIDE Albums. The ratio of helpmates selected to helpmates submitted for the 1971-3 Album is the lowest of any genre in any Album, and the next two were similar. Understandably, perhaps, the two Albums after that overcompensated. Such an oscillation from one extreme to another gives a false picture. Some of the Album problems are completely anticipated.

Few of the leading helpmate composers have been the subject of anthologies. Helpmates feature prominently in Bakcsi's three collections of his own problems but there is no collection of Páros's, Kricheli's or Petkov's helpmates. Let us hope that it is not too late for the first two omissions to be rectified; and that Petkov himself will some time produce an anthology of his helpmates. Meanwhile all these names are prominent in the present book. I have also made a special effort to include problems from the 1970s wherever possible.

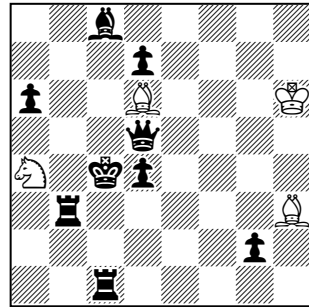
This chapter ends with three problems for solving, whose solutions are given on the next page. They are all special favourites of mine and should give some idea of the richness and subtlety of the helpmate. But be careful! As Irving Chernev wrote in *The Bright Side of Chess* : "Warning. Helpmates have a fatal fascination and it is difficult after indulging in a few of them to return to less imaginative forms of chess."

4 P.A.Petkov
3 HM *Probleemblad* 1984



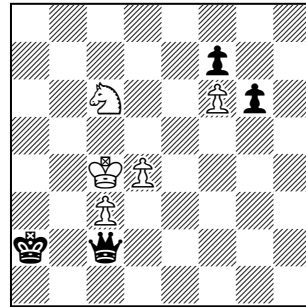
H#2 3 solutions

5 A.M.A.van der Ven
1 Pr British Chess Fed.
1937-38



H#3 b) ♖>f5 c) ♖>f7

6 U.Grinblat
2 HM Israel Ring Ty 1956



H#4

BLACK TO PLAY

4. (Petkov) 1. ♖b3 ♜×d5 2. ♜d4 ♜b4; 1. ♜c3 ♜×f5 2. ♜f7 ♜e7; 1. ♜g3 ♜×c4 2. ♜b6 ♜a5.

The Bb4 must be a promoted pawn. Since the WB can be on e2 in the diagram position I am at a loss to know why the composer did not shift the whole position down one rank! However it hardly spoils this elegant idea, three different unpins, three captures to open lines of guard, three line closings, all related together in a cycle. The motivation for each move is exactly paralleled by that of the corresponding move in the other solutions.

5. (van der Ven) a) 1.g1 ♜ ♜c3 2.d×c3 ♜g4 3. ♜d4 ♜e2; b) 1. ♜d3 ♜×d7 2. ♜cc3 ♜b5+ 3.a×b5 ♜b6; c) 1.a5 ♜b4 2.d5 ♜×c8 3.a×b4 ♜a6.

Sacrifices to get BPs to the right squares for blocking the BR out. Not a deep idea, admittedly, but to triple it with three thematic pieces, no other white material and some delicate timing was a remarkable feat in 1937. The twinning is pleasing, though a modern composer would probably have tried to avoid it.

6. (Grinblat) 1. ♜e4 ♜e7 2. ♜×e7 f×e7 3. ♜a3 e8♞ 4. ♜a4 ♞a8.

The WS is useless except for wasting a tempo. One of its possible moves gives check and five block lines, though the solver has to grasp the whole solution to see why this matters. One possible square is plugged, so all that is left is for it to sacrifice itself, just in time, on the square where the BQ is also to sacrifice to permit the promotion. It is nice that only the need to move the useless S forces the underpromotion, since if the S remained on c6 White could promote to a Q without guarding a4. The pin of the only other (apparently) mobile unit at Black's first move is also a delicate touch.

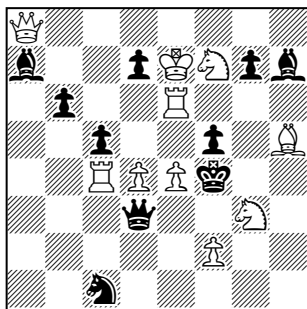
CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTS

The history of the helpmate can be seen as an evolution towards complexity; this chapter deals with the concepts which are necessary in order to cope with this complexity. You may well disagree with my views but you need to consider these questions if you are to understand helpmates fully.

a) Helpmates are different!

I pointed out in the introduction that helpmates are logically anterior to types of problem which use the principle of opposition to the adversary, as Dawson called it. In fact **all** other types of problem fall into this second category; we thus have a fundamental distinction between help play and everything else. When Dawson subsequently describes helpmates as a “limitation” he is forsaking his usual scientific approach for one based on convention. In this context I find his later remark that “the helpmate is an ideally artistic medium for illustrating direct themes” most revealing. This relegates helpmates to the status of a kind of cheat directmate, a view still more or less tacitly shared by many problemists six decades later. This attitude may be partly explained by the fact that the majority of problemists, whether solvers or composers, come to directmates first and never entirely shed the way of thinking that goes with them.

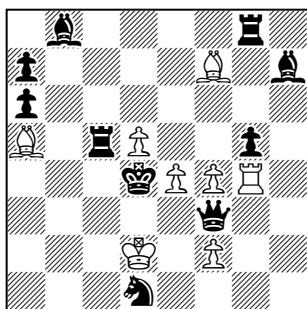
7 G.Bakcsi
2 Pr Magyar
Sakkszövetség T. 1959



#3

1. ♖d8! (>2. ♖c7+)
1... ♗×d4 2. ♕e8 ♜f6 3. e5;
1... ♗×e4 2. ♕f8 ♜a8 3. d5.

8 G.Bakcsi
1 HM Sahs 1960



H#2 b) ♖>e6

a)
1. ♗×e4 ♙c7 2. ♗g6 f5;
b)
1. ♗×f4 ♙g6 2. ♗c7 e5.

Of course some composers are equally at home in either field. Bakcsi is one of them. Let's compare his mate in three, **7**, with one of his two move helpmates, **8**, which has a similar theme. If the apparently different lengths bother you, reflect that in a direct threemover after the key there is the same number of moves, in the same order, as in a helpmate in two.

Of Bakcsi's two problems the mate in three seems to have come first in date; its thematic skeleton (the setup involving the BQ and the WR which points at the BK with two WPs in between) is reflected left to right in the helpmate but is clearly recognisable. The author's aim was to cause the BQ to capture each of the WPs in turn in two thematic lines and subsequently to move off in such a way that the other pawn can block its return and thus discover mate. What is interesting is the totally different means of achieving this in the two problems. In the directmate the BQ takes the pawns in order to place a guard on the diagonal of the threat, forcing the WK to choose his next moves carefully in order to avoid check. The BQ is lured beyond the critical squares (d5, e5) in order to restrain the WQ which, now that the BQ has lost the chance of taking on g3, has powerful threats of mating on g5 or h4. The composer's skill is needed above all to arrange a suitable threat and to differentiate the moves of the WK.

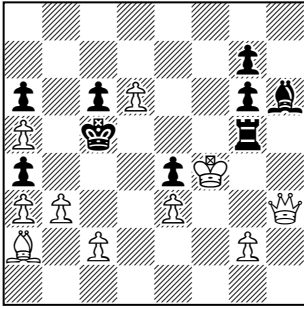
In the helpmate the BQ is only too willing to capture WPs to clear the way, something which in the directmate Black would have preferred to avoid. The composer's main task is to prevent the BQ from being able to go somewhere else at Black's second move, and especially from sacrificing itself to the remaining pawn. This explains the WK twinning (stopping e.g. 1.Qxf4 Bc7 2.Qf5 exf5 in the diagram position) and the presence of the BBs, which need shutting out and also prevent the BQ from hiding away on squares too far along the diagonals. While in the directmate e4 and g4 must be guarded by pieces with which Black cannot interfere, the corresponding squares in the helpmate (e4 & c4) need to be protected from guard (Bd5!) in order to prevent cooks, hence the WPd5. The most striking difference is in the total number of white pieces used. The immobile ones in the directmate are absolutely essential to stop the BK from escaping, while in helpmates it can be quite tricky sometimes to prevent the BK from walking right into a mating net.

Both Bakcsi problems are good quality compositions but which is the better? Despite its extra pieces the directmate is clearly superior, and if given the problems without the dates I think most people would guess that the directmate came first.

Only certain ideas will transfer in this way and not all directmates are as devoid of byplay as this one, of course. Few composers make the transition as well as Bakcsi; often the result of transfer from one genre to another is unsatisfactory; and it can be grotesque. You are no doubt familiar with the Djurašević theme, so...

BLACK TO PLAY

9 P.Gvozdják
3 Pr Mat 20TT 1990



H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖d5 ♘d7 2.c5 c4;
1. ♖b5 b4 2.c5 ♘d7.

to show such things as the Plachutta, the Finnish Nowotny or correction play. If you don't know what those things are, don't worry, helpmates can manage very well without them! Those themes which can be transferred easily tend to be the more figurative ones, such as the Albino (see 94), consisting of patterns of moves which can be achieved by quite different motivations in the different genres.

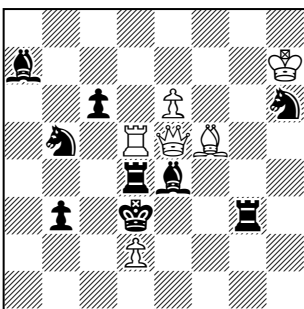
If the helpmate cannot do better than mimic directmate themes then there is no justification for its existence. The point was made by Palatz in 1925 when he described the helpmate as "highly suited to the clear realisation of modern ideas, unobscured by pointless side variations" and added "That is what reveals its special value, its great significance, and indeed the need for unorthodox chess in general, in that it enables combinations which go beyond the realm of the directmate". Which leads us to ask...

b) What is a Helpmate Theme?

Before reading on you might like to look at 10 and decide for yourself what you think its theme is.

It is not often possible to give an exact description of the theme of a helpmate, or if it is, the problem may be a rather weak one. Whereas in directmates some of the moves are designed to thwart some of the other moves, and the theme emerges from this contest, in most helpmates every move contributes positively to the overall thematic effect, thus creating a strategic intensity which other genres find it hard to match.

10 C.J.Feather
Moultings 3 1991



H#2 b) ♖>d8

a)
1. ♖g6 ♖c5 2. ♗x f5 ♘e3;
b)
1. ♗d6 ♗g4 2. ♗x d5 ♘c3.

The arrival effect at Black's second move is the potential check to the WK which has already had to be forestalled, and the departure effect is the opening of the line e5 to e3 for White's second move, which has no departure effect and a very obvious arrival effect!

Part (b) is exactly similar. In this problem the position of the WK causes an alternation of the apparent pin of the WB and the WR. That was in fact the initial idea, and in that sense might be described as the problem's theme, but while the composer knows that, the solver does not, and may decide that the theme is the capture of white material (always a popular idea in helpmates) or more generally the opening and closing of lines. The real "theme" of a helpmate like this lies in the unity which comes from the blending of the different motifs.

What? You aren't familiar with the Djurašević theme?? I'm disappointed in you. You're bound to recognise it when I remind you, though. It's the one where in the first phase white's move A threatens a mate B but defence X changes the mate to C, and in the second phase the move B threatens C which X changes to A. You were teasing me, you knew that all along! Anyway here it is in a helpmate, 9. What do you mean, you can't have threats in a helpmate? We just make sure that all possible black moves change the mate. All Black can play after 1.Kd5 Qd7 is 2.c5. What do you mean, he missed a mate? What do you mean, you thought g2 was there to prevent a dual? Black is supposed to be helping, you know! Well, no, I can't say what g2 is there for, since the problem seems to be sound without it. The changes are nice, though. What do you mean, the WB is idle? You can't expect pieces to participate in every variation, as they would in a helpmate. What do you mean, it is a helpmate? Don't be silly!

To be serious (what do you mean, you thought I was?), although there are themes which will transfer, they would often be incomprehensible without reference (stated or implied) to directmate models. This is the case with attempts

to show such things as the Plachutta, the Finnish Nowotny or correction play. If you don't know what those things are, don't worry, helpmates can manage very well without them! Those themes which can be transferred easily tend to be the more figurative ones, such as the Albino (see 94), consisting of patterns of moves which can be achieved by quite different motivations in the different genres.

If the helpmate cannot do better than mimic directmate themes then there is no justification for its existence. The point was made by Palatz in 1925 when he described the helpmate as "highly suited to the clear realisation of modern ideas, unobscured by pointless side variations" and added "That is what reveals its special value, its great significance, and indeed the need for unorthodox chess in general, in that it enables combinations which go beyond the realm of the directmate". Which leads us to ask...

b) What is a Helpmate Theme?

Before reading on you might like to look at 10 and decide for yourself what you think its theme is.

It is not often possible to give an exact description of the theme of a helpmate, or if it is, the problem may be a rather weak one. Whereas in directmates some of the moves are designed to thwart some of the other moves, and the theme emerges from this contest, in most helpmates every move contributes positively to the overall thematic effect, thus creating a strategic intensity which other genres find it hard to match.

Every move can in theory have one effect caused by the fact that the piece no longer occupies the square it has just left (departure effect) and another caused by its occupying a new square, possibly with capture (arrival effect). In practice it is relatively unusual, though not impossible, for a mating move to have a departure effect. While even short helpmates which make use of both arrival and departure effects at every move are rare, it does seem that helpmates find it easier to come near to this maximum of intensity than directmates.

In addition to the actual moves of the solution it can happen that the twinning shows a kind of arrival and/or departure effect which may be seen as an additional enrichment, although it is more often a convenience for getting the problem sound!

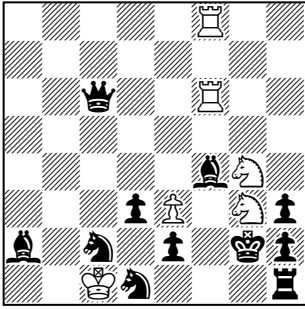
In 10, part a), the departure effect at Black's first move is the unguarding of e3 and the arrival effect is the anticipatory shielding of the WK from check at Black's second move. The departure effect at White's first move is the opening of the line from d4 to d8. This may appear irrelevant to the thematic content of the problem but is in fact the reason why the solution of (b) will not work in (a) and vice versa. The arrival effect at White's first move is the guarding of c2 and c4.

The arrival effect at Black's second move is the potential check to the WK which has already had to be forestalled, and the departure effect is the opening of the line e5 to e3 for White's second move, which has no departure effect and a very obvious arrival effect!

Part (b) is exactly similar. In this problem the position of the WK causes an alternation of the apparent pin of the WB and the WR. That was in fact the initial idea, and in that sense might be described as the problem's theme, but while the composer knows that, the solver does not, and may decide that the theme is the capture of white material (always a popular idea in helpmates) or more generally the opening and closing of lines. The real "theme" of a helpmate like this lies in the unity which comes from the blending of the different motifs.

BLACK TO PLAY

11 C.J.Feather
Moultings 5 1991



H#2 b) f4 = ♖

a)
1. ♖xg3 ♜g6 2. ♖d6 ♜e5;

b)
1. ♜xg4 ♜g8 2. ♜c4 ♜e4.

I felt that this particular blend was quite successful because it is the need for Black to open a line at his second move which makes him close another on his first. You may judge otherwise!

For an example of a helpmate containing significant arrival and departure effects at every move, including the mates, see **11**, which I leave you to analyse for yourself. This problem contains a dual avoidance effect in the choice of which WR to move. Dual avoidance is an important idea in helpmates and will be looked at more closely in chapter 7.

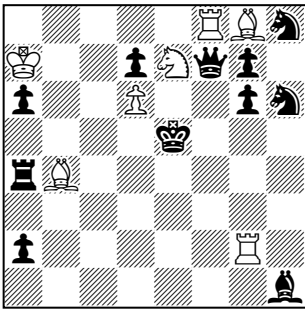
Very rarely does the composer's initial idea immediately fix the nature of all the available moves in his projected helpmate. Perhaps a move or moves of either side is left uncommitted or perhaps it is merely the arrival or departure part of a move that is undetermined at this initial stage. Often the greatest skill and judgment is required in deciding how to fill these gaps, first in knowing what will actually allow a sound problem to be produced and secondly in choosing, from within the range of possibilities which will work, those which will best complement the main idea.

In **12** this main idea was as follows: the BQ stands at the junction of the lines of the WB and the WR while the BK stands poised to move onto the continuation of the WB and wR lines beyond the BQ's square. For some reason to be determined the wB and wR, one in each solution, need to move through the BQ's square. In moving aside to allow this the BQ creates a guard from the other white piece on the square to which the BK must move. Consequently the wQ must clear the line for the wB by capturing the WR and vice versa.

This scheme prescribes Black's first move completely (QxR, QxB), White's second move not at all, Black's second move partially (BK moves onto line, but some choice of square is possible and there is room for a departure effect) and White's first move partially (WR/WB move through the square vacated by the BQ, arrival effects unspecified).

Since inventing this mechanism in 1976 I have based a number of related problems on it, thus perhaps justifying the name "Feather mechanism" which Janevski has bestowed on it, though I can't help thinking that that ought to refer to something in the undercarriage of a bird!

12 C.J.Feather
Moultings 5 1991



H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖xg8 ♜f3 2. ♖e6 ♜e2;

1. ♖xg8 ♜c4 2. ♖f6 ♜c3.

My first attempt with the mechanism used a very crude motivation for White's first move, namely the need to reach a square from which the mating move could be played. It was not until 1991, as you see, that I managed to think up the most appropriate accompaniment to the original idea. The arrival effect at White's first move is the closing of a black line which White is about to open on the mating move, so we have anticipatory prevention of unwanted guards by both Black and White; the theme genuinely arises from the blend of all the effects seen in the problem.

The interpretation of the word "theme" which I am using is a considerably more complex one than the usual sense of the word. It is based on the conviction that it is not very useful to say, for example, that the theme of a two move helpmate is a pickaninny if a black pawn on its starting square makes a different one of its four possible moves in each of four solutions. The pickaninny idea is a familiar one from directmates, but the above description takes no account of what happens on the other twelve moves nor of the effects of the pickaninny moves themselves.

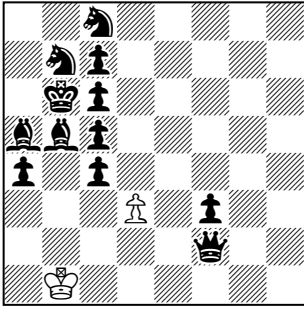
c) Interplay

In answer to the point at the end of the last section you may say that all we have to do is to find another three fourfold ideas (the four promotions or the four initial moves of a white pawn or the four orthogonal moves of a king, for example) and fill up the spare moves in the problem with them. We should then have a helpmate with an enormous amount of thematic content. Indeed this sort of thing is done and will be looked at in chapter 5. But do four separate ideas like this make a theme? Obviously it is a matter of taste, but it seems to me that some interplay, some intertwining of the play of White and that of Black, is needed.

Whereas in other genres the antagonism between the sides usually guarantees interplay, in help play something else must ensure that there is interaction or else we shall have what amounts to a juxtaposition of separate puzzles, making an ill unified and unsatisfactory composition.

BLACK TO PLAY

13 H.Ebert
1 Pr *Die Schwalbe* 1982

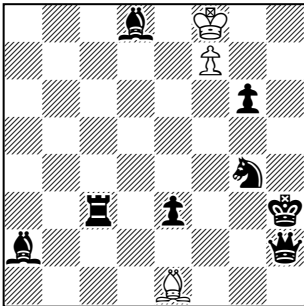


H#5 2 solutions

1. ♖e1 d4 2. ♔d2 d5
3. ♜a5 d6 4. ♜a6 d7
5. ♞a5 d×c8♟;

1. c3 d4 2. ♞f1 d5
3. ♜e2 d6 4. ♜a6 d7
5. ♞b5 d×c8♟.

14 R.Ruppin
2 Pr *problem* 1957

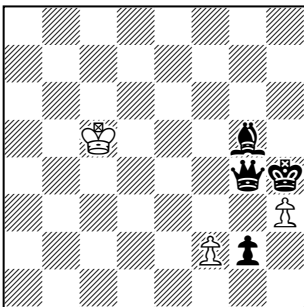


H#3 2 solutions

1. ♜b8 ♔g7 2. ♞c7 f8♜
3. ♞h2 ♜f1;

1. ♜b2 ♔e8 2. ♞c2 f8♜
3. ♞h2 ♜f3.

15 F.von Wardener
Aachener Anzeiger 1933



H#5

1. g1♞ ♔d5 2. ♔d1+ ♔e4
3. ♞e2 ♔f3 4. ♞g3+ ♔g2
5. ♜h5 f×g3.

What exactly is this interplay to which I am referring? It is easiest first to suggest it by its absence! In **13** Black needs to get the Q to a6 in order to block the remaining square in the king's field, and so the bishops must clear the lines, in one case with an extra pawn move to make the two solutions the same length. It is a serious weakness that the white moves are the same in the two solutions. All White has to do is get his pawn to c8, a process which will not tax the solver's imagination too much. There is no connection whatsoever between what Black does and what White does. Their paths do not even cross! This is a disguised serieshelpmate. Place the WP on d7 and it is actually a **sound** serieshelpmate (i.e. Black plays a series of 5 moves and then White mates in one) in which, I think you will agree, nothing very profound has been lost by comparison with the helpmate. The attractive clearance idea had already been shown in serieshelpmate form before 1982, however...

It is quite hard to find suitable white play to intertwine with such clearance ideas. In **14**, showing another kind of clearance related to the one in 13, the weakness of the repeated promotion is still there but the composer has arranged that White's first move is determined by the square occupied by the BQ at Black's first. Try starting 1.Qb2 Kg7 for example. The wrong WK move walks into the line of the battery which Black has just created, so that there is genuine interplay between the first moves on either side. Admittedly this is not sustained through the remainder of the solution but the overall effect is nonetheless much more homogeneous. The construction of this problem is good, especially in the way the WK's access to unthematic squares is prevented by the two bishops, the one on a2 serving also to help determine the BQ's arrival square in one solution. The composer could have dispensed with the BPe3 if he had started the BR on c1 or c5 instead of c3, but this would completely spoil the thematic unity; then 1.Qb2 would prevent 1...Kg7 by direct guard, not by creating a battery.

For our final example on this idea, let's look at a 5-move helpmate which shows genuine interplay throughout. In **15** the order of Black's first and second moves is determined by the need to bring the WK closer and this in turn fixes White's first move, since d4 is still guarded when he plays it. The BQ's route to h5 via d1 is determined by the need to unguard f3 for the wK to pass, and this also means that Black must promote to a knight, not a bishop. It is particularly pleasing that the orthogonal power of the BQ is used in two ways (along the rank, determining White's first move, and up the d-file, fixing the move order) since its "thematic" moves (in the narrow sense) are both diagonal.

To sum up, I am not saying that interplay of the intensity of 15 is essential, since 14 is a fine work, but I am saying that it is contrary to the spirit of the helpmate for there to be none at all, and that the notion of interplay is a useful one in the analysis and appreciation of helpmates.

d) Motivation

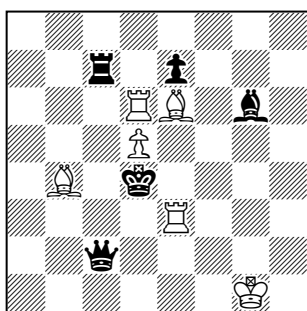
Once a composer has decided what moves he wishes to show he must find reasons why those moves will be the ones which solve the problem. If he is wise he will also anticipate the typical cooks which will be associated with his idea and will incorporate reasons why these cooks should not work. It is much harder to eliminate cooks afterwards!

Reasons why solutions work (and potential cooks don't) constitute the motivation for the moves in a helpmate. Such motivations must always exist; some composers regard them as important and some as incidental, but in either case the analysis of motivation is the principal tool in studying how composers go about their work and indeed in learning how to compose helpmates yourself, if such is your ambition. It can also help solvers; if they learn quickly to read the signs in a position they can often guess the theme accurately.

My comments on the problems in subsequent chapters will often dwell on the motivation of the moves. Distinctions may be made between pure motivation (just one reason why the effect works) and impure; or between equal motivation (corresponding moves have similar motivations) and unequal.

BLACK TO PLAY

16 A.Molnár
Special Pr Magyar
Sakkszövetség T. 1967



H#2 2 Solutions

1. ♖c3 ♗f5 2. ♖d3 ♗e4;
1. ♗d3 ♖c6 2. ♗c4 ♗c5.

There have been surprisingly few attempts to make a methodical study of the reasons for the moves in chess problems. That is no bad thing since chess composition is an art, not a science. Pierre Bansac (1892-1978, real name Charles Rinderknecht) developed a system which he described as the theory of effects. I find his approach excessively scientific and disagree with some of his conclusions but his concentration on the way in which moves change situations can be both practical and stimulating if it does not lead to the imposition of dogmatic rules.

In an issue of the sadly defunct magazine *Problème* dated April 1971 he quotes **16** and comments on the “perfect strategic symmetry of the two solutions”, drawing attention particularly to White’s first move and Black’s second. The move 1...Bf5 removes the BB’s guard on e4 and establishes a white guard on the square, while in the other solution 1...Rc6 does the same with regard to the BR and the square c5. The move 2.Rd3 blocks a square and closes the BQ’s line to e4, while in the other solution 2.Bc4 also blocks a square and closes a BQ line, this time to c5. Most people would describe the theme of this problem in terms referring to the closing of lines on either side of e4 and c5, a pleasing geometrical effect. Bansac points out that the BQ is quite irrelevant in this connection, and

might be removed from the board except that it is needed as a cookstopper. It is irrelevant in that the motivation it apparently brings to the moves 2.Rd3 and 2.Bc4 is unnecessary to make those moves happen. The need to block those squares would take care of that anyway. Do you find it agreeable that a cookstopper can be used to augment strategic effects in this way? or do you think that effects thus achieved have something spurious about them?

Whichever view you prefer, you have to base your preference on the motivation of the moves. Bansac clearly takes the second view since he goes on to point out that what the Q prevents is 1.Rc4 Bf5 2.e5 Rd3, which can be eliminated by moving the whole position down one rank (thus BK to d3) and relocating the WK on a8, since the black pawn move in the cook then becomes impossible. In this new position the BQ can be removed without any effect on soundness or solution. Does that change your opinion?

Curiously, that is not the end of that particular story, since in the FIDE Album for 1974-6 we find (number 578, 1st Prize, Budapest SSz TT., 1975) essentially the same position as 16, but with the BR moved to c8, the BB to h7, the WK to h5 and instead of the BP a BS on e8. Obviously some guard on d6 is necessary or else there are cooks such as 1.Rc6 Rel 2.pass dxc6. The BQ is still present in this version but is of course strictly unnecessary. The most interesting feature, however, is the name over the diagram, not Molnár but Páros! I cannot believe that this is plagiarism, so presumably it is either an example of mislabelling or else Páros composed his version in ignorance of Molnár’s work. I have not been able to check the original sources; perhaps a reader will be able to clear up this mystery?

If the problem is genuinely by Páros then we can say that at least one great helpmate composer was in favour of using pieces in the way the BQ is used in this problem. It is time we had a handy term for this. It was provided in an article by Alfred Gschwend in *Schach-Echo* in 1974. The BQ in the Molnár/Páros problem is a weasel.

Of course, this is not meant as a term of abuse, since weasels are clearly quite cuddly carnivores; it originates in a poem by Christian Morgenstern which I translate (quite inaccurately) into English as follows:

*A weasel
Sits at an easel
Painting with a teasel.*

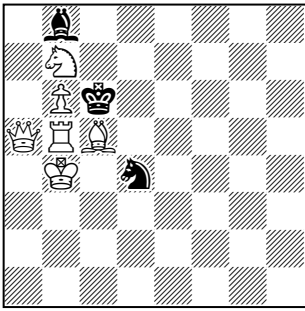
*Do you know why
This sly
Beast thus wastes his time?*

*He does it so
(If you must know)
My lines may have a rhyme.*

Gschwend distinguishes three kinds of supplementary effects achievable with the aid of weasels, those of the sacrificial weasel, the symmetry weasel and the line closing weasel.

BLACK TO PLAY

17 J.Hartong
1 Pr *Elck Wat Wils*
Wedstrijd 1947



H#2

1. ♖×b7 ♜a8+ 2. ♚×a8 b7.

The sacrificial weasel occurs in problems where a white piece is captured and consists in using a more powerful white piece than is necessary or perhaps in using a white piece where none is needed at all. Thus in **17** the WQ is a weasel since a WR would do; the WSb7 appears not to be a weasel, since with a WP instead there are many obvious cooks, but in fact if we move the BS from d4 to f5 we can remove b7 completely and the solution remains the same. In most modern problems with this kind of content there are two or more parts and composers usually arrange for the pieces captured passively in one line to be active in another.

Gschwend's second subspecies, the symmetry weasel, occurs, as you might expect, when pieces are added merely for the sake of symmetry. It is a fairly rare if not actually endangered species.

The line closing weasel is the one we have already met; like the sacrificial type it can take the form of an unnecessary piece or of a piece used where a weaker one (often a pawn) would do.

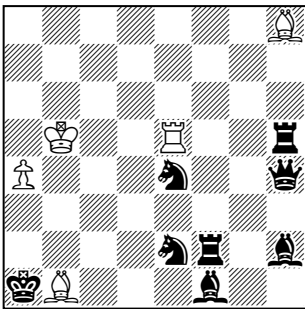
There are a few other species of weasel not mentioned by Gschwend, but those three are enough to give you the idea.

Weasels have a shy nature which makes them easy to miss. If one is preoccupied with a thematic idea it is quite easy to compose a helpmate with a weasel without noticing it, so that it is not always possible to tell whether one is used intentionally or not. Equally, there are many cases where judges have made no mention of weasels in the problems they were honouring, so here again we cannot be sure whether they approved of them or overlooked them.

My point about weasels is that, love them or loathe them, one should not fail to notice them, and for that a conscious effort is needed. So I have included a few later in this book and hereby challenge you to spot them. I will not draw attention to any weasels until the end of my remarks on a problem, so that you have a chance to search for them first. You may even spot one or two which I have missed! I am sure that this will be the best way for you to decide whether you are a weasel fan or not.

Here's an easy one to start you off: How many weasels are there in **18** and which pieces are they? The answer is given at the end of this chapter. Good hunting!

18 J.Korponai
Probleemblad 1956



H#2

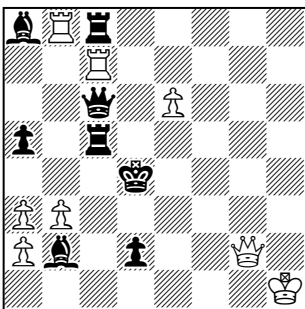
1. ♗g5 ♘h7 2. ♗f4+ ♚e2.

e) Economy

In this section I am much indebted to Michael Lipton, whose epilogue to 'Chess Problems: Introduction to an Art' is the most intelligent thing I have read on the subject of compositional chess and its significance.

Economy of force is often the only kind of economy which readily springs to mind, but there are other kinds, as we shall see. Nonetheless, it is the obvious place to begin. Can we say that the smaller the number of pieces the better the problem? Sometimes that is true but it is often not so simple. It may be a matter of taste, for example, whether to use a BQ or two BPs to stop a cook. In one sense the BQ is the more economical but if you think in terms of the wasted power a BQ might have as many as 27 moves while the pair of pawns would have a (highly unlikely) maximum of 24. If one piece is to be used and it is merely a question of which, then there is general agreement that the lightest possible piece should be used and it is seen as a failing if that is not the case. There is an example in **19** which you may like to find (answer below). There will be more to say about this problem later.

19 J.Kiss
1 Pr *Magyar*
Sakkszövetség TT. 1971

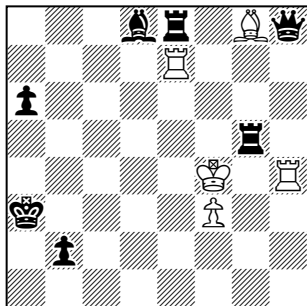


H#2 4 solutions

1. ♜c2 ♜b4+ 2. ♚c3 ♜f3;
1. ♜c3 b4 2. ♚c4 ♜e4;
1. ♜c4 b×c4 2. ♚c5 ♜d5;
1. ♜e5 ♜b5 2. ♜e4 ♜×d2.

BLACK TO PLAY

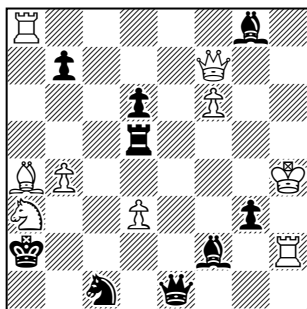
20 M.Persson
6 Pr *Schach-Echo* 1977



H#2 b) ♖a6>h6

- a)
1. ♖f8+ ♜xg5 2. ♖f6 ♜e3;
b)
1. ♖c7+ ♜e3 2. ♖e5 ♜a7.

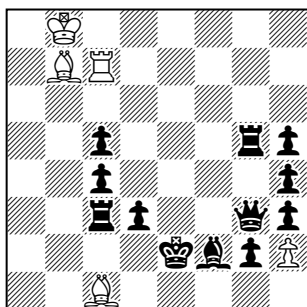
21 J.Korponai 1 Pr
MTS Dunájuvárosi T. 1970



H#2 2 solutions

1. b5 ♖c4 2. ♖c5 ♖c2;
1. b6 ♖c2 2. ♖c5 ♖c4.

22 C.J.Feather
original



H#3 2 solutions

1. ♖f3 ♖x3+ 2. ♜x3 ♖f7+
3. ♜g4 ♖f4;
1. ♖e3 ♖x3 2. ♜x3 ♖e7+
3. ♜d4 ♖e4.

When there is a choice, what colour should pieces be? This again is a matter of taste, especially if pawns are involved or if it is a question of guarding squares around the BK. In 20, an attractively light example of selfpin and unpin by one of the helpmate genre's best loved composers, the WPf3 and the BRg5 could be replaced by BSs on h1 and h4 provided that the WRh4 is moved to g4. Having decided that I would have done it that way I found that I could not actually convince myself that it was any better, indeed it somehow seems to make the solution more obvious!

There are a good many composers (I am one) who try quite hard to avoid using white pawns, but I doubt if any of the others could give a good reason, any more than I can.

When it is a question of guarding squares the colour of pieces may be determined by questions of soundness or of freedom of movement. If it is a matter of stopping cooks, however, there is general agreement that the use of white pieces (as opposed to pawns) should be avoided. Indeed some critics condemn idle white pieces on principle. This is not always so simple a matter. In an article in *The Problemist* in 1973 I argued that provided a white piece took an active part somewhere in the problem it was unreasonable to expect it to participate in every phase. In support of that view I quoted some complicated task problems which looked impossible to achieve otherwise. Such has been the evolution of technique since, however, that I have changed my mind and now think that (in most cases) all white pieces (not pawns) should be needed in all parts of a problem. Most, if not all, composers would agree with this. It is always the sad fate of task problems to be ultimately superseded.

Why did I add "in most cases"? There is a further category of helpmates in which white pieces are idle in one or all parts because their idleness is part of the theme. It needs a striking theme to carry this off successfully, but there are cases where it can be quite convincing.

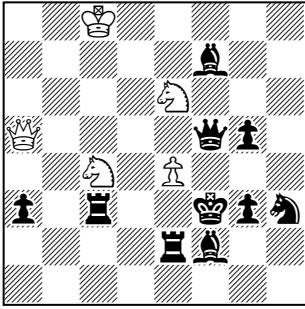
Here is one. In 21 there is clearly no way to deal with the squares b1-3 except by White's playing Sc4 and Bc2 in either order. The arrival effect of these moves is unfortunately the unpin of black pieces which prevent the mate. All that can be done at Black's first move is to close the line of one of these pieces in advance. Then at his second move the already unpinned black piece can close the line of the other piece which is still pinned but about to be unpinned. The thematic intensity and parallelism is admirable but what about the WQ and the WRh2, which contribute nothing to the mate and do not move throughout the problem? If the WRh2 were not present 1.Bc5 and 2.b6 could be played with the white moves added in either order. Thus the presence of the WR forces the move order. The role of the WQ is similar and in addition serves to prevent a cook by the BR moving to e3. Are these two white pieces cookstoppers (dualstoppers, if you prefer) or thematic agents? I am happy to interpret them as the latter. What do you think?

The next kind of economy, or rather the lack of it, is exemplified in 22. To unpin the WR which is the mating piece in each part, the BQ gets in the way of the BK and so a white piece must sacrifice itself in order to clear the way again. This is one of my favourite themes, much more interesting than the case where the square is already blocked by an immobile black piece, but this setting is quite unjustifiable and I publish it here only as an example of what to avoid. Why? This is a two move theme! White's second move and Black's third are empty of meaning. This offends against the **economy of time**: no idea should be built up to more moves than the minimum. Compare 22 with 23, which I consider one of my best compositions, and see the difference. Solvers, and judges too, seem relatively insensitive to this kind of economy, which is rarely commented upon.

[19: the BBb2 could be a BP]

BLACK TO PLAY

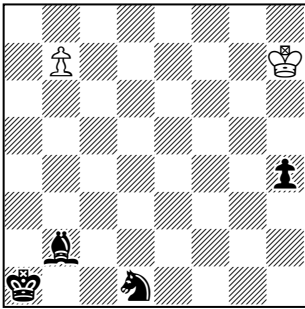
23 C.J.Feather
The Problemist 1977



H#2 b) e4 = ♖

- a)
1. ♖f4 ♘×f4 2. ♕×f4 ♖f5;
b)
1. ♚ce3 ♘×e3 2. ♕×e3 ♖c3.

24 W.Á.Földesák
5 Comm.
Revista de Sah 1963



H#5

1. h3 b8♖ 2. h2 ♖×b2
3. h1♚+ ♖h2 4. ♗b2 ♖h3
5. ♖b1 ♖a3.

Economy of play requires that the resources of the position should be used as intensively as possible and obviously includes the idea of interplay which has already been discussed. Perhaps the most important aspect of this kind of economy in the helpmate, however, is the idea of the interchange of functions, often known by its German name *Funktionswechsel*. In the simplest form of this idea the functions of two pieces (often but not necessarily of the same colour) in one phase of a helpmate are interchanged in another. Thus in 23 the Ws alternately serve to sacrifice and to guard while in 20 the thematic BB and BR alternately pin and unpin. Not only do interchanges of functions contribute to effective economy, they also increase the thematic unity of a problem.

Economy of space suggests full use of the board and of the mobility of the pieces, a desideratum that is often not achieved when the need to prevent cooks by confining and restricting pieces intervenes.

Long helpmates tend to have almost completely blocked positions, as we shall see in the next chapter, and some very short ones achieve their themes by crudely limiting mobility. Janevski and Stolev quote a 3-solution helpmate in 2 by Parrinello in which Black has an average choice of fewer than three moves at each turn (*The Modern Helpmate in Two*, 291). Setting a capture of white theme by eliminating the possibility of almost all other kinds of move, as Parrinello does, seems to me dubious, which is why I am not further dignifying the problem by reproducing it here. If one is going to approach chess composition that way one might as well take the final logical step and achieve soundness merely by adding the condition “no cooks allowed”.

At its best, though, the helpmate is the showplace for airy positions where the empty spaces are fully used and the solution is still miraculously unique. Shinkman’s 2 was a good example and 24 is another, and a fine example of interplay, too. The whole board is used and the freedom of movement extends to White’s ability to promote to a Q. That promotion fails not because of crude cookstoppers but because of the logic of the solution. White must remove b2 because Black has no time to do so, and a Q would give an unwanted check. You would think that to relieve a similarly unwanted check from the BP as it promotes to a R the WK could simply step aside to the g-file, but the timing is such that this cannot be done without the WR’s getting in the way of the BS. A delicate masterpiece by an outstanding and underrated composer.

An interesting numerical indicator of the amount of mobility in a helpmate is nowadays available to problemists. The Alybadix suite of solving programs by Ilkka Blom has met with some criticisms especially when it comes to distinguishing meaningful play from the rest in direct problems and selfmates, but for helpmates it is superb. Not only is it fast but it also gives a figure for the number of moves which it investigates during testing, and that number can provide an estimate of the relative mobility in different problems. Thus the move number for the Parrinello problem mentioned above is 313 while for 21 it is 24164; for an average 3-move helpmate it might run into millions and for Bebesi’s helpmate in 14 in the next chapter the figure is an amazing 142,910,085. This last took over nine and a half hours to test with an 80486/33-processor!

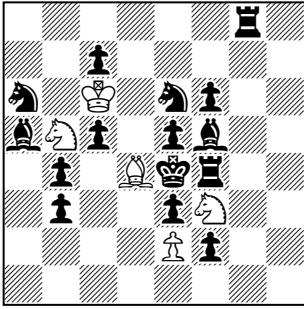
If you are interested in Alybadix, write to Ilkka Blom at Salmikatu 27 A16, 65200 VAASA, Finland.

Economy of idea is what Lipton calls the avoidance of petty byplay in direct problems, and you might think that the helpmate genre guarantees this by its nature. Not so! The helpmate composer can be confronted by the decision whether to set his idea economically in, say, 2 phase form, or to go for more phases. More does not always mean better (in fact in my view it does not often mean better!) but the pressure to go for quantity increases as the familiar themes become more and more thoroughly worked.

Problem 19, in which we have already found a BB which could be a BP, contains three well matched solutions in which the BR makes room for the BK to pin itself on the c-file and mate is then delivered by the pinned WQ. The fourth solution involves unpinning the WQ and leaving one WR idle; it looks for all the world like a cook. It is most mysterious since this line could easily be prevented (e.g. by adding a BSb1, but there may be neater ways) and some of Kiss’s other works show him to be a composer of good taste.

BLACK TO PLAY

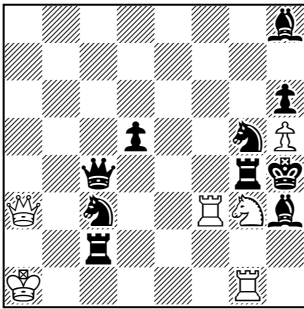
25 M.Myllyniemi
1 Pr P.Sola JT 1977-78



H#2 5 solutions

1. c4 ♖b6 2. c×b6 ♜d6;
1. ♗g7 ♕×e5 2. f×e5 ♜g5;
1. f1 ♗ ♕×e3 2. ♗×e3 ♜d2;
1. ♖b6 ♕c3 2. b×c3 ♜×c3;
1. c×d4 ♜e1 2. d3 e×d3.

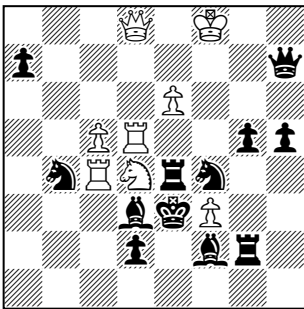
26 J.M.Kricheli
Schach-Echo 1979



H#2 3 solutions

1. ♖f1 ♖e7 2. ♖e2 ♜h1;
1. ♜d4 ♜h1 2. ♗ce4 ♜f4;
1. ♖e6 ♜f4 2. ♗g7 ♖e7.

27 Ž.Janevski
Scacco! 1992



H#2 3 solutions

1. ♖b1 ♖×g5 2. ♗c2 ♜c3;
1. ♜×e6 ♜c3 2. ♗g6 ♜e5;
1. ♖e2 ♜e5 2. ♗g3 ♖×g5.

Less mysterious but more interesting is **25**. In four solutions there is an active sacrifice of a white piece, while the fifth contains merely a capture of the passive WB and is dull by comparison. It is impossible to tell whether the composer wanted this solution or could not see a satisfactory way of avoiding it. Whether or not you agree with me that this line slightly spoils the problem, you might like to try your hand at the tricky but fascinating task of eliminating it. I cannot manage it without increasing the total of pieces by one but I think it is worth it. My answer is given at the end of the chapter.

f) Originality and Anticipation

It is far from self evident what originality is. To the best of my knowledge I invented the so called “Feather mechanism” described in section b) above but obviously I did not invent the capture of white pieces or the line opening by the BQ which are constituents of the idea. It is the particular combination of motifs which made the idea original. Indeed it is often in combinations of motifs that originality is to be found nowadays. Alternatively, there is still room to find new motivations for familiar looking manoeuvres. We shall see examples in later chapters. Meanwhile a plea to judges and commentators in general not to use the word “original” in a vague sense but to specify the combinations or motivations which they find novel.

Plagiarism is fortunately very rare but unintentional anticipation is common. Usually it gets pointed out sooner or later, but it can be quite a lot later. I took a rest from composing in the eighties and on my return was amazed to find in the FIDE Album 1983-5 a problem by T.Garai which I had completely anticipated about ten years before. Garai very graciously acknowledged this in a note to *The Problemist* soon afterwards. At about the same time I composed another problem which, as it turned out, Janevski had made a matter of months before. In both these cases the settings were very similar.

When a problem and its partial anticipation are more different it can be instructive to compare them. A case of this is seen in **26** and **27**. Despite the different orientation the similarity of the matrix should be apparent. The theme is cyclic white moves which alternately pin and mate, while the black pieces initially occupying the mating lines get themselves out of the way. The key to the economy of the position is the triple observation of the WS by the WQ and WRs, one of which is left guarding it in each solution. Important for soundness is the fact that this WS guards a vital square or squares in the BK’s field.

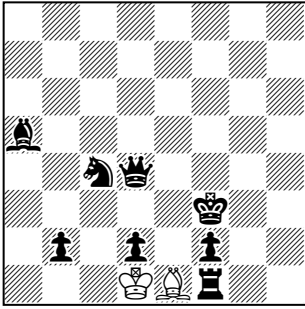
Kricheli’s setting is superior in several interesting constructional features. The first is that he has the pawns moving in the right direction, often a crucial decision. The WP next to the BK is clearly needed to stop mates on its square but the fact that e4 is guarded in the Janevski setting causes other difficulties. Next Kricheli has ensured that no black blocking piece can capture this WP even in two moves, which enables him to move the BK’s field to the board’s edge and locate the WQ at a safer distance. Further, he has found a very useful device on the long black diagonal which again keeps the WQ out, except in the line where its influence along the third rank is needed. Finally he has blocked the second rank with the thematic BRc2, which means that no equivalent of Janevski’s Wpc5 is needed.

Janevski has made trouble for himself in his decision to make the BRe4 go to g6. Not only does he have to use the WK and add pawns on a7 and h5 to prevent the BQ from simply moving away, but the Bpg5 becomes necessary to prevent the wrong rook from interfering at g6. That makes the thematic interference on g3 look ill chosen, too. The blocking piece on f2 has to be a BB, not a BP, because of cooks by Qg1, showing another advantage of positioning the BK at the board edge.

Perhaps surprisingly, Kricheli’s problem did not appear in the FIDE Album, but notice the date, in the seventies!

BLACK TO PLAY

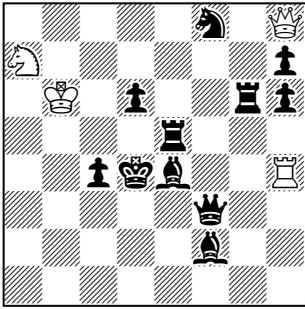
28 F.Giegold
1 HM *Schach-Echo* 1972



H#5

1. ♖d7 ♕c2 2. ♗d6 ♖x b2
3. d1 ♗ ♕x a5 4. ♔e2 ♖c3
5. ♗e1 ♖d3.

29 J.M.Kricheli
1 HM *feenschach* 3/1971



H#2 b) ♗f2>e3

- a)
1. ♖f6 ♖h3 2. ♗d5 ♗c6;
- b)
1. ♗g4 ♖xh7 2. ♗d5 ♗b5.

g) Difficulty

There is a puzzle element in chess problems which can add to the enjoyment if one ultimately discovers that the difficulty lay in one's inability to grasp a telling, novel idea. Sometimes the idea is not so novel but there is something about the position which makes it hard to grasp.

The composer of 28 was famous for his amazing knack of injecting difficulty into his compositions. Apart from the puzzle element this problem shows artistic qualities in the movement across critical squares by both WB and BQ and in the motivation for the mysterious arrival square of Black's first move, which cannot be understood without seeing the whole solution.

Sometimes, however, helpmates are hard to solve because clumsy construction leaves all sorts of misleading signs to lead one astray. This can be most frustrating because one feels entitled to expect the composer to baffle one by legitimate means or not at all! Since many helpmates are not hard, if a helpmate composer does produce a work which solvers find both difficult and satisfying he tends to rejoice inordinately. I was thrilled in the early seventies when one of the first problems I had published in a German magazine scored the maximum points for difficulty (and a reasonable grading for content). Maximum difficulty for a helpmate in 2! Several solvers gave it up as insoluble. I now realise that what made this fairly modest problem hard was that my name was unknown and the theme involved capturing black material, unusual in those days.

Yes, difficulty is subjective and transient. I found the first helpmates by Bakcsi which I solved in the sixties enormously difficult; he has long since become one of my favourite composers, I have studied his compositions closely and as a result I now solve most of his new helpmates instantaneously. I have even had the experience of looking at a problem of his and saying to myself "Why didn't I think of that?", recognising the idea even before the actual moves.

Solvers said that they found 29 enormously difficult, yet the change of pin theme, in which one black piece pins itself instead of another, was already well known. Was it difficult because solvers instinctively shied away from the idea of the useless pin in the mating position of each part? Does the theme justify the idle white pieces? Part b) is actually sound with the WR on g4, so that the useless pin disappears after 1.Rxg4, though an equivalent capture in a) would be harder to arrange. Would such a rearrangement make the problem better? Would it make it easier?

One thing we can be sure of, it was astute of the composer to send this difficult work to *feenschach*, where the honours were at that time based on solvers' gradings and showed a strong tendency to set difficulty above artistic qualities; as a result the quality of the helpmates submitted to the magazine declined rapidly in the early seventies until the system was changed. Nowadays very few magazines bother with solvers' gradings and in the ones which do they often seem absurd. It is not surprising that an average of the marks of solvers who range from the novice to the jaded should fail to produce anything meaningful, whether quality or difficulty is in question.

h) Unity

You may have been surprised that this was not the first in my list of concepts. Whether composing a long single line helpmate where his aim is to fuse black and white play into a satisfactory whole, or a multiphase helpmate in 2 where the need is for well balanced solutions, the search for variety without loss of unity is the composer's main concern. This idea will run through the rest of the book, as we look at the challenges it offers in various lengths and sorts of helpmate and the different ways in which it may be achieved.

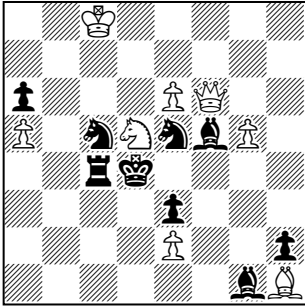
ANSWER TO WEASEL PROBLEM: Five, since each one of the BQ, BRs & BBs can be removed separately. In addition, some of them can be removed in pairs. You can even remove three at the same time without changing what happens if you choose the BRh5 and the two bishops. I think this is the world record for weasels!

ANSWER TO MYLLYNIEMI CONSTRUCTION: I added BQf8, BPd5, WPc6; moved the WK to b7; and removed a6 and c5. Did you do better?

BLACK TO PLAY

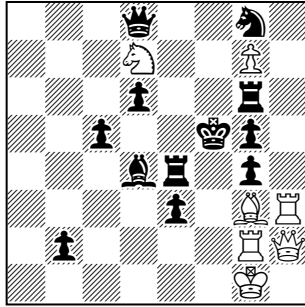
DO IT YOURSELF!

30 F.Seidemann
Deutsche Märchenschach-
Zeitung 1931



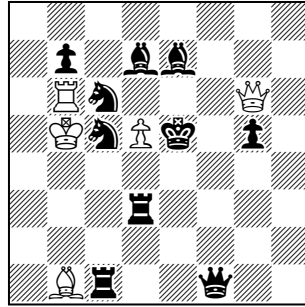
H#2

31 V.Zabunov
3 Pr Schach-Echo 1966



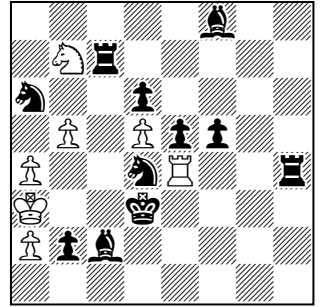
H#2 3 solutions

32 C.J.Feather
Schach-Echo 1971



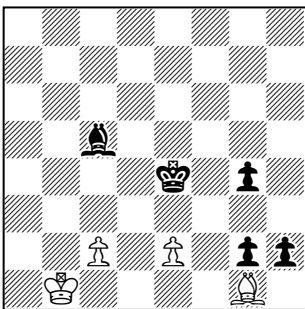
H#2 b) $\text{h}1 > \text{g}3$

33 N.Kovács
Magyar Sakkvilág 1930



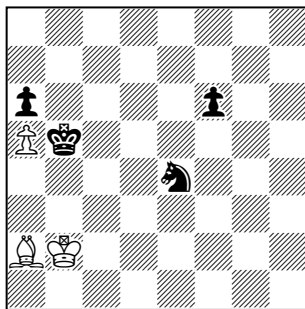
H#3

34 H.Lohmann
Die Welt 1954



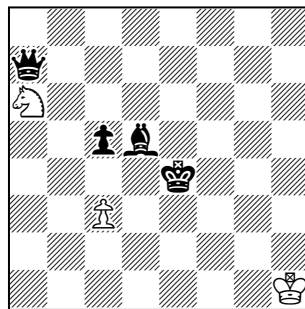
H#5

35 N.Ringeltaube &
W.Schröder
1 HM feenschach 12/1973



H#5

36 M.McDowell
2 Pr British Chess
Magazine 1979



H#6 2 solutions

SOLUTIONS ON
NEXT PAGE

BLACK TO PLAY

30. (Seidemann) 1. ♖d3 ♜f2 2. exf2 e3.

A good puzzle and a well made problem. The WQ is necessary since a WRf6 would cause cooks, however a modern composer would probably have used a black pawn on e6.

31. (Zabunov) 1. ♜ee6 ♞×b2 2. ♗e5 ♜c2; 1. ♞ge6 ♞h8 2. ♗f6 ♜h7; 1. ♗c3 ♗×d6 2. ♞d4 ♜e5.

Clearances with an average of two idle white pieces per solution. I'm not sure whether this problem has one solution too many or three solutions too many! You may be reassured that none of the other problems in the book are as bad as this, but I did warn you! To appreciate the good one must experience the bad. Oh yes, there's also the cook 1. ♜f8 ♗×c5 2. ♜f6 g×f8♜, so I guess it's actually four solutions too many. This problem appears as 554 in the FIDE Album.

32. (Feather) a) 1. ♜f7 ♜×d3 2. ♜f6 ♜d4; b) 1. ♗g4 ♜×c6 2. ♜f5 ♜d5.

This is the problem mentioned in the text, which the solvers found so hard.

33. (Kovács) 1. ♜c4 a5 2. ♜×b5 ♜×b2 3. ♗b3 a4.

Difficult, certainly, but also rather naughty. Or should we assume that the author added the two BRs and the BPs b2 and f5 not to confuse the solver but because he thought they stopped cooks? They don't.

34. (Lohmann) 1. h1 ♗ ♗d4 2. g1 ♗ ♗a1 3. ♗ge3 ♜b2 4. ♜d4 c4 5. ♗e4 ♜b3.

Hard to solve but very artistic too, with all that bishop play and similar use of the two corners. Only g4 stops cooks.

35. (Ringeltaube & Schröder) 1. ♗c3 ♗e6 2. ♗d5 ♗c8 3. ♗b6 a×b6 4. a5 b7 5. ♜a6 b8♜.

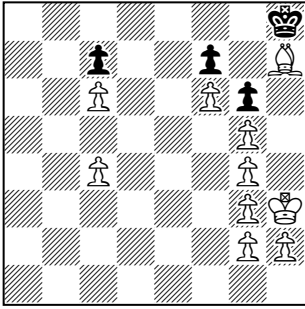
Solvers agreed that this was hard but it's even harder to say why. My theory is that one does not expect the BS to go to b6 because it seems incredible that its route there can be unique.

36. (McDowell) 1. ♜b6 c4 2. ♜e5+ c×d5 3. ♜d6 ♗×c5 4. ♜c7 d6+ 5. ♜b8 d7 6. ♜a7 d8♜.

The subtle motivation for the BQ moves requires one to anticipate the position at move 5 from the very beginning; an excellent problem. Serendipity intervened when solvers found the "cook" 1. ♗c6 c4 2. ♗b5 c×b5 3. ♜d5 b6 4. ♜c6 b7 5. ♜b6 ♗b4 6. ♜a5 b8♜, which is unrelated to the first line except in the delicacy of its timing. In shorter helpmates the practice of adopting chance solutions usually produces bad problems, but if you have ever tried to compose a helpmate in 6 you will appreciate the miracle of this accurate and attractive cook and surely not blame the composer for welcoming it as a second solution!

CHAPTER 3: LENGTH AND FORM

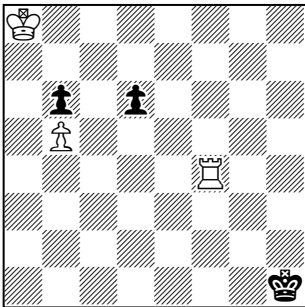
37 R.Kassai
2 Pr *Tipográfia* 1966



H#21

1. ♖xh7 ♜h4 2. ♔g8 ♜h3
.....
13. ♜f2 ♜h4 14. ♖xg2 c5
15. ♜f3 ♜h3 16. ♖e4 ♜g2
17. ♜d5 h4 18. ♖xc6 h5
19. ♜d7 h6 20. ♖e8 h7
21. ♜f8 h8 ♜(♖).

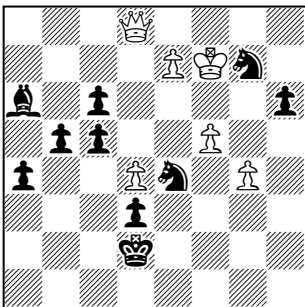
38 F.Abdurahmanović
Special Pr
Magyar Sakkélet 1974



H#6 2 solutions

1. d5 ♜b7 2. d4 ♜c6
3. d3 ♜d5 4. d2 ♜e4
5. d1 ♜ ♜f3 6. ♜g1 ♜h4;
1. ♖g2 ♜c4 2. ♜f3 ♜c5
3. bxc5 b6 4. ♖e4 b7
5. ♜d5 b8 ♜ 6. ♜c6 ♜b7.

39 A.M.Kárpáti
Magyar Sakkélet 1956
(version)



H#3 3 solutions

1. ♖c3 e8 ♜ 2. ♖b4 ♜c7 3. ♖a5 ♜d5;
1. ♖c3 e8 ♜ 2. ♖c4 ♜d7 3. ♖d5 ♜e6;
1. ♖e3 e8 ♜ 2. ♖f4 ♜e7 3. ♖g5 ♜x4.

Long helpmates (the longest is a helpmate in 28 by B. Hegermann, 1934) are notoriously tedious. Like the giant marrow in the vegetable show they look impressive but have little flavour. Pieces trapped by pawns in corners mark time like bored sentries while others make uneventful treks to the extremities of the board and back. The occasional nice piece of timing, such as 14...c5 in **37**, enlivens proceedings for a moment but the only “theme” is the length itself and the remarkable fact of soundness. There is a feeling that the composer simply fiddled about until he found some unique sequence of moves, about which he initially had as little idea as the prospective solver.

Not until we get down to about six or seven moves does this feeling begin to dissipate, and even then the thematic thread can be tenuous, as in **38** where the two kings make similar diagonal marches, the solution with the WK’s march being considerably less interesting than the other. In fact there are few themes which require such length and if you can think of one you will be very lucky (and skilful) if you manage to set it soundly. Such is the combinatorial explosion that even a fast program like Alybadix may be unable to test the trillions of possibilities in a sensible time, so you may never know if your work is correct.

Computers can help a great deal with helpmates in 4, 5 or 6 moves, which were previously very hard to test, and that accounts for an expansion in thematic settings of such length. In 1936 Dawson, commenting on a problem by Fox which was said to have been through at least fifty different versions before achieving soundness, opined that “it may be taken (very nearly) as an axiom that a 4-move helpmate with a White R and a B is cooked!”. While this has been proved to be complete nonsense (e.g. WK a8, WR c2, WB d1, BK h1, helpmate in 6, solution obvious – Z. Maslar, *feenschach* 1978) it is true that as the number of moves increases so the feasibility of using many white pieces diminishes rapidly and the thematic possibilities with it. For example, the only helpmate in more than 4 with a WQ in the FIDE Albums in the last 30 years is the remarkable **59** (for solving, at the end of this chapter).

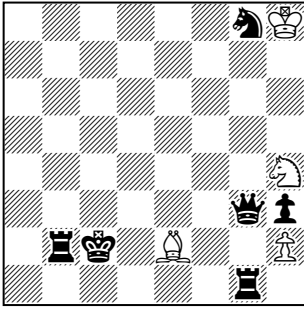
Even in 3-move helpmates the number of white pieces is usually quite limited and it is not particularly common to find a WQ. The immobile WQ in **39**, serving as a provider of white lines to be temporarily closed by the R, B and S which appear on e8, makes a very unusual theme indeed, with the repetition of Kc3 an unavoidable minor blemish. As if to prove the point about soundness this problem appeared without the BPh6 and with the WK on h7, allowing a couple of cooks which I have corrected with this change. I do not know if the problem has been corrected before.

The limitations mentioned above apply despite an undoubted improvement in technique over the years. Páros was considered a great technician and was vastly more accomplished than many of his contemporaries. In 1970 an elegant task of his (Albino plus 4 echo mates) dating from 1954 was set as a synthetic in *The Problemist* and solvers showed that the pieces required could be reduced from 14 to 11 without compromising the theme. Even more remarkable, though dating from the computer age, was the result when a helpmate in 2 with double BS promotion by Neukomm appeared as a synthetic in *Thema Danicum* in 1993. Instead of the 20-piece original several solvers sent in a setting with 12 men! and it was further shown that the essential part of the idea can be set in miniature (7 men or fewer).

Further evidence of this technical progress comes in the growing number of 2-move helpmates which use all or most of the seven white pieces. Nonetheless the limits on progress are absolute and have to do, among other things, with the size of the board. As things stand, we shall never see regular appearances of helpmates in 4 with half a dozen white men and several thematic solutions!

BLACK TO PLAY

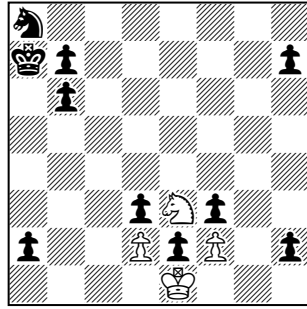
40 K.Ébersz
2 Pr= *Magyar Sakkvilág*
1934



H#5 (Cooked: see
2012 Introduction)

1. ♖c1 ♗h5 2. ♖e1 ♘f3
3. ♘d1 ♗e5+ 4. ♚e2 ♘g4
5. ♚d2 ♗e3.

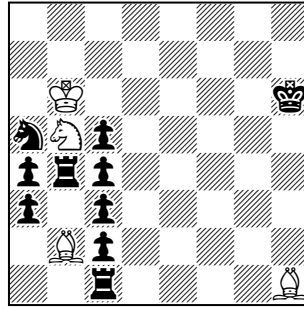
41 C.M.Fox
Essener Anzeiger 1931



H#5

1. h1♖+ ♗f1 2. ♖h2 ♗e3
3. a1♚+ ♘d1 4. ♚a6 ♗c3
5. ♖b8 ♗b5.

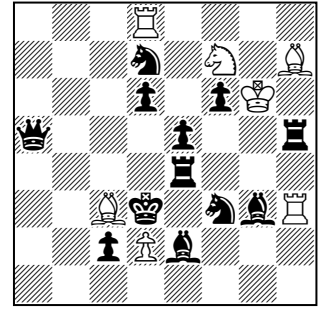
42 N.Kovács
HM *Magyar Sakkvilág*
1934



H#4

1. ♚a1 ♗c3 2. ♚bb1 ♗e4
3. ♚h1 ♘d6 4. ♚h5 ♗f7.

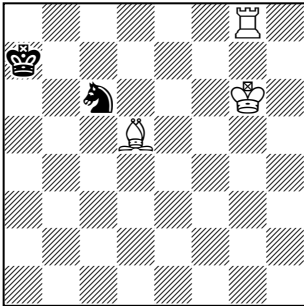
43 J.Oudot
Problemas 1957



H#2

1. ♗c5 ♘x6 2. ♗g5 ♗x5.

44 W.Pauly
Die Schwalbe 1931

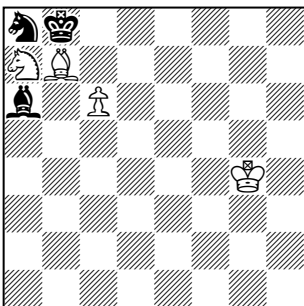


H#3*

* 1... ♖c8 2. ♗b8 ♖c6
3. ♘a8 ♖a6;

1. ♘b7 ♗f7 2. ♗a7 ♗e8
3. ♘a8 ♗c6.

45 H.P.Rehm
Arbejder Skak 1958



H#3*

* 1... ♗c8 2. ♗b7 cxb7
3. ♗c7 ♗c6;

1. ♗b6 ♗b5 2. ♗c8 ♗c7
3. ♗a7 ♗xa6.

Fashions in helpmate form have often fluctuated but there is no doubt that the single line type has very little left to offer after seventy years or so of intensive cultivation. To achieve a satisfying unity in this form the problem must either show very intensive strategy as in **40**, with two different closings of the same battery line which is established during the solution, or successive repetition, as in **41**, where the full five moves are needed to achieve the doubling of the thematic shielding of the WK from check. It is easy to see that there is only a limited number of ideas which can be set as vividly as **40** or cumulated as in **41**.

The point becomes even more apparent in shorter problems like **42** or **43**. The former is a brilliant construction to force what appears to be the wrong BR to move to the h-file; since the pin must be relieved two moves by the Rb4 are needed anyway, leaving only two for the Rc1 to get to h5, which is impossible because of the WBh1. The BSA5 stops a cook with the BK on d8. **43** shows a mate on a square which is maximally guarded in the initial position, and has the elegance to do it with none of the pins present at the start.

It is evident, however, that these problems lead nowhere; no composer looking at either of them is going to get ideas for further development; they are perfect of their kind.

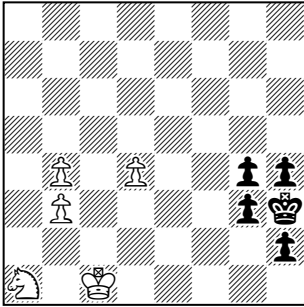
The need for variety was sought for a long time through the set play form. The first helpmate with a set mate in 1 was published by Dawson in 1921 but the idea soon developed into the full line (missing only an initial black move) which A.C. White described 14 years later as "the most satisfactory endeavor to combine two lines of play in the Help-Mate". In the long run he was to prove quite wrong about that but the fact became evident only slowly, so let us first look at an absolutely perfect example, **44**. The strategy is the same in the set play and the solution, with a neat interchange of functions between the white pieces. As a crowning elegance in a form where the set play will not work as solution because Black lacks a waiting move, his first move in the solution is a waiting move, but pins the BS!

If the set play form could have continued to produce masterpieces like that it would flourish to this day, but it suffered from three drawbacks.

The first was that it became for a while almost *de rigueur* to have set play, so that it was foisted on problems where it really did not fit. Many of those were much messier than **45** but even here the very ordinary set play adds nothing at all to the delightful parallelism of the solution, so the composer would have done better not to add the BB merely for its sake.

BLACK TO PLAY

46 G.Baksci
3 HM Jacobs MT 1959

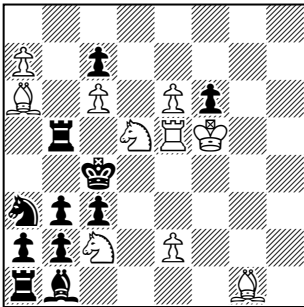


H#4*

* 1... ♖c2 2.h1♙+ ♖e1
3.♗g2 ♖d3 4.♗h2 ♖f4;

1.g2 ♖c2 2.g1♙+ ♖e1
3.♗g2 ♖d3 4.♗g3 ♖f4.

48 J.Korponai
problem 33TT 1961 (v)
(originally 1 Pr)

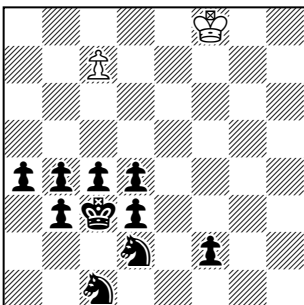


H#2*

* 1... ♖de3;

1.fxe5 ♖b6 2.e4 ♖ce3.

50 R.Lecomte
1 Comm. *Thèmes 64* 1956



H#3 b) -♙d4

a)
1.f1♙ c8♖ 2.♗e3 ♖b6
3.♗c2 ♖xa4;

b)
1.f1♙+ ♗e7 2.♗d1 c8♗
3.♗c2 ♗h8.

The second drawback is the tendency for the actual and the set play in this kind of problem to be essentially no more than different ways of doing the same thing, often leading to the same mate in a different way; for example **46** shows this. The white play does not change, though the ingenuity of the black play is such that the defect hardly shows; there are many cruder examples with this failing which do not deserve to be reproduced!

The final drawback is the severe limitation imposed by set play when it comes to showing ambitious themes. Thus in **47** the halfpin combined with the switch of unpin from White to Black would be most pleasing were it not for the cook 1.♖d6 ♗x♖b5 2.♗e7 ♗d8. The composer attempted to cure this by moving the WRf8 to f7, but this makes even worse cooks (e.g. 1.♗f6 ♗d1 2.♗f3 ♗e7). If you try to cure this you will find the task virtually impossible; while in the two solution form it is usually relatively easy to add a black piece to prevent cooks, here it would have to be an immobile piece. Not surprisingly then, in those cases where composers did achieve soundness with set play, the positions became increasingly cluttered with immobilised pieces, like the SW corner of **48**.

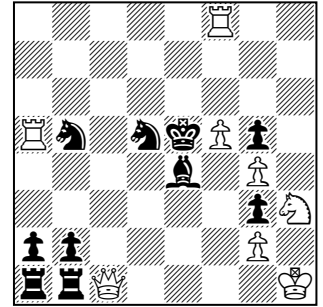
The composer had great difficulty in getting this problem sound. The capture and the crossing of the critical square e3 make a most attractive way of achieving the switch of S-mates, but at what a price!

Clearly this form had reached its limit; within ten or a dozen years of **48** it had almost died out. Except for a few cases where the theme made it appropriate, the set play form was a false route for the helpmate, and it is no coincidence that around the time when it started to die out the modern strategic style really started to catch on. After all, set play is always half a move short, so even without its other shortcomings is quantitatively deficient.

The twinning or multiple position form goes back to Shinkman (1871) so is even older than set play; and it does not have its disadvantages. It is interesting to compare **49** and **50**. The former is full of WPs stopping cooks, because mobile black pieces cannot be used; the ones blocking WK moves are particularly unfortunate. The latter scores with striking white economy, only two cookstoppers and a WK restrained more neatly by the board edge. Lindgren's problem is better only because he got there twelve years earlier!

Twinning can involve changes which are all made from the diagram position or successive changes which lead on from each other; there is usually little to choose between these methods though a mixture of them in the same problem can be irritating. Making more than one change in a position is frowned upon and is usually a sign of poor construction; one exception is the so called duplex form which can be presented as "either side plays first and is mated", indeed its solutions are usually written that way. A moment's thought will convince you that this is the same as forming a twin by changing the colours and rotating the board 180 degrees. It is very difficult to be both ambitious and economical in this form, in fact good duplex helpmates are about as common as health resorts on the planet Pluto. A pleasant (but not exactly deep!) example is **51** which, unusually, has two solutions in each part.

47 M.Montanari
1 Pr *problem 24TT* 1957

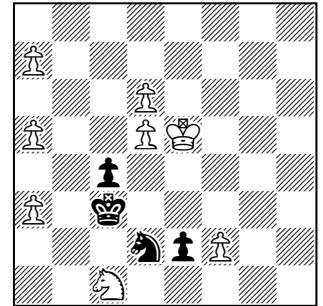


H#2*

* 1... ♖g1 2.♗d4 ♗c7;

1.♗e3 ♗d8 2.♗f1 ♗c3.

49 B.Lindgren
1 Pr *Tidskrift för Schack*
1943



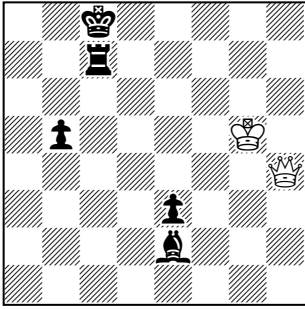
H#3*

* 1...a8♖ 2.e1♗ ♖b6
3.♗c2 ♖a4;

1.e1♙+ ♗f4 2.♗d1 a8♗
3.♗c2 ♗h8.

BLACK TO PLAY

51 P.Benkö
Die Schwalbe 1974

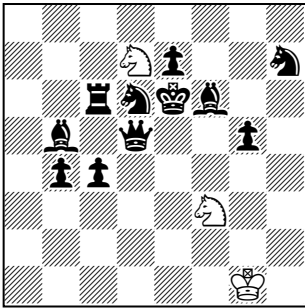


H#2 2 Solutions
DUPLIX

1. ♖f3 ♜h5 2. ♜b7 ♜e8;
1. ♜g4 ♜h1 2. ♜d7 ♜a8.

1. ♜h6 ♜d3 2. ♜g5 ♜h7;
1. ♜g3 ♜c5+ 2. ♜h4 ♜h5.

53 A.Benedek
2 HM *Jubilee Sanz* 1986



H#3 b) Move ♜ to c5 in mating position of a).

a) 1. ♖f5 ♜de5 2. ♜d6 ♜f7 3. ♜d7 ♜d8;

b) 1. ♜b5 ♜f7 2. ♜c6 ♜7e5 3. ♜d6 ♜d7.

There also exists a thing called zero-position which should be avoided in the same way as bubonic plague. This book is certified free of infection.

It would be tedious to enumerate all forms of twinning; the most common involve moving one piece (ideally not the BK) to another square, adding or removing one piece or changing its colour or denomination. Interchanging two pieces is often tolerated as a kind of single change.

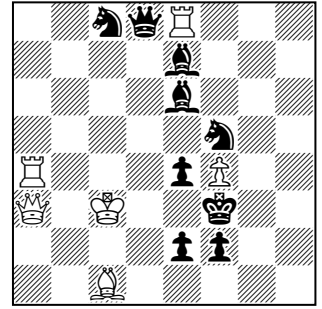
When the twinning is closely related to the problem's strategy, as in 10, it is known as thematic twinning, though this term is often used loosely. In 52 the theme is the removal of the black e-pawn by white sacrifice on e4 or e3; it is thematic (and, I hoped, amusing) that the BK must be mated on whichever of these squares is obstructed by the pawn and not on the one which appears to be free. This is achieved by alternating lines of guard to f4 in the interchange of functions between the WR and the WB. Quite the oddest thematic twinning I have seen appears in 53, typical of its author's ingenious whimsy. I will not spoil this piece of wit by attempting to describe it; it makes a superb problem but I cannot see it setting a trend!

53 certainly has artistic unity but the same cannot be said of the famous 54, which sets out unashamedly to puzzle by means of twinning. "Difficult, do you call it, Sir? I wish it were impossible", as Dr Johnson remarked of the performance of a celebrated violinist.

As soon as twinning ceases to be neutral or thematic and begins to be seen as the theme of the problem, a certain superficiality sets in. The various parts are usually strategically unrelated; the twinning itself is (erroneously) considered a sufficient link. Myllyniemi composed a position containing a helpmate in 2 on each rank and each file (taken separately) and Dawson produced one with a problem on each of nine different diagonals. Another idea is to remove successive pieces until very little is left, the so called striptease theme, all strip and no tease in my opinion, as titillating as a turnip. I spare you the tedium of these. There are some not too extreme examples among the problems for solving.

The multisolution form (dating from Lange, 1862) is by far the most satisfactory in most cases, though this view did not prevail until after Dawson's death in 1951. For a time it was referred to by the name of the Russian M.B. Neumann (thus a helpmate with three solutions used to be termed "Neumann 3") but this confusing jargon is fortunately no longer current. Although Neumann certainly used this form it was mainly Páros who later brought it to prominence. One obvious reason why it is now regarded as superior to twinning is that it is harder to achieve; whereas a multisolution helpmate can usually be transformed easily into twins the opposite process is mostly impossible. The multisolution form is so well represented in this book that I shall give no special examples here.

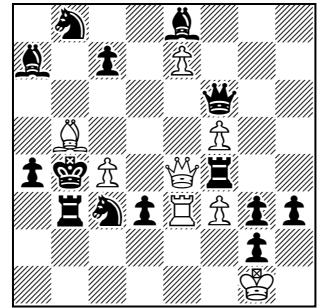
52 C.J.Feather
Moultings 9 1992



H#2 b) ♜e4>e3

a)
1. ♜d6 ♜x e4 2. ♜x e4 ♜a8;
b)
1. ♜d7 ♜x e3 2. ♜x e3 ♜c2.

54 G.Páros
1 Pr Kovács MT 1948



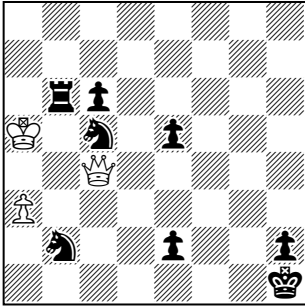
H#2 b) +♜a5

a)
1. ♜a3 ♜x d3 2. ♜b3 ♜b1;
b)
1. ♜c5 ♜a8 2. ♜d6 ♜b7.

BLACK TO PLAY

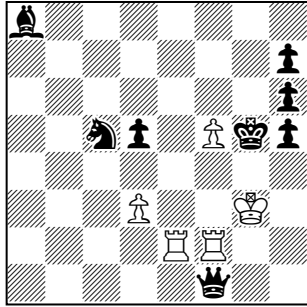
DO IT YOURSELF!

55 W.Schlitt
1 Pr *Feenschach* 1959



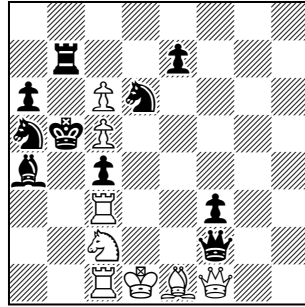
- a) H#1
- b) ♖c4 H#2
- c) ♗c4 H#3
- d) ♘c4 H#4
- e) ♙c4 H#5

56 G.Bakcsi
2 HM *feenschach* 5/1971



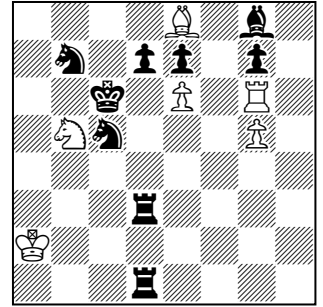
- H#2
- b) ♖♗=♗♗
- c) ♖♗=♘♘
- d) ♖♗=♙♙

57 I.Telkes
1 Pr Budapest-Paris
1938/39



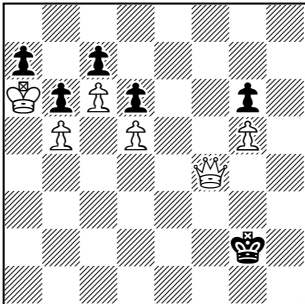
H#2

58 G.Páros
1 Pr *Chess Life & Review*
1972/74



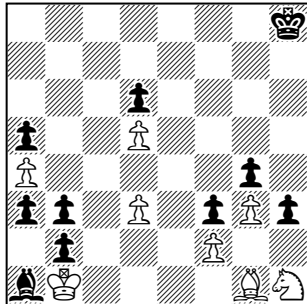
H#3

59 F.Abdurahmanović
3 HM *Mat* 1974



H#5*

60 G.Bebesi
Fairy Chess Review 1955



H#14

SOLUTIONS ON
NEXT PAGE

BLACK TO PLAY

55. (Schlitt) a) 1.e1 ♖ ♗f1; b) 1.e1 ♖ ♗f4 2.♗g2 ♗f1; c) 1.e1 ♖+ Kxb6 2.♖f2 ♖e2 3.♖g1 ♖f3; d) 1.e1 ♖ ♗xb2 2.♗g2 ♗d3 3.♗b1 a4 4.♗g1 ♗f2; e) 1.♗b5+ cxb5 2.♖g2 bxc6 3.h1 ♗ c7 4.♗g1 c8 ♗ 5.♗h1 ♗h3.

Twinning for its own sake, a remarkable concoction, but some of the content is less than scintillating.

56. (Bakcsi) a) 1.♗d7 ♗e7 2.♗f6 ♗g7; b) 1.♗a1 ♖g4 2.♗f6 ♖e3; c) 1.d4 ♗xd4 2.♗b7 ♗e4; d) 1.♗a1 e4 2.♗f6 f4.

The repeated moves detract but it's still something of a *tour de force*.

57. (Telkes) 1.♗xf1 ♗b3+ 2.cxb3 ♗d4.

The construction can be improved (e.g. a5=BP, BPe7 to d5 and remove b7 and c6). A typical thirties one-liner, crying out for a doubling of the idea but still impressive.

58. (Páros) 1.♖h7 exd7+ 2.♖xg6 d8 ♗+ 3.♖xe8 ♗a7.

A very late date for a short one-liner. The white pieces are there only to be taken but it's hard to imagine a twin in which they might serve.

59. (Abdurahmanović) 1... ♗d4 2.♖f3 ♗xb6 3.♖e4 ♗a5 4.♖xd5 b6+ 5.♖xc6 ♗b5; 1.♖h3 ♗e5 2.dxe5 d6 3.♖g4 d7 4.♖f5 d8 ♗ 5.♖e6 ♗d7.

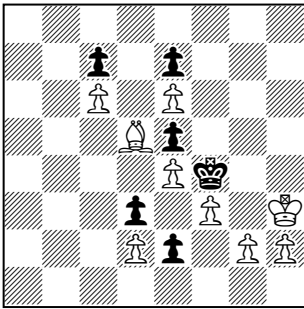
Must have been composed by the "fiddling about" method mentioned in the text, but still amazing.

60. (Bebesi) 1.♖g7 ♖h2 ... 4.♖xd5 ... 6.♖b4 ♖g1 7.h2 d4 8.hxg1 ♖ d5 9.♖xf2 ♗xf2 10.♖xa4 ♗xg4 11.f2 ♗e3 12.f1 ♖+ ♗d1 13.♗f4 g4 14.♗b4 ♗c3.

The best face of the long helpmate. Some subtle timing and a more dynamic use of the closed corner than in most such problems. The word "miracle" used by one solver is hardly out of place. Goodness knows how long the genial and charming composer spent on this, but Alybadix needed 9 hours, 38 minutes and 3 seconds (with an 80486/33 processor).

CHAPTER 4: AGAINST THE GRAIN

61 F.Abdurahmanović
1 Pr *Sahovski Glasnik*
1964-66

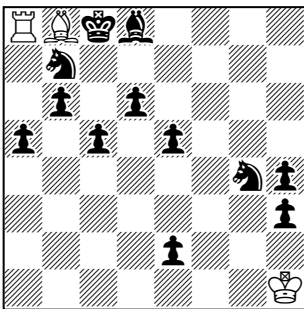


H#3*

* 1...♖h4 2.e1♗ ♕h5
3.♗xh3 g3;

1.e1♗ ♖b3 2.♗h4 ♖d1
3.♗g5 g3.

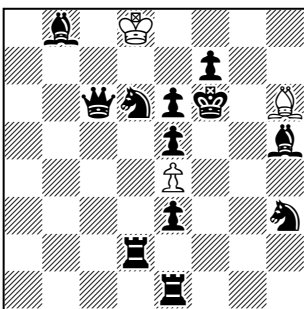
62 A.M.Kárpáti & L.Lindner
1 Pr *Magyar Sakkvilág*
1941



H#4

1.b5 ♖a7+ 2.♖c7 ♖b8+
3.♖b6 ♖a7+ 4.♖a6 ♖xc5.

63 J.M.Kricheli
Problemista 1966



H#3 b) ♗e5>f5

a)
1.♗g2 ♖f8 2.♗g7 ♖xd6
3.♗g6 ♖e7;

b)
1.♗g1 ♖xe3 2.♗g7 ♖f4
3.♗g6 e5.

Before we look at methods of achieving that unity in variety which is the hallmark of the best helpmates, we shall cast a quick eye over some ways in which composers have gone against the nature of the genre in their search for interest and originality. It is interesting that each of these apparently perverse sidelines also has a connection with the main lines of the helpmate's development.

Attempts to introduce so called "tries" have from time to time been made by a variety of composers with inspiration from directmates. The difference is that directmate tries have refutations while helpmate "tries" simply don't work, being a failure of cooperation. While directmate tries look to Black for resourcefulness, helpmate "tries" look to the solver for incompetence!

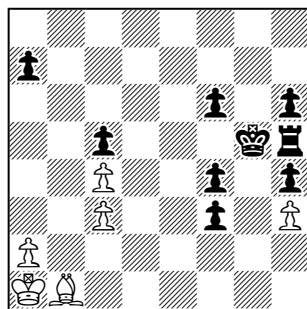
Thus in 61 we are supposed to try first 1.e1♗?? 2.♗xe4 ♕h4 3.♗f5 g3, and then 1.e1♗ ♕h4 2.♗xe4 ♖xe4 stalemate, thus completing the theme of the four promotions. In a three move problem attempts which obviously fail after one and two moves respectively do not seem very convincing to me; and what a constricted position!

Perhaps we shall find 62 more convincing. Here the solver is hardly likely not to attempt to block d7 for Bxd6 mate; it does not take long to see that the only possible piece to do the job would be a BB, which would have to appear from promotion on h1. When you have found that this does not work and put in a great deal more thought besides you may find the ingenious solution: the WB has to shuttle backwards and forwards so as finally to provide a similar looking mate on the a-file instead of the eighth rank. A convincing try, then? Not for me. We can remove e2/g4/h3/h4 altogether without affecting soundness or solution. If the composers were going to use those pieces why didn't they arrange for 1.h2 ♕g2 2.h1♗+ ♕h3 3.♗c6 ♕xh4 etc. to work as a second solution? Because it's strategically inferior to the first! and surely that flaw cannot be remedied by having it as a "try" which fails rather than a solution which works! I think the embroidery in the SE corner actually spoils this fine problem by insulting the solver's intelligence.

Despite the above, there is a kind of "try" in the helpmate which can be very convincing. The catch is that such "tries" are not tries at all but dual avoidance! In 63 you will find, if you start with the wrong rook in either part, that the power of the rook left behind prevents the intended mate, whether by pin of the bishop or by guard of e5. Thus each line is correct (not dualised) because of a specific strategic effect; the presence of both rooks is not mere embroidery since the problem would be unsound as a twin with the BR moving from d2 to e1. As I have already promised once, there will be more about dual avoidance in chapter 7. I chose 63, by the way, because it is such a clear example; it does have a defect in the repetition of Black's second and third moves, though.

The next method of going against the helpmate grain has also been present in the last two examples. This is **tempo**. The "tries" in 62 failed because the WK had nowhere to go at his third move; if in 63 the WB could have done nothing instead of capturing on d6 or e3 then either rook could have started off. Tempo play involves finding ways of filling in moves, doing nothing, or nothing harmful, instead of positive cooperation. It can make for intriguing puzzles and is very popular with some solvers for that reason. The mate in 64 could be achieved in three moves if the sides could play in the order WWBBBW. Since they can't, all possible pawn moves on the a-file are needed as fillers, two black and two white tempi.

64 A.M.Kárpáti
1 HM *J.Darvas Mem.* 1957

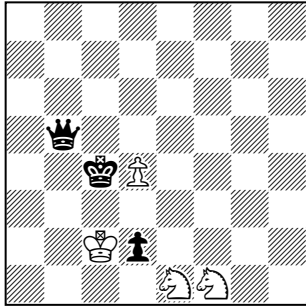


H#5

1.a6 ♕b2 2.a5 ♕c2
3.♕f5 a3 4.♕e4 a4
5.♗e5 ♕d2.

BLACK TO PLAY

65 K.-H.Ahlheim
3 Pr *Die Schwalbe* 1971

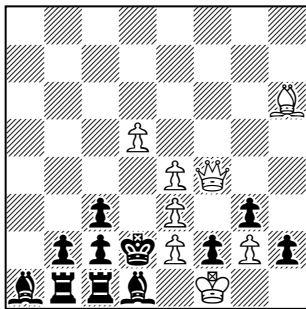


H#3 2 solutions

1. d1♖ d5 2. ♗x d5 ♘d3
3. ♗d4 ♘e3;

1. d1♗+ ♖d2 2. ♗a4 ♘c2
3. ♗b3 ♘fe3.

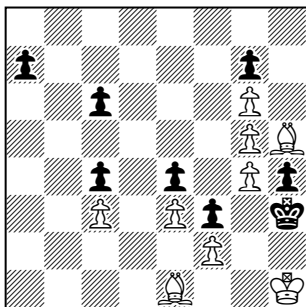
**67 R.Darvas, T.Kardos &
J.Bajtay**
1 Pr *Tidskrift för Schack* 1950



H#3

1. h1♗ ♖x f2 2. ♗x f2 e5
3. ♗h1 e4.

69 M.Caillaud
1 Pr *feenschach* 1987



H#9

1. a5 ♗d2 2. a4 ♗c1 3. a3
♗b2 4. a2 ♗a3 5. a1♗+
♗c1 6. ♗a2 ♖g1 7. ♗x f2
♗d2 8. ♖g3 ♗e1 9. h3
♗x f2.

appeared (with solution) in an article and had a cook which went unnoticed even by the judge. I have searched all subsequent issues of the magazine but can find no correction and do not even know whether the composer (who died in 1988) knew of the cook. I have cured it myself, by changing the colour of g5 and adding the BP a3.

Tempo effects are not particularly hard to set if the composer does not try to incorporate too much else. Thus in **65** the need is merely to ensure that the promoting black pieces have a spare move and only one way to use it; this is in some ways like the set play form but with the gap not at the beginning of the solution but later. As in the case of set play, once the idea becomes more complex the construction can be quite hard since pieces added to stop cooks must often be immobilised. In **66** a similar idea to 65 is already a considerably greater task because the black tempo moves are on the same line. (I should have preferred the two solution form e.g. e5=R , f6=B , add BP g5; one piece more in order to get rid of twinning is a good bargain in my view.)

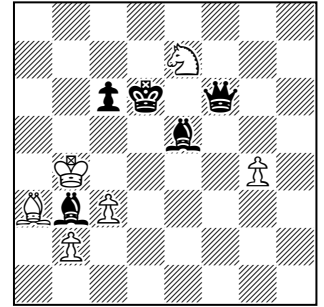
And when we look at **67**, with three black tempi, we see what the cost in immobilisation may be! White has to buy Black some time by sacrificing the Q; it would not be such fun to use a WS g4 instead! Black has five choices at his first move, two at his second and six at his third, and of these thirteen, five mate White! This is more like a selfmate than a helpmate, and even more so is the curious **68** where Black gets no choice at all! The limited possibilities are reflected in the fact that Alybadix tests this in 0.28 seconds, whereas most helpmates in 6 take hours.

69 shows a white tempo idea at considerable length. White needs to play Kg1 but otherwise to return to his initial position after an even numbered move. To lose a move the bishop has to travel widely. The black and white play takes a few moves to meet but when it does the interplay is subtle. In this problem White has an average of just over three choices per move.

When composers have ceased to treat tempo as an end in itself and have understood it as a device for motivating strategic ideas some remarkable compositions have resulted. This transition is very well seen in the works of Kricheli. There is a wonderful example in chapter 7 of tempo motivating a dual avoidance idea. Here we shall look at an example of tempo as the reason for some mysterious arrival effects.

In the first part of **70** it is obvious that the BS must get out of the WR's way, but why should it land on c2 rather than elsewhere? Similarly in the second part the WR must cross f4 but why should it land on g4, not h4? In each case there will be a later tempo move (2...Kc1 / 2.f2) which means that there would be an unwanted check if they did not land there. It is most ingenious that this anticipatory check avoidance is achieved by white tempo in one part and black in the other. This fine problem

66 J.M.Kricheli
5 Pr *Karsch Mem.* 1974

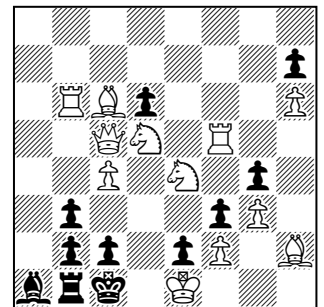


H#3 b) e5=♗

a) 1. ♗g8 ♘g6 2. ♖e6
♖c4 3. ♗f7 ♘f8;

b) 1. ♗f7 ♘g8 2. ♖d5
♖b3 3. ♗e6 ♘x f6.

68 M.Klasinc
Sp Pr *Schach-Echo* 1972

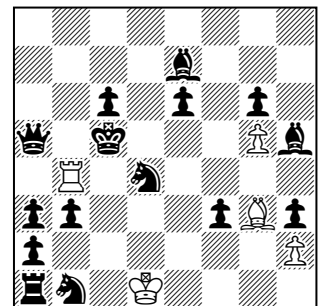


H#6*

* 1... ♖e3;

1. dxc5 ♘b4 2. cxb4 ♘c3
3. bxc3 ♗x f3 4. gx f3 ♖g6
5. hx g6 g4 6. gx f5 ♗f4.

70 J.M.Kricheli
2 Pr *problem* 1968



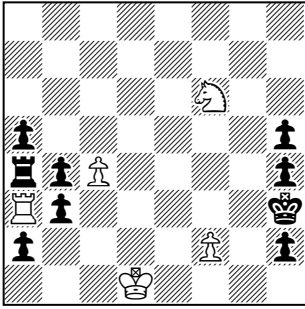
H#3 b) ♗e7>c3

a) 1. ♗c2 ♖f4 2. ♖d6 ♖c1
3. ♗c5 ♗d4;

b) 1. ♗b5 ♖g4 2. f2 ♗f4
3. ♖b4 ♗d6.

BLACK TO PLAY

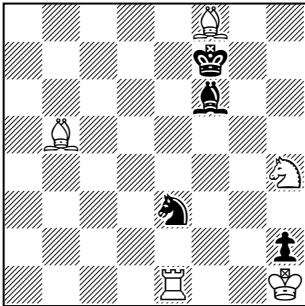
71 W.A.Földeák
Christmas Card 1950



H#3

1. a1♖+ ♔e2 2. ♖e5+ ♔f1
3. ♖b5 ♖x♖3.

72 S.Stambuk
3 HM *Sahovski Vjesnik* 1952



H#2

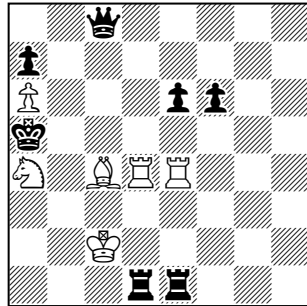
1. ♗c2 ♕h6 2. ♗a1 ♕c4.

Our final attempt to go against the grain is what I shall call **hideaway**. It is often related to tempo. In **71** Black would do nothing for three moves if that were allowed, just as in a tempo problem. Having once promoted the a-pawn, though, which he must do since 1.Kg2 is no use, he plays not tempo moves but the only two moves which will hide away the Q which he did not want! It is necessary to ensure that minor promotions will not work, which explains the rather dull white moves, thwarting the R-promotion. In view of the method of publication I suspect that the composer regarded this as something of a curiosity, which it is.

Tempo and hideaway are blended in the other order in **72**, where the BS would happily stay in hiding on any of seven squares which it can reach at its first move; but since it must make a tempo move at its second turn, only one of these initial possibilities works.

You may think that hideaway is rather weasely, since hiding useless pieces is rather like shutting them off in the way we saw in 18. That is true, but with hideaway, as with “tries” and tempo, an apparently sterile and perverse notion can be turned to thematic advantage if it is intertwined with the motivation of the other moves in a unifying way. In **73** we have BQ hideaways which use the arrival effects of the hiding BQ in order to motivate dual avoidance. This idea of hideaway stimulating subsequent strategy deserves further attention from composers.

73 C.J.Feather
Moultings 2 1950



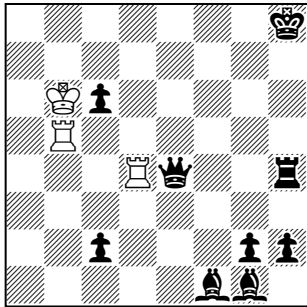
H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖g8 ♕e2 2. f5 ♖e5;
1. ♖h8 ♕d3 2. e5 ♖d5.

BLACK TO PLAY

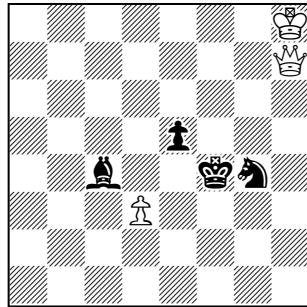
DO IT YOURSELF!

74 G.Bakcsi
2 Pr *Tipografia* 1963



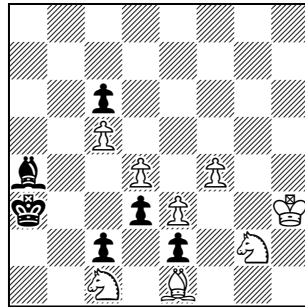
H#2 b) ♖>a6

75 G.Páros
1 Pr *BTSB* 1956



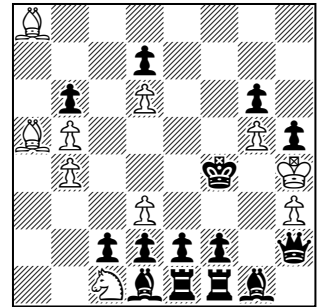
H#3

76 L.Lindner
Comm. Magyar Sakkvilág
1943



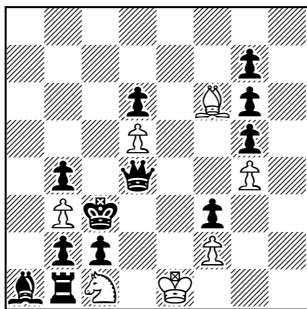
H#3

77 F.Abdurahmanović
2 Pr *Süddeutscher*
Rundfunk 1960



H#3

78 B.Hegemann
Problemist Fairy Chess
Supplement 1935



H#4

SOLUTIONS ON
NEXT PAGE

BLACK TO PLAY

74. (Bakcsi) a) 1.♖e3 ♜g5 2.c5 ♜xh4; b) 1.♖d3 ♜d7 2.♚c4 ♜b8.

Interesting BQ hideaways which avoid new pins by reinforcing old ones.

75. (Páros) 1.e4 ♜a7 2.♚e5 d4+ 3.♚d5 ♜d7.

White tempo with superb economy, including economy of space.

76. (Lindner) 1.d2 e4 2.dxe1 ♜ (d1??) ♜e3 3.♜b4 ♜c4.

Great skill in preventing the “try” from working, but what poverty in the white play!

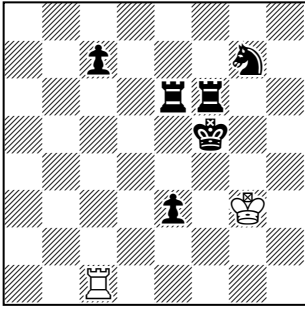
77. (Abdurahmanović) 1.♚e3 ♜h1 2.♖xh1 ♜g3 3.♖a8 ♜xb6.

The sequence BBWW would solve this in 2 but in fact maximum length tempo moves by both sides are needed. Full marks for technical skill if not for artistic impression!

78. (Hegermann) 1.♖e5+ ♜f1 2.♚d4 ♜xg7 3.♖f6 ♜e1 4.♚c3 ♜xf6.

Obviously there is the short set line 1...♜xg7 2.♖f6 ♜xf6 but to recreate it in the solution the BQ must take two moves to reach f6. In order for this to work both Ks must waste two moves. Nobody was in the mood for real cooperation in 1935!

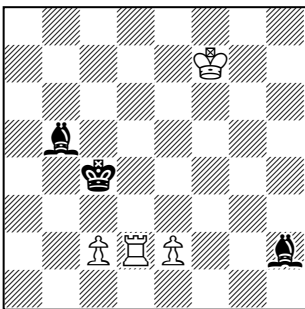
79 F.Lovejko
1 Pr *Zadachi i Etiudi* 1925



H#3 4 solutions

1. ♖f7 ♜h1 2. ♕f6 ♕f4
3. ♚e7 ♜h6;
1. ♚g6+ ♕f3 2. ♚ef6 ♖d1
3. ♜e6 ♖d5;
1. ♜e8 ♕f3 2. ♜e5+ ♕×e3
3. ♜d6 ♖c5;
1. ♜h5+ ♕f3 2. ♜f4 ♜h1
3. ♜g6 ♜h5.

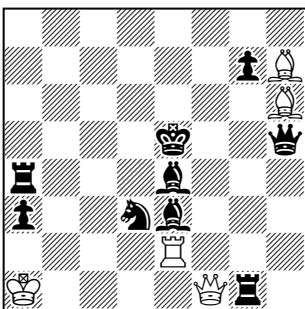
81 M.Bily
Harmonie 1993



H#4 2 solutions

1. ♜e5 ♖d5 2. ♜c3 ♖e5
3. ♜d4 ♕f6 4. ♜c4 e3;
1. ♜g1 ♖d6 2. ♜c5 ♖e6
3. ♜d5 c3 4. ♜c4 e4.

83 J.Korponai
1 Pr *feenschach* 1971



H#2 b) ♕>e6

- a)
1. ♜b4 ♜g8 2. ♜b1 ♕f4;
b)
1. g5 ♜f8 2. ♜c1 ♕f5.

CHAPTER 5: PATTERNS

In this chapter we shall look at four kinds of helpmate motif – echoes, promotions, geometric shapes and cycles of moves – whose thematic unity, a sort of unity in space, lies in the pattern created. We shall see that these types have other features in common, too.

Echoes go back a long way, as 79 shows. Ignoring the cookstopping pawns, each of the four final positions has the same arrangement of pieces, an obvious enough mate but very ingeniously arranged to achieve a fourfold setting. The chief weakness is the repetition of 1...♕f3.

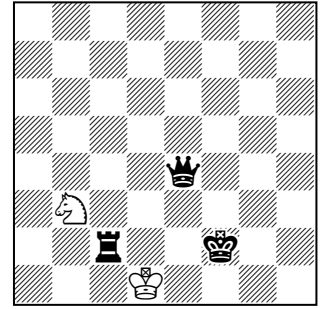
The composer's main difficulty in this kind of problem is to find a unique order leading to the desired end; so you will often, as here, see pieces moving to squares just vacated by others and features involving check or its avoidance. Even more striking than 79 in this respect is 80, where unguard for the WK is a feature in two parts and the need for the BK to make way for other pieces is used in all three. Since the possibilities for economical echoes like these are quite limited this style finds fewer practitioners today, although some solvers like it for its undemanding simplicity. The composer of 81 is one who perseveres, seeking out slightly unusual combinations of material; and infuriating judges who agonise over possible anticipations! The echoes in 81 are chameleon echoes, like some of those in 79 and 80, since the same mate occurs on squares of different colours.

An attempt to rejuvenate the echo problem is seen in 82, where each part has a different pair of echoes. This idea has not been much explored.

While using whatever tactics come to hand to force the move order towards his desired mating configuration, the echo composer has often little chance of including genuine strategy. 83 comes closer to strategy with its line opening and closing effects and 84 achieves it with its double unpins in each part. Often when they reach this level of sophistication composers will abandon the echo part of the idea to pursue deeper strategical paths.

Did you notice the weasel in 83, by the way? In b) the line closing by 1.g5 is spurious, since the pawn must leave g7 and can clearly go nowhere else. To be fair, the BQ is only half a weasel, since it does stop cooks in part a).

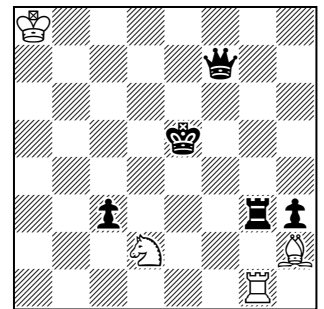
80 J.Peris
1 Pr *Revista de Sah* 1938-39



H#3 b) ♕>b6 c) ♕>f6

- a)
1. ♜g1 ♖d4 2. ♕h1 ♕e1
3. ♚g2 ♖f3;
b)
1. ♕f1 ♖a5 2. ♕g1 ♖c4
3. ♚f2 ♖e3;
c)
1. ♚e2 ♕c1 2. ♕e1 ♖c5
3. ♚f1 ♖d3.

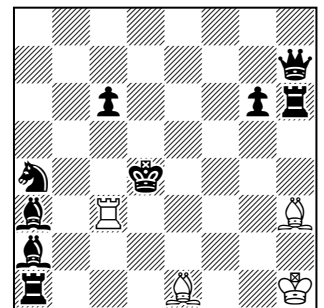
82 M.Klasinc & B.Ostruh
feenschach 1991



H#3 2 solutions b) ♕>f2

- a)
1. ♜e6 ♖e4 2. ♚d3 ♖g5
3. ♚d7 ♖e5;
1. ♕f5 ♖f3 2. ♚g6 ♖g4
3. ♕e6 ♖f4;
b)
1. ♕f4 ♖c4 2. ♕f3 ♖e1
3. ♚g2 ♖e5;
1. ♕e3 ♖c4+ 2. ♕e4 ♖d1
3. ♚f3 ♖d6.

84 G.W.Jensch
3 Comm. *Probleemblad*
1968

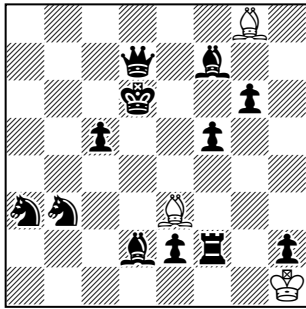


H#3 2 solutions

1. ♜d6 ♖c5 2. ♜h2 ♖f5 3. ♜b1 ♖f2;
1. ♜c1 ♖h4 2. ♜e6 ♖g2 3. ♜h3 ♖f6.

BLACK TO PLAY

85 G.W.Jensch
2HM *Problemblad* 1969



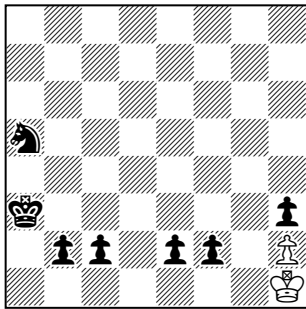
H#4

1. ♖c4 ♘h6 2. ♗g5 ♙d5
3. ♗e7 ♘f3 4. ♗e6 ♘f4.

Echo usually suggests echoed mates but it is possible to show echoed play instead, that is moves which imitate each other. Possible, but very difficult to find one's way between inanity on the one hand and weaseldom on the other! The superb **85**, probably the best problem in this book, shows White imitating Black in an equal but opposite way at every turn. What's more, the motivation is as equal as it possibly can be, given that one side mates and the other is mated (Black's third move blocks a square, White's third closes a line) and in particular the motivation for the first move clearances is pure. Jensch did not enter his problems for the FIDE Albums.

I frankly doubt whether the next motif, **promotion**, could ever reach the level of sophistication which echoes very occasionally attain. Dr Niemann wrote in 1972 that one fifth of his famous collection of helpmates showed promotions! I propose to devote about one fiftieth of my space to them because to me promotions are a device, not a theme, but I haven't been brave enough to ignore them completely.

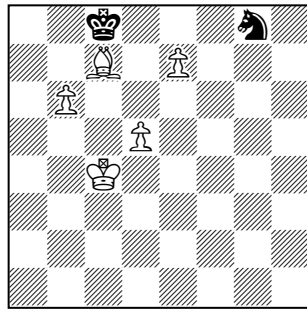
86 D.H.Hersom
Fairy Chess Review 1936



H#8

1. f1 ♖ ♗g1 2. ♗g3 h×g3
3. c1 ♗ g4 4. ♗h6 g5
5. e1 ♗ g×h6 6. b1 ♗ h7
7. ♖b3 h8 ♗ 8. ♗b4 ♗a1.

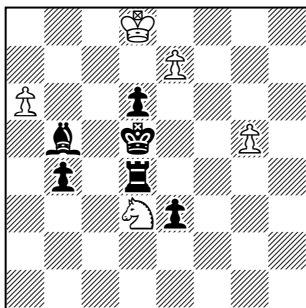
87 A.M.Kárpáti
1 HM *Magyar Sakkélet*
1968



H#2 4 solutions

1. ♖b7 e8 ♗ 2. ♗a6 ♗a8;
1. ♖d7 e8 ♗ 2. ♗e7 ♗d8;
1. ♖b7 e8 ♗ 2. ♗a8 ♗c6;
1. ♗f6 e8 ♗ 2. ♗d7 ♗d6.

88 G.Páros
(after W.Rybakov)
Die Schwalbe 1943

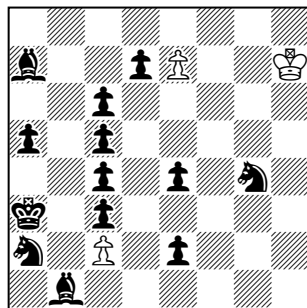


H#2 b) ♗a6>g6

b) ♗a6>a2 c) ♗a6>g2

- a) 1. ♖c6 e8 ♗ 2. d5 ♗e6;
b) 1. ♖e6 e8 ♗ 2. ♗d5 ♗g7;
c) 1. ♗xd3 e8 ♗ 2. ♖c4 ♗c6;
d) 1. ♖e4 e8 ♗ 2. d5 ♗g6.

89 R.Wiehagen
2 Pr *The Problemist* TT
1989-90



H#3 b) ♗g4>a4

c) ♖>a8 d) ♖>h5

- a) 1. e1 ♖ e8 ♗ 2. ♖c1 ♗d8 3. ♖b2 ♗×a5;
b) 1. e1 ♗ e8 ♗ 2. ♗d3 ♗d6 3. ♗db4 ♗×c4;
c) 1. e1 ♗ e8 ♗ 2. ♗g3 ♗×d7 3. ♗gb8 ♗×c6;
d) 1. e1 ♗ e8 ♗ 2. ♗h1 ♗f8 3. ♗h4 ♗f5.

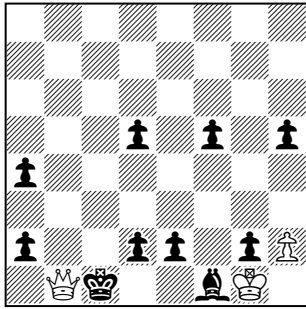
Whether in ingeniously forced ascending order (**86**, complete with an extra bishop), in shorter 4-solution form (**87**) or a host of other combinations (which I spare you), the dreaded four promotions idea haunts the helpmate with its ragbag of ill matched motivations and anticipated anticipations. In the shorter settings the BK tends to get a lot of exercise, often with repeated moves such as 1.Kb7 in 87. If you think that is an economical setting you may like to know that it can be done with only 5 men (H.Haverkorn & D.Borst, *Die Schwalbe* 1988: WKd7, WPC7; BKb7, BRb8, BSA7, helpmate in 2.5, i.e. White starts. In this setting the WK plays to c7 three times).

Attempts to fill in some of the blank moves inevitably left by this idea started early. The original on which **88** is based dates from 1927 but had 6 WPs and an idle WS, although without twinning. The BK must move in diagonal line with the promotion square to force the R-promotion and in orthogonal line to force the B-promotion, so why not complete the so called K-star motif by using all four diagonal moves of the BK? thus taking us into the geometrical domain of the next section. More modern developments have added different blocks on the square left by the BK, but that was not thought of in 1943; indeed the repeated 2.d5 is a blemish.

Black promotions cannot be shown quite so neatly as white; for one thing three moves are needed to force a BQ promotion. That explains the length of **89**, a considerable achievement despite its grotesque twinning. This is the so called Babson task, in which each black promotion is answered by the same white one, ideally on the first move, as here. Some very dull play occupies the next two moves!

BLACK TO PLAY

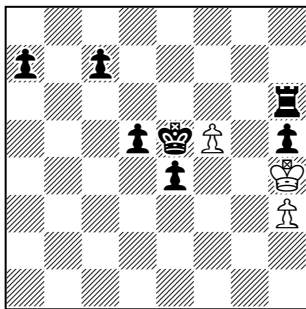
90 C.M.Fox
Deutsche Märchenschachzeitung 1932
 (2 Pr *Essener Anzeiger* 3T.)



H#7

1. a×b1 ♖ ♕f2 2. g1 ♗ h4
3. ♗g5 h×g5 4. e1 ♗ g6
5. ♗e8 g7 6. ♗h8 g×h8 ♖
7. d1 ♗ ♖c3.

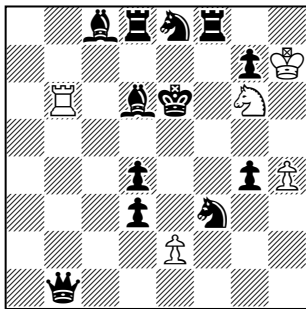
92 B.Hegermann
TRDFCR 1939



H#4 b) ♗>h2 c) ♗>b1
 d) ♗>c8

- a) 1. ♕f6 ♖g3 2. ♕g7 f6+
3. ♗h8 f7 4. ♗h7 f8 ♖;
- b) 1. ♕f4 f6 2. ♕f3 f7
3. ♕g2 f8 ♖ 4. ♕h1 ♖f1;
- c) 1. ♕d4 f6 2. ♕c3 f7
3. ♕b2 f8 ♖ 4. ♕a1 ♖a3;
- d) 1. ♕d6 f6 2. ♕c6 f7
3. ♕b7 f8 ♖ 4. ♕a8 ♖×c8.

94 Z.Gavrilovski
 6 Pr *USPB* 1988



H#2 b) ♖>e4 c) ♗f8>e5 d) ♗d3>e7

- a) 1. ♕f7 e×f3 2. ♗e7 ♖e5;
- c) 1. ♕d5 e×d3 2. ♗c5 ♖f4;

Finally on our whistle stop tour of promotions, a little look at successive ones to the same piece, an idea which received a good deal of attention in the thirties. Just two examples. **90** shows four black rooks, which I suppose excuses the absurd WQ. The motivation for the promotions is twice block and twice check avoidance. In **91** we at last find some fairly homogeneous motivation for promotions. In each case the arrival effect is equal, being the need to avoid check and to avoid controlling the a2-d5 line. Unfortunately, although each departure effect is a line opening for White this is twice for both WB and WQ and once for WQ alone. If there is anything at all left in the promotion idea as a main theme I think it must be in this area of promotions with well unified motivation.

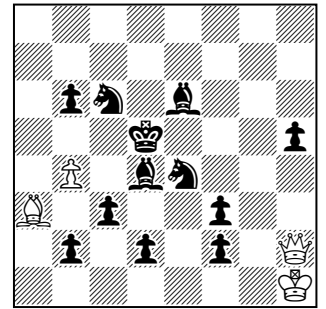
Geometric patterns include the diagonal star which we saw in 88, the cross (four orthogonal directions), the Albino, Pickaninny, S-wheel and similar motifs with their extensions. In **92** for example, the BK visits all four corners of the board. Part a) is quite ingenious but the repetitiousness which sets in thereafter well illustrates one of the difficulties of this kind of problem.

Geometrics can be very obvious and boring. They also quite often feature material which serves only in one part. **92** is not too bad in that respect; **93** is less good but still far from the worst one may encounter! It shows an extended K-star with a twinning device sometimes called the Forsberg twin (after a composer who made a famous example) which often accompanies geometric pattern problems. We are getting used to mixed motivation in pattern problems but here everything is simplistic, just a matter of reaching the necessary square, with even 1...Bf2 in b) not being a genuine line closing. This problem is an early example of the concentrated geometric style.

94 represents its typical modern state, with a BK-star, a coordinated star by the BB, an Albino and four different WS mates. Put like that it sounds terrific, but let's make a closer inspection. The BK and BB motifs are very easy to set if the B is pinned initially, since not only is the black move order automatically forced but the problem of guarding the K's starting square is automatically solved. The Albino is much harder; here the motivations for its moves are a) unguard by capture b) guard c) guard & d) unpin of White; there is some desperate twinning in which the pin of the WS comes and goes and three different black pieces change station.

The beauty of this kind of problem lies in the fact that each of the moves (Black's first, White's first, Black's second and White's second) plays out its own thematic motif most appealingly; however, it is only skin deep since on the level of motivation the apparent unity vanishes. You compose this sort of thing by deciding what you would like the moves to do and fiddling about until you find a reason. ANY reason will do!

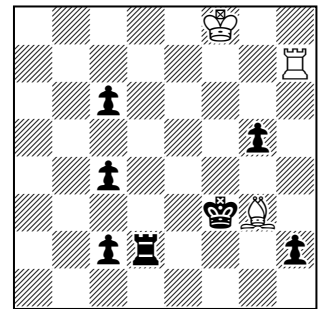
91 G.Páros
 2 HM *Magyar Sakkvilág*
 1929 (version)



H#3

1. b1 ♗ ♕c1 2. d1 ♗ ♕f4
3. f1 ♗ ♖a2.

93 H.Bartolović
 1 HM *Magyar Sakkélet*
 1956



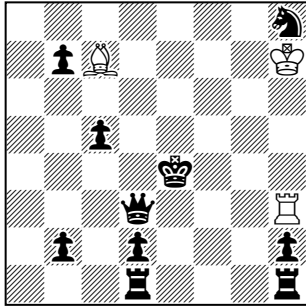
H#2 b) h7=♗ c) h7=♖
 d) h7=♗

- a) 1. ♕e2 ♗e7+ 2. ♕d1 ♗e1;
- b) 1. ♕g2 ♗f2 2. ♕h1 ♗e4;
- c) 1. ♕g4 ♖g7 2. ♕h5 ♖f6;
- d) 1. ♕e4 h8 ♖ 2. ♕d5 ♖e5.

- b) 1. ♕f5 e3 2. ♗e5 ♖e7;
- d) 1. ♕d7 e4 2. ♗c7 ♖×f8.

BLACK TO PLAY

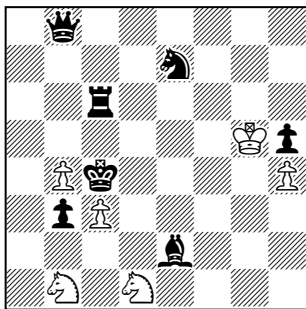
95 F.Abdurahmanović
2 Pr Mat 1973



H#3 4 solutions

1. ♖f5 ♔g8 2. ♖g6 ♘f4
3. ♖f5 ♖h6;
1. ♖f1 ♘g3 2. ♖f3 ♘e1+
3. ♖g2 ♖g3;
1. ♖b1 ♘g3 2. ♖d3 ♘e5+
3. ♖c2 ♖c3;
1. ♖b5 ♘b8 2. ♖d5 ♖d3+
3. ♖c6 ♖d6.

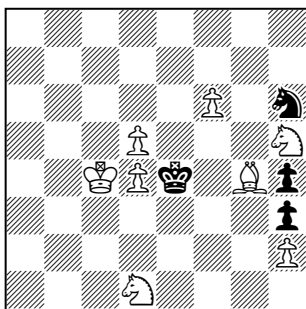
97 C.J.Feather
Moultings 3 1991 (version)



H#2 3 solutions

1. ♖b5+ ♔f4 2. ♘d3 ♘e3;
1. ♘d3 ♖xh5 2. ♘d5 ♘a3;
1. ♘d5 ♖f5 2. ♖b5 ♘b2.

99 A.Zidek
3 HM Schach-Aktiv 1993



H#2* b) ♘>c2 c) ♘>g5
d) ♘>g6

- a) * 1... ♘xh3 2. ♘f5 ♘g2;
- b) * 1... ♖c5 2. ♘e3 ♘f2;
- c) * 1... ♘e2 2. ♘f3 ♘d3;
- d) * 1... f7 2. ♘f4 ♘f6;
1. ♘f5 ♖c5 2. ♘e3 ♘f2;
1. ♘e1 ♘e2 2. ♘f3 ♘d3;
1. ♘e6 f7 2. ♘f4 ♘f6;
1. ♘e7 ♘xh3 2. ♘f5 ♘g2.

This style is not confined to helpmates in 2 nor does it necessarily suffer from poor twinning. **95** is a most accomplished example in which BK and BQ make stars (this time using a battery instead of a pin) and three of the mates are echoes. The composer must have regretted the impossibility of getting the WB to al in the Kc2 line. Once again the tactics are mixed, and the repetition of 1... ♘g3 is a shame.

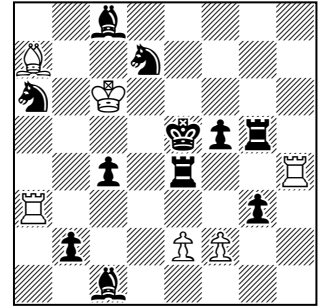
One more modern trend shows the attempt to blend geometry with more strategic thinking, as in **96** where an Albino is combined with pinmates. There is good movement along the fourth rank but the black play in the 1. ♘f6 line seems stuck on, the pin in this line is created differently from the others and again there is repetition (1... ♖e3), so this is only partly successful. It is clear, though, that developments must head in this direction if geometric themes are to avoid superficiality.

I have been unable to establish which was the first helpmate in which the moves made an **ABC cycle** but I guess that it was around 1960 and that the inspiration was the kind of interchange of moves over two solutions which we saw in the white play of 21 and which can easily be extended to three, so that moves A & B appear in one solution, B & C in the next and C & A in the last. I composed **97** by imagining the black play and then wondering what on earth White could do to stop the black moves happening in the other order. Each black block forces the WK (twice with the help of tempo) to a square where the wrong second black move gives check. It's as simple as that; not a good problem.

Solvers tend to be very impressed the first time they see something like **98** with its cycles of black **and** white moves, but by moving the BK around and restricting the pieces (especially the black ones) it becomes easy to do. The motivation for the moves is of the crudest here (only move, simple access etc.). In fact black and white ABC move cycles both singly and together have been set in miniature.

Move cycles with no particular strategy are extremely easy to compose, though the same cannot always be said of cycles of strategic effects. In **99** the composer leaves the BK alone but moves the only mobile black piece all over the place. The result is a possibly unique cycle not just of moves but of set play and solution, the solution of one part becoming the set play of the next (without its initial black move, of course). How refreshing it was to read the comment of solver W.Will: "profoundly tedious"! This kind of problem gets helpmates a bad name.

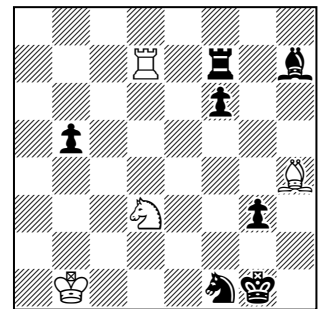
96 Ž.Janevski
1 Pr Olympic Ty 1990



H#2 4 solutions

1. ♘f6 ♖e3 2. ♘e6 f4;
1. ♖eg4 ♖e3+ 2. ♖f4 f×g3;
1. ♖f4 ♖a5+ 2. ♖e4 f3;
1. ♘e3 ♘b8+ 2. ♖d4 f×e3.

98 U.Heinonen
4 HM Thessaloniki 2300 Ty
1986-88

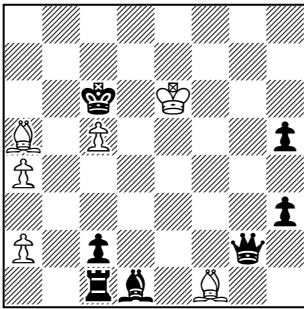


H#2 b) ♖>c6 c) ♖>h5

- a) 1. ♖f8 ♖xh7 2. g2 ♘f2;
- b) 1. g2 ♘f2 2. f5 ♘e5;
- c) 1. f5 ♘e5 2. ♖f8 ♖xh7.

BLACK TO PLAY

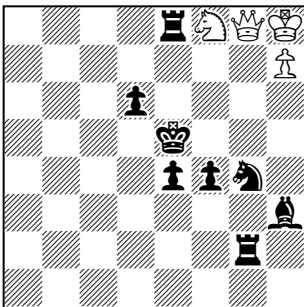
100 M. Myllyniemi problem 1980



H#2 b) ♖c2>g6, ♔>c2
+c) ♜g6>c6, ♕>g6

- a) 1. ♖g7 ♘b6 2. ♗b7 ♘b5;
b) 1. ♗b7 ♘g2 2. ♗b2 ♘e4;
c) 1. ♗b2 ♘d2 2. ♖g7 ♘d3.

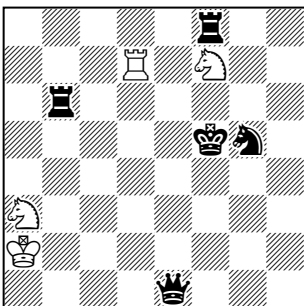
102 C.J. Feather Original



H#2 3 solutions

1. ♕f6 ♖g5+ 2. ♕f7 ♖g7;
1. ♕f5 ♖g7 2. ♗e5 ♖g6;
1. ♗d2 ♖g6 2. ♗d4 ♖g5.

104 W.B. Trumper & A. Vlietinck 3 Pr *The Problemist* 1969-70



H#3 3 solutions

1. ♗e6 ♘c4 2. ♗e7 ♘h6+
3. ♗e6 ♗d6;
1. ♗b4 ♗d6 2. ♗f4 ♘c4
3. ♗e4 ♘h6;
1. ♗e4 ♘h6+ 2. ♗e5 ♗d6
3. ♗f4 ♘c4.

Some of the most curious cycles arise when the same piece makes all the moves. In **100**, whose twinning might possibly be excusable because it too is cyclic, the BQ traces a sort of stuttering triangle. Notice that in short notation this appears to be a move cycle but in reality it is merely an arrival cycle. The white equivalent is found among the problems for solving.

The straight line cycle **101**, using tempo as motivation, is also an arrival cycle; I quote it for another reason. It occurred to me as I wrote the above remarks about how easy it is to compose such things that you have no reason to take my word for it and indeed if you have never tried you may be very sceptical. So I decided to put myself to the test. I had never seen an orthogonal version of 101 (though I expect one exists somewhere) so I challenged myself as follows: if I can't produce a sound orthogonal setting with fewer pieces than 101 within half an hour I will delete the remarks about easiness.

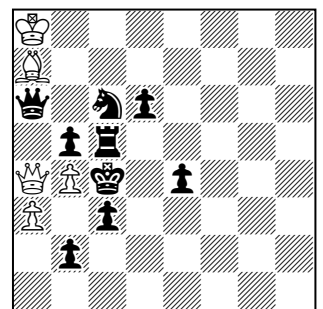
Of course, I can't prove that I am honest (who can?) but I ask you to believe this: it took me 9 minutes and the result is **102**. Now this problem says nothing at all about my brain power (declining) but a great deal about the superficiality of the idea. 102 is trash. Incidentally you have just found out why I included 31 in chapter 2 – so that I should not be the composer of the worst problem in the book!

No, not all move cycles are trash. **103**, incidentally misprinted in the FIDE Album with WQf4, is brilliant. Not only is it a fourfold white cycle but it has pinmates and homogeneous motivation which even extends to the black play, all of which involves getting away from the mating line and closing another. This problem helps us to understand that cyclism can be a framework for strategy, not merely an end in itself. In later chapters we shall see more examples, in many of which it will be features other than moves which cycle.

The first three move cycle (ABC/BCA/CAB) dates from 1962, I believe, but the best setting from that early period is the economical **104**. It is in many ways reminiscent of the echoes with which we started this chapter. Since 1970 composers have been reinventing this particular wheel with monotonous regularity, encouraged by judges who don't seem to know about wheels either. I can explain this odd phenomenon only by the reason mentioned above: the awe of the uninformed faced with something apparently complicated but in fact quite trivial.

Some composers have tried to add extra features to the move cycle, such as the cyclic blocking effect seen in Black's first and third moves in **105**, a cycle of pieces used, not of moves. This problem also shows some of the technical difficulties. Once a WS arrives on e5 both WSs control d3, thus elaborate means are needed to ensure that the right one goes

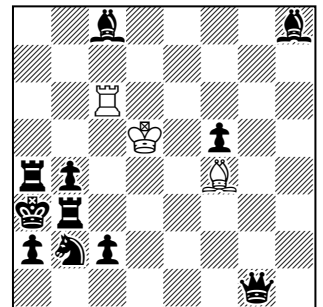
101 M. Velimirović 1 HM Gavrilović Mem Ty 1974-75



H#2 3 solutions

1. ♗d5 ♖d1 2. c2 ♖×c2;
1. ♗e5 ♖c2 2. ♗d5 ♖b3;
1. ♗d3 ♖b3 2. ♗c4 ♖d1.

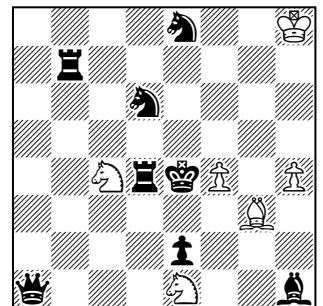
103 J. Retter 3 Pr Blaustein Mem Ty 1976



H#2 4 solutions

1. ♗a7 ♘c1 2. ♗b7 ♗a6;
1. ♗e3 ♗a6 2. b3 ♘d6;
1. ♗g3 ♘d6 2. ♗g7 ♗c3;
1. ♗d3 ♗c3 2. ♗e1 ♘c1.

105 A. Keinz 2 Pr *Schach-Echo* 1979

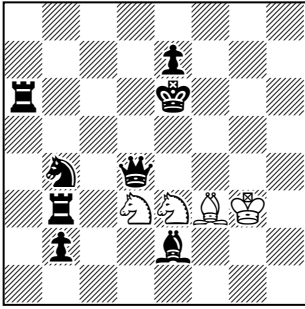


H#3 3 solutions

1. ♗f5 ♘f2 2. ♖×f4 ♘e5
3. ♗e4 ♘d3;
1. ♗g2 ♘d3 2. ♖f3 ♘f2
3. ♗e4 ♘e5;
1. ♗d2+ ♘e5 2. ♖e3 ♘d3
3. ♗e4 ♘f2.

BLACK TO PLAY

106 A.Molnár
1 Pr *Magyar Sakkélet* 1982



H#3 b) ♖>a5 c) ♖>f1

- a) 1. ♖d6 ♜c5+ 2. ♕e5 ♘e4
3. ♘d3 ♜g4;
b) 1. ♖g5+ ♜g4 2. ♕f5 ♜c5
3. ♘d3 ♘e4;
c) 1. ♖d6 ♘e4 2. ♖f7 ♜g4
3. ♘f3 ♜c5.

there. These means are the setup on the long diagonal and the pieces needed to stop other cooks which it causes. Move cycles are often beset with this kind of difficulty.

Finally a three move cycle with genuine strategy, nothing less than the rare thirdpin of White, one of the hardest themes of the helpmate. It is not surprising that **106** requires twinning or that there is a flaw in the repetition of 1.Rd6; even with these defects this is a remarkable work. Studying the way in which the move order is forced and the unpins are made unique will teach you more about helpmate technique than it is possible to put into words. Molnár is another composer who does not contribute to FIDE Albums.

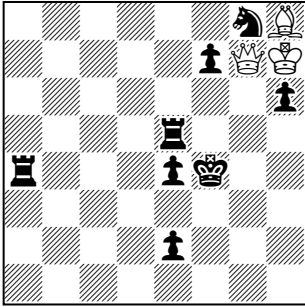
What then do the motifs of this chapter have in common?

Unity which is on the surface and does not extend to the motivation of the moves unless the composer makes a special effort to face the added challenge this implies; a composing method that resembles opportunism more than inventiveness; and a charm which must not fool us into thinking they are difficult to achieve. Fortunately a few composers do make the effort to add genuine strategy, but that is both hard to do and, too often, ill appreciated.

BLACK TO PLAY

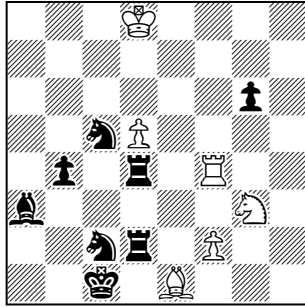
DO IT YOURSELF!

107 C.J.Feather
Original



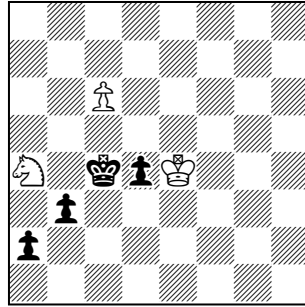
- a) H#2
- b) e4=♙
- c) e4=empty

108 G.Bakcsi
3 Pr *British Chess Magazine* 1979



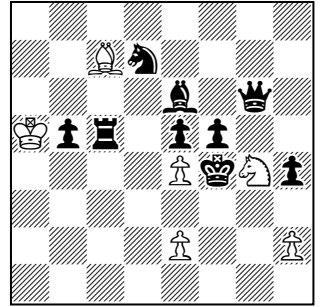
- H#2
- b) ♔>d3
- c) +♞c2>b3
- d) ++♕>c4

109 A.M.Kárpáti
1 Pr *BTSB* 1956



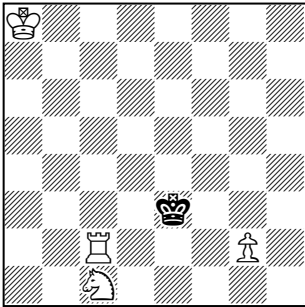
H#3 4 solutions

110 J.Vilem
1 Pr *Schach-Echo* 1974



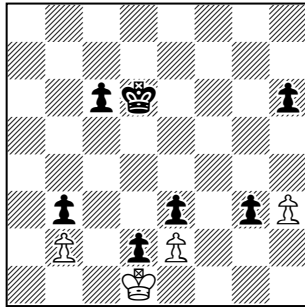
H#3 3 solutions

111 W.A.Shinkman
Conspiracy 1935 *)



H#4 2 solutions

112 C.M.Fox
Deutsche Märchenschachzeitung 1932



H#9

SOLUTIONS ON
NEXT PAGE

*) Shinkman died in 1933; it is not clear whether the problem was found among his papers or whether there is an earlier source omitted in error in *Conspiracy*.

BLACK TO PLAY

107. (Feather) 1.♔e3 ♖xe5 2.♕d3 ♗c3; b) 1.♞h5 ♗c3 2.♕g5 ♖g3; c) 1.♕f5 ♗g3 2.♞g4 ♖xe5.

Triangular arrival cycle, superficial but curious. An earlier setting of this by A. Vlietinck had idle white material in every phase.

108. (Bakcsi) a) 1.♞4d3 ♜xb4 2.♞d1 ♘e2; b) 1.♞e4 ♘xe4 2.♞e2 ♘xc5; c) 1.♞c2 ♘c3 2.♞c4 ♜f3; d) 1.♞2d3 ♘e4 2.♞xd5+ ♘d6.

Crosses by two BRs, with amazing technique, dreadful twinning and an anthology of motivations.

109. (Kárpáti) 1.a1 ♜ c7 2.♞c2 c8♘ 3.♞b4 ♘d6; 1.a1 ♘ c7 2.♘c3 c8♘ 3.♘b4 ♘a6; 1.a1 ♞ ♘c3 2.♞a4 c7 3.♞b4 c8♞/♗; 1.a1 ♗ c7 2.♗a3 c8♗+ 3.♗c5 ♗xc5.

Almost a Babson task in miniature without twinning!

110. (Vilem) 1.♗xg4 ♖a6 2.♘d5 ♘a5 3.♘xe4 ♘d2; 1.fxg4 ♘d6 2.♗xe4 ♘f8 3.♘f5 ♘h6; 1.fxg4 ♘e3 2.♘g4 ♘d8 3.♗f5 ♘g2.

A curious cycle of the pieces blocking on e4/f5/g4. Unable to trace a correction of the original cooked version I have added BPh4 to cure it.

111. (Shinkman) 1.♕d4 ♜f2 2.♕c3 ♘e2+ 3.♕b2 ♘c3+ 4.♕a1 ♜a2; 1.♕f4 ♘b3 2.♕g3 ♘d2 3.♕xg2 ♘f3+ 4.♕h1 ♜h2.

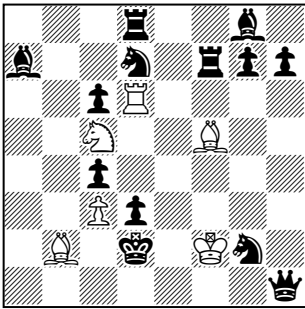
Distant chameleon echoes and a little strategy to allow the BK to cross the second rank. All of 5 men.

112. (Fox) 1.g2 h4 2.g1 ♜ h5 3.♞xe2 ♖xe2 4.d1 ♘+ ♖d3 5.♘c2+ ♖d4 6.♘g6 h×g6 7.e2 g7 8.e1♞ g8♗ 9.♞e6 ♖d8.

Mixed four promotions with some interesting play.

CHAPTER 6: JOURNEYS

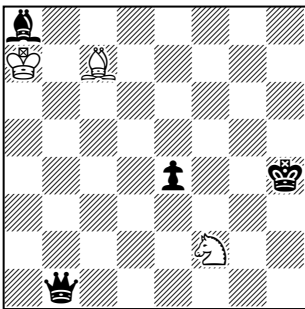
113 A.Benedek
1 HM *Probleemblad* 1972
128 TT



H#2 6 solutions

1. ♖b6 ♜×d3 2. ♗d7+ ♜c5;
1. ♗f6 ♜×d3 2. ♗d7+ ♜f5;
1. ♗e3 ♜×d3 2. ♗g2+ ♜c5;
1. ♗f4 ♜×d3 2. ♗g2+ ♜f5;
1. ♗b8 ♜×d3 2. ♗a7+ ♜c5;
1. ♗e7 ♜×d3 2. ♗f7+ ♜f5.

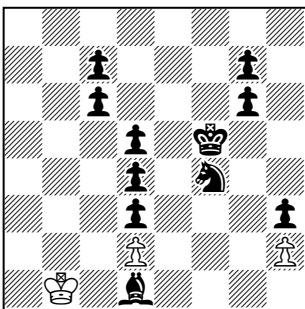
115 G.Bakcsi
Bilten 1963



H#4

1. ♖g1 ♜b6 2. ♖g3 ♜×e4+
3. ♖h2 ♜f2 4. ♗g2 ♜c7.

117 H.P.Rehm
1 Pr *Schach-Echo* 1986-88



H#7

1. ♗h5 ♜c1 2. ♖g4 ♜d1
3. ♖h4+ ♜e1 4. ♗d1 ♜f2
5. ♗e2 ♜f3 6. ♗g3+ ♜f4
7. ♗h5 h×g3.

In this chapter we see how unity may be sought in sequences of moves which complete a journey, which may be a return journey (usually called switchback) a round trip, or a change of places with another man.

The **switchback** motif dates from the twenties. In short problems it can seem a very vacuous idea indeed; it needs to be set at greater length, to be shown with interesting motivation or, as in **113**, to appear in intensive repetition. There have been many 2-move settings, few of which are as elegant as this one. In order to remove the BPd3 White needs to be unpinned but the only unpinning moves place a guard on the mating line, so once the pawn has been taken both Black and White must return whence they came. The black moves are agreeably paired, two withdrawal unpins and two sets of interferences. Weaker features are the repeated moves and the fact that the Wb5 guards a square in the BK's field while the WS doesn't.

The double black switchback in **114** is caused purely by the need to open lines. Restraining the BR and BQ is difficult; this problem is well constructed despite the heavy position.

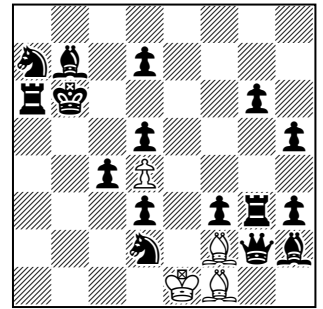
Two white pieces are thematic in **115**, which shows a long chain of interesting motivations as follows: since the BB must block g2 the WS must remove the BP; the BQ must block g1 and has to do so on the first move since the BK cannot yet advance; the WB will have to move away to allow the BK into the mating net but apparently it can move at random; 1.Qg1, however, pins the WS so the WB must unpin it! A lovely miniature.

115 is elegant but **116** is almost incredible! Similar settings of a long WS return trip exist, by e.g. Páros (before Kárpáti), Bakcsi, Bernleitner and Geissler (later) but the clever use of the two diagonals in Kárpáti's masterpiece is unsurpassable. The first black move, blocking the square the BK needs to go to, seems preposterous at first, as does the thought that the WK will end up on a1.

With more than an echo of the lovely 15, **117** shows a double switchback of the same piece in order to admit the WK and finally block h5. The prevention of alternative routes explains all the pawns. In **118**, however, the heavy position is caused by the integration of the switchback motif into a complex strategic theme: in order to remove the hampering BPs White must give an unwanted check, to which the only answer is for the BK to step aside. The white pieces must then return to guard the

squares they have just abandoned and the BK goes back to its original square, making four switchbacks in all. This combination of minus and plus features (abandon of guard/gain of guard; check/removal of block) is the very essence of the modern strategic helpmate and makes this the most forward looking problem in this section. The interchange of functions between the WR and the WB finds an ideal correspondence in the other interchange of functions at Black's first move.

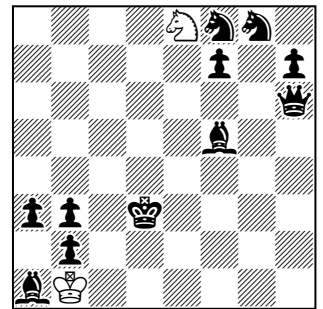
114 G.Páros & F.Fleck
1 Pr Bláthy Mem Ty 1940



H#4

1. ♗g5 ♜h4 2. ♖g4 ♜×h3
3. ♖g2 ♜×d7 4. ♗g3 ♜d8.

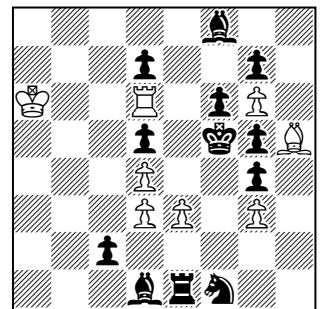
116 A.M.Kárpáti
HM *Magyar Sakkvilág* 1945
(Cooked: see 2012
Introduction)



H#7

1. ♗e4 ♜d6 2. ♗g6 ♜c4
3. ♖e4 ♜×b2 4. ♖f5 ♜c4
5. ♗h8 ♜d6+ 6. ♖f6+ ♜a1
7. ♖g7 ♜e8.

118 W.Alaiikov
Schach-Echo 1978

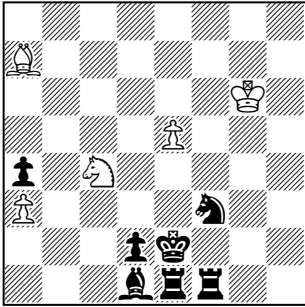


H#3 2 solutions

1. ♗e2 ♜×d5+ 2. ♖e6 ♜d6+ 3. ♖f5 e4;
1. ♗e2 ♜×g4+ 2. ♖×g6 ♜h5+ 3. ♖f5 g4.

BLACK TO PLAY

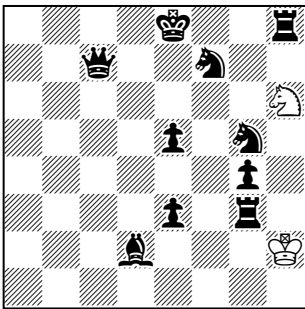
119 J.Csák
idée & form 1991



H#3 3 solutions

1. ♖h1 ♜e3 2. ♖hg1+ ♜g2
 3. ♖gf1 ♜f4;
 1. ♜b3 ♜b2 2. ♜c2+ ♜d3
 3. ♜d1 ♜f4;
 1. ♞d3 ♜b6 2. ♞e3 ♜d5+
 3. ♞e2 ♜f4.

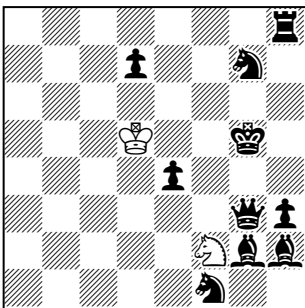
121 T.Baló
Buletin Problemistic 1992



H#4

1. ♜h7 ♜xg4 2.0-0 ♜f2
 3. ♖g7 ♜g4 4. ♜h8 ♜h6.

123 F.Abdurahmanović
 2 HM *Schach-Echo 1975*



H#4 b) ♞>e8

- a)
 1. ♞h4 ♜xh3+ 2. ♞g4 ♜f4
 3. ♜g3 ♜d3 4. ♞h3 ♜f2;
 b)
 1.0-0 ♜x e4 2. ♖f4 ♞d6
 3. ♖h4+ ♞e7 4. ♖h8 ♜f6.

At first sight the BB and BR manoeuvres in **119** appear to be switchbacks, but strictly speaking they are not. Since the return journey involves a stop these journeys, like the BK's triangular route in the other solution, are **round trips**. The motivation in each case is tempo, and the need to answer checks or close the bishop line at the right moment ensures that the WS gets plenty of exercise, although all the mates are unfortunately the same.

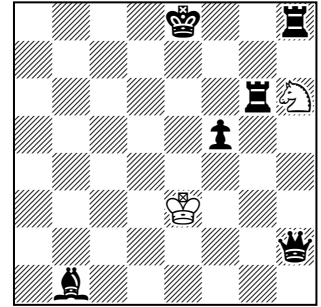
To see the close relationship between the round trip and switchback ideas in longer problems, compare **120** and **121**. Both use the need to remove a black pawn. In the round trip problem this (and the position of the two kings, avoiding duals) conditions the rest of the solution, allowing a very light setting. In the switchback problem, however, the need to avoid a second BP capture determines White's second move, an appropriate touch.

This comparison suggests that round trips are easier to show than switchbacks of equal length, which is probably true provided the motivation is similar. The round trip idea dates back to 1861, in a very unsound setting by Barbe. Its less subtle versions tend to use capture as motivation since, as we have seen, that is very easy to arrange. The elegant **122** uses repeated line closing for the WK in a setting of matchless economy and grace which well hides the difficulties the composer had in achieving soundness. The pinned BR is the key device. In its final form this is one of the few perfect helpmates in existence, an example of the gift to be simple, such a rare thing. The adjective "Mozartian" springs to mind.

The combination of white and black round trips in **123** is curious. While the motivation in a) is common, consisting of a clearance on the mating square followed by the need to unguard that square to permit the BK access, that in b) is very unusual. The BR must reach f4 to close the line which will permit the WK to advance, but to get the BK to the mating square in time this must be done by castling, thus closing the route back to h8. The other two sides of the rectangle must be used instead, neatly preventing 1...Sg4. Solvers found this very hard. My guess is that part a) was an afterthought!

In weaker round trip problems the side not making the journey sometimes has nothing very interesting to do. This could be said of the first part of **123**, for example. In order to achieve the double black round trip (once in each direction) of **124** the composer has had to devise some very ingenious white play involving unpinning the BQ at the right point. The motivation is capture but on a half battery line this seems more interesting than usual.

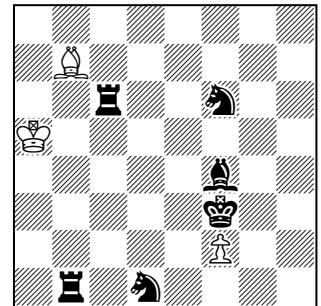
120 C.Jonsson
Thema Danicum 1992



H#4

1. ♖g7 ♜x f5 2.0-0 ♜d6
 3. ♞h8 ♜f7 4. ♜h7 ♜h6.

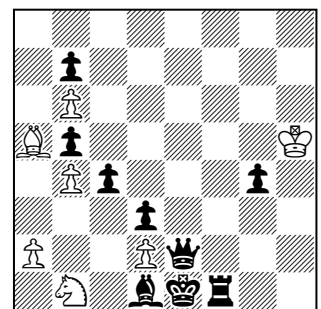
122 F.Chlubna
 HM *Thèmes 64 1967 (v)*



H#5

1. ♜b2 ♞b4 2. ♜c4+ ♞c3
 3. ♜e3+ ♞d2 4. ♜d1+ ♞e1
 5. ♜g4 ♞xc6.

124 D.Biscan
 1 Pr *Sahovski Glasnik 1990*

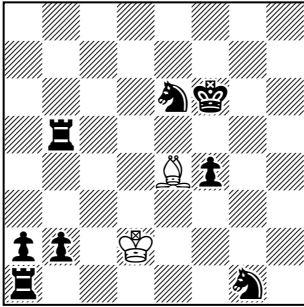


H#4 2 solutions

1. ♞e7 ♜c3 2. ♞xb4 ♜d5
 3. ♞xd2 ♜b4 4. ♞e2 ♜xd3;
 1. ♞xd2 ♞h4 2. ♞xb4 ♜d2
 3. ♞e7+ ♞g3 4. ♞e2 ♜f3.

BLACK TO PLAY

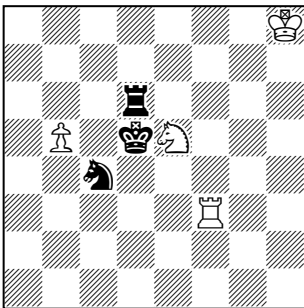
125 H.P.Rehm & U.Ring
feenschach 1986



H#6½

- 1... ♖b1 2. ♕e5 ♖c2
3. ♕e4 ♖c3+ 4. ♕e3 ♖c4
5. ♕d2 ♖e4 6. ♕c1 ♖d3
7. ♕b1 ♖d2.

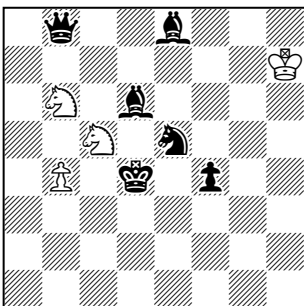
127 G.Fuhlendorf & W.Karsch
Kieler Neueste Nachrichten 1934



H#3

1. ♖c6 ♖e3 2. ♗d6 ♖f3
3. ♖c4 ♖e5.

129 H.Angeli
Die Schwalbe 1989



H#4

1. ♗a7+ ♖bd7 2. ♕d5 ♖a4
3. ♗d4 ♖dc5 4. ♖c6 ♖b6.

It would be churlish to complain that the black play in **125** is dull since the composers have managed to introduce a white switchback as well as a white round trip, but in its onesided thematic approach this finely constructed work does seem rather old fashioned. In general terms I believe that the interest of both switchback and round trip problems lies less in what they do than in why it works.

We find the third of our motifs, **change of places**, in the black play of **126**. The BQ, BP and BK exchange places in a closed chain simply motivated by the need to block the right squares and get the BK to the right place. But this problem is more subtle than that. White must unguard and regard the mating square in an effect we have already met in 115; but if you try a simple there and back by the WB you will find yourself checking too soon. Therefore the WB must make a tempo move which makes the rest of its journey back to b1 take three moves, the whole manoeuvre making a round trip. Both the WK and WS are delicately restrained from wasting two moves as an unwanted alternative. And if you're about to complain that there isn't much interplay between Black and White, ask yourself why the BQ cannot go to c4 via a2.

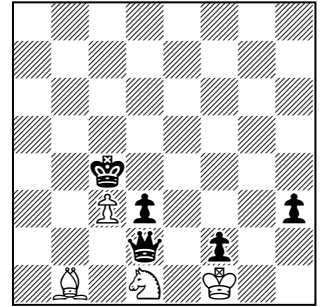
Not all change of place problems are as subtle as that one; and many settle simply for an interchange between two pieces, not the chain effect. **127** is the earliest setting in which pairs of white and black pieces both exchange places; it shows just how primitive this idea can be and how mechanical the effect can seem when there is no interplay.

128 is superior in two ways. First the interplay is intrinsic to the motivation of the change of places, and secondly the thematic pieces are of the same kind, a much more interesting (and difficult) form of the idea. The way in which the BS retreats to make way for the WS is most attractive.

The idea is shown with WSs in **129**, where the need to clear lines for both BQ and BB motivates the moves and fixes their order. Although the BQ moves only as a B its orthogonal power is needed to ensure soundness by means of the check at Black's first move. To find this move it is necessary to have grasped the whole solution.

At the cost of some very boring white play, making one wonder if this should have been a serieshelpmate, the composer of **130** has managed to double the chain version of the idea with different pieces (KRB & QPK). It is much more satisfying to combine the two kinds of place exchange in one problem however, as in **131**, where White has the simple version and Black the chain. The a- and b-pawns are unfortunately necessary to prevent cooks with the BK on e4.

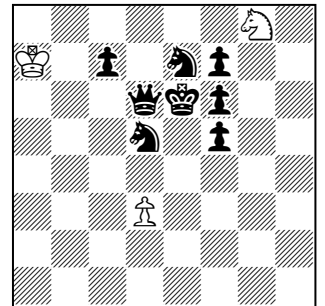
126 M.McDowell
1 Pr *Thema Danicum* 1983



H#4

1. ♗f4 ♖c2 2. d2 ♖b3+
3. ♖d3 ♖a2 4. ♗c4 ♖b1.

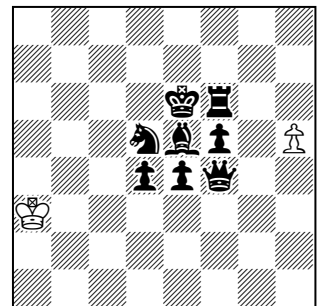
128 R.Queck
3 Pr *Die Welt* TT 1961-62



H#4

1. ♗g6 ♖e7 2. ♗gf4 ♖g6
3. ♗e7 d4 4. ♗fd5 ♖f8.

130 M.Manhart
feenschach 1988

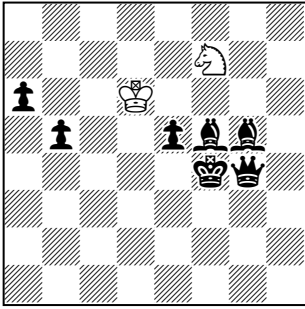


H#4 b) - ♖e5

- a)
1. ♕d6 h6 2. ♖e6 h7
3. ♖f6 h8 ♖ 4. ♕e5 ♖f7;
- b)
1. ♕e5 h6 2. f4 h7 3. ♕f5 h8 ♖ 4. ♕e6 ♖h5.

BLACK TO PLAY

131 S.Ylikarjula
2 Pr *Die Schwalbe* 1987
(172 TT)



H#5

1. ♖e4 ♜d8 2. ♗f4 ♝e7
3. ♜g5+ ♞f7 4. ♗g4 ♜b7
5. ♞f5 ♜d6.

One of the problems for solving shows how the place exchange and round trip ideas can be combined in a homogeneous way. In general, though, it seems that changing places offers rather fewer possibilities for interesting motivation than the other two ideas in this chapter.

As a means of achieving unity, how do the ideas of this chapter compare with those of the previous one?

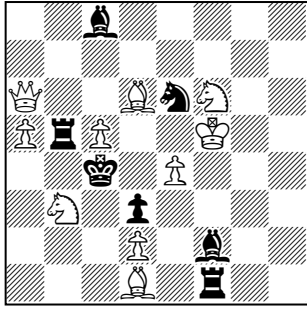
Since the journeys are striking in themselves we naturally tend to wonder why no other route will work and thus to notice the motivation. Since a whole sequence is involved the motivation is often more homogeneous. However the composer still starts with a pattern in his mind, only then deciding what reasons shall bring it about. While the pattern of, say, an Albi is essentially a pattern in space, happening at the same moment in four parallel solutions, the journeys in this chapter need both time and space.

In the last chapter the question was “where?”; in this one it is “where and when?”; but in the next we shall ask “why?”.

BLACK TO PLAY

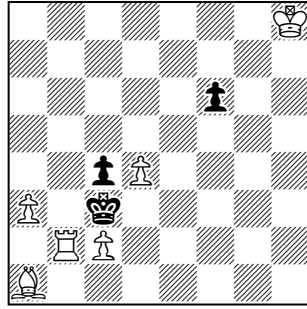
DO IT YOURSELF!

132 M.Parrinello
1 HM Macleod JT 1987-89



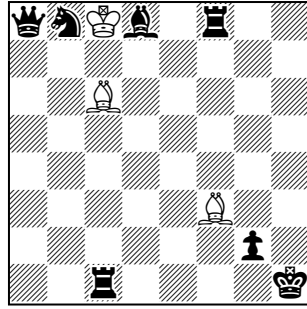
H#2 b) -♗e4

133 R.Queck
Schach 1951



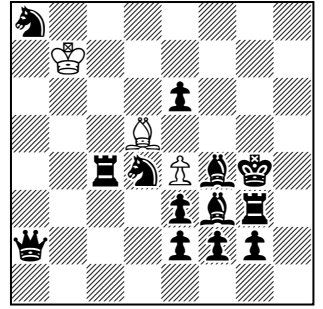
H#4

134 G.W.Jensch
1 Pr Feenschach 1969



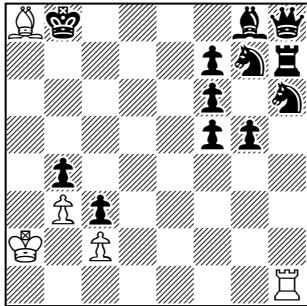
H#4

135 N.Geissler
feenschach 1991



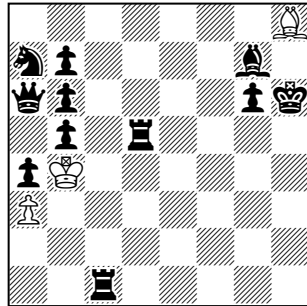
H#4 b) ♗e4<>♖g2

136 A.Uddgren
5 Pr feenschach 27TT
1972-73



H#4

137 R.Heinz
Schach-Echo 1990



H#7

SOLUTIONS ON
NEXT PAGE

BLACK TO PLAY

132. (Parrinello) a) 1. ♖xc5+ ♜d7 2. ♗e6+ ♜e5; b) 1. ♖xc5+ ♜f3 2. ♖f2+ ♜d5.

This was described as “pin/unpin of white with black switchbacks and crosschecks”. Doubtless you noticed that BRb5 and WQa6 could be replaced by a BPb5, for the loss of an entirely weasely pin arrangement.

133. (Queck) 1. ♖xd4 ♜b5+ 2. ♖e3 ♜xf6 3. ♖d2 ♜e5 4. ♖c3 ♜e2.

A round trip which is intricately blended with surprising white play. This composer is always refreshing.

134. (Jensch) 1. ♖c7+ ♜e8 2. ♖h2+ ♜fc6 3. ♜f3 ♜h5 4. g1 ♖ ♜hx3.

Change of place by two WBs. Remarkable economy and clever timing with repeated unpinning motifs.

135. (Geissler) a) 1. ♖xe4 ♜c6 2. ♖f5 ♜d7 3. ♖f3 ♜xe6 4. ♖g4 ♜d5; b) 1. ♖xg2 ♜xe4 2. ♖h3 ♜f5+ 3. ♖f3 ♜xe6 4. ♖g4 ♜d5.

The blend of place change and round trip mentioned in the text. Even the twinning is an exchange of places!

136. (Uddgren) 1. ♖g4 ♜a1 2. ♜h1 ♖xh1 3. ♖h2 ♜b1 4. ♖c7 ♜a8.

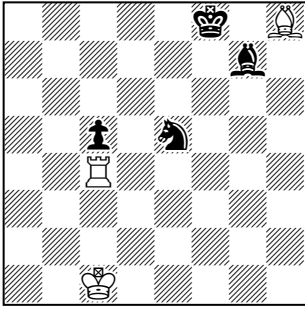
Pure motivation for all the moves in a place change at maximum distance.

137. (Heinz) 1. ♖a1 ♜b2 2. ♜g1 ♜c3 3. ♜h5 ♜d3 4. ♖g5 ♜h8 5. ♖g7 ♜e4 6. ♖h6 ♜e5 7. ♜g4 ♜f6.

Maximum switchbacks on the same line by BB and WB. Getting the BB to go to a1 is the hard part; it is achieved by the impossibility of the BB's ultimately approaching h6 other than from g7 combined with the unusual hazard of mating White if Black is not careful. Though the play after Black's fifth move is dull the length is justified by this motivation. I still find it hard to believe that this can be sound!

CHAPTER 7: ASKING WHY

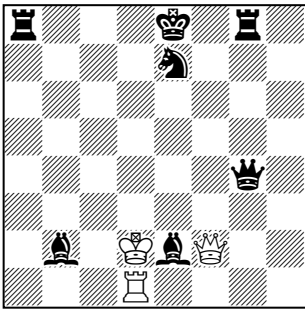
138 A.M.Kárpáti
1 Pr *Raketa* 1942



H#4

1. ♖f7 ♜b4 2. ♗a1 ♘b2
3.c4 ♘a3 4. ♗g7 ♜b8.

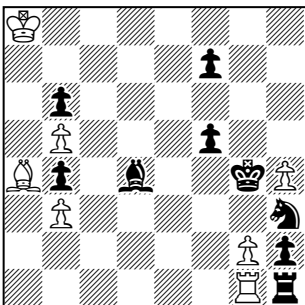
139 F.Chlubna
3 PI Austria-Switzerland
1977



H#2 b) ♖>g1 c) ♖>h1

a)
1. ♗d5 ♜f1 2. ♞d8 ♖f7;
b)
1. ♗d3 ♜e1 2. ♗d7 ♖xg8;
c)
1. ♗d4 ♜b1 0-0-0 ♖b7.

141 G.Büsing, H.Moser,
M.Nieroba, A.Buckenhofer
1 HM *feenschach* 1987



H#4

1. ♗e3 ♜a1 2. ♞b1 g3
3. ♞x b3 ♜g1 4. ♞c3 ♘d1.

two black pieces! It was a pleasant bonus to be able to make the BK start on d5 and apparently retreat from the scene of action, but the interchange of functions between d6 and e4 is the focal point of the problem, for without it there would be a ruinous lack of economy.

I shall devote this chapter to two ideas which may at first seem dissimilar but will prove to be closely connected. The first is the **anticipatory effect**: a move has to be carried out before the need for it becomes fully apparent. The attraction for the solver is obvious, since an element of surprise and difficulty is naturally to be found in this style of helpmate. For the composer the challenge is to find subtle reasons, hence the title of this chapter.

Why, in **138**, does White not play ♜xc5 at his first move? It is clear that the BB must move in order to let the WB escape, but the solver has to foresee that there is no way of getting the BB back to its original square in three moves, and that Black will therefore need a tempo (3.c4). This simple form of anticipatory effect shows the point of the idea: the composer has deliberately cultivated an apparent possibility which will not work and he has done so because to understand why it will not work is to understand why the solution does work. Thus the solver is called upon to recreate some of the logic which entered into the composing process and the dialogue between composer and solver becomes closer and more meaningful.

Most helpmates in this category are more complex than 138. Obviously if the problem has more than one phase it will need the unity which comes from similar reasons for the anticipatory effect in each part. In **139** each of the minor pieces moving at Black's first move has an arrival effect which closes a line so as to forestall an unwanted check on the second. The departure effects add to the unity in that each one opens a line for a white piece which is not yet in position.

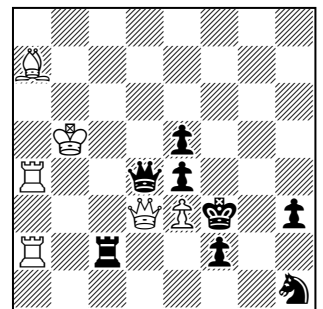
It is quite frequent for anticipatory themes to make use of both arrival and departure effects. This can represent two stages in the solving process. In **140** the solver has first to see why it will be necessary to move the BQ and BR (departure effect) and then to grasp the reason for their arriving where they do.

I have found that the line opening motif seen here in the white play blends well with anticipatory effects. Some problemists dislike the capture of black pieces which is inherent in this idea, but to me this dislike seems irrational, deriving from a preoccupation with directmates.

Clearly the anticipatory effects in twomovers must operate on a briefer timescale than those in longer problems. With four moves at their disposal (one each?!) the composers of **141** have come up with a truly mysterious start in 1. ♗e3. To see why it is necessary one has to understand not only that the BR must remove b3 but where it can go afterwards. Which is not even to mention the attractive clearance and return by the WR!

Anticipatory line closing can be shown in two moves but to make it convincing some kind of interchange of functions is usually necessary. Why, in **142**, must the BS go to d7 and the BR to f3? To cut a line of guard which is already interrupted by

140 C.J.Feather
Moultings 6 1991 (version)

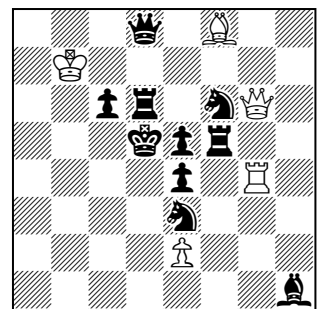


H#2 b) a4=♗

a) 1. ♖xa7 ♖xc2 2. ♗xe3
♖xe4;

b) 1. ♞xa2 ♖xd4 2. ♗e2
♖d1.

142 C.J.Feather
Moultings 6 1991



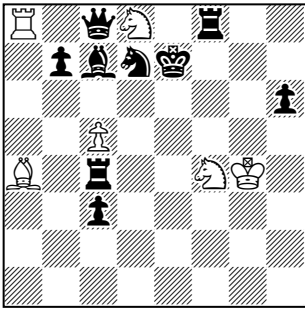
H#2 2 solutions

1. ♗d7 ♖xd6+ 2. ♗c4 ♖d3;

1. ♞f3 ♖xe4+ 2. ♗c5 ♖xc6.

BLACK TO PLAY

143 J.Csák
4 Pr *Mat-Pat* 1988

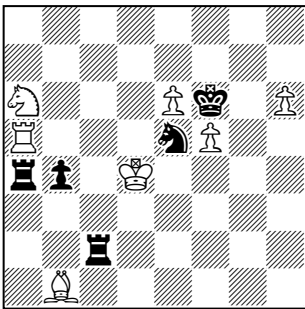


H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖e5+ ♜g3 2. ♜f5 ♘d5;
1. ♜f6+ ♜f3 2. ♜e6 ♘g6.

The next example, **143**, makes a fascinating study. The double checks by the BS at the first move seem quite paradoxical enough at first glance but there is more to them. Each is a double anticipatory line closing. One line is present but not yet obviously relevant and the other has yet to be set up. Thus 1. ♖e5+ closes the BS's line to g3, so that when the WK moves, as it must, it can find a safe haven there without pinning the WS which must mate. The move 1. ♖e5+ also closes the line from f5 to d5 so that when the BQ arrives on f5 it will not prevent the mate. The motivation for the BQ's departure from c8 is of course to allow the WR to guard d8; its arrival effect is a hideaway. The motivation for White's first move is in fact not to answer the check but to escape from the pin of the WS by the BRc4, but this in no way detracts. This is an impressively concentrated thematic scenario; it would be truly miraculous if the same rationale lay behind the other solution, wouldn't it? Alas, it doesn't! It looks as though it does, but as soon as one realises that the BS **must** go to f6 to block that square, any line effects start to look very weasely. Indeed, since 2... ♘g6 covers f8 the BRf8 need not even be present for this solution to work. Weasel fans will not mind this in the least, of course. (Have you decided yet whether you are a fan?)

144 M.Myllyniemi
3 Comm *Die Schwalbe*
1966



H#2 2 solutions

1. ♜g2 ♘c7 2. ♜g5 ♘d5;
1. ♜g6 ♘c5 2. ♜e7 ♘e4.

I would substitute the BPh6 with a WPg5 and move the whole position East, so that g1 becomes h1. The correspondence in motivation and effect between the two solutions is then perfect. However, it is also necessary to add a BP on the new c6 square to stop a cook. The composer clearly thought this a fault in economy. What do you think?

Let's move on to the second idea which causes us to ask "why?".

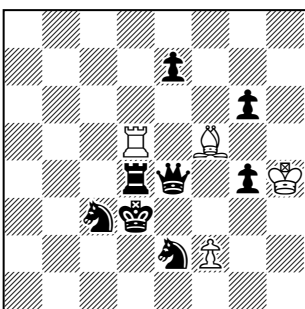
In **144** Black either blocks g5 with the R or e7 with the S. It is no accident that the R can also get to e7 and the S to g5, via a unique route in each case. Why will these moves not work? With g5 blocked and e7 empty White must mate by Sd5, but this closes the line of guard from the WR to f5. With e7 blocked and g5 empty White must mate by Se4, but this closes the line of guard from the WB to f5. In each case one line to f5 is opened by Black and White must not close it again. This is **dual avoidance**, which we have already met in 63 and 73.

Great theoretical arguments rage around this term, distracting attention to the question of what is and what isn't dual avoidance and away from the question of **what it is for**, namely to make us ask why moves work as they do. To avoid theory I intend to use the term in its loose sense: dual avoidance occurs when an idea from one phase can apparently be interchanged with an idea from another but there is a single reason why this will not work. *)

"Idea" can mean something like "which square can be blocked with which piece?" as in 144 or can refer to a move or moves as in **145**. Here the only reason why you cannot interchange the two initial white moves is that a BP gets in the way! This is less crude than it sounds, since it is tempo which makes Black put the P in the way; the switchbacks are also attractive.

Why do I put anticipatory effects and dual avoidance together? In the case of 138 I said that the composer deliberately cultivated an apparent possibility which did not work and he did so because to understand why it did not work was to understand why the solution did work. The same applies to dual avoidance but in this case the apparent possibility becomes the other phase of the problem; consequently to understand why the phases do not mix is to understand the problem as a unified entity.

145 M.Myllyniemi
Suomen Shakki 1980



H#3 2 solutions

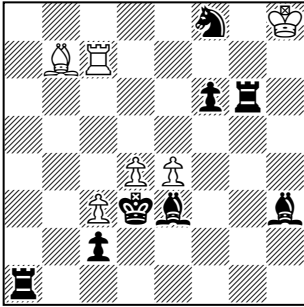
1. e6 ♙xg6 2. ♜f5 ♜xg6
3. ♜c4 ♜d5;

1. e5 ♜d8 2. ♜d7 ♙xg6
3. ♜c4 ♙f5.

*) Note for theorists: By using the vague word "idea" I am intentionally sidestepping the usual distinction between partial and total dual avoidance; if you like you can say "move or sequence of moves" instead (= partial dual avoidance) but you will then have to define total dual avoidance separately. For a theoretical discussion see the articles by Ternblad and Knöppel in *problem*, no. 127-132, 1969.

BLACK TO PLAY

146 J.M.Kricheli
1 Pr *Shakmaty* 1965

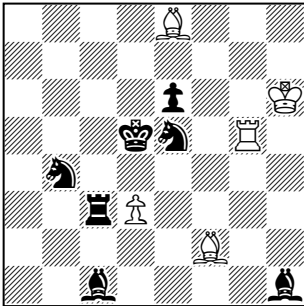


H#3 2 solutions

1. ♖d1 ♜c6 2. ♔×e4 ♘a8
3. ♜d3 ♜×f6;

1. ♗f1 ♘c6 2. ♔c4 ♜c8
3. ♗d3 ♘a4.

148 J.M.Kricheli
Schach 1967

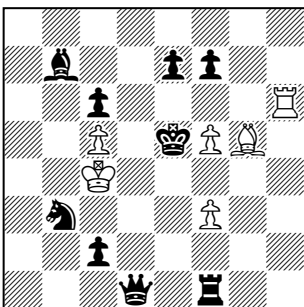


H#2 b) e5=♠

a)
1. ♗a3 ♜g4 2. ♜c5 ♜d4;

b)
1. ♗b2 ♜g7 2. ♗c6 ♜d7.

150 R.Vieira
The Problemist 1984



H#2 6 solutions

1. ♗d4 ♜h4 2. ♗×f5 ♜e4;
1. e6 ♜h8 2. e×f5 ♜e8;
1. ♗d7 ♘×e7 2. ♗×f5 ♘d6;
1. ♜×f3 ♜h3 2. ♜×f5 ♜e3;
1. ♗c8 ♘h4 2. ♗×f5 ♘g3;
1. ♗×f5 ♘h4 2. e5 ♜f6.

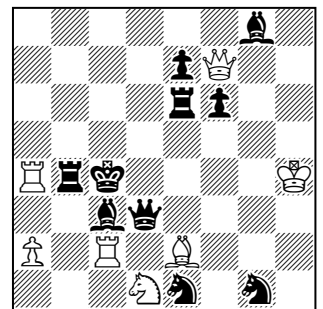
In **146** the BK will go to c4 or e4 and in either case a black piece must block d3. The two available pieces are the BRa1 and the BBh3, which must make Black's first move since the BK's destinations are initially guarded. It seems that either can start and the BK can be mated on either square. Only when we get to White's second move do we see what we should have anticipated: he lacks a tempo. He must move one of his pieces back into the line of either the BR or the BB at a8 or c8, so he must choose whichever of these two squares has been unguarded by the departure effect at Black's first move. That means that only one of White's first moves will work, the one which is made by the piece which does not need to step backwards on the second move. The solutions are so logically unified that to see one is immediately to see the other. It is a quality of the very best helpmates to be mysterious initially and then directly comprehensible **as a whole** as soon as one gets the idea. This is one of the finest helpmates in existence.

In **147** you should try exchanging 1...♜a5 and 1...♗h5 to see the dual avoidance, unusually motivated by capture causing unpin. If the board were bigger a single BS would have sufficed in this problem!

Another interesting motivation is based on our familiar arrival and departure effects. The BB in **148** must leave c1 to unpin the WR but equally it must arrive somewhere. Either arrival (b2/a3) sets up a black battery so that when the BR or BS moves one of the mates is prevented. The master touch is revealed by the fact that the only reason these pieces need to block squares is white self interference, as the WR cuts off the bishops' guard of c6/c5. Changing taste is apparent in the use of twinning here. This problem is correct with a BRc5 and two solutions; had he composed it in the eighties I'm sure Kricheli would have presented it that way.

The term "dual avoidance" suggests two phases; there may be more, though it would be tedious to talk of "triple avoidance" etc.. Páros provides a very early example in **149** where the strategy is very simple but homogeneous and clear. Each S-move at Black's first turn guards two mating squares, the motivation being tempo, and each of the white first moves permits an unguard of the remaining square. In **150** six different black pieces go to f5. The inclusion of the 1.♗×f5 line was an error of judgment not merely because it repeats the move 1...♘h4 found in another solution but because it is irrelevant to the dual avoidance effect. Without it we would have five different black pieces arriving on f5 and each excluding four mating possibilities. The reasons are very mixed (guard / unguard / line opening / line clearance) but it would be a very dull solver indeed who could unravel this helpmate without asking the question "why?".

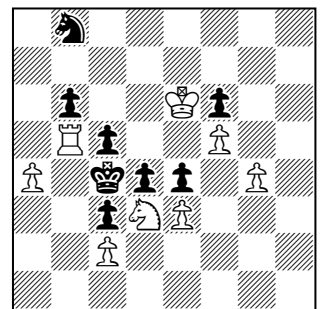
147 V.Schneider
1 Pr *Die Schwalbe* 1972



H#2 2 solutions

1. ♗×c2 ♜a5 2. ♗d4 ♘e3;
1. ♗×e2 ♗h5 2. ♗d4 ♘b2.

149 G.Páros
Die Schwalbe 1948



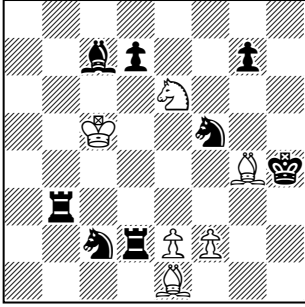
H#2 3 solutions

1. ♗a6 g5 2. f×g5 ♘e5;
1. ♗c6 a5 2. b×a5 ♜×c5;
1. ♗d7 e×d4 2. c×d4 ♜b4.

BLACK TO PLAY

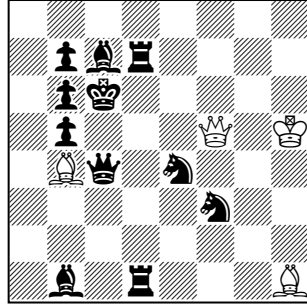
DO IT YOURSELF!

151 J.M.Kricheli
Feenschach 1966



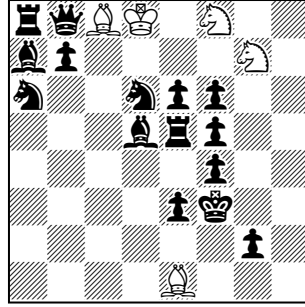
H#2 b) ♖>h2

152 C.J.Feather
Moultings 7 1991



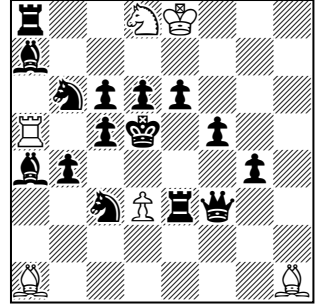
H#2 2 solutions

153 M.Persson
Springaren 1993



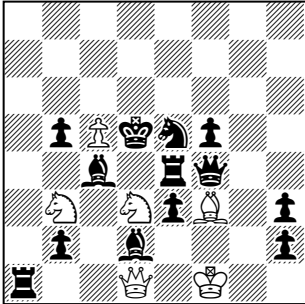
H#3 2 solutions

154 P.A.Petkov
1 Pr Sinfonie
Schacchistiche 1970



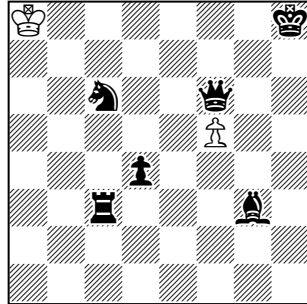
H#2 2 solutions

155 P.A.Petkov
3 Pr Schach-Echo 1971



H#2 2 solutions

156 F.Chlubna
Comm. Schach-Echo 1975



H#4 2 solutions

SOLUTIONS ON
NEXT PAGE

BLACK TO PLAY

151. (Kricheli) a) 1. ♖cd4 ♜d5 2. ♗d6 f3; b) 1. ♗b4 ♜b5 2. ♗e3 f4.

White needs to lose a tempo, which conditions the arrival effects at Black's first move and causes dual avoidance. Kricheli was the master of such themes but I wonder why he didn't place the WS on h3 in a), for neater twinning?

152. (Feather) 1. ♗fg5 ♜×e4+ 2. ♜7d5 ♜e8; 1. ♗eg5 ♜×f3+ 2. ♜d5 ♜c3.

An odd use of what looks like a halfpin. I am tempted to call the effect at Black's first move an anticipatory uncheck. All the moves have thematic departure and arrival effects.

153. (Persson) 1. ♗e4 ♜f×e6 2. ♜×e6 ♜×f5 3. ♜b6 ♜d4; 1. ♗e4 ♜×f5 2. ♜×f5 ♜×e6 3. ♜c5 ♜d4.

The departure effects at Black's first move cause an interchange of the white moves over the two solutions. Homogeneous line opening motivation.

154. (Petkov) 1. ♗b8 ♜×c6 2. ♗b5 ♜e7; 1. ♗c8 ♜×e6 2. ♗e4 ♜c7.

A curious mixture of legitimate dual avoidance (try interchanging Black's first moves) and weaseldom. You are supposed to imagine that 1. ♗c8 ♜×c6 2. ♗b5 ♜×b4 may work until you notice that you have unpinned the BPc5; similarly that 2... ♜f4 may be mate in the other line. The pins in question are totally unnecessary in the problem as a whole; had the composer managed to arrange it so that they had some function I should view this differently. As it is, you can delete a5, b4, e3, c5, g4 and h1, move the BQ to e3 and you have a sound problem, six pieces fewer and the same solutions.

155. (Petkov) 1. ♜a6 ♜e2 2. ♜c6 ♜×f4; 1. ♜h6 ♗e2 2. ♜e6 ♜b4.

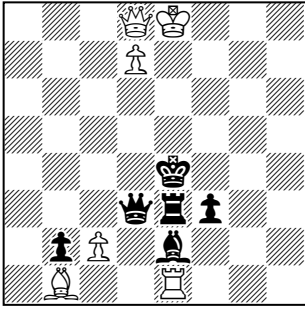
However this is brilliant! The square block idea is obvious but try 2. ♜e6 or 2. ♜c6 and you will find that you have just unpinned a black piece which stops the mate. Unpinning motivation and avoidance runs through the whole problem and each avoided pin is needed in the other line.

156. (Chlubna) 1. ♗c7 ♜b7 2. ♜e5 f6 3. ♜h3 f7 4. ♜h7 f8♜; 1. ♜h6 f6 2. ♗b8 f7 3. ♜g3 f8♜+ 4. ♜g8 ♜×h6.

The two mates are the familiar ones with BR and BK in the corner, but in each case the arrival of the BR causes an unwanted pin unless Black forestalls it when getting his B out of the R's way. This is appropriately combined with two BQ hideaways and an ingenious use of tempo to achieve the anticipatory unpin effect on two different lines. Such an elegant problem could not possibly win a prize, of course. It's obviously far too easy to do. Why then do I wish that I had composed it?

CHAPTER 8: LINES

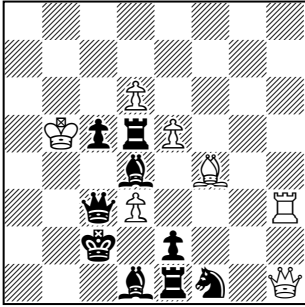
157 Y.Blaustein
2 HM Israel Ring Ty 1967



H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖a6 ♜f6 2. ♜b5 c4;
1. ♖a3 ♜g5 2. ♜b3 c3.

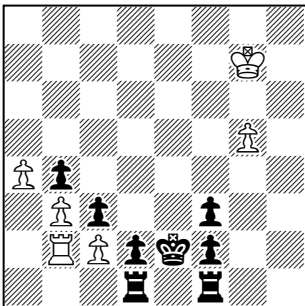
158 P.Sola
1 Pr Deutsche
Märchenschachzig 1932



H#2*

1... ♜h8 2. ♖x d3 ♜h7;
1. ♖a1 ♜e4 2. ♜b2 d4.

159 I.Telkes
Comm Magyar Sakkvilág
1937



H#4

1. ♜a1 ♜b1 2. ♜h1 ♜g1
3. ♜d1 ♜g4 4. ♜h1 ♜e4.

Since three of the six chess pieces are line pieces and the pawn can on occasion make a fourth, line themes must play an important part in all genres of problem. Helpmates featuring line moves tend to be quite clear thematically; however the line play itself may already be quite familiar from direct mates and so the difficulties for the composer come in arranging interesting motivations for the line effects and in deciding what other play blends most satisfactorily with them. Depending on composers' varying success in this, some of the best and some of the worst helpmates fall under this heading.

Let's start by looking at a group where the interest centres on play along lines. In **157** we have attractive clearances by BQ/BB and BQ/BR. Essentially these are double hideaways, crossing a critical square so that the WP can move so as to prevent their return to d3. The halfpin of BB and BR is both pleasing and necessary. The slightly restricted WQ position is regrettable; I should have chosen a BS on d7 and placed the WK on g1 for an increase in mobility which Alybadix shows as 3813 moves as contrasted with 2732. Where the problem is least satisfactory is in White's first move, where the motivation is not a line idea but a simple guard. The composer has done well to find an arrangement which makes the WQ's arrival square depend on the BQ's arrival square but in doing so has given the WP a second reason for its moves (guard of d4/d5) which further distracts attention from the main line theme onto the square guarding motif.

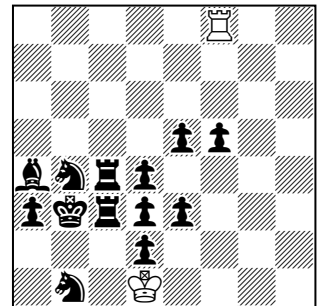
Clearly, to arrange some line effect also at White's first move would have required a much heavier setting. This is a familiar dilemma in this genre: there is so much potential thematic space even in a short helpmate that inadequate or merely neutral use of some of it can detract from the overall artistic impression. Some composers wrestle very consciously with this dilemma but others treat it purely instinctively. It seems to me that as the helpmate has become more sophisticated so the need for the conscious approach has grown.

Back in the thirties such notions were unthought of and **158** was a remarkable problem. The set play features a white clearance and the solution a black one. The motivations are not equal and it is perhaps a pity that the WR guards d3 initially. This problem is a curious example of the influence of fashion. The set play form is not at all suited to this kind of theme and in fact without the WPd6 the problem is sound in two solution form, with a rather appropriate first black move added to the set play in the shape of 1. ♜d8! The composer must have seen this.

A slightly different clearance idea is seen in **159**. All the moves except the mate are onto, away from or (especially) along the thematic line and all, obviously, are rook moves. It would be interesting to know whether the composer conceived of the idea initially as a double clearance or a double switchback; the fact that we cannot tell proves how homogeneous the effect is.

The modern descendant of this problem is **160**, a considerably harder task because the double clearance goes in the same direction and thus necessitates the extra length, leaving Black's third move and White's fourth to be filled in somehow. The former is easily occupied with an admittedly unthematic block but the latter is hard. The use of tempo, making it necessary to immobilise the WK, may be the only practicable solution.

160 M.Ott & N.Geissler
Die Schwalbe 1992

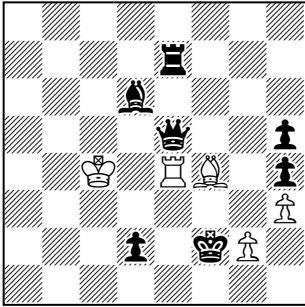


H#5

1. ♜c8 ♜f6 2. ♜3c7 ♜c6
3. ♜a2 ♜c2 4. ♜c3 ♜c1
5. ♜8c4 ♜x b1.

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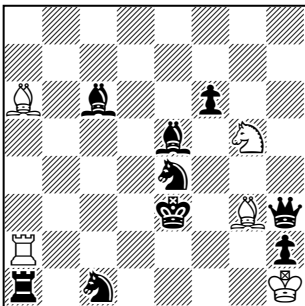
161 M.McDowell
Comm *Münchener SK* 1987



H#3 b) ♖>e6

- a) 1. ♖h8 ♕x d6 2. ♖g7 ♖e5
3. ♖g3 ♖e2;
b) 1. ♖a5 ♖x e6 2. ♖c5 ♕e5
3. ♖e3 ♖g3.

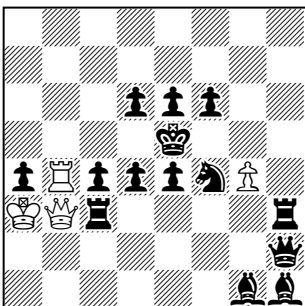
163 J.M.Kricheli
1 Pr *Schach-Echo* 1973/1



H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖d4 ♕f1 2. ♖d3 ♖e2;
1. ♖f4 ♖g2 2. ♖d2 ♕f2.

165 G.Bakcsi
1 Pr *Europe-Echecs* 1971



H#2 b) ♖c4>c5 c) +♖d4>d5

- a)
1. ♖ce3 ♖d3 2. c3 ♖x d4;
b)
1. ♖cf3 ♖e3 2. d3 ♖x e4;
c)
1. ♖cg3 ♖f3 2. e3 ♖x f4.

All our examples so far have shown the crossing of critical squares. This idea is shown to perfection in **161** where Black's hideaways are mirrored by White's line closings to give the BK access to the mating squares and White's critical square is initially occupied by the BQ which makes Black's critical moves. It is hard to use the word "critical" without also being critical of the judge! Admittedly the various motifs in this problem are none of them new, but thematic unity like this makes it worth a prize in any company.

It is interesting to compare this problem with **162**, which is less homogeneous but has even better interplay, with black pieces clearing the critical square for White to cross before they return to allow the BK access. This has been called the mousetrap theme but as in the cartoons the mouse has the last laugh!

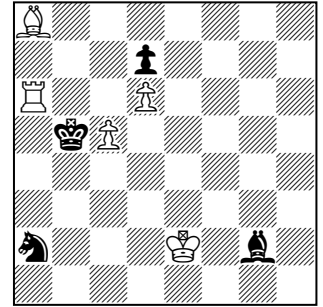
More paradoxically, critical play can put the thematic piece on the wrong side of the critical square, as in **163** where the need to prevent a check in anticipation (in order to permit an essential unguard) motivates the WB and WR to go to squares where the mating moves will cut off their lines of guard, thus giving the unguarding move (Black's second) a blocking arrival effect. The difficulty of expressing that in words is itself a tribute to the intricacy of the idea. The move which does not form an intrinsic part of the theme (Black's first) appropriately shows another blocking effect.

Another idea involving movement along lines is the so called magnet, in which one piece appears to draw another magnetically after it, ideally in several solutions. This idea, which can be shown with white pieces, black pieces or a mixture, often suffers from ill unified motivation, as in **164**, which clearly belongs to the "more is better" school of composition. Two solutions in a) show the WB moving to guard a square, while in the other one the motive is purely clearance. In b) the WB guards each time but the moves 1. ♖d3 and 2. ♖f3 are particularly weak.

Vastly more impressive is the mixed magnet in **165**, where the motivation (line closing / critical move / unpin + line opening) is well unified and identical in each case.

One of the most original helpmates of the eighties is **166**, related to the magnet but considerably more subtle. The white line pieces lead the BQ but hesitate so that their subsequent check can be answered by the BQ's selfpin. The need for each thematic line to be five squares long makes this technically difficult. The white interchange of functions is absolutely intrinsic to the idea.

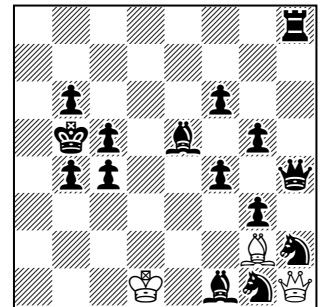
162 Z.Maslar
feenschach 1986



H#3 2 solutions

1. ♖b4 ♖a1 2. ♖a2 ♕c6+
3. ♖a6 ♖x a2;
1. ♖h3 ♕h1 2. ♖g2 ♖a5+
3. ♖c6 ♕x g2.

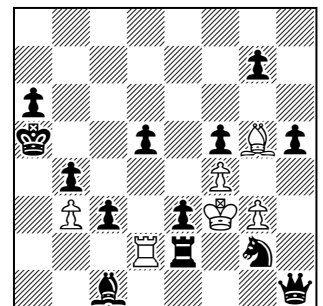
164 R.Wiehagen
Schach 1989



H#2 3 solutions b) ♖>g4

- a)
1. ♖a6 ♕a8 2. ♖a7 ♖b7;
1. ♖a8 ♕b7 2. ♖a5 ♖c6;
1. c3 ♕c6+ 2. ♖c4 ♖d5;
b)
1. ♖f5 ♕d5 2. ♖g4 ♖e4;
1. ♖h3 ♕e4 2. ♖f3 ♖x f3;
1. ♖d3 ♕f3+ 2. ♖h3 ♖g2.

166 B.Schauer
1 Pr *Die Schwalbe* 1984

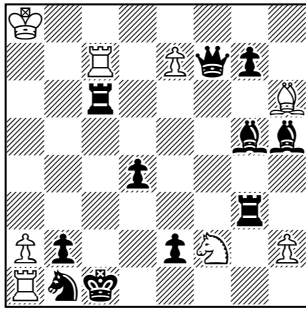


H#3 2 solutions

1. ♖d1 ♖d4 2. ♖d3 ♖x d5+
3. ♖b5 ♕d8;
1. ♖h4 ♕e7 2. ♖f6 ♕d8+
3. ♖b6 ♖x d5.

BLACK TO PLAY

167 K.Widlert
1 Pr *Die Schwalbe* 1988



H#2 b) ♖g3>b3

- a) 1. ♗d2 ♕e3 2. ♜f4 ♜xc6;
b) 1. ♜c2 ♜c3 2. ♜c4 ♕xg5.

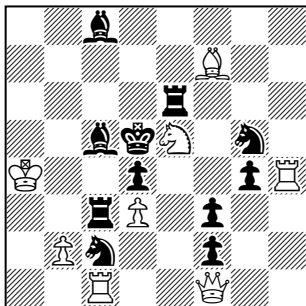
Finally in our survey of movements along lines I invite you to consider **167**, in which the essential motivating factor is the need for the BQ to hide away on either f4 or c4. If nothing is done in compensation this will create an unwanted unpin of the piece making the square block at Black's first move. Consequently the pinning white pieces must follow along the pin line and cross those critical squares. What I should like you decide for yourself before reading on is why the composer added the WPs on a2 and h2. The problem is quite sound without them...

Well, one commentator rather unkindly described 167 as "a queer fish". Reading that, you may wonder whether the WPs are merely red herrings but I believe that they are not. Without them one could argue that the anticritical effect of 1... ♕e3 and 1... ♜c3 is spurious since these moves are the only way to shut the BR from the mating line and so must be played anyway. With the pawns the possibility of a) 1. ♗d2 h×g3 2. ♜f4 ♜xc6 and b) 1. ♜c2 a×b3 2. ♜c4 ♕xg5 exists but these fail because of the unpin. Thus the anticritical moves become genuinely thematic and the BR is relegated to its proper role of ensuring soundness. In my view the adding of WPs here improves the economy of idea to such an extent that

the poorer economy of force is quite acceptable. Less agreeable is the idle pin a1-c1. You will easily see how difficult it is to control b1 any other way, but it seems to me that a composer whose views are enlightened enough to allow him to add those WPs really ought to have had the nerve to use a third BR on b1!

Talking of pins, my heart sinks. That ubiquitous line motif the pin, seen as a minor feature in so many problems in this book, is so easy to indulge in that when the attempt is made to elevate it to thematic status it seems to bring out the worst in even the most reputable composers. We have already seen its incarnation as weasel in 132. A few years ago a great fuss was made about a helpmate by two well known composers because it showed triple pin mates four times over. Now this "insuperable task", which I cannot bring myself to reproduce here, has a total of 8 entirely unused (static) pinlines over its four solutions, an average of 2 per solution. (That makes one for each composer, I suppose – thank goodness it wasn't composed by Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs!)

168 I.Olasz
TRDFCR 1939



H#2

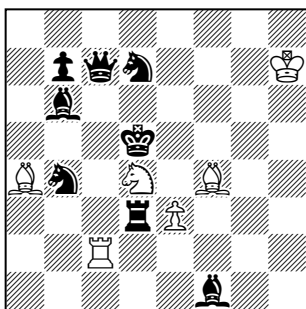
1. ♜x d3 ♗xg4 2. ♜c4 ♗e3.

I wonder how many problems in this book could be embroidered by the addition of useless pin lines? We have just seen an example where the composer added one for a technical reason, but to do so merely in order to be able to breathe the word "task" *) is to share the mentality of those who wish that there was a trombone part in Beethoven's "pathétique" sonata. No doubt Beethoven could have written such a thing; but the real artist knows the meaning of the word restraint.

Not that the task mentality is new, as **168** proves with its quadruple pin mate. At least in this case only one of the pin lines is static. No, not new, but dangerous, because it substitutes quantity for quality.

Quality and quantity are not mutually exclusive. The next three problems show cumulative effects without too much compromise and all the pins and unpins in them form an active part of the solution.

169 K.Császai
1 HM *Magyar Sakkélet*
1976



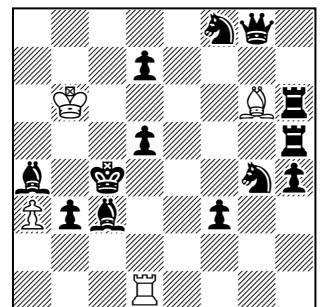
H#2 4 solutions

1. ♜c3 ♕d6 2. ♜c4 ♕b3;
1. ♜c4 e4+ 2. ♜c5 ♗e6;
1. ♜c5 ♗b5 2. ♜c6 ♗c7;
1. ♜e5 ♕b3+ 2. ♜d6 ♗f5.

169 contains 4 pin mates of the same piece with exemplary use of the white material and as its only flaw just one repeated move, while **170** offers 5 different unpins with most of the remainder of the play featuring some kind of line opening or closing, the only real weakness being the very feeble move 2. ♗b5. Double pin mates in the three move helpmate are rare because of soundness problems; **171** [on next page] manages to show three of them created in a strategically harmonious manner. There are a couple of pairs of repeated moves and the difficulty of the undertaking is underlined by the rather colourless white play but there is nothing spurious, nothing stuck on.

*) an acronym for "Technically And Stylistically Kitsch", as you no doubt know

170 P.Bansac
1 Pr *Pest Ty* 1966

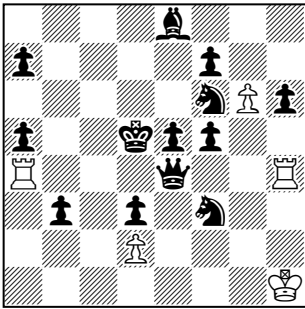


H#2 5 solutions

1. ♗c6 ♕b1 2. b2 ♕a2;
1. d6 ♕e8 2. ♗b5 ♕x b5;
1. ♗e6 ♕e4 2. ♗e5 ♕x d5;
1. ♗f6 ♕x h5 2. f2 ♕e2;
1. ♗f6 ♕e4 2. d4 ♜c1.

BLACK TO PLAY

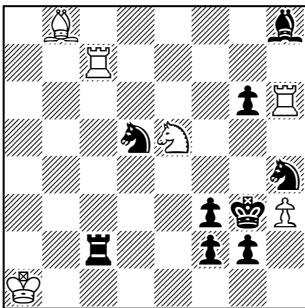
171 G.Bakcsi
Probleemblad 1979



H#3 3 solutions

1. ♖f4 g7 2. ♜d4 g8♖
3. ♜e4 ♖g2;
1. ♖c4 gxf7 2. ♜e4 f8♖
3. ♜d4 ♖d6;
1. ♖b4 gxf7 2. ♜d4 fxe8♖
3. ♜c4 ♖c6.

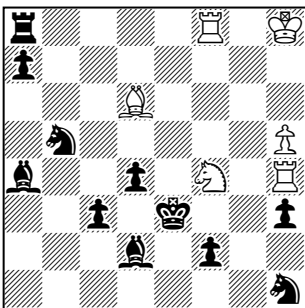
173 J.Csák
 1 Pr 9th Solidarity
 Tourney 1986-89



H#2 2 solutions

1. ♜f6 ♜xf3 2. ♜xf3 ♖c3;
1. ♜c3 ♜xf3 2. ♜xf3 ♖g7.

175 G.Bakcsi
 4 HM *Probleemblad 1967*



H#2

- b) ♜d4>e4 c) ♜d4>f3
- a)
1. ♜g3 ♖e8+ 2. ♜e4 ♖xh3;
- b)
1. ♜d4 ♖xh3+ 2. ♜f3 ♖c5;
- c)
1. ♜d8 ♖c5+ 2. ♜d4 ♖e8.

The task approach is only one way to make the pin/unpin motif thematic; a more satisfactory way is to seek interesting motivations for strategy based on pinning. In the mysterious **172** each of the BS and BB finds itself in the way after performing the necessary removal of the WP, so its only recourse is to selfpin by capture. Meanwhile White pins the other one of the pair. The homogeneity of this strategy is emphasised by the three function interchanges (BS/BB, WR/WQ, WS/WS). The construction looks precarious but the inaccessibility of f2 is skilfully used in avoiding cooks. Have you noticed what is mysterious about this problem? The answer appears at the end of this chapter.

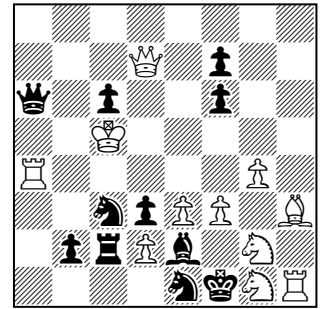
The same composer's **173** also shows how pinning can motivate interesting strategy although, unlike the last problem, it rather suffers from a lack of interchanges of functions. The BSh4 must move in order to let the WR guard h3 but cannot do so without imposing a guard on the mating line. The only solution is to arrange for this BS to pin itself. This requires an unpin of the WS so that it can sacrifice itself to permit the BS to get to the right squares. Mating moves which pin are interesting in themselves; there is still scope for originality in seeking curious reasons why they should happen.

Although, as we saw in chapter 5, cycles are mostly unsatisfactory as an end in themselves, cyclic form can often be used to give simple motifs like pins and unpins added unity and intensity. The brilliant **174** shows the white pieces moving in cyclic order as they are unpinned by Black, each one in two different ways, one at Black's first move and one at his second. The skill which is evident in the arrangement of the mating nets is of the highest degree of refinement.

In **175** we find a cyclic interchange of functions of the three white pieces, as they take it in turns to pin, mate and guard f4. In each case the black moves are prompted by the need to selfpin in order to block a square and also by the need to unguard the mating line, a double but well balanced motivation.

Like the pin, the halfpin cannot now claim to be a theme in itself, though it once did, as **176** shows. This is elegantly set (though by moving f5 to e5 we could do without g4) and the critical BB move is pleasing, but the mating move is the same, which considerably eases the construction. In more modern times the halfpin either has to serve as one motif among several (as in 83 or 157), to act as bluff (a favourite notion of mine, see 152) or to be intensified in some way. The next two problems are both remarkable examples of such intensification.

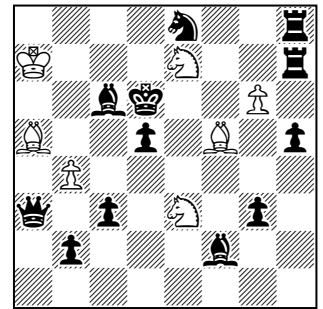
172 J.Csák
 4 HM Rusek Mem. 1987



H#2 2 solutions

1. ♜xf3 ♖xd3 2. ♜xg1 ♖f4;
1. ♜xf3 ♖a1 2. ♜xg2 ♖f5.

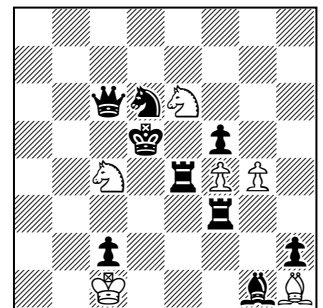
174 A.Molnár
 2 Pr *Magyar Sakkélet 1963*



H#2 3 solutions

1. ♜e1 ♜g4 2. ♜h6 ♜c8;
1. ♜g7 ♜xd5 2. ♖b3 ♖c7;
1. ♜a4 ♖d8 2. d4 ♜c4.

176 C.M.Fox
 1 Pr *Chess Amateur 1930*

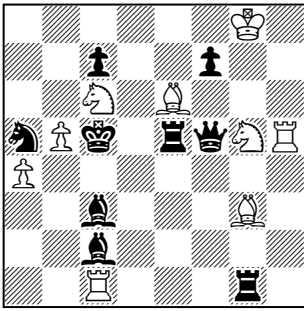


H#2*

- 1...gxf5 2. ♜f2 ♜e3;
1. ♜c5 ♜g5 2. ♜d4 ♜e3.

BLACK TO PLAY

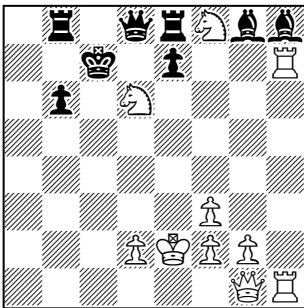
177 J.Kiss
2 Pr *Dunaujvárosi Hírlap*
TT 1962



H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖e4 ♘c7 2. ♗g7 ♜x e4;
1. ♜f2 ♜x f7 2. ♗g6 ♘x f2.

179 V.Schneider
3 Pr *Tipografia* TT 1969



H#2 2 solutions

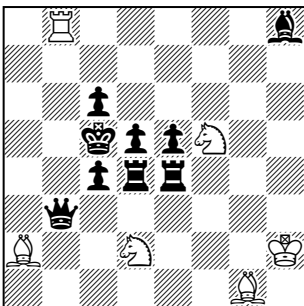
1. ♗g7 ♜h2 2. e6 ♜c1;
1. ♗f7 ♜1h6 2. e5 ♜c1.

dual avoidance, since the sequences 1. ♗g7 ♜1h6 2. e6 ♜c1 and 1. ♗f7 ♜h2 2. e5 ♜c1 can be played; the reason for their failure highlights the interplay. The problem appeared in a cooked form; I do not know if the composer ever corrected it so I have added the WPD2 to make it sound.

The change of pin motif is attractive precisely because of the scope it leaves for interesting motivations and for the choice of suitable white play. Not all possible motivations have been fully explored. We shall look at two more of the subtler ones which have been found.

The twinning of **180** is not very good but thematically the problem is excellent. To permit the initially pinned BR to block on c4 and d5 instead of the BPs which prevent the mates, not only must the WB be enabled to sacrifice itself on those squares but the BR must be unpinned by the BQ or the other BR. This last feature accounts for the arrival effect at Black's first move. The composer's stroke of genius was to make the departure

180 G.Bakcsi
3 HM *Talaber* JT 1981



H#2 b) ♗a2>h1

- a)
1. ♜e3 ♘c4 2. ♜x c4 ♜b3;
b) 1. ♜e3 ♘x d5 2. ♜x d5 ♜e4.

At a surprisingly early date for such a theme, **177** combines three halfpins, two black and one white (and thus three different interchanges of functions), in a setting where the line openings by BR and BQ for the BBs are particularly attractive.

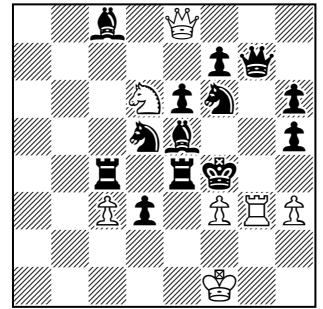
Admittedly with poor twinning, **178** shows something quite extraordinary. The BK moves into three different halfpins, each formed of two of the black pieces in the triangle at the centre of the board. Obviously these cannot be complete halfpins in the sense that the ones in 177 are, with each piece from each halfpin moving in turn. Instead each of the three pieces in the triangle moves once, and they all block the square just vacated by the BK, taking it in cyclic order to block or to remain to be pinned. The WQ establishes the halfpin in each case only after the BK moves, so the effect is anticipatory. The constructional problems are apparent but the problem is thematically faultless and outstanding as a feat of the imagination.

We have already seen in 106 that it is possible to go on from the halfpin to the thirdpin. Decent thirdpin helpmates are very rare, though, so now let us turn our attention to a pin/unpin idea which I shall call the change of pin motif. A black piece is pinned initially but is unpinned by the interposition of a second black piece, allowing the first to move away and leave the second pinned instead. Thus in **179** the BPe7 is unpinned by each BB in turn so that it can move to intercept the other one, leaving the first one necessarily pinned. This exchange of functions between the BBs is matched by an exchange of mating and guarding duties between WR and WQ, providing an interplay which can easily be missing in settings of this idea.

The interplay springs from the fact that each BP move also closes a potential white line of guard, which must therefore be avoided. Indeed we have a kind of effect of those same moves a line opening which permits the WB sacrifices. This, along with the fact that the unpins take place on the same square, unifies the problem in a most satisfying way.

Even more subtle is the motivation for the change of pin in **181**. The play centres on the need for White to guard e2. By playing ♜dc3 or ♜df4 to do this, however, he will unpin one of the BSs which will prevent the mate. Therefore the BSs must be unpinned by the BB and the BR, whose lines can then be shut off by the unpinned BS. The one move which is not yet accounted for is White's first, which appropriately closes the remaining black line. This logic is perfectly worked out in close parallel in the two solutions. Only the BQ, stopping a single cook, is rather expensive. I should have preferred a WPG3.

178 M.Myllyniemi
Tidskrift för Schack 1979

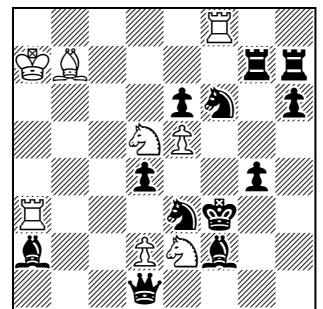


H#2

b) ♜g3>d1 c) ♜d6>b7

- a)
1. ♜e3 ♜x e6 2. ♗f4 ♜x c4;
b)
1. ♜x f3 ♜c6 2. ♗f4 ♜x d3;
c)
1. ♜f5 ♜b5 2. ♗f4 ♜d6.

181 C.Fougiaxis
1 Pr *Sinfonie*
Scacchistiche 1984

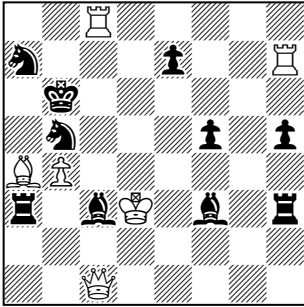


H#2 2 solutions

1. ♗b3 ♜f7 2. ♗c4 ♜dc3;
1. ♗f7 ♜b3 2. ♗d7 ♜df4.

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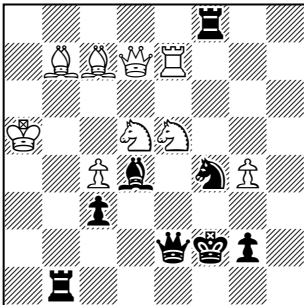
182 F.Abdurahmanović
1 Pr NBvSV JT 1991



H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖d4 ♜b8+ 2. ♚c7 ♜f4;
1. e5 ♜d8 2. ♚c6 ♜h6.

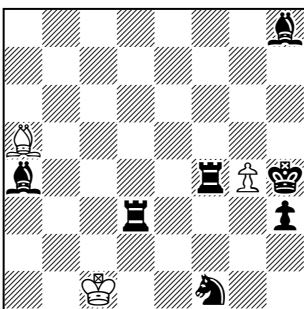
183 F.Pachl
Schach-Report 1992



H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖x d5 ♜f7 2. ♚f3 ♜f5;
1. ♖x e5 ♜b4 2. ♚e3 ♜b6.

184 F.Abdurahmanović
2 Comm *Schach-Echo*
1974



H#4

1. ♜b3 ♚d1 2. ♖c3 ♚e2
3. ♜d4 ♚f3 4. ♖d7 ♜d8.

similar in part b). The subsequent moves to c4 (Black's third moves) are not genuine line effects, rather a choice of blocks, but at least they prevent the pieces on the a-file from appearing too weasely!

Whereas the double interference in the last problem is interesting because it affects both Black and White, some interference effects need to be single in their motivation if they are to seem convincing. One of the most difficult ideas of this kind is the black interference cycle in which R, B and P each close the line of the next in sequence. It is difficult because the necessary two-square pawn move is restricting and because finding suitable accompanying play seems almost impossible.

If 181 perhaps reminds you of the direct mate theme known as the Goethart unpin, **182** may suggest that related idea, the Gamage unpin. Black will pin the Bc3 by moving his K to the c-file but the WQ is able to unpin it again on the mating move because at Black's first move the BSb5 or the BPe7 has closed its diagonal in advance. It is nice that the BK's moves pin whichever one of the BS or BP has not already moved to intercept. It looks as though certain direct mate themes will transfer beautifully to helpmates after all!

Were you fooled? The unpin of the Bb3 is pure window dressing. If you move the WQ to d2 nothing changes except that the pin is removed (oh, and you won't need the BRa3 any more). You could add a BPd4 and the solution starting 1.e5 would still work because the point of the move to e5 is not to close a line at all, it is simply the only way to stop the BP from interfering at e6! I admit that I was a little surprised to find this problem winning a theme tourney for precisely the kind of unpin which we have just seen that it can manage without, but it is after all a matter of taste. We all like a good magic show (and Abdurahmanović is certainly a technical wizard!), we know something of the illusions on which the magician's art depends, yet we are still entertained. We **want** to believe in wonders. Magicians know this and make their living from it. Long may they continue pulling weasels from their hats.

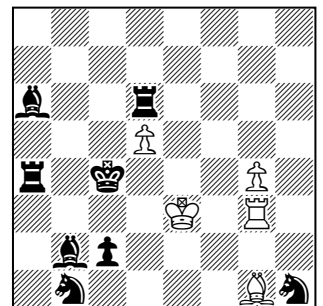
Our next example, **183**, will help us to move on to our final line play idea. There are selfpins by capture which are somewhat reminiscent of 172 but this time they are anticipatory. The main interest of the problem lies in the play at White's first move, which is very striking, opening two white lines and closing one black one each time. The motivation of each move is exactly the same as that of the corresponding move in the other solution and there are (unusually in a helpmate in 2) three different interchanges of functions between white pieces (S/S, Bc7/Q and Bb7/R).

There are many other problems in this book in which the line opening and closing idea features incidentally, but it is time to consider a few where it forms the main content.

Because pinning ideas need intensive treatment to be convincing I have concentrated on helpmates in 2 throughout the last section. Line closing can also operate very effectively in longer problems, as we have already seen in 122. **184** contains a magical and well motivated closed chain of interferences to permit the WK to approach the BK. First a BR shuts off a BB, then the same BR is shut off by the other BB, which is then intercepted by the remaining BR. Finally this R is itself closed out by a move of the first BB. Cyclic effects of any kind are rare in the four move helpmate but a cycle which is expressed by successive moves (as opposed to corresponding ones in different phases) is even more unusual. This is Abdurahmanović at his best, with technique and inspiration going hand in hand.

My objective in **185** was to show double anticipatory line closings at Black's first move. The fact that I need to tell you that may prove that it is not very convincing! Thus 1. ♖d4+ provides both for the WK to go to e4 without a subsequent check from the BRa4 and for the BK to go to c5 without a subsequent check from the WBg1. The effects are

185 C.J.Feather
Moultings 5 1991



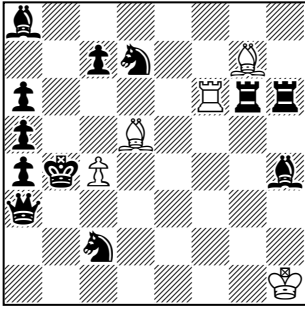
H#3 b) - ♖d5

a)
1. ♖d4+ ♚e4 2. ♚c5 ♜b3
3. ♖c4 ♜x d4;

b)
1. ♜d3+ ♚e2 2. ♚c3 ♜c5
3. ♜c4 ♜x d3.

BLACK TO PLAY

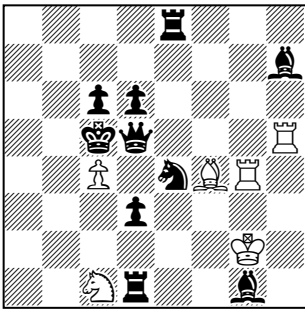
186 J.M.Kricheli
5 Pr *Europe Echecs* 1977



H#2 3 solutions

1. ♖c5 ♜×a6 2. c6 ♜b6;
1. ♗c6 ♜f3 2. ♗f6 ♗f8;
1. ♕b3 ♜f4 2. ♝c6 c5.

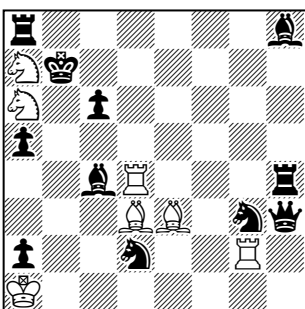
187 M.Persson
3HM *Schach-Echo* 1974/1



H#2 b) -♗d6

- a)
1. ♗e5 ♗a2 2. ♗f2 ♗e3;
b)
1. ♗f5 ♗c7 2. ♗d2 ♗×d3.

188 J.Csák
The Problemist 1991



H#2 b) ♗a5>g6

- a)
1. ♗f5 ♜g7+ 2. ♗f7 ♜d7;
b)
1. ♗de4 ♜b2+ 2. ♗b3 ♜b4.

I have tried this theme myself and come off considerably worse than Kricheli does in **186**. His setting is not completely satisfactory but I know of none better. Perhaps you would like to set to and produce one? If so, good luck! Anyway, let's see what happens in **186**. The thematic pieces are those on g6, a8 and c7. In the first solution the BP interferes with the BR at Black's second move after some most appropriate critical play by the WR. Unfortunately the BP's move also unguards the mating square (b6) but the possibility of playing 1.c5 with the same effect shows that that is not its real purpose. In the second solution the BB interferes with the BP at Black's first move and his second move is (suitably) another line closing. In the last solution the BR interferes with the BB at Black's second move; this line is rich in white line openings. The supporting play is all in keeping with the idea, but is not very well unified. My main regret, though, is that the second interference is at Black's first move, not his second. While that ought in theory to have been avoidable it is not easy to see how!

Putting together a couple of the ideas in this chapter we come to the notion of interference by a pinned piece. Like so many of the motifs we have been considering, this is not so much a theme in itself as an element which requires the admixture of complementary motifs to make a satisfactory whole. That is exactly what is achieved in **187**. The BQ departs from d5 to avoid giving a check at Black's second move but arrives at e5/f5 in order to close a line of guard. This effect whereby a pinned piece stays pinned but changes its position seems to me to constitute a genuinely active use of the pin line. What happens at White's first move is a little colourless (simple guard) but Black's second shows interesting departure and arrival effects (opening of a white line, closing of a black one) and the mates exploit all the strategic features mentioned. Some of the black line pieces feature only in their own solution (the BBgl stops cooks, too) but with a total of seven thematic lines that is virtually inevitable.

This is thoroughly typical of modern line play in the helpmate in 2, showing the relative ease with which a skilful composer can achieve considerable complexity. It also illustrates another dilemma of the modern short helpmate: if such content can be achieved with such ease, shall we not need ever more striking effects if we are not to appear merely to repeat ourselves?

One such striking effect appears in **188**. White finds himself checking too soon, and since that check both causes an unpin and requires an interference this problem may make a fitting conclusion to our discussion of these and related motifs. The striking feature, however, is that the subsequent mate takes place on the line which has just been closed off, making an effect which is both optically and logically interesting. The motivation of Black's first move is also line closing and there is a (technically very astute) white line opening on the second move, so the whole complex is well unified. It is a slight pity that one BB move both unguards and closes a line while the other merely closes a line, but that is a tiny point.

This problem both encourages us to believe that original line combinations are still possible and leads us back to our question "why?". The composer can only have conjured up this idea by asking himself (whether consciously or not) "Why should a white check on a given line not give mate while a subsequent one from a different but similar piece on the same line does so?".

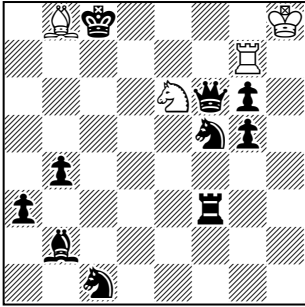
* * * * *

Answer to Csák Mystery: The BQ and the BPC6 are quite unnecessary.

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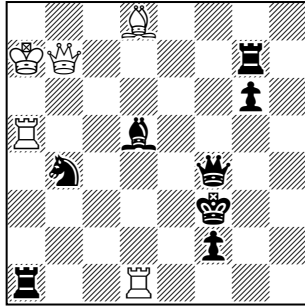
DO IT YOURSELF!

189 F.Chlubna
4 Pr *Schach* 1973



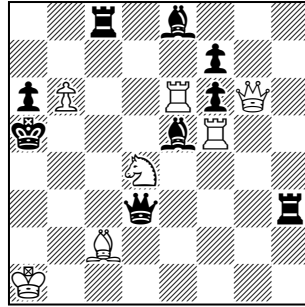
H#2 2 solutions

190 P.A.Petkov
Schachmatna Misl 1986



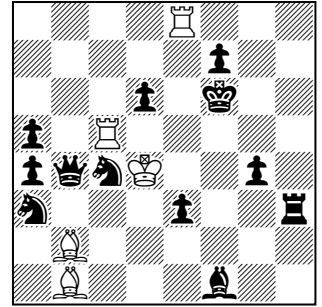
H#2 2 solutions

191 J.Korponai
2 Pr *Budapest S.Sz.* 1965



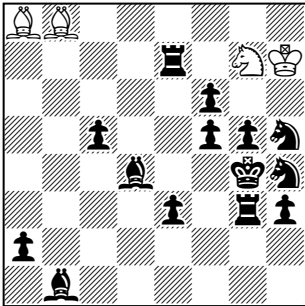
H#2 2 solutions

192 K.Gandev
2 Pr *Schach-Echo* 1970/II



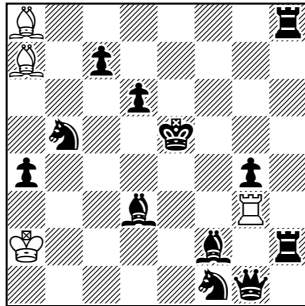
H#2 2 solutions

193 M.Persson
1 HM *Springaren* 1990



H#2 2 solutions

194 G.Páros
2 Pr *BCF 27TT* 1937-38



H#3 b) ♗d3>f5

SOLUTIONS ON
NEXT PAGE

BLACK TO PLAY

189. (Chlubna) 1.♖c3 ♘c5 2.♗a6 ♖g8; 1.♜d4 ♙a7 2.♗f5 ♖c7.

The first moves of White are not very interesting, but Black executes four unpins of Rg7! The indirect unpins are connected with dual avoidance, the direct ones are hideaways.

190. (Petkov) 1.♗g4 ♖d4 2.♜f7 ♗g2; 1.♗e3 ♙g5 2.♜a2 ♖e5.

One pin changes to another, with the originally pinned piece finally unpinning. Perfect equivalence between the solutions with two attractive white interchanges of functions.

191. (Korponai) 1.♗b5 ♗g4 2.♜g3 ♘b3; 1.♜b5 ♗g1 2.♜c7 ♘c6.

The change of pin motif with square block (b5) and the need to close black lines as motivation. The white self interferences are an ideal accompaniment nicely compensated for in advance by White's first move. However, the pin of the WS (which merely stops one cook, by Qb6) adds a slightly spurious touch to what is an otherwise splendid problem. It can be avoided by moving the WK to e7, the WQ to g7, deleting the BPf7 and adding a BSa8.

192. (Gandev) 1.♗e1 ♖h5 2.♜d2 ♗d5; 1.♗b8 ♙h7 2.♜b6 ♗e4.

This looks a little messy but is in fact well constructed, the main problem being to prevent the WK from going to c3 and then discovering mate. (Anti-) critical play by both sides nicely blending and excellent use of the whole board.

193. (Persson) 1.♖e5 ♘e8 2.♜f4 ♘xf6; 1.♖e4 ♘xf5 2.♖f3 ♘h6.

This is a paradoxical line closing idea in which the necessary interference with a black piece causes an unwanted interference with a white line of guard and thus necessitates a compensating square block. As in 191 the resulting idle white piece in each line is thematic, not a failing in economy.

194. (Páros) a) 1.♜e1+ ♙f2 2.♜c3 ♖e3+ 3.♗d4 ♖e4; b) 1.♜e3+ ♙g2 2.♜f4 ♖f3 3.♗e4 ♖e3.

Astounding for its date, this would appear highly publishable even now. The two solutions match perfectly and even achieve a kind of strategic chameleon echo with long range critical moves by White.

CHAPTER 9: CAPTURE OF WHITE

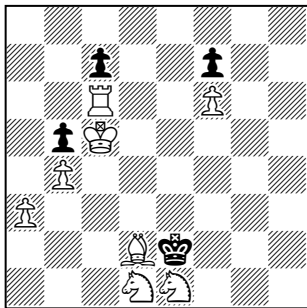
Capture of white material has been one of the most fashionable of all helpmate ideas, both in single line form in the thirties and forties and in multiphase form in the last twenty years or so. Most often the surprise effect of such a paradoxical kind of “help” is cited as the reason for its obvious attraction for both composers and solvers; but this surprise has long since worn off, so there must be more to it.

Captures change the tactical possibilities of a position more radically than other moves, and since White cannot capture his own pieces, Black must do it for him; thus it should be obvious that capture of White creates novel opportunities for strategy with inbuilt interplay. In addition it is virtually impossible to compose or solve this kind of helpmate without facing important questions: How can it “help” to reduce the available mating force? Why must the capturing moves be played?

These questions highlight the idea of the motivation of moves which has been the guiding principle of our last few chapters. The decisive point in the popularity of the idea, though, seems to me to be its compactness: though a capture is in itself a clearly recognisable motif, it takes a single move, leaving ample room for the composer’s originality in devising suitable accompaniments or complicated antecedents and consequences. In the early days there was no doubt the additional challenge for the composer of getting his capture helpmate sound, since the presence of white material not used in the mate must increase the chance of cooks. Technique gradually improved, and some remarkably precarious looking positions turn out to be quite possible if the right means are used (e.g. the use of the square f2 in 172).

However it is generally true nowadays that the most interesting thematic complexes involving capture of White are to be found in the two move helpmate. Such problems may need five or six white pieces in addition to king and pawns. For reasons of soundness it is unusual to find that amount of white material in longer helpmates. As a result of this and of the compactness of the capture motif, settings of it in longer helpmates are often unconvincing. They tend to contain a number of colourless moves which make one wonder whether they really justify their length; most of the examples I have seen (or composed!) tend to look like twomovers with bits added on.

195 I.Telkes *Die Schwalbe* 1933



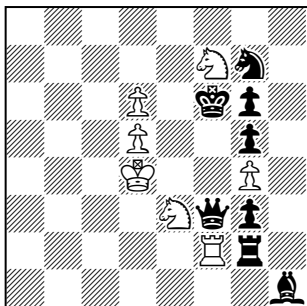
H#3

1. ♖×d2 ♔d4 2. ♖×d1 ♕e3
3. ♖×e1 ♞c1.

It’s time to start looking at some examples, starting with **195**. Decide what you think about this problem before reading on.

If you remember chapter 2 you will have realised that the sacrificial weasel has just reared its head again. If a white piece is there only to be captured, how does one justify its presence in the first place? The question is hardest in the case of single line helpmates like **195** in which the captured white pieces do not move. In this case one has to decide either that the paradox of capture is sufficient justification, or that the piece in question must prevent cooks. There is no other choice. Both these points of view were espoused by early helpmate composers, Dawson and Fox going for the cook prevention justification and the composer of 195 choosing the justification by paradox. There is no doubt that the WB in 195 is necessary but both WSs are weasels. They can be removed without changing anything, which means that **all** the pawns can also go. If you think that the remaining four pieces do not make much of a problem, it may be because there was not much of a problem to start with!

196 C.J.Feather *Moultings* 2 1991 (version)



H#2 2 solutions

1. g×f2 ♘d8 2. ♖×d5+ ♘×d5;
1. ♞×f2 ♘h6 2. ♖×g4+ ♘×g4.

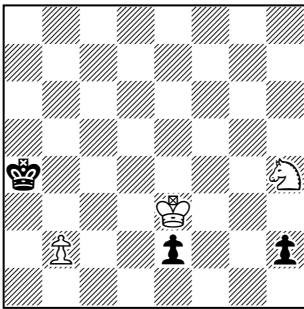
We have seen an example of the Dawson/Fox approach in 30, where the WQ cannot be replaced by a WR. I cannot help feeling that it is zoologically interesting that a fox should shun weasels.

The multiphase form is clearly more satisfactory because it offers a wider choice of justifications for the use of captured material. A piece captured in one phase may be active in another, the most generally favoured approach. If captured and mating pieces exchange roles between phases we have the Zilahi theme (one of the few themes with an inbuilt interchange of functions), which has produced many fine problems.

If the same piece is captured in each phase that may be justified by a dual avoidance effect or something similar. In **196** each of the two captures of the same WR causes a different added guard on one of the mating squares, the point being that the two similar captures are not interchangeable.

BLACK TO PLAY

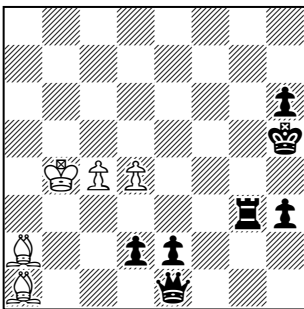
197 I.Sztankovszky
1 Pr *Feenschach* 3TT
1952



H#5

1.e1 ♖ ♗f3 2. ♗a5 ♗g1
3.hxg1 ♗+ ♖d3 4. ♗c5
♖c4 5. ♗a3 b3.

198 M.Caillaud
1 Pr *Rex Multiplex* 1986

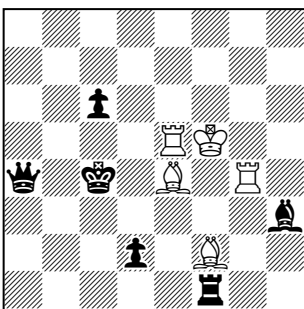


H#4 2 solutions

1. ♖h4 ♗b3 2.h5 ♗d1
3.exd1 ♗ d5 4. ♗g4 ♗f6;

1. ♗g4 ♗b2 2. ♖h4 ♗c1
3.dxc1 ♗ c5 4. ♗g5 ♗f7.

199 C.J.Feather
Arbeiter-Zeitung (Wien)
1975



H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖a5 ♗b5 2. ♖x b5 ♗d3;
1. ♖c2 ♗d3+ 2. ♖x d3 ♗e3.

Multiphase helpmates in which captured white material is justified by its preventing cooks seem almost nonexistent now but the sacrificial weasel still thrives and is indeed nourished by many important composers. A problem by Garai in which an unnecessary wQ is twice captured won a prize in a theme tourney of *Mat* in 1987 (see Janevski / Stolev, no. 258). The judge of the 1970/I tourney of *Schach-Echo* (U.Ring) gave a special prize to a problem by Bakcsi with a similar feature, highlighting his dilemma by describing it as both a “constructive tour de force” and a “formally simulated” idea “at a high cost in economy”.

In keeping with my belief that you should spot weasels yourself I shall not quote any more sacrificial ones here where you will be expecting them, but there may be some later! Meanwhile let us start looking at the various forms which the capture idea can take.

a) The white piece moves to the capture square

As the first of several different forms of the capture of white idea we consider the case in which the white piece moves to the square where it will be taken. Why should it do so? It may be in order to capture a black piece and by sacrificing itself to make the square available for a second black piece, as we have already seen in 180; it may be the special case when the second black piece is the king, as in 52; or it may be that the white move gives Black access to the square in some other way. One of the charms of the idea is that many variations are possible.

In **197**, for example, the WS must sacrifice itself to allow Black to promote to a bishop on a dark square so that it can block in the right place. The problem dates from an age when such a sacrifice seemed enough of a theme in itself; it contains some very colourless moves but comes close to justifying its length by filling in the spare black moves with another similar promotion and block.

The composer of **198** has doubled the idea of capture for promotion and in doing so has created an effect in which white bishops seem to change into black ones! It appears curious at first that a black bishop on a given square can move to make a block in the BK’s field while a white bishop on the same square does not guard the BK’s field. The trick works thanks to the curious nature of the pawn, which can clear a diagonal and turn into a bishop in one move. The combination of BQel and WKb4 is a skilful device to prevent both BPs from promoting orthogonally without wasting time. While the bishop colour change is a neat trick the problem does contain some padding, especially on the first moves. I have already expressed doubts about capture of White in problems longer than two moves; in a way this problem both proves and disproves my thesis, since on the one hand it could have been set as a twin helpmate in three without losing anything genuinely thematic, but on the other hand it would then certainly have made the fullest possible use of its length. So much for generalisations!

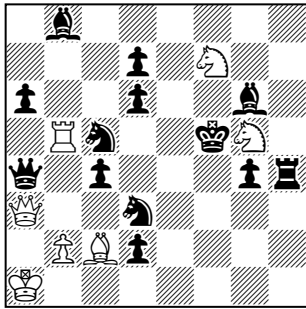
Another version of the white sacrifice idea is for it to be the only way for White to unguard the square to which the BK needs access. This can be rather obvious if the move is literally the only way of getting rid of the unneeded white piece (bishops tend to play from corner squares) but there is a more subtle variant, as seen in **199**. The thematic pieces are initially free but in blocking squares the BQ creates a pin which leaves the sacrifice as the only means of unguard. A further variation on this idea is to make the preceding black move a check which the sacrifice parries by interference.

b) The white piece is on the capture square

The remaining forms of the idea can apply both when the captured white piece does not move at all and from the point when, in one of the effects mentioned in the last section, it has just moved to the capture square. The former is very common but the latter clearly makes a more complex effect. We shall see examples of both. There are three different cases according to what happens to the black piece after the capture.

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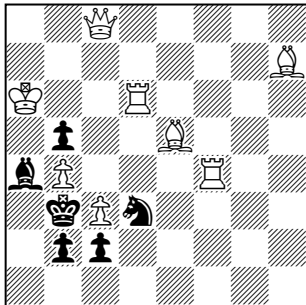
200 C.J.Feather
Moultings 4 1991



H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖xb5 ♜xd3+ 2. ♜e4 ♜f1;
1. ♖xc2 ♜xc5+ 2. ♜e5 ♜f2.

201 F.Abdurahmanović
3 Pr Olympic Ty 1984



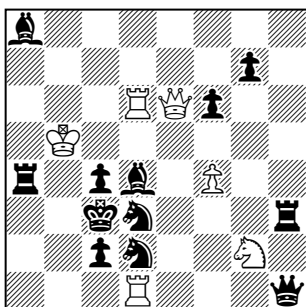
H#2 2 solutions

1. ♜xf4 ♜g4 2. ♜c4 ♜g8;
1. ♜xe5 ♜h8 2. ♜xc3 ♜d3.

202 goes further, showing capture unguards for the BK which are also prospective selfpins by three different pieces. The differentiation of the solutions according to which piece makes the capture is most skilful and well unified. It depends on unguards of the mating line or square, a motif which blends well with the main idea. Perhaps I should not be quoting this as an example of capture of White, though, since nothing changes if we delete the WRd4. So Abdurahmanović must be added to the list of important composers favouring the sacrificial weasel. It seems striking to me that that this remains (becomes??) a very good selfpin problem without that WR!

If the capturing black piece is the BK then unpin and unguard effects are obviously excluded. Consequently this type can be rather dull unless the captured piece has just sacrificed itself actively. **203** is a lovely example, with line closings and three pinmates, all by the WQ, in a cyclic effect. This theme is far from easy to show so considerable skill has gone into the easy looking position. The only enigma is the BBa8, which seems to have no purpose.

203 Ž.Janevski
1 Pr Phénix 1989



H#2 3 solutions

1. ♜f3 ♜d3+ 2. ♜xd3 ♜e3;
1. ♜b4 ♜d4 2. ♜xd4 ♜xc4;
1. ♜g1 ♜d2 2. ♜xd2 ♜e1.

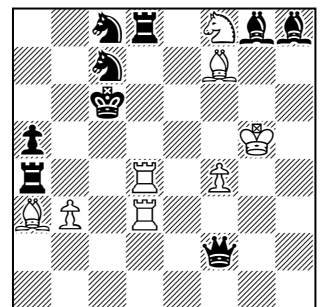
b1. The capturing black piece stays put

The first case is when the capturing black piece stays where it is after taking the white piece. The capture may (rather boringly!) block a square in the BK's field, or it may be the only available tempo move, as we saw in Black's second move of 67. Alternatively, as in 173, the capture may be the only nondisruptive move, in other words a special case of the black hideaway idea. A more dynamic variation features the need for the black piece to pin itself so that it cannot return to prevent the mate. We have seen this idea in both 172 and (in anticipatory form) in 183.

One of the most interesting types occurs when a pinning piece is captured. There is a wide range of possible reasons for this unpin, depending on what the freed black piece is to do next. The composer of 57 intensified the capture idea by arranging that the motivation of the unpin by capture was to permit a further capture by the unpinned BP. In **200** the BSs must be unpinned by capture only so that they are free to answer the check which the WQ must give on the way to the mating square. There is still scope for composers to devise new motivations for this kind of play.

An idea which is related to capture for unpin is capture for unguard. The white piece is captured because it guards a square to which the BK needs access. I am particularly fond of the anticipatory version of this, in which the square needed by the BK is not yet guarded but would become guarded but for the capture. You have seen this in 12 and 140. There are many effective examples featuring the removal of a direct guard, however. In **201** the composer has shown good taste in choosing to accompany this with first white moves featuring a further unguard as departure effect and a pin of the capturing piece as arrival effect. The interchange of functions at White's second move is also nice. So often the success of helpmates with capture themes depends on the appropriate use of the noncapturing moves.

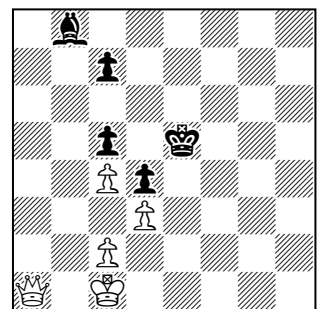
202 Ž.Janevski & F.Abdurahmanović
Sakkélet 1991



H#2 3 solutions

1. ♜axd4 b4 2. ♜d6 b5;
1. ♜xd4 ♜g6 2. ♜d7 ♜e5;
1. ♜xd4 ♜h5 2. ♜d5 ♜f3.

204 W.Hagemann
3 Pr Schwalbe Ring Ty 1949

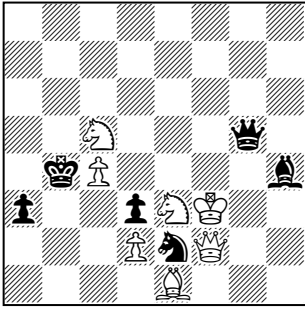


H#3*

- 1...c3 2.dxc3 ♜a8 3. ♜d4 ♜e4;
1.c6 ♜xd4+ 2. ♜xd4 ♜d2
3. ♜e5 c3.

BLACK TO PLAY

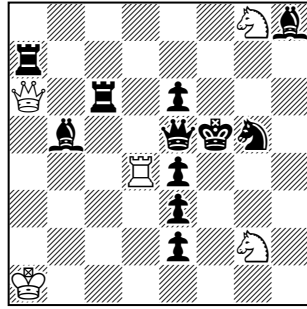
205 M.Sosedkin
3 Pr *diagrammes* 1982-83



H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖f4 ♗c2+ 2. dxc2 d3;
1. ♗g3 ♖e2 2. dxe2 d4.

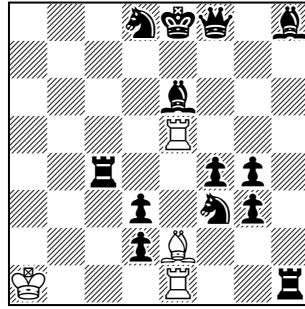
206 P.A.Petkov
3 Pr *Schachmatna Misl*
1978



H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖a4 ♗d3 2. exd3 ♗h4;
1. ♖c3 ♖d5 2. exd5 ♗h6.

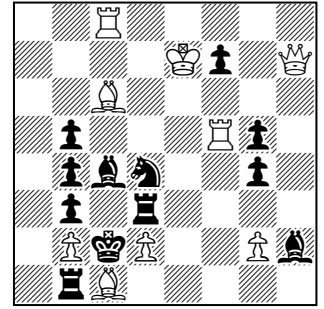
207 P.A.Petkov
feenschach 1990



H#3 2 solutions

1. ♖d4 ♖c5 2. ♖f7 ♖c2
3. dxc2 ♖b5;
1. ♗d4 ♖h5 2. ♖d7 ♖h3
3. g×h3 ♖h5.

208 C.J.Feather & F.Abdurahmanović
Schach-Echo 1977



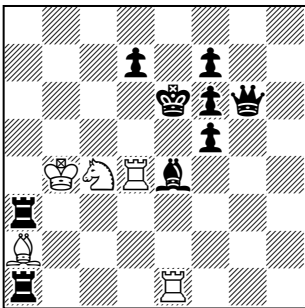
H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖e6 ♖f3+ 2. ♖xc8 ♖c5;
1. ♖h3 ♖f1+ 2. ♖x7 ♖e4.

The BP capture idea features more prominently in **205**, one of the most attractive examples I have seen, with its elegant anticipatory line closings at Black's first move and the wonderful interchange of functions between WQ and WS which is used to differentiate the pawn moves at White's second turn. Do have a really close look at this one.

An interesting comparison may be made between **206** and **207**, two examples of this motif by the same composer but in different lengths of problem. In both cases the BPs need to capture to open lines and so white must sacrifice. Although the two unpins at Black's first move in the threemover are differentiated in an attractive and thematic way, this problem lacks the interchanges of functions of the shorter one and once again makes me wonder about its length, especially since White's first move is so weak. The double check mates are inelegant compared with the economical use of the WSs in the shorter setting.

209 V.Schneider
1 Pr *Schach-Echo* 1966



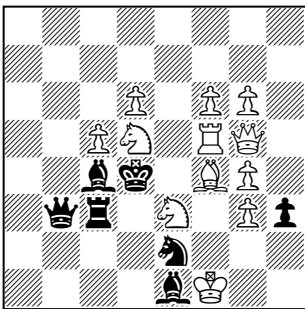
H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖x2 ♗e5 2. ♖c2 ♗d3;
1. ♖x2 ♗e3 2. ♖b1 ♗c2.

Finally in this section where the black piece captures and does not move again there is the type exemplified twice in 58: the capture answers a check, which is usually a side effect of some other necessary manoeuvre undertaken by White. This is seen in **208**, where the nuisance check is created when the WB and WR move to guard squares. The paradoxical nature of the idea is here increased by having the mates use the same lines as were previously controlled by the captured pieces.

A more subtle variant involves forestalling a check rather than answering it. Thus in **209** the WS will cause a check when it moves to unpin the BB, so a BR must prevent the check before it happens by removing the WB. The choice of capture introduces a dual avoidance motif based on line closing, a very fitting accompaniment since the WS both opens and closes lines each time it moves.

210 J.Csák
4 Comm *Europe-Echecs*
1988



H#2 2 solutions

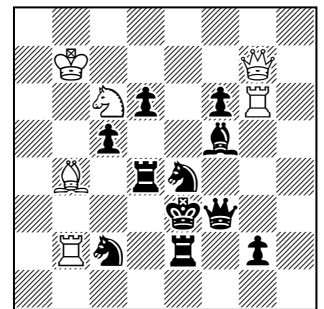
1. ♖x3 ♖x3+ 2. ♖x3 ♖x3;
1. ♖d5 ♖d5+ 2. ♖d5 ♖d5.

b2. The capturing black piece is captured

The second case occurs when the capturing black piece is itself then captured. The second capture need not happen immediately. This is in essence a mechanism whereby one white piece can replace another without more than one white move being involved. In **210** the idea is carried to an extreme by being doubled consecutively in each line but the price in economy and mobility is naturally high.

The idea in its single form offers a variety of different possibilities for the reason why the second white piece needs to get to the thematic square. Thus in **211** the captures allow the BS to be pinned.

211 C.J.Feather
Moultings 12 1993

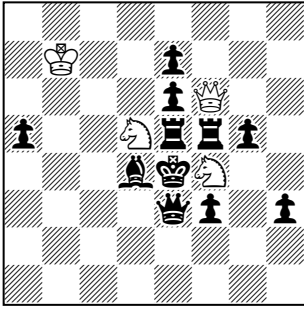


H#2 b) ♗>a5

a)
1. ♖b4+ ♖b4 2. ♖f4 ♖h6;
b)
1. ♖x6 ♖x6 2. ♖d3 ♖b3.

BLACK TO PLAY

212 C.J.Feather
Schach-Report 1992



H#2 2 solutions

1.gxf4 ♖xf4 2.♔xf4 ♜h4;
1.exd5 ♖xd5 2.♔xd5 ♜c6.

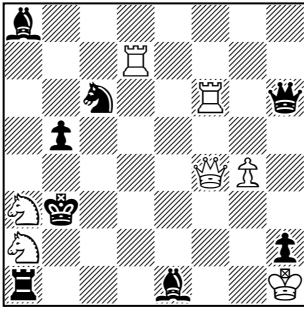
Other reasons might be to guard squares, to gain access for a subsequent move or to create a clearance when the second white piece moves again. There is scope for originality here. More simply the double capture may be the only way to eliminate the black piece concerned. In **212** the BPs can be got rid of only if they capture a WS, necessitating a subsequent sacrifice of the other WS so as to clear the square for the BK.

b3. The capturing black piece moves on

The third and last case is perhaps the most interesting: the black piece captures and moves again. We saw a simple version of this in 147 where the white piece was captured merely because it lay on the black piece's only route to its destination; although this motivation is obvious it was used in that problem to create a very interesting form of dual avoidance, thus showing once again that it is the accompanying play which often determines the quality.

In addition there is of course a variety of reasons why the black piece should need to reach its destination, so this idea merits further experimentation. In problems 8, 11 and 172 we have already seen some of its possibilities. **213** is a very curious example where it is hard to say what the reason for the captures really is. Clearly in the line where the BQ must reach a4 the only route passes through f4, just as in the other line the only route to b2 passes through f6. No doubt for that reason, Janevski describes the idea as "pseudo annihilation", meaning that the capture occurs only because the white piece occupies a square which would be needed even in its absence. As an experiment let us forget the first line for a moment, move the BQ to g5 and make g4 a BP. Now the 1.♔xf6 line still works but the alternative route 1.♔e5 does not, because the mating move is blocked by the WR which has not been removed. Thus we have shown that the motivation in this line is really a clearance. We have incidentally also confirmed the analytical usefulness of possibilities which fail only because of a single difference in strategic effect from the solution.

213 T.Garai
2 Pr The Problemist 1987



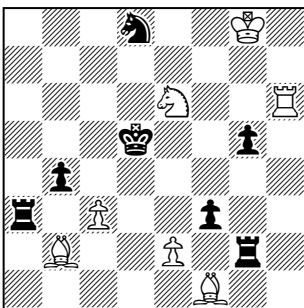
H#2 2 solutions

1.♔xf4 ♖d2 2.♔a4 ♖f3;
1.♔xf6 ♖a7 2.♔b2 ♜f7.

On closer inspection of this problem, though, we see that the clearance motivation applies only because the WQ possesses a diagonal power which the WR lacks. The WQ can mate from f7 but the WR cannot. Turning to the other solution, no matter what alternative route we might imagine for the BQ, it would not fail to work for lack of a clearance since the WQ, whose powers include those of a rook, could simply mate on f3 instead of the WR. Therefore the motivation in this line is indeed an accidental annihilation.

There is no way in which the composer could have avoided this slight imbalance; and the problem is splendidly light and airy for such spectacular content. I do find it a little worrying though, that the judge did not comment on any of the above, referring merely to "impressive strategy".

214 M.Persson
Schach-Echo 1979



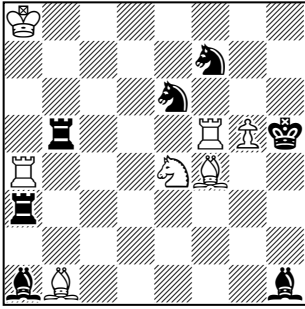
H#2 3 solutions

1.♖xc3 ♖xg5 2.♖c5 e4;
1.♖xe2 cxb4 2.♖e4 ♖c7;
1.♗xe6 exf3 2.♗c5 c4.

Mutual clearances between WQ and WR are impossible but the idea of removing white pieces to open lines can be shown genuinely and effectively, as the lovely **214** shows. Each of the thematic black pieces (which are, most satisfactorily, the **only** black pieces!) needs to block a square in the BK's field and has a choice of ways of getting there. Of these one involves capturing a white piece, thus opening a line of guard, and the other does not, and for precisely that reason will not work. The white moves blend perfectly in that White opens the other two lines in each case; and the final refinement is that there is a cyclic interchange of functions in the use of the two WPs and the WS, each being captured in one solution, making White's first move in the next and his second in the remaining one. This helpmate is perfect in its clarity and harmony, my favourite among all of its composer's problems. Incidentally it is high time we had a published collection of Manne Persson's works, since he started composing in 1933!

BLACK TO PLAY

215 F.Pachl
4 Pr *Thema Danicum* 1989

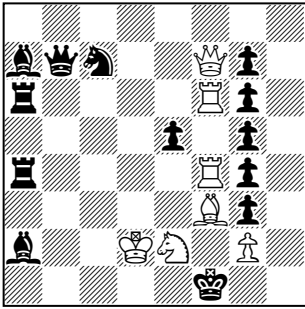


H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖xf5 ♙e3 2. ♖d5 ♘g3;
1. ♗xf4 ♞e5 2. ♗g2 ♘f6.

The lines of guard opened by the black captures in 214 were each blocked only by a single white piece, but it is easy to extend this by positioning another white piece on the same line and having it move as part of the solution. An attractive version of this idea is to have two intersecting lines of guard and site the extra white piece where they meet, as in **215**. Indeed the idea is taken even further by having this extra piece (the WS) pinned initially. From this there arises some complex strategy at Black's second move, where the thematic black pieces both clear the white line, unpin the WS and do so with dual avoidance, since the wrong choice would put an unwanted guard on the mating square. Among currently active composers Pachl stands out for his understanding of the nature of modern strategy in the helpmate: it would be hard to say neatly what the "theme" of this problem is, but the blend of motifs is so chosen as to exploit the resources of the position and ensure perfect balance. All the moves except Black's first move show both arrival and departure effects and every one of them is connected with line opening or closing.

216 A.Zarur
1 Pr *The Problemist* 1989



H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖xf4 ♞b6 2. ♖c4 ♙e4;
1. ♖xf6 ♞c4 2. ♖b6 ♙c6.

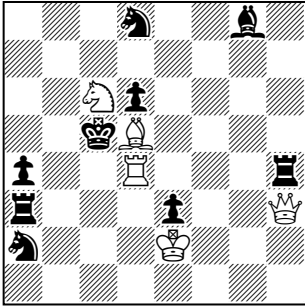
216 shows an even more complex line clearance by capture. There are three heavy pieces bearing down on the BK behind the WBf3 but the two nearest are securely guarded by BPs. There is time for one to move away, closing some black lines in the process, but the other must be removed by a black piece. This then moves away for further line closing, while the remaining white move both opens the mating line and contributes further to the line closing idea. The interchange of lines closed between White's first move and Black's second is most attractive. Of course the WQ serves only as a R, but that is inevitable if we stick to the usual conventions about promoted force.

The above discussion of the different ways of using the white capture motif covers, however briefly, all the possible types and could be expanded into a complete system of classification. Where such a classification would be open ended is in the motivation of the moves. In the immense popularity of the capture motif in recent years we have seen time after time the same sorts of captures for the same sorts of reasons. Consequently the motif itself has acquired connotations of staleness which are not fully deserved. If composers and solvers would concentrate on the reasons for the moves they would find that there is still freshness in the idea of capturing white pieces. It is after all one of the most fertile of all helpmate ideas and if it ever becomes truly exhausted then the helpmate itself will be dead. Of course, some problemists believe that the helpmate is nearly (or already) dead, but that question takes us on to the next and final chapter...

BLACK TO PLAY

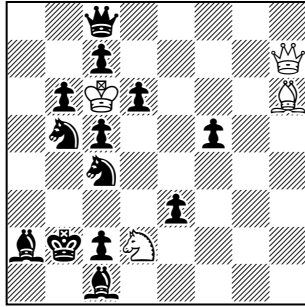
DO IT YOURSELF!

217 G.Smits &
N.G.G. van Dijk
feenschach 1982



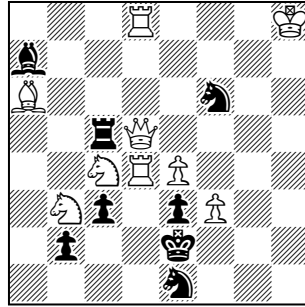
H#2 3 solutions

218 T.Garai
Sinfonie Scacchistiche
1987



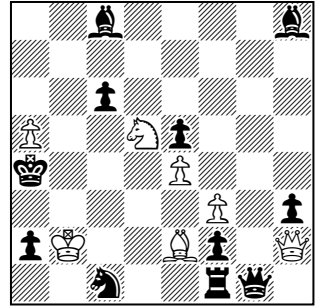
H#2 2 solutions

219 Z.Janevski
Sachova Skladba 1991



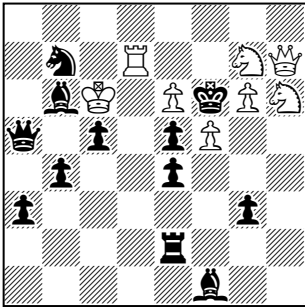
H#2 2 solutions

220 G.Bakcsi
3 Pr Sinfonie
Scacchistiche 1970



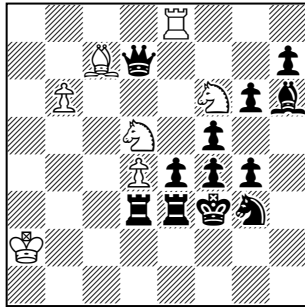
H#2 b) ♔>b6

221 G.Bakcsi
1 Pr Probleemblad 1969



H#2 4 solutions

222 C.J.Feather
Moultings 9 1992



H#3 b) ♜f5>f7

SOLUTIONS ON
NEXT PAGE

BLACK TO PLAY

217. (Smits & van Dijk) 1.♖xd4 ♘a5 2.♗xd5 ♜f5; 1.♙xd5 ♞b4 2.♝xc6 ♜c8; 1.♗xc6 ♙b3 2.♗xd4 ♜xe3.

A cycle of captures of white pieces, the motivation alternating between unguard for BK access and passive annihilation by the BK. The three mates by the WQ add unity. Curiously, a2 can be a BP. I guess that the composers must at some stage have been working on a version with the whole position one rank lower on the board! Careless of them to miss this, though.

218. (Garai) 1.♗ca3 ♜xc7 2.♗xc7 ♙g7; 1.♗ba3 ♙xe3 2.♗xe3 ♜g7.

The white captures provide hideaway squares for the BSs, with attractive white and black interchanges of functions and a nice touch in the block of a3, which Black cannot use for both Ss at once!

219. (Janevski) 1.♖xd5 ♞d3 2.♗xd3 ♘a3; 1.♗xd5 ♞d1 2.♗xd1 ♘xe3.

The presence of the WRd4 is clearly justified by the fact that it moves, but what does the WQ do? If you think that the answer is nothing, you are wrong, for it stops the cook 1.♗d7 ♞d1 2.♗xd1 ♘xe3. Now wouldn't it have been dull to stop that by putting the WK on f8? If we do that we can not only remove the WQ but also the BPb2.

220. (Bakcsi) a) 1.cxd5 ♜xe5 2.d4 ♜b5; b) 1.♗xe2 ♜xf2 2.♗d4 ♜xa2.

Black clears a line for the WQ which selfpins and therefore determines the arrival effect (unpin) on Black's second move. Cunning thematic twinning changes the selfpin line but avoids cooks by also changing the guards on the BK's field. Perfectly balanced motivation.

221. (Bakcsi) 1.♗a8 ♘g8+ 2.♗xg8 ♜h4; 1.♗d6 ♘e8+ 2.♗xe8 ♜e7; 1.♖h2 ♘h5+ 2.♖xh5 ♜e7; 1.♙h3 ♘g4+ 2.♙xg4 ♜h4.

The only way to bring the WQ into play is to move a WS but all their moves give check! Thus Black must arrange to answer the check with a capture, using four different pieces on different squares. The repeated mates are hardly a fault. This checking idea became quite fashionable in the eighties, when nobody bothered to remember that Bakcsi had worked it a decade before.

222. (Feather) a) 1.♗xe8 (♗e7?) ♘xe4 2.♗xe4 ♙e5 3.f3 ♘f6; b) 1.♗xc7 (♗d6?) ♘xf4 2.♗xf4 ♞e5 3.♖f3 ♘d5.

An attempt to show a genuine 3-move theme involving capture of White. To unguard the sacrifice squares e4 and f4 Black must capture on his first move because if he tries to selfpin instead then White's second move will unpin the BQ and prevent the mate. This requires three white moves (sacrifice, unpin and mate). I'm not sure whether I'm convinced but if I am it's the interchange of functions between WR and WB which does it.

CHAPTER 10: ALTERED IN FULFILMENT

*... what you thought you came for
 Is only a shell, a husk of meaning
 From which the purpose breaks only when it is fulfilled
 If at all. Either you had no purpose
 Or the purpose is beyond the end you figured
 And is altered in fulfilment.*
 (T.S.Eliot, 'Little Gidding')

Twenty or so years ago, when I would have wished to read a book like this, I should have been very optimistic about the future development of the helpmate; and indeed the intervening years have seen an enormous flowering of the genre. When I took a rest from chess problems in the eighties I felt that I had no more to say as a composer of helpmates and wondered if that was because I was getting jaded or because the genre itself was becoming played out.

I returned to composition in September 1990 when a helpmate in 2, in virtually finished form, simply came into my head, attracted no doubt by the ample empty space available therein; since that time I have composed about 300 more, and even with my inexhaustible talent for repetition I have to believe that two or three of them are original! So why am I not more confident about the future of helpmates?

In the first place I am dismayed at the low standards which many helpmate composers set themselves, both technically and imaginatively. The most obvious ideas and motifs have been very thoroughly worked but this does not stop composers from treading these well trodden paths again and again. And the worst thing is that solvers and judges do not seem to mind. It's almost as though people look to helpmates merely for entertainment and do not really like originality; they don't want to make the effort to think analytically and study the motivations of the moves. Helpmates must be as undemanding as a Lehar waltz while it is left to other genres to correspond to Beethoven sonatas or Mahler symphonies. The helpmate is the lazy person's chess problem. Much as I should like to be optimistic I cannot see it shedding that image and I have to accept that it is partially deserved.

The only hope is that helpmate enthusiasts may start to adopt the critical approach which I advocated in the introduction. That is why I have dwelt so often on imperfections in this book: our mistakes are the most useful things we have, if only we are prepared to acknowledge them.

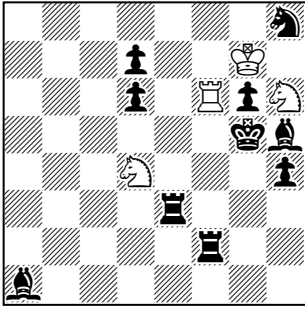
Secondly, I am not sure that helpmates in more than two moves genuinely offer the scope for development which one would initially expect. When selecting examples for this book I looked at a good many recent threemove helpmates and found that most of them failed to justify their length. They tend to use the same motifs as twomovers, but spread more thinly because of the soundness problem, in other words they are a further example of more not meaning better.

If you agree with my assessment that it is misleading to speak of helpmate themes in the conventional sense (see chapter 2) you will see that it provides one reason why this may be so. Of the various styles of helpmates which we have looked at only journeys (chapter 6) seek unity in sequences of moves spread out over time; although there obviously are other thematic combinations which require length to make their point, they are perhaps the exception rather than the rule. Putting this together with the soundness problem it may be that there is simply less scope in helpmates than in direct problems and that they are consequently bound to be exhausted sooner. A good many composers appear to take this view, if only tacitly, as is shown by the drift to unorthodox forms, especially unorthodox conditions such as Circe or Madrasi. In writing this book one hope which I have (though not a very confident one) is that composers might really make the effort to search out thematic complexes which genuinely justify three or more moves. They do exist.

Thirdly, I cannot really see any equivalent in helpmates of virtual play in directmates. The fact that after many attempts nothing of this kind has really caught on (see chapter 5) seems to support this view. One approximate equivalent ought to be dual avoidance (chapter 6); although dual avoidance helpmates are not scarce it puzzles me that they are not much more plentiful. I used to think that this was because Páros concentrated so much on the idea at one stage of his career that he made other composers shy of it, but that was thirty years ago. It would delight me if this book could help to persuade composers to make greater use of dual avoidance in company with more modern themes. **223** [on next page] is a good example of what I mean: the dual avoidance is achieved by black departure effects rather as in 63 but it is combined with white sacrifices in a very elegant manner, showing that this kind of novelty need not mean crowded positions.

BLACK TO PLAY

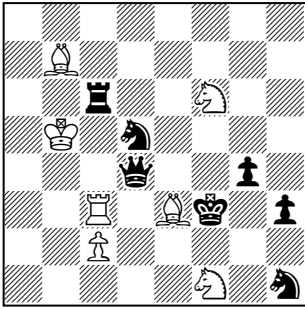
223 M.Parrinello
feenschach 1991



H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖c3 ♜e6 2. d×e6 ♞×e6;
1. ♞b2 ♞df5 2. g×f5 ♝×f5.

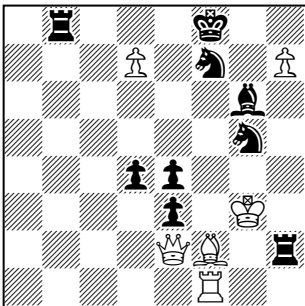
225 C.J.Feather
Schach-Report 1994



H#2 b) ♞>g2

- a)
1. ♞×c3 ♞×d5 2. ♜h8 ♞×c3;
b)
1. ♞×f6 ♝×c6 2. ♜a1 ♝×f6.

226 G.Bakcsi
3 Pr USPB 1984



H#2 2 solutions

1. d3 ♞b2 2. e2 ♞c5;
1. ♝×f2 d8 ♞ 2. ♝×e2 h8 ♞.

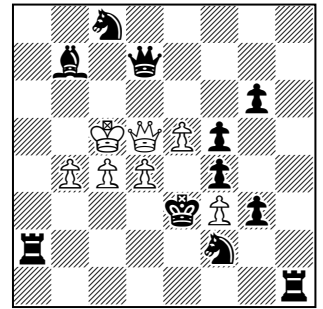
Finally, it seems that new helpmate themes are becoming very rare indeed. In **224** you will see one, an addition to the family of line themes which we saw in chapter 8. The WQ has to find its way around behind the BB and BQ in order to follow them along a line for the ultimate mate, crossing its starting square again in the process. This visually and intellectually attractive theme has yet to find its perfect expression but clearly offers some scope for originality. It would be nice to accompany it with ten or a dozen other new themes from recent years but I cannot.

In some of the earlier chapters I have suggested possible areas for development, but it is difficult to do more than combine motifs in what one believes are appropriate ways and hope that the resulting thematic complex seems fresh; and above all it is difficult to find novel combinations which lend themselves to a variety of satisfactory expressions. Thus I have recently been experimenting with a two move idea in which white pieces are captured at Black's first move in order to clear squares as arrival points for other white pieces which mate by discovery. In **225** this is shown in the Zilahi form (see chapter 9), thus ensuring that there is what I see as an indispensable interchange of functions. This idea takes care of three of the four moves but it was enormously difficult to find anything sensible for Black's second. You may or may not think that I have found a good solution to this difficulty in the shape of the BQ hideaways; but you should easily see that the range of possibilities is very limited.

Thus even if it is original this problem is not going to lead to a whole family of related compositions in the way that the best ideas do, shown long ago by Comins Mansfield in his *Adventures in Composition*. None of the constituent motifs in **225** is anything but very trite in itself, thus the most that the combination can aspire to is a lesser kind of originality.

That all seems very pessimistic, but there is also room for some optimism. It is easy to agree that helpmates need unity and we have seen all the usual ways of achieving it exemplified in earlier chapters. There may be other ways, though. In the curious **226** there is a kind of unity which is hard to describe, perhaps based on the line opening idea, the pin of the BS and the fact that White needs a Q and a B for each solution but does not have time to use the same ones! Bakcsi has made a number of problems like this, some of which I find frankly unconvincing, but you cannot deny that this one is both economical and interesting. We need composers to make such experiments, even if they do not always work. Another idea of Bakcsi's is to aim for unity in the interchange of motifs between the black and white play. Thus in **227** while in a) Black performs a clearance on the left hand side and White a switchback, in b) there is a white clearance on the right hand side and a black switchback. The unity is more visual than strategic and the twinning is fairly extreme but the principle is general enough to suggest a range of other possible combinations which composers ought to be exploring.

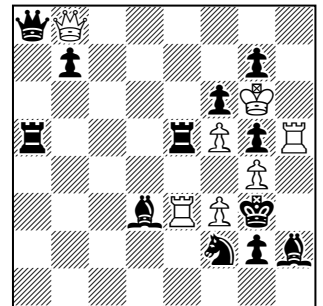
224 B.Ellinghoven & H.P.Rehm
feenschach 1990



H#3 b) ♞>g2

- a)
1. ♞e2 ♞g8 2. ♞×f3 ♞d8
3. ♞×d4+ ♞×d4;
b)
1. ♞d2 ♞a5 2. ♞×d4 ♞a8
3. ♞×f3+ ♞×f3.

227 G.Bakcsi
1 Pr Vizügyi SC TT 1987

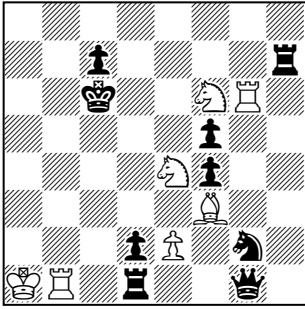


H#2 b) ♞>h8

- a)
1. ♞a1 ♝×e5 2. ♜a2 ♝e3;
b)
1. ♞g1 ♝h1 2. ♞h2 ♞×h2.

BLACK TO PLAY

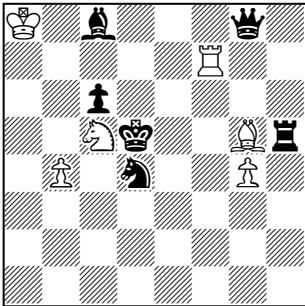
228 C.J.Feather
Die Schwalbe 1974



H#2 2 solutions b) ♗>h4

- a)
 1. ♖c5 ♘d7+ 2. ♗d6 ♘ec5;
 1. ♚d7 ♘c5+ 2. ♚d5 ♘fd7;
 b)
 1. ♗xf3 ♖g3 2. ♗d4 ♖c3;
 1. ♗xg6 ♘h5 2. ♗e7 ♘e8.

230 C.J.Feather
Moultings 3 1991



H#2 2 solutions b) c5=♗

- a)
 1. ♗e5 ♖f8 2. ♗d5 ♘f4;
 1. ♗d6 ♘d8 2. ♚d5 ♘c7;
 b)
 1. ♗e6 ♘h4 2. ♚d5 ♖e7;
 1. ♗e4 ♖f3 2. ♗d5 ♖e3.

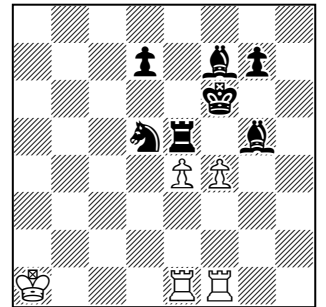
I have repeated that more does not mean better; ironically I was responsible for introducing a new type of helpmate which may be thought to suggest the opposite! This involves taking a normal helpmate with two solutions and twinning it with another similar one, with quite different themes in the two parts. I discovered this possibility quite accidentally in 1973 when composing the second half of **228**. The first half just appeared of its own accord and was obviously too interesting to jettison. Since then I have intentionally composed other problems in this form and it does seem to offer interesting possibilities. It presents a great challenge to the imagination because the usual difficulties of achieving a satisfactory blend of motifs are doubled at a stroke; knowing what elements to attempt to blend together is indeed the hardest part because although there are technical difficulties they are not usually insuperable.

There are some possible variations on the idea: to use the multisolution form rather than twinning is quite possible; to have more than two thematic parts is imaginable but very hard indeed; to make the different themes more closely related can increase unity but seem rather less original (see **229**); or one can mix the parts so that each contains one solution belonging to each theme. This last idea can be seen in very simple form in **230**. I am inclined to prefer this variant but it can be even harder to handle if the strategy is not as rudimentary as it is here.

The idea has been taken up by a few other composers but has certainly not caught on in a big way; I doubt if there are more than a hundred or so such works in existence twenty years after the first. My collaborator Friedrich Chlubna is, however, convinced that this style does offer the best chance of novelty in the further development of the helpmate. Without being entirely convinced, I very much hope he will be proved right.

This book has been a personal statement about helpmates, which I had the good fortune to encounter as my first type of chess problem. My main thesis has been that serious work needs serious criticism. The helpmate genre is significant enough to need and benefit from such critical analysis and to deny it is to adopt a condescending attitude which does it great harm. In putting forward that view I have tried to be provocative wherever possible because there are too many problemists who think that helpmates are undemanding. I should like to end, though, by reminding you that you were never meant to agree with my views and to warn you that if by some awful chance you do agree you should visit a psychiatrist at the earliest opportunity.

**229 Y.Gordian &
 V.F.Rudenko**
Phénix 1988



H#2 2 solutions b) +♚f5

- a)
 1. ♚e7 e5+ 2. ♗e6 f5;
 1. ♚e8 f5 2. ♗e7 e5;
 b)
 1. ♗e7 exf5 2. d5 fx e5;
 1. ♗e6 fx e5 2. ♗e7 ex f5.

C. J. FEATHER AND HIS HELPMATES

A SMALL SELECTION WITH COMMENTS BY FRIEDRICH CHLUBNA

As the translator and publisher of C. J. Feather's book BLACK TO PLAY it seems to me that it would be incomplete without a small but representative selection of his own best helpmates. For after studying these problems nobody will doubt that this man, who is not afraid to condemn spurious composing practices or to describe the helpmate as "the lazy person's chess problem", is himself one of the genre's most accomplished practitioners and is thus fully entitled to write critically about it.

Christopher John Feather was born on March 24, 1947. He lives with his wife Anne and his son Harry (born in 1978) in Stamford, a picturesque old town about 90 miles north of London. He works as Deputy Head at Stamford High School and also teaches a little French. His various interests include literature, music (especially Renaissance polyphony, Bach, harpsichord music and string quartets), recreational mathematics and computer programming, crosswords and wine. He would also be keen on cooking (food, that is!) if his wife did not already excel in that department.

Feather's interest in chess problems dates from 1968; he was encouraged by John Rice and especially John Driver (who was to die so prematurely). Driver lived in Kettering, not far from Stamford. Right from the start Feather was fascinated by orthodox helpmates (without unusual pieces or conditions); about 85% of his compositions are of this type. In addition he has composed about 50 serieshelpmates and a few helpmates with grasshoppers or Circe rules.

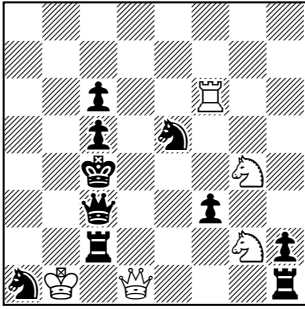
In 1989 he published a booklet entitled PLUCKINGS which contains the best works from his first period of composition. From the next year, when he took up composing again after a long break, his new works appeared at such a pace that the chess problem magazines of the whole world would not have had enough space to publish them all. Consequently he began the series of MOULTINGS, twelve tiny booklets containing an average of about 27 originals each, which he sent out to problemists all over the world.

In fact just over half of his problems (including some masterpieces) have never competed in any tourney. He is decidedly proud of that record. When he composes he does it purely for the satisfaction of the activity itself. Tourneys, FIDE-Albums, Master Titles and all the other paraphernalia which composers think they need in order to satisfy their ambitions seem ridiculous to him. He has never kept a tally of his award-winning problems and he insisted that no awards be mentioned above any of those in the following selection. You can guess from the quality, though, that there are a number of prizewinners among them.

Let's start the show!

BLACK TO PLAY

231 *British Chess Magazine* 1972

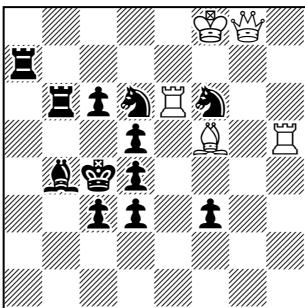


H#2 3 solutions

1. ♔d4 ♜f2 2. ♕d5 ♞e3;
 1. ♞d3 ♞2e3+ 2. ♕d4 ♜f4;
 1. ♚d2 ♜f4+ 2. ♕d3 ♞f2.

A white AB-BC-CA cycle whose nicely unified pinning strategy makes it stand out among the vast mass of cyclic problems in existence.

232 *Thèmes 64* 1972

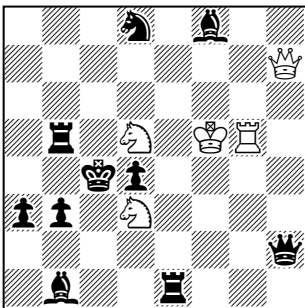


H#2 b) ♔>c5

- a) 1. ♞xg8 ♜e4 2. dxe4 ♞e6;
 b) 1. ♞xh5 ♞e4 2. dxe4 ♜e5.

A frequently reprinted work from Feather's early composing period. He does not rate it very highly now because of the repeated move 2.dxe4. However since this pawn stands at the intersection of the lines g8-c4 and h5-b5 it is hard to see how this could be avoided. The anticipatory motivation for the black first moves (unpin of the Pd5, so that it can accept the subsequent sacrifice on e4) is still impressive.

233 *Schach-Echo* 1974

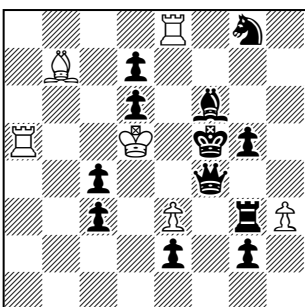


H#2 b) -♚b3

- a) 1. ♚xd5+ ♞g4 2. ♚d6 ♜c5;
 b) 1. ♞xd3+ ♞f6 2. ♞e2 ♞c2.

Two double line openings with dual avoidance: White must consider carefully whether to park his king on g4 or f6.

234 *Schach-Echo* 1974



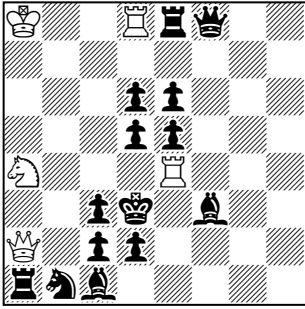
H#2 b) ♔>f3

- a) 1. ♔e5+ ♞xc4 2. ♔xa5 ♞e4;
 b) 1. ♔e4+ ♞xd6 2. ♔xb7 ♜f5.

The wK stands at the intersection of R and B lines. When it moves to open one line the simultaneous opening of the other would cause a disruptive discovered check if the BQ did not forestall it. However, by arriving on the e-file the BQ interferes with the WR on e8 and so must move again. There is thus more to this problem than the rather inflexible-looking position initially suggests.

BLACK TO PLAY

235 *feenschach* 1974 (v)



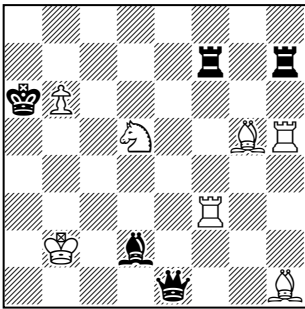
H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖a3 ♜c4+ 2. dxc4 ♝c5;

1. ♜a3 ♝c5+ 2. dxc5 ♜c4.

The combination of white and black halfpins has often been shown in directmates so this is not specifically a helpmate theme. Good construction, though.

236 *Schach-Echo* 1975



H#2 2 solutions

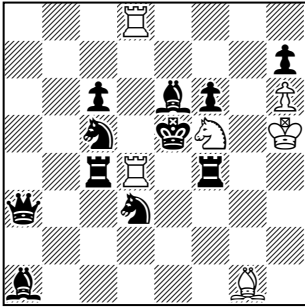
1. ♜xg5 ♜b3 2. ♜e7 ♝c7;

1. ♜xg5 ♜b3 2. ♜e7 ♝c7;

1. ♜xg5 ♜b3 2. ♜e7 ♝c7;

A partial pre-echo of 215 which is quite rightly among Feather's best known works. If you want to get the most out of this splendid blend of line openings and closings you should also investigate why 1. ♜xg5 ♜f6? and 1. ♜xg5 ♜e3? do not work. Furthermore the captures on g5 and f3 are singly motivated, as becomes apparent if you try 1. ♜b4? and 1. ♜c7?. A gem!

237 *Sinfonie*
Scacchistiche 1975



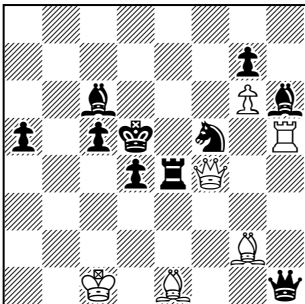
H#2 2 solutions

1. ♜f1 ♝e3 2. ♜f2 ♜h2;

1. ♜c8 ♝d6 2. ♜d7 ♜e8.

A fine example of black and white interplay. White must choose the arrival square of the Sf5 in such a way that it causes an anticipatory interference on the line which Black is about to open.

238 4th Makuc-Moder
Tourney 1975-76



H#2 b) ♜c5>e6

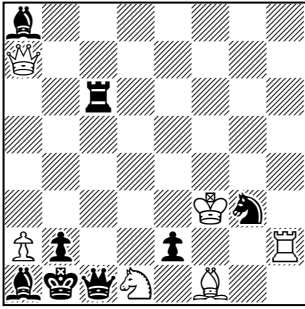
a) 1. ♜xh5 ♜g3 2. ♜e3 ♜f7;

b) 1. ♜xg2 ♜c3 2. ♜e3 ♜xh5.

Black has to capture white pieces in order to unpin his own men which in turn will unpin the WQ. You may think that the additional unpin of the Be1 is rather too much of a good thing but Feather had no choice about it since if this bishop is not pinned in the initial position the problem is cooked in both parts.

BLACK TO PLAY

239 *Tipografia*
Páros MT 1976

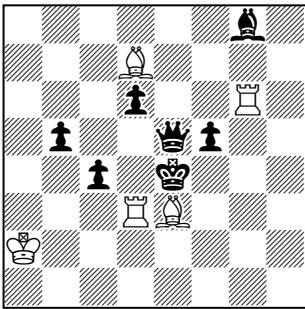


H#2 2 solutions

1. exd1 ♖h1 2. ♗c3 ♕d3;
1. exf1 ♕g1 2. ♗c4 ♘c3.

In this thematic complex involving the creation of batteries along the first rank I particularly like the interchange of functions between the Qa7 and the Rh2. But the Sd1 and the Bf1 also exchange their roles, producing the Zilahi theme. This subtle problem also shows what Feather means when he writes that for him promotions do not make a theme unless they are part of a complicated strategic idea.

240 *Tipografia*
Páros MT 1976

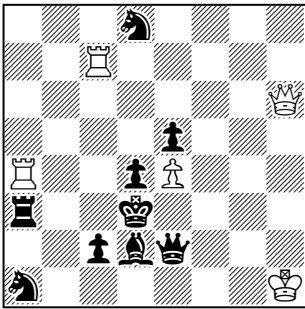


H#2 2 solutions

1. d5 ♖x d5 2. ♕x d5 ♗c6;
1. f4 ♗x f4 2. ♕x f4 ♖g4.

An interesting idea, perfectly constructed. Black can get rid of his own troublesome pawns only by playing them to precisely the square to which his king wants to move. Thus White is forced to sacrifice on that square in order to make it available for the BK. You have already met this idea in a particularly subtle setting (23) as well as in an unsatisfactory one (22). Feather has worked the theme a number of times, having first encountered it in a problem by the Austrian Helmut Zajic.

241 *Die Schwalbe* 1976 (v)

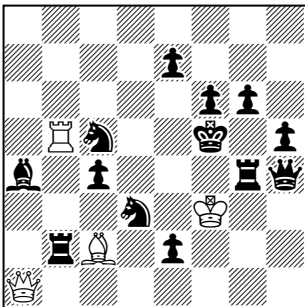


H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖c3 ♕e3+ 2. dxe3 ♖d7;
1. ♕e3 ♖c3+ 2. dxc3 ♕a6.

A Zilahi with queen and rook as thematic pieces. Each time Black blocks the square on which the sacrifice takes place in the other line.

242 *British Chess*
Magazine 1976



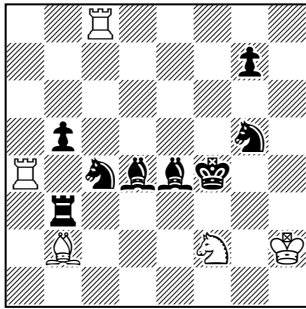
H#2 b) ♗g6>g5

a) 1. ♗xb5 ♕a8 2. ♗e6 ♕d5;
b) 1. ♖xc2 ♕d4 2. ♗f4 ♕e4.

At a casual glance you may see the theme merely as unpins by capture followed by line closings. Only when you try 1. ♖xb5 ♕d4 in a) and 1. ♗xc2 ♕a8 in b) will you notice the witty dual avoidance: Black has created batteries which consequently prevent the mates. Highly original! Feather rates 242 as the best of his compositions.

BLACK TO PLAY

243 *British Chess Magazine* 1977

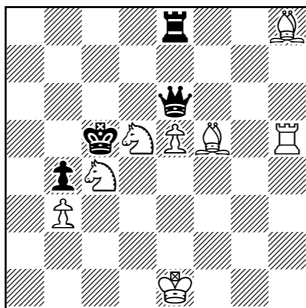


H#2
b) ♖c8>e7 c) ♖c8>g6

- a) 1. ♗e5 ♜c3 2. ♗f5 ♘c1;
b) 1. ♗f5 ♙g2 2. ♗e3 ♘e5;
c) 1. ♗e3 ♘xg7 2. ♗e5 ♜f6.

Cyclic black blocks with third-pin, economical and with relatively good twinning. The motivation of the white play is not well unified.

244 *British Chess Magazine* 1977

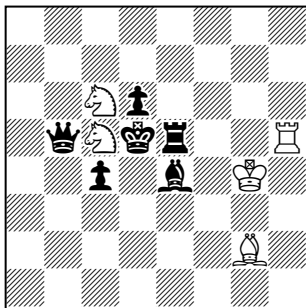


H#2 3 solutions

1. ♔xd5 e6 2. ♔e4+ ♗xe4;
1. ♔xe5+ ♗e4 2. ♔e7 ♘xe7;
1. ♔xf5 ♘e7 2. ♔c8 e6.

A white cycle with a touch of humour. The BQ must make a clearance on the blocked fifth rank and thus in its turn becomes an obstacle which has to be dealt with. Here the black second moves are not well matched: the queen is twice sacrificed and once hidden away.

245 *Novi Temi* 1977

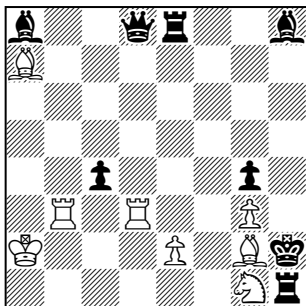


H#2 2 solutions

1. ♗xg2 ♘xe5 2. ♔c6 ♘f3;
1. ♜xh5 ♘xe4 2. ♔c5 ♘g5.

Feather is constantly finding original motivations for the capture of white material. Here White's second moves would unpin black pieces and these can escape only by capturing their pinners. Once again the construction is admirable. All the men on the board are used in the solutions, not a single piece being there merely to stop cooks.

246 *Schach-Echo* 1977



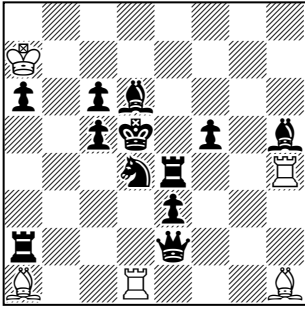
H#2 2 solutions

1. ♜xe2+ ♜b2 2. ♜e5 ♗e4;
1. ♗xg2 ♜d2 2. ♗d5 e4.

White must carefully consider which of his rooks to use in order to build a battery on the second rank. If he chooses wrongly it becomes impossible to shut off all the black pieces. A good example of the anticipatory effects of which Feather is so fond: in order to choose the right move among a range of apparently equivalent possibilities, White has to know in advance what Black can or cannot do on the following move. The BPe4 is not necessary for soundness but is there to ensure single motivation.

BLACK TO PLAY

247 *Tribune de Genève*
1977 (v)



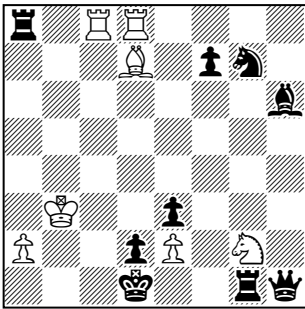
H#2 2 solutions

1. ♔d2 ♖xe4 2. ♗e6 ♖g4;

1. ♔f3 ♗xd4 2. ♖e6 ♗b2.

Changes of pin with attractive choices of first move for Black: not 1. ♔d3 or 1. ♔g2 since the lines a2-g2 or h5-d1 must not be opened.

248 *Sinfonie*
Scacchistiche 1978



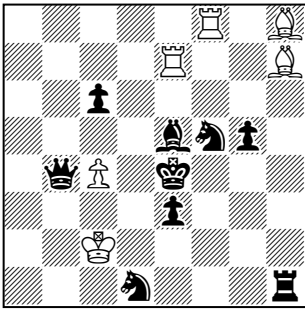
H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖a5 ♖c1+ 2. dxc1 ♗b5;

1. ♔h3 ♗e1 2. dxe1 ♖g4.

Here too Black must think far ahead. He must move the Ra8 or the Q in such a way that after the white sacrifice and the subsequent battery opening by the WB the d-file will not be guarded. In this problem the interplay between Black and White pervades the whole course of the solutions right through to the mate.

249 *British Chess*
Magazine 1978



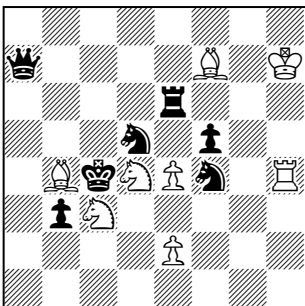
H#2 2 solutions

1. ♔xe7 ♖xf5 2. ♗h2 ♖f7;

1. ♖xh7 ♗xe5 2. ♗d6 ♗g7.

Once again Black must unpin his own men so that they can close a black line on the second move (and open a white one at the same time). The arrival effect of the black first moves (control of the subsequently created white battery) determines the mating moves. A fascinating helpmate with a great deal of strategy and including both white and black interchanges of function (Re7/Bh7 and Qb4/Rh1).

250 *British Chess*
Magazine 1978



H#2 2 solutions

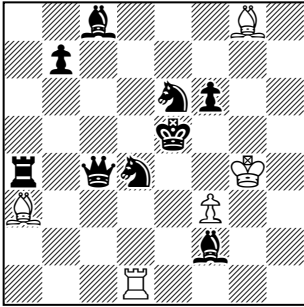
1. ♗b6 ♗xe6 2. ♗xe6 exf5;

1. ♖b6 exd5 2. ♗xd5 ♗xf5.

The presence of five black and two white hindrances makes a mate from the Rh4 seem more of a wish than a reality. It happens though. Incidentally this problem completely anticipates T. Garai's no. 641 in the FIDE Album 1983-5.

BLACK TO PLAY

251 *Magyar Sakkélet*
1978

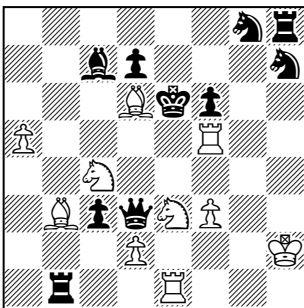


H#2 b) ♖a3>c1

- a) 1. ♗f4+ ♕e6 2. ♗d×e6 ♖d6;
b) 1. ♗f5+ ♜d4 2. ♗e×d4 ♕f4.

If Black could move a knight without giving check, mate would follow immediately. The way in which the two black batteries shut each other off and in so doing force White to sacrifice a piece is amusing and skilfully arranged.

252 *The Problemist* 1979

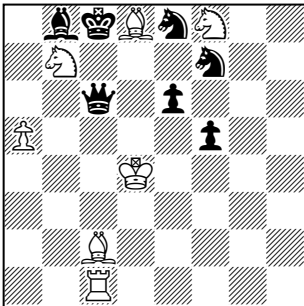


H#2 4 solutions

1. ♖×d6+ ♗×d6+ 2. ♜×b3 ♗ec4;
1. ♖×f5 ♗×f5+ 2. ♜×e1 ♗ce3;
1. ♖×e3 ♜g1 2. ♖×f5 ♗×e3;
1. ♖×c4 ♕a4 2. ♖×d6 ♗×c4.

A fine example of two pairs of thematically distinct solutions which are nevertheless all connected by the fourfold capture of white pieces by the BQ. Yes, I still think that this form of helpmate might and should have a future (see chapter 10). Undoubtedly it requires skill and patience in the construction but the examples in this book (there are more to follow) show that it offers novel possibilities for inventive composers.

253 *British Chess Magazine* 1979

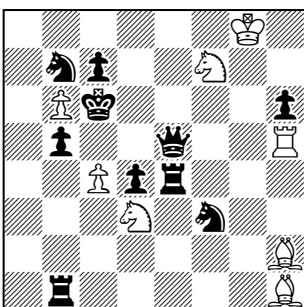


H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖c7 ♕×c7 2. ♖×c7 ♕e4;
1. ♖d7+ ♗×d7 2. ♖×d7 ♕a4.

The same theme as in 240 but this time with the BQ as the thematic piece in both solutions. The white battery works once directly and once indirectly.

254 *Schach-Echo* 1979



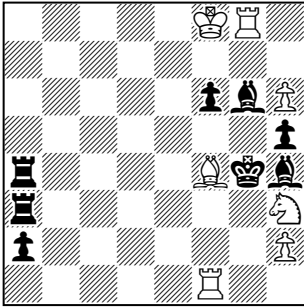
H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖×h5 ♕×c7 2. ♗g5 ♗fe5;
1. ♖×h2 ♜×b5 2. ♜f4 ♗de5.

The Feather-mechanism (see 12) is here combined with a black halfpin. Paradoxically on the first move the BQ plays away from the square from which the white knights want to give mate. Consequently instead of Black's second moves being by the king, as usual, they are shutoffs of the BQ instead. In contrast the white first moves are rather simply motivated by the need to guard b6.

BLACK TO PLAY

255 *British Chess Magazine* 1980 (v)



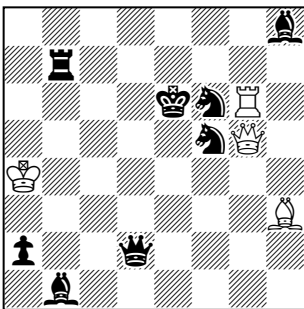
H#2 b) f1=♔

a) 1. ♖×h3 ♕g5 2. ♗e4 ♖f4;

b) 1. ♖×f4 ♘g5 2. ♗d3 ♕h3.

A theme which is very hard to describe in words. However, the play on the squares h3, f4 and g5 speaks for itself and is well unified in effect.

256 *Sinfonie Scacchistiche* 1980



H#2 4 solutions

1. ♔d6 ♖g7 2. ♗e4 ♔×f5;

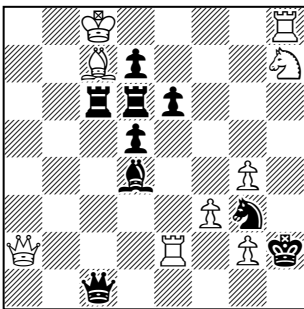
1. ♖d7 ♕g2 2. ♗g7 ♔×f6;

1. ♔d5 ♖g7 2. ♗d7 ♔e7;

1. ♖e7 ♕g2 2. ♗d4 ♔d5.

Four selfblocks, two each by the BQ and BR, introduce the solutions and are followed on the second black move by four line closings by the unpinned knights. The repetition in the white first moves does not bother me at all, in fact it even seems thematic, giving the problem a kind of modern touch which might be compared with the mate changes found in direct mates. The construction using little more than the thematic material is very good.

257 *Magyar Sakkélet* 1981



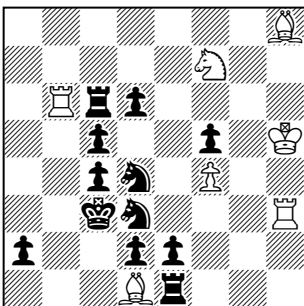
H#2 2 solutions

1. ♔g1 ♖×e6 2. ♖×e6 ♘f6;

1. ♗g1 ♔×d5 2. ♖×d5 ♘g5.

It is essential to unpin the Sg3, which can be done only by sacrificing a white piece in order to free the incarcerated BR on d6. Which sacrifice is correct depends on which black piece is left controlling the h-file after Black's first move. Thus it is once again necessary to think ahead when solving. Unlike Feather, though, I do not believe that we can use the term "dual avoidance" if it is achieved merely by means of departure effects.

258 *Deutsche Schachblätter* 1984 (v)



H#2 b) ♘>g5

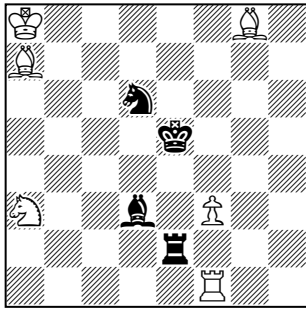
a) 1. ♖×b6 ♘e5 2. ♗c6 ♘×c6;

b) 1. ♖×d1 ♘f3 2. ♗e1 ♘×e1.

Although the WS is clearly out of play the solutions are surprising. In making room for the knights the black rooks rather unwillingly capture white pieces, since on other squares they would prevent the mate. This creates flight squares for the BK but these flights will be covered by the knights at the end. The solver has to grasp this before daring to try the correct first moves.

BLACK TO PLAY

259 *Die Schwalbe* 1985

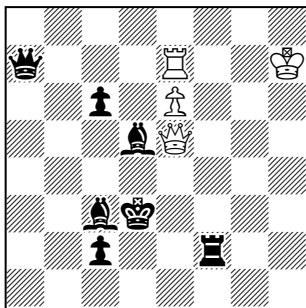


H#2 b) ♖>b3 c) +♙>b8

- a) 1. ♗e4+ fxe4 2. ♘xe4 ♜c4;
 b) 1. ♘e4 fxe4 2. ♚xe4 ♗b8;
 c) 1. ♚e4 fxe4 2. ♗xe4 ♗d4.

A black cycle in which all the moves are to the same square must surely be unique. With the simplest means Feather ensures that in each phase there is only one sequence of moves which works. The repetition of the move 1...fxe4 is an essential part of the theme and should not be cause for complaint. At first glance the twinning seems rather messy but a closer look reveals it to be very subtle.

260 *Moultings* 1 1990

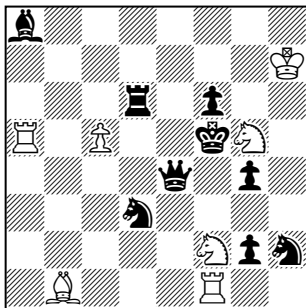


H#2 3 solutions

1. ♚f7+ exf7 2. ♗d4 ♙e2;
 1. ♗d7 exd7 2. ♗c4 ♙e3;
 1. ♗xe6 ♙xe6 2. ♚d2 ♙e4.

This problem is convincing proof that black sacrifices can also make an attractive helpmate theme. The three thematic black pieces perform a cyclic interchange of their sacrificial and blocking roles.

261 *The Problemist* 1991 (v)

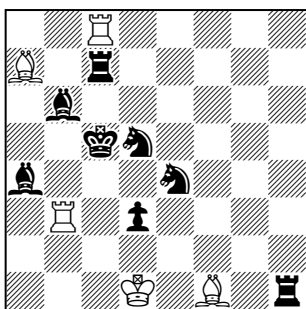


H#2 2 solutions

1. ♗f4 ♜xe4 2. ♗xe4 cxd6;
 1. ♗f4 ♜xd3 2. ♚xd3 c6.

The halfpin is bluff. One of the two pieces changes over to be pinned on the f-file while the other is captured in order to allow a different black piece to be pinned in its place. Witty and unusual.

262 *Schach-Aktiv* 1991



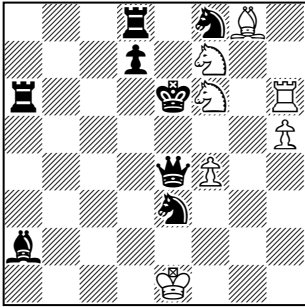
H#2 2 solutions

1. ♗d4 ♗b8 2. ♚c2 ♜xd3;
 1. ♗c4 ♜b8 2. ♗g1 ♗xd3.

Helpmates can hardly be more perfect and harmonious than this one, which seems almost miraculous to me. Once again Feather bluffs the solver with pins which are not used as pins. With white ambushes and black unpins which simultaneously open two white lines, the solutions are original and far from obvious.

BLACK TO PLAY

263 *Moultings 2 1991*



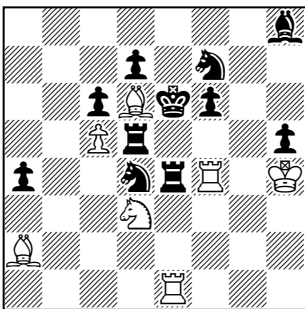
H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖e7 ♜d6 2. ♗xg8 ♞xg8.

1. ♖f5 ♜d5 2. ♞xh6 ♞xh6;

Did you expect the batteries to open? Once again it's a quite different story; in each solution one of the white batteries is completely destroyed and the other is used only indirectly. A genuine puzzle but at the same time a fine, well unified problem.

264 *Moultings 2 1991*



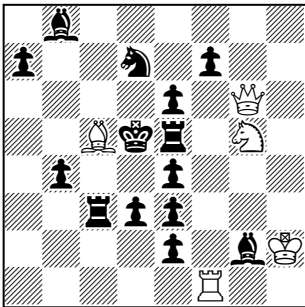
H#2 2 solutions

1. ♗b3 ♞d1 2. ♞xc5 ♞xc5;

1. ♗e2 ♗b1 2. ♞xf4+ ♞xf4.

Exchange of functions between Ba2 and Re1 with puzzling ambushes. A refreshing "Aha!" reaction surely awaits every solver with the discovery that the rook must guard d6 and the bishop f5. I can reconcile myself to the idea that the 300 or so helpmates in the MOULTINGS series did not participate in tourneys; much more regrettable is the fact that they were not **solved!**

265 *Moultings 3 1991*
(dedicated to F.Chlubna)



H#2 2 solutions

b) ♞g5>b5 c) +b5=♗

a) 1.f6 ♞xe6 2. ♖xe6 ♜g8;

1.f5 ♞xe4 2. ♖xe4 ♜xg2;

b) 1. ♗c7 ♜xe6+ 2. ♖xe6 ♞xc7;

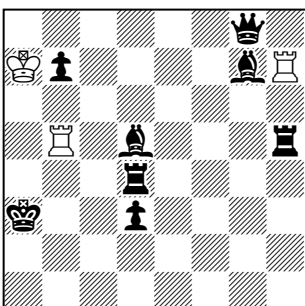
1.b3 ♜xe4+ 2. ♖xe4 ♞xc3;

c) 1. ♞c4 ♞f5 2.exf5 ♜c6;

1. ♞xc5 ♞f3 2.exf3 ♜xd3.

I regard 265 particularly highly but not just on account of the dedication. If you reread the text to 252 you will know why. The achievement of 3 x 2 solutions with active white sacrifices is unique; I know of no other example. Even the black first moves have equal motivations in each pair of solutions. The danger of cooks which haunts all helpmates is here dealt with by Feather as though it simply didn't exist.

266 *Moultings 3 1991*



H#2 2 solutions

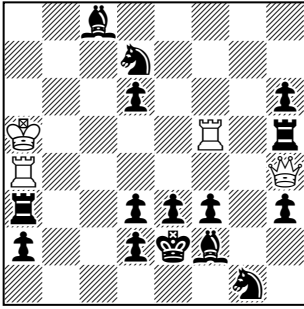
1. ♗e5 ♞hxb7 2. ♗c4 ♞a5;

1. ♞e5 ♞h1 2. ♞c4 ♞a1.

There are many helpmates with a double black Grimshaw. In this one, however, the black first moves close lines even before they are opened. The admirable economy and the exchange of functions between the white rooks also deserve to be mentioned.

BLACK TO PLAY

267 *Moultings 3 1991*

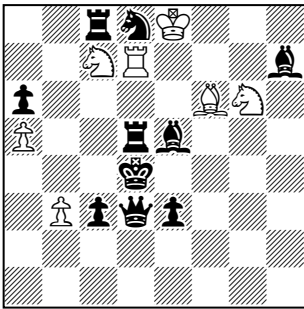


H#2 b) f5=♘ c) f5=♙

- a) 1.d5 ♖×f3 2.♔×f3 ♚g4;
- b) 1.♞e5 ♜×e3 2.♔×e3 ♚e4;
- c) 1.♞c5 ♜×d3+ 2.♔×d3 ♚c4.

The underlying scheme with the three clearance sacrifices on neighbouring squares is not new, having been used a number of times both in the directmate and the helpmate. The combination of the idea with three different unpins and Forsberg twinning may well be original though.

268 *Moultings 3 1991*

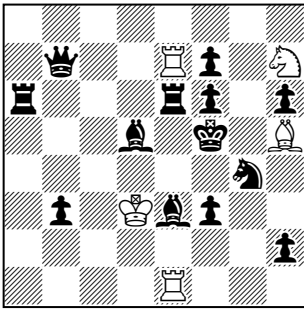


H#2 b) ♗b3>b4

- a) 1.♞×d7 ♜×e5 2.♞e4 ♜×d7;
- b) 1.♞×f6 ♜×d5 2.♞c4 ♜×f6.

The play seems reminiscent of 245 but the capture of white pieces is motivated differently: Black must make squares accessible for the mating moves of the white knights. Thus the solver has to visualise the last moves when finding the first ones.

269 *Moultings 4 1991*

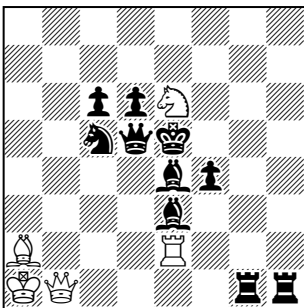


H#2 2 solutions

- 1. ♞b6 ♖×e6 2. ♞e3 ♖×f6;
- 1. ♞ec6 ♖×e3 2. ♞e6 ♖×f3.

The slipshod typesetter appears to have left out any indication of which WR should play to e6 or e3! But to get a better understanding of the originality of this problem you'll need to find out for yourself anyway!

270 *Moultings 4 1991*



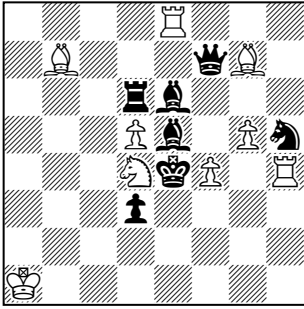
H#2 2 solutions

- 1. ♔d3 ♚×g1 2. ♞c1 ♚g5;
- 1. ♔d2 ♚f1 2. ♞b1 ♚×f4.

More than just a combination of black halfpin and unpins of the WQ, this problem is really about the dual avoidance caused by the BQ's moves. Since the queen obstructs a different BB each time, White must consider carefully which continuation will work.

BLACK TO PLAY

271 *Moultings* 4 1991



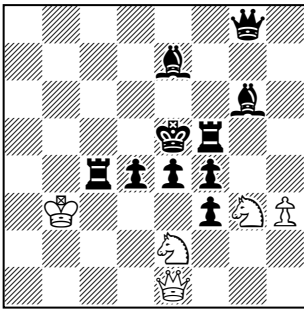
H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖xf4 dxe6+ 2. ♜d5 exf7;

1. ♖xd5 fxe5+ 2. ♜f4 exd6.

Exchange of functions between two pairs of black pieces: the ones which are pinned in one solution are captured in the other. The white pawns on d5 and f4 also exchange their roles.

272 *Moultings* 6 1991



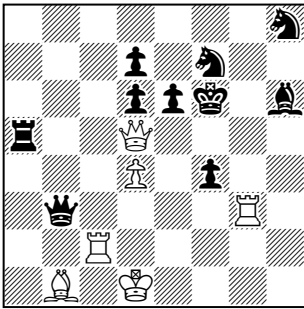
H#2 2 solutions b) ♜>h2

a) 1. ♖c5 ♘xd4 2. ♚xd4 ♜xe4; 1. ♚d5 ♘xe4 2. ♚xe4 ♘c1;

b) 1. ♚e6 ♘xf5 2. ♚xf5 ♜xf4; 1. ♖g5 ♘xf4 2. ♚xf4 ♘f1.

Another fascinating helpmate of the “2 + 2 type”. The clearance sacrifices by the white knights are common to all the solutions but there are differences in the black first moves (two blocks away from the BK by the BB and two next to the BK by the BQ) and in the mates (direct or battery). This time the solutions are not paired AA+BB but AB+AB, as in 230, which gives the composer even greater difficulties. The WPh3 is a tribute to these difficulties, for it is used only in b).

273 *Moultings* 6 1991



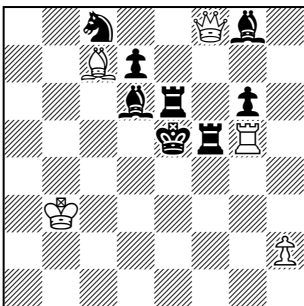
H#2 2 solutions

1. ♚xd5 ♜g6+ 2. ♜f5 ♜c5;

1. ♚xg3 ♜e5+ 2. ♜g6 ♜g2.

In this problem the capture of the most powerful white pieces is combined with mating moves which create pins, an extremely challenging thematic mixture. The white first moves are unexciting but at least their motivation is analogous. The construction is very astute, indeed it is hard to believe that there really are no cooks in this position.

274 *Moultings* 6 1991



H#2 4 solutions

1. ♜f4 ♜g3 2. ♖e5 ♜b4;

1. ♜d5 ♖b6 2. ♜fe5 ♜f3;

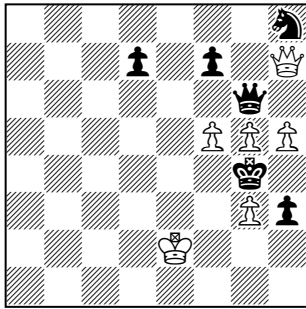
1. ♜xg5 ♜xd6+ 2. ♜f5 ♜f4;

1. ♖xc7 ♜xf5+ 2. ♜d6 ♜c5.

Two pairs of solutions which are quite distinct thematically and yet go well together. With its line closings by pinned pieces the first pair can claim greater strategic interest while the other pair with its captures of the pinning white pieces has a more obvious appeal.

BLACK TO PLAY

275 *Moultings* 6 1991

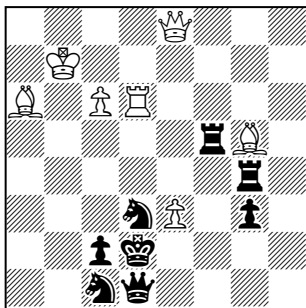


H#2 3 solutions

1. ♖×f5 ♔×f7 2. ♖×g5 ♔f3;
 1. ♖×g5 ♔h6 2. ♖×h5 ♔f4;
 1. ♖×h5 g6 2. ♖×f5 ♔h4.

The BQ goes to the squares f5, g5 and h5 in cyclic order, first opening a line by removing a pawn and then blocking a square. It is interesting to compare this with F. Simoni's H1759 from *The Problemist*, January 1994. The latter takes 18 pieces to show exactly the same cycle. Admittedly the white strategy in Simoni's problem is much better. Whether it justifies a 50% increase in material is of course a matter of taste.

276 *Moultings* 7 1991

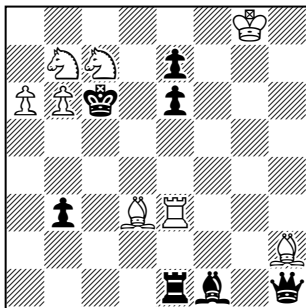


H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖d5 ♔d8 2. ♗f4 ♔a5;
 1. ♖d4 ♔d8 2. ♗e5 ♔a5.

Change of pin with interesting dual avoidance. White must bear in mind that when the BS moves away at move 2 it will not only shut out the second BR but also close one of the white lines of guard pointing at e3. Thus the WQ in one part and the WB in the other are prevented from moving away to give mate.

277 *Moultings* 7 1991

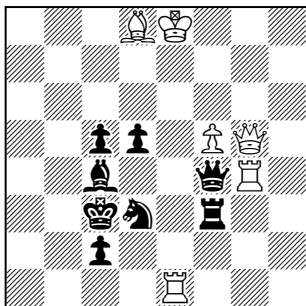


H#2 b) h2=♖

- a) 1. ♖×e3 ♔g1 2. ♖e2 ♔b5;
 b) 1. ♗×d3 ♖d2 2. ♗e2 ♖×e6.

Two annihilations followed by line closing on e2, not a very profound or complicated theme but much enhanced by the interchange of functions between the pairs of pieces on d3/e3 and e1/f1.

278 *Schach-Report* 1992



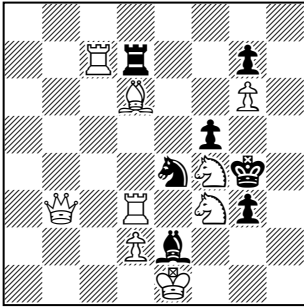
H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖×g5 ♖d4 2. ♖d2 ♔a5;
 1. ♖×g4 ♔d2+ 2. ♖d4 ♔f6.

The Feather-mechanism (see 12) was the subject of an interesting article in *Thema Danicum* in October 1992 and January 1993, with no fewer than 12 examples. This idea can obviously be set in a variety of ways; here, with a WQ used instead of the usual B, it gives rise to an original motivation for the capture of the white pieces. The subsequent moves to the d-file are caused purely by the need to pin the BS.

BLACK TO PLAY

279 *Moultings 8 1992*



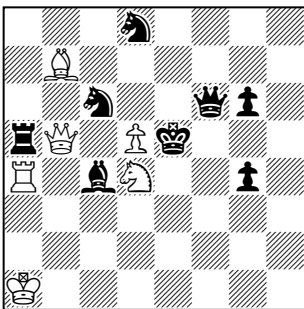
H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖×d6 ♜b8 2. ♚×f4 ♜c4;

1. ♜×d3 ♜cc3 2. ♚×f3 ♜d1.

Here too the purpose of White's very surprising first moves is to set up subsequent pins. I particularly like the exchange of roles between the Qb3 and the Rc7.

280 *Schweizer Schach-Magazin 1992*



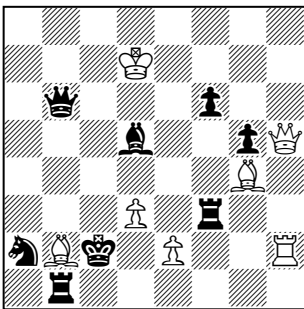
H#2 2 solutions

1. ♖×d4 ♜×c4 2. ♗f5 ♜f4;

1. ♜×d5 ♜×c6 2. ♗e6 ♜c7.

Genuine black and white teamwork to clear the doubly blocked lines a4-f4 and b7-e4, with subsequent closing of BQ lines. A great deal of strategy, though the analogy is not perfect in every detail

281 *Moultings 8 1992*



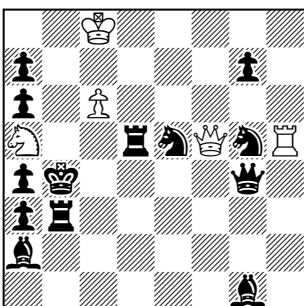
H#2 2 solutions

1. ♜f5 ♜×f5 2. ♗b3 e3;

1. ♜h3 ♜×h3 2. ♚b3 e4.

The annoying BR can be made to disappear on f5 or h3 (but not on d3!). As a result the square d3 becomes guarded from one of two different directions, which determines which mating move must be played. Then Black still has to block b3, making sure he chooses the right piece. The black and white play meshes together like precision clockwork.

282 *Moultings 9 1992*



H#2

b) ♜b3>c3 c) ♜b3>g3

a) 1. ♖d7 ♜×d5 2. ♗e4 ♜c4;

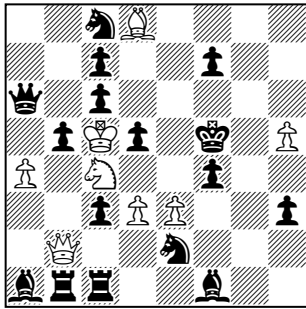
b) 1. ♗e6 ♜×e5 2. ♜d4 ♜b8;

c) 1. ♜d7 ♜×g5 2. ♗d3 ♜d2.

An impressive cycle of interchanging functions. The three black pieces on the fifth rank take it in turns to unpin the WQ, be captured and close a line. This ambitious theme is shown in a relatively light position with very good twinning.

BLACK TO PLAY

283 *Moultings* 10 1992

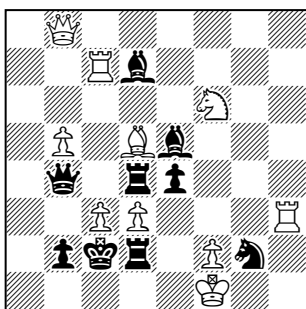


H#2
b) ♖b1>a2 c) +♕f5>e6

- a) 1. bxa4 ♖b8 2. ♗b7 ♖xc8;
- b) 1. ♗g3 ♖h2 2. ♗g2 ♖xh3;
- c) 1. c2 ♖g7 2. ♗f6 ♖g4.

Three times the white lady leads a black gentleman up the garden path. An impressive task which has some weaknesses: 24 pieces, unattractive twinning and idle white pawns in c). Feather dislikes this problem but I have nevertheless included it here so that you shall not think that he avoids tasks because he cannot construct them. With his enormous technical ability he could doubtless produce numerous records such as this, but it is a style which simply fails to correspond with his idea of what a good helpmate should be like.

284 *Moultings* 11 1992

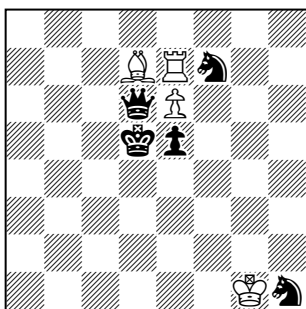


H#2 b) ♖c2<>♗d2

- a) 1. ♗xh3 ♖d8 2. ♖xd3 ♗xe4;
- b) 1. ♗xc7 ♖h8 2. ♖xc3 ♗xe4.

Related to 279 but with perhaps even more unexpected pins on the lines d8-d3 and h8-c3. However this time the exchange of functions between pinning and mating pieces is missing. The moves 1. ♗g3? and 1. ♗c6? are possible but unsuccessful.

285 *Schach-Echo* 1972

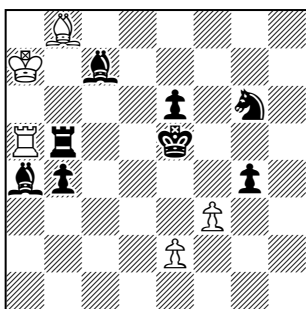


H#3 b) ♗f5

- a) 1. ♖xe7 ♗c8 2. ♖d7 exd7 3. ♖e6 d8♖;
- b) 1. ♖xd7 ♖e8 2. ♖d8 e7 3. ♖e6 exd8♖.

An early and extremely economical example of the capture of white material in the three move helpmate. The motivation is the need to make e6 accessible to the BK, after which the BQ is sacrificed in order to show the WQ the way to the correct promotion square.

286 *Moultings* 5 1991



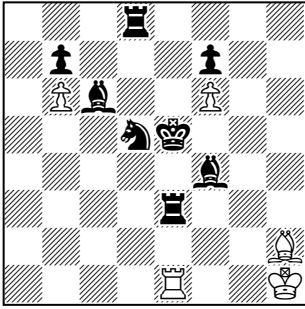
H#3 b) f3=♗

- a) 1. ♖f6 ♗xc7 2. ♗g5 ♗e5+ 3. ♖f5 e4;
- b) 1. ♖e4 ♖xb5 2. ♗g3 ♖e5+ 3. ♖f4 e3.

No profound strategy but harmony down to the last detail! The BK stands at a focal point which is first crossed by a black piece and then occupied by a white one. Attractive twinning by changing the colour of the pawn on f3.

BLACK TO PLAY

287 *Moultings* 8 1992

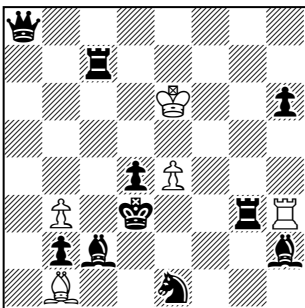


H#3 2 solutions

1. ♔d6 ♕g1 2. ♖e7 fxe7 3. ♗d7 e8♚;
 1. ♔e6 ♜f1 2. ♗c7 bxc7 3. ♗d7 cxd8♚.

Here again the diagram position contains the pair of pins (WR/BR and WB/BB) which we have already met, e.g. in 262. These pins disappear totally in the course of the solution. There are attractive white ambushes, with black sacrifices to make the white promotions possible. The final black moves are not entirely homogeneous since the R blocks and closes a line while the B merely blocks.

288 *Moultings* 8 1992

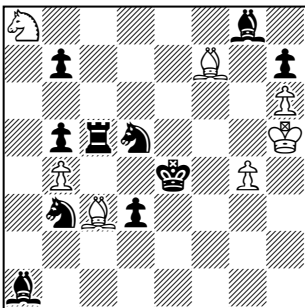


H#3 b) ♜d4>d2

- a) 1. ♔xe4 ♕a2 2. ♖xb3 ♜f3 3. ♖b7 ♕d5;
 b) 1. ♔c3 ♜h4 2. ♗xe4 ♕c2 3. ♗c6 ♜c4.

And yet again the appearance of a pinning theme turns out to be pure deception. Instead Black first opens a white line and then closes a black one, while the white mating piece creeps up from behind like a Red Indian. The analogy between the solutions is almost perfect. It would be complete if the Rg3 could be on f3, but that is unfortunately impossible because of cooks.

289 *Sakkélet* 1993

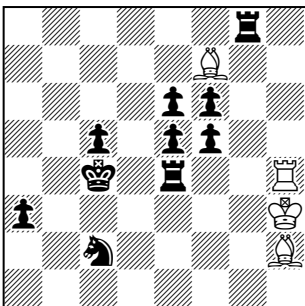


H#3 b) ♚b8

- a) 1. ♗xb4+ ♕d5+ 2. ♔xd5 ♕e5 3. ♔c4 ♚b6;
 b) 1. ♗e7+ ♕e5 2. ♔xe5 ♕d5 3. ♔f6 ♚d7.

The very first black moves come as a surprise. Who would imagine that the knight goes to b4 and e7 in order to block flight squares? The white bishops have their hands full protecting their king from the Rc5; in the process they exchange functions and also their moves in an AB-BA pattern.

290 *Moultings* 12 1993



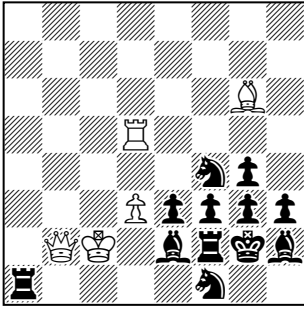
H#3 2 solutions

1. ♔d5 ♕h5 2. ♖c4 ♜d4+ 3. exd4 ♕f3;
 1. ♔b3 ♕xe5 2. ♖a4 ♜b4+ 3. cxb4 ♕xe6.

It is no easy matter to show two active WR sacrifices in a three move helpmate without cooks. Feather achieves it with such elegance and harmony that composing looks like child's play. My only regret is that the surplus effect of the move 3.exd4 (opening of the line h2-d6) could not be avoided. Unfortunately it is impossible to put the Bh2 on b8 instead.

BLACK TO PLAY

291 *Moultings* 12 1993

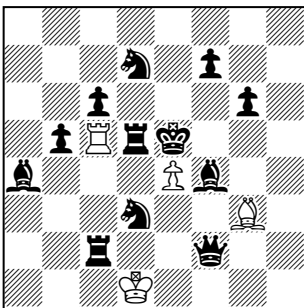


H#3 b) ♖g4>h4

- a) 1. ♗xd5 ♖b7 2. ♗f4 ♖xf3+ 3. ♖xf3 ♗e4;
 b) 1. ♗xg6 ♖g7 2. ♗f4 ♖xg3+ 3. ♖xg3 ♗g5.

This time White actually sacrifices his queen twice, after Black has already captured another white piece in order to open a line! There cannot be many correct helpmates in three with 2 x 2 white sacrifices. Don't you agree that in view of the content the somewhat unattractive setting is quite acceptable?

292 *Schach* 1994

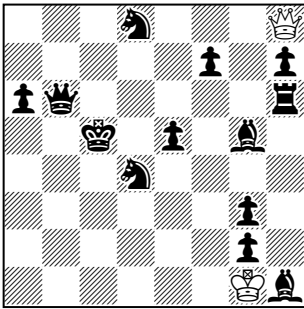


H#3 b) ♖g6>e6

- a) 1. ♖e6 ♗xc6+ 2. ♗d6 ♗xd6 3. ♗e5 ♗c5;
 b) 1. ♖f6 ♗h4+ 2. ♗g5 ♗xg5 3. ♗e5 ♗g3.

Line clearances by Black for White allow the setting up of batteries. This causes the Bg3 to find its way to c5 and the Rc5 to go to g3 – an original exchange of places!

293 *British Chess Magazine* 1976



H#4

1. ♖d6 ♖g7 2. ♖e7 ♖f6+ 3. ♖f8 ♖xe5 4. ♗e7 ♖h8.

You really have to solve this yourself in order to understand the joke fully. Do at least find out why the WQ cannot make a return trip to h8 by way of such moves as 2... ♖g6? or 2... ♖xe5+?.