

FIFTY CHESS PROBLEMS

Brian Tomson

Limited edition: seven copies

December, 1983

Prefatory Note

This collection of 50 published chess problems is for friends only: it contains much immature work and maybe only half-a-dozen to a dozen problems that I would consider republishing if I had a larger output to choose from. Some day I may produce another work with 50 problems, strictly selected and better worth looking at, but until then what you see in front of you is the best I can rustle up.

J.B.T.

No. 1 is in what Brian Harley described as the 'bunch of primroses' style - the sort of problem that every beginner triumphantly produces when he cottons on to the idea of a waiter. No. 2 is a simple affair with successive R sacrifices. No. 3 - never in the 'primroses' style - is the only case among the early problems where I have yielded to the urge to reconstruct: what you see in the diagram may represent my 1983 style rather than my 1970 one. The setting originally was: 1B2r3; 4pp2; 1SP1k3; 2Rp2QB; 6S1; 8; K7; b6b. No. 4 might be seen as a built-up 2-er, but it has not too bad economy, and represents the beginnings for me of a long and possibly anachronistic fascination with self-block in the 3-er. No. 5 is old fashioned but has enough spectacle to have been accepted by the late C.H.O'D. Alexander for his column in the Sunday Times. In no. 6 I no longer like the use of the WR but have resisted the urge to reconstruct; the point of the problem lies of course in the focal key and dual avoidance after moves by the BQ. No. 7 is a rather simple waiter - not a half-pin. No. 8 was again accepted by Alexander, and qualifies as a 3-er mutate (set is 1... Sc any 2.R-(x)e7, and 1...Sg6 2.Rf7 short mate), though he must have had reservations about it, for it is pawny and the short set mate is a thematic flaw. It shows that I had graduated in 3-ers to the idea of anticipatory self-block (further examples are nos. 12, 14, 15, 22 and 28). Anticipatory self-blocks with a black S appear in Sam Loyd in 1878 (no. 545 in A.C. White's Sam Loyd and his chess problems) and in C.A.L. Bull in various problems from 1894 on (D. McIntyre, Sonatas in chess, nos. 23 and 64, the splendid no. 71, and nos. 80, 93 and 115).

After this burst of enthusiasm about problems in 1970, I slowed down. Nos. 9 and 10 are simple 2-ers. No. 11 is based on the idea of different waiting moves after the single and double moves of the black eP, but has a poor key. No. 12 has a reasonable matrix with two S anticipatory self-blocks and two B sacrifices, but I did not succeed in reducing the blockaded P's in the setting. The tourney judge, T.C.D. Ricketts, however, described it as 'very promising'. No. 13 has a try: the dual-free march by the WK to h3 leads only to stalemate. Nos. 14 and 15 show multiple anticipatory self-blocks, with two S's in one instance and two B's and a P in the other. No. 14 is the first problem I did combining a degree of complexity with tight construction - if only I'd had a better key! No. 15, which has an edge in complexity over no. 14, is one of my two favourites among my 3-ers. I altered it after publication: to add tries, the BPg5 replaces an original WPh6. The revised version was recently computer-tested by Jens Kieffer-Olsen and is guaranteed free from cooks.

Chess in Australia had an abundant feast of originals in its second problem tourney in 1977; no. 16, with a rather simple changed mate, was lucky to take second place among the 2-ers. The second place-getter among the 3-ers, no. 17; is more elaborate: it has a key that stumped at least one strong solver, two magnet sacrifices, and some variety, though it is still pawny. No. 18 is a very pawny task, and repeats no. 15 a good deal; but it out-Bulls Bull with its anticipatory self-blocks, four with BS and a differentiated one with BB. No. 19 is a quite different task; I constructed it in ignorance of the Batori fore-runner, though I discovered the latter and was able to acknowledge it before publication. No. 20 represents first thoughts about a battery, though it was not until no. 38 that I managed to construct a satisfactory battery 2-er. No. 21, embarked upon when I was gradually convinced that self-block alone is not enough to make an attractive problem, combines self-block with cross-check, as do nos. 23 and 26. A corrected version of no. 21 is here presented; it originally had no BBg8, and was cooked by 1.Kf4 Sg6+ 2.Rxg6. No. 22 attempts to emulate Bill Whyatt with two quiet related second moves by white; but there are again too many P's in the setting. No. 23 is the thematically richest of the three problems combining self-block with cross-check; after it had been sent off, Bob Meadley's book on Whyatt appeared, and I discovered that Whyatt had already experimented with the theme (his no. 69, from the Weekly Times), in a version which, however, differs from this one by utilising a set flight.

In the evenings of the Easter vacation of 1980 I started tinkering with the series helpmate, and no. 24 represents the first fruits of this. Its best idea, of shielding on two successive diagonals with the BS, was reused in the more elegant no. 45, which thus must be held to supersede it. No. 25 is a first exploration of the helpmate: a co-production done on a Sunday afternoon and in a subsequent couple of letters exchanged with Rurik Bergmann. No. 26 is a simpler handling of the theme of nos. 21 and 23, and was composed before them. No. 27 is again a primitive series helpmate (its S-manoevres are short of being 'thematic') but pleased solvers. No. 28, ex aequo with no. 15 my favourite 3-er, would also be my nomination for my best problem not to feature in an award: among the problems with anticipatory self-block, it alone has a key that impressed solvers, and its construction seems to be tight.

From no. 29 on, I think I can say that all my series-move problems have a 'theme': this one illustrates complex shields. No. 30, a 2-er, has a thematic try, 1.Sdxe5?, but, as a solver pointed out, the WQ is underused. Three pieces (BBa1, BPc3, WQe1) can be removed from the diagram, leaving almost all of the play intact, but this seemed to me to

make the refutation of the try (now 1...Rxb3) too crude. David Shire, who also solved, seems to have liked its basic idea but not its construction, and attempted a reworking (4b3; 1K6; 2P2p2; 1k2pR2; 1pS5; 1P1SpB2; 1p7; 5q2: published in Problem Observer, July, 1981), but even this version may not be convincing.

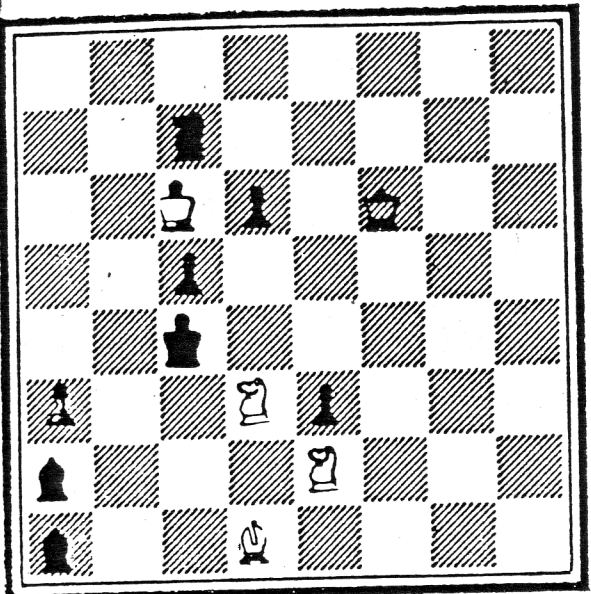
No. 31, though short, seems to have held solvers up for a time. In no. 32, where the finale has a shuffle of pieces, it may not be easy for the solver to see the device of the BK walking along the line of the shield. No. 33 is schematic in construction, but has the point that apparent short-circuitings of the series (1.Pxd4 2-4.Be7 and 1.Pc4 2-3.Bxd4 4-5.Be7) fail because they lead to unretractable blocks in the route needed for the BK.

The helpmate quartettes, nos. 34, 35 and 37, saw endless testing by friends - and some revision by me - the summer before their publication. All the same, no. 34 turned out to need post-publication adjustment (the WSe3 was originally on e7, which allows cooks). There is set play in no. 35, in part (a) only (1...Rb4 2.Sb3 Sc4 3.Sa1 Rb2), a minor embellishment that I hit on by chance. No. 36 has a neat matrix, discovered by Bob Shearer; the construction was carried out jointly. No. 37, like its counterparts, shows that the central (e-) file is the hardest to exploit in the straight-line helpmate; a crude grab in the solution had to be resorted to.

No. 38 has a try, 1.Sd1?, that took in several solvers, and has, I think, harmony as well as complexity. No. 39 has an A UW (four black P's promote to four different pieces) and is fairly economical. No. 40 is perhaps my most original idea in the series helpmate: the logic of which black piece, K or R, captures f2 is at first sight more intricate than the logic of which piece is to capture d4, yet it is the capture of d4 that is the real puzzle. Nos. 41 and 42 are further series helpmates that illustrate shielding through or round two WR's. The second of the two elicited from the English grandmaster, John Nunn, the flattering comment of 'best problem of the set'. No. 43 is a capture-free series selfmate with three underpromotions; it has six men in all, a minimum for the task. No. 44 may recall the problems of T. Taverner. In no. 45, there is one of the two BS's which, like Spenser's Redcrosse, goes 'pricking on the plaine', but it may not be obvious at first glance which of the two. It is a problem that I was pleased to get as economical as I did. No. 46 is a reworking of no. 40; no. 40 has priority in showing the theme, but no. 46 has the better construction. It has the BK moving nine times behind a shield, which may be a record. No. 47 combines A UW with a discovered check, in a light setting. No. 48 is, alas, as noted on the diagram, cooked, but I have not seen a correction that would keep it as a miniature.

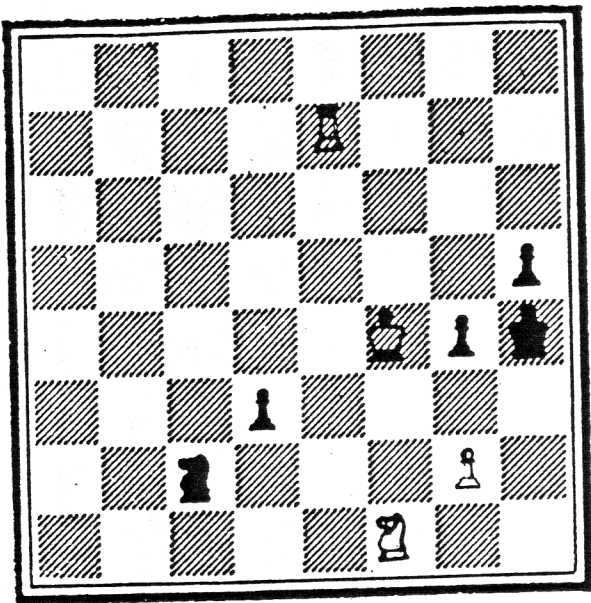
No. 49, its easier counterpart, is at least cook-free.
No. 50 shows the matrix of no. 41 put to use in a series selfmate: there are now three orthogonally moving pieces whose lines must be crossed by the series-moving K, with complex shields in all cases. When publication in British Chess Magazine was too imminent for the offer of a correction to be possible, I spotted a means of lengthening the problem by one move, and it is this new version that appears here. Originally the WB was on g8, and the WS on e4.

1. Chess in Australia
 April, 1970



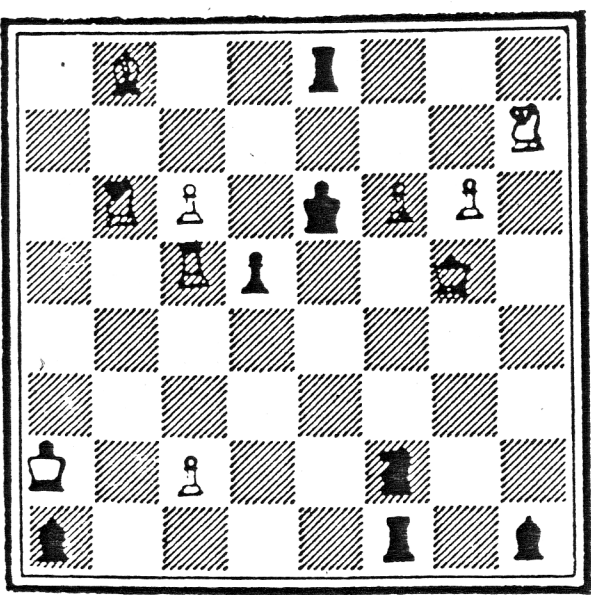
#2 (6 + 7)

2. Chess in Australia
 May, 1970



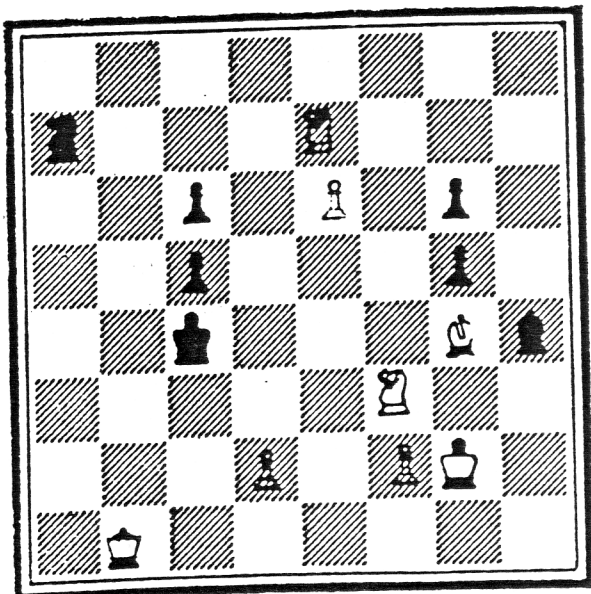
#3 (4 + 5)

3. Evening News (London)
 c. June, 1970 (V)



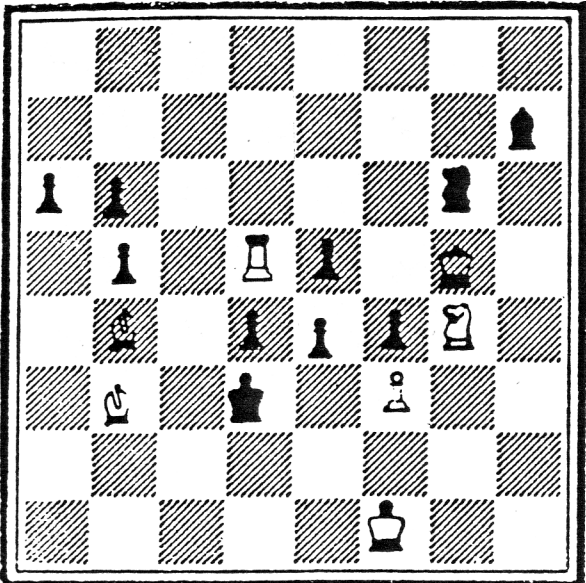
#2 (10 + 7)

4. Chess in Australia
 August, 1970



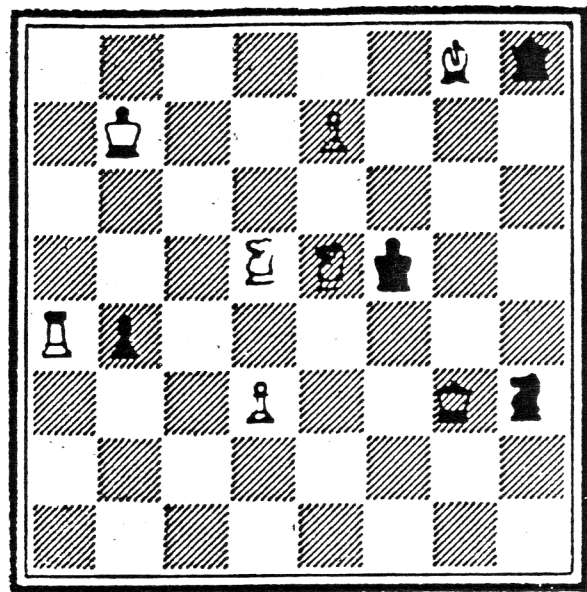
#3 (8 + 7)

5. Sunday Times (London)
23 August, 1970



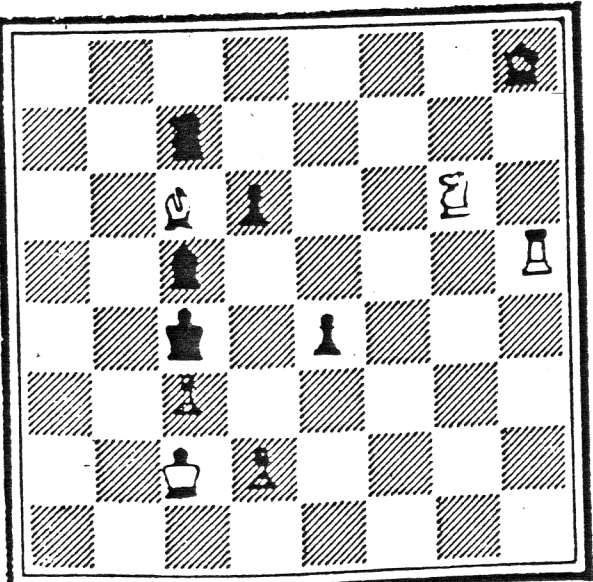
≠3 (7 + 10)

6. Sunday Mirror (Sydney)
c. September, 1970



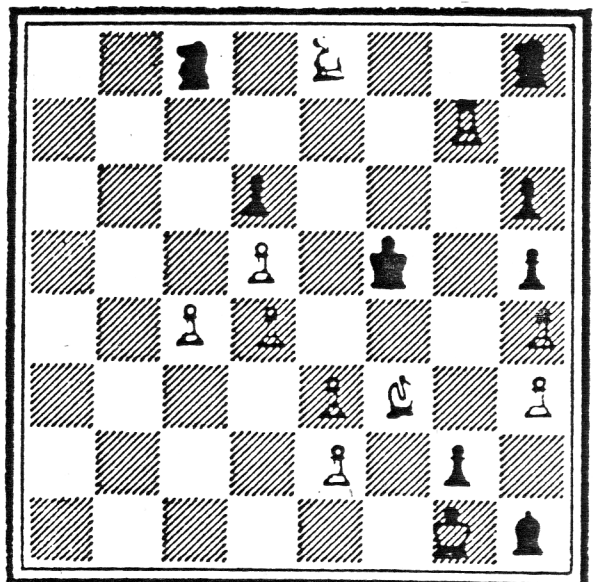
≠2 (8 + 4)

7. Sunday Mirror (Sydney)
c. September, 1970

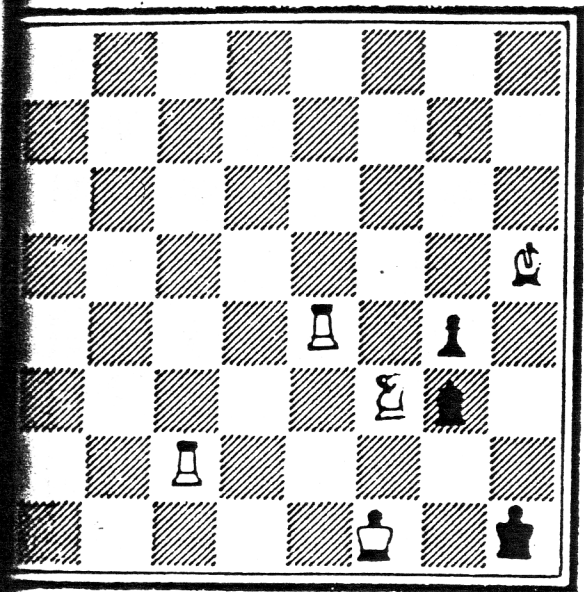


≠2 (7 + 5)

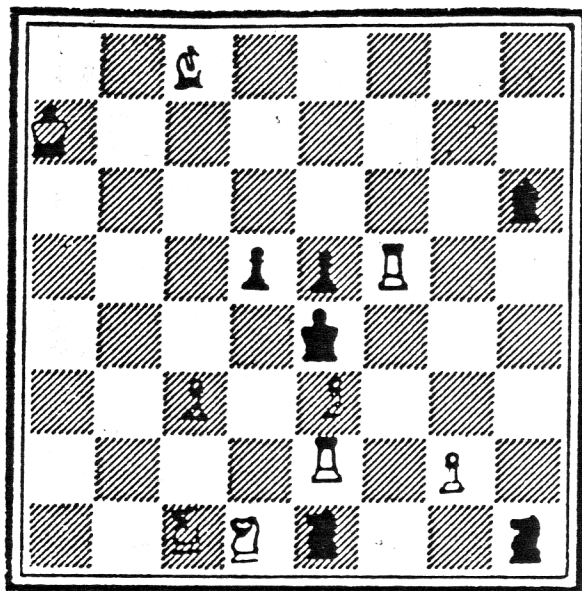
8. Sunday Times (London)
7 November, 1971



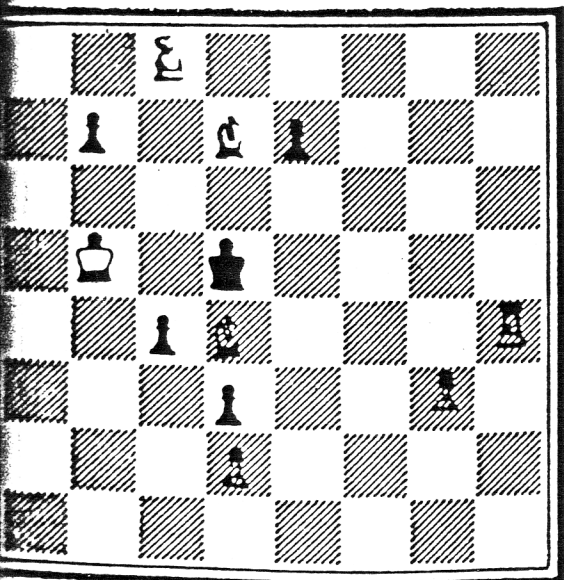
≠3 (11 + 8)



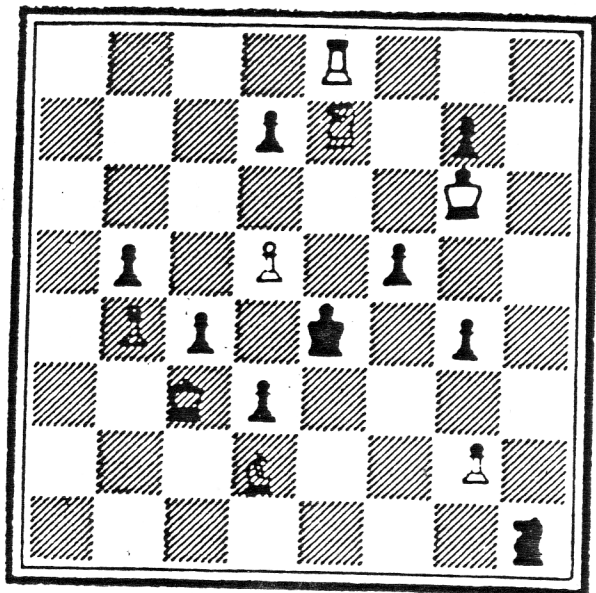
#2 (5 + 3)



#2 (9 + 6)

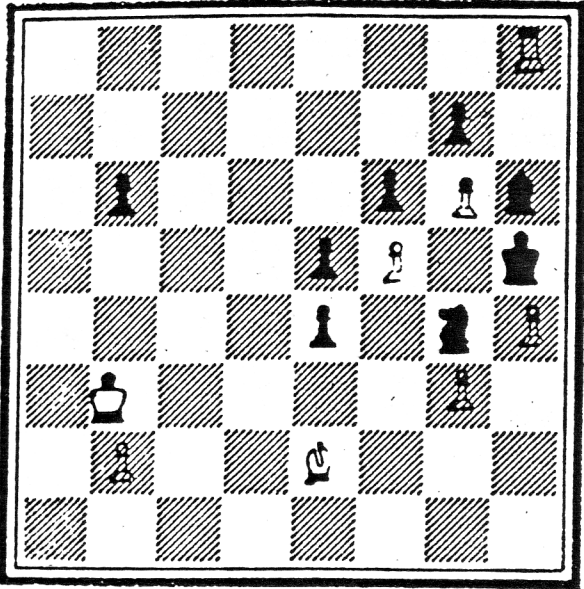


#3 (7 + 5)



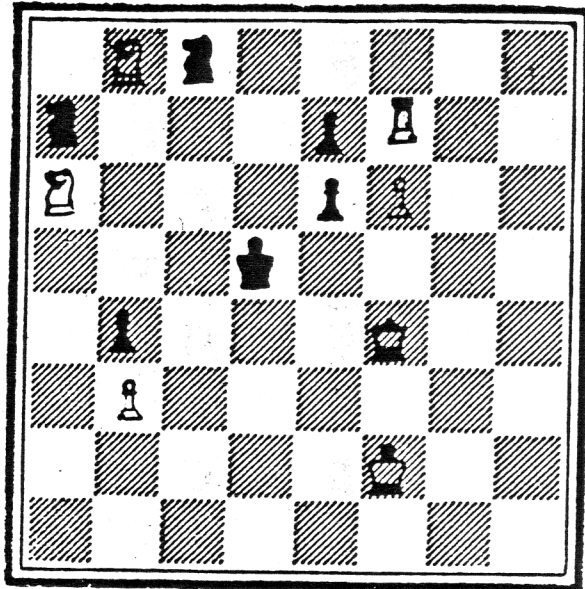
#3 (8 + 9)

13. Chess in Australia
September, 1976



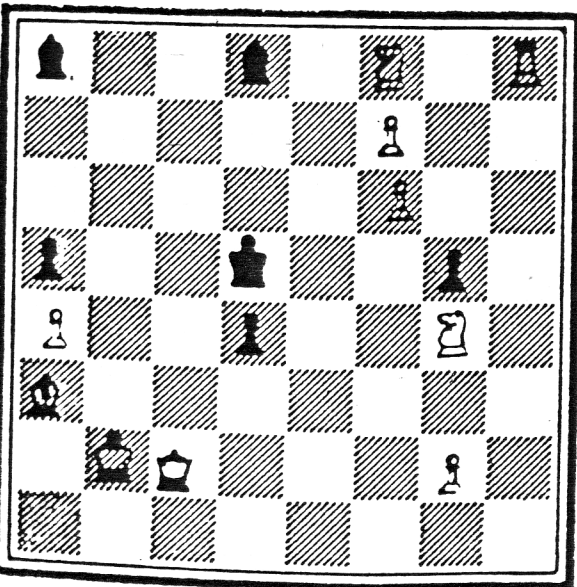
≠8 (8 + 8)

14. British Chess Magazine
November, 1976



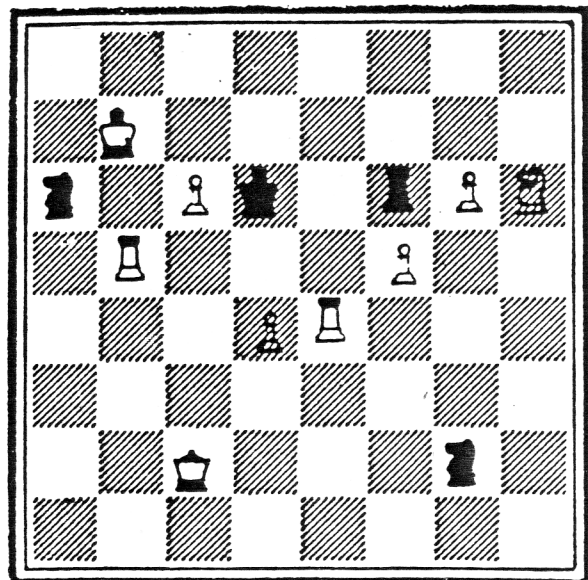
≠3 (7 + 6)

15. Problem Observer
February, 1977 (V)
(Hon. Mention)



≠3 (10 + 6)

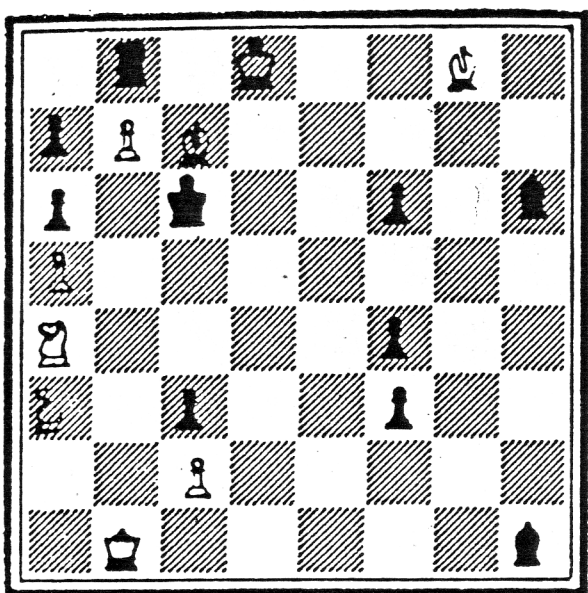
16. Chess in Australia
March, 1977



≠2 (9 + 4)

17. Chess in Australia

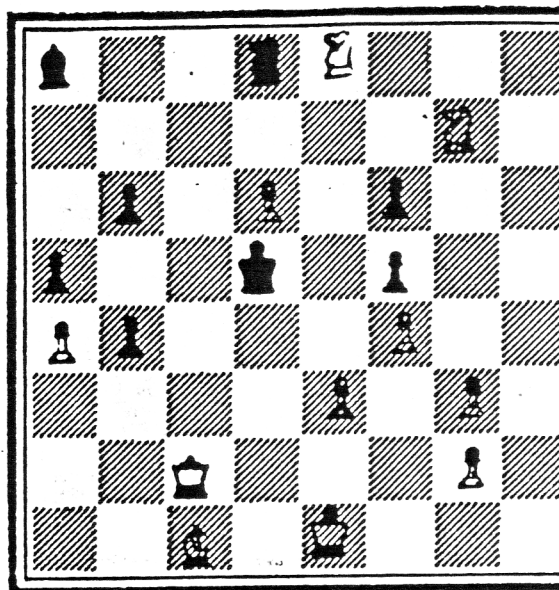
March, 1977



≠3 (9 + 10)

18. Chess in Australia

August, 1977

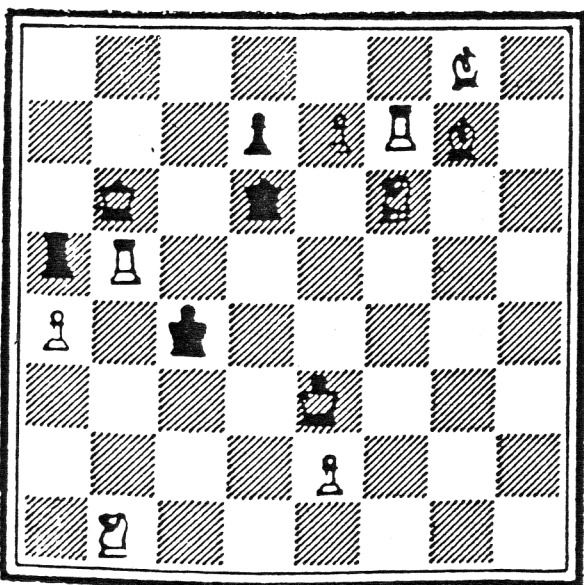


≠3 (11 + 8)

19. Problem Observer

January, 1978

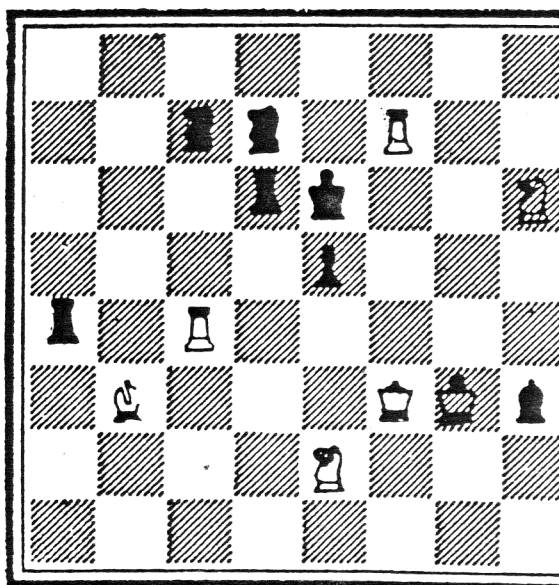
(After R. Batori. Commended)



≠2 (11 + 4)

20. Chess in Australia

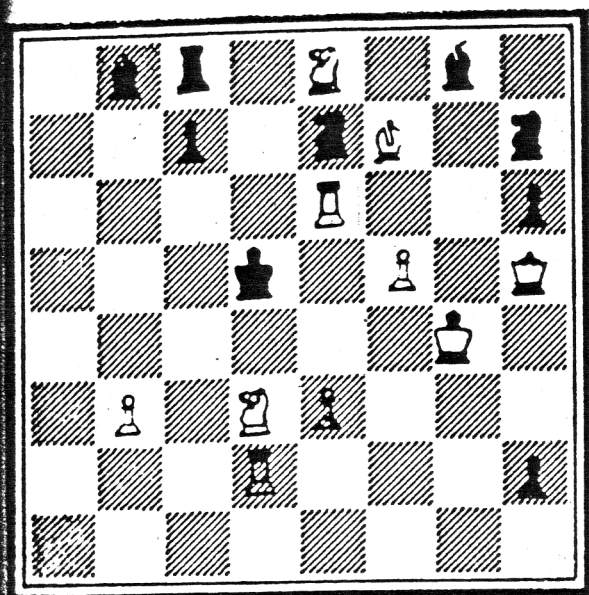
July, 1978



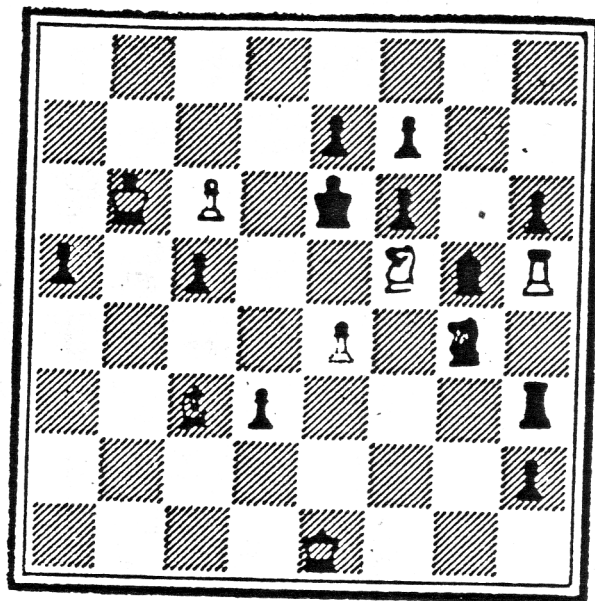
≠2 (7 + 7)

21. Chess in Australia
February, 1979 (V)

22. Chess in Australia
August/Sept., 1979



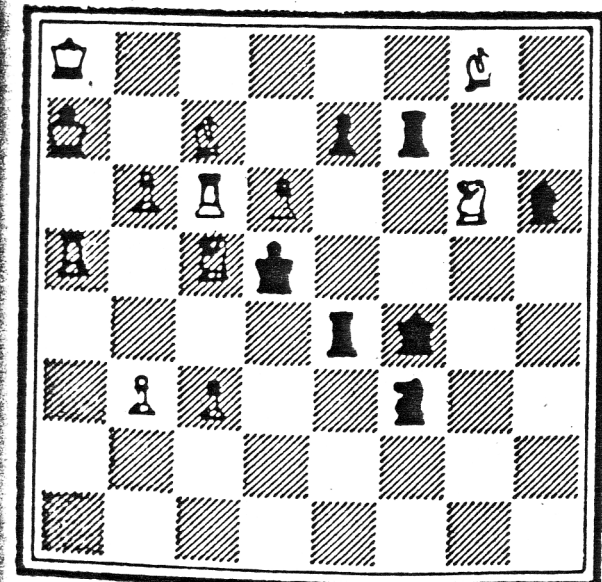
♯2 (10 + 9)



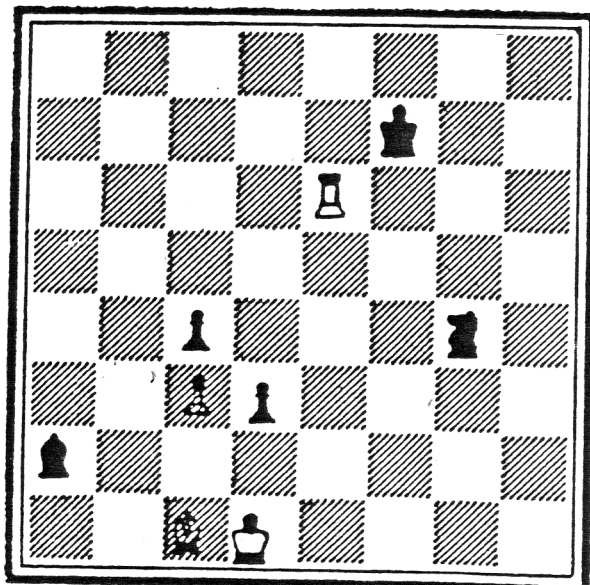
♯3 (7 + 12)

23. Problem Observer
March, 1980
(Fourth Prize)

24. Problem Observer
September, 1980 Vol. X No.5
0402



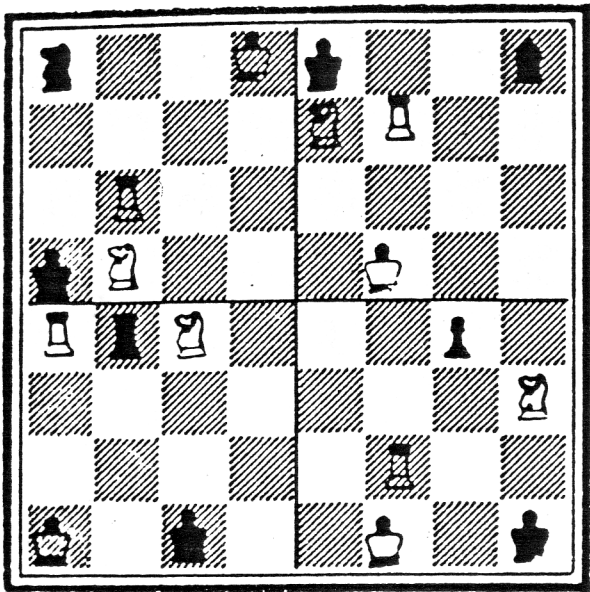
♯2 (12 + 7)



SH♯13 (4 + 5)

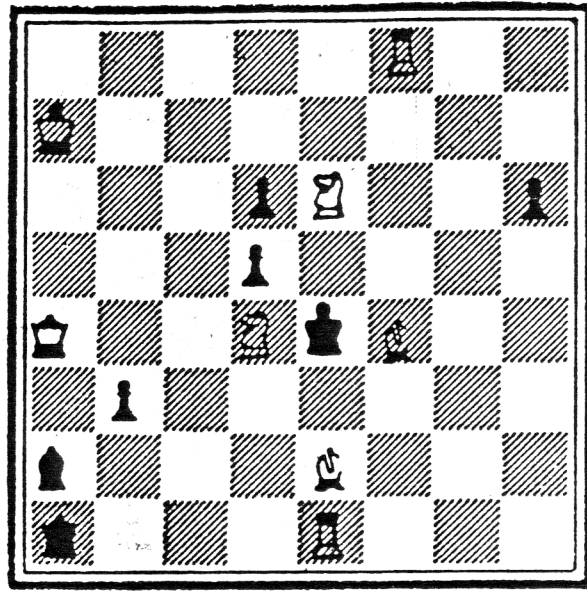
25. Chess in Australia
September, 1980

(with R. Bergmann)



H#2's Whole board for each

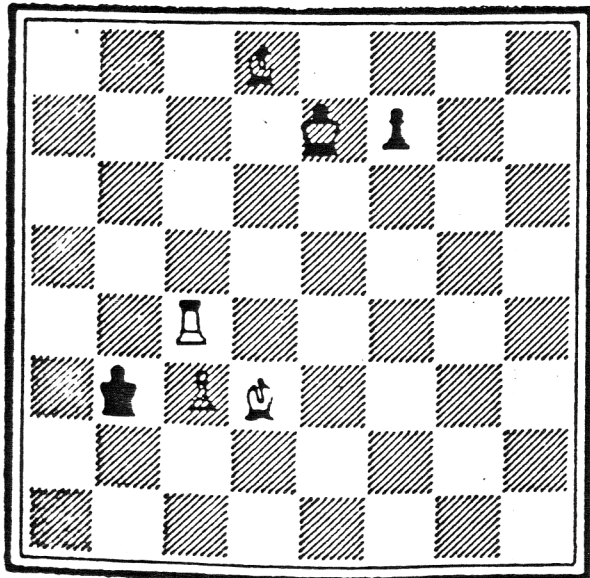
26. Tasmanian Chess Magazine
October, 1980



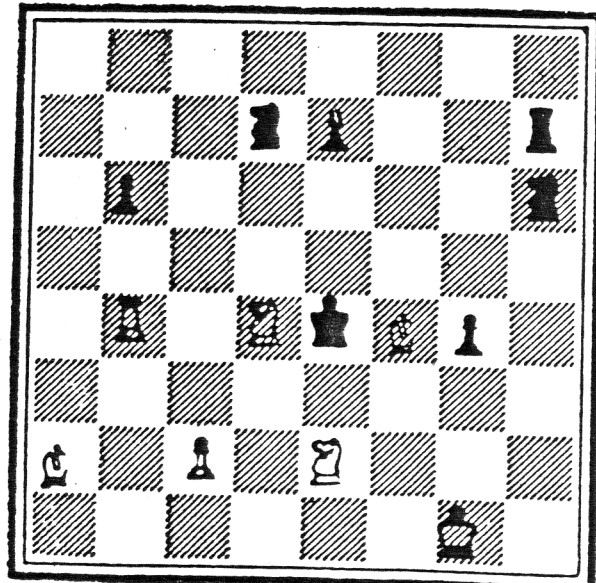
#2 (8 + 7)

27. Chess in Australia
January, 1981

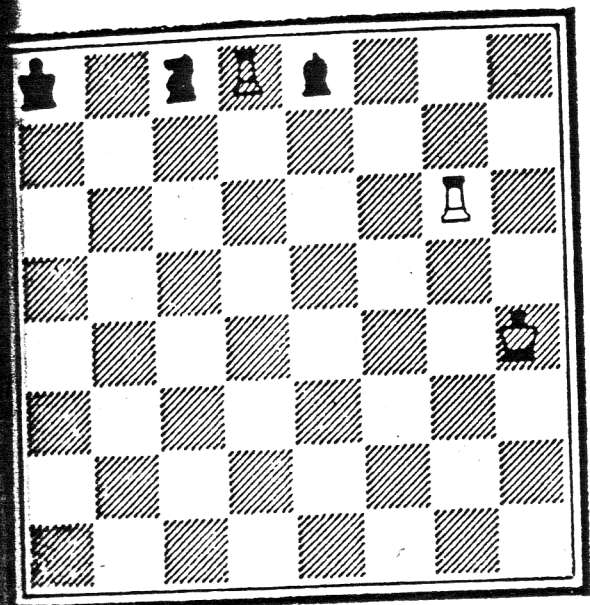
28. The Problemist
March, 1981



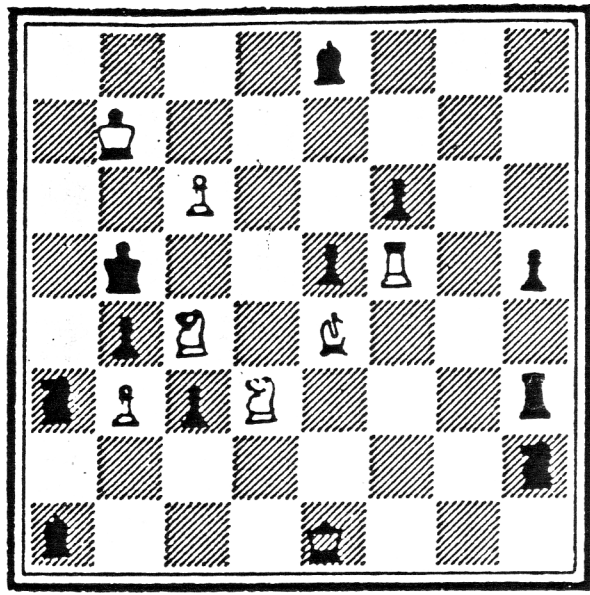
SH#13 (5 + 2)



#3 (7 + 7)



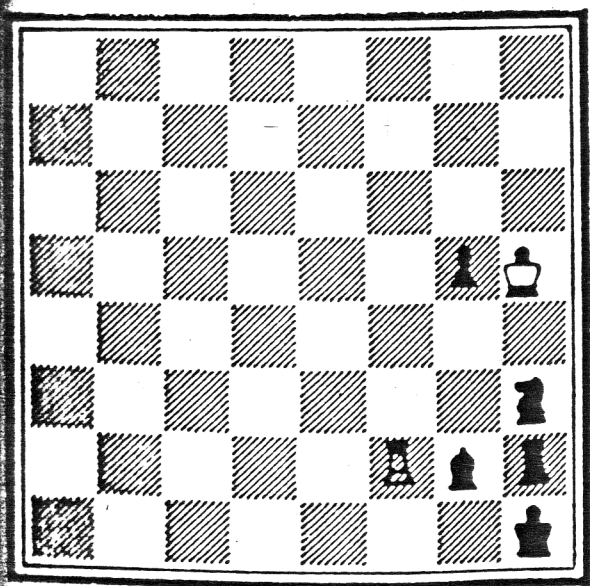
SH#16 (3 + 3)



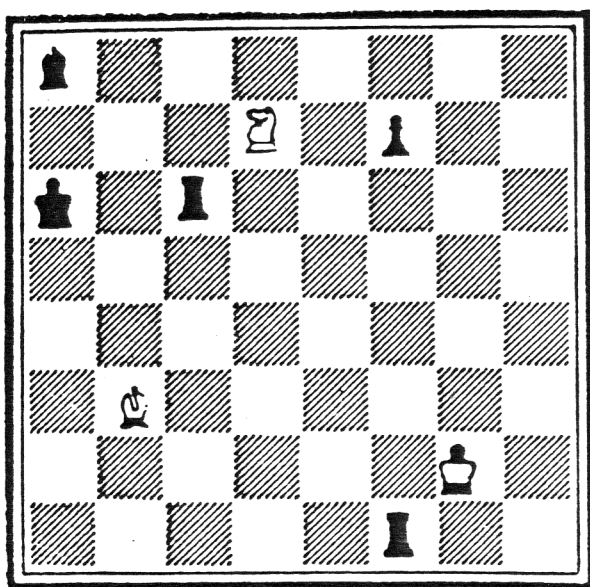
#2 (8 + 11)

31. Problem Observer
May, 1981
(Commended)

32. Chess in Australia
June, 1981

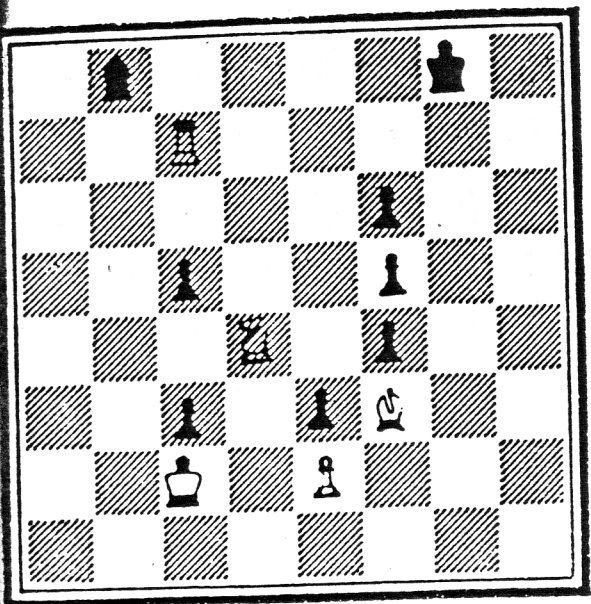


SH#8 (2 + 5)



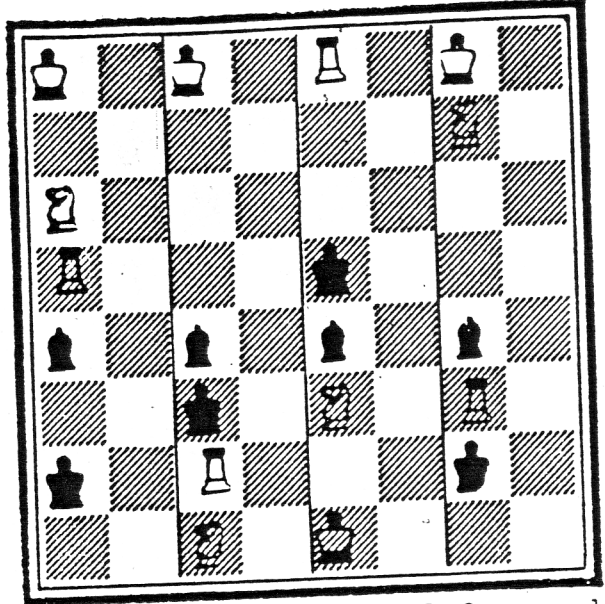
SH#15 (3 + 5)

3. Problem Observer
September, 1981



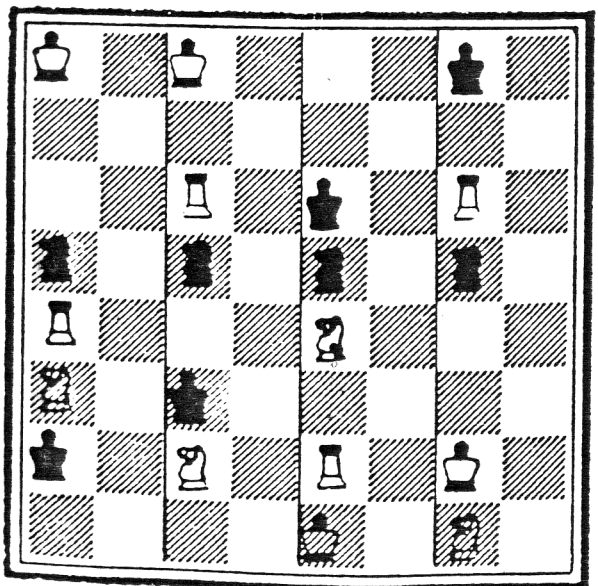
SH#26 (5 + 8)

34. Chess in Australia
September, 1981 (V)
(Dedicated to R. Bergmann)



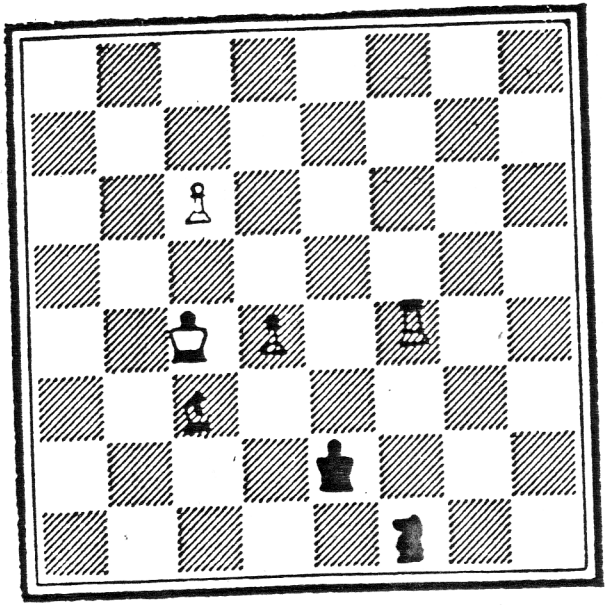
H#3's Whole board for each

35. The Problemist
November, 1981



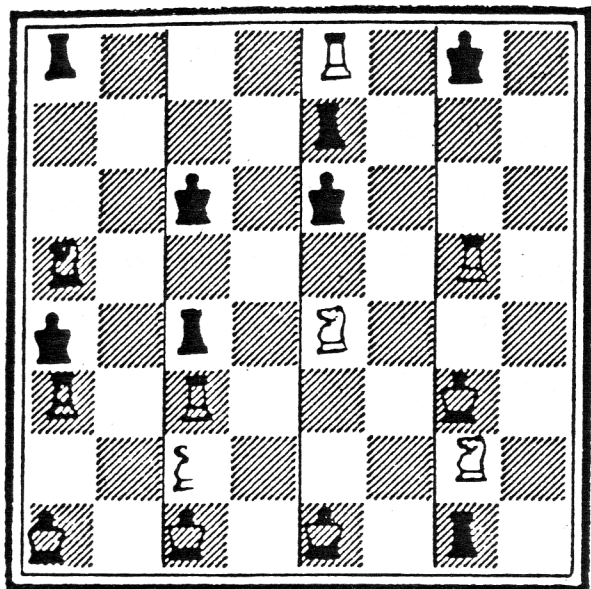
H#3's Whole board for each

36. Chess in Australia
December, 1981
(with R. Shearer)



SH#15 (5 + 2)

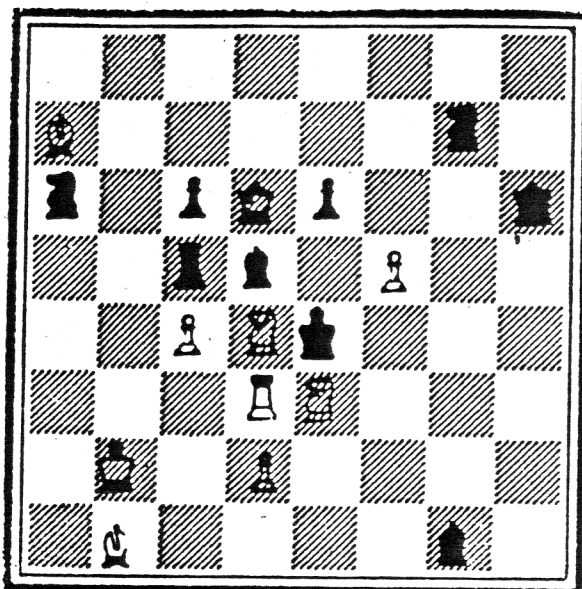
37. Problem Observer
January, 1982



H#3's Whole board for each

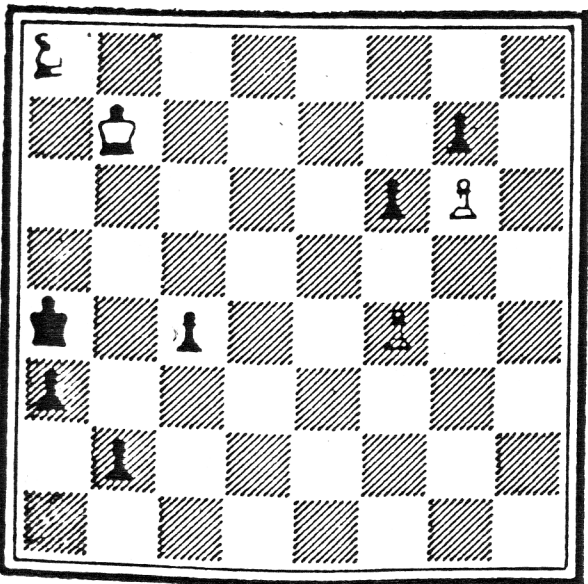
38. The Problemist
January, 1982

(Commended)



#2 (10 + 9)

39. Chess in Australia
April, 1982

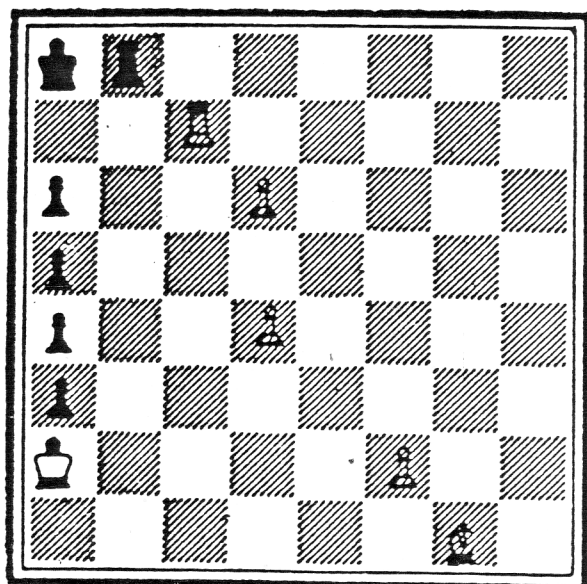


SH#21 (4 + 6)

40. British Chess Magazine
November, 1982

No. 11799

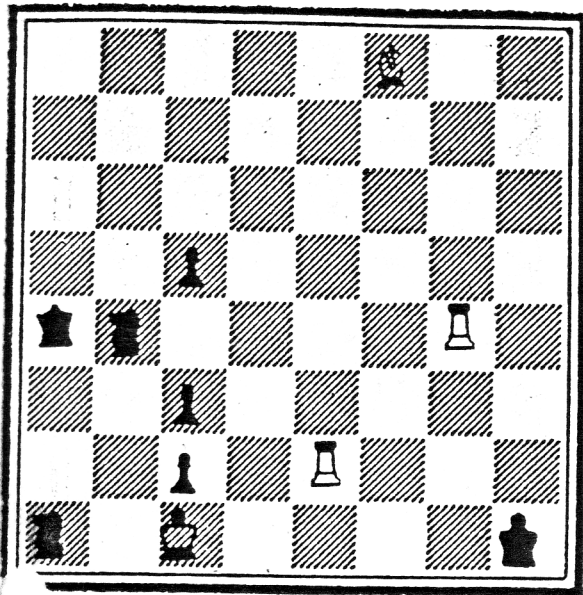
(Commended)



SH#25 (6 + 6)

41. Chess in Australia

November, 1982



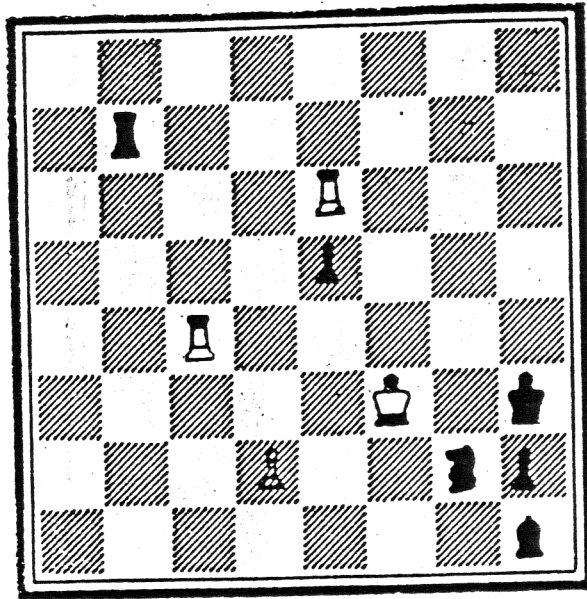
SH#17

(4 + 7)

42. British Chess Magazine

December, 1982

No. 11810



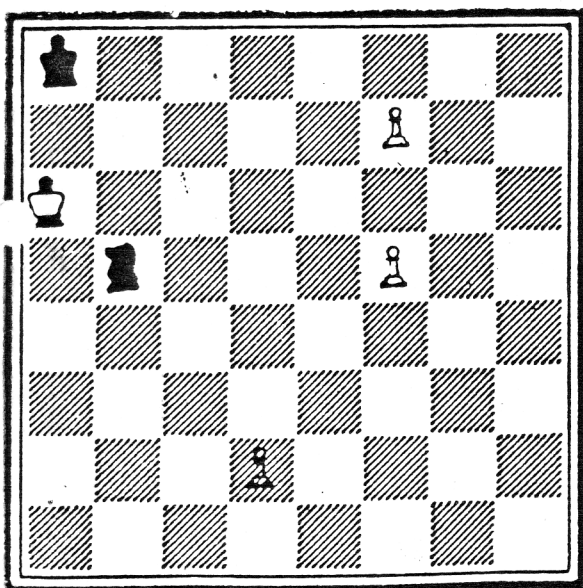
SH#28

(4 + 6)

43. Problem Observer

January, 1983 vol. XII No. 1.

0531



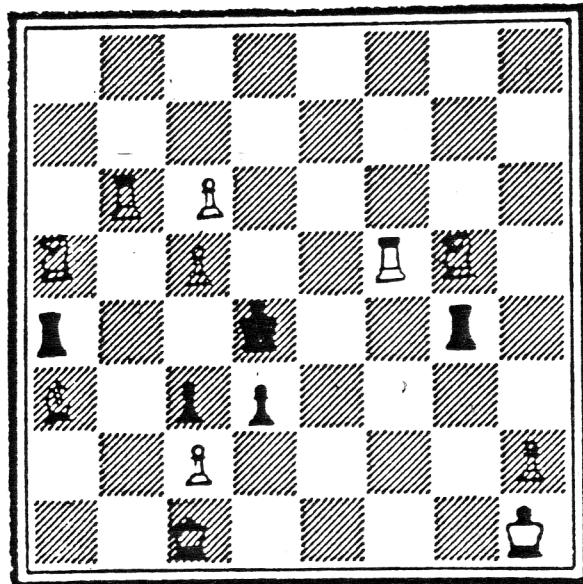
SS#14

(4 + 2)

44. Chess in Australia

Feb./March, 1983

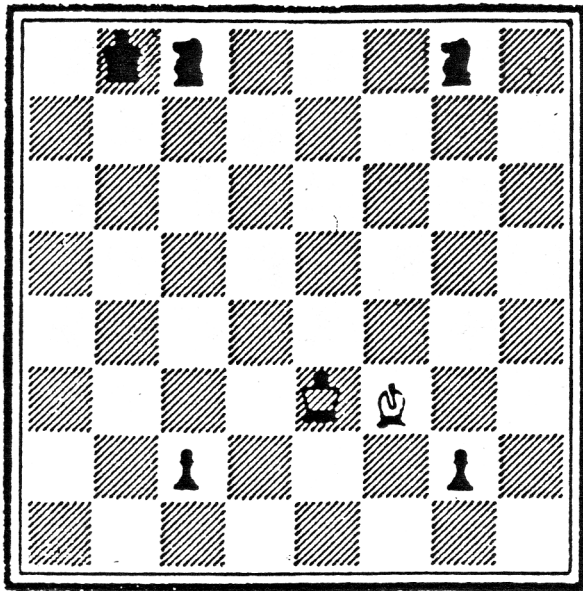
(with R. Bergmann)



#2

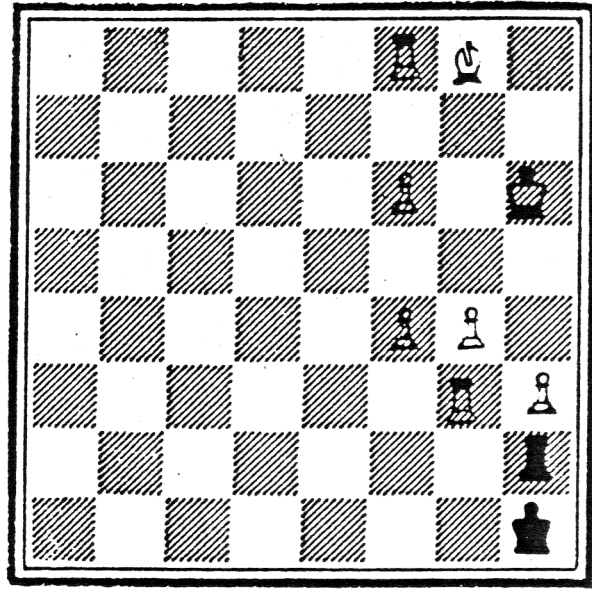
(11 + 5)

45. The Problemist
 March, 1983



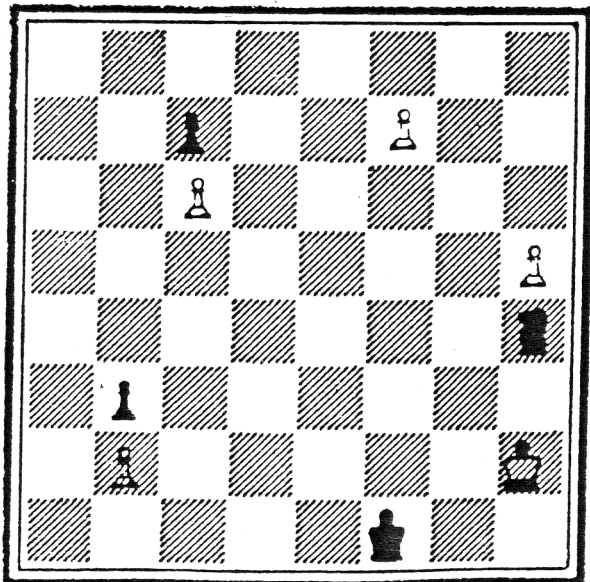
SH#17 (2 + 5)

46. feenschach
 May, 1983



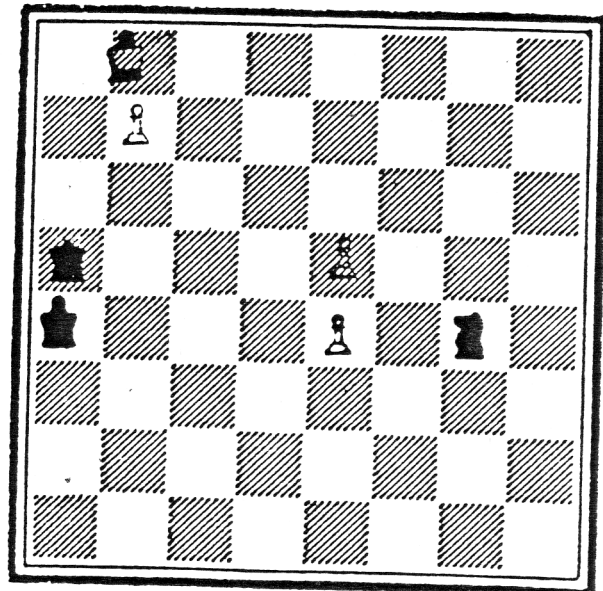
SH#29 (8 + 2)

47. British Chess Magazine
 May, 1983
 No. 11869



SS#21 (5 + 4)

48. Chess in Australia
 May/June, 1983
 (cooked)

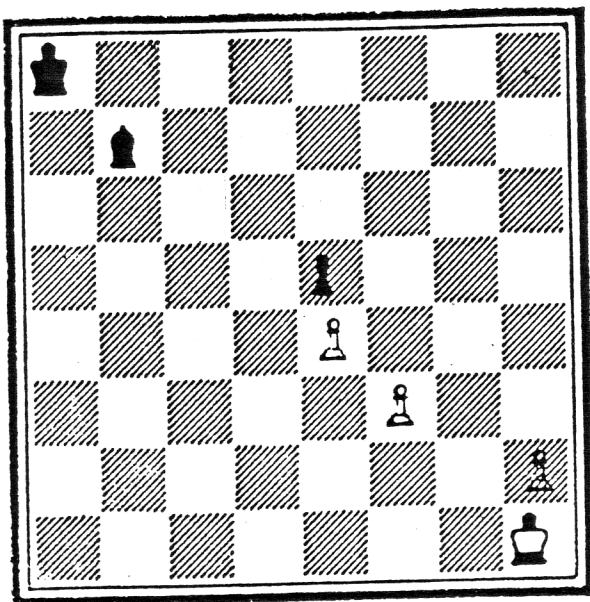


SS#14 (4 + 3)

49. Chess in Australia
August, 1983

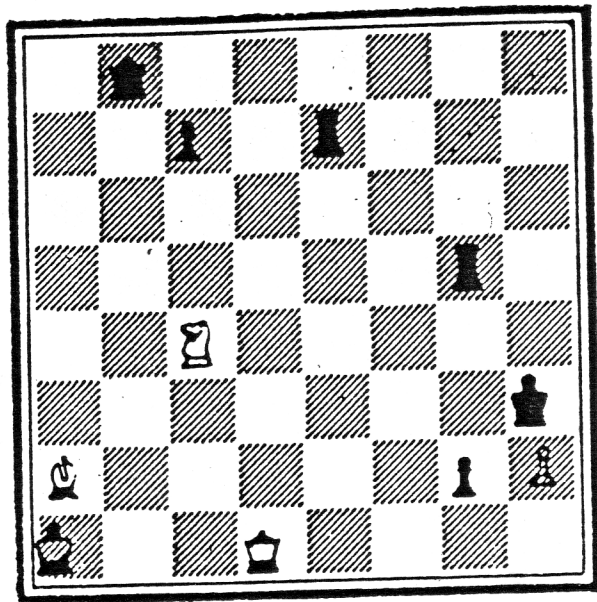
50. British Chess Magazine
September, 1983 (V)
No. 11911v

(6th Commendation)



SS#19

(4 + 3)



SS#17

(5 + 6)

Anticipated by A.H. Kniest: Novi Temi 1964.

k7/lp6/pPp5/24/6B1/7K. SH#21.

5. a1B 7. Bxb6 8. Ba7 13. b1B 14. Bc4

19. c1B 21. Bb8, Bxe4#.

Solutions

1. 1.Qb2
2. 1.Re3 (threat 2.Rh3+) ...Sxe3 2.Sxe3. ...Pg3 2.Rxg3.
3. 1.Pc7
4. 1.Kh1 (threat 2.Bh3) ...Sb5 2.Bh3. ...Sc8 2.Sxc8.
5. 1.Kf2 (threat 2.Se3) ...Pa5 2.Rxd4+.
6. 1.Sf3
7. 1.Qc8
8. 1.Rg3, no threat. ...Sg6 2.Rg4. ...Sf7 2.Rg6. ...Sc any
2.Be4+.
9. 1.Re1
10. 1.Rf1
11. 1.Bc3, no threat. ...Pe6 2.Be8. ...Pe5 2.Kb6. ...Pb6
2.Rh5+.
12. 1.Pd6, no threat. ...Sf2 2.Be3. ...S or Pg3 2.Bf4.
...Pf4 2.Rf8.
13. 1-6.Kh7
14. 1.Rf8, no threat. ...Sb5 2.Sxb4+. ...Sc6 2.Sc7+. ...Sb6
or ...Pxf6 2.Rd8+. ...Sd6 2.Sc7+. ...Pe5 2.Qc4+.
15. 1.Rh6, no threat. ...Bb7 2.Qf5+. ...Bc6 2.Qb3+. ...Bb6
2.Qf5+. ...Bc7 2.Qb3+. ...Be7 2.Pxe7. ...Bf6 2.Rxf6.
...Pd3 2.Qc5+.
16. 1.Qd2
17. 1.Qf1 (threat 2.Bd5+) ...Kxb7 2.Qxa6+. ...Pf2 2.Qxh1+.
18. 1.Pg4, no threat. ...S or Bb7 2.Qd3+. ...Sc6 2.Qb3+.
...Bc6 2.Qe3+. ...Se6 2.Sxf6+. ...Sf7 2.Se6. ...Pxd4
2.Pe4+.
19. 1.Sxd7
20. 1.Qe3
21. 1.Kg3
22. 1.Qa1 (threat 2.Qa2+) ...Se5 2.Kc7. ...Se3 2.Kxc5.
...Be3 2.Sg7+. ...Pc4 2.Sg7+.
23. 1.Bb8
24. 1.Sf6 2-3.Kh5 4-6.Sc2 7-9.Bc6 10-11.Se2 12-13.Bg4, Rh6
25. (top left) 1.Sc7 Sc3 2.Sa6 Rb5
(top right) 1.Bf6 Sc8 2.Bd8 Sd6
(bottom left) 1.Rb2 Rb4 2.Rc2 Rb1
(bottom right) 1.Pg3 Rh2+ 2.Pxh2 Sf2 *Ideal mate.*
26. 1.Qe8
27. 1-5.Pf1=S 6-8.Sb4 9-10.Kb5 11-13.Sa4
28. 1.Kf2 (threat 2.Sg3+) ...Sc5 2.Bd5+. ...S or Pe5 2.Sg3+.
...Sf6 2.Sf3+. ...Sf5 2.Se6+.
29. 1.Kb7 2.Sd6 3-5.Ke5 6-7.Sf6 8-9.Kf7 10-11.Sg7 12-13.Kh7
14-15.Bg8 16.Kh8
30. 1.Scxe5
31. 1.Bf1 2.Rg2 3-5.Sh4 6.Rh2 7.Bh3 8.Sg2
32. 1.Kb7 2.Rc4 3-5.Ke4 6-7.Be6 8.Kf5 9.Rh4 10.Kg4 11-12.
Rfg5 13-14.Pf4 15.Bf5
33. 1-15.Bxd4 16-18.Be7 19-26.Ka2
34. (a) 1.Ka1 Rb5 2.Bb3 Sb4 3.Ba2 Sc2
(c) 1.Kb4 Kb7 2.Bb5 Rc4+ 3.Ka5 Sb3
(e) 1.Kf4 Kf1 2.Kg3 Sf5+ 3.Kh2 Rh8
(f) 1.Kh2 Sf5 2.Bf3 Se3 3.Bh1 Sf1

35. (a) 1.Sb3 Sb5+ 2.Kb1 Ra2 3.Sc1 Sc3
 (c) 1.Kb3 Kc7 2.Ka4 Kb6 3.Sb3 Rc4 *Ideal mate.*
 (e) 1.Kf7 Sf6 2.Kg7 Rg2+ 3.Kh8 Rg8
 (f) 1.Kh7 Sf3 2.Kh8 Se5 3.Sh7 Sf7
36. 1-2.Sf3 3-4.Kg3 5-6.Sg4 7-8.Kg5 9-10.Sf5 11-12.Ke6
 13.Sxd4 14-15.Se7 *Ideal mate.*
37. (a) 1.Kb5 Rb3+ 2.Ka6 Sc4+ 3.Ra7 Rb6
 (c) 1.Kb5 Sd4+ 2.Ka4 Rc2 3.Rb4 Ra2
 (e) 1.Kf7 Rxe7+ 2.Kg8 Sf6 3.Kh8 Rh7
 (f) 1.Kh7 Kh3 2.Kh6 Rg6+ 3.Kh5 Sf4
38. 1.Sg4
39. 1-3.Pc1=S 4.Sb3 5.Pb1=Q 6.Qxg6 7.Qg4 8-9.Pgxf4
 10-12.Pf1=R 13-14.Ra5 15-19.Pf1=B 20.Bb5 21.Qb4
40. 1.Rb7 2-5.Kb4 6-7.Rc5 8-9.Kd2 10-11.Rxf2 12-13.Rc5
 14-15.Kb4 16-17.Rb7 18-21.Ka8 22-23.Rxd4 24-25.Rb8
41. 1-2.Se3 3-4.Qg3 5-6.Sf2 7-8.Kf3 9-10.Se3 11.Qf4
 12-13.Kf5 14.Qg5 15-16.Kh7 17.Qg8
42. 1-2.Rg4 3-4.Kh5 5.Rg6 6-8.Kf8 9-10.Re7 11-12.Kd8
 13-14.Rc6 15-17.Ka5 18-19.Rb4 20-21.Ka3 22-23.Rc2
 24-26.Kxd2 27-28.Re1
43. 1-5.Pd8=B 6.Pf8=R 7.Rf6 8.Ba5 9.Rb6 10-12.Pf8=S
 13-14.Sc7+ *Ideal Mate. Better as SS #10 with aPd2 and d7.*
44. 1.Bb2
45. 1-3.Sgf2 4.Pg1=B 5.Bh2 6-7.Sd2 8.Pc1=B 9.Ba3
 10-11.Sd4 12-13.Ba7 14.Sb6 15.Sc6 16.Ka8 17.Bhb8
46. 1.Rg2 2-3.Kf1 4-5.Re3 6-8.Kd4 9-10.Rf7 11-13.Kxf6
 14-16.Kd4 17-18.Re3 19-21.Kf1 22-23.Rg2 24-25.Kh1
 26-27.Rxf4 28-29.Rh2
47. 1-3.Ph8=R 4-5.Rxb3 6.Rh3 7-11.Pb8=B 12.Bxc7 13.Bg3
 14-15.Pc8=S 16-18.Sf2 19.Pf8=Q 20.Qf3 21.Sh1+
48. Intention: 1-3.Pe8=R 4-5.Rxg4 6.Rg3 7-10.Pe8=R 11-12.
 Ra6 13.Ka8 14.Pb8=R Cook: 6-7.Ra6 8.Ka8 9.Pb8=R
 10-13.Pe8=R 14.Re3
49. 1-5.Ph8=B 6.Bxe5 7.Bh2 8-11.Pe8=B 12.Bc6 13-17.Pf8=B
 18-19.Bfg1
50. 1.Se3 2.Bg8 3.Qb3 4-5.Kc3 6.Sf5 7.Qe6 8-10.Kf6
 11.Qf7 12-13.Sg6 14-15.Kh8 16.Se5 17.Qh5+

IS. Note: if the stipulation was changed to series self-stalemate in no. 50, an extra move of the WS would be obtained and the problem would be improved(!)

• = editor

40. Ingenious determination of move order - B must avoid capturing d4 too soon! (N.A. Macleod). The switch of shield roles between R and K is well managed (W. H. Duce). Commended: A familiar idea, but the extra R-moves (22-24) add an element of originality (Judge: John M. Rice).
42. Best problem of the set (J. Nunn). One or two twists to the familiar conducted tour (D. Nixon). Difficult (J. Tymms).
47. Fine Allumwandlung with unexpected finale (N.A. Macleod). Neat but overfamiliar AUW in series form (C. J. Morse). Difficult (G. Whitehead, M. McDowell).
50. Entertaining and original example of complex K shields (N.A. Macleod). More original [than 47], with bK placed to ensure surprisingly unique solution (C. J. Morse). White K sails majestically through narrow straight between Scylla and Charybdis (G. Whitehead). 6th Commend.: Judge: N.A. Macleod "Entertaining and original example of multiple K shields."
 (19)
43. Charming triple under-promotion, but superseded by same composer in current B.C.M. (D.A. Smedley [referring to 47?]). All the minor promotions with minimal force (M. McDowell). Splendidly accurate (J. K. Hetherington).

Tolson

#2	1, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 16, 19, 20, 21, 23, 26, 30, 38, 44	15
#3	2, 4, 5, 8, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 22, 28	12
#8	13	1
SH#	24, 27, 29, 31, 32, 33, 36, 39, 40, 41, 42, 45, 46	13
H	25(x4), 34(x4), 35(x4), 37(x4)	4
SS#	43, 47, 48, 49, 50	5
		50
CIA	1, 2, 4, 9, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 25, 27, 32, 34, 36, 39, 41, 44, 48, 49	23
Ev'g News	3	1
Sunday Times	5, 8	2
Sunday Mirror	6, 7	2
Problem R	10, 28, 29, 35, 38, 45	6
B.C.M.	14, 40, 42, 47, 50	5
Publ'ic Observer	15, 19, 23, 24, 30, 31, 33, 37, 43	9
Tasch Mag.	26	1
Leerschach	46	1
		50