Marco Bonavoglia Memorial Tourney

Preliminary Award by Thomas Brand

It was a very sad honour for me to be invited to judge this tourney: It's the second time I took over the judgement of an intended Jubelee and now a Memorial Tourney: The first one was the intended Wolfgang Dittmann 80 Tourney.

Both Wolfgang and Marco were very interested not only generally in retros, but liked the exploration of different fairy conditions in retrograde analysis: While Wolfgang since the new millennium focused on Anticirce in Proca defence retractors, in his younger years he often dealt with illegal clusters and last movers – including those based on fairy conditions. And both met a few times – at Andernach and during Wolfgang's business stay in Italy.

And I liked it very much to meet with both: Not only to discuss on problem chess and specifically retrograde analysis, but because both were very likeable dialogue partners in discussions on a wide range of topics.

So it was a great honour when tourney director Antonio Garofalo asked me to act as judge for the now rededicated memorial tournament, where the announced theme was *"Last move?" problems with any fairy conditions (Fairy pieces are not allowed unless the initial game array is clrearly stated).*

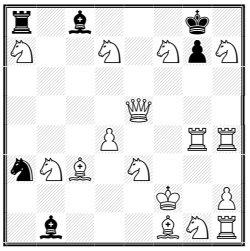
Antonio sent me a file with 15 contributions (frankly, I had hoped for more participants) from the following authors (* indicates co-productions):
Themis Argirakopoulos 9*, 10*; Allan Bell 6, 7; Dirk Borst 5; Michel Caillaud 14; Jacques Dupin 13*; Theodoros Giakatis 9*, 12; Maryan Kerhuel 13*; Enzo Minerva 15; Ladislav Packa 11; Kostas Prentos 9*, 10*; Paul Raican 1, 2, 3, 4; Manfred Rittirsch 8.

Intensive checks – I am very grateful to Hans Gruber for his valuable support – resulted in the exclusion of a few problems:

2: (Kh8/Kb8, 12+4): *anticipated* by Plaksin & Kornilow *feenschach* 1988 (P0008680).
6: (Ke4/Kc6, 4+3): *cooked*, many other solutions like Pd5xS/Bc4**.**
7: (Ke1/Kg1, 4+11): *cooked*, for example a) Kd1xSe1#, b) Qe5xPf4.
9: (Kg8/Ke4, 9+2): *no solution*, since the intended e.p. capture recolours Pg7.
10: (Kg6/Kd5, 19+1) *no solution* according to our understanding of the "Masand Generalized" definition given together with 10: See the diagram "Position before -1.Sd1-e3" (i.e. the position when exactly 1 single move is retracted - notabene, the solution move we are looking for). Then play the move forwards in the diagram: 1.Sd1-e3. After this move (obviously a check, so bQf5 and bPg4 are recoloured) the queen rebirth square is free, so all white queens check and recolour all the pieces they observe/cover, so all knights and bishops (thankfully queens don't observe each other …)
So it is ALSO true: 1.Se3+ leads to the wQd4 (which now checks) – recolouring the wSe3! So there should be a BLACK Se3 in the diagram - but there isn't!
12: (Ke1/Ke5, 4+2): *no solution* in b): R 1.Rc3xPh3 [wRh1]+ is illegal because the resulting pawn constellation bPh3/wPh7 is illegal in Anticirce, and the additional Circe condition does not change this.
15: (Kg1/Kh3, 9+1): cooked, since for a "last move" problem to be correct the last move must be completely be determined – including captures. This is not the case in b), where the black man captured might have been a Knight, a Rook, or a Queen.

The quality of the remaining problems seems me to be from "average" to "excellent", so I decided to integrate six out of the eight now to be considered problems into the award. Brief remarks on the two not included:
1: (Kd4/Ke1, 4+9): Obvious last (checking) move; the only Rex Multiplex use is to fix the white Queen – so "too orthodox" in my mind.
4: (Se1,Sb7, 4+2): Indeed, Co+ with 488 proof games in 14.5 (no shorter one), all ending with 15.Rg1xQd1 – but do I overlook any specific "last move?" arguing? Note, the unique last move is only forced by the "proof game time pressure", not by any retro arguments. (Compare 14)

Now let's switch to the awarded problems:

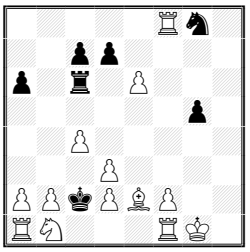


← 1st Prize: 14) Michel Caillaud
r1b3k1/S2S1SpS/8/4Q3/3P2RR/sSB1S3/5K1P/1b3BSR
Last move? (16+6) - Einstein

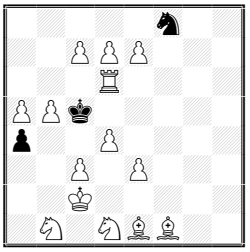
1.e4 Sa6(P) 2.e5 a5 3.e6 a4 4.exf7(S) e6 5.c4 Bd6(S) 6.c5 Se7(P) 7.c6 0-0(Bf8) 8.cxd7(S) c6 9.b4 c5 10.b5 c4 11.b6 c3 12.bxa7(S) Qb6(R) 13.Sxc3(B) Rb1(B) 14.g4 b6 15.g5 b5 16.g6 b4 17.gxh7(S) b3 18.axb3(S) e5 19.Rxa4(Q) e6 20.Qh4(R) e4 21.d4 e3 22.Bxe3(R) e5 23.Rxe5(Q) Se4(P) 24.Qg4(R) e3 25.fxe3(S) Ba3(S) 26.Ke1-f2!

«In Einstein Chess, any move of a unit except Kings and non capturing Pawns changes its nature. So that the total number of moves of a non capturing player (as is the case for Black in this problem) is limited, except for the King moves.
As Black didn't capture, there is only 1 explanation for some pieces : Dd8-b6(T)-b1(F) and Ff8-a3(C) (with Ff8 either original or issued from Th8-f8(F))
Some captures by white are clear: a×b3(C), b×a7(C), ç×d7(C), é×f7(C), f×é3(C), g×h7(C), C×ç3(F) and Dé5 comes from Fç1 after 2 captures F×é3(T)×é5(D) or F×g5(T)×é5(D).
The last 10th white capture accounts for Tg4,h4. Tg4 is the original Dd1 after Dg4(T), and Th4 is Ta1 after T×a4(D)-h4(T) or Té1(F)×h4(T)
Only T×a4(D)-h4(T) accounts for capture of Cb8 captured as a Pawn on file a, ç or d.

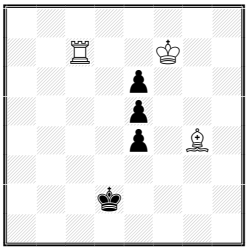
Some sequences can be ordered. The critical one is : ç×d7(C), ç7 to ç3+ Db6(T), C×ç3(F), Tb1(F), a×b3(C), T×a4(D) and at last Fa3(C) When Ff8 leaved, f8 was controled since long by Cd7.
So that black King was already in g8 (after 0-0(Ff8)). As h8 is controled by Cf7 before original Ff8 moved, black King played only one move in the game! Now as black King is restricted the exact number of black moves (25) is known with 2 variations for the original Bf8 : Ff8-c5,d6(C)-é4(P)-é3 for Fç1×é3(T)×é5(D) or Ff8-é7(C)-g6(P)-g5 for Fç1×g5(T)×é5(D)
At the same time, minimal number of white moves can be determined to 26, so white played the last move, and the retroplay is under pressure as white has to make black moves available.
The try F×g5(T)×é5(D) fails :
26.Tg5×Pé5(D) 25.Ff8-a3(C) Ré1-f2 24.é6-é5 f2×é3(C) 23.é4-é3 Fç1×Pg5(T) 22.g5-g6 d2-d4 21.Cé7-g6(P) Dd1-g4(T) 20.é5-é4 Da4-h4(T) 19.???
So the last move is 26.Ré1-f2!!
It happens that time pressure makes all the moves determined until the initial position!! So that the stipulation could also be “Last 25,5 moves?” as well as “Proofgame in 25,5 moves” or simply “Proofgame?” as move number is superfluous.» Comment by Author.
With use of only one (of course well-chosen) fairy condition the author manages to create a truly “retro without words”: You may start with the initial game array and try to play to the diagram position, you will notice that this game is unique with 25.5 moves – or you might retract from the diagram, and you will reach the initial game array just 25.5 moves before with a unique retraction order. The technical clue is that the black King has only moved once (castling); the Knights on d7, f7, and h7 are not only there so that White has many moves and thus the order of White and Black is determined, but also and very importantly so that the black King is immobilised -- because the Einstein condition rule says that kings and non-capturing pawns would ruin everything. (And of course White has 16 pieces as a basic prerequisite for Black never being able to benefit from the Einstein capture upgrade).
Clearly number one in this tourney!



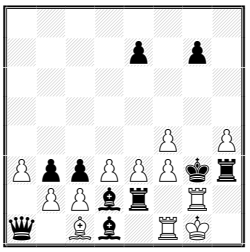
← 2nd Prize: 5) Dirk Borst
Last move? (13+7)
5Rn1/2pp4/p1r1P3/6p1/2P5/3P4/PPkPBP2/RN3RK1
Zeroposition: a) +♟a5 b) +♘b8 c) ♟g5→h5
Monochromatic
Solutions:
a) 0-0
b) ♙g7x♜f8=♖
c) ♙f5xe6 e.p.
Valladao.
«In all three, Black has no legal last move, so White made the last move in each. White’s retraction must enable Black to retract a legal move.
In a) not gxTf8=T? because wTf8 captured Sb8. After f5xe6 e.p.? the bD cannot get back home.
In b) not 0-0? because the wK captured the a-pawn. After f5xe6 e.p.? the bD cannot get back home. In c) not gxTf8=T? because wTf8 captured Sb8. Not 0-0? because the wK captured the a-pawn.» Comment by Author.
Using Monochromatic specifics the author manages to make two of three possible last moves "all being" special moves” forming the Valladao task– cyclically illegal in the three positions.
Even the fact that Black has no last move, so White must start the retraction is motivated by the fairy condition used. It was much fun to figure out the detailed intelligent reasoning for the uniqueness of last move in the three positions – but the Zeroposition with quite unbalanced twinning is a drawback.
Sometimes it’s not so easy to see that a Monochromatic position is legal, so the authors added three proof games to demonstrate legality.



← 1st Hon. Mention: 8) Manfred Rittirsch
Last move? - (14+3)
5n2/2PPP3/3R4/PPk5/p2P4/2P1P3/2K5/1N1NBB2
b) ♖d6→d2 c) ♖d6→b4 d) ♖d6→f4 Sentinelles
a) 1.Rd4xSd6[+wPd4] (Sc,e8-d6)
b) 1.Rd4xBd2[+wPd4] (Bc1-d2)
c) 1.Rd4xRb4[+wPd4] (Ra4-b4[+bPa4])
d) 1.Rd4xPf4[+wPd4] (e,f,g(x)f4)
«Large rook cross. 4 different types of uncaptured pieces.»
Comment by Author
Well-linked four solutions (uncapture of different black men o the same square by the “thematic” rook) with optimal “geometric” twinning. And it’s fun to figure out why other uncaptures don’t work. Very elegant, but of course not as deep as the Prize-winners.



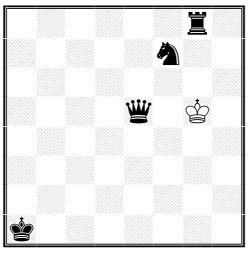
← 2nd Hon. Mention: 13) Maryan Kerhuel and Jacques Dupin
Last move? - (3+4) b) ♖c7→c5 Make & Take
8/2R2K2/4p3/4p3/4p1B1/8/3k4/8
Double checks by White's rook and bishop.
a)
-1.Bd4×Xg4 illegal (black king in check)
-1.Bd5×Xg4 impossible
-1.Bd6×Ng4++!
b)
-1.Re3×Xc5 illegal (black king in check)
-1.Rf4×Nc5++!
The question is "how to retract the double check via Rd7 (Rd5) and Bf4?" This is done by uncapturing a Knight (not so surprising due to the e-wall). As to be expected the doublecheck move is performed by the Bishop in one solution and in the other one by the Rook.
Fine twinning, as you might ask "what does it change?"



← Commendation: 3) Paul Raican
Last move? - (12+10)
8/4p1p1/8/8/5P1P/PppPPPkr/1PPbr1R1/q1Bb1RK1
Madrasi
Vertical Cylinder

«Sol: White King is in check from bQa1, then:
-1.Qa2-a1+! (-1.Qa2xSa1? or a2-a1=Q? are both illegal, too many white captures) **O-O-O-O!**
Extended castling, specific for vertical Cylinder (wK is now in e1 and wR in a1).
Thematic try:
-1 ... O-O-O? and the cage South cannot be released.
-2.Kh2-g3! Now, a possible retro-play is the following:
-2 ...Rg5-g2 -3.a4xBb3! Re5-g5 -4.Rg2-e2. The **cage South** is released by: Rg2>a8, Rh3>h8, Bd1>c8, Qa2>d7>d8, Pa4>a7, Kh2>e8, e2>e3, Re5>h1, Be3xQd2, Be3>g1, d4xSc3, **g2-g1=B!** (bB is promoted because the Pawns e7-g7 are both at home) g3-g2, Pd4>d7, Bb3>f1, g2xSf3>b8, g4-g3, h5xSg4, bBf8 was captured from f8 by a Knight» Comment by Author

The answer to the question "What was the last move?" is extremely obvious, while the main topic of this problem is the penultimate move, the very specific and quite spectacular castling. The subsequent retraction is more or less purely (Madrasi-) technical.



← Commendation: 11) Ladislav Packa
Last move? - (1+4)
6r1/5n2/8/4q1K1/8/8/8/k7
Zeroposition
a) -♕e5 b) -♘f7 c) -♖g8
Anticirce
a) - Qe5 1.Sh8-f7+ 1.Rb8-g8+
b) - Sf7 1.Rd8-g8+, 1.Qh8-e5+
c) - Rg8 1.Qb8-e5+, 1.Sd8-f7+
Black officers cycle. Cycle of departing squares.
Here the Zeroposition does not disturb: Removing one of the three black men results in a double check position which is resolved by mutual blocking of the Anticirce rebirth square automatically resulting in a cycle of departing squares. Very elegant, very easy to solve, an ideal Anticirce retro merchandizing problem.

Bornheim (Germany), December 2023 **Thomas Brand**
International Judge of the FIDE

Marco Bonavoglia Memorial Tourney

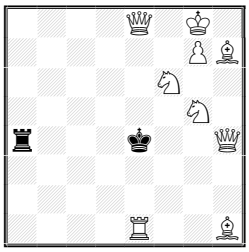
Final Award by Thomas Brand

During the three months after publication of the award (see Best Problems 110) there arrived a few claims. I will discuss and finally decide here:

"Lost" problem:
There was another problem, 16 by J. Lorinc, being lost awhile anywhere between author, director, and judge. It seems me to be too small to be added to the award.

Cooked problems:
The claim concerning 14 (Caillaud) is NOT valid, since it is based on explicit promotions in Einstein Chess – but they are not permitted.
The claim concerning No. 3 (Raican) by Dmitrj Baibikov (Cook: -1...Qb1xSa1 -2.Ra2xSg2 a4xBb3) is justified; this problem loses the Commendation. The author corrects by adding a wBb1.

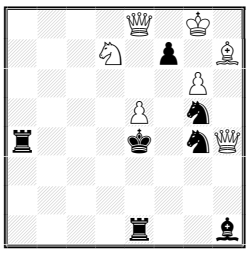
Claim against "no solution":
Co-Author Prentos of 9 and 10 argues (supported by a positive Jacobi computer check) that both problems have a legal solution since the additional recolouring I had claimed (after intensive and deep discussion with Hans Gruber) were not valid. This seems me to be a typical example of an equivocal definition, since it is not clearly stated that re-colouring should stop directly (Prentos / Jacobi interpretation), or a "transitive re-colouring shell" (Brand / Gruber interpretation) should be considered.
Since Jacobi has "created facts" (and in dubio pro reo) I will overcome my concerns and award following distinctions:



← 3rd Prize: 9 by Themis Argirakopoulos & Kostas Prentos & Theodoros Giakatis.
Last move? (9+2) C? - Masand Generalized
[4Q1K1/6PB/5S2/6S1/r3k2Q/8/8/4R2B]

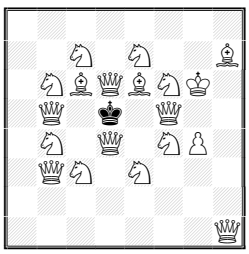
Retract: -1.Sg4xSf6 [e1,h1,g5,h7,e8=w]+++++++ Sd7xPf6 [g4=w][h7,e8=b]+++ -2.e5xPf6 e.p. [d7=b]++ f7-f5 -3.g6-g7+
Both complex and elegant lastmover with original blend of fairy conditions.

The last move must have been Sg4-f6 activating the battery on the fourth rank. The colors of g5, e1, h1 changed from black to white, and so did the colors of e8, h7. In the previous move, the double check by the black Qe8 and Bh7 could have been justified only as a result of color change. A black Knight check on f6 was necessary at this point, making the last move wSg4xSf6. One step back, the double check by the white Qe8 and Bh7 could have been achieved using the good old en passant capture (wPe5xbPf5). So, the black Knight captured a white pawn on f6. Its departure square must have been d7, in order to prevent an illegal retrocheck by the Ra4 that would otherwise change colors from white to black, after the check by the wQe8.
Cross-checks: A double check is answered by a triple check, which in turn is answered by a septuple check.



← The position 5 half-moves earlier must have been the following:

Masand Generalized: When a unit gives a direct or indirect check, all units (except Kings) observed or attacked by it change color.

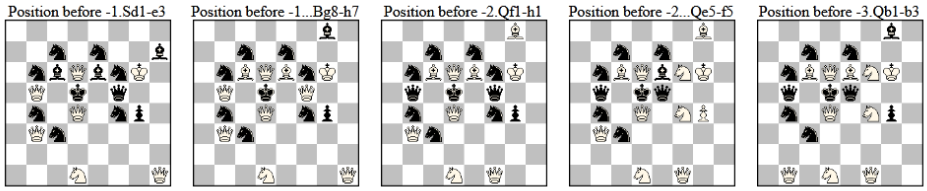


← Special Prize: 10 by Themis Argirakopoulos & Kostas Prentos
[8/2S1S2B/1SBQBSK1/1Q1k1Q2/1S1Q1SP1/1QS1S3/8/7Q]
Last move? (19+1) C?
Masand Generalized, AntiCirce
Retract: -1.Sd1-e3
[c3,b4,f4,g4,f5,b6,c6,e6,f6,c7,e7,h7=w]++++++++++++++++ Bg8-h7 [f5,c6,e6=b]++++ -2.Qf1-h1 [b5,f5=w] [g8=b]++ Qe5-f5 [e6=w][f4,g4,f6=b]+ -3.Qb1-b3 [g4,g8=w][e6=b]++

A tremendous construction task – more than an aesthetical problem, but this construction must be honoured!

The black King is in check by 16 pieces. Before the last move, a white piece occupied the rebirth square d1 of the Queens. The position of Qf5 is crucial, because depending on her color she can attack both Kings. If the last move were -1.Sd1-c3? (or -1.Qd1-b3?, or -1.Qd1-h1?), then the Qf5 would already be white.
With the color of the other 7 Knights and 3 Bishops being black, the check by the bSe7 would have just changed the color of the Qf5 from black to white, and just before that, the check by the wBe6 would have changed the color of the Qf5 from white to black, which would constitute an illegal self-check. Therefore, the last move was Sd1-e3 and the Qf5 was black before that, while the other 5 Queens were white. In the previous move, Black gave a quadruple check, from Se7, Sf4, Qf5, Bh7. The only way to achieve these checks was by playing Bg8-h7 from the rebirth square of the Knights and changing the color of Qf5, Bc6 and Be6 from white to black. One move earlier, the double check from the Bc6 and Be6 can be achieved only by retracting Qf1-h1, further changing the color of Qf5 from black to white, due to the check from the Be6. Taking back the previous move bQe5-f5 changed the color of both Sf4 and Sf6 from white to black. The double check from this color change can be released by bringing back the Qb3 to b1.
Cross checks (2+1+2+4+16) with intensive use of both fairy conditions.

The following diagrams follow the solution move by move for better visualization:



So the final award is:
1st Prize: 14,
2nd Prize 5,
3rd Prize 9,
Special Prize 10.
1st Honourable Mention 8,
2nd Honourable Mention 13.
Commendation 11.

Bornheim (Germany), June 2024 - **Thomas Brand, International Judge of the FIDE**