

FIDE OLYMPIC TOURNEY 2018: SELFMATES AWARD

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It was an honor and pleasure to judge the tourney organised on the occasion of the Chess Olympiad 2018 at Batumi. The tourney attracted 24 selfmates (5 s#2s, 5 s#3s and 14 s#-moremovers), composed by 21 authors from 10 countries.

In making the award I was guided by my usual judging criteria, which include originality of the contents; strategy, harmony, quantity and quality of the play, including aesthetic or solving-appealing elements (such as unexpectedness and beauty of a first move and of the further play, existence of different mates etc.); and the technical presentation of themes and/or ideas. In the selfmate genre I also pay attention to the existence or absence or genuine selfmate elements in the play.

I had to exclude a S#16 (composed by Milomir Babić) which combines AUW, Phenix and Valladao task, because of the cook 1.a8Q+ Ba2 2.f:g8Q!! with many sub-variations, which was found by Olaf Jenkner (the 127-pp. results of the computer testing is submitted to the author of the problem).

The quality of nearly 2/3 of the entries is on a low or average level, but this is partly compensated by the good quality of the problems which entered the award, notably those awarded a Prize.

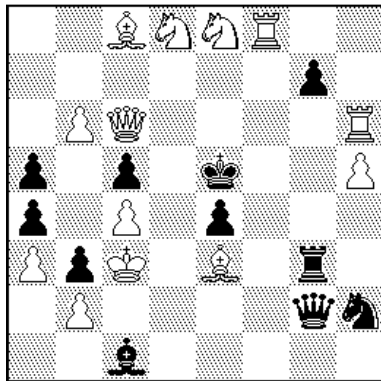


1st Prize - Andrey Selivanov. A “star” by the black bishop at B1 moves, White Allumwandlung (AUW) at W2 moves and five-fold BK play at different squares at B2 moves is a nice combination, which is regrettably achieved with multiple repetition of the mate 3...Be6#. The ostensibly crowded position is unpleasant at first sight, but all white aristocratic pieces are well-employed, except the underused out-of-play wSa7. The quality of the key is emphasized by two nice tries. 1.Be4? B:h4!; 1.Bg2? Rh1!; **1.Bf3!** (2.R:c6+ K:d7 3.Bg4+ Be6#), 1...B:f4 2.f8Q+! Ke5 3.Qe7+ Be6#, 1...B:h4(R:h4) 2.f8S+! Kf5 3.Qe6+ B:e6#, 1...B:f6 2.f8R+! Ke7 3.Qf7+ B:f7#, 1...B:h6 2.f8B+! K:f6 3.R:c6+ Be6#.

2nd Prize – Aleksandr Kuzovkov. A cycle of moves is combined with a cycle of formation of white batteries and a vivid battery play with utmost precision. Compare with the author’s #6 (A in the Appendix). **1.d6!** (2.Be4+(A) Kc4 3.Bd5+ Kd3 4.Rd4+(B) Kc3 5.Re4+ Kd3 6.Re3+ S:e3#, 1...g:f2 2.Rd4+(B) Kc3 3.Re4+ Kd3 4.Se5+(C) Kc3 5.Sg4+ Kd3 6.S:f2+ Sf2#, 1...B:c7 2.Se5+(C) Kc3 3.Sf7+ Kd3 4.Be4+(A) Kc4 5.Bc2+ Kd5 6.B:b3+ Q:b3#, [1...B:b6 2.S:b6 g:f2 3.d7 Bh3 4.d8Q+ Bd7 5.B:d7+ Ke3 6.Q:d2+ S:d2#]).

3rd Prize – Aleksandr Feoktistov. The author claimed that the problem shows the Theme of the Future. It has 3 + 2 variations with the following contents: I) play by the existing black battery (after removing the obstructing bPf4 from the fourth rank) in the threat and after 1...b:c4/e:f2; and II) play by the white R/B battery and by newly created black batteries after 1...Q:f5/Q:f6. The claimed change of functions of white and black moves is not very convincing because the „letter“-pattern is not clear-cut. A part of the content of this problem was earlier shown by the same author (see B in the Appendix). **1.Sc4!** (2.S:e3+! f:e3(a) 3.Rd2+!(A) e:d2 4.e4+(B) R:e4#, 1...b:c4 2.Rd2+!(A) e:d2 3.e4+(B) f:e3 e.p.(a) 4.b:c4+ R:c4#, 1...e:f2 2.e4+!(B) f:e3 e.p.(a) 3.Rd6+ Kc5(b) 4.Bd4+ R:d4#, 1...Q:f5 2.Rc5+!(C) K:c5(b) 3.Bb4+ Kd4 4.f:e3+ f:e3#(a), 1...Q:f6 2.Qd8+! Q:d8 3.R:c7+ Q:a8 4.Rc5+(C) K:c5#(b)).

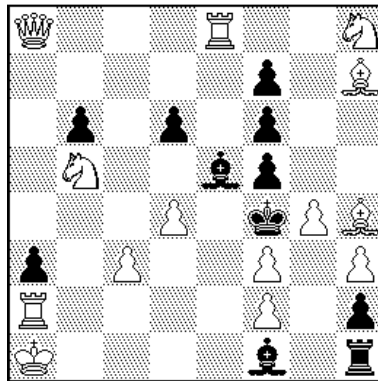
1st Honourable Mention
Sergey Borodavkin



S#4 *

13+11

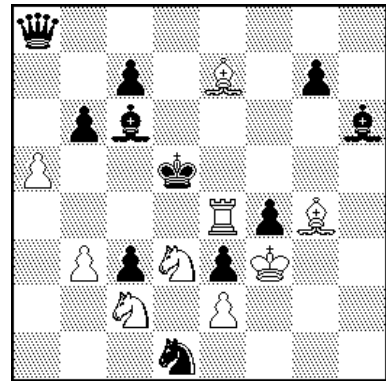
2nd Honourable Mention
Štefan Sovik



S#5

14+11

3rd Honourable Mention
Jozef Havran



S#3 ^v

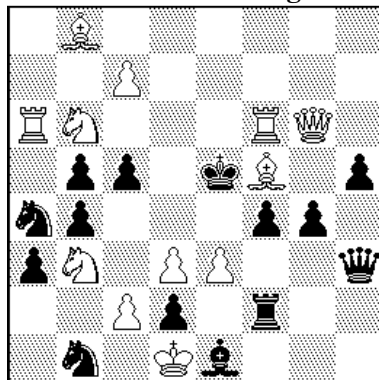
9+11

1st Honourable Mention – Sergey Borodavkin. A well-constructed rendering of the 10th WCCT theme with 4 different mates on the same square, but the repetition of the white 4th move is regrettable. 1...Qh3 2.Re6+ Q:e6 3.Q:c5+ Qd5 4.Qd4+ Q:d4#, 1...Rf3 2.Sf7+ R:f7 3.Qc7+ R:c7 4.Bd4+ c:d4#; **1.Sf6!** (2.Qe8+ Kd6 3.Qd7+ Ke5 4.Qd4+ c:d4#), 1...Sf3 2.Q:e4+ Kd6 3.B:c5+ K:c5 4.Qd4+ S:d4#, 1...B:e3 2.Q:c5+ Kf4 3.S:e4+ K:e4 4.Qd4+ B:d4#, 1...Qh3 2.Sd7+ Q:d7 3.Q:c5+ Qd5 4.Qd4+ Q:d4#.

2nd Honourable Mention – Štefan Sovik. A good battery play with exchange of white 2nd moves (which decoy the bPf7) and 3rd moves. The bPb6 is redundant and the key is made by an out-of-play wS. **1.Sc7!** (2.Sd5+ K:f3 3.Se3+ d5 4.Q:d5+ Kf4 5.Sg2+ B:g2#), 1...B:d4 2.Sg6+(A) f:g6 3.Se6+(B) Ke5 4.S:d4+ Kf4 5.Se2+ B:e2#, 1...f:g4 2.Se6+(B) f:e6 3.Sg6+(A) Kf5 4.S:e5+ Kf4 5.Sd3+ B:d3#, [1...Rg1 2.Sd5+ K:f3 3.Sb4+ d5 4.Q:d5+ Kf4 5.Sd3+ B:d3#].

3rd Honourable Mention – Jozef Havran. Le Grand theme and additional changed play after 1...Sf2 in a symmetrical matrix. 1.Rc4? (2.Sdb4+(A) Ke5+ 3.Re4+ B:e4#), 1...b:a5 2.Scb4+(B) a:b4 3.Rd4+ K:d4#, 1...Sf2 2.Rc5+ b:c5 3.Be6+ K:e6#, [1...Ba4(Bb5,Bd7,Be8) 2.Sdb4+ Ke5+ 3.Re4+ Q:e4#], 1...Q:a5!; **1.Re6!** (2.Scb4+(B) Kd4+ 3.Re4+ B:e4#), 1...b:a5 2.Sdb4+(A) a:b4 3.Re5+ K:e5#, 1...Sf2 2.Rd6+ c:d6 3.Be6+ K:e6#, 1...Q:a5 2.Sdb4+ Q:b4 3.Re5+ K:e5#, [1...Ba4(Bb5,Bd7,Be8) 2.Scb4+ Kd4+ 3.Re4+ Q:e4#].

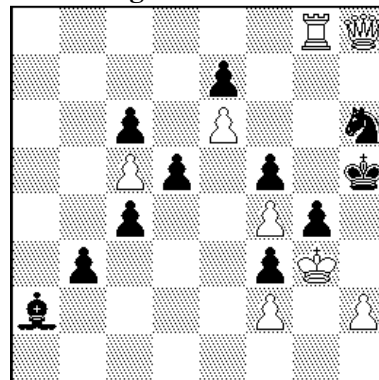
1st Commendation
Mark Erenburg



S#8

12+14

2nd Commendation
Eugene Fomichev



S#11

8+11

1st Commendation – Mark Erenburg. Popandopulo mechanism with use of white promoted pieces in the 2nd stage of the thematic play, starting from 6.Sb6+ in the threat and 5.Bce6+ after 1...S:b6. **1.Rf7!** (2.Qd6+! K:d6 3.c8S+ Kc6 4.S:a4+ Kd5 5.Sc3+ b:c3 6.Sb6+ Kc6 7.Sa4+ Kd5 8.S:c3+ S:c3#, 1...S:b6 2.c8B+ Kd5 3.Bfe6+ Kc6 4.B:g4+ Kd5 5.Bce6+ Kc6 6.Bf3+ R:f3 7.Bg4+ Kd5 8.B:f3+ Q:f3#).

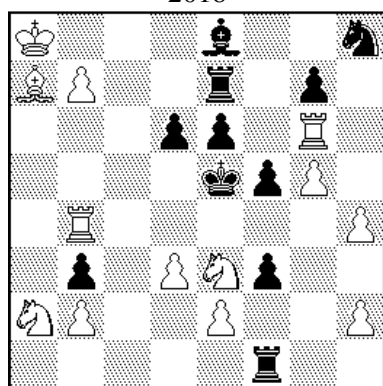
2nd Commendation – Eugene Fomichev. Attacking the square f5 by 1 or 2 white pieces (wQ, or wR+wQ) allows the wR to chase (with an aim to grab) the bB and then to preventively close the c2-f5 line. **1.Qh7!** (2.Q:f5+ S:f5#) Bb1 2.Rf8! (3.R:f5+ B:f5 4.Q:f5+ S:f5#) Ba2 3.Ra8! Bb1 4.Ra1! (5.R:B and 6.Q:f5+) Bd3! (4...Bc2? 5.Rc1 and s#10) 5.Rd1! Bc2! (5...Be4? 6.Re1 and s#9) 6.Rc1! Bd3! 7.Rc3! Be4(Bb1) 8.Re3! Bc2 9.Re5! Bd1 10.Re4! ~ (10...Bc2?) 11.Q:f5+ S:f5#.

After the publication of the preliminary award, several problemists submitted anticipation claims regarding the two best ranked entries: while Aleksandr Kuzovkov recently made a #6 with cyclic moves and cyclic battery creation (see **A** in the Appendix); Aleksandr Feoktistov used his s#3 with a black battery creation (see **B** in the Appendix) as a basis for supplementing the content. In both cases the authors added some value to their own ideas and renderings, but the re-making detracts from the overall impression. In the light of the above findings, it appeared necessary to consider whether to alter the award. The lower-placed entries were not serious candidates for being upgraded, unlike the problem of Andrey Selivanov, whose highly thematic play in the solution and the welcome tries by the key piece (in spite of the repeated mate) are sufficient in the newly emerged context to elevate it to the top position in this tourney. The problems for which anticipation claim have arrived are now downgraded to one position lower, that is to the 2nd Prize (Kuzovkov) and to the 3rd Prize (Feoktistov).

I express my gratitude to Mr Ferad Kakabadze for inviting me to judge the FIDE Olympic tourney 2018, to all authors for sending their problems for the tourney, as well as to Olaf Jenkner for the computer testing of the aforementioned s#16 by using his own programme “Gustav”, and to Hans Gruber for asking Mr Jenkner to test this problem. I congratulate the authors of the problems which entered the award and I express my hope that some problems from this tourney will enter the forthcoming FIDE Album 2016–2018.

APPENDIX

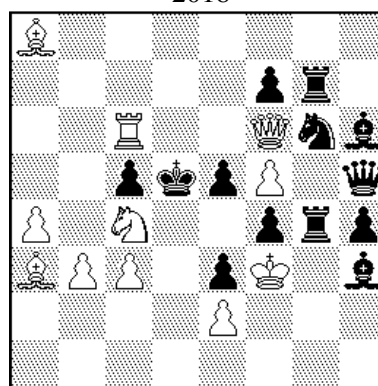
A) Aleksandr Kuzovkov **B) Aleksandr Feoktistov**
 2nd-3rd Pr. *Uralsky Problemist* – 25 JT 2nd Pr. *Uralsky Problemist* – 25 JT
 2018 2018



#6 13+11

1.Sc3! (2.Sc4+(A) Kf4 3.Sd2+
 3...Ke5 4.Bd4+(B) Kf4 5.Bf2+
 5...Ke5 6.S:f3#)
 1...R:b7 2.Bd4+(B) Kf4 3.Bb6+
 3...Ke5 4.d4+(C) Kf4 5.d5+
 5...Ke5 6.R:e6#
 1...Bc6 2.d4+(C) Kf4 3.d5+
 3...Ke5 4.Sc4+(A) Kf4 5.Sa5+
 5...Ke5 6.S:c6#

Cf. the 2nd Prize in the *Olympic tourney* 2018.



S#4 11+13

1.Bc1! (2.S:e3+! f:e3(a)
 3.R:c5+(A) K:c5 4.Ba3+ Rb4#)
 1...Q:f5 2.R:c5+(A) K:c5(b)
 3.Qe7+! S:e7 4.B:e3+ f:e3#(a)
 1...Qg5 2.Qd8+! Q:d8
 3.Rc7+! Q:a8 4.R:c5+(A) K:c5#(b)

Cf. the 3rd Prize in the *Olympic tourney* 2018.

Zoran Gavrilovski, International Judge of the FIDE for Chess Compositions
 In Skopje, 18 December 2018 (revised on 20 January 2019)