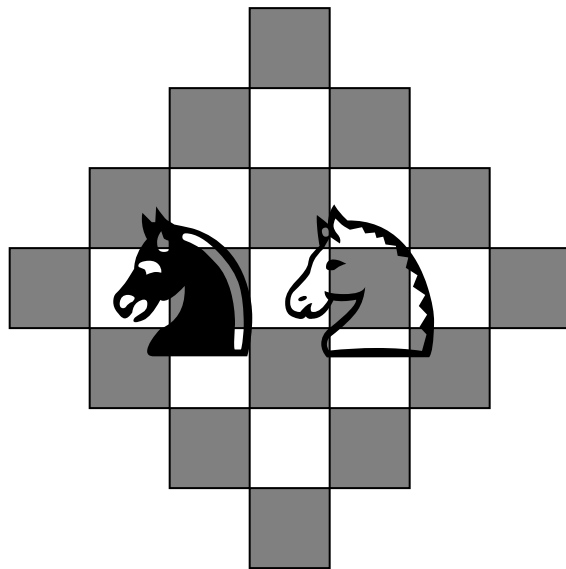


StrateGems



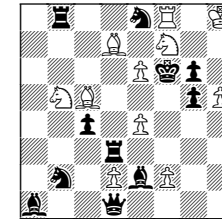
Outstanding Awards

January 2023

I reviewed thirty-one entries. The tourney was successful as the participants produced above-average compositions. Almost all the entries were of the logical type. I tried to be objective, despite my tastes and preferences. I have not carefully checked the entries for its predecessors, as well as the correctness of the solution. I will work these issues later, to the final results. The results are preliminary and the comments are wellcome. I thank all the composers for participating and I wish you all the best.

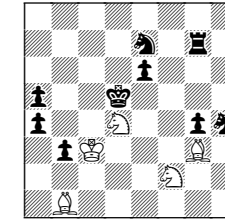
The award ranking is as follows:

1st-2nd Prize
Valery Kirillov,
Grigory Popov & Igor Yarmonov



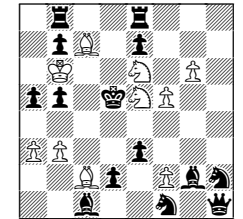
#12√ (11+11)

1st-2nd Prize
Olivier Schmitt
Dedicated to Mike Prcic



#33 (5+9)

3rd-4th Prize
Olivier Schmitt

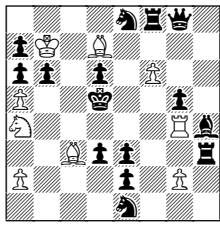


#20√ (10+14)

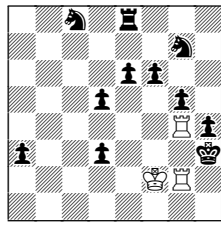
1st-2nd Prize - (Valery Kirillov, Grigory Popov & Igor Yarmonov - M1796) Strong, logical composition. The capture of the black Rook (on the second move) is compensated by the sacrifice of the white Knight on the key-move. Vibrant, original and beautiful. All white Pawns take an active part, which is important in a good composition. Two piquant model mates in the finale. I especially liked the beautiful mate by a Pawn. Congratulations! Solution: 1.Sfd6+? Ke5 2.f4+ gxf4 3.Rf5+ gxf5 4.Sf7+ Kxe4!; **1.Sd4!** Rxd4 2.Bxd4+ Ke7 3.Bc5+ Kf6 4.Be3 Qg1 5.Bd4+ Ke7 6.Bc5+ Kf6 7.Sd6+ Ke5 8.d4+! cxd3 9.f4+! gxf4 10.Rf5+! gxf5 11.Sf7+ Kxe4/Kf6 12.Bc6/e5#.

1st-2nd Prize - (Olivier Schmitt - M1814) The Main plan is to move the white Bishop to d3-square, Kf2 to b3-square and then: 1.Bc4+ Ke4 2.Sd2+ Ke3 3.Sc2#. White accomplishes this goal by maneuvering its pieces, always threatening a mate and capturing black Pawns on a5, a4 and b3. Solution: **1.Bc7!** Kc5 2.Sd3+ Kd5 3.Sf4+ Kc5 4.Sfxe6+ Kd5 5.Sf4+ Kc5 6.Sd3+ Kd5 7.Sf2 Kc5 8.Se4+ Kd5 9.Sf6+ Kc5 10.Sd7+ Kd5 11.Sb6+ Kc5 12.Sxa4+ Kd5 13.Sb6+ Kc5 14.Sd7+ Kd5 15.Sf6+ Kc5 16.Se4+ Kd5 17.Sd2 a4 18.Bd3! Kc5 19.Se4+ Kd5 20.Sf6+ Kc5 21.Sd7+ Kd5 22.Sb6+ Kc5 23.Sa4+ Kd5 24.Sb6+ Kc5 25.Sd7+ Kd5 26.Sf6+ Kc5 27.Se4+ Kd5 28.Sd2 Kc5 29.S2xb3+! Kd5 30.Bg3! (31.Bc4+ Ke4 32.Sd2+ Ke3 33.Sc2#) 30...Sf3 and now the Main plan: 31.Bc4+ Ke4 32.Sc5+ Ke3 33.Sc2# with the black Knight self-blocking f3-square.

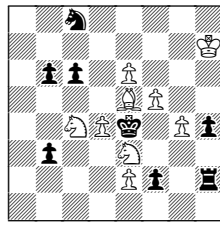
3rd-4th Prize - (Olivier Schmitt - M1798) The Main plan: 1.Sc4 Sg4 2.Sf4+ Kd4 3.Se2+ Kd5 4.fxe3 Sfxe3 5.Sc3+ Kd4 6.Be5+ Sxe5 7.Sxb5+ Kd5 8.Sxe3#, but 1...bxc4! The try: 1.Sf4+? Kd4 2.Se2+ Kd5 3.Sc3+ Kd4 4.Sxb5+ Kd5 5.Sc3+ Kd4 6.Se2+ Kd5 7.Sf4+ Kd4 8.Se6+ Kc3!, the black King escapes to c3-square, and after 9.Be5+ Kxc2! Thus, White must first protect its Bishop. Solution: **1.Sd3!** Ke4 2.Se1+! (the Bishop is now guarded) Kd5 3.Sf4+ Kd4 4.Se2+ Kd5 5.Sc3+ Kd4 6.Sxb5+ (the black Pawn is captured) Kd5 7.Sc3+ Kd4 8.Se2+ Kd5 9.Sf4+ Kd4 10.Se6+ Kd5 11.Sd3 Ke4 12.Se5+ Kd5 (we are back to the initial setting, but without black Pb5). And now the Main plan: 13.Sc4 Sg4 14.Sf4+ Kd4 15.Se2+ Kd5 16.fxe3 Sfxe3 17.Sc3+ Kd4 18.Be5+ Sxe5 19.Sb5+ Kd5 20.Sxe3#. A good, quiet, flight-giving key. The author is known for such multi-way constructions. This logical composition with rich content is a good manifestation of his style.

3rd-4th Prize
Olivier Schmitt

#23√ (9+15)

Special Prize
Baldur Kozdon

#9 (3+11)

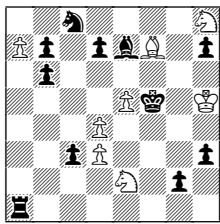
1st Honorable Mention
Olivier Schmitt

#11√. (9+8)

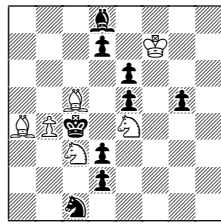
3rd-4th Prize - (Olivier Schmitt - M1768) The Main plan: 1.Kxa7? Sc2 2.Sxb6+ Kc5 3.Sa4+ Kd5 4.a3 из-за 4... e1Q/Be1!. Therefore, White plans to capture Bh4 and also Pe2. **1.Rd4!** Ke5 2.Rb4+ Kd5 3.Bd4 Ke4 4.Bb2+ Kd5 5.Rd4+ Ke5 6.Rxh4+ (Bishop is captured) 6...Kd5 7.Sc3+ Ke5 8.Sxe2+ (The Pawn is captured) 8...Kd5 9.Sc3+ Ke5 10.Sa4+ Kd5 11.Rd4+ Ke5 12.Rb4+ Kd5 13.Bd4 Ke4 14.Bc3+ Kd5 15.Rd4+ Ke5 16.Rg4+ Kd5 and now the Main plan: 17.Kxa7 Sc2 18.Sxb6+ Kc5 19.Sa4+ Kd5 20.a3 ~ 21.Sb6+ Kc5 22.Bb4+ Sxb4 23.axb4#. A powerful composition implementing a very complex idea.

Special Prize - (Baldur Kozdon - M1765) If immediately 1.Rh2+? Kxh2, then after 2.Rxh4+ follows 2...gxh4! Therefore, White must first make preparations. **1.Rg1!** Sf5 2.Kf3 Sd4+ 3.Rxd4 Kh2 4.Rg2+ Kh3 5.Kf2 g4 6.Rgxc4 Rh8 7.Rg2 Rg8 is now 8.Rh2+ Kxh2 9.Rxh4#. Laconic, clearly and beautiful!

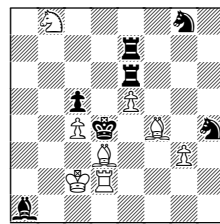
1st Honorable Mention - (Olivier Schmitt - M1767) 1.e7? f1Q!; 1.Sf1? c5!; **1.Sd1!** Kd5 2.Sce3+! (2.Sxb6+? Sxb6!) 2...Ke4 3.Sf1 Kd5 4.Sde3+! (4.e7? Kc4!) 4...Ke4 5.e7 Sxe7 6.Sd1 Kd5 7.Sfe3+ Ke4 8.Sc4 Kd5 9.Sxb6+ Ke4 10.Sc3+ Ke3 11.Sc4#. It is interesting how the Knights interact with each other to achieve the goal. Model mate.

2nd Honorable Mention
Olivier Schmitt

#14 (8+11)

3rd Honorable Mention
Olivier Schmitt

#11 (6+9)

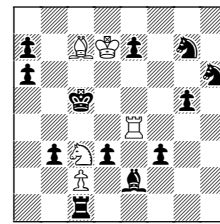
4th Honorable Mention
Alexandr Pankratyev

#5 (8+7)

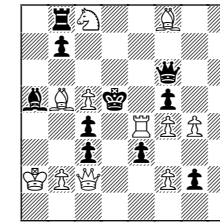
2nd Honorable Mention - (Olivier Schmitt - M1813) **1.Be8!** Ke6 2.Sf4+ Kf5 3.Sd5 Ke6 4.a8Q Rxa8 5.Sf4+ Kf5 6.Sxh3 Ke6 7.Sf4+ Kf5 8.Sxg2 Ke6 9.Sf4+ Kf5 10.Se2 Ke6 11.Bf7+ Kf5 12.Sg6 hxg6+ 13.Bxg6+ Ke6 14.Sf4#. Similar maneuvers as in the previous composition ending with a model mate.

3rd Honorable Mention - (Olivier Schmitt - M1811) **1.Sd1!** Kd5 2.Sec3+ Kc4 3.Bxd7 Kb3 4.Ba4+ Kc4 5.Se4 Kd5 6.Sef2 e4 7.Sg4 e3 8.Sdxe3+ Ke4 9.Bc6+ Kf4 10.Bd6+ e5 11.Bxe5#. A logical composition with a typical play for such multi-way constructions, which ends with model mate.

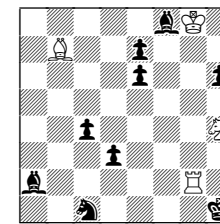
4th Honorable Mention - (Alexandr Pankratyev - M1778) **1.Re2!** (2.Re4#) Sf6 2.Be3+ Kxe5 3.Bf4+ Kd4 4.Be5+ Rxe5 5.Sc6#. The key forces the black Knight to self-block on f6. Then, the white Pawn is sacrificed following the white Rook sacrifice on the same square.

5th Honorable Mention
Olivier Schmitt

#11 (5+12)

Sp. Honorable Mention
Leonid Lyubashevsky,
Leonid Makaronez
& Victor Volchek

#4 (11+10)

Commendation
Baldur Kozdon

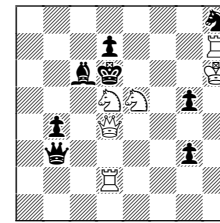
#11 (4+9)

5th Honorable Mention - (Olivier Schmitt - M1812) **1.Bb8!** Kb6 2.Rb4+ Kc5 3.Ra4 Kb7 4.Bc7+ Kc5 5.Bg3 Rf1 6.Bb8 Kb6 7.Rb4+ Kc5 8.Re4 Kb6 9.Bc7+ Kc5 10.cxb3 Rb1/d2 11.Rc4/b4#; 5...Sg4 6.Rxg4 Sf5 7.Bf2+ Sd5 8.Rxd4 Rf1 9.Be3 Kb6 10.Rb5+ Ka5 11.Ra4#. Routine pendulum moves but not much originality.

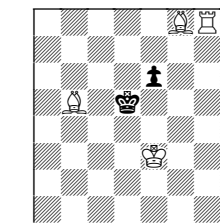
Sp. Honorable Mention - (Leonid Lyubashevsky, Leonid Makaronez & Victor Volchek - M1794) **1.bxc3!** (2.Rd4+ Qxd4 3.Qxf5+ Qe5 4.Qxe5#), 1...Qxc3 2.Re5+ Kd4 3.fxe3+ Qxe3 4.Qxc4#, 1...Bxc3 2.Sb6+ Qxb6 3.Re5+ Bxe5/Kd4 4.Qxc4/fxe3#, 1...Bc7 2.Bxc4+ Kc6 3.Bb5+ Kd5/Kxb5 4.c4/Qa4#, 1...fxe4 2.Qd1+ Qd4 3.Qxd4+ Ke6 4.Bxc4#. Strategic composition with two captures of the key-move Pawn.

Commendations are not rated.

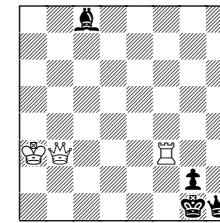
Commendation - (Baldur Kozdon - M1810) **1.Rg6+!** Kh2 2.Sf3+ Kh3 3.Sg1+ Kh4 4.Bf3 Se2 5.Rg4+ Kh5 6.Sh3 e5 7.Kh7 Sg1 8.Sxg1 e4 9.Rf4+ exf3 10.Sxf3 ~ 11.Rh4#. Unfortunately, an often used-up scheme and, as a result, a trivial solution.

Commendation
Leonid Makaronez
& Rauf Aliovsadzade

#4* (6+8)

1st Prize for the miniature
Rauf Aliovsadzade

#4√. (4+2)

2nd Prize for miniature
Baldur Kozdon

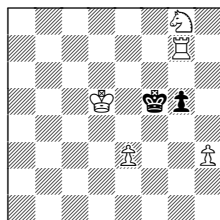
#10 (3+4)

Commendation - (Leonid Makaronez & Rauf Aliovsadzade - M1763) 1...B~ 2.Sc4+ Qxc4 3.Qf6[A]+ Kc5 4.Qb6[B]#, 1...Qa2 2.Qxb4+ Ke6 3.Re7+ Kf5 4.Qg4#, 2...Kxe5 3.Re7+ Kf5 4.Qe4#; **1.Rf7!** Bxd5 2.Qb6 [B]+ Kxe5 3.Qf6 [A]+ Ke4 4.Qd4#, 1...Qxd5 2.Sc4+ Kc7 3.Qb6+ Kc8 4.Rf8#. The white Rook is sacrificed on the key-move. In variations, the black Queen and Bishop capture the same white Knight after which the black King is chased to the mating square.

1st Prize for the miniature - (Rauf Aliovsadzade - M1775) Both tries fail: 1.Rg6? Ke5! and 1.Be7? e5!. **1.Bb4!** Ke5 2.Be7! Kd5 3.Rc8 e5/Kc5 4.Bc4/Re5#, 1...e5 2.Rg6! e4 3.Kf4 Kd4 4.Rd6#. In the solution, everything changes to the exact opposite! In the first variation, 1...Ke5, which was the refutation to 1.Rg6, White plays 2.Be7, which was the second try. Similarly, in the second variation, 1...e5, which was the refutation to 1.Be7, White now plays 2.Rg6, which was the first try. Original and wholesome! Interesting super-miniature, white aristocrat. Congratulations!

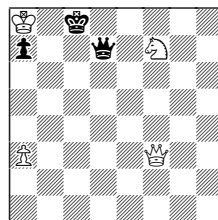
2nd Prize for miniature - (Baldur Kozdon - M1795) A logical composition. The try: 1.Qe3+ Kh2 3.Rh3+ fails to Bxa3. Therefore, the Bishop must be removed from c8-h3 diagonal. **1.Qe3+!** Kh2 2.Qe5+ Kg1 3.Qe1+ Kh2 4.Qg3+ Kg1 5.Re3! Ba6 (losing control over the h3-square) 6.Re1+ Bf1 7.Qe3+ Kh2 8.Qf2 Kh3 9.Re4 g1Q 10.Rh4#. White forcing-moves in such miniatures are natural. It is surprising that there are no captures on either side. Good miniature!

1st H.M. for miniature
Anatoly Steepochkin



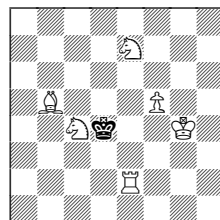
#5* (4+2)

2nd H.M. for a miniature
Richard Becker



#10* (4+3)

Sp. H.M. for a miniature
Andrzej Szypulski
& Bogusz Piliczewski



#4 (6+1)

1st Honorable Mention for miniature - (Anatoly Steepochkin - M1764) 1...g4 2.hxg4#, **1.Se7+!** Kf6 2.Rh7 g4 3.h4 g3 4.e4 g2 5.e5#. Two Ideal-mates by two different pawns, in a miniature!

2nd Honorable Mention for a miniature - (Richard Becker - M1766) Try: 1.Qc3+? Qc7 2.Qh3+ Qd7 3.Qf3 Qb5!; **1.a4!** a6 (1...Qc7 2.Qg4+ Qd7 3.Qc4+ Qc7 4.Qe6+ Qd7 5.Qa6+) 2.Qc3+ (2.a5? Qb5!) 2...Qc7 3.Qh3+ Qd7 4.Qf3! zz a5 5.Qc3+ Qc7 6.Qh3+ Qd7 7.Qh8+ Kc7 8.Qb8+ Kc6 9.Qb5+ Kc7 10.Qb7#. Technically, well-composed logical problem, but lacking artistry.

Special Honorable Mention - (Andrzej Szypulski & Bogusz Piliczewski - M1805) **1.Rb2!** Ke4 2.Sc6 Kd5 3.Re2 Kc5 4.Re5#; 2...Kd3 3.Sb6+ 3.Kc3/Ke3 4.Sa4#/Re2#, 1...Kd3 2.Rd2+ 2.Kc3 3.Sd5+ Kb3 4.Rb2#, 1...Kc3/Kc5 2.Sc6 etc. Good key-move providing an additional square for the black King, with the white Rook switchback and two model echo-mate! The technical Pawn on f5 detracts.

We thank Ferhat for being the judge. The award is open for 3 months. Please send comments to Mike Prcic.