

BMJC-80

Award by Wieland Bruch (Frankfurt/Oder)

Entrants: 1-5 M. Cioflâncă; 6-7 P.Einat; 8 E.Fomichev; 9 J.Kapros; 10-11 M. Kovačević; 12 J-M.Loustau; 13 J-M.Loustau & M.Caillaud; 14 K.Mlynka; 15 K.Mlynka & Z.Labai; 16-17 K.Moen; 18-21 C.Ouellet; 22 P.Pitton; 23 H.Reddmann; 24-29 J.Rotenberg; 30 D.Shire; 31 D.Wirajaya.

I was very pleased to accept the invitation to judge this special tourney. On the one hand I can thereby, I hope, provide some small pleasure to the four esteemed octogenarians, and I take this opportunity to send the BMJC-quartet all good wishes for the future. There was also the fact that the thematic aspects of the Nowotny, with its many facets, have held a particular interest for me since my days as a beginner, and indeed, from the composing angle, have never completely deserted me in the intervening 40 years.

I did, of course, have certain doubts about whether in 2018 a theme tourney with the classical Nowotny as its focus might not have come a bit too late. Consequently I feared that I would receive only a very few really original problems for assessment. A quick perusal of the 31 entries (sent to me without composers' names) suggested that my worries were not entirely misplaced. In addition to a few non-thematic items (nos. 3, 4, 6 and 30 contained no Nowotny at all!) there were quite a few entries that were anticipated to a greater or lesser degree, some of them acknowledged as reworkings of earlier examples ("after ..."). In not one of these cases could I discern a significant advance.

[HA = Albrecht data-base by Udo Degener, accessible via <http://www.schach-udo.de/albrecht/albrecht2/>.]

No.25 – cf. HA-26.077 by K.Fabel, HA-7.629 by A.Sarkis and HA-26.005 M.Pawlov

No.26 – a better setting is HA-6.409 by J.Rice, and cf. also e.g. HA-8.352 by V.Lukjanov, HA-52.257 by A.Grinblatt & J.Retter, and HA-124.606 by Wong Kong Weng

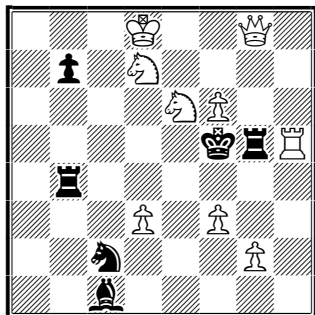
No.27 must likewise be measured against HA-6.409 by J.Rice

No.28 is just a version of HA-52.482 by D.Gussopulo

No.29 cf. HA-124.601 by V.Stoica or HA-99.936 by E.Bourd

Among the remaining 22 problems I did find a few interesting concepts with ambitious content, yet in some cases the desirable technically clean presentation was missing. But at least the two prizewinners, in my view, prevent our tourney from being a total failure. I regard the following six entries as worthy of a place in the award.

1. Prize No. 12 Jean-Marc Loustau



#2

(9+6)

1.d4? (2.g4# - A) 1...Se3 2.Rxg5# - B, 1...Rxd4!

1.f4? (2.Rxg5# - B) (2.g4? - A) 1...Rxb5 2.g4# - A, 1...Kg4 2.Qxg5# - C, 1...Bxf4!

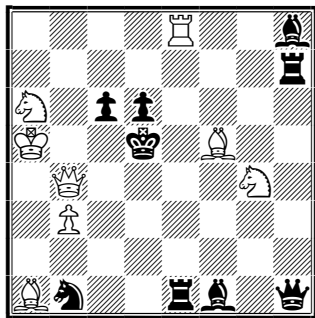
[1.Ke7? (2.Qh7#) 1...Rxb5!]

1.Sf4!! (2.Qxg5# C - 2.g4? - A, 2.Rxg5? - B, 2.Qh7?) 1...Bxf4/Rxf4 2.g4/Rxg5# - A/B, 1...Rxb5

2.Qg4#

The combination of a *complete TTC* (tertiary threat correction) with *cyclic pseudo-le Grand* is for me the outstanding concept of this tourney. It's true that the refutation of the try 1.d4? is extremely mundane, but in spite of that the logic of the thought-sequence is not without its charm. The bR successfully repulses the threat introduced by closure of its line (2.g4), and in analogous fashion the bB does the same with regard to the threat on its line (2.Rxg5), in each case through capture of the piece that effects the closure. In the solution a *refined Nowotny* with flight-gift allows captures by the two thematic black pieces, but now with return of both the previous threats, thanks to selfblocks with dual avoidance. This rich content is rounded off by one changed mate and two transferences. The light construction compensates to some degree for the crude refutation.

2. Prize No. 10 Marjan Kovačević



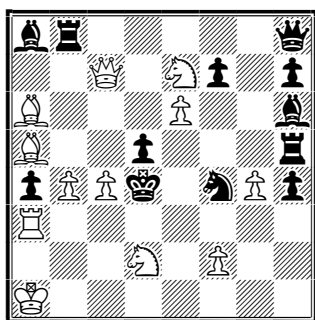
#2

(8+9)

1.Se5? (2.Qd4/Be6#) 1...Rxe5/Bxe5 2.Qd4/Be6#, 1...Sc3! (2.Be6?)
 1.Re2? (2.Be6/Qc4/Se3#) 1...Rxe2/Bxe2 2.Qc4/Se3#, 1...Bc3 2.Be6# (2.Se3?), 1...c5!
1.Bg7! (2.Qd4/Sf6/Sc7#) 1...Rxc7/Bxc7 2.Sf6/Sc7#, 1...Re7 2.Qd4#, 1...c5 2.Qb7#

The cutting-point on e5 is the first thing one notices, because of its proximity to the bK. But Nowotny-tries with the wR or wB are too weak, as both pieces have guard-duty as well: 1.Re5+? Rxe5 2.Qd4, but 1...Bxe5! (2.Be6?); 1.Be5? Bxe5 2.Be6, but 1...Rxe5! (2.Qd4?). An improvement is 1.Se5!?, with the double threat 2.Be6/Qd4, but Black's response is the subtle *theme A* defence 1...Sc3! (2.Be6?). Now White has a choice between the two Nowotnys further away from the bK on e2 and g7, with the wR or wB moving over the first cutting-point and thereby shortening the line of one of the two thematic black units of the first Nowotny. In both cases, as well as the completely new double threat, one of the two threats of the first Nowotny additionally comes into play. This extra threat, however, disappears automatically after the Nowotny-captures (1.Rc2? >2.Se3/Qc4 and 2.Be6; 1.Bg7! >2.Sf6/Sc7 and 2.Qd4). The triple threats thus created allow in each case a Fleck-style differentiation, with the third thematic threat (alongside the prominent Nowotny-captures) becoming effective as a *theme-A interference* on the line of the other Nowotny! These echoed links between the thematic pieces and their lines of operation give this expansively conceived problem both an original touch and an aesthetic charm.

1. Hon. Mention No. 11 Marjan Kovačević



#2

(12+12)

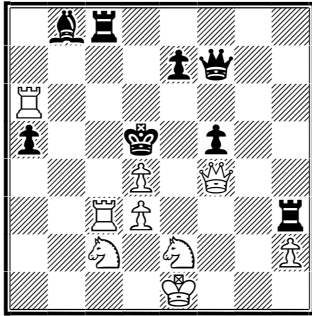
1.Re3? (2.Qc5,Sf3# - A,B) 1...d:c4 - a 2.Q:c4#, 1...Sd3!

1.g5? (2.Sf5,Q:f4#) 1...d:c4 - a 2.Qc5# - A, 1...Qf6!

1.Bb7! (2.Sc6,Bb6#) 1...d:c4 - a 2.Sf3# - B, 1...R:b7/B:b7 2.Sc6/Bb6#

In the first try 1...dxc4 defends against the double threat 2.Qc5/Sf3 with double black line-opening in the style of a Finnish Nowotny. This same black move also operates in the two following Nowotny-phases as a total defence, although each time it can open only one of the two lines a8–h1 and h5–a5. The mates that follow are precisely the two separated threats of the first phase (twofold *Dombrovskis paradox*), giving rise to a *three-phase change of mate*. In the light of this complex play with three cutting-points the heavy force can hardly be criticised. Somewhat regrettable, however, is the fact that both the wBs are needed only for the post-key play.

2. Hon. Mention No. 9 Jorge Kapros



#2

(9+8)

1...Rc7/Bxf4/Bc7/Rxc3 2.Qe5/Sxf4/Rc5/Sxc3#

1.Qxb8? (2.Qe5,Sf4# - A,B) 1...Qe6!

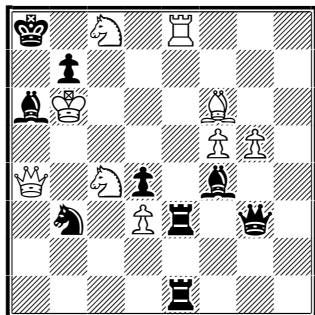
1.Qc7? (2.Sf4,Rc5# - B,C) 1...Rxc7/Bxc7 2.Sf4/Rc5#, 1...Rxd3!

1.Rxc8? (2.Rc5,Sc3# - C,D) 1...Bd6!

1.Rc7! (2.Sc3,Qe5# - D,A) 1...Bxc7/Rxc7 2.Sc3/Qe5#, 1...Qe6/Re3 2.Rxa5/Sxe3#

In most Nowotny problems the capture of one of the two thematic black pieces (if it's possible) would be a weakness, and correspondingly easy to refute, because by its very nature only one threat would be involved. But here these alternative captures of bR or bB are an integral part of the concept because, in an original fashion, they give rise to double threats which, together with the pairs of Nowotny threats, bring about a *cycle of double threats*.

3. Hon. Mention No. 13 Jean-Marc Loustau and Michel Caillaud



#2 (9+9)
 b) sKd5; c) sKf7

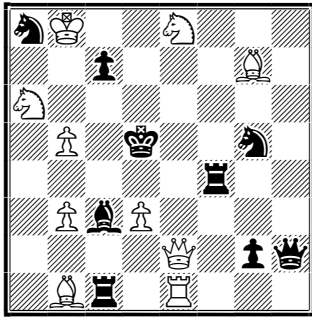
a) 1.Se5? 1...Rc1!
1.Be5! (2.Se7,Sd6, Sa7#) 1...Rxe5/Bxe5 2.Se7/Sd6#

b) 1.Be5? 1...Rxd3!
1.Re5+! 1...Rxe5/Bxe5 2.Qd7/Se7#

c) 1.Be5? 1...Rxe5!
1.Se5+! 1...Rxe5/Lxe5 2.Sd6/Qd7#

A *Rice-cycle* with *three Nowotnys on one square* is certainly a notable achievement, even if this kind of tripling takes something of the paradox out of the theme and the thematic defences by their very nature have only a differentiating function. The two checking keys do not appear to be absolutely necessary and in this scheme are probably the result of an unfortunate quirk of fate.

Commend No. 16 Kabe Moen



#2 (10+9)

Zeroposition: a) Rc1-g3 b) Re1-d1 c) Bg7-f8

a) 1.d4! (2.Qe5,Qc4#) 1...R:d4/B:d4 2.Qe5/Qc4#

b) 1.d4! (2.Qe5,Qc4#) 1...R:d4/B:d4 2.Qc4/Qe5#

c) 1.d4! (2.Qe5,Qc4#) 1...R:d4/B:d4 2.Sf6/Sb4#

The same key and the same defences three times over – not something that’s usually desirable... But here this gives rise to *three distinct types of Nowotny*: first the standard form, then a *paradoxical Nowotny* with reciprocal change of the mates, and finally a *Romanian Nowotny* with the captures as total defences. The result is a *3x2 Zagoruiko*. This interesting experiment has been made possible only through drastic alterations of the position, making the unpopular zero-position an unavoidable necessity.

My congratulations to all the successful composers! I should also like to thank the tourney controller *Michael McDowell* for the enjoyable collaboration, and in particular *John Rice* for his valued translation-service!

Wieland Bruch
Frankfurt (Oder), 24th September 2018