WFCC-70 JT Section H

Award by Andriy Frolkin – Kyiv, Ukraine (28-Jul-2026)

First of all, I am most thankful to Narayan Shankar Ram for the concept of this WFCC-70JT Section and for organizing it in a highly efficient way. Classical-style retrograde analysis (CS-RA) is, in a certain sense, a stand-alone genre of chess composition. Unlike in other genres, its primary focus is on the past of diagram positions (retroplay) rather than on their future (forward play leading to the desired outcome). The strictest form of CS-RA encompasses problems requiring the so-called release of a position, i.e. the discovery of the *inevitable* key events that led to its emergence and/or the *unique* last N moves. Such problems may have forward-play stipulations like "#1 (who?)" or "h#2," etc., which in some cases affect the retro part of the solution. The solver of such problems has to deduce what *must* have happened in the previous play. A less strict form of CS retros is about what *may* have happened in the game, e.g. whether or not White or Black missed a chance to mate in 1 move or to capture en passant. CS retros with the lowest degree of strictness cut off a large share of possible past events by asking what must/may have happened *if* (provided that…, under the condition that…).

Historically, RA came to incorporate three major categories: CS retros, PGs and fairy retros. To me, the special attraction of CS retros lies in that **a problem of this type is like a detective story involving deductive reasoning**. PGs are **help-play problems in which deductive reasoning usually plays a supplementary role**. And as to fairy retros… A retro based on OTB chess rules is like a whodunit in which the protagonist (a human detective) is to figure out who committed a murder (or some other crime) using a standard "tool" like a gun, knife, or skeleton key. By contrast, if a fairy retro does involve deduction, it is often perceived as a story about an alien detective (sometimes not even resembling a human in any way) revealing the perpetrator of a crime which is impossible here on Earth and in which some "science fiction tools" were used. More than that – unfortunately, **quite a few fairy problems of this sort are retros in name alone**.

CS retros have been declining since the turn of the century. In the 1986-1988 FIDE Album, they accounted for 65.6% of Section H (21 out of 32); in the 1992-1994 Album, for 60.5% (23/38); then: 1998-2000: 49.2% (30/61); 2001-2003: 32.2% (28/87); (…) 2016-2018: 29.5% (33/112); 2019-2021: 16.9% (13/77).

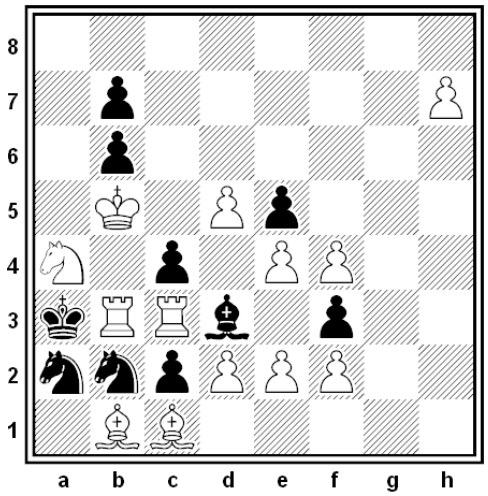
In February 1969, less than 6 months before Woodstock, the Doors declared, "Rock Is Dead!" Nevertheless, as we know, rock is still alive today, in 2026. Let us hope that classical-style retrograde analysis will still linger on for a few decades to come.

Now to the award. The overall level of the prize-winning problems is quite high, which is really encouraging. After a rather long consideration, I decided to include all the received entries in the award. After all, retros in the category "for all" can also attract newcomers and prompt them to compose much more difficult problems.

I extend my sincere gratitude to all the participants for supporting CS RA.

The distribution of the entries in the award is as follows.

H10 – 1st Prize (1st place)



13+10 Last 33 single moves?

When approaching such problems, the first thing the solver should do (after noting that the last move was -1.Rb4×Xb3+) is count the sides' balances. Black balance: 10 (pieces on the board) + 5 (b×c×d, c2×d3×e4, g×f) + 1 (Rb4×b3+) = 16. White balance: 13 + 2 (a7×b6, d×c) + 1 (h×g>g1) = 16. The black g- and h-pawns must have promoted on g1 to be included in the balance. The retrocage on the squares a2, a3, b1, b2, b3, b4, b5, b6, b7, c1, c2, c3, c4, d2, d3, e2, e4 will be unlocked in the retroplay after White's unpromotion on a8, followed by the retractions a6-a7 and a7×b6. Black has only 4 pawn tempos at his disposal (d5×c4, d6-d5, e6-e5, e7-e6) and White has 6 (d4-d5, h7>h2). The cage involves three pin-lines in which pinned pieces can be replaced with unchecking pieces of the other side.

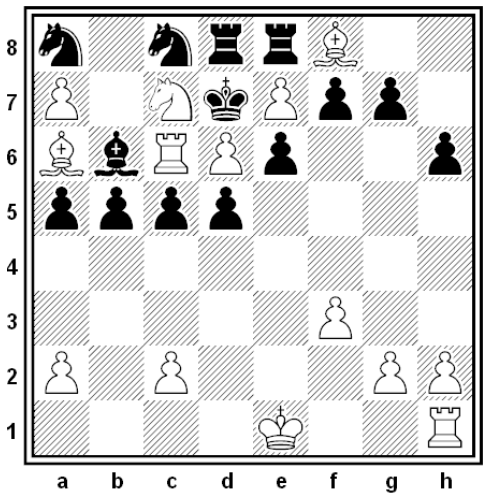
There are several tries in which one or more tempos are lacking. It might look reasonable to begin with an attempt to unpromote wSa4: -1…e6-e5? -2.Sc5-a4 e7-e6 -3.d4-d5 d5×Qc4 -4.Se6-c5 d6-d5 -5.Sc7-e6 ?? and Black has already run out of tempos. Trying to unpromote on a8 a wS uncaptured on c4 also leads to retrostalemate. In this line of retroplay, Black misses one pawn tempo only: -1.Rb4×Q/Rb3+ Sd1-b2 -2.Sb2-a4+ -Se3-d1 -3.d4-d5 d5×Sc4 -4.Sd6-c4+ Sc4-e3+ -5.Se8-d6 e6-e5 -6.Sc7-e8 e7-e6 -7.Sa8-c7 d6-d5 -8.a7-a8=S ?? (-3…d5×Q/Rc4? -4.Q/Rc8-c4 Sc4-e3+ -5.Q/Ra8-c8?? – illegal check).

The remaining option is to uncapture a white piece on g2 and then unpromote it. How about entrusting bSb2 with the uncapturing mission? Retract: -1...Sd1-b2 -2.Sb2-a4+ Se3-d1 -3.h6-h7 Sf5-e3 -4.h5-h6 Sh6-f5 -5.h4-h5 Sf7-h6 -6.h3-h4 Sg5-f7 -7.h2-h3 Sh3-g5 -8.d4-d5 Sg1-h3 -9.?? – White is short of two tempos. What about uncapturing a bS on b3 and then sending it to g1? Retract: -1.Rb4×Sb3+ e6-e5 -2.Sc5-a4 Sa5-b3 -3.Sb3-c5+ Sc6-a5 -4.h6-h7 Se5-c6 -5.h5-h6 Sf7-e5 -6.h4-h5 Sg5-f7 -7.h2-h4 Sh3-g5 -8.d4-d5 Sg1-h3 -9.?? – again White misses two tempos; or -7.d4-d5 Sh3-g5 -8.??

There is, however, a trick in store: by converting all three available pins into batteries, the right conditions allowing the uncaptured bSb3 to reach g1 are created: **-1.Rb4×Sb3+ e7-e5!** Paradoxically, instead of saving tempos, Black wastes one. It should be noted that here White had the opportunity to capture en passant before the last move (a side theme once actively pursued by Alexander Kislyak). **-2.d4-d5 d5×Sc4!** Time for 3 cross-unchecks: **-3.Sa5-c4+ Sc4-b2+ -4.Sb2-a4+**. Now another battery is created: **-4...Sc5-b3 -5.Sb3-a5+**. At this point, the non-occupied e6-

square is used: **-5...Se6-c5!** Now the bS goes to g1 for unpromotion while White uses his pawn tempos. **-6.h6-h7 Sg5-e6 -7.h5-h6 Sh3-g5 -8.h4-h5 Sg1-h3 -9.h3-h4 g2-g1=S -10.h2-h3 h3×Sg2**. Now the active and passive roles of the sides are interchanged. The wS heads for the unpromotion square while Black resorts to tempoplay. **-11.Se3-g2 d6-d5 -12.Sd5-e3 h4-h3 -13.Sc7-d5 h5-h4 -14.Sa8-c7 h6-h5 -15.a7-a8=S h7-h6 -16.a6-a7 a7×Qb6 -17.Ka5-b5** (-17…Se3/e5-c4+) and the cage is released. An excellent retro with an impressive mix of classical retro elements: a long dual-free sequence of retromoves, the restoration of three batteries, two CF knights, retroecho (-3...Sc4-b2+ -4.Sb2-a4+ and -4...Sc5-b3 5.Sb3-a5+), three cross-unchecks, phases of transformation, a missed e.p. capture opportunity, and last but not least, an abundance of tries. A real gem!

H07 – 2nd Prize (2nd place)



14+14 Proca retractor -6 & #1

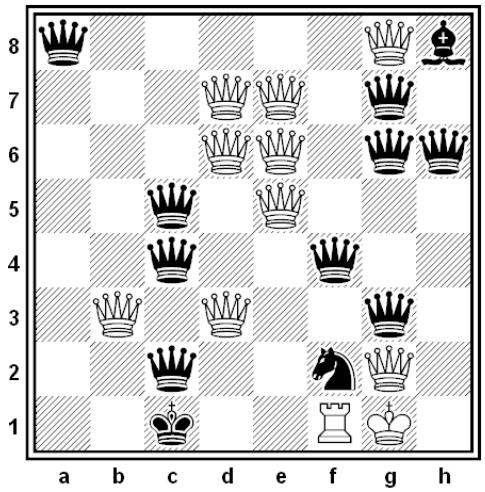
Black balance: 14 + 1 (b×a) = 15. White can uncapture a bQ or bB (light-squared) at a convenient moment. White balance: 14 + 2 (d7×e6, e6×d5) = 16.

Main plan: -1.Bb7-a6? h7-h6 -2.Sa6-c7 & 1.Sb8#, but -1...a6-a5! (-2.Kd2-e1 h7-h6 -3.Ke3-d2 Ba5-b6 -4.Rb6-c6 B~ -5.Kf4-e3 B~-6.Ke5-f4 & 1.Bc6#, but -5…B~-c3! -6.Ke5-f4?! – the wK is in check and so White cannot deliver the intended mate!

Solution: **-1.Kd1-e1! h7-h6 -2.Kc1×Bd1! Be2-d1 -3.Rd1-h1! B~-e2-4.0-0-0!! B~ -5.Bb7-a6!** (the main plan!) **B~** (-5...a6-a5? -6.?? – retrostalemate for White) **-6.Sa6-c7** & **1.Sb8#**.

In this brilliant logical retractor, White's position of "visual kingside castling" turns, quite astonishingly, into a position of retracted queenside castling; as a result, White has no more "waiting" retractions and thus Black is deprived of his defence on account of White's retrostalemate.

H12 – 3rd Prize (3rd place)



11+12 Minimum number of queen moves?

"Minimum number of moves" of a certain piece or of a type of pieces as a restrictive condition affecting retroplay was sort of popular a few decades ago. In particular, "minimum number of queen moves" was repeatedly used by Plaksin and Zolotarev (see PDB P0006504, P0006643, P0009093) as a means of achieving 4 CF pieces in a non-PG retro. The concept underlying **H12** is entirely different. There are 9 white and 9 black queens on the board, which of course means that all 16 pawns promoted to Qs. When solving this problem, one should first of all retract the obvious last move – castling: -1.0-0-0+. Other moves by the wK and wR in earlier play are thus ruled out. As a consequence, no black promoted queens emerged on d1, e1, f1, h1.

The capture of a pawn can lead to 3 promotions. But here, no pawns were captured. A pawn × officer capture results in 2 promoted pieces. In the general case, the minimum number of captures required for 16 pawns to promote is 8. In this problem, 9 pieces are missing. And this is the actual minimum here, in view of the limited set of promotion squares available for Black. The black d-pawn made 1 capture to promote on c1; bPe made 2 captures to promote on c1 or g1; bPf and bPh each made 1 capture to promote on g1. This accounts for all 5 captures by bPs. The black a-, b- and g-pawns promoted on their home files.

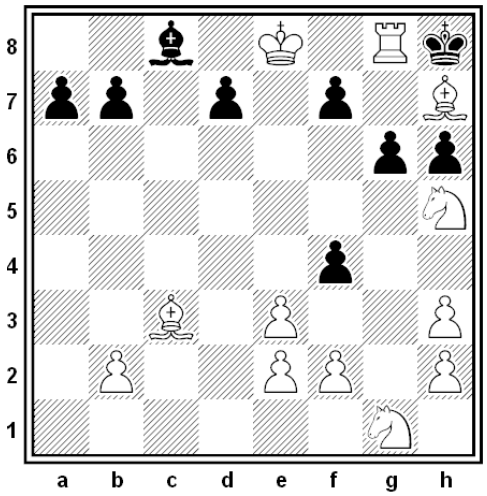
The four wPs that must have made 1 capture to promote originate from the a-, b-, c- and g-files. There are no bQs on any possible promotion squares or on the home square of the original bQ. Is it possible for each bQ to have made just 1 move? There is only 1 pattern meeting this requirement:

Qg7>a1
Qc2>b1 (Black's last move maintaining the minimum moves pattern could only have been Qb1-c2)
Qc4>c1
Qf4>c1
Qh6>c1
Qa8>d8
Qc5>g1
Qg3>g1
Qg6>g1

If the wQ on g8 made 0 moves, the total number of captures would be at least 10. So, the next question is whether each wQ could have made just 1 move without disturbing the above pattern of bQ moves.

The answer is “yes.”
Qg2>a8
Qb3>b8/d1
Qe5>b8 (in view of bQa1-g7, wQe5>h8 is ruled out)
Qd6>f8
Qe7>f8
Qd3>d1/d8
Qd7>d8
Qe6>e8
Qg8>h8
Black is under severe time pressure – his “tempostalemate” must be avoided.
Retract: **-1.0-0+ Qb1-c2 -2.Qd8-d7 b2-b1=Q -3.d7-d8=Q Qd8-a8 -4.Qb8-b3 b3-b2 -5.Qa8-g2 b4-b3 6.a7-a8=Q b5-b4 7.a6-a7 b6-b5** (not b7-b5? in view of the need for a6xb7-b8-Q) – the last 14 single moves are strictly determined. Next e.g. -8.b5×Ra6 Ra3-a6 -9.Qf8-e7 Rc3-a3 -10.f7-f8=Q Kb2-c1 -11.Qd1-d3 Qc1-f4 -12.f6-f7 c2-c1=Q -13.Qf8-d6 d3xSc2, etc. The 16 queens could have played a total of just 16 moves. A fascinating non-standard “heavyweight” problem with a severe restriction on retroplay.

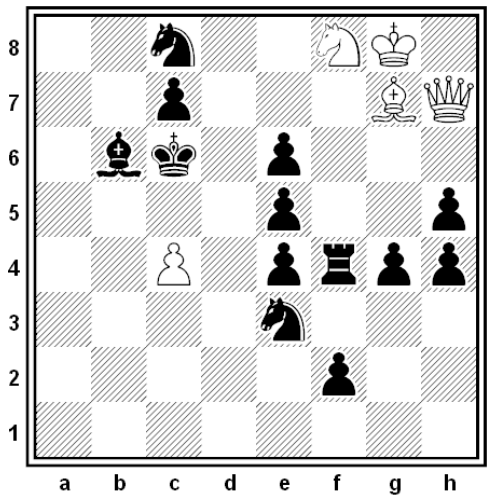
H04 – 4th Prize (4th place)



12+9 Last 10 single moves?

The small retrocage arising after the retraction of the last move **-1.Rg7-g8++**, which necessitates the cross-capture h7xg6, g7xh6 and the unpromotion of the white light-squared bishop, is known from PDB P1080545 and P0008285, but there is practically no similarity in the retro content. Black balance: 9 + 4 (c×d×e×f×g>g8=B) + 2 (d2×e3, g2×h3) + 1 (Ra8) = 16. White balance: 12 + 3 (e×f, h7×g6, g7×h6) + 1 (wPa was captured on its home file) – 16. Retract further: **-1…f5-f4!** [-1...e5×Qf4? -2.Bg8-h7 h7×Bg6 -3.Bb1-g6 e5-e6 -4.Qb8-f4 e7-e6?? (-5.Qd6xRb8) – with the bP on e7, the wK’s position is illegal] **-2.Bg8-h7!** [-2.Bd2-c3? e6×Bf5 -3.Bc1-d2 e7-e6?? (-4.d2×e3?); -2.Be5-c3? e6×Bf5 -3.Bb8-e5 e7-e6?? (-4.Be5×Rb8?) – again the wK’s position is illegal.] **-2…h7×Rg6** [-2…h7×Qg6? -3.Qd6-g6 e6×Bf5 -4.Qb8-d6 ?? [-5.Qd6×Rb8); -3…f6-f5 -4.Rg2-g7 Kg7-h8 5.Sg3-h5++ – impossible to uncapture the white light-squared B] **-3.Rf6-g6!!** (screening) **e6×Bf5 -4.Rg2-g7 Kg7-h8 -5.Sg3-h5++ Kh8-g7!** (switchback). Interesting retroplay with a lot of tries; screening; white Phoenix bishop.

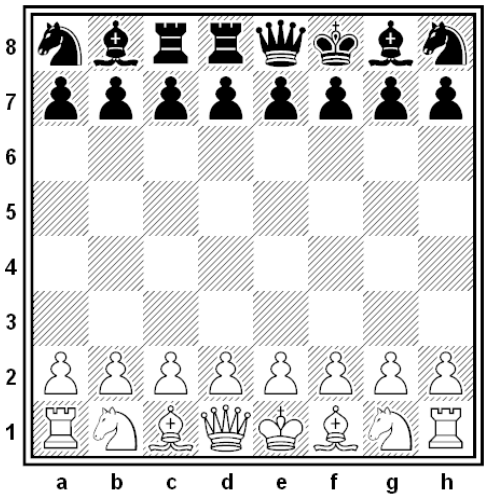
H02 – 5th Prize (5th place)



5+13 Proca retractor -19 & #1

All the 11 missing white pieces were captured by black pawns. Solution: **-1.Qf5×Bh7! Bg6-h7+** (1st occurrence) **-2.Kf7-g8 Bh7-g6+-3.Kg8-f7 Bg6-h7+** (2nd occurrence) **-4.Kf7-g8 Bh7-g6+-5.Kg6-h7 Bg8-h7+-6.Kh7-g6 Bf7-g8+-7.Kg8-h7 Be8-f7+** (forced) **-8.Kf7-g8 Bd7-e8+-9.e7×Qf8=S Qh8-f8+! -10.Qg5-f5 Sf5-e3+** (or f5×~g4+) (1st occurrence) **-11.Kg8-f7 Qh6-h8+-12.Kh7-g8 Qf6-h6+-13.Kg6-h7 Qf8-f6+-14.Kf7-g6 Qh8-f8+!** (2nd occurrence) **-15.Kg8-f7 Qh6-h8+-16.Kh7-g8 Qf6-h6+-17.Kg6-h7 Qf8-f6+-18.Kf7-g6 Qd8-f8+** (forced) **-19.Bf8-g7** & **1.e×d8=S#**. Two long draw pendulums – the first anticlockwise (7 moves, the wK waltzing with the uncaptured bB), the second clockwise (9 moves, the wK waltzing with the uncaptured bQ). The stunning (apparently original) feature of the first draw pendulum is that White reaches the position before the 2nd occurrence and before the avoidable 3rd occurrence in two different ways: “short” and “long.”

H09 – Special Prize (6th place)



16+16 #colour

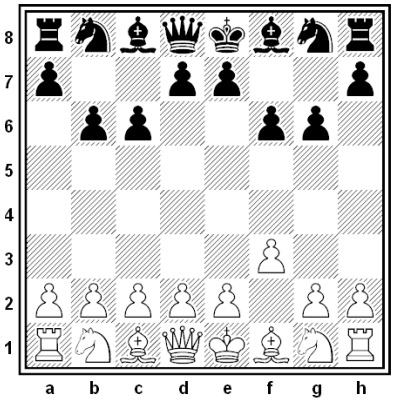
Resolve the position!
a) Minimum number of mates?
b) With the minimum number of mates: which pieces changed colour?
c) With the minimum number of mates: in which order did the white pawns become black again?

The condition “#colour” (or “#C”) requires the change of colour of the piece(s) delivering mate unless this results in self-check. In the latter case, the game ends on account of “true mate”; other mates are called “provisional” and the game continues after the change of colour.

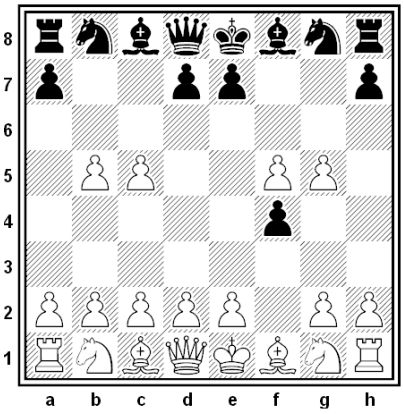
In view of the position of the black bishops, at least 4 black pawns must have changed colour to white and back to black. It is clear that the last mate to the bK was given by wPg7. Originally, this pawn was black, but it changed colour after mating the wK. Such mate could not be delivered with the wK on the 1st rank; so the white monarch must have “gone out” and at least 1 wP made a move and then returned to its home square after changing colour. The most recent mates were delivered (in any order) by bPf2 (with the support of a bS) and by wPg7 (with the support of a wS).

General outline of genesis of the diagram position:

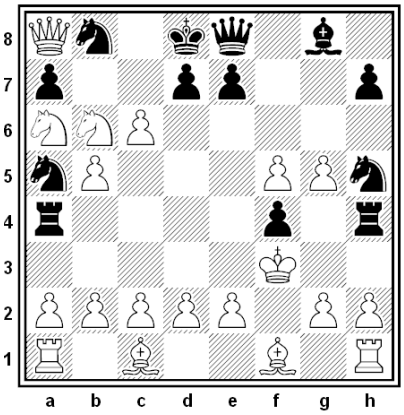
1) White plays his f-pawn and Black plays his b-, c-, f- and g-pawns:



2) These 5 pawns deliver mate and change colour:

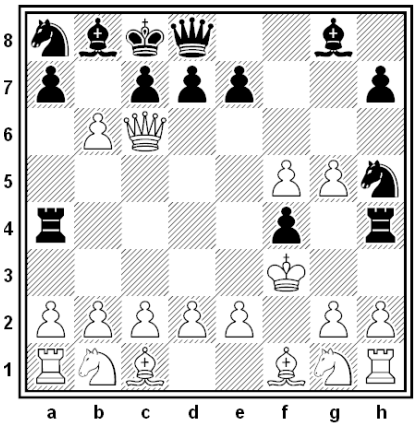


3) Then the white c-pawn delivers a pin-mate and becomes black again, e.g.:



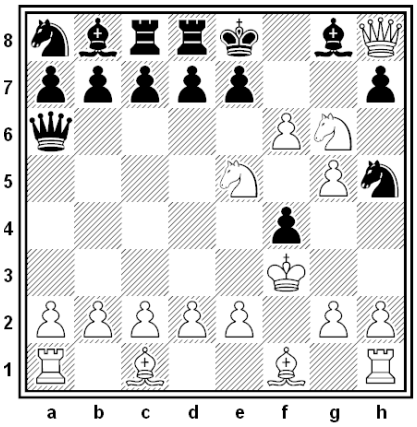
Before c6-c7# [c7=bP]

4) After that, the white b-pawn mates, e.g.:



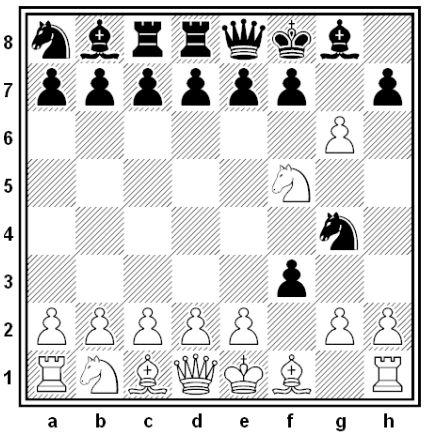
Before b6-b7# [b7=bP]

5) Next, the white f-pawn delivers a pin-mate, e.g.:



Before f6-f7# [f7=bP]

6) Finally, the last two pawns mate, e.g.:



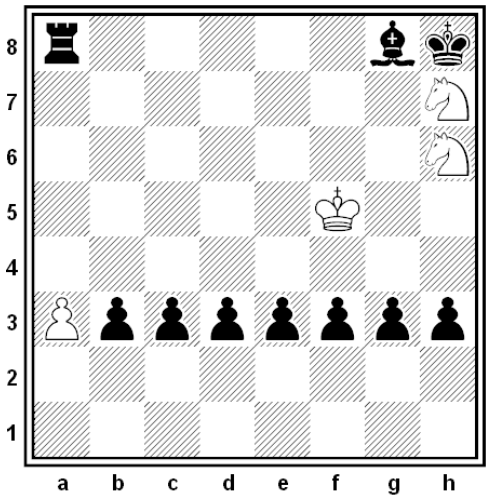
Before g6-g7# [g7=bP] & f3-f2# [f2=wP] (or vice versa)

In the retroplay of position 6), the bK cannot get to c8 or d8 for mate as long as bPf7 and bBg8 remain on the squares they currently occupy. Therefore, the last but one mate to the bK could only have been f6-f7# [f7=bP]. Considering the bBs b8 and g8, mates from c7 and f7 could only be pin-mates. Due to these facts, the order in which the 4 extra white pawns change back to black is fixed.

Solution:
a) The minimum is 10 mates = 10 colour changes.
b) The white f-pawn and the black b-, c-, f- and g-pawns.
c) The order was: c-pawn; b-pawn; f-pawn; g-pawn.

A remarkable deductive fairy W homebase retro with two pin-mates in the history of the position.

H11 – 1st Honourable Mention (7th place)

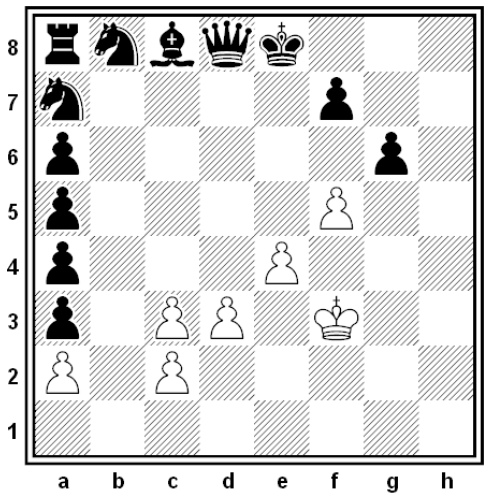


4+10 Proca retractor -9 & #1

-1.Kf6-f5! a4xb3 e.p. -2.b2-b4 b4xc3 e.p. -3.c2-c4 c4xd3 e.p. -4.d2-d4 d4xe3 e.p. -5.e2-e4 e4xf3 e.p. -6.f2-f4 f4xg3 e.p. 7.g2-g4 g4xh3 e.p. -8.h2-h4 ~ -9.Sf8xRh7 & 1.Sf8-g6# (-8.... Bf7-g8 -9.Sg5xPh7 & 1.Sg5xf7#.

Black uses 7 e.p. captures in a row (a record for a Proca retractor!) to delay the implementation of White's threat. In addition to the main line of the solution, there are a few side variations and tries.

H03 – 2nd Honourable Mention (8th place)



7+12 Last 8 single moves including an Allumwandlung?

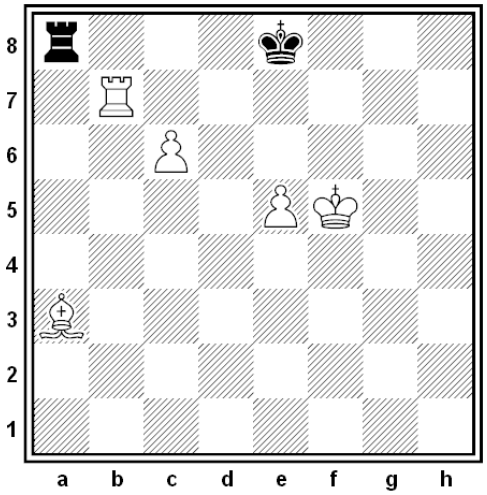
The stipulation means that an Allumwandlung must have occurred in the past 8 single moves. Accordingly, half of these retromoves must have been unpromotions.

Retract: **-1.b2×Sc3 Sd1×Bc3 -2.Bh8-c3 d2-d1=S =3.g7×Rh8=B Rh1×Qh8 -4.h7-h8=Q+ h2-h1=R**. In the position after these 8 retractions, the sides' balances are closed. The black pawns

captured all 7 missing white pieces and the wPs g7 and h7 made a cross-capture, accounting for the 2 missing black units. The try -1.b2×Qc3 Qe1×Bc3 -2.Bh8-c3 e2-e1=Q -3.g7×Rh8=B Rh1×Sh8 -4.h7-h8=S h2-h1=R fails on account of overbalance, as 1 extra capture by Black is required.

A curious helpplay + balance counting “exercise”; however, the 5 black “deadwood” officers detract from the overall impression.

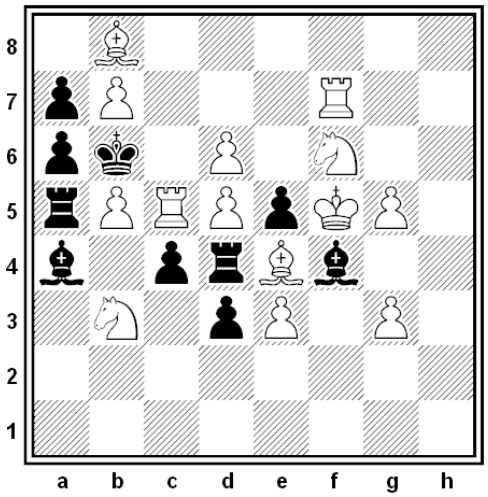
H13 – 3rd Honourable Mention (9th place)



5+2 #4 (A.P.)

A retro miniature. If White is to move, Black lost the right to castle because his king or rook must have just moved. **1.Ke6! Rc8 2.c7! Rd8 3.Rb8! Rc8 4.R×c8#, 3...R×b8 4.c×b8Q/R#.** Referring to the A.P. right to move convention, Black claims that he retains the right to castle and hence it is his turn to move. **0...0-0-0?! 1.Bd6! Rf8+ 2.Ke4 Rf4+ 3.K×f4! Kd8 4.Rb8#.** Two attractive lines of play with 3 non-checking white moves in each. The author is focused on harmonizing the two lines through equal length, while in the past most problems of this type had only 1 white move in the AP variant. The most successful example of such concept is PDB P1333624, which, in spite of the use of the non-orthodox AP principle, was sensationally selected as an orthodox #2 to FIDE Album 2013-2015 (see **Appendix**, **A**) – apparently, due to the harmony of the two parts of the solution.

H15 – 4th Honourable Mention (10th place)

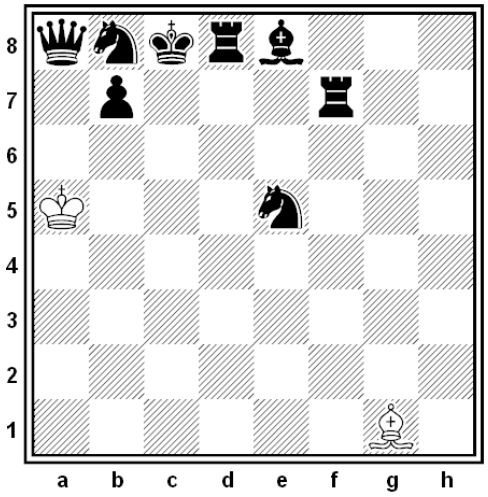


14+10 #2?

Black's last move: **e7-e5**.
1.d×e6 e.p. ! ~ 2.Sd7/Bc7#
1...Rxd6 2.Bc7#, 1...Bxd6 2.Sd7# – Latvian Novotny!
1...R×e4/Rd5 2.S(×)d5#, 1... a×b5 2.Rc6#

An appealing idea, albeit with minimal retro content: Novotny interference is created by an en passant key!
1.Rfc7? ~ 2.Sd7#; 1... a×b5 2.R5c6#; 1... B×b5!

H14 – 1st Commendation (11th place)

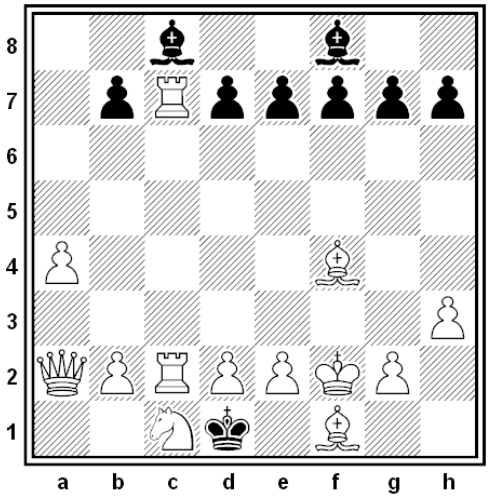


2+8 Retractor -1 & h#2 3 solutions

-1...Sa6×Qb8+ & 1.Kd7 Bc5 2.Rc8 Qd6# (MM)
-1...Sa6×Rb8+ (preceded by a7/c7xb8=R+) **& 1.Kc7 R×d8 2.Bc6 Bb6# (MM)**
-1...Sa6×Sb8+ & 1.Rc7 Sd7 2.Qb8 Sb6#

Meredith with model mates and Baltic theme (solutions 2 & 3).

H06 – 2nd Commendation (12th place)



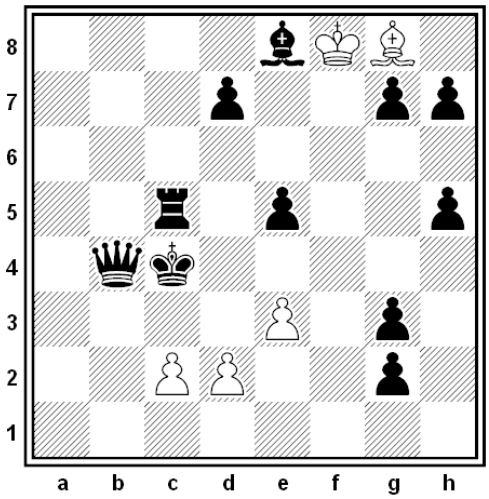
13+9 Retractor -1 & #1

Solution: **-1.Rc6-c2! & 1.Qb3#**.

Black balance: 9 + 3 (f×e×d×c) + 1 (c7xb8/d8=B) + 1 (c7xb8=R) + 1 (bPa was captured on its home file) + 1 (bRh8) = 16. Alternatively, wPc×b×Pa>a8=R – the black balance is closed anyway. White balance: 13 + 2 (Bc1, Rh1) =15. Retract: **-1.Rc6-c2! Kc2×Sd1 -2.Sc3-d1+ Kd1-c2 -3.Se4-c3+ Kc2-d1 -4.Sc5-e4+! Kd1/b1-c2**. Disregarding various repetitions, this is the only line of retroplay to release the black king. -1.Rc5-c2? Kc2×Sd1 -2.Sc3-d1+ Kd1-c2-3.Se4-c3+ Kc2-d1-4.Sc3-e4+ – retroperpetual.

A certain improvement over a previous problem (see **Appendix**, **B**) due to the try -1.Sb3-(×)c1 & 1.Rxc1# and the dualistic try -1.Qb1-(×)a2 & 1.S~#.

H08 – 3rd Commendation (13th place)

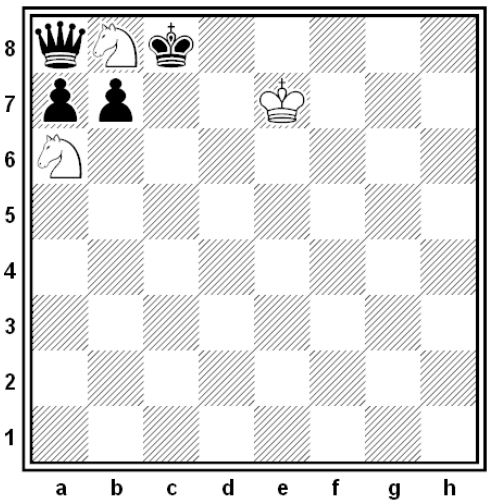


5+11 Retractor -1 & h#1.5

The bPs captured all 11 missing white pieces. Last move? -1.Kf7-f8+? – illegal check from bBe8. So it must have been a wP promotion to bishop. -1.f7×Q/Rg8=B+? – this must have been preceded by -1…Q/Rh8×g8+ – an illegal 12th capture by Black. -1.f7×Bg8=B+? – this implies bPa×b>b1=B – again an illegal 12th capture. Solution: **-1.f7×Sg8=B & 1...f7×e8=S 2.d5 Sd6#**.

Capture of bS and promotion to wB is replaced with capture of bB and promotion to wS – a nice interchange effect.

H05 – 4th Commendation (14th place)

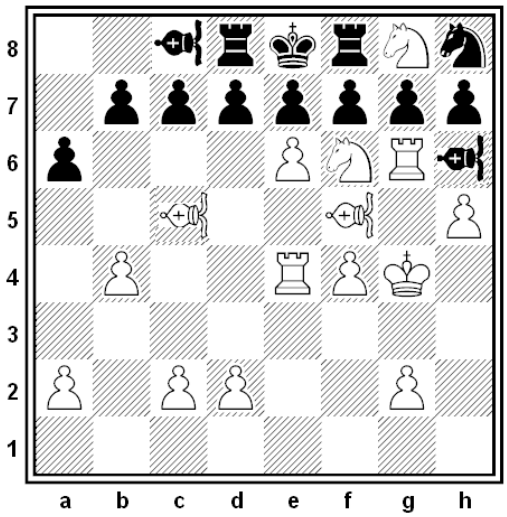


3+4 Proca retractor -2 & #1

Another retro miniature. **-1.c7×Sb8=S Sd7-b8 -2.c6-c7** & **1.c6×d7#**.

The piece uncaptured on b8 is then captured for forward-play mate. The author called this “Cat and Mouse theme” – could be dedicated to Tom & Jerry. 😊

H01 – 5th Commendation (15th place)

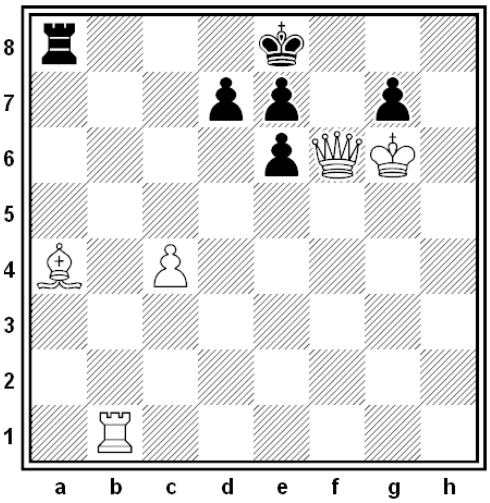


15+14 Last 2 single moves? Shatranj

An almost elementary retro featuring Shatranj. Retract: **-1.Sd5-f6+** (-1.Sd5×Sf6? – illegal check) **a7-a6**. The black Fers was captured on its home square (regardless of whether it was d8 or e8). Switchback by Alfil c8 (in view of the need to let bRa8 get to d8). The white Fers and the missing bS could have been captured "almost anywhere." Most certainly, Shatranj retros with much deeper content can be composed.

Appendix

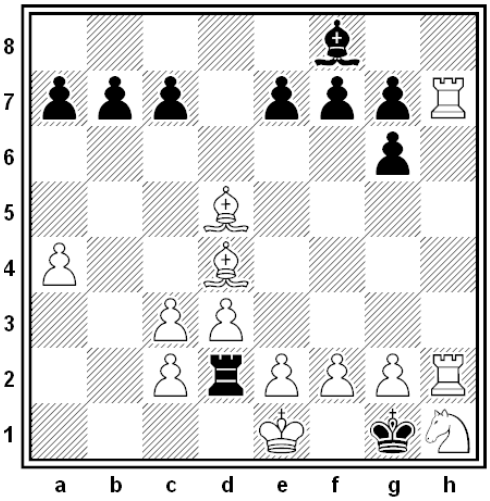
A Anatoliy Vasylenko
SuperProblem (website) 2015 (PDB P1333624)
Special Honourable Mention
FIDE Album 2013-2015, A3



5+6 #2 (A.P.)

If White has the move, Black must have just made a move with his K or R (f7×e6?? – illegal check) and therefore lost the right to castle. 1.Q×e6! ~ 2.Qg8#; 1…Ra6/Kf8/Kd8 2.Rb8#/Qf7#/Qd7#. Black claims that he can still castle and hence it is his turn to move. 0…0-0-0?! 1.Q×e7! ~ 2.Qc5#; 1…d6/R~ 2.Qb7#/Qd7#. Black's castling is a way to legalize *a posteriori* his right to first move. If the legalizing castling is not played, the entire variant is considered null and void. 0…e/g×f6?? 1.Rb8+ R×b8 (or 1.B×d7+ K×d7) and Black can no longer castle. This point regarding P1333624 is not clarified in PDB.

B Jeff Coakley
Puzzling Side of Chess 2023



13+10 -1 & #1
Black balance: 10 + 6 (b2×c3, h×g×f×e+d×c8/e8=B) = 16.
White balance: 13 + 1 (h7×g6) + 1 (Bf1) = 15.
? & 1.f3/f4#. Which of the mates works? Retract: -1. Rh6-h2! and 1.f4#. Further retroplay: 1… Kh2×Sg1-2.Sh3-g1+ Kg1-h2-3.Sf4-h3+ Kh2-g1-4.Sh5-f4+! Kg1-h2.