Champagne Award 2014 Bern

Section A

13 entries by 11 composers in this section. 1 problem was cooked.

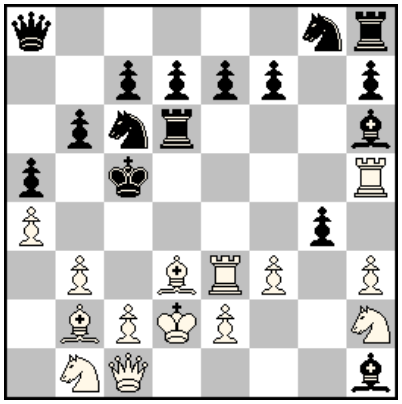
I accepted a loose definition of cross-check : n+1 consecutive checks = n cross-checks.
This allows checks with capture, but of course more elegant are cross-checks without capture.

Under the large definition, the record to my knowledge is 7 cross-checks, given as Annex, difficult to improve in short time competiton.

The authors were left to work either on quantity (looking for “local records”) or on quality (homogeneity, originality,...). Of course, the personal tastes of the judge are essential in the final ranking.

1° Prize

Kostas PRENTOS



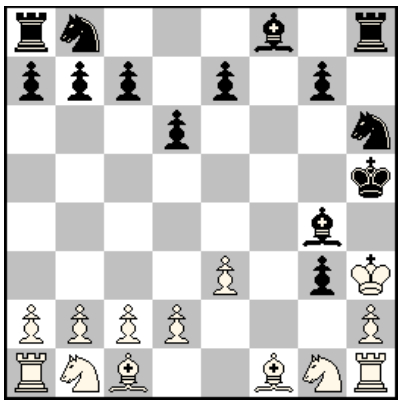
SPG 18,5 (14+16) C+

1.a4 a5 2.♖a3 ♖a6 3.♖ç3 ♖d6 4.b3 b6 5.♗b2 ♗b7 6.♕ç1 ♗×g2 7.♘f3 ♘ç6 8.♖g1 ♗h1 9.♖g5 ♕a8 10.♖h5 g5 11.♗h3 ♗h6 12.♗f5 ♔f8 13.h3 ♔g7 14.♘h2 ♔f6 15.f3 ♔é5 16.d4+ ♔×d4 17.♔d2 g4+ 18.♖é3+ ♔ç5+ 19.♗d3+

« Only » 4 thematical checks but of the same nature : they are all battery checks without capture, the most sophisticated nature of thematical moves. Very « professional » realization.

2° Prize

Per OLIN



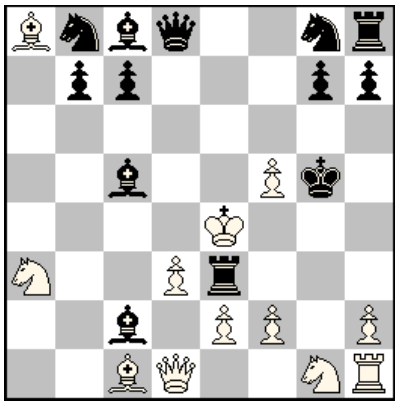
SPG 11,0 (13+14) C+

1.é3 d6 2.♕h5 ♕d7 3.♕×h7 ♘h6 4.♕é4 f5 5.f3 ♔f7 6.♔f2 ♔g6 7.♔g3 ♔h5 8.♔h3 f4+ 9.g4+ f×g3 e.p.+ 10.♕g4+ ♕×g4+ 11.f×g4+ ♗×g4+

Great intensity (number of cross-checks / total number of moves = 6/22). « Local record » of 7 checks with homogeneous play around square g4.

3° Prize

Joaquim CRUSATS



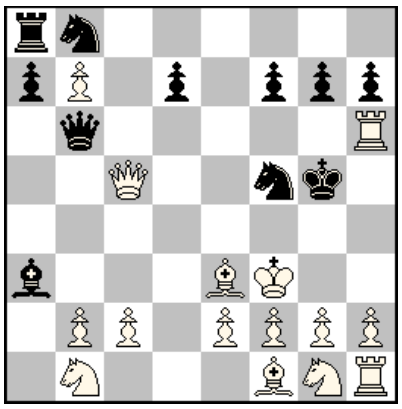
SPG 17,0 (12+13) C+

1.g4 a5 2.♗h3 a4 3.♔f1 a3 4.♔g2 a×b2 5.♔f3 ♖a3+ 6.♔é4 ♖×h3 7.a4 é6 8.a5 ♔é7 9.a6 ♔f6 10.a7 ♔g5 11.♖a5+ d5+ 12.♖×d5+ f5+ 13.♖×f5+ é×f5+ 14.g×f5 ♗ç5 15.♘a3 b1=♗ 16.a8=♗ ♗×ç2+ 17.d3+ ♖é3+

The composer succeeds in equalizing the existing record by splitting the play in 2 sequences of croos-checks (5+2). The aesthetical drawback is 2 promoted Bishops apparent on the diagram.

1° H.M.

Jonathan MESTEL, Allan BELL

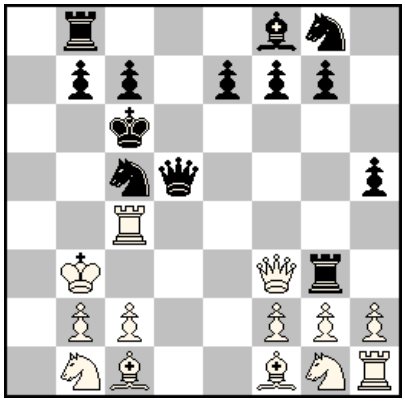


SPG 13,5 (15+11) C+

1.a4 é5 2.a5 é4 3.a6 é3 4.a×b7 é×d2+ 5.♔×d2 ♔é7 6.♔é3 ♔f6 7.♖a6+ ♔g5 8.♖h6 ♗a3 9.♕d6 ♘é7 10.♕×ç7 ♖é8 11.♕×ç8 ♕b6+ 12.♕ç5+ ♘f5+ 13.♔f3+ ♖é3+ 14.♗×é3‡

2° H.M.

Ivan BENDER, Marko FILIPOVIC, Marko KLASINC



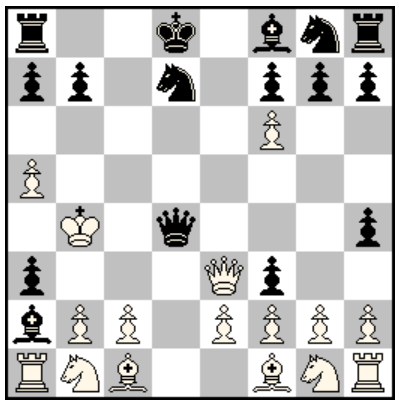
SPG 13,0 (13+13) C+

1.é4 h5 2.é5 ♖h6 3.é6 ♖g6 4.é×d7+ ♔×d7 5.d4 ♔ç6 6.♔d2 ♗é6 7.♔ç3 ♗×a2 8.♖×a2 ♕×d4+ 9.♔b3 ♘d7 10.♖×a7 ♖b8 11.♖a4 ♖g3+ 12.♕f3+ ♕d5+ 13.♖ç4+ ♘ç5+

1st and 2nd HM both show a nice sequence of 5 checks without capture. 2nd HM is more homogeneous (5 direct checks as there is a battery check in 1st HM) but 1st HM adds a thematical capture check, with pin-mate as non thematical bonus.

3° H.M.

Kostas PRENTOS



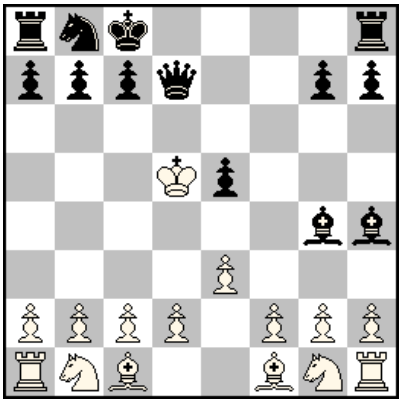
SPG 9,0 Circé parrain (16+16)

1.d4 ç5 2.d×ç5 ♕b6(a3) 3.♔d2 d5 4.ç×d6 e.p. ♗é6(f3) 5.♔ç3 ♘d7 6.d×é7 ♕é3(h4)+ 7.♔b4 ♗×a2 8.♕d4(a5) ♔×é7 9.♕×é3(f6)++ ♔d8(♕d4)++

Cross-double check is clearly impossible in orthodox chess. Possibly other fairy conditions than Circe Parrain allow to do it, but this problem will be a pioneer.

1° Com.

Marco BONAVOGLIA



SPG 9,0 (15+13) C+

1.é3 d5 2.♔é2 ♗g4+ 3.♔d3 ♔d7 4.♔d4 é5+ 5.♔×d5 ♗é7 6.♕f3 ♗h4 7.♕×f7+ ♘é7+ 8.♕×é7+ ♔ç8+ 9.♕d7+ ♕×d7+

6 checks as 1st HM (and 3rd Com.) and still a better intensity (5/18) than 2nd Prize but a lacking in homogeneity

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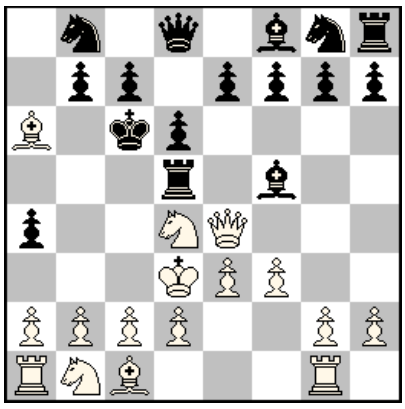
2° Com.

Allan BELL



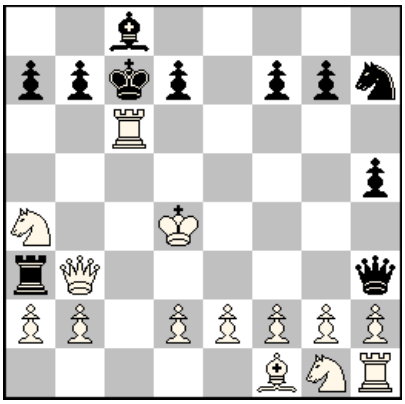
SPG 9,5 (16+16) C+

1.é3 a5 2.♕g4 a4 3.f3 ♖a5 4.♗a6 d6 5.♔é2 ♗é6 6.♔d3 ♔d7 7.♘é2 ♔ç6 8.♖g1 ♗f5+ 9.♕é4+ ♖d5+ 10.♘d4+

A final sequence similar to that of 2nd HM, but one check less. Additional originality is that the play is totally without capture (32 units on diagram). A « local » record with this constraint?

3° Com.

Vidmantas SATKUS



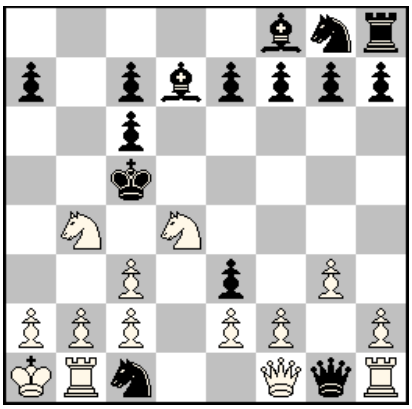
SPG 15,5 (14+11) C+

1.♘ç3 h5 2.♘d5 ♖h6 3.♘×é7 ♖ç6 4.♘d5 ♕h4 5.♘×ç7+ ♔d8 6.♘×a8 ♖×ç2 7.♘b6 ♖×ç1 8.♘a4 ♖ç3 9.♖ç1 ♖a3 10.♕b3 ♘f6 11.♔d1 ♘h7 12.♔ç2 ♔ç7 13.♔ç3 ♕h3+ 14.♔d4+ ♗ç5+ 15.♖×ç5+ ♘ç6+ 16.♖×ç6+

6 thematical checks as in 1st HM and 1st Com. Well done.

4° Com.

Hitoshi YANAMI



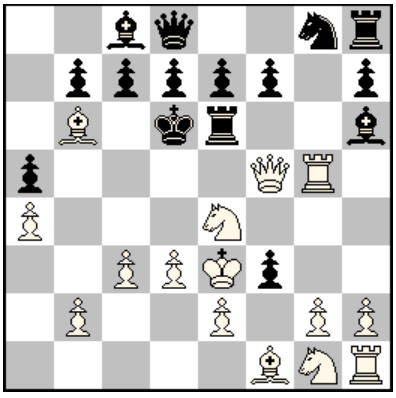
SPG 17,0 (14+15) C+

1.g3 ♘a6 2.♗g2 ♖b8 3.♗ç6 b×ç6 4.♘ç3 ♖b3 5.♘d5 ♖ç3 6.♘b4 d5 7.d×ç3 d4 8.♗é3 d×é3 9.♕d5 ♘ç5 10.♕g2 ♔d7 11.0-0-0+ ♘d3+ 12.♔b1 ♔d6 13.♔a1 ♔ç5 14.♖b1 ♘ç1 15.♘f3 ♕d1 16.♘d4 ♕g1 17.♕f1 ♗d7

All other entries have a King in check on diagram. Author had original idea to hide the cross-check sequence in the middle of the game. But only one cross-check is insufficient for a higher ranking.

Annex

Kostas PRENTOS, Andreï FROLKIN
Orbit 2010



SPG 15,5 (15+15) C+

1.a4 g5 2.♖a3 ♗h6 3.♖g3 ♔f8 4.ç3 ♔g7 5.♕ç2 ♔f6 6.♕g6+ ♔é5 7.d3 a5 8.♗é3 ♖a6 9.♔d2 ♖é6 10.♗b6 ♘ç6 11.♔é3 ♘d4 12.♘d2 g4+ 13.f4+ g×f3 e.p.+ 14.♖g5+ ♘f5+ 15.♕×f5+ ♔d6+ 16.♘é4+

Current record for 8 consecutive checks = 7 cross-checks.

Section B

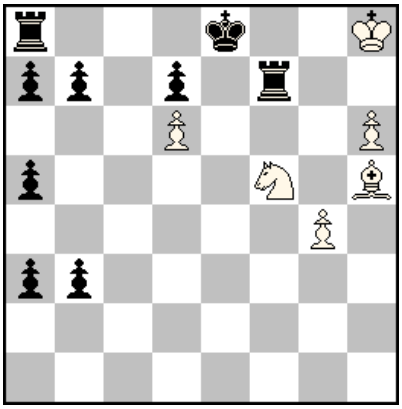
This tourney was in memory of **Paul VALOIS** and **Uri AVNER**.

Disappointingly (again for this section) only 2 entries by 3 composers were received.

Both entries showed the same basic idea. A castling is demonstrated to be illegal in a reflex problem because otherwise it would have been forced to be played before by the reflex condition.
One of the entry added some complications in the retro construction, ending in a much heavier position. Well, it is generally true nowadays than to be on top of an award, you have to display some complexity. But chess composition is not only “sport” but also “art”. And clarity of exposition of the idea was here the decisive point.

1° Place

James QUAH



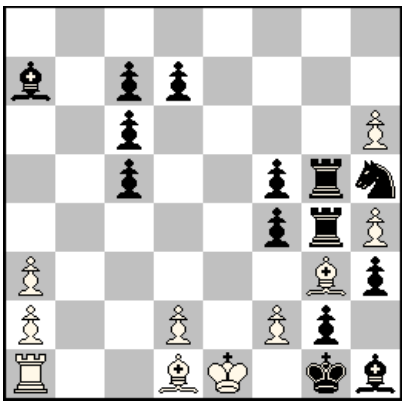
r‡2 (6+9)

1.h7! [2.♗×f7+ ♔×f7‡] (1…0-0-0? is illegal) 1…♔d8 2.♘g7 ♖f8‡

Black Pawns captured the 10 missing white pieces. Every possible black last move (except King and Ra8 moves that distroy castling) leaves position with mate by castling that should have been played if castling was legal.

2° Place

Joaquim CRUSATS, Andreï FROLKIN



r‡2 (10+14)

1.♗é2 ~2.♗f1 g×f1=♕‡ (2.0-0-0‡? illégal)

If last move was ♗é2-d1 (other ♗ moves are illegal because of reflex mate ♔é2‡), then 0-0-0 is illegal otherwise reflex condition would have forced it as last move. Other last black moves have to be studied, such as -1.♖g8-g5 g5×♕h6 -2.♕f6-f6 given by composers; but I see no point in this complications : there would have been some point for example in a twin presentation, where a sequence of moves save the castling in a position and not in the other one, but this is not the case here...

Michel Caillaud