1st Prize – Gold Medal, Rolf Kohring 1…Eb3 2.e8Q Bc5 3.Rc4 Sg1 4.Qxd2+ Rd1#; 1…Eh6 2.e8B Bd6 3.Rd4 Sb1 4.Bxe2+ Rf1#. In the initial position, the white King has a flight (g8), while the black King has two flights (c4 and d4). In order to force the mate White must decoy the black Rook c1 on a light square, as it will attack the white King via a8.

2nd Prize – Silver Medal, Theodoros Giakatis 1...Rxf6-f5[+bRh8] 2.Rxc2-d3 [+wBf1] Bxd3-h3[+bRa8] 3.0-0-0 Rxa5-c4[+bSb8]#; 1...Bxg6-g3[+bQd8] 2.Rxc6-c1 [+wRh1]+ Rxc1-g1[+bRh8] 3.0-0 Bxf2-a2[+bRh8]#. The author's description says almost everything: The main task of the problem is the realization of the classic idea "white battery and black castling".

3rd Prize – Bronze Medal, Igor Kochulov a) 1.nQc8 nBf5+ 2.g4+ nRxg4 (nRg4→h1)#; b) 1.nBd8 nRc3+ 2.Qc2 nQxc2 (nQc2→d1)#; c) 1.nRc8 nQa1+ 2.Ra2+ nBxa2 (nBa2→f1)#. Three neutral pieces cyclically change their roles.

Retros

[Editor's note: only the gold medal is diagrammed and shown with the solution. The silver and bronze medal were both cooked.]

1st Prize – Gold Medal
Mark Kirtley
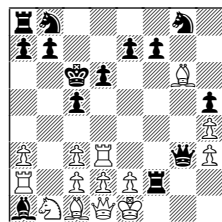
PG 22½   (14+14)

1st Prize – Gold Medal, Mark Kirtley 1.h4 g5 2.Rh3 Bg7 3.Rf3 Bc3 4.bxc3 g4 5.Bb2 g3 6.Qc1 gxf2+ 7.Kd1 fxg1B 8.Ke1 Bc5 9.Qd1 Ba3 10.Bc1 Bb2 11.a3 c5 12.Ra2 Ba1 13.Bb2 Qc7 14.Qc1 Qg3+ 15.Kd1 d6 16.Rd3 Bh3 17.gxh3 h5 18.Bg2 Rh6 19.Be4 Rf6 20.Bg6 Rf2 21.Ke1 Kd7 22.Qd1 Kc6 23.Bc1. The white trio (B,Q,K) performs a double switchback. Moreover this impressive and new theme is constructed in its purest form – same case for each double switchback and no capture at all. Note that it leads to a non-classical extended future proof game (SW&SW) (B,Q,K). The only way to parry the first check on square f2 is to play Bb2 Qc1 and Kd1. Then a black Bishop is moving through square b2, and the only way for white to allow this maneuver is to perform a first switchback of the thematic trio. Then a second check on square f2 forces Bb2 Qc1 and Kd1 once again. Finally the second switchback of the thematic trio is made to get the final position, where it stands at home.

♞♘♞♘♞♘♞♘

Anything But Average
Chess Classics and Off-Beat Problems
by Werner Keym

Another fine book by Werner Keym. This one is a combination of great chess games, endgame studies, problems and puzzles. Immortal games by Anderssen, Fisher, Kasparov, Carlsen, famous studies by Barbier-Saavedra, Lasker, Troitzky, Réti, and classical problems of all kind are presented and explained with additional diagrams. There is something here for everyone.

A word about the author. Werner was born in 1942. He was a teacher of French and Latin from 1968 to 2004. Werner plays piano and saxophone and likes to organize concerts (about 350 up to now) in Meisenheim, the little town where he lives. He was the mayor of Meisenheim from 2010 to 2014.
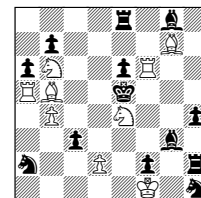
Werner Keym

Werner began to compose endgame studies in 1959. In 1963 he had great success with a three-mover showing an en passant capture key (= no. 68 in Anything But Average). After that, he published many retro problems and a few chess jokes (for New Year's Eve). In 2009 he succeeded in developing consistent conventions for Partial Retrograde Analysis and Retro-Strategy (Codex for Chess Composition 16.3, p. 181).
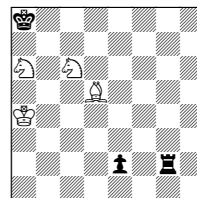
Reading the book I found many interesting problems. One that I especially enjoyed is a classic composed by Sam Loyd (**N°1**). It shows chess provocation at its extreme

N°1 Sam Loyd
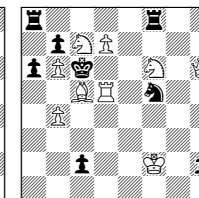1st Prize
Checkmate Tourney 1903
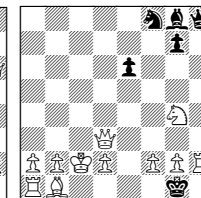
N°2 Cyril S. Kipping
Manchester City News
1911

N°3 Ado Kraemer &
Erich Zepler, 1st Prize
Neue Leipziger Zeitung
1935(v)

N°4 Milan Vukcevich
1st Prize
StrateGems 1988

#3   (9+13)   #3√   (4+3)   #3   (9+8)   #3   (11+6)

N°1 1.Ke2! (2.Rf8/Rf7+ Kxe4 3.d3/Bd3#), 1…f1Q+ 2.Ke3!, and now Black has ten different checks, but cannot avoid mate the next move. After 1…f1S 2.Rf2+ Kxe4 3.d3/Bd3#. Said Loyd: "The originality of the problem is due to the White King being placed in absolute safety, and yet coming out on a reckless career, with no immediate threat and in the face of innumerable checks…"

N°2 shows check provocation in one of the most beautiful miniatures. The key, **1.Ka5!!** (2.Sd4+ Ka7 3.Sb5#; or 2.Se7+ Ka7 3.Sc8#) exposes the white King to check by the promoted black Queen, 1…e1Q+ 2.Kb6 with no less than six different checks by the black Queen: 2…Qa5+ 3.Sxa5; 2…Qb4+ 3.Scxb4#; 2…Qb1+ 3.Sb4#; 2…Qe3+/Qf2+/Qg1+ 3.Sd4#. The defenses by the Rook do not help either: 1…Rg8 2.Sd4+ (2.Kb6? Rc8!) 2…Ka7 3.Sb5#. The try: 1.Kb5? would block the b5-square.

N°3 shows a 3-fold check provocation! **1.Ke1!!** (2.Sg4+ Sxh6 3.Se5#). Black has two possible promotions into Queen, 1…c1Q+ and 1…h1Q+. The position of the white Queen helps White capture both black Queens. 1…c1Q+ 2.Qxc1 h1+ 3.Bg1#; 2…Re8+ 3.Be3# and 1…h1Q+ 2.Qxh1 c1Q+ 3.Rd1#; 2…Re8+ 3.Re5#. Both white captures create a different battery. The third check, 1…Rae8+ is answered with 2.Sfxe8+ Rf6 3.d8S#.

N°4 is another of my favorites. It shows a three-fold white Queen sacrifice key, while exposing the white King to check. **1.Qh7!!** (2.Rh1+ Kxg2 3.Qe4#), 1…Qxh7+ 2.Kc3! (2.Kb3?) Qxh2/Qh3+/Qc2+/Qxb1 3.Be4/Bd3/Bxc2/Rxb1#, 1…Bxh7+ 2.Kb3! (2.Kc3?) Bd3/Bc2+/Bxb1 3.Bxd3/Bxc2/Rxb1#, 1…Sxh7 2.Kd3! (2.Kb3/Kc3?) ~ 3.Bc2#. Also: 1…g6 2.Rh1+ Kxg2 3.Qb7#, 1…Kf1 2.Rh1+ Ke2 3.Qd3/Qe4#, 1…Sg6 2.Kc3 ~ 3.B~#. There is also an amazing triple dual avoidance.

Anything But Average sells for 10 Euros plus shipping. To order this book go to: http://www.berlinthema.de/.
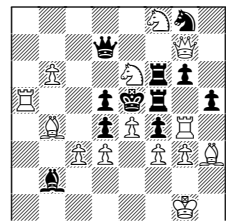
Recent Tourney Winners

Comments and solutions are from the magazines which originally published the awards.
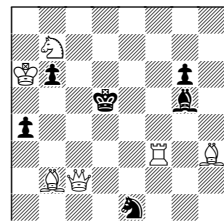
N°1 Gerhard Maleika
1st Prize
Probleemblad 2016
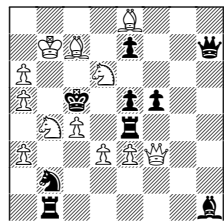
N°2 Pavel Murashev
1st Prize
Gulayev-Grin-110 MT 2018

N°3 Victor Chepizhny
1st Prize (Meredith only)
Gulayev-Grin-110 MT 2018

#2√.. (12+9)   #2*√. (14+11)   #2√. (6+6)

N°1 1.Ka7? (2.Sb7#), 1…Sxd3/Rxe3 2.Sxd3/Qxe3#, 1…exd6!; 1.Ka8!? (2.Sb7#), 1…Sxd3/exd6 2.Sxd3/Bb6#, 1…Rxe3!; 1.Kb8!? (2.Sb7#), 1…Rxe3/exd6 2.Qxe3/Bb6#, 1…Sxd3!; **1.Kc8!** (2.Sb7#), 1…Sxd3/Rxe3/exd6 2.Sxd3/Qxe3/Bb6#. After three failed tries the white Kings finds a safe place.

N°2 1…Rg5[a] 2.Rxg5/gxf4#, 1…Qe8[b] 2.Rxd5/Qc7#, 1…Qf7[c] 2.Rxd5#, 1…Qb5 2.Qc7#; 1.exd5? (2.Sxd7[A]/Sxg6#[B]), 1…Rg5[a] 2.Rxg5#[D] (2.gxf4?), 1…Qe8[b] 2.Qc7# (2.Rxd5?) Erokhin & anti-le Grand. 1…Qf7[c] 2.d6# (1…Qxd5 2.Qc7# self-pin), 1…Qb5!; 1.Sg5? (2.Sxd7[A]/Sxg6#[B]), 1…Rxg5[a] 2.gxf4#[C] (2.Rxg5?) le Grand & anti-Erokhin. 1…Qe8[b] 2.Rxd5# (2.Qc7+?), 1…Qf7[c] 2.Sxf7# (2.Rxd5?), 1…dxc3!; **1.Rg5![D]** (2.gxf4#[C]), 1…Rxg5[a] 2.Sxd7#[A] (2.Sxg6?), 1…Qxe6 2.Sxg6#[B] (2.Sxd7?), 1…fxg3 2.f4#, 1…Bc1 2.cxd4#. Also: 1.Sxd4? (2.Sxd7/Sxg6#), 1…Qf7[c] 2.Sc6#, 1…Qe8 2.Rxd5#, 1…Bxc3!.
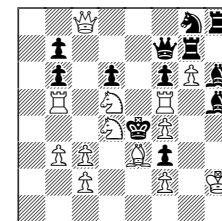
N°3 1.Qe2? (2.Qe6#), 1…Kc6 2.Qc4#, 1…Be3!, 1.Qxg6? (2.Qe6#), 1…Kc4 2.Qe4#, 1…Bf6!; **1.Qc8!** (2.Qe6#), 1…Ke4 2.Qc6#. In two tries, the black Bishop closes white Queens line. In each try there is a flight-giving key(s).

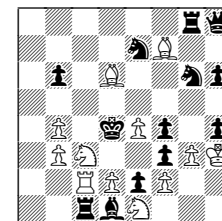**N°4** Mikhail Marandyuk
1st Prize
Zadachy i etyudi 2017
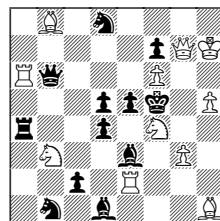
N°5 L.Salai jr., M.Dragoun, E.Klemanič & L.Packa
1st Prize, *Probleemblad* 2016

**N°6** Alexander Kuzovkov
1st Prize
Ural Problemist-25 JT 2018

#3 (11+12)   #3 (13+12)   #3 (12+13)

N°4 1.Bf3! (2.Qg4+ Kxf6 3.Sxd5#), 1…Sc3 2.Bg4+ Ke4 3.3.Sd2#, 1…exf4 2.g4+ Ke6 3.Sc5#, 1…Ra5 2.Sxd4+ Qxd4 3.Qg4#; 2…Bxd4 3.Bg4#; 2…exd4 3.g4#. A complex problem. The main feature is that the white pieces arrive at the same square g4 three times on the second and third move. There is also line openings and pinning black pieces. Masterfully composed.

N°5 1.Se6! (2.Sg5+ fxg5/Bxg5 3.Rb4#), 1…Qd7 2.Sxf6+ Sxf6 3.Qc4#, 1…Bxg6 2.Rb4+ Kxf5 3.Sxg7#, 1…Bg4 2.Qc4+ Kxf5 3.Se7#, 1…Kxf5 2.Sd4+ Ke4/Kxg6 3.Qf5#, 1…Bxf4+ 2.Rxf4+ Ke5 3.Bd4#. With a flight-giving key, White leaves its Rf5 en prise. In the two variations, Bh5 self-blocks. In other variations we have play of two white batteries and a switchback by the white Knight.
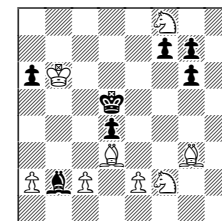
N°6 1.Sb5+?[C] Kxe4!; 1.Sxf3?+[D] Kd3!; 1.d3?[A] (2.Sb5#[C]) Qe5![a] (2.Bc4?[B]); 1.Bc4?[B] (2.Sxf3#[D]) Se5![b] (2.d3?[A]); **1.g4!** (2.Sb5+[C] Kxe4 3.d3#[A]), 1…Se5[b] 2.d3![A] & 3.Sb5#[C]; 2…Sxd3 3.Sxf3#[D], 1…Qe5[a] 2.Bc4![B] & 3.Sxf3#[D]; 2…Qxe4 3.Sb5#[C], 1…Bxc2 2.Sxf3+[D] Kd3 3.Bc4#[B]. Logical, modern threemover.

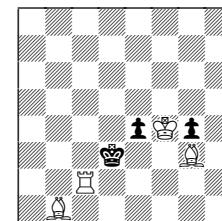**N°7** Grigory Atayans
1st Place
Russian Championship 2018
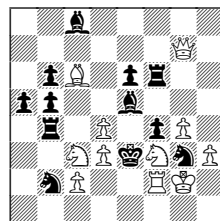
N°8 Mikhail Marandyuk
1st Prize
Moscow Konkurs 2018

N°9 Eugene Fomichev
1st-2nd Prize
Lenin's covenant 2018

#4 (11+12)   #5 (8+7)   #4*√. (4+3)

N°7 1.Qe7![A] (2.Re2+ Sxe2 3.Sd5+ exd5 4.Qxe5#), 1…Rxd4 2.Qa3[B] ~ 3.Sd1+ Sxd1 4.Qc1#, 1…Rf5 2.Qh4[C] ~ 3.Re2+ Sxe2 4.Qf2#. Beautiful second quiet moves by the white Queen forcing black defender to open mating lines.

N°8 1.Sd1! (2.c4+[A] dxc3 e.p. 3.Se3+ Kd4 4.Sc2+ Kd5 5.e4#[B]), 1…Bc1 2.e4+[B] dxe3 e.p. 3.Sc3+ Kd4 4.Se2+ Kd5 5.c4#[A], 1…f5 2.Se3+! dxe3 3.c4+ Kd4 4.Se6+ Kc5 5.Be1#. The first two mates has been seen before. However, the addition of the third variation, after 1…f5 defense, with the play of the distant Sf8, and the nice mate on e1, gives this problem enough originality. All three mates are model mates.

N°9 1…Kd4 2.Rc6 e3 3.Be4 e2 4.Bf2#; 2…Kd5 3.Bxe4+ Kd4 4.Bf2#, 1…e3 2.Ke5 e2 3.Be1 & 4.Rc3#. The mates are already set, but White has to move first. 1.Be1? g3!, 1.Bf2 g3!; **1.Ke5!** (zz), 1…Ke3 2.Rg2 Kf3 3.Bxe4+ Ke3 4.Bf4#, 1…e3 2.Be1 ~ 3.Kd5 e2 4.Rc3#.