

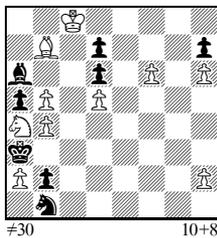
# FAIRIES 2010

*Judge: Kjell Widlert (Sweden)*

I am honoured to be the judge of this last fairy informal tourney of the great Mat Plus. The tourney lived up to the expectations raised by the quality of the magazine: the level was very good, with several excellent problems and one clear masterpiece.

Mat Plus 37-38 contains 31 originals, and the related Mat Plus Review 13-14 another 2 originals in an article (by Petkov) plus 1 correction of an earlier problem in another article (by Millour). Mat Plus 39-40 contains 28 originals, and the related Mat Plus Review has another original in an article (by Olin). This adds up to 63 problems of very different types, probably all sound, but one of them anticipated. Commentator JL believed he had already seen the matrix of **1624** (Ganapathi), and indeed there is a better anticipation by Unto Heinonen, Springaren Summer T 2005: Kc4 Sc3 Pc7 e2 – Ka3 Pf2, h#2 AntiCirce 2 solutions, 1.f1Q Sd1 2.Qxe2>d8 cxd8R>a1# and 1.f1S e3 2.Sxe3>b8 cxb8B>c1#. **1742** by the same composer looks like it should be anticipated but maybe isn't; it would have had a commendation if the composer had put the wK on b8 to make both mates Circe-specific.

**1755** (Kirchner) might have made the award, but for the Circe condition which seems to be merely technical.



**René Millour**  
*1. pr Mat Plus 2010*

Mars Circe

## 1st Prize: 4 on p.66 – René Millour (France)

The central part of the solution is in the long march of the wB to e8, pushing the bB ahead of him, all steered by MarsCirce effects: (1) the bB can only capture from c8, so for most of the long march, the wB is immune from capture; (2) the bB is also immune from capture, even within sight of f1, as this would stalemate Black (Sb1 being

pinned by Sa4); (3) the wK can only enter d8 when e8 is occupied, otherwise there is a self-check from the bK; (4) when e8 is occupied, White can play the main plan Pf6-f7-f8xb2# with no danger of K(e8)xf7 - unless this leads to a stalemate.

But this is just a small part of the story! Before the long march, White has to dispose of the road block Pb5, which necessitates a walk of the wK to a7 in order to stop Pa5(a7)xb6, after which the possibility Pb6(b7)xa6 (not Pb2(b7)xa6, Pb2 being pinned by Pb4) would stop the wB from leaving the a8 corner via a6. In this preliminary phase, a tempo is needed to make the bB leave b7, another one to make it leave c8, a third one to make it leave b7 again, and finally a fourth one to make it leave b5 (as the road has a bend at a6, Black can arrange to arrive on b5 only *after* the wB has arrived on a6). Ph2 has three tempos available if it doesn't waste one by playing h2-h4?, and the fourth one can be Kc7 when the wB is out of reach from c8. Later, four more tempos are needed (one of them after the road bend on d3), and these can be played by the wK, keeping in mind that d8 must be kept within reach in case the bB occupies e8 (playing for Pf7? stalemate!).

The final stage of the solution occurs when the bishops are within reach of e8. The bB cannot stop the wB from reaching that square, except by going there itself – which will allow White to play Kd8 followed by Ke8. But it isn't over yet: Black can mount a last defence by playing Bg8! (also with a stalemate after Pf7?), and then oscillating between f7 and g8. But the move to g8 has the side effect of allowing White to play Ke7 without a check from Sb1, which in turn allows the wK to drive the bB away from g8 by itself occupying it – but only after a final tempo on g7. Then at last, Black is helpless against the main plan.

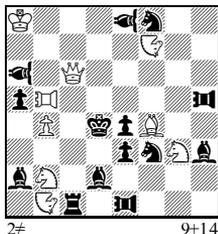
All in all, we have an exact 13-move walk of the wK from c8 to a7 and then all the way to g8, visiting 9 squares, with 5 tempo moves. We have another three tempo moves by Ph2, and an equally exact 10-move walk of the wB from b7 to e8, visiting 10 squares. You can also count to 18 switchbacks in this study-like fight K+B against B, with subtleties all along the way. The position is so natural, with everything fitting together like clockwork, that one can't imagine how any detail

could have been different – but in fact there was an earlier version (in Mat Plus 29), fortunately cooked.

I have seen some good MarsCirces in my day, but I don't think I have ever seen a better one. It's extraterrestrial!

The solution goes:

Main plan 1.f7? (threatening 2.f8B 3.B(c1)xb2#) K(e8)xf7!  
**1.Ba8! Bb7 2.Kb8 Bc8 3.Ka7 Ba6** (switchback) **4.b6 Bb7** (switchback) **5.h3!** (1st waiting) **B~ 6.b7 B(c8)xb7 7.Kb8** (switchback) **Bc8** (switchback) **8.Kc7!** (2nd waiting) **Ba6** (switchback) **9.Kc8** (switchback) **Bb7** (switchback) **10.h4!** (3rd waiting) **Ba6** (switchback) **11.Bb7** (switchback) **B~ 12.Ba6 Bb5 13.h5!** (4th waiting) **Bc4 14.Bb5 Bd3 15.Bc4 B~ 16.Bd3 Be4 17.Kc7!** (5th waiting) **Bf5 18.Be4**, and now there are two possibilities for Black: **18... Bg6/Be6 19.Bf5/Bg6 Bf7** (19...hxg6? 20.h7 21.h8B 22.B(c1)xb2#) **20.Bg6/Kc8!** (6th waiting; switchback) **Be6!** (switchback) **21.Be8 Bg8! 22.Kc8/Kc7!** (7th waiting; switchback) **Bf7** (switchback) **23.Kd8 Bg8** (switchback) **24.Ke7 Bf7+** (switchback) **25.Kf8 Bg8** (switchback) **26.Kg7!** (8th waiting) **Bf7** (switchback) **27.Kg8! B~** and at last **28.f7 B~ 29.f8B B~ 30.B(c1)xb2#**.



**Jean-Marc Loustau**  
 2.pr Mat Plus 2010

♙=Pao  
 ♚=Vao  
 ♞=Nightrider

**2nd Prize: 1598 – Jean-Marc Loustau (France)**

For such a task, the setting is indeed quite light as the composer claims: this is only the second example of a 6th degree white correction, and for that result, 23 pieces isn't much. The result is achieved with a very homogenous mechanism, which is a great advantage. There are set mates on four squares on the fifth rank (c5-f5); as the white Pao moves progressively further east, one of the set mates is lost by a self-block or by a new guard from the opposing black Pao; but Black also loses the ability to move without capture to the newly guarded square – which allows a new mate from a line-piece over that square. This mechanism clearly requires a nightrider to give a mate across f5, so I find the use of nightriders fully justified. Because of the unity of the mechanism, I prefer the composer's setting over the versions proposed by commentator JR. And I don't consider the three black bishops a flaw at all: with fairy pieces on the board, it is meaningless to talk about promoted

pieces, and in fact it is better economy to use a third bishop than to use a third Vao.

**1.PAb5~?** (2.Se2#) Bc4 2.Qc5#, 1...Rc4 2.Qd5#, 1...Sg1 2.Be5#, 1...Bf1 2.Sf5#, 1...PAb5!

**1.PAc5!?** (2.Se2#) Bc4! (2.Qc5??)

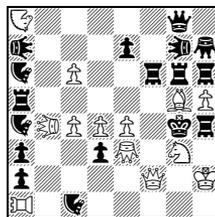
**1.PAd5!!!?** (2.Se2) Bc4 2.Qb6# changed (2.Qc5+? PAxc5!), 1...Rc4! (2.Qd5??)

**1.PAe5!!!!?** (2.Se2#) Rc4 2.Qd6# changed (2.Qd5+? PAxd5!), 1...Sg1! (2.Qe5??)

**1.PAf5!!!!?** (2.Se2#) Sg1 2.Qf6# changed (2.Qe5+? PAxe5!), 1...Bf1! (2.Sf5??)

**1.PAg5!!!!!** (2.Se2#) Bc4 2.Qb6#, 1...Rc4 2.Qd6#, 1...Sg1 2.Qf6#, 1...Bf1 2.Nh6# changed (2.Sf5+? PAxf5!).

Non-thematic: 1.Sc4? (Novotny) Se5!



**Mikhail Khramtsevich**  
**Aleksandr Bulavka**  
 3.pr Mat Plus 2010

♞=Nightrider  
 ♞=Grasshopper  
 ♞=Rookhopper  
 ♞=Lion  
 ♞=Rook-Lion  
 ♞=Kangaroo

Functionary Chess

**3rd Prize: 1729 – Mikhail Khramtsevich and Aleksandr Bulavka (Belarus)**

In contrast to the 2nd Prize, this is really a very heavy setting, both in terms of number of pieces (30) and in terms of number of fairy elements (7, mostly different kinds of hoppers). But we get something extraordinary for the money: a cyclical Lender, implying the mating scheme A(B)C,D > D(C)E,F > F(E)B,A. This is more easily understood as a combination of two separate cycles – a Ceriani cycle involving key and one variation mate A()D > D()F > F()A, and a Ukrainian cycle involving threat and another variation mate (B)C > (C)E > E(B). The number of paradoxes that the construction must resolve is huge, so I would hardly have thought it possible to combine these in one setting using normal (even if many and varied) fairy elements. Despite appearances, the setting is harmonious in that everything depends on observations or the lack thereof (remember that only pieces that are observed by the adversary can move in Functionary Chess), and in that all mates in the Ceriani cycle are openings of the fifth rank for Lib4.

The Ceriani cycle works like this. 1.c5 Rxc5 2.d5# because RHh4 is no longer observed, not

2.e5?? as Pe4 is no longer observed by Na6; 1.d5 Rxc5 2.e5#, not 2.c5?? as Pc4 is no longer observed by Qg8; 1.e5 Rxc5 2.c5#, not 2.d5?? as Pd4 is no longer observed by LIg7.

The Ukrainian cycle works like this. 1.c5 thr 2.Gg1# because Ge3 is observed by KAA7 (Gg1 is observed by Na4), 1...RHb6 defends because Ge3 is no longer observed 2.RLg1# because RLa1 is now observed by LIg7; 1.d5 thr 2.RLg1# because RLa1 is now observed by LIg7, 1...RHb6 defends because RLa1 is no longer observed 2.Qf5# because Qf2 is now observed by KAA7; 1.e5 thr 2.Qf5# because Ra5 is shut off and Qf2 is still observed by KAA7, 1...RHb6 defends because Qf2 is no longer observed 2.Gg1# because Ge3 is now observed by KAA7. So in short, the three keys leave 0, 1 or 2 pieces on the line KAA7-e3-f2 and 1, 2 or 3 pieces on the line LIg7-a1; the defence RHf6-b6 increases the first number by 1 and decreases the second number by 1.

It is not enough to invent these mechanisms, everything must fit together too, with no duals or cooks and with no refutations except those stopping the two tries. All this provides justification for the great variety of fairy elements. Functionary Chess, Lion, Kangaroo and Nightrider are essential for the mechanism and cannot be deplored. Something on e3 has to give a thematical mate, but not necessarily have to be a Grasshopper (Gh7 is only technical). A thematical defence must be f6-b6, but not necessarily a Rookhopper (however, it cannot be a rook which would guard f5 and f4). Something on a1-b2-c3 has to give a thematical mate, but not necessarily a Rook-Lion. This is not to say that there actually were better options, it is probably just bad luck that three new fairy pieces had to be introduced for these functions. It must also be said that all types of fairy pieces are involved in the thematical play; no type is introduced just to guard a flight-square or stop a cook.

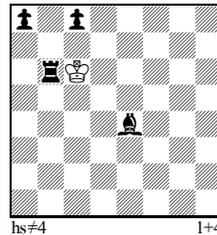
So all in all I'm quite impressed, and the more I look at the mechanisms, the lighter the setting appears to me.

- 1.c5? A (2.Gg1# B) RHb6 2.RLg1# C, 1...Rxc5 2.d5# D, 1...e6!
- 1.d5? D (2.RLg1# C) RHb6 2.Qf5# E, 1...Rxc5 2.e5# F, 1...RHf1!
- 1.e5! F (2.Qf5# E) RHb6 2.Gg1# B, 1...Rxc5 2.c5# A, 1...RHf4 2.Qxf4#

**4th Prize: 1617 – Peter Harris (South Africa)**

Given the light material (Tanagra), the content is simply grandiose. The solutions are similar, but

not analogous, and of roughly equal value. The big questions are: how can the transmuting king be mated when it can always capture the checking piece – and how can Black be forced by the lone wK to play such a mating move??



**Peter Harris**  
4.pr Mat Plus 2010

b) b6-e6  
HaanerChess  
TransmutingKing  
AntiCirce

- a) 1.Kd5 Rb7 2.Kxe4>e1 Re7+ 3.Ke6 Rc7 4.Kd6 Rd7#
- b) 1.Kd7 Bc2 2.Kxc8>e1 Bb1 3.Kd2! Rd6+ 4.Kd5 Ba2#

The answer to the first question is in the fact (which was quite new to me) that in Haan + AntiCirce, a K can only capture once! (The same is true for queens and bishops, and partly for rooks and knights.) So the trick is to let the wK capture its way to e1, so that later it cannot capture again because there's a hole on e1. The answer to the second question is that black pieces are restrained by Haan holes so that only the mating move remains – and then the wK is similarly restrained so that it cannot escape check. In a), the bB is captured on the trip to e1, and the bR is incarcerated on c7 by holes and Pc8, leaving only Rd7#. In b), the bB will be mating, so the wK has to capture Pc8 instead on its trip to e1. It cannot capture the bR, as then the wK needs much too long to reach d5 from e1, so the bR has to be totally incarcerated on d6 after giving the helpful check. I like it that the holes are used economically: apart from the holes left by the mating moves, only b6 in a) and d2 in b) are not necessary for the mates.

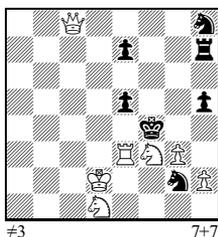
The problem would have been even more grandiose if the “only-capture-once” manoeuvres had been strategically motivated – that is, if the only reason the wK visits e1 were to stop himself from capturing later. This is not so here. In a), White has to capture the bB for the final zz position. In b), White must capture Pc8 so that Ba2 will check.

What about the black pawns? None of the fairy conditions produces pawns on the back rank, so they got there because the composer put them there! I have no problem at all with that; this is fairy chess after all. Pc8 is very well used: it avoids check from the bB and restrains the bR in a), and it is thematically captured in b). Pa8 seems to have the sole function of avoiding check from

the bR (on white squares; that's why 3.Kd2! and not 3.Kd1?), but this essential function is ample justification for a bP.

**5th Prize: 1731 – Gilles Regniers (Belgium)**

Direct three-movers are rare guests in our fairy tournaments, and even more so three-movers in a construction that is comparable to the finest orthodox examples. This is one of those. There are three Isardam-specific switchback mates, using the fact that bKf4 is not in check from Pg3 as long as Pe5 is still there (Pxf4?? is illegal in Isardam). One of those mates occurs in the threat, and the other two in thematic variations after Isardam-specific obstructions on f7: after 1...Rf7, Black can no longer parry 2.Sxe5+ Kg5 3.Sf3+ by 3...Sf7! making Sxg5 illegal; and after 1...Sf7, Black can no longer parry 2.Rxe5+ Kxf3 3.Re3+ by 3...Rf7! making Rxf3 illegal. So we have a very natural combination of two Isardam motifs.



**Gilles Regniers**  
5.pr Mat Plus 2010

Isardam

The position is very open and economical for such complex content. There are two weaknesses, that can easily be accepted when compared to all the strong points. The key is only decent (Black threatens 1...e6), and one of the defence motives is impure: 1...Sf7 defends only by the Isardam effect: 2.Qxe5+ Kg4 (Sxe5??) 3.Qe6+ Kg5!, but 1...Rf7 defends both specifically 2.Qxe5+ Kg4 3.Qe6+ Kxf3! and trivially 3...Rf5!

**1.Qe6!** (2.Qxe5+ Kg4 3.Qe6# [Kf4??]), 1...Sf7 2.Rxe5+ Kxf3 3.Re3# [Rf7?? Kf4?? Sxe3??], 1...Rf7 2.Sxe5+ Kg5 3.Sf3# [Sf7?? Kf4?? Rxf3??]

**1st Honourable Mention: 1732 – František Sabol (Czech Republic)**

1.Rc6? seems to lead to immediate mate from Bh2 by 1...Pb4(b7)xc6#, but Black can use the other pawn 1...Pb5(b7)xc6! So we need to remove Pb5 in a foreplan. We can't use Bb3 for this (1.Bc2? b3+ which is not mate because of Rc8), but new wB can do the job. It seems we can simply play 1.g8=B 2.Bg8(f1)xc4 3.Bc4(f1)xb5, but 1.g8=B? is stalemate! For Bh2 is pinned by Rc8, h3 is

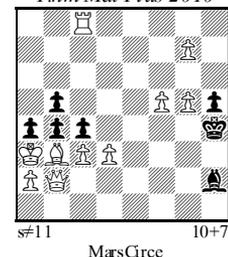
guarded by Bb3 (and Bg8) via f1, g3 is guarded by Pf5 via f2, and g4 is guarded by the wQ via d1. So we need a tempo-winning manoeuvre.

The tempo-winning play is very Martian: the wQ interferes with Bb3 on g2 (unguarding h3!) and obstructs Rc8 on h1 (unpinning Bh2!), and then returns to b2 when the work is done. The rest of the foreplan is fairly mundane, however: g8=B, d4, Bxc4, Bxb5 is a very straight-forward way of getting rid of Pb5. But there is one clever detail: g8=B must be played before d4, so that the unpinned Bh2 doesn't have the opportunity to play B(f8)xc7!

1.Rc6? Pb5(b7)xc6! 1.g8=B? stalemate!

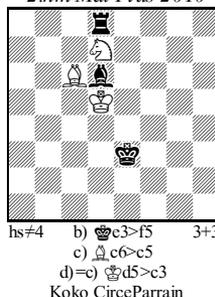
**1.Qg2!** Kh3 2.Qh1+ Kh4 3.g8=B B~ 4.Qg2+ Bh2 5.d4 Kh3 6.Qh1+ Kh4 7.Bg8(f1)xc4 B~ 8.Qg2+ Bh2 9.Bc4(f1)xb5 Kh3 10.Qb2+ Kh4 11.P(b7)xc6#

**František Sabol**  
1.hm Mat Plus 2010



s≠11 MarsCirce 10+7

**Jaroslav Štůň**  
2.hm Mat Plus 2010



hs≠4 b) ♙c3>f5 3+3  
c) ♚c6>c5  
d)=c) ♜d5>c3  
Koko CirceParrain

**2nd Honourable Mention: 1746 – Jaroslav Štůň (Slovakia)**

Circe Parrain. Fortunately the play is completely different in all four positions, so we don't get the impression of just seeing the same thing four times. The play is accurate only because the bB must be eliminated for good before the zz mate, so it must be captured in such a way that it is not reborn on the next move. Therefore 2...Re7! in part b).

I agree with commentator JL that the order of twins a) and b) should have been switched, so that we would have had clean continuous twinning.

- a) 1.Kxd6 Rc8 2.Ke6 Rxc6+ 3.Kd5[+wBb5] Ke4+ 4.Kxc6 Kd5[+bRb7]#
- b) 1.Sf6 Rd7 2.Se8 Re7 3.Kxd6 Rd7+ 4.Kxd7 Ke6[+bRc8]#
- c) 1.Se5 Bxe5+ 2.Kxe5[+wSf5] Rd6 3.Se7 Kf4+ 4.Kxd6 Ke5[+bRc7]#
- d) 1.Bb4 Rxd7 2.Kd4[+wSe8] Rc7 3.Sxd6 Rc5+ 4.Kxc5 Kd4[+bRb6]#

**3rd Honourable Mention: 1728 – Hubert Gockel (Germany)**

A reciprocal change built almost completely on Annan effects. 1...Q~ loses control of the white B/R battery, which can mate while keeping the guard of e3 as Bb6 moves like a R and does not guard. The correction 1...Qxb5 makes White lose control of e5 (in an orthodox manner) but gain a control of e3 (Bb6 moves like a B again), so White must take care to guard or keep guarding e5. The heart of the problem is in the way 1.Kh1? and 1.Bh1! switch around which of the two horizontal R moves guards e3 and which guards e5: after 1.Kh1?, Rh3+ keeps the guard of e3 while Rg3+ guards e5 instead (as Rg3 moves like a B); after 1.Bh1!, both e3 and e5 are guarded (as Kh2 moves like a B), but Rg3+ loses control of e5 and Rh3+ loses control of e3 (as Rh3 moves like a K).



Zugzwang seems unlikely in view of the free upper left corner, but it is a pleasant surprise that every black move actually allows a mate. Among them are four Annan-specific side-variations (a7~ and Rb8 are especially good). The price to pay is Se8, which is not involved in the thematical play at all, and partly Qd1, which serves only three minor functions.

- 1.Kh1? zz Q~ 2.Rh3# A (2.Rg3+? Kxe3!), 1...Qxb5! 2.Rg3# B (2.Rh3+? Kxe5!), 1...Qxe3!
- 1.Bh1! zz Q~ 2.Rg3# B (2.Rh3+? Kxe3!), 1...Qxb5! 2.Rh3# A (2.Rg3+? Kxe5!), 1...Qxe3! 2.Rf4#, 1...Qxf3! 2.Qxf3#, 1...S1~ 2.Qxe2#, 1...f4 2.Bbg6#, 1...a7~ 2.Bxb7#, 1...Rb8 2.Bc6#, 1...S8~ 2.Sd6#, 1...g7~ 2.Sf6#

**4th Honourable Mention: 1602 – Pierre Tritten & Guy Sobrecases & Jacques Rotenberg (France / France / Israel)**

A humorous double Phoenix and a double Monkey theme: Rh1-h3 and Bf1-e2 is played by both sides

in the same solutions. To achieve the mutate form, the composers built a halfbattery from Qf2, which itself is pinned in all mates. The need for Pc3+c4 to stop other sideways bR moves is unavoidable but still regrettable.

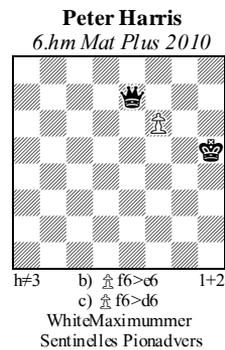
- 1...Rxb1 2.Re4 Rh3#; 1...Bxf1 2.Se4 Be2#;  
1.Rxb3>a8 bxa8=R>h1 2.Re4 Rh3#; 1.Bxe2>c8 bxc8=B>f1 2.Se4 Be2#

**5th Honourable Mention: 1621 – Kevin Begley & Kostas Prentos (USA / Greece)**

A paradoxical theme: long and short white castling in the same line of play! This has been done before, but only in fairy forms where lost castling rights can be won back – such as some Circe forms. Often in such problems, the fun ends when the castlings are played, but here half of the fun remains in the form of a remarkable final position: Qg3 is specifically pinned, so Black has only 4...Kh1, after which Rf1 is specifically pinned so that White is stalemate.

Black's R and S must be captured before the zz final, so Ke1-f2-g1 and R-f1 without castling does not work. To get a wR rebirth on h1, the wK has to be to the left of the wR, so the wK must also move, and the rebirths of K and R work as desired only with Kc1 and Rd1. The long castling is not a logical foreplan to the short one, but there is a clear connection between the two.

- 1.0-0-0! Bh2 2.Rxf1>h1 Rd1+ 3.Kxd1>e1 Qg3 4.0-0! zz Kh1=



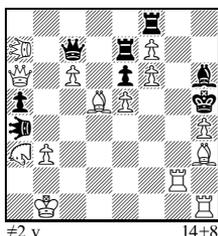
**6th Honourable Mention: 1604 – Peter Harris (South Africa)**

Varied but still homogenous play with three white promotions and excellent twinning; quite charming!

In a), 3.Qh6 is needed against 4.Kh6[+wPh5]! Similarly, b) requires 2.Qg3 against 4.Kxh4[+wPh5]! Part c) has no similar clever

touch, but like the other two has a Sentinelles-specific mate (4.Kg6[+wPh5]??). The twinning wP differentiates the solutions only passively, not by any active function, which is somewhat unusual and nice to see. The differentiating effects are usually double, but there are two precise effects: the b) solution does not work in part c) because 2...Re1 is forced, and the c) solution does not work in part b) because of a lack of tempo 1.Qg5[+wPe7] ~?

- a) 1.Qc7[+wPe7] f7 2.Qf4[+wPc7] c8=Q 3.Qh6[+wPf4] Qh3#
- b) 1.Qh4[+wPe7] e8=R 2.Qg3[+wPh4] Ra8 3.Qg4[+wPg3] Rh8#
- c) 1.Qg5[+wPe7] d7 2.Qf4[+wPg5] e8=S 3.Qh4[+wPf4] Sf6#



**Ján Dučák**  
7.hm Mat Plus 2010

AnnanChess  
♁ = Lion  
♁ = Nightrider-Lion

**7th Honourable Mention: 1597 – Ján Dučák (Czech Republic)**

An extended Djurašević cycle with four mates, not built on a single coherent mechanism but produced by a multitude of different effects, centering around the Annanized halfbattery on the h file. Among the paradoxes implied by the theme I want to mention these: (1) When D threatens A, why does not A threaten D? Because after 1.Bhx6? the move Ph4-g5 is illegal, as Ph4 no longer moves like a B; (2) When A gives D after defence y, why does not D give A after the same defence? Because of 1.h4-g5 Bxg5 2.Bhx6+ Bh4! (3) Why does defence x stop the threat A but leads to the same mate in the other phase (Dombrovskis)? Because 1.Bhx6 Qxe5 defends Qe2 directly, but 1.h4-g5 Qxe5 makes Qe2 possible by Lla7's guard of f7 (when Qa6 moves away), and does not guard e2 because of Pe6. There is an interesting Annan-specific Schiffmann motif here: Qxe5 "pins herself" (takes on the powers of a P) in the expectation of being freed again if White plays the threat 2.Bhx6#.

Despite the much harder theme, I rate this lower than the other Annan Chess two-mover, Gockel's 1728. The composer had some bad luck with the construction. Lla7 is part of the thematic play, but could in theory have been an orthodox piece as its function is only to guard f7 when Qc7 moves.

NLa3 is only for guarding g6 in two mates. And Lla4 is only against the unfortunate cook 1.h4-g3. – With fairy pieces already on the board, I wonder why the composer did not put another wB on a6 instead of the fat queen.

- 1.Bhx6? A (2.Qe2# B) Qxe5 2.Bg4# C, 1...Bg5 2.hxg5# D, 1...Bc1 etc 2.Rh3#
- 1.h4-g5! D (2.Bhx6# A) Qxe5 2.Qe2# B, 1...Bxg5 2.Bg4# C, 1...Kxf7 2.g6#

**8th Honourable Mention: 1738 – Luis Miguel Martin, Spain**

The bK needs the company of his P, but they are so far apart ... so either the K has to walk all the way to his P, or the P has to walk all the way to the K, resulting in opposite-corner echoes. A nice idea so far, but one that makes for fairly boring black play, to be honest. The trick is to complement it with interesting and varied white play, which is not trivial considering the number of moves needed: 7+7. The composer succeeded almost perfectly here, with lively interplay between the knight and two grasshoppers. The "almost" comes from the repetition of Sa1-b3, which is tolerable but still costs the problem some places in the award.

**Luis Miguel Martin**  
8.hm Mat Plus 2010



**Neal Turner**  
cm Mat Plus 2010  
dedicated to Juraj Lörinc



- 1.Kg2 Sb3 2.Kf3 Ga2 3.Ke4 Sc5+ 4.Kd5 Gd6 5.Kc6 Se6 6.Kb7 Gf7 7.Ka8 Sc7#

- 1.a5 Sb3 2.a4 Gc3 3.a3 Sd4 4.a2 Ge5 5.a1=B Sf5 6.Bd4 Gg4 7.Bg1 Sg3#

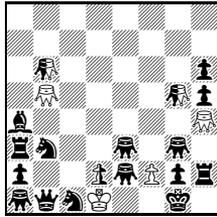
**Commendations (without rank):**

**1599 – Neal Turner (Finland)**

An unusual and economical selfmate with especially subtle white play – including the critical move Bg1! – and with the heavy black pieces surprisingly powerless.

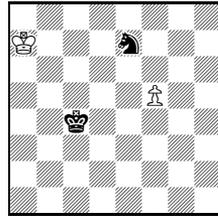
- 1.Bg1+! Qb7 2.b3! zz Rf3 (R-#?; other moves like Rf2?? are illegal) 3.Bf2! zz f4 4.Be1+ Qb5# (5.rGxf3?? illegal because of a3; therefore not 2.b4?)

**Dmitri Turevski**  
*cm Mat Plus 2010*  
 (after L.Grolman and  
 G.Evseev)



h#2 4+15+3N  
 0211 + 2111  
 ♁♁=Grasshopper

**Ramaswami Ganapathi**  
**Guy Sobrecases**  
*cm Mat Plus 2010*



h#4 Circe  
 Black Transmuting King  
 211..

**1603 – Dmitri Turevski (Russia)**

The idea is taken from Lev Grolman & Georgy Evseev, *Die Schwalbe 2000*: Black loses a tempo by capturing a neutral piece with a neutral pawn, promoting to the exact same piece. Grolman & Evseev use neutral pieces of two different types (grasshopper and nightrider), both giving mate while being pinned by another neutral of the same kind. Turevski uses neutrals of the same kind, which has the clear advantage that the thematical pieces pin each other reciprocally in the mate. They also have the disadvantage that the thematical promoting capture(dxel=nG) is repeated in both solutions. The setting is heavy, but that is due to the set-play form – all black cookstoppers have to be immobile. And the Grolman/Evseev is even heavier! I find that this setting is different enough to merit a place in the award, especially considering the tries with 1...f4 and 1...nGc5, which fail only because of check to the wK, and which have no counterpart in the earlier problem (I believe).

I don't understand, however, why the composer hasn't put black pawns instead of rooks on a3 and h2 (as commentator JR points out). Did he want the number of pawns and grasshoppers to be not more than 8? But such calculations are meaningless when there are neutrals on the board, so it is clear from the outset that the position didn't occur in a game from the normal game array.

- 1...nGb4 2.nGe1 nGxg3#; 1...nGa5 2.nGe1 nGxe3#
- 1.nGb4 nGe1 2.dxe1=nG nGxg3#
- 1.nGa5 nGe1 2.dxe1=nG nGxe3#
- 1.nGb4 f4? 2.nGg4+ nGxg3??; 1.nGa5 nGc5 2.nGd4+ nGxe3??; 1.nGb4 nGe1 2.Gh3? nGxg3+ 3.Kh1; 1.nGa5 nGe1 2.Gd3+? nGxe3??

**1607 – Ramaswami Ganapathi and Guy Sobrecases (India / France)**

A charming chameleon echo built on a simple thought: a transmuting king can always capture the checking piece, but in Circe, this piece can guard itself. This setting is ideal in that no move is repeated and no technical pieces are needed (unless you consider the wK technical; it stops the dual Kc5).

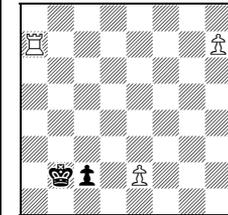
- 1.Sg6 fxg6(Sg8) 2.Sf6 g7 3.Sh7 g8=B+! 4.Kxg8(Bf1) Bc4#
- 1.Kb4! (1.Kc5?) f6 2.Sf5 f7 3.Sg7 f8=B+! 4.Kxf8(Bc1) Ba3#

**1608 – Peter Harris (South Africa)**

An economical AUW with some UltraMax tricks. 1.c1=S is a pure pre-closure of the first rank, as there is the alternative 1.Kb1[+bPb2]? Ra1[+wPa7] 2.Ka2 Rh1! And 3...h8=B is a specific selfblock against 5.Ka2! (but also the only white move that doesn't stop White from playing a8=R on the next move). Note also the similar try in b) 3.Rf1? Rg6 4.Rb1 Ra6[+wPg6]+ 5.Ka2!

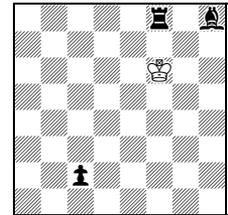
- a) 1.c1=S Ra1[+wPa7] 2.Ka2[+bPb2] e4 3.Kxa1[+bPa2] a8=Q 4.b1=B Qh8#
- b) 1.c1=R Rg7[+wPa7] 2.Ka1[+bPb2] Rg1[+wPg7] 3.Rxg1 h8=B 4.Rb1 a8=R#

**Peter Harris**  
*cm Mat Plus 2010*



h#4 b) -c2 3+2  
 WhiteMaximumber Ultra &  
 Sentinles

**Peter Harris**  
*cm Mat Plus 2010*



h#4.5 b) ♠c2>c3 1+3  
 Haaner Chess  
 AntiCirce

**1618 – Peter Harris (South Africa)**

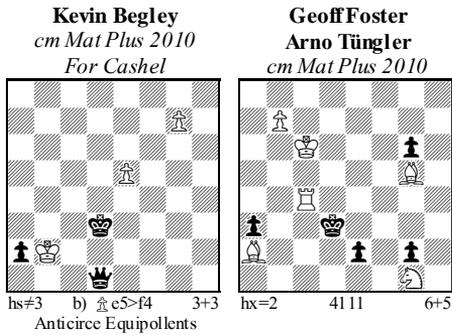
This is much simpler and less unified than its big brother 1617 above, but it too has two zugzwang mates after incarceration, and it has the advantage of excellent twinning and no black P on the back rank. Like in 1617, the wK captures its way to e1, but only in one mate does this stop him from capturing again later.

- a) 1...c1=S 2.Kg7 Se2 3.Kxf8>e1 Sg3 4.Kd2 Sh1 5.Kd1 Sf2#
- b) 1...Rd8 2.Kg7 Rd2 3.Kxh8>e1 Rb2 4.Ke2 Rc2 5.Kd1 Rc1#

**1619 – Geoff Foster (Australia)**

The ending is especially memorable, with all three bishops involved in restraining both kings. The play leading up to it is good too, with all eight pieces moving and the black bishop visiting all





**1743 – Kevin Begley (USA)**

A very AntiCirce-Equipollents-specific selfmate combination, echoed horizontally and diagonally, realized with an AUW which increases the value considerably. The twinning looks suspicious (why do we need a wP at all?) but is in fact a clever solution to a constructional problem. White must guard c4+e4 in one solution and e2+e4 in the other, which could also be done by a wQ from e6 and g4, respectively. White Ps on e5 and f4 stop these duals, but fortunately only one P is needed as Pe5 and Pf4 both also stop one of the solutions in a fairy-specific way – the right one! With wPe5, Kc3+ doesn't work because of 3...Kd4!, and with wPf4, Kd2+ doesn't work because of Ke3!

Black's play is not completely analogous: a1=S is played to give wK a quick route to d2, while a1=R is played to guard a3 (but not c3) against 4.Kxb3>a3.

- a) 1.g8=B a1=S 2.Bd5 Sc2 3.Kxc2>d2+ Kd4#
- b) 1.g8=Q a1=R 2.Qg2 Qb3+ 3.Kc3+ Ke3#

**1747 – Geoff Foster and Arno Tüngler (Australia / Germany)**

It is a bit unfair to the composers that one's first thought is "a failed Babson!" when one might as well think "black AUW with three matching white promotions!". I choose the latter interpretation, and enjoy the excellent economy of the setting. It is interesting that the CapZug stipulation (in the final position, Black is not in check and must capture) allows the differentiation of Q/R/B in only two moves.

- 1.e1=Q b8=Q 2.Qc3 Qb3x=
- 1.e1=R b8=R 2.Ra1 Rb1x=
- 1.e1=B b8=B 2.Bh4 Bg3x=
- 1.e1=S Kd5 2.Sc2 Rxc2x=

Stockholm 2015

**Kjell Widlert**