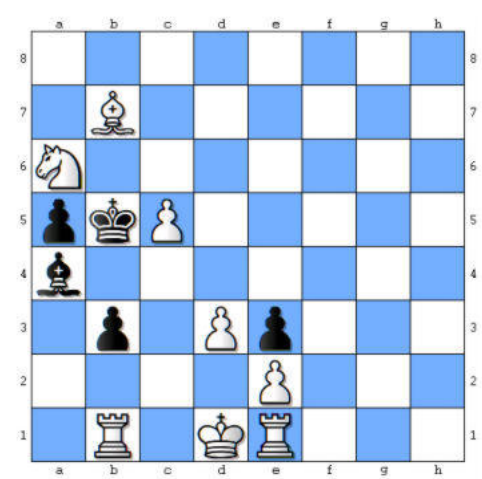




Udo Degener

S#10 (C+ - Brute Force tested)

1st Honorable Mention

A finely constructed selfmate based on accurate timing and harmonious cooperation among all White forces.

The initial set play already reveals the final mating picture after 1...b2#, while the actual solution develops this idea through a carefully prepared sequence of manoeuvres. Particularly pleasing is the way White gradually guides the black King along a predetermined route while simultaneously arranging the necessary placement of the remaining pieces. A sense of inevitability.

The Rook, Bishop and Knight all contribute actively to the execution of the plan, each performing a distinct strategic function. The play never feels redundant: every move serves a precise purpose, and several tempos must be judged with exact accuracy in order to reach the desired position.

The final phase, beginning with 5. Bc6, is especially convincing. White's pieces coordinate elegantly while Black's a-pawn becomes an essential component of the mating mechanism. The return to the mating picture already shown in the set play provides a satisfying sense of unity and completion.

Although the thematic content is relatively straightforward, the economy of the construction and the precise synchronization of the various components make this an enjoyable and technically accomplished selfmate.

Set play: **1...b2#**

Solution: **1. Kc1!** b2+ 2. Rxb2+ Bb3 3. Rxb3+ Ka4 4. Rb2 Ka3 5. Bc6 a4 6. Rb1 Ka2 7. Nb4+ Ka3 8. Nc2+ Ka2 9. Rd1 a3 10. Rb2+ **axb2#**

[Echo with Set Play]