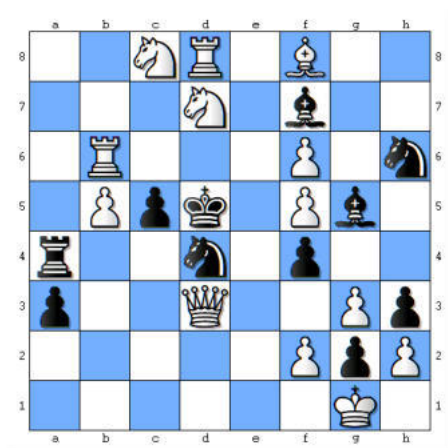




Michael Herzberg

S#12 (C+ - Brute Force tested)

>>> 1st Prize <<<

An extraordinarily fascinating construction in which Black appears to enjoy remarkable freedom, yet every defensive choice ultimately leads to the same unavoidable fate.

The play begins with a striking sequence of sacrifices that gradually strip away White's material while preserving the hidden mating mechanism. Elements of logic appear: it is important to free the f6 square. Particularly memorable is the repeated oscillation of the black King between d5 and e5, a curious motif that creates the impression of activity and escape while in reality guiding Black deeper into the composer's net.

The strategic heart of the problem lies in the paradoxical relationship between freedom and inevitability. Black's pieces seem unconstrained, and yet all roads converge towards the elegant finale 12. Qf3+ Qxf3#. The final mate appears almost predetermined long before it becomes visible.

A highly original work whose artistic strength comes not from forceful restriction, but from the illusion of unrestricted movement. In this sense it is perfectly in harmony with the spirit of the tourney: bending the rules to their limits while never violating their internal logic.

*Try: 1.Nxc5+ Ke5 2.Nd7+? Kd5 3. Rc6
(4. Qf3+ Sxf3#) 3. ...Bh5 4. g4 Bxg4 5. Nf6+?? Not possible.*

**Solution: 1. Nxc5+! Ke5 2. Bd6+! Kxf6
(2. ... Kd5 3. Bxf4+/Bc7+/Bb8+ Kxc5 4. Qc3+ Rc4 5. Bd6+ Kd5 6. Qf3+ Nxf3#)**

**3. Be5+ Kxe5 4. Nd7+ Kd5 5. Rc6 Bh5 6. g4 Bxg4 7. Nf6+ Ke5 8. Nxg4+ Nxg4
9. Rd5+ (9. Re8+?) Kxd5 10. Nb6+ Ke5 11. Nd7+ Kd5 12. Qf3+ Qxf3#**