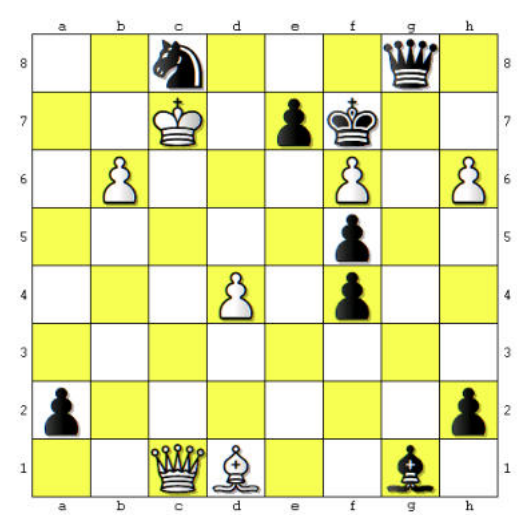




Ilham Aliev

White to move and win

5th Honorable Mention

This study is built around a striking sequence of successive Black promotions. The sacrificial opening 2. Bxe6+! initiates a dynamic battle in which Black appears to achieve extraordinary material success, only for each newly created Queen to become a temporary and ultimately vulnerable asset.

The thematic try 5. Qh8+? is a valuable introductory motif, highlighting the precise role of the stronger 5. Qg7+!. Particularly attractive is the central idea that White willingly allows multiple black promotions while maintaining complete control of the tactical narrative.

The finale is both economical and memorable. After the elimination of the first Queen, White proceeds to neutralize the next one and finally captures the third, producing the amusing and aesthetically satisfying effect of defeating three successive Queens in a single coherent scheme.

While the study does not pursue the radical frontiers explored by the prize-winning entries, it presents a clear thematic concept, precise execution and a highly enjoyable finish. These qualities make it a worthy Honorable Mention.

Solution: **1. Bb3+! e6**

(1. .. Kf8 2. b7 +-) **2. Bxe6+ ! Kxe6**

(2. .. Kxf6 3. Bxg8 h1=Q 4. b7 +-)

3. Qc4+ Kxf6 4. Qxg8 a1=Q

(4. .. h1=Q 5. Qg7+ Ke6 6. Qd7+ Kf6 7. b7 Qxb7+ 8. Kxb7 a1=Q 9. Qg7+)

(4. .. Ne7 5. Qg7+ Ke6 6. Qe5+ Kf7 7. Kd7 ! Kg6 8. b7 a1=Q 9. b8=Q +-)

5. Qg7+ ! {Thematic try:}

(5. Qh8+ {? but} Kf7 (5. .. Ke6 6. d5+ {see main line})) **6. Qg7+ Ke8 !)**

5. .. Ke6 6. d5+ Kxd5 7. Qxa1 h1=Q

(7. .. Nxb6 8. Qd1+ Ke5 9. Qe2+ Kf6 10. Qh5)

8. Qa8+ Kc5 9. Qxh1 1-0