FIDE World Cup 2025
in Composing Chess Problems

— Definitive awards —

This PDF file contains the final awards of the **FIDE World Cup 2025** in composing. A total of 279 problems and studies have been received. The following table gives a break down of the numbers for the various sections together with the numbers of prizes, honourable mentions and commendations awarded:

section	received		awarded	
		Pr	HM	Comm
twomovers	25	4	3	4
threemovers	28	3	3	2
moremovers	27	3	5	5
eg studies	43	5	5+2	3
helpmates	50	5	7	6+1
selfmates	26	4	3+1	3+1
heterodox	20	2	2	3
fairies	39	3+1	3	4
retros + pg	21	2	2	4
$\sum$	279	31+1	33+3	34+2

During the **claims stage**, three problems were found to be unsound (one selfmate and two retros). In contrast, one study that was deemed to be unsound is now included in the award. One helpmate and one retro turned out to partially anticipated. The awards have been adjusted by the judges accordingly. Also, there have been objections regarding the originality of the winner of the moremover section which the judge rejected as unjustified.

Winners:

section	Gold medal	Silver medal	Bronze medal
twomovers	Gvozdják	Murashev	Vasylenko
threemovers	Shavyrin	Doukhan	Kusovkov
moremovers	Banaszek	Shavyrin	Gavrilovski
eg studies	Pasman	Minski	Arestov
helpmates	Klemanič	Gavryliv	Petković
selfmates	Gvozdják	Oganesjan	Richter
heterodox	Petković	Turevski	Linß
fairies	Tribowski	Shankar Ram	Dyachuk
retros + pg	Prentos	Hambros	Parrinello

Notes: Two awards have not been translated into English. Given the availability of tools like *DeepL* and *Google Translate*, I consider a translation unnecessary.

Some solutions in the studies section are very short. The full solutions provided by the authors can be found in the PGN-file distributed with this award.

Torsten Linß (worldcupcomposing2025@gmail.com)

Hagen, 1 November 2025

Fairies

— Award by Thomas Maeder —

From tourney director Torsten Linß, I received 39 anonymous entries on uniform diagrams and with more or less homogenized notation of the solutions.

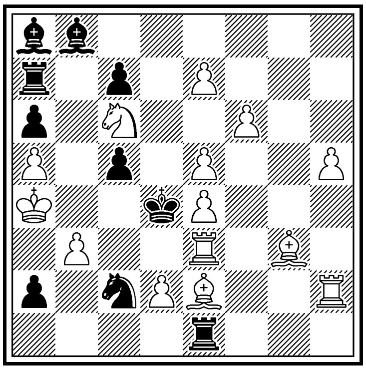
Among them were a number of top problems, but I was astonished by how many entries there are that would have difficulties making their mark in a mediocre tourney; I don't quite understand why the authors decided to submit these problems to a global competition.

I have also found some entries with very interesting ideas, but flaws in their realization. In an informal tourney, entries like this might land in the lower ranks, but this being a formal tourney where non-awarded entries remain unpublished, I generally decided not to include them in the award to give the authors the chance of success in a different tourney with an improved setting.

Fairy chess has been quantitatively dominated by problems with help-play stipulations in recent years, and this tourney is no exception: two thirds of the entries have a non-antagonistic stipulation. I am certainly not the only one to have recognized that composers have had a lot of success with such problems in many recent tourneys. So readers may be surprised that the top places of this tourney all have antagonistic stipulations. The reason for this phenomenon is two-fold: on the one hand, I have the impression that many judges are a bit too impressed – more than me anyway – by the harmony of play that can be achieved much more easily in help play than in, say, direct play; and on the other hand, almost all of the problems that I have mentioned in the second paragraph above are help-play problems.

But now to the awarded entries:

Marcel Tribowski
Gold medal



s#14 Isardam (14+10)

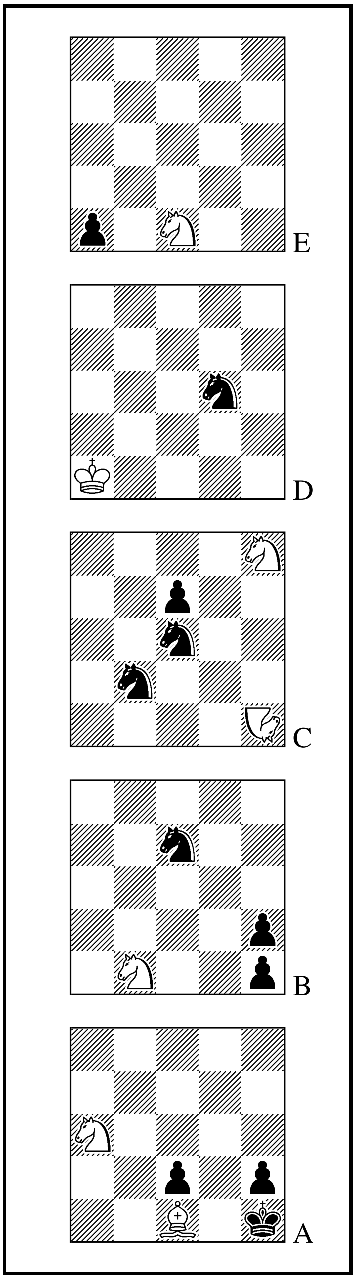
1st prize: no. 36

Pendulums with alternating guards and unguards are known from the orthodox selfmate field. But here, the motivations for both parts are very specific to Isardam, which seems highly original. Once one has discovered this mechanism, the foreplan almost plays itself. But what progress have we made? In the ensuing main plan, White uses a different sequence of alternating guards and unguards to improve the position of its Bg3 while keeping Black busy! Finally, the hR completes his roundtrip to deliver the decisive check; Black is forced to observe its own king while at the same mating the white king. A fantastic battle!

1.e8=L! [2.Td3+ K:e4 3.Lg6+ L:c6#] **Tb7** (i) **2.Lg6** (ii) [3.Td3+ Tb4#] **Ta7 3.Lf7** [4.Td3+ ...] **Tb7 4.Ld5** [5.Td3+] **Ta7 5.Lg8** [6.Td3+ ...] **Tb7 6.Th4** [7.Td3+] **Ta7 7.Lf4** [8.Td3+ ...] **Tb7** (iii) **8.Lh6** [9.Td3+] **Ta7 9.Th3** [10.Td3+ ...] **Tb7** (iv) **10.Td3+ K:e4 11.Ld5+ Kf5 12.Thf3+ Kg4 13.Tf2+ Kh4 14.Th2+ Tb4#**

i: 1...Tf1 2.L:f1 Tb7 3.Ld7 Ta7 4.Tf2 ∼/Tb7 5.Td3+ K:e4 6.Lf5+/Tf4+ L:c6#/Tb4#
ii: 2.Th4? Ta7 3.Lf4 Tg1!
iii: 7...Tf1 8.L:f1 Tb7 9.Lh2(Lg5,Lh6) Ta7 10.Thh3 Tb7 11.Le6 ∼/Ta7 12.Td3+ K:e4 13.Th4+/Lg2+ Tb4#/L:c6#, 7...Tg1 8.Td3+ K:e4 9.Lh7+ Tg6 10.L:g6+ L:c6#
iv: 9...Tf1 10.L:f1 Tb7 11.Thf3 ∼/Ta7 12.Td3+ K:e4 13.Tf4+/Lh7+ Tb4#/L:c6#

N. Shankar Ram
Silver medal



#4 (7+11)
3D-Chess
=Unicorn=(1:1:1)-Rider

2nd prize: no. 27

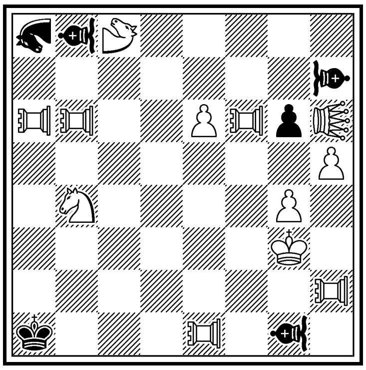
Problems on the $5\times5\times5$ "board" are so few and far between that they are almost automatically original. And here, we have an example that even realizes an ambitious theme: the Jacobs cycle with 4 thematic squares and 4 defenders!

On the 2d board, this idea seems to require the usage of fairy force (I know of a realization with Zebras), while the added dimension provides enough lines to get by without – I don't consider the Unicorn a fairy piece. The key move creates a Zugzwang position; this means that every first black move has to be looked at, and it's no wonder that a few of them have dualistic continuations. Luckily, play is unique after the vast majority of moves by each of the defenders, though.

1.Sa3A:c2A+? Sc4B/Sb2C/Sc3C:c2A!
1.Ue1C-d2B+? Sc4B/Sb2C/Sd3D:d2B!
1.Se5C-e3B+? Sc4B/Sc3C/Sd3D:e3B!
1.Sc1E-d1C+? Sb2C/Sc3C/Sd3D:d1C!

1.Ue1C-c3A! [ ]
1...Sc4B∼ 2.Sc1E-d1C+
  2...Sb2C:d1C 3.Se5C-e3B+ Sc3C/Sd3D:e3B
    4.Sa3A:c2A/Uc3A-d2B#
  2...Sc3C:d1C 3.Uc3A-d2B+ Sb2C/Sd3D:d2B
    4.Sa3A:c2A/Se5C-e3B#
  2...Sd3D:d1C 3.Sa3A:c2A+ Sb2C/Sc3C:c2A
    4.Uc3A-d2B/Se5C-e3B#
1...Sb2C∼ 2.Se5C-e3B+
  2...Sc4B:e3B 3.Sc1E-d1C+ Sc3C/Sd3D:d1C
    4.Sa3A:c2A/Uc3A-d2B#
  2...Sc3C:e3B 3.Uc3A-d2B+ Sc4B/Sd3D:d2B
    4.Sa3A:c2A/Sc1E-d1C#
  2...Sd3D:e3B 3.Sa3A:c2A+ Sc4B/Sc3C:c2A
    4.Uc3A-d2B/Sc1E-d1C#
1...Sc3C∼ 2.Uc3A-d2B+
  2...Sc4B:d2B 3.Sc1E-d1C+ Sb2C/Sd3D:d1C
    4.Sa3A:c2A/Se5C-e3B#
  2...Sb2C:d2B 3.Se5C-e3B+ Sc4B/Sd3D:e3B
    4.Sa3A:c2A/Sc1E-d1C#
  2...Sd3D:d2B 3.Sa3A:c2A+ Sc4B/Sb2C:c2A
    4.Se5C-e3B/Sc1E-d1C#
1...Sd3D∼ 2.Sa3A:c2A+
  2...Sc4B:c2A 3.Sc1E-d1C+ Sb2C/Sc3C:d1C
    4.Uc3A-d2B/Se5C-e3B#
  2...Sb2C:c2A 3.Se5C-e3B+ Sc4B/Sc3C:e3B
    4.Uc3A-d2B/Sc1E-d1C#
  2...Sc3C:c2A 3.Uc3A-d2B+ Sc4B/Sb2C:d2B
    4.Se5C-e3B/Sc1E-d1C#

Vasyl Dyachuk
Bronze medal



#2 4 solutions (12+6)
=Vao, =Lion, =Rook-,
=Bishop-, =Rose-,
=Nightrider-Lion

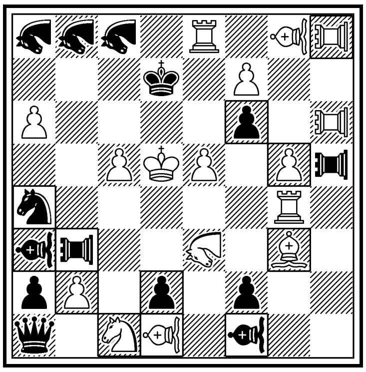
3rd prize: no. 28

4 white lions each guard a square allowing a mate when provided with a hurdle. Their move lines intersect on 3+2+1=6 squares. In the set play, moves by black pieces to these 6 squares lead to all 6 combinations of dual mates, as each black piece serves as hurdle for two white lions. With the key moves, White provides hurdles himself to threaten one of the mates. The same black moves now intercept one of the lion lines, so that the ensuing mates are now unique. When the dust settles, we count a le Grand theme on each of the intersection points and a plethora of cyclic shifts. Following traditional views of fairy economy, it would be better if all pieces were orthodox or lions. After toying a bit with the position, I am convinced that it would indeed be possible to eliminate the alien Vaos, but only at significant material cost. Similar traditional views would ask for 3 refutations, leaving only one real solution, but this again would be expensive to achieve (if at all). The composer opted for a light setting and astonishingly reached a position with only one cook-stopper. I can very well respect this decision.

1.Kg2! [2.TLa2# **A**] VAf2/LLc2/NLd2 **abc** 2.TLf1/RNa3/LIc1# **BCD**
1.Kf3! [2.TLf1# **B**] LLf5/VAf4/VAf2 **dea** 2.RNa3/LIc1/TLa2# **CDA**
1.e7! [2.RNa3# **C**] VAe3/LLc2/LLf5 **fbd** 2.LIc1/TLa2/2.TLf1# **DAB**
1.g5! [2.LIc1# **D**] NLd2/VAf4/VAe3 **cef** 2.TLa2/TLf1/RNa3# **ABC**

Participants: Balasubramanian, S. K.: 24 (2nd comm.); Braun, Paul: 8; Brull Mayol, Cosme: 1; Courthiau, Bernard: 23 (1st hon. ment.); Crişan, Vlaicu: 15 (1st comm.); Danstrup, Niels: 4; Dimitrov, Ognian: 16; Dyachuk, Vasyl: 28 (3rd pr.); Eilazyan, Eduard: 7; Feoktistov, Aleksandr: 38; Gasparyan, Alexey: 39; Gatti, Daniele: 14; Giakatis, Theodoros: 32; Golha, Ján: 3; Gvozdják, Peter: 37 (sp. pr.); Huber, Eric: 2; Klemanić, Emil: 35 (2nd hon. ment.); Kochulov, Igor: 34; Kotěšovec, Václav: 10 (4th comm.); Krätschmer, Ralf: 6; Linß, Torsten: 9 (3rd comm.); Lörinc, Juraj: 21; Nefyodov, Vladislav: 29; Novomesky, Daniel: 17; Pachl, Franz: 11; Parrinello, Mario: 33 (3rd hon. ment.); Rittirsch, Manfred: 31; Răican, Paul: 13; Semenenko, Valery: 12; Shankar Ram, N.: 27 (2nd pr.); Solja, Kenneth: 19; Stopochkin, Anatoli: 26; Tarasiuk, Vladislav: 30; Tar, Gábor: 22; Tribowski, Marcel: 36 (1st pr.); Tritten, Pierre: 25; Trommler, Sven: 5; Vieira, Ricardo de Mattos: 20; Vilkauskas, Antanas: 18.

Peter Gvozdják



r#2 (16+14)
♖♜=Rook-, ♗♝=Bishop-, ♘♞=Nightrider-Lion
paralysing pieces

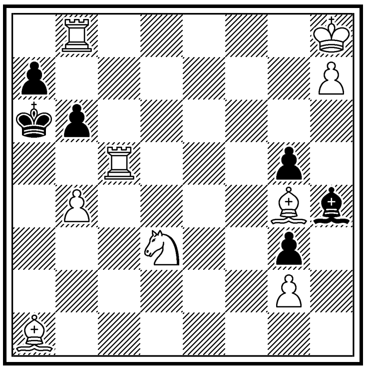
Spezial prize: no. 37

In 1974, Milan Velimirović realized his famous 3×3 Lačný cycle in an orthodox threemover. The problem relied on 3 flights of the black king: one of them needs to be attacked twice, by the white queen and another white piece, allowing the queen to deliver mate from that square; or all 3 squares have to be guarded for a mate, let's call it X, by a different piece. Some years later, young Miodrag Mladenović used the same mechanism in a reflexmate twomover with swapped colors; the fairy stipulation allowed for a much more elegant setting. Who would have thought that 50 years after Milan's pioneering work, the same mechanism would be used to show two 3×3 Lačnýs in one problem?? There is also a 6×3 Zagorujko, which would normally be a feat in itself, but looks like a simple addendum here. In r#2 settings, Black has to be prevented from playing the move X early as a disturbing check; Miodrag did this elegantly by unblocking a black pawn. In entry 37, the author(s) resort(s) to paralyzing lions: only after the hurdles on both paralysis lines have been removed can the black rook-lion deliver mate. Speaking of lions: White makes the thematical flights inaccessible either by 3 orthodox blocks or by 3 moves providing hurdles to a phalanx of black nightrider-lions. White can start with each of these 6 moves, forcing the black queen to attack one of the flights because of Zugzwang – the clumsy lions hardly have any moves. If White starts with providing a hurdle, we get a Lačný cycle of the blocking moves, and if White starts with a blocking move, the result is a Lačný cycle of the moves providing hurdles. Getting all this sound must have been extremely hard, and the position tells... 30 pieces were necessary, including a number of non-thematical paralyzing pieces, among them both lions and (otherwise) orthodox officers.

Three white pieces stand out negatively: apart from BLd1g8 also Bg3 even if this piece both prevents the unwanted queen mate on e5 and keeps the Rg4 on the 4th rank, forcing it to sacrifice itself rather than unguarding the thematical squares. I have therefore decided to give this problem a special treatment from those which obey to more traditional rules of economy.

1.TLb6? **A** [ ] D:c1 **a** 2.Tc4 **D** D:c4#, 1...Db1 **b** 2.Td4 **E** TLf5#, 1...D:b2 **c** 2.Te4 **F** TLf5#, 1...NLc4!
1.TLc6? **B** [ ] D:c1 **a** 2.Te4 **F** TLf5#, 1...Db1 **b** 2.Tc4 **D** TLf5#, 1...D:b2 **c** 2.Td4 **E** D:d4#,
1...NLe2 2.Kc4 D:c1#, 1...NLd4!
1.TLd6? **C** [ ] D:c1 **a** 2.Td4 **E** TLf5#, 1...Db1 **b** 2.Te4 **F** D:e4#, 1...D:b2 **c** 2.Tc4 **D** TLf5#, 1...NLe4!
1.Tc4? **D** [ ] D:c1 **a** 2.TLb6 **A** D:c4#, 1...Db1 **b** 2.TLc6 **B** TLf5#, 1...D:b2 **c** 2.TLd6 **C** TLf5#, 1...pLLb5!
1.Td4? **E** [ ] D:c1 **a** 2.TLd6 **C** TLf5#, 1...Db1 **b** 2.TLb6 **A** TLf5#, 1...D:b2 **c** 2.TLc6 **B** D:d4#, 1...NLe2!
1.Te4! **F** [ ] D:c1 **a** 2.TLc6 **B** TLf5#, 1...Db1 **b** 2.TLd6 **C** D:e4#, 1...D:b2 **c** 2.TLb6 **A** TLf5#

Bernard Courthiau



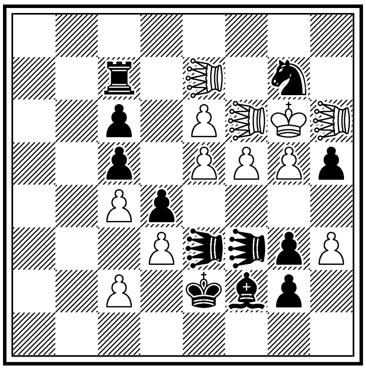
s#9 Circe (9+6)

1st honorable mention: no. 23

I am not quite sure about the purpose of the thematic tries given with the solution; it seems to me that Black doesn't have enough choice for making them interesting. Also, the key is rather strong as it has to establish the white rook's self-guard. But the white bishop has plenty of choice; as the climax of the problem, the key turns out to be a clearance of the long diagonal for the very specific play of the black bishop. All in all, an extremely entertaining composition with many surprising moves and good Circe-specific play!

1.Tc4? b5?, 1...Kb5!, 1.Sc1? b5?, 1...b:c5!
1.Lg7! b5 2.Tc4 b:c4[+wTh1] 3.Sc1 c3 4.Tf1 c2 5.Le6 g4 6.Tf6 Lg5 7.La2+ L:f6[+wTa1] 8.Lg8+ L:a1 9.Lb2 L:b2#

Emil Klemanič



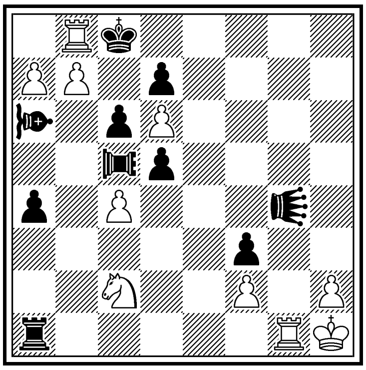
h#2.5 4;1.1;1.1 (12+12)
♕♛=Lion

2nd honorable mention: no. 35

An interesting "helpmate of the future?" problem showing two Zilahis. A different judge might have placed this among the prizes, but to me, everything about this composition makes a very static impression, from the many blocked pawns to the clumsy fairy pieces used.

1...LI:e3 2.K:e3 **a** LIh4 3.Kf4 LIh6#
1...LI:f3 2.K:f3 **b** LIhh4 3.Kf4 LIf6#
1...LIh7 2.LI:h6 LI:h5+ 3.Ke3 **a** LI:h6#
1...LIb7 2.LI:f6 LIe4+ 3.Kf3 **b** LI:f6#

Mario Parrinello



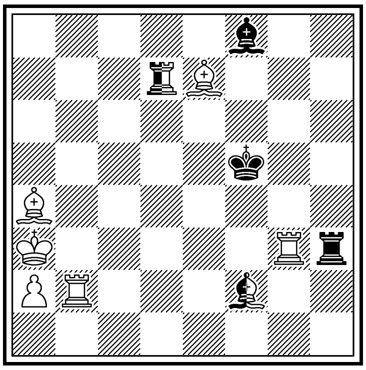
hs#3 Super Guards (10+10)
b) ♘c2→b2 c) ♘c2→g6
♛=Lion
♜=Rook-Lion
♝=Bishop-Lion

3rd honorable mention: no. 33

As far as I can tell, this is an original cycle of eliminations of Super Guards. The twinning changes give away a lot. Also, the mates to the white king are very orthodox.

a) 1.Tc1 LIb4 2.S:b4 TL:c1 3.S:a6+ TLc5#
b) 1.Td1 LLd3 2.S:d3 LI:d1 3.S:c5+ LIg4#
c) 1.Tf1 TLe5 2.S:e5 LL:f1 3.S:g4+ LLa6#

Vlaicu Crişan



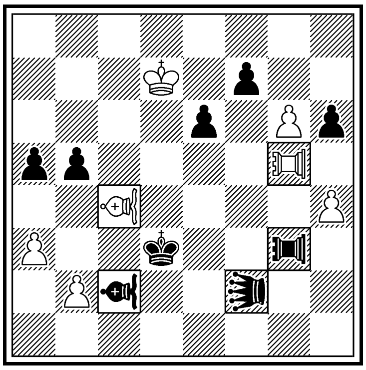
hs#3 2.1;1.1;1.1 (6+3+2)
Anda

1st commendation: no. 15

Perfect orthogonal-diagonal echo with good usage of the entire board. I would like to see more Anda-specific choices in the play; e. g. that the black king would only have to wait on f5 to allow the white pieces to become neutral; but in this problem, the order of the black moves is also (and more prominently) determined by the very orthodox need to evacuate d7 and f2 early.

1.L:f8 nL:g3 2.Tf2[=n]+ Ke6 3.nTd6[=w]+ nL:d6[=s]#
1.T:h3 nT:e7 2.Ld7[=n]+ Kf4 3.nLe3[=w]+ nT:e3[=s]#

S. K. Balasubramanian



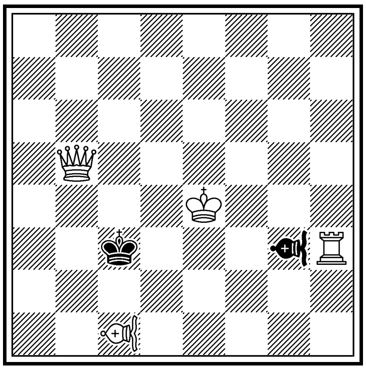
h#2 (7+9)
=Leo, =Pao, =Vao
BUL-pieces c2 f2 g3 c4 g5

2nd commendation: no. 24

Rich play with lots of Bul effects. I have never used Bul pieces in my compositions, but I imagine that it is very difficult to compose something satisfactory, mainly because most moves will end up having multiple purposes, which runs totally against the economy of aims that I usually attempt to achieve; this composition is certainly no exception here. Also, there is more static force on each side of the board than I would like to see.

1.bVA:g6[sK→f5] bPA:b5[sK→h5] 2.bLE:h4[sbPA→g4] bVA:f7[sB→f5]# (2...bVA:f7[sB→d5]? 3.bVAf5!)
1.bPA:a3[sK→d5] bVA:e6[sK→a2] 2.bLE:b2[sbVA→b1] bPA:a5[sB→b3]# (2...bPA:a5[sB→d5]? 3.bPAb3!)

Torsten Linß



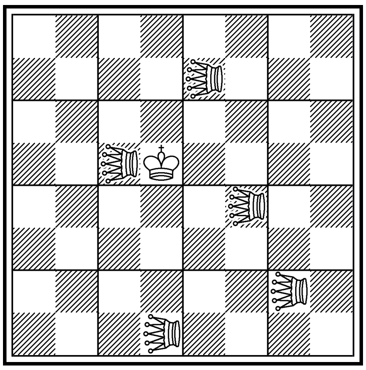
s#13* (4+2)
=Cardinal

3rd commendation: no. 9

Almost-echo in two corners. This wouldn't impress me a lot in a helpplay problem; but we have antagonistic play here, and the Cardinals are adequately used.

1...Kc2 2.Dc6+ Kb3 3.Kd5 Kb4 4.Dc4+ Ka5 5.CLd2+ Kb6 6.Da6+ Kc7 7.Db7+ Kd8 8.Th8+ CLe8 9.Ke5 CLf8 10.CLg5+ Ke8 11.Dd5 CLg8 12.De6+ Kf8 13.Kf6 CL:h8#,
1.Kd5 Kc2 2.Db1+ Kc3 3.De4 Kb3 4.Kc5 Kc3 5.Kc6 Kb3 6.Dd3+ Kb4 7.CLa3+ Ka5 8.Dd5+ Ka6 9.Db5+ Ka7 10.Da5+ Kb8 11.CLb5+ Kc8 12.Da8+ CLb8! 13.Td3 CL:a8#

Václav Kotěšovec



ser-!=9 4 solutions (6+0)
Grid chess
=Sparrow

4th commendation: no. 10

Echos in help (or series) play are a dime a dozen. Luckily, this entry uses a very original combination of fairy elements, though, and with one exception, all pieces move in each solution.

1.SPd4 2.Ke4 3.Kd3 4.Kd2 5.Ke1 6.SPd2 7.SPfe2 8.SP4e3 9.SPcd3!=
1.Kd4 2.Ke3 3.SPd4 4.Kf2 5.SPfg3 6.SPdf3 7.Kg1 8.SPf1 9.SPdf2!=
1.SPe5 2.Ke6 3.Kd7 4.SPdc6 5.Ke8 6.SPd8 7.SPcd7 8.SP5d6 9.SPfe6!=
1.Ke4 2.Kf5 3.Kg4 4.Kh5 5.SPg5 6.SPh4 7.SPfg4 8.SPcf4 9.SPef5!=