Facebook: Chess Endgame Studies and Compositions Solving Ladder
Leg 1, Round 3, August 2021
Solutions, Comments and Results

1) Francis JC de Blasio
Sjakk-Nytt, 1947

1.♘d4!   **(5)**

(2.♘b3#)

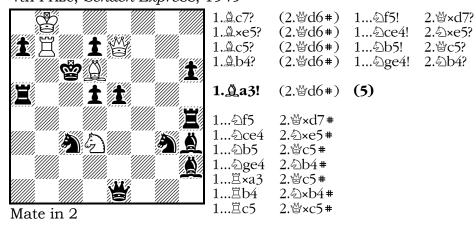| 1...♗c3+	2.♕×c3#
1...♗×d4	2.♕×d4#
1...♗a3,♗c1	2.♘c2#

Mate in 2

"Every move defeats the threat. Is this two-mover a threat problem or a waiter? Unusual to be contemplating this question *after* solving." (Rhodes Peele) The answer to this question is unclear. A threat that never happens, such as this one, is termed a **virtual threat**.

Francis de Blasio was a lesser-known composer from the USA. He seems to have been active mainly between the years 1944 and 1956. He composed little more than 100 problems, mostly heavy affairs featuring intense pinning and unpinning effects, as was fashionable in those days. This miniature, one of 13 he created, displays his lighter side.

2) Siegfried Brehmer
4th Prize, *Schach-Express*, 1949

1.♗c7?	(2.♕d6#)	1...♘f5!	2.♕×d7?
1.♗×e5?	(2.♕d6#)	1...♘ce4!	2.♘×e5?
1.♗c5?	(2.♕d6#)	1...♘b5!	2.♕c5?
1.♗b4?	(2.♕d6#)	1...♘ge4!	2.♘b4?

1.♗a3!   (2.♕d6#)   **(5)**

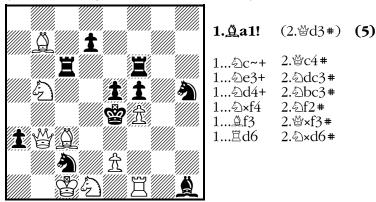| 1...♘f5	2.♕×d7#
1...♘ce4	2.♘×e5#
1...♘b5	2.♕c5#
1...♘ge4	2.♘b4#
1...♖×a3	2.♕c5#
1...♖b4	2.♘×b4#
1...♖c5	2.♕×c5#

Mate in 2

"1.Ba3 obvious first guess, but not so easy to eliminate alternatives." (Hugh Gilbert) "Four of the five moves of the Bd6 are tries, each defeated by a different one of Black's four thematic defenses …gSe4, …Sb5, …Sf5 and …cSe4. The fifth move 1.Ba3 is the actual key." (Rhodes Peele) 1.Bxe5?, 1.Bc5? and 1.Bb4? are tries with a common error - the blocking of the potential mating square. 1.Bc7? though is different, it interferes with the guard of the potential mating square.

German composer Siegfried Brehmer (1917-1996) was a very influential proponent of the New German School of Chess Composition, famous for his logical three and more-movers. The book *100 & ein Schachproblem von Seigfried Brehmer* by Brehmer himself and Wieland Bruch, produced to their exceptionally high standards by *Editions feenschach-phénix* in 1996 is warmly recommended, if you can obtain a copy.

3) Arthur R Gooderson
The Problemist, 1944
(correction by José Antonio Coello)

1.♗a1! (2.♕d3#) **(5)**

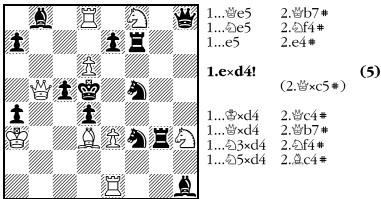|	
1...♘c~+	2.♕c4#
1...♘e3+	2.♘dc3#
1...♘d4+	2.♘bc3#
1...♘×f4	2.♘f2#
1...♗f3	2.♕×f3#
1...♖d6	2.♘×d6#

Mate in 2

As in the previous problem, a white bishop has to move to threaten mate, this time by letting the wQ through to the mating square. 1.Bd2? fails to 1...exf4! as do other moves by that piece that move off the a1-e5 diagonal, though they also fail to 1...Rd6! 1.Bb2? fails to 1...axb2+!, 1.Bd4? to 1...exd4! and 1.Bxe5? to 1...Sxf4! The excellent key allows checks by the bSc2. Random checks, by unguarding the line c4-e4 allow 2.Qc4#, but Black can correct this error by 1...Se3+ or 1...Sd4+. However, both these moves block a square next to the bK, allowing one of the white knights to unguard it and mate. Both white knights get a second mate. "It is a pity that a white piece Rf1 guards only f4." (Ioannis Garoufalidis). Ioannis suggests a version – remove wRf1, add wPg3 and move bSh5 to h3. This indeed replaces a wR by a wP, which is good, but there are two consequences. Firstly 1...Sxf4 is now a simple unguard rather than a self-block followed by a white interference mate. In the original position this gives 1...Sxf4 unity with 1...Sd4+ which shows similar strategy. Secondly, it introduces the defence 1...Sf2 leading to a repeat of 2.Sf2#, which some composers would wish to avoid. As Ioannis writes, the bS can't stay on h5 in his version as 1...Sxg3! would refute the key. Of course, these issues are matters of style and opinion. Very good to see solvers questioning construction though. 😊

Arthur Gooderson (1906-1981) was a British composer who was active during the transition between the traditional two-mover, where the interest was mainly limited to the key, the play following it and any changes from the set play, and the modern school where the focus widened to include tries and the play following them. He was an inspiration and mentor to the young composers of the UK who started their careers in the 1950s, some of whom are still active today.

4) Bjarne Blikeng
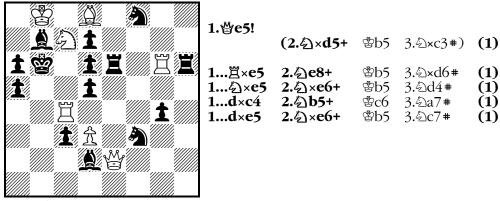1st Prize, *Problemisten*, 1944

Mate in 2

1...♕e5	2.♕b7#
1...♘e5	2.♘f4#
1...e5	2.e4#

1.e×d4! **(5)**
(2.♕×c5#)

1...♔×d4	2.♕c4#
1...♕×d4	2.♕b7#
1...♘3×d4	2.♘f4#
1...♘5×d4	2.♗c4#

In the set play there are three mates after self-blocks on e5, but no mate after the strong defence 1...Ke5. The key takes that flight, but gives d4 in return. There follow four variations where black pieces move to d4, leading to three self-blocks. "Suspiciously simple!" (Hugh Gilbert) "In two-movers, Black's most defended square (here, d4) is sometimes his weak point. I think Alabama composer Steven Dowd and his correspondents have mentioned this several times on Facebook recently. I am tempted to call this solving aid *Dowd's Rule!*" (Rhodes Peele) No solver mentioned the set play and so all may have missed the point of the problem, which is **Total Change** – the defences and mates between phases (here set and actual) are different while the strategy, here self-blocks, remains the same. There is also **Mate Transference** – the mates 2.Qb7# and 2.Sf4# from the set play reappear in the actual play, but after different defences. Given the prominent unprovided flight, the solvers can be forgiven for missing all this, if indeed they did miss it.

Bjarne Blikeng was a prominent Norwegian composer.

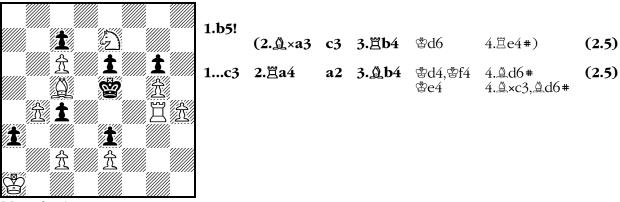### 5) Rudolf M Larin
Uralski Problemist, 1999

Mate in 3

1.♕e5!

	(2.♘×d5+	♔b5	3.♘×c3#) **(1)**
1...♖×e5	2.♘e8+	♔b5	3.♘d6# **(1)**
1...♘×e5	2.♘×e6+	♔b5	3.♘d4# **(1)**
1...d×c4	2.♘b5+	♔c6	3.♘a7# **(1)**
1...d×e5	2.♘×e6+	♔b5	3.♘c7# **(1)**

I couldn't resist the Dowdian (queen sacrifice) key which threatens a check from the B+S battery followed by a double-check mate from the newly-formed Q+S battery. Black's captures lead to four more openings of the B+S battery, this time followed by mate by the knight without double-check. These four variations are called **Siers Batteries** after the German composer Theodor Siers (1910-1991).

Rudolf Larin (1940-2016) was a Russian composer who was originally from Belarus.

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6) Jan Hartong
Die Schwalbe, 1929

Mate in 4

1.b5!

	(2.♗×a3	c3	3.♖b4	♚d6	4.♖e4#)	**(2.5)**

1...c3	2.♖a4	a2	3.♗b4	♚d4,♚f4	4.♗d6#	**(2.5)**
				♚e4	4.♗×c3,♗d6#	

A problem that illustrates the most famous chess problem theme of all – the **Indian** theme, here doubled. An Indian manoeuvre consists of a white critical move through a critical square, followed by a self-interference on the critical square for the purpose of relieving stalemate, and finally a discovered mate. Once seen, never forgotten and if it stumps you the first time, you will be looking out for it thereafter and it is unlikely to defeat you ever again. The theme gets its name from the first problem to show it, which was by Henry Loveday (1815-1848) a composer resident in India.

Jan Hartong (1902-1987) was one of several great Dutch composers who lived during the twentieth century.

Facebook Chess Solving Ladder, Leg 03, 2021

Name	Ascents	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	Leg Total	Cumulative Total
Hugh Gilbert	0	30.0	25.0	25.0				80.0	80.0
Rhodes Peele	0	25.0	25.0	25.0				75.0	75.0
Geoff Brown	0	30.0	23.5	20.0				73.5	73.5
Ene Florian	0	28.0	15.0	30.0				73.0	73.0
Christian Westrapp	0	30.0	-	-				30.0	30.0
Ioannis Garoufalides	0	-	-	30.0				30.0	30.0
Alex King	0	29.0	-	-				29.0	29.0
Stanislas Loiret	0	29.0	-	-				29.0	29.0
Chris Shephard	0	-	-	24.0				24.0	24.0

Welcome to new solvers Ioannis Garoufalides and Chris Shephard!