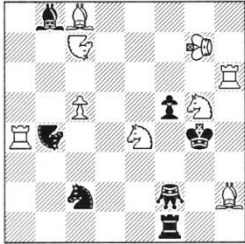
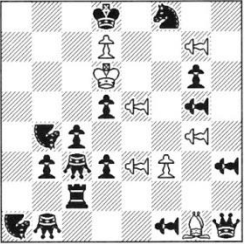
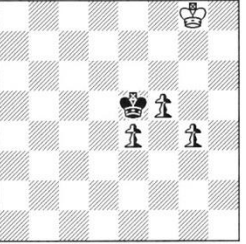
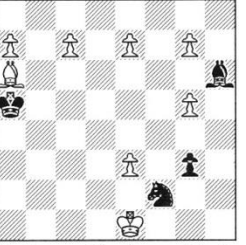


Israel Ring Tourney: Fairies Award 2004-2005

Judge: Tadashi Wakashima (Japan)

I thank the editor Uri Avner for inviting me to judge the prestigious Israel Ring Tourney and providing me all the diagrams and solutions. Thirty problems participated. Contrary to my high expectation, the general level seems rather unimpressive. Unfortunately no prize is given due to the lack of outstanding problems. I selected two honourable mentions and two commendations.

A few words have to be said about problems that do not appear in the list of awards. To my surprise, I found a large number of series-helpmates/selfmates (13 out of 30) among the entries and all of them were disappointments. Shields, underpromotions, unique mating positions [**1171** (Bunka), **1172** (Nagnibida), **1173** (Tzur), **1227** (Bakcsi & Zoltán), **1229** (Tzur), **1231** (Mintz), **1435** (Érsek)] are too familiar and do not make good problems; even AUW [**1174** (Nedelyković)] does not justify the problem because it has been done so many times. As for the seriesmovers with fairy conditions (Circe, Madrasi), the only question that should be asked is, are there any new ideas impossible to realize without such fairy conditions? **1228** (Nagnibida), **1331** (Érsek), **1333** (Nagnibida) do not give an answer to this question. A germ of an idea can be found in **1436** (Nagnibida). Instead of B-promotion in the actual play, Q-promotion almost works until the very end. But then the mating move Rxd6 (+Qd8) turns out to be selfcheck. Now that is an idea, however slight. I prefer Q-promotion in the actual play rather than in the try. And you can say that Circe-effect is underemployed here (only in the mating move).

Uri Avner 1 st HM IRT 2004-05 	Alberto Armeni 2 nd HM IRT 2004-05 	Michael Grushko 1 st Comm IRT 2004-05 	György Bakcsi & László Zoltán 2 nd Comm IRT 2004-05 
#2 ^v (9+7) Transmuting white King Grasshopper; Nightriders	#2 (8+16) ♗=Grasshopper ♞=Nightrider; ♚♛=Orphan	a) H#4 b) H=4 (1+1+3) Circé Parrain Neutral Pawns e4,f5,g4	S=7 Circé (8+4) Black must capture

Let's turn to other problems. We have three problems with orphans and I am happy to say that they are not alone. **1437** (Armeni) shows a deft way of handling a difficult orphan with few materials. Three solutions are a good find, but it is a pity that the mating moves are the same. **1230** (Armeni) is marred heavily by the almost same variations. And the last one, **1334** (Armeni), will appear in the award. In the Anticirce **1233** (Wenda), an obvious defect is of course the use of symmetry. But there is a larger defect. In the first solution, 2.Rf6? does not work because after 3...a8=B+ black can defend by 4.Rf1! And in the second solution, 2.Qb6 does not have a plausible try corresponding to 2.Rf6? **1330** (Grushko & Ettinger) can be served as a good introduction to Einstein Chess (especially the triple step is fine), but nothing more. And finally, here is my selection and ranking.

1st Honourable Mention: Vm 1438, Uri Avner

Reciprocal change by orthogonal/diagonal transformation. The reversal of check/non-check is a familiar mechanism, but here the composer adds a new twist. The play centers on the square f6 and the possibility/impossibility to arrive there from both sides. This gives the problem a paradoxical effect. The construction is also good. I only wish if the try 1.Ba6? can be the actual key because it is less blunt and the byplay is richer with a fine switchback mate.

1.Ba6? (2.Be2#) 1...Gb6 2.Sf6# (A) [2.Ne8+? Nf6!] 1...Gb2 2.Nd8# (B) [Black cannot defend by 2...Nf6?? because Gb2 is then attacking the transmuted WK who, by assuming the power of his attacker, checks the BK. That is exactly why the condition Transmuted White King is employed here. And of course, 2.Sf6#?? is selfcheck.] 1...fxe4/Re1/Se1(Sd4)/Nd3(Nc6,Na6)/Gf6 2.Bc8/Sxf2/Ne3/Sf6,Sxf2/Sxf6#; but 1...f4!; 1.Kg6! (2.Bxf5#) 1...Gb6 2.Ne8# (B) [This time, Black cannot intercept the N-line by 2...Nf6?? because of the selfcheck to BK from transmuted WK. And also 2.Sf6#?? is selfcheck.] 1...Gb2 2.Sf6# (A) [2.Ne8+? Nf6!] 1...Se3(Sd4)/Gf6 2.Ne3/Sxf6#.

2nd Honourable Mention: Vm 1334, Alberto Armeni (Italy)

8 distinct mates by orphans is an achievement. However, the overall impression is rather mixed. The reason is that Oe5 acts as Q/G/S, Og7 as G/S, Og4 as G/N, and Og3 as N. A certain unity is needed here. I think there are other possibilities worth exploring. For example, if we can find a better configuration of orphans and 1...h2xg1=Q/R/B/S/G/N leads to 6 distinct mates by orphans, it will be much more unified. And as you can see above, Black Of1 is a lonely orphan: he does not participate in the activated chains, and acts only as a hurdle for Gb1. How sad.

In the diagram, Oe3 can move as a Grasshopper (Gc3->Oe3). 1.Oe3-e6+? (Sf8->Oe6) 1...Sxe6 2.Og7-e8# (Se6->Og7) but 1...Og5xe6+! (Sf8->Oe6->Og5); 1.Oe3-h6? (2.Bb6#) Na6!; 1.Oe3-g3! (2.Bb6#) 1...Gxg1 2.Og4-c8# (Gg1->Og4) 1...Qxg1 2.Oe5-e8# (Qg1->Og3->Oh3->Og4->Og5->Oe5) [Please note that 2.Oe5-e7+? does not work because 2...Og5xe7+! (see the chain above).] 1...Rf2 2.Og4-e8# (Na1->Og4) 1...Ga5, Gc5, d4 2.Oe5-c7# (Ga5, Gc5, Gc3->Oe5) 1...Ge3 2.Og7-c7# (Ge3->Og3->Og5->Og7) 1...Na6 2.Og3-e7# (Na6->Og3) 1...Sxd7 2.Oe5xd7# (Sd7->Oe5) 1...Se6 2.Og7-e8# (Se6->Og7).

1st Commendation: Vm 1287, Michael Grushko

There are very few known examples of Circé Parrain problem with strong strategic elements. **1287** is no exception. Trying to solve this, you just move pieces blindly without any idea of what is going on. The only thing for sure is that in the final positions, the black king will be on the edge of the board. It is so unrewarding for solvers. What gave this problem a commendation is a small change in the final positions. But what a big difference it makes!

a) 1.Kf4 nPxf5 2.Kg5 [+nPg6] nPxg6 3.Kh6 [+nPh7] Kf7 4.nPxg6 Kf6 [+nPg5]#
 b) 1.Kf4 Kg7 2.Kxg4 nPxf5 [+nPh5] 3.Kxh5 [+nPg6] Kf6 [+nPg4]+ 4.Kh6 nPxg6=

2nd Commendation: Vm 1440, György Bakcsi & László Zoltán (Hungary)

I love the humour of this entertaining bagatelle.

1.g8=B! Zugzwang 1...Bxg5 [+wPg2] 2.e8=B Bxe3 [+wPe2] 3.a8=B Kxa6 [+wBf1] 4.Bb7+ Kxb7 5.c8=B+ Kxc8 6.Bd7+ Kxd7 7.Be6+ Kxe6=