Vm77 (IV 2019): 3193v (p. 14), 3230-3242 [14]. Vm78 (VIII 2019): 3285-3302 [18].
Vm79 (XII 2019): 3356-3378 [23].

This sums up to a good number of 55 problems, of which one was a duplicate (3362=3297) and one was cooked (3376). There was a rich variety of styles and types of fairies, and the award reflects this multitudinousness. Only when finally writing down the award, I got aware that four of the five top placed problems are from composers from my own country. I apologize for that, but I assure that this played no role in judging. I hope that those excellent problems speak for themselves.

1st Prize: Var. 3236 Armin Geister & Daniel Papack

Black has two masked batteries (h3-d8-h4; e3-h8-h4) which could be activated by the white battery (white pawns b4, b7 as rear pieces, rook b2 as front piece). However, any move of the rook b2 delivers mate (instead of a simple check), because both white pawns check via b2, and all royal flights are taken. Therefore, the battery must be devaluated by capturing one of the b-pawns so that a rook move checks only once. A second plan that secures the final mate is to move away the masking white pawn from the black battery. This can only be achieved by allowing the pawns (g5, h5) to capture a black piece. Therefore, a black piece has to be sacrificed – either the rook on f3 or the queen on g3. The non-checkmating piece from one solution is sacrificed in the respective other solution. The square to which the black piece wants to move is blocked by a white piece in the diagram position, so a clearance is needed in the first move. In the end, a white pawn would control the mating piece, thus care has to be taken, and the rebirth square of that pawn is blocked by an exact arrival move of a white piece. Even worse, the mating piece would also be controlled by a white officer, so exact white arrival moves have to be played once again. It is a splendid feature that there is a little asymmetry, as in the first solution first the officer's rebirth square is blocked, then the pawn's rebirth square, and vice versa in the second solution. This way it is ensured that the order of the moves is unique. White and Black change their pieces' roles how to co-ordinate all the tasks.

Finally, there is a change of 2ⁿᵈ and 3ʳᵈ black moves in a wonderfully fairy specific orthogonal-diagonal transference, full of strategy in each of the twelve single moves. Fairy chess at its best – the outstanding winner of this tournament!

1.♕h1 ♖f3 2.g5-g2xf3 ♗h7-cxb7 3.♕g2+ ♗f6-f8xb4#
1.♗f2 ♖g3 2.h5-h2xg3 ♗f6-fxb4 3.♖d2+ ♗h7-c8xb7#

2ⁿᵈ Prize: Var. 3287 Hubert Gockel

A simple pattern, but ingeniously worked out: three black pieces guard the black king, so the unit e2 has to find a hide-away, and White has to capture both knights (White has to capture with the same piece, first promoting the pawn e7, then capturing with the promoted unit). But where to hide? And in which order to capture the knights? And which promotion is the right one, rook or queen? In four phases, both promotions and both move orders are combinatorily connected, and the respective correct choice is determined by (and determines) the black hide-away strategy. So the black and white play are wonderfully interwoven. In a), the rook can hide only by capturing a white piece which guards a flight. This flight has to be taken in the mating move, which therefore lands on square f8 if Black captures on h4, and it lands on d8 when Black captures on c5. In both cases, a promotion to queen in the first move would protect the piece to be captured, thus White has to promote to rook. In b), the queen checks either in the first or in the second move. So White has to protect the king in the respective first or second move, thus White has to promote to queen. What a deep pattern in an open position, with excellent twinning.

a) 1.♖c2 e7xf8=♖ 2.♖c2xc5 ♖f8xd8 # 1.♖h2 e7xd8=♖ 2.♖h2xh4 ♖d8xf8 #
b) 1.♕e2xa2+ e7xd8=♕ 2.♕a2xb3 ♕d8xf8# 1.♕b2 e7xf8=♕ 2.♕b2-a3+ ♕f8xd8#

3ʳᵈ Prize: Var. 3291 Václav Kotěsovec

Wow – computer find or not: such a big and large echo in diagonally opposite corners without twinning is really great. Of course, the individual moves do not show much strategy, but the overall impression is entertaining and miraculous at the same time.
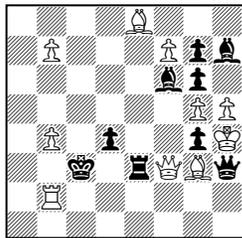
1...♘f3 2.♔b1 ♞e2 3.♔c2 ♖b3+ 4.♔c3 ♔d1 5.♔d4 ♖e5 6.♔d5 ♖e4 7.♔d4 ♖c3 8.♔d3 ♖ec2
9.♔c4 ♖d5 10.♔b4 ♖a5 11.♔c3 ♖d2 12.♔b3 ♔c1 13.♔a2 ♖d1 14.♔a1 ♖b3=
1...♖h5 2.♔a2 ♖f3 3.♔b3 ♖c2 4.♔c4 ♔h5 5.♔d5 ♖c6+ 6.♔e5 ♖f6 7.♔f5 ♖g6 8.♔e6 ♖d5
9.♔d7 ♖e8 10.♔e7 ♖d8 11.♔f6 ♖g5 12.♔f7 ♔h6 13.♔g8 ♖h5 14.♔h8 ♖f7=

1ˢᵗ Honorable Mention: Var. 3298 Sven Trommler & Franz Pachl

Both white pieces are pinned. They are replaced by like black pieces (after a switchback of the white king which enables the white piece to leave the line). The pin thus is transformed into a battery, and this battery is provoked to fire by a check of the previously pinned white piece. The knight and the fifth black officer take flights of the white king. The excellent twinning leads to a perfect Orthogonal-Diagonal Transformation, in which all rooks and all bishops change their functions. It is a pity that the scheme does not allow to make use of the remaining pin in the mate. The perfect harmony leaves a strong aesthetic impression despite the many pawns.
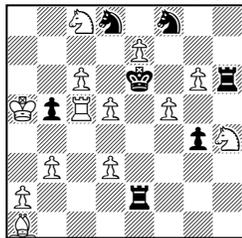
a) 1.♔f4 ♞d2 2.♗e4 ♗f5 3.♔e5 ♖f1 4.♗c6 + ♗d7#
b) 1.♔e4 ♞e2 2.♖xb4 ♖d4 + 3.♔e5 ♗f3 4.♖b8 + ♖d8#

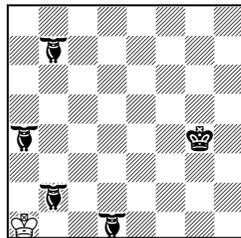| Geister & D. Papack 1ˢᵗ Prize IRT 2019	Hubert Gockel 2ⁿᵈ Prize IRT 2019	Václav Kotěsovec 3ʳᵈ Prize IRT 2019	S. Trommler F. Pachl 1ˢᵗ HM IRT 2019

HS#3 2.1.1.. 10+9 Marscirce	H#2 b) e2=♕ 13+7 Superguards	HS=13.5 2.1.1.. 1+5 BishopHopper ♜	HS#4 b)♞e4→f4 5+14
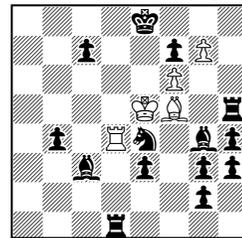
2nd Honorable Mention: Var. 3358 Hubert Gockel

A modern pattern-play two-mover which has the merit to explore the affordances offered by the new invention Breton. This is an easy-to-understand condition with considerable potential. Captures of officers get a new interpretation here, they are not necessarily coarse as the capturing side loses a strong piece as well. The themes Dombrovskis, threat correction and threat return are presented in a fresh manner with plenty of fairy effects. 1.b3? [2.♖e5 **A**#] 1...♞xf7[-♗a7] 2.♞b6# but 1...fxe3[-♗a7] a! 1.b4 ? [2.♖d4 **B** #] but 1...♗xc5[-♞d8] b ! ♕xd7[-♙b2] ? [2.♕xd6[-♖g4] C #]

1...fxe3[-♗a7] a 2.♖e5 A # 1...♗xc5[-♞d8] b 2.♖d4 B # 1...♞b8 2.♞b6# 1...♞b7 2.♗xe6[-♙g5] # 1...♞xf7[-♗a7] 2.♞b6# but 1...♖xd7[-♛g3] !   **1.♕xd7[-♙g5]** ! [2.♖g5#] 1...fxe3[-♗a7] a 2.♖e5 **A** #

1...♗xc5[-♞d8] 2.♖d4 **B** # 1...♞h3 2.♕xd6[-♖g4] #   1...♞xf7[-♗a7] 2.♞b6#

3rd Honorable Mention: Var. 3290 Mikhail Khramtsevich & Aleksandr Bulavka

Ambitious and original: a black lion hops over the black king to provide a hurdle for a white lion, which then enters the line, landing between the black king and the black lion. In the second white move, the lion hops over the black lion and at the same time uses it as a hurdle to check and mate the king. The black bishop enters the square left by the lion, a neighbor square of the king. The purpose of the bishop move is to provide a block – however, it does not block the king, but the lion! This is absolutely harmonious in each of the four twins, and all white lions play a role in each of the mates. A wonderful idea, but it is a deplorable drawback that the twinning is inhomogeneous and that thematic black pieces are moved in each twinning.   a) 1.♌g2 ♌f3 2.♗d5 ♌h1#

b) 1.♌g6 ♌f5 2.♗d3 ♌h7# c) 1.♌e7 ♌e5 2.♗e3 ♌e8# d) 1.♌b4 ♌d4 2.♗f4 ♌a4#

4th Honorable Mention: Var. 3242 Václav Kotěsovec

Many years ago, the author published a booklet in which he presented a collection of several hundreds of perfect three-fold echoes (without twinning). Nevertheless, this one is remarkable, because it uses a difficult stipulation and gets along without fairy condition. The final constellation is complex, and every piece moves in each of the solutions.
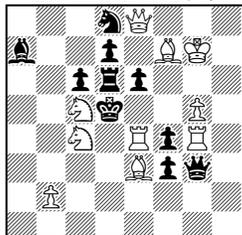
1.♔b2 ♘d3 2.♔b1 ♙d2 3.♙d4 ♔e2 4.♖c2 ♘c3 5.♖b2 ♔d1 6.♖c1+ ♘xc1#

1.♔d1 ♖e3 2.♖c2+ ♙f2 3.♙f4 ♔f3 4.♖e2 ♔g2 5.♙d2 ♔f1 6.♖e1+ ♖xe1#

1.♖c3+ ♔d5 2.♖b3 ♔c4 3.♙b2 ♙b4 4.♔b1 ♔b5 5.♙a2 ♙a4 6.♖a3+ ♖xa3#

5th Honorable Mention: Var. 3375 Jaroslav Štúň

This problem is an intellectual challenge on the one hand (very complicate conditions and pieces: it is difficult not to mix the just captured piece and the to-be-reborn one, as in most cases they are of the same nature), but one the other hand it shows a six fold echo which is a big achievement.
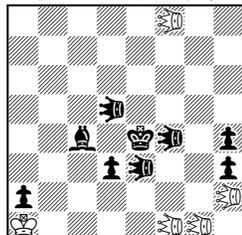
a) 1.♞g5xe5 ♞d5-e4[+♙f4] 2.♞e5xf6 ♙f4xf6[+♞f8] 3.♞f8-g6 [+♙g4][+b♔h5]+ ♞f5-f3[+w♔f5]#

1.. ♞f5-e6[+♙d6] 2.♞e5xf6 ♙d6xf6[+♞h6] 3.♞h6-f7[+♞d7] [+b♔e8] + ♞e6-c6[+w♔e6] #

b) 1.♙h5xf5 ♞d5-f4[+♙h4] 2.♞h4xf4 ♞g5xf4[+♞e3] 3.♞f6-g5[+♙g3] [+b♔h4]+ ♞f4-f2[+w♔f4] #

1... ♞g5-g7[+♙f7] 2.♞f6-e7 ♙f7-g5 3.♞d5-f6[+b♔h6] + ♞f6-f8[+w♔f6] #

c) 1.♙e5-c5 ♞d5-d3 2.♞f5-c6 ♞g5xc4 3.♞c6-b5[+♞b3][+b♔a4] + ♞c4-c2[+w♔c4] #

1.♞f5-e4 ♞g5xe4 2.♙e5-e3 [+♞e2] ♞e4xc4 3.♞d5-d3[+♞c2] [+b♔d1] + ♞d3b3[+w♔d3] #
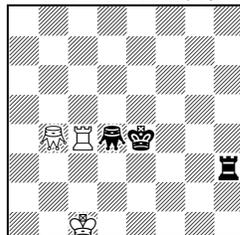
Hubert Gockel 2nd HM IRT 2019	M. Khramtsevich A. Bulavka 3rd HM IRT 2019	Václav Kotěsovec 4th HM IRT 2019	Jaroslav Štúň 5th HM IRT 2019

#2vvv   Breton   10+10

H#2   b) d3=♌   5+9
c)♗c4→a7   d)♗c4→b8
Lion ♌♌

HS#6   3.1.1..   3+3
Grasshopper ♞
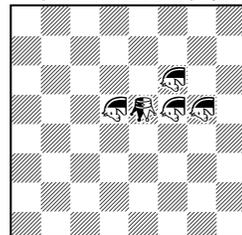
HS#3   5+0
b)♙e5→h5 c)♞f6→c4
Republican ParrainCirce
Neutral Eagle ♞
Neutral Grasshopper ♞

1st Commendation: Var. 3193v Ofer Comay

A funny position in which remarkable use is made of the limited space on light squares on the whole board. Three corner moves by the kings, the black ones are tempo losing manoeuvres on light squares! The mating move utilizes the fourth corner with a nice fairy promotion.

1...♚a1!! 2.♚b6 ♗cb1 3.♚a7 ♗3c2 4.♚a8!! ♗d3 5.♚b8 ♗c6b5 6.♚c7 ♗7c6 7.♚d8 ♗e6d7 8.♚e7 ♗5e6 9.♚f6 ♗4f5 10.♚g5 ♗3g4 11.♚h4 h3 12.♚g3 h4 13.♚h2 ♗h3 14.♚h1!! ♗h5g4 15.♚g1 h5 16.♚f2 h6 17.♚e1 ♗6h5 18.♚d2 ♗h7g6 19.♚c3 h7 20.♚d4 h8=♗#!

Ofer Comay
1st Com. IRT 2019

H#19.5   31+7
Bishop-Lion ♗

2nd Commendation: Var. 3371 Eric Huber

A tricky fairy condition (or should we call that "fairy pieces"?). The solutions remind of retro problems. The two solutions are not overly harmonious, but rather play with the effects the total invisibles offer. This is presented in an attractive style, however.

a) 1...♛f1 2.fxg3 ♛f4 3.gxh2 + TI~*h2# 2 white invisibles are captured on g3-h2

1 invisible is on g2. If it is white, it is still pinned after g3xh2. 1 white invisible captures h2 -> this invisible could only be wQh1/wRh1 (the existence of Sf1/Sf3 is excluded by move wQf1-f3).

b) 1...♚c6 2.fxe3 TI~*g4 3.exd2 ♚e4# 2 white invisibles are captured on e3-d2

1 black invisible e4 is captured by Qc6xe4. 1 invisible g2/g3 captures bRg4-> this invisible must be a wRg2

3rd Commendation: Var. 3356 MenachemWitztum

Harmonious Orthogonal-Diagonal Transformation play with coarse moves in a rather clumsy setting. The moves by the queen are remarkable, first self-pinning, then moving along the pin line and provoking mates which are making use of the pin.

a) 1.♛xd4 ♖hxh6 2.♛e3 + ♘e4# b) 1.♛xg5 ♗xa6 2.♛g4 + ♘f5#

4th Commendation: Var. 3234 Anatoly Stepochkin

Four-fold echo using two fairy conditions which strongly limit the pieces' mobility. Nevertheless the queens are quite active. Obviously, the combination of the conditions is interpreted in the way that Koeko contact can be realized within a 2_2 grid cell. A pity that there are several repeated moves, some even at the same move in different solutions (1.– Qe5, 1.– Qe5, 2.– Qe5; 2.Kd4, 3.Kd4; 2.Qd6, 2.Qd6).

1.♛c4 ♛e5 + 2.♚b4 ♛d5 3.♛b3 ♚e4 4.♚c5 ♛f5 5.♚d4 + ♛c5#
1.♛e6 ♛f4 2.♚d6 ♚e4 3.♚b6 ♚d4 + 4.♚c4 + ♛e5 5.♚d5 + ♛c4#
1.♛g2 ♛e5 2.♚d4 ♛e3 3.♚e2 ♛e6 4.♚e5 ♚g6 5.♚f4 + ♛g3#
1.♛g6 ♚g5 2.♛d6 ♛e5 + 3.♚d4 ♛f4 4.♚e4 ♛h4 5.♚f5 + ♛e4#

5th Commendation: Var. 3294 Adrian Storisteanu

Nice RR-QQ play using an entertaining (once you get acquainted with it) condition, in particular if retractions are to be considered. Surprisingly, both twins end in orthodox pin stalemates.

a) - 1.♖h1x♕b1[+♕b1,-♖b1] ♚a8x♚b7 [+♖h1,-♖h1] & 1.♕c3 ♖b7-a7+ 2.♕c3xa7[+♖a1,-♖a1] ♖h1-b1=

b) - 1.♖d1x♕b1[+♕b1,-♖b1] ♕e7x♕b1 [+♛d1,-♖d1] & 1.♕e3 ♚g6 2.♕e3xd1[+♛d1,-♕d1] ♛d1-d6=

Eric Huber	Menachem Witztum	Anatoly Stepochkin	Adrian Storisteanu
2nd Com. IRT 2019	3rd Com. IRT 2019	4th Com. IRT 2019	Canada

H#2.5 b)♚h3→f3 2+3	HS#2 b)♟f5→e5	HS#5 4.1.1.. 2+2	-1(w,b) & h=2 0+3
Total Invisible 4	8+13	KoeKo GridChess	Circe assassin
			b)♚b7→f8

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