

Bedrich Formánek Memorial Tourney Section Fairy h#3

When Juraj Lörinc asked me on December 11th, 2023 whether I would like to be a judge at Bedrich Formánek MT, I spontaneously agreed. H#3 with fairy pieces were required. The submitted problems must utilize exactly two types of fairy pieces (more pieces of the same types possible) from the following list: grasshopper, vao, pao, mao, nightrider, berolina, camel, moa, giraffe, alfil, fers, dabbaba. Additionally, the entries can (but need not) use royal unit(s) and/or neutral unit(s). A good choice, because in a search Juraj found slightly above 100 existing problems in line with these conditions, hinting that the area can be quite productive, yet not totally unexplored. On November 21st, 2024, tournament director Ivan Jarolin sent me 29 problems in anonymous form. All of the permitted fairy pieces were included in the 29 problems. I was very satisfied with the quality, so I was able to award 15 problems (6 prizes, 5 hon. mentions and 4 commendations.)

Here is my ranking:

1st Prize
BF03
Michal Dragoun

H#3 (5+11)
2.1.1.1.1.1.
Pao e5, f5
Vao d3, e2, h1

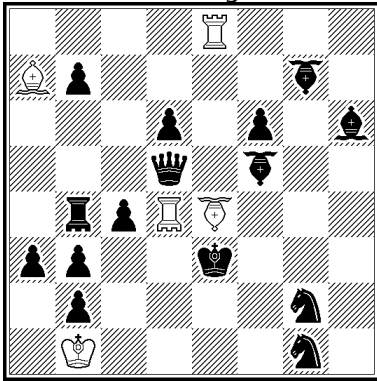
1st Prize: BF03 Michal Dragoun

I) 1.Rf2 PAXc5! (VAXc4?) 2.PAXe2 (PA~?) PAh5 3.Kc5 Sf5#

II) 1.Rh2 VAXc4! (PAXc5?) 2.VAXf5 (VA~?) VAF1 3.Kc4 Se2#

This problem enchanted me immediately because everything is just right here. The two solutions with Kniest theme, dual avoidance, Zilahi with passive sacrifices of wVao/wPao to clear the battery line, critical moves and antibattery mates with the wS are a feast for the eyes and celebrate the pure beauty of chess composition. Problem chess at a high level in perfect harmony and analogy.

4th Prize
BF06
Michal Dragoun



H#3 (5+15)

4.1.1.1.1.1.

Dababa b4, d4

Fers e4, f5, g7

4th Prize: BF06 Michal Dragoun

I) 1.DAb6 DAf4 2.Qd2 DAf2 3.Qe2 Bxb6#

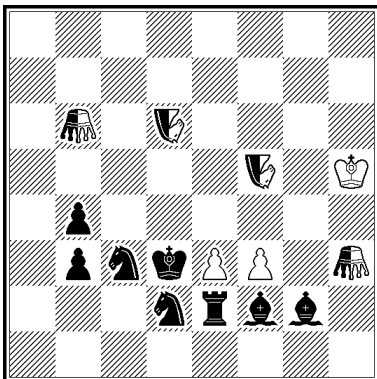
II) 1.Fe6 Fd3 2.Qf3 Fe2 3.Qf2 Rxe6#

III) 1.c3 Fxf5 2.Kd3 Re1 3.Qc4 Fe4#

IV) 1.Fg4 DAxb4 2.Kf4 Bf2 3.Qg5 DAd4#

In this harmonious problem, analogy is trump. In the first pair, the battery line is interfered in the key so that the fairy pieces can move without disturbing check to open the line for the bQ. In the mating move, the black interfering piece is captured. In the second pair, the mating piece switches back after removing a disturbing black piece. The black queen is used as a blocking piece in all 4 solutions. The Cookstopper on g7 could be avoided with wPg6 and bPg7, but the author probably didn't like that anymore than I did.

5th Prize
BF10
Hiroaki Maeshima



H#3 (3+8+4)

b) wKh5→c7

Neutral: Grasshopper b6, h3

Neutral: Nightrider d6, f5

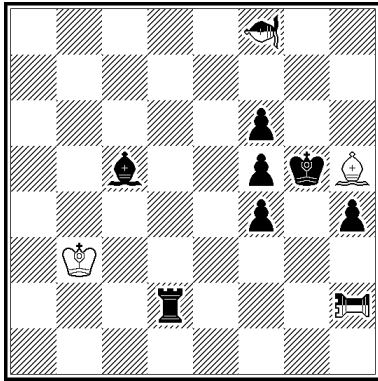
5th Prize: BF10 Hiroaki Maeshima

a) 1.nNg7+ Kg4 2.nGf5 nGxb3+ 3.Kxe3 nNdx5#

b) 1.nNe8+ Kc6 2.nGd6 nGf1+ 3.Kc4 nNfxd6#

Even though such neutral mates have already been shown in h#2 cyclically with 3 nightriders, this double setting in h#3 with orthogonal-diagonal transformation is impressive. The two solutions harmonize perfectly with each other and the two neutral grasshoppers fit wonderfully into the action as a sacrifice and guarding piece.

6th Prize
BF17
Michael Barth



H#3 (2+7+2)

2.1.1.1.1.1.

Neutral: Pao h2

Neutral: Vao f8

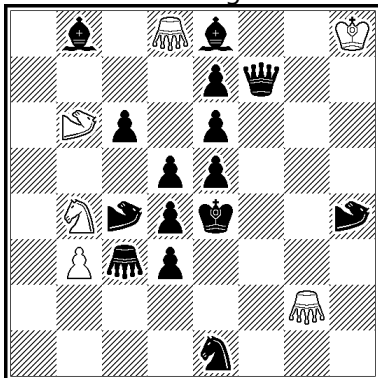
6th Prize: BF17 Michael Barth

I) 1.Rd5 nPAd2 2.Bd4 nVAa3 3.nVAc1 nPAxd5#

II) 1.Be3 nVAc5 2.Rd4 nPAa2 3.nPAa5 nVAxe3#

In an impeccable construction, reciprocal batteries are built with neutral pieces, which kill the black king on two different lines. bRd2/bBc5 change their function as a hurdle and as active sacrifice. Here, too, the two solutions are completely analogous. It's nice that the neutral pieces are moved by both white and black. Although one might think that this orthogonal-diagonal correspondence with pao/vao should already exist in abundance, I have not found anything similar in a search.

1st Hon. Mention
BF23
Michal Dragoun



H#3 (6+15)

3.1.1.1.1.1.

Grasshopper c3, d8, g2

Camel b6, c4, h4

1st Hon. Mention: BF23 Michal Dragoun

I) 1.Gc5 Sxd5 2.Kxd5 CAc3 3.CAf3 Ga8#

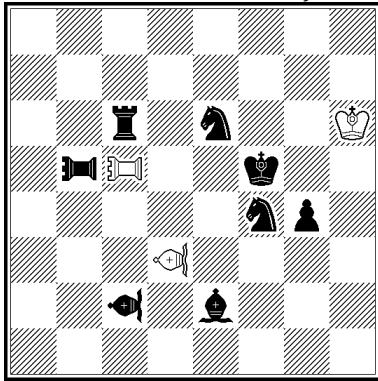
II) 1.CAf5 CAxe5 2.Kxe5 Gf8 3.Sf3 Sxd3#

III) 1.CAe3 Gxd4 2.Kxd4 Sa6 3.Qf3 CAxe7#

Cyclic Zilaxis in h#3 are rare. I found only 11 orthodox problems in the PDB. Active sacrifices by capturing a pawn so that the black king can run into the mating trap, as here, were the most common motive, usually in combination with a cycle of white moves. But in none of them was the third black move uniformly motivated as in BF23, where the square left by the black king is regained in all 3 solutions by occupying f3 with activation of wGg2.

2nd Hon. Mention
BF01

Vidadi Zamanov/Vlaicu Çrisan



H#3 (3+8)

b) bPg4→f6
Pao c5, b5
Vao d3, c2

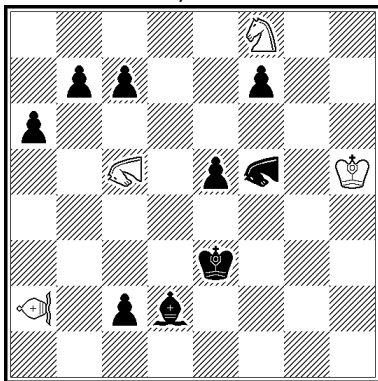
2nd Hon. Mention: BF01 Vidadi Zamanov/Vlaicu Çrisan

a) 1.VAb1 PAc2 2.PAe5 VAb1+ 3.Bd3 PAF2#
b) 1.PAa5 VAb5 2.VAe4 PAxa5+ 3.Rc5 VAd7#

In an excellent analogy, reciprocal batteries are formed and fired for double checkmate on 4 different lines. I would have appreciated it if the author had replaced the two black fairy pieces by orthodox pieces. This would have been possible without any problem, diagram A even shows the idea with idealmats.

3rd Hon. Mention
BF21

Michael Barth/Sven Trommler



H#3 (4+9)

b) wVAf8
Mao c5, f5
Vao a2

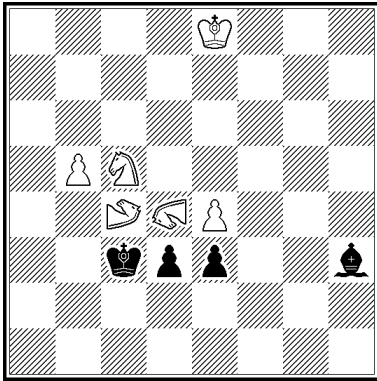
3rd Hon. Mention: BF21 Michael Barth/Sven Trommler

a) 1.c6 VAd5 2.Ke4 Se6 3.Be3 VAb7#
b) 1.b5 VAc4 2.Kd3 VAg7 3.MAe3 VAXa6#

White installs a battery twice with the Mao as the back piece, Black provides the hurdle and the sacrificial piece so that the Vao can move off for double checkmate. A Meredith would even have been possible (- bPc7, bRa6 instead of bPa6).

4th Hon. Mention
BF20

Michael Barth/Sven Trommler



H#3 (6+4)

b) bBh3→h4

Mao d4

Moa c4

4th Hon. Mention: BF20 Michael Barth/Sven Trommler

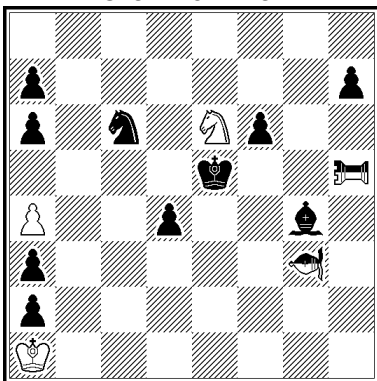
a) 1.Be6 MOd6 A 2.Bb3 MAC6 B 3.Kc4 Sa4#

b) 1.Be1 MAC6 B 2.Kd4 MOd6 A 3.Bc3 Sd7#

Battery firings with the wS and Mao/Moa as the back piece, swapping the first and second white moves. A light example with a slightly simpler black strategy than in BF21.

5th Hon. Mention
BF18

Sven Trommler



H#3 (3+10+2)

b) bBg4→d2

Neutral: Pao h5

Neutral: Vao g3

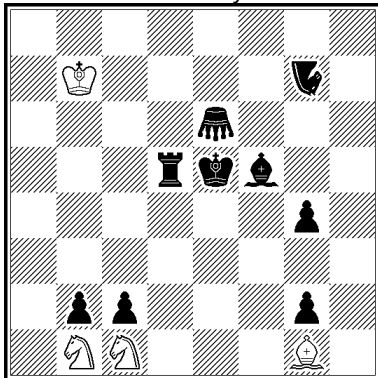
5th Hon. Mention: BF18 Sven Trommler

a) 1.Sb8 nPAh4 2.Bf5 nVAxb8 3.nPAxa4 Sc7#

b) 1.Sa5 nVAe1 2.Bf4 nPAxa5 3.nVAb4 Sc5#

2 neutral antibattery mates with Vao/Pao and a wS as the front piece. Although not 100% analogous, because in b) the wS also has to serve as a hurdle for the nVao, the problem is pleasing because of the good interplay between white and black.

1st Commendation
 BF28
 Aleksandr Semenenko/
 Vladislav Nefyodov



H#3 (4+9)

3.1.1.1.1.1.
 Grasshopper e6
 Nightrider g7

1st Commendation: BF28 Aleksandr Semenenko/Vladislav Nefyodov

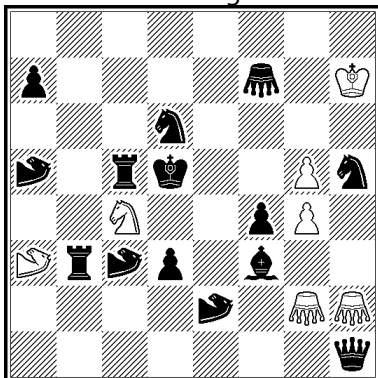
I) 1.Rd6 Sd2 A 2.b1=N Se2 B 3.Nd5 Bd4# C

II) 1.Ke4 Se2 B 2.c1=S Bd4 C 3.Sd3 Sd2# A

III) 1.Kf4 Bd4 C 2.g1=G Sd2 A 3.Gg5 Se2# B

Cycle of white moves AB/BC/CA, black promotions to N/S/G, garnished with model mates. It's a pity about the bNg7, which doesn't play an active role, but prevents cooks and is needed for the promotion into this fairy piece.

2nd Commendation
 BF07
 Michal Dragoun



H#3 (7+14)

3.1.1.1.1.1.
 Grasshopper f7, g2, h2
 Camel a3, a5, c3, e2

2nd Commendation: BF07 Michal Dragoun

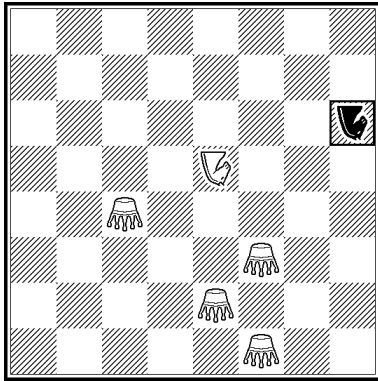
I) 1.Qxg2 Ge5 2.Ke4 Gg3 3.Rd5 Sd2#

II) 1.Rxa3 Gh6 2.Kd4 Gc6 3.Bd5 Gd2#

III) 1.Gxc4 Gf2 2.Ke5 Gb6 3.CAd5 CAd2#

This cyclical Zilahi, where the mating moves take place on the same square, has the weakness that there is no interplay. Therefore, it deserves only a commendation.

3rd Commendation
BF13
Sebastian Luce



H#3 (5+1)

2.1.1.1.1.1.

b) wGc4→b8

Grashopper c4, e2, f1, f3

Nightrider e5, h6

Royal Nh6

3rd Commendation: BF13 Sebastian Luce

a)

I) 1.rNd4 Gd3 2.rNc2 Gb2 3.rNa1 Gc3#

II) 1.rNf5 Gf6 2.rNd6 Ge6+ 3.rNh8 Ng6#

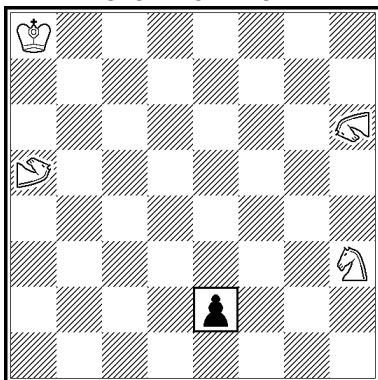
b)

I) 1.rNg8 Gbf4 2.rNf6 Gf2 3.rNh2 Ng4#

II) 1.rNd8 Ge8 2.rNg2 Gd3 3.rNe1 Ge4#

A miniature with a royal nightrider who is mated on four different squares. Through good interaction of the white fairy pieces, all flights are blocked. A find.

4th Commendation
BF19
Sven Trommler



H#3 (4+1)

b) wCAa5→b7

c) wGh6→g2

Camel a5

Giraffe h6

Royal Pe2

4th Commendation: BF19 Sven Trommler

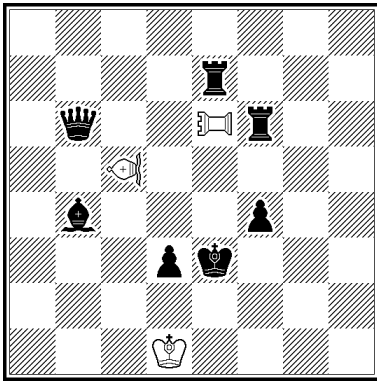
a) 1.e1=rCA Sg5 2.rCAf4 Gld5 3.rCAg7 Se6#

b) 1.e1=rS Sf4 2.rSf3 CAc4+ 3.rSh4 Gld5#

c) 1.e1=rGI Glf6 2.rGld5 Sf4+ 3.rGlc1 CAAd4#

An astonishing problem with five pieces and the promotion of the royal pawn. This results in a cycle of the promoted king and the checkmate piece CA-S, S-GI, GI-CA. You certainly can't expect much interplay here.

A
BF01, Version



H#3 (3+7)

b) wKd1→g2

Pao e6

Vao c5

a) 1.Qa7 PAb6 2.Re4 VAXa7

3.Bc5 PAb3#

b) 1.Re8 VAe7 2.Qd4 PAxe8

3.Re6 VAg5#

I would like to thank Ivan Jarolin for the good cooperation and congratulate the decorated authors.

Franz Pachl, in December 2024