

Six-Day Composing Tournament at the 68th WCCC 2026 - Helpmate Section - Award

Jakob Leck

20 August 2026

List of participants:

Abdurahmanović, Fadil (36); Alexandrov, Velko (20); Baier, Silvio (8); Balasubramanian, S.K. (28); Caillaud, Michel (9,19); Comay, Ofer (32,33,34); Crăciun, Ovidiu (40); Crusats, Joaquim (10); Ehinger, Ralf (18); Gavrilovski, Zoran (1,4,27,38); Giakatis, Theodoros (41); Guida, Marco (35); Harkula, Hanno (37); Kalkavouras, Ioannis (5); Klasinc, Marko (36); Krätschmer, Ralf (6); Nallusamy, Velmurugan (28,39); Navon, Emanuel (11,12); Neef, Wilfried (22); Onkoud, Abdelaziz (2,3,16,17,25); Parrinello, Mario (15,35); Pitton, Pietro (13); Schaffner, Gerold (7); Semenenko, Oleksandr (29,31); Semenenko, Valery (29,30); Sergiienko Andrii (26); Shamir, Saul (21); Skripnik, Anatoly (14); Uță, Matei-Maria (40); Velikhanov, Kenan (14); Werner, Dieter (6); Witztum, Menachem (12,23,24,32)

32 composers from 17 countries competed in the helpmate section of the six-day composing tournament for this year's WCCC. The stipulated theme seems to have been well received since the 41 problems I received from tournament director Frank Reinhold in anonymised form showed a pleasant variety of ideas. Yet, especially in the twomover, it is always a challenge today to find truly original material. I cannot help but be reminded of a quote from the second part of Goethe's *Faust*: "Wer kann was Dummes, wer was Kluges denken, das nicht die Vorwelt schon gedacht?" Fortunately, enough composers provide an answer, mostly in the moreover.

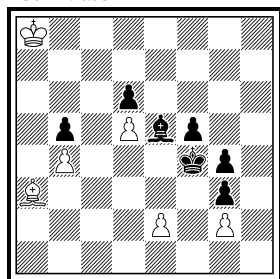
Among the 21 h#2 submitted many were very similar to the example by Bakcsi in the tournament announcement (a black piece makes a capture to open a line while giving a battery check, white sacrifices for check protection and the black piece returns) or, with an added Zilahi, to problems like diagram A or B, and thus did not make it into the award. One of the problems was completely anticipated (mirrored) by C, a reminder to always check in your favourite database before submitting (e.g. searching in PDB (<https://pdb.dieschwalbe.de>) with `PATTERN='...'` for the most important pieces in the position). Another problem might have been in the award, but the construction turned out to be unnecessarily heavy, a reduction from 9+14 to 8+11 pieces was possible.

One thing that was apparent from the submissions is the popularity of Viktoras Paliulionis' Helpmate Analyzer (<https://helpman.komtera.lt/>), more than 10 problems were sent with the theme description seemingly produced by the program. Whether this is a positive trend, everybody has to decide for himself. While the Helpmate Analyzer is a highly helpful tool to analyze problems,

to not overlook thematic aspects of a problem or to help with indexing in a collection, to my mind when submitting a composition the theme description should contain the author's intention or focus, and, for example, whether a problem conforms to the Sabra 28 theme (almost all problems in this competition do) is unnecessary information in this context.

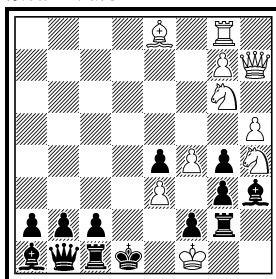
But now, without further ado, let us enjoy the awarded problems.

37
Hannu Harkola
1st Prize



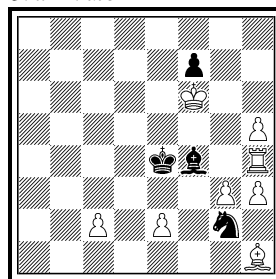
h#4.5 C+ (6+7)

19
Michel Caillaud
2nd Prize



h#8 C+ (10+13)

36
Marko Klasinc
Fadil
Abdurahmanović
3rd Prize



h#3 C+ (8+4)
2 solutions

37) Hannu Harkola:

1.- e4 2.Ba1 e5 3.d×e5 Bb2 4.e4 Bg7 5.Be5 Bh6#

19) Michel Caillaud:

1.Rh2+ Sg2 2.R×g2 Sh4 3.Rh2+ Sg2 4.R×g2 Q×e4 5.Rh2+ Qg2 6.R×g2 Bc6 7.Rh2+ Bg2 8.R×g2 Rd8#

36) Marko Klasinc, Fadil Abdurahmanović:

1) 1.Kd4 c4 2.Se3 Be4 3.K×e4 R×f4#

2) 1.Kd5 c3 2.Be3 Re4 3.K×e4 B×g2#

1st Prize: No 37, Hannu Harkola

In no 37 the thematic switchback manoeuvre and sacrifice are cleverly embedded in a double Klasinc together with clearance along the long diagonal. The sacrifice is motivated by the need to mobilize a black pawn that needs to act as a block, and unlike in most of the other problems in this tournament the thematic return is not the capture of the sacrificed white piece. The setting is very economical, the only drawback is that the white king is doing nothing more than making the problem orthodox.

2nd Prize: No 19, Michel Caillaud

In a schema that is reminiscent of great problems like D by Gabor Cseh a task is presented: a fourfold consecutive setting of the tournament theme. Incidentally, the previous record of three consecutive settings was also held by Michel Caillaud (see E), another threefold setting is F. The play is mechanical and the many captures of officers may seem brutal, but for a task this is nothing to worry about. And it is also interesting that the composition can be interpreted as a logical helpmate with four logically successive foreplans.

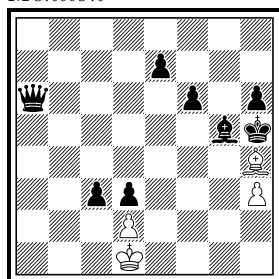
3rd Prize: No 36, Marco Klasinc & Fadil Abdurahmanović

Unpin, dual avoidance between double step and single step of the white pawn, blocks onto the same square, hideaway sacrifice and return of the white king, all

together with Zilahi and Chumakov, and all officers on the board are involved in exchange of functions. A great achievement, and a tasteful combination of thematic elements. The economic setting and the blocks onto the identical square set it apart from predecessors, but the margin of originality comparing with G (see also P1077246 in PDB (Vinokurov 2007)), which already shows the main thematic elements of Zilahi, Chumakov and switchback, is not large. For a similar sacrifice of white line pieces with black king switchback see also H.

29

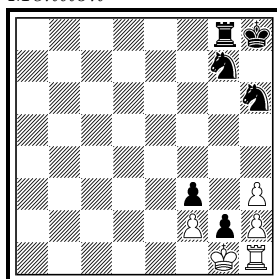
**Oleksandr
Semenenko**
Valery Semenko
*1st Honourable
Mention*



h#5 C+ (4+8)

26

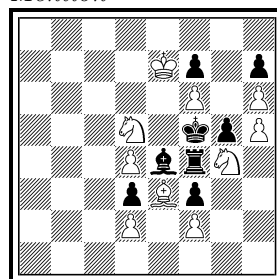
Andrii Sergiienko
*2nd Honourable
Mention*



h#4 C+ (5+6)

25

Abdelaziz Onkoud
*3rd Honourable
Mention*



h#2 C+ (10+8)
b) ♖e3

29) Oleksandr Semenko, Valery Semenko:

1.Bf4 (B~?) Bg5 2.f×g5 Ke1 3.g4 Kf2 4.Bg5 Kg3 5.Qg6 h×g4#

26) Andrii Sergiienko:

1.Sg4 h4 2.S×h2 h5 3.Sg4 h6 4.S×h6 R×h6#

25) Abdelaziz Onkoud:

a) 1.R×g4 Bf4 2.R×f4 Se3#

b) 1.B×d5 e4+ 2.B×e4 Se3#

1st Honourable Mention: No 29, Aleksandr Semenko & Valery Semenko

No 29 shows a similar Klasinc to the 1st prize (but only one). Surprisingly, here the white bishop has to be sacrificed to allow the black pawn to move forward to in turn sacrifice itself. This is combined with dual avoidance on the first move, the interplay is very nice.

2nd Honourable Mention: No 26, Andrii Serhiyenko

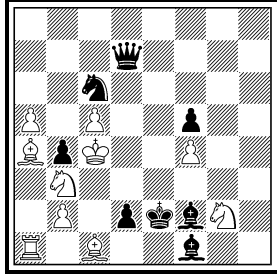
In no 26 we see the thematic sacrifice as part of a sacrificial clearance along the h file, combined with a long switchback manoeuvre of the knight to clear away the second pawn on the h file. That the black thematic piece sacrifices as well fits quite nicely into the context, and with a very economical setting and model mate the form of the composition is good.

3rd Honourable Mention: No 25, Abdelaziz Onkoud

In many of the problems submitted the black thematic moves, leaving the square and returning, are motivated by a secondary motive, e.g. the black piece needs to make a capture to clear a line. In no 25, however, the moves are only made to allow the white sacrifice, which in turn clears a square. In addition we see a

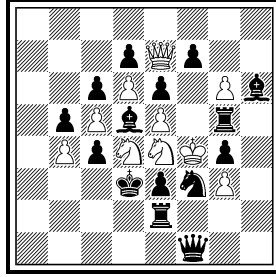
Zilahi. The problem can be compared to I, which shows a similar motivation of the moves.

9
Michel Caillaud
1st Commendation



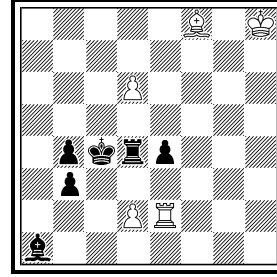
h#2 C+ (10+8)
b) ♖a1→a3

12
Emanuel Navon
Menachem Witztum
2nd Commendation



h#2.5 C+ (10+15)
b) ♜e2→a1

35
Marco Guida
Mario Parrinello
3rd Commendation



h#3 C+ (5+6)

9) Michel Caillaud:

- a) 1.d×c1=B Sd2 (Sd4+?) 2.B×d2 Bd1#
b) 1.d1=R Bd2 (Be3?) 2.R×d2 Sc1#

12) Emanuel Navon, Menachem Witztum:

- a) 1.- Qf6 2.S×e5+ Sf3 3.S×f3 Qc3#
b) 1.- Q×e6 2.R×e5+ Sg5 3.R×g5 Q×e3#

35) Marco Guida, Mario Parrinello:

- 1.R×d6+ d4 2.e×d3+ Re5 3.Rd4 Rc5#

1st Commendation: No 9, Michel Caillaud

No 9 is the only problem using pawn promotions for the black thematic pieces. The white sacrifices are motivated as hideaway, for line openings, the black moves also serve to remove the wBc1 in a) and to loose the guard on c1 in b). The idea is attractive, however, the use of the Bc1 and the way the white lines are opened provide a slightly unpleasant (to me, at least) imbalance between the solutions. See J for an earlier problem showing hideaway sacrifices for line opening, but with a strong touch of symmetry.

2nd Commendation: No 12, Emanuel Navon & Menachem Witztum

No 12 shows the opening of two indirect half-batteries in a similar way to the example by Bakcsi in the announcement: Black captures one of the two obstructing white pieces, thereby giving a battery check, the other white piece sacrifices for check protection, and the black piece returns, capturing the white piece. The twist in the current problem is that the half-batteries do not exist in the diagram and are created by an ambush on the first white move. And depending on the line that needs to be opened, we can see a choice or dual avoidance between 2.Sxe5+ and 2.Rxe5+: both clear away the pawn, but only one allows the correct check protection to clear the second white piece from the line for the white queen. The switchbacks are motivated as hideaways. The need to exclude alternative moves (for example by the black Se5 in the first solution) together with the power of the white queen explains the large amount of material on the board.

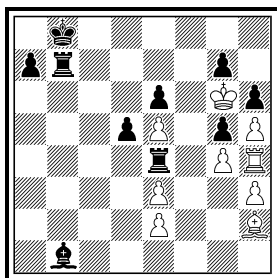
3rd Commendation: No 35, Marco Guida & Mario Parrinello

Only one solution in a h#3 is not much by today's standards, but the composition wittily combines the tournament theme with an en passant capture, which I think deserves to be shown here.

41

Theodoros Giakatis

4th Commendation



h#4 C+ (9+10)

41) **Theodoros Giakatis:**

1.R×g4+ e4 2.R×e4 Rf4 3.R×e5+ e4 4.R×e4 Rf8#

4th Commendation: No 41, Theodoros Giakatis

No 41 shows interlocking battery play with a consecutive doubling of the tournament theme.

Problems for comparison

A

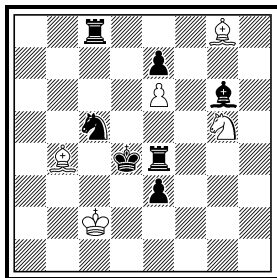
Arnold Beine

Franz Pachl

Boris Tummes

Problem-Forum
2003

3rd Honourable
Mention

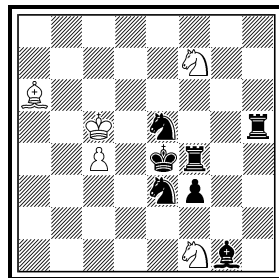


h#2 C+ (5+7)
2 solutions

B

Andrey Lobusov

Schweizerische
Schachzeitung 1992

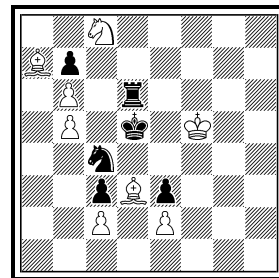


h#2 C+ (5+7)

C

Hans-Peter Rehm

Die Schwalbe 2009
3rd Commendation



h#2 C+ (8+6)

A) Arnold Beine, Franz Pachl, Boris Tummes:

- 1) 1.R×e6+ Se4 2.R×e4 Bc3#
- 2) 1.S×e6+ Bc5+ 2.S×c5 Sf3#

B) Andrey Lobusov:

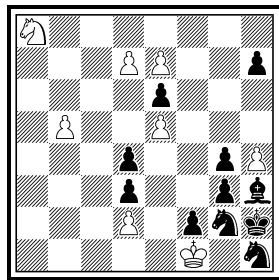
- 1) 1.S3×c4+ Se3 2.S×e3 Sd6#
2) 1.S5×c4+ Se5 2.S×e5 Sg3#

C) Hans-Peter Rehm:

- 1) 1.S×b6 Bc4+ 2.S×c4 Se7#
2) 1.R×b6 Sd6 2.R×d6 Be4#

D

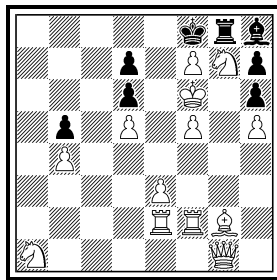
Gabor Cseh
The Problemist
1997
1st Prize



h#10 C+ (8+11)

E

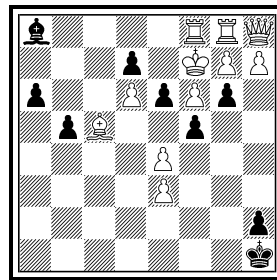
Michel Caillaud
Problem Paradise
2013
Special Prize



h#10 C+ (13+8)

F

Illo Krampis
SuperProblem 2014



h#4 C+ (11+9)

D) Gabor Cseh:

- 1.h6 d8=Q 2.h5 Qd5 3.S×h4+ Qg2+ 4.S×g2 e8=B 5.h4 Bc6 6.Sf4+ Bg2 7.Sd5
b6 8.Sc7 b7 9.S×a8 b×a8=Q 10.B×g2+ Q×g2#

E) Michel Caillaud:

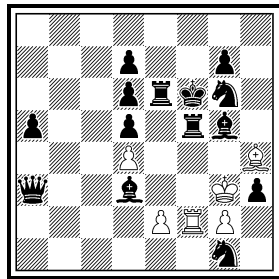
- 1.R×g7 Bf1 2.Rg8+ Qg7+ 3.R×g7 Rg2 4.Rg8+ Rg7 5.R×g7 Rg2 6.Rg8+ Rg7
7.R×g7 Bc4 8.b×c4 Sb3 9.c3 Sc5 10.c2 S×d7#

F) Illo Krampis:

- 1.B×e4 Ra8 2.B×a8 e4 3.B×e4 Ra8 4.B×a8 Q×a8#

G

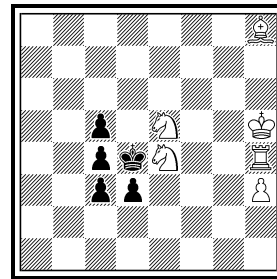
**Christopher James
Austin Jones**
Springaren 2007
3. Prize



h#3 C+ (6+14)
2 solutions

H

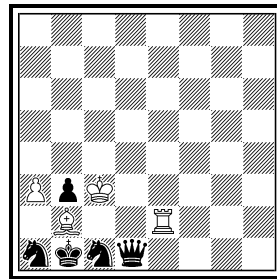
Jacques Rotenberg
Rex Multiplex 1983
*1st Honourable
Mention*
dedicated to J.P. Boyer



h#2.5 C+ (6+5)
2 solutions

I

Miron Gnatina
Shakhovij Leopolis
2009
10. TT
6th Commendation



h#2 C+ (4+5)
2 solutions

G) Christopher James Austin Jones:

- 1) 1.Kf7 e4 2.Be7 Bf6 3.K×f6 R×f5#
- 2) 1.Ke7 Kg4 2.Rf7 Rf6 3.K×f6 B×g5#

H) Jacques Rotenberg:

- 1) 1.– S×c3+ 2.Ke3 Rd4 3.K×d4 Sg4#
- 2) 1.– S×c4+ 2.Kd5 Bd4 3.K×d4 Sf6#

I) Miron Gnatina:

- 1) 1.Sc2 Ba1 2.S×a1 Rb2#
- 2) 1.Sd3 Bc1 2.S×c1 Rb2#

J

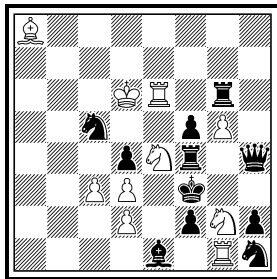
Yury Gorbatenko

Igor Agapov

Russia East -

Russia West 2000

4th-7th Place e.a.



h#2 C+ (10+11)
2 solutions

J) Yury Gorbatenko, Igor Agapov:

- 1) 1.B×d2 Se1+ 2.B×e1 Sd2#
- 2) 1.Q×g5 Sh4+ 2.Q×h4 Sg5#