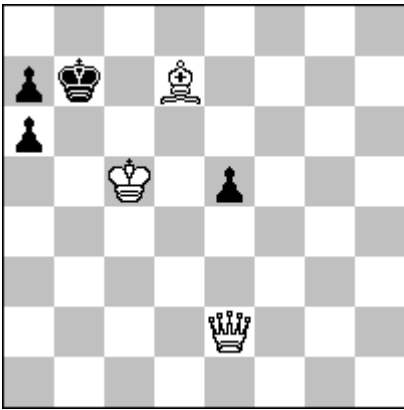


In my last ‘problem corner’ I left you with this problem, quoted from an excellent recent publication, *Anything but Average* by Werner Keym:

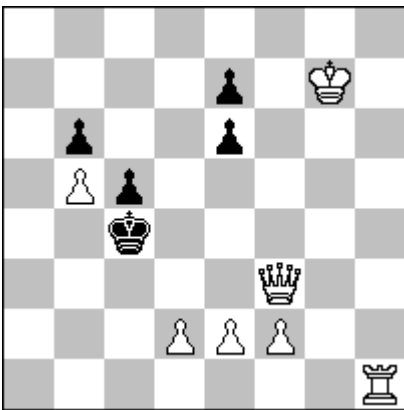


Mate in 3

Otto Wurzburg, *Bahn Frei* 1895 (v)

The key is 1.Bh3!. Now after any move by the black King 2.Qg4 forces mate next move. But what about 1...a5 (after which 2.Qg4 can be met by 2...a6, vacating a7)? The answer is the star move 2.Qa6+! The Pawn at a5 is now what problemists would call a distant self-block, and after 2...Kxa6 White mates with 3.Bf1.

When I read *Anything but Average* I became acquainted with many delightful problems (and studies) I hadn’t seen before, but I also enjoyed being re-acquainted with a few that I’d previously enjoyed. Here, for instance, is one that I had greatly enjoyed when it was quoted by Leonard Barden in one of his columns many years ago –



Mate in 3

Johann Berger, *Didaskalia (Frankfurter Rundschau)* 1887

It looks as though it should be a fairly routine business to round up the black King, but he turns out to be a slippery customer, and it requires imagination and steely logic to see the surprising way in which you force mate in 3.

I’ll give the solution next time, though of course there are other ways (even if you don’t solve it yourself) to find out the solution. One of them is to buy the book (I can give you details – my address is [cjajones1@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:cjajones1@yahoo.co.uk)), a drastic remedy, but you would enjoy the other contents of the

book! To get more of a 'staple diet' of chess problems there's the British Chess Problem Society website - [www.theproblemist.org/](http://www.theproblemist.org/) - which *inter alia* has a weekly chess problem, a problem especially chosen for its solver appeal.