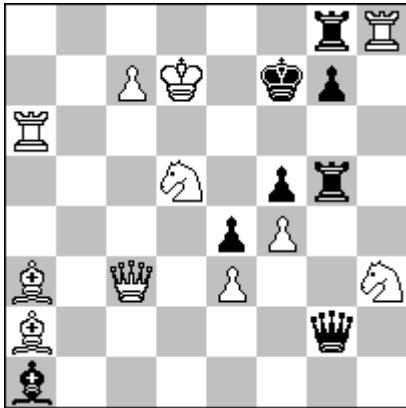In the last Newsletter I left you with this problem:

Mate in 2
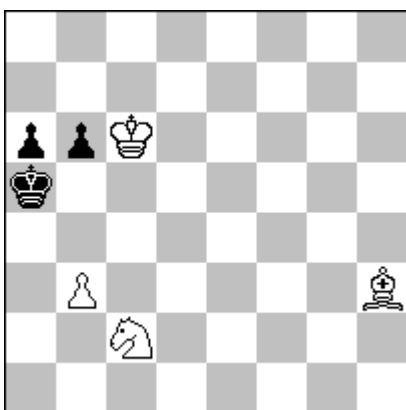N. A. Macleod
1st Prize, BCF Tourney 1972-73; Brian Harley Award e.a. 1973-74

As I said last time, "It looks as though White would like to discover mate with a move of the d5N, but at present there are two impediments – the reply …Qxa2 and the fact that all four moves of the d5N would interrupt lines guarding potential flight squares of the bK".

The key is 1.Qb2!. This prevents …Qxa2, and allows a 5th possible move by the d5N, which would be mate: 2.Nc3. Obviously, if 1…Qxb2 2.Nxg5 is mate. The heart of the problem are the four defences after which the other moves of the d5N come into play – if 1…Rg6, the blocking of the potential flight square g6 permits 2.Nf6; if 1…g6 we don't play 2.Nf6 (2…Kg7!) but can now play the other move that intercepts the a6R's now unnecessary) guard of g6, 2.Nb6; if 1…Rb8, the h8R now guards f8, permitting 2.Nb4; and if 1…Re8 we now block this line of defence with the other move that interrupts the now unnecessary guard of f8 from a3, 2.Ne7. (There is also 1…Rd8+ 2.cxd8=N.)

This month, a problem that offers 'two for the price of one'!

Mikhail Gorislavsky

Schach, 1970

Mate in 4 (b)Bh3>f1

In other words, the diagrammed position is mate in 4, and, when you have solved that, you will find

that this solution will no longer work if the wB starts instead from f1; but a different solution now does. Both solutions next time!

I've taken this problem from the Supplement, part of the British Chess Problem Society magazine *The Problemist*, for January 2021. The magazine contains much that may be of interest if you are developing an interest in chess problems. If you would like to see a copy let me know. Or, to get more of a flavour of the sort of thing found in the magazine, visit the BCPS website - www.theproblemist.org/.

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