WCCI 2016-2018 – Twomovers selection

All problems appeared originally in December 2018 on Google Sites at:
(https://sites.google.com/view/mihailoswebsite/mihailos-chess-problems-new)

Mihailo Stojnic

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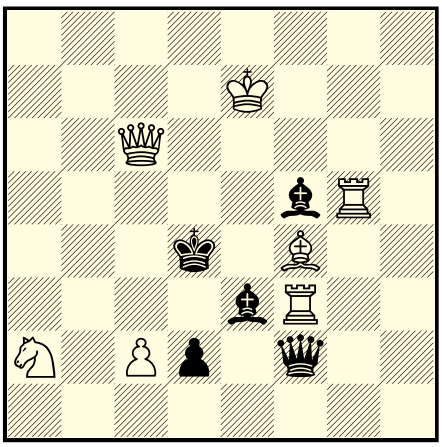

$\neq 2^{\checkmark\checkmark}$ C^{+} $7+5$

Content:

✓ **Thematic try** (**T**$_1$)

1.♘b4? ~ 2.♙c3≠(X)

1...♗xc2(x) 2.♗e5≠(Y)(♖d5≠(Q)?/♕c5≠?)

1...♗xf4(y) 2.♕d5≠(Z)(♕c3≠?)

1...♟d1♞!

Solution (**S**$_1$)

1.♔f6! ~ 2.♗e5(Y)

1...♗xc2(x) 2.♕d5≠(Z)(♕c3≠?)

1...♗xf4(y) 2.♙c3≠(X)(♖d3≠?)

1...♕g3/h2 2.♗xe3≠

✓ **Additional try** (**T**$_2$)

1.♘c3? ~ 2.♘b5≠(W)

1...♗xc2(x) 2.♖d5≠(Q)(♗e5≠(Y)?/♕c5≠?)

1...♗xf4(y) 2.♕d5≠(Z)(♕c3≠?)

1...♕e2 2.♘xe2≠

1...♕f1!

(1...♗d3 2.♕c5/♖d5/♗e5≠)

Comment: The problem shows the ***2×3 Lacny*** theme in a threat-form (i.e. the ***Shedey-Lacny*** theme). As is well known this theme assumes the ***cyclic*** change of three white thematic moves between two phases (here the thematic try (**T**$_1$) and the solution (**S**$_1$)). The white thematic moves are the threat and the mates on two black thematic defenses 1...♗xc2(x) and 1...♗xf4(y). Besides the two thematic phases that constitute this ***Shedey-Lacny*** complex, the main thematic try (**T**$_1$) and the solution (**S**$_1$), there is an additional try that introduces a third different threat, a third changed mate on one of the two thematic black defenses, 1...♗xc2(x), and eventually completes ***2+3+3 Zagoruiko*** in a ***threat-form***. Strategically completely ***harmonious*** play with lots of dual-avoidances (enabled ***every single*** time by ***only one*** particular weakness, which will be referred to as the ***single-weakness dual-avoidance***), the same type of ***key thematic effects*** (guarding/ungarding squares around the black king), the ***reduction*** of typically needed 6 key critical effects to only 4 used here, and a ***Meredith*** position are among the key features that will be discussed below in greater detail.

Main thematic phases:

1. *Thematic try* (**T**$_1$)

   After white plays 1.♘b4? there is a thematic threat ~ 2.♙c3≠(X). As mentioned above, black can defend against this threat with the following two thematic defenses 1...♗xc2(x) and 1...♗xf4(y). However, the motivation of this defenses is particularly important for having a full-detailed picture of the strength of the core of the mechanism. Namely, the first of the defenses 1...♗xc2(x) defends by directly ***capturing the threatening white piece***, ♙c2. The second of the defenses 1...♗xf4(y) defends by ***capturing a supporting white piece***, ♗f4. After black plays 1...♗xc2(x) white answers with 2.♗e5≠(Y) as the ♖g5's line g5-e5 is now opened. On the other hand, after black plays 1...♗xf4(y) white answers with 2.♕d5≠(Z) as the ♖f3's line f3-c3 is now opened.

   One should also note the dual-avoidances on both black thematic defenses. After 1...♗xc2(x), 2.♖d5≠(Q)? doesn't work as the rook interferes with the ♕ on its c6-e4 line and the square e4 would be left unguarded. Moreover, 1...♗xc2(x) can not be followed with 2.♕c5≠? either as the white queen would leave the diagonal c6-e4 and the e4 square would again be left unguarded. Similarly, 1...♗xf4(y) can not be followed with 2.♕c3≠? as the white queen would again leave the diagonal c6-e4 and the e4 square would be left unguarded.

   Finally, the try is conveniently refuted via a knight ***under-promotion*** 1...♟d1♞!

2. *Solution* (**S**$_1$)

After white plays 1.♔f6! there is a thematic threat ∼ 2.♗e5≠(Y). Black can defend against this threat with two thematic defenses 1...♝xc2(x) and 1...♝xf4(y). However, the motivation of these defenses is now ***reciprocally*** changed. This time the first of the defenses 1...♝xc2(x) defends by ***capturing a supporting white piece***, ♙c2 whereas the second, 1...♝xf4(y), defends by ***capturing the threatening white piece***, ♗f4. This of course automatically implies reciprocally exchanged roles of the white thematic pieces, ♙c2 and ♗f4. Now, after black plays 1...♝xc2(x) white answers with 2.♕d5≠(Z) as the ♖g5's line g5-d5 is now opened. On the other hand, after black plays 1...♝xf4(y) white answers with 2.♙c3≠(X) as the ♖f3's line f3-d3 is now opened. One should of course note that the lines that are being opened are the same as in the thematic try (**T**$_1$). However, the squares being guarded through the line openings are different. For example, in the try (**T**$_1$) opening of the ♖g5 line on the fifth row results in having the e5 square guarded whereas here opening of the same rook line results in having the d5 square guarded. In an analogous fashion, in the try (**T**$_1$) opening of the ♖f3 line on the third row results in having the c3 square guarded whereas here opening of the same rook line results in having the d3 square guarded.

One has interesting dual-avoidances as well. After 1...♝xc2(x) white can't follow with 2.♕c3≠? as the white queen would as above relinquish the control of the e4 square (one should note that in try (**T**$_1$), 2.♕c3≠? was the dual avoided after the other black defense, i.e. after 1...♝xf4(y)). On the other hand, this time 1...♝xf4(y) can not be followed with a new mate 2.♖d3≠? as the ♝f5 defends against it (this ***single-weakness dual-avoidance*** is enabled by the key 1.♔f6! which guards the e5 square).

3. *Additional thematic try* (**T**$_2$)

In addition to the above discussed main try and the solution, white can also try with 1.♘c3? (basically as an alternative to 1.♘b4?). This first move though allows for another (third) different threat, 2.♘b5≠(W). Black can defend against this threat again with the same two thematic defenses 1...♝xc2(x) and 1...♝xf4(y). This time the motivation of both of these defenses is ***capturing of supporting white pieces***, ♙c2 and ♗f4 to free the squares d3 and e5, respectively. Now, after black plays 1...♝xc2(x) white answers with a third changed mate 2.♖d5≠(Z) as the ♖g5's line g5-d5 is again opened and can be utilized by the rook itself. On the other hand, after black plays 1...♝xf4(y) white answers (as in (**T**$_1$)) with 2.♕d5≠(Y) as the ♖f3's line f3-c3 is now opened and c3 is guarded. After 1...♛e2 white can answer with 2.♘xe2≠. However, after a bit more subtle 1...♛f1! white has no answer and the try is refuted.

By its definition the ***Shedey-Lacny*** has two changed mates and the changed threat between its two phases, (**T**$_1$) and (**S**$_1$). Since (**T**$_2$) brings the third changed threat plus the third changed mate on 1...♝xc2(x) and one repeated mate after 1...♝xf4(y), one technically has a ***2+3+3 Zagoruiko*** realized in a ***threat-form***.

Reciprocal *dual-avoidance* – 2.♗e5≠(Y) and 2.♖d5≠(Q)

The dual-avoidances similar to those in the thematic try (**T**$_1$) appear here as well. First one observes the ***reciprocal dual-avoidance*** after 1...♝xc2(x). In the try (**T**$_1$) after 1...♝xc2(x), 2.♗e5≠(Y) worked while 2.♖d5≠(Q)? didn't work. Here it is the other way around, i.e. after 1...♝xc2(x), 2.♖d5≠(Q) works while 2.♗e5≠(Y)? doesn't work. The reason for this ***reciprocal dual-avoidance*** is a carefully chosen geometry. Namely, in (**T**$_1$) ♘ from b4 guards d3 so that 2.♗e5≠(Y) can be a mate and at the same time it doesn't guard e4 so that 2.♖d5≠(Q) can't be a mate. On the other hand in (**T**$_2$) ♘ from c3 guards e4 so that 2.♖d5≠(Q) can be a mate and at the same time it doesn't guard d3 so that 2.♗e5≠(Y) can't be a mate.

Change of motivation for the same dual-avoidances – 2.♕c5≠? and 2.♕c3≠?

One also has two additional dual-avoidances that are the same as those appearing in the thematic try (**T**$_1$). However, their motivations are different. First, 1...♝xc2(x) can not be followed with 2.♕c5≠? as the square d3 is unguarded. Similarly, 1...♝xf4(y) can not be followed with 2.♕c3≠? as the square c3 is occupied by the white knight. The motiation for these two dual avoidances in the thematic try (**T**$_1$) was the unguarded square e4. This square is now guarded by the ♘ from c3 and these two moves could conceivably be the mates as well. However, 1.♘c3? also introduces two new weaknesses that

prevent that and ensure that one indeed has the duals avoided. Namely, differently from the thematic try (**T**$_1$), ♘ now doesn't guard d3 and it also occupies the c3 square which are precisely the two above mentioned reasons why the white moves 2.♕c5≠? and 2.♕c3≠? are avoided as potential mates.

Technical comments:

The structure of the mechanism is obviously what enables all of the content discussed above. Some of its key components are discussed in a bit more detail below.

- *The structure of the mechanism*

  In total there are 5 white and 2 black thematic pieces. The white ones are: the ***key threatening, mating, and mate supporting*** pieces, ♙c2 and ♗f4; the ***additional mating*** piece, ♕c6; and the ***mate supporting*** pieces, ♖f3 and ♖g5. The two black thematic pieces are ♝e3 and ♝f5.

  The entire mechanism is based on a perfectly ***harmonious*** and ***analogous*** strategy by both, white and black.

  - White threats

    The threats are by one of the key thematic pieces, ♙c2 or ♗f4, and are based on the squares d3 and e5 being guarded or unguarded.

  - Motivation of black defenses

    Black defenses capture both white key thematic pieces in both, (**T**$_1$) and (**S**$_1$). In each of these phases the motivation of one of the defenses is to the capture the threatening piece whereas the motivation of the other is to neutralize the supporting effect of the other white key piece. The motivation for capturing is also ***reciprocally*** exchanged between the phases. The supporting effects that are being neutralized assume guarding the d3 and e5 squares.

  - Weaknesses of black defenses and white's mating moves

    When capturing the threatening pieces the black defenses open one of the rooks' lines to enable mates by the other white key piece (this is possible because the square e5 is guarded via the opened rook line in (**T**$_1$) and because the square d3 is guarded via the opened rook line in (**S**$_1$)). On the other hand, when capturing the other white key piece the black defenses open the other of the rooks' lines and enable mating by the ♕ on d5 (this is effectively done by having the opened rook take control of c3 in (**T**$_1$) and by having the other opened rook take control of d5 in (**S**$_1$)). Of course, it is not that hard to see that these weaknesses are ***reciprocally*** exchanged between (**T**$_1$) and (**S**$_1$).

    It is now rather clear that the entire mechanism critically relies on guarding/unguarding ***4 thematic squares***: d3, e5, c3, and d5. In (**T**$_1$), d3 and d5 are guarded whereas in (**S**$_1$), e5 and c3 are guarded.

- *Nature and **reduction** of critical effects*

  As is well known to the experts in the ***Lacny*** or (***Shedey-Lacny***) arena one typically needs ***6 critical effects*** to realize ***2×3 Lacny*** mechanisms. Also, it is often fairly hard to design the ***Lacny*** mechanisms where all of the critical effects are of the same type. Here that is achieved, as ***all critical effects*** are guarding/unguarding the squares around the black king (in (**T**$_1$), ♘ guards d3 and d5; in (**S**$_1$), ♘ guards c3 and ♔ guards e5). Moreover, as mentioned above, here one also has a not so often present ***reduction*** of the number of different critical effects. Namely, instead of typically needed 6 critical effects here one has only 4. That of course raises the question as to how this reduction actually happens. The catch is in the doubling of the roles of d3 and e5 squares.

  For example, when it comes to the doubling of the role of e5 one has the following: after 1...♝xf4(y) continuing with 2.♙c3≠(X) is not possible in (**T**$_1$) because e5 is left unguarded and is possible in (**S**$_1$) because e5 is guarded. This establishes the first role of e5. On the other hand, 2.♗e5≠(Y) is the threat in (**S**$_1$) because e5 is guarded and is not the threat in (**T**$_1$) because e5 is not guarded but it becomes possible after 1...♝xc2(x) since e5 becomes guarded. This establishes the second role of e5. When it comes to the doubling of the role of d3 one has an ***reciprocal*** analogous reasoning that is now rather obvious and its details are omitted.

- *Ultimate goal – a **Meredith** position*

  Since there are 7 thematic pieces that are necessarily needed for the structure of the mechanism and there must be two kings, it follows that the mechanism presented here cannot be realized with less than 9 pieces. Certainly the most important feature of the problem is its final ***Meredith*** position. It was my long standing belief that this mechanism can indeed be realized in a Meredith position. However, given that 9 pieces are the minimum that the mechanism requires and that by the definition of the ***Meredith*** no more than 12 pieces can be on the board one then easily sees that the maneuvering field wasn't really that spacious. The highest value in the discovery of this position in my view is actually the persistence in the belief that such a position in so narrowly limited conditions may actually exists. In my mind this is the ***best chess problem that I have ever composed***.

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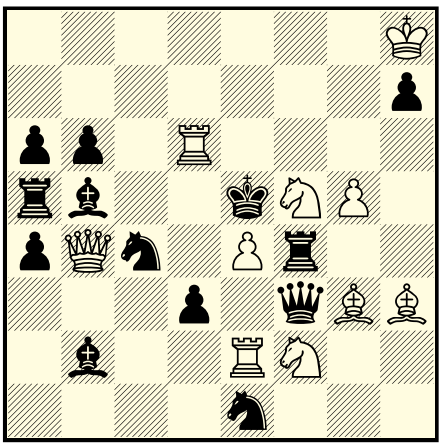

$\neq 2^{*\checkmark\cdots}$ C^{+} $10+13$

Content:

* **Set play** (**Sp**$_1$)

1...♞c4∼(♞e3(x)) 2.♕xb2≠(X)

1...♞xd6(y) 2.♕xd6≠(Y) ← *correction*

1...♛∼(♛g4(z)) 2.♘(x)g4≠(Z)

1...♛xe4(w) 2.♖xe4≠(W) ← *correction*

Solution (**S**$_1$)

1.♘e3! ∼ 2.♖d5≠

1...♞xe3(x) 2.♖e6≠(Q)

1...♞xd6(y) 2.♕xb2≠(X) ← *correction*

1...♛g4(z) 2.♘exg4≠(R)

1...♛xe4(w) 2.♘fg4≠(Z) ← *correction*

1...♝b6∼(q) 2.♘xc4≠

1...♛xf2 2.♘exg4≠(R)

✓ **Additional thematic tries** (**T**$_2$)

1.♘f5∼(♘h4)? ∼ 2.♖d5≠ but 1...♝b6∼(q)(♝e8(q$_1$)/♝d7(q$_2$)/♝c6(q$_3$))!

1.♘e7!? ∼ 2.♖d5≠ 1...♝c6(q$_3$) 2.♘xc6≠ but 1...♝e8(q$_1$)/♝d7(q$_2$)!

1.♘h6!? ∼ 2.♖d5/♘f7≠ but 1...♝e8(q$_1$)! ← ***corrective refutations reduction***

✓ **Additional thematic tries** (**T**$_3$)

1.♖d6∼ (lifted from the board)? ∼ 2.♕e7≠ but 1...♝d7(q$_2$)/♚e6+/♝a3/♛xe4(w)!

1.♖d8!? ∼ 2.♕e7≠ but 1...♝d7(q$_2$)/♚e6+/♝a3!

1.♖d7!? ∼ 2.♕e7/♖e7≠ but 1...♝d7(q$_2$)/♚e6+!

1.♖xb6!? ∼ 2.♕e7/♕c5≠ but 1...♝d7(q$_2$)! ← ***corrective refutations reduction***

✓ **Additional thematic tries** (**T**$_4$)

1.♖d6∼ on the sixth row (♖f6/♖g6/♖h6)? ∼ 2.♕e7≠ but 1...♛xe4(w)/♝d7(q$_2$)!

1.♖c6!? ∼ 2.♕e7≠ but 1...♛xe4(w)! ← ***corrective refutations reduction***

Comment: The main content of the problem is the so-called ***Ideal Ruchlis*** theme which means that there are 4 changed mates between two thematic phases (here the set play (**Sp**$_1$) and the solution (**S**$_1$)) on the same black defenses with 2 of the 4 mates being the ***transferred*** ones. The key point is that the 4 black thematic defenses are divided into ***two pairs of conceptually corrective*** moves in both thematic phases. There are also three sets of additional tries. The first one, (**T**$_2$), consists of three tries that show a ***corrective duel*** between ♘f5 and ♝b5 with ***refutations reductions*** and eventually provides the motivation behind the key 2.♘e3! The second set, (**T**$_3$), consists of 4 tries and shows another ***corrective refutations reductions*** concept based on random and corrective play of ♖d6. The third set, (**T**$_4$), consists of 2 tries and shows yet another ***corrective refutations reductions*** concept based on random and corrective play of ♖d6 on the sixth row.

Technical comments:

There are several technical things that should probably be emphasized. First, the entire mechanism is shown in a ***set play to actual play*** form which is typically a bit more challenging than when instead of the set play one relies on a try. Also, in the set play both pairs of the black thematic defenses are clearly of corrective type. In the solution that may be a bit less visible but is still true. Namely, due to the structure of the threat black precise moves 1...♞xe3(x) and 1...♛g4(z) are defenses. However, the white mating moves

2.♖e6≠(Q) and 2.♘exg4≠(R) that follow on these defenses, respectively follow on random lifting, 1...♞c4∼ and 1...♛∼ as well. Moreover, black defenses 1...♞xd6(y) and 1...♛xe4(w) defend against 2.♖e6≠(Q) and 2.♘exg4≠(R), respectively (the first one by directly capturing ♖d6 and the second one by capturing ♙e4 and effectively freeing the f5 square) and are indeed corrective moves.

The key technical difficulty was how to activate ♖e2 in the solution. This was achieved by introducing 1...♛xf2 that is followed by 2.♘g4≠ which opens the e2-e4 line for the rook to guard the e4 square. At the same time, this also enabled all white pieces to have an active role in both the set play and the solution (the sole exception being ♙g5 which is not needed in the set play).

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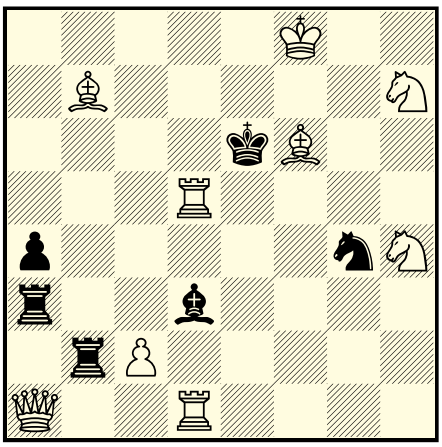

$\neq 2^{\checkmark\cdots}$ C^{+} $9+6$

Content:

✓ **Thematic try** ($\mathbf{T_1}$)

1.♙c4? ~ 2.♗c8≠(X)

1...♜xb7(x) 2.♘g5≠(Y)

1...♗xh7(y) 2.♖d6≠(Z)

1...♞xf6(z) 2.♘g5≠(Y)

1...♞e5(w)!

Solution ($\mathbf{S_1}$)

1.♗e7! ~ 2.♘g5≠(Y)

1...♜xb7(x) 2.♖d6≠(Z)

1...♗xh7(y) 2.♗c8≠(X)

Additional tries ($\mathbf{T_2}$)

1.♘g2? ~ 2.♘f4≠ but 1...♞e5(w)/♗xh7(y)!

1.♘g6!? ~ 2.♘f4≠

1...♜xb4(x_1) 2.♘g5≠(Y)

1...♗xg6(y_1) 2.♗c8≠(X)

1...♞e5(w)! ← ***corrective refutations reduction***

Additional tries ($\mathbf{T_3}$)

1.♘f3? ~ 2.♘d4/♘fg5≠ but 1...♜xb7(x)/♗xh7(y)!

1.♘f5!? ~ 2.♘d4/g7≠

1...♗xf5(y_2) 2.♗c8≠(X)/♖d6≠(Z)

1...♜xb7(x)! ← ***corrective refutations reduction***

Additional tries ($\mathbf{T_4}$)

1.♗~(♗d8)? ~ 2.♘g5≠ but 1...♜xb7(x)!

1.♖d8? ~ 2.♗c8/d5≠ but 1...♞xf6(z)!

1.♕xb2? ~ 2.♘g5/♕b6≠ 1...♞e5(w) 2.♕xe5≠ but 1...♜c3!

1.♖xd3? ~ 2.♗c8/♖d6≠ but 1...♜xd3!

Comment: Similarly to Problem **1**, this problem also shows the ***Lacny*** theme in a threat-form (***Shedey-Lacny***). The structure of the mechanism is also similar to Problem **1**, however the realization is different. The key difference is in the geometry. Instead of relying of two orthogonal lines as in Problem **1**, here one utilizes one orthogonal line d1-d6 and one diagonal line a1-f6. This difference then brings the difference in the remaining content of the problem as well. In addition to the main ***Shedey-Lacny*** theme realized between thematic try ($\mathbf{T_1}$) and ($\mathbf{S_1}$), one also has three additional sets of tries ($\mathbf{T_2}$), ($\mathbf{T_3}$), and ($\mathbf{T_4}$).

The first set ($\mathbf{T_2}$) brings a ***corrective refutations reduction*** with two threats from the ***Shedey-Lacny*** complex reappearing as mates on black so to say ***pseudo-thematic*** moves 1...♜xb4(x_1) and 1...♗xg6(y_1) played along the lines b2-b7 and d3-h7 of the original ***Shedey-Lacny*** thematic moves 1...♜xb7(x) and 1...♗xh7(y), respectively. One should note that the refutation 1...♞e5(e5)! although the same move as the refutation of the thematic try ($\mathbf{T_1}$) has here a different refuting purpose. Namely, in the thematic try ($\mathbf{T_1}$) it is a direct defense against the threat 2.♗c8(X); here it closes the line d5-f5 of ♖d5.

The second set ($\mathbf{T_3}$) brings again a ***corrective refutations reduction*** with two black thematic moves from the ***Shedey-Lacny*** reappearing as refutations being reduced.

Finally, the third set ($\mathbf{T_4}$) brings 4 different tries split in two corresponding pairs. Both pairs of tries show alternative ways of additionally guarding the squares f6 and d5 when compared to the thematic try ($\mathbf{T_1}$) and ($\mathbf{S_1}$) (the first moves in the thematic try ($\mathbf{T_1}$) and ($\mathbf{S_1}$) provide an additional guarding of the squares d5 and f6). In the first pair the guarding is done by actually moving ♗ and ♖ away from f6 and d5, respectively. The refuting moves of these tries are the black defenses from the thematic try ($\mathbf{T_1}$) on which white has a mate 2.♘g5≠(Y). The second pair of tries shows natural attempts by white line pieces ♕ and

♖d1 to provide the guarding of f6 and d5, respectively by capturing the black thematic pieces ♜b2 and ♝d3. They are refuted by the play of the ♜a3 on the third row.

The final position is very light with all pieces having roles in all key parts of the problem (even ♙c2 has a tiny role of preventing 1...♜f2+ after 1.♗e7? in the solution). Although the position is fairly light and the strategic content may very well be on par (if not even better) with the Problem **1**, it is the belief that the ***Meredith*** position can actually be achieved in this mechanism that in my mind sets the first one apart.

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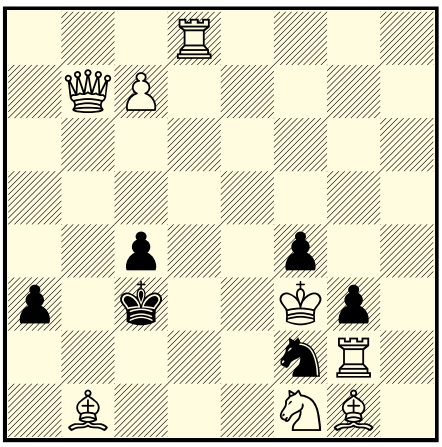


$\neq 2^{*\checkmark\checkmark}$ C^{+} $8+6$

Content:

* **Set play** (**Sp**$_1$)
  1...♞∼ 2.♖gc2≠(X)/♗d4≠(Y)
  1...♟a2(z)!

* **Thematic try** (**T**$_1$)
  1.♗d3? waiting/zugzwang
  1...♞∼(x) 2.♖gc2≠(X)
  1...♞xd3(y) 2.♗d4≠(Y)
  1...♟xd3 2.♙c8♕/♖≠
  1...♟a2(z)!

* **Thematic try** (**T**$_2$)
  1.♖b8? waiting/zugzwang
  1...♞∼(x) 2.♕b4≠(Z)
  1...♞d3(y) 2.♖gc2≠(X) ← ***transferred mate***
  1...♟a2(z)! 2.♕b2≠
  1...♚d4!

Solution (**S**$_1$)
1.♖d2? waiting/zugzwang
1...♞∼(x) 2.♗d4≠(Y) ← ***transferred mate***
1...♞d3(y) 2.♖dc2≠(W)
1...♟a2(z)! 2.♕b2≠

Comment: The problem shows a ***3×2 Zagoruiko*** which assumes changed mates on two black thematic defenses in three phases. However, two things make this ***Zagoruiko*** complex particularly interesting.

1. ***Black corrections*** *as a choice for pair of black defenses*

   Two black thematic defenses consist of a random move by the 1...♞∼(x) and its a corrective version 1...♞(x)d3(y).

2. *Two white thematic mates are* ***transferred in a reciprocal fashion***

   Instead of typically needed ***6 different*** white mates to complete a ***3×2 Zagoruiko*** here one has only ***4 different*** white mates which implies that some of the mates are ***transferred***. Not only that, the white mates are transferred in a particular way. In the thematic try (**T**$_1$) white mates 2.♖gc2≠(X) and 2.♗d4≠(Y) appear as mates on a random move by ♞, 1...♞∼(x) and on its a correction 1...♞xd3(y), respectively. Each of these two white mates appears in one of the two remaining thematic phases, thematic try (**T**$_2$) and solution (**S**$_1$), as the mate on the other thematic defense. For example, white mate 2.♖gc2≠(X) that followed the random ♞ move in the thematic try (**T**$_1$) appears as the mate on the corrective move 1...♞xd3(y) in the thematic try (**T**$_2$). On the other hand, 2.♗d4≠(Y) that followed after the corrective move 1...♞xd3(y) in the thematic try (**T**$_1$) appears as the mate on the random move 1...♞∼(x) in the solution (**S**$_1$).

One of the key components of the entire mechanism is the logical flow of the thematic content between the thematic phases. First, in the set play (**Sp**$_1$) any move by the ♞ is followed by both white thematic mates, 2.♖gc2≠(X) and 2.♗d4≠(Y). Moreover, the only move that refutes the set play is 1...♟a2(z)!

The thematic try (**T**$_1$) effectively repeats the set play while separating the white thematic moves through the random and corrective move by the ♞. (**T**$_2$) brings the first attempt to neutralize the strength of 1...♟a2(z)! However, it leaves d4 unguarded and the black king can escape via 1...♚d4! Finally, in the solution ♖ from d8 again manages to take control of b2 and enable 2.♕b2 after 1...♟a2(z).

Technical comments:

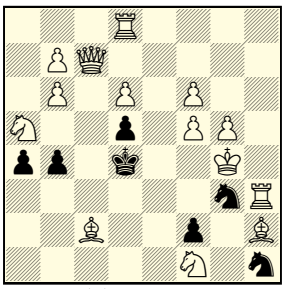
A couple of technical comments are also in place. One should first note a fairly subtle detail regarding the role of ♙c7. Namely, in the thematic try ($\mathbf{T}_2$) after white plays 1.♖b8? one has a waiting/zugzwang type of position. However, if ♙c7 weren't there one would also have a rather nice threat ∼ 2.♕g7≠. However, since there would be a threat only 1...♞g4/e4/d3 would defend against it and one technically wouldn't have as clear of a corrective play as it does in the position in Diagram **4**.

Also, if one prefers a position with no white pawns or minor dual-promotions, one can remove ♙c7 and add ♘a5, ♟a6, ♞h1, and move ♟ from f4 to g4 and ♔ from f3 to g7. The resulting position will have 2 extra pieces (16 pieces in total) but there will be no white pawns and no minor dual-promotion.

4v

Mihailo Stojnic

Scheme



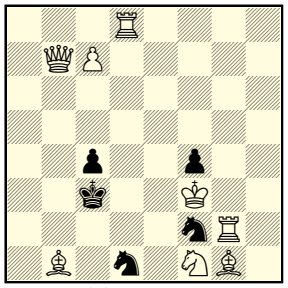
$\neq 2^{*\checkmark\checkmark}$ C^{+} $14+7$

Of a bit more interest is probably the following set of observations. First, one can easily see that the refutation of the thematic try ($\mathbf{T}_2$) is perhaps somewhat unpopular 1...♚d4! Also, the role of ♖g2 in the solution is rather limited. One can however find the positions where these things can be removed. For example, the position in Diagram **4v** achieves all of this. After the flight 1...♚d5! in what would be the thematic try ($\mathbf{T}_2$) one has 2.♘c6≠ and the refutation of what would be ($\mathbf{T}_2$) is 1...♟a3! (which is even different from 1...♟b3! that refutes what would be ($\mathbf{T}_1$)). Also, in the solution after 1...♞∼(♞xf1) ♖ from h3 gets a role by guarding e3.

4vv

Mihailo Stojnic

Scheme



$\neq 2^{*\checkmark\checkmark}$ C^{+} $8+5$

Of course, the scheme in Diagram **4v** is by no means necessarily the best possible. In fact it is given only for the illustration purposes to show that one can avoid all the things that may not be so popular. However, in my view the beauty and the lightness of the position in Diagram **4** are a much better choice. This is especially so given that the problem is of the waiting/zugzwang type where the role of say blocking a black pawn (the role ♖g3 has in Diagram **4**) is pretty much as important as its a say seemingly more active play like in Diagram **4v**.

In fact, not only was there never doubt in my mind that the position in Diagram **4** is substantially stronger than the one in Diagram **4v**, but it was actually quite contrary. Namely, it is even a bit of a pity that a bit lighter position given in Diagram **4vv** has a tiny dual 1...♞a2/♞e3 when refuting the first try (or the set play). Of course, if one views these two moves as a single move 1...♞d∼ (since in the waiting concept the only role of ♘d1 in Diagram **4vv** is to guard the square b2/or leave it unguarded by randomly moving) the duals wouldn't be there. Still, to honor the form rather than the artistic approach I selected the Diagram **4** as the one that formally doesn't have the dualistic try refutation weakness.

5

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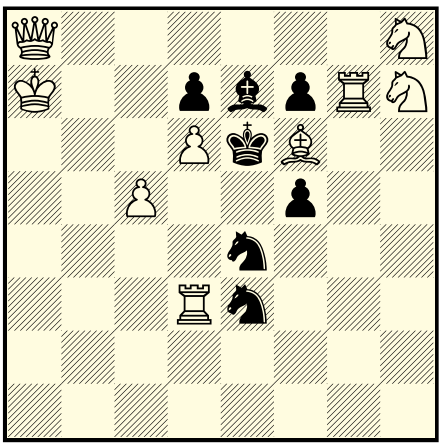

$\neq 2^{*\checkmark}$ C^{+} $9+7$

Content:

* **Set play** (**Sp$_1$**)
1...♞e3~ 2.♕(x)d5≠
1...♟f4 2.♕xe4≠
1...♗~(x/y)/♞e4~(z/w)!

* **Thematic try** (**T$_1$**)
1.♖g6? waiting/zugzwang
1...♗~(x) 2.♘(x)f8≠(X)
1...♗xf6(y) 2.♕e8≠(Y) ← *correction*
1...♞e4~(z) 2.♘(x)g5≠(Z)
1...♞xf6(w) 2.♖xe3≠(W) ← *correction*
1...♟xg6 2.♕g8≠
1...♞e3~ 2.♕(x)d5≠
1...♟f4 2.♕xe4≠
1...♗xd6!

Solution (**S$_1$**)
1.♘xf7? waiting/zugzwang
1...♗~(x) 2.♘(x)d8≠(Q)
1...♗xf6(y) 2.♘f8≠(X) ← *correction*
1...♞e4~(z) 2.♘f(x)g5≠(R)
1...♞xf6(w) 2.♘hg5≠(Z) ← *correction*
1...♞e3~ 2.♕(x)d5≠
1...♟f4 2.♕xe4≠

Comment: The problem shows another ***Ideal Ruchlis*** after ***two pairs of black corrective defenses***. A bit differently from Problem **2** this time both parts of the corrective pairs (random move and corrective move) are indeed played as defensive moves. The mechanism is completely analogous and is based on the corrective moves on f6 being ***selfpins*** in the thematic try (**T$_1$**) and ***selfblocks*** in the solution (**S$_1$**). To complete the mechanism the arrival of ♘ on f7 in the solution provides guarding of e5 and two new mates on d8 and g5 which are technically analogues to the corresponding mates by the ♘ from h7 on f8 and g5 in the thematic try (**T$_1$**). Of course, ***the key component*** of the problem is actually the ***set play***. Namely, in the set play the mates are provided on all black moves except on random lifting of the thematic pieces ♗e7 and ♞e4. In other words, ***none of the 6 thematic mates*** needed to complete the ***Ideal Ruchlis*** concept ***exists in the set play***! The table below actually highlights this.

Ideal Ruchlis – none of the 6 mates appears in set play			
Black first move	**White second move continuation**		
	Set play (**Sp$_1$**)	**Thematic try** (**T$_1$**)	**Solution** (**S$_1$**)
1...♗~(x)	2.?	2.♘(x)f8≠(X)	2.♘(x)d8≠(Q)
1...♗xf6(y)	2.?	2.♕e8≠(Y)	2.♘f8≠(X)
1...♞e4~(z)	2.?	2.♘(x)g5≠(Z)	2.♘f(x)g5≠(R)
1...♞xf6(w)	2.?	2.♖xe3≠(W)	2.♘hg5≠(Z)

Technical comments:

One should add a couple of small technical details regarding the practical realization. In the thematic try (**T**$_1$), white plays 1.♖g6? and effectively actively sacrifices the rook. After black plays 1...♟xg6 and captures the rook there is a nice mate 2.♕g8≠ along the top edge of the board. Of course, one then may naturally wonder why the roles of the thematic try (**T**$_1$) and the solution (**S**$_1$) aren't reversed. The point is that only through 1.♘xf7! all white pieces get to have an active role. In that regard one also observes that 1...♞xc5 activates ♖d3 to be the only piece that guards the square d6.

6

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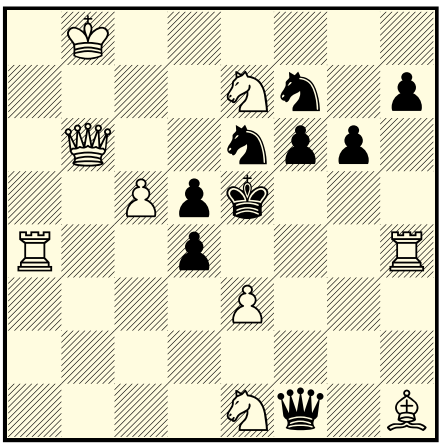

$\neq 2^{*\checkmark\checkmark}$ C^{+} $9+9$

Content:

* **Set play** (**Sp$_1$**)
1...♕~(♕g1/♕d3/♕f3) 2.♘(x)d3≠(W$_1$)/♘(x)f3≠(W$_2$)

✓ **Thematic try** (**T$_1$**)
1.♖f4? ~ 2.♘c6≠(Z)
1...♞e~(x) 2.♕xf6≠(X)
1...♞xf4(y) 2.♙xd4≠(Y)
1...♕xf4 2.♘d3≠(W$_1$) ← ***focal*** ♖ ***capturing move***
1...♕b5 2.♘f3≠(W$_2$) ← ***non-capturing move***
1...♞fd8 2.♕d6≠
1...♟f5!

Solution (**S$_1$**)
1.♖a6! ~ 2.♕xe6≠
1...♞e~(x) 2.♙xd4≠(Y)
1...♞f4(y) 2.♕xf6≠(X)
1...♕xa6/b5 2.♘f3≠(W$_2$) ← ***focal*** ♖ ***capturing move***
1...♕h3 2.♘d3≠(W$_1$) ← ***non-capturing move***
1...♕f5(z) 2.♘c6≠(Z)
1...♞fd8/d6/g5 2.♕(x)d6≠

* **Additional try** (**T$_2$**)
1.♗xe5? ~ 2.♕xe6/♖e4≠
1...♞xc5/g5/f4 2.♙xd4≠(Y)
1...♞fg5/d6 2.♕(x)d6≠
1...♕f5(z)!

Comment: This problem shows a combination of ***reciprocal*** change of mates after a ***pair of black corrective defenses*** and ***reciprocal*** change of white mates after the black queen ***rook capturing*** and ***non-capturing focal*** moves. The overall play is rich with different threats in the thematic try (**T$_1$**) and the solution (**S$_1$**), and the main mechanism that relies on a collection of different effects. In the thematic try (**S$_1$**) one has three of these effects: 1) closing of ♕ line f1-f6; 2) guarding of f6; and 3) relinquishing the control of f4. On the other hand, in the solution (**S$_1$**) one has the remaining two: 4) relinquishing the control of d4 square and 5) supporting of the white line b6-f6 (the last effect is not needed for reciprocal change; it is rather part of the overall problem's structure). The following table shows this reciprocal change complex.

Reciprocal changes after a pair of black corrective moves

Black first move	**White second move continuation**	
	Thematic try (**T$_1$**)	**Solution** (**S$_1$**)
1...♞e~(x)	2.♕xf6≠(X)	2.♙xd4≠(Y)
1...♞(x)f4(y)	2.♙xd4≠(Y)	2.♕xf6≠(X)

The second part of the mechanism deals with a carefully designed (without a single dual) black queen's ***focal*** play. Namely, both first moves by white rooks are chosen so that they are ***active sacrifices***. Moreover, both times the rooks are captured by the black queen's moves along its two ***focal*** thematic lines f1-f4 and f1-a6 and the white mates (2.♘d3≠ and 2.♘f3≠) that follow are distinguished by the ***focal*** nature of the black queen's play. Two additional defenses by the black queen 1...♕b5 (in the thematic try (**T$_1$**)) and 1...♕h3 (in the solution (**S$_1$**)) are used to complete the focal play and have one of the remaining white mates (2.♘d3≠ and 2.♘f3≠) reappear. This is schematically shown in the table below.

Technical comments:

One should also note an interesting technical detail regarding the ♕'s focal play. Namely, in the solution, in addition to the two black queen's focal thematic moves one also has a nice move 1...♕f5(z). This move

maintains control of both d3 and f3 and neither of the two white mates that are prepared for the black queen's focal play can work. Instead, white answers with the reappearance of the threat from the thematic try 2.♘c6≠(Z). Moreover, in the additional try (**T**$_2$), 1...♕f5(z) is the refutation as after 1.♗xe5, 2.♘c6≠(Z) would leave e5 unguarded.

Reciprocal changes after the black queen's capturing/non-capturing focal play

Black first move		**White second move**
Thematic try (**T**$_1$) 1.♖f4?	**Solution** (**S**$_1$) 1.♖a6!	
1...♕xf4 – ***capturing*** ♖	1...♕h3 – ***non-capturing***	2.♘d3≠(W$_1$)
1...♕b5 – ***non-capturing***	1...♕xa6 – ***capturing*** ♖	2.♘f3≠(W$_2$)