FAIRY KINGS

by Mark Alexander Ridley, Great Britain

This article is a reviewed and updated version of an article formerly published in "Variant Chess". Our thanks to John Beasley. (N. Red)

Introduction

The purpose of this article is to examine the various types of fairy kings that problemists have experimented with. This is a somewhat neglected area and I hope the examples below prove that much more can be achieved in this genre.

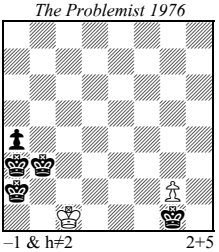
Section 1: More than one King

Two types of fairy king are considered here: (a) Rex Multiplex, and (b) Siamese Kings. Both of these are well known, but are included for completeness.

(a) Rex Multiplex

In Rex Multiplex each bK must obey normal rules, but white must mate all of them simultaneously. It should be emphasized that a King may not move into check, even to throw himself in front of another. Problem **1** shows a clever way to eliminate a BK. *Retract 1.f2xQg1=K for 1. f1=B Qd4 2.Bc4 Qb2#, 1.h2xQg1=K for 1. Ka1 Qb6+ bKa2 Qb6#.*

1. Roger Powell
The Problemist 1976

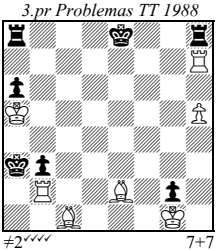


–1 & h≠2 2+5
Rex Multiplex
2 solutions

(b) Siamese Kings

Each side has two Ks and the threatened and inevitable capture of either K constitutes mate. The magazine *Problemas* held a theme tourney in 1988 for Siamese Kings and the problems quoted come from this competition.

2. J. J. Burbach
3.pr Problemas TT 1988



≠2✓✓✓✓ 7+7
Siamese Kings

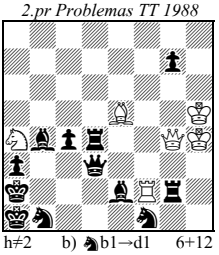
Problem **2** comes from the direct mate section. It is easy to see that moving wBe2 threatens Re2#. However, the wB must be careful where he goes. In all, there are four thematic tries:

1. Bc4? fails to 0-0-0!, 1. Bd3 fails to Kd8!, 1. Bf3? fails to Kf8!, 1. Bg4 fails to 0-0!

In each of the four tries the wBe2 interferes with wRb2. The key is **1.Bd1** (>2.Re2#). With the wB now out of harm's way we get: 1…0-0-0 2. Rc2 #, 1…Kd8 2. Rd2 #, 1…Kf8 2. Rf2 #, 1…0-0 2. Rg2 #

A most amusing idea!

3. Harry Fougiaxis
2.pr Problemas TT 1988



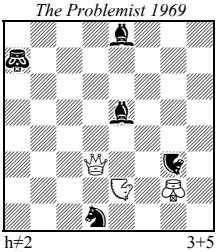
h≠2 b) ♘b1→d1 6+12
Siamese Kings

Problem **3** comes from the "other types" section. In both parts, Black unpins one of his men, and this is matched by similar strategy from White. A black Grimshaw interference follows on d3, which White exploits on mating. Although the definition of Siamese Kings stipulates two Kings per side, no doubt examples could be composed with three or more kings on each side. *(a) 1.Qc3 Rf3 2.Rd3 Qc4#, (b) 1.Qc2 Bf4 2.Bd3 Qxd1#.*

Section 2: Kings that move differently when in check

We will look at four types of fairy kings with this property: (c) Vaulting Kings, (d) Transmuting Kings (*Rois Transmutés*), (e) Super Transmuting King, and (f) Reflecting Kings (*Rois Réflecteurs*).

4. J. G. Ingram
The Problemist 1969



h≠2 3+5

Vaulting Kings
(Nightrider type)
♘♞ = Nightrider

(c) Vaulting Kings

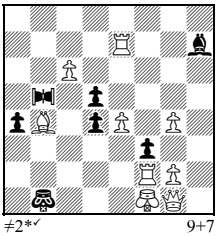
The Vaulting King was introduced by J.G.Ingram, in his article "Escape on Horseback" (FCR xi/1939, p.34).

The Vaulting King when in check has the additional power of moving like another piece stipulated by the composer. Several types of added power have been tried, but Vaulting Kings have not gained wide currency.

It seems appropriate to start with a simple example by the piece's inventor: In **4** the Vaulting Kings have Nightrider power.

After 1.Bc6+ the WK goes to a5 (moving as a Nightrider). 2. Be4 opens the line e2-b8 and closes the line g3-a6, thus allowing Qa6#.

5. Ronald Turnbull
cm Variant Chess 1995-96

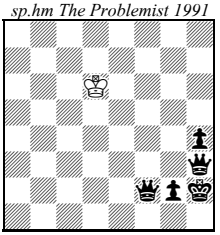


≠2*✓ 9+7

Vaulting Kings
(Equihopper type)
⋈ = Equihopper

Turnbull's **5** uses Vaulting Kings with Equihopper power in a direct mate. The problem shows set play, a thematic try and a good key, which allows further checks. It should be noted that the Equihoppers are of the "English" type and can be blocked on Queen lines. *Set: 1.. Ed7+/Eh3+/d3+ 2.KxE#, Try 1.gxf3? (>2.Kg2#) Exf3+ 2.KxE#, but 1…Eh3! defeats (E = Equihopper); 1.Rd2 (>2.Kf2#), 1…Ef3+ 2.Kb7#, 1…Ef5+ 2.Kxh7# (2…Ef1 is self-check).*

6. Ronald Turnbull
sp.hm The Problemist 1991



–5 & ≠1 1+5

Proca Retractor
Transmuting Kings

(d) Transmuting Kings

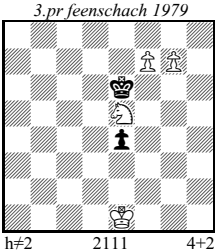
This is a form, which has become quite popular in recent years. These kings when in check can only move like the checking piece. Ronald Turnbull is one composer who has worked a lot with these kings and it is appropriate to give one of his problems as an example.

Problem **6** is a Proca-type Retractor. In a defensive Retractor, the players alternately retract any legal move they wish, each striving for a position in which there is a forward mate (for their side). In a Proca Retractor, the side retracting decides what unit (if any) has been uncaptured. In **6** White can retract 1.Kc8xSd6, forcing 1..Sf5-d6++ (maybe capture something on d6), or 1.Kd4-d6 but not 1.Kf4-d6?? since with the wK moving like a Q, the bK would have been in check with White to play. *Retract 1.Ka3xBd6 Bg3-d6++ 2.Ke7xQa3 Qa2/b3-a3+ 3.Kg8xSe7 Sd5-e7++ 4.Ke6 Kg4xSh2+ 5.Sf1-h2+ for 1.Se3#; 2…a6-a3+ 3.Kg6xSg7 Sc6-e7++ 4.Ke6 etc (2…Q~ 3.Ke6)*

Problem **6** is complex with its kaleidoscope of batteries, and many tries. The use of promoted force is well justified.

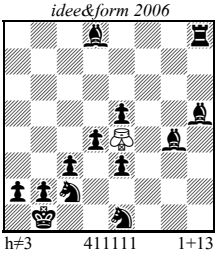
Without a doubt, one of the classics of the genre is **7**, showing a double AUW with only six men. *(a1) 1. Kf5 f8=Q+ 2. Kh7 g8=B#, (a2) 1. Kf6 f8=R+ 2. Kh6 g8=S#, (b1) 1. Kf5 f8=Q 2. Kg6 g8=R#, (b2) 1. Ke7 f8=S 2. Kf7 g8=B#.*

7. Alfred Gschwend
3.pr feenschach 1979



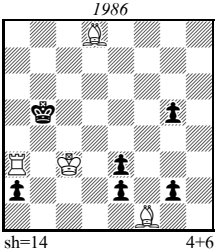
h≠2 2111 4+2
b) ♘c5→f6
Transmuting Kings

8. Karol Mlynka
idee&form 2006



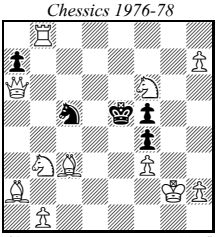
h≠3 411111 1+13
♔ = SuperTransmuting King

9. François Gournay
3.hm 5th TT Rex Multiplex 1986



sh=14 4+6
Reflective Kings

10. George P. Jelliss
Chessics 1976-78



≠2 11+5
Antipodean Chess

(e) Super Transmuting King or Pressburger King

The Super Transmuting King, sometimes better known as a Pressburger King, is one of the more up and coming fairy kings. It is a king which definitively takes up the nature of the checking piece (and thus loses his royal status).

In **8**, we see the White Super Transmuting King across the four solutions in turn; gain the power of Bishop, Knight, Queen, and finally Rook. In other words the White Super Transmuting King performs an AUW. *1. Ka1 Kxe5 2.Bc7+ Kxd4=B 3.b1B Bxc3#, 1. Sa1 Kxe5 2.Sd3+ Kc4=S 3.Sc1Sa3#, 1. a1Q Kd5 2.Qa2+ Kxd4=Q 3.Sf3 Qd1# , 1. Bd1 Kf5 2.Rf8+ Kf1=R 3.Sf3 Rxd1#*

(f) Reflecting Kings

Reflecting Kings in check have the power to move like the checking piece or like a normal king. Problem **9** shows an AUW where Black has to be careful about the first promotion. Note how the promotion to a Queen on the first move is determined. If 1.g1=R? then 15.Rxa3+! and the final position is not stalemate. After 1.g1=Q! then 15.Qxa3 +?? is illegal self-check from the wKc3! *1. g1=Q 2.Qg4 3.Qa4… 7.g1=R 8.Rg6 9.Rb6 10.Ka5 11.e1=S 12.Sd3 13.Sb2 14.a1=B Be2=*

Section 3: The King can be reborn

This section will examine Circe-style rebirths of the King after a capture. Mate only occurs if the King's rebirth square is blocked and he cannot be reborn. Two ideas that have been tried are Antipodean Kings and Circe Kings.

(g) Antipodean Kings

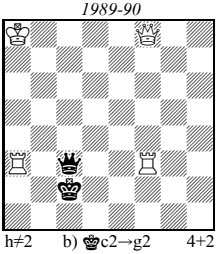
Antipodean Chess is a Circe variety, introduced by G.P.Jelliss in the first two issues of *Chessics*. Captured units, including Kings are reborn a distance (4,4) away. Problem **10** shows the BK mated in all four corners of the board. *1. Rg8 (zz), 1……S~ 2.Bxe5 (Ka1)#, 1…..Sxb3(Sf7) 2.Sxe5 (Ka1)#, 1…Kd5 2.Sxd5 (Ka1), 1…Ke4 2.Sxe4 (Ka8)#, 1….. Kd4 2.Sxd4 (Kh8)#*

(h) Circe Kings

A captured King is replaced on its square in the original array, i.e. e1 for the wK and e8 for the bK. Norman Macleod popularized this format in his article in *Chessics* 8, x/1979, but he was not the first to use it. (There are earlier problems by A. Olson in *springaren*, S Ylikarjula in *feenschach*, and perhaps others. H. Schiegl first suggested this rule in 1970.) Reborn Kings can castle, and castling is the theme of George's elegant miniature **11**. *(a) 1. Qxa3 (Ra1) Qe8 2. Qxa8 (Ke1) 0-0-0#, (b) 1 .Qxf3 (Rh1) Qe8 2. Qxa8 (Ke1) 0-0#*

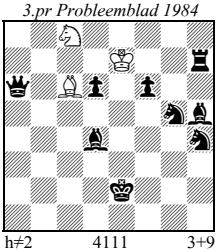
Olson's **12** combines it with Madrasi (also Rex Inclusive) showing a wealth of effects in its four solutions, such as interference with, and obstruction of potential paralysations. *1.d5 Sb6 2.Bxb6 (Sg1) Sxe2 (Ke8)#, 1.f5 Sxd6 (d7) 2. dxc6 (Bf1) Bxe2 (Ke2)#, 1.Qxc8 (Sb1) Ke8 2.Bxe8 (Ke1) Sc3#, 1.Se8 Sxd6 (d7) 2. Rxe7 (Ke1) Bb5#.*

11. Alexander George
The Games and Puzzles Journal & Variant Chess 1989-90



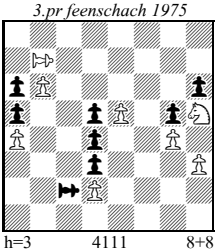
h≠2 b) ♔c2→g2 4+2
Circe Rex Inclusive

12. Anders Olson
3.pr Probleemblad 1984



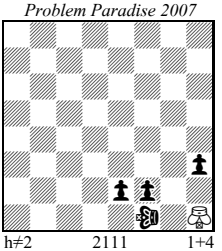
h≠2 4111 3+9
Circe Rex Inclusive
Madrasi Rex Inclusive

13. Jorge J. Lois
3.pr feenschach 1975



h=3 4111 8+8
⇨ = Royal Pawn

14. Karol Mlynka
Problem Paradise 2007



h≠2 2111 1+4
NoWhiteCapture
♔ = Pressburger King
♔ = Royal Dummy

Section 4: Kings that move differently

Expanding on Section 2, we examine in this section Kings that move like other pieces in more general circumstances.

(i) Royal Pieces

These pieces are well known. A Royal piece moves in the normal way, but is treated for checks like a King. Thus it cannot be left on a square where it is en prise.

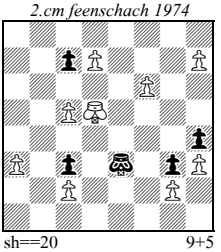
Royal pawns, which of course promote to Royal pieces, are used in **13**. The problem shows matching promotions, an idea known as the Babson Task. *1.c1=RQ b8=RQ 2. RQ=e1 RQf8 3. RQh4 RQf1=, 1.c1=RR b8=RR 2. RRc6 RRe8 3. RRg6 e6=, 1.c1=RB b8=RB 2. RBb2 RBd6 3. RBa1 RBa3=, 1.c1=RS b8=RS 2.RSb3 RSc6 3. RSa1 RSxd4=.*

(j) Dummy King

Occasionally, composers have used dummy pieces in chess problems. These are pieces which have no power of movement and can therefore only block or be captured. They are usually used to ease constructional difficulties and by tradition Pawns are used for this purpose. However, in **14** we see a Dummy King or Royal Dummy employed in combination with a Pressburger King. The piece the bPe2 promotes to in each solution is neatly matched by the power the White Pressburger King takes. In the first solution, the Queen promotion line, we see a switchback performed by the White Pressburger King, while in the second, the knight promotion and three consecutive checks are interesting. *1.e1=Q Kh2 2.Qe5+ Kh1+Q#; 1.h2 Kg2+ 2.e1=S+ Ke3=S#*

(k) Protean Kings

15. Roger Powell
2.cm feenschach 1974



sh==20 9+5
Protean Kings

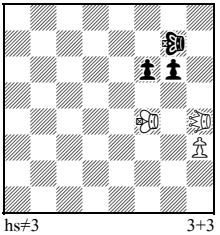
The Protean King, featured in **15**, was invented by A. H. Kniest and J. Niemann (Fairy Chess Review 1948). It starts as a normal King, but after making a capture it moves like the captured unit, discarding its previous powers.

Problem **15** is a Series Help-Double-Stalemate. The problem features an unusual AUW: The Black Protean King starts as a King, it takes the power of a White Pawn, and then promotes to Rook on a8. It then moves like a Rook until it captures d7, promoting to a Bishop on d8, and so on. The royal powers are retained throughout. In the final position, a White Pawn and White Protean King are blocking each other, so are a Black Pawn and Black Protean King. *1.Kd2 4.Kxa3 9.KPa8=KR 11.KRxd7=KP 12.KPd8=KB 13. KBxf6=KP 15.f8=KS 16.KSxh7=KP 17.h8=KQ 19 KQxc2=KP 20.c6+ Kxc6=KP==*

(l) Japanese Kings

A Japanese King is a simply a partial King which cannot move backwards. When it reaches the eighth rank, it promotes into a full King and acquires an ability to move backward. Similar principles apply for the Japanese, Queen, Rook, Bishop, and Knight. As far as I am aware, the Japanese principle has not been applied to fairy pieces.

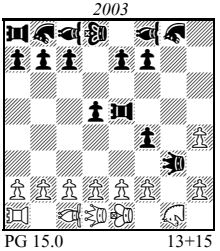
16. Eric Huber
Vlaicu Crisan
1.hm Japanese Sake Tourney 2003



hs≠3 3+3
211111
Japanese pieces

16 is a helpselfmate. The problem demonstrates a neat chameleon echo. *1.JKg4 g5 2.JQh7+! JKg6 3.JQh8=Q f5#, 1.JQg5! f5 2.JQe7+ JKf6 3. JQe8=Q g5#*

17. Michel Caillaud
pr Japanese Sake Tourney 2003



PG 15.0 13+15
Japanese pieces

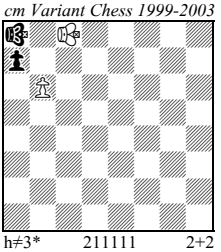
Problem **17** is a shortest Proof Game. The task set by the composer is to work out the exact game score from the game array. In this case the sides having orthodox pawns, and Japanese pieces on their back rank at the start of the game. Michel Caillaud from France is one of the world's most renowned Retro composers and 17 is worthy of close study. *1. g3 d5 2.JBh3! JQd6 3.JBd7+ JKd8 4. JBe8=B h5 5.Bd7 h4 6.Bh3 JRh5 7.Bg2 h3 8.JSc3 hxg2 9.JSe4 gxh1=Q 10.JSf6 Qe4 11.JSe8=S Qh4 12.gxh4 JQg3 13.Sf6 JRe5 14. Sh5 g5 15.Sf4 gxf4*

The first point to note the White Japanese Knight has been captured on f4. A normal knight would travel for example b1-c3-d5-f4. However, the Japanese Knight cannot move backwards and has to promote on e8 first. Secondly, Japanese Bishop needs to lose a tempo. An orthodox Bishop would simply play Bf1-h3-g2 for example. However, this route is not available for the Japanese Bishop, so he also must promote on e8 first, before proceeding to g2 to be captured.

One of the most popular Retro themes is the demonstration of a Pawn promoting to a piece and it then is captured. This theme has become known as the Frolkin theme. This setting with Japanese pieces playing the thematic part is original.

(m) Scorpions

18. Stephen Emmerson
cm Variant Chess 1999-2003



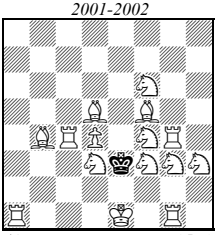
h≠3* 211111 2+2
Sentinelles pion adverse
♔ = Scorpion Kings

A Scorpion is a fairy chess piece which combines the power of the King and the Grasshopper.

In **18**, where Scorpions replace the orthodox Kings we get the chess variant "Sting". The position in **18** is often referred to as the Vielväterproblem position, and many problems have been composed to this position. *Set-Play 1…Kc7 2.Ka6 Kc8 (bPc7) 3. Ka8 (wPa6) b7#; 1.Ka6 Kc7 2.Ka8 (wPa6) Kc8 (bPc7) 3.c6 c7#, 1. axb6 Kd7 2.Kb7 Kd6 (bPd7) 3.Ka7 (wPb7) b8Q#.*

(n) Neptune or Marine King

19. Andrew Buchanan
4.hm M.A.Ridley-40
2001-2002



≠2 15+1
Which white unit moved last?
Ultramarine chess
Dead Reckoning

To illustrate the Neptune, I have chosen **19**, which comes from a tourney held to celebrate my 40th birthday. The solution to **19** is given below due to its detail.

Within Dead Reckoning, there are positions where one side can show that he has *definitely* not lost the right to castle. The convention is that White (here) may not castle unless he can show he has *definitely* retains the right to do so. If White cannot 0-0-0, then he cannot avoid stalemate on the move and the position is dead. If White can 0-0-0, then the position is still alive after **1.0-0-0 Ke2** and White can mate by **2.Rge1** (not Rde1+ Kd1!). We shall show the position is only legal if it is still alive.

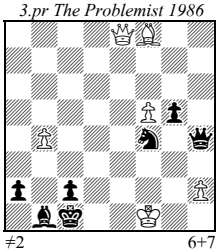
If Black has made a move to the diagram that was itself uniquely forced, and if the diagram position is dead, then Black's move was itself from a dead position and could not legally have taken place. Black's last move was not from e5 (by capture), e4, f2, d2 – all positions of illegal double check. Suppose that Black's last move was Ke2-e3. White's previous was Kc1xd1-e1++. But BKe2-e3 was forced, and led to the diagram with white not able to castle and dead game. So that move was from a dead position and illegal. So Black's last move was **Kc1xd2-e3**. There are fifteen White units on the board (including seven promoted men), so the captured unit was the White Mermaid. Accordingly, Black's move from c1 was forced, and was only legal if the diagram position was still alive and White can still castle. (With BK on c1, White's checking move could only have been **SQd1xf2-h3**). Thus the position is only legal if White has not lost the right to castle, and White can certainly #2 by 1.0-0-0.

As Judge for this tourney the problem took part in, I was impressed by the theme "a side can certainly castle" could be shown so well. Few examples have been composed either in orthodox or fairy chess, and here, there is no shortage of Marine content. It is to date the only problem I have seen published where a Neptune makes a physical move, so that is a challenge to composers.

Section 5: Disguised Kings

This is a popular section, and many ideas have been tried, in all these problems the K is either not on the board at all, or takes on some other clothing, and another way of determining mate is introduced.

20. F. von Meyenfeldt
3.pr The Problemist 1986



≠2 6+7
Symbolic Kings

(o) Symbolic Kings

The Symbolic King was invented by F. H. von Meyenfeldt. A King on the board is just an ordinary, capturable, non-Royal piece that moves like a King. Promotion to such a King is allowed, but not castling. There is no normal King, but any unit becomes a Symbolic King (SK) of the same colour if after by a move of the other side, it is on a square where a normal King would be mated!

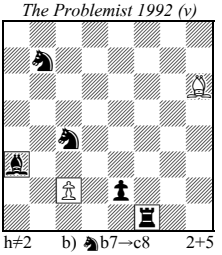
In **20** five different pieces become actual or potential SKs, including the WQ in dual avoidance after two principal defences by the Knight. (The defending side, has one "imaginary" to turn one of the units forming the net into a SK.) *1. Bg7 (2.Qa4# (SKa2)), 1…… Sd3 2.Qe2# (SKd3), 1….Sd5 2.Qe6# (SKd5) (not 1..Sd3,5 2.Qa4? Qxb4# (SKa4!), 1…Qg3 2.Qh5# (SKg3), 1…Qh3 2.Qe1# (SKc1), 1…Kb2 2.Qe3# (SKb2).*

(p) K–Units

This is another of Frits von Meyenfelt's inventions. A K-unit moves like a unit of the same type when it is not attacked. But when observed by an enemy unit it moves like a normal King, and cannot be left in (or move into) check. In particular, two hostile K-units cannot stand next to each other. Moves that give check to more than one K-unit are illegal.

Other points worth mentioning are: A normal King may be regarded as a K-unit that always moves like a King. (In fact, if we ignore complications caused by the presence of multiple K-units, a K-unit is just a royal piece that moves like a normal K when in check.) A K-unit pawn promotes to a K-unit piece; if checked on its own square (2nd/7th) rank, it can move to its back rank, whence it can return as a pawn to its 2nd/7th rank.

21. F. von Meyenfeldt
The Problemist 1992 (v)



h≠2 b) ♞b7→c8 2+5
c) ♝e2→c3
d) ♞c4→d5
♘♗♖ = K-Units

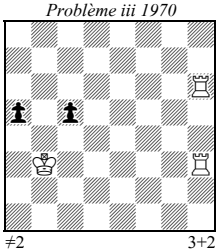
In the eponymous problem **21**, there are three K-units present: bBa3, bRf1 and wPc2. If Black played Se3+ the KPc2 could move to c3, d3, d2, but not to b3 (next to KBa3), or to b2 and the first rank (various checks). There are four parts **a**. diagram, **b**. Sb7 to c8, **c**. Pe2 to c3, **d**. Sc4 to d5. The first three parts show "skewers"; e.g. in the final position of (a), if the KR on d6 attempts to get out of check by moving off the a3-f8 line it exposes KBa3. *(a) 1. KRf6 KPc3 2.KRd6 Bf8#, (b) 1. KBd6 Bd2 2.KRf8 Bb4#, (c) 1 .KRf2+ KPd1 2.KR b2 Bc1#, (d) 1. KRa1 Bc1+ 2.KBa2 Bb2#.*

(q) Camouflage Kings

The Camouflage King is presented on the board, but disguised as a unit of his camp. Even in this disguise, he may not be left in check. If attacked (i.e. put in check), the check must be parried. If that is impossible, or if no legal move is possible with the Camouflage King on the board, this King must shed his disguise and take the power of a normal King, in which case he may be mated.

If a King moves next to an enemy unit, there is a risk that the move may be illegal, as this move as this unit may be a Camouflage King. In that case, the Camouflage King must be revealed, and the other King must play another move ("touch and move" rule).

22. Roméo Bedoni
Problème iii 1970



≠2 3+2
Camouflage bK

In helpmates, the Camouflage King may be mated on the last move, in which case it must be mated both as the disguised piece and as the King. All of this is rather confusing, but the simple scheme **22** should not be too difficult to follow.

White starts by attempting 1.Kc4; if accepted the bP on c5 must be the genuine thing and Black can only play 1…a4. The Pawn on a4 is then the Camouflage King; so White mates with 2.Ra6#.

Now suppose 1.Kc4 is refused. Then bPc5 is the Camouflage King. So White plays 1.Kc3, then 1….a4 2.3Rh5# (Note that the Camouflage King cannot move as a normal King even after it is unmasked.)

(p) Disguised Kings

This form of Fairy King was introduced at the 2007 World Chess Composition Congress held in Rhodes. It is defined as follows.

One of Black's pieces (King included) is a royal piece, which we call "Disguised King". At the start, we do not know the Disguised King's whereabouts.

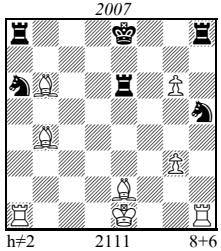
Other rules to note are:

1. The King can be captured if it is not the Disguised King.
2. Pawns cannot promote to King
3. A Pawn cannot double-step when it is attacked when it is the Disguised King and can be captured en passant.
4. Castling is not allowed when either King or Rook is Disguised King and the Disguised King is attacked or its path is observed by opponent's pieces.

When this condition is applied to White as well, we denote it as Disguised Kings.

To demonstrate the form, I have chosen **23**, the joint first prize winner which is a Duplex Helpmate in 2 with two solutions. The term duplex means both sides can fulfil the stipulation.

23. René J. Millour
1-2.pr Sake Tourney Rhodes 2007



h≠2 2111 8+6
Duplex
Disguised Kings

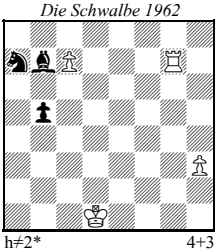
With Black to play, the White Bishops on b6, b4, e2 and White Pawn on g3 cannot be the White Disguised King as they are attacked by Black units.
1. 0-0 Bd4 2.fRb8 Rxa6# (So bRh8=bDK, wRh1=wDK)
1. 0-0-0 Bg4 2. Rdg8 Rxh5# (So bRh8=bDK, wRa1=wDK)

With White to play, the Black Knights on a6 and h5 are both attacked and cannot be the Black Disguised King.
1. Ra4 0-0 2.0-0 Sc5# (So bRe6=bDK, wRa4=wDK)
1. Rh3 0-0-0 2. 0-0-0 Sf4# (bRe6=bDK, wRh3=wDK)
Not 1. Bg1 0-0-0 2. 0-0-0 Sxg3? This is not mate, as WBg1 might be the White Disguised King! A massive castling display is combined with the revealing of both Black and White Disguised Kings.

(r) Ultimate Kings

The Ultimate King (*Rex Ultimo*) was introduced by F. von Gardener in 1924. Apparently not on the board, he is in fact disguised as one of his own units, and is revealed as the last unit to play a move for his side, if that move does not give check. (This last move by a piece becoming a King must not be into check!)

24. H. P. Rehm
F. von Wardener
Die Schwalbe 1962



h≠2* 4+3
2111
Ultimate bK

This original definition was later refined as follows: if after any move the problem stipulation could be fulfilled by the opponent's next move if the piece that moved were a normal King, then this piece is transformed to a King.

The miniature **24** by Hans Peter Rehm and the Ultimate King's inventor shows three promotions and a changed mate for the Black Bishop. *Set 1.….c8=S 2. Ba6=K Rxa7#; 1.Bg2 c8=R 2. Bxh3=K Rh8 #, 1.Sc6 c8=Q 2. Sa7=K Qxb7#.*

Ultimate Kings could have potential in other genres. For example reflexmate with no Kings on the board at the start, and a thematic try (or tries) which fails because White can mate a Black Ultimate King on his second move.

Section 6: Miscellaneous Kings

There are several types of Fairy King which are worth mentioning, but do not fall into any of the above categories.

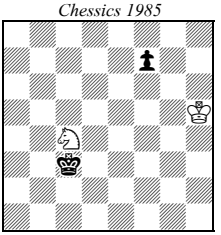
(s) Castle Chess

Composers have experimented with various ways of generalizing castling thus increasing the King's mobility such as *Anderson castling*, and Creed's *All-in castling*, etc.) In *Castle Chess* a King may "castle" with any other unit, of either colour, on a Queen-line and more than two squares distant, irrespective of previous moves. The King moves two squares towards the unit, which then goes to the intermediate square. As in normal chess, the line must be clear, and a King may not castle out of, through, or into check.

The *Castler* King introduced earlier by E. Holladay and F. Mihalek (see Chessics 1985, p.57) is essentially the same, but can only castle with friendly units. (A *mixed Castler* defined in the same article is exactly the same, castling with units of either side.) Holladay's minimanner **25** shows an underpromotion Excelsior first delayed then accelerated. *1.f6 Sb6 2.Kb2 Kg4 3.Ka1 Kf3 4.Kc3/Pb2 Ke2 5.b1=S Kd1 6.Kb2 Sa4+ 7.Ka1Kb3/Sc2#*

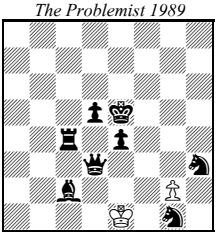
Problem **26** is a zeroposition with double changes in each part. This very poor twinning is perhaps partly justified by the task shown. AUW and a castling star in a White Pawn minimal. (In addition there is a cycle of pieces promoted to and castled with.). *(a) 1. e8=S Kg3/Qf4 2.Sd6 Qc1#, (b) 1. e8=B Kg7/Rf6 2.Bc6 Rf1#, (c) 1. g8=Q Kc7/Bd6 2.Qg3 Bxg3#, (d) 1. g8=R Kf3/Se4 2. Rxg3+ Sxg3#.*

25. Edgar Holladay
Chessics 1985



h≠7 2+2
Castler Kings

26. Nils Bakke
The Problemist 1989



s≠2 2+8
Maximummer
Castle Chess

a) ♕d3→h2 & ♙g2→c7
b) ♖c4→h8 & ♙g2→c7
c) ♗c2→b8 & ♙g2→g7
d) ♘g1→b2 & rotate 90° counterclockwise

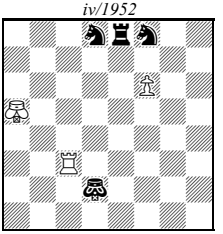
(t) Nostalgic Kings

The *Nostalgic King* moves like an ordinary King, but on finding himself a Queen's move from his original square (e1/e8), can and must go there on his next side's turn. For this special move the final square must not be attacked and the intervening squares cannot be occupied, but attacks on these intervening squares are ignored, and the Nostalgic King may

capture an enemy unit on his home field. Problem **27**, one of the earliest by the Nostalgic King's inventor, shows all these rules in action.

After 1.Re1 Rc7 2.NKe3 the wK is a Queens' move away from base, so 2…NKxe1 is a must. Similarly Black must play 3.NKxe8 with the result that 3.Re7 is mate. Note that the problem shows a counter-clearance by the BR to open the way home for the Black Nostalgic King. *1. Re1 Rc7 2.NKe3 NKxe1 3.NKe8 Re7#*

27. W. Hagemann
The Fairy Chess Review iv/1952



h≠3 3+4
= Nostalgic Kings

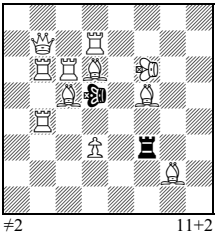
(u) Potentate Kings

The *Potentate* King is only deemed to be in check when attacked twice. It ignores single attacks. (It is identical to the Armoured King independently proposed by N. Guttman in the early '80s.)

Problem **28** was the first published using a Potentate King. The bRf1 is not pinned (if it moves, the Black Potentate King is only under fire once). The key allows battery openings and shut offs. *1. 6Rb5 (zz), 1…Rxf5 2. Bf4#, 1…Rh3 2.Bg3#, 1….Rf1 2.Bf2#, 1…Rxd3 2.Bxe3, 1..PKxc6 2.Bxf3#.*

Since a double attack on the Potentate King counts as only a single check, much extra force is needed. Nevertheless, Potentate Kings could have potential, for example if fairy pieces such as Lions or fairy conditions like Patrol chess are in use. (Orthodox double checks can then occur without the use of batteries.)

28. A. Davaine
Problème iii/1970



≠2 11+2
Potentate Kings

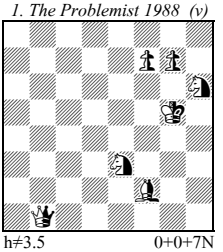
(v) Neutral Kings

Neutral pieces are now well known. They were introduced by T.R. Dawson in the Reading Observer (1912). However, the Neutral King was suggested by K.J.Goodare 40 years later (Fairy Chess Review x/1952).

Problem **29** with its reciprocal e.p. captures is an excellent example. It was described by Judge Yves Cheylan as "one of the greatest Neutral masterworks since the invention of the genre in 1912". *(a) 1…eSb4 2.f5 Kg6+ 3.Kh7 Bd4 4.g5 fxg6e.p , (b) 1…Qb8 2.Kf6+ Ke7 3.g5 Bh4 4.f5 gxf6e.p.*

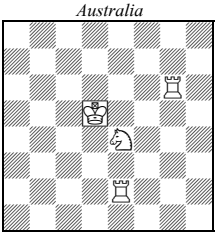
Note that in a wholly neutral problem, check or mate to a Neutral King can only be given by a Neutral Pawn, since any check by a Neutral piece would be self-check.

29. Manfred Rittirsch
1. The Problemist 1988 (v)



h≠3.5 0+0+7N
b) ♘e3→f8

30. Geoff Foster
Australia

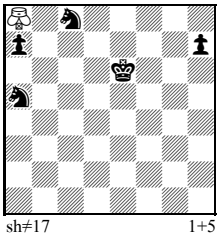


ser-≠4 4+0
= half-neutral King in white phase
b) half-neutral King in neutral phase

(w) Half Neutral Kings

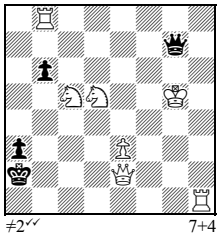
Half Neutral Pieces were invented by Petko Petkov and were introduced at the 1989 World Chess Composition Congress at Bournemouth in 1989. However, it is only recently that composing with a Half Neutral King has been tried. Geoff Foster of Australia has been particular active in this field and **30** is one of his first problems in this field. *(a) 1.Rc6 2.Sf6 3.Ree6 4.hnKd6(=nK)#, (b) 1.Sd6 2.Ree6 3.nhKe5(=wK) 4.hnKf6(=nK)#.*

31. George P. Jelliss
Bournemouth 1989



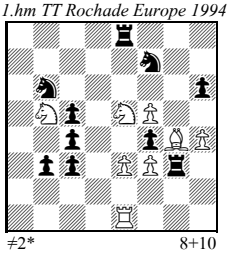
sh≠17 1+5
♔ = Neutralising King

32. J. E. H. Creed
The Problemist XI/1989



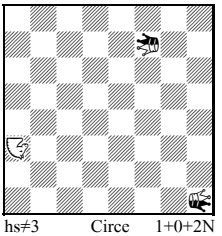
≠2✓✓ 7+4
Brunner

33. Christian Poisson
1.hm TT Rochade Europe 1994



≠2* 8+10
Republican Chess

34. Michael Grushko
Problem Paradise 2007



hs≠3 Circe 1+0+2N
AntiCirce
Republican Chess type II
♘ = Nightrider
♃ = Lion, ♇ = Locust

(x) Neutralising King

The Neutralising King invented by George Jelliss, causes any opposing man it attacks to act, temporarily, as a neutral piece. Although **31** features help-play, the concept would seem to be equally applicable to direct play, self play and reflex play. In addition the principle ought to be capable of extension to other pieces than the King, and it seems surprising not more examples have been composed. *5.h1R 6.Rc17.Rc6 8. Sc4 13.a1B 14.Be5 15.Bc7 16.Kd6 17.S4b6+ NKb7#.*

(y) Brunner Chess

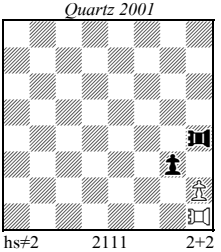
The posthumous **32** uses another very old idea (1919). In *Brunner Chess* a capture of the King is illegal if it leaves the other King in check (i.e. a check can be answered by attacking the other King, or by pinning the checking man). *Tries: 1.Kf6? Qh6 2.Rxh6 Kb1; 1.Kg6? Qb2 2.Sc3 Qc2; 1. Kh6!.*

(z) Republican Chess

This is a variant played without Kings at the start of the game. However, if the side, which has played, can place the opposite King on a square where it would be in legal mate, the opposite side is mated. This is known as Republican Chess type I. A neat reciprocal change is demonstrated in **33**. *Set play 1...c2 2. Sd3 (+bKc1)#, 1...Rg2 2, Sd3 (+bKf1)#; 1.Rd1! threatens 2.exf4 (+bKd5)#, 1....c2 2.Sd3 (+bKc3)#, 1..Rg2 2.Sxc4 (+bKf1).*

In Republican Chess type II, after the opposite King is put on such a square, the opposite King is put on such a square, the opposite side can then put itself the other King on such a square where it is mated. In **34**, after each capture both the captured piece (Circe) and its capturer (Anti-Circe) are reborn on their original squares. Like 16, 34 is a helpselfmate. The problem consists of a very difficult solution with typical Republican crosschecks. The appearing of a Neutral King (instead of a White one) strikes me as being very original and an idea worthy of further investigation. *1.Ne1 nLId1 2.Nf3 nLOxf2 (Nf8, nLOf1), 3.Nd4 (+BKg1)+ nLOxc1 (nLId8, >nLOd1) (+nKe1)#.*

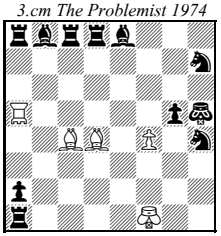
35. Eric Huber
Vlaicu Crisan
Quartz 2001



hs≠2 2111 2+2
Republican Chess type 2
Optional Replacement Chess
♖♜ = Pao

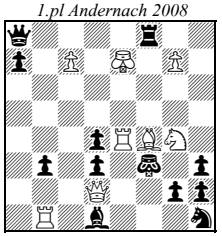
In **35**, we see Republican Chess type II combined with Optional Replacement Chess. In addition to the fine display of captures, we see in **35** the problem rounded off with chameleon echo mates. *1.PAxh4(PAg6) gxh2(h3) 2.PAxh2(g5)(+BKh5)+ Kh6(+WKh4)#, 1.hxg3(g7) g6 2.gxh4(PAg7)(+BKh6)+ Kh7(+WKh5)#.*

36. Roger Powell
Cedric Sells
3.cm The Problemist 1974



≠2 5+11
Kamikaze Chess
= Anti-Kings
= Rookhopper

37. Michel Caillaud
1.pl Andernach 2008

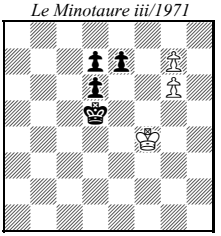


≠2 8+12
Magic Kings

38. Marco Bonavoglia
1.pl Andernach 2008

PG 10.5 8+16
Magic Kings

39. H.Schiegl
Le Minotaure iii/1971



h==6.5 3+4
Bicolores

(aa) Anti-Kings

The Anti-King is in check when **not** attacked by an enemy unit. Problem **36** features such a King together with a Rookhopper and Kamikaze Chess. Although three disparate fairy elements are in use, we nevertheless have a splendid demonstration of "Organ Pipes". *1.Ke1 (zz), 1……Bc7, Bc6 2.Bc5#; 1…Bd7, Bd6 2.Bd5#, 1……Rd7, Rc6 2.Bb5#; 1…Rc7, Rd6 2.Be5# etc. By-play 1...Sf3, Sg2 2.RHxa1#; 1..Sg6 2.f5#; 1…7S~ 2.fxg5#; etc.*

(bb) Magic Kings

These cause the immediate change of colour of any piece they come into contact with or observe again from a different direction. This colour-change happens to pieces of either colour regardless of which side has made the move, which means that a piece entering the King's field changes colour on arrival. Any pieces newly observed by two Magic Kings at once retain their own colour, as do Magic Kings themselves. At the 2008 Andernach Problemists Weekend, there was a composing tourney for problems using Magic Kings, and **37** which took first place in the two move section, shows an elegant reciprocal change. *Try 1.Re1? (threat 2.Se5), 1…..Qd5 2. Ke6 (d5=wQ)#, 1…..Rf5 2. Qxd3 (2..Kxf4?? turns BRf5 White). but 1… Bc2! refutes as after 2.Se5? 2..Ke2 changes the colour of Qd2 and Re1. Key 1.Bh6!, 1…..Qd5 2. Qxd3, 1…..Rf5 2. Ke6 (f5=wR).*

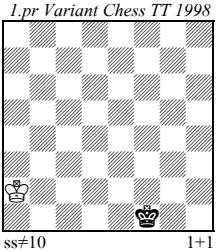
There was also a section for proof-games using a Magic King and I quote the extraordinary **38** not just because it got the first prize, but it shows what chaos a Magic King can cause at the start of a game, with his power to change the colour of various pieces. *1.f3 d6 2.Kf2 (f1=bB, g1bS, e2=bP) gxh1R 3.Kg2 (h1=wR, f1=wB, g1=wS, f3=wP, h2=bP) hxg1=S (g1=ws 4.Kg3 (f3=bP) e1Q+ 5.Kxf3 Qxd1+ 6.Ke3 (d2=bP) dxc1=B+ 7.Kd2 (d1=wQ, c1=wB, c2=bP) cxb1=S+ 8.Kd3 Bf5 9.Kc4 e6 10.Kb3 (a2=bP, b2=bP) bxa1=R 11. Kxa2 (a1=wR, b1=wS).*

(cc) Sensitive Kings

Sensitive Kings are Kings, which are deemed to be in check when observed by pieces of their own colour as well as their opponents. The French call this rule Echecs Bicolores. **39** is a miniature help double stalemate, White's last move stalemating himself as well as Black. Here, White builds a battery against his own King while Black advances. *1… g8B+ 2.Kd4 Bd5 3.Kd3 Bh1 4.d5 g7 5.d4 g8=R 6.d5 Rg2 7.e5 Kf3==.*

In **40**, the Sensitive and Sentinelles rules are excellently used and combined with an ideal mate. *1.Kb2 (+WPa2) 2.Ka1 (+WPb2) 7.b8R 8.Rb2 9.Rh2 (+WPb2) 10.Rh1 (+WPh2); K~#.*

40. Ronald Turnbull
1.pr Variant Chess TT 1998



ss≠10 1+1
Bicolores
Sentinelles

(dd) Swapping Kings

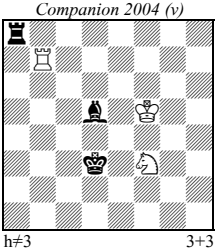
I originally intended to include an example of this form in Section 2 of the article, however all the examples I had to hand proved to be unsound. Therefore, I am very grateful to Eric Huber who kindly sent me some further examples.

"Swapping Kings" is a fairy condition that was invented by Daniel Meinking and Kevin Begley. The basic rule is simple and can be summed up as follows. "When the side on-move checks the opposite King, the Kings change places."

This is known as the "swap". A swap is mandatory. Some precisions are necessary:

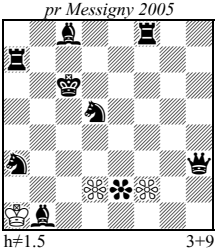
- The legality of any checking move is evaluated **after the swap**, except in certain cases involving castling
- castling out-of–check is illegal (WKe1 WRh1 BKe8 BBa5, 1.0-0??)
- castling through check is illegal (WKe1 WRh1 BKf8 BBa5, 1.0-0??)
- castling into-check is legal (WKe1 WRh1 BKf8 BBa7, 1.0-0!)
- a King swapped back to its game-array square is considered "reborn" and is
- eligible to castle
- normal chess rules apply to all non-checking moves
- in notation, the traditional symbols + and ~ are applied **after the swap** (i.e once the move is completed), a swap will be represented by "%".

41. Ion Murarasu
Eric Huber
Vlaicu Crisan
1.pr 4th Quick TT Good Companion 2004 (v)



h≠3 3+3
211111
Swapping Kings

42. Vlaicu Crisan
pr Messigny 2005



h≠1.5 3+9
211
❁❁ = Spider

The Good Companions (American Problemists Association) organised a thematic tourney using this condition in Summer 2004. The winner was **41** here given in an improved version by Vlaicu Crişan. *1.Ba2 Rb2 2.Bb1 Rf2 3.Ra5% Se5%#*

(ee) Spider

This piece moves like a King and can also move to any square of the circle where it stands (there are four "circles" on the chess board a1-h1-h8-a8, b2-g2-g7-b7, c3-f3-f6-c6, and d4-e4-e5-d5). A Spider at c3 for example can move to d3-e3-f3-f4-f5-e6-d6-c6-c5-c4 and also to b2-b3-b4-d4-d2-c2.

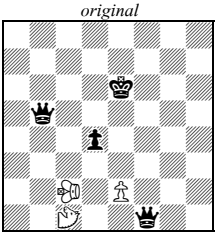
In **42**, the three Spiders are placed on the same "ring" b2-b7-g7-g2. White intends to play 2…SPd3# and 2…SPf3#. *1....SPfc2 2. SPg3 .SPdd3#, 1....SPdg3 2. SPf7 SPff3#*

(ff) Subversive King

A Subversive man does not capture or check. Instead, when such a piece attacks an enemy man, the checking power of the attacked unit is reversed and transferred to its own King. So for example, if we have a White Subversive Rook a1, and a Black Bishop on d1, then a Black King on say g4 is in check.

Normally I have seen Knights or Rooks, typically used for the condition, but recently wondered why could a King not have such powers. I put the thought to Cedric Lytton, who sent me the original **43**, which may inspire others to try this condition which has been somewhat neglected. *1.Qbd5 SKd3 2.Qff5+ e4 3.dxe3 ep. SKe4#.*

43. Cedric C. Lytton
original

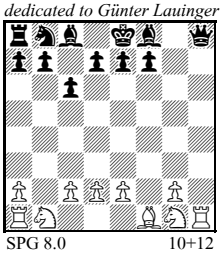


h≠3 3+4
♔ = Subversive King
♘ = Camelrider

(gg) Ceriani-Frolkin and Schnoebelen King

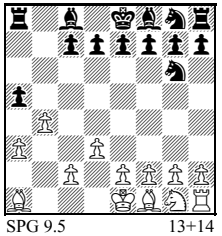
The Frolkin is one of the most popular Retro themes in existence. It occurs when a Pawn promotes and is then captured later in the play. If after the pawn promotes, the promoted piece is captured without making any further moves, we have the Schnoebelen theme.

44. Bernd Gräfrath
Die Schwalbe 06/2008
dedicated to Günter Lauinger



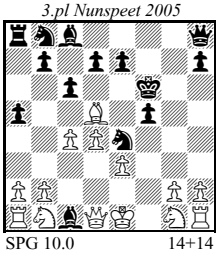
SPG 8.0 10+12
Losing Chess

45. Bernd Gräfrath
The Problemist 2008



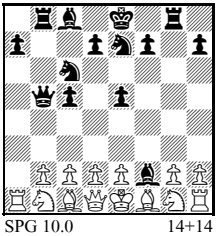
SPG 9.5 13+14
Losing Chess

46. Joost de Heer
3.pl Nunspeet 2005



SPG 10.0 14+14
Extinction Chess

47. Joost de Heer
Probleemblad 2006



SPG 10.0 14+14
Extinction Chess

In **44** and **45**, we feature Losing Chess. In these two proof-games we see the unusual feature of a Pawn promoting to King and then being captured. In **44**, it moves and captures black pieces, being eventually captured: this is a Ceriani-Frolkin King. In **45** it is captured without making any further moves: a Schnoebelen King.

44: *1.h4 c6 2.h5 Qh6 3.h6 Qxf2 4.hxg7 Qxe1 5.gxe1=K Qxd1 6.Kxg8 Qxc1 7.Kxh7 Qxh2 8.Kh8 Qxh8.*

45: *1.Sc3 Sc6 2.Sa4 Se5 3.b4 Sg6 4.d3 b5 5.Bd2 bxa4 6.Qb1 a3 7.Qb2 axb2 8.a3 bxa1=K 9.Bc3 a5 10.Bxa1.*

In **46** and **47** we feature Extinction Chess, another fairy condition that allows promotions to King. In the first proof-game, a promotion to h8 must occur and that piece will be captured without playing. Due to the path of the black King, the promotion must be to King. A Schnoebelen King ! In the final position White is mated because his last Bishop cannot escape. **47** doubles the number of King promotions. This is ingeniously achieved thanks to the constant threat of bBf2 to capture the wKe1.

46: *1.f4 Sf6 2.f5 Se4 3.f6 a5 4.fxg7 f5 5.gxh8=K Bh6 6.d4 Bxc1 7.e3 Kf7 8.Bc4+ Kf6 9.Bd5 Qxh8 10.c4 c6#.*

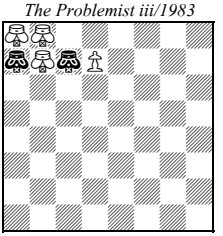
47: *1.f4 e5 2.f5 Bc5 3.f6 Se7 4.fxg7 Bxf2+ 5.g8=K c5 6.a4 Qb6 7.a5+ Qb5 8.a6 Sbc6 9.cxb7 Rxg8+ 10.b8=K Rxb8+*

Section 7: Combinations

Most of the problems quoted up to now have usually featured only one type of Fairy King. However, there is no reason why two or more types of Fairy King could not be combined in the same problem. This could be done in several ways:

- in a twin problem, with change of type of Fairy King. For example, (a) Circe King, (b) Antipodean King,
- each side could have a different type of Fairy King, as we have see in **14**,
- or in a problem like **48**, which is an interesting piece of piece shuffling. *1.Kc8 8Kc7 2.aKb8 aKa7 3.Ka8 d8=K 4.cKb8+ dKc8==*.

48. Roger Powell
The Problemist iii/1983



h==4 4+2
Anti-King
Rex Multiplex

Conclusion

I feel that many more Fairy Kings ideas remain to be explored. Comments from readers are welcomed.

Definitions of fairy pieces and conditions

Circe: When a capture is made, the captured unit (except a King) is replaced on its rebirth square if it is empty; otherwise, the captured unit vanishes.

Dead Reckoning: Article 1.3 of the Laws of Chess is enforced. If situation is such that neither side could ever checkmate, then the game is drawn and ends immediately ("Dead Game"). Further moves from such a position are thus illegal and do not take place.

Doublestalemate: stalemate of both sides.

Equihopper: Moves along any line over another unit of either colour to a square situated such that the hurdle stands at the mid-point between the Equihopper's departure and arrival squares. The English Equihopper cannot pass over an obstruction other than the hurdle when playing along Queen-lines. The non-stop/French Equihopper does not have this restriction. Unless otherwise stated, the non-stop Equihopper is meant.

Extinction Chess: The first player who does not have pieces of all types loses the game. Pawns may promote to any other type of piece, including Kings. Castling under or through orthodox check is allowed.

Grasshopper: Moves along queen-lines, but must hop over another piece of either colour and land on the next square beyond.

Helpselfmate: White starts and is mated. Black helps until his final move, which must be forced, as in a selfmate.

Kamikaze Chess: capturing pieces disappear with their victims.

Lion: moves on Queen-lines but must hop over a unit of either colour landing any square beyond.

Locust: moves along queen-lines, but can only move by capturing an enemy unit, and this it does by hopping over the unit to the next square beyond, capturing as it goes.

Losing Chess: The object of the game is to literally lose all of your men, (including the King); capture is compulsory if possible and there is no check or mate as such.

Madrasi: A piece of the side to move is paralysed if it is threatened by an opposite unit of the same kind. This rule applies to King in Madrasi Rex Inclusiv but not in Madrasi.

Nereid: moves like a Bishop and captures like a Bishop-Locust.

Nightrider: a rider that moves along a straight line on squares lying a knight's move away from each other.

Optional Replacement Chess: (similar to SuperCirce) when a capture is made, the captured unit (except a King) can be replaced on any empty square. A wP on the 1st rank, or bP on the 8th, cannot be moved. Bishops can't change the colour of their squares after capture.

Pao: moves like a Rook, but captures an enemy unit by hopping over another unit of either colour. Check is therefore given over another unit.

Poseidon: moves without capturing like a King and captures adjacent pieces like a Locust.

Pressburger King = SuperTransmuting King: King which definitively takes the nature of the checking piece (and thus loses his royal status).

Rookhopper: moves like a Grasshopper, but on Rook lines only.

Squid: moves like a Knight and captures like a Knight-Locust.

Prawn: moves like a Pawn and captures diagonally like a Pawn-Locust.

Sentinelles: On moving, a piece leaves behind a Pawn of its own colour on its departure square. The rule does not apply to Pawns, or to pieces moving from the 1st or 8th rank, nor does it apply if there are eight pawns of that colour already on the board.

Sentinelles PionAdverse (Enemy Sentinels): On moving a piece leaves behind a Pawn of the opposite colour on its departure square. The rule does not apply to Pawns, or to pieces moving from the 1st or 8th rank, nor does it apply if there are eight Pawns already on the board.

Siren: moves like a Queen and captures like a Locust.

Triton: moves like a Rook and captures like a Rook-Locust.

Ultramarine Chess: All pieces are marine and have been since the game array. So the game is played with Prawns, Squids, Nereids, Tritons, Mermaids and Neptunes rather than orthodox force.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Jubilee Tourney Mark A. Ridley – 50

Theme: FAIRY KINGS. Any sort of problem presenting at least one fairy condition or piece that have been shown in Mark Ridley's present article. New fairy conditions involving fairy Kings of any sort are also welcome.

Judge: **Mark A. Ridley**

Prizes: in books.

Send your problems to: **Eric Huber, CP 13-72, 024240 Bucharest, Romania**
or by email to: **hubereric@yahoo.fr**
until **January 17th, 2011**, the jubilarian's 50th birthday.