Israel Ring Tourney: Studies 2020
Judge: Amatzia Avni, Israel, December 2020

I received 21 studies of average quality from director Gady Costeff, who also checked for anticipations. In the participants' list, two names stood out: a sensational reappearance of Yehuda Hoch, after an absence of a quarter of a century; and the debut of a new 14-years old Israeli composer, Itay Richardson (pronounced *Rihardson*). The two are connected, as Itay is the grandson of Yehuda, and they also joined forces to compose one study. The lad inherited excellent composition genes and it is to be hoped that in time, he will fulfill his promise.

13 studies appear in the award. The unawarded studies were either too simple, or not interesting enough, or anticipated. In one case a study was left out of the award because it was pure computer work, with no evidence of human involvement.

1st Prize: Var. 3441 Steffen Nielsen & Martin Minski

Steffen S. Nielsen
Martin Minski
1st Prize IRT 2020

Win   6+6

An enjoyable piece, combining Phoenix, minor promotion, point (5.Be5) and a model mate, in a natural, flowing manner.

1.Ng3! 1.b7 Be3+ 2.Nxe3 Rxa2+ -+ **1...Rxg3 2.b7 Bf4** 2...Be3+ 3.Bd4 +- **3.Rxh2 Rxc3! 4.Re2+** 4.Bxc3? Bxh2 = **4...Be3 5.Be5!!** the point **5...Ra3+** (5...Bxe5 6.Rxe3 +- 5...Rxe5 6.b8=Q+ +- 5...Rxe2 6.b8=Q+ +- **6.Kb6 Kd7 7.b8=N+** ! Phoenix 7.b8=Q? Rb3+ = **7...Kc8** 7...Kd8 8.Bf6+ **8.Bxf4 gxf4** 8...Rb3+ 9.Kc6 **9.Re8** model mate.

2nd Prize: Var. 3388 Pavel Arestov & Petr Kiryakov

Pavel Arestov
Petr Kiryakov
2nd Prize IRT 2020

Draw   6+2

During a battle of white to achieve a draw, either by fortress, stalemate with an h-pawn, or a positional draw, the WK travels from one corner to another, while offering black a gift of a piece or two. The work leaves a positive impression, both in content and structure.

1.Kb7! 1.h7 Qxc3 1.Bf6 Kb6 **1...Qxe2!** 1...Qxh6 2.Be7 with 3.Bb4 fortress; 1...Qxc3 2.Nd5! Kc5 (2...Qd4 3.Kc6 Kc4+ 4.Kd6) 3.e4! **2.Kc6!** 2.h7 Qb2+ 3.Kc8 Qxc3 **2...Qc4+ 3.Kd7! Qd3+!** 3...Qxc3 4.Bg5 Qe5 5.Ne6 **4.Ke7!** 4.Ke8? Qd6! 5.Bf7 Qxd8 **4...Qxc3 5.Kf7! Qd2** 5...Qh8 6.Bg5 Qh7+ 7.Bf6 Qxc7 8.Kg6 **6.h7!** 6.Kg6 Qd3+! 7.Kg7 Qxd8 8.h7 Qg5+ 9.Kf7 Qh6 10.Kg8 Qg6+ 11.Kh8 Qf7 **6...Qh6 7.Kg8 Qg6+ 8.Kh8** white king travelled a8->h8 **8...Qc2 9.Ne6!** with 2 lines

A) **9...Kc3 10.Bf6+!** 10.Be7 Kc4 11.Bf6 Qf7 12.Be7 Kd5 **10...Kc4 11.Be7 Qf7** 11...Qxe6 12.Kg7! Qxe7+ 13.Kg8 **12.Ng5 Qg6 13.Ne6!** positional draw.

B) **9...Qf7 10.Bf6! Kd2** 10...Kd3 11.Be7 Kc4 12.Ng5! see line A **11.Bg7 Ke3** 11...Kd3 12.Bh6 Kc4 13.Ng5 **12.Bf8** 12.Bh6+? Kd3 13.Bf8 Kc4 **12...Kf2 13.Bd6! Qxe6** 13...Kg2 14.Be5 Kh3 15.Ng5+) **14.Kg7** 1/2-1/2

Special Prize: Var. 3390 Steffen Nielsen

Steffen S. Nielsen
Sp. Prize IRT 2020

Win   Btm   7+5

A long journey of WK to find haven from perpetual check, was observed in the past. The fine point here is an exact 3rd move, which uniqueness is revealed only at the end of the solution.

1...Nf3+ 2.Kf1 2.Kg2? Rg5+ perpetual **2...Ra1+** Now white has three choices: 3. Kg2 or 3.Rb1 or 3.Rc1. **3.Rb1!!** Try: 3.Kg2? Rg1+ 4.Kh3 Ng5+ 5.Kh4 Nf3+ 6.Kh5 Rh1+ 7.Kg4 Rg1+ 8.Kf5 Rg5+ 9.Kf6 Rg6+ 10.Kxf7 Ne5+ 11.Kf8 Nd7+ 12.Ke8 Ne5 13.Bb6+ Ke2 14.Kd8 Rd6+ 15.Kc7 (?) (15.Ke8 =) 15...Rd7# The rook on b8 blocks the escape of the White king. Correction try: 3.Rc1 Rxc1+ 4.Kg2 Rg1+ 5.Kh3 Rh1+ 6.Kg4 Rg1+ 7.Kf5 Rg5+ 8.Kf6 Rg6+ 9.Kxf7 Ne5+ 10.Kf8 Nd7+ 11.Ke8 Ne5 12.Bb6+ Ke2 (12...Nf4 13.Kd8 d2 14.Be3+ Kxe3 15.Rb1) 13.Kd8? (13.Kf8 =) 13...d2! -+ 14. Rb2 is not possible, because the bishop is on b6. 13...Rd6+? 14.Kc8 Unblock of c8. The point of 3...Rc1!? or 14.Kc7 Rd7+ 15.Kc8
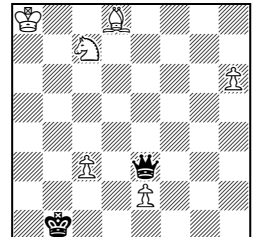
3...♖xb1+ 4.♔g2 ♖g1+ 5.♔h3 ♘g5+ 5...♖h1+ 6.♔g4 ♖g1+ 7.♔f5 transfers to the mainline **6.♔h4 ♘f3+ 7.♔h5 ♖h1+!** or 7...♔g5+ 8.♔h6 ♖g6+ 9.♔h7 ♘g5+ 10.♔h8 ♖h6+ 11.♔g7 ♖g6+ 12.♔f8 +- **8.♔g4 ♖g1+ 9.♔f5 ♔g5+ 10.♔f6 ♖g6+ 11.♔xf7 ♘e5+ 12.♔f8 ♘d7+** 12...♖f6+ 13.♔g8 ♖g6+ 14.♔h7 +- **13.♔e8 ♘e5!** Finally White has some breathing space. **14.♗b6+ ♔e2** 14...♔f4 15.♖c4+ ♔f5 16.♔d8 +- **15.♔d8 ♖d6+** 15...d2? 16.♖c2! +- The point of 3. ♖b1! in comparison to 3. ♖c1!? **16.♔c7 ♖d7+ 17.♔b8 +-** Unblock of b8. The other point of 3.♖b1! 1-0

1st Honorable Mention: Var. 3389 Janos Mikitovics

Simple, yet very precise play. A neat knight sacrifice paves the way to victory.
1.♔b4! (1.b6? ♘c8! 2.♔d5+ ♖xd5 3.b7 ♘b6+ 4.♔b4 ♘d7! = (4...♖d8? 5.♖a6!! ♘d7 6.♖d6 +-)) **1...♔e3 2.b6!** (2.♔c5? ♖xb5! =) **2...♘c8!**
3.♘d5+!! ♖xd5 3...♘d4 4.♖a8! ♖xb5 5.♘xb6 ♖d6 6.♘c4! ♖h6 7.♖d8+ ♖d6 8.♖xd6# **4.b7 ♘e7 5.♖a6!!** 5.b8=Q? ♘c6+ = 5.♖c3? ♖d8 = **5...♖d4+ 6.♔b3**
or 6.♔c3 6.♔b5? ♖d5+ 7.♔b6 ♖d6+ 8.♔b5 ♖d5+ 9.♔b4 ♖d4+ 10.♔b3 loss of time **6...♖xd3+ 7.♔b2** or 7.♔c2 **7...♖d8! 8.♖a8!** 8.♖e6+? ♔d4! = **8...♖d2+ 9.♔c1!!** Thematic try 9.♔c3? ♖d3+! 10.♔c2 (10.♔c4 ♖d4+ 11.♔c5 ♖d5+ 12.♔b6 ♖d6+ 13.♔c7 ♖c6+ 14.♔d7 ♖b6 =) 10...♘c6 11.♖e8+ ♔d4 12.♖d8+ ♘xd8 13.b8=♕ ♔e4!! 14.♕b4+ ♖d4 15.♕e7+ ♔f5! 16.♕c5+ ♔e4 17.♕e7+ ♔f5 positional draw. **9...♘c6 10.♖e8+! ♔d3 11.♖d8+ +- 1-0**

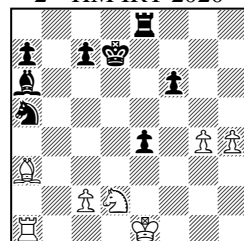**János Mikitovics**
1st HM IRT 2020
Win   5+3
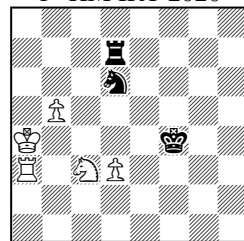
2nd Honorable Mention: Var. 3444 Sergiy Didukh

An amusing concept – white withdraws his pieces only to re-develop them immediately. It resembles Costeff's Ke1/h8 sp. Prize in Humor ty 2004. One would like to see a final withdrawal to the first rank, as suggested by the composer, but this line is not unique. The author is a chess blogger, who occasionally tries his hand in composing.
1.♗c1! 1.O-O-O? ♔c8 = 1.♗c5? e3 2.♔b1 ♗b7! = 1.♗b2? e3 2.♖xa5 exd2+ 3.♔xd2 ♗e2+ 4.♔d1 ♗c4 5.♗xf6 ♖e4 = **1...e3 2.♘b1!** 2.♘f3? ♗b7! =
2...♖e5 Black can try a sacrifice 2...♘c6 with the idea to profit from White`s intentional underdevelopment 3.♖xa6 ♘d4 4.♖xf6 ♘xc2+ 5.♔e2 ♘d4+ 6.♔d3 e2 7.♗d2 e1=Q 8.♗xe1 ♖xe1 9.♔xd4 ♖xb1 10.♔e3 ♖e1+ 11.♔f2 +- **3.♗b2 ♖b5** Another attempt to drop a piece 3...♖c5 4.♗c3! f5! forces White to find several precise moves: 5.♖xa5 ♖xa5 6.♗xa5 f4 7.♘a3! ♔d6 (7...♘c6 8.c4 ♗c8 9.♘c2 ♗xg4 10.♘b4+ ♔d6 11.♘d5 +-) 8.c4 ♗c8 9.♘b5+ ♔c5 10.♗xc7 ♗xg4 11.♗xf4 +- **4.♘c3!** (4.♗xf6? ♖b4! 5.♗g5 ♖xg4 6.♖xe3 ♘c4 = 4.♗d4? ♖b4 5.♗xe3 ♗b7 6.♘c3 ♖c4 7.♔d2 ♘c6 8.♗d5 ♘b4 9.♘xf6+ ♔e6 10.c3 ♔xf6 =) **4...♖xb2** 4...♖c5 5.h5 ♔e6 6.h6 ♔f7 7.h7 ♔g7 8.♘e4 ♖xc2 9.♖xa5 ♖e2+ 10.♔d1 ♖xb2 11.♖xa6 +- **5.O-O-O+!** The King keeps his promise **5...♔e6 6.♔xb2** wins, e.g. 6...♘c4+ 7.♔c1 ♘e5 8.♖e1 ♘xg4 9.♘d1 e2 10.♘c3 1-0
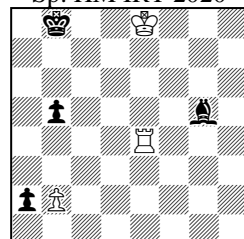

Sergiy Didukh
2nd HM IRT 2020
Win   7+8

Special Honorable Mention: Var. 3443 Yochanan Afek

Delicate and aesthetic, presenting a synthesis of two known variations. The solution ends with an identical anticipated De Feijter study (Kg8/Kg2 Deventer Dagblad).
1.♖e1 b4 2.♔f7! 2.♖a1? b3 3.♔f7 ♔c7 4.♔e6 ♔c6 5.♔e5 ♔c5 -+ 2.b3? ♗f6 - + 2.♔d7? ♗f6 -+ **2...b3 3.♔e6 ♗d2 4.♖a1!!** Logical try: 4.♖d1 (♖f1/♖g1/♖h1) ♗c3! 5.♔d5 ♗xb2 6.♔c4 ♗c1! -+ **4...♗c3! 5.♔d5! ♗xb2 6.♔c4 ♗xa1 7.♔xb3 ♗e5 8.♔xa2 draw.**

Yochanan Afek
Sp. HM IRT 2020
Draw   3+4

1st Commendation: Var. 3440 Yehuda Hoch & Itay Richardson

Yehuda Hoch
Itay Richardson
1st Com IRT 2020

Lively play leads to a nice domination of the BQ. Unfortunately, this domination was already executed in a stunning way by Zhukov, Kh3/Kc8 1st prize Tbirizi 2016.

1.fxe7 1.♞xf7 ♝e3 1.c7+ ♚xc7 2.♝xd4 ♜xd8 **1...♞d6 2.c7+** 2.♝f4 ♝c5 3.♝xd6+ ♝xd6 4.c7+ ♝xc7 **2...♚xc7** 2...♛xc7 3.♝xd4 ♛xe7 4.♝b6 **3.♞e6+ ♚d7 4.e8=♛+! ♚xe8 5.♝xd4 b5+ 6.♚a3 ♞c4+ 7.♛xc4! ♛a5+ 8.♛a4!! bxa4 9.b4!** wins as the black queen is dominated.

2nd Commendation: Var. 3438 Itay Richardson

The moves 3.Re8! and 6.Nc7+! are worthwhile.

1.♞b5 ♜b8 2.g8=♛ ♝xg8 2...♜xg8 3.♜e7 **3.♜e8!! ♜xe8** 3...♝f7 4.♜xb8+ ♚xb8 5.♞d6 **4.f7 ♝xf7 5.♛xf7 ♛e7** 5...♜e7 6.♛xd5+ ♚b8 (6...♚b7 7.♛g8+ ♜b8 8.♛d5+) 7.♛d8+ ♚b7 8.♛d5+ ♚b6 9.♞d6 = **6.♞c7+!** thematic try: 6.♛xe8+ ♛xe8 7.♞c7+ ♚b7 8.♞xe8 ♚c6 9.♞b4 ♝h8 -+ **6...♚b7 7.♞xe8 ♛xf7 8.♞d6+ draw.**

3rd Commendation: Var. 3387 Michal Hlinka & Lubos Kekely

Black searches for a way to give up his rook for white's two pawns. Clever play by white's knights prevents him from achieving this goal.

1.♞b2+ 1.♞c3+? ♚d2 2.♞b1+ ♚d1 = **1...♚e1** 1...♚d2 2.♞c4+ +- 1...♚e2 2.♞g1+ +- **2.♜e6 ♛e2+!** 2...♛g8+ 3.♚h1! ♚e2 4.♞c4 ♛xe6 5.fxe6 +- **3.♜xe2+ ♚xe2 4.♝f4+ ♚e3 5.♞e6 ♜g8+ 6.♚f1!** 6.♚h2? ♚e4 7.♞c7 ♜h8+ 8.♚g3 ♜g8+ 9.♚f2 ♜f8 = **6...♜a8** 6...♜b8 7.f6 +- **7.♞c4+** 7.f6? ♜xa6 8.f7 ♜a8 = **7...♚e4 8.f6 ♚f5** 8...♜xa6 9.f7 ♜a8 10.♞d6+ ♚e5 11.♞e8 +- **9.♞b6 ♜a7** 9...♜h8 10.♞c5 +- 9...♜xa6 10.f7 +- **10.♞c8 ♜xa6 11.f7** and wins 1-0

4th Commendation: Var. 3523 Peter Krug & Mario Garcia

A host of nice combinational ideas not always connected to a coherent picture.

1.g6! with two lines: 1) **1...c2 2.♞g7!** 2.♝xc2? ♛xc6 3.♝a4 (3.♞ef6+ exf6 4.g7 f5+ 5.♚xh7 ♛g6+ 6.♚g8 ♚d7 -+) 3...♚xa4 4.g7 ♚xe4 5.g8=Q+ ♚d7 6.♛xf7 ♛e6+ 7.♛xe6+ ♚xe6 -+ **2...♛g4** 2...fxg6 3.c7 c1=Q 4.♝b5+ ♚d7 5.♞ec3! = positional draw **3.♞d6+!** 3.♞ef6+? exf6 4.♝xc2 ♛g5 5.c7 ♚d7 6.♝d3 ♛xd5 7.gxf7 ♛g5+ 8.♚xh7 ♚c5 9.♚g8 a4 10.♝b5+ (10.f8=Q ♛xf8+ 11.♚xf8 a3! -+) 10...♚xb5 11.c8=Q+ ♚xc8 12.f8=Q+ ♚c7! -+ **3...exd6 4.c7 fxg6** 4...♚xg6+ 5.♝xg6 c1=Q 6.♝d3! ♛g5+ 7.♚h8 ♛e5+ 8.♚g8 ♛g3+ 9.♚h8 = positional draw **5.♞f6+ ♚e7 6.♞d5+!** = positional draw

2) **1...♛xc6 2.♝b5! ♛xb5 3.♞c7+!** 3.g7? ♛xd5 4.g8=Q+ ♚d7 -+ **3...♚f8 4.g7+!** 4.♞xb5? c2 5.♚xh7 (5.gxh7 c1=Q+ -+) 5...fxg6 -+ **4...♚g8 5.♞f6+ exf6 6.♞d5 ♛xd5** = stalemate

5th Commendation: Var. 3524 Mario Garcia & Vladislav Tarasiuk

It would have been better to delete the first 3 moves. Precise play, but not particularly interesting, except for the accurate choice of a bishop's move on the 9th turn.

1.f8=Q! 1.b8=Q? ♜xb8 2.f8=Q ♞xc6 -+ **1...♞xf8 2.b8=♛ ♛xb8+ 3.♞xb8** 3.♚xb8? ♜xc6 -+ **3...♜h8 4.♝f7!** 4.♝c4? ♞d7 5.♚xa7 ♞xb8 6.a6 ♚d4 7.♝d3 ♞d7 8.♝b7 ♞c5+ 9.♚b6 ♜h6+ -+ **4...♞d7 5.♚xa7 ♞xb8** 5...♜xb8 6.♝e6 ♞d8 7.♝xd7 ♜xd7+ 8.♚b6! ♚d4 9.a6 = **6.♚b7!!** Try: 6.a6? ♞c6+! 7.♚b6 ♜h6 8.a7 ♞xa7+! 9.♚xa7 ♜h7 -+ **6...♞d7** 6...♚d4 7.a6 ♞d7 8.a7 = **7.a6 ♜h6!** 7...♞c5+ 8.♚b6 ♞a4+ 9.♚a5 = **8.a7!** 8.♚c7? ♞b6 -+ **8...♞b6 9.♝b3!!** 9.a8=Q? ♞xa8 10.♚xa8 ♜h8+! 11.♚b7 ♜h7 -+ 9.♝a2? ♚d4 10.a8=Q ♞xa8 11.♚xa8 ♜a6+ -+ 9.♝d5/h5 ♚d4! 10.♝f3 ♚c5! 11.a8=Q ♞xa8 12.♚xa8 ♚b6 -+ **9...♚d4 10.a8=Q ♞xa8 11.♚xa8 ♚c5 12.♚a7!** draw 12.♝c2? ♚b6! -+

Itay Richardson
2nd Com IRT 2020
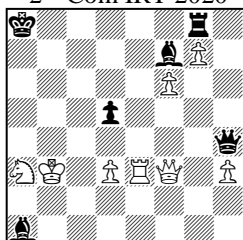
Draw   8+6

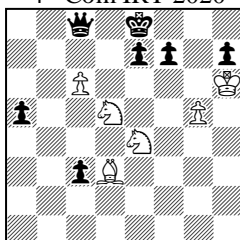**M. Hlinka Ľ. Kekely**
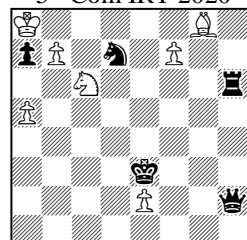3rd Com IRT 2020
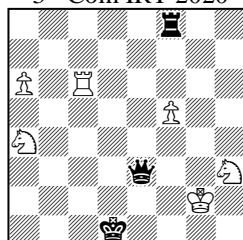
Win   6+3

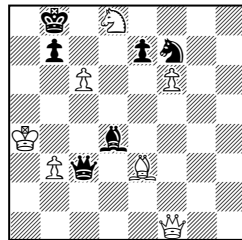**P. Krug M. Garcia**
4th Com IRT 2020

Draw   6+7

M. Garcia V.Tarasiuk
5th Com IRT 2020

Draw   7+5

Win   7+6

6th Commendation: Var. 3527 Yehuda Hoch

Short and sweet.

1.♖a6+ ♔g5 1...e6 2.Raxe6+ ♔xh7 3.♖xc3 h1=Q+ 4.♔b8 ♔g7 5.♖c7+ ♔f8 6.♖a6 ♕g1 7.♖f6+ ♔e8 8.♖h6 ♕d4 9.♖h8+ **2.♖h6!! ♔xh6 3.♖h3+!! ♕xh3 4.h8=♕+** 1-0

Win   5+5

Special Commendation: Var. Michael Pasman

Inventive play, and a sort of 'task', in which white sacrifices his entire army. Yet, an overcrowded starting position, brutal play full of captures, and an anticipation by Kubbel (Kh4/Kf5, 1917) to the Re5+ motive, were against a higher grading.

1.♕xg7+! 1.♘d3+? ♗xd3 2.♕xg7+ ♔d5! 1...♘xg7 1...♔d5 2.c4+! ♔xc4 3.♖xa4+ +- **2.♘d3+!** 2.♖e8+? ♘e6 3.♘d3+ (3.♘xc6+ ♔d5! 4.♘b4+ ♔c4) 3...♗xd3 4.♘xc6+ ♔d5! 5.♘b4+ ♔c4! **2...♗xd3+** 2...♗xd3 3.♘xc6+ dxc6 (3...♔d5 4.♘b4+ ♔c4 5.cxd3+) 4.c4+ ♔e6 5.♖e8+ ♔xf7 6.♖xe1 **3.cxd3 ♗e4+!** 3...♕d2 4.f8=Q +- ♕xd3+ 5.♔f2 ♕d2+ 6.♘e2 +- **4.♔g4!!** Try : 4.dxe4? ♕xe4+ 5.♔f2 ♕h4+ 6.♔f1 ♕h3+ 7.♔e2 ♕g2+ = perpetual check **4...♕f2!** 4...♗f5+ 5.♘xf5 ♕e2+ 6.♔h3! ♘xf5 (6...♘e6 7.♖e8! ♔d5 8.♖xe6 ♕h5+ 9.♘h4 ♕xf7 10.♖f6) 7.♖e8+! ♘ce7! 8.♖xe7+! ♘xe7 9.c4+! ♔e6 10.f8=Q ♕xd3+ 11.♔g4 ♕e4+ 12.♕f4 ♕g2+ 13.♕g3 +-) (4...♕d2 5.♖e8+ ♘e6 6.♖xe6+ dxe6 7.♘xc6+ ♗xc6 8.♖e1 is the same as the main line **5.♖e8+!** 5.f8=♕ ♕g2+ 6.♔h4 ♕h2+ = 5.♘xc6+ dxc6 6.♖e8+ ♘e6 7.c4+ ♕xb2 8.f8=♕ ♕g2+ = **5...♘e7** 5...♘e6 6.♖xe6+! dxe6 7.♘xc6+ **6.♖xe7+ ♘e6 7.♖xe6+! dxe6 8.♘c6+!! ♗xc6**

8...♔d5 9.♘e7+ ♔c5 10.♗a3+ +- **9.♖e1+!!** 9.c4+ ♕xb2 10.♖e1+ ♔d4 11.f8=♕ ♕g2+ 12.♔h4 ♕h2+ = **9...♔d5** 9...♖xe1 10.c4+ ♕c3 11.♗xc3# **10.f8=♕!** 10.♖e5+ ♔xe5 11.f8=♕ ♕g2+ 12.♔h4 ♕h2+ = **10...♕xf8** 10...♖xe1 11.♕f4 +- 11.♖e5+!! dxe5 11...♔xe5 12.c4# **12.c4+ ♔d6 13.♗a3+ ♔d7 14.♗xf8 ♔e8 15.h7 ♔xf8 16.h8=♕+** 1-0
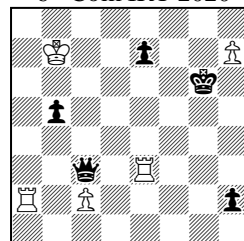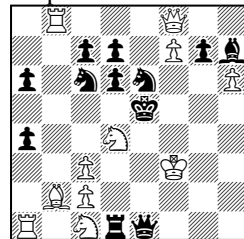
Win   11+12

Israel Ring Tourney: Selfmates 2019-2020

Judge: Gennady Kozyura, International Judge (Ukraine), February 2021

The competition included 26 problems from 13 problem experts from the following countries: Germany, Israel, Russia, Slovenia, Ukraine. I checked all the problems for correctness using the Gustav 4.0c program in the Bruto Force mode.

Problem No. 3229 is carried over to the next cycle, since the judge is the co-author. No. 3280: the lack of an answer to the check in a two-move, without proper content, is a big drawback. No. 3282: it is necessary to finalize and make two full-fledged versions with model mats.

In general, the competition must be considered good; the prize problems have a chance to get into the FIDE album. I would like to thank the editors who entrusted me to judge this competition. The compositions were created to give joy to people! It was nice to award good problems!

I. Selfmates in 2 to 4 moves

1-2nd Prize: Var.3408 Mark Erenburg.

Cyclic theme of Svoboda (Zilahi) performed for the first time! If it were not for the roughness in the latter variant, then the task would be the sole leader. I would like to note the author's desire for new ideas.
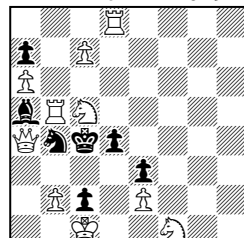
1.♘e6! - zz

1...♗xc7 2.♘xc7(A) d3 3.♕a2+ ♘xa2#(B);
1...d3 2.♖xb4+(B) ♗xb4 3.♕d2+ exd2#(C);
1...♗b6 2.♖xd4+ ♗xd4 3.♘xe3+(C) ♗xe3#(A)

S#3   10+7