

# Dom Springaren s# 2020

Award by Hans Gruber (Regensburg, Germany), International Judge of the FIDE

## List of participating problems

Issue 153: III/2020 14502 [1].

Issue 154: VI/2020 14559 (misprint: should read s#4, without twinning; see issue 156, page 170), 14560, 14561, 14562, 14563, 14564, 14565, 14566, 14567 (cooked in 14 moves; see issue 156, page 171, and issue 158, page 56), page 81 [10].

Issue 155: IX/2020 14633, 14634 (not an original: see issue 157, page 33), (14635) [2].

Issue 156: XII/2020 14692 (version see issue 158, page 85), 14693, 14694, 14695 [4].

As Alexandr Azjusin asked not to consider his problem 14635 in the Springaren informal tournament 2020, section selfmates, this problem is removed from the award.

As I always enjoy reading Springaren, I was glad to accept the invitation to judge this tournament when Kenneth Solja recently invited me. A total of nineteen problems participated, but two had to be removed (one cooked, one anticipated). Almost all remaining problems were marked as C+, with the exception of two Pitkänen problems (page 81; 14695) both of which indeed are C+ as I found out. (Is 14635 really fully computer tested? I needed one and a half hour to fully test with Gustav only the last 10 moves.)

The availability of computers certainly changed the solving of selfmates: I doubt whether nowadays many solvers solve long selfmates in a brain-only mode . . . I remember how difficult it was when I did so some 40 years ago. One long selfmate could take days and weeks, and in most cases cooks were to be found. I confess that I, too, was too lazy to solve the problems of this tournament. Computers also have strong impact on the composing of selfmates. Today it is much easier than in earlier times to present correct long selfmates. However, many compositions have a one-line solution in which either checks or Zugzwang situations strongly restrict Black who has only one move at any time. In a bit more advanced problems, a Zugzwang key allows two variations in each of which Black then is straightjacketed. Such problems let miss most of what should make a good selfmate, the fight between two (almost) equipollent opponents, with strategic depth of both white and black moves. Straightjacket moves do not have strategic depth, and such problems must present extraordinary content of the white play in order to be candidates for the award.

## Prize: 14502 – Camillo Gamnitzer

1.L×b2? [2.L×d4+ L×d4#] T×b2!, but not 1.–L×b2? 2.Sh7+ Sf5  
3.S×d3+ Ke6 4.Sf4+ Ke5 5.d4+ L×d4#, 2.– Ke6 3.Dg4+ Sf5  
4.Ld5,L×f5+ Ke5 5.Dd4+ L×d4#

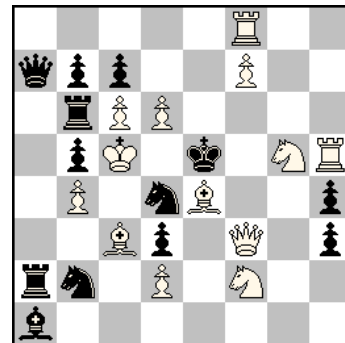
1.Sd1,Sh1? [2.S×h3+ Ke6 3.Th6+ Ke5 4.Dh5+ K×e4 5.Te6+  
S×e6#] b×c6!

1.Sf×h3? [2.Se6/Sh7+ K(×)e6 3.Th6+ Ke5 4.Dh5+ K×e4 5.Te6+  
S×e6#] b×c6!

1.Lh7 [2.Sge4+ Ke6 3.Th6+ Ke5 4.Dg3+ h×g3 5.S×d3+ S×d3#]  
b×c6! and now 2.L×b2 [3.L×d4+ L×d4#] T,L×b2 3.Df6+ K×f6  
4.Sg4+ Kg7 5.Se6+ S×e6#

Pr 14502

Camillo Gamnitzer



s#5

An epic struggle of both sides with depth and surprises, but with a crystal-clear logical structure. Can the deadly battery be forced to fire? No! But White can strongly threaten at d4, as the try 1.L×b2? shows, when three different white pieces enforce the bishop's mate. The knight tries create new powerful full-length threats, and it is challenging to find the refutation. The best selfmate move of the tournament, 1.– b×c6!, refutes – a move that carries the „trademark Camillo Gamnitzer“. The purpose of this move is deeply hidden, it provides a „distant flightsquare“ of the black king at d7: 2.– Ke6 3.Th6+ Kd7! Black seems to be afloat again. (Such strength of Black is what makes a selfmate a coruscating gemstone!) Believe it or not – my first thought when I studied 14502 was whether the mate S×d3 can be threatened which initially is prevented by the bishop and the queen. The splendid key 1.Lh7! allows the white knight to interfere on e4. Then we only need to sacrifice the queen, and S×d3 becomes true. Bad news, however: 2.Sge4+ enforces 2.– Ke6, so we may suspect that again 1.– b×c6! is a strong defence, and it is!

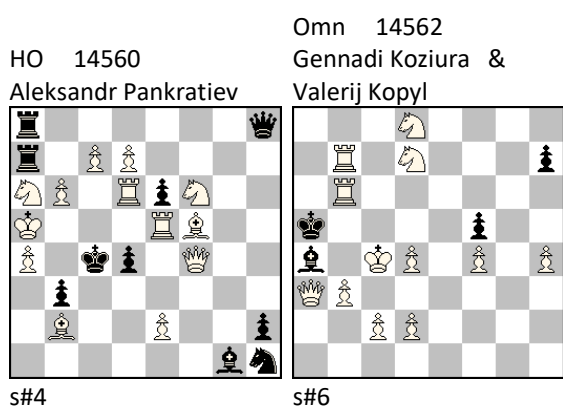
Hold on! This is a moment when it is perspicuous to give way to despair! But keep on – 1.– b×c6 has a weakness that is even much more hidden than its strength that seems to save Black. Almost impossible to discover it, so how does a composer find it? The move guards the flight d5 of the white king! This is preposterous! This square does not have to be guarded because it always has been (and will be) guarded by the black king. Now look at the solution and see the composer's imagination! The black king can be driven far away, and after its Journey to the Moon (through which White reimplemented the originally planned L×b2, and splendidly sacrificed the queen), S×e6 mates without support of the king! Look at the white pieces' activities in the position after 5.Se6+: Each of them is active and necessary. Such are the dreams of what makes a good selfmate: Strong and hidden play and counterplay of both sides, outstanding exploration of all pieces' resources, full usage of the white material. The dream came true!

**Honourable Mention: 14560 –**  
Aleksander Pankratiev

1.Dd2 [2.T×d4+ L×d4 3.Tc5+ A L×c5 4.Db4+ B L×b4#]  
1.– Sf2 2.Ld3+ S×d3 3.Db4+ B S×b4 4.Tc6+ C S×c6#  
1.– D×f6 2.L×e6+ D×e6 3.Tc6+ C D×c6 4.Tc5+ A D×c5#

It is intellectually stimulating to observe a cycle of 3rd and 4th white moves. Here it is achieved in a remarkably clear structure of full-length threat and two variations with some surprises (who would guess

that the knight h1 mates on c6?) and good control of the powerful white forces. The play is lively, and three different black pieces deliver the mates.



**2nd Commendation: 14562 –** Gennadi Koziura & Valerij Kopyl

1.Te6 Zz. h5 2.Te5+ Ka6 3.Kd5 Zz. Ka5 4.Ta7+ Kb5 5.Dd6 Zz. L×b3+ 6.c4+ L×c4#  
1.– h6 2.Kd3 Zz. h5 3.Ta7+ Kb5 4.Te3 Zz. L×b3 5.Da6+ Kb4 6.Dc4+ L×c4#

Again a helpless black side – but the key allows both a single step of the pawn and a double step. In two variations the white king enters different cages, and the variations are linked by different pieces' sacrifices on c4.

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