# Composer of renown

THE ABSTRACT WORLD of chess problem composition is quite removed from that of ordinary over-the-board play. So much so, indeed, that even many Wellington club members are probably unaware that we have a composer of international renown in our midst. His name (which is Ukrainian) is Emil Melnicenko, and he was born in Austria in 1950 of Czech parents. He has, however, spent most of his life in New Zealand, is currently doing a librarianship course at university, and spends a large part of the remainder of his waking hours in analysis of the next potential study.

Melnicenko, who resides in Karori, also holds a science-arts degree and has interests in painting and playing and composing jazz. He says it was a natural step to combine these interests with his over-the-board chess experience "to arrive at an art form which uses the rules of a played game as a means to creative self-expression. Instead of sound or colour, six (or seven) units, the chessmen, are used to create themes and weave geometric progressions or systematic motifs".

Here are some examples of Emil's work.
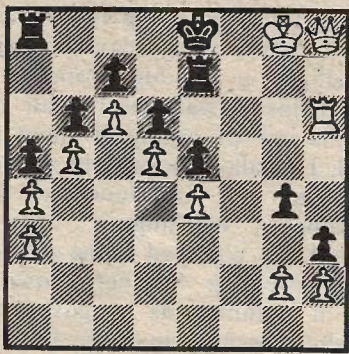
White to move and draw.

Here a positional draw is reached after White sacrifices his queen to gain a vital tempo.

1. Rf6

The other attempt to stave off mate, by 1.Qf6 0-0-0 ch 2.Qf8, fails to 2....h×g2.

1. ...	0-0-0 ch
2. Rf8	Ree8!
3. R×e8	R×e8 ch
4. Kf7!	

Not 4.Kg7 R×h8 5.g3 (5.K×h8 h×g2 and queens a pawn) Re8 6.Kf7 Kd8! and White is in zugzwang.

4. ...	R×h8
5. g3	Kd8
6. Kg7!	Re8
7. Kf7!	Re7 ch
8. Kf8	Rh7
9. Kg8	Draw

This study won second honourable mention in a Polish tourney.
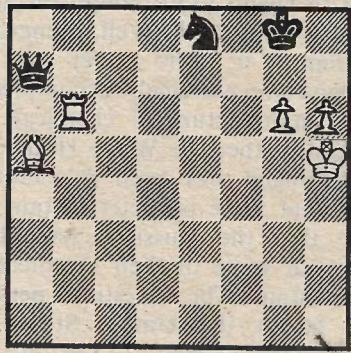
White to move and win.

The try 1.Bc3 (planning 2.h7 ch) is defeated by 1...Ng7 ch. Therefore:

1. h7 ch	Kh8
2. Bc3 ch	Ng7 ch
3. Kh6	Qb7!

The start of a curious dance between the Black queen and White rook — the queen begging to be captured (thus giving a stalemate draw) and the rook sidestepping temptation. 3...Qc7 loses instantly to 4.Rb8 ch Q×b8 5.B×g7 mate.

4. Rc6!	Qc7
5. Rd6	Qd7
6. Re6	Qe7
7. Bf6!	Qf8
8. Re8!	

And mates after 8....Q×e8 9. B×g7.
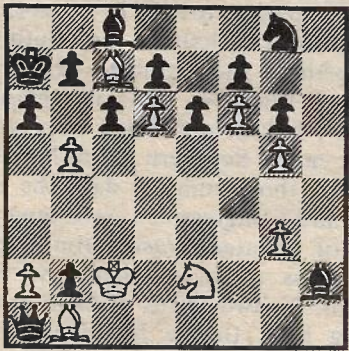
White to move and win.

This one should keep you busy until next week — White wins in... 91 moves!

The solution begins 1.b6 ch Ka8 2.Bd8 Kb8 3.Be7 Ka8 4.Bf8 Kb8 5.Bh6 Ka8 6.Bg7 (shedding a tempo) Kb8 7.Bf8 Ka8 8.Be7 Kb8 9.Bd8 Ka8 10.Bc7. Back where we started, except now it is Black's move, and he must advance a pawn. For moves 11-19 repeat those of 2-10. Another pawn must move. This cycle is repeated until, at move 91, Black runs out of pawn moves, and must yield from zugzwang.

MURRAY CHANDLER

ALGEBRAIC NOTATION

The algebraic notation in this chess column is that used almost exclusively in Europe and in many countries elsewhere. Each square has one designation only. The vertical files are labelled a to h from White's left. In horizontal rank the squares are labelled 1 to 8 from White's end. Normal symbols are used, except that pawns as such are not mentioned; just the arrival square is given for a non-capturing pawn move.