Recently published British originals
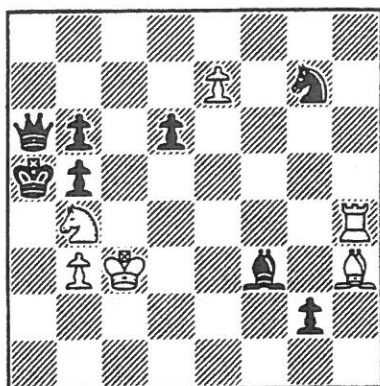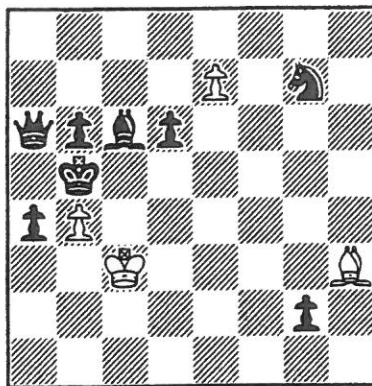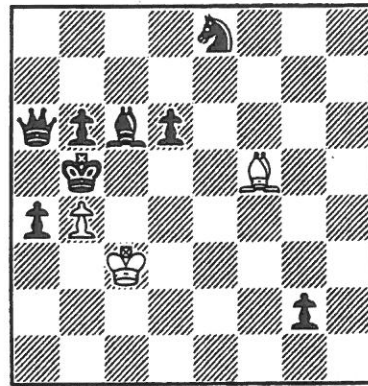

1 - draw

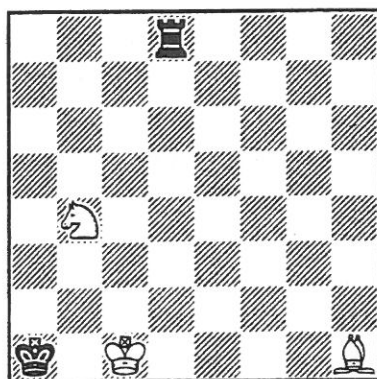**1a - 1 Nc6+, after 3...Kb5**

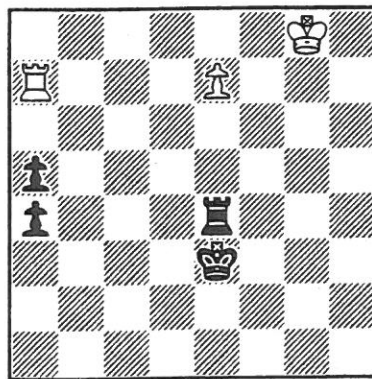
1b - 1 e8Q, after 5 Bf5

An unfortunate omission from March's list of outlets for original composition was the column in *Correspondence Chess*, now in the hands of Ian Watson. Mike Bent's **1** appeared in it last year.

We can hardly set up a stalemate here; what else can we do to draw? Let's play a few moves and see what happens. 1 Nc6+ forces 1...Bxc6, 2 Ra4+ forces bxa4, 3 b4+ forces 3...Kb5 (see **1a**): no, there is no way forward, White has only 4 Bg4 to continue the attack and Black has several ways of meeting it. But if we start by diverting the knight, **1 e8Q Nxe8**, and then continue **2 Nc6+ Bxc6 3 Ra4+ bxa4 4 b4+ Kb5** as before, White can play **5 Bf5** (see **1b**), and at least it will be out of range of a promoted knight on g1. Now what can Black do? He is threatened with mate, the knight prevents 5...Be8, and if the bishop tries another square the check **6 Bd7+** drags him straight back and **7 Bf5** repeats the position. Alternatively, he can create a flight square on a4 by playing **5...a3**, but now **6 Bd3+ Ka4 7 Bc2+ Kb5 8 Bd3+** gives White a perpetual check on another diagonal.
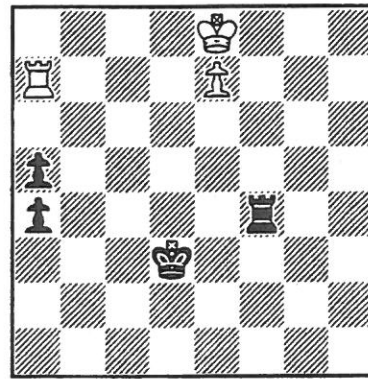
Ian is at Crismill Manor, Crismill Lane, Bearsted, Kent ME14 4NT, e-mail address ian@irwatson.demon.co.uk . His column is primarily devoted to problems, but he is very willing to print original studies if he is offered them.
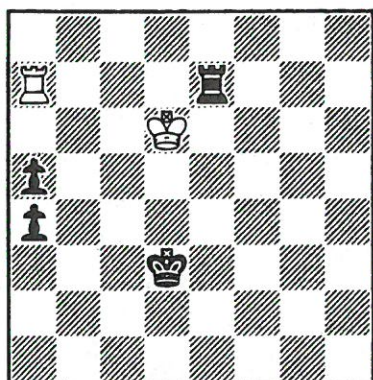

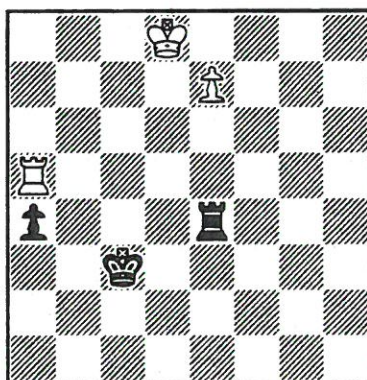
2 - win

3 - win

3a - 2 Ke8, after 2...Kd3

Guy Haworth (sorry, not "Howarth" as on page 191 of our December issue) has been looking at various computer-generated positions with five men. **2** is the start of

the longest win with K+B+N v K+R, and it occurred to me that my readers in *diagrammes* might enjoy gently solving it. White would like to mate by Nc2+ and Bd5, but the rook's guard of d5 prevents this. He has to start instead with the quiet move **1 Bc6**, and only **1...Rd6** continues to keep the mate at bay (1...Rd4 allows a fork, and the pin 1...Rc8 is useless because 2 Nc2+ releases it). Now a second quiet move **2 Bb5** switches the point of attack to c4, and Black is helpless. He can try **2...Rb6**, to meet **3 Nc2+ Ka2 4 Bc4+** by **4...Rb3**, but **5 Nd4** finishes him off.
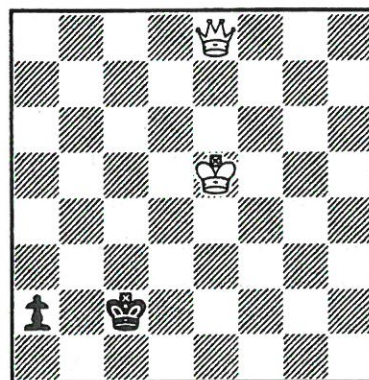
Computers first attracted attention by cracking positions which had proved too deep for human attack, and nobody would set such a thing for solution. But they also help by working quickly through large amounts of data and highlighting positions of particular interest, and discoveries of this kind may be surprisingly light and elegant.

3b - 3 Kd7, after 5...Rxe7   3c - 3 Kd8, after 4...Kc3   3d - 3 Rxa5, after 8...a2

I set **3**, based on a study by Artur Mandler, in *diagrammes* last year, and it gave a lot of trouble. The wK must hide on e8, but if it goes straight there by 1 Kf8 Rf4+ 2 Ke8 Black will play 2...Kd3 and we have **3a**. White now has three options. If he tries 3 Kd7, Black has 3...Rd4+ 4 Ke6 Re4+ 5 Kd6 Rxe7 (see **3b**) 6 Kxe7 (6 Rxe7 is no better) Kc3 7 Rxa5 Kb3, when his king has linked up with his remaining pawn and he will draw. If 3 Kd8 then 3...Re4 4 Rxa5 Kc3 (see **3c**) 5 Rxa4 (this would win with wK on d7, because 5...Rxa4 would be met by 6 e8Q) Rxa4 (but with wK on d8, Black can afford to capture) 6 e8Q Ra8+. And if 3 Rxa5 then 3...Kc2 4 Kd7 Rd4+ 5 Ke6 Re4+ 6 Re5 Rxe5+ 7 Kxe5 a3 8 e8Q a2 (see **3d**) and draws. Note that 3...Kc3 won't do; if bK stood on c3 in **3d**, 9 Kd5 Kb2 10 Kc4 would lead to a Q v Qa1 win.

So bK can get near enough to his pawns to draw, and White must think of something else. The answer is **1 Kf7 Rf4+ 2 Ke6! Re4+ 3 Kd7 Rd4+ 4 Ke8**. Now **4...Kd3** gives **3a** with bR on d4 instead of f4, and White has the pin **5 Rd7** (5...a3 6 Rxd4+ Kxd4 7 Kd7 a2 8 e8Q a1Q 9 Qh8+); by going to e8 via f7-e6-d7 instead of directly, White has lured bR to the bad square d4. Other lines are 4...Ke2 5 Rxa5 Kd3 6 Kf7 etc, 4...Re4 5 Rxa5 Kd3 6 Kf7, and 4...Rd5 5 Kf7.

When I printed this in *diagrammes*, several solvers sent answers based on 2 Ke8, doubtless led astray by the quite accidental fact that each of the three moves Kd7, Kd8, and Rxa5 demands a different refutation. I published it as by "JDB after Mandler", but while I think this is technically correct it does somewhat overstate my contribution; all the individual lines appeared in a study by Mandler published in *Thèmes-64* in 1958, and I merely added the little king-walk to tie them together.