

# British Endgame Study News

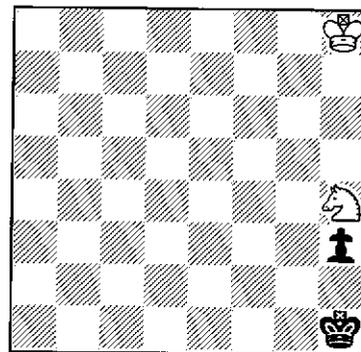
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*by* Ronald Turnbull  
White to play and draw

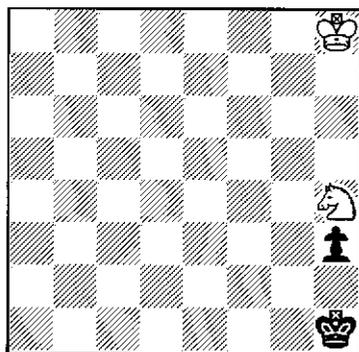
**Editorial.** Jonathan Levitt has offered me an article describing his thoughts as a tourney judge, and I am publishing it as our second special number and postponing my planned selection of British studies from 1994-95 until December. Too much of this magazine is written by myself, and it is pleasant to have a guest contribution. Also in this issue are all our usual features, including a poignant little tale from Andrew Miller, and Ronald Turnbull's delightful trifle above is presented as this month's "try and solve this before looking inside" study.

**Spotlight.** Harold van der Heijden points out that Adamson would certainly *not* have approved of my attempted rescue of his 1919 puzzle study (see diagram 19a in special number 1): the position is illegal! The wPs on b2 and d2 have never moved, so wBh8 must have arisen by promotion, and all eight wPs are still on the board. Very sorry.

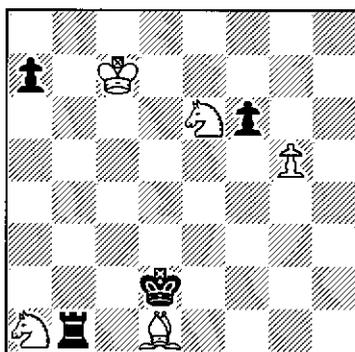
Paul Byway's Hastings prizewinner (June, page 10) has also been challenged: Jürgen Fleck suggests in *EG* 121 that White can draw without setting up the fortress so neatly established by Paul. The analysis is lengthy and not conclusive, but Paul proposes removing all uncertainty by adding bPe7. This does not affect the play and is useless to Black once the fortress has been built, but it tilts the previous material balance sufficiently in Black's favour to rule out unwanted alternatives.

**World Composing Championship.** An individual World Study Composing Championship is announced from Holland: send one original study (any theme) to Geurt Gijssen, Weezenhof 2531, 6536 JH Nijmegen, Netherlands, to arrive before 1 March 1997. Its status as a world championship appears to be self-proclaimed and it will be interesting to see what response it attracts, but significant prizes are on offer (\$250 first, \$100 second, \$50 third) and the administrative arrangements as announced are eminently realistic and practical. And a purely personal opinion: if we *must* have world championships in an activity which I regard as intrinsically unmeasurable and non-competitive, I would far rather see them conducted between individuals as individuals without reference to national or political boundaries.

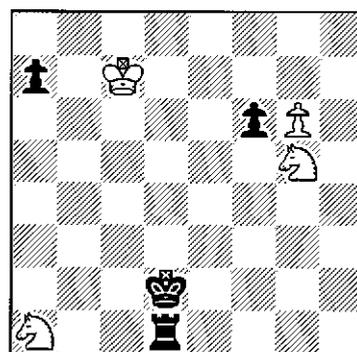
## Recently published British originals



1 - draw



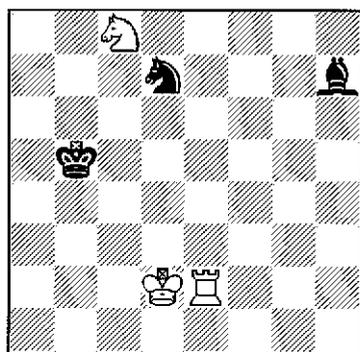
2 - win



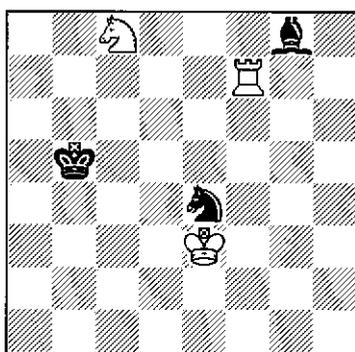
2a - after 2 Ng5

If you found difficulty with Ronald Turnbull's 1, from the July *BCM*, you are in good company; he threw it at me in a problem-solving contest (twenty problems in an hour and a half) and I spent ten fruitless minutes on it before deciding that the rest of the paper offered easier pickings. Since I was supposed to be the study expert in the group, this was rather embarrassing. The wK is far away and wN must cope on its own, but we have 1 Nf3 Kg2 2 Ne1+ Kg3 (or 2 Nh4+ Kf2) and 1 Nf5 Kg1 2 Ng3 h2 3 K-- Kg2. The move that works is the unlikely **1 Ng6**, followed after **1...h2** by the switchback **2 Nh4!** Alternatively, if 1...Kg1 then 2 Ne5 h2 3 Nf3+, or 2...K-- 3 Ng4. Surprisingly, a search in the late Richard Harman's indexed collection failed to discover an anticipation of this elegant little switchback. The position after 2 Nh4 is well known, but nobody appears to have tried starting the wN on h4 before.

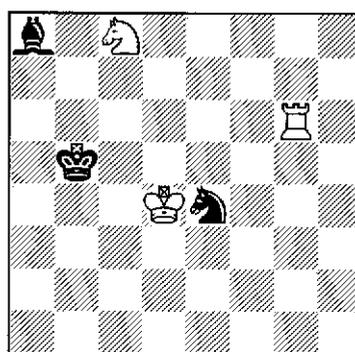
The starting position in George Berguno's 2 is not particularly natural, but the study shows an instructive manoeuvre which sometimes can be used to good effect over the board. White plays **1 g6**, and Black's natural reply is **1...Rxd1** to get bR behind wP. Now comes the good move: **2 Ng5!** blocking the g-file (see 2a). It leaves Black nothing better than **2...Rc1+ 3 Kb7/8 Rb1+ 4 Ka8**, after which White will promote in comfort; even 4...Rb5 will not help Black on account of 5 Ne4+/f3+. This was published last year in Adam Sobey's column in *The Problemist*.



3 - win



3a - after 3...Bg8



3b - after 6 Rg6

Adam himself had singularly bad luck with 3: having asked me to help check its

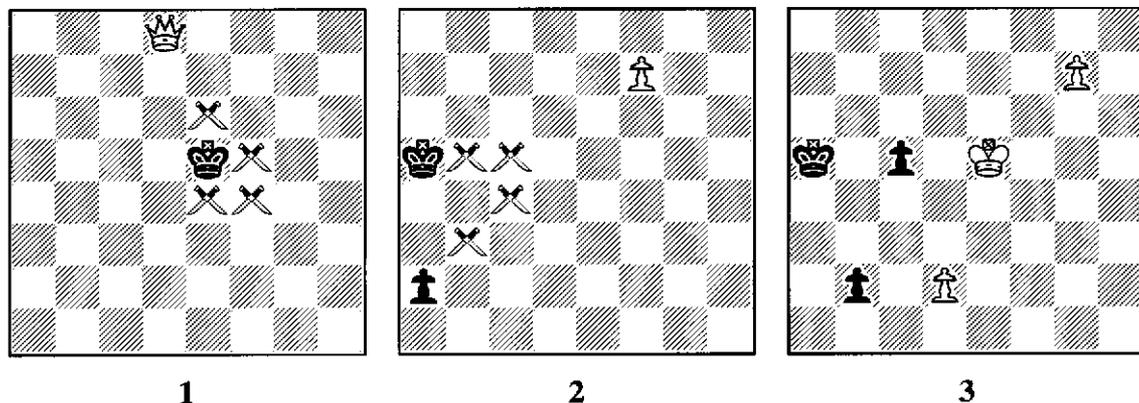


# So Near, and Yet So Far

by Andrew Miller

In 1994 members of the Endgame Study Circle were asked to submit compositions on the theme "White wins by avoiding stalemating Black, whose King is away from the edge of the board" as British entries for the World Chess Composing Tourney.

As a theme this is not difficult to show, with plenty of opportunity for variety and originality. However, ever since starting endgame composing 30 years ago I have chosen to restrict myself to miniatures, i.e. maximum of seven pieces, including Kings. Rather than depart from this principle, I struggled to find a way of showing the theme which requires all eight squares around the Black King to be considered (an edge of board position would have been much easier in a miniature setting). The matrix in 1 suggested itself; here  $\times$  represents squares made unavailable to BK by other pieces, to be decided later. One could imagine this position arising by promotion of WP, and that underpromotion to R would win by avoiding this stalemate.

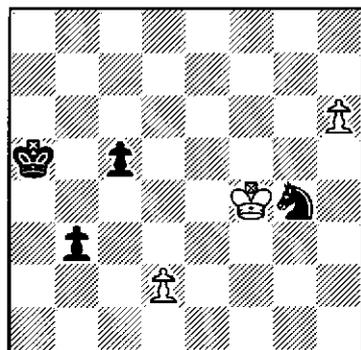


An extension of this basic idea was to set the action at the opposite end of the board, as in 2. Here play would be not **1 f8Q? a1Q 2 Qa8+ Kb4!=** but **1 f8R! a1Q 2 Ra8+ wins**, which is more interesting. The next objective was to cover the squares marked  $\times$ , yet remaining a miniature; also, the respective forces must be similar so that White has no other way to win. This is shown in 3, with the action one file to the right. After **1 g8Q? b1Q 2 Qa8+ Kb5/b4 3 Qb8+ Kc4! 4 Qxb1** the stalemate is pure (i.e. each square is guarded only once), an extra move has been introduced, and only six men have been used. There is a minor Black dual on move 2, but this cannot be avoided by starting BK on either a4 (because **2 Qa8+ Kb3 3 Qb8+ Kc2** draws without the stalemate resource) nor on a6 (because **1 g8R b1Q 2 Ra8+ Kb7** actually wins for Black). The solution could be lengthened with the b and g Pawns starting on their original squares, with play **1 g4 b5 ... 4 g7 b2 5 g8R! (5 g8Q?)** and wins.

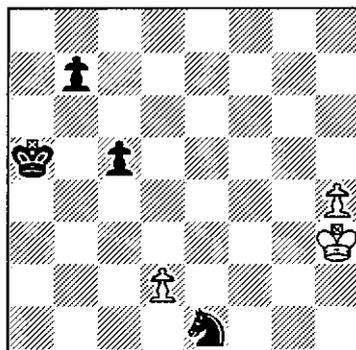
This in itself would be a pleasant study, showing the WCCT theme with what is probably the minimum starting force. However, it is preferable for the important pieces to move to their final position during the solution, as indeed BK already does here. With seven pieces only there was no way this could be achieved for the c and d Pawns, but a very attractive idea was to see if during the solution WK could move all

the way from the h-file. This means that the two Kings, starting at maximum separation (on the h- and a-files), would come into opposition for the stalemate, an idea that would be hard to envisage from the starting position.

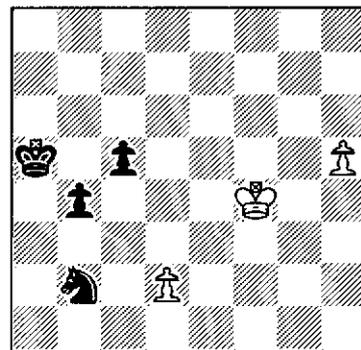
Of course, if the self-inflicted miniature stipulation didn't apply, this would not be difficult to engineer. Still, only six pieces have been used, so the idea might be possible by using an extra piece, whose function would be to prevent promotion. This would be captured by WK on e5 (e4 would not do since WK would be in check when Black's P promotes), as in 4, with the solution **1 h7 Ne5** and the threatened fork on g6 forces the capture of BN, a pleasant sacrifice that gives Black the stalemate resource.



4



5 - Miller, 1995



6 - V & M Platov, 1928

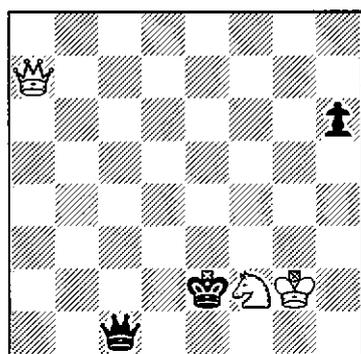
But how to arrange a starting position with WK even further across? This is where the great majority of time was spent. The principle that came to light was that BN would try to prevent promotion on h8, having to go via the critical square e5. At the same time it would have to be away from BK, since otherwise it could hinder checks to BK from the promoted WQ or R. Extensive analysis was needed to find a solution that was sound, mainly because there are several positions in which BN would capture White's dP and lead to a positional draw with N+PP v Q. The final version is shown in 5, the solution being **1 Kg4** (1 h5? Nf3) **Nd3 2 Kf5** (2 h5? Ne5) **b5 3 h5 b4 4 h6 Ne5! 5 Kxe5 b3 6 h7 b2 7 h8R!** (not 7 h8Q? b1Q 8 Qa8+ Kb4 9 Qb7+ Kc4=).

This looked a very promising entry, showing the theme with the Kings starting at maximum separation, and in a miniature. Moreover, the promoting hP has to resist rushing forward, and Black has a surprising stalemating resource by sacrificing his N. Also, the initial position, with the possible exception of BN on e1, looks very natural. It did seem likely that the final stalemate might have been shown before, but the other features should more than compensate. Accordingly, I was very optimistic.

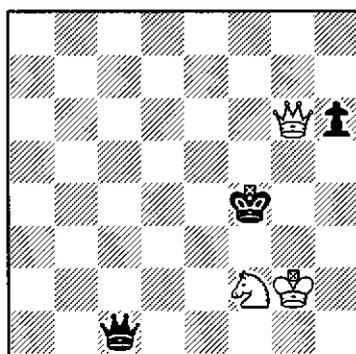
Disaster struck! It was found that this had been almost completely anticipated by the Platov brothers in 1928 - see 6. After **1 h6 Nd3+ 2 Kf5 Ne5** we have the position in my composition after move 4. Although mine has more subtle initial play and has the Kings at maximum separation in the initial position, it was felt that the similarities with the Platov study were far too close for it to gain marks in the WCCT judging. However, John Beasley (who recently had the misfortune to have published a first-class study which turned out to have been completely anticipated) kindly published it in issue 115 of *diagrammes*. It is (correctly) entitled "after V & M Platov", but who would have believed that it was composed independently rather than just extended!

## From the world at large

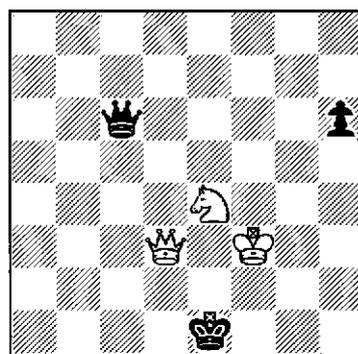
Alain Pallier's column in *phénix* recently quoted **1**, by Y. Serejkin and V. Kolpakov, which took first prize for 1992 in the excellent Russian magazine *Shakhmatnaya kompozitsiya*. I usually find studies with Q+N v Q heavy going, but this is an exception. White starts with **1 Qa6+** and the replies **1...Ke1** and **1...Ke3** allow fork and skewer respectively, so **1...Kd2** appears forced, and **2 Qd3+** gives a position which will occur later in the solution. However, the main line is **1...Ke3**, because the skewer **2 Qxh6+** can be met by **2...Ke2**; the immediate capture **3 Qxc1** gives stalemate, and if White tries to regain the main line by playing **3 Qa6+**, well... Let's examine the main line first. After **1...Ke3** we have **2 Qd3+ Kf4**, but now the attack **3 Qf3+ Kg5 4 Ne4+ Kg6 5 Qf6+ Kh7** fails because **bPh6** prevents **Ng5+**. The move that works is the quiet **3 Qg6!** after which **bQ** has no good move (see **1a**). Several moves allow immediate skewers or forks with no risk of stalemate, and only slightly more complicated are (i) **3...Qc8 4 Qg3+ Kf5 5 Qg4+**, (ii) **3...Qc3 4 Qg4+** and either **4...Ke5 5 Qg7+** or **4...Ke3 5 Nd1+**, (iii) **3...Qa3 4 Qf6+ Ke3 5 Qf3+**, (iv) **3...Qb2 4 Qg4+ Ke3 5 Qe4+ Kd2 6 Qd3+** and mate next move, and (v) **3...Qa1 4 Qg4+ Ke3 5 Qe4+ Kd2 6 Qd3+ Kc1 7 Qd1+ Kb2 8 Nd3+ Ka2 9 Qa4+** etc. There remains **3...Ke3**, because of course **4 Qxh6+** still fails, but we have **4 Qe4+ Kd2 5 Qd3+** (this is the position that would have arisen after an immediate **1...Kd2 2 Qd3+**) **Ke1 6 Kf3!** (threatening mate on e2) **Qc6+ 7 Ne4** and Black has no further defence (see **1b**).



**1** - win



**1a** - after 3 Qg6

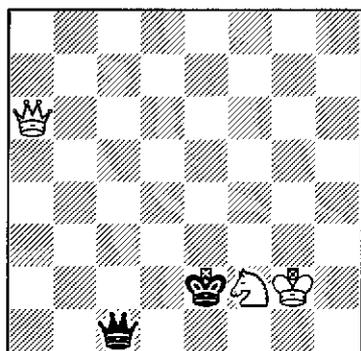


**1b** - after 7 Ne4

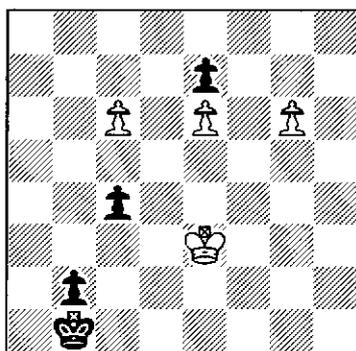
Now let's examine what happens if White plays **2 Qxh6+**, realizes that **3 Qxc1** will be stalemate, and tries to get back into the main line by **3 Qa6+** (see **1c**). If Black naively plays **3...Ke3**, hoping for **4 Qh6+** with a draw by repetition, White can win by **4 Qf3+ Kg5 5 Ne4+ Kg6 6 Qf6+ Kh7 7 Ng5+** etc; the loss of **bPh6** allows White access to **g5**, and this is fatal to Black. But Black has a better move: **3...Kd2!** The line **4 Qd3+ Ke1 5 Kf3 Qc6+ 6 Ne4** now gives **1b** but *without bPh6*, and **6...Qf6+** gets Black out of trouble because **7 Nxf6** will again be stalemate. The **bP** may be completely passive, but the whole study nevertheless revolves around it.

**2** (Ado Kraemer, *Denken und Raten*, 1929) and **3** (Harold Lommer, 1935) come from Harold van der Heijden's new book *Pawn promotion to bishop and rook in the endgame study*. On the whole, this book takes its material from the exotic end of the

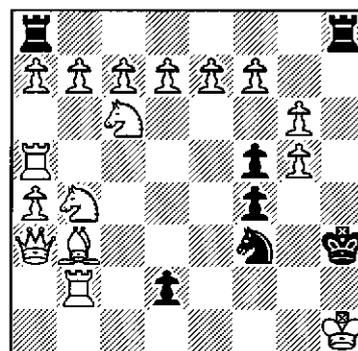
study field (a comparison with the relevant chapter of *Endgame magic* is instructive) but the beautifully clear-cut 2 is one of the exceptions. After 1 g7 Kc2, White might think of 2 g8Q b1Q 3 Qh7+ Kb2 4 Qxb1+, swapping off queens with an easy win, but Black can play 3...Kc3! and leave bQ to be taken for nothing. The move that works is 2 g8B. Similarly, after 1...Ka1/Ka2 the only move that works is 2 g8R. Only after 1...Kc1 does White have a choice (now 2 g8Q and 2 g8R both work).



1c - 2 Qxh6+, after 3 Qa6+

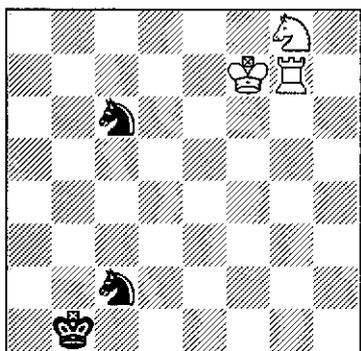


2 - win

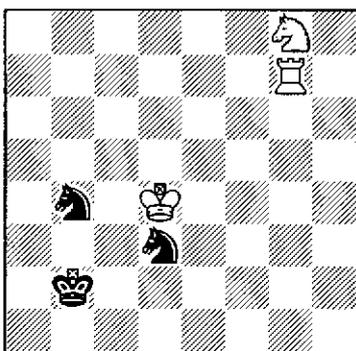


3 - win

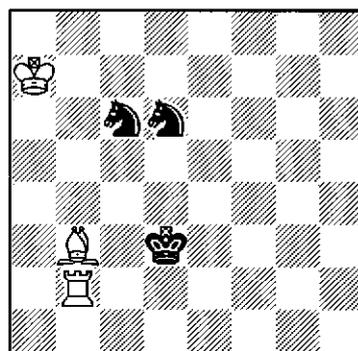
3, by contrast, is an extreme task study. After 1 bxa8Q we have 1...Rh5 2 Qh8 Kg3+ 3 Qxh5 d1Q+ 4 Bxd1 stalemate; after 1 f8Q, 1...Rh5 2 Qh6 Rh8! 3 Qxh8 Kg3+ and the same. We must play 1 bxa8R, and this proves to be the first rook promotion of six: 1...Rh5 2 Rh8 Rxh8 3 a8R Rh5 4 Rh8 Rxh8 5 c8R ... 7 e8R ... 9 f8R ... 11 d8R ... 13 Ra7! (now the seventh rank is clear) Kg3+ 14 Rh7 and wins easily.



4 - 243 moves to win!



4a - after 7 Kd4



5 - 223 moves to win

EG 121 reports another remarkable computer discovery by Lewis Stiller: in 4, it takes no fewer than 243 moves for White to force the win (mate or capture of a bN). EG says that this projects the incredible spectre of R+N v 2N being a general win even without pawns, but this is surely saying too much. Black's position in 4 is weak, with bK in the corner, and White soon occupies the centre (best play is 1 Ke6 N6b4 2 Ke5 Nd3+ 3 Ke4 Nf2+ 4 Kf3 Nd3 5 Ke2 N2b4 6 Ke3 Kb2 7 Kd4, giving 4a). The same position with wKe5, bKc3, bNc5/e4, if won for White, would surely take longer. Compare 5, which is the longest win in the ending R+B v 2N (which does appear to be a general win, ignoring the fifty-move rule). Here it is Black who starts in the centre, yet White can eventually drive him out and round him up.

## News and notices

**A tourney for articles.** Another issue of *Infoblatt* is through my door, and reminds me that there is a tourney in *diagrammes* for **articles on study or problem themes**. These should be sent to Yves Tallec, 23 rue Fantin-Latour, 75016 Paris, France, to arrive by December 31, and should be in English, French, or German. They will be published in French, and the translations from English will presumably be done by Yves himself; he speaks good English and has a nice literary touch in French, and you may entrust your work to him with confidence. The rules are not rigid, but I would recommend submitting the equivalent of three or four pages of *BESN* with between ten and twenty diagrams. This is the third such tourney organized by *diagrammes*, and its predecessors have been notably successful. The prize fund (books) is 2000F.

**Meetings.** The next *EG* readers' meeting will be at 17 New Way Road, London NW9 6PL, on Friday October 4 at 6.00 pm. Non-subscribers to *EG* will be welcome, but they will be asked to pay £5 towards the cost of the buffet (except on a first visit). Bring the latest *EG* with you!

**Books.** I have quoted two studies from Harold van der Heijden's *Pawn promotion to bishop and rook in the endgame study* on the preceding pages. The actual book (70 studies with commentary) is available from the *BCM* (The Chess Shop, 69 Masbro Road, London W14 0LS) for £11.50 including postage, or for £16.95 with a computer disc containing over 1500 such studies. About the disc, however, I regret I have reservations. 1500 studies is too many for the general enthusiast, given the repetitive nature of the theme and the modest quality of many of the offerings, and many readers will prefer just to read about the best and most important. Those who see themselves as study specialists will think differently, but sources are not always cited correctly (the task of compilation was massive and there appears to have been some reliance on inaccurate secondary sources) and the search software was designed for other purposes and is not ideal for the job in hand. See it in action before you commit yourself.

I have some fresh supplies of my little booklet *Le zugzwang dans l'étude* (32 pages, 60 ancient and modern studies on reciprocal zugzwang and losing a move, 114 diagrams, text in French) which was originally published as a special number of *diagrammes*. These are available from myself at £5 including postage, proceeds towards the cost of producing *BESN*. One reason I have founded *BESN* is to provide writers with a vehicle for publishing this sort of thing in English!

**Books wanted.** If any reader has a copy of J. H. Blake's *Chess endings for beginners* or W. P. Turnbull's *Chessmen in action* (both in the Routledge pocket series) which is no longer wanted, could he or she please let me know?

*Anybody wishing to give notice here of any event, product, or service should contact the Editor. There is no charge and no account is taken of whether the activity is being pursued for commercial profit, but notices are printed only if they seem likely to be of particular interest to study enthusiasts. Readers are asked to note that the Editor relies wholly on the representations of the notice giver (except where he makes a personal endorsement) and that no personal liability is accepted either by him or by any other person involved in the production and distribution of this magazine.*