



10th YCCC 2026

Announcement



68th WCCC

8 – 15 August 2026
Magdeburg, Germany



10th Youth Chess Composing Challenge 2026

The Youth Chess Composing Challenge (YCCC) celebrates its jubilee! Since introduction in 2016, the YCCC has been inspiring valuable pieces of chess art, many of which have been selected for the **FIDE Album** – the “golden book” of the world’s best compositions in the 3-year cycles.

The jubilee YCCC edition is once again open to the **U23 participants**, but it also introduces a separate **U13 category** for the youngest chess composers.

The Youth Committee of the World Federation for Chess Composition (WFCC) cordially invites young composers from all around the world to take part in YCCC-10, with their original entries sent by **10th July 2026** to yccc@wfcc.ch. For any information and advice on YCCC you may write to the same address.

How to prepare and send entries

You should send your original (previously not published) compositions on diagrams, with complete solutions and possible comments, to the tournament director Julia Vysotska yccc@wfcc.ch. Please, indicate your **date of birth, nationality, and country of residence (if different from nationality)**. If possible, add **FEN notation for diagram positions** and send your **endgames in pgn format**.

It is highly preferable that you **check the soundness of your entries with computer programs**, and indicate the name of the program you had used. For most of the genres except endgames you may use a free open source **Olive** graphical front-end for Popeye chess software, developed by **Dmitry Turevski**.

The **Popeye** is a solving program for chess problems created and developed by **Thomas Maeder**.

On your phones you may check both problems and endgames with the **FEN Tool**, developed by **Mu-Tsun Tsai**.

Rules & Themes

The 10th YCCC 2026 is open to all participants born 2003 or later. It consists of three sections: one with strict thematic condition for #2 (Section A), and two without set themes: endgame studies (B), and all kinds of compositions except orthodox endgames (C). **Each participant may send one entry per section. Joint works are not accepted.** In the Section C, the participants born 2013 or later may choose to compete in the U23 category (Overall standings) or in the U13 category.

Final results and prizes

The overall standings of the YCCC-10 will be based on the sum of the points earned in all three sections. The section points will be distributed as follows:

1st Place – 17 points, 2nd Place – 13 points, 3rd Place – 10 points, 4th Place – 8 points, 5th Place – 7 points, 6th Place – 6 points, 7th Place – 5 points, 8th Place – 4 points, 9th Place – 3 points, 10th Place – 2 points, any other placement in the award – 1 point.

In the case of ties, the first tiebreaker will be the higher number of points in one of the sections. If results remain equal, then the next higher number of points will decide. If all three results are the same, the younger participants will have advantage.

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The final results will be announced at the closing ceremony of the [Magdeburg WCCC 2026](#), on **14th August 2026**. Complete awards with judges' comments will be published on the [WFCC website](#), in the [YCCC Project section](#).

The five best composers from five different countries will be rewarded 500 Euros WFCC Fujairah Grants for taking part in the World Congress of Chess Composition & World Chess Solving Championship 2027, or in the European Chess Solving Championship 2027. If a rewarded participant can't use the grant, it will be offered to the next most successful composer.

The YCCC Workshop and useful links

The YCCC organizing team includes some of the world's best composers, ready to help and advise younger colleagues. You are encouraged to contact them through the same address yccc@wfcc.ch, preferably **before July 1**, with possible questions about the content, construction and originality of your entries. Please, use the title **"YCCC Questions"** in the Subject field.

You may also contact other mentors in the newly established [Chess Composers Club](#). Before applying for membership, don't miss a series of instructive articles on the homepage, in the section **First Steps in Composing**.

Section A – Mates in two moves (#2)

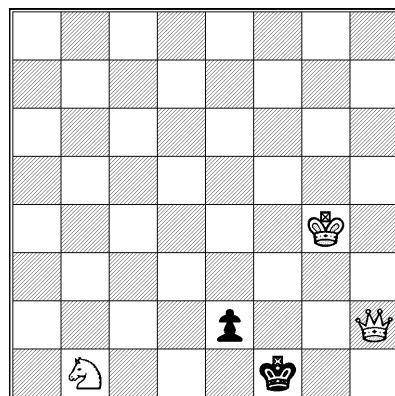
For the 2026 challenge participants are invited to compose a position with a try (or tries) defeated by a unique refutation in addition to the true solution.

Thematic condition: Mate in two moves with a bP standing on the 2nd rank in the diagram position. In the solution or try the thematic bP *essentially* blocks a square in the bK field. In the other phase (try or solution) the same bP promotes to bS and ideally also to bQ. These promotions may serve as defences or as refutations. Dual promotions to Q/R and Q/B will not be considered detrimental.

Examples:

A Martin Hoffmann

Tagblatt der Stadt, Zürich 21/8/71



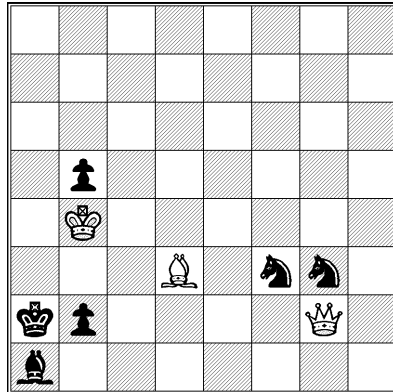
#2

1.Kf3? (>2.Qf2/2.Qh1) but 1...e1S+! 1.Kg3? (>2.Qf2/2.Qh1) but 1...e1Q+! White forces the pace with threats but these tries are met by checking refutations by the bP promotions. After 1.Kf3? there is no essential blocking role for the bP but after 1.Kg3? Ke1 2.Qh1/Qg1 the bPe2 does have

that role. It is good that the key creates a *Zugzwang* or block in the terminology of problemists. **1.Kh3!** (-) 1...e1S 2.Sd2 (2.Qg2? Sxg2!) and 1...e1Q 2.Qg2 (2.Sd2? Qxd2!) The separation of the mating moves following self-blocking by the bP promotions is known as dual avoidance – an excellent feature. 1...Ke1 2.Qg1. All works well after the key with completely accurate play but the double threats and checking refutations of the tries should be avoided if possible. This problem is noteworthy for the extreme economy – only 5 units!

B Ottmar Nemo

Bohemia 12/4/36

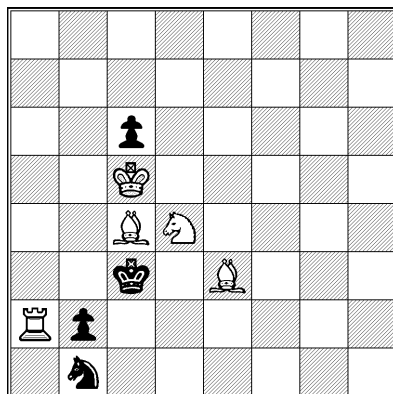


#2

The thematic bP is pinned. 1.Qf2? (>2.Qa7) The threat of the try unpins the bP which now is an essential blocker. This approach is defeated by 1...Sd4! **1.Bc2!** (-) The bP is unpinned. 1...b1S/b1Q+ 2.Bb3 and 1...Sg~ 2.Qg8, 1...Sf~ 2.Qa8 (or 2.Qd5) In the variations introduced by the bSs the bPb2 serves as a block. It is a pity that the mates following the promotions are not differentiated but a key granting a check to the wK is welcome. {1.Qc2? (2.Qb3/2.Qb1) 1...Sd2!}

C Christopher Sumner

Grantham Journal 6/3/24



#2

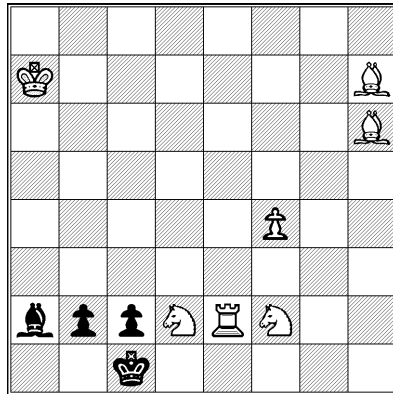
The diagram position is a near block and various White moves maintain this state of affairs. 1.Bh6? 1.Ba6? 1.Bf1? and 1.Ra8? are all defeated by 1...Sd2! There is only one variation, 1...Sa3 2.Ra3, where bPb2 blocks a square in the bK field. **1.Bc1!** (-) 1...bxc1Q 2.Se2 (2.Rc2? Qxc2!) 1...bxc1S 2.Rc2 (2.Se2? Sxe2!) 1...Sa3 2.Rxa3 and 1...Sd2 2.Bxb2! The “awkward” black defence is exploited as a self-block!

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Thus far our examples have provided a key phase that introduces a *block*, implying that Black necessarily *must* promote. The final examples are all *threat* problems.

D Valery Didenko

Die Schwalbe 1993

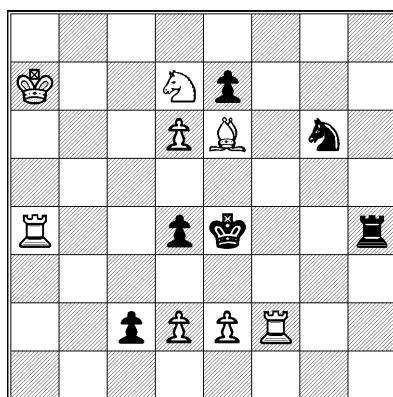


#2

The set-up of wBh6, wPf4, wSd2 and bKc1 is known as a *half battery* and it is logical to consider moves of wPf4 and wSd2 in order to bring wBh6 into play. 1.f5? (>2.Re1) 1...b1Q 2.Sc4. This defence blocks b1 but unblocks b2 so White must reclaim this square when opening the battery. However, 1...b1S! refutes. Note how after 1.f5? the bPc2 necessarily blocks this square. Moves by wSd2 also place a guard on d2 to threaten 2.Re1. 1.Sf1?/1.Sf3? (>2.Re1) 1...b1S 2.Rxc2. Again this defence blocks b1 but unblocks b2, a square recovered by the mating move but now 1...b1Q! refutes. White corrects this mistake by **1.Sb1!** (>2.Re1) 1...cxb1S 2.Rc2 (2.f5? Sd2!) and 1...cxb1Q 2.f5 (2.Rc2? Qxc2!) 1...Kxb1 2.Re1 (pin-mate) and 1...Bxb1 2.f5. This final mate is changed from that in the diagram position where 1...Bb1 is answered by 2.Sb3. A complex #2 using two thematic bPs. In addition to the variation play the Q/S promotions also provide refutations.

E David Shire

Original for The Problemist 2026

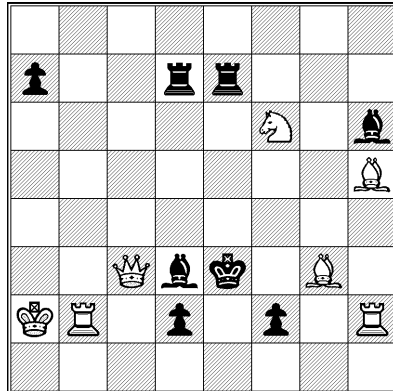


#2

1.Rf5? (>2.Sc5) 1...exd6 2.Sf6 but 1...c1Q! 1.Rf3? (>2.d3) 1...Se5 2.Sc5, 1...Sf4 2.Re3 but 1...d1S! **1.e3!** (>2.Rxd4) 1...Kd3 2.Sc5 (2.Rxd4? 2.Bf5?) Here bPc2 acts as a block only in the key phase; this has to be the case with the bK on the 4th rank! wRf2 and bPc2 are active in the try play whilst their role in the actual play is passive but essential. The recurrence of 2.Sc5 across the 3 phases unifies the scheme.

F Vladimir Erokhin

Schweizerische Schach-Magazin 1984



#2

Set Play: 1...d1S 2.Rbe2, 1...f1S 2.Rhe2, 1...Rd4 2.Qxd2 and 1...Bf4 2.Bxf2. Two pairs of variations with line-opening and self-block. 1.Rxd2? (>2.Re2) 1...f1Q! 1.Rxf2? (>2.Re2) 1...d1Q! The two main phases are 1.Rh4? (>2.Qxd2) 1...d1Q 2.Bxf2, 1...Bf4 2.Bxf4 but 1...f1S! In the first variation the d pawn promotes and in the second variation the f pawn blocks. **1.Rb4!** (>2.Bxf2) 1...f1Q 2.Qxd2, 1...Rd4 2.Qxd4, 1...d1S 2.Qc1 (1...Re4 2.Rxe4). In the first variation the f pawn promotes and in the second variation the d pawn blocks. The S promotions are used to discriminate between the major try and key. 1...f1S! refutes the try whilst in the solution 1...d1S opens a line for the wQ to mate. The relatively symmetrical nature of the construction enables two parallel phases where the roles of the bPs are clearly outlined. The set mates are changed over the course of the solution – a valuable element. A quite outstanding problem!

Advice to contestants

Do study carefully the examples provided; they may act as a source of ideas!

Diagrams with the bK on the first or second rank and *adjacent to the bP* are most likely to be anticipated. Problems of this type may prove easier to construct for newcomers and, if they adopt this approach, we encourage them to separate the phase where the bP promotes from the one where the bP blocks as in the case in examples **B** and **C**.

Much greater chances of originality will be found with the bK on the third or fourth ranks as in the case in examples **E** and **F**.

Experienced competitors might choose to experiment with *two* thematic bPs as in examples **D** and **F**. If following this path it will be perfectly in order for one pawn to fulfil only one of the two specified functions.

Where promotions to both Q and S occur in the same phase, do try to differentiate between the mates. Note the *dual avoidance* found in **A**, **C** and **D**.

Finally do avoid keys that take a flight from the bK (flight-giving is to be encouraged!). However, a key that takes a flight but also gives one is acceptable. A key capturing a black piece is unacceptable (the capture of a bP is reasonable). A key checking the bK or one shielding the wK from a threat of check is also bad practice.

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The same as the key-move, the refutations of thematic tries shouldn't be overly strong black moves.

Good luck with your composing efforts and, above all, enjoy the challenge!

Judge: David Shire

Section B – Endgame studies (+, =)

No set thematic condition

Judges: Steffen Slumstrup Nielsen & Gady Costeff

The judges will put emphasis on original ideas and clarity. To understand better the content and form that distinguishes an artistic endgame study from usual chess combinations and puzzles in the Internet, we warmly recommend the articles from the Chess Composers Club homepage, mentioned above.

Section C – All kinds of problems

No set thematic condition

This section is open to problems of any kind, length and content (endgames excluded). The U13 composers may choose between participation in general U23 category, or in the separate U13 category.

Judges: A group of experts in different genres. The final standings are based on average marks given by the judges, after excluding the lowest and the highest ones.

Marjan Kovačević
YCCC coordinator