

Jurgen Stigter-64 JT 2018

Provisional award

This formal study composing tourney celebrates the 64th anniversary of our friend **Jurgen Stigter**, a life long enthusiast of our art and a former president of ARVES who is also a renowned collector of chess books. Jurgen has also generously sponsored this special event.

Out of 40 anonymous diagrammed entries which I had received from tourney director **Luc Palmans** I have consulted about some half of them with our expert **Harold van der Heijden** regarding soundness and originality. Their devoted assistance is much appreciated. The general standard of the awarded entries is very high. A couple of candidates for top honours I decided to leave out of the award since I was not approved with their extra redundant introduction, too complicated or too crowded or both. Instead of ranking them lower than they potentially deserve, I chose to return them to the authors for reconsideration and thus to allow them a chance for better luck in another event. For the rest it's, as usual, a matter of taste and preferences.

Sharing the opinion that awards of formal tourneys should not be too long just from "social" arguments, I finally included 10 entries in the provisional award. I find them all "human", comprehensive, well constructed and having the power to make people happy. Here is my selection:

First-second prize: No. 18 V. Tarasiuk This stunning logical malyutka (a 5 men baby study) is based on the asymmetry of the chessboard. The solution, just like the logical try, is surprisingly accurate despite the length of the main line. A most remarkable discovery!

First-second prize: No. 19 V. Tarasiuk Here is another splendid logical study highlighted by the king's choice on move 7 to avoid a knight future Zwischenschach. The mutual struggle before and following the thematic junction is lively and eventful.

Third prize: No. 14 Y. Bazlov The climax of white's daring and imaginative play is the amazing queen sacrifice followed by a "quiet" king move and a subsequent long range skewer.

Fourth prize: No. 31 G. Costeff In this elegant study especially eye catching is the defensive manoeuvre of the black dark squared bishop to the upper corner duly "ignored" by his white counterpart. The latter, in return, sets nonchalantly a deadly battery to secure promotion.

Special prize: No. 35 D. Gurgenidze The combination between mutual queen sacrifices and 3 different promotions deserves a special distinction.

First hon. mention: No. 6 S. Slumstrup Nielsen A fascinating struggle to secure promotion with subtle King moves highlighted by the obstruction on b5. Aesthetic is the similarity between the key and the final move in the main line.

Second hon. mention: No. 37 J. Polašek & J. Mišek Mutual rook sacrifices are followed by a Bishop underpromotion to secure a win with a bishop pair of the same colour.

Third hon. mention: No. 1 S. Slumstrup Nielsen & M. Minski After the astounding switchback 5. Nc5!! Black faces an unpleasant choice between 2 mates and a deadly skewer.

First commendation: No. 21 L.Topko An elegant battle of minor pieces vs. a rook. The knight is given away in favour of an effective battery play to obtain domination.

Second commendation: No. 3 D. Gurgenidze & M. Minski Eye catching echo model pin stalemates following a highly tense sacrificial introduction. In your judge's # 10177 2 such pins on the third rank are displayed however there I preferred to show the second pin as a positional draw and this way save a couple of extra pawns and maintain an "ideal" final position.

I conclude with cordial thanks to all participants. The award will remain open to appeals for 3 more months.

Yochanan Afek, Amsterdam, March 2018