

Award Maroc Echecs 2026

Judge : Vitaly Medinstev

Section A : h#2



I received 20 anonymized helpmates in two moves of various quality from the tourney director Abdelaziz Onkoud whom I thank for inviting me to be the judge of this competition. The overall level of the tourney was average. At the same time, there are some very interesting works among the entries.

As usual, the main measure of my estimation was the trinity of originality, complexity and harmony (unity). Works showing weak thematic content, serial play (the lack of interdependency) and/or not well-matched play of both sides were not included into the award, as well as problems with serious flaws such as significant symmetry in the play of pieces, unjustified repetition of moves, rude captures, idle white officers, radical twin form, heavy construction. The judge's subjective views also influenced the ranking.

Participants :

Alexandrov Velko : A7 ; Crisan Vlaicu : A16* ; Vieira Ricardo : A1* ; Galma Mikhaïlo T. : A17* ; Gavriliv Evgeny : A5*, A9, A10, A11, A12 ; Gurov Valery V. : A3, A4 ; Labai Zoltán : A2 ; Muljadi Paul : A6 ; Nefyodov Vladislav V. : A20 ; Onkoud Abdelaziz : A8 ; Trommler Sven : A13, A14 ; Vasyuchko Mikola R. : A17* ; Witztum Menachem : A1*, A15 ; Yuzyuk Victor Ya. : A18, A19 & Zamanov Vidadi : A5*, A16*.

Comments on some unmarked works:

A2 – fake pin: bPd4, - wR;

A3 – not quite matched play in solutions. Compare to P1004697;

A10 – to increase artistic value, one solution with mate by rook should be eliminated (for instance +bSd6);

A11 – anticipated by y/403461;

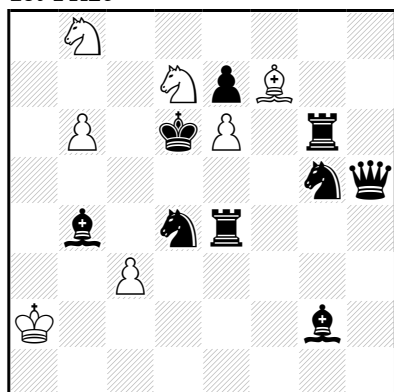
A12 – self-anticipation : <https://frme.sportsontheweb.net/chatranj/Final%20award%20H2%20Bakani%20Mustapha-%2055%20JT.pdf>

A14 – rude capture of thematic bR and the relocation of thematic bP in twin prevented the problem from being awarded;

A17 – no better than y/103967, in my view.

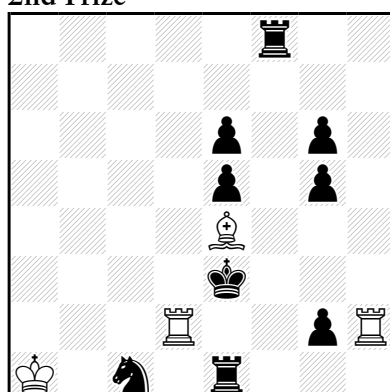
I propose the following ranking:

A8 - Abdelaziz Onkoud
Maroc Echecs 2026
1st Prize



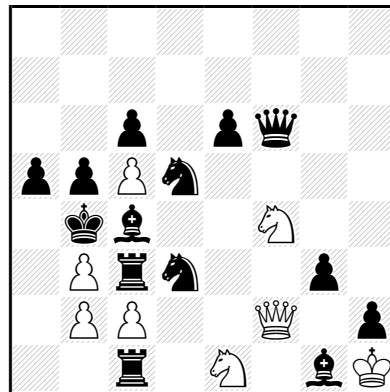
h♯2 4 solutions (7+9) C+

A4 - Valery Gurov
Maroc Echecs 2026
2nd Prize



h♯2 4 solutions (4+9) C+

**A1 - Menachem Witztum
 & Ricardo Vieira**
Maroc Echecs 2026
1st Honorable Mention



h♯2 2 solutions (8+14) C+

A8 - Abdelaziz Onkoud : 1st Prize

1. ♖d×é6 ♗×b4 (♜é5?) 2. ♜c5 b×c5♯
1. ♜é×é6 ♗×d4 (♜c5?) 2. ♜é5 d×é5♯
1. ♜g×é6 ♜c5 (♗×d4?) 2. ♜6é5 ♜b7♯
1. ♜g×é6 ♜é5 (♗×b4?) 2. ♜c5 ♜c4♯

An original HOTF 2x2 with pure dual-avoidance in W1, fourfold annihilation of wPe6 and four model mates. The most interesting paradox is that identical routes of black officers of the same type lead to different mates: in one case, one thematic unit blocks the key square e5/c5, and in the other, another unit of the same type is sacrificed on that same square. The undeniable winner of the tourney despite the fact that thematic wPc3 not being involved in one of the two pairs of solutions.

A4 - Valery Gurov : 2nd Prize

1. ♜ff1 ♜d3+ 2. ♜f2 ♜×g2♯
1. ♜f4 ♜f5 2. ♜f3 ♜h3♯
1. ♜×d2 ♜×g2+ 2. ♜d1 ♜c2♯
1. ♜×é4 ♜h4+ 2. ♜f5 ♜f2♯

By using wR instead of wQ in a well-known pattern bK+wR+wB, the author managed to present an interesting and economical HOTF 2x2 with fairly harmonious play in the pairs of solutions, including passive Zilahi and a function permutation of the move Rxg2. Curiously, this problem has a similar nuance – the bRf8 is involved only in one pair of solutions. Can be compared to P1072670, y/643897.

A1 - Menachem Witztum & Ricardo Vieira :1st Honorable Mention

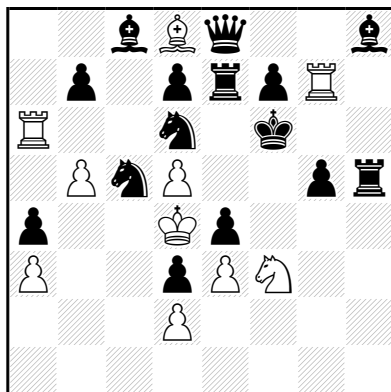
In the initial position, bK has no free squares, and a mate by any knight on the field d3 (which guards twice by Black) is quite obvious. But how can at least one of these guards be eliminated? A random move by bSd3 performs a negative effect, for example: 1. ♜e5/~ ♜d2 2. ♜d3 ♜×d3♯?? 3. ♜×d3 ! ; 1... ♜d4 2. ♜d3 ♜×d3♯?? 3. ♜×d3 !

Therefore the black knight must be captured on one of the two thematic pin lines:

1. ♜×é1 ♜×é1 2. ♜d3 ♜×d3♯
1. ♜3×f4 ♜×f4 2. ♜d3 ♜×d3♯

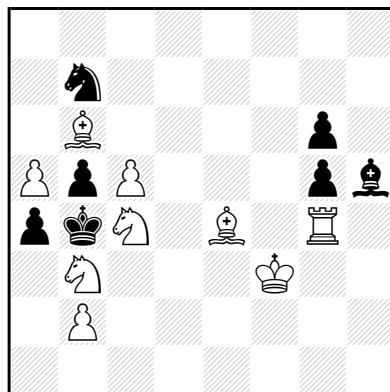
An original Zilahi with pin-mates and restoration of control over c5, lost after W1. I was lenient towards the monotonous mate that is organically inherent to the problem scheme; however, the heavy construction with four black officers, including the queen, did not allow me to rank the work higher.

A15 - Menachem Witztum
 Maroc Echecs 2026
 2nd Honorable Mention



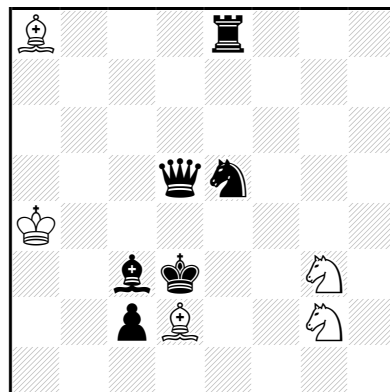
h†2 b) ♖f3→c3 (10+15) C+

A9 - Evgeny Gavriliv
 Maroc Echecs 2026
 1st Commendation



h†2 2 solutions (9+7) C+

A13 - Sven Trommler
 Maroc Echecs 2026
 2nd Commendation



h†2 2 solutions (5+6) C+

A15 - Menachem Witztum : 2nd Honorable Mention

- a) 1. ♔×d8 ♘é5 2. ♚é8 ♙×f7†
 b) 1. ♜×a6 ♖×g5 2. ♜c4 ♘×é4†

The mating squares f7/e4 are guarded not only by the two initially pinned black pieces but also by one more piece, and this guard can be removed only by capturing a linear white officer – performing a hideaway – thereby eliminating one of the pins (AntiZielElement). Then the unpinned black piece performs another hideaway. A non-trivial play with functions exchange in three pairs of units. The heavy construction and the relocation of the mating piece in twin 'b' determined the rank of the distinction. Can be compared to P1072527, P1230226.

A9 - Evgeny Gavriliv : 1st Commendation

1. ♜×a5 ♙c2 2. ♜×c4 ♙a5†
 1. ♜×c5 ♘c2 2. ♜×é4 ♙c5†

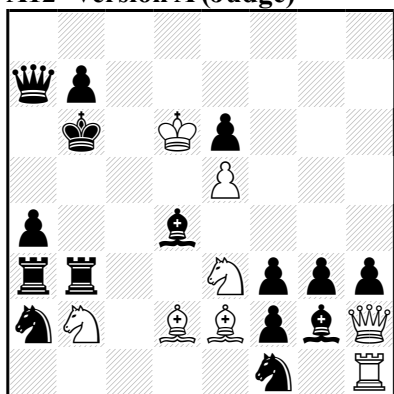
Tempo-pins by means of the capture of one of the two thematic white officers (that are elements of a direct white half-battery) with a change of their functions in the solutions. It looks fresh. There is something scacographic about the initial position ♜ Can be compared to P0548081.

A13 - Sven Trommler : 2nd Commendation

1. ♜c4 ♘é4 2. ♔d4 ♘f4†
 1. ♙d4 ♙b4 2. ♔c4 ♙é4†

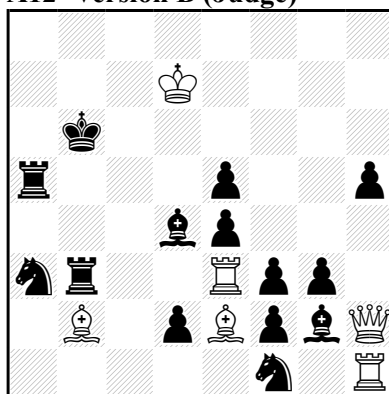
A pleasant Meredith showing Witztum-70 Challenge theme along the line a4 – h4, though the play is not quite matched in the solutions.

A12- Version A (Judge)



h‡2 2 solutions (8+15) C+

A12- Version B (Judge)



h‡2 2 solutions (6+14) C+

A12 (version A)

1. ♖×h2 ♜b1 2. ♜×é3 ♞×a4‡

1. ♙×h1 ♚×f2 2. ♙×b2 ♞d5‡

A12 (version B)

1. ♖×h2 ♜b1 2. ♜×é3 ♙×d4‡

1. ♙×h1 ♚×f2 2. ♙×b2 ♜×b3‡

Judge: Vitaly Medintsev

Krasnodar, 15.10.2026