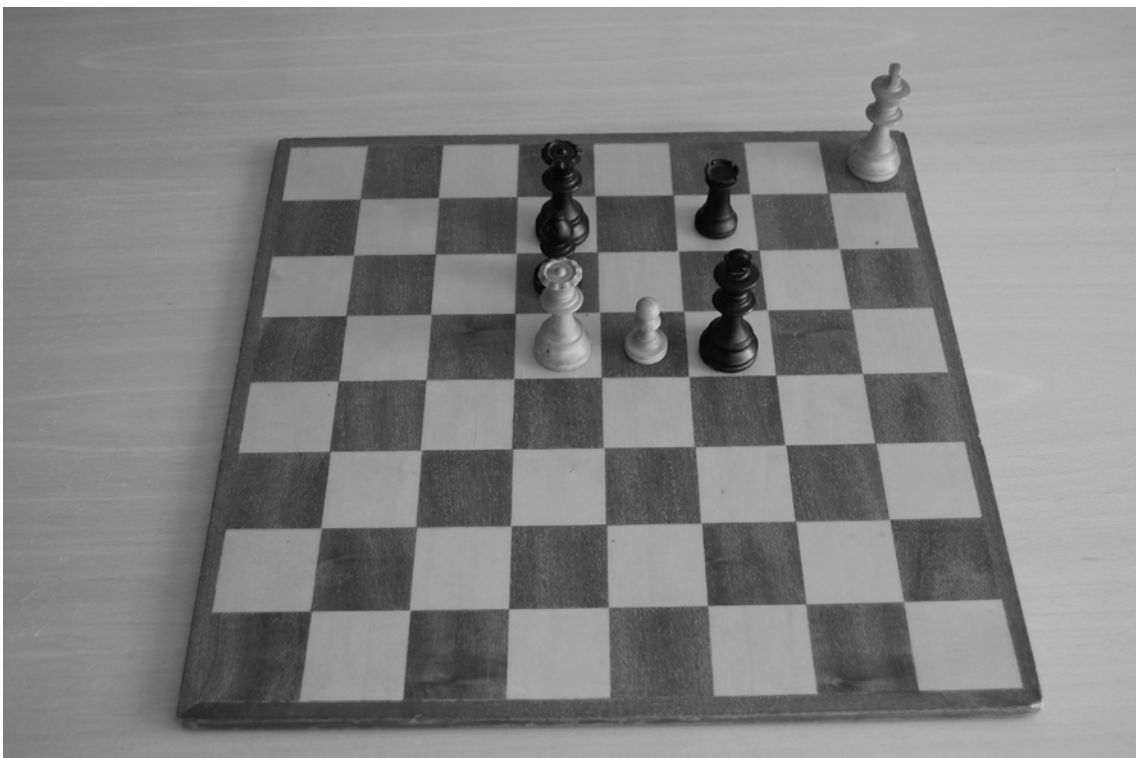


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White to play and draw

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EDITORIAL

HAROLD VAN DER HEIJDEN

Mario Guido García (Argentina) has agreed to join **EG**'s editorial team. I am really happy with the fact that “my” team is now complete and consists of representatives from several countries with a strong endgame study composition tradition (Argentina, Czech Republic, Israel, Russia) as well as several Western Europe countries. Mario, who has been contributing a lot to recent Spotlights, will take care of correctness checking of studies in awards, **before** these are published in **EG**.

Spotlight's editor Jarl Ulrichsen and I have been snowed under with numerous e-mails reporting cooks in studies that appeared in early issues of **EG**. All of these claims need checking (numerous claims turned out to be incorrect) and it is simply too much for us (as regards both time and valuable publication space). We are trying to find a solution for this (e.g. very obvious minor duals will not be mentioned in Spotlight anymore, or we will focus on important studies or recent **EG**'s only).

Recently, during the annual meeting of ARVES, it was decided that the growing backlog of **EG** awards will be resolved by issuing extra “awards supplements”. This means that **EG** readers will receive (almost) double-sized **EG** issues at no extra cost. Perhaps **EG** readers could try to convince their chess friends that now is an excellent opportunity to subscribe!

This issue contains two articles on the highly controversial issue of endgame tablebases (EGTBs) and composition. My personal opinion on the subject is the most liberal point of view that seems to be possible: a composer is allowed to use any tool during composition while positions in EGTBs and zugzwangs in lists and/or databases do not fully anticipate a

study. Of course this does not mean that all compositions from composers using such tools or sources are always masterpieces. Not all endings with a unique solution qualify as an endgame study (as some composers seem to believe) and the same goes for complex studies that e.g. combine several reciprocal zugzwangs. Although such compositions are technically perfect, these sometimes lack “flow”; “surprise”; “soul” and “clarity” (impossible to solve for a human solver). It is the composer's duty to add artistic content and explain a study, a magazine's editor's duty to select appropriate studies for solving and the judge's duty to distinguish between technical endings and endgame studies. This, by the way, also goes for traditional composition. In contrast with the liberal point of view, there is also a strictly conservative point of view. In that view a composer is not allowed to use any tool in composition, and certainly no EGTBs. And between these two viewpoints exists a whole spectrum of opinions. I have nothing against people having other opinions, but I found it rather disappointing that often, also in the pages of **EG**, composers that use modern tools while composing were directly or indirectly accused of cheating. It is quite likely that this is not the last time we will write about the topic in **EG**!

This issue also has a very interesting article about the famous Ukraine composer Zinar, the king of pawn endings and a worthy successor to Grigoriev. Zinar seemed to have disappeared around 1990, but about a year or so ago, Sergey N. Tkachenko informed me that he had succeeded in finding Zinar! Together with Sergey Didukh, he wrote an article for the *Problemist Ukraina*, which we reproduce in **EG** after skilful English translation by AJR.

ORIGINALS (21)

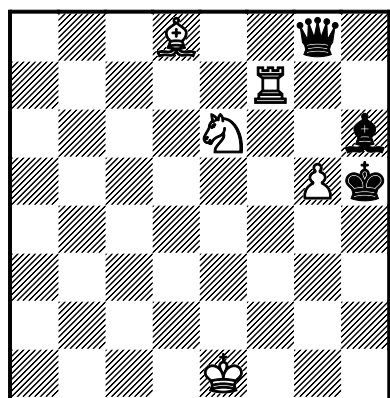
Editor :
ED VAN DE GEVEL

Editor: Ed van de Gevel – “email submissions are preferred.”

Judge 2008-09: Sergey N. Tkachenko

In the first study by Mario Guido García, White must be very careful in selecting which material to save to hold the draw:

No 16454 M.G. García



e1h5 3141.10 Draw

No 16454 Mario Guido García (Argentina). 1.Sf4+/i Kg4 2.Sd3 Qxd8 3.gxh6 Qxd3 4.h7 draws.

i) 1.Rf2? Qxe6+ 2.Re2 Qd6 3.gxh6 Qxd8 4.h7 Kg4 5.Rh2 Qh8 6.Rg2+ Kh3 7.Rg1 Kh2 wins, or 1.Re7? Bxg5 2.Sxg5 Qxd8 3.Re5 Kg4 4.Se6 Qb6 5.Re2 Qg1+ 6.Kd2 Kf3 7.Re1 Qf2+ 8.Kd1 Qh4 wins.

The second study by Mario Guido García requires knowledge of the Troitzky endgame SS versus pawn, to end up with something completely different:

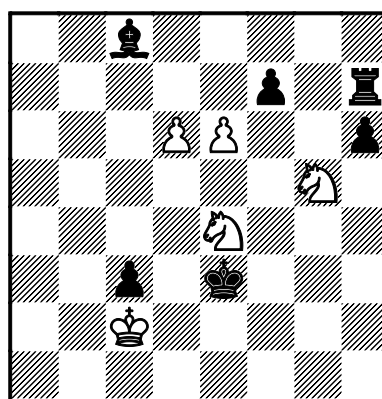
No 16455 Mario Guido García (Argentina). 1.d7/i Rh8 2.Sxf7 Rg8 3.Sed6 Bxd7 4.exd7 Kd4 5.Kd1/ii Rg1+/iii 6.Ke2 c2 7.d8Q c1Q 8.Se4+ Kxe4 9.Qd3+ Kf4 10.Qf3 mate.

i) 1.Sxh7? fxe6 2.Shf6 h5 3.Kxc3 h4 draws.

ii) 5.Sf5+? Kd5 6.Sg7/iv Ra8 7.Sh5 Ke6 8.d8Q Rxd8 9.Sxd8+ Kf5 draws.

iii) Kc5 6.Se8 Rg1+ 7.Kc2 Rg2+/v 8.Kxc3 wins.

No 16455 M.G. García



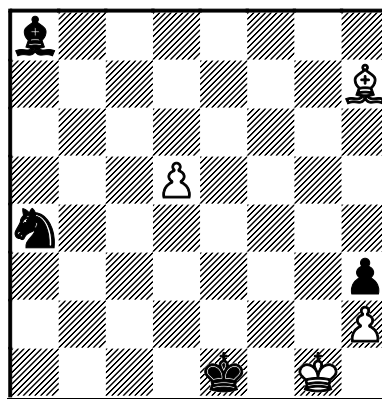
c2e3 0332.23 Win

iv) 6.Sh4 Ke6 7.d8Q Rxd8 8.Sxd8+ Kf6 9.Sc6 Kg5 draws, or 6.d8Q+ Rxd8 7.Sxd8 Ke5 8.Sh4 Kf4 draws.

v) Kb4 8.d8Q Rg2+ 9.Kd1 Rd2+ 10.Qxd2 cxd2 11.Kxd2 h5 12.Sg5 h4 13.Sh3 wins.

In the third study Leonid Topko shows how White holds on in a limited space:

No 16456 L. Topko



g1e1 0043.21g1e1 Draw

No 16456 Leonid Topko (Ukraine). 1.Bf5 Sc3 2.Bxh3 Se2+ 3.Kh1 (Kg2 Bxd5 mate;) Kf2 4.Bg2/i Sf4 5.Be4 Sh5 6.Bg2/ii Sf4 7.Be4 Sh3 8.Bg2 Bb7 9.Be4/iii Ba8 10.Bg2 draws.

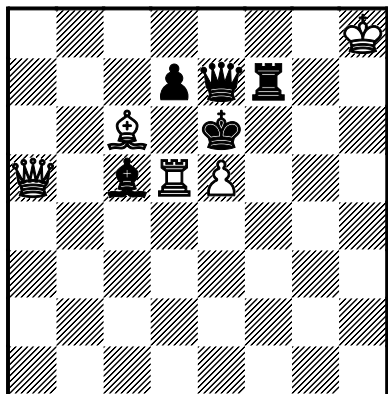
i) 4.Be6? Sf4 5.Bg8 Sh3 6.Bf7 Bb7 7.Be6 Ba8 8.Bf7 Kf1 9.Bg8 Sf2 mate.

ii) 6.h3? Sg3+ 7.Kh2 Sxe4 wins.

iii) 9.Bxh3? Bxd5+ 10.Bg2 Bxg2 mate.

In the fourth study by Oleksandr Skrinnik, White needs all his wits to save the day:

No 16457 O. Skrinnik



h8e6 4440.11 Draw

No 16457 Oleksandr Skrinnik (Russia). 1.Rd6+ (Bxd7+ Kxd5;) Bxd6/i 2.Qd5+ Kf5 3.Bxd7+/ii Qxd7/iii 4.e6+ Be5+ 5.Qxe5+ Kxe5 6.exf7 (exd7 Rxd7;) Qd8+ (Qxf7 stalemate;) 7.Kg7 Qe7 8.Kg8 draws.

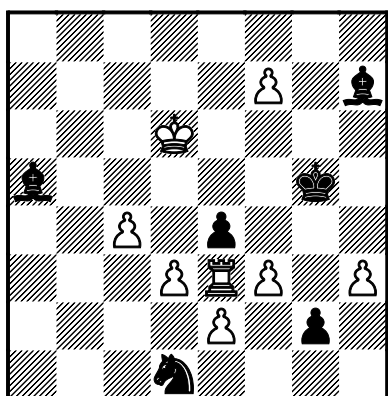
i) Kf5 2.Bxd7+ Kg5 3.Qd2+ draws.

ii) 3.exd6+? Qe5+ 4.Qxe5+ Kxe5 5.Kg8 dxc6 6.Kxf7 Kxd6 wins.

iii) Kf4 4.Qd4+ Kg5 5.Qg4+ Kh6 6.Qh3+ Kg6 7.Qd3+ draws.

In the fifth study Andrzej Jasik shows a mate with four selfblocks:

No 16458 A. Jasik



d6g5 0163.62 Win

No 16458 Andrzej Jasik (Poland). 1.f8Q/i Bb4+/ii 2.c5 Bxc5+/iii 3.Kxc5 g1Q 4.Qg7+/iv Bg6 5.f4+ Kxf4/v 6.Qf6+ Bf5/vi 7.Qh6+ Qg5 8.Rf3+ exf3 9.e3+ Sxe3 10.Qd6 mate.

i) 1.h4+? Kg6 2.f8Q Bb4+ 3.c5 g1Q 4.Qe8+ Kh6 5.Qe6+ Bg6 draws.

ii) Sxe3 2.Qg7+ Bg6 3.h4+ Kxh4 4.Qxg6 wins.

iii) g1Q 3.Qg7+ Bg6 4.f4+ Kxf4 5.Rf3+ Kg5 6.Rf5+ wins.

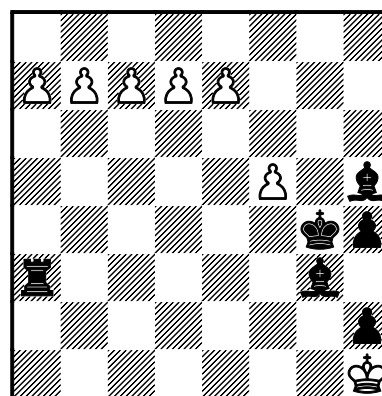
iv) 4.f4+ Kh5 5.Qf7+ Kh6 6.Qf6+ Kh5 draws.

v) Kh4 6.Qf6+ Kh5 7.Qh8+ Bh7 8.Qxh7 mate.

vi) Kxe3 7.Qd4+ Kxe2 8.Qxg1 wins.

The sixth study by Michail Zinar shows five promotions to rook:

No 16459 M.A. Zinar



h1g4 0360.62 Win

No 16459 Michail Afanasevich Zinar (Ukraine) 1.a8R/i Rb3 2.b8R/ii Rc3 3.c8R/iii Rd3 4.d8R/iv Re3 5.e8R/v wins.

i) 1.a8Q? Kh3 2.Qxa3 Bf3+ 3.Qxf3 stalemate.

ii) 2.b8Q? Kh3 3.Qxb3 Bf3+ 4.Qxf3 stalemate.

iii) 3.c8Q? Kh3 4.Qxc3 Bf3+ 5.Qxf3 stalemate.

iv) 4.d8Q? Kh3 5.Qxd3 Bf3+ 6.Qxf3 stalemate.

v) 5.e8Q? Kh3 6.Qxe3 Bf3+ 7.Qxf3 stalemate.

SPOTLIGHT (17)

Editor :

JARL ULRICHSEN

Contributors: Ilham Aliev (Azerbaijan), Marco Campioli (Italy), Mario García (Argentina), Daniel Keith (France), Alain Pallier (France), Harold van der Heijden (The Netherlands), Valery Vlasenko (Ukraine) and Timothy Whitworth (England).

To save space only new discoveries will be mentioned. As for cooks that are known already, readers are referred to Harold van der Heijden's database (HHdbIII).

We continue Pallier's investigation of end-game studies with six men or less.

EG1

5, S. Isenegger (HHdbIII no. 35492).

21, C. Jonsson (HHdbIII no. 35069).

EG3

78, R. Brieger. 1.Rc1, meant to be a try, wins in 135 moves (and so does 1.Sg3). A typical line runs 1.Rc1 Be5 2.Rb1 Bd4 3.Re1 Bg1 4.Sg3 h1S 5.Sf5.

85, W. Proskurowski. The intended solution is incorrect as 1.Bc4 Kf5 2.Ka7 Kf4 (not 2...Ke5) draws, whereas the try 1.c7 Be6 2.Bc4 Bc8 3.Ba6 actually wins. But then the rest is dualistic.

88, B. Soukup-Bardon. Although the late composer was an outstanding expert on this type of endgames, EGTB shows that there are many duals, the first being 2.Sb3 (instead of 2.Sc4). This was also found by García.

89, A. Åkerblom. No solution. The composer overlooked that 6.Rd3 is met by 6...Se2 (and not 6...Kc4 7.Rc3+ Kxc3 stalemate or 6...Sxd3 stalemate). This was also found by García.

106, C. Jonsson duplicates *EG1* no. 21.

EG4

134, S. Zlatic. In I we meet the usual duals 5.Rd1, 5.Re1, 5.Rg1 and 5.Rh1 (instead of

5.Rf1 – a rather arbitrary choice). I V White can start with 1.Sxc5.

147, B. Soukup-Bardon. Many duals; e.g. 5.Sf7+, 5.Sh7 and even 5.Sd2.

149, J. Vandiest. Dual 12.Qb8+ (instead of 12.Qc8+).

151, N. Kralin. No solution. Black wins after 5...Se5 6.Kxa7 Bd3.

P. 77 C, G. Kasparyan (HHdbIII no. 39576).

P. 78 E, E. Kopnin. 1.Rb4+ is only the quickest win. 1.Rb7, 1.Rb6 and 1.Rb8 also win.

P. 89, J. Moravec. No solutions. Without the illegal e.p. capture both these positions are lost.

EG5

P. 103 (no. 43), G. Nadareishvili. Multiple duals. 15 alternatives draw at move 4.

P. 104 (no. 62), G. Nadareishvili. Second solutions. 1.Sc5, 1.Kc5, 1.Kc7 and 1.Kd5 also draw. This was also found by García.

170, G. Teodoru. The solution should end with 5.Kxb7. The rest is dualistic.

203, E. Dobrescu, V. Nestorescu (HHdbIII no. 33655).

206, J. Vandiest. Duals 15.Qb4+ and 16.Qe6+.

208, I. Vandecasteele (HHdbIII no. 33902).

EG6

P. 139 2b, A. Gulyayev (HHdbIII no. 49864).

EG7

230, E. Puhakka (HHdbIII no. 34558).**234, E. Dobrescu** (HHdbIII no. 34472).**247, A. Sobey.** Second solution 1.Kd3 and then several duals. This was also found by García.**248, P. Joitsa** (HHdbIII no. 35084; also no solution after 1...Rxd6 with a database win.)**257, G.J. van Breukelen.** Many duals starting with 2.Kd5, 2.Kc4 or 2.Kc5 (instead of 2.Ke4).**258, J. Selman** (HHdbIII no. 34162).**P. 184 C, N.D. Grigoriev.** 7.c8Q should be the last move. The rest is dualistic.**P. 185 F, F. Prokop.** The printed solution needs correcting and should read 2...Ke8 (not 2...Kc8) 3.Ke3.**P. 185 H, A. Kraemer.** Cook 3.Kg5 or 3.Kf5 (instead of 3.h7+). White can lose a tempo in different ways.

EG8

260, A. Branton (HHdbIII no. 33730).**276, M. Klinkov.** There are several duals, the first being 4.Qh3+ or 4.Qg6+.**282, W. Proskurowski.** The moves 3.Kc4 and 4.e4 can be transposed.**289, K. Sczala** (HHdbIII no. 35806).**292, A. Hildebrand.** Cook 5.Rc3 (instead of 5.Kd1).**313, B. Badai.** No solution. The position after 2.Kxf4 is lost for White.**324, A. Herbstman, E. Pogoyants** (HHdbIII no. 33625).

EG9

P. 235 no. 4, E. Dobrescu (HHdbIII no. 42125).**P. 235 no. 5, R. Voia** (HHdbIII no. 40029).**P. 242 A, B. Badai** (HHdbIII no. 33275).**337, G. Zakhodyakin** (HHdbIII no. 33850).**343, G. Nadareishvili** (HHdbIII no. 33604).**345, D. Makhatadze.** 5.Bxd7+ should end the solution. The rest is dualistic.**346, G. Amirkhanov.** 4.Sxb2 should end the solution. The rest is dualistic.**376, E. Pogoyants** (HHdbIII no. 34256).**377, E. Dobrescu** (HHdbIII no. 34635).**378, H. Steniczka** (HHdbIII no. 34030).**381, L. Kopac.** Cf. *EG10* p. 286. The intended solution 4.Bc3 is bad, but the correct solution is dualistic as Kg5 can be played at move 3 or at move 4.

EG10

390, J. Vandiest. Cf. p. 263. 7.Qf7+ is another dual.**406, V. Yakimchik** (HHdbIII no. 33781).**419, J. Fritz.** Diagram error. A black pawn is missing on h7. And worse: The position is drawn in many ways after 6.f1Q. This was also found by García.**421, Soukup-Bardon.** There are several alternative ways of winning. In addition to the composer's solution 1.Kh5, White can play 1.Sa5, 1.Sb2, 1.Se5+ and 1.Sce3. This was also found by García.**432, R. Ashurov.** Second solution 4.Kb6. After 4...Sc7 White must avoid 5.Kxc7 stalemate and choose one of several winning moves.García has begun a parallel investigation. His focus is however on other kinds of cooks than those that can be found by EGTB. I need more time to verify all his claims. The following is only part of the comments he has sent to *EG*.

EG1

31, A. Kopnin. Incorrect. Black wins in the line 1...Rc8+ by playing 6...Rh1 (instead of 6.Kxh7).

EG2

47, A.G. Kuznetsov. Second solution 8.Ke5 h3 9.Be4+ Kb8 10.Kf6 Kc7 11.Ke6 Kd8 12.Kf7 Kc7 13.Sd5+ Kd6 14.Sf6 Ke5 15.Bb7.**57, G. Zakhodyakin.** Second solution. 3.Sb3+ Ka2 4.Sd2 Ka3 5.Sc3 draws (EGTB).**60, G. Amiryan.** Incorrect. Black draws after 2...h4 3.gxh4 Sxd3 4.Bxd3 Bd4.

EG3

99, B. Badai. 3.Ke3 seems to be a serious dual.

103, C. Sansom. 7.Sbd3 also wins easily.

112, P. Perkonoja. This seems to be rehabilitated. EG5 p. 107 claims a win for White after 2.Bd4 Sf6+ 3.Bxf6 exf6 4.c8Q Rxc8 5.h7 Ke7+ 6.Kg7 Kd6 7.Kxf6. But Black can play 6...Rc2.

EG4

125, B. Breider. Black seems to draw after 4...Kxd4 5.a7 Bg6 6.a8Q Bf5.

165, Z. Kadrev. Another rehabilitation. In EG7 p. 179 W. Veitch claimed that 1...Rd1 draws, but White wins after 2.Se7 Ra1 3.Rg4+ Kf8 (Kf6; Sd5+) 4.Sg6+ Ke8 5.Rg2.

EG5

P. 97, C.M. Bent. Second solution. The surprising 4.Kg6 (threatening 5.Rxf5 mate) leaves Black in a hopeless position.

172, A. Herbstman. Second solution. Instead of 2.Bc6 White can play 2.g4+ Rxe4+ 3.Kd2+ Kg2 4.gxh5 Ra4 5.h6 Bf5 6.Kc3 winning bPa3 after a few moves.

180, B. Kozdon. Incorrect. There is no win after 1...Kxg3 2.d7 Rg4+ 3.Kf7 Bg5.

196, E. Thiele. 3.Bc5 (composer) wins at once, but White can also play 3.Sf4 Kf8 4.Sd5 Be8 5.Kh7 Bd6 6.Re6.

204, B. Badai. Second solution 2.Ke2 Re7+ 3.Kd1 Sc4 4.Re6, and if 4...Rc7 then 5.Sd3 Rd7 6.Re4 b5 7.Rxc4 bxc4 8.Se5 Rc7 9.Kxd2 draws (EGTB); and if 4...Rg7 then 5.Rh6+ Kg2 6.Rh4 b5 7.Rxc4 bxc4 8.Kxd2 draws (EGTB).

EG7

224, F. Bondarenko, A.P. Kuznetsov. The final phase is dualistic. White can play 12.Sh7 (instead of 12.Sd7) Qxg6 13.f8Q+ Kxh7 14.Qxf3 Qxc2 15.Qf7+ Kh8 16.Qh5+ Kg8 17.Qxg5+.

225, G.M. Kasparyan, R. Mandinyan (HHdbIII no. 35233).

227, N. Kralin. Second solution 3.Sf5+ Kg5 4.Sbd6 f3 5.Se4+ Kg4 6.Sf2+ Kg5 7.g3.

238, A. Fred. Second solution? 2.c4+ Ka4 3.Bxa7 d1Q 4.c5, and White should win.

250, E. Janosi. No solution. 7...dxc4 is a terrible blunder. Correct is 7...Sc2+ 8.Sxc2 dxc4 with a database draw.

EG8

270, E. Pogogyants. No solution. Black wins after 2...Kd6 3.h3 Bd8. The stalemate threat is gone and Black will be able to handle wPh7.

307, Y. Zemlyanski. The transposition of moves 2.Sd4 b2 3.Sb6 b1Q 4.Sxa4 leads to the solution. It can be prevented by playing 3...Sc5, but after 4.Se2+ it is difficult to show a win for Black.

319, V. Nestorescu. HHdbIII no. 33835 gives the line 6.Sd5 Bd4 7.e3 Rc5+ 8.Ka4 Bh8 9.b4 Rc4 10.Ka5 g3 11.b5 g2 12.Sb4 g1Q, and Black wins. García improves on White's play in the following way: 7.h8Q+ Bxh8 8.Sb4 Sd3 (the only way to escape the attack on bR) 9.exd3 Rc1 10.Sd5 g3 (h3; Se3) 11.Sf4 Rc6 12.h7 g2 13.Sh3, and the draw is evident. Thus 6.Sd5 seems to be a second solution.

EG9

P. 235 no. 6, E. Janosi. Probably incorrect. After 1...Rb1 2.b6 Sd5 3.b7+ Kb8 4.Kd7 Rb6 5.Bh4 Rg6 White seems to be lost.

EG10

402, F. Bondarenko, A.P. Kuznetsov. Second solution 2.Kg1; if 2...Bxe6 then 3.a7 Bxd7 4.a8Q wins; and if 2...Bf3 then White can play as in the solution or win on the spot by playing 3.Sd4.

431, A. Tjavlovski. Probably incorrect. After 4...Ke5 5.Sf7+ Kd4 6.e5 Rh2+ 7.Kd1 b4 8.Rf3 Kd5 9.Re3 Kd4 White can hardly make any progress.

436, E. Szentai. No solution. There is no win after 1...Qe7 as Black can now capture on g5 with his queen.

446, L. Zoltan. García points out that White wins easily after (4...Kh5) 5.Rg4 (instead of 5.Rf8). Therefore I suggest that the

right move is 4...Kg5 that leads to the solution.

Pauli Perkonoja was one of the most successful composers in the sixties and seventies. Keith has recently put Perkonoja's endgame studies under the microscope. Here are some of his findings. Other claims will be reported in a later issue when I have been able to check them more thoroughly.

8.286, P. Perkonoja. No solution. The line 3...Rxd8 4.axb3 was supposed to be a win as White's aPs are now undoubled; cf. *EG8* p. 213. It turns out however to be a database draw after 4...Kb6. This was also found by García.

46.2779, P. Perkonoja. Second solution 4.Rc7 h1Q 5.Bb7+ Kb8 6.a7+ Kxa7 7.Bxc6+. In the solution White can also play 7.Be6 instead of 7.Re6 (Ulrichsen).

50.3152, P. Perkonoja. It has been known for several years that 13...Kh1 is a cook. Keith adds a new cook, viz. 7...f2 8.Sc4 Kf1.

56.3661, P. Perkonoja, V. Gerasimov. No solution. 3...Sd4 4.Ka5 a3 5.Kb4 a2 6.Kc3 Sec6 wins for Black. If 4.Ra1 then 4...Sef5 5.Rxa4 f2 wins for Black (EGTB).

77.5307, T. Amirov, P. Perkonoja. Second solution. The natural continuation 1.f6 gxf6 2.S8f7+ Kg8 3.Sf5 Rc7 4.S7h6+ Kf8 5.g7+ Rxc7 6.Sxc7 Kxc7 7.Sf5+ Kf7 (Kg6; Se7+) 8.Sd4 Kg6 9.Sc6 wins easily; if 1...Re3+ then 2.Kxb4 a2 3.f7 a1Q 4.f8Q mates.

116.9856, P. Perkonoja. Second solution 2.Rb2 Sb5 3.Rc2+ Kb7 4.Sc5+ forking king and rook. The defeat can be postponed one move by adding 2...e5. In addition Black seems to draw in the line 1...Kb7 2.Kxe7 Kc6.

This column usually contains bad news, but for once I bring good tidings.

87.6306, Yu. Bazlov. *EG126* p.172 reported the cook 1...d1Q 2.bxc5 Qf3+ 3.Ke5 Qg3+ 4.Kd5 Qxc7 with a database win. Keith has succeeded in correcting this masterpiece by moving all men one file to the left. In the analogous position that arises after 1...c1Q and

4...Qxb7 White can now play 5.Kb4, and it is a draw (EGTB).

Vol.XI.15622, M. Campioli. In *EG169* p. 59 this was deemed incorrect. The composer does not agree. He plays 8.Qe7+ instead of García's continuation 8.Qc5+ and claims a win for White after 8...Kd4 (Kf4; Qh4+) 9.Sf5+ Kd3 10.Qd6+ Kc2 11.Qxc3. White now has a decisive material advantage and although the play will still last for many moves there should be no doubt about the final outcome.

Our editor in chief has acted as section director of the *FIDE Album* 2004-2006. He has checked the endgame studies and the next entries are his findings.

129.11012, N. Mironenko. Cook 2.Ra7 Qxh7 3.Kd8+ Kg8 and now 4.Re7 e.g. Qh2 (Qh6; Se8) 5.Kd7.

158.14505, Y. Afek. Cooks 9.Reb4; 10.Reb5; 11.Reb6 (EGTB).

Vol.XI.15142, G. Costeff. Cook 10...a2 11.Be5 Sd6 12.Kb4 Kc6 13.Kb3 Kd5 14.Bg7 Ke6 15.Kxa2 Kf5 16.Kb3 Se8 17.Bf8 Sc7 18.Kc4 Se6 19.Be7 Sf4.

Vol.XI.15573, E. Kudelich, B.N. Sidorov. Cook 1...f5 2.Ke2 Ba6+ 3.c4 Sxd2 4.Bxd2+ Kg3 5.Bxe6 Bb7 6.Be1 Bf3+ 7.Kf1 Bg2+ 8.Ke2 Bf3+.

165.15955, Yu. Bazlov, V. Kovalenko. Cook 2.Kd7 Sg7 (2...Bxe7 3.Bf2 Bc5 4.Be1 Bb4 5.Kxe6 Bxc3 6.bxc3 Kb5 7.Kd5 a5 8.c4+) and now 3.Kc6 e1Q 4.Bb6+ Ka4 5.Ra3+ Kb4 6.Ba5+ Kc4 7.Bxe1 Bxe1 8.Rxa6. Incorrect: 7...Qh4+.

165.15999, V. Kalyagin, E. Kudelich. Suspect: 6...Se5+ 7.Ke3 Sg4+ 8.Kd4 Sf2 9.Kc3 Be6.

165.16000, V. Kovalenko. Cook: 2.b8Q Qg7 3.Qc8+ Ka5 4.d6 cxb3 and now 5.e6.

166.16125, Yu. Bazlov. Cook 4.Sd5 Kh4 5.Bxf3 Sxf3 6.g6 Rg3 7.Kf6 Sh2 8.g7 Sg4+ 9.Kg6 Se3+ 10.Kf7 Sf5 11.g8S; or in this line 4...Rh1 5.Sf4+ Kh4 6.Bxf3 Sxf3 7.g6.

166.16249, D. Keith. Cook in 2...Kf3 main line: 6.Sc7 Qb7 7.a8Q Qxc7+ 8.Kd4.

171.16367, S. Hornecker. In the line 2...Sd3 the composer continues 5.Qe4+, but White can also play 5.Qd5 Ka1 6.Qa5+ Kb1 7.Qd2 e4 8.Qe3 Sc1+ 9.Ka3 Sd3 10.Qxe4 Kc1(2) 11.Qc4+ Kd2 12.Ka2; if in this line 5...Sc1+ then 6.Ka3 Kc2 7.Qg2+ Kd1 8.Kxb2.

171 p. 33 P.14, F. Cassidy. Whitworth writes: “The diagram has a misleading heading. In *The Chess-Monthly*, March 1884, page 221, it was reported that the position, with an extra white pawn on e5 and the black king on d5, had occurred in actual play, that the game had been given up as drawn, but that ‘Dr Cassidy’ had shown how it could have been won. The version without the extra pawn and with the black king on f6 was given, without any heading at all, as No. 31 in Tattersall’s *A Thousand End-Games*, Volume 1, 1920.”

Observe that *Chess-Monthly* was originally written with a hyphen. The hyphen was later dropped and for the last four years of its life *Chess Monthly* is the correct title.

172.16414, J. van Reek. Cook 22.h4. The pawn endgame is drawn. Black can win wPh4 and wPh5 by advancing his f-pawn to f3, but he cannot win wPh6 without losing his f-pawn (García).

172.16417, P. Rossi. This is simply a version of an endgame study by the same composer that took part in the annual tourney in *EBUR* 2001. Spotlight’s editor acted as judge; cf. HHdbIII no. 2676.

172.16422, V. Vlasenko. No solution. Black should not hurry to play 4...c1Q. The right move is 4...c4, and after 5.Bc8 c3 6.Ke4 Black has the elegant answer 6...Bc1. Now 7.Kd3 (7.Bxc1 stalemate) Bxg5 8.Kxc2 Bf6 leads to a position in which White’s king cannot reach a6 in time (García).

172.16423, L. Katsnelson, V. Katsnelson. No solution. The position after 3.Kxf2 is simply a database draw and could have been easily spotted by consulting an EGTB (García).

172.16426, V. Vlasenko. Diagram error. wKh3 should be wKh1 (Vlasenko).

172.16430, V. Kondratiev. No solution. Black draws in the line 13...c5 by playing 14...Qb7 instead of 14.Qb6+ (García).

172.16431, A. Karin. Second solution 2.Qb6 Sb7 3.Qxb7 (García).

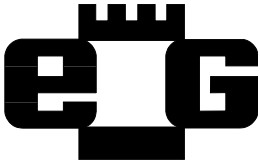
172.16438, I. Aliev. The author has found an anticipation, viz. a composition by the pawn wizard M. Zinar published in *Shakhmaty v SSSR* in 1985; cf. HHdbIII no. 17128. Aliev’s oeuvre was inspired by an endgame study by J. Moravec published in *Československý šach* in 1952; cf. HHdbIII no. 43035. Aliev improved Moravec’s position by moving wPc5 to b4.

172.16441, Kovalenko. This reminds HH of the “woosh” study by Jan van Reek, *Pionneneindspelen* 1992, correction *Schakend Nederland* 1993: a2e1 0000.66 .a3a5g6h2h3 h4c4d3d7e5e6e7 7/7 Win: 1.g7 d2 2.g8Q d1Q 3.Qg1+ Kd2 4.Qxd1+ Kxd1 5.a6 c3 6.a7 c2 7.a8Q c1Q 8.Qh1+ Kd2 9.Qxc1+ Kxc1 10.h5 e4 11.h6 e3 12.h7 e2 13.h8Q e1Q 14.Qa1+ Kd2 15.Qxe1+ Kxe1 16.a4 d5 17.a5 d4 18.a6 d3 19.a7 d2 20.a8Q d1Q 21.Qh1+ Kd2 22.Qxd1+ Kxd1 23.h4 e5 24.h5 e4 25.h6 e3 26.h7 e2 27.h8Q e1Q 28.Qa1+ Ke2 29.Qxe1+ Kxe1 30.h4 e5 31.h5 e4 32.h6 e3 33.h7 e2 34.h8Q wins.

172.16442, E. Kudelich. The moves 7.Rc7 and 8.Sxb4 can be transposed.

172.16450, V. Kalashnikov. Second solution 3.bxc4 g1Q 4.h3 Qxd4 5.Rxg4. Black cannot prevent White from building a well-known fortress with KR and Pb2 vs. KQ (García).

EG/38 p. 200 says that Anatoly Kuznetsov’s patronymic (Russian otchestvo) is Grigorevich. Answering a question posed by Siegfried Hornecker, Van der Heijden tells us that it should be Georgi(y)evich.



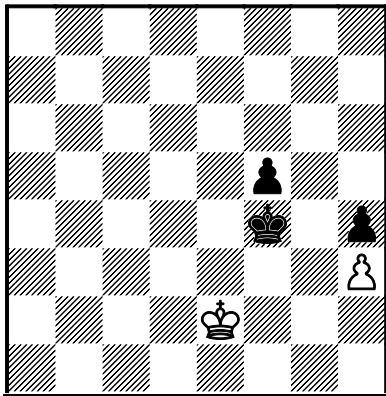
History

AN EARTHLY PAWN PASSION OR THE MASTER'S MIRACULOUS RESURRECTION

BY THE TWO SERGEIS:
S.N. TKACHENKO AND S. DIDUKH¹

[SNTk] The pawns-only endgame is a frequent guest at the otb table. With an eye to the endgame today's grandmaster aims to create flaws in his opponent's pawn structure, so as to take advantage later. However, real life has shown that the great ones of this world, wonderfully as they conduct the opening and middle game phases, not seldom commit lamentable blunders and oversights in even elementary pawn endings.

TD.1 L.Yudasin vs. V. Osnos
Leningrad 1987

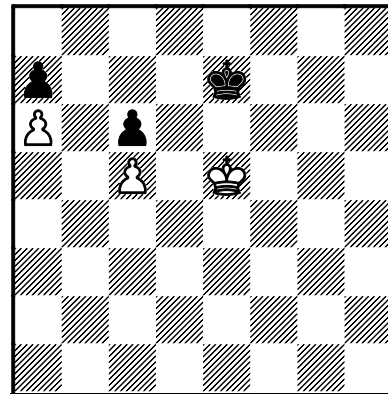


e2f4 0000.12 2/3 WTM

Yudasin took the opposition (TD.1) with **1.Kf2**, and offered a draw on the spot, with the remark that this was 'a known draw that is in all the books'. The experienced Osnos, aghast at his own ignorance, accepted. But the books tell a different story: 1...Ke4 2.Ke2 f4 3.Kf2 f3 4.Kf1 Ke5 5.Ke1 Kf5 6.Kf1 Ke4! Confronting White with triangulation. 7.Ke1 Ke3 8.Kf1 f2, and the pawn queens.

TD.2 is an amusing oddity that occurred between two players who are just as well known.

TD.2 V. Bologan vs. E. Dizdarevich
Sarajevo 2004



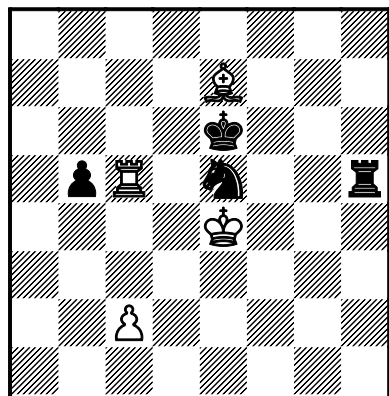
e5e7 0000.22 3/3 BTM

With the capture of bPc6 the position will resemble TD.1. OK, the positioning of the a-file pair isn't quite the same. The Bosnian IGM ignored this minor discrepancy, played **1...Ke8?? 2.Ke6**, and stopped the clocks. But here we do have the book position, with a draw by 1...Kd7! 2.Kf6 Kd8 3.Ke6 Ke8, with reciprocal zugzwang, a piece of wisdom picked up by beginners at chess school: 4.Kd6 Kd8 5.Kxc6 Kc8 6.Kd6 Kd8 7.c6 Kc8 8.c7 stalemate!

Resigning a drawn endgame (TD.3) was also the experience of the fabled Maia Chiburdanidze, costing her first place in the North Urals Cup.

1. This article was published in the Russian language in *Problemist Ukraina* 3(13) in 2007. It appears in EG for the first time in English, and with the addition of example TD.5.

TD.3 E. Skripchenko vs. M. Chiburdanidze
Krasnoturinsk 2004

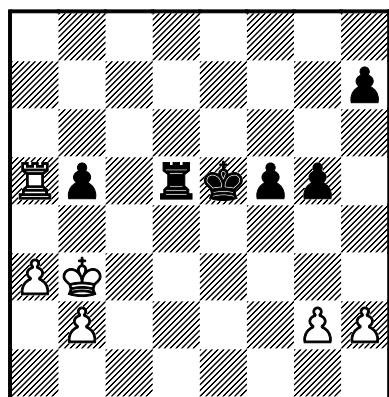


e4e6 0413.11 4/4 BTM

Having fallen into a pin Chiburdanidze plays correctly for a while by avoiding 1...Kxe7? 2.Rxe5+ Rxe5+ 3.Kxe5, when she would have lost the opposition. So: **1...b4!** **2.Rb5 Rh2 3.Rxe5+ Kd7 4.Kd3 Rh3+ 5.Re3.** Now, after the natural 5...Rxe3+ 6.Kxe3 Kxd7 7.Kd3! – the most sly! – it was good thinking to have spilt a drop of blood with 7...b3! 8.cxb3, seizing the opposition with 8...Kd7!, and equalising. But all this was irrelevant, for the ladies champion unexpectedly stopped the clocks!

With TD.4 we can cite a recent case of GM blindness in a pawn ending.

TD.4 S. Rublevsky vs. V. Zakhartsev
Championship of Russia,
Premier League, 2007



b3e5 0400.44 6/6 WTM

By playing 1.Kc3, White would have been in no danger of losing. But the longing to reach a safe drawing haven played him a mischievous trick. **1.a4?? bxa4+ 2.Kxa4 Rxa5+**

3.Kxa5 f4 4.b4 g4 5.b5 f3 6.gxf3 gxf3 7.b6 Kd6! This device, common in the studies world, to decoy the opposing king into check, did not enter the calculations of one of Russia's strongest grandmasters. The scales fell from White's eyes and he resigned, having failed to see: 8.Ka6 f2 9.b7 f1Q+. Check.

Glancing at these far from complex examples we can't help thinking of the words of Nikolai Dmitrievich Grigoriev, the master-practitioner and famed poet of the pawn endgame: Grandmasters don't like pawn endgames because they simply don't understand them!. To my mind the relevance of this remark today lies in the reluctance of players to delve into the subtleties. Devoting the lion's share of their training to openings preparation ('To reach the ending phase you have to survive that far!') a grandmaster will naively rely on solving otb endgame problems when he meets them, and not before. It is sadly the case that with the shortening of time controls such optimism, as we have seen, is misplaced.

Successful liquidation of this widespread lack of competence in pawn (and not only in pawn!) endgames can come about by solving studies. Sharp examples are not needed for honing the imagination and combinative vision: quite straightforward ones will make up for deficiencies in chess upbringing. Mark Dvoretzky, one of today's top trainers, has gone down this path. By transferring them to a file these studies become a source of nourishment for his star pupils.

Our chess world is such that, delighting in study canvases we all too often lose sight of the artists themselves. Who are they, these providers of teaching materials? What impels these chess sorcerers, these unselfish devotees, sifting the chessboard day and night in pursuit of, what, some airy chimaera? What do we know at all of their lives, of their lives' labours?

In the present essay we, the two Sergeis, hope to remedy this injustice by telling the reader about the most well known name since Grigoriev linked to pawn study ideas –

Mikhail Afanasevich Zinar. The flourishing of his creativity, almost all devoted to the end-game with pawns, lasted throughout the 15 years of the USSR's decline into history. My co-author, SD, has volunteered for the mission to display Zinar's oeuvre through the most delightful of his studies.

[SD] They do say that for a complete assessment of a man one must await his death. If this is the case the chess world has already had the opportunity on two occasions to evaluate the eminence of M.A. Zinar as a composer. The first time was in 1990 when, to everyone's surprise, Zinar 'put his affairs in order', and the second time – not so long ago – when rumours of his premature demise circulated. Praise be, Zinar is alive and well!

This joyous news has warmed the hearts of his admirers in every corner of the globe. After recognising for the second time the gigantic services to the world of chess composition made by the Ukrainian master, from everywhere there poured in urges for someone to pay a visit to the living legend, for support and contact to be maintained, and, in short, to do everything to revive his interest in composing.

Zinar composed his first study at a time when the pawn study's creative high-jump bar had been raised to its superb heights thanks to the splendid work of Nikolai Grigoriev. What a paradisaic age for chess that was! Chess literature was published in edition sizes running to many thousands. F. Bondarenko's *The Study in the Pawn Endgame*, appearing in 1973, turned out to be a priceless seedling that fell onto fertile ground. Miraculous shoots sprang up within a mere twelvemonth when *Shakhmaty v SSSR* established the debut of a 23-year-old from Feodosia named Mikhail Zinar. It was a study showing intricate play of the kings based on corresponding squares.

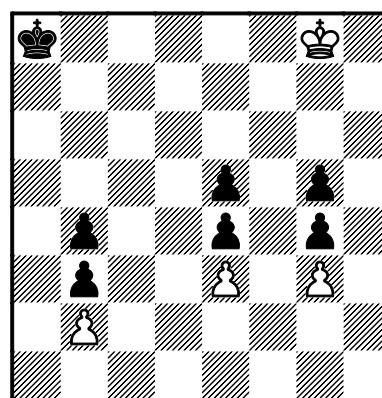
Later on Zinar returned time and again to this complex area of pawn ending play, but it was in 1983 that he expounded his special expertise in the pages of Yuri Averbakh's *Chess Endings* grand opus. (SNTk: A rare event in-

deed in the otb world for an IGM to entrust a significant part of his work to a modest candidate master!)

Right from the start of his creative activity Zinar was true to all that was best in first class work: technique of a high order combined with intriguing ideas.

TD.5 M. Zinar

Krimskaya pravda, 1975



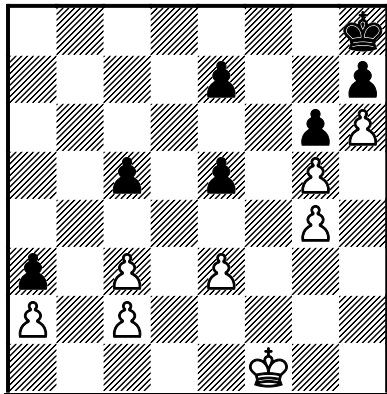
g8a8 0000.36 4/7 Win

In TD.5 White's task is to capture the black e-file pawns without allowing bK in to attack wPb2. This can be done if he can take the e4-c4 opposition. Relevant corresponding squares stretch the length of the b- and f-files. It won't do to step onto the f-file straight away, so: **1.Kg7! Ka7! 2.Kg6! Kb6!** Otherwise bPg5 will be lost. **3.Kf6!** The opposition is worth more than material gain: **3.Kxg5? Kc5 4.Kf5 Kd5**, when it is Black who is winning. **3...Kb5 4.Kf5! Kc6 5.Ke6!!** Impressive stuff! The good and sage white monarch turns his nose up at no fewer than four black pawns! **5...Kb6 6.Kd6! Kb5 7.Kd5! Kb6 8.Kxe4!**, with a win.

The surest way to surprise the chess amateur with the beauty of composition is to show him some of Zinar's pawn endings. On the most varied of types of amateur they produce a uniquely captivating effect. It could not be otherwise! The belief that nothing could be simpler than a pawn ending is exploded when their eyes pop out under the pressure of his deep and refined ideas. The sweep of the struggle in TD.6 excites – unfailingly.

TD.6 M. Zinar

special prize, *Shakhmaty v SSSR* 1977



f1h8 0000.76 8/7 Win

1.Ke2! This move must not be delayed! 1.c4? Kg8 2.Ke2 Kf7 3.Kd3 Ke6, and there is no way into Black's camp. Or 1.Ke1? c4!, putting an end to all incursions. **1...e4! 2.c4! Kg8 3.Kd2 Kf7 4.Kc3 Ke6 5.Kb3 Kd6 6.Ka4!** The pawn is not for taking: 6.Kxa3? Kc6 7.Ka4 Kb6, drawing. **6...Kc6 7.Ka5 Kc7 8.Kb5 Kd6 9.Kb6 e6 10.Kb5 Ke5! 11.Ka5(Ka6).** The 'appetiser' c5 is poisoned: 11.Kxc5 stalemate. **11...Kd6 12.Kb6 Ke5 13.Kb7! Kd6 14.Kc8 Ke5 15.Kd8! Kd6 16.Ke8 Ke5 17.Kf7 Kd6 18.Kf6!** Leaving the black footsoldiers alone has become an acquired habit: 18.Kg7? Ke7 19.Kxh7 Kf7 20.c3 e5, drawn. **18...Kd7 19.Ke5 Ke7 20.Kxe4.** At long last a pawn that can be taken has surfaced! **20...Kd6 21.Kf4!** Straight away 21.Kf3? is shown to be bad after: Ke5 22.Kd2 Ke4 23.Ke2 e5 24.Kf2, the second black stalemate! 21.c3? is also to be avoided. To come to the point, White might surely have moved his cP earlier, but as we shall in due course see it must be left in its starting blocks. **21...e5+ 22.Ke4 Ke6 23.Kd3 Kd6 24.Kc3.** wK's Mediterranean cruise has lasted 20 moves. But staying put will get him nowhere. Accounts must be settled with bPa3. **24...Kc6 25.Kb3 Kb6 26.Kxa3 Ka5 27.Kb3 e4 28.Ka3 Kb6 29.Kb2!** So as to knock bK off balance with his next. **29...Ka5 30.Kb3! Ka6 31.Kc3 Ka5 32.Kd2 Kb4 33.Ke2 Ka3.** If 33...Kxc4 a quick decision results from: 34.Kd2 Kb4 35.a3+ Kxa3 36.Kc3 winning. **34.Kf2 Kxa2 35.Kg3 Kb2 36.Kf4 Kxc2.** Had wP stood on

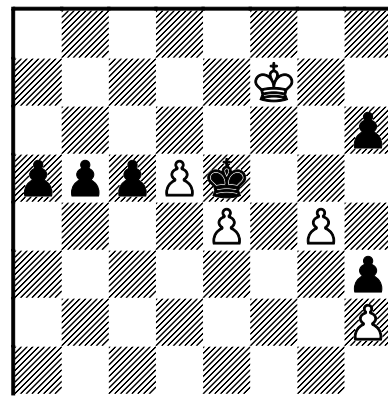
c3 Black would not have lost a crucial tempo! **37.Kxe4 Kc3 38.Kd5.** Victory!

Such a gigantic contest with a royal progress over the whole board, a threefold refusal to capture, and two midboard stalemates! Even if a person could withstand such an aesthetic assault on his senses, there is nonetheless no doubt at all that he would be won over by the single fact that the outcome hangs on one skinflint tempo hoarded by White to the very end!

Record ideas fell into Zinar's lap with astonishing ease! Looking at the natural pawn setting of TD.7 it is hard to believe that a task lies hidden there.

TD.7 M. Zinar

special prize, *L'Italia Scacchistica* 1982



f7e5 0000.45 5/6 Win

Tempting as it is to support the d-pawn's advance, it doesn't work: 1.Ke7?! c4! 2.g5. Too late. 2...c3 3.gxh6 c2 4.h7 c1Q 5.h8Q+ Kxe4 6.d6 Qc5 7.Qh4+ Kd3 8.Qxh3+ Kc2, and Black makes a draw.

1.g5! The g5 square will be needed by a future wQ. **1...hgx5 2.Ke7,** and no fewer than five variations sprout from this node:

- a4 3.d6 a3 4.d7 a2 5.d8Q a1Q 6.Qh8+, or
- b4 3.d6 b3 4.d7 b2 5.d8Q b1Q 6.Qd6+ Kxe4 7.Qg6+, or
- c4 3.d6 c3 4.d7 c2 5.d8Q c1Q 6.Qd5+ Kf4 7.Qf5+ Ke3 8.Qxg5+, or
- g4 3.d6 g3 4.d7, and:
 - gxh2 5.d8Q h1Q 6.Qd6+ Kxe4 7.Qc6+, or
 - g2 5.d8Q g1Q 6.Qd5+ Kf4 7.Qf5+ Ke3 8.Qxc5+.

It is all so beautiful and so simple! Every pawn plays its part, the second and fourth lines show symmetry, as do the third and fifth. A superb creative achievement with an elegant logical introduction.

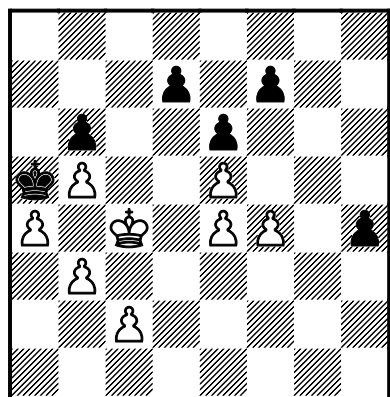
(SNTk: It is unfortunate that in the 1.Ke7?! try all is not so smooth. It is clear that after 8.Qxh3+ Kc2, Black must still fight for equality – wPd6 is extremely dangerous. There is a long analytical variation introducing a dissonance into the study's basic idea. I think that this weakness lay behind Zinar's suppression of the first move when this study was reproduced: wPg4 was removed, and bPPh3h6 were replaced by bPPh4g5 respectively.)

From what Zinar tells us this study was composed in 1977 at the same time as another composition showing the win of six queens. Sadly, this suffered from duals, so the record stays with TD.7.

TD.8 is probably the best known of all Zinar's studies.

TD.8 M. Zinar

1st special commendation,
Shakhmaty v SSSR 1980



c4a5 0000.75 8/6 Win

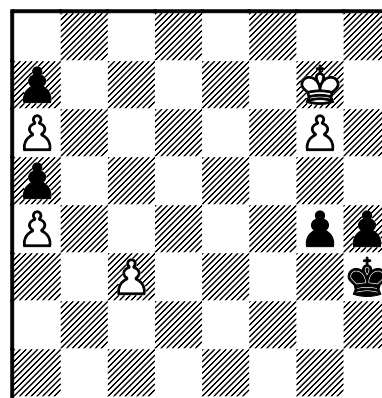
Seeing that bPh4 cannot be stopped, the similarity with the well known Réti manoeuvre is clear. But we see not prepared for a real miracle. **1.Kc3 h3 2.Kb2!!** Is the king abandoning the chase? On the contrary, he's tensing his muscles! **2...Kb4.** Or 2...h2 3.Ka3 h1Q 4.b4 mate the first. **3.c3+ Kc5 4.Kc2 d5.** Or 4...h2 5.Kd3 h1Q 6.b4 mate the second. **5.Kd3.** Not 5.exd5? exd5 6.Kd3 d4! **5...dxe4+ 6.Kxe4 h2.** After 6...f6 wK reins in the runa-

way: 7.Kf3 h2 8.Kg2. Can you believe this, looking at the diagram? **7.Kd3 h1Q 8.b4+ Kd5 9.c4** mate the third. A blood-curdling duel with three injections of checkmate.

It is hard to overestimate Mikhail Afanasievich's achievements in the realm of successive underpromotions. The starting pistol for this phase of his career was the publication of TD.9, in which for the first time in a pawn study there are two underpromotions to rook.

A.9 M. Zinar

3rd prize, *Bulletin of Central Chess Club of USSR* 1978



g7h3 0000.44 5/5 Win

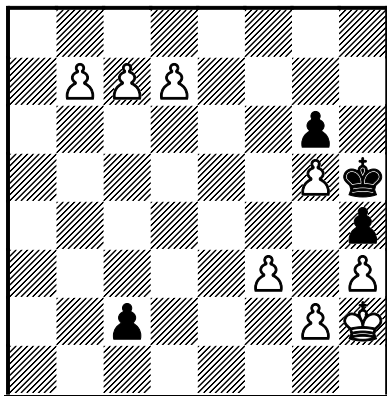
1.Kh6! g3 2.g7 g2 3.g8R! Not 3.g8Q? g1Q 4.Qxg1 stalemate. **3...Kh2 4.Kh5 h3 5.Kh4 g1Q 6.Rxg1 Kxg1 7.Kxh3 Kf2 8.c4 Ke3 9.c5 Kd4 10.c6 Kc5 11.c7 Kb6 12.c8R!** winning. 12.c8Q? is stalemate.

[SNTk] Two R-promotions in an 'almost' pawns study had been done by Vladimir Bron in 1930. Why 'almost'? The point is that in order to carry out his idea the future composition IGM had to call on the services of a bQ, which White ruthlessly gobbles up on the second move.

[SD] The interest in underpromotions stimulated by TD.9 was no laughing matter. Many authors entered the P-ending underpromotion lists. But the principal instigator was not to be left behind. Zinar assiduously updated the chess world with his finds: in 1983 there was the first synthesis of successive underpromotion to achromatic bishops; in 1986, to knight and bishop; in 1988 to a pair of monochromatic bishops; and in 1990, to rook and knight in

a study to win. The attempt in 1988 at triple underpromotions to rook failed to survive close analytic scrutiny. Luckily in 1988 this fantastic idea was rescued by A.Davranyan. But saving a study with four-fold underpromotion to knight has so far eluded everyone's grasp. To tell the truth this idea has extracted a vow of loyalty from the pawns wizard and awaits his return to the composing fray. But all are charmed by the TD.10 'shortie'.

TD.10 M. Zinar
special honourable mention,
Shakhmaty v SSSR 1983



h2h5 0000.73 8/4 BTM, Win

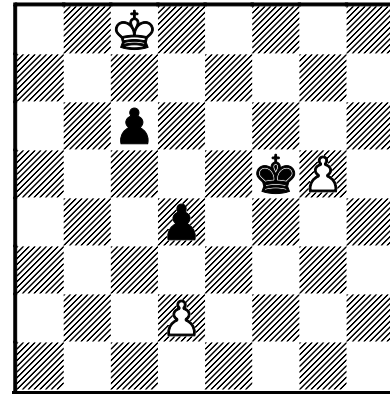
1...c1Q 2.c8R! If 2.c8Q? Qf4+ 3.Kh1 Qc1+ 4.Qxc1 stalemate. **2...Qb2 3.b8B!** If 3.b8Q? Qe5+ 4.Qxe5 stalemate. **3...Qd4**, hoping for 4.d8S? Qxd8 drawing, but: **4.d8R** wins. Not one of the three white pawns on the seventh rank actually queens!

I respectfully doff my hat to the skill of Mikhail Afanasevich in ferreting out artistic subtleties in known theoretical positions. With special felicity he dredged the Q vs. cP end-game, as in TD.11 (also TD.12 and TD.15).

From the very start vigilance is the watchword. **1.Kb7!** Naturally not 1.d3? Kxg5 2.Kc7 Kf4 3.Kxc6 Ke3. **1...c5 2.d3.** With wKc7 or wKd7, then after 2...c4 he would either obstruct his pawn or be subjected to check by a promoted bP. **2...Kg6!** Holding wPg5 hostage. **3.Ka7!!** Black's calculations included only 3.Kb6 c4 4.dxc4 d3 5.c5 d2 6.c6 d1Q 7.c7 Qd7 8.Kb7 Kf5, when Black would win. **3...Kf7.** If instead 3...Kg5 4.Kb6 draws, or if 3...c4 4.dxc4 d3 5.c5 d2 6.c6 d1Q 7.c7 Qd7

8.Kb8, when Black lacks just one tempo to rejuvenate his pawn. **4.g6+! Kg8 5.g7! Kxg7 6.Kb6(Ka6) c4 7.dxc4 d3 8.c5 d2 9.c6 d1Q 10.c7 Qd7 11.Kb7 Kf6 12.Kb8**, when bK is one step away from the winning zone.

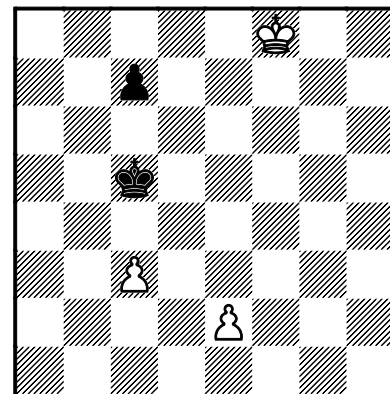
TD.11 M. Zinar
2nd prize, Moscow tourney, 1983



c8f5 0000.22 3/3 Draw

The play in TD.12 is set by a reciprocal zugzwang linked to a well known theoretical draw where the queen cannot cope with a pawn on the third rank.

TD.12 M. Zinar
1st special prize, *Shakhmaty v SSSR* 1981



f8c5 0000.21 3/2 Win

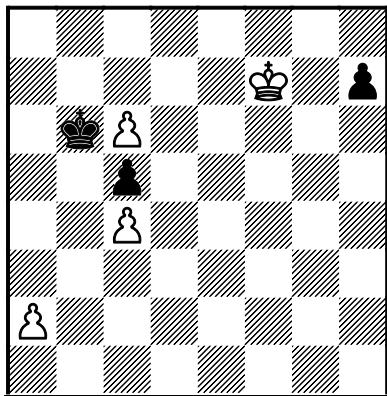
1.Kg7!! You're a hero if you found this move by yourself – you'll have thrown down the gauntlet to a grandmaster of the first rank! After 1.Kf7?! Kd5, White is in zugzwang: 2.Kf6 (Kg6, Ke4;) Kc4! 3.e4 Kxc3 4.e5 c5 5.e6 c4 6.e7 Kd2! 7.e8Q c3, with our theoretical draw. No better: 1.Ke7? Kc4, and 2.Ke6 Kxc3 3.Kd5 Kb4! 4.e4 c5, with mirrored marches, or 2.e4 Kxc3 3.e5 c5 4.Kd6 c4 5.e6 Kb2 6.e7 c3 7.e8Q c2. **1...Kd5 2.Kf7!**, and

zugzwang afflicts Black. **2...Ke5**. Even less satisfactory is **2...c6 3.Ke7!** or **2...Kc4 3.e4 c5 4.e5 Kxc3 5.e6 c4 6.e7 Kd2 7.e8Q c3 8.Qd8+ Kc1 9.Qg5+!**, the diagonal being unobstructed! **3.Ke7(Ke8) Kd5 4.Kd7 Kc4 5.Kc6!** It would be careless to play **5.e4? Kxc3 6.e5 c5**, flanking the win because wK is in wQ's way. **5...Kxc3 6.Kc5!** winning. A study in the classic mould!

The Crimean master's virtuoso technique and outstanding fantasy have yielded a rich harvest of high class studies. In the course of the 15 years from 1976 to 1990 he produced around 200 original compositions (that is, not counting versions and corrections). On top of that his oeuvre was confined within the narrow limits of pawn specialisation, at that time deemed more or less explored! Despite this, one manufactured article after another, each more beautiful than the last, emerged from the great study composer's workshop: shining ideas harmoniously assembled and clothed with elegance.

TD.13 M. Zinar

1st prize, *64-Shakhmatnoe obozrenie* 1982



f7b6 0000.32 4/3 Draw

1.Kg7! A 'feint' worthy of Réti or Sarychev! It is hard to reject the knee-jerk **1.Kf6? Kxc6 2.Kg5**, but after **2...Kb6 3.Kh6 Ka5 4.Kxh7 Kb4 5.Kg6 Kxc4 6.Kf5 Kc3 7.Ke5 c4 8.a4 Kb4**, when Black wins. **1...h5 2.Kf6 h4 3.Ke5 Kxc6 4.Kf4 Kb6 5.Kg4 Ka5 6.Kxh4 Kb4**. The sole difference from the try lies in wK being on h4 instead of on h7. As they say in Odessa, 'two big differences'. But the route to a safe haven is sown with mines. **7.Kg3! Kxc4 8.Kf2!** It is the square f3 that is

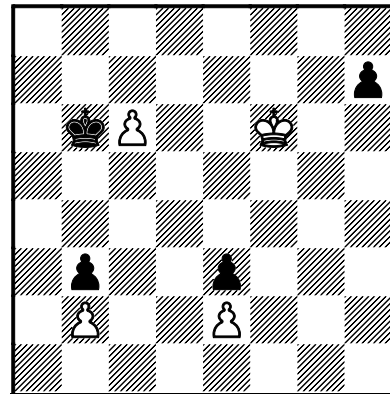
mined: **8.Kf3? Kd3 9.a4 c4 10.a5 c3 11.a6 c2 12.a7 c1Q 13.a8Q Qh1+**, winning for Black. **8...Kc3 9.Ke2!** picking his way between the 'chcking' squares e1 and e3. **9...c4 10.a4** – drawn. Staggering for a miniature!

For years and years nothing approached the astounding expressiveness of the Réti or Sarychev 'feint' moves, in other words a pointed royal shrug losing two whole tempi. Until, that is, the year 1984.

TD.14 M. Zinar

special commendation,

Shakhmaty v SSSR 1984



f6b6 0000.33 4/4 Draw

1.Kg7!! The natural **1.Kg5?** loses: **Kxc6 2.Kh6 Kd5 3.Kxh7 Ke5 4.Kg6 Kf4** and so on. **1...h5 2.Kf6! h4 3.Ke5 h3 (Kxc6? Kf4) 4.Kd6**, drawing. Laconic genius!

I am not acquainted with Mikhail Afanasevich Zinar in person. But I had read and re-read his book *The harmony of the pawn end-game* co-authored with the late V.M. Archakov many times, even before I composed my first study. Seeing that I possessed no other book on composition it is readily understandable if such remote tutoring exercised a formative influence. Dear Mikhail Afanasevich, please accept the heartfelt thanks of an unknown pupil and ardent fan of your talent. May pawns once more reveal to you their innermost secrets!

[SNTk] With a smooth baton transfer from Sergei Didukh I shall now share with the reader memories of my own encounter with Mikhail Afanasevich Zinar.

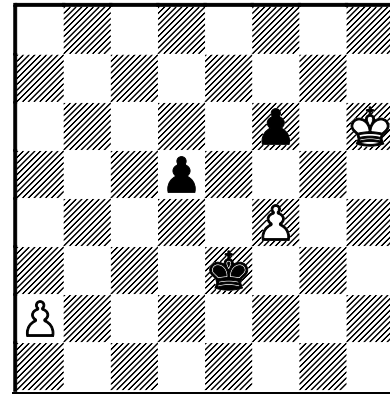
Setting out on the studies path at the latter end of the 1970s I was bewitched by Richard Réti's brilliant pawn bravado and the wonderful works of the Soviet master Nikolai Grigoriev. As it then seemed to me, after such miraculous studies how was it possible to find anything new and original to say in such a restricted sub-domain of the chess art as the ending with pawns? But then up over the horizon sprang the Mikhail Zinar star. This man re-ploughed the pawn study field, in all directions, to yield entirely fresh beauties and nuances. (It is curiously symbolic that his date of birth – 9v1951 – coincides with Victory Day celebrated in the Soviet Union!)

My eyes opened particularly wide at the winning study, pawns only, in the anniversary tourney marking 1500 years of the Ukrainian capital Kiev. At that time I was a student at the Kiev Polytechnic Institute, and from time to time turned up at the evenings bringing together the capital's lovers of the poetry of chess. At one such gathering Vladimir Mikhailovich Archakov, organiser of the anniversary tourney, told the assembled company that about 80 studies from every corner of the Soviet Union had been received. I was fascinated to know who would have been victorious on such a mighty study battlefield. Favourites mentioned were entries from E. Pogosyants, G. Nadareishvili, Al.P. Kuznetsov, V. Dolgov, L. Mitrofanov. But all these renowned masters of mixed piece configurations had to make way for a first grader from Feodosia named Mikhail Zinar with an advocacy of the narrow pawn band of the chess spectrum. (The title of USSR Master of Sport, the next step up from candidate, was awarded in 1986 for a third place in the 16th Individual Championship, for which studies in the 1981-82 period were valid.) Sharing first and second places with the glorious Leopold Mitrofanov, Zinar demonstrated in this event that the pawn ending was not ripe for consigning to the archives.

1.a4 Kd4 2.Kh5!! White loses out in a hand-to-hand confrontation: **2.Kg6?** Kc5 **3.Kxf6** d4, when White loses the treacherous

TD.15 M. Zinar

1st/2nd prize, Kiev 1500 AT, 1982



h6e3 0000.22 3/3 Draw

a-pawn. A wait-and-see strategy fares no better: **2.f5?** Kc5! **3.Kh5** d4 **4.Kg4** d3 **5.Kf3** Kd4 **6.a5** Kc3 **7.a6** d2, and Black promotes with check. **2...f5!** This is more sly than **2...Kc4** **3.a5!** Kb5 **4.Kg4** Kxa5 **5.Kf5!** Kb4 **6.Kxf6** with equality. **3.Kh4!!** Fantastic self-restraint! The 'provoked' **3.Kg5?** loses: Kc5! **4.Kxf5** d4 **5.Ke4** Kc4 **6.a5** d3 **7.Ke3** Kc3 **8.a6** d2 **9.a7** d1Q **10.a8Q** Qe1+ **11.Kf3** Qh1+, winning wQ on the diagonal, or, in this, **6.f5** d3 **7.Ke3** Kc3 **8.f6** d2 **9.f7** d1Q **10.f8Q** Qe1+ **11.Kf3** Qf1+, inflicting the same punishment on the file. Study within a study! **3...Kc5** **4.Kg3** Kb4 **5.Kf3(Kf2)** Kxa4 **6.Ke3** Kb5 **7.Kd4** Kc6 **8.Ke5!** Making his way to the pawn by a diversionary route. **8...Kc5** **9.Kxf5** d4 **10.Kg6!** d3 **11.f5** d2 **12.f6** d1Q **13.f7**, now a theory draw.

Who can remain unimpressed by this 'bypass': **Kh6-h5-h4-g3-f3-e3-d4-e5-xf5?** Eight moves instead of two! How improbable it is that tempi, so important in everyday chess, should be so fatal. A consequence was inclusion in the *FIDE Album 1980-1982*.

Can one learn more about the man from a photo? Devotees of extra-sensory perception claim practically 'everything'. OK, but what would they say about the character waving his wand over the chessboard in the full swing of the 1989 All-Union congress of chess composition in Moscow? (Sitting next to Zinar is Vazha Neidze. Behind him is Oleg Efrosinin. Father off: Yakov Rossomakho and Nikolai

mentary formalities was disturbed by a thunderbolt! The examination of my data in connection with prison convictions brought to light the fact that at that moment I happened to be on the list of highly dangerous criminals! According to police records it emerged that Tkachenko (Sergei Nikolaevich), born in Odessa region on 26th January 1963, on more than one occasion stole a car of foreign origin! The procurator in charge of the investigation operated out of the town of Ananev to the north of Odessa region, where the above-named comrade had perpetrated his criminal acts. All the data about the wanted criminal fully corresponded to what was on my completed questionnaire, so it looked more than likely that I would be spending the next few days in custody pending clarification of this monstrous misunderstanding. By good fortune one of the officials of the Odessa investigation department was well known to me, and, happening upon this breach of administrative protocol made a phone call to the Ananev procurator with regard to suspicion of guilt. My wife's brother raised the alarm and took the freshly-fledged recidivist in his car to the 'confessional box'. I shall long remember how the local procurator reacted to my sudden appearance. A grimace of satisfaction in anticipation of the apprehension of arresting a dangerous criminal changed on the spot into utter disappointment! To have snaffled a big fish at small expense to his department only for it to be snatched from his grasp! It turned out that the bandit, all of whose personal data – surname, first name, patronymic, year, date and place of birth – completely corresponded to my own, was active in Odessa. An unheard of event in the world of jurisprudence. [Might it not have been a case of stolen identity? AJR]

On the way back to Odessa I made a détour to the village of Gvozdavka, which lay some kilometres from Ananev. Anatoly Georgievich Kuznetsov's information was that Mikhail Afanasevich Zinar had moved there from the Crimea. At that time Mikhail had practically withdrawn from study composing (since 1990

only one study of his had been published), and, besides making his personal acquaintance I hoped to discover the reason for such prolonged abstinence. Having found, with the help of a communicative villager, the house where Zinar was living, I was informed that "Afanasevich is at lessons just now." So I waited for the house-owner's home-coming from the school where he was engaged in imparting 'labour discipline'. I introduced myself and transmitted the warmest of greetings from study colleagues. It became clear that our encounter cheered my new companion up, stirring up study memories.



A spread was quickly set up before us. Zinar told me that the chief reason for his hurried exit from study work was not a dearth of pawn study ideas but the rigours of humdrum existence. Already before the Soviet Union's collapse problems arose at work and accommodation in the Crimea. Sadly, this was also the case in his new residence of Gvozdavka, where all was not plain sailing: the village school paid veritable peanuts, so he was

obliged to look for sources of extra income if his family were to be fed. But finding work that paid in an impoverished village was impossible. Supplementary income came from raising geese, chickens and sucking-pigs, on which Mikhail spent all the 'free' time left after his school work was done. Living under such conditions, it was hardly possible to dump housekeeping chores to spend time at the chessboard following up study novelties and entering tourneys... Even postal expenses were incompatible with bucolic survival. It was scarcely possible to make something worthwhile in these circumstances, and to churn out second-class imitations was not on. What does the bottom line of our insubstantial art need from him? Maybe just to survive... was how my new companion summed it all up. I did my best to convince Mikhail that these were the temporary difficulties of a young state, that all would turn out for the best, and so on. As a last argument for not deserting the chess arena I told him about the creation in Odessa of the 'Black Sea' [T*™] association of chess composers, one of whose aims was the material support of chess talent. Among its plans were the publication of a magazine 'The Problemist of the South' [T*] for the poetry of chess. There was substantial financial backing, behind which was a great enthusiast for chess, and that included chess composition. I also talked about the preparations of the Ukrainian team for the 5WCCT, and about the imminent memorial tourney in honour of the pawn master Nikolai Grigoriev...

My optimism, boosted by one glass after another of homemade wine (according to my driver some six litres of this auspicious beverage were consumed), all but transmitted itself to mine host. Having retrieved a dusty chessboard from the attic, Mikhail rehearsed some interesting schemas for future studies with pawns. It was clear that the passion for pawns still excited the hermit of Gvozdavka! I was not to be left behind and in turn showed off a couple of new pieces of my own. Unnoticed, the evening crept up on us, so with a feeling of

a duty towards the studies community accomplished I set off back to Odessa. As a memento of that meeting I now have the gift of a copy of *The Harmony of the Pawn Study* presented to me by Mikhail, with his autographed dedication. (I can reveal a little secret. From beginning to end this book was written by Mikhail Zinar. But how was it to be published? The well-connected Archakov knew people in the publishing world and came to his aid – at the cost of Zinar's sole authorship.)

A few months later, finding myself in Moscow on business, I had a meeting with Anatoly Georgievich Kuznetsov and told the maestro that Zinar was 'alive and well and ready with new things for publication!' Right away the Moscow maestro penned a missive to Gvozdavka with an invitation to judge the contemplated pawns tourney.

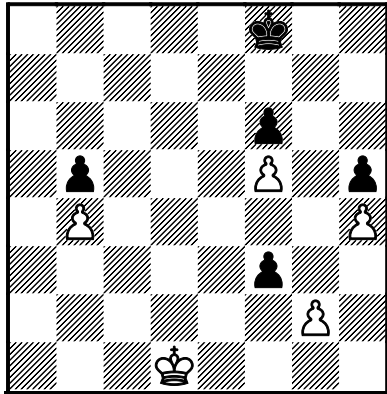
'If you want to make the gods laugh, just make plans.' Sad to say, life put a spoke our wheel of optimism. A local war broke out in Odessa between candidates for the post of governor, impacting even chess composition. Our chess benefactor, having supported the disgraced town mayor, was compelled to emigrate. Along with his exit the whole programme of development and sponsorship of chess composition folded. For a while I endeavoured to revive the project which had had such a promising start. But it was not to be ... At the end of 1997 I was forced to lie on my back in hospital with an aggravated skin complaint. Denuded of financial means the 'Problemist of the South' magazine simply faded away, and soon the association as well...

The most recent news of Zinar dates from 2000. The director of the Odessa Chess School of Olympic reserve [apparently a system for talent-spotting. AJR] advised me that he had met Mikhail Afanasevich and acquired from him a library of chess books and magazines. That year was the last in which Zinar has published a study (TD.17). I suspect that Mikhail composed this on the 6.WCCT theme – Refusal to capture based on win (or loss) of a tempo. Alas, none of the masters could achieve this specific thematic requirement

with pawns. At the last moment a rule clarification proclaimed that the theme had to be achieved with a piece, and not with a pawn....

TD.17 M. Zinar

64-Shakhmatnoe obozrenie 2000



d1f8 0000.44 5/5 Win

1.g3! Clearly the black pawn must not be taken. After 1.gxf3? bK can hover between squares d6 and c6, after which White has no way to strengthen his position. Now Black is deprived of this possibility because wK captures bPf3 and at the proper moment rams the opponent's position with g3-g4. **1...Ke7 2.Ke1!!** Black exults after the seemingly logical 2.Kd2? Kd6 3.Kd3! Kd5! 4.Ke3 Ke5zz 5.Kxf3 Kxf5 6.g4+ hxg4 7.Kg3 Ke4 8.Kxg4 (h5, Kf5;) f5+ 9.Kg3 Ke3, with a clearly level game. **2...Kd6 3.Kf2 Ke5 4.Ke3!zz** Black's turn! **4...f2 5.Kxf2 Ke4 6.Ke2! Ke5 7.Ke3! Kxf5 8.Kf3**, and we are by now familiar with this BTM set-up. **8...Ke5 9.g4 hxg4+ 10.Kxg4 Ke4** (f5+; Kf3!) **11.h5 f5+ 12.Kh3**, cutting off bP's threatened march and winning.

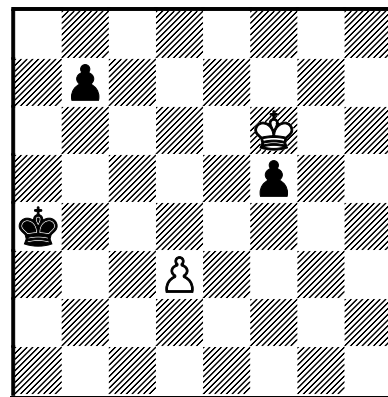
A nicely stitched together study, with small pretensions to originality. But what right had we to expect more after such a long lay-off?

Sad to say, there have been no more pawn revelations for the chess world from Zinar... In fact, no chess output at all – the keenly hoped for return to collaboration with Anatoly Kuznetsov never took place, the latter's earthly journey coming to an abrupt end in 2000. And shortly after that the bitter news reached me that Mikhail Zinar too had slipped into Eternity in the the Moscow master's wake.

To write that the pawn study has been orphaned by Zinar's departure would be to distort the truth. With Zinar's creative full stop the pawn study practically died the death itself! Rare work by individual authors failed to bring the wished for creative spurt to this twig, for we got instead things that were essentially reworks of known ideas. What I remember from this period is just one memorable pawn opus, the work of the Moscow international GM (TD.18).

TD.18 O.Pervakov

1st prize, 64-Shakhmatnoe obozrevie 2000



f6a4 0000.12 2/3 Draw

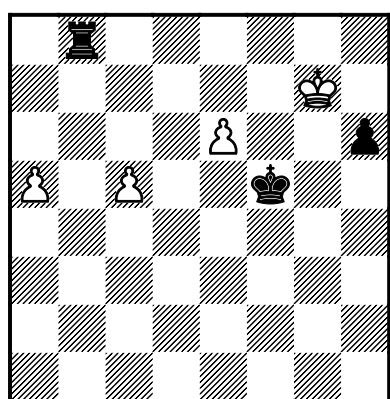
dP's take-off pursuit of the promotion prize simply won't do: 1.d4? f4 2.d5 f3 3.d6 f2 4.d7 f1Q+, Ah! It's check! And no better is 1.Kxf5? b5 2.d4 b4 3.d5 b3 4.d6 b2 5.d7 b1Q+, that check again! Maybe it's more attractive to try: 1.Ke5? b5 2.d4 b4 3.d5 b3 4.d6 b2 5.d7 b1Q 6.d8Q, but then comes 6...Qe4+! 7.Kf6 Qh4+, when wQ falls to a sniper's diagonal.

The move that saves the day is the obscure **1.Kg5!! b5 2.d4 b4 3.d5 Kb5 4.d6!** Not 4.Kf6? tempting though it is: Kc5 5.Ke6 b3 6.d6 b2 7.d7 b1Q 8.d8Q Qe4+ 9.Kf7 Qe4+, and curtains. **4...Kc6 5.Kxf5**, and the Réti mechanism gets to work: **5...Kxd6 6.Ke4**, halting the pawn, or 5...b3 6.Ke6 b2 7.d7, with mutual ennoblement. And Réti triumphs again in the line **1...Kb4 2.Kxf5 Kc3 3.Ke5!**, for after **3...Kxd3** just the same fate awaits this bP: **4.Kd5 b5 5.Kc5**. The alternative is to concede an echo-march to the eighth with **3...b5 4.d4 b4 5.d5**, which clearly will not be enough to win. Two Réti manoeuvres in a maljutka!

Sadly we have seen no other pawn spectacles since Zinar's time. Should we conclude from this that the pawn ending is for practical purposes exhausted? I leave the question open... But even if this is the case we must not simply bury it. In my view there are good prospects for the pawn ending in synthesis with pieces as makeweights. An example will clarify. (TD.19)

TD.19 E. Kolesnikov

1st prize, *Shakhmatny vestnik* 1993



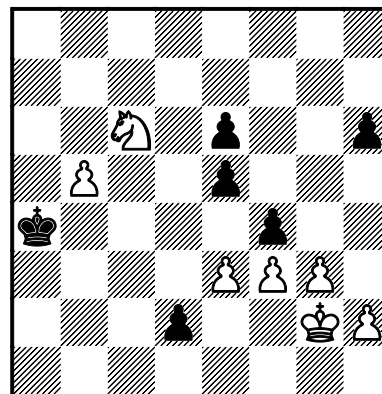
g7f5 0300.31 4/3 Draw

1.Kf7! Rh8! 2.e7 Rh7+ 3.Kf8 Kf6 4.e8S+!, avoiding mate-in-1 and ready for 4...Ke6 5.Sg7+ Kd5 with rook-win after 6.Kg8 Rxc7 7.Kxc7 h5 8.a6 Kc6 9.Kf7 h4 10.Ke7 h3 11.a7, equalising. The alternative is no improvement: 4...Kg6 5.c6 Ra7 6.c7 Ra8 7.Ke7 h5 8.Kf6 h4 9.Sg4, with the same outcome. **4...Ke5!** The most cunning! The point is that there is no sense in White playing 5.Sg7? h5! 8.a6 h4 7.a7 Rh8+. **5.c6! Rh8+ 6.Ke7 Rxe8+!** Well may we ask what White gains by this line. After the obvious 7.Kxe8 Kd6 8.Kd8 Kxc6 9.Kc8 h5! 10.Kb8 Kb5 11.Kb7 Kxa5 12.Kc6 h4, wK is in no state to overhaul the black infantry. Eureka!! **7.Kd7!! Kd5.** 7...Rh8 8.c7 Rh7+ 9.Kc6! drawn. **8.c7 Rh8 9.c8Q Rxc8 10.Kxc8 Kc6! 11.Kb8! Kb5 12.Kb7! Kxa5 13.Kc6! h5 14.Kd5**, applying tempo upon tempo to infiltrate the hP's quadrant. The familiar 'Réti-Prokeš' manoeuvre became an option due to non-capture of bR on move 7! The logical elaboration of the classic idea is clear as crystal.

And here (TD.20) is a fresh example from the work of my co-author on this article's theme.

TD.20 S. Didukh

EG 2005 (correction 2007)



g2a4 0001.55 7/6 Draw

1.b6 d1Q 2.b7 Qe2+. No better is either: 2...Qc2+ 3.Kh3 Qxc6 4.b8Q Qxf3 5.exf4 e4 6.Qb7, or 2...fxe3 3.b8Q Qd2+ 4.Kh3 e2 5.Sxe5, equalising in both cases. **3.Kh3 Qf1+ 4.Kh4!!** But why not play closer to the centre? 4.Kg4? Qb5 5.b8Q Qxb8 6.Sxb8 fxe3 7.Sd7 e2 8.Sc5+ Kb4 9.Sd3+ Kc3 10.Se1 Kd2 11.Sg2 e1Q 12.Sxe1 Kxe1 13.Kh3. A surprise is in store for White here: 13...Kf1!! 14.g4 Kf2!zz 15.g5 hxg5 16.Kg4 Kg2 17.Kxg5 Kxf3 18.h4 e4 19.h5 e3 20.h6 e2 21.h7 e1Q 22.h8Q Qg1+ 23.Kf6 Qd4+, picking off bQ on the diagonal. **4...Qb5 5.b8Q Qxb8 6.Sxb8 fxe3 7.Sd7 e2 8.Sc5+ Kb4 9.Sd3+ Kc3 10.Se1 Kd2 11.Sg2 e1Q 12.Sxe1 Kxe1 13.g4! Kf2** – otherwise 13.Kg3 – **14.Kh3zz** – White gloats – **14...Kxf3 15.g5! h5 stalemate!** This spine-tingling stalemate is possible thanks to avoidance of a bQ check on move four!

The idea for this article came to me after an interesting interchange with Didukh. In one of his letters Seryozha asked me what I knew of Zinar's fate. In reply I told my namesake of the pawn maestro's demise, and suggested to my colleague that we write something together about his life and work. To learn the precise facts I telephoned the local Gvozdavka administration. The colourful Ukrainian voice on the wire informed me that... Mikhail Afanasevich Zinar was alive and 'teaching at the school'!

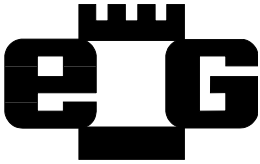
(I retain the original.) I remember insisting the other end of the wire three times, almost dumbstruck as I was by this so heartening piece of news. (One recalls Mark Twain's 'The report of my death is an exaggeration'. [Closer to home, Troitzky's death was prematurely announced in post-revolutionary years. AJR].) On having this fantastic resurrection confirmed I at once told my co-author. The response was salvo-like "That's great news! Extraordinary! Uplifting! Now I can get down to the article with redoubled energy. I have gone through The Harmony of the Pawn Study yet again. The studies are now chosen. I think that I'll be done in a couple of days, and then I'll send you the revision. Your tale will fascinate Everyone. Many people were interested in Zinar's fate after I had told them on the Internet

of his recent death. We can properly sum up a person's life only after he has passed on. We set up statues to the departed, and we even call factories and steamboats after them." Well, to express a little of our recognition and admiration while the man is still alive... Without such self-effacing zealots the world of chess would lose its fascination, its charm, its magic. Mikhail Afanasevich, we thank you for the sunshine of your studies! And there's something else ... come back to us!! The pawn study languishes without you. That is not why the Lord God has restored you to the chess world.

Lviv region, and Odessa
2007



S.N. Tkachenko (2007)



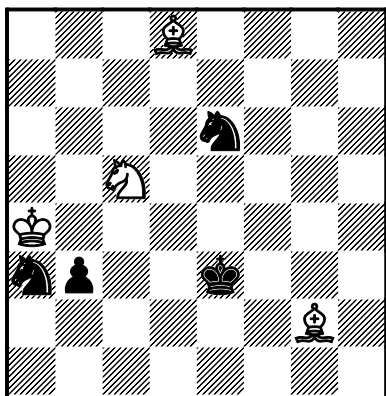
Prizewinners explained

YOCHANAN AFEK

Exactly a year ago Oleg Pervakov published here his first thematic article "Let's go to the corner" introducing a selection of stunning and somewhat paradoxical moves to one or more of the four remotest squares on the chessboard. Oleg himself was meanwhile involved in a major event whose mighty award displays, among others, two more brilliancies with the maximal form of the same motive.

The well known Russian trainer **Mark Dvoretsky** is a great fan of our art which has regularly provided him with innumerable lively free items for his famous card-index and many books as well as for his training sessions at all levels. That is why he chose to give something in return and to celebrate his own 60th birthday by organizing a composition tourney with a generous prize fund. Mark was assisted by Oleg with whom he collaborated in judging this both quantitatively and qualitatively outstanding event.

A.1 N. Rezvov & S.N. Tkachenko
1st prize Dvoretsky 60 JT 2007



a4e3 0027.01a4e3 4/4 Win

1.Bf6 The pawn must be stopped since after 1.Sxe6? b2 2.Bg5+ Kf2 a drawish queen vs. three minor pieces ending pops up. **1...b2!**

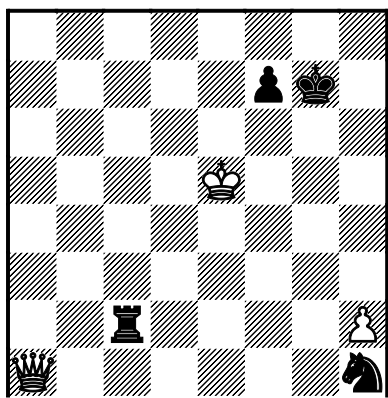
Knight tempo moves are the only hope to maintain minimal material damage. **2.Bxb2 Sc4 3.Bh8!!** The bishops will in fact seek shelter at the corners as it will soon become apparent that these are the best squares to avoid an intermediate knight's tempo move. However laziness wouldn't pay as choosing the closer corner fails: 3.Ba1? Sxc5+ 4.Kb5 Sb3 draws; equally wrong is 3.Bc1+? Kf2 4.Ba8 Sxc5+ 5.Kb5 Sd3 draws. **3...Kf2! 4.Bh1!!** This time laziness does pay! Why not all the way to the opposite corner at once? Let's try: 4.Ba8? Sxc5+ 5.Kb5 Sd7! 6.Bd4+ Se3 and Black rescues both his knights **4...Kg1!** since a direct attempt to trade the knight would prove futile following: 4...Sxc5 5.Kb5 Se3 6.Kxc5 Sg2 7.Bd4+! The king nonetheless is driven away from his knights **5.Ba8!! Sxc5+** or 5...Sb6+ 6.Kb5 Sxa8 7.Sxe6+- **6.Kb5!** An amazing position: The desired fork has been finally achieved and the bishops are beyond the reach of a sudden knight assault. **6...Sd7 7.Bd4** wins. Thanks to his far sighted fourth move Black is unable to cover this check by his knight and following its fall there is a theoretical win which in this particular case would last just 36 more moves. It is hard to imagine that less than four decades ago this ending was still considered a draw thus hindering the creation of such a masterpiece and at the same time enabling quite a few unfortunate incorrect ones.

David Gurgendze has always been not just one of the most successful composers of all time but also a distinguished endgame theoretician who devoted a great deal of research to the queen vs. rook and pawn endings. Nowadays you may get it all in a mouse-click yet

David still manages to add special artistic flavour to a dry looking piece of chess theory.

A.2 D. Gurgenzidze

Special prize Dvoretzky 60 JT 2007

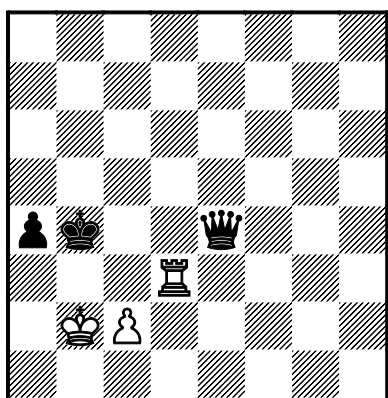


e5g7 1303.11 3/4 Win

1.Kf4+! What exactly the struggle is about might be explained by the following try: 1.Kd6+? Kg8 2.Qxh1 Rd2+ 3.Kc5 Rc2+ 4.Kd4 Rd2+ 5.Ke3 Rd6 6.Qa8+ Kg7 7.Qa1+ Kg8 with a theoretical draw as White cannot crack this rock-solid fortress despite his huge material advantage. The black Rook strolls from e6 to h6 avoiding zugzwang. This ending has already appeared more than once in top over the board events and curiously even between two **EG** readers:

A.3 J. Timman – J. Nunn

Wijk aan Zee 1982



White to move

John writes: “**1.Ra3!** is the only move to draw. After 1...Qe5+ 2.Ka2 Black cannot make progress. White should keep his king on b2 except when checked, and otherwise keep his rook posted on a3 or d3. Jan however went wrong with **1.Ka2??** and resigned after **1...a3!** as now Black can force the exchange of pawns

by 2.Rb3+ (2.Kb1 Qe1+ 3.Ka2 Qc1 4.Rb3+ Ka4 is even worse) 2...Kc4 3.Kxa3 Qxc2 leading to a winning ending of Q vs R in 23 moves”. “However”, concludes John, “I was happy that Timman did not require me to demonstrate it!”

In our study White's task would be to prevent black from achieving this goal. A queen on f8 or h8 would do the trick but not before an intensive journey through all four corners of the board takes place! **1...Kf8! 2.Qa8+** Not immediately 2.Qxh1? Re2 3.h4 Re6 draws. **2...Kg7 3.Qxh1 Rf2+** Black opts for the above explained plan. An alternative attempt would prove no better: 3...Re2 4.Qg1+ Kh7 5.Qc5 Rxb2 (5...Re6 6.Qf8 wins; 5...Kg7 6.Qg5+ Kf8 7.h4 wins) 6.Qa7! Kh8!? (Kg7; Qg1+) 7.Kf5 wins. **4.Ke3 Rf6 5.Qa1! Kg6 6.Kd3!** So that the rook will not get to e6 with a check tempo. **6...Rd6+ 7.Kc4! Re6** or **7...Kh7 8.Qa3! Re6 9.Qf8!** and wins. **8.Qh8!** Mission accomplished! The all round tour as a natural part of a technical process reminds us of the one which is displayed in Pervakov & Sumbatyan (1st-2nd prize Nona 2005) to be found in Pervakov's article.

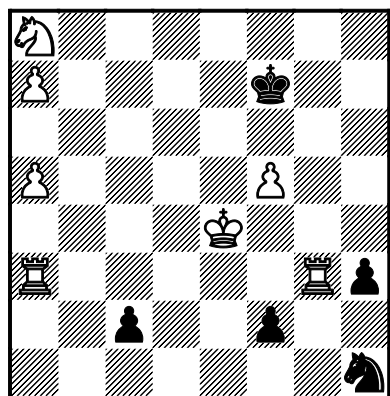
The Dvoretzky 60 JT was a powerful demonstration of fine art and might also serve as a great source of potential candidates for Study of the Year. An English version would also be welcome in order to enjoy in full the thorough analysis and the instructive comments of the jury.

A non prizewinner explained We conclude this corner revisit with a non prizewinner, for a change, from yet another recent jubilee tourney. In fact it is not too difficult to understand this unique creation. The plan is rather prosaic: annihilate the advanced pawns even at the price of the pair of rooks and win the remaining knight ending thanks to the extra pawns.

1.Rg7+!! Attempts to let Black promote do not look very promising: 1.Rgc3!? f1Q 2.Rxc2 Sf2+ 3.Rxf2 Qxf2 draws; 1.Rgf3!? c1Q 2.Sb6 Sg3+ 3.Kd4 Se2+ 4.Ke4 Sg3+ draws. But why not 1.Ra1? Be patient as the reason for the outstanding key becomes ap-

A.4 Gady Costeff

1st hon. ment. Stoffelen 70 JT 2008



e4f7 0204.33 7/5 Win

parent as late as on move 10th! **1...Kxg7 2.Ra1 f1Q 3.Rxf1 Sg3+ 4.Kd3 Sxf1 5.Kxc2 Se3+** A technical win is obtained following **5...h2 6.Sb6 h1Q 7.a8Q Qh2+ 8.Kb3 Qg3+ 9.Ka4 Qf4+ 10.Kb5 Qxf5+ 11.Qd5 Qb1+**

12.Kc6 Qa1 13.Kb7 wins. **6.Kd3 6.Kb3?** leads to the main variation where White will have no better than **12.Kc4? 6...Sd5 7.Sb6 Sc7 8.Sd5 Sa8 9.Sf4 h2 10.Sh5+** what could we do now if not for that far sighted key?! **10...Kh6 11.Sg3 Kg5 12.Ke4 12.Kc4? Kf4 13.Sh1 Kxf5 14.Kd5 Kf4 15.Kc6 Ke5! 16.Kb7 Kd6 17.Kxa8 Kc7 18.Sg3 Kc8. 12...Kg4 13.Sh1** and the rest is not too complicated.

Prosaic? Not quite! It is most probably the first time that two slow walking creatures such as the knights exchange their initial squares at the opposite corners in such a natural fashion.

What cannot be easily explained is why this highly original and daring concept did not find its worthy place among the prizewinners.

ARVES 20th ANNIVERSARY TOURNEY

The Dutch-Flemish Association for Endgame Study (Alexander Rueb Vereniging voor schaakEindspelStudies) ARVES organizes an international composing tourney for endgame studies. Judge: Marcel Van Herck. Three money prizes will be awarded:

1st prize: 300 euro; 2nd prize: 200 euro; 3rd prize: 100 euro.

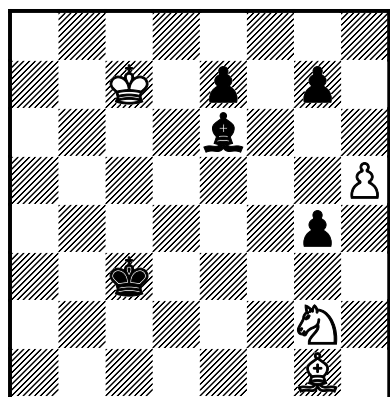
Entries (not more than three per composer) should be sent to the tourney director Luc Palmans, Sieberg 55, 3770 Riemst, Belgium or palmans.luc@skynet.be before December 31st, 2008.

The award will be published in the first half of 2009.

Theme: A study in which White wins after forcing Black to incarcerate a minor piece (B/S). Voluntarily incarcerations for self-stalemate are not thematic.

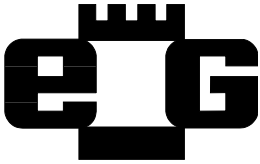
Example:

Alexei Troitzky
hon. ment. *Sydsvenska Dagbladet*
Snällposten 1912



White wins

1.Kd8 Bf7 2.Kxe7 Bxh5 3.Sf4 g6 (thematic move) **4.Se2+ Kc4 5.Sg3 Kd5 6.Kd7 Ke5 7.Be3 Kd5 8.Kc7 Ke6 9.Kc6 Ke5 10.Kc5 Ke6 11.Bd4 Kd7 12.Kd5 Ke7 13.Be5 Kd7 14.Bd6! Ke8 15.Ke6 Kd8 16.Be5 Kc8 17.Kd6 Kb7 18.Bd4 Ka6 19.Kc6 Ka5 20.Bc3+ Ka4 21.Kc5 Kb3 22.Kd4 Kc2 23.Kc4 Kd1 24.Kb3 Kc1 25.Ba5 Kd1 26.Bb4 Kc1 27.Kc3 Kb1 28.Ba3 Ka2 29.Bb2 Kb1 30.Kb3 g5 31.Sxh5** wins.



Endgame study composition depends more and more on computers. Endgame Tablebases (EGTB) are the most discussed topic, but not only databases are causing problems. I give here a summary from several recent 2008 texts.

Of course, the whole subject is controversial. The editor-in-chief has made several immediate comments (marked HH) and if there is sufficient response we could write more about the topic in the future.

1. Databases legalized!

In *Československý šach* ii2008 I published the article “Databases legalized!”. Here is a shortened version.

1.1. History

First here is a short history of EGTBs.

(1) In 1991 the living legend Ken Thompson (born 1943, USA) produced a CD trio, allowing perfect evaluation of many important 5 men endings.

(2) In 1989 Eugene Nalimov (born 1965 in Novosibirsk, USSR, now at Microsoft, USA) programmed his own EGTB generator with a new and more efficient format, nowadays known as “Nalimov”. Eugene first completed all 5 men endings with pawns and by 2006 had finished all 6 man endings. His files are sufficiently large (about 1.12 Terabytes, 264 single-sided DVDs!) that only few enthusiasts possess these on their hard disk drives. Therefore, the preferred way is on-line testing.

(3) In 2005 Marc Bourzutschky (USA), using Yakov Konoval’s software (Russia), started research into 7 man endings. After successful tries with pawnless positions they

generated the first 7 man constellation with a pawn in August 2006.

1.2. Pros and cons of EGTBs

(1) Endgame studies with more pieces still have the delicate taste of “Unknown”. They could have been analyzed for months with engines and/or grandmasters, they can be honoured, but nonetheless may some years later found to be cooked. This situation is a good motivation for solvers. In mate problems such a situation has been history for a long time.

(2) A composer of endgame studies required specific skills. But suddenly there is another quite different composing method – “database mining”. Many composers and judges don’t consider it morally right to evaluate classically composed and “mined” studies together.

(3) The most discussed problem is originality of a database composition.

Are EGTBs a modern form of endgame theory, or aren’t they? Maybe yes; I enter some position and receive a pre-prepared answer. And maybe not, because EGTBs don’t include any general rules. Chess-players don’t worry about it except study composers. Videlicet it would be ridiculous to publish a theoretical position as an endgame study, wouldn’t it?

Do you know the EGTB generation algorithm? A computer checks all variations of certain position from easy ones to more and more difficult until all positions are evaluated. Thus – it seems – the computer has anticipated every new database composer. Database composers don’t agree with such a viewpoint: a kind of computer file is not identical with a publication; for example due to huge quantity

of positions [HH: generally speaking it is impossible to “invent” a new chess position. In some kind of mathematical formula all possible positions can be described. Only when someone used a position (or better a series of positions) before, it is anticipated].

However the option could change in years to come. Electronically signed documents and even contracts are today considered valid. In addition there are “paper” lists. In the excellent Paul Valois’ **EG** index you can find links to over 60 Reciprocal Zugzwang lists! [HH: these lists were published as a service to composers. For a reciprocal zugzwang study to be thematic, a try is needed showing the same position with the other side to move. When a composer succeeds in doing that, it is his achievement and the fact that the zugzwang position occurred in a list does not anticipate the study].

Computers do not have copyright, too. But even this could be changed in the future and younger readers maybe will experience a similar situation as in Asimov’s robot stories. IM David Levy, a well-known chess player, computer chess pioneer and ICGA president, a little while ago published the serious book *Love and Sex with Robots*. He predicts “full valuable” sex with robots by 2050.

1.3. *Uncertain times*

For database composition the last 15 years have been uncertain – every judge evaluated database studies in a different way.

In the 5 man ending era there was a recommendation to separate database studies in a separate section. But several years later the 6 man EGTBs appeared and these started to clash with classical composition. Mario Matouš is a typical example. Thanks to his excellent composition technique he can express his ideas in excellent miniature form. Matouš surely never uses a computer, but in principle he cannot be distinguished from a database “miner”.

Jaroslav Polášek prepared a small overview of awards published last years in the classical magazine *Československý šach*.

1.3.1. **Annual tournament 1999-2000** (judgement vi2001); judge Polášek “respected the recommendation and separately evaluated all studies composed (or that could have been composed) using EGTBs”.

1.3.2. **Annual tournament 2001-2002** (judgement v2003); judge Hlinka for a similar reason honoured database compositions with special honours.

1.3.3. **Hlinka 50 JT** (judgment 9/2004); this time judge Hlinka evaluated all entries jointly. He wrote: “It is interesting that all top ranked studies finish with database positions”.

1.3.4. **Annual tournament 2003-2004** (judgement iv2005); judge Kekely used the classical evaluation methods of Botvinnik and Neidze containing 11 criteria, of course w/o EGTBs.

1.3.5. **Annual tournament 2005-2006** (judgment ii2007); judge Vlasák writes: “Database compositions could be evaluated separately. Finally I didn’t do so and the reason deserves attention of rule makers. The 3rd prize of Matouš – surely composed by a classical way – should be placed in a computer section, while vice-versa the evidently computer-assisted honourable mention of Becker and Akobia – thanks a short formal introduction – should be considered as a normal study”.

1.3.6. **Polášek and Vlasák 50 JT** (judgment v-vii/2007); both judges write in the extended version: “There is not a general agreement about a database composition. Under such conditions possible disqualification should be announced in rules before the tournament. We didn’t do that and as a consequence we have agreed to evaluate all entries jointly. In the opposite case most of the prizes should have to be demoted.”

We can see an interesting analogy to a Hlinka 50 JT. After some years the problem is shifted from 5 man to 6 man endings.

In the **Album FIDE 2001-2003** the blind-man’s buff was suddenly over. One of the three judges FM Amatzia Avni (born 1954, Israel) ranked all database entries with a very low score and he resisted all informal requests

to change such a judgment. The sleeping Commission had to do something. So the latest PCCC (Rhodes 13.-20.10.2007) added in the Codex a small hidden sentence, footnote 3: “The use of a computer does not result in an authorship of the computer. Nor does the compilation or publication of a computer generated database constitute the publication of one or more chess compositions”. The second sentence is a little difficult for non-native reader, but its meaning is clear: also “paper” listings are “not counted” as anticipations.

After this episode Avni re-worked his rankings allowing 6 extra entries to be nominated for the Album. However in an open e-mail he writes: “In the spirit of the PCCC resolutions, I revised my scores *as if* there are no chess databases in the world and *as if* my scoring reflects my true values and beliefs... The whole affair of being virtually forced to change my scores against my better judgment, was highly annoying to me; but if my distress contributes to the overall happiness of study composers worldwide (does it really?), then, so be it.”

According to Avni’s opponents (Iuri Akobia) he should made a greatly more changes in his judgment or hold on to his original ranking.

Clear legislative determination is surely a more honest way to solve the whole matter as never-ending discusses what is and what is not a publication. So the endgame study is another discipline basically changed by computers besides for example the correspondence chess. A good message is that we finally know it undoubtedly.

I suppose it doesn’t solve all problems with EGTBs. We have already software that is able to find zugzwangs and positions with only-moves in databases. And we have already authors mining databases instead of finding their own themes [HH: also for mining one needs an idea first, e.g. a zugzwang]. And it is not a big problem to improve this software radically...

Composers should realize that they are composing in the first place for solvers [HH: I would say that composers try to create some-

thing beautiful. Solving is nice but secondary] and not for honours and titles. Though a long-time computer fan, getting a new Matouš’s study I always put pieces on my chessboard and try to crack it. But if I feel some study is a computer compilation, I switch my computer immediately on, too. And what purpose has such a process from one computer to another? To keep the endgame study alive, authors should keep discernment and discipline by limiting his production to interesting and valuable pieces.

End of the quotation. The main purpose of this text was to inform Czech and Slovak composers about changes in the Codex. But rather unexpectedly the final “non-EGTB” part invokes the most reactions.

2. Does the endgame study head to its death thanks to computers?

Ladislav Salai, jr, *Československý šach* iii2008, text is shortened.

The legalization of EGTBs is not the only problem in endgame studies.

Some years ago I discussed with Josef Franzen (CCGM, Bratislava, Slovakia), who decided to stop his activities in correspondence chess. He had lost the pleasure (1) of recognizing with what engine he is playing and (2) of observing how players make titles which he used to win during the last 30 years.

This time I began to feel the chess composition could head to a similar situation. The first symptoms appeared in “fairy” genres with compositions beyond human comprehension. A well-known Slovakian composer (EV: in the last moment before the printing of the official text his name was deleted by the author) demonstrated me personally how to generate such pieces. Yes, he does it for honours and titles and a creative experience is quite missing [HH: but when there is no creativity the judge should be able to not honour such a study].

Selfmates are the next “ill” section. Magazines are full of long compositions with only one black piece. Unfortunately many of them

are from Russia, which I considered as a last bastion of classic chess art.

Back to studies. There are composers, generating on their computers positions with unique moves. Maybe they don't know classic works at all. And I am not able – as an editor – to explain that these positions are not studies at all [HH: An editor should be able to do so]. And rejected works are finally printed in other columns and even honoured, often only with mentions, but after all honoured! [HH: perhaps this editor now-and-then does overlook an artistic element?] And this authors' category is slowly growing creating a danger for the whole study. Maybe in some years they will determine the trend in study composition.

Also several good composers become sloppy misusing computers and this way lose contact with solvers. It does not matter that I'm not able to solve a certain study. But it does matter that I'm tired of playing through the solution. Tons of computer-generated side-lines kill the idea even if it exists. Becker and Akobia are examples of this approach. They composed several nice pieces, but in many cases they overstepped the boundaries. I do not have a problem with the fact that their zugzwangs are "mined", but for me the problem is that several of this zugzwangs are not understandable for a human. I feel this composition method is risky for authors and endgame study composition should end this way.

3. Mark Dvoretzky 60 JT

Very similar ideas in other words can be found in the judgment of Dvoretzky 60 JT, by the way one of the most interesting endgame study tournaments of the last years. [HH: this is not very similar. The text is quite different, separating artistic studies from positions with a series of unique moves but without an interesting idea].

It is clear that many of the authors have used analytical engines and EGTBs. Using computers can be welcomed if it helps to cre-

ate an excellent study. But the outcome is not always positive. We can meet pure computer compositions, too. In such cases results of thematic lines are not given by sharp points or pure logic, but it is a random finish of computer analysis. "Simply it had worked out so". I think such works do not have any esthetic value.

Sometimes even in good studies there are very difficult proof side-lines for White or Black which can only be tested with a computer. And how the solver can then find which line is the main thematic one?

4. Quo vadis, endgame study?

On my request Ladislav Salai jr. concretized his ideas. The full text will appear parallel in *Šachová skladba*, here is a shortened version.

I will give here my personal view on the contemporary endgame study. First I need to apologize to all composers which it could outrage. But chess composition – include endgame studies – is my life-love and I'm not sure where it is heading.

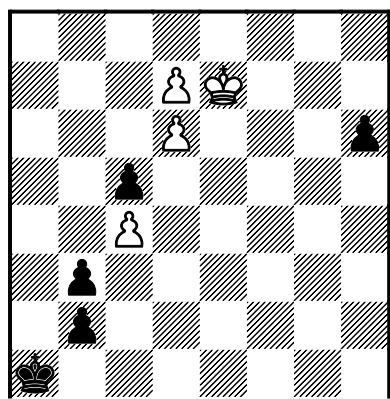
Evaluating studies some years ago I had to cope with terms as excellent, good and poor. After the computer invasion I am forced to differentiate at least 5 groups with a lot of finesses [HH: this does not seem to be an enormous extra work load]. I will give some examples.

4.1 After an Extra-league match we relaxed in a pub solving a Matouš' study. Cracking it we were exhilarated; the exhaustion was gone and I immediately called the author for his next piece. It was a very nice evening.

EV: As the mentioned study was published in my column (see *EG170.VII*, page 153) I use the opportunity to publish another nice study composed by the author L. Salai jr. Some years ago I was also exhilarated by solving it.

V.1 Ladislav Salai jr.

2nd prize Československý šach 1999



win

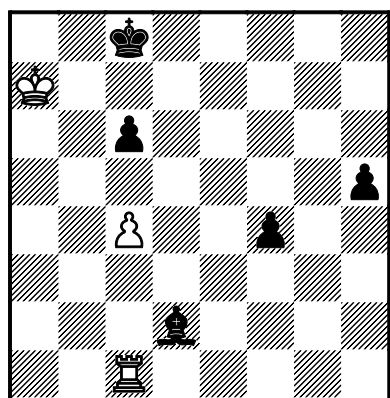
1.d8Q b1Q 2.d7! 2.Qa8+? Qa2 3.Qh1+ Qb1 4.Qxb1+ Kxb1 5.d7 b2 6.d8Q Kc2!. 2...b2 2...Qe4+ 3.Kd6 b2 4.Qa5+ Kb1 5.d8Q. 3.Qa8+!! 3.Qa5+? Qa2 4.Qc3 (d8Q b1Q;) 4...Qa7! 5.Ke8 Qa4!. 3...Qa2 4.d8Q b1Q 5.Qh8+ Qbb2 6.Qh1+ Qab1 7.Q8a8+ Q2a2 White queens are adjusted correctly and we have something like pawn ending. 8.Kd6! h5! 8...Qxa8 9.Qxa8+ Kb2 10.Qb7+ Kc2 11.Qxb1+ Kxb1 12.Kxc5. 9.Kxc5 h4 10.Kd4 h3 11.Ke3 Qxh1 11...h2 12.Qxb1+ Kxb1 13.Qh1+ Kc2 14.Qxh2+. 12.Qxh1+ Kb2 13.Qh2+ Kb3 14.Qxa2+ Kxa2 15.Kf2 wins.

So group 1 is created for solvers. They are recompensed for their time with extra artistic experience.

4.2

V.2 Iuri Akobia and Richard Becker

spec. hon. ment. Razumenko 70 JT 2007



draw

1.Rh1! 1.Rf1? Be3+ 2.Ka6 c5! 3.Kb5 Kd7 4.Rh1 f3 5.Rxh5 f2 6.Rh1 Ke6. 1...Be3+ 1...f3

2.Kb6 2.c5! 2.Ka6 f3 3.Rxh5 f2 4.Rh1 Kc7. 2...Bxc5+ 2...f3 3.Kb6. 3.Ka8! Bf2 3...f3 4.Rf1 f2 5.Rxf2. 4.Rh2! 4.Rxh5 Be3 zz 5.Rd5 Kc7 zz 6.Rf5 Kd6 7.Kb7 c5 8.Kb6 c4+ 9.Kb5 c3. 4...Bd4 5.Rh4! 5.Rxh5 Be3 zz. 5...Be3 6.Rxh5! zz 6...Kc7 6...f3 7.Rf5 f2 8.Rxf2, 6...Kd7 7.Kb7 c5 8.Kb6 c4+ (8...f3 9.Rd5+ Ke6 10.Rd3) 9.Kb5 c3 10.Rh2. 7.Rd5!! zz 7...Kb6 7...c5 8.Rxc5+ Bxc5, 7...f3 8.Rf5 f2 9.Rxf2. 8.Rf5 Kc7 9.Rd5! Kb6 9...c5 10.Rxc5+, 9...f3 10.Rf5 f2 11.Rxf2. 10.Rf5 c5 11.Rxf4 draw. [HH: the fact that no explanatory text is supplied at all, which was undoubtedly supplied by the composer, is inexcusable. For such studies we need textual comments, not only the moves!].

Diagram V.2 is less engaging for a high difficulty. Yes, it is another view on our chess art. After the solution is demonstrated and I spent some extra time for detailed analysis, some satisfaction finally comes after all. It is caused by the understandable mutual zugzwang after 7.Rd5! with two simple echo stalemates.

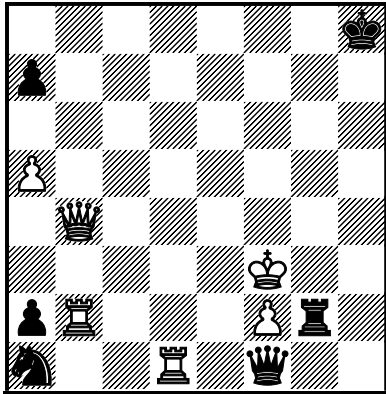
So the second group is also usable for a chess community. Maybe for a smaller one, but it does. Personally I have no problem if the author is a database “miner” or even if the study is a complete computer work.

The classical composition process is a long-ranging matter finished with something like euphoria for the author. If the author loses such a nice creative excitement, it is only his problem [HH: the same goes for composers using computers as tools. Obviously, traditional composition is more cumbersome because of correctness checking, anticipation checking, and by shifting pieces around to find something interesting almost by pure chance. But the achievement should be judged, not the effort].

4.3 Diagram V.3 illustrates the third group. It is not for solvers at all and maybe this information should be a part of the stipulation [HH: It is nothing new that not all studies are suited for solving. The responsibility to select studies for a real-time solving competition or a magazine competition lays with the arbiter or the editor, not with the composer]. But

even only a passive consumption is hard to digest.

V.3 Richard Becker
1st prize Skrinnik 50 JT 2007



BTM, win

1...Rxf2+ 2.Ke3 Sc2+ 3.Rxc2 Rf3+ 4.Ke4 Rf4+ 5.Ke5 Rf5+ 6.Ke6 Rf6+ 7.Ke7 Rf7+ 8.Ke8 a1Q 9.Rxa1 Qxa1 10.Rh2+! /i Kg8 11.Rg2+ Kh8 12.Rg6! 12.Rg5 a6 zz 13.Rh5+ Kg8 14.Rg5+ Kh8 15.Qg4 (15.Kxf7 Qg7+) 15...Rg7 16.Qh4+ Rh7 17.Qf4 Qe1+ 18.Re5 Qg1 19.Qf6+ Qg7. 12...a6 13.Rg5 zz 13.Qc5 Qb2 14.Qd6 Qc3 15.Qxa6 Rf8+ 16.Kxf8 Qg7+ 17.Ke8 Qxg6+ 18.Qxg6. 13...Qf6 14.Qh4+ Rh7 15.Rg8+ Kxg8 16.Qxf6 win.

i) 10.Kxf7 Qg7+ 11.Ke6 (11.Ke8 Qg6+ 12.Kd8 Qd3+! (12...Qxc2? 13.Qd4+ Kh7 14.Qxa7+ Kg6 15.Qd4 Qf5 16.Qd6+ Kh5 17.a6) 13.Kc7 Qxc2+ 14.Kb7 Kh7 15.Kxa7 Kh6 16.Kb8 Qh2+ 17.Kb7 Qg2+ 18.Kc7 Qc2+ 19.Kb7 Qg2+ 20.Kb6 Qg6+ 21.Kb5 Qe8+) 11...Qg6+ 12.Kd5 Qf5+! (12...Qxc2 13.Qb8+ Kg7 14.Qxa7+ Kf6 15.Qc5 Qg2+ 16.Kd6) 13.Kd4 Qxc2 14.Qb8+ Kg7 15.Qxa7+.

After 13. Rg5! we have an original position of reciprocal zugzwang with a QR material on almost empty board. The idea of direct or indirect guarding the main diagonal a1-h8 is very impressive. And the fine stalemate line 13.Qc5? is a good add-in.

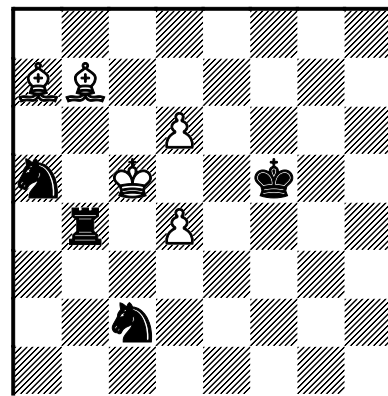
But line i) needs a consultation with EGTBs. Yes, the study is sound, but to understand this side-line without databases would need much more time as the rest of solution. Such cases are typical of Becker's composi-

tions. He has been very productive in recent years, but maybe the themes would benefit from humility and patience. Personally I'm skipping his diagrams – it is always unclear if the solver will be excited or exhausted and disgusted.

There is another problem, authors of group 2 could very easy switch to group 3 without observing it.

4.4

V.4 Emil Melnichenko
1st prize Rossi 80 JT 2005



draw

1.Bd5 Sb7+ 1...Sb3+ 2.Bxb3 Rxd4 3.Bxc2+ Ke5 4.Bb8 Rd2 5.d7+ Ke6 6.Bf5+ Ke7 7.Kc6 Rd4 8.Be5 Rd1 9.Bf4 Kf6 10.Bd6. 2.Kc6 Sxd4+ 3.Kc7 Ke5 4.Bxb7 4.Bb6 Kxd5 5.d7 Se6+ 6.Kxb7 Kd6, 4.d7 Kxd5 5.Bb6 Sd8 6.Kxd8 Rxb6 7.Kc7 Rc6+ 8.Kd8 Rd6 9.Ke7 Sc6+. 4...Sb5+ 5.Kb6 Sxd6+ 6.Kc6 Sxb7 7.Bb6 Sd6 8.Bc7 Rd4 9.Kd7=.

For the full solution see EG No. 157, page 426. Replaying it I had a lot of questions. For example there is the line 1...Sb3? ... 10.Bd6 – what is virtually the outcome? Or after 4.Bb6? Kxd5 5.d7 or 4.d7? Kxd5 5.Bb6 we have the same position, but Black continues one time 5...e6 (after 4.Bb6?) and second time 5...Sd8 (after 4.d7?). What for?

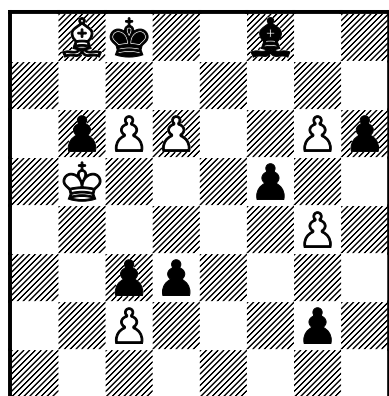
There is only one answer. The whole study from start to finish is created by a computer [HH: I seriously doubt this. One should see Melnichenko's solutions before he used a chess program. Thousands of moves. I often wrote that such behaviour distracts from the

study]. A computer doesn't know to finish lines at the correct moment. It cannot recognize transpositions. It even cannot know if any side-line is necessary at all.

The group 4 is not even suited for consumption. Even if the "reader" holds to the whole end, there is not any experience, only exhaustion and frustration. At the same time the first look at the setup position promises something better and there are interesting isolated moments in the solution, too. Unfortunately they are lost in a lot of something hard to determinate. Simply the human's touch is missing here.

4.5 The last group is probably the most serious threat for our beloved chess discipline.

V.5 G. Josten and J. Mikitovic
Šachová skladba 2008



win

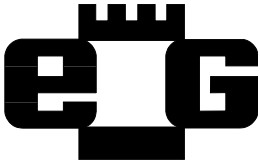
1.d7+ Kd8 2.Ka6 d2 2...g1Q 3.Kb7 Qd4 4.Bc7+ Ke7 5.d8Q+ Qxd8 6.Bxd8+ 3.Kb7 d1Q 4.Bc7+ Ke7 5.d8Q+ Qxd8 6.Bxd8+ Kxd8 7.c7+ Ke7 8.c8Q g1Q 9.Qc7+ Kf6 10.Qf7+ Kg5 11.Qxf5+ 11.Qxf8 Qg2+

12.Ka7 Kxg6, 11.g7 Bxg7 12.Qxg7+ Kf4. 11...Kh4 12.Qxf8 Qg2+ 12...Qxg4 13.g7 Qe4+ 14.Ka7 Qa4+ 15.Kb8. 13.Kc7 Qxc2 13...Qg3+ 14.Qd6. 14.g7 Qh2+ 14...Qh7 15.Qh8. 15.Kc8 c2 16.Qf6+ Kh3 17.Qxh6+ Kg2 17...Kg3 18.Qe3+ Kg2 19.g8Q 18.Qc6+ Kg1 19.g8Q 19.g8R Qe5 20.Qxc2 Qe6+.

The position V.5 I rejected to print in *Pat a mat*, a Slovakian magazine dedicated to chess composition. I'm sure it is not a study at all. It doesn't contain any idea or at least I didn't find it. It is only a well played finish of a game – White deserves some small approval, but nothing more.

I'm afraid that groups 4 and 5 will dominate in several years and it will cause the death of the true study. Computer generated studies will be solved by another computer and this idea is terrible. The computer could be an excellent slave, but also an evil master. The symbiosis must be balanced and a composer must always concede his solvers.

What to do? Maybe "double-blind" tournaments are one way to keep endgame study production within more realistic bounds. What do I mean by this new term? While in anonymous tournaments the judge has the diagrams with full solutions, in double-blind tournaments he will only receive the diagrams. It would also eliminate weak, nonqualified and too-busy judges. We have tested something like that in the Polášek & Vlasák 50JT, but only in an unofficial free mode. Actually it is a big problem to get some useful rules. It should be subject to discussion and future experiments.



In the previous issue of EG we started to talk about the pawn – “the soul of chess” according to A. Philidor. In this part we shall concentrate on the most surprising move of the pawn – promotion – and the themes and studies connected with it.

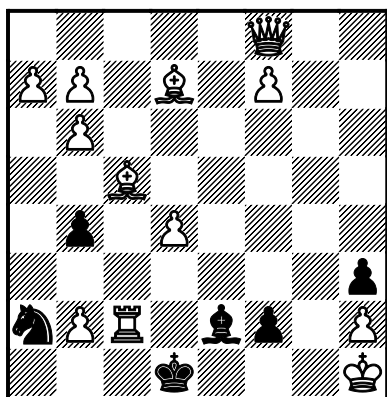
In a game the pawn usually only promotes to the strongest piece – the queen. In second place, certainly, is promotion to a knight – in order to win a tempo, material, or to continue a mate attack by a check, etc. The latest example is the game Shirov-Aronyan from the recent tournament in Morelia-Linares (by the way, there the knight promotion was necessary to prevent mate). Bishop and rook promotions are extremely rare in practice.

A queen promotion is often seen in studies, so we shall not discuss it here.

1. Multiple underpromotion

We certainly begin with promotion of a pawn to all three weak pieces – illustrated in the well-known study P.1 by V. Korolkov.

P.1 V. Korolkov
1st prize *Pravda* 1929



h1d1 1153.73 12/6 Win

White has to win, but it is already difficult to defend against the two mate threats Bf3 and f1Q. The pawns that have almost reached the promotion square come to help. But first there is piece play.

1.Rd2+ Kc1 (1...Kxd2 2.Qh6+ Kc2 3.Qxh3) 2.Rd1+! Kxd1 3.Ba4+ b3! Black doesn't want to be a punchbag and counter plays. 4.Bxb3+ Ke1 5.Bb4+ Sc3! 6.Bxc3+ Kf1. The mate on f1 has been prevented, but now a rectilinear protection of the square f3 – 7.Bd5 – leads to stalemate after 7...Bf3+ 8.Bxf3. It is necessary to lure the black bishop to b5 – at any cost! 7.Bc4 Bxc4 8.Qc5! Bd3 9.Qb5! Bxb5. Now, finally, the pawns speak the decisive words: 10.b8S! Bd3 11.a8B! (11.a8Q? Be4+ 12.Qxe4 – stalemate) 11...Be2 12.f8R!, wins. As from the deep sea three heroes appeared (one even stronger than the other) – a knight, bishop and rook – and destroyed the enemy's army.

This is the first study with three sequential promotions into different minor pieces. It is important to note the extra plus: promotions follow one after the other in the classical sequence – N, B, R. At the time this excellent study was merciless criticized by A. Gurvich. In my opinion – that was totally unfair!

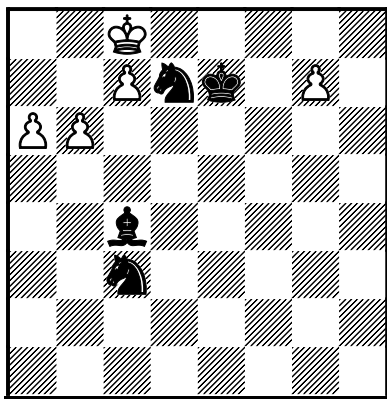
This idea was realized in the most economical form by an excellent Polish grandmaster (P.2).

The three black pieces are a formidable force which is difficult to fight even with a queen. For example: 1.g8Q? Bxg8 2.a7 Se4! 3.Kb7 Bd5+ 4.Ka6 Sd6. All that remains is 1.a7 Ba6+ 2.b7 Se4 3.g8S+! (knight) Ke8! 4.Sf6+! Sexf6 5.a8B! The bishop's turn. Bad is 5.a8Q? Sd5, and mate is inevitable. 5...Se5!

6.Kb8 Sc6+ 7.Kc8 Bf1 8.b8R! And finally, a rook! And again the strongest piece renders White clumsy assistance – 8.b8Q? Ba6+ 9.Qb7 Se4 10.Qxa6 Sd6 mate. 8...Ba6+ 9.Rb7! (but not 9.Bb7? Se4 10.Bxa6 Sd6 mate), and Black necessarily reconciles to stalemate with the immured promoted bishop and a pinned promoted rook – for example, after 9...Se4. Superb!

P.2 J. Rusinek

1st prize *New Statesman* 1971

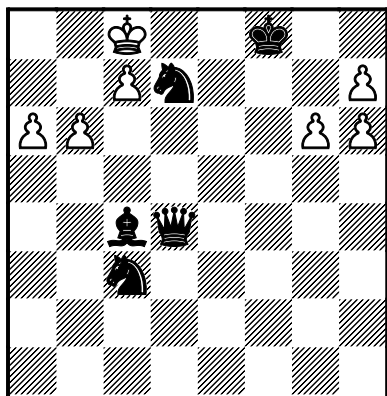


c8e7 0036.40 5/4 Draw

Later Jan added three pieces and achieved the last promotion – to a queen – and once again demonstrated the world uniqueness of position P.2. (HH: as a matter of fact, Rusinek had originally already composed this version, but found it inferior. He considered the extra material needed too high a price for the extra promotion).

P.3 J. Rusinek

64, vii1978



c8f8 3036.60 7/5 Draw

1.h8Q+ (1.h8R+? Ke7) 1...Qxh8 2.g7+ Qxg7 3.hxg7+ Ke7 4.a7 etc. Of all studies with promotion into all four pieces (Alumwandlung, AUW) known today, this example is perhaps the most successful.

2. Record number of promotions into the same piece

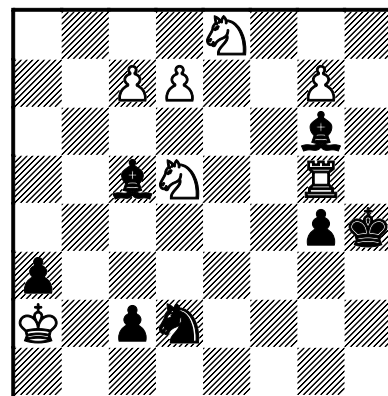
2a. Transformation into a knight

In the excellent article by Wieland Bruch “Exploring the watershed between more-mover and study” (EG171, supplement) the study (B80) by A. Chéron, *Journal de Genève*, 1964 with an eightfold knight promotion, which is actually a problem by W. Shinkman, *Deutsche Schachzeitung* 1908, corrected by Chéron by adding four (!) non-playing pieces. Nevertheless, this is the formal record. Therefore the study by M. Babic (*FIDE Album 1995-1997*, D54) with six promotions, is wrongly presented in the Album as a task [HH: this is the first correct win study with 6 S-promotions and the Phoenix theme].

In my opinion the most successful examples feature a triple knight promotion. Here are three of them.

P.4 V. Korolkov

1st prize 64, 1937



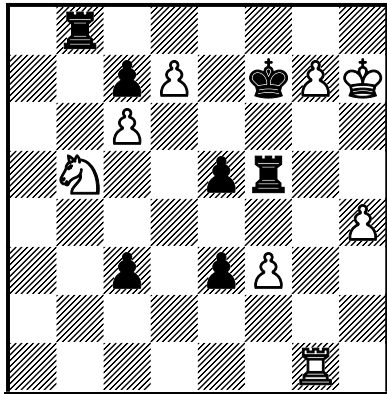
a2h4 0165.33 7/7 Win

Black’s most terrible threat is the knight promotion c1S+ and subsequent mate. Therefore White’s actions should be prompt. 1.Rh5+! Kxh5 (1...Bxh5 2.d8Q+; 1...Kg3 2.Rh1) 2.Sf4+ Kh6 3.g8S+! Kh7 4.Sgf6+ (4.Sef6+? Kg7! 5.S6h5+ Bxh5) 4...Kh6

(4...Kh8 5.Sxg6 mate) **5.Sxg4+ Kh7 6.Sef6+ Kg7 7.Se6+ Kf7 8.d8S+! Ke7 9.c8S mate!**
The answer to Black's threat is three knight promotions and mate in five horse powers!

P.5 A. Sochnev

1st/3rd prize Gurgenev 50 JT, 2004



h7f7 0701.54 8/7 Win

Here the triple knight promotion is preceded by a preliminary plan. **1.Sd6** forced sacrifice. Bad is 1.Rg5? Rxc5 2.hxc5 e2 3.g6+ Ke7 4.Sa7 e1Q 5.Sc8+ Rxc8 6.dxc8Q Qh4+ 7.Kg8 Qc4+, and 1.Kh6? Rf6+ 2.Kh5 Rf5+ 3.Kg4 Rf6 4.Kh3 e2. **1...cxd6**. Now White has to win a tempo somehow in order to have time to play c6-c7. This goal is achieved through a nonevident manoeuvre: **2.Kh6!** Again not 2.Rg5? Rxc5 3.hxc5 e2 4.c7 e1Q 5.d8S+ Rxd8 6.cxd8S+ Ke7 7.g8Q Qb1+ 8.g6 c2 9.Sf7 Kd7 10.Qd8+ Kc6 11.Qxd6+ Kb7) **2...Rf6+ 3.Kh5 Rf5+ 4.Kg4 Rf4+ 5.Kh3! Rxf3+**. The pawn f3 is eliminated, and the white king returns. **6.Kg4! Rf4+ 7.Kh5 Rf5+ 8.Kh6 Rf6+ 9.Kh7! Rf5**. And, at last, the final part of the preliminary plan: **10.Rf1! Rxf1**. And now advance bravely **11.c7! Rf5 12.d8S+! Rxd8 13.cxd8S+! Kf6 14.g8S mate!** An excellent logical study!

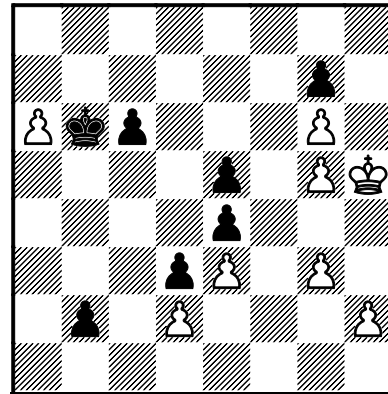
By the way, Alexey Sochnev has collected a large number of studies in which double underpromotions occur. And he was highly interested in record plans, in particular in studies with a high number of underpromotions and a small number of pieces in the initial position. Alas, the record (5 knight promotions, 10 pieces) did not survive – in the published posi-

tion a defect has been found that does not allow for a correction.

As an example of a mixed Black-and-White transformation into knights I present you the pawn etude P.6.

P.6 N. Kralin

2nd prize *Shakhmaty v SSSR* 1980



h5b6 0000.76 8/7 Draw

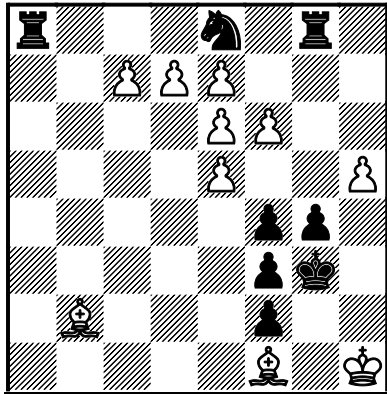
White's unique hope for rescue is a self-stalemate but already after the natural **1.a7! Kxa7** careful consideration is necessary in order to find the exact move – **2.g4! b1S!** (2...b1Q 3.h4, and stalemate cannot be prevented), and then another very effective move – **3.h3!!** In such cases a Russian proverb says “when you hasten – people laugh at you”. After 3.h4? Sc3 White is in zugzwang and loses: 4.dxc3 d2 5.c4 d1Q 6.c5 Qd4 7.exd4 e3 8.d5 e2 9.d6 e1S! 10.d7 Sd3 11.d8Q Sf4 mate. **3...Sc3 4.h4**. And now Black is in the same zugzwang. To prevent stalemate he has to move the king, whose position on a7 is invulnerable. **4...Kb7**. The best answer. If 4...Ka6 5.dxc3 d2 6.c4 d1Q 7.c5 Qd4 8.exd4 e3 9.d5 e2 10.dxc6!, and White is rescued by a check on c8. **5.dxc3 d2 6.c4 d1Q 7.c5 Qd4 8.exd4 e3 9.d5 e2 10.d6 e1S! 11.d7 Sd3 12.d8S+!** Now we see the drawback of the position of the black king on b7! **12...Ka6 13.Se6 Sf4+ 14.Sxf4 exf4**, and nevertheless it is stalemate!

2b. Bishop promotion

Here M. Zinar's record – fivefold promotion on the same square – is in place!

P.7 M. Zinar

1st special hon. mention
Friendship 200 JT, 1983



h1g3 0623.74 10/8 Win

1.f7 Rh8 2.fxe8B! Takes care of the h5-square around which further events develop. After 2.fxe8Q? Ra1! (but not 2...Rhx5+ 3.Qxh5 Rh8 4.e8B! with transition to the author's solution) 3.Bxa1 Rxh5+ 4.Qxh5 Black is stalemate. **2...Raxe8 3.dxe8B! Rxe8 4.Bd4! Rh8 5.e8B! Rxe8 6.e7 Rh8 7.e8B! Rxe8 8.e6 Rf8** (or 8...Rg8 9.e7 Rg5 10.e8B) **9.e7 Rf5 10.e8B!** The final nuance for victory! The attempt 10.Bxf2+? fails: 10...Kxf2 11.e8Q g3 12.Qe1+ Kxe1 13.c8Q Kxf1 14.Qc4+ Kf2 15.Qd4+ Kf1 with an obvious draw.

2c. Rook promotion

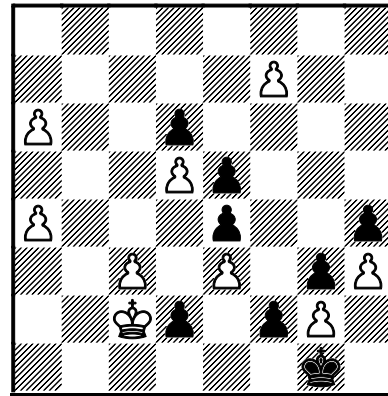
M. Zinar – the well-known modern master of the pawn study, and successor of N. Grigoryev – devoted a lot of creativity to underpromotion task records. Besides P.7, he owns another three task records. P.8 shows a triple rook promotion in a pawn study.

White has to promote three pawns to rooks in order to prevent stalemate on the squares h2, h3 and f3.

1.f8R! (1.f8Q? Kh2 2.a7 d1Q+ 3.Kxd1 f1Q+ 4.Qxf1 stalemate) **1...f1Q 2.Rxf1+ Kxf1 3.Kxd2 Kxg2 4.a7 Kxh3 5.a8R!** Queen promotion is again impossible – 5.a8Q? g2 6.Qg8 (or also 6.Qc8+ Kh2! 7.Qd8 h3 8.Qxd6 g1Q 9.Qxe5+ Kh1 10.d6 Qf2+ 11.Kd1 h2) 6...g1Q 7.Qxg1, stalemate. **5...Kg2 6.a5** (here and at the following move Rh8 can also be played – a quite admissible dual). Unfortunately another version of this task (Davranjan & Zinar, sp.

P.8 A. Davranyan & M. Zinar

1st hon. mention *Shakhmaty v SSSR* 1989



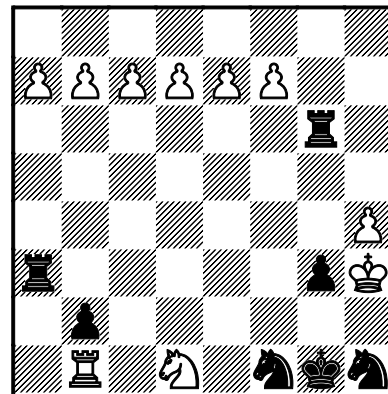
c2g1 0000.87 9/8 Win

prize 64-*Shakmatnoe Obozrenie*, 1989) has been cooked (13.Kd5 winning) **6...h3 7.a6 h2 8.Rh8** (8.a7? h1Q 9.Rb8 Qf1 10.a8Q Qd3+ 11.Kc1 Qxe3+ 12.Kb2 Qf2+ 13.Ka3 e3 and Black wins) **8...h1Q 9.Rxh1 Kxh1 10.a7 g2 11.a8R!** (11.a8Q? g1Q 12.Qh8+ Kg2 13.Qg7+ Kf3 14. Qxg1 stalemate) **11...g1Q 12.Rh8+ Kg2 13.Rg8+ Kf2 14.Rxg1 Kxg1 15.c4** wins.

A sixfold rook promotion is carried out in P.9.

P.9 M. Zinar

Special hon. mention
Shakhmaty v SSSR 1984



h3g1 0707.72 10/7 Win

1.a8R! Here White has to struggle against stalemate: 1.a8Q? Sf2+ 2.Sxf2 g2+ 3.Qxa3 Rg3+ 4.Qxg3. **1...Rb3 2.b8R!** (2.Rxb2? Rxb2) **2...Rc3 3.c8R! Rd3 4.d8R! Re3 5.e8R! Rf3 6.f8R!** The final chord. Neither now, nor earlier could White play its rook to the 3rd rank: 6.Ra3? Rxa3 7.Ra8 Rb3 8.Rcb8 Rc3 9.Rdc8 Rd3 10.Red8 Re3, and the black

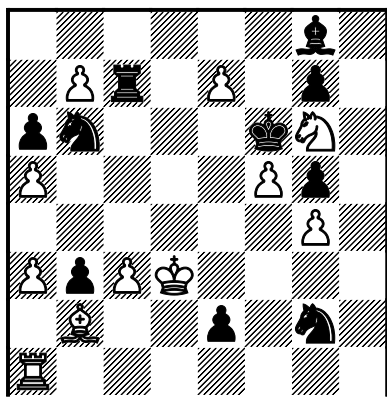
rook is safely surfing along the rank, evading persevering sticky colleagues. The rest is simple: **6...Sf2+ 7.Sxf2 g2+ 8.Rxf3 Rg3+ 9.Rxg3** wins.

Subsequently G. Costeff was able (EG 1999) to achieve a sevenfold promotion, but in his study the sequence of promotions is random, which disqualifies that study as an accomplishment of the task.

3. Babson Task

But Gady was the only composer to realize a 3rd/4th Babson-task in a study. Two earlier attempts by J. Rusinek failed because of incorrectness.

P.10 G. Costeff
Special hon. mention
Israel Ring ty 1998-1999



d3f6 0447.75 11/10 BTM, Win

First – what else?, introductory play:
1...Bc4+ (1...e1Q 2.Rxe1 Sxe1+ 3.Ke2 Rxe7+ 4.Sxe7 Sd7 5.Sxg8+ Kf7 6.Kxe1 Kxg8 7.Kd2 Kf7 8.c4 Ke7 9.Be5) **2.Kd4** (bad is 2.Ke4? Bd5+ 3.Kd3 Bc4+ 4.Ke4 Bd5+ 5.Kd4 Rc4+ 6.Kd3 e1Q 7.Rxe1 Sxe1+ 8.Kd2 Sf3+ 9.Kd1 Re4 10.c4+ Kf7 11.Se5+ Rxe5) **2...Rd7+** **3.Kc5 Sa4+** **4.Kxc4** (4.Kc6? Bb5 mate) **4...Se3+** (4...Sxb2+ 5.Kc5; 4...Rc7+ 5.Kd5) **5.Kb4**. The poisonous pawn b3 will sooner or later become evident: 5.Kxb3? Rxb7+ 6.Kxa4 Sd1 7.e8S+ Kf7 8.Sd6+ Kf6 9.Sxb7 e1Q 10.Kb3 Qe2 11.Rb1 Qb5+ 12.Ka2 Qc4+ 13.Ka1 Sxc3 14.Bxc3+ Qxc3+ 15.Ka2 Qc2+. **5...Rxb7+** **6.Kxa4 Sd1**. Black still can fight, but the end is near. And after 6...Sc4 White wins by a knight promotion: 7.e8S+! Kf7

8.Se5+! **7.Rxd1!** Too early is 7.e8S+? Kf7 8.Sd6+ Kg8 9.Sxb7 e1Q 10.Kxb3 Qd2 11.Rb1 Qd5+. Now the main line branches:

A. 7...exd1S 8.e8S+! Kf7 9.Sd6+,

B. 7...exd1R 8.e8R! (8.e8Q? Rd4+ 9.c4 Rb4+ 10.axb4 stalemate),

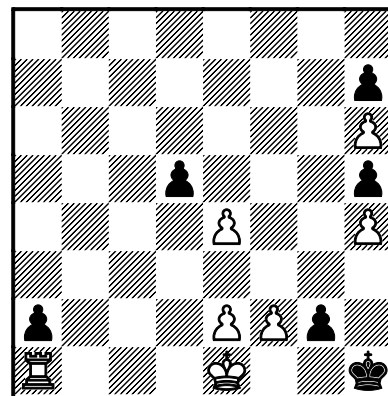
C. 7...exd1Q 8.e8Q! Qd4+ 9.c4! (9.cxd4? Rb4+ 10.axb4 stalemate).

It is hardly possible to demand any intelligent play in such a complex idea. Will some endgame study composer ever succeed in achieving the full Babson-task?

4. Valladao Task

The israeli study composer also owns, in my opinion, the most elegant expression of the Valladao-task.

P.11 G. Costeff
The Problemist 2007



e1h1 0100.55 7/6 Win

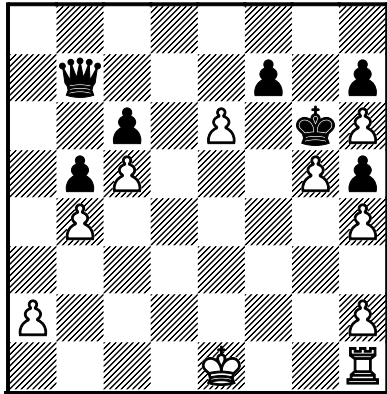
1.0–0–0+! g1Q 2.Rxg1+ Kxg1 3.Kb2 dxe4 4.f4! (hesitation will be punished: 4.f3? e3 5.f4 Kf2 6.f5 Kxe2 7.f6 Kd2 8.f7 e2 9.f8Q a1Q+ 10.Kxa1 e1Q+ drawing) **4...exf3 5.exf3 Kg2 6.f4 Kg3 7.f5 Kg4 8.f6 Kf5 9.f7 Kg6 10.f8R!** with a victory.

In a Valladao-task the pawn can formally promote to a queen. But, in my opinion, the ideal Valladao-task is when a pawn underpromotes. [HH: the “perfect Valladao” was defined by me as a study with: 1) underpromotion with the Q-promotion as the thematic try, 2) castling, with the thematic try Rf1/Rd1, and 3) A double step of the white pawn, which Black captures en-passant with

the single step as a thematic try. Costeff also managed this task!].

The author of P.12 managed in Valladao-task to carry out three different promotions. What about trying all four?

P.12 S. Hornecker
König und Turm 2007



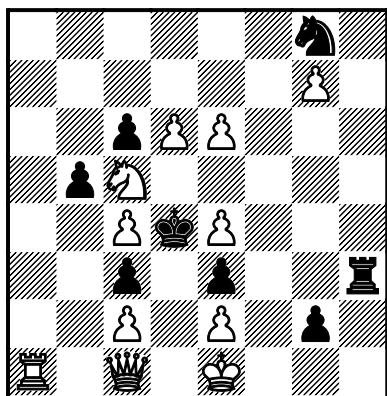
e1g6 3100.85 10/7 Win

1.0-0 (The king has to withdraw from the e-file in order to prevent checks) **1...f5!** After **1...Qe7 2.Rxf7! Qxe6 3.Rf6+ Qxf6 4.gxf6** pawn final is easily won for white. **2.gxf6**, and a branching:

- A. 2...Qc8 3.f7 Qxe6 4.f8S+!,
- B. 2...Qc7 3.f7 Qe5 4.f8R!;
- C. 2...Qa8 3.f7 Qxa2 4.Rf6+! Kxf6 5.f8Q+.

Working on the theme of the VIIth WCCT the authors of the following study were able to accomplish the Valladao task, although admittedly not in the ideal form.

P.13 N. Kralin & O. Pervakov
13th place 7th WCCT 2001-2004



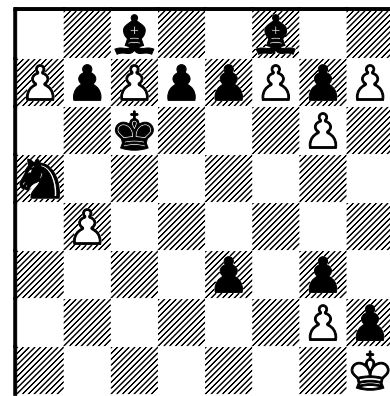
e1d4 1404.75 11/8 Win

1.Sb3+! As we shall see in the final position of this study, White has to get rid of the “fifth column” (pawn e4). Therefore it is too early for **1.Qd1+? 1...Kxe4 2.Sc5+ Kd4!** Other ways lead to a fast defeat: **2...Kf4 3.Sd3+! Kf5 4.Qxe3 Rxe3 5.Kf2 Rxe6 6.d7 Rd6 7.Sc5.** Now the white king gets rid of a “traitor” from the inner circle: **3.Qd1+ Ke5! 4.Qd4+!** By retreating to e5 on the previous move, Black provoked its contender to play the erroneous **4.Sd7+? Kxe6 5.Sc5+ Kf7! 6.Ra7+ Kg6 7.Qd3+ Kh6 8.Qxe3+ Rxe3 9.Kf2 Rxe2+ 10.Kg1 Rxc2 11.Sb3 Rb2 12.d7 Rb1+ 13.Kxg2 Rd1. 4...Kxd4.** “The fifth column” is now liquidated, and White starts with the realization of the main plan: **5.0-0-0+ Kxc5 6.d7 Rh1 7.d8Q g1Q 8.Qd4+ Kb4 9.c5+ Ka5 10.Qxc3+ b4! 11.Qa1+ Kb5 12.c4+ bxc3 13.Qb1+ Kxc5,** And the finale **14.Qf5+!** winning.

And in conclusion two entertaining examples on the theme:

5. Incarceration of promoted pieces

P.14 M. Zinar
commendation Archakov JT 1989



h1c6 0063.77 8/11 Draw

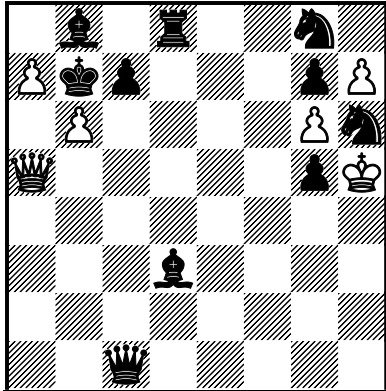
How to deal with the extremely dangerous black pawn on e3? Bad is **1.h8Q? e2 2.Qxh2 gxh2 3.a8Q e1Q+.** It is necessary to hope for **1.b5+ Kb6!** avoiding mined squares: **1...Kxc7 2.a8Q e2 3.Qxa5+ or 1...Kxb5 2.h8Q e2 3.Qh5+.** But now an original stalemate combination is possible: **2.a8S+!** (**2.h8S? e2 3.a8S+ Kxb5 (Kc5), or 2.h8Q? e2 3.a8S+ Ka7)**

2...Ka7 3.b6+ Ka6 4.h8S!, and stalemate is unavoidable

We should raise our hat for the author of P.15. To make such a romantic, vital study during such awful times!..

P.15 A. Hurtig

2nd prize *Schackvärlden* 1943



h5b7 4366.43 7/10 Draw

Black has an overwhelming superiority in force and mate threats. Rescue for White seems from area of a fantasy. But...

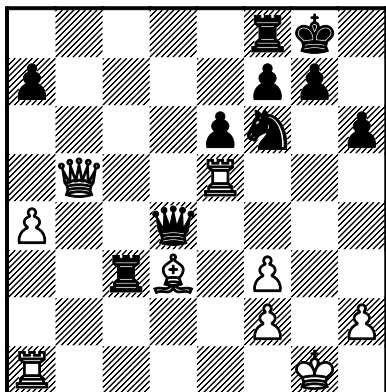
1.a8B+! It is easy to see that the black king easily escapes from two white queens after 1.a8Q+? Kc8 2.b7+ Kd7 3.Qd5+ Ke7 4.hxg8S+ Sxg8! (it is still possible to produce a blooper: 4...Rxc8? 5.Qe5+) 5.Qxd8+ Kxd8 6.Qxb8+ Ke7. **1...Kc8 2.b7+ Kd7 3.Qd5+ Ke7 4.Qe5+ Kf8.** “The time from two queens is gone, from one for a long time!”, – the black king triumphs. But a b-i-i-i-g surprise awaits him: **5.Qxg7+!! Kxg7.** Black has not yet given up hope: 6.h8Q+? Kf8! 7.Qg7+ Ke8 8.Qf8+ Kd7!, and again the white queen is finished. However **6.h8B+! Kf8** – stalemate!

SNIPPETS

Editor :

JOHN ROYCROFT

1. – Fritz 11 doesn't like resigning. When it does it bleats: *How could that happen? To me of all people! I give up.* However, it regularly defeats me in the quick games I play, by instantly seeing things like:

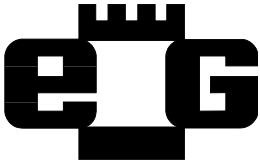


After Black's Qd8xwPd4. I played Be4, and after Rb3; threw in the towel.

Is it fanciful to imagine Fritz ‘teaching’ the technique of concocting introductory play?

2. – Gady Costeff finds the online audio-visual potential of <http://youtube.com/user/Lovuschka> ‘an order of magnitude more compelling than looking a study over in a magazine’. Do other web-empowered readers agree? ‘Lovuschka’ is Russian for ‘trap’.

3. – Solution to puzzle on page 188: 1.Sf7! draws.



ABOUT ENDGAME TABLEBASES (EGTBs)

IURI AKOBIA¹

Among endgame study composers and chess players EGTBs (EndGame TableBases) are well-known. These databases contain all possible positions of a certain material balance and their outcome, i.e. whether the position is a win or a draw.

When one has a complete set of EGTBs and a suitable programme (e.g. ChessBase) available on one's computer it is possible to find the right move in any position with 4 to 6 men (and some 7 men). The computer programme does not need to analyse the positions, but it uses the data from a specific database. Therefore it is possible to display the result instantly. Without EGTBs even the most powerful computer would need ten minutes, ten hours, or much more for the same position. It is even possible to analyse more effectively positions with more than 6 men. Certain special programmes, like Deep Fritz 8 (and higher versions) use EGTBs during analysis. It must be clear that this system is of great help to endgame study composers and o.t.b. players when analysing chess positions.

Ken Thompson had already generated all 3-5 man EGTBs in the 1990s. Later, Eugene Nalimov generated the table for all 6 man endings. That wasn't an easy job since these EGTBs required no less than 1.2 TB, which is huge in comparison with all 4-5 EGTBs which were 7 GB in size. Recently, even some 7 man EGTBs have been generated, but as a single database would occupy 160-200 GB, which is often the complete volume of a hard disk, therefore, at present, 7 man EGTBs are be-

yond the reach of the owner of an ordinary personal computer. In practice, one has 4-5 man EGTBs on the hard disk of ones computer, and when a composer wants to analyse a 6 man position, he can directly access EGTBs on the internet: www.k4it.de/index.php?topic=egtb&lang=de.

There is a very interesting, freely available, chess programme Wilhelm (www.geocities.com/rba_schach2000) that allows the user to generate and analyse certain special positions from an EGTB. Especially mutual zugzwang positions are important. Such positions are often used to compose studies (I shall discuss this later).

Complete information about the EGTB can be found on the site of the well known Czech composer Emil Vlasák (www.volny.cz/ev-comp/tablebase.htm). There you can also find links to several sites. It is noteworthy that downloading an EGTB with 4-5 men requires only a standard internet connection, while 6 man tables require high-speed connections (ADSL, DSL). Even then the downloading of a single database takes hours [HH: as a matter of fact in June 2008 there are no longer sites that host the complete databases for downloading. The only way to download the databases is using a peer-to-peer network e-mule. See <http://kirill-kryukov.com/chess/tablebases-online>]. But it is possible to buy the complete set of 4-5 man EGTB and a couple of 6 man EGTBs on DVD from the following site: www.chesscentral.com/software/turbo-endgame.htm.

1. This is a re-worked version of an article that appeared in *Mate Plus Review*, autumn 2007 and is reproduced here with kind permission of the editor, Milan Velimerovic, and the author.

EGTB and Endgame Study Composition

In the world of chess composition there are many disputes regarding the use of EGTBs in endgame study composition. Some problemists believe that an endgame study with positions that are present in an EGTB should not be considered as an original work (let us call such problemists Group A). The majority of composers reject this opinion (Group B).

Group A treats all positions (initial or final in the study) containing 6 men or less as “made” by a computer and they use the expression “a computer study”. The consequence of such a wrong attitude would be to abandon all ideas from EGTB (5-7) territory and to leave room for study-monsters (not that I am against heavy studies; all forms have the right to “live”). We often hear from members of group A that a certain position was “taken” from an EGTB. Such a statement is not adequate. An EGTB does contain all possible positions with an exact result, and a computer can display for every position the best move. But the total number of positions in an EGTB is extremely large (billions and billions), and it is hardly possible to select one of such positions by simply browsing through all possible positions. Instead of saying “the position is taken from an EGTB” it would be fairer to say: “the data of this position are in an EGTB”. Or: “All the analyses for this position can be extracted from an EGTB”.

As group A presents it, a composer just selects “a list of ready positions” from an EGTB, finds an interesting idea, adds some analyses and the study is ready. Well, we shall try to work this way with the EGTB KRBPKQ (about 13 GB on hard disk). In order to check all positions it would be necessary to use a computer programme to put all positions one after another on the chess board and to look at their analyses on the screen (like catching “a golden fish”). Stop, this is Utopia! Such an adventure could last many, many years. This leads nowhere!

Let’s be level-headed again and see how EGTBs can really help a composer. As a rule,

the composer begins with an idea (the idea comes first), puts an approximate, rough position on the board (the scheme), and then he repeatedly changes the position to find the optimal realization of the idea [HH: This is not essentially different from traditional composition]. While doing so, he constantly follows the results of the analyses from the EGTB. This is way to use the magnificent services of the EGTB.

What do you think, do only study composers work this way? Certainly not! All composers have such opportunities, and even better! First, all direct problems with up to 6 men are in EGTB territory, and second, all direct problems, no matter how many pieces are on the board, can be precisely analysed by computer programmes (much more precisely than studies). We may conclude that the whole spectrum of chess problems is in the territory of computer help. However, we haven’t heard problem composers using the expression “computer problems”. The truth is that problems are more “computer-made” than studies.

Group B doesn’t restrict the composer his creativity. The source as well as the method or tools he uses are free. The main criterion is how much the initial idea is upgraded with new nuances. These nuances could be any of thematic tries, syntheses of several ideas, consecutive or parallel ideas, etc.

There is no doubt that it is much more difficult to find interesting ideas among the many billions of positions in the EGTBs than in the limited territory of published studies (for example, Van der Heijden’s endgame study database III contains 67,000 studies). It is impossible to disagree with the opinion of IGM John Nunn who has devoted a lot of work to researching databases. Recently, he wrote: “The composer who discovers something remarkable in a database deserves credit; the composer who repeats the discovery does not”.

The group B approach doesn’t mean there are no areas in EGTBs that demand a special approach by study composers. The lists of positions with mutual zugzwang that can be pro-

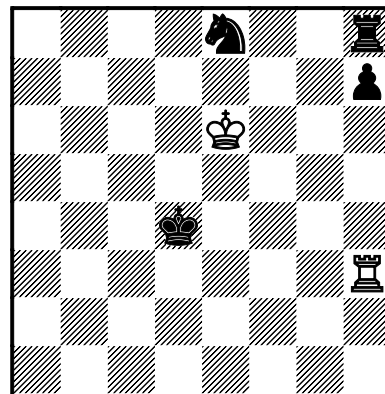
duced from EGTBs using a programme like Wilhelm, and which are published in various sources, belong to these special areas. Such positions call for another approach. The composer wouldn't abandon any ethical standard if he developed the ideas from these lists. However, he should have in mind that these positions could be treated as partial anticipations. The relation is the same as with development of ideas from classical endgames [HH: But since a good zugzwang study requires the zugzwang position with WTM in a try, the single position anticipation should be considered very partly].

Our experience tells that finding interesting ideas in these lists is not as easy as presented by group A. It is even more difficult to develop these ideas. There are tens of thousands of positions of mutual zz in some endings. To find an idea with chances of being further developed, a huge amount of effort and time is required. There is reason to believe that composers from group A still haven't attempted this kind of search for "ready endgame studies" as we cannot find examples of "easily taken" endgames from EGTBs in from such composers. The most unacceptable action by group A is then a public demand to judges to downgrade the most economical studies. Moreover, they try to incorporate such rules in the PCCC Codex. There even happened to be judges who gave zero points, without hesitation, to all such endgame studies competing for the FIDE Album. It is very sad that these persons do not worry about their huge responsibility for the future of the Study-Art.

Many will agree there are no absolutely original ideas in the chess world. All ideas exist in "darkness" until composers make them accessible for the audience. When these ideas come to the light, we call them "original" although there are always some old "bricks" integrated in them.

I believe the following examples will give an impression about the (group B) author's attitude towards the use of EGTB in study composing.

A.1 Position 1



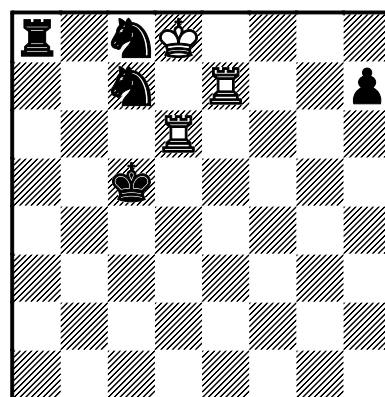
e6d4 0403.01 2/4 BTM, Draw

1...Ke4 2.Rxh7 Rxh7 stalemate.

Position 1 is taken from the KRNPKR mutual zugzwang list (The list contains about 4000 positions) and it is a zugzwang with BTM. As you may have noticed, the stalemate is not new. We should make it immediately clear that this position was generated by a computer (it could also have been created by a man, but this would be impossible to prove).

Is it possible to compose an original endgame out of this simple position? My friend Richard Becker and I thought about it for a long time. We analysed all the details to reveal the possibilities. Huge energy and time was spent. It wasn't very clear what would come out. However, we managed to realise a synthesis of several stalemates in a position with 8 men (Position 1a).

A.2 R. Becker & I. Akobia
5th prize Ceskoslovensky Sach 2006



d8c5 0506.01 3/5 Draw

1.Rh6

Thematic try 1.Rxc7+? Kxd6 2.Rd7+ Kc6

a) 2...Ke6? 3.Rxh7 Se7+ (3...Sd6+ 4.Kc7 Ra7+ 5.Kd8 Sf7+ 6.Kc8 Sd6+ 7.Kd8 draws) 4.Kc7 Ra7+ 5.Kb8 (Kd8) 5...Sc6+ 6.Kc8 Rxh7 stalemate.

b) 2...Kc5? 3.Rxh7 Sd6+ 4.Kd7 (Ke7) 4...Ra7+ 5.Kd8 Sf7+ 6.Ke8 Sd6+ 7.Kd8 =; 3.Rc7+ Kd5 4.Rxh7 Nd6+ (4...Sb6+? 5.Kc7 Ra7+ 6.Kb8 Rxh7 stalemate) 5.Kd7 Ra7+ 6.Kd8 Sf7+ (Black avoids 6...Rxh7? - a sixth echo stalemate) 7.Kc8 Kc6 wins.

A) 1...Sd5 2.Rc7+ Sxc7 3.Kxc7 Se7 4.Rxh7 Ra7+ 5.Kb8 (Kd8) Sc6+ 6.Kc8 Rxh7 echo stalemate 1, or 3...Sb6 4.Rxh7 Ra7+ 5.Kb8 Rxh7 echo stalemate 2.

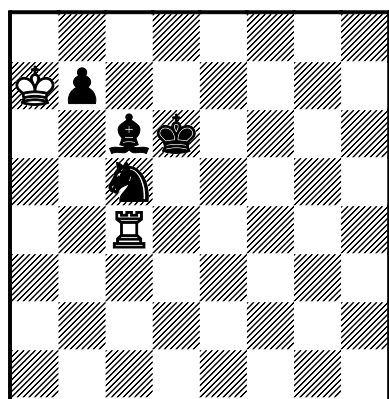
B) 1...Sxe7+ 2.Kxe7 Ra7 3.Kf8 Kd5 4.Rxh7 Se6+ 5.Ke8 Ra8+ 6.Ke7 Ra7+ 7.Ke8 Rxh7 echo stalemate 3, or 2...Rh8 3.Kf7 (Kd7/Kf6) Se8 4.Ke6 Kd4 5.Rh3 zz BTM, Sg7+ 6.Kf6 Se8+ 7.Ke6 c7+ 8.Kf7 (Kf6) Se8 9.Ke6 and now:

9...Ke4 10.Rxh7 Rxh7 echo stalemate 4, or:

9...h5 10.Rh4+ Ke3 11.Kf7 Sd6+ 12.Kg6 Rg8+ 13.Kh7 Rg5 14.Kh6 Sf7+ 15.Kh7 Kf3 16.Rf4+ Kg3 17.Rg4+ Kf3 18.Rf4+ Kxf4 echo stalemate 5.

As you can see, position 1 is only a fragment of the study (position 1a). If group A judges consider this a “computer study”, a dialogue with them is hopeless.

A.3 Position 2



a7d6 0103.01 2/4 BTM, Draw

Position 2 is from a list with approximately 21,000 positions with mutual zugzwang of the type KBNPKR. Here we see a mutual zz with

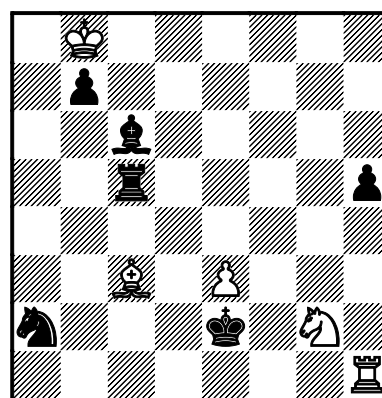
black to move: 1...Sd7 2.Rb4 b5 3.Ka6 Kc5 4.Ka5 Se5 5.Rxb5+ Bxb5 stalemate.

Careful analysis of the position revealed possibilities of adding introductory play. Some addition is necessary, as the stalemate is known and we cannot “sell” this as a study. In many cases such a position could be developed into quite long solutions. However, if we do not add thematic content, such as a thematic try, synthesis with another idea, etc, there is no sense in publishing it as a study. These are cases where the judge should be careful in estimating the contributions of the author and the computer that generated the initial position (we are talking about positions with mutual zz).

After analyzing and searching for a long time the author found it possible to unite three identical stalemates.

A.4 I. Akobia

3rd prize Schneider MT 2006



b8e2 0444.12 5/6 Draw

1.Sf4+ (1.Re1+!? Kf2 2.Sf4 Rxc3 wins) 1...Kxe3 2.Bd4+! (2.Bd2+!? Kxd2 3.Rh2+ Kc3 wins) 2...Kxd4 3.Se6+ with:

A) 3...Kc4 4.Rh4+ Kb5 5.Sxc5 Kxc5 6.Rxh5+ Kc4 7.Rh4+ Kc5 8.Rh5+ Kb6 9.Rh7 Sb4 10.Rxb7+ Bxb7 - echo stalemate 1, or:

B) 3...Ke5 4.Rxh5+ Kxe6 5.Rxc5 Kd6 6.Rc2 Sb4 7.Rc1 and two lines:

B1) 7...Sd5 8.Ka7 Kc7 9.Rb1 Se7 10.Rxb7+ Bxb7 echo stalemate 2, or:

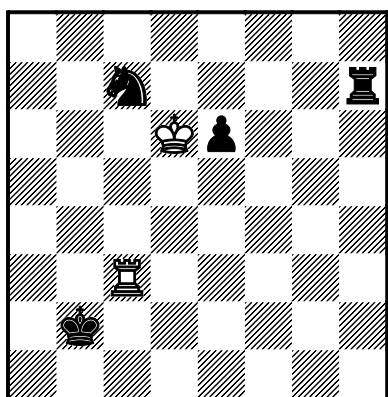
B2) 7...Sa2 8.Rc2 Sb4 9.Rc1 Sa6+ 10.Ka7 Sc5 11.Rc4 zz BTM Sd7 12.Rb4 b5

13.Ka6 Kc5 14.Ka5 Se5 15.Rxb5+ Bxb5
echo stalemate 3.

We cannot call the introductory play very successful, but to synthesise three echo stalemates is not an easy job.

Here is another example of working with EGTBs. In this position (KRNPKR) there is a mutual zugzwang with Black to move, after the White's move.

A.5 Position 3

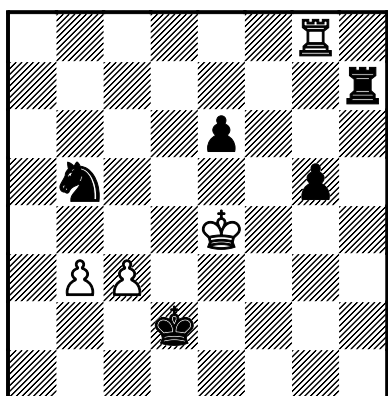


d6b2 0403.01 2/4 BTM, Draw

1.Rc4 zz BTM Kb1 2.Rc5 zz BTM =.

We had several opportunities to lengthen the introductory play, but it did not satisfy us. It was necessary to search for synthesis of a parallel positional draw, or to change colours and search for interesting ideas for Black. The following study has two parallel main lines beginning with the second move of Black.

A.6 R. Becker & I. Akobia
1st prize Hildebrand MT 2007



e4d2 0403.22 Draw

1.Ke5! Kxc3 2.Rxg5 with:

A) 2...Rh6 3.Rg7! zz Kd3 4.Rg4! (Thematic try 4.Rg3+!? Kc2! zz 5.Re3 Kd2 6.Rg3 Sa7 7.Kd6 Sc8+ 8.Kd7 Sb6+ 9.Kd6 Sd5 wins, 5.Rg7 Kc3! zz 6.Rg3+ Kb4 wins. Thematic try 4.Rg1!? Sc7 5.Rd1+ Ke3 6.Re1+ Kd2 7.Re4 Se8 8.Rg4 Kc3 9.Rg8 Sc7 wins) **4...Kc2 5.Rg3 zz Sa7 6.Kd6** (Thematic try 6.b4!? Sc6+ 7.Kd6 Sd4 8.Ke5 Sb3 9.b5 Sd2 zz 10.Kd4 Rh5 11.Rc3+ Kd1 12.Re3 Rd5+ 13.Kc3 e5 14.Kb4 Rd4+ 15.Kc5 Se4+ 16.Kc6 Kd2 17.Rh3 Rd6+ 18.Kc7 Rd3 wins) **6...Sb5+ 7.Ke5 Sa7 8.Kd6 Sc8+ 9.Kd7 Sb6+ 10.Kd6 Sd5 11.b4! Sc3 12.Re3 (Ke5) Sb5+ 13.Ke5 zz Kd2 14.Rg3 zz Sa7 15.Kd6 Sc8+ 16.Ke5 Sa7 17.Kd6 Sb5+ 18.Ke5 Kc2 19.Re3! zz Kd2 20.Rg3 Ke2 21.Re3+! Kd2 22.Rg3** positional draw, or **22...Ke2 23.Re3+ Kxe3** stalemate.

B) 2...Sc7 3.Kd6 Kb4 4.Re5 (waiting move; Thematic try 4.Rg1!? Kxb3 5.Rc1 Kb4 zz wins)

4...Rg7 5.Re1! (Thematic try 5.Rh5!? Kxb3 6.Rc5 Rh7 zz 7.Rc1 Kb4 zz wins) **5...Kxb3 6.Rc1 Rf7 7.Rc6! Kb2 8.Rc5 Rg7 9.Rc6 Kb3 10.Rc1 Rf7 11.Rc6 Kb4 12.Rc2! Kb5 13.Rc3 zz** (Thematic try 13.Rc1!? Rg7 zz 14.Rc2 Rh7 15.Rb2+ Kc4 wins) **13...Rg7 14.Rc1 zz Rh7 15.Rc2 zz Kb4 16.Rc1 zz Kb3 17.Rc5 zz Ka4 18.Rc6 zz Ka5 19.Rc4 zz Kb5 20.Rc2 Kb4 21.Rc1 Kb3 22.Rc5 Ka3 23.Rc3+ Kb2 24.Rc4 zz Kb1 25.Rc5 zz** positional draw.

In two parallel variations the white Rook makes precise tempo moves. In line A, these moves are along the g-file and the third rank and in line B, along the fifth rank and the c-file.

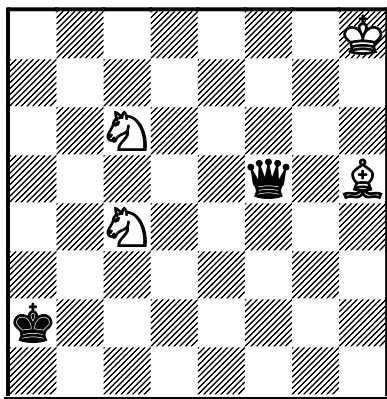
These three examples should have served to present the opportunities given by EGTB and a computer with modem programmes. The fact that the computer is the main assistant of the modem composer is beyond doubt.

Whatever group A would say, there is a deep belief that the future of study composing depends on the imagination, erudition and energy of the composer, while, certainly, the computer will always be a useful assistant.

THE GBR CLASS 3002/1006

JOHN ROYCROFT

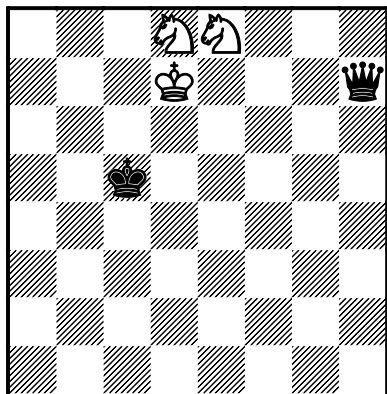
In the second edition of *Secrets of Spectacular Chess* the authors, commenting on a position from a Nadareishvili *Thèmes-64* 1958 prize-winner, draw attention to the WTM diagrammed position (after 4...Ka2, when the composer's drawing line continues 5.Bf3!!) and write:



h8a2 3012.00 f5h5c4c6 4/2

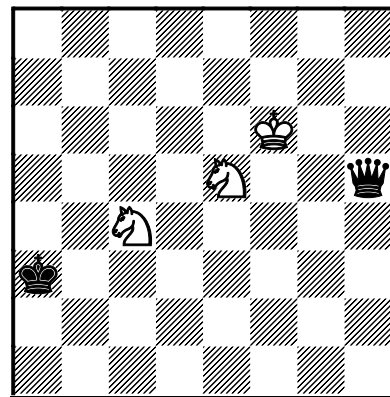
... Unfortunately the computer cook ... 5.S4e5 is, apparently, a draw, while 5.S6e5 loses! It is beyond normal human comprehension why that is, although John Nunn might be able to explain it if you ever get stuck on a desert island with him!

Well, Fritz 11, never overlooking a tactical trick, wins every time against this 'club player'. Nevertheless communing thanks to the Bleicher site with the *C* oracle, he can report exegetical progress.



C d7c5 3002.00 h7d8e8 3/2 WTM

Both sides are well placed, Black because his threatening presence on each wing stretches White's defensive resources, burdened as they are with a fight on two fronts, and White because a knight is giving check so that he can choose how to improve his position. In this endgame the general stageical idea is that the knights draw if they set up a bunch with their monarch, provided he is not actually on the board's edge. In the diagram 1.Kc8? is bad, while 1.Ke6! draws.



C f6a3 3002.00 h5c4e5 3/2 BTM

The general 'bunch' draw allows serial checking repulsion of the aggressor king when he attempts an approach. However, a snag in this 'formula' is that such a bunch may not be a fortress – it may be necessary to retreat while being ready to choose a different bunch, depending on how the aggressor plays. And, there may be a fleeting – and deeply hidden – chink, an Achilles' heel, in any particular defensive armour.

We shall be learning from the oracle without adducing variations. A '!' will indicate a unique winning (black) move, while a '(!)' will indicate the presence of either a straight dual or a 'waste of time' (or both).

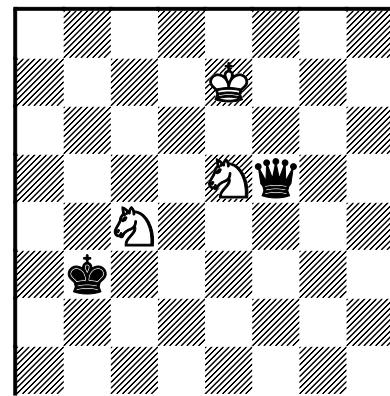
C 1...Kb4! 2.Sd6. Now Sf5 would draw, and bK is not close enough to interfere. Can bQ on her own do anything about this? 2...Qh8+! The first of a series of tempo-gain-

ing checks (a recurrent feature in long wins) leading eventually to wKd4 in check from bQc3. 3.Kf5 Qh3+(!) 4.Ke4 Qh1+(!) 5.Kd4 Qg1+(!) 6.Ke4 Qe1+(!) 7.Kd4 Qc3+(!). We enter another delicate phase. 8.Kd5 Qd2+(!) 9.Ke6 Qa2+(!) 10.Kf6 Kc5. At last, progress. But is there not an instant ‘bunch’? 11.Sf5 Qb2(!). Enter the first of a series of pins combined with switching of board-ends by bQ, the enemy being unable to regroup to meet the versatile and mobile dynamic bQ powerhouse. 12.Ke6 Qb6+(!) 13.Kf7 Kd5. Infiltration, the key anti-bunch manoeuvre. 14.Sg6 Qf2(!) 15.Kf6 Ke4. There is no driving-off check! 16.Se7 Qb6+ 17.Kg5 Qd8(!). Black needs the whole board in order to win! 18.Kf6. The final stage has its finesses. 18...Kf4 19.Ke6 Qb6+! 20.Sd6 Qe3+! 21.Kd7 Qh3+(!) 22.Kc7 Qh7 23.Sc8 Ke5 24.Kb6 Ke6 25.Sc6 Kd7 26.S8a7 Qh6(!) 27.Kb5 Qg5+. Black’s hold is strong enough for even 27...Ke8 – though no other move by bK – not to forfeit the win, even if the penalty is 20 moves. 28.Kb6 Qg1+(!) 29.Kb5 Kc7, and now we no longer need the oracle to wrap it up!

Using the Bleicher site (or similar) leads to the observation that although duals increase in

frequency as a long win develops, nevertheless there are late moments when a unique move is indispensable, if progress is to be made. (We exclude unique moves that are effectively forced, such as in response to a check.) This is a phase-related phenomenon (cf. GBR class 0023) calling for closer attention by specialists in artificial intelligence and/or in combinatorics.

Borderline cases hinting at studies test the ‘bunch’ recipe.



C e7h3 3002.00 f5c4e5 WTM

The natural 1.Kd6? loses fastest to 1...Kc3. So how can White draw? The answer is among this EG’s *Snippets*.

REVIEWS

Editor:

JOHN ROYCROFT

***Secrets of Spectacular Chess*, Jonathan LEVITT and David FRIEDGOOD. 2nd edition, 2008. 288 pages. ISBN 978 1 85744 551 0.**

The authors now include further examples (of games, problems and studies) encountered in the last ten years to illustrate their ‘PDGF’ approach to chess beauty, with factors outside these four such as originality and soundness explicitly excluded: PGDF = Paradox, Depth, Geometry, Flow. The ambitious attempt to apply PGDF across every genre doesn’t work for this reader – the concepts feel too abstract, too woolly and too subjective – but may work for you, and in any case the rich, rambling commentary (Ovid and Oscar Wilde have fleeting walk-on parts) makes the whole a good read. The -w, -b and -c suffixes to page references in the names index to indicate ‘white’, ‘black’ and ‘composer’ are indeed neat.

Sometimes we wonder if the preface by an invited grandee has been read by the author, and conversely, whether the grandee has read the book. In this case IGM John Nunn (in the 1995 edition, and repeated in 2008) tests his readers with placing the move 30...Qd7xh3+!, and gives the answer, seemingly unaware that the combination occupies two whole pages in the book.

***Practical Endgame Play – mastering the basics*, Efstratios GRIVAS. 2008. 320 pages. ISBN 978 185744 556 5.**

Significant added value in this excellent traverse of a well-trodden path is the selection of so many examples from the Greek GM’s own games, making them unfamiliar to the bulk of readers. His bibliography, though, follows the same principle, with more than half of the books listed being authored by the GM himself. Studies get a rare look-in – and are unindexed. We were especially impressed –

and here we discern added value – by the GM’s proposed twelve rules that introduce Chapter Thirty on queen endgames.

***Jon Speelman’s Chess Puzzle Book*, Jon SPEELMAN. 2008. 144 pages. ISBN-13: 978-1-904600-96-1.**

Eight labelled pigeon-holes, four above four. Each pigeon-hole displays an apothecary’s glass jar, also labelled. Each jar has a different shape, a different colour, a label or equivalent of its own, and a theme, expressed in one witty visual way or another. The labels read: Mates, Forks, Pins, Skewers, Back Rank, Stalemates, Promotions, and Loose Pieces.

And the book? It lives up to its cover in every way. If you have the slightest desire to brush up your chess calculating prowess, to improve your studies-solving skills, to perform better against Fritz, this is the book for you, as it was for this reviewer. Speelman at his inimitable best.

***Moving on*, by Frank VISBEEN, 2008. ISBN: 978-90-79483-01-3. 172 pages. 252 diagrams. In English.**

The Dutch problemist F. Visbeen (1937-1996) left a manuscript behind which has now been published. The text, often light-hearted, is very readable. There is only one pair of pages with relevance to studies, and the two associated diagrams are just sketches. The composer presumably had his tongue in his cheek in writing:

“*Solving* studies is a discipline in itself, *composing* certainly is.”

And, again:

“... the studies that I do want to declare at the registry of Births, Marriages and Deaths remain comfortably warm in the womb.”

Once more:

“Why ‘Moving on?’ Because I think it is time to look out of the window ... and to consider why in daily life so many compositions have remained unfinished.”

The book is well indexed, but there is no evident explanation of the book’s sub-title: *Fifty chess compositions and their adventures* – the diagrams bearing Visbeen’s name total 72. Is the author having a laugh at our expense?!

Alfonso X El Sabio – Libro de los Juegos: Acwdrex, Dados e Tablas, Edicion de Raul Orellana Calderon, Madrid 2007. ISBN: 978-84-96452-41-1. 412 pages. Hard cover, robust binding, hardy dust cover, yellow and red ribbon place holders. Edition size: 1,000. Colour illustrations. In (Old) Spanish.

The original by Alfonso the Wise carries the date 1283 and the place Sevilla. The main part is devoted to the fers and alfil version of chess, illustrated by 103 problems of the time. Stipulations and solutions are in the longest of longhand descriptions. The original painted diagrams that preface each (short) chapter are reproduced – a visual feast that is repeated, to meet the modern taste, in a separate brochure prepared by our old friend Joaquin Pérez de Arriaga. The brochure includes the corresponding diagram numbers in Murray’s *A History of Chess*. Puzzling pawns on the first rank are explained as having promoted to fers.

1000 Minor Piece Endings 2007. 550 pages. ISBN 978-963-9750-08-1.

1000 Queen Endings 2007. 386 pages. ISBN 978-963-9750-11-1.

The above hardback, figurine algebraic, 6-diagrams per page, volumes were assembled by Hungarian GM József Pintér. Below the diagram “1.?” indicates WTM and “1...?” indicates BTM. There is no explanatory matter whatsoever, the solutions consisting of unalleviated moves. Studies are mixed in with game positions. There is no GBR retrieval directory. Is there added value in either anthology for studies enthusiasts? We detect none. Will the figure 1000 linked to a holder of the grandmaster title attract any potential purchaser?

1000 Endgame Studies 2007. Selected by András MÉSZÁROS. 312 pages. ISBN 978-963-9750-09-8.

Same layout and format as the two Pinter volumes. The same comments apply, except that as a ‘pure’ anthology of studies, the author has compiled an index by themes, in which each position is allowed just one theme – a limitation. The name ‘Bernard Carlier Leger’ (a pair of bishop ending examples) was fresh to us, but with no date or source or bibliography supplied the author has missed an information opportunity. More serious lapses are diagram and composer duplication (‘H. Otten’ and ‘G. Otten’ ...), and the index entry ‘De Villeneuve & Esclapon J.’. No studies by Blandford, Joseph, Peckover, Pervakov or Wotawa are included.

The Huddersfield College Chess Magazine, Vol. I-IV. Oct. 1872 to Sep. 1876.

The Huddersfield College Chess Magazine, Vol. IV-V. Oct. 1876 to Sep. 1878.

This magazine was the precursor of the *British Chess Magazine*. At first sight these two hardback volumes are Moravian Chess facsimile reprints, ISBN 978-80-7189-582-4 and ISBN 978-80-7189-584-8 respectively, but this is not so. They are *selected* facsimile pages whose choice is unexplained. We find two items of interest to EG readers. One is the six-part survey (concluding ‘to be continued’) by H.J.C. Andrews of the manuscript papers of William Bone, who died in 1874. The other is the letter dated 31v1877 from E.B. Cook (b.1830 and of Hoboken, USA) giving advance notice of his award in the American Centennial Problem Tournament. He writes: *Forty-five sets were found to contain out-and-out faulty problems, and six sets were unsound by reason of problems containing a curdling preponderance of “doubles”. Of the single problems four were found wrong in toto, and one heavily discounted by disfiguring “duals”.* Our purpose in citing the foregoing is to suggest that this is strong evidence against the suggestion that is sometimes made that E.B. Cook was the first to use the term ‘cook’ in its modern sense. In any case the term ‘cook’ predates the adult Cook.

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