

StrateGems 2014

I included in the award only 4 studies out of 20 published in the magazine in 2014.

First, I'd like to explain why the next 4 studies were not awarded.

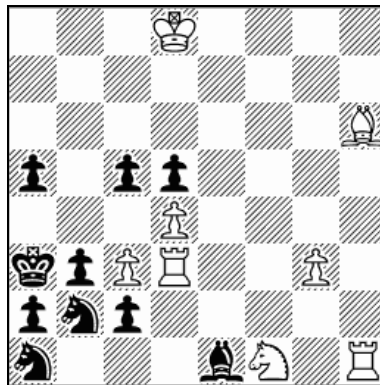
E0257 by Y.Afek is completely anticipated by D.Gurgenidze (#72444 in the HHIV).

E0256 and **E0268** by R.Becker show precise play in Q+S vs. Q ending. I see nothing original in these studies. This material was boring 100 years ago and nowadays Richard has made it even more boring.

E0261 by F.Vrabec shows a deep foresight idea. But the reasons why White has to place his king on b5 and not on b3 or b4 are so masked that they are impossible to understand even with the computer without Nalimov. I consider this a very serious drawback.

E0253 Gady Costeff

Prize



Win

1.Bc1 c4 (1...cxd4 2.Se3 Bxc3 3.Sxd5) **2.Rf3!** (2.Re3? a4 3.Rxe1 stalemate) **2...Bd2!** This bishop impedes Black's counter-play for stalemate and he must be sacrificed now.

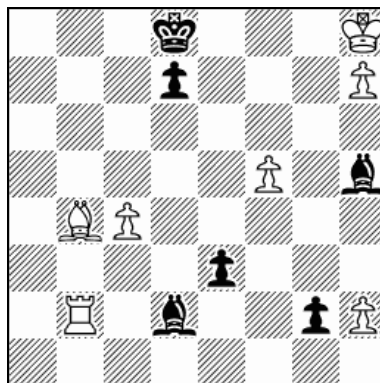
2...a4 3.Se3! Bd2 4.Bxd2 Sd1 5.Bc1+ b2 6.Bxb2+ Kxb2 7.Sxd1+ Kb1 8.Se3+ c1Q 9.Rxc1+ Kxc1 10.Rf1+ Kb2 11.Rf2+ Kb1 12.g4 wins; or 2...Bxg3 3.Sxg3 a4 4.Rd3 cxd3 5.Sf5 d2 6.Sd6 dxc1Q 7.Sb5#.

3.Sxd2 a4! 4.Rd3! (4.Sxc4+? dxc4 5.Bf4 Sd3) **4...cxd3 5.Rd1!** (5.Sc4+? dxc4 6.Bf4 Sd1) **5...cxd1Q 6.Sc4+! dxc4 7.Bf4** and «b2» can't be vacated! **7...Sc2 8.Bd6+ Sb4 9.Bxb4#.**

The black Sb2 has 4 possible squares to move on in the initial position but they all get blocked during the solution, three of them with bright sacrifices of the white pieces. Gady Costeff realized this striking romantic idea very well. The study by An.Kuznetsov and E.Pogosiants 1965 (#34470 in HHIV) shows the idea of «blocked and trapped knight» in the classical style, but, of course, it doesn't anticipate the prize-winner.

E0262 Andrzej Jasik

Honorable mention



Win

1.Rb1 (1.Bd6? Bc3+) **1...Bd1!** **2.Rxd1 e2** **3.Rxd2 g1Q** (3...e1Q 4.Rxg2 Qxb4 5.Kg8 Qxc4+ 6.Kg7 Qd4+ 7.f6) **4.Rxe2 Qd4+** **5.Re5!** Deflection of bQ! (5.Kg8? Qg4+) **5...Kc7!** The king leaves the 8th rank so that the queen could give perpetual check after the capture on «e5». (5...Qxe5+ 6.Kg8 Qe8+ 7.Bf8 win.) **6.Ba5+**

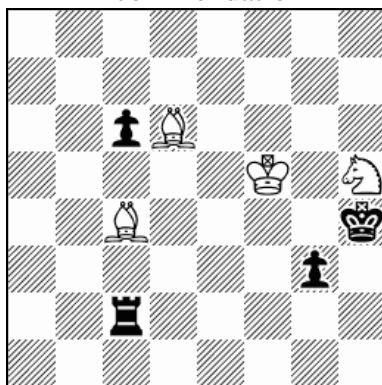
Not precipitated 6.Kg8? Qxc4+ 7.Kg7 Qg4+ draw; and waiting moves like 6.Ba3? or 6.Be7? lead to perpetual after 6...Qxe5.

6...Kd6 **7.Kg8 Qxc4+** **8.Re6+!** Check! Decoy of bK! (8.Kf8? Qh4 9.Bb4+ Kxe5 10.Bc3+ Kxf5=) **8...dxe6** **9.h8Q exf5+** **10.Kf8** [10.Kh7? Qh4+ 11.Kg8 Qc4+] **10...Qc8+** **11.Kg7 Qb7+** **12.Kh6** win.

Two sacrifices of the same rook are unexpected and impressive, though their motives are different. The middle of this tactical study is perfect, but the introduction is a little too epic and the final moves after 8.Re6+ are rather prosaic.

E0271 Martin Minski

1 commendation



Win

1.Be2! (1.Sf4? g2! 2.Bc5 Kg3=) **1...Rxe2** (1...g2 2.Bg3+ Kh3 3.Bg4#) **2.Sf4 Re3** **3.Bf8!**

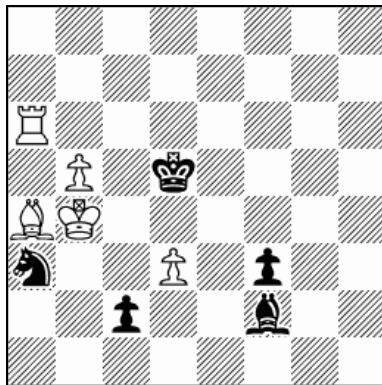
Not 3.Bc5? Re8! zz 4.Bb4 g2=; or 3.Bb4? c5! 4.Bxc5 Re8=; or 3.Sg2+? Kh3 4.Sxe3 g2=.

3...Re8 **4.Bc5!** zz (4.Bg7? g2=) **4...Rg8** (4...g2 5.Bf2#) **5.Be7+** **Rg5+** **6.Bxg5#.**

Spectacular sacrifice of the bishop on the first move paralyzes Black completely. Another bishop has to be careful not to play on «c5» too early because of the mutual zugzwang. A couple of mates and absence of difficult lines make this study up to the taste of lazy solvers.

E0254 M.Hlinka & Y.Polasek

2 commendation



Draw

1.Bb3+! (1.Bxc2? Sxc2+ 2.Kc3 Se3! 3.Kd2 Sf1+ 4.Kd1 Bd4) **1...Kd4** **2.Rd6+!** (2.Bxc2? Sxc2+ 3.Kb3 Kxd3 4.Rf6 Sd4+ win.) **2...Ke3** (2...Ke5 3.Re6+ Kf4 4.Rc6 Bd4 5.Bd5 f2 6.Bg2=) **3.Bxc2** (3.Re6+?

Kd2! 4.Bxc2 Sxc2+ 5.Ka5 Bg3 6.Rh6 f2 7.Rh1 Sd4 8.b6 Sf3 9.Rf1 Ke2 win.) **3...Sxc2+** (3...Bh4 4.Re6+ Kd2 5.Bd1 Kxd1 6.b6 f2 7.b7 Sc2+ 8.Kc5 f1Q 9.b8Q=) **4.Kc3** (4.Kc4? Bg3 5.Re6+ Kd2 6.b6 f2 7.Rf6 Se3+ 8.Kc5 f1Q) **4...Sd4!** **5.Rxd4 Be1+** **6.Kc4 f2** **7.Re4+ Kf3** **8.b6!** (8.Re8? Bd2; or 8.Rf4+? Kxf4 9.b6 Ba5 10.b7 Bc7 win.) **8...f1Q** **9.Rf4+ Kxf4** **10.b7** draw.

Interesting play starts from 4...Sd4! and leads to the finale where Black has the move, the queen and bishop but cannot stop the white pawn. Such scenario is well-known in studies (M.Liburkin 1949 #23868, A.Sochniev StateGems(!) 2006, #73003).

Sergiy Didukh,
Judge of the tourney