

# Endgame study award, The Macedonian Problemist 2022

*by Steffen Nielsen*

11 studies took part in the 2022 informal study tournament of the Macedonian Problemist, the first of its kind. They were sent to me by editor Zoran Gavrilovski. As the tournament wasn't announced until well into 2022, the number of entries was satisfactory and so was the level. I am happy to see a new tournament emerge, and I am convinced the level will be even higher in subsequent tournaments of the Macedonian Problemist.

I regret having to repeat my lesson from previous awards that a series of precise, economical, but essentially idea-less moves do not constitute an artistic work of any value. In this tournament Kekely and Hlinka repeated their "crimes". I cannot begin to guess how these works come about. Are the pieces simply set up until the engine gives a long, captureless line without duals?

Other studies left out the award were based on ideas I find boring/outdated. For instance a king move to a precise square in response to a check (Arestov), where the king would have been vulnerable later on, had it moved to any other square. Additional ideas are needed to make this concept great again.

The study by Minski/Avni, though of course skillfully crafted, too much resembles previous similar tactics of stalemate avoidance and unguarded guards.

One study by Egorov (#2666) shows some good play, but the capture of the rook c2 is very harmful. The other (#2667) by the same author, also doesn't show any clear idea (at least I couldn't find it). Both studies unnecessarily begin with Black to move.

Prusikin's attempt at a middle game study did not convince me despite two moves out of the ordinary. Having 18 pieces on the board calls for more ambitious ideas.

All the unawarded studies are presented below the award for reference.

The two top studies of the tournament were very close in quality. In the end I gave first prize to the most ambitious idea rather than to the amazing flow of the other candidate.



### Serhiy Didukh #2668

1st prize The Macedonian Problemist, 2022  
Black to move

**1...h2+!** 1...Qxd6 2.gxf3 Qxe6 3.f8N+!; 1...Qe7 2.gxf3 Qxf7 3.Rd7! Qxd7 4.Nf8+; 1...Qa5 2.gxf3 Qa1+ 3.Kh2 Qf1 4.Kg3! Qg2+ 5.Kf4 Qh2+ 6.Kg4 Qxd6 7.f8Q Qxe6+ 8.Kg3+-; 1...Qa8

**2.Kh1 Qa8 3.Ra6!!** Logical try 3.gxf3? Qxf3+ 4.Kxh2 Qxf2+ 5.Kh3 Qf3+! (5...Qxf7? 6.g6+! Qxg6 7.Nf8+) 6.Kh4 Qf2+ 7.Kg4 Qxf7 8.g6+ Qxg6+ 9.Ng5+ Kh8! 10.Rxg6 stalemate.; 3.g6+? Kh6! (3...Kxg6? 4.Nc7+) 4.g7 Qa1+ 5.Kxh2 Qe5+

**3...Qe4** 3...Qxa6 4.gxf3 Qxe6 5.f8N+!; 3...Qb7

**4.gxf3 Qxf3+ 5.Kxh2 Qxf2+** 5...Qh5+ 6.Kg3 Qxf7 7.f4+-

**6.Kh3 Qf3+ 7.Kh4 Qf2+ 8.Kg4 Qxf7 9.g6+! Qxg6+ 10.Ng5+ Kh8! 11.Rd6!** zz

**11...Qe8 12.Rd8! Qxd8 13.Nf7+** The jump in place Rd6–a6–d6 puts Black in zugzwang, avoids the stalemate and traps the queen. **1–0**

Judge's comment: White needs to foresee a Black stalemate trap. White plays 3. Ra6!! to ensure the position after 11. Rd6 is reached with Black to move. A difficult concept. Black to move and an unnatural rook on f3 in the initial position are blemishes that seem unavoidable.



### Michael Pasman - #2670

2nd prize, Macedonian Problemist, 11.2022

**1.Nf3!** 1.Ng5 Kd3! 2.Nhf3 Be7! 3.Ne5+ Ke3!; 1.Nf1 Kd3

**1...Kd3 2.Nh4 e3 3.Ng2 e2 4.Ng5!** 4.Kh7 Ke4! 5.Kg6 Kf3! 6.Ne1+ Kg4! 7.Nc2 h4 8.Ng5 Bc5--+; 4.Kg7 Ke4 5.Kf6 Kf3 6.Ne1+ Kg4

**4...Be7 5.Nf4+ Kd2** 5...Ke3 6.Ngh3 Bd6 7.Nxe2 Kxe2 8.Kg7 /h7

**6.Ne4+** 6.Nxe2 Kxe2--+

**6...Ke3 7.Nxe2 h4! 8.N4g3!** 8.N2g3 h3! 9.Kh7 Bh4! 10.Kg6 Bxg3 11.Nxg3 Kf2!--+; 8.N2c3 Bb4 9.Kg7 Bxc3+ 10.Nxc3 h3

**8...Kf2! 9.Nf5!** 9.Kh7 Bd6! 10.Kg6 Bxg3; 9.Kg7 Bd6

**9...h3 10.Neg3! Bh4!** 10...Bd6 11.Ne4+! (11.Nh1+ Kg2 12.Nxd6 Kxh1--+ ) 11...Kf3 12.Ng5+

**11.Nh1+!** 11.Nxh4 Kxg3--+

**11...Kg1** 11...Kg2 12.Nxh4+

**12.Nxh4 Kxh1 13.Ng6! h2 14.Nh4**

1/2-1/2

Judge's comment: An exquisite and epic miniature. Perhaps even too epic as the lines are also very difficult with alternatives on most moves (particularly 4. Kh7, 4. Kg7). Still the study is packed with beautiful moves and even has relevance to endgame theory. The final trick 13. Ng6 h2 14. Nh4 is known from Fahrni/Keemink, Het Eindspiel, 1928 (HHDBVI #80465).



### Vladislav Tarasiuk #2611

Honorable mention, The Macedonian Problemist, 2022

**1.Qe7!** 1.Nxf5? Qxb8 2.Qe7 Qh2+ 3.Nh4 Qf4 4.g3 Qxc4—+

**1...Qxc4** 1...Bg5 2.Qd7! Bf6 3.Nxf5 Qxb8 4.Nd6 Qg8 5.Ne4=

**2.Nxf5 Qe2+ 3.g4 Qh2+ 4.Nh4 Qxh4+!** 4...Qf4 5.Nd7 c4 6.Ng6 Qh2+ 7.Nh4 Qf4 8.Ng6 positional draw

**5.Kxh4** 5.Qxh4?? g6#

**5...Bg5+ 6.Qxg5 hxg5+ 7.Kh5!!** 7.Kxg5 c4 8.Kf4 b3! 9.axb3 cxb3—+

**7...c4 8.Nd7 b3!** 8...c3 9.Nc5 (e5) =

**9.axb3 cxb3 10.Nf6+!** gxf6 - stalemate

½—½

Judge's comment: I consider 7. Kh5!! the move of the tournament, anticipating a stalemate that is not at all obvious. The study is of course weakened by the violent nature of the introductory play, but I see no clear improvement.



### Serhiy Didukh - #2671

Commendation The Macedonian Problemist, 2022

**1.Bg3** 1.Ra1? Ra8+–+; 1.Kb6? Bd3 2.Ra1 Bb1! 3.Rxb1 Rb8+

**1...Rxc3 2.Nf5 Rf3 3.Rh4+** 3.Ng3? Rxc3 4.Rf4 Ra3+! 5.Kb4 Ra2–+

**3...Kg8 4.Nh6+ Kf8!** 5.Ng4 Ra3+ 6.Kb6 6.Kb4? Ra4+ 7.Kxa4 Bb5+

**6...Ra6+ 7.Kc7!** 7.Kc5? Rc6+ 8.Kd4 Ba6 9.Nxf2 Rc4+

**7...Rc6+ 8.Kb8! Rc8+ 9.Ka7 Ra8+ 10.Kb6 Ra6+ 11.Kc7 Rc6+ 12.Kb8** (square Ra6–c6–c8–a8)

**12...Rb6+ 13.Kc7 Rb7+ 14.Kd6!** 14.Kd8? Rd7+

**14...Rd7+ 15.Kc5 Rd5+ 16.Kb6 Rb5+ 17.Kc7 Rb7+ 18.Kd6** (square Rb7–d7–d5–b5)

**18...Rb6+ 19.Kc7!** Which square next? ½–½

Judge's comment: The rook/king chase is known from many studies. Serhiy himself mentions Dolgov's #49745 from Stavropolskaja Pravda, 1972, as an inspiration. I also remember my own from The Problemist 2013 (HHDBVI #7829) where the sacrifices were also motivated by the need to evacuate the bishop from a promotion square. Amusingly, in that study it is the king that tries to escape and secure a win, while here it is the rook that is trying to force a win. The present study is undoubtedly more elegant (there is material equality and excellent introductory moves). But in terms of novelty there is not enough for a higher place.

**Unawarded studies in order of appearance in the magazine:**



### Arestov Pavel, Russia - #2607

Not in award The Macedonian Problemist, 2022

**1.Bc3!** 1.Rxb3+? Kc4=; 1.Kg6

**1...Kc4** 1...Nf5+ main line

**2.Bxd2 Nf5+ 3.Kf8!!** 3.Kf6? Nd6 4.Ke5 Nb5 5.Ba5 Na3 6.Rc1+ Nc2 7.Ke4 b2 8.Rxc2+ Kb3=; 3.Kg6? Ne7+ 4.Kg5 Nd5 5.Kg4 Nc3 6.Rc1 b2 7.Rxc3+ Kb4 8.Rc2+ Kb3=

**3...Nd4 4.Kf7!** 4.Ke7? Kd3 5.Rb2 Kc4 6.Kd6 Nb5+ 7.Kc6 Nc3=

**4...Nb5** (Ne2)

4...Kd3 5.Rb2 Kc4 6.Bc1 Nc6 7.Re2 Nb4 8.Bb2+–

**5.Ba5!** 5.Be1? Nc3 6.Rc1 b2 7.Rxc3+ Kb4 8.Ke6 Ka4=

**5...Nd4 6.Ke8!** 6.Bd2? Nb5 7.Ba5 Nd4 loss of time

**6...Kd3 7.Rb2 Kc4 8.Kd7 Nf3** 8...Nc2 9.Bd8 Kc3 10.Bf6++–

**9.Ke6!** 9.Kd6? Nd4 10.Kd7 Nf3 loss of time

**9...Nd4+ 10.Kd6!** 10.Ke5? Nc6+=

**10...Nf5+** 10...Nb5+ 11.Ke5 main line

**11.Ke5 Ne3 12.Ke4** 12.Rb1? Nd5 13.Rc1+ Kd3 14.Kxd5 b2 15.Rb1 Kc2=

**12...Nd1 13.Rd2** 13.Rb1? Nc3+=

**13...Nc3+ 14.Ke5!** 14.Ke3? b2! 15.Rxb2 Nd1+=; 14.Kf3? Na4 15.Ke2 b2=

**14...Na4 15.Rd4+ Kb5 16.Bd2** (Be1)

**16...b2 17.Rb4+** win.

**1–0**



**Michal Hlinka & Luboš Kekely, Slovakia - #2608**

Not in award The Macedonian Problemist, 2022

**1.Ba4+ Ke7 1...Kf8 2.Bc5+ Kg8 3.Bd6 Qb1+ 4.Kg5+–**

**2.Bc5+ Ke6 3.Bb6 Ke7 3...Kd6 4.Bc2! Ke7 5.Kg5! Qc6 6.Bf5+–**

**4.Kg5! g6! 5.Kh4!** 5.Bc5+? Ke6 6.Bb6 Ke7 7.Kh4 as main; 5.Kf4? Qa6 6.Bb5 g5+ 7.Kxg5 Qc8 8.Bd3 Qg8+ 9.Kf4 Kf6=

**5...g5+!** 5...Qc8 6.Kg3 Qa6 7.Bc5+ Kf6 8.Bb5 Qe6 9.Bb4 Kf7 10.Bd2 g5 11.Bxg5 Kg7 12.Bf4 Qg6+ 13.Kh2 Qh5+ 14.Kg1 Qd1+ 15.Bf1 Qg4+ 16.Bg3+–

**6.Kg3!** 6.Kxg5? Qc8 7.Bb5 Qg8+ 8.Kf4 Qe6=

**6...Qa6 7.Bc2!** 7.Bd1? Qd3+=

**7...Kf6 7...Ke6 8.Bd1+–**

**8.Bd1 Qd3+ 9.Bf3 g4 9...Qf5 10.Bg4 Qf4+ 11.Kh3+–**

**10.Kxg4 10.c8Q? Qxf3+ 11.Kh2 Qxf2+ 12.Kh1 Qf1+ 13.Kh2 Qf2+ perpetual check**

**10...Qf5+ 11.Kg3 Kg5 12.Ba5!** 12.Be2? Qf8 13.Ba5 Qd6+ 14.Kg2 Qd7 15.f3 Qe6=

**12...Qf4+ 13.Kg2**

**1–0**



**Lubos Kekely & Michal Hlnka, Slovakia - #2610**

Not in award The Macedonian Problemist, 24.02.2023

**1.Kd7 Ra8 2.Kxe6 Nc2 2...Kb4 3.f5 Nb3 4.Be7+ Kc4 5.Bc5 Ra6+ 6.Ke5 Na5 7.f6 Nc6+ 8.Kf5 Nd8 9.Be7 Ne6 10.f7 (10.Bc5)**

**3.Be7+ Kb3 4.d5 Nd4+ 5.Kf7 Kc4 6.d6 Ra7 7.Ke8 Ne6 8.d7 Ng7+ 9.Kd8 Kb5 9...Kd5**

**10.Kc8 Kc6 11.d8N+**

$\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$





### Amatzia Avni & Martin Minski - #2609

Not in award The Macedonian Problemist, 2022

**1.Nfg6+!** 1.Rb8? g6=

**1...Kh7** 1...fxg6 2.Rb8+ Kh7 3.Nf7 transposes to the main line

**2.Rb8** 2.Nxh4+? g6 is equal

**2...fxg6 3.Nf7 Bf3+!** The BK is doomed, but now black starts a stalemate attempt

**4.Kh3** 4.Kh2? Qa8 5.Rxa8 Bxa8=; 4.Kxf3?? Qf6+--+

**4...Bg2+!** 4...Qa8 5.Rxa8 Bxa8 6.Kxh4+--

**5.Kxg2** 5.Kxh4? Qd4+ (5...Qa4+) 6.Kg3 Qc3+ 7.Kxg2 Qg3+= with stalemate to follow

**5...Bd8! 6.Rxd8 Qa8+! 7.Be4!!** both 7.f3? Qxf3+! 8.Kxf3; and 7.Rxa8?= lead to stalemate

**7...Qxe4+ 8.Kg3 g5** saves his king

**9.Nxg5+-** ...but not his queen. Themes: mate, stalemate, avoidance of stalemate, avoidance of capture, fork

**1-0**



### Evgeny Egorov - #2666

Not in award The Macedonian Problemist

**1...Nf6** 1...Qg6 2.Ra2+ Kb8 3.Kc6 Nf6 4.e8Q+! Qxe8+ (4...Nxe8 5.Nd7+ Kc8 6.Ra8#) 5.d7 Qxd7+ (5...Nxd7 6.Nxd7++-) 6.Nxd7+ Nxd7 7.Kxd7+-

**2.e8Q+** 2.Rf2? d2! (2...Qb4+ 3.Kc6 d2 4.Rf1+-) 3.Rxf6 Qb4+ 4.Kc6 Ka7! 5.e8Q Qb6+ 6.Kd7 d1Q=; Thematic try 2.Ra2+? Kb8 3.Na6+ Kc8 4.Nc5 Kb8 5.e8Q+ Nxe8 6.d7 Qg6+ 7.Ka5 Kc7+-

**2...Nxe8 3.d7 Qb4+** 3...Qg6+ 4.Ka5 Qc6 5.d8Q++-

**4.Kc6 dxc2 5.dxe8Q+ Qb8** 5...Ka7 6.Qf7+ Ka8 7.Qa2++-

**6.Qe4!! c1Q** 6...Qb7+ 7.Nxb7 c1Q+ 8.Nc5+-

**7.Kd7+ Ka7 8.Qa4+ Kb6 9.Qb4+ Ka7 10.Qa5#**

1-0



### Evgeni Egorov, Kazachstan - #2667

Not in award The Macedonian Problemist

**1...g2!** 1...c3 2.h6! (2.Ne4+? Ke5 3.h6 Kxd4 4.h7 Kxe4 5.h8Q g2 6.Qxh4+ Kf3 7.Qe1 c2 8.Kb5 b3 9.Kc4 b2=) 2...cxd2 3.h7 Kg7 4.Rxh4 Kh8 5.Rh1 g2 6.Rg1+–

**2.Nf3 h3 3.Rf4+!** Thematic try 3.Rh4? b3 4.h6 b2 5.h7 b1Q+ 6.Kc7 Qxh7+ 7.Rxh7 c3–+

**3...Kg7** 3...Ke7 4.Re4+ Kd7 5.Re1+–; 3...Ke6 4.Ng5+ (Thematic try 4.Re4+? Kf5 5.Rh4 b3 6.h6 b2 7.h7 b1Q+ 8.Kc7 g1Q 9.Nxg1 Qxg1=) 4...Ke5 5.Nxh3 g1Q+ 6.Nxg1 Kxf4 7.h6+–

**4.h6+!** 4.Rg4+? Kh6 5.Rg6+ Kxh5 6.Rg5+ Kh6 7.Rg3 Kh5!= 8.Rxh3+?? Kg4 9.Ng1 b3 10.Rc3 d5–+

**4...Kh8 5.Rg4** 5.Kb5? g1Q! (5...h2 6.Ng5+–) 6.Nxg1 h2 7.Nf3 h1Q 8.Rf8+ Kh7 9.Ng5+ Kg6=

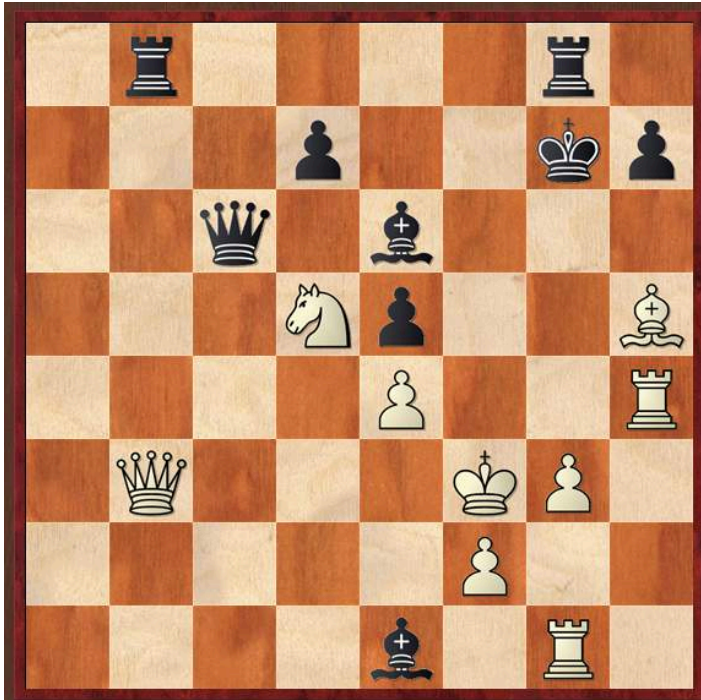
**5...h2! 6.Nxh2 c3 7.Rxg2** 7.Nf3? c2 8.Ng5 Kg8!=

**7...b3 8.Ng4!** 8.Nf3? b2 9.Nd2 c2–+

**8...b2** 8...c2 9.Nf6 c1Q 10.Rg8#

**9.Nf6 b1Q+ 10.Kc7 Qb3 11.Rg7 Qc4+ 12.Kd8!**

**1–0**



### Mikhail Prusikin - #2669

Not in award The Macedonian Problemist, 07.09.2022

**1.Qe3 Rbf8+** 1...Bxd5 2.Qg5+ Kf8 3.Qf5+ Ke7 4.Qxe5+ Qe6 (4...Be6 5.Rxe1+-) 5.Qxe6+ Bxe6 6.Rxe1+-

**2.Kg2 Bxf2** 2...Rxf2+ 3.Kh1+-

**3.Qg5+ Kh8 4.Qxe5+** 4.Bg6? Bh3+! 5.Rxh3 Qxg6 6.Qxe5+ Rg7 7.Ne7 Qf6 8.Qxf6 Rxf6=

**4...Rg7 5.Bf7!! Rxf7** 5...Bf5!? 6.Rgh1! Bxg3 7.Rxh7+! Bxh7 8.Rxh7+ Kxh7 9.Qh5+ Qh6 10.Nf6+ Kh8 11.Qxh6+-; 5...Bxf7 6.Rxh7+ Kxh7 7.Rh1+ Bh5 (7...Kg8 8.Ne7#) 8.Rxh5+ Kg8 9.Ne7+-; 5...Bxg3 6.Rxh7+ Kxh7 7.Qh5#; 5...Bxg1 6.Rxh7+ Kxh7 7.Qh5#

**6.Rgh1** 6.Qb8+ Rg8 7.Qb2+? (7.Qe5+ Rgg7) 7...Bd4!! 8.Qxd4+ Rgg7=

**6...Kg8 7.Ne7+! Rxe7** 7...Kf8 8.Nxc6+-

**8.Qb8+ Kf7 9.Rf4+ Kg6 10.Rf6+!! Kxf6 11.Qf4+ Bf5** 11...Kg6 12.Rh6#

**12.Qxf5#**

**1-0**