

The Endgame Study Tournament Polášek and Vlasák 64JT Preliminary Award

Preface

First of all, we thank all the congratulators who have contributed to our jubilee tournament. In total, there were 50 studies from 35 authors from 19 countries:

Yochanan Afek (ISR/NED), Pavel Arestov (RUS), Amatzia Avni (ISR), Yuri Bazlov (RUS), Bizijagin Buyannemekh (MNG), Evgeny Egorov (KAZ), Mario García (ARG), Alexey Gasparyan (ARM), Daniele Gatti (ITA), Luis Miguel González (ESP), David Gurgenidze (GEO), Marek Halski (POL), Michal Hlinka (SVK), Valery Kalashnikov (RUS), Daniel Keith (FRA), Ľuboš Kekely (SVK), Petr Kiryakov (RUS), Martin Minski (GER), Paul Muljadi (USA), Steffen Slumstrup Nielsen (DNK), Stanislav Nosek (CZE), Sergey Osintsev (RUS), Geir Sune Tallaksen Østmoe (NOR), Petromir Panaiotov (BGR), Michael Pasman (ISR), Oleg Pervakov (RUS), Itay Richardson (ISR), Luděk Sedlák (CZE), Jan Sprenger (ITA), Alexander Stavrietsky (RUS), Vladislav Tarasiuk (UKR), Jan Timman (NLD), Leonid Topko (UKR), Igor Yarmonov (UKR).

Thanks also go to the sponsors: The Czech Chess Association and the Československý šach magazine.

As o.t.b. players, we tried to feel the atmosphere of entries by trying to solve them first without a computer. Unfortunately, it is getting harder and harder to do as the studies are progressing, and many are now indigestible without a computer support – both because of the complexity and the need to consult EGTB. Unfortunately only a small percentage of award-winning studies are suitable for classical solution contests.

Of course the originals were also tested by engines, especially by the brand new Stockfish 14 with Syzygy 6 and partly Syzygy 7 on the local drive. The originality of entries was tested in Harold van der Heijden's database HHdbVI using the CQL6.1 searching engine.

The judges have different tastes; while Emil likes original themes, Jaroslav values perfection of execution the most. We believe that by consensus we have reached an ideal compromise. We have honoured 50 percent of the entries, which seems like a high number to us. Other interesting entries therefore did appear in the judgment; maybe they will score in future competitions. We decided mainly according to our taste; after all it is a competition for our birthday.

The judgment in standard formats PGN and PDF can be found in www.vlasak.biz/pv64.php. You can here also directly replay all studies without any special software.

Protests

Protests till 15th November 2021

to emil@vlasak.biz with carbon copy to jaroslav.polasek@brouzdej.net.

The Prize fund will be divided in the Final award.

Emil Vlasák and Jaroslav Polášek, both international judges FIDE, September 2021

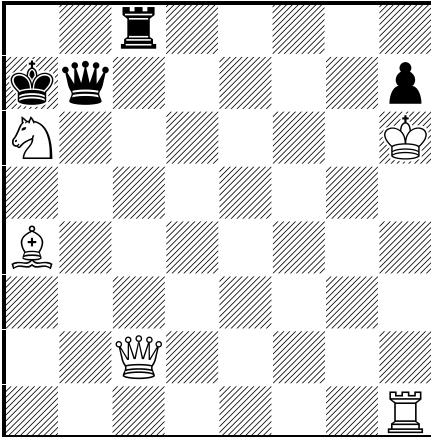
List of honours

The main section

1 st Prize	Martin Minski, GER
2 nd – 3 rd Prize	Oleg Pervakov, RUS
2 nd – 3 rd Prize	Sune Tallaksen Østmoe, NOR
4 th Prize	Yuri Bazlov, RUS
5 th Prize	Luděk Sedlák, CZE
1 st honourable mention	Pavel Arestov, RUS Petr Kiryakov, RUS
2 nd – 3 rd honourable mention	Michal Hlinka, SVK Ľuboš Kekely, SVK
2 nd – 3 rd honourable mention	Daniele Gatti, ITA
4 th honourable mention	Michal Hlinka, SVK Ľuboš Kekely, SVK
5 th honourable mention	Jan Sprenger, ITA
6 th honourable mention	Steffen Slumstrup Nielsen, DNK
7 th honourable mention	Marek Halski, POL
1 st commendation	Luis Miguel González, ESP
2 nd commendation	Luděk Sedlák, CZE
3 rd commendation	Yochanan Afek, ISR/NED
4 th commendation	Steffen Slumstrup Nielsen, DNK
5 th commendation	Itay Richardson, ISR
6 th commendation	Evgeny Egorov, KAZ
7 th commendation	Alexey Gasparyan, ARM

Development of ideas

1 st special Prize	Michael Pasman, ISR
1 st special honourable mention	Sergey Osintsev, RUS
2 nd special honourable mention	Alexander Stavrietsky, RUS Vladislav Tarasiuk, UKR
3 rd special honourable mention	Martin Minski, GER Jan Sprenger, ITA
1 st special commendation	David Gurgenidze, GEO
2 nd special commendation	Stanislav Nosek, CZE

The main section**Martin Minski, GER**1st Prize

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White wins

1.Qf2+ Ka8 After 1...Kxa6 2.Ra1 wins with 3.Bc6+ and quick mate; possible is also 2.Bb5+ Qxb5 3.Ra1+ Kb7 4.Qa7+ Kc6 5.Rc1+ Kd6 6.Rxc8.

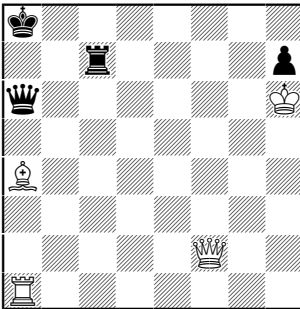
2.Nc7+! Blocking c7, after logical try 2.Ra1? Qxa6+ 3.Qb6 Qxb6+ 4.Bc6+ Kb8 5.Ra8+ Kc7! Black king escapes.

2...Rxc7

After 2...Qxc7 White obtains the decisive attack by making two quiet moves 3.Qf6! Ka7 4.Bd7!.

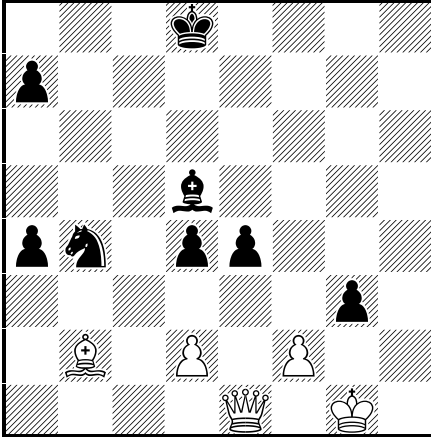
3.Ra1! Battery. 3...Qa6+

3...Kb8 needs to find the already known quiet move 4.Bd7! Rxd7 5.Qf8+ Kc7 (5...Qc8 6.Ra8+-) 6.Rc1+-.

**4.Qb6!!** The point, nothing gives 4.Bc6+? Rxc6+. **4...Qxb6+ 5.Bc6+ Kb8 6.Ra8 mate.**

A nice elegant and economical study with a logical try.

Unfortunately there are several side-lines with difficult quiet computer moves preventing to use the study in human solution contests. For example after **2...Kb8** White has several ways to win, but they all contain hard-to-see computer moves. 3.Rc1 Rxc7 4.Qf4 Qb6+ 5.Bc6 Qb2 6.Qf8+ Rc8 7.Qd6+ Rc7 (7...Ka7 8.Ra1+ Qxa1 9.Qc5+) 8.Rc3! (or 8.Rg1 Qb3 9.Rg3). Or 3.Rd1 Rxc7 (3...Qxd7 4.Bd7) 4.Qf6 Rf7 (4...Qb4 5.Bd7) 5.Qh8+ Ka7 6.Ra1 or 3.Rh5 Qxc7 4.Rb5+ Ka8 5.Kh5 Re8 6.Rf5 Re5 7.Bc6+!.



Oleg Pervakov, RUS

2nd – 3rd Prize

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Black to move, White wins

Today it is not easy to come up with a completely original theme. Oleg succeeds; the study is not like anything we have seen in the past. The difficulty, however, requires a computer both in composing and solving.

1...Nd3! The clearly best defence. **2.Qe2!**

But not 2.Qb1? gxf2+ 3.Kf1 Be6! 4.Kg2 Bh3+! 5.Kxh3 Ne1

or 2.Qf1? gxf2+ 3.Kh2 Bc4! 4.Bxd4 Ne5! 5.Qxf2 Ng4+ or 4.Kg3 e3 5.dxe3 dxe3.

2...gxf2+ 2...Nxb2 3.fxg3 wins, for example 3...a3 4.Qb5 Be6 5.Qa5+ or 3...Nc4 4.Qh5 Nb6 5.Qh7 Nc8 6.Qh8+ Kd7 7.Qxd4.

3.Kf1

3.Kh2? Bc4 4.Bxd4 Ne5! is already known, also 4.Kg3 e3 5.dxe3 dxe3 6.Qd1 Kc7 7.Bd4 Nc5 8.Bxc5 f1Q is draw.

3...Bc4! Creating a battery, bad is 3...Be6 4.Qh5! Nxb2 5.Qa5+ or 3...Nxb2 4.Qxf2 Nc4 5.Qxd4 Nb6 6.Qc5!.

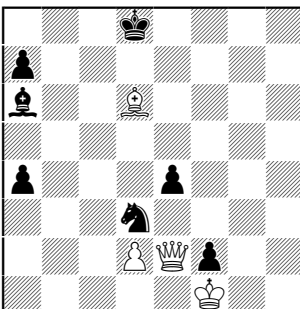
4.Bxd4 Ba6! The knight moves 4...Nb2/Ne5 are not possible: 5.BxN Bxe2+ 6.Kxe2+-, so Black prepares similar threat Nb4/Nc5.

5.Bf6+ Kc7! 5...Kd7 6.Qg4+ or 5...Ke8 6.Qxe4+.

6.Be5+!

And why not 6.Be7? guarding both b4 and c5? It is only logical try, after 6...a3! 7.Bxa3 e3! – blocking e-file – 8.dxe3 (8.Qxe3 Ne5+ 9.Kxf2 Ng4+) 8...Kb6! the White Queen has no good move: 9.Qd2 Nc5+ 10.Kxf2 Ne4+.

6...Kd8! Or 6...Kb6 7.Qe3+ Ka5 8.Bc3+ Kb5 9.Qxe4.

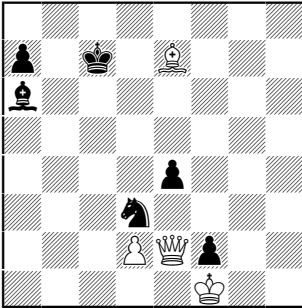


After 7.Bd6! – mutual zugzwang

7.Bd6! Mutual zugzwang **7...a3!**

Better as 7...Nb4/c5? 8.BxN Bxe2+ 9.Kxe2+-.

8.Bxa3 Kc7



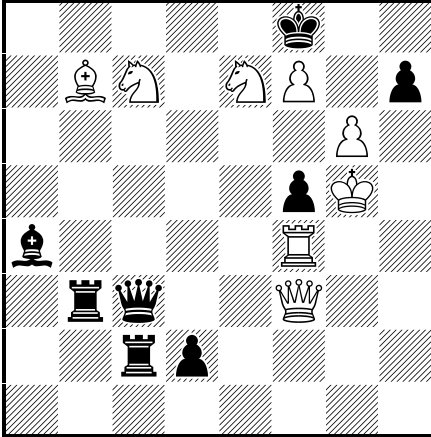
After 9.Be7! – mutual zugzwang

9.Be7! Mutual zugzwang again. **9...e3!?**

Blocking e3, 9...Kb6? 10.Qe3+! Ka5 11.Qxa7.

10.dxe3 Kb6 11.Bd8+! The point, Black King has to move into check.

11...Kb7 12.Qf3+ or 11...Kc5 12.Qh5+.



Geir Sune Tallaksen Østmoe, NOR

2nd – 3rd Prize

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Black to move, White draws

Stalemate studies with multiple pins have been very popular recently. This is one of the best; no pin is even partially prepared at the startup, completely all pieces are brought into the final position as a result of a rather interesting game.

1...h6+! 1...Qxf3 2.Ne6+ Kxe7 3.f8Q+. **2.Kh5** 2...Kxh6 Qg7+ 3.Kg5 Rxf3. **2...Qf6**

Maybe a better practical chance is 2...Bd7!? 3.g7+! Qxg7 4.Ng6+ Qxg6+ 5.Kxg6 Rxf3 6.Bxf3 Rc6+ 7.Kh7 Rxc7 8.Rd4 Kxf7 9.Kxh6 Kf6 10.Rxd2 Be6. White has a minus pawn plus bad King, but for all that it is EGTB draw.

3.g7+! Kxg7!

3...Qxg7? 4.Ng6+ Qxg6+ 5.Kxg6 Rxc7 6.Rxa4.

4.Rg4+!

4.Ne8+? Kxf7 5.Nxf6 Rxf3 6.Bxf3 d1Q 7.Bxd1 Rh2+ 8.Rh4 Bxd1+ 9.Kxh6 Rxh4+ 10.Kg5 Kxe7.

4...Kh7

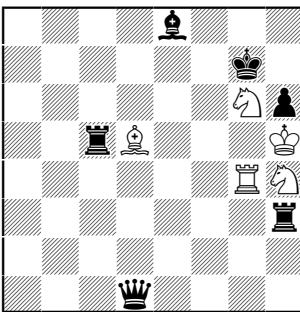
4...Kxf7? 5.Qd5+ Kxe7 6.Rg7+! Qxg7 7.Qe6+ Kf8 8.Qc8+ Ke7 9.Qe6+.

5.Qxf5+ Qxf5+ 6.Nxf5 Rh3+

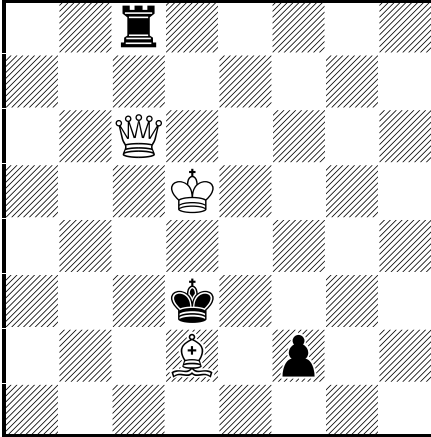
After 6...d1Q the simplest draw is 7.f8N+ Kh8 8.Ng6+ Kg8 9.Bd5+ Kh7 10.Nf8+.

7.Nh4 Rc5+ 8.Bd5 d1Q 9.f8N+! 9.f8Q? Rxd5+ wins. **9...Kh8 10.Nfg6+ Kh7 11.Nf8+ Kh8**

12.Nfg6+ Kg7 Else perpetual. **13.Ne8+! Bxe8** Stalemate with four pinned pieces, including one promoted piece.



The final stalemate



Yuri Bazlov, RUS

4th Prize

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White wins

Nice findings in 6-men constellation with several surprising quiet moves, connected with interesting side-lines and piquant story.

Tries:

1.Qxc8?! Kxd2! This elementary endgame needs a precise play. **2.Qc4 Ke1 3.Qh4 Ke2 4.Qh2 Kf3 5.Qh1+ Ke2 6.Qg2 Ke1 7.Qg3 Ke2 8.Qe5+!? Kd1!!** The only move, draw. Interesting is **8...Kd3?! (8...Kd2?** loses immediately after 9.Qh2 Ke3 10.Qg2 Ke2 11.Ke4!). Yuri recalls that a famous textbook on endings (Ю. Авербах «Шахматные окончания (ферзевые)», Москва ФиС, 1982, Nr. 7, after first move, mirrored) recommended **9.Qg3+ (9.Qe4+? Kd2!** and White has not Qh2 or **9.Qd4+? Ke2) 9...Ke2 10. Qh2! Ke1 11.Ke4** winning. But after 10...Kf3! Black holds. In truth, White only wins by a rather unexpected way **9. Qb2! Ke3 10.Qb5.**

1.Qb6?! Rd8+!

But not **1...Rf8? 2.Qe3+ Kc2 3.Qc3+ Kd1 (3...Kb1 4.Qb3+ Ka1 5.Bc3 mate) 4.Bg5! Rd8+ 5.Ke4 Re8+! 6.Kd4! Rd8+ 7.Ke3 f1Q 8.Qa1+ or 5...f1Q 6.Qc1+ Ke2 7.Qc2+ Ke1 8.Bh4+. 2.Ke6 Re8+ 3.Kd7 Ke2 or 3...Re2** draw.

The solution:

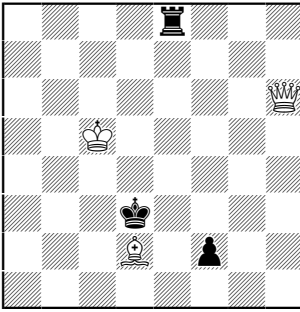
1.Qh6! Rd8+! 2.Kc5!

But not **2.Ke5? Re8+! 3.Kd5** – The King cannot enter the f-file – **3...Ke2!** draw.

2...Re8!

After **2...Rf8 3.Qxf8 Ke2** White wins using a spectacular move **4.Bf4!! f1Q 5.Qe7(8)+ Kf3 6.Qe3+ Kg4 (6...Kg2 7.Qg3+ Kh1 8.Qh2 mate) 7.Qg3+ Kf5 8.Qg5+ Ke4 9.Qd5+ Kxf4 10.Qf7+.**

The defence **2...Rc8+** ends with known mate **3.Kb4! Re8 (3...Rc4+ 4.Kb3 f1Q 5.Qe3 mate, 3...Rb8+ 4.Ka3 Ra8+ 5.Kb3 Rb8+ 6.Bb4 Rxb4+ 7.Kxb4 Ke2 8.Qh2 Ke1 9.Kc3) 4.Qh3+! Ke2 (4...Kxd2 5.Qd7+ see main) 5.Qg4+! Kxd2 6.Qd7+ Ke2 7.Qxe8+ Kf3 8.Qc6+ Ke2 9.Qg2 Ke1 10.Kc3 f1Q 11.Qd2** mate.

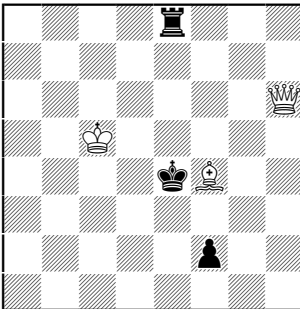


3.Bf4!!

But not 3.Bg5? Re5+! 4.Kb4 Rb5+! blocking the diagonal a6-f1.

3...Ke4!?

An interesting play arises after 3...Rc8+ 4.Kd5! Rd8+ 5.Ke5 Re8+ 6.Kf5 Rf8+ 7.Kg4! (7.Kg5? Rxf4) 7...Rg8+ 8.Bg5! (8.Kh4? Rh8!) 8...Ke2 9.Qa6+ Ke1 10.Qe6+ Kd1 11.Qxg8 f1Q 12.Qb3+.



4.Qg5! Another surprising quiet move. **4...Rc8+**

4...f1Q 5.Qd5+ Kxf4 6.Qf7+.

5.Kd6 Rd8+ 6.Qxd8

6...Ke6 Re8+ 7.Kd6 Rd8+ only loses time.

A/ 6...Kxf4!? 7.Qa8!

But not 7...Qf6+?! Kg3! (7...Ke3? 8.Ke5+-) with stalemate on h1 or

7...Qh4+?! Kf3 8.Qh3+ Ke2 9.Qg2 Ke1.

7...Kg3 8.Qh1 wins.

B/ 6...f1Q 7.Qa8+ Kd4

Or 7...Kf5 8.Qd5+ Kg4 9.Qg5+ Kf3 10.Qg3+ Ke4 11.Qe3+ Kf5 12.Qe6+.

8.Qa7+! Kc3 9.Qa3+ Kc2 10.Qa2+ Kc3 11.Bd2+!

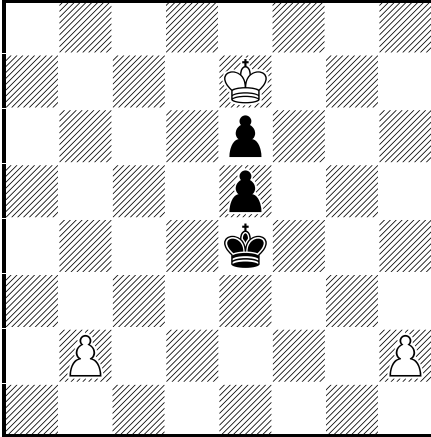
After 11...Be5+? Black defends himself with a chain of only moves: 11...Kb4 12.Qb2+ Ka4!

13.Qc2+ Ka5! (13...Kb5? 14.Qb3+ Ka5 15.Bc3+ Ka6 16.Qa4+ Kb7 17.Qc6+ Kb8 18.Qc7+

Ka8 19.Qc8+ Ka7 20.Bd4 mate) 14.Qc3+ Ka4! (14...Ka6? 15.Qc6+ Ka5 16.Bc3 mate)

15.Qc2+ Ka5 16.Bc3+ Kb6! 17.Bd4+ Ka5!.

11...Kd3 12.Qa6+ wins.



Luděk Sedlák, CZE

5th Prize

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White draws

First let us check bad tries:

After 1.Kxe6? Kd4 (or 1...Kf4) 2.h4 d4 Black promotes first with a check.

1.h4? Kf5 2.b4 e4 3.b5 e3 4.b6 e2 5.b7 e1Q 6.b8Q Qxh4+ 7.Kd7 Qd4+ 8.Kc6 Qd5+ exchanging queens, or symmetrically 1.b4? Kd5...

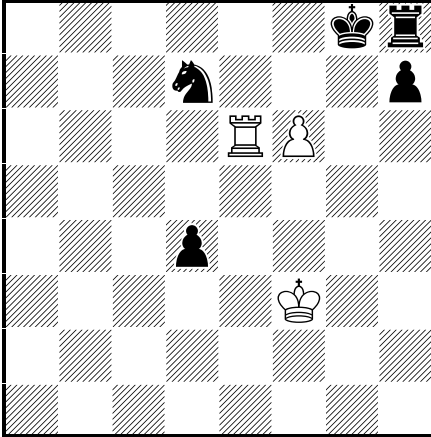
1.Kd6? Kf5(f4) 2.b4 e4 3.b5 e3 4.b6 e2 5.b7 e1Q 6.b8Q Qe5+.

1.Kd7? Kd5 2.h4 e4 3.h5 Ke5! 4.Ke7 Kf5.

So, the last shocking move remains:

1.Ke8!! Kd5 2.h4 e4 3.h5 Ke5 3...e3 4.h6 e2 5.h7 e1Q 6.h8Q **4.Kf7 e3 5.h6 e2 6.h7 e1Q 7.h8Q+** or symmetrically **2...Kf5 2.b4 e4 3.b5 Ke5 4.Kd7 e3 5.b6 e2 6.b7 e1Q 7.b8Q+ draw.**

This unusual study has basically one-move-solution, but excellent one. Maybe more interesting is "magic" starting position which has a chance to appear on the front page of prestigious publications.



**Pavel Arestov, RUS,
Petr Kiryakov, RUS**

1st honourable mention
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White draws

1.Re8+ Nf8 2.Re7 Ng6 3.Rg7+!

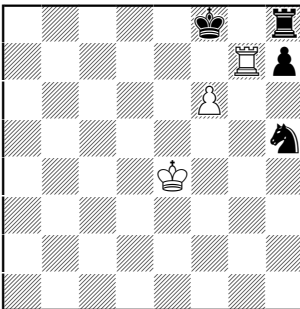
White has not time for 3.Ra7? because of 3...h5! and the rook endgame after 4.Rg7+ Kf8 5.Rxg6 Kf7 6.Rg5 h4 is lost.

3...Kf8 4.Ke4

Again 4.Ra7 is bad because of 4...d3! 5.Ke4 d2 6.Rd7 d1Q 7.Rxd1 Kf7 8.Kf5 Ra8 9.Rd7+ Kg8 10.Rg7+ Kh8. The pawn must be stopped with the king.

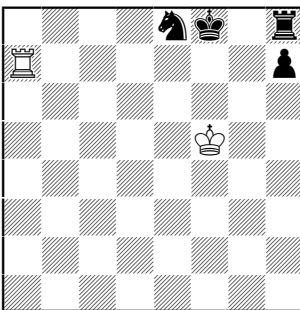
4...d3 Else the king is quick enough to hold: 4...Nh4 5.Ke5 d3 6.Ke6 Ng6 (6...d2? 7.Ra7) 7.Ra7 Nf4+ 8.Kf5 d2 9.Rd7.

5.Kxd3 Nf4+! 6.Ke4 Nh5 With this manoeuvre Black unbound himself and somewhat coordinates his forces.



7.Rb7!! The highlight of the study.

After 7.Ra7? Nxf6+ 8.Kf5 Ne8! White should be in mutual zugzwang:



Mutual zugzwang

firstly 9.Rb7? Nd6+,
 secondly 9.Rd7 h5 10.Kg6 Rg8+ 11.Kxh5 Nf6+
 or finally 9.Kg5 Nd6! 10.Rd7 Rg8+ 11.Kh6 (11.Kh5 Nf7 12.Ra7 Rg6) 11...Nf7+ 12.Kxh7
 Rg7 mate.
 Bad is also 7.Rc7? Nxf6+ **8.Kf5** and here **8...Ng8! 9.Kg5** 9.Ke6 h5. **9...Ne7!** avoiding
 10.Kf6 Nd5+.

7...Nxf6+ 8.Kf5 Ne8

White has a draw after 8...Ng8 9.Kg5! (9.Ke5? h5) 9...Ne7 10.Kf6 Ng8+ 11.Kg5 h5, for
 example 12.Kh4 Nf6 13.Kg5.

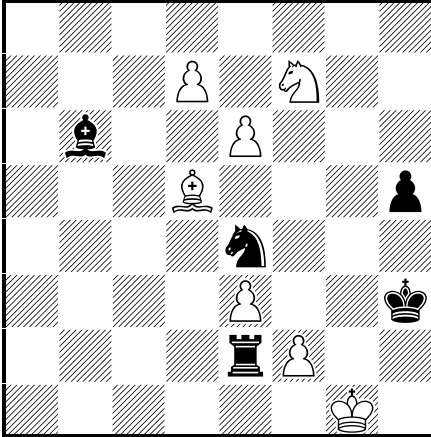
9.Ra7!! Tempo, we the already known mutual zugzwang with black-to-move.

9...h5

9...Nd6+ 10.Ke6! Ne4 11.Kf5.

10.Kg6 h4 11.Rf7+ Kg8 12.Re7 Nd6 13.Re6! The final finesse, 13.Rd7? Nf7 14.Rxf7 Rh6+!
 would be happy for Black. **13...Rh7 14.Rxd6** and the rook endgame is draw.

The kernel of the study is probably derived from EGTB, but the whole game is still very
 interesting and humanly understandable without a computer. The mutual zugzwang and
 its incitement are surprising.



Michal Hlinka, SVK
Ľuboš Kekely, SVK

2nd – 3rd honourable mention
 Polášek and Vlasák 64 JT 2021

White wins

1.Ng5+! White clears the diagonal d5-h1 to prevent the threat 1...Re1 mate. Bad is 1.Bc4? Rxf2 2.Ng5+ (2.e7 Bxe3) 2...Nxe5 3.Kxf2 Bd8.

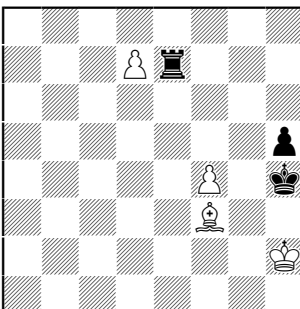
1...Nxe5 2.Bg2+ Kh4!

Preparing a stalemate. After 2...Kg4 the 7th move in the main line should be a check. And in lines like 3.e7 Re1+ 4.Kh2 Bc7+ 5.f4 Rxe3 is 6.e8Q a simple win.

3.e7 Re1+ 4.Kh2

4.Bf1? Nf3+ 5.Kg2 Kg4 6.e8Q Nh4+ 7.Kh2 Nf3+ with perpetual check.

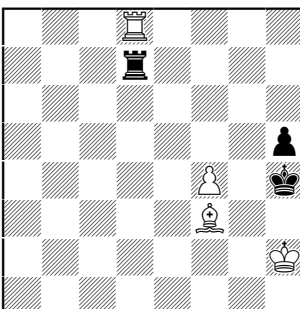
4...Bc7+ 5.f4 Bxf4+! 6.exf4 Nf3+! 7.Bxf3 Rxe7



8.d8R!

The point; White avoids stalemate first time.

8...Rd7!



9.Re8!

The promoted rook executes a logical manoeuvre preventing Rd2.

The try is 9.Rg8? Rd2+ 10.Kg1 Rd4 11.f5 Rf4 or 10.Bg2 Rxe7+ with stalemate.

Bad is also 9.Rf8? Rd8! 10.Rf5 Rd2+ 11.Bg2 (11.Kg1 Kg3) 11...Kg4 12.Rf8 Rf2 13.f5 Kg5!
 or 9.Ra8? Rd4 10.Rf8 Rd8!

9...Re7

9...Rd2+? is not problem for White here because of 10.Be2!.

10. Rg8!

After 10.Ra8 Re2+ 11.Kg1 Black has an only move 11...Rc2!! preventing White to guard the first rank: 12.f5 Kg3 13.Bd1 Rg2+ 14.Kh1 Rh2+!. But not 11...Rb2? 12.f5 Kg3 13.Se4 or 11...Rd2? 12.f5 Kg3 13.f6.

10...Rf7 10...Re2+ 11.Kg1! or 10...Rg7 11.Rb(a)8 Rc7 12.Be4 Rc4 13.Re8.

11.Rh8!

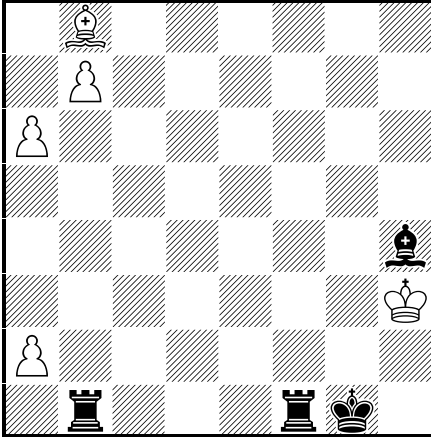
11.Rg5? Rf5! 12.Rxf5 stalemate.

11...Rxf4

11...Rf5 12.Kg2 Ra5 13.Re8 Rf5 14.Re5 Rg5+ 15.Kf2.

12.Rxh5 mate.

It is always nice when the study does not end with an underpromotion, but the born piece takes part in an interesting play.



Daniele Gatti, ITA

2nd – 3rd honourable mention
Polášek and Vlasák 64 JT 2021

White wins

1.Bh2+! Clearing way for pawns and the same time driving Black King into the corner. After 1.a7? Rf3+ 2.Kg4 Kf2 3.a8Q Rb4+ 4.Kh5 Be7! White can avoid perpetual by sacrificing 5.Ba7+ Ke2 6.Qc8 (6.Bd4 Rxd4 7.Qa6+ Kd1 8.b8Q Rh4+ 9.Kg6 Rg4+ 10.Kh7 Rh4+ 11.Qh6 Rxh6+ 12.Kxh6 Ba3!) 6...Rb5+ 7.Bc5 Rxc5+ 8.Qxc5 Bxc5 9.b8Q, but Black holds the QPxRB endgame: 9...Ba3! 10.Qh2+ Kd3! 11.Kg4 Re3!. **1...Kh1 2.a7 Rf3+ 3.Kxh4 3.Ka4?!** White tries to avoid stalemate, but it does not win: 3...Rf8 4.a8Q!? (4.b8Q Rfxb8 5.Bxb8 Rb4+ 6.Bf4 Ra4) 4...Rb4+ 5.Kh5 Rf5+ 6.Kg6 Rf6+ 7.Kg7 Rg4+ 8.Kh7 Rf7+ 9.Kh6 Rg2! and now:

10.b8Q Rf6+ 11.Kh5 Rf5+ 12.Kxh4 Rh5+ 13.Kxh5 stalemate,

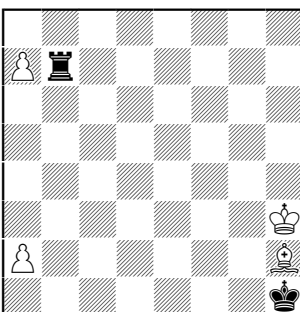
10.b8R Bg5+ 11.Kg6 Rf6+ 12.Kg7 Kxh2 13.Rh8+ Bh4+ 14.Qxg2+ Kxg2 15.Rxh4 Ra6,

10.Be5 Bf2 11.b8Q Be3+.

3...Rh3+ 4.Kxh3

4.Ka4? Another try to avoid stalemate (4...Rxb7? 5.a8Q). 4...Rxh2! 5.a8Q Rg1+ 6.Kf4 Rh4+. It is not a perpetual check, Black escapes via b8-a7, so more detailed analysis is needed. Black finds a study rescue. 7.Ke5 Rh5+ 8.Kd6 Rh6+ 9.Kc7 Rg7+! 10.Kb8 Rh8+ 11.Ka7 Rxa8+ 12.Kxa8 Rg2! 13.b8Q Rxa2+ 14.Kb7 Rb2+.

4...Rxb7



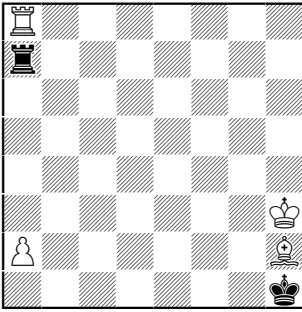
5.a8R!

5.a8Q stalemate

or 5.Bb8 Rxa7 6.Bxa7 stalemate

or 5.Bg1 Rxa7 6.Bxa7 stalemate.

5...Ra7



6.Rf8! For the future Rf3.

After 6.Rb8? Rh7+ 7.Kg3 Rh3+! 8.Kg4 Ra3 9.Rb2 Rxa2! 10.Rxa2 we have another stalemate and after 7.Kh4!? Ra7! 8.Kg3 Black has the defence 8...Ra3+! 9.Rb3 Rxb3 10.axb3 stalemate.

6...Rh7+ 7.Kg4! 7.Kg3? Rh3+! 8.Kg4 Ra3 9.Rf2 Rxa2! with the known stalemate from the previous note.

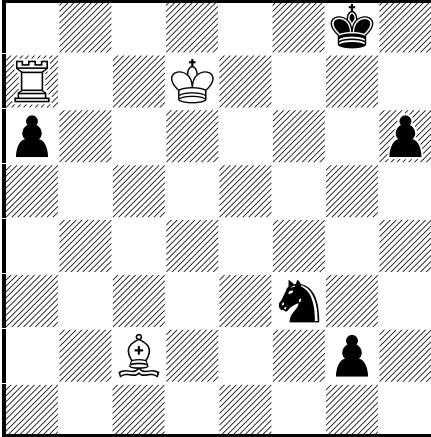
7...Ra7

The rook ending 7...Kxh2 8.a4 Ra7 9.Rf2+! Kg1 10.Ra2 is won for White.

8.Kg3 Rf7 8...Ra3+ 9.Rf3 – the point of 6th move.

9.Rb8 Rb7 10.Kf3 wins, for example 10...Ra7 11.Bf4 (or 11.Be5) 11...Ra3+ 12.Be3 (or 12.Rb3) 12...Rxa2 13.Rh8+.

Similar concept to the previous Hlinka+Kekely study. Interesting collection of stalemates and the play of promoted rook. But the introductory side-lines are a little boring.



Michal Hlinka, SVK
Ľuboš Kekely, SVK

4th honourable mention
 Polášek and Vlasák 64 JT 2021

White draws

It is not easy to stop Black pawns, for example 1.Ra8+? Kg7 2.Re8 g1Q 3.Re7+ Kf6 4.Re6+ Kg5 5.Rg6+ Kf4 6.Rxg1 Nxg1 and Black wins.

Another check does work **1.Bb3+!** – with two lines:

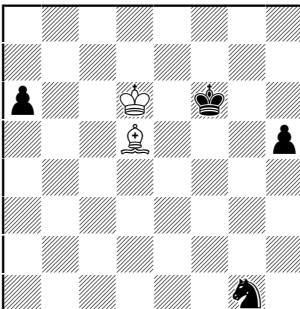
A/ 1...Kh8 2.Ra8+ Kh7 3.Bg8+ For 3...Re8? g1Q 4.Bc2+ Kg7 see 1.Ra8+?

3...Kg7 4.Bd5! The only way to prevent Ng5.

4...g1Q 5.Rg8+ Kf6 6.Rxg1 Nxg1 7.Kd6! Controlling both wings.

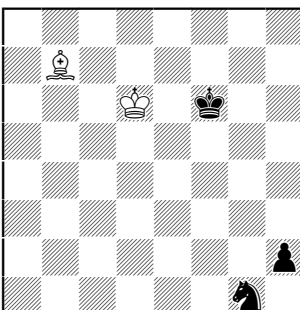
The straightforward 7.Kc6? surprisingly is not sufficient: 7...h5 – of course – 8.Kb6 h4 9.Kxa6 Ke5 – winning important tempo – 10.Bb7 h3 11.Kb5 h2 12.Kc4 Kf4 13.Kd3 Nf3 Black wins.

7...h5



8.Bb7! A familiar but impressive motive. **8...a5** Easier for White seems to be 8...h4

9.Bxa6 h3 10.Bb7! h2



11.Bh1!! not giving Black a tempo, for example 11...Nh3 12.Kd5 Nf2 13.Bg2 Kf5 14.Kd4 Kf4 15.Bd5.

9.Kc5 h4 10.Bc8 Nf3 11.Kb5 Nd4+ 12.Kxa5 Ne6 13.Kb4! A precise diagonal defence.
13.Kb5? loses a tempo after 13...h3 14.Kc4 Ke5 15.Kc3 h2 16.Bb7 Nc5 17.Bh1 Ne4+
 18.Kc2 Kf4.

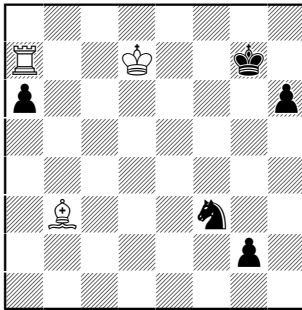
13...Ke5

Also 13...h3 14.Kc3 h2 15.Bb7 gives Black nothing.

14.Kc3 h3 15.Kd2 h2 16.Bb7 draw.

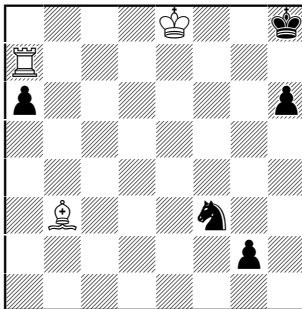
The judges found interesting also the try **3...Kg6!?** because the Black King will be at his pawn a move early. **4.Bd5! g1Q 5.Rg8+ Kf5 6.Rxg1 Nxb1 7.Kd6! h5 8.Bb7! a5 9.Bc8+ Or 9. Kb5 transposing. 9...Kf4.** Compare to the main line White won a tempo with a check, but the Black King has advanced significantly. The drawing motives are similar. **10.Kc5 Nf3 11.Kb5 Ne5 12.Kxa5 Ng4 13.Kb4 h4 14.Kc3 h3 15.Kd2 h2 16.Bb7 Nf2** And here a “novelty” **17.Bg2! draw.**

B/ 1...Kg7



2.Ke8+! Nice surprising move with the idea 2...Kf6 3.Rxa6+ Ke5 4.Ra1.

2...Kh8



3.Ra8! Another surprise, bad is 3.Kf7? Ne5+.

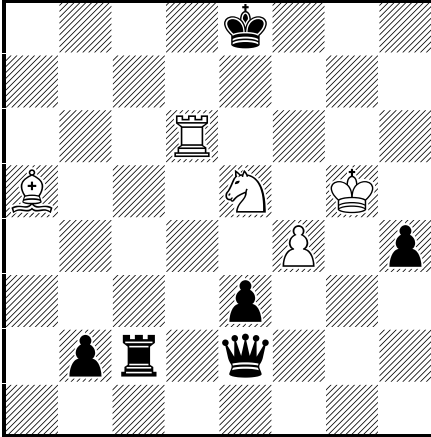
3...Ng5

3...Ne5 4.Ke7+ Kh7 5.Rg8 Ng6+ 6.Kf6(7) g1Q 7.Rg7+ ends with perpetual check.

4.Ke7+ Kh7

4...Kg7? even loses after 5.Rg8+ Kh7 6.Kf8 h5 7.Bc2+.

5.Bc2+ Kg7 6.Rxa6 g1Q 7.Rg6+ Kh8 8.Rxh6+ Kg7 9.Rg6+ perpetual check.



Jan Sprenger, ITA

5th honourable mention
Polášek and Vlasák 64 JT 2021

White wins

Logical try **1.Rd8+?! Ke7 2.Ng6+ Kf7!**

2...Ke6? 3.f5+ Kf7 4.Rf8+ Kg7 5.f6+ Kh7 6.Rh8 mate.

3.Rd7+ Kg8 4.Kh6 Qh5+! 5.Kxh5 b1Q 6.Kh6 Qa1(b2) and if 7.Bc3?! Qxc3 8.f5 then 8...Qf6/Qc7/Rd2 covering both d8 and g7.

Therefore, White modifies the attack so that the rook ends on column "e". **1.Re6+! Kf8 2.Ng6+ Kg8 3.Re8+ Kf7 4.Re7+ Kg8 5.Kh6 Qh5+!** Black sacrifices the Queen to gain time to guide the g7 mate. **6.Kxh5 b1Q 7.Kh6 Qa1(b2) 8.Bc3!!**

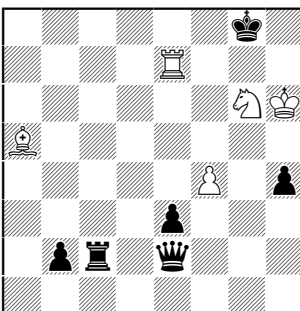
Nowotny does work here. Premature should be 8.f5? threatening Re8+ and Rf8 mate because of 8...Rc8! 9.Bc7 Qf6 10.Be5 Qf7!.

8...Qxc3

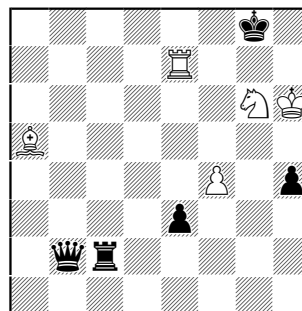
8...Rxc3 9.Rg7 mate.

9.f5!

Now Re8-f8 cannot be parried without conceding control of the g7 square. **9...Qf6 10.Re8+! Kf7 11.Rf8 mate.**

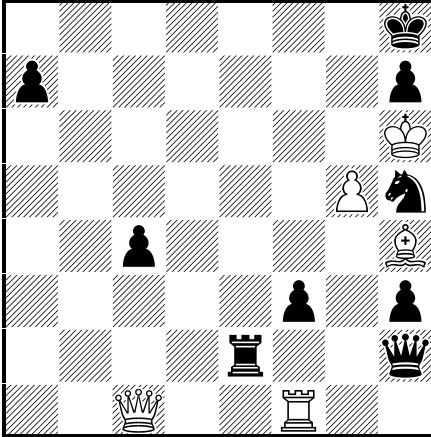


5...Qh5+!



8.Bc3!!

A very enjoyable work from a practical player with a lively play, understandable even without a computer. Unfortunately the composition has its principles, and one of them is the purity of a logical try, which should be refuted in only one way. Therefore, we cannot rate the study higher.



Steffen Slumstrup Nielsen, DNK

6th honourable mention
Polášek and Vlasák 64 JT 2021

White wins

1.Qc3+ Qe5 2.Rxf3 Nf4!?

The natural defence 2...Kg8 3.Qxc4+ Qe6+ is refuted seemingly easily by 4.Qxe6+ (but not 4.g6? hxg6 5.Be7 g5+ 6.Rf6 Nxf6) 4...Rxe6+ 5.Kxh5 h2 6.Rh3. But after 6...Kg7! White has suddenly problem to save his last pawn. He has to find a study way 7.Bf2! h6 8.Bd4+ Kh7 9.Bf6! – the point – 9...hxg5 10.Kxg5+ Kg8 11.Kg6 Re1 12.Rh8 mate.

3.Rxf4 Kg8 4.Qxc4+ Qe6+ 5.g6! Compare to 2...Kg8, here things are reversed. Bad is here 5.Qxe6+? Rxe6+ 6.Kh5, for example 6...h2 7.Rf1 Re2.

5...hxg6

Or 5...h2 6.Qc8+ Qxc8 7.gxh7+ Kh8 8.Bf6 mate.

6.Be7!

6.Qd4 Re5.

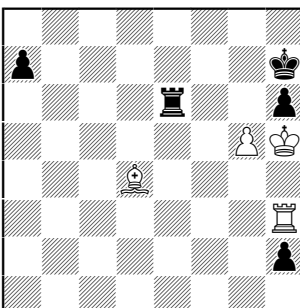
6...g5+ 7.Rf6 h2 8.Qd5!!

The point, bad is 8.Rxe6? h1Q+ 9.Kg6 Qh7+ 10.Kxg5 Rg2+.

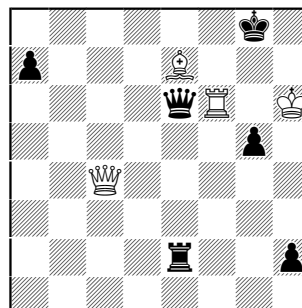
8...h1Q+ 9.Qxh1 Qxe7 10.Qd5+

10.Qa8+? Qe8.

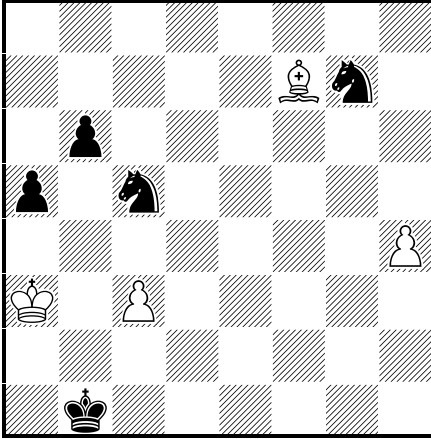
10...Kh8 11.Qa8+ Qe8 12.Rf8+ Qxf8+ 13.Qxf8 mate.



9. Bf6!



8.Qd5!!



Marek Halski, POL

7th honourable mention
Polášek and Vlasák 64 JT 2021

White draws

White King is in a mate net not to mention missing piece.

1.h5!

The try 1..Bg6+? Kc1 2.h5 Nge6 3.h6 Nf8 should cost White a decisive tempo, e.g. 4..Bf5. 5.h7 Nxh7 6.Bxh7 Kd2 7.Kb2 Na4+ wins.

1...Nge6!

Thematic possibility 1....Nxh5 will be commented at the end of solution.

2.h6

Again, 2..Bg6+? costs a tempo after 2...Kc1 3.h6 Nf8!.

2...Nf8!

2....Ng5 3.Bg6+ Kc1 4.h7 Nxh7 5.Bxh7 transposes to the main.

Or 2...Nc7 3.Bg6+ (guarding the threat Nb5 mate) 3...Ka1 4.Bd3! and if 4...Nxd3 5.h7 Nc5? 6.c4! (6.h8Q? Nb5 mate) and White even wins.

3.h7

After 3..c4? Kc2 Black saves a tempo missing Kc1: 4.h7 Nxh7 5.Bg6+ Kc3 6.Bxh7 Kxc4 wins.

3...Nxh7 4.Bg6+ Kc1 5.Bxh7 Kd2 6.c4!

But not 6..Kb2? Nd3+ and Pc3 goes lost: 7.Kb3 b5 8.Bf5 a4+ wins.

6...Kc3 7.Bg8 Nd3 8.Ka4

8..Bf7? Nb2! 9.Be6 Nxc4+ 10.Ka4 Nb2+! 11.Kb5 a4 12.Ba2 a3! 13.Bf7 (13.Kxb6 Kb4!) 13...Nd3! 14.Bc4 Nc1 15.Bf7 Nb3 16.Ka4 a2 wins easily.

8...Kb2!? Black tries a tricky manoeuvre sacrificing knight. After 8...Nc5+ 9.Ka3! Nd3 10.Ka4! we are facing to a positional draw.

9.Kb5 Nc5 10.Kxb6 a4 11.Kxc5 a3 Black promotes. 12.Kb6!

Too slow is 12..Kd6? a2 13.c5 a1Q 14.c6 Qa3+! 15.Kd7 Qd3+! 16.Kc8 Qf5+ 17.Kb7 Qb5+ 18.Kc7 Kc3!.

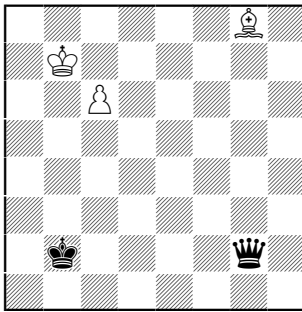
12...a2 13.c5 a1Q 14.c6 Qg1+!?

If 14....Qa8 then 15.c7 Qxg8 16.Kb7.

15.Kb7 Qg2!

With the bishop on g8 White cannot play easily 16..Kb6? Qxg8 and Black wins.

Bad is also 16..Be6? Kc3 17.Kb6 Qb2+ 18.Ka7 Qa3+ 19.Kb6 Qb4+ 20.Ka7 Qc5+ 21.Kb7 Qb5+ 22.Kc7 Kd4.



16.Bc4! Kc3! It seems that Black's plan is working, but ...

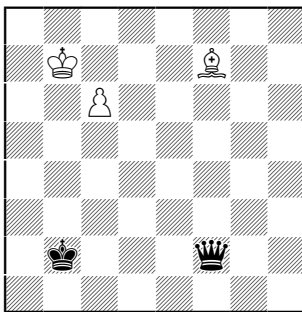
17.Bf1!! Tempo, after 17.Ba6? Kb4! Black would win.

17...Qb2+

Or 17...Qe4 18.Kb6!.

18.Ka7! Qf2+ 19.Kb7 Qb2+ 20.Ka7 Qh2 21.Kb7 Qh1 22.Kb6! Qh6 23.Kb7! Qh1 24.Kb6
draw.

Back to the line **1...Nxb5**. According to the author it is weaker because of **2.Bxh5 Kc2 3.c4 Kc3 4.Bf7 Nd3 5.Ka4 Kb2 6.Kb5 Nc5 7.Kxb6 a4 8.Kxc5 a3 9.Kb6 a2 10.c5 a1Q 11.c6 Qg1+ 12.Kb7 Qg2 13.Kb6 Qf2+ 14.Kb7**

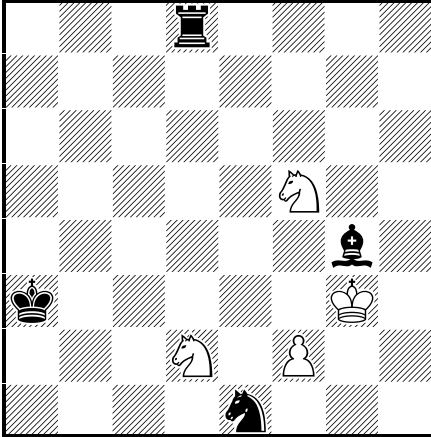


14...Qxf7+ 15.c7 with a simple draw. That is why Black attracts the bishop on g8 playing 1...Nge6!.

However the matter is more complicated. After **14...Qf3! 15.Kb6? Qe3+ 16.Kb7 Qe4!**

17.Kb6 Qb4+ 18.Ka7 Qa5+ Black should win. White has to find here a similar finesse as in the main line: **15.Bc4! Kc3 16.Be2!!**. It would be nice second thematic line, does not it? Unfortunately not because of the dual **15.Bh5! Qe4 16.Be2!**.

This somewhat reduces our impression from the logical construction of this interesting, but difficult composition.



Luis Miguel González, ESP

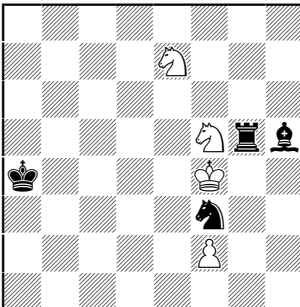
1st commendation

Polášek and Vlasák 64 JT 2021

White draws

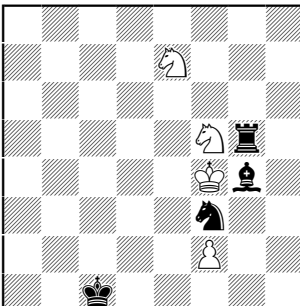
Can white draw with a missing rook? **1.Nc4+ Kb3!** 1...Kb4? 2.Ne5! winning material. **2.Na5+ Ka4 3.Nc6! Rg8!** Or 3...Rc8 4.Nfe7. **4.Nce7!** 4.Nfe7? Rg7 consolidating. **4...Rg5 5.Kf4 Nf3**

A key position is reached by a clean introduction without changing pieces. **6.Ne3(h6)** 6.Nd4? Rg7! 7.Nxf3 Bxf3 8.Nf5 Rf7. **6...Bh5 7.N3f5!** 7.N7f5? Rg6 8.Ne7 Rf6+.



Black with an extra rook cannot release his forces. Bad is 7...Rg1(2) 8.Ng3! with immediate draw because Black has not more Bg4. So Black tries to engage his king, first via d2 (plan A) or via c7 (plan B), but White always finds a way to stop him.

7...Ka3 8.Ng3 8.Nd6? Rg4+. **8...Bg4 9.Ngf5! Kb2 10.Ne3(h6) Bh5 11.N3f5! Kc1 12.Ng3 Bg4 13.Ngf5**

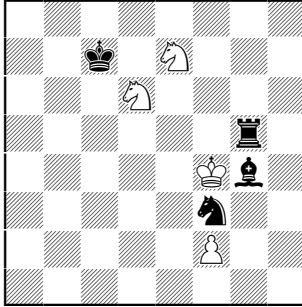


The second key-position.

Black cannot continue his plan 13...Kd2?! because of forks 14.Nd4! Rg7 15.Nef5 Bxf5 16.Nxf3+! Ke2 17.Nd4+ Kd3 18.Nxf5.

So Black tries the second plan.

13...Kb1 14.Ne3(h6) 14...Bh5 15.N3f5 Ka2 16.Ng3 Bg4 17.Ngf5 Ka3 18.Ne3(h6) Bh5 19.N3f5 Ka4 20.Ng3 Bg4 21.Ngf5 Ka5 22.Nc6+ It speeds up things. White can also wait for Kc7: 22.Ne3(h6) Bh5 23.N3f5 Ka6 24.Ng3 Bg4 25.Ngf5 leading to the same position. **22...Ka6 23.Nce7!** It is not possible to turn-off: 23.Ncd4? Nxd4! or 23.Nh4? Rc5!. **23...Kb7 24.Nd6+** Again a quicker way, possible is still 24.Ne3(h6) Bh5 25.N3f5 Kc7 26.Ng3 Bg4 27.Ne4! transposing to the main. **24...Kc7**



The third key-position. White cannot continue 25.Ndf5? Kd7 26.Ne3 Bh5! 27.N3f5 Ke6. But the position of Kc7 gives new chance **25.Ne4!** With the point 25...Rg7 26.Nf6! consolidating pieces.

25...Re5! 26.Nf6!

Not 26.Ng6? Re6! 27.Kxg4 Nd4! or 27.Nf8 Re8 28.Nh7 Bh5 29.Nhf6 Rf8 30.Ke3 Bg6! 31.Kxf3 Bxe4+.

26...Be6! Launches the final tactical battle.

Worse is 26...Bd7 27.Kxf3 Rxe7 (27...Kd6 28.Neg8!) 28.Nd5+.

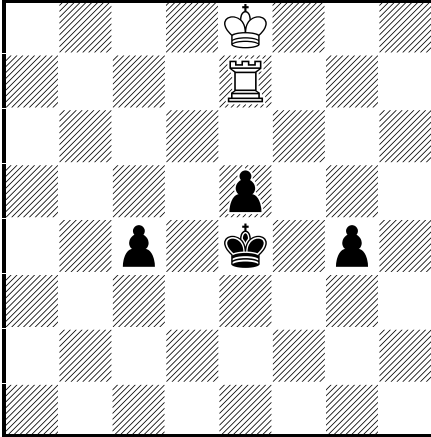
27.Kxf3 Kd6 28.Kf4!

28.Neg8? Bxg8 29.Nxg8 Re6!.

28...Ra5 29.Neg8! Rf5+ 30.Ke3! White must protect the f2 pawn, without it White would lose the NNxRB ending. 30.Kg3? is also bad 30...Bxg8 31.Nxg8 Rg5+. **30...Bxg8 31.Nxg8 Ke6 32.Nh6 Rh5 33.Ng4 Kf5 34.f3** draw.

To fully understand the structure of the analysis, it is necessary to say when and how Black can start the plan B. According to the author, bad is **7...Ka5? 8.Nc6+ Kb6 9.Ne5** with a draw. But this is a mistake, Black wins after 9...Rg2! 10.Nxf3 Rxf2 or 10.Nd7+ Kb6 11.Nf6 Nd4!. So White has to play 9.Nce7 and we are in plan B. But the González's statement is correct, except that White has to play **8.Ng3! Bg4 9.Nc6+ Kb6 10.Nd4** with draw. To achieve plan B, Black has to switch phase, the quickest way is probably triangle Ka3-b2-a2-a3 in the main line **11... Ka2 12.Ng3 Bg4 13.Ngf5 Ka3** (see 17...Ka3 in the main line).

An extraordinarily comprehensive study, the full enjoyment of which requires a considerable investment of time. This weakens the artistic impression, especially in the context of the White duals, which are in a drawish study not a loss of time, but rather organic nature. What we appreciate – more than the play – is the positional draw itself.



Luděk Sedlák, CZE

2nd commendation

Polášek and Vlasák 64 JT 2021

White draws

Very interesting symmetric position with anti-symmetric solution.

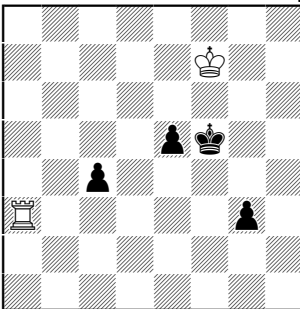
The try **1.Kd7?!** is refuted by **1...Kd5!**

2.Re6 c3 3.Rc6 Kd4 4.Rd6+ Ke3(e4) 5.Rc6 Kd3! 6.Rd6+ Ke2 7.Re6 (7.Rc6 g3) 7...c2
8.Rxe5+ Kd3 9.Rd5+ Kc4 10.Rd6 (10.Kd6 g3 11.Rg5 g2) 10...g3 or
2.Rg7 c3 3.Rxg4 e4! 4.Rg3 Kd4 5.Ke6 e3 6.Kf5 e2.

After **1.Kf7!** we have several interesting lines:

A/ 1...Kf5 2.Ra7! g3 3.Ra3!

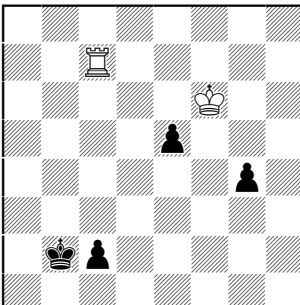
This manoeuvre is not possible in the try **1.Kd7?!**



3...Kf4 3...g2 4.Rg3 e4 5.Rxg2 e3 6.Rc2 or **3...e4** 4.Rxg3. **4.Ke6 g2 5.Ra1 c3** 5... e4 6.Kd5.
6.Kd5 c2 7.Kc4 Ke3 8.Kc3(b3) Kf2 9.Kxc2 g1Q 10.Rxg1 Kxg1 11.Kd3.

B/ 1... g3 2.Kf6 g2 3.Rxe5+ Kf3 4.Rf5+ Kg3 5.Rg5+ Kh2 6.Rh5+ with perpetual check.

**C/ 1...c3 2.Kf6 2.Rc7? Kd3 3.Rd7+ Ke2 4.Rc7 g3. 2...c2 3.Rc7 Kd3 4.Rd7+! Ke3 5.Rc7! Kd3
6.Rd7+ Kc3 7.Rc7+ Kb2**



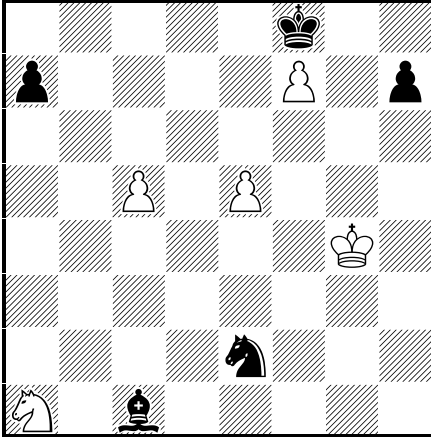
8.Kxe5! Only after a delay of 5 moves can this pawn be eaten.

Another check loses 8.Rb7+? Kc1 9.Kxe5 g3 10.Ke4 (10.Kd4 Kd1! But not 10. ..Kd2?

11.Rc7! g2 12.Rg7 c1Q 13.Rxg2+ winning the Queen) 10...g2 11.Rg7 Kb1 12.Rb7+ Ka2

13.Ra7+ Kb3 14.Rb7+ Kc3 15.Rc7+ Kd2 16.Rd7+ Ke1.

8...g3 9.Kd4! – guarding c3 – **9...g2 10.Rb7+ Kc1 11.Rg7 Kd1 12.Rxg2 c1Q 13.Rg1+ draw.**



Yochanan Afek, ISR/NED

3rd commendation

Polášek and Vlasák 64 JT 2021

White draws

1.c6 h5+! 2.Kh4!

Not into a fork 2...Kxh5? Nf4+ 3.Kg4 Ne6 4.Nb3 Be3 5.Kf5 Kxf7-+.

2...Nd4

2...Nf4 3.c7 Ng6+ 4.Kxh5 Ne7 5.e6 transposes to the main line.

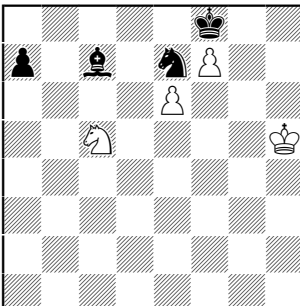
3.c7

Bad is 3...Nb3? Nf5+! 4.Kxh5 Be3! 5.c7 Ne7 6.e6 Bb6 and Bxc7.

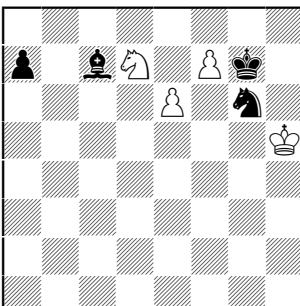
3...Nf5+ 4.Kxh5 Ne7 5.e6 Bf4

After 5...Be3 6.Kg4! Bb6 7.Kf4 Bxc7+ 8.Ke4 White hols, for example 8...Ng6 9.Kf5.

6.Nb3 Bxc7 7.Nc5

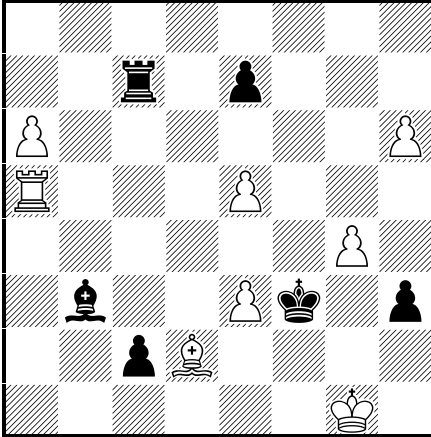


7...Kg7! 8.Nd7 Ng6



9.f8Q+! Nxf8 10.e7! Nxd7 11.e8N+! Kf7 12.Nxc7 draw.

A nice trifle with Giant Leap of the White Knight, who sacrifices himself to rise from the dead.



Steffen Slumstrup Nielsen, DNK

4th commendation
Polášek and Vlasák 64 JT 2021

White wins

One mystery directly on the start – 1.a7 or 1.h7?

In the try 1.h7? White even loses: 1...c1Q+ 2.Bxc1 Kg3! 3.Bd2 Rc1+ The bishop is lured from the diagonal e1-a5. 4.Bxc1 h2+ (Rc1 and h2 could be swapped) 5.Kh1 Bd1 with mate on f3.

Bad is also 1.Kh2??? c1Q! 2.Bxc1 Kxg4! 3.Ba3 Rc2+ 4.Kh1 Rd2 5.Bb4 Rd1+ 6.Kh2 Bc2 7.h7 Be4 8.h8Q Rh1 mate.

1.a7! c1Q+ 2.Bxc1 Kg3!

2...Rxc1+ 3.Kh2 with an easy win.

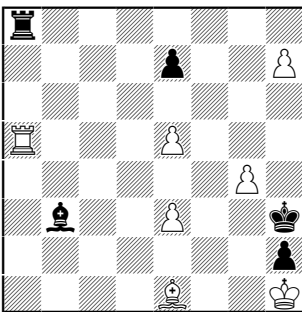
3.Bd2 h2+ 4.Kh1 Rxa7!

4...Rc1+? 5.Bxc1 Bd1 and unlike the try White has here 6.a8Q guarding the mate.

5.Be1+!

White doesn't even have a thought for 5.h7? Bd5+ 6.Rxd5 Ra1+.

5...Kh3 6.h7 Ra8! 6...Rxa5 7.h8Q+.



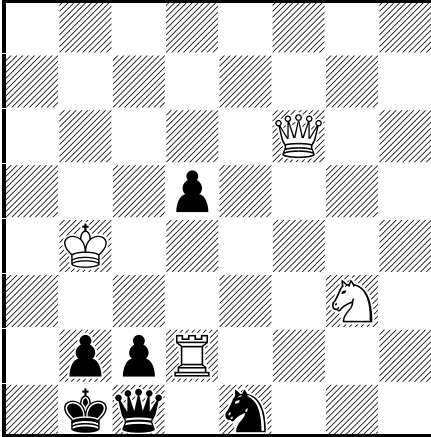
What to do? After 7.e4? Rf8 8.h8Q+ Rxh8 9.Ra3 Rb8! Black holds.

Insufficient is also 7.e6? Rh8! 8.Rh5+ Kxg4 9.Rxh2 Bd5+ with Be4 winning Ph7.

So **7.Ra3!!** Heureka! Typical Nielsen way of playing with overloaded pieces.

7...Bd5+ 8.e4+ Rxa3 9.h8Q+ or 7...Rf8 8.h8Q+ Rxh8 9.Rxb3 Rf8 10.e4+ wins.

Nice piece for solvers.



Itay Richardson, ISR

5th commendation

Polášek and Vlasák 64 JT 2021

White draws

Let us start with a thrilling line **1.Ka3?! d4!** Threatening Qd1. **2.Ne4** 2.Qxd4? Nf3.

2...Qd1! **3.Qxd4 Qf3+!**

After 4.Nc3+ Ka1 5.Kb4 the simplest practical way it 5...Qa8 guarding mate, for example 6.Ne2 Nf3.

4.Ka4 Ka1! 4...c1Q? 5.Rxb2+ Qxb2 6.Nd2+. **5.Rxc2 Qa3+!!** 5...Nxc2? 6.Qg1+ Ka2 7.Qg8+ Ka1 8.Qg1+ b1Q 9.Qxb1+ Kxb1 10.Nd2+=. **6.Kxa3 Nxc2+.**

Bad is also 1.Kb3? d4 2.Ne4 Nf3! 3.Rd3 Qe1! 4.Qxf3 Ka1! or 1.Nf1? Qd1!.

Correct is **1.Ne4!! Nd3+!**

Other possibilities:

1...dxe4 Black has no more d4, so 2.Ka3 is enough to keep:

2...Nf3 3.Re2 Qe3+! (3...e3? 4.Qc3 Ka1 5.Rxc2) 4.Rxe3 c1Q 5.Rxf3 exf3 6.Qxf3 or

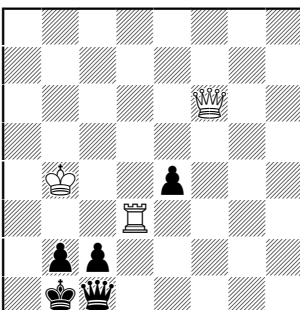
2...e3? 3.Qc3! exd2 4.Qb3 with mate

1...Qd1 2.Nc3+ The easiest. 2...Kc1 3.Rxd1+ cxd1Q 4.Nxd1 b1Q+ 5.Qb2+ Qxb2+ 6.Nxb2 Kxb2 7.Kc5.

2.Rxd3

Bad is the immediate 2.Ka3? because of 2...Qg1!! controlling c5: 3.Nc3+ Kc1 4.Rxd3 Qc5+ 5.Ka4 Qa7+ 6.Kb3 b1Q+.

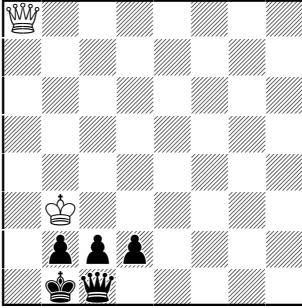
2...dxe4



Thematic try: **3.Kb3? exd3** **4.Qh8**

Waiting move, 4.Qc3? d2 5.Qa5 Qh1! see main.

4...d2 **5.Qa8**



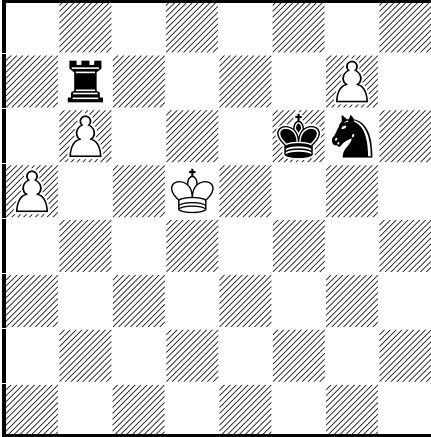
A fantastic position! It looks good for White, but surprisingly Black Queen is able to guard e4! **5...Qh1!! 6.Qa2+ 6...Qxh1+ d1Q 7.Qe4 Qe2** with the idea **8.Qxe2 c1N+**. **6...Kc1 7.Qxb2+ Kd1 8.Qxc2+ Ke1!** In case of say **5...Qg1?** White should have here a saving **9.Qe4+!**. **9.Qc3 Qd5+** with Black win.

Correct is **3.Ka3!! exd3 4.Qc3! Ka1**

Or **4...d2?** **5.Qb3** mating.

5.Kb3! Kb1 6.Ka3! Ka1 7.Kb3 draw by repetition.

Interesting but rather crude analysis. A more experienced composer would surely have found a form where he could have used the move **5...Qh1!!** as a final.



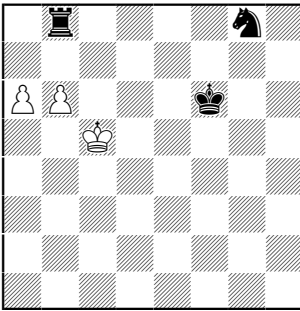
Evgeny Egorov, KAZ

6th commendation

Polášek and Vlasák 64 JT 2021

White wins

1.g8Q Ne7+ 2.Kc5! Nxg8 3.a6



Could two pawns win against superior forces?

3...Rb8 4.b7!

4.a7? Rc8+ 5.Kd6 Ra8.

4...Ne7 5.Kd6!

5.a7? Rxb7 6.a8Q Rd7.

5...Re8 (h8) 6.Kd7!

Bad is 6.Kc7? Nd5+ 7.Kc6 Nb4+ or

6.a7? Nc8+.

6...Nd5! 7.a7! Re7+ 8.Kc6

But not 8.Kd6? Rxb7 9.a8Q because of 9...Rd7+! 10.Kxd7 Nb6+.

8...Nb4+ 9.Kb6

9.Kc5? Rxb7 10.a8Q Rb8! with fork or also 9...Rc7+ 10.Kd6 Rxb7 11.a8Q Rb6+! 12.Kc5 Rb8! with the same fork..

9...Nd5+ 10.Kc5

10.Ka6/c6 Nb4+ 11.Kb6 Nd5+ loses time.

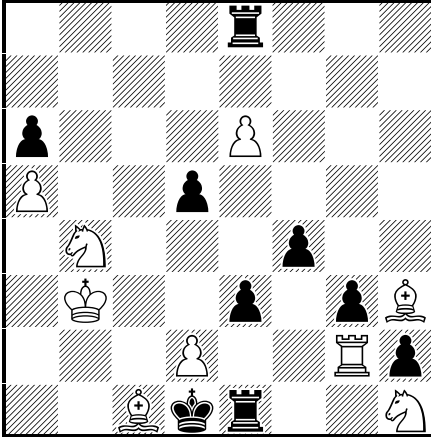
10...Rxb7 11.a8Q Rd7 12.Qe8!

But not 12.Qc6+? Ke7.

12...Re7 13.Qh8+ Ke6 14.Qh3+! wins.

The last chance of making a mistake was 14.Qg8+? Rf7 15.Qc8+ Rd7 or 15.Qg4+ Rf5.

An interesting fight of two pawns against superiority to the last shot.



Alexey Gasparyan, ARM

7th commendation

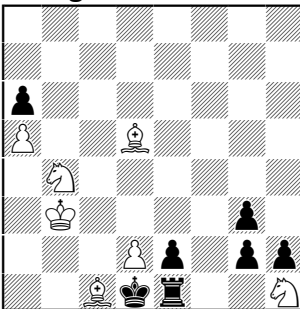
Polášek and Vlasák 64 JT 2021

Black to move, White draws

1...e2 2.Bg4 Rxe6 3.Bxe6 f3 4.Bxd5

4.Rxg3? Rxh1 5.Nd3 Rg1 6.Rxf3 h1Q 7.Bxd5 Qh5! 8.Bc6 Qxa5.

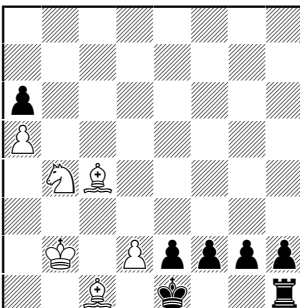
4...fxg2



5.Nf2+! gxf2

Or **5...Kxc1** 6.Kc3 h1Q 7.Nfd3+ Kb1 8.Ba2+ Ka1 9.Nc2+ Kxa2 10.Ndb4+ Kb1 11.Na3+ with perpetual.

6.Kb2 Rh1 7.Bb3+ Ke1 8.Bc4!



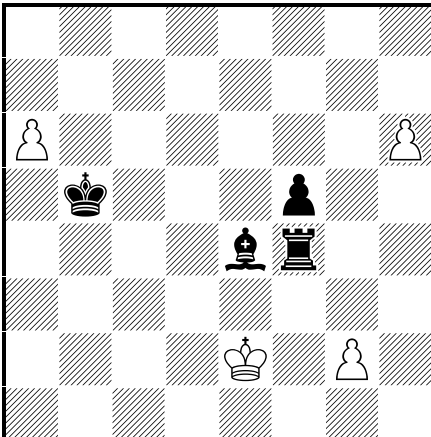
8...Kf1

8...g1Q 9.Nc2+ Kf1 10.Ne3+ Ke1 11.Nc2+ Kd1 12.Ne3+ or

8...f1Q 9.Nd3+ Kd1 10.Bb3 mate.

9.Nd5! Kg1 10.Nf4! Kf1 11.Nd5 Ke1 12.Nb4! draw by repetition.

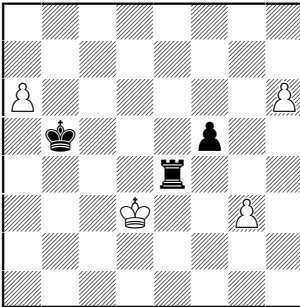
One of the most original finals in the tournament. The work-out of such position is very difficult, though. The author managed to move three thematic pawns, but the impression is still a bit awkward, and a pair of pawns on the a-file had to be additionally added for soundness.

Development of ideas**Michael Pasman, ISR**1st special Prize

Polášek and Vlasák 64 JT 2021

White draws

1.g3! 1...h7?? Rh4. 1...Bd3+! In connection with the next move, Black cuts off White king from the kingside. **2.Kxd3 Re4! 2...Rc4** for example 3.a7 Rc8 4.Ke3 Kb6 5.Kf4=.

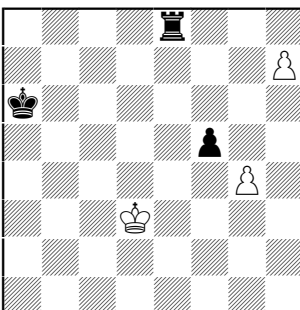


3.g4! Nice move.

After **3...a7?? Re8 4.Kd4 Kb6 5.a8Q Rxa8 6.Ke5 Rh8 7.Kxf5 Rxh6** White would miss one tempo to save the day.

3...Kxa6 Of course not **3...Rxg4? 4.h7 Rh4 5.a7** and White even wins.

4.h7! Re8

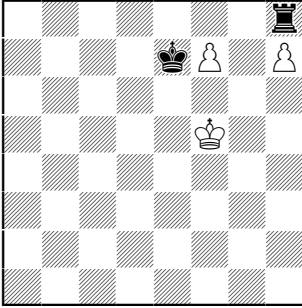


5.gxf5! Surprising way to hold. Thematic try: **5...g5?? f4 6.g6 f3 7.g7 f2 8.g8Q** The first Excelsior, but Black checks first **8...f1Q+** with mating attack.

5...Kb5 6.f6 Kc5 7.f7 Rh8 8.Ke4 Kd6 9.Kf5 Ke7

The Black play seems to be successful, after **10.Kg6? Kf8** White is in a zugzwang.

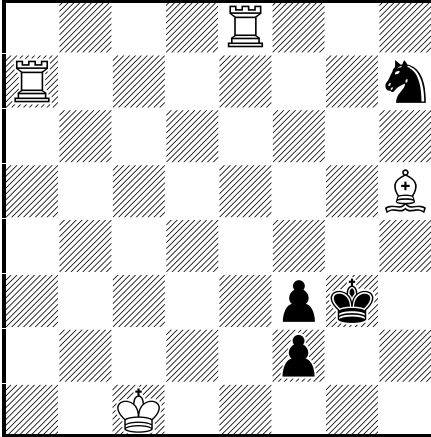
But...

**10.f8Q+!**

The second Excelsior started with a pawn's single-step advance (Festina Lente) secures draw. **10...Kxf8 11.Kg6** because Black is - to his detriment - on the move. **11...Ke7**

12.Kg7 draw.

The final sacrifice and zugzwang are known from I. Maly (5.p Ukraine Team champ, 1998). But this predecessor was short and unremarkable, having in the first three moves five captures. Pasman's compact study-from-a-game adds rich content and elevates the final idea considerably.



Sergey Osintsev, RUS

1st special honourable mention
Polášek and Vlasák 64 JT 2021

White wins

1.Rg7+!

Bad is 1.Rg8+? Kh4 2.Ra4+ Kxh5 and the knight is not under attack as in the solution. 2.Rg4+ does not help here: 2...Kxh5 3.Rxh7+ Kxg4 4.Rh1 Kg3 5.Kd2 Kg2.

1...Ng5! The best chance for Black.

Bad would be here 1...Kh4 2.Re4+! Kxh5 3.Rxh7+ Kg6 4.Rh1 or 2...Kh3 3.Bg4+.

After 1...Kh2 White has a nice move 2.Re2! fxe2 3.Bxe2 and 1...Kh3 enables 2.Bg4+.

2.Kd2!!

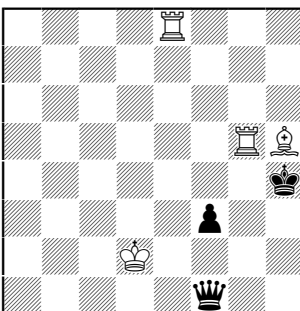
Surprisingly the natural move 2.Rxg5+? does not work: 2...Kh4! 3.Kd2!? Kxg5!, but not 3...f1Q? 4.Rg4+ transposing to the main.

2...f1Q

After 2...Kh4 3.Bxf3 (or 3.Rh8) 3...f1Q 4.Rh8+ Kg3 5.Rxg5+ the constellation RRBxQ is a technical win.

3.Rxg5+ Kh4!

Another RRBxQ wins arise in lines like 3...Kf4 4.Rg4+ Kf5 5.Rf8+ Ke5 6.Rg5+ and 7.Rxf3 or 3...Kh2 4.Bxf3 Qxf3 5.Rh8+.



4.Rg4+!!

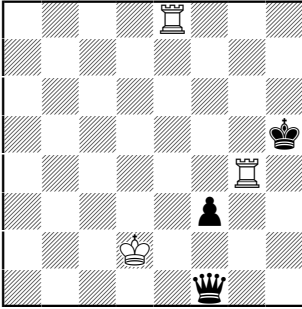
Attempts to win using “normal” moves surprisingly fail in interesting, but difficult lines: 4.Ree5? Qa1! – the only way to the perpetual – 5.Rgf5 Qd4+! 6.Ke1 Qg1+! 7.Kd2 Qd4+ 8.Kc2 Qc4+! 9.Kb2 Qb4+! 10.Ka2 Qa4+!

After 4.Rf5?! Qg2+! – to keep a feature to advance the pawn – 5.Ke3 (5.Kc3 f2 6.Ref8 f1Q 7.Rxf1 Qc6+ winning the bishop) 5...Qg1+! 6.Kxf3 the study is enriched by the stalemate rescue 6...Qg4+! 7.Bxg4.

The reason of text move is to throw off the bishop and open up the h-file. The similar move 4.Rgg8? is not sufficient because Black doesn't have to capture 4...Qf2+! 5.Kd3 Qf1+! (5...Kxh5? 6.Rg1!!) 6.Kd2 Qf2+.

4...Kxh5

Or 4...Kh3 5.Rgg8 Qg2+! 6.Ke3! (6.Rxg2? fxg2 7.Rg8 Kh2) 6...Qe2+ 7.Kf4 Qd2+ 8.Kxf3.

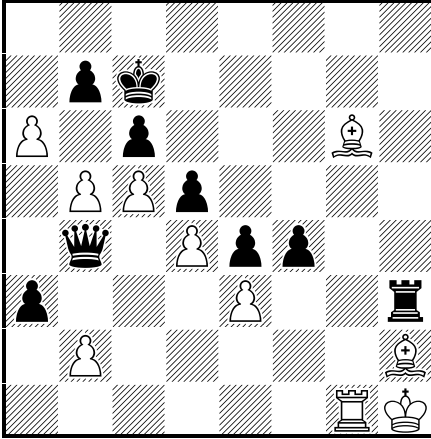


5.Rg1! with two echo skewers:

A/ 5...Qxg1 6.Rh8+ Kg4 7.Rg8+ or

B/ 5...Qf2+ 6.Kd3 Qb2 7.Rh8+! Qxh8 8.Rh1+.

Excellent treatment of a well-known theme.



Alexander Stavrietsky, RUS, Vladislav Tarasiuk, UKR

2nd special honourable mention
Polášek and Vlasák 64 JT 2021

White wins

1.b6+ Kb8 1...Kd7 2.Bf5+ Ke7 3.Bxh3. 2.a7+ Ka8 3.Bh5!

White has to block the h-file – 3.Bxe4? Rh8.

For the thematic try 3.Bh7? see the comment to the move 10.

3...Rg3! 3...Qe1 4.Rxe1 Rxh5 and White can avoid stalemate for example with 5.b4 and 6.b5.

4.Bxg3 f3 5.Rf1 g2+! 6.Kxg2 Qd2+ 7.Kh1!

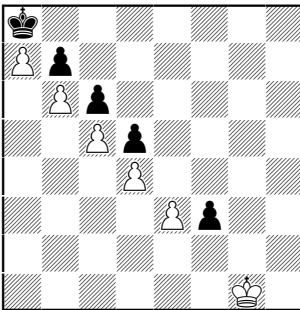
7.Kg3? Qxe3+ 8.Kh4 Qh6.

7...Qc1! 8.Rxc1 axb2 9.Rg1! b1Q 10.Bf3!

After 10.Bd1? Qxd1! 11.Rxd1 Black reached stalemate.

In the try 3.Bh7? the stalemate would not work: 10.Bxe4 Qxe4+.

10...Qxg1+ 11.Kxg1 exf3

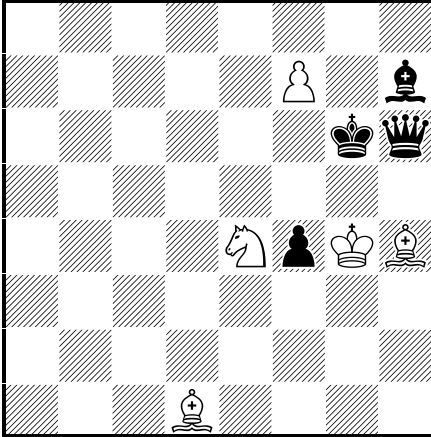


12.Kf1!

This is the well-known C. Lippmann and L. Kieseritzky (1843) position.

12...f2 13.e4 dxe4 14.Kxf2 e3+ 15.Ke1! e2 16.d5 wins, for example 16...cxd5 17.Kxe2 d4 18.Kd2 d3 19.c6 bxc6 20.Kxd3 c5 21.Kc4 Kb7 22.Kd5 c4 23.Kd6 c3 24.a8Q+ Kxa8 25.Kc7 c2 26.b7+ Ka7 27.b8Q+ Ka6 28.Qb6 mate.

An entertaining introduction to an entertaining endgame!



Martin Minski, GER
Jan Sprenger, ITA

3rd special honourable mention
 Polášek and Vlasák 64 JT 2021

White draws

1.Ng5 Kg7

1...Qh5+ 2.Kh3.

2.Bf2 Qd6

2...Bd3 3.Bc5 Kg6 4.f8N+!=.

3.Bc2!! The point.

In the logical try 3.f8Q+? Kxf8 4.Bc5! Bf5+! 5.Kh4 (5.Kxf5 Qxc5+ 6.Kxf4 Qc1+) 5...Qxc5 6.Ne6+ Bxe6 there is not stalemate.

Bad is also 3.Bd4+? Kh6! 4.Nxh7 Qd7+! (4...Kxh7 5.Bb3=) 5.Kf3 Qd5+! (5...Qxf7? 6.Nf6=) 6.Kg4 (6.Kxf4 Qxd4+) 6...Qxf7. Black wins a piece, for example 7.Nf6 Qg6+ and 8...Qd3 or 7.Bc2 Qh5+ 8.Kxf4 Qh2+.

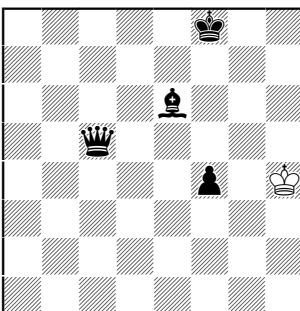
3...Bxc2

3...Qd7+ 4.Kh4!, but not 4.Kh5? Bg6+! 5.Bxg6 Qd1+ 6.Kh4 Kxg6 7.f8Q Qh5 mate.

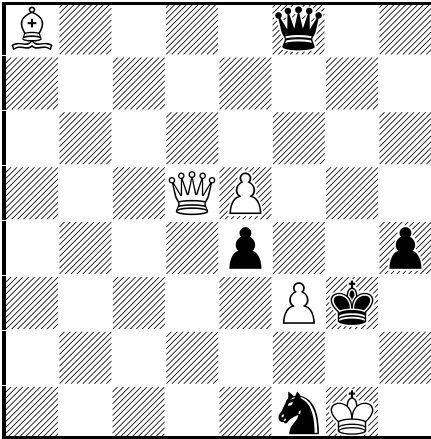
Now the stalemate combination is possible.

4.f8Q+! Kxf8 4...Qxf8 5.Ne6+.

5.Bc5! Bf5+! 6.Kh4! Qxc5 **7.Ne6+ Bxe6** model mirror stalemate.



Maybe an artistic development of the study-from-a-game Minski and Waelzel, Schach 2019. This version is spiced up by the bishop sacrifice in the third move.



David Gurgenidze, GEO

1st special commendation
Polášek and Vlasák 64 JT 2021

White wins

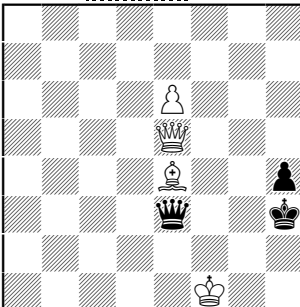
Bad is 1.Qxe4? Qc5+ 2.Kh1 and here – among other ways – the following clear line leads to a draw: 2...Kf2 3.Qxh4+ Ng3+ 4.Kh2 Qxe5 5.Be4 Qh5.

1.e6 1...Qc5+ is here not possible. But Black has another dangerous Q move.

1...Qxf3 2.Qe5+ Driving the king away because of 2.Qxe4? Qf2 with mate. **2...Kh3**

3.Qxe4

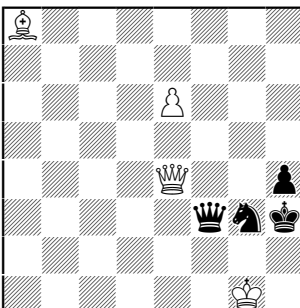
Bad is 3.Bxe4? Qe3+ 4.Kxf1.



4...Qf4+! 5.Qxf4 stalemate.

3...Ng3 Black has another stalemate in mind – after 4.Qxf3.

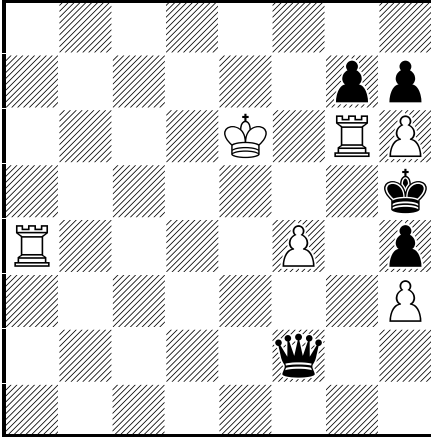
But...



4.Qg4+!! Qxg4 5.Bg2 mate.

Nice reintroduction of the known spectacular combination. Surprisingly we have found only one study (Minski and Nielsen 2017) where the sac is not on the board border. The Gurgenidze study is, however, more significant.

We are a bit bothered by the uneconomical e6 pawn.



Stanislav Nosek, CZE

2nd special commendation
Polášek and Vlasák 64 JT 2021

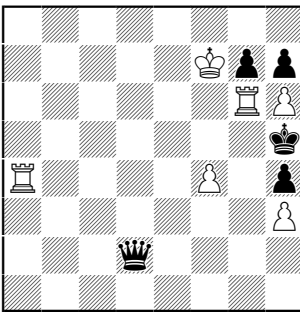
White wins

1.Kf7

1.hxg7? Qb6+.

1...Qd2

1...hxg6 2.h7.



2.Ra5+! The point.

2...Qxa5 3.Rg5+ Qxg5 4.fxg5 gxh6

4...g6 5.Kg7.

5.g6! hxg6 6.Kf6 g5 7.Kf5 g4 8.hxg4 mate.

A nice arrangement the well-known mating finale, suitable for a solving contests.