The 100 Endgames You Must Know WORKBOOK

JESUS DE LA VILLA

Practical Endgame Exercises for Every Chess Player

NEW IN CHESS

Jesus de la Villa

The 100 Endgames You Must Know Workbook

Practical Endgames Exercises for Every Chess Player

New In Chess 2019

Published by New In Chess, Alkmaar, The Netherlands
www.newinchess.com

Cover design: Ron van Roon
Supervision: Peter Boel
Editing and typesetting: Frank Erwich
Proofreading: Sandra Keetman
Production: Anton Schermer

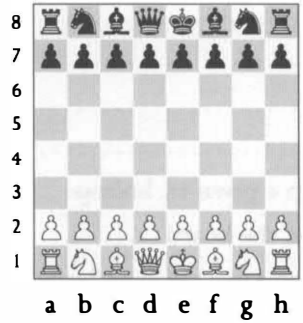
Have you found any errors in this book?
Please send your remarks to editors@newinchess.com. We will collect all relevant corrections on the Errata page of our website www.newinchess.com and implement them in a possible next edition.

ISBN: 978-90-5691-817-0

Contents

Explanation of symbols

The chessboard with its coordinates:



❑	White to move
■	Black to move
♔	King
♕	Queen
♖	Rook
♗	Bishop
♘	Knight

±	White stands slightly better
∓	Black stands slightly better
±	White stands better
∓	Black stands better
+–	White has a decisive advantage
–+	Black has a decisive advantage
=	balanced position
!	good move
!!	excellent move
?	bad move
??	blunder
!?	interesting move
?!	dubious move
N	novelty

Introduction

'Learn from the mistakes of others. You can't live long enough to make them all yourself.' — Eleanor Roosevelt

Background and motivation

My endeavours in the world of endgames extend over a period of many years as a trainer, and represent a continued effort to help learners improve their skills in this all-important and all-decisive phase in a game of chess. Since the improving player often struggles to remember certain key ideas or manoeuvres, or – more often – fails to execute the acquired theoretical knowledge in their games, I have developed specific training methods designed to explain these positions in the clearest possible way. All too often have I witnessed the following tragic scenario unfold: a player, having learned a theoretical endgame by heart, becomes so confident that he assumes such a position can hold no secrets to him. But then he gets the position on his board in a tournament game – sometimes even the very next day after training – and disaster strikes.

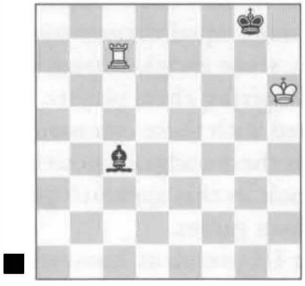
Interestingly, the decisive blunder is usually not a 'novelty', but rather a typical violation of endgame theory seen in some earlier game(s), occasionally even perpetrated by this or that decorated chess star. As Tartakower once famously remarked: 'All blunders are all there, waiting to be made.' Perhaps I am justified in adding an Orwellian twist to this and state that 'all blunders are equal, but some are more equal than others.' Database statistics certainly support this claim; some endgame positions reveal a much higher victim rate than others. Aspiring chess players, therefore, are well advised to become acquainted with these common pitfalls. In my experience, the best way to train these endgame positions is by solving exercises such as the ones in this book, as this approach greatly helps you recognize certain key ideas in your own games.

The quote above, by the First Lady of former US president Roosevelt, is not meant ironically, but genuinely echoes my recommended approach to endgame study: seeing where and how others went astray greatly accelerates your own learning process. Therefore, besides carefully analysing the positions in this book, I would encourage you not only to examine any flawed play produced in your own games, but also to look at games of friends at your chess club or at other boards in the tournament, if you happen to be playing one. Moreover, don't stop once you've figured

out what went wrong; also try to understand why it went wrong, what might have been tried, or what ought to have been the outcome with correct play.

Most chess players are human beings, endowed with human qualities. They smile at the tragedy of other chess players, and say to themselves: 'That would never happen to me.' A highly dangerous presumption!

One such example is a game from the 2014 U18 European Championship in the city of Batumi, Georgia, played by the extraordinary Spanish talent Jaime Santos Latasa. In a crucial game that could have earned him the title, Jaime first spoiled a promising middlegame position and then, disappointed about the way the game had developed, played an endgame – that everybody knew was still a draw – on autopilot. The expected result would have earned Jaime the bronze medal (his opponent would be silver medallist, while the Russian player Daniil Yuffa would win gold). But then this happened:

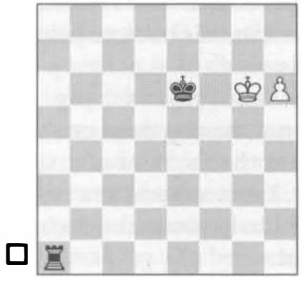


70...♗e6?? and after **71.♔g6!** it's zugzwang, and the position is lost. The rest of the game is of little interest: **71...♗h3 72.♖e7 ♔f8 73.♔f6 ♔g8 74.♔g6 ♔f8 75.♖e3 ♗d7 76.♔f6 ♔g8 77.♖g3+ ♔h8 78.♔f7! ♔h7 79.♖g5! ♔h6 80.♔f6! ♗c6 81.♖c5 ♗d7 82.♖c7 ♗g4 83.♖c2 1-0** Boruchovsky-Santos Latasa, Batumi 2014 (9).

Thus, Boruchovsky became European Champion, Yuffa ended as the runner-up, while Jaime Santos dropped to fourth place.

Errors such as the one in this game are usually the result of fatigue, time trouble, or some psychological weakness such as disappointment, apathy, or a sudden distraction. While these human factors can never be ruled out in a practical game, thorough study of the endgame can – and does – help players prevent blundering away a theoretical draw or win in the vast majority of cases.

The following well-known diagram represents, I believe, the most important position in the endgame rook vs. pawn. Adrian Mikhalchishin, I am sure, would agree with me, as he presents this position in the first diagram in Chapter 1 of his book *Mastering Basic Rook Endgames*. Many games have reached this position, and the current one continued as follows:



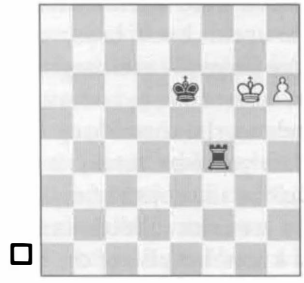
55.h7?

The correct move is 55.♔g7.

55...♖g1+ 56.♔h6 ♔f7 57.h8♘+ ♔f6 58.♔h7 ♖g3 0-1 Alfaya Marcelo-Martin Duque, San Sebastian 2014.

This shows it's never too late to spoil a perfectly tenable game, even in simplified positions.

If you are a sceptical nature, and feel inclined to retort 'hang on, this was only a young player, rated below 2000 Elo', well, allow me then to show you another example, from a game Kotronias-Sandalakis, Nikaia 2016:

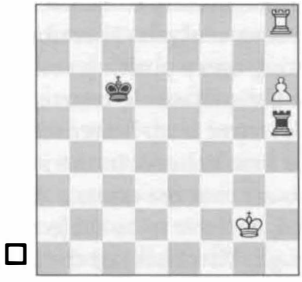


This is essentially the same position. Here, White played **64.♔g7** (Kotronias, one would assume, knows exactly what he's doing) **64...♖g4+ 65.♔f8 ♖f4+ 66.♔g7 ♖f7+**, reaching the following position:

67.♔g8?? ♔f6 1-0

So there was another trick, victimising an internationally titled chess heavyweight.

Or how about the following example taken from an ultimate elite contest:



This position occurred in a tiebreak game Gelfand-Anand for the World Championship, Moscow 2012. White could have broken Black's only resource, Vancura's Defence, even with a tempo to spare, for example **61.♔g3 ♔b7 62.♔g4** and White wins.

But here, White instead played 61.♖h7?? and after 61...♔d6 Black got his king closer, drew the game, and retained his world title.

Many more examples of such technical mishaps, or as Dvoretsky called them 'tragicomedies', are presented and analysed in this book to help you improve this crucial phase in the game of chess.

Solving diagram positions from a book is not the same as solving problems over the board, but more often than not, having done one's homework will give a player that decisive edge at the moment of making a crucial decision. While doing these exercises, I recommend you try imagining you are playing a real game. This will help you make decisions in the most realistic – and best – frame of mind.

Some learners complain: 'Is it really worth studying all endgame positions? What if I never get any of them on my board in a tournament game?' At first, such concerns appear to make some sense, and this reminds me of a strong FIDE Master confessing to me that, as a junior, he once had to deliver checkmate with bishop and knight vs. lone king, and failed. Embarrassed, he went home to study every detail of this endgame, and swore revenge: someday, he would prove that he could do it. At the time of his confession, some 20 years later, the moment still hadn't come, though, and who knows he might never get another shot at redemption. So, was his study time wasted? I would argue that it was not. Determined chess minds usually come back stronger from hardship, by discipline and rigorous analysis. Therefore, even if the statistical likelihood of you getting every position contained in this book in real games were nil, I would still whole-heartedly recommend you analyse all positions carefully; there is no better recipe for significant chess improvement.

I am a firm believer in the instructional value of real game examples. It seems to me that the essence of our human condition is that to understand an ordeal, we have to be subjected to it. Theoretical knowledge alone is not enough. Therefore, all the positions in this book were taken from real games, mostly featuring strong players. Throughout this book, however, you will find examples, too, of games between average players – even beginners – particularly where these positions reveal some instructive or common mistakes. I am aware that not every blunder made on the chessboard makes it into the databases, while many others are yet to be 'found', in the Tartakowerian sense of the word; such might well be the object of my future research. The present publication, I believe, is an accurate collection not only of the most important endgames you must know, but also of the most frequent errors players of all levels commit in these positions.

How to use the material in this book?

Solving the exercise requires two things: an effort to calculate properly and accurate theoretical knowledge of the relevant endgame. In each

exercise, the reader is asked to answer one specific question. The most common question is whether the position is winning or not. Another typical question is to choose between two or more options, an approach I personally like very much, as it mimics the decision-making process during a real game. In such positions, you should particularly look out for any subtle hidden resources. I might also ask you to assess the consequences of some simplifying operation, which is such a common occurrence in a chess game, and one which often requires mature decision-making. (To become proficient in the art of simplification, I highly recommend the books *Liquidation on the Chess Board* by Joel Benjamin, as well as *The Correct Exchange in the Endgame* by Eduardas Rozentalis.) A few times I ask you to give all the winning moves in a position, not out of any practical necessity (one winning move is more than enough in a practical game), but with the aim of reinforcing your theoretical knowledge of the endgame in question. When you work out the answers to such questions, calculation takes a back seat, and the error rate in practical play is usually much lower.

In each chapter, the exercises are organized in increasing level of difficulty: while the first ones should pose few problems for the average player, the ones at the end of each chapter are likely to challenge even a seasoned chess master. Therefore, each player can work through this book focussing on positions suitable for their level. For less experienced players, my recommended approach is this: solve only the first half of each chapter, and leave the rest for some later stage of your chess improvement. By contrast, I would advise stronger players to start at the end and work their way through the chapter in reversed order, stopping once you feel the problems become as easy as eating your favourite sweet baked food at an outdoor lunch. I recommend that all players, regardless of their Elo, repeat any positions they weren't able to figure out, within one year.

I am aware that level of difficulty is to some degree a subjective matter: a player who happens to have studied a particular endgame before might have no problem solving even the more difficult problems on the topic, whereas a player making his first footsteps into new endgame territory might struggle to find the basic ideas. For this reason, I have decided against awarding some sort of 'star system' to indicate the level of difficulty to each problem, which might only mislead you. What I have sometimes provided, though, is statistical analysis to show, for instance, the frequency of and average score in certain positions.

To all exercises I have attached a highlighted reference to the corresponding endgame presented in *100 Endgames You Should Know*, including exercises relating to the Appendix on fortresses. Please note

that not every single endgame that was covered in 100 *Endgames You Must Know* has made it into this book, for the simple reason that some positions produce few or no instructive mistakes in chess praxis, and have therefore been left out. Less than a handful of positions in this book are new in the sense that they received no previous coverage in 100 *Endgames You Must Know*. Where this is the case, I have provided detailed explanations to equip you well with all the knowledge you need to play these positions. Perhaps, such new positions will find their way into a future edition of 100 *Endgames You Must Know*.

A final note on terminology: some terms in the English version of this book have been updated and differ from the terminology used in 100 *Endgames You Must Know*. I hope the new terminology improves your reading experience.

Enjoy the journey through these exercises – I am confident they will help you become a better chess player.

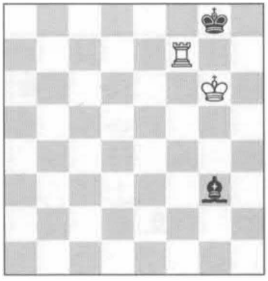
Jesus de la Villa
Pamplona, January 2019

CHAPTER 1

Basic endings

It only seemed logical to make this the easiest chapter in the entire book. But don't be fooled: you will find some examples of blunders taken from high-level tournament play. It's hard to tell from database info alone whether these mistakes were the result of fatigue, time trouble, or some such psychological factor as mentioned in the introduction. But let me just remind you that superficial knowledge of endgame theory, so common in the chess world, is also an important factor that should not be underestimated.

A



B

C

D

The above diagrams represent four common situations. Examine these four diagrams closely, and keep them in mind while you try the exercises. Knowing what to look out for is the best recipe for playing such positions with confidence, even under time pressure.

Diagrams [A] and [B] show two situations in the struggle between rook and bishop: in diagram [A], the king is trapped in the wrong corner and, therefore, Black is already lost; diagram [B] shows us one of the most typical errors, hereby christened as 'right-corner catastrophe'. Diagrams [C] and [D] aim to alert you to the danger of losing the opposition.:

(1)

Does White have time to capture the g4-pawn?
(solution on page 91)

(2)

Is exchanging queens a good idea for White in this position?
(solution on page 91)

(3)

Can White save the game?
(solution on page 92)

(4)

Choose between 94...♗f5 and 94...♗c4.
(solution on page 92)

(5)

Find four errors in the following sequence of moves: 73...♘h6 74.f6 ♔e6 75.♔g5 ♘f5 76.g7 ♘xg7 77.fxg7 ♔f7 78.♔h6 ♔g8.
(solution on page 93)

(6)

Can White force an entry for his king with 60.♕e5 ?
(solution on page 93)

(7)

Should White take the d3-pawn?
(solution on page 94)

(8)

Would it be correct to build a bridge by means of 62.♖h4+ followed by 63.♖h5+ or 63.♖h3+ ?
(solution on page 94)

(9)

Is 80.b6 winning for White?
(solution on page 94)

(10)

Choose between 102...♗d6 and 102...♗g3.
(solution on page 95)

(11)

Can White win the game?
(solution on page 95)

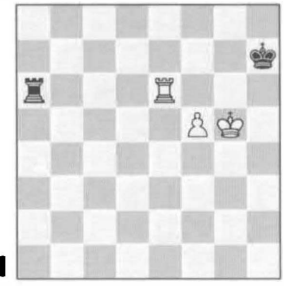
(12)

Can White win the game?
(solution on page 96)

(13)

Can White win the game?
(solution on page 97)

(14)

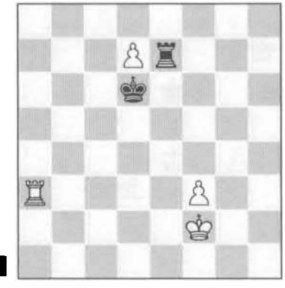


Would it be a good idea for Black to exchange rooks?
(solution on page 97)

(15)

Should Black simplify into a pawn endgame?
(solution on page 97)

(16)

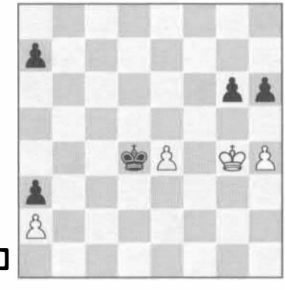


How should Black capture the pawn?
(solution on page 98)

(17)

Does Black have time to capture the pawn and escape from the wrong corner?
(solution on page 98)

(18)

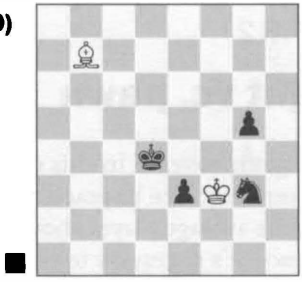


Choose between 38.h5 and 38.♔f4.
(solution on page 99)

(19)

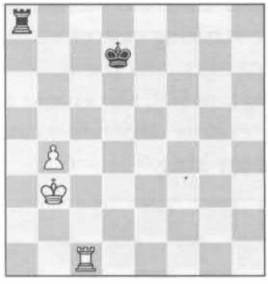
Can White draw the game by exchanging on c4?
(solution on page 99)

(20)



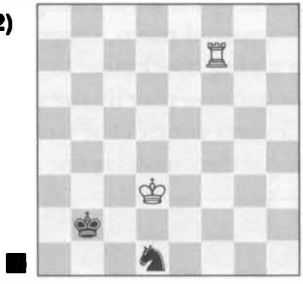
Is 54...♘e4 winning?
(solution on page 100)

(21)



Is 55...♖c8 correct in this position?
(solution on page 100)

(22)

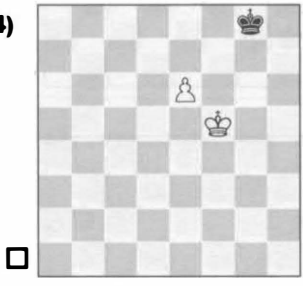


Can Black save the knight?
(solution on page 101)

(23)

Can Black win the game?
(solution on page 102)

(24)



According to my database, white players have chosen the following moves in this position: 77.♔e5, 77.♔g6 and 77.♔f6. Which ones are correct?
(solution on page 102)

CHAPTER 2

Knight vs. pawn

The endgame covered in this chapter is still relatively easy, as evidenced by a lower error rate in practical play compared to other endings. Even though the average player should be able to play this endgame with confidence, it's necessary to learn about a few subtle resources that might otherwise not easily be discovered over the board.

Let's examine the following four diagrams, designed to aid your memory: Diagram [A] represents the circuit of a knight trying to deal with a rook's pawn on the sixth rank. Diagram [B] shows the optimal range of a king vis-à-vis a knight to prevent the latter from sacrificing itself for a passed pawn. Diagram [C] shows the striking case of a knight to move giving checkmate to a king in the corner (usually the result of some cooperative play by the opponent). In diagram [D], the knight alone cannot forever control the pawn and success therefore depends on any effective barriers to delay the arrival of the enemy king.

A

B

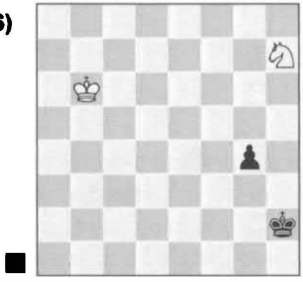
C

D

(25)

It seems that the pawn is lost. Can White still win?
(solution on page 103)

(26)

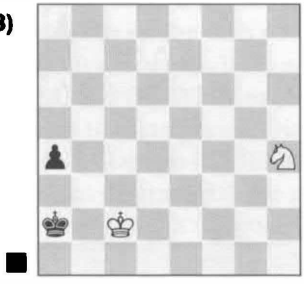


Is the knight able to prevent the pawn from queening?
(solution on page 103)

(27)

Choose between 66.♘b4+ and 66. ♘c1+.
(solution on page 103)

(28)

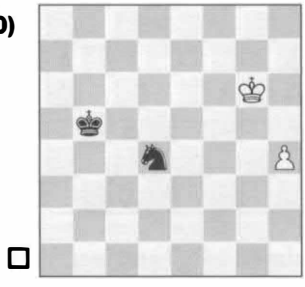


Should Black play ...a4-a3 ?
(solution on page 104)

(29)

Can Black win the game?
(solution on page 104)

(30)

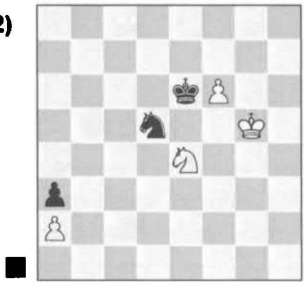


Can the knight get onto the right circuit?
(solution on page 105)

(31)

Can Black save the game?
(solution on page 106)

(32)

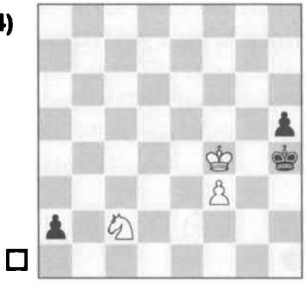


Black chose to play 75...♘xf6. Was this a good decision?
(solution on page 106)

(33)

Choose between 56.h6 and 56.e7+.
(solution on page 107)

(34)

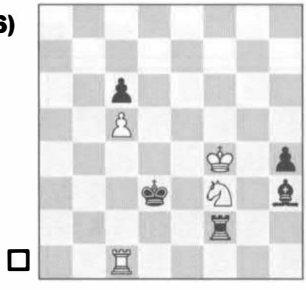


Choose between 51.♔e3 and 51.♔e5.
(solution on page 107)

(35)

White played 1.♘g7 and lost. Could he have saved the game by playing 1.c5, with the idea of winning the bishop as soon as possible?
(solution on page 108)

(36)



Choose between 55.♖d1+ and 55.♖g1.
(solution on page 109)

CHAPTER 3

Queen vs. pawn

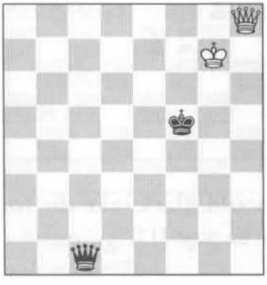
The endgame of queen vs. pawn entails a more complex finale to a game of chess, as evidenced by a much higher error rate compared to the endgames covered thus far. To become a stronger player, knowledge of the basic rule is essential: the queen wins against a central pawn or a knight's pawn, while against any other pawn the result is a draw. This correct and very useful rule has, however, many exceptions. That's why so many errors slip in, often with unexpected – and painful – results. Furthermore, since players are often unfamiliar with the wide array of tricks available in these positions, the outcome of this type of endings almost seems unpredictable.

As it is virtually impossible to present every possible trick hidden in these positions, the selected exercises aim to familiarize the reader with some of the most important ones. Particularly, the key positions we shall examine are shown in the diagrams below. In diagrams [A] and [B], White to play can save the game, but he must be alert not to fall prey to a nasty trick. Diagrams [C] and [D] represent two contrasting situations. In diagram [C], Black to move wins, but only by means of the right check; in diagram [D], the pawn on the fifth rank – provided it is to move – can draw against the queen.

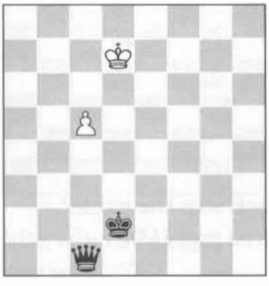
A

B

C



D



(37)

Evaluate the position.
(solution on page 110)

(38)

Does Black win by exchanging rooks?
(solution on page 111)

(39)

White played 56.♔d5. Was this a good idea?
(solution on page 112)

(40)

Only one move wins. Which one?
(solution on page 112)

(41)

Can Black win the game?
(solution on page 113)

(42)

How should Black take the rook?
(solution on page 113)

(43)

Can Black make a draw?
(solution on page 114)

(44)

Does it matter whether White plays 51.♔f8 or 51.♔h8 ?
(solution on page 115)

(45)

White can choose between 58.♖d7, 58.e8♕ and 58.♖c8. Does any of these moves win?
(solution on page 115)

(46)

Can Black win the game?
(solution on page 116)

(47)

Is Black winning?
(solution on page 117)

(48)

Can White win the game?
(solution on page 117)

CHAPTER 4

Rook vs. pawn

A rook vs. pawn scenario often comes about from a rook vs. rook position (see Chapter 9), especially when one player is forced to sacrifice his rook to neutralize a passed pawn, and then tries to race his own pawn up – or down – the board, hoping to have bought himself enough time to secure a draw. I've seen these positions appear on the boards of my students many times during tournament play. The good news is that the methods of play involved in rook vs. pawn positions are clear-cut, and mastery of this kind of endgame promises tangible rewards.

Since crucial decisions are usually taken when one pair of rooks still remains on the board, many exercises depart from this situation. Moreover, solving the exercises in this chapter will help you improve two important chess skills: (1) calculation, and (2) learning how and when your chessmen must *share duties*.

The diagrams below provide some insight into the most common patterns and ideas you must know to navigate your way through this endgame with confidence:

A crucial moment

A

Memorize this position: Black to move advances the king and draws; White to move gives a long-range vertical check and wins! Although it doesn't matter which file the pawn is on, a couple of subtle differences must be observed: (1) the drawing procedure is different with a rook's pawn; and (2) a checking distance of two squares from behind (i.e. a check from b5, in our example) only wins against a rook's pawn.

There is another important practical feature to this position: the endgame rook vs. rook's pawn appears more than three hundred times

in my database, and whenever the side with the pawn was to move, they ended up losing in several dozens of games. In some games, the draw was thrown away on the first move, while in others the losing error occurred at some other critical moment, as we will see in the exercises.

Cutting the king off horizontally

B

In this position, an important (and the only) winning method for White is to play 1.♖g5!, cutting off the black king from its pawn so that it won't be able to support it. If the pawn advances, the rook is always in time to capture it. This manoeuvre doesn't work if applied one file further down, as then the rook is unable to successfully deal with the pawn. Often this idea has to be anticipated – or even carried out – when both rooks are still on the board!

Tempo gaining

C

The rook carries out a useful tempo-gaining manoeuvre by first giving check and only then placing itself behind the pawn, forcing the enemy king to lose precious time. This manoeuvre can be decisive if the king is two ranks in front of the pawn, as it is forced to move back.

Promoting to a knight

Promoting to a knight (in a general sense also known as 'underpromotion', i.e. opting for a piece of lesser value than the queen) with check is another common resource, and is often the only way to save the game when the opponent presses from behind.

Diagram [D] is the most typical situation, leading to a draw. In diagram [E], with a rook's pawn, promoting to a knight won't save Black. Positions [F] and [G] are less common, but worthy of attention nonetheless. In diagram [F], which comes about after the rook had to give a check from the fifth rank, knight promotion secures a draw for White. Diagram [G] shows a situation where the weaker side's king has been cut off on the edge of the board while the stronger side's king was able to rapidly approach, unhindered by any obstacles along the way. In this case, promoting to a knight is losing.

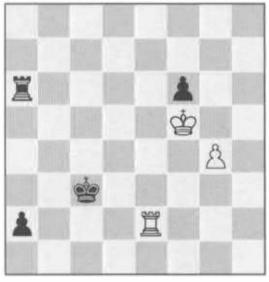
D

E

F

G

(49)



Is 70.♖xa2 good enough to draw the game?
(solution on page 118)

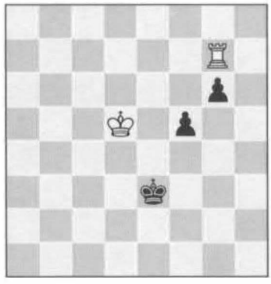
(50)

Is 71...♖xa7+ sufficient to draw?
(solution on page 119)

(51)

Can White win the game?
(solution on page 119)

(52)



Can White win the game?
(solution on page 120)

(53)

The pawn is getting awfully close. Can White still win the game?
(solution on page 120)

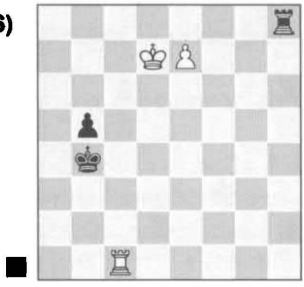
(54)

Can White draw the game?
(solution on page 121)

(55)

What is the best way for Black to sacrifice his rook?
(solution on page 122)

(56)

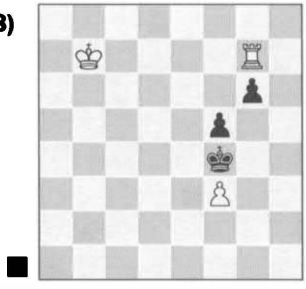


What is the best way for Black to sacrifice the rook?
(solution on page 123)

(57)

Can Black win the game?
(solution on page 123)

(58)

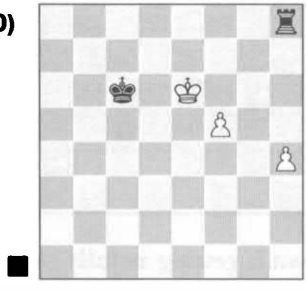


What is the result after the following moves: (a) 53...g5 and (b) 53...♔xf3 ?
(solution on page 124)

(59)

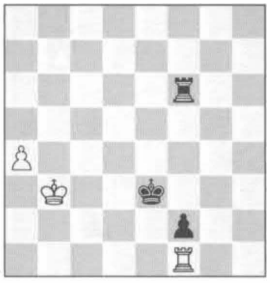
Choose between 59.a7 and 59.♖a5.
(solution on page 125)

(60)



Can Black eliminate both pawns?
(solution on page 126)

(61)

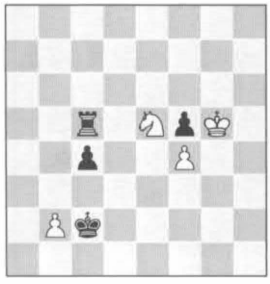


Black to move will soon win a rook. Can he win the game?
(solution on page 127)

(62)

White played 54.♖c8. Two questions: (a) Was this good enough to win? (b) Was there anything better?
(solution on page 128)

(63)



Is sacrificing the knight enough to force a draw?
(solution on page 129)

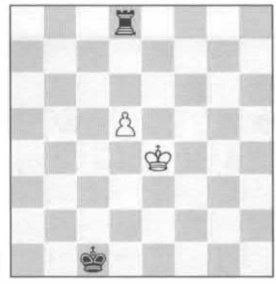
(64)

Choose between 55.b5 and 55.♔a5.
(solution on page 129)

(65)

White to move and soon to win a rook. What is the best way to capture it?
(solution on page 130)

(66)



Can Black win the game?
(solution on page 130)

(67)

Black can sacrifice the rook to win both pawns. Would that be good enough to draw the game?
(solution on page 131)

(68)

Does Black have time to eliminate the last remaining white pawn, and help his own h-pawn?
(solution on page 131)

(69)

Can Black win the game?
(solution on page 132)

(70)

Is there any difference between 78.♖xf7 and 78.♔xf7 ?
(solution on page 133)

(71)

Choose between 66...♔a5 and 66...b4.
(solution on page 133)

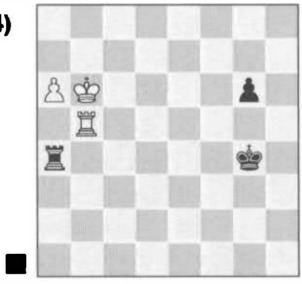
(72)

Can White save the game?
(solution on page 134)

(73)

How should Black capture the bishop?
(solution on page 135)

(74)

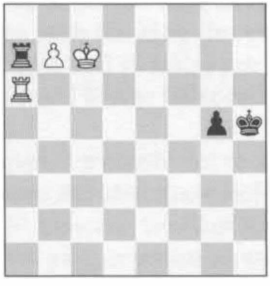


A classic race; can Black survive?
(solution on page 135)

(75)

The black pawn is rushing down the board at full speed. Can White save the game?
(solution on page 136)

(76)



What should Black play?
(solution on page 137)

(77)

How should White take on g4?
(solution on page 137)

(78)

What result may Black hope for?
(solution on page 138)

(79)

Is Black's king in time?
(solution on page 138)

(80)

The rook must move, allowing Black's king to make headway. Can White still win the game?
(solution on page 139)

CHAPTER 5

Rook vs. two pawns

Similar to the previous chapter, this imbalance commonly arises after one player sacrifices their rook for a passed pawn. Therefore, the fight between a rook and two pawns is of great practical importance.

Almost no specific theoretical knowledge is required, except perhaps for the well-known rule that two connected pawns on the sixth rank are unstoppable, which is a common situation even with more material on the board. On the other hand, when a rook combats two separated pawns (one supported by its king) the practical advice provided in this chapter is all you need to play these positions with confidence. Specifically, keep in mind the following three techniques: *outflanking* to get the king in front of the pawns, latching onto the hindmost pawn with the king (hereby christened as *playing tag*, as in the children's game), and *switching pole position*, i.e. being able to choose which pawn should be the front-runner in the race toward promotion.

If you're not yet familiar with these techniques, I recommend that you first study the theoretical chapter in *100 Endgames You Must Know*, before trying the exercises. As was my approach in *100 Endgames You Must Know*, I focus here mainly on positions with connected pawns; positions with separated pawns, though interesting, are of too little theoretical value, and therefore omitted.

(81)

Can White win the game?
(solution on page 139)

(82)

Can White successfully deal with the pawns?
(solution on page 140)

(83)

Can White win the game?
(solution on page 140)

(84)

Choose between 57.f6 and 57.♔g2.
(solution on page 141)

(85)

Can White win the game?
(solution on page 141)

(86)

Can Black make a draw?
(solution on page 142)

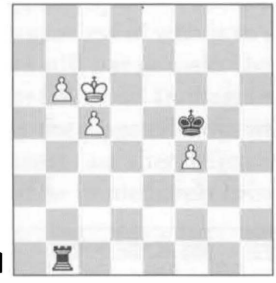
(87)

Is 85.♕b6+ winning?
(solution on page 142)

(88)

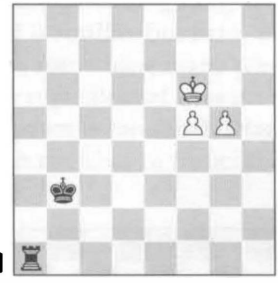
Can Black save the game?
(solution on page 143)

(89)



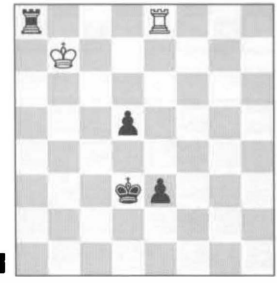
Can Black save the game?
(solution on page 144)

(90)



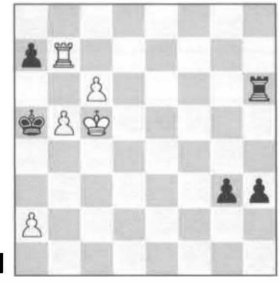
Choose between 56...♖g1, 56...♖a6 and 56...♔c4.
(solution on page 144)

(91)



How should White capture the rook?
(solution on page 145)

(92)



What result can Black hope for?
(solution on page 146)

(93)

Choose between 78...♖b8 and 78...♖b4.

(solution on page 147)

CHAPTER 6

Same-coloured bishops: bishop + pawn vs. bishop

The previous chapters all dealt with endgames characterized by extreme imbalances (queen vs. pawn; rook vs. one or two pawns). Now the time has come to focus on some endgames involving pieces of equal strength.

This chapter examines same-coloured bishop endings (for opposite-coloured bishop endings, see Chapter 8). In these positions, most errors are the result of misplaying standard theoretical positions, particularly one that requires the defending king to seek the opposition from behind.

Diagram [A] shows the correct position of the defending king: it is a draw regardless of who is to play. Diagram [B] is similar, but here, Black to move still has to make the correct decision, something many players in practice fail to do! In diagram [C], Black loses regardless of who is to play, because the diagonal from which to stop the pawn is too short. Diagram [D] presents another defensive technique with the king in front: Black draws if he immediately brings the king to g8.

A

B

C

D

(94)

Can Black make a draw?
(solution on page 148)

(95)

Can White force a draw by first trading rooks and then exchanging the kingside pawns by means of g2-g4 ?
(solution on page 148)

(96)

Choose between 69...f3+ and 69...♗f8.
(solution on page 149)

(97)

Choose between 65.♗b7 and 65.♗g2.
(solution on page 149)

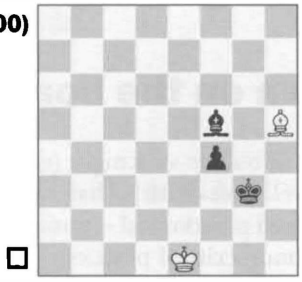
(98)

Evaluate the position.
(solution on page 150)

(99)

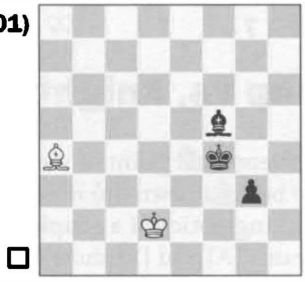
Can Black save the game?
(solution on page 150)

(100)



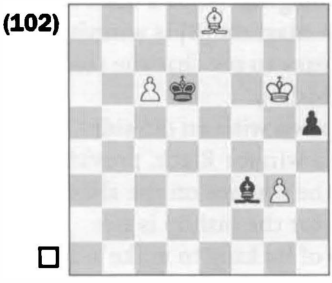
Can White save the game?
(solution on page 151)

(101)



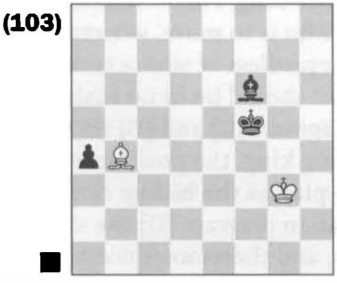
Can White make a draw?
(solution on page 151)

(102)



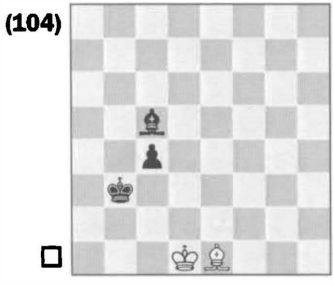
Is either of the moves 51.♔h6 or 51.♔g5 winning?
(solution on page 152)

(103)



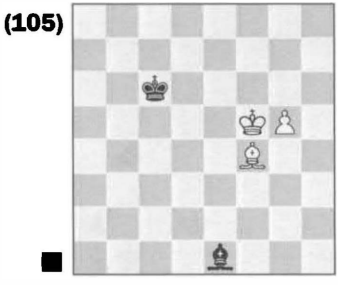
Is it possible to calculate whether this is a winning or a drawn position?
(solution on page 153)

(104)



Can White hold this position?
(solution on page 153)

(105)



Can Black make a draw?
(solution on page 154)

CHAPTER 7

Bishop vs. knight: one pawn on the board

From a theoretical point of view, the endgame of bishop vs. knight (with one side being a pawn up) is among the least well-researched. That said, it's worth taking notice of a couple of useful – indeed paradoxical – positions.

Diagrams [A] and [B] show us the most common critical positions, of which the position in diagram [A] is most seen in practice. In both diagrams, we see a dangerous h-pawn on the verge of promotion, which would be winning if it weren't for an important resource the defending side has at his disposal: sacrificing the passive bishop to imprison the gluttonous king. Furthermore, the position in diagram [A] is a draw no matter who is to move, whereas the position in diagram [B] is winning for Black, regardless of whose turn it is. It's fairly easy to see that the side with the pawn should be in no rush to go after the bishop.

In diagrams [C] and [D] we see knight and pawn with an off-side defending king; the position in diagram [C] is a win for Black, provided he is to play, as the bishop can be deprived of the squares on the shortest diagonal; in diagram [D] the shortest diagonal for the bishop is five squares, and therefore it doesn't need the help of its king to make a draw, unless White plays carelessly.

Except from these diagram positions, it's useful to know that the knight usually has a hard time stopping a passed pawn supported by a bishop, and unless the knight is firmly settled in front of the pawn – and barring the odd tactic – its only hope lies in stalemate.

A

B

C

D

(106)

Black has an offside king. Can he save the game?
(solution on page 155)

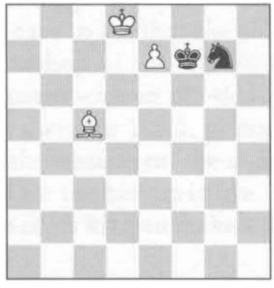
(107)

Here, too, Black's king is far away from the action. Is White winning?
(solution on page 155)

(108)

Is 69...♔g1 winning for Black?
(solution on page 156)

(109)



Choose between 57.♔d7 and 57.♗d4.
(solution on page 157)

(110)

Is White winning?
(solution on page 157)

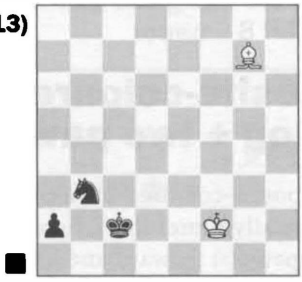
(111)

Can White save the game?
(solution on page 157)

(112)

Choose between 80...♗d4 and 80...♔d3.
(solution on page 158)

(113)



Can Black win the game?
(solution on page 159)

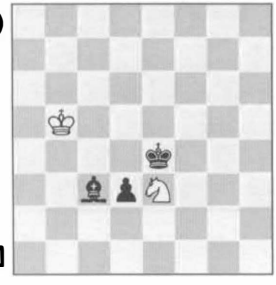
(114)

Is any of the following logical moves winning: 63...♘g4, 63... ♘d1 or 63... ♔e2 ?
(solution on page 160)

(115)

Can White win the game?
(solution on page 160)

(116)



Does White have a defence?
(solution on page 161)

(117)

Can White save the game?
(solution on page 162)

CHAPTER 8

Opposite-coloured bishops: bishop + two pawns vs. bishop

The opposite-coloured bishops endgame is governed by rules of its own, and typically represents a fight between one side trying to push their passed pawn(s) forward and a defending bishop preventing this, operating through a parallel universe its oblique competitor can never touch. Thus, we enter a whole new world of endgame theory. Here are some key guidelines to keep in mind:

- Two connected pawns are a draw, provided the defending bishop is able to take up the correct defensive stand;
- Two pawns separated by one file almost never win;

Two pawns further away from one another almost always win (a caveat: if one of those pawns is a knight's pawn, it'd better not be too far advanced!).

Also, beware of specific features/manoeuvres, such as:

- *Special pawns*; and
- Bring the king round via a lengthy detour.

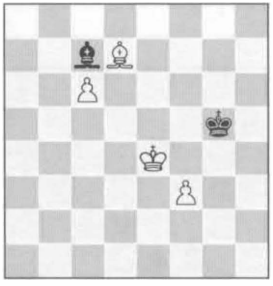
The diagrams below show six common positions players tend to mess up. Except for the position in diagram [F], the result of the game doesn't depend on whose turn it is.

Basic defensive stand

A

Basic defensive stand

B



Basic defensive stand with a b- or g-pawn

C

The king can go all the way round

D

Trying a king walk doesn't work

E

Premium pawns

F

For players who have studied these positions before, the exercises might be a walk in the park. But for those players that are new to this endgame, I suggest the following training method: try to determine what the correct result of the game should be (with Black and with White to move); then, try to determine the appropriate winning or drawing manoeuvre. If your assessment proves wrong, look up the corresponding position in 100 *Endgames You Must Know*; only after that you should do the test positions in this chapter. Also, please be prepared to have some good fun, as some of these positions come with a fantastic element of surprise!

(118)

Should Black play 38...g5 ?
(solution on page 162)

(119)

Is this endgame winning for White?
(solution on page 163)

(120)

Is exchanging rooks on c6 winning for White?
(solution on page 163)

(121)

Is 84...♘g4 good enough to win the game for Black?
(solution on page 164)

(122)

Choose between 80.♔e2 and 80.♗f7.
(solution on page 164)

(123)

Evaluate the position.
(solution on page 165)

(124)

Is this a winning endgame?
(solution on page 165)

(125)

Can Black win the game?
(solution on page 166)

(126)

How should White capture the pawn?
(solution on page 166)

(127)

Can Black save the game?
(solution on page 167)

(128)

Can White reach the basic defensive stand?
(solution on page 167)

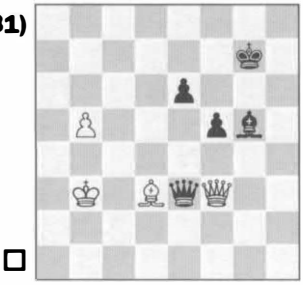
(129)

How should White set up his pieces to defend this position?
(solution on page 168)

(130)

Can Black win the game?
(solution on page 169)

(131)

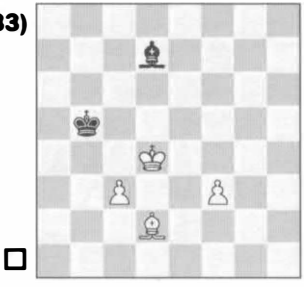


Should White exchange queens?
(solution on page 169)

(132)

Choose between 50...♗f4 and 50...♖e4.
(solution on page 170)

(133)

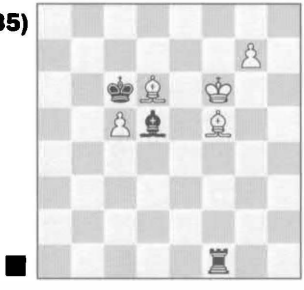


Should White start with 58.f4 ?
(solution on page 170)

(134)

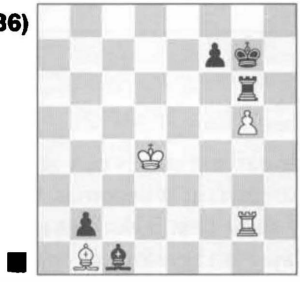
Can White successfully deal with all three pawns?
(solution on page 171)

(135)



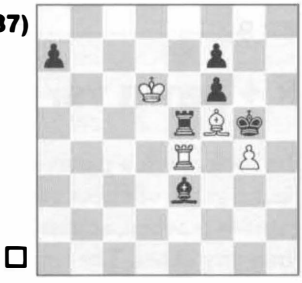
Can Black force a draw with 64...♖xf5+ ?
(solution on page 172)

(136)



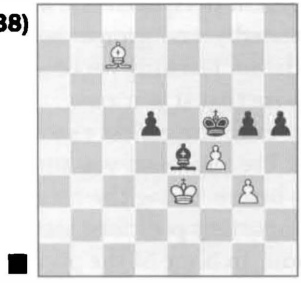
Is simplifying to an opposite-coloured bishops ending winning for Black?
(solution on page 172)

(137)



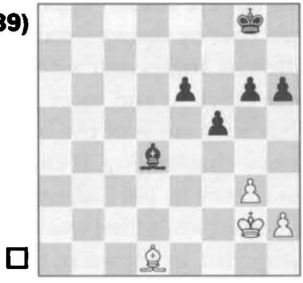
Should White exchange rooks?
(solution on page 173)

(138)



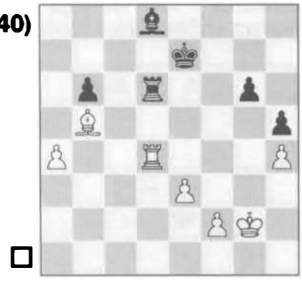
Is the breakthrough 50...h4 winning for Black?
(solution on page 174)

(139)



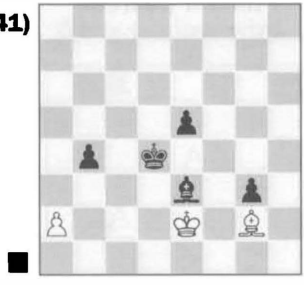
Choose between 33.g4 and 33.h4.
(solution on page 175)

(140)



Can White win the game by exchanging rooks?
(solution on page 176)

(141)



Choose between 52...e4 and 52...♗f4.
(solution on page 177)

CHAPTER 9

Rook + pawn vs. rook

While the rook is but a passive bystander in the earliest stages of a game, the further a game of chess evolves, the more important it becomes. Once an endgame is reached, statistics unmistakably show that it decides more games than any other. The improving chess player is therefore strongly encouraged to improve their skills wielding the most straightforward of chessmen. Statistics, however, also show that rook endgames produce a much higher error rate than any other, so despite its rectilinear simplicity, there must be more than meets the eye.

The selected exercises aim to provide you with a better grasp of the most important ideas. Some motifs repeat themselves throughout the test positions, but are usually approached from different perspectives. I am convinced that by facing similar problems repeatedly, and approached from different angles and with additional subtleties, learning becomes both more efficient and more meaningful. Beware that if you are unfamiliar with some of the basic manoeuvres, even the easiest exercises might prove challenging. If this is true for you, I recommend you study the main theory in *100 Endgames You Must Know* before trying the exercises.

I've grouped what I believe to be the most important positions into three categories, as shown in the diagrams below. In none of the positions does it matter who is to play, except for the position in diagram [H].

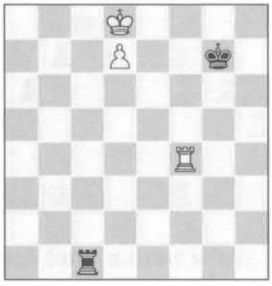
Basic positions

Philidor position

A

Lucena – The Bridge

B



First rank defence

C

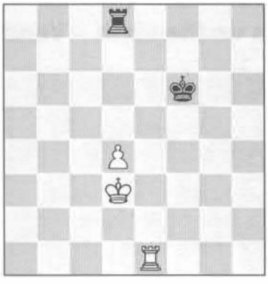
Kling & Horwitz defence

D

Positions with the king cut off

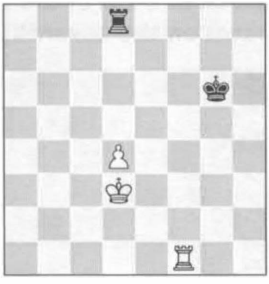
Vertical cutoff (one file)

E



Vertical cutoff (two files)

F



Ideal horizontal cutoff

G

Imperfect horizontal cutoff

Black to move draws (1...♖b8),
White to move wins

H

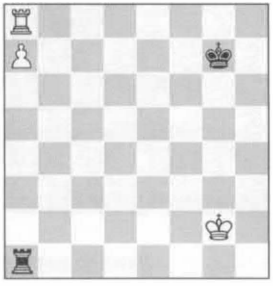
Harmless horizontal cutoff

I

Positions with a rook's pawn

Rook stuck in front of the pawn (pawn on the seventh)

J



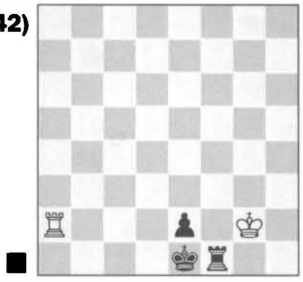
Pawn on the sixth – Vancura

K

Rook's pawn (king in front) – king cut off

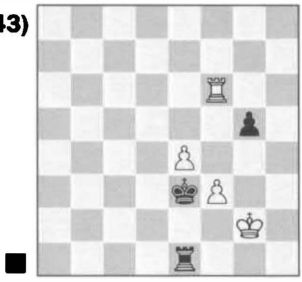
L

(142)



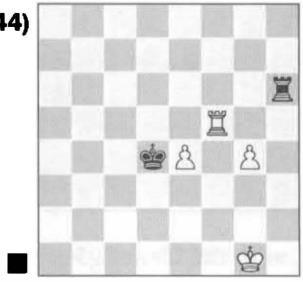
Choose between 67...♖f8 and 67...♖f2+.
(solution on page 178)

(143)



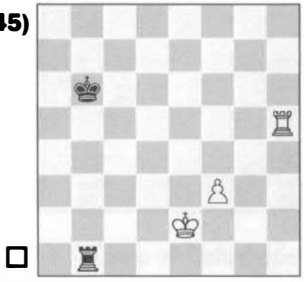
Choose between the following two paths: 71...♖a1 72.♖f5 g4 or 71...♖e2+ 72.♔g3 ♖e1.
(solution on page 178)

(144)



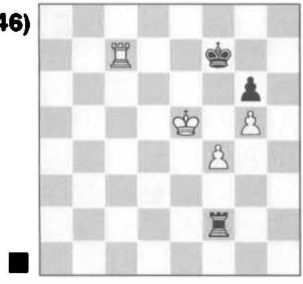
Can Black hold this position?
(solution on page 179)

(145)



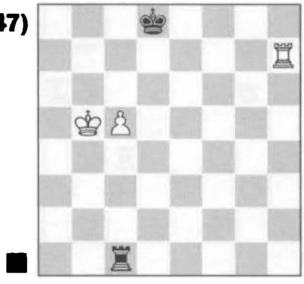
Is the endgame winning for White?
(solution on page 179)

(146)



Choose between 109...♔f8 and 109...♔g8.
(solution on page 180)

(147)



Can Black hold the game?
(solution on page 180)

(148)

White has only one winning move. Which one?
(solution on page 181)

(149)

Where does the black rook belong?
(solution on page 181)

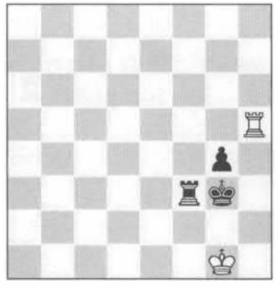
(150)

Can White hold his own?
(solution on page 182)

(151)

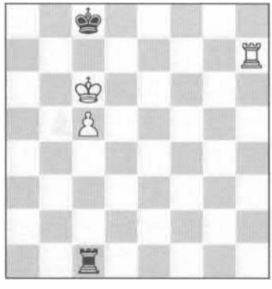
Is 57.g5, with the idea of g5-g6, winning?
(solution on page 182)

(152)



Can Black win the game?
(solution on page 183)

(153)



Does it make any difference whether Black plays 60...♔d8 or 60...♔b8 ?
(solution on page 183)

(154)

Does Black have a defence?
(solution on page 184)

(155)

Only one move draws the game for Black. Which one?
(solution on page 184)

(156)

Choose between 55.♖d7+ and 55.♖xd6.
(solution on page 185)

(157)

Choose between 59.♔c5, supporting the passed pawn, or 59.♖d4 to exchange it for the h-pawn.
(solution on page 185)

(158)

Choose between 61...b5 and 61...♖xg4.
(solution on page 186)

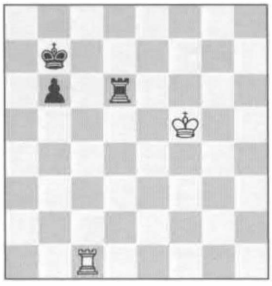
(159)

Is there a way Black can win the game by force?
(solution on page 187)

(160)

Choose between 66.g5 and 66.♔h4.
(solution on page 188)

(161)



Choose between 67.♖b1, 67.♔e4 and 67.♔e5.
(solution on page 189)

(162)

Can Black hold the game?
(solution on page 190)

(163)

Is the extra pawn enough to win the game?
(solution on page 191)

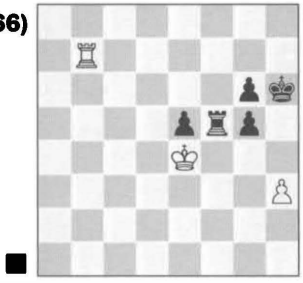
(164)

Choose between 74...♔f5 and 74...♔f3.
(solution on page 191)

(165)

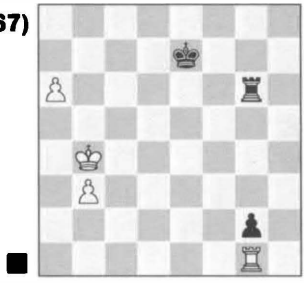
Can Black hold the game?
(solution on page 192)

(166)



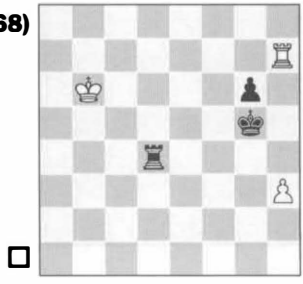
Is the simplifying move 53...g4 winning?
(solution on page 193)

(167)



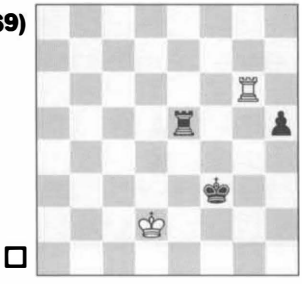
Black can choose between taking the a6-pawn or the b3-pawn, after 56...♖b6+. Which move is correct?
(solution on page 194)

(168)



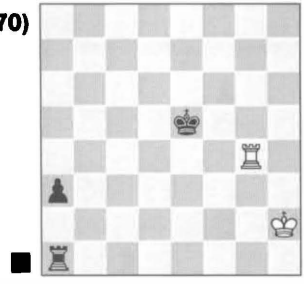
Choose between 50.♔c5 and 50.♖f7.
(solution on page 195)

(169)



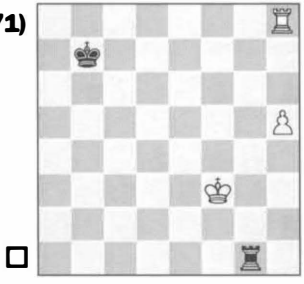
How should White play out this position?
(solution on page 195)

(170)



Choose between 67...♖a2+, 67...♔d5 and 67...♖b1.
(solution on page 196)

(171)

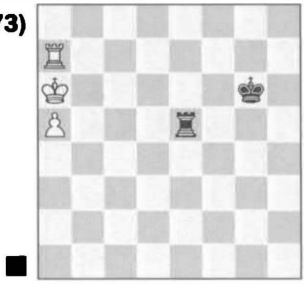


Choose between 73.h6 and 73.♔f4.
(solution on page 196)

(172)

Is Black winning the game?
(solution on page 197)

(173)

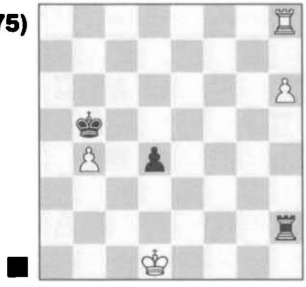


Black's pieces are miles away. Can he still draw the game?
(solution on page 198)

(174)

Is 68.♖d8 enough to make a draw?
(solution on page 198)

(175)

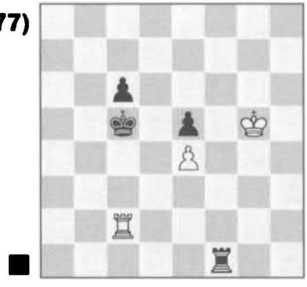


What result(s) do the moves 65...♔b6 and 65...♔c4 lead to?
(solution on page 199)

(176)

Choose between 46...a5 and 46...♖xh2.
(solution on page 200)

(177)

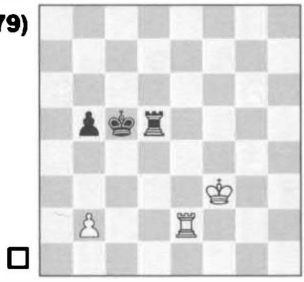


Does liquidating the pawns lead to victory?
(solution on page 201)

(178)

Choose between 63...♔e3 and 63...♔e4.
(solution on page 202)

(179)

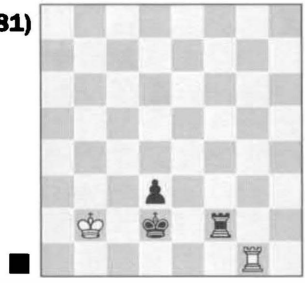


Choose between 51.♔e3 and 51.♖e4.
(solution on page 203)

(180)

Can White hold his own?
(solution on page 203)

(181)

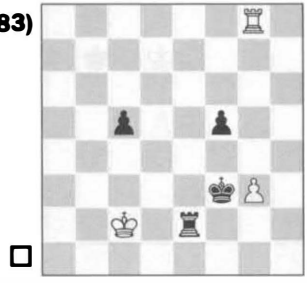


Can Black win the game?
(solution on page 204)

(182)

Is there any known defensive system available to Black?
(solution on page 205)

(183)

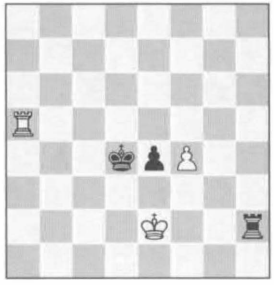


Choose between 58.♔c3 and 58.♔d3.
(solution on page 206)

(184)

Is exchanging knights with 92.♘d5+ winning?
(solution on page 206)

(185)



White's king is in check. Does it make any difference where it moves to?
(solution on page 207)

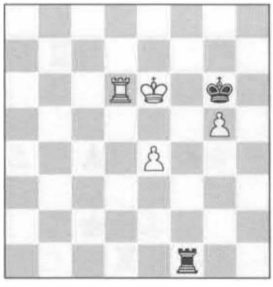
(186)

Black has two moves to draw. Which ones? (solution on page 207)

(187)

Choose between 56.hxg5 and 56.♖h5.
(solution on page 208)

(188)



Choose between 78.♔d7+, 78.♔e7+ and 78.♖d5.
(solution on page 209)

(189)

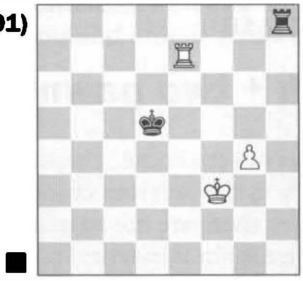
How many errors can you spot in the following sequence of moves: 51.♔d5 ♔g5 52.♖c1 ♖a6 53.♖g1 ♔f6 54.♔d4 ♖a3 55.♖f1 ?
(solution on page 210)

(190)

Choose between 63...♔e5 and 63...♖h8+.

(solution on page 210)

(191)



Choose between 66...♖f8+ and 66...♔d6.

(solution on page 211)

CHAPTER 10

Rook + two pawns vs. rook

Welcome to yet another chapter on the ever-important rook endgame. Contrary to the previous chapter, which dealt with rook and one pawn vs. rook, here there are not so many theoretical positions.

The five main theoretical positions represented below in six diagrams each have distinctive features. Some of them allow for a very simple defence; others require thorough study of a tedious and exhausting defence, all too easily mishandled in a practical game (in particular positions with a bishop's or a rook's pawn).

Connected pawns blocked by the king

Draw, no matter who moves

A

Waiting in the corner

Draw

B

The king cut off on the back rank

Lost, no matter who moves

C

The rook stuck in front

With a second extra knight's or rook's pawn: draw

D

Vancura's Defence against two pawns

Draw

Second rank defence against doubled knight's pawns

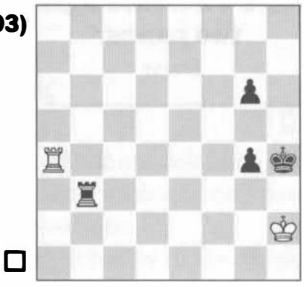
Draw

F

(192)

What is White's only move to defend this position?
(solution on page 212)

(193)

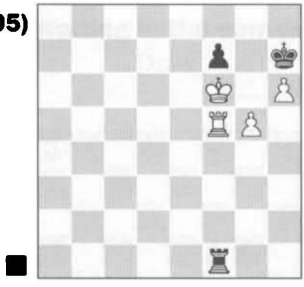


Can White defend this position?
(solution on page 212)

(194)

Can White, thanks to his two-pawn advantage, break Philidor's Defence?
(solution on page 213)

(195)

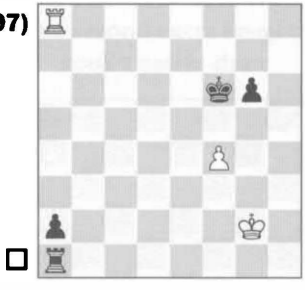


Can Black save the game?
(solution on page 213)

(196)

Choose between 86...♖a7 and 86...♖e7.
(solution on page 214)

(197)

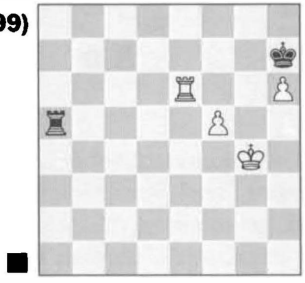


Evaluate the position.
(solution on page 214)

(198)

Choose between 72...♖g4 and 72...♖g1.
(solution on page 215)

(199)

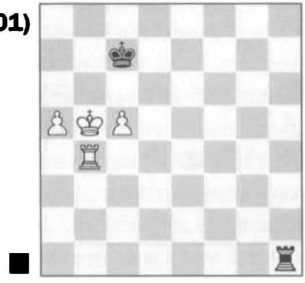


Choose between 62...♖a7 and 62...♖a1.
(solution on page 215)

(200)

Choose between 84.♖a8 and 84.♔g2.
(solution on page 216)

(201)

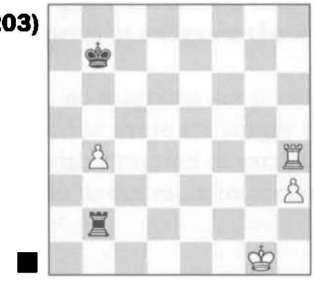


Only one move saves Black. Which one?
(solution on page 217)

(202)

Choose between 48...♖g6 and 48...♔h7.
(solution on page 218)

(203)



Can Black somehow save the game?
(solution on page 218)

(204)

Choose between 67.♖c8, 67.♖d8 and 67.♖a6.
(solution on page 219)

(205)

Choose between 80.♖b8 and 80.♖g8.
(solution on page 219)

(206)

Choose between 54...♖h3 and 54...♖h4.
(solution on page 221)

CHAPTER 11

Pawn endings

As players' ratings go up, pawn endgames become less common. The following statistics illustrate this: in the general database (with more than 10 million games), pawn endgames occur in about 3%, whereas in *Chess Informant* this rate drops to a mere 0.8%. From personal experience I can attest to this, as my personal database clearly mirrors this general trend: before I reached 2300 Elo, 3% of my own games ended in pawn endings; once I surpassed that level, the rate dropped to only 1%.

The phenomenon, I believe, is fairly easily explained: the beginning chess player is naturally inclined to capture or exchange any chessmen on offer, and often does so unwittingly, i.e. by failing to properly assess the resulting positions. The expert player, on the other hand, is able to calculate more deeply, and understands the potentially fatal consequences of entering into this pieceless territory far better than the beginner does. Therefore, in practical games between strong players, we often see one of two scenarios unfold: (1) players may decline offers to simplify the position, knowing it is not in their best interest to venture into a pawn endgame, or (2) the game ends beforehand, i.e. the players, by mutual understanding, recognize that to play on a position that they know will end in a split point, would be a pointless affair altogether.

The above stated is reflected in the selected exercises, which feature games of different levels. Despite the large number of exercises, the level of difficulty is generally lower compared to other chapters. If you are a proficient player I suggest you try some of the final exercises; if you feel those are like shooting fish in a barrel, you might want to skip this chapter altogether, and focus on more challenging aspects of endgame theory instead.

Contrary to all other chapters in this book, no diagrams are presented to illustrate any basic positions. The reason is that there are simply too many of them. Moreover, virtually all come with a myriad of exceptions. But please note that some of the solutions refer to the most important diagrams on pawn endings from Chapter 1.

(207)

Is it a good idea for White to play 64.♖f4+ followed by 65.♖g4 ?
(solution on page 222)

(208)

Can Black save the game?
(solution on page 222)

(209)

Should White trade rooks?
(solution on page 223)

(210)

What is the worst knight move Black can play?
(solution on page 223)

(211)

Is White winning?
(solution on page 224)

(212)

Can White save the game?
(solution on page 224)

(213)

Is liquidating by means of 61...♖xg4 winning?
(solution on page 225)

(214)

Is f7-f8♕ winning here?
(solution on page 225)

(215)

Does either of the normal moves 62.♖c5 or 62.♔e4 lead to a winning endgame?
(solution on page 226)

(216)

Is White justified in playing 75.♖xf5 ?
(solution on page 226)

(217)

Does capturing on e5 ensure a draw for Black?
(solution on page 227)

(218)

Is it correct for White to exchange queens with 54.♕f4+ ?
(solution on page 227)

(219)

Is exchanging queens with 55...♕g7+ winning for Black?
(solution on page 228)

(220)

Is this a winning position for White?
(solution on page 228)

(221)

Choose between 58...♔g8 and 58...♔h8.
(solution on page 229)

(222)

Can Back save the game?
(solution on page 229)

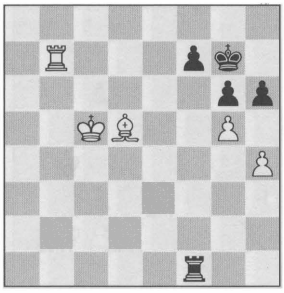
(223)

Choose between 33.♔f5 and 33.f4.
(solution on page 230)

(224)

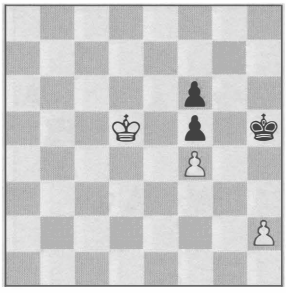
Can White draw the game?
(solution on page 230)

(225)



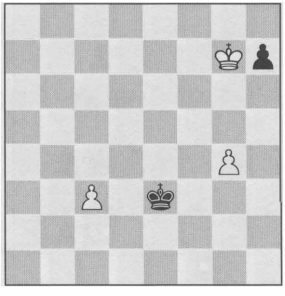
It's White to move in this common endgame. Is it a draw?
(solution on page 230)

(226)



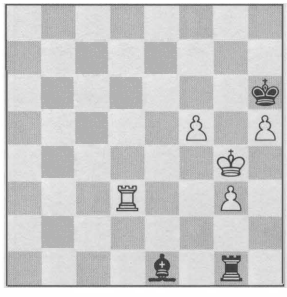
Is White winning?
(solution on page 231)

(227)



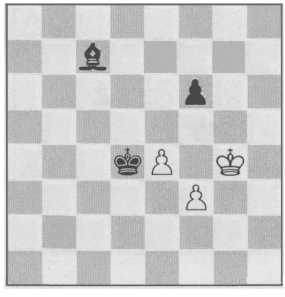
Choose between 45.♔xh7 and 45.♔f8.
(solution on page 231)

(228)



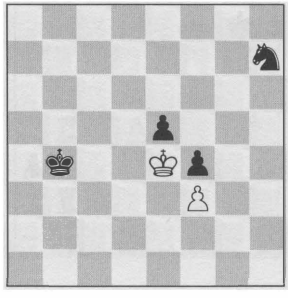
Does 64...♖g3 guarantee a draw?
(solution on page 232)

(229)



Can Black win the game?
(solution on page 232)

(230)



Can Black win the game?
(solution on page 233)

(231)

Choose between 58...♔c2 and 58...♔c4.
(solution on page 233)

(232)

Is 65.♖f3 enough for a draw?
(solution on page 234)

(233)

Choose between 54.♖xc2+ and 54.f4.
(solution on page 234)

(234)

Can White save the game?
(solution on page 235)

(235)

Does it make any difference whether White plays 39.♖xg2 or 39.♔xh3 ?
(solution on page 236)

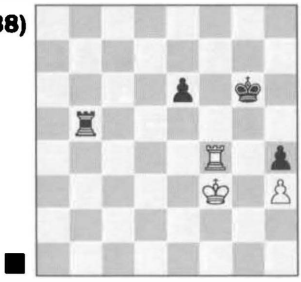
(236)

Can Black save the upcoming pawn endgame?
(solution on page 236)

(237)

Can Black save the game?
(solution on page 237)

(238)

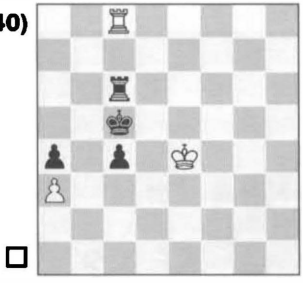


Does trading rooks win by force for Black?
(solution on page 237)

(239)

Choose between 65...♘xd3, and allowing this exchange on the f4-square after 65...♘e6.
(solution on page 238)

(240)

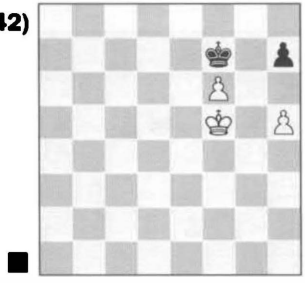


Is trading rooks a correct idea for White?
(solution on page 239)

(241)

Can White win the game?
(solution on page 239)

(242)



Black has four moves. Which ones lead to a draw, and which ones lead to defeat?
(solution on page 240)

(243)

Choose between 49...♔e8, 49...♔f8 and 49...h6.
(solution on page 241)

(244)

Can Black save the game?
(solution on page 242)

(245)

Is it a good idea for White to play 68.♖xf6 ?
(solution on page 242)

(246)

White played 50.♔xg7. Was that a good move?
(solution on page 243)

(247)

Can Black hold with 42...f5 ?
(solution on page 243)

(248)

Does Black ensure a draw by trading bishops?
(solution on page 244)

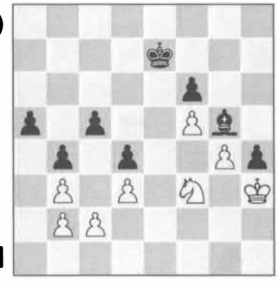
(249)

Can White hope for anything in this position?
(solution on page 244)

(250)

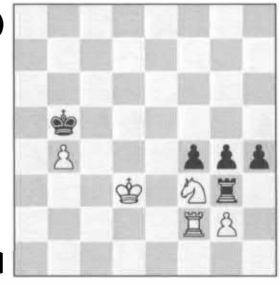
What can White hope for?
(solution on page 245)

(251)



White captured the h4-pawn. Was that a good decision?
(solution on page 246)

(252)

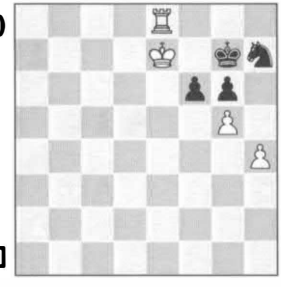


Can Black win the game?
(solution on page 246)

(253)

Can Black save the game?
(solution on page 247)

(254)



Choose between 56.♔e6 and 56.♔d7.
(solution on page 248)

(255)

Can White win the game?
(solution on page 248)

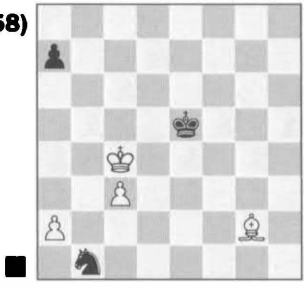
(256)

White played 50.g4. Was that a good decision?
(solution on page 249)

(257)

Is simplifying by means of 57.f6 winning for White?
(solution on page 250)

(258)

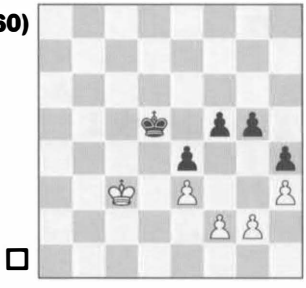


Choose between 49...♔d6 and 49...♘a3.
(solution on page 251)

(259)

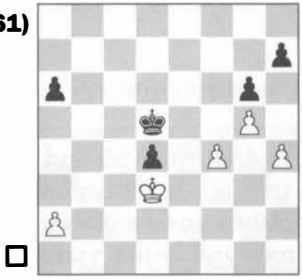
Is simplification beginning with 43...♘hxf3 correct?
(solution on page 252)

(260)



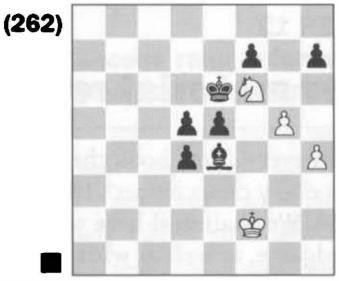
Choose between 45.♔d2, 45.♔c2 and 45.♔b4.
(solution on page 253)

(261)



Evaluate this position from a friendly encounter between Capablanca and Edward Lasker.
(solution on page 254)

(262)



Black has a comfortably winning game. Can you guess what happened after the reckless move 35...h6 ?
(solution on page 254)

CHAPTER 12

Other material relations

Just as in every chess book there comes a time to deal with odds and ends, in every chess player's life there comes a time to play a pawnless endgame. We shall deal here with the dreaded bishop-and-knight vs. lone king endgame, as well as with the endgame of rook-and-bishop vs. rook. A few other miscellaneous topics included are those dealing with fortresses, drawing with bishop against rook, and rook-and-pawn vs. queen.

In a pawnless endgame, recognizing certain key positions is paramount, i.e. knowing how and when it is possible to get them, or, as the game situation may require, knowing how and when to avoid them. This holds true, in particular, for the bishop-and-knight vs. lone king mating procedure. In practice, the lone king has often escaped justice, but trust me, once you know what to look out for, you'll be able to bring it to execution.

Bishop and knight mate

The lone king wants to break free

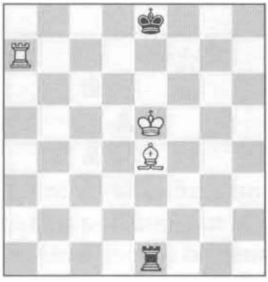
A

The cage

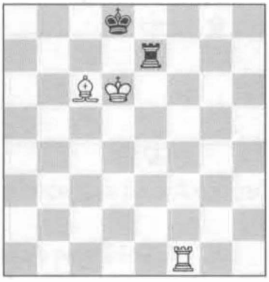
B

Rook and bishop vs. rook

Philidor position



D Second rank defence (stalemate resource)



Rook and pawn vs. bishop

E Bishop's pawn (draw)

F Rook's pawn (draw)

G Knight's pawn (winning)

H Rook's pawn on the fourth rank (winning)

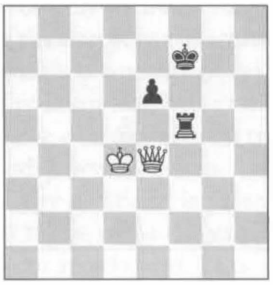
Queen vs. rook and pawn

Rook with pawn on the second rank (draw)

I

Pawn on the third rank (winning)

J



Knight's pawn (draw)

K

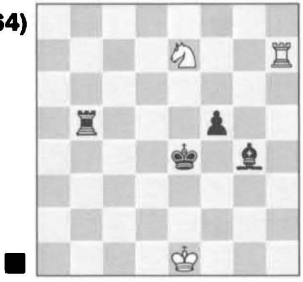
Rook's pawn on the third rank (draw if the king is on the f-file; winning if the king is on the h-file)

L

(263)

White spent twenty-three moves to get to this position, but he can still win. How should he continue?
(solution on page 255)

(264)



Choose between 68... ♔e3 and 68... f4.
(solution on page 256)

(265)

The bishop has only two moves to draw. Which ones?
(solution on page 257)

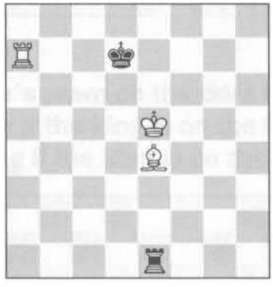
(266)

Can Black get a fortress?
(solution on page 258)

(267)

The lone king is about to escape. Can Black prevent this?
(solution on page 258)

(268)



Two of Black's three king moves draw, and one loses. Do you know which one(s)?
(solution on page 259)

(269)

Choose between 106...♖a8 and 106...♗c4.
(solution on page 260)

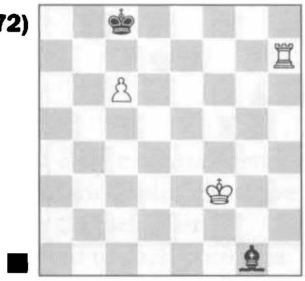
(270)

Here Caruana let victory slip through his fingers. Can you teach Caruana how to win this position?
(solution on page 260)

(271)

Here, Botwinnik engineered a miraculous escape. How did he do it?
(solution on page 261)

(272)

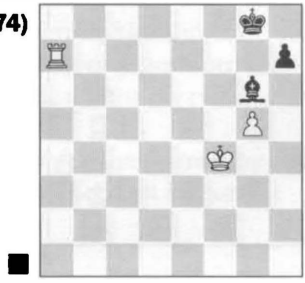


Can Black save the game?
(solution on page 262)

(273)

Can Black win the game?
(solution on page 263)

(274)

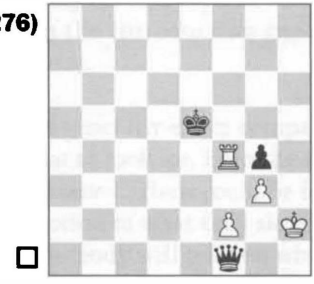


Can Black make a draw?
(solution on page 263)

(275)

Can White win the game?
(solution on page 264)

(276)



Does capturing on g4 lead to a draw?
(solution on page 264)

(277)

Choose between 59.♕b7 and 59.♔d3.
(solution on page 265)

(278)

Choose between 59...♖g7 and 59...♔g8.
(solution on page 266)

(279)

Does it make any difference where Black's king goes to?
(solution on page 266)

(280)

Is this a drawn position?
(solution on page 267)

CHAPTER 13

Appendix

Fortresses

A fortress is a position in which one side has a clear material advantage, but is unable to force a win against a simple yet rock-solid defensive set-up that usually requires little or no subtle play by the defender.

Amateur players seem to be naturally attracted to such positions. One reason for this might be that in the amateur's mind, the sturdy fortress evokes the image of heroism of a bygone age. And why not, chess fortresses often do in fact resemble the mighty ones from medieval times.

The most striking features of a fortress are:

- No pawn breaks are available;
- There are no passed pawns, or these are firmly blocked;
- The stronger side can't penetrate into the enemy position;
- The defending side is in no danger of falling into zugzwang.

On the other hand, the attacker must try to break the fortress by any means possible (often, none will be available). The most important techniques to be tried are:

- Break in forcefully, by means of sacrifices;
- Get the king in;
- Use zugzwang.

No diagrams are shown here; there are simply too many theoretical fortresses. Should your memory need refreshing on this topic, I recommend you look at the positions given in the Introduction and Fortress Appendix of *100 Endgames You Must Know*.

My personal belief is that the exercises here are generally easier compared to other chapters because you know exactly what to look for. Even the most impressive moves such as the ones seen in Fedoseev-Carlsen could be found by ordinary players if they have at least some notion of what they should be looking for. Of course, in a real game situation nobody will tell you whether there is a fortress to be found, so developing a keen eye for any sign that might warn you of such a possibility arising in the position is extremely useful. By analogy, developing a sense of danger to prevent a weaker side from creating a fortress is also an essential skill for the improving chess player.

(281)

Can Black save the game?
(solution on page 268)

(282)

White to move. Does Black have a fortress?
(solution on page 269)

(283)

Is this a fortress?
(solution on page 270)

(284)

Does Black have a winning move?
(solution on page 270)

(285)

Has White destroyed the black fortress?
(solution on page 271)

(286)

Will White be able to create a fortress with bishop and knight vs. queen?
(solution on page 271)

(287)

Choose between 54.♗d5 and 54.♗a8.
(solution on page 272)

(288)

Can Black win the game?
(solution on page 273)

(289)

Only two bishop moves make a draw. Which ones?
(solution on page 275)

(290)

Can Black save the game?
(solution on page 275)

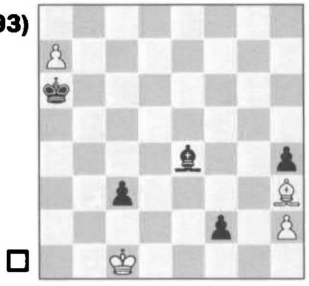
(291)

Is it time to resign?
(solution on page 276)

(292)

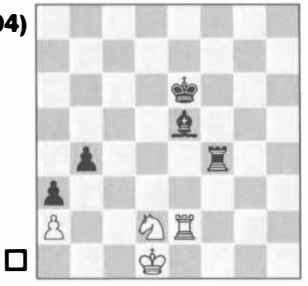
Choose between 74.♔e4, 74.♔d4 and 74.h7+.
(solution on page 276)

(293)



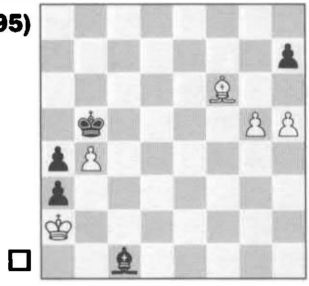
Three moves draw. Which ones?
(solution on page 277)

(294)



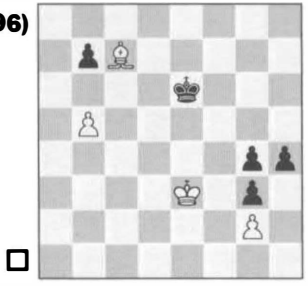
White played 60.♖e4 to force a draw. Did he overlook anything?
(solution on page 277)

(295)



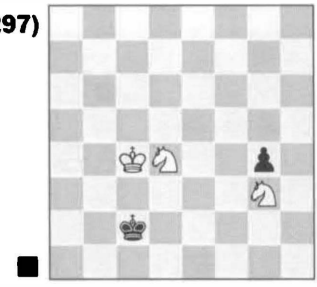
Choose between 48.g6 and 48.h6.
(solution on page 278)

(296)



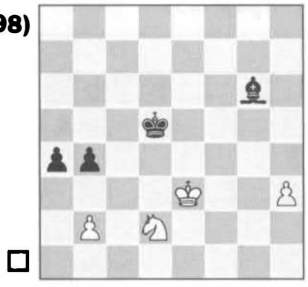
Choose between 59.♔d4 and 59♔f4.
(solution on page 278)

(297)



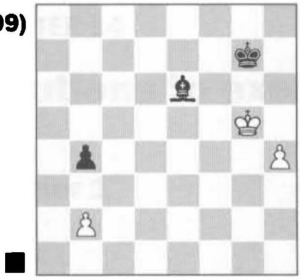
Does it matter where Black's king moves to?
(solution on page 279)

(298)



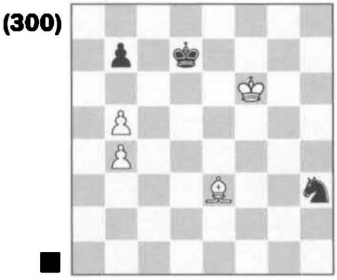
The black pawns look extremely dangerous. Many live spectators, however, saw that White could save the game. How?
(solution on page 280)

(299)



Choose between 57...♗c4 and 57...♗g8.
(solution on page 281)

(300)



White just played 43.♗e3, dominating the knight. Can Black be saved?
(solution on page 281)

CHAPTER 14

Solutions to exercises

Chapter 1

Exercise 1

Jung Min Seo 2389

Monica Calzetta Ruiz 2223

Stockholm 2017 (4)

White can afford to take the pawn. In fact, this is the fastest and safest route to secure a draw.

47.♘xg4! ♗xg4 48.♔xg4 ♔b5 49.♔f4 ♔xa5 50.♔e3! ½-½

The king reaches the key c1-square. White's last move seems so obvious, but the databases reveal that white players have erred in this position, e.g. 50.♔e4? ♔b4 51.♔d3 ♔b3 52.♔d2 ♔b2 0-1, Berger-Mason, Breslau 1889. At the time of this game, endgame theory was of course still in its infancy.

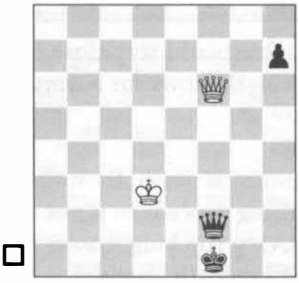
ENDING 5

Exercise 2

Klaus Rhein

Eshan Ali

Mallorca 2004 (5)



White must keep the queens on and suffer a little while longer in a drawn endgame. The simplest way to do this is by playing 58.♕a1+=.

58.♕xf2+? ♔xf2 59.♔e4

This forces Black to find the only accurate move in this position.

59...♔g3!

59...h5?? 60.♔f4! and White will capture the pawn.

60.♔e3

60.♔f5 h5 and the pawn will promote.

60...h5 61.♔e2 ♔g2!

When the kings face one another like this, the pawn always promotes, even if it were still on its second rank.

62.♔e1 h4 0-1

ENDING 5

Exercise 3

Joachim Olbrich 2390

Petra Krupkova 2215

Germany tt 1994/95

The knight should stay close to the king: 79.♘g8! allows for a simple defence.

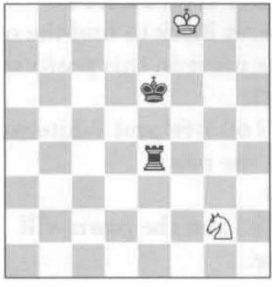
79.♘g4?

A ridiculous decision. Even though the winning procedure is not always easy, moving the knight away from the king is usually suicidal.

79...♖h4

79...♖h3! is less natural but thirteen moves faster.

80.♘e3 ♖e4 81.♘g2



81...♔f5

81...♔f6! immediately wins the knight by zugzwang: 82.♔g8 ♖g4+.

82.♔f7 ♔g4 83.♔f6 ♖e2 0-1

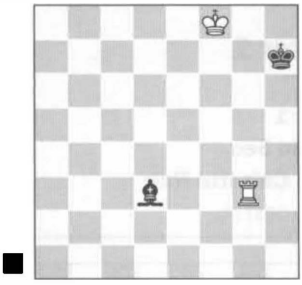
ENDING 8

Exercise 4

Yivi Pustina

John Reid

Varna ol 1962 (2)



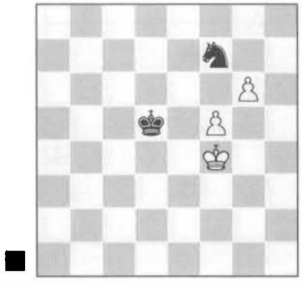
The outcome of the endgame rook vs. bishop should be a draw when the defending king has taken refuge in the corner of the colour contrary to that of the bishop. There is, however, one particular error, seen many times even at master level, that you must know.

94...♗f5?

This *right corner catastrophe* has occurred in dozens of games by players of all levels: of all the 'obvious' squares, this is the only one that loses. Avoid this disaster by remembering that the bishop should be far away from the king, so that it can give some timely checks. 94...♗c4! is one of several correct moves: 95.♔e7 ♔h8 and the black king returns to its comfort zone, in the corner. According to my database, out of eighteen games that saw this mistake, sixteen times it proved fatal. In one game, the player with the rook simply failed to take advantage and on one other occasion, the fifty-move rule stood in the way.

95.♔f7 ♔h8
95...♔h6 is now not possible:
96.♔f6! ♗d7 97.♖d3 ♗c8 98.♖d8+–.
96.♖g8+ ♔h7 97.♖g5 1-0
ENDING 6; see also **ENDING 7**.

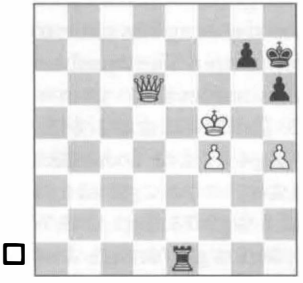
Exercise 5
Hans Ulrich Raabe 1297
Horst Sköcz 1202
Dortmund 2000 (8)



All mistakes are the result of poor assessment of a king vs. king-and-pawn endgame.
73...♘h6??
73...♔d6! 74.gxf7 ♔e7 and White's king can't control the key squares of the f5-pawn.
74.f6??
74.♔g5 ♘g8 75.f6+–.
74...♔e6 75.♔g5

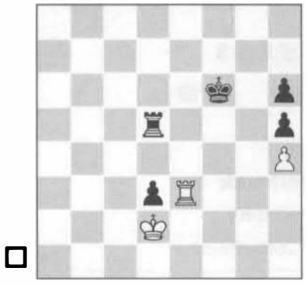
75...♘f5??
75...♘f7+!= leads back to **ENDING 2.**
76.g7??
76.f7+–.
76...♘xg7 77.fxg7 ♔f7 78.♔h6 ♔g8 ½-½
ENDINGS 2 & 3

Exercise 6
Martin Hrivnak 2177
Jozef Veselsky 2204
Slovakia tt 2001/02 (5)



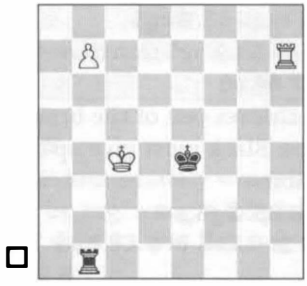
Even though the black fortress is not that easily broken, White has several ways to do it. Forcing an entry for the king is quickest, but careful calculation is required.
60.♕e5! ♖xe5+ 61.fxe5 g5
61...♔g8 62.♔e6 g5 63.hxg5 hxg5 64.♔d7+–.
62.hxg5 hxg5 63.♔xg5
63.e6 ♔g8 64.♔xg5 transposes.
63...♔g7 64.e6
White achieves one of the basic positions: Black must give up the opposition.
64...♔g8 65.♔g6 1-0
ENDING 2

Exercise 7
Daryn Smith
L Brady
Detroit 1994 (2)



White can get away with capturing the pawn: the king has time to reach the corner. The number of h-pawns is irrelevant.
64.♖xd3! ♖xd3+ 65.♔xd3 ♔f5 66.♔e3 ♔g4 67.♔f2 ♔xh4 68.♔g2 ♔g4 69.♔h2 h4 70.♔g2 h3+ 71.♔h2 h5 72.♔h1 ♔g3 73.♔g1 ♔f3 74.♔h2 ♔g4 75.♔h1 ♔g3 76.♔g1 ♔h4 77.♔h2 ♔g4 78.♔h1 ♔f3 79.♔g1 ½-½
ENDING 4

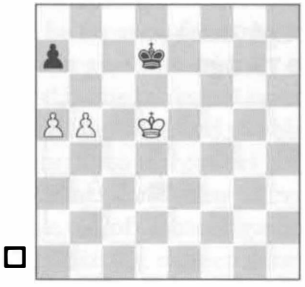
Exercise 8
Thordur Gudmundsson
Leif Reinert Fjallheim 1667
Reykjavik 2017 (5)



Building a bridge is now a clumsy idea, because it only allows Black's king to come closer.
62.♖h4+??
62.♔c5 and White would get a Lucena position in a few moves' time. Only then should he be thinking of building a bridge.
62...♔e5 63.♖h5+ ♔d6 64.♖b5 ♖xb5 65.♔xb5

65...♔c7 66.♔a6 ♔b8 ½-½
ENDINGS 2 & 53

Exercise 9
Jean De Lagontrie 2085
Thierry Poesson 2080
Cannes 1995 (9)



White can't force a win by any move, so perhaps b5-b6 may be regarded as the best try. Certainly

in the game, this turned out successful.

80.b6!? axb6??

80...a6! is one way to make a draw; 80...♔c8! is another.

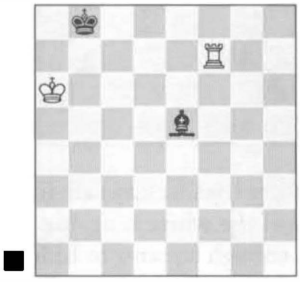
81.axb6 ♔c8 82.♔c6 1-0

ENDINGS 2 & 89

Exercise 10

Mihail Marin	2583
Romain Edouard	2597

Benasque 2009 (9)



This is essentially a mirror image of Exercise 4, but from a different starting position. Is this topic worthy of more than one exercise? I believe it is: not only do we see here one of the most typical errors in the endgame rook vs. bishop, the endgame itself is a fairly common occurrence.

102...♗d6??

Once again it's a right corner catastrophe. This square seems to be a magnet of some kind. Drawing moves are 102...♗g3, 102...♗h2, as well as 102...♗d4, among others.

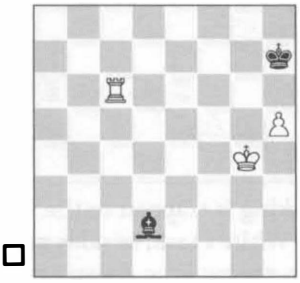
103.♔b6 ♔a8 104.♖a7+ ♔b8 105.♖d7 1-0

ENDING 7

Exercise 11

Pavel Maletin	2571
Ivan Bocharov	2476

Berdsk tt 2009 (2)



White is spoilt for choice in this endgame. The main idea is to sacrifice the pawn to keep the king in the wrong corner. Placing the rook on f6 is ideal for this purpose.

69.♖f6! ♗c1

A waiting move. Another idea is to annoy the rook with the king; this once occurred in an even more famous game: 69...♔g7 (in this game actually move 87) 70.♔f5 ♗e3 71.h6+! ♗xh6 72.♖g6+! ♔h7

analysis diagram

73.♔f6! (White's king reaches the winning square) 73...♗e3 74.♔f7 ♗a7 75.♖a6 ♗b8 76.♖a8 ♗c7 77.♖c8 ♗f4 78.♖c4 ♗g5 79.♖c3 1-0 Tal-Zhidkov, Baku 1972.

70.h6 ♗xh6 71.♔h5 ♗e3 72.♖f7+ ♔g8 73.♔g6

Black's king is trapped in the wrong corner. White's task, besides making sure the enemy king doesn't get out, is to set up a double attack by threatening to capture the bishop as well as delivering checkmate.

73...♗g1

This position has occurred in twenty-five games in my database. The winning manoeuvre was carried out in all of them.

74.♖f1 ♗h2 75.♖f2 ♗g3 76.♖g2 ♗d6 77.♖d2 ♗e7 78.♖a2 1-0

ENDING 6

Exercise 12

Mark Condie	2430
Murray Chandler	2595

Bath zt 1987 (8)

White wins by giving up the pawn to imprison the king in the wrong corner. White needs the rook on f7 so that the king can't escape via f8:

76.♖f7!

76.g8♕+? ♔xg8 77.♔g6 ♔f8! and the king escapes.

76...♗e5 77.g8♕+ ♔xg8 78.♔g6 ♗g3

The bishop tries to stay safe in the shadow of the white king, but there are not enough squares to hide.

79.♖f3 ♗d6 80.♖d3 ♗e7 81.♖b3

81.♖c3 would be a little faster.

81...♗d6 82.♖b6 ♗g3 83.♖f6 ♗h4

84.♖f4

Another example is 84.♖f3 (actually move 83 in the game) 84... ♗d8 85.♖d3 ♗h4 86.♖d4 1-0 Wojtyra-Cetwinski (place + date unknown).

84...♗g3 85.♖g4 ♗d6 86.♖d4 ♗e7 87.♖a4 1-0

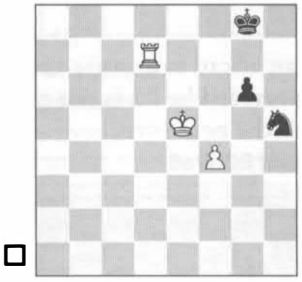
There is no way to avoid the loss of the bishop.

ENDING 6

Exercise 13

Valery Filippov	2595
Loek van Wely	2635

Elista ol 1998 (11)



By means of a pawn sacrifice, White finds a way to exploit the weaknesses in Black's camp.

53.♔e6! ♘xf4+

53...♔f8 also fails: 54.♖f7+ ♔e8 (54...♔g8 55.♔e7 ♔h8 56.♔f8) 55.♖f6! ♘xf6 56.♔xf6 and the king will capture the pawn, maintaining control over the key squares.

54.♔f6 ♘g2

Once more we see that a knight separated from the king is bound to be lost. Another variation is 54...♔h8 55.♖d4 g5 56.♖d7 g4 (56...♘h5+ 57.♔xg5 ♘g7 58.♔g6 ♘e6 59.♖d6 ♘f4+ 60.♔f5) 57.♖d4+–.

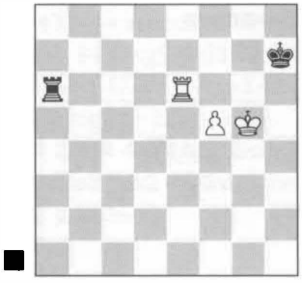
55.♔xg6 ♘f4+ 56.♔g5 ♘e6+ 57.♔f6 ♘f8 58.♖d8 1-0

ENDING 3

Exercise 14

Marta Michna	2357
Dominyka Batkovskyte	2111

Warsaw Ech tt W 2013 (4)



Black's decision to exchange rooks is abysmal, yet it is a common mistake. All too often, a player's desire to shorten the suffering by simplifying is the cause of defeat.

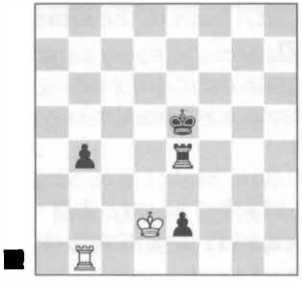
82...♖xe6?? 83.fxe6 ♔g7 84.♔f5 ♔f8 85.♔f6 1-0

ENDING 2

Exercise 15

Michiel Bosman	2356
Espen Forsaa	2331

Ohrid tt 2009 (2)



Simplification is winning for Black:

66...e1♕+! 67.♖xe1 ♖xe1 68.♔xe1 ♔d4 69.♔d2 b3! 70.♔d1 ♔d3 71.♔c1 ♔c3

White resigned.

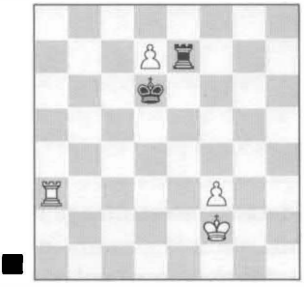
ENDING 2

Exercise 16

Laurent Fressinet 2633

Hikaru Nakamura 2664

Turin ol 2006 (10)



The way to prevent White from reaching the key squares is by capturing with the king:

77...♔xd7!

Capturing with the rook loses: 77...♖xd7? 78.♖d3+ ♔e6 79.♖xd7 ♔xd7 80.♔g3! ♔e6 81.♔g4 ♔f6 82.♔f4 and White conquers the key squares.

78.♖a7+ ♔e8 79.♖xe7+ ♔xe7 80.♔g3

80.♔e3 ♔f7! leads to the same.

80...♔f7!

An accurate move, preventing White from reaching the key squares.

A) 80...♔f6? 81.♔f4 ♔e6 82.♔g5 ♔f7 83.♔f5 ♔g7 84.♔e6 ♔f8 85.f4 ♔e8 86.f5 ♔f8 87.♔f6 ♔g8 88.♔e7+–;

B) 80...♔e6? 81.♔g4 ♔f6 82.♔f4+–.

81.♔g4 ♔g6 82.♔f4 ♔f6 ½-½

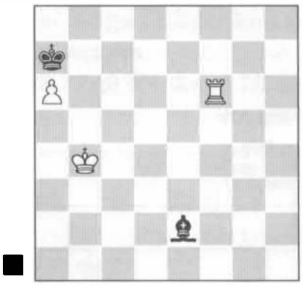
ENDING 3

Exercise 17

Anthony Wirig 2418

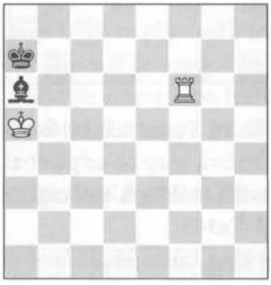
Jean Pierre Le Roux 2480

Guingamp 2004 (1)



Black can afford to capture the pawn, provided he finds the right move on the next turn.

89...♗xa6! 90.♔a5



Now, there is only one move to save the game.

90...♗c4?

Wrong!

A) The right move is 90...♗d3! 91.♖f7+ (91.♖d6 ♗e2) 91...♔b8 92.♔b6 ♔c8 93.♔c6 ♗e4+ (this check makes the difference) 94.♔d6 ♗g2 95.♖c7+ ♔b8! and with the bishop on the long diagonal, the side with the rook cannot complete the plan to confine the black king in the wrong corner;

B) Also losing is 90...♗e2? on account of 91.♖f7+ ♔b8 92.♔b6 ♔c8 93.♔c6 ♔d8 94.♔d6 ♔c8 95.♖c7+ ♔d8 (95...♔b8 96.♔c6 and the king is confined) 96.♖c2! (the bishop doesn't have a single good square) 96...♗d3 97.♖d2 and the bishop is lost.

91.♖c6 ♗b3 92.♖c7+ ♔b8 93.♔b6 ♗a2 94.♖c2 ♗e6 95.♖e2 ♗d7 96.♖h2 1-0

ENDINGS 6 & 7

Exercise 18

Tiberiu Georgescu	2388
Adrian Petrisor	2349

Romania tt 2009 (3)

The white king should oscillate between f3 and f4. Black, on the other hand, must play ...g6-g5 to capture the e4-pawn.

38.♔f4!

Exchanging with 38.h5? is premature. White's king can't reach the critical c1/c2-squares in time to imprison Black's: 38...gxh5+ 39.♔xh5 ♔xe4 40.♔xh6 ♔d3 41.♔g5 ♔c3 42.♔f4 ♔b2 43.♔e3 ♔xa2 44.♔d2 ♔b2–+. White is too slow.

38...a6 39.♔f3 ♔e5 40.♔e3 g5 41.hxg5 hxg5

The distant passer, while a nuisance, can't pose enough problems to keep White's king away from the critical c1-/c2-squares.

42.♔f3 ♔d4

42...a5 43.♔g4 amounts to the same: 43...♔xe4 44.♔xg5 ♔d3 45.♔f4 ♔c2 46.♔e3 ♔b2 47.♔d2 ♔xa2 48.♔c2=, imprisoning the black king.

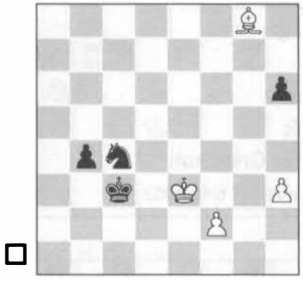
43.♔g4 ♔xe4 44.♔xg5 ♔d3 45.♔f4 ♔c2 46.♔e3 ♔b2 47.♔d2 ♔xa2 48.♔c2 ♔a1 ½-½

ENDING 5

Exercise 19

Aleksey Goganov	2609
Dmitry Gordievsky	2471

Khanty-Mansiysk 2014 (3)



Exchanging on c4 is a mistake. Spotting Black's subtle and only winning manoeuvre is not easy, though.

63.♗xc4?

63.♔e2! should hold the draw. If 63...b3, then 64.♗xc4 is now correct: 64...♔xc4 65.♔d2 ♔d4 66.h4 h5 67.♔c1 ♔e4 68.♔b2 ♔f3 69.♔xb3 ♔xf2 70.♔c3 ♔g3 71.♔d3 ♔xh4 72.♔e2 ♔g3 73.♔f1!=.

63...♔xc4 64.♔d2

64...♔b3!!

A surprising move: Black's king will still be in time to capture both enemy pawns before settling on the g2-square.

65.f4 ♔c4! 66.f5 ♔d5 67.♔d3 ♔e5 68.♔c4 ♔xf5 69.♔xb4 ♔g5 70.♔c3 ♔h4 71.♔d3 ♔xh3 72.♔e3

72.♔e2 ♔g2!–+.

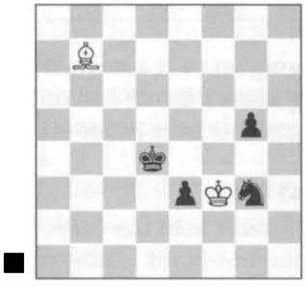
72...♔g3! 0-1

ENDING 5

Exercise 20

Igor Glek	2576
Alexander Grischuk	2712

Dos Hermanas INT blitz 2003 (4)



54...♘e4 is winning, but Black has to know what to do on his next move. In the game, Black erred:

54...♘e4! 55.♗xe4 e2?

A mistake. 55...g4+! would have led to an easy win.

56.♔f2!

Clearly, Grischuk had missed this. 56.♔xe2? ♔xe4 57.♔f2 ♔f4 58.♔g2 ♔g4 and Black would control the key squares.

56...♔xe4 57.♔xe2!

White keeps the opposition, denying Black's king control over the key squares.

57...♔f4 58.♔f2 g4 59.♔g2 g3 60.♔g1 ♔f3 61.♔f1 g2+ 62.♔g1 ♔g3 ½-½

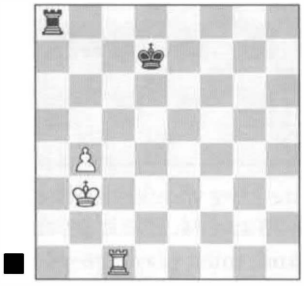
ENDING 2

Exercise 21

Svetozar Gligoric

Robert James Fischer

Bled/Zagreb/Belgrade ct 1959 (25)



Offering an exchange of rooks is possible. This position may look easy, but practice shows mistakes aren't few and far between.

55...♖c8! 56.♖xc8 ♔xc8 57.♔c4

Nothing is gained on the other side either: 57.♔a4 (actually move 63 in the game) 57...♔b8 ½-½ Browne-King, Lugano 1989.

57...♔b8! ½-½

Here, the game was agreed drawn, but some other games continued, e.g. 58.♔d5 (move 73 in the game) 58...♔b7 59.♔c5 ♔c7 60.b5 ♔b7 61.b6 ♔b8 62.♔c6 ♔c8 63.b7+ ♔b8 64.♔b6 ½-½ Hammer-Giri, Moscow 2017.

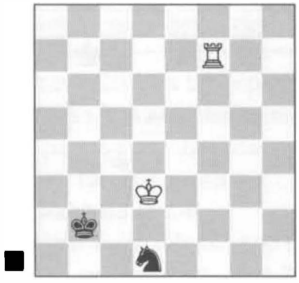
ENDING 3

Exercise 22

Predrag Nikolic 2623

José Carlos Ibarra Jerez 2513

Budva Ech 2009 (3)



When the only option for a knight to stick close to its king is to jump onto the knight's most awkward square on the board (here, b2), the practical result is usually defeat:

95...♔a3?

These positions are extremely difficult, as is evidenced by the large number of errors from this moment onwards. The correct move was **95...♔b3! 96.♖b7+ ♔a3**, transposing to move 97 in the game.

96.♖a7+?

This only helps White to reach a safe position.

96.♖f3 traps the knight by force, for example: 96...♔a2 (96...♘b2+ 97.♔c3 ♘a4+ 98.♔c4+ ♔a2 99.♔b4 transposes) 97.♖f1 ♘b2+ 98.♔c3 ♘a4+ 99.♔b4 ♘b2 100.♖h1 ♘d3+ 101.♔c3 (the knight must wander off) 101...♘f4 102.♖d1 (not allowing the knight to return via the d5-square) 102...♘e6 103.♖d5 ♘f4 104.♖e5! (a further step towards restraint) 104...♔b1 105.♖e1+ ♔a2 106.♔c2 ♘d5 107.♖e5 ♘b4+ 108.♔c3 ♘c6 109.♖e6! (finally, the knight is totally dominated) 109...♘d8 110.♖d6 ♘f7 111.♖d2+ ♔a3 112.♖d7+–.

96...♔b3 97.♖b7+ ♔a3! 98.♖b8 ♘b2+! 99.♔c2 ♘a4! 100.♖b3+ ♔a2! 101.♖b5 ♔a3 102.♔d3

The crucial moment.

102...♔a2?

Errs again, when the knight is one jump away from its most awkward square, which we called 'dumb square' in *100 Endgames You Must Know*.

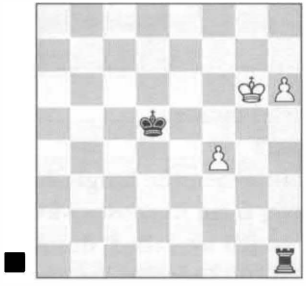
102...♘b2+! 103.♔d4 ♘a4 104.♔c4 ♘b2+ 105.♔d4 ♘a4 keeps up the defence.

103.♔c4!

White now has a theoretical win. For the remainder of the game, only the critical errors are pointed out.

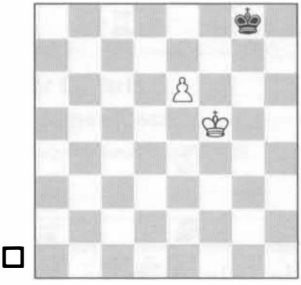
103...♘b2+ 104.♔c3 ♘a4+ 105.♔b4 ♘b2 106.♖d5 ♔b1 107.♔b3?
107.♔a3!+−.
107...♔c1! 108.♖c5+ ♔b1! 109.♖c3 ♘d1! 110.♖c8 ♘f2 111.♖f8 ♘d1! 112.♖c8 ♘f2 113.♖c2 ♘d1! 114.♖e2 ♔c1! 115.♔c4 ♔b1?
115...♘b2+!=. Again the 'dumb' square.
116.♔d3 ♘b2+ 117.♔c3 ♘d1+ 118.♔d2 ♘b2 119.♖e8 ♔a2 120.♔c3 ♘a4+ 121.♔b4 ♘b2 122.♖b8 ♘d1 123.♖d8 ♘e3 124.♔c3 ♔b1 125.♖d3 ♘f5 126.♖f3 ♘d6 127.♖f4 ♔a2 128.♔b4 ♔b2 129.♔c5 ♘b7+ 130.♔b6 ♘d6 131.♔c6 ♘c8 132.♖f7 ♔b3 133.♖c7 1-0
ENDING 9, Position 1.24 – Kamsky-Bacrot, Sofia 2006.

Exercise 23
Laszlo Szabo
Viktor Kortchnoi
Leningrad 1967



Black can win in a fairly typical way; the f4-pawn precludes any stalemate motifs, while promoting to a knight in the corner is insufficient.
76...♔e6 77.h7
The other variation involving promoting to a knight goes 77.♔g7 ♔e7 78.h7 ♖g1+ 79.♔h6 ♔f7! 80.h8♘+ ♔f6−+.
77...♖g1+ 78.♔h6 ♔f7 79.h8♘+ ♔f6 80.♔h7 ♖g7+ 81.♔h6 ♖g4 82.♔h7 ♖xf4 83.♔g8
83.♘g6 ♖f1 84.♘f8 ♔f7.
83...♖a4 84.♔h7 ♖g4 0-1
ENDING 9

Exercise 24
Alexey Suetin 2460
Sergey Gorelov 2415
Moscow 1981 (7)



There are two winning moves.
77.♔f6??
It's hard to believe that such a strong player would ever make such a dreadful move.
A) 77.♔g6! (move 79 in the game) is the most natural winning move, for instance: 77...♔f8 78.♔f6 and we've reached the basic winning position with the pawn on the sixth rank: 1-0 Hatzis-Bakratsas-Fidrilakis, Greece tt 2017;
B) 77.♔e5! is the other winning move: 1-0 Tomczak-Graf, Poznan 2007.
77...♔f8 78.e7+ ♔e8 79.♔e6 ½-½
ENDING 2

Chapter 2

Exercise 25

Ivan Cheparinov 2681
Peter Prohaszka 2617
Croatia tt 2015 (6)

White can still win by exploiting the knight's limited ability to stop passed pawns, or otherwise win the knight by tactical means:

68.f6! ♔xh4 69.f7 1-0

The knight is unable to stop the pawn, for example: 69...♘e4 70.♔e7 or 69...♘g4 70.♔g7!.

See also **ENDING 10**.

Exercise 26

Edmar Mednis 2405
Robert Fontaine 2300
Cannes 1996 (10)

The knight can stop the pawn.

53...g3 54.♘g5!=

The only square for the knight (barring direct attacks on the pawn), enabling White to save the game, regardless of who is to move.

54...♔g1

54...g2 55.♘f3+! (55.♔b5 ♔g3!–+) 55...♔g3 56.♘g1; the knight is in front of the pawn, thus ensuring a draw.

55.♔c5 g2 56.♔d4 ♔f2

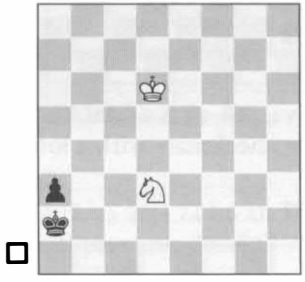
56...♔h2 57.♘f3+=; 56...♔f1 57.♘h3=; 56...♔h1 57.♘f3=.

57.♘h3+ ♔g3 58.♘g1 ♔f2 59.♘h3+ ½-½

See also **ENDING 11**.

Exercise 27

Maria Petraki 2102
Athanasios Papadimitriou 1869
Nikea 2005 (4)



Getting the knight onto the right circuit is by itself no guarantee for a draw. Depending on the position of the enemy king, you have to choose the right square.

66.♘c1+??

In this case, the other option was called for: 66.♘b4+ ♔b3 67.♔c5=.

Once the king lends a helping hand, things become so much easier. Notwithstanding, 67.♘d3 is also good enough.

66...♔b1!

Now, the knight has a limited choice lest the pawn queen on its own.

67.♘e2

67.♘b3 ♔b2–+. The knight is powerless to stop the pawn.

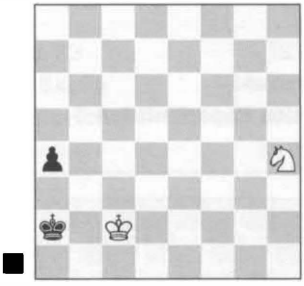
67...♔b2! 0-1

ENDING 12

Exercise 28

Arl Dale	1085
Joshua Devarajh	1151

Sandy Bay ch-AUS jr 2010 (11)



The move ...a4-a3 is a fatal blunder, allowing checkmate with a lone knight:

63...a3??

This is an easy example, but it is striking to see how the offside knight still manages to give checkmate. While not very important from a theoretical point of view, it's interesting to see the squares (with stars) from where the knight can deliver checkmate and from where it cannot: almost all of them are dark squares, except for the corners and the ones which would bring about an illegal position; almost none are light squares except for the ones at jumping range of the b4-square. The logical 63...♔a3 leads to a draw: 64.♔c3 ♔a2=.

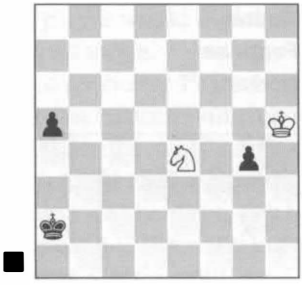
64.♘f3 ♔a1 65.♘d2 ♔a2 66.♘e4 ♔a1 67.♘c5 ♔a2 68.♘d3 ♔a1 69.♘c1 a2 70.♘b3#

ENDING 14

Exercise 29

Graeme Spain	2200
Anthony Ker	2330

Wanganui ch-NZL 2006/07 (6)



64...g3?

Black is winning, but not with this move. Now the knight is able to make it back in time, even though in the game it failed to do so.

64...a4! is the right move. It's perhaps counter-intuitive that the knight, apparently closer to the action on the e4-square, is in fact too slow: 65.♔xg4 (65.♘c3+ ♔b3 66.♘xa4 g3!, now the other pawn does a runner, 67.♘c5+ ♔a3!–+. Again we see the optimal range of king vis-à-vis knight) 65...a3 66.♘d2 (intending to get on track) 66...♔a1!–+.

analysis diagram

Truly remarkable, yet at the same time completely logical: by stepping into the corner, the black king renders the knight's route via c4 useless. Only after playing ...a3-a2 will it step out of the corner to facilitate promotion, except in the variation 67.♘e4 ♔b2!.

65.♘xg3 a4 66.♘e4?

White doesn't seem to know about the rule of the correct knight circuit: 66.♘e2! (toward the c1-square) and if 66...♔b2, 67.♘f4! (toward the d3-square) 67...♔c3 (67...a3 68.♘d3+=) 68.♘d5+! ♔b3 69.♘f4 a3 70.♘d3=.

66...a3!

Now there is no way to get on track.

67.♘c3+

67.♘d2 ♔a1 68.♘c4 a2 69.♔g4 ♔b1–+.

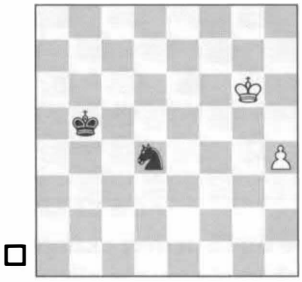
67...♔b2 68.♘d1+ ♔b3–+ 0-1 (80)

ENDING 12

Exercise 30

Vereslav Eingorn	2560
Alexander Beliavsky	2525

Kiev ch-URS 1986 (12)



With correct play, White can keep the knight at bay. The position visually contrasts with the previous diagram, where the knight was in time even though it was further away.

70.♔f6!

Fending off the knight on a three-square diagonal is optimal technique: the knight would have to spend three moves to give a single check.

70...♘c2

70...♘e2 71.h5 ♘g3 72.h6 and the pawn will promote; 70...♘f3 71.h5 ♘h2 72.♔f5!+–.

71.h5 ♘e3 72.♔g5!

Again, optimally fending off the cavalier.

72...♘c4 73.h6

Beliavsky resigned in view of 73...♘e5 74.h7 ♘f7+ 75.♔f6 ♘h8 76.♔g7+–.

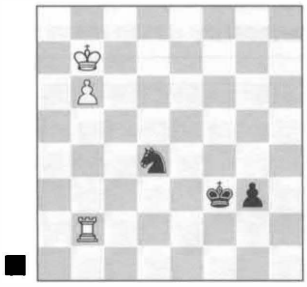
ENDING 12

Exercise 31

Veronika Rohackova 1680

Jan Dinzik 1870

Bratislava 1997 (3)



Here, we find a perfect example of how to share duties: the g3-pawn, supported by the king, must force a rook sacrifice, while the knight aims to give itself up for the b6-pawn. Both these tasks are feasible, but Black must play accurately.

62...g2?

Now the knight will not be able to control the b-pawn. It was necessary to play 62...♘e6! and the knight would get the job done without any problems.

63.♖xg2 ♔xg2 64.♔b8?

White returns the favour with this inaccurate move.

64.♔c8! was correct, and if 64...♘b5, 65.♔d7+–. The same move would follow after 64...♘f5; two further examples of effectively fending off an enemy knight.

64...♔f3??

A losing blunder. The player with the black pieces was probably unfamiliar not only with the concept of lateral control, but also with the specific features of knight's pawns.

64...♘c2 65.b7 ♘b4; 64...♘f5?? 65.♔c7; 64...♘e6=.

65.b7 ♘b5 66.♔a8! ♘c7+ 67.♔a7 1-0

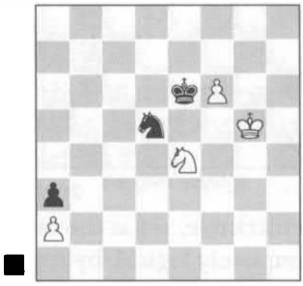
ENDINGS 10 & 11

Exercise 32

Jesus Nogueiras Santiago 2557

Maikel Gongora Reyes 2417

Las Tunas ch-CUB 2001 (12)



Taking on f6 was a bad decision. The move, most likely prompted by a desire to reach a draw as quickly as possible, leads to checkmate in the corner by a lone knight.

75...♘xf6?

75...♘e3! would have held the draw: 76.♔g6 ♘g4 77.♔g7 ♘xf6. Now this sacrifice is possible, e.g. 78.♘xf6 ♔e5 79.♔g6 ♔d4 80.♔f5 ♔c3 81.♔e4 ♔b2 and White can't imprison the black king.

76.♘xf6 ♔e5 77.♘d7+ ♔d4 78.♔f4

This endgame is of theoretical importance and has been reached much more often than you might think. The white king is intent

on imprisoning its counterpart once the latter captures the pawn; meanwhile, the knight is two jumps away from one of the mating squares (b3). These are the pre-conditions necessary to obtain a winning position.

78...♔c3 79.♔e3 ♔b2 80.♔d2 ♔xa2 81.♔c2 ♔a1 82.♘c5! ♔a2 83.♘d3 ♔a1 1-0

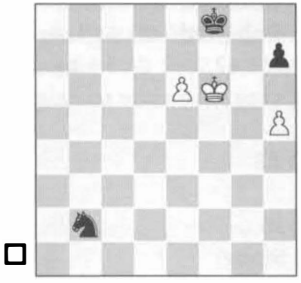
ENDINGS 12 & 14

Exercise 33

L Garcia 2130

Sergio Navarrete Delgado

Pamplona 1997



h5-h6 is the move of a player who doesn't know what it feels like to get checkmated in one of the corners of the chessboard by a lone knight.

56.h6?

56.e7+ ♔e8 57.♔g7 ♔xe7 58.♔xh7 ♔f7 59.♔h6 leads to a clear draw.

56...♘d3!

Black is alert and moves the knight closer.

57.e7+ ♔e8 58.♔g7 ♔xe7 59.♔xh7?!

The king is five moves away from certain death. White could have put up slightly more stubborn resistance by keeping the king next to the black pawn without capturing it. However, against correct play this also loses: 59.♔g8 ♘f4 60.♔g7 ♘e6+ 61.♔g8 ♔f6 62.♔h8 ♔f7! and White must face the music: 63.♔xh7 ♘g5+ 64.♔h8 ♔f8 65.h7 ♘f7#.

59...♔f7! 60.♔h8 ♘f4 61.♔h7 ♘e6 62.♔h8 ♘f8! 0-1

It is checkmate in one move.

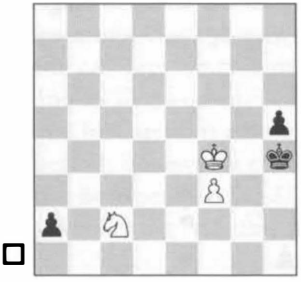
ENDINGS 12 & 14

Exercise 34

Mauricio Rios 2488

Li Chao 2674

Concord 2013



It might appear irrelevant where White's king goes, but if he chooses the wrong option, Black can prevent the white pawn from promoting and is able, by doing some extraordinary twisting, to get the king in to harass the knight.

51.♔e3?

The move played in the game is wrong because the king is useless

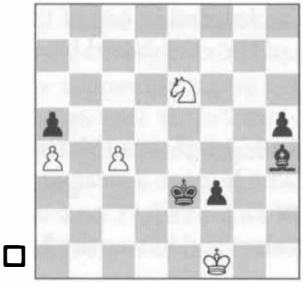
here. It ought to be helping the advance of the f-pawn:
51.♔e5! ♔g3 52.f4 h4 (if now 52...♔g4 53.f5 ♔g5 54.f6 ♔g6 55.♔e6 and Black even loses) 53.f5 h3 54.f6 h2 55.f7 h1♕ 56.f8♕ ♕h5+ 57.♔d4 ♕d1+ 58.♔c3 a1♕+=.
51...♔g3 52.f4 ♔g4!
52...h4? is a race which ends in both pawns queening: 53.f5 h3 54.f6 h2 55.f7 h1♕ 56.f8♕=.
53.♘a1
53.♔e4? is a bad idea, allowing the black pawn to queen with check: 53...h4 54.f5 h3 55.f6 h2 56.f7 h1♕+.
53...h4 54.♘c2
54.♘b3 leads to a different variation, with a different no-go area for the king: 54...h3 55.♔f2 ♔xf4 56.♔g1. Now, the king can easily overcome this hindrance, as is shown in the analysis diagram:

analysis diagram

56...♔e5 57.♔h2 ♔d5! 58.♔xh3 ♔c4 59.♘a1 ♔c3–+.
54...h3 55.♔f2 ♔xf4 56.♘a1 ♔e5
There are other winning moves, but Black already sets out to circumvent the no-go area about to be concocted by the knight.
57.♘c2

The squares e3, d3, d4 and d5 represent the no-go area for the king.
57...♔d6! 0-1
Black's king easily dismantles the barrier and is in time to bully the knight. Any move not directly aimed to circumvent the no-go area in the most efficient way spoils the win, for example: 57...♔e4? 58.♔g3 ♔d5 59.♔xh3 ♔d6 60.♔g3 ♔c5 61.♔f3 ♔c4 62.♔e2 ♔c3 63.♔d1 and White's king is in time to help the knight.
ENDING 13

Exercise 35
Markus Stangl
Schneider
Berlin 1992



The move c4-c5 is the right plan to save the game, although it involves

having to find some only moves at the end of a long variation.

1.c5!

This game in not in the databases. Dvoretsky rescued it from oblivion in his book *For Friends and Colleagues* (1). The game saw 1.♘g7? ♗f6 2.♘xh5 ♗d4 3.c5 (3.♘g3 ♔d3) 3...♗xc5 4.♘f6 ♔d4 5.♘d7 ♔d5 6.♔e1 ♗d4–+.

1...♗g3 2.c6 h4 3.c7 ♗xc7 4.♘xc7 h3 5.♘d5+ ♔d4 6.♘e7 h2 7.♘f5+ ♔c4 8.♘g3 ♔b4 9.♔f2 ♔xa4 10.♔xf3

All these moves were forced. Now Black can move his king to different squares.

10...♔b3

10...♔b4 11.♔g2 a4 12.♘e2 and the knight reaches the c1-square.

11.♔g2 a4

The critical position. Remember that the effective knight circuit is a2-b4-d3-c1. This last square is crucial.

12.♘e2!

The knight heads for the c1-square.

12...♔b2 13.♘f4!

Now it aims for the d3-square.

13...♔c3 14.♘d5+ ♔b3 15.♘f4 a3 16.♘d3!

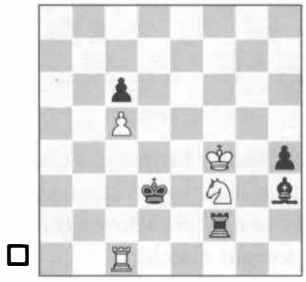
The game is a draw. The knight cannot be prevented from getting onto the circuit again via c1 or b4. Praise the knight for this extraordinary display of skill!

ENDING 12

Exercise 36

Hana Kublkova	2180
Llbuse Skazelova	2060

Ostrava ch-CSR W 1992 (3)



Black threatens 55...♗g2, winning, but White can prevent this move by playing 55.♖g1, and later on try to win the bishop with a knight fork. There is, however, a crucial difference between playing 55.♖g1 directly, or flicking in a check.

55.♖d1+?

It seems logical to push the king away, but White is actually helping his opponent get out of any knight forks.

55.♖g1! is the right move. The forcing variation that Black has at his disposal allows us to witness an astonishing display of resilience, worthy of a Troitsky study.

55...♗g2?!. Here, this is not the best move as it allows a forced draw

(55...♗f1! would have made White suffer a little while longer, but the result should be a draw, too, for example: 56.♖g6 h3 57.♖d6+ ♔c4 58.♔g3 ♖g2+ 59.♔xh3 ♖g7+ 60.♔h4 ♔xc5∓): 56.♖xg2! ♖xg2 57.♘e1+.

analysis diagram

And now Black's king has a choice between no less than 5 squares, but believe it or not, all allow a tempo-gaining knight check:

A) 57...♔e2 58.♘xg2 h3 59.♘e3 (59.♔g3? loses the pawn endgame, since White is unable to answer ...♔xc5 with ♔c3) e.g. 59...h2 60.♘f5 h1♕ 61.♘g3+=;

B) 57...♔d2 58.♘xg2 h3 59.♘h4 h2 60.♘f3+=;

C) 57...♔d4 58.♘xg2 h3 59.♘h4 h2 60.♘f3+=;

D) 57...♔c3 58.♘xg2 h3 59.♘e3 h2 60.♘d1+ ♔d4 61.♘f2=;

E) 57...♔c4 58.♘xg2 h3 59.♘e3+ ♔xc5 60.♔g3=.

55...♔c2 56.♖g1 ♗g2 57.♖xg2 ♖xg2 58.♘e1+ ♔b3!

On this remote square, the king can't be disturbed.

59.♘xg2 h3

Finally, the knight sits helpless on its most uncomfortable square on the board, and while it is true that the king comes to its aid, the pawn endgame is lost.

60.♔g3 hxg2 61.♔xg2 ♔c4 0-1

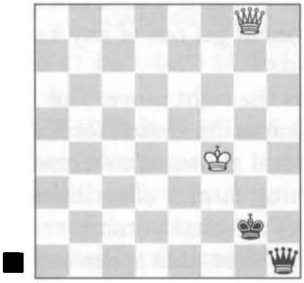
ENDINGS 15 & 80

Chapter 3

Exercise 37

Carlos Barrero Garcia	2302
Oleg Korneev	2649

Dos Hermanas 2006 (6)



The correct result is a draw, but in practice, even grandmasters have lost this position as Black, particularly after erring on the second move.

66...♔f1

This is correct, but the real problem is the next move. Including all possible symmetrical positions, my database shows this position has arisen in seventeen games, with White winning eleven times! It's true that Black could already blunder with 66...♔f2?, allowing 67.♕a2+! and it's already too late to save the game. Nonetheless, the

error on the next turn is as natural as it is common. Players should try to bar such mishaps in either one of two ways: in the first place, it should be possible to calculate this endgame correctly, but, if you're not confident about your calculation skills, I suggest you learn the following useful guideline: the attacking side wins if he manages to give a *horizontal check on the second rank*. By the same token, if the defending side can avoid that check, he mustn't allow it.

67.♕c4+

67...♔f2?

A common mistake. Remember the rule: avoid any horizontal checks on the second rank!

67...♔g1! is the correct move; for example: 68.♕c5+ (68.♕c1+ ♔h2 and the checks run out, since on the next one, the black queen will interpose on the g2-square) 68...♔h2! 69.♕h5+ ♔g1 70.♕d1+ ♔h2 71.♕xh1+ ½-½ Gawehns-Kaiser, Bad Homburg 2012 (in this game these move numbers were 52-56).

68.♕c2+

Now the queen comes closer by a series of checks until she forces the king to move to g1.

68...♔f1 69.♕d1+ ♔g2 70.♕e2+ ♔h3

70...♔g1 71.♔g3 leads to checkmate.

71.♕g4+ ♔h2 72.♕g3#

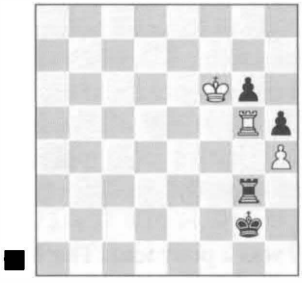
ENDING 20

Exercise 38

Dolfi Drimer

Leonid Stein

Havana 1968 (8)



Black wins, since the white pawn will only reach the seventh rank. In fact, this is the only way to win the game.

73...♖xg5! 74.hxg5

74.♔xg5 ♔g3 75.♔xg6 ♔xh4 76.♔f5 ♔g3–+.

74...h4 75.♔xg6 h3 76.♔f7 h2 77.g6 h1♕ 78.g7 ♕h7!

Black won twelve moves later by means of a well-known procedure: move the queen closer and closer with check until the enemy king is forced to step in front of its pawn, thus gaining the necessary tempi for the king to approach, step by step.

79.♔f8 ♕f5+ 80.♔e7 ♕g6 81.♔f8 ♕f6+ 82.♔g8 ♔g3 83.♔h7 ♕f7 84.♔h8 ♕h5+ 85.♔g8 ♔g4 86.♔f8

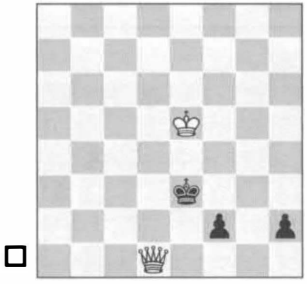
♕f5+ 87.♔e7 ♕g6 88.♔f8 ♕f6+ 89.♔g8 ♔g5 90.♔h7 0-1

ENDING 16

Exercise 39

Valerij Popov	2579
Timur Gareev	2191

Samara 2002 (2)



56.♔d5? was a poor idea. The trick White relied on in the game, and which eventually turned out well for him, has in fact a major flaw, as the white king voluntarily abandons the winning zone.

56.♔d5?

56.♕h1, among other moves, was easily winning, because the white king is in the winning zone (two steps away from g3, to be precise). There might follow: 56...♔e2 57.♕xh2 ♔f3 (57...♔e1 58.♔e4+– as in the game) 58.♕h1+ ♔e2 59.♕e4+ ♔d2 60.♕f3 ♔e1 61.♕e3+ ♔f1 62.♔f4 ♔g2 63.♕e2 ♔g1 64.♔g3 and checkmate.

56...h1♕+! 57.♕xh1 ♔e2 58.♕h2

A tricky position.

58...♔e1??

Another one bites the dust. Whether or not the player with the black pieces trusted his position, had he been familiar with – or remembered – the theoretical endgame, he wouldn't have had any problems finding 58...♔f3!.

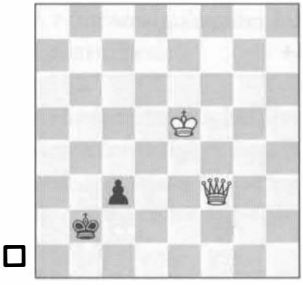
59.♔e4! ♔e2 60.♕g2 1-0

ENDINGS 18 & 19

Exercise 40

Antal Benyei	1921
Zoltan Dudas	1840

Hungary tt 2008/09



White should be careful not to give just any random queen check.

59.♕e2+?

This prepares a trick which actually won White the game, but objectively, allowing the black pawn another step forward is the wrong idea since the king is outside the winning zone; now the position is a theoretical draw.

The right move is 59.♕b7+!. Perhaps White couldn't find another check after 59...♔c1 (59...♔a1 allows the queen to come closer by means of checks: 60.♕a6+ ♔b2 61.♕b5+ ♔a2 62.♕a4+ ♔b2 63.♕b4++–), but after 60.♔d4! the king has time to enter the winning zone: 60...c2 61.♔d3 ♔d1 62.♕h1#.

59...c2 60.♔d4

This tricky position has claimed many victims. My database reveals thirteen games with identical or symmetrical positions. Seven timed did the side with the pawn err.

60...♔b1??

60...♔a1= is the right move, as you can find out for yourself.

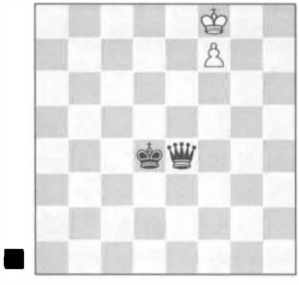
61.♔c3 c1♕+ 62.♔b3 1-0

ENDING 19

Exercise 41

Klaus Thönnessen	2155
Patrick Boos	2015

Worms 2003 (1)



Black wins as long as he doesn't let the enemy king escape via the *right* side of the pawn. In the game he achieved this only because of his opponent's inexpert play.

69...♔e5?

Allows the white king into the corner, while Black lacks the tempi needed to bring his own king closer. The winning move is 69...♕h7! 70.♔e8 ♔e5 71.f8♕ ♔e6 and checkmate is inevitable.

70.♔e7?

But the king comes out via the *wrong* side of the pawn, a phenomenal blunder! 70.♔g7! holds the draw for the reason stated above: the black king has no time to come closer. In fact, it can neither reach e7 nor g6 in a single move: 70...♕g4+ 71.♔h7 ♕h5+ 72.♔g7 ♕g5+ 73.♔h7 ♕f6 74.♔g8 ♕g6+ 75.♔h8=.

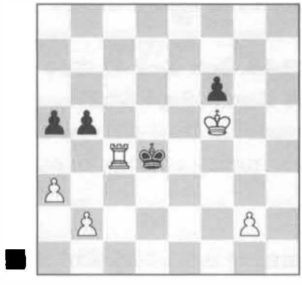
70...♕b7+ 71.♔e8 ♔e6 0-1

ENDINGS 18 & 19

Exercise 42

Harry Schussler	2200
Ove Kinnmark	2390

Motala ch-SWE 1976 (9)



Capturing with the pawn is misleading: while it looks as if the pawn will promote, White's king

can in fact return in time to capture it, and once two new queens appear on the board, the white king will be dangerously close.

44...bxc4?

44...♔xc4! is correct, but it is necessary to correctly assess the queen vs. two pawns endgame: 45.♔xf6 ♔b3 46.g4 ♔xb2 47.g5 a4 48.g6 b4 49.g7 bxa3 50.g8♕ a2=.

analysis diagram

Because of the a4-pawn, the queen can't give check on b3. Furthermore, it's impossible to imprison the king, e.g. 51.♕b8+ ♔c2 52.♕c7+ ♔b2 53.♕b6+ ♔c2 54.♕c5+ ♔b2 55.♕b4+ ♔c2 56.♕c4+ ♔b2=.

45.♔xf6

Now a series of forced moves follows.

45...♔d3 46.♔e5 ♔c2 47.♔d4 ♔xb2 48.♔xc4 ♔xa3 49.g4 ♔b2?!

49...a4 would at least narrow down White's winning options to only one.

50.g5

Also winning is 50.♔b5 ♔b3 51.g5! and the pawn promotes with check.

50...a4 51.g6 a3 52.g7 a2 53.g8♕ a1♕

Both sides have a new queen, but White wins quickly as he is able to give a horizontal check on the second rank, as explained in Exercise 37.

54.♕g2+! ♔a3

54...♔b1 55.♔b3+–; 54...♔c1 55.♕f1+ ♔b2 56.♕e2+ reaches the game position.

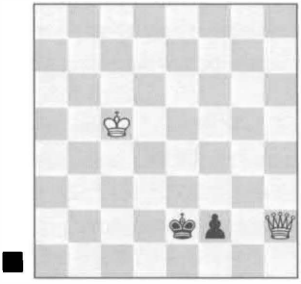
55.♕f3+ ♔b2 56.♕e2+ ♔a3 57.♕e3+ ♔b2 58.♕d2+ 1-0

ENDING 20

Exercise 43

Marcel Kanarek	2471
Gil Popilski	2500

Warsaw 2014 (7)



Black can make a draw, and while he did so in the game, he also

showed that he didn't really know what he was doing:

82...♔e1?

82...♔f3! is the right move, as we've seen in previous exercises.

83.♕h4?

White misses his chance. After this move he has to acquiesce to a draw. Victory is achieved by 83.♔d4! f1♕ 84.♔e3 and mate cannot be staved off.

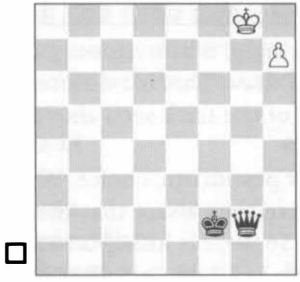
83...♔e2 ½-½ (106)

ENDING 19

Exercise 44

Rafael Pita Romero Rodriguez	2041
Andres Castro Acosta	2068

Formigal ch-ESP jr 2002 (8)



Is might seem as if it doesn't matter whether White plays 51.♔f8 or 51.♔h8, but once again there is a trick.

51.♔h8?

Alas, this is losing! 51.♔f8 was an easy draw.

51...♔g3!!

Gaining two tempi to get the king closer.

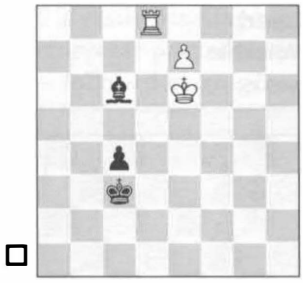
52.♔g7 ♔f4+ 53.♔f8 ♕a8+ 54.♔g7 ♕b7+ 55.♔g8 0-1

ENDING 17

Exercise 45

Sokhib Djuraev	2354
Stephen Solomon	2378

Istanbul ol 2012 (9)



There is one winning move, but it's not the most obvious one, played in the game. You'll see here an exceptional case of a queen unable to beat a pawn on the sixth rank.

58.♖d7?

A) The rook should be employed to win the c4-pawn, when the win would be a piece of cake, e.g. 58.♖c8! ♗a4 59.♔d5 ♗b5 60.♖c5+–;

B) Or 58.e8♕? ♗xe8 59.♖xe8 ♔d4 60.♖d8+ ♔e4 61.♖c8 ♔d4 62.♔f5 c3 63.♔f4 ♔d3 64.♔f3 c2=.

58...♗xd7+ 59.♔xd7 ♔d2 60.e8♕ c3

Extraordinary! The white queen has no checks.

61.♕e5 c2 62.♕b2 ♔d1 63.♕d4+ ♔e2 64.♕c3 ♔d1 65.♕d3+ ♔c1

66.♔c6 ♔b2 67.♕d2 ♔b1 68.♕b4+ ♔a2 69.♕c3 ♔b1 70.♕b3+ ♔a1 ½-½

ENDINGS 16 & 18

Exercise 46

Satea Husari	2307
Leonid Voloshin	2423

Koszalin 1999 (5)

Of course Black can win: he is a whole queen up! Several roads lead to Rome, but alas, materialism can cloud a player's judgement.

50...♕xb2+??

A) 50...♕d5! is easiest, pinning the c-pawn: 51.♔b6 ♔f3 52.c7 ♕a8–+;

B) 50...♕b3+ also suffices, for example: 51.♔c8 ♔f3 52.c7 ♔e4 53.♔d7 ♕d5+ 54.♔e7 ♕c6 55.♔d8 ♕d6+ 56.♔c8 ♔d5–+.

51.♔c8!=

Queen vs. pawn on the sixth is not always winning; particularly if the queen has no checks at her disposal, or, as is the case here, if the only check available doesn't help the attacker's cause.

51...♔f3 52.c7

Now it is queen vs. pawn on the seventh, and the result is a draw.

52...♔e4 53.♔d7 ♕g7+ 54.♔d8?!

54.♔c6!, immediately heading for the queenside, would be easier.

54...♕f6+ 55.♔d7 ♕d4+

Interestingly, White has only one move to draw. This is a different version of the trick seen above.

56.♔c8?

A rather pessimistic choice. White must have been aware that the natural 56.♔e7? is losing on account of 56...♕a7 57.♔d8 ♔d5 58.c8♕ ♔d6 and mate is inevitable, but 56.♔e8! is good enough to hold the draw.

56...♕g7?

A series of astonishing blunders, possibly prompted by extreme time trouble. 56...♕a7! forces checkmate as given in the variation above.

57.♔d8 ♔d5 58.c8♘??

A ludicrous finish! 58.c8♕ ♔d6 is not mate because the queen has two checks.

58...♕g8+ 0-1

ENDINGS 17 & 19

Exercise 47

Gata Kamsky 2762

Wang Hao 2737

Tashkent 2012 (4)

Black can win naturally, provided he foresees one accurate move once the white pawn reaches the seventh rank.

54...c3! 55.♗xc3+ ♔xc3 56.♔b7 b2 57.♔xa8 b1♕ 58.a7 ♔b4! 0-1

The king comes closer with tempo and forces a well-known mating pattern.

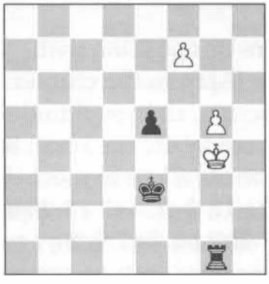
ENDING 17

Exercise 48

Aleksander Mista 2562

David Navara 2710

Czechia tt 2012/13 (4)



White can win the game, but he has to voluntarily move the king to the h-file, allowing it to be cut off, to exploit the power of the pawn duo.

52.♔f5??

This move leads to a drawn queen vs. pawn-on-the-seventh endgame. 52.♔h3! is easily winning because of the unstoppable pawn duo: 52...♖f1 53.g6+– followed by g6-g7.

analysis diagram

52...♖f1+ 53.♔e6 ♖xf7! 54.♔xf7 e4 55.g6 ♔f2!

Getting the king's position right. Here the newly born queen won't be able to give any checks.

56.g7 e3 57.g8♕ e2

Mista must have felt extremely frustrated here. How often do you get the chance to play queen vs. central pawn on the seventh, and when it finally happens, it turns out to be an exception!

58.♕e8 e1♕ 59.♕xe1+ ♔xe1 ½-½

ENDING 16

Chapter 4

Exercise 49

Mirjana Maric 2291

Gabriela Olarasu 2283

Serbia tt W 2007 (9)

70.♖xa2 loses: the black king is too close. Unfortunately for White, there was no better option.

70.♖xa2 ♖xa2 71.♔xf6 ♖f2+!

A tempo-gaining check is almost always a good idea, and in this position it's crucial.

72.♔e5 ♖g2!

Completing the manoeuvre with gain of tempo.

73.♔f5

The diagram shows a typical distribution of three of the four pieces on the board: the rook is well-placed behind the pawn, which in turn is supported by its king. The result of the game now depends on the position of the attacking king: if it is on any of the squares numbered 1, the result is a draw. On the other hand, with White to play the drawing margin naturally widens, as shown by the squares numbered 2.

The key to assessing the position is the number of steps the black king needs to reach the critical square, in this case d6: if the king is three steps away, Black wins, whereas if it needs four moves, it's a draw.

73...♔d4 74.g5 ♔d5 75.♔f6 ♔d6 76.g6

Compare this position with diagram [A] from the chapter introduction, and you'll find that they're essentially the same: Black to play wins, White to move draws.

76...♖f2+ 77.♔g7 ♔e7 78.♔h8 ♖h2+ 79.♔g7 ♖g2 80.♔h7 ♔f6

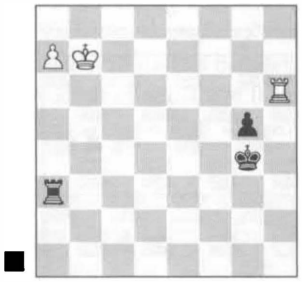
White resigned.

ENDING 28

Exercise 50

Chanda Sandipan	2579
Csaba Balogh	2616

Beijing blitz 2008 (5)



If you've studied the solution to the previous exercise, the answer is straightforward: the rook sacrifice lures the white king into the drawing zone.

71...♖xa7+! 72.♔xa7 ♔f3 73.♖f6+ ♔e3 74.♖g6 ♔f4 75.♔b6 g4 76.♔c5 g3 77.♔d4 ♔f3

78.♖f6+

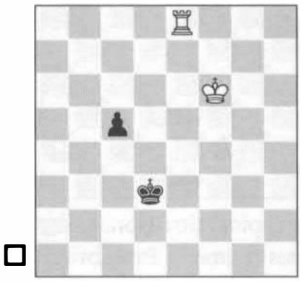
78.♔d3= leads to the critical position, but with Black to move!

78...♔e2 79.♖g6 ♔f2 80.♖f6+ ♔e2 81.♖e6+ ♔f2 82.♖f6+ ½-½

Exercise 51

Rainer Käding	2171
Matthias Terwey	2063

Germany tt 2006/07 (7)



White wins by means of a tempo-gaining manoeuvre with the rook.

52.♔e5??

Showing no understanding of the basic concept of tempo-gaining. The correct variation is 52.♖d8+! ♔e4 53.♖c8 ♔d4.

analysis diagram

The six numbered squares compose the drawing zone. From the sixth rank (e.g. f6), the king reaches the f3-square in time: 54.♔f5 c4 55.♔f4 ♔d3 56.♔f3+–, once again essentially reaching diagram [A] from the introduction.

52...c4 53.♖d8+ ♔e3! 54.♖h8 c3 55.♖h3+ ♔d2 56.♔d4 c2 57.♖h2+ ♔d1 58.♔d3

Another typical situation, and a precarious moment. Promoting to a knight (on any square except a corner) is now a game-saving resource.

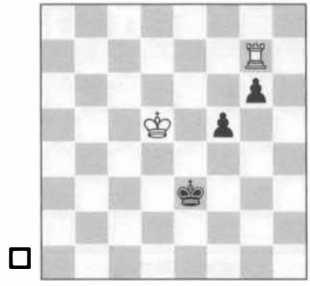
58...c1♘+! ½-½

ENDINGS 23 & 24 & 28

Exercise 52

Goran Cabrilo	2335
Milan Vukic	2510

Bor ch-YUG 1976 (12)



White can win as long as he gets his priorities right, i.e. he shouldn't be tempted by materialistic pawn-grabbing, but should instead bring the king round, without further ado.

73.♖xg6??

Wasting a precious tempo by capturing the least important pawn.

A) 73.♖a7! wins easily: 73...g5 74.♖a3+ ♔e2 75.♔d4 g4 76.♔e5! ♔f2 77.♔f4!+-;

B) 73.♔c4! is also winning: 73... f4 74.♔c3 f3 and in this position, similar to diagram [A] from the introduction, the g6-pawn doesn't help Black's cause.

analysis diagram

75.♖e7+!+-.

73...f4 74.♖e6+ ♔d3!

The king boldly holds his own.

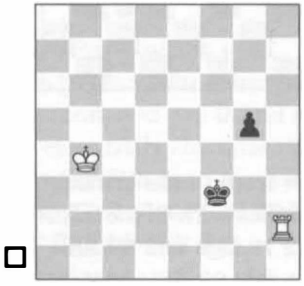
75.♖f6 ♔e3 76.♖e6+ ♔d3 77.♖a6 f3 78.♖a3+ ♔e2 79.♔e4 f2 80.♖a2+ ♔e1 81.♔e3 f1♘+ 82.♔d3 ½-½

See also **ENDING 23**.

Exercise 53

Josef Lys	2225
Pavel Cech	2315

Czechoslovakia tt 1990/91 (13)

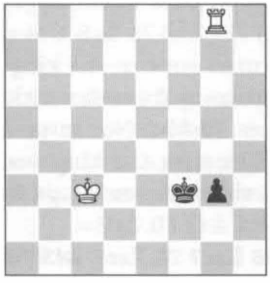


The poorly placed rook must immediately be rerouted to exert

pressure from behind the pawn. To this aim, our standard tempo-gaining manoeuvre is called for.

64.♔c3??

Another player who is unappreciative of the benefits of tempo-gaining, though in this case the manoeuvre had to be prepared first: 64.♖h8! g4 65.♖f8+! (the point) 65...♔e3 66.♖g8 ♔f3 67.♔c3 g3



analysis diagram

68.♔d2! (the second point; with the rook behind the pawn, it isn't even necessary to play for the opposition) 68...g2 (68...♔f2 69.♖f8+) 69.♔e1+–.

64...g4 65.♖h8 g3 66.♖f8+

66.♔d2 g2=.

66...♔e2 67.♖g8

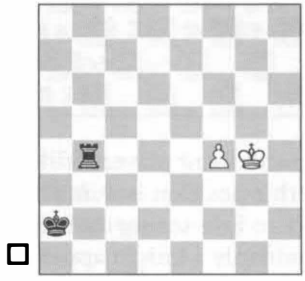
67...♔f2! 68.♖xg3 ½-½

ENDING 24

Exercise 54

Ivan Gallc	2349
Dragan Kosic	2488

Cetinje 2009 (5)



A mutual king race won't do: if White wants to save the game, he must meet his counterpart head on.

67.♔f5!!

The natural 67.♔g5 starts a king race, but is no good: 67...♔b3! 68.f5 ♔c4 69.f6 ♔d5 70.f7 ♖b8 71.♔f6 ♔d6 72.♔g7 ♔e7–+.

67...♔b3 68.♔e5! ♔c4 69.f5 ♖b5+

69...♔c5!? is perhaps a better practical choice, as after 70.f6 ♔c6 Black is close to reaching a version of the standard diagram [A] position, but unfortunately the poor placement of the rook doesn't do him any favours: 71.f7 ♖b8 72.♔e6=.

70.♔e6! ♖b6+ 71.♔e5!

The white king must keep blocking his enemy.

71.♔e7 ♔d5 72.f6 ♖b7+–+.

71...♖b5+ 72.♔e6 ♔d4

Opting to exert some pressure from behind.

73.f6 ♖b6+ 74.♔e7 ♔e5 75.f7 ♖b7+ 76.♔e8 ♔e6

Some tournament players still believe this position is winning. You have to love seeing their faces when suddenly a knight appears on the board.

77.f8♘+!=

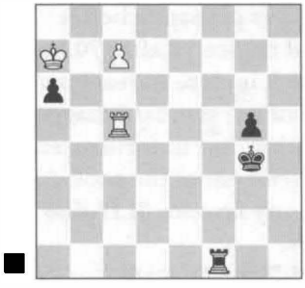
And drawn, thirty moves later.

ENDINGS 21 & 24

Exercise 55

Arthur Jussupow	2609
Igor Glek	2534

Switzerland tt 2009 (1)



Pinning the pawn to sacrifice the rook on c7 loses. It makes a huge difference whether the white king is on a7 or on a6.

72...♖f7??

In this variation, the king on a6 is fast enough. 72...♖f8! had to be played: 73.c8♕+ ♖xc8 74.♖xc8 ♔f3

analysis diagram

75.♖f8+ (our classic tempo-gaining scheme) 75...♔e3 76.♖g8 ♔f4 and now it turns out that the king is four steps away from the critical d3-square: 77.♔b6. No matter how hard White tries, the king won't get there in three moves: 77...g4 78.♔c5 g3 79.♔d4 ♔f3 80.♔d3=.

73.♔xa6 ♖xc7 74.♖xc7 ♔f3 75.♖f7+

Gaining a tempo!

75...♔e4 76.♖g7 ♔f4

From a6, the king reaches the critical square in three moves.

77.♔b5 g4 78.♔c4 g3 79.♔d3 ♔f3

Once again, a version of the standard diagram [A] position, with White to play.

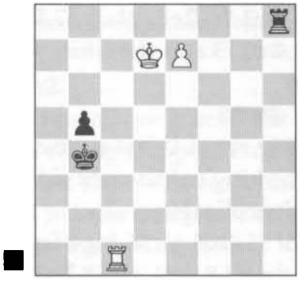
80.♖f7+ ♔g2 81.♔e2 ♔g1 82.♖g7 g2 83.♖g8 ♔h2 84.♔f2 ♔h1 85.♖h8#

ENDING 28

Exercise 56

Peter Taylor	2209
Vitaly Kunin	2507

Port Erin 2007 (3)



Here, it's necessary to pin the pawn to sacrifice the rook on the e7-square, as tactics prevent Black from making some other useful move.

50...♖h7!!

Other moves lose, including the logical retreat with the king. Let's see the variations:

A) 50...♔a3? 51.♖c3+!! (a devilish intermediate check, making the black king lose a vital tempo) 51...♔a4 (51...♔a2 52.♖c8 ♖h7 53.♖b8+–) 52.♖c8 ♖h7 53.♔d6 ♖xe7 54.♔xe7 b4 55.♔d6 b3 56.♔c5 ♔a3 57.♔c4+–;

B) Waiting with 50...♖g8 is not an option, as White simply improves his position: 51.♖c8+–.

51.♖e1?!

Lets Black improve his king.

A) 51.♖c8 seems a bit more logical: 51...♔a3! 52.♔d6 ♖xe7! 53.♔xe7 b4 54.♔d6 b3 55.♔c5 b2=;

B) 51.♔d8 ♖xe7 52.♔xe7 ♔a3 and now a check from the front is not so effective: 53.♖a1+ ♔b2!=. The king is unimpressed by the enemy rook.

51...♔c3 52.♔c6 ♖xe7 53.♖xe7 b4 54.♔b5

Going round is too slow.

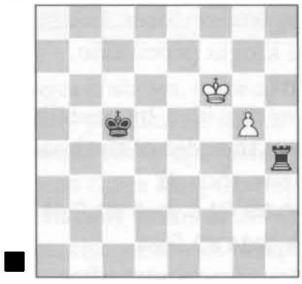
54...b3 55.♖e3+ ♔c2 56.♖e2+ ♔c3 57.♔a4 b2 58.♖e1 ♔c2 59.♔a3 b1♕ 60.♖xb1 ♔xb1 ½-½

ENDING 23

Exercise 57

Franz Hölzl	2390
Gerardo Barbero	2495

Graz 1991 (10)



Black can win, but he has to be careful; as we are about to see, the rook on Black's fifth rank is badly placed.

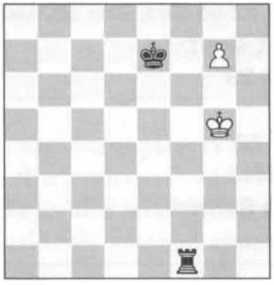
54...♔d6?

It was necessary to give a check at once to avoid the well-known, though in this position unusual drawing resource we'll see below: 54...♖f4+! 55.♔e5 ♖g4 56.♔f6 ♔d6 57.g6 and now that the rook is already behind the pawn, the black king can get in: 57...♔d7! (57...♖f4+? 58.♔g5! as in the game) 58.g7 ♔e8–+.

55.g6

This is almost our familiar standard diagram position, but the black

rook is too close, allowing a surprising defensive resource:
55...♖f4+ 56.♔g5! ♖f1 57.g7
The pawn is on the seventh, but it doesn't really threaten to promote.
57...♔e7

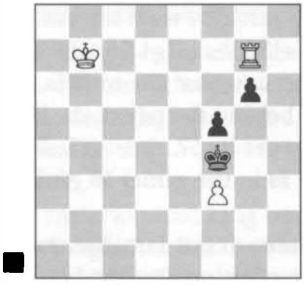


The king comes closer, forcing an unusual knight promotion.
58.g8♘+!
We know this idea, but usually the king is on the edge of the board. It's still a draw, though.
58...♔e6 59.♘h6 ♔e5 60.♘g4+ ♔e4 61.♘f6+ ♔d4 62.♘g4
And a draw was agreed after nineteen more moves.

Exercise 58

Romain Candy	2112
Alexandre Feryn	1994

Nimes 2009 (9)



Both moves draw, but one of them requires finding a difficult second move.
53...g5?!
53...♔xf3! is easiest: 54.♖xg6 f4 55.♔c6 ♔e2 56.♖e6+ ♔d2 57.♖f6 ♔e3 58.♔c5 f3 and the white king is too slow.
54.♖f7! ♔xf3?
The losing error. It was necessary to bring the king to the right side, to hinder its colleague.
54...♔e5! 55.♔c6 g4 56.fxg4 fxg4 57.♔c5 ♔e4! 58.♔c4 g3! 59.♖g7 ♔f3 60.♔d3=, reaching once again a version of diagram [A] from the introduction.
55.♖xf5+ ♔g4
Going backwards is always undesirable, but the worst thing is that the king now has to move to the wrong side of the pawn and will get mated.
56.♖f8 ♔h3
Black needs four tempi to escort the pawn home, while White needs six tempi to forestall this. White has a trump, though: Black's poorly placed king is a serious liability.
57.♔c6 g4 58.♔d5 g3 59.♔e4 g2 60.♔f3

All symmetrical options included, this position has occurred six times according to my database: it compels Black to go for knight promotion as seen in diagram [G] from the introduction, which loses here.

60...♔h2

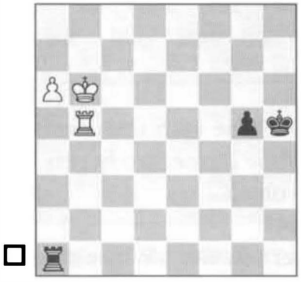
This is one of two games that did not see a knight appear on the board, but the result is the same. 60...g1♘+ loses quickly 61.♔f2 ♔h2 62.♖h8+ ♘h3+ 63.♔f3–+.

61.♖h8+ 1-0

Exercise 59

Diana Arutyunova	2267
Petra Sochorova	2180

Vienna W 2015 (5)



Advancing the pawn to force an immediate rook sacrifice is wrong, because the king on a7 will be too far from the action. Therefore, a bridge-building mechanism is called for.

59.a7?

Correct is 59.♖a5! ♖f1 (checks only help the white king to come closer: 59...♖b1+ 60.♔c7 ♖c1+ 61.♔d7 ♖d1+ 62.♔e7 ♖e1+ 63.♔f7 ♖f1+ 64.♔g7 ♖d1 65.a7 ♖d8 66.a8♕ ♖xa8 67.♖xa8 g4 68.♔f6+–) 60.a7 ♖f8 61.a8♕ ♖xa8 62.♖xa8 ♔g4 63.♔c5 ♔f3 64.♖f8+ ♔e3 65.♖g8 ♔f4 66.♔d4 g4 67.♖f8++–.

59...♖xa7 60.♔xa7

The diagram shows, once again, the classic position in which Black needs six tempi (three pawn moves and three king moves) to be threatening promotion. White, however, also needs six tempi, and so Black must take measures to disturb the king. The technique: shouldering off.

60...♔h4?

60...♔g4!!. This basic manoeuvre to combat an enemy king's unobstructed march is difficult to find over the board if you haven't seen it before: voluntarily blocking your own pawn in the heat of a crucial battle for tempi is, after all, a rather counter-intuitive idea. Additionally, in this case, it is essential that Black foresee move 65: 61.♔b6 ♔f4 62.♔c5 g4 63.♔d4 g3! 64.♔d3 ♔f3 65.♖f5+ ♔g4! (as in the game) 66.♖f8 g2 67.♔e2 g1♘+!=.

61.♔b6 g4 62.♔c5 ♔g3 63.♔d4 ♔f3

Another crucial moment. Black is close to reaching the key position in game-saving circumstances, but unfortunately for him, either rook check throws a spanner in the works.

64.♔d3??

Also here, as we have seen numerous times before, winning a tempo is vital before placing the rook behind the pawn:

A) 64.♖f5+! ♔e2 65.♖g5 ♔f3 66.♔d3 g3. Now the check doesn't work, as we will see in the game, but with the rook behind the pawn, there is another winning method: 67.♔d2!+–;

B) 64.♖b3+ ♔f4 (64...♔f2 65.♔e4 g3 66.♖b2++–) 65.♖b8 ♔f3 66.♔d3 g3 67.♖f8+!+–.

64...g3 65.♖f5+

65...♔g4

Going backwards, coupled with the idea of promoting to a knight, is the finishing touch in Black's plan.

66.♖f8 g2 67.♔e2 g1♘+

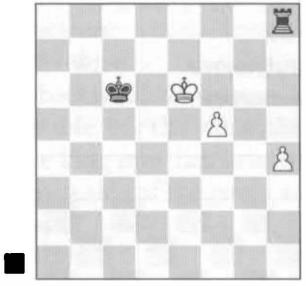
The position is a theoretical draw. According to my database, however, Black won forty moves later.

ENDING 21

Exercise 60

David Sherman	2157
Andrie Zaremba	2293

East Parsippany 2001 (3)



Black can cope with the pawns, provided he immediately gets his king involved.

69...♖xh4?

A) After 69...♔c7!, White can't stop the king coming round, for if he tries 70.♔e7 (70.f6 ♔d8 71.f7 ♖h6+!–+) there follows 70...♖xh4 71.f6 ♖e4+–+;

B) 69...♖e8+? would be winning if there was no h-pawn; but here it's not good enough: White's king will manage to escort the pawn to the other side of the board. 70.♔f7 ♔d7 71.h5 ♖h8 72.♔g6 ♔e7 73.f6+! ♔f8 74.f7 and Black has no useful

moves: 74...♔e7 75.h6! ♖a8 76.h7 ♖f8 77.♔g7 ♖xf7+ 78.♔g8=.

70.f6 ♖e4+

In all likelihood, the cause of the previous error. Black, aware of the standard theoretical position, has to give this check, but because the rook is so close to the enemy king, the resource of promoting to a knight works.

71.♔f5 ♖e1 72.f7 ♔d7 73.f8♘+=

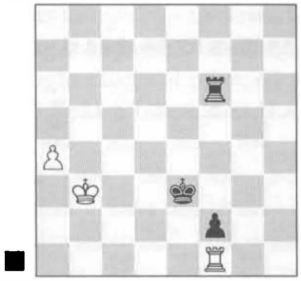
And drawn, twenty-four moves later.

See also **ENDINGS 21 & 24**.

Exercise 61

Christian Endre Toth	2129
José Costa Jr Fernandes	2121

Rio de Janeiro 1986 (6)



Black wins, but he shouldn't be too hasty and go after the rook immediately. Instead, he should cut the enemy king off first.

56...♔e2?

This move unnecessarily complicates matters. The king had to be cut off on the fourth rank: 56...♖f4! 57.a5 ♔e2 58.♖xf2+ ♔xf2.

57.♖h1?

Neither player seems to be aware of the concept of cutting off the king. 57.♖xf2+ is enough for a draw: 57...♔xf2 58.♔c4! (58.a5? ♖f4–+; 58.♔b4? ♔e3! 59.a5 ♔d4 60.♔b5 ♖f5+! 61.♔b4 ♖f1 62.♔b5 ♔d5 63.♔b6 ♔d6 64.a6 ♖b1+–+) 58...♖f5

analysis diagram

59.♔b4! (it may seem odd, but now the black rook is worse) 59...♔e3 60.a5 ♔d4 61.a6=.

57...f1♕?

57...♖f4! was still winning.

58.♖xf1 ♖xf1 59.a5?

59.♔c4!, not letting his own king get cut off while hindering Black's, was again sufficient to hold a draw.

59...♔d3

59...♖f4! cutting off the king, was still easiest. However, the move in the game is also winning.

60.♔b4 ♔d4 61.♔b5 ♔d5 62.♔b6 ♔d6 63.a6

A version of diagram [A] from the introduction has been reached again.

63...♖b1+!–+ 64.♔a7 ♔c6 65.♔a8 ♔b6 66.a7 ♖g1 0-1
ENDING 22

Exercise 62
Igor Yagupov 2482
Anatolij Bets 2413
Alushta 2000 (6)

The move in the game, while winning, unnecessarily complicates matters, and sets the stage for the error three moves later.
54.♖c8?!
The most technical, and therefore easiest, way to win is to first cut off the king with 54.♖c5! ♖a7+ 55.♔d8 ♖xe7 56.♔xe7.
54...♖a7+ 55.♔d6 ♖xe7 56.♔xe7 ♔f5!?

57.♖h8??
An error revealing a lack of understanding of the basic ideas in this endgame: against a rook's pawn, the most effective method is to persecute the king from behind with your own king, combined with horizontal checks, knowing that knight promotion is no solution for the defender in such a scenario: 57.♖c5+! ♔g4 58.♔f6 h4 59.♖c4+ ♔g3 60.♔g5 h3 61.♖c3+ ♔g2 62.♔g4 h2 63.♖c2+ ♔g1 64.♔g3 and here promoting to a knight can't save the game: 64...h1♘+ 65.♔f3+–, the knight is lost.
57...♔g4
Now, on the other hand, White lacks one tempo to carry out an effective horizontal king persecution.
58.♔e6
58.♔f6 h4 59.♖a8 h3 60.♖a4+ ♔g3 61.♔g5 h2=.
58...h4 59.♔e5 h3 60.♔e4 ♔g3 61.♔e3

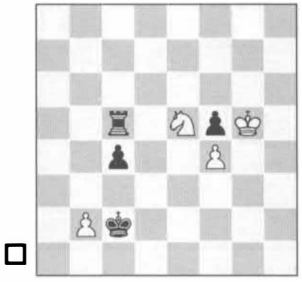
The critical position has been reached with the side with the pawn to move, thus ensuring a draw.
61...♔g2! 62.♖g8+ ♔f1 63.♖h8 ♔g2 64.♔e2 h2 65.♖g8+ ♔h1! 66.♔f2 ½-½
ENDINGS 22, 27 & 28

Exercise 63

Geralf Jess

Leonore Poetsch 1468

Frankfurt 2013 (5)



Giving up the knight is objectively losing for White. Given the result of the game, however, it's probably the most practical try:

62.♘xc4!? ♖xc4 63.♔xf5 ♔xb2?

A typical error, losing a precious tempo by capturing an unimportant pawn. The king had to be brought closer at once: 63...♔d3 64.♔e5 ♖c5+ 65.♔e6 ♔e4 is an easy win.

64.♔g5??

This move allows the black king to become involved. It is necessary to go to the other side and use shouldering: 64.♔e5 ♔c3 65.f5 ♖c5+ 66.♔e6 ♔d4 67.f6 ♖c6+ 68.♔e7 ♔e5 69.f7 ♖c7+ 70.♔e8 ♔e6 and it's a theoretical draw after 71.f8♘+=.

64...♖c1??

Here, it was sufficient to bring the king closer: 64...♔c3! 65.f5 ♔d4 66.f6 ♔e5 67.f7 ♖f4 68.♔g6 ♔e6–+.

65.f5 ♖g1+ 66.♔h6 ♖f1 67.♔g6 ♔c3 68.f6 ♔d4 ½-½

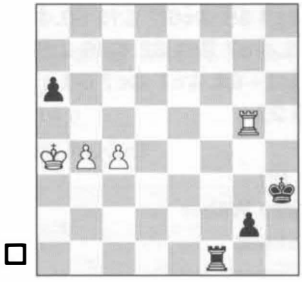
See also **ENDINGS 21 & 23**.

Exercise 64

Vladimir Klasan 2352

Marcello Dragovic 2380

Senta 2011 (8)



55.b5?

Shoving the pawn forward while preventing the '...♖f5-trick', but despite these virtues, this is a losing move. The correct choice was 55.♔a5! ♖f5+! (55...g1♕ 56.♖xg1 ♖xg1 57.♔xa6 ♔g4 58.b5 ♔f5 59.b6 ♔e6 60.b7 ♖b1 61.♔a7=) 56.♖xf5 g1♕ 57.♖c5∓, reaching an endgame with good practical drawing chances. Indeed, the Lomonosov tablebases confirm that, with correct play, it's a draw.

55...axb5+ 56.♔xb5

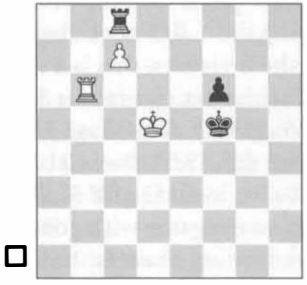
The problem is that the pawn can't be captured, so now the king remains on the wrong side.

56.cxb5 ♖f4+! 57.♔a5 ♖g4–+.

56...g1♕ 57.♖xg1 ♖xg1

When the king is on the wrong side of the pawn, all you have to do is count the tempi each player needs to either help the pawn become a queen, or prevent it from doing so.
58.c5 ♔g4 59.♔c6!? ♔f5 60.♔d6 ♖d1+ 61.♔e7 ♖c1 62.♔d6 ♔f6 63.c6 ♖d1+ 64.♔c7 ♔e7 0-1
ENDING 21

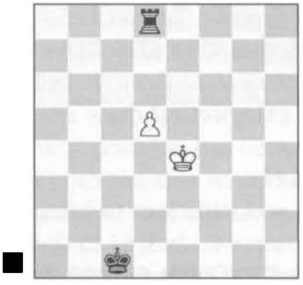
Exercise 65
Jean Marie Weber 2236
René Kalmes 1975
Differdingen ch-LUX 2007 (2)



White must force Black's king to move to the wrong side of its pawn.
53.♔d6?
The most natural move, but a flawed one, as it allows the king to come to the right side: a kind of anti-body check – almost a 'body pull'. 53.♖c6! would force the king to go to the wrong side: 53...♔g4 54.♖c4+ ♔g5 55.♔e6 f5 56.♔d7 ♖h8 57.c8♕ ♖xc8 58.♖xc8! and the black king is on the wrong side, allowing the white king to approach unhindered: 58... f4 59.♔e6 f3 60.♖f8 ♔g4 61.♔e5 ♔g3 62.♔e4+–.
53...♔e4!
Seizing the opportunity: from this side of the pawn Black will be able to keep the enemy monarch at bay.
54.♖b4+ ♔e3

55.♔d7
The king wanders too far. The variation 55.♖b8 ♖xc7 56.♔xc7 f5 57.♔d6 f4 58.♔e5 also culminates in knight promotion.
55...♖xc7+ 56.♔xc7 f5 57.♔d6 f4 58.♔e5 f3 59.♖b3+ ♔e2 60.♔e4 f2 61.♖b2+ ♔e1 62.♔e3 f1♘+!=
And drawn, ten moves later.
ENDING 23

Exercise 66
Salomé Neuhauser 1924
Diana Samigullina 2102
Herceg Novi Ech jr W 2008 (2)



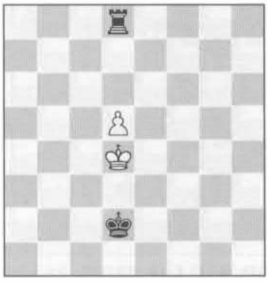
With the rook in front of the pawn, zugzwang is an essential idea, as Réti showed in a famous study from 1928.

55...♔c2!!

The only right move, anticipating zugzwang.

55...♔d2? 56.♔d4! ♔e2 57.♔e4 ♔d2 58.♔d4=.

56.♔d4 ♔d2



White is in zugzwang and will be outflanked.

57.♔c5

57.♔c4 ♔e3!; 57.♔e4 ♔c3!.

57...♔e3 58.♔c6 ♔e4 59.d6 ♔e5 60.d7 ♔e6 0-1

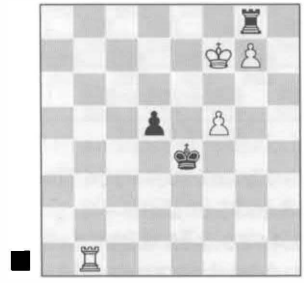
ENDING 25

Exercise 67

Elrik Tvedt Gullaksen 2370

Tony Hedlund

Nordic Cup tt cr 1997



Eliminating White's last remaining pawns fails to a manoeuvre similar to the one in the previous exercise.

66...♖xg7+

After a few more or less forced moves, we essentially reach a position similar to the previous exercise.

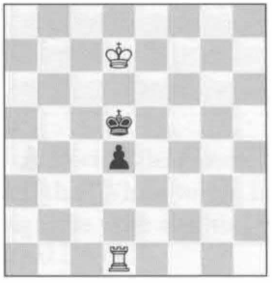
67.♔xg7 ♔xf5 68.♔f7! d4 69.♔e7 ♔e5

69...d3 70.♔d6! ♔e4 71.♔c5+–.

70.♖d1!

70.♔d7 d3!.

70...♔d5 71.♔d7



Zugzwang.

71...♔e4 72.♔c6 d3 73.♔c5 ♔e3 74.♔c4 d2 75.♔c3

Black lost fifteen moves later.

ENDING 25

Exercise 68

Jeffrey Lawrence

W Herren

Zurich jr 1962 (9)

Black has time to both win the g-pawn and help the h-pawn. In the game, however, the player with the black pieces was not up to the job. The first couple of moves are forced for both sides:

67...♔g6! 68.♖f8 ♔xg7 69.♖xf2 ♔g6 70.♔b7 ♔g5 71.♔c6 ♔g4 72.♔d5 h4 73.♔e4 h3 74.♔e3 ♔g3

White would normally be winning, but in this position he can't: the rook is on an unfavourable square, unable to give a safe check.

75.♖f8

Reaching the most important position in this endgame. We know that the side with the pawn can make a draw if it's their turn to move. However, the position is not entirely trivial, and it's not too late to botch it.

75...h2??

A blunder, aiming to promote to a knight in the corner, by which Black shows his lack of understanding of the endgame; now he is lost. 75...♔g2 is the way to draw.

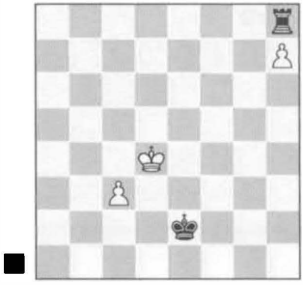
76.♖g8+ ♔h3 77.♔f2! h1♘+ 78.♔f3 ♔h2 79.♖g7 1-0

ENDING 28

Exercise 69

Vladimir Karlik	2293
Martin Petr	2416

Usti nad Orlici 2006 (9)



Black can win the game, as long as he doesn't waste time capturing the least dangerous pawn.

67...♖xh7??

The same conceptual error we've seen several times before. The right plan is to set about outflanking the enemy king at once: 67...♔f3! 68.c4 ♔f4 69.♔d5 ♔f5 70.♔d6 ♔f6 71.c5

analysis diagram

71...♖d8+ 72.♔c7 ♔e7 73.c6 ♖h8 74.♔b7 ♔d6 75.c7 ♖xh7–+.

68.c4 ♖h4+ 69.♔d5 ♔d3 70.c5 ♖h5+ 71.♔d6 ♔d4 72.c6 ♖h6+ 73.♔d7 ♔d5 74.c7 ♖h7+ 75.♔d8 ♔d6 76.c8♘+!=

And drawn, forty moves later.

ENDING 23

Exercise 70

Hans Joachim Hecht 2450

Panagiotis Cladouras 2325

Germany Bundesliga 1983/84 (3)

There is a huge difference between 78.♔xf7 and 78.♖xf7: 78.♔xf7 forces Black into a losing knight-in-the-corner vs. rook endgame.

78.♖xf7?

78.♔xf7! h5 79.♔g6 h4

analysis diagram

80.♖g2+!, an unusual check, but a necessary one to create room for the king: 80...♔f3 (80...♔f4 81.♔h5 h3 82.♖a2 ♔g3 83.♖a3+ ♔g2 84.♔g4 leads to the same position as in the game) 81.♖a2 h3 82.♔g5 ♔g3 83.♖a3+ ♔g2 84.♔g4 h2 85.♖a2+ ♔g1 86.♔g3 h1♘+ 87.♔f3+–.

78...h5 79.♖g7+

79.♔f6 h4= and White, unable to give a check on the fourth rank, can't bring his king any further: a theoretical draw.

79...♔f3 80.♖h7 ♔g4 81.♔f6 h4

White can't win. Please note, however, that White would be winning if he were able to give a horizontal check.

82.♔e5 ♔g3 83.♔e4 h3 84.♔e3 ♔g2! 85.♖g7+ ♔f1

It's a drawn position, although according to the database White won.

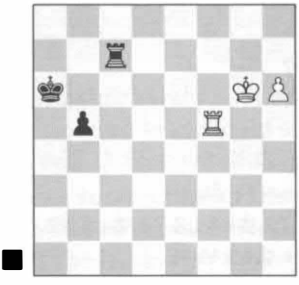
ENDING 27

Exercise 71

Alexander Tikovsky 2202

Jiri Nehybka

Moravia tt 2002/03 (2)



Don't let your king be cut off, neither before nor after the rook sacrifice! With this in mind, finding the move that avoids this pitfall isn't that difficult:

66...♔a5!

66...b4? loses since it lets the king get cut off on Black's fourth rank: 67.h7 ♖c8 68.♔g7 ♖c7+ 69.♔g8 ♖xh7 70.♔xh7+–.

67.h7 ♖c8??

Black makes life complicated for himself. If it's possible to calculate till the end, there's no need to look for any subtleties: 67...♖xh7! 68.♔xh7 ♔a4 69.♔g6 b4 70.♖f8 b3 71.♔f5 b2 72.♖b8 ♔a3 73.♔e4 ♔a2=.

68.♖h5 ♔b4

68...♔a4 69.h8♕ ♖xh8 70.♖xh8 b4 71.♔f5 b3 72.♔e4 b2 73.♖b8 ♔a3 74.♔d3 and the king is in time.

69.h8♕ ♖xh8 70.♖xh8

Now the rook is better placed.

70...♔c3

71.♔f5?

Again we see a player unfamiliar with the blessings of tempo-gaining: 71.♖c8+! ♔d3 72.♖b8 ♔c4 73.♔f5 b4 74.♔e4+–.

71...b4 72.♔e4 b3 73.♔e3 b2 74.♖c8+ ♔b3 ½-½

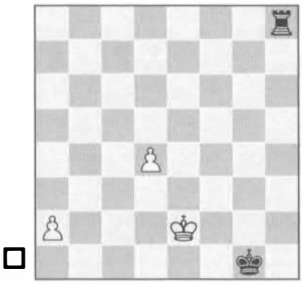
ENDING 24

Exercise 72

Davide Marotti

Savielly Tartakower

London 1922 (6)



White can save the game by means of a magnificent king manoeuvre:

66.♔d3?

This move allows the enemy king to become active. White, on the other hand, had an extraordinary resource at his disposal, based on keeping the black monarch out of play: 66.♔e3!! (66.♔f3 ♖h4!, cutting off the king), preventing 66...♔f2. Now, 66...♖h4 (66...♔g2 67.♔f4 ♖f8+ 68.♔e5 ♔f3 69.d5=), cutting off the king, would be winning if it weren't for the a-pawn: 67.a4! ♔g2 (the black king wants to get around) 68.a5 ♔g3 69.d5! (but not 69.a6?? ♔g4! 70.♔e4 ♔g5+ 71.♔e5 ♖h8 72.a7 ♔g6 73.♔e6 ♖e8+ 74.♔d7 ♖a8! 75.♔e6 ♖xa7 76.d5 ♖a1 77.d6 ♖e1+–+) 69...♖a4 70.d6 ♖xa5 71.♔e4! (threatening 72.d7) 71...♖a8 72.♔e5 ♔g4 73.♔e6=.

66...♔f2!

Now the black king manages to have a say in the matter.

67.d5 ♔f3!

67...♖h4? 68.d6 ♖h6 69.♔c4 ♖xd6 70.a4=. The king will assist the a-pawn.

68.♔c4

68.♔d4!? seems more normal, but: 68...♔f4 69.d6 ♔f5 70.♔d5 ♔f6 and the black king manages to come round: 71.a4 ♖a8–+.

68...♔e4 69.a4 ♖c8+ 70.♔b5 ♔xd5 71.a5 ♖b8+ 72.♔a6 ♔c6 73.♔a7 ♖b7+ 74.♔a8 ♖b5 75.a6 ♔b6 76.a7 ♖a5 0-1

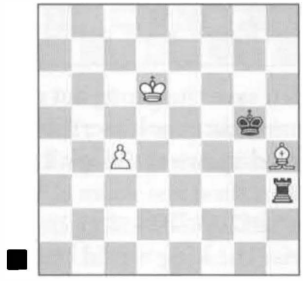
See also **ENDING 22**.

Exercise 73

Javier Orellana

Aleksandar Kurcubic 2315

Leon Wch U26 1996 (1)



Voluntarily moving the king away from the action is almost never a good idea, and this position is no exception.

57...♖xh4!

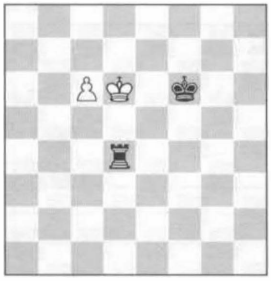
The correct decision, even though it does leave the rook rather poorly placed, and therefore Black must tread with care over the next moves.

57...♔xh4? 58.c5 ♖d3+ 59.♔e7 ♖c3 60.♔d6 ♔g5 61.c6 ♔f6 62.c7=.

58.c5 ♔f6?

Ruining the good decision he made one move earlier. It was necessary to give check now, to prevent 59.♔c5: 58...♖d4+! 59.♔e7 ♖c4 60.♔d6 ♔f6 61.c6 ♔f7!–+.

59.c6 ♖d4+



Now it's too late. We know this scenario:

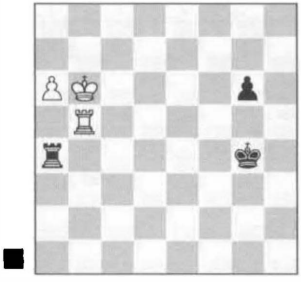
60.♔c5! ♖d1 61.c7 ♔e7 62.c8♘+ ½-½

Exercise 74

Alexander Lastin 2580

Yuri Kruppa 2582

Elista 2000 (3)



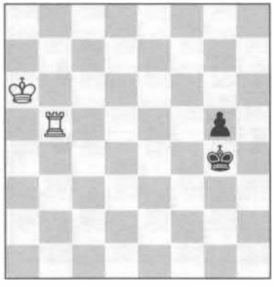
Black can survive, but in the game he only did so because White let him off the hook.

64...♖xa6+??

This move should have cost Black the game.
64...g5! is the right choice: 65.♖a5 (65.a7 loses a tempo: 65...♖xa7 66.♔xa7 ♔f4=) 65...♖b4+ 66.♔c7 ♖f4! (Black had to foresee this only move) 67.a7 ♖f8 68.a8♕ ♖xa8 69.♖xa8.

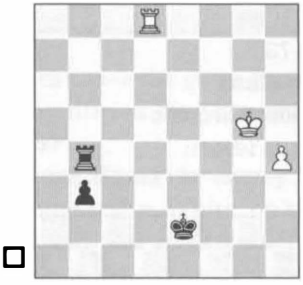
analysis diagram

If we compare this position to the one after move 65 in the game, we notice that the white king is worse on c7 than on a6, since the most important thing is the number of moves to get to the critical d3-square: 69...♔f3 70.♖f8+ ♔e3 71.♖g8 ♔f4 72.♔d6 g4 73.♔d5 g3 74.♔d4 ♔f3 75.♔d3 g2=.
65.♔xa6 g5



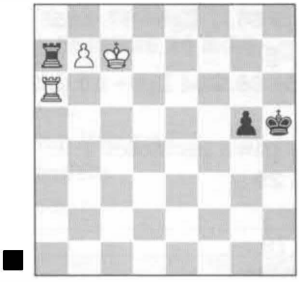
66.♔b6??
66.♖b8! (to gain a tempo by means of a check from behind) 66...♔f3 67.♖f8+ ♔e3 68.♖g8 ♔f4 69.♔b5 g4 70.♔c4 ♔f3 71.♔d3 g3 72.♖f8++–.
66...♔f4 67.♖b4+ ♔f3 68.♔c5 g4 69.♔d4 g3 70.♖b3+ ♔f2 71.♖b2+ ♔f3 72.♖b3+ ♔f2 73.♔e4 g2 74.♖b2+ ♔g3 75.♖xg2+ ½-½
See also **ENDINGS 21,23 & 24**.

Exercise 75
Karoly Borloy
Lajos Portisch
Budapest ch-HUN 1962 ((2)



White can save the game, but not by an immediate rook sacrifice; he must first displace the black king.
64.♖c8?
64.♖e8+! ♔f2 65.♖f8+ ♔g2 (otherwise the king would be checked again) 66.♖d8! (to give up the rook on the back rank) 66...b2 67.♖d1 b1♕ 68.♖xb1 ♖xb1 69.h5 ♔g3 70.h6 ♖b5+ 71.♔g6 ♔g4 72.h7=.
64...b2 65.♖c2+ ♔f3!
To start stalking the king from behind, an effective technique against a rook's pawn.
66.♖xb2 ♖xb2 67.h5 ♖b5+ 68.♔g6 ♔g4!–+ 69.h6 ♖b6+ 70.♔g7 ♔g5 71.h7 ♖b7+ 72.♔g8 ♔g6 73.h8♘+ ♔f6 0-1
ENDING 27

Exercise 76
Neil McDonald 2438
Christopher Ward 2509
Oakham 2000 (5)



The best thing to do is to allow b7-b8♕, as we shall see.

68...♖xb7+?

The wrong choice. 68...♖xa6! 69.b8♕ ♖f6 would lead to a theoretically drawn position, albeit one in which Black would have to suffer for some time.

69.♔xb7 ♔g4

The best try, trying to contest the enemy king, but it should not suffice. 69...g4?! is much less resistant: 70.♔c6 g3 71.♔d5 g2 72.♖a1 ♔g4 73.♔e4+–.

70.♔c6?

The winning move is 70.♖f6!!, confining the king to the g- and h-files – a common theme: 70...♔h3 71.♔c6 g4 72.♔d5 g3 73.♔e4 g2 74.♔f3 (forcing a position in which promotion to a knight won't save Black) 74...g1♘+ 75.♔f2 ♔h2 76.♖h6+ ♘h3+ 77.♔f3+–.

70...♔f3!

Completing the body check.

71.♔d5 g4 72.♖f6+

The rook moves behind the pawn with tempo, but it's not good enough.

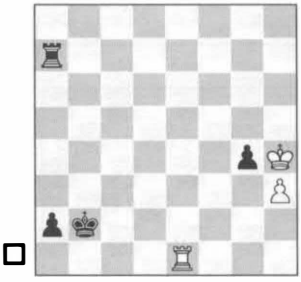
72...♔e3 73.♖g6 ♔f3 74.♔d4 g3 75.♔d3

Reaching a version of diagram [A] from the introduction for the umpteenth time.

75...g2= 76.♔d2 ♔f2 77.♖f6+ ♔g3 78.♖g6+ ♔f2 79.♖xg2+ ♔xg2 ½-½

ENDING 26

Exercise 77
Herman Plinik
Klaas Bergsma
Beverwijk 1955 (8)



66.hxg4??

This loses because the king ends up on the wrong side of the board. 66.♔xg4! a1♕ 67.♖xa1 ♖xa1 68.h4 ♔c3 69.h5 ♔d4 70.♔f5! ♖h1 (70...♖a5+ 71.♔g6!=) 71.♔g6 ♔e5 72.h6 ♔e6

analysis diagram

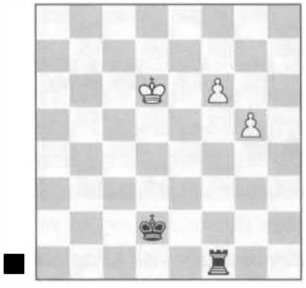
73.♔g7!=.

66...a1♕ 67.♖xa1 ♖xa1 68.♔g5 ♔c3 69.♔f6 ♔d4??
Again we see a player forgetting about tempo-gaining by means of a rook check: 69...♖f1+!.
70.g5 ♖a6+ 71.♔f5 ♖a5+ 72.♔f6 ♔e4 73.g6 ♖a6+ 74.♔g5??
White returns the favour: 74.♔f7!=.
74...♔e5 75.g7 ♖a8 0-1
ENDING 28

Exercise 78

Igors Rausis	2512
Atanu Lahiri	2361

Dhaka 2009 (6)



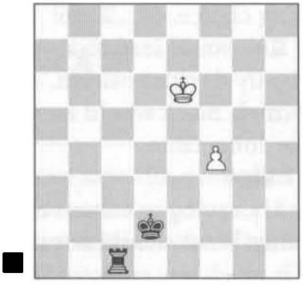
64...♖f5?
Black should have settled for a draw by moving the king closer: 64...♔e3! 65.♔e7 (65.♔e6 ♔f4! 66.g6 ♔g5! 67.g7!=) 65...♔f4! 66.g6.

Now Black faces an interesting choice: 66...♔f5! (66...♔g5? 67.g7+–) 67.g7 ♖g1 68.♔f7 ♖g2=.
65.♔e6!
All of a sudden, White is winning.
65...♖xg5 66.f7 ♖g6+ 67.♔e5!
67.♔f5 ♖g1=.
67...♖g5+ 68.♔e4 ♖g4+ 69.♔f3 ♖g1 70.♔f2
And the pawn promotes: 1-0.
ENDING 29

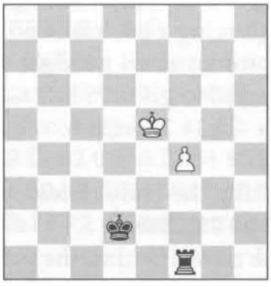
Exercise 79

Albert Vajda	2345
Martin Krockenberger	2305

Eger 1993 (4)



Black can win, provided he executes two of the techniques we have studied, the first being the tempo-gaining rook check:
86...♖e1+! 87.♔d6 ♖f1 88.♔e5



Next is getting the king round to the other side.

88...♔e3!

The normal move. 88...♔e2 also wins.

89.f5 ♔f3! 90.f6 ♔g4 0-1

The king has managed to come round. See also **ENDINGS 24 & 26**.

Exercise 80

Aleksandr Veingold 2432

José Candela 2411

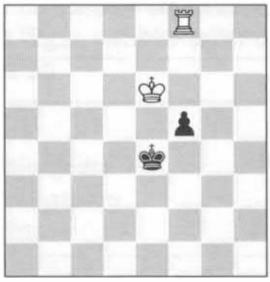
Burgas 2001 (7)

Also here, White's king is fast enough, provided he uses the right techniques: first, get the rook behind.

55.♖g8! ♔e3 56.♖e8+!

Next, gain a tempo by an intermediate check, and attack the pawn.

56...♔d3 57.♖f8 ♔e4 58.♔e6!



Finally: get the king round to the other side.

58...f4 59.♔f6 1-0

ENDING 23

Chapter 5

Exercise 81

Mikhail Gurevich 2649

Igor Glek 2590

Vlissingen 2002 (6)

White is winning because his king is active. The winning procedure involves bringing the king even closer.

55.♔e2 g4 56.♔f1

The white king wants to sneak in front of the pawns, so Black's next move is forced.

56...♔h2 57.♖f2+

Now either Black's king must move to the back rank or else he must lose a pawn.

57...♔h1 58.♖f4 h3!?

Setting up a clever trap.

59.♔f2!

Not falling for 59.♖xg4? h2! and there would be no way to avoid stalemate.

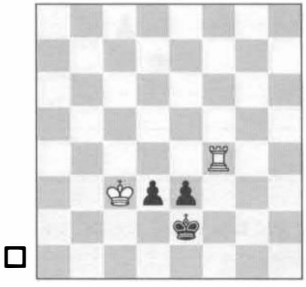
59...h2 60.♖e4 1-0

See also **ENDING 28**.

Exercise 82

Karolis Juksta	1576
Arnas Povilas Zukauskas	1649

Panevezys ch-LTU jr 2014 (6)



White can win thanks to his active king. First, however, he must find the right place for his rook.

72.♖d4?

Placing the rook behind the passed pawn, however natural, is not the right plan against two connected passed pawns, and throws away the win.

72.♖h4! d2 73.♖h2+! (perhaps this move was hard to find) 73...♔e1 74.♖h1+ ♔e2 75.♔c2+–.

72...d2 73.♔c2

Black has not much to fear any more: the position is an easy draw.

73...♔e1

73...♔f2 or 73...♔f1 is also a draw.

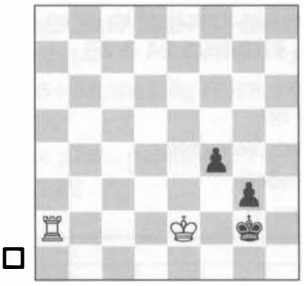
74.♖d3 ♔e2 75.♖xe3+ ♔xe3 76.♔d1 ♔d3 ½-½

ENDING 31

Exercise 83

Robert Bator	2315
Konstanty Kalszaurl	2390

Stockholm 1982/83 (5)



White can win, but not with the move played in the game. This position might resemble the previous one, but in this case there is a hidden stalemate motif. Therefore, ...f4-f3 must not be allowed.

63.♖a1?

63.♖a3!, preventing 63...f3+, wins easily.

63...f3+ 64.♔e3 f2 65.♔e2

This position is usually winning against central pawns. However, against pawn duos on the a- and b-files, b- and c-files, f- and g-files, or g-and h-files, it's a draw due to stalemate motifs.

65...♔h2 66.♔f1 ♔h1 67.♖b1 ♔h2 68.♔e2 ♔g2 69.♖a1 ♔h2 70.♔f3

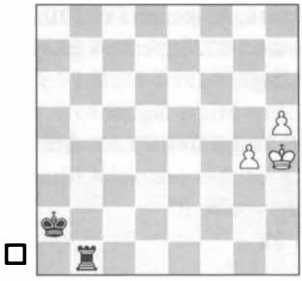
70...f1♕+!

This is the defensive idea: Black gives up both pawns to force stalemate.
71.♖xf1 g2 72.♖f2 ♔h1 73.♔e2
A good sense of humour. White prefers drawing against a material superiority. 73.♖xg2, stalemate, was the natural finish.
73...g1♕ 74.♖f1 ♕xf1+ 75.♔xf1 ½-½
ENDING 31

Exercise 84
Benito Villegas
Miguel Najdorf
La Plata 1944 (9)

White faces two dangers: Black's pawn duo is one move away from turning into an unstoppable force, and Black's rook, if discharged of its defensive duties, will give up its life for the f-pawn. But White can nip Black's intentions in the bud.
57.f6?
This loses because of the power of the unstoppable pawn duo. 57.♔g2! forces a draw by preventing the white rook to take aim at the f-pawn from the f1-square: 57...♖b2+ 58.♔g3 a2 59.f6 and Black, lacking the time to advance his pawns, must force a repetition of moves.
57...♖f1 58.f7
58.♖a4 fails because it allows the king to deal with the white pawns: 58...♔xh7! 59.f7 ♔g7!–+.
58...♖xf7 59.♖xf7 a2
59...b3 also wins: two connected pawns on the sixth rank (or one on the seventh and the other on the fifth) are stronger than a rook.
60.♖a7 b3 61.♔g4 b2 62.♖xa2 b1♕ 63.♖h2 ♕g1+ 64.♔h3 ♔xh7 0-1
ENDING 30

Exercise 85
Giorgi Giorgadze 2610
Andrei Istratescu 2540
Elista ol 1998 (4)



Despite the offside black king, White can't win, unless the black rook is unable to give any checks from behind. The main rule that applies to this kind of endgame is as follows: it's a draw if the rook is on the first or the second rank; if it's on any other rank, the side with the rook loses. The exact placement of the black king is, perhaps surprisingly, never an issue: it ensures a draw from any square on the board.
Notwithstanding these theoretical generalities, according to my

database, this concrete position, including all possible symmetries and positions with the rook on different squares, has occurred in only a few games.

65.h6

Other moves don't win either:

A) 65.g5 ♔b3 66.g6 ♖g1!=;

B) 65.♔g5 ♔b3 66.♔f6 ♔c4 67.g5 ♔d5 68.g6 ♖f1+ 69.♔e7 ♖e1+ 70.♔f7 ♖f1+ 71.♔g8 ♖h1=.

65...♖h1+

Another game in my database took a different course, which was also correct: 65...♔b3 66.g5 ♖h1+ 67.♔g4 ♔c4 68.♔f5 ♔d5 69.♔f6 ♔e4 70.♔g7 ♔f5 ½-½ Martinez de Negri-Spata, Argentina tt 2016.

66.♔g5 ♔b3 67.♔g6 ♔c4 68.g5 ♔d5 69.♔g7

69.♔h7 ♔e6 70.g6 ♖g1!=.

69...♔e6 70.g6 ♖h2 71.h7 ♔f5 ½-½

The king latches onto the hindmost pawn: tag you're it!

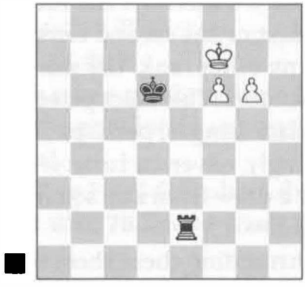
ENDING 32

Exercise 86

Sergei Tivlakov 2656

Erald Dervishi 2540

Altenkirchen 2012 (5)



We've seen this kind of position before, and we will keep seeing more of them. Remember the basic techniques: switch pole position, and play tag. Black can make an easy draw by watching out for a switch in pole position, but in the game the player with the black pieces became obsessed with playing tag:

77...♔e5??

77...♖g2! was the only correct move, preventing the switch in pole position, and if 78.g7 there follows 78...♔e5, playing tag.

78.♔g7! 1-0

White switches pole position, and the black king and rook are uncoordinated. Had the king been on d6, the game would have been drawn.

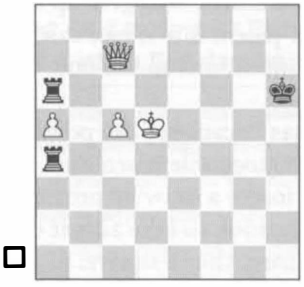
ENDING 32

Exercise 87

Victor Mikhalevski 2566

Konstantin Lerner 2504

Ashdod 2004 (3)



85.♕b6+!

The easiest way to win.

85...♖xb6 86.axb6 ♖b4 87.♔c6!

It's never too late to fall into Prokes's trap, as many naive and overconfident players have experienced. If 87.c6?, hoping to sacrifice the pawn and win with a single pawn against the rook, there follows the intermediate check 87...♖b5+! with a draw.

87...♔g6 88.♔b7!

Switching pole position is the only way to win: the black king may seem miles away, but actually, it only lacks one tempo to draw the game.

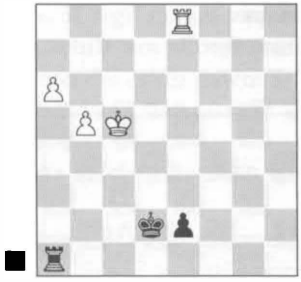
88...♔f7 89.c6 1-0

ENDING 32

Exercise 88

Veselin Topalov	2630
Alexander Bellavsky	2650

Linares 1995 (8)



Black can save the game. This, however, can't be achieved by immediately queening the pawn, which would allow White to queen one of his own, thanks to the technique of switching pole position.

70...e1♕??

With this move, Black's king will be dragged away too far from the action. One of two correct moves is 70...♖a3!, preparing to build a bridge, thus forcing White to sacrifice his rook for the pawn, after which the enemy king will be one square closer: 71.♖xe2+ (71.♔b6 ♖e3 72.♖xe3 ♔xe3 73.a7 e1♕ 74.a8♕=) 71...♔xe2 72.♔b6 (72.b6 ♖a5+!) 72...♔d3 73.♔a7 ♔c4 74.b6 ♔b5 and the king, having saved a tempo, plays tag: 75.b7 ♖xa6+ 76.♔b8=. The second correct move, 70... Kd3, seems strange, but is equally effective because the king approaches the white pawns and if White puts his king on b6, Black takes on e1 with his rook: 71.♔b6 (71.♖xe2 ♔xe2 draws because the black king is one square closer) 71...e1♕ 72.♖xe1 ♖xe1 73.♔a7 ♖e7+ 74.♔b8 ♔c4 75.b6 ♔b5=.

71.♖xe1 ♔xe1 72.♔b6 ♔d2

The crucial moment: the rook controls the furthermost pawn, so White, by switching pole position, decides to support the other one.

73.♔a7! 1-0

This is what Black had missed: the hindmost pawn that White suddenly turns his attention to, is out of the black king's reach.

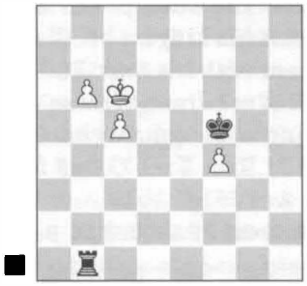
In conclusion, we can establish the following rule: the defending king, to make a draw, mustn't be more than one step away from the enemy pawn, i.e. in this particular position it should have been on the d3-square, for example.

ENDING 32

Exercise 89

Igor Glek	2515
Smbat Lputian	2560

Dortmund 1992 (8)



A familiar sight: two connected pawns supported by their king vis-à-vis a defending rook placed behind them. Bearing this precedent in mind (see previous exercise), you might sense what White is up to: a switch in pole position. Black's king, therefore, had better hurry up.

67...♔e4!

A) Black has no time to indulge in the pawn: after 67...♔xf4? the king is too far from the pawn, and there follows a switch in pole position: 68.♔b7! ♔e5 69.c6 ♔d6 70.c7+–;

B) 67...♔e6? prevents the switch of pole position, but loses nonetheless on account of 68.b7 and Black's king can't play tag with the c-pawn, because the f-pawn controls the e5-square.

68.f5

Intending to divert the white king. 68.♔b7 ♔d5 69.c6 ♔c5!=.

68...♔xf5!

Now that the black king is close enough to the d7-square, it can capture the pawn. 68...♔e5 would also make a draw.

69.♔b7

69.b7 ♔e5 70.♔c7 ♔d5=.

69...♔e6 70.c6 ♖c1 71.♔c7

71.c7 ♔d7=.

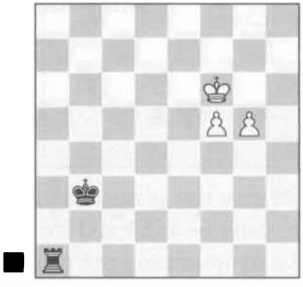
71...♔d5 72.b7 ½-½

ENDING 32

Exercise 90

Gata Kamsky	2650
Vasil Spasov	2495

Manila izt 1990 (5)



Any logical king move is good enough to draw: Black simply intends to play tag.

56...♖a6+?

This move, as well as any other rook move, leads to a lost position.

A) 56...♖g1? is not enough either, because after 57.g6 ♔c4 White switches pole position with 58.♔g7!;
B) 56...♔c4! 57.g6 ♔d5 58.g7 ♖g1 59.♔f7 ♔e5.

analysis diagram

Keep sticking to the pawn. 60.f6 ♔f5=;

57.♔e5?!

This move, although it doesn't throw away the win, complicates matters. 57.♔g7! makes way for the f-pawn, while not allowing Black to latch onto the other pawn: 57...♔c4 58.f6 ♔d5 59.f7 ♖a8 60.f8♕ ♖xf8 61.♔xf8 ♔e6 62.g6+–.

57...♖a5+ 58.♔e6 ♖a6+ 59.♔e5? ½-½

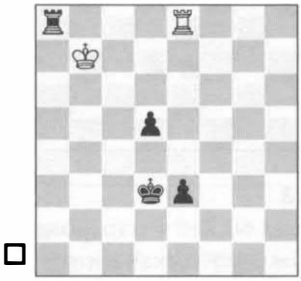
Accepting a draw in a winning position. 59.♔f7! was still winning, for example: 59...♔c4 60.g6 ♔d5 61.g7 ♖a8 62.f6 ♔e5 and now Black effectively seems to be saying 'tag, you're it', but the problem is the position of his rook; there follows 63.♔g6 and White wins. This example shows that for a successful game of tag, the rook must be behind the pawns.

ENDING 32

Exercise 91

Valery Shalimov	2393
Vladimir Onischuk	2469

Kharkov 2007 (1)



Capturing with the rook is the more flexible choice, as the king will have to go back to b7 anyway, while the rook can still choose which pawn to aim at from behind.

58.♖xa8!

58.♔xa8? loses: 58...d4 59.♔b7.

analysis diagram

Now Black can choose whether to promote the d- or the e-pawn: 59...♔e2! (switching pole position; White might have missed this idea. 59...e2? is the obvious variation, but is incorrect: 60.♔c6 ♔d2 61.♔d5 d3 62.♔d4=, tag you're it): 60.♔c6 d3 61.♔c5 d2 62.♖d8 d1♕–+.

58...d4 59.♔c6

59...♔c3

A) 59...e2 60.♖e8= transposes to the variation 58.♔xa8 above;

B) 59...♔e2, switching pole position, is now harmless, as the white king will soon join in: 60.♔d5 d3 61.♔e4 d2 62.♖d8=.

60.♖e8!

Other moves also draw, but this is the most natural.

60...♔d2 61.♔d5 d3 62.♔d4 e2 63.♖e7 e1♕ 64.♖xe1 ½-½

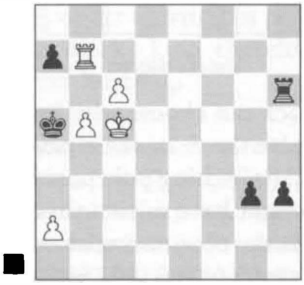
ENDING 32

Exercise 92

Boris Shatskes

Grigory Goldberg

Moscow 1961 (13)



Objectively speaking, the position is a draw, but Black has one move that almost wins by force. In fact, this is exactly what happened in the game.

59...a6!

A) After 59...♖h5+, making a draw is easy for both sides: 60.♔c4 a6 61.♖a7 ♖h4+ 62.♔c5 ♖h5+=;

B) The direct 59...♖xc6+? even loses: 60.bxc6 a6 61.♖b3!; this gain of tempo is decisive.

60.♖a7 ♖xc6+!

Black can give up the rook, as his pawn duo has become an unstoppable force.

61.♔xc6 g2

62.a3?

White again threatens checkmate, but he should have settled for 62.♖xa6+! ♔b4 63.b6! g1♕ 64.b7=. Despite his material advantage and the pawn on Black's sixth rank, he can't win: 64...♕g6+ 65.♔c7 ♕f7+ 66.♔c8 ♕f8+ 67.♔c7 h2 68.♖h6! ♕xh6 69.b8♕+ and this endgame is a draw.

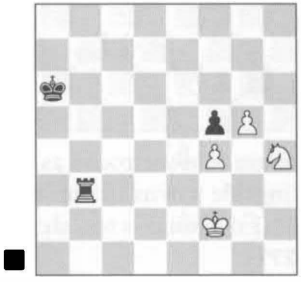
62...♔a4 63.♖xa6+ ♔b3 64.b6 g1♕ 65.b7

Now Black is winning.

65...♕g6+ 66.♔c7 ♕f7+ 67.♔c8 ♕f8+ 68.♔c7 h2! 69.♖h6 ♕g7+ 70.♔c8 ♕xh6 71.b8♕+ ♔a2

This is the difference compared to the variation after move 62. Black's king hides from the checks.
72.♕e5 ♕c1+ 0-1

Exercise 93
Michael Rolz 2561
Zvulon Gofshtein 2526
Israel 2005



At first glance, there doesn't seem to be any difference between two rook moves, since in either case, the white king must defend the pawn, allowing his counterpart to come closer.
78...♖b8?
But this move loses. As we're about to see, White prefers to keep his pawn rather than his knight.
78...♖b4! is the correct move, and if 79.♔e3, 79...♔b5! 80.♘xf5 ♔c5! 81.g6 ♖b6 82.g7 ♖g6=.
79.♘xf5!!
79.♔e3? would lead to a similar variation analysed above: 79...♔b6! 80.♘xf5 ♔c7 81.♘h6 ♖b6 82.f5 ♔d6 83.g6 ♔e5!.
79...♖f8
79...♔b7 doesn't help either: 80.g6 ♔c7 81.♘h6+–.

80.♔g3!
This is the move that Black missed. In his legendary work *My system*, Nimzowitsch showed an almost identical position to illustrate the concept of the blockade.
80.g6? is another fairly logical try, but after 80...♖f6! 81.g7 ♖g6 White can't make any significant progress before the black king gets involved.
80...♖xf5 81.♔g4 ♖f8 82.g6 ♔b7

Again, the black king, while apparently so far away, is actually only one tempo short.
83.f5 ♔c6 84.g7 ♖g8 85.f6 ♔d6
85...♔d7 86.♔f5 ♔e8 87.♔e6.
86.♔f5 1-0

Chapter 6

Exercise 94

José Gonzalez Garcia 2506
Viktor Moskalenko 2569
Barcelona 2008 (8)

Black can make a draw: his king has time to reach the appropriate defensive set-up behind the pawn.

80...♗e5??

This is not the way to go, and simply loses a tempo. The king must head for the b5-square without further ado: 80...♔c4! (the dark squares are best avoided: 80...♔c5? 81.♗c7 ♗d2 82.♗b6+ followed by c6-c7) 81.♗c7 ♗d2 82.♗f4 ♗a5 83.♗e3 ♔b5=.

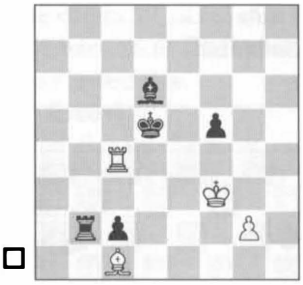
analysis diagram

81.♗c7 ♗c3 82.♗g3 ♗a5 83.♗f2 1-0

ENDING 34

Exercise 95

Jeroen Piket 2670
Alexei Shirov 2710
Aruba m 1995 (5)



The decision to trade rooks as well as the kingside pawns is a blunder, as the c1-a3 diagonal is too short.

53.♗xb2??

Keeping the rooks on with 53.♖c8 should be enough for a draw, for example: 53...♖a2 54.♔e3 ♗a3 55.♗xa3 ♖xa3+ 56.♔d2 ♖g3 57.♔xc2 ♔e4 58.♔d2 ♖xg2+ 59.♔e1=.

53...♔xc4 54.g4 fxg4+ 55.♔xg4 ♗b4

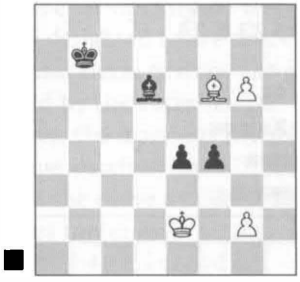
△ ...♗d2, ...♔b3.

56.♗c1 ♔d3

56...♔b3 also wins: 57.♔f3 ♔a2 58.♔e2 ♔b1 59.♗g5 ♗a3 60.♗h6 ♗c1 61.♗f8 ♗g5 62.♗a3 ♗e7.

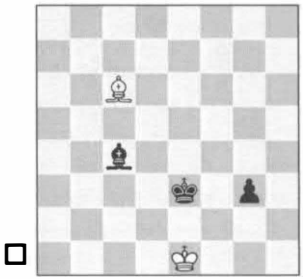
57.♔f3 ♗d2 58.♗a3 ♔c3 0-1
The white bishop is forced to abandon the c1-a3 diagonal.
ENDING 35

Exercise 96
Vladimir Savon 2545
Amador Rodriguez
Yerevan 1976 (6)



As in the previous exercise, the trick is to avoid the critically short f8-h6 diagonal, so Black had better not play ...f4-f3+.
69...f3+??
69...♗f8! prevents White from making any progress: 70.♗g5 (70.g7 ♗xg7 71.♗xg7 f3+=; 70.♔f2 ♔c6 71.g7 ♗xg7 72.♗xg7 ♔d5=) 70...♔c6 71.♗xf4 ♔d5 72.♔f2 (72.♗c1 ♗g7=) 72...♗g7 73.♔g3 e3 74.♗xe3 ♔e4 75.♗d2 ♔f5=.
70.gxf3 exf3+ 71.♔xf3 ♗f8 72.♔e4 ♔c6 73.♔f5 ♔d7 74.♗c3 ♔e8 1-0
Black resigned here, not allowing White to demonstrate the winning manoeuvre.
75.♔f6 ♗h6 76.♗b4 1-0
Zugzwang.
ENDING 35

Exercise 97
Miroslav Bores 2230
Jiri Groh 2154
Czechia tt 2006/07 (9)

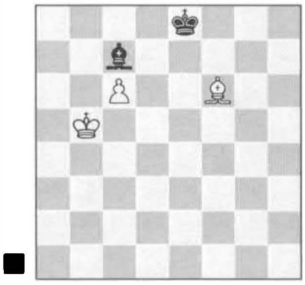


This is a position of mutual zugzwang. The white bishop must be on g2 when its counterpart moves to d3. We shall soon see why.
65.♗g2?
This is the only square on the long diagonal that loses.
65.♗b7! (65.♗a8 and 65.♗h1 also draw) 65...♗d3 66.♗g2! ♗e4 67.♔f1=.
65...♗d3!
Zugzwang. The point is that if the bishop stays on the long diagonal, Black plays ...♗e4, forcing a winning king-and-pawn endgame. But if the bishop goes to h3, the black king manages to infiltrate to h2, after which it will become apparent that the bishop is on a critically short diagonal, and therefore the game is lost.
66.♗h3 ♔f3! 67.♗f1 ♗f5 68.♗b5 ♔g2! 69.♗c6+ ♔g1 70.♔e2 ♗h3 71.♔f3 ♔h2 72.♔e3 ♗g2 73.♗b5 ♗d5 74.♗f1 ♗c4 75.♗xc4 g2 76.♔d2 g1♕ 77.♔c3 ♔g3 0-1
ENDINGS 2 & 35

Exercise 98

Alexander Galkin	2608
Mateusz Bartel	2608

Khanty-Mansiysk 2007 (1)



This exercise follows up on the problem presented in Exercise 94. Black can reach the correct defensive set-up provided he mobilizes the king at once. If Black is hesitant and loses but one tempo, White is allowed to carry out his winning plan.

92...♔f7!

92...♗g3? loses a fatal tempo: 93.♔b6 ♔f7 94.♗d8 ♔e6 95.♗c7 ♗e1 96.♔b7 ♔d5 97.♗f4 ♗a5 98.♗e3+–, threatening 99.♗b6, and the king is too late to defend the position.

93.♗g5 ♔e6 94.♔a6 ♔d5 95.♔b7

95...♗a5?

It's unbelievable that a strong grandmaster would throw away half a point, especially after having overcome the most difficult stage in the defence.

95...♗g3! (or any other safe move on the h2-b8 diagonal) 96.♗d8 ♔c4! 97.♗c7 ♗e1 98.♗f4 ♗a5 99.♗e3 ♔b5! reaches the correct defensive set-up.

96.♗e3! 1-0

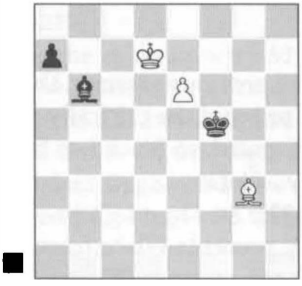
♗b6 cannot be prevented.

ENDINGS 33 & 34

Exercise 99

Anatoly Karpov	2710
Jan Timman	2590

Brussels 1987 (8)



Black can just about save the game, provided he makes all the most accurate moves.

64...♗d8! 65.♗d6

The immediate 65.♗c7 doesn't make much sense as it doesn't win the a-pawn, and after 65...♗g5 66.♗d6, Black would have two defensive possibilities at his disposal, although the basic defensive set-up with 66...♔e4! would still be good.

65...a5!

The pawn provides an all-important gain of tempo. In the variation 65...♗h4? 66.♗e7 ♗e1 67.♗d8 ♗b4 68.♗c7 the black king has no time to reach the d5-square.

66.♗c7

66.♗e7 ♗xe7 67.♔xe7 a4 and both pawns queen.

66...♗g5 67.♗xa5 ♔e5 ½-½

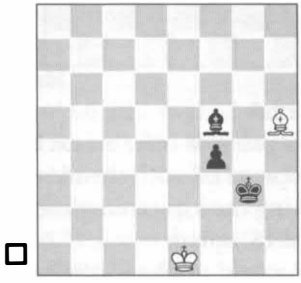
Karpov accepted the draw here, as the black king reaches the correct defensive set-up. Engine-addicts may be delighted to see that there is another move to draw the game, afforded by the extra tempo. However, the manoeuvre itself is unique, as after, say, 67...♗h4 68.♗b4 the move 68...♔e4! already becomes imperative: 69.♗e7 ♗e1 70.♗d8 ♗b4 71.♗c7 ♔d5!.

ENDING 34

Exercise 100

Vadim Zaitsev	2352
Andrey Gutov	2412

Kemerovo 2012 (4)



White can save the game, but not by taking the opposition from behind, as seen in the previous exercises. This time, frontal defence is called for.

83.♗d1?

83.♔f1!. The king goes to g1, from where it cannot be evicted, and awaits the exchange of bishops on g4 to reach a drawn pawn endgame. This defensive method is generally poorly understood.

83...♗e6?

Black, being handed a golden opportunity, shows he doesn't understand the requirements of the position either: 83...♗e4! (other moves also win) 84.♔f1 ♗f3! 85.♗c2 ♗g2+-+ followed by ...f4-f3.

84.♔f1!

White finally discovers the defensive mechanism, and holds onto it for the remainder of the game.

84...♗d5 85.♔g1 ♗c6 86.♗e2 ♗a8 87.♗d1 ♗f3 88.♗b3

But not 88.♗xf3?? ♔xf3-+.

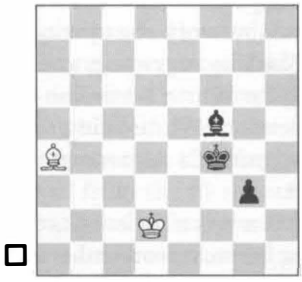
88...♗g4 89.♗d5 ♗h5 90.♗c6 ♗e2 91.♗d5 ♗d1 92.♗c6 ♗f3 93.♗b5 ♗g2 94.♗e2 f3 95.♗xf3 ½-½

ENDING 36

Exercise 101

Andrzej Sydor	2425
Jerzy Pokojowczyk	2335

Bydgoszcz ch-POL 1976 (11)



White can reach the drawing position seen in Exercise 97, but he must play with great care.

69.♔e2?

Allows an important tactical nuance that gains a decisive tempo. 69.♔e1! is the correct move, as now 69...♗d3 is not check, giving White time to play 70.♗c6! ♔e3 and now counter the threat of an exchange on e4 with 71.♗g2! ♗e4 72.♔f1!=.

69...♗d3+! 70.♔e1 ♔e3 71.♗c6 ♗e4! 72.♗xe4 ♔xe4 73.♔e2 ♔f4! 74.♔e1 ♔e3 0-1

ENDINGS 2 & 35

Exercise 102

Istvan Bilek	2435
Axel Ornstein	2470

Albena 1976 (8)

While both ♔h6 and ♔g5 lead to zugzwang positions, there's a huge difference between the two: one places Black in zugzwang, and is winning for White, while the other option leads to White being on the receiving end of a zugzwang.

51.♔h6!

Now all Black can do is wait, meaning he must worsen his king position.

51.♔g5? ♔c7 leaves White in an irreversible zugzwang position.

51...♔c7 52.♗xh5 ♗xc6 53.g4

Now Black is unable to place his king behind the pawn in opposition, nor in front of it on an opposite-coloured square. Therefore, Black is lost.

53...♔d6 54.g5 ♗e4 55.♗g6 ♗d5 56.♗f5 ♗f7

57.♗g4! 1-0

White is going to offer an exchange of bishops on h5 with the idea of preventing the king from defending from the f8-square.

57.♗c8? would not be winning: 57...♔e7 58.♗g4 ♔f8!= and ♗h5 is no solution any more, as the resulting pawn endgame is a draw.

Black resigned here, most probably because the game was adjourned

allowing home analysis. One possible finish might have been: 57...♔e7 58.♗h5 ♗d5 59.g6 ♔f6 60.g7 ♗g8 61.♗e2 ♔e7 62.♔g6 ♔e8 63.♔f6 ♗b3 64.♗h5+ ♔d7 65.♗f7+–.

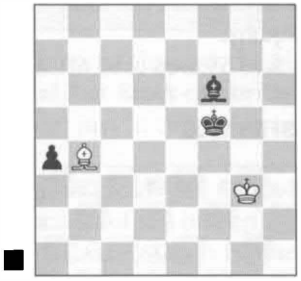
See also **ENDINGS 33 & 35**.

Exercise 103

Thomas Ernst 2540

Igor Stohl 2560

Manila ol 1992 (9)



This position is winning, and Stohl started off on the right foot: offering an exchange of bishops is more important than bringing the king closer.

65...♔e6!

65...♔e4? 66.♔f2 ♔d3 67.♗d6 ♔c2 68.♔e2 ♗c3 69.♗e7 ♔b3 70.♔d1 and exchanging the bishops is now never going to bring any dividends: 70...♗b4 71.♗xb4 ♔xb4 72.♔c2=.

66.♔f3 ♔d5?? ½-½

Oddly, Black changes plans and decides to offer an immediate draw, while he could play on for a win at no risk, something he could have attained with perfect play. Let's see:

A) 66...♔d5? 67.♔e3 ♔c4 68.♗f8 ♔b3 69.♔d2 leads nowhere;

B) However, the simple plan 66...♗e7! 67.♗c3 a3 followed by ...♗f6 wins the game. The most significant factor is not so much any particular motif in bishop endgames, but rather the basic rule of the square of the pawn: the king is outside!

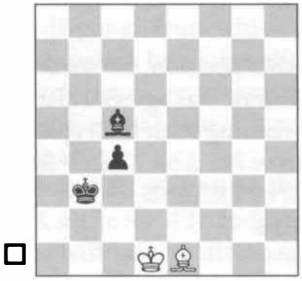
See also **ENDING 1**.

Exercise 104

Riccardo Duarte 2030

Francisco Benko 2190

Acassuso 1994 (3)



As in Exercise 100, White draws by using a frontal defence.

67.♗d2?

The white king is unable to take up the correct defensive stand from behind the pawn. However, another defensive resource is available: frontal defence. Therefore, White must play 67.♔c1!. The point of this concept is twofold: the king cannot be evicted from the b1-square, and an exchange of bishops on the b4-square leads to a drawn pawn endgame. Judging by the way the

game developed, it's clear that neither player knew about these ideas.

67...♗f2?

67...♗d4, among other moves, would thwart White's intentions to take up the defensive stand: 68.♔c1 ♗c3! 69.♗f4 ♗b2+! 70.♔b1 c3–+.

68.♗a5?

Obviously, the correct move was 68.♔c1!=.

68...♗g3?

68...♗d4!–+.

69.♗d2?

69.♔c1!.

69...♗e5! 70.♗e1 ♗c3!

Two correct moves in a row by Black.

71.♗g3

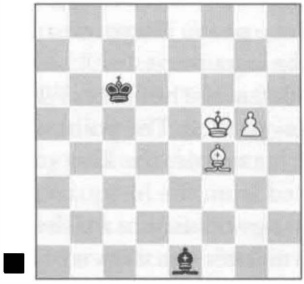
And in this position, for some reason a draw was agreed. Black is still winning with the typical manoeuvre 71...♗b4 72.♗e5 ♗a3 followed by 73...♗b2.

ENDING 36

Exercise 105

Boris Alterman	2595
Boris Gulko	2620

Elenite 1995 (2)



In this position, reminiscent of Exercises 100 and 104, we see Boris Gulko demonstrating a new technique, as well as highly accurate defensive play.

56...♔d7!

The defence based on opposition from behind doesn't work: 56...♔d5 57.g6 ♗c3 58.♗g5 ♗g7 59.♗e7 (zugzwang) 59...♗h6 60.♔f6+–.

57.g6 ♔e8!

57...♔e7?? 58.♗d6+ (see Exercise 101) 58...♔e8 59.♔e6 ♗c3 60.♗e5+–.

58.♗d6

It's paramount that the king reaches the g8-square.

58.♗h6 ♗c3 59.♔e6 ♗b2 60.♗g5 ♔f8!=.

58...♗c3! 59.♔e6

White threatens 60.♗e5 and there is only one way to counter that threat:

59...♗g7! 60.♗c5

60.♗e5 ♔f8!=.

60...♗c3 61.♗b4 ♗b2 62.♗e7 ♗c3

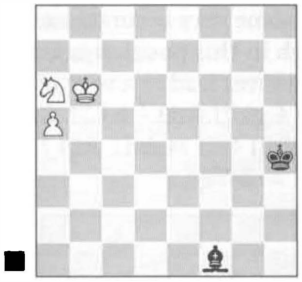
62...♗g7?? 63.♗d6! ♗f8 (63...♗h6 64.♔f6 ♗f8 65.♗f4+–) 64.♗xf8+–.

63.♗a3 ♗d4 64.♔f5 ♗c3 65.♗d6 ♗b2 66.♔g5 ♗g7 67.♔f4 ♗c3 68.♔f5 ♗b2 ½-½

ENDING 36

Chapter 7

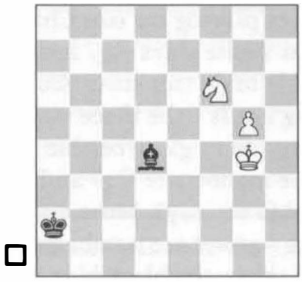
Exercise 106
Georgy Agzamov
Alexander Bellavsky 2620
Frunze ch-URS 1981 (3)



White tries to obstruct the bishop's diagonal, but Black can bring his king over just in time to draw the game.
60...♔g5! 61.♘c7 ♔f6 62.♘b5
Obstruction of the bishop's diagonal, but any such further attempts, whether on c6 or b7, will be dealt with by Black's king.
62...♔e7 63.a6 ♔d7 64.a7 ♗g2

It's no longer possible to obstruct the diagonal on c6.
65.♘d4 ♗a8 66.♘b3 ♔c8 67.♘a5 ♔d7 68.♘b7 ♔c8 69.♘a5 ♔d7 ½-½
ENDING 38

Exercise 107
Nukhim Rashkovsky 2500
Laszlo Barczay 2375
Balatonbereny 1988 (2)



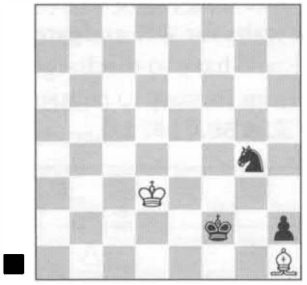
White wins, since the bishop is forced either to go onto a three-square diagonal, from which it can be expelled by a joint effort of White's pieces, or to occupy the long diagonal, where it can be obstructed.
52.♔f5 ♗e3 53.g6 ♗h6 54.♔e6 ♗g7
If Black waits for ♔f7 and later ♘g4, he will have to discharge the bishop from its duty to control g7.
55.♔f7 ♗h8 56.♘h5! 1-0

The square occupied by the knight (h5 or any symmetrical equivalents) is the key square with an a-, b- or

g-pawn on the sixth rank. White threatens 57.♘g7 followed by 58.♔g8, and if the bishop moves away, the knight will interfere on f6. In such situations, the only way Black can draw is by attacking the pawn with the king, a different version of playing tag (see Chapter 5), when White plays ♘g7 and ♔g8. To be able to do this successfully, the king needs to be three steps away from f6 or g5, to be able to meet the manoeuvre ♘g7 and ♔g8 with ...♔f6 or ...♔g5. More distant drawing squares are numbered 1. Beyond those, the black king is helpless.

Exercise 108

Alfredo Brito Garcia 2325
Bojan Kurajica 2565
Las Palmas 1994 (3)



Many players falsely believe this endgame is always a draw, while others don't even know the main defensive idea. The truth is, however, that under normal circumstances Black wins, as long as he doesn't attack the bishop prematurely.

69...♔g1?

A premature attack on the bishop in the corner! This move shouldn't be played before making sure that the defending king is unable to imprison the attacker's. It's much better to force the defending king to find some very accurate moves, although in this position most logical moves lead to a win: 69...♘e3 70.♔d2 ♘g2 71.♔d3 ♘h4 72.♔d2 ♔f1 73.♔d1 ♘f5 74.♔d2 ♔g1 75.♔e1 ♘h4 76.♔e2 ♘g2.

analysis diagram

Zugzwang.

70.♔e2!

A premature attack on the bishop eases the defence considerably: White waits for Black to take the bishop, and then plays ♔f1 or ♔f2, whichever is the same colour as the square the enemy knight is on. We shall soon see why.

70...♘f2

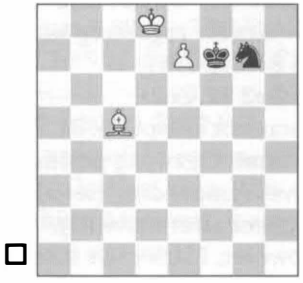
If Black captures now, White must play the king to a light square: 70...♔xh1 71.♔f1!=.

71.♗b7 ♘h3 72.♗h1 ♘f4+ 73.♔e1 ♔xh1 74.♔f2! ½-½

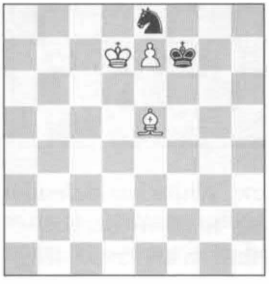
Now the king moves to a dark square. This way, the knight can't

dislodge it. 74.♔f1?? would be a monumental blunder, as 74...♘d3 would win on the spot.
ENDING 38

Exercise 109
Edmund Player 2151
David Okike 2172
England tt 2003/04 (9)



White can win by zugzwang, but first he must sidestep a drawing resource.
57.♔d7!
57.♗d4? looks winning, but falls into the trap 57...♘e6+! 58.♔d7 ♘f8+!=.
57...♘e8 58.♗d4 ♘c7 59.♗c3 ♘e8 60.♗e5 1-0



Zugzwang.
ENDING 39

Exercise 110
Zhou Guijue 2193
Kuang Yinghui 2209
China tt w 2003 (3)

This position looks like the previous one, but there's an important difference, based on a stalemate trick.
90.♗f5
The only try, but...
90...♔h8! ½-½
There is no way to expel the black king from this stalemate fortress.
ENDING 39

Exercise 111
Yzgi Bensu
Gozde Deniz Altunkeser
Denizli ol jr 2003 (3)

White could have saved the game with a neat defence. With the first move he starts off on the right foot:

65.♔c2 ♔h2

Black wants to get to the pawn by bringing his king all the way around. This succeeds only thanks to White's kind cooperation. Insufficient is 65...♔g2?! 66.♘f4+ with an immediate draw; the same goes for 65...♗c7!? (controlling the f4-square) 66.♔d2 ♔f1 67.♔e3=.

66.♔b1?

This looks natural. Could there be anything else? Yes, there is! The move 66.♘e1! exploits the fact that the black king is for the moment slightly offside: 66...♔g3 67.♔d3 ♔f2 68.♘c2 and the knight establishes a stable position to control the pawn on the seventh.

66...♔g3 67.♔c2 ♔f3 68.♘e5+

68.♔b3 ♔e3 69.♔c2 ♔d4–+, zugzwang.

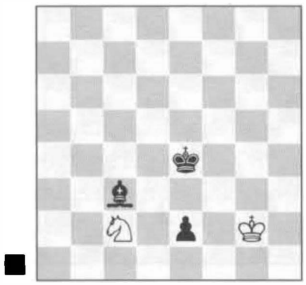
68...♔e4 69.♘d3 ♔e3 0-1

See also **ENDING 40**.

Exercise 112

Klaudia Kulon	2217
Roman Staruch	2036

Koszalin 2008 (2)



Black is winning, but not any move will do. The main idea is to force zugzwang. The procedure explained in **ENDING 39** doesn't work, however, since the square on the seventh rank (a light square) is of a different colour than the (dark-squared) bishop.

80...♗d4?

It's necessary to pre-empt effective coordination between the enemy king and knight by means of 80...♔d3! 81.♔f3 ♔d2 82.♔f2 and now aim for zugzwang with 82...♗f6 83.♔f3 ♗h4–+.

81.♘e1 ♔e3 82.♘c2+

82.♘f3 was not an option: 82...♗f6! and the same zugzwang position we saw above is impending (see also the comment after move 88). Now, however, Black can't take away the blockading square from the knight with 82...♔d2 because of 83.♘d4.

82...♔d3 83.♘e1+ ♔d2 84.♘f3+ ♔d1 85.♔g3 ♗e3 86.♔g2 ♔c2 87.♔g3 ♔d3

Until now, White has defended adequately to maintain the equilibrium in an interesting position, but he seems uncertain about the correct defensive set-up, and, unfortunately for him, now

decides to change the position of his king:

88.♔g2?

White should only move the king when the bishop is on e1. Meanwhile, the knight must hop back and forth between e1 and f3. 88.♘e1+ ♔e4 89.♘f3=.

88...♔e4?

Black fails to seize the opportunity. 88...♗b6! 89.♔g3 (89.♘e1+ amounts to the same) 89...♔e3 90.♘e1 ♗c7+ 91.♔g2 ♗e5 92.♔g1 ♗g3 93.♘c2+ ♔d2–+.

89.♔g3 ♗b6 90.♔g2? ½-½

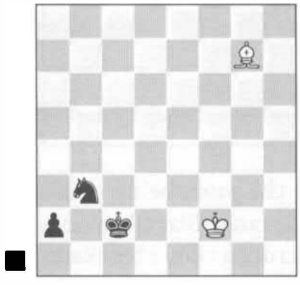
White, as so often occurs, offers a draw in a lost position. Who can blame him? Moreover, it appears to have been accepted.

See also **ENDING 40**.

Exercise 113

Darryl Johansen	2510
Ian Rogers	2600

Canberra 1995 (6)



Black wins by a rather difficult manoeuvre. The point is to be careful not to let the king be imprisoned once it captures the bishop on a1.

57...♘c5!

The knight is most flexible on the c5-square; the manoeuvre now depends on what route the white king chooses.

58.♔e3

This square is too far away and makes things easier for Black. The stubbornest is 58.♔e2 when Black must lose a tempo with the king: 58...♔c1! 59.♔e3 (59.♔e1 ♘d3+ followed by 60...♘b2–+; 59.♗a1 ♔b1 60.♔d1 ♘a4 61.♔d2 ♘b2–+, reaching the position of the next diagram) 59...♘a4 60.♗a1 ♔b1 61.♔d2 ♘b2–+, reaching the same zugzwang position as in the main variation anyway.

58...♘a4

Threatens 59...♘b2.

59.♗a1 ♔b1 60.♔d2

60.♔d3 ♘c5+ and the king can't go to d2.

60...♘b2

This model zugzwang position is worth remembering: White can't imprison the black king.

61.♔c3 ♔xa1 62.♔c2 ♘d3

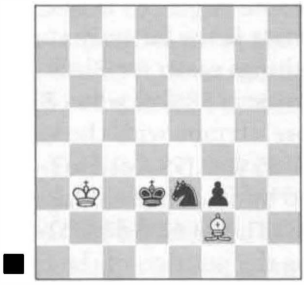
White resigned.

ENDING 38

Exercise 114

Zorica Puljek Salai	2195
Ildiko Madl	2380

Pula W 1998 (3)



None of the suggested moves is winning against correct defence, i.e. by keeping the bishop on its longest diagonal. In the game, however, Black won quickly:

63...♘g4

A) 63...♘d1 leaves White with the same choice: 64.♗g1! (if 64.♗g3?, 64...♔e2 controls half the squares on the bishop's new diagonal, while the knight has time to take away the other half from the f5-square: 65.♔c4 ♘e3+ 66.♔c5 ♘f5 and the bishop is expelled) 64...♔e2 65.♔c4 ♘f2 66.♗h2 ♘g4 67.♗g1 ♔f1 68.♗b6 ♔e2 69.♗g1!=;

B) 63...♔e2 64.♗g1!= leads to similar variations.

64.♗g3?

No sooner does the bishop voluntarily – and unwisely – occupy the shorter (four squares long) diagonal, than Black is motivated to arrange his pieces aimed at total control of it. White had to stay on the longer diagonal: 64.♗g1! ♔e2 65.♔c4 ♘f2 (the only way to get the bishop off the longer diagonal) 66.♔d5 ♔f1 67.♗h2 ♔g2 68.♗c7 (care is required, as a move such as 68.♗d6? loses to 68...♘d3! and the bishop can't get back on the diagonal) 68...♘d1 69.♗b6! and the bishop is back on its longest diagonal.

64...♔e2

Black's king rules over the e1- and f2-squares.

65.♔b2 ♘e3 66.♔c1 ♘f5! 0-1

And the knight now conquers the g3- and h4-squares.

ENDING 37

Exercise 115

Martin Cerny	2225
Bohuslav Dubansky	2169

Czechia tt 1999/00

Despite the pawn being only on the sixth rank, Black has no way to construct a stable blockade at any time, because of the lack of coordination between his king and knight.

89.♔c7?

This, however, is not the right move: the king should be harassing

the knight. Now, Black has all the time in the world for such ugly and otherwise losing ideas of trying to get the king round all the way via f6.

The winning line is 89.♔b5! ♘b7 90.♗c8 ♘d6+ 91.♔c5 ♘e4+ 92.♔c6 ♘d6 93.♗a6.

analysis diagram

What White has achieved is a position in which the knight has neither a stable blockade, nor any permanent control over the pawn. The next phase is about forcing zugzwang by means of some simple, patient manoeuvring: 93...♔e6 94.♗e2 ♔e7 95.♗b5 ♔e6 96.♗a4 ♔e7 97.♗b3+–.

89...♔f6 90.♗d7

90...♔e5!

Black finds the right plan, consisting of bringing the king close to the knight as well as to the enemy pawn. Had he stayed passive, White would have been able to get in ♔b8-a7-a6, disturbing the knight. Specifically, 90...♔e7? loses on account of 91.♗b5 ♔e6 92.♔b8! (this is the winning manoeuvre) 92...♔d6 93.♔a7 ♔c5 94.♗d7 ♔b4 95.♗e8 ♔c5 96.♔a6 ♔b4 97.♗f7 ♔a4 98.♗g6 ♔b4 99.♗c2 (zugzwang) 99...♘c6 100.b7 ♔c5 101.♗a4 ♘b8 102.♔a7+–.

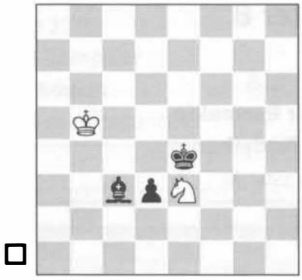
91.♗c6 ♔d4 92.♗e8 ♔c5 93.♗f7 ♔b5 94.♗e8+ ♔c5 95.♗d7 ♔d4 96.♗g4 ♔d5 97.♗h5 ♔d4 98.♗e2 ♔c5 ½-½

ENDING 40

Exercise 116

Franz Wieser	1665
Walter Bieher	1933

Ellwangen sr 2003 (9)



The side with the knight usually has a hard time trying to hold onto a shaky blockade to control a pawn, but here there is a way to do it.

81.♘c4?

White errs. Correct was 81.♘f1!=. The knight should move out of the way so that the king can attack the pawn. This manoeuvre is explained

after the second move in **ENDING 40**.

81...♔d4 0-1

It's immediate zugzwang.

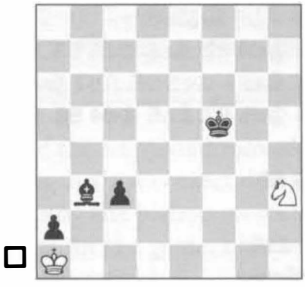
ENDING 40

Exercise 117

Aleksej Aleksandrov 2550

Vereslav Eingorn 2585

St Petersburg 1996 (7)



The knight is miles away, and on top of that, Black has two pawns. The a-pawn however is of no use, so Black plans its timely sacrifice. With correct defence, White can establish a well-known theoretical draw.

73.♘f4!!

This is the only correct route towards the d3-square.

73.♘f2? fails because of 73...♗c2 74.♔xa2 ♔f4 75.♘h3+ ♔e3 76.♔a3 ♗f5 77.♘g1 ♗e6 and White can't hold the position.

73...c2 74.♘d3 ♗c4 75.♘c1

White has achieved a well-known theoretical position. Black can't do anything meaningful with the a2-pawn.

75...♔e4 76.♔b2 a1♕+ 77.♔xa1 ♔e3 78.♔b2 ♔d2 79.♔a1 ♔c3 80.♘b3 ♗b5 81.♘c1 ♗a4 82.♔a2 ♗e8 83.♔a1 ♗f7 84.♘b3 ½-½

ENDING 39

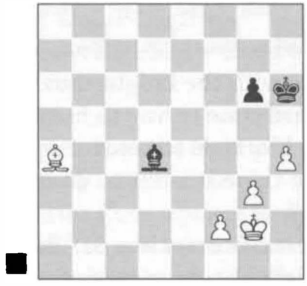
Chapter 8

Exercise 118

Vladimir Burmakin 2530

Sergey Nadyrhanov 2480

Smolensk 1997 (8)



Black should go for ...g6-g5, as he can easily reach the correct defensive set-up, i.e. the bishop attacking the pawn from in front.

38...g5!

Other waiting moves also draw, but aren't as clear-cut. White could play g4-g5 and after f2-f4, ♔g3-g4. From that position, Black should watch out for h4-h5 as well as ♗xg6, even though, objectively speaking, neither of these moves should trouble Black.

39.hxg5+ ♔xg5 40.f4+

The white pawns are going to reach the fifth rank (f5 and g5). Black should already be thinking about how to set up his king and

bishop once they get there: the king belongs on g7 and the bishop on d8 or e7. See the position after move 48.

40...♔f6 41.g4 ♗e3 42.♔f3 ♗c1 43.g5+ ♔g7 44.♔g4 ♗a3 45.♗e8 ♗b4 46.♔f3 ♗d2 47.♔g4 ♗b4!

Simply the best. It's true that Black could wait and answer f4-f5 with ♗c3; there's time to play the bishop to a different diagonal. But why complicate matters?

48.f5 ♗e7! ½-½

The basic defensive stand.

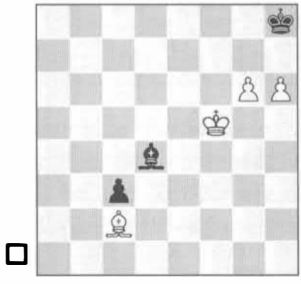
ENDING 42

Exercise 119

Radimiro Dragovic 1659

Janusz Kepinski 1575

FICGS cr 2008 (1)



This is a winning endgame: the presence of the c3-pawn, while a factor to reckon with, changes neither the assessment of the position nor the main idea.

70.♗b3?

This move fails as it lets the black king out of the corner. Correct would be to advance the king first to prevent the enemy monarch from reaching the f8-square: 70.♔e6! ♔g8 71.♔e7 followed by ♗b3 and ♔f7, winning.

70...c2!

A miraculous escape.

71.♗xc2 ♔g8! 72.♗b3+ ♔f8!

We've reached a theoretical draw with g- and h-pawns on the sixth.

73.♗a4 ♗c3 74.♔g5 ♗b2 75.♗d1 ♗a1 ½-½

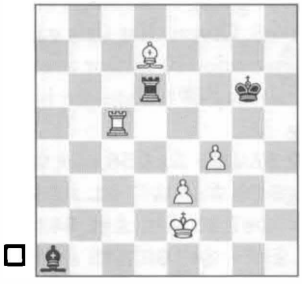
ENDING 41

Exercise 120

Nicolas Templier

Pavol Federic

Bratislava Wch jr 1993 (7)



White wins by exchanging rooks. The pawns are not far advanced, so you might be led to believe

that Black can arrange a standard defensive set-up. But this is a first-rate pair of pawns.

46.♖c6! ♖xc6 47.♗xc6 ♔f6 48.♔f3

The e-/f-pawn duo (or c-/d-pawn duo) against a bishop on the long diagonal offers far better winning chances, the reason being that the pawns, rather than advancing to the fifth rank together, will stay on the fourth and fifth ranks to block out the black bishop. In view of this, when fighting against this pawn duo, it is necessary to take the defensive stand against the pawns on the fourth rank, meaning that the bishop must go to the b8-d6 diagonal. This, however, is not possible here.

48...♔f5

After 48...♔e7 49.e4 ♗g7 50.e5 the bishop has adopted the right defensive stand against the pawn duo on the fifth rank, but the f-pawn won't advance.

49.e4+ ♔f6 50.♔e3 ♗b2 51.♗d7 ♗c1+ 52.♔f3 ♗b2 53.♗h3 ♗d4 54.♔e2 ♗b2 55.♔d3 ♗a1 56.♔c4

The king is going to support the move e4-e5. Given that this game is from an under-10 junior event, White's display of technique is amazing.

56...♗b2 57.♔d5 ♗c1 58.e5+ ♔e7 59.f5 ♗g5 60.♔e4 ♔f7 61.♗g4 ♗h4 62.♗h5+ ♔e7 63.♔f4 ♗e1 64.f6+ ♔e6 65.♗g4+ ♔f7 66.♔f5 ♗c3 67.♗h5+ ♔f8 68.e6 ♗b4 69.♔e4 ♗a3 70.♔d5 1-0

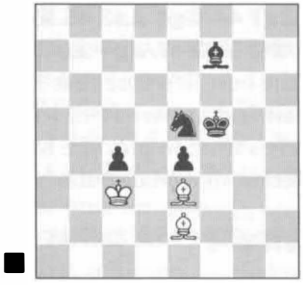
ENDING 43

Exercise 121

Anatoly Karpov 2770

Gata Kamsky 2735

Elista FIDE-Wch m 1996 (13)



88...♘g4?!

This move is insufficient, although keeping the knight doesn't promise much either: 88...♘d7 89.♗xc4=; 88...♗g8 89.♔d4=.

89.♗xg4+ ♔xg4 90.♔d2 ½-½

Kamsky didn't insist, as the defence is straightforward, e.g. 90...♔f3 91.♗d4 ♗d5 92.♗c5 e3+ 93.♗xe3 c3+ 94.♔xc3=.

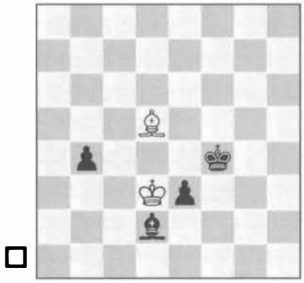
ENDING 44

Exercise 122

Humberto Blanco

Oscar Enrique Zavarce

San Christobal 2012 (7)



The defence against these two pawns is based on the following idea: White should only be worried about the black king supporting the central pawn. The b-pawn doesn't really matter.

80.♗f7?

The correct move was 80.♔e2! ♔e5 81.♗f7 ♔d4 82.♗e6 ♔c3 83.♔d1 b3 84.♗f7 ♔b2 85.♗e6 ♔a3 86.♗f5! (anticipating the threat) 86...b2 87.♗b1=.

80...♔f3 81.♗h5+ ♔f2 82.♗g4 ♔f1

Black is irresolute; 82...b3 was already possible.

83.♗h5 ♔f2 84.♗g4 ♔e1 85.♗h5 b3 0-1

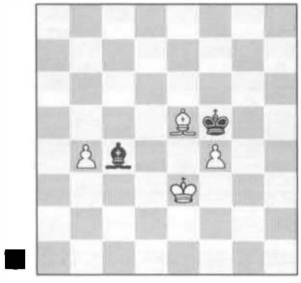
ENDING 47

Exercise 123

E Arendsman

S Klaassen

Nijmegen NED-ch jr W 1992



Paradoxical as it may seem, winning chances increase the further back the pawns are, and indeed, this position is winning for White.

65...♔e6 66.♔d4 ♗a6 67.♔c5 ♔d7

68.♔b6

To illustrate that advancing the b-pawn prematurely can be a big mistake, have a look at the following variation: 68.b5?! ♗b7 69.b6?? ♔e6 and the white king can't get through.

68...♗c8

68...♗d3 69.b5 ♔c8 70.♔c6 ♗e4+ 71.♔c5 ♗d3 72.b6+–.

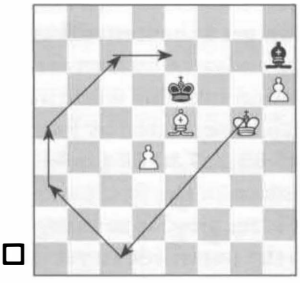
69.b5 ♔d8 70.♔a7 ♔d7 71.b6 ♔c6 72.f5 ♔d7 73.b7 ♗xb7 74.♔xb7 1-0

ENDING 50

Exercise 124

Carlos Garcia Palermo	2450
Juan Mario Gomez Esteban	2485

Benasque 2010 (2)



The endgame with a strong a- or h-pawn in combination with a central pawn is winning. The way

to do this is by bringing the king over by means of a lengthy detour, as shown in the diagram. In this game, the player with the white pieces had been aimlessly shuffling his pieces around for some time, before he hit on the right plan:
82.♔f4 ♔d5 83.♔e3 ♔c4 84.♔d2 ♗e4 85.♔c1 ♗h7 86.♔b2 ♗g6 87.♔a3 ♗c2 88.♗g7 ♗h7 89.♔a4 ♗e4 90.♔a5 ♔d5 91.♔b6 ♗f5 92.♔c7 ♗e4 93.♔d7 ♗h7 94.♔e7 ♗d3 95.♗e5 1-0
ENDING 51

Exercise 125
Eldar Gasanov 2514
Borki Predojevic 2639
Rijeka Ech 2010 (4)

Black can get a theoretically winning endgame by transforming the position into one with two extra pawns separated by four files.
64...♔g5 65.♗f7 h4 66.gxh4+ ♗xh4
The creation of the first passer. Now all that is required is to bring the king to the queenside to get in ...a7-a6 and ...b6-b5.
67.♗e6 ♔f4 68.♗c8 ♗e7 69.♗d7 ♗d6 70.♔f1 ♔f3 71.♗c8 g3 72.♗b7+ ♔e3 73.♗c6 ♔d2 74.♔g2 ♔c3 75.♔f3 ♔b4 76.♔e3 a6 77.♔d3 b5 78.axb5 axb5

Now we have two passers.
79.♗d5 ♔a3 80.♔c2 b4 0-1
A typical zugzwang position; White has to allow one of the pawns through.

Exercise 126
Artur Jussupow 2636
Zigurds Lanka 2504
Batumi Ech tt 1999 (3)

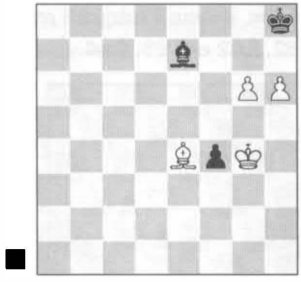
44.♔xh4
This leads to an easy win: the two passed pawns are separated by five files.
By contrast, 44.gxh4? turns the b3-bishop into a wrong bishop in view of the colour of the queening square h8: with 44...♔g7 Black would then achieve an easy draw

by sacrificing his bishop for the a-pawn at some opportune moment.
44...♗a5 45.♔h5 1-0
Lanka had seen enough, knowing that promoting a pawn is easy when the pawns are so far separated, for example: 45...♗b4 46.g4 ♗d2 47.♗c2 (zugzwang)

analysis diagram

47...♗c1 48.a5 ♗d2 49.a6 ♗e3 50.g5+ ♔g7 51.♔g4 ♗a7 52.♔f5 and the king heads for the a-pawn.

Exercise 127
Antonio Scerbo 2116
Paolo Carola 1917
Amantea 2010 (1)



Black can draw the game based on a stalemate motif.
52...♗f8!
The pressure on this pawn ensures the draw. Black has no time to put the bishop on the long diagonal and get the king out of the corner: 52...♗f6? 53.♗d5! (53.♔xf4? ♔g8= would let Black's king out) 53...♗c3 54.♗c4 (54.♔xf4? ♗d2+!=; 54.♔f5? f3 55.♗xf3 ♔g8) 54...♗b2 55.♔f5 f3 56.♔e6! f2 57.♔f7+–.
53.♔h5 ♔g8 54.♗f3 ♔h8 55.♗d5

White thought he had achieved a decisive zugzwang position, but Black now uncorks a brilliant resource.
55...f3 56.♗xf3 ♔g8 57.♗e4 ♔h8 58.♗d5 ♗xh6! ½-½
ENDING 41

Exercise 128
Hans Kelchner
Gottfried Braun 2330
Germany tt sr 1994 (3)

White needs his king on f2 and the bishop on d2 to hold this position. Unfortunately for him, his bishop is poorly placed. Provided Black is careful and doesn't open the door for the bishop by means of ...e5-e4, White will need six tempi to reach the defensive set-up, a luxury he can't afford.

63.♔d2 f4 64.♗g7 ♔f5 65.♔e1 ♗b5 66.♔f2

66.♗f8 is no good either in view of 66...e4 67.♗b4 e3–+.

66...♗c6 67.♗f8 e4 68.♗c5

Preventing ...e4-e3 for the time being, so Black must set the winning plan in motion.

68...♔e5 69.♗a7 ♗e8 70.♗b6 ♔e6?!

Black fails to complete the preparatory stage with 70...♗h5!.

71.♗a7

Curiously, the databases give the move 71.♗c7, which would render the next two moves totally irrational.

71...♔d5 72.♗b6 ♔c4?

Mind-boggling, but most likely the game went like this.

73.♗c7!= e3+ 74.♔e1? f3

We're back to a simple winning position.

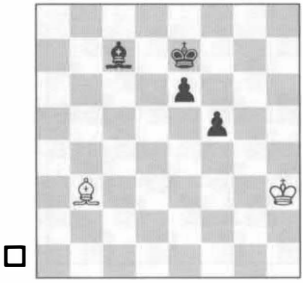
75.♗g3 ♔d3 76.♗h4 ♗d7 77.♗g3 ♗b5 78.♔f1 ♔d2+ 79.♔g1 ♔e2 0-1

ENDINGS 41 & 42

Exercise 129

Oskar Orel	2315
Robert Zelcic	2533

Slovenia tt 2005 (8)



White must establish the defensive formation against pawns on Black's fourth rank, as the position would become untenable if they were allowed to march onto the fifth.

91.♔g2?

A losing move, because we are dealing with a special pawn duo here. The way to go about setting up the pieces against pawns on the fourth rank is 91.♗c2! ♔f6 92.♔g2 e5 93.♔f3!=.

91...e5 92.♗c2 e4! 93.♗a4

The bishop isn't doing much here, but if it sat on the long diagonal, say on g2, Black would be able to execute the cage (see *100 Endgames You Must Know*, **ENDING 43**).

93...♔f6 94.♗c6 ♔e5 95.♔f2 ♗b6+ 96.♔e2 f4 97.♔f1 f3 98.♗b7 ♔f4 99.♗c6 e3

The pawns are on the sixth rank already. Now the winning manoeuvre, described in *100 Endgames You Must Know*, is a piece of cake.

100.♗b5 ♗a5 101.♗a6 ♔e5 102.♗b5 ♔d4 103.♗a6 ♔c3 0-1

There would follow ...♔d2 and ...e3-e2.

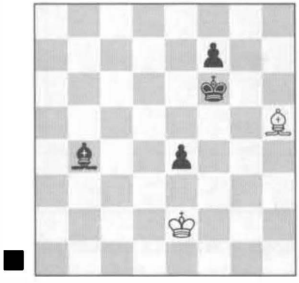
ENDINGS 41 & 43

Exercise 130

Mikel Huerga Leache 2440

Torbjørn Ringdal Hansen 2459

San Sebastian 2011 (8)



Black wins as he possesses the special pawns; White can't get the fourth-rank defensive stand (i.e. with the enemy's pawns on the latter's fourth rank). However, Black must watch out for an immediate tactic.

58...♔e6?

58...♗c5! is the prophylactic move, and after 59.♔d2 ♔e6 60.♔e2 f5

analysis diagram

Black ought to proceed in accordance with **ENDING 43**.

59.♗xf7+ ♔xf7 60.♔e3 ♗c5+ 61.♔xe4 ½-½

ENDING 43

Exercise 131

Herman Steiner

Arthur William Dake

Los Angeles m 1935 (4)

The queen exchange leads to a lost endgame, as White lacks time to get the right defensive stand.

61.♕xe3?

61.♕b7+!∓ fights on.

61...♗xe3 62.♔c2

Against this pawn duo, the fourth-rank defence is required.

62...♔f6 63.♔d1 ♔g5 64.♔e2 ♔f4 65.b6 ♗xb6 66.♗c4 e5 67.♗e6 e4 68.♗d7 ♔e5 69.♗c6 f4 70.♗b7 f3+ 71.♔f1 ♔f4 72.♗c6 e3 73.♗b5 ♗a5 0-1

ENDING 43

Exercise 132

Zoltan Almasi	2630
Aleksander Delchev	2629

Croatia tt 2001 (7)

50...♗xf4 inevitably leads to a tough but defensible rook vs. bishop endgame. The alternative loses:

50...♖e4? 51.♖xe4

A) 51.♔xf5! ♖xa4 52.♗xa4 also wins, and leads to the same endgame as in the game but without the black pawn on the e-file. This might look better, but White presumably didn't want to allow the possibility of the rook swinging back. Still, that would also lead to a losing endgame;

B) 51.♖a8!, keeping the rook, is also winning, e.g. 51...♔e6 52.♗c6, since 52...♖xf4? allows 53.♖e8#.

51...fxe4 52.♔f5

An instructive position. White wins because the black bishop can't achieve the defensive stand against the pawns, while the black pawns are to White but a minor nuisance.

52...e3 53.♗e2!+–

Controlling both black pawns.

53...♗g3 54.♔e4 h5 55.♗xh5 ♗e1 56.♔xe3 ♗a5 57.f5 ♗e1 58.f6+ ♔e6 59.♔e4 ♗b4 60.♗g4+ ♔f7 61.♔f5 1-0

ENDING 43

Exercise 133

Mathias Womacka	2445
Jens-Uwe Maiwald	2375

Munich 1993 (6)

The endgame with c- and f-pawns is winning, unless the defending side

manages to control them on the same diagonal. White's next move doesn't spoil anything, but forces him to find a fantastic resource, as we shall soon see.

58.f4?!

58.c4+! is much easier, not allowing Black to stop both pawns on one diagonal. Then, White can carry out the standard procedure, i.e. use the king to support the enemy pawn that can't be simultaneously controlled by both bishop and king.

58...♗e6!

After this move, White needs several only moves to win. The pawns are frozen on one diagonal (a2-g8), but his strong king is an important trump.

59.♔e5! ♗b3 60.♔d6!

For the time being, White plays aptly and impedes the black king from contributing to the control of the f-pawn. There's more than one way to err, for example: 60.f5? ♔c6 61.f6 ♗f7 and Black establishes a blockade on one diagonal.

60...♔c4 61.f5! ♔d3

Remarkably, by this gain of tempo, as though slipping through a back door, the black king manages to get to the f-pawn. To win, White should now transform the position into bishop vs. two pawns.

62.♗e1?

White probably lost faith. 62.♔e5! was still winning: 62...♔xd2 63.♔d4! – thanks to this extraordinary king retreat, White could have advanced his pawns.

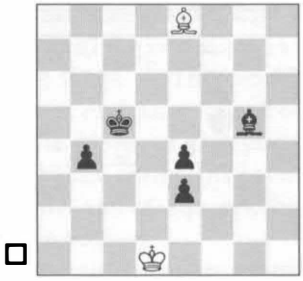
62...♔e4 63.f6 ♔f5 64.♗h4 ♗g8 65.♔e7 ♔g6 66.♗f2 ♗f7 67.♗b6 ♗a2 68.♗d8 ♗g8 69.♔d7 ♔f5 70.♔d6 ♗f7 71.♔c5 ♔e4 72.♔c6 ♗g8 73.♗e7 ♔d3 74.♗b4 ♔e4 75.♗f8 ♔d3 76.♗g7 ♔e4 77.♔c5 ♗f7 ½-½

ENDINGS 45 & 46

Exercise 134

Josep Manuel Lopez Martinez	2563
Miguel Illescas Cordoba	2598

Ayamonte ch-ESP 2007 (4)



White can control all three pawns with a procedure similar to Exercise 122. The presence of the third pawn, however, introduces a different element: the bishop now needs to attack the e4-pawn from in front.

66.♗f7?

A) 66.♗a4! ♔c4 67.♗c2 ♔d4 (67...♔c3 68.♗xe4 leads to a well-known defensive system) 68.♔e2, and the black king can't babysit

the e4-pawn and, at the same time, advance the b-pawn;

B) 66.♗g6? ♔d4 and the white bishop is cut off by the e4-pawn, making it easy for Black to win by advancing his other pawns.

66...♔d4–+

The black king threatens to go to d3, sheltered from any checks by the e-pawn.

67.♔e2

The white king relinquishes control of the crucial c2-square.

67...♔c3 68.♗d5 b3 69.♗xe4 ♔b2! 70.♗d5 ♔c2 0-1

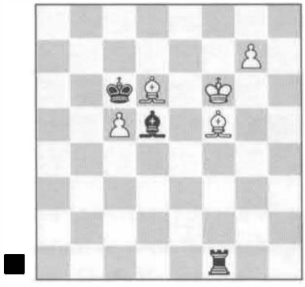
ENDING 47

Exercise 135

Jan Timman 2600

Jaime Sunye Neto 2415

Wijk aan Zee 1980 (1)



Simplification, while not strictly necessary, is a correct decision:

64...♖xf5+!

Other moves, such as 64...♗g8 65.♔e5 ♖e1+ 66.♗e4+ ♖xe4+ 67.♔xe4, also lead to a draw.

65.♔xf5 ♗g8

This position, characterized by the pawns being separated by three files, as well as by a g-pawn on the seventh rank controlled by the defending bishop, is one of the most surprising theoretical draws in opposite-coloured bishop endings: Black's pieces together constitute an impenetrable cordon against the white king.

66.♔e5!?

A funny move, but after 66.♔f6 ♔d7! the king is denied access.

66...♗a2 67.♔d4 ♗g8 68.♔c3

Clearly, White intends to bring his king all the way round, but in this position it doesn't work: Black denies the king access on the queenside, too.

68...♔b5! 69.♗f8 ♗a2 ½-½

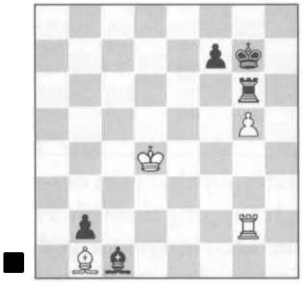
ENDINGS 49 & 51

Exercise 136

Gennadi Makarov

Nukhim Rashkovsky

Soviet Union 1973



Trading rooks leads to a winning endgame.

47...♖xg5!

A winning endgame is also reached after 47...♗xg5!? 48.♗xg6 fxg6–+.

48.♖xg5+ ♗xg5

White resigned here.

There might have followed: 49.♔e4 ♔h6 (49...♗c1? 50.♔f3 ♔f6 51.♔g4!=) 50.♔f5 ♔h5! 51.♗c2 f6 52.♗b1 ♔h4 53.♗c2 ♔g3 54.♔e4 ♔f2–+.

Exercise 137

Robert Lagerman	2348
Victor Mikhalevski	2632

Reykjavik 2008 (1)

Trading rooks leads to a lost endgame; White would have maintained serious drawing chances by keeping the rooks on.

53.♖xe5? ♗f4! 54.♔e7?!

Confusion leads to making the same mistakes. The logical move offered far better resistance: 54.♔d5!? fxe5 55.♔e4 f6 56.♗d7 a5 57.♔f3 and we would reach a position in which Black might try one of three different plans:

analysis diagram

A) Bringing the king across to support the a-pawn: 57...♔h6 58.♔e4 ♔g7 59.♗a4 ♔f8 60.♔d5 ♔e7 61.♗b5 ♔d8 62.♗a4 ♔c7 63.♗e8 ♔b6 64.♗a4 and it seems that this plan comes to nothing; Therefore, Black might try:

B) Exchanging the e-pawn for the g-pawn. This plan can only be successful against a careless white player, for example: 57...♔h4 58.♗a4 ♗h6 59.♗d7 ♗g5 60.♗a4? e4+ 61.♔xe4 ♔xg4–+. This would lead to a better endgame compared to the game. However, this plan also fails if White maintains his bishop on the d7- and c6-squares, for example 60.♗c6!;

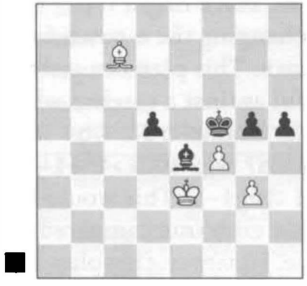
C) Executing another lengthy manoeuvre with the king: 57...♔h4 58.♗a4 ♗h6 59.♗d7 ♗g5 60.♗c6! ♔h3 61.♗a4 ♔h2 62.♗d7 ♔g1 63.♗b5 (denying access via the f1-square) 63...♗h4 (zugzwang) 64.♗a4 ♔f1–+ followed by ...♔e1-d2 and the king will support the passed a-pawn.

54...fxe5 55.♔xf7 a5

The pawn is out of the king's reach, meaning that eventually the bishop

will have to let go of the defence of the g4-pawn.
56.♔e6 a4 57.♔d5 a3 58.♗b1 ♔xg4 59.♔e4
The black king is halfway through its journey towards the a-pawn.
59...♔g3 60.♗a2 ♔f2 61.♔d3 ♗g5 62.♔e4 ♗f6 63.♔d3 ♔f3 64.♗d5+ ♔f4 65.♔e2 e4 66.♗a2 ♔e5 0-1
ENDING 51

Exercise 138
Andronico Yap 2385
Dimitar Donchev 2430
Luzern ol 1982



...h5-h4 leads to an endgame with a central and rook's pawn, which Black can win by force by means of the typical king march.
50...h4! 51.fxg5
At best, 51.gxh4 leads to the same endgame since White will be forced to give up the f4-pawn later on. In addition, Black can play 51...d4+!, exploiting the fact that if 52.♔xd4 gxh4 the pawn will inevitably promote.
51...h3 52.g4+ ♔xg5 53.♗e5 ♔xg4 54.♗h2

The king can't get through between the pawns, so its only viable route is via the kingside by means of the typical detour. At several points during the course of this long but effective procedure, Black must use zugzwang.
54...♔f5 55.♔d4 ♔e6 56.♔c5 ♔d7 57.♗g3 ♔c8 58.♗h2 ♔b7 59.♗g3 ♔a6 60.♗c7 ♗g2

Zugzwang.
61.♔b4 ♗f3 62.♔c5 ♗e4 63.♗d6 ♔a5 64.♔d4 ♔a4 65.♔c3 ♗g2
Again, zugzwang.
66.♔c2 ♗f3 67.♔c3 ♗e4 68.♗h2 ♔a3 69.♗d6+ ♔a2 70.♗h2 ♔b1 71.♗f4 ♗g6 72.♔d4 ♗f7 73.♔c3 ♗e6
Once more, zugzwang.
74.♔d3 ♔b2 75.♔d2 ♔b3 76.♔d3 ♗f5+ 77.♔d2 d4 78.♗e5 ♔c4

79.♗h2 ♔d5 80.♔e2 ♔e4 81.♗c7 d3+ 82.♔f2 ♗g4 83.♗a5 ♗f3 84.♔g3 ♗g2 85.♗d2 ♔d4 86.♔f2 ♔c4 87.♗a5 ♔b3 88.♗e1 ♔c2 89.♔g3 d2 90.♔h2 0-1
ENDING 51

Exercise 139
Nguyen Van Huy 2502
Le Quang Liem 2703
Ho Chi Minh City Ach 2012 (4)

One extra pawn almost never wins in an opposite-coloured bishops endgame. Theoretical interest, therefore, usually departs from a two-pawn surplus. With more pawns on the board, the key to winning such positions is to find the right way to simplify, i.e. by exchanging any and all of the opponent's pawns, to end up with the most promising two vs. zero majority.

33.h4?

Not the best move, natural as it may look; it allows Black to fix the pawns and choose which breaks best suit him.

33.g4! leads to a draw, by achieving different pawns to be exchanged, e.g. 33...♔f7:

A) 34.gxf5 gxf5! (if 34...exf5 35.h3 – White can simply wait) 35.♔f3 ♔f6 36.♗b3 e5 37.♗c2 ♔g5 38.h4+ (Black wins in similar fashion if the h-pawn stays behind) 38...♔f6 39.h5 ♗b6 40.♗b1 ♔g5 41.♗c2. This position deserves a diagram to illustrate Black's plan more clearly:

analysis diagram

White has adopted the correct defensive set-up against the two pawns on Black's fourth rank, and may rely on his bishop giving its life in exchange for both of them, knowing that Black has the wrong bishop: 41...e4+ 42.♗xe4 fxe4+ 43.♔xe4 ♔g4!. Zugzwang; the white king must give way, allowing its foe to first capture the h5-pawn, and, after that, block him out of the corner: 44.♔d3 ♔xh5 45.♔e2 ♔g4 46.♔f1 ♔f3–+. Clearly, were the white pawn further behind, the manoeuvre would be even easier;

B) 34.h4! – this move is necessary, too, e.g. 34...♔f6 35.h5! g5 (35...gxh5 36.gxf5 with an easy draw) 36.♔f3 followed by ♗c2 and White can wait.

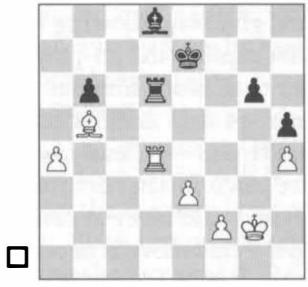
33...h5!

This loses by force, as Black will exchange the g-pawn for the h-pawn, and the h-pawn for the g-pawn, creating a special pair of pawns.
34.♗a4 ♔f7 35.♔f3 ♗b6 36.♗b5 ♗a5 37.♗c6 ♗e1 38.♔f4 e5+ 39.♔f3 g5 40.hxg5 ♔g6 41.♔g2 ♔xg5 42.♔h3 h4 43.gxh4+ ♗xh4 44.♔g2 e4 45.♔f1 ♔f6 46.♔e2 ♔e5 47.♗e8 f4 48.♗h5 ♗d8 49.♗g4 ♗b6 50.♗h5 0-1
ENDING 43

Exercise 140

Dusan Vukovic	2156
Dragan Milin	2066

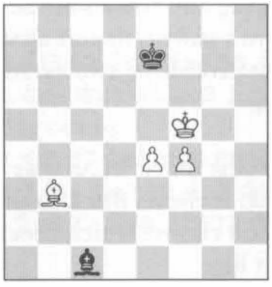
Serbia tt 2016 (5)



White forces a winning two vs. zero majority.
53.♖xd6! ♔xd6 54.♗e8 ♗xh4 55.♗xg6 ♔c5 56.♗xh5 b5

Black exploits the temporary absence of the bishop to exchange the last remaining pawn. This decision, although correct, will not save the game, but otherwise White would play ♗e8, maintaining the pawn, and win by advancing his other two pawns, forcing the bishop to sacrifice itself for them.
57.axb5 ♔xb5

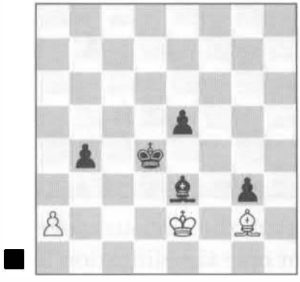
White has achieved special pawns and the black king is too far away to reach the only defensive stand that could save the game, against White's pawns on the fourth rank.
58.f4 ♔c4 59.♔h3 ♗e1 60.♔g4 ♔d5 61.♔f5 ♔d6 62.e4 ♔e7 63.♗d1 ♗d2 64.♗b3 ♗c1 65.♔e5 ♗d2 66.♔f5 ♗c1



67.e5 ♗d2 68.♔e4 ♗e1 69.f5 ♗h4 70.♔f4 ♗e1 71.f6+ ♔f8 72.♔f5 ♗b4

73.♗a4 ♗a3 74.e6 ♗b4 75.♔e4 ♗a3 1-0
ENDING 43

Exercise 141
Jaap Vogel
Jonny Ivarsson
Bad Pyrmont 1969 (12)



Black's passers have become quite intimidating. To win, he needs to exchange one of them for the a-pawn, a crucial decision that must be taken right now.

52...e4?

This move leads to a clear draw. Black will now be forced to give up his g-pawn in exchange for the a-pawn, resulting in a well-known theoretical draw.

52...♗f4! is the right plan. As we will see, Black thus obtains an endgame with pawns further separated from one another. To this end, Black keeps his e-pawn where it is, only to later obtain White's a-pawn in return for it, or else force the exchange of the g-pawn in much more favourable circumstances: 53.♗h1 ♔c3 54.♗d5 ♔c2 55.♗b3+ ♔b2 56.♗d5.

analysis diagram

The crucial moment. 56...e4! 57.♗e6 (57.♗xe4 ♔xa2 leads to an endgame with pawns separated by four files, which is always winning) 57...♗d6 58.♗d5 ♗e5 59.♗e6 ♗d4 (threatens 60...g2) 60.♔f1 e3 61.♗d5 (61.♗c4 ♔c3 62.♗b5 ♔d2 and the king supports the move ...e3-e2, which will win the bishop) 61...g2+! 62.♗xg2 ♔xa2–+. We've reached a version of this endgame in which the white king can't get to d1 in time: 63.♔e2 b3 64.♗d5 ♔a3 65.♗e4 ♔b2 66.♗d5 ♔c2!–+.

53.♗h1 ♗f4 54.♗g2 e3 55.♗f3 ♔c3 56.♗d5 ♔c2 57.♗b3+ ♔b2 58.♗d5 g2

There is no other plan available. Black can't force a better zugzwang, since 58...♔b1 can be answered by moving the king, e.g. 59.♔e1.

59.♗xg2 ♔xa2 60.♔d3?

White spoils all his defensive efforts with this natural-looking move. Both 60.♔d1! and 60.♗d5+ b3 61.♔d1 drew.

60...b3 61.♗d5 ♔a3 62.♗c4 b2 63.♔c2 e2 0-1

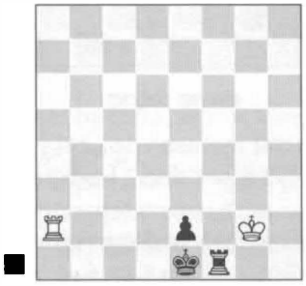
One of the pawns will promote.

ENDING 47

Chapter 9

Exercise 142

Ufuk Sezen Arat 2400
Deniz Ozen 2351
Turkey tt 2017 (10)



White threatens to draw by means of the long-side defence. To win, Black must first kick away the white king. This he achieves by a preliminary check.

67...♖f8?

Now White begins an effective series of checks from the long side. 67...♖f2+! is the correct move, displacing the white king: 68.♔g1 (forcing the king to step onto the back rank, creating options based on ...♖f1+; 68.♔g3 ♔f1−+) 68...♖f8 69.♖a1+ ♔d2 70.♖a2+ ♔e3 71.♖a3+ ♔d4 72.♖a4+ (72.♖a1 ♖a8! 73.♖b1 ♔e3−+) 72...♔c3 73.♖a3+ ♔b2 74.♖e3 ♖f1+−+.

68.♖a1+ ♔d2 69.♖a2+ ♔d3 70.♖a3+ ♔d4 71.♖a4+ ♔d5 72.♖a5+

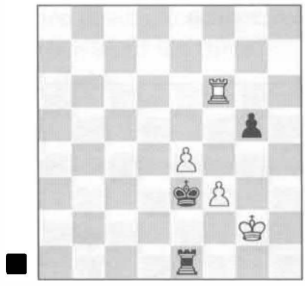
72.♖a1 is also good enough.

72...♔d6 73.♖a6+ ♔d7 74.♖a7+ ♔d8 75.♖a8+ ♔c7 76.♖a7+ ♔d6 77.♖a6+ ♔d5 78.♖a5+ ♔c4 79.♖a4+ ♔c3 80.♖a3+ ♔b4 81.♖e3 ½-½

ENDING 54

Exercise 143

Nikola Karaklajic
Halje Kramer
Moscow ol 1956 (6)

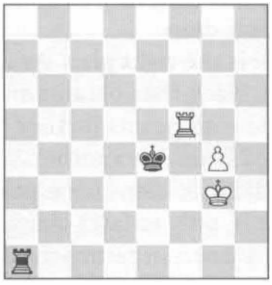


Once again, the obvious move is not the right one: simplification leads to a theoretically lost position.

71...♖a1??

71...♖e2+ 72.♔g3 ♖e1 was a way to impede White from making any progress, for example: 73.♔g4 (or 73.♖f5 ♖g1+ 74.♔h2 ♔f2=) 73...♖g1+ 74.♔h5 ♔d4! 75.♖f5 ♖g3= and White can't take the g5-pawn without losing both his own pawns.

72.♖f5 g4 73.fxg4 ♔xe4 74.♔g3

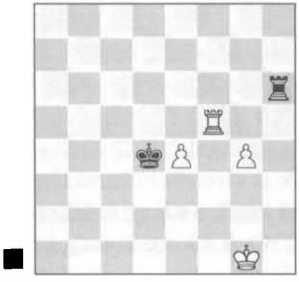


White has achieved an ideal horizontal cutoff and therefore wins with ease.

74...♖a8 75.♖b5 ♖f8 76.g5 ♖f5 77.♖b4+ ♔e5 78.♔g4 ♖f1 79.♔h5 ♔f5 80.♖b5+ ♔e6 81.♔h6 ♔e7 82.g6 ♖h1+ 83.♔g7 ♖e1 84.♔g8 ♖e2 85.g7 ♖e1

86.♖h5 ♖g1 87.♔h8 ♔f7 88.♖h7 1-0
ENDING 62

Exercise 144
Lubomir Kavalek
Hans Ree
Eersel m 1969 (3)



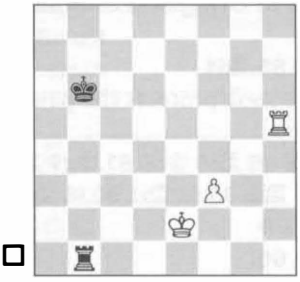
Black can hold provided he is patient; if he captures the pawn straight away, White will achieve an ideal horizontal cutoff.

38...♔xe4??

38...♖g6! is the way to win back one pawn and reach a drawn position. 39.g5 (39.♔f2 ♖xg4 40.♔f3 ♖xe4) 39...♔xe4 40.♖a5 ♔f4=.

39.♔g2 ♖h8 40.♔g3 ♖g8 41.♖a5 1-0
ENDING 62

Exercise 145
Attila Groszpeter 2505
Tejas Bakre 2290
Paks 1998 (13)



The endgame is winning. Black's king is cut off by two files, and while the black rook seeks to take a frontal defensive stand, White is in time to get his pawn to the fourth rank.

72.♖d5! ♔c6 73.♖d3 ♖h1 74.♔f2

74.f4? would be a serious inaccuracy, since after 74...♖h2+ the white king has to go back, allowing Black to draw the game: 75.♔e1 ♖h4=.

74...♖h3 75.♔g2 ♖h8

76.f4!

White achieves an essentially identical position to the one analysed in **ENDING 60**.

76...♖g8+ 77.♔f3 ♖f8 78.♖d4 ♔c5 79.♖d7 ♔c6 80.♖d3 ♖h8 81.♔g4 ♖g8+ 82.♔h5 ♖f8 83.♔g5 ♖g8+ 84.♔h6

White's king takes the advanced position in Grigoriev's combined method.

84...♖f8 85.♖d4

Now the rook protects the pawn laterally.

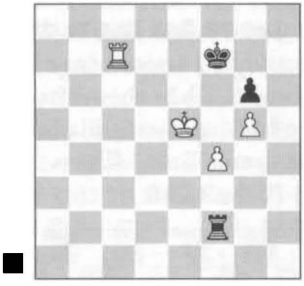
85...♔c5 86.♖a4 ♔d6 87.♔g7 ♖f5 88.♔g6 ♖b5 89.f5 ♖b1 90.f6 ♖g1+ 91.♔f7 1-0

ENDING 60

Exercise 146

Robert Kempinski	2586
Julen Arizmendi	2540

Turin ol 2006 (11)



Anticipating your opponent's intentions is often crucial to finding the right ideas in your games. In this position, White intends ♔f6 to end up with a knight's pawn. The only viable method of play, therefore, is the back-rank defence.

109...♔g8!

After 109...♔f8? 110.♔f6 ♖xf4+ 111.♔xg6 Black can't reach the back-rank defence. Hence, he would end up on the losing side of a Lucena.

110.♔f6 ♖xf4+ 111.♔xg6 ♖f8!

Black has constructed the back-rank defence.

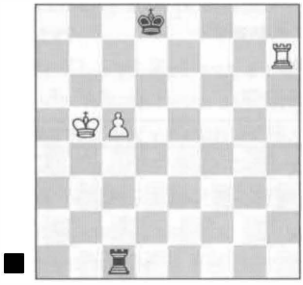
112.♖g7+ ♔h8 113.♖f7 ♖a8 114.♖c7 ♔g8 115.♔h6 ♖a6+ ½-½

ENDING 55

Exercise 147

Roland Eriksson	2278
Heikki Rissanen	2272

cr 2006



The rook is already behind the pawn. To ensure Kling & Horwitz's defence, Black's king must go to the short side.

66...♔c8!

Waiting with 66...♖c2? leads to defeat since after 67.♔c6 ♖c1 68.♖h8+ ♔e7 69.♖c8 Black's king is on the long side, where the rook should be.

67.♔c6 ♔b8 68.♖h8+ ♔a7 69.♖d8 ♖c2 70.♖d5 ♔b8 71.♖d8+ ½-½

ENDING 56

Exercise 148

Jaan Ehlvest	2600
Ljubomir Ljubojevic	2580

Rotterdam 1989 (2)

White must play the one move that protects the pawn while allowing the white king to embark on a decisive excursion to the other side of the board, unafraid of any checks the black rook might throw at it.

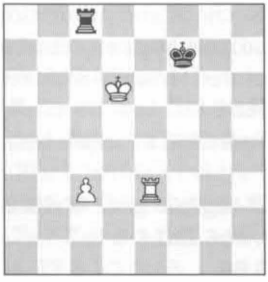
47.♖e3!

The threat is c3-c4, so Black starts firing checks.

47...♖d8+ 48.♔c2 ♔f7

48...♖c8 49.♔b3 ♖b8+ 50.♔a4 ♖a8+ 51.♔b5 ♖b8+ 52.♔c6 ♖c8+ 53.♔d7 ♖c4 54.♔d6 ♖c8 55.♖e6+ ♔f7 56.♖e7+ ♔f6 57.♖c7 leads to the same position.

49.♔b3 ♖b8+ 50.♔c4 ♖c8+ 51.♔b5 ♖b8+ 52.♔c6 ♖c8+ 53.♔d7 ♖c4 54.♔d6 ♖c8



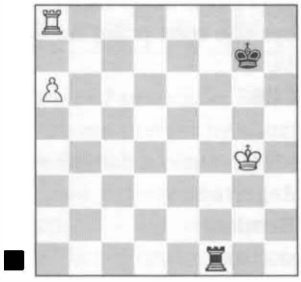
55.♖e7+!+– ♔f6 56.♖c7 ♖d8+ 57.♔c6 ♔e6 58.c4 ♔e5 59.c5 ♔d4 60.♔b7 ♖d5 61.♔b6 ♔c4 62.♖h7 1-0

See also **ENDINGS 60 & 62**.

Exercise 149

Jonathan Westerberg	2447
Petter Haugli	2256

Tylösand 2015 (7)



Black must execute Vancura's Defence, i.e. attack the pawn laterally.

61...♖f6!

61...♖a1?! is not yet lost, but is the beginning of the wrong plan: 62.♔f5 ♖a2? (now, only 62...♖a5+ followed by 63...♖b5 and 64...♖b6 draws) 63.♔e5 ♖a1 64.♔d5 ♖a2 65.♔c6 ♖a1 66.♔b7. Now White's simple winning plan, while time-consuming, is unstoppable:

1) Take refuge with the king in front of the pawn;
2) Get the rook out of the way;
3) Get the king out of the way;
4) Promote the pawn.

62.♔g5 ♖g6+ 63.♔f5 ♖f6+ 64.♔e5 ♖b6 65.♔d5 ♖f6!=

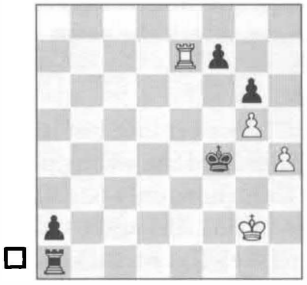
One can only speculate as to the reasons why White kept on trying to win this game until move 125, but accept the split point he finally did: ½-½.

ENDING 66

Exercise 150

Elmar Magerramov	2500
Semko Semkov	2450

Chartres 1990 (5)



It might look as if White is in trouble: he is about to lose his h4-pawn, and his king is forced to stay on the g2-/h2-squares. Even so, he has a straightforward draw in hand:

73.♖xf7+

The simplest plan: once the f-pawn is removed from the board, Black wouldn't be able to win even if he were two pawns up; 73.♖a7 ♔g4 74.♖a4+ is also enough for a draw.

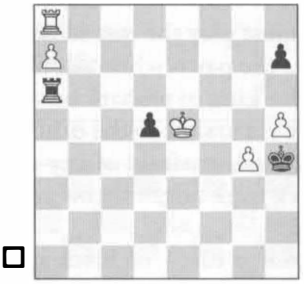
73...♔g4 74.♖a7 ♔xh4 75.♖a8 ♔xg5 76.♖a7 ♔h5 77.♖a8 g5 78.♖a7 ½-½

ENDING 65

Exercise 151

Le Quang Liem	2326
Boris Blodstein	2249

Budapest 2005 (4)



A young Le Quang Liem got carried away by an attractive-looking yet unsound tactic:

57.g5?

57.♔xd5 ♖a2 58.♔e6 ♖a6+ 59.♔e7 h6 60.♔f7 was easily winning.

57...♔xh5 58.g6

No doubt relying on the fact that the pawn can't be taken on the pain of a rook check and promotion. He must have been extremely disappointed to see Black's retort:

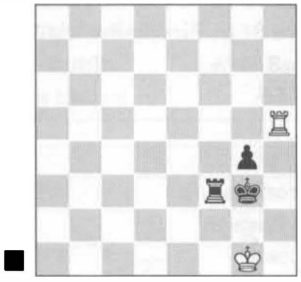
58...♔h6!

White soon had to acquiesce to a draw:

59.♔xd5 ♔g7 60.gxh7 ♔xh7 61.♔c5 ♖a1 62.♔b6 ♖b1+ ½-½

ENDING 66

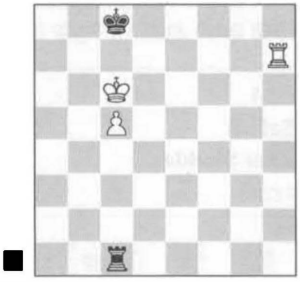
Exercise 152
Johannes Minckwitz
Joseph Henry Blackburne
Baden-Baden 1870 (13)



Black wins by force:
79...♖a3!
White has no way to achieve a Philidor or a back-rank defence. Therefore, the Lucena is inevitable.
80.♔f1 ♖a1+ 81.♔e2 ♔g2 82.♖h8 ♖a3 83.♖g8 g3 84.♖f8 ♔h2 85.♖h8+ ♔g1 86.♖g8 g2

The classic Lucena position has appeared on the board.
87.♖h8 ♖a2+ 88.♔e1 ♖f2 89.♖h7 ♖f6 90.♔e2 ♖e6+ 91.♔d2 ♖e5!
Finally, Black builds a bridge.
92.♖h8 ♔f2 93.♖f8+ ♔g3 94.♖g8+ ♔f3 95.♖g7 ♖e4 0-1
ENDINGS 52 & 53 & 55

Exercise 153
Leonid Stein
Samuel Reshevsky
Los Angeles 1968



As a matter of principle, Black should always prefer the short side, if allowed (with a central pawn, Black draws either way).
60...♔b8!
60...♔d8? is a mistake easily made, and often unpunished: 61.♖h8+ ♔e7 62.♖c8+– eventually leads to the Lucena position, just as with a knight's pawn.
61.♖h8+ ♔a7 62.♖d8
Azarov-Jarmula, Warsaw rapid 2013, continued with 62.♖c8 (actually move 75 in that game) 62...♖d1 (I always recommend a simpler defensive system with 62...♖h1!, immediately threatening lateral checks, and if 63.♖d8, 63...♖c1!= going back to Kling and Horwitz's system) 63.♔c7 ♖h1 64.♖d8 ♖h7+ 65.♖d7 ♖h8 66.c6 (White has made some progress) 66...♖g8 67.♖d6 (this popular trick, which has claimed some famous victims, we will see again in later exercises) 67...♖g7+? (the automatic mistake; Black is

lost) 68.♔c8! 68...♖g8+ 69.♖d8 ♖g6 70.c7 ♔b6 71.♔b8 1-0.

62...♖c2!

'K&H'.

63.♔d6 ♔b7 ½-½

White can't make any progress.

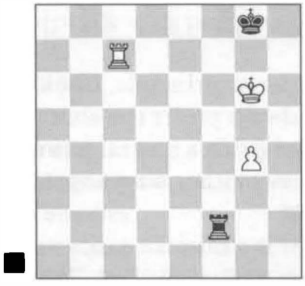
ENDING 56

Exercise 154

Younus Safvat

Vivek Kumar Shukla

Varna 1962 (2)



Against a knight's pawn, the basic defence we are about to see works like a dream.

52...♖f8!

Found in six other games in my database. Let's see an example of a losing continuation: 52...♔f8? (leads to Lucena) 53.g5 (53.♖c8+ ♔e7 54.g5 ♖g2 55.♖c3 ♖f2 56.♔h6 ♖h2+ 57.♔g7 ♔e8 58.♖f3 ♖g2 59.g6 ♖g4 60.♔f6 ♔f8 61.♖b3 ♖f4+ 62.♔g5 ♖f2 63.♖b7 ♖g2+ 64.♔f5 ♖f2+ 65.♔e6 ♖e2+ 66.♔d5 ♖g2 67.♖b8+ ♔g7 68.♔e5 ♖xg6 69.♔f5 ♖f6+ 70.♔e5 ♖f8 71.♖b1 ♖e8+ 72.♔d6 ♔f7 73.♖f1+ ♔g7 74.♔d7 ♖e3 75.♖f4 ♖d3+ 76.♔e7 ♖e3+ 77.♔d6 ♖d3+ 78.♔e5 ½-½ Clarke-Abrams, Swansea 2006) 53...♖f1 54.♖c8+ ♔e7 55.♔g7 ♖f2 56.g6 ♖f1 57.♔g8 ♖f2 58.♖c7+ ♔e8 59.♖f7 ♖g2 60.g7 ♖g1 61.♖f4 ♖g2 62.♖e4+ ♔d7 63.♖e5 ♖g1 64.♔h7 ♖h1+ 65.♔g6 ♔d6 66.♖g5 1-0 Birens-Rodriguez, Caen 2011 (move 52 was move 78 in Clarke-Abrams, and move 81 in Birens-Rodriguez).

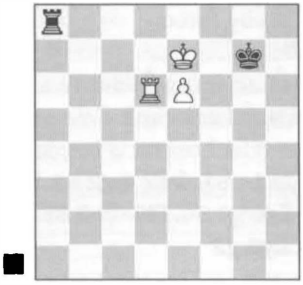
53.g5 ♖a8 ½-½

ENDING 55

Exercise 155

Levon Aronian	2741
Magnus Carlsen	2698

Moscow 2006 (6)



Many mortal chess players have gone down here as Black; we are about to see a Norse demigod of chess succumb, too.

73...♖a7+?

73...♔g6! is a crucial waiting move, keeping the rook in the corner. Many players have found this idea, e.g. 74.♖b6 (move 114 in this game) 74...♖a7+ 75.♔d8 ♖a8+ 76.♔d7 ♖a7+ 77.♔d6 ♔f6 78.e7 ½-½ Shankland-Cvitan, Biel 2014.

74.♔e8 1-0

Carlsen immediately resigned, but examples abound of games showing us the winning method: 74.♔e8 (move 58 in this game) 74...♖a8+

(74...♔f6 75.e7+ with check!) 75.♖d8 ♖a6 76.e7 ♖a1 77.♔d7 1-0 Orlov-Schmittdiel, Dortmund 2012.

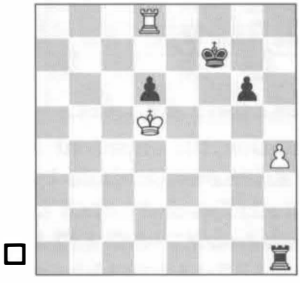
ENDING 57

Exercise 156

Jacob Chudnovsky 2403

Sergey Kudrin 2610

Cambridge 1998 (4)



White might have assumed that an intermediate check would only help the black king become more active. However, this in-between check was necessary so as not to fall prey to an ideal horizontal cutoff:

55.♖xd6?

55.♖d7+! ♔f6 56.♖xd6+ ♔f5 57.♔c4! ♖xh4+ 58.♔d3 and Black can establish neither an ideal horizontal nor a vertical cutoff: 58...♖e4 59.♖xg6!=.

analysis diagram

55...♖xh4

With careful play, Black can transform the current imperfect horizontal cutoff (winning because of the rook on the h-file) into an ideal horizontal cutoff.

56.♔e5 ♔g7 57.♖d1 ♔h6 58.♖g1 g5

And Black has an ideal horizontal cutoff. From here, the winning procedure is straightforward.

59.♔f5 ♖f4+ 60.♔e5 ♔g6 61.♖a1 ♖b4 62.♖f1 g4 63.♖f8 ♔g5 64.♖g8+ ♔h4 65.♔f5 ♔h3 66.♖h8+ ♔g2 67.♖a8 g3 68.♖a2+ ♔h1 0-1

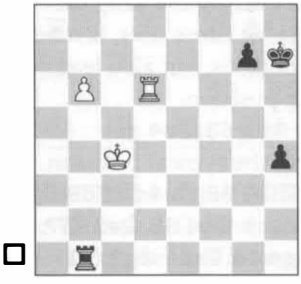
ENDING 59

Exercise 157

Georgi Tringov

Heinz Liebert

Bucharest 1968 (5)



The right plan is to support the b-pawn, but careful calculation is required.

59.♖d4?

59.♔c5!, supporting the passed pawn, is correct: 59...g5 60.♖d7+ (60.♖d3 is also a draw: 60...♔g6 61.♔c6 g4 62.♖d6+ ♔f5 63.♖d5+ ♔f4 64.♖b5 ♖e1 65.♔d7!=) 60...♔g6 61.b7 h3 62.♖d6+ ♔f5 63.♖b6 ♖c1+ 64.♔d4 h2 65.b8♕ h1♕. This position, which would drive a human being mad, is also a draw, according to Lomonosov tablebases.

59...♖xb6 60.♖xh4+ ♖h6!

This is the point: White can't exchange rooks.

61.♖g4

61...♖h3!

The move that guarantees an ideal horizontal cutoff, and with it, easy victory.

61...♖d6! cutting the king off vertically by three files, is much more laborious, but also leads to a winning position.

62.♔d4 ♔h6 63.♔e4 g5

Reaching the typical position.

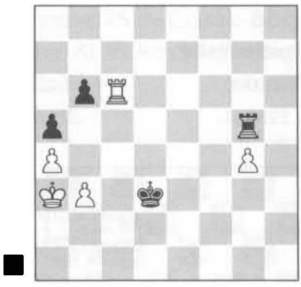
64.♔f5 ♖f3+ 65.♔e4 ♖f1 66.♖g2 ♔h5 67.♔e3 ♔h4 68.♔e2 ♖f7 69.♖g1 g4 70.♖h1+ ♔g3 0-1

ENDING 62

Exercise 158

Ashot Anastasian	2475
Alexander Shabalov	2425

Tbilisi ch-URS 1989 (10)



Simplification, the impatient player's hallmark, leads to a theoretically lost endgame.

61...b5?

61...♖xg4! 62.♖xb6 looks like a close shave for Black, but passive defence holds: 62...♖g8! 63.♖b5 ♖a8 64.♔b2 and in this position, the black king is performing a useful role.

62.axb5 ♖xb5

62...♖xg4 63.b6 ♖g7 64.♔a4+–.

63.♖c4

To continue with ♖f4 and ♖f5.

63...♔d2

63...♔e3 64.♔a4 ♖g5 65.♖c7 ♔d4 66.♖a7 ♖xg4 67.♖xa5 ♔c3+ 68.♔a3 transposes to the game.

64.♔a4 ♖g5 65.♖c8 ♔d3 66.♖a8 ♔c3 67.♖xa5 ♖xg4+ 68.♔a3

Black can't avoid an ideal horizontal cutoff.

68...♖g1 69.♖c5+ ♔d4 70.b4 ♖a1+ 71.♔b3 ♖b1+ 72.♔a4 ♖a1+ 73.♔b5 ♖a8 74.♖h5 ♖b8+ 75.♔a4 ♔c4 76.♖c5+ ♔d4 77.♔b3

Once more, we have come to an ideal horizontal cutoff. From here, the winning method is a piece of cake.

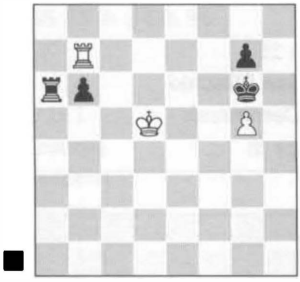
77...♖a8 78.♖h5 ♖c8 79.b5 ♖c5 80.♖h4+ ♔d5 81.♔b4 ♖c1 82.♖h6 ♖b1+ 83.♔a5 ♔c5 84.♖c6+ ♔d5 85.♔a6 ♖b2 86.♖h6 ♔c5 87.b6 ♖a2+ 88.♔b7 ♖g2 89.♔a7 ♔b5 90.b7 ♖a2+ 91.♔b8 ♖c2 92.♖h1 ♖g2 93.♖a1 1-0

ENDING 62

Exercise 159

Jop Delemarre	2405
Miroslaw Grabarczyk	2480

Germany Bundesliga B 1996/97 (1)



Black can force the win by means of an ideal horizontal cutoff.

66...♖a4!!

Such a logical, yet at the same time original move. White hardly has any choice.

67.♖xb6+ ♔xg5 68.♔e5 ♔h5 69.♖b1 g5 70.♔f5 ♖f4+ 71.♔e5 ♖f3 72.♖h1+ ♔g6 73.♖g1 ♖f4 74.♖e1 ♖a4 75.♖f1 g4 76.♖f4

A creative defensive try which I've never seen anywhere before, well worth taking notice of.

76...♖a5+ 77.♔e4 ♔g5 78.♖f1 ♖a3

Despite White's defensive effort, an ideal horizontal cutoff is re-created one file further down.

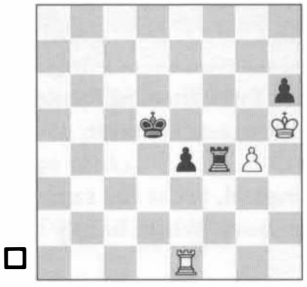
79.♖f8 ♔h4 80.♖g8 ♖f3 81.♖g7 ♔h3 82.♖g8 ♖f7 83.♔e3 g3 84.♔e2 ♔h2 85.♖h8+ ♔g1 86.♖g8 g2 87.♖a8 ♖h7 88.♔f3 ♔h1 0-1

ENDING 62

Exercise 160

Sebastian Plischki	2423
Lukas Cernousek	2456

Orlova 2014 (2)



Exchanging pawns, while not the only path to a draw, is simplest, as it leads to a harmless horizontal cutoff that allows a long-side defence.

66.g5!

66.♔h4 leads by force to a queen vs. rook and pawn endgame with a well-known drawing fortress: 66...♔e5 67.♔g3 ♖f3+ 68.♔g2! ♔f4 69.♖h1 e3 70.♖xh6 e2 71.♖f6+ ♔e5 72.♖xf3 e1♕ 73.♖f5+=.

66...hxg5 67.♔xg5 ♖f3 68.♔g4 ♔d4 69.♖d1+?!

Unnecessarily complicating matters to a certain degree.

69.♖a1! (to give checks on the long side) 69...♖d3 70.♔f4! (now preventing ...♔e3 or ...e4-e3) is the easiest defensive technique.

69...♖d3 70.♖e1 ♖d2 71.♔f4 ♖f2+ 72.♔g3 ♖f8 73.♖d1+ ♔e3 74.♖e1+ ♔d3 75.♖d1+ ♔e2 76.♖a1!

Finally taking the long side, but luckily for the spectators things are about to get exciting.

76...♖d8

77.♔f4??

White seems bent on losing the game. 77.♔g2?? was premature on account of 77...♖g8+, but almost any rook move is good enough, for example: 77.♖a2+ ♖d2 78.♖a1 e3 79.♔g2=. The rook in the corner, lord of the long side, ensures the draw.

77...e3 78.♖a2+ ♖d2 79.♖a3 ♖d4+??

Black's blunder is probably due to a lack of faith in his position. 79...♖d3! 80.♖a2+ ♔e1 wins easily.

80.♔g3 ♖d3

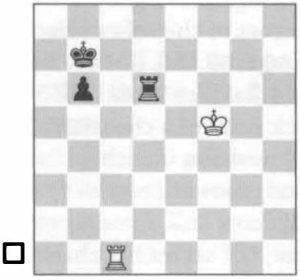
81.♖a2+??
A losing check, seen before in similar positions. 81.♖a1! was the correct defence.
81...♔e1
With the king on the back rank and the rook on the third (preventing ♔f3) the position is winning.
82.♖a1+ ♖d1! 83.♖a2 e2 84.♔g2 ♖b1?!
Black also seems determined to do things in the most complicated way. 84...♖d8, with the idea of ...♖g8+, wins easily.
85.♔f3 ♖b3+ 86.♔g2

A fairly typical position that allows only one winning move.
86...♖c3??
Such a typical error. In my database there are four games with the same position (symmetrical positions and positions with colours reversed included) before this move, and in all of them the winning side erred! The simple winning move is 86...♖e3!–+.
87.♖a1+ ♔d2 88.♔f2!
White is back on the bus to Share-point City.
88...♖c2 89.♖e1 ♔d3 90.♖a1 ♖c3 91.♔e1 ♔e3 92.♖a3!
Fastest.
92...♖d3 93.♖b3 ♔e4 94.♖b2
Winning the pawn.
94...♔f3 95.♖xe2 ♖e3 96.♖xe3+ ♔xe3 ½-½
ENDINGS 59 & 64 & 99

Exercise 161

Peter Laveryd	2420
Ulf Andersson	2623

Katrineholm 1999 (2)



Both a horizontal and a vertical cutoff are possible (or so it seems). Only a player well-versed in the characteristics of each kind of cutoff is able to find the right moves. Watch how the legendary endgame specialist Ulf Andersson handles the position.
67.♖b1?
Ulf was famous for lulling his victims into a false sense of security, beyond the point of no return. After this move, Black gets an ideal horizontal cutoff.
A) 67.♔e4! not only avoids a horizontal cutoff, it also renders a vertical one toothless, since with the knight's pawn, two files are

insufficient to carry out Grigoriev's winning method: 67...b5 68.♖b1 ♔b6 and White's pieces are placed ideally, but only one move holds: 69.♔e3!=;

B) 67.♔e5? is on its face a good move, as it brings the king closer. There is, however, an important tactical nuance, allowing Black to create a horizontal cutoff: 67...♖c6!. There it is, White can't enter a pawn endgame. Perhaps White thought that the cutoff would be imperfect and that the rook might be able to swing across to the other side, but it's a mirage: 68.♖b1 ♖c4 69.♔d5 ♖a4 or 68.♖a1 ♖c4 69.♔d5 b5! and Black reaches a theoretically winning position in either variation.

67...♖d4!

Of course, Ulf seizes his chance.

68.♔e5 ♖a4 69.♔d5 ♔a6 70.♔c6 ♖c4+ 71.♔d5 b5

Once again we've reached an ideal horizontal cutoff.

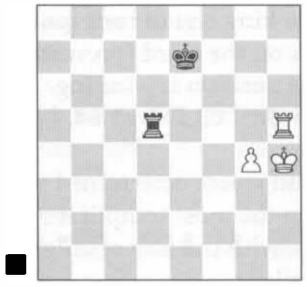
72.♖a1+ ♔b6 73.♖a2 ♖h4 74.♖a8 b4 75.♖b8+ ♔a5 76.♔c5 ♔a4 77.♖g8 ♔a3 78.♖a8+ ♔b2 79.♖a4 ♔c3 0-1

ENDINGS 59, 60, 61, 62 & Summary

Exercise 162

Michael Adams	2610
Alexey Dreev	2590

Debrecen Ech tt 1992 (5)



Black can hold the game with an only move:

69...♖d8!

Dreev is alert, and prepares frontal checks. Many players have missed this idea in similar positions. I suspect the reason is that in rook endings, constantly changing circumstances call for different defensive methods, which confuses especially those players who haven't studied them thoroughly.

69...♖d1? is one of several ways to lose the game: 70.♖f5! (cuts off the king and prepares g4-g5) 70...♔e6 71.♖f2 ♖h1+ 72.♔g5 ♖h8 (now the rook isn't in time to give any frontal checks) 73.♖f4 (with the king on g5, this defence guarantees the pawn's decisive step to the g5-square) 73...♖g8+ 74.♔h6! ♔e5 75.♖a4 ♖h8+ 76.♔g7 ♖b8 77.g5+−.

70.♖f5 ♖h8+

70...♔e6 is somewhat easier: 71.♖f4 (71.♔g5 ♖g8+) 71...♔e5! (the only move) 72.♖a4 ♔f6! and the king cuts in front of the pawn.

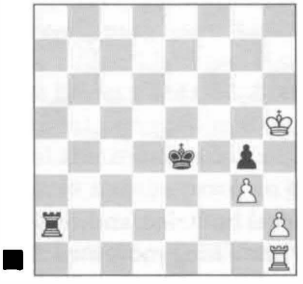
71.♔g5 ♖g8+ 72.♔f4 ♖f8! 73.♖xf8
½-½
ENDING 59

Exercise 163
Vitaly Sivuk 2482
Zbigniew Strzemiecki 2434
Krakow 2013 (9)

A vertical cutoff ensures victory. All necessary circumstances are met:
1) The king can be cut off by two files;
2) The pawn can get to Black's fourth rank before the white rook achieves the right defensive set-up on the back rank; and
3) We're dealing with a bishop's pawn.
60...♖e4!
The king must be cut off by two files.
61.♔f3
61.♖h1 seems more normal, but eventually leads to the same.
61...♖e1
It's useful to provoke the white king into moving down a rank. Other moves, such as 61...♖e6 or 61...♖e7, also win.
62.♔f2 ♖e6 63.♖h1 c5

We've reached an important position: White's king separated by two files allows Black to comfortably execute Grigoriev's combined method.
64.♖b1+ ♔c6 65.♖c1 ♔b5 66.♖b1+ ♔a4 67.♖c1 ♔b4 68.♖b1+ ♔a3 69.♖c1 ♖e5!
Completing the manoeuvre. White's king can't harass the rook, but if it were any closer, ...♖c6 would also win.
70.♔f3 ♔b2 0-1
ENDING 60

Exercise 164
Michal Krasenkow 2380
Evgeny Sveshnikov 2490
Norils ch-URS 1987 (4)



The two rare motifs featured in this position confused even an experienced grandmaster:

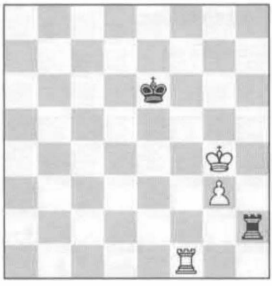
74...♔f5?

Black's pieces head for rear-guard positions, but will fail to occupy the necessary defensive posts. The active move 74...♔f3! had to be played: 75.♖f1+ ♔g2 76.♖f4 ♔xh2 77.♔xg4 ♖a8! 78.♖f2+ ♔g1.

analysis diagram

The rook performs an unusual but effective version of long-distance checking, for example: 79.♖c2 ♖g8+ 80.♔f3 ♖f8+ 81.♔e3 ♖e8+ and White's king can run, but it can't hide.

75.♖f1+ ♔e6 76.♔xg4 ♖xh2



77.♔g5!

An unusual but tried-and-tested plan. White's king moves up the board and keeps his rook ready to interpose once the enemy rook starts checking from the front.

77...♖h8 78.♖f6+! ♔e7 79.g4 ♖g8+ 80.♖g6

The rook intervenes.

80...♖a8

Black now lacks one tempo to play 80...♔f7 and draw the game. A database search for similar positions reveals all sorts of results: unobjectionable wins, missed draws, and squandered winning chances. In this game, White executed the next tricky phase with impeccable technique.

81.♖g7+ ♔f8 82.♔h6 ♖a6+ 83.♔h7 ♖a4 84.g5 ♖h4+ 85.♔g6 ♖g4?!

85...♖a4 is the most logical move but lacks one tempo to reach the bank-rank defence: 86.♖b7! (86.♖f7+?? ♔g8 87.♖f6 ♖a8=) 86...♖a6+ 87.♔h7+–.

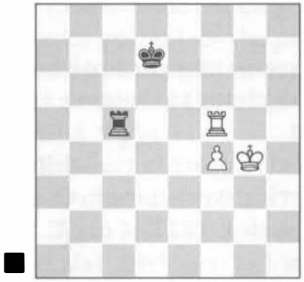
86.♖f7+ ♔g8 87.♖a7 ♔f8 88.♖a8+ ♔e7 89.♖g8 1-0

See also **ENDING 59**.

Exercise 165

Alexander Motylev	2641
Alexei Shirov	2706

Moscow FIDE Wch playoff rapid 2001 (3)



Black can hold, as long as he immediately prepares horizontal checks from the back rank.

70...♖c6?

70...♖c8! is the only correct move: 71.♖e5 (it's necessary to keep the black king at bay) 71...♔d6 (easiest, although other moves also draw) 72.♖e1 (threatening to advance) 72...♖g8+!= (the king has to keep babysitting the pawn).

71.♖e5

Once the pawn reaches the fifth rank (and here this can't be prevented anymore) a vertical cutoff by one file is good enough to win.

71...♖g6+

Surely 71...♖c8!? would have given the opponent better chances to go wrong: 72.♖e4! (the most effective, but not the only move; 72.f5? ♖e8=) 72...♖g8+ 73.♔h5 ♖f8 74.♔g6!+–; the white rook on the fourth rank allows this move, and now the advance of the pawn can no longer be stopped.

72.♔f5 ♖g8

73.♖e6

73.♖e4!, with the same idea as in the comment above, is somewhat easier. However, these mutual inaccuracies are understandable if we bear in mind that this was a rapid game.

73...♖f8+ 74.♖f6 ♖g8 75.♖f7+ ♔e8 76.♔f6 ♖h8 77.♖a7 ♖h6+ 78.♔g7 ♖h5 79.♖a4

79.♔g6 ♖h1 80.f5+–.

79...♖h4 80.♖e4+ ♔d7 81.♔g6 ♖g4+ 82.♔f5 ♖g8 83.♔f6 ♖g4 84.♖e7+ ♔d8 85.f5

Finally, the pawn has moved forward.

85...♖f4 86.♖e5 ♖a4 87.♔f7 ♖a7+ 88.♔f8 ♖a6 89.♖d5+ 1-0

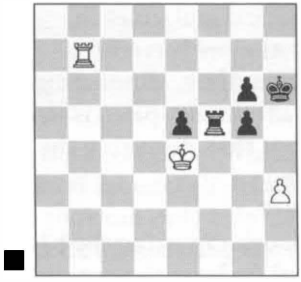
ENDING 59

Exercise 166

Karel Opocensky

Jaroslav Sajtar

Prague 1946 (4)



Simplifying by means of ...g5-g4 is easily winning since it leads by force to an ideal horizontal cutoff:

53...g4! 54.hxg4 ♖f4+ 55.♔xe5 ♖xg4

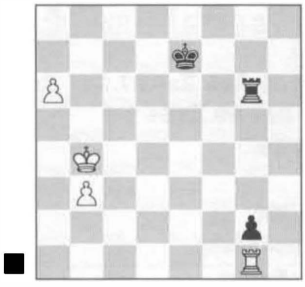
White can't prevent the creation of an ideal horizontal cutoff with the rook on f4 and the pawn on g5.

56.♔f6

56.♖b8 ♖a4! (56...g5 57.♖h8+ ♔g6 58.♖g8+ ♔f7 59.♔f5=) 57.♖h8+ ♔g5

58.♖h1 ♖h4 59.♖g1+ ♔h5 60.♔f6 ♖f4+ 61.♔e5 g5–+.
56...♖f4+ 57.♔e5 g5 58.♖b1 ♔g6 59.♖b6+ ♔h5 60.♖b1 ♖f2 0-1
ENDING 62

Exercise 167
Robert James Fischer
Pal Benko
New York ch-USA 1959 (10)



Good decision-making involves considering different types of theoretical endgames in combination with careful calculation. Here, eliminating the far-advanced a-pawn is more important than capturing the b3-pawn.
56...♖b6+?
Even though capturing the b3-pawn is natural (to leave the opponent with a rook's pawn), the tactics favour White.
56...♖xa6! is the right move, leading to either a Philidor position or an insufficient vertical cutoff: 57.♖xg2 ♔d7 58.♖c2 (58.♔b5 ♖e6 59.♖c2 ♖e8 60.♖c6 ♖b8+ 61.♖b6 ♖h8=, intending ...♔c7) 58...♖b6+ 59.♔a4 ♖b8 – a vertical cutoff by one file is not enough.
57.♔a5 ♖xb3 58.♖xg2
58.a7! ♖a3+ 59.♔b6 ♖b3+ 60.♔c5 ♖a3 61.♖xg2 leads to the same thing.
58...♖a3+ 59.♔b6 ♖b3+ 60.♔c5
60.♔c6 ♖c3+ 61.♔b5 also wins, because of the same motif as in the main variation: the black rook isn't far enough to keep giving checks.

In this position, Black would be able to make a draw if his rook were further away (e.g. on b1) by giving checks incessantly. Since this is not possible here, all Black can do is move the rook behind the pawn, allowing White to exploit a tactical resource.
60...♖a3! 61.a7! ♔e6
Black's king tries to threaten the pawn by getting off the seventh rank, but it's too little too late.
61...♔f6 62.♔b6 ♖b3+ 63.♔a6 ♖a3+ 64.♔b7 ♖b3+ 65.♔a8 ♔e7 66.♖g8 and we reach a familiar winning position: 61...♔d7 62.♖g8!.
62.♖g7 ♖a1 63.♔c6 ♖a2 64.♔b7 ♖b2+ 65.♔c8 ♖a2 66.♔b8 ♖b2+ 67.♖b7 ♖h2 68.a8♕ ♖h8+ 69.♔a7 1-0
ENDING 67

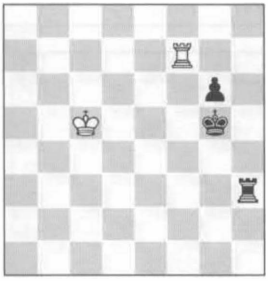
Exercise 168
Hermann von Gottschall
Jacques Mieses
Hannover 1902 (16)

White should move the rook off the h-file straight away (several good options are available) so as not to give Black the chance to gain a tempo by offering a rook trade on h4.

50.♔c5?

50.♖f7! ♖h4 (50...♖d3 51.♖h7 – now it is safe to have the rook here) 51.♖f3 and White keeps the pawn.

50...♖h4! 51.♖f7 ♖xh3



Capturing and at the same time achieving a horizontal cutoff, inevitably leading to a Lucena position.

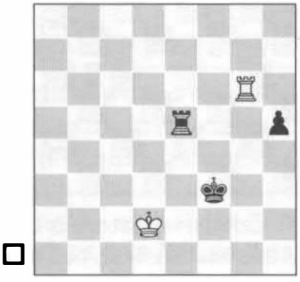
52.♔d4 ♔g4 53.♔e4 g5 54.♖f1 ♖g3 55.♖h1 ♖g2 56.♔e3 ♔g3 57.♖h8 ♖g1 58.♔e2 g4 59.♖g8 ♔h2 60.♖h8+ ♔g2 61.♖h7 g3 62.♖g7 ♖a1 63.♖g8 ♔h2 64.♖h8+ ♔g1 65.♖h7 g2 66.♖h8 ♖a5

Mieses demonstrates fine technique in this endgame, played as far back as 1902!

67.♖h7 ♖e5+ 68.♔d2 ♔f2 69.♖f7+ ♔g3 70.♖g7+ ♔f3 71.♔d1 ♖e4 0-1

See also **ENDINGS 53 & 62**.

Exercise 169
Lajos Portisch
Svetozar Gligoric
Vrnjacka Banja tt 1966



The position is a draw. White's king isn't cut off far enough. In addition, Black's rook can only help its king at the price of removing the cutoff altogether.

61.♖f6+ ♔g4 62.♖g6+

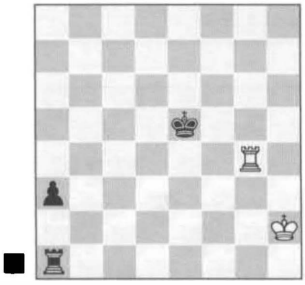
Not an error, but easier is 62.♖f1!? h4 63.♖e1!=, the typical procedure to force the king to come closer in the endgame rook and pawn vs. rook.

62...♔f5 63.♖g8 h4 64.♖f8+ ♔g4 65.♖g8+ ♔h3 66.♖g7 ♔h2 67.♖g8

White's rook won't let the black king off the h-file.

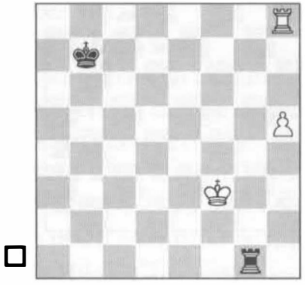
67...♖e4 68.♖g7 h3 69.♖g8 ♖e7 70.♖g6 ♖a7
Finally, Black acquiesces and tries trading rooks, but the white king is too close.
71.♔e2 ♖a2+ 72.♔f1 ♖g2 73.♖h6 ♖g4 74.♖h8 ♖f4+ 75.♔e2 ½-½
See also **ENDING 67**.

Exercise 170
Vasily Smyslov
Jan Hein Donner
Palma de Mallorca 1967 (4)



Vancura's defensive system is clear-cut once it is established, but if getting there is impossible, as is the case here, the defender is in trouble.
67...♖a2+!
The only move to prevent Vancura's Defence.
A) 67...♔d5? 68.♖g3! is Vancura's Defence;
B) 67...♖b1? prevents Vancura's Defence for now, but after 68.♖a4!, going back with 68...♖a1 is no longer an option, since White improves the position of his rook with 69.♖b4, and the manoeuvre from the game no longer wins, e.g. 69...♖a2+ 70.♔g3! ♔d5 71.♖b3! and White again establishes Vancura's Defence. Nor is 68...♖b3 any good, as the white king can come closer to the queenside beginning with 69.♔g2 ♔d5 70.♔f2.
68.♔h3
68.♔g3 places the black king one square closer to the queenside, in such a way that ...♖b2 would now not be winning. The king, however, obstructs the way for the rook to the third rank. There might follow 68...♔d5 69.♖f4 ♖b2 70.♖a4 a2 and now the black king is too late, as in the game.
68...♖b2 69.♖a4 a2 70.♔g3 ♔d5 71.♔f3 ♔c5 72.♔e3 ♔b5 73.♖a8 ♔c4
Smyslov resigned here. There might have followed 74.♖a7 ♔c3 75.♖a8 ♔c2 76.♖a7 ♔b1–+.
ENDING 66

Exercise 171
James Tarjan 2535
Predrag Nikolic 2490
Vrsac 1983 (5)



The position resembles the one in Gelfand-Anand, quoted in the introduction. In that game, too, Vancura's Defence had to be avoided.

73.♔f4!

A) 73.h6? allows the intermediate 73...♖g6! establishing Vancura's defensive set-up 74.♔f4 (74.h7 ♖h6=) 74...♖c6 75.♔g5 ♖c5+=;

B) 73.♖d8 also loses because of 73...♖g5 74.h6 ♖h5 75.♖h8 ♖f5+ 76.♔g4 ♖f6, and the black rook is not able to give checks after 77.♔g5!.

73...♖f1+

73...♔c7 74.h6! ♖g6 75.h7 ♖h6 76.♖a8+–.

74.♔g5 ♖g1+ 75.♔f6 ♖f1+ 76.♔g7 ♔c7

76...♖g1+ 77.♔h7 ♔c7 78.♖g8 ♖h1 79.h6 ♔d7 80.♖g6 ♔e7 81.♔g7+–.

77.h6 ♖g1+ 78.♔h7 ♔d7 79.♖g8 ♖f1 80.♖g4 ♔e7 81.♔g6 ♖f6+ 82.♔g5 ♔f7 83.h7 ♖g6+ 84.♔h5 ♖xg4 85.h8♕ ♖g7 86.♕h6 ♔g8 87.♕d6 ♖h7+ 88.♔g6 ♖g7+ 89.♔f6 ♖f7+ 90.♔e6 ♖b7 1-0

ENDING 66

Exercise 172

Gyula Sax	2545
James Plaskett	2435

Lugano 1986 (9)

Only if the pawn is on its third rank can the defending side hope for a draw. Here, Black wins: with the king cut off by five files, any position with the rook's pawn on its fourth rank supported by the king is winning, even if the rook were able to give checks from the front.

77...♔b4

Black simply shepherds the pawn as far down to the board as possible.

78.♖b8+ ♔a3 79.♖b5 a4 80.♖b8 ♔a2 81.♔f2 a3 82.♖b6 ♔a1 83.♖b8 a2 84.♖b6

Once the pawn has reached its seventh rank, Black executes the familiar winning manoeuvre, the first stage of which consists in bringing the rook to the b1-square.

84...♖c7 85.♔e2 ♖c1 86.♔d3 ♖b1

In my database there are seventy-one games with this position (including symmetrical ones and those with rook on b5, b7, or b8), nine of which ended in a draw.

87.♖h6 ♔b2 88.♖b6+ ♔c1 89.♖c6+! ♔d1 90.♖h6 ♖b3+ 91.♔c4

This is the critical position. The rook sacrifice that follows should be well-known. Even so, some players still go for 91...♖a3, which leads to a draw after 92.♖h1+ with the idea of blocking on a1 or otherwise keep the option to give checks, depending on what the black king does. Another winning method consists of 91...♖b6!.

91...♖c3+!

The reason for the nine draws (see comment after move 86 above) was that all nine players didn't find this move.

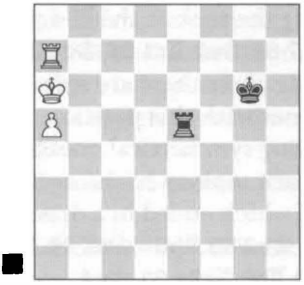
92.♔b4 ♖c1 0-1

ENDING 67

Exercise 173

Robert Markus	2604
Zbynek Hracek	2646

Germany Bundesliga 2014/15 (12)



It doesn't matter that the black king is off-side. All the rook needs to do is apply Vancura's Defence, which is perfectly viable against a pawn on the fifth rank.

55...♖e6+! 56.♔b5 ♖e5+

Black should keep giving checks until the king abandons the pawn.

57.♔b6 ♖e6+ 58.♔c5 ♖e5+ 59.♔d6

Once the king is away from the pawn, the pawn itself must become the target of attack, while keeping the option open of giving lateral checks, should they be required.

59...♖f5! 60.a6 ♖f6+ 61.♔e5 ♖f5+ 62.♔e4 ♖f6!

Now the rook must attack the pawn from the sixth rank.

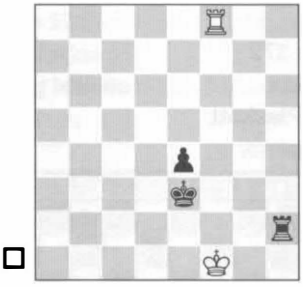
63.♖a8 ♔g7 64.♔d4 ♖c6 65.♔e5 ♖b6 66.♔d5 ♖f6 67.♖a7+ ♔g6 68.♔d4 ♖c6 69.♖a8 ♔g7 70.♖a7+ ♔g6 71.♔e5 ♖b6 72.♔d5 ♖f6 73.♔e4 ♖b6 74.♔e5 ♖c6 75.♖d7 ♖xa6 76.♖d6+ ♖xd6 77.♔xd6 ½-½

ENDING 66

Exercise 174

Alejandro Escudero	2210
David Anton Guijarro	2476

La Roda 2012 (5)



Absolute precision is required in this position: after 68.♖d8, the rook won't be in time to go to the long side.

68.♖d8?

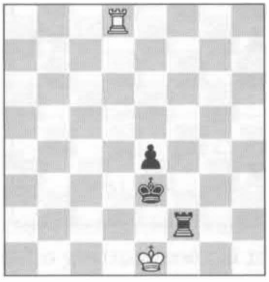
68.♖e8, achieving Kling & Horwitz's defence, is the easiest way to draw the game.

68...♖f2+!

This check is essential to get the rook to the other side with tempo.

In the game Asilkefelli-Erdogan, Kemer 2012, Black let victory slip through his hands after 68...♖h1+? (move 63 in that game) 69.♔g2 ♖e1 70.♖a8!=.

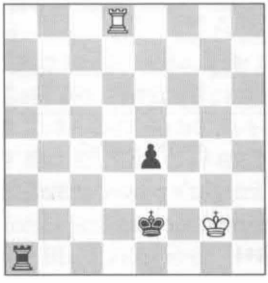
69.♔e1



69...♖a2!

The only move, denying the enemy rook access to the long side, by going there himself. Many games have followed less successful paths, such as Paulovic-Stork, Ricany 2011: 69...♖f4? (move 72 in that game) 70.♖d7 ♔f3 71.♖d4? (the losing move; 71.♖a7, and many other moves, would hold the draw) 71...♖g4!–+ 72.♔f1 ♖h4 73.♔g1 ♖h5 74.♖d8 e3 75.♖f8+ ♔e2 76.♖d8 ♖g5+ 77.♔h2 ♔e1 78.♖a8 e2 79.♖f8 ♖d5 80.♖g8 ♔d1 0-1.

70.♔f1 ♖a1+ 71.♔g2 ♔e2!



Because of the bad position of White's rook, the black pawn will reach its sixth rank.

72.♖d7

The perhaps more natural variation 72.♖b8 e3 73.♖b2+ ♔d3 74.♖b3+ ♔d2 75.♖b2+ ♔c3! shows that White's rook lacks effective checking distance.

72...e3 73.♖d8 ♖a7

Now the black rook prepares to kick the enemy king away by means of a check on the g-file.

74.♖d6

If 74.♖g8 ♔e1 wins easily.

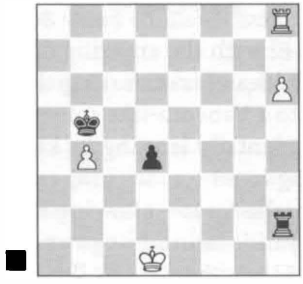
74...♖g7+ 75.♔h3 ♔f2 76.♖f6+ ♔e1 77.♖e6 e2 78.♖d6 ♖g5 79.♔h4 ♖g1 0-1

ENDINGS 56 & 57 & 58

Exercise 175

Zurab Azmaiparashvili	2610
Vladimir Malaniuk	2505

Lviv zt 1990 (5)



Endgame theory dictates that White can't win with the pawn on the seventh on the a- or b-files. Thus, the easiest plan is to bring the king to the safe a7-/b7-squares. Meanwhile, the presence of the d-pawn is irrelevant.

65...♔b6!

Based on an extremely simple plan. There is, however, a surprising alternative plan, consisting in sheltering the king in front of the defender's passed pawn. This plan, which might appeal to players looking for active defence, is extremely risky, but reveals an extraordinary and highly instructive saving resource, well worth pointing out: 65...♔c4?! 66.h7! ♔d3 67.♔c1 and here, with the black position at the verge of collapse, there is a surprising yet typical resource.

analysis diagram

67...♖c2+!! with the amazing dual-purpose idea of transferring the rook into a Vancura-like set-up and incidentally lending its king a helping hand – as sticking out an umbrella for it – allowing it to safely hide behind its pawn (67...♖h5? 68.♔b2 ♔d2 69.♖d8! ♖xh7 70.♖xd4+ wins, most easily by a horizontal cutoff): 68.♔b1 ♖c7 69.♔b2 ♔c4! 70.b5 ♔b4=.

66.b5 ♔b7 67.h7 ♔a7 68.b6+ ♔b7 69.♔e1 d3 70.♔d1 d2 71.♔c2 ♖h1 72.♔xd2 ♖h6 ½-½

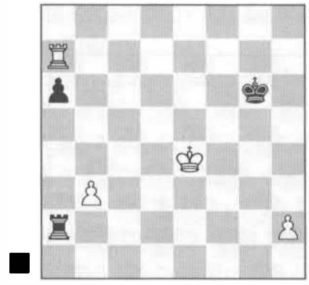
ENDINGS 62 & 65 & 75

Exercise 176

Aloizas Kveinys

Alexander Panchenko

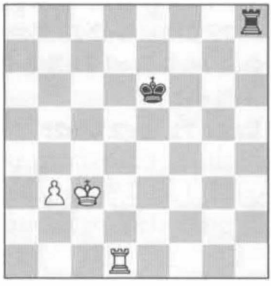
Daugavpils ch-URS U20 1979



The fight is about cutting off the black king as far away as possible; two files isn't enough, but three is.

46...♖xh2?

46...a5, while not the only way to draw, is probably best. The idea is to attack the b3-pawn, without losing the a6-pawn with check: 47.♔d4 ♖b2 48.♔c3 (48.♔c4 ♖c2+!) 48...♖xh2 and now the endgame is a draw, for example: 49.♖xa5 ♔f6 50.♖d5 ♔e6 51.♖d1 ♖h8



analysis diagram

With a knight's pawn, a two-file cutoff is insufficient.

47.♖xa6+!

Winning.

47...♔f7

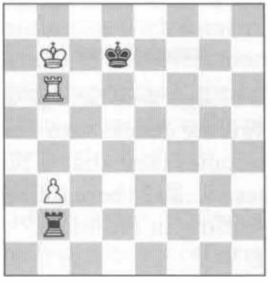
48.♔d5!

It's too late for Black to take any satisfactory defensive stand.

48...♔e7

48...♖h8 49.b4 ♖d8+ 50.♖d6 ♖b8 51.♔c5 and the pawn will cross the middle of the board, and this, as we know, inevitably leads to Lucena.

49.♔c6! ♖c2+ 50.♔b7 ♔d7 51.♖h6 ♖b2 52.♖b6



White is ready to move his pawn forward.

52...♖c2 53.b4 ♖c7+ 54.♔b8 ♖c1 55.b5 ♖c8+ 56.♔a7 ♖c1 57.♖b7+ ♔c8 58.♖b8+ ♔d7 59.b6 ♖a1+ 60.♔b7 ♖b1 61.♖h8 ♔e7 62.♖h2 ♔d6 63.♖c2 1-0

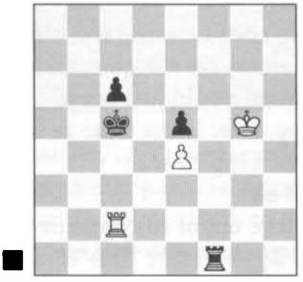
The Lucena position is imminent, therefore Black resigned.

Summary of section 3 of Chapter 10

Exercise 177

Ufuk Sezen Arat	2400
Deniz Ozen	2351

Turkey tt 2017 (10)



59...♔d4?

Simplification is a mistake, as the white rook is on the long side. All moves that keep the c6-pawn win:

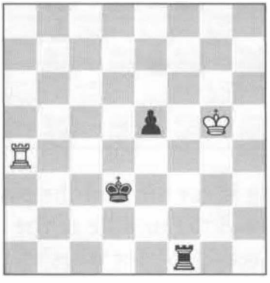
A) 59...♔d6! 60.♖d2+ ♔e6 61.♖c2 ♖g1+ 62.♔h5 ♔d6 63.♖c4 ♖f1 64.♔g5 ♖f4–+;

B) 59...♔b6–+ 60.♖b2+ ♔c7 61.♖c2 ♔d6 62.♖d2+ ♔e6! 63.♖c2 ♖g1+ 64.♔h5 ♔d6–+.

60.♖xc6 ♔xe4 61.♖c4+ ♔d3

The white king is cut off and the pawn is ready to advance, but:

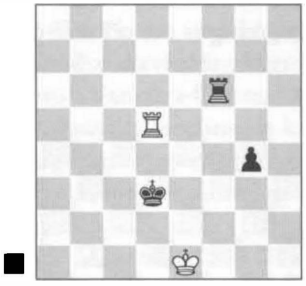
62.♖a4!



Showing good defensive technique by going to the long side.

62...e4 63.♖a3+!
Time to start giving checks. 63.♔g4? would lose on account of 63...e3 64.♖a3+ ♔d2! 65.♖a2+ ♔e1 66.♖a1+ ♔f2 67.♖a2+ e2–+.
63...♔e2
The king tries crossing the e-file. Should it stay on the queenside, then White would just keep checking. Now is the time to bring the white king closer.
64.♔g4! e3
Now White ought to continue with 65.♔g3! ♖g1+ 66.♔f4 ♖f1+ 67.♔g3 ♖d1 68.♔g2 ♖d2 69.♖a1!, but instead he played:
65.♖a2+? ♔e1 66.♔g3 e2 67.♔g2
Reaching Exercise 142.
ENDINGS 54 & 57

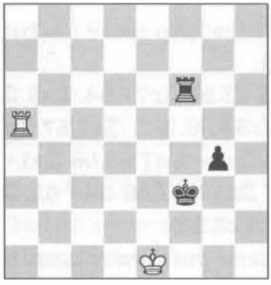
Exercise 178
Lajos Tipary
Karoly Androvitzky
Budapest ch-HUN 1953



The king is cut off, and the pawn has crossed the middle of the board. Does it really matter whether Black plays 63...♔e3 or 63...♔e4 ? Yes, it does! White has a defence against one of these moves, based on an interesting resource well worth remembering.
63...♔e3?
63...♔e4! 64.♖a5 ♖f3! 65.♖a4+ ♔f5 66.♔e2 ♔g5 would lead to the Lucena position.
64.♖a5 ♔f3
The key variation is 64...♖f3 65.♖a4! g3 66.♖g4, reaching an unusual position in which Black can't rearrange his pieces without allowing Philidor's Defence:

analysis diagram

66...♔d3 67.♖g8 ♔e4 68.♖g7 ♔f4 69.♖g8 (giving checks also draws) and it becomes clear that if Black continues 69...♖a3 there follows 70.♔f1, ending in Philidor's Defence.



65.♔f1 ♔g3+ 66.♔g1 ½-½

White achieves the back-rank defence.

ENDING 55

Exercise 179

Evert Straat

Edgar Colle

Scheveningen 1923 (7)

Many rook vs. rook and pawn positions are theoretically lost, and over-confidence with some players causes them to lose even more often. In this position, the key for White is to assess the right moment to part with the b2-pawn.

51.♔e3?

This leads to defeat. White can't keep the b-pawn, nor otherwise execute any known defensive method of play.

51.♖e4! prevents the king from making progress, and if Black intends to capture the pawn, White has several defences, for example: 51...♖d2 52.♔e3 ♖xb2 53.♔d3 and the white king is in time.

51...♔b4 52.♖d2 ♖c5 53.♔d4 ♖c8 54.♖h2 ♔b3 55.♔d3 ♖d8+ 56.♔e3 b4

The position is of theoretical interest: the b2-pawn is about to drop and there is no way to get any known defensive construct in return for it.

57.♖h4 ♖d1 58.♔e2 ♖c1 59.♔d2 ♖c2+ 60.♔d1 ♖xb2

Reaching an almost identical position we have seen several times before: the pawn is unstoppable.

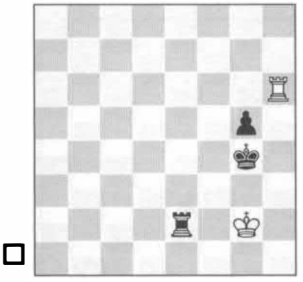
61.♔c1 ♔a2 62.♖h8 ♖b1+ 63.♔c2 b3+ 64.♔c3 ♖c1+ 65.♔b4 ♖g1 66.♔c3 ♖g3+ 67.♔b4 b2 68.♖a8+ ♔b1 69.♖c8 ♖g7 70.♔c3 ♖a7 0-1

See also **ENDING 53**.

Exercise 180

Mikhail Ulibin	2560
Vlacheslav Bashkov	2430

Chelyabinsk 1993



White can hold by means of a simple variation that, however, requires a keen understanding of the back-rank defence.

55.♔f1 ♖a2 56.♖b6?

A difficult choice. 56.♖g6!! would have demonstrated a deep understanding of the position. White's rook prevents the pawn from moving forward while his king correctly takes up residence on g1. After that, the rook will transfer to the back rank, e.g. 56...♔h4 57.♔g1! g4 58.♖f6, setting up the back-rank defence.

56...♔g3!

Now White's king has no time for ♔g1.

57.♖b3+

An echo of Philidor's Defence, which here doesn't work.

57...♔h2! 58.♖b4 ♖g2 59.♖c4 g4 60.♖c8 ♖g1+ 61.♔e2 g3 0-1

By now a familiar sight: the Lucena position is about to appear on the board.

ENDING 55

Exercise 181

Stefan Turna 2218

Miroslav Rohacek 2297

Slovakia tt 2011/12 (6)

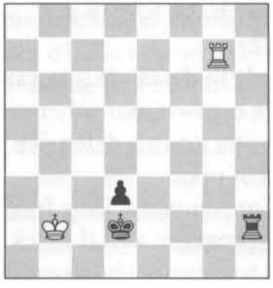
Black can win by moving the rook to the h-file, taking away the possibility of White creating maximum checking distance. After that, Black wins by force by means of a manoeuvre that, oddly enough, is much more laborious if it is his turn to move.

74...♖h2!

One of the most complicated theoretical endgame positions. No fewer than twenty-three games in my database have reached this position, symmetries included, and eight ended in a draw.

75.♖g7

75.♔b3!? is stubborner, but the position of the king on the third rank allows Black to carry out a new manoeuvre: 75...♖h8 76.♖g2+ ♔e1 77.♖g1+ ♔f2 78.♖g7 ♖d8!. The point: now White's king can't go to c1, which would be possible if it were on the b2-square. 79.♖f7+ ♔e2 80.♖e7+ ♔d1 0-1 Easton-Mitchell, England 1992 (in this game the move numbers were 62-67).



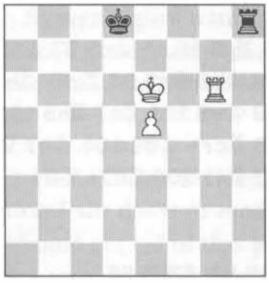
75...♖h8?

By mixing both good and bad moves, Black shows he lacks thorough knowledge of the endgame. The only winning move was 75...♖h1 and if 76.♖g2+ ♔e3

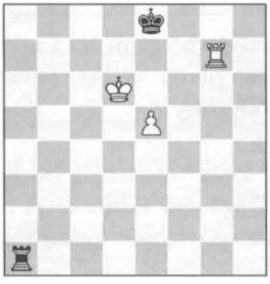
77.♖g3+ ♔e2 78.♖g2+ ♔f3 79.♖g8, 79...d2 shows how useful it is to have the rook on the back rank.
76.♖g2+ ♔e3 77.♖g3+ ♔e2 78.♖g2+ ♔f3

79.♖d2??
White immediately returns the favour. Correct was 79.♖g7! with the idea of attacking the pawn with the king instead. If Black stops this with 79...♖c8 there follows 80.♖h7!, creating sufficient checking distance: 80...d2 81.♖h3+ ♔g2 82.♖d3=.
79...♔e3–+ 80.♔c1 ♖h1+ 81.♖d1 ♖xd1+ 82.♔xd1 d2 0-1
ENDING 58

Exercise 182
Edgar Colle
George Koltanowski
Paris 1929 (7)



In this seemingly simple position, we are about to witness a great struggle revolving around two elementary defensive methods: Philidor's and long-side defence. Eventually Black succeeds.
89...♔e8!
Given that the black rook is badly placed on the short side, this move, aiming for Philidor's Defence, is Black's only choice. Let's see some alternatives:
A) 89...♖e8+? 90.♔d6+–;
B) 89...♖h1? 90.♖g8+ ♔c7 91.♔f7.
White's king on the long side deprives Black of a viable defence.
90.♔d6
Threatening 91.e6, but giving the black rook some respite.
90.♖g1 ♖h6+! (Philidor).
90...♖h1 91.♖g7 ♖a1!
The rook aims to give checks on the third rank from the long side.
91...♖h6+? would be wrong on account of 92.e6+–.



92.♖e7+ ♔f8?!
92...♔d8 was easier, as it doesn't allow the offer of a rook trade on the sixth rank.
93.♖d7 ♖a6+ 94.♔d5 ♔e8!

The most accurate, finally reaching the basic position of Philidor's Defence.

95.♖d6 ♖a1

Now trading rooks is impossible.

96.♔e6 ♖h1

Preparing to go back to his third rank via the other side.

97.♖d2 ♖h6+ 98.♔d5 ♖a6 99.♖b2 ♖a7 100.♖b6 ♔e7 101.♖e6+ ♔d7 102.♖h6 ♖a5+ 103.♔e4 ♖a1 ½-½

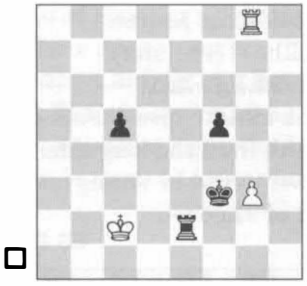
ENDING 52

Exercise 183

Enver Bukic

Dragoljub Janosevic

Kraljevo ch-YUG 1967



White saves the game by a mix of creative play and theoretical understanding:

58.♔d3!

58.♔c3? loses because of 58...♖g2 59.♖g5 ♖xg3 and White can't take the f5-pawn without losing the rook.

58...♖e3+

Now 58...♖g2 is met by 59.♖g5 ♖xg3 60.♖xf5+ ♔g4+ 61.♔e4=.

59.♔c4 ♖e4+ 60.♔xc5 ♖g4 61.♖f8! ♖g5 62.♔d4 ♔xg3 63.♔e3 ♔g4 64.♔f2 ½-½

White will achieve Philidor's Defence.

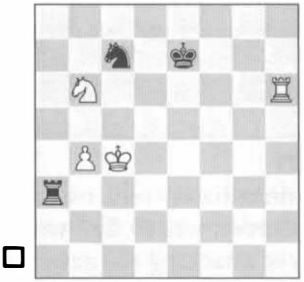
ENDING 52

Exercise 184

Eugene Znosko-Borovsky

Josef Cuklerman

Paris 1929 (2)



It requires careful calculation to establish that 92.♘d5+ is the only winning move, reaching a basic theoretical position:

92.♘d5+! ♘xd5 93.♔xd5 ♔d7

Black's king unsuccessfully tries to make it to the b-file.

94.♔c5! ♖g3

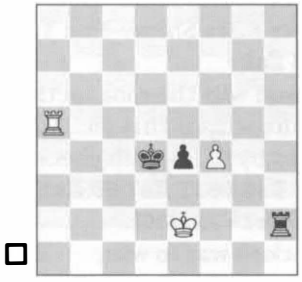
94...♔c7 95.♖h7+ ♔b8 96.♔b6 and because of the bad position of his rook, Black manages neither Philidor's Defence nor the back-rank defence, which would otherwise be valid against a knight's pawn.

95.♔b6 ♖g8 96.b5 ♔c8 97.♔a7! ♖g7+ 98.♔a8 ♖g5 99.♖c6+ ♔d7 100.♖b6 ♔c8 101.♖b7 ♖h5 102.b6 ♖b5 103.♖c7+ ♔d8 104.♔b7 ♖b1 105.♖c2 ♖a1 106.♖d2+ 1-0

We're about to reach the Lucena position.

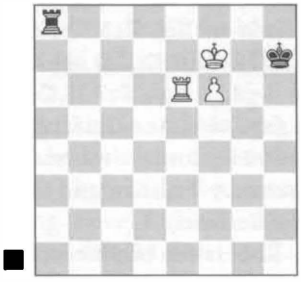
ENDINGS 52, 53 & 55

Exercise 185
Carlos Guimard
Erich Eliskases
Buenos Aires ch-ARG 1955 (10)



White has one losing move, the culprit being his own pawn.
45.♔f1!?
45.♔e1?? is losing. In this variation we see how one's own pawn can sabotage an otherwise valid defensive system. White's rook can't carry out Philidor's Defence as it is unable to give checks from behind: 45...e3 46.f5 ♔d3! (gaining a crucial tempo) 47.♖a3+ ♔e4 48.f6 ♔f3 (and now another one) 49.♔d1 ♖d2+ 50.♔e1 ♖b2 51.♔d1 ♔f2–+.
45.♔d1! is easiest. Had White played this move, then he might have avoided his later error: 45... e3 46.f5 ♔d3 47.♖a3+ ♔e4 48.f6. Black is forced to deal with the far-advanced pawn, after which we are in the final stage of Philidor's Defence.
45...e3
45...♔e3 46.♖a3+ ♔xf4= (Philidor).
46.f5
White should get rid of this pawn to reach a pure Philidor position, and he seems to be well on his way to doing so.
46...♔d3 47.♖e5??
47.♖a3+ ♔e4 48.f6 (White needs only one more tempo, for either f6-f7 or ♖a5, to start the second stage of Philidor's Defence) 48...♔f3 (the most tenacious) 49.♔g1! ♖g2+ 50.♔f1! ♖b2 51.♖a1! ♖b7 52.f7 ♖xf7 53.♖a8=, preparing checks from behind.
47...e2+ 48.♔g1 ♖h4!
The only winning move. 48...♖h5? 49.♔f2 forces a repetition of moves: 49...♖h2+ and White has an additional option: 50.♔f3!=.
49.♔g2 ♖f4! 50.♖d5+ ♔e4 51.♖d8 ♖xf5 52.♖e8+ ♔d3 53.♖d8+ ♔e3 54.♖e8+ ♔d2 55.♖d8+ ♔e1
Reaching Lucena.
56.♖d7 ♖g5+ 57.♔h2 ♔f2 58.♖f7+ ♔e3 59.♖e7+ ♔f3 0-1
ENDINGS 52 & 53

Exercise 186
Many games



White's playing his rook to the sixth is a rather devious idea, setting the stage for one of the most common errors in the whole of

endgame theory. The pawn being a bishop's pawn means that Black has two defensive options; with a central pawn, he would only have one.

In my database, one hundred and seventeen games reached this position, out of which twenty-one did not end in a draw; with a central pawn, there are only forty-nine games, but the drawing percentage isn't any higher: sixteen games.

65...♖a7+??

The typical error. Other rook moves on the a-file lose for the same reason.

A) 65...♔h6! is one of the correct moves, and natural as well. Black keeps the rook in the corner, preventing the white king from reaching the eighth rank, and keeping long-distance checks in reserve: 66.♖e8 (66.♔e7 ♔g6 67.f7+ ♔g7 68.♖a6 ♖b8 69.♖a7 ♖f8 70.♔e6 ♖b8 71.♖c7 ♖b1 72.♔e7 ♖e1+ 73.♔d8 ♔f8 ½-½ Rakhmanov-Vaibhav, Al-Ain 2015) 66...♖a7+ 67.♔e6 ♖a6+ 68.♔f5 ♖a5+ 69.♖e5 ♖a8 70.♖d5 ♔h7 71.♖d7+ ♔h6 72.♖d1 ♔h7 73.♖h1+ ♔g8 74.♔g6 ♖a7 75.♖d1 ♖g7+ 76.fxg7 ½-½ Acs-Gelfand, Warsaw 2003 (move 66 was move 89 in Rakhmanov-Vaibhav, and move 76 in Acs-Gelfand);

B) 65...♖b8! is the other correct move. From this square, the rook keeps sufficient checking distance: 66.♖e1 (66.♖a6 ♖b7+ 67.♔e8 ♖b8+ 68.♔e7 ♖b7+ 69.♔e6 ♔g6 70.♖d6 ♖f7 71.♔e5 ♖f8 72.♖a6 ♖f7 73.♖a1 ♖xf6 74.♖g1+ ♔f7 ½-½ Tartakower-Spielmann, Bad Kissingen 1928) 66...♖b7+ 67.♖e7 ♖b8 68.♖a7 ♖b1 69.♔e6+ ♔g6 ½-½ Shirov-Hou Yifan, Tromsø 2013 (move 66 was move 83 in Tartakower-Spielmann, and move 80 in Shirov-Hou Yifan).

66.♔f8! ♖a8+

The reason why the rook on the sixth rank wins is that 66...♔g6 is answered by 67.f7+ with check.

67.♖e8! ♖a6 68.f7 ♖a7 69.♖e1 ♖a8+ 70.♔e7 ♖a7+ 71.♔f6!

The quickest way to win.

71...♖a6+ 72.♖e6 ♖a8 73.♖e8 ♖a6+ 74.♔e5 1-0

Radjabov-Swiercz, Warsaw 2013.

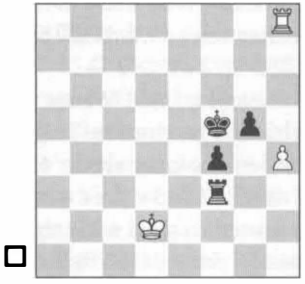
ENDING 57

Exercise 187

Florin Gheorghiu

Alvars Gipslis

Moscow 1967 (7)



White can easily draw by either 56.hxg5 or 56.♖f8+.

It's interesting to see how quickly White goes down after the comfortable-looking pin:

56.♖h5?

56.hxg5! ♖e3 (56...♔xg5 57.♔e2) 57.♖h1! ♔xg5 58.♖e1 is the most comfortable variation.

56...♔g4! 57.♖xg5+ ♔xh4

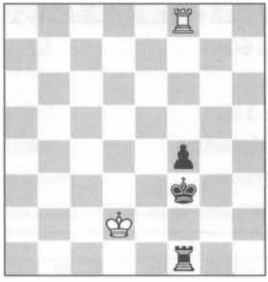
58.♖e5

58.♖g8 ♖e3! followed by a rook move on the e-file and advancing the pawn.

58...♖f2+ 59.♔e1 ♔g3 60.♖e8

60.♖g5+ ♔f3 61.♖a5 ♖b2–+.

60...♖a2 61.♖g8+ ♔f3 62.♖f8 ♖a1+ 63.♔d2 ♖f1



Black threatens to move the pawn forward. The only way to prevent this is for White to give lateral checks from the long side, but unfortunately for him, his own king is in the way.

64.♖f7 ♔g2 65.♖g7+ ♔f2 66.♖h7 f3 67.♖h2+ ♔g3 68.♖h8 ♖a1 69.♖g8+ ♔f2 70.♖f8 ♖a7 71.♖d8 ♖e7 72.♖d6 ♔f1 73.♖f6 f2 74.♖a6 ♖g7 0-1

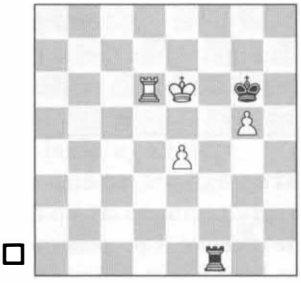
See also **ENDING 56**.

Exercise 188

Bruce Steinfeld

Igor Ivanov 2505

Columbus 1988



Faced with the imminent loss of half his pawn majority, White must seize the moment to transform the position into a theoretically winning endgame. Knowing some theory about a pawn on the sixth rank comes in handy: the game is won if the stronger side's king reaches the eighth rank without offering an exchange of rooks.

78.♔d7+??

Not good enough to win, as it doesn't prevent Black from setting up a long-side defence.

A) 78.♔e7+! ♔xg5 (the black king is just a tad offside) 79.e5 ♖a1 80.e6. Now Black would need his rook on the eighth rank and his king on g6, but he lacks the time to achieve this: 80...♔g6 81.♔e8! (the only winning move) 81...♖a8+ 82.♖d8 ♖a6 83.e7 ♔f6 84.♔f8+–;

B) 78.♖d5? keeps both pawns, but the white rook is now very passive, allowing Black a long-side defence: 78...♖a1!=.

78...♔xg5 79.e5

79...♖a1??

Surprisingly, trying to set up the long-side defence is premature. First, the king has to be improved: 79...♖e1! 80.e6 ♔f6 81.♖d2 ♖a1!. Now is the time to bring the rook to the long side: 82.♖f2+ ♔g7 83.e7 ♖a7+!.

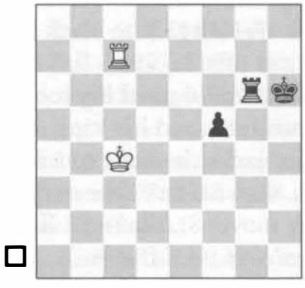
80.e6 ♖a7+ 81.♔e8 ♔f6 82.e7+ ♔g7 83.♖d1 ♔f6 84.♔f8 1-0

ENDINGS 54 & 57

Exercise 189

German Bazeev	2298
Stanislav Savchenko	2502

St Petersburg 2011 (9)



Here, we are about to witness some mutual lack of understanding about cutting off an enemy king:

51.♔d5?

This allows an ideal horizontal cutoff; 51.♔d3! or 51.♔d4! would have prevented this.

51...♔g5?

Black fails to seize his chance: 51...♖g4!.

52.♖c1 ♖a6 53.♖g1+ ♔f6 54.♔d4 ♖a3

With great effort, Black has achieved an imperfect horizontal cutoff, but White's rook is correctly placed on the g-file, so the result should be a draw.

55.♖f1?

White shows he doesn't know the defensive technique 55.♖g2!.

55...♔g5!–+ 56.♖g1+ ♔f4 57.♖f1+ ♔g4 58.♔e5 ♖e3+ 59.♔d4 f4 60.♖g1+ ♔f3 61.♖h1 ♖e8 62.♖f1+ ♔g3 63.♔d3 f3 64.♖a1 ♔h2 65.♖a7 f2 66.♖h7+ ♔g2 67.♖g7+ ♔f1 68.♔d2 ♖d8+ 69.♔c2 ♖d5 0-1

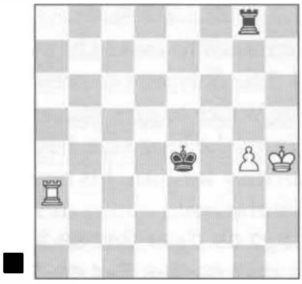
ENDING 62

Exercise 190

Mark Taimanov

Bent Larsen

Palma de Mallorca izt 1970 (7)



Using the g8-rook to kick the white king back should take priority over any king move.

63...♔e5??

63...♖h8+! was necessary to prevent a horizontal cutoff, for example: 64.♔g5 (64.♔g3 ♔e5! transposes to the main variation) 64...♖g8+ 65.♔h5 ♖h8+ 66.♔g5 ♖g8+ 67.♔h4 ♖h8+ 68.♔g3 ♔e5! 69.♖a6=. This leads to an imperfect horizontal cutoff, allowing Black to draw the game provided the rook stays on the h-file. This can be achieved by means of 69...♖h7 or 69...♖h1.

64.♖a6

Now the imperfect horizontal cutoff wins as the black rook can't go the h-file in time.

64...♔f4

64...♖h8+ 65.♔g5! ♖g8+ 66.♔h5 ♖h8+ 67.♖h6! ♖g8 68.g5+–; the imperfect cutoff has turned into an ideal one.

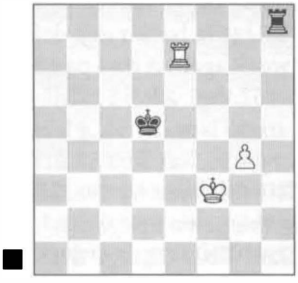
65.♖f6+ ♔e5 66.g5 1-0

ENDING 62

Exercise 191

John Emms	2463
Mark Hebden	2467

England 4NCL 2015/16 (10)



The defending side must immediately harass the rook on the seventh rank lest it build a bridge (see the variation at move 67).

66...♖f8+?

66...♔d6! is necessary, and if 67.♖e4, 67...♔d5!.

67.♔g3 ♔d6

67...♖g8 seems a logical alternative, but is met by 68.♔f4 ♖f8+ 69.♔g5 ♖g8+ 70.♔f5 ♖f8+ 71.♔g6 ♖g8+ 72.♖g7, building a bridge.

68.♖e4 ♔d5 69.♖f4 ♖g8 70.♖f6!!

White has transformed an inefficient vertical cutoff by two files into an imperfect horizontal cutoff, and is now winning the game since Black's king can't reach the h-file. It's a pity that White fails to correctly follow up on his excellent play.

70...♔e5 71.♖a6?

Allowing the opponent to go to an adjacent file of the pawn. 71.♖h6! would force an ideal horizontal cutoff within a few moves.

71...♖h8!

Black grabs his last chance.

72.♖b6 ♖h1 73.♖c6 ♖h8 74.g5 ♔f5 75.♖c5+ ♔g6 76.♔g4 ♖h1 77.♖c6+ ♔g7 78.♖c7+ ½-½

ENDING 62

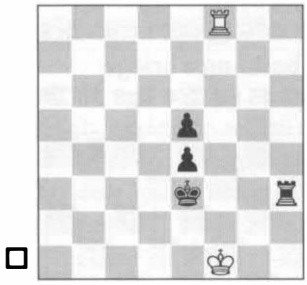
Chapter 10

Exercise 192

Igor Slunlakov 2321

Nikolai Vlassov 2426

Kemerovo 2011 (4)



Against two doubled central pawns, the best option is Kling & Horwitz's defence. Therefore, the rook must be behind the pawns to capture one at the opportune moment.

90.♔g2?

This move would be good enough against one extra pawn, but not against two. White must play 90.♖e8! ♖h1+ 91.♔g2 ♖e1 92.♖xe5=, Kling & Horwitz's defence with one pawn.

90...♖f3 91.♖a8

Intending a long-side defence, but it doesn't work against two pawns.

91...♖f2+! 92.♔g1 ♖d2 93.♖a3+ ♔e2 94.♖a5

White has no time to take one pawn and bring the rook back to the long side.

94...e3 95.♔g2

Capturing the pawn with 95.♖xe5 leads to a theoretically lost ending, as the rook lacks enough checking distance: 95...♔f3 96.♖f5+ ♔e4 97.♖f8 ♖d1+ 98.♔g2 e2–+.

95...♔d3+ 96.♔g3 ♔e4 97.♖a1 ♖d4 98.♖a3 ♖b4 99.♖c3 ♖b1 100.♖c2 ♔d3 101.♖a2 e2 102.♖a3+ ♔e4 0-1

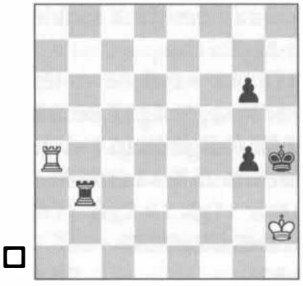
ENDING 69

Exercise 193

Peter Sicheri

Dimo Werner 2390

Münster 1989 (5)



Against doubled knight's pawns, the defender can save the game by placing the rook on the second rank. In this position particularly, it is the only way to draw.

51.♖a2!

Let's see why other moves lose:

A) 51.♖a1? (the back-rank defence doesn't work against two pawns) 51...♖b2+! 52.♔g1 ♔h3! 53.♖d1 (all White can do is wait) 53...g3 54.♖a1 g5 55.♖c1 g4 56.♖a1 ♖b3 57.♖f1 g2 58.♖c1 ♖f3 followed by 59...♖f1, winning the pawn endgame;

B) 51.♖a8? ♖b2+ 52.♔g1 ♔h3 53.♖h8+ ♔g3–+.

51...g3+ 52.♔g2 ♖b4 53.♖a8 ♖b2+ 54.♔g1 ♔g4 55.♖g8 g5 56.♖f8 g2

The only practical chance worth a try.

57.♖h8?

A bad square. The white rook must be ready not only to give checks from behind, but also to return to the back rank, for instance with 57.♖c8=.

57...♖b1+!

Now the position is winning, as seen several times in the previous chapter. The rest of the game is totally incomprehensible and best left uncommented.

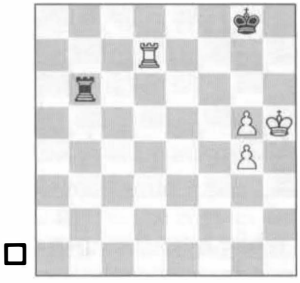
58.♔xg2 ♖b2+ 59.♔f1 ♔g3 60.♖a8 ♖b1+ 61.♔e2 g4 62.♖g8 ♖a1 63.♖g7 ♖a8 64.♔f1 ♖b8 65.♖g6 ♖f8+ 66.♔g1 ♖a8 67.♔f1 ♖a1+ 68.♔e2 ♔h3 69.♔f2 ♖a2+ 70.♔g1 ♔g3 71.♔f1 ♖h2 72.♔g1 ♖c2—+ ½-½

ENDING 70

Exercise 194

Aleksander Delchev	2637
Robert Markus	2586

Vrsac 2006 (8)



Black has a rock-solid defensive set-up. Let's prove this by looking at two attempts at grandmaster level to see how easy it is to hold this position:

64.g6

64.♖a7 ♖c6 65.g6. Now three moves draw, all based on the same idea: 65...♖c1! (in this game the number of this move was 73), to give checks from behind should the king go to h6 (naturally, the other correct moves are 65...♖c2 and 65...♖c3). 66.♔h6 ♖h1+ 67.♔g5 ♖b1 68.♖e7 ♖a1 69.♖e5 ♔g7 70.♖b5 ♖c1 71.♖b7+ ♔g8 72.g7 ♖c5+ 73.♔h4 ♖a5 74.♖e7 ♖b5 75.g5 ♖b4+ 76.♔h5 ♖b6 77.♖a7 ♖c6 78.g6 ♖c1 79.♔g5 ½-½ Spoelman-Mikhalevski, Budva 2009.

64...♖b1!

The same as in the comment to the previous move.

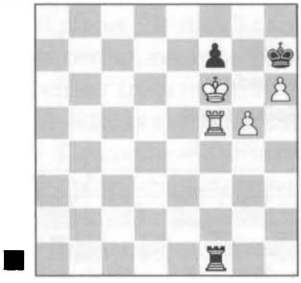
65.♖e7 ♖a1 66.♔g5 ♖b1 67.g7 ♖b6 68.♔f5 ♖a6 69.♔e4 ½-½

ENDING 70

Exercise 195

Levon Aronian	2815
Magnus Carlsen	2881

Dubai Wch blitz 2014 (16)



Black is going to lose the f7-pawn, but this pawn structure ensures a draw if the defending king can settle in the hole on g6.

68...♖a1! 69.♔xf7 ♖a7+ 70.♔f6 ♖a6+ 71.♔e5 ♖a5+ 72.♔f4 ♖a4+

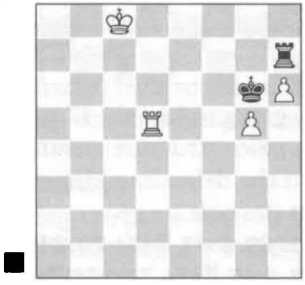
All these checks are necessary.
73.♔g3

Now only one move draws, but it's not a check.
73...♔g6!
The king settles in the hole, assuming the role of blockader. 73...♖a3+? would be wrong in view of 74.♔g4 ♖a4+ 75.♔h5 and Black can't achieve a blockade.
74.♖f8 ♖a3+ 75.♔g4 ♖a4+ 76.♖f4 ♖a6! 77.♖b4 ♖c6 78.♖e4 ♖b6 79.♔f4 ♖a6 80.♖e8 ♖a4+ 81.♔e5 ♖a5+ 82.♔f4 ♖f5+ 83.♔e4 ♖xg5 84.♖g8+ ♔xh6 85.♖xg5 ♔xg5 ½-½
ENDING 74

Exercise 196

Rauf Mamedov	2678
Hrant Melkumyan	2642

Hersonissos tt 2017 (6)

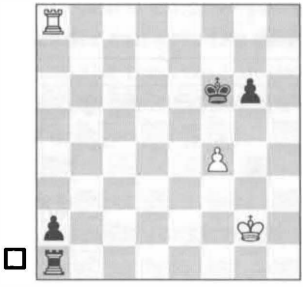


Several moves draw, as long as Black keeps the white rook from the g7-square.
86...♖a7?
This move fails to achieve the goal. Better was 86...♖e7 87.♖d7 ♖e8+! 88.♖d8 ♖e7 89.♖g8+ ♔h7! 90.♖f8 ♔g6!=.
87.♖d7! ♖a8+ 88.♔b7 ♖g8
The difference between this move compared to a second-rank defence is that Black isn't threatening to capture the pawn and, after White's next move, is left in zugzwang.
89.♔c7 ♖a8 90.♖g7+ ♔f5 91.♔b7 ♖e8 92.h7 1-0
ENDING 74

Exercise 197

Mateusz Bartel	2644
Joseph Gallagher	2484

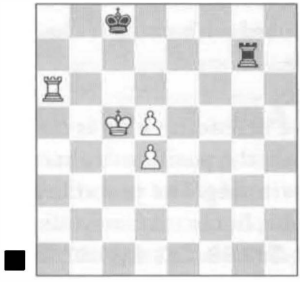
Biel 2014 (2)



Even if White loses the f-pawn, it's an obvious draw since the g-pawn can't trouble his king.
52.♖a5 ♔e6 53.♔h2 ♔d6 54.♔g2 ♔c6 55.♔h2 ♔b6 56.♖a8 ♔c5 57.♔g2 ♔d4 58.♖a4+ ♔e3 59.♖a3+
59.♔h2 ♔f3 would give up the pawn anyway.

59...♔xf4 60.♖a8 g5 61.♖f8+ ♔e4 ½-½
ENDING 75

Exercise 198
Lars Hauge 2431
Martyn Kravtsiv 2645
Stockholm 2016/17 (2)



A dangerously misleading position. Against a doubled central pawn duo, Black must seek a defence akin to Kling & Horwitz's, as in Exercise 192. But at this precise moment, attacking the d4-pawn is losing. Ironically, the right move in this position, with the king on c8, would be losing if the king stood on d8, and vice versa.

72...♖g4?

A) 72...♔d8?, threatening 73...♖g4, is too slow: 73.♖a8++–;

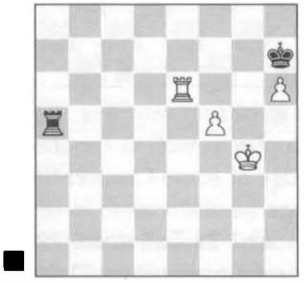
B) 72...♖g1! is the correct defence: 73.♔c6 ♖c1+ 74.♔d6 ♖d1 reaches the typical Kling & Horwitz position and threatens to capture the d4-pawn. Should White defend the pawn with 75.♖a4, then all Black has to do is wait with 75...♖d2!.

73.♔c6!

The threat of mate foils Black's intentions.

73...♔b8 74.d6 ♖g6 75.♖a1 ♖h6 76.♖f1 ♖h8 77.♖b1+ 1-0
ENDING 69

Exercise 199
Penteala Harikrishna 2762
Davit Shengelia 2557
Czechia tt 2016/17 (2)



If White's king were allowed to go to g5, Black wouldn't be in time to give any checks. White, meanwhile, would still be making progress, as the game continuation shows.

62...♖a7?

62...♖a1! places the rook in the opposite corner, ready to give checks either from behind or from the side, as the situation may require. This is the only correct defensive plan, and this move, together with 62...♖a2 and 62...♖a3, are the only drawing moves available to Black: 63.♔g5 ♖g1+!=.

63.♔g5 ♖b7 64.♖e5!

White prepares f5-f6. The direct 64.f6? fails because of 64...♖b5+!.

64...♖b1

It's too late for this, but the game was lost anyway; 64...♖a7 65.f6!+–.

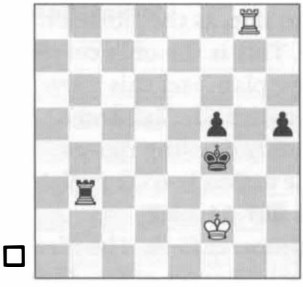
65.♖e7+ ♔g8 66.f6
We've reached a position with the king cut off on the back rank.
66...♖g1+ 67.♔f5 ♖f1+ 68.♔e6 ♖e1+ 69.♔d7 ♖f1

The position now requires accurate play as well as theoretical knowledge of some Chapter 9 endgames.
70.♖e8+ ♔h7 71.♖e6 ♔xh6 72.♔e8!
The only winning move; 72.♔e7? ♔g6!=.
72...♖f2 73.f7+ ♔g7 74.♖e1 1-0
ENDINGS 58 & 71 & 73

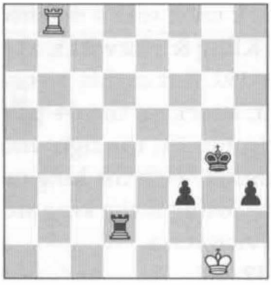
Exercise 200

Laurent Fressinet	2668
Francesco Rambaldi	2542

France tt 2017 (2)



It's natural to bring the rook to the opposite corner, ready to fire away checks at the king. In this position, however, the timing isn't right for this move: the fact that the kings are in opposition means that Black can now force the white monarch onto the back rank.
84.♖a8?
84.♔g2! is the only move to draw: 84...♖b2+ 85.♔h3 ♔f3 86.♖g3+ ♔e4 87.♖g8 f4 88.♖h8 ♔f3 89.♖xh5 ♔f2 90.♖a5 f3 91.♖a1, reaching a corner of the board with enough checking distance.
84...♖b2+
Once the defending king is on the back rank, the position is almost always winning. The procedure takes some time, but is relatively easy.
85.♔g1 ♖d2 86.♖a3 ♔g4 87.♖b3 f4
The best plan is to get both pawns to their sixth rank.
88.♖a3 h4 89.♖b3 h3 90.♖b8 f3



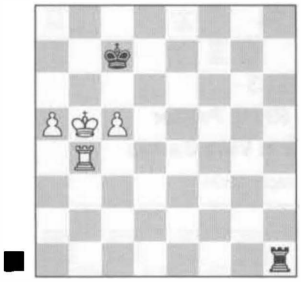
Once the pawns are on the sixth, White's king, bombarded by checks, uses its own rook to find shelter. Then, all you need is just a little patience.
91.♖g8+ ♔f4 92.♖f8+ ♔e3 93.♖e8+ ♔d3 94.♖d8+ ♔e2 95.♖e8+ ♔d1 96.♖f8 ♔e2 97.♖e8+ ♔d1 98.♖f8 ♖g2+ 99.♔h1 ♖f2 100.♔g1 ♔e1 101.♖a8 ♖d2 0-1
ENDINGS 58 & 71 & 73

Exercise 201

Alexander Grischuk 2719

Pavel Eljanov 2720

Elista 2008 (6)



White has a dominant position. Black had better know his stuff, or he will soon be toast. In the diagram position, Black's king must be ready to block either pawn coming to the sixth rank. Then, the black rook should be in a position to fire away checks in any direction required. Eljanov found the first move, but erred later on.

63...♔b7!

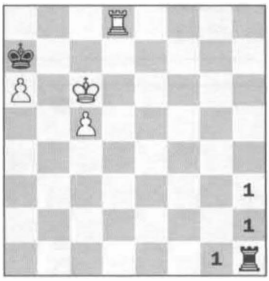
A good move, but examples of bad ones come by the dozen: 63...♖g1? (this was move number 68 in this game). Interestingly, in this case, the player with the black pieces saved the game: 64.a6!? (moving the a-pawn forward is one of several dangerous plans) 64...♖a1 65.♖a4 ♖b1+ 66.♔c4 ♖c1+ 67.♔b5 (67.♔b4! ♖b1+ 68.♔c3 is the winning continuation) 67...♖b1+ 68.♔a5?= ♔c6 69.♖a3 ♖b2 70.♖a1 ♖b3 71.♔a4 ♖b2 72.♔a3 ♖b5 73.♖h1 ♖a5+ 74.♔b4 ♖xa6 ½-½ Charbonneau-Moskvitch, Montreal 2000.

64.a6+ ♔a7!

In accordance with the rule saying that the king must be placed in front of the pawn that advances to the sixth rank.

65.♖d4 ♖b1+ 66.♔c6 ♖h1 67.♖d8

Reaching another critical moment.



67...♖h5?

The kind of error made by a player who has got tired after defending for a long time. That said, knowing one's endgame theory would of course help. Black should have kept his rook in the corner to be able to choose between different checking options. The numbered squares indicate the only rook moves that make a draw.

68.♔b5!

There are no checks from behind. White is now winning, and Grischuk doesn't let his opponent off the hook.

68...♖h7 69.♖d5

Preparing c5-c6 followed by ♖d7.

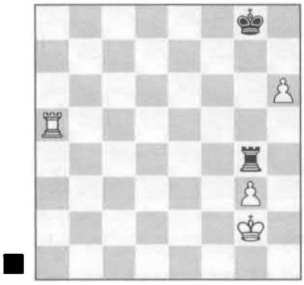
69...♖h1 70.♖d7+ ♔b8 71.c6

We've reached a position with the king cut off on the back rank and pawns on the sixth, which we know is winning.

71...♖b1+ 72.♔c5 ♖c1+ 73.♔b6 ♖b1+ 74.♔c5 ♖c1+ 75.♔d6 ♖d1+

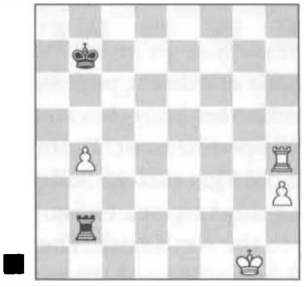
76.♔e7 ♖c1 77.♖d8+ ♔a7 78.♔d7 ♖d1+ 79.♔c8 1-0
ENDINGS 71 & 73

Exercise 202
Magnus Carlsen 2864
Vladimir Kramnik 2803
Moscow blitz 2013 (2)



Black can force a drawn position against two connected pawns. Kramnik's display of defensive skill in this blitz game is impressive.
48...♖g6!
48...♔h7? seems more natural, but after 49.♖a6 there is no way to prevent the white pawn from coming to g5, e.g. 49...♖g8 50.♔h3 ♖g5 51.♔h4 ♖g8 52.g4 ♖b8 53.♔h5 and White wins easily. This variation shows that Black needs the king on g6 to make a draw against this particular pawn duo.
49.♖h5 ♔h7 50.♔h3 ♖f6 51.♔h4 ♖g6 52.g4 ♖a6 53.g5 ♖a4+ 54.♔g3 ♖a8!
Not the only move to draw; Black immediately sets about improving the position of his king.
55.♖h4 ♔g6
The king stands well here.
56.♖g4 ♖a3+ 57.♔h4 ♖a6 58.♖e4 ♖b6 59.♔g4 ♖a6 60.♔f4
The position is nearly identical to diagram 11.10 in 100 Endgames You Must Know.
60...♖b6 61.♖e7 ♖b4+ 62.♔e5 ♖b5+ 63.♔e4 ½-½
ENDING 74

Exercise 203
Manuel Rivas Pastor
Jesus de la Villa Garcia
Pamplona rapid 1994



Vancura's Defence is often possible against two pawns, too – provided one of the pawns is a rook's pawn. This is what Black should have used to save the game here.
54...♖b3!
The game continued 54...♔c6? 55.♖d4! ♔b5 56.h4 and by laterally defending both pawns, White wins easily. This was a rapid game and no other score sheet has survived but a vague remembrance in my mind.
55.♔f2 ♔b6
The black king should head for the b4-pawn, for example: 55...♔b8? 56.♔e2 ♔b7 57.♔d2 ♔b6 58.♔c2 ♖g3 59.♖h5+- ♖f3 60.h4 ♖f4 61.♔b3 ♖g4 62.♔a4+-.
56.♔e2 ♔b5 57.♔d2 ♖g3 58.♔c2 ♖f3=
ENDING 76

Exercise 204
Krister Lagerborg 2034
Stefan Schneider 2387
Sweden tt 2014/15 (7)

White must avoid Vancura's Defence against two pawns. With this in mind, he should immediately get his rook off the a-file, where it blocks his a-pawn. However, not just any move will do.

67.♖a6?

A) 67.♖c8! is the correct move: 67...♖f8+ (67...♖a7 68.♖c5; 67...♖f5 68.a6 ♖a5 69.♖c7+ ♔f6 70.a7+–) 68.♔d7 ♖f5 69.a6;

B) By contrast, 67.♖d8? wouldn't work: 67...♖f8+ 68.♔e7 ♖f5 69.a6 ♖f7+ 70.♔e8 ♖f8+ 71.♔d7 ♖f6!. White's rook is forced to defend the pawn from a8, allowing Black to get back into the Vancura position: 72.♖a8 ♔h7=.

67...♖f5!

Black's rook immediately attacks the a-pawn from the side, all in accordance with Vancura. From now on, White's rook is uncomfortably stuck in front of its own pawn.

68.♔e7 ♖f7+ 69.♔d8 ♖f8+ 70.♔c7 ♖f7+ 71.♔b6 ♖f6+ 72.♔b5 ♖f5+ 73.♔b4 ♖f4+ 74.♔b3 ♖f3+

74...♖xh4? would be too greedy, giving White's rook time to improve its position: 75.♖e6 ♔f7 76.♖e1 ♖g4 77.a6+–.

75.♔c2 ♖f2+ 76.♔d3

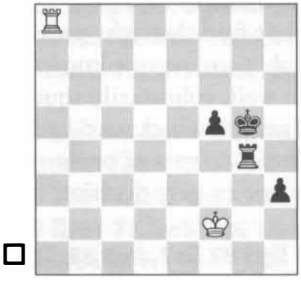
Now Black has only one move: the rook must attack the pawn laterally again.

76...♖f5!= 77.♖a7+ ♔g6 78.a6 ♖f6 79.♖a8 ♔g7 80.♔e4 ♔h7 81.♔e5 ♖b6 ½-½

Black has demonstrated excellent defensive skill; White recognized this after sixteen more moves.

ENDING 76

Exercise 205
Alexander Kotov
Salo Flohr
Moscow ch-URS 1951 (15)



White must wait with the rook in the corner. Giving a hasty check is tempting but wrong:

80.♖g8+?

Even a great player such as Kotov can't resist the temptation. In another game, Smyslov – already at the ripe old age of sixty-eight – demonstrated crisp knowledge of this difficult endgame and played: 80.♖b8!= (waiting; in this game this was move number 63) 80...♖h4 (80...h2 81.♖g8+!=) 81.♔g1 ♖e4 82.♔h2 ♖e3 83.♖g8+ ♔f4 84.♖a8 ♔e4 85.♖a4+ ♔e5 86.♖a5+ ♔f6 87.♖a8 f4 88.♖a5 ♖e5 89.♖a6+ ♔f5 90.♔xh3 ♖e2 91.♖a4 ♖d2 ½-½ Smyslov-Large, London 1989.

80...♔f4 81.♖h8 ♖g2+ 82.♔f1 ♔g3 83.♖g8+ ♔f3

83...♔h2! was the way to win.

84.♖h8

Let's look at another defensive plan: 84.♖a8 (move 61 in this game) 84...♖b2 85.♖a3+ ♔g4 86.♔g1 f4 and Black has basically achieved Position 11.5 from *100 Endgames You Must Know*: 87.♖c3 f3 88.♖c8 ♖b1+ 89.♔h2 f2 90.♖f8 ♖b2 91.♔h1 ♔g5 92.♖g8+ ♔f4 93.♖f8+ ♔e3 94.♖e8+ ♔d2 0-1 Valden-E.Atalik, Chalkis 2010.

84...♔g3 85.♖g8+ ♔f3?

Black can't find the right procedure. Undeniably, unless one knows the position well, voluntarily squeezing oneself into that awkward little mouse hole in front of one's own pawn is not an easy decision to make.

86.♖h8 ♖g3 87.♖h7 ♔e3 88.♖h8 ♔f3 89.♖h4 f4 90.♖h8 ♔g4 91.♖g8+ ♔f5 92.♖f8+ ♔e4 93.♖e8+ ♔f3 94.♖h8 ♔e3 95.♖h7 ♔d2 96.♔f2 ♖e3 97.♖d7+?!

97.♖a7!, bringing the rook to the long side, is correct.

97...♖d3

Now White has one move to draw the game, and not a particularly natural one:

98.♖h7?

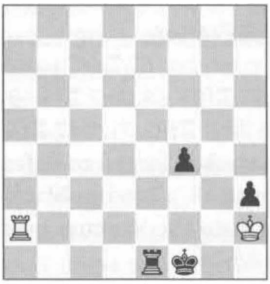
Difficult to resist the temptation, but getting behind the pawn is a mistake.

98.♖e7! ♔d1 99.♖e1+ ♔c2 100.♖e7 h2 101.♔g2 ♖e3 102.♖a7=.

98...♔d1 99.♔f1 ♖f3+ 100.♔g1 ♔e2 101.♖a7 ♖d3 102.♖e7+ ♖e3 103.♖a7 ♖d3 104.♖e7+ ♔f3 105.♔h2 ♔f2 106.♖a7

The rook is on the long side, but the h3-pawn is still on the board.

106...♖e3 107.♖a1 ♖e1 108.♖a2+ ♔f1!



Without the h-pawn, this position would be a draw after 109.♖a3, stopping the f-pawn in its tracks. With the h-pawn on the board, however, this doesn't work.

109.♔xh3

109.♖a3 ♖e2+! 110.♔h1 ♖e3 111.♖a1+ ♖e1 112.♖a3 f3!, this very unpleasant

tactic is another reason for White's demise.

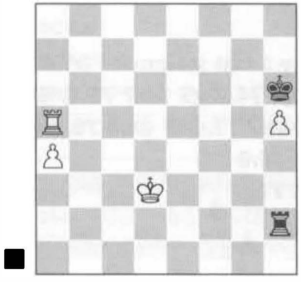
109...♖e3+! 110.♔g4 f3 111.♔g3 f2+ 112.♔h2 ♖e8 113.♖a1+ ♔e2 114.♖a2+ ♔f3 0-1

ENDING 73

Exercise 206

Eugen Mantu	2348
Wolfgang Gunkel	2429

cr 2007



Black can make a draw by applying the Vancura Defence against two pawns.

54...♖h3+?

How strange to see a player lose like this in a correspondence game, in such a simple position. 54...♖h4! is the move based on Vancura's Defence, attacking the pawn that is being protected by the rook.

55.♔c4 ♖h4+ 56.♔c5?

White returns the favour.

By defending the pawn with 56.♔b5! White would have a unique opportunity to free his rook: 56...♖xh5+ (56...♔xh5 57.♖a8+– is easier) 57.♔b6 ♖h4 58.♖a6 ♔g7 59.a5+–.

56...♖f4!

Suddenly, Black wakes up and carries out the defensive method he disregarded on move 54. By keeping the pawn under attack, while preparing to give checks from the side, White won't be able to improve his rook.

56...♖e4? is not good enough: 57.♖a8 ♖f4 (57...♔g7 58.a5 ♖e5+ 59.♔b6 ♖e6+ 60.♔c7 ♖e5 61.a6+–) 58.a5 ♖f5+ 59.♔b6 ♖f6+ 60.♔c7 ♖f5 61.a6 ♖f6 62.a7+–.

57.♔d6

57.♖a8 ♔h7! 58.a5 ♖f5+ 59.♔b6 ♖f6+ 60.♔c7 ♖f5 61.a6 ♖f6=.

57...♖d4+ 58.♔e5 ♖c4 59.♖a8 ♖b4 60.a5 ♖b5+ 61.♔d6 ♔g7 62.♖a7+ ♔h6 63.♔c6 ♖f5 64.♖a6 ♔g7 65.♖a7+ ♔h6 66.a6 ♖f6+ 67.♔d5 ♖b6

The rook keeps the a-pawn under attack. Once the king comes to its rescue, the latter becomes the new target.

68.♖a8 ♔g7 69.♖a7+ ♔h6 70.♔c5 ♖e6 71.♔b5 ♖e5+ 72.♔c6 ♖e6+ 73.♔d7 ♖f6 74.♖a8 ♔g7 75.a7 ♖f7+ 76.♔e6 ♖f6+ 77.♔e5 ♖a6 78.h6+ ♔h7 79.♔d5 ½-½

ENDING 76

Chapter 11

Exercise 207

Igor Alexandre Nataf	2560
Nikola Mitkov	2493

Kallithea tt 2002 (3)

Exchanging rooks is the easiest way to win this game, provided one knows how to handle the doubled pawns.

64.♖f4+!

64.h4! is another winning move.

64...♔e5

64...♔e3 is an attempt to counterattack, worthy of attention: 65.♖g4 ♖h2 66.♔f1 ♖xh3 67.g6 ♖h8 68.g7 ♖g8 69.♔g2+–.

65.♖g4 ♖xg4?!

Even though Black is lost no matter what he does, he could have put up more resistance by keeping the rooks on. After the exchange of rooks, the black rook needs four tempi to capture the g5-pawn; White's king, of course, is in time to defend it.

66.hxg4 ♔e6 67.♔f2 ♔f7 68.♔e3 ♔g7 69.♔e4!

White must be careful to avoid the mutual zugzwang position: 69.♔f4? ♔g6 and a pawn goes west.

69...♔g6 70.♔f4 ♔f7 71.♔f5 ♔g7 72.g6 ♔h6

73.g7!

Avoiding a last stalemate trick.

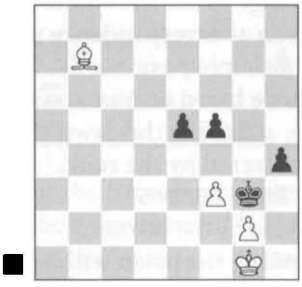
73...♔xg7 74.♔g5 ♔h7 75.♔f6 ♔h6 76.g5+ ♔h7 77.♔f7 ♔h8 78.♔g6 ♔g8 79.♔h6 1-0

ENDING 77

Exercise 208

Adam Horvath	2540
Rakesh Kulkarni	2368

Abu Dhabi 2015 (5)



Black can save the game. As long as he gets the move order right, he can eliminate all of White's pawns.

41...h3!

But not 41...e4? on account of 42.♗xe4! fxe4 43.fxe4 ♔f4 44.♔h2 and White wins.

42.gxh3 e4 43.♗xe4 fxe4 44.fxe4

White still has two pawns, but Black has time to capture the most dangerous one, after which a drawn endgame is reached with king and pawn vs. lone king.

44...♔f4 45.h4 ♔xe4 ½-½

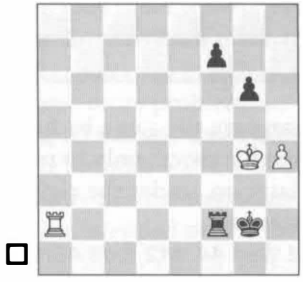
ENDING 78

Exercise 209

Jörg Dinckel

Axel Stephan

Germany tt 1993/94



If White trades rooks, he ends up in a lost pawn endgame because of an in-between check.

87.♖xf2+?

Prematurely exchanging pieces is one of the most common errors in chess, and usually denotes an impatient character. By keeping rooks on the board (for example with 87.♖a3) White would have had to suffer a little longer, but the draw should never be in danger.

87...♔xf2 88.h5 f5+!

White missed either this move or Black's 90th. If 88...gxh5+?, 89.♔xh5 and the f-pawn also drops. Probably, this is what Black had calculated.

89.♔f4 gxh5 90.♔xf5 ♔g3! 0-1

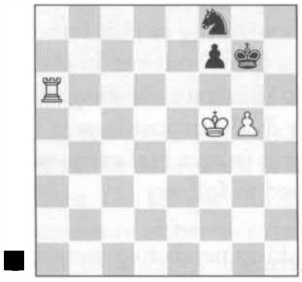
The h-pawn will become a queen.

ENDING 5

Exercise 210

Garry Kasparov	2812
Pablo Zarnicki	2515

Internet blitz 1998



75...♘g6?

This looks so safe, yet it is the only losing move. It's also an unusual move, even for blitz. Any other move draws: 75...♘e6; 75...♘h7; 75...♘d7.

76.♖xg6+!

A well-known simplifying operation, often the only way to win for the side that is an exchange up with material reduced to only one flank.

76...fxg6+ 77.♔e6 ♔h7 78.♔f6 ♔h8 79.♔xg6 ♔g8 80.♔h6 ♔f7 81.g6+ ♔g8 82.g7 ♔f7 83.♔h7 ♔e7+- ½-½

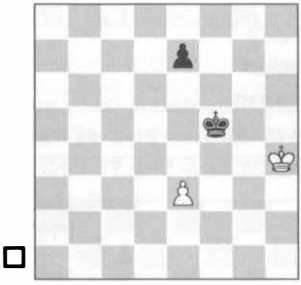
Presumably, Kasparov got flagged.

ENDING 79

Exercise 211
Willi Schlage
Carl Ahues
Berlin 1921

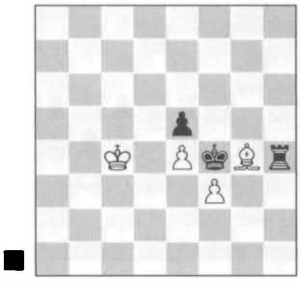
White is winning in this famous position, often featured in the books to illustrate the king's ability to make dual-purpose moves. The position is from a real game which continued as follows:
1.♔e6!
White's king needs five moves to capture the a-pawn, and one more move to get in ♔a7-b7/8. He won't achieves this aim with just any route, though. He must choose the one route that simultaneously achieves a second objective, and that is to bodycheck the enemy king, preventing it from reaching the c7-square, before White can get his king to the b-file.
1.♔e7? is wrong: 1...♔c3 2.♔d6 ♔d4 3.♔c6 ♔e5 4.♔b7 ♔d6 5.♔xa7 ♔c7=.
1...♔c3 2.♔d6?
Suddenly, White strays from the ideal route, and by doing so lets victory slip through his hands.
2.♔d5! ♔d3 3.♔c6 ♔d4 4.♔b7 ♔d5 5.♔xa7 and the black king is too late to imprison its colleague.
2...♔d4 3.♔c6 ♔e5 4.♔b7 ♔d6 5.♔xa7 ♔c7 ½-½
ENDINGS 80 & 82

Exercise 212
Noel Studer 2471
Radoslaw Wojtaszek 2737
Germany Bundesliga 2017/18 (4)

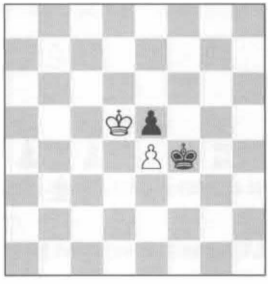


White can save the game by first defending his pawn, only to part with it later on, under the right circumstances.
43.♔g3! ♔e4 44.♔f2 ♔d3 45.♔f3 e5
White is now at a critical juncture, and has to decide what the best way is to part with his pawn. If he lets the pawn be captured on the e3-square, then the black king would automatically be on a key square, thus ensuring promotion of the pawn within a few moves. For this reason, the correct option is:
46.e4! ♔d4 47.♔f2 ♔xe4 48.♔e2 ½-½
ENDING 80

Exercise 213
Asya Zhivotovskaya 1688
Natallya Kamynina
St Petersburg 2012 (8)



The Lomonosov tablebases surprisingly reveal that the position is a draw against any black try. Nonetheless, there were other continuations instead of what Black chose in the game, to at least some pose some more problems to White:
61...♖xg4?! 62.fxg4 ♔xg4 63.♔d5??
A classic blunder leading to a lost position by mutual zugzwang. White has 'stepped on a mine'. 63.♔d3! leads to a draw, as seen in the previous exercise.
63...♔f4



Whoever is to move, is lost.

64.♔c4 ♔xe4 65.♔c3 ♔e3 66.♔c4 0-1
ENDINGS 79 & 80

Exercise 214
Zvonko Vranesic 2375
Peter Nurmi 2315
Ontario 1980 (4)

Queening the pawn leads to a theoretically drawn pawn endgame. By contrast, the knight and king can manoeuvre either to expel the bishop, or to block its influence over the f8-square.
108.f8♕?
There's no shortage of drama in the game of chess: White throws away the win at move 108! He should have played 108.♘c7! ♔f4 (108...♗g7 109.♘e8! ♗h6 110.♘d6 followed by ♘f5) 109.♔f6 ♔xg4 (109...♗f8 110.♘e6+) 110.♘e6 ♔h5 111.♘g7+.
108...♗xf8+ 109.♔xf8
109.♘xf8 ♔f4 loses the last pawn.
109...♔xe6 110.♔g7
White is going to win the g5-pawn, but the only thing Black needs to be able to do is answer ♔xg5 with ...♔g7.
110...♔e7!

Of course, Black defends. Perhaps White expected the counterattack 110...♔e5?? 111.♔g6! ♔f4 112.♔h5+–.

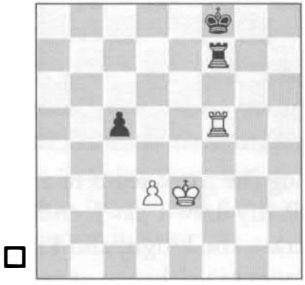
111.♔g6 ♔f8 112.♔xg5 ♔g7 113.♔h5 ♔h7 114.g5 ♔g7 115.g6 ♔g8 116.♔g4 ♔g7 117.♔g5 ♔g8 ½-½

ENDING 80

Exercise 215

Matthew Turner	2517
Katrine Tjolsen	2160

Tromsø 2009 (9)



Both moves lead to a draw, but keeping the rook on is perhaps the most practical choice.

62.♔e4?!

62.♖xc5 ♔e8! leads to a Philidor position.

62...♖xf5! 63.♔xf5 ♔f7 64.♔e5 c4!

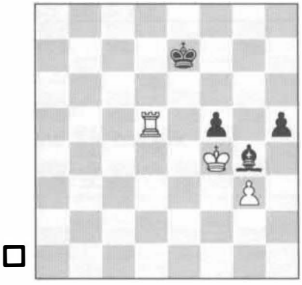
Altering the key squares of the last remaining pawn: ½-½.

ENDINGS 52 & 81

Exercise 216

Robert Kula	2319
Zbigniew Strzemiecki	2405

Police 2014 (7)



White is objectively winning. Simplification, however, is a blunder after which he loses all of his advantage.

75.♖xf5??

Now Black's defence is very simple. After 75.♔g5! White wins by means of a typical procedure in this kind of positions: penetrate with the king via the dark squares, and put the opponent in zugzwang, e.g. 75...♔f7 76.♖d7+ and Black has a choice: 76...♔e6 (going to the back rank allows an even easier zugzwang) 77.♖a7 ♔e5 78.♖a5+ ♔e6 79.♖b5

analysis diagram

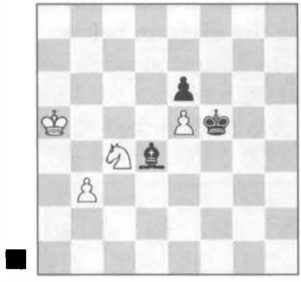
79...♔d6 (79...♔f7 80.♖e5+–, zugzwang) 80.♔f6! (80.♖xf5? does not work here in view of 80...♗xf5 81.♔xf5 h4!, the same motif as in the game) 80...♔d7 81.♖d5+ ♔e8 (after 81...♔c6, 82.♖xf5 is winning) 82.♖e5+ ♔d7 83.♖e7+ ♔d6 84.♖a7 ♔d5 85.♖a4 ♔d6 (if 85...♗h3 86.♖f4 ♗g4 87.♖xf5!+ is winning) 86.♖d4+ and 87.♖xg4!, winning.

75...♗xf5 76.♔xf5 h4! ½-½

This is the only resource Black had to find: give up the pawn to bring about a change in the key squares (the most important motif in **ENDING 81**) or, as is the case here, convert it to a rook's pawn.

ENDING 81

Exercise 217
Alexey Suetin
Ludek Pachman
Titovo Uzice 1966



The easiest way to a draw is by playing:

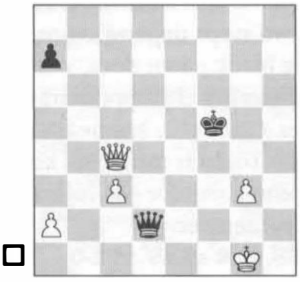
55...♗xe5! 56.♘xe5 ♔xe5 57.b4 ♔d6!

The point. The king is not going to let the pawn promote unhindered.

58.♔a6 ♔c7 59.♔a7 ♔c6 ½-½

The game ends with a funny little king dance.

Exercise 218
Hikaru Nakamura 2657
Joel Benjamin 2563
Philadelphia 2005 (5)



Exchanging queens is the easiest way to win: the a2-pawn always ensures victory in this two vs. one pawn endgame.

This is one of my favourite examples taken from Benjamin's great book *Liquidation on the Chess Board*. I've shown this position many times during training sessions, and those unfamiliar with the theory really struggle here.

54.♕f4+! ♕xf4 55.gxf4 ♔xf4

Now White's plan is easy: bring the c-pawn to the seventh rank before moving the a2-pawn.

56.♔f2 ♔e4 57.♔e2 ♔d5 58.♔d3 ♔c5 59.c4 ♔c6 60.♔d4 ♔d6 61.c5+ ♔c7 62.♔d5 ♔d7 63.c6+ ♔c7 64.♔c5 ♔c8 65.♔d6 ♔d8 66.c7+ ♔c8 67.♔c6

We've reached the basic position.

The a2-pawn will advance either one or two steps depending on what the black pawn does, with the idea of running the opponent out of moves. Once this happens, all White has to do is move his king to make some room for his colleague, and it's game over.

67...a6 68.♔d6 a5 69.a4 1-0

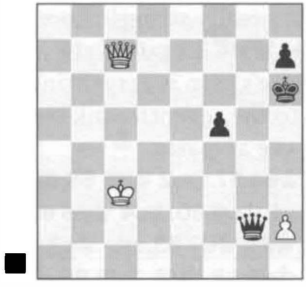
Nakamura was fortunate enough to get to this exact same position again, three years later. See Hernandez-Nakamura, Chicago, 2008.

ENDING 85

Exercise 219

Oleg Romanishin	2590
Ljubomir Ljubojevic	2615

Tilburg 1985 (4)



Exchanging queens is winning, as we've seen in the previous exercise.

55...♕g7+! 56.♕xg7+ ♔xg7 57.♔d4 ♔f6

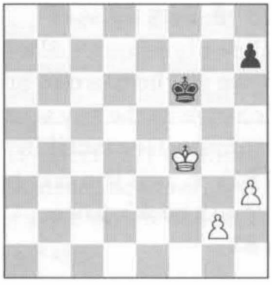
And White had seen enough: **0-1**.

ENDING 85

Exercise 220

Hannes Stefansson	2455
Christopher Lutz	2540

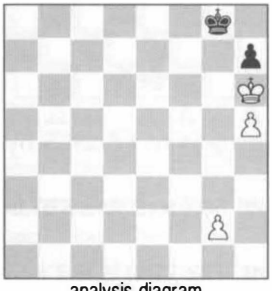
Manila ol 1992 (12)



White is winning, provided he keeps the g-pawn on the second rank.

59.g4?

White's sinful hands touch the sacred g2-pawn. Now he won't be able to execute the manoeuvre shown in the diagram below. 59.h4 is the easiest move to win: 59...♔g6 (59...h5 60.g3; 59...h6 60.g4) 60.♔g4 ♔f6 61.♔h5 ♔g7 62.♔g5 ♔g8 63.♔h6 ♔h8 64.h5 ♔g8.



analysis diagram

We've reached the basic position. White must move the pawn either one or two squares, depending on whether Black's king is on g8 or h8. **Bird's rule of colours** provides an easy solution requiring zero calculation: 'If the kings are on opposite-coloured squares, the pawns should be on opposite-coloured squares; if the kings are on same-coloured squares, the pawns should be on same-coloured squares.' 65.g3!+–.

59...♔g6 60.h4 ♔f6 61.g5+ ♔g6 62.♔g4 h6! 63.h5+ ♔g7 64.g6

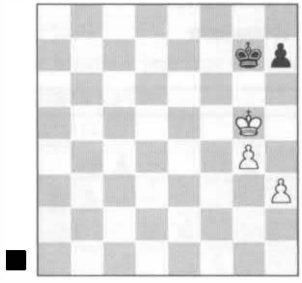
The protected passed pawn is usually a game-winning asset, but this is an exception:

64...♔g8 ½-½

ENDING 87

Exercise 221

Maxim Chetverik 2305
Gyula Horvath 2435
Zalakaros 1994 (2)



The key is the colour rule, explained in the previous exercise.

58...♔h8?

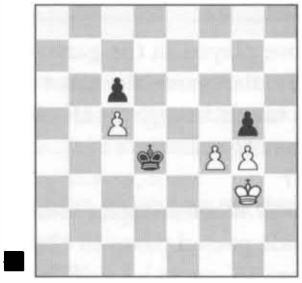
The losing move. Given that the pawns are on the same colours, Black's king must get ready to move to the same colour as White's, when the latter plays ♔h6. Therefore, 58...♔g8! must be played, e.g. 59.♔h6 ♔h8=.

59.♔h6 ♔g8 60.h4 ♔h8 61.h5 1-0

ENDING 87

Exercise 222

Radoslaw Wojtaszek 2427
Dominik Sypnicki 2182
Bartkowa ch-POL jr 2002



Most players go out of their way to deny the opponent such a coveted commodity as a protected passed pawn. However, we see again that in chess there are no absolutes.

42...♔xc5!

Black finds time to capture the c-pawn; 42...gxf4+? helps White to improve his king: 43.♔xf4 ♔xc5 44.♔e5! (kicking Black's king from the square of the g-pawn) 44...♔b4 45.g5 c5 46.g6 c4 47.g7 c3 48.g8♕ c2 49.♕g5+–.

43.f5 ♔d6 44.♔f3 ♔d5 45.♔e2 ♔d6 46.♔d2 ♔e5 47.♔c3 ♔d5 48.♔d3 ♔e5 49.♔c4 ♔d6 50.♔d4 ½-½

White made no further progress and accepted a draw on move 67.

ENDING 89

Exercise 223

Sonia Zepeda 2046

Eglantina Shabanaj 2176

Istanbul ol W 2000 (8)

The move played in the game seriously disregards the most famous breakthrough in all of endgame theory.

33.♔f5?

33.f4 saves White, despite allowing an outside passed pawn in the main variation: 33...g6 34.b3 axb3 35.axb3 cxb3 36.cxb3 h5 (36...♔e6 37.♔f3 h5 38.f5+! ♔f6!=) 37.gxh5 gxh5.

analysis diagram

Black has achieved an outside passer, but White's king is more active: 38.♔f5! ♔d5 39.♔g5 ♔e4 40.f5 h4 41.f6 h3 42.f7 h2 43.f8♕ h1♕=.

33...b3! 34.axb3 c3 0-1

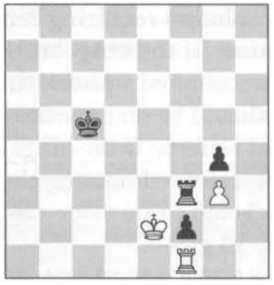
ENDING 92

Exercise 224

Adolf Anderssen

Louis Eichborn

Breslau m 1852



White can save the game by switching blockaders. The move played in the game, on the contrary, transposes to a lost pawn endgame.

47.♖xf2?

47.♖c1+! frees the rook, and enables the king to take on the role of blockader instead: 47...♔d4 48.♔f1=.

47...♖xf2+ 48.♔xf2 ♔d4 0-1

ENDING 79

Exercise 225

Ruslan Ponomariov 2694

Eneasz Wlewiora 2320

Katowice Ech blitz 2017 (18)

This endgame is usually won by exchanging on the f7-square, as

long as the attacker keeps at least one of his pawns alive.

45.♔d6?

There was no reason to postpone the sacrifice: 45.♖xf7+ ♖xf7 46.♗xf7 ♔xf7 47.♔d6 hxg5 48.hxg5 immediately leads to a winning endgame, as seen in several exercises.

45...hxg5 46.hxg5 ♖f5?

Black placidly returns the favour. Attacking the g5-pawn is good, but keeping the f7-square defended isn't. The correct move was 46...♖g1! 47.♖xf7+ ♔h8 and Black achieves the endgame rook and bishop vs. rook, which is a draw because the g5-pawn drops.

47.♖xf7+!

This liquidation leads finally to a familiar winning endgame.

47...♖xf7 48.♗xf7 ♔xf7 49.♔d7 ♔f8 50.♔e6 ♔e8 51.♔f6 ♔f8 52.♔xg6 ♔g8 53.♔f6 ♔f8 54.g6 ♔g8 55.g7 1-0

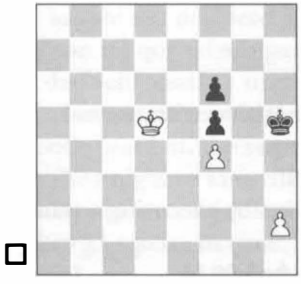
ENDING 79

Exercise 226

Mikhail Markov 2377

Sadig Mammadov

Moscow 2016 (4)



White wins by using the h-pawn as a means to slow down the opponent's king manoeuvre.

70.h3! ♔h4 71.♔e6 ♔xh3 72.♔xf6 ♔g4 73.♔e5

We have reached one of the most famous basic endgame positions in chess. It is mutual zugzwang: whoever moves, loses.

73...♔h5 74.♔xf5 ♔h6 75.♔f6 ♔h7 76.f5 1-0

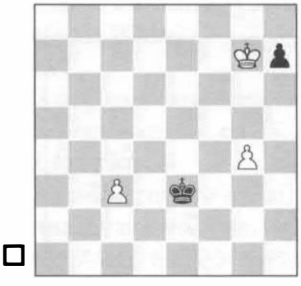
ENDING 79

Exercise 227

Frederic Benregula 1096

Alexis Bromo 1182

cr 2013 (1)



This was a bit of a trick question: White can win by six different moves. It's interesting to note,

however, that the most obvious one fails.

45.♔xh7??

A greedy move that throws away an easy win.

A) The most normal would be to advance the c-pawn, to completely side-track the black king: 45.c4 ♔d4 and only now 46.♔xh7+–;

B) 45.♔f8! also wins because the king can support the c-pawn, e.g. 45...♔f4 46.c4 ♔xg4 47.c5 ♔f5 48.♔e7!+–.

45...♔f4!

Only very rarely are two pawns that widely separated insufficient to win, but here Black's king, by a surprising change of course, manages to capture both.

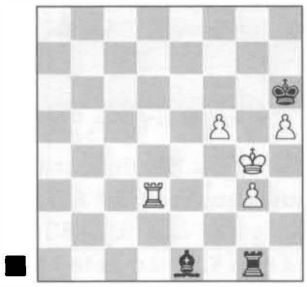
46.c4 ♔xg4 47.c5 ♔f5 48.c6 ♔e6 ½-½

See also **ENDING 78**.

Exercise 228

Luke McShane	2538
Martin Simons	2230

England 4NCL 2001/02 (10)



64...♖xg3+ is only good if the player foresaw his 66th move:

64...♖xg3+ 65.♖xg3 ♗xg3 66.♔xg3 ♔g5!

The point: waiting for White's king or pawns to move, before capturing one. 66...♔xh5? loses because of 67.♔f4!+–.

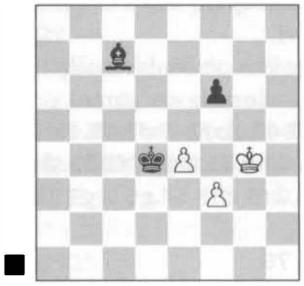
67.h6 ♔xh6 68.♔f4 ♔g7 69.♔e5 ♔f7 70.f6 ♔f8 71.♔e6 ♔e8 72.f7+ ♔f8 73.♔f6 ½-½

See also **ENDING 78**.

Exercise 229

Eduardo de la Riva Fernandez	1972
Antonio Abos Rosico	2047

Aragon tt 2009 (9)



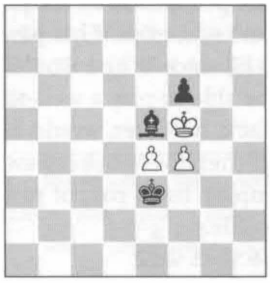
Black has only one pawn, and it appears it's going to come off the board soon along with both White's pawns.

There is a standard manoeuvre, however, based on the idea of sacrificing the bishop for one pawn, to end up in a classic blocked-pawns position with mutual zugzwang.

57...♔e3!

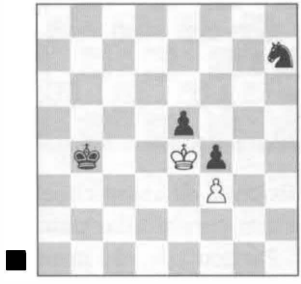
Black wins by executing a standard idea.

58.♔f5 ♗e5 59.f4



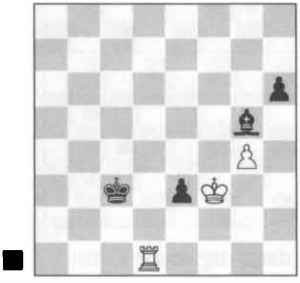
This position is well worth remembering. Only one move is winning here.
59...♔d4! 60.fxe5 fxe5
Bringing about by the elementary mutual zugzwang position by force.
61.♔g4 ♔xe4 62.♔g3 ♔d3 63.♔f2 e4 64.♔e1 ♔e3 65.♔f1 ♔d2 0-1
ENDING 79

Exercise 230
José Ortega Valle 2000
Agustin Garcia Luque 2401
Dos Hermanas 2001 (5)



Black has two ways to win the game, both based on the same idea: give up the knight to save the last remaining pawn, and get the king to the key g2-square in time.
75...♘g5+!
75...♘f6+! 76.♔xe5 ♘h5 77.♔f5 ♔c4 78.♔g5 ♔d3 79.♔xh5 ♔e2! is another winning move, perhaps slightly easier, yet oddly similar.
76.♔xe5 ♘h3! 77.♔f5 ♔c4 78.♔g4 ♔d3 79.♔xh3 ♔e2 80.♔g2
80.♔g4 ♔e3–+.
80...♔e3 81.♔g1 ♔xf3 82.♔f1 ♔e3 83.♔e1 f3 84.♔f1 f2 0-1
ENDING 79

Exercise 231
Jozsef Szily
Baruch Wood
Budapest 1948 (5)



Black has a fortress, but must watch out for a sacrifice on g5, which could lead to a winning pawn endgame for White.
58...♔c2?
Black is negligent and forgets about the exchange sacrifice on g5; now he is already lost.
58...♔c4! is the correct move, when White makes no progress, e.g.
A) 59.♖d7 ♔c5 60.♖g7 ♔d5 and White now can't win by giving back the exchange; or
B) 59.♔e4 ♔c5 and the king can't make any further progress, for if

60.♔f5 ♗h4 and the passed pawn will cost a rook.

59.♖d5!

Now the inevitable captures on g5 lead to a winning pawn endgame.

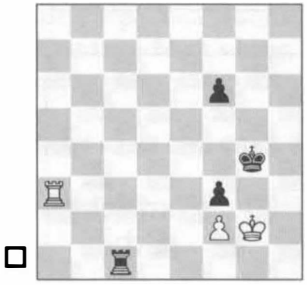
59...♔c3 60.♖xg5 hxg5 61.♔xe3 ♔c4 62.♔e4 ♔c5 63.♔f5 ♔d6 64.♔xg5 ♔e7 65.♔g6 ♔f8 66.♔h7 1-0

ENDING 80

Exercise 232

Stellan Brynell	2492
Ivan Sokolov	2642

Stockholm 2010/11 (7)



Several drawing moves are available, but the easiest is:

65.♖xf3! ♖g1+

An irrational fear for this move might lead a player to decide against playing the safe 65.♖xf3, but the pawn endgame is a draw.

66.♔xg1 ♔xf3 67.♔f1

The white position is unassailable. Black can't win even if his pawn were on f7, since White would always be able to play a well-timed f2-f4. Black, however, would be able to win if there were other pawns, for example a fixed pair of pawns on the b-file.

67...f5 68.♔e1 ♔g2

68...f4 69.♔f1 isn't winning either. Now is the right time to give up the pawn.

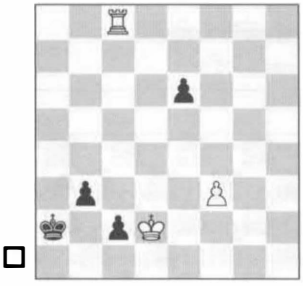
69.f4! ♔g3 70.♔e2 ♔xf4 71.♔f2 ♔e4 ½-½

ENDING 80

Exercise 233

Arnaldo Valdes Castillo	2350
Alberto Delgado	2260

Cienfuegos 1976 (7)



This position is all about choosing between two very similar pawn endings. Particularly, the position of the kings must be properly assessed.

54.f4?

54.♖xc2+!. Here, this simplification is winning, the reason being the vis-à-vis of the kings. After 54...bxc2 55.♔xc2 White's king corrals its

counterpart in the corner: 55...♔a1 (55...e5 56.♔d3 ♔b2 57.♔e4+–) 56.f4 ♔a2 57.♔c3 ♔b1 58.♔d4 ♔c2 59.♔e5+–.

54...b2!

Whether or not this came as a surprise for White, the bottom line is that he is going to have to sacrifice his rook anyway. Note that Black's king is now more flexible, compared to the other variation.

55.♖xc2 ♔b3 56.♖c6

56.♖xb2+ ♔xb2 57.♔d3 ♔c1! is similar. Black brings his king across in time to threaten White's last remaining pawn, once the latter plays ♔e5.

56...b1♕ 57.♖b6+ ♔a2 58.♖xb1 ♔xb1

The black king is much better here, and is fast enough to force the trade of pawns.

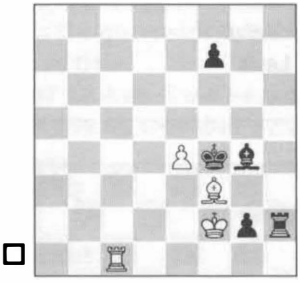
59.♔d3 ♔c1 60.♔e2 ♔c2 61.♔e3 ♔d1 ½-½

ENDING 80

Exercise 234

Edward Allen	2235
Alexander Shabalov	2535

Philadelphia 1991 (1)



White can save the game, but not with the obvious simplifying move. Instead, he must ward off the threat of 72...♖h1.

72.♗xg4?

This leads to a pawn vs. pawn endgame in which White loses his pawn, with fatal consequences, as he's unable to alter the key squares of the enemy pawn. The saving move was 72.♖c7! f6 (72...♗xf3 73.♖xf7+ ♔xe4 74.♖xf3=) 73.♗xg4 ♔xg4 74.♖g7+ ♔f4 75.♖f7=.

72...♖h1 73.♖g1 ♖xg1 74.♔xg1 ♔xg4 75.♔xg2 f6

75...♔f4 also wins. In these positions with pawn vs. pawn on adjacent files, an important defensive resource is to give up the pawn to alter the key squares. Here, however, this does not work. Ironically, if White's king were

on the h2-square, where it would be seemingly worse placed, the position would be a draw after the pawn sacrifice e4-e5!
76.♔f2 ♔f4 77.♔e2 ♔xe4 78.♔f1 0-1
ENDING 81

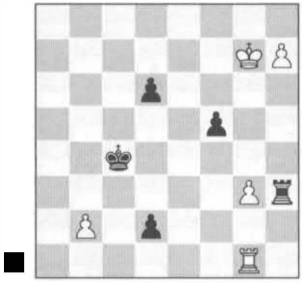
Exercise 235
Michael Valvo 2370
Roman Levit
Chicago 1992

There is one tiny difference between 39.♖xg2 and 39.♔xh3, namely the position of the king. This nuance is enough to alter the evaluation of the position.
39.♖xg2?
Losing, as the king won't be able to step into the square of the black a-pawn.
39.♔xh3! wins two tempi compared to the game. In addition, thanks to some dual-purpose play, White's king is in time to enter the square: 39...♖xg4 40.♔xg4 a5 41.♔f5! (White already threatens to promote the pawn) 41...♔c6 (41...♔c7 lets White's king into the square: 42.♔e5=).

analysis diagram

42.e5 (it's necessary to keep playing dual-purpose moves. Stepping into the square straight away fails: 42.♔e5? ♔c5! body-checks and wins) 42...a4 (42...♔d7 again lets the white king into the square: 43.♔e4) 43.e6 a3. The black pawn will promote, but the careful 44.♔g6!=, sidestepping promotion with check, makes sure the white pawn will promote, too.
39...hxg2 40.♔xg2 a5 0-1
ENDING 82

Exercise 236
Nana Alexandria
Irina Levitina
Moscow ct W 1975 (1)



Black can draw the pawn ending with a subtle dual-purpose king move at the end of the variation.

47...♔b3

47...d5 leads to the same result with similar variations: 48.h8♕ ♖xh8 49.♔xh8 ♔b3 50.♔g7 ♔xb2 51.♔f6 ♔c2 52.♔e5 (52.♔xf5 d1♕ 53.♖xd1 ♔xd1 54.♔e5 ♔e2 55.g4 ♔e3! transposes to the game) 52... d1♕ 53.♖xd1 ♔xd1 54.♔xd5 ♔e2 55.♔e5 ♔f3 and all the pawns are exchanged.

48.h8♕ ♖xh8 49.♔xh8 ♔xb2 50.♔g7 ♔c2 51.♔f6 d1♕ 52.♖xd1 ♔xd1 53.♔xf5 ♔e2 54.g4 siegel d5 55.♔e5 ♔e3! ½-½

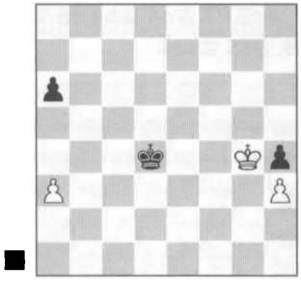
Black manages to execute Réti's manoeuvre, albeit in a more modest version. Threatening to support his own pawn enables Black to capture the enemy pawn.

ENDING 82

Exercise 237

Lukasz Twardowski	2375
Pavel Rehak	2135

Ostrava 1998



The position is going to result in an endgame with blocked rook's pawns and an extra pawn for White. As long as Black is aware of the guiding principles of this endgame, he can hold the draw.

42...♔e4

The first stage is to imprison the white king.

43.♔xh4 ♔f4 44.a4 a5!

It is necessary to prevent the white pawn from reaching the fifth rank.

45.♔h5 ♔f5 46.h4 ♔f6 47.♔h6 ♔f5 48.h5 ♔f6 49.♔h7 ♔f7 50.h6 ♔f8 51.♔g6 ♔g8 52.♔f6

Finally, White begins the race towards the queenside, but Black's king is in time.

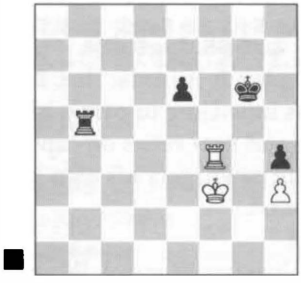
52...♔h7 53.♔e6 ♔xh6 54.♔d6 ♔g7 55.♔c6 ♔f8 56.♔b6 ♔e7 57.♔xa5 ♔d8 ½-½

ENDING 83

Exercise 238

Markus Göttge	1398
Michael Höber	2234

cr 2012



Black can force a winning pawn ending by exchanging rooks. In this endgame, if the attacking side's rook pawn manages to cross the middle of the board, he will be able to choose between several winning manoeuvres, most notably the one based on imprisoning the enemy king once it captures the pawn.

61...♖f5! 62.♔g4!?

62.♖xf5 ♔xf5 leads to a variation seen in the comment to Black's 63rd move. The far advanced passed pawn, coupled with the fact that the h-pawn is still alive, means a smooth victory is at hand.

62...♖xf4+ 63.♔xf4

The critical position.

63...♔h5?

Black ruins his previous play. 63...♔f6! is an easy win, letting White capture the unimportant h-pawn: 64.♔g4 ♔e5! 65.♔xh4 ♔f4−+.

64.♔e5 ♔g5 65.♔xe6 ♔f4

Clumsy play. It is ironic that Black, who was unwilling to part with his h-pawn and now relies on capturing the white pawn, gets his own king imprisoned.

66.♔d5!

With this accurate move, White shows he understands the position: he must imprison the enemy king.

66...♔g3 67.♔e4

Black might as well have accepted the draw here.

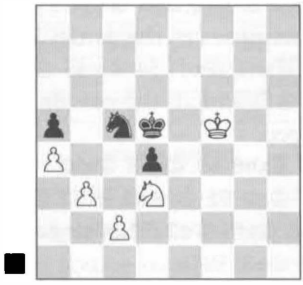
67...♔g2 68.♔e3 ♔g3 69.♔e2 ♔g2 70.♔e1 ♔xh3 71.♔f1 ♔h2 72.♔f2 h3 73.♔f1 ♔g3 74.♔g1 h2+ 75.♔h1 ½-½

ENDING 84

Exercise 239

Jörg Hickl	2485
Peter Meister	2375

Germany Bundesliga 1987/88 (4)



An immediate trade of knights leads to a lost endgame, because the black king will be imprisoned after capturing White's b3-/a4-pawn duo.

65...♘xd3?

65...♘e6! is good, given that in this case a knight trade on the f4-square leads to a draw: 66.♘f4+?! ♘xf4 67.♔xf4 d3!! 68.♔e3 (68.cxd3 ♔d4=) 68...dxc2 69.♔d2 ♔c5 70.♔xc2 ♔c6, keeping distant opposition.

66.cxd3 ♔c5 67.♔e4 ♔b4 68.♔xd4 ♔xb3 69.♔c5 ♔xa4

70.♔c4!

Now White has the edge; the ensuing pawn race will result in a

winning queen vs. queen endgame, as seen in several exercises in Chapter 3.

70...♔a3 71.d4 a4 72.d5 ♔b2 73.d6

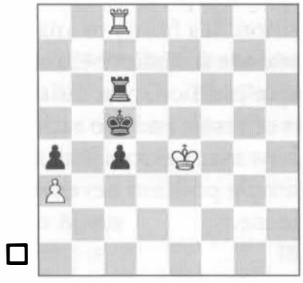
Black resigned, as he understood what was coming: 73...a3 74.d7 a2 75.d8♕ a1♕ and now a familiar horizontal check: 76.♕d2++–.

ENDINGS 20 & 84

Exercise 240

Maciej Jakubowski	2335
Marek Vokac	2525

Trinec 1998 (3)



Trading rooks is correct, provided one really understands the reason why!

57.♖xc6+?!

Objectively correct yet dubious, since less risky alternatives were available, such as 57.♖e8!, which should hold, e.g. 57...♔b5 (57...♖h6 58.♖c8+) 58.♔d4 c3 59.♖e5+ ♔b6 60.♖e1 c2 61.♖c1=.

57...♔xc6 58.♔d4 ♔b5 59.♔c3??

If White had intended this, he would have been far better off keeping the rooks on.

59.♔e3! ♔c5 60.♔e4 and Black can make no progress whatsoever.

59...♔c5 60.♔c2 ♔d4 61.♔d2 c3+ 62.♔c1

We have reached a basic theoretical position. Black wins by means of triangulation.

62...♔d5! 63.♔d1 ♔c5!

After the last two moves, which White can't copycat, Black's king is ready to seize the corresponding square: if White's king goes to c2, Black's will go to c4; if White goes ♔c1, Black will answer with ...♔d4.

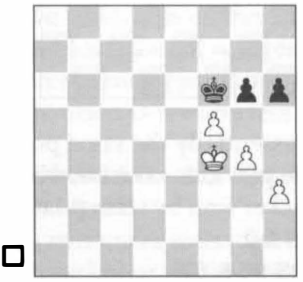
64.♔c1 ♔d4! 65.♔c2 ♔c4! 66.♔c1 ♔b3 67.♔b1 ♔xa3 68.♔c2 ♔b4 69.♔c1 ♔b3 70.♔b1 c2+ 71.♔c1 a3 0-1

ENDING 86

Exercise 241

Tatiana Kosintseva	2496
Anna Ushenina	2501

Khanty-Mansiysk Wch rapid 2014



White wins, but theoretical knowledge of the endgame rook's and knight's pawn vs. rook's pawn, as well as bishop's and rook's pawn vs. rook's pawn, is required.

60.h4!

The only winning move. Let's see why the other two natural options fail:

A) 60.fxg6? ♔xg6 61.h4 ♔f6=, the opposition saves Black;

B) 60.♔e4?, expecting Black to exchange, is wrong because 60...h5! quickly leads to a king and pawn vs. king endgame.

60...gxf5

The waiting strategy 60...♔f7 61.fxg6+ ♔xg6 62.♔e5 leads to a different version of the endgame knight's and rook's pawn vs. rook's pawn, in which White outflanks her opponent after 62...♔g7 63.♔e6 ♔g6 64.h5+! ♔g5 65.♔f7 ♔xg4 66.♔g6+–.

61.gxf5 ♔f7 62.♔e5 ♔e7 63.f6+ ♔f8 64.♔f5 ♔f7 65.h5

This is essentially the same position as in the previous exercise, where the attacker won by triangulation.

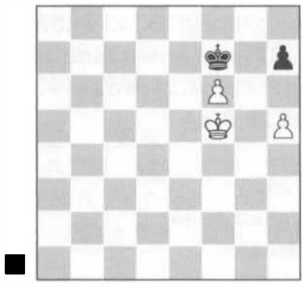
65...♔f8 1-0

ENDINGS 86 & 87

Exercise 242

Vereslav Eingorn	2589
Roman Slobodjan	2550

Koszalin 1999 (8)



I have provided an example of each of the four possible moves in this position. It's funny to analyse some database statistics behind this simple position, particularly in terms of result and Elo rating. Seeing how many errors occur in such a simple position never ceases to amaze me.

77...♔e8!

Black must keep the rook's pawn on his second rank and cede the opposition to White when there is an odd number of squares between the latter's pawns. By contrast, if the number of squares is even, he should keep the opposition. Specifically, with a white pawn on h3 or h5, Black should play ...♔e8; with a pawn on h4 Black should play ...♔f8; with a pawn on h2, which may still choose to advance one or two squares, Black is simply lost.

A) 77...♔f8? is the most frequently played move (number 67 in this game), seen seven times in my

database, with a disheartening 0% score. 78.♔e6 ♔e8 79.f7+ ♔f8 80.♔f6 1-0 Janyska-Chudinovskih, Olomouc 2011;

B) 77...h6? (move 61 in this game) leads to a triangulation endgame: 78.♔e5 ♔f8 79.♔f4 ♔g8 80.♔e4 ♔f8 81.♔e5 1-0 Jamroz-Szilagyi, Lublin 1968;

C) 77...♔g8! (move 69 in this game) also leads to a draw, for the same reasons as ...♔e8, but most players reject this move, most probably for psychological reasons. 78.♔e6 ♔f8 79.♔e5 ♔f7 80.♔f5 ½-½ Balogh-Csema, Hungary tt 2008/09.

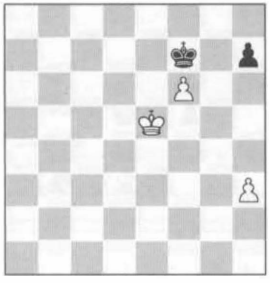
78.♔f4 ♔f7 79.♔g5 ♔e6 ½-½

ENDING 86; see also **ENDING 85**.

Exercise 243

Jan Banas	2360
Ladislav Mista	2340

Olomouc 1973 (8)



If you've studied the previous exercise, the answer to this one should be obvious: the odd number of squares between both white pawns means that Black should cede the opposition to White.

49...♔e8!

A) 49...♔f8?. Some players blindly rely on the opposition. Let's look at two examples: 50.♔e6 ♔e8 51.h4! ♔f8 52.h5+– ♔e8 53.f7+ (1-0 Cori-Fernandez, Sitges 2017; moves 51-55 in this game) 53...♔f8 54.♔f6 1-0 Epstein-Cejkova, Novi Sad 1990 (move 50-55 in this game);

B) 49...h6? loses quickly to a triangulation motif: 50.♔f5 h5 51.h4 ♔f8 52.♔g6+–.

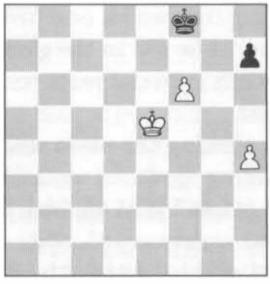
50.♔e6 ♔f8 51.♔e5

Just as he does in the game (see below), it would make sense for White to put Black to the test here too, by forcing him to come up with the accurate pawn move, e.g. 51.f7 h6! 52.♔f6 h5 53.♔e6 h4 and Black forces stalemate.

51...♔f7 52.♔f5 ♔e8! 53.h4 ♔f7 54.♔e5

Probing Black.

54...♔f8!



With the pawn now on the fourth rank (even number of squares between the rook's pawns) keeping the opposition is now correct.

55.h5

55.♔e6 ♔e8 56.f7+ ♔f8 57.♔f6 h6!=.

55...♔f7 56.♔f5

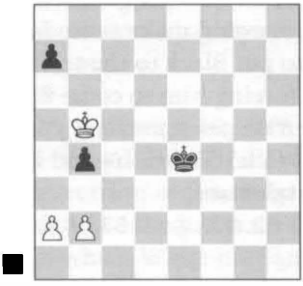
Black is still under interrogation, but it's clear he knows all the answers.

56...♔e8! 57.♔f4
57.♔e6 (move 65 in this game)
57...♔f8 58.f7 h6 59.♔f6 ½-½ Van Laatum-Golubev, Groningen 1993.
57...♔f7 58.♔e5 ♔e8 ½-½
ENDING 86; see also **ENDING 85**.

Exercise 244

Markus Stangl	2405
Herbert Holzmann	2415

Budapest 1990 (7)



Black can save the game, but not by playing the two vs. one pawn endgame, as he did in the game. Black needs a special resource.
44...♔d5?
44...b3!, altering the pawn structure, is the saving move, for example: 45.axb3 (45.a4?! ♔d3 46.♔b4 ♔c2 47.♔a3 a5 stalemate) 45...♔d3 46.b4 ♔c2 47.♔a6 ♔b3! 48.b5 ♔b4 49.b3 ♔c5=.
45.♔xb4 ♔c6
Black has brought his king back to defend, but with both white pawns still on the second rank, his defensive efforts will come to naught.
46.♔a5 ♔b7 47.♔b5 ♔c7 48.♔a6 ♔b8 49.b4 ♔a8 50.b5 ♔b8

Now it's easiest to rely on Bird's rule of colours: the kings are on opposite colours, thus the pawns must go to opposite colours, too.
51.a3! ♔a8 52.a4 ♔b8 53.a5 1-0
Black had seen enough.
ENDING 87

Exercise 245

Arne Hagesaether	2152
Alexandre Vuilleumier	2356

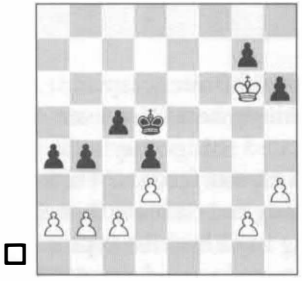
Hastings 2012 (6)

At first glance, it might seem like a good idea to eliminate a pawn with 68.♖xf6. Furthermore, it looks as if the other pawn might drop soon, too. But upon closer scrutiny, this variation actually gives Black a theoretically winning endgame.
68.♖xf6?

68.♔f1!, attacking the c4-pawn, engineers an immediate draw.
68...♘f4 69.♖xf4+ ♔xf4 70.♔e1!?
It looks as if the other pawn will be lost too, but:
70...♖xe2+! 71.♔xe2 ♔e4

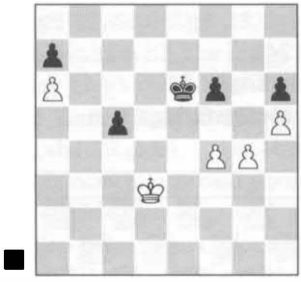
Black will now use basic outflanking technique to capture White's pawn, and gain control of a key square. After that, it's time to shepherd his own pawn down to greener pastures.
72.♔d2 ♔f3 73.♔d1 ♔e3 74.♔c2 ♔e2 75.♔c1 ♔d3 76.♔b2 ♔d2 77.♔b1 ♔xc3 78.♔c1 ♔d3 79.♔d1 c3 80.♔c1 c2 0-1
ENDING 79

Exercise 246
Boglarka Biskopics
Andrea Szeles
Paks ch-HUN jr W 1997 (8)



50.♔xg7 seems bad, but then, in an under-10 junior event, I've seen worse. Objectively, 50.♔xg7 is actually correct, but a move is only as good as its follow-up.
50.♔xg7! c4 51.♔xh6?
51.b3! was the correct way to fight against any breakthroughs.
51...b3!
Now, after executing a classic breakthrough, Black will promote a pawn first. The game is over.
52.axb3 axb3 53.dxc4+ ♔xc4 54.cxb3+ ♔xb3 55.g4 d3 56.g5 d2 57.g6 d1♕ 58.g7 ♕d6+ 59.♔h7 ♕d3+ 60.♔h8 ♕xh3+ 61.♔g8 ♔c4 62.♔f8 ♕f5+ 63.♔g8 ♔d5 64.♔h8 ♕h5+ 65.♔g8 ♔e6 66.b4 ♔f6 67.b5 ♕f7+ 68.♔h8 ♕xg7#
ENDING 92

Exercise 247
Maxime Lagarde 2566
Borya Ider 2394
Sautron 2014 (3)



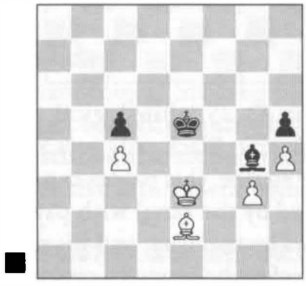
The move 42...f5, while logical, is insufficient: Black only gets a 'floating square' (his pawns cannot be supported by the king) with pawns separated by two files, and his pawns will therefore be prone to capture.

42...f5 43.g5 ♔d5?!
Followed by immediate resignation. The game might have continued in a more interesting way: 43...hxg5 44.h6 ♔f7 45.fxg5 ♔g6.

analysis diagram

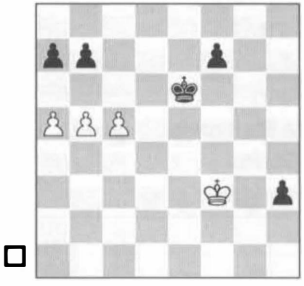
Black gains two separated passed pawns, but they are a manageable floating square for the enemy king: 46.♔c4 f4 47.♔d3! and the black pawns are lost. It's easy to see that if the c5-pawn had been on b5 in the starting position, the move 42...f5 would actually be winning, instead of losing.
ENDING 88

Exercise 248
Larry Remlinger 2380
Vincent McCambridge 2465
Anaheim 1984 (6)



Black can get a draw by exchanging bishops, provided he knows how to defend against the protected passed pawn.
78...♗xe2! 79.♔xe2 ♔d4 80.♔f2
This move might have prompted Black to refrain from trading bishops. White waits for Black to capture the c4-pawn in order to break with g3-g4. 80.g4 directly doesn't create any problems since Black can capture: 80...hxg4 and if 81.h5 ♔e5=; the king is inside the square.
80...♔xc4 81.g4 ♔d5 82.g5 ♔e5 83.♔e2 ♔d5 84.♔d3 ♔e5 85.♔c3 ♔d5 86.♔b3 ♔e5 87.♔a4 ♔e6 ½-½
ENDING 89

Exercise 249
Gennady Tunik 2412
Ilya Duzhakov 2325
St Petersburg 2011 (8)



White can definitely aspire to something here! However complicated things may look, the position clearly favours White. He can engineer a breakthrough resulting in either direct promotion or a protected passed pawn. Black,

on the other hand, has no serious floating square to speak of.

44.c6! b6

44...bxc6?! allows promotion of the a-pawn: 45.b6 axb6 46.a6+–.

45.axb6 axb6

Now that White has obtained a protected passed pawn, the king will eliminate first the h-pawn, then the f-pawn and, finally, support its own passed pawn.

46.♔g3 ♔d6 47.♔xh3 ♔c7 48.♔g4 ♔c8 49.♔f5 ♔c7 50.♔f6 ♔c8 51.♔xf7 ♔d8 52.♔e6 ♔c8

To win this endgame, White must give up his passed pawn by means of a standard procedure:

53.c7! ♔xc7 54.♔e7 ♔c8 55.♔d6 ♔b7 56.♔d7 ♔a7 57.♔c7 ♔a8 58.♔xb6 ♔b8 59.♔a6 1-0

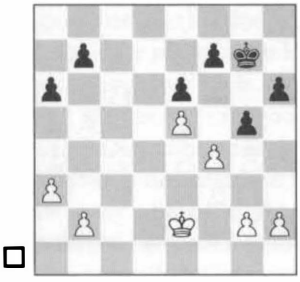
ENDING 89

Exercise 250

Carl Schlechter

Savielly Tartakower

Carlsbad 1907 (21)



Black has just played ...g6-g5, and by doing so he has given White the option to create a decisive outside passed pawn.

31.fxg5!

This exchange, coupled with a subsequent king transfer to g4, enables White to create an outside passed pawn. There is little Black can do.

31...hxg5 32.♔f3! ♔g6 33.♔g4 f5+

If Black waits with the king, White will play g2-g3 and h2-h4.

34.exf6 ♔xf6 35.g3 a5 36.a4 e5 37.h4 gxh4 38.gxh4

White is now the proud owner of an outside passed pawn. The next step is to divert Black's king by giving it up, allowing his own king to gobble up all the enemy pawns.

38...♔g6 39.b3 b6 40.h5+ ♔f6 41.h6 ♔g6 42.h7 ♔xh7 43.♔f5

Black resigned.

ENDING 90

Exercise 251

Raj Tischbierek 2315

Vladislav Vorotnikov 2410

Leipzig 1979 (3)

Capturing the h4-pawn was a howler. Most likely, the white player underestimated the pent-up power of Black's queenside pawns to engineer a successful breakthrough. Had he kept the knight on the board, the game would still have been within drawing margins.

56.♘xh4?

A) 56.♔g2 is one possibility to keep equality;

B) 56.♘xg5? is another way to go awry: 56...fxg5 and the same breakthrough as in the game can't be prevented. White's protected passed pawn is an asset of very limited value.

56...♗xh4 57.♔xh4

Doubled pawn constellations are vulnerable to breakthroughs, and the technique to pull one off is to sacrifice either one or several pawns.

57...c4!

Ensures the promotion of a black pawn.

58.♔h5

58.bxc4 a4 followed by ...a4-a3; 58.dxc4 a4 59.bxa4 b3 60.cxb3 d3–+.

58...a4 59.♔g6

59.bxa4 b3!–+.

59...axb3 60.cxb3 cxd3 61.♔g7 d2 62.g5 d1♕ 63.gxf6+ ♔d6 64.f7 ♕g4+ 65.♔f6 ♕h4+ 0-1

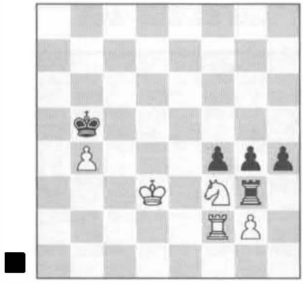
See also **ENDING 92**.

Exercise 252

James Critelli 2311

Ronald Bruno 2244

Las Vegas 2006 (6)



This position may look rather confusing, but Black can once again force an endgame with a blocked pawn by a couple of accurate checks, an idea we've seen before.

51...♖xf3+!

The rook sacrifice ensures the creation of a dangerous pawn duo which forces White to give back

his rook but in worse conditions. Not good enough to win is 51...gxf3 52.gxf3 h3 53.♖h2 ♖xf3+ 54.♔e4= or 51...h3 52.gxh3 ♖xh3 53.♔e4=.

52.gxf3 g3!

The threat of the g3/h4-pawn duo turning into an unstoppable force paralyses the rook, so the king must intervene.

53.♔e2 h3 54.♔f1 gxf2

Perfect timing. Black forces through simplification, and now proceeds to wrest control over the key squares away from the opponent.

55.♔xf2 ♔xb4 56.♔g1 ♔c3 57.♔h2 ♔d3 58.♔xh3 ♔e2 59.♔g2 ♔e3 60.♔f1 ♔xf3 61.♔e1 ♔g2 62.♔e2 f3+ 0-1

ENDING 79

Exercise 253

Gabriel Jimenez Molina 2334

Eduardo Serrano Salvador 2214

cr 2011

White intends to support his passed pawns. Black, however, can draw as long as he finds the only move that thwarts this dangerous plan: he must buy himself enough time to get to grips with both white pawns.

45...g4!

Black may have applied the method of elimination – a common technique in chess calculation – to find this move. Most logically, one starts by calculating the consequences of eliminating the white pawns with ...♔a7; upon finding this doesn't work, it would be plausible to look into a restraint policy with ...♔c7; seeing that this move is no good either, one finally concludes that a king diversion is necessary, so then the feeble move ...h6-h5 might be the next candidate. Let's have a closer look at these possibilities:

A) 45...♔a7? is tempting, but after 46.c6 ♔xa6 47.♔e6 White wins;

B) 45...♔c7? is somewhat of an improvement, but also here White can aid his pawns with

analysis diagram

46.♔e6! g4 47.a7 ♔b7 48.c6+ ♔xa7 49.c7 ♔b7 50.♔d7!+–;

C) 45...h5? is not energetical enough, as White has now time for 46.c6, creating a pawn duo able to queen on auto-pilot thanks to zugzwang, for example: 46...h4 47.♔g4 and the black king, forced to move, must acknowledge defeat.

46.♔xg4 h5+ 47.♔xh5 ♔a7 ½-½

ENDING 88

Exercise 254
Louis Paulsen
C Hengstenberg
Düsseldorf blindfold sim 1862

Our celebrated forebears were fully aware of how effective this kind of blocked pawn duo is to tear down a fortress. They also knew how to play accurately.

56.♔e6!

56.♔d6 also wins, with the same idea. By contrast, 56.♔d7? is inadequate (for the same reasons as 56.♔d8): 56...fxg5 57.♖e7+ ♔f6!! (avoiding a transition into a lost pawn endgame, to get into a drawn rook endgame instead) 58.♖xh7 gxh4 59.♖xh4 g5 60.♖h8 ♔e5!=.

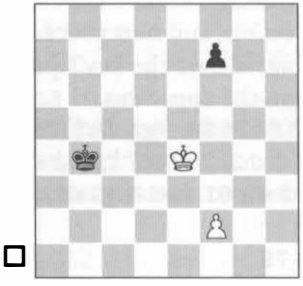
56...fxg5 57.♖e7+ ♔h6 58.♖xh7+ ♔xh7 59.hxg5

The rest is easy.

59...♔g7 60.♔e7 ♔g8 61.♔f6 ♔h7 62.♔f7 ♔h8 63.♔xg6 ♔g8 64.♔h6 ♔h8 65.g6 ♔g8 66.g7 1-0

ENDING 79 & Chapter 5

Exercise 255
Vladimir Malakhov 2663
Evgeniy Najer 2605
Moscow 2007 (7)



The point is to execute a dual-purpose king manoeuvre: capture the f7-pawn while shouldering off ('bodychecking') the enemy king. Of course, accurate calculation is required.

61.♔e5?

White can't win by a direct race. He must use the mechanism of the bodycheck to force Black to either worsen his king position or move the pawn: 61.♔d4! ♔b5 (if the king moves up, White will keep the opposition while getting closer to the f7-pawn; if the king moves down, 61...♔b3, the pawn moves up: 62.f4 ♔c2 63.f5 ♔d2 64.f6 ♔e2 65.♔d5+–; 61...f6 62.f4 ♔b5 63.♔d5 ♔b4 64.♔e6+–) 62.♔d5 ♔b6 63.♔d6+–.

61...♔c5! 62.f3 ♔c6 63.f4

63.♔f6 ♔d5! 64.♔xf7 ♔e5=.

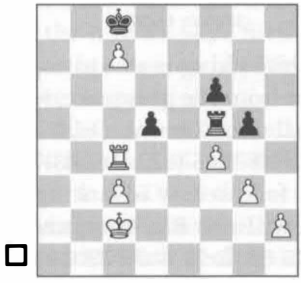
63...♔d7 64.♔f6 ♔e8 65.♔g7 f5! 66.♔f6 ½-½

ENDING 80

Exercise 256

Asier Etxagibel	2134
Mikel Ortega Lopez	2240

Spain tt 2018 (5)



The move g3-g4 was wrong: White could have won by keeping the rooks on. Simplification, by contrast, leads to a difficult yet drawn pawn endgame with a subtle king manoeuvre at the end of a long variation.

50.g4?

50.♖a4! g4 51.♖a8+ ♔xc7 52.♖h8, among other options, should be winning.

50...dxc4

50...♖xf4? 51.♖xf4 gxf4 52.h4+– would be elementary.

51.gxf5 ♔xc7 52.fxg5

52.♔d2 leads to a surprising variation: 52...gxf4! (allowing an outside pawn) 53.♔e2 (53.h4 ♔d6 54.h5 ♔e7 55.♔e2 ♔f7 56.♔f3 ♔g7 57.♔xf4 ♔h6 58.♔g4 ♔h7 and there is no way to make any progress) 53...♔d6 54.♔f3 ♔e5 55.h3 ♔xf5 56.h4 ♔e5 57.h5 ♔f5 58.h6 ♔g6 59.♔xf4 ♔xh6 60.♔f5 ♔g7 61.♔e4 ♔g6 62.♔d5 f5 63.♔xc4=.

52...fxg5 53.♔d2 ♔d6 54.♔e3 ♔e5 55.f6!?

Since the e5-pawn is lost anyway, White might as well create some room to get to grips with the c4-pawn.

55...♔xf6 56.♔d4 ♔f5 57.♔xc4 ♔g4

The crucial moment: White's king has a choice of moves.

58.♔b5

58.♔d5!? is the most logical try, but it's not winning. Let's find out why: 58...♔h3 59.♔e5 ♔xh2 60.♔f5.

analysis diagram

Once again, we reach this typical paradox of a king using dual-purpose moves to achieve its goal.

60...♔g3! 61.c4 (61.♔xg5 ♔f3 and the white pawn drops) 61...♔f3 and White has a choice between allowing a position with bare kings, or one with king-and-queen vs. king-and-queen.

58...♔h3 59.c4 ♔xh2 60.c5 ½-½

ENDING 82

Exercise 257

Zurab Azmaiparashvili 2672

Angelos Vouldis 2524

Greece tt 2005 (5)

Simplification leads to a version of the endgame with blocked rook's pawns and a passed pawn on the other flank, which in this case is only a draw. This would be different if the pawn stood on h2.

57.f6?

White probably didn't expect too much from this position. Presumably, he didn't believe his position could be improved by doing some manoeuvring. This assumption, however, was wrong, as there is in fact a quick and efficient way to win the game by force: 57.♘f4! ♗f6 58.♘g6+ ♔e4 59.♘f8 (59.♘xh4 ♗xh4 60.♔xh4 ♔xf5 61.♔g3 ♔g5 is the same endgame as in the game, within drawing margins) 59...♗d8 60.♘d7 ♔d5.

analysis diagram

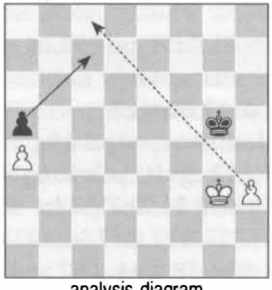
Now White's king is able to support its pawn from the g6-square, which makes all the difference: 61.♔h5!! ♔d6 62.♘f8 ♔e5 (62...♗e7 63.♘e6) 63.♔g6, followed by advancing the f-pawn, will cost Black a piece.

57...♗xf6 58.♘xf6 ♔xf6 59.♔xh4 ♔f5!

Necessary to prevent the variation 59...♔g6 60.♔g4+-. Now White, perhaps disheartened at this point, rejects the natural continuation with 60.♔g3 (which would promise no more than a draw in any case) and keeps on playing without much point.

60.♔h5

The natural continuation would be 60.♔g3 ♔g5.



analysis diagram

For natural positions such as in the diagram, the two lines allow us to come to a conclusion regarding the result of the game: the longest (dotted) line from h3 to c8 (the route of the black king after capturing the white pawn) reaches the c-file above the shorter line a5-c7 (the route of the white king after capturing the black pawn) and therefore the result is a draw. Note that if the h-pawn were further back (in this case, on h2) White would be winning.

61.♔f3 ♔h4 62.♔e4 ♔xh3 63.♔d5 ♔g4 64.♔c5 ♔f5 65.♔b5 ♔e6 66.♔xa5 ♔d7 67.♔b6 ♔c8=, the black king is just in time.

60...♔f4 61.h4 ♔f5 62.♔h6 ♔f6 63.♔h7 ♔f7 64.h5 ♔f6 65.♔h6 ♔f7 66.♔g5 ♔g7 67.♔f5 ♔h6 68.♔e5 ♔xh5 69.♔d5 ♔g6 70.♔c5 ♔f7 71.♔b5 ♔e7 72.♔xa5 ♔d7 73.♔b6 ♔c8 74.a5 ♔b8 75.a6 ♔a8 76.a7 ½-½

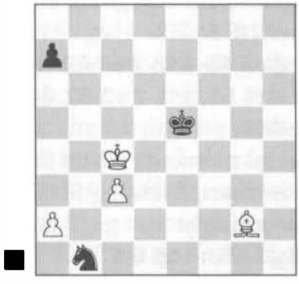
ENDING 83

Exercise 258

Yuri Nikolaevsky

Isaak Lenchiner

Dnyepropetrovsk 1962



The key to a white victory is to force an exchange of the badly placed knight without altering the pawn structure. That is why Black should avoid such a scenario from his very first move.

49...♔d6?

This move leads to a losing endgame, handled by White in impeccable style, helped perhaps by home analysis over adjournment. Black could have saved the game with 49...♘a3+!, denying White the possibility of forcing the trade of this piece, for example: 50.♔b4 (50.♔d3 ♘b5=) 50...♘c2+ followed by ...♘e3.

50.♔d4!

The beginning of an impressive technical performance by Nikolaevsky. The first stage of his plan is to trap the black knight in such a way that it will be forced to exchange itself for the bishop. Not only does 50.♔d4 prepare to control the b5-square with the bishop, it also anticipates any attempts by Black to prolong the life of his knight via the d2-square.

50...♘a3

50...♘d2 51.♔d3 ♘b1 52.♗f1 ♘a3 53.♔d2 traps the knight in similar fashion to the game.

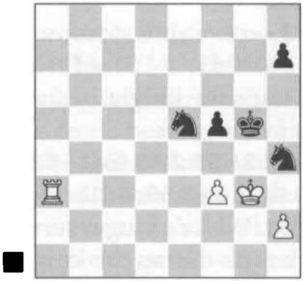
51.♗f1 ♘c2+ 52.♔d3 ♘e1+ 53.♔e2 ♘c2 54.♔d2 ♘a3 55.♔c1!

A paradox: White's king returns to the back rank to trap the knight.

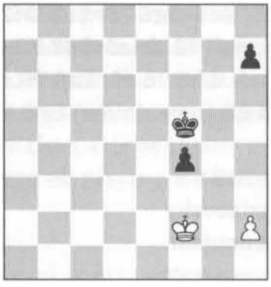
55...♔c5 56.♔b2 ♘c4+ 57.♗xc4 ♔xc4 58.♔c2

Finally, the minor pieces have come off. We have now reached an endgame with bishop's and rook's pawn vs. rook's pawn. The white a-pawn being on the second rank always guarantees victory, as explained in Exercise 218.
58...♔c5 59.♔d3 ♔d5 60.c4+ ♔c5 61.♔c3 ♔c6 62.♔d4 ♔d6 63.c5+ ♔c6 64.♔c4 ♔c7 65.♔d5 ♔d7 66.c6+ ♔c7 67.♔c5 ♔c8 68.♔d6 ♔d8 69.c7+ ♔c8 70.♔c6 1-0
ENDING 85

Exercise 259
Iryna Zenyuk 2194
Andrei Florean 2426
San Diego 2006 (8)



Don't let appearances fool you – this exercise is not identical to the previous one. Immediate simplification is a mistake here.
43...♘hxf3? 44.♖xf3?
White, the lower rated player, immediately returns the favour by making the typical beginner's mistake of capturing pieces at the first opportunity given. Having said that, the defence is by no means easy and requires great precision. The right move is 44.♖a4!! to prevent ...f5-f4. The knights remain awkwardly placed, unable to save the f5-pawn. 44...♘d2 (44...♔f6 45.♖a6+ ♔g7 46.♔f4 also here, Black loses the f5-pawn; 44...h5 45.h4+!=) 45.h4+ ♔h5 46.♔f4 Back loses the f5-pawn.
44...♘xf3 45.♔xf3 f4 46.♔f2 ♔f5



We have reached a position seen in Exercises 218 & 258.
47.♔f3 ♔e5 48.♔f2 ♔e4 49.♔e2 f3+ 50.♔f2 ♔f4 51.♔f1 ♔e3 52.♔e1 f2+ 53.♔f1 ♔f3
The crucial moment: White must move his pawn, allowing Black to react accordingly.
54.h3 ♔g3 55.h4 h5 0-1
ENDING 85

Exercise 260

Christian Schneider 2081

Lukas Meizner 2007

Willingen 2007 (9)

In this common and dangerous pawn structure, White faces a tough decision: should he risk a decisive breakthrough by moving away from the pawn cluster, or should he go for passive defence, allowing the enemy king in? White's position, however, is not beyond salvation, as he has a crucial game-saving resource at his disposal, based on mutual zugzwang.

45.♔d2?

A) Surely, White understood that 45.♔b4? would take the king too far away from the action, allowing the breakthrough 45...f4! 46.exf4 (46.♔c3 f3 47.gxf3 exf3 48.♔d2 g4–+) 46...gxf4 47.♔c3 ♔c5 48.♔d2 ♔d4 49.♔e2 e3 50.fxe3+ fxe3–+;

B) But the surprising move 45.♔c2!! keeps the balance, for if 45...♔c4 (45...f4 doesn't work with the king one square closer: 46.♔d2 f3 47.g4! (not 47.g3? g4!–+) 47...hxg3 48.fxg3=) then 46.♔d2, reaching an unusual zugzwang position:

analysis diagram

Black has no useful move in this exact same position as in the game but with Black himself to move. Let's look at the options:

B1) 46...f4 47.♔e2! followed by f2-f3 (=; if Black insists in bringing his king in, he even ends up losing);

B2) 46...g4 47.♔c2 – now, Black has no reserve tempi available and can't win back the opposition either;

B3) 46...♔b3 47.♔e2 ♔c2 (47...g4 48.♔e1 leads to the same position) 48.g3! ♔c1 49.gxh4 gxh4 50.♔e1 and with this pawn structure, Black's king can't outflank its antagonist, not even by means of the opposition.

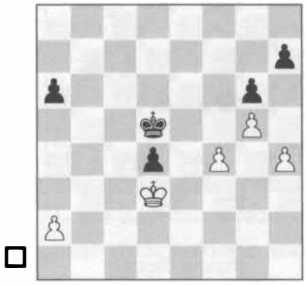
45...♔c4 46.♔e2 ♔c3?

Black misses his chance: 46...g4! 47.♔d2 ♔b3 48.♔d1 ♔c3 49.♔e2 ♔c2 50.♔e1 ♔d3 51.♔f1 g3! 52.fxg3 hxg3 53.h4 ♔d2 54.h5 f4 and the black pawn queens with mate.

47.g3! ♔c2 48.gxh4 gxh4 49.♔e1 ♔c3 ½-½

ENDING 92

Exercise 261
José Raul Capablanca
Edward Lasker
London friendly game 1913



White should now win by breaking through on the kingside. In the game, however, he misplayed the position and was lucky to come out on top eventually.

39.f5?

White seems to forget about his reserve tempo on the queenside. It was necessary to use it to kick the king a little further away from the candidate queen: 39.a3! a5 40.a4 ♔c5 41.f5! and now, indeed, a white pawn will become a queen.

39...gxf5 40.h5 ♔e5?

Such a human mistake: Black is unwilling to abandon his d-pawn, but this leads him astray too far from the h-pawn.

40...♔e6 41.♔xd4 f4 42.♔e4 f3 43.♔xf3 ♔f5=.

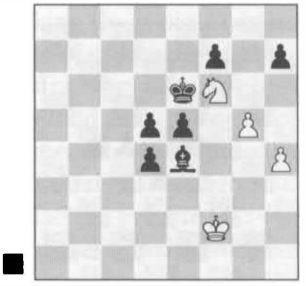
41.h6!

Black resigned.

Now g5-g6 can't be prevented any longer, so a white pawn will promote on the h8-square.

ENDING 92

Exercise 262
Fahrudin Colpa 1934
Vahdet Patkovic 2081
Sarajevo 2014 (3)



Black has, believe it or not, eleven winning moves in this position! Evidently, he wasn't familiar with the bizarre zugzwang position shown in the diagram below, and which has become a standard example in manuals of endgame theory.

35...h6?

A blunder that brings Black to the very edge of defeat, with only one way to save the game. 35...♗f5 was possibly the easiest solution.

36.♘xe4 dxe4??

36...hxg5! was the only move to draw, but who would make such a move after 35...h6 ? 37.♘xg5+ ♔f6 with a likely draw.

37.gxh6 ♔f6 38.h5

Black falls into one of the most painful zugzwang positions known to man, even though it is more common to see this happen with a white pawn on f5 rather than h5. If he moves the king, the h6-pawn will be unstoppable. By contrast, White's king is perfectly capable of dealing with the three black pawns, and therefore it is clear that Black can only postpone the inevitable.

38...e3+ 39.♔f3 e4+ 40.♔e2

Now we witness how the black pawns will drop, one after the other. At this point, Black really could have resigned with a clear conscience, but he couldn't bring himself to do it, and played on out of spite.

40...♔g5 41.h7 ♔f4 42.h8♕ d3+ 43.♔e1 f5 44.♕f6 e2 45.♕d4 ♔f3 46.h6 f4 47.♕f2+ ♔g4 48.♕g2+ ♔f5 49.♕h3+ ♔g5 50.h7 f3 51.♕g3+ 1-0

Chapter 12

Exercise 263

Marco Gähler 2292

Milos Roganovic 2497

Zurich 2010 (1)

This position is where White often throws away the win. Memorizing one concrete mechanism is almost mandatory. The player handling the white pieces in this game wasn't familiar with it.

97.♗e5!?

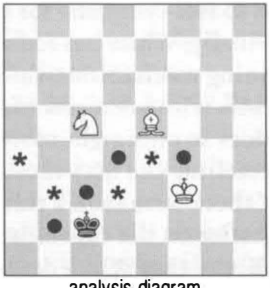
This move, while not an error (it leads to mate in the same number of moves as via the prescribed method) is a step in the wrong direction.

White can keep the black king under control with the manoeuvre 97.♔e3 ♔c2 98.♘d2 ♔c3 and now 99.♗d6!. The black king is locked in a cage it can't escape from. The rest of the winning procedure is child's play.

97...♔c2 98.♔e3?

White mixes up ideas and, by doing so, compromises the win: he has spent twenty-five moves, and will need twenty-one more with perfect play to give checkmate.

98.♘c5! creates a second triangle, as published by Delétang as far back as 1923, to keep the king bound.



analysis diagram

The key point to remember is that the a3-square is not really a hole in this bishop-knight wall that the black king can exploit: once the it reaches a3, White answers ♗c3, blocking the b4-exit.

98...♔b3 99.♗d4 ♔c4 100.♘c3 ♔b4 101.♔d3?

The decisive error because of the fifty-move rule: White has used twenty-seven moves, and now he needs twenty-four more. By contrast, 101.♔e4! leads to mate in 'only' twenty.

101...♔a5 102.♔c4 ♔a6 103.♔c5 ♔b7 104.♘d5 ♔c8 105.♔d6 ♔b7 106.♗c3 ♔a6 107.♔c6 ♔a7 108.♘b6 ♔a6 109.♗b4 ♔a7 110.♗d6 ♔a6 111.♗b8 ♔a5 112.♘d5 ♔a4 113.♔c5 ♔b3 114.♘b4 ♔c3 115.♗f4!

One has to feel sympathy for this effort. Finally, White has found the winning mechanism, which he executes with great precision, but he does so only eight moves before reaching the fifty-move limit. If there were such a thing as poetic justice on the chessboard, it would dictate that White deserves the win, but alas, the chess rules are governed by the maxim *dura lex, sed lex* (a tough law, but the law nonetheless).

115...♔b3 116.♗e5 ♔a4 117.♔c4 ♔a5 118.♗c7+ ♔a4 119.♘d3 ♔a3 120.♗b6 ♔a4 121.♘b2+ ♔a3 122.♔c3 ♔a2 123.♗c5 ½-½

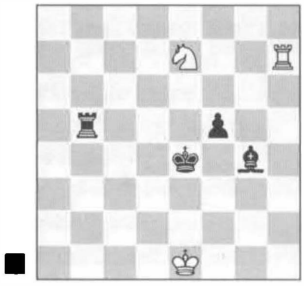
Drawn because of the fifty-move rule. White would have given checkmate in five more moves. Remember what I said in the introduction: *learn from other people's mistakes...*

ENDING 93

Exercise 264

Radovan Brajovic	2205
Ljubomir Masic	2385

Skender Vakuf ch-YUG 1980 (3)

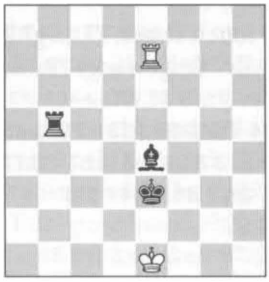


Black wins by letting White capture his pawn; this will lead to the Philidor position.

68...♔e3!

68...f4? temporarily saves the pawn, but after 69.♘g6 f3 70.♖e7+ ♔f5 71.♘h4+ ♔g5 72.♘xf3+ ♗xf3 the pawn drops any way, with a drawn position as a result.

69.♘xf5+ ♗xf5 70.♖e7+ ♗e4

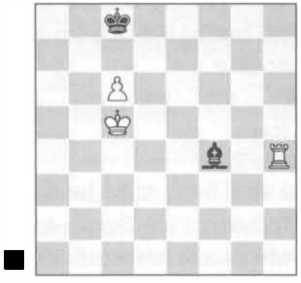


A textbook version of the winning Philidor position. Executing the manoeuvre is a lengthy process and requires great technical skill:
71.♖d7 ♖b1+ 72.♖d1 ♖b7 73.♖d2 ♖b1+ 74.♖d1 ♖b2 75.♖d7 ♖a2 76.♖d8 ♖e2+ 77.♔d1 ♖g2 78.♔c1 ♖c2+ 79.♔d1 ♖c7 80.♖e8 ♖h7 81.♔c1 ♖b7 0-1
ENDING 94

Exercise 265

Georg Siegel	2480
Ivan Nemet	2395

Zurich 1995 (7)



The two moves that draw are the ones that keep the bishop on the h2-b8 diagonal without disturbing the black king's mobility.
91...♗c1?
Losing, as the bishop won't be able to get back onto the right diagonal. Let's look at all the other moves:
A) 91...♗c7? loses on the spot to 92.♖h8++–;
B) 91...♗b8? also loses on account of 92.♖h8+ ♔c7 93.♖xb8!;
C) 91...♗g3! keeps the bishop on the right diagonal;
D) 91...♗e5! is also correct for the same reason;
E) 91...♗e3+? 92.♔d6+–.
92.♖a4 ♔c7 93.♖a7+ ♔c8 94.♖f7 ♗d2

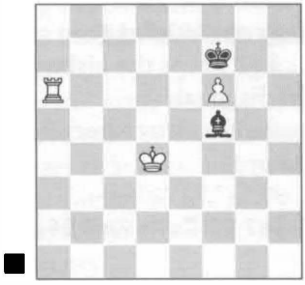
95.♖h7??
So far the bishop has not been able to reach the right diagonal. The win would be in doubt if the black bishop reaches a5, but the winning procedure was as follows: 95.c7 ♔b7 96.♔d6 ♗a5 and now White wins like in Exercise 272, De Firmian-Georgiev: 97.♖g7 with zugzwang (or 97.♖h7 or even 97.♖e7): 97...♗b6 98.c8♕+ ♔xc8 99.♔c6+–.
95...♗e3+ 96.♔d5 ♗f4 97.♖h3 ♗g5?? 1-0
Again the bishop leaves the right diagonal – Black's position is again losing, although it is slightly strange to resign at this point already.
ENDING 97

Exercise 266

Levon Aronian 2797

Teimour Radjabov 2734

Beijing blitz 2014 (2)



Black can set up a fortress, but he is going to have to work for it. Before anything else, the bishop must take the a2-g8 diagonal.

74...♗g4??

In blitz games, even elite players sometimes mess up simple endgames. The correct defence is 74...♗e6! 75.♔e5 ♗b3=; 74...♗c8 is another possibility, because it attacks the rook and so the bishop could go to e6 on the next turn.

75.♔e5!

Now the bishop can't get back onto the right diagonal.

75...♗f3 76.♖a7+ ♔f8

77.♖c7

77.f7! is much faster: 77...♔g7 78.♔e6 ♗h5 79.♖c7 (zugzwang) 79...♗g6 80.f8♕+ ♔xf8 81.♔f6+–.

77...♗g4 78.♔d5 ♗f3+ 79.♔e5 ♗g4 80.♖c4 ♗f3 81.♔e6 ♗b7 82.f7 ♗a6 83.♖h4 ♔g7 84.♖g4+ 1-0

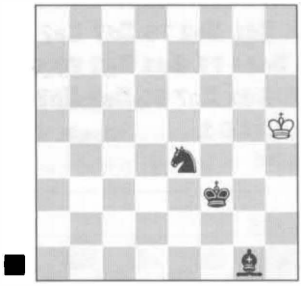
ENDING 97

Exercise 267

Zoltan Gyimesi 2539

Ralf Lau 2495

Fürth 2000 (5)



This is essentially the same position as Exercise 263. Over the next three moves, White's king will be locked in a cage. That is, if Black knows how to do that.

93...♔f4

A good start.

94.♔g6 ♗c5?

94...♘g5! 95.♔f6 ♗c5! is the way to prevent White's king from escaping justice. My database reveals the following interesting statistics: Black has a 100% score out of seven games; extending the search to include symmetrical positions and positions with colours reversed, it shows that 47 out of 48 games

ended in a win. The only game that ended in a draw was the one we saw in Exercise 263. Based on these statistics it is clear to say that once the cage closes, the enemy king is almost certainly doomed. Compare these statistics with the one based on the final position in this game.

95.♔f7 ♔f5 96.♔e8 ♔e6 97.♔d8 ♗d6 98.♔c8 ♘c5 99.♔d8 ♘b7+ 100.♔c8 ♘c5 101.♔d8 ½-½

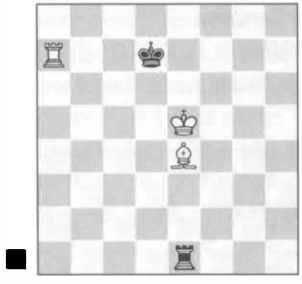
The database statistics for this position (including symmetrical ones) are 11 draws out of 23 games! Perhaps a fair result for such an unpredictable procedure.

ENDING 93

Exercise 268

Wang Yue	2626
Peter Acs	2520

Paks 2006 (8)



Black should aim for Cochrane's Defence. To get there from this position, however, doesn't seem very natural.

88...♔d8?

The game move allows the Philidor position.

88...♔e8! – even though both kings are on the same file, this is the basic Cochrane position. 88...♔c8 also holds the draw.

89.♔d6 ♔e8 90.♗d5

White started the winning manoeuvre on the right foot, but fails to complete it.

90...♔f8 91.♖f7+ ♔e8 92.♖f3 ♔d8 93.♖f2?!

Again White falters. During the times of adjournments, I witnessed many players analyse this endgame, often showing lack of proper understanding of the winning manoeuvre. In modern times, driven by the need to perform well under strict time controls, it is essential that players study the endgame more thoroughly. The best way to win is 93.♖f8+ ♖e8 94.♖f7 ♖e1 95.♗f3 ♖e3 96.♖a7 ♖c3 97.♗c6 ♖d3+ 98.♗d5 ♖c3 99.♖d7+ ♔c8 100.♖g7 ♔b8 101.♖b7+ ♔c8 102.♖b4 ♔d8 103.♗c4!.

93...♖e7 94.♖f8+ ♖e8 95.♖f7 ♖e1

Essentially, we're at the beginning of the Philidor manoeuvre in the rook-and-bishop vs. rook endgame.

96.♖d7+ ♔e8 97.♖g7 ♔d8

According to my database, this position has occurred in twelve games, with White winning seven.

All in all, I'd say this isn't a bad score. Objectively, however, White is winning, of course. In Negi-Sethuraman, Chennai 2008, White played ♖a7 (move 101 in that game) and also there, White ended up accepting a draw after forty-two more moves. Only one game saw the accurate move ♗b3, but even that game was eventually drawn.

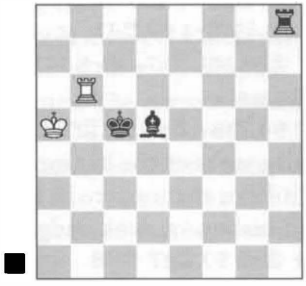
98.♖b7 ♖c1 99.♖a7 ♖c2 100.♖d7+ ♔c8 101.♖h7+– [??] ½-½

ENDINGS 94 & 95

Exercise 269

Evgeny Degtiarev	2393
Craig Hanley	2427

Groningen 2006 (5)



White can force the Philidor position. At this exact moment, however, White in practice often deviates from the right plan, and often sees his winning chances vanish into thin air after the opponent finds the second-rank defence.

106...♗c4?

106...♖a8+ 107.♖a6 ♖b8! starts the correct execution of Philidor's plan: 108.♖h6 ♖b3 109.♖h4 ♗f3 110.♖f4 ♗c6 111.♖f5+ ♗d5 112.♖f4 ♖b5+ 113.♔a4 ♖b7 114.♔a3 ♖b3+ 115.♔a4 ♖e3 116.♖f5 ♖e2–+.

The move in the game might seem winning, but is adequately countered by:

107.♖b5+!

This stalemate resource throws a spanner in the works, kicking away Black's king. White now correctly engineers the second-rank defence.

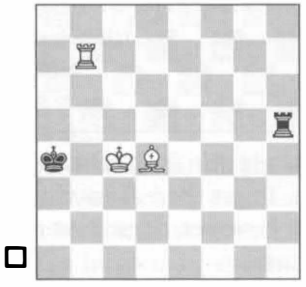
107...♔d4 108.♖b6 ♖h5+ 109.♔b4 ♖h2 110.♖d6+ ♗d5 111.♖b6 ♖c2 112.♔a5 ♗c4 113.♔b4 ♖c1 114.♖d6+ ♗d5 115.♖b6 ♗c6 116.♔a5 ♗d7 117.♖b4+ ♔d5 118.♔b6 ♖c6+ 119.♔b7 ♖e6 120.♖b1 ♗c6+ 121.♔b6 ♗e8+ 122.♔c7 ♗a4 123.♖a1 ♗b5 124.♖d1+ ½-½

ENDING 96

Exercise 270

Fabiano Caruana	2794
Peter Svidler	2757

Moscow ct 2016 (13)



White has achieved a winning Philidor position, but time is against him, both on the clock (he was in serious time trouble) and on

the board (he is close to violating the fifty-move rule).

105.♗f2?!

This game represents one of the most dramatic climaxes in the history of modern chess. A pawnless endgame started on move 66, and after a long phase of objective equilibrium, Black fell into a losing Philidor position on move 102. At this point, White had to find a checkmate within eleven moves or sign the score sheets with only half a point because of the fifty-move rule. Unfortunately for him, the move in the game leads to a longer checkmating sequence. Performing well in this kind of endgame, under such demanding circumstances, requires not only theoretical and technical skill, but also physical endurance.

105.♖b2! was the most accurate. The most tenacious defence then starts with 105...♖h3 106.♗f2 and now Black must wait with his rook on the third rank: 106...♖f3 107.♗c5 ♖f4+ 108.♗d4 ♖f3 109.♖b4+ ♔a3 (109...♔a5 110.♖b7+– is faster) 110.♖b6 ♔a2 111.♖b2+ ♔a3 112.♖e2 (threatening 113.♗c5+ followed by 114.♖a2) 112...♖f4 113.♖e1 and Black can't hold out more than one move without either losing his rook or being checkmated, two moves before being saved by the fifty-move limit.

105...♖g5 106.♖h7 ♖g4+ 107.♗d4 ♖g5 108.♖h8 ♖b5 109.♖a8+ ♖a5 110.♖b8 ♖h5

111.♗f6?

A demoralized Caruana also misses the best move here, but it wouldn't make any difference. 111.♖b2! was correct, to start all over, but the fifty-move rule wouldn't have allowed it.

111...♔a5 112.♗c3+ ♔a6 113.♗d4 ♖h6 114.♗e3 ♖e6 115.♖b3 ♖c6+ 116.♔d5 ½-½

The fifty-move rule put a definitive end to the game.

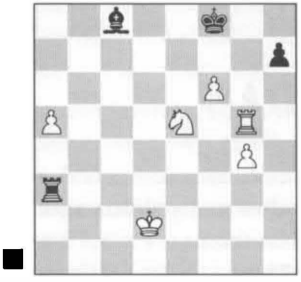
ENDING 94

Exercise 271

Laszlo Szabo

Mikhail Botvinnik

Budapest 1952 (5)



Botwinnik has in mind a drawn endgame with rook and bishop's pawn on the sixth vs. bishop. This

he achieves by means of a forced variation.

51...♖xa5!! 52.♘d7+ ♗xd7 53.♖xa5 ♗xg4

Black has achieved his aim. What he has to do next is place the bishop on the a2-g8 diagonal, something the white king, far away from the action, can't prevent. The redundant h-pawn is no particular inconvenience to speak of, but Botwinnik decides to part with it anyway.

54.♔e3 ♗e6

Black understands that the pawn is irrelevant and instead hastens to bring the bishop on one of the defensive diagonals.

55.♔f4 ♗c4 56.♖a7 h5 57.♔g5 h4 58.♔xh4 ♗b3 59.♔g5 ♗c4 60.♖c7 ♗a2 61.♖c1 ♗d5 62.♔f5 ♔f7 63.♔e5 ♗b3 64.♖c7+ ♔f8 65.♖b7 ♗c4 66.♖b4 ♗a2 67.♔f5 ♗d5 68.♔g6 ♗f7+ 69.♔g5 ♗d5 70.♖h4 ♗b3 71.♖h8+ ♔f7 72.♖h7+ ♔f8 73.f7

White, after many twists and turns, tries a last trick.

73...♔e7!

73...♗xf7? would be unforgivably frivolous after such accurate defence: 74.♔f6 and White wins.

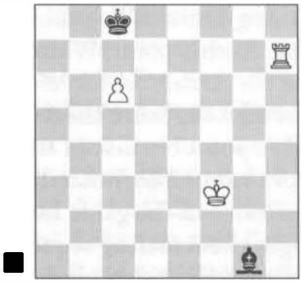
74.♔g6 ♗c4 75.♖g7 ♗b3 76.f8♕+ ♔xf8 77.♔f6 ♔e8 78.♖e7+ ♔d8 ½-½

ENDING 97

Exercise 272

Nick De Firmian	2405
Krum Georgiev	2485

Nis 1981 (5)



Black can save the game provided he gets his bishop onto the h2-b8 diagonal.

52...♗c5!

A good start.

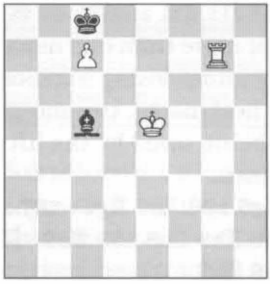
53.♔e4 ♗b6?

But now he loses his head; 53...♗d6! 54.♔d5 ♗f4=.

54.♔d5

White denies his opponent a second chance; the bishop can't get back onto the right diagonal.

54...♗f2 55.♖g7 ♗e3 56.♔e5 ♗c5 57.c7!



Because the bishop is badly placed, White finds a way to force a winning rook vs. bishop endgame.

57...♗b4

57...♔b7 58.♔e6! ♗b6 59.♔d6 ♗a5 60.♖f7 (zugzwang) 60...♗b6 61.c8♕+ ♔xc8 62.♔c6+–.

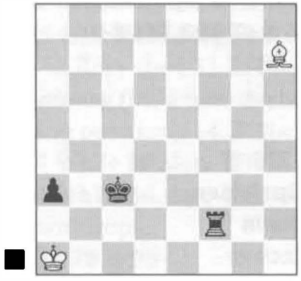
58.♖f7 ♗a5 59.♔d6 ♔b7 60.♖g7 ♗b6 61.c8♕+ 1-0

ENDING 97

Exercise 273

Vladimir Malakhov	2707
Ni Hua	2701

Sochi tt blitz 2009 (3)



Black can win the game by denying the bishop access to the key a2-g8 diagonal.

89...♖f6?

Allows the bishop onto the right diagonal. The winning moves are: 89...♖g2! (or 89...♖f8 and 89...♖f1+) 90.♗f5 ♖e2 91.♗h7 ♖e8 92.♗g6 ♖e1+ 93.♔a2 ♖e7! 94.♗f5 ♖e2+ 95.♔a1 ♔b3–+.

90.♗g8!

The bishop reaches the right diagonal, thus drawing the game. As often happens, the side that lets the win slip away can't bring himself to shake hands with the opponent, and needlessly prolongs the struggle. The rest is devoid of brilliancies and requires no further commentary.

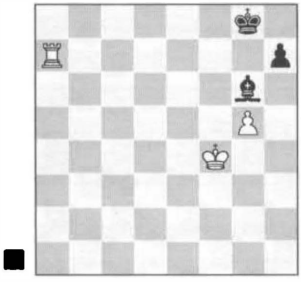
90...♔b4 91.♔a2 ♖f8 92.♗e6 ♖f2+ 93.♔a1 ♔c5 94.♗g8 ♔d6 95.♗c4 ♔e5 96.♗g8 ♖f8 97.♗c4 ♔d4 98.♗e6 ♖e8 99.♗f7 ♖f8 100.♗e6 ♔c3 101.♔a2 ♔b4 102.♔a1 ♖h8 103.♗f7 ♖f8 104.♗e6 ♖f6 105.♗g8 ♖d6 106.♔a2 ♖d2+ 107.♔a1 ♔c3 108.♗f7 ♖b2 109.♗g8 ♔c2 110.♗h7+ ♔c1 111.♗g8 ½-½

ENDING 97

Exercise 274

Mark Paragua	2533
BT Murali Krishnan	2345

Kolkata 2012 (1)



This is not a fortress, since White's king can penetrate via the dark squares. Black, however, does have the possibility to give up the pawn and force a transition into a position with a rook's pawn on the sixth rank, as seen in the previous exercise.

57...h6!

Not the only move, but a unique idea nonetheless. Black must give up his h-pawn, transposing to a well-known theoretical draw. 57...♗c2 58.♔e5 already would leave Black with an only move: 58...h6!.

58.gxh6 ♔h8 59.♔g5 ♗h7??

Is it ever too late to spoil a perfectly good position? The bishop needed to move further away: 59...♗d3=.

60.♖a8+! ♗g8

Now that the bishop has been forced off the diagonal, White can win by force by bringing the h-pawn to the seventh rank.

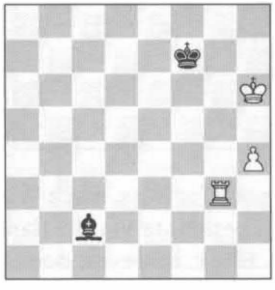
61.♖c8 ♔h7 62.♖c7+ ♔h8 63.♔g6 ♗d5 64.h7 ♗e4+ 65.♔h6 ♗f5 66.♖f7 1-0

ENDING 98

Exercise 275

Tigran Petrosian	2615
Bozidar Ivanovic	2440

Bar 1980



The h-pawn on the fourth rank means White is winning. Conversion is laborious, but Petrosian shows he's up to the job.

110.♔h5 ♗d1+

The bishop won't be able to get back onto the diagonal, but if it moved to other squares it would run into trouble, too: 110...♗e4 111.♔g5! ♔g7?! 112.♔f4+ and 110...♗b1 111.♖g5 followed by 112.♔g4 and White improves his king.

111.♔g5 ♔g7 112.♖c3!

Excellent. It's worth trying to figure out how many moves the bishop needs to get to the b1-h7 diagonal without moving through controlled squares. The answer is four.

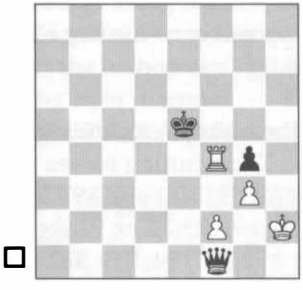
112...♗e2 113.h5 ♗a6 114.h6+ ♔h8 115.♔g6 ♗b7 116.♖e3 ♗d5 117.♖e8+ ♗g8 118.♖e7 ♗d5 119.h7 ♗e4+ 120.♔h6 ♗g6 121.♖d7 ♗e8 122.♖d6 ♗d7 123.♖f6 1-0

ENDING 98

Exercise 276

Henrik Danielsen	2482
Mihail Marin	2556

Reykjavik 2009 (6)



The move ♖xg4 loses as it leads to a position with a knight's pawn on the third rank: the king won't be able to remain behind the pawn.

49.♖xg4?!

49.♖f8 is objectively more resilient, but also loses: 49...♔e4 50.♖e8+ (50.♖f4+ ♔d3 51.♖xg4 transposes to the game) 50...♔f3 51.♖f8+ ♔e2 52.♖e8+ ♔xf2 53.♖f8+ ♔e2 54.♖xf1 ♔xf1–+, reaching a well-known endgame with blocked pawns.

49...♕xf2+ 50.♔h3 ♕f5!

This is fastest, but there are a few alternatives that win, too. The key is not to let White's king tuck itself away behind the pawn; for example 50...♕e2? allows a draw: 51.♖f4! and it won't be possible any longer to prevent White's king from reaching g2, provided White is careful and keeps his rook on the f-file, e.g. 51...♔d5 (51...♕e1 52.♔g2= is much easier) 52.♖f5+ ♔e4 53.♖f4+ ♔e5, *semi-zugzwang* (i.e. a non-decisive zugzwang position), 54.♖f8!=.

51.♔h4 ♕h7+ 52.♔g5 ♕f5+ 53.♔h4 ♕h7+ 54.♔g5 ♕h3 0-1

The pawn drops.

ENDINGS 79 & 99

Exercise 277

Vladimir Tukmakov 2550

Axel Ornstein 2415

Thessaloniki ol 1984 (8)

White mustn't allow Black's king to establish contact with the b5-pawn, constructing a well-known theoretical draw. The d6-pawn, on the other hand, is irrelevant.

59.♔d3?

White fails to appreciate the danger. 59.♕b7! prevents Black's king to get closer to the b-pawn, leading to a gradual destruction of the black position: 59...♖c5 60.♔d3 ♖e5 61.♔c3 △ ♔b4-a5-b6+–.

59...♔d5!=

Black seizes his chance. Now it is no longer possible to prevent the king from reaching his b-pawn, setting up a fortress.

60.♕b7+ ♔c5 61.♕c7+ ♔b4 62.♕xd6+ ♔b3

A typical knight's pawn fortress. Since the pawn is on the defender's fourth rank, it doesn't matter whether the king is in front or behind it. The rest requires no further commentary.

63.♕a6 ♔b4 64.♕a1 ♖c8 65.♕e1+ ♔a4 66.♔d4 ♖c4+ 67.♔d5 ♖c8 68.♕e7 ♖c4 69.♕a7+ ♔b4 70.♕a6 ♖c5+ 71.♔d4 ♖c4+ 72.♔d5 ♖c5+ 73.♔d6 ♖c4 74.♔d7 ♖c1 75.♕d6+ ♔a4 76.♕f4+ ♖c4 77.♕f1 ♔b4

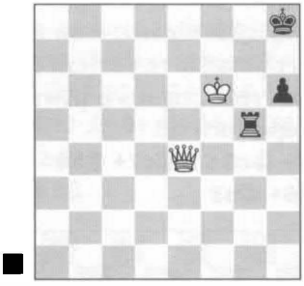
78.♕a1 ♖c5 79.♕b2+ ♔a4 80.♕a1+ ♔b4 81.♕e1+ ♔a4 82.♕d1+ ♔a5 83.♕a1+ ♔b4 84.♕b2+ ♔a4 ½-½

ENDING 99 – Summary

Exercise 278

Anatoly Karpov	2674
Andrei Istratescu	2617

Bucharest m 2005 (4)



White could win this position if his king is allowed to the eighth rank and not subject to immediate eviction. That is why the best defensive formula for Black is to place the rook on the g7-square, unless this would be clearly wrong for tactical reasons.

59...♔g8??

Losing, as it allows the white king to march onto the eighth rank. The winning procedure is by no means easy, but Karpov never gives his prey a chance to escape.

59...♖g7! was correct and in accordance with the suggested method of defence; also good were 59...♖g1 and 59...♖g8.

60.♕e6+ ♔h7 61.♔f7

61.♔e7 ♖g8 62.♔f7 ♖g7+ 63.♔f8 was a few moves quicker.

61...♖g8 62.♕f5+ ♔h8 63.♕e5+ ♔h7 64.♕e6 1-0

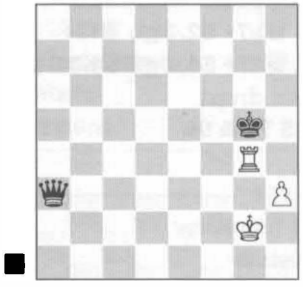
There might have followed 64...♖g5 65.♔f8 and the king reaches the eighth rank without the opponent being able to immediately expel it. Now the rook loses its pawn support and is lost: 65...♖g1 (65...h5 66.♕f6 ♖g6 67.♕e5 ♔h6 68.♔f7 h4 69.♕e4 ♖g5 70.♕xh4+ ♖h5 71.♕f6+) 66.♕e4+ ♔h8 67.♕d4++–.

ENDING 100

Exercise 279

David Navara	2722
Vincent Colin Khuu	2427

Aix-les-Bains Ech 2011 (1)



Black gets an easily winning game if he moves his king to the h-file. This is, however, a paradoxical decision, and one of the least well-known in endgame theory.

73...♔f5?

73...♔h5! 74.♔h2 ♕f3 75.♖g3 ♕e2+ 76.♖g2 ♕e5+ 77.♔h1 ♔h4 and the pawn drops.

74.♔h2 ♕b2+ 75.♔g1 ♕e2 76.♔h1 ♕f2 77.♖g2! ♕e1+ 78.♖g1 ♕e4+

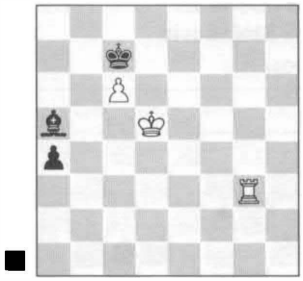
79.♔h2 ♕c2+ 80.♖g2 ♕c7+ 81.♔h1 ♔f4 82.♔h2!?
White could move the rook, but keeping it on the g2-square is easiest (provided this is not immediately losing).
82...♔f3+ 83.♔h1 ♕c1+ 84.♔h2 ♕e1
Now there is no choice but to move the rook, which might as well attack the queen.
85.♖g1 ♕e2+
This move prevents the rook from going back to g2, but now there is no way to get the king in.
86.♔h1 ♕e4

87.♖g2!
White doesn't think twice to put the rook back on the g2-square. Strictly speaking, the move wasn't entirely forced, as 87.♖g4 was another possibility. For the remainder of the game, David Navara demonstrates flawless defence.
87...♕e5 88.♔g1 ♕e1+ 89.♔h2 ♕h4
Again the rook must move, and the most useful thing is to attack the queen with it.
90.♖g4 ♕f2+ 91.♔h1 ♕e1+ 92.♔h2 ♕e5+ 93.♔h1 ♕e1+ 94.♔h2 ½-½
ENDING 100

Exercise 280

Dragoljub Velimirovic	2530
Hans Ree	2425

Amsterdam 1974 (14)

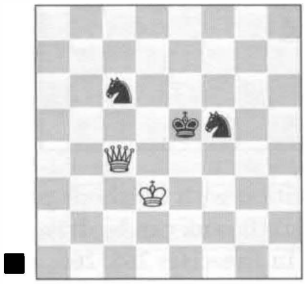


The position with a bishop's pawn on the sixth rank can be drawn, as seen in Exercises 265, 266, and 271. Here, however, Black has some problems to solve.
69...♗d2?
Losing. Now the bishop won't be able to get onto the right diagonal (h2-b8).
A) 69...♔c8 is one of two moves that draw: 70.♖g8+ ♔c7 71.♖g7+ ♔c8 72.♖g1 a3! (72...♗d2? 73.♖g4 ♗e1 74.♔d6+–) 73.♔c5 ♔c7 74.♖g7+ ♔c8=;
B) 69...♗e1 was also good: 70.♖g7+ ♔c8 71.♖g4 ♔c7!=.
70.♖g7+! ♔c8 71.♖g4!+–
Preventing the bishop from reaching the h2-b8 diagonal.
71...♗a5 72.♖xa4
Eliminates the pawn while simultaneously preventing ...♗c7;

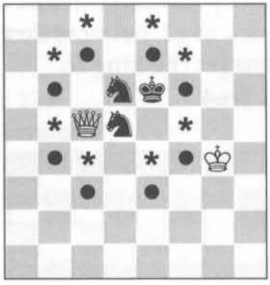
72.♔d6? ♗c7+ and the bishop would get back onto the right diagonal.
72...♗e1 73.♖g4 ♔c7
73...♗a5 74.♔c5! with zugzwang.
74.♖g7+ ♔c8 75.c7 1-0

Chapter 13

Exercise 281
Nebojsa Djokic 2180
Dobrisav Stojanovic 2367
Serbia tt 2014 (10)



The ideal defensive set-up is to have the knights as close to the king as possible, but not mutually defending one another. Here, Black is not yet ideally coordinated, but with precise play he can hold a draw.
89...♘cd4?
Black fails to head for the defensive formation described above. The set-up with two knights defending one another is much less effective, as the enemy king is able to infiltrate, after which zugzwang threats will be hanging over the defender's head. With 89...♘ce7, while also temporarily a position with mutually protecting knights, achieves the ideal set-up: 90.♕c5+ ♔e6 91.♔e4 ♘d6+ 92.♔f4 ♘d5+! (92...♘f7 93.♕c4+ ♔f6 94.♕a6+ ♔g7 95.♕b7 ♔f8 96.♕d7+–, zugzwang) 93.♔g4.



analysis diagram

Black has achieved the ideal set-up. Observe the almost impenetrable wall created by the knights. Let's try a variation in which White's king manages to slip through the only weak spot in the wall: 93...♔e5 94.♔f3 ♔e6 95.♔e2 ♔e5 96.♔d3 ♔e6 97.♕a5 (97.♔d4 ♘f5+ and the white king must go back) 97...♘f4+ 98.♔d4 ♘e2+ 99.♔d3 ♘f4+, and the knights get back into the ideal defensive set-up.
90.♕c5+ ♔f4 91.♕c7+ ♔f3 92.♕e5 ♔g4 93.♔e4
The king slips through between the two equestrians.
93...♔g5 94.♕f4+ ♔f6 95.♕g4 ♔f7 96.♔e5

Now White chases the enemy king toward the edge of the board.
96...♔e7 97.♕g8 ♔d7 98.♕d5+ ♔c7 99.♕c5+ ♔d7 100.♔d5 ♔d8

101.♕a7?!
Visually impressive, as Black's king is on the rim, but the Nalimov tablebases show that with this move, White unduly lengthens the road to victory: it is now mate in thirty-nine moves, whereas 101.♕b6+ would lead to mate in fifteen.
101...♔c8
101...♘e7+ 102.♔e4 ♘dc6 103.♕b7+–.
102.♕f7! 1-0

The final position is self-explanatory: one knight must move, leading to the loss of both.
Appendix – F3

Exercise 282
Saevar Bjarnason 2310
Nikolaj Borge 2405
Hafnarfjordur 1995 (2)

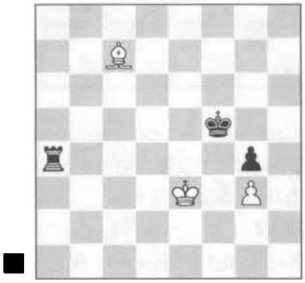
Black's fortress has one major flaw: the king isn't inside. Fortunately for him, White allows it in.
109.♕a7+?
109.♕b3+! would prevent Black's king from stepping inside the fortress, and White would be winning, e.g. 109...♔f8 110.♕d5 with zugzwang – the obligation to move creates disarray in Black's camp: 110...♔e7 111.♕g8; 110...♗h8 111.♕d8+; 110...♘f7 111.♔e6.
109...♔g8!
From now on, Black has a rock-solid fortress, and the defence is straightforward, despite White's understandable attempt to get anywhere.
110.♕b8+ ♔h7 111.♔g5 ♘f7+ 112.♔h5 ♘e5 113.♕c8 ♗h8 114.♔g5 ♗g7 115.♕e8 ♗h6+ 116.♔f5 ♗g7 117.♕h5+ ♔g8 118.♔e6 ♗h8 119.♔e7 ♗g7 120.♕h1 ♘g6+ 121.♔e8 ♘e5 122.♕h3 ♗h8 123.♕h2 ♗g7 124.♕h3 ♗h8 125.♕e6+ ♔h7

126.♕h3+ ♔g8 127.♕h6 ♗g7 128.♕xg7+
Draw.
Appendix – F1

Exercise 283

Arovah Bachtiar	2400
Terrey Shaw	2390

Siegen ol 1970 (3)

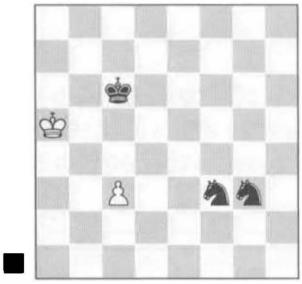


This is not a fortress: White has the wrong-coloured bishop.
In the fight between rook vs. bishop and blocked pawns, it is much more favourable for the bishop to be attacking the enemy pawn rather than defending its own.
59...♔e6!
The king exploits the weakness of this kind of bishop, by using the opposite-coloured squares as an avenue to infiltrate into the position.
60.♗b8 ♔d5 61.♗c7 ♖a7 62.♗b6 ♖f7 63.♔e2 ♔e4 64.♗c5 ♖b7 65.♗d6 ♖b2+ 66.♔f1 ♔f3 67.♔g1 ♖g2+ 68.♔h1 ♖xg3 69.♗xg3 ♔xg3 70.♔g1 ♔h3 0-1
ENDING 79

Exercise 284

Wang Yue	2739
Vlswanathan Anand	2791

Nice blindfold 2009 (11)



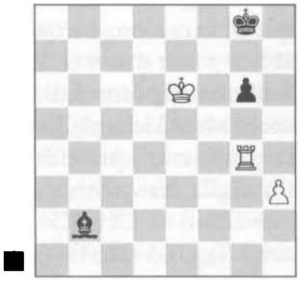
Black must see to it that the pawn stays behind Troitzky's line, i.e. it mustn't be allowed to reach the c5-square (the pawn reaching c4 can't be prevented). Thus, there is more than one winning move.
61...♔c5?
In the endgame of two knights vs. pawn, the further back the pawn is blocked, the better the winning chances are. For different kinds of pawns, there is a different limit, known as 'Troitsky's line'. Even without remembering this line by heart, it is clear that it's always best not to let the pawns advance too far. It's difficult to know exactly what Anand was thinking in this blindfold game, but he had two ways to prevent the pawn from getting to the c5-square:
A) 61...♘e4 is the most obvious move, since the knight will go to c5;
B) 61...♘d2 62.c4 ♘b3+, followed by 63...♘c5. In either case, the pawn will remain in the winning zone.

By contrast, in the game it will be in the drawing zone. The rest of the game is not that interesting.
62.c4 ♘e4 63.♔a4 ♘d4 64.♔a5 ♘c3 65.♔a6 ♘e6 66.♔b7 ♘a4 67.♔a6 ♘b6 68.♔b7 ♘d7 69.♔a6 ♘d8 70.♔a5 ♘b6 71.♔a6 ♔c6 72.c5 ♘c4 73.♔a7 ♘e6 74.♔b8 ♘d8 75.♔a7 ♘b7 76.♔b8 ♘a3 77.♔a7 ♘b5+ 78.♔a6 ♘c3 79.♔a7 ♘d5 80.♔a6 ♘b4+ 81.♔a7 ♔c7 82.c6 ♘c5 83.♔a8 ♘e4 84.♔a7 ♘d6 85.♔a8 ♘xc6 ½-½
Appendix – Different material relations

Exercise 285

Amador Rodriguez	2450
Joaquin Diaz	2395

Bayamo 1981 (11)

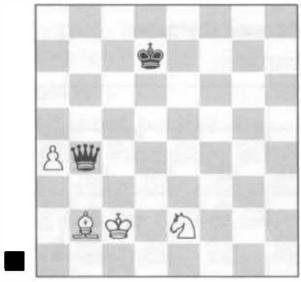


From the fortress rook and two pawns vs. bishop and two pawns in the corner, it is possible to get to this position almost by force. The fortress isn't falling apart yet, but Black faces a crucial decision.
91...♔h7?
91...♔g7! was the right move. It is more important to keep the enemy king out than to unpin. The g6-pawn will be lost in any case, and at least this move lures the white pawn closer, enabling Black to later capture it to force a drawn rook vs. bishop ending: 92.h4 ♔h6 93.♔f7 ♔h5 94.♖xg6 ♔xh4=.
92.♔f7! ♔h6 93.♖xg6+ ♔h5
Now Black won't be able to capture the white pawn.
94.♖g2
94.♖g4 looks like an easier win.
94...♗c3 95.♖h2 ♗e5 96.♖h1 ♗g3 97.♔f6 ♗c7 98.♔f5 ♗g3 99.♖d1 ♗h2 100.♖d2 ♗g1 101.♔f4 1-0
Appendix – F14

Exercise 286

Silvio Danailov	2380
Mark Hebden	2530

Toulouse 1990 (3)



White needs his knight on the d4-square and the king on the b1-square. This looks easy, but Black can avoid this with accurate play.
57...♕xa4+ 58.♔c1
58.♔b1 ♕e4+!.
58...♔c6?
This innocuous-looking move allows White to create an unbreakable fortress. The way to

prevent this was 58...♔d6! 59.♘d4 ♕a2!.

analysis diagram

The king is denied access to the b1-square.

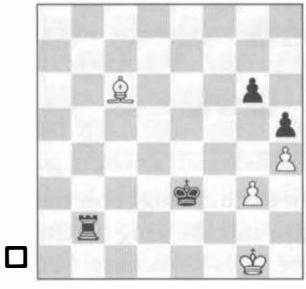
59.♘d4+ ♔d5 60.♔b1 ♕d1+ 61.♔a2 ♔c4 62.♗a1 ♕h1 63.♗b2 ♕a8+ 64.♔b1 ♔d3 ½-½

Appendix - F1

Exercise 287

Aleksander Delchev	2587
Javier Moreno Carnero	2506

France tt 2001 (10)



White has the very common F14 fortress, which has saved many players half a point. Black's king, however, is ideally placed, so the defender must play very accurately.

54.♗d5?

Losing. 54.♗a8! was necessary to avoid the rook coming to g5 with gain of tempo: 54...♖b5 55.♔g2 g5 56.hxg5 ♖xg5 57.♔h3! ♖g4 58.♗c6 ♔f2 59.♗d5 ♖xg3+ 60.♔h4.

analysis diagram

The position is a draw: White can simply capture the h5-pawn. It's important to note that this position is a draw with the bishop on d5 or c6, but if it is on b7 or a8 the position is losing. We will see this in a couple of variations below.

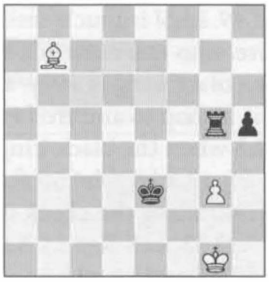
54...♖b5!

54...g5? looks totally forced, but is wrong, since after 55.hxg5 ♖b5 the bishop is on a better square: 56.♗c6 (56.♗e6 is also a draw with a similar variation) 56...♖xg5 57.♔h2 ♔f2 58.♔h3 ♖xg3+ 59.♔h4= (see the analysis diagram above).

55.♗c6

55.♗e6!? is also a rather tough nut to crack. Let's see one variation: 55...♖b1+ 56.♔h2 ♖b2+ 57.♔h3 (57.♔g1 ♔f3-+) 57...♔f2 58.♔h2 (58.♗d5 ♖d2 59.♗e4 ♖d1 60.♔h2 ♖g1 61.♗xg6 ♖g2+!-+) 58...♖e2 59.♗f7 ♔f1+ 60.♔h1 ♖g2 61.♗xg6 ♖xg3-+.

55...♖c5 56.♗b7 g5 57.hxg5 ♖xg5



It's interesting to compare and contrast this diagram to the variations above: the difference in bishop placement is decisive. Concretely, White makes a draw if the bishop is on one of the highlighted squares, always by means of the only move ♔h2. By contrast, with the pawn on h6, White makes a draw with the bishop on any logical square, including b7, c8 and a8, but only with the move ♔g2 (see Exercise 285).

58.♔g2?!

58.♔h2!? is much more stubborn, though losing too, as seen in the following games: 58...♔f2 59.♔h3 ♖xg3+ 60.♔h4 and now only one rook move wins: 60...♖g7! (60...♖b3? 61.♗c6= ♖c3 62.♗e8 ♔f3 63.♔xh5 ♖c8 64.♗f7 ♔f4 65.♔g6 ♖c6+ 66.♔g7 ♔g5 67.♔h8 ♖h6+ 68.♔g7 ♖d6 69.♔h8 ♔f6 70.♗g8 ♖d8 71.♔h7 ½-½ Nihal-Subramaniam, Bhubaneswar 2016; in this game the move numbers were 97-108) 61.♗c6 ♖h7 62.♗d5 (62.♗e8 ♔f3 63.♗xh5+ ♔f4–+) 62...♔e3 63.♗g8 ♖h8 64.♗f7 ♔f4 65.♗b3 ♖b8 66.♗c4 ♖c8 67.♗e6 ♖c6 68.♗d5 ♖c2 69.♔h3 ♔g5 0-1 Ftacnik-Murey, New York 1987 (moves 69-78 in this game).

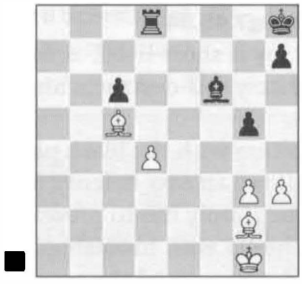
58...h4 59.♔h3 hxg3 60.♔g2 ♔f4 61.♗c6 ♖c5 62.♗b7 ♖c2+ 63.♔g1 g2 64.♔h2 ♖b2 0-1

Appendix – F14

Exercise 288

Boris Alterman	2615
Avigdor Bykhovsky	2450

Tel Aviv 1999 (7)



Black must choose either to defend his pawn or allow White to head for a well-known fortress. With accurate play, however, Black can prevent this.

41...♗xd4+!

41...♖c8?! is too passive, and shouldn't be enough for a win. If Black wasn't sure how to avoid the fortress, perhaps this was the best practical try, though.

42.♗xd4+ ♖xd4 43.♗xc6

The critical moment. I imagine that Black lacked detailed knowledge of the fortress F16, or else he would have taken appropriate measures.

43...♖d2?

43...h5! prevents the creation of F16 and wins easily: 44.♔f2 h4 45.gxh4 gxh4 46.♔e3 ♖b4–+, followed by penetrating with the king via the dark squares.

44.♗f3! ♔g7 45.h4??

White's joy is short-lived, as he immediately self-destructs his fortress.

The position with the black pawn on h6 allows an easy defence for White: he simply has to prevent the move ...h6-h5 with his bishop. With the black pawn on h7 the possible 'fortress' created doubts for a long time: since Black can carry through ...h7-h5 with the help of either his rook or his king, and in general this should be winning.

However, here White can keep the draw. The key is twofold: he has to prevent the ...h7-h5 advance until the black rook leaves the second rank, and then has to meet the advance to h5 with the immediate response h3-h4!. And this should happen under two conditions: the bishop stays on the long diagonal in case of the advance ...g5-g4, and the pawn on h4 is not lost in case of a pawn exchange. or example: 45.♗h5! (White has to prevent ...h7-h5 for as long as he can, and force Black to use both his pieces to support the push) 45...♔h6 46.♗f3 ♔g6 47.♗e4+ ♔g7 48.♗f3 ♖b2 (48...h6? 49.♗h5! is much easier for White, who can move his king while the black king is away, and move his bishop to and fro between g4 and h5 when the black king reaches e3) 49.♗h5 ♔h6 50.♗f3 ♖b4!? (controlling the check on e4) 51.♗c6 ♔g7 52.♗e8 ♖e4 53.♗h5 ♖e7 54.♗f3 ♔g6 55.♔g2 h5

analysis diagram

56.h4! g4 (56...gxh4 57.gxh4 leads to a simple position, because one of Black's two pieces has to keep defending the pawn on h5) 57.♗c6=. We have reached a lesser-known and less frequent version of fortress F14.

45...gxh4 46.gxh4 ♔f6 47.♗e4 h5 48.♗f3 ♔g6 0-1

The h4-pawn will drop in a few moves' time.

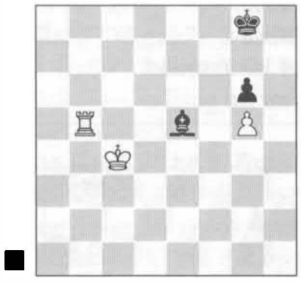
Appendix – F16; see also **F14**.

Exercise 289

Bazar Hatanbaatar 2375

Kamil Miton 2604

Dresden ol 2008 (7)



White has optimal control over the bishop on the long diagonal: the g7-/h8-squares are taboo, while the f6-/e5-/d4-/c3-/b2-squares are all controlled by White's pieces. This leaves Black only with the suspicious-looking a1-square. On the other hand, since White can't do anything to control that square too, Black is actually OK.

101...♗g7?

This fails in typical style and we'll soon find out why.

101...♗a1! is completely safe. There is no move White can play to bother the bishop, and even if White somehow managed to give Black the move in this position, any king move would be OK.

101...♗f4! is another move that draws. Attacking White's only pawn is usually a safe option, and this position is no exception.

102.♖b6

102..♖b8+ also wins, and is more natural.

102...♔f7 103.♖b7+ ♔g8 104.♖xg7+!

Simplifying to a winning pawn endgame.

104...♔xg7 105.♔d5 ♔f7 1-0

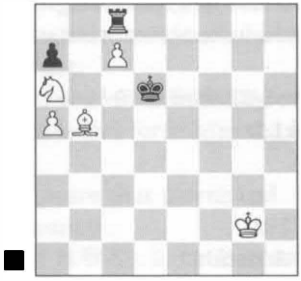
ENDING 79

Exercise 290

Jacek Gdanski 2430

Eckhard Schmittdiel 2490

Polanica Zdroj 1991 (10)



Black can save the game, provided he immediately sacrifices the exchange. By doing so, he will have enough time to use his king, first to force the a5-pawn to move forward, and, after that, to hide in the corner.

57...♖xc7! 58.♘xc7 ♔xc7 59.♔f3 ♔d6!

Objectively, with this move most of the hard work has been done. Now White will be forced to move the pawn up to the a6-square.

60.♔e4

60.a6 would lead to an immediate fortress. The game move forces Black to hang in tough.

60...♔c5 61.♗e2 ♔b4

By the skin of his teeth! Black is just in time to attack the pawn and to get back. That said, playing ...a7-a6 would also be good enough, since this would force the capture of the pawn.

62.a6 ♔c5 63.♔e5 ♔c6 ½-½

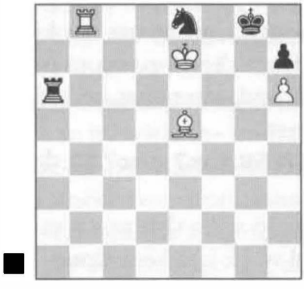
Fortress I.1

Exercise 291

Akiba Rubinstein

Vasily Omelianshy

St Petersburg 1905 (1)



There is no need for Black to resign here. A stalemate motif, in combination with the fortress seen in the previous exercise, allows for a spectacular rescue.

65...♖a7+!!

Directly 65...♖a8? fails to 66.♖b7+-.

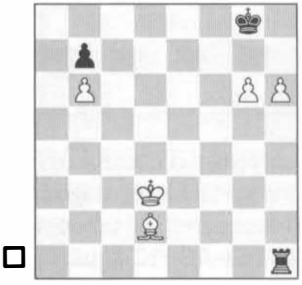
66.♔xe8 ♖a8 67.♔e7+ ♖xb8 68.♗xb8 ♔h8 69.♔f6 ♔g8 70.♗e5 ♔f8 ½-½

Fortress I.1

Exercise 292

Patryk Oliwa	2130
Krzysztof Jakubowski	2325

Poland tt 1997 (9)



Finding White's only winning move is easy: all he has to be wary of is Black creating a fortress with blocked b-pawns on the queenside.

74.h7+?

A) 74.♔d4? is also a draw after 74...♖g1!=. The pawns are blocked, and the rook can be put on g6 and then on c6. A careless player however could still fall for 75.g7 ♖xg7?? – in this case, Black's king wouldn't be able to hide inside the fortress;

B) 74.♔e4! is the correct move and, with the king one square closer, it's already possible to trade the pawns for the rook by means of h6-h7+, for example: 74...♖h5 75.♗f4 (not yet 75.h7+ ♔g7! 76.♗c3+ ♔xg6 77.h8♘+ ♖xh8 78.♗xh8 ♔f7 and the king makes it in time)

75...♔h8 76.♗e5+ ♔g8 77.h7+ ♖xh7 78.gxh7+ ♔xh7 79.♔d5+–.

74...♔g7!!

Perhaps this is what White had missed. Black gains two tempi to bring in the king.

If 74...♖xh7? 75.gxh7+ ♔xh7 76.♔e4 ♔g6 77.♔d5 ♔f7 78.♔d6 ♔e8 79.♔c7+–, calling off any construction work.

75.♗c3+ ♔xg6 76.h8♕ ♖xh8 77.♗xh8 ♔f7 78.♔d4 ♔e6 ½-½

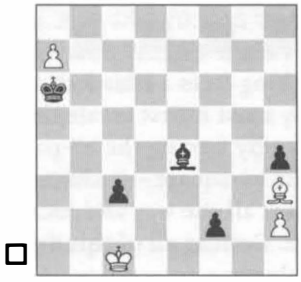
The king hides on a8/b8, and no force in the world can do anything against it.

Fortress I.4

Exercise 293

Holger Burkhardt	2120
Norbert Kuhn	2085

Germany tt 1996/97



This was a bit of a trick question: the three moves that draw are 55.a8♕+, 55.a8♖+ and 55.a8♗ ☺. The reason is that the white king needs access to the c2-square to capture the c-pawn.

55.a8♕+!

55.a8♘? loses to 55...♔b7!–+; other moves lose the pawn without diverting the black bishop.

55...♗xa8 56.♔c2 ♗c6 57.♔xc3 ♗b5

Before hiding in the corner, White's king must force the black h-pawn forward. Without this, Black would win by means of a simple procedure:

1) Stalemate White's king on the h1-square and force him to play h2-h3;
2) Capture that pawn; and
3) Promote.

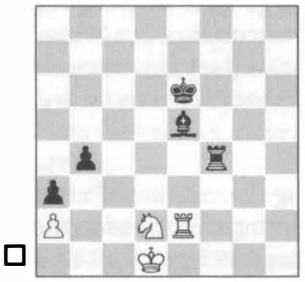
58.♔d4 f1♕ 59.♗xf1 ♗xf1 60.♔e3 ♔b5 61.♔f4 h3 62.♔e3 ♔c4 63.♔f2 ♗g2 ½-½

Fortress I.1

Exercise 294

Jan Markos	2454
Mark Hebden	2521

Cork 2005 (8)



While it was not obvious, White overlooked a little something and was lucky to save the game.

60.♖e4! b3!?

This, of course, is the trick. After the trade of rooks this move would be out of the question, because of a knight fork on c5.

61.♘xb3!

This subtlety had to be calculated in advance.

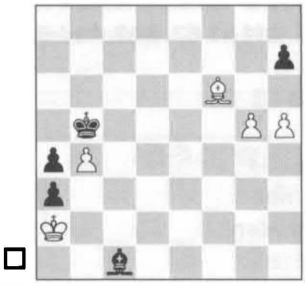
61...♖xe4 62.♘c5+ ♔d5 63.♘xe4 ♔xe4 64.♔c2 ♔d4 65.♔b1 ♔c3 66.♔c1 ½-½

Fortress I.1

Exercise 295

Csaba Balogh	2449
Timothy Taylor	2385

Budapest 2003 (1)



Whether g5-g6 is winning requires careful calculation, but White might as well try this move once he sees what Black can do against h5-h6.

48.h6?

Allowing the creation of a fortress. The winning continuation was 48.g6! hxg6 49.hxg6 ♗h6 50.♔xa3 ♗c1+ 51.♔a2 ♗h6 52.♗e7 ♗g7 53.♔a3 ♗h6 54.♗f6 ♗c1+ 55.♗b2+– followed by g6-g7.

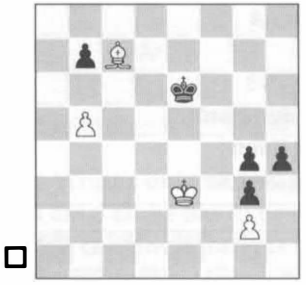
48...♗xg5! 49.♗xg5 ♔xb4 50.♗c1 ♔c4 51.♔xa3 ♔d5 52.♔xa4 ♔e6 53.♔b5 ♔f7 54.♔c6 ♔g8 55.♔d7 ♔h8 56.♔e6 ♔g8 57.♔f6 ♔f8 58.♗b2 ♔g8 59.♗a3 ♔h8 60.♔f7 ½-½

Fortress I.1

Exercise 296

Claude Landenbergue	2200
Imad Hakki	2305

Hamar 1983 (2)



Black's king faces a laborious task: not only must it first create the fortress – by forcing the b5-pawn up to the b6-square – it also needs to go back all the way and hide inside it. Getting all of this done is obviously time-consuming. White, however, wastes all his advantage with a greedy move.

59.♔f4?

59.♔d4! prevents Black from executing his plan: 59...h3 60.♗xg3 hxg2 61.♗f2! (61.♗h2 ♔f5 62.♔d3 is a more complicated win) 61...♔f5 62.♗e3 g3 63.♔d5 ♔g4 64.♔e4 ♔h5 65.♔f4 ♔h4 66.♗g1 ♔h5 67.♔xg3 ♔g5 68.♔xg2 ♔f4 69.♔f2 ♔e4

70.♔e2 ♔d5 71.♔d3 and Black's king can't attack the white pawn. 59.♔e4! also wins, based on the same motif.

59...h3 60.♔xg3 hxg2 61.♔xg2 ♔d5 62.♔g3

62...♔c5

Black executes the first stage on the plan.

63.b6 ♔c6 64.♔xg4 ♔d7 65.♔f4 ♔c8

Mission accomplished: this is now an impenetrable fortress.

66.♔e4 ♔d7 67.♔d5 ♔c8 68.♗h2 ♔d7 69.♗e5 ♔c8 70.♔d6 ♔b8 71.♔d7+ ♔a8 72.♗b8 ♔xb8 73.♔d8 ♔a8 74.♔c8 ½-½

Fortress I.5

Exercise 297

Veselin Topalov	2702
Anatoly Karpov	2696

Monaco rapid 2000 (8)

Black had better choose a careful move. Although the g-pawn has crossed Troitsky's line, Black can still lose if he lets his king get trapped in a corner that the blockading knight can reach.

65...♔b2?

65...♔d2!, perhaps counter-intuitive: the black king should go to the corner where the knight is, and circle around the pawn. For example: 66.♘b3+ ♔e1 67.♘c5 ♔f2 68.♘ce4+ ♔e3 69.♔c3 ♔f3 70.♔d3 ♔g2 71.♔e2 ♔h3 72.♔f1 ♔h2 73.♔f2 ♔h3 74.♔g1 ♔h4 75.♔g2, stalemate.

66.♔b4!

Now the king is going to be trapped in the corner. That being so, executing the winning plan is so difficult that few players manage to play flawlessly.

66...♔a2

67.♘df5?

This lets the king escape; an understandable error, especially given that this was a rapid game. 67.♘b5! was the correct move.

67...♔b2?

67...♔b1 68.♘d4 ♔b2=.

68.♘e3 ♔a2 69.♘c4 ♔b1 70.♔c3 ♔c1 71.♘b2 ♔b1 72.♘d3 ♔a1 73.♔b3

Now the king is completely trapped and can only move back and forth in a tiny little cage on the a1-/b1-squares. The time has come for the blockading knight to take an active role as fellow-executioner of Black's royal highness.

73...♔b1 74.♘e2 1-0

Appendix – Different material relations

Exercise 298

Vladimir Fedoseev 2718
Magnus Carlsen 2837
Riyadh Wch rapid 2017 (12)

By looking at the engine evaluation, of course!

74.♔e2?

White opts for the natural move. The spectacular move that saves the game will come as a complete surprise – unless you've been keeping an eye out for a fortress. 74.♘b3!! is a move well worthy of a diagram:

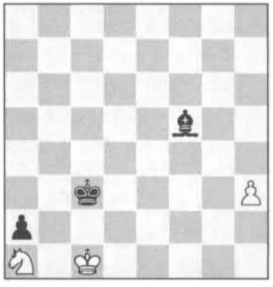
analysis diagram

The knight controls the queening square and allows the white king to quickly get into the corner. A perfectly logical move, therefore, once you understand that capturing the knight leads to an elementary fortress: 74...a3 (74...axb3 75.♔d2= fortress; 74...♔c4 75.♘a5+ ♔b5 76.♘b3 repeats the position) 75.bxa3 bxa3 76.♔d2 ♔c4 77.♘a5+ ♔b4 78.♘c6+ ♔b3 79.♘a5+ ♔b2 80.♘c4+=.

74...a3!

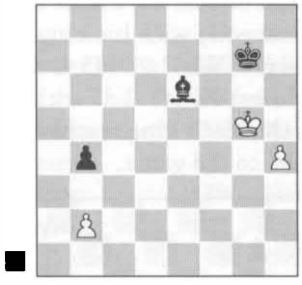
Carlsen is famous for not letting his opponents off the hook. The a-pawn will prove too strong.

75.bxa3 bxa3 76.♔d1 a2 77.♘b3 ♔c4 78.♘a1 ♔c3 79.♔c1 ♗f5



All Black has to do is wait until White runs out of pawn moves; then he will be forced to move either the king or the knight.
80.h4 ♗g6 81.h5 ♗xh5 82.♘c2 ♗e8 83.♘a1 ♗a4 84.♘c2 ♔b3 0-1
Fortress I.5

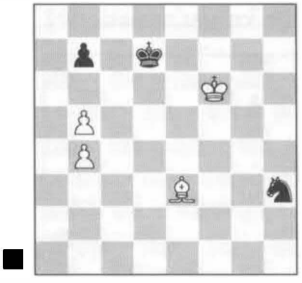
Exercise 299
Vladimir Vodicka 2340
Milos Jirovsky 2420
Czechia tt 1995/96 (7)



White would love to get the fortress from the previous exercise. To do so, he must entice Black to play ...b4-b3. Black, therefore, must be wary of this idea. He has two good options.
57...♗c4?
This is not one of them.
A) 57...♗g8! moves the bishop back in anticipation of the pawn coming to the h7-square: 58.♔f5 ♔f7 59.♔e5 ♔e7 60.h5 (60.♔d4 ♔d6 61.h5 ♔c6 62.h6 and White lacks one tempo: 62...♔b5!–+) 60...♔d7 61.h6 ♔c6 62.h7 ♗xh7 63.♔d4 ♔b5!–+;
B) The second correct option is based on the same idea: 57...♔f7! 58.h5 ♔e7 59.h6 ♗g8 60.♔f5 ♔d6 and Black's king reaches the queenside in time.
58.♔f5 ♔h6 59.♔e4

Now it's clear that White will be able to carry his plan through.
59...b3
Black acquiesces. The fortress stands erect and all White has to do now is hide the king inside.
60.♔e3 ♔h5 61.♔d2 ♔xh4 62.♔c1 ♗d3 63.♔d2 ♗c2 64.♔c3 ♔g3 65.♔d2 ♔f3 66.♔c1 ♔e3 ½-½
Fortress I.5

Exercise 300
Anish Giri
Sam Shankland
Wijk aan Zee 2019 (11)



The answer is yes, as long as Black can force the white pawn to move to b6, building Fortress I.5:

43...♔d6!

Black starts with the right move, moving the king with a double intention.

44.♔f5

44.b6?! makes things easier, because it is enough for Black to hide his king in the Fortress. In this case it is not necessary to reach a8 – it is enough to get to c8: 44...♔d7=.

44...♔d5!

45.b6

Giri made this move with little hope, after checking that the alternatives did not win either. However there are some funny variations: 45.♔g4 ♔c4 (we take this move as our main variation. The move draws, although it requires some subtlety. 45...♔e4!, saving the knight, is easier)

analysis diagram

46.♗c5!? ♘f2+! 47.♗xf2 ♔xb4 48.b6.

analysis diagram

Now we have a fun position. Black can reach Fortress I.5, but he needs to play correctly with his king: 48...♔c4! (48...♔b5? 49.♔f5 ♔c6 50.♔e6 loses) 49.♔f5 ♔d5 with a draw as the black king reaches c8. We return to the game.

To the surprise and disbelief of all the fans around the world, Shankland resigned here. He thought he had to get his king on a8 to draw, but in this position Black just needs to take his king to c8:

45...♔d6 46.♔g4 ♔d7 47.♔xh3 ♔c8=

There is no way to separate the black king from the b7-pawn without forcing stalemate.

Fortress I.5

Index of players (numbers refer to pages)

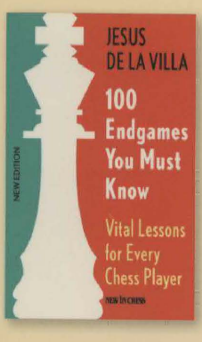
Jesus de la Villa's worldwide bestseller *100 Endgames You Must Know* debunked the myth that endgame theory is complex and that endgame books are tedious. Reviewers praised its clarity and completeness and thousands of players dramatically improved their endgame understanding (and their results!).

In recent years, De la Villa's students sometimes complained that when they had to apply what they had studied in *100 Endgames*, they didn't always have the material ready at their fingertips. De la Villa then made an important discovery: most of the errors his students made are being made by others as well, even by strong and sometimes famous chess players!

De la Villa started collecting training material and selected those exercises best suited to retain and improve your knowledge and avoid common errors. In this book the Spanish grandmaster presents hundreds of exercises grouped according to the various chapters in *100 Endgames*. Solving these puzzles will drive home the most important ideas, refresh your knowledge and improve your technique.

This book contains a massive amount of clear, concise and easy-to-follow chess endgame instruction. The advice De la Villa gives in the solutions is practical and useful. **Ideal for every post-beginner, club player and candidate master who wishes to win more games.**

Jesus de la Villa (1958) is an International Grandmaster born in Spain. He has won the Spanish Championship twice and is a well-known chess coach.



Grandmaster Matthew Sadler, former British Champion, on *100 Endgames You Must Know*:

"Buy it and read it! De la Villa does a truly wonderful job of explaining useful endgames in a calm and measured manner that is clear enough for any strength of player to understand while still being interesting for stronger players. If you've never read an endgame book before, this is the one you should start with."

52495
9 789056 918170

Games/Chess $24.95

NEW IN CHESS

WWW.NEWINCHESS.COM