

Karsten Müller - Endgame Magic

Illustrative training material
from master practice



Karsten Müller
Jerzy Konikowski

JBV Chess Books

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Preface

Our extensive work on the magical world of endgames is divided into four parts. The first offers 100 interesting and instructive examples from master practice, thoroughly analyzed and commented. These are assigned to 20 subject areas that are particularly important in the endgame, such as zugzwang, passed pawn, stalemate, liquidation, perpetual check, etc. The focus is deliberately on examples in which magical elements are combined with instructive and therefore practical ones, and in which many useful rules of thumb and the often more important exceptions to these are explained and illustrated.

In part 2 'Practice makes perfect' the reader has the opportunity to immediately check his pre-existing knowledge and what he has learned in part 1. The 100 exercises that serve this purpose also contain combinatorial elements. While knowledge of the more advanced endgame theory is not required, basic knowledge is necessary to recognize and correctly assess elementary draws or winning positions.

Part 3 offers 100 fascinating studies. We felt it appropriate to include a larger number of examples of this chess art form, as that is where most tactical endgame ideas emerge most clearly and instructively. We have attached great importance to the fact that these are practice-oriented positions that could well have been taken from a real game and whose solutions are clearly comprehensible. And only in a few cases have we included examples of a different kind, namely when it was a matter of conveying to the reader what we felt to be a particularly important and instructive motive.

Incidentally, to derive maximum benefit from the exercises, it's very important to deal with them under conditions similar to those of a tournament game. However, you can also view the book as a pure textbook and turn directly to the solutions, because even with this approach you can enrich your existing knowledge with many typical endgame motives.

Part 4 rounds off our book with another dozen of highly topical examples from GM games of 2023, arranged according to predominant endgame themes!

We are sure that the magic from the realm of endgames will cast its spell on you too and that you will enjoy the fascination of the final phase of the game.

We would like to thank Frederic Friedel and Rainer Woisin from ChessBase for the idea of working with QR codes, Robert Ullrich from Beyer Verlag for the harmonious cooperation and Thomas Beyer for the exemplary layout.

Karsten Müller and Jerzy Konikowski
Hamburg / Dortmund, August 2023

Part I

Strategic and tactical motives in the endgame

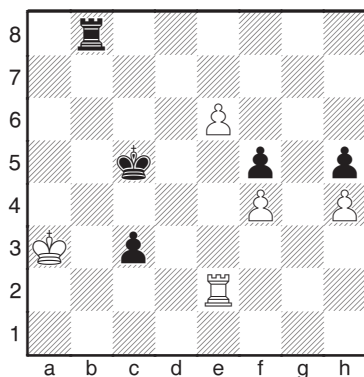
Chapter 1

The active king

In the opening and the middlegame, the king rarely plays an active role. However, this changes completely in the endgame, when its activity and mobility usually have a decisive impact on the final result.



Example 1



Black to move

54...♔c4!

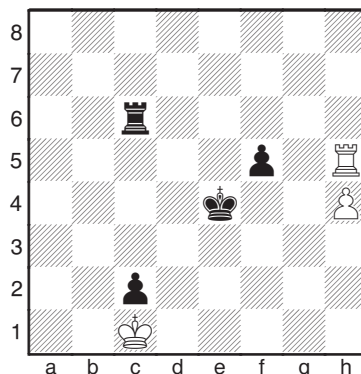
This activation of the king is correct, because the white counterpart is not only degraded to a spectator, but also endangered as an object of attack in view of the immediate mating threat.

On the other hand, the passive approach 54...♔d6? 55.e7 c2 56.♖xc2 ♔xe7 57.♖g2= would not lead to the goal.

55.♔a2 ♔d3 56.♖e5

56.♖g2 allows the immediate advance 56...c2 with the hopeless continuation 57.♖g3+ ♔d4 58.♖g1 ♖b7 59.♖e1 ♔c3-+.

56...♖a8+ 57.♔b3 ♖b8+ 58.♔a2 c2 59.♖c5 ♖e8 60.♔b2 ♖xe6 61.♖c3+ ♔e4 62.♖g3 ♔xf4 63.♖g5 ♖c6 64.♔c1 ♔e4 65.♖xh5



65...f4!

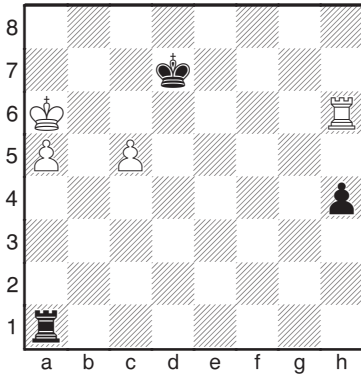
Of course, White is helpless against two passed pawns.

66.♖h8 f3 67.♖f8 ♔e3 68.h5 f2 69.♖e8+ ♔f3 70.♖f8+ ♔e2 71.♖e8+ ♔f1 72.♖f8 ♖h6 73.♖f5 ♔e2 74.♖e5+ ♔d3 75.♖f5 (75.♖d5+ ♔e4-+) 75...♖xh5! 0-1

A nice final point in view of the possible continuation 76.♖f3+ ♔e2 or 76.♖xf2 ♖h1+ 77.♔b2 c1♖+, Abdusattorov – Vidit, Rapid, India 2022.



Example 2



White to move

On the surface, White doesn't seem to be able to make any progress in this rook ending. However, he found a way to achieve victory based on activating the king.

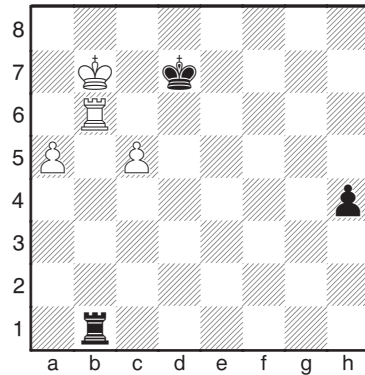
69.♔b7!

This pawn sacrifice leads to success, while after eliminating the opponent's last pawn with 69.♞xh4? and the continuation 69...♔c6 70.♞h5 ♞a2 White could no longer win.

69...♞b1+

After 69...♞xa5 70.c6+ ♔e7 71.♞xh4 ♞b5+ 72.♔c8 White will sooner or later reach the so-called 'Lucena position' and then win using the standard technical procedure called 'bridge building'; e.g. 72...♞b1 73.c7 ♞b2 74.♞e4+ ♔f7 75.♔d7 ♞d2+ 76.♔c6 ♞c2+ 77.♔d6 ♞d2+ 78.♔c5 ♞c2+ 79.♞c4 and after the bridge is completed, the pawn runs through.

70.♞b6!



70...♞c1

70...♞xb6+ loses because of 71.♔xb6 h3 72.c6+ ♔d8

(72...♔c8 73.a6 h2 74.a7 h1♞ 75.a8♞#) 73.a6

(73.♔b7 h2 74.c7+ ♔e7 75.c8♞ h1♞+ 76.♔b8+-)

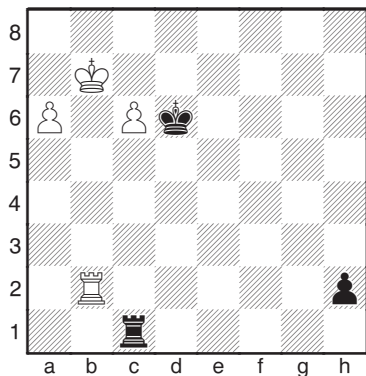
73...h2 74.a7 h1♞ 75.a8♞+ and in the queen ending the c-pawn is too strong a trump; e.g. 75...♔e7 76.♞a3+ ♔e8 77.♞e3+ ♔f7 78.♞f4+ ♔e6 79.♞c4+ ♔d6 80.♞c5+ ♔e6 81.c7 ♞b1+ 82.♔a7 ♞a1+ 83.♔b7+-.

71.c6+ ♔d6

71...♔d8 72.a6 (72.♞b3!?!+-) 72...h3 73.a7 h2 74.a8♞+ +-

72.♞b2 h3 73.a6 h2

73...♞xc6 doesn't help either because of 74.♞d2+ ♔c5 75.♞c2+ +-.

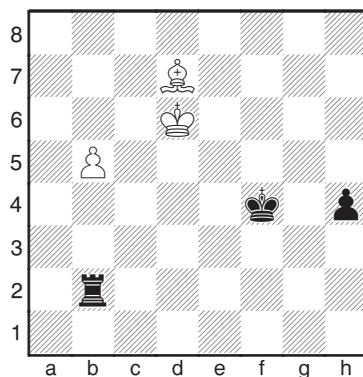


Example 3

74. ♖d2+

The immediate 74. ♖xh2! also wins after 74... ♖b1+ 75. ♔c8 ♔xc6 76. ♖h6+ ♔c5 77. a7 ♖a1 78. ♖h7 ♔c6 (78... ♔b6 79. ♔b8! and 80. a8 ♖+-) 79. ♖c7+ ♔b6 80. ♔b8 ♖a2 81. ♖c1 ♖xa7 82. ♖b1+ ♔a6 83. ♖a1+ etc.

74... ♔c5 75. ♖xh2 ♖b1+ 76. ♔c7 and 1-0 in view of the possible continuation 76... ♔c7 ♖g1 77. ♖h5+ +- or 76... ♖a1 77. ♖h5+ ♔c4 78. ♔b6 ♖b1+ 79. ♔a7+-, Pragganandhaa – Firouzja, Miami 2022.

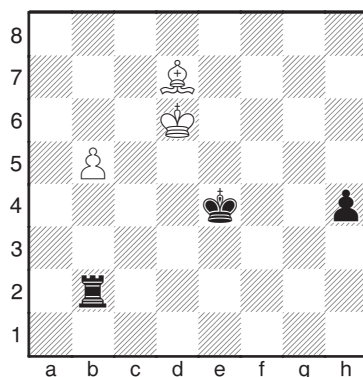


Black to move

91...h3?

Since the pawnless endgame 'rook versus bishop' is usually a draw, this move is a mistake.

Black can only win by first activating his king with 91... ♔e4!!.



1) 92.♔c6 ♖e5 93.b6 ♜c2+ 94.♔b7 ♔d6
 95.♙f5 ♜f2 96.♙g4 ♔c5 97.♔a7 ♜a2+
 98.♔b7 ♜b2-+

2) 92.♔c7 ♔d5 93.b6 ♜c2+ 94.♔b8 ♔d6
 95.♙f5 ♜f2 96.♙h3 and -+ in the lines:

a) 96...♜f3 97.♙g4 ♜g3 98.♙f5 h3 99.b7
 h2 100.♙e4 ♔d7 101.♔a7 ♜a3+
 102.♔b8 ♜a1 103.♙f5+ ♔d8 104.♙e4
 h1♙ 105.♙xh1 ♜xh1 106.♔a7 ♜a1+
 107.♔b8 ♜b1 108.♔a8 ♔c7

b) 96...♔c6 97.b7 ♔b6 98.♙g4 ♜f8+
 99.♙c8 ♜f3 100.♙g4 ♜e3 101.♔c8 ♜c3+
 102.♔b8 h3

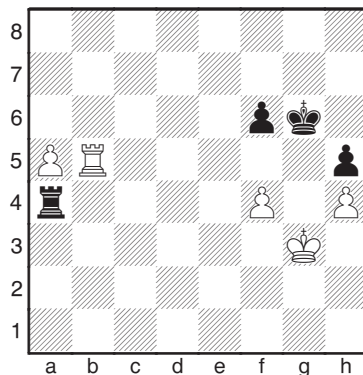
92.♙xh3 ♜xb5

The endgame is theoretically drawish.

93.♙d7 ♜h5 94.♙e8 ♜h1 95.♙f7 ♜d1+
 96.♔e6 ♜a1 97.♔d5 ♔f5 98.♙e6+ ♔f6
 99.♙h3 ♜a5+ 100.♔d4 ♜h5 101.♙c8
 ♔e7 102.♔e4 ♔d6 103.♔f4 ♜c5
 104.♙g4 ♜c4+ 105.♔f5 ♜xg4 106.♔xg4
 ½-½, Duda – Le, San Francisco 2022



Example 4

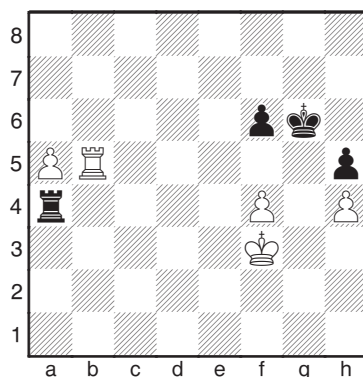


White to move

60.f5+?

After this mistake, Black was able to save the game.

Therefore, White should first activate his king with 60.♔f3!.



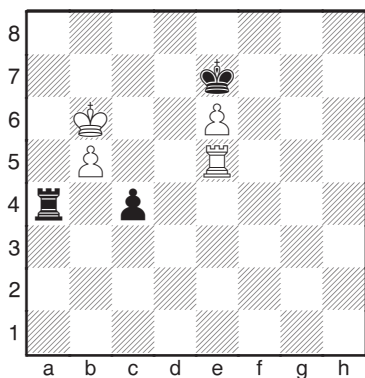
Chapter 9

Theoretical rook endings

Since rook endings occur very frequently in practice, they are of outstanding importance and require a lot of concrete knowledge, which can be obtained primarily by studying the extensive theory. The fact that these endgames are rightly considered to be particularly difficult can often be seen even in apparently simple positions.



Example 41



White to move

Extra pawn, two massively escorted passed pawns – that seems to be an example from the ‘easy exercise’ category.

77. ♖e4!

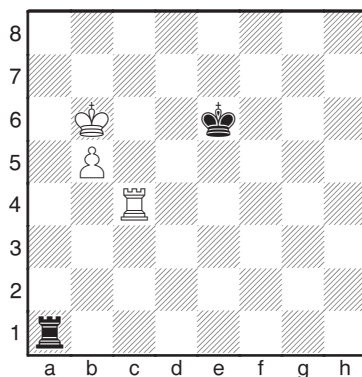
By pinning the c-pawn, the mobility of

the black rook is reduced to almost zero. However, it must be mentioned that the game move is only the most effective of a total of five winning moves.

77... ♜a1

77... ♜b4 78. ♔c5 also leads to the so-called ‘Lucena position’ after the elimination of the c-pawn.

78. ♜xc4 ♔xe6



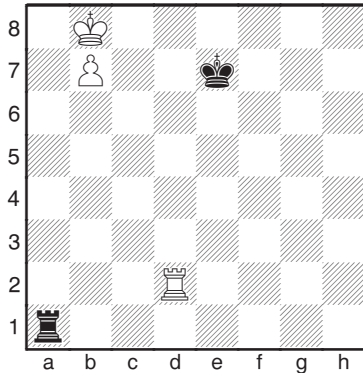
The ‘Lucena position’ is an elementary winning position in rook endings, in which the stronger side plays with king, rook and pawn against a rook because the opposing king is cut off by at least one file from the place of action. In the decisive stage, a so-called ‘bridge’ is built to protect the king from disruptive checks and thus enable the promotion of the pawn.

79. ♜d4

An amusing oddity! Apparently Black doesn’t notice that the Lucena position is already on the board and the bridge building is no longer necessary. With a kind of over-subtlety, he cuts off the enemy king one more file with his rook.

The immediate 79. ♔c6!? with the possible continuation 79... ♜h1 80. b6 ♜h8 81. b7 ♔e5 82. ♜b4 ♜h6+ 83. ♔c5+- wins faster.

79...♔e5 80.♞d2 ♞b1 81.♕c6 ♞c1+
 82.♕b7 ♞b1 83.b6 ♞c1 84.♕a7 ♞a1+
 85.♕b8 ♕e6 86.b7 ♕e7



87.♞d4!

The rook is placed on the right square to build the mentioned 'bridge'. For White it's the 4th rank, while for Black it would be the 5th rank accordingly.

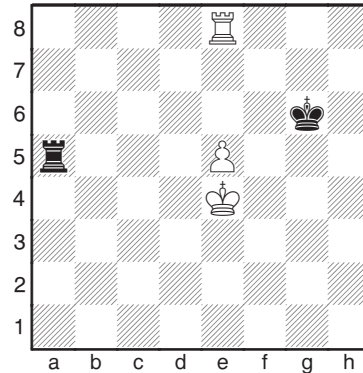
**87...♕e8 88.♕c7 ♞c1+ 89.♕b6 ♞b1+
 90.♕c6 ♕e7**

90...♞c1+ 91.♕b5 ♞b1+ 92.♞b4+-

91.♞d5 ♕e8 92.♞b5 1-0, Polak – Kalod,
 Czech Republic 2000



Example 42



Black to move

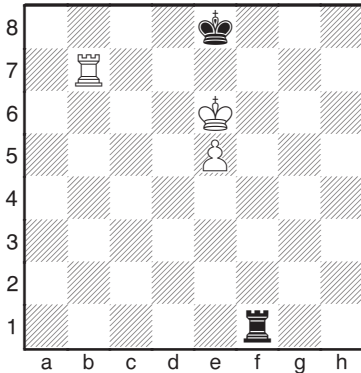
An elementary defensive technique in the '♞ vs. ♞+♔' endgame is associated with the so-called 'Philidor position'. The defending rook is placed on the 6th rank (or the 3rd if Black is the defender) to prevent the attacking king from advancing. And as soon as the pawn advances, the rook moves to the back rank, from where it can pursue the king with disruptive checks once it steps out of the protection granted by the pawn. The correct use of this technique will ensure the draw.

86...♕f7

By placing the king in front of the passed pawn, Black chooses the other completely sufficient method to reach a draw. In view of the outcome of the game, however, he may later have regretted not having followed the foolproof Philidor method – that is, 86...♞a6! with the possible continuation 87.♕d5 ♞a5+ 88.♕d6 ♞a6+ 89.♕d7 ♞a7+ etc.

87. ♖b8 ♔e6

The simplest approach is 87...♖a6!
88.♔f5 ♔e7 89.♖b7+ ♔e8=.

88. ♖b6+ ♔e7 89. ♔f5 ♖a1 90. ♖b7+ ♔e8 91. ♔f6 ♖f1+ 92. ♔e6**92... ♔d8?**

Apparently Black is not familiar with the rule that he has to escape the mating threat to the *short* side. And based on this knowledge gap, the choice of the long side is perfectly understandable: the king has 'more space' to dodge the mating threats. In fact, however, the point is that the attacking rook has 'more space' on the long side for the decisive winning maneuver that will soon follow.

After the correct choice 92...♔f8!, a path to a draw might look like this: 93.♖b8+ ♔g7 94.♔d6 (94.♔e7 ♖a1=) 94...♖d1+ 95.♔e7 ♖a1 96.♖b7 ♖a8 97.e6 ♔g6 98.♔d7 ♔f6 99.e7 ♔f7=.

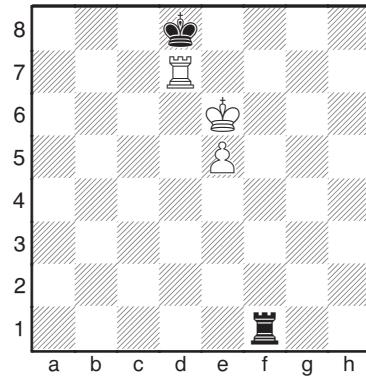
93. ♖d7+

Another path to victory is 93.♖b8+! ♔c7:

1) However, 94.♖h8? is a mistake, because after 94...♖e1 95.♔d5 ♖d1+ 96.♔e4 ♔d7 97.♖h7+ ♔e6 98.♖h6+ ♔e7= White can't win anymore.

2) The correct solution is 94.♖b4 ♔d8 95.♖d4+ ♔e8 96.♖a4 ♔f8 97.♖a8+ ♔g7

98.♔d6 ♖d1+ 99.♔e7 ♖e1 100.e6 ♔g6 101.♔d7 ♔f6 102.♖f8+ ♔g7 103.e7+-.

**93... ♔e8**

After 93...♔c8 White wins as shown in the following lines: 94.♖d4 ♖h1 95.♔f7 ♖h7+

(95...♖f1+ 96.♔e7 ♖e1 97.e6+-)

96.♔g6 ♖h1 97.e6 and after reaching the Lucena position the game can go on with 97...♖e1 98.♔f7 ♖f1+ 99.♔e8 ♖e1 100.e7

- 100...♔c7 101.♖f4 ♖h1 102.♖c4+ ♔d6 103.♔d8+-

- 100...♖f1 101.♖c4+ ♔b7 102.♔d7 ♖d1+ 103.♔e6 ♖e1+ 104.♔d6 ♖d1+ 105.♔e5 ♖e1+ 106.♖e4+-

94. ♖a7 ♔d8

94...♔f8 95.♖a8+ ♔g7 96.♔d6+-

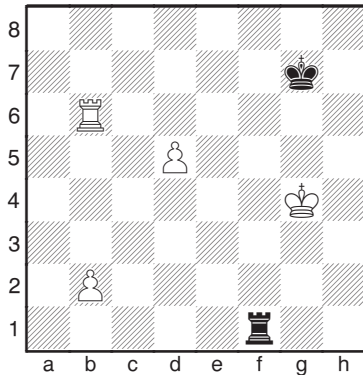
95. ♖a8+ ♔c7

There was this thing with 'more space' on the long side: Since the rook is not attacked, White can carry out his plan undisturbed.

96.♔e7 ♖h1 97.e6 ♖h7+ 98.♔f6 and 1-0 in view of the possible continuation 98...♖h6+ 99.♔f7 ♖h7+ 100.♔g6 ♖e7 101.♔f6 ♖h7 102.e7+-, Jansa - Hlousek, Prague 1970.



Example 43



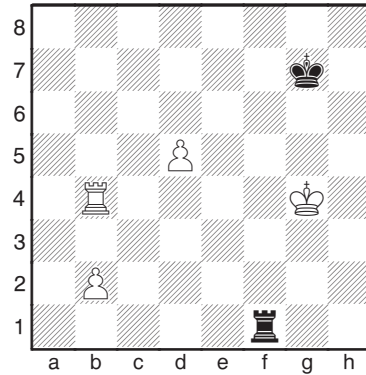
White to move

This example is not just about the well-known rule of thumb that the rook belongs behind the passed pawn. It also illustrates that even with two passed pawns the attacker often cannot make any progress if his king is cut off from the scene of action.

57.b4?

After this mistake, the black king can get closer to the pawns, while the white one remains cut off.

57. ♖b4! with the threat of placing the rook behind the passed d-pawn led to victory.



Now Black can twist and turn as he pleases: he is hopelessly lost.

1) 57... ♖d1 is the critical line (57... ♖g1+ 58. ♔f5 ♔f7 59. ♖b7+), because it prevents the white rook from getting behind the d-pawn. After that, the most convincing way to win is 58. ♔f5! – a not-so-obvious pawn sacrifice to activate the king.

(58. ♖b5!? is one of the alternatives that also leads to the goal.)

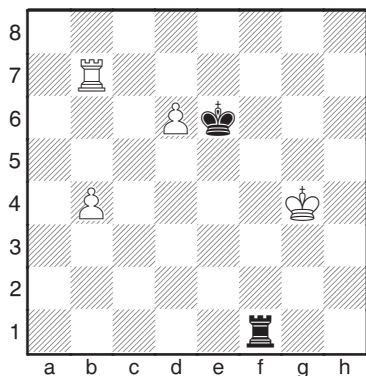
58... ♖xd5+ 59. ♔e6 ♖d1 60. ♖c4 ♔f8 61. b4 ♖b1 62. ♔d7 ♔f7 63. ♔c6 ♔e7 64. b5 ♔d8 65. ♖h4+–

2) On the other hand, after 57... ♔g6 (57... ♔f6 58. ♖f4+) 58. ♖d4! the rook reaches the desired ideal position, after which Black loses, for example, as follows: 58... ♖g1+ 59. ♔f4 ♔f7 60. ♔e5 ♔e7 61. ♖c4 ♔d7 62. b4 ♖d1 63. b5 ♖b1 64. ♖h4 ♖xb5 65. ♖h7+ ♔d8 66. ♔e6+–.

57... ♔f7

Of course, the king must approach the pawns at the first opportunity.

58. ♖b7+ ♔f6 59. d6 ♔e6



The next example is also about the rule of thumb: The rook belongs behind the passed pawns.

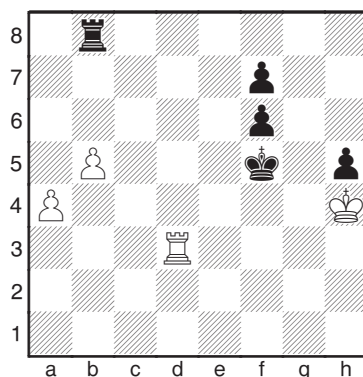


Example 44

60.d7

Or 60.♖b6 ♜d1 61.♔f4 ♜xd6 62.♜xd6+ ♔xd6 63.♔e4 ♔c6 64.♔d4 ♔b5 65.♔c3 ♔c6 66.♔c4 ♔b6 with an equal pawn ending.

60...♜d1 61.♔f4 ♜xd7 62.♜b6+ ♔d5 63.b5 ♔c5 64.♜b8 ♜d6 65.♔e5 ♜b6 66.♜xb6 ♔xb6 ½-½, Vaishali – Goriachkina, Nur-Sultan 2022



White to move

45.♜d6?

This wrong decision is difficult to understand, especially since simple counting leads to the clear result that the planned maneuver ♜a6, b6, a5, ♜a7, b7, a6, ♜a8 requires seven moves, while after the correct 45.♜b3! (Here the rook clearly belongs behind the passed pawns!) the five moves b6, b7, a5, a6, a7 would have led to victory, as shown in the following lines:

1) 45...♜a8 46.♜b4 ♔e6 47.b6 ♔d7 48.b7 ♜b8 49.a5 ♔c7 50.a6+-

2) 45...♔e5 46.a5 ♔d6 47.♔xh5

a) 47...♔c7 48.♜c3+ ♔b7 49.♜c6 ♜h8+

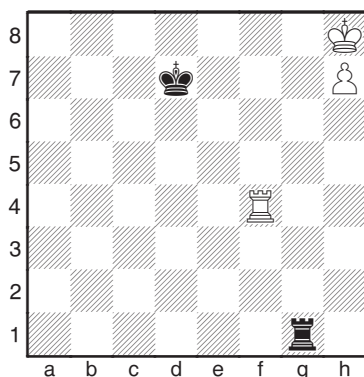
Chapter 19

Tactical tricks

What was said about the opening and the middle game also applies to the endgame: If you know the usual and typical tactical tricks, it will be easier to prevent them or to use them to your advantage.



Example 91



White to move

Obviously, White's task here is to free his king from its prison on h8, the question being whether this is best done via the 7th or the 8th rank.

66. ♖f8!

But not 66. ♖f7+?, because after 66... ♔e6 (66... ♔e8 67. ♖g7 ♖f1 68. ♖g8+ ♔f7=)

67. ♖g7 ♖a1 the planned way out is impassable: 68. ♔g8? (♠68. ♖g8 ♔f7=) 68... ♖a8#.

66... ♔e6

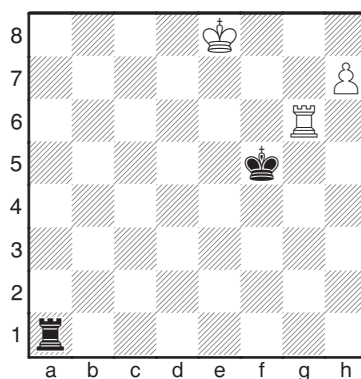
Black at least closes the escape route to the queenside.

After 66... ♔e7 67. ♖g8 ♖h1 with the possible continuation 68. ♔g7 ♖g1+ 69. ♔h6 ♖h1+ 70. ♔g6 ♖g1+ 71. ♔f5+- the white king can escape immediately.

67. ♖g8 ♖h1 68. ♔g7 ♖g1+ 69. ♔f8 ♖f1+ 70. ♔e8 ♖a1 71. ♖g6+

71. ♔d8? ♖a8+ 72. ♔c7 ♖a7+ =

71... ♔f5



72. ♖f6+!

With this little trick, White avoids the mishap 72. h8 ♖? ♖a8+.

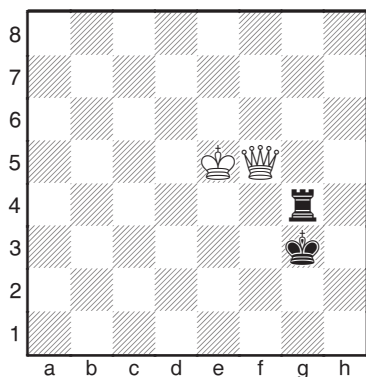
72... ♔e5

72... ♔g5 73. ♖f8 ♖a8+ 74. ♔f7 ♖a7+ 75. ♔g8 ♔g6 76. h8 ♖+-

73. ♖f8 ♔e6 74. ♖f6+ ♔e5 75. ♖f1

75. ♖h6 was much more accurate to avoid the endgame '♔ versus ♖'; e.g. 75... ♖a8+ 76. ♔f7 ♖a7+ 77. ♔g6 ♖a6+ 78. ♔g5+-.

75... ♖xf1 76. h8 ♖+ ♔e4 77. ♔e7 ♖f5 78. ♖h4+ ♔e5 79. ♖c4 ♖g5 80. ♖c5+ ♔f4 81. ♖d4+ ♔f3 82. ♔f6 ♖g4 83. ♖d3+ ♔f4 84. ♖f5+ ♔g3 85. ♔e5



85...♖g8

Now the rook is lost on the spot.

85...♔h4!? was more tenacious; e.g.
86.♚f2+ with the lines:

1) 86...♔g5 87.♚d2+ ♔h4 88.♔f5+-

2) 86...♔h3 87.♚e1 ♖g2 88.♔e4

a) 88...♔h2 89.♔f3 ♖c2 90.♚g3+ ♔h1
91.♚g6 ♖c3+ 92.♔f2+-

b) 88...♖g6 89.♚h1+ ♔g4 90.♚g2+ ♔h5
91.♚h3+ ♔g5 92.♔e5 ♖g7 93.♚g3+ ♔h6
94.♚h4+ ♔g6 95.♔e6 ♖g8 96.♚e4+ ♔g7
97.♔e7 ♔h6 98.♔f7 ♖g7+ 99.♔f6 ♖g5
100.♚e3+-

86.♚d3+ ♔f2

- 86...♔g2 87.♚d5+ +-

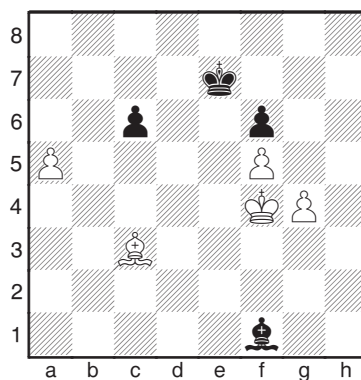
- 86...♔h4 87.♚h7+ +-

87.♚c2+ ♔g1 88.♚b1+ ♔h2 (88...♔g2
89.♚a2+) 89.♚h7+ 1-0, Flear – Jones,
Online 2021

Given the great drawish tendency in a pure endgame with opposite-colored bishops, radical measures are sometimes necessary in order to score a full point.



Example 92



White to move

77.♙xf6+!!

After this brilliant sacrifice, the black pieces are soon overwhelmed with controlling three passed pawns on both wings.

1) After 77.♙b4+?! the bishop has to return immediately to do better on the second attempt:

a) 77...♔d7 78.♙c3 ♔e7 79.♙xf6+ +-

b) 77...♔f7 78.♔e4 ♙e2 79.♔d4 ♙xg4
80.a6 c5+ 81.♔e4 ♙h3 82.♔f3 ♙xf5
83.a7+-

2) After 77.g5? fxg5+ 78.♔xg5 there's not enough winning potential; e.g.

78...♔d7 79.f6 ♘c4 80.♔g6 ♖c7 81.f7 ♘xf7+ 82.♔xf7 ♖b7=.

3) And after 77.♙d4? ♘c4 even the bishop sacrifice is no longer enough to win: 78.♘xf6+ ♖xf6 79.g5+ ♖f7! 80.♔e5 c5 81.♔d6 ♙d3 82.♔xc5 ♘xf5=.

77...♔xf6 78.g5+ ♖e7

78...♔f7 doesn't help either: 79.♔e5 c5 80.♔d5

– 80...c4 81.♔d4 ♙d3 82.a6 ♘xf5 83.a7+–

– 80...♙d3 81.f6 c4 82.♔d4+–

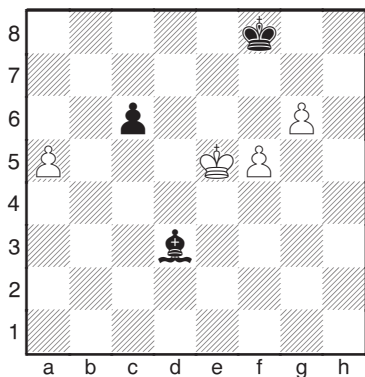
79.♔e5 ♙d3

1) 79...c5 80.g6 c4 81.f6+ ♖f8 82.♔d4 ♙d3 83.g7+ ♖f7 84.a6 ♙f1 85.a7 ♙g2 86.♔xc4+–

2) 79...♔f7 80.g6+ ♖g7 81.f6+ ♖xg6 82.♔e6 c5 83.♔e7 ♙c4 84.a6+–

80.g6 ♖f8

80...c5 81.f6+ ♔d7 82.g7 ♙c4 83.a6 ♖c7 84.a7 ♖b7 85.♔d6+–



81.f6!

When White sacrificed the bishop, he had to foresee this crucial move, because without it the position would still be a draw; e.g. 81.♔d6? ♘xf5 82.a6 c5 83.♔d5 ♙h3=.

81...c5 (81...♙xg6 82.a6+–) 82.g7+ ♖f7

83.♔d6 ♙h7

83...c4

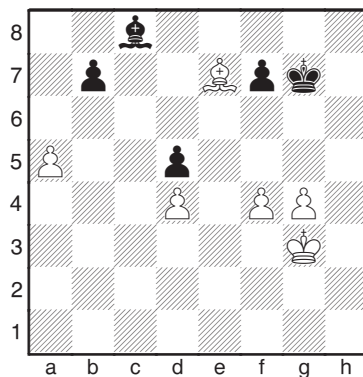
1) 84.a6? c3 85.a7 ♙e4 86.g8♖+ ♖xg8 87.♔e7 c2 88.f7+ ♖h7=

2) ♖84.g8♖+ ♖xg8 85.♔e7 ♙g6 86.a6 c3 87.a7 c2 88.a8♖+ ♖h7 89.♖h1+ ♖g8 90.♖h6+–

84.a6 c4 85.a7 ♙e4 86.g8♖+ and **1–0** in view of the possible continuation 86...♔xg8 87.♔e7 ♙d5 88.f7+ +–, Oparin – Lomasov, Moscow 2017.



Example 93



White to move

64.f5!

After this advance, the black pieces are limited to the maximum and the white king ogles the penetration square on e5.

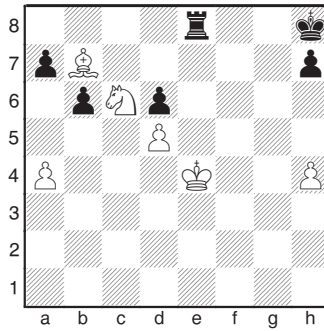
64...f6

Sealing the said break-in square can no longer stop White.

Part II

Practice makes perfect

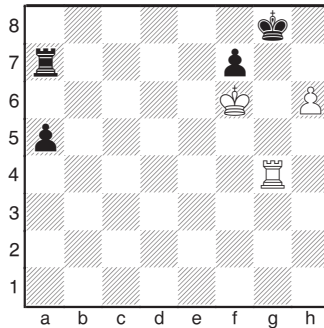
Exercise 1



White to move

- a) White wins after ♔f5 .
- b) White wins after ♔d3 .
- c) Both moves win.

Exercise 2

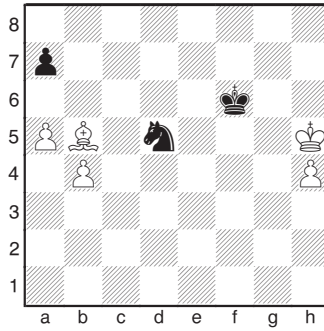


Black to move

- a) ♔h8 is good enough to win.
- b) ♔h7 is better.
- c) Both moves win.

(Solutions starting on page 167)

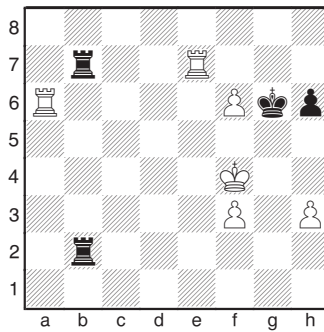
Exercise 3



Black to move

- a) ♞xb4 leads to a draw.
- b) ♞g7 leads to a draw.
- c) Both moves lead to a draw.

Exercise 4



Black to move

- a) ♜2b4+ leads to a draw.
- b) Another continuation leads to a draw.

(Solutions starting on page 168)

Part II

Solutions of the exercises



Solution 1: b)

40. ♖f5?

Instead of this mistake, 40. ♖d3! was correct. Here's a look at the possible consequences:

1) 40... ♗g7 41. ♖c4 ♖e4+ 42. ♖b5

a) 42... a5 43. h5 ♖h6 44. ♖xb6 ♖xa4 45. ♗xa5 ♖xh5 46. ♗c6 ♖b4+ 47. ♖c7 ♖g5 48. ♖xd6+-

b) 42... ♖xh4 43. ♗xa7 h5 44. ♗c8 ♖f4 45. ♗xd6 h4 46. ♖xb6 ♖xa4 47. ♗b5 h3 48. d6 h2 49. d7+-

2) 40... ♖e1 41. ♗d4 ♖h1 42. ♗f5+-

40... ♖g7 41. ♗a6 ♖e1 42. ♗b5 a5 43. ♗d3 ♖e3 44. ♗b5 ♖e1 45. ♗a6 ♖f7 46. ♖g5 ♖g1+ 47. ♖f5 ♖e1 48. ♗d3 ♖e3 49. ♗c4 ♖f3+ 50. ♖g5 ♖g3+ 51. ♖f5 (51. ♖h6 ♖g4=) 51... ♖f3+ 52. ♖g5 ♖g3+ 53. ♖f5 ♖f3+ ½-½, Le – Keymer, Internet 2022



Solution 2: a)

62... ♖h8!

After the mistake 62... ♖h7? 63. ♖a4 ♖h8 64. ♖g5 ♖g8=, Black cannot win.

63. ♖a4 ♖h7

Now White is in deadly zugzwang.

64. ♖a1 a4 65. ♖a3 ♖g8 66. ♖e5

66. ♖g3+ ♖h8 67. ♖a3 ♖h7 zugzwang! 68. ♖g5 ♖a6 69. ♖f3 ♖g6+ 70. ♖f5 ♖xh6 71. ♖g5 ♖g7 72. ♖a3 ♖a6+-

66... ♖a6 67. ♖g3+ ♖h8 68. ♖a3 ♖h7 69. ♖f3 f6+ and 0-1 in view of the possible continuation 70. ♖d4 a3 71. ♖f1 a2 72. ♖a1 ♖xh6-+, Shuvalova – Zhu, Nur-Sultan 2022.



Solution 3: a)

Only after 62...♖xb4! Black could have saved the game; e.g. 63.♔g4 ♖d5

– 64.♔f3 ♖e7 65.♙d3 ♖c6 66.a6 ♖b8=

– 64.a6 ♖c7 65.♙c4 ♖xa6 66.♙xa6 ♔g7 with a theoretical draw.

On the other hand, the game continued with a fatal mistake.

62...♔g7? 63.♔g5 ♖xb4 64.♔f5! a6 65.♙e8 ♖d3 66.♙c6 ♔h6

White also wins after 66...♖b2 67.♙b5! axb5 68.a6 ♖c4 69.a7 ♖b6 70.♔e4!.

67.♙d5 ♔h5 68.♔e4 ♖b4 69.♙b7 ♔xh4 70.♔d4 ♔g5 and **1–0** in view of the possible continuation 70...♔g5 71.♔c3 ♖a2+ 72.♔c4 with the lines:

– 72...♖c1 73.♙xa6 ♖e2 74.♙b7 ♖f4 75.a6 ♖e6 76.a7 ♖c7 77.♔c5+–

– 72...♔f6 73.♙xa6 ♔e7 74.♙b5 ♔d6 75.a6 ♔c7 76.♔b3 ♖c1+ 77.♔b2+–

Jakovenko – Fedoseev, Poikowski 2018



Solution 4: b)

To understand this position, it's first necessary to answer the standard question 'What's the threat?' And once you've spotted the venomous threat 55.f7+ Kg7 56.Tf6!+–, you can start thinking about the appropriate defense. Apparently, the defense of the 6th rank has life-sustaining importance.

54...♙2b4+?

Since this check, which only drives the king to a safe position, leads to loss, it could be called 'unconscious revenge check', so to speak. It would only make sense if the goal was to push the king further away from the crucial area before a concrete action.

The correct defense was 54...♙2b6 with the possible continuation 55.f7 ♔g7 56.♙xb7 (Because after the final point from the main line 56.♙a8??, the reply 56...♙f6+ (with check!) followed by ♙xe7 would even turn the result upside down.)

56...♙xb7 57.♙f6 ♙b4+ 58.♔g3 ♔f8 and White can't make any progress; e.g. 59.♙f4 ♙b5 60.♔g4 ♙g5+ 61.♔h4 ♙a5 62.♙f6 ♙g5 63.♙xh6 ♙f5 64.♔g4 ♙xf7 65.f4 ♙a7 66.f5 ♔g7 67.♔g5 ♙a1 68.h4 ♙g1+ 69.♔h5 ♙h1 70.♙a6 ♔f7.

55.♔g3 ♖4b6 56.f7 ♔g7 57.♖a8! and 1–0 in view of the possible continuation 57...♖f6 58.f8♖+ or 57...♖b8 58.♖xb8 ♖xb8 59.♖e8, Abdusattorov – Rapport, Online 2022.



Solution 5: a)

61.♖a1!

This continuation leads to a draw.

The serious mistake 61.♖a2+ would only push the king closer to the white passed pawns, giving away half a point e.g. 61...♔d3 62.♖xe2 ♖xe2 63.♔f4

(63.h5 ♔e4 64.h6 ♔f5 65.h7 ♖e8–+)

63...♔d4 64.h5

1) 64...♔xc5? 65.h6 ♔d6 66.h7 ♖e8 67.♔f5 ♔e7 68.♔g6 ♖a8 69.♔g7 ♔e6 70.g4 ♖a7+ 71.♔h6 ♖a8 72.g5 ♔f7 73.g6+ ♔f6 74.g7 ♖a1 75.g8♗+ ♔f7 76.♗f6 ♖h1+ 77.♗h5 ♖xh5+ 78.♔xh5 ♔g7=

2) 64...♔d5! 65.♔f5 ♖f2+ 66.♔g6 ♖xg2+ 67.♔f7 ♖h2 68.♔g6 ♔e6 69.h6 ♖g2+ –+

61...♖e5 62.♔f4 ♖xc5

Or 62...e1♖ 63.♖xe1 ♖xe1 64.h5 ♖e6 65.g4 ♖h6 66.♔g5 ♖c6 67.h6 ♖xc5+ 68.♔g6 ♖c6+ 69.♔g7 ♖c7+ 70.♔g6 ♖c6+ 71.♔h5 ♔e3 72.g5 ♔f4 73.h7!

1) 73.g6?? ♖c5+ 74.♔h4 ♖c1 75.♔h3 ♖h1+ 76.♔g2 ♖xh6–+

2) 73.h7! ♖c1 74.♔h6 ♖h1+ 75.♔g7 ♖xh7+ 76.♔xh7 ♔xg5=

63.g4 ♖c1 64.♖a2+ ♖c2 65.♖a1 ♖c1 66.♖a2+ ♔d3 67.♖xe2 ♔xe2 68.g5 ♖c4+ 69.♔f5 ♔f3 (69...♖xh4 70.g6=) 70.g6 ♖c5+ 71.♔f6 ♔g4 72.g7 ♖c6+ 73.♔f7 ♖c7+ 74.♔f6 ♖xg7 75.♔xg7 ♔xh4 ½-½, Harikrishna – Anton Guijarro, Online 2022



Solution 6: b)

56...♔e4?

The king was already spot on and the text move only gives the white colleague the vital tempo to reach the a1 corner, so that the bishop can take care of other things than guarding the passed a-pawn.

With the correct push 56...h5! Black could prepare the decisive breakthrough g6–g5 to create a second passed pawn, as can be seen in the following lines:

1) 57.♔c2 g5! 58.hxg5 h4 59.g6 ♕e4+ 60.♔b2 h3 61.♕e5 ♔xe5 62.g7 ♕d5–+
 2) 57.♕f6 ♔e6 58.♕a1 ♔f5 59.♔c1 g5 60.hxg5 h4 61.g6 ♔xg6 62.♕e5 ♔f5!–+
57.♔c1 ♔f5 58.♔b2 ♕d5 59.♕h6 ♔g4 60.♕g5 h6 61.♕xh6 ♔xh4 62.♕d2 g5 63.♕xg5+ ♔xg5 and ½-½ after some more moves, Zatonskih – Lee, Saint Louis 2022.



Solution 7: b)

56...♞d8?

Instead of this thoughtless handling of the rook, there were even *two* ways to save the endgame:

1) 56...♞h8! 57.♞e7 ♞h3+ 58.♔e4 ♞h6 59.♔f3 ♞g6 60.♞f7 ♞g1 61.♞e7 ♞g6 62.f5 exf5 63.♔f4 ♞h6 64.♔xf5 ♞h5+ 65.♔e6 ♞h6+ 66.♔f7 ♞h7+ 67.♔f8 ♞h5 68.e6 ♔d6=
 2) 56...♞e8! 57.♔e4 ♞h8 58.♞f6 (58.♞e7 ♞h6=) 58...♔d7 59.f5 ♞h4+ 60.♔e3 exf5 61.♞xf5 ♔e6 62.♞g5 ♞a4=

57.♞e7

And like in a case of poetic justice, White also had a second winning method – namely 57.f5 exf5 58.♔f4 or 57...♔d5 58.♔f4 etc.

57...♔d5 58.♔f3 ♞g8 59.♞d7+ ♔c5 60.♞d6 ♞e8

60...♞g6 61.f5 ♞g5 62.♞xe6 ♞xf5+ 63.♔e4 ♞f1 64.♞d6 ♞e1+ 65.♔f5 ♞f1+ 66.♔e6+–
61.♔g4 ♞g8+ 62.♔h5 ♞h8+ 63.♔g5 ♞g8+ 64.♔f6 ♞f8+ 65.♔xe6 ♞xf4 66.♞d5+ ♔c6 67.♞d1 ♞h4

67...♔c7 68.♔e7 ♔c6 69.e6 ♞h4 70.♞c1+ ♔d5 71.♔d7+–

68.♞c1+ ♔b7 69.♔f7 ♞f4+ 70.♔e7 ♞h4 71.e6 ♞h7+ 72.♔f6 ♞h6+ 73.♔f7 ♞h7+ 74.♔g6 ♞h8 75.e7 ♞c8 76.♞xc8 ♔xc8 77.e8♞+ and since it was a rapid game, Black continued playing until he was mated on move 83, Le – So, San Francisco 2022.



Solution 8: c)

72...g5+!

This positional pawn sacrifice ultimately also leads to a draw.

Just as easy, however, was 72...♔h5!? with the intention of 73...g5+ and the possible continuation 73.♖e5+ ♖xe5 74.♔xe5 ♔g4 75.♔f6 ♔xg3 76.♔xg6 ♔xh4.

73.hxg5+ ♔g7

The endgame with the defending king in front of the passed pawn is of course dead draw, but the game only ended with a stalemate on move 101, Aditya – Naroditsky, Online 2022.



Solution 9: b)

Two active minor pieces against a passive rook, safely blocked black passed pawn against the possible creation of an unstoppable white passed pawn on the queen-side – in short: White's win is only a matter of time.

46...♔e5

A little more resistance could be offered with 46...h6, although this attempt ultimately doesn't bring any salvation either; e.g. 47.gxh6 ♖h8 48.h4 ♖xh6 49.♔g2 f4 50.♗f3 ♖h8 51.b6 axb6 52.a6 etc.

47.♔d3+

White has everything under perfect control.

47...♔d6 48.♖xc5 f4 49.♖e4+ ♔e5

49...♔c7 50.♖f6 ♔d6 51.♔d4 a6 52.♖e8+ +-

50.b6 axb6 51.a6 ♖f7 52.♗b7 b5+ 53.♔b4

53.♔xb5!? also wins after f3 54.♖f2 or 53...♖xb7+ 54.axb7 ♔xe4 55.b8♖ f3 56.♖g3.

53...f3 54.a7 ♖f8 55.a8♖ ♖xa8 56.♗xa8 and **1-0** in view of the possible continuation 56...♔f4 57.♔xb5 ♔e3 58.♔c4 f2 59.♔g3 ♔d2 60.♗g2+-, Gukesh – Abdusattorov, Calcutta 2022.



Solution 10: b)

47...♙e5?

Now Black loses without a whimper, because the white passed pawn can no longer be stopped.

47...♞a3? (Δ♞d3) also loses after 48...♙e6 49.♞xh5 or 48...♙g6 49.d7.

And after 48...♙g4, the reply 49.♙e2 (to rule out ♙f3) is even more precise than 49.♞d5 straight away.

Only after 47...♞a5! = Δ48.d7 ♞d5 does the saving rook swing behind the passed pawn succeed.

48.♞c5 f6 49.d7 ♞a1+ 50.♙c1 and **1-0** because of 50...♞a8 51.♞c8+-, Sarin – Gukesh, Calcutta 2022.



Solution 11: c)

There is nothing to be done against White's passed pawn.

46...♙g8

Even the tougher attempt 46...♙g7 is doomed to fail after 47.♞e6; e.g. 47...♙f8 48.♙d2 ♙b5 49.♞f6+ ♙g7 50.♞f7+ ♙g8 51.d7 ♙a4 52.♞f6 ♙xd7 53.♞d6 c3+ 54.bxc3 bxc3+ 55.♙c1+-.

47.♙xc4

The profane elimination of two pawns is much stronger than the unnecessarily subtle approach 47.d7 ♙xd7 48.♞d6, which still involves some work after 48...c3 49.bxc3 b3! 50.♞d1 b2 51.♞b1.

47...♙g7 48.♞xf5 ♙f7 49.♙e5 ♙e6 50.♞g5+ ♙f6 51.♞g6+ ♙f5 52.♙c6 and **1-0** in view of the possible continuation 52...♞xd6 53.♙e7# or 52...♙xg6 53.♙xd8 ♙d7 54.♙b7 ♙f6 55.♙c5+-, Maghsoodloo – So, Rapid, Calcutta 2022.

Part III

Endgame magic

Test your technique and tactics

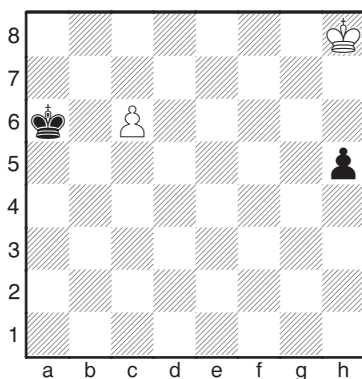
The following 100 exercises are so-called 'studies', i.e. fantasy products that primarily serve to provide sophisticated entertainment and aesthetic enjoyment. However, they can also convey certain teaching content (an interesting example can be found below).

Our selection covers the whole spectrum from 'easy' to 'difficult' and if you find yourself reaching your limits and getting stuck, please don't hesitate to make things easier by studying the lines in the solution section to make sure you can actually enjoy the whole thing.

First of all, we would like to point out that, in principle, *White is to move* in studies, so that only the desired result is given above the respective diagram: i.e. '+-' for 'White wins' or '=' for 'White draws'.

What you can learn from studies, for example

Perhaps you know this little jewel among the studies in which its creator Richard Réti demonstrates in an exquisitely minimalist way that two kings and two pawns are enough to conjure up a little stroke of genius on the board.



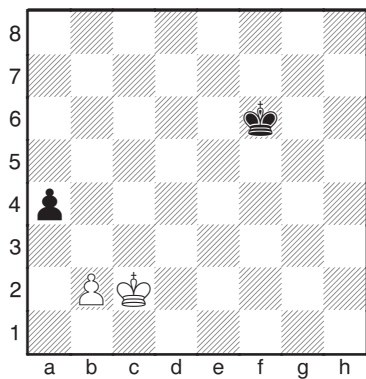
White to move and draw

1. ♔g7!! (1. ♕h7? h4--+; 1. ♔g8? h4--+) 1...h4 2. ♕f6! ♕b6 (2...h3 3. ♕e7 followed by ♕d7=) 3. ♕e5! and now 3...h3 4. ♕d6= or 3...♔xc6 4. ♕f4=

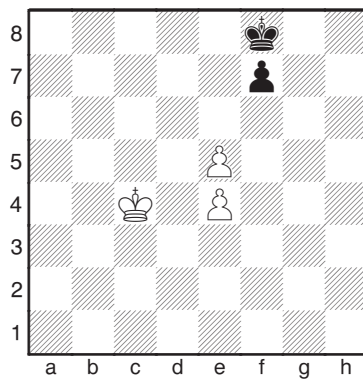
And if you are wondering what can be learned from this precious miniature for the practical game, then take another look at example 34 (page 42), because there someone apparently learned from the Réti study that the movement on a diagonal is a movement in *two* directions at the same time!

(Solutions starting on page 254)

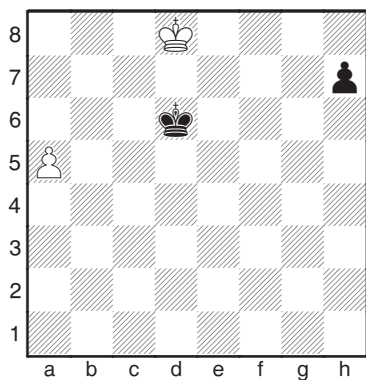
Exercise 1 +-



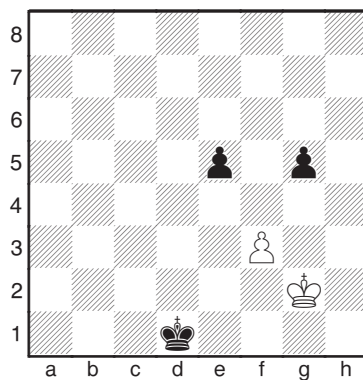
Exercise 3 +-



Exercise 2 =

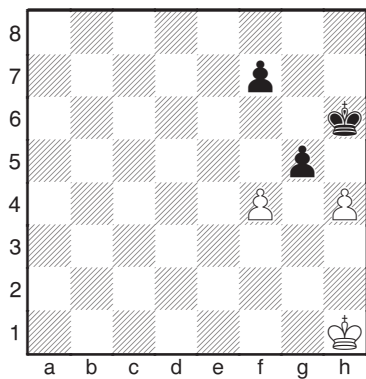


Exercise 4 =

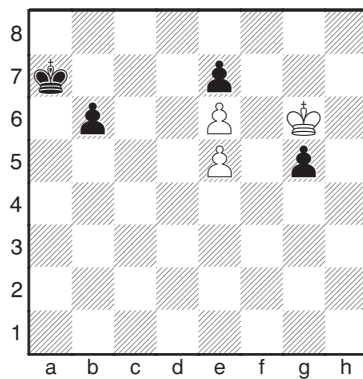


(Solutions starting on page 256)

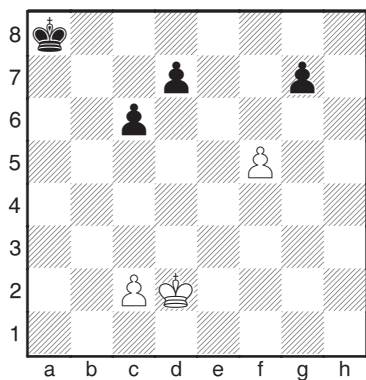
Exercise 5 =



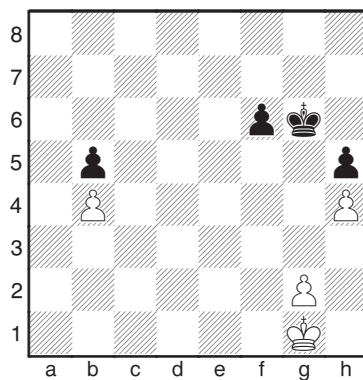
Exercise 7 +-



Exercise 6 =

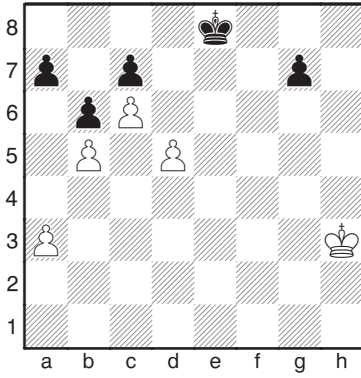


Exercise 8 +-

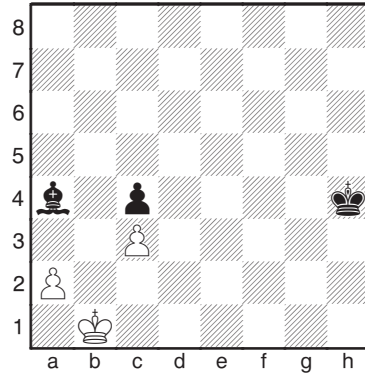


(Solutions starting on page 258)

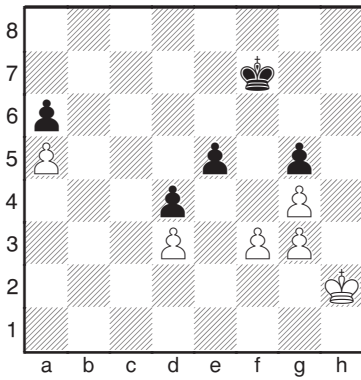
Exercise 9 +-



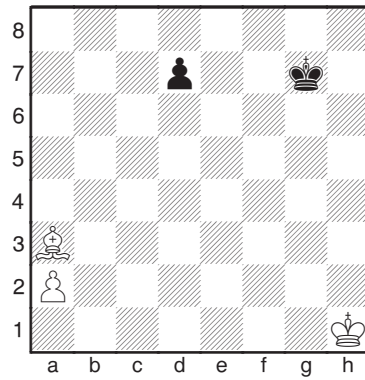
Exercise 11 =



Exercise 10 +-

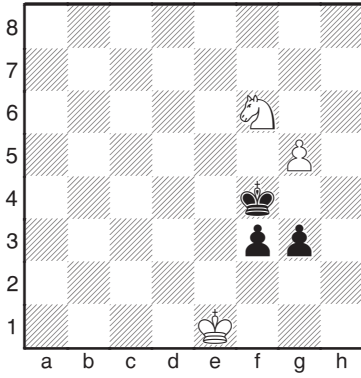


Exercise 12 +-

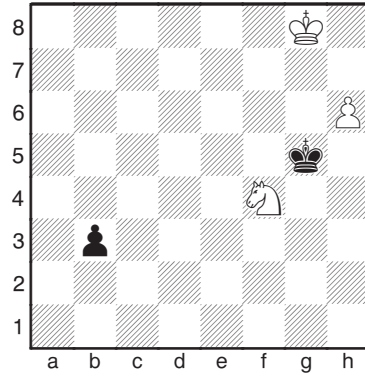


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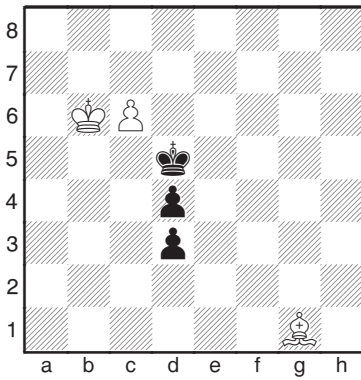
Exercise 13 +-



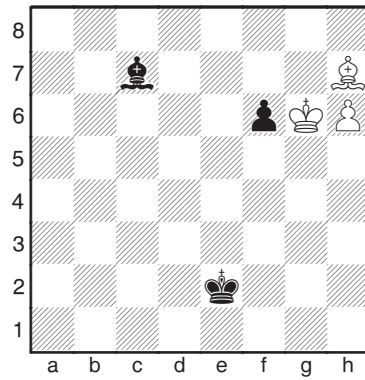
Exercise 15 +-



Exercise 14 +-

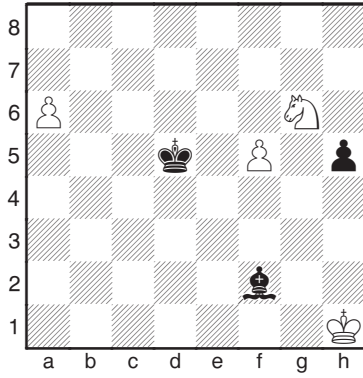


Exercise 16 +-

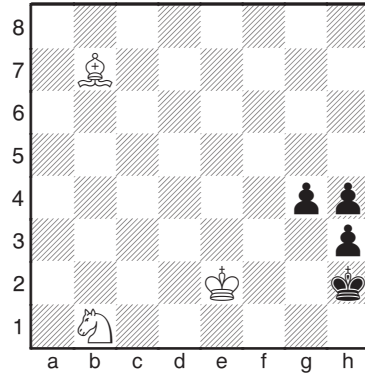


(Solutions starting on page 262)

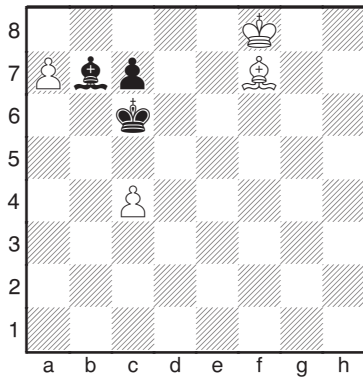
Exercise 17 +-



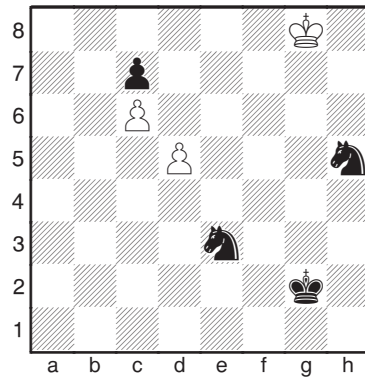
Exercise 19 +-



Exercise 18 +-



Exercise 20 =



Part III

Solutions



Exercise 1:

1. b!

1. c? a! 2. b4 (2. bxa3 e5=) 2... e5 3. b3 d5 4. xa3 c6 5. a4 b6 6. b5
a7 7. a5 b7 8. b6 b8 9. a6 a8=

1... a3

1... e5 2. a2 d5 3. a3 c5 4. xa4 b6 5. b4+-

2. b3!

2. b4? e5 3. a2 d5 4. xa3 c6 5. a4 b6=

2... e5 3. a2 d5 4. xa3 c5 5. a4 b6

5... c6 6. a5+-

6. b4+-

(F. Cassidy, 1884)



Exercise 2:

1. c8!

1. e8? h5+-

1... c6 2. b8 b5

2... h5? 3. a6+-

3. b7 xa5 4. c6 h5 5. d5 h4 6. e4 h3 7. f3=

(L. Prokes, 1947)



Exercise 3:

1.e6!

1) 1.♔d5? ♕e7 2.e6 fxe6+ 3.♕e5 ♔d7 4.♕f6 ♔d6 5.♕f7 (5.e5+?? ♔d5--) 5...♕e5 6.♕e7=

2) 1.♕c5? ♕e7 2.♔d5 ♔d7 3.♕c5 ♕e6 4.♔d4 ♔d7=

1...fxe6

1...f6 2.♕c5 ♕e7 3.♔d5 ♕e8 4.♔d6 ♔d8 5.e7+ ♕e8 6.♕e6 f5 7.♕xf5! ♕xe7 8.♕e5+-

2.e5!

2.♕c5? e5! 3.♔d5 ♕f7 4.♕xe5 ♕e7=

2...♕e7 3.♕c5 ♔d7 4.♕b6 ♔d8 5.♕c6 ♕e7 6.♕c7 ♕e8 7.♔d6 ♕f7 8.♔d7 ♕f8 9.♕xe6 ♕e8 10.♕f6 ♕f8

10...♔d8 11.♕f7+-

11.e6 ♕e8 12.e7 ♔d7 13.♕f7+-

(J. Crum, 1913)



Exercise 4:

1.♕h1!

1) 1.♕f1? ♔d2 2.♕f2 ♔d3 3.♕g3 ♕e3 4.♕g2 ♕e2 5.♕g3 ♕f1 6.♕g4 ♕f2--

2) 1.♕h2? ♔d2!

(1...♕e2? 2.♕g2 ♕e3 3.♕g3=)

a) 2.♕g2 ♕e2 3.♕g3 ♕f1--

b) 2.♕g1 ♕e3 3.♕g2 ♕e2--

c) 2.♕g3 ♕e3 3.♕g2 ♕e2--

3) 1.♕g3? ♕e1 2.♕g2 ♕e2 3.♕g3 ♕f1--

1...♕e2

1...♕e1 2.♕g1 g4

(2...♕e2 3.♕g2 ♕e3 4.♕g3=)

3.♕g2 ♔d2 4.fxg4 e4 5.g5 e3 6.g6 e2 7.g7 e1♙ 8.g8♙=

2. ♖g2 ♗d3 3. ♗h3! ♖e3 4. ♗g3

4. ♗g4? ♗f2-+

4... ♗d2

4... ♗d3 5. ♗h3!=

5. ♗h2!

5. ♗g2? ♗e2-+

5... ♗d1 6. ♗h1=

(H. Neustadtl, 1890)



Exercise 5:

1. hxg5+!

1. fxg5+? ♗h5 2. g6 fxg6-+

1... ♗h5 2. g6!

2. ♗g2? ♗g4 3. g6 fxg6 4. f5 gxf5-+

2... fxg6

2... ♗xg6 3. ♗g2 ♗f5 4. ♗f3=

3. f5!

3. ♗g1? ♗g4 4. f5 ♗xf5-+

3... gxf5 4. ♗g1

4. ♗g2? ♗g4-+

4... ♗g5 5. ♗f1 ♗g4 6. ♗g2 ♗f4 7. ♗f2 ♗e4 8. ♗e2 f4 9. ♗f2=

(H. Mattison, 1918)



Exercise 6:

1. ♗e3! ♗b7 2. ♗f4!

2. ♗e4? ♗b6 3. ♗e5 ♗c5-+

2... ♗c7

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About the authors

GM Dr. Karsten Müller was born on November 23rd, 1970 in Hamburg. He studied mathematics and received his doctorate in 2002. From 1988 to 2015 he played for the 'Hamburg SK' in the German 'Bundesliga' and in 1998 he was awarded the title of Grandmaster.

The busy and globally recognized end-game expert was named 'Trainer of the Year' by the German Chess Federation in 2007



He is the author (or co–author) of the following highly esteemed works:

- Secrets of Pawn Endings (with Frank Lamprecht, Everyman/GAMBIT 2000)
- Fundamental Chess Endings (with Frank Lamprecht, GAMBIT 2001)
- Danish Dynamite (with Martin Voigt, Russell 2003)
- Chess Cafe Puzzle Book: Test and Improve Your Tactical Vision (Russell 2004)
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- The Magic Tactics of Mikhail Tal: Learn from the Legend (with Raymund Stolze, Edition Olms 2012)
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- The slow (but venomous) Italian (with Georgios Souleidis, New in Chess 2016)
- The Magic of Chess Tactics 2 (with C.D. Meyer, Russell 2017)

His excellent series of ChessBase-DVDs Chess endgames 1–14 also attracted attention.

Müller's popular column Endgame Corner was published at 'www.ChessCafe.com' from January 2001 until 2015, and his column Endgames is published in Chess-Base Magazine since 2006.

To date, numerous of his books have been published by JBV Chess Books (Joachim Beyer Verlag) - a total of 24 in German and the following titles also in English:

- Magical Endgames (together with Claus Dieter Meyer)
- The Human Factor in Chess (together with Luis Engel)
- The Best Endgames of the World Champions Vol. 1 + 2
- World Chess Championship 2021 (together with Jerzy Konikowski and Uwe Bekemann)
- The Best Combinations of the World Champions Vol. 1 + 2 (together with Jerzy Konikowski)
- Bobby Fischer 60 Best Games
- Chess Training with Matthias Blübaum (together with Matthias Blübaum and Matthias Krallmann)
- Typical Sicilian
- The Human Factor in Chess – The Testbook (together with Luis Engel and Makan Rafiee)
- Magnus Carlsen – The Chess DNA of a Genius (2023)
- Karsten Müller – Attack (2023)

FIDE Master Jerzy Konikowski (born 1947) is a recognized German trainer and chess theorist of Polish origin. He completed his studies as a chess coach in Warsaw and was the Polish national coach from 1978 to 1981.

In 1981 he moved to Germany and received German citizenship. He coached the youth team of North Rhine–Westphalia for 15 years and played in various teams in the German 'Bundesliga' from 1983-1994.

His numerous books and articles have been translated into several languages and published in many countries.

His other passion is correspondence chess. He won several tournaments in the European class and represented

Germany in the final of the 17th European Correspondence Chess Championship (1993-1998), where he placed 7th.

He is also a renowned chess composer who created about 400 chess problems, over 100 of which received awards in international competitions. Eight of his problems have been included in FIDE albums, the collections of the world's best problems.

