



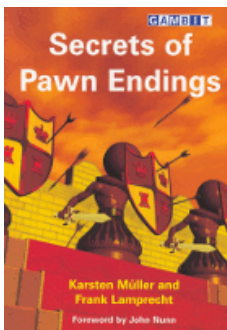
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Secret No More

Secrets of Pawn Endings, by Karsten Müller and Frank Lamprecht, 2000
Everyman Chess, Figurine Algebraic Notation, Softcover, 288pp. \$24.95

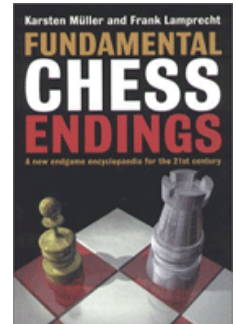
Some months ago we reviewed a book devoted to king and pawn endings. *The Final Countdown* by Willem Hajenius & Herman van Riemsdijk was a good effort to break down and simplify these most basic endings. (Interested readers may find a copy of this review in the [ChessCafe.com Archives](#).) Everyman Chess, the successor to Cadogan, has just released a new book by two German masters that attempts to do a much more thorough job treating these endings and endings can be surprisingly difficult.

We have to confess that we initially did not recognize the names of the authors. According to the publisher's blurb on the back cover, Karsten Müller is a German grandmaster "who competes regularly in the Budesliga and in international events. He finished third in the German Championship in 1996 and was runner-up in 1997." Lamprecht's credentials seem even less impressive. Again, according to the back-cover blurb, he is "a high-rated FIDE master, also from Germany, who has completed the requirements for the international master titles." So there you have it: A grandmaster and an FM who has satisfied the norm for the IM title, neither of whom may have much recognition outside their own country. Well, with the release of this book, that should change. The hard work and excellent research that the authors have put into this book has resulted in an outstanding manual on the theory and practice of king and pawn endings.

The material is divided into sixteen chapters:

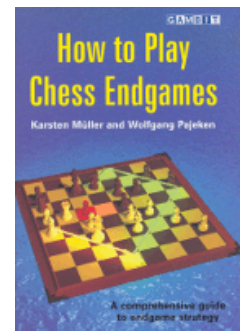
- King and Pawn(s) vs King
- King and Pawn vs. King and Pawn
- Race of the Passed Pawn
- Small Number of Pawns
- Unique Features of the Rook's Pawn
- Fortresses, Stalemates and Underpromotion
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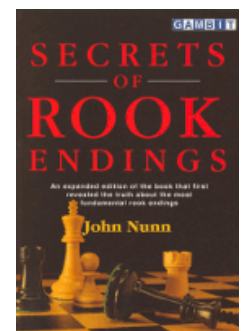
[Fundamental Chess Endings](#)

by Karsten Müller
& Frank Lamprecht



[How to Play Chess Endgames](#)

by Karsten Müller
& Wolfgang Pajeken



[Secrets of Rook Endings](#)

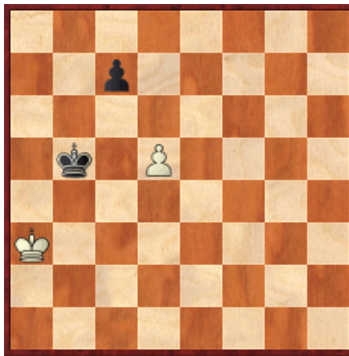
by John Nunn

- Complicated Cases
- Simplifications
- Exercises

This material is supplemented by a Preface and Introduction, Sources (a bibliography) and Index. There is also a foreword by British GM John Nunn. Everything is neatly arranged into 288 double-column pages.

The authors begin with the simplest of K+P endings. As they take the reader through the standard fare of the opposition, the rule of the square, Lucena's position, etc., they do so comprehensively and with great clarity. The material is structured so that the theory of the simpler endings builds logically to the more complicated endings. Furthermore, when the more complicated positions simplify to a position that has been covered in previous material, there is a citation to that previous material. The additional instructive benefit a simple reference like this has cannot be over-emphasize. It is a device that other texts could well use.

Let's look, for example at the following position taken from Chapter Two, King and Pawn vs. King and Pawn:



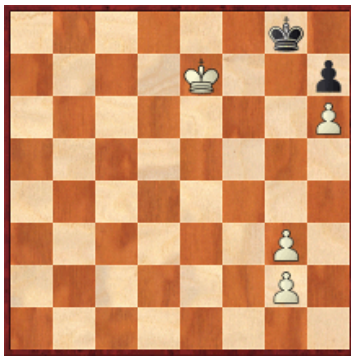
[FEN "8/2p5/8/1k1P4/8/K7/8/8 w - - 0 1"]

This position is from the end of a study by **P. Duclos**, 1903. The authors discuss a tactical defense at White's disposal, to wit, the sacrifice of a pawn followed by the defense of key squares. With White to move, they give the following line: **1 d6!** (1 Kb3? Kc5 and now: (a) 2 d6 Kxd6! (2...cxd6? 3 Kc3! =) 3 Kc4 Kc6! →; (b) 2 Kc3 Kxd5! 3 Kd3 c6 → [1.06]) **1...cxd6 2 Kb3! Kc5 3 Kc3!**= (1.06).

Very nice. But note the two parenthetical numerical references, both as it turns out, "1.06". What do they mean? They are, in fact, referring to position number 1.06 in the previous chapter. In other words, when the reader reaches the end of line "b" in the notes, or the end of the main line, a position has arisen that has already been explained. The authors do not spend any additional time discussing it, but refer you to the strategical or tactical explanation if you want or need to do that. A quick check of position 1.06 reveals that it indeed is a discussion of which key squares the side with the advantage must control, and when, in order to win. These references to prior positions and theory are quite simply terrific teaching aids, instructive threads that weave their way through the book, interconnecting the material so that the interested reader may maximize the benefits.

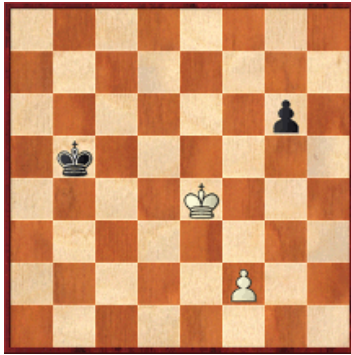
Each chapter ends with a series of exercises of varying difficulty to test the student. Full solutions with explanations appear immediately after the exercises. Here is a sampling of three positions from the exercise sections. Regarding levels of difficulty: the first has been designated by the authors as easy, the second medium and the third hard. Solutions to these positions may be found at the end of this review.

(1) White to move and win



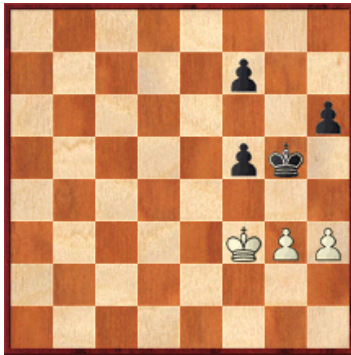
[FEN "6k1/4K2p/7P/8/8/6P1/6P1/8 w - - 0 1"]

(2) White to move and win



[FEN "8/8/6p1/1k6/4K3/8/5P2/8 w - - 0 1"]

(3) Black to move and win



[FEN "8/5p2/7p/5pk1/8/5KPP/8/8 b - - 0 62"]

The material in this book is well researched, logically presented and clearly explained. The authors presume no working knowledge of the theory of K+P endings from the reader, therefore allowing the book to be a great teaching and learning tool for anyone willing to put in the time and effort. In his Foreword, GM John Nunn calls this book "an exceptionally valuable contribution to the literature of king and pawn endings." Yes, indeed. It appears that Messrs. Müller and Lamprecht will be unknowns not much longer. We have the makings of a minor classic here.

Solutions

(1) White wins easily by sacrificing his front g-pawn: **1 g4 Kh8 2 g5 Kg8 3 g6 Kh8 4 g4 hxg6 5 Kf6 Kh7 6 g5** and wins.

(2) **I. Dobias, Narodni listy**, 1926. White puts Black in *zugzwang* with **1 Kd4!!** (shouldering away). Thereby the white king keeps the three-move distance from the g-pawn. 1 Ke5? Kc4 2 Kf6 (2 f4 Kd3!)= 2...Kd5 3 Kxg6 Ke4! 4 Kg5 Kf3! =; 1 Kd5? Kb4! 2 Kd4 Kb3! 3 f4 Kc2! =; 1 Kf4? Kc5 2 Kg5 Kd4 3 Kxg6 Ke4! =; 1 f4? Kc4! 2 Ke5 Kd3! =; 1 f3? Kc4 2 f4 Kc3! =. **1...Kc6 2 Ke5! Kc5** 2...Kd7 3 Kf6! and wins **3 f4!** 3 f3? Kc4! = **3...Kc4 4 Kf6!** and wins.

(3) **Taimanov-Zakharov**, USSR 1969. The doubled pawns demand a lot of work but they win! **1...h5!?** 1...Kg6 2 Ke3 Kg7 (2...h5? 3 Kf4! Kf6 4 h4! Ke6 5 Kg5! Ke5! 6 Kxh5 f4 7 gxf4+ Kxf4 8 Kh6 Kg4 9 h5 Kh4 10 Kg7 Kxh5 11 Kxf7=) 3 Kf4 Kf6 4 g4 Kg6! (4...fxg4? 5 hxg4 Kg6 6 Kf3 Kg5 7 Kg3! f6 8 Kf3=) 5 gxf5+ Kh5! 6 Ke5 Kg5 7 f6 Kg6 8 h4 h5 and wins. **2 h4+** 2 Ke3 f4+! 3 gxf4+ Kh4 4 Kf3 Kxh3 5 f5 f6 and wins. **2...Kg6 3 Ke3** Alternatively, 3 Kf4 Kf6 4 Ke3 Ke5 5 Kf3 f4 6 g4 hxg4+ 7 Kxg4 Ke4 8 h5 f3 9 Kg3 Ke3 10 h6 f2 11 h7 f1Q 12 h8Q Qg1+ and Black wins the white queen. **3...Kg7 4 Kf3 f6 5 Kf4 Kg6 6 Kf3 Kf7 7 Ke3 Ke7 8 Kf3** 8 Kd3 Ke6 9 Ke2 Ke5 10 Ke3 (10 Kf3 f4 11 g4 hxg4+ 12 Kxg4 Ke4 and wins) 10...f4+ 11 gxf4+ Kd5 12 Kd3 f5 13 Ke3 Kc4! and wins. **8...Kd6 9 Kf4 Ke6 10 Ke3 Ke5 11 Kf3 f4 12 g4 hxg4 + 13 Kxg4 Ke4! 14 h5 f3 15 h6 f2 0-1**

Order [*Secrets of Pawn Endings*](#)
by Karsten Müller and Frank Lamprecht

This article first appeared at [ChessCafe.com](#) in June, 2000.

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