



Treasure Diving

Recently I visited Jan Timman's new apartment and what I saw there reminded me of the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein and the way he used to do the dishwashing. Most people tend to clean the dirty plates and cups on the day they used them and then put them in the drawers to be soiled again another day. Wittgenstein performed the task on a grander scale. He saved the dirty dishes for at least one week, put them in the bath tub to soak and finished the job efficiently with a hose.

Timman had moved into the apartment about a month earlier. Most people tend to empty one carton, put the contents in a drawer and then go on to the next one. But it seemed as if Timman had adopted the philosopher's grand-scale approach by emptying all the cartons at the same time and spilling the contents over all the rooms of his apartment so that he could clear away everything at one go. Well, at one go... The great work hadn't nearly been finished yet.

A small group of chessplayers had gathered around a chessboard on a little island in the sea of books and papers that covered all of the apartment. We were looking mainly at endgame studies.

One study often reminds you of another one with a related theme. But how exactly were the pieces placed in that other study? Often a book was needed to check.

On such occasions Timman walked without hesitation to one of the mountains of papers, delved into it and invariably came up with exactly the right book. Now he didn't remind me of Wittgenstein anymore, but of another celebrity, the multi-trillionair Scrooge McDuck, uncle of Donald Duck.

To store his money, Uncle Scrooge possesses an enormous warehouse, which he also uses as a swimming pool. He knows the exact location of each individual coin and when for instance he needs the 1920 Exotistan florin, he climbs the diving plank, takes an expert's look at the immense amount of money, jumps in and after a short and blissful dive he comes up with the required coin. Timman handled his chessbooks with the same assurance.

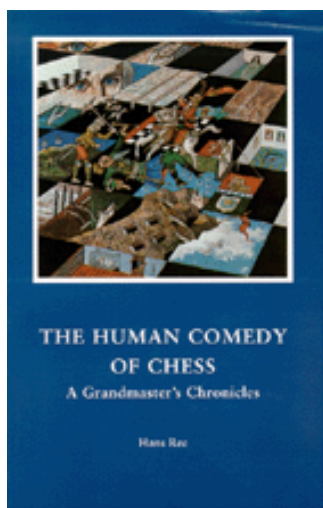
For the latest issue of *Ebur*, a magazine devoted to endgame studies, he didn't have to dive deeply, for it had arrived on that same day.

COLUMNISTS

Dutch Treat

Hans Ree

The Human Comedy of Chess



by Hans Ree



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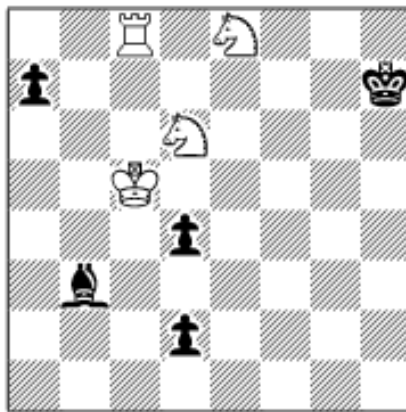


Recently Jan Timman, Tim Krabbé and Hans Böhm have sponsored endgame study tourneys. The (provisional) jury report of the tourney that Krabbé sponsored on the occasion of his 60th birthday can be found on his website, www.timkrabbe.nl.

Sponsoring such a tourney can be a heavy burden, for apart from supplying the prize-money, they had to log many hours of jury-duty. But Timman, Krabbé and Böhm were well rewarded for their efforts, for their tourneys attracted many submissions of high quality.

The latest issue of *Ebur*, mentioned earlier, contained the provisional report on Böhm's tourney, that had a "quiet move" as its prescribed theme. As Timman, Krabbé and Böhm had been judges of that tourney, this was a good occasion for them to show me the masterpiece they had deemed worthy of first prize.

All three of them and also Harold van der Heijden, compiler of the famous endgame study database, had exclaimed "King d6!" when they first saw the next diagram. Though they had no idea in what position it would have to be played, this move turned indeed out to be the final move of the study. These study-lovers are not paranormally gifted, but they know their trade.



Luis Miguel Gonzalez

First Prize

**Böhm's Quiet Move Tourney (provisional)
White to move and win.**

1. Rc8-c7+ Kh7-g8

After other moves White wins quickly.

2. Ne8-f6+ Kg8-f8 3. Nf6-h5

3. Nd7+ looks strong too, but it is insufficient.

3...Kf8-g8

After 3...d1Q Black will be mated quickly by 4. Rc8+.

4. Rc7-g7+ Kg8-f8

Or 4...Kh8 5. Rg1 d1Q 6. Nf7+ Bxf7 7. Rxd1 Bxh5 8. Rh1 winning.

5. Rg7xa7

His 11th move will make clear why this pawn has to be removed.

5...Kf8-g8

White was threatening mate in a few moves.

6. Ra7-g7+ Kg8-f8

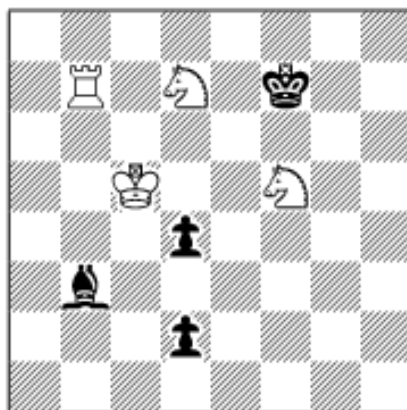
6...Kh8 fails again after 7. Rg1.

7. Rg7-b7 Kf8-g8 8. Nh5-f6+

8. Rxb3 d1Q doesn't win.

8...Kg8-f8 9. Nf6-d7+ Kf8-e7 10. Nd6-f5+

10. Ne5+ will only lead to a draw.

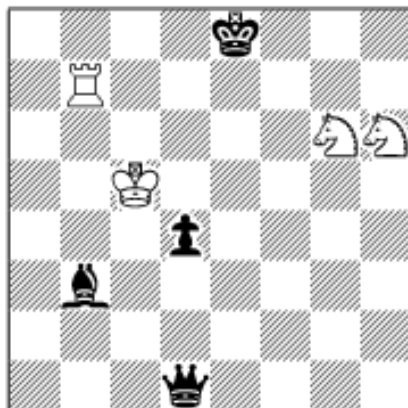


10...Ke7-f7 After other King's moves White wins more quickly.

11. Rb7-b6 This is the quiet move prescribed by the theme of the tourney.

11...d2-d1Q There is nothing better. After 11...Kg8 12. Rg6+ Black will be mated and after 11...Be6 12. Ne5+ Kf6 13. Ng4+ White stops the d-pawn.

12. Nd7-e5+ Kf7-g8 13. Rb6-b8+ Kg8-h7 14. Rb8-b7+ Kh7-g8 15. Nf5-h6+ Kg8-f8 16. Ne5-g6+ Kf8-e8



And now comes the final move, foreseen by the clever judges.

17. Kc5-d6 and mate in 2.

By the way, Hans Böhm has already sponsored a new endgame study tourney in which the prescribed theme is "humor", a concept wisely left undefined.

The prizefund is 500 euros, the judges will be Timman, Krabbé and Böhm, with technical assistance provided by tourney director Harold van der Heijden.

Submissions can be send before December 31 2004 to:

"Humor Tourney"
Harold van der Heijden
Michel de Klerkstraat 28
7425 DG Deventer
The Netherlands.

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