



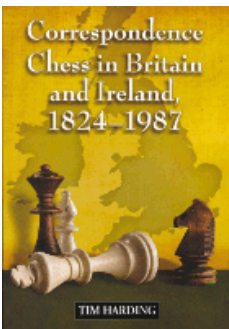
COLUMNISTS

The Kibitzer

Tim Harding

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Remembrance of Endgames Past

It has been a long time since this column featured endgames. Back in the late 1960s and early 1970s, long before databases, I gradually compiled a large index file of practical endgames and late middle-game positions that mutated into endgames. These were mostly taken from the Russian monthly *Shakhmatny Bulletin* and other chess magazines to which I subscribed in those days. Also, I saved the endings of several games that I played myself and some played by others from tournaments in which I competed.

The card index, recently rediscovered, has at least 250 entries and I have started to go through them. Several have annotations, the source of which is not always stated, and usually I had not recorded where I found the game, alas. Of course the notes may be unreliable. None of the games in this article were played (or originally annotated) with the benefit of modern computers. As I wanted to show how the endings were seen at the time they were originally played and published, I have not attempted to re-analyse most of them in the light of computer analysis technology, especially as engines are at their least reliable in endgames. But then it is well known that this is the phase of the game where human analysis can sometimes be better than that of the machine, even today.

The one important exception is that in some of the five-man endgames shown here, tablebases provide an irrefutable guide to the correct result and line of play. This affects mostly the last few examples where my intention was to compare what leading endgame analysts thought in the 1970s and 1980s with what is known for certain today. Readers can have fun analysing all these endings for themselves, but I do not intend to participate in any debate about them.

There is material in the card index for about three columns, beginning with this one. So more will follow later this year. Many of the games recorded are well-known by famous grandmasters and world champions; these I exclude as I am sure they are easily available. I checked about twenty-five percent of the games so far to see if they are in ChessBase's [Mega Database 2011](#). Many are, but some are not, and in a few cases the august database includes an incorrect move or truncates the finish. Here is a case where I think that database may be wrong.

Oleg Privorotsky – Arkady Novopashin
Leningrad 1967
Sicilian Defence [B83]

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nc6 5 Nc3 d6 6 Be2 Nf6 7 Be3 Be7 8 0-0 9 Nb3 a6 10 f4 b5 11 a3 Bb7 12 Bf3 Rc8 13 Qe1 e5 14 f5 Na5 15 Nxa5 Qxa5 16 Bg5 Qb6+ 17 Qf2 Qxf2+ 18 Rxf2 d5 19 Bxf6 gxf6 20 Re2 Bc5+ 21 Kf1 Bd4 22 Nxd5 Bxd5 23 exd5 Bxb2 24 Ra2 Bc3 25 a4 b4 26 a5 Rfd8 27 Be4 Rc4 28 g3 Rd4 29 Kf2 Kf8 30 Kf3 Ke7 31 Ra4 Kd6 32 Ke3 Kc5 33 Ra2 Rd6 34 Kf3 Rd1 35 Ke3 Kc4 36 Ra4 Rf1 37 Ra2 Kc5 38 Ra4

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[FEN "8/5p1p/p2r1p2/P1kPpP2/Rp2B3/2b1K1P1/2P1R2P/5r2 b - - 0 38"]

In ChessBase's version the game ends here as 0-1, which is implausible unless White's flag fell. My card index actually begins at this point. I probably found this in *Shakhmatny Bulletin* or another Russian magazine. My index card says the finish from here was as follows:

38...Rxd5 39 Bxd5 Kxd5 40 g4 e4 41 Rg2 Ke5 42 Rg3 Rc1 43 Ra2 Re1+ 44 Kf2 Rh1 45 Rh3 Kf4 46 Rxh7 e3+ 0-1

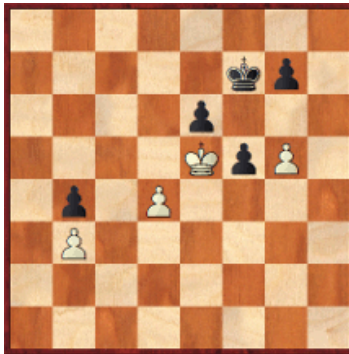
Here then is a selection of endgames, mostly from my cards. I begin with king and pawn and conclude with queen and pawn endgames.

King and Pawn Endings

This type of ending is fundamental, so even when there are one or two pairs of pieces on the board players must always be aware of the possibility of liquidation. After a winning advantage has crystallized here, there is rarely a second chance for the weaker party, unless a queen endgame results.

Alexander Zaitsev – Enver Bukic

USSR v Yugoslavia, Skopje 1969



[FEN "8/5kp1/4p3/4KpP1/1p1P4/1P6/8/8 b - - 0 66"]

66...g6 67 d5 exd5 68 Kxd5 Ke7 69 Ke5 Kd7 70 Kd5 Kc7 71 Kc5 f4 72 Kd4 Kd6 73 Ke4 f3 74 Kxf3 Ke5 75 Ke3 Kf5 76 Kd4 Kxg5 77 Kc5 Kf4 78 Kxb4 g5 79 Kc3 Ke3 0-1

Wolfgang Unzicker – Arturo Pomar Salamanca

Clare Benedict Cup team tournament, Leysin 1967
Caro-Kann Defence [B14]

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 exd5 cxd5 4 c4 Nf6 5 Nc3 e6 6 Bg5 Be7 7 Nf3 0-0 8 Bd3 dxc4 9 Bxc4 b6 10 0-0 Ba6 11 Bxa6 Nxa6 12 Ne5 Nb4 13 a3 Nbd5 14 Nc6 Qd7 15 Nxe7+ Qxe7 16 Nxd5 exd5 17 Re1 Qd6 18 Bxf6 Qxf6 19 Re5 Qc6 20 Rc1 Qb5 21 Qe2 Qxe2 22 Rxe2 Rfc8 23 Rec2 Rxc2 24 Rxc2 Kf8 25 f3 Re8 26 Kf2 Re6 27 Rc8+ Re8 28 Rc6 Re6 29 Rxe6 fxe6



[FEN "5k2/p5pp/1p2p3/3p4/3P4/P4P2/1P3KPP/8 w - - 0 30"]

30 Ke3 Ke7 31 Kf4 Kd6

If 31...Kf6 32 h4 h6 33 a4 a5 34 b3 g5+ 35 hxg5+ hxg5+ 36 Ke3! e5 37 g3! and wins.

32 a4 a6 33 b4 a5 34 b5 h6 35 h4 g6 36 g3! e5+

Black is lost. If 36...Kd7 37 Ke5 Ke7 38 g4.

37 dxe5+ Ke6 38 g4 g5+!? 39 hxg5 hxg5+ 40 Kxg5 Kxe5



[FEN "8/8/1p6/pP1pk1K1/P5P1/5P2/8/8 w - - 0 41"]

41 f4+

41 Kh4! is simpler; e.g., 41...Kf4 42 g5 Kf5 43 g6!+- Kxg6 44 Kg4 Kf6 45 Kf4 Ke6 46 Ke3.

41...Ke4 42 f5 d4 43 f6 d3 44 f7 d2 45 f8Q d1Q 46 Qf5+ Ke3 47 Qf4+ Ke2 48 Kh6! Qd8 49 Qe5+ Kf3 50 g5 Kg4 51 g6 Qh4+ 52 Kg7 Qd8 53 Qe4+ Kg5 54 Kf7! Qf6+

54...Qd7+ 55 Qe7+ forces off queens and wins the black b-pawn.

55 Ke8 Kh6 56 g7 Kxg7 57 Qe7+ Kg6 58 Qxf6+ Kxf6 59 Kd7 1-0

J. Pogats – Gedeon Barcza
Hungarian ch, Budapest 1955



[FEN "8/7p/p7/1p1p1k2/1P6/P3K1P1/
7P/8 w - - 0 41"]

41 h3

If 41 Kd4 Kg4 42 Kxd5 Kh3:

a) 43 Kc5 h5 44 Kb6 Kxh2 45 Kxa6 Kxg3 46 Kxb5 h4 47 a4 h3 48 a5 h2 49 a6 h1Q and wins, which is why White is doomed to ultimately unsuccessful manoeuvres on the kingside.

b) 43 Ke4 Kxh2 44 Kf3 h6!;

41 Kf3 Kg5 42 Kg2 Kg4 43 h3+ Kg5! 44 Kf2 (44 Kf3 Kf5) and now 44... Kf6!! 45 Ke2 d4 46 Kd3 Ke5 47 g4 Kf4 transposes to the game continuation.

41...Ke5 42 g4 d4+ 43 Kd3 Kf4 44 Kxd4 Kg3 45 Ke4 Kxh3 46 Kf4 Kg2 47 g5 Kf2 48 Kg4 Ke3 49 Kg3 Ke4 50 Kg4 Ke5 51 Kh5 Kf5 52 Kh4 Kf4 53 Kh5 Kg3 54 Kh6 Kg4 0-1

White resigns as he can no longer avoid the liquidation of the kingside followed by losing the race to the queenside.

Mark Taimanov – Sakharov

37th USSR ch semifinal, Rostov-on-Don 1969



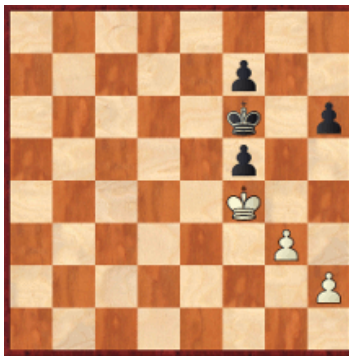
[FEN "8/5pk1/6pp/4r3/5R2/6P1/
3K3P/8 b - - 0 54"]

Normally rook and three versus rook and two on the same wing will be drawn. If the white king were on g1 or g2 that would be the case here also.

54...Rf5! 55 Rxf5

After 55 Rh4 g5 56 Rh3 Rf2+ 57 Ke3 Rb2, White should lose because of his badly placed rook. So he tries the pawn ending instead, hoping to be saved by Black's broken pawns.

55...gxf5 56 Ke3 Kg6 57 Kf4 Kf6



[FEN "8/5p2/5k1p/5p2/5K2/6P1/
7P/8 w - - 0 57"]

58 h3 Kg6 59 Ke3 Kh5 60 Kf4 Kg6 61 Ke3 Kg5 62 Kf3 h5 63 h4+ Kg6 64 Ke3 Kg7 65 Kf3 f6 66 Kf4 Kg6 67 Kf3 Kf7 68 Kf4 Ke6 69 Kf3

For 69 Ke3 Ke5 see the position after move seventy-one in the game.

69...Kd6

69...Ke5 70 Ke3 f4+ 71 gxf4+ Kd5! also wins (but not 71...Kf5 72 Kf3=).

70 Kf4 Ke6 71 Ke3 Ke5 72 Kf3



[FEN "8/8/5p2/4kp1p/7P/5KP1/8/8 b - - 0 72"]

72...f4! 73 g4

73 gxf4+ Kf5 wins for Black here because it is White's move: 74 Kg3 Ke4 75 f5 Kxf5 76 Kf3 Ke5.

73...hxg4+ 74 Kxg4 Ke4 75 h5 f3 76 h6 f2 0-1

Vladas Mikenas – B. Vladimirov

USSR ch semifinal, Moscow 1963



[FEN "8/p2r1k1p/2RP2p1/8/2p3P1/2Nb4/
PP5P/6K1 w - - 0 32"]

32 Na4!?

A knight on the rim with lots of vim! However, 32 Kf2 Ke6 33 Ke3 Rxd6 34 Rxd6+ Kxd6 35 Kd4 was perhaps objectively superior.

32...Ke6 33 Nc5+ Kd5 34 Nxd7 Kxc6 35 Ne5+ Kxd6 36 Nxd3 cxd3 37 Kf2



[FEN "8/p6p/3k2p1/8/6P1/3p4/PP3K1P/8 b - - 0 37"]

All forced to here.

37...Kd5?

After this the point of White's simplification becomes clear. Black probably missed a draw here, by 37...Ke5 38 Ke3 d2 39 Kxd2 Kf4 40 h3 Kg3 41 Ke3 Kxh3 42 Kf3 Kh4 43 Kf4 h5 (43...g5+ 44 Kf3 h5) 44 gxh5 Kxh5 45 b4 g5+ 46 Kg3 Kg6.

38 Ke3 Kc4



[FEN "8/p6p/6p1/8/2k3P1/3pK3/PP5P/8 w - - 0 39"]

39 g5

Forcing Black to move his a-pawn.

39...a6 40 h3

And again. This is Black's last reserve tempo.

40...a5 41 a4!!

Black must have missed this idea at move thirty-seven.

41...d2

If 41...Kb4 42 Kxd3 Kxa4 43 Kc4 (*zugzwang*) 43...h5 44 gxh6 g5 45 h7 g4 46 h8Q.

42 Kxd2 1-0

Black resigned, as 42...Kb4 is met in the same way; while if 42...Kd4 43 b3, White crawls forward and eventually obtains a winning passed pawn.

Milan Vukic – Wolfgang Pietzsch
Sarajevo 1967

Based on notes by GM B. Ivkov.



[FEN "4k3/ppr2p2/4p1p1/7p/2P1K3/1P4P1/
P4P1P/3R4 w - - 0 34"]

34 Rd4 f6 35 f4 Ke7 36 b4 b6?

In this endgame Black gets a painful lesson on the dangers of passive defence. 36...a5! was the best try.

37 Kd3 Rc8 38 Kc3 e5 39 fxe5 fxe5 40 Rd5 Ke6 41 a4 a6? (41...Rf8!) 42 a5 b5 43 Rc5 Rxc5 44 bxc5



[FEN "8/8/p3k1p1/PpP1p2p/2P5/
2K3P1/7P/8 b - - 0 44"]

44...Kd7??

Disastrous. There were two better options:

a) 44...b4+! 45 Kxb4 Kd7 46 Kc3 Kc6 47 Kb4 e4=.

b) 44...bxc4 45 Kxc4 e4 46 Kd4 e3 47 Kxe3 Kd5 48 Kf4 Kxc5 49 Kg5 Kb5 50 Kxg6 Kxa5 51 Kxh5 Kb4 and the [tablebase server](#) shows that the resulting queen and h-pawn versus ending is comfortably drawn for Black.

45 cxb5 axb5 46 h4 1-0

Chris Shephard – M. P. Townsend
England 1969

This position occurred in the *Sunday Times* British schools team competition semifinal in 1969.



[FEN "8/1p4p1/3n4/p1N1p1k1/2P3P1/
PP2K3/8/8 w - - 0 1"]

The adjudicators Hugh Alexander and Bernard Cafferty awarded White a win because of the following continuation:

1 Ne4+!

Forcing a king and pawn ending which is won although White goes a pawn down.

1...Nxe4 2 Kxe4 Kxg4



[FEN "8/1p4p1/8/p3p3/2P1K1k1/
PP6/8/8 w - - 0 3"]

3 b4!

3 c5 wins also but is less obviously forcing.

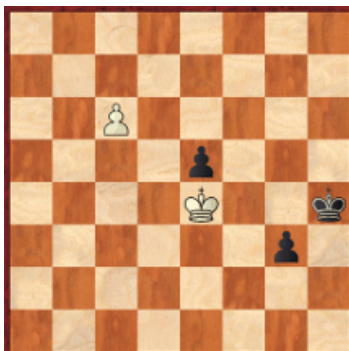
3...axb4 4 axb4 Kh4

a) 4...Kh5 fails to a skewer after 5 c5 g5 6 b5 g4 7 c6 bxc6 8 bxc6 g3 9 c7 g2 10 c8Q g1Q 11 Qh8+.

b) 4...Kh3 5 c5 with the same breakthrough, White queening with check.

c) 4...Kg5 5 Kxe5 Kg6 6 Ke6 shuts out the black king: 6...Kh7 7 c5 g5 8 Kf5 Kg7 9 b5

5 c5 g5 6 b5 g4 7 c6 bxc6 8 bxc6 g3



[FEN "8/8/2P5/4p3/4K2k/6p1/8/8 w - - 0 9"]

9 Kf3! (9 Ke3 also wins.) **9...e4+!**

The black king dare not move to h3, because then White queens with check.

10 Kg2! e3 11 Kf3! 1-0

I conclude this section with a finish of my own, albeit not from the card index. On this occasion I had to work a night shift on a newspaper, for which it was necessary to finish as quickly as possible after the move-forty time control. To achieve this outcome, transition to a pawn ending was ideal.

Gerry O'Connell – Tim Harding

Dublin Telecom 1991



[FEN "4r3/p4n2/1p3kp1/2pR4/4Pp2/5K1B/
1P4PP/8 b - - 0 39"]

39...Ng5+ 40 Kxf4 Rxe4+ 41 Kg3 Nxh3 42 Kxh3 Rd4!

Mission accomplished. White might do some thinking but all the rest of my moves could be played instantly.

43 Rxd4 cxd4 44 Kg3 Ke5 45 Kf3 a5 46 h4

No better is 46 Ke2 a4, etc.

46...a4 47 g4 b5 48 Ke2

Or 48 h5 gxh5 49 gxh5 b4 50 h6 Kf6, etc.

48...b4 0-1

Queen and Pawn Endgames

Because of the power of the queen on an open board, these can be among the trickiest to play in practice. The very simplified ones were among the first to be solved by computer and play in some of the following has been checked against the tablebases which infallibly show the objectively correct result and line of play. The first of these, however, has several pawns and so is not amenable to exhaustion by computer.

Aron Nimzowitsch – O. Antze

Hannover 1926

King's Indian Defence [E60]

**1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 g3 Bg7 4 Bg2 0-0 5 f4 d6 6 Nf3 c6 7 0-0 d5 8 cxd5 cxd5
9 Ne5 Qb6 10 Nc3 Rd8 11 b3 Na6 12 Ba3 Bf8 13 Na4 Qb5 14 Qd3 Qa5 15
Rfc1 Bf5 16 Qc3 Qb5 17 Bf1 Ne4 18 Qe1 Qe8 19 e3 b5 20 Nc6 Rdc8 21
Bxb5 Bd7 22 Bxa6 Rxc6 23 Bb7 Rxc1 24 Rxc1 Rd8 25 Nc5 Bc8 26 Bxc8
Rxc8 27 Qa5 e6 28 Nxe4 dxe4 29 Rxc8 Qxc8 30 Bc5 Bxc5 31 Qxc5 Qa6 32
Qc2 Qa5 33 Kf2 Qh5 34 Qxe4 Qxh2+ 35 Qg2 Qh5 36 g4 Qa5 37 Kg3 h6
38 Qf2 Qc7 39 Kh3 f5 40 gxf5 gxf5 41 d5 exd5 42 Qg2+ Kf7 43 Qxd5+ Kf6**



[FEN "8/p1q5/5k1p/3Q1p2/5P2/1P2P2K/P7/8 w - - 0 44"]

This position illustrates manoeuvring in a queen ending with many pawns.

44 Qd4+ Kg6 45 Qd2 Kf6 46 Qb2+ Kg6 47 b4 Qc4 48 Qd2 Kh5 (48...Qf1 +?? 49 Qg2+) **49 a4 a6 50 Kg3 Qg8+ 51 Kh2 Qc4 52 Qb2 Qd3 53 Qg2 Qc4 54 Kg3 Qg8+ 55 Kh3 Qc4 56 Qf3+ Kg6 57 Kh4 Kg7**

57...Qxb4 58 Qc6+ Kg7 59 Kh5! Euwe.

58 Qb7+ Kg6 59 Qb6+ Kh7 60 Qf6! Qd5

To set up perpetual check with ...Qh1+, but...

61 Kg3 Qg8+ 62 Kh2 Qa2+ 63 Kh3 Qd5



[FEN "8/7k/p4Q1p/3q1p2/PP3P2/4P2K/8/8 w - - 0 64"]

64 Qe7+

64 Qxa6? Qf3+ 65 Kh2 Qf2+, etc.

64...Kg6 65 Qe8+! Kh7

If 65...Kf6 66 Kg3 Qd3 67 a5 Qf1 68 Qe5+ Kg6 69 Qe6+ Kg7 70 Qxf5 Qg1+ 71 Kf3 Qf1+ 72 Ke4 Qc4+ 73 Ke5 Qb5+ 74 Ke6 and wins (Nimzowitsch).

66 Kg3 Qb3 67 a5!



[FEN "4Q3/7k/p6p/P4p2/1P3P2/1q2P1K1/8/8 b - - 0 67"]

67...Qb1?!

67...Qd3 gave more chances of a draw, but not after 68 Qf7+ Kh8 69 Qf6+ Kh7 70 Qd4!:

a) 70...Qxd4 71 exd4 Kg7 72 b5, etc.

b) 70...Qb1 71 Qd7+ Kg6 72 Qc6+ Kg7 73 Qb7+ Kf8 74 Qxa6 winning as in the game.

c) 70...Qf1 71 Qd7+ Kg6 72 Qe6+ Kg7 73 Qxf5 winning eventually.

68 Qd7+ Kg6 69 Qc6+ Kg7 70 Qb7+ Kf8 71 Qxa6 Qe1+ 72 Kf3 Qd1+ 73 Qe2 Qd5+ 74 Kf2 Qd8 75 a6 Qh4+ 76 Kg2 Qe7 77 Qf3 Qc7 78 b5 Qg7+ 79 Kf2 Qb2+ 80 Qe2 Qa1 81 b6 1-0

Horst Rittner – Sandor Szekely

Eberhardt Wilhelm Cup correspondence 1963



[FEN "7q/3pk3/p3p3/1p1PPp2/1P5p/P1QP4/7P/7K b - - 0 36"]

Black possibly missed a win here. The pin on the diagonal looks natural so he played **36...Qa8** but it turned out that the resulting king and pawn position was drawn. The game ended as follows: **37 Qd4 Qxd5+ 38 Qxd5 exd5 39 Kg2 Ke6 40 d4 f4 41 Kf3 Kf5 42 h3 1/2-1/2**

Instead Black could have played 36...Qh5!.

Now I. Bottlik & Szekely gave the following possible continuation in *Magyar Sakvilag*: 37 Qc5+ Kf7 38 dxe6+ dxe6 39 Qa7+ Kg6 40 Qe7 Qd1+ 41 Kg2 h3 + 42 Kf2 Qd2+ 43 Kf1 Qxd3+ 44 Kf2 Qd4+ 45 Kf3 Qe4+ 46 Kf2 Qg2+ 47 Ke3 Qg5+ 48 Qxg5+ Kxg5 with a winning king and pawn ending; e.g., 49 Kf3 f4 50 Ke4 Kg4.

The next one soon becomes a queen endgame.

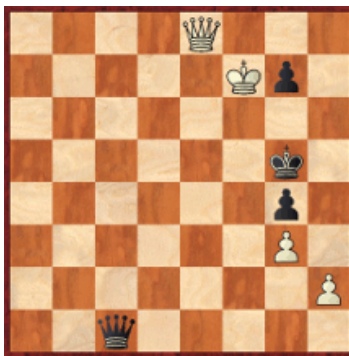
Alexander Zaitsev – Kosenkov

RSFSR ch semifinal 1965



[FEN "8/4Kpp1/4b3/4P1k1/2p3p1/6P1/5R1P/8 w - - 0 51"]

51 Rxf7 Bxf7 52 Kxf7 c3 53 e6 c2 54 e7 c1Q 55 e8Q



[FEN "4Q3/5Kp1/8/6k1/6p1/6P1/7P/2q5 b - - 0 55"]

55...Qf1+ 56 Kg8 Qf6 57 Qd7 g6!?

Black could also try 57...Kh6, giving up the advanced pawn but driving the black king away: 58 Qxg4 Qd8+ 59 Kf7 Qf6+ 60 Ke8 Qe5+ 61 Kd7 and it will be hard for White to make progress.

Perhaps the passive defence by 57...Kh5 would have been best, as exchanging queens does not win for White: 58 Qf7+ Kh6 59 Qxf6+ gxf6 60 Kf7 Kg5 61 Ke6 Kg6

58 Kh7 Qb2??

After 58...Kh5 59 Qe8, Black is getting squeezed, but 59...Qg5 should hold. Not, however, 59...Kg5? 60 Qe3+ Kf5 61 Qf4+ Ke6 62 Qxg4+ Kf7 63 Qd7+ Kf8 64 h4, etc.

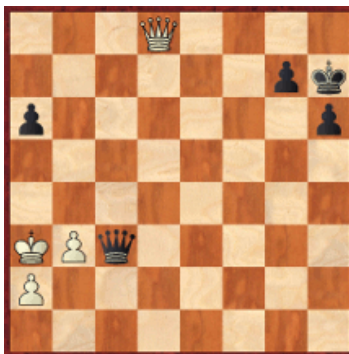
59 Qd5+ 1-0

Black resigns, if 59...Kf6 60 Qd6+ Kf7 (If 60...Kg5 61 Qxg6 mate, while if 60...Kf5 61 Qxg6+ Ke5 62 Qg7+ wins the queen.) 61 Qxg6+ Kf8 62 Qg8+ Ke7 63 Qg7+ forcing queens off.

Raul Sanguinetti – Lubomir Kavalek

Havana Olympiad final-A 1966

From the days when GM Kavalek still represented Czechoslovakia. This one is in the databases.



[FEN "3Q4/6pk/p6p/8/8/KPq5/P7/8 w - - 0 33"]

33 Qd5 Qf6 34 b4 Qg5 35 Qc4 Qf6 36 Kb3 h5 37 a4 h4 38 b5 axb5 39 axb5 Qf3+ 40 Ka4 h3 41 b6 Qg2 42 Qd3+ g6 43 b7 Qxb7 44 Qxh3+



[FEN "8/1q5k/6p1/8/K7/7Q/8/8 b - - 0 44"]

After the simplification, we have a knight's pawn on the third rank only. It should not win but White fell into a trap.

44...Kg7 45 Qc3+ Kg8 46 Qf6 Qe4+ 47 Kb3 Kh7 48 Qg5 Kg7 49 Ka3 Kf7 50 Kb3 Ke6 51 Ka3 Qd3+



[FEN "8/8/4k1p1/6Q1/8/K2q4/8/8 w - - 0 52"]

52 Ka4?

52 Kb2 is necessary, and draws, as GM Bruno Parma pointed out at the time.

52...Qd7+! 0-1

Black forces the queen exchange whatever the reply.

Now for three connected simplified examples featuring the theoretically difficult case of a knight's pawn on the sixth rank.

Lyavdansky – Volovich

Moscow-Leningrad 1968



[FEN "8/7K/6P1/8/4q3/2Q5/8/1k6 w - - 0 1"]

GM Lev Polugayevsky was asked to adjudicate this position, which would decide the 1968 Moscow-Leningrad match but he had no theory to guide him. Subsequently the ending of queen and g-pawn (or b-pawn) on the sixth rank against queen was subjected to detailed analysis.

Analysis by Moscow master Lisitsin, published in *64* in 1969, claimed White

had a forced winning method. This was then tested in the Podgayets-Shamkovich game (see below). Further analytical articles appeared, by Novotelnov (*Shakhmatny Bulletin* 7/1970, page 199) and Faibisovich (*Shakhmatny Bulletin* 2/1971, page 40).

GM Yuri Averbakh reviewed the debate in detail in volume three of his [*Comprehensive Chess Endings*](#) series (translation by Ken Neat, Pergamon Press 1986) pages 69-74, but he came to the conclusion that theory could not yet decide the question. The tablebase says this position is a draw.

1 Qb3+

The first phase of Lisitsin's plan is to transfer the white queen to a6 and king to a7 so that both pieces are on the file adjacent to the black king. Remember that White has a maximum of fifty moves in which to advance his pawn or exchange queens.

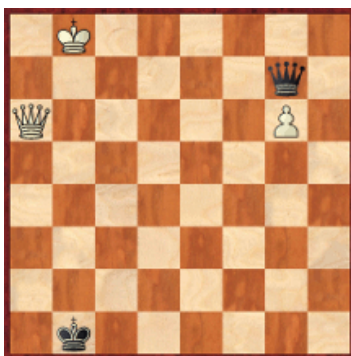
1...Ka1 2 Qa3+ Kb1 3 Qd6

This protects the pawn and the queen provides some shelter for the king to run across the board.

3...Ka1 4 Kg8 Qa8+ 5 Kf7 Qb7+ 6 Ke6 Qb3+ 7 Qd5 Qb6+ 8 Kf5 Qf2+ 9 Kg5 Qg1+ 10 Kf6 Qf2+ 11 Qf5 Qb6+ 12 Kg7 Qb7+ 13 Qf7 Qe4

There are no more delaying checks because after 13...Qb2+ 14 Qf6 the queens are exchanged.

14 Qa7+ Kb1 15 Qb6+ Ka1 16 Qa6+ Kb1 17 Kf7 Qd5+ 18 Ke7 Qe5+ 19 Kd8 Qh8+ 20 Kc7 Qg7+ 21 Kb8



[FEN "1K6/6q1/Q5P1/8/8/8/8/1k6 b - - 0 21"]

21...Qh8+

21...Qe5+ is stronger according to Averbakh, and would lead to a position seen in the next ending. It turns out, however, that 21...Qh8+ should not lose.

22 Ka7

Accomplishing phase one of the Lisitsin plan.

22...Qe5

The tablebase says a draw is still the correct result and that 22...Qc3 also holds.

23 Qb7+ Ka1 24 Qa8



[FEN "Q7/K7/6P1/4q3/8/8/k7 b - - 0 24"]

The idea is to use the threat to exchange queens to drive the black king out of his four-square corner box. Averbakh awards this move an exclamation mark, but the reason why is not clear. According to the tablebase, it's still a draw.

24...Qd4??

Neither Lisitsin nor Averbakh detected that this move is an analytical blunder.

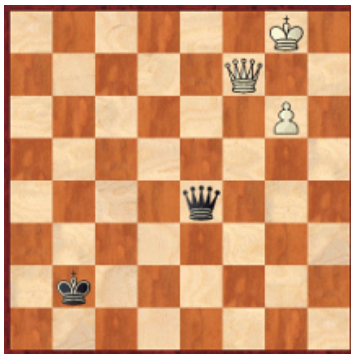
The tablebase said that Black must play either 24...Qg5 or the obvious 24...Qc7+ when if 25 Qb7 Qc5+ 26 Qb6 Black has three playable moves: 26...Qc3, 26...Qe5 and 26...Qe7+.

25 Kb8+ and wins.

The tablebase says "M16," which means that in a maximum of sixteen moves White will checkmate his opponent. Now he can soon advance his pawn to set up a position that old theory knew to be winning; e.g., 25...Kb2 26 Qb7+ (Now the king cannot go back to the a-file because of 27 Qa7+.) 26...Kc2 27 g7.

Lev Podgayets – Leonid Shamkovich

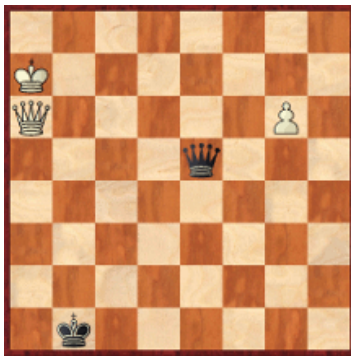
Volgograd 1969



[FEN "6K1/5Q2/6P1/8/4q3/8/1k6/8 w - - 0 1"]

This is the starting point of the second endgame analysed in Averbakh's book. For the first few moves, Podgayets followed the Lisitsin plan.

1 Qf6+ Ka2 2 Qa6+ Kb2 3 Kf7 Qd5+ 4 Ke7 Qe5+ 5 Kd7 Kb1 6 Kc8 Qf5+ 7 Kb8 Qe5+ 8 Ka7



[FEN "8/K7/Q5P1/4q3/8/8/1k6 b - - 0 8"]

8...Qg5

This move had a "question mark" in my card index probably because it was criticised in the Russian debate from the early 1970s, yet it is one of three moves to draw according to the tablebase server.

The waiting move 8...Kb2 also draws although Averbakh condemned it. He said White can then carry out Lisitsin's Qb7-a8 manoeuvre but we have just seen that this should not be decisive.

8...Qc3! was recommended by Novotelnov and debated by Faibisovich, who thought it could delay Black's defeat, but not more. 9 Qb5+ Ka2 10 Qa4+ Kb1 11 Qe4+ Ka1! was Novotelnov's main line and Black indeed holds if he follows the tablebase line.

Instead Faibisovich suggested 9 Qb7+ when:

a) 9...Ka1 was his analysis, claiming a win for White after 10 Ka8! (Vacating a7 for the queen and threatening 11 Qa7+ Kb1 12 g7.) 10...Qh8+ (The only move) 11 Qb8 Qh1+ (Again the only move) 12 Ka7:

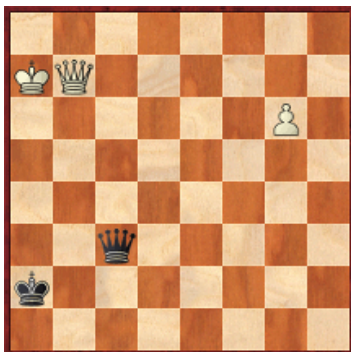
a1) 12...Qg1+ 13 Qb6 Qg4 14 Qf6+ (Faibisovich considered 15 Qa6+ Kb1 16 Ka8 which takes longer according to both Averbakh and the computer.) 14...Kb1 or 14...Ka2 15 g7 winning.

a2) 12...Qd5! is the only defence according to the tablebase. Then:

a21) 13 Qa8! The last move in Faibisovich's variation. The applause from Averbakh is perhaps worth it because it sets Black a problem, but actually nothing wins. Instead of 13...Qd6? 14 g7! Qc7+ 15 Qb7 Qc5+ 16 Ka8 (winning because there is no check on f8 any longer) Black can play 13...Qg5! – the only move to hold, and not considered in Averbakh's book.

a22) 13 Qh8+ was given as an alternative by Faibisovich: 13...Kb1 (13...Ka2 does lose: 14 Qh2+! Ka1 15 Qg1+ Ka2 16 Qf2+.) 14 Qf6 Qa5+ and Black can draw (instead of Faibisovich's 14...Qd7+ 15 Kb6, "etc").

b) 9...Ka2! is more tenacious according to Averbakh.



[FEN "8/KQ6/6P1/8/8/2q5/k7/8 w - - 0 10"]

Then after 10 Ka8 Qh8+! 11 Qb8 Qh1+ 12 Ka7 Black can play

b1) 12...Qg1+ 13 Qb6 Qg5! with a position very similar to the actual line in the game. 14 Qa6+ Kb2 when Averbakh thought White would eventually win, but the computer shows otherwise.

b2) 12...Qa1 is also discussed by Averbakh. Neither of the replies recommended by Faibisovich actually wins, so Averbakh was right to be sceptical although he could not prove it without today's computer resources:

b21) 13 Ka6 Qc3 14 Qh2+ Ka1 15 Qh1+ Kb2 16 Qe4 when Averbakh pointed out 16...Qa3+ 17 Kb5 Qb3+ 18 Kc5 (18 Qb4 Ka1! 19 Qxb3 stalemate.) 18...Qc3+ also draws as he thought; e.g., 19 Kd6 Qa3+ 20 Ke5 Qc5+ 21 Kf4 Qf2+ 22 Kg4 Ka1.

b22) 13 Qh2+ Kb1+ 14 Kb8 Qf6 15 Qh1+ Ka2 16 Qa8+ Kb1 17 Qb7+ Ka1 18 Qa7+ Kb1 19 Qf7 when, as Averbakh suspected, 19...Qe5+ can hold the draw.)

Now returning to the main line after 8...Qg5.

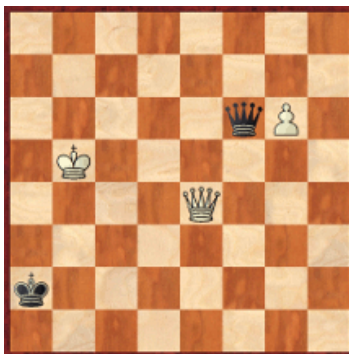
9 Qd3+ Ka2 10 Qc2+ Ka1 11 Qa4+ Kb1 12 Qe4+ Ka2

The black king must avoid a1 and b2 because of 13 Qd4+ and 14 g7.

13 Ka6

Having improved his queen position, White's aim now is to bring his king to safety.

13...Qf6+ 14 Kb5



[FEN "8/8/5qP1/1K6/4Q3/8/k7/8 b - - 0 14"]

14...Qg5+

Also, 14...Qb2+ and 14...Qh8 are playable but other queen moves and all king moves would be fatal.

15 Ka4 Qg1 16 Kb4 Qb6+ 17 Kc4 Qc7+ 18 Kd3 Qd6+ 19 Ke2



[FEN "8/8/3q2P1/8/4Q3/8/k3K3/8 b - - 0 19"]

This is actually where Black went wrong in the game. The tablebase shows that Shamkovich had a choice of five playable moves, but he did not find any

of them.

19...Qf6??

Perhaps the best move is 19...Ka1! as recommended by Averbakh, who commented "One gains the impression that White is unlikely to be able to improve his position here". The other moves that do not lose are 19...Qa6+, 19...Qb6, 19...Qb8 (because 20 g7 in reply to any of those would lose the pawn to 20...Qb2+), and 19...Qh2+.

After 19...Ka1, play can go 20 g7 (Averbakh also considered some other moves.) 20...Qh2+ 21 Kd1 Qh5+ (21...Qg1+? loses to 22 Qe1 Qxg7 23 Kc2+ Ka2 24 Qb1+ Ka3 25 Qb3 mate.) 22 Kc2 Qc5+ 23 Kb3 Qa3+ which is drawing because 24 Kxa3 is stalemate.

20 Qg2

Not the only win, but the quickest; White threatens both 21 g7 and a discovered check.

20...Qg7 21 Kd3+

The only winning move.

21...Ka3 22 Qa8+ Kb2 23 Qb8+ Ka1 24 Qd6 Qg8

24...Qb7 is the most tenacious, as Averbakh said, but it still loses eventually.

25 Qa3+ Kb1 26 Qb4+ Ka1 27 Qc3+ Kb1 28 Qc2+ 1-0

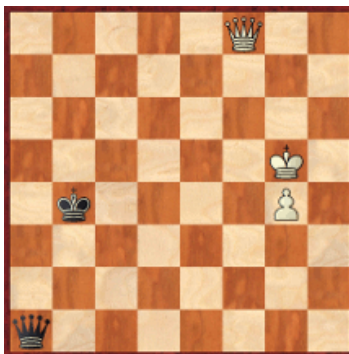
As the queens are about to be exchanged, Black resigned.

So if the ghost of Polugayevsky had to do that adjudication today, one could advise him that the general case of queen and g-pawn on the sixth rank against queen is a draw, although of course exceptional positions (particularly good placement of white forces or bad ones of black forces) would be different. I am full of admiration for Averbakh despite pointing out a few mistakes in his analysis which I doubt that anyone detected at the time. His judgment and analysis, in this type of position which is much more comprehensible by computer retrograde analysis than by ordinary human calculation, has time and again to have been proved much more often right than not.

In a somewhat later Soviet competition, the same endgame once again arose.

Juris Neimanis – Evgeny Dragomaretsky

USSR Team Ch., Moscow, 1972



[FEN "5Q2/8/8/6K1/1k4P1/8/8/q7 b - - 0 56"]

Both sides have just promoted pawns so this was the position when the queen ending arose. The pawn is starting much further back but White soon progressed it to the sixth rank and then got stuck.

56...Kb3 57 Kg6 Qa6+ 58 Kg7 Qe2 59 g5 Kc2 60 Qf5+ Kb2 61 g6

Now the pawn is on the sixth, the clock starts; White needs a queen exchange or pawn advance not later than move 111. However a series of aimless moves follows.

61...Qe7+ 62 Qf7 Qe4 63 Kg8 Qa8+ 64 Qf8 Qd5+ 65 Kh7 Qh1+ 66 Qh6 Qe4 67 Qh2+ Kb1 68 Qg1+ Ka2 69 Qf2+ Ka1 70 Kg7 Qb7+ 71 Kh6 Qh1+ 72 Kg5 Qd5+ 73 Qf5 Qg2+ 74 Kf6 Qc6+ 75 Kg7 Qb7+

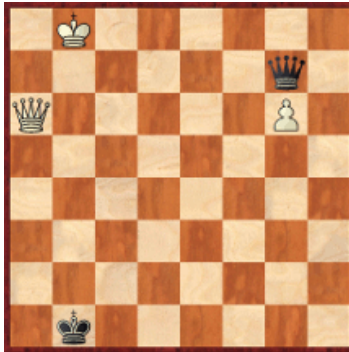


[FEN "8/1q4K1/6P1/5Q2/8/8/k7 w - - 0 76"]

I have the impression that somewhere around here there was an adjournment and team-mates of Neimanis took the opportunity to tell him about the Lisitsin plan. He rapidly transfers his queen to a7 and tries to bring his king across the board.

76 Qf7 Qe4 77 Qa7+ Kb1 78 Qb6+ Ka2 79 Qa6+ Kb1 80 Kf7 Qd5+ 81 Ke7 Qe5+ 82 Kd7 Qg7+ 83 Kc8 Qf8+ 84 Kb7 Qg7+ 85 Kb8!

Threatening to win by Qb7+, exchanging queens.



[FEN "1K6/6q1/Q5P1/8/8/8/1k6 b - - 0 85"]

85...Kc1?

Dragomaretsky infringes the golden rule that, in such queen endings, the safest place for the defending king is as far away from the enemy pawn as possible (that is if you cannot safely occupy a square directly in its path to the queening square). He conceives the suicidal plan of marching his king to the other corner – and gets away with it!

According to the tablebase, Black should play either 85...Qh8+ 86 Ka7 Qe5 (or 86...Qc3) or 85...Qe5+ which transposes exactly to Podgayets-Shamkovich (position after Black's move seven above).

86 Qc6+

White has seven theoretically winning moves and this is slightly the quickest. It should mate in thirty-six moves – with a pawn advance or queen exchange just in time.

86...Kd2 87 Qd6+?

87 Kc8 is correct, tracking the black king in the hope of setting up a cross-check to exchange queens. See below. After the inaccurate text, White needs

further inaccuracies from his opponent, which are not forthcoming.

**87...Ke1 88 Kc8 Kf1 89 Qf4+ Kg2 90 Qf7 Qc3+ 91 Kd7 Qd4+ 92 Ke8 Qh8
+ 93 Ke7 Qe5+ 94 Qe6 Qg7+ 95 Ke8?!**

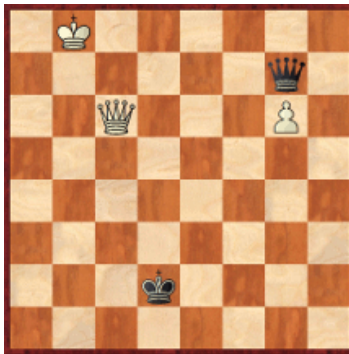
95 Kd6 is best and 95 Qf7 second best. All moves win theoretically but inaccuracies increase the danger of not forcing the queen exchange or pawn advance in time. For example, 95 Kd6 Kg1 96 Qe1+ Kg2 97 Qe4+ Kg1 98 Ke6 Qg8+ 99 Kf5 Qf8+ 100 Kg5 Qd8+ 101 Kf4 Qd6+ 102 Kg4 Qd7+ 103 Kh5 Qg7 104 Qe3+ Kf1 105 Kg5 Qb2 106 Kf5 Qc2+ 107 Qe4 Qc8+ 108 Kf4 Qd8 109 Kg4 Qg8 110 Qb1+ Ke2 111 Qb2+ Kd1 and time is up. Draw (although White has a theoretical win).

**95...Kg1 96 Qf7 Qh8+ 97 Qf8 Qh5 98 Kf7 Qd5+ 99 Kg7 Qb7+ 100 Qf7
Qb2+ 101 Qf6 Qb7+ 102 Kh6 Qh1+ 103 Kg5 Qg2+ 104 Kh5 Qe2+ 1/2-1/2**

Saved by the bell! With only seven moves left to the fifty-move rule cut-off, White concedes the draw. If there were no limit and both sides played the best moves from here on, White would mate in forty-five moves from now!

So how should White have won this?

Let's return to the position after Black's eighty-sixth move.



[FEN "1K6/6q1/2Q3P1/8/8/8/3k4/8 w - - 0 87"]

87 Kc8!

Now best play according to the tablebase goes as follows.

87...Qh8+ 88 Kc7 Ke3

Somewhat surprising; this defers defeat by seven moves compared with the next best choice, 88...Qg8.

89 Qd7 Qe5+ 90 Kd8 Qa5+

Of course checks on h8, g5 and f6 would all be immediately fatal to Black.

91 Ke8 Qh5

Preventing the pawn advance by a pin.

92 Kf7 Ke2

If 92...Ke4 93 Qd6 Ke3 94 Ke7 Qh4+ 95 Qf6 Qb4+ 96 Kf7 Kd2 97 g7.

93 Qd4 Ke1 94 Qd3 Qg4 95 Qd6

95 g7? does not win after 95...Qf4+! 96 Ke6 Qg4+ 97 Kf6 Qh4+, etc.

95...Qh5 96 Qd4 Ke2 97 Kf6 Qh6

Not 97...Qh8+? 98 g7.

98 Qg4+ Kd3 99 Kf7 Qh1 100 g7



[FEN "8/5KP1/8/8/6Q1/3k4/8/7q b - - 0 100"]

The pawn advance resets the fifty-move clock and White soon wins.

For example, 100...Qb7+ 101 Kf6 Qb6+ 102 Kg5 Qd8+ 103 Kf4 Qg8 104 Kg3 Kc3 105 Kh3 Kb2 106 Kg2 Qd5+ 107 Kg1 Qc5+ 108 Kh1 Qe3. Surprisingly the tablebase says that 109 Qg1 now mates one move quicker than 109 g8=Q.

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