



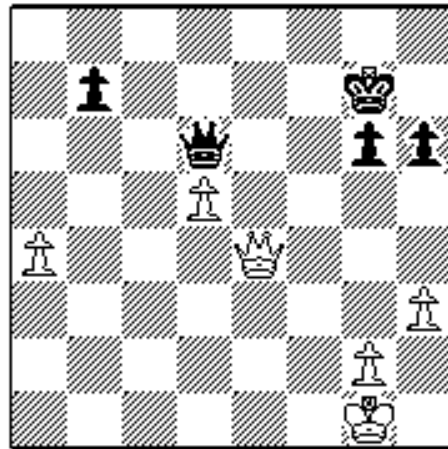
Activate the King

An endgame is different from a middlegame in many respects. One of the most important is the new role of the King. In the middlegame he usually hides after castling behind his pawn shield, but when the firepower on the board diminishes he himself becomes a strong fighting unit:

COLUMNISTS

Endgame Corner

Karsten Müller

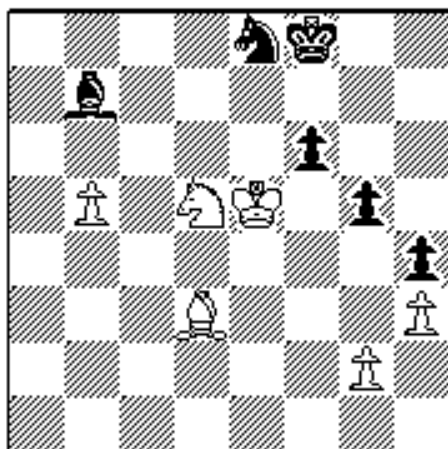


4.01 *Rashkovsky - Krasenkov, Capelle la Grande 1990* +/-

White's main trump, the far-advanced d-pawn, needs further support, so his majesty comes: **1.Kf2 Qf6+ 2.Ke2 Qb2+ 3.Ke3 Qc3+ 4.Qd3 Qe5+ 5.Kf3 Qf6+ 6.Ke4 Qh4+ 7.g4 Qe1+ 8.Kd4 Qa1+ 9.Kc5 Qxa4 10.Qc3+** (immediately simplifying into a pawn endgame with 10.Qd4+?? backfires as Black gets an **outside passed b-pawn** [an important concept in pawn endings]

10...Qxd4+ 11.Kxd4 Kf6 12.Kc5 Ke7 13.h4 g5--+] **10...Kf7 11.Kd6 Qf4+ 12.Kd7 b5 13.d6 b4 14.Qc7 Qe4** (after 14...b3 15.Kc6+ Kg8 16.Qb8+ White wins the b-pawn leaving Black without counterplay.) **15.Kc8+ Kf6 16.Qc5** and Krasenkov resigned due to **16...b3 17.d7 Qa8+ 18.Kc7 b2 19.d8Q+ Qxd8+ 20.Kxd8 b1Q 21.Qe7#**

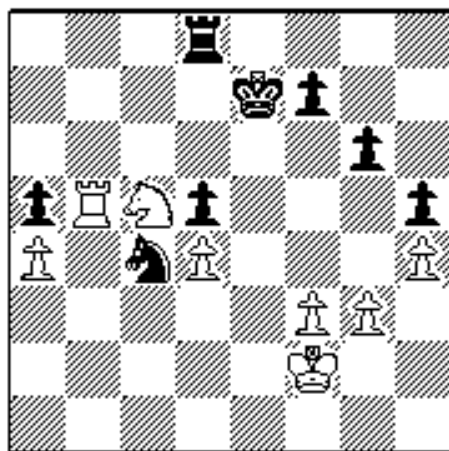
But beware of running into a mating net:



4.02 *N.Short (2685) - A.Beliavsky (2620), Linares 1992*

Instead of capturing with the Knight on f6, Nigel Short wanted to improve the position of his King even further with **58.Ke6??** missing the reply **58...Bc8#**

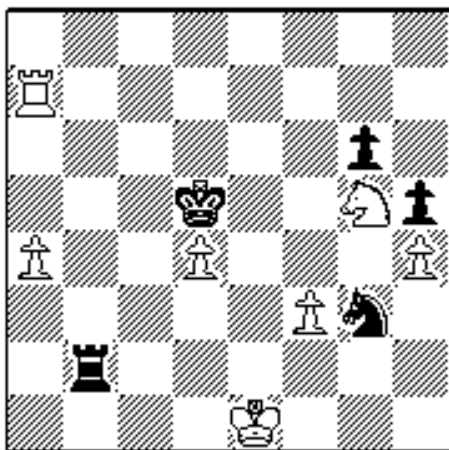
In two of my recent games, this theme played an important role:



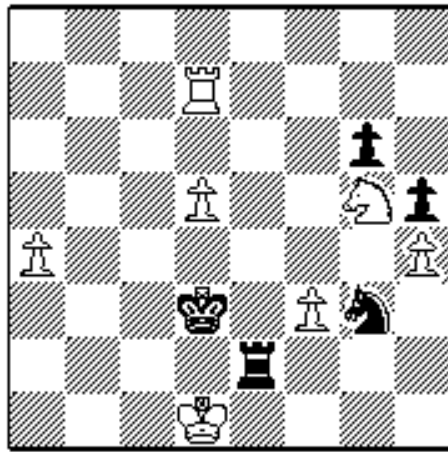
**4.03 J.Emms (2527) - K.Müller (2513),
German Bundesliga 2001, Solingen -
Hamburg, 6th board**

After the time control I took a closer look at the position and found myself in trouble. Finally I decided to activate my Rook at the cost of two pawns to obtain counterplay: **41...Rd6** (After 41...Rc8 I didn't like 42.g4) **42.Nd3 Rb6 43.Rxd5 Rb3 44.Ne5! Rb2+ 45.Ke1 Ne3 46.Rxa5** (I was a worried about 46.Nxg6+ during the game, but in the

post mortem we decided, that Black has good chances to draw after 46...fxg6 47.Re5+ Kd6 48.Rxe3 Kd5) **46...Nf5 47.Ra7+?** (47.d5! was John's suggestion. It seems to be very strong e.g. 47...Rg2 48.Nc4 Rxg3 49.Ra7+ Kf6 50.d6 Rxf3 51.d7 Ke7 52.Nb6 Rd3 53.a5+-) **47...Ke6 48.Nxf7** (Of course not 48.Rxf7? Nxd4 49.f4 Re2+ 50.Kf1 Rxe5) **48...Nxb3** [Dorfman's proposal 48...Nxd4 is interesting as well, e.g., 49.Ng5+ Kd5 50.a5 Kc4 51.a6 Ra2 52.Rc7+ Kd3 53.a7 Nc2+ and White's King can't escape from the checks as after 54.Kf1 Ne3+ 55.Kg1 Ra1+ 56.Kh2 Ra2+ 57.Kh3? leads to disaster: 57...Nf1 58.Rd7+ Kc4 59.Rc7+ Kb5 60.Rb7+ Kc5 61.Ne4+ Kc4 62.Rc7+ Kd3 63.Rd7+ Ke3-+] **49.Ng5+ Kd5** (See Diagram)

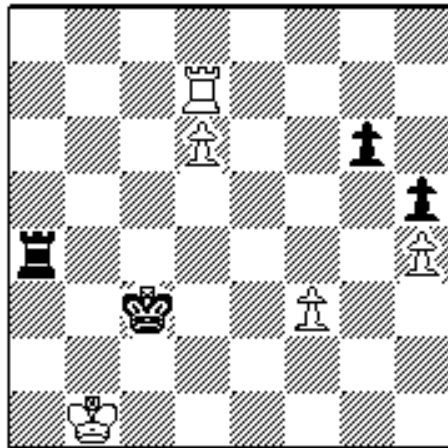


Now Black's King is coming to assist the attack **50.Rd7+ Kc4 51.d5 Re2+?** (As Lubomir Ftacnik pointed out, 51...Kd3! immediately was called for: 52.Rc7 [52.Re7? Nf5 53.Re4 Ne3-+] 52...Nf5! 53.Ne4 [53.Rc1? Ne3-+] 53...Nxb3 54.Rc3+ Kd4 55.d6 Nxf3+ 56.Rxf3 Kxe4 57.Rg3 Rb4=) **52.Kd1 Kd3** (See Diagram)



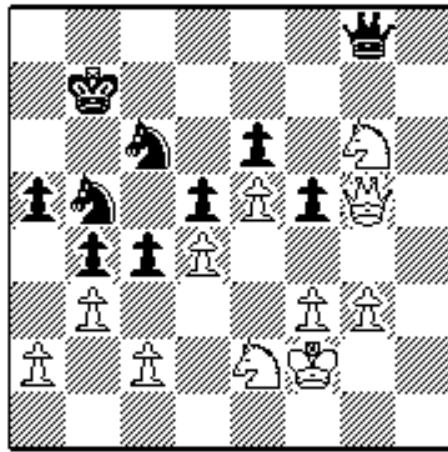
Certainly not an easy position to play as John had to win - the Hamburg team was leading 3½:2½ - and was already running short of time **53.Kc1** (53.Rc7!? was interesting as well: (A) 53...Ra2? 54.d6 Ra1+ 55.Rc1 Ra2 56.Ne4! Nxe4 57.fxe4 Rxa4 58.d7 Rd4 59.Ke1+-; (B) 53...Rh2? 54.Kc1 Rxe4 55.Kb2 [55.Ne6!?] 55...Rxa4 56.d6 Rb4+ 57.Ka3 Rb8 58.Nf7 h4 59.d7 h3 60.Rc8 Rxc8 61.dxc8Q h2 62.Ne5+ Kd4 63.Kb4 Kxe5 64.Qh8+-; (C) 53...Rd2+! 54.Kc1 Ne2+ 55.Kb1 Ke3 and Black is still

fighting.[55...Nc3+? 56.Rxc3+ Kxc3 57.Ne4+- is the main point behind 53.Rc7.]) **53...Ra2 54.Kb1 Rxa4 55.d6 Ne2?** (55...Rb4+ 56.Ka2 Nf5 was better.) **56.Ne4?** (56.Rb7! seems to win, e.g., 56...Nc3+ [56...Rd4 57.d7 Nc3+ 58.Kc1 Ne2+ 59.Kb2 Nf4 60.Nf7 Ne6 61.Rb8 Kd2 62.Ne5 Rd5 63.f4 Ke3 64.Re8+-] 57.Kb2 Ra2+ 58.Kb3 Ra1 59.d7 Rb1+ 60.Ka3 Rxb7 61.d8Q+ Kc2 62.Qg8+-) **56...Nc3+ 57.Nxc3 Kxc3** (See Diagram)



I had read John's excellent book *The Survival Guide to Rook Endings* and therefore managed to survive: **58.Rc7+** (58.Rd8 Rd4 59.d7 Kd3 60.Kb2 Rd6 61.Kb3 Kd4=) **58...Kb3 59.Rb7+** (59.Re7 Kc3 [59...Rd4? 60.Re3+ Kc4 61.Re4+-] 60.d7 Rd4=) **59...Kc3 60.Rc7+ Kb3 61.d7 Rd4 62.Kc1 Rd6 63.f4 Rd5 64.Rb7+ Kc3 65.Rc7+ Kb3 66.Rc6 Rxd7 67.Rxg6 Rf7 68.Rg5 Rxf4 69.Rxh5 Kc3 70.Rc5+** (After 70.Kd1 Kd3 71.Rd5+ Rd4 72.Rxd4+ Kxd4= the subject of my book (together with IM

Frank Lamprecht), *Secrets of Pawn Endings*, is reached - The Rule of the Square in the first example of Chapter 1 to be more precise.) **70...Kb4 71.Rc8 Rxe4 72.Kd2** ½-½



**4.04 Z.Almasi (2668) - K.Müller (2523),
Austrian Staatsliga Graz,
Fürstenfeld-Gleisdorf, 1st board**

I start at an earlier stage as the complications are quite interesting. After the opening Zoltan Almasi was winning, but he had messed things up and now matters are not so easy any more:

43.bxc4 dxc4 44.d5 exd5 45.Qxf5 Qh7!

46.Kg2 (Of course not 46.f4? Qh2+ 47.Kf1 Qxe2+ 48.Kxe2 Nbd4+)

46...Nxe5 (46...Nbd4 came strongly into

consideration as well e.g. 47.Nxd4 Nxd4 48.Qf6 [48.Qg5? allows

48...Qh2+] 48...Nxc2 49.e6 c3 50.Qf7+ Qxf7 51.exf7 Ne3+ 52.Kf2 c2

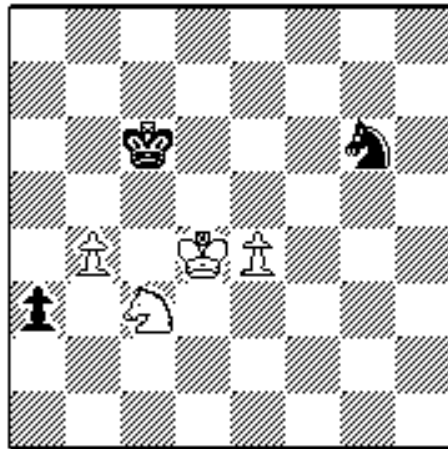
53.f8Q Nd1+ 54.Ke1 c1Q) **47.Qxe5 Qxg6 48.Qxd5+ Qc6 49.Qf7+ Ka6**

50.g4 a4 51.g5 b3 52.cxb3 cxb3 53.axb3 a3 54.b4 Qc2 55.Qe6+ Kb7 56.g6

Nc7! (After 56...a2 57.g7 a1Q 58.g8Q I was afraid, that my King wouldn't

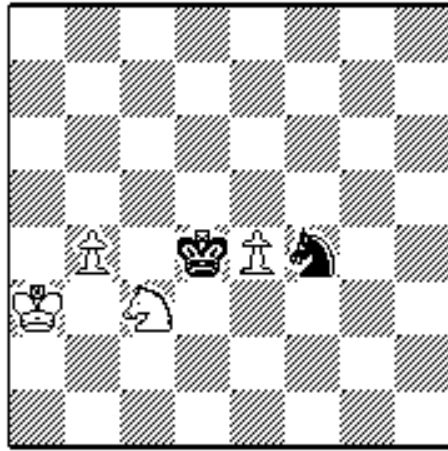
be as safe as White's.) **57.Qe4+ Qxe4 58.fxe4 Ne6 59.Nc3 Nf4+ 60.Kf3**

Nxg6 61.Ke3 Kc6 62.Kd4 (*See Diagram*)

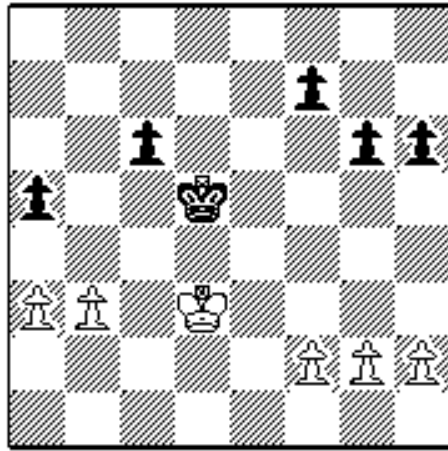


Although it looks very difficult for me it seems, that I still could have saved the day **62...Nf4** (62...Nf8 leads to a draw as well.) **63.Kc4 Kd6** (At first I wanted to play 63...Ne2? but this fails due to 64.Nxe2 a2 65.Nd4+ Kd6 66.Nc2+-)

64.Kb3 Ke5 65.Kxa3 Kd4! the active position of Black's King is very annoying for White (*See Diagram*)

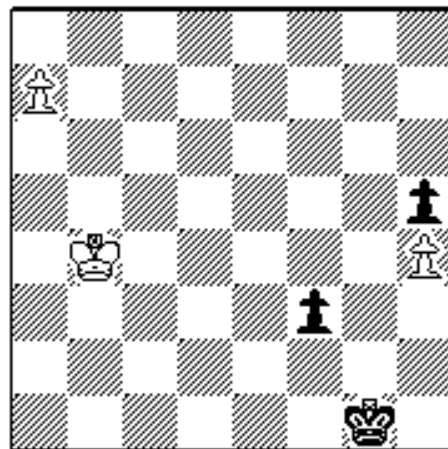


66.b5!? Nd3 (66...Kc5? 67.Ka4 Nd3 68.Ka5 Ne5 69.Ka6 Kd4 70.b6 Kxc3 71.b7 Nd7 72.e5+-) **67.b6 Nc5 68.Kb4** and now I blew it with **68...Na6+?** (Instead 68...Nb7! was called for: 69.Na4 [69.Kb5 Nd8 70.Ka6 Kxc3 71.e5 Kd4 72.e6 Nxe6 73.b7 Nc5+=] 69...Kxe4 70.Nc5+ Kd5 71.Nxb7 Kc6=) **69.Kb5 Sb8 70.b7 Kxc3 71.e5 1-0**



4.05 G.Kasparov (2849) - E.Bareev (2709) World Cup of Rapid Chess Final Cannes 2001

34.Kc3 34.g4!? to create more spare tempi on the kingside is very interesting as well. I couldn't find a win for White, but it is very close: (A) 34...f6 35.Kc3 h5 36.gxh5 gxh5 37.h4 (37.a4 c5 38.h4 f5 39.Kd3 Ke5 40.Kc4 Ke4 41.Kxc5 Kf3 42.b4 axb4 43.Kxb4 Kxf2 44.a5 f4 45.a6 f3 46.a7 Kg1

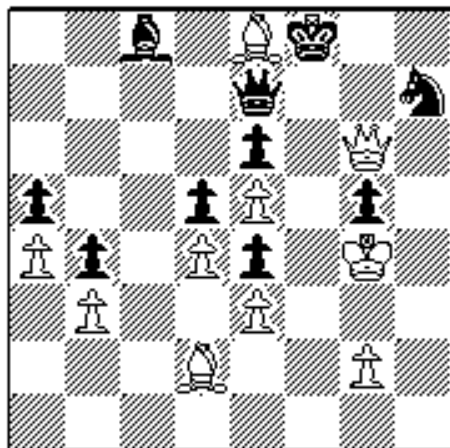


and the position is a theoretical draw, although in practice it is much more difficult to defend than with help of the endgame database.) 37...f5 38.a4 c5 39.Kd3 Ke5 (39...f4? 40.f3 Ke5 41.Kc4 Kd6 42.Kb5+-) 40.Kc4 Ke4 41.Kxc5 Kf3 42.b4 axb4 43.Kxb4 Kxf2 44.a5 f4 45.a6 f3 46.a7 Kg1=; (B) 34...h5? 35.g5+-; (C) 34...Ke5? 35.Kc4 Kf4 36.b4+- and White is much faster than Black. (D) 34...f5 35.gxf5 gxf5 36.h3 h5 37.h4 Kc5 (37...Ke5 38.Kc4 Kf4 39.b4 axb4 40.a4+-) 38.Kc3 Kd5 39.a4 c5

40.Kd3 Ke5 (40...f4? 41.f3+-) 41.Kc4 Ke4 42.Kxc5 Kf3 43.b4 axb4 44.Kxb4 Kxf2 45.a5 f4 46.a6 f3 47.a7 Kg1 48.a8Q f2= **34...h5 35.h4 f6 36.Kd3 g5 37.g3 gxh4?!** (37...g4 was better as Black's counterplay on the kingside is stronger and he has the tempo f6-f5 in reserve.) **38.gxh4 f5 39.f3** (39.f4 c5 40.a4 [40.Ke3 c4 41.b4 axb4 42.axb4 c3 43.Kd3 c2 44.Kxc2 Kc4=] 40...Kd6 41.Kc4 Kc6=) **39...Ke5 40.Ke3 c5 41.f4+ Kd6 42.Kd2!** much more tricky than 42.Kd3 **42...Kc6** (even 42...Kd5 is playable: 43.Kd3 Kc6 44.Kc4 Kd6 45.Kb5 Kd5 46.Kxa5 Ke4=) **43.Kc3 Kb5 44.Kd3 1-0** and

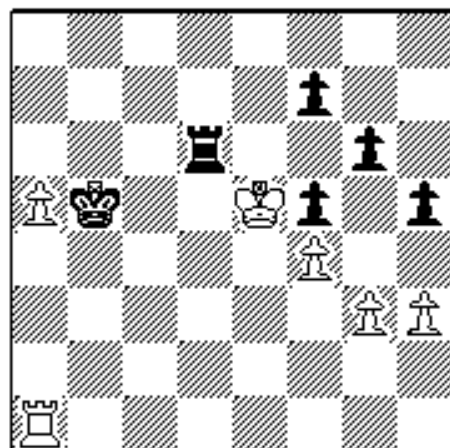
Bareev having only two seconds left resigned. But the position seems to be tenable with more time on the clock: **44...Kc6!** (44...Kb6? 45.Kc4 Kc6 46.a4+-) **45.Kc4 Kd6! 46.Kb5 Kd5 47.Kxa5 Ke4 48.Kb6 Kxf4 49.a4 Kg3 50.a5 f4 51.a6 f3 52.a7 f2 53.a8Q f1Q=**

Exercises (Solutions next month):



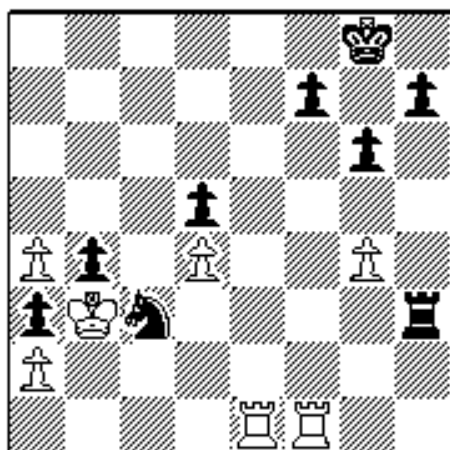
E4.01 V.Georgiev (2538) - K.Müller (2527), Hamburg 2000

Can White to move convert his advantage?



E4.02 G.Meins (2465) - S.Reschke (2390), German Bundesliga 1997

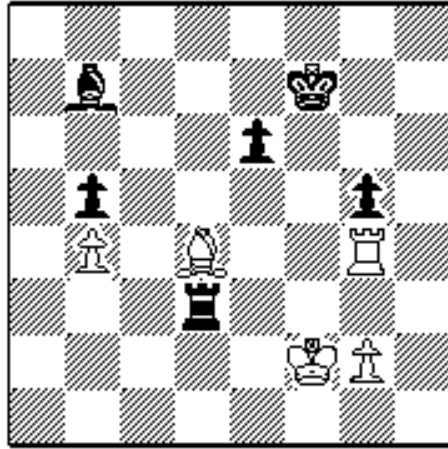
White's King is very active isn't he?



E4.03 J.Hjartarson (2605) - S.Sulskis (2510), FIDE-Wch Groningen 1997

White played Re7. Was this a fortunate choice?

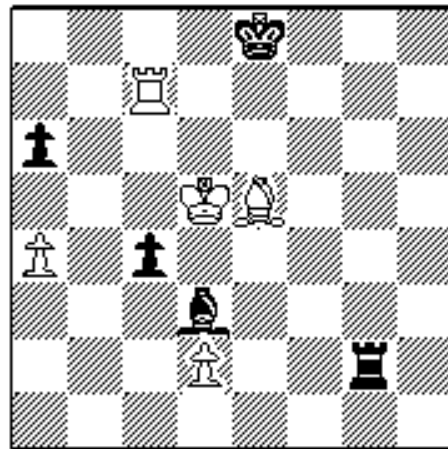
Solutions to last month's exercises



36.Ke3 Rxd2 37.Rxd2 Bxd2 38.Be5 (see *Endgame Corner* No.2) 1/2-1/2

**S 3.01 V.Kramnik - G.Kasparov,
Braingames WCh London 2000**

35...Rd2+?! was an unfortunate choice as Kramnik could force the exchange of Rooks immediately. (35...Kg6!? was a better try although Kramnik claims in *New in Chess Magazine* 01/2001, that White is still able to defend e.g. 36.Ke2 [36.Be3?! Rd5] 36...Rb3 37.Be3 Bd5 [37...Kf6 38.Bd2 Rb2 39.Ke1 e5 40.Rg3 Bd5 41.Bxg5+ Kf5 42.Bd2] 38.Rxg5+ Kf6 39.Bd2 Bc4+ 40.Kd1 e5 41.Rh5)



**S 3.02 I.Radziewicz (2379) -
R.Fernandez Blanco (2096), EU-ch
U20 Girls Aviles 2000**

White won with **59.Ke6! Rg6+** (59...Kd8 60.Rc6 Rg6+ 61.Bf6+-) **60.Bf6 Rxf6+ 61.Kxf6 Kd8 62.Ra7 Kc8 63.a5 Kb8 64.Rxa6 Kb7 65.Rb6+ Ka7 66.Ke6 Bf1 67.Kd5 Be2 68.Kc5 Bd3 69.Rc6 Be2 70.Rc7+ Ka6 71.Kb4 Bd3 72.Rc6+ Kb7 73.Rxc4 Bxc4 74.Kxc4 1-0**

Sources:

A.Soltis, *GM Secrets:Endings*, Thinkers Press 1997

J.Emms, *The Survival Guide to Rook Endings*, Everyman 1999

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New in Chess 01/2001

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