



## COLUMNISTS

## Endgame Corner

Karsten Müller



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## The Aim of the Game

Mating attacks in the endgame are of a different character than in the middlegame because the king can often join its forces:

### A) Mating Attack Out of the Blue

Even an exchange of queens is no insurance against a direct mating attack:

**129.01 Cordova, Emilio (2561) – Guimaraes, Wagner Peixoto (2277)**  
Zonal 2.4 Open Araruama BRA (8), 25.06.2011

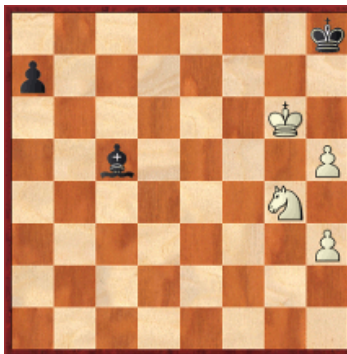


[FEN "7k/p7/1b6/3Q1K1P/1q4N1/7P/8/8 b - - 0 75"]

**75...Qc5?!**

75...Qf8+ 76.Ke4 Qb4+ draws easily because of White's open king.

**76.Qxc5 Bxc5 77.Kg6**



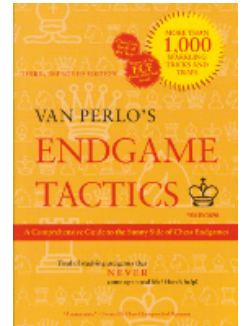
[FEN "7k/p7/6K1/2b4P/6N1/7P/8/8 b - - 0 77"]

The king is an important part of the attacking army.

**77...Bd4**

77...Bf8? loses to 78.h6 a5 79.Ne5 Bxh6 (79...a4 80.Nf7+ Kg8 81.h7#) 80.  
Kxh6 a4 81.Nc4 Kg8 82.Kg6+—

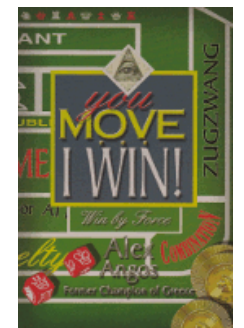
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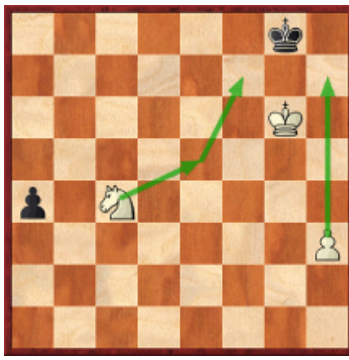


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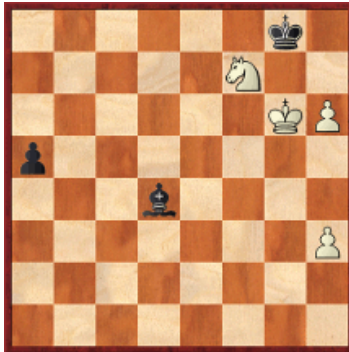


[FEN "6k1/8/6K1/8/p1N5/7P/8/8 b - - 0 82"]

Black's a-pawn is too far behind.

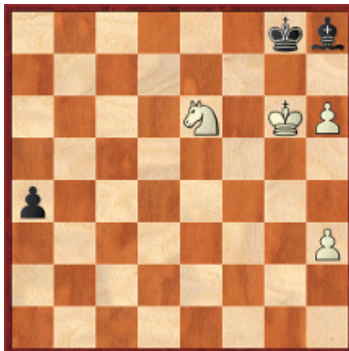
**78.h6**

78.Nh6 a5 79.Nf7+ Kg8 80.h6



[FEN "6k1/5N2/6KP/p7/3b4/7P/8/8 b - - 0 80"]

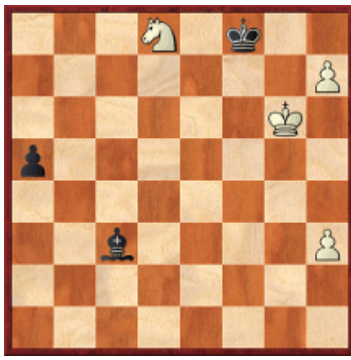
A) Even 80...a4 is playable: 81.Ng5 Bh8 (81...a3? 82.h7+ Kf8 83.Ne6+ Ke7 84.Nxd4 a2 85.h8Q a1Q 86.Nf5+-) 82.Ne6



[FEN "6kb/8/4N1KP/8/p7/7P/8/8 b - - 0 82"]

82...Bf6!! The surprising point. (82...a3?? 83.h7#) 83.Kxf6 Kh7 84.Kg5 a3 85.Nd4 (85.Nf8+ Kh8 86.h7 Kg7 87.Ne6+ Kxh7 88.Nd4 a2 89.Nc2=) 85...a2 86.Nc2 Kg8=.

B) 80...Kf8 81.Nd8 Bc3 82.h7



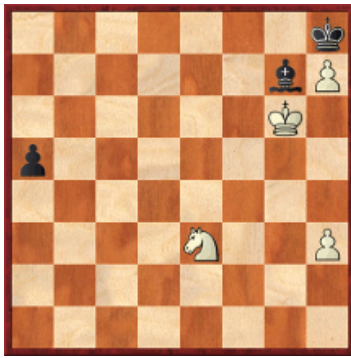
[FEN "3N1k2/7P/6K1/p7/8/2b4P/8/8 b - - 0 82"]

Now 82...Bh8 saves the day, but not 82...a4? 83.Ne6+ Ke7 84.Ng7+-.

B1) 83.Nf7 Bd4 84.h8Q+ Bxh8 85.Nd6 (85.Nxh8? a4+ backfires completely.) 85...a4 86.Nb5=.

B2) 83.Ne6+ Ke7 84.Nc5 Bc3=.

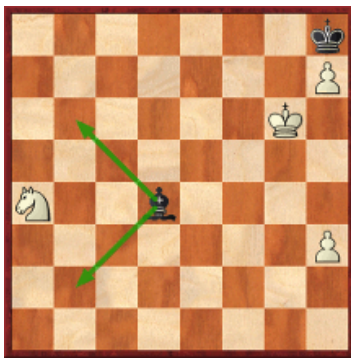
**78...a5 79.h7 Bg7! 80.Ne3**



[FEN "7k/6bP/6K1/p7/8/4N2P/8/8 b - - 0 80"]

**80...a4?**

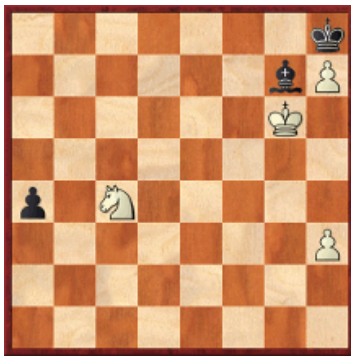
Black rushes. The bishop has to fight the domination duel with 80...Be5! 81.Nc4 (81.Ng4 Bg7=) 81...Bc7 82.Nd2 a4 (82...Be5 83.Ne4 Bf4=) 83.Ne4 Bf4 84.Nc5 Be5 (84...a3? 85.Ne6 a2 86.Nd8 a1Q 87.Nf7#) 85.Nxa4 Bd4!



[FEN "7k/7P/6K1/8/N2b4/7P/8/8 w - - 0 86"]

Domination by corralling 86.h4 Bf2 87.h5 Bd4 88.h6 Be3 89.Nc3 Bxh6 90.Nd5 (90.Kxh6 stalemate) 90...Bg5=.

**81.Nc4 1-0**



[FEN "7k/6bP/6K1/8/p1N5/7P/8/b - - 0 81"]

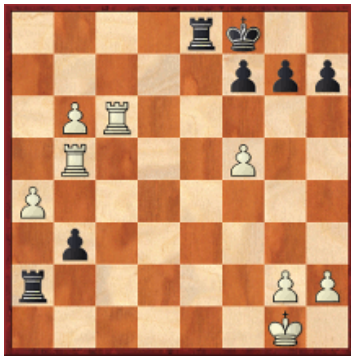
Black resigned because of 81...a3 82.Nd6 a2 83.Nf7#.

### B) The Flight

In double rook endings mating attacks and perpetual check often play a role:

#### 129.02 Caruana, F (2714) – Hou Yifan (2612)

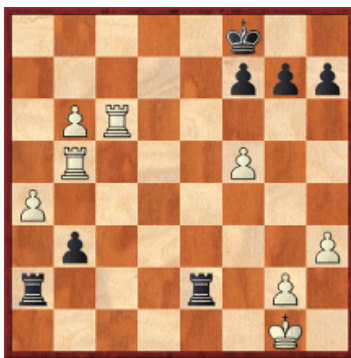
AAI GM New Delhi (8), 30.06.2011



[FEN "4rk2/5ppp/1PR5/1R3P2/P7/1p6/r5PP/6K1 w - - 0 38"]

#### 38.h4!

Caruana prepares an escape for his king. After 38.h3? Ree2, White's king cannot run away from the mighty black rooks:



[FEN "5k2/5ppp/1PR5/1R3P2/P7/1p5P/r3r1P1/6K1 w - - 0 39"]

39.Re5 (39.Kh2?? backfires completely: 39...Rxc2+ 40.Kh1 Rgc2 41.Rxc2 bxc2 42.Rc5 Ra1+ 43.Kg2 c1Q 44.Rxc1 Rxc1 45.a5 Rb1→) 39...Rxc2+ 40.Kf1 Rgf2+ 41.Ke1 Rfc2 42.Rxc2 bxc2 43.Rc5 Rxa4 44.Rxc2 Rb4=.

#### 38...Ree2

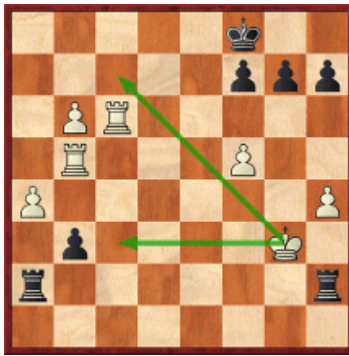
38...Rc2 39.Rc7 (39.Rd6 Ke7 40.Rd4→) 39...Ree2 40.Kh2 Rxc2+ 41.Kh3 Rh2+ 42.Kg3 Rhg2+ 43.Kf3 Rgf2+



[FEN "5k2/2R2ppp/1P6/1R3P2/P6P/1p3K2/2r2r2/8 w - - 0 44"]

This allows White's king to hide on the kingside: 44.Kg4 Rg2+ 45.Kh5 g6+ 46.Kh6 Rh2 47.b7 Rxh4+ 48.Kg5 Rh5+ 49.Kf6+-; 38...b2 39.Kh2 Rxa4 40. b7 Rb8 41.Rc8+-.

**39.Kh2! Rxc2+ 40.Kh3 Rh2+ 41.Kg3**



[FEN "5k2/5ppp/1PR5/1R3P2/P6P/1p4K1/r6r/8 b - - 0 41"]

Caruana's king starts its long journey.

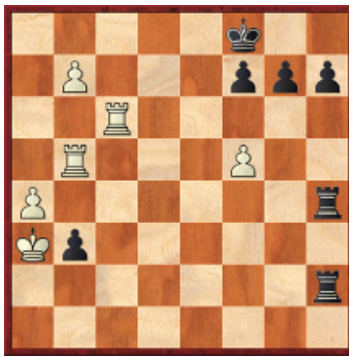
**41...Rhg2+**

After 41...Rag2+ 42.Kf4 Rxh4+ (42...Rf2+ 43.Ke5 Re2+ 44.Kd6 Rd2+ 45. Kc7+-) 43.Kf3 Rgh2 44.b7 R2h3+, the king hides on a3:



[FEN "5k2/1P3ppp/2R5/1R3P2/P6r/1p3K1r/8/8 w - - 0 45"]

45.Ke2 Rh2+ 46.Kd3 R2h3+ 47.Kd2 Rh2+ 48.Kc3 R2h3+ 49.Kb2 Rh2+ 50. Ka3+-

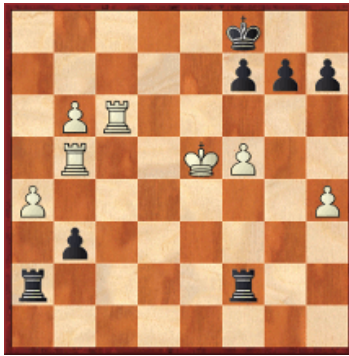


[FEN "5k2/1P3ppp/2R5/1R3P2/P6r/Kp6/7r/8 b - - 0 50"]

**42.Kf4 Rgf2+**

42...Rxa4+ 43.Kf3 Rgg4 44.b7 Raf4+ 45.Ke3 Re4+ 46.Kd3 Rd4+ 47.Kc3+-.

**43.Ke5**



[FEN "5k2/5ppp/1PR5/1R2KP2/P6P/1p6/r4r2/8 b - - 0 43"]

**43...g6**

Opens a new route for White's king. After 43...Rfe2+, White hides on the queenside: 44.Kd6 Rad2+ 45.Kc7 Re7+ 46.Kb8+-.

**44.Kf6! Rac2 45.Rxc2 bxc2 46.b7 1-0**

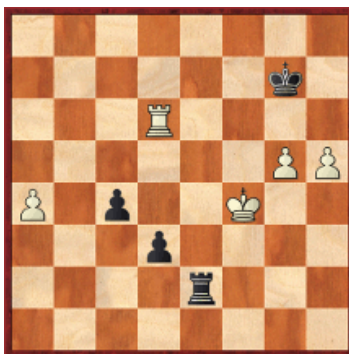
Black resigned because of 46...c1Q 47.b8Q+ Qc8 48.Qxc8#.

### C) Race of the Passed Pawns

In this case the usual drawish tendency of rook endings is reduced:

**129.03 Lalic, S (2277) – Hebden, M (2533)**

98th ch-GBR Sheffield ENG (2), 26.07.2011



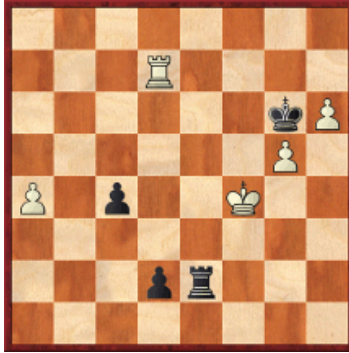
[FEN "8/6k1/3R4/6PP/P1p2K2/3p4/4r3/8 b - - 0 41"]

Hebden could still have saved himself. How to deal with White's wave of pawns: 41...Re7 or 41...d2?

### 41...Re7?

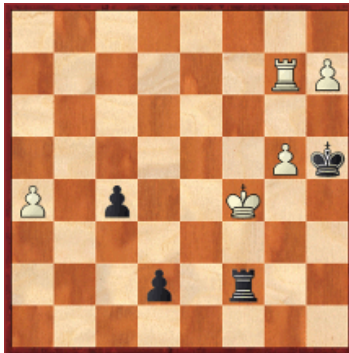
Too passive. White's rolling pawns are now always one move quicker. 41...d2 draws, if Black's king navigates carefully:

A) 42.h6+ Kh7! 43.Rd7+ Kg6!



[FEN "8/3R4/6kP/6P1/P1p2K2/8/3pr3/8 w - - 0 44"]

A1) 44.Rg7+ Kh5 45.h7 Rf2+

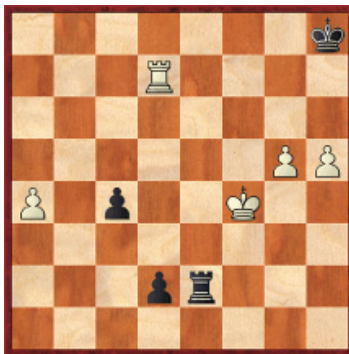


[FEN "8/6RP/8/6Pk/P1p2K2/8/3p1r2/8 w - - 0 46"]

46.Ke5 (46.Kg3? backfires completely: 46...Rf8 47.Rg8 Rf3+ 48.Kg2 d1Q 49.h8Q+ Kg4+-) 46...d1Q 47.h8Q+ Kg4 48.Qc8+ Kg3 49.Qc7=.

A2) 44.h7 Re8 45.Rxd2 Kxh7 46.a5 c3 47.Ra2 Rc8 48.Rc2 Ra8 49.Rxc3 Rxa5=.

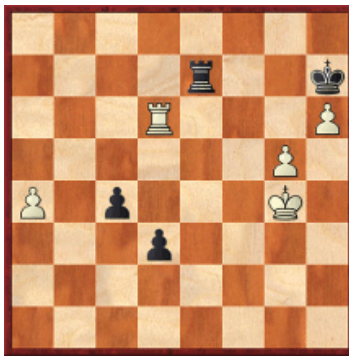
B) 42.Rd7+ Kh8!!



[FEN "7k/3R4/8/6PP/P1p2K2/8/3pr3/8 w - - 0 43"]

The point. (42...Kg8? 43.g6 Rf2+ 44.Kg5 c3 45.h6 Rf8 46.h7+ Kh8 47.g7+ Kxh7 48.gxf8Q#) 43.g6 (43.Rd8+ Kg7! 44.h6+ Kh7 45.Rd7+ Kg6! 46.h7 Re8=) 43...c3 44.Kg5 (44.h6 Re8=) 44...Re8 (44...c2?? 45.Rd8+ Re8 46.Rxe8 + Kg7 47.h6#) 45.h6 c2 46.Rh7+= (46.h7?? c1Q 47.Kh6 d1Q+-).

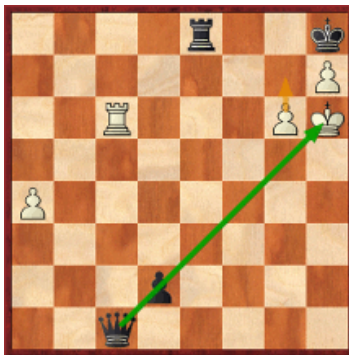
**42.h6+ Kh7 43.Kg4**



[FEN "8/4r2k/3R3P/6P1/P1p3K1/  
3p4/8/8 b - - 0 43"]

### 43...Rc7

43...Re8 44.Kh5 Kh8 (44...Re5 45.Rd7+ Kh8 46.h7 d2 47.Kh6+-) 45.g6 (45.Rd7? Rc8 46.h7? backfires because of 46...c3 47.Kh6 c2 48.g6 c1Q+-) 45...Re5+ (45...c3 46.Rxd3 Rc8 47.Rd1 c2 48.Rc1 Rc5+ 49.Kg4+-) 46.Kg4 Re8 47.Kg5 c3 48.h7 c2 49.Rc6 d2 50.Kh6 c1Q



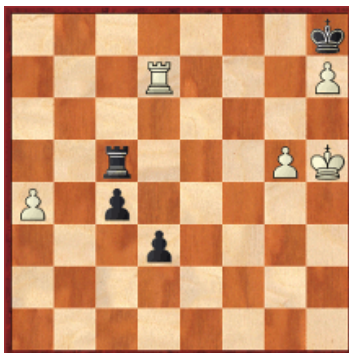
[FEN "4r2k/7P/2R3PK/8/P7/8/  
3p4/2q5 w - - 0 51"]

Now the pawn d2 acts as an umbrella. 51.g7#.

### 44.Kh5!

But not 44.Kf5?, as White's king has no safe shelter after 44...c3 45.Rxd3 Rc5 + 46.Kf6 Rc6+=.

### 44...Rc5 45.Rd7+ Kh8 46.h7 1-0



[FEN "7k/3R3P/8/2r3PK/P1p5/3p4/  
8/8 b - - 0 46"]

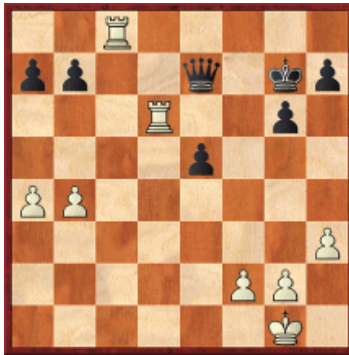
Black resigned because of 46...d2 47.Kh6 Rc8 [47...Rxc5 48.Rd8+ Rg8 49.hxc8Q#] 48.g6 c3 49.g7#.

## D) Coordination is Crucial

When two rooks fight against a queen, it is often extremely important as to whether the rooks can coordinate or not:

129.04 Hole, O (2383) – Thomassen, J (2400)

ch-NOR Oslo NOR (9), 10.07.2011



[FEN "2R5/pp2q1kp/3R2p1/4p3/PP6/7P/5PP1/6K1 w - - 0 31"]

31.Rcd8! Kh6

31...Qg5? 32.R8d7+ Kh6 33.Rc7+—



[FEN "8/ppR4p/3R2pk/4p1q1/PP6/7P/5PP1/6K1 b - - 0 33"]

The rooks dominate completely.

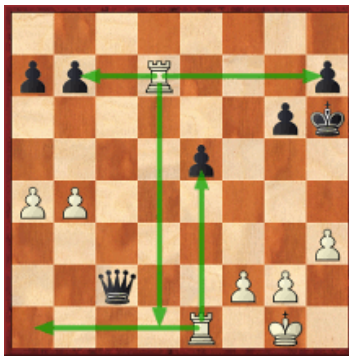
32.R8d7 Qf8 33.Re6



[FEN "5q2/pp1R3p/4R1pk/4p3/PP6/7P/5PP1/6K1 b - - 0 33"]

33...Qf4?!

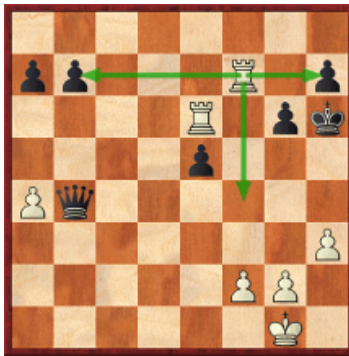
33...Qc8!? forces White to stop the perpetual check by 34.Red6! (34.Ree7? runs into the typical 34...Qc1+ 35.Kh2 Qf4+ 36.Kg1 Qc1+=) 34...Qc1+ (34...Qf8 35.b5+/-) 35.Rd1 Qc2 36.Re1



[FEN "8/pp1R3p/6pk/4p3/PP6/7P/2q2PP1/4R1K1 b - - 0 36"]

36...Qxa4 37.Rxb7 a5 38.bxa5 Qxa5 39.Re4+/-.

33...Qxb4?! 34.Rf7!



[FEN "8/pp3R1p/4R1pk/4p3/Pq6/7P/5PP1/6K1 b - - 0 34"]

This uses the powerful rook in an optimal way 34...Qxa4 35.Ree7 Qd1+ 36.Kh2 Qd6 37.Rxh7+ Kg5 38.Ref7 e4+ 39.g3+-

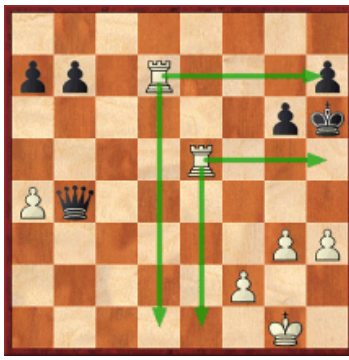


[FEN "8/pp3R1R/3q2p1/6k1/4p3/6PP/5P1K/8 b - - 0 39"]

**34.g3 Qxb4**

34...Qe4 35.Rf7!+-; 34...Qc1+ 35.Kh2 Qb2 36.Rf7+-.

**35.Rxe5**



[FEN "8/pp1R3p/6pk/4R3/Pq6/6PP/5P2/6K1 b - - 0 35"]

Full board control by the beautifully coordinated rooks.

**35...Qxa4 36.Ree7 a5 37.Rxh7+ Kg5 38.Rdf7 Qd1+ 39.Kh2 1-0**



[FEN "8/1p3R1R/6p1/p5k1/8/6PP/5P1K/3q4 b - - 0 39"]

Black resigned; one sample line runs 39...Qd2 40.h4+ Kg4 41.Rf4+ Qxf4 42.gxf4 b5 43.Rb7 b4 44.Rb5+-.

### E) The King Leads the Attack

Pure opposite colored bishop ending have a large drawish tendency, but matters are completely different, if both sides have an additional rook. Here the guideline from the middlegame, that opposite colored bishops favor the attacker, gains in importance. Usually blitz games should not be analysed, but I found the following final so typical, that I just had to annotate it:

**129.05 Hovhannisyan, R (2553) – Andreikin, D (2687)**

1st ICC Open Final INT (1.4), 05.06.2011



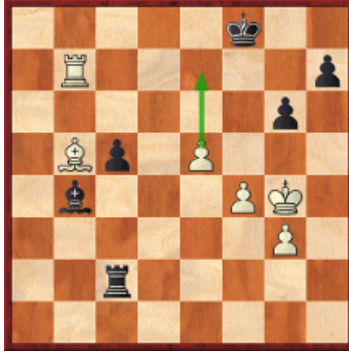
[FEN "6k1/5p1p/2B1p1p1/1Rp1P3/1bP2PK1/2r3P1/7P/8 w - - 0 39"]

**39.Rb7!**

The right move, which hits Black's Achilles heel directly. 39.Kg5? Kg7 40.Rb7 h6+ 41.Kg4 Kf8=; 39.Rb8+? Kg7 40.Rb7 h5+ 41.Kg5 Ba5 42.Be8?? Bd8 + 43.Re7 Bxe7#.

### 39...Kf8

39...Rxc4 does not help, as after 40.Be8 Kf8 41.Bxf7 Rc2 42.Bxe6 Rxe2 43. Bc4 Rc2 44.Bb5, White's e-pawn will decide the day:



[FEN "5k2/1R5p/6p1/1Bp1P3/1b3PK1/6P1/2r5/8 b - - 0 44"]

44...Rb2 45.e6 c4 46.Rf7+ Kg8 47.Bxc4 Rc2 48.Bb5 Rc8 49.Rb7+-.

### 40.Kg5! Ba5



[FEN "5k2/1R3p1p/2B1p1p1/b1p1P1K1/2P2P2/2r3P1/7P/8 w - - 0 41"]

40...Kg7 41.Be8 h6+ 42.Kg4 Rxc4 43.Bxf7 Rd4 44.Bxe6+ Kf8 45.Bf7 Kg7 46.Be8+-.

### 41.Kh6!

Of course not 41.Kf6?? Bd8+ 42.Re7 Bxe7#.

### 41...Rxc4?

This allows a mate, but Black is lost in any case; e.g., 41...Rd3 42.Rb5 Bc7 43. Rxc5 Rd8 44.Kxh7+-; 41...Bd8 42.Rb8 Rd3 43.Kxh7+-.

### 42.Rb8+ Ke7 43.Re8# 1-0

### Exercises (Solutions next month)

**E129.01 Howell, D (2625) – Ansell, S (2410)**

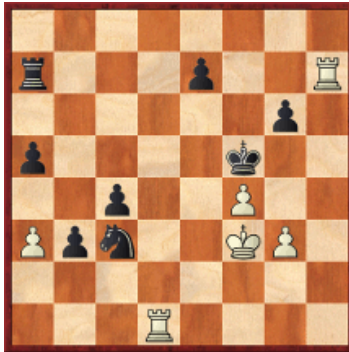
98th ch-GBR Sheffield ENG (9), 03.08.2011



[FEN "2rk4/3p4/pR1Kp3/P1P1Pp2/4bP2/3B4/2P2R2/1r6 w - - 0 33"]

Black has just played **32...Rb1**. How to react ?

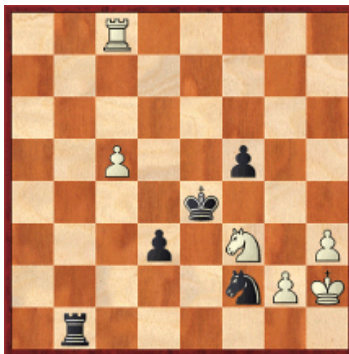
**E129.02 Girish, A Koushik (2309) – Grandelius, Nils (2542)**  
50th World Junior Championship Chennai IND (8), 10.08.2011



[FEN "8/r3p2R/6p1/p4k2/2p2P2/Ppn2KP1/8/3R4 w - - 0 32"]

Who comes first: White's attack or Black's pawns? (White to move)

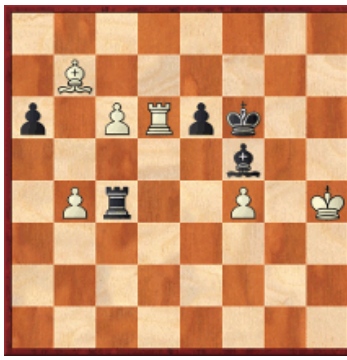
**E129.03 Mazi, L (2332) – Beliavsky, A (2613)**  
19th Vidmar Mem Ljubljana SLO (4), 09.08.2011



[FEN "2R5/8/8/2P2p2/4k3/3p1N1P/5nPK/1r6 b - - 0 77"]

How did Beliavsky close the net?

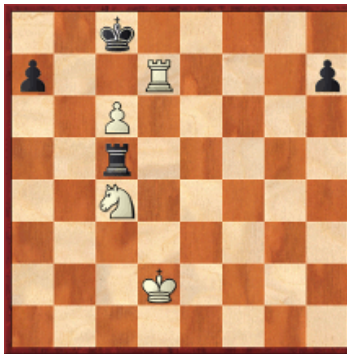
**E129.04 Rombaldoni, Ax (2459) – Rombaldoni, D (2495)**  
1st Alghero Open ITA (8.6), 02.09.2011



[FEN "8/1B6/p1PRpk2/5b2/1Pr2P1K/  
8/8/8 b - - 0 66"]

Why was **66.c5-c6??** a blunder?

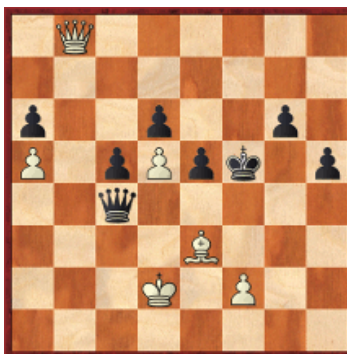
**E129.05 Sokolov, Ivan (2672) – Collutiis, D (2468)**  
1st Alghero Open ITA (2.1), 27.08.2011



[FEN "2k5/p2R3p/2P5/2r5/2N5/8/  
3K4/8 w - - 0 53"]

How did Sokolov win?

**E129.06 Rombaldoni, D (2495) – Braga, F (2447)**  
1st Alghero Open ITA (9.6), 03.09.2011



[FEN "1Q6/8/p2p2p1/P1pPpk1p/2q5/  
4B3/3K1P2/8 w - - 0 51"]

White to move and win.

**E129.07 Bu Xiangzhi (2675) – Gupta, Abhijeet (2627)**  
FIDE World Cup 2011 Khanty-Mansiysk RUS (3.2), 04.09.2011

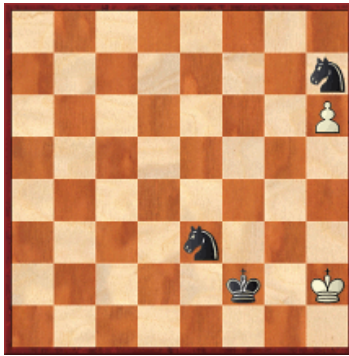


[FEN "3Q4/8/6p1/1p3p1k/1q6/5PpP/  
2Bb2K1/8 w - - 0 61"]

White won with a surprising shot. Can you find it?

**E129.08 Miezis, Normunds (2520) – Bauer, Christian (2637)**

Biel MTO SUI (5), 21.07.2011



[FEN "8/7n/7P/8/8/4n3/5k1K/8 b - - 0 115"]

Find the quickest win for Black!

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