



Queen vs. Two Rooks: Part One

In general, it is impossible to say whether two rooks are better than a queen; it all depends on the exact position.

Factors in favor of the queen include:

- bad coordination of the rooks,
- the queen can attack weak pawns or chase the rooks,
- exposed king,
- no safe anchor squares for the rooks,
- a strong passed pawn or even two connected passed pawns, which are always dangerous against a rook,
- the rooks have no control over the position.

Factors in favor of the rooks include:

- the rooks have full control,
- the queen has no real targets,
- safe king,
- the rooks support a strong passed pawn,
- the queen must passively protect weak pawns.

The following examples will help you to apply these principles in practice.

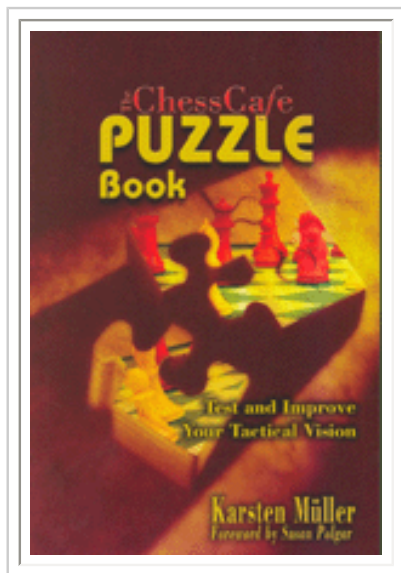
62.01 R.Hamdani (2385) - M.Chokshi (2223)

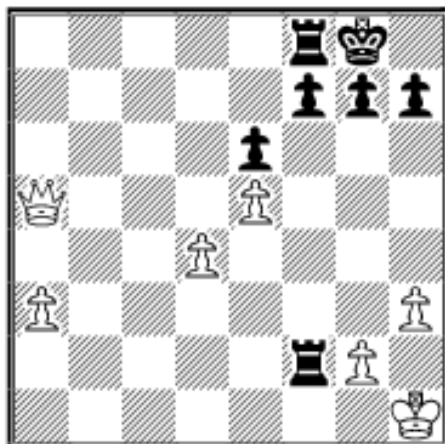
Dubai 2004

COLUMNISTS

Endgame Corner

Karsten Müller



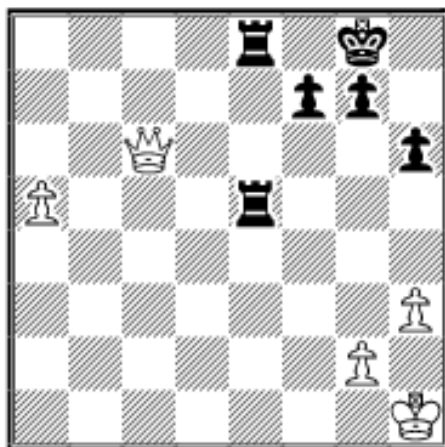


Black is winning, as his rooks have safe anchor squares, and White's weak pawns will fall, one after the other, like ripe fruits. Conversely, White has no counterplay, as the queen has no targets and the passed a-pawn is easily stopped.

26...h6 27.d5 exd5 28.Qxd5 Re8!

Pressuring the weak e5-pawn and eyeing the superb anchor square e6. **29.Qb7**

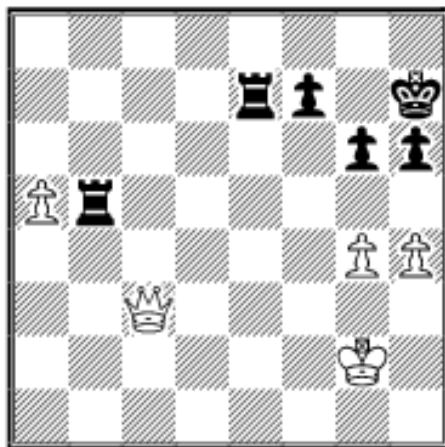
29.a4 Rf5 30.Qc6 Rfxe5 31.a5



Now Black wins the a-pawn in typical fashion: 31...Rf8 32.a6 Re7 33.Qc5 Rd7 34.Kh2 Ra8+ followed by Rda7 and Rxa6.

29...Re6 (29...Re2!?) 30.g4 Rf3 31.Qb8+ Kh7 32.Qb1+ g6 33.Qb7 Rf4 34.a4

34.Qc7 Kg7 35.Kg2 Re4 36.Qc3 R4xe5 37.a4 Kh7 38.a5 Re7 39.h4 Rb5



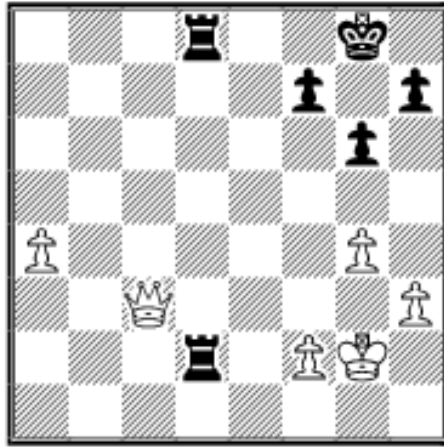
White's a-pawn is doomed.

34...Rxe5 35.Qc7 Ree4 36.a5 Rc4 37.Qe5 Rf2 38.Kg1 Ra2 39.Qe1 Rc3?? 0-1

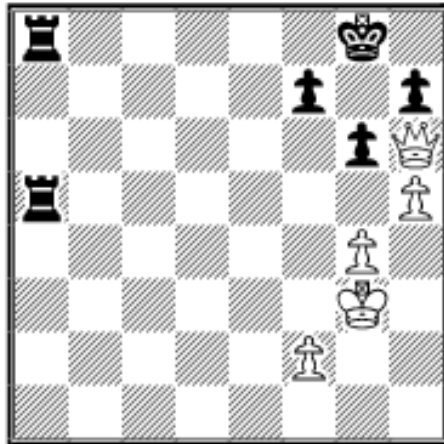
Black's last move is given in the database, but I think that either 39...Rc5 or 39...Rcc2 is more likely the last move of the game.

62.02 P.Leko (2741) - V.Kramnik (2770)

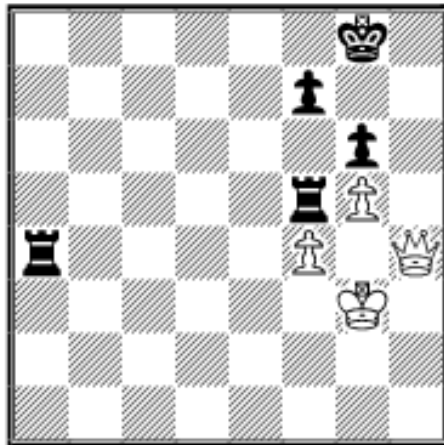
World Championship, Brissago 2004



Black is on top, as he will win the a-pawn and his king is safe; whether he can win remains to be seen: **37...R2d5 38.Qc6 Ra5** The rooks start to gang up against the passed pawn. **39.Kg3 Rda8 40.h4!** White must try to reduce material and create threats against Black's monarch **40...R5a6 41.Qc1 Ra5 42.Qh6 Rxa4 43.h5 R4a5**

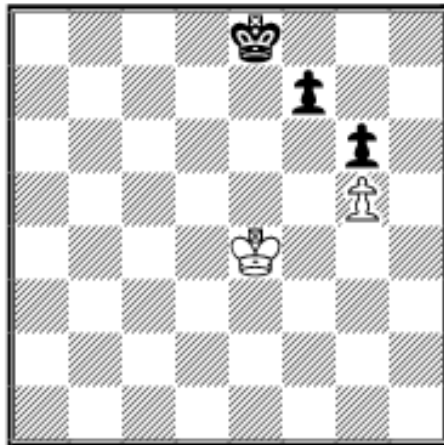


The critical moment has come. **44.Qf4?** Probably overlooking the point of Kramnik's reply. **44.hxg6** was called for, e.g. **44...hxg6 45.g5?** This is probably too committal. The question as to whether Black can win against the best defense seems to be open. **45...Rf5 46.f4 Ra4 47.Qh4**



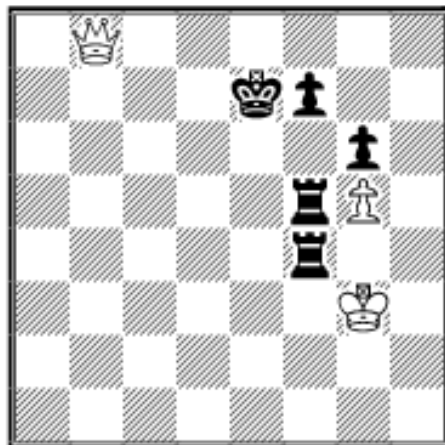
Now I think that Black can prevail: **47...Rc4!?**

A) The immediate **47...Rxf4?** leads to a drawn pawn endgame: **48.Qxf4 Rxf4 49.Kxf4 Kf8 50.Ke4 (50.Ke5? Ke7-+)** **50...Ke8**



I leave this as an exercise: White to move and draw. The solution is at the end of this article.

B) **47...Kf8?! 48.Qh8+ (48.Kf3? Raxf4+ 49.Qxf4 Ke7!-+)** **48...Ke7 49.Qb8! Raxf4?**

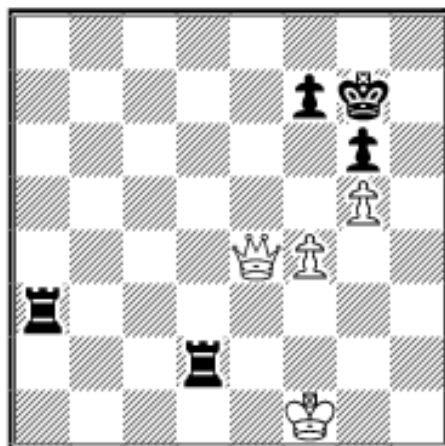


This is refuted by 50.Qc7+ Kf8 51.Qxf4=.

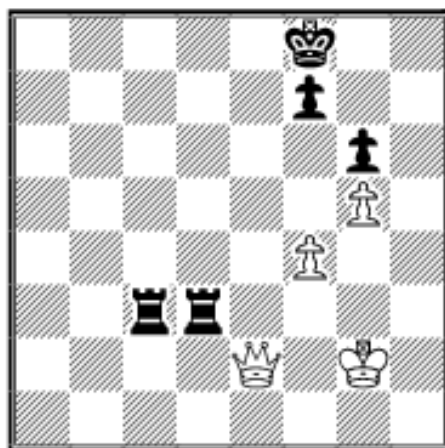
Now I continue with the analysis of the main move 47...Rc4!?:

48.Qg4 (48.Kf3?! Rc3+ 49.Ke4 Rb5 50.Kd4 Ra3 51.Qg4 Rb4+ 52.Ke5 Ra5+ 53.Kd6 Rf5—) 48...Rc3+ 49.Kg2 (49.Kf2 is similar: 49...Rd3 50.Ke2 Rb3 51.Kf2 Kg7 52.Kg2 Rd5 53.Qe2 Rdd3 54.Kf1 Rf3+ 55.Kg1 Rfe3 56.Qc4 Rbd3 57.Kf1

Rd2 58.Qb4 Rd3 59.Qe4 Ra3

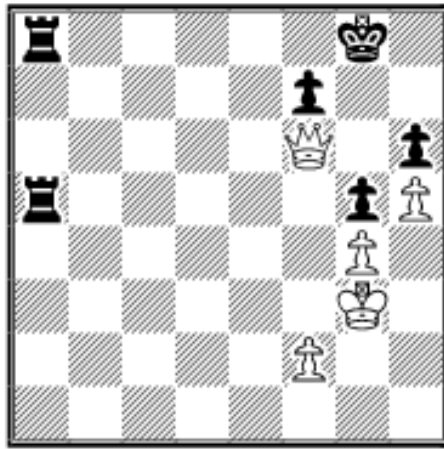


Black is winning, e.g. 60.Qe5+ Kh7 61.Qf6 Kg8 62.f5 Rf3+ 63.Ke1 Rd5—; 49.Kh4?? Kh7—+ immediately leads to fatal zugzwang.) 49...Rd5 50.Qe2 Rdd3 51.Qe8+ Kg7 52.Qe2 Kf8!



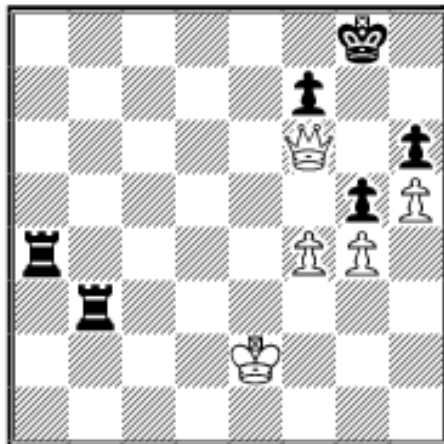
The king comes closer to help the rooks dominate the queen 53.Kf2 (53.Kg1 Rb3 54.Qf2 Re3 55.Kh2 Kg8 56.Kg2 Rbd3 57.Kg1 Rd1+ 58.Kg2 Rde1—) 53...Rb3 54.Kg2 Rg3+ 55.Kf2 Rh3 56.Qd1 Rbd3 57.Qc1 Rh2+ 58.Kg1 Ra2 59.Qc8+ Kg7 60.Qc1 Kh7 61.Qe1 Rdd2 62.Qf1 Kg7 63.Kh1 Rf2—.

44...g5! 45.Qf6 h6!



Black will eventually double rooks on the f-file and win White's f-pawn: **46.f3**

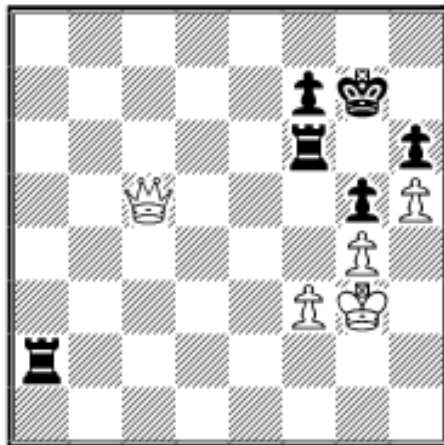
46.f4 overexposes the king: 46...Ra3+ 47.Kf2 Ra2+ 48.Kf3 (48.Kf1 Rc8+) 48...R8a3+ 49.Ke4 Ra4+ 50.Kd3 R2a3+ 51.Ke2 Rb3+.



The attack of Black's rooks crashes through.

Of course not 46.Qxh6?? R8a6+.

46...R5a6 47.Qc3 Ra4 48.Qc6 R8a6 49.Qe8+ Kg7 50.Qb5 R4a5 51.Qb4 Rd5 52.Qb3 (52.f4 Rd3+ 53.Kf2 Ra2+ 54.Ke1 Rh3 55.Qe4 Rh1+ 56.Qxh1 Ra1+-) 52...Rad6 53.Qc4 Rd3 54.Kf2 Ra3 55.Qc5 Ra2+ 56.Kg3 Rf6

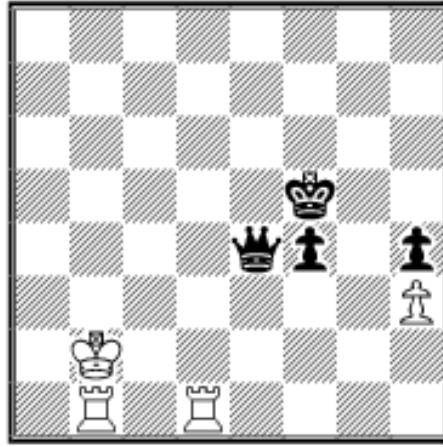


Finally, the first rook has arrived **57.Qb4 Raa6 58.Kg2 Rf4 59.Qb2+ Raf6 60.Qe5 Rxf3 61.Qa1 Rf1 62.Qc3 R1f2+ 63.Kg3 R2f3+ 64.Qxf3 Rxf3+ 65.Kxf3 Kf6** and Leko resigned because of **66.Ke4 Ke6 67.Kd4 f5+.**

Exercises (Answers Next Month)

E62.01 G.Beikert (2444) - M.Godard (2353)
FRA-chT France 2003

How to storm White's fortress?



In the pawn endgame exercise, from the analysis of Leko vs. Kramnik, White can draw by 51.Kd4! Kd8 52.Ke4=.

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