



Kamsky's Comeback

Gata Kamsky's comeback during the recent M-tel Masters tournament in Sofia, Bulgaria was really amazing. It seems as if he has lost nothing of his former strength. I want to present his fine endgame victory over Viswanathan Anand. The following notes are mostly from German FM Claus Dieter Meyer, who has made a deep study of the subtleties.

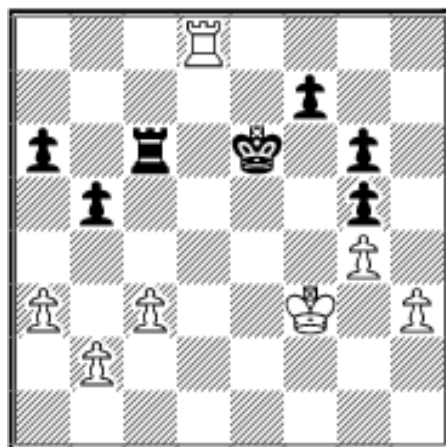
COLUMNISTS

V.Anand (2803) - G.Kamsky (2671)

M-tel Masters, Sofia 2006

Endgame Corner

Karsten Müller

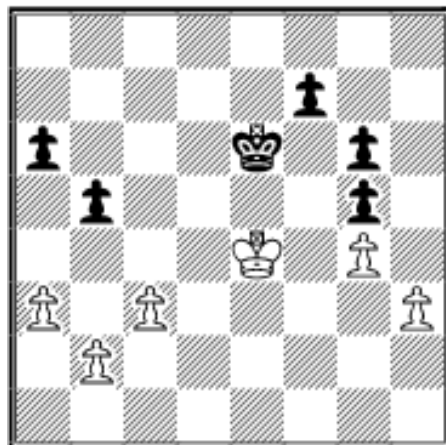


39...Rd6!

This forces White's rook to leave the d-file

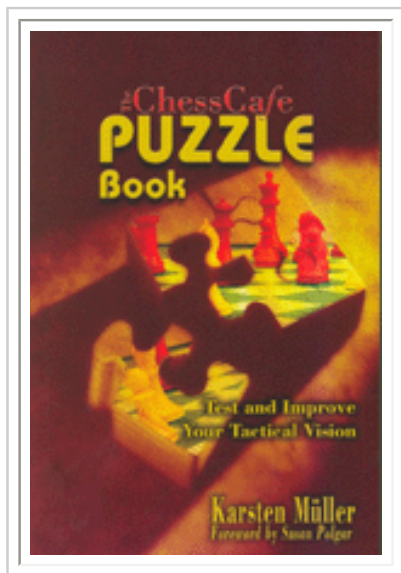
40.Re8+

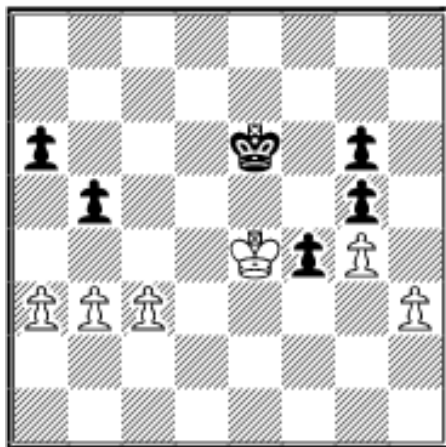
Of course, the rook must stay on the board:
40.Rxd6+? Kxd6 41.Ke4 Ke6:



And Black's kingside majority will decide the issue: 42.b4

A) 42.b3 f5+ 43.Kd4 f4 44.Ke4:





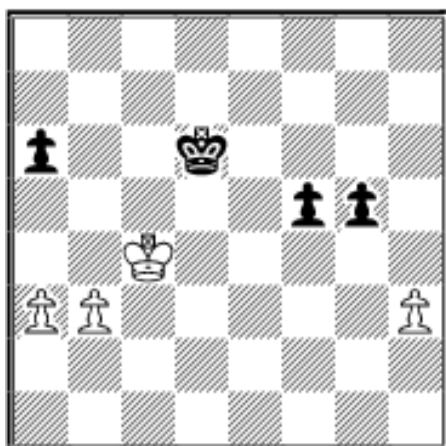
Now Black opens a path on the queenside to open a second front: 44...a5! 45.Kd4 a4+.

B) 42.Kd4 f5!

42...a5? 43.b4 (43.Kc5? f5 44.Kxb5 (44.Kd4 a4+) 44...Ke5 45.Kc4 Ke4+) 43...axb4 44.axb4 f5 45.gxf5+ gxf5 46.c4=.

43.b4

(43.gxf5+ gxf5 44.b3 (44.b4 g4+) 44...Kd6 45.c4 bxc4 46.Kxc4:

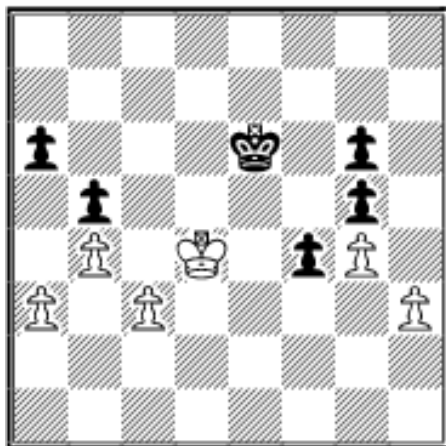


And Black is quicker: 46...Ke5 47.b4 Ke4 48.Kc3 g4 49.hxg4 fxg4 50.Kd2 Kf3 51.Ke1 Kg2+)

43...f4 44.Ke4+ leads to the main line.

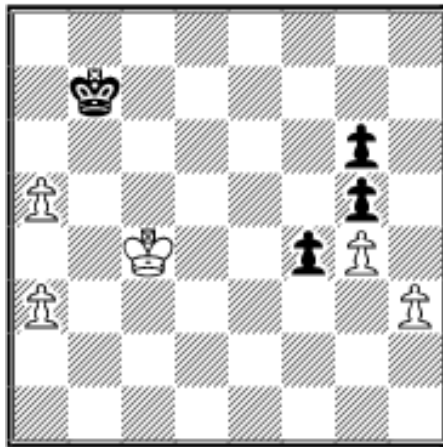
Now back to 42.b4.

42...f5+ 43.Kd4 f4:

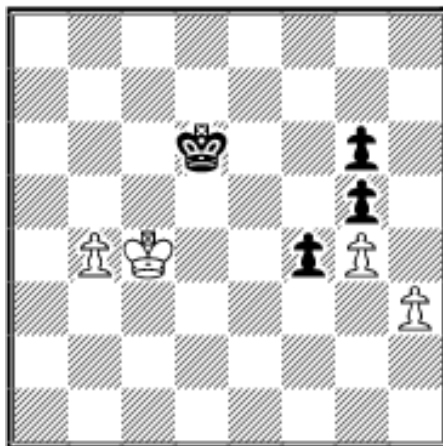


The passed pawn secures the win. White cannot undermine it successfully, as the g6-pawn can replace its colleague. (43...Kd6? 44.c4 bxc4 45.gxf5 (45.Kxc4 f4 46.Kd4 a5 47.Ke4! Kc6 48.Kd4 Kb5 49.Kc3=) 45...gxf5 46.Kxc4=) 44.Ke4 (44.c4 bxc4 45.Kxc4 Ke5 46.Kd3 (46.Kc3 Ke4+; 46.a4 f3 47.Kd3 Kf4 48.b5 Kg3+) 46...Kd5 47.a4 Ke5 48.Kc3 Ke4 49.b5 axb5 50.axb5 Kd5 51.Kd3 Kc5 52.Ke4 Kxb5 53.h4 gxh4 54.Kxf4 g5+--+) 44...Kd6 45.Kd4 (45.h4 gxh4 46.Kxf4 g5+--)

45...a5! (45...f3? 46.Ke3 Kd5 47.Kxf3 Kc4 48.Ke4 Kxc3 49.Ke5 Kb3 50.Kf6 Kxa3 51.Kxg6 Kxb4 52.Kxg5 a5 53.Kh5 a4 54.g5 a3 55.g6 a2 56.g7 a1Q 57.g8Q=) 46.c4 (46.bxa5 Kc6 47.c4 bxc4 48.Kxc4 Kb7:



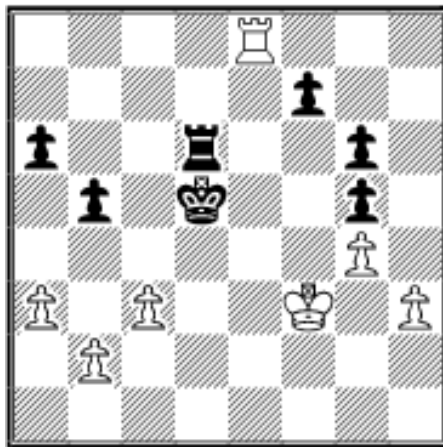
The a-pawn will fall prey to Black's king, as White must remain in the square of the protected passed pawn; 46.Ke4 a4 47.Kd4 f3 now Black wins the race easily: 48.Ke3 Kd5—+)



48...Ke5! (48...Kc6? surprisingly spoils it 49.Kd4 Kd6 50.b5=) 49.Kd3 Kd5 50.Kc3 Ke4 51.Kd2 Kd4—+.

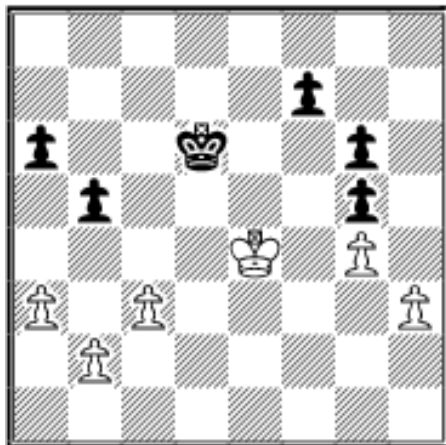
40.Rc8!? might be a bit more precise; e.g., 40...Kd5 (40...Rd2 41.Rc6+ Ke5 42.Rxa6 Rxb2 43.a4=) 41.Rc7 f5 42.Rg7 Ke5 43.Re7+ Kf6 44.Ra7 and White should reach the safe harbor.

40...Kd5



41.b3

41.Rc8?! is playing with fire. The immediate 41...Rc6? does not do the job, but 41...f5!? is very dangerous; e.g., 42.Rc7 Rc6 43.Rg7 now (43.Rxc6? Kxc6—+ is lost.) 43...f4 and Black is very active. 42.Rxc6! Kxc6 43.Ke4 Kd6:



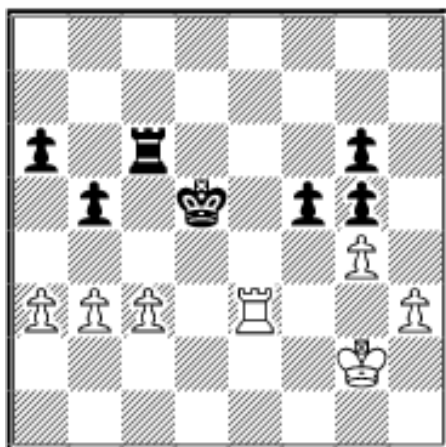
Now White can mobilize his queenside just in time: (43...Kc5? 44.Ke5+-) 44.b4! Ke6 45.c4 f5+ 46.Kd4 bxc4 47.gxf5+! gxf5 48.Kxc4=.

41...Rf6+ 42.Kg2

The king must retreat, as the pawn endgame after 42.Ke3? Re6+! 43.Rxe6 Kxe6 is lost as usual: 44.Kd4 f5 45.b4 (45.gxf5+ gxf5 46.c4 bxc4 47.Kxc4 Ke5

48.Kd3 Kf4+-) 45...f4 46.Ke4 Kd6 47.Kd4 a5!+- and Black wins as shown above.

42...Rc6 43.Re3 f5

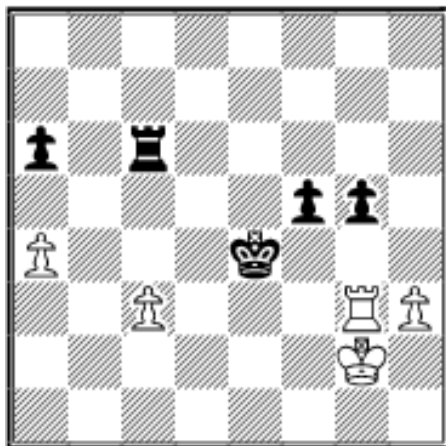


Black has made good progress, but it should still be drawn, because of the large drawish tendency inherent in rook endings (but not in pawn endings. Here every small detail can count for a lot).

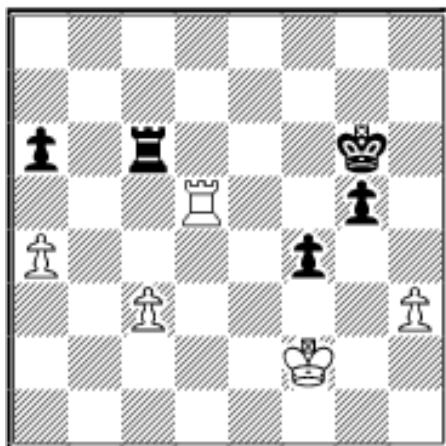
44.gxf5 gxf5 45.Rg3 Ke4 46.a4

46.Rxg5 should also suffice: 46...Rxc3 47.Rg6 a5 (47...Rxb3 48.Rxa6 Rb2+ 49.Kg1 f4 50.h4 Kf3 51.Rg6 Rb3 52.h5 Rxa3 53.h6 Ra1+ 54.Kh2 Ra8 55.Rb6=) 48.h4 Rxb3 49.h5 Rb2+ 50.Kh3 Rb1 51.Kh2 Rc1 52.h6 Rc8 53.Kh3 Rh8 (53...f4 54.h7 Rh8 55.Rg7=) 54.Kh4 f4 55.Re6+=.

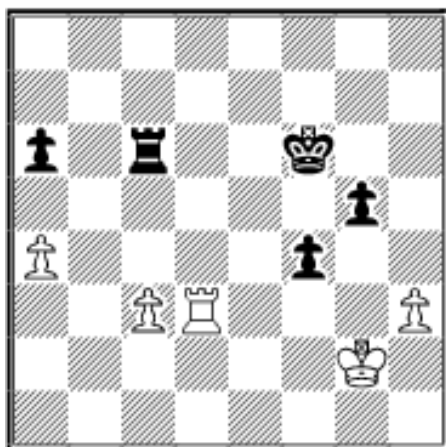
46...bxa4 47.bxa4

**47...Kf4**

47...Rg6!? is not easy to parry, but White should survive: 48.Kf2 f4 49.Rg1 Kf5 50.Rd1 Rc6 (50...Ke4 51.Rg1!) 51.Rd5+ Kg6:



52.Rd4!? with the idea to undermine Black's kingside, to reduce the winning potential or even to reach the famous drawn rook + h- and f-pawn ending (see [Endgame Corner #1](#)). 52...Rxc3 53.h4 gxh4 (53...Rc6 54.Kf3 Rc3+ 55.Kf2 gxh4 56.Rd6+ (56.Rxf4) 56...Kf5 57.Rxa6=) 54.Rxf4 Kg5 55.Rd4 Rc2+ 56.Kg1 Rc5 57.Kg2 Rf5 58.Kh3 Rf3+ 59.Kg2 Rf4 60.Rxf4 Kxf4 61.Kh3=.

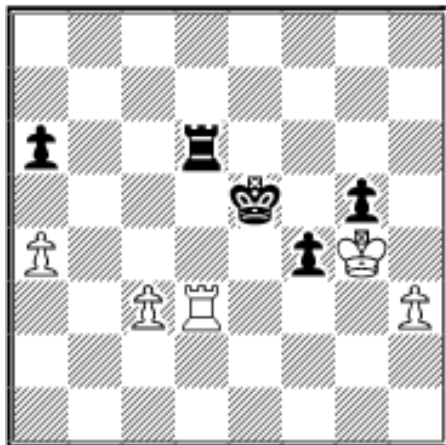
48.Rf3+ Ke5 49.Re3+ Kf6 50.Rd3 f4**51.Kf3?**

The losing move, because of the resulting pawn endings; Anand had to play for a draw in the rook endgame by activating his rook, which is quite typical by the way:

51.Rd5!? Kg6 52.h4! gxh4 53.Kh3 f3 54.Kxh4 f2 55.Rd1 Rxc3 56.Rf1 Ra3 57.Rxf2 Rxa4+ 58.Kg3=

51.c4!? Ke5 (51...Rxc4 52.Rd6+ Kf5 53.Rxa6 Rc2+ 54.Kf3 Rc3+ (54...Rh2 55.Rh6=) 55.Kg2 Rg3+ 56.Kh2 Ra3 57.Kg2=) 52.Rd5+ Ke4 53.Rxg5 Rxc4 54.Ra5 f3+ 55.Kf2 Rc2+ 56.Kf1 Ke3 57.Re5+ Kf4 58.Re6 a5 59.Rf6+ Kg3 60.Rg6+ Kxh3 61.Rg5=.

51...Ke5 52.Kg4 Rd6!

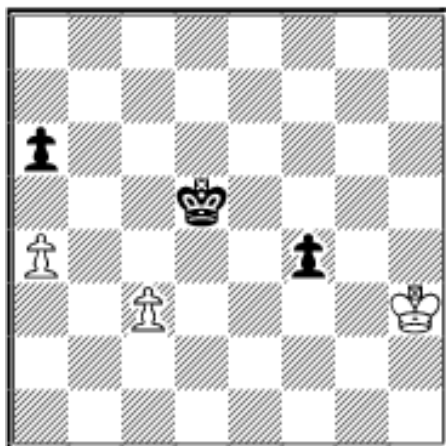


White must exchange rooks and loses by one tempo.

53.Rxd6

53.Rf3 Rd1! 54.Kxg5 (54.c4 Ke4+; 54.Rf2 Rg1++) 54...Rg1+ 55.Kh6 Ke4 56.Rf2 Ke3+.

53...Kxd6 54.h4 gxh4 55.Kxh4 Kd5 56.Kh3



56.c4+ is also one tempo too slow:
56...Kxc4 57.Kg4 Kb4 58.Kxf4 Kxa4 59.Ke3 Kb3 60.Kd2 Kb2+, as Black has reached a key square.

56.Kg4 Ke4 57.c4 f3 58.Kg3 Ke3+.

56...Ke4!!

Precise to the end. 56...Kc4? spoils it:
57.Kg4 Kxc3 58.Kxf4 Kb4 59.Ke3 Kxa4

60.Kd2 Kb3 61.Kc1=.

56...a5? 57.Kg2! (57.Kg4?? Ke4+) 57...Ke4 58.Kf2=.

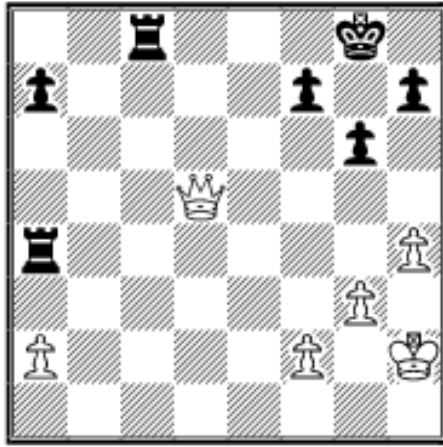
57.Kg2 Ke3 0-1

White resigned because of 58.Kf1 Kd3 59.Kf2 Kxc3 60.Kf3 Kb4 61.Kxf4 Kxa4 62.Ke3 Kb3 63.Kd2 Kb2+.

Addendum

63.01 L.Aronian (2502) - R.Milu (2395)

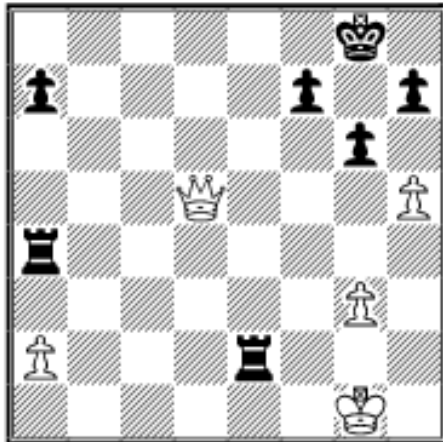
Victor Ciocaltea Memorial Bucharest 1999



Black must act precisely to maintain any winning prospects, as White's queen finds many targets to attack, and Black's king is not completely safe because of the typical thrust h4-h5.

31...h5?

31...Rc2! 32.h5 Rxf2+ 33.Kg1 Re2

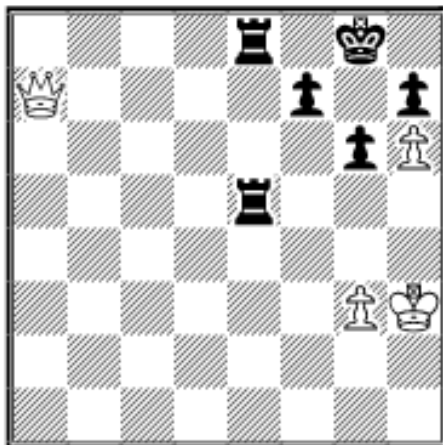


34.h6

A) 34.Kf1 Re8 (34...Rxa2? 35.h6=) 35.Qd7 Rae4.

B) 34.a3! is interesting as 34...Rxa3?? is met by 35.Qd8+ Kg7 36.h6+ Kxh6 37.Qf8+-.

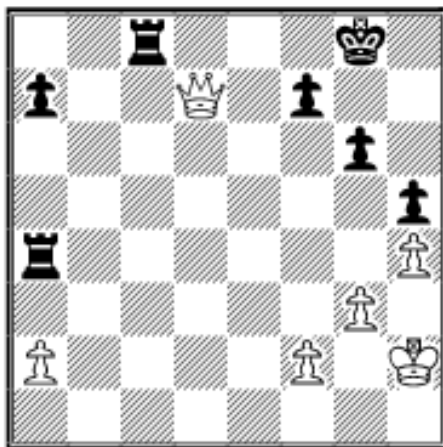
34...Re1+ 35.Kg2 Re8 36.Qd7 Rxa2+ 37.Kh3 Rae2 38.Qxa7 R2e5.



White's counterplay against Black's king still gives him drawing chances in all cases.

32.Qd7!

Now White can force a draw with his active queen.



And now instead of **32...Rcc4** Georg von Buelow from Rio de Janeiro (but originally from Hamburg) has suggested **32...Rac4!?**, as the a-pawn only hinders the coordination of Black's rooks. Indeed it is by no means easy to prove a draw, if this is possible at all; e.g., **33.Qxa7 Re4 34.a4 Ree8** planning to double on the a-file in the long run. The direct **35.g4**, with the idea **h5**, is met by **35...Ra8 36.Qd4 Ra5**. This is, of course, no complete proof, but certainly

a very interesting concept for Black to play.

**33.Qe8+ Kg7 34.Qe5+ Kf8 35.Qh8+ Ke7 36.Qe5+ Kd8 37.Qd5+ Ke7
38.Qe5+ Kf8 39.Qh8+ Ke7 40.Qe5+ Kf8 41.Qb8+ Kg7 42.Qe5+ Kh7
43.Qe8 Kg7 44.Qe5+ Kh7 45.Qe8 Kg7 1/2-1/2**

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