



## Ponomarev's Technique

### Part 2

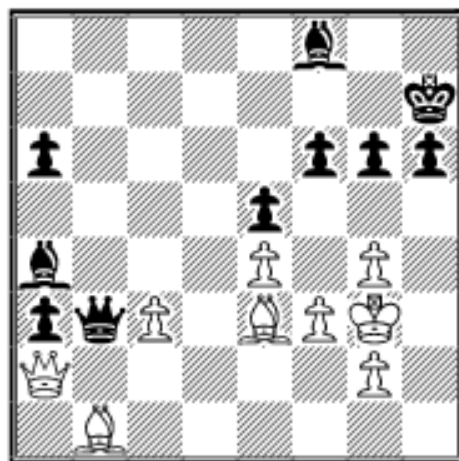
I continue my analysis of Ponomarev's recent endgames (for the first part see the [ChessCafe.com Archives](#)):

**16.01 R.Ponomarev (2727) - V.Ivanchuk (2717) FIDE WCh Final Moscow 2002**

COLUMNISTS

## Endgame Corner

Karsten Müller



I start with two examples from the final of the FIDE World Championship, where he was a bit lucky:

**47...Kg7??** A very unfortunate idea. In principle it is good to activate the king to prepare for the endgame, but the queens are still on the board and so more

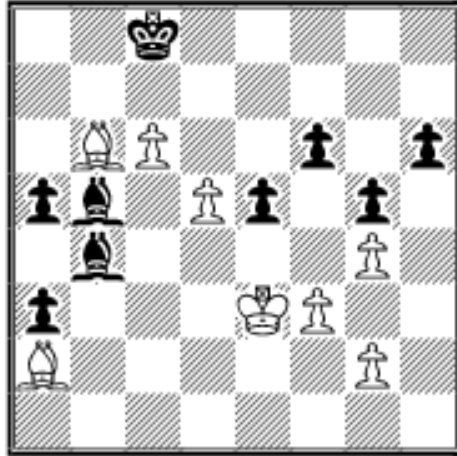
care was required.

47...a5 with the idea to exchange queens was the right way to proceed. White is defenceless, e.g., 48.Kf2 Qxa2+ 49.Bxa2 Bc2 50.Ke2 a4 51.Bd5 (51.Kd2 Bb3 52.Bxb3 axb3 53.Kc1 Kg7–+) 51...Bb3 52.Bc1 Bc5 53.Kd3 Kg7 54.Bc4 g5 55.Bd5 Kf8–+ (Hübner in *Schach* 3/2002)

**48.Qd2!** This counterattack gives White equality. **48...g5** (48...Qxb1 49.Bxh6+ Kg8 (49...Kh8? 50.Bxf8 a2?? 51.Qh6+ Kg8 52.Qg7#) 50.Qd5+ Kh7 51.Bxf8 Qe1+=)



**49.Ba2 Qb7 50.Qd3 Be8 (50...Bb3?? 51.Qb1+-; 50...Bc6?? 51.Qc4+-) 51.Qd5 Qxd5 52.exd5 a5 53.c4 Bb4 54.c5 Kf8 55.Kf2 Bb5 56.c6 Ke7 57.Ba7 Kd8 (57...Kd6!?)=) 58.Bb6+ Kc8 58...Ke7 draws as well. 59.Ke3**

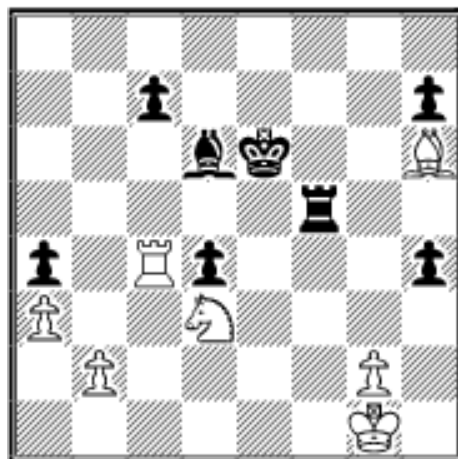


**59...a4?** wastes precious time and allows White's king to support his connected passed pawns. 59...Bf1! was called for: 60.g3 a4 61.Bb1 Bd6 62.Ba2= (Hübner) **60.Ke4 Be2** (60...Bf1 61.Kf5 Bxg2 62.Bc4 a2 [62...Bd6 63.Ke6 Bc7 64.Bxc7 Kxc7 65.d6++-] 63.Ba6+ Kb8 64.c7+ Ka8 65.c8Q#; 60...Bd6

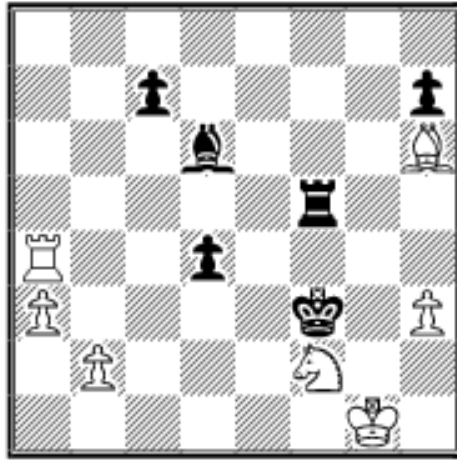
61.Kf5 Bc7 62.Bxc7 Kxc7 63.Ke6 Bxc6 [63...Kb6 64.Ke7 Kc7 65.d6++-] 64.dxc6 Kxc6 65.Kxf6 Kd6 66.g3 Kc5 67.Kxe5 Kb4 68.Kd4 Kb5 69.f4+-) **61.Kf5 e4 62.Ke6 exf3 63.d6 Bxd6 64.Kxd6 1-0**

In the second round he even managed to reach a draw a piece down:

## 16.02 V.Ivanchuk (2717) - R.Ponomarev (2727) FIDE WCh Final Moscow 2002



**39...h3!?** opens lines against White's king and prepares the following king march. **40.gxh3** Of course not 40.g4?? h2+ 41.Kg2 Rf1-+ **40...Kd5 41.Rxa4 Ke4 42.Nf2+ Kf3**



White has to be careful now as his king is under attack:

**43.Rxd4?**

43.Rc4! was much stronger, e.g. 43...Re5 44.Nd3 Re2 45.b4 Rg2+ 46.Kf1 Rh2 47.Ne1+ Ke4 48.Bg7 Rd2 49.Rc2+-

**43...Bc5 44.Rd2**

44.Rd3+ comes into consideration as well: 44...Ke2 45.Rd2+ Ke1 (45...Kf3? 46.Kf1 Kg3 47.Rd3+ Kh2 48.Be3+-) 46.Kg2 (46.Rc2 Bxf2+ 47.Kg2 Rf6) 46...Bxf2 47.Rd7 Bh4 48.Be3 Ke2 49.Bg1 Rg5+ 50.Kh1 Rh5 51.Rxc7 Bf6 and in both cases it is not completely clear, if White can win.

**44...Rf6!** Continuing the attack is stronger than regaining the piece with 44...Kg3? 45.Rd3+ Rf3 46.Rxf3+ Kxf3 47.a4 Bxf2+ 48.Kf1+- **45.Bg5?!**

45.Rc2!? Bd4

**A)** 46.Bg5?! is less clear than 46.Bc1 although after 46...Rg6 47.Kf1 Rg5 48.Rxc7 White's winning chances are still alive, e.g.,

**A1)** 48...Bxf2 49.Rf7+ Kg3 50.Rxf2 Ra5

**A2)** 48...Rf5 49.Nd1 Ke4+ 50.Ke2 Rh5 51.Nc3+

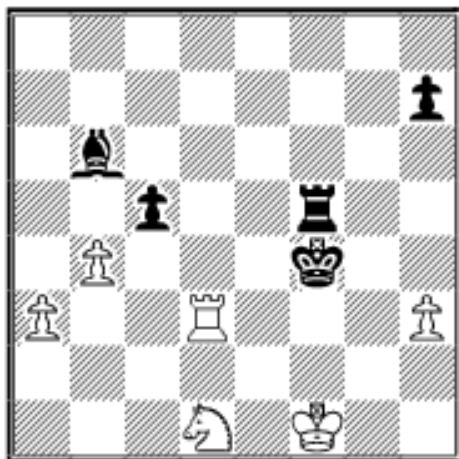
**A3)** 48...Bxb2? 49.Rf7+ Kg3 (49...Ke3 50.Nd1++-) 50.Ne4++-

**B)** 46.Bc1!? 46...Kg3 (46...Rg6+ 47.Kf1 Rg2 48.a4+-) 47.Rc3++-

**45...Rg6 46.Kf1?**

46.h4! h6 47.Kf1 (47.Rc2?! Be3 48.Kf1 hxg5 49.hxg5 c5 50.Nh3 Rd6) 47...hxg5 48.Rd3+ Kf4 49.Nh3+ Ke4 50.Rc3 (Kasparov according to *New in Chess* magazine 2/2002) and White should still have excellent winning chances, e.g. 50...g4 51.Nf2+ Kd5 52.Rd3+ Ke5 53.b4 Bb6 54.Kg2

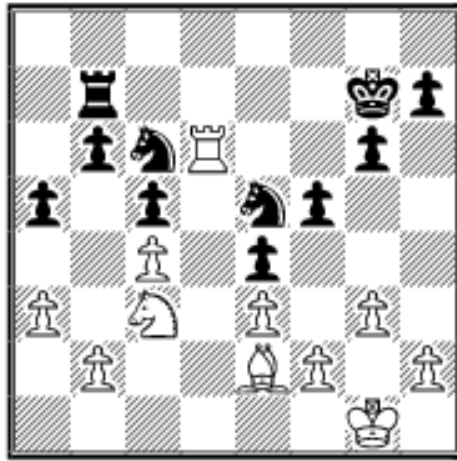
**46...Rxb5** Black's activity is now enough compensation for the missing pawn. **47.Rd3+ Kf4 48.Rc3 Bb6 49.b4 Rd5 50.Rd3 Rf5 51.Nd1 c5**



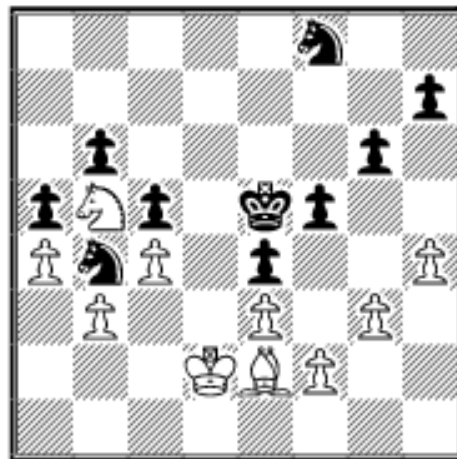
**52.Nc3** (52.Rd6?? Ke5+--+) **52...cxb4 53.axb4 Ke5+ 54.Ke1 Rf4 55.Rd5+ Ke6 56.Rb5 Bc7 57.Nd5 Re4+ 58.Kf2 Bd6 1/2-1/2**

In the next example Ponomariov defeated a very strong and experienced grandmaster:

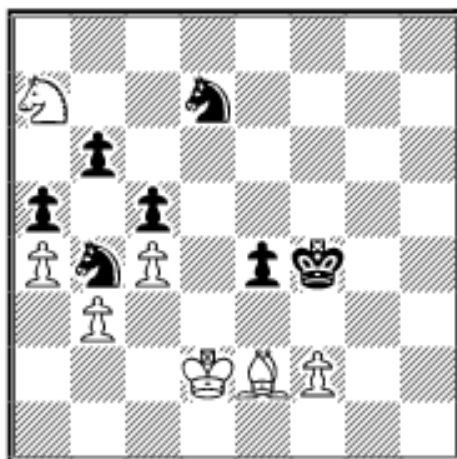
**16.03 A.Beliavsky (2659) - R.Ponomariov (2684) EUCup 17th Panormo 2001**



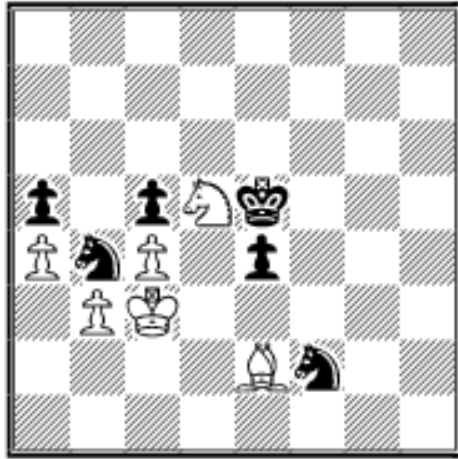
Black's knights are a powerful force, but it is still a lot of work ahead of him. First he exchanges the active white rook: **27...Rd7! 28.Rxd7+ Nxd7 29.h4 Nce5 30.Kf1 Kf6 31.Ke1 Ke6 32.Nd5 Kd6 33.a4 Nc6 34.b3** White has protected the weak pawn c4, but the price is high as all his queenside pawns are now on light squares. **34...Nb4 35.Nc3 Ke5 36.Kd2 Nf8 37.Nb5**



After activating his king he now advances his kingside pawns to gain further space. **37...h6 38.Nc3 g5 39.hxg5 hxg5 40.Nd1 Nd7 41.Nc3 Nf6 42.Nb5 f4 43.gxf4+ gxf4 44.exf4+ Kxf4 45.Na7 Nd7**

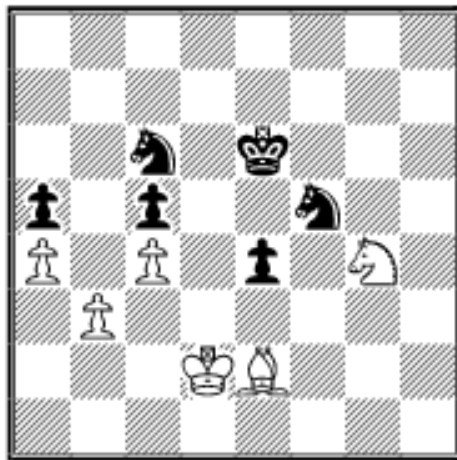


**46.Kc3?** Now f2 becomes really weak. 46.Nc8 looks more logical. **46...Ne5 47.Nc8** (47.Kd2?! Nbd3 48.Bxd3 Nxd3 49.Ke2 [49.Nc8 Kf3 50.Nxb6 Kxf2 51.Nd5 Ne5—+]) **49...Nc1+—+] 47...Ned3 48.Nxb6 Nxf2 49.Nd5+ Ke5**



**50.Ne3** Exchanging the knights loses in a common way. First Black's knight is transferred to his optimal blockading outpost c5 and then his king penetrates decisively: 50.Nxb4? cxb4+ 51.Kd2 Kd4 52.Kc1 (52.Ke1 e3 53.Bf3 Nd3+ 54.Kf1 Kc3 55.Ke2 Nc1+ 56.Kxe3 Nxb3—) 52...e3 53.Kc2 Ne4

54.Bd1 Nc5 55.Be2 now Black's king breaks through on the kingside: 55...Ke4 56.Bh5 Kf4 57.Be2 Kg3— **50...Nh3 51.Bd1 Ng5 52.Bh5 Ne6 53.Bd1 Nd4 54.Ng2 Nf3 55.Ne3** (55.Bxf3? exf3 56.Ne3 Kf4 57.Kd2 Nc6 58.Nd5+ Kg3 59.Ke1 Nd4—) **55...Nh4 56.Ng4+ Kf5 57.Ne3+ Kf4 58.Nd5+ Ke5 59.Nb6 Nf5 60.Nd7+ Kd6 61.Nf6 Ng3 62.Ng4 Ke6 63.Kd2 Nf5 64.Be2 Nc6**



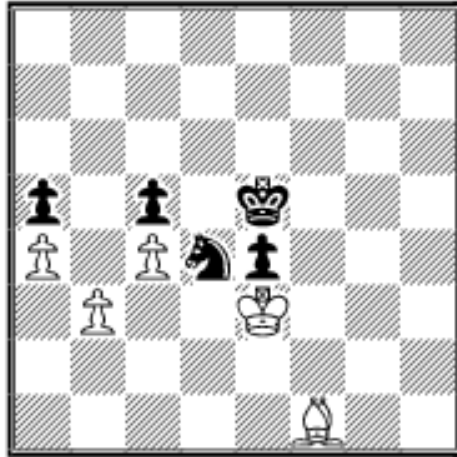
**65.Bf1?** Can Black win against the alternatives 65.Bd1 and 65.Kc3?

I 65.Bd1! Ncd4 66.Nh2 Ke5 67.Ng4+ Kf4 68.Nf6 Nf3+ 69.Kc3 N5d4 70.Nd7 Ne6 71.Nf6 Kf5 72.Nd5! (72.Nd7? Ne5 73.Nb6 Kf4 74.Nd5+ Kg3 75.Bc2 Ng5 76.Bd1 Kf2—)

72...Kg4 73.Nf6+

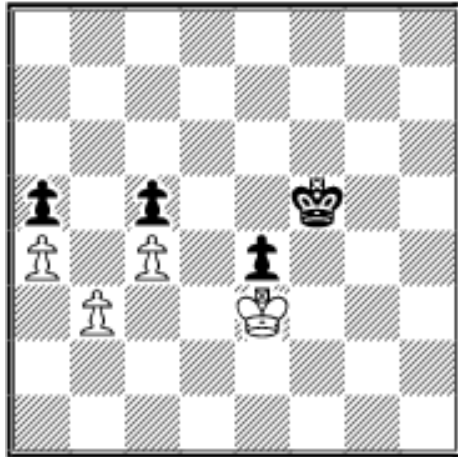
II 65.Kc3 Ne5 66.Nf2 Ng3 67.Kd2 (67.Bd1? e3 68.Nh3 Kf5 69.Ng1 Ne4+ 70.Kc2 Nc6 71.Bh5 Nb4+ 72.Kd1 Ng3 73.Bf3 Ke5—) 67...Nc6 68.Bd1 (68.Ng4? Nxe2 69.Kxe2 Kf5 70.Ne3+ Ke5 71.Nd5 Nd4+ 72.Ke3 Nf5+—) 68...Ke5 69.Ng4+ Kf4 70.Ne3 Nf5 71.Nd5+ Ke5 72.Kc3

**65...Ne5! 66.Ne3 (66.Bh3 Nxg4 67.Bxg4 Ke5 68.Be2 Nd4 69.Bd1 Kf4 70.Kc3 Ke3—+) 66...Nf3+! 67.Ke2 N3d4+ 68.Kf2 Nxe3 69.Kxe3 Ke5 0-1**



and White resigned. A possible finish is **70.Bg2**

The pawn ending after 70.Bh3 Nf5+ 71.Bxf5 Kxf5

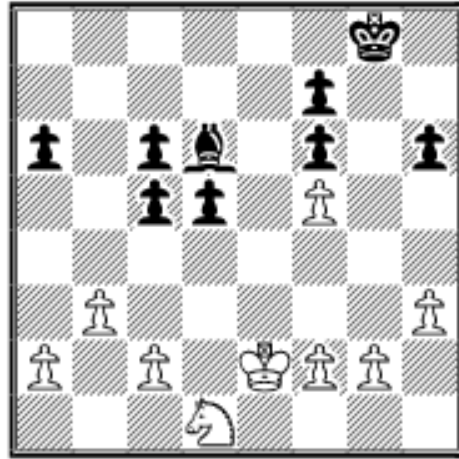


is completely lost (**the technique is worth knowing!**):  
72.Ke2 Kf4 73.Kf2 e3+ 74.Ke2 Ke4 75.Ke1 Kf3 76.Kf1 e2+ 77.Ke1 Ke3 and now White has to commit suicide: 78.b4 cxb4—+

**70...Nf5+ 71.Ke2 Kf4 72.Kf2 Nd4 73.Ke1 Nxb3 74.Ke2 Nd4+ 75.Kf2 Nf3 76.Ke2 Ne5—+**

The next example is easier:

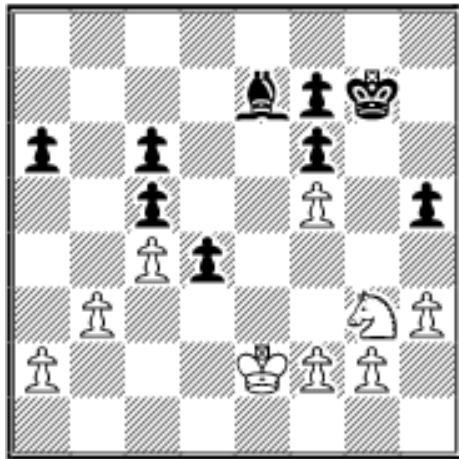
**16.04 A.Volokitin (2493) - R.Ponomarev (2673)  
Lausanne Young Masters 2001**



White's knight is much superior due to the closed nature of the position and White's pawns are securely placed on light squares: **27...Be5 28.Ne3 Kf8 29.c4!** a good strategy, which gives White's knight the ideal blockading square d3 and the mighty central square e4.

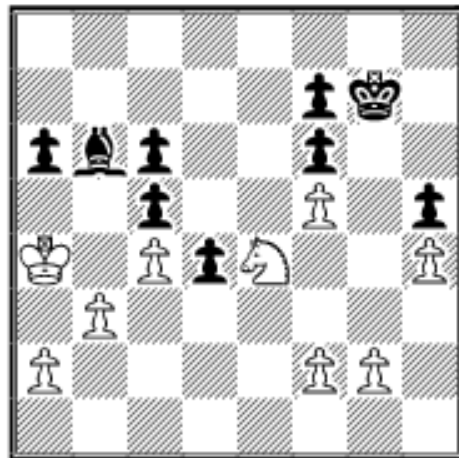
**29...d4 30.Nf1 h5 31.Nd2 Bd6**

**32.Ne4 Be7 33.Ng3 Kg7**



**34.h4!?** Imprisoning Black's king is even more convincing than grabbing the h-pawn.

**34...Kh6 35.Ne4 Kg7 36.Kd3** the start of a king march to the queenside. **36...Kh7 37.Kc2 Kh6 38.Kb2 Kg7 39.Ka3 Bd8 40.Ka4 Bb6** (40...d3 41.Ka3 Ba5 42.Kb2 Bb4 43.f3+-)



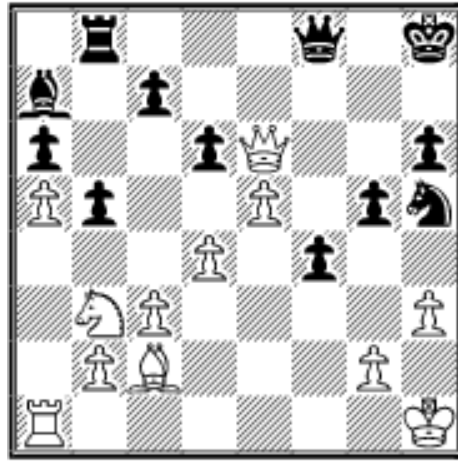
Black is completely dominated, but how to deal the decisive blow? **41.b4!** the right moment to grab more space **41...cxb4 42.c5 Bc7 43.Kxb4 Bf4 44.Kc4 Be5 45.Ng3 a5 46.Ne2 1-0**

I want to end my discussion with three examples in which Ponomariov defeated very

strong grandmasters:

**16.05 R.Ponomariov (2684) - A.Morozevich (2742) FIDE WCh Moscow 2001**

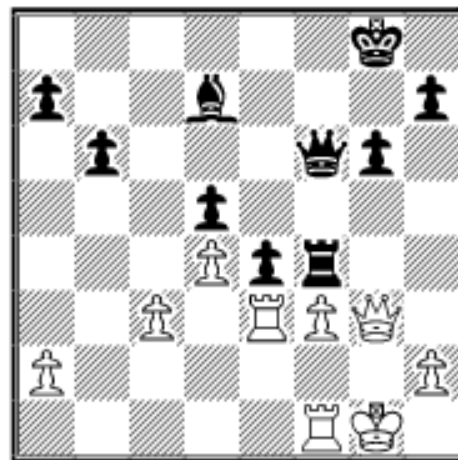




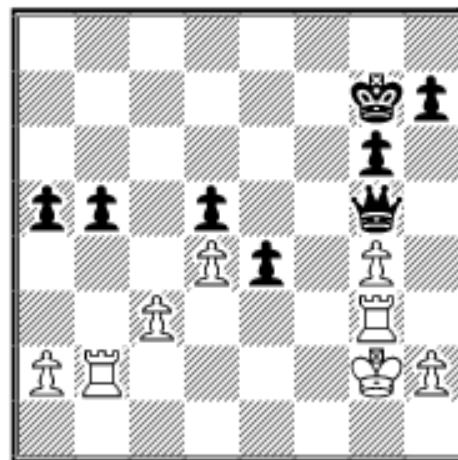
**29.exd6! Qxd6** (29...cxd6  
**30.Qd7 Qg7 31.Qxd6+-)**  
**30.Qxd6 cxd6 31.Re1** A good  
 example of the power of a rook  
 on an open file. **31...Rf8**  
**32.Re7 Bb8 33.Nd2 Ng7**  
**34.Nf3 Re8 35.Rb7 d5 36.Rb6**  
**h5 37.Bg6 Rc8 38.Nxg5 f3**  
**39.gxf3 Bf4 40.h4 Bc1**  
**41.Rxa6 Bxb2 42.Bf7**

threatening mate **42...Ne8 43.Rg6 Nc7 44.Rc6 Ra8 1-0**

**16.06 P.Svidler (2686) - R.Ponomarev (2684) FIDE  
 WCh Moscow 2001**



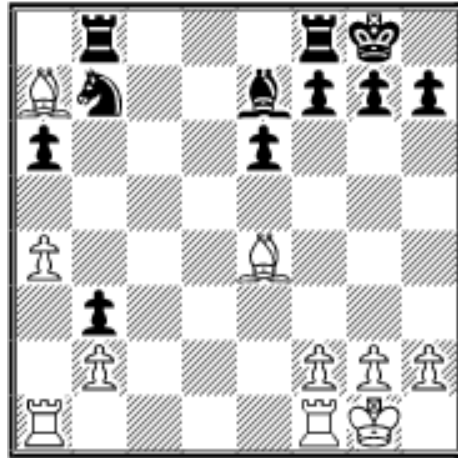
**25...Bg4! 26.Qxg4** (26.fxg4?  
 Rxf1+ 27.Kg2 Ra1 28.Qb8+  
 Qf8--+) **26...Rxg4+ 27.fxg4**  
**Qg5 28.Rg3 b5 29.Rf2 Kg7**  
**30.Kg2 a5 31.Rb2**



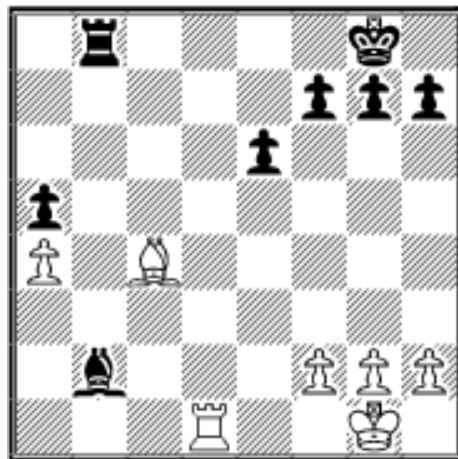
**31...b4!** Ponomarev wants to  
 create two connected passed  
 passed pawns. An important  
 weapon for the queen fighting  
 against two rooks. **32.cxb4**  
**axb4 33.h3 Qc1 34.Rgb3 Kh6**  
**35.Rxb4 Qd1 36.Kf2 Kg5**  
**37.Re2 Kf4 38.Rb3 Qxd4+**  
**39.Kg2 Qc4 40.Rf2+ Kg5**  
**41.Rf7 d4 42.h4+ Kxh4**

**43.Rxh7+ Kxg4 44.Rg3+ Kf5 0-1**

## 16.07 A.Dreev (2676) - R.Ponomariov (2684) World Teams Yerevan 2001

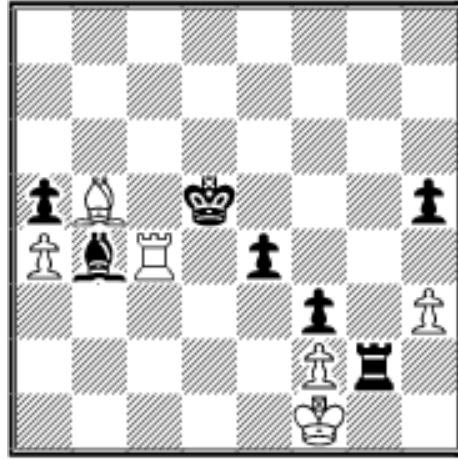


22...Nc5! Instead of fighting against the bishop pair, Ponomariov decides to sacrifice an exchange and to play on the dark squares. **23.Bc6 Rb4 24.Rfd1 Rc8 25.Bxc5 Bxc5 26.Rac1 Bd4 27.Bb5 Rb8 28.Rc4 Rxc4 29.Bxc4 Bxb2 30.Bxb3 a5 31.Bc4**



This endgame should be drawn, but the presence of rooks gives Black some hope. In the following Ponomariov shows how to play for a win: **31...g6 32.g3 Rc8 33.Bb5 Rc2 34.Bd3 Rc5 35.Kg2 Kg7 36.Bb5 Ba3 37.Rd2 Bb4 38.Re2 e5** the pawns start to roll. White should probably stop this by

grabbing more space on the kingside himself. **39.Re4 h5 40.Rc4 Rd5 41.Rc7 e4 42.Rc4 Re5 43.Bc6 f5 44.Rc2 g5 45.Rc4 Kf6 46.Rc2 Re7 47.Bb5 f4 48.Rc6+ Ke5 49.gxf4+ gxf4 50.Rg6 Kf5 51.Rg8 Rc7 52.Rc8 f3+! (52...Rxc8? 53.Bd7+=) 53.Kf1 Rg7 54.Rc4 Ke5 55.Bc6 Rg4 56.Bb5 Rg2 57.h3 Kd5**



**58.Rc8?** 58.Ba6 was more tenacious although it already looks very unlikely, that White will be able to save his skin.

**58...Bc5–+ 59.Rd8+ Ke5**

**60.Re8+ Kf4 61.Rc8 Bxf2**

**62.Rc4 0-1**

### Sources:

ChessBase *MEGABASE 2001*

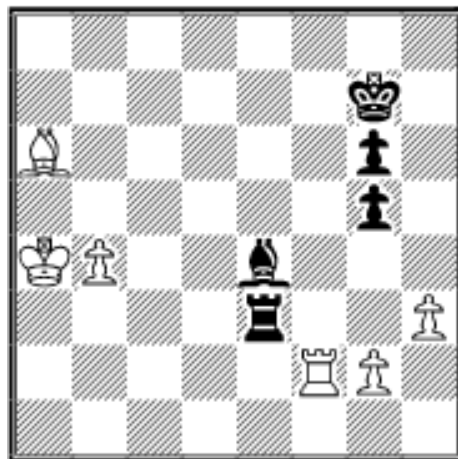
*The Week in Chess*

*Schach* No.3/2002

*New in Chess* magazine No.2/2002

### Exercises (Solutions next month)

Three exercises from the recent super tournament in Linares, where Ponomarev showed, that he already belongs to the circle of the world's top players and his win of the FIDE world championship was no accident:

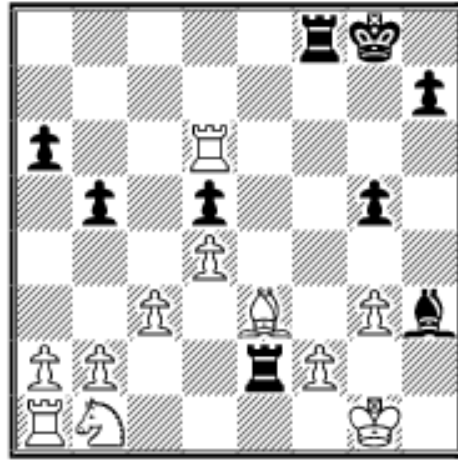


**E16.01 M.Adams (2742) -**

**R.Ponomarev (2727)**

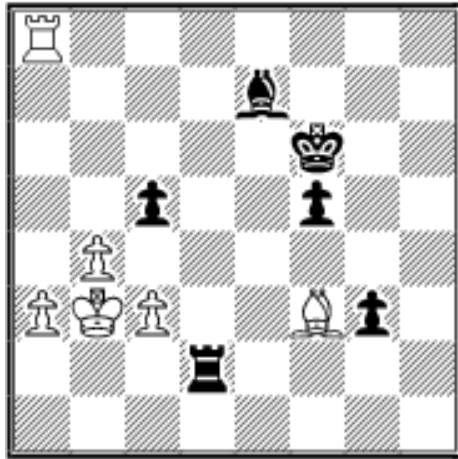
**SuperGM Linares 2002**

Adams played 46.Rf2 and won later. Is 46.Re2 winning as well?



**E16.02 *R.Ponomarev* (2727) - *V.Anand* (2757) SuperGM  
Linares 2002**

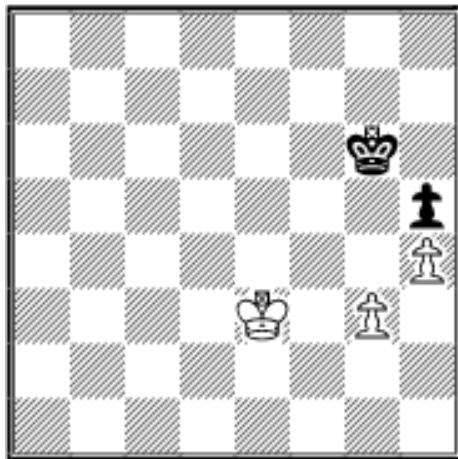
Anand has sacrificed a piece to reach this position. What was his idea? (Black to move)



**E16.03 *R.Ponomarev* (2727) - *G.Kasparov* (2838) SuperGM  
Linares 2002**

Kasparov played 43...Kf7 (43...Rf2! looks much more dangerous). What was Ponomarev's reply?

**Solutions to last month exercises**

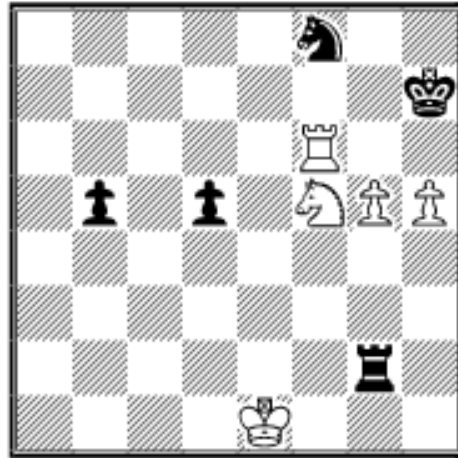


**E15.01 *R.Ponomarev* (2673) - *A.Moiseenko* (2561) 3rd  
Rector Cup Kharkov 2001**

Black can't allow White's king to reach the opposition on the fourth rank. So the two drawing moves are **57...Kf5**  $\frac{1}{2}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$   
58.Kf3 Ke5! 59.g4 hxg4+!  
60.Kxg4 Kf6= and **57...Kf7**

58.Kf3 Ke7! 59.Ke3 Kf7! 60.Kd4 Kf6! 61.Ke4 Ke6!= Did you find both?

But not 57...Kg7? 58.Ke4! Kf6 59.Kf4! Kg6 60.Ke5! Kg7  
61.Kf5! Kh6 62.Kf6! Kh7 63.Kg5!+-



**E15.02 *R.Ponomariov* (2684) -  
*R.Vaganian* (2650) World  
Teams Yerevan 2001**

Ponomariov won nicely with  
**56.Rf7+ Kg8 57.Nh6+ 1-0**

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