



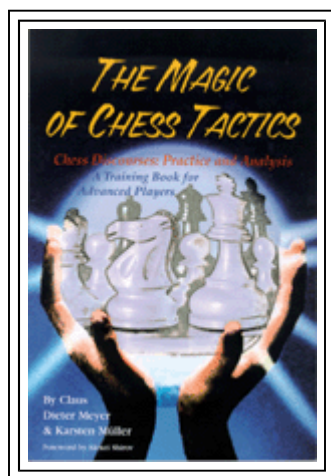
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COLUMNISTS

## Endgame Corner

Karsten Müller



## A Theoretically Important Endgame

I had an interesting endgame, in the recent German Championship held in Höckendorf, against one of Germany's very talented young players, 16-year-old Arik Braun:

**41.01 K.Müller (2517) - A.Braun (2429)**  
[B47] 75th ch-GER Höckendorf 2004

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nc6 5.Nc3 Qc7 6.g3

6...Nf6?

This is a serious error. As usual the move order is very critical in the Open Sicilian. 6...a6 is correct, which leads to the game after 7.Bg2 Nf6 8.0-0 Nxd4 (8...Bc5 is an important alternative.) 9.Qxd4 Bc5 10.Bf4 d6 11.Qd2.

7.Bg2?

I can't explain this properly. Maybe I hoped to get the endgame I was aiming for: 7.Ndb5!

Qb8 (7...Qa5 8.Bd2±) 8.Bf4 Ne5 (8...e5 9.Bg5±) 9.Be2! Bc5 (9...a6 10.Qd4 d6 11.Rd1 axb5 12.Bxe5+-) 10.Bxe5! Qxe5 11.f4 Qb8 12.e5+- from R.Fischer-M.Tal, Bled 1961 is the well known refutation.

7...Nxd4 8.Qxd4 Bc5 9.Bf4 d6 10.Qd2 a6 11.0-0 h6 (11...Nd7? 12.Rad1 Ne5 13.Na4±) 12.Rad1 e5 13.Be3 Bg4

13...Ke7 is the alternative here. Yet White's initiative is dangerous, e.g. 14.Bxc5 Qxc5 15.Na4 Qc7 (15...Qc6?! 16.f4 a5 17.Qd3 b5 18.Nc3 Be6 19.Qxb5 Qxb5 20.Nxb5 Bc4 21.Nxd6 Bxf1 22.Nf5+ Kf8 23.Rxf1±) 16.f4 a5 17.Qd3 b5 18.Nc3 Be6 19.Nxb5 Qc5+ 20.Kh1 Bc4 21.Qxd6+ Qxd6 22.Nxd6 Bxf1 23.Nf5+ Kf8 24.Rxf1 with compensation (Ribli in CBM 64) K.Georgiev-S.Dorobanov, New York Open 1998.

13...Bxe3? 14.fxe3 Ke7? (14...Be6 15.Qxd6 Qxd6 16.Rxd6 Rd8 17.Rxd8+ Kxd8 18.Nd5±) 15.Rxf6+-

13...Be6 14.Bxc5 dxc5 15.Nd5 Bxd5 16.exd5 Qd6 17.f4 is another move order to reach the endgame. It was used in Adams-Anand, Corus Wijk aan Zee 2001.

14.Bxc5 dxc5 (14...Bxd1?? 15.Bxd6+-) 15.f3

15.Qd6 Rc8 (15...Qxd6?! 16.Rxd6 Rd8 17.Rxd8+ Kxd8 F.Peredy-O.Touzane, Budapest First Saturday 1995 18.f4 is unpleasant as 18...Re8? is met by 19.f5±)

16.Rd2 has also been tried, but Black should be able to neutralize White's initiative.

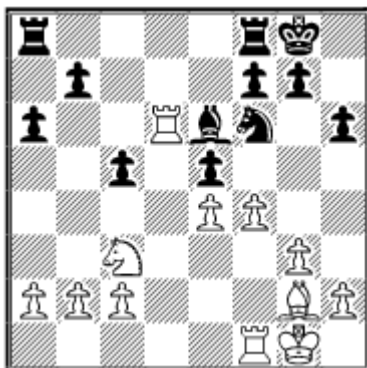
### 15...Be6 16.Nd5

16.f4

**A)** 16...Rd8?! 17.Nd5 Bxd5 18.exd5 e4 19.Rfe1 (19.c4 0-0 20.Rfe1 Rfe8 21.Qc2 with compensation B.Kurajica-M.Franklin, Hastings 1971) 19...Rxd5 20.Rxe4+ Kd8 21.Qe2 Rxd1+ 22.Qxd1+ Qd7 23.Qxd7+ Kxd7 24.Re5 b6 25.Bf1 a5 26.Bc4± was the very famous R.Fischer-M.Taimanov, Vancouver 1971, that Fischer managed to win in very instructive fashion. See Endgame Corner 9 in the [ChessCafe Archives](#).

**B)** 16...0-0

**B1)** 17.Qd6 Qa5!= O.Rodriguez Vargas-V.Palermo, Buenos Aires 1973 (17...Qxd6? 18.Rxd6



gives White a very strong initiative, e.g. 18...Rfe8 19.Rfd1 Rac8 20.f5 Bc4 21.a4± V.Kotronias-D.Rajkovic, Corfu 1993)

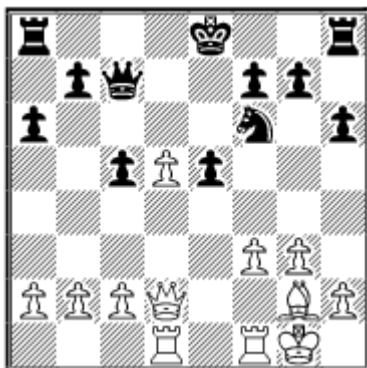
**B2)** 17.Nd5 Bxd5 18.exd5 (see next diagram)



and now Black has something better than ... Qd6: 18...e4 (18...exf4 19.Qxf4 Qb6 and White has only a very slight advantage.) 19.Rfe1 Rfe8 20.c4 Qd6 21.Re3 Re7 22.Rde1 Rae8 23.Qc2 b5 24.b3 h5 and in M.Pavlov-M.Bobotsov, Bucharest 1971 a draw was agreed.

So I like the immediate 16.Nd5 more: 16.Rfe1 Rd8 17.Qxd8+ Qxd8 18.Rxd8+ Kxd8 19.f4 Kc7 20.Nd5+ Bxd5 21.exd5 e4!= D.Navara-P.Haba, CZE 2002

**16...Bxd5 17.exd5** (see next diagram)



**17...Qd6**

17...0-0?! 18.d6 Qb6 19.c4 Rad8 20.Rfe1 Rfe8 21.Bh3 and it is not easy to blockade White's dangerous d-pawn, D.Alsina Leal-D.Andreikin, Kirishi 2003

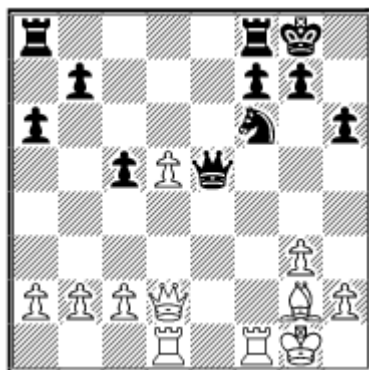
**18.f4!**

18.c4 0-0 19.Rfe1 Rfe8 20.Re2 Re7 21.Rde1 Rae8 22.Qc2 b5 does not promise White anything, D.Maxion-W.Heinig, Germany

1992.

**18...0-0 19.fxex5**

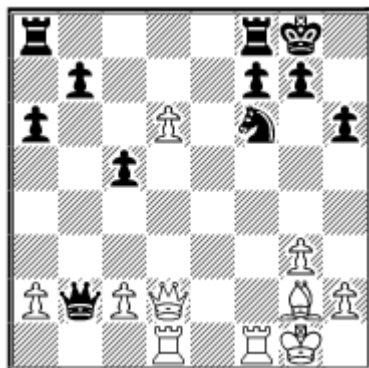
19.Rfe1 exf4 20.Qxf4 Rfd8 21.Qxd6 Rxd6 22.Re7 b6 23.Rc7 Rad8 24.c4 R8d7 25.Rc8+ Rd8 26.Bh3 Rxc8 27.Bxc8 a5 28.Bb7 Ne4= (Ribli) P.Large-G.Fischdick, London 1984

**19...Qxe5**

If Black manages to blockade the d5-pawn with his knight, he will be just fine. So White has to take drastic measures to fight for an advantage. Michael Adams has given the following pawn sacrifice his stamp of approval, so I was happy to try it myself:

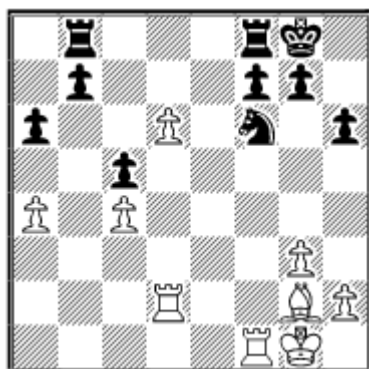
**20.d6!?**

20.c4 Qd6 is just equal: 21.Qf4 Rad8 22.Rfe1 Qxf4 23.gxf4 Ne8 24.Re7 Nd6 25.b3 Rfe8= due to Black's strong blockading knight, T.Ernst-C.Bergstrom, Norrkoeping 1988

**20...Qxb2****21.c4!**

At first sight this is a very strange decision: White offers an endgame a pawn down! But Adams is extremely strong, so we have to look again. White's d-pawn threatens to cut Black's army in two halves, which may lead to a domination of his rooks. Due to White's queenside pressure his bishop is stronger than the knight, which has lost its ideal blockading post on d6. And last but not least – White is better mobilized and has the initiative.

21.Rb1?! Qxa2 22.Rxb7 Rad8 T.Horvath-A.Fominyh, Budapest 1996 reduces White's winning potential, especially as his potentially dangerous a-pawn has disappeared, and makes Black's defense much easier.

**21...Qxd2 22.Rxd2 Rab8 23.a4!?**

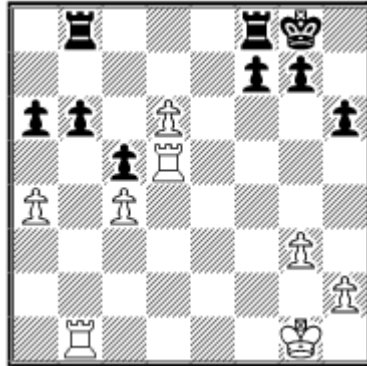
White wants to keep the queenside pawns on the board to bring pressure to bear on them.

23.Rb1 b5 24.d7 Rfd8 25.Bc6 Kf8 26.cxb5 axb5 27.Rxb5 Rxb5 28.Bxb5 Ke7 29.Re2+ Kf8 30.Rd2 Ke7 31.Re2+ and a draw was agreed in I.Rodriguez Gonzalez-J.Morales, Madrid 2003.

**23...Rfd8**

23...Nd7 One idea of this move is to establish the knight on e5.

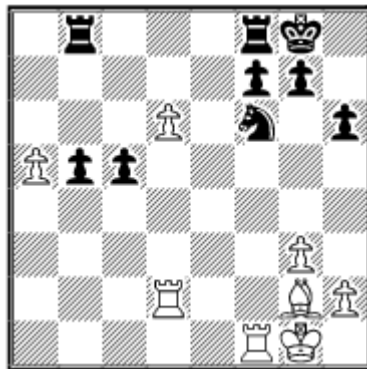
A) 24.Bd5!? comes strongly into consideration, e.g. 24...Nf6 25.Rb1 Nxd5 (25...b6 26.Bc6 is quite good for White as it's not easy for Black to untangle his forces.) 26.Rxd5 b6 (see next diagram)



27.a5! bxa5 28.Rbd1 and White is better despite the two pawn deficit.

B) 24.Rb2 Rfd8 25.Rxb7 Rxb7 26.Bxb7 Nb6 27.Bxa6 Nxa4 28.Bb5 (28.Rd1 Nc3 29.Rd3 Ne4 30.d7 Nf6 31.Bb5 Kf8=) 28...Nc3 29.Rf5 Rxd6= T.Bakre-A.Fominyh, Cairo 2001

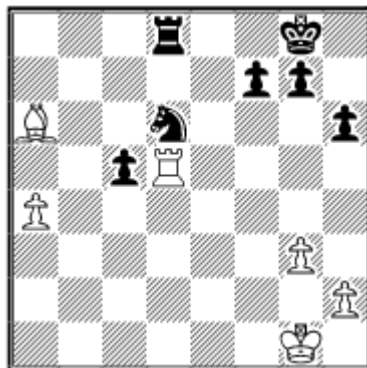
23...b5? is met by 24.cxb5 axb5 25.a5± (see next diagram)



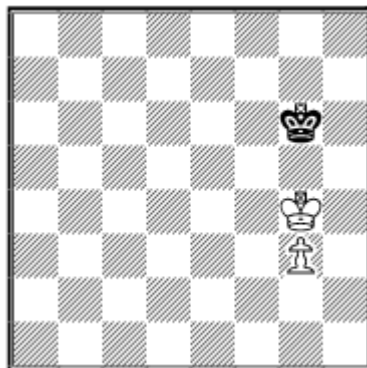
and White's bishop lends his long arm to the a-pawn.

24.Rb1 b6!?

24...Nd7 25.Rxb7 Rxb7 26.Bxb7 Ne5 27.Rd5 Nxc4 28.Bxa6 Nxd6 (see next diagram)



29.a5 (29.Rxc5!? still gives White some winning chances as his a-pawn is quite dangerous.) 29...Kf8 30.Bf1 Nb7! White can win the knight, but not the game. 31.Rxd8+ Nxd8 32.Bg2 Ne6 33.a6 Nc7 34.a7 Ke7 35.Kf2 Kd6 36.Ke3 c4 37.a8Q Nxa8 38.Bxa8 Ke5 39.Bf3 f5 40.Be2 g5 41.Bxc4 f4+ 42.Kf2 (42.gxf4+ gxf4+ 43.Kf3 Kf6 is drawn due to White's wrong rook's pawn.) 42...fxg3+ 43.hxg3 g4 44.Bf7 Kf6 45.Be8 Kg5 46.Ke3 h5 47.Bxh5 Kxh5 48.Kf4 Kh6 49.Kxg4 Kg6 (see next diagram)



and a draw was agreed in Adams-Anand, Corus Wijk aan Zee 2001. If you don't know why or want to study pawn endgames, you can start with Endgame Corner 10 in the [ChessCafe Archives](#).

25.Re1 (see next diagram)



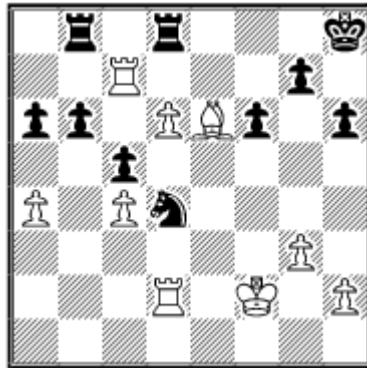
25...Nd7? now it is too late for this regrouping. 25...Ne8 was called for, when I could not find more than 26.Red1 Nf6

27.Re1=

**26.Re7 f6?!**

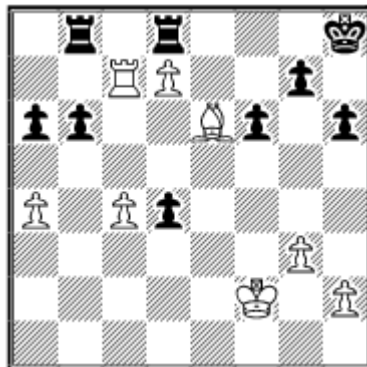
26...Nf6 27.Bc6 Kf8 28.Ra7 Ng4 29.Re2 Rxd6 30.Bd5 with compensation.

**27.Bd5+ Kh8 28.Be6 Ne5 29.Kf2 Nc6 30.Rc7 Nd4** (see next diagram)



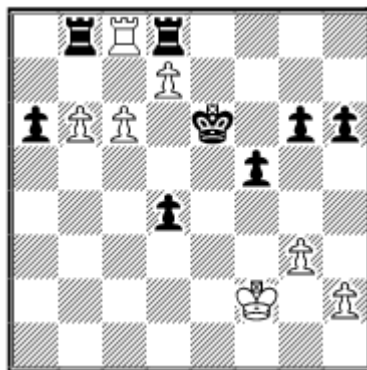
**31.Bd7**

Thomas Luther suggested the immediate 31.Rxd4 cxd4 32.d7 (see next diagram)



This is very interesting, e.g.

**A)** 32...g6? 33.a5 f5 (33...d3 34.Rc8 d2 35.Rxd8+ Rxd8 36.Ke2+-; 33...bxa5 34.Rc8 Kg7 35.Rxd8 Rxd8 36.c5+-) 34.Rc8 Kg7 35.axb6 Kf6 36.c5 Kxe6 37.c6+- (see next diagram)



The touch down is coming!

**B)** 32...a5! 33.Ke2 g6 34.Kd3 Kg7 35.Kxd4 Kf8 36.Kd5 Ke7 37.g4 and White may be winning, but I am not 100% sure.

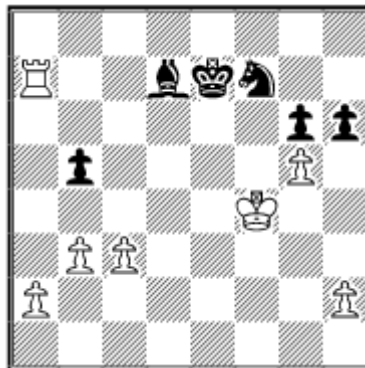
**31...Kh7 32.Ke3** (see next diagram)



**32...f5?** (32...b5 was the last chance.)  
**33.Rxd4!** now it is over: **33...cxd4+ 34.Kxd4 Kg6 35.Ke5 Rf8 36.Be6 b5 37.axb5 axb5 38.c5 b4 39.d7 b3 40.Rc8 b2 41.Rxb8 Rxb8 42.Bxf5+ Kf7 43.Kd6 b1Q 44.Bxb1 Rxb1 45.d8Q 1-0**

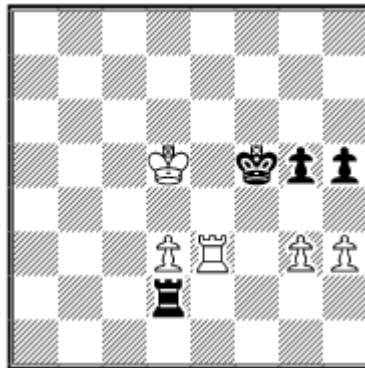
Sources: ChessBase MEGABASE 2004; The Week in Chess

### Exercises (Solutions next month)



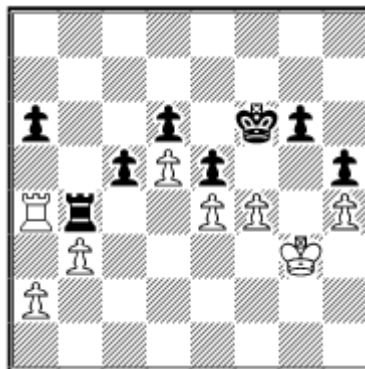
**E41.01 K.Müller (2521) - P.Acs (2606) ECC Rethymnon 2003**

White to move and win



**E41.02 M.Adams (2719) - S.Zhigalko (2399) ECC Rethymnon 2003**

White to move and win



**E41.03 G.Schebler - K.Müller German Championship Hoeckendorf 2004**

White to move and win

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