



Counterplay Counts

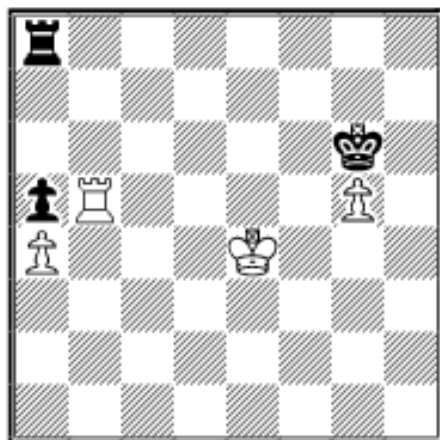
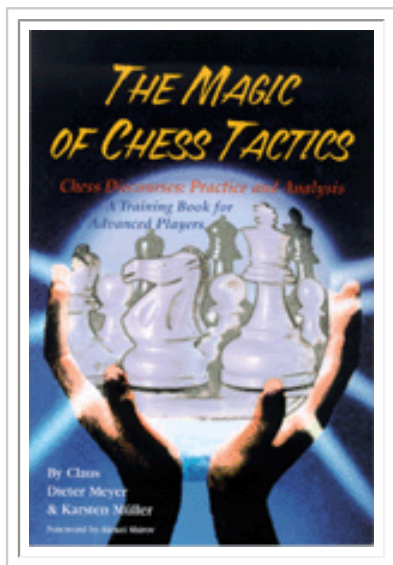
In rook endings activity is usually critically important, as in the following recent examples:

43.01 V.Anand (2774) - S.Lputian (2634)
ARM-ROW Match Moscow 2004

COLUMNISTS

Endgame Corner

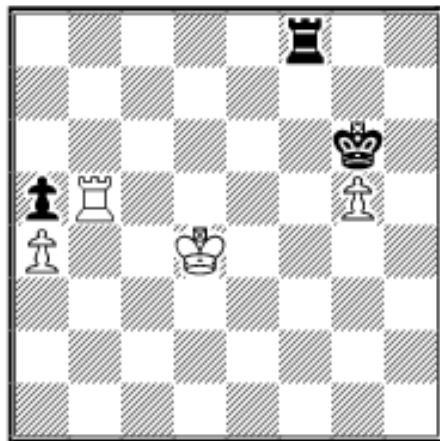
Karsten Müller



57.Kd4?

The winning method was given at the ChessBase website: 57.Re5! Rb8 (passively waiting makes White's task easier: 57...Ra7 58.Kd5 Ra6 59.Kc5 Ra8 60.Kb6+-) 58.Rxa5 Rb4+ 59.Kd5 Kxg5 60.Ra8 Kh6 61.a5 Rb5+ 62.Kc4 Rg5 63.a6+- as Black is one tempo too slow to set up Vancura's draw.

57...Rd8+? Activity is the correct concept, but Black chooses the wrong way to implement it. Alexander Baburin found the proper method and published it in *Chess Today* 1313: 57...Rf8!!



A) 58.Kc5 Kxg5 59.Rxa5 Rf4 60.Ra8 Kg6 61.a5 Rf5+ 62.Kc6 Kg7 is Vancura's draw.

B) 58.Ke4 Re8+! 59.Kd3 (59.Re5 Rxe5+ 60.Kxe5 Kxg5=) 59...Rf8!! 60.Rxa5 Rf4=

C) 58.Rxa5 Rf4+ 59.Kc3 Rf3+ 60.Kb4 Rf4+ 61.Kb5 Kxg5 62.Ra8 Rf5+ 63.Kc6 Rf6+ 64.Kd5 Rf5+ 65.Ke6 Rf6+ 66.Ke7 Kg6 67.a5 Rf7+ 68.Ke6 Rf6+ 69.Ke5 Rf5+ 70.Ke4 Rb5= (Baburin)

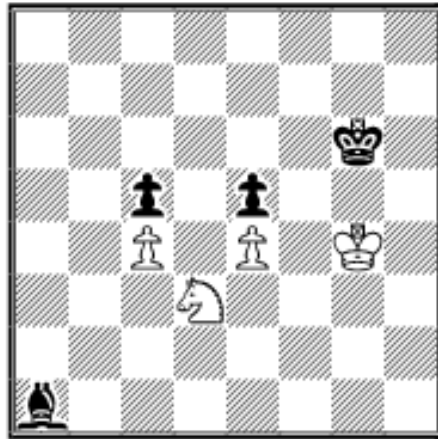
58.Kc4! Rd1 (58...Rf8 does not work anymore due to 59.Rc5+-) **59.Rxa5 Ra1 60.Kb3 Rb1+ 61.Ka3 1-0**

This strategy is, of course, also valid in other endings. Although sacrificing a

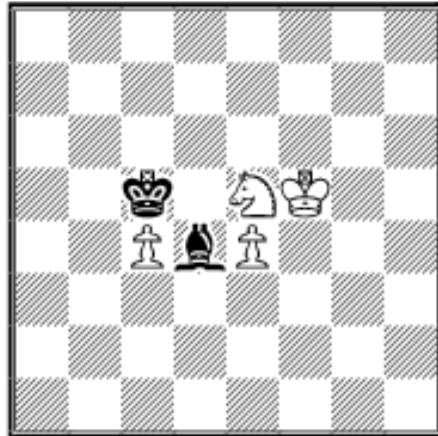
pawn for activity is more common in rook endings. The following position is a classic example from a minor piece endgame:

43.02 Pachman - Hromadka

Prague Ch 1944

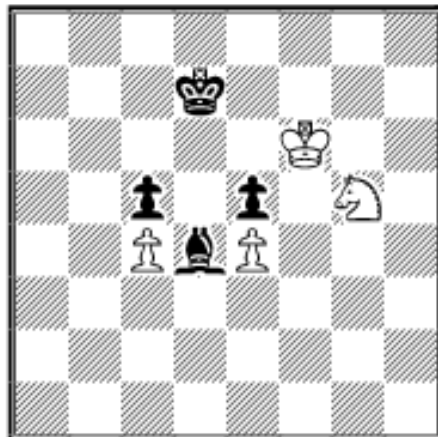


1.Ne1 Keeping the position closed is the best try. 1.Nxc5 was played in the game. One sample line runs 1...Kf6 2.Nd3 Ke6 3.Kg5 Kd6 4.Kf5 Bd4 5.Nxe5 (5.c5+ Kc6 6.Ke6 Ba1=) 5...Kc5= (see next diagram)



and White can't keep both pawns.

1...Bd4 2.Nf3 Bc3 3.Nh4+ Kf6 4.Kh5 White was thought to be winning with this plan, but Robin Smith recently found that the position is drawn (see *Modern Chess Analysis*, p.41f): **4...Bd4 5.Nf5 Bc3 6.Ne3 Bd4 7.Ng4+ Ke6 8.Kg6 Bc3 9.Nf6 Bb2 10.Nh7 Ke7 11.Kf5 Bc3 12.Ng5 Bd4 13.Nf3 Kd6 14.Kf6 Kd7 15.Ng5** (see next diagram)

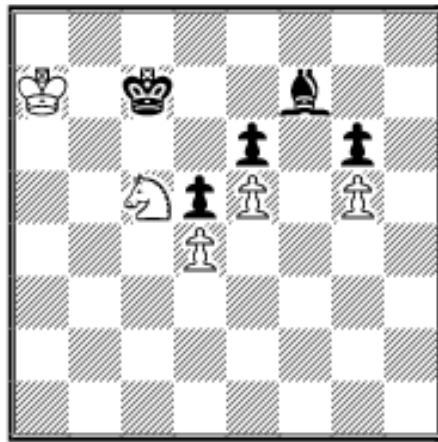


So far everything has worked out according to White's plan, but now comes the amazing surprise: **15...Kc7!** Counterplay is what counts! **16.Nf7 Kb6 17.Nxe5** (17.Ke6 Ka5 18.Kd5 Kb4 19.Nd8 Kc3 20.Nc6 Kd3 21.Nb8 Be3 22.Nd7 Bd4=) **17...Ka5 18.Ke6 Kb4 19.Kd5 Bxe5 20.Kxe5 Kxc4 21.Kd6 Kd3 22.e5 c4=**

The next two endgames are also classics:

43.03 S.Dolmatov (2550) - M.Drasko (2510)

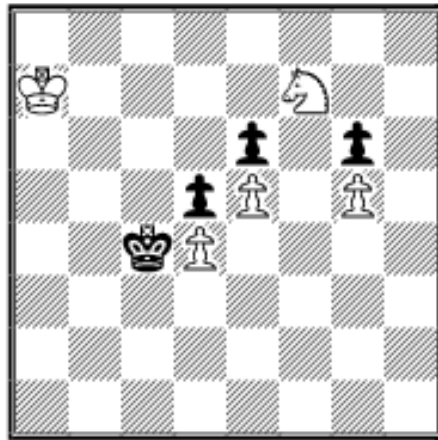
Sochi 1988



This was analyzed independently by Nikolai Grigoriev and, more than half a century later, by Sergey Dolmatov (see *School of Chess Excellence 1* by Dvoretsky). Again activity is the only chance: **62...Bg8?**

62...Kc6 offered much more resistance: 63.Nb7? This direct plan was given by Dolmatov, but Black now has a miracle escape. (Retreating with 63.Ka6! was called for: 63...Kc7 64.Nb7 Be8 65.Ka7 Bf7 66.Nd6 Bg8 67.Ka6 Kc6 68.Ka5 Bh7 69.Nf7 Bg8

70.Nh6+- (Grigoriev)) 63...Kb5! 64.Nd6+ Kb4 65.Nxf7 Kc4 (see next diagram)



Now the position is drawn due to Black's counterplay: 66.Kb6 (66.Nh8 Kxd4 67.Nxg6 Ke4=) 66...Kxd4

A) 67.Kb5 Ke3 68.Kc5 Ke4 (68...d4? 69.Nd6 d3 70.Nc4+ Ke4 71.Kd6+-) 69.Kb4 Ke3=

B) 67.Kc6 Ke3

B1) 68.Kc5 Ke4 69.Kb4 Ke3 70.Nd8

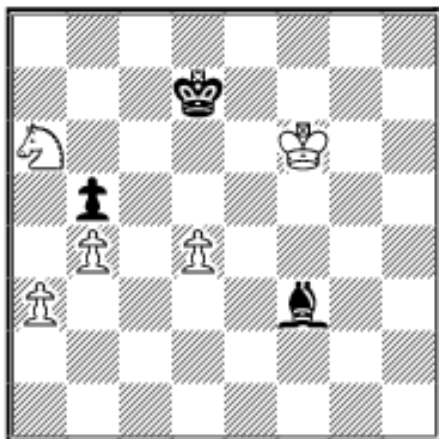
B1a) 70...Kf4? 71.Nc6 Kxg5 (71...Ke4 72.Kc5 d4 73.Nxd4 Kxe5 74.Kc4+-) 72.Kc5 Kf4 73.Kd6 g5 74.Nd4+-

B1b) 70...Ke4 71.Nc6 d4 72.Kc4 d3 73.Kc3 Kd5 74.Nd8 Kxe5 75.Kxd3 Kf4 76.Nf7 e5=

B2) 68.Kd6 d4 69.Kxe6 d3 70.Nd6 Kd4 71.Kf6 d2 72.e6 d1Q 73.e7 Qf3+ 74.Kxg6 Qc6 75.e8Q Qxd6+ 76.Kg7 Kc3 77.g6 Kb2= as Black's king is inside the drawing zone.

63.Nb7 Kc6 64.Nd6 (imprisoning the bishop) **64...Bh7 65.Ka6 Bg8 66.Ka5 Bh7 67.Nf7 Bg8 68.Nh6 Bh7 69.Ka6 Kc7 70.Kb5 Kb7 71.Kc5 Kc7 72.Nf7 Bg8 73.Nd6 Bh7 74.Ne8+** (what a knight!) **1-0**

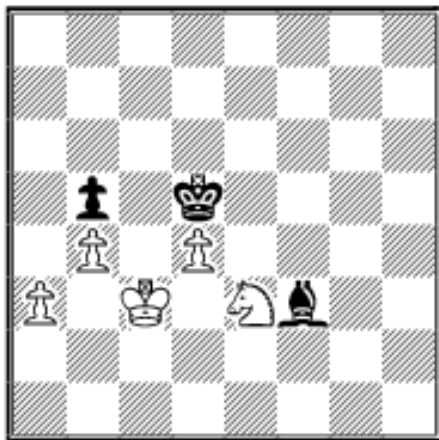
43.04 A.Karpov (2705) - G.Kasparov (2715)
World Championship 31th-KK1 Moscow 1984



With additional black (!!) pawns on a7 and d5 White would win easily as Black has no counterplay whatsoever. Yet as matters stand it is extremely difficult to convert the two pawn advantage: **58...Kd6! 59.Kf5 Kd5 60.Kf4 Bh1 61.Ke3 Kc4 62.Nc5 Bc6 63.Nd3 Bg2 64.Ne5+ Kc3 65.Ng6 Kc4 66.Ne7 Bb7?**

66...Bh1 offered much tougher resistance, e.g. 67.Nf5 Kd5 68.Ng3 Bg2 69.Kd3 Bf3

70.Nf1 Be4+ 71.Kc3 Bf3 72.Ne3+ (see next diagram)



72...Kd6 (72...Ke4?! 73.Nc4 Kd5 74.Nb2 Kc6 75.a4+-) 73.a4!! a study-like win follows: 73...bxa4 74.Nc4+ Kc7 75.b5 Bd5 76.Ne3 Bb3 77.Kb4 Kb7 78.d5 Kc7 79.Nc4 Bc2 80.b6+ Kb7 81.Kc5 Bg6 82.Na5+ Kb8 83.d6 Be8 84.b7 a3 85.Kb6 a2 86.Nb3 Bd7 87.Nc5 Bb5 88.d7 a1Q 89.d8Q#

67.Nf5! now it is over: **67...Bg2**

67...Kd5 68.Kd3 Ke6 69.Ng3 Bg2 70.Nh5 Kd6 71.Nf4 Bf1+ 72.Kc3 Kc6 (72...Bc4 73.a4+-) 73.d5+ Kd6 74.Kd4 Bc4 75.a4+-

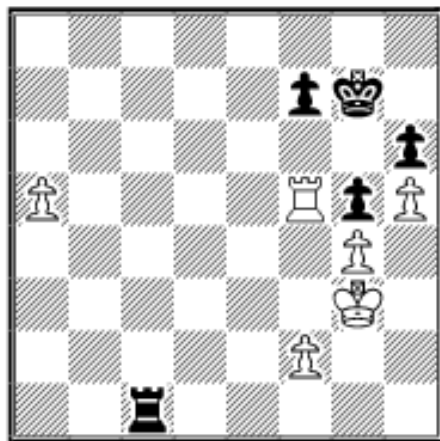
67...Kb3 68.Kd3 Bg2 (68...Kxa3 69.Kc3+-) 69.Ne3 Bh3 70.d5 Kxa3 71.Kc3+-

68.Nd6+ Kb3 69.Nxb5 Ka4 70.Nd6 1-0

Finally Johannes Steckner (Zürich, Switzerland) has asked me to clarify matters in *Endgame Corner* 30, example 30.04 (see also EC42.05):

43.05 P.Leko (2736) - V.Anand (2753)

XX SuperGM Linares 2003

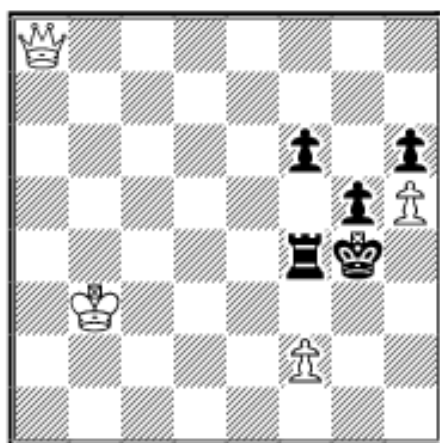


45...Rc4!? (In the game Anand played 45...Ra1? and lost quickly (see 30.04).)

46.Kf3

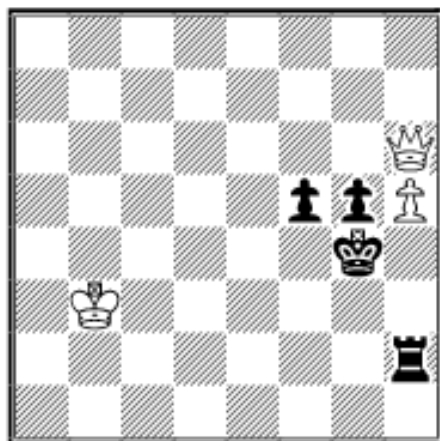
46.f3 Rc2 47.f4 Rc3+ 48.Kf2 gxf4 49.Rxf4 Ra3 50.Rf5 f6 51.Rb5 Kf7 52.Ke2!+- (Arizmendi – see *Endgame Corner* 37 in the [ChessCafe Archives](#)) (52.Rb7+? Ke6 53.Rb6+ Ke5 54.a6 Kf4= (Leko at www.chessgate.de))

46...Ra4 47.Ke3 Rxc4 48.Kd3 f6 49.Kc3 Kf7 50.Kb3 Ke6 51.a6 Kxf5 52.a7 Rf4 53.a8Q Kg4 (see next diagram)



So far my analysis in *Endgame Corner* 30. Now Jan Timman has found a very dangerous plan to shatter Black's fortress (see *New in Chess Magazine* 1/2004, p.97): **54.Qh1!?**

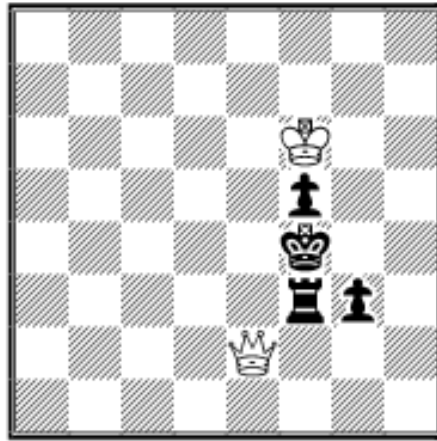
My line went 54.Qe8 Rxf2 55.Qg6 f5 56.Qxh6 Rh2 (see next diagram)



and now Steckner looked at

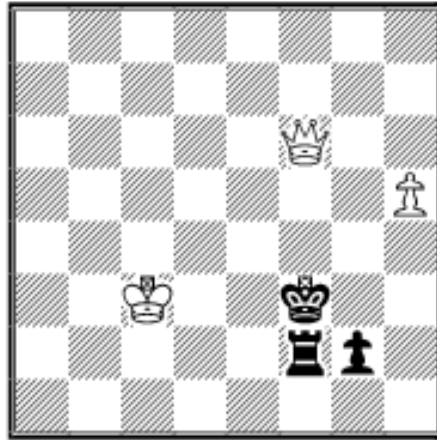
A) 57.Qe6 Kxh5 58.Qxf5 (58.Kc4 Rh4+ 59.Kd5 Re4 60.Qxf5 Rf4=) 58...Rh4=

B) 57.Qd6! Rh3+! (57...Rxc5? 58.Qd1+ Kh4 59.Kc4 g4 60.Kd4+-) 58.Kc4 Kxh5 59.Kd4 g4 (59...Rh4+? 60.Ke5 Rf4 61.Qc6!+-) 60.Ke5 Rf3 61.Kf6 g3 62.Qd1 Kg4 63.Qe2 Kf4= (see next diagram)



with a reciprocal zugzwang, but Steckner did not find a way for White to lose a tempo.

54...Rxf2 55.Qg1+ Kf3 56.Kc3 g4 57.Qc1 g3 58.Qxh6 g2 59.Qxf6+ (see next diagram)



Assuming that White wins, but Black still has a resource: **59...Kg3! 60.Qg5+** (60.Qg7+ Kf3 61.h6 Rf1=) **60...Kf3 61.h6 Rf1 62.h7 Rh1=**

So the doors of Black's fortress remain closed at least for the time being...

Sources:

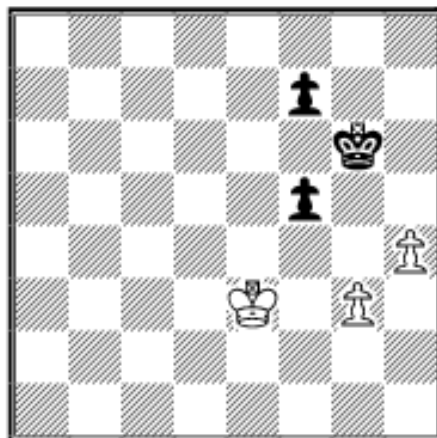
School of Chess Excellence 1 – Endgame Analysis, Mark Dvoretsky, Edition Olms 2001

Modern Chess Analysis, Robin Smith, Gambit 2004

Chess Today – daily internet newspaper edited by Alexander Baburin

The Week in Chess – compiled and edited by Mark Crowther, which has recently reached its 500th issue. Congratulations!

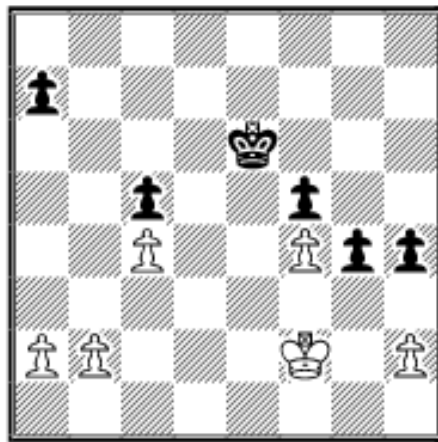
Exercises (Solutions next month)



E43.01 G.Kasparov (2817) - E.Bacrot (2675)

ARM-ROW Match Moscow 2004

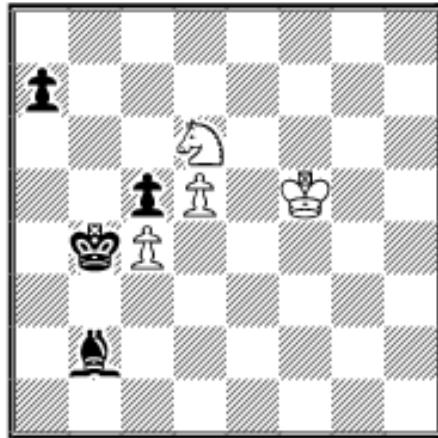
Pawn endings are not as easy as they seem to be, even Kasparov missed the win here. Can you do better?



E43.02 Instructive Pawn Ending

Hamburg 2004

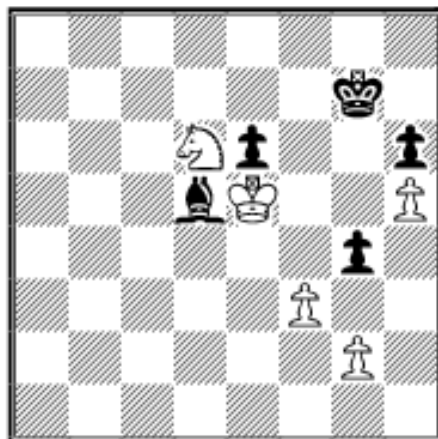
Frank Lamprecht showed me this position from a game between two young players at his club. They agreed to a draw, which is indeed the correct result. Why? (White is to move)



E43.03 Nguyen Chi Minh (2364) - M.Borriss (2441)

Bundesliga 2003-4 Kreuzberg 2004

Evaluate the position with Black to move.



E43.04 R.Vaganian (2623) - L.Johannessen (2495)

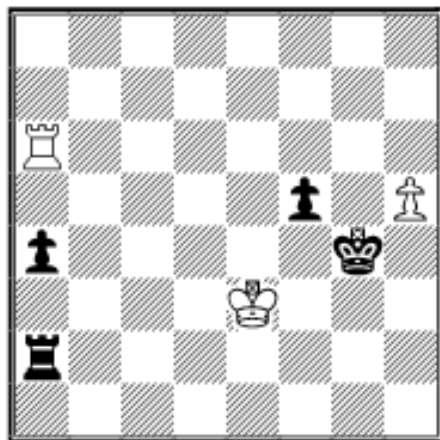
Bundesliga 2003-4 Katernberg 2003

White to move and win.

Solutions to last month exercises

E42.01 L.Lenic (2386) - D.Sermek (2577)

Vidmar mem 15th Terme Zrece 2003



White has to keep his h-pawn: **53.Rg6+?**

53.h6 f4+ 54.Ke4 Re2+ 55.Kd3 Re3+

A) 56.Kd4

A1) 56...a3 57.h7 Rh3 58.Ke4 (58.Rxa3? Rxh7–+) 58...Rxh7 59.Rg6+ Kh5 60.Rg1 Rf7 61.Kf3=

A2) 56...Kf5 57.h7 Rh3 58.Ra7= (58.Rxa4? Rxh7 59.Kd3 Rh2–+)

B) 56.Kd2 Rh3 57.Ke2 Rh2+ 58.Kf1 Kg3 59.Rg6+ Kf3 60.Kg1 Rh5 61.Ra6=

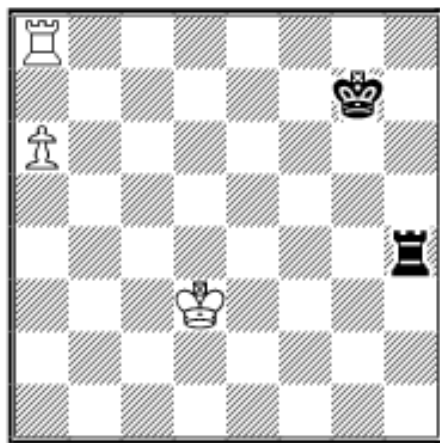
53...Kxh5 54.Rg8 a3 55.Kf4 Rf2+ 56.Ke3 Rf1 57.Ra8 Ra1 58.Kf2

58.Kf3 a2 this is possible due to Black's f-pawn. With a pawn on g5 instead of f5 it would not work as White's king can remain on g2 and the black king then lacks shelter. 59.Kg2 f4 60.Kf2 Kg6 61.Kg2 f3+ 62.Kf2 Rh1–+

58...Kg4 0–1

E42.02 V.Anand (2766) - A.Shirov (2736)

GMA Wijk aan Zee 2004



White has to play precisely to avoid Vancura's draw: **53.Ra7+!**

53.a7? Ra4 is completely drawn as White's king can't hide from the checks, e.g. 54.Kc3 Ra1 55.Kb2 Ra6 56.Kb3 Ra5 57.Kb4 Ra1 58.Kb5 Rb1+ 59.Kc6 Rc1+ 60.Kb5 Rb1+ 61.Kc4 Ra1=

53.Rc8? is just too slow: 53...Ra4 54.Rc6 Kf7 55.Kc3 Ke7 56.Kb3 Ra1 57.Kb4 Kd7=

53.Rb8? does not help either: 53...Ra4 54.Rb6 Kf7 55.Kc3 Ke7 56.Kb3 Ra1 57.Kb4 Kd7 58.Kb5 Rb1+=

53.Kc3? Rh6! 54.Kb4 Rf6 is Vancura's draw.

53...Kf6

53...Kg8?! loses easily: 54.Rb7 Ra4 55.a7 Ra1 56.Rb8++-

54.Kc3 Re4

54...Ra4 55.Ra8 Kf7 56.Kb3 Ra1 57.Kb4 Rb1+ (Black's king can't leave squares g7 and h7 due to the trick 57...Ke7 58.a7 Kd7 59.Rh8+-) 58.Kc5 Rc1+ 59.Kb6 Rb1+ 60.Ka7 Ke7 61.Rb8 Rc1 62.Kb7 Rb1+ 63.Ka8 Rc1 64.a7 Kd6 65.Kb7 Rb1+ 66.Kc8 Rc1+ 67.Kd8 Rh1 68.Rb6+ Kc5 69.Rc6++-

55.Rh7 Ra4 56.a7 and Shirov resigned due to **56...Ke6 57.Kb3 Ra1 58.Kb4 Kd6 59.Kb5 Rb1+ 60.Ka6 Ra1+ 61.Kb7 Rb1+ 62.Kc8 Ra1 63.Kb8+-**



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