



The Bear in the Hole

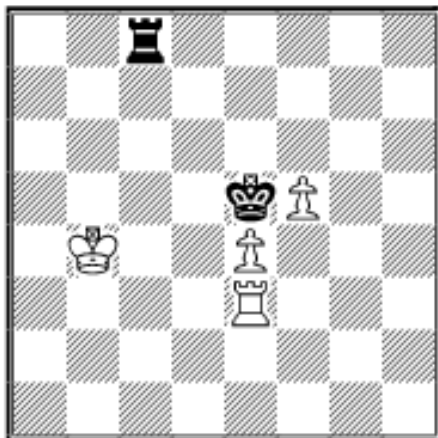
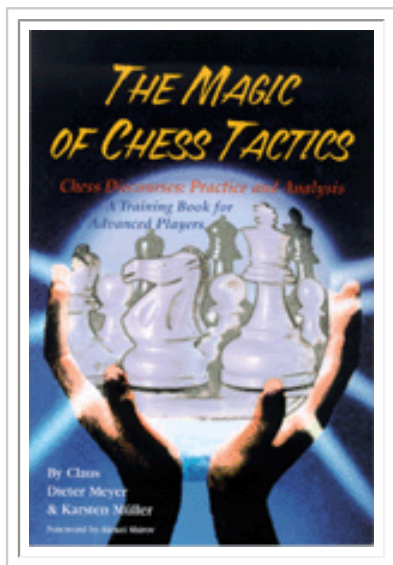
Two connected passed pawns are very powerful in rook endgames. If the defender does not have any pawns there are basically two types of drawn positions: Kasparyan's triangular positions or the defending king blocks the pawns (the bear in the hole). But even then the draw is by no means guaranteed:

44.01 R.Dautov (2535) - O.Romanishin (2520)
Kecskemet 1989

COLUMNISTS

Endgame Corner

Karsten Müller

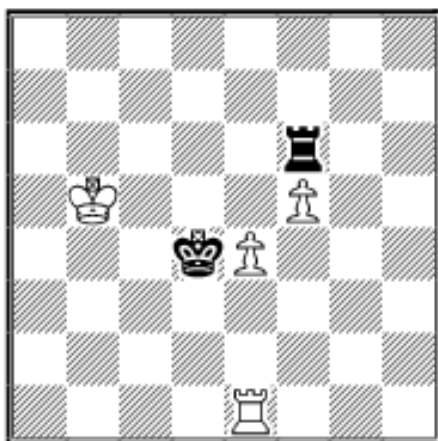


Should the defending rook try to cut off the king horizontally or vertically?

57...Kd4

57...Rc6? is wrong as it allows the improvement of White's rook: 58.Rc3! Rh6 59.Rc4 and White wins as shown in the game.

58.Re1 Rb8+? Black had to change direction with 58...Rf8! 59.Kb5 Rf6! (see next diagram)



and White can't make progress.

59.Ka3?

59.Ka5!+- was called for (see below).

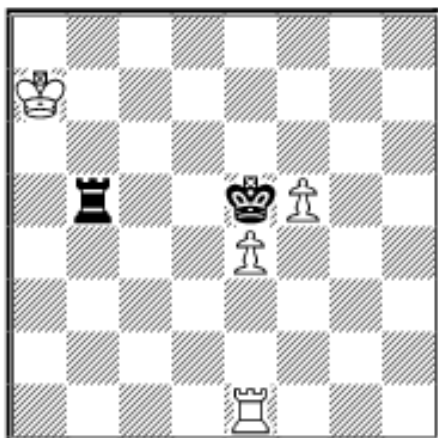
59...Ke5 60.Ka4 Rb7?

60...Rb6! had to be played. Dautov gives the following sample lines in *Informator 48*:

61.Ka5 Rf6 62.Kb4 Kd4 63.Kb5 Ke5 64.Kc4 Rd6 65.Re2 (65.Re3 Ra6 66.Kd3 Kf4! 67.Re2 Rd6+ 68.Kc3 Ke5 69.Rd2 Rh6! 70.Rd4 Rh3+ 71.Kc4 Rh8!=) 65...Ra6 66.Kd3 Ra3+ 67.Kd2 Rb3 68.Re3 Rb6 69.Kd3 Kf4 (I can add that 69...Ra6 70.Rf3 Ra3+ 71.Ke2 Ra2+ 72.Ke3 Ra3+ 73.Kf2 Ra8! also draws.) 70.Kd4 Rd6+ 71.Kc5 Ra6 72.Re1 Ke5=

61.Ka5! and the king cannot be cut off on the 6th rank anymore, so White wins. The steps are as follows: move the rook to a4, b4 or c4 and use it as bridge for the king. When the king has reached an appropriate square (e.g. c7) the e4-pawn can be sacrificed with Ra7. Dautov demonstrates this:

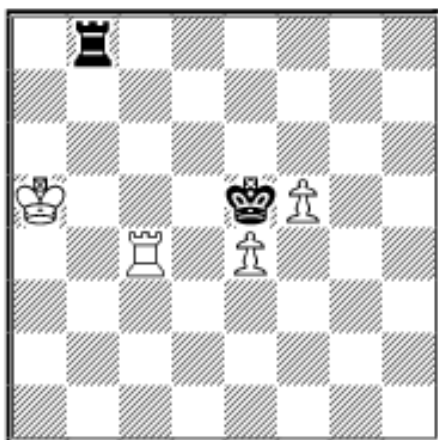
61...Rb8 62.Ka6 Rb2 63.Ka7 Rb5



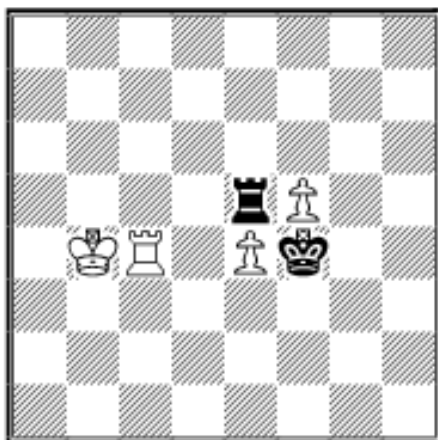
now the time has come to implement the first step: **64.Rf1!** forces Black's king to blockade the f-pawn **64...Kf6**

64...Kxe4?! 65.f6 Ra5+ 66.Kb6 Ra8 67.f7 Rf8 68.Kc6 Ke5 69.Kd7+-

65.Rc1 Ke5 66.Rc4 Rb1 now the king has to march to a5 to use the rook as a bridge to the b-file **67.Ka6 Rb2 68.Ka5 Rb8!?** (see next diagram)



setting a devilish trap **69.Ra4!!** puts Black in zugzwang. The immediate 69.Rb4? is wrong as White's king has no place to hide on the other side: 69...Ra8+ 70.Kb5 Rb8+ 71.Kc4 Ra8! 72.Kb3 Kf4! 73.Rc4 Re8 74.Kb4 Re5 (see next diagram)



and this cut off draws, e.g. 75.Kc3 Re8 76.Kd3 Rd8+ 77.Ke2 Ra8=

69...Ra8+ 70.Kb4 Rb8+ 71.Kc5 Rc8+ 72.Kb5 putting Black in zugzwang again **72...Rc7 73.Rc4 Rd7 74.Kc6 Rd8 75.Kc7 Rd1 76.Kc8 Rd6**

76...Rd2 77.Rc7 Rd6 (77...Kxe4 78.f6 Rf2 79.f7 Ke5 80.Kd8+-) 78.Re7+ Kf6 79.Re8 Ra6 80.Kb7 Ra5 81.Re6+-

77.Ra4 preparation for the final phase **77...Kf4**

77...Rd1 78.Ra7 Kxe4 79.f6+-

77...Rb6 78.Kc7 Rh6 79.Kd7 Rb6 80.Ra5+ Kf6 (80...Kxe4 81.Ke7 Rb7+ 82.Kf6 Rb6+ 83.Kg7 Rb7+ 84.Kg6+- another example for the strength of the horizontal cut off.) 81.Kc7 Rb1 82.Ra6+-

78.Kc7 Rd1

78...Rh6 79.Kd7 Ke5 80.Ke7 Rh7+ 81.Kf8 Rh8+ 82.Kg7 Rh1 83.f6 Rg1+ 84.Kf7 Rb1 85.Ra6+-

79.f6 Ke5 80.Ra6 Rd2

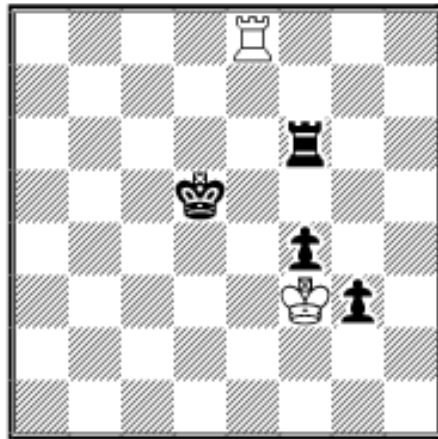
80...Rf1 81.Kd7 Rxf6 82.Rxf6 Kxf6 83.Kd6+-

81.Kc8 (Of course not 81.f7?? Rf2=) and Black resigned due to **81...Rd1 82.f7 Rf1 83.Ra7 Ke6 84.Kd8 Rxf7 85.Rxf7 Kxf7 86.Kd7 Kf6 87.Kd6+-**

The checking distance of the defending rook can be extremely important:

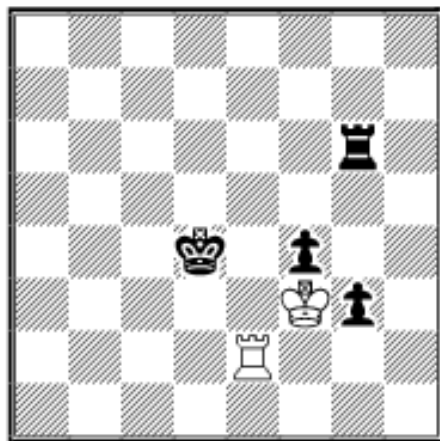
44.02 *E.Rutherford* (2117) - *I.Gourlay*

SCO-ch Aberdeen 2001



The position is drawn due to the cut off king and the passive rook: **87...Rg6 88.Re2**

88.Rd8+? allows Black to shorten the checking distance: 88...Ke5 89.Re8+ Kd4 (89...Kf5? 90.Ra8=) 90.Re2 (see next diagram)



90...Rg8!! (90...Rg7? 91.Ra2 Ke5 92.Ra5+ Kf6 93.Ra6+ Kg5 94.Ra5+ Kh4 95.Ra8! Rb7 96.Rh8+ Kg5 97.Rg8+ Kf5 98.Rf8+= and the checking distance is too long.)
 91.Ra2 Ke5 92.Ra5+ Kf6 93.Ra2 Kg5 94.Ra5+ Kh4 95.Ra7 Rb8 96.Rh7+ Kg5 97.Rg7+ Kf5 98.Rf7+ Ke5 99.Re7+ Kf6 now the rook is attacked, which spells doom
 100.Re4 Kg5 101.Re5+ Kh4 102.Re1 Rb2 103.Kxf4 Rf2+ 104.Ke3 Kh3—+

88.Re7?? g2—+

88...Kd4 89.Re1? gives Black a chance to win.

89.Ra2 was called for, e.g. 89...Kd3 (89...g2 90.Rd2+! the saving zwischenschach 90...Ke5 91.Rxg2=) 90.Ra3+ Kc2 91.Ra2+ Kb1 92.Rg2 Rf6 93.Rg1+ Kc2 94.Rg2+ Kd3 95.Ra2=

89...Kd3?

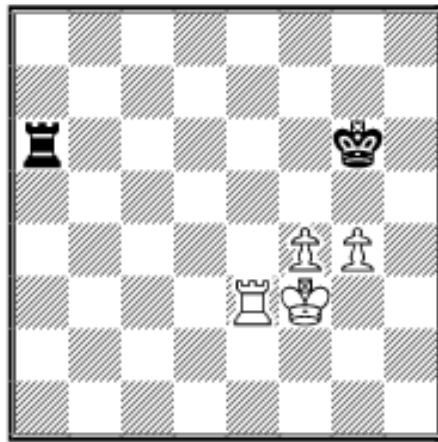
89...g2 was the way to go as the resulting pawn endgames are won: 90.Rd1+ (90.Rg1 Kd3 91.Rd1+ Kc2 92.Rg1 Kd2 93.Kf2 Rg3—+ zugzwang) 90...Ke5 91.Re1+ Kf5 92.Rg1 Rg3+ 93.Kf2 Kg4 94.Rxg2 (94.Ra1 g1Q+—+) 94...Kh3 95.Rg1 Rxg1 96.Kxg1 Kg3—+

90.Rd1+ Kc2 91.Rg1! (Here 91.Ra1? is wrong due to 91...g2—+) **91...Kd2** ½–½

So, when advancing connected passed pawns, you should be very careful to not allow the defending king to block them. Here is a warning example:

44.03 D.Lorenz - R.Galicki (2067)

Dortmund op-B 2001



80.g5?!

better technique is 80.Rb3 Rc6 81.Kg3 Ra6 82.Kh4 Rc6 83.f5+ Kf6 84.Rb5 Rc4 85.Kh5 Rc8 86.g5+ Kg7 87.Rb7+ Kg8 88.Kg6 Ra8 89.f6 and White would win even without his g-pawn (but not without his f-pawn as you doubtlessly know).

80...Kh5!?

80...Kf5?! 81.Re5+ Kg6 82.Kg4 and White

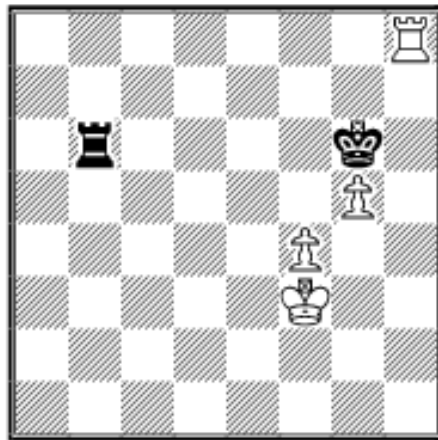
has made one step forward.

81.Re4

81.Ke4?! Kg4 82.Rb3 Re6+ 83.Kd5 Re1 84.Rb4 Kf5 85.Kd6 is won (compare 44.01), but still quite difficult.

81...Ra3+ 82.Ke2? now Black's king can infiltrate to f5.

82.Re3 Ra6 83.Re8 Rb6 84.Rh8+ Kg6

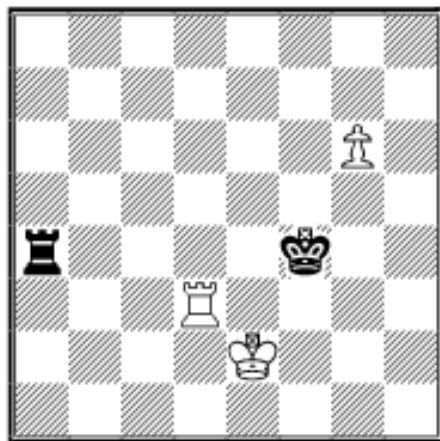


A) 85.Rh6+?! if you think that it is over now then you have missed the point of Black's defense as 85...Kf5 86.Rxb6?? is stalemate. But 86.Kg3 Rb3+ 87.Kh4 Kxf4 88.Rf6+ Ke5 89.Kh5+- wins.

B) 85.Kg4+-

82...Kg4 83.Rd4 Rg3 84.Kd2 Kf5 85.Ke1 Kg4 86.Ke2 Ra3 87.Rd3 Ra4 88.g6 Kf5?!

88...Kxf4 (see next diagram)



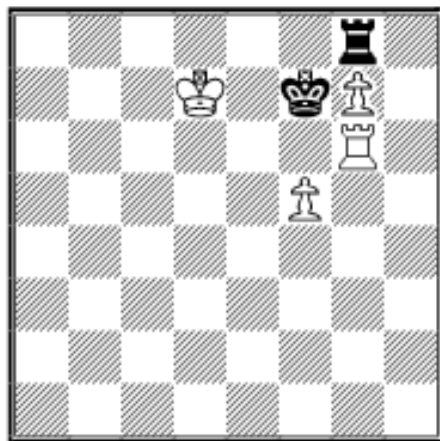
draws immediately thanks to a little
zwischenzschach: 89.g7 (89.Rf3+ Ke5
90.Rg3 Ra8=) 89...Ra2+ 90.Kf1 Ra8=

89.g7 Ra8?

89...Ra2+ had to be played first to prevent
White's best set up: 90.Kf3 Ra8 91.Rd7 Kf6
92.Kg4 Kg6! 93.f5+ Kf6 94.Kh5 Ra1!= the
deep point

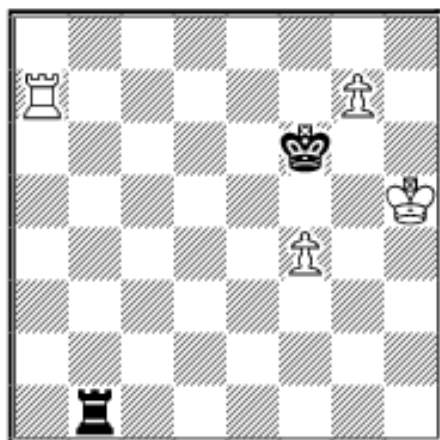
90.Kf3?

White could seize his chance with 90.Rg3! Rg8 91.Kf3 Kf6 92.Ke4 Re8+
93.Kd5 Rd8+ 94.Kc5 Kf7 95.f5 Rc8+ 96.Kd6 Rd8+ 97.Kc7 Ra8 98.Rg6 Re8
(98...Kg8 99.f6 Kf7 100.Rh6+-) 99.Kd7 Rg8



and now White triangulates with his rook to
force the decisive zugzwang: 100.Rg1 Kf6
101.Rg2 Kf7 102.Rg6+-

**90...Rg8 91.Rd7 Ke6 92.Ra7 Kf6 93.Kg4
Rb8?** the invasion of White's king had to be
prevented: 93...Kg6! 94.f5+ Kf6 95.Kh5
Rxc7= **94.Kh5 Rb1** (see next diagram)



Both players missed that the promotion to a
queen is not forced: **95.g8Q?** (95.g8N+ Kf5
96.Rf7+- wins easily.) **95...Rh1+ 96.Kg4
Rg1+ 97.Kf3 Rxc8 98.Ra6+ Kf5 99.Ra5+
Kf6 100.Rb5 Rg1 101.Kf2 Ra1 102.Ke3
Re1+ 103.Kd3 Rd1+ 104.Ke3 Rf1 105.Rb4
1/2-1/2**

The last example again shows the strength of
a cut off on the 5th rank:

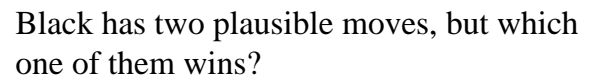
44.04 C.Hansen (2595) - I.Miladinovic (2565)
Sigeman & Co Malmo 1998

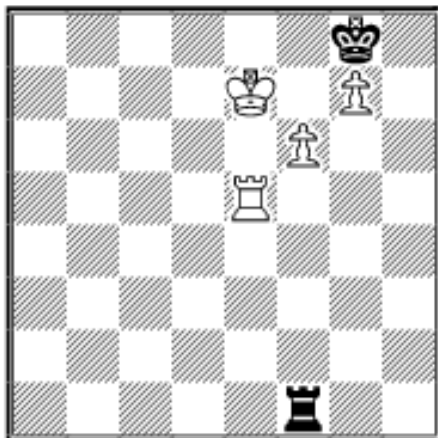


Only 66...Kh4! remains: 67.Kd4 (67.f6 Ra6 68.f7 Rf6 69.Re7 Kxg4 70.Kd5 Kf5=)

69.Kc5 Rd8 70.Ra4 zugzwang 70...Rc8+ (70...Rd7 71.Rd4 Rc7+ 72.Kd6 Rb7 73.Ke6 Rb8 74.Rd5 Rb6+ 75.Rd6 Rb4 76.f6 Kg6 77.g5 Re4+ 78.Kd7 Kf7 79.Kd8 Re8+ 80.Kc7 Kg6 81.Rd8 Re6 82.Rg8+ Kh7 83.Rg7+ Kh8 84.Rd7+-) 71.Kd5 Rb8 72.Ke6 Rb6+ 73.Kd7 Rb7+ 74.Kc6 Rb1 75.Rd4 Re1 76.Kc7 Re5 77.Kd7 Re1 now the rook can advance as White's king is better placed: 78.Rd6 Kxg4 79.f6 Rf1 80.Ke7+-

Exercises (Solutions next month)

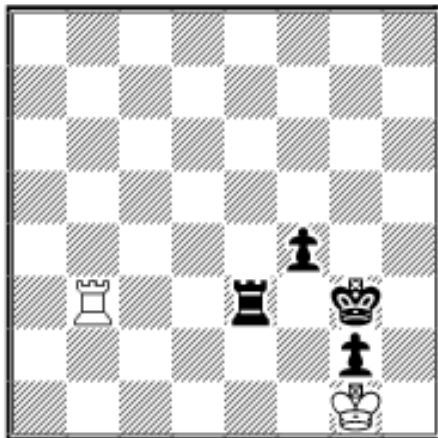




E44.02 P.Tjornsted - K.Hovmoller (2170)

Politiken Cup Copenhagen 2000

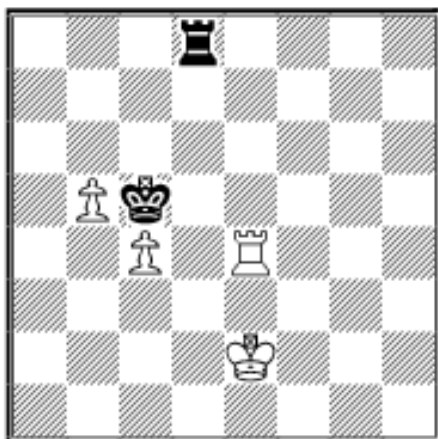
White played 122.Rh5, was this a clever decision?



E44.03 K.Richter (2217) - C.Baeder

Germany 2001

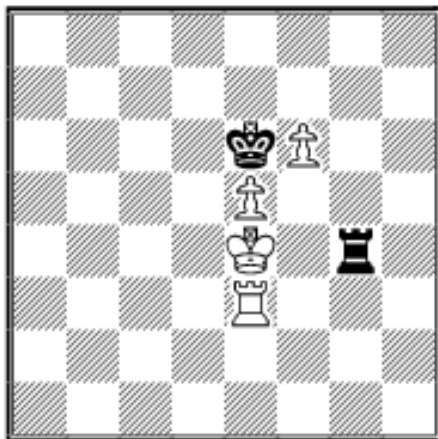
Can Black to move break White's cunning defense?



E44.04 E.Danielian (2411) - N.Kosintseva (2336)

EU-ch 3rd (Women) Varna 2002

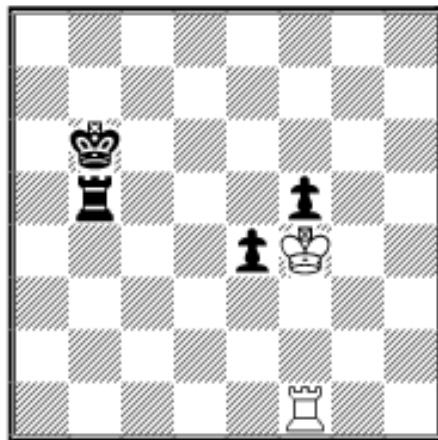
How can Black to move construct a cut-off on the 5th rank? (Just moving up and down on the d-file is not sufficient.)



E44.05 M.Rockenschaub (2205) - T.Pfaffel (2070)

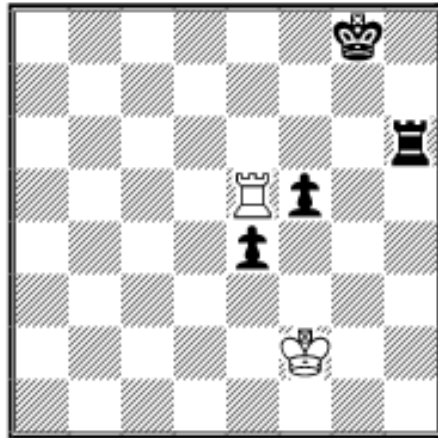
AUT-chT 1996

White to move and win.



E44.06 D.Zav - U.Blass
Israel ch 3/4-Final corr 2000

Black to move and win easily.

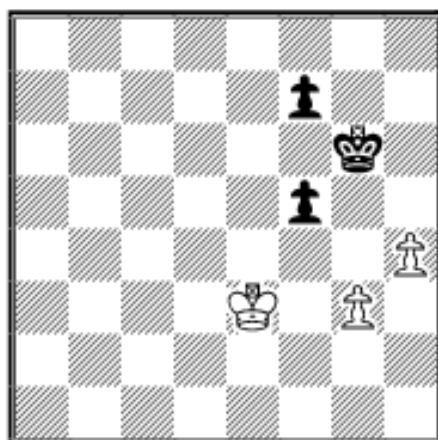


E44.07 M.Kilic - A.Can (1983)
TUR-ch Kusadasi 2004

Black to move and win.

Solutions to last month exercises

E43.01 G.Kasparov (2817) - E.Bacrot (2675)
ARM-ROW Match Moscow 2004



Even the great Kasparov can make a mistake in deceptively simple pawn endings:

66.Kd4?

66.Kf3! puts Black in zugzwang:

A) 66...f6 67.Kf4+-

B) 66...Kf6 67.Kf4 Ke6 (67...Kg6 68.Ke5 f6+ 69.Ke6+-) 68.Kg5 Ke5 69.h5+-

C) 66...Kg7 67.Kf4 Kf6 68.h5 Ke6 69.Kg5+-

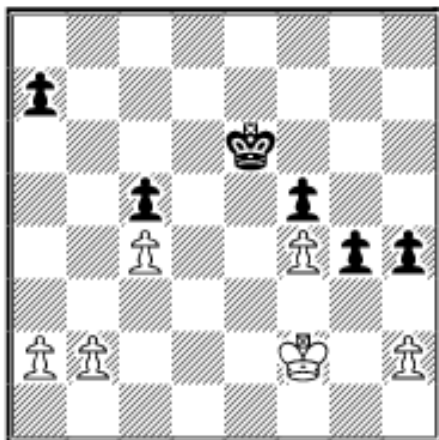
66.Kf4? f6 67.h5+ (67.Ke3 Kh5=) 67...Kh6!! (67...Kxh5? 68.Kxf5 Kh6 69.Kxf6+-) 68.Kxf5 Kxh5= now White has ended on the wrong end of the reciprocal zugzwang.

66...Kh5 and a draw was agreed due to **67.Ke5 Kg4 68.h5 Kxh5 69.Kxf5 Kh6 70.Kf6 Kh5=**

The next exercise was analyzed by my friend Frank Lamprecht:

E43.02 Tassell - M.Hanssen

Hamburg 2004



Here the game was agreed drawn and indeed the position is equal, but White has to prove it: **38.Kg2?**

The only move is 38.h3! to clarify the situation on the kingside immediately: 38...a5 39.a4! now White's fortress is watertight (39.b3? g3+ 40.Kg2 a4!-+; 39.a3? a4!-+ Black will penetrate on the kingside; 39.Kg2? a4!-+) 39...gxh3?! 40.Kg1 Kf6 41.Kh2 Kg6 42.Kxh3 Kh5 43.b3!=

38...h3+

38...Kd6? 39.Kf2? Kc6? 40.Kg2? Kb6? 41.a3? Ka5? 42.b3? (42.h3! g3! 43.b3! Kb6 44.Kf3 a5 45.a4!=) 42...Kb6 43.Kg1 a5 44.a4 Kc6 45.h3 Kd6 46.Kg2 Ke6 47.Kg1 Kf6 48.Kh2 Kg6 49.Kg2 Kg7 (49...gxh3+? 50.Kh2! Kh6 51.b4! and White should be able to hold the draw.) 50.Kh2 (50.Kg1 gxh3 51.Kh2 Kg6-+) 50...Kh6 51.Kg2 gxh3+ 52.Kh2 Kg6! 53.Kxh3 Kh5! 54.b4 cxb4-+

38...a5 39.a4 (39.h3 a4-+) 39...h3+! 40.Kf1 Kf6 41.Kg1 Kg6 42.Kf2 Kh6 43.Kg3 Kh5 44.b3 Kh6 45.Kf2 Kg6 46.Kf1 Kh5 47.Kg1 (47.Kf2 Kh4 48.b4 axb4 49.a5 b3 50.a6 b2 51.a7 b1Q 52.a8Q Qc2+ 53.Ke1 Qc1+ 54.Ke2 Qxc4+ 55.Ke3 Qe4+-) 47...Kh4 48.Kf2 g3+ 49.hxg3+ Kg4-+

39.Kf2 Kd6 40.Kg3 Kc6 41.a3

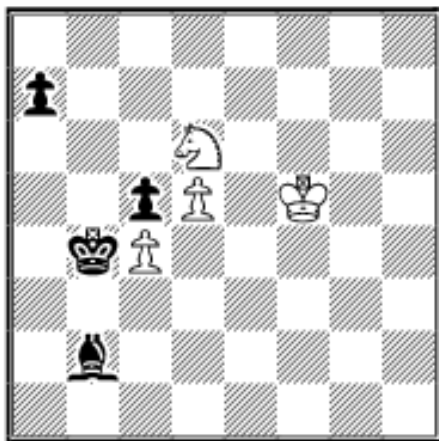
41.Kf2 Kb6 42.a3 Ka5 43.b3 Kb6 44.Kg3 a5 45.a4 Kc6 46.Kf2 Kd6 47.Kg3 Ke6 48.Kf2 Kf6 49.Kg3 Kg6 50.Kf2 Kh6 51.Kf1 Kh5 52.Kf2 Kh4 53.b4 axb4 54.a5 b3 55.a6 b2 56.a7 b1Q 57.a8Q Qc2+ 58.Kg1 Qc1+ 59.Kf2 Qxf4-+

41...Kb6 42.b4 (42.Kf2 Ka5 43.b3 Kb6 44.Kg3 a5 45.a4 Kc6-+) **42...cxb4 43.axb4 a5-+**

Instructive lines; thank you, Frank!

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

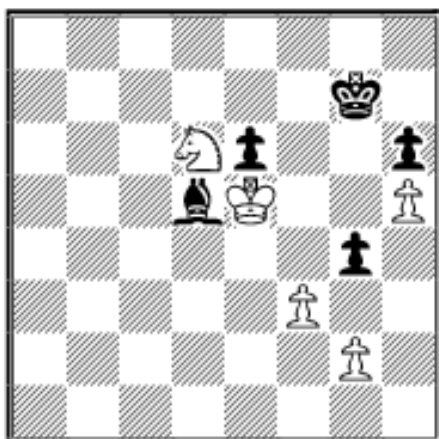
Bundesliga 2003-4 Kreuzberg 2004



Black has to be very careful to hold, the careless **50...a5?** spoils it. 50...Bc3 was called for to stop the d-pawn via a5 or via e1-h4, e.g. 51.Ke6 Be1 52.Nc8 Kxc4 53.d6 Ba5 54.Nxa7 Kb3 55.Nc6 Bb6= **51.Nb5 Bg7 52.d6 Bf8 53.d7 Be7 54.Na7!** and it is all over: **54...Bh4 55.Nc6+ Kxc4 56.Ke6 a4 57.Ne7 Bxe7 58.Kxe7 a3 59.d8Q a2 60.Qg8+ 1-0**

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

Bundesliga 2003-4 Katernberg 2003



Vaganian won nicely with the beautiful **48.Nf5+!!** (48.fxg4? Bxg2 49.Kxe6 Bf3=) **48...Kh7** (48...exf5 49.Kxd5 Kf6 50.f4+-) **49.f4 Bxg2** (49...Ba2 50.Nd4 g3 51.Ne2 Bd5 52.Nxg3 Bxg2 53.Kxe6 Kg8 54.Kf6 Kh7 55.Kf7+-) **50.Kxe6 Bf1 51.Kf7 Bc4+ 52.Kf8 Bd3 53.Ng3 1-0** and the advance of the f-pawn decides.

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