



The Power of the Bishop Pair

I have previously discussed the power of the bishop pair in the endgame. This time the following fascinating fight caught my attention:

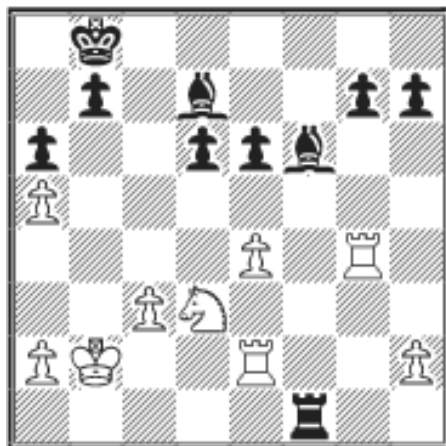
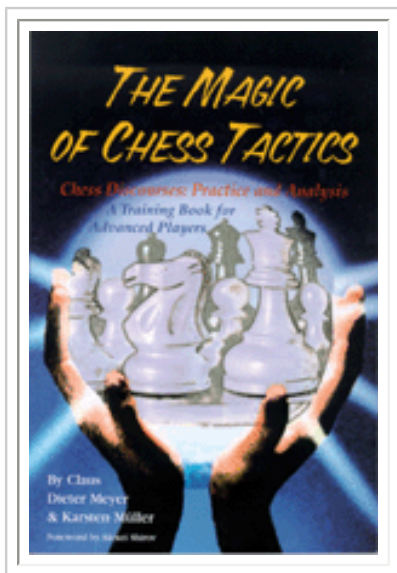
51.01 M.Chraibi (1969) - A.Winnicki (2104)

HSK 15 - St. Pauli 3, Hamburg 2005

COLUMNISTS

Endgame Corner

Karsten Müller



The position should be dynamically balanced, but both sides must play very precisely and both are in terrible time trouble: **36.Rgg2?! Unnecessarily passive.**

36.e5 dxe5 37.Nxe5 Bb5 38.c4 Be8
39.Rge4 and;

36.Rf4 Rh1 37.Rff2 Bb5 38.Re3 Kc7
39.e5 dxe5 40.Nxe5



are better as White's knight has found a good outpost, which is very important.

36...Bb5 37.Rd2 Rf3?!

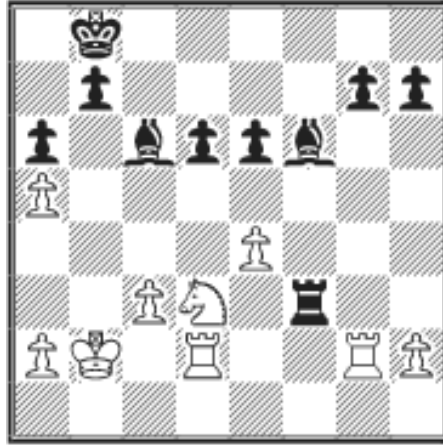
37...Kc7!? was more precise, according to the old positional rule that the worst placed piece should be improved.

38.Kc2?

Again, it was better to improve the prospects of the knight: 38.Rg3 Rf1 39.e5! dxe5 40.Nc5 and White is OK, e.g. 40...Bc4 (40...h5!?) 41.Rh3 Bg5 42.Rd7 Rf2+ 43.Ka1 Rf1+=.

38...Bc4?

38...Ba4+ 39.Kb2 Bc6



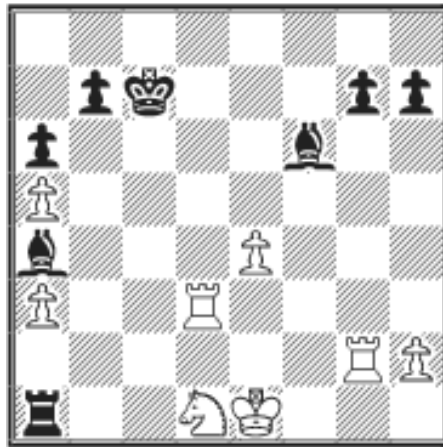
is very unpleasant for White because of his weak pawns, e.g. 40.e5 (40.Rg4 h5 41.Rg3 Bxe4; 40.Rge2? Bb5 41.Kc2 Bg5—) 40...dxe5 41.Nb4 Bb5 42.Nc2 Bc4.

39.a3 Rf1?! 40.Nb2! Bb5? A

miscalculation; 40...Ba2 was called for, but White can keep the initiative with 41.Nd1 Rf4 42.Nf2 Kc7 43.Ng4. **41.Rxd6 Rf3 42.Rxe6?** Without the c3-pawn White's king lacks shelter, which will be his undoing in the end. 42.Nd1! gives

White a large advantage. **42...Rxc3+ 43.Kd1** Other king moves also offer nothing: 43.Kb1 Bd7 44.Rd6 Bc6 and 43.Kd2 Rb3. **43...Bd7 44.Rd6 Kc7 45.Rdd2**

45.Rd3?! Ba4+ 46.Ke1 Rc1+ 47.Nd1 Ra1

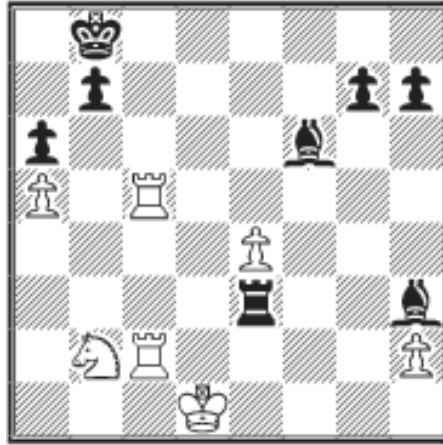


gives Black a strong bind; a real nightmare for the poor pinned knight.

45...Rxa3 46.Rc2+?!

46.Nc4!? Ba4+ 47.Ke1 Bh4+ 48.Ke2 Bb5 49.Rc2 (49.Rxg7+?! plays with fire: 49...Kc6 50.Rc2 Ra2! 51.Kd1 Ba4 52.Ne3+ Kd6) 49...Bf6 and White should be able to hold.

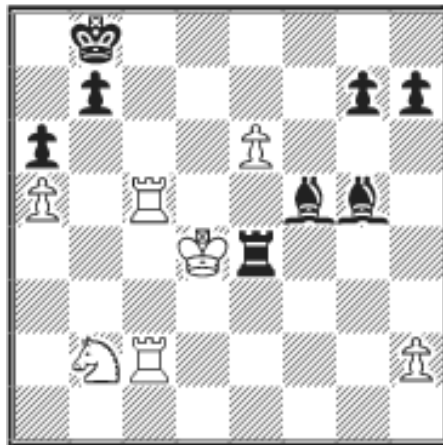
46...Kb8?! 46...Bc6 looks more promising. **47.Rc5** 47.e5 Bxe5 48.Nc4 doesn't solve White's problems because of 48...Ra1+ 49.Kd2 Bf5 50.Nxe5 Bxc2. **47...Bh3 48.Rgc2 Re3**



52.Kd3 Bf5+ 53.Kd4 Re4+

now White should have directed his knight to b6 as **49.e5?** is beautifully refuted. 49.Kd2 Rxe4 50.R2c4? Re8 51.Nd3 Bd7 is also horrible for White. But 49.Nc4! does the job: 49...Rxe4 50.Nb6 Ka7 51.Kd2 and a draw is the most likely outcome. However, not the direct 51.Rc8? Bxc8 52.Rxc8 because of 52...Rd4+ 53.Ke2 Rd8—+.

49...Bg4+ 50.Kd2 Bg5! 51.e6 Re5+



54.Kd5?

54.Kd3 was called for, but Black's winning chances are excellent: 54...g6 (54...Re3+ 55.Kd4 Bxc2 56.Rxg5 Rxe6 57.Rxg7 Rh6) 55.Rxf5 gxf5 56.Rc5 Rxe6 57.Rxf5 Be7.

54...Bf6 55.Nc4? 55.Rd2 Re5+ 56.Kd6 Rxe6+ 57.Kd5 Re5+ 58.Kd6 Re8 59.Rcd5 Rc8—+. 55...Rd4# 0–1

Exercises (Solutions Next Month)



E51.01 S. Volkov (2558) - R. Ponomarev (2673)

EU-ch 2nd Ohrid 2001

How did Ponomarev catch the steed?



E51.02 S.Kindermann (2519) - A.Reuss (2368)

Bayern-ch Bank Hofmann 6th Bad Wiessee 2002

How did Kindermann rescue his knight?



E51.03 I.Khenkin (2610) - A.Motylev (2680)

TCh-RUS Sochi 2005

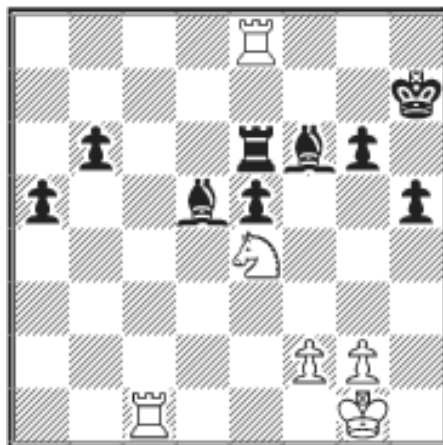
What to do against Black's mighty passed pawns?



E51.04 I.Khenkin (2610) - A.Motylev (2680)

TCh-RUS Sochi 2005

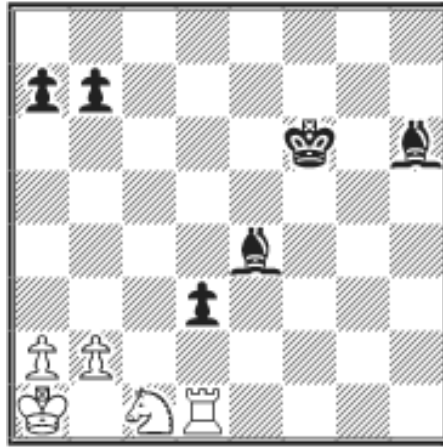
Asses the position with White to move.



E51.05 M.Kobalija (2618) - T.Vakhidov (2504)

Abu Dhabi op 14th 2004

Find Black's best move!



E51.06 After *I.Nataf* (2553) -

***M.Blushtein* (2462)**

Canadian op Kapuskasing 2004

Black to move and win (in the game Black's king was on f7 and it was soon drawn).

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