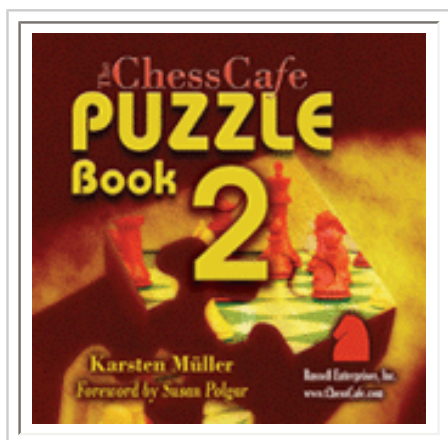




COLUMNISTS

Endgame Corner

Karsten Müller



The Right Exchange Revisited

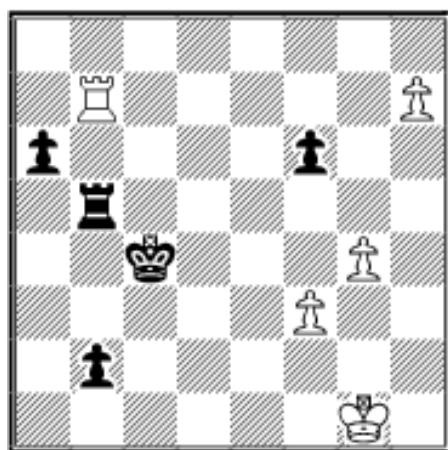
I have decided to revisit a very important problem that was first discussed in [February 2007](#). So let's begin with a review of the following guidelines and add a couple new ones:

- Single rook endgames have a very large drawish tendency. Remember Dr Tarrasch's old aphorism: "All rook endgames are drawn."
- The side playing against a rook usually wants to retain one rook to coordinate with the minor pieces; for example, with one or two minor pieces against a rook.
- When exchanging into a pawn endgame, you should be absolutely sure about the result, because even the slightest advantage may prove decisive, e.g. a slightly more active king.
- One side usually gains more from every exchange. Make sure it is you!
- What stays on the board is more important than what comes off the board.

A) Exchange to reduce the attacking potential

74.01 A.Rmus - L.Vajda

Herceg Novi 2006



White must exchange rooks, otherwise the firepower of Black's major pieces will prevail.

38.Rc7+?

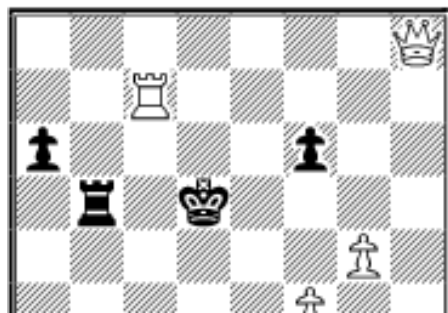
38.Rxb5 axb5 39.h8Q b1Q+ 40.Kg2 was forced, when White has good drawing chances, e.g. 40... Qb2+ 41.Kh3 Qe5 42.Qc8+ Kb3 43.Qc1 b4 44. Qb1+ Kc4 45.Qc2+ Qc3 46.Qe4+.

38...Kd5 39.h8Q

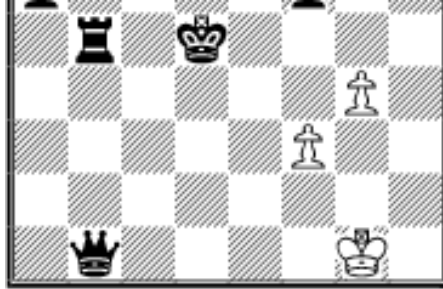
39.Rd7+ Ke6 40.Rd1 b1Q 41.Rxb1 Rxb1+ 42.

Kg2 Rb8-+.

39...b1Q+



We have now reached the "fourth phase" of the game, as coined by Mihail Marin in [Learn from the Legends](#). The most important rule after both sides have queened is "the one who gives the first check wins." It is applicable here as both kings are exposed.



40.Kf2 Rb2+ 41.Ke3

41.Kg3 Qe1+ 42.Kh3 Qh1+ 43.Kg3 Qxh8—+.

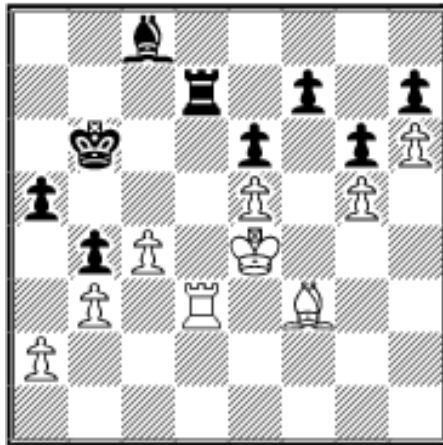
41...Qe1+

White resigned because of 42.Kf4 (42.Kd3 Qd2#) 42...Qe5#.

B) Exchange to alter the pawn structure and open lines

74.02 R.Ponomarev - A.Morozevich

Tal Memorial Moscow 2006

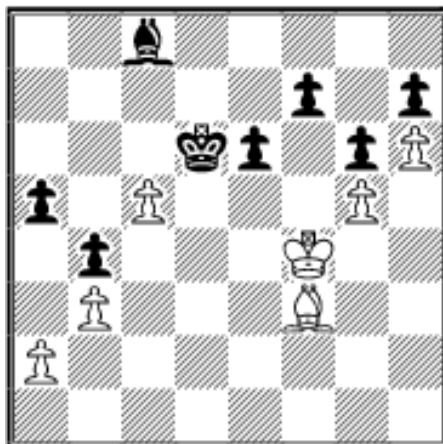


The position seems dead drawn, as White's king has no inroads, but Ponomarev found a surprising way to play for a win.

45.Rd6+!?

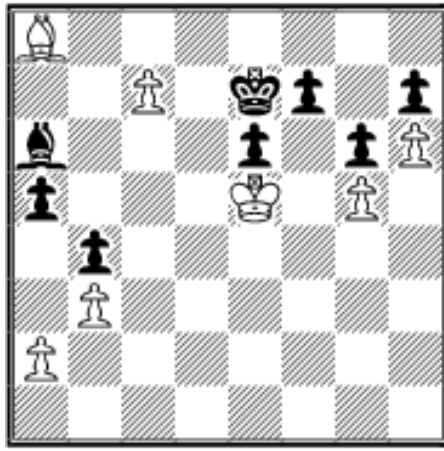
45.Rxd7 Bxd7 46.Kd4 Be8 47.c5+ Kc7=.

45...Kc5 46.Kf4 Rxd6 47.exd6 Kxd6 48.c5+

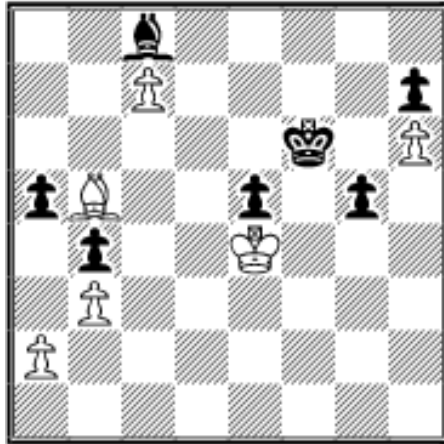


48...Kxc5?

Accepting the gift is too greedy. 48...Ke7! was called for: 49.Ke5 Ba6 50.Ba8 Be2 51.c6 Bf1 52.c7 Ba6



This is drawn, as Ponomariov showed in the post mortem analysis, but Barski and Notkin proved that matters are not that simple in the German magazine *Schach* 1/2007: 53.Bc6 Bc8 54.Bb5 Bb7 55.Kd4 Kd6 56.Be8 e5+ 57.Ke3 Ke6 58.Bb5 Bc8 59.Bc4+ Kf5 60.Bxf7 Kxg5 61.Ke4 Kf6 62.Bg8 Bb7+ 63.Bd5 Bc8 64.Bc6 g5 65.Bb5



Now Black's passed g-pawn secures him enough counterplay: 65...g4! (but not 65...Bb7+? 66.Ke3 Kg6 67.Bd7 Kxh6 68.Kd3!! Kh5 69.Kc4 g4 70.Kc5 g3 71.Kb6 g2 72.Kxb7 g1Q 73.c8Q+-) 66.Bd3 Kg5 67.Kxe5 g3 68.Bf1 Bb7 69.Bh3 Ba6=.

49.Ke5 Ba6 50.Kf6 Kd6 51.Be4

51.Kxf7 Bd3 52.Kg8 Ke7 53.Kxh7 Kf8 54.Bc6 e5 55.Be8+-

51...Be2 52.Kxf7 Bg4

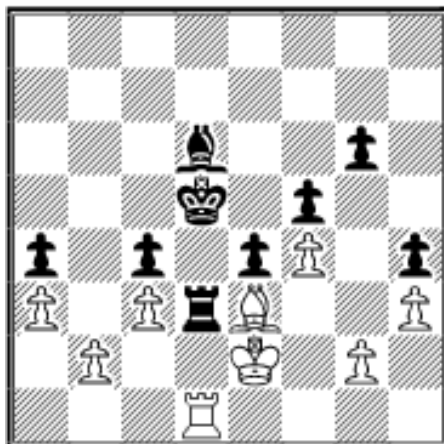
52...Bh5 53.Kg7+-.

53.Bxg6 1-0

C) Breaking a blockade

74.03 N.Nikolaev - G.Tunik

Petroff Memorial St. Petersburg 2000



How will Black make progress? *Zugzwang* alone will not do, as White's rook can wait on d1 and d2. But exchanging the bishops first and then the rooks does the job.

43...Bc5! 44.Bxc5

44.Bc1?! Rxd1 45.Kxd1 e3+- allows Black's king to invade on e4 with decisive effect.

44...Kxc5 45.Rd2

45.Re1 Kd5 46.Rg1 Rg3 47.Rd1+ Ke6 48.Rg1 g5 49.fxg5 Ke5 50.Kf2 e3+ 51.Ke2 Ke4 does not help.

45...Kd5

White cannot prevent Black from entering a won pawn ending.

46.Rd1

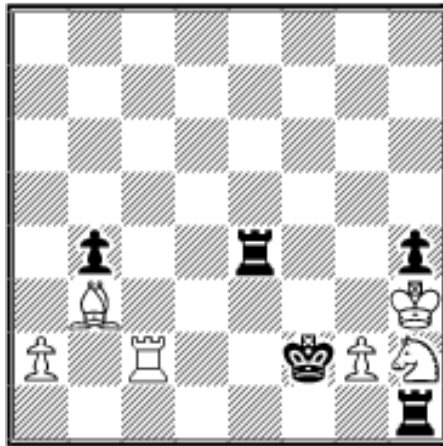
46.Rxd3+ exd3+ 47.Ke3 d2 48.Kxd2 Ke4--+.

46...Rxd1 0–1

D) Exchange to keep a blockade

74.04 Shishkin, V (2474) - Kruppa, Y (2531)

Fifth I Platonov Mem Kyiv UKR (7), 08.02.2007

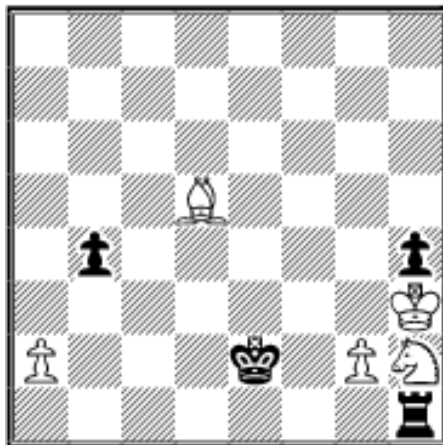


Usually the side fighting against the lone rook should keep both rooks on the board. But this is an exception because of Black's activity.

72...Re2!

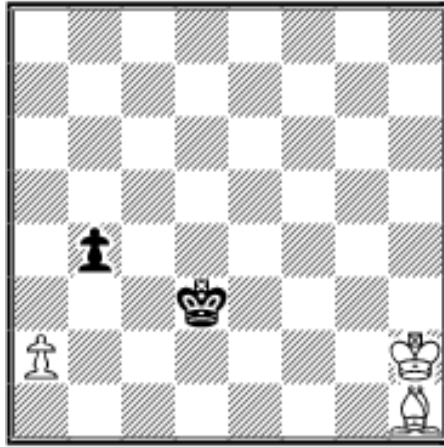
72...Ke3? 73.Bd5 Rd4 74.Bb7 and White has winning chances.

73.Rxe2+ Kxe2 74.Bd5



74...Ke3?

74...Kd3 75.g4 hxg3 76.Bxh1 (76.Kxg3 Rb1 77. Nf3 Kc3 78.Kf4 b3 79.axb3 Rxb3=) 76...gxh2 77. Kxh2



Now comes the point of the defense: 77...Kc4!! and White cannot safeguard his last pawn.

75.g4?

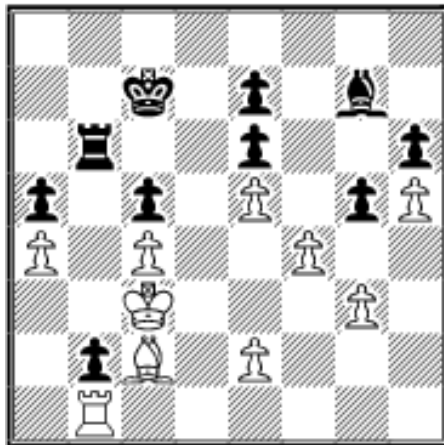
75.g3 wins.

75...Rd1 76.Bb3 Kf4??

After 76...Rg1 77.Kxh4 Kf4, Black's activity is sufficient for a draw.

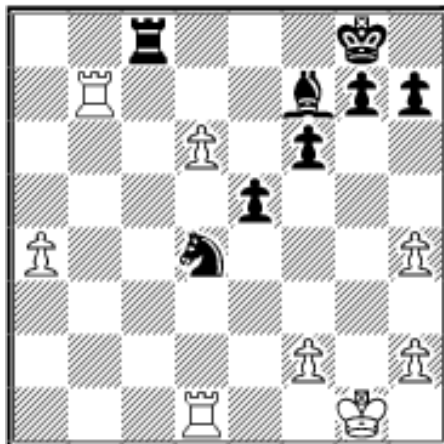
77.Bxd1 1-0

Exercises (Solutions next month)



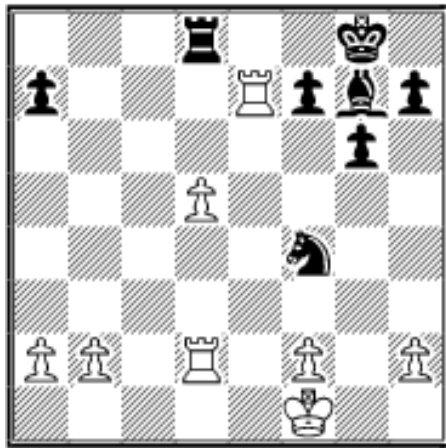
E74.01 A.Miles - V.Smyslov
Dortmund 1986

How did Miles proceed?



E74.02 L.Aronian - V.Anand
XXIV SuperGM Morelia/Linares 2007

Aronian sacrificed his two bishops for one of Black's rooks to get two dangerous passed pawns. However, at the moment his initiative seems to have come to a dead end, or can you find a plan for White?



E74.03 R.Vaganian - E.Sutovsky
Pamplona 2004

Is 1...Rxd5 a good move? If not, what did Sutovsky play?



[TOP OF PAGE](#)



[HOME](#)



[COLUMNS](#)



[LINKS](#)



[ARCHIVES](#)



[ABOUT THE
CHESS CAFE](#)

[\[Chess Cafe Home Page\]](#) [\[Book Review\]](#) [\[Columnists\]](#)

[\[Endgame Study\]](#) [\[The Skittles Room\]](#) [\[Archives\]](#)

[\[Links\]](#) [\[Online Bookstore\]](#) [\[About The Chess Cafe\]](#) [\[Contact Us\]](#)

© 2007 CyberCafes, LLC. All Rights Reserved.

"**ChessCafe.com**"® is a registered trademark of Russell Enterprises, Inc.