

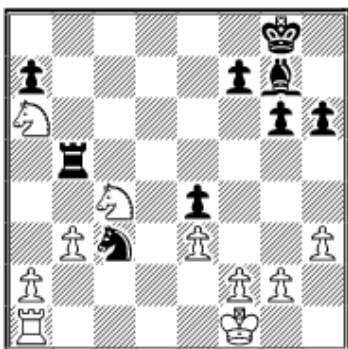


The Activity of the Rook

Oliver Reeh drew my attention to the following striking example.

79.01 M.Carlsen (2710) - A.Onischuk (2650)

Biel 2007



The key to the position is that Black's rooks are not performing up to their powerful potential and it is difficult to penetrate into the enemy position. But Fritz 10 has found an amazing way to activate Black's rook. Can you find it before looking at the solution?

28...Bf8?

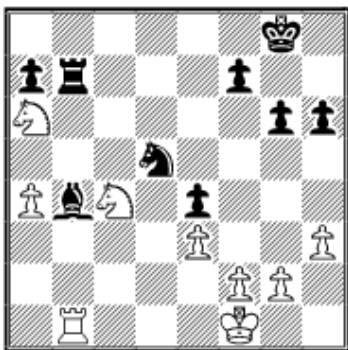
Onischuk wants to stop b4, but it is coming anyway. 28...Rh5!! was called for, followed by ...g5-g4, e.g. 29.Nb8 g5 30.Nc6 g4 31.Nxa7 gxf3 32.gxf3 Rxf3 33.Kg2 Rh5 and Black's

counterplay is sufficient to draw.

29.b4!

Now the activation of White's rook decides the issue.

29...Bxb4 30.a4 Rb7 31.Rc1! Nd5 32.Rb1



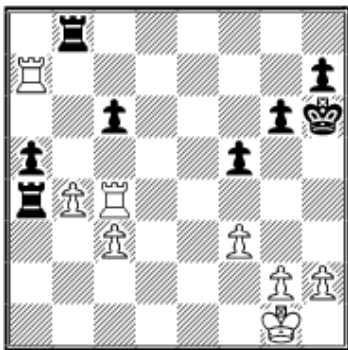
Black cannot extricate himself from the pin without losing material.

32...f5 33.a5 Kg7 34.Ne5 f4 35.exf4 e3 36.fxe3 Nxe3+ 37.Kg1 Nd5 38.Kh1 Rb5 39.Nc6 1-0

In the following example, the German Under-12 Junior Champion uses his active rooks to draw a difficult position.

79.02 J.Bolacky (2258) - Se.Kaphle (2041)

Czech Open A Pardubice 2007



32...Ra2! 33.Rxa5 Rb2

Black must not exchange his rook of course.

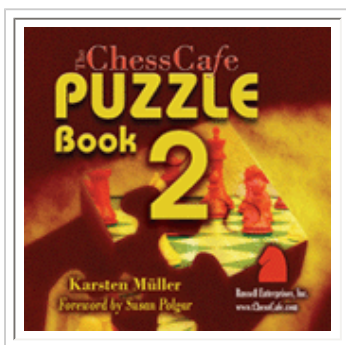
34.Rh4+?

The post mortem analysis revealed that temporary passivity with 34.Ra1 was the best chance to fight for a win, e.g. 34...Re8 35.Kh1 Ra2 36.Rg1 Re6 37.h4

COLUMNISTS

Endgame Corner

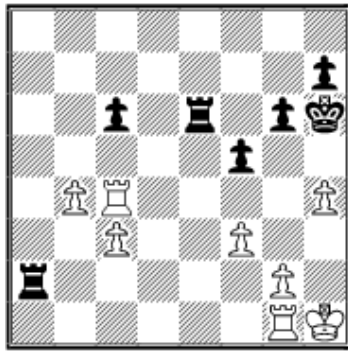
Karsten Müller



CHESSTHEATRE

Play through and download the games from ChessCafe.com in the [DGT Game Viewer](#).

[The Complete DGT Product Line](#)



White retains real winning chances.

34.Rxc6? Rd8 35.h4 Rdd2 36.Kh2 Rxc2+ 37.Kh3 Kh5 38.Ra7 h6 39.Rh7 Rh2+ 40.Kg3 Rbg2+ 41.Kf4 Re2 42.Kg3 Rhg2+ 43.Kf4 Rh2=

34...Kg5 35.Rd4

Now it is more a less a forced draw. But Black's counterplay already gives him the draw, e.g. 35.Rxh7 Re8 36.Ra1 Ree2 37.g3 Rg2+ 38.Kh1 Rgf2 39.f4+ Kg4 40.Rh6 Kf3=.

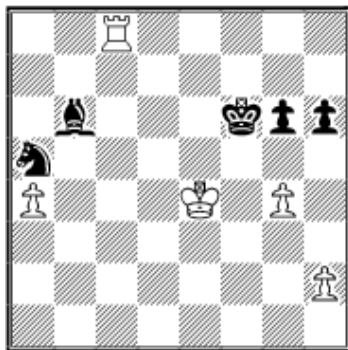
35...Re8 36.f4+

36.h4+ Kh5 37.Rc5 Ree2 38.Rg4 Rec2 39.Kh2 Rxc3=.

36...Kh4 37.Re5 Ra8 38.Ra5 Re8 39.Re5 Ra8 ½–½

The final example is from Adrian Mikhalchishin's excellent ChessBase DVD *Secret Weapons of the Champions*.

79.03 Y.Razuvaev - N.Kirov
Bulgaria 1981



White's mighty rook plays cat and mouse with Black's minor pieces.

45.h4 Ke6

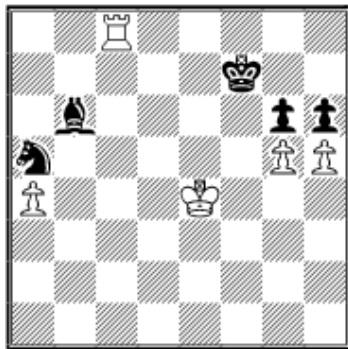
45...Bf2? 46.Rf8+-.

46.h5 Kf7

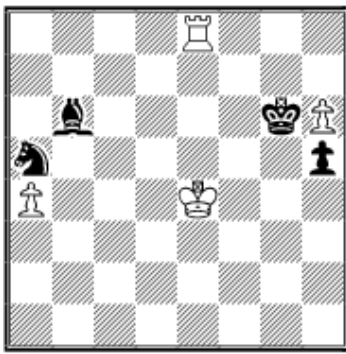
46...gxh5? is met by 47.Rh8+-.

47.Kd5

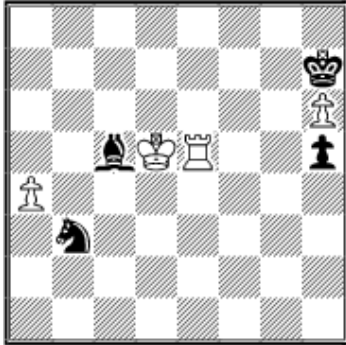
The beautiful breakthrough 47.g5!? probably wins as well:



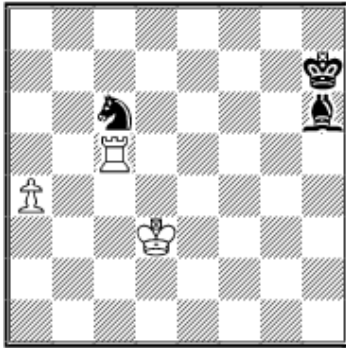
47...Kg7 (47...gxh5 48.gxh6 Kg6 49.Re8!



White's rook dominates the show, e.g. 49...Bc5 (49...Bf2? 50.Re6+ Kh7 51.Kf5 h4 52.Kg5 h3 53.Re7+ Kg8 54.h7+ Kh8 55.Kg6+-) 50.Re6+ Kh7 51.Re5 Nb3 52.Kd5!



White should be winning, but I am not completely sure.) 48.Rb8 (48.Re8!?) 48...Bf2 49.Kf3 Be1 50.Ke2 Bg3 51.Rb6 gxh5 52.gxh6+ Kh7 53.Rb5 Nc6 54.Rxh5 Bf4 55.Kd3 Bxh6 56.Re5



White mates in sixty-two moves according to the six-man tablebase. Chess really is an amazingly deep game!

47...gxh5 48.gxh5 Kf6 49.Rb8 Be3

White also retains good winning chances after 49...Bc7!? 50.Rb1 (50.Re8? Kg5 51.Rc8 Bf4 52.Rc5 Bd2=) 50...Ke7 (50...Bf4 51.Ke4) 51.Kc5 Kd7 52.Rd1+ Kc8 53.Kb5.

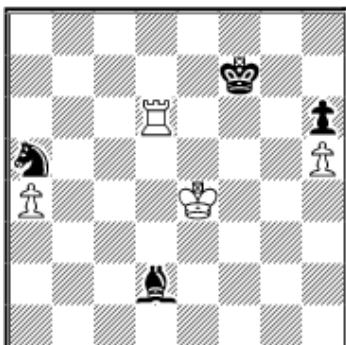
50.Ke4 Bd2 51.Rb2 Be1 52.Re2 Bb4

52...Bh4 53.Rb2 Kf7 (53...Ke7 54.Rb5 Nc4 55.Kd5 Ne3+ 56.Kc6 Kf6 57.a5 Nc4 58.a6 Bf2 59.Rc5+-) 54.Rb6 Kg7 55.Rg6+ Kh7 56.Kd5 Be7 57.Rb6 Bg5 58.Ra6 Bd2 59.Kc5 Kg7 60.Kb5 Nb3 61.Rd6 Be3 62.Rd3+-.

53.Rg2 Kf7

53...Ke7 54.Rg6 Bd2 55.Kd3 Bg5 56.Ra6 Nb3 57.Kc4 Nd2+ 58.Kd5 Kd7 59.Rg6 Be3 60.Rc6+-.

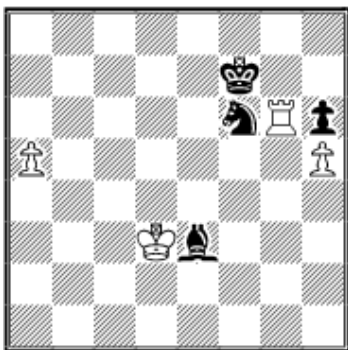
54.Rg6 Bd2 55.Rd6



Forcing the bishop away from one of its duties.

55...Bg5

55...Nb3 56.Kd3 Nc5+ (56...Bg5 57.Rd5 Ke6 58.Rb5 Nc1+ 59.Kc4+-) 57.Kc4 Be3 58.a5 Ne4 59.Rg6 Nf6 60.Kd3



White wins the h6-pawn, as 60...Nxh5 is refuted by 61.Kxe3 Kxg6 62.a6+.

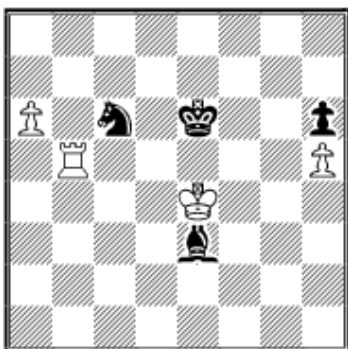
56.Rd5 Nc6

56...Nc4 57.a5 Ke6 58.a6 Be3 59.Rd8 Ba7 60.Re8 + Kf6 61.Rg8 Ne5 62.Rf8+ Nf7 63.Kd5 Bf2 64.Re8 Ng5 65.Rg8 Nf7 66.Rg6+ Kf5 67.Re6 Kg5 68.Re7 Nd8 69.Rd7 Bb6 70.Rd6+.

57.a5 Ke6 58.a6 Be3

58...Bh4 59.Rb5 Kd6 60.Rb7 Be7 61.a7 Nxa7 62.Rxa7 Bg5 63.Kf5 Bc1 64.Rg7 Bd2 65.Rg2 Bc1 66.Rg1 Be3 67.Rd1++.

59.Rb5



This forces the bishop to make a decision that overloads the defense.

59...Bg1?!

59...Bg5?! 60.Rc5 Na7 61.Rc7 Nb5 62.Rc6+ Kd7 63.Rc5 Na7 (63...Nd6+ 64.Kd3 Nc8 65.Rxg5 hxd5 66.h6+-) 64.Rxg5 hxd5 65.h6+-.

59...Bf2 was the most tenacious, e.g. 60.Rb2 Bh4 61.Rb7 Bg5 62.Rg7 Bc1 63.Rg6+ Kd7 64.Rg2 Ba3 65.Rg7+ Kc8 66.Rg6 Kc7 67.Rxh6+-.

60.Rb1

The immediate 60.Rb7 was possible as well.

60...Bf2 61.Rb2 Bc5 62.Rb7 Na7

62...Ne7 63.a7 Bxa7 64.Rxa7 Kf6 65.Ra5+-.

63.Rh7

The h-pawn finally falls prey to White's rook.

63...Kf6 64.Kf4

64.Rxh6+ Kg5 65.Rh7 Nb5 66.Kd3+-.

64...Bd6+ 65.Kg4 Bc5 66.Rxh6+ Ke5

66...Kg7 67.Rg6+ Kh7 68.Re6 Bf8 69.h6+-.

67.Rg6 1-0