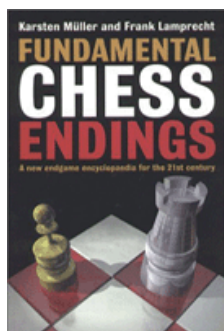




## COLUMNISTS

### Endgame Corner

Karsten Müller



#### CHESSTHEATRE

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



## The Dangerous Corner

The rook is usually far superior to a bishop in simplified positions, because it can play for *zugzwang* and try to dominate the bishop.

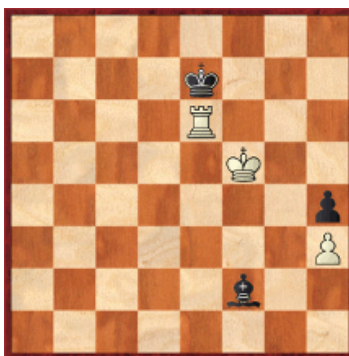
**110.01 Kramnik, Vladimir (2772) - Ponomarev, Ruslan (2739)**  
Tal Memorial Moscow RUS (6), 11.11.2009



[FEN "8/1R6/6k1/6b1/7p/1p5P/6K1/8 w - - 0 58"]

**58.Kf3!**

The pawn b3 cannot run away, but Black's king can after 58.Rxb3? Bf4! 59. Kf3 Kf5! (Golubev in *Chess Today* #3292) and the king has escaped from the dangerous corner h8. White cannot win; e.g., 60.Rb5+ Be5 61.Ke3 Ke6 62. Ke4 Bg3 63.Rb6+ Ke7 64.Kf5 Bf2 65.Re6+



[FEN "8/4k3/4R3/5K2/7p/7P/5b2/8 b - - 0 65"]

65...Kd7! It is important to escape from the losing zone near the h8-corner. (After 65...Kf7? 66.Re2, White wins similar to the game.) 66.Kf6 Bg3 67.Kf7 Bf2 68.Re2 Bg3 69.Rd2+ Kc7 70.Ke7 Kc6 71.Ke6 Kc7 72.Rc2+ Kd8 and White cannot make progress. But not 72...Kb8?? 73.Kd7 Kb7 74.Rb2+ and the cut off along the b-file is sufficient to win.

**58...Bd2**

Now 58...Kf5 can be met by 59.Rb5+ Kf6 60.Kg4 and Black's bishop is so poorly placed that its king cannot escape.

**59.Kg4 Be1 60.Rxb3**

Purchases from our [shop](#) help keep [ChessCafe.com](#) freely accessible:



[ECE: Rook Endings](#)  
by Chess Informant



[ECE: Queen Endings](#)  
by Chess Informant



[ECE: Minor Piece Endings](#)  
by Chess Informant



[FEN "8/8/6k1/8/6Kp/1R5P/8/4b3 b - - 0 60"]

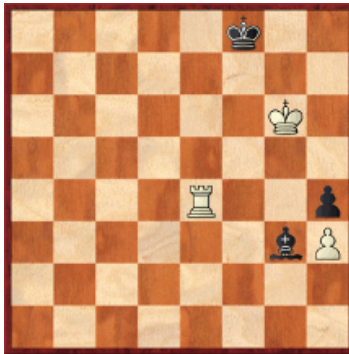
### 60...Bg3

Trying to run away with 60...Kf6 does not help because of 61.Rf3+ Ke6 62.Re3++.

### 61.Rf3

Kramnik cuts Black's king off, so that he will win by using the sharp endgame weapon *zugzwang* again and again.

**61...Be1 62.Re3 Bf2 63.Re6+ Kf7 64.Kf5 Bg3 65.Re4 Bf2 66.Kg5 Bg3 67.Re2 Kg7 68.Re7+ Kf8 69.Kf6 Bf2 70.Re6 Bg3 71.Kg6 Bh2 72.Re4 Bg3**



[FEN "5k2/8/6K1/8/4R2p/6bP/8/8 w - - 0 73"]

This is the decisive *zugzwang* position, but at the moment White is to move. So Kramnik has to lose a move in order to win.

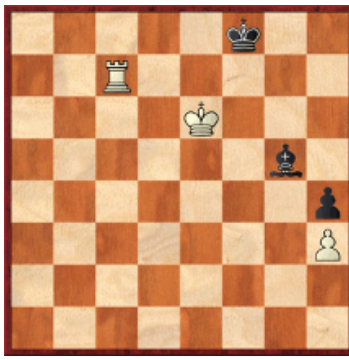
**73.Kf6 Bf2 74.Kg6 Bg3 75.Re2 Bd6 76.Kg5 Bg3**

Changing the defensive diagonal with 76...Be7+ does not help, as it is quite short and the bishop has no safe anchor square:



[FEN "5k2/4b3/8/6K1/7p/7P/4R3/8 w - - 0 77"]

**77.Kf5 Kf7 78.Re4 Bf6 79.Rc4 Bd8 80.Rd4 Be7 81.Rd7 Kf8 82.Ke6 Bg5 83.Rc7**



[FEN "5k2/2R5/4K3/6b1/7p/7P/8/8 b - - 0 83"]

Black is in *zugzwang*; e.g., 83...Kg8 84.Kf5 Be3 85.Kg6 Kf8 86.Rh7+-.

**77.Kf6 Bf4 78.Re4 Bd6 79.Rd4 Bc7 80.Kg6 Bg3 81.Re4 1-0**

Finally Kramnik has managed to lose the move. Ponomarev is in *zugzwang* and resigned.

In the next example Black's king must also run away directly:

**110.02 Dragun, K (2300) - Leniart, A (2439)**

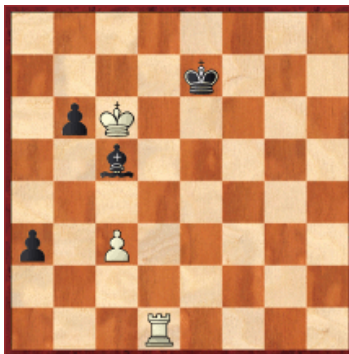
ch-POL Warsaw POL (6), 14.01.2010



[FEN "1k6/5R2/1p6/1K6/8/p1P1b3/8/8 b - - 0 68"]

**68...Bc5?**

Now White can imprison Black in the corner and win the a-pawn in typical fashion. The king had to run away immediately: 68...Kc8! 69.Kc6 Kd8 70.Rf1 (70.Rd7+ Kc8=) 70...Bc5 71.Rd1+ Ke7



[FEN "8/4k3/1pK5/2b5/8/p1P5/8/3R4 w - - 0 72"]

White cannot win, as he cannot reach a decisive *zugzwang* because Black's king breathes freely. 68...a2? loses, but it is very close: 69.Rf1 Bd2 70.Kb4 Kc7 71.Ra1 Kc6 72.Rxa2 Bf4 73.Ra8 Bd6+ 74.Ka4 Bc7 75.Rc8 Kb7 76.Rf8 Kc6 77.Rf5 Bd6 78.Rh5



[FEN "8/8/1pkb4/7R/K7/2P5/8/8 b - - 0 78"]

White mates in forty-nine moves according to the tablebase.

68...Bh6?

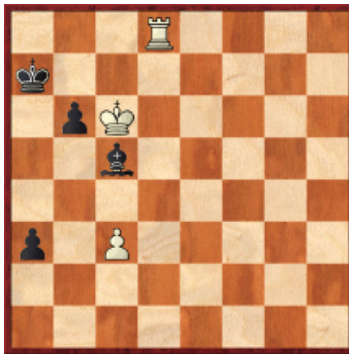


[FEN "1k6/5R2/1p5b/1K6/8/p1P5/8/8 w - - 0 69"]

This is refuted by 69.Rf6! (The greedy 69.Kxb6? falls into Black's trap: 69...a2 70.Rf1 Bg7=) 69...Be3 70.Rf3 Bc5 71.Kc6 Kc8 72.Rd3+-.

**69.Kc6 Ka8**

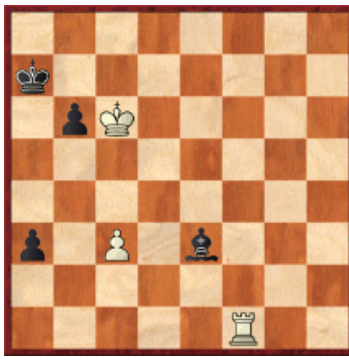
After 69...Kc8, 70.Rd7! stops the escape of Black's king: 70...Kb8 71.Rd8+ Ka7



[FEN "3R4/k7/1pK5/2b5/8/p1P5/8/8 w - - 0 72"]

72.Re8! puts Black into fatal *zugzwang*; e.g., 72...Bg1 73.Re4 Bc5 74.Ra4+ Kb8 75.Ra6+- (Baburin in *Chess Today* #3356).

After 69...Be3, 70.Rf1 Ka7



[FEN "8/k7/1pK5/8/8/p1P1b3/8/5R2 w - - 0 71"]

The rook wins the domination game as follows: 71.Ra1 Bc5 72.Re1 Ka6 73.Re8 Ka7 74.Re4+-.

**70.Rh7 Kb8 71.Rf7 Ka8**

71...a2 is refuted by 72.Rf1 Be7 73.Kxb6 (73.Ra1? blows it because of 73...Bf6 74.Rxa2 Bxc3 75.Kxb6 Bd4+=) 73...Bf6 74.Rxf6 a1Q 75.Rf8#.

**72.Rf4 Ka7 73.Ra4+ Kb8 74.Ra6**



[FEN "1k6/8/RpK5/2b5/8/p1P5/8/8 b - - 0 74"]

Finally the decisive *zugzwang* is reached. First Black loses a pawn, later the game.

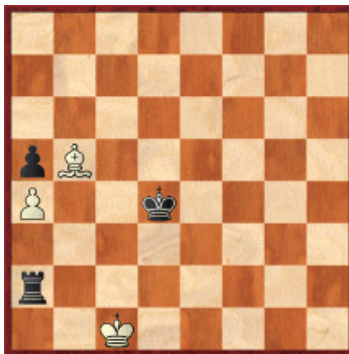
**74...Bf2 75.Rxa3 Bc5 76.Ra6 Be3 77.c4 Bf2 78.Rxb6+ Kc8**

78...Bxb6 79.Kxb6 Kc8 80.Kc6 Kb8 81.Kd7 Kb7 82.c5+-.

**79.c5 Bg3 80.Rb3 1-0**

In the last example, White's king must stay away from the dangerous a1-corner.

**110.03 Hirschberg, Leander (1699) - Haubold, Martin (2065)**  
Nuremberg 6th LGA Cup (2), 04.09.2009



[FEN "8/8/8/pB6/P2k4/8/r7/2K5 w - - 0 54"]

**54.Kb1?**



The wrong direction. After 54.Kd1, Black cannot win.

**54...Rd2 55.Kc1 Kc3 56.Bc6 Rh2?**

This lets the king escape. Black wins with 56...Rd8 57.Bb5 (57.Bf3 Kb3 58. Bd1+ Kb4 59.Bc2 Kc3 60.Kb1 Rb8+ 61.Kc1 Rh8—) 57...Kb3



[FEN "3r4/8/8/pB6/P7/1k6/8/2K5 w - - 0 58"]

White is in fatal *zugzwang*.

**57.Kd1 Kb3 58.Bb5 Kb2 59.Ke1 Kc1 60.Bc6 Rd2 61.Bb5 Kc2**



[FEN "8/8/8/pB6/P7/8/2kr4/4K3 w - - 0 62"]

**62.Kf1?**

It is a mistake to allow Black's king to come closer. 62.Bc6 or; 62.Be8 is called for.

**62...Rd6?**

Black misses his chance.

62...Kd1 wins; e.g., 63.Bc6 Rd6 64.Bb5 Rf6+ 65.Kg2 Kc2 66.Kg3 Kb3 67. Kg4 Rf2 68.Kg3 Ra2 69.Kf3 Rxa4—+.

**63.Ke2 Re6+ 64.Kf3 Kc3 65.Kf4 Kb3 66.Kf3 Re7 67.Kf4 Kb4 68.Kf3 Kc3 69.Kf4 Kd2 70.Kf3 Re3+**



[FEN "8/8/8/pB6/P7/4rK2/3k4/8 w - - 0 71"]

### 71.Kf4!

Hirschberg defends well and does not allow White to cut off his king very far away.

**71...Re7 72.Kf3 Rf7+ 73.Ke4! Kc3 74.Ke3 Re7+ 75.Kf4 Re1 76.Kf3 Kb3**



[FEN "8/8/pB6/P7/1k3K2/8/4r3 w - - 0 77"]

### 77.Kf2??

Hirschberg blunders, probably because of fatigue after the long defense. After 77.Kf4, Black cannot win, as White's king is back in the corner just in time after 77...Ra1 78.Ke3 Rxa4 79.Bxa4+ Kxa4 80.Kd2 Kb3 81.Kc1=. Chess really is a deep and rich game. Sometimes the defending king must leave the corner to breathe freely and sometimes it must be able to run into the corner as quickly as possible.

**77...Re4 78.Kf1 Rxa4 79.Bxa4+ Kxa4 80.Ke1 Kb3 0-1**

### Exercises (Solutions next month)

#### E110.01 Petrov, Marij (2500) - Dimitrov, R (2394)

Georgi Tringov Mem Plovdiv BUL (4), 02.02.2010



[FEN "8/3kb3/p7/3K4/1P3R2/8/8/8 w - - 0 66"]

How did Petrov convert his advantage?

#### E110.02 Kharlov, Andrei (2558) - Movsesian, Sergei (2632)

Moscow Aeroflot op-A (1), 08.02.2006



[FEN "8/8/2Bk3p/P2P2p1/6P1/3KP3/5r2/8 b - - 0 44"]

Why was Kharlov's last move 44.a5? a mistake?

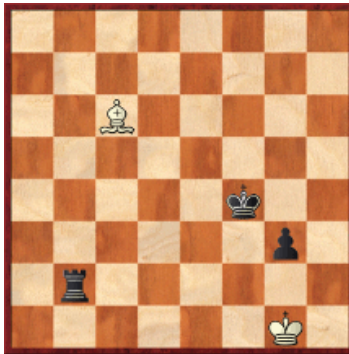
**E110.03 Velchev, H (2298) - Petrov, Marij (2500)**  
Georgi Tringov Mem Plovdiv BUL (3), 01.02.2010



[FEN "8/5Qbk/5q1p/7P/3pp3/5p2/1PP5/1K4R1 w - - 0 44"]

Was 44.Qg6+ a good decision?

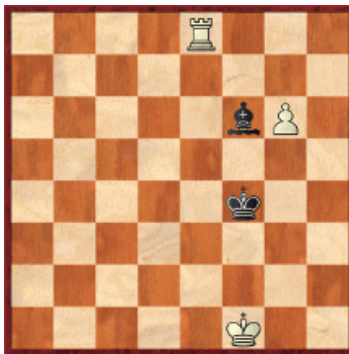
**E110.04 Bednarski, J - Hecht, H.J.**  
Wijk aan Zee, 1973



[FEN "8/8/2B5/8/5k2/6p1/1r6/6K1 b - - 0 11"]

White's king is near the dangerous corner. How did German endgame expert Hecht convert his advantage?

**E110.05 Serper, G (2435) - Bern, I (2275)**  
Baguio City, 1987



[FEN "4R3/8/5bP1/8/5k2/8/8/5K2 w - - 0 8"]

White has two winning moves. Find one of them!



Comment on this month's column via our [Contact Page](#)! Pertinent responses will be posted below daily.

---

 [TOP OF PAGE](#)

 [HOME](#)

 [COLUMNS](#)

 [LINKS](#)

 [ARCHIVES](#)

 [ABOUT THE  
CHESS CAFE](#)

[\[ChessCafe Home Page\]](#) [\[Book Review\]](#) [\[Columnists\]](#)  
[\[Endgame Study\]](#) [\[The Skittles Room\]](#) [\[Archives\]](#)  
[\[Links\]](#) [\[Online Bookstore\]](#) [\[About ChessCafe.com\]](#) [\[Contact Us\]](#)

© 2010 BrainGamz, Inc. All Rights Reserved.  
"ChessCafe.com®" is a registered trademark of BrainGamz, Inc.