

THE MODERN ENDGAME MANUAL

Efstratios Grivas

Mastering queen
vs pieces endgames



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Efstratios Grivas

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Mastering queen vs pieces endgames

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KEY TO SYMBOLS

= Equality or equal chances

± White has a slight advantage

∓ Black has a slight advantage

± White is better

∓ Black is better

+ - White has a decisive advantage

- + Black has a decisive advantage

∞ unclear

∞ with compensation

↔ with counterplay

↑ with initiative

→ with an attack

Δ with the idea

□ only move

N novelty

! a good move

!! an excellent move

? a weak move

?? a blunder

! ? an interesting move

? ! a dubious move

+ check

mate

INTRODUCTION

Dear Reader,

As you may already be aware, the publishing house 'Chess Evolution' is print-ing a series called 'The Modern Endgame Manual' which will consist primarily of eight books and will deal with everything concerning the endgame.

I was surprisingly pleased when the Editor in Chief, GM Arkadij Naiditsch, asked me to write two of the total eight books. But I was a bit 'disappointed' when it was made clear to me that I would have to deal with a quite difficult subject: Queen vs Pieces Endgames!

But OK, nothing is really difficult nowadays. The modern author has at his dis-posal powerful databases, tablebases, analysed material, books and, by adding his knowledge, you will always find what you are looking for!

The endgame is a phase of the game that has been extensively analysed and formed to concrete conclusions, although in nearly all the books I know of, very little space is dedicated to the queen vs pieces endgame subject.

I think this is mainly because of space limitations and because it's a difficult theme that doesn't appear too interesting for the readers. But a modern chess player cannot really choose what he likes or prefers — this has nothing to do with openings!

Today we have shorter time-controls and there isn't really enough time to dig around on the subtleties of each ending. You have to know and to repeat knowledge; don't be carried away by the usual myth of the 'chess talent'. As I have repeatedly written and proved, 'talent is the excuse of the failed'.

'Unfortunately', the modern chess player is entitled and forced to work more than his predecessors. The modern chess trainer also needs to prepare more delicate themes, understand them and then teach them to his students as well. So, there is plenty of room for everything and for everybody who is thirsty for knowledge.

Knowledge is the key word, and knowledge is absorbed sub-consciously; it is impossible to remember everything you study. So, it is highly important to work with good material and good trainers in order to improve towards the 'Chess Olym-pus'.

Nowadays the help of the Silicon Monster (chess analysis engines) is quite valuable, as it can save an author countless hours of analysis and checking. But still the role of the qualified trainer remains important; he knows where the truth is — he knows what to keep and what to throw away...

I do not want to hold a high nose and claim that everything I have written is perfect and completely sound; I am always aware of the surprise factor and I just try to write honestly and with responsibility.

As an author, I feel that I should especially congratulate four important figures of our chess literature world: Alexander Baburin, Karsten Muller, John Nunn and Jan Timman. Dr. John Nunn was kind enough to permit me to publish his analysis of the game Piket-Nunn, Wijk aan Zee 1990 — I truly thank him!

Finally, I would like to thank three readers who each contributed valuable time and effort to check and correct my work:

- Former FIDE Women World Champion, GM & FST Antoaneta Stefanova.
- Endgame Expert & Author, GM Karsten Müller.
- Lecturer in Computer Science, who has championed advances in the creation and use of chess endgame tables, Guy Haworth.

Have a nice reading journey!

Athens, 2016
Efstratios Grivas

EDITORIAL PREFACE

In this series of nine endgame books, FIDE Senior Trainer Adrian Mikhalchishin, FIDE Senior Trainer Efstratios Grivas and IGM Csaba Balogh combine their experience as trainers and as practical players to create something very special.

The authors aim for very understandable explanations of every endgame position in each book.

The specification:

- 1st book — Queen and pawn endgames.
- 2–3 — Minor piece endgames (bishop and knight endgames).
- 4–5 — These will feature the fight between different material constellations.
- 6–8 — These books are going to focus on the most common endgames, which are of course rook endings.
- 9th — This book will focus on exchanges and simplifications.

The main concept of each book is to provide theoretical knowledge which can be used in practical games. It means the focus of the books will be on positions which are the most likely to occur - and the practical playing of them.

That's why you will firstly meet the theoretical part, and secondly the practical examples of how games actually continued in a particular endgame.

Yes, you're right, you won't find too many very complicated studies, stunning manouevres or rarely-appearing positions — and there is a simple reason why not!

How often do we see positions, for example two knights vs pawn where one knight is blocking the pawn and the other one tries to get the king to the corner before releasing the second knight for the mate? Or constellations with crazy material on the board? This might happen in one game out of 100! You could spend hundreds of hours working on something that might bring you “only” a single point more out of 100 games!

Our approach is quite different: let's make more points in the other 99 games! And who knows, we might also be lucky in the remaining one, but actually, statistically, it would almost not matter.

“The Modern Endgame Manual” will make an expert out of you in most of the endgames which are going to appear in your long career as a chess player!

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The above sources were my main help and guide while writing this book. I would like to thank the (rest) of the authors for their contributions to chess literature and the chance they gave to all chess players to become better. Wikipedia was quite helpful too!

If I forgot to ‘mention’ somebody or if I used ‘modified’ material and didn’t mention the original author, I want to apologize. Obviously I didn’t do it on purpose; I don’t need to, as I am capable of writing and analysing things myself. I am just getting old and sometimes my collected old material fails to remind me exactly who did what...

CHAPTER 1.

QUEEN VS QUEEN & BISHOP

Many interesting endings can arise from the rare opposition of a queen against a combination of major and minor pieces. We can accept as a general rule that, when there are no pawns on the board, the superior side can win if its material advantage is at least one rook (using standardized material value).

Without pawns, the ending of queen vs queen & bishop is drawn. Naturally, there do exist (as always) a few exceptions in which the defending king is caught in an uncomfortable position.

It has been proven that the bishop-side can win when his king is near enough to co-operate with the rest of his forces.

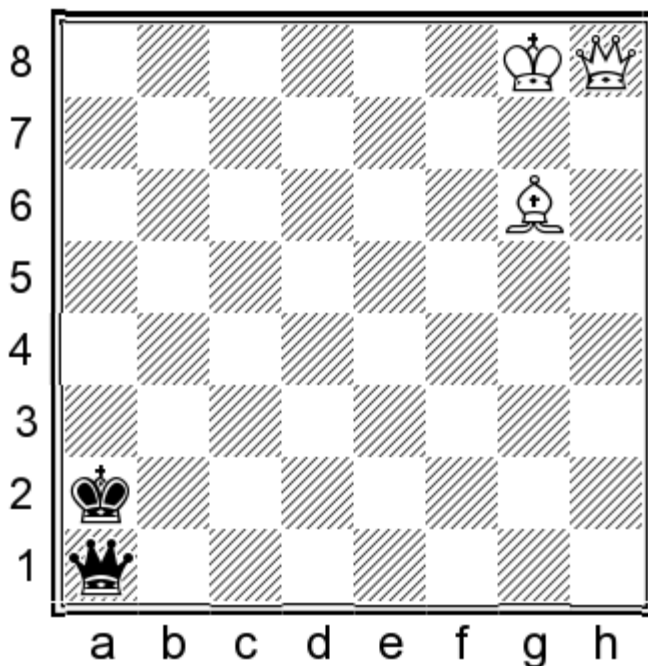
Usually, however, the queen and bishop don't co-operate in a successful manner due to the bishop's restriction to only the half of the squares on the board.

1

Ni Hua

Wu Wenjin

Beijing 2001



The white king is very far away and cannot assist, so the position remains drawn.

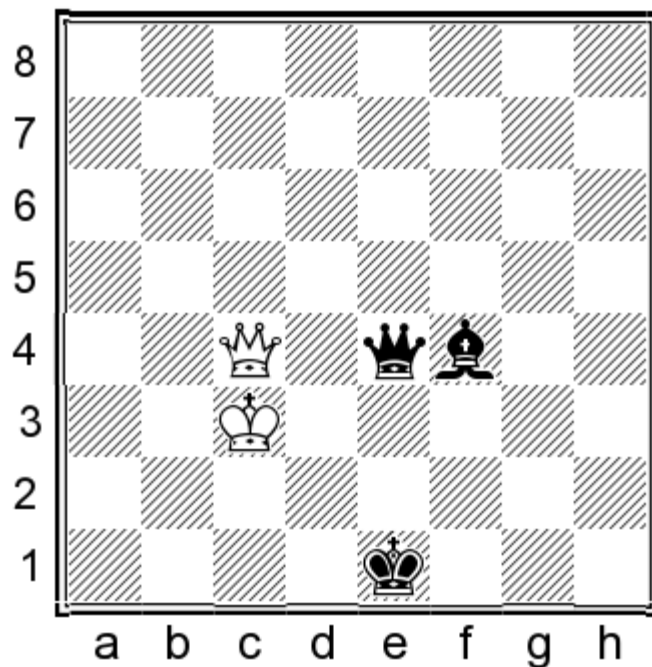
64. ♖f7+ ♔b1 65. ♚h1+ ♔b2 66. ♚h2+ ♔a3 67. ♚d6+ ♔b2 68. ♚d4+ ♔b1 69. ♚b4+ ♔c1 70. ♚f4+ ♔b2 71. ♚d4+ ♔b1 72. ♚g6+ ♔a2 73. ♚a4+ ♔b2 74. ♚c2+ ♔a3 75. ♚f7 ♚g1+ 76. ♔f8 ♚e3 77. ♚a2+ ♔b4 78. ♚b2+ ♔c5 1/2-1/2

2

Mladenov Svetlin

Koch Thomas

Germany 2012



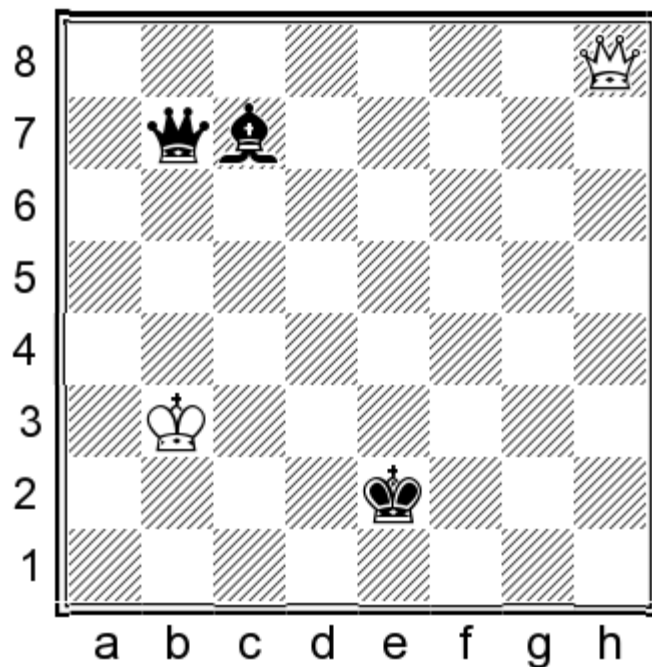
Here we have a model defence. White checks from the opposite-coloured squares to the bishop.

103...♖e5+ 104.♜b3 ♘d2 105.♞h4+ ♜d1 106.♞h1+ ♙e1 107.♞c6 ♜d2 108.♞g2+ ♜e3 109.♞g1+ ♜e2 110.♞g4+ ♜f2
 111.♞h4+ ♜f3 112.♞h3+ ♜e4 113.♞g4+ ♜e3 114.♞g1+ ♜f3 115.♞f1+ ♙f2 116.♞d3+ ♙e3 117.♞f1+ ♜e4 118.♞g2+
 ♜f5 119.♞f3+ ♜e6 120.♞c6+ ♜e7 121.♞b7+ ♜d8 122.♞c6 ♞d4 123.♞c4 ♞xc4+ 124.♜xc4 1/2-1/2

Many factors can affect a game but the most usual in these endings is time-trouble, as they do tend to appear at a very late stage of the game, where time is limited...

3

Muzychuk Anna
 Harikrishna Pentala
 Wijk aan Zee 2010



86.♔a2?

A losing move by the sister of the former Women's World Champion! 86.♔c2, 86.♔c3 or 86.♔c4 were all good alternatives.

86...♕d5+! 87.♔b1 ♖e4+ 88.♔a2 ♗e5

The bishop plays its part in the mating net, while the white queen has no available checks!

89.♖h6

Or 89.♖h5+ ♔d2! 90.♖g5+ ♔c2 91.♖e3 ♖c4+!-+.

89...♖a4+ 0-1

90.♔b1 ♖b3+ 91.♔c1 ♖d1#.

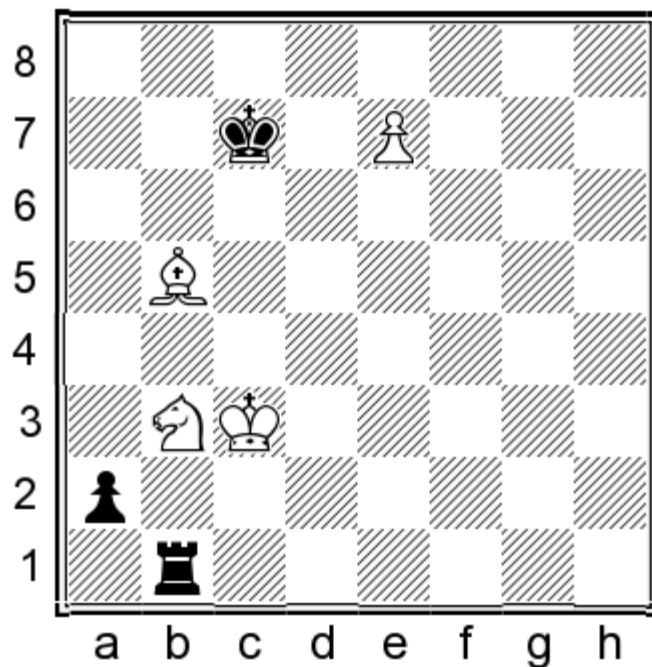
The following examples can prove the viability of the ending. Note that in all the positions the superior side's king was close enough to his counterpart.

4

Wibe Terje Paul

Hurme Harri

Ybbs 1968



It appears that Black will queen as well, but White will have the move...

81. e8=♚ ♖xb3+ 82. ♗xb3 a1=♚ 83. ♚c6+

83. ♚d7+ is good as well.

83... ♗b8 84. ♚d6+! ♗b7

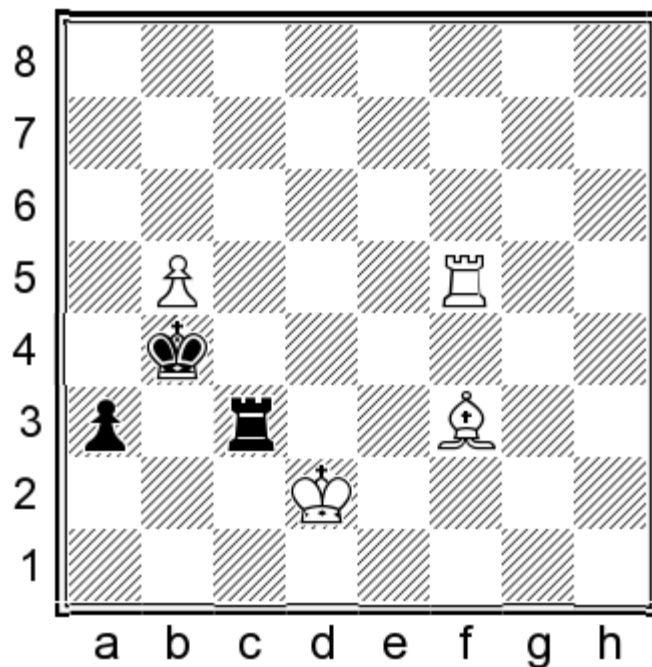
84... ♗c8 85. ♗d7+ ♗d8 86. ♗g4+ ♗e8 87. ♗h5#.

85. ♗c6+ ♗b6 86. ♗d5+ 1-0

And Black resigned: 86... ♗b5 87. ♚c6+ ♗a5 88. ♚c7+ ♗b5 89. ♗c4#.

5

**Moskalenko Viktor
Shchekachev Andrei
St Petersburg 1993**



What White needs here is some precise calculation.

71. ♖f4+!

By the way, 71.b6 wins as well.

71... ♖c4

71... ♖b3 72. ♕d1+ ♖b2 73. ♖b4++.

72. ♖xc4+ ♖xc4 73. ♕e2+! ♖b3 74. b6 a2 75. b7 a1=♚ 76. b8=♚+ ♖a3 77. ♗a7+ ♖b2 78. ♗d4+ ♖b1 1-0

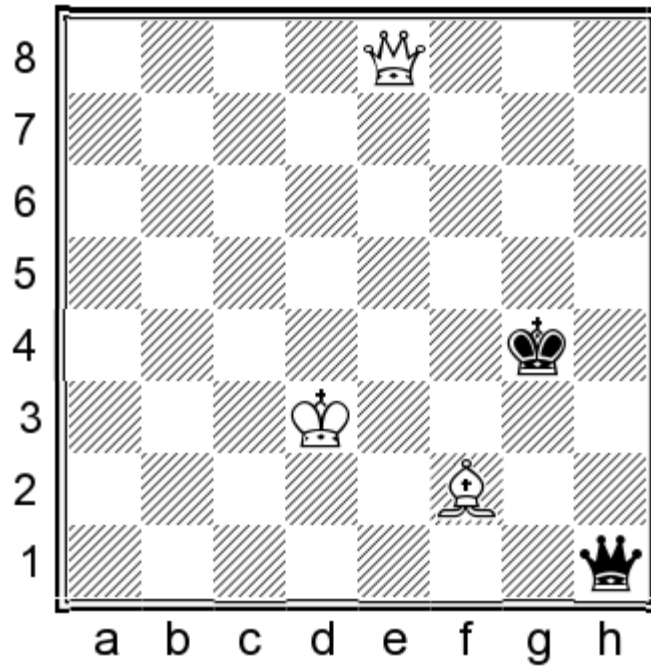
And Black resigned due to 79. ♕d3+ ♖a2 80. ♗a4+ ♖b2 81. ♗b4+ ♖a2 82. ♕c4#.

6

Sarkar Justin

Devereaux Maxim

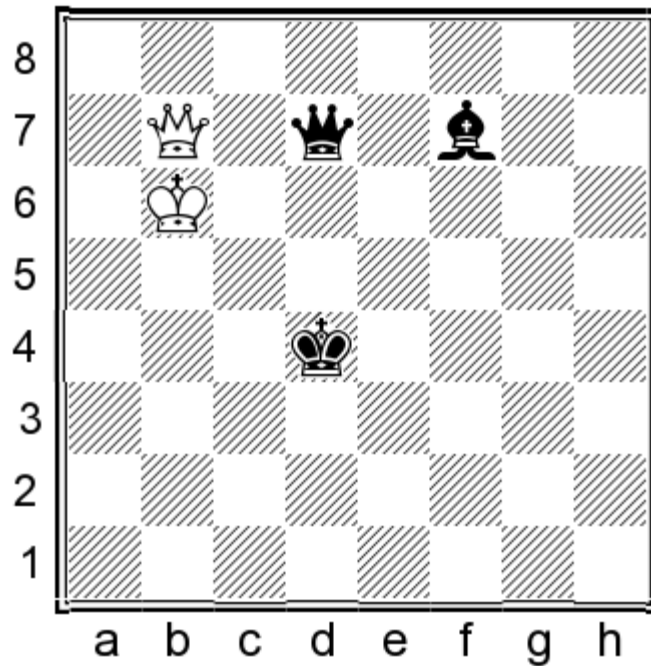
London 2000



75. ♖g6+ ♔f4 76. ♕g3+ ♔f3 77. ♗c6+ ♔xg3 78. ♗xh1 1-0

7

Dawson Jeffery
 Karstensen Christian
 Copenhagen 2006



Even if this position doesn't look great, White can still defend.

87... ♗d6+ 88. ♔a7 ♗a3+ 89. ♔b8 ♗d6+ 90. ♔c8?

White blunders! Fine was 90. ♔a7=.

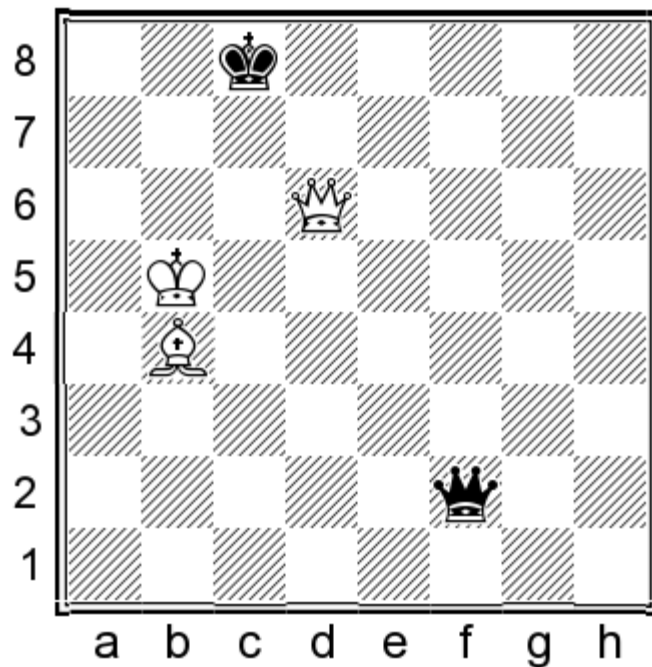
90...♔e6+ 0-1

8

Langer Mikhail

Pruess David

Stillwater 2007



61.♙e6+! ♔c7 62.♙d6+

The bishop decisively joins to the attack.

62...♔b7

62...♔d8 63.♙e7+ ♔c8 64.♙c7#.

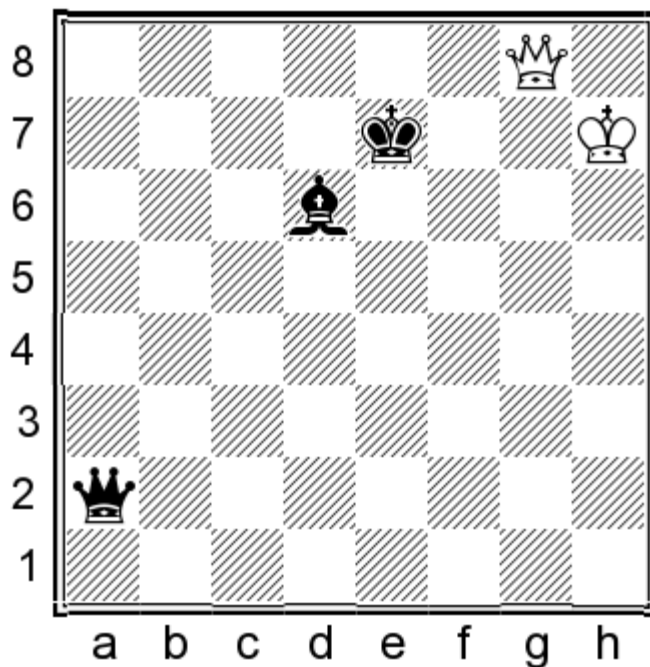
63.♙d7+ ♔a8 64.♙c8+ 1-0

9

Polok Kacper

Krainski Aleksander

Poronin 2014



76...♚h2+!

The black queen will approach the white king like a sneak-thief!

77.♔g6 ♚g3+ 78.♔h7 ♚h4+ 79.♔g6 ♚g4+ 80.♔h7 ♚h5+ 81.♔g7 ♚e5# 0-1

QUEEN & PAWNS VS QUEEN & BISHOP

In general everything depends on the specific position! The pawns' side should usually opt for a queen exchange to reach a favourable pawns vs bishop ending.

I wouldn't say that the pawns' side is completely out of danger of losing, as sometimes the pawns can be an obstacle to the perpetual check! Feeling too safe in chess is a good step towards losing, so stay alert!

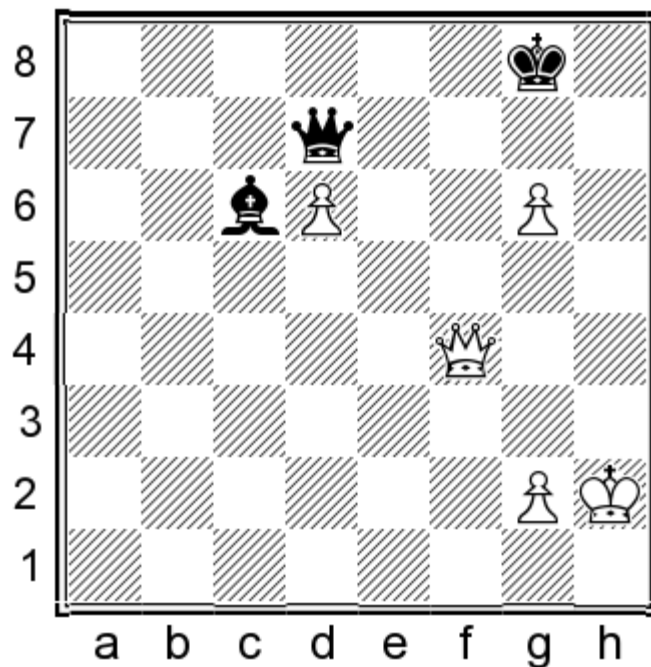
There are no concrete rules of thumb as exist in numerous positions but in general vs two pawns the draw shouldn't be difficult, while vs three or more pawns things can start to become dangerous.

As usual, co-operation is the starting point; the queen should take care of the opposite-coloured squares to the bishop.

Let's examine some positions:

1

Ponomariov Ruslan
Grischuk Alexander
Moscow 2009



Easy stuff for Black - weak and separate pawns are never really a threat...

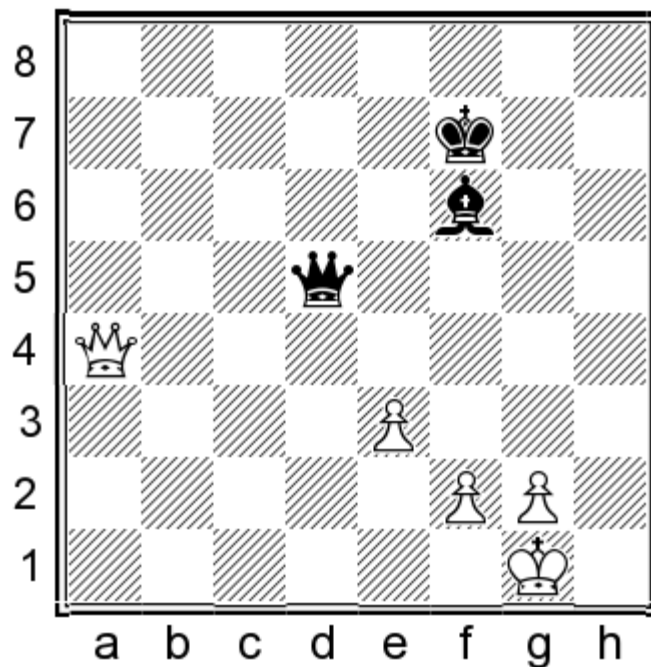
55. ♖f6 ♘d5 56. ♔g3 ♚e6 57. ♗xe6+ ♙xe6 58. ♕f4 ♔g7 59. ♕e5 ♘d7 60. ♕d5 1/2-1/2

2

Nakamura Hikaru

Gelfand Boris

London 2013



White's three connected pawns look scary but Black's set-up is solid and his king will assist in stopping the pawns as well.

54.g4?!

54. ♖g4, with the idea of e4 and g3 should be more promising for White.

54... ♖f3!

Blocking the pawns and restricting White from any plan for improvement.

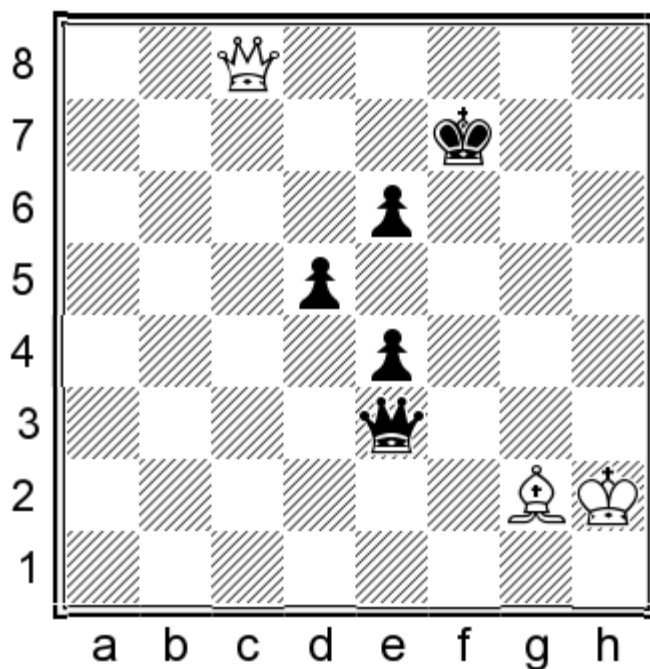
55. ♖d7+ ♔f8 56. ♖f5

Probably there is nothing better, but now the draw is not so difficult.

56... ♖xf5 57. gxf5 ♔f7 58. f4 ♖b2 59. ♔g2 ♔f6 60. e4 ♖c1 61. ♔f3 ♖d2 62. ♔g4 ♖c1 63. e5+ ♔f7 64. ♔g5 ♖d2 65. ♔g4 ♖c1 66. ♔g5 ♖d2 67. f6 ♔e6 68. ♔g6 ♖xf4 69. f7 ♖h6! 70. ♔xh6 ♔xf7 71. ♔g5 ♔e6 72. ♔f4 ♔e7 73. ♔f5 ♔f7 74. e6+ ♔e7 75. ♔e5 ♔e8 76. ♔d6 ♔d8 77. e7+ ♔e8 78. ♔e6 1/2-1/2

3

Andersson Ulf
Kasparov Garry
Madrid 1988

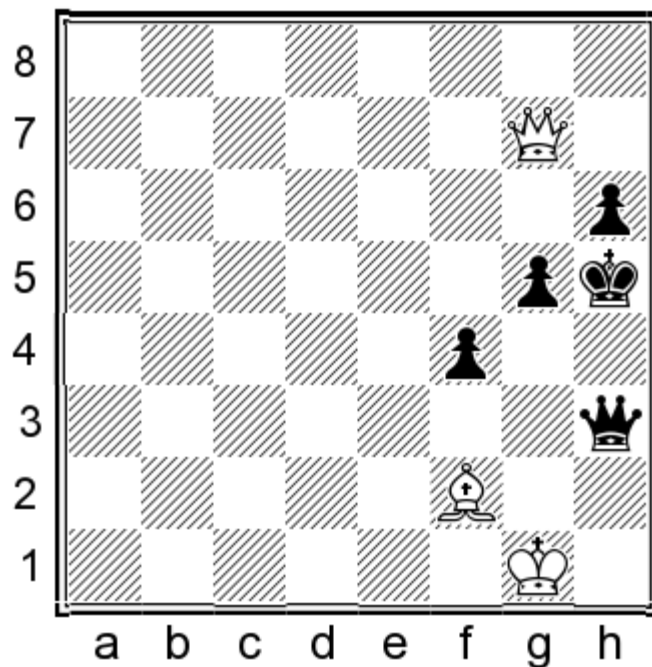


As is logical, the connected pawns are always scary to meet. But here the black queen is not so well-placed, allowing White to achieve a perpetual check or material gain.

58. ♖c7+ ♔f6 59. ♖d8+ ♔e5 60. ♖c7+ ♔d4 61. ♖b6+ ♔d3 62. ♖xe6 ♖f4+ 63. ♔g1 ♖e3+ 64. ♔h2 ♖c5 65. ♖e5! 1/2-1/2

4

Lagno Kateryna
Vescovi Giovanni
Wijk aan Zee 2006



Again a difficult position for White - she has to be accurate...

54...♙e6 55.♚c3! ♙e4

55...g4 56.♚c5+ ♔g6 57.♚c7=.

56.♙h3+ ♔g6 57.♚c8

The white queen takes care of the light squares and the bishop of the dark ones.

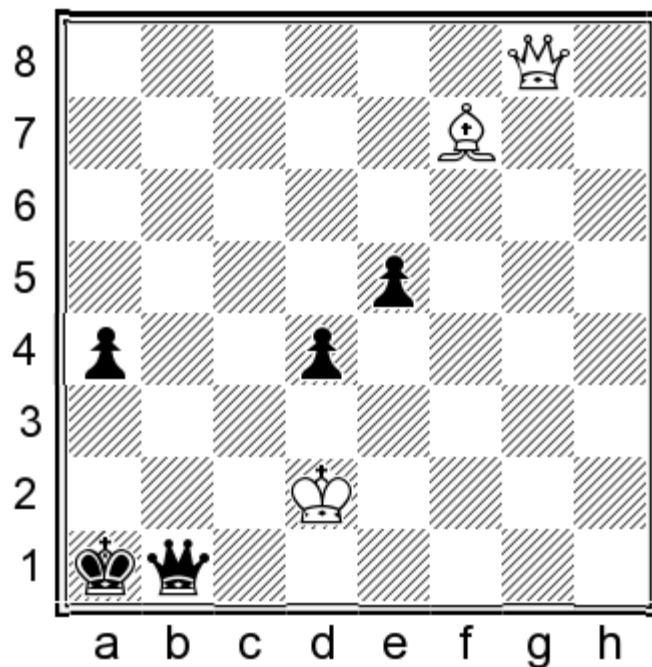
57...♚d5 58.♙a6+ ♔h5 59.♚e2+ g4 60.♚e8+ ♔g5 61.♚e7+ ♔g6 62.♚e8+ ♔g5 1/2-1/2

5

Shulman Yuri

Marin Mihail

Reykjavik 2009



The black king is pretty safe, while the black pawns are free to move.

49...e4! 50.♖e8 a3

Black advances all his pawns and in the same time he keeps the shelter for his king.

51.♖a4 ♖b2+ 52.♔e1 e3

Good dark square domination!

53.♖d1+ ♖b1!

The ending is easily winning, as the bishop cannot stop all the pawns.

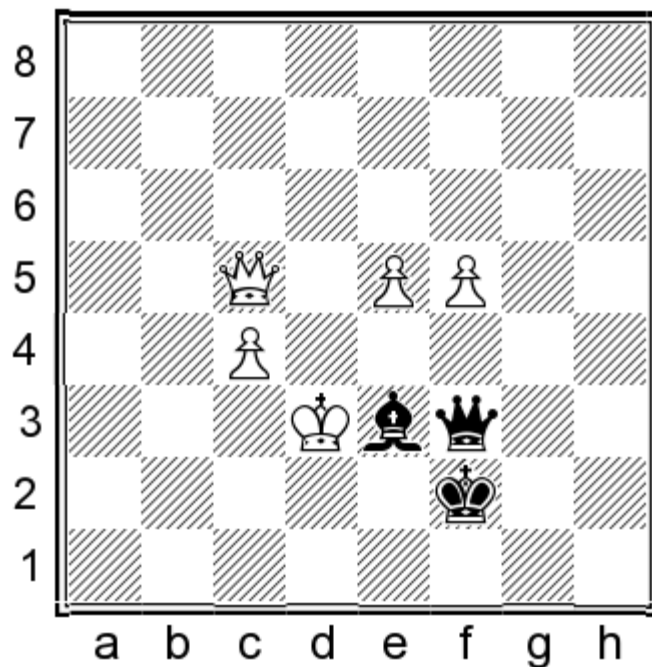
54.♔e2 ♖xd1+ 55.♔xd1 ♔b2 0-1

6

Hornicek Jiri

Zvara Tomas

Czech Republic 2000



Here White overdid things!

61. ♖c8?

He should have gone for 61. ♖d5 ♜xf5+ 62. ♖e4 accepting a draw.

61. ♖c8? ♜c5+!

Now Black mates, as the white pawns are 'assisting' his plans!

62. ♔c2 ♜e4+

Quicker is 62... ♜d4 63. ♜b8 ♔e2!.

63. ♔b2 ♜d4+ 64. ♔b3 ♜d3+ 65. ♔b2

65. ♔a4 ♜xc4+ 66. ♔a5 ♜b4+ 67. ♔a6 ♜b6#.

65... ♜d2+ 66. ♔b1 ♜b4+ 0-1

67. ♔c2 ♜a4+ 68. ♔d2 ♜b4+ 69. ♔d3 ♜d1+ 70. ♔e4 ♜f3+ 71. ♔d4 ♔e2! 72. e6 ♜d6! and... ♜d3 mates!

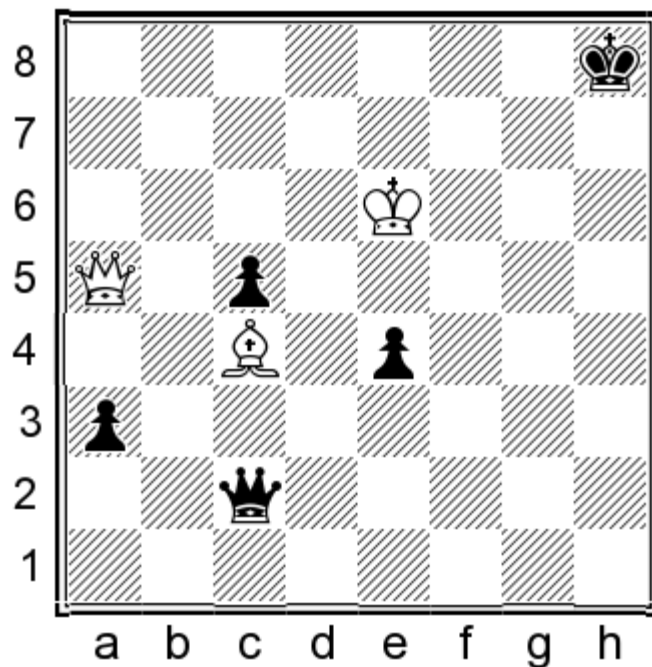
And here is a second example of what can happen in no time!

7

Moiseenko Vadim

Sarkar Justin

Riga 2016



It seems that Black is fine, but the white forces are well connected and can deliver a deadly finish.

48. ♖d8+! ♔h7 49. ♗h4+ ♔g7 50. ♗g3+ ♔h7 51. ♕d5!

Preparing the end. Again the pawns block the perpetual check!

51... ♗d3 52. ♗h4+ ♔g7 53. ♗g5+ ♔h7 54. ♕e7! ♖a2 55. ♕f8!

Completing the mating net.

55... ♗f3+ 56. ♕f7 1-0

QUEEN & PAWNS VS QUEEN & BISHOP & PAWNS

As usual, the stronger side (usually the one who has the bishop!) has good winning chances if he can create targets, or a passed pawn or a combined attack to the enemy king.

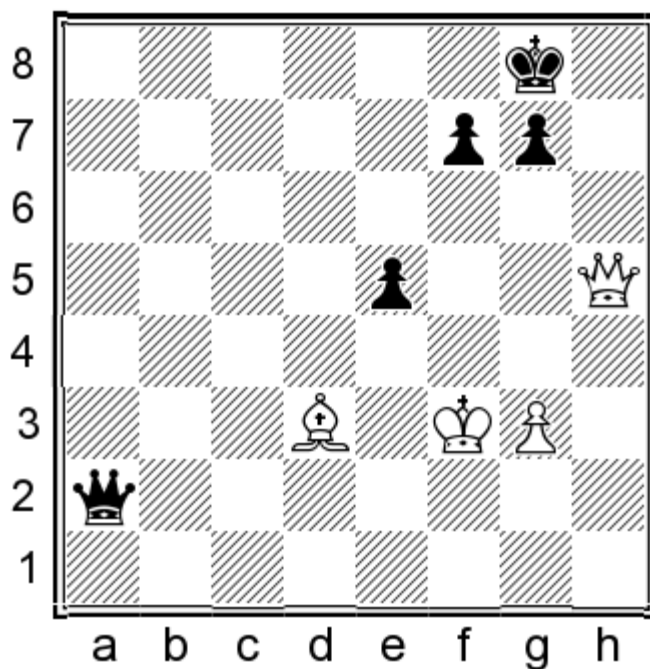
Of course perpetual check is always lurking and it takes a lot of moves. The stronger side should always consider exchanging queens – if, of course, the ending is winning.

1

Timman Jan

Georgiev Kiril

Saint Vincent 2000



White can choose which pawn to capture; e5 or g7?

48. ♖h7+

I think that 48. ♖xe5 g6 was good. The winning plan for White is to place his pawn on g5 and his king close to the d5-square. Then he can return the piece by ♖xf7+, reaching a won pawn ending. Well, it will take time, but it seems strong.

48. ♖h7+ ♔f8 49. ♖h8+ ♔e7 50. ♖xg7

50. ♖h4+! might be a stronger alternative: 50... ♔d7 (50... f6 51. ♖b4+ ♔d7 52. ♗b5+ ♔c7 53. ♖c5+ ♔d8 54. ♖d6+ ♔c8 55. ♗d7+ ♔b7 56. ♗c6+ ♔a6 57. ♗d5+ ♔a5 58. ♗xa2+-) 51. ♖g4+ ♔c7 (51... ♔e7 52. ♖b4+ ♔f6 53. ♖h4+ g5 [53... ♔e6 54. ♗c4+-] 54. ♖h6+-) 52. ♖xg7+-.

50... ♖d5+

Now the checks start...

51. ♔e3 ♖d4+ 52. ♔e2 ♖b2+ 53. ♔f1 ♖c1+ 54. ♔f2 ♖d2+ 55. ♗e2 ♖d4+ 56. ♔g2 ♖e4+ 57. ♗f3 ♖f5 58. ♖g4! ♖c2+ 59. ♔h3 ♔f8 60. ♖e4 ♖c8+ 61. ♗g4 ♖c1 62. ♗f5

The black pawns are blocked and ready to be attacked. Note that an eventual...f6 will make the bishop stronger in attacking via the light squares. But on the other hand staying on f7 it will be a permanent target...

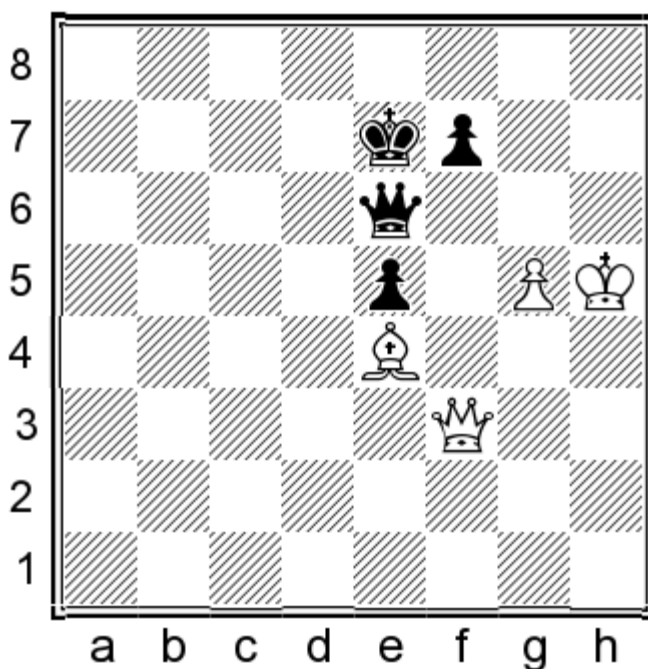
62...♖h6+ 63.♗h4 ♜d6 64.♗g5 ♜c6 65.♔g4 ♜c4+ 66.♔h5!

The white king enters the battle. Note that the presence of so many pawns makes the black queen's life difficult....

66...♜e2+ 67.g4 ♜h2+ 68.♗h4 ♜d2 69.♙e4 ♔e8

Black could play 69...♜d4 and the following long variation is a good example of how White might proceed: 70.g5 ♔g7 71.♜e1 ♜a4 72.♜e2 ♜e8 73.♔h4 ♜d8 74.♗h5 ♜d4 75.♜f3 ♜d8 76.♜f5 ♜d4 (76...♜e7? 77.♜h7+ ♔f8 78.♗h8#) 77.♔h5 ♜d1+ 78.♜f3 ♜d8 79.♜f2 ♜h8+ 80.♔g4 ♜c8+ 81.♜f5 ♜c3 82.♜h7+ ♔f8 83.♜h8+ ♔e7 84.♔f5+-.

70.g5 ♔f8 71.♜g3 ♜d6 72.♜d3 ♜e6 73.♜f3 ♔e7



74.♙c2

74.♙d5! ♜g6+ 75.♔g4 ♔f8 76.♜f5 wins on the spot.

74...♜d6 75.♜b7+ ♔f8 76.♙b3 ♜g6+ 77.♔g4

White could spoil everything with the careless 77.♔h4? ♜h7+ 78.♔g3 ♜f5 with a draw.

77...♔g7

77...f5+ 78.♔h4 ♔e8 79.♜c8+ ♔e7 80.♜c7+-.

78.♙d5!

Domination! Black is out of moves.

78...e4 79.♜b2+! ♔h7 80.♜e5 ♔g8 81.♜f6

Simple and decisive.

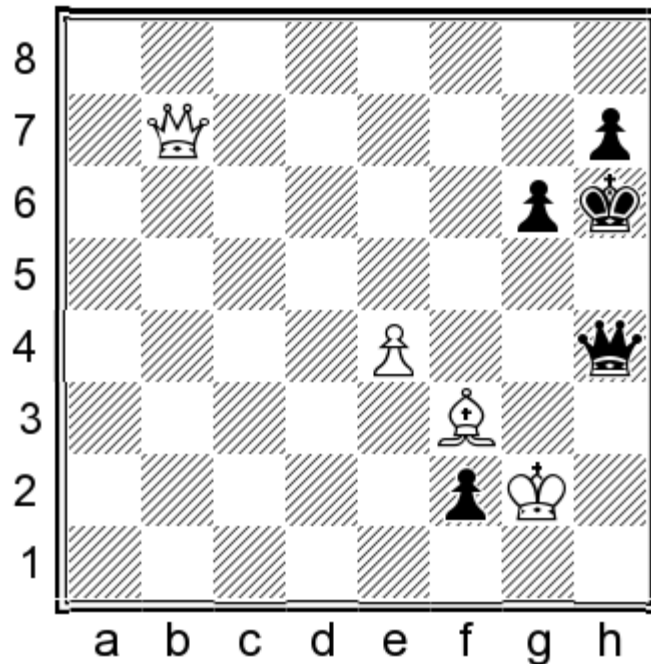
81... ♖xf6

81... ♖h7 82.g6.

82.gxf6 e3 83.♔f3 1-0

2

Postny Evgeny
Shvidler Eliahu
Israel 2009



White is on the right track and something like 41. ♖c7 would do the job in the long run.

41. ♖b5? ♖g5+!

Black grabs his chance and now the ending should be a draw.

**42. ♖xg5+ ♔xg5 43. ♔xf2 ♔f4 44. ♔e2 g5 45. ♗g2 g4 46. ♔d3 h5 47. ♔d4 h4 48. e5 h3 49. ♗f1 ♔f3 50. e6 ♔f2 51. e7 h2!
52. e8=♖ h1=♖ 53. ♖e2+ ♔g3?**

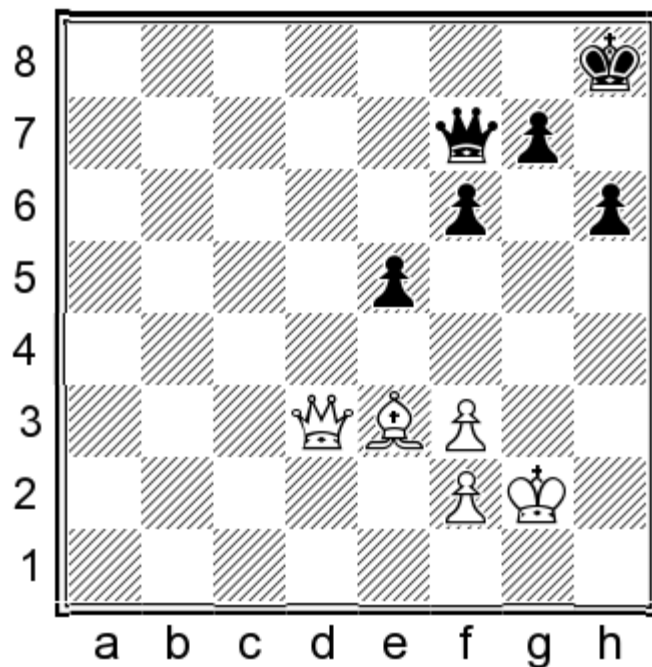
Losing. Good was 53... ♔g1=.

54. ♖e1+ 1-0

And Black realised his fate: 54... ♔f4 55. ♖e5+ ♔f3 56. ♖e3#.

3

Nakamura Hikaru
Carlsen Magnus
London 2012



Black's pawns are healthy and it is difficult for White to make progress.

46.f4

It is logical to exchange weak and doubled pawns.

46...exf4 47.♙xf4 ♖g8 48.♚e4 ♜h8

Black stays put and waits for White to show his hand, but there is nothing to be done as the base of Black's pawns on g7 cannot be attacked.

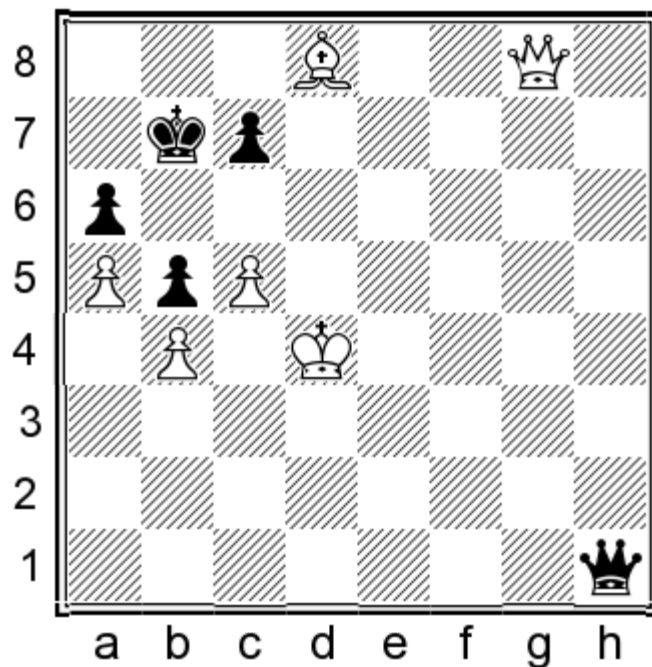
49.♙e3 ♜g8 50.♙d4 ♜h8 51.f4 ♜g8 52.♜g3 ♜h8 53.♙e3 ♜g8 54.♙d4 ♜h8 55.♙e3 ♜g8 56.♙d4 ♜h8 1/2-1/2

4

Ponomariov Ruslan

Eljanov Pavel

Kharkov 2009



White wins as Black will soon run out of checks.

54... ♖a1+ 55. ♔e4 ♜e1+ 56. ♔f5 ♞b1+ 57. ♔f6 ♞xb4

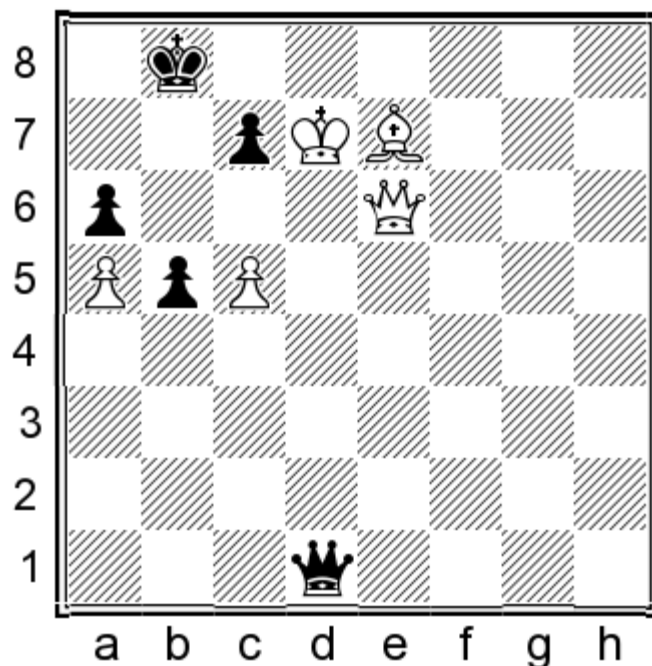
Or 57... ♞b2+ 58. ♔g6 ♞g2+ 59. ♔g5 ♞e4+ 60. ♔h6 ♞h1+ 61. ♔g7 ♞a1+ 62. ♔f6 ♞g1+ 63. ♔f8+-.

58. ♞d5+ ♔b8 59. ♔e7?!

59. ♔e6! ♞g4+ 60. ♔f7 ♞f4+ 61. ♔f6 would have finished it off more quickly.

59... ♞xa5

Checks are not helpful: 59... ♞h4+ 60. ♔f7 ♞h7+ 61. ♔e8 ♞g6+ 62. ♔d7 ♞g4+ 63. ♞e6 ♞d1+



64.♔d6! cxd6 65.♚e8+ ♔a7 66.♚c7! and mate follows.

60.c6!

The mating net is ready!

60...♚c3+ 61.♚f7 ♚h8

61...♚c4 62.♚xc4 bxc4 63.♔b4 is a trivial endgame win.

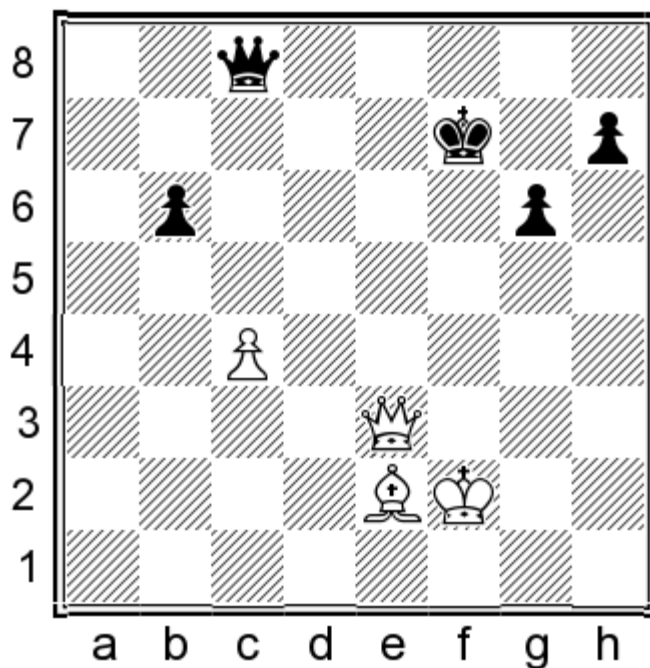
62.♔f6 ♚h7+ 63.♔g7 ♚h3 64.♚d8+ ♚c8 65.♚e8 1-0

5

Alekseev Evgeny

Najer Evgeniy

Moscow 2007



This is quite a difficult ‘win’ for White; he should combine pressure against the black king and the black b-pawn.

58...♚c7 59.♚e1 ♚d6 60.♚h6?

White should regroup his pieces: 60.♚f3+ ♚f6 61.♚b7+ ♔g8 62.♚c8+ ♔g7 63.♚c7+ ♔h6 64.♔d3±.

60...♚b4+ 61.♚f1 ♚b1+ 62.♚f2 ♚f5+ 63.♚e3 ♚e5+ 64.♚f3 ♔g8

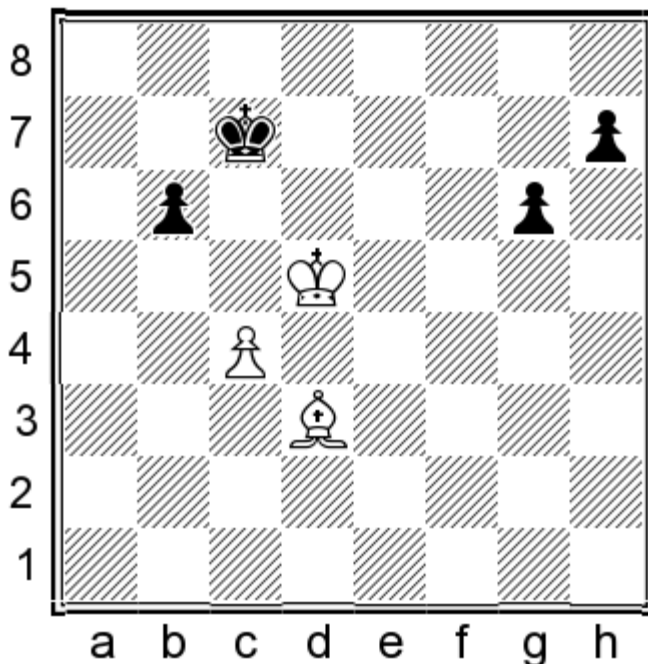
64...♚f5+ 65.♚f4 (65.♚g2 ♚e4+ 66.♚f2 ♚d4+) 65...♚xf4+ 66.♚xf4 ♔f6 67.♔g4 h5 68.♔c8 g5+ 69.♚e4 g4 70.♚f4 ♔e7 71.♚e5 ♔d8 72.♔f5 ♔c7 73.♚d5 ♔b7 74.♚d6 g3 75.♔e4+ ♔a6 76.♚c6 ♔a5 draws.

65.♚f4?

The queen exchange in this position might be ‘problematic’ for White; he should continue with 65.♚h4 ♔g7 66.♚e4 ♚f6+ 67.♚g3±.

65...♞c5?

I couldn't see how White will improve after 65...♞xf4+!? 66.♔xf4 ♕f7 67.♔e5 ♕e7 68.♙d3 ♕d7 69.♔d5 (69.♔f6? ♕c6 70.♔g7 h5 71.♔xg6 h4 72.♔g5 h3 73.♔g4 h2 74.♙e4+ ♕c5=) 69...♕c7



Until K.Müller pointed out 70.♙c2! (if 70.♙f1? h5 71.♙d3 g5 72.♙g6 h4 73.♙f5, then 73...♕b7! 74.♔d6 ♕a6 75.♕c6 ♕a5=) 70...♕d7 71.♕d4 ♕c6 72.♙d3 ♕d6 73.♙e4 ♕e6 74.♕c3+–.

66.♞f6! ♞a3+ 67.♔e4

Now the white forces are well co-ordinated.

67...♞b4 68.♙d3 ♞a5 69.♞e5!? ♞b4

69...♞xe5+? 70.♔xe5 ♕f7 71.♔d6 loses on the spot.

70.♞f6 ♞a5 71.♞e6+! ♕f8 72.♞d6+ ♕f7?

Black should defend with 72...♕e8, although 73.♞e5! should win.

73.♞d5+! ♕f6

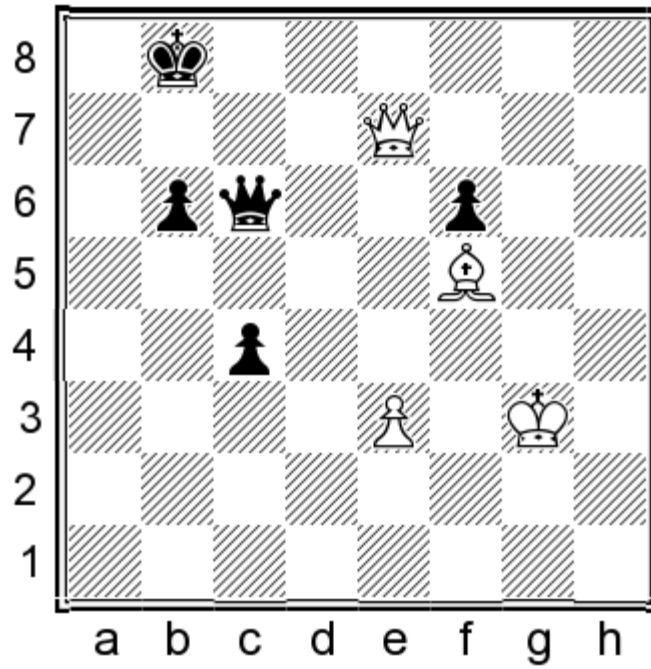
73...♕e7 74.♞xa5 bxa5 75.♔d4! wins. 73...♕e8 74.♞g8+ ♕e7 75.♞xh7+ ♕f6 76.♕f3+–.

74.♞xa5 bxa5 75.♔d5 a4 76.c5 a3 77.♙c4 g5 78.♔d6 g4 79.c6 g3 80.c7 1-0

And Black resigned due to 80...g2 81.c8=♞ g1=♞ 82.♞f8+ ♕g5 83.♞g7+.

6

Van Wely Loek
Timman Jan
Merrillville 1997

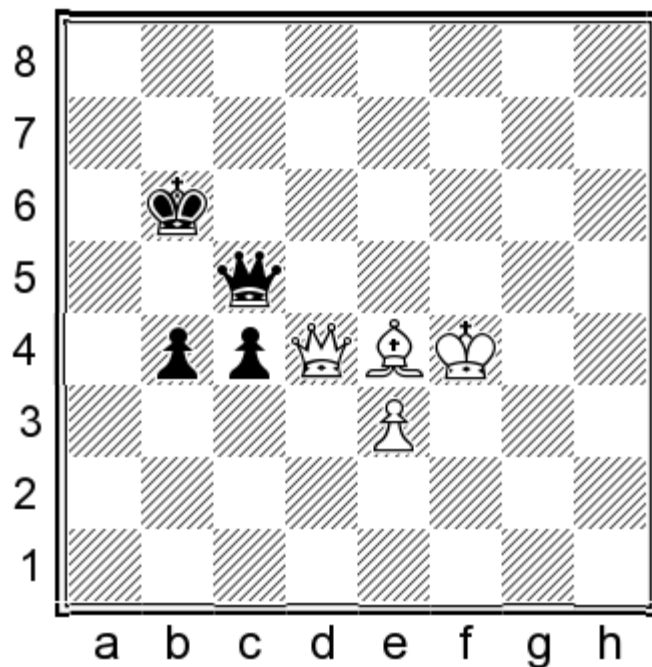


60.♔f4?!

White is a piece up and certainly stands better. Can he win? Well of course one should not be too critical in the sudden-death part of the game - probably the two players were short of time. However the text move is wrong in principle - the white king should head in the other direction: 60.♔f2! planning ♔e1-d2-c3+-. This manoeuvre seems to win quite easily. Not only is the idea in itself very strong but also Black does not seem to have any constructive moves: 60...b5 (60...♖c7 61.♗e8+ ♔a7 62.♙e4 ♗h2+ 63.♙g2+-) 61.♙e4 (61.♙d7 ♗d5 [61...♖c7 62.♗e8+ ♔b7 63.♙xb5 ♗h2+ 64.♔e1+-] 62.♗d8+ ♔a7 63.♖c7+-) 61...♗b6 62.♗d7 c3 63.♗e8+ ♔c7 64.♗f7+-.

60.♔f4?! b5 61.♗d8+ ♔a7 62.♙e4 ♗c5 63.♗xf6 b4 64.♗d4! ♔b6

The ending after 64...♗xd4 65.exd4 b3 66.♔e3 c3 67.♔d3 c2 68.♔d2 ♔b6 69.♙d5 wins easily.

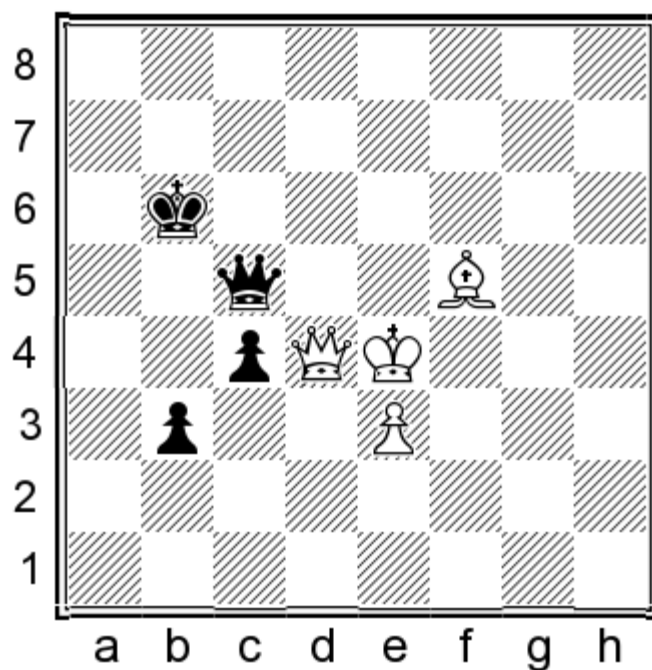


65. ♕f5?

A bad move that throws the win away. 65. ♖f3! ♜b5 66. ♝xc5+ ♜xc5 67. ♖e2+- was the correct follow-up.

65...b3! 66. ♖e4

66. ♝xc5+ ♜xc5 67. ♖e4 c3 68. ♜d3 c2 69. ♜d2 ♜d6 70. ♙h7 ♖e5 and White cannot win: 71. ♙g8 b2 72. ♜xc2 b1=♝+ 73. ♜xb1 ♖e4=.



66... ♜b5

66...c3! was also equal, and more accurate as it would lead to the previous comment.

67. ♖c3 ♜e7+ 68. ♔f3 ♞d6 69. ♙e4 ♜e6 70. ♞d4 ♔b4?

70... ♞h3+ 71. ♔e2 ♞h2+ is a perpetual check.

71. ♞b6+?

A terrible blunder in time trouble. 71. ♔e2 would now give White serious winning chances.

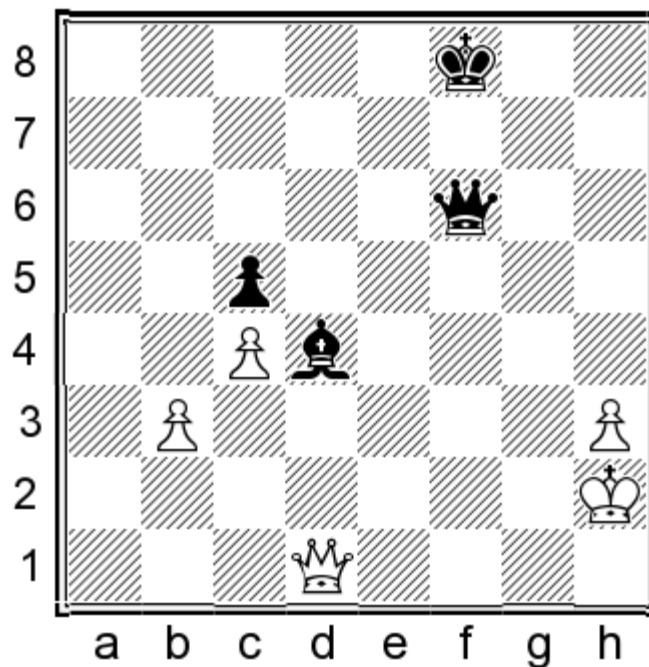
71... ♞xb6 0-1

7

Adams Michael

Polgar Judit

Frankfurt 1999



White's pawns are blocked and isolated, a fact which makes Black's task easier.

53. ♞e2

On 53. ♞d2 Black would win with 54... ♞f2+.

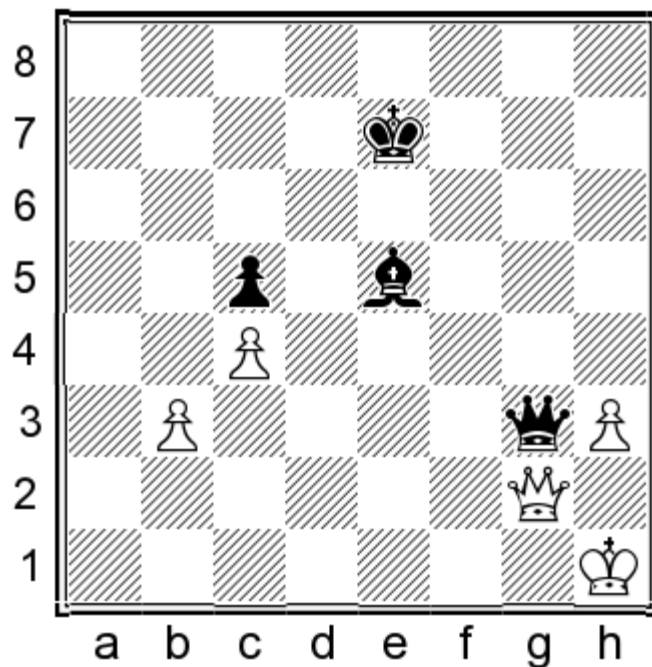
53... ♞f4+ 54. ♔g2 ♞g5+ 55. ♔h2?

The only move was 55. ♞g4 but after 55... ♞xg4+ 56. hxg4 ♔g7 Black also wins.

55... ♙e5+?

In rapid and blitz games you can easily miss mate in one: 55... ♞g1#.

56. ♔h1 ♞g3 57. ♞f1+ ♔e7 58. ♞g2



58... ♖xb3?

Another blunder in time-trouble! As explained, 58... ♖xg2+ 59. ♔xg2 ♕f6 is a trivial win.

59. ♖e4?

59. ♖g5+! and Black cannot avoid perpetual check.

59... ♖d1+?!

59... ♖xh3+! 60. ♔g1 ♖h2+ 61. ♔f1 ♖f4+-+.

60. ♔g2 ♖d2+ 61. ♔g1

61. ♔f3 ♕f6 62. ♖c6+ ♔d6-+.

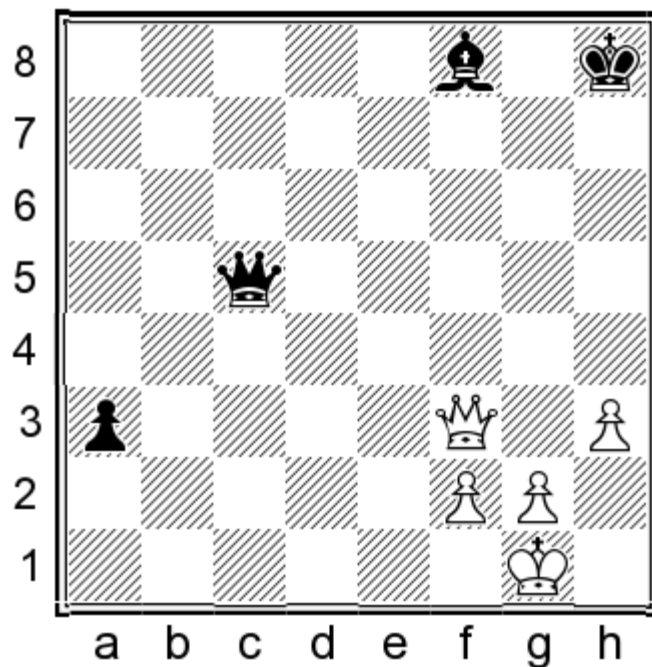
61... ♖d4+!

Finally!

62. ♖xd4 cxd4 63. ♔f2 ♔d6 64. ♔e2 ♔c5 65. ♔d3 ♕f6 66. h4 ♕xh4 67. ♔c2 ♔xc4 68. ♔d2 d3 69. ♔e3 ♔c3 70. ♔e4 d2 71. ♔f5 d1=♖ 0-1

8

**Nataf Igor Alexandre
Nisipeanu Liviu Dieter
Germany 2004**



The passed black a-pawn will carry the day - the white kingside is still harmless.

42...♔g7?!

There was no need for this. 42...a2 was winning on the spot: 43.♖f6+ ♔g7 44.♗h4+ ♔g8 45.♗d8+ ♔f7 46.♗d7+ ♗e7 47.♗f5+ ♔f6 48.♗h7+ ♔f8 49.♗h6+ ♗g7+

42...♔g7?! 43.♗g4+ ♔f6 44.♗f3+ ♔e6 45.g3 ♔d6 46.h4 ♗d5! 47.♗g4+ ♔f6 48.h5 a2 49.♗g6+ ♔e7 50.♗g7+ ♔d8 51.♗f6+ ♔d7 52.♗g7+ ♔e7 53.♗a1 ♗a5

53...♔f6! 54.♗xf6 ♗d1+ 55.♔h2 a1=♗ was another trivial win.

54.♔g2 ♔e6 0-1

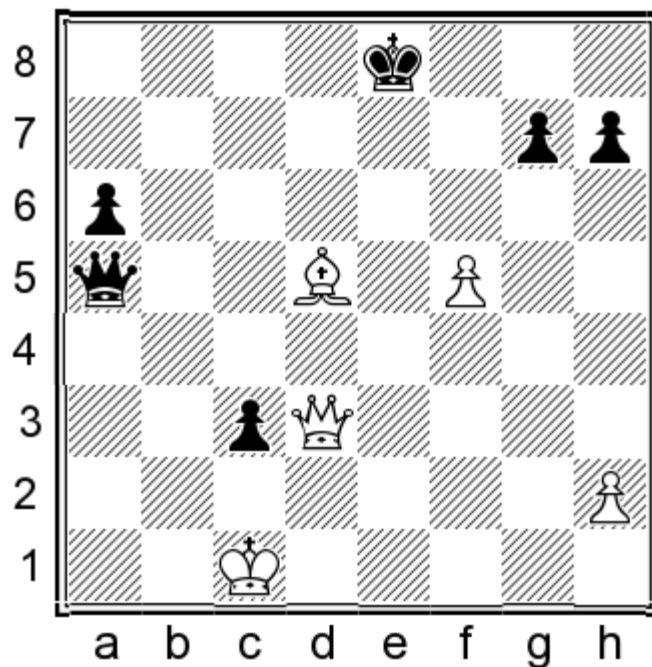
And as 55...♔f6 is coming, White resigned.

9

Swiercz Dariusz

Vachier Lagrave Maxime

Caleta 2013



White's material advantage will tell.

37. ♖e4+ ♔d8 38. ♕c2! ♚a3 39. ♗h4+ ♕e8 40. ♘c6+ ♖f7 41. ♘d5+ ♕e8 42. ♗e1+ ♔d8 43. ♗e6!

Now White threatens to collect the black kingside.

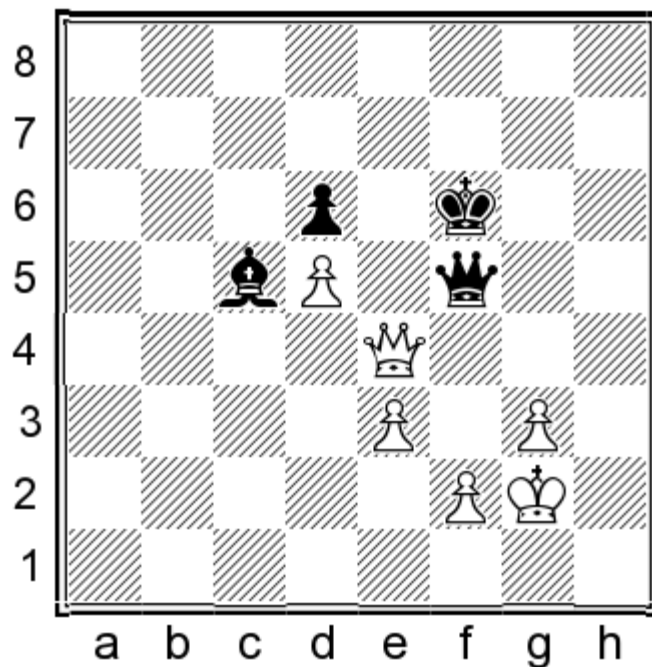
43... ♗b2+ 44. ♕d3 ♗xh2 45. ♗g8+ ♕c7 46. ♗xg7+ ♕d6 47. ♘g2!

Blocking the black queen and preparing the advance of his passed f-pawn.

47... ♗h4 48. f6 ♗e1 49. ♗f8+ ♕d7 50. ♘h3+ ♕c6 51. ♗c8+ 1-0

10

Bareev Evgeny
Rublevsky Sergei
Sochi 2005



White shouldn't be in danger.

67. ♖c4

67. ♖f4! was more accurate: 67... ♜xf4 68. gxf4 ♔f5 69. ♔f3 ♔f6 70. e4 ♙b6 71. e5+ dxe5 72. fxe5+ ♔xe5= but White was obviously trying for something more.

67. ♖c4 ♔g6 68. g4 ♜e5 69. ♜d3+ ♔g7 70. ♔f1 ♔f6 71. ♔e2

With this regrouping White tries to mobilise his pawns with f4 and e4.

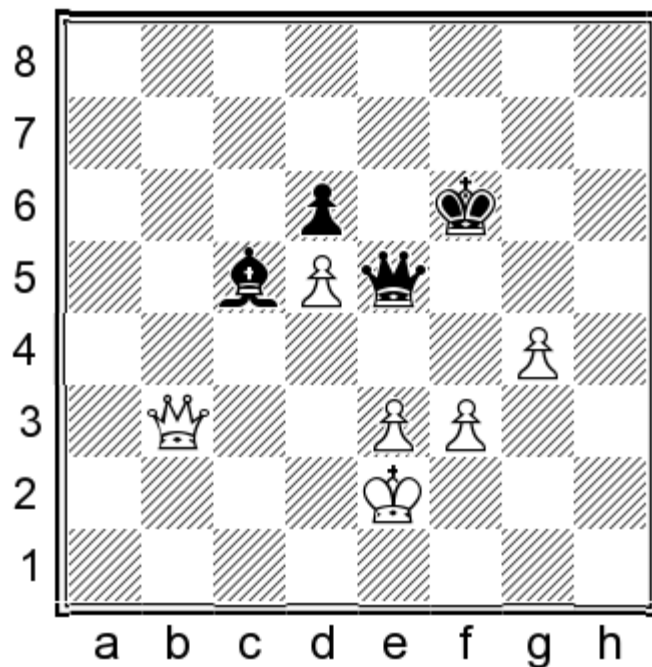
71... ♜b2+ 72. ♔f3 ♜e5 73. ♜b3

73. ♔e2 ♜b2+=.

73... ♔g6 74. ♜b1+ ♔g7 75. ♜b7+ ♔g6 76. ♜b1+ ♔g7 77. ♜b3 ♔f6 78. ♔e2?!

He should take the draw with 78. ♜b7=.

78... ♜e4 79. f3 ♜e5



80. ♖d3

80.f4!? achieves the draw: 80... ♗e4 81.g5+ ♔f5 (81... ♔f7!? is the suggestion of K.Müller) 82. ♖d3 ♗b4 83.g6! ♗xd3+ 84. ♔xd3 ♔xg6 85.e4 ♔f6 86.e5+ dxe5 87.fxe5+ ♔xe5.

80... ♗b2+ 81. ♔f1 ♔g5! 82. ♗e2?!

Passive and dangerous. Good was 82. ♗h7! ♗d2 83. ♗f5+ ♔h4 (83... ♔h6 84. ♗f6+=) 84. ♗f6+ ♔g3 85. ♗f4+ ♔h3 86. ♗h6+=.

82... ♗c1+ 83. ♔f2 ♗h1

83... ♗c3! 84.f4+ ♔g6=+.

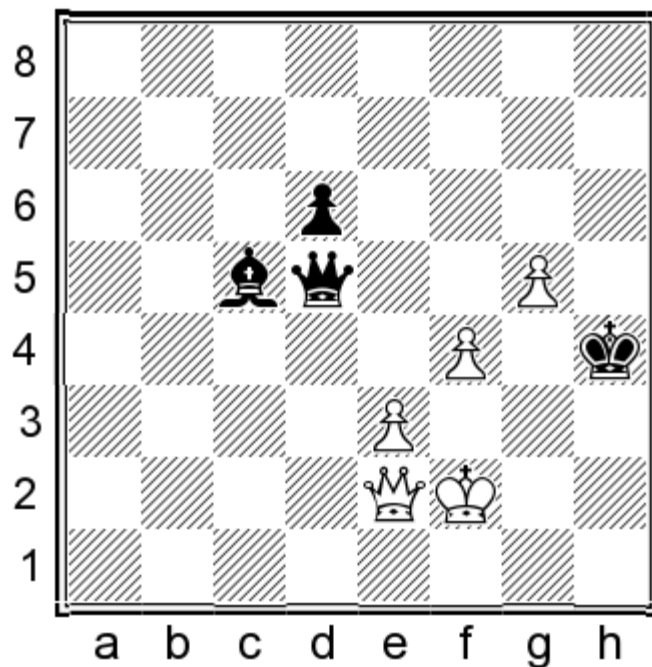
84.f4+

84. ♖d3 ♗h2+ 85. ♔f1 ♗h3+=.

84... ♔h4 85.g5

85. ♗f3 ♗h2+ 86. ♔f1 ♗g3 87. ♔e2 ♗xg4 88.e4=.

85... ♗xd5



86. ♖c2?

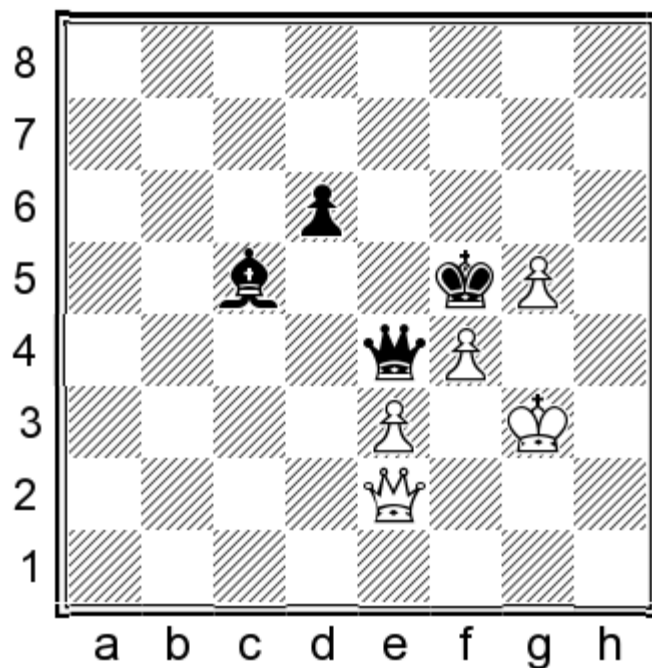
Again White has a clear path to the draw: 86.g6 ♜g8 87.♔f3! ♜d5+ 88.♔f2.

86...♔g4?

Black could now win with 86...♔h3! 87.♔e2 ♔g4 88.♜d3 ♜a2+ 89.♜d2 ♜xd2+ 90.♔xd2 ♔f5 91.♔d3 d5-+.

87. ♜e2+ ♔f5 88. ♔g3 ♜e4

Things look critical now...



89.♔h4!

Activity above all - White is back on the track!

89...♖h1+ 90.♔g3 ♖g1+ 91.♔h4 ♖h1+ 92.♔g3 ♖e4 93.♔h4 ♖h1+ 94.♔g3 ♖e4 95.♔h4 ♗xe3?!

95...♔e6 96.♖g4+ ♔e7 looks like a better try, but Black wouldn't be able to win after 97.♖c8!

96.♖g4+ ♔g6 97.♖h5+ ♔g7 98.♖h6+ ♔g8 99.♖xd6 1/2-1/2

CHAPTER 2.

QUEEN VS QUEEN & KNIGHT

Without pawns, the ending of queen vs queen & knight is drawn. Naturally, there do exist (as always) a few exceptions, in which the defending king is caught in an uncomfortable position.

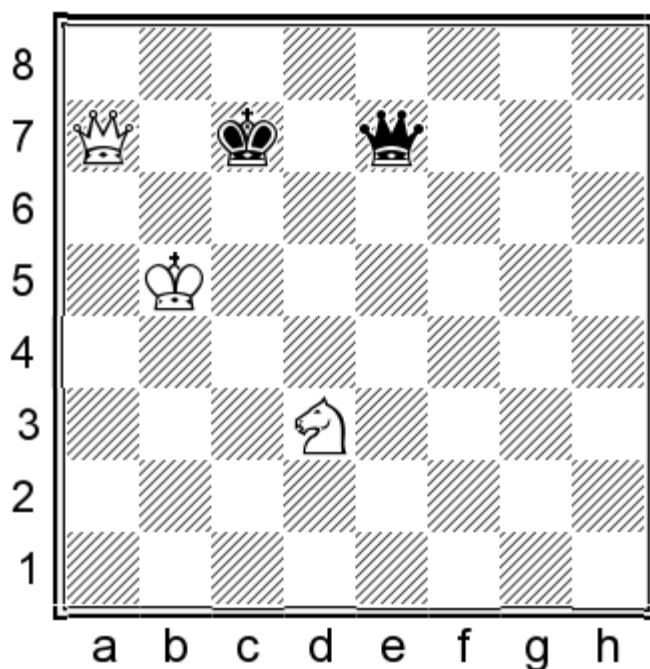
It has been proven that the knight-side can win when his king is near enough to co-operate with the rest of his forces.

Queen and knight co-operate more successfully than queen and bishop, due to the ability of the knight to attack all squares of the board.

As said, the knight's side can win if it forces mate or take advantage of the bad placement of the opponent's queen. A lot of cases arise from mutual promotion.

1

Spassky Boris
Karpov Anatoly
Hamburg 1982



Even World Champions can lose this ending, although this was an exhibition TV game!

83...♔d8?

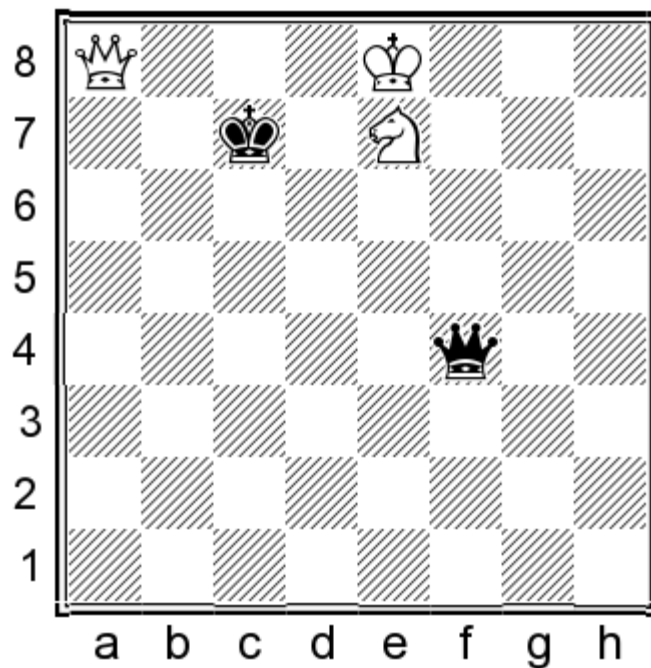
Of course 83...♔d6 preserves the draw.

84.♚b8+ 1-0

85.♘c5 is coming next, Black resigned.

2

Antal Gergely



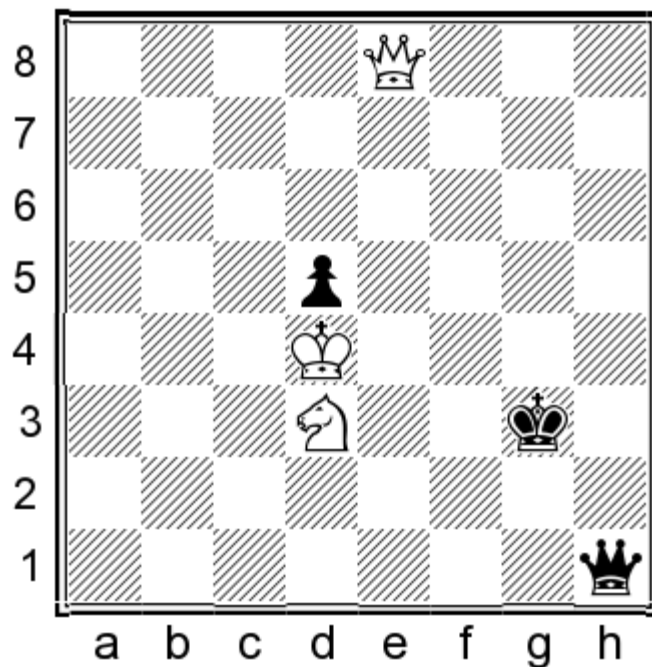
71...♔e5?

She had to play 71...♔g5=.

72.♖a7+ ♔d6 73.♖b6# 1-0

3

Van der Weil John
Azmaiparashvili Zurab
Groningen 1994



All is good for White here, who can play for mate or win the black queen.

58. ♖e5+ ♔g2 59. ♖e2+

59. ♘f4+ ♔g3 60. ♘e2+ ♔g2 61. ♗g5+ ♔f2 62. ♗e3+ ♔f1 63. ♘g3+ was quicker.

59... ♔g3 60. ♖e5+ ♔g2 61. ♗g5+ ♔f1

61... ♔h2 62. ♗h4+ ♔g2 63. ♘f4+ ♔g1 64. ♗e1+ ♔h2 65. ♗f2+ ♗g2 66. ♗xg2#.

62. ♗f4+ ♔g2

62... ♔e2 63. ♗e3+-.

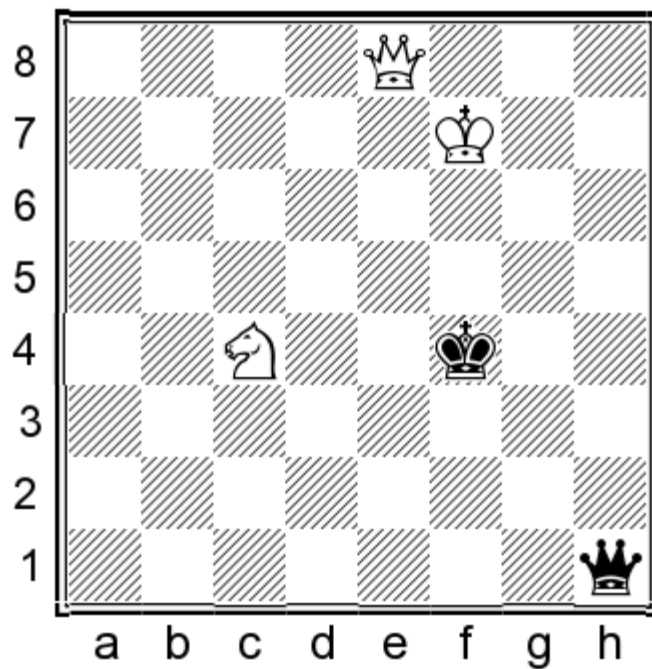
63. ♗g4+ ♔f1 64. ♗d1+ ♔g2 65. ♘f4+ ♔h2 66. ♗h5+ ♔g1 67. ♘e2+ ♔g2 68. ♗xd5+ ♔h2 69. ♖e5+ ♔g2 70. ♗e4+ ♔h2 71. ♗h4+ ♔g2 72. ♘f4+ ♔g1 73. ♗e1+ 1-0

4

Shabalov Alexander

Van de Mortel Jan

Chicago 2008

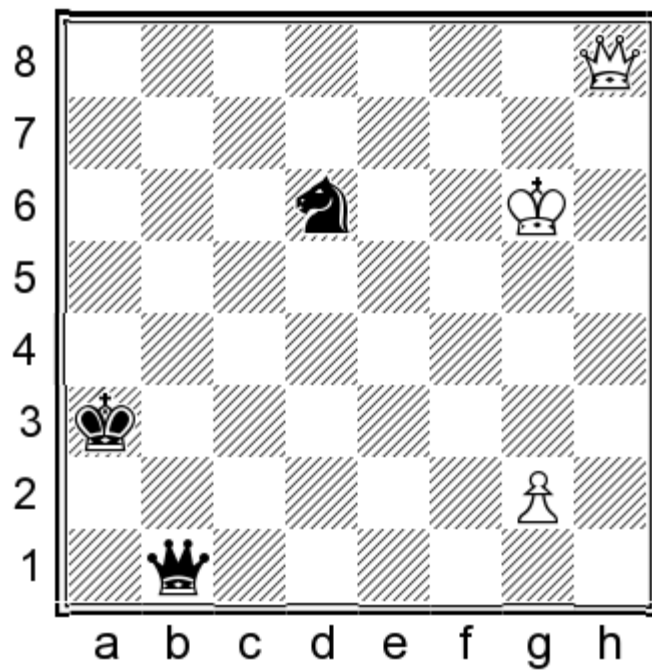


Here again White is on top:

73. ♖e5+ ♔g4 74. ♘e3+ ♔f3 75. ♚d5+ 1-0

5

Atalik Suat
Pantsulaia Levan
Turin 2006



But here, because of his bad king, White loses the game.

57. ♔g7 ♚b2+ 58. ♔h7 ♚c2+ 59. ♔g8 ♚c4+

Black brings his queen closer with each move.

60.♔h7

60.♔g7 ♖d4+ 61.♔h7 ♖e4+ 62.♔h6 ♖h4+ 63.♔g7 ♘f5+ 64.♔g8 ♖c4+-+.

60...♖e4+ 61.♔g8 ♖d5+ 62.♔g7 ♖xg2+ 63.♔h7 ♖h3+ 64.♔g7

This loses a little bit quicker than 64.♔g8 ♖e6+ 65.♔h7 ♖f5+ 66.♔g7 ♖e5+ 67.♔g8 ♖e8+ 68.♔h7 (68.♔g7 ♘f5+) 68...♖h5+ 69.♔g7 ♘f5+ 70.♔g8 ♖e8+ 71.♔h7 ♖f7+-+.

64...♘f5+ 65.♔g8 ♖b3+ 0-1

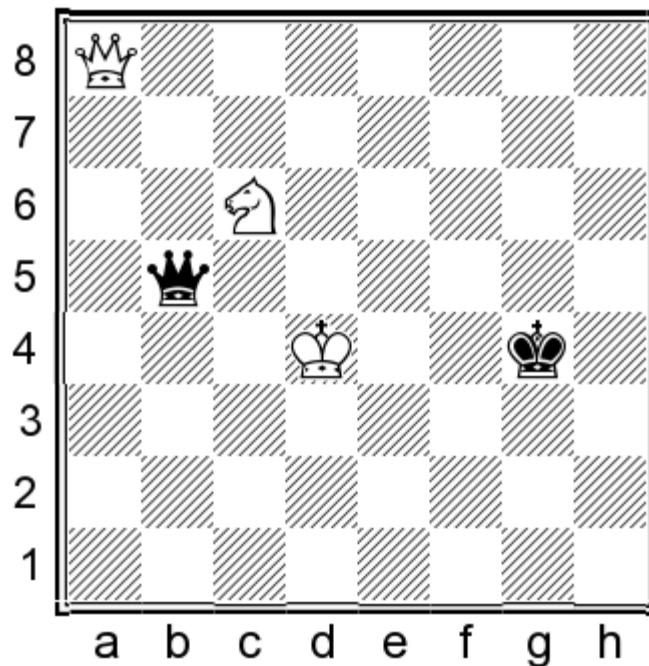
And Black mates or wins the white queen.

6

Yu Yangyi

Cori Jorge

Athens 2012



The black king stands badly and White can win.

63.♘e5+! ♔f5 64.♖f8+ ♔e6

If 64...♔g5 leads to forced mate after 65.♖g7+ ♔f5 66.♖g6+ ♔f4 67.♖g4#.

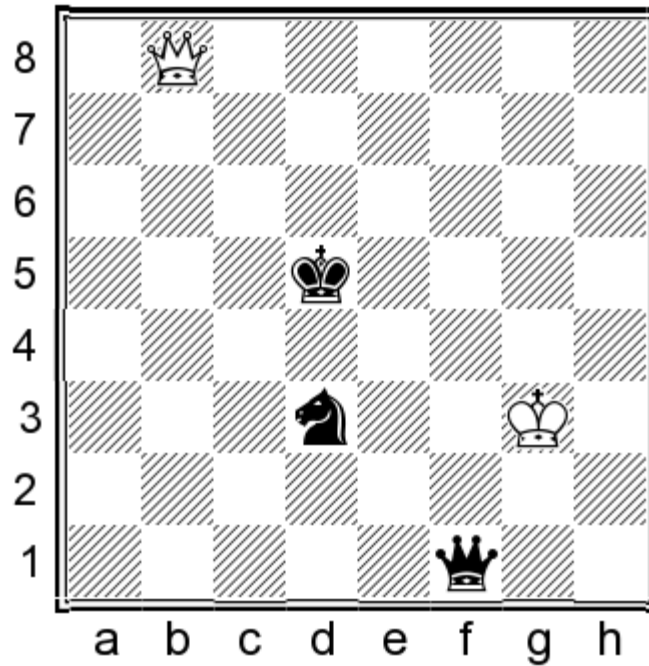
65.♖f7+ ♔d6 66.♘c4+ 1-0

And Black resigned due to 66...♔c6 67.♖e8+.

7

Kozul Zdenko

Shirov Alexei



Another exception, where the weaker side loses.

66... ♖f2+! 67. ♔h3

67. ♔g4 ♚e5+ 68. ♔g5 ♜g3+ loses the queen.

67... ♚f4+ 68. ♔g4 ♜g2+!

Black takes advantage of the white queen's position, as White cannot take the knight.

69. ♔f5 ♜h3+ 70. ♔f6 ♜h4+ 71. ♔f5 ♜h5+ 72. ♔f6 ♜g6+ 73. ♔e7 ♜g7+ 74. ♔d8 ♚e6+ 75. ♔c8 ♜c3+ 76. ♔b7 ♜c6+ 77. ♔a7 ♜a4+ 78. ♔b6 ♜b4+ 79. ♔a7 ♜a5+ 80. ♔b7 ♚c5+ 81. ♔c8 ♜a6+ 0-1

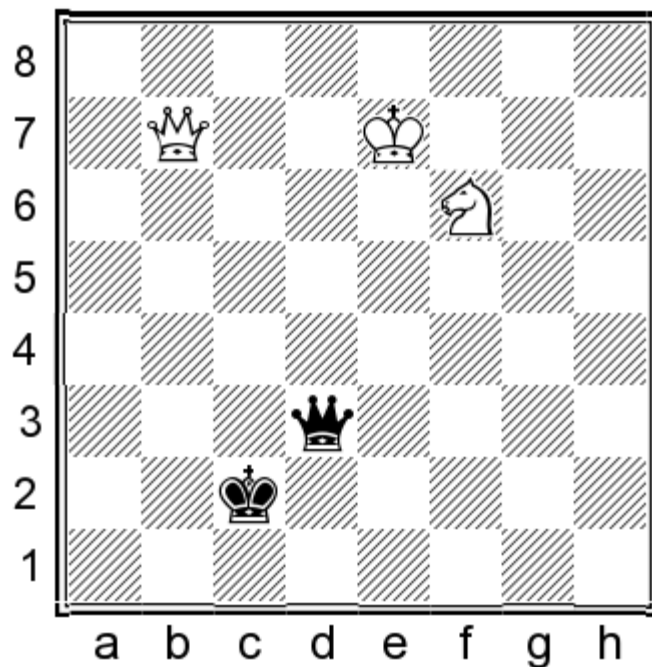
And White resigned: 82. ♔d8 ♜f6+ 83. ♔e8 ♜h8+.

8

Milos Gilberto

Bareev Evgeny

Shenyang 2000



Sometimes the lone queen can win as well, if the stronger side is not careful enough!

79. ♖d5? ♔h7+!

Game over!

80. ♗d6 ♕xb7 81. ♗f6 ♗d3 82. ♗d7 ♗d4 83. ♗f6 ♕b8+ 84. ♗e6 ♕d8 85. ♗d7 ♕e8+ 86. ♗d6 ♕g6+ 87. ♗e7 ♗d5 88. ♗f6+ ♗e5 89. ♗d7+ ♗f5 90. ♗d8 ♕c6 91. ♗e7 ♕c7 92. ♗e8 ♗e6 93. ♗f8+ ♗d6 94. ♗g6 ♕g7 0-1

QUEEN & PAWNS VS QUEEN & KNIGHT

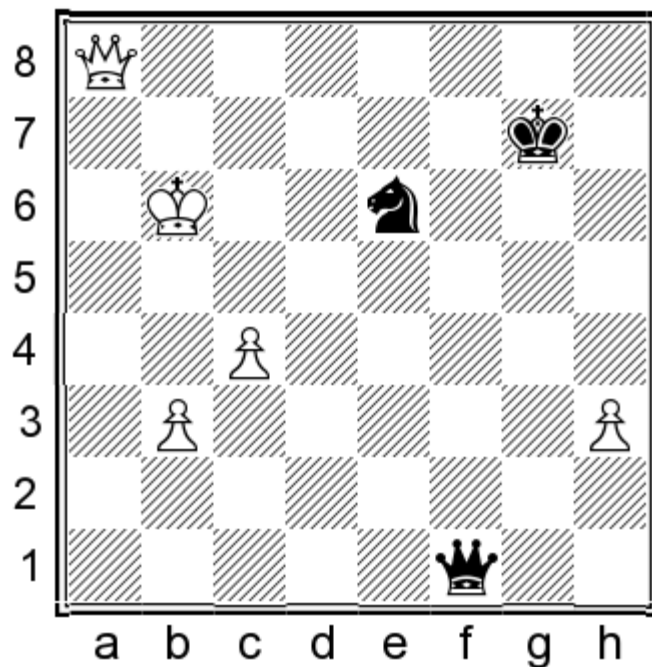
This ending is a bit mysterious (!) as sometimes the pawns win and sometimes the knight wins (!). And of course sometimes a draw is on the cards!

Usually the pawns win when they are far advanced and the opponent's king off in the distance. Chances for a draw do exist in the usual way; the perpetual check.

On the other hand, if the pawns' opponent's king is close to them and his counterpart, mating nets are created. Then the defender should either seek perpetual check or get rid of his pawns, to create valuable squares for his king.

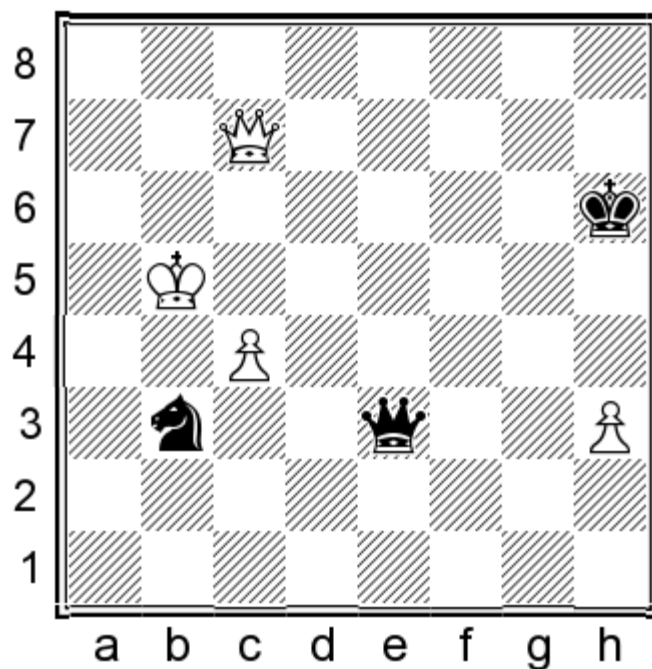
Against one or two pawns the knight faces no real difficulties, but the problems begin when there are more pawns. But even then a draw is possible, as the following three examples can verify:

1
Carlsen Magnus
Anand Viswanathan
Chennai 2013



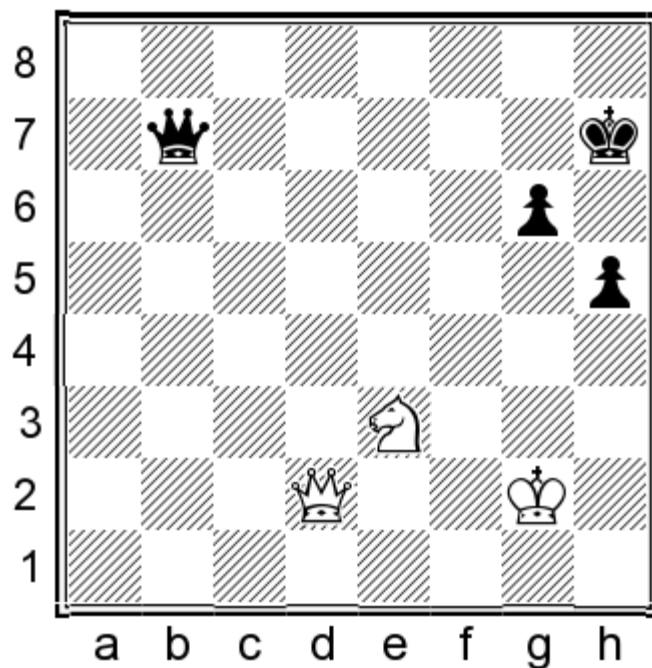
Neither side can improve, so a draw is the natural outcome.

57. ♖d5 ♜e1 58. ♖d6 ♜e3+ 59. ♙a6 ♞c5+ 60. ♙b5 ♞xb3 61. ♖c7+ ♙h6



62. ♖b6+! ♜xb6+ 63. ♙xb6 ♙h5 64. h4 ♙xh4 65. c5 ♞xc5 1/2-1/2

And Magnus Carlsen was the new World Champion!



An easy draw, as White can stop the black pawns.

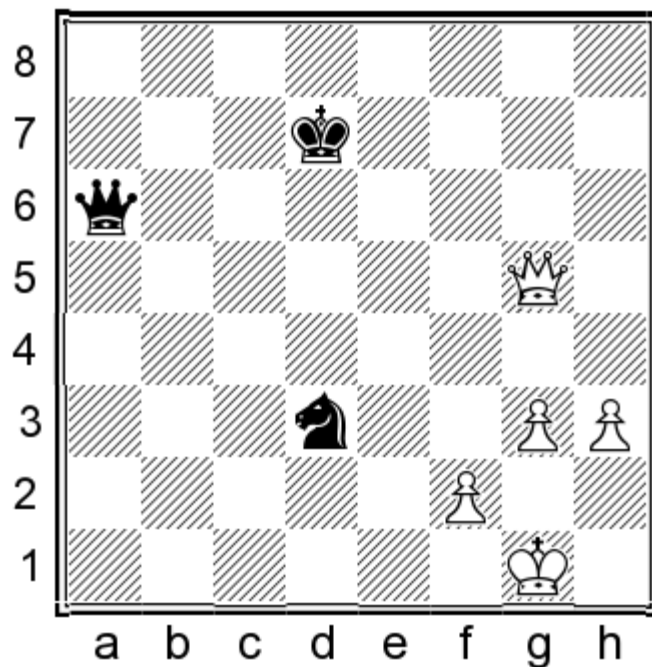
76. ♖d5 ♜f7 77. ♜d4 ♜f5 78. ♗e3 ♜e6 79. ♕f2 ♜f7+ 80. ♕g3 ♜c7+ 81. ♕h3 ♜e7 82. ♗d5

White has successfully centralized his pieces and he is ready to create some serious threats, but now Black starts to give checks.

82... ♜e6+ 83. ♕h2 ♜e2+ 84. ♕h1 ♜f3+ 85. ♕h2 ♜e2+ 86. ♕g3 ♜g4+ 87. ♜xg4 hxg4 1/2-1/2

3

Bu Xiangzhi
Miroshnichenko Evgenij
Antwerp 2008



A difficult ending to assess. White's three connected pawns seem to be a real force.

48. ♖g7+ ♔e8 49. h4 ♚b5 50. ♗g6+ ♔f8 51. ♗f6+ ♔g8 52. ♗e6+ ♔f8 53. h5 ♚b1+ 54. ♔g2 ♚e1+?!

54... ♗b7+! 55. f3 (55. ♔h2) 55... ♗b2+ 56. ♔h3 ♚f2+ 57. ♔h4 ♗d4+ 58. g4 ♚d3 looks OK for Black, as his centralised pieces and weakened white structure is an obstacle to White's plans.

55. ♔h3 ♚d3 56. f4?!

56. ♗f6+ ♔g8 57. ♔g4! was correct and Black faces some problems.

56... ♚f2+ 57. ♔h4 ♚e4! 58. h6 ♗h1+ 59. ♗h3

59. ♔g4 ♗d1+ 60. ♔f5 ♚xg3+ is OK for Black.

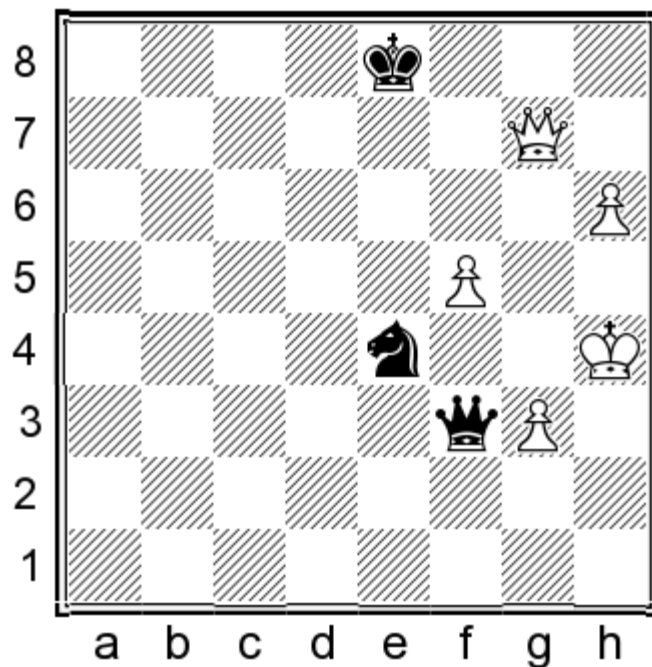
59... ♗f3

59... ♗e1!

60. ♗f5+ ♔g8 61. ♗g6+ ♔f8 62. ♗f5+

62. h7 ♗h1+ 63. ♔g4 ♗d1+ 64. ♔f5 ♗d5+ 65. ♔g4 ♗d1+=.

62... ♔g8 63. ♗g6+ ♔f8 64. ♗g7+ ♔e8 65. ♗e5+ ♔f8 66. ♗b8+ ♔f7 67. ♗c7+ ♔f8 68. ♗g7+ ♔e8 69. f5



69...♞d6

Not losing, but 69...♞h1+! 70.♔g4 ♞d1+ 71.♔f4 ♞d6 72.h7 ♞f1+= was more accurate.

70.♞e5+ ♔d7 71.♞e6+ ♔c7!

71...♔c6? 72.g4 is a lost cause...the knight must be able to create threats.

72.g4 ♞e4!

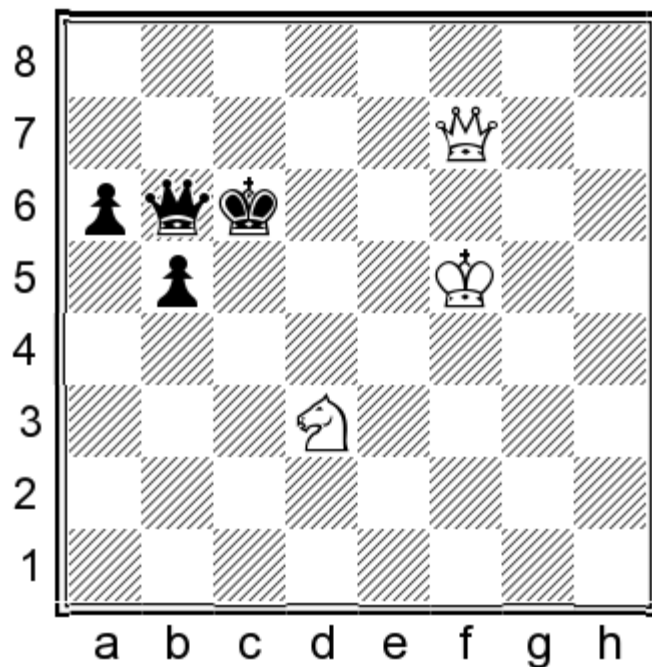
And White cannot improve. The rest of the game wasn't difficult:

73.♞e7+ ♔c6 74.♞e8+ ♔c7 75.♞e7+ ♔c6 76.♞e8+ ♔c7 1/2-1/2

When the three forces (king, queen and knight) combine their power, they can take advantage of an opponent's bad king placement to win:

4

**Estevez Morales Guillermo
Lebrede Zarragoitia Gerardo
Bayamo 1984**



Black should be OK but he has to be careful.

66...♙d4?

66...♙c7 was fine: 67.♘e5+ ♔b7 68.♙d5+ ♔a7=.

66...♙d4? 67.♘e5+ ♔b6 68.♙e6+ ♔c5

Or 68...♔c7 69.♙c6+ ♔b8 70.♘d7+ ♔a7 71.♙c7+ ♔a8 72.♙b8#.

69.♙e7+?

Favour returned! Of course 69.♙c8+ ♔b6 70.♙b8+ ♔c5 71.♙c7+ ♔b4 (71...♔d5 72.♙c6#) 72.♘c6+- wasn't that difficult!

69...♔b6?

69...♙d6=.

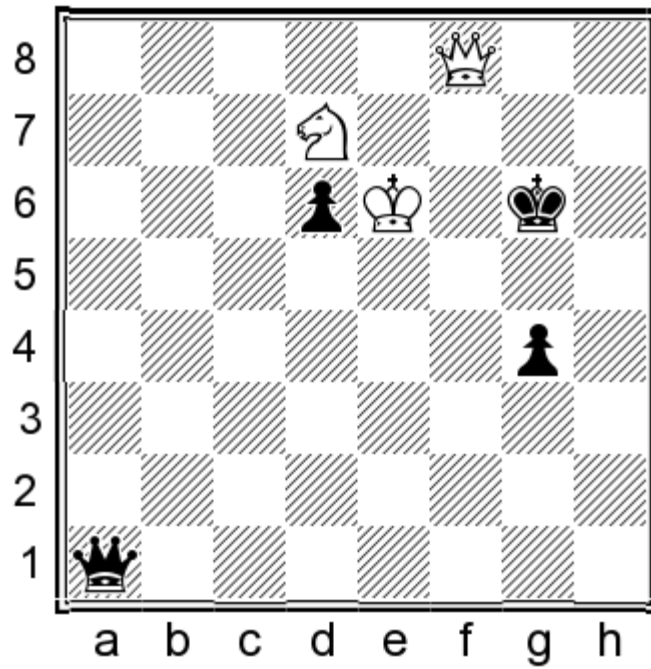
70.♙f6+

70.♙e6+! ♔c5 71.♙c8+-.

70...♔b7?

Back to darkness again! 70...♔c5 and Black would be out of danger.

71.♙c6+ ♔a7 72.♙c7+ ♔a8 73.♙c8+ ♔a7 74.♘c6+ 1-0



The black king has been caught in a mating net.

49. ♖f5+ ♔h6

49... ♔g7 50. ♗g5+ ♔h8 51. ♗h6+ ♔g8 52. ♘f6+.

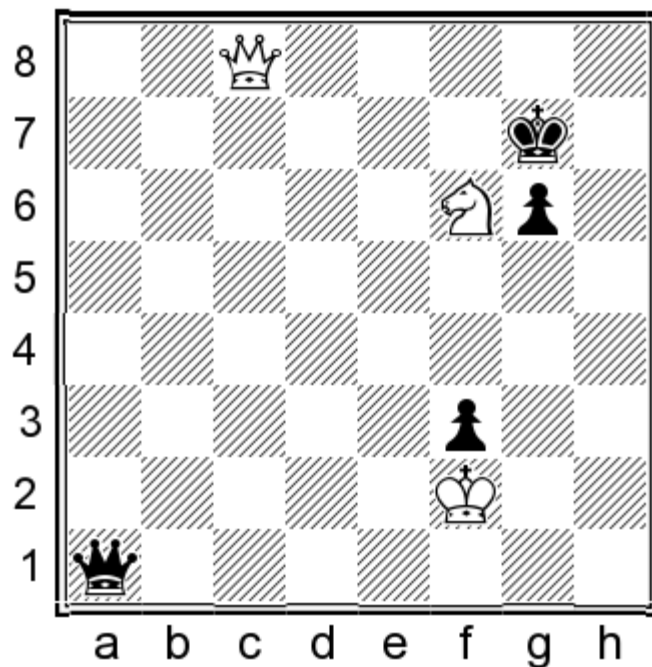
50. ♗f4+! ♔g6

50... ♔h5 51. ♘f6+ ♔g6 52. ♗xg4+ ♔h6 53. ♗h5+ ♔g7 54. ♗h7+ ♔f8 55. ♗f7#.

51. ♗xg4+ ♔h6 52. ♗h4+ ♔g6 53. ♘f8+ ♔g7 54. ♗h7+ 1-0

6

**Gopal Geetha Narayanan
Kharitonov Alexandr
Cappelle-la-Grande 2010**



Here again the bad position of the black king decides.

56. ♖g8+! ♔h6

56... ♕xf6 57. ♖h8+.

57. ♖h8+ 1-0

And Black resigned as his queen is lost: 57... ♔g5 58. ♖e4+.

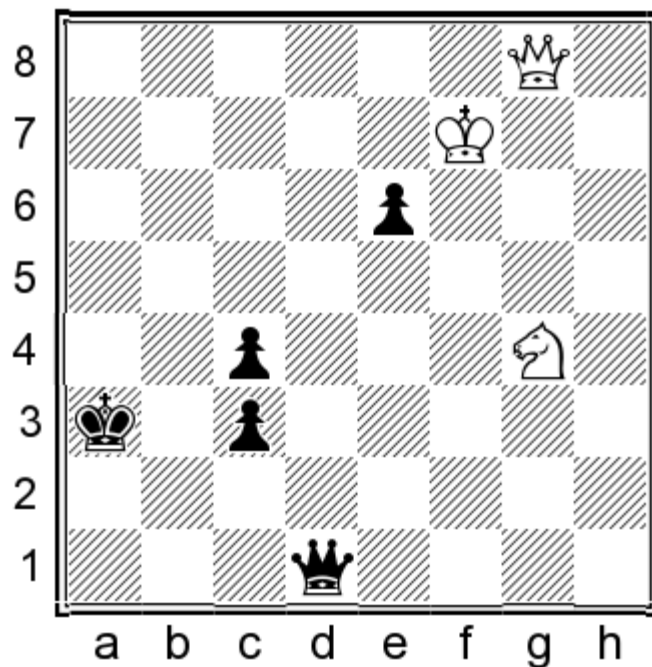
But of course the pawns can be proven strong as well, especially when they are well-advanced:

7

Bacrot Etienne

Aronian Levon

Morelia/Linares 2006



Here Black's pawns are quite far-advanced and the white king is too far away to create any threats...

50...♖d7+

A simpler win was 50...♖f3+ 51.♘f6 (51.♔e7 c2 52.♖g5 ♔a4! 53.♔xe6 ♖a3→) 51...c2 52.♖g5 (52.♖g1 ♔b2 53.♖d4+ ♔b1→) 52...♖c3 53.♖c5+ ♔a2 54.♖a7+ ♖a3 55.♖f2 ♔b1→. Note how important the c4-pawn is, helping Black to get out of checks!

50...♖d7+ 51.♔f6 ♖d4+ 52.♔xe6 c2 53.♖a8+ ♔b2 54.♖b8+

There is no good alternative: 54.♖b7+ ♔c3 55.♖f3+ ♖d3 56.♖f6+ ♔b3 57.♖f4 ♖c3 58.♖c1 ♖b2 59.♖e3+ ♔a2 60.♖a7+ ♖a3 61.♖f2 ♖a6+! 62.♔f7 (62.♔d5 ♔b1→) 62...♖b7+! 63.♔g8 ♖b2 64.♖a7+ ♔b1→.

54...♔c1 55.♖g8 ♔d1! 0-1

QUEEN & PAWNS VS QUEEN & KNIGHT & PAWNS

In this ending the knight can prove to be a dangerous piece and can certainly offer good winning chances.

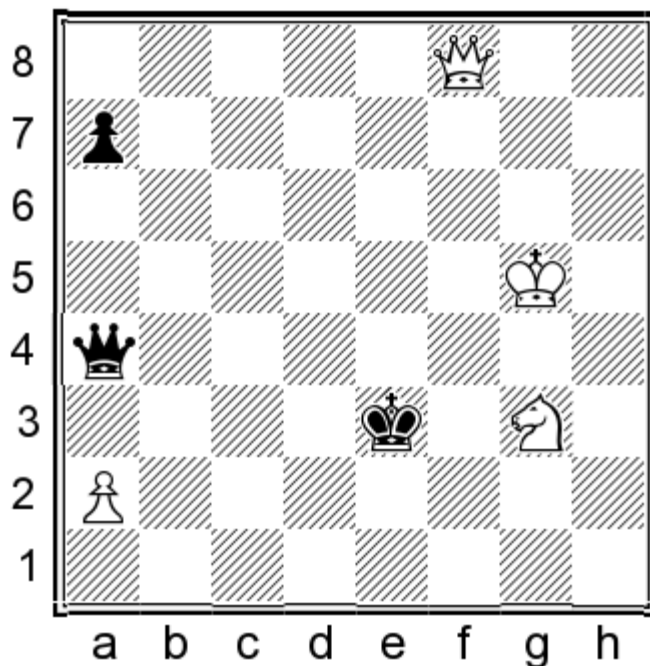
The usual stuff of mating threats and/or transposition to a won ending after a queen exchange are the two main 'knight-plans'.

1

Grivas Efstratios

Karkanaque Ilir

Xanthi 1991



Black is threatening to capture the last white pawn, and the natural 49.♙f7 ♔d2, intending to bring the king over to b2, might not help. The solution lies elsewhere, more specifically in the misplacement of the black king.

49.♙d6!

Cutting off the black king and preparing his mating net with the assistance of the white king and knight. 49.♙f7 ♔d2 50.♙d5+ ♔c2 51.♘e4 ♔b2 52.♙d2+ ♙c2 53.♙b4+ ♔a1 54.a4 should also win by the way, but it was a difficult variation to calculate over the board after five hours of play...

49.♙d6! ♔f3

Nothing is changed by 49...♙xa2 50.♘f5+ ♔e4 51.♙d4+ ♔f3 52.♙f4+ ♔g2 (52...♔e2 53.♙h2+-) 53.♘e3+ ♔g1 54.♙f1+ ♔h2 55.♔h4!+-.

50.♘f5!

Also winning is 50.♙d3+ ♔g2 51.♙e4+.

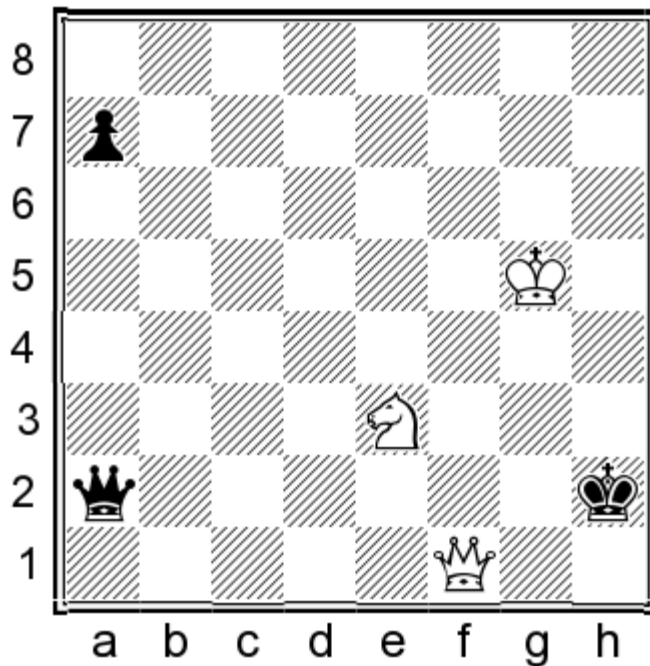
50...♙xa2?!

Black's last chance, as 50...♔e2 51.a3 just gives a won ending.

51. ♖f4+ ♔g2

51... ♕e2 52. ♗h2+.

52. ♘e3+ ♔g1 53. ♗f1+ ♔h2



54. ♔h4! 1-0

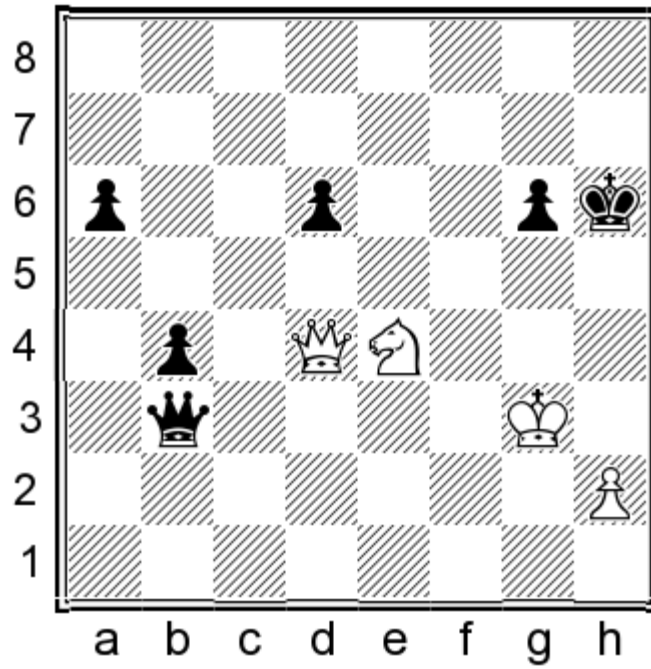
And Black will have to surrender his queen to avoid mate.

2

Kotronias Vasilios

Grivas Efstratios

Athens 1995



In a possible ending without the queens, Black would have the upper hand. But White now includes his king in an effort to create a mating net. The black pawns are more of a hindrance to their queen than assistants.

60. ♔h4! ♕h7?

A very bad move! Black has to stick to passive defence in the first instance, by playing 60... ♖g8! 61. ♖xb4 ♖d5! and the fight continues.

61. ♗f6+ ♕g7?

Black had to opt for 61... ♔h6 62. ♖xd6!±, especially as the tempting 62. ♗d5 g5+ 63. ♔g4 ♖c2 64. ♖h8+ ♖h7 65. ♖f8+ ♖g7 66. ♖xd6+ ♖g6 67. ♖f8+ ♖g7 68. ♖xg7+ ♔xg7 69. ♗xb4 a5 is only suffice for a draw!

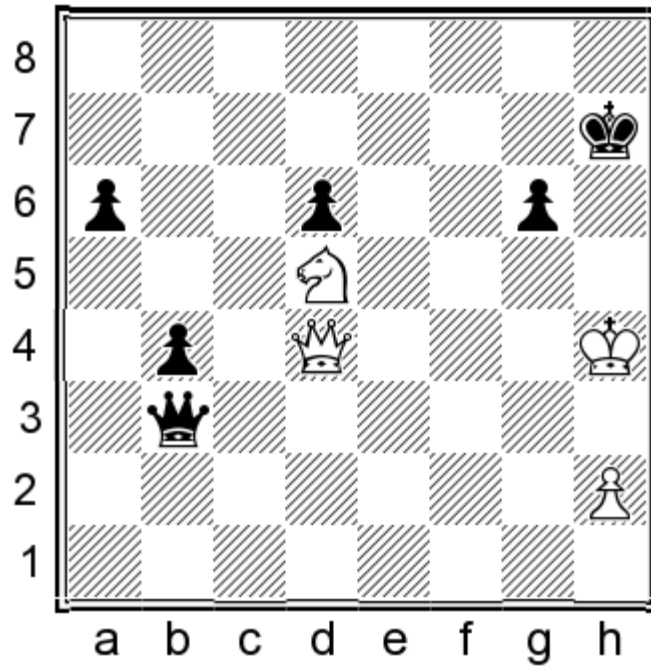
K.Müller suggested 62. ♗g4+ as even stronger: 62... ♔h7 63. ♖xd6+–.

62. ♗d5+?

62. ♗h5+! wins easily: 62... ♔f7 63. ♖g7+ ♔e6 (63... ♔e8 64. ♗f6+ ♔d8 65. ♖d7#) 64. ♖g8+.

62... ♔h7?!

62... ♔g8 is a more stubborn defence, but anyway White is clearly on top after: 63. ♔g5 ♖f3 64. ♗f6+ ♔f7 65. ♖c4+±.



63.♔g5!

The king, queen and knight co-operate perfectly to create a mating net.

63...♖f3 64.♘f6+ ♔g7 65.♕a7+ ♔f8 66.♖b8+ 1-0

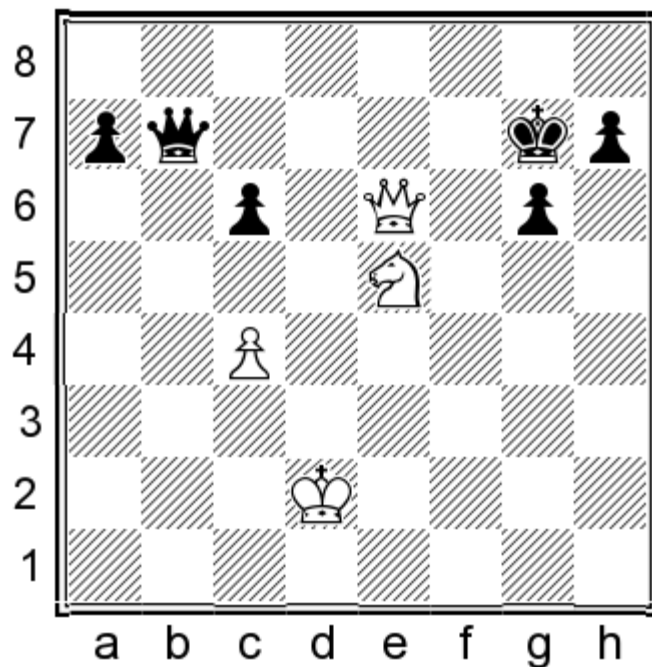
66...♔f7 67.♕e8+ ♔g7 68.♖g8#.

3

Van Wely Loek

Mamedyarov Shakhriyar

Bastia 2010



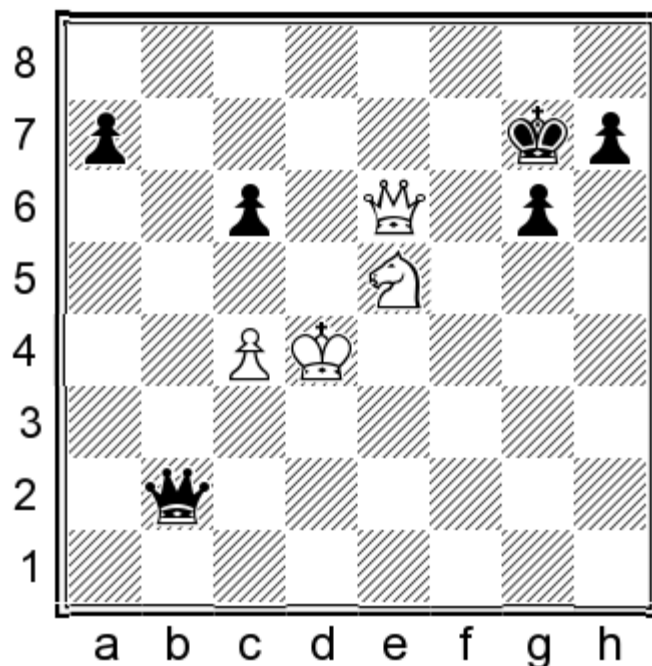
Black is in danger, as the white king can advance and assist the attack.

57... ♖b2+ 58. ♔d3 ♜b3+ 59. ♔d4 ♜b6+ 60. ♕e4 ♜b1+ 61. ♔d4

61. ♘d3! was White's only chance.

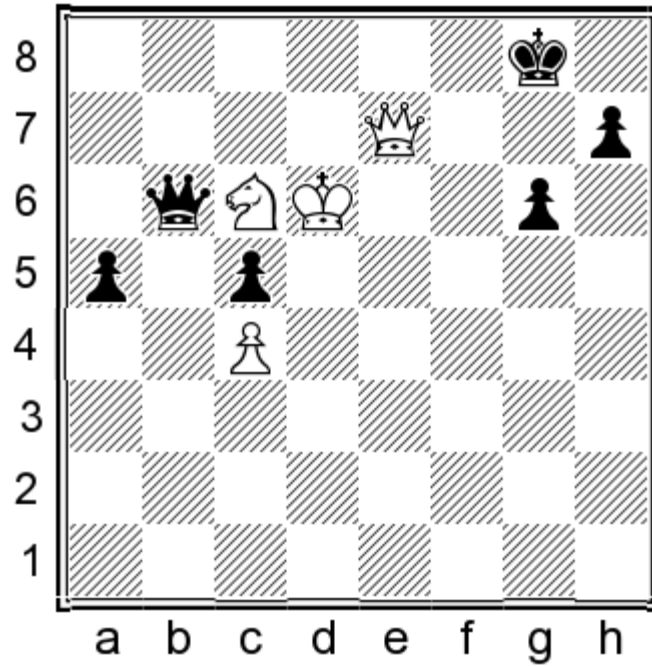
61... ♜b2+?

A bad move, allowing the white king to join the attack on his counterpart. White had to continue with the natural 61... ♜b6+ 62. ♕e4 ♜b1+ 63. ♘d3.



62. ♕c5! ♜b6+ 63. ♕d6 c5+ 64. ♘c6 h5

64...a5 65.♚e7+ ♔g8



66.♔d5! ♚b2 67.♚d8+ ♔g7 68.♚xa5+- is not an option either.

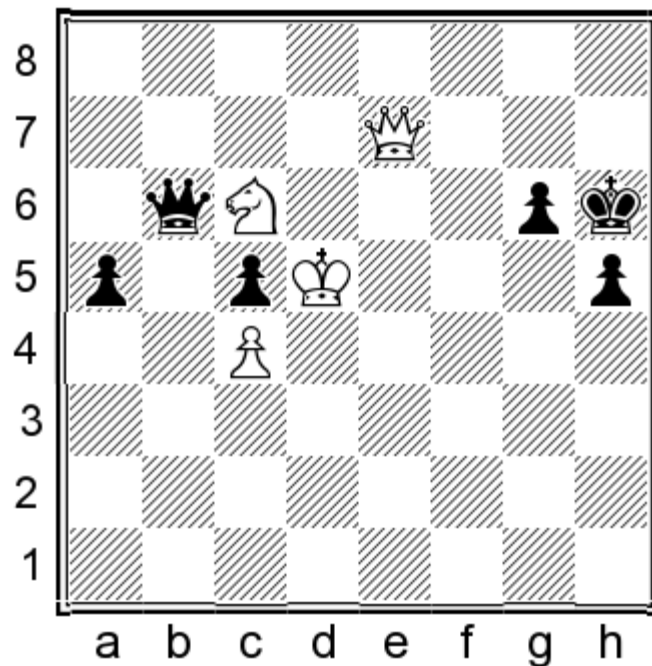
65.♔d5

65.♚e7+! ♔h6 66.♔d5!.

65...a5

The queen exchange is of no help: 65...♚b7 66.♔xc5 ♚f7 67.♚xf7+ ♔xf7 68.♔d6 h4 69.c5 h3 70.♖e5++-.

66.♚e7+ ♔h6



67.♗e5!

The white pieces combine excellently.

67...a4 68.♗f7+ ♔g7 69.♗g5+ ♔h6 70.♗e6! 1-0

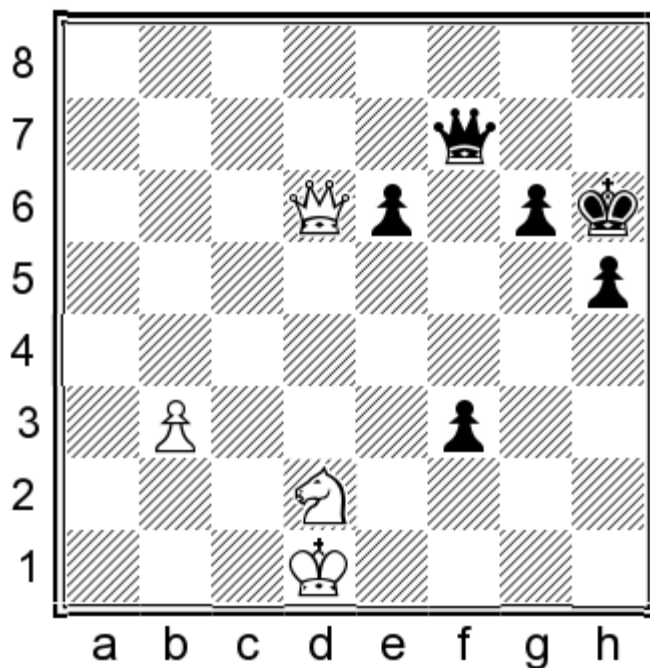
And with mate on the cards, Black resigned.

4

Bologan Viktor

Solak Dragan

Konya 2012



White must firstly stop the dangerous black f-pawn and then see if he can benefit from his own passed pawn.

69.♖d3 f2 70.♔e2 g5 71.b4! h4

After 71...g4? 72.b5 h4 73.♖e3+ ♔g6 74.♖e4+ ♔g5 75.b6 h3 76.♔f1! wins but not 76.b7? h2 77.b8=♖ f1=♖+!
78.♗xf1 ♖f3+ 79.♖xf3 gxf3+ 80.♔f2 h1=♖=.

72.b5 ♖c7?

A bad blunder which loses the game. Black had to opt for the afore-mentioned variation with 72...g4!

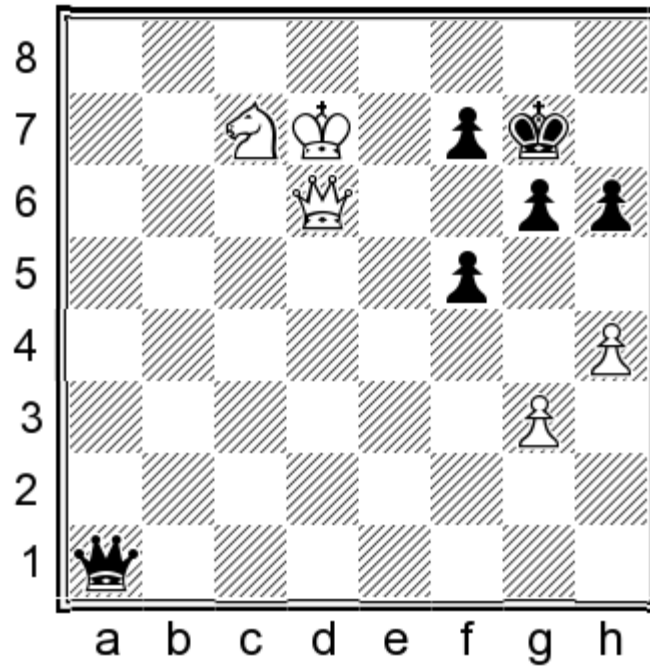
73.♖e3! ♔h5 74.b6 ♖d7 75.♔xf2 g4 76.♖e5+ ♔g6 77.♗e4!

The combination of an attack on the black king and the passed pawn is too much for Black.

77...♖d3 78.♖f6+ ♔h7 79.♗g5+ ♔g8 80.♖f7+ ♔h8 81.♖f8# 1-0

5

Bruzon Batista Lazaro



White's chances to win are good – but first he has to weaken Black's structure.

64.h5! gxh5

64...g5 65.♖e8+ ♔h7 66.♗f6 (the computer move is the 'nonhuman' 66.♗b8! ♗h8 67.♕e7+-) 66...♗xf6 67.♘xf6+ ♕g7 68.♕e7+- and 64...♕g8 65.♕e7 ♗e1+ 66.♕f6 ♗c3+ 67.♗e5 ♗c6+ 68.♘e6! ♗xe6+ 69.♗xe6 fxe6 70.♕xg6+- aren't great alternatives.

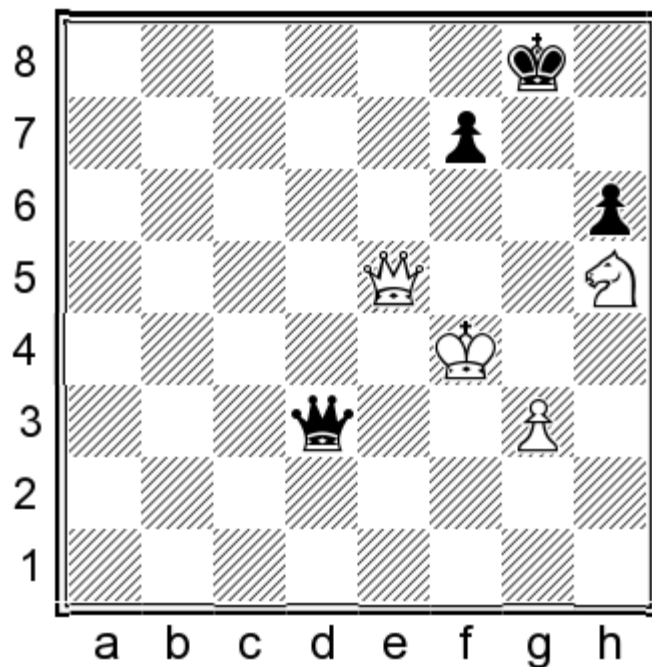
65.♘e8+ ♕g8 66.♘f6+ ♕g7 67.♘h5+ ♕g8 68.♕e7?

A clear blunder. White would have winning chances after 68.♘f6+ ♕g7 69.♘e8+ ♕g8 70.♗f4! (70.♗xh6? ♗a4+ 71.♗c6 ♗xc6+ 72.♕xc6 ♕h7 73.♘f6+ ♕g6 74.♘d7 f4!)=) 70...♗a7+ 71.♘c7 ♕g7 72.♗xf5 ♗d4+ 73.♕c8.

68...♗a7+ 69.♕f6 ♗a1+ 70.♗e5

70.♕xf5 ♗b1+ 71.♕f4 ♗c1+=.

70...♗a6+ 71.♕xf5 ♗d3+ 72.♕f4



72...♖d2+?

And Black blunders in turn. He could retain the draw with 72...♗f1+ 73.♔g4 ♖d1+.

73.♔f3! ♖d3+ 74.♔g2 ♖d2+ 75.♔h3 ♖d7+ 76.g4

76.♔h4 ♖d8+ 77.♗f6+- was good as well.

76...♖d3+ 77.♔h4 ♖d8+ 78.♗f6! ♖f8 79.♔h3 ♖a3+ 80.♔h4 ♖f8 81.♗g3!

The final blow, threatening ♗f5-h6.

81...♖g7 82.♖xg7+ ♔xg7 83.♔h5 ♔f6 84.♗f5 1-0

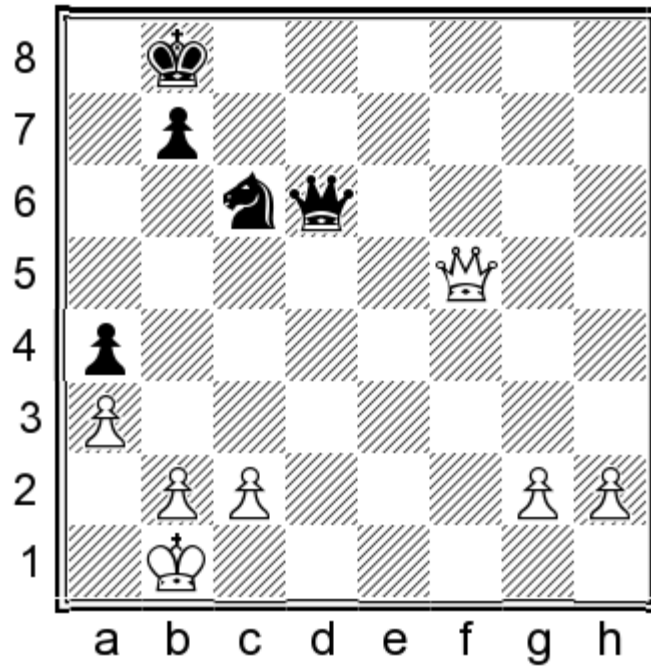
Of course exceptions do exist, especially when the pawns are connected and/or passed, while the knight lacks counterplay.

6

Egger Mancilla Jorge Alejandro

Papaioannou Ioannis

Istanbul 2000



An unclear ending, where White's kingside pawns seem to be dangerous but Black is not without resources.

39.h4 ♖g3! 40.♗e4 ♖f2 41.♗xa4

If 41.h5?! then 41...♗f1+ 42.♔a2 ♗f7+.

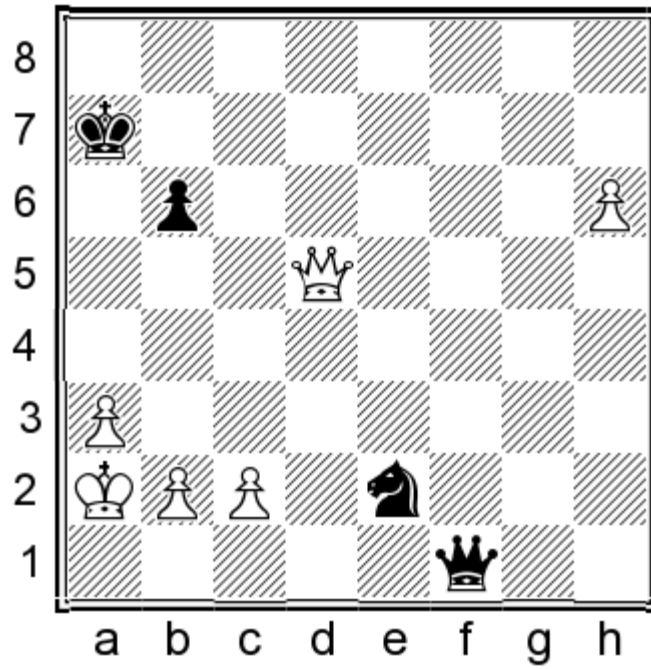
41...♗xg2 42.♗f4+ ♔a7 43.♗c4 ♖g6 44.♗c5+ b6 45.♗d5 ♗f6?!

45...♗g1+ 46.♔a2 ♗g6 47.c4 ♘a5 48.c5 ♗c2 49.cxb6+ ♔xb6 50.h5 ♘c4 seems to be holdable, as Black's combined attack with queen and knight cannot be underestimated -...♘d2 is a serious threat.

46.h5 ♘d4?

After this Black will not survive. He should have moved the knight in the other direction with 46...♘e7! trying to stop the h-pawn.

47.h6 ♗f1+ 48.♔a2 ♘e2



49. ♖d7+! ♔a6 50. b4! ♚c3+ 51. ♕b3 ♚b5

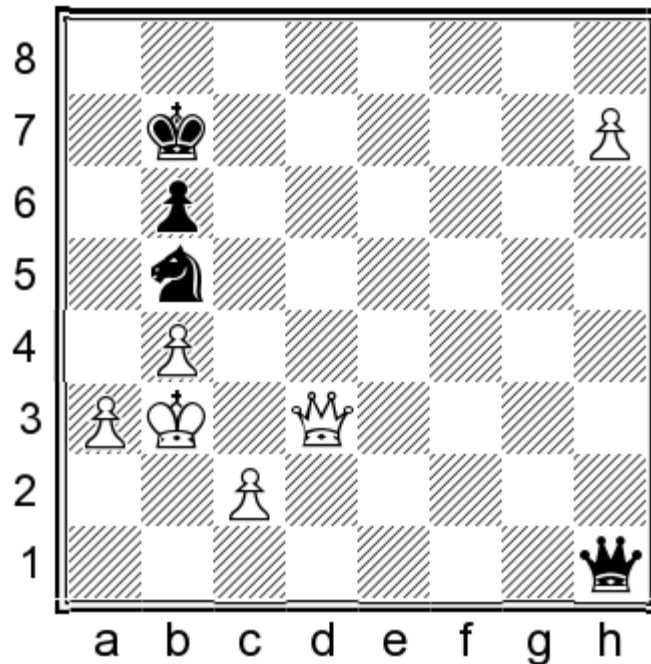
51... ♚e4 52. ♖d3+ ♖xd3+ 53. cxd3 ♚f6 54. ♕c4+-.

52. ♖d3 ♖h1

52... ♖xd3+ 53. cxd3 ♚d6 54. h7 ♚f7 55. ♕c4 ♚e5+ 56. ♕d5 ♚g6 57. ♕c6 ♚h8 58. a4 is curtains and 52... ♖f6 53. ♕a4! is easy as well.

53. h7 ♕b7

53... ♖a1 54. ♕a4! ♖e5 55. h8=♖+-.



54. ♖xb5?!

54. ♖d7+ ♜c7 (54... ♔a6 55. ♖c8+ ♔a7 56. h8=♖+-) 55. ♖g7 ♖h3+ (55... ♖b1+ 56. ♖b2) 56. ♔b2+- was easier.

54... ♖xh7 55. ♖d5+

The queen ending is no trouble for White now.

55... ♔a7 56. a4 ♖h3+ 57. ♖d3 ♖e6+ 58. ♖c4 ♖h3+ 59. ♔b2 ♖h8+ 60. ♖c3 ♖h5 61. ♖c7+ ♔a8

61... ♔a6 62. c3 ♖e2+ 63. ♔a3+-.

62. a5 b5 63. ♖c8+ ♔a7 64. ♖c5+ 1-0

64... ♖xc5 65. bxc5 ♔a6 66. c6 ♔xa5 67. c7+-.

CHAPTER 3.

QUEEN VS ROOK

The ending of queen vs rook looks like an easy one, but there are many details to be studied and applied.

The queen wins, but the main opponent is the 50-move rule and the restricted time to think that both opponents have at their disposal, as in these late phases of the game they have usually consumed most of it and are living on the 30-seconds/per move extra increment.

We will 'borrow' some help in understanding this endgame from Derek Grimmell, who made an excellent study of this ending in his 'Queen versus Rook Endgame Training Database' (ChessBase 2008). It is probably the most accurate work I have ever seen on this subject and I found it very helpful.

But let's exam firstly some important concepts, starting with ways to defend:

1. *Close defences*: In which the king and rook stay within two squares of each other for mutual support and defence.
2. *Distant defences*: In which the rook separates itself from the king while remaining no more than one rank or file away so as to re-join if needed.
3. *Cut-off defences*: In which the rook sets up a barrier to the white king's progress and the black king supports this barrier from some distance.
4. *Harassment defences*: In which the rook hides behind the white king and threatens a series of harassing checks from either of two directions.

And how does the queen win this ending?

1. *By giving mate*: Although mate seems obvious, the queen has several mating patterns and threats available in this ending that almost never appear in any other type of position.

We will call these 'microwave mates' because their scarcity in other positions makes it likely that a defender will overlook them, allowing the queen a one-move mate with a delightful 'surprise' quality (for the attacker).

2. *By forking the rook*: The rook must often separate itself from the king due to the suffocating presence of the opposing pieces.

When this happens, either the queen must find a way to fork the rook, or she must force it to return to its king and endure the process of suffocation.

Several standard techniques make these goals simpler to achieve: they improve the queen's ability to fork the rook. In the sample games, the student will see several cases in which strong international players missed one-move forks, or demonstrated a lack of familiarity with the proper forking techniques.

3. *By creating a zugzwang position*: A well-prepared defender can avoid both of the first two dangers by proper positioning. The stronger side must be familiar with a number of zugzwang positions. The Philidor is the best-known of these.

And finally, how does the rook draw this ending?

1. *By stalemate tricks*: The queen's main strategy is to force the rook toward the edge of the board to create zugzwang (although there are a few zugzwang positions that can occur in the centre of the board).

When this happens, an over-eager attacker can easily fall into a stalemate trap. Even when the attacker avoids actual stalemate, the defender can often prolong the defence through awareness of 'stalemate defences', times when it is safe to place the undefended rook on an attacked square, for example, because capturing the rook would produce stalemate.

Again, we will see cases in which international players missed stalemate defences and missed potential draws as a

result.

2. *By skewer or pin of the queen:* We understand that this ending is likely to occur late in a playing session. It is easy for a fatigued attacker facing stubborn defence to fall into a pin or skewer of the queen. In rare circumstances, this can allow the rook to win.

3. *By the 50-move rule:* This is the weaker side's real defensive strength. Let us be clear about one fact: against a skilled and knowledgeable attacker, even the best defence will lose well short of the 50-move rule. And yet for a skilled and knowledgeable defender, this ending is much easier to defend than it is to win. Black's two main ways of reaching the 50-move rule are:

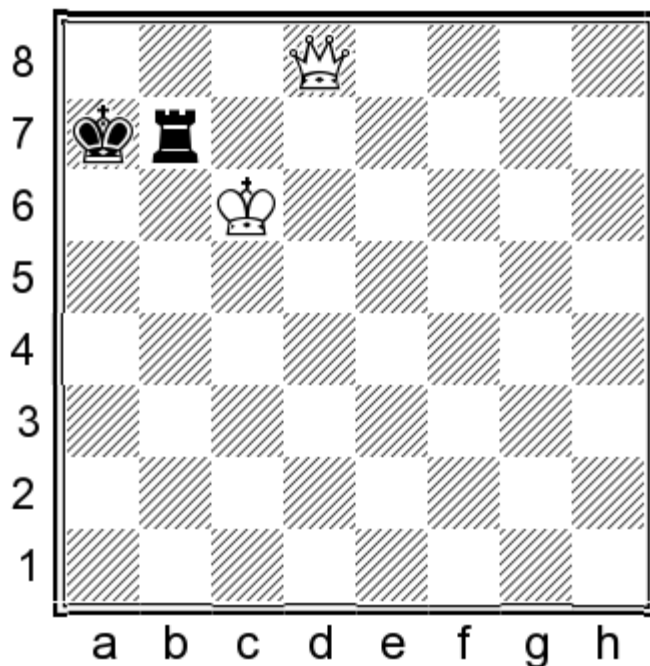
3.1. *By confusing the opponent:* There are at least five types of positions in this course in which the weaker side can choose an objectively inferior defence that sets the attacker tremendous problems. An unprepared attacker is virtually certain to choose the wrong approach and lose time.

3.2. *By superior knowledge:* There are yet more positions in which superior knowledge enables the defender to recognize weak moves and exploit them to slip away along the edge of the board or toward the centre, and thus prolong resistance.

The rule of thumb in this ending is that two escapes **should** draw; three escapes **will** draw.

Our first example is the most crucial of the survey:

1 Philidor Position



This is the most important position to know; the so-called 'Philidor Position'. In this standard position, it must be Black to move.

1...♖h7

All alternatives equally lose:

1...♔a6 2.♕c8.

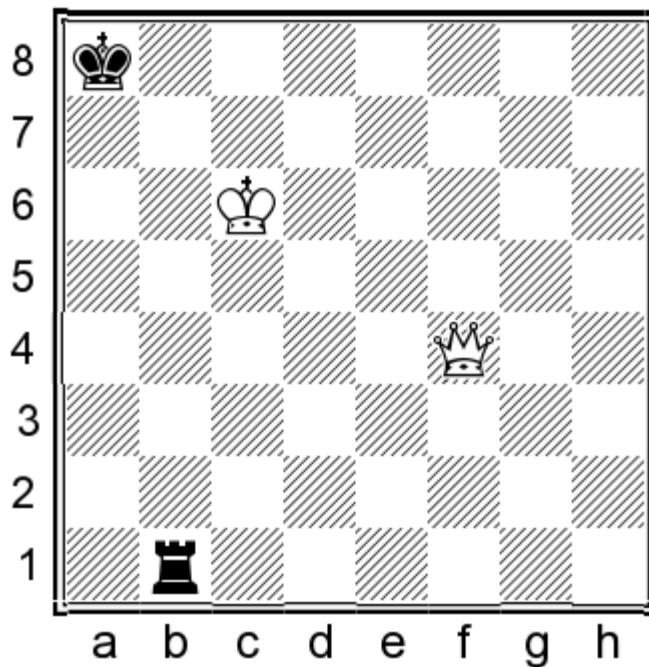
1...♖b8 2.♕a5#.

1...♖b4 2.♞a5+.

1...♞b3 2.♞d4+ ♔b8 3.♞f4+ ♔a7 (3...♔c8 4.♞f8#) 4.♞a4+.

1...♖b2 2.♞d4+.

1...♖b1 2.♞d4+ ♔b8 3.♞f4+ ♔a8



4.♞f8+ ♔a7 5.♞f2+ ♔b8 6.♞h2+ ♔a7 7.♞a2+.

1...♖f7 2.♞d4+ ♔b8 (2...♔a8 3.♞a1+) 3.♞b2+ ♔a8 4.♞a2+.

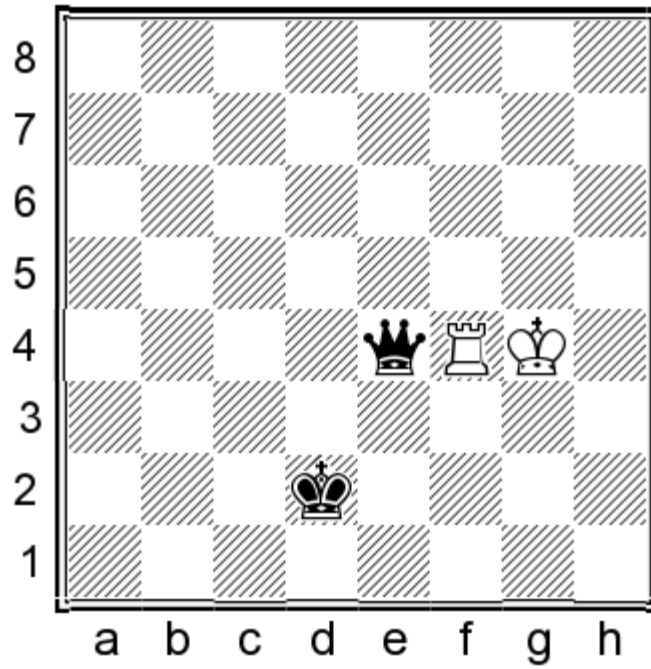
1...♖g7 2.♞d4+.

1...♖h7 2.♞a5+ ♔b8 3.♞b4+ ♔a7 4.♞a3+ ♔b8 5.♞b3+ ♔a7 6.♞a2+ ♔b8 7.♞g8+ 1-0

But what about practice? Theory is good but what happens when we get to a practical game? Let's look at an example featuring two great and well-known players:

2

**Gelfand Boris
Svidler Peter
Moscow 2001**



Let's look at a well-known example of what a tenacious defender can do against a super-GM.

78...♖g6+ 79.♔f3 ♕d3 80.♔f2 ♖g5

80...♖c6 is a bit better, although it doesn't make a big difference. But with the 50-moves rule every move counts.

81.♔f3 ♖g1

81...♖g6! is more effective, because Black pushes White toward the first rank, rather than the eighth, and White is already closer to the first than the eighth. Knowing when and how to go either direction can save a great deal of trouble in this ending.

82.♖f5 ♖e3+ 83.♔g4 ♕e4! 84.♖f8 ♖g1+ 85.♔h5?

85.♔h4 is best, although Black mates in 18 moves starting with 85...♖c5.

85...♖g7?

Overlooking the decisive 85...♖c5+ can often happen to the attacker!

86.♖f1 ♖e5+

86...♖g3 here or on the next few moves is correct, pushing the king to the shorter edge of the board.

87.♔g4 ♖e6+ 88.♔g5 ♖g8+ 89.♔h4

If 89.♔h5 then 89...♖g3.

89...♖g6! 90.♔h3

90.♖f2 is a slightly better defence, although after 90...♖d6 Black mates in 18.

90...♔e3

90...♞g5! pushing the king back is the right concept.

91.♔h4 ♚h7+ 92.♔g3?!

92.♔g5! saves White at least 7 moves.

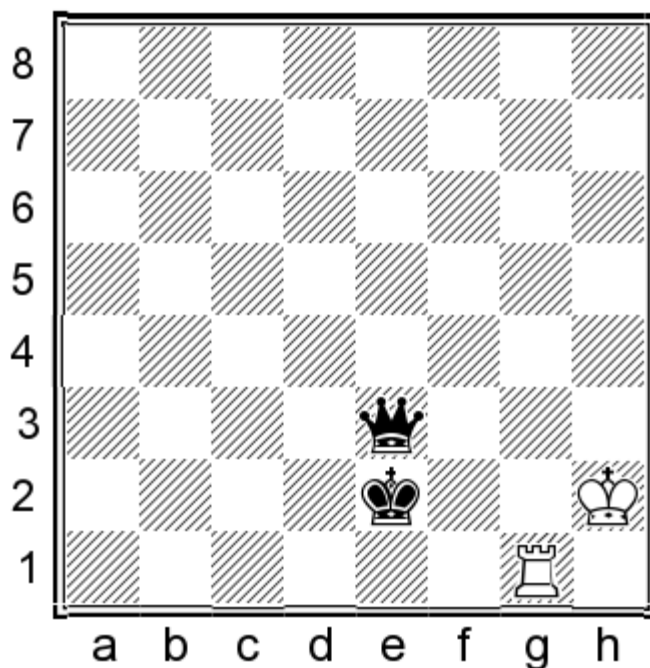
92...♞g8+ 93.♔h3

93.♔h4?! ♞c4+.

93...♞g5! 94.♔h2 ♔e2

Not a mistake, but 94...♞g4 should be the usual restriction method!

95.♞g1 ♚f4+ 96.♔h3 ♚h6+ 97.♔g3 ♚e3+ 98.♔h2



98...♔f2?!

98...♞d4! puts White in zugzwang and mates soon: 99.♞g3 ♔f2 100.♞g2+ ♔f1 101.♔h3 ♚h8+.

99.♞g2+ ♔f1 100.♞g4

Now Black has lost all the ground he gained and more.

100...♞e5+ 101.♔h3 ♔f2 102.♔h4 ♔f3?!

This is an especially difficult position to solve at the board. Yet this is a common pattern that always responds to 102...♞h2+! 103.♔g5 ♔f3. Not only does it work here, but it is usually the best procedure everywhere except the corner of the board.

103.♞g6!

Gelfand knows his defensive tactics in ♖v♗ endings. Svidler has gained no ground since move 85.

103...♖e7+ 104.♔h5 ♔f4 105.♔h6?!

White misses the stalemate trick 105.♗f6+! which would already come close to guaranteeing a draw by the 50-move rule. The attacker must be very careful about approaching the defender on the (relative) sixth rank.

105...♗h4+

105...♔f5! mates in 12.

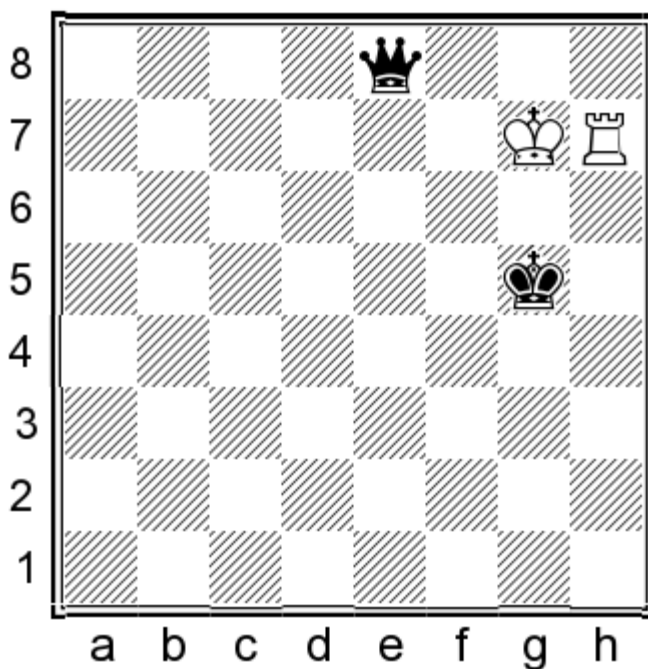
106.♔g7 ♔f5!

See the comment to the 102nd move.

107.♗h6 ♖e7+ 108.♔g8 ♔g5

108...♖d7 109.♔f8 ♔g5 is the killing sequence.

109.♗h7 ♖e8+ 110.♔g7



110...♖e5+

110...♖e4 is the most precise.

111.♔f7 ♖d5+ 112.♔g7 ♖d6

112...♖e4!.

113.♔g8 ♔g6 114.♗g7+ ♔f6 115.♗f7+ ♔e6 116.♔g7 ♖g3+

116...♖e5+! 117.♔g8 ♖d5 forces the 'Philidor Position' in about five moves.

117.♔f8 ♖h4 118.♔g8 ♗g5+

Black should force the position in the comments to the 116th move: 118...♗d8+ 119.♞f8 (119.♔g7 ♗g5+ 120.♔f8 ♗h5!) 119...♗d4 120.♞f7 ♗d5.

119.♞g7 ♗d8+ 120.♔h7 ♗h4+ 121.♔g8 ♗h5 122.♞a7

It is already too late to capture the rook before the 50-move rule applies. Gelfand's play suggests that he has already made a deep study of the queen versus rook endgame.

122...♗g6+ 123.♔h8 ♗f6+ 124.♞g7 ♗h6+ 125.♔g8 ♗h2 126.♞g6+ ♔e7 127.♞g7+ ♔e8 128.♞g6 ♗h5 129.♔g7 ♔e7 1/2-1/2

What can we conclude from the above game? Svidler is clearly a great chess player. He missed a few sudden opportunities such as the fork at move 85, but the main problem was that he was unable to solve a concrete problem at the board several times. In other words, he could have forced Gelfand back until a win was there for the taking, but did not know the dozen or so basic but non-obvious ways to deliver the killing blow.

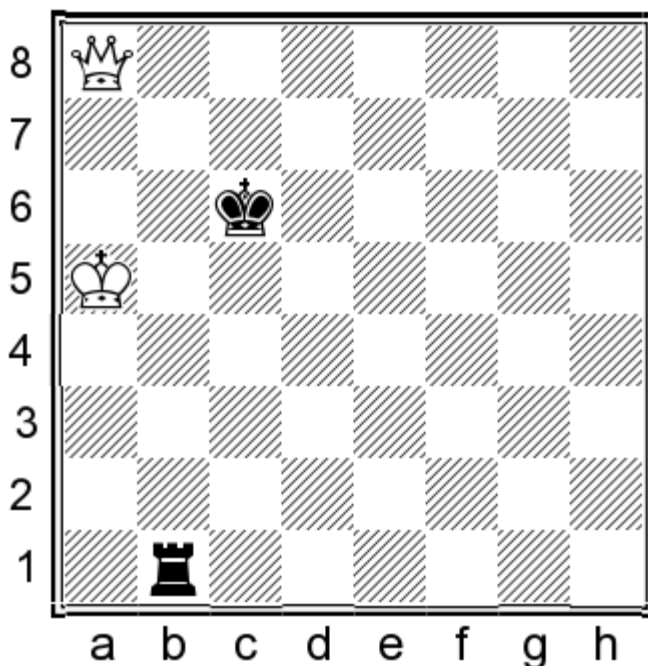
By contrast, Gelfand gave the impression of knowing which positions give the queen the greatest difficulty. He seemed to steer towards these, even when they were objectively less good. Remember his example of tenacious defence!

3

Ivanchuk Vassily

Lautier Joel

Horgen 1995



96...♔c7

96...♔c5 is equally good. More importantly, it creates the chance to get into 'Harassment' defences, rather than moving at once to a 'Close' defence.

97.♗a7+ ♞b7

97...♔c6 moving towards the centre gives White more options to make mistakes.

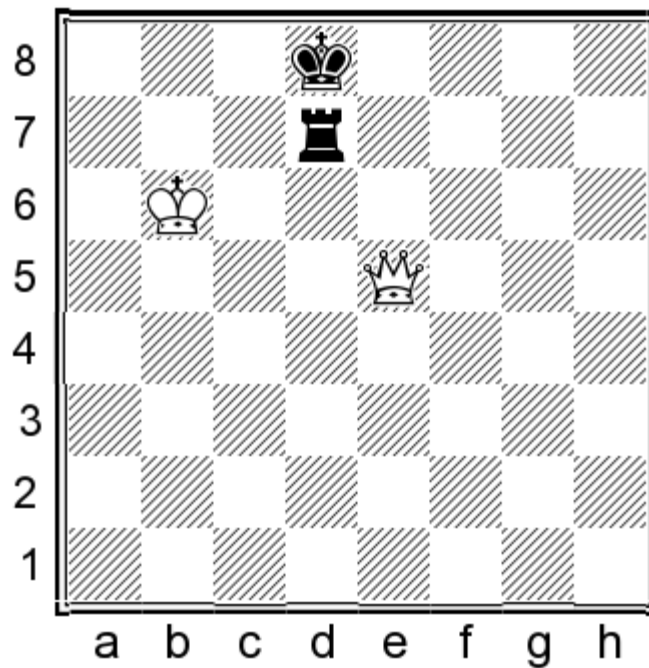
98.♖c5+ ♕b8

98...♔d8 is better, again moving towards the centre: 99.♖f8+ ♔d7 100.♖a8 ♔c7 101.♖a6 ♔c8 (101...♔b8 102.♖e6! ♖a7+ 103.♔b6 ♖b7+ 104.♔c6 ♖c7+ 105.♔d6 ♖b7 106.♖e4 ♖b6+ 107.♔c5 ♖b7 108.♔c6 is a well-known method that we came already met in the previous game) 102.♖c6+ ♔b8 103.♖e6!.

99.♔a6 ♖d7 100.♖e5+!

Best! Ivanchuk seems to know this ending well.

100...♔c8 101.♔b6 ♔d8



102.♔c6?!

102.♖b8+! ♔e7 103.♔c6 is precise.

102...♖f7

Lautier continues to fall back. using his chances. Ivanchuk is farther from mate than he was on move 95.

103.♖g5+ ♔e8 104.♔d6 ♔f8?!

Black misses the fact that the 'too-near' king permits the stalemate defence 104...♖f6+! 105.♔d5 ♖f7 getting off the back rank and again Ivanchuk is no closer to mate than when he started. The best move is very hard for White to find at the board.

105.♔e6

Again a typical position, which against the edge of the board is very bad for Black.

105...♖h7

Now it's a trivial win and Ivanchuk finishes the job smoothly. If 105...♖b7 then 106.♞c5+ ♔g7 107.♞d4+ ♔g8 108.♔f6! and with the checking square under control Black is doomed.

106.♞f6+ ♔g8 107.♞g6+

107.♞d8+ ♔g7 108.♞e7+ ♔g8 (108...♔g6 109.♞f6+ ♔h5 110.♔f5) 109.♞e8+ ♔g7 110.♞f7+ ♔h6 111.♞f6+ ♔h5 112.♔f5.

107...♖g7 108.♞e8+ ♔h7 109.♔f6

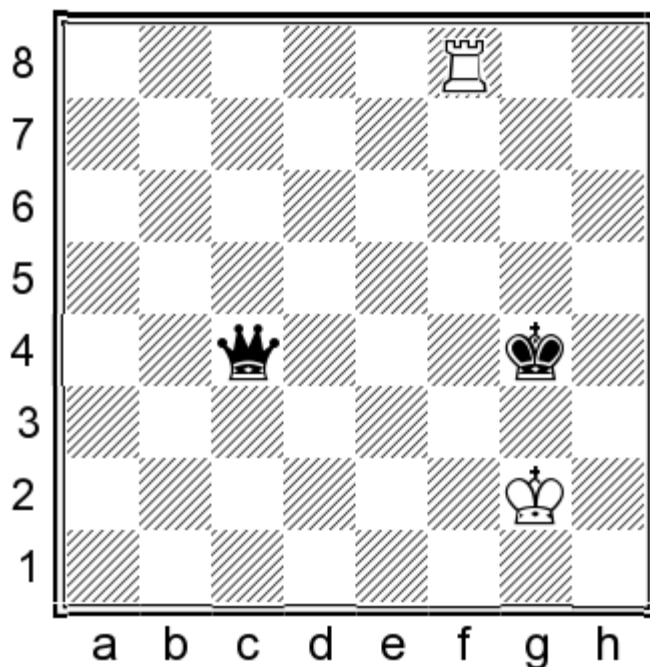
The 'Philidor Position'.

109...♖g4 110.♞h5+ ♔g8 111.♞xg4+ 1-0

So, in fact, late in a session and with little time left on the clock, even the strongest players in the world overlook basic patterns that either prolong the defence or end all resistance.

4

Volokitin Andrei
Khismatullin Denis
Plovdiv 2008



69.♖f2 ♞d5+ 70.♔h2 ♞d4

A Grandmaster knows a tremendous amount about chess, but not necessarily about this specific ending. Keeping the diagonal with 70...♞e4! places White in an immediate zugzwang.

71.♔g2 ♞d3

Again 71...♞d1 was more precise.

72.♔g1 ♕g3 73.♖g2+ ♕f3 74.♖f2+ ♕e3 75.♖g2 ♔d4 76.♖g3+ ♕e2+?!

76...♕f4+! forces the 'Philidor' by a well-worn path.

77.♕g2 ♖e4+ 78.♕g1

78.♕h3 is more stubborn: 78...♖h1+ 79.♕g4 ♕f2 and mate in 13.

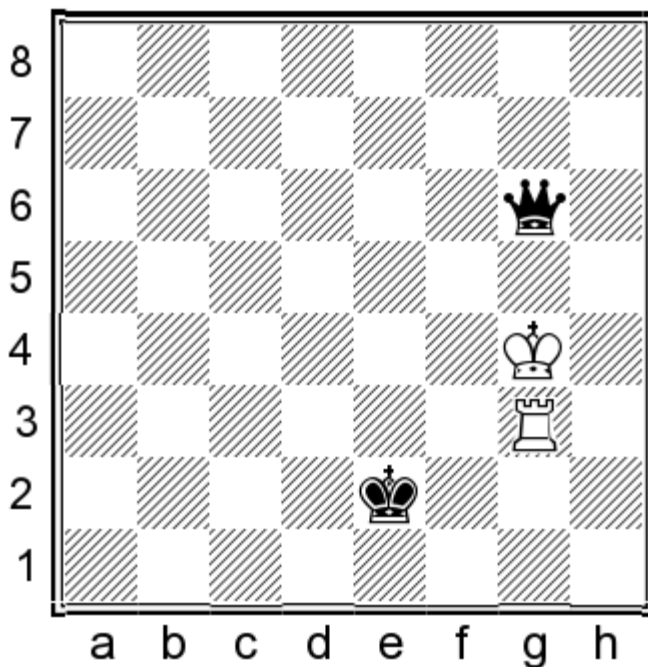
78...♖d4?!

78...♖d5 79.♖g2+ ♕f3.

79.♕g2 ♖f4?!

79...♖d5+ 80.♕h3 ♕f2.

80.♕h3 ♖h6+ 81.♕g4 ♖g6+



We have played 12 moves, and White is now 12 moves farther from mate than at the outset!

82.♕f4?!

82.♕h4! is by far the toughest.

82...♖d6+?!

82...♖f6+! 83.♕g4 ♕f2 (a pattern well-known by now) ends resistance.

83.♕g4 ♖g6+ 84.♕f4?! ♖f6+! 85.♕e4?

85.♕g4 is mate in 14.

85...♖h4+ 0-1

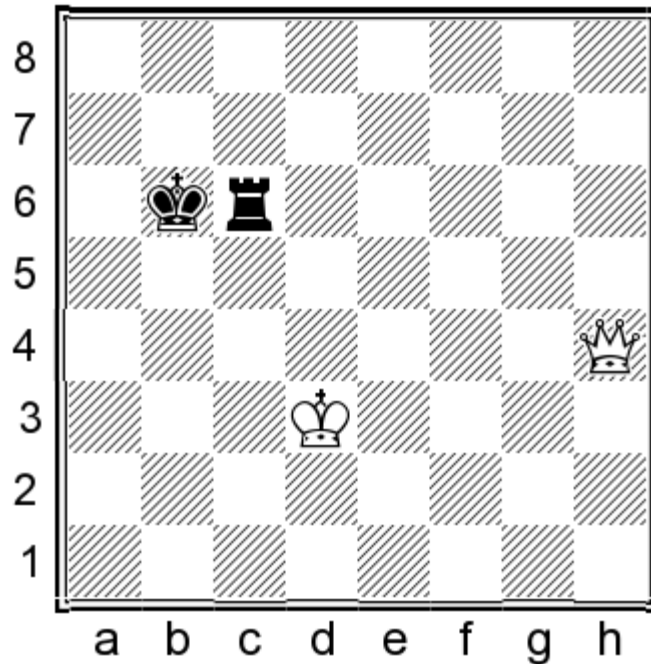
Here come some fresh examples, where the strongest side showed (more-or-less) good understanding. Probably they studied Grimmell's analyses in depth!

5

Moradiabadi Elshan

Nielsen Peter Heine

Athens 2010



110...♔b7?!

Black decides to stay in the corner, which is a bad policy in general. He should focus towards the centre with 110...♔c5! when White needs 25 moves to mate.

111.♕d8 ♖b6?!

111...♖c1 was again correct, not allowing the white king to approach.

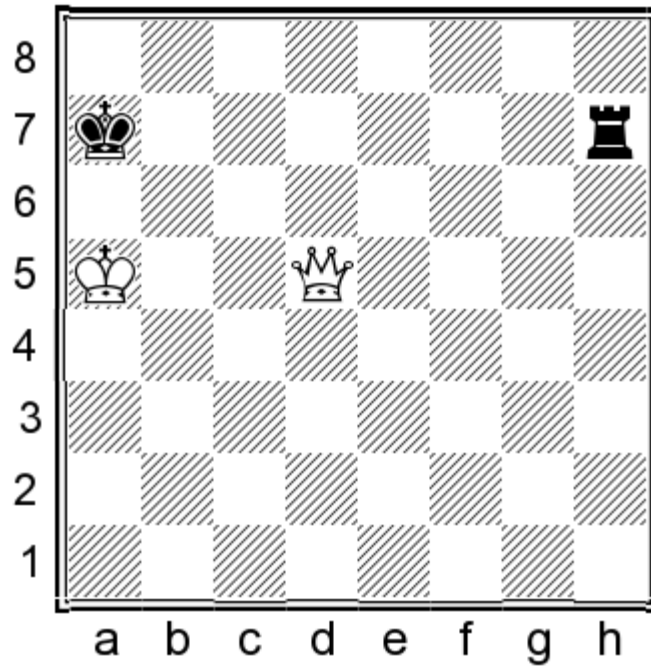
112.♔c4 Now White mates in 6. 112...♖c6+ 113.♔b5 ♖c7 114.♕d5+

114.♕e8 is good as well.

114...♔a7

After 114...♔c8 we again meet a well-known pattern: 115.♕a8+ ♔d7 116.♔b6.

115.♔a5 ♖h7



115...♖b7 116.♔d4+ ♕b8 117.♕a6 ♕c8 118.♗h8+.

116.♔d4+ ♕b8 117.♗f4+ ♕a7 118.♗e3+ ♕b8 119.♗g3+ ♕a7 120.♗g1+ 1-0

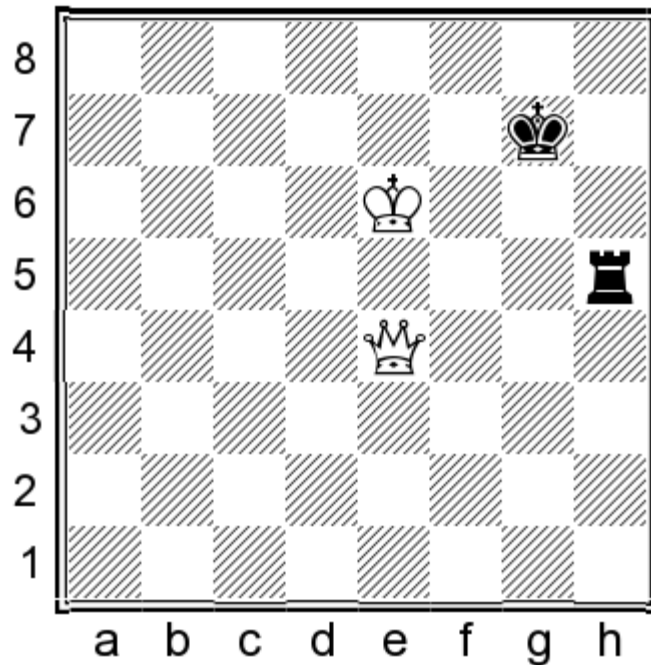
And Black resigned due to 120...♕b7 (120...♕b8 121.♗g8+) 121.♗b1+.

6

Svidler Peter

Howell David

Amsterdam 2010



Svidler received his lesson (see his previous game above) and now he is merciless!

97...♖h6+ 98.♔e7 ♖g6 99.♗d4+

99.♗h4 is a move quicker.

99...♔g8 100.♗e5! ♖g1

Best. If 100...♖a6 then 101.♗g3+ ♔h8 (101...♔h7 102.♗d3+) 102.♗c3+ ♔h7 103.♗d3+.

101.♗d5+ ♔h7 102.♗d3+ ♔g8 103.♔f6!

Now that the checking square (f1) is covered, the king approaches.

103...♖g7 104.♗d5+ ♔h7 105.♗h1+ ♔g8 106.♗h5 ♖a7

106...♖g1 107.♗f7+ ♔h8 108.♗a7 ♖g8 109.♗c7 ♖f8+ 110.♔g6 ♖g8+ 111.♔h6.

107.♗d5+ 1-0

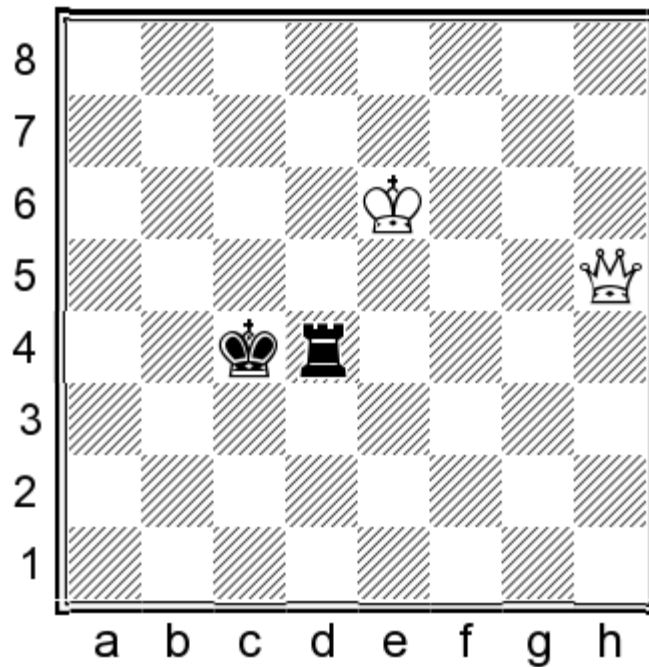
And Black resigned in view of 107...♔h7 (107...♔h8 108.♗h1+ ♔g8 109.♗g1+) 108.♗h1+ ♔g8 109.♗g1+.

7

Jones Gawain

Kabanov Nikolai

Khanty Mansiysk 2010



As the defending king is well centralised, the win is one of the longest; 28 moves.

82...♔d3

82...♖d3 keeps the win on the 28 moves mark, but the text reduces it to 26!

83.♗c5 ♔e4 84.♗f5+ ♔e3 85.♔e5 ♖d3 86.♗f4+ ♔e2 87.♔e4 ♖d2

Black doesn't defend accurately. Again 87...♞c3 was a bit better.

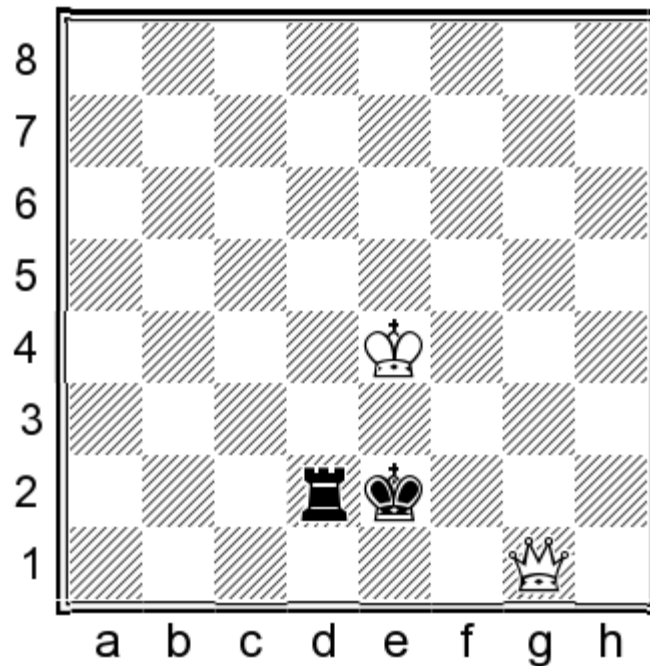
88.♟f3+ ♔e1 89.♞h5

89.♔e3? would be a clear blunder: 89...♞d3+! 90.♔xd3 but the text could also be improved on by 89.♞h1+ ♔e2 90.♞c1!.

89...♔f2 90.♞h1 ♞e2+ 91.♔f4 ♞d2 92.♞h2+?!

92.♞e4! ♞e2 93.♞d4+ ♔g2 94.♔g4 - in 14.

92...♔e1 93.♞g1+ ♔e2 94.♔e4!



White has made progress and now needs 'just' 17 moves.

94...♞c2 95.♞g2+ ♔d1 96.♞f1+ ♔d2 97.♔d4 ♞b2 98.♞f2+ ♔c1 99.♞e1+ ♔c2 100.♔c4

White pushes the black king to the edge by the usual motif.

100...♞a2 101.♞e2+ ♔b1 102.♞d1+ ♔b2 103.♔b4 ♞a8 104.♞e2+ 1-0

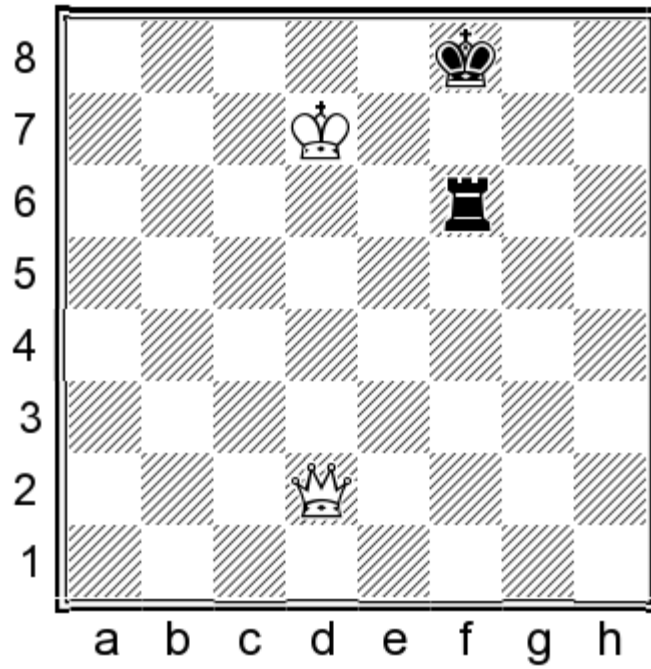
The rook was forced to leave the king's protection and now White easily picks it up: 104...♔c1 105.♞f1+ ♔c2 106.♞g2+.

8

Bartel Mateusz

Anton Guijarro David

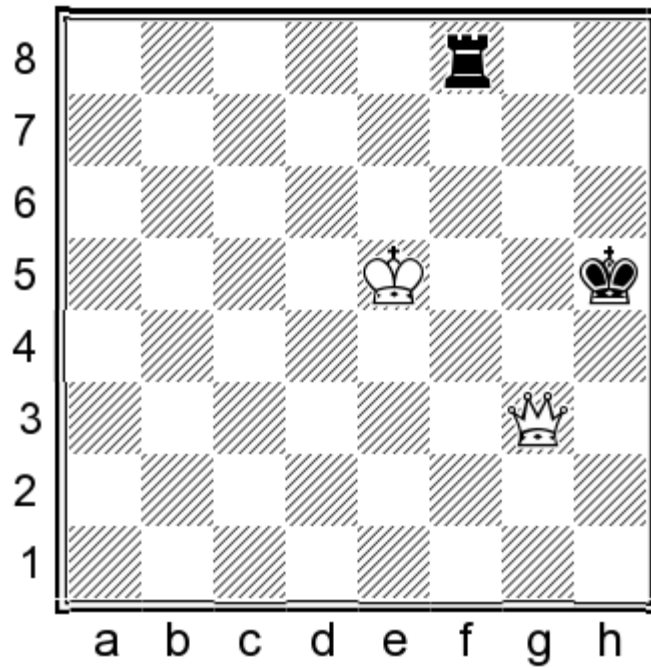
Baku 2016



105...♔f7 106.♚d5+

106.♚g5 is more accurate - the stronger side doesn't always have to check!

106...♔g6 107.♔e7 ♜f5 108.♚d3 ♔g5 109.♔e6 ♜f6+ 110.♔e5 ♜f8 111.♚g3+ ♔h5



112.♔e6!

Black is running short of moves...

112...♔h6

112...♖e8+ loses to 113.♕f7 ♖d8 114.♗g6+ ♕h4 115.♗f6+.

113.♗h4+ ♕g6 114.♗g4+ ♕h7

114...♕h6 115.♕e7.

115.♕e7 ♖g8 116.♗h5+ ♕g7 117.♗h3

Of course, the text move wins but 117.♗d5 is more harmonious- the queen operates better when centralised!

117...♕g6 118.♗h4 ♖g7+ 119.♕e6 1-0

And Black resigned as the end is nigh: 119...♖a7 120.♗g3+ ♕h5 121.♗h2+ ♕g6 122.♗g1+ or 119...♖g8 120.♗e4+ ♕h6 (120...♕g7 121.♕e7 ♕h6 122.♕f7 ♖g7+ 123.♕f6) 121.♕f7 ♖g7+ 122.♕f6 ♖g5 123.♗f4.

The most common and the most difficult to meet is the so-called ‘Third Rank Defence’.

This defence can be executed either on a rank or file style. It must be noted that a lot of valuable work has been made by A.Dritte Reihe.

To achieve a ‘Third Rank Defence’, the ‘rook’ king has to be placed on the edge of the board, on one of the two middle squares, with his rook on the respective third file/rank.

When the ‘rook’ king has access to both central squares, he has the greatest amount of flexibility, so the ‘queen’ side should always take away one of these squares.

This defence is important; if you have the rook and face a not-fully-prepared opponent, you may be able to gain ten moves or more while your opponent learns that there is no obvious way to cut-off the rook from the third file/rank.

As long as the ‘rook’ side preserves his king on the central squares, it’s always possible to have one safe square for the rook, keeping the vital ‘blockade’.

The defence can be broken by a quite central queen move, in the form of a knight-standing with its king.

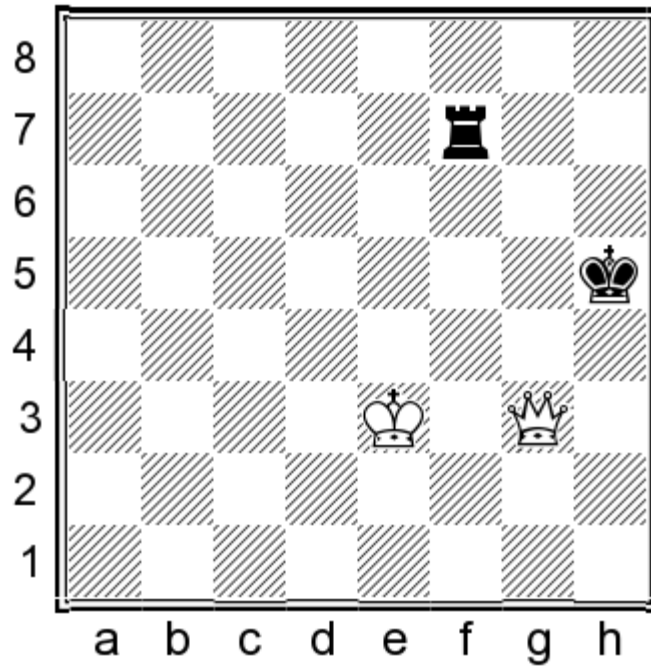
The next two examples will help to illuminate the subject:

9

Krutti Valer

Ress Tamas

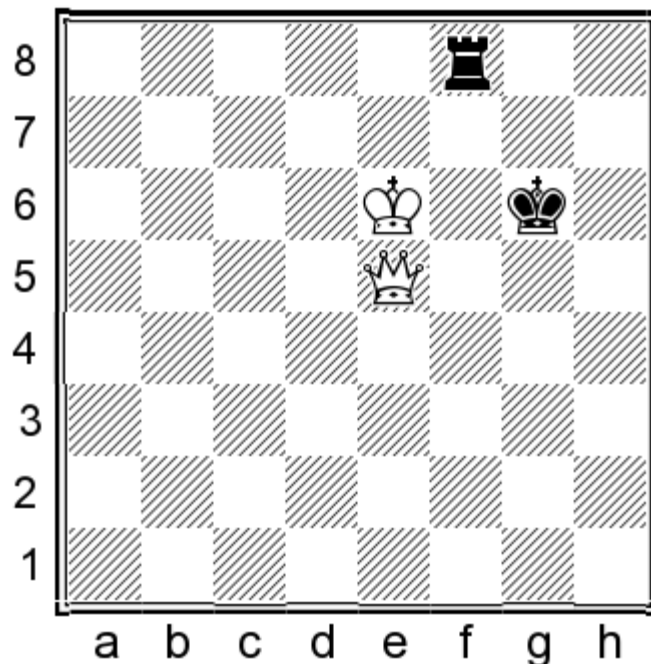
Hungary 2012



This game ended here with a draw agreement because of the 50-moves rule! But of course it can now help us to understand the mechanism of the defence. As long as White simply tries to dominate the rook, there is always one escape square.

White's problem is that the king and queen alone cannot dominate the rook on the entire third rank. So, White must start with 136.♔e4 ♖f6 137.♔e5 ♖f7 138.♜d3!

(A quiet but very strong move. Wrong would be 138.♜g8?! ♖f3 139.♔e4 ♖f2 140.♜g3 ♖f7 and we have again the initial position but White has lost some moves! After 138.♔e6 White has achieved the maximum square control to dominate the rook on the f-file, but still the rook has a valid escape: 138...♖f8. It's critical for Black that it is White to move in this position. Black to move would have to move the rook off the third rank. This is why Black moves the rook to a square of the opposite colour to the square of the white king; usually a knight's move away. By doing this, Black ensures that White will never dominate the rook. Of course White is still winning: 139.♜e5+ ♔g6



140.♖d4! [again the 'knight-move' standing of king and queen!] 140...♞e8+ 141.♔d7 ♞f8 142.♞g4+ ♔h6 143.♔e7 and Black has to abandon the third rank: 143...♞f2 [143...♞f1 144.♞h3+-] 144.♞h4+-)

138...♔g5 139.♞d8+ ♔g6 140.♞g8+ ♞g7 141.♞e6+ ♔h7 142.♔f5 and the defence is broken. The end might be: 142...♞g2 143.♞d7+ ♞g7 144.♞d4! ♞f7+ 145.♔e6 ♔g8 146.♞d5! ♞g7 147.♔f6+ ♔h7 148.♞h1+ ♔g8 149.♞a8+ ♔h7 150.♞e8 (achieving the 'Philidor Position') 150...♞a7 151.♞g6+ ♔h8 152.♞g1! ♞d7 153.♞c5 ♞d8 154.♞h5+ ♔g8 155.♞g6+ ♔h8 156.♞g7#.

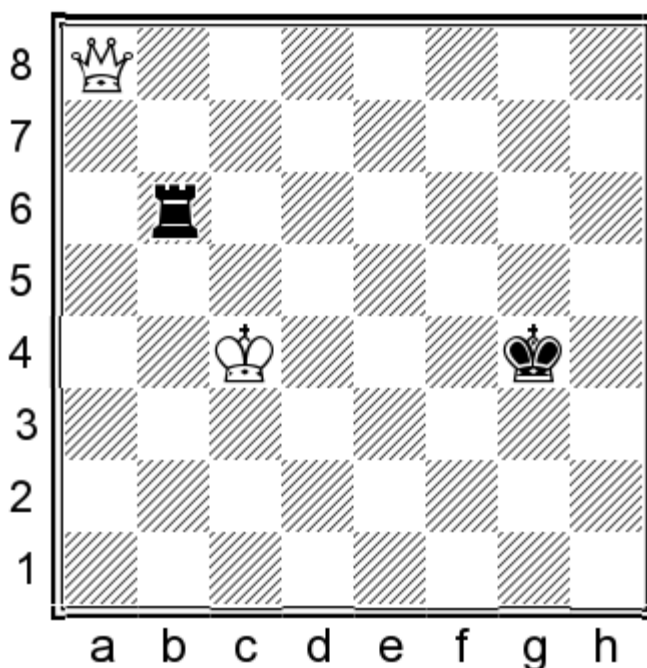
1/2-1/2

10

Kononenko Dmitry

Teske Henrik

Marianske Lazne 2016



Well, the white pieces are a bit far away, but still the win shouldn't take more than 26 moves with accurate play - which of course is probably impossible in battle (game) conditions!

66...♞f6

The correct defence - the rook should be placed next to its king.

67.♔d4 ♞f4+ 68.♔e3 ♞f6 69.♞d5!

Centralisation!

69...♞f5 70.♞g8+ ♔h5 71.♔e4 ♞f1

This is the first non-book move (!) which loses in 20 moves and not in 21 as with the moves 71...♞f6 or 71...♞f2. Well, not a big deal I would say...

72.♞c4! ♞f6 73.♔e5 ♞f2 74.♞c5 ♞f1 75.♞d5 ♞f8 76.♔e6+ ♔g4 77.♞g2+ ♔h4

If 77...♔h5 then the usual 78.♖g3 ♕h6 79.♗g4.

78.♖g6! ♜f1 79.♕e5 ♜f3 80.♕e4 ♜f1 81.♕e3 ♕h3 82.♖g5 ♕h2 83.♕e2 1-0

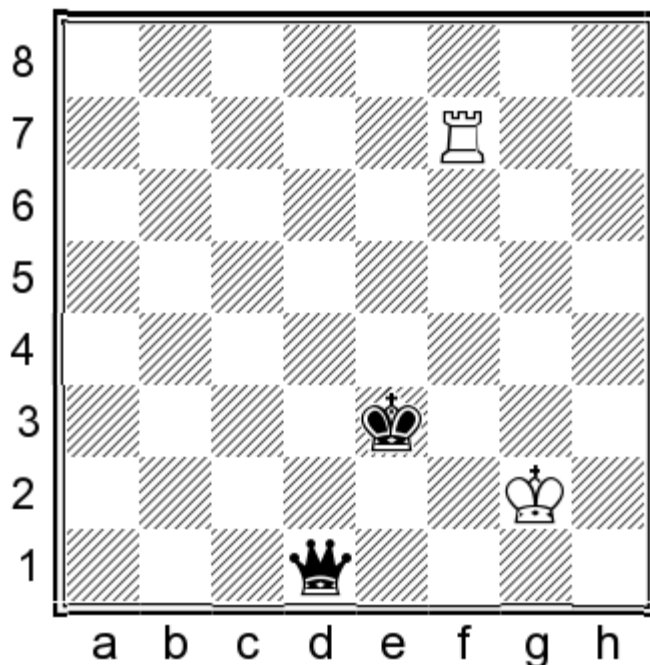
And Black resigned: 83...♞g1 84.♞h4+ ♔g2 85.♞d4! ♕h2 86.♕f2 ♞g2+ 87.♕f1 ♞g3 88.♞h4+ ♜h3 89.♞f2+ ♕h1 90.♞g2#.

11

Areshchenko Alexander

Inarkiev Ernesto

Baku 2014



84.♞e7+ ♕f4 85.♜f7+ ♕g5 86.♞g7+ ♕f6

The checks are over, for the time being at least!

87.♞g3 ♕f5 88.♕h2 ♕f4 89.♞a3

The alternative was 89.♞g2 ♞e1 90.♞g7 (90.♕h3 ♞h1+ 91.♞h2 ♞f3+ 92.♕h4 ♞g4#) 90...♞e5 91.♞g2 ♕f3+ 92.♕h1 ♞a1+ 93.♕h2 ♞e1! and we have the 'Philidor Position'. Now the rook is lost.

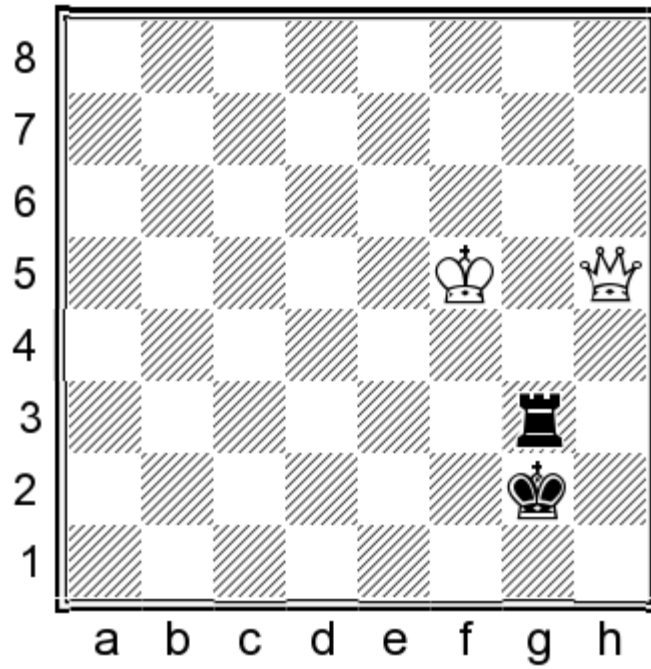
89...♞c2+ 90.♕h3 ♞h7+ 91.♕g2 ♞b7+ 0-1

12

Papaioannou Ioannis

Short Nigel

Al Ain 2012



64...♔f2 65.♔f4 ♚c3 66.♞d5

66.♞d1! would be more accurate, pushing the black king to the edge.

66...♔e2 67.♞d4 ♚d3 68.♞b2+ ♔d1 69.♔e4 ♚h3 70.♞a1+ ♔e2 71.♞a6+ ♔f2 72.♞b6+ ♔f1 73.♔f4 ♚c3 74.♞b2

74.♞d4 ♚h3 75.♔g4 ♚h2 76.♔g3 ♚g2+ 77.♔f3+-.

74...♚h3 75.♞d2 ♚h6 76.♞c1+

76.♞d3+! ♔e1 77.♔g3 ♚h5 78.♞c2 and the rook is lost.

76...♔e2 77.♞c2+ ♔e1 78.♔g3 ♚d6 79.♞f2+

79.♞e4+ ♔d1 80.♞a4+ ♔e2 81.♞g4+ wins the rook as well!

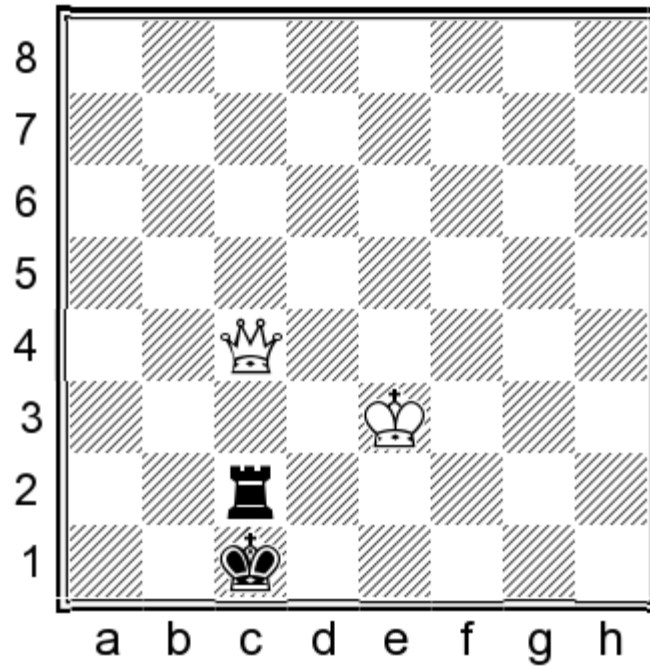
79...♔d1 80.♞f1+ ♔c2 81.♞c4+ ♔d1 82.♔f3

82.♞a4+!

82...♚d2

Now the rook is saved but not the half-point...

83.♞a4+ ♔c1 84.♔e3 ♚b2 85.♞c4+ ♚c2



86. ♖b4

86. ♖d4 ♔b1 87. ♕d3 ♜b2 88. ♕c3 ♔a2 89. ♖d1 and we have the 'Philidor Position'.

86... ♜c8 87. ♕d3 ♜c6

Not the best defence. 87... ♜d8+ 88. ♕c3 ♜c8+ 89. ♕b3 ♜e8 makes the win at least 10 moves longer.

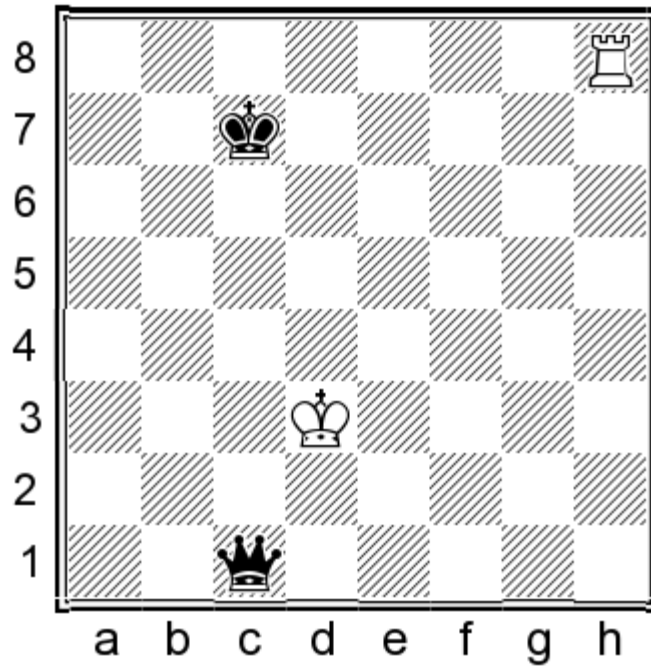
88. ♖a3+ ♔b1 89. ♖b3+ ♔c1 90. ♖a4! ♜d6+ 91. ♕c3 ♜d3+ 92. ♕xd3 1-0

13

Gashimov Vugar

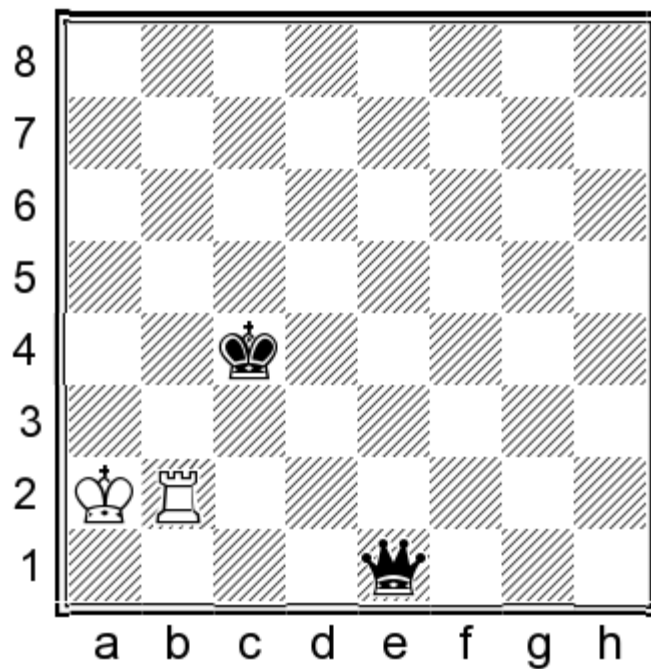
Bacrot Etienne

Sestao 2010



As the pieces are far away from each other, the win should take approximately 28 moves with accurate play.

65. ♖h2 ♔d6 66. ♞c2 ♚b1 67. ♕c3 ♔d5 68. ♞d2+ ♕c5 69. ♞b2 ♚e1+ 70. ♕b3 ♔d4 71. ♕a2 ♕c3 72. ♞b3+ ♕c4 73. ♞b2 ♚d1



73... ♚e5! 74. ♞c2+ ♔d3 75. ♞b2 ♕c3 76. ♕b1 ♚e1+ 77. ♕a2 ♚d1 and we have reached the 'Philidor Position'.

74. ♞b8 ♚c2+ 75. ♞b2 ♚a4+ 76. ♕b1 ♕c3

76... ♚d1+ 77. ♕a2 ♕c3 is the 'Philidor Position'.

77. ♞b6 ♚d1+ 78. ♕a2 ♚d5+ 79. ♕b1 ♚f5+ 0-1

And White resigned, as the choice between mate or losing the rook is not pleasant.

The ending is of course won for the queen, but as it is not often encountered even the very strongest players do not know how to handle it perfectly. The usual accompanying time-trouble is a negative aspect as well, and the 50-moves rule the nightmare of the queen and the heaven of the rook!

QUEEN VS ROOK & PAWN

When the side with the rook has an extra pawn then things may turn out differently, provided of course that the 'rook' king and rook are close to the pawn and the opposing 'queen' king cannot attack from behind. The basic (but not absolute in some cases) rules are:

1. With a central (c/f- and d/e) pawn: Draw on 2nd, 6th and 7th, otherwise win.
2. With a knight pawn (b/g): Nearly always draw (beware of the 5th rank).
3. With a rook pawn (a/h): Draw on 3rd and 7th, otherwise win.

The further the pawn is advanced, the greater the chances are for a draw. For instance, the 'queen' side wins in all cases when his king blocks a pawn that has not crossed the middle line. Almost all positions with the pawn on the 5th rank are won. However if the pawn has reached the 6th or 7th rank, a draw is quite probable.

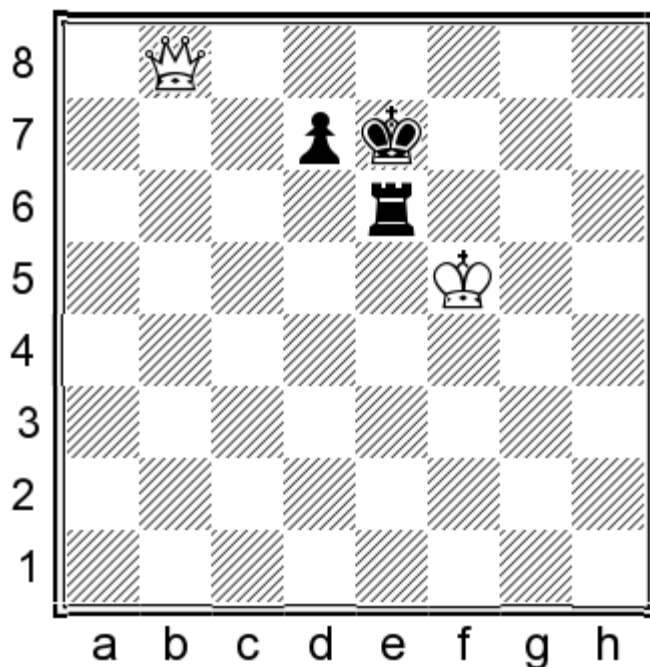
In general, for better defence the following should be kept in mind:

1. The rook should have two safe squares, as otherwise it might have to move away from its king and thereby find itself lost.
2. The 'rook' king should be on the short side of the board (either ranks or files).
3. The 'queen' king shouldn't be allowed to cross the rank of the pawn and attack from behind.

But of course there are many positions; so many exceptions to the above rules do exist...

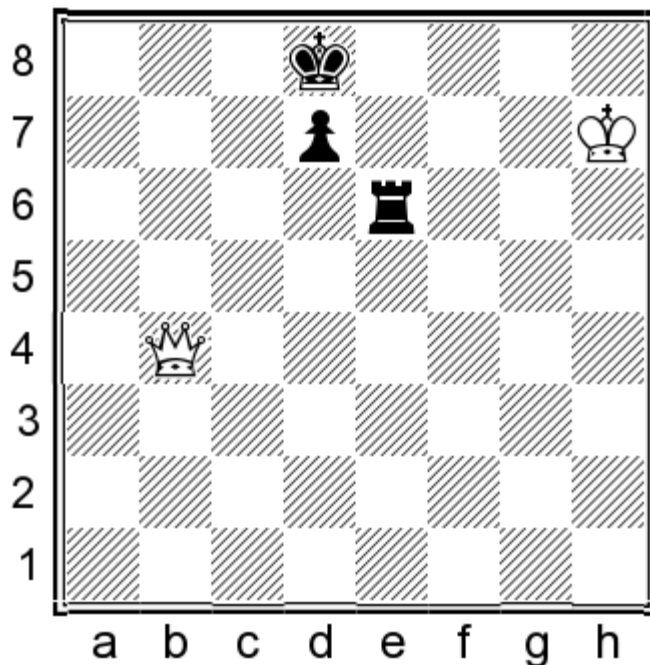
Let's start our examination with some positions with the pawn on the 7th rank:

Example 1
Philidor Francois-Andre
Study 1777



A typical drawn position: Black holds his king on the 7th and 8th ranks, preventing the white queen from entering the important d8-square. The rook has two safe squares at its disposal (e6 and c6); therefore a zugzwang cannot be created.

Example 2
Khenkin Viktor
Study 1981



If the white king has crossed the 6th rank, Black's position is no longer foolproof. For example, this case depends on who is to move. Black on move achieves a draw after 1...♔c7(c8)!. He should keep a distance between the kings in order to avoid mate threats. With White on the move, he wins:

1. ♕b8+! ♔e7 2. ♔g7

With the threat ♕f8#.

2... ♖c6

If 2... ♖d6 then 3. ♕b4 wins.

3. ♕f8+ ♔e6 4. ♕f6+

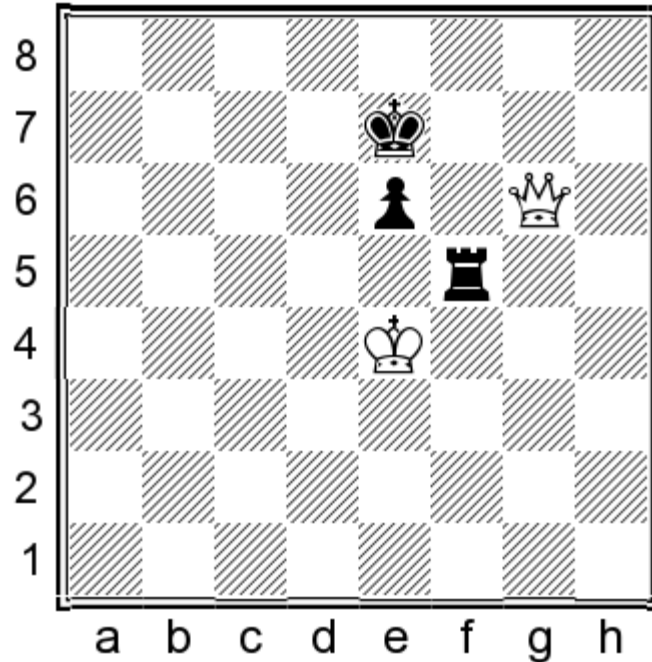
4. ♕b4! ♔d5 5. ♔f7 ♖e6 6. ♕b7+ ♔d6 7. ♕b6+ ♔d5 8. ♕c7+- is also good, according to Dvoretsky.

4... ♔d5 5. ♕d8 ♔d6 6. ♔f7

The queen has occupied the important d8-square, and now the king can attack the pawn. His opponent, forced to stand in front of the pawn, only hinders his own rook.

6... ♖c5 7. ♕b6+ ♖c6 8. ♕b8+ ♔d5 9. ♔e7 1-0

And the pawn is lost.



As mentioned, the position is won for White.

64...♔d6 65.♖g7

65.♖e8! is more accurate.

65...♜b5 66.♖g3+ ♔d7 67.♖a3 ♜d5 68.♖b4 ♜f5 69.♖b7+ ♔d8 70.♖b8+ ♔d7 71.♔d4 ♜d5+ 72.♔c4 ♔e7 73.♖g8 ♜f5 74.♖g6

White hasn't really made any progress; the only difference after her 64th move is that her king stands on c4 instead of e4.

74...♔d7 75.♖g3! ♜d5 76.♖g7+ ♔e8 77.♖f6 ♔d7 78.♖f7+ ♔d6 79.♖e8!

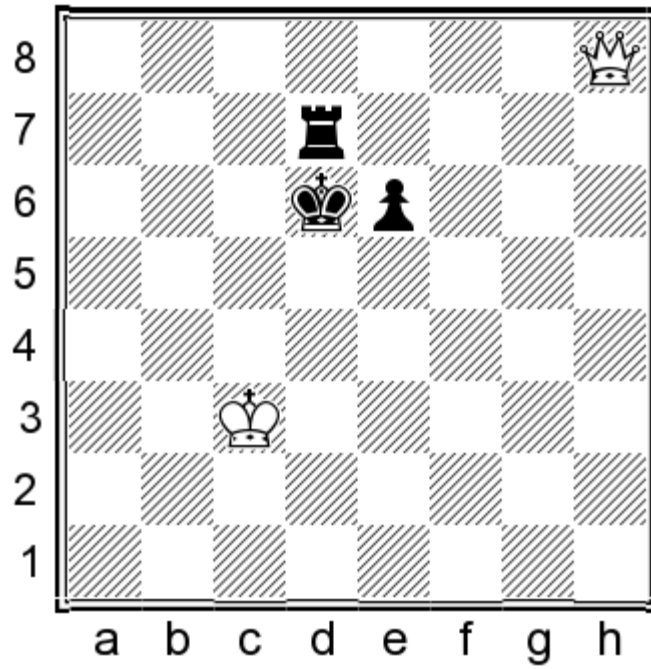
Finally White finds the correct procedure and her last five moves are the best!

79...♜c5+ 80.♔b4 ♜d5 81.♖d8+ ♔e5 82.♖e7

This is the right plan: push the black king back by placing the queen on the squares e8 and e7.

82...♔f5 83.♔c3 ♔e5 84.♖f8 ♜d7 85.♖h8+ ♔f5

85...♔d6 loses to

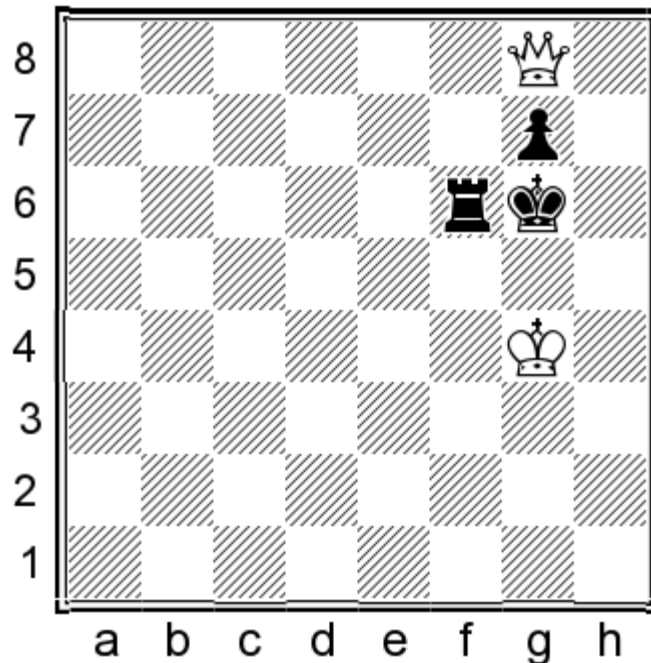


86. ♖e8! ♜h7 87. ♜b8+ ♔c6 88. ♜g8 ♜e7 89. ♔c4.

86. ♔c4 ♜d5 87. ♜g7 1-0

And Black resigned: 87... ♔e4 88. ♜f6 ♜e5 89. ♜h6 ♔f5 90. ♜f8+ ♔e4 (90... ♔g6 91. ♔d4 ♜d5+ 92. ♔e4 ♜f5 93. ♜e7 ♜f6 94. ♔e5+-) 91. ♜f6!

Example 3
Khenkin Viktor
Study 1981



The closer the pawn is to the edge, the greater the defensive resources are. This sort of position (with the king in front of the pawn) is lost when the pawn is central. With a bishop pawn, the outcome depends on the specifics of piece.com

placement. Here (the knight pawn) Black holds a draw easily; the same is valid for the white king on e5, but not if the king gets to e7 (Dvoretsky). This study of V.Khenkin has some flaws, as here he analyses

1...♖f1?

Which loses! Also bad is 1...♔h6? 2.♞h8+ ♔g6 3.♞h5#, but to avoid the double attack,

Black should place his rook on a dark square: 1...♖f2! 2.♞d5 ♔h7 with an easy draw according to Dvoretsky.

1...♞d6!

and 1...♞b6! are also good enough.

1...♖f1? 2.♞d5?

Now White can win if he plays 2.♞e8+! ♔h7 (2...♖f7 3.♔h4 ♔f6 4.♔h5+-) 3.♞h5+ ♔g8 4.♞d5+ ♔f8 (4...♔h8 5.♞d8+ ♔h7 6.♞d3+) 5.♞c5+ ♔g8 6.♞c4+ ♖f7 7.♔g5+- (Dvoretsky).

2...♞g1+! 3.♔h3

3.♔f3 ♖f1+ 4.♔g3 ♖f6=.

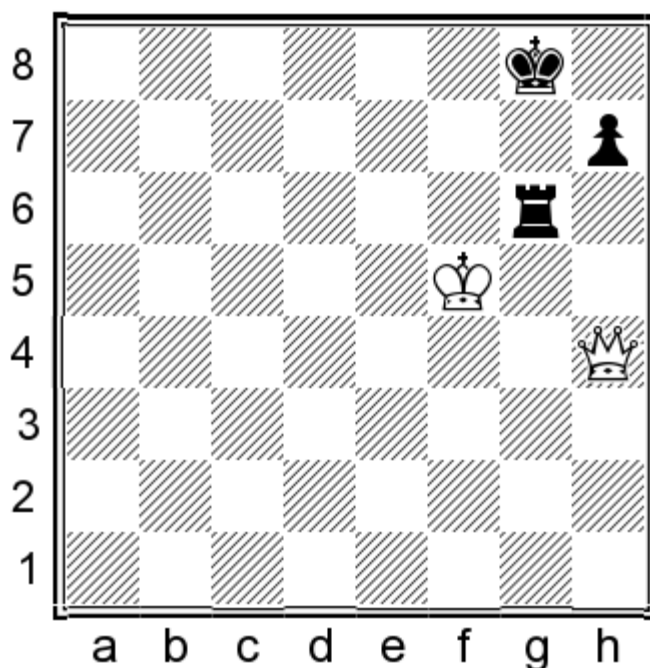
3...♔h7 4.♔h4 ♔h8 5.♔h5 ♔h7 6.♞e4+ ♔h8 1/2-1/2

And White cannot make any progress. If his queen abandons the a8-h1 diagonal Black transposes into the drawn Philidor position after...♞h1-h6.

Example 4

Berger Johann

Study 1921



With the rook pawn on the 7th rank, Black loses because the rook has only one safe square at its disposal.

1.♞e7

And Black is in zugzwang, as any move drastically worsens his position.

1...♞a6

1...♞g2 2.♞d8+ ♔g7 3.♞d4+ ♔h6 4.♞e3+ ♔g7 5.♞c3+! ♔g8 6.♞c8+ ♔g7 7.♞b7+ or 1...♞g1 2.♞d8+ ♔f7 3.♞c7+ ♔g8 4.♞b8+ ♔g7 5.♞a7+ or 1...♔h8 2.♞f8+ ♞g8 3.♞f6+ ♞g7 4.♔e6! (4.♞e5? h6! =) 4...h5 5.♞h6+ or, finally, 1...♞h6 2.♔g5 ♞g6+ 3.♔h5 (position from G.Laza) 3...♔h8 (3...♞a6 4.♞d8+ ♔g7 5.♞c7+) 4.♞f8+ ♞g8 5.♞f6+ ♞g7 6.♔h6+.

2.♞d8+ ♔g7 3.♞d7+ ♔h6 4.♞b7

4.♞c7! ♞g6 5.♞e7! at once is better.

4...♞d6

4...♞a3 5.♞c6+ ♔g7 6.♞d7+--.

5.♞e7 ♞g6

A reciprocal zugzwang. White, with the help of a triangular queen maneuver, gives his opponent the move.

6.♞f8+ ♔h5 7.♞f7 ♔h6 8.♞e7 ♞g2 9.♞e3+ ♔g7 10.♞c3+ ♔f7 11.♞c7+ ♔g8 12.♞b8+ ♔g7 13.♞b7+ 1-0

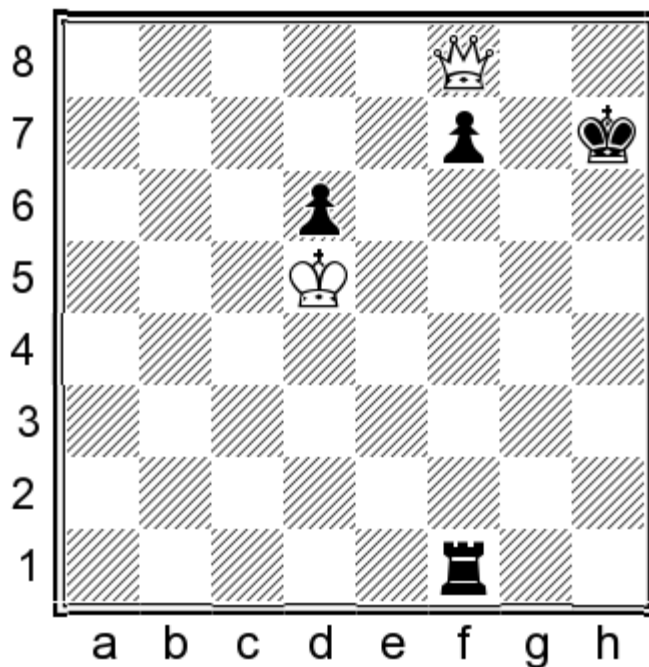
Of course, theory and practice are two different things! Let's see why:

2

Anand Viswanathan

Ragger Markus

Germany 2014



This position is drawn but Black managed to lose it...

55...♞f5+

55...♖d1+ and anywhere on the f-file are also OK moves.

56.♔xd6 ♜f6+! 57.♔d7

57.♔e5 ♜e6+! (57...♜f1? 58.♞a8+→) 58.♔f5 ♜f6+! is the point! 57.♔e7 ♜g6! is similar to the idea that Black should use in the game.

57...♜f5?

Loses! 57...♜g6! was the drawing method and if the white king leaves f8, with let's say 58.♞e7, Black achieves the drawn position with 58...♔g7.

58.♞d6! ♜g5

58...♔g7 59.♔e8 ♜g5 60.♞f8++-.

59.♞f4 ♔g6 60.♔e7!

Now the white king can operate from behind enemy lines.

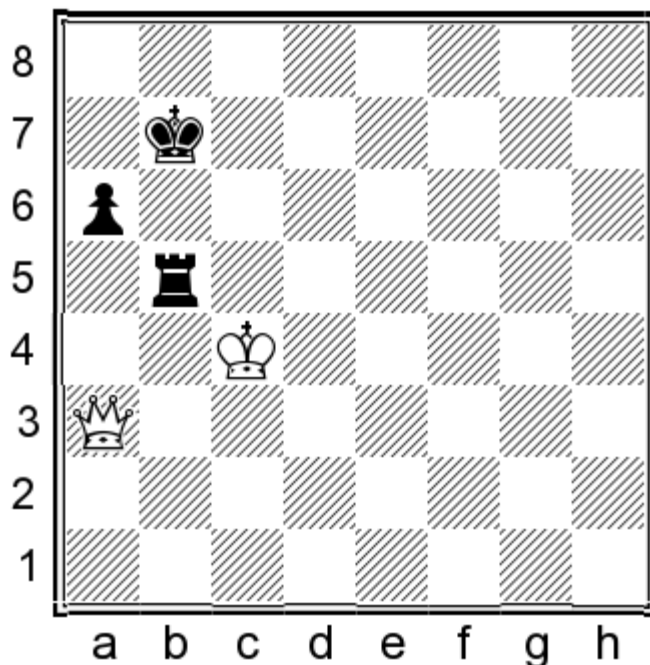
60...♜f5 61.♞g4+ ♜g5 62.♞e4+ ♜f5 63.♞d3 ♔g5 64.♞g3+ ♔h5 65.♔e8 ♔h6 66.♞g4 ♜f6 67.♔f8 1-0

Pawns on the 6th rank can create more interesting positions! A rook's pawn loses when on the 7th rank, but draws when on the 6th!

Example 5

Guretzky-Cornitz Bernhard

Study 1864



Here the rook has only one safe square (b5), therefore the white king needs to breakthrough using a zugzwang technique. However he can neither force the gain of the rook nor smoke the king out from the corner.

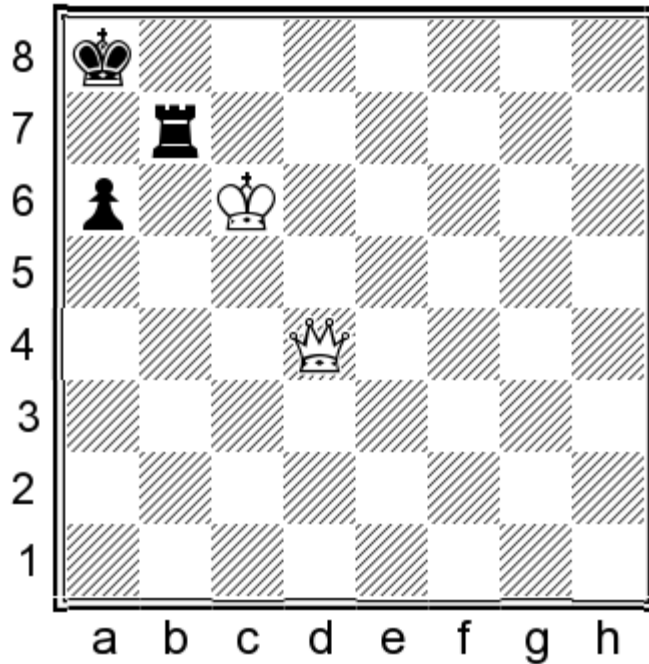
1.♞e7+ ♔b8 2.♞e8+ ♔b7 3.♞d8 ♔a7 4.♞c8 ♜b7!

Black should by no means abandon the corner. 4...♔b6? loses after 5.♖b8+ ♕c6 (5...♕a5 6.♗d8+ ♕a4 7.♗d2 ♕a3 8.♗d6++-) 6.♗a7 ♖b6 (6...♖a5 7.♕b4 ♖b5+ 8.♕a4 ♖b6 9.♕a5+-) 7.♕d4 ♕b5 (7...♖b4+ 8.♕c3 ♖b6 9.♕c4!+-) 8.♗d7+ ♕b4 9.♗c7 ♖h6 10.♗e7+ ♕a4 11.♗e8+ ♕a5 12.♕c5+-.

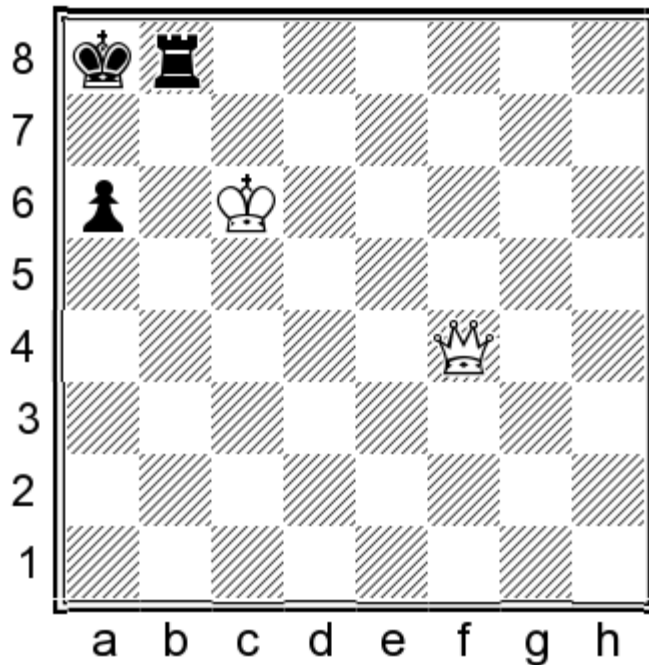
5.♗c5+

This is stronger than 5.♕c5 ♖b5+ 6.♕c6 ♖b6+ 7.♕c7 ♖b5 8.♗g4 ♖b7+ 9.♕c6 ♖b6+.

5...♕a8 6.♗d6 ♕a7 7.♗d4+ ♕a8 8.♕c5 ♕a7 9.♕c6+ ♕a8



10.♗d8+ ♖b8 11.♗a5 ♕a7 12.♗c7+ ♕a8 13.♗f4



13...♖b7! ½-½

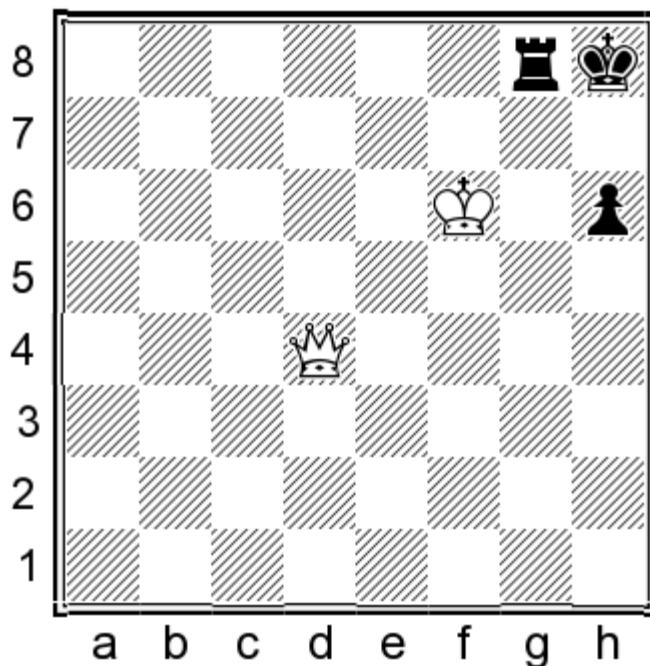
This precise defensive move prevents the occupation of the important c7- and c8-squares by the white king. 13...♖b7? loses to 14.♔c7! ♕a7 (14...♖b7+ 15.♔c8 ♖b5 16.♚c7+-) 15.♚d6 ♖b8 16.♚c5+ ♕a8 17.♚c6+ ♕a7 18.♚d6! (a decisive zugzwang) 18...♖b7+ 19.♔c8 ♖b5 20.♚d7+ ♕a8 21.♚c7 ♖b1 22.♚c6+ ♕a7 23.♚c5+ ♕a8 24.♚d5+ ♕a7 25.♚d4+ ♕a8 26.♚e4+-.

If we shift the above starting position one or two ranks lower, Black loses; too many squares demand protection behind the pawn in this case, and the pieces cannot successfully tackle this problem.

Keep in mind that, as V.Khenkin stated, White wins against the pawn on a6 if his king is standing on the a-file. He prepares ♔a5 by means of resolute queen actions, forcing the black king away from the 7th rank and the rook away from b5.

3

Penrose Jonathan
Hartston William
Coventry 1970



70...♔h7?

Black should not let the white king settle on the f7- and f8-squares. 70...♖g7! is a draw.

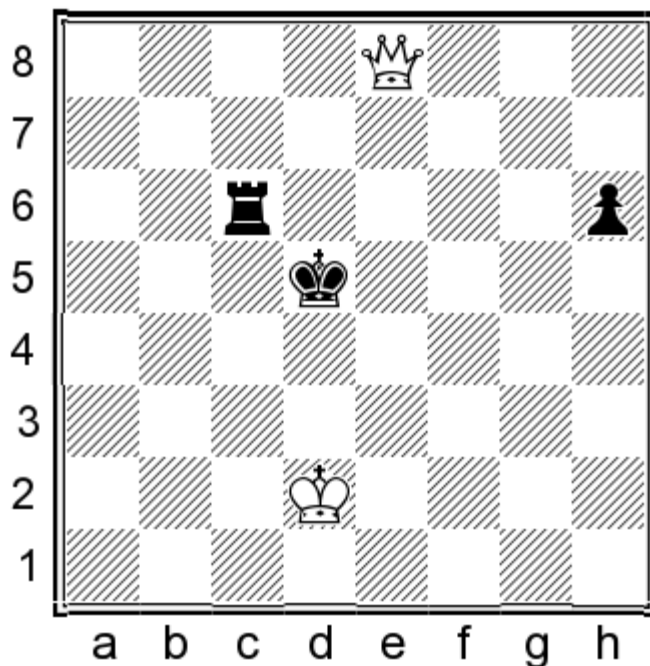
71.♔f7! ♖g5 72.♚f6 ♖g8 73.♚e6! ♖g5 74.♔f8 h5

74...♖g7 75.♚f5+ ♔h8 (75...♖g6 76.♔f7+-) 76.♚f6+-.

75.♚f7+ ♔h6 76.♚f6+ ♖g6 77.♚f4+ ♔h7 78.♚e5! ♔h6 79.♔f7 h4 80.♚e4 1-0

4

Kramnik Vladimir



75.♔d3

Black's king is too far from the h-pawn to create a fortress.

75...♞e6 76.♞b5+ ♔d6 77.♔d4 ♔e7 78.♞f5!

The road to safety is cut-off!

78...♞f6 79.♞h7+ ♔f8 80.♔e5 ♞a6 81.♞b7

81.♞d7! is the accurate continuation.

81...♞g6 82.♞h7!

82.♔f5?! ♞g5+ 83.♔f6 ♔g8 84.♞b3+- is also a win according to the engines, but it unnecessarily prolongs the game.

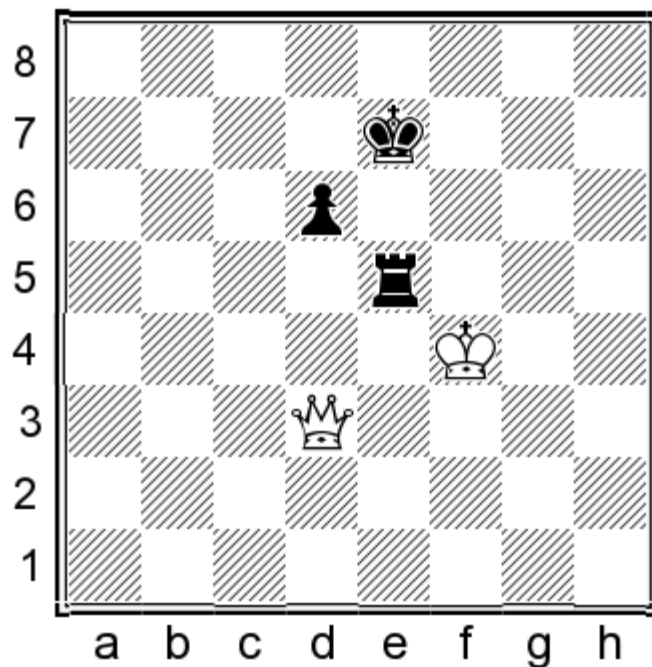
82...♞a6

82...♞c6 83.♞e4 ♞c7 84.♔f6 ♞f7+ 85.♔g6+-.

83.♞d3 1-0

Black resigned. After 83...♞a7 84.♞d4 (84.♔f6+-) 84...♞f7 85.♞h4 ♔g7 86.♔e6 ♞f8 87.♞g4+ ♔h7 88.♔e7 ♞g8 89.♞c4 ♔g7 90.♞e6 ♔h7 91.♔f7 ♞g5 92.♔f8+- we have an easy win.

Example 6
Philidor Francois-Andre
Study 1777

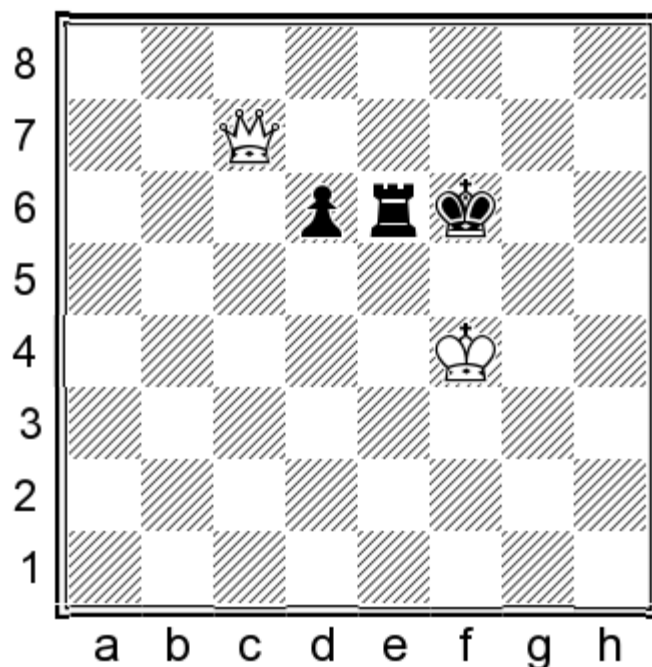


Another study by A.Philidor! If the black pawn is a central or bishop's pawn and stands on the 5th or 6th rank, Black is lost. White's plan consists of the following stages:

- 1) To occupy squares behind the pawn, with the help of zugzwang, and drive the black king out to d5 from where he will obstruct his own rook.
- 2) To cross the 5th rank with his king.
- 3) To breakthrough with the king to the e-file and the pawn.

1. ♖h7+ ♔d8

Both 1... ♔f8? 2. ♖d7 and 1... ♔e8? 2. ♖c7 ♖c5 3. ♖d8 White's mission becomes easier than after the text move: 3... ♖e5 4. ♖e8+ ♔d5 (4... ♔f6? 5. ♖d7 ♖d5 [5... ♖e6 6. ♖c6 ♔f7 7. ♖b7+ ♔g6 8. ♖c7 ♔f6



9. ♖d7!+–] 6. ♔e4 ♖e5+ 7. ♔d4 ♖e6 8. ♔d5+–) 5. ♜c8 transposes into the main line.

2. ♜f7! ♔c8

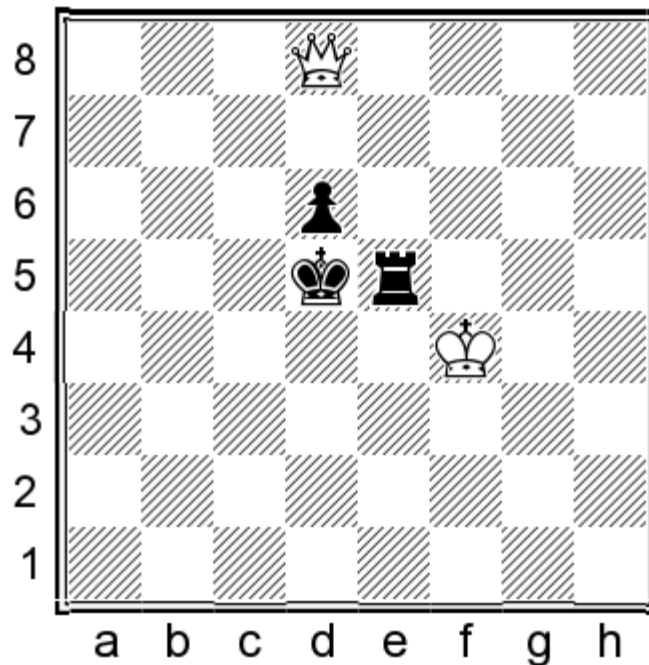
This is better than 2... ♖e7? 3. ♜g8+ ♔d7 4. ♔f5+– and 2... ♖c5 3. ♜e6 ♔c7 4. ♜e7+ ♔c6 5. ♜d8 ♖e5 6. ♜c8+ ♔d5 7. ♜a8+ ♔e6 8. ♜e8+ ♔d5 9. ♜c8! transposes into the main line.

3. ♜a7 ♔d8

Easier is 3... ♖c5 4. ♜e7+–.

4. ♜b8+ ♔d7 5. ♜b7+ ♔d8 6. ♜c6! ♔e7 7. ♜c7+ ♔e6 8. ♜d8 ♔d5

The same is 8... ♖f5+ 9. ♔g4 ♖e5 10. ♜e8+ ♔d5 11. ♜c8+–.



9. ♜c8!?

The first stage ends successfully. Black is in zugzwang and he is forced to give way to the white king. Andre Cheron recommended 9. ♖d7!+ and now:

a) 9... ♔c5 10. ♜b7! ♔d4 (10... ♖e2 11. ♜a7+ ♔d5 12. ♜a8+ ♔c5 13. ♜a5+ ♔d4 14. ♜b4+–) 11. ♜c6 ♖d5 12. ♔f3! ♔e5 (12... ♖f5+ 13. ♔g4 ♖d5 14. ♔f4!+–) 13. ♔e3 ♖c5 (13... ♖d1 14. ♜c3+–; 13... ♔e6 14. ♜c4 ♔e5 15. ♜e4+–) 14. ♜e8+ ♔f6 (14... ♔f5 15. ♜f7+ ♔e5 16. ♜e7+ ♔d5 17. ♜e4#) 15. ♖d7 ♖d5 16. ♔e4 ♖d1 17. ♜g4+– (K.Salvioli) or 17. ♜f5+! ♔e7 18. ♜g5+ (Dvoretsky).

b) 9... ♖h5 10. ♜b5+–.

c) 9... ♖e4+ 10. ♔f5 ♖e5+ 11. ♔f6 ♖e4 (11... ♔c5 12. ♜b7!) 12. ♜b5+ ♔d4

c1) 13. ♜c6 (A.Cheron) 13... ♔d5 14. ♜b5 ♖e3 15. ♜b4+ ♔d3 16. ♜c5 ♔d4 17. ♔f5

c11) 17... ♖e1 18. ♜b5+ ♔e3 (18... ♔d2 19. ♜b4+–) 19. ♜e5+–.

c12) 17... ♖e2 18. ♜a3+ ♔d2 (18... ♔c2 19. ♜a2+ ♔d3 20. ♜b3+–) 19. ♔f4

c121) 19... ♖e3 20. ♜b2+ ♔d3 21. ♜b3+ ♔d2 (21... ♔e2 22. ♜c2+ ♔e1 23. ♜c4 ♖h3 24. ♔g4+–) 22. ♜c4 ♖d3 23. ♔e4+–.

c122) 19...♗c2 20.♖a2+ ♕d3 21.♜b3+ ♕d2 22.♛c4! d3 23.♚d4! (23.♛c5? ♕d1 24.♛c3 d2 25.♜f3 ♕c1! 26.♛c3+ ♕b1 27.♜b3+ ♕c1 28.♛c4+ ♕d1 29.♕f3 ♞e7 30.♕f2 ♞e8 31.♖a4+ ♕c1 32.♛c6+ ♕b2= [B.Guretzky-Cornitz, 1864]; 23.♜b4+! ♕c2 24.♕f3+- [G.Lisitsyn]) 23...♕c2 (23...♞e8 24.♜b2+ ♕d1 [24...♕e1 25.♜b5! ♞d8 26.♕e3 ♕f1 27.♜f5+-] 25.♜b5! ♞d8 26.♕e3 ♕c2 27.♛c5+ ♕d1 28.♜b6+-) 24.♕f3 ♞e1 25.♛c4+ ♕d2 26.♜b4+ ♕d1 27.♜b2! ♞e2 28.♛c3 ♞d2 29.♛c4! (29.♕e3 ♞e2+ 30.♕xd3? ♞e3+=) 29...♕e1 30.♜b4!+- (A.Cheron).

c2) 13.♜b4+! ♕d5 14.♚d2+ ♕c5 15.♛c3+ ♕d5 16.♚d3+, transposes to the main line.

9...♞e4+

If 9...♞h5? 10.♖a8+ ♕d4 11.♖a4+- or 9...♞e7 10.♚g8+! (10.♕f5 ♞f7+ 11.♕g6 [11.♕g5! - Dvoretzky] 11...♞f4 - A.Cheron), with the idea ♕f5. If 9...♕d4 then 10.♛c6 ♞d5 and, according to C. Salvioli 11.♕f3! ♕e5 (11...♞f5+ 12.♕g4 ♞d5 13.♕f4!+-) 12.♕e3 ♞c5 13.♞e8+ ♕f6 (13...♕f5 14.♜f7+ ♕e5 15.♞e7+-) 14.♚d7 ♞d5 15.♕e4+-.

10.♕f5 ♞e5+ 11.♕f6

The second stage is also fulfilled.

11...♞e4

Both 11...♞e1 12.♜b7+ ♕c5 13.♛c7+ ♕d5 14.♖a5+ and 11...♞e2 12.♖a8+ ♕d4 13.♖a4+ ♕c5 14.♖a3+ lose rapidly.

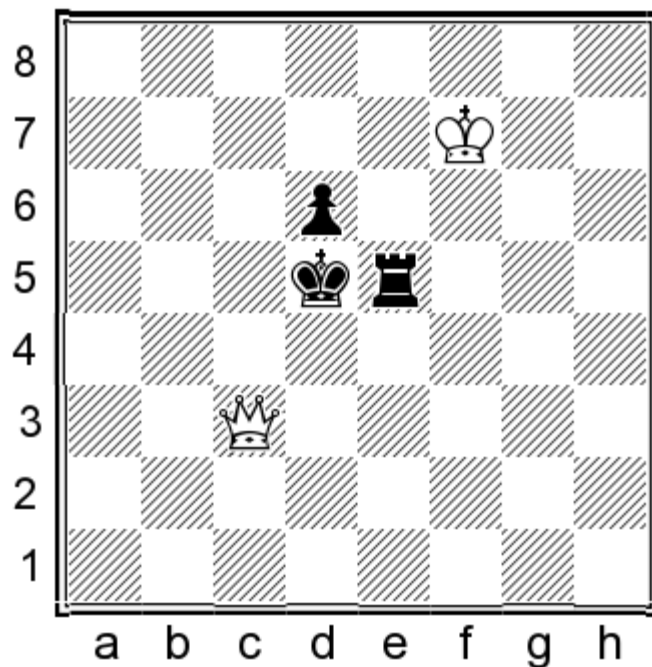
12.♛c3!

A neat method that stems from B. Guretzky-Cornitz (1864). Philidor analysed a slightly slower process: 12.♜f5+ ♞e5 13.♚d3+ ♕c5 14.♚d2! ♕c6 (14...♞e8 15.♖a5+-; 14...♞e4 15.♛c3+ ♕d5 16.♚d3+ ♞d4 17.♜b5+ ♕e4 18.♕e6+-) 15.♚d4 ♕d7 16.♛c4 ♞c5 (16...♕d8 17.♛c6+-; 16...♞e7 17.♖a4+ ♕d8 18.♖a8+-; 16...♞e3 17.♖a4+ ♕d8 18.♖a8+-; 16...♞e8 17.♖a4+ ♕d8 18.♜b5+-; 16...♞a5 17.♜b4! ♞c5 18.♜b7+ ♞c7 19.♜b5+ ♞c6 20.♕f7 ♕c7 21.♕e6+-) 17.♜f7+ ♕c6 18.♕e7 ♞e5+ 19.♕d8 ♞c5 20.♚d7+ ♕d5 21.♕e7 ♞c6 22.♜f5+ ♕c4 23.♕d7 ♞c5 24.♖e4+ and 25.♕xd6, winning (A.Philidor). The computer engines prefer 12.♜b7+ (or 12.♖a8+) 12...♕d4 13.♛c6 d5 14.♜b6+ ♕d3 (14...♕c4 15.♕f5!+-) 15.♛c5 d4 16.♖a3+ ♕e2 (16...♕c4 17.♛c1+-; 16...♕c2 17.♜b4+-) 17.♜b2+ ♕e3 18.♛c1+ ♕e2 19.♛c2+ ♕e3 20.♕f5 ♞f4+ 21.♕e5 d3 22.♛c5+ ♕f3 23.♛c6+ ♕e3 24.♜h6+-.

12...♞e6+

12...♞e5 loses to 13.♕f7!

13.♕f7 ♞e5



14.♔f8!

Zugzwang again. Black must let the white king cross the e-file. 14.♚b3+ ♔d4 15.♚a4+ ♔d5 16.♚b5+ ♔d4 17.♚c6 d5 18.♚a4+ ♔d3 19.♚d1+ ♔e4 20.♚e2+ ♔d4 21.♚b2+ ♔e4 22.♔f6+- is the computer engines' suggestion, which makes no difference to the outcome.

14...♞e4

14...♔e4 15.♚c4+ ♔f5 16.♚d3+ ♔e6 17.♔e8+- or 14...♞e6 15.♚b3+ ♔e5 16.♔f7 ♞f6+ 17.♔e7+-.

15.♚d3+ ♞d4

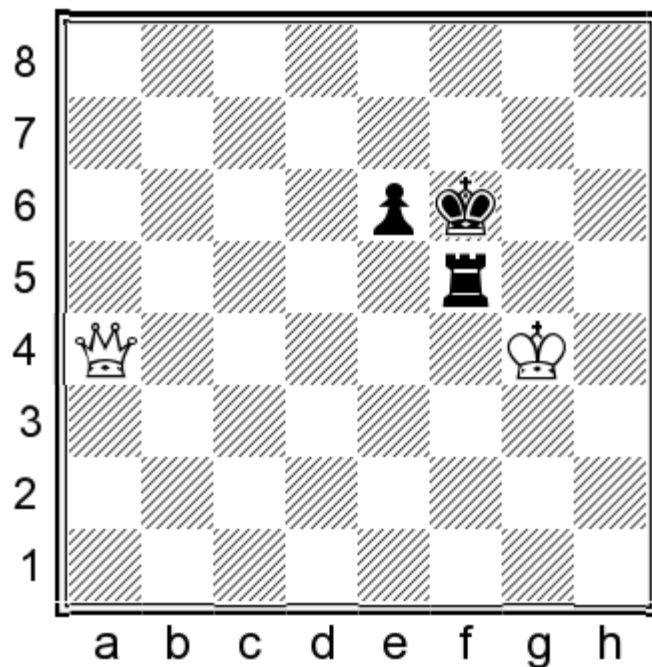
Or 15...♔e5 16.♔e7 d5 17.♚g3+ ♞f4 (17...♔d4+ 18.♔d6 ♔c4 19.♚g2 ♞d4 20.♚c2+-; 17...♔f5+ 18.♔d6 d4 19.♚d3 ♔f4 20.♔d5+-) 18.♚e3+ ♞e4 19.♚g5+ ♔d4+ 20.♔d6+-

16.♚f5+ ♔c4 17.♚c2+ ♔d5 18.♔e7 ♔e5 19.♔d7 ♞d5 20.♚e2+ ♔f4 21.♔c6 ♞d4 22.♔b5 ♔f5 23.♚e3 ♞e4 24.♚d3 ♔e5 25.♔c6 ♞d4 26.♚e3+ ♞e4 27.♚g5+ ♔e6 28.♚g6+ ♔e5 29.♚xd6+ 1-0

And White wins. The identical plan brings success against a black pawn on d5. With the pawn on d4, Black also loses. If the pawn stands on c6 or c5, White wins too, although his task is even more complicated.

5

**Svidler Peter
Howell David
Amsterdam 2010**



74...♠e7 75.♚a7+ ♜d6 76.♚b8+ ♜d7 77.♚b7+ ♜d6 78.♚c8

The 'pushing' method!

78...♠e7 79.♚c7+ ♜e8

79...♠f6 loses to 80.♚d8+ ♜f7 81.♚d7+ ♜f6 82.♚e8, as in the game.

80.♚d6! ♜f7 81.♚d7+ ♜f6 82.♚e8 ♜g5+ 83.♠h4 ♜f5 84.♚f8+ ♜g6 85.♚e7 ♜e5 86.♠g4 ♜e4+ 87.♠f3 ♜e1 88.♚h4

88.♠f4 was quicker: 88...♜f1+ (88...e5+ 89.♠f3+–) 89.♠g3 ♜e1 90.♚d6 ♜f7 91.♚f4+ ♜e8 92.♚b8+ ♜d7 93.♚b5+ ♜c8 94.♠f4+–.

88...♜e5 89.♚e7 ♜e1 90.♠f4 ♜f1+ 91.♠e5

White should follow the variation after the 88th move.

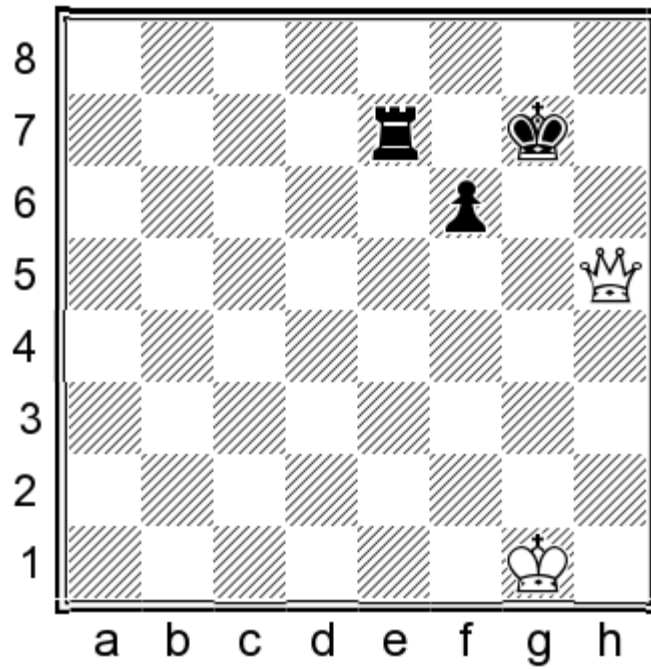
91...♜e1+ 92.♠d6 ♜d1+ 93.♠c6 ♜e1?!

93...♜c1+ should be played, when White ought to return to g3: 94.♠d6 ♜d1+ 95.♠e5 ♜e1+ 96.♠f4 ♜f1+ 97.♠g3.

94.♚h4 ♜e5 95.♠d6 ♜h5 96.♚e4+ ♠g7 97.♠xe6

And the rest is easy.

97...♜h6+ 98.♠e7 ♜g6 99.♚d4+ ♠g8 100.♚e5 ♜g1 101.♚d5+ ♠h7 102.♚d3+ ♠g8 103.♠f6 ♜g7 104.♚d5+ ♠h7 105.♚h1+ ♠g8 106.♚h5 ♜a7 107.♚d5+ 1-0



Even in a blindfold game, a good player knows what to do!

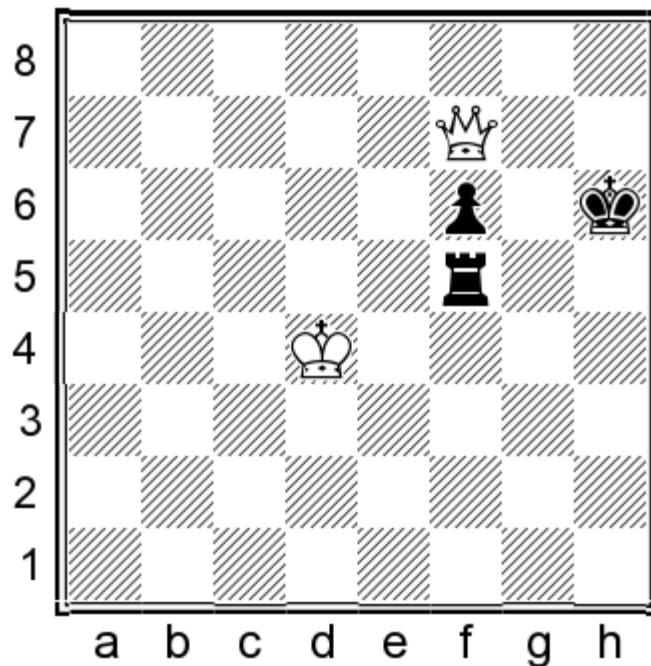
43...♞e5 44.♚h4 ♞g5+ 45.♔f2 ♞e5 46.♔f3 ♞f5+ 47.♔e4 ♞e5+ 48.♔f4

48.♔d4! ♞g5 49.♚h3 is accurate.

48...♞g5 49.♚h3 ♞e5 50.♚c8 ♞g5 51.♚d7+ ♔g6 52.♚e8+ ♔g7 53.♚e7+ ♔g6 54.♚f8!

As usual, the queen pushes and squeezes the enemy king.

54...♞f5+ 55.♔e4 ♞e5+ 56.♔d4 ♞g5 57.♚g8+ ♔h6 58.♚f7 ♞f5 59.♔e4 ♞e5+ 60.♔d4 ♞f5



61. ♖f8+

As Black is in zugzwang, 61. ♔c4! would do the job: 61... ♖f3 62. ♔d5 ♖f5+ 63. ♔d6 (63. ♔e6 ♖e5+! 64. ♔xf6? ♖f5+!) 63... ♖g5 64. ♖f8+ ♔g6 65. ♖g8+ ♔h6 66. ♖f7 ♖f5 67. ♔d7+.

61... ♔g6 62. ♖g8+ ♔h6 63. ♖f7 ♖f4+ 64. ♔d5 ♖f5+ 65. ♔d6 ♖g5

Of course White wins as we noted above, but here the famous mouse-slip appeared:

66. ♖g7+? ♖xg7 0-1

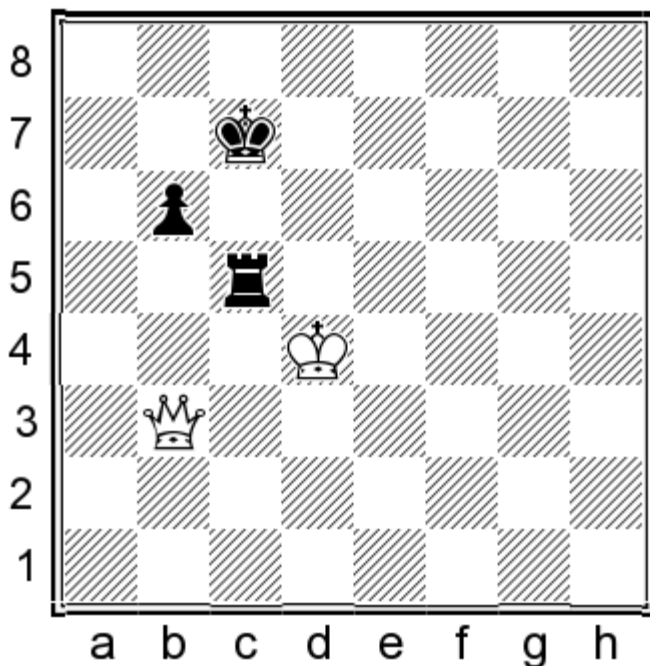
A draw still can be achieved when the knight pawn has left the 7th rank. If it is standing on the 6th rank, Black should keep his king behind it; if the pawn has reached the 4th or 5th rank; the king may be placed in front of it as well.

The main difference in these positions compared to those with a bishop pawn, or a central pawn, is the impossibility of queen's attacks against the king from the flank. The defensive method is similar to that with the a6-pawn.

Example 7

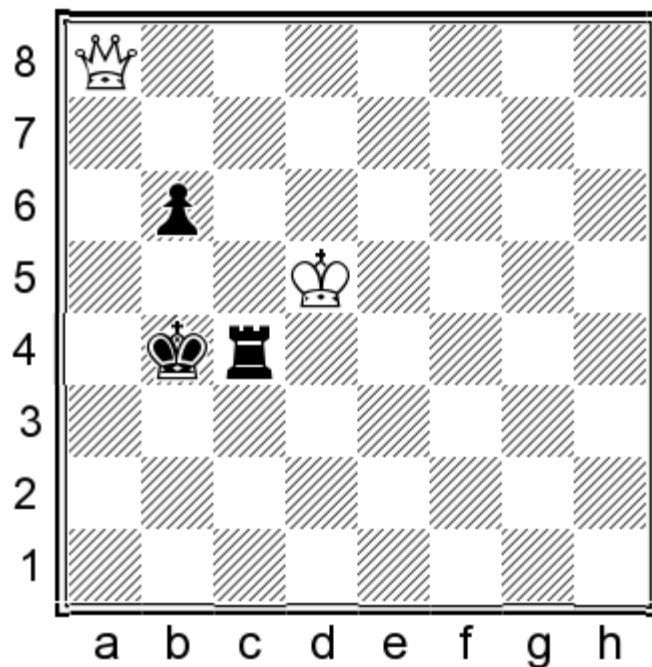
Guretzky-Cornitz Bernhard

Study 1864



1. ♖f7+ ♔b8 2. ♖e6 ♔b7 3. ♖d7+ ♔b8 4. ♔e4 ♔a8 5. ♖a4+ ♔b7 6. ♔d4! ♖c7!

Black lets the white king go ahead in order to keep his own king behind the pawn. If 6... ♖a5? 7. ♖d7+ ♔b8 8. ♖c6 ♔a7 9. ♖c7+ ♔a6 10. ♖b8 ♖c5 11. ♖a8+ ♔b5 and B.Guretzky-Cornitz evaluated this position as drawn. However, Cheron proved in 1950 that White wins, although in a very complicated way. First of all White should pass the move to Black: 12. ♖b7 ♖h5 (12... ♔a5 13. ♖a7+ ♔b5 14. ♖a8+-; 12... ♖c1 13. ♔e5 ♖d1 14. ♖f3 ♖d8 15. ♔e6 ♔a6 16. ♖a3+ ♔b5 17. ♖c3 ♔a6 18. ♔e7 ♖b8 [18... ♖d1 19. ♖a3+] 19. ♔d7 ♖b5 20. ♔c7 ♖b7+ 21. ♔c6 ♖b6+ 22. ♔c5 ♖b4 23. ♖a1+ ♔b7 24. ♖a5+-) 13. ♖e4! ♖c5 (13... ♖h6 14. ♖e2+ ♔a4 [14... ♔c6 15. ♖g2+ ♔d6 16. ♖b7+-] 15. ♔d5+-) 14. ♖a8! ♖c4+ 15. ♔d5 ♔b4



a) 16. ♖a6? b5 (a drawn position. Black achieves a draw in a similar position with the pawn on the 4th or 3rd rank but not with the pawn on the 6th rank, or with his king on b6 or b7) 17. ♖a2 ♜c5+ 18. ♔d6 ♜c8! 19. ♔d7 ♜c4 20. ♔d8 ♜c5 21. ♜b2+ ♔a4! (21... ♔c4? 22. ♔d7+-) 22. ♔d7 ♜c4= or 22...b4= (B.Guretzky-Cornitz, 1864).

b) 16. ♜f8+! ♜c5+ (16... ♔b5? 17. ♜f1+-; 16... ♔b3 17. ♜e8 ♜b4 18. ♜e1! ♔a4 19. ♔c6 ♔b3 20. ♜d2 ♔a3 21. ♜c3+ ♔a4 22. ♜d3 b5 23. ♜d1+ ♔a3 24. ♜a1+ ♔b3 25. ♔c5+-) 17. ♔e6!

b1) 17... ♔c4 18. ♔d6 ♔b4 19. ♜f2! ♔b5 20. ♜a2 ♔b4 21. ♜b2+ ♔a5 22. ♜a3+ ♔b5 23. ♔d7 ♜c4 (23... ♜h5 24. ♜b2+ ♔a5 25. ♜d2+-; 23... ♔c4 24. ♜b2 ♜b5 [24...b5 25. ♔d6 ♜d5+ 26. ♔c6 ♜c5+ 27. ♔b6 ♜d5 28. ♜c1+ ♔b4 29. ♜f4+ ♔c3 30. ♔c6+-] 25. ♜e2+ ♔c5 26. ♔c7+-) 24. ♜b3+ ♔c5 (24... ♜b4 25. ♜d5+ ♔a4 26. ♜a2+ ♔b5 27. ♔c7+-) 25. ♔c7 b5 26. ♜e3+ ♔b4+ 27. ♔b6 ♔a4 28. ♜e2+-.

b2) 17... ♔a4 18. ♜a8+! (18. ♔d6? ♜c4 and b5=) 18... ♔b4 (18... ♔b5 19. ♔d6 ♔b4 20. ♜a2 ♔b5 21. ♜a3 ♜c6+ 22. ♔d7 ♜c5 23. ♜a1! ♔b4 24. ♔d6 ♔b5 25. ♜a2 ♔b4 26. ♜b2+ ♔a5 27. ♜a3+ ♔b5 28. ♔d7+-) 19. ♜a6 b5 20. ♜d6! ♔c4 21. ♜e7! ♜d5 (21...b4 22. ♔d6 ♜a5 23. ♜c7+-) 22. ♜c7+ ♜c5 23. ♜a7! b4 24. ♔d6 ♜d5+ 25. ♔c6 ♜d4 26. ♜f7+ ♔d3 27. ♔c5 ♔e3 28. ♜b3+-.

b3) 17...b5 18. ♜e7! ♔c4 19. ♔d6 ♔b4 20. ♜e1+ ♜c3 21. ♔d5 ♔b3 22. ♜b1+ ♔a4 23. ♜a2+ ♜a3 (23... ♔b4 24. ♜b2+-) 24. ♜c2+ ♔a5 (24... ♔b4 25. ♜d2+-; 24... ♜b3 25. ♔c5 ♔a3 26. ♜g2!+-) 25. ♔c6 b4 26. ♜c5+ ♔a4 27. ♜b5+ ♔b3 28. ♔c5 ♜a4 29. ♜d3+ ♔b2 30. ♔b5+- (A.Cheron).

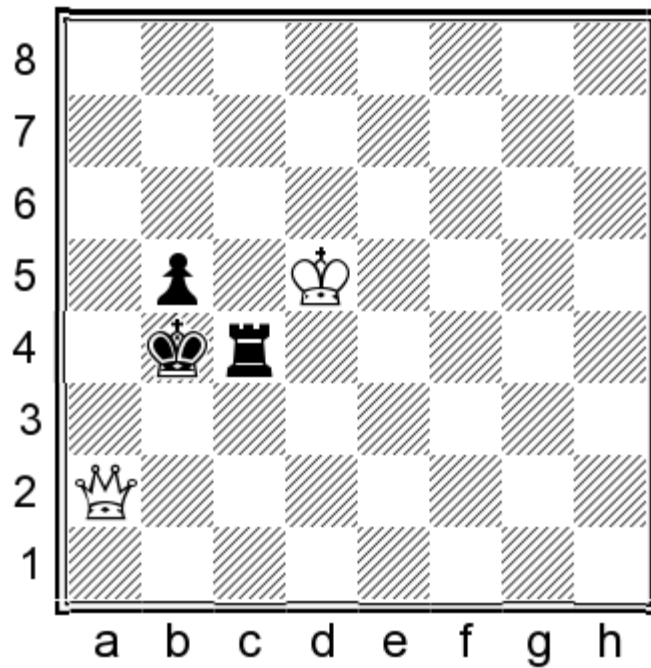
7. ♔d5 ♜c5+ 8. ♔d6 ♜c7

As V. Khenkin noted, even with the white king on d8 (while the queen is standing on e6 and the rook on c5) there is no win: unlike the case of a rook pawn (won for White), Black holds here thanks to the waiting move... ♔a7.

9. ♜b5 ♜c5 10. ♜d7+ ♔b8 11. ♜g4 ♜c7 12. ♜e2

With the idea ♜a6.

12... ♔b7! 1/2-1/2



Another important case of a draw. If shifted down or with the black king on b6, it remains drawn.

1...♞c5+ 2.♔d6 ♞c8!

The rook is safe here, as distinct from similar situations with a central pawn.

3.♔d7 ♞c4 4.♔d8 ♞c5 5.♞b2+ ♔a4!

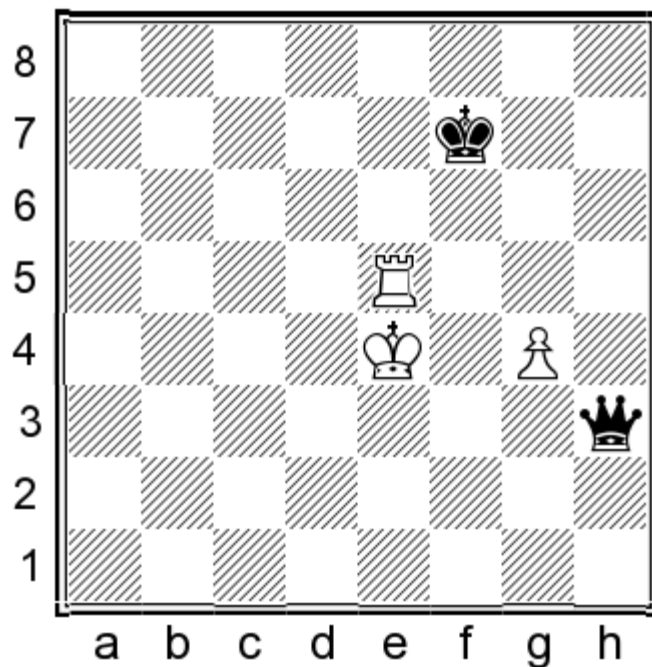
But not 5...♔c4? 6.♔d7+-.

6.♔d7 ♞c4 1/2-1/2

Or 6...b4=.

7

**Piket Jeroen
McShane Luke
Germany 1996**

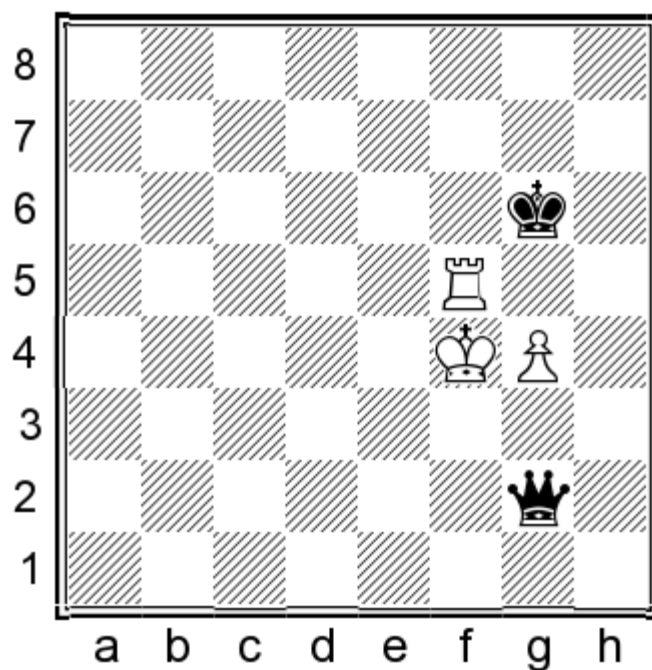


66. ♖f5+!

The only way to achieve the drawn position. 66. ♔f4? loses to 66... ♚h2+ 67. ♔f5 ♚f2+ 68. ♔e4 ♔g6, as White's king is cut off from the pawn.

66. ♖f5+! ♔g6 67. ♔f4 ♚h2+

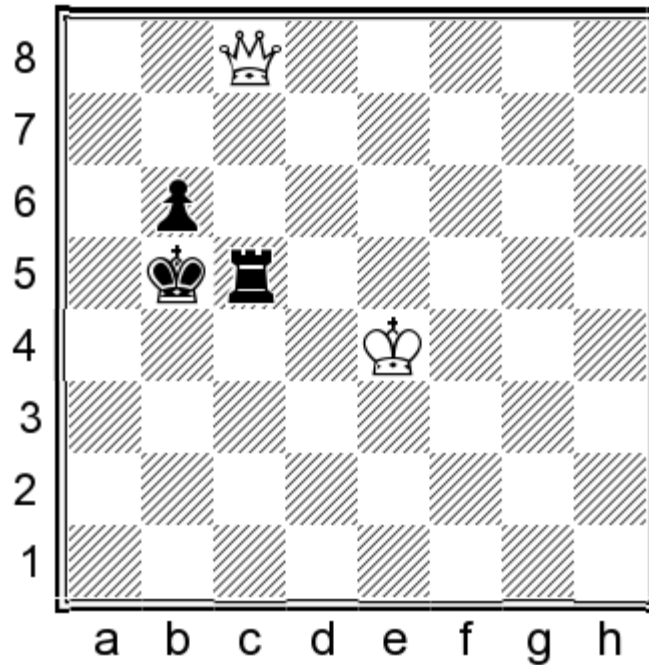
67... ♚g2 doesn't achieve much after



68. ♖g5+! ♔f6 69. ♖f5+ ♔e6 70. ♔g5!.

68. ♔f3 ♚g1 69. ♖h5 ♚f1+ 70. ♔g3 ♚e2 71. ♖f5 ♚e4 72. ♔h3 ♚e1 73. ♔g2 ♚e3 74. ♔h2 ♚e4 75. ♔g3 ♚xf5 1/2-1/2

Example 9
Cheron Andre
Study 1950



The correct method here is

1. ♖b7!

holding the black pawn on the 6th rank. After 1. ♖a8? ♔b4 White cannot prevent the B.Guretzky-Cornitz drawing position: 2. ♜f8 (2. ♜a6 ♖c4+ 3. ♔d5 b5=) 2... ♔b3 3. ♜b8 (3. ♜f3+ ♔b4 and 4... ♖c4+, 5... b5=; 3. ♔d3 ♖c3+ and 4... b5=) 3... b5 4. ♔d4 ♖c4+=.

1. ♖b7! ♖g5 2. ♜d7+

A quicker alternative is 2. ♔d4! ♖c5 (2... ♖g4+ makes White's task easier because his king crosses the 5th rank immediately: 3. ♔e5 ♖g5+ 4. ♔f6 ♖c5 5. ♔e6+-) 3. ♜a8!+- achieving a winning position (Dvoretsky).

2... ♔a6 3. ♜c8+ ♔a7

3... ♔b5 4. ♔d4 ♖c5 5. ♜a8+-.

4. ♜c7+ ♔a6 5. ♜c4+ ♔a7 6. ♜f7+ ♔a6 7. ♜f8! ♖g1

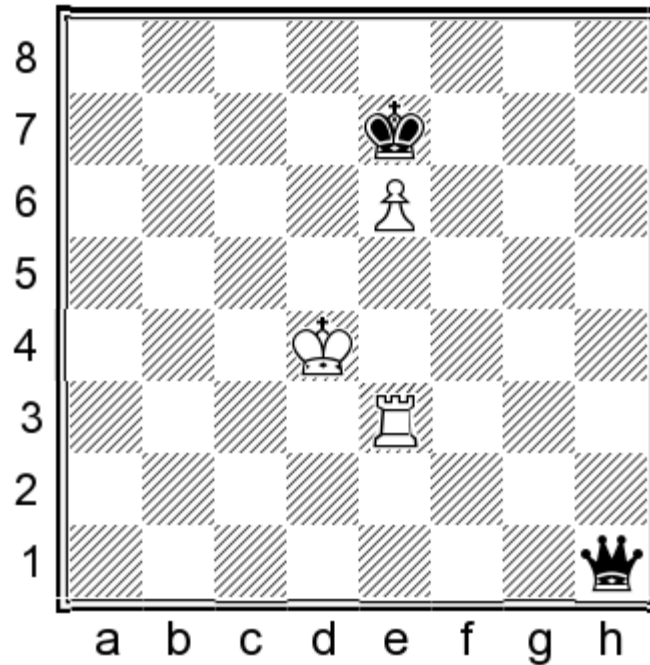
7... ♖c5 8. ♜a8+ ♔b5 9. ♔d4+-.

8. ♔d5 ♖d1+ 9. ♔c6 ♖c1+ 10. ♔d7 ♔b7 11. ♜f3+! ♔a7

11... ♔b8 12. ♜f4+.

12. ♜a3+ 1-0

Example 10
Grigoriev Nikolay



As stated previously, it is good for White to keep his king on the lower (short side) ranks here. He would have had no problems if his king was standing on e2; in such a case Black could not create a zugzwang. With White to move, a draw can be achieved by means of 1.♔d3! ♚d1+ 2.♔c3! This is an important position of reciprocal zugzwang to be remembered. After 2...♔f8 (2...♚d5 3.♔c2 is useless) 3.e7+ ♔e8 4.♞e4 ♚f3+ 5.♔d4 ♚b3 6.♞e3 ♚c2 7.♞e4, White is out of danger. However with Black on move the evaluation differs, as he manages to squeeze White's pieces out (by means of zugzwang), closer to the pawn, which means closer to the black king. The black king then joins the queen at an appropriate moment - with decisive effect.

1...♚b1! 2.♔c3

2.♔d5 ♚a2+ 3.♔e5 ♚b2+ 4.♔f4 ♚f2+ loses even faster.

2...♚d1!

The familiar zugzwang position has arisen, but this time with White on move.

3.♞e4

3.♔c4 ♚c2+ 4.♔d4 ♚d2+-+.

3...♚f3+ 4.♔d4 ♚b3! 5.♔e5

If 5.♞e3 then 5...♚c2! 6.♞e4 ♔d6! 7.♔e3 (7.e7 ♚d2+ 8.♔c4 ♚d5+-+) 7...♔d5-+. After the king move, a similar end happens on the other wing.

5...♚b2+ 6.♔f4

6.♔d5 ♚c3! 7.♞e5 ♚d3+ 8.♔c5 ♚d6+-+.

6...♚f2+ 7.♔g4

7.♔e5 ♖f6+ 8.♔d5 ♖c3!-+.

7...♗g2+ 8.♔f4 ♔f6! 9.♔e3

9.e7 ♖f2+ 10.♔g4 ♖f5+-+.

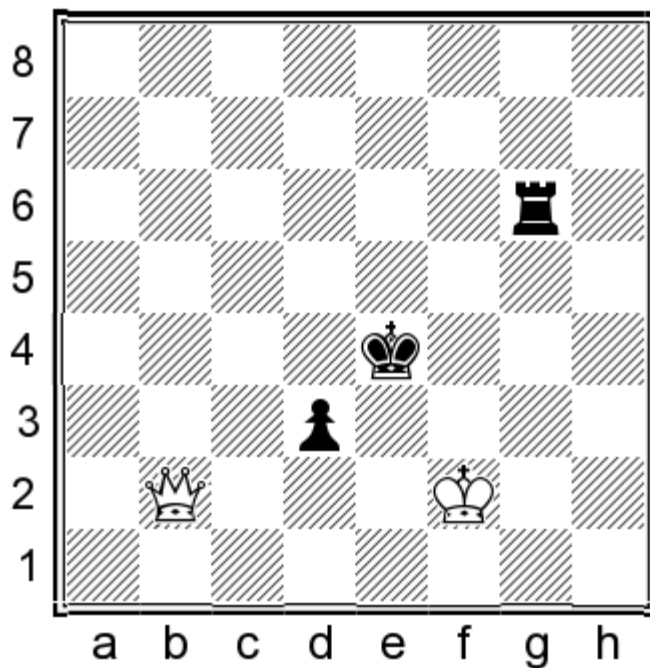
9...♔f5 0-1

8

Nakamura Hikaru

Aronian Levon

Stavanger 2015



81.♖b4+! ♔d5 82.♔e3 ♖g3+ 83.♔f4 ♖g7

83...♖h3 84.♖e4+ ♔d6 85.♖e5+ and the rook is lost.

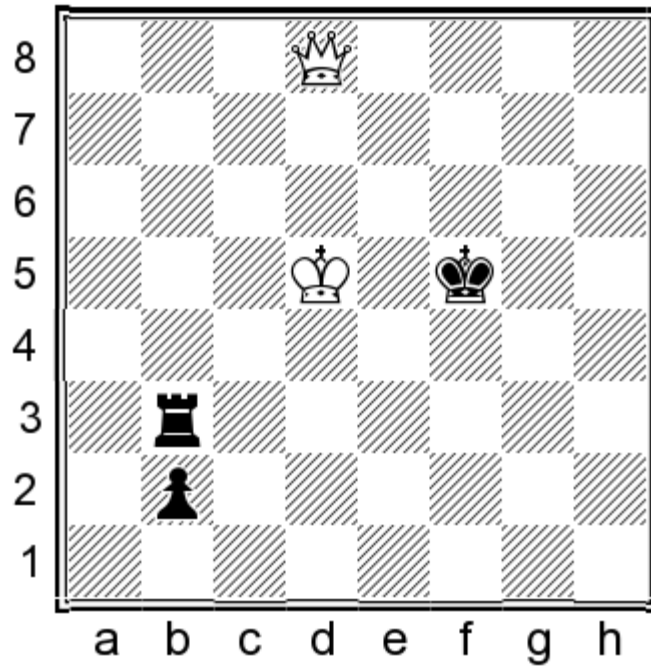
84.♖e4+ 1-0

9

Wei Yi

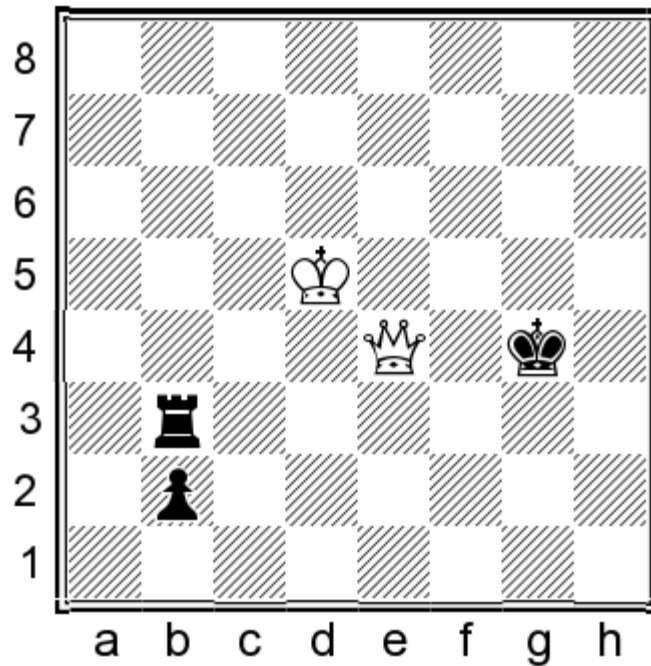
Ding Liren

Baku 2015



A scary position but the far advanced pawn shouldn't lose.

69. ♖d7+ ♔g5 70. ♜e7+ ♔g4 71. ♜e4+



71... ♔g3!

71... ♔h5? loses to 72. ♜b1 ♔h6 73. ♔c4 ♖b6 74. ♜h1+ ♔g7 75. ♜g2+.

72. ♜g6+ ♔h4?

The wrong file! 72... ♔f4 or 72... ♔f3 should draw; the black king shouldn't be driven too far away from his rook.

73.♖b1! ♗g5 74.♗c4

And now either the pawn or the rook is lost.

74...♖b8 75.♖g1+ ♗f5 76.♖c5+! ♗g4

76...♗e6 77.♖d5+ ♗e7 78.♖e5+-.

77.♖d4+ ♗f3 78.♖f6+ ♗e4 79.♖e6+ ♗f3 80.♖f5+ 1-0

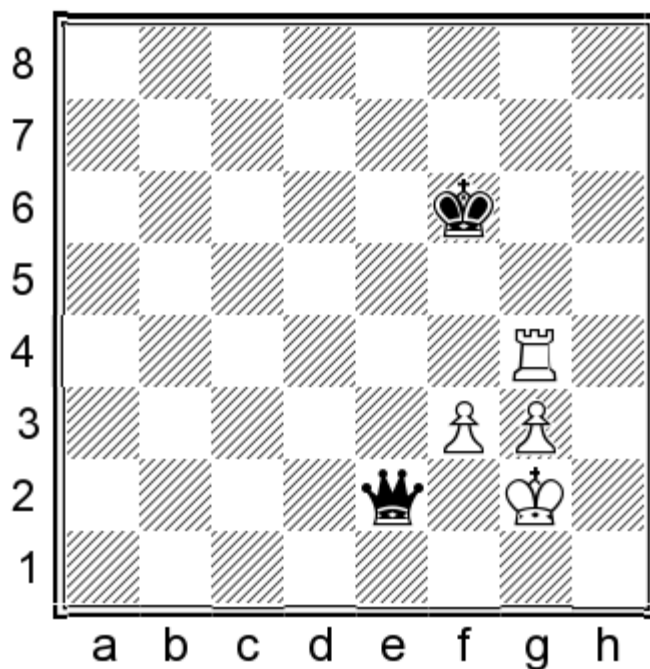
QUEEN VS ROOK & PAWNS

The queen vs rook and two pawns case is not without chances, especially if the pawns are isolated and weak and the king can assist. But in general, if the pawns are connected and healthy, then the winning chances are nearly zero.

A defensive option is to transpose to a queen vs rook & pawn ending; when there exists a theoretical draw of course. Let's examine some interesting examples:

1

Sulava Nenad
Summeraver
Virovitica 1980



A typical drawn position - the pawns are connected and healthy.

64.♔g1

64.♔h3 is good as well.

64...♕e1+ 65.♔g2 ♖e2+ 66.♔g1 ♖e3+ 67.♔g2 ♖d2+

67...♔e5? obviously loses to 68.♞e4+.

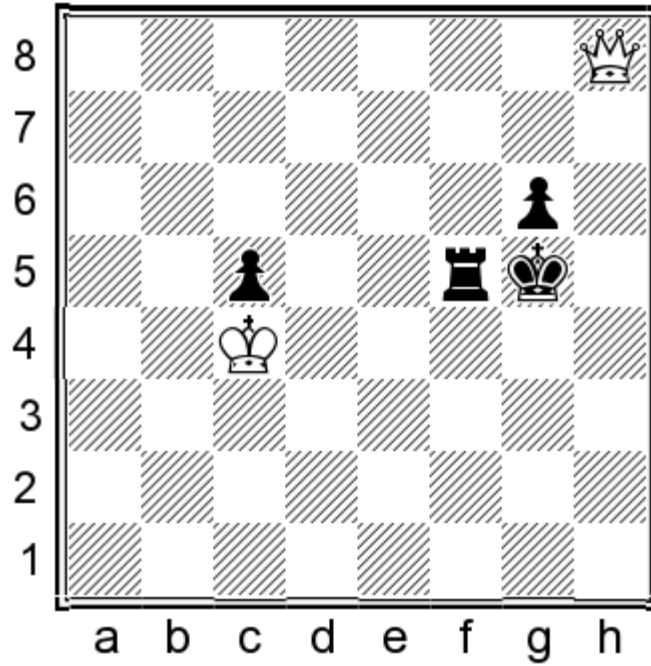
68.♔g1 ♖c1+

If now 68...♔e5 then White simply plays 69.♞f4.

69.♔g2 ♖b2+ 70.♔g1 ♖a1+ 71.♔g2 ♖a2+ 72.♔g1 ♖b1+ 73.♔g2 ♖c2+ 74.♔g1 ♖d1+ 75.♔g2 ♖e2+ 1/2-1/2

2

Gelfand Boris
Ivanchuk Vassily

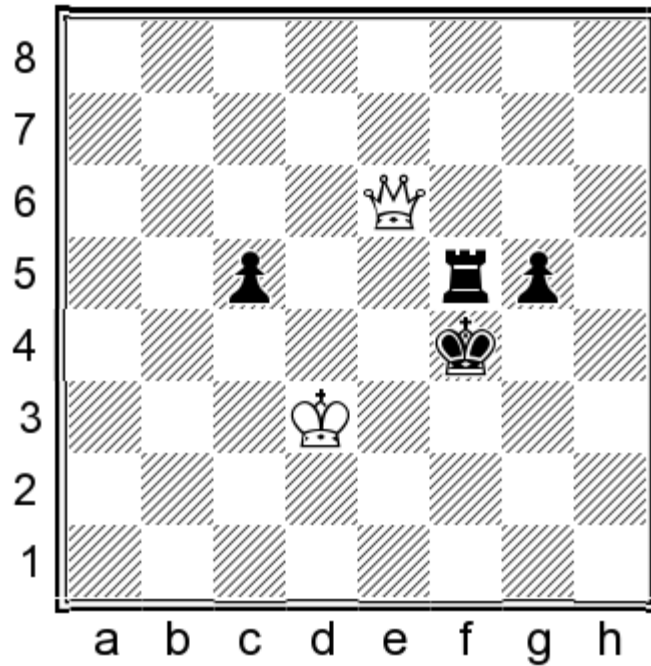


Such positions are not problematic for the 'rook' side, as the loss of the c-pawn does not (usually) affect the drawn position!

68...♔g4 69.♖h6 g5

Safer was 69...♗f4+ 70.♔xc5 g5=.

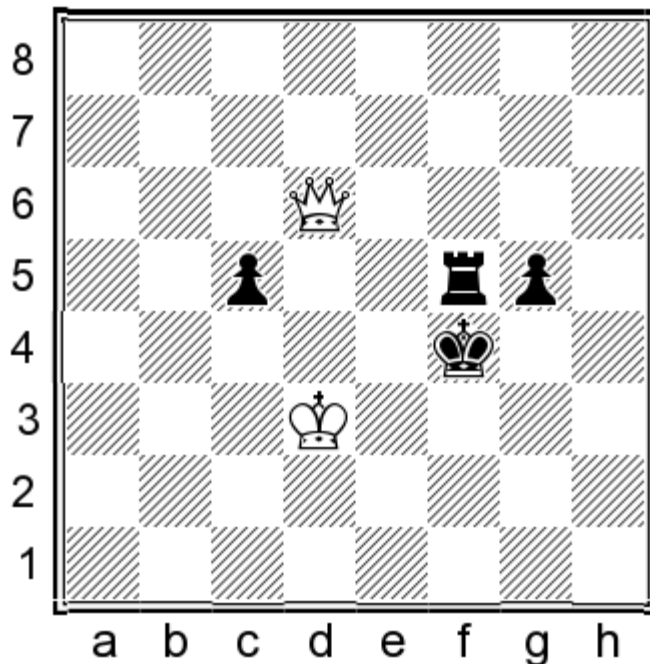
70.♖e6 ♔f4 71.♔d3!?



71...♗e5!

The only move, avoiding the point behind White's last move: 71...g4? 72.♖e3#. It is curious that 71...c4+? loses: 72.♔d4! ♖b5 73.♗d6+ and the rook is lost!

72.♗f6+ ♖f5 73.♗d6+



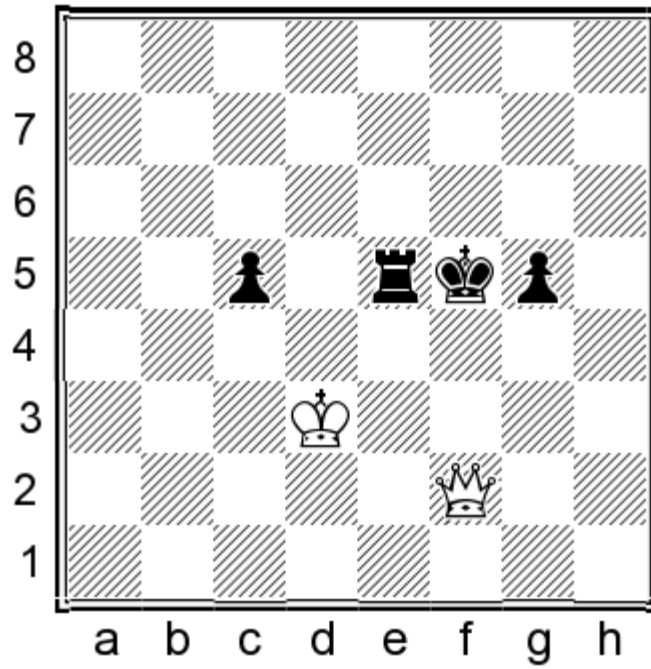
73...♞e5

73...♔f3 was good as well: 74.♗e6 (74.♗c6+ ♔g3! 75.♗g6 ♖f3+ 76.♔c4 g4=) 74...c4+! (74...♖f4? 75.♗h3+ ♔f2 76.♗h5 c4+ [76...g4 77.♗h2+ ♔f3 78.♗e2+ ♔g3 79.♗e5 ♔f3 80.♗e3+-] 77.♔d2! c3+ 78.♔xc3 g4 79.♗h2+ ♔f3 80.♔d2+-) 75.♗xc4 ♖f4=.

74.♗f6+ ♖f5 75.♗h6 ♞e5

Black can also go for 75...♞d5+ 76.♔e2!? ♞d4!= or 75...♔g3 76.♗d6+ (76.♗h5 ♖f3+ 77.♔e2 g4 78.♗xc5 ♔h3=) 76...♖f4 77.♗xc5 ♖f3+ 78.♔e4 g4= but not for 75...♔f3? 76.♗h3+ ♔f4 77.♗e3+ ♔g4 78.♗e6+-.

76.♗h2+ ♔f5 77.♗f2+



77...♔e6?

A blunder. He should opt for 77...♔g4 78.♚f6 ♜d5+ 79.♔e3 ♜d4!= or for 77...♔g6 78.♚g3 ♜d5+= preserving the king next to his pawn.

78.♚f3 ♔d6 79.♔c4 ♔e6 80.♔b5! ♜f5

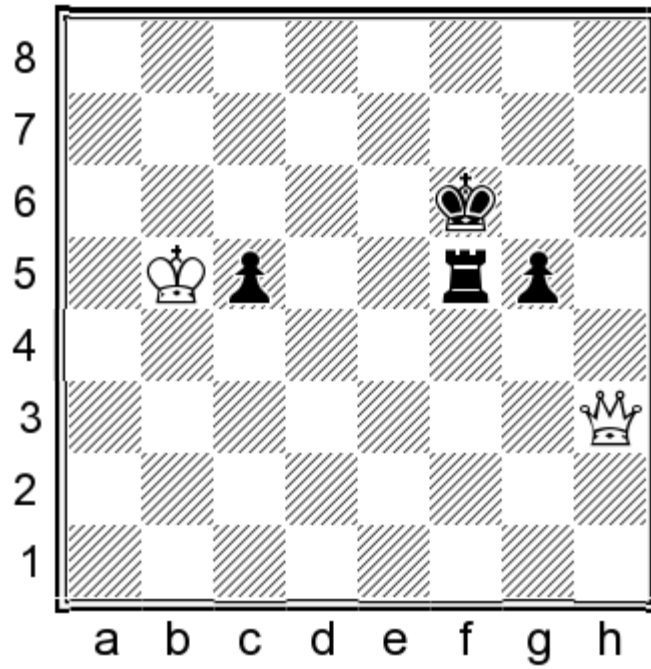
Or 80...♔d6 81.♚c6+ (81.♚f7 ♜d5?! 82.♚f6+ ♔d7 83.♚c6++-) 81...♔e7 82.♚g6+-.

81.♚h3

Although White is not playing best moves (81.♚h5!) the win is still in sight.

81...♔f6

81...♔e5 82.♔xc5 ♔f4+ 83.♔d4+-.



82. ♖h6+! ♔f7

After the more stubborn 82... ♔e5 83. ♔xc5 some beautiful variations follow:

a) 83... ♔f4+ 84. ♔d6! (84. ♔d4? ♔g3! 85. ♔e3 ♖f3+ 86. ♔e2 g4=) 84... ♔g4 85. ♖e6! ♔f4 86. ♖d7 ♔g4 87. ♔e7 ♔f4 88. ♔e6 ♔g4 89. ♖d1+ ♖f3 90. ♔e5 ♔g3 91. ♖g1+ ♔h4 92. ♖h2+ ♔g4 93. ♖g2+ ♖g3 94. ♖e4+ ♔h3 95. ♖e2! g4 96. ♔f4 ♖f3+ 97. ♔g5! ♖g3 98. ♖f2 ♖f3 99. ♖h4+--.

b) 83... ♔e4+ 84. ♔d6 g4 85. ♖g6 ♔f4 86. ♔e6 ♖e5+ 87. ♔f6 ♖a5 (87... ♖e3 88. ♖f5+ ♔g3 89. ♔g5+-) 88. ♖d3+-.

c) 83... g4 84. ♖h4 ♔e4+ 85. ♔d6 ♔f3 86. ♔e6! ♖f4 87. ♔e5 ♖e4+ 88. ♔f5 ♖f4+ 89. ♔g5+-.

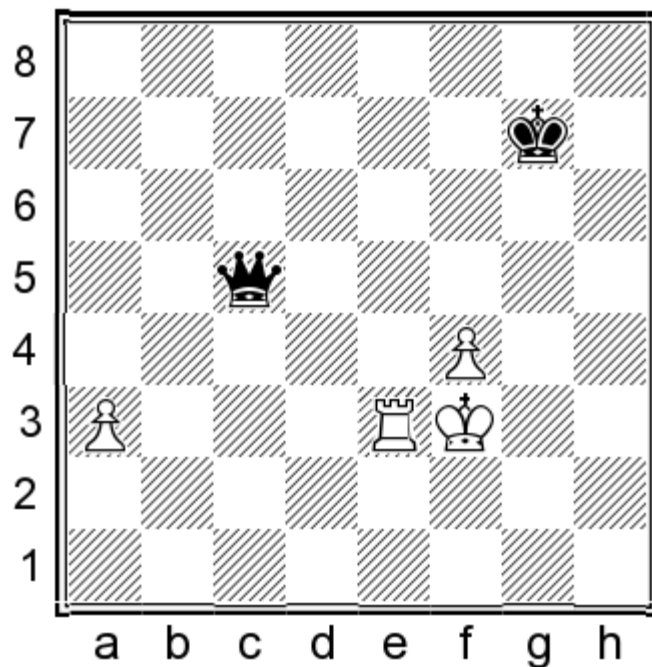
83. ♔c4 ♖e5 84. ♔d3 ♔e7 85. ♖g6 ♖d5+ 86. ♔e4 ♖d4+ 87. ♔e5 ♔d7 88. ♖b6 ♖f4 89. ♖e6+ ♔c7 90. ♖d6+ ♔c8 91. ♖xc5+ ♔d7 92. ♖d6+ ♔c8 93. ♖g6 1-0

3

Anand Viswanathan

Gelfand Boris

Moscow 2009



Here the pawns are isolated and far away from each other, so it is not a surprise that the position is lost!

79.a4 ♔f6 80.♞e5

White is not able to protect both of his pawns: 80.♞e4 ♜c6 81.♔e3 ♜c3+ 82.♔e2 ♔f5-+.

80...♜a3+ 81.♔g4 ♜xa4 1/2-1/2

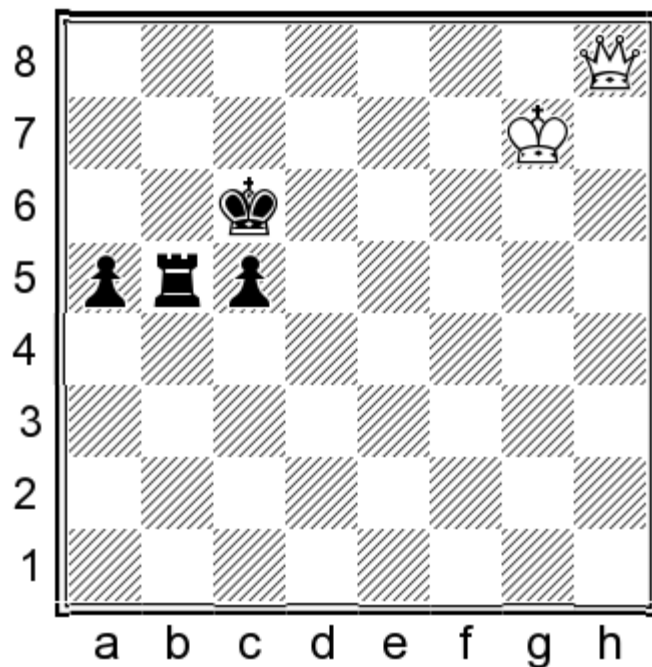
And although this is a winning version of queen vs rook & pawn, the game was actually drawn after 128 moves — keep in mind that this was a blitz game!

4

Ponomariov Ruslan

Ivanchuk Vassily

Dagomys 2010



Things don't look so bad for Black as his two pawns aren't very far separated whereas the white king is distant. Still, White can prevail.

65. ♖e8+ ♔b6 66. ♕d8+ ♔c6 67. ♔f6 ♖b4

67...a4 is not of a help as well: 68. ♔e5 a3 (68...♖b4 69. ♕a5 ♖d4 70. ♕a6+ ♔c7 71. ♕b5+-) 69. ♕a8++-.

68. ♕xa5 ♖d4 69. ♕a6+ ♔c7

69...♔d5 70. ♕e6#.

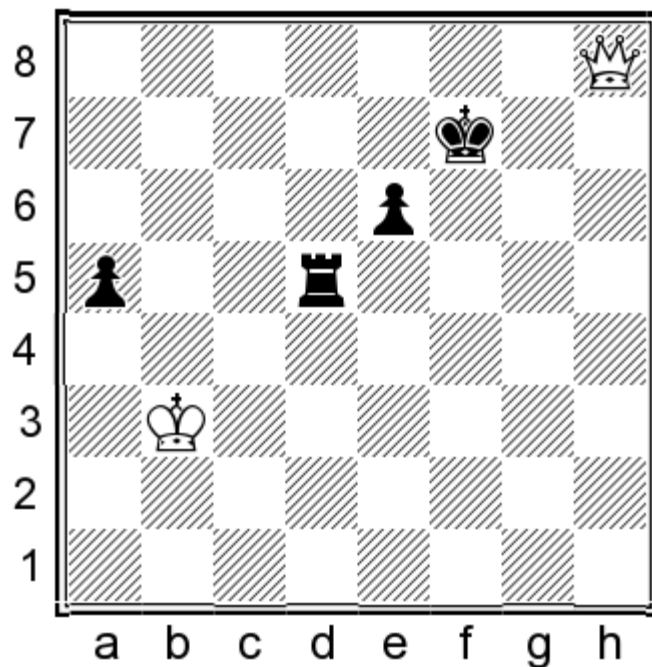
70. ♔e6 ♖g4 71. ♕d6+ ♔b7 72. ♕xc5

Both pawns were lost in no time!

72...♖g6+ 73. ♔f7 ♖c6 74. ♕b5+ ♖b6 75. ♕d7+ ♔a6 76. ♕a4+ ♔b7 77. ♔e7 ♔b8 78. ♔d7 ♖b7+ 79. ♔d8 ♖b6 80. ♕d7 ♔a8 81. ♕d5+ ♔b8 82. ♕c5 ♖h6 83. ♕e5+ ♔a8 84. ♕e4+ ♔a7 85. ♕e3+ ♖b6 86. ♔c7 1-0

5

**Svidler Peter
Howell David
Amsterdam 2010**



Obviously White wants to force Black to push one of his pawns, win it and then deal with the other.

62.♔c4 ♖f5 63.♔d4 ♖d5+ 64.♔e4 ♖f5 65.♜h7+ ♔e8 66.♜g7 ♖d5 67.♜f6 ♔d7 68.♜f7+ ♔d6 69.♜e8! ♖e5+ 70.♔f4 ♖f5+ 71.♔g4 ♔e5

Black's alternatives don't work either: 71...♖d5 72.♜d8+ ♔e5 (72...♔c6 73.♜e7!+-) 73.♜e7 ♖d4+ (73...♖b5 74.♜g5+) 74.♔g5 ♖d5 75.♜c7+ ♔d4+ 76.♔f6 e5 77.♔e6 ♖b5 78.♜c2+-, as the pawns will fall shortly.

72.♜d8 a4

Desperation! After 72...♔e4 White wins with 73.♜c7 ♖d5 74.♜c4+ ♔e3 (74...♔e5 75.♜f4#) 75.♜c3+ ♔e4 76.♜e1+-.

73.♜a5+ ♔f6 74.♜xa4 1-0

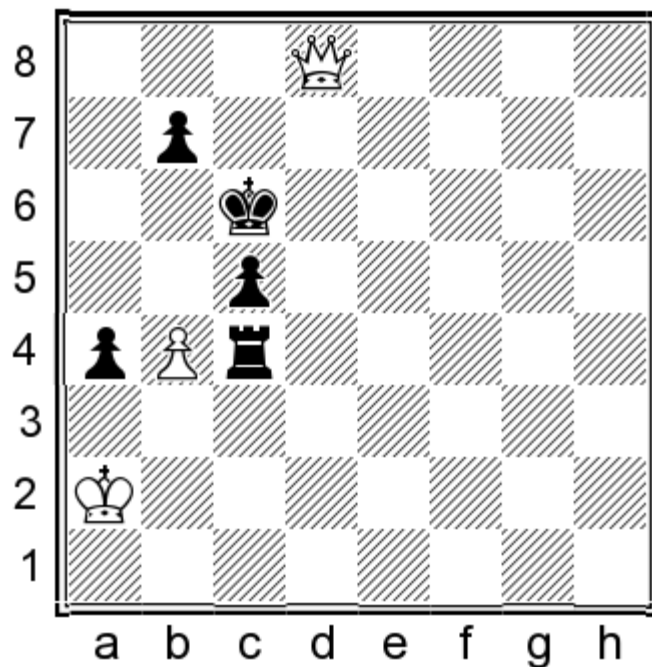
And White won on the 107th move.

6

Smirin Ilia

Nevednichy Vladislav

Turin 2006



71.b5+!

Black seems well-set to hold but not after White's text move! If 71.bxc5? ♖xc5 72.♔a3 ♜b5! (72...b5? and 72...♞d5? lose) 73.♔xa4 ♞c5 we have reached a theoretically- drawn position.

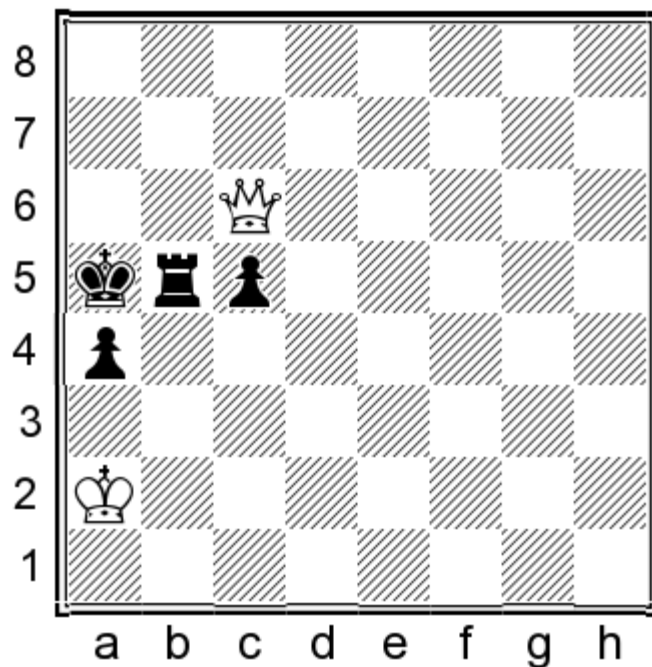
71.b5+! ♔xb5 72.♞d3! ♔b4

72...b6 73.♔a3+-.

73.♞b1+ ♔a5 74.♞xb7

White exchanged the b-pawns, destroying Black's potential survival hopes.

74...♞b4 75.♞c6 ♞b5



76. ♖d6! ♔b4

76...c4 77. ♖d4 ♔b4 78. ♖d2+ ♔c5 79. ♔a3+–.

77. ♔b2 ♔c4+ 78. ♔a3 ♚b4 79. ♖d7 ♔c3 80. ♖d5 ♚c4

Black is fighting to keep his pawns but it is in vain.

81. ♖d1 ♚b4 82. ♖d5 ♚c4 83. ♖d6

Or 83. ♖f5 ♔d4 84. ♖d7+ ♔c3 (84...♔e5 85. ♖c6 ♔d4 86. ♖d6+ ♔e4 87. ♔b2!+–) 85. ♖d5 and it is Black to move!

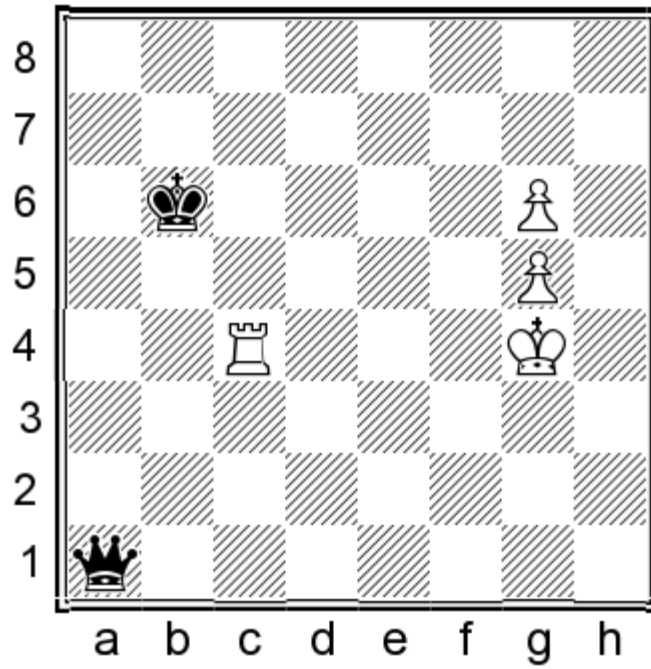
83...♔c2 84. ♖d7 ♔c3 85. ♖d5! ♚d4 86. ♖xc5+ ♔d3 87. ♔b2 ♚c4 88. ♖d5+ ♚d4 89. ♖f3+ ♔c4 90. ♔c2 ♔c5 91. ♖e3 ♔c4 92. ♖e6+ ♔b4 93. ♖b6+ ♔c4 94. ♖a5 1-0

7

Khomeriki Nino

Melia Salome

Tbilisi 2016



The doubled pawns are not so bad here - White can save the draw.

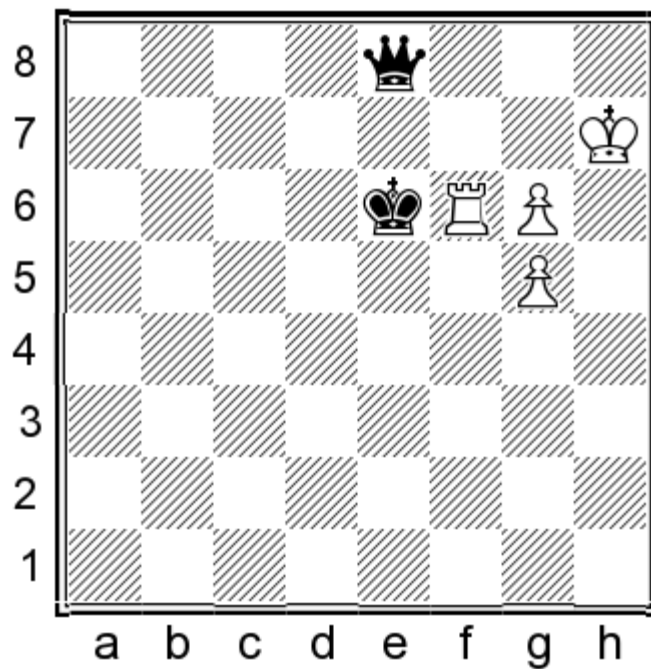
79...♖d1+ 80.♔h4 ♜h1+ 81.♔g4 ♜d1+ 82.♔h4 ♜h1+ 83.♔g4 ♜g2+ 84.♔h5!

Now 84.♔h4? loses to 84...♜h2+ 85.♔g4 ♜e2+.

84...♜e2+ 85.♞g4 ♜e8 86.♞f4 ♔c5

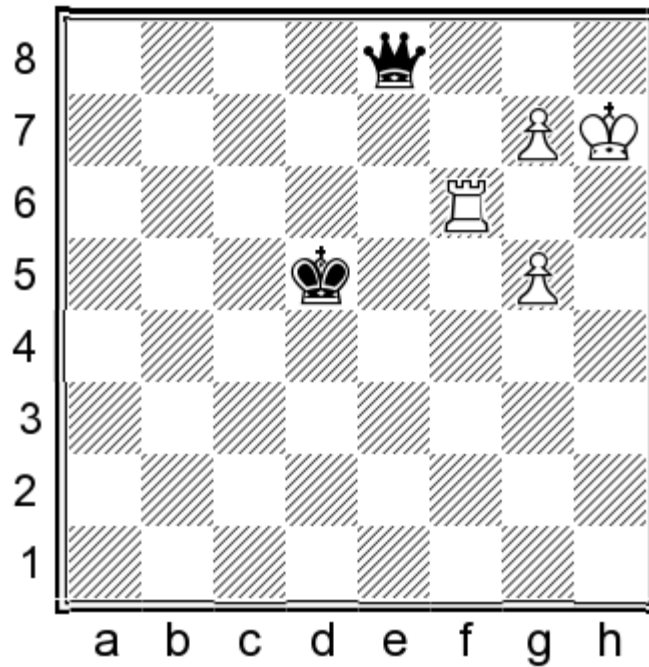
Black feels safe and gives it a last try to win with the natural continuation of approaching with her king.

87.♞f7 ♔d5 88.♔h6 ♔e5 89.♔h7 ♔e6 90.♞f6+



90...♔e7?

90...♔e5? 91.g7 ♖h5+ 92.♖h6 loses as well, but Black could hold the draw with 90...♔d5 91.g7



91...♖e4+ 92.♔h8 ♖h1+ 93.♖h6 ♖a1= or 90...♔d7 91.g7 ♖e4+ 92.♔h8 ♖h4+ 93.♖h6 ♖xg5 94.g8=♖ ♖xh6+ 95.♖h7+ ♖xh7+ 96.♔xh7.

91.g7 ♖h5+ 92.♖h6 ♖f7 93.♔h8 1-0

And Black resigned!

Queen vs rook & three pawns or more can be a scary case but you should never underestimate the power of the lady!

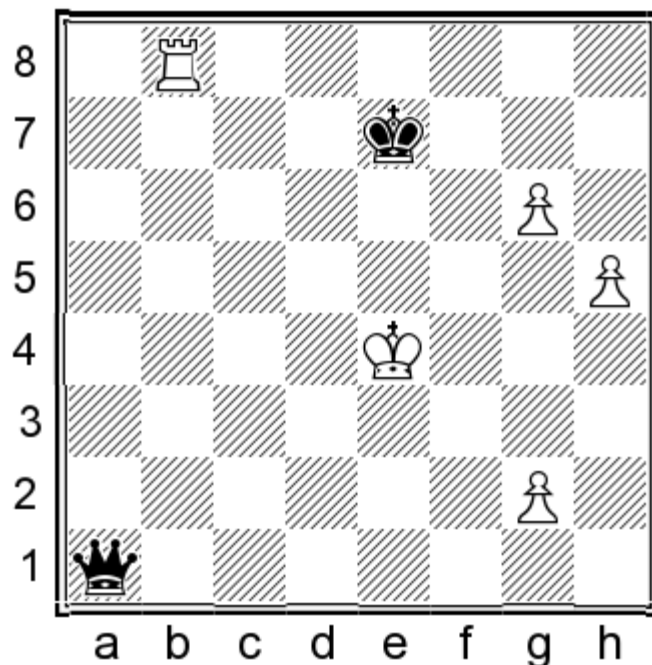
In general the 'rook' side should be safe but some exceptions can occur when the rook is far away and can be lost.

8

Anand Viswanathan

Nakamura Hikaru

London 2012



White seems to be OK, but the far-off rook is a disadvantage.

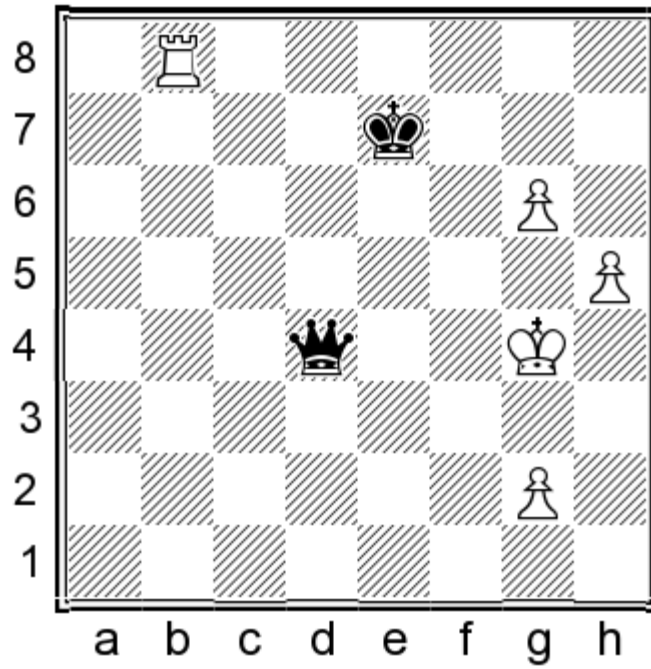
57...♖e1+?

Black could cash the full point by 57...♖a4+! 58.♔e5 (58.♔d3 ♖d7+ 59.♔e3 ♖e6+ 60.♔f3 ♖f5+ 61.♔g3 ♖e5+-+; 58.♔f5 ♖c2+ 59.♔g5 ♖d2+ 60.♔f5 ♖d5+-+) 58...♖a6! (58...♖c6! 59.♖b1 [59.g7 ♖d6+-+; 59.♖b2 ♖f6+-+] 59...♖c3+ 60.♔f4 ♖d2+ 61.♔f5 ♖c2+-+) 59.♖b1 ♖e2+-+.

57...♖e1+? 58.♔f3 ♖c3+?

After this move the tragedy is complete and the point was split. White could still have won with the exact check: 58...♖d1+! 59.♔e3 (59.♔g3 ♖d6+-+) 59...♖c1+ 60.♔d3 (60.♔f3 ♖c6+ 61.♔e3 ♖e6+ 62.♔f3 ♖f5+ 63.♔e3 ♖e5+-+) 60...♖f1+ 61.♔e3 ♖xg2 62.♖b5 and now both 62...♔d6 63.♖f5 ♖g3+ 64.♖f3 ♖h4! (64...♖g5+? 65.♔f2 ♖xh5 66.♖g3=) 65.♖f5 ♖e1+ 66.♔f3 ♔e6 67.♖g5 ♖f1+ 68.♔g3 ♔f6-+ and 62...♖c6 63.g7 ♔f7 64.♖g5 ♖c1+-+ will do the job.

59.♔g4! ♖d4+



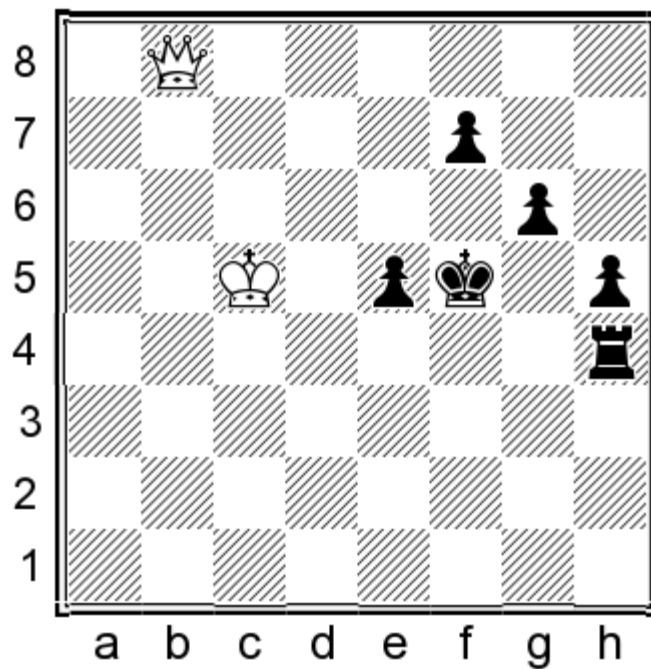
60. ♔h3! ♚d3+

White could have built up a well-known fortress after 60... ♚e3+ 61.g3 ♚e5 62.♖b7+ ♔f6 63.g7! ♚xh5+ 64.♔g2 ♚d5+ 65.♔f2 ♔g6 66.g8=♚+ ♚xg8 67.♖b4 ♚f7+ 68.♖f4=

61. ♔h4 ♚e4+ 62.g4 ♚e1+ 63.♔h3 ♚e3+ 64.♔h4 ♚e1+ 65.♔h3 ♚e3+ 1/2-1/2

9

Harikrishna Pentala
Bluebaum Matthias
Berlin 2015



A fascinating and scary position! But the queen is a strong piece!

66. ♖c8+

The right policy is to involve the king (now or after the check) into the attack of the pawns and this should be done from behind: 66. ♔d6! f6 67. ♕e7 ♖f4 68. ♗d6 ♕g5 69. ♗d2 h4 70. ♕f7 h3 71. ♗e1 ♕g4 72. ♗g1+=.

66. ♖c8+ ♕f4?!

Black overestimates his position! Safe was 66... ♕g5! 67. ♔d6 f6 68. ♕e6=.

67. ♗d8

67. ♗e8 ♖g4 68. ♗xf7+ ♕g5 69. ♔d5 ♖f4 70. ♗e7+ ♕h6 71. ♕xe5 ♖f5+ is a well-known drawn position.

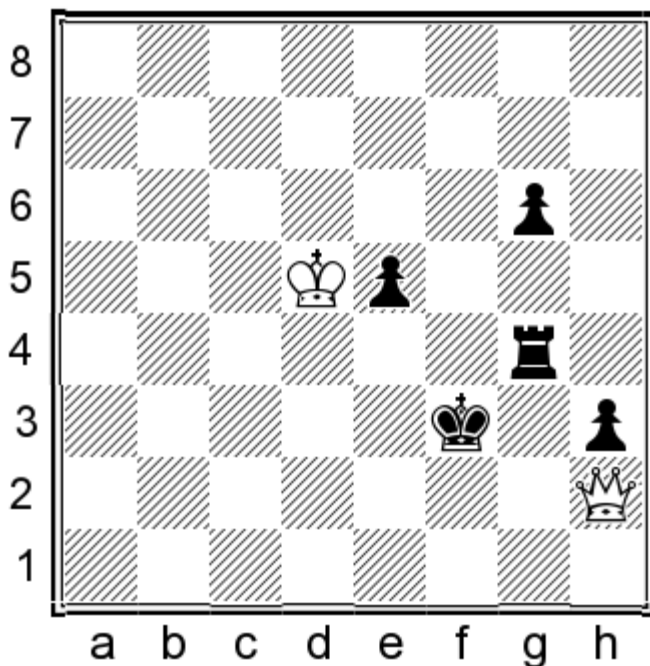
67... ♖g4 68. ♗f6+ ♕g3 69. ♗xf7

And one of the pawns is gone...

69... h4 70. ♗b3+ ♕g2 71. ♗c2+ ♕f3 72. ♗d1+ ♕g3 73. ♗g1+ ♕f3 74. ♗f1+ ♕g3 75. ♗g1+ ♕f3 76. ♗h1+ ♕g3 77. ♔d5

After some 'test' checks it is time for the white king to approach.

77... h3 78. ♗g1+ ♕f3 79. ♗h2



79... ♖h4?

I have the feeling that Black was trying to win but this is a losing blunder. He ought to have opted for 79... ♖g3! 80. ♕xe5 g5 (80... ♕g4? 81. ♗e2+ ♕h4 82. ♗f2 g5 [82... ♕g4 83. ♗f4+] 83. ♕f5 g4 84. ♕g6 h2 85. ♗xh2+ ♖h3 86. ♗f2+ ♖g3 87. ♗e1!) 81. ♕f5 g4=.

80. ♕xe5 g5 81. ♕f5 g4 82. ♗h1+ ♕f2 83. ♗h2+ ♕f3 84. ♗f4+! ♕g2 85. ♗d2+ ♕f3 86. ♗d3+ ♕f2 87. ♗d2+ ♕f3 88. ♗f4+

♔g2 89.♖e4+! ♔f2 90.♔g5!

And the poor rook is trapped!

90...♖h8 91.♖d4+ ♔g2 92.♖b2+ ♔g1 93.♖xh8 h2 94.♖a1+

Nice is 94.♔xg4 h1=♖ 95.♖d4+ ♔f1 96.♖d1+ ♔g2 97.♖e2+ ♔g1 98.♔g3!+-.

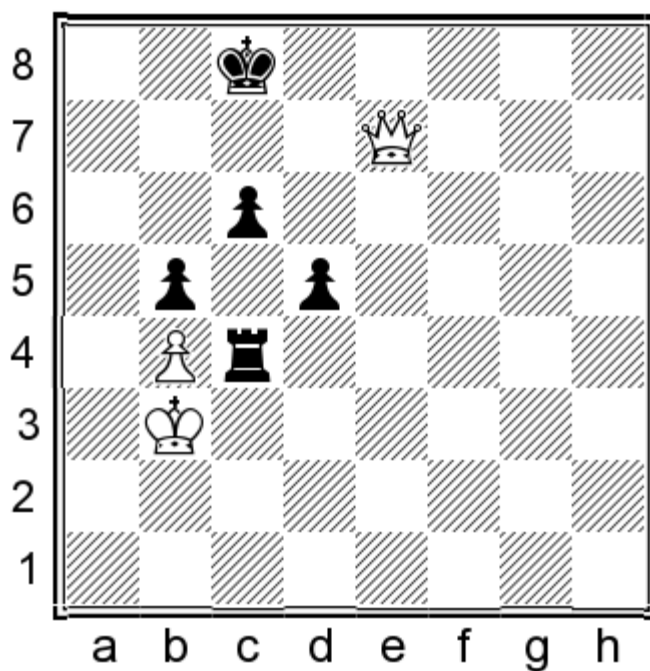
94...♔g2 95.♖b2+ ♔g1 96.♖c1+ ♔g2 97.♖d2+ ♔h3 98.♖e1 g3 99.♖f1+ g2 100.♖f3# 1-0

10

Rublevsky Sergei

Markovic Miroslav

Herceg Novi 2000



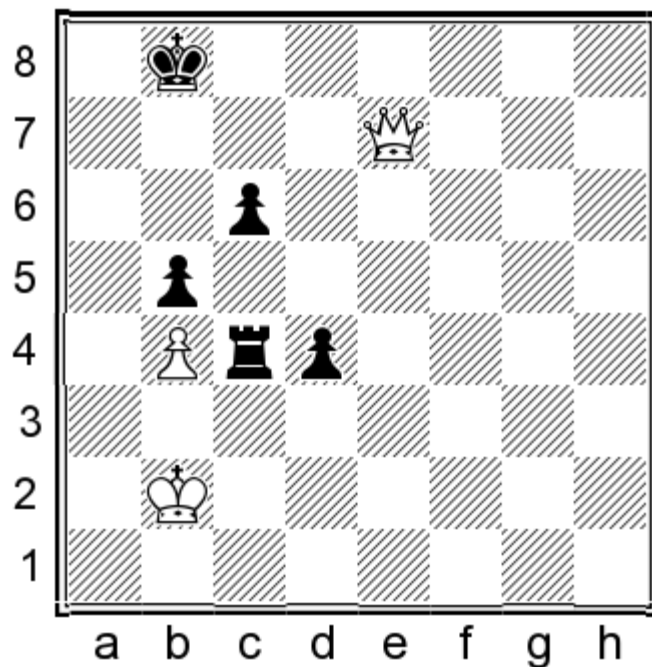
The position is drawn because White cannot neither involve his king in the battle, nor can he force the black rook to withdraw from the c-file.

64...d4?!

No need to do this - 64...♖c1 was fine.

65.♔b2! ♔b8

Or 65...♖c3 66.♖e8+ ♔c7 67.♖e5+ ♔c8 68.♖xd4 ♖c4 69.♖d6 ♔b7 70.♔b3 ♔b6 71.♖b8+ ♔a6 72.♔a3 (72.♔b2 ♖xb4+ 73.♔c3 ♖c4+=) 72...♖c3+ 73.♔b2 ♖c4 74.♔b3 ♖c1 and I do not see how White can improve with such an imprisoned king.



66. ♖d7!

Excellent! White will lose his only pawn but his king will be able to assist!

66... ♜xb4+?

And Black takes the bait! Still OK was 66... ♔a8 67. ♖c7 ♜c3 68. ♖d8+ ♔b7 69. ♖d7+ ♔a6 70. ♖xd4 ♜c4 71. ♖d6 ♔b6=.

67. ♔c2 ♜c4+ 68. ♔d3 ♜c1 69. ♔e4!

The white king is now too active!

69... d3 70. ♔e3! b4

70... ♜c4 71. ♔xd3 is a win for White - a sample variation is 71... ♜c1 72. ♔e3 ♜c4 73. ♔d2 ♔a8 74. ♖c7 ♜c5 75. ♖b6 ♜c4 76. ♔e3 ♜c1 77. ♔d4 ♜c4+ 78. ♔e5 ♜c1 79. ♔d6+-. Now Black is about to lose all his important pawns!

71. ♖d6+ ♔c8 72. ♖xb4 ♜h1 73. ♖g4+ ♔c7 74. ♔xd3 1-0

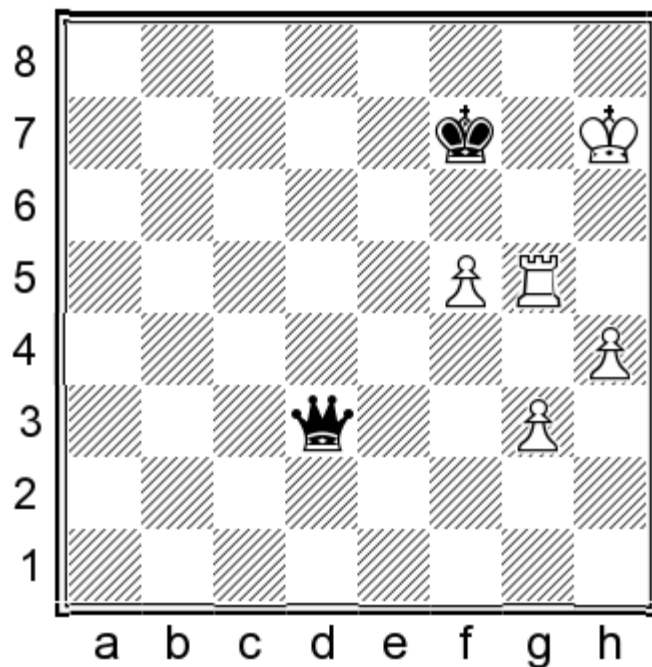
Game over - White reached a theoretically-won position and finished matters on the 120th move.

11

Pantsulaia Levan

Ter Sahakyan Samvel

Lake Sevan 2008



Black might get into trouble if he is not alert.

65...♚d4! 66.♖g6

The 'active' 66.g4? loses in no time after 66...♜f6! 67.♖g6 ♜xh4+ 68.♖h6 ♜xg4 69.♖g6 ♜xf5.

66...♜f2!

Forcing a repetition of moves.

67.♖g7+ ♔f6 68.♖g6+

68.g4 ♜xh4+ 69.♔g8 ♔e5=.

68...♔f7 69.♖g7+ ♔f6 70.♖g6+ ♔f7 1/2-1/2

70...♔xf5 71.g4+ ♔e5 72.h5=.

QUEEN & PAWNS VS ROOK & PAWNS

We will start by examining pawn vs pawn positions, which is usually a win for the 'queen' side.

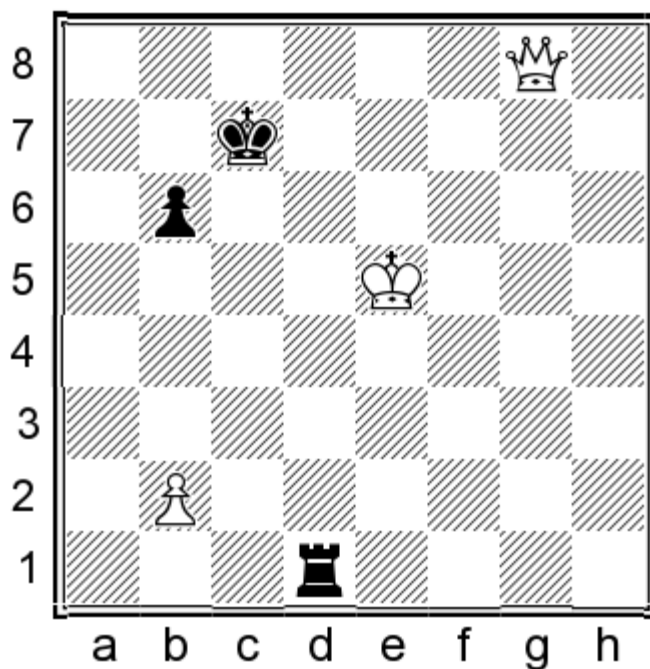
But of course exceptions do exist and we have to know them. But before that I am obliged to thank Dvoretzky, N.Grignorev, F.Dedrele and V.Khenkin for their discoveries and contributions in this (and not only this!) particular ending.

1

Caruana Fabiano

McShane Luke

London 2014



As noted, pawns on the same file makes for an easily winning case.

50...♖e1+ 51.♔d5 ♜d1+ 52.♙e4 ♞e1+ 53.♔d5 ♜d1+ 54.♙c4 ♞c1+ 55.♙b4 ♞c5 56.♚a8

56.♚f8 is good as well: 56...♔d7 57.♚xc5 bxc5+ 58.♔xc5+-.

56...♞e5 57.♙a4 ♞e1

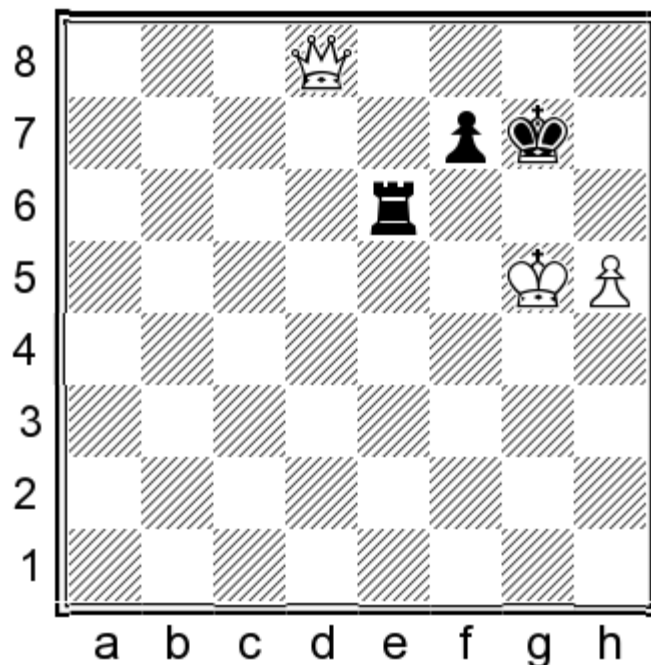
57...♞f5 58.b4 ♞e5 59.♚a7+ ♔c6 60.b5+ ♔c5 61.♚c7+-.

58.♚a7+ ♔c6 59.♚b8 ♞e4+ 60.b4 1-0

Example 1

Grigoriev Nikolay

Study 1917



From the historical point of view, N.Grigoriev did an analysis of the diagrammed position, but it was only discovered among his archives in 1954. Independently, G.Kasparian published an analysis in 1948. He did not know N.Grigoriev's conclusions and managed to discover the truth independently when he checked one of his endgame studies for its correctness. Here the rook has two safe squares, a6 and h6; therefore White cannot create a zugzwang position. The defence is rather simple: Black should not give the f8-square to the white queen and should not permit the move h6.

The evaluation of this position would be changed if the white king was standing on the 7th or the 8th rank. For example, if the king is on d7 then 1. ♖g5+ ♔h7 2.h6 wins. Neither can a draw be achieved if all the pieces are shifted to the left or downwards. As N.Grigoriev proved, Black loses if he has an additional pawn on h6. The reason is obvious: the pawn deprives the rook of its second safe square.

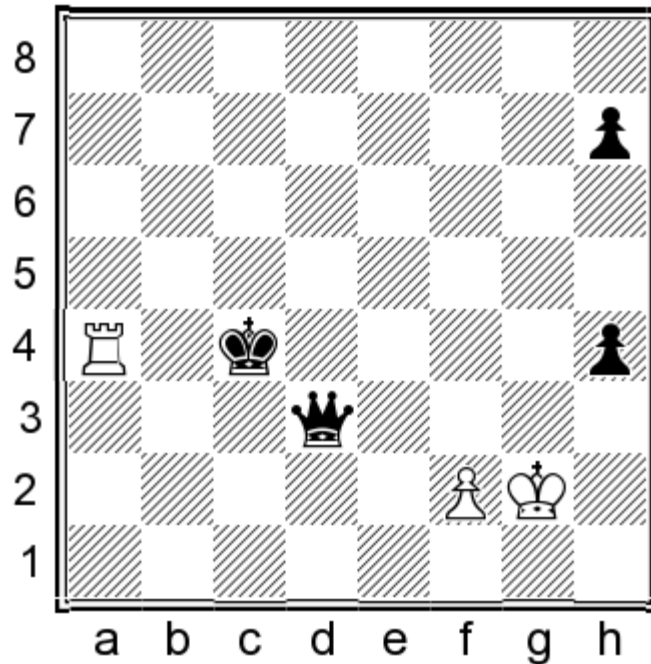
1. ♖d4+ ♔h7 2. ♜c3 ♝h6 3. ♜b4

With the deadly threat of ♜f8.

3... ♔g7! 4. ♜b3 ♝e6 5. ♜h3 ♝h6!

Preventing 6.h6+. In the event of 5... ♝c6? White wins by means of 6.h6+! ♔h7 7. ♜f5+ ♝g6+ 8. ♔h5 ♔h8. In the game Andric,D- Rogulj,B, where this position occurred (with reversed colours and wings), White played 9.h7? and Black resigned, but the position is drawn! The f7-pawn is obviously invulnerable: 9. ♜xf7? ♝g5+ or 9... ♝xh6+ and the rook becomes a desperado, but White wins rapidly by means of 9. ♜c8+! ♝g8 (9... ♔h7 10. ♜f8) 10. ♜c3+ ♔h7 11. ♜f6+-. His opponent resigned right away, although he could make White's task truly difficult by playing 9... ♝e6! (rather than 9... ♝g7? 10. ♜c8+ ♔xh7 11. ♜f8!+- or 9... ♔g7? 10. ♜xf7+! ♔xf7 11.h8=♜+-) 10. ♔g5 (10. ♜xf7? ♝h6+ 11. ♔g5 ♝g6+! 12. ♔f5 ♝g5+=) 10... ♝d6 11. ♔f4! (11. ♜c8+? ♔xh7 12. ♜f8 ♝g6+ 13. ♔f5 ♝f6+! 14. ♔g5 [14. ♔e5 ♝e6+ 15. ♔d5 ♝f6=] 14... ♝g6+ 15. ♔h5 ♝f6! [15... ♝g7? 16. ♜e8+-] 16. ♜e7 ♝h6+ 17. ♔g5 ♝g6+ 18. ♔f5 ♔g7=) 11... ♝e6 12. ♔f3 (12. ♜xf7? ♝e4+=) 12... ♝g6 13. ♔e4 ♝g7 (13... ♝e6+ 14. ♔d4 ♝g6 15. ♔d5 ♝e6 16. ♜xf7+-) 14. ♜c8+ ♔xh7 15. ♜f8 ♔g6 (15... ♝g4+ 16. ♔f5 ♝g7 17. ♜e8!+-) 16. ♔e5 ♝h7 17. ♜g8+ ♝g7 18. ♜h8!+-.

6. ♜h1 ♔h7! 1/2-1/2



Y.Averbakh, in contrast to his opponent, knew G.Kasparian's freshly-published analysis; this fact enabled him to save this hopeless position.

59...♔d5?

59...♔b3! 60.♖xh4 ♔c2-+ was an easy win.

59...♔d5? 60.♖xh4 ♔e6?

As L.Abramov demonstrated, Black could avoid Grigoriev's drawn position by playing 60...♕g6+! 61.♔h2 ♖f5 62.♔g3 ♖e5+ 63.♔f3 (63.♔g2 ♖g5+ 64.♔h3 ♖g1-+; 63.♖f4 h5 64.♔f3 ♖g5-+) 63...♕g5 64.♖h3 ♔d4 65.♖g3 ♖d5+ 66.♔g4 ♖h1-+.

61.♖h3!

Now it is only a draw.

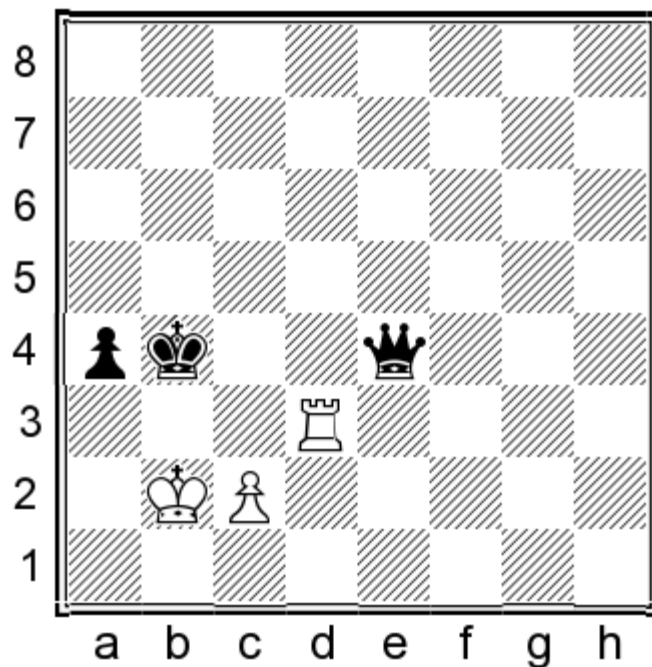
61...♖e4+ 62.♔h2 ♔f6 63.♖e3 ♖d5 64.♖g3 h5 65.♖e3 ♔g5 66.♖g3+ ♔f4 67.♖e3 h4 68.♖h3 ♖b7 69.♖e3 ♔g4 70.♖h3 ♖b1 71.♔g2! ♖h7 72.♔h2! ♖c7+ 73.♔g2 ♖c2 74.♖e3 1/2-1/2

3

Timman Jan

Nunn John

Wijk aan Zee 1982



69.♔a2?

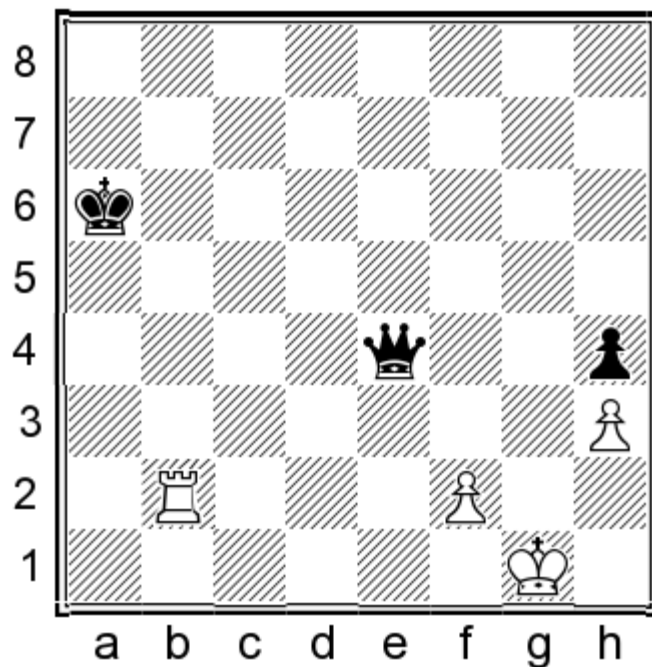
A blunder! 69.♞a3! ♛e5+ 70.♔a2 was the trivial drawing continuation.

69.♔a2? a3! 0-1

The pawn has been moved to the ideal square and White resigned due to 70.♞b3+ (70.♔b1 ♛e1+ 71.♔a2 ♛c1 72.♞b3+ ♔a4+) 70...♔c4 71.♔xa3 ♛xc2+.

4

Adly Ahmed
Salah Sayed
Egypt 2016



A theoretically won position.

67... ♖f3 68. ♜b4 ♕xh3

A bit dangerous, as now the rook has two safe squares, if it is able to reach e3 or h3 of course!

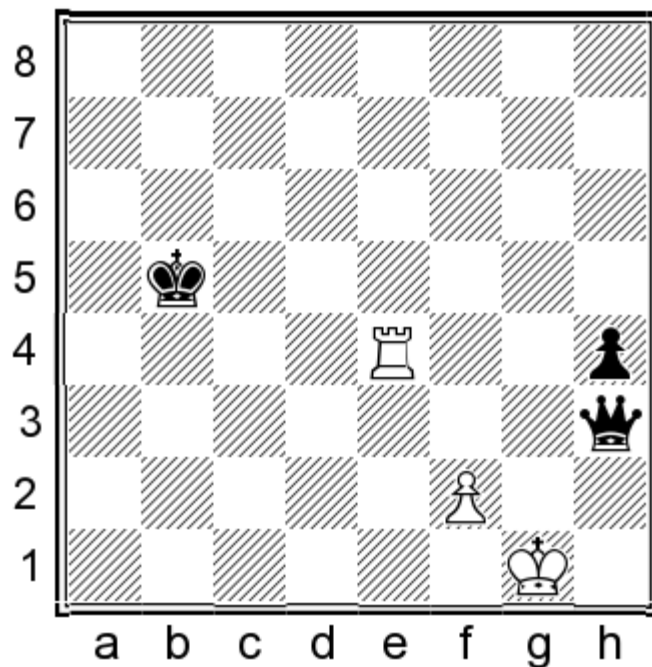
69. ♞a4+ ♔b5 70. ♞f4 ♔c5 71. ♞a4 ♔b6 72. ♞b4+ ♔a5 73. ♞e4 ♔b5?

A blunder which allows White to reach a drawn position. Black should opt for 73... ♕f5! 74. ♞e3 h3!-+.

74. ♞f4?

Returning the favour. Known is 74. ♞e3! ♕g4+ 75. ♔h2=.

74... ♔c5 75. ♞a4 ♔c6 76. ♞c4+ ♔d5 77. ♞a4 ♔c5 78. ♞f4 ♔b5 79. ♞e4



79...♚f5!

The only move as White was threatening 80.♖e3.

80.♖e3 ♜g4+?

Black seems not to know 80...h3!-+.

81.♔h2

Now it's a draw.

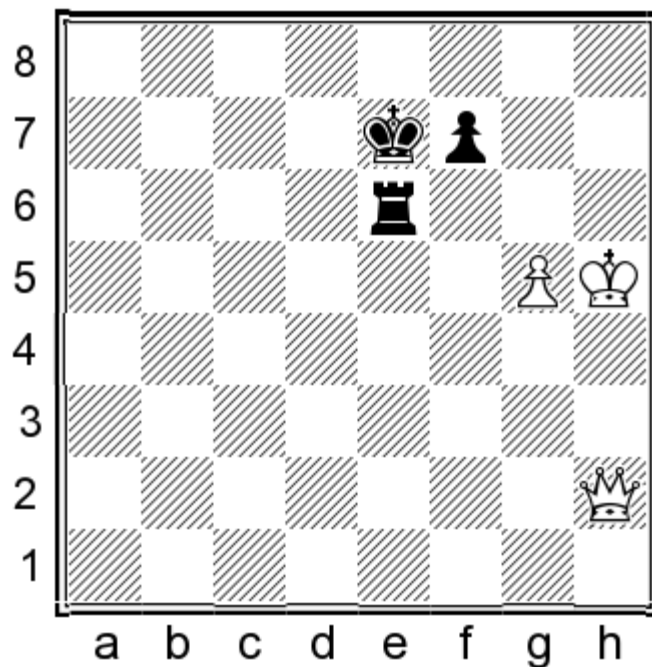
81...♔c5 82.♖c3+ ♔d5 83.♖e3 ♔d4 84.♖h3 ♔e5 85.♖e3+ ♔f5 86.♖h3 ♚f4+ 87.♔g2 ♔g4 88.♖e3 ♚d4 89.♖h3 ♚d5+ 90.♔h2 ♚c4 91.♔g2!

91.♖e3? loses to 91...♚f1.

91...♚d5+ 92.♔h2 ♚d1 93.♔g2 ♚d5+ 1/2-1/2

Almost all positions with the pawns on the same file are lost. But positions with the pawns on adjacent files are sometimes tenable, but only if the 'rook' side's pawn stands on its initial square. The following study is illuminating:

Example 2
Dedrl Frantisek
Study 1925



If Black is on move he holds by means of transferring his king to g7: 1...♔f8! 2.♔g4 ♔g7 3.♔f5 ♖g6 4.♚b2+ ♔h7 and White cannot do anything as 5.♚f6 leads to a drawn pawn endgame. If White is to move in the initial position, he wins by preparing a sacrifice of his queen for the rook.

1. ♚b8! ♖g6 2. ♚b4+ ♔e8 3. ♚e4+ ♖e6

3... ♔f8 4. ♚xg6!+-.

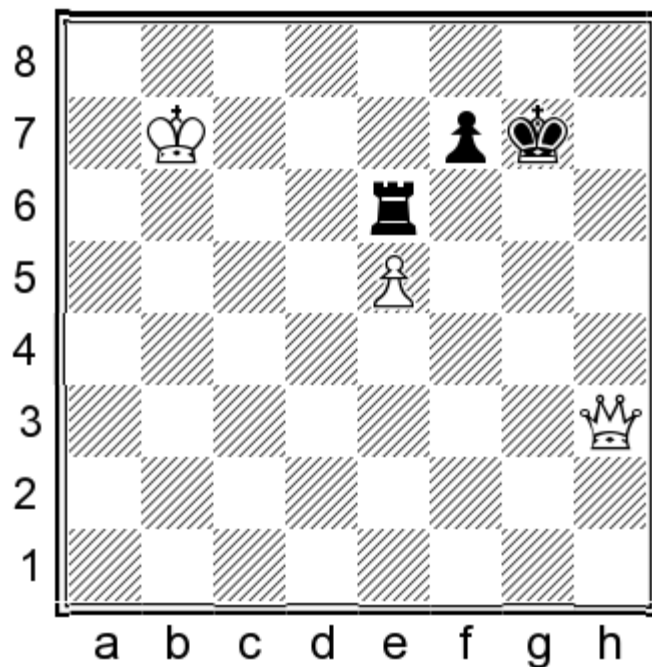
4. ♚xe6+! fxe6 5. ♔h6! 1-0

From the above study, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. An important technique of exploiting an advantage can be a queen sacrifice that results in a winning pawn endgame.
2. The 'rook' side should keep his king in front of the opponent's pawn; this can often (but by no means always!) neutralise the threat of the queen sacrifice. If the pawn stands on e5 (instead of g5) the king should stay on e7.
3. With the white king on the 7th rank, Black's position is most often lost.

5

Gonzalez Trigal Jose Luis
Alonso Bouza Julio Javier
Mondariz 2016



The central pawn is more helpful, as White wins.

67. ♖f5

Much simpler was 67. ♖xe6! fxe6 68. ♔c7+-.

67. ♖f5 ♜h6 68. ♔c7 ♜a6 69. ♖e4 ♜h6 70. ♔d7 ♜a6 71. ♖d5 ♜a3 72. ♔e8 ♜a7 73. ♖g2+

73... e6 fxe6 74. ♖d4+-.

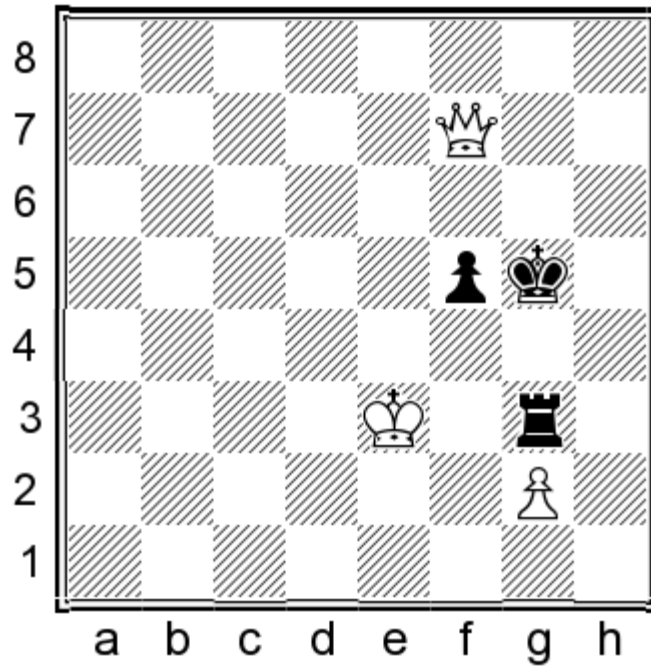
73... ♔h7 74. ♖h2+ ♔g6 75. ♖g1+ 1-0

6

Ivanchuk Vassily

Sutovsky Emil

Tsaghkadzor 2015



White is easily winning here.

55.♔d4?!

He should go for the natural 55.♔f2 ♖g4 56.♚e7+ ♔g6 57.♚e6+ ♔g5 58.g3 ♖e4 59.♚f7 ♖g4 60.♚g7+ ♔h5 61.♚f6+-.

55.♔d4?! ♖xg2 56.♚g7+ ♔f4! 57.♚h6+!

I think that White missed 57.♚xg2? with stalemate!

57...♔g4 58.♔e5 ♖e2+ 59.♔f6

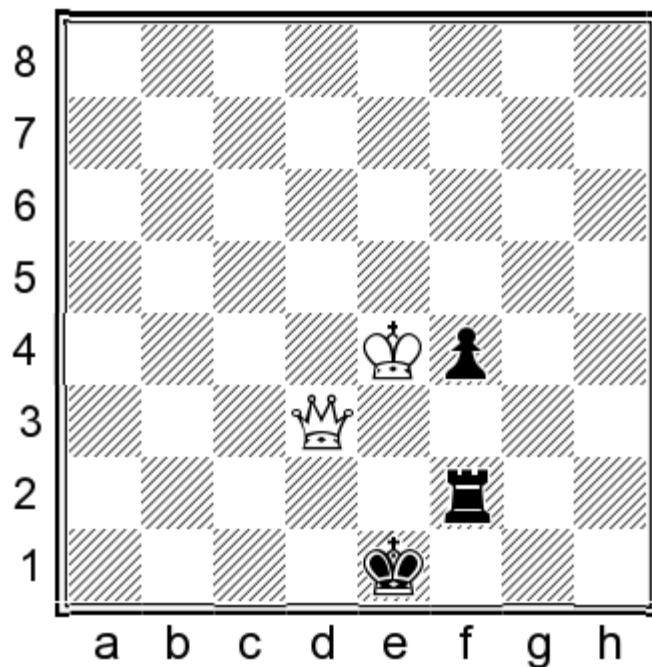
White has nevertheless achieved an ideal winning position.

59...♖f2 60.♚h1

More accurate is 60.♚g5+! ♔h3 61.♚g1! (61.♔e5? ♖f1=) 61...♖f4 62.♔e6! ♖f3 63.♔e5 ♔h4 64.♚g2 ♖g3 65.♚f2+-.

60...♖f3

60...f4 is a more stubborn try: 61.♚g1+ ♔f3 62.♔f5 ♔e2 63.♔e4 ♖f1 (63...f3 64.♔d4 ♖g2 65.♚e3+-) 64.♚d4 ♖f2 65.♚d3+ ♔e1

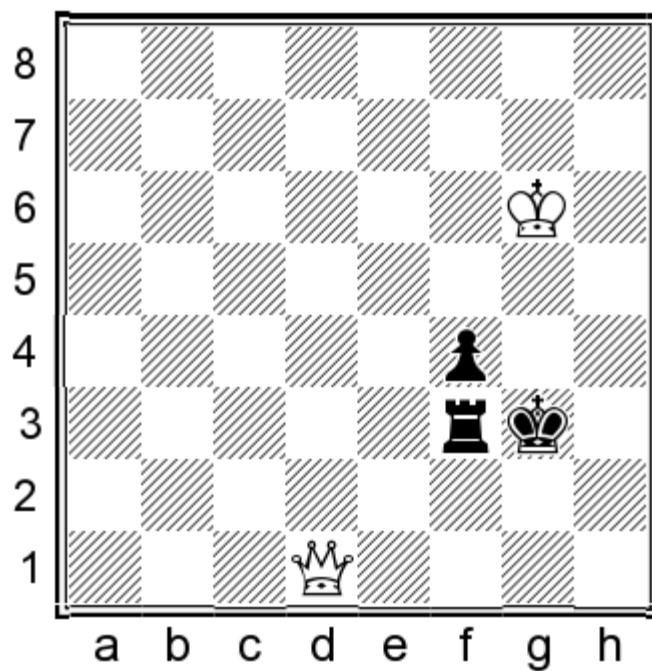


66.♔f5! ♖f1 67.♔g4 ♖f2 68.♔h3 f3 69.♚b1+ ♔e2 70.♚e4+ ♔d2 71.♔g3 ♖f1 72.♚d4+ ♔e2 73.♚c4+ ♔e1 74.♔f4+-.

61.♔g6

61.♚g1+! ♔f4 62.♚e1 ♔g4 63.♔e5+-.

61...f4 62.♚d1 ♔g3

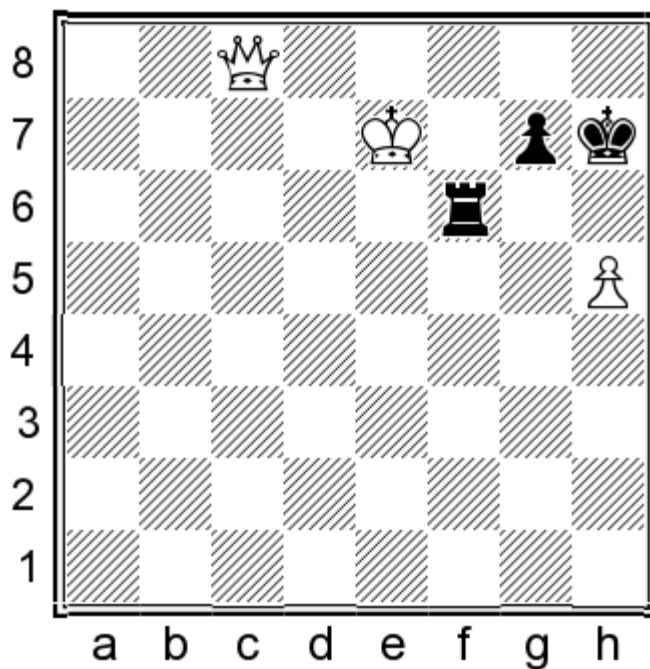


63.♚g1+!

White should be careful: 63.♚e2? ♖f2 is a drawn position!

63...♔h3 64.♕h5 ♖a3 65.♚g4+ ♕h2 66.♚xf4+ 66...♔g2 67.♔g4 ♖a2 68.♚f3+ ♕h2 69.♚g3+ ♕h1 70.♔h3 ♖f2 71.♚c3 ♖h2+ 72.♔g3 ♖g2+ 73.♕f3 ♕h2 74.♚e1 ♖g8 1-0

Example 3
Athens 2016

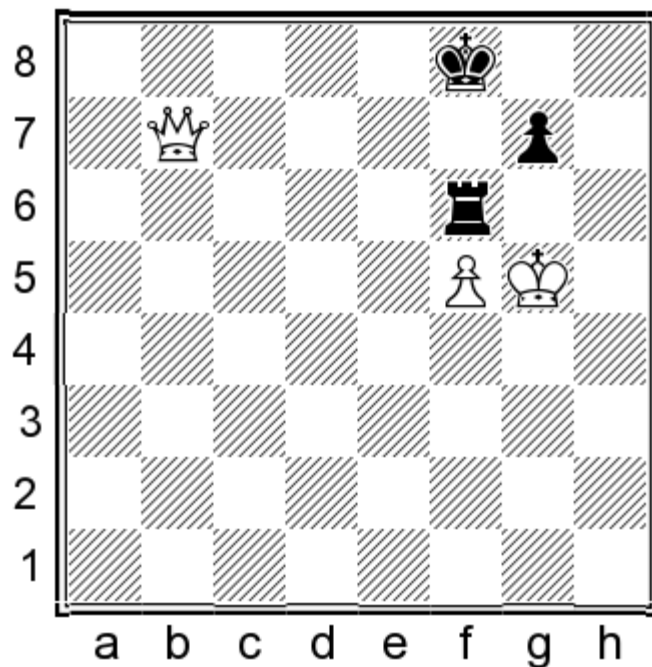


But exceptions do exist here as well! Although the white king has reached the 7th rank there is still no win. The reason is that any pawn endgame with a rook's pawn is drawn.

1. ♚c2+ ♔g8! 1/2-1/2

Rather than 1...♕h6? 2. ♚e4!+-.

Example 4
Athens 2016



Black loses in spite of the fact that his king occupies a 'regular' position in front of the pawn.

1...♖h6 2.♕d7!

If we move the entire position after 2.♕d7 to the left by one file (Black's pawn on f7, rook on g6 etc.), there is no zugzwang anymore because Black has a waiting move 2...♖h6! and therefore White cannot win.

2...♔g8

If 2...♖f6 then 3.♕d8+ ♔f7 4.♕xf6+ gxf6+ 5.♔h6 is decisive.

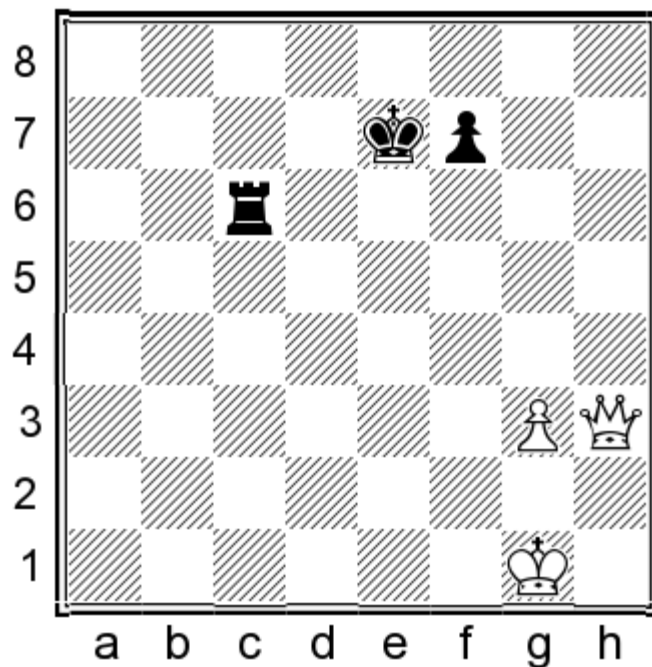
3.♕e8+ ♔h7

The king has abandoned his position in front of the pawn, and a queen sacrifice can no longer be avoided.

4.♔f4 ♖f6 5.♔e5 ♖h6 6.♕e6! 1-0

7

**Saemisch Friedrich
Prins Lodewijk
Hastings 1938**



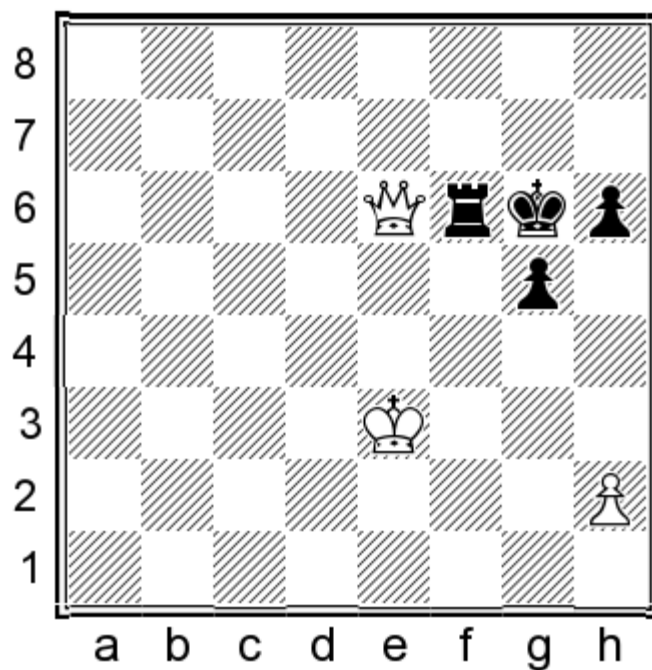
F.Saemisch agreed to a draw without any knowledge that he had a winning position. He had only to not allow the black king to come to g7. Here is P.Keres' analysis:

1. ♖h4+ ♔f8 2. ♜h8+! ♕e7 3. ♜f2 ♖g6 4. ♜f3 ♗e6 5. ♜g4 ♖g6+ 6. ♜h5 ♗e6 7. g4 ♖g6 8. g5 ♗e6 9. ♜b8 (F.Dedre's position) 9... ♖g6 10. ♜b4+ ♕e8 11. ♜e4+- followed by a queen sacrifice.

1/2-1/2

8

Karpov Anatoly
Istratescu Andrei
Bucharest 2005



49. ♖e8+ ♔g7

The position is drawn, but White can press by just advancing his king. His next can't be helpful however...

50. h4? gxh4! 51. ♖e7+ ♔g6 52. ♔e4 h3! 53. ♖e8+ ♔g7 54. ♚d7+ ♔h8 55. ♖xh3 ♖g6 56. ♔f5 ♔h7 57. ♚d3 ♖g5+ 58. ♔f6+ ♔h8! 59. ♖e4 ♔g8?

A blunder! 59... ♖g7, 59... ♖g8 and 59... ♖g1 draws.

60. ♖e6+ ♔h7

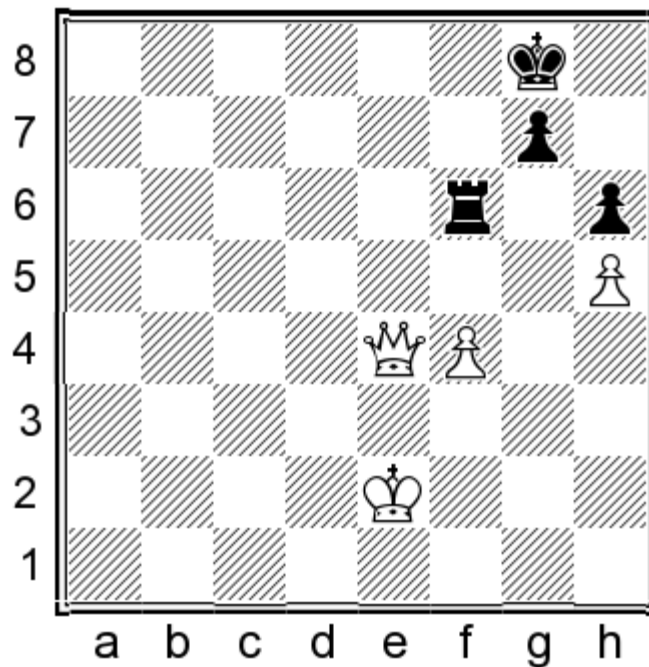
60... ♔h8 61. ♔f7 ♖g7+ 62. ♔f8 ♔h7 63. ♖f5+ ♔h8 64. ♖f6+-.

61. ♔f7 ♖g8 62. ♖f5+ ♔h8 63. ♖e5+ ♔h7 64. ♖e6! 1-0

And Black resigned due to 64... ♖g7+ 65. ♔f8 ♖g5 66. ♖e7+ ♔h8 67. ♖f7 ♖g2 68. ♖f6+ ♔h7 69. ♖f5+ ♔h8 70. ♖e5+-.

9

Jobava Baadur
Gagunashvili Merab
Tbilisi 2012



With even pawns the win is much simpler.

51. ♖e8+ ♖f8 52. ♖e6+ ♔h8 53. ♔e3 ♖f6

This makes it easier, but equally hopeless was 53... ♔h7 54. ♖g6+ ♔h8 55. f5 ♔g8 56. ♖e6+ ♔h8 57. ♖e7 ♔g8 58. ♔e4 ♖f7 59. ♖e6 ♔f8 60. ♖c8+ ♔e7 61. ♔e5+-.

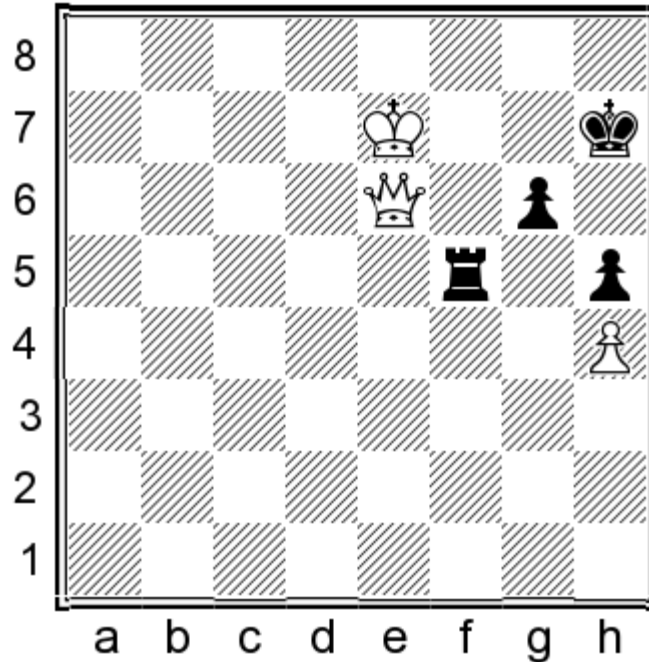
54. ♖xf6!

Transposing to an easily won pawn ending.

54...gxf6 55.♔e4 ♕g7 56.f5 ♖f7 57.♔d5 ♕e7 58.♔c6 ♕e8 59.♔d6 ♖f7 60.♔d7 ♕g7 61.♔e7 1-0

From the multitude of theoretically-known positions where a rook opposes a queen more-or-less successfully, we will examine several of the most important and characteristic cases.

Example 5
Khenkin Viktor
Study 1962



A drawn position that we should commit to memory.

1...♔h8!?

Both 1...♔g7= and 1...♖f1= are by no means worse than this.

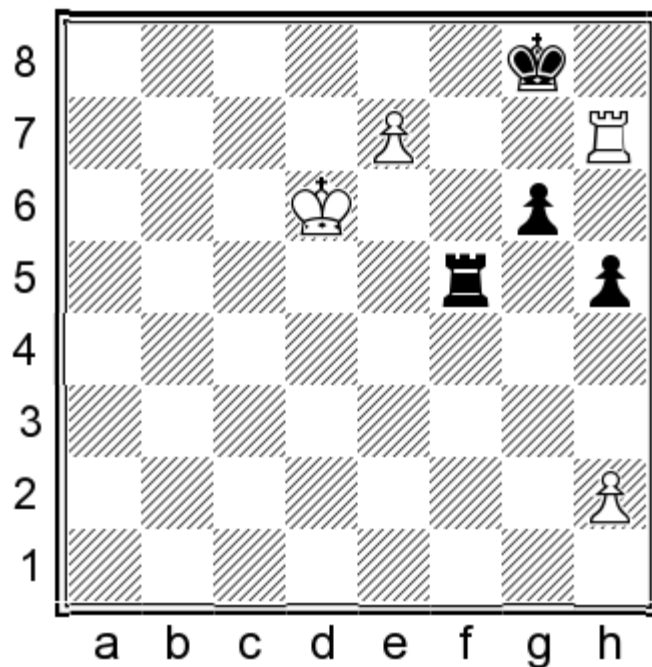
2.♖xg6 ♖f7+

2...♖e5+ is good as well.

3.♔e6 ♖e7+ 1/2-1/2

With a draw by a stalemate or perpetual check. With a shift upwards, the position is still drawn. But when shifted down, it is lost: White wins by means of a queen attack along the last rank.

10
Kamsky Gata
Ljubojevic Ljubomir
Linares 1991



73. ♖xh5!

73.e8=♚+ ♔xh7 is an already noted drawn position.

73. ♖xh5! ♖xh5 74.e8=♚+ ♔g7 75.♚e7+ ♔h6 76.♚f8+ ♔h7 77.♚f7+ ♔h8 78.♔e6!

78.♚xg6? ♖d5+! is drawn!

78... ♖f5 79.♚c7 ♔g8 80.h4 ♖f3 81.h5

Not the only win but the easiest from a practical standpoint.

81... ♖xh5 82.♚c8+ ♖f8 83.♚c5 ♖f1 84.♚xh5

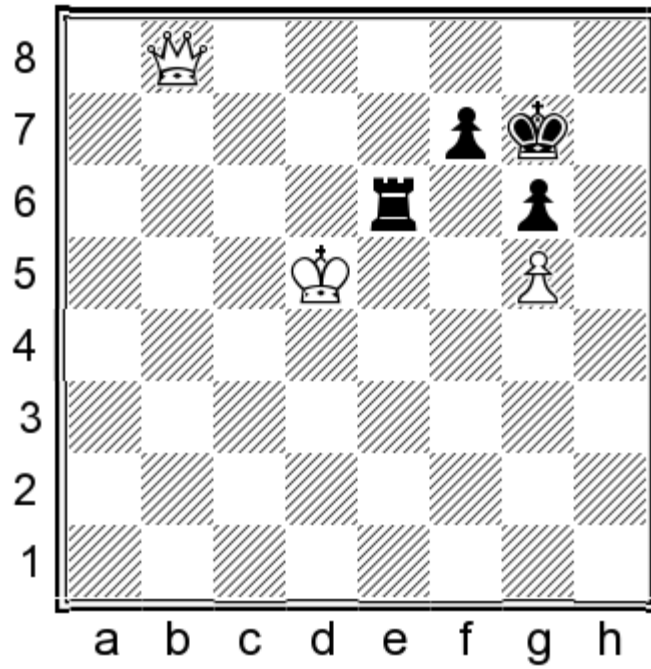
And White wins the ending of queen vs rook.

84... ♖e1+ 85.♔f6 ♖f1+ 86.♔g6 ♖g1+ 87.♔h6 ♖e1 88.♚g4+ ♔f7 89.♚c4+ ♖e6+ 90.♔g5 ♔e7 91.♔f5 ♖h6 92.♚c7+ ♔e8 93.♚f4 ♖c6 94.♚a4 ♔d7 95.♔e5 ♔c7 96.♚a7+ ♔c8 97.♔d5 ♖h6 98.♚g7 ♖a6 99.♚e7 ♖a2 100.♚e8+ ♔c7 101.♚c6+ ♔d8 102.♚c4 ♖h2 103.♚d4 ♖h6 104.♔c5+ ♔c8 105.♚g4+ 1-0

Example 6

Khenkin Viktor

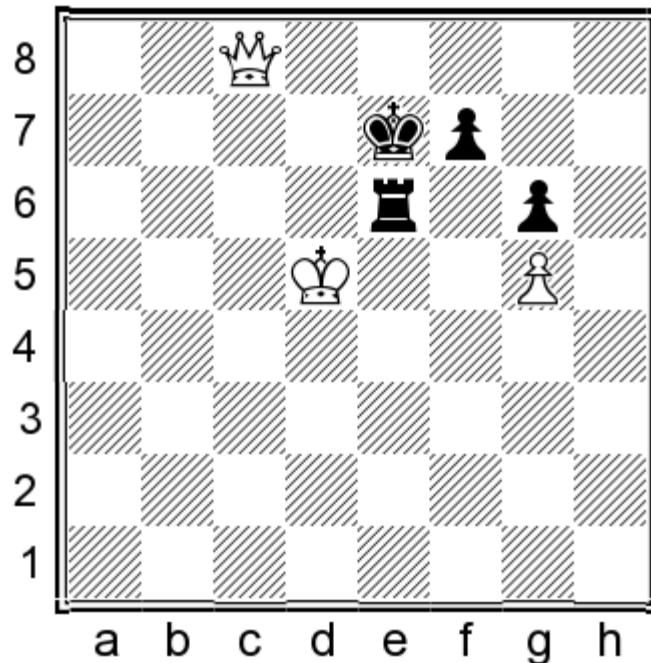
Study 1966



As we have already examined, a similar position without the g6-pawn is drawn. But here, when this pawn deprives the rook of its second – and required - safe square, White wins, as he gradually approaches the black pawn with his king using the zugzwang technique. It is worth mentioning that White is helpless in making any progress if his king is cut-off in the right corner, be it in the diagrammed position or in many similar situations.

1. ♖c7! ♜e3

Other moves are no better: 1... ♜a6 2. ♖c3+ ♔h7 3. ♖c4! ♜b6 (3... ♜e6 4. ♖c8 [with the threat of ♖xe6] 4... ♜e1 5. ♖f8 ♜f1 6. ♔d6+- with 7. ♔e7 and 8. ♖xf7+ to follow; 3... ♜a5+ 4. ♔d6 ♜xg5 5. ♖xf7+ ♔h6 6. ♖f4 ♔h5 7. ♖h2+ ♔g4 8. ♖h6+-) 4. ♖c7 ♜b5+ 5. ♔d6 ♜f5 6. ♔e7+- or 1... ♔f8 2. ♖c8+ ♔e7



3. ♖b8! ♔d7 4. ♖f8 ♜e7 5. ♖g8 ♔c7 6. ♖a8 ♜d7+ (6... ♔d7 7. ♖f8!) 7. ♔e5+-.

2.♙c2! ♖g8

If 2...♖a3 3.♙b2+ or 2...♖g3 3.♙b2+ decides immediately. If 2...♖e6 then 3.♙c3+ ♖h7 (3...♖g8 4.♙c8+; 3...♖f8 4.♙c8+ ♖e7 5.♙b8!) 4.♙h3+ and ♙xe6.

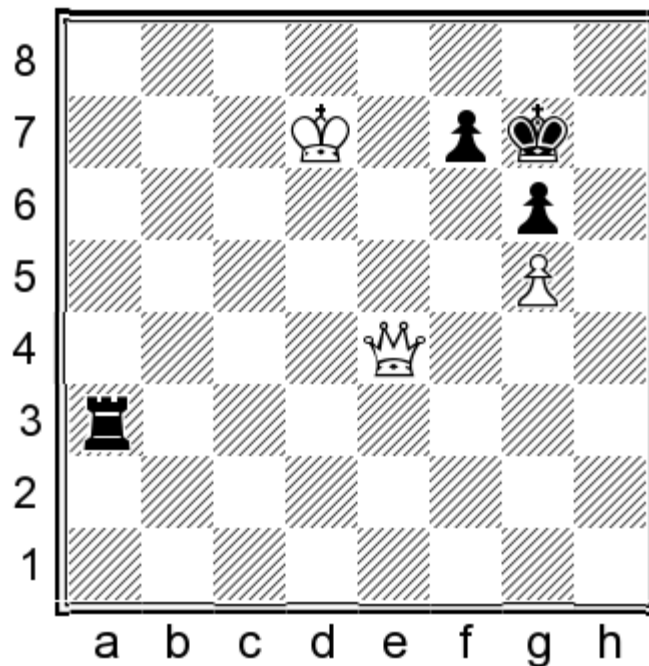
3.♖d6 ♖e6+ 4.♖d7 ♖e3

4...♖g7 5.♙c4!+-.

5.♙c4! ♖a3

The rook must leave the e-file because 5...♖e1 6.♙c8+ is bad.

6.♙e4 ♖g7



7.♖e7

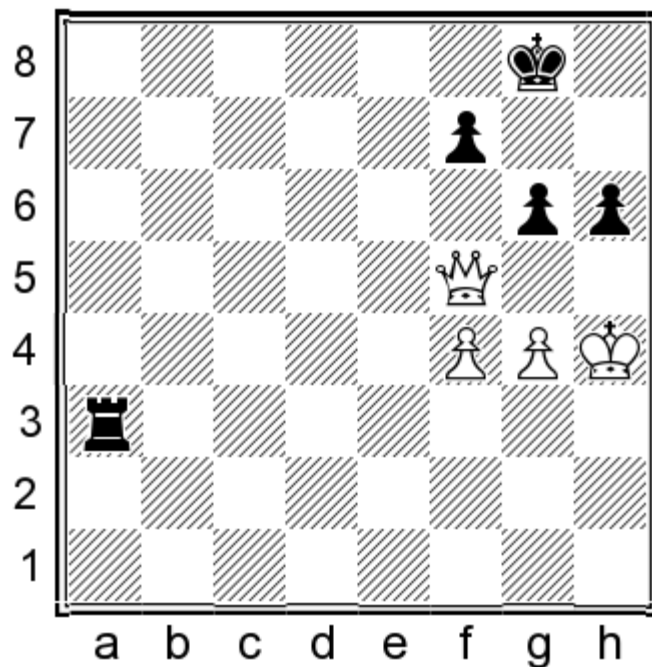
According to Dvoretsky, quicker is 7.♙e5+! ♖g8 8.♙b8+ ♖h7 (8...♖g7 9.♙b2+-) 9.♖e7+-.

7...♖a7+ 8.♖e8 ♖g8

8...♖a5 9.♙d4+ ♖g8 10.♙d8 (10.♖e7 ♖a8 [10...♖xg5 11.♙d8+ ♖h7 12.♖f8+-] 11.♙d5 ♖f8 12.♙f3 ♖g7 13.♙c3+ ♖g8 14.♙f6+-) 10...♖e5+ 11.♖d7+ ♖h7 12.♙f6 ♖f5 13.♙e7 ♖g8 14.♖e8 ♖g7 15.♙f8+ ♖h7 16.♙xf7+ ♖xf7 17.♖xf7+-.

9.♙d5 ♖c7 10.♙d8 ♖b7 11.♙c8 ♖a7 12.♙b8 1-0

11
Navara David
Farago Ivan
Deizisau 2005



Black sought salvation in this ending, but in vain. It must be noted that 43...g5+ wouldn't help after 44.fxg5 hxg5+ 45.♖xg5+! (45.♔xg5? ♖e3!=) 45...♔h8 46.♗e7 ♜f3 47.♗e2 ♜b3 48.♗c4 ♜f3 49.g5+–, as the rook cannot be placed on the 6th rank.

44.♗d5?

A blunder instead of the correct 44.♗c8+ ♔h7 45.♗f8 ♜a7 (45...g5+ 46.fxg5 hxg5+ 47.♔xg5+–) 46.g5 (46.f5 wins as well) 46...hxg5+ (46...h5 47.f5 gxf5 48.♔xh5+–) 47.fxg5+–.

44.♗d5? ♔g7?

Black missed a great chance with 44...g5+! 45.fxg5 ♜a6 46.♔h5 hxg5 47.♗d8+ ♔g7 48.♔xg5 ♜e6, when we would have a drawn position; the black king is on the right side!

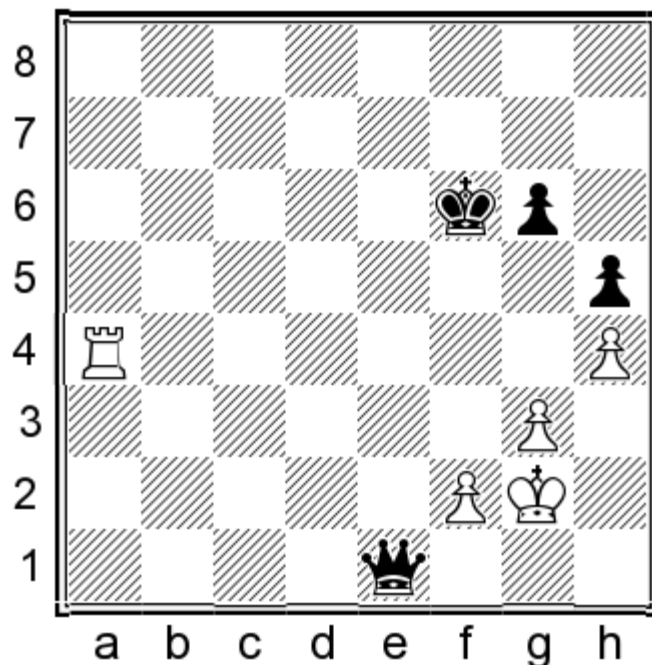
45.♗e5+ ♔g8 46.♗b8+ ♔h7 47.♗f8 ♜a7 48.f5 1-0

12

Dorfman Iosif

Beliavsky Alexander

Lvov 1978



V. Khenkin supplied a detailed analysis of this ending. Where does the rook belong, on e3 or f4? It turns out that both squares are good when the black king is on d5; but the rook should stand on f4 (to protect g4) while the black king remains on the kingside!

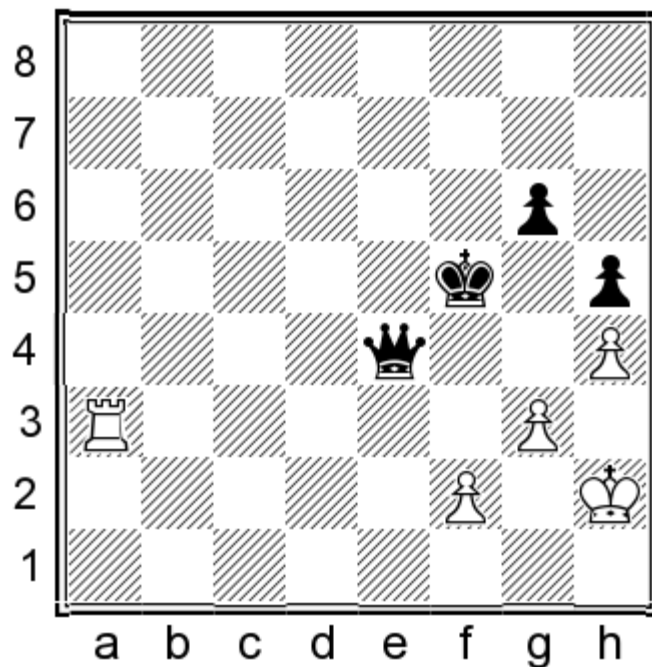
56. ♖a3?

In the actual game, I. Dorfman undertook a premature transfer to e3. A draw could be reached by means of 56. ♖f4+! ♕e5 57. ♖f8 (57. ♖a4 is also good) 57... ♜e4+ 58. ♔g1 ♞c6 59. ♖f4 ♞c1+ 60. ♔g2 ♞d1 and now:

a) If the rook remains on the 4th rank with 61. ♖b4 then after 61... ♔d5 62. ♖f4 ♕c5 White should play 63. ♖f8! planning ♖e8-e3=, giving way to the black king and planning a rook transfer to e3. As theory says 63. ♖e4? loses to 63... ♞d5 64. ♕f3 ♕c6! (Klein-Svenson, cr 1968/69 — reversed colours) 65. ♕e3 (65. ♕f4 ♞d3! 66. ♖e8 ♕c7! 67. ♖e7+ ♕d8 68. ♖e4 ♕d7!—) 65... ♞d1! 66. ♖d4 (66. ♖f4 ♕d5 67. ♖f7 ♞e1+ 68. ♕d3 ♕c5! 69. ♖f4 ♕b5 70. ♕c2 ♞e2+ 71. ♕c3 ♞d1 72. ♖b4+ ♕c5 73. ♖c4+ ♕d5 74. ♖f4 ♕e5— with the threat 75... ♞c1+ and 76... ♞xf4) 66... ♞e1+ 67. ♕f3 ♞c3+ 68. ♕e4 ♕c5 69. ♖d8 ♞f6! 70. ♖d2 ♕c4 71. ♕e3 ♕c3 72. ♖d3+ (72. ♖d1 ♞e6+ and... ♞g4+) 72... ♕c2 73. ♖d2+ ♕c1 74. ♖d3 (74. ♖e2 ♕d1) 74... ♞e5+ 75. ♕f3 ♞f5+ 76. ♕e3 ♞b5! 77. ♕e4 (77. ♖d4 ♞c5) 77... ♕c2 78. ♖f3 ♞e2+ 79. ♕f4 ♞e6 0-1.

b) 61. ♖f8!? ♞d5+ 62. ♕g1 ♕e4 63. ♖e8+ ♕f3 64. ♖f8+! ♕e2 (64... ♕g4?! 65. ♕h2 ♞d2 66. ♕g2! g5 67. hxg5 ♕xg5 68. ♖f4= followed by ♖h4-f4-h4) 65. ♖e8+ ♕d2 66. ♖e3!= as Black cannot make any progress.

56. ♖a3? ♞e4+ 57. ♕h2 ♕f5



58.♞e3?!

White loses rapidly after 58.♔g1 ♜b1+ 59.♔g2 ♜b7+ 60.♔h2 ♔g4! (60...♜b2? 61.♞f3+ ♔e4 62.♞e3+ ♔d4 63.♔g2=) 61.♞a4+ ♔f3 62.♞f4+ ♔e2–+. However after 58.♞a7! the winning process would have been very complicated. In case of even the slightest inaccuracy White could have reached one of the drawn positions that have been mentioned above (with the rook on f4 or e3): 58...♜c6 (58...♔g4? 59.♞f7!)=) 59.♞f7+ (59.♞e7 ♜f6! and 60...♔g4–+) 59...♔e4 60.♔g1! ♜d6! (60...♔d3? 61.♞e7! and ♞e3=) 61.♔g2 (61.♞f4+ ♜xf4; 61.♔h2 ♔d3) 61...♜d5! (61...♔d3? 62.♞f3+ and ♞e3=; 61...♜e6? 62.♞f4+) 62.♞f8 ♔d3+ 63.♔g1 ♜c6! 64.♞f7! (planning ♞e7=) 64...♜e4! 65.♞a7 (65.♞f4 ♜e2 66.♔g2 [66.♞f8 ♜e1+ 67.♔h2 ♜e4! 68.♞f4 ♜c6 69.♔g1 ♔e2–+] 66...♔d2 67.♞a4 ♜e6! 68.♞b4 [68.♞a3 ♜c6+ 69.♔h2 ♔e2] 68...♜d5+ 69.♔g1 ♔e2 70.♞b2+ ♔f3–+) 65...♜b4! (planning...♔e2)

a) 66.♞a6 ♜b1+ 67.♔h2 ♔e2–+.

b) 66.♞a8 ♜b1+ 67.♔h2 ♔e2–+.

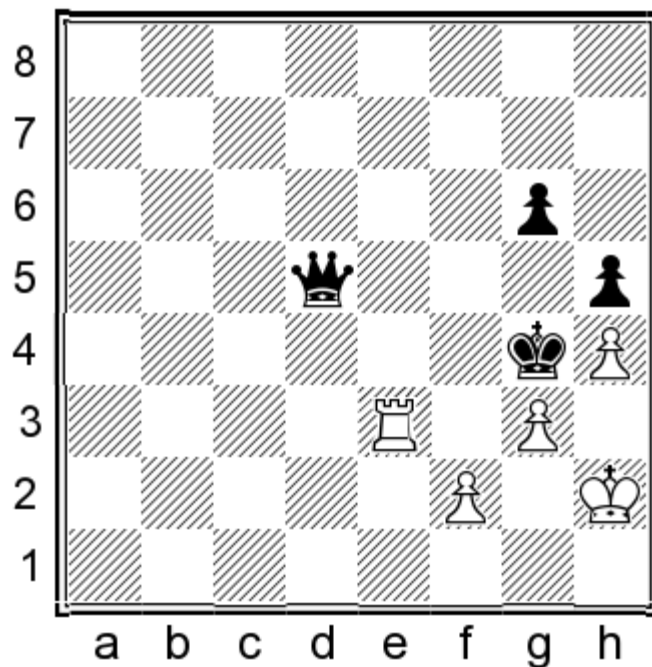
c) V.Khenkin does not investigate the most stubborn defence: 66.♔f1 preventing the king invasion on e2. Black responds with 66...♜d6! planning to bring his king to g4. For example: 67.♞a1 (67.♞a2 ♜c6! [67...♜d5? 68.♞a3+ ♔d2 69.♔g1=] 68.♞a3+ ♔e4 69.♞e3+ ♔f5 70.♔g1 ♔g4–+; 67.♔g2 ♜c5!) 67...♜c6! 68.♞a3+ (68.♞d1+ ♔e4 69.♔g2 ♔f5+) 68...♔e4 69.♞e3+ ♔f5 70.♔g1 ♔g4–+.

d) 66.♔g2 ♜c5! 67.♞a6 ♜d5+ 68.♔g1 ♔e2 69.♞xg6 ♜d1+ 70.♔h2 ♔f1! (70...♔xf2? 71.♞f6+ ♔e3 72.♞f4=) 71.♞b6 (71.♞a6 ♜d4) 71...♜c2 72.♞f6 ♜e4–+.

58...♜d5 59.♔g1

59.♞e7 ♔g4 or; 59.♞e8 ♜f7!.

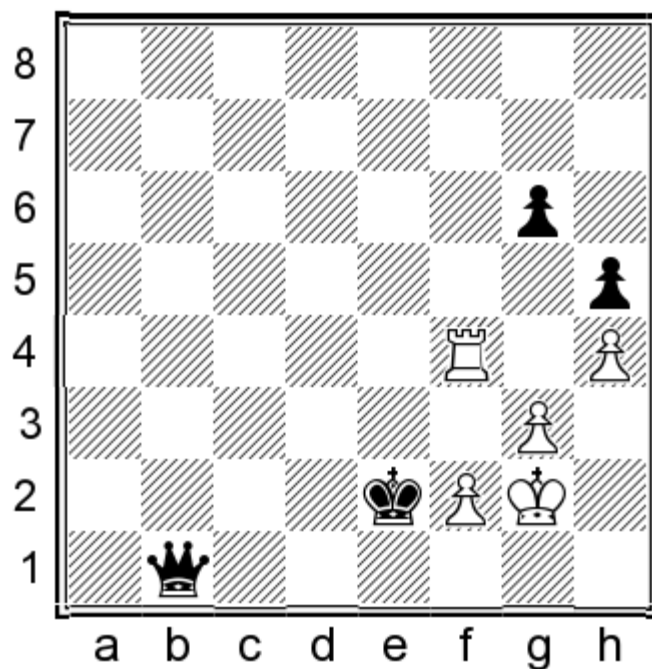
59...♔g4! 60.♔h2



60...♚c6! 61.♞a3

61.♞b3 ♚c2!.

61...♚c1! 62.♞e3 ♚f1 63.♞e4+ ♔f3 64.♞f4+ ♔e2 65.♞e4+ ♔d3 66.♞f4 ♚b1 67.♔g2 ♔e2



68.♞f6?

Losing rapidly. However the best choice, 68.♞f8!? was good enough only for postponing the deadly end for a while:
 68...♚b7+ 69.♔g1 ♚c6! 70.♞f4 ♚a8! (the rook is forced to occupy a light square) 71.♞f7 ♚a1+ 72.♔g2 ♚f1+ 73.♔h2
 ♚d1! 74.♞f4 (74.♔g2 ♚d5+) 74...♔f1+.

68...♖f1+ 69.♔h2 ♚a1! 0-1

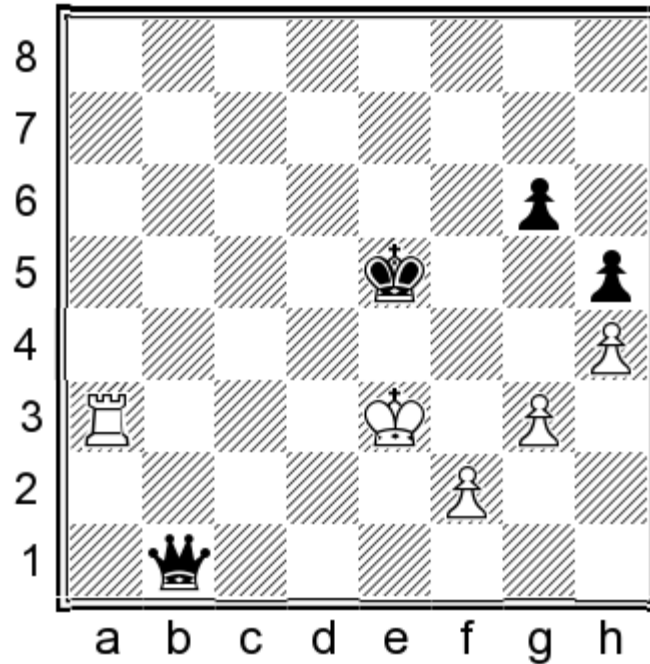
White resigned in view of the inevitable 70...♔f1.

13

Bischofberger Dario

Garriga Cazorla Pere

Prague 2016



If White could have his king on g2 and his rook on f4, everything would be fine. But there is another way to do the job!

47.♖a5+! ♔d6 48.♖g5

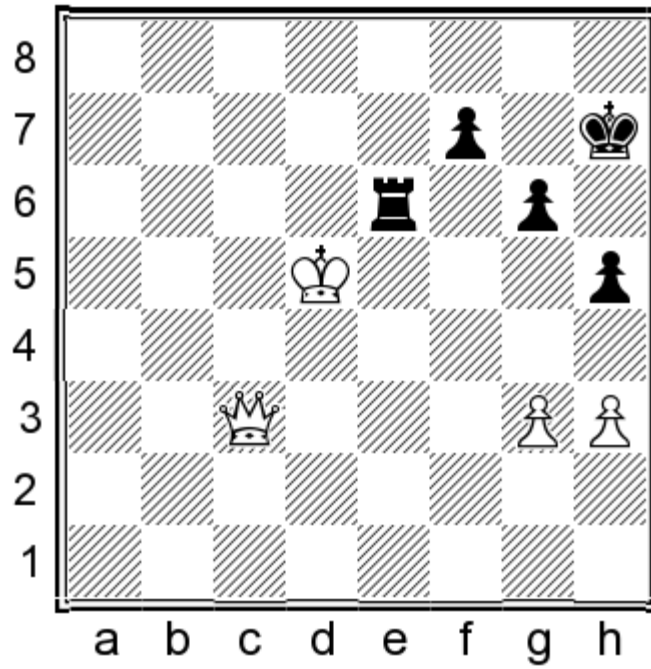
And now the black king can never assist his queen.

48...♖b3+ 49.♔e2 ♚e6+ 50.♔f3 ♔e7 51.♔g2! ♚e4+ 52.♔g1 ♚e2 53.♔g2 ♔f6 54.♔g1 ♚e1+ 55.♔g2 ♚d1 56.♖a5
♚g4 57.♖c5 ♚e4+ 58.♔g1 ♚f3 59.♖a5 ♚c3 60.♖g5 ♚c1+ 61.♔g2 ♚xg5 62.hxg5+ ♔xg5 63.f3 ♔f5 64.♔f2 g5 65.♔e2
g4 66.fxg4+ ♔xg4 67.♔f2 h4 68.gxh4 ♔xh4 1/2-1/2

Example 7

Khenkin Viktor

Study 1966



Dvoretsky provides us with an excellent analysis here, with the help of V.Khenkin: ‘To fully understand the following endgame, we should refresh our memories with the evaluations of several already-known positions. As we know from the previous example, it would have been an easy draw if the white pawn stood on h4. Here, on the contrary, White has a clear plan: to push his pawn to g5, obtaining V.Khenkin’s winning position from a previous example. However the immediate 1.g4? hxg4 2.hxg4 meets a strong response 2...g5!=. When White gains the g5-pawn, the drawn position of F.Dedrle arises. When analysing it, we have mentioned that White wins if his king is on the 7th rank. From this, we come to the correct plan: first White should cross the 5th rank with his king and only thereafter may he push the g-pawn.

If we move the h5-pawn to h6, the evaluation is changed: Black, if on move, plays 1...g5, getting another protected square for the rook (g6). After 2.h4 gxh4 3.gxh4 he comes to the drawn position of N.Grigoriev by means of the pawn sacrifice 3...h5!. He must sacrifice; otherwise White advances his pawn to h5 and wins.

If White is on move he can prevent...g5 solely by playing 1.h4, but then 1...h5!= follows.’

1.♔c5!

1.h4? ♔g8=

and 1.g4? hxg4 2.hxg4 g5!= - F.Derdle’s position.

1.♔c5! ♔g8 2.♚d4 ♔h7 3.♚d8 ♔g7 4.♔b5! ♞e1

Nothing else helps: 4...♔h7 5.♚f8+- or 4...♞f6 5.♚d4 g5 6.♚d8! ♞g6 7.♔c5 h4 (7...g4 8.h4+-) 8.g4!+- or, finally, 4...♞e4 5.♔c6 ♞c4+ 6.♔d5 ♞c3 7.♚b8 ♞d3+ 8.♔e4 ♞d1 9.♚b2+ ♔g8 10.♚c3 ♞d6 11.♔e5 ♞e6+ 12.♔f4 ♔h7 13.♔g5+-.

5.♚d4+ ♔g8 6.♔c6 ♞e6+

6...♞h1 7.♔d7! ♞xh3 8.♔e7 ♞xg3 9.♚f4 ♞a3 10.♚xf7+ ♔h8 11.♚xg6+- is hopeless.

7.♔d7 ♞e1 8.g4! hxg4 9.hxg4 ♞e6

After 9...g5 10.♚d2 ♞e6 11.♚xg5+- or 9...♞e6 10.g5! we come to one of the aforementioned positions.

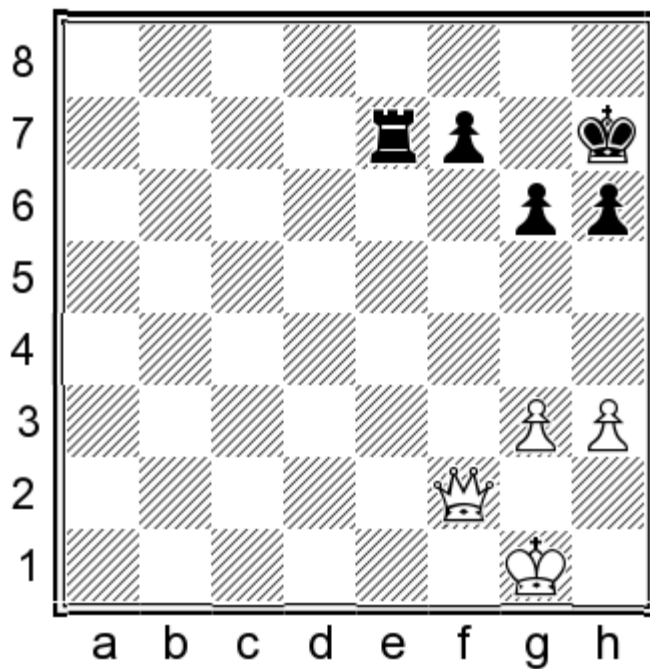
10.g5! 1-0

14

Korchnoi Viktor

Sakharov Yuri

Kiev 1964



A won position, although some hard work is required.

53...h5 54.♖f6 ♜b7 55.♞c3 ♜b1+ 56.♔f2 ♔g8 57.♕e3 ♜b5 58.♕e4 ♜f5

If Black defends with 58...♜b6 59.♕e5 ♜e6+ 60.♕d5 ♔h7, we would have the position from Example 7.

59.♞d3 ♔h7 60.g4!

Sooner-or-later White has to 'improve'.

60...hxg4 61.hxg4 ♜g5

And after 61...♜f6 62.♞d8 ♔g7 63.♕e5 ♜e6+ 64.♕d5 ♜a6 65.♞c7 ♜e6 66.g5, we would have the position seen in Example 6.

62.♞d7

This gives Black an extra chance. Accurate of course was 62.♕f4+–.

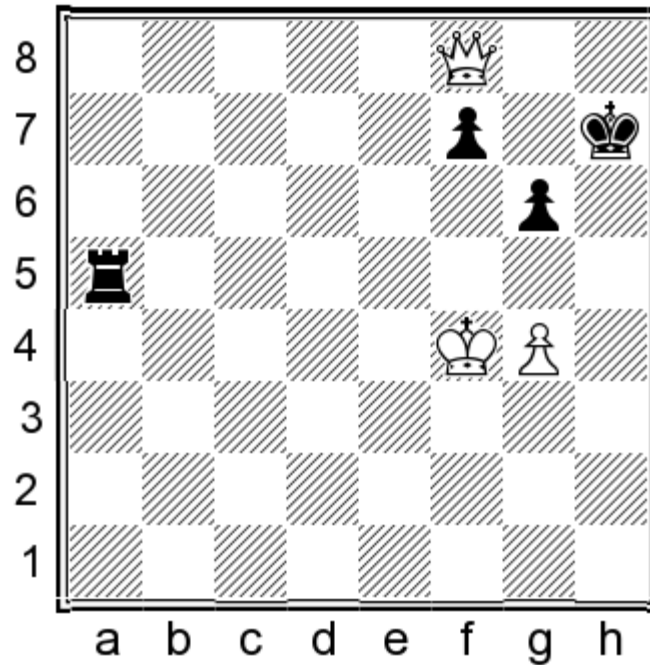
62...♔g7

62...♜xg4+!? 63.♕f3 ♜h4 64.♞xf7+–.

63.♕f4 ♜a5 64.♞d4+ ♔h7 65.♞c4 ♔g8

65...g5+ 66.♔f3 ♖a7 (66...♔g6 67.♚c2+ ♔h6 68.♚c6+ ♔h7 69.♚c7+-) 67.♚c2+ ♔g8 68.♚c5+-.

66.♚c8+ ♔h7 67.♚f8



67...♖a4+?!

Making things too easy. 67...g5+ should have been tried, although after 68.♔f3 ♖a7 69.♔e4! (69.♚c5? ♖a6 70.♚xg5 ♖g6=) 69...♖a4+ 70.♔f5 ♖f4+ 71.♔xg5 ♖f1 72.♔h4+- White would win. As long as Black cannot place his rook on the 6th rank, he is lost.

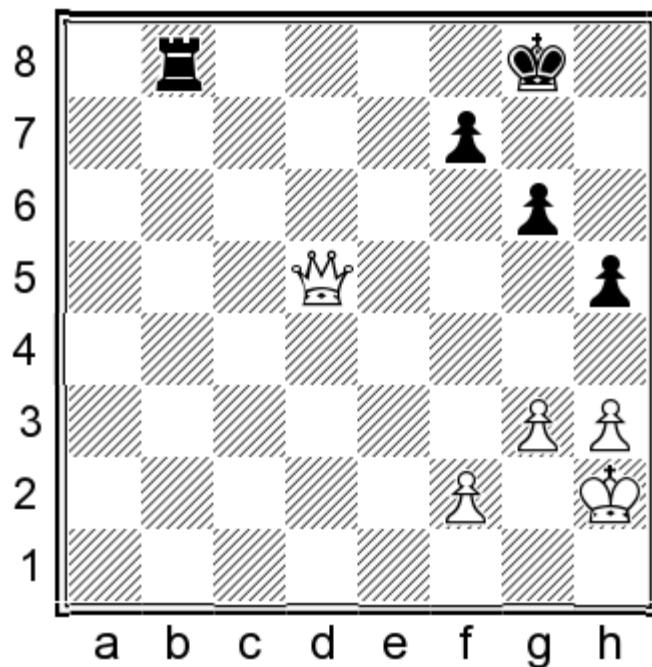
68.♔g5 ♖a5+ 69.♔f6 ♖a6+ 70.♔xf7 ♖a7+ 71.♔f6 ♖a6+ 72.♔g5 ♖a5+ 73.♔h4 ♖a7 74.♚c5 ♖b7 75.♔g5 1-0

15

Nikolic Predrag

Ljubojevic Ljubomir

Monte Carlo 1998



3 vs 3 should be an easy case, although also important is the fact that Black has no counterplay.

46. ♖e5 ♜c8 47. g4 hxg4 48. hxg4 ♜c4 49. ♔g3 ♜c2 50. f4 ♜a2 51. ♔h4!

The white king assists the attack!

51... ♜a6 52. ♔g5 ♔h7 53. ♖c3

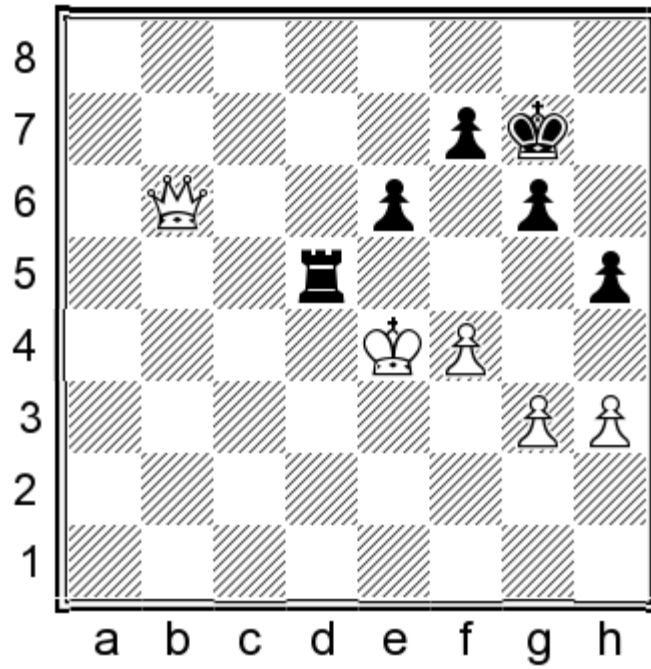
53. ♖c7 ♔g7 54. f5 gxf5 55. gxf5 is another trivial win.

53... ♜e6 54. f5 gxf5 55. gxf5 ♜h6 56. ♖c7 ♔g7 57. f6+ ♜xf6 58. ♖e5 1-0

Example 8

Botvinnik Mikhail

Study 1952



The great Mikhail Botvinnik investigated this position (with reversed colours) when he analyzed his adjourned game versus O.Troianescu (1952). He proved that the inevitable queen sacrifice on d5 leads to a winning pawn endgame.

1.g4 hxg4 2.hxg4 ♔g8 3.♚c7 ♔g7 4.♚c6 ♔f8

Otherwise the white king breaks through: 4...♞d8 5.♚c3+ ♔g8 6.♔e5 ♔g7 7.f5! exf5 8.gxf5 ♞e8+ (8...gxf5 9.♚g3+ ♔f8 10.♔f6; 8...f6+!? 9.♔f4 ♞d5 is more tenacious; it leads to a theoretical position with a bishop's pawn on the 6th rank that is winning for White, although not easily so) 9.♔f4+ ♔g8 10.fxg6 fxg6 11.♔g5 ♞e6 12.♚c7 ♔f8 13.♚d7+- (V. Khenkin). 4...♞d1 5.♚c3+ ♔g8 6.♔e5 ♔g7 (6...♞f1 7.♚c4 ♞g1 8.♔f6 ♞xg4 9.♚c7) 7.f5! exf5 8.gxf5 ♞f1 (8...gxf5 9.♚g3+ ♔f8 10.♔f6+- - M.Botvinnik) 9.fxg6 fxg6 10.♔e6+ ♔g8 11.♚h3!+- threatening to invade on h6 and not 11.♚d3? ♞f5!= (11...♞g1? 12.♔f6+-).

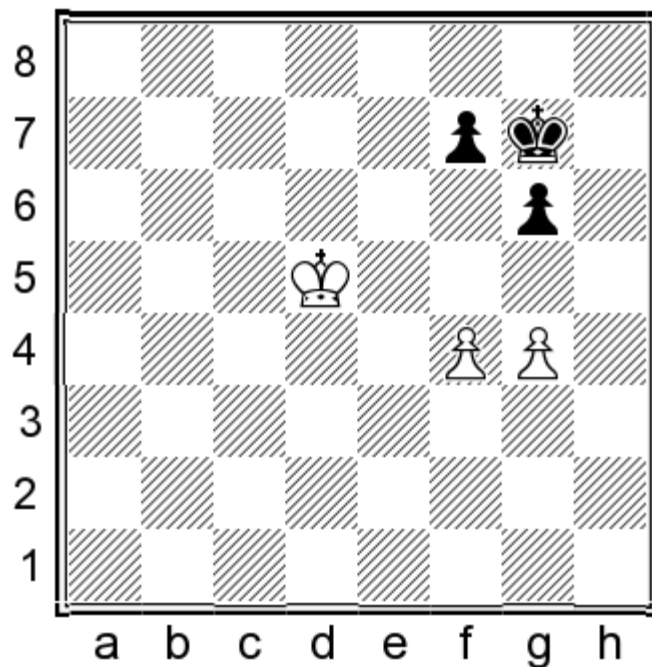
5.♚a8+! ♔g7

Prior to the queen sacrifice White should drive the black king back. He cannot go to the centre: 5...♔e7 6.♚a3+ ♔e8 7.♚b4!+-.

6.♚xd5! exd5+

6...f5+ 7.♔e5 exd5 8.g5+-.

7.♔xd5



7...♔f8

7...♔h6 8.♕e5 ♖g7 9.♕d6 ♔h8!? makes no difference: 10.♕d7 ♔h7 11.♕d8! (11.♕e7? ♖g8!) 11...♔g7 (11...♔h8 12.f5) 12.♕e8! (the opposition is required when the pawn stands on f5, but not in this case) 12...♔g8 13.♕e7 ♖g7 14.f5 g5 15.♕e8+.

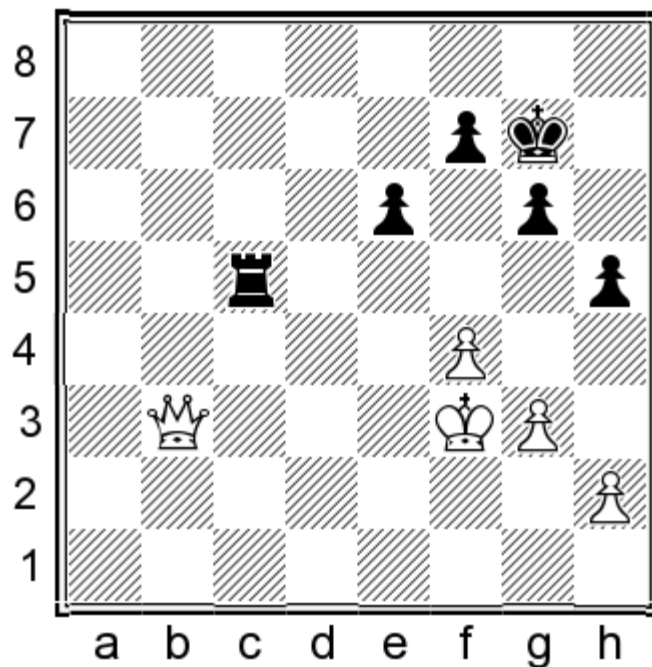
8.♕d6 ♕e8 9.f5! g5 10.♕c7 ♕e7 11.♕c8! ♕d6 12.♕d8 ♕e5 13.♕e7 f6 14.♕f7 1-0

16

Chiburdanidze Maia

Donaldson Akhmilovskaya Elena

Tallinn 1977

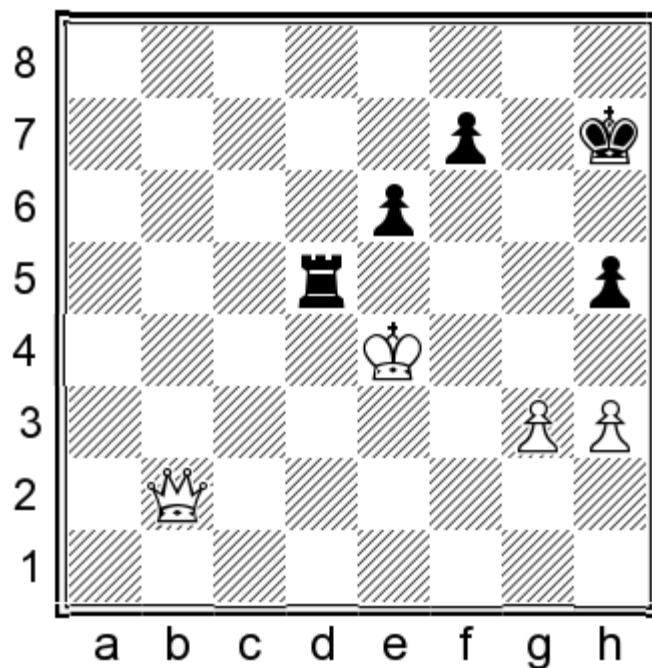


A very similar position from M. Botvinnik's analysis!

43...g5

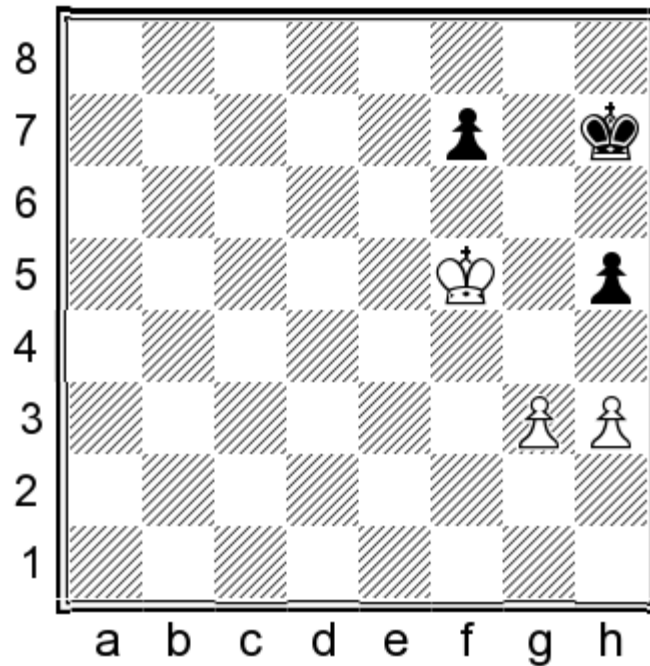
Black decides to become active. Alternatively, 43...♖f5 44.♚b6 ♜d5 45.h3 ♜f5 46.♔e4 ♜d5 47.g4 hxg4 48.hxg4 ♔g8 49.♚c7 ♔g7 50.♚c6 ♔f8 (50...♜d1 51.♚c3+ ♔g8 52.♔e5 ♔g7 53.f5! exf5 54.gxf5 ♜f1 55.fxg6 fxg6 56.♔e6+ with a theoretical win) 51.♚a8+ ♔g7 52.♚xd5! exd5+ 53.♔xd5 ♔f8 54.♔d6 ♔e8 55.f5 g5 56.♔c7 ♔e7 57.♔c8! ♔d6 58.♔d8 is also a win for White.

43...g5 44.fxg5 ♜xg5 45.h3 ♔h7 46.♔e4 ♜d5 47.♚b8 ♔g7 48.♚b2+ ♔h7



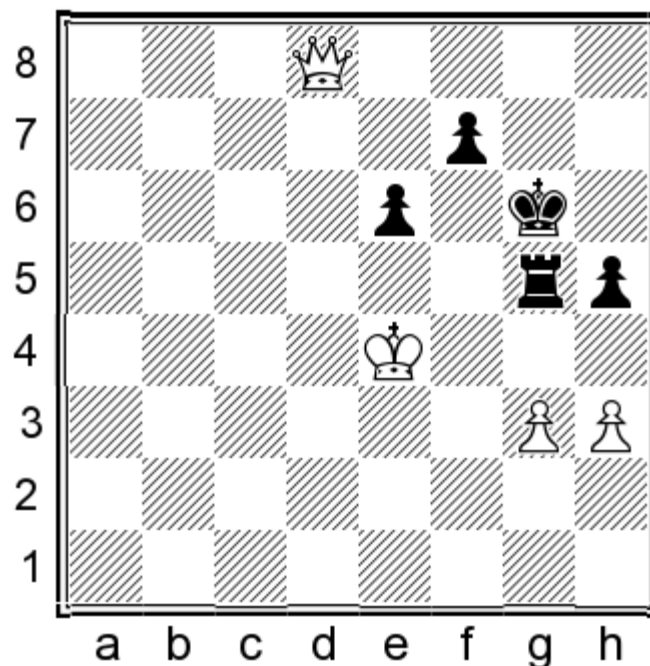
49.♚b1

At first sight 49. ♖f6 ♜f5 50. ♗xf5+ exf5+ 51. ♔xf5 appears to lead to a won pawn ending. On closer inspection though, Black can save himself with



51...h4! 52.g4 ♔g7 53.♔g5 f6+ 54.♔xh4 ♔g6 55.♔g3 f5!. It must also be mentioned that White can continue with 49.g4 hxg4 50.hxg4 ♜g5 51.♔f4 ♜g6 (51...♔g6 52.♗h8 e5+ 53.♔f3 e4+ 54.♔f4 ♜c5 55.♗g8+ ♔f6 56.g5+ ♔e7 57.g6 fxg6 58.♗xg6) 52.♗e5! ♔g8 53.g5 and the white king is free to penetrate Black's position.

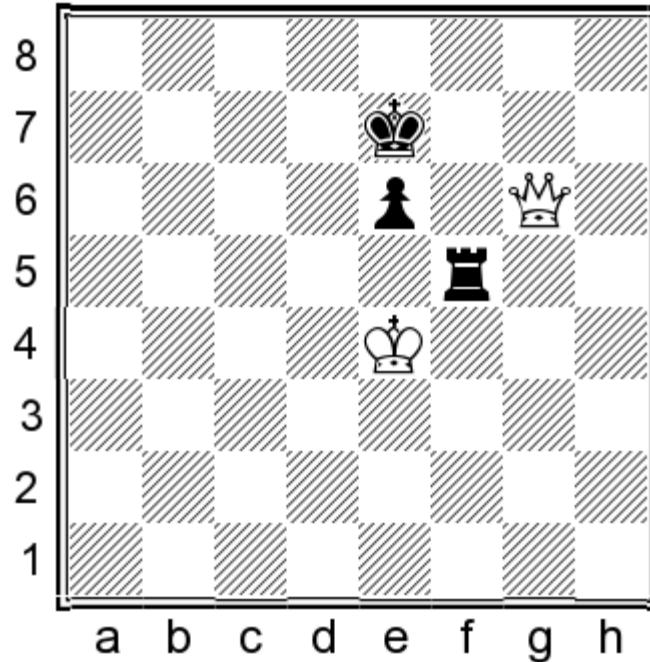
49...♔g7 50.♗a1+ ♔g6 51.♗h8 ♜g5 52.♗g8+ ♔f6 53.♗d8+ ♔g6



54. ♗f8!

Preventing 54...♜xg3? 55. ♗g8+ or 54...♔f6 55. ♗h6+ ♜g6 56. ♗xh5.

54...♖f5 55.g4 hxg4 56.hxg4 ♖d5 57.♗g8+ ♕f6 58.♗h8+ ♕g6 59.♕f4 ♖c5 60.♗g8+ ♕f6 61.g5+ ♕e7 62.g6 ♖f5+ 63.♕e4 fxg6 64.♗xg6



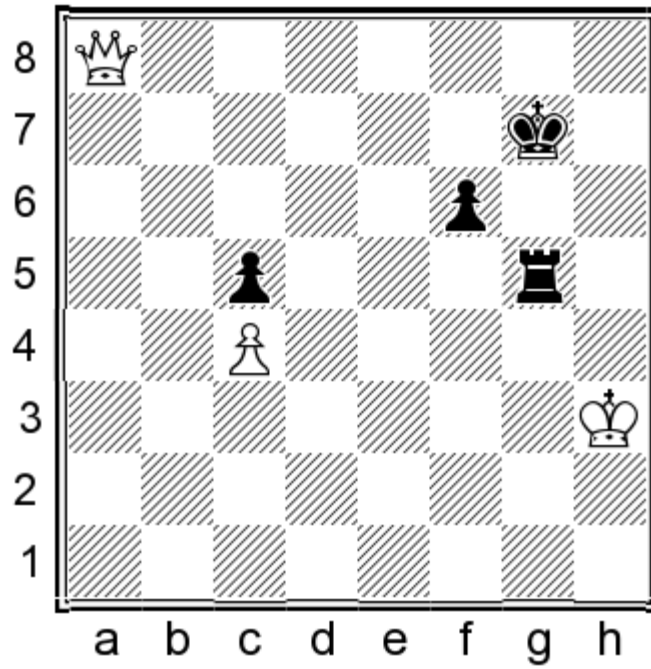
And White has obtained a won queen vs rook & pawn ending. The technical part of the game is particularly instructive for this type of ending:

64...♕d6 65.♗g7 ♖b5 66.♗g3+ ♕d7 67.♗a3 ♖d5 68.♗b4 ♖f5 69.♗b7+ ♕d8 70.♗b8+ ♕d7 71.♕d4 ♖d5+ 72.♕c4 ♕e7 73.♗g8 ♖f5 74.♗g6 ♕d7 75.♗g3 ♖d5 76.♗g7+ ♕e8 77.♗f6 ♕d7 78.♗f7+ ♕d6 79.♗e8 ♖c5+ 80.♕b4 ♖d5 81.♗d8+ ♕e5 82.♗e7 ♕f5 83.♕c3 ♕e5 84.♗f8 ♖d7 85.♗h8+ ♕f5 86.♕c4 ♖d5 87.♗g7 1-0

Some more interesting cases with multiple pawns will be examined, concluding the chapter:

17

Areshchenko Alexander
Parligras Mircea Emilian
Al Ain 2015



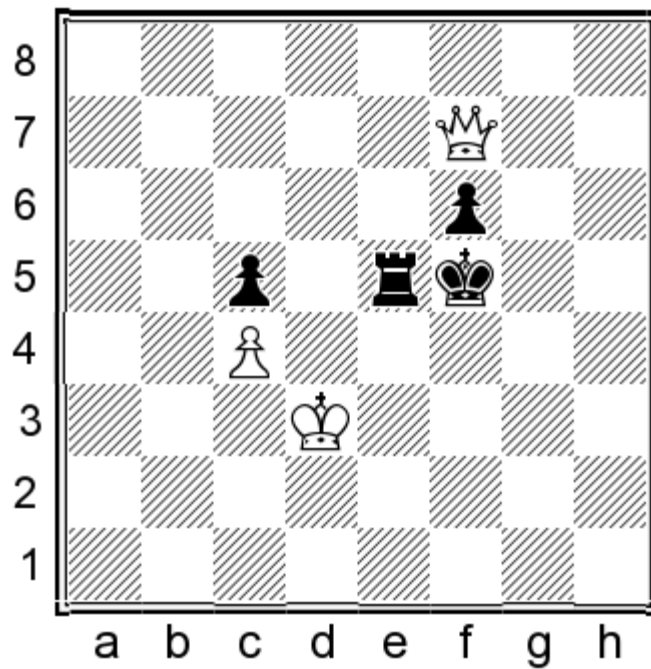
The extra c-pawns are, of course, in the queen's favour.

58.♔h4 ♕f7 59.♚e4 ♔g7 60.♚e7+ ♔g6 61.♚f8

Now the white king will be able to join the battle via the centre.

61...♚h5+ 62.♔g4 ♚g5+ 63.♔f4 ♚f5+ 64.♔e4 ♚e5+ 65.♔d3 ♚g5

65...♔g5 66.♚f7 ♔f5



67.♚g7!+-.

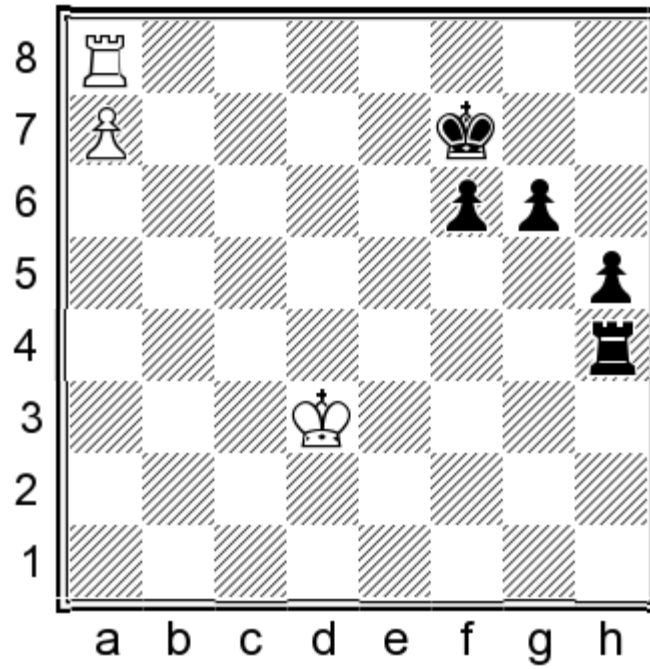
66.♚g8+ ♔f5 67.♚f7 ♚g3+ 68.♔e2 ♚g2+ 69.♔f3 ♚g5 70.♚e8! 1-0

18

Ambroz Jan

Ciocaltea Victor

Baile Herculane 1982



54. ♖f8+?

After 54. ♖b8! ♖a4 55. a8=♚ ♖xa8 56. ♖xa8 White wins.

54. ♖f8+? ♔xf8 55. a8=♚+ ♔e7 56. ♚b7+ 1/2-1/2

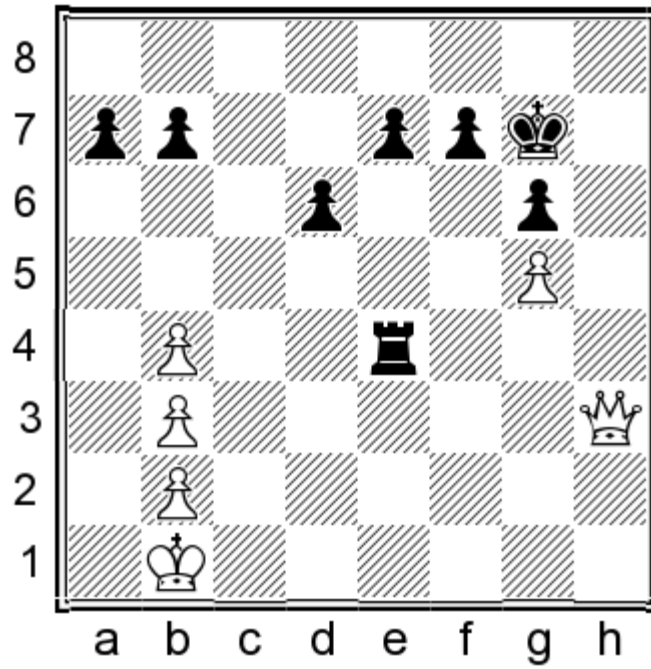
Draw. Black should just bring his rook to g4, f5 or e5.

19

Martin Gonzalez Angel

Petursson Margeir

Biel 1985



32. ♖f3?

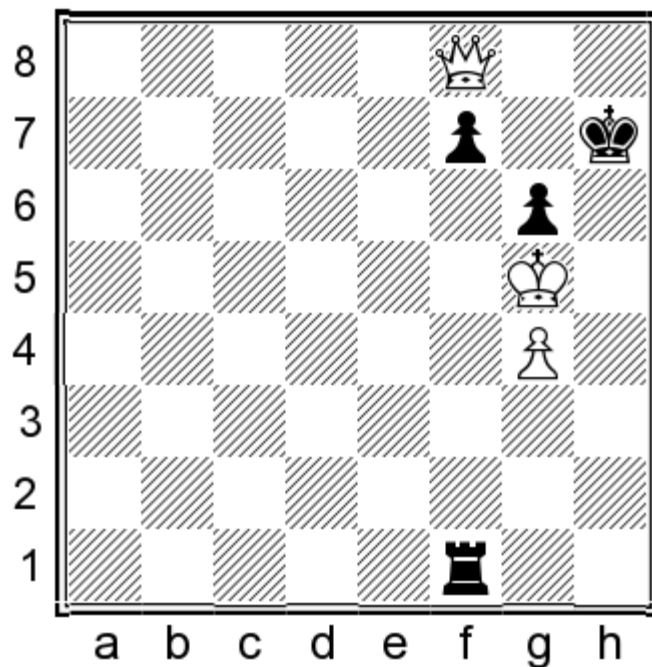
White could win with 32.b5!, attacking the black queenside pawns.

32... ♖e1+! 33. ♔c2 b5! 34. ♗b7 ♖e5

The rook has protected all the important pawns, and an impenetrable and indestructible fortress has been created.

35. ♗xa7 ♔f8 36. ♗b8+ ♔g7 37. ♗c7 ♔f8 38. ♗d8+ ♔g7 39. ♗e8 ♖xg5 40. ♗xe7 ♖f5 41. ♗xd6 ♔g8 42. ♔d3 1/2-1/2

Example 9
Khenkin Viktor
Study 1982



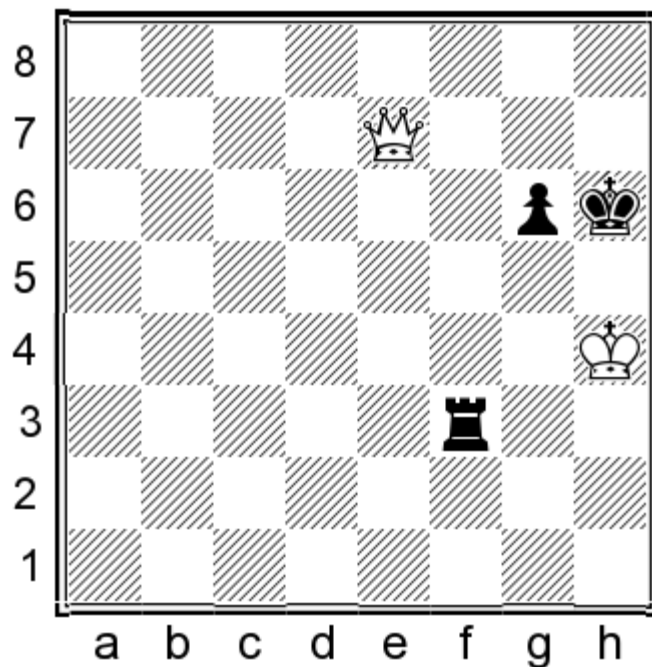
If White is to move, 1.♙h6+ ♔g8 2.♚h3 ♖e1 3.♕h6 g5! followed by 4...♞e6+ leads to the F.Dedrlé drawing position. But White can play better: 1.♚e7! with mate in 71st move, according to the tablebases!

1...f6+!

All rook retreats lose: 1...♞f2? 2.♚h6+ ♔g8 3.♚h4 ♖e2 4.♕h6+-
 or 1...♞f3? 2.♚h6+ ♔g8 3.♚h1! ♖e3 4.♕h6+-.

1...f6+! 2.♕h4 g5+

2...♞f3?! is tempting because Black, after the forced continuation 3.♚e7+ ♔h6 4.g5+ fxg5+ 5.♚xg5+ ♔h7, is close to the drawn B.Guretzky-Cornitz position: all he needs is to play...♞f5 when the king is on the 7th or the 8th rank. However he fails to reach it: White plays 6.♚e7+ ♔h6



7. ♖e5! ♔h7 8. ♚c7+ ♔h6 9. ♕g4 ♜f5 10. ♛e7 ♞h5 11. ♞f8+ ♔h7 12. ♞f7+ ♔h6 13. ♞g8 ♞g5+ 14. ♕f4 ♜f5+ 15. ♕e4+— forcing the black king ahead and achieving a winning position (Dvoretsky).

3. ♕g3 ♜f4 4. ♞f7+ ♔h6

His unfavourably placed king betrays White.

5. ♕g2!?

5. ♞g8 ♜f1 is useless.

5... ♞xg4+ 6. ♕f3 ♜f4+

6... f5!? - Dvoretsky.

7. ♕e3 ♞h4! 8. ♞xf6+ ♔h5 9. ♞g7

9. ♞f7+ ♔h6 and... ♜f4=.

9... ♜f4 ½-½

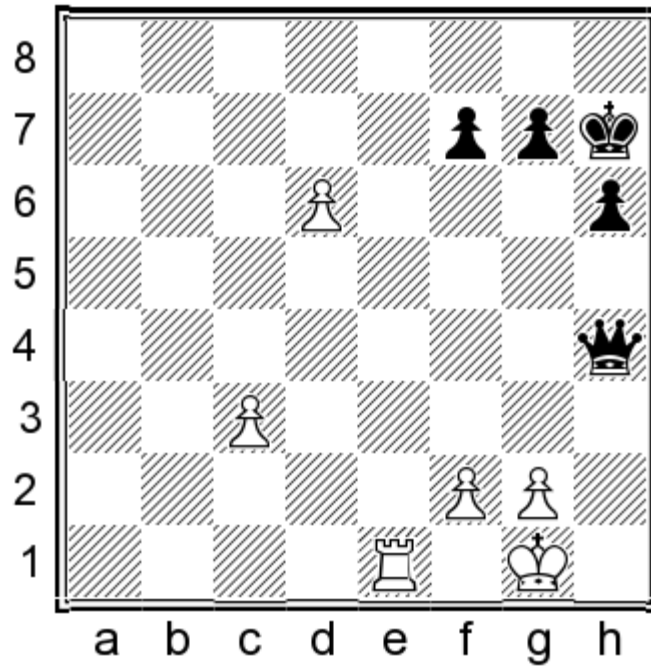
The B.Guretzky-Cornitz drawing position arises. Summing up, Black holds no matter who is on move.

20

Bron Vladimir

Ordal SA

Kharkov 1936



We must keep in mind that in multi-pawn endings with a far-advanced passed pawn being supported by the rook from behind, a queen, when it must block the pawn, can be even weaker than the rook.

1.d7 ♖d8 2.♞d1 ♔g8 3.c4 ♔f8 4.c5 ♔e7 5.c6 f5?

Black could probably save the game after 5...♞a5! (planning...♔d8) 6.♞d3 (6.d8=♞+? ♞xd8 7.♞xd8 ♔xd8—) 6...♞e1+ 7.♔h2 ♞e5+ 8.g3 ♔d8 9.♞e3 ♞h5+ 10.♔g1 ♞d1+ with a perpetual check.

6.♞e1+ ♔f7 7.♞c1! ♞c7 8.g3!

8.♞d1? ♔e7 9.♞e1+ ♔f7 10.♞e8 (10.g3 ♞d6!=) is premature in view of 10...♞f4! 11.d8=♞ (11.♞e1 ♞d2; 11.g3 ♞c1+ 12.♔h2 ♞f1) 11...♞c1+ 12.♞e1 (12.♔h2 ♞f4+) 12...♞xe1+ 13.♔h2 ♞xf2= and White cannot escape from checks (Dvoretzky). 8.♔f1! is equivalent.

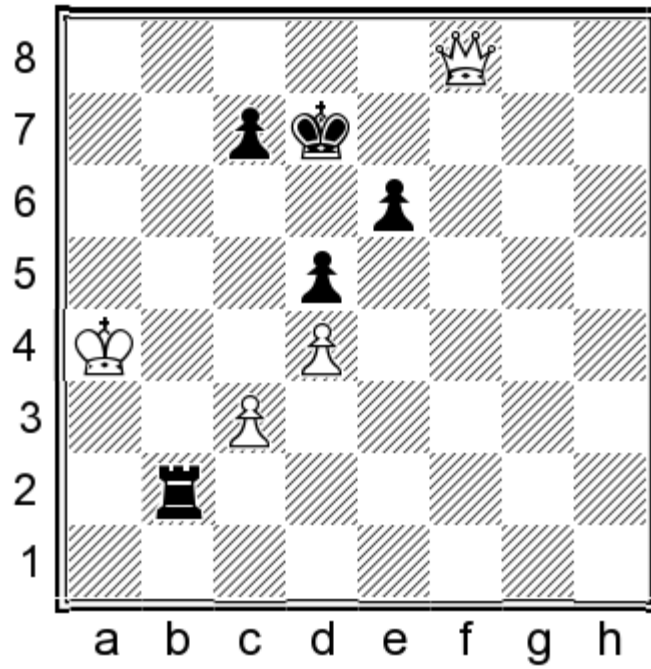
8...f4 9.♞d1 ♔e7

9...♞d8 10.c7.

10.♞e1+ ♔f7 11.♞e8 ♞xc6 12.d8=♔+! 1-0

21

**Jobava Baadur
Rathnakaran Kantholi
Dubai 2016**



White should advance his king, creating attacking motifs.

42. ♖f7+ ♔d6 43. ♕e8 ♖b6 44. ♔a5! ♖b3 45. ♕d8+ ♔c6 46. ♕e7! ♖xc3

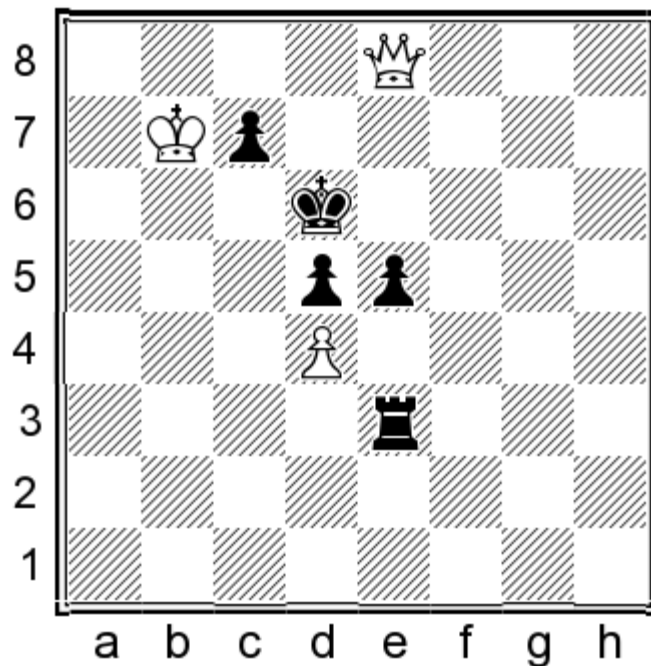
What else? If 46... ♔b7 47. ♕xe6 ♖xc3 48. ♕xd5++.

47. ♔a6!?

47. ♕xe6+ ♔b7 48. ♕xd5+ was simple but White has another way to improve!

47... ♖e3 48. ♕e8+ ♔d6 49. ♔b7 e5

49... ♖e4 50. ♕d8# or 49... ♖b3+ 50. ♔c8 ♖d3 51. ♕d7#.



50. ♖f8+! ♔d7

50... ♕e6 51. ♖h6+.

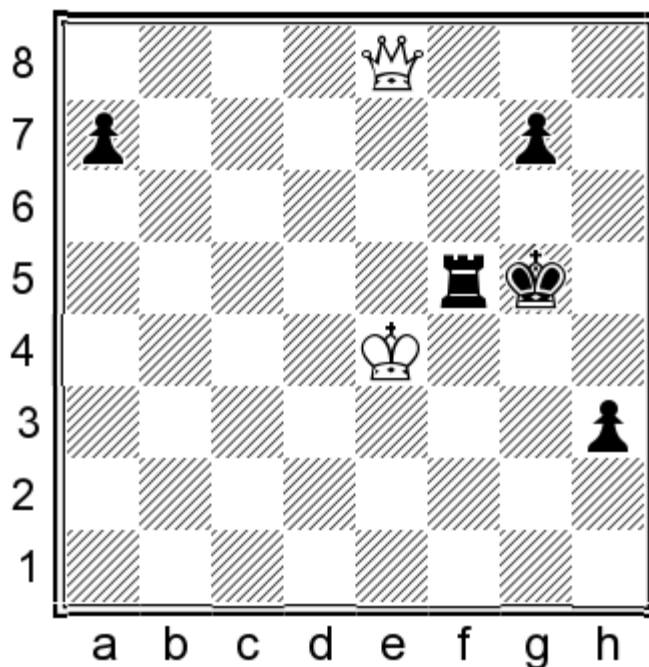
51. ♖g7+ 1-0

And Black resigned due to 51... ♕e8 52. dxe5.

The final example is enlightening of the practice value:

22

Karkanaque Ilir
Grivas Efstratios
Varna 1994

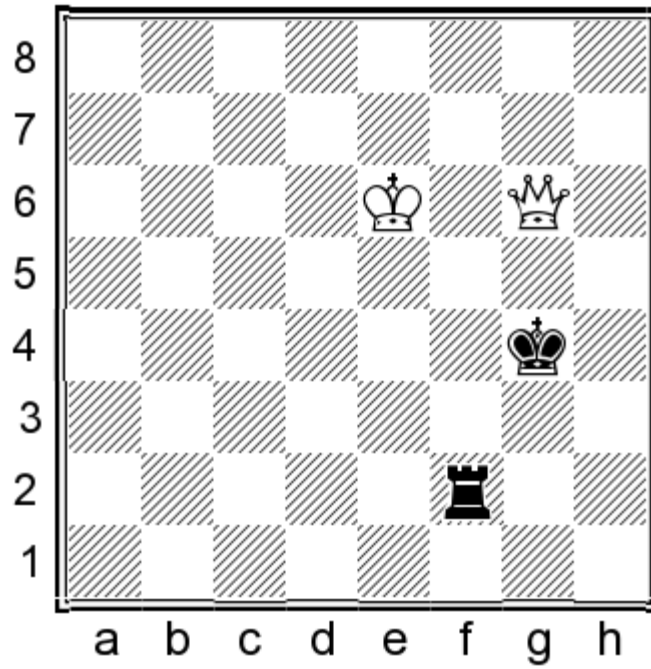


Black can easily hold the draw by retaining either the g- or the h-pawns. However, due to the competitive requirements of the Greek National Team (it was the last round of the Balkaniad), the author received an order to play for a win (!). Of course, the only aim was the opponent's clock. This explains Black's 'efforts' to lose the game, burning all bridges behind him. Naturally, one cannot possibly comment on a game where both players had approximately a minute each to complete their moves, but I will try to spot some interesting 'moments'.

70...g6 71. ♖d8+ ♔g4 72. ♖d1+ ♔h4 73. ♖e1+ ♔g4 74. ♖g1+ ♔h5 75. ♖g3 a5 76. ♖xh3+ ♔g5 77. ♖h8 a4 78. ♕e3 a3
79. ♖d8+ ♔g4 80. ♖d1+ ♔g5 81. ♖a4 ♔h6 82. ♖xa3 ♔g7 83. ♖e7+ ♔g8 84. ♕e4 ♔h8 85. ♖h4+ ♔g7 86. ♕e3 ♖f7
87. ♖d8 ♖f5 88. ♖d4+ ♔g8 89. ♕e2 ♖f7 90. ♖d8+ ♔g7 91. ♕e3 ♖f6 92. ♕e4 ♖f5 93. ♖e7+ ♔g8 94. ♖d7 ♖f7 95. ♖h3 ♖f5
96. ♖h6 ♔f7 97. ♖h7+ ♔f6 98. ♖h8+ ♔g5 99. ♕d4 ♖f1 100. ♕e3 ♖f5 101. ♕e4 ♔g4 102. ♖h6 ♖f4+? 103. ♕e5?

Incredible, but both sides overlooked the simple 103. ♖xf4+.

103... ♖f5+ 104. ♕e6 ♖f2 105. ♖xg6+



Even for titled chess-players time is an important factor, even in theoretically-won positions. Let's see why.

105...♔f3 106.♔e5 ♔e2 107.♚g4+ ♔d2 108.♔d4 ♚e2 109.♚f4+ ♔c2 110.♚f3 ♚d2+ 111.♔c4 ♔b2?

111...♔b1.

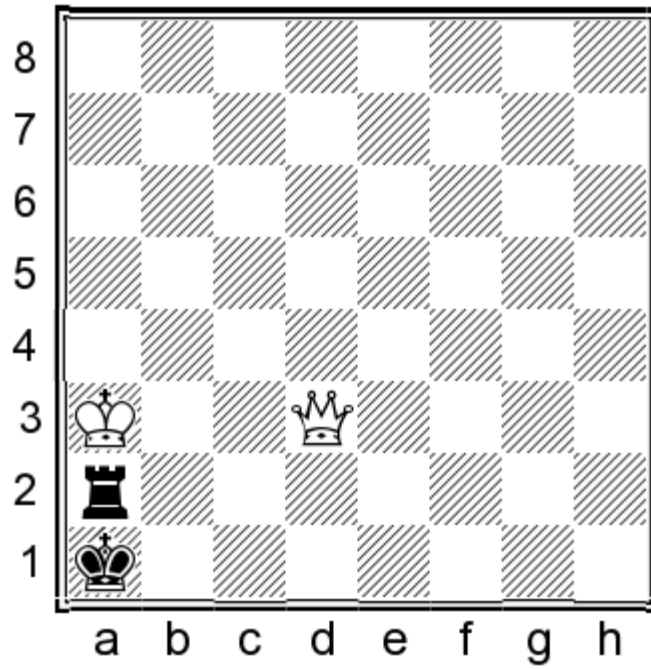
112.♚e3?

112.♚c3+ is not that difficult!

112...♚c2+ 113.♔b4 ♚c1 114.♚b3+ ♔a1 115.♔a3 ♚c2 116.♚d3

Of course not 116.♚xc2? stalemate, but easier is 116.♚e3.

116...♚a2+



117.♔b3?

A new comedy of errors starts. 117.♔b4 is still on the right track.

117...♖b2+?

117...♖a3+! 118.♔xa3 stalemate!

118.♔c3?

118.♔c4 is the right move, but not 118.♔a3 ♖b3+ 119.♔xb3 stalemate again!

118...♔a2?

118...♖b3+ 119.♔xb3 stalemate.

119.♖a6+

With 119.♖d1 the 'Philidor Position' (mentioned in earlier examples) arises.

119...♔b1 120.♖f1+ ♔a2 121.♖a6+

121.♖d1

121...♔b1 122.♖a7 ♖c2+ 123.♔d3 ♖b2 124.♔e3 ♔c1 125.♔d3 ♖d2+ 126.♔e3 ♖d5?!

126...♖b2.

127.♖c7+

127.♖a1+ ♔c2 128.♖a2+.

127...♔b2

127...♔d1 128.♚b7 ♖e5+ 129.♔d3 ♔e1 130.♚g2 with mate to follow. 130.♚h1+ ♔f2 131.♚h2+ is also winning.

128.♚b7+ 1-0

And here Black ran out of time. A game full of critical mistakes but indeed quite instructive of the various possibilities in this ending.

QUEEN VS TWO ROOKS

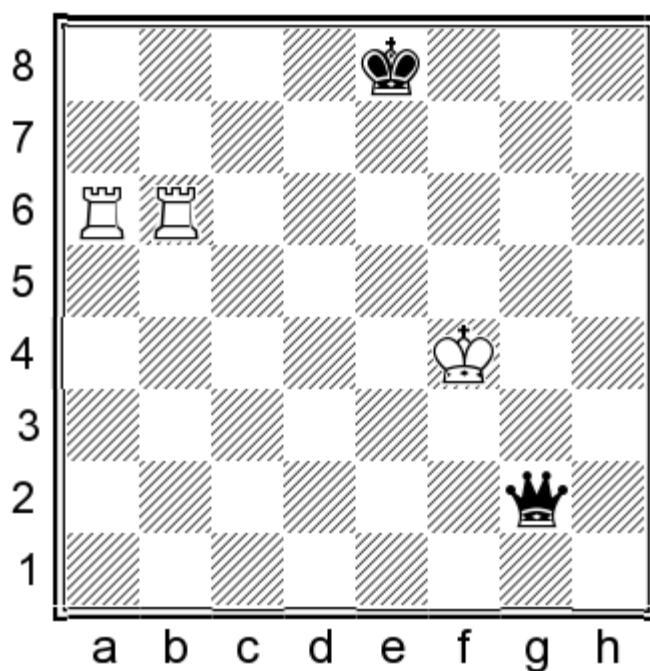
This ending is quite simple, as the queen should be able to deliver perpetual check. The 'rooks' side has just two aims: to deliver mate or win the queen.

Both of the above are quite difficult in theory and also in practise but nevertheless the 'queen' side should be careful not to fall into the 5% of losses found here!

The rooks should be very near to their king for two purposes: to protect him and to co-operate for a potential mating net.

As said, the winning ratio for the rooks are less than 5% (according to statistics) and still requires the 'help' of the opponent!

1
Barcza Gedeon
Prins Lodewijk
Saltsjobaden 1952



White's king is rather exposed and no mate threats have emerged, so a draw is the natural outcome.

73... ♖f2+ 74. ♔e5 ♚e3+ 75. ♔d6 ♜f4+ 76. ♔c6 ♜c4+ 77. ♔b7 ♚d5+ 78. ♔a7 ♔d7

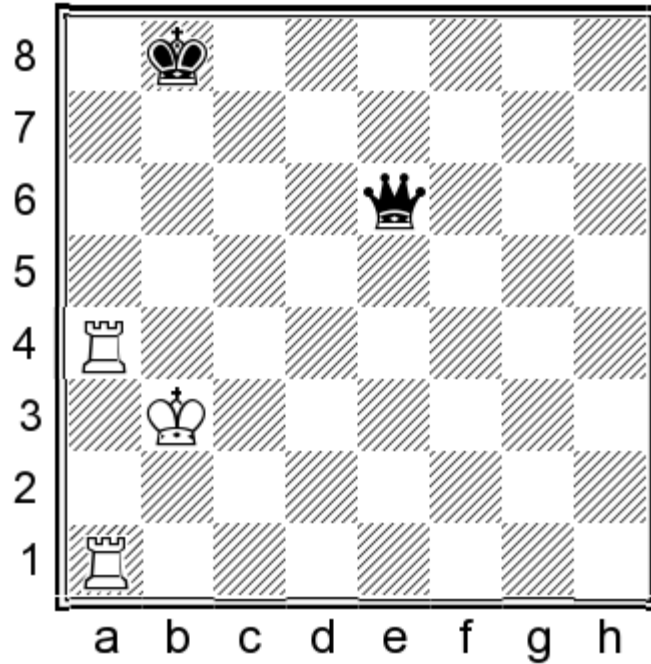
The checks could continue: **78... ♚d7+ 79. ♖b7 ♜f5 80. ♖c6 ♜g4 81. ♔b8 ♜f4+=.**

79. ♖d6+

Ending the 'torture'!

79... ♜xd6 80. ♖xd6+ ♔xd6 1/2-1/2

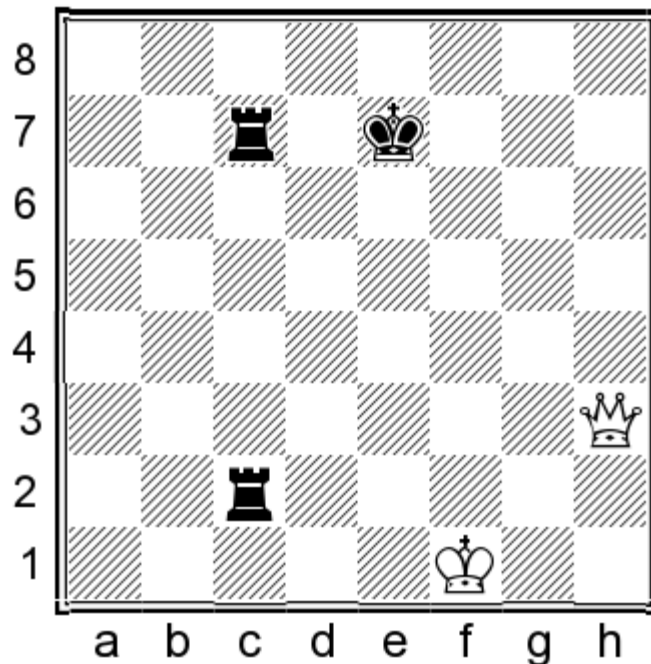
2
Unuk Laura
Melia Salome



Again a drawn position. Still, White tried for some more moves as she has nothing to lose:

61. ♖c4 ♜e3+ 62. ♖c3 ♜b6+ 63. ♔a2 ♜a7+ 64. ♔b2 ♜f2+ 65. ♖c2 ♜d4+ 66. ♔a2 ♜a7+ 67. ♔b1 ♜g1+ 68. ♔b2 ♜b6+ 69. ♔c1 1/2-1/2

3
 Vernacki Srdjan
 Saric Sinisa
 Borovo 2003



The placement of the queen decides.

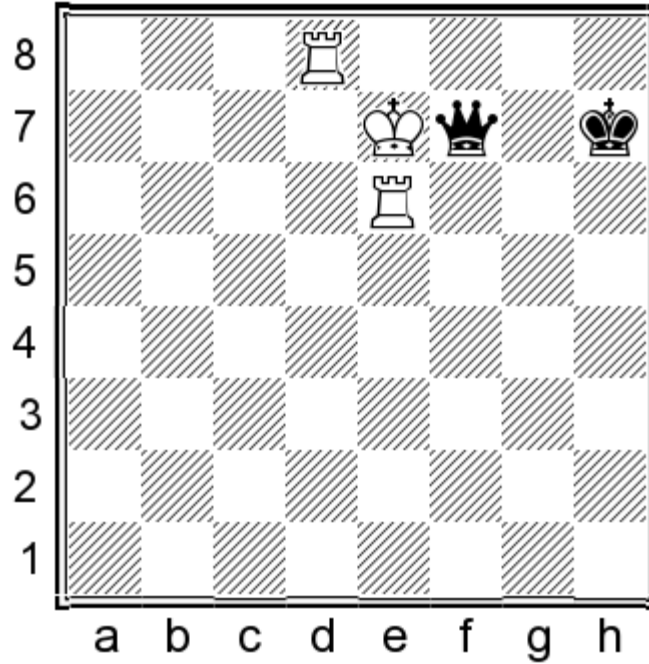
76...♞c1+ 77.♔f2 ♞7c2+ 78.♔g3 ♞c3+ 0-1

4

Breuer Stefan

Hoerstmann Martin

Germany 2003



84.♔d6

84.♔xf7 would lead to a stalemate but anyway Black can hold.

84...♞f4+ 85.♔c6 ♞c4+ 86.♔d7 ♞b5+ 87.♔c7 ♞a5+ 88.♞b6 ♞a7+ 89.♔c6 ♞a4+ 90.♔b7 ♞e4+ 91.♔b8 ♞f4+ 92.♞dd6 ♔g8 93.♔a8 ♞f3+ 94.♞dc6

It is rather difficult for White to 'commit suicide' but he should still be careful, as his king can be driven into a mating net.

94...♞a3+ 95.♔b7 ♞f3 96.♔a8 ♞a3+ 97.♞a6 ♞e7?

A decisive blunder! 97...♞f8+ continues the endless checking, assuring the draw.

98.♞c8+ ♔f7 99.♞a7 1-0

QUEEN VS TWO ROOKS & PAWNS

An ending where the rooks and the pawn(s) are in charge and the queen is trying to save the day by achieving perpetual check!

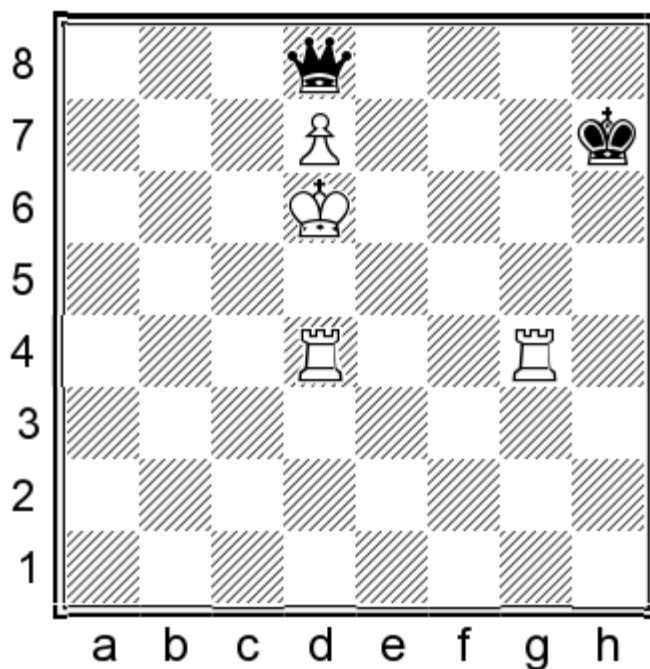
Starting with one pawn on the board, we can easily understand that the central pawn (e & d) is not that helpful, as it allows the queen to check from everywhere! So, it reduces the winning chances if it is not advanced.

1

Nikolic Predrag

Tkachiev Vladislav

Wijk aan Zee 1995



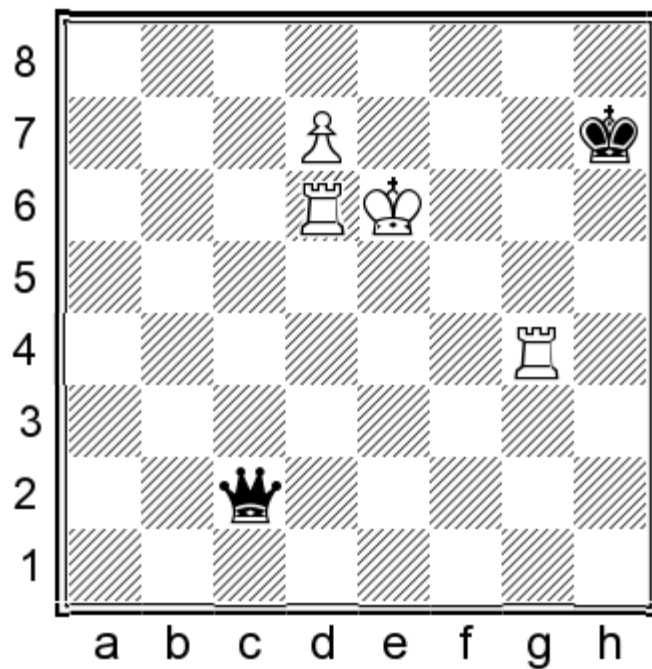
Activity (white king) and passivity (black queen) makes the difference in this example. The pawn is already well-advanced and its king supports it.

72.♔e6! ♚b6+ 73.♔f7 ♚b3+ 74.♔e7

74.♔f8! was more accurate, leading to the game: 74...♚a3+ 75.♔e8.

74...♚a3+

Black should try 74...♚e3+, although after 75.♔f7 ♚f3+ 76.♔e6 ♚c6+ 77.♖d6 ♚c2



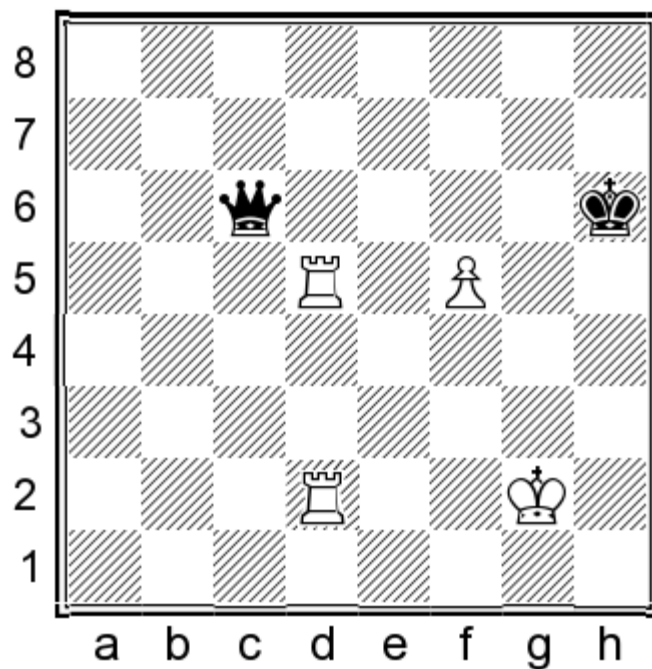
78. ♖h4+! (78. d8=♚? ♜f5+!=) 78... ♔g7 79. d8=♚+- he loses anyway.

75. ♔e8 ♜e3+ 76. ♝de4 1-0

The bishop pawn is not that bad, but there still exists too many drawn positions and many checks!

2

Caruana Fabiano
Topalov Veselin
Bucharest 2012



Here Black is in no danger, as the pawn is prematurely advanced.

78.♔g3 ♕g5! 79.f6+ ♔g6! 80.♖2d3 ♜c7+ 81.♖d6 ♜c5 1/2-1/2

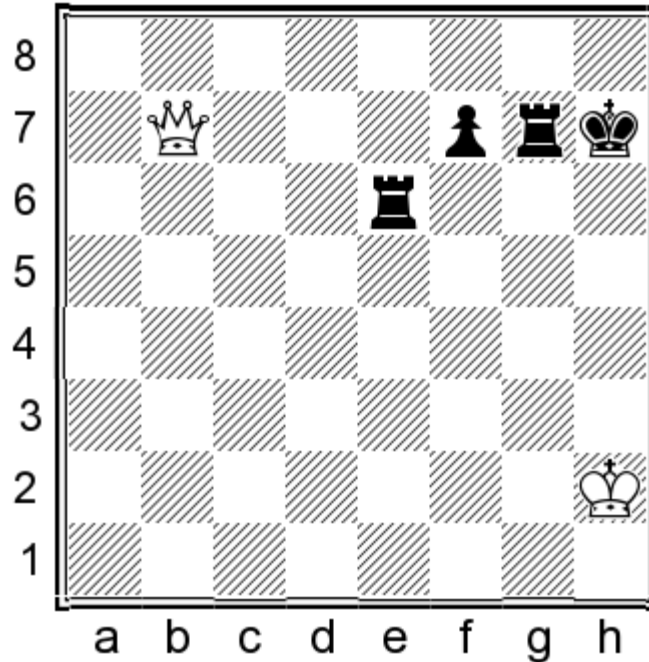
White's king is too exposed for any winning attempts.

3

Landa Konstantin

Kornev Alexei

Taganrog 2011



White's king has been caught in a deadly mating net, so the end can't be far off...

71.♜b1+ ♖eg6 72.♜f5 ♔h8! 73.♜c8+ ♖g8 74.♜h3+ ♔g7 75.♜c3+ f6?!

Black could finish the game shortly by a nice (and to be remembered) manoeuvre: 75...♔h7! 76.♜c2 ♖h8! and next...♔g7+ or...♔g8+.

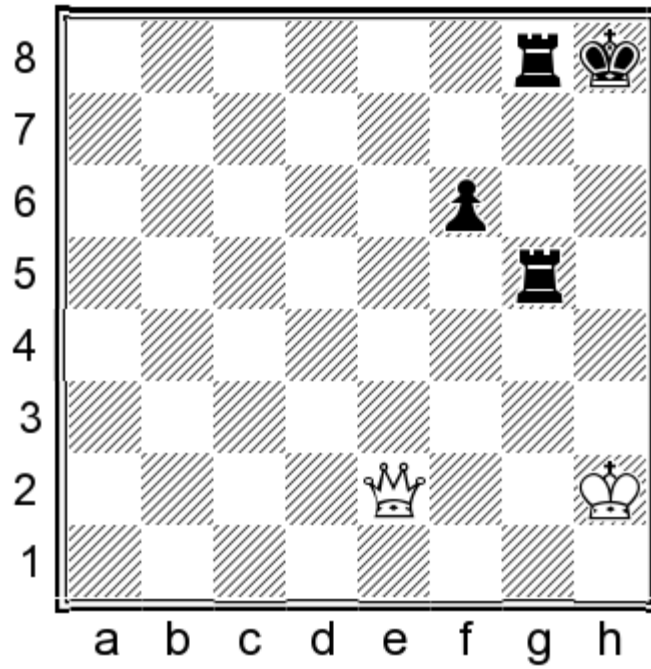
76.♜c7+ ♔h8 77.♜f4 ♖8g7 78.♜b8+ ♔h7 79.♜b1 ♖e7 80.♔h3 ♔g7 81.♜d3 ♖g5

More accurate was 81...♖e5! 82.♜d7+ ♔h6 83.♜d2+ ♖eg5 84.♔h4 ♖g8 85.♜f4 ♔g7 86.♜c7+ ♔g6 87.♜c2+ ♔h6 88.♜d1 (88.♜d2 ♖h8!) 88...♖h8+.

82.♜d6 ♖f7 83.♜d8 ♔h7 84.♔h4 ♔g7 85.♔h3 ♖g1 86.♔h4 ♖g2 87.♔h3 ♖g5 88.♔h4 ♖b7

Black couldn't imagine the above-mentioned manoeuvre and he plays moves senselessly, trying to fish for something. The only plus for him is that his position remains winning!

89.♔h3 ♖a7 90.♔h2 ♖g6 91.♔h3 ♔h7 92.♔h2 ♖ag7 93.♜d3 ♔h8 94.♜d8+ ♖g8 95.♜d2 ♖g5 96.♜e2



96...R5g7! 0-1

Finally! And as the threat 97...Rh7+ cannot be avoided, White resigned!

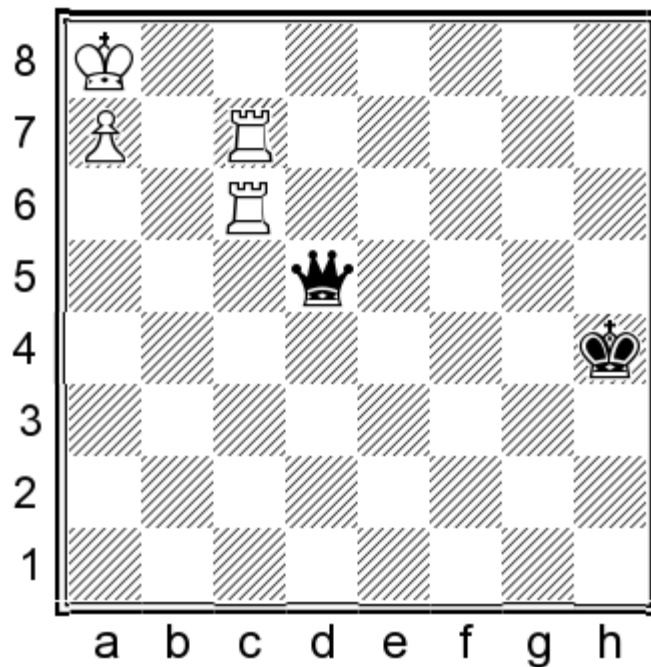
As for the rook pawn, the problem is that it limits its own king as well, a fact which in many cases helps the queen to deliver perpetual.

4

Smirnov Pavel

Roeder Mathias

Golden Sands 2014



At first sight it seems that White will prevail, but the rook pawn does not give the white king enough space to manoeuvre, so theoretically the position is drawn - but practically Black has difficult in saving it!

105.♔b7 ♚b5+ 106.♔a8 ♚d5 107.♔b8 ♚b5+ 108.♔c8 ♚f5+

Black is obliged to continually check.

109.♞d7 ♚a5?

Which he forgets! He had to opt for 109...♚f8+ 110.♞d8 ♚f5+ 111.♞d7 (111.♔c7 ♚a5+) 111...♚f8+, achieving the draw.

110.♞d4+ ♔g3 111.♔b7! ♚b5+ 112.♞b6 1-0

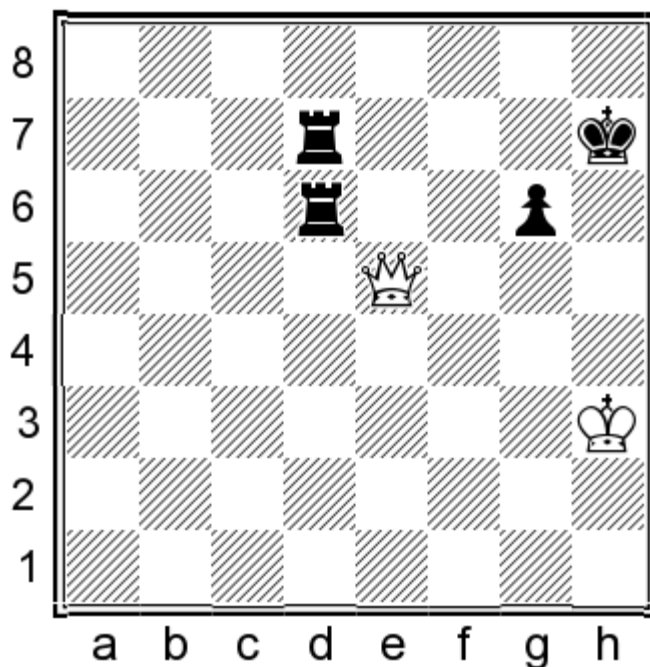
The knight pawn should be the best; everything seems to run smoothly! So, we will examine more positions with this interesting pawn!

5

Moreno Trujillo Alejandro

Granda Zuniga Julio

Madrid 2012



A winning position for Black. He will slowly advance his pawn, creating at the same time mating threats on the opponent king. The procedure is slow but it is difficult for White to find a perpetual check - the extra pawn provides a good shelter for the black king.

73...♞d3+ 74.♔g2 ♞b3 75.♚e2 ♞db7 76.♚e6 ♞c3 77.♚e2 ♞d7!

Now the queen cannot easily leave the 2nd rank, due to mating threats (...♞d2+ and...♞c1+).

78.♔h2 ♞f7 79.♔g2 ♞c5 80.♚e3 ♞cf5 81.♚h3+ ♔g7 82.♚e3 ♞c7 83.♚d4+ ♔f7 84.♚d2 ♞e7 85.♔g3 ♞fe5 86.♚f4+ ♞f5 87.♚d2 ♞a7 88.♚e3 ♞b7 89.♚c3 ♞d7 90.♚b3+ ♞fd5 91.♔f4 ♔f6 92.♚b2+ ♞d4+ 93.♔e3

93.♔f3 ♕f5 94.♚c2+ ♜d3+ 95.♖g2 ♗g5—+.

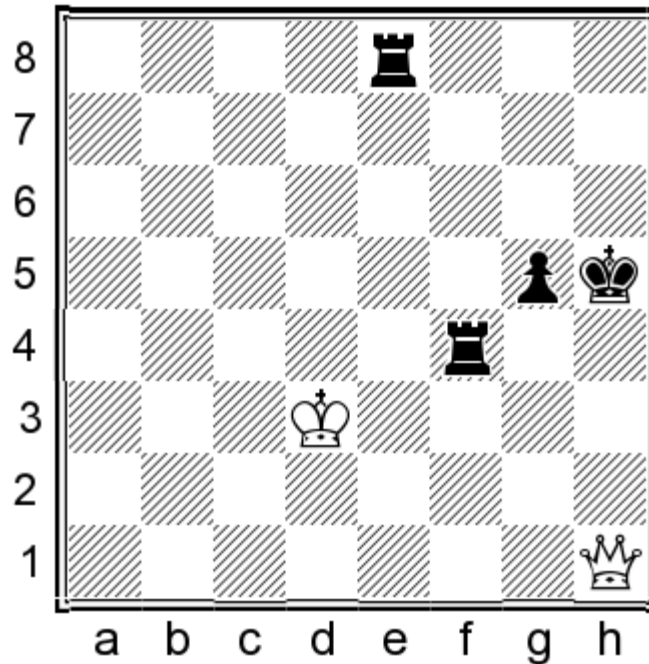
93...♖g5 94.♚g2+ ♜g4 95.♚c6 ♜e7+ 96.♖f2 ♜f7+ 97.♖e2 ♖h5 98.♚h1+ ♜h4 99.♚d5+ ♜f5 100.♚e6 ♜hf4 101.♚e8 ♜f8 102.♚c6 g5

Finally the pawn advances!

103.♚h1+ ♜h4 104.♚g2 ♜e8+ 105.♖d3 ♜f4

105...♜he4 looks better: 106.♚h2+ ♖g6 107.♚d6+ ♜e6 108.♚b8 g4—+.

106.♚h1+



106...♖g6?

A blunder that could have cost the half-point. 106...♖g4! 107.♚g2+ ♖f5 108.♚d5+ ♜e5—+ was correct.

107.♚c6+! ♖f7 108.♚d5+?

White didn't take his chance: 108.♚b5! ♜d8+ (108...♖g6 109.♚c6+=) 109.♖e3 and Black cannot protect his pawn!

108...♖f6 109.♚d6+ ♖f7 110.♚d5+ ♖f6 111.♚d6+ ♜e6 112.♚f8+ ♖g6 113.♚g8+ ♖f5 114.♚f7+ ♜f6 115.♚d7+ ♖g6 116.♚e8+ ♜f7 117.♚g8+ ♖h5 118.♚h8+ ♖g4

Black is back on the right track!

119.♚h1 ♜f3+ 120.♖e2 ♜f2+ 121.♖e3 ♜7f3+ 122.♖e4 ♜e2+ 123.♖d4 ♜ff2 124.♚h6 ♜d2+ 125.♖c3 ♜d5 126.♚e6+ ♜df5 127.♚e1 ♖g3 128.♚g1+ ♜g2 129.♚e1+ ♖h2 130.♚e4?!

130.♖d3 was the best try: 130...♜f4 131.♚e5 ♜g3+ 132.♖e2 ♜ff3—+.

130...♜gf2?!

130...♖f3+! was winning on the spot: 131.♚xf3 (131.♔d4 ♖f4—+) 131...♞g3 132.♚xg3+ ♔xg3—+.

131.♚e7 ♞5f3+ 132.♔d4 ♞f4+ 133.♔e3 g4 134.♚h7+ ♔g2 135.♚b7+ ♞2f3+ 136.♔e2 ♞a4!

Never forget that the white king can be also in trouble!

137.♚d5 ♞b4 138.♚e5 ♞b2+! 0-1

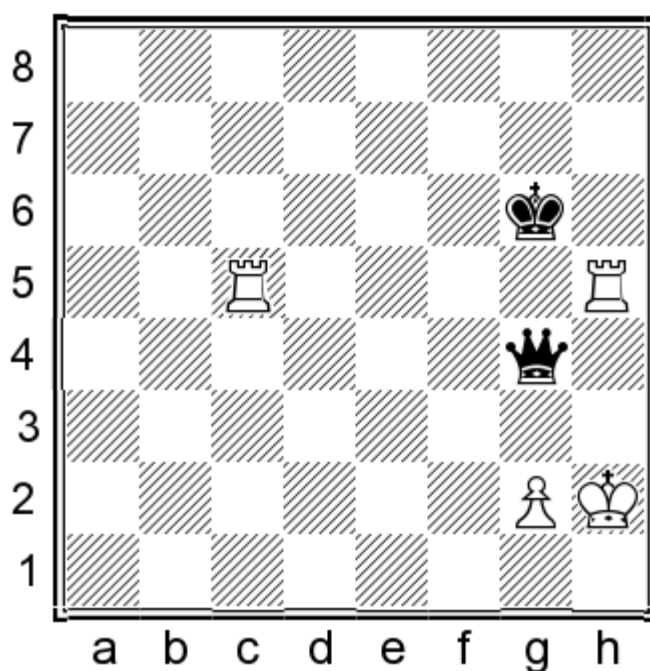
A trick to remember.

6

Van der Wiel John

Winants Luc

Brussels 1987

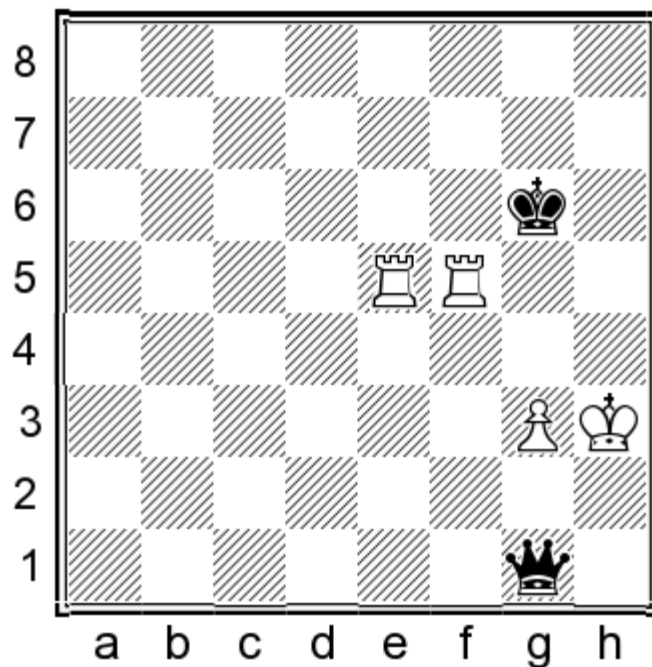


White wins but the procedure can be long and tiring...

74...♚f4+ 75.♔g1 ♞e3+ 76.♔h1 ♞f4 77.♞h3 ♞f1+ 78.♔h2 ♞f4+ 79.♞g3+ ♔f7 80.♞h5

White secures the king and prepares the advance of the pawn.

80...♔e6 81.♔h3 ♞c1 82.♞gg5 ♞e3+ 83.g3 ♞g1 84.♞e5+ ♔f6 85.♞hf5+! ♔g6



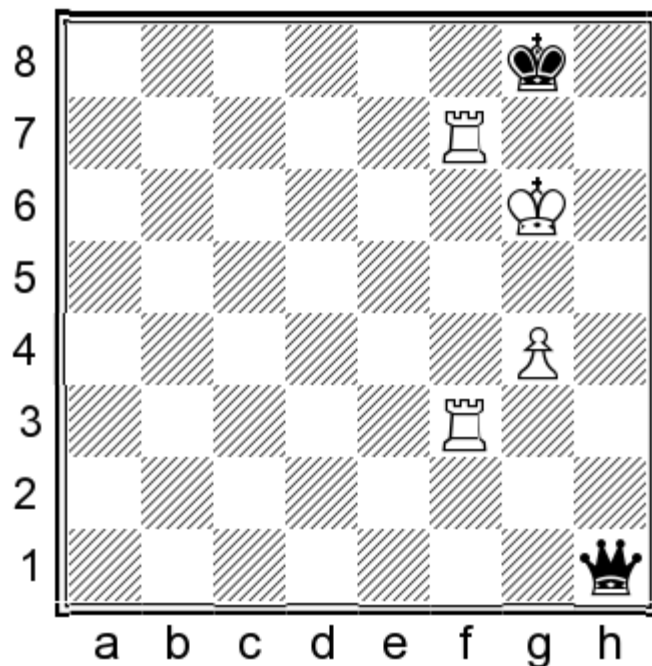
86.♖f3!

White's last two moves were forced, so as to offer security to the king on the 4th rank.

86...♚h1+ 87.♔g4 ♚d1 88.♞e6+ ♔g7 89.♞ef6 ♚d7+ 90.♔h5 ♚d1

90...♚e8+ 91.♞f7+ ♔g8 92.g4+-.

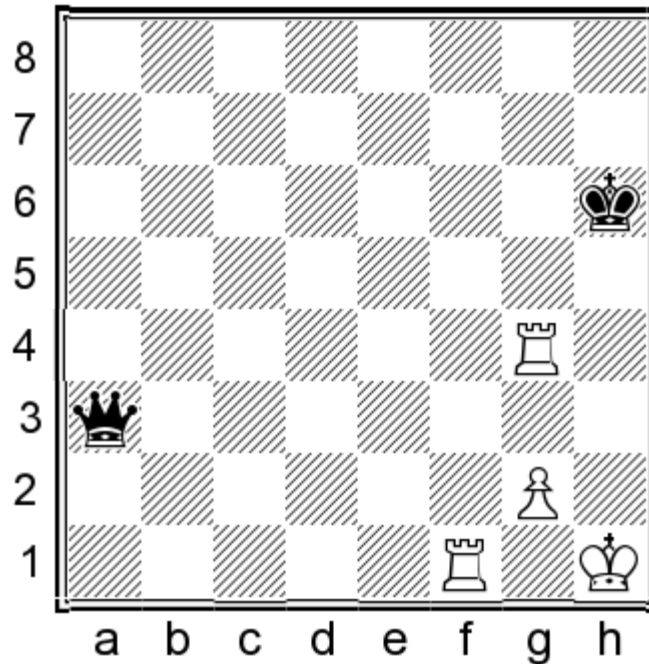
91.♞f7+ ♔g8 92.g4 ♚h1+ 93.♔g6 1-0



And Black resigned due to **93...♚b1+ 94.♞3f5 ♚b6+ 95.♞7f6 ♚d8 96.♞f8+ ♚xf8 97.♞xf8+ ♔xf8 98.♔h7+-.**

7

Najdorf Miguel
Ribli Zoltan
Wijk aan Zee 1973



A very similar position to the last game, and of course White is again winning.

89.♖f3 ♜a1+ 90.♔h2 ♜e5+ 91.♖fg3

Mating threats appears suddenly! The pawn is quite useful, providing shelter to its king.

91...♔h5 92.♖g8

The simple 92.♖g5+ ♜xg5 93.♖xg5+ ♔xg5 94.♔g3 was winning as well.

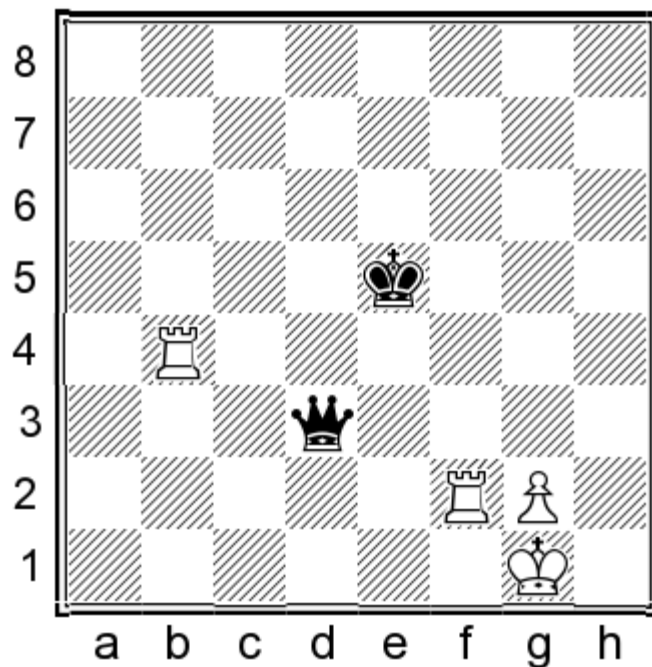
92...♔h6 93.♖h8+!

A typical exchanging manoeuvre!

93...♜xh8 94.♖h3+ ♔g7 95.♖xh8 ♔xh8 96.♔g3 ♔g7 97.♔g4 ♔g6 98.g3 ♔f6 99.♔h5 ♔g7 100.♔g5 ♔h7 101.♔f6 ♔g8 102.♔g6 ♔h8 103.g4 ♔g8 104.g5 ♔h8 105.♔f7 1-0

8

Dzagnidze Nana
Gunina Valentina
Batumi 2016



The black king is placed in the centre, so mating threats are avoided for now.

68.♖bf4 ♜b1+ 69.♞f1 ♜b6+ 70.♞4f2 ♜e3!

Now White needs to regroup her rooks.

71.♞d1 ♜a7 72.♞e1+ ♔d4 73.g3 ♔c4 74.♞e4+ ♔d5 75.♞ee2 ♔d6 76.♔g2 ♜a8+ 77.♞f3 ♜d5 78.♞ee3 ♜b7 79.g4!

White is steadily improving, while Black can do nothing more than wait for some perpetual check opportunity to appear.

79...♜b4 80.g5?!

80.♔g3 was natural. Now the win could have been prolonged for 30 moves!

80...♜b2+?!

80...♜b5! would have made White to regret her last move, although she can still win: 81.♞f6+ (81.♞g3? ♜b2+!=) 81...♔c7 82.♞g3 ♜e2+ 83.♞f2 ♜e4+ 84.♔h3 ♜h7+ 85.♔g4 ♜d7+ 86.♞f5 ♜d4+ 87.♔h3 ♜h8+ 88.♔g2 ♜b2+ 89.♞f2 and so on.

81.♔g3 ♜b1 82.♔g4!

The white king will find shelter in front of his pawn, assisting it to queen.

82...♔d5 83.♞f5+ ♔d6 84.♞fe5 ♜d1+ 85.♔f5 ♜f1+ 86.♔g6 ♜f4 87.♔g7! ♜a4 88.♞e6+ ♔d7 89.g6 ♜g4 90.♔g8 ♜c4 91.g7 ♜a2 92.♔h7 ♜h2+ 93.♞h6 ♜c2+ 94.♔h8 ♜b2 95.♞f3 1-0

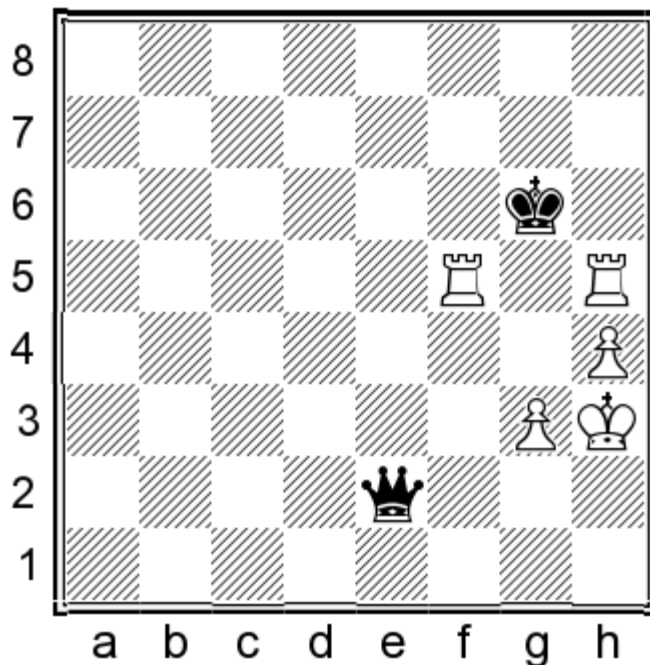
Black resigned. After 95...♔e7 96.♞ff6 White queens.

With two or more pawns the win shouldn't be difficult for the rooks - the material is already too high in their favour!

Actually the second pawn is an important extra shelter for its king! Keep in mind that the only salvation for the 'queen' side is perpetual check or - in some very rare cases - stalemate.

If the pawns are connected there is usually no chance for perpetual check, thereby affording an easy win. Here the flank pawns should be a much easier case than the central ones.

9
Jakobsen Ole
Greger Roland
Copenhagen 1998



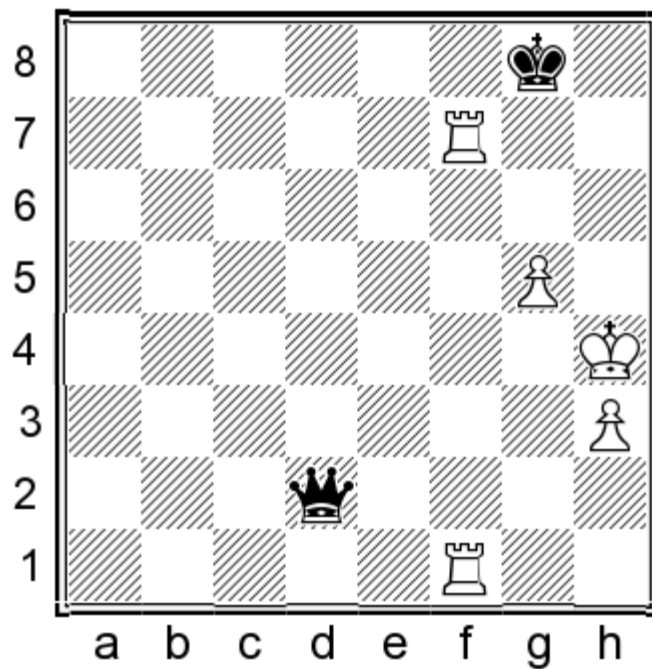
The end should be near to hand as White's rooks and connected pawns cannot be matched by the queen.

70.♖hg5+ ♔h6 71.♖f6+ ♔h7 72.♖gf5 ♚d1 73.♔h2

73.♖f1 ♚e2 74.g4 was good as well.

73...♚c2+ 74.♖f2 ♚c5 75.♖6f5 ♚d4 76.♖f7+ ♔g8 77.♖7f4 ♚d1 78.g4 ♔g7 79.♖4f3 ♚d6+ 80.♔h3 ♚d1 81.♖f1 ♚e2 82.h5 ♚e5 83.g5! 1-0

10
Navara David
Sargissian Gabriel
Huaian 2016



White wins smoothly, as the black king is also under mating net threats.

89.♔h5 ♖e2+ 90.♟f3 ♗e8 91.h4 ♔h8 92.♔h6

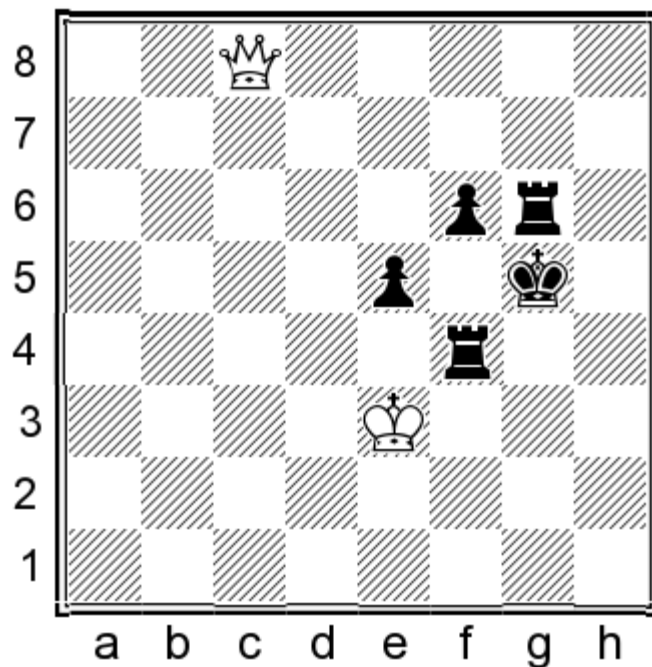
The white king is perfectly protected.

92...♗g8

92...♔g8 93.♟f8+ ♗xf8+ 94.♟xf8+ ♔xf8 95.g6+-.

93.♟f8 1-0

11
Yu Yangyi
Ding Liren
Danzhou 2014



98...f5 99.♖d8+ ♔g4 100.♖d1+ ♔h4 101.♗h1+ ♔g5 102.♗h8

102.♗g2+ ♖g4 ends the checks.

102...e4 103.♔d4 ♖f3 104.♗h2 ♖h6 105.♗b2

Or 105.♗g1+ ♔f6 106.♗g8 ♖d3+ 107.♔c4 ♖h1—.

105...♖e6 106.♔d5 ♖e7 107.♔d6

107.♗g2+ ♔f4 108.♗h2+ ♔g4 109.♗g2+ ♖g3 110.♗e2+ ♔g5—.

107...♖h7 108.♔e5 ♖hh3

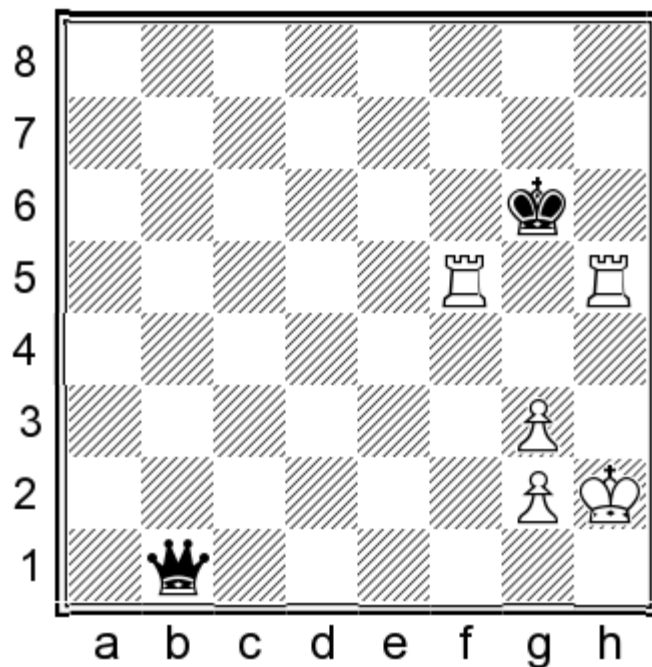
The rooks are perfect when co-operating!

109.♗d2+ ♔g4 110.♗e2 ♖hg3 111.♗h2 e3 112.♗e2 ♔h3 113.♔d4 ♖f2 114.♗e1 ♔g2 115.♔d3 e2+ 116.♔d4 f4
117.♔e4 ♖e3+ 118.♔f5 ♖f1 119.♗d2 0-1

And White resigned due to 119...♔g1 and the pawn queens.

An interesting case is that of doubled pawns. In a way they act like one, but offer better protection to the king:

12
Kramnik Vladimir
Andreikin Dmitry
Tromso 2013



Obviously this ending with the doubled pawns is an easy win, therefore White's task is simple here; using this fact he slowly but surely puts his opponent king 'on the ropes'.

56.♟fg5+ ♔f6 57.♞b5 ♚c2 58.♞h6+ ♔g7 59.♞bb6 ♚c5 60.♞bg6+ ♔f8

60...♔f7 61.♞c6 ♚e5 62.♞c7+! (the usual trick!) 62...♔g8 63.♞hh7+–.

61.♞h7! ♚f5 62.♞gg7 ♚e6 63.♞e7 1-0

63...♚g6 64.♞hf7+ ♔g8 65.♞g7+ ♚xg7 66.♞xg7+ ♔xg7 67.g4+–.

Separated pawns is the most difficult case. Usually the 'rooks' side 'forgets' one so as to strongly advance the other; in other words, using it as a decoy!

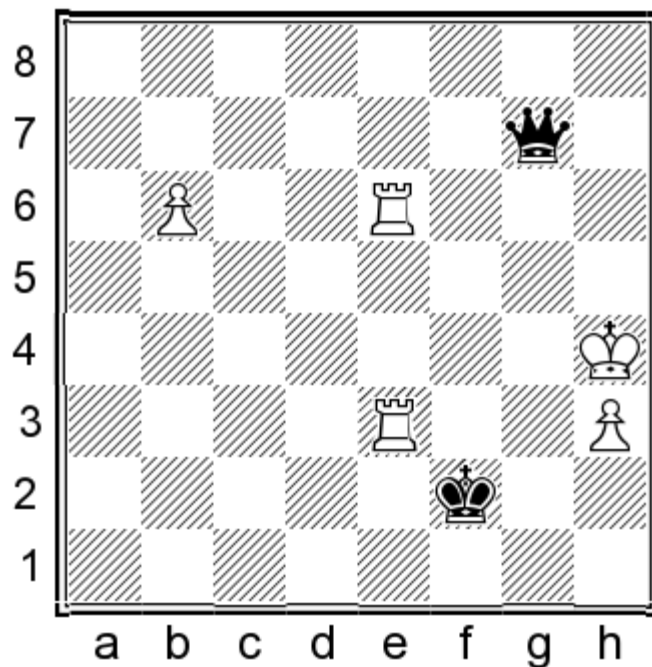
But of course the perpetual check is looming, as the king lacks satisfactory shelter.

13

Karpov Anatoly

Anand Viswanathan

Lausanne 1998



Here it is mostly the b-pawn and the mating threats that will carry the day.

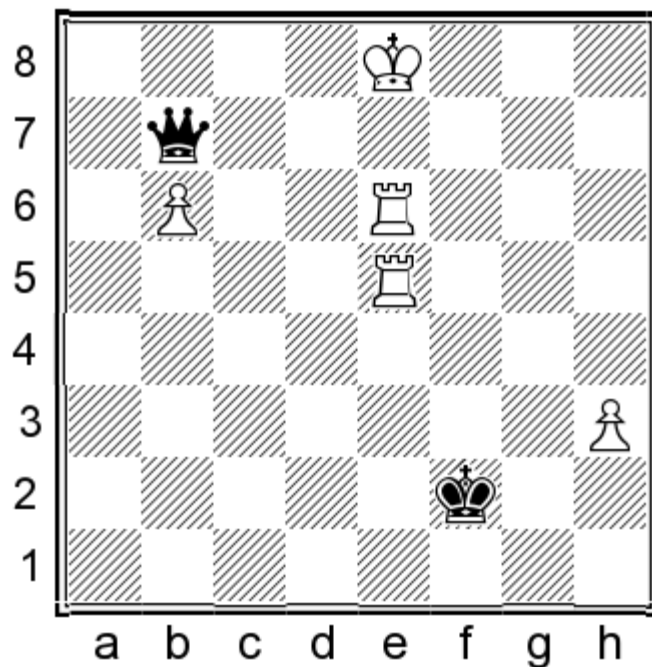
81. ♖3e5 ♜h8+

White will decisively advance his b-pawn after 81... ♜g3+ 82. ♔h5 ♜xh3+ 83. ♔g6 ♜g2+ 84. ♖g5 ♜b7 85. ♖f5+ ♔g3 86. ♖f7.

82. ♔g4 ♜g7+ 83. ♔f5 ♜h7+ 84. ♔f6 ♜h4+

84... ♜xh3? loses the queen after 85. ♖e2+ ♔f1 86. ♖e1+ ♔f2 87. ♖6e2+- - the decoy!

85. ♔f7 ♜h7+ 86. ♔e8 ♜b7



The black queen has blockaded the b-pawn, so White turns to his other foot-soldier now!

87.h4! ♖b8+ 88.♗f7 ♖b7+ 89.♗g6 ♖b8 90.h5 ♖g8+ 91.♗f5 ♖h7+ 92.♗f6 ♗f3 93.♞e3+ ♗f2 94.♞e2+ ♗f3 95.♞2e3+ ♗f2 96.♗g5 ♖g8+ 97.♗h4 ♖d8+ 98.♗h3 ♖d1 99.♞e2+ ♗f3 100.♗h2?!

100.♞e1! wins on the spot due to the threat of 101.♞f1#.

100...♖d8 101.♞6e3+ ♗f4 102.b7 ♖b6 103.♞e4+ ♗f3 104.♞2e3+ ♗f2 105.♞e7 ♖d6+ 106.♗h3 ♖b8 107.♞3e5 ♗g1 108.♞g7+ 1-0

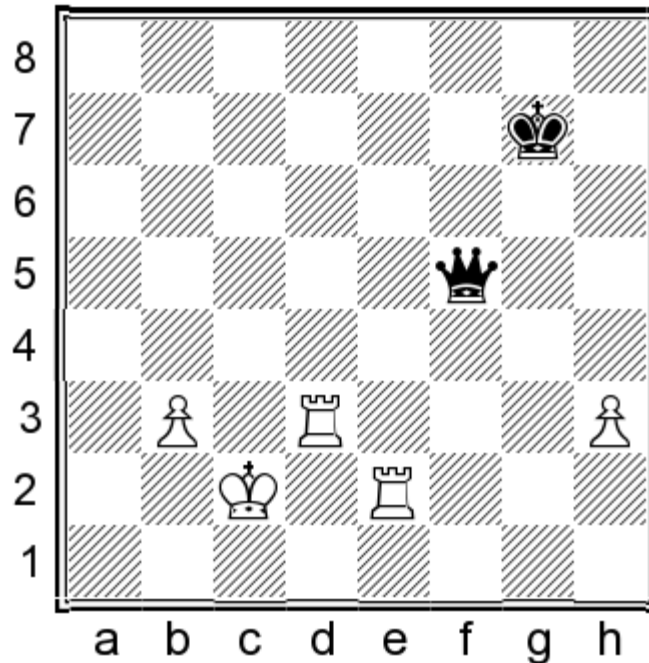
108...♗f2 109.♞f7+ ♗g1 110.♞e1#.

14

Polgar Judit

Kapnisis Spyridon

Patras 2012



61.♞ed2 ♖c5+ 62.♗b2 ♖e5+ 63.♞d4!

White will shelter her king with the rooks, advancing the pawns.

63...♗h7 64.b4 ♗g7 65.h4 ♗h7 66.♞2d3 ♖e2+ 67.♗b3 ♖e1 68.b5 ♖b1+ 69.♗a4 ♖a2+ 70.♗b4 ♖b2+ 71.♗c5 ♖c1+ 72.♗b6 ♖g1 73.♗b7

1-0

With three or more pawns the win is trivial and nearly nothing can go wrong.

QUEEN & PAWNS VS TWO ROOKS & PAWNS

In general, a queen and one pawn equal two rooks. This is of course a simplistic way to evaluate matters, and its misunderstanding will eventually guide us to nearly always prefer the two rooks.

Thus, in a situation with an equal number of pawns and no particular structural weaknesses for either side, the side with the rooks usually has the upper hand.

In general, it is not an easy job to say when the two rooks are better than a queen; it all depends on the strategical factors of each exact position. The two rooks might offer a serious advantage and high chances of getting the full point, if they can utilise their positive assets.

The queen should avoid passive positions or, if this is not possible, then should avoid such endings altogether! The queen has the upper hand when the rooks are disconnected or doomed to passivity because of the need to stop an opponent's passed pawns or to defend their own pawns.

MUTUAL AGREEMENT

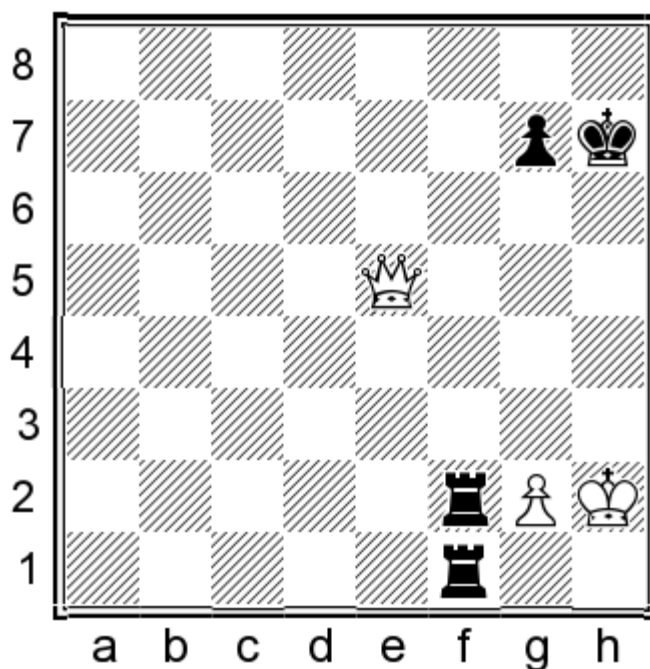
There are many drawn positions that have been already examined in chess endgame theory. Some of them will be presented here:

1

Polgar Judit

Kramnik Vladimir

Wijk aan Zee 2005

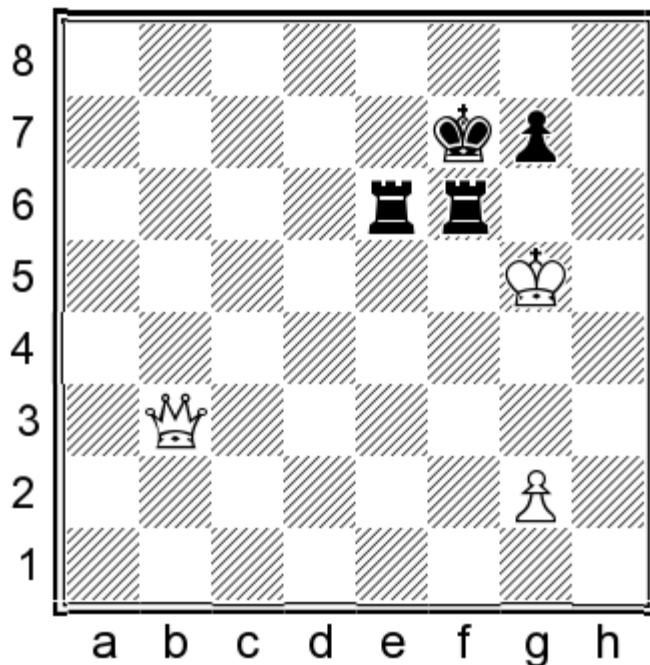


This is a theoretically-drawn position. Black's king is too exposed and besides, capturing the white g-pawn is no longer a win, as White can achieve a theoretically-drawn pawn ending. White should advance his king and pawn close to his opponent's king, getting ready for the drawn pawn ending.

37. ♖h5+ ♔g8 38. ♖e8+ ♚f8 39. ♖e6+ ♚f7

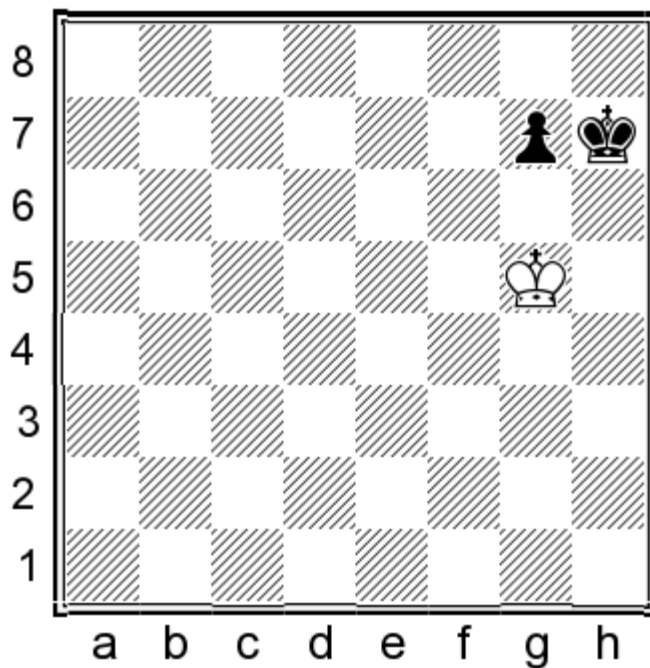
The only way to avoid an immediate draw. Now the white king enters the fray!

40.♔g3! ♖d8 41.♔g4 ♕f8 42.♔g5 ♜f6 43.♞b3 ♞dd6 44.♞b8+ ♕f7 45.♞b3+ ♞de6



46.g4! ♕g8 47.♔h4 ♕h7 48.♞d3+ ♞g6 49.♞f5 ♞ef6

A typical drawn ending arises after 49...♞e1 50.g5 ♞h1+ 51.♔g4 ♞h2 52.♔g3 ♞h5 53.♔g4 ♞hxg5+ 54.♞xg5 ♞xg5+ 55.♔xg5



50.♞e4 ♞c6 51.♔g3 ♞c3+ 52.♔h4 ♞c5 53.♔g3 ♞h5 54.♞b1 ♞a5 55.♞e4 ♞a1 56.♞f5 ♞g1+ 57.♔f2 ♞h1

57...♞1xg4 58.♞h5+ ♔g8 59.♞d5+ ♕f8 60.♞d8+ ♕f7 61.♞d7+ ♕f6 62.♞d6+ ♕g5 63.♞e5+ is also a draw by perpetual check.

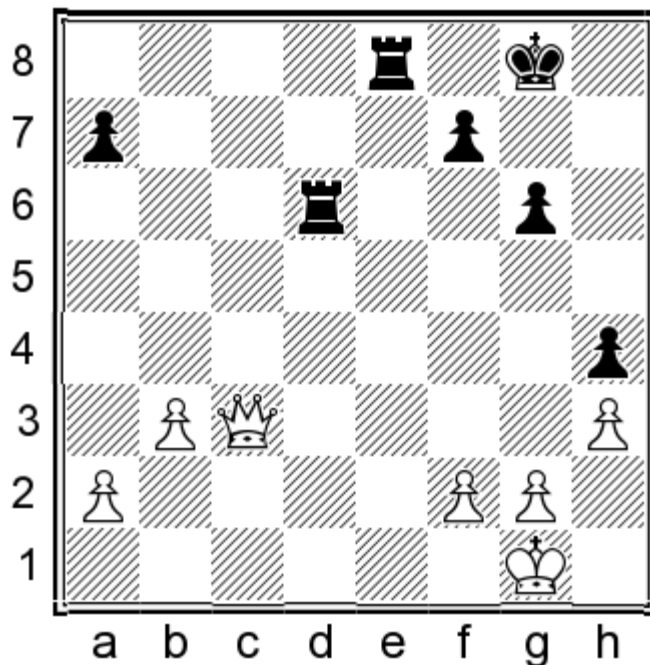
58.♔g3 ♖g1+ 59.♕f2 ♜1xg4 1/2-1/2

2

Rechlis Gad

Avrukh Boris

Israel 2005



Here White should be OK, as his extra pawn should be enough to hold.

32.♜b4 ♜d1+ 33.♔h2 ♜e2

Activity of the rooks is important!

34.♜b8+ ♔g7 35.♜xa7 ♜dd2 36.♔g1 ♜e1+ 37.♔h2 ♜f1

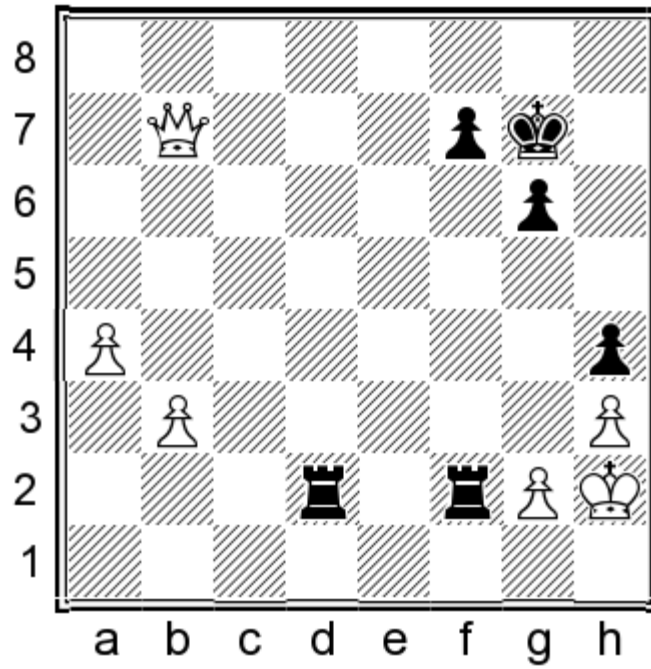
Of course, here Black could have repeated moves with 37...♜e2= but he was looking for a win!

38.a4 ♜xf2

The alternative 38...♜dd1 39.g3 ♜h1+ (39...hxg3+? 40.♔xg3±) 40.♔g2 ♜hg1+ 41.♔f3 (41.♔h2=) 41...hxg3 42.fxg3 ♜d3+ 43.♔e4 ♜gxg3 44.b4 would be rather unclear!

39.♜b7

Despite his two passed pawns on the queenside it's White who has to play precisely in order to achieve a draw. But of course neither side is in too great a danger of losing the game; only if they really overdo things, which is not usually the case when two strong players meet and fight...



39...g5!

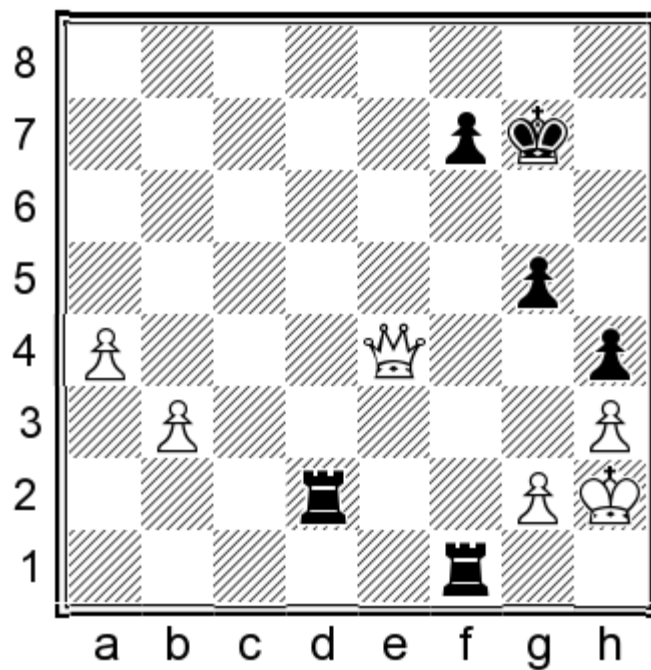
It is essential to protect the h4-pawn. 39...♖f1?! 40.♙e4! g5 41.♙e3 ♜d5 42.a5 can be risky for Black.

40.♙e4

40.a5 is good enough: 40...♞d1 41.♙e7 ♔g6 42.♙e4+ ♔h6 43.♙c6+ f6 44.♙e8=.

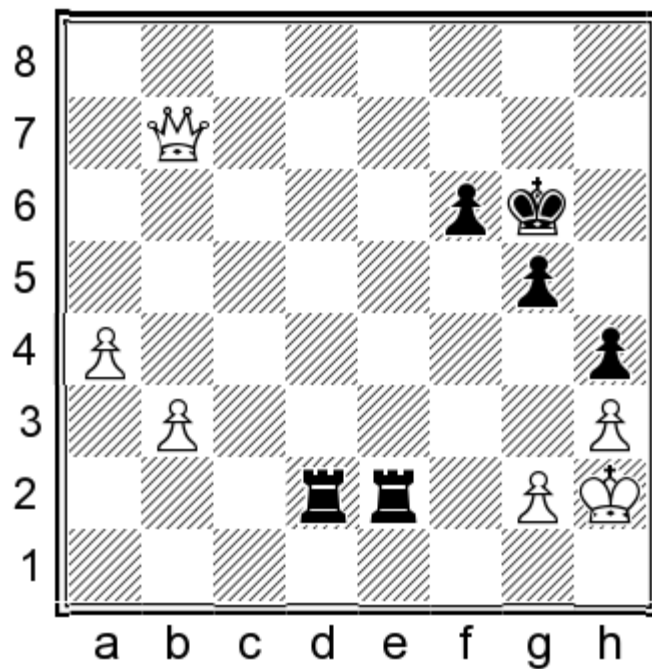
40...♖fe2

40...♖f1?!



41.♙e3! as noted previously.

41. ♖f3 f6 42. ♗b7+ ♔g6

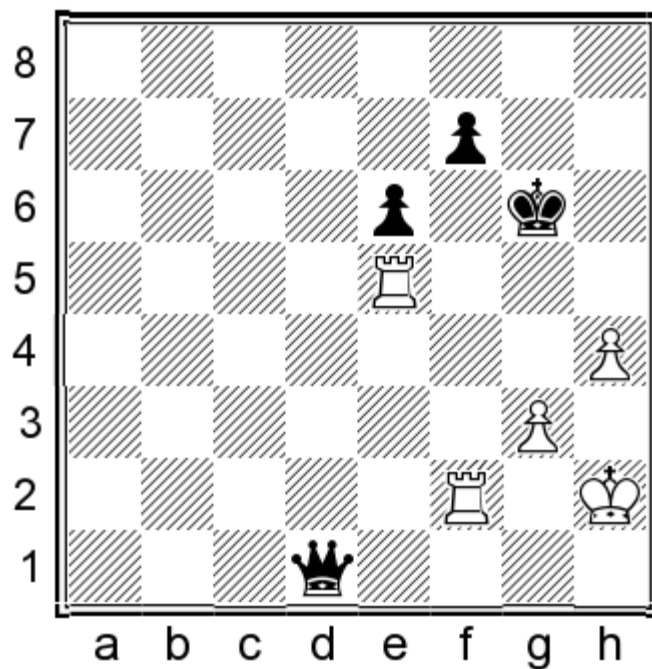


43. ♗a8!

And Black cannot avoid the checks: 43... ♖e1 44. ♗g8+ ♔h6 45. ♗h8+=. 1/2-1/2

3

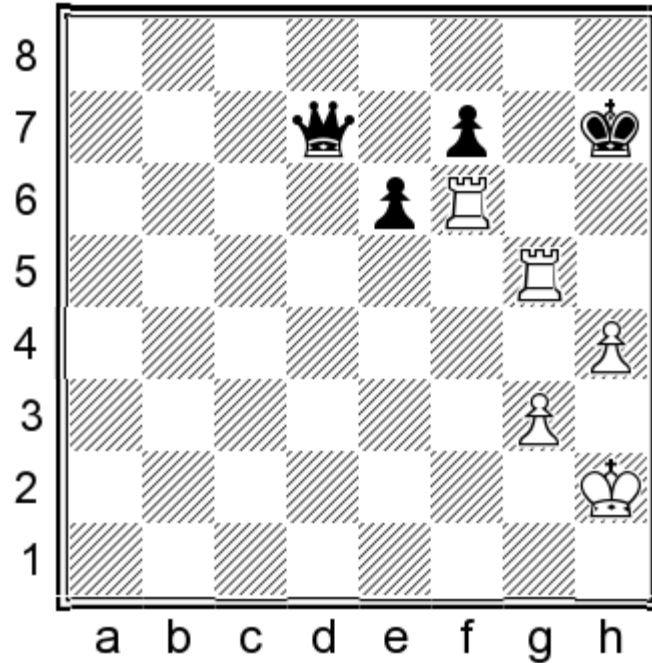
Yermolinsky Alex
Kaidanov Gregory
Long Beach 1993



Black should not face too many problems here, but the threat of ♖g5+ should be neutralised and White should not be allowed to double rooks on the f-file.

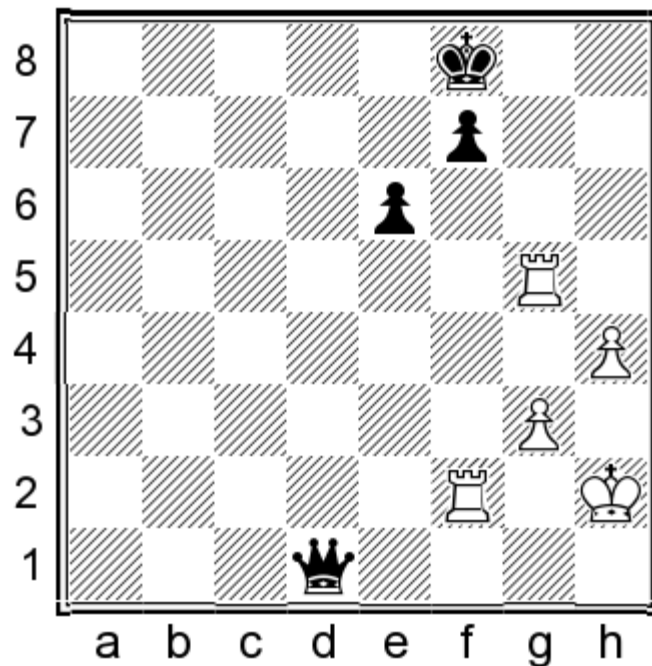
44...♔g7?

The correct defence was 44...♚d7! 45.♖g5+ ♔h7! (45...♔h6? 46.♖f6+ ♔h7



47.♖g4! e5 48.♖g5+ → 46.♖f6 ♚e7! and Black holds.

44...♔g7? 45.♖g5+ ♔f8



46.♖g6!

This is what Black missed!

46...e5

46...♖d7 47.♗gf6+-.

47.♗gf6 e4 48.♗xf7+ ♔g8 49.♗e7

The rooks regroup to attack another pawn.

49...♖d3 50.♗f4 e3 51.♗fe4

Black cannot hold his pawn any longer and he soon runs out of checks.

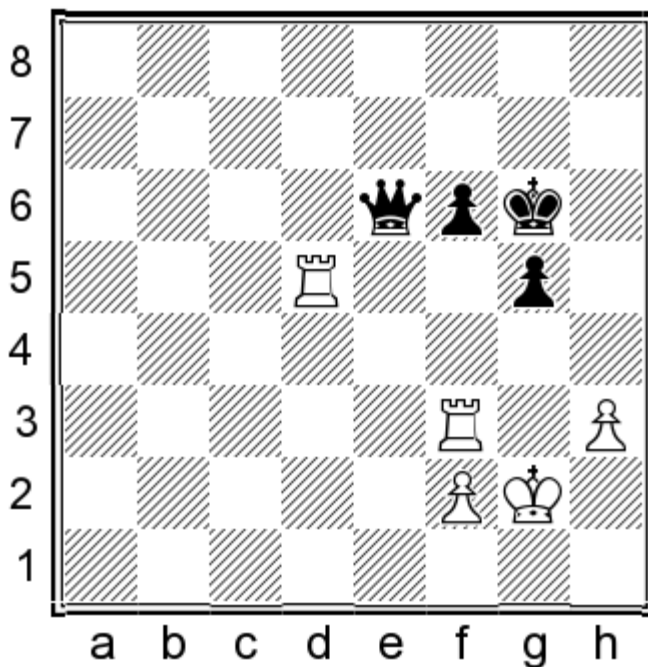
51...♖c2+ 52.♔h3 ♖c8+ 53.g4 ♖c1 54.♗xe3 ♖h1+ 55.♔g3 ♖g1+ 56.♔f4 ♖f2+ 57.♔g5 ♖d2 58.♔g6 1-0

4

Burnett Ronald

Ippolito Dean

London 1998



Black should be able to defend as the white pawn structure is not ideal.

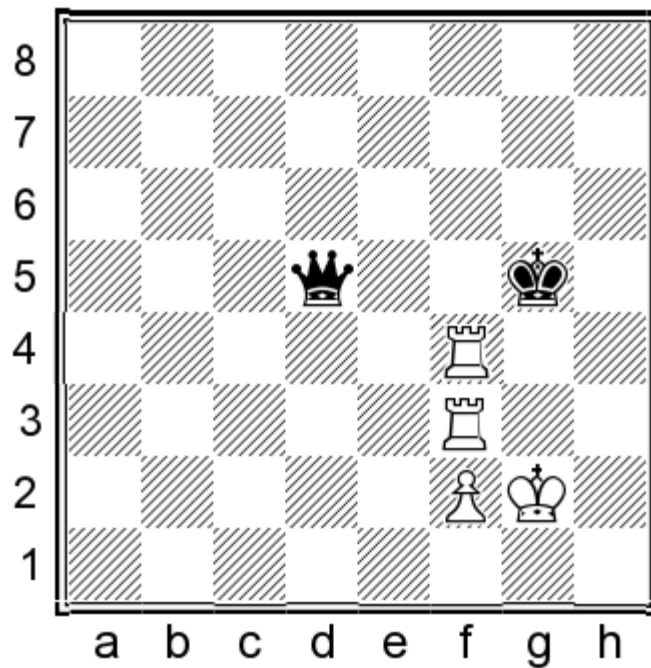
90.♗b5 ♖e4 91.♗b6 g4?

Panic! The calm 91...♖e5 was enough, as after 92.♗bxf6+ ♖xf6 93.♗xf6+ ♔xf6 we have a drawn pawn ending.

92.hxg4 ♔g5 93.♗bxf6 ♔xg4 94.♗f8 ♖d5

Or 94...♔g5 95.♔h2 ♔h6 96.♗f8 ♖d4 97.♗f6+ ♔h7 98.♗f4 ♖e5 99.♗h3+ ♔g6 100.♗g3+ ♔h5 101.♗f8 ♔h6 102.♗h8+ ♖xh8 103.♗h3+.

95.♗f4+ ♔g5



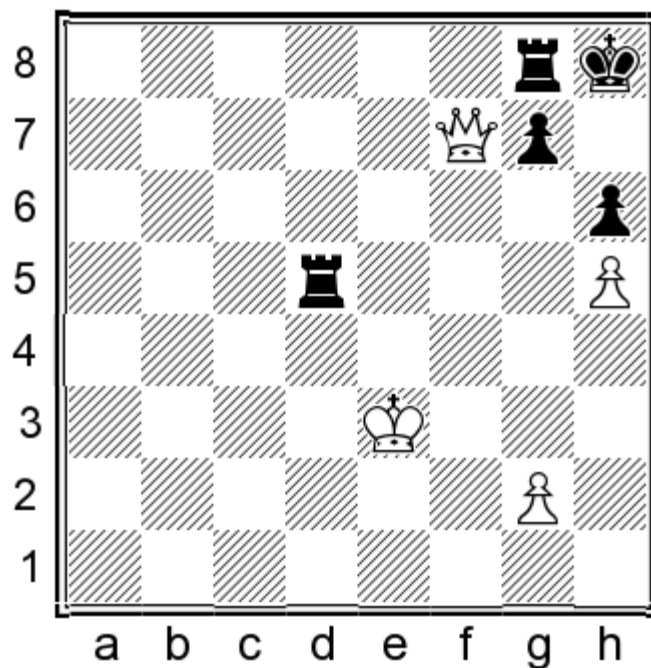
96. ♖f5+!

Transposing to a won pawn ending.

96... ♜xf5 97. ♖xf5+ ♘xf5 98. ♔f3 ♕g6 99. ♕g4 ♔f6 100. ♔f4 ♕g7 101. ♕g5 ♔f7 102. ♔f5 ♕g7 103. ♔e6 ♕g6 104. f4 ♕g7 105. f5 ♔f8 106. ♔f6! 1-0

5

Eidelson Rakhil
Kochetkova Julia
Voronezh 2004



This looks like an easy draw, as analysed in the game A.Shirov-V.Anand, but the position of the white king is bad - he should be on the kingside.

47...♞d6!

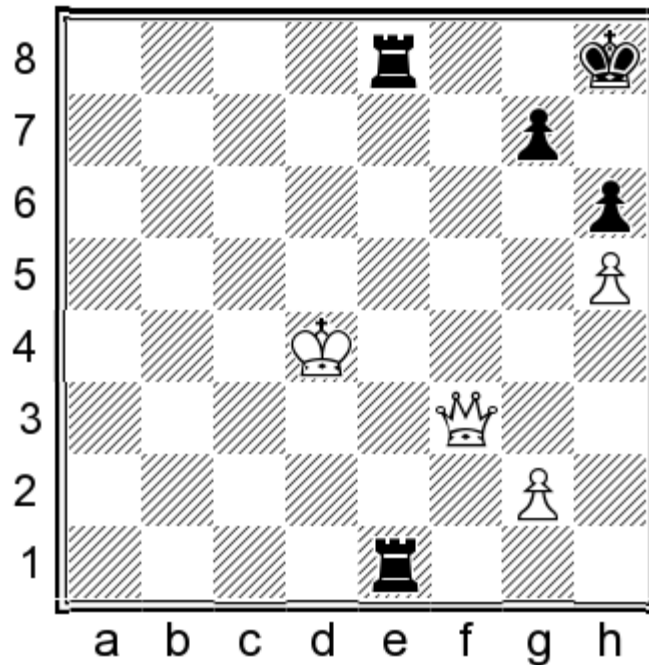
Now the white king cannot cross the f-file.

48.♜e7 ♜f6 49.♜e4 ♜gf8 50.♔e2 ♜f2+ 51.♔d3 ♞d8+ 52.♔e3 ♜ff8 53.♜c6 ♞de8+

The king is pushed further away from his kingside, where he will not be protected by pawns and can be caught in mating nets.

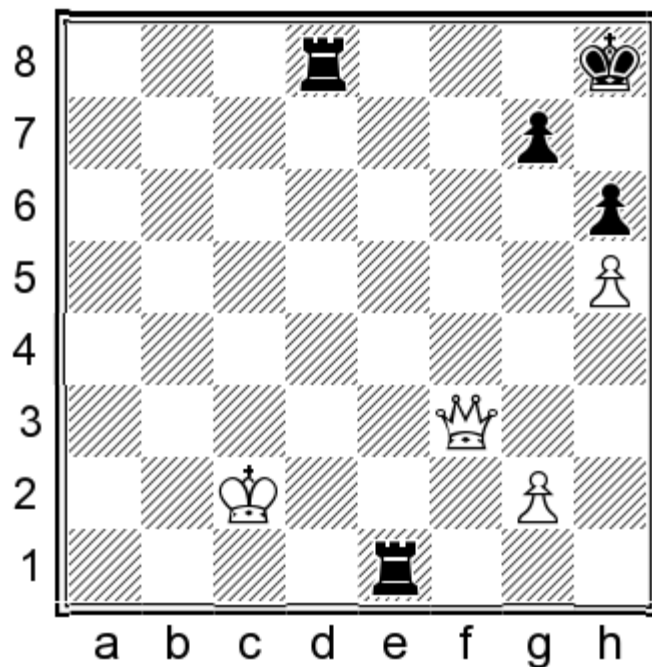
54.♔d4 ♞e2 55.♔d3 ♞fe8 56.♜f3 ♞2e5 57.♔d4 ♞e1 58.♔d3?!

The only way of resistance is to place the king near to Black's first rank, hoping that the opponent's rooks will leave it, allowing a perpetual check.



58.♔d5! ♞d8+ 59.♔c6 ♞c1+ 60.♔b7. But of course Black has a winning plan: **60...♞d7+ 61.♔b6 ♞d6+ 62.♔b7 ♞f6 63.♜e4 ♞cf1 64.g4 ♞1f4 65.♜e2 (65.♜e8+ ♞f8 66.♜e2 ♞4f6+) 65...♞d4 66.♔c7 ♔g8! 67.♜e8+ ♔h7 68.♜e2 ♞ff4+.** Easier said than done!

58...♞d8+ 59.♔c2



59...♖e5! 60.♔c3 ♜c5+ 61.♔b4 ♜c1 62.♔a3 ♜b8 63.♔a2 ♜c5 64.♔a3 0-1

QUEEN DOMINATION

The side with the queen will prove stronger when the player with the two rooks has a lot of weak pawns and/or squares. Yet, the balance in a queen versus two rooks' situation depends a lot on the position.

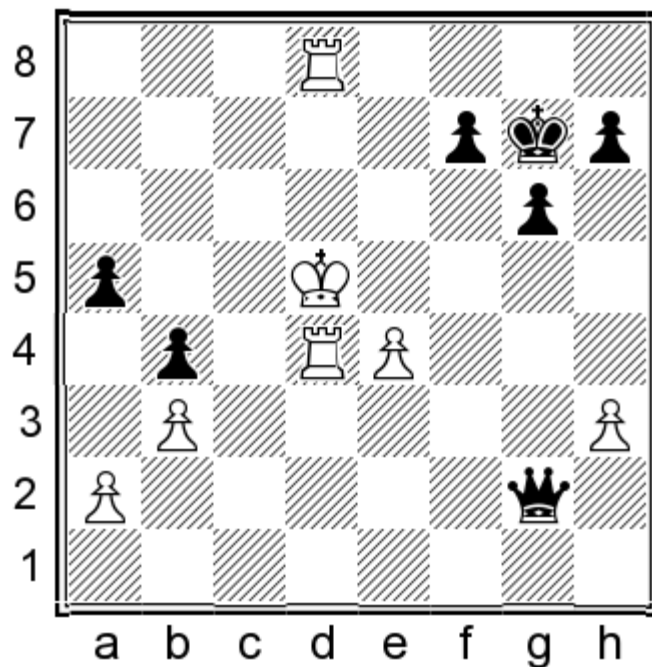
Thus, a rule of thumb is to prefer the queen when it has a lot of weak squares and pawns to attack. Remember that things are not always that bleak for the queen! Such a strong piece must have its glorious moments as well.

1

Carlsen Magnus

Wang Yue

Linares 2009



Black's material advantage is strong and can easily tell in such positions. The more so as the white rooks lack targets...

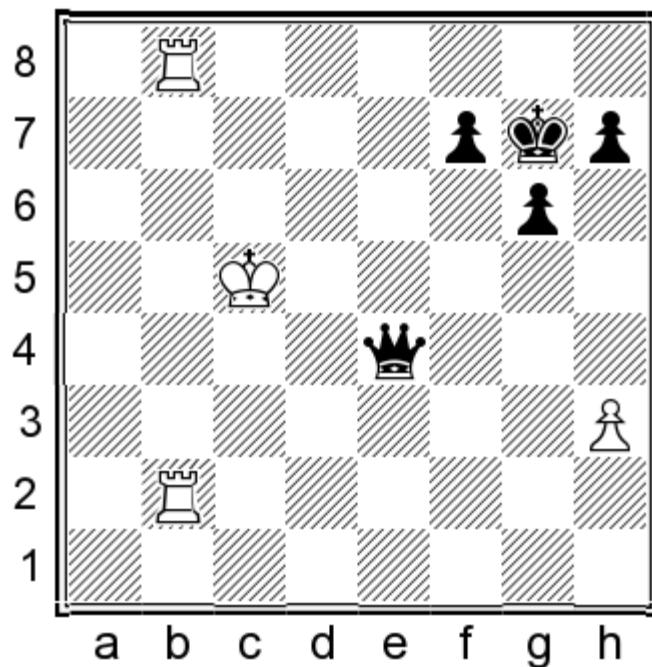
45. ♖d3 ♜c2

45...f5 was also quite strong but Black has in mind to eliminate the queenside pawns and then win an extra white pawn, achieving an easily won 3-1 on the kingside.

46. ♔d4 a4!

Accurate! 46... ♜xa2?! 47. ♔c4 a4 48. ♖8d4 axb3 49. ♖xb3 wasn't clear.

47. bxa4 ♜xa2 48. ♔c5 b3 49. ♖b8 b2 50. ♖db3 ♜xa4 51. ♖xb2 ♜xe4



Mission completed. Now Black will advance his pawns and his king will assist as well.

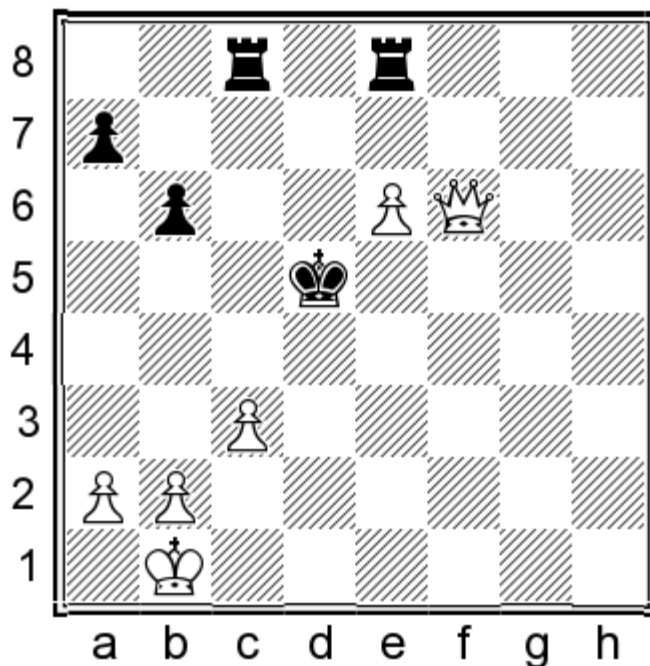
52.♞8b3 ♔h6 53.♞c3 f5 54.♞bb3 ♚e5+ 55.♔c4 ♔h5 56.♔d3 ♔h4 57.♔d2 f4 58.♞f3 g5 59.♞fd3 ♚c5 60.♞bc3 ♚f2+ 61.♔d1 ♚f1+ 62.♔d2 ♚g2+ 63.♔d1 ♚e4 64.♔d2 h5 0-1

2

Andruet Gilles

Kouatly Bachar

Ales 1984



White's material advantage should be enough for the win.

44.♚f7?!

44.e7! ♞g8 45.a4, followed by ♔a2-b3, should not be difficult.

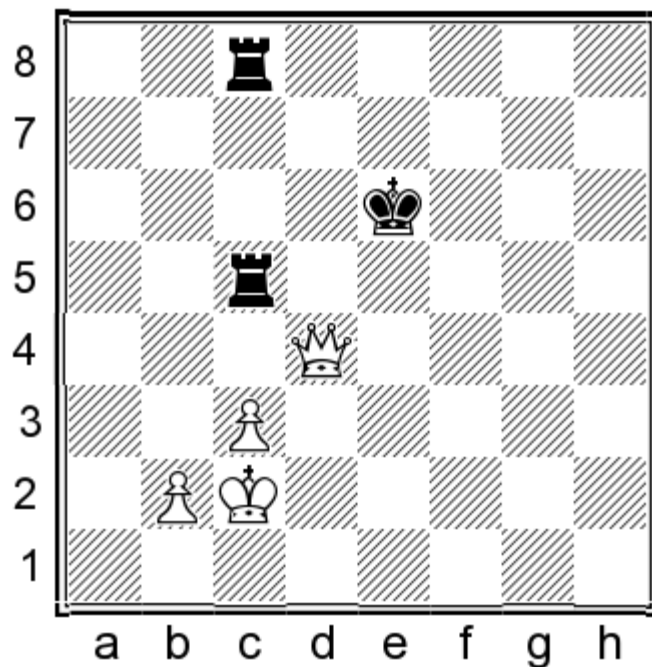
44.♚f7?! ♔e5! 45.♚g7+

45.e7? ♔d6 would be OK for Black.

45...♔xe6 46.♚xa7 ♞c6 47.a4

Exchanging the a- and b-pawns, creating two passed pawns, seems the correct follow-up.

47...♔d6 48.a5 bxa5 49.♚xa5 ♞b8 50.♚f5 ♞bc8 51.♔c2 ♞c5 52.♚f6+ ♔d7 53.♚d4+ ♔e6



54.b3?

A blunder! White should advance with a slow-but-steady hand: 54.♔b3 ♖b8+ 55.♔a4 ♖bc8 (55...♖c6 56.♜e4+ ♔d7 57.♜d5+ ♖d6 58.♜f5+ ♔c7 59.b4+-) 56.♔b4 ♖5c7 (56...♖5c6 57.c4) 57.♜b6+ (57.c4? ♖b7+ 58.♔c3 ♖cb8 59.♜d5+ ♔e7=) 57...♖c6 58.♜b5+-.

54...♖xc3+! 55.♜xc3 ♔d7!

Missed by White, who was only expecting 55...♖xc3+ 56.♔xc3 ♔d5 57.♔b4+-.

56.♔d3 ♖xc3+ 57.♔xc3 ♔c7!

Opposition and draw!

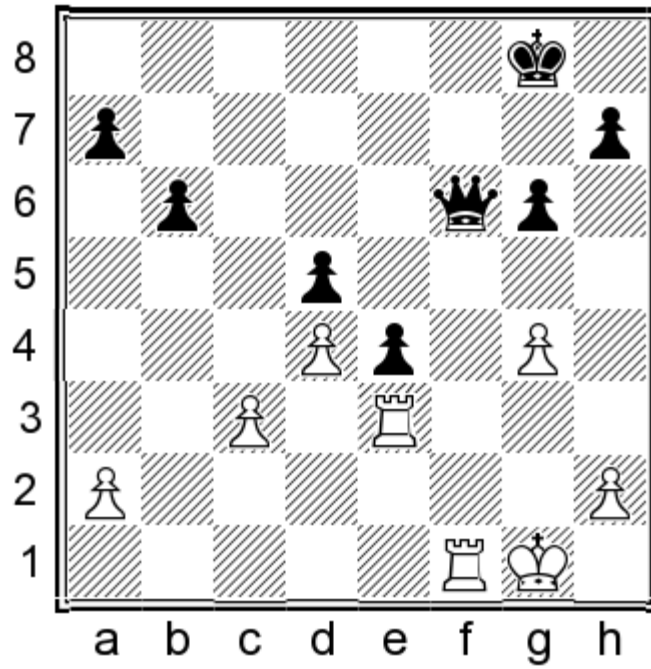
58.♔d3 ♔d7 59.♔d4 ♔d6 1/2-1/2

3

Svidler Peter

Ponomarev Ruslan

Moscow 2001



Black stands better; his passed and protected e-pawn and the weaknesses of the white pawn structure (g4, c3, a2), makes White's life miserable.

27...♙g5! 28.♞g3

28.♞e2 loses to 28...♙xg4+ 29.♞g2 ♙d7.

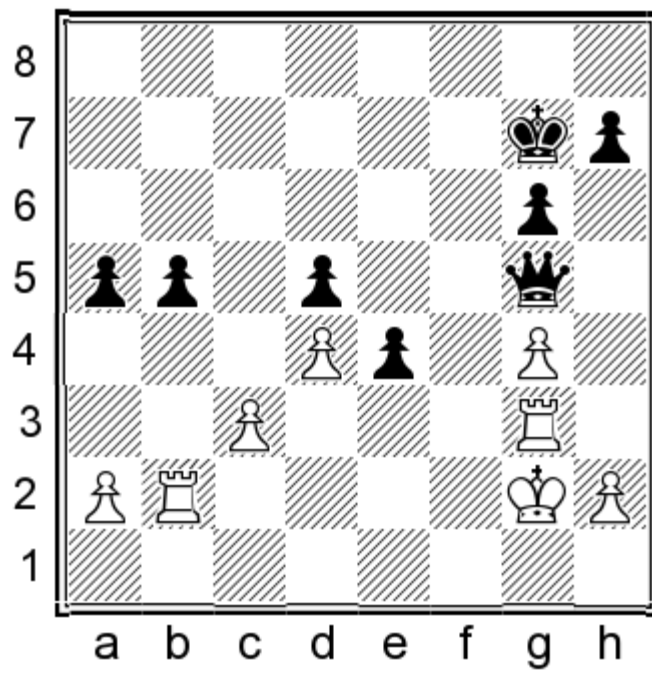
28...b5!

Targets must be fixed forever! Black also prepares the idea...a5 and...b4, weakening the d4-pawn.

29.♞f2

29.♞b1 ♙d2! doesn't help: 30.♞xb5? ♙e1+ 31.♔g2 ♙e2+—+.

29...♔g7 30.♔g2 a5 31.♞b2



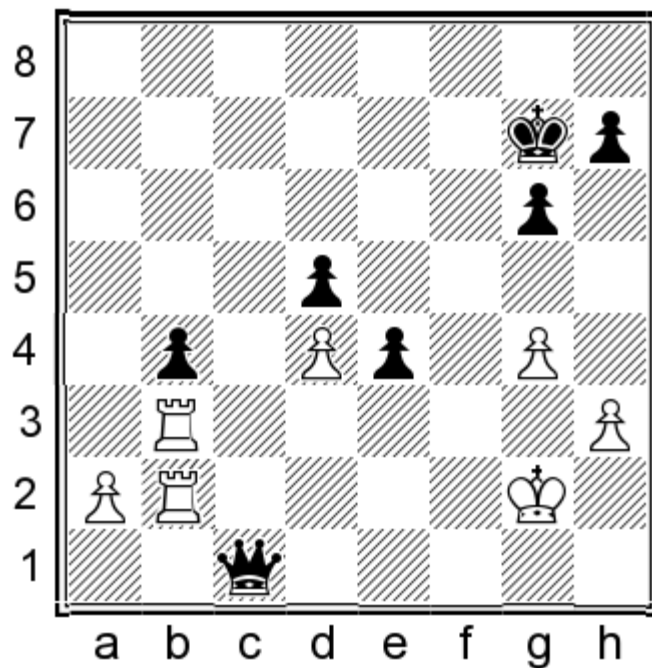
31...b4! 32.cxb4 axb4

Even better was 32...♔c1! 33.♖f2 axb4 34.♖b3 ♕d1-+.

33.h3 ♕c1

The rooks are too passive and clumsy as defenders; the black queen dominates the game.

34.♖gb3



34...♔h6!

It's time for the black king to assist his queen.

35. ♖xb4 ♕d1!

With the simple threat...e3-e2.

36. ♔f2

Alternatives such as 36.a4 e3 37. ♖b1 e2+ or 36. ♖4b3 ♕xd4 37. ♖e2 ♔g5 38.a3 ♕d1 39. ♖be3 ♔f4+ are not helpful.

36... ♔g5

36... ♖f3+ 37. ♔e1 ♕xh3 38.a4 ♔g5 was more accurate.

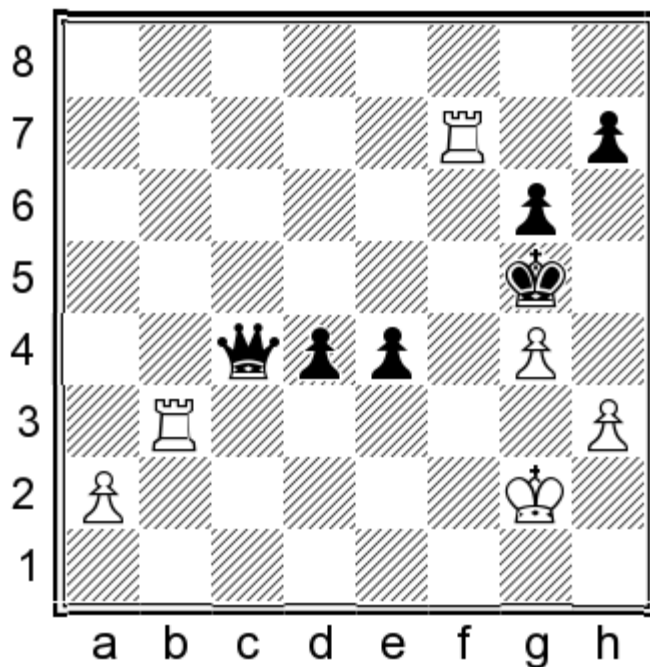
37. ♖e2

37.a4 ♔f4 38. ♖4b3 ♕xd4+.

37... ♔f4 38. ♖b3

38.a4 e3+ 39. ♖xe3 ♕d2+ 40. ♖e2 ♕xb4+.

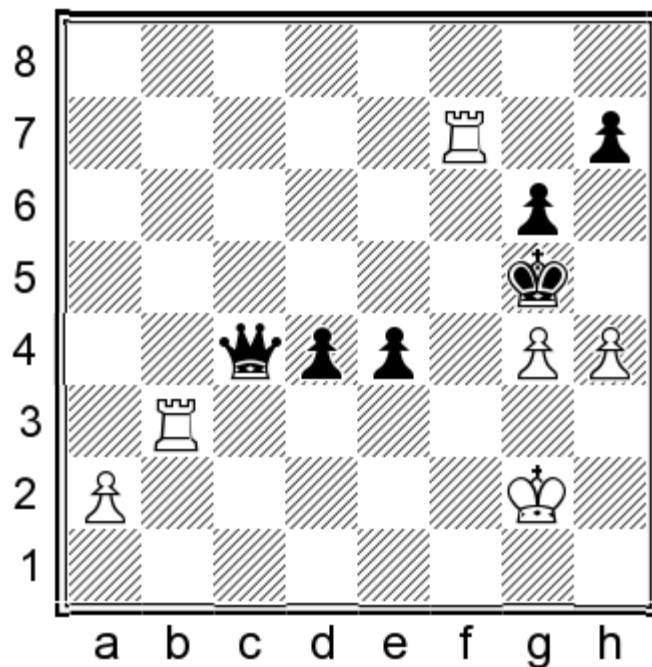
38... ♕xd4+ 39. ♔g2 ♖c4 40. ♖f2+ ♔g5 41. ♖f7 d4



42. h4+

A last clever try/trap, as the alternative 42. ♖xh7 ♔f4 43. ♖b2 e3+ was easy.

42... ♔xh4



Black could be easily get carried away and fall for the simple but very effective for White: 42...♔xg4? 43.♖g3+ ♔h5 44.♖xh7#.

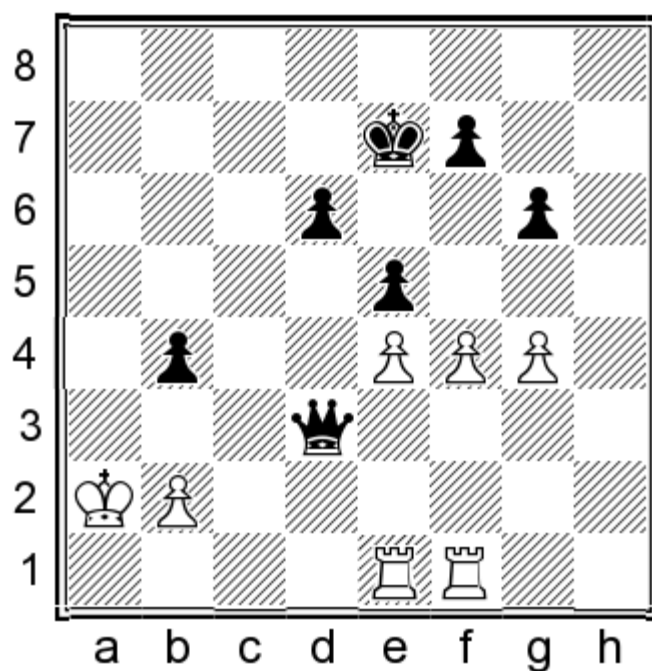
43.♖xh7+ ♔xg4 44.♖g3+ ♔f5 0-1

4

Andersen Alf Roger

Aandal Kristian

Oslo 2006



Black's advantage is obvious, as his queen can combine attacks against the enemy king and his pawns. Another important plus of his position is the passivity of the white rooks.

43...♙c4+ 44.♚b1 b3!

Now the b2-pawn will soon be lost.

45.fxe5

Forced: 45.♞f2 exf4 46.♞xf4 ♞d3+ 47.♚a1 ♞a6+.

45...♞d3+ 46.♚a1 ♞a6+ 47.♚b1 ♞a2+ 48.♚c1 ♞a1+ 49.♚d2 ♞xb2+ 50.♚d3 dxe5 51.♚c4!

The most active try. After the passive 51.♚e3 ♞d4+ 52.♚f3 ♞d3+ 53.♚g2 b2 Black will exchange his b2-pawn for White's on e4 and g4, winning the ending with three pawns vs none!

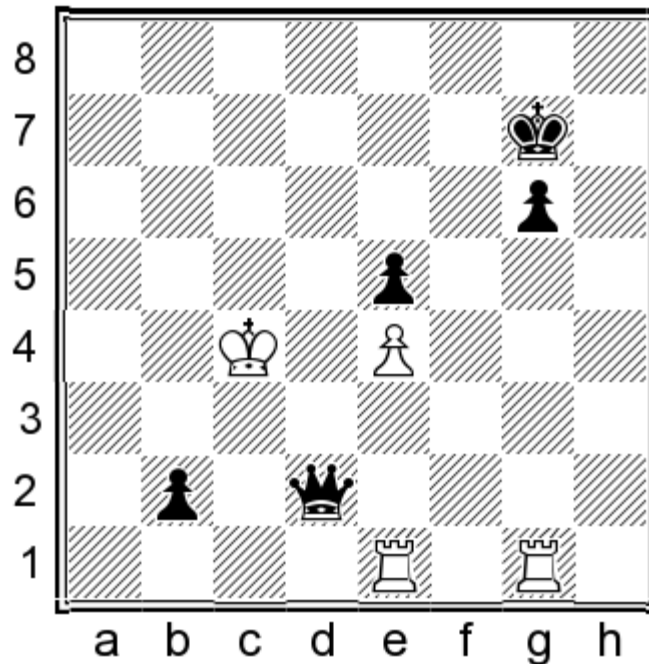
51...♚e6

51...♞c2+! 52.♚d5 f6 is even better.

52.g5 ♞c2+ 53.♚b4 b2 54.♞g1

54.♚a3! ♞d2 55.♞g1 is a more stubborn defence.

54...f6 55.gxf6 ♚xf6 56.♞gf1+ ♚g7 57.♞g1 ♞d2+ 58.♚c4



58...b1=♞?!

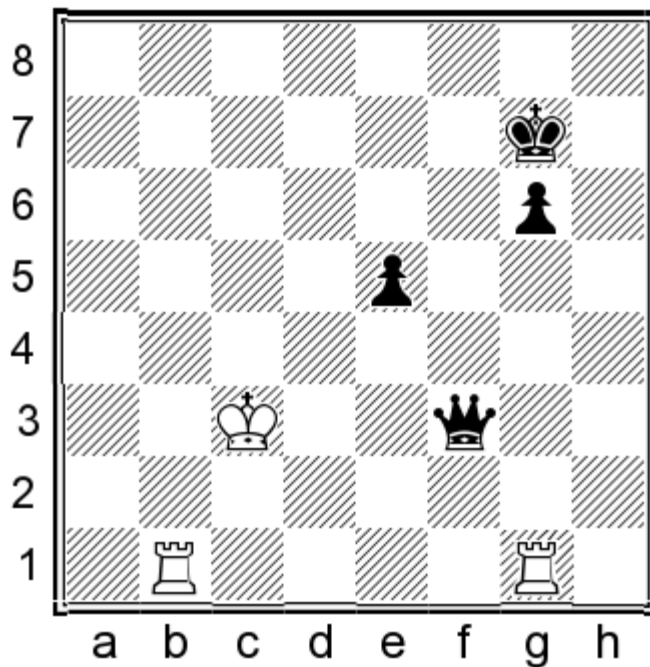
58...g5! 59.♞d1 ♞e3 60.♞de1 ♞d4+ 61.♚b3 ♚g6 is strong enough. Black must not hurry with this exchange and first activate his king and his g-pawn.

59.♞xb1 ♞d4+ 60.♚b3 ♞xe4 61.♚c3

61.♞bd1! ♚f7 62.♞g3 would be a much better defensive set-up.

61...♖f3+?

61...♖e3+? 62.♔c4 g5 63.♔d5 ♔g6 64.♟bd1 ♚c3 65.♔e4 is not clear, but 61...♖d4+! 62.♔c2 e4 cutting off the enemy king, is the right way.



62.♔c4!

The white king comes in, helping his rooks to stop the enemy pawns.

62...e4 63.♔d4 e3?

Better is 63...♖d3+ although after 64.♔e5 e3 65.♟h1 it is not easy for Black to improve his position.

64.♟b1 ♚e2 65.♟e1 ♚d2+ 66.♔e4 e2 67.♔f3

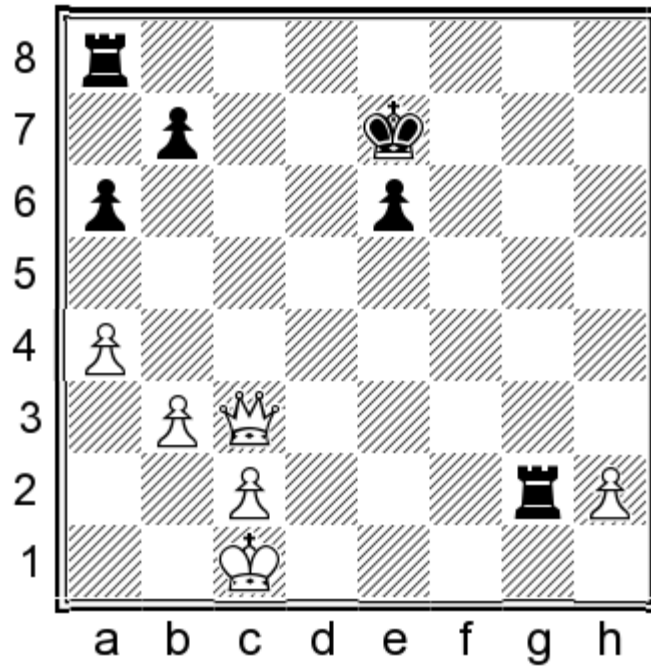
Black will lose his e-pawn, so there is not much left to play on with.

67...♖d3+ 68.♔f2 ♖d4+ 1/2-1/2

Black misplayed his winning position because he forgot to activate his king; an important feature in nearly all endings.

5

Izoria Zviad
Gagunashvili Merab
Kusadasi 2006



White has secured a clear advantage. His queen is very active and his h-pawn will be an important factor in the upcoming battle. Black's rooks are misplaced and his 'centralised' king helps the missions of the white queen (by various possible checks). Black's only counterplay lies with his passed e-pawn, but surely this is not enough to save him?

32. ♖b4+ ♔f6 33. ♕xb7 ♖gg8

After 33... ♖ag8 34. ♕xa6 ♖xh2 35. a5 White's three passed pawns will carry the day.

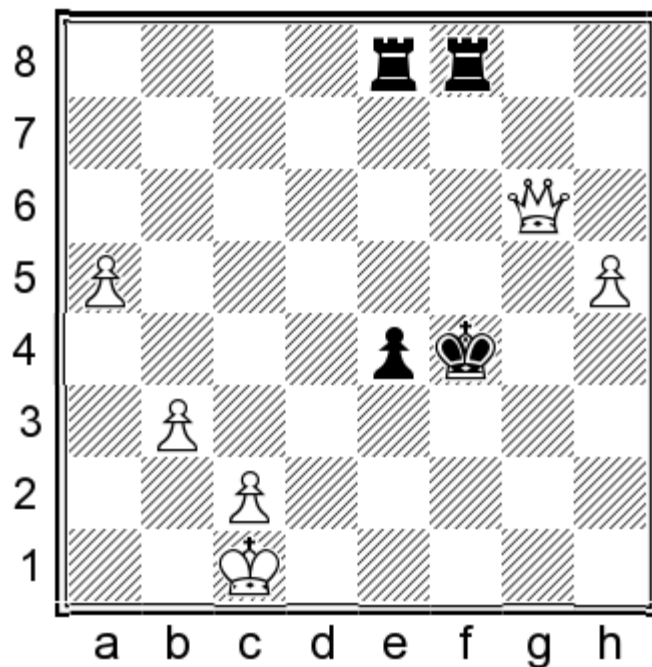
34. a5 e5

Black must look for counterplay in his passed e-pawn. His main problem remains his unprotected king.

35. ♖f3+ ♔e6 36. h4

Time for the passed pawn to run!

36... ♖gf8 37. ♖g4+ ♔d6 38. h5 ♖ae8 39. ♖b4+ ♔e6 40. ♖c4+ ♔f5 41. ♖xa6 e4 42. ♖g6+ ♔f4



43.♔d2!

The white king will stop this dangerous black e-pawn, while the white queen will help the advance of the white pawns.

43...♔f3

43...e3+ 44.♔e2 ♖g8 45.♚f6+ ♔g4 (45...♔e4 46.♚c6+ ♔d4 47.a6) 46.h6.

44.♔e1 e3 45.a6 e2 46.a7 ♔e3 47.♚g1+! ♔f4 48.b4 ♖f5 49.♚f2+ ♔g5 50.a8=♚!

The careless 50.♚g2+? ♔xh5 51.a8=♚? ♖f1+ 52.♚xf1 exf1=♚+ 53.♔xf1 ♖xa8 would be a nightmare for White.

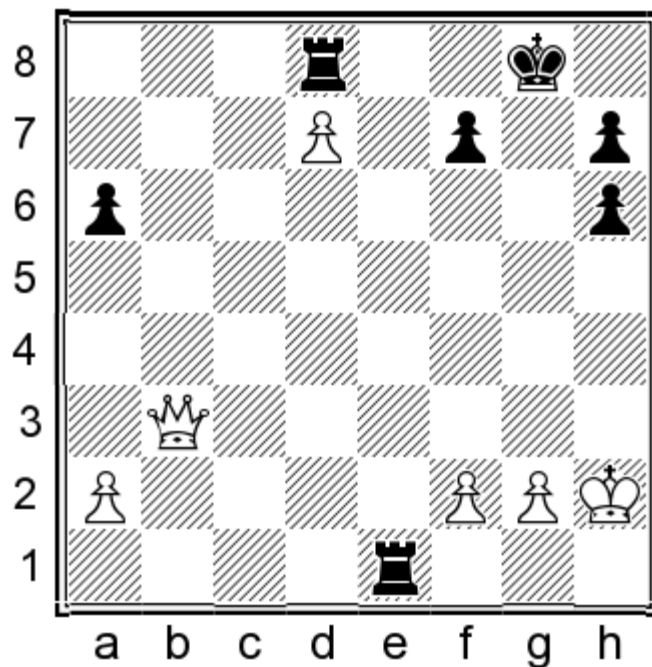
50...♖xa8 51.♚g2+ 1-0

6

Bobras Piotr

Warakomski Tomasz

Poznan 2005



White's advantage is large, based on his well-advanced passed pawn and the weaknesses around the black king.

30. ♖b4! ♜e5

Black has to remain 'passive', as 30...♞d1? loses to 31. ♖g4++-.

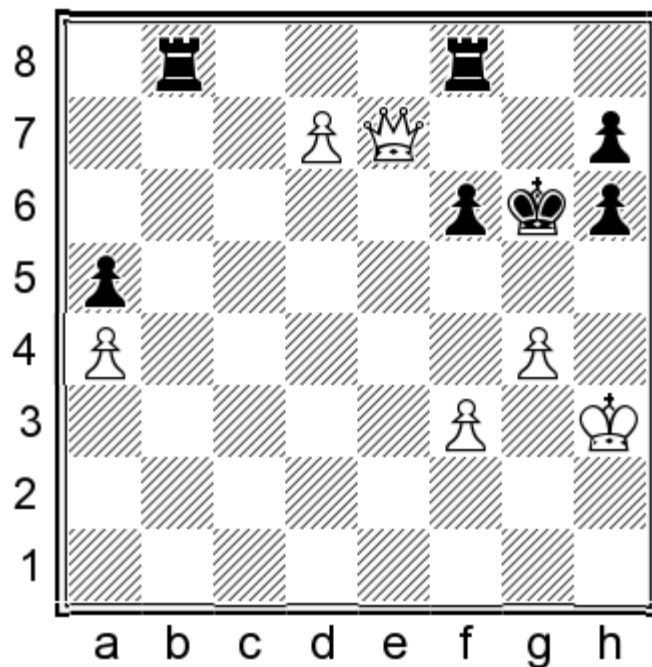
31. ♖d6

Threatening ♜c7.

31... ♞b5 32. ♖e7 ♞bb8 33. a4 a5 34. f3 ♞f8 35. ♔h3

It is time for the white king to assist; White cannot queen his pawn but he will create further threats with his king's assistance.

35... ♔g7 36. g3 ♔g6 37. g4 f6



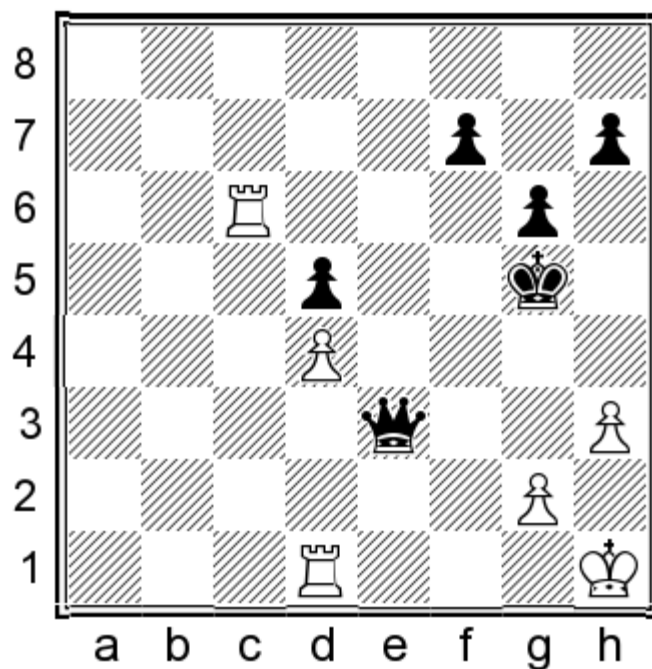
38.♔h4 h5

38...♞a8 loses to 39.f4 f5 40.♞d6+ ♔g7 41.gxf5 ♞xf5 42.♞c7!+-.

39.gxh5+ ♔h6 40.f4 ♞bd8 41.f5 ♞b8 42.♞e3+ ♔g7 43.h6+ ♔h8 44.♞e7 ♞b4+ 45.♔h5 1-0

7

Lukacs Peter
Metz Hartmut
Budapest 1995



Black's extra pawn is healthy but White should still be able to defend.

35.♖c5?!

Activity is the key-word in such endings. White should attack the black pawn structure with 35.♖c7! After 35...♚e2 36.♖a1 ♜f2 37.♖d7 ♜xd4 38.♖a5 f5 39.♖axd5 he would have nothing to be afraid of.

35.♖c5?! ♚e4?!

Returning the favour. After 35...f5! White would be in trouble, as 36.♖xd5? fails to 36...♜b3+.

36.♖c3?!

36.♖c7! was again the right path for White.

36...f5 37.♔g1

Or 37.♖g3+ ♔h4 38.♖f3 g5 and with the follow-up of...f4 and...h5-g4, Black will dominate.

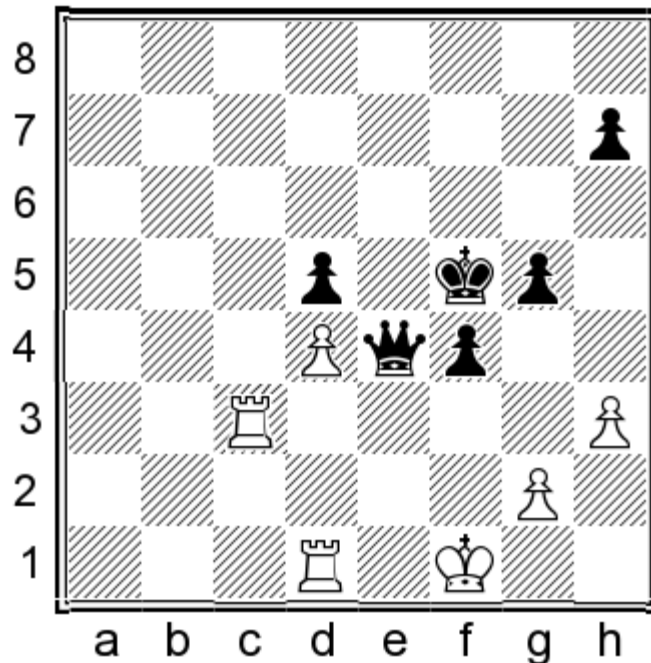
37...f4 38.♔f2 ♔f5?!

As we have already noted, 38...♔h4! is quite strong.

39.♔f1?

White forgets to create something and instead he remains passive. He should think of organising a 3rd-rank defence with 39.g3! h5 40.gxf4 ♔xf4 41.♖dd3 and I do not see how Black will improve enough to gain the full point.

39...g5?



The correct idea but the wrong execution. He should start with 39...h5.

40.♖f3?

Both sides missed the tactical 40.♖e1! ♜xd4 41.g4+ fxg3 (41...♔g6 42.♖c6+=) 42.♖f3+ ♔g6 43.♖e6+ ♔h5 44.♖ff6 with

a draw!

40...h5 41.♖f2 ♚e3!

41...g4? would trap the black queen after 42.♖e2+-.

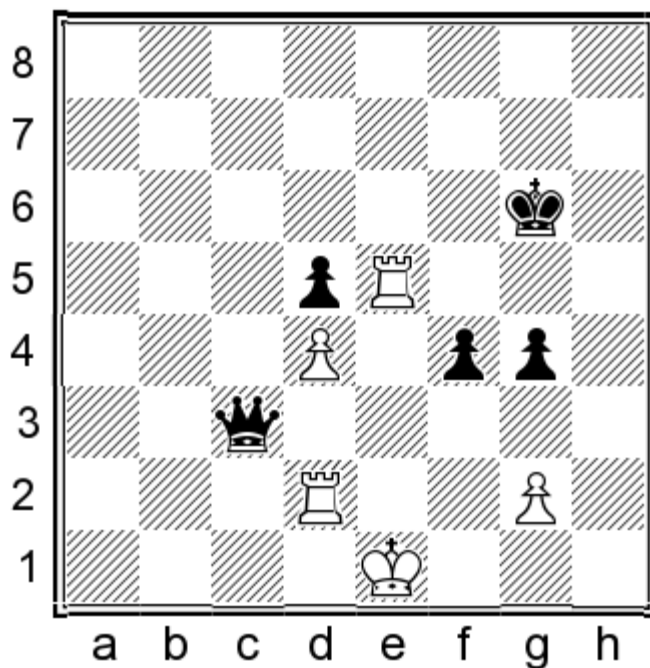
42.♖e2 ♚b3 43.♖e5+ ♔f6 44.♖d2

44.♖de1 loses to 44...♚d3+ 45.♖1e2 ♚xd4+-.

44...♚c3 45.♔e2 ♔g6

Passive. The clear-cut win was by 45...g4 46.♖d3 ♚c2+ 47.♖d2 f3+! 48.gxf3 gxf3+ 49.♔e3 ♚c1 50.♔d3 ♚f1+ 51.♔e3 ♚e1+ 52.♔d3 f2.

46.♔e1 g4 47.hxg4 hxg4



48.♖xd5?

White is lost anyway, but he had to fight on with 48.♖e6+ ♔f7 49.♖e5 ♔f6.

48...♚e3+

Or 48...♚c1+ 49.♖d1 (49.♔e2 ♚c4+) 49...♚e3+ 50.♔f1 g3.

49.♖e2

49.♔d1 ♚b3+-+.

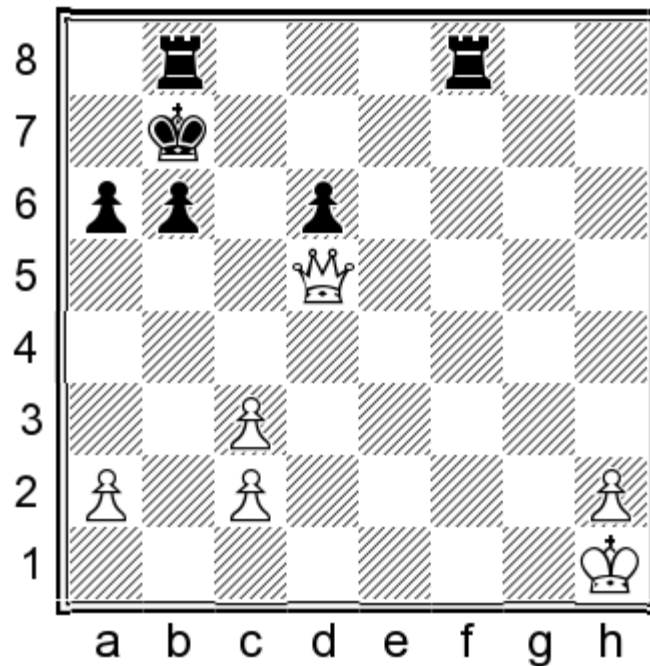
49...♚c1+ 50.♔f2 g3+ 51.♔f3 ♚f1+ 52.♔g4 ♚xe2+ 53.♔xf4 ♚f2+ 0-1

ROOKS DOMINATION

Rooks are powerful when they act together. A standard method is doubling the rooks to gain, or at least stop, an enemy pawn. Rooks can also create mating threats, particularly when the opponent's king is cut off at an edge. The most important factors that are usually in favour of the rooks are:

1. The rooks have full control of the position.
2. The king is safe.
3. The rooks support a passed pawn.
4. There are fixed pawn structures.
5. The rooks have safe anchor squares.
6. The queen has no real targets.
7. The queen must passively protect weak pawns.

1
Byrne Donald
Reshevsky Samuel Herman
New York 1957



White's weak pawns do not promise him an easy time - Black needs to regroup his rooks and attack them, but first he has to deal with his king's security. Also note that the white king is not safe at all!

42...♔c7?

42...♔a7! 43.♕xd6 ♖f7 was the correct follow-up.

42...♔c7? 43.♕c4+ ♔b7 44.♕e4+! d5!?

A fair try to win, as the alternative 44...♔a7 45.♕e7+ ♔a8 46.♕e2 b5 47.♕e6 looks fine for White.

45.♕xd5+?

Winning the weak d-pawn is not important; White had an easy draw with 45.♚e7+ ♔a8 46.♚e2 ♔a7 (46...b5 47.♚e6!) 47.♚e7+.

45...♔a7 46.c4

46.a4 a5 47.h4 ♖b7 48.♚e5 ♖h7 and Black is on top.

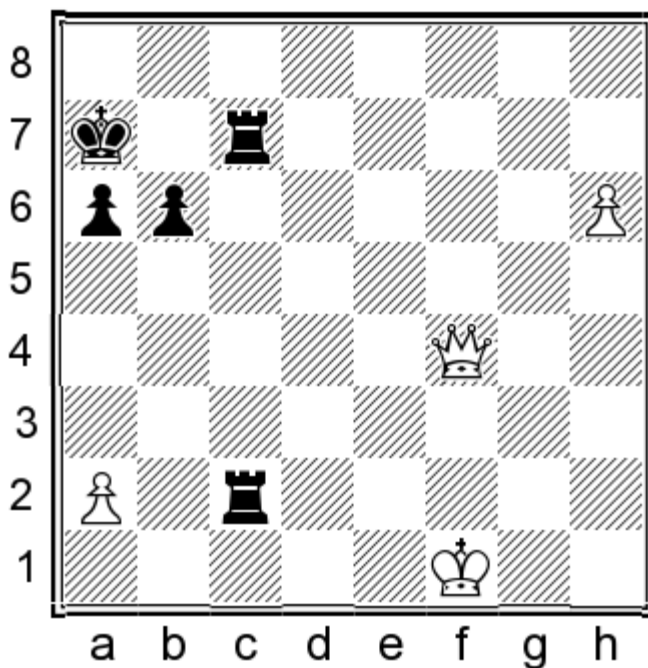
46...♖fc8 47.♚d7+ ♔a8 48.♔g1 ♖c5

Black starts to find a good set-up and he is ready to attack the white targets.

49.♔f1 ♖bc8 50.h4 ♖xc4 51.h5 ♖xc2

The weak white pawns fall like over-ripe apples!

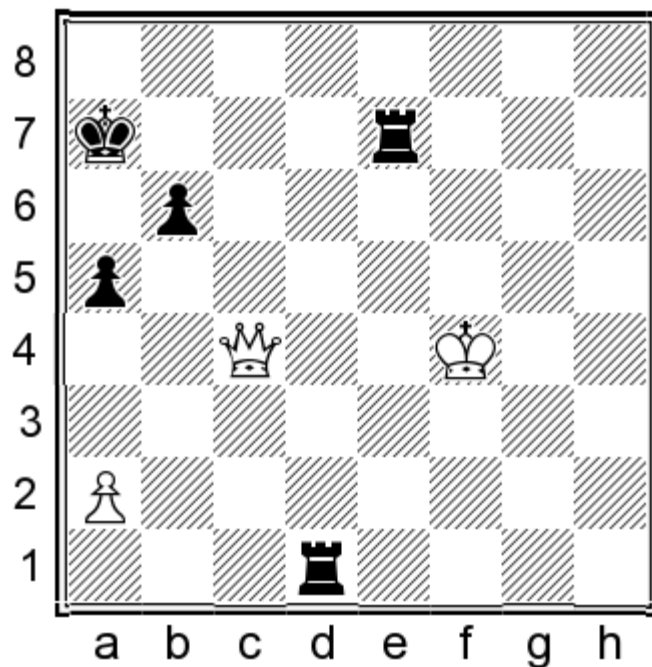
52.h6 ♖8c7 53.♚a4 ♔a7 54.♚f4



54...♖2c6!

And now White's only counterplay will fall as well.

55.♔e2 ♖e7+ 56.♔d3 ♖d7+ 57.♔e3 ♖e6+ 58.♔f3 ♖h7 59.♚f8 ♖exh6 60.♔e4 ♖h2 61.♚g8 ♖d7 62.♔e3 a5 63.♚e6 ♖hh7 64.♚g8 ♖he7+ 65.♔f3 ♖d3+ 66.♔f4 ♖d1 67.♚c4

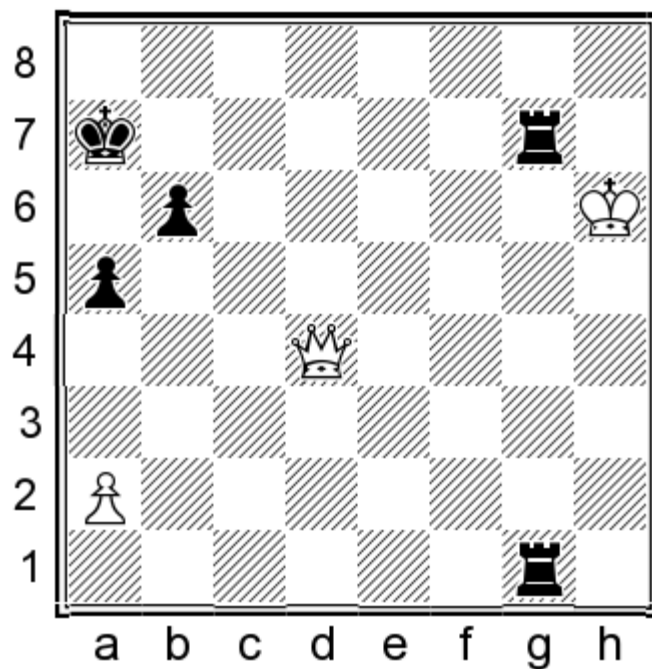


67...♞f1+! 68.♔g5 ♞g7+ 69.♔h6 ♞fg1

White's king has been lured into a mating net as well!

70.♞d4

70.a3 ♞1g4 71.♞c8 ♞4g6+ 72.♔h5 ♞g5+ 73.♔h6 (73.♔h4 ♞g1) 73...♞c5 74.♞d8 ♞gc7+.



70...♞1g4

70...♞1g6+ 71.♔h5 ♞g3 72.♔h6 ♞g8 73.♔h7 ♞3g7+ 74.♔h6 ♞g6+ 75.♔h7 (75.♔h5 ♞g3) 75...♞8g7+ 76.♔h8 ♞b7 was quicker.

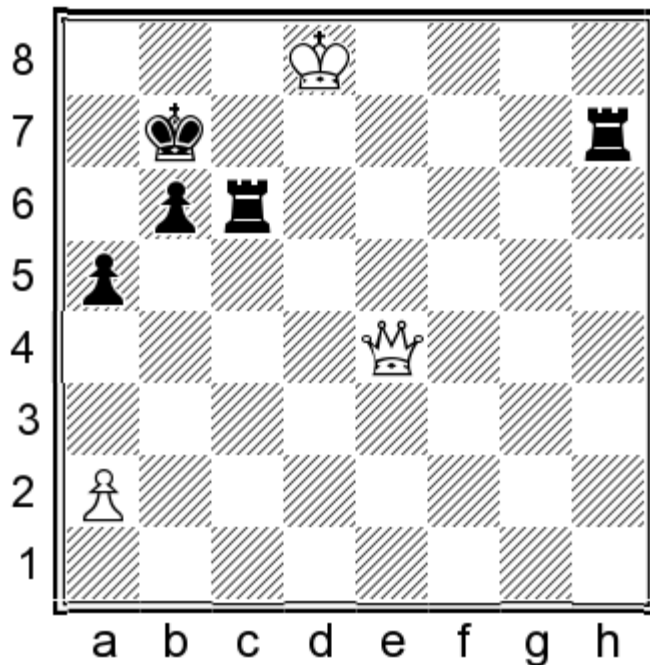
71. ♖d8 ♜4g6+ 72. ♔h5 ♝g2 73. ♔h6 ♞b7 74. ♚d5 ♞c2 75. ♞b3 ♞c5 76. ♞e3 ♞d7 77. ♞e6 ♞dc7 78. ♞e4 ♞7c6+ 79. ♔g7 ♔b7 80. ♔f7 ♞h5 81. ♔g7 ♞hh6 82. ♔f8 ♞h8+

82... ♔a7! 83. ♞e7+ ♔b8 84. ♞e5+ ♞c7-+.

83. ♔e7

83. ♔f7 ♞hh6 84. ♔f8 ♔a7!-+.

83... ♞h7+ 84. ♔d8



84... ♞hc7! 85. ♚d5 ♔a7 86. ♞e5 ♞b7 87. ♞g5 ♞cc7 88. ♞e5 ♞h7 0-1

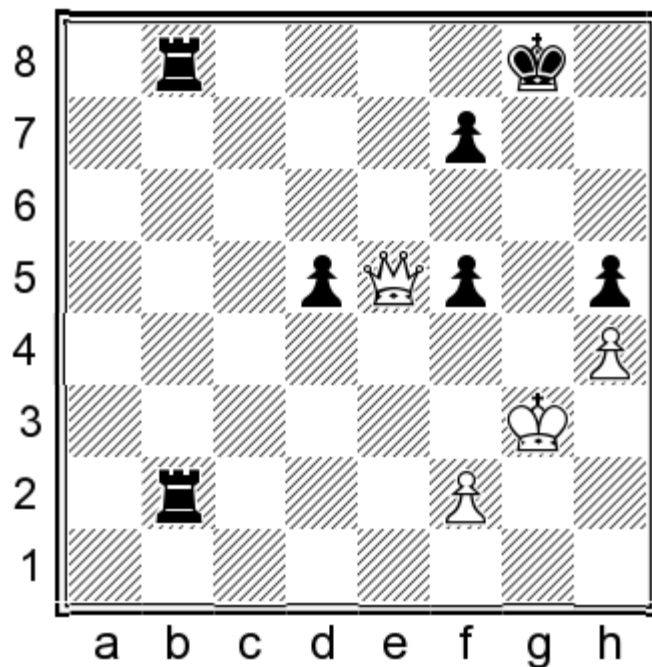
And White had had enough: 89. ♔c8 ♞h8+ 90. ♞xh8 ♞b8+.

2

Miralles Gilles

Flear Glenn

Valras 1990



White faces a difficult choice; which pawn should be captured?

35. ♖xd5?!

And this is the wrong one! It is of high importance to try for a perpetual, so capturing one of the opponent's king's protectors (the f5-pawn) was the right continuation. After 35. ♖xf5! ♜8b6 36. ♖xd5 White would have quite fair chances to save the half point.

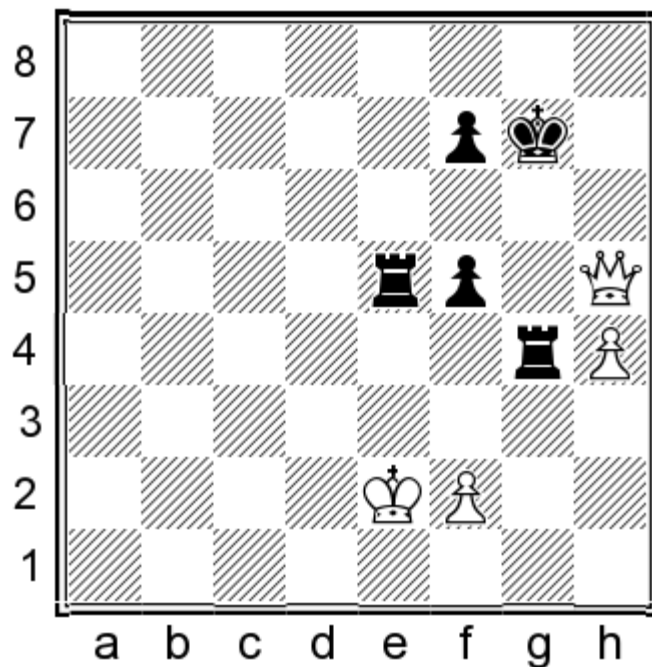
35. ♖xd5?! ♜2b5! 36. ♖d1 ♜8b6! 37. ♔f4 ♜g6 38. ♖xh5?

White could put up more resistance with 38. ♖d8+! ♔h7 39. f3! ♚.

38... ♜g4+ 39. ♔f3 ♔g7!

And now the white queen is completely paralysed; the black rooks will finish the job.

40. ♔e2 ♜e5+



41.♔f1?!

White gets into a zugzwang position. He had to try 41.♔d2 f6 42.♔d3 ♖f4 43.♔c3 ♖xf2—+ and pray!

41...f6! 42.f3 ♖a4 43.f4

43.♔g2 ♖a2+ 44.♔h3 ♖b2!—+.

43...♖xf4+ 44.♔g2 ♖e1 45.♔g3 ♖g4+ 46.♔h2 ♖e2+ 47.♔h3

Or 47.♔h1 ♖d2 48.♜xf5 ♖xh4+ 49.♔g1 ♖c4 50.♜b1 ♖cc2 51.♜b7+ ♔h6 52.♜b1 ♖g2+ 53.♔h1 ♖h2+ 54.♔g1 ♖cg2+ 55.♔f1 ♖h1+—+.

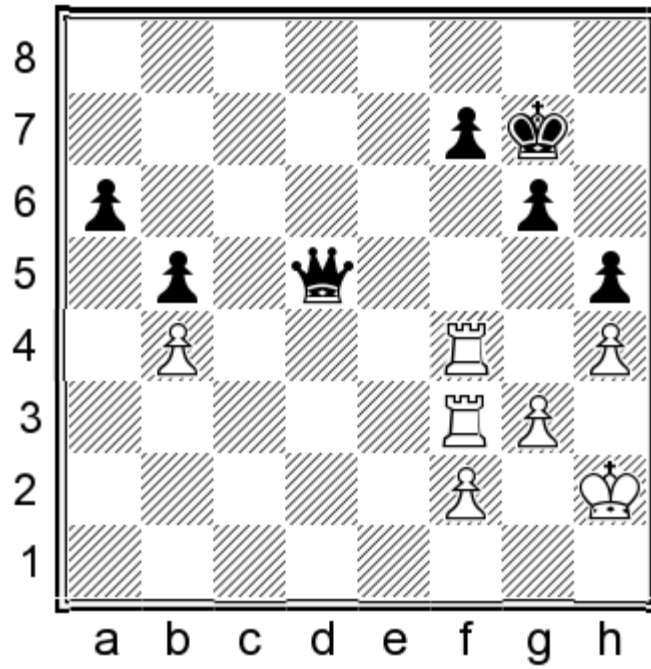
47...♖eg2 0-1

3

Sasikiran Krishnan

Hou Yifan

Caleta 2012



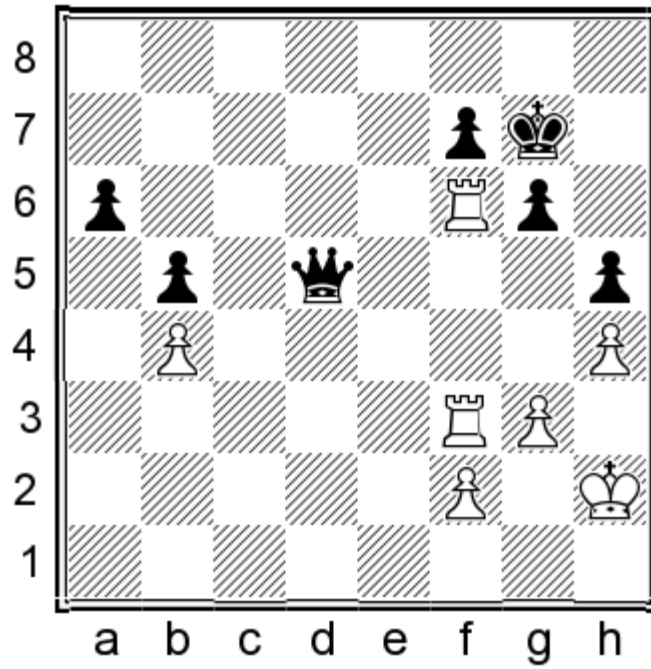
Remember: the queen needs targets and the rooks' need stability!

47. ♖f6!

White blocks the f-pawn and forces Black to act quickly.

47... ♗a2?

This is not the way that Black should start real counterplay. The retreat 47... ♔g8? is met by 48. ♔g2 ♖e4 49. ♖xf7 ♗xb4 50. ♖3f4 and Black should also be lost despite her passed queenside pawns: 50... ♗c5 51. ♖7f6 a5 (51... ♔g7 52. ♖xa6 b4 53. ♖ff6 ♗d5+ 54. ♔h2 ♗d3 55. ♖fb6 ♔h6 56. ♖a2 ♗c3 57. ♖b7 ♗d4 58. ♖c2+-) 52. ♖xg6+ ♔h7 53. ♖g5 ♗c6+ 54. ♔h2 a4 55. ♖f7+ ♔h8 56. ♖xh5+ ♔g8 57. ♖f4 a3 58. ♖g4+ ♔f7 59. ♖f5+ ♔e7 60. ♖g7+ ♔e8 61. ♖h5 ♔f8 62. ♖a7 ♖f6 63. ♔g1 b4 64. ♖b5+-). The only way to fight on was the direct 47... a5! 48. bxa5 b4 when White has the choice between a queen endgame with an extra pawn or two rooks against queen: 49. ♖3f4 (49. ♖xf7+? ♗xf7 50. ♖xf7+ ♔xf7 51. a6 b3 52. a7 b2 53. a8=♗ b1=♗ with a queen endgame which should be tenable) 49... b3 50. ♖b6 ♗xa5 51. ♖xb3 ♗d5 52. ♖b6 f5 and White is on top but Black has some practical drawing chances.



48. ♔g2!

Preparation for the simplification, as White wins an all-important tempo for the upcoming pawn ending. 48. ♖xf7+? violates the endgame principle of do not rush: 48... ♜xf7 49. ♖xf7+ ♔xf7 50. ♔g2 (50. f3 ♔e6 51. ♔g2 ♔d5 52. ♔f2 ♔c4 53. g4 ♔xb4 54. f4=) 50... ♔e6 51. ♔f3 ♔d5 52. ♔e3 ♔c4 53. f4 ♔xb4 54. g4 ♔c5 55. f5 ♔d5 56. fxg6 ♔e6 57. gxh5 ♔f6=.

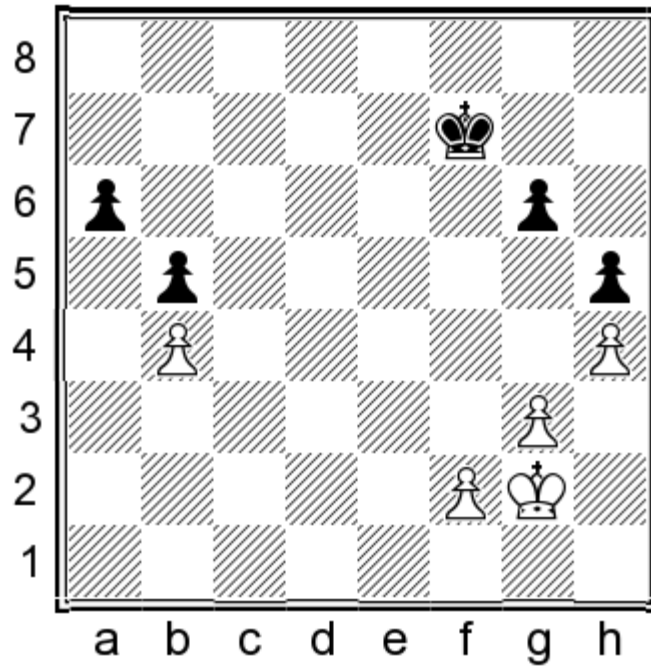
48... ♔g8

Now it is too late for 48... a5 due to 49. bxa5 ♜xa5 (49... b4 50. a6 b3 51. ♖xf7+ ♔h6 52. ♖b7 ♜xa6 53. ♖ff7+—) 50. ♖xf7+ and White's attack is too quick: 50... ♔h6 (50... ♔g8? 51. ♖f8+ ♔g7 52. ♖3f7+ ♔h6 53. ♖h8#) 51. ♖b7 ♜a6 52. ♖ff7 ♜c6+ 53. ♔h2 g5 54. ♖h7+ ♔g6 55. ♖bg7+ ♔f5 56. ♖xg5+—.

49. ♖xf7! ♜xf7

The pawn ending is lost, but 49... ♜d5 50. ♖7f6+— also offers no real hope.

50. ♖xf7 ♔xf7



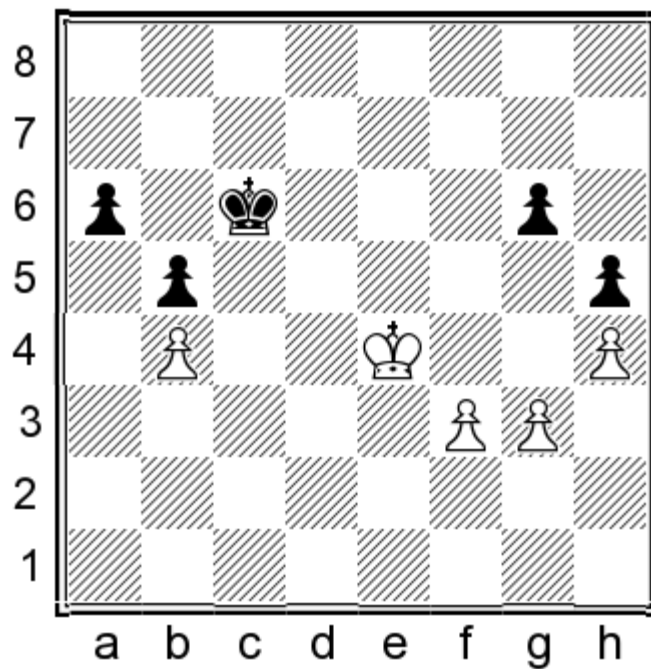
51.♔f3!

The king comes firstly to stop Black's queenside counterplay based on the breakthrough...a5. Afterwards White's kingside majority will decide the day.

51...♔e6

After 51...a5 52.bxa5 b4 53.♔e4+- White's king is in the square and Black's king is not.

52.♔e4 ♔d6 53.f3 ♔c6



54.g4!

This advance wins the resulting races.

54...♔c7

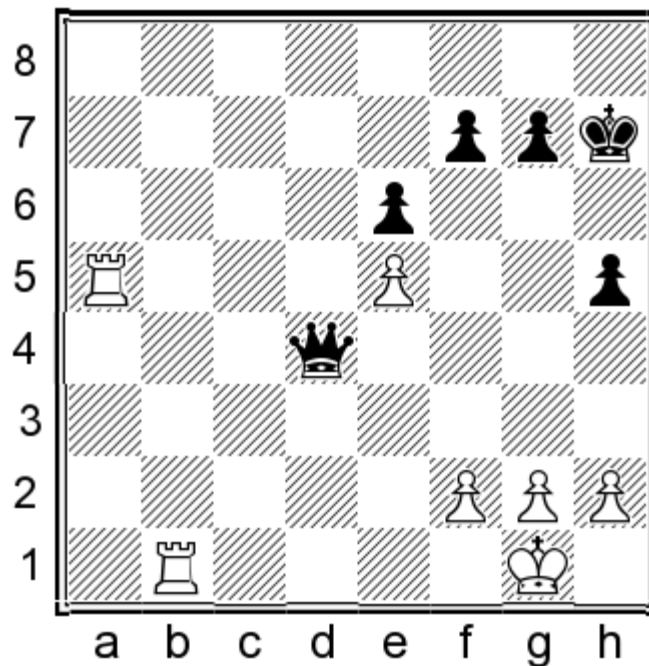
The breakthrough 54...g5 backfires due to 55.gxh5 gxh4 56.h6 h3 57.h7 h2 58.h8=♚+- and after 54...♔b6 55.gxh5 gxh5 56.f4 a5 57.bxa5+ ♔xa5 58.f5 b4 59.f6 b3 White must deal with the b-pawn: 60.♔d3! (60.f7? b2 61.f8=♚ b1=♚+=) 60...♔a4 61.f7 b2 62.♔c2 ♔a3 63.f8=♚+--.

55.gxh5 gxh5 56.f4 ♔d6 57.f5 ♔d7 58.♔e5 ♔e7 59.f6+ 1-0

Black resigned due to 59...♔f7 60.♔f5 a5 61.bxa5 b4 62.♔e4! and White's king stops the b-pawn but not 62.a6? b3 63.a7 b2 64.a8=♚ b1=♚+=.

4

Tukmakov Vladimir
Savchenko Stanislav
Donetsk 1998



In general, the more pawns there are on the board, the easier the win. But some cases needs 'extra handling', as in this game, where White's e-pawn is a little bit exposed and needs permanent protection.

34.h3

The right way, as 34.g3? h4! would give Black serious counterplay.

34.h3 ♚c3?!

In general the defending side should generate counterplay; proper would be 34...g5.

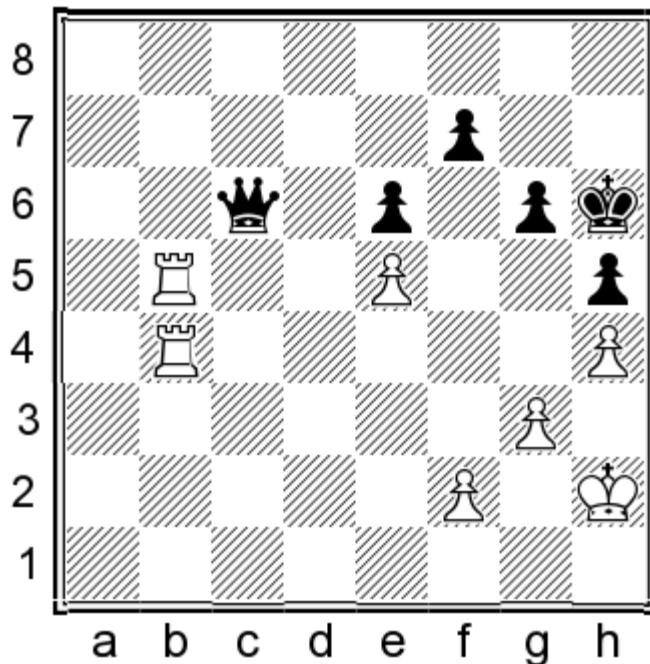
35.♞ab5 g6?!

This was the last chance for 35...g5. Black would not save the game, but his practical chances would be high.

36.h4!

Rooks love fixed pawn structures! Now, Black's f-pawn becomes an easy target.

36...♔g7 37.g3 ♖c4 38.♟b4 ♚c1+ 39.♔g2 ♚c6+ 40.♔h2 ♔h6



41.♟b3!

Planning ♟b4-f4 and ♟b3.

41...g5

Too late! Losing also was 41...♚e4 42.♟e3 ♚f5 43.♔g2 and ♟b4-f4.

42.hxg5+ ♔xg5 43.♟b4

Now ♟f4 and ♟b3 cannot be avoided.

43...f5

'Forced', as otherwise this pawn would be lost.

44.exf6 ♔xf6

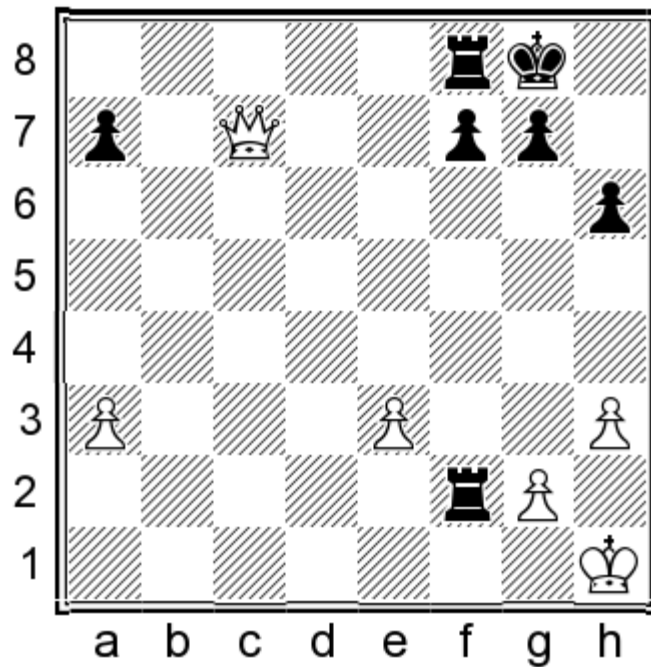
Black 'saved' his vulnerable f-pawn, but on the other hand new weaknesses have been created (pawns e and h). White can focus on the black e-pawn and win the game.

45.♟f4+ ♔g7 46.♟e3 ♚d5 47.♟fe4 ♚f5 48.♔g1 1-0

Black had to resign, as both his pawns are lost.

5

Mikhalchishin Adrian
Kasparov Garry
Frunze 1981



A rather easy ending, where White's weak pawn structure loses the day.

31...a6! 32.♚a7 ♜f6!

All Black's pawns are protected by the one rook, allowing the other to become active.

33.a4 ♜d8 34.a5 ♜d1+ 35.♔h2 ♜d2 36.♚b8+

After 36.♔g1 ♜g6 37.g4 ♜gd6 Black can combine mating threats and the usual attack on the weak white a- and e-pawns.

36...♔h7 37.♚b4

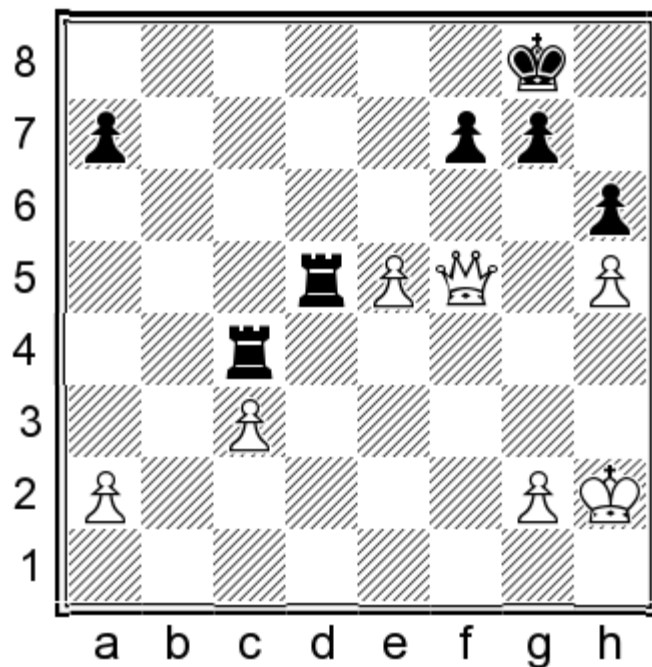
37.♔g1 ♜ff2 38.g4 ♜g2+ 39.♔h1 ♜ge2-+; 37.♔g3 ♜g6+ 38.♔f3 ♜dxg2-+.

37...♜ff2 38.♚e4+ f5 0-1

White had to resign, due to 39.♚c6 ♜xg2+ 40.♚xg2 ♜xg2+ 41.♔xg2 g5 with a winning pawn ending for Black.

6

Shirov Alexei
Anand Viswanathan
Linares 1998



“The endgame is won for Black” - V.Anand. Nevertheless, it demands tedious manoeuvring and gradual improvement of the position of Black’s rooks in order to be able to exploit the numerous white pawn weaknesses and win.

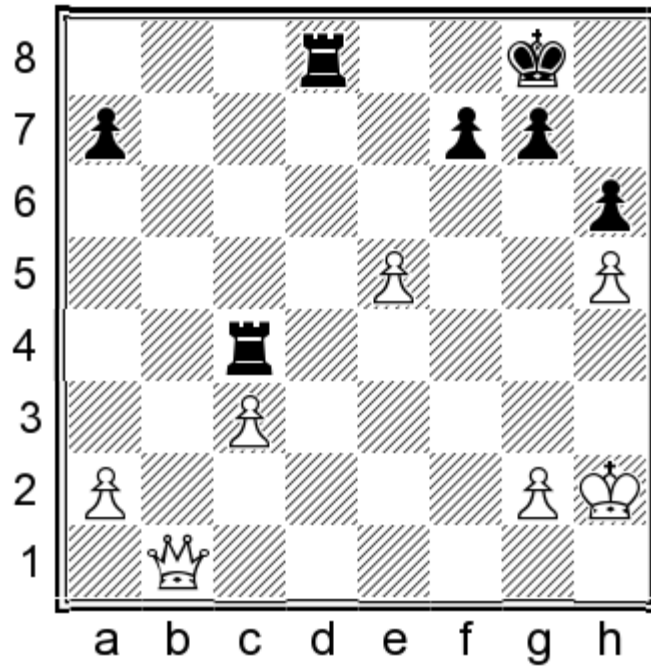
33. ♖b1

Threatening ♖b8+ and ♖b1+, indirectly defending e5 and c3 and going for the pawn on a7.

33... ♜d8?

Back-rank preparations... Black tries to play as per ‘theory’, but here he should have opted for 33... ♜h4+ 34. ♔g3 (34. ♔g1 ♜xh5 35. e6 fxe6 36. ♖b8+ ♔h7 37. ♖b1+ ♜df5 38. c4 ♜hg5+) 34... ♜xh5 35. ♖b8+ ♔h7 36. ♖b1+ g6 37. ♖b7 ♜d3+ 38. ♔f4 ♔g7 39. g4 ♜h2 40. e6 ♜f2+ 41. ♔e4 ♜g3 42. ♖xa7 ♜xg4+ 43. ♔e3 ♜f6 44. exf7 ♜xf7 45. ♖a5 h5 and he will win, as the separated white pawns cannot be advanced quickly enough.

34. ♖b7



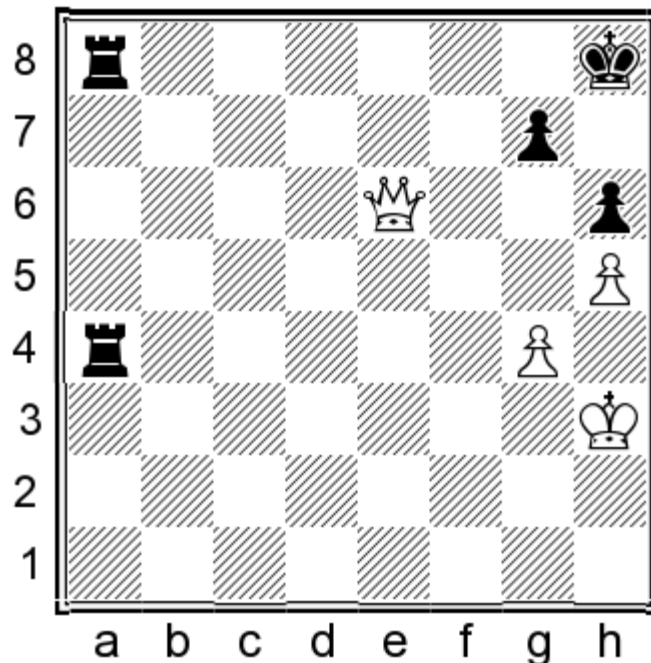
34.e6!? could have been played, creating weaknesses around the black king. After 34...fxe6 35.♖e1 ♜c6 36.♖e5 it wouldn't be easy to justify Anand's words...

34...♜xc3 35.♖xa7 ♜cc8!?

35...♜c6 36.a4 ♜e6 37.a5 ♜ee8 38.♖b6 would be OK for White.

36.a4

White could have saved himself with 36.e6 fxe6 37.♖e7 ♜e8 38.♖b4 ♜a8 39.a4 ♜a6 40.♖c4 ♜ea8 41.♔h3 ♜xa4 42.♖xe6+ ♔h8 43.g4

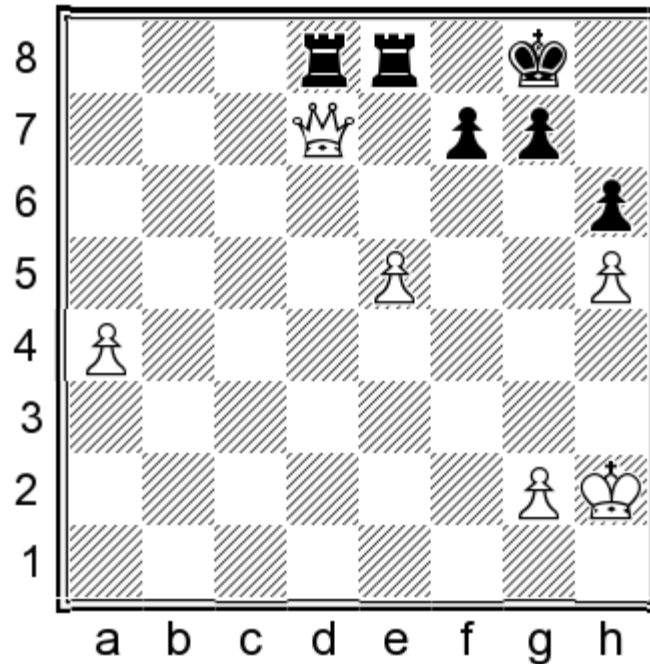


The problem here for Black is that the pawn ending (after he somehow takes on g4) with h5 vs g7-h6 pawns is drawn.

36...♖a8 37.♚c7 ♜dc8

37...♞d4 38.♚c6 ♜dx4 39.e6 fxe6 40.♚xe6+ ♔h8 reaches a well-known drawn position.

38.♚b7 ♜e8 39.♚c6 ♜ac8 40.♚d7 ♜cd8



41.♚c7?

White should always aim for the position we examined with 2 vs 2 pawns on the kingside. So, he had to opt for 41.♚b5! ♜b8 42.♚d5 ♜e6 43.♔g3 ♜a6 44.a5 ♜ba8 45.♚d7 ♜xa5 46.e6=.

41...♞d5! 42.a5 ♜dx5 43.a6 ♜5e7

Black could also win with 43...♜xh5+ 44.♔g3 ♜e3+ 45.♔f4 ♜a3 46.♚b8+ ♔h7 47.♚b1+ g6 48.♚b7 ♜f5+ 49.♔e4 ♜a4+ 50.♔e3 ♔g7 but Anand tries to ‘play it safe’.

44.♚c6 ♜f8!

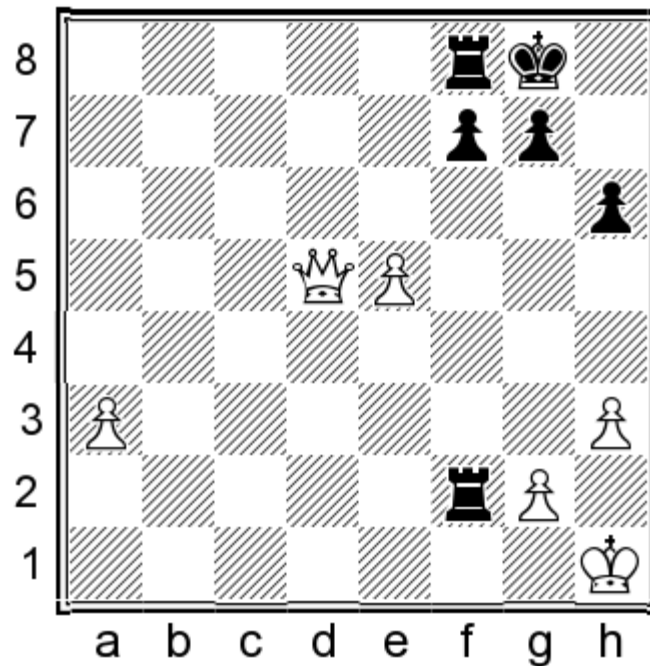
Now the doubling of the rooks on the a-file can no longer be prevented. The a-pawn falls. Afterwards, the kingside pawns will be wiped out. And the most important factor: White no longer has the resource e6!

45.♔h3

45.♚c5 ♞d7 with...♜a8 and/or...♜a7 coming.

45...♜a7 46.g4 ♜fa8 47.♔h4 ♜xa6 48.♚b7 ♜a5 49.♚c6 ♜f8 50.♚b6 ♜g5 51.♚b3 ♔h8 52.♚b4 ♜e8 53.♚a4 ♞d8 54.♚e4 f5! 55.gxf5 ♜f8 0-1

And White resigned as both of his pawns falls, without the chance of a perpetual check.



28...♖e8!

Black starts pressuring the weak e5-pawn, which is the first of his three main targets (the white pawns a, e and g).

29.♖b5

29.a4 ♜f5 30.♖c6 ♜fxe5 31.a5 ♜f8! 32.a6 ♜e7 33.♖c5 ♜d7 34.♔h2 ♜a8 followed by...♜da7 and...♜xa6 is a typical exploitation of Black's advantage.

29...♜e6! 30.g4 ♜f3 31.♖b8+

31.♖c5 ♜f4 32.♔g2 g6 33.♖c8+ ♔g7 34.♖c3 ♜e4 35.♔f3 ♜4xe5 36.a4 ♔h7—.

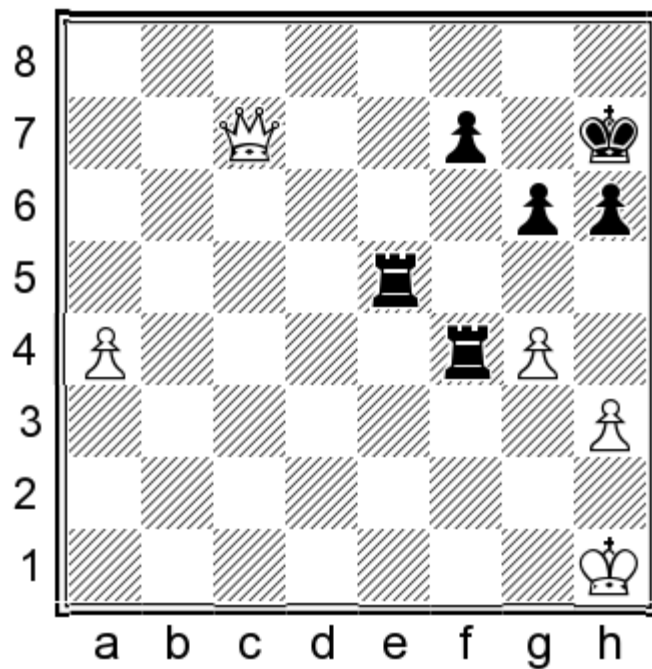
31...♔h7 32.♖b1+ g6 33.♖b7 ♜f4 34.a4

34.♖c7 ♔g7 35.♔g2 ♜e4 36.♖c3 ♜4xe5 37.a4 ♔h7 38.a5 ♜e7 39.h4 ♜b5—+ is very much akin to the previous note.

34...♜xe5

The first target is felled; the other two are coming!

35.♖c7



35...♖e4 36.a5 ♖c4 37.♚e5

37.♚b7 ♖c2 38.♔g1 ♔g7 39.♚e7 ♖a4 40.♚e5+ ♔h7 41.♚f6 ♔g8 42.a6 ♖aa2—+.

37...♖f2 38.♔g1 ♖a2 39.♚e1 ♖c5 0-1

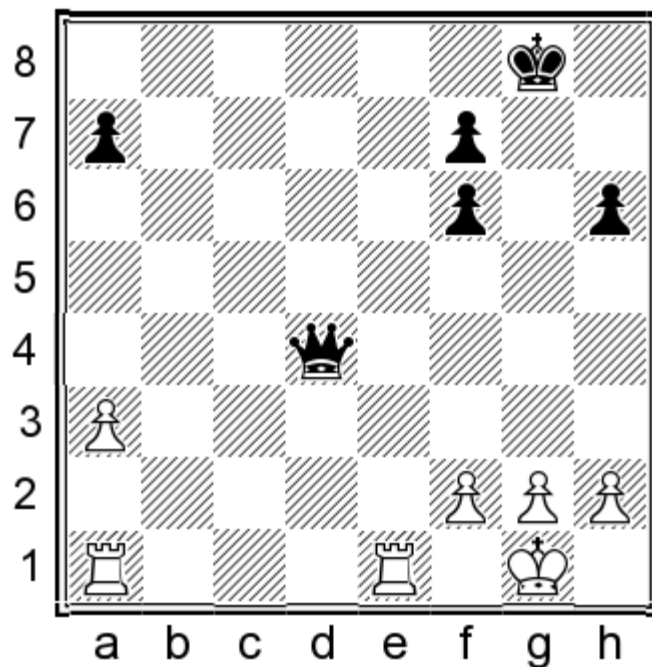
White resigned. After 40.♚f1 ♔g7 41.a6 ♖c6 the second target will fall and the rest is far too easy.

8

Varga Zoltan

Fogarasi Tibor

Budapest 1996



This is a quite easy win for White, as Black's shattered pawn structure is an extra minus for him.

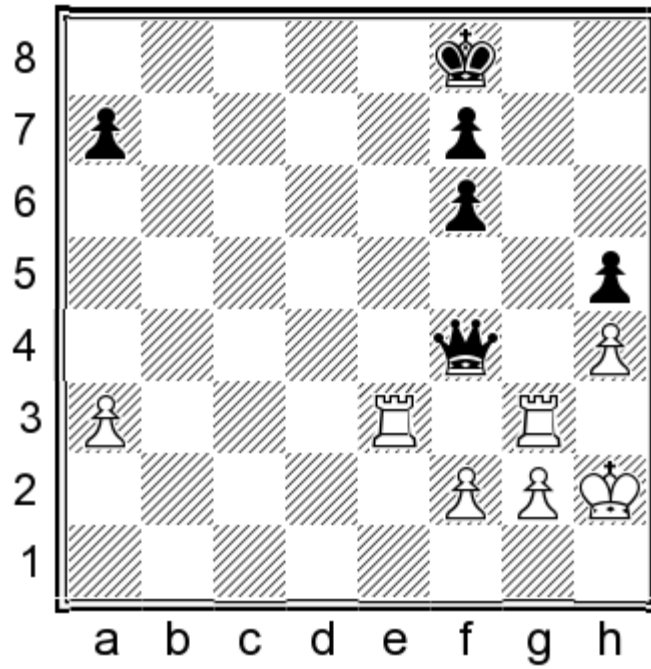
29.♖ad1 ♜c5 30.♗d3?!

The target is the f6-pawn, so White prepares the set-up with ♗f3-f4, g3 and ♗e3-f3. But 30.♗e3 was more accurate, as after 30...h5 he could play 31.h4.

30...h5 31.h4 ♜c4 32.♗h3?

Passive. Tactical solutions were required and White could continue here with 32.♗g3+! ♔f8 (32...♔h7 33.♗b1) 33.♗b1 ♜f4 34.♗e3 ♜xh4 35.♗b8+ ♔g7 36.♗g3+ ♔h7 37.♗b4+.

32...♔f8 33.♗ee3 ♜c1+ 34.♔h2 ♜c7+ 35.♗hg3 ♜f4!



Now White has to offer his h-pawn.

36. ♖ef3 ♜xh4+ 37. ♞h3 ♝g5 38. g3 ♔g7 39. ♞h4 ♔g6 40. ♞a4 a5 41. ♞af4 ♜e5 42. ♔h3 f5

Black must be wary to not fall into a losing pawn ending: 42... ♜e6+? 43. ♔h4 ♜e5 44. ♞xf6+ ♜xf6+ 45. ♞xf6+ ♔xf6 46. ♔xh5+-.

43. a4!

Securing the outpost on b5. White can win if he can place one of his rooks on this square, as then he will attack all Black's important pawns (a5 and f5).

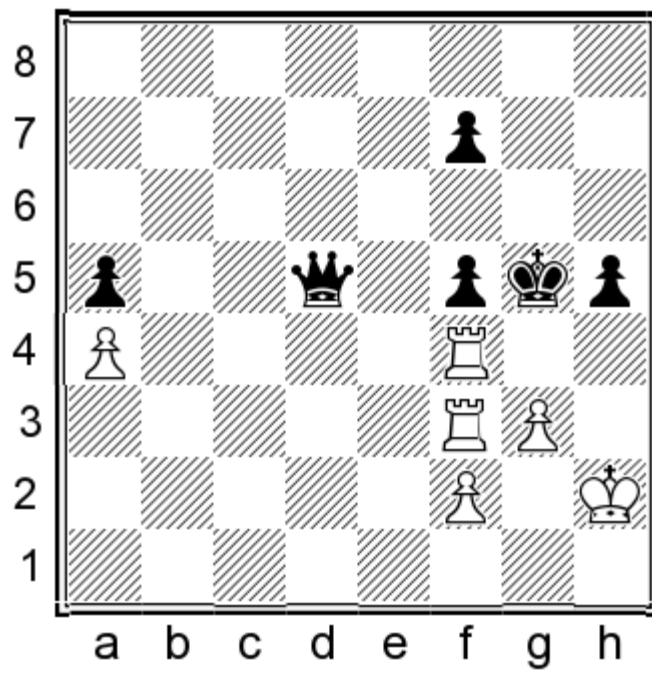
43... ♜d5 44. ♔h2 ♔g5?

A bad move. Black should try to activate his queen, so he had to continue with 44... f6 45. ♞c3 ♜d2! 46. ♞c5 h4! when the white king will not have enough security.

45. ♞e3

Accurate was 45. ♞c3 f6 46. ♞c2 ♜e5 47. ♞c6 ♜d5 48. ♞b6 and the threat ♞b5 is decisive.

45... ♜c5 46. ♔h3 ♜d5 47. ♞ef3 ♔g6 48. ♔h2 ♔g5



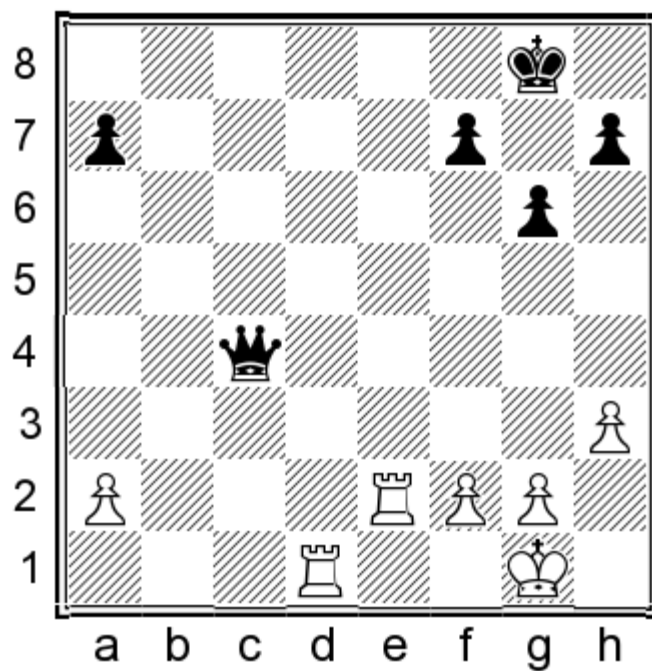
49.♖c3!

Finally White finds the plan!

49...♔d6 50.♖b3! 1-0

9

Skacelik Petr
 Porat Maya
 Brno 2006



31.♞d2

Protecting and preparing the transfer of the rooks on the 3rd rank.

31...a6 32.♞c2 ♖a4 33.♞ed2 ♘g7 34.♞c3! ♚b4 35.♞dc2 ♗a5 36.a3 ♖a4 37.♞d2 ♗a5 38.♞dd3 ♚b5 39.♞f3 ♖a4 40.g3!

Good work and not falling for the cheap 40.♞c7? ♚d1+ 41.♙h2 ♚d6+--.

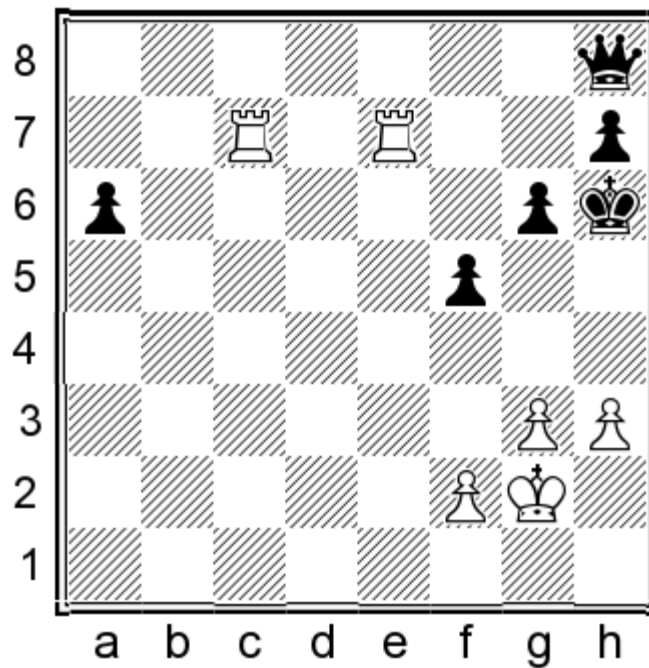
40...♗a5 41.♞c6 f5

Otherwise ♞cf6.

42.♞e3 ♘h6 43.♞e7!

Now the black king will be caught in mating nets.

43...♗xa3 44.♞cc7 ♗a1+ 45.♙g2 ♗h8



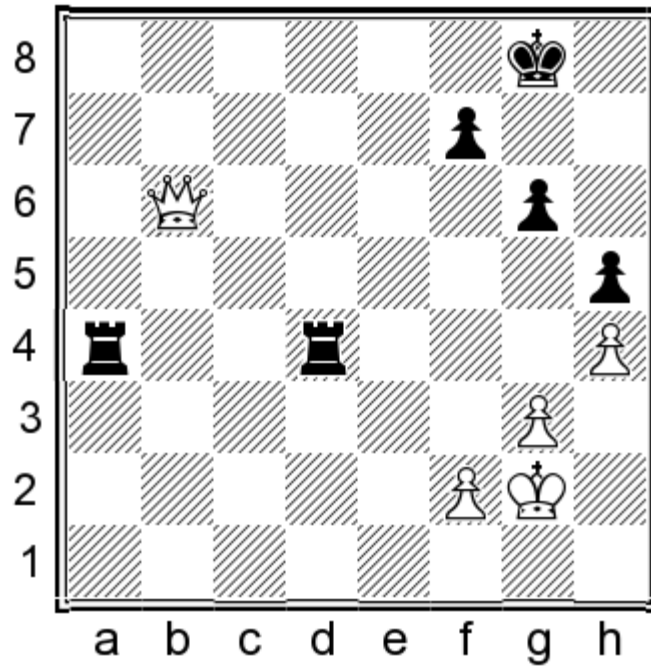
46.h4!

Black has no moves and the threat f3, g4-g5 cannot be stopped.

46...♗a8+ 47.♞b7 ♗h8 48.♙h3 ♗g8 49.f3 ♗h8 50.♞ec7 f4 51.g4 1-0

10

Karpov Anatoly
Kasparov Garry
Linares 2001



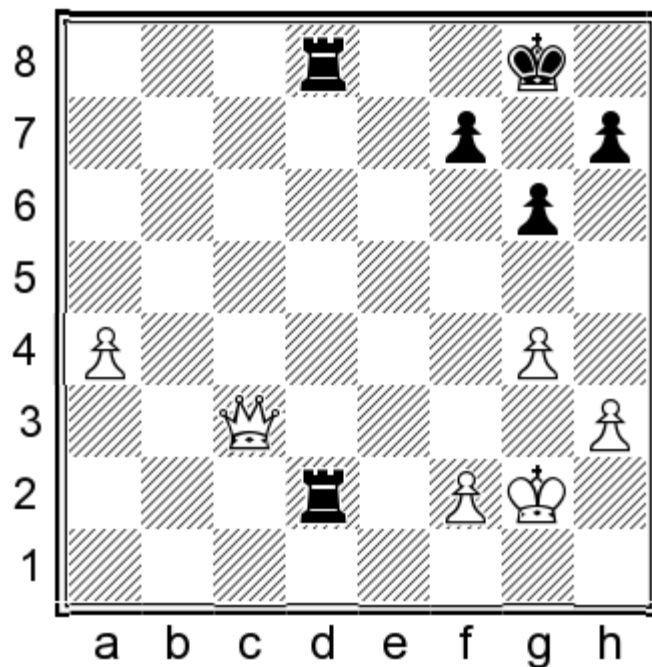
It seems that Black has entered a favourable ending, one which should pose White extreme problems. But the unlucky placement of the black rooks allows White to keep the balance!

34. ♖b8+! ♔h7 35. ♚c7!

The only move sufficient for the draw. Black's rooks are unable to protect the valuable f-pawn, so Black has to accept the unavoidable.

35... ♔g8 36. ♖b8+ 1/2-1/2

11
Leko Peter
Kramnik Vladimir
Brissago 2004



Of course Black has every chance to win. First he must concentrate on the white a-pawn and then try to exchange his rooks for the opponent's queen and one pawn, achieving a won pawn ending. Easier said than done!

37...♖2d5! 38.♚c6 ♜a5 39.♔g3 ♜da8 40.h4!

It is important for White to reduce the material and to create some kind of threats against the enemy king.

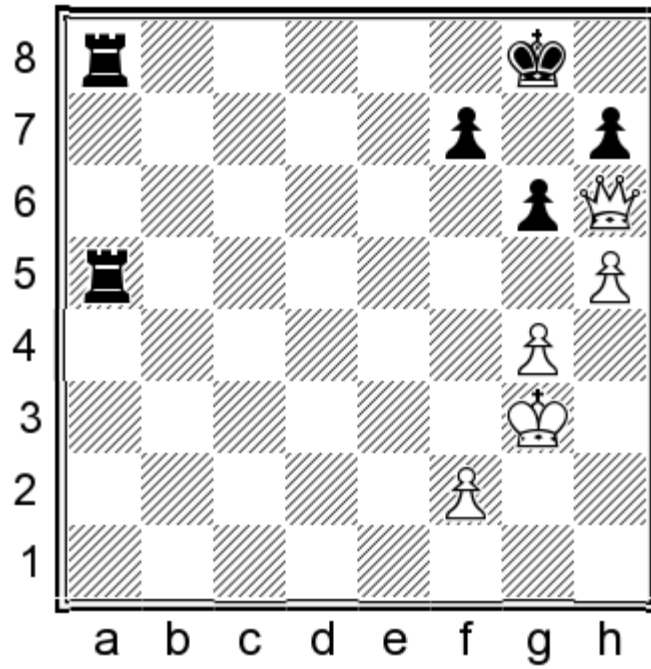
40...♜5a6!?

This seems better than the immediate 40...♜xa4?! 41.h5 gxh5 42.gxh5 ♜4a6 43.♚e4 h6 44.♚g4+ but Black could also play 40...h6!? 41.h5 g5 42.f4! gxf4+ 43.♔xf4 ♜xa4+ 44.♔g3 ♜4a6 45.♚d5 ♜b8.

41.♚c1 ♜a5 42.♚h6

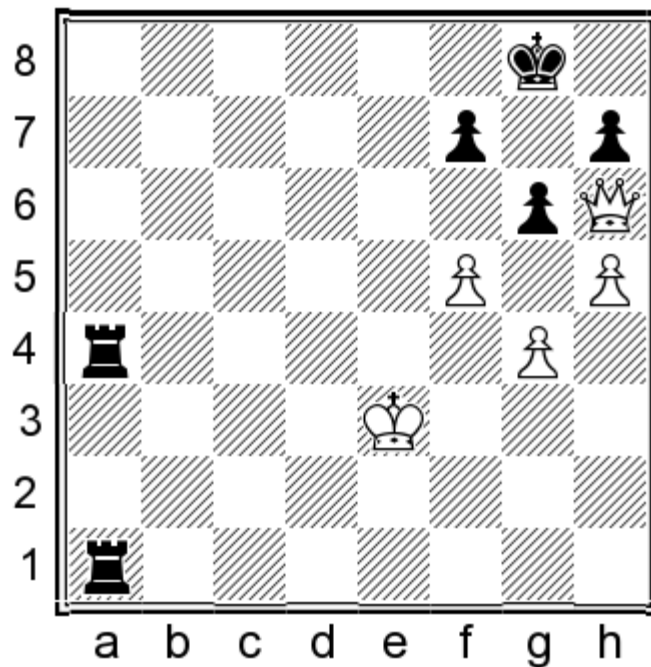
On 42.♚c6 Black would try to enter the previous note with 42...h6.

42...♜xa4 43.h5 ♜4a5

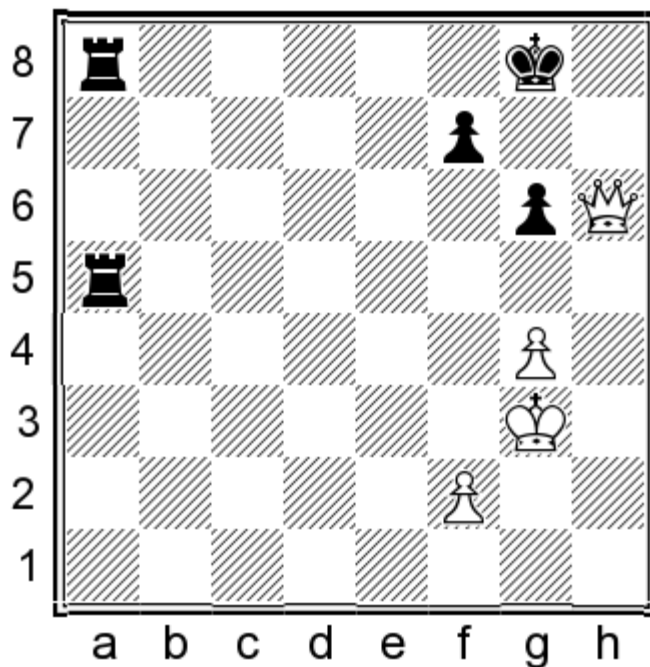


44. ♖f4?!

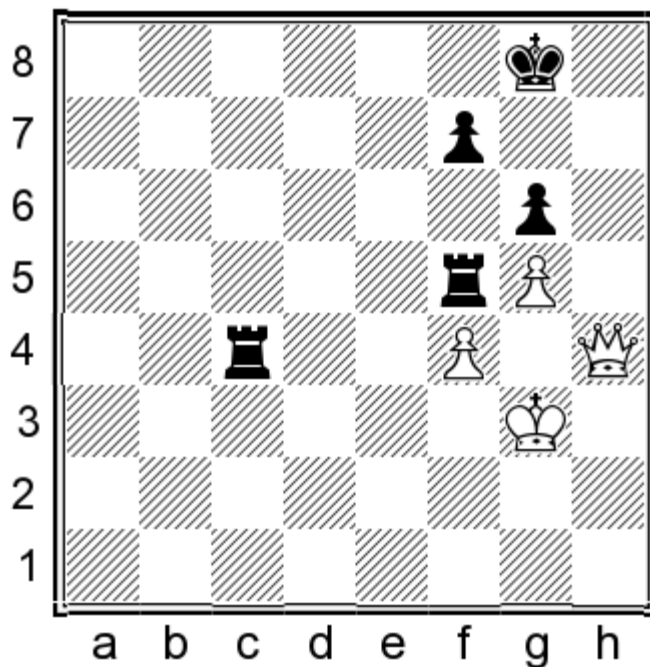
You can't really call this a mistake, but it nonetheless eases Black's task. White seems to be helpless, even with 44.f4 ♖a1 (44...g5? 45.f5=) 45.f5 ♖8a3+ 46.♔f4 ♖a4+ 47.♔g5 (47.♔e3?



47... ♖xg4!-+) 47...gxf5 48. ♖c6 ♖a6 (48...h6+!? 49.♔xf5 ♔h7+) 49. ♖c8+ ♔g7 50.♔xf5 ♖f6+ 51.♔e4 ♖e1+ 52.♔d5 ♖fe6+ but he should try it, as it is highly important to open the opponent's king, aiming for a perpetual. Interesting (but not enough for the half point) is the position after 44.hxg6 hxg6



Now Black can win with some delicate manoeuvres, first shown by endgame expert GM Karsten Müller: 45.g5 (45.f3 ♖a3 46.♚d2 ♜b8 47.♚d5 ♜bb3 48.g5 ♜b8! [48...♜xf3+? 49.♚xf3 ♜xf3+ 50.♔xf3 ♔f8 51.♔e4=] 49.♚d4 ♜a5 would just transpose to 45.g5 themes) 45...♜f5 46.f4 ♜a4 47.♚h4 ♜c4!

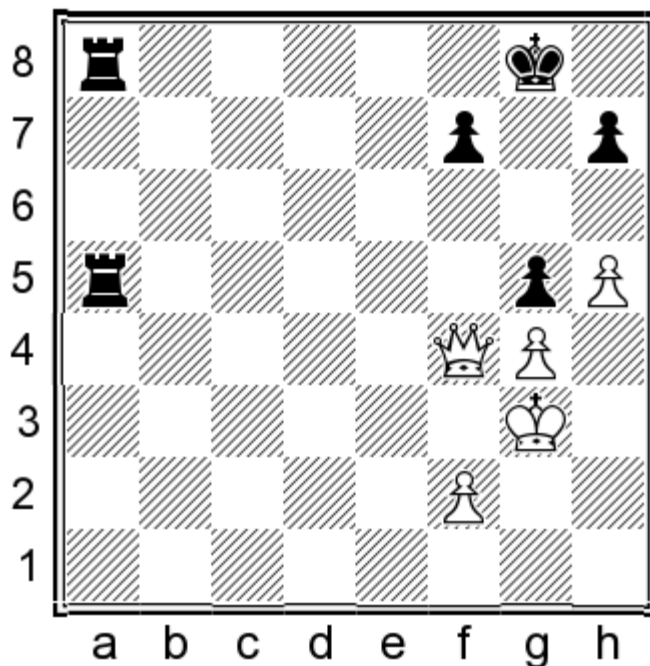


The point! Black can use his rooks in order to create mating threats and zugzwang positions, waiting for the right moment to achieve a won pawn ending. Wrong would be 47...♜fxf4? 48.♚xf4 ♜xf4 49.♔xf4 ♔f8 50.♔e4! (50.♔e5? ♔e7-+) 50...♔e8 51.♔d4! ♔d8 52.♔e4= or 47...♔f8? 48.♚h8+ (48.♔f3? ♜axf4+ 49.♚xf4 ♔e7!-+) 48...♔e7 49.♚b8! ♜axf4 50.♚c7+ ♔f8 51.♚xf4=.

Now White can continue with 48.♚g4 (48.♔f3?! ♜c3+ 49.♔e4 ♜b5 50.♔d4 ♜a3 51.♚g4 ♜b4+ 52.♔e5 ♜a5+ 53.♔d6 ♜f5-+) 48...♜c3+ 49.♔g2 (49.♔f2 ♜d3 50.♔e2 ♜b3 51.♔f2 ♔g7 52.♔g2 ♜d5 53.♚e2 ♜dd3 54.♔f1 ♜f3+ 55.♔g1 ♜fe3 56.♚c4 ♜bd3 57.♔f1 ♜d2 58.♚b4 ♜ed3 59.♚e4 ♜a3 60.♚e5+ ♔h7 61.♚f6 ♔g8 62.f5 ♜f3+ 63.♔e1 ♜d5-+; 49.♔h4 ♔h7!-+) 49...♜d5 50.♚e2 ♜dd3 51.♚e8+ ♔g7 52.♚e2 ♔f8! 53.♔f2 (53.♔g1 ♜b3 54.♚f2 ♜e3 55.♔h2 ♔g8 56.♔g2

♖bd3 57.♔g1 ♜d1+ 58.♔g2 ♜de1—) 53...♞b3 54.♔g2 ♞g3+ 55.♔f2 ♞h3 56.♞d1 ♞bd3 57.♞c1 ♞h2+ 58.♔g1 ♞a2 59.♞c8+ ♔g7 60.♞c1 ♔h7 61.♞e1 ♞dd2 62.♞f1 ♔g7 63.♔h1 ♞f2 but Black is winning anyway.

44...g5!



Now Black can keep all the pawns on board, without even allowing a future f4 break.

45.♞f6 h6 46.f3

Of course 46.♞xh6? ♞8a6 would be a childish trap. Also inadequate is 46.f4 ♞a3+ (46...♞5a6 47.♞e5 ♞a3+ 48.♔f2 ♞b3 49.♞e2 gxf4—) 47.♔f2 ♞a2+ 48.♔f3 (48.♔f1 ♞c8—) 48...♞8a3+ 49.♔e4 ♞a4+ 50.♔d3 (50.♔d5 ♞xf4 51.♞xh6 ♞a5+—) 50...♞2a3+ 51.♔e2 ♞b3—.

46...♞5a6 47.♞c3 ♞a4 48.♞c6 ♞8a6 49.♞e8+ ♔g7 50.♞b5 ♞4a5 51.♞b4

White must not allow the black rooks to arrive at the important f6 and f4 squares.

51...♞d5 52.♞b3

52.f4 ♞d3+ 53.♔f2 ♞a2+ 54.♔e1 ♞h3 55.♞e4 ♞h1+ 56.♞xh1 ♞a1+—.

52...♞ad6 53.♞c4 ♞d3! 54.♔f2

54.♞c2 ♞e3 55.♔f2 ♞ee6 56.♞c3+ ♞f6 57.♔g3 ♞a6! 58.♔g2 (58.♞b3 ♞f4 and...♞af6; 58.♞d4 ♞a3) 58...♞a4 59.♔g3 ♞af4—; 54.♞b5 ♞e3 55.♞c5 ♞dd3—.

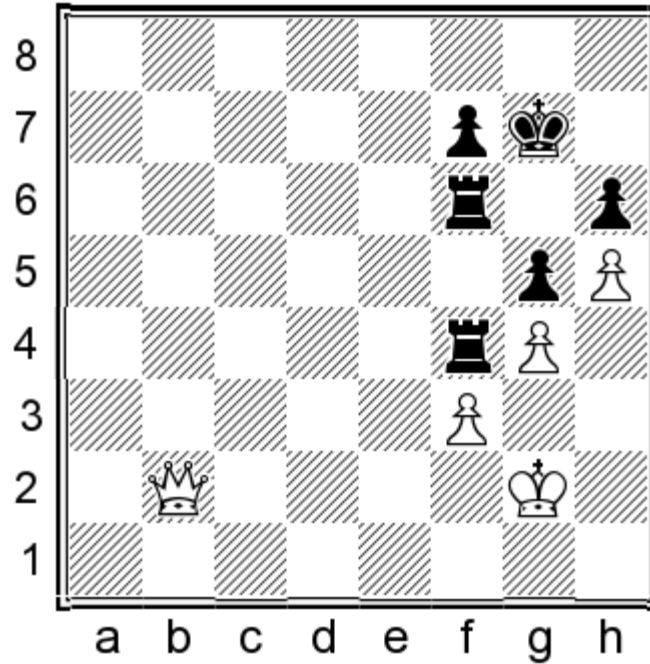
54...♞a3 55.♞c5

55.f4 ♞d2+ 56.♔e1 ♞h2! 57.♞d4+ ♔g8 58.fxg5 ♞a1+! 59.♞xa1 ♞h1+—.

55...♞a2+ 56.♔g3 ♞f6 57.♞b4 ♞aa6 58.♔g2

58.♞b2 ♞a4 59.♔g2 ♞af4—.

58...♖f4 59.♚b2+ ♖af6



Finally the rooks have arrived on the correct squares and the rest is simple.

60.♚e5

60.♚c3 ♖xf3 61.♚xf3 ♖xf3 62.♔xf3 ♔f6 63.♔e4 ♔e6—+.

60...♖xf3 61.♚a1 ♖f1 62.♚c3

62.♚e5 ♖1f4 63.♔g3 ♔h7 64.♚a1 ♖e6 65.♚b1+ ♖ee4—+.

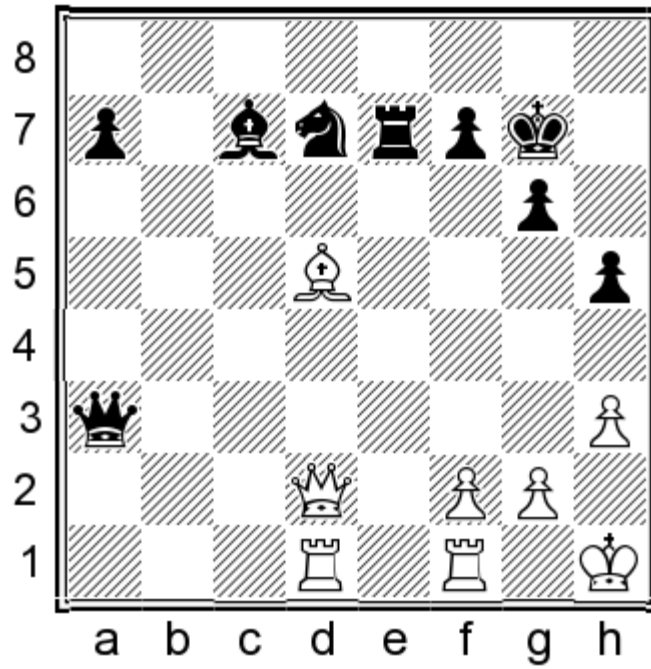
62...♖1f2+ 63.♔g3 ♖2f3+ 64.♚xf3 ♖xf3+ 65.♔xf3 ♔f6 0-1

12

Kramnik Vladimir

Svidler Peter

Linares 1999



White enjoys a winning position, where his exchange up will tell in the long run. But of course this will take a lot of moves and it will give White chances to go wrong.

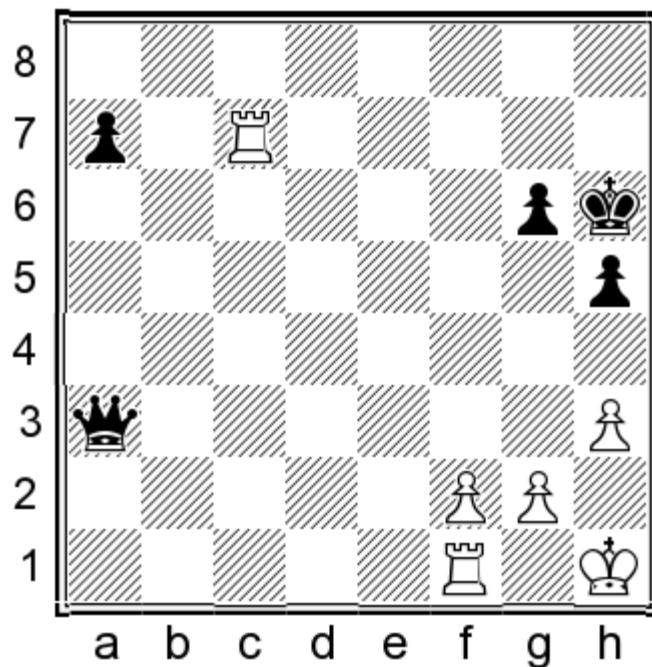
28. ♔xf7!

A remarkable but justified decision. White enters a theoretically-winning ending with two rooks versus queen.

28... ♖xf7

There was not much difference on 28... ♔xf7 29. ♖xd7 ♖xd7 30. ♖xd7+ ♔f6 31. ♖xc7 a5 32. ♖cc1! a4 (32... ♖b4 33. ♖a1 and ♖a2, ♖fa1) 33. ♖a1 ♖b3 34. ♖fb1 ♖c2 35. ♔g1 a3 36. ♖b6+ ♔g7 37. ♖a6+-.

29. ♖xd7 ♖xd7 30. ♖xd7+ ♔h6 31. ♖xc7



31...♙d3?!

Black had to pose more problems with 31...a5 32.♖cc1! a4 33.♗a1 ♘b3 where White had to find 34.f3!! h4 35.♗f2 and ♗fa2 winning.

32.♔g1 ♘d4

32...a5 33.♗a1 a4 34.♗a7.

33.♗c2 1-0

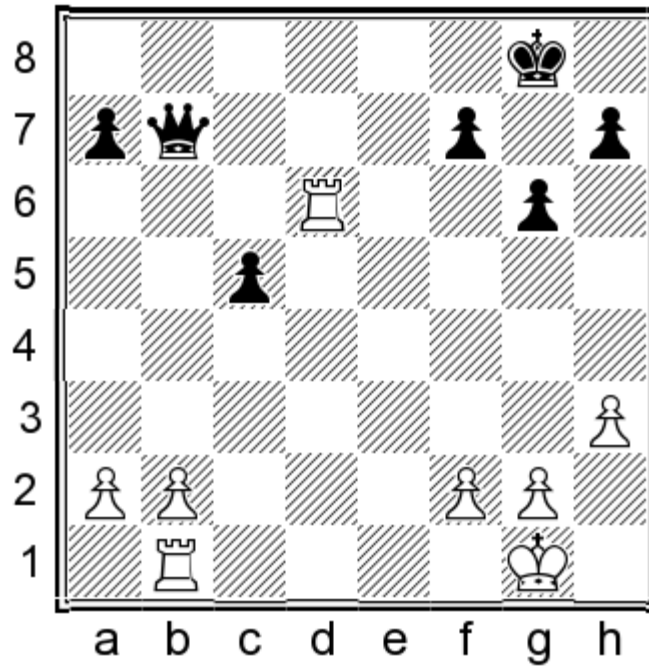
Black resigned as after 33...♙a4 34.♗cc1! a5 35.♗a1 ♘b4 36.♗a2 there is no hope of survival.

13

Kolev Atanas

Suba Mihai

Mallorca 2000



This is a very interesting ending that arises from a well-known variation of the ‘Modern Benoni Defence’, featuring in thirty games up ‘til today with the score of +7/=22/-1 in White’s favour. As I wrote a book called ‘Beating the Fianchetto Defences’ (Gambit Ltd-2006), I had the ‘pleasure’ of analyzing the above position. In my opinion White has fair chances to win, as has been proven in our previous examples. Well, this is not so easy and Black must be on the alert, but on the other hand how White can be in danger?

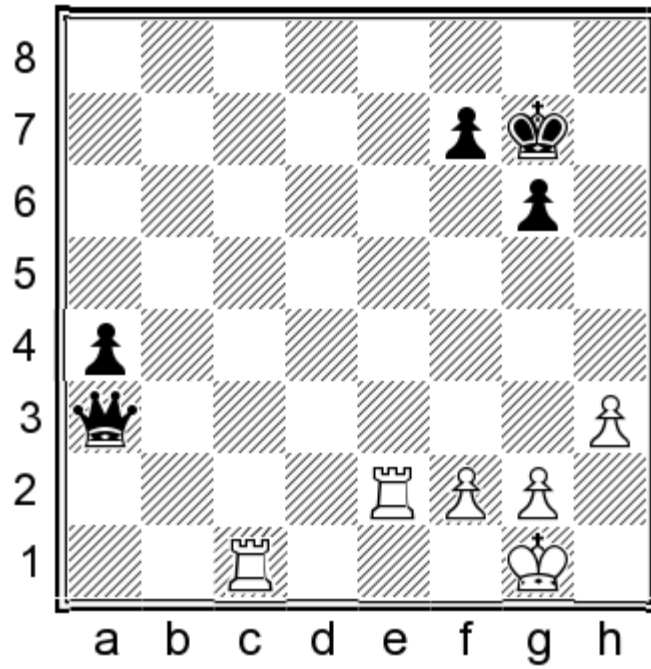
25...♔g7 26.♞d2 ♚a6 27.a3?

27.b3! was much better in my opinion: 27...c4 28.bxc4 ♞xc4 29.♞dd1! a5 (29...♞xa2 30.♞a1 ♞e2 31.♞d7±) 30.♞dc1!±.

27...♞c4 28.♞e1 h5 29.♞de2 h4?

Black should opt for 29...a5! 30.♞e4 ♞b3 31.♞1e2 c4 32.♞4e3 ♞d1+ 33.♔h2 h4 and now it is not easy for White to improve.

30.♞e4 ♞b3 31.♞xh4 ♞xb2 32.♞c4 ♞xa3 33.♞ec1 a5 34.♞xc5 a4 35.♞5c3 ♞b2 36.♞3c2 ♞b3 37.♞e2 ♞a3



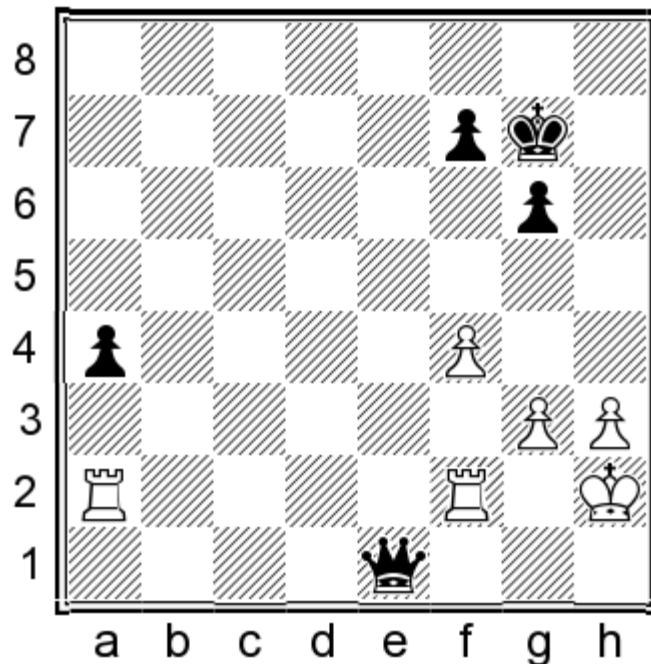
38. Ke1!

The typical regrouping!

38... Qb2 39. Bb1 Qd2 40. Ba1 Qc3 41. Bed1 Qc2 42. Bf1! Qb3 43. f4!

43. f3? a3 44. Bf2 Qe3! holds!

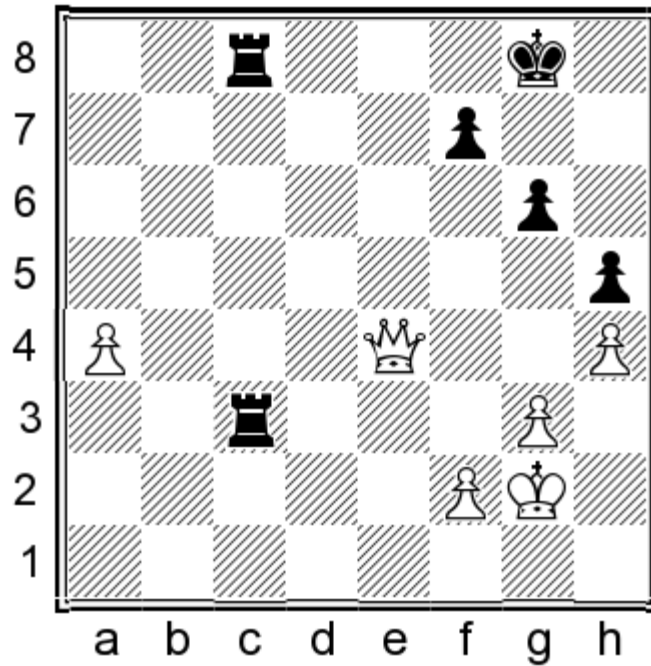
43... Qb4 44. Qh2 Qd4 45. Ba2 Qc4 46. Bff2 Qb3 47. Ba1 Qe3 48. Bf3 Qd4 49. Ba2 Qc4 50. Bff2 Qc1 51. g3 Qe1 1/2-1/2



White wrongly accepted a draw here. After 52. Bf3! f6 53. Bfa3 he should win.

14

Vajda Szidonia
Kiss Fernanda
Zagan 1995



36...♖8c7? 0-1

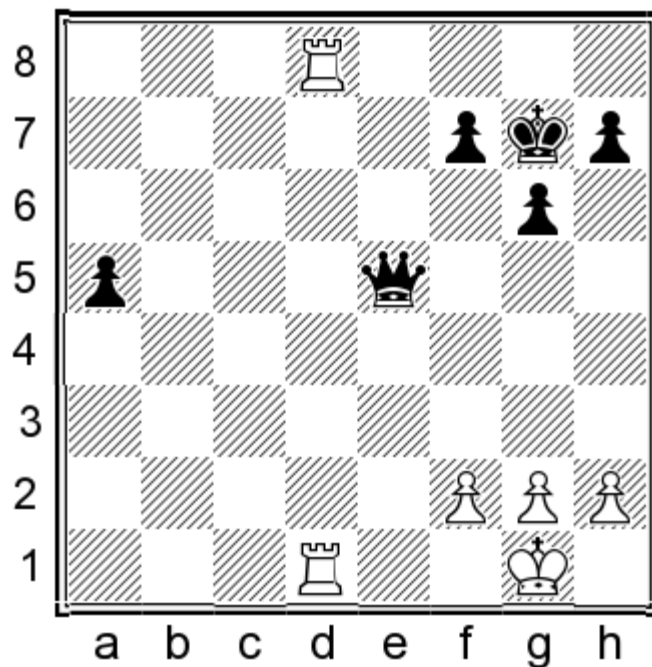
A serious blunder that could have cost the half point! Black could not win with 36...♖3c5? 37.♖b7 ♖e8 38.♗a7 ♖ee5 39.♗b6 ♖f5 40.♗d8+ ♔h7 41.♗b8 ♖c2 42.♗a7 ♖a2 43.♔g1=

but the 'usual' manoeuvre with 36...♖3c7! with the idea...♖a7 and...♖a8 (or reversed!) would win. White has no time to get active with 37.f4 due to 37...♖c4! (37...♖c2+? 38.♔h3 ♖a2 39.f5 ♖cc2 40.♗e8+ ♔g7 41.♗e5+=) 38.♗b7 ♖c2+ 39.♔h3 ♖e8 40.♗h1 ♖ee2 41.f5 gxf5+-. The funniest thing is that White 'trusted' her opponent and resigned at this point, in a drawn position!

After 37.a5! ♖a7 38.♗d4 ♖cc7 39.♗b6 ♖e7 (39...♖cb7 40.♗d8+ ♔h7 41.♗d5) 40.♗c5! Black is unable to properly coordinate her rooks and win the white a-pawn!

15

Planinc Albin
Tringov Georgi
Ljubljana 1969



38.h3?!

38.♖8d4! with the idea of ♖a4 and ♖da1, was obviously the correct follow-up.

38...h5 39.♖a8?!

This is the final mistake by White. He should again go for 39.♖8d4. Here Black has to hurry to create counterplay, as otherwise White will achieve the ideal position: 39...f5! 40.♖a4 f4 41.♖a3! (41.♖da1 f3 42.♖xa5 ♖e6=) 41...a4! 42.♖xa4 f3 43.g3 ♖f5 44.♔h2 ♖c2 45.♖a7+ ♔h6 46.♖f1 ♖e2 47.♔g1 ♖e6 48.♔h2 ♖e2 and there is no improvement...

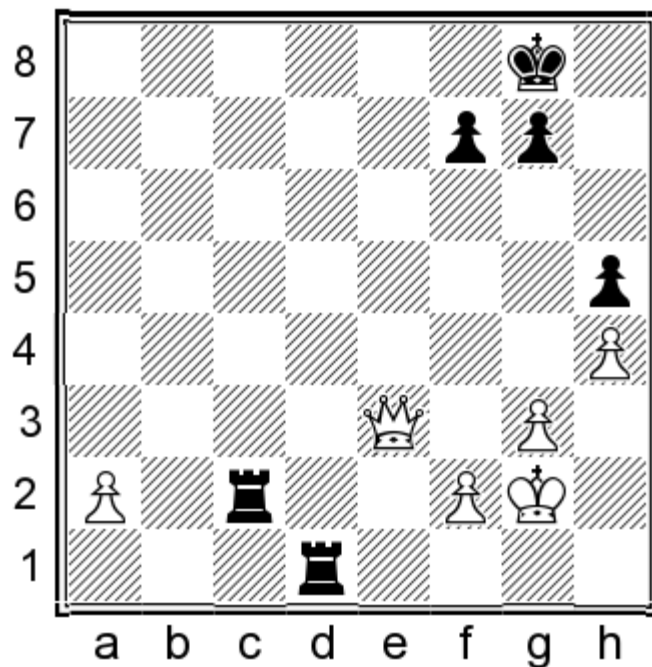
39...♖c3 40.♖a7 h4 41.♖dd7 1/2-1/2

16

Atalik Suat

De Firmian Nick

Lake George 2005



39...♖d8!

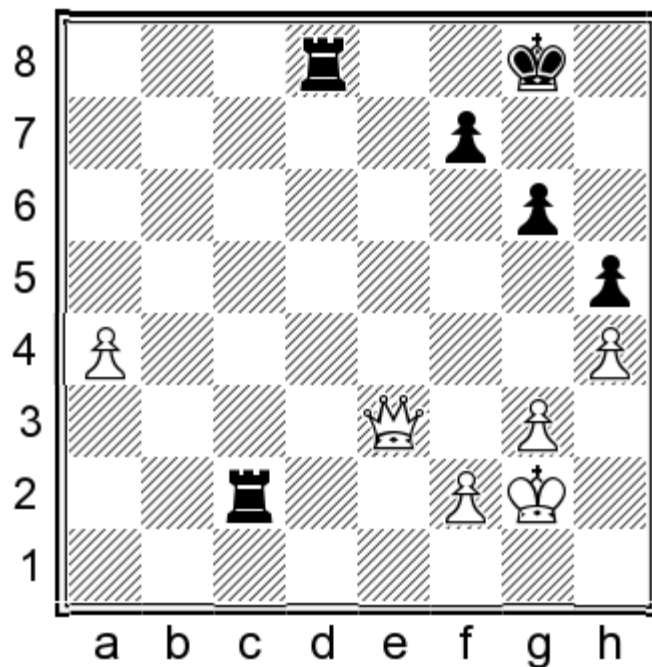
The usual method - Black will attack the white a-pawn from behind, while his rooks will protect the king and the pawns.

40.a4

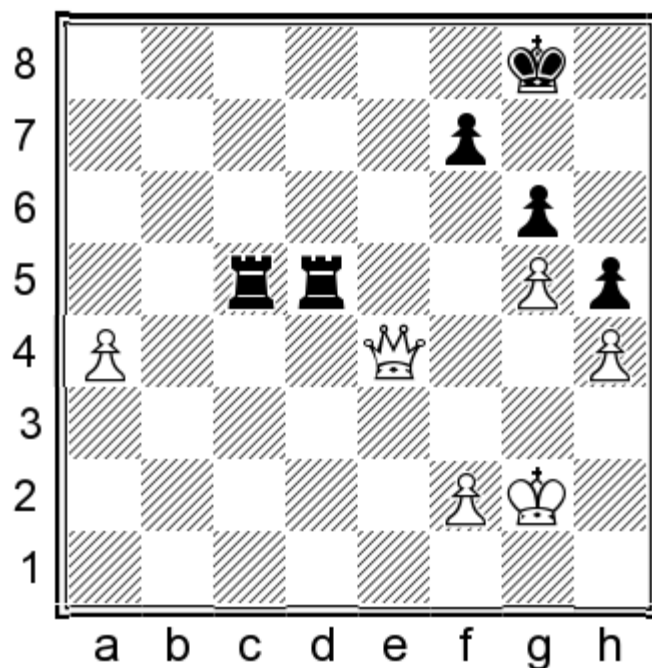
If 40.♙g5?, then 40...♞dd2! 41.♚xh5 (41.♙e3 ♞e2! 42.♙f3 ♞xa2→) 41...♞xf2+ 42.♔h3 ♞h2+ 43.♔g4 ♞c4+ 44.♔f3 ♞c3+ 45.♔f4 ♞f2+ 46.♔e4 ♞xg3, winning.

40...♞dc8?!

The notorious 40th move. However even after the best attacking scheme by Black, White has a way to draw this precarious-looking ending: 40...g6

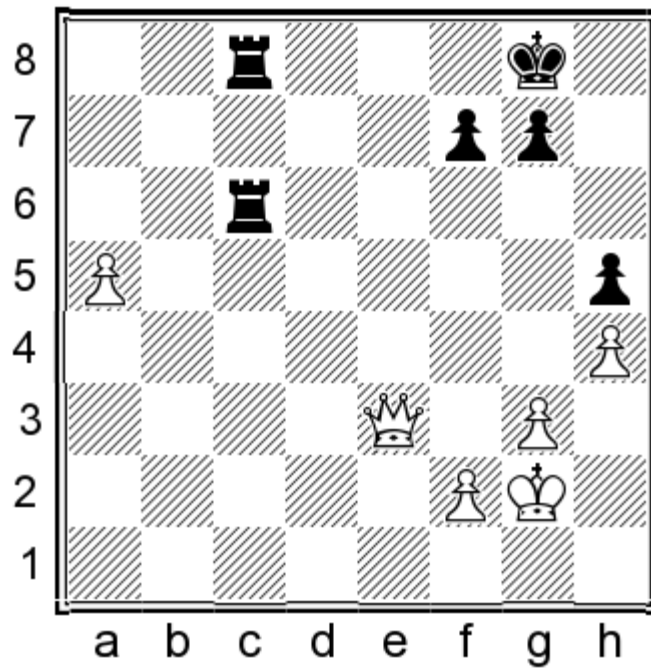


41.g4! (trying to exchange the pawns around Black's king is the best method for the defending side with the queen. If 41.♖e7? ♜d5 42.♚a7 ♜cc5 and White will be in trouble) 41...♜d5!? (41...hxg4 42.h5=) 42.♚e4 ♜cc5 (42...♜dc5 43.gxh5= or 42...♜cd2 43.g5 ♜2d4 44.♚e8+ ♔g7 45.♚c6 ♜f5 46.♚c3 ♜ff4 47.a5 and White will organise his defence as Black needs time to deal with the white a-pawn) 43.g5!



After this, the pawn endgame is drawn after a very well-known trick: 43...♜f5 44.f3 ♜a5 45.♔g3 ♜a7 46.♚d4 ♜fa5 47.♚e4 ♜xa4 48.♚e8+ ♔g7 49.♚e5+ ♔h7 50.♚e8 ♜4a5 51.♚e4 ♜f5 52.♚c6 ♜a3 53.♚e4 ♜axf3+ 54.♚xf3 ♜xf3+ 55.♔xf3 ♔g7 56.♔e4 with a draw, as Black can never gain the opposition after the liquidation of his f-pawn for White's g-pawn. It is important to know this classic endgame position.

41.a5 ♜2c6



42. ♖a7!

Excellent defence! Now Black can never use his rooks efficiently to make a4 fall.

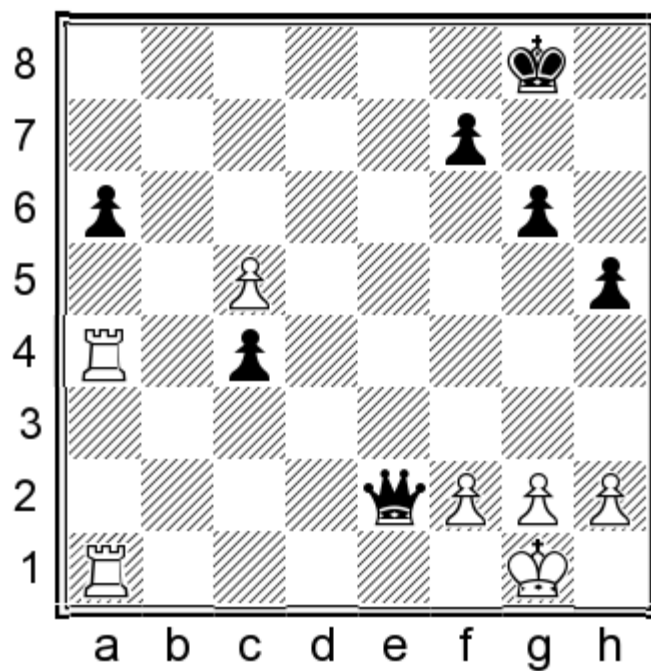
42... ♜6c7 ½-½

17

Nakamura Hikaru

Caruana Fabiano

Saint Louis 2016



Black tried to find salvation in this ending but White has the upper hand.

37...c3 38.♖c1 c2 39.♗d4! ♕b5

Black had no option, otherwise the white c-pawn will queen.

40.♗d2 ♕xc5 41.♗dxc2 ♕a3 42.h4?

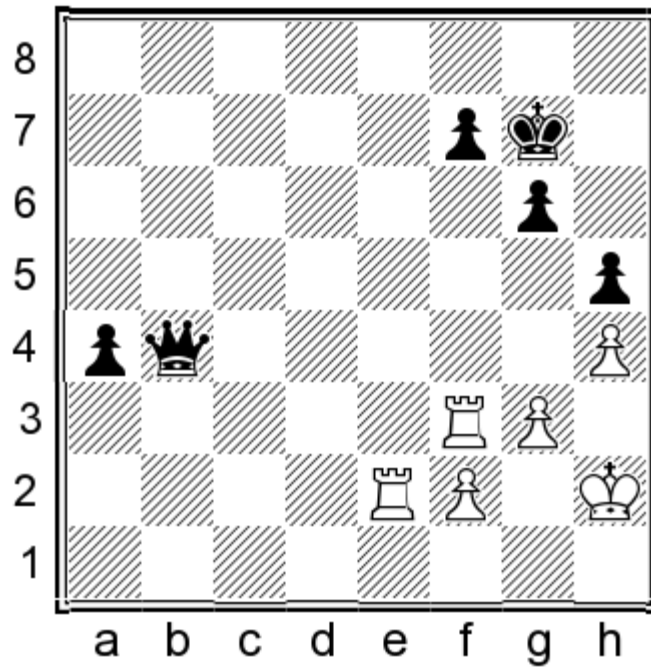
A bad move, which loses valuable time. White had to find the 'usual' 42.♗d1! a5 43.♗cc1 a4 44.♗a1 ♕b3 45.♗d2 (or 45.♗d4 a3 46.♗d8+ ♔g7 47.♗a8) 45...h4 46.h3 g5 47.♗da2, when Black would be in real trouble.

42...a5! 43.g3 a4 44.♗e1 ♕b3 45.♗ce2

If 45.♗cc1 then 45...a3 is OK.

45...♕c3 46.♗e3 ♕b2 47.♗1e2 ♕b4 48.♔h2 ♔g7 49.♗f3

49.♗a2 looks like its on the right track, but Black can continue with 49...g5! 50.hxg5 h4 51.♗ea3 ♕g4 52.♗xa4 hxg3+ 53.fxg3 ♕xg5 achieving a drawn position.



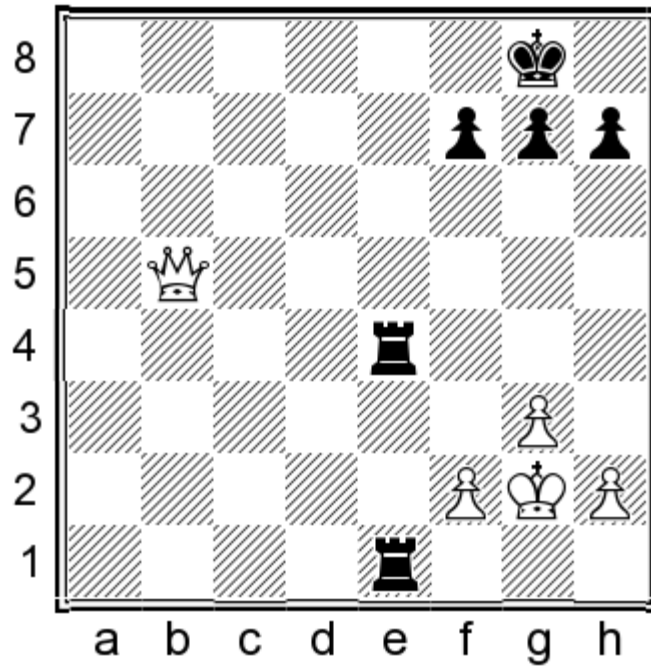
49...g5! 50.hxg5 h4 51.♗ee3 hxg3+ 52.♔xg3 ♔g6

White's king is too exposed to perpetual checks, so there are no real winning chances.

53.♔h2 ♕c4 54.♗g3 ♕f1 55.♗ef3 ♕c4 56.♗f6+ ♔g7 57.♗ff3 ♔g6 58.♗f6+ ♔g7 59.♗ff3 1/2-1/2

18

Ftacnik Lubomir
Svetushkin Dmitry
Panormo 2001



Black has very good winning chances and, what's more, he has almost no way to lose this. So he should continue according to our examinations and conclusions. This should be a good exercise for the reader: try to continue the fight behind the black pieces; create plans and ideas, according to what we have already examined.

1/2-1/2

QUEEN VS ROOK & MINOR PIECE

The queen vs rook & minor piece is a very common ending in practice. It arises from a lot of different situations, but mainly when the defender needs to 'lose' some material in order to seek salvation.

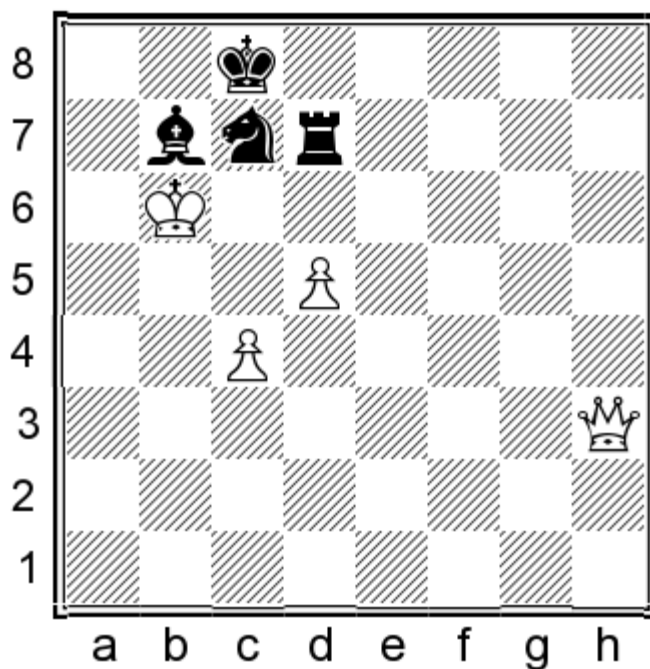
This pawnless ending is rather simple for the defender and it is mainly drawish, except for some rare cases where the pieces cannot co-ordinate properly and their king is confined and in danger.

1

Zubarev Alexander

Smirnov Artem

Schwaebisch Gmuend 2016



Black seems to be in trouble...

89...♙xd5!

An excellent idea, achieving a drawn ending.

90.cxd5 ♖xd5+

The ending is a theoretical draw.

91.♔c5 ♜e7 92.♚g4 ♔c7 93.♚g3+ ♔c8 94.♚f4 ♔b7 95.♚b4+ ♔c8 96.♚e4 ♚d5+ 97.♚xd5 ♜xd5 98.♔xd5 1/2-1/2

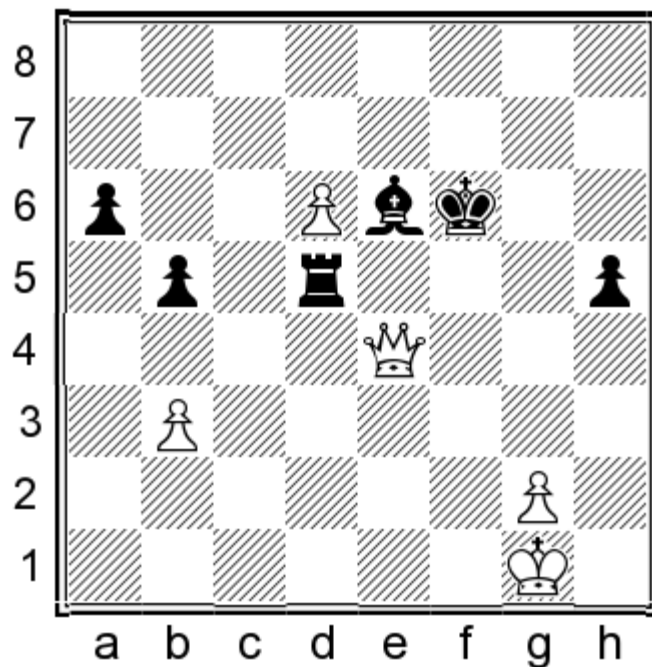
When pawns are added into the mix, things become tougher for the pieces, as the 'queen' side can often prevail - in cooperation with her king of course!

2

Gelfand Boris

Dominguez Perez Leinier

Elancourt 2013



White holds a big advantage, which he should normally turn into a full point, but things are not so easy...

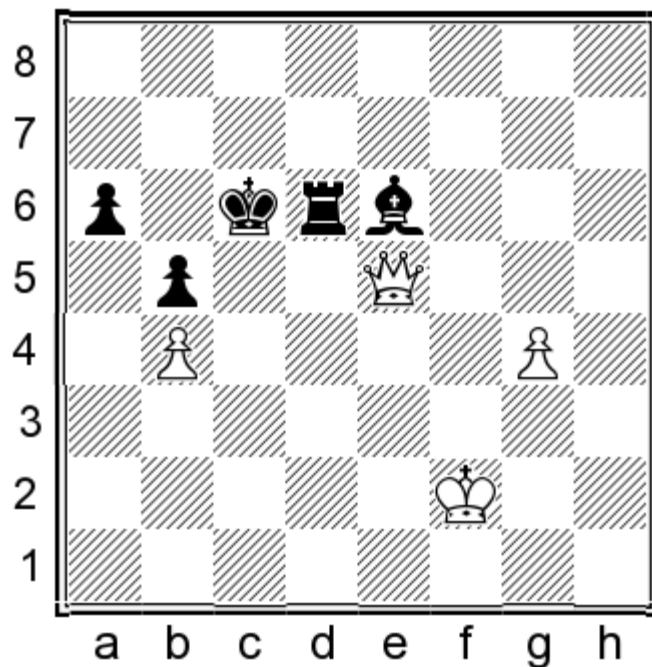
50. ♖f4+ ♜f5 51. ♗h4+ ♔e5 52. ♖xh5 ♔xd6 53. b4!

Blocking the queenside pawns on the same colour of the bishop.

53... ♜e6 54. ♗h8 ♔c7 55. ♗g7+

White could easily fall into a nice trap: 55. ♖c3+ ♔b7 56. ♗e3 ♜d6 57. g4 ♜xg4! 58. ♗e4+ ♜c6 59. ♗xg4 ♜c4 with a fortress; this ending is won if White's king had passed the 4th rank.

55... ♜d7 56. ♗e5+ ♜d6 57. ♔f2 ♔c6 58. g4



58...♙c4

Black missed a good chance here: 58...♙xg4! 59.♖e4+ ♗c7 60.♗xg4 ♝c6 61.♗d4 ♗b7 62.♗d5 ♗b6 63.♗e3 ♝c8!
(63...♝c4? 64.♗a8! ♝xb4 65.♗d8+ ♗c6 66.♗f6+ ♗c5 67.♗f8+ ♗c4 68.♗c8+ ♗d5 69.♗xa6+—) 64.♗d7 ♝c7 65.♗d8 ♗b7 with a draw!

59.♗e8+ ♗c7 60.♗e7+ ♝d7

Black could try to run with his king to f7, but it would hardly save him: 60...♗c6 61.♗a7 ♗d5 62.♗c5+ ♗e6 63.♗e3 ♗d7 64.♗a7+ ♗e8 65.♗b8+ ♗d7 66.♗b7+ ♗e8 67.♗c8+ ♗e7 68.♗c7+ ♝d7 69.♗e5+ ♗f7 70.♗f5+ ♗e8 71.g5+—.

61.♗e5+?!

An inaccurate move which allows counterplay. White could prevent it by 61.♗c5+ ♗b7 62.g5+—.

61...♗b7 62.g5 a5!

Of course, Black jumps at his chance.

63.bxa5 ♗a6 64.♗c3

64.♗a1 ♝f7+ 65.♗e3 ♝e7+ 66.♗f4 ♝e6 67.♗c3 would make White's task simpler.

64...♝d3 65.♗b4 ♝b3 66.♗e1 ♝a3 67.g6 ♝xa5 68.g7

An alternative idea is 68.♗e3 ♝a3+ 69.♗d4!?

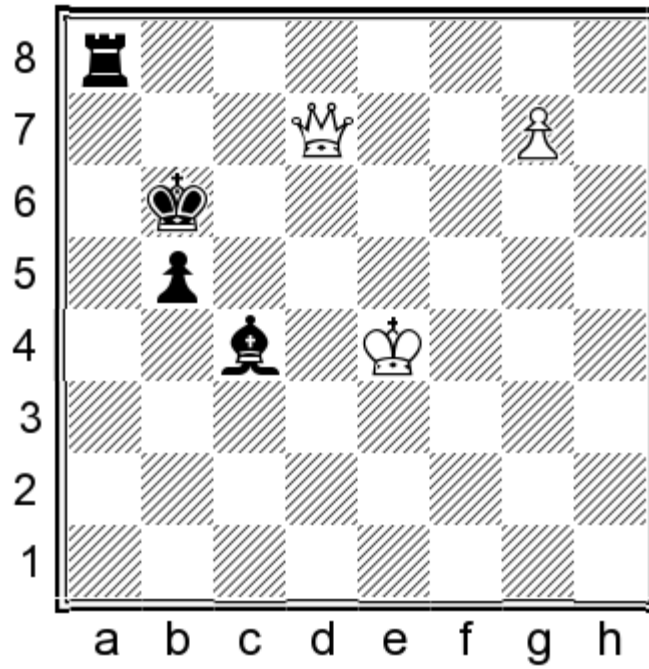
68...♝a2+ 69.♗f3 ♝a4 70.♗d2

70.♗f4! would allow the king to cross the 5th rank.

70...♗b6

Black could try 70...♙a2, although White is still in the driver's seat after 71.♗d6+ (71.♗xa2? ♝xa2 72.g8=♗ ♝a4 is a theoretical draw) 71...♗b7 72.♗c5 ♗a6 73.♗e3 ♗a5 74.♗d3! ♗a6 75.♗c6+ ♗a5 76.♗b7 ♙c4+ 77.♗d4 ♗b4 78.♗h1!+—.

71.♗e4! ♝a8 72.♗d6+ ♗b7 73.♗d7+ ♗b6



74.♔d4

The king has joined the action and Black is helpless.

74...♞a4

74...♞g8 75.♞d6+ ♔b7 76.♞f8+- or 74...♞a6 75.♞e8 ♔b7 76.♔c5+- or 74...♞b8 75.♔e5 ♞a8 76.♔d6+-.

75.♞d6+ ♔b7 76.♔c5 ♞a6 77.♞e7+ ♔b8 78.♞d7

Or 78.g8=♞+ ♔xg8 79.♞d8+ ♔b7 80.♞xg8 ♞c6+ 81.♔xb5+-

78...♔a8 79.♞xb5! ♔xb5 80.g8=♞+ ♔b7 81.♞f7+ ♔c8 82.♔xb5

And White won.

82...♞d6 83.♔c5 ♞a6 84.♞e7 ♔b8 85.♔b5 ♞a7 86.♞f8+

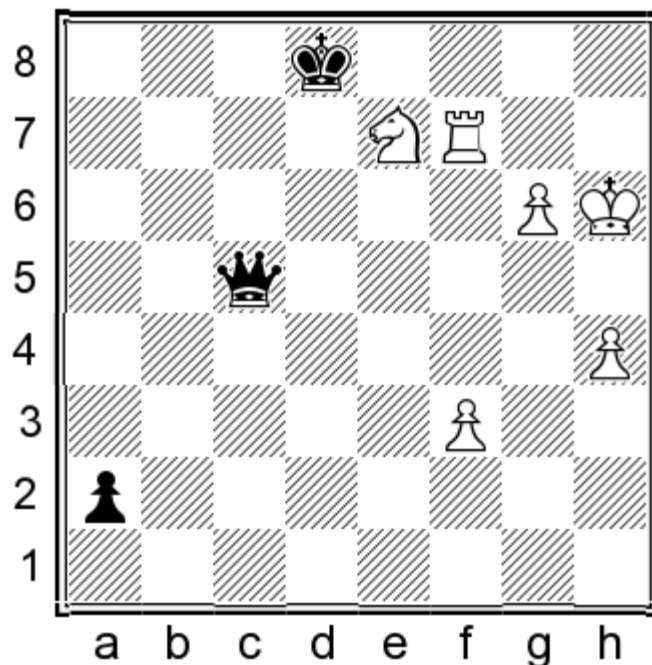
86.♞d8+ ♔b7 87.♞d4!+-.

86...♔c7 87.♞f4+ ♔c8 88.♔b6 ♞e7 89.♞f5+ ♔d8 90.♔c5 ♔c7 91.♞d5 ♞d7 92.♞e5+ ♔b7 93.♔b5 ♞c7 94.♞d5+ ♔a7 95.♔a5 ♞b7 96.♞d4+ ♔b8 97.♔a6 1-0

If the 'pieces' side's pawns are passed and well-advanced, things can become dangerous; precise calculation is required.

3

McShane Luke
Aronian Levon
London 2012



It is very seldom that two queens fight to storm a fortress.

64...♖c4

Aronian stops White's play first. The direct promotion 64...a1=♖ wins as well: 65.g7 ♖a6+ 66.♘g6 ♖e3+ 67.♔h7 (67.f4 ♖e8+) 67...♖e8 68.g8=♖ ♖xg8+ 69.♔xg8 ♖xg6+.

64...♖c4 65.♘f5 a1=♖ 66.♖f8+ ♔c7 67.g7

The pawn promotion comes too late, but White's pawns are also too slow after 67.h5!? ♖e5! (strong centralisation!) 68.♔h7 ♖cc5 and Black wins: 69.♖f7+ ♔d8 70.♘g7 ♖cd6 71.♘f5 ♖de6 72.♖f8+ ♔d7 73.g7 ♖5xf5+ 74.♖xf5 ♖xf5+ 75.♔h6 ♖f7 76.♔h7 ♖xh5+ 77.♔g8 ♔e6 78.f4 ♔e7 79.f5 ♔f6 80.♔f8 ♖f7#.

67...♖c6+ 68.♔h7 ♖xf3 69.g8=♘

This underpromotion does not help, but there was no salvation to be found anywhere: 69.g8=♖ ♖h5+ 70.♘h6 ♖b1+ 71.♖f5 ♖bxf5+ 72.♔g7 ♖hg6+ 73.♔h8 ♖e5+ 74.♖g7+ ♖gxg7# or 69.♖f7+ ♔b6! 70.g8=♖ ♖h5+ 71.♘h6 ♖b1+ 72.♔g7 ♖bg6+ 73.♔f8 ♖c5+ 74.♖e7 ♖c8+ 75.♖e8 ♖cxe8#.

69...♖h5+ 70.♘gh6 ♖e5!

Centralisation is often called for as the queen controls so many important squares from the middle of the board.

71.♘g7

71.♖f7+ ♖xf7+ 72.♘xf7 ♖xf5+.

71...♖xh4 72.♖f7+ ♔b6 73.♘gf5 ♖ee4 74.♔g6 ♖e6+ 75.♔g7 ♖g5+ 76.♔f8

76.♔h8 ♖gg6 77.♖g7 ♖e5 78.♘g8 ♖gxf5 79.♘e7 ♖f8+ 80.♔h7 ♖h5#.

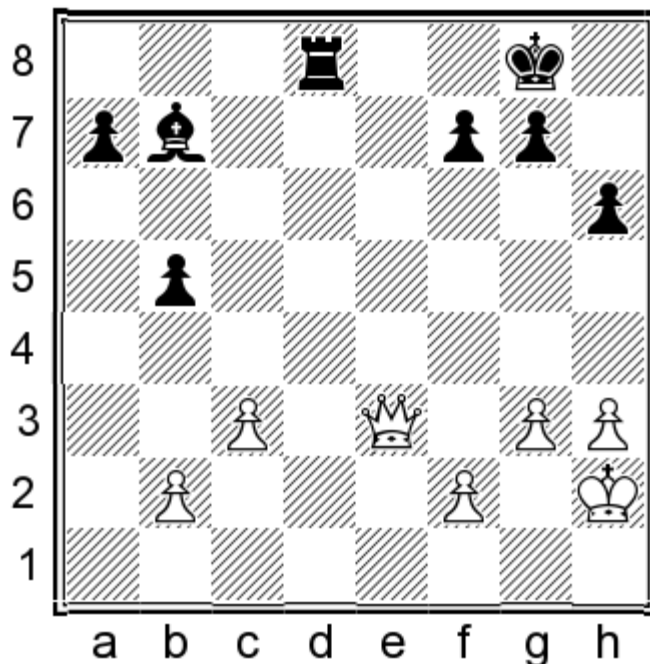
76...♖c8# 0-1

Quite common are positions with even and symmetrical pawns. Here the queen feels at home and creates ‘insults’ with her pawns on both sides of the board. Then the king usually assists, although this is not always necessary.

In general, the ‘pieces’ side is doomed to passivity and a long, tiring and blunderfull (most of the times) defence...

4

Carlsen Magnus
Kramnik Vladimir
Shamkir 2015



A winning position for White.

30...♞d1 31.g4! ♔c6

Black had no real choice: 31...a6 32.♞e8+ ♔h7 33.♞xf7+.

32.♞c5 ♔d7 33.♞xa7 ♞d2 34.♔g3 ♞d3+ 35.♔f4 ♔h7 36.♞b7 ♞d2 37.♔e3 ♞d6 38.f4

Black hasn't only lost material but he also has no good move available and no safe squares to use to hang on.

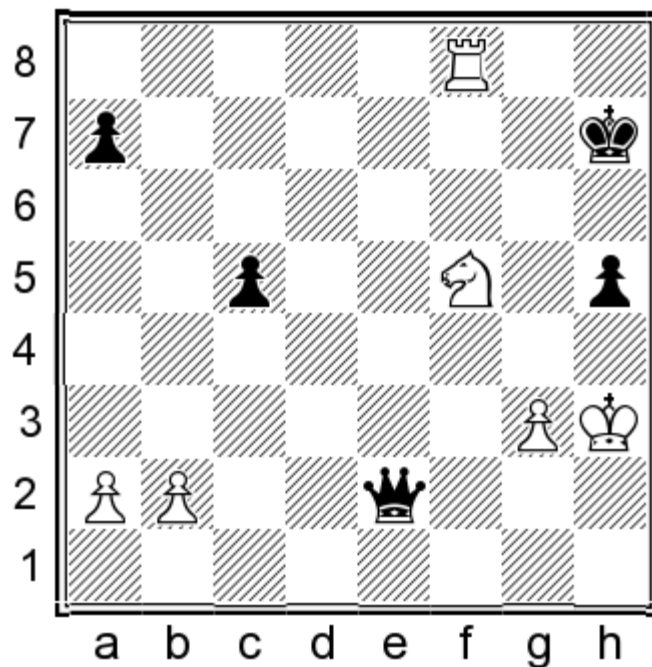
38...g6 39.♞b8 ♞d5 40.♔e4 ♔e6 41.♞b7 ♞c5 42.♔d4 ♞c4+ 43.♔e5 b4 44.cxb4 ♞c2 45.♔f6! ♞xb2 46.♞b8 ♞f2 47.f5! gxf5 48.♞g3

48.g5 ♞g2 49.h4 hxg5 50.h5 and ♞f8 was curtains as well.

48...♞f1 49.g5 1-0

5

Topalov Veselin
Anand Viswanathan
Sofia 2010



White is fighting to preserve equality, but Black is on top.

48...c4!

As precise as an analysis engine!

49.a4 a5 50.♖f6 ♔g8!

Creating an unpleasant zugzwang!

51.♘h6+ ♔g7 52.♞b6 ♚e4

52...♚f3 would win as well: 53.♔h4 ♚e4+! 54.♔xh5 ♚d5+-+.

53.♔h2 ♔h7!

Zugzwang again!

54.♞d6 ♚e5 55.♘f7 ♚xb2+ 56.♔h3 ♚g7! 0-1

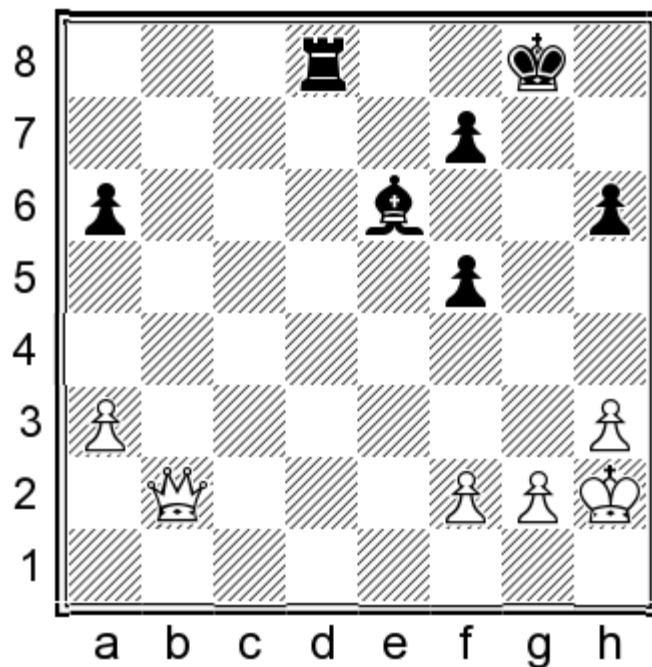
And White resigned: 57.♘d8 ♚g4+ 58.♔h2 h4+-+.

6

Grivas Efstratios

Kofidis Andreas

Kalavryta 1998



White's advantage is huge, not only due to the material but because of the pawn structure as well.

32.f3

32.♚b6! ♜d2 33.f3 was sensible.

32.f3 a5 33.♚f6 ♜d3! 34.a4 ♔h7

Forced (34...♞a3? 35.♚d8+).

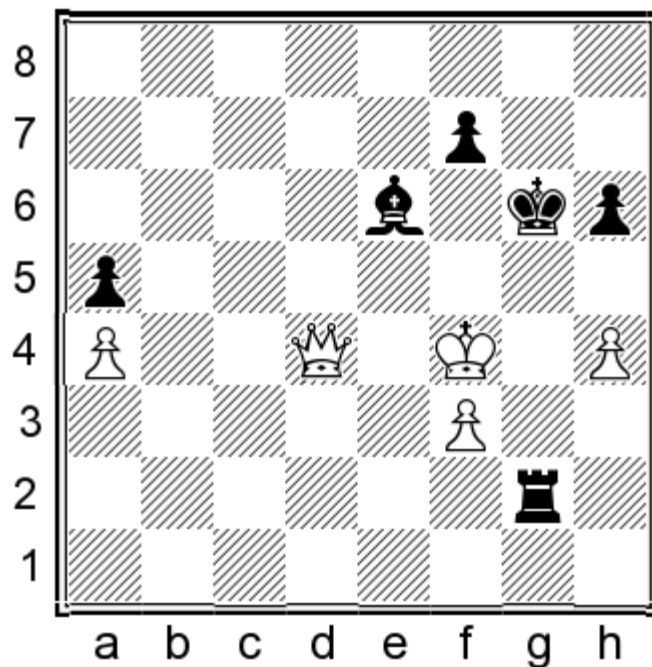
35.♔g3 ♞a3 36.♚d4 ♞a2 37.♔f4

The white king heads for the weakened dark squares around its black counterpart, to create mating threats. Maybe even better is 37.h4! h5 38.♔f4.

37...♞xg2 38.♔e5 f4

38...♞g3 39.♚c3 ♞xh3 40.♚xa5 ♞xf3 41.♚c5+.

39.h4! ♔g7 40.♔xf4+ ♔g6



41. ♖e5! ♜h2 42. ♖xa5

42. ♔g3 ♜h3+ is useless.

42... ♜xh4+ 43. ♔g3 ♜c4 44. f4

White has created a passed pawn and the win is now in sight.

44... h5?!

Making White's win easier. Anyway, Black cannot continue with 44... ♙d7 45. ♖d5! ♜c3+ 46. ♔f2 ♙xa4? 47. ♖e4+.

45. ♖g5+ ♔h7 46. ♖xh5+ ♔g7 47. ♖e5+ ♔g6 48. ♖g5+ ♔h7 49. f5 ♜c3+ 50. ♔f2 1-0

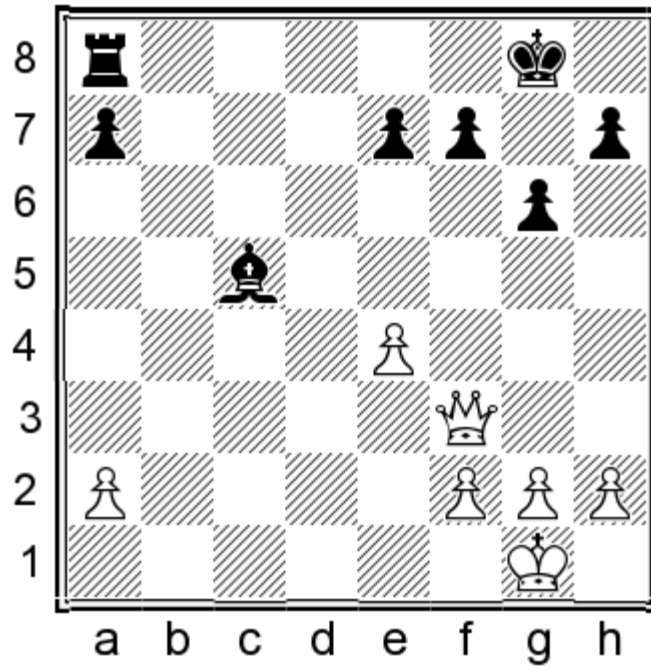
50... ♙b3 51. f6+-.

7

Kramnik Vladimir

Shirov Alexei

Wijk aan Zee 1999



This endgame had previously been considered rather drawish; however, Kramnik had a different opinion on this subject!

19. ♖c3 ♜c8

Planning...♖c7 and...♗b6. Previously 19...♞d8!? had been played: 20.♔f1 ♗b6! (20...♗d4?! 21.♞c7 ♗b6 22.♞xe7 ♞d2 23.♞e8+ ♔g7 24.♞e5+ ♔g8 25.f4! ♞f2+ 26.♔e1 ♞xg2 27.f5± Ftacnik,L-Ivanchuk,V Yerevan 1996) 21.a4 e6 22.a5 ♗d4 23.♞c7 ♞f8 24.e5 h5 25.♔e2 ♔g7 26.f4 ♞h8 27.♔f3 ♗g1 28.♞c1 ♗d4 29.♔e4 ♞d8 30.♞c7 ♞d5 31.g3 ♗g1 32.h3 ♞d1 33.g4 hxg4 34.hxg4 ♞d4+ 35.♔f3 ♞d5 36.♔e2 ♗d4 37.♔f3 g5 38.f5 exf5 39.e6 1-0 Kramnik,V-Kasparov,G Moscow 1998.

20. ♔f1 ♜c7 21.a4

This may be a future queen! Besides, it is important to push the black bishop from its comfortable b6-square.

21... ♗b6

After 21...♗d6 22.♞a5! f6 23.h4!? (23.g3 g5!) 23...♔g7 24.g3 h5 25.f4± White is on top.

22. ♞e5! ♜c2

22...♞c1+ doesn't help: 23.♔e2 ♞c2+ 24.♔d3 ♞xf2 25.a5 ♗xa5 26.♞xa5 ♞xg2 27.♞d8+ ♔g7 28.♞xe7+-.

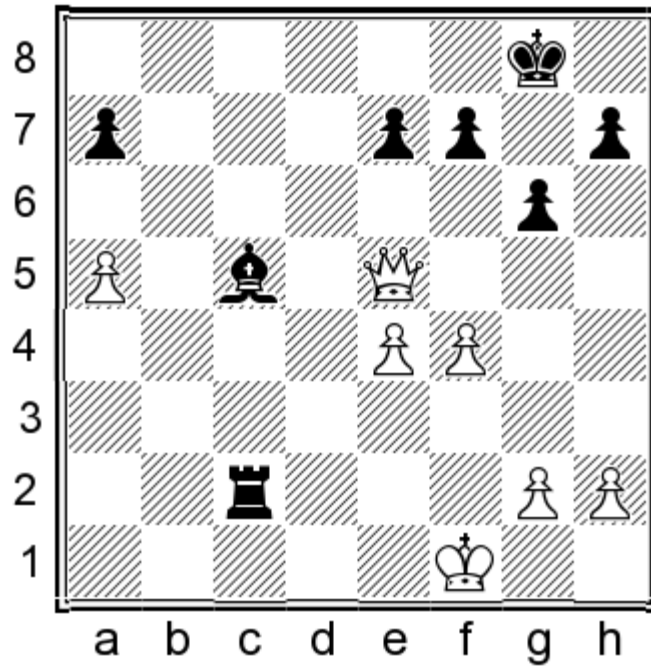
23.a5!

A much better move than 23.f4?! e6 24.a5 ♗c7! 25.♞d4 ♗xa5 26.♞xa7 ♗b4 when Black can defend.

23... ♗c5!

The only move, as basically everything else loses: 23...♗xf2? 24.♞b8+ ♔g7 25.♞b3+- or 23...♗c7? 24.♞xe7+- ♗xa5? 25.♞e8+ ♔g7 26.♞e5+- or 23...♞xf2+? 24.♔e1 ♞xg2! (24...♗e3 25.♞xe7! ♞xg2 26.e5+-) 25.axb6 axb6 26.♞xe7+-.

24.f4



24...e6?

Until here Black has defended optimally. Now he also had to avoid 24...♔d6? 25.♚d4 ♕xf4 (25...♞c7 26.e5+-) 26.♚xa7+- Instead he had to opt for 24...h5 25.f5!±

25.g4!

Not much was offered by 25.♚b8+ ♔g7 26.♚b3 ♞c1+ 27.♔e2 ♕d4±. Now the weak black king will tell.

25...♞c4

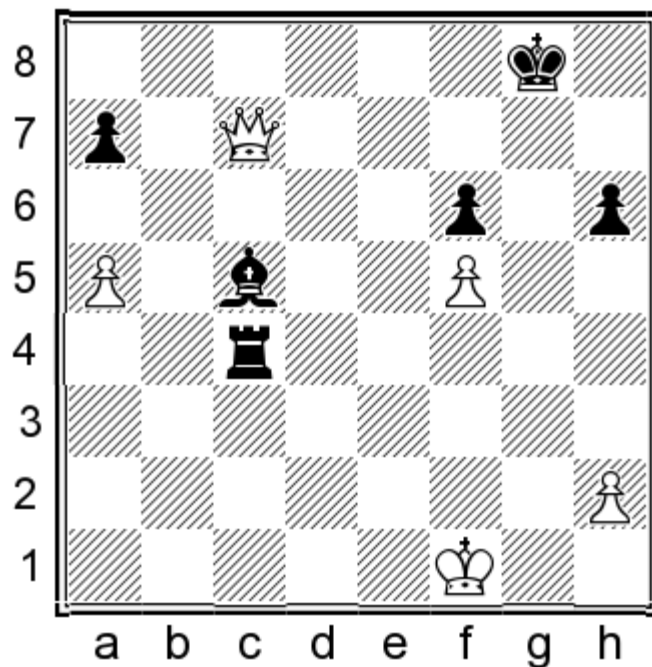
25...♕f8 loses to 26.♚b8+-.

26.♚c7! h6

After 26...♔g7 27.f5! is strong.

27.f5! gxf5 28.gxf5 exf5 29.exf5 f6

Unfortunately for Black he cannot do without this move: 29...♞c2 30.f6 ♞f2+ 31.♔e1 ♞xf6 32.♚xc5 a6 33.h4 ♞e6+ 34.♔f2 ♔g7 35.♔f3 ♔g8 36.♔f4 ♔g7 37.♚d4+ ♔g8 38.h5 ♔h7 39.♔f5 ♔g8 40.♚d5 ♔g7 41.♚xe6 fxe6+ 42.♔xe6+- or 29...♔g7 30.♚e5+ ♔g8 31.f6 ♕f8 32.♚g3+ ♔h8 33.♚b8+-.



30. ♖g3+!

Better than 30. ♖d8+ ♔g7 31. ♖d7+ ♔f8!.

30... ♔f8 31. ♖g6

More material is gained - the white h-pawn is a future queen!

31... ♙d4 32. ♖xh6+ ♔e7 33. ♖f4 ♔d7 34. h4 ♖a4 35. ♖e4 ♔d6

35... ♖a1+ loses to 36. ♔e2 ♙e5 (36... ♖a2+ 37. ♔d3 ♖a3+ 38. ♔xd4 ♖a4+ 39. ♔e3+-) 37. ♖b7+ ♙c7 38. a6+-.

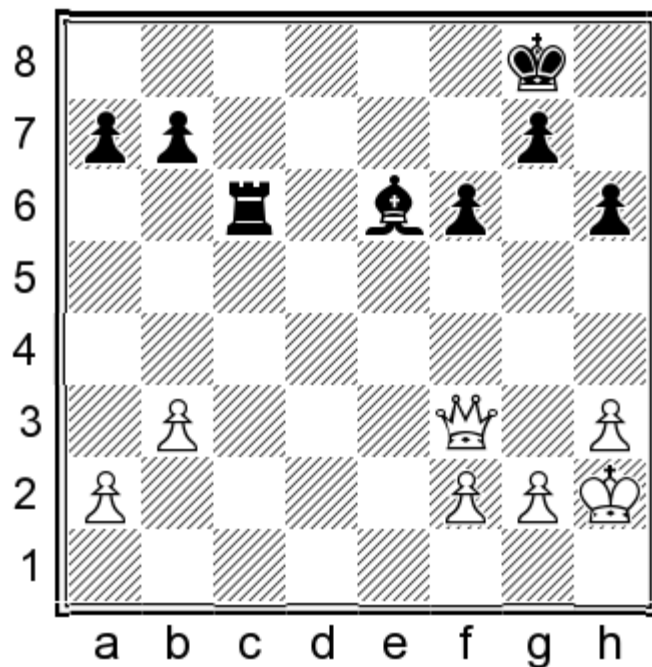
36. h5 ♖a1+ 37. ♔e2 ♙e5 38. ♖b4+ ♔d5 39. ♖b7+ ♔c4

39... ♔d4 40. ♖b2+ ♔e4 41. ♖xa1 ♙xa1 42. h6+-.

40. h6 ♖a2+ 41. ♔f3 1-0

8

**Fine Reuben
Stahlberg Gideon
Gothenburg 1937**



When the pawn structure is asymmetrical, the queen is favoured as it is the most powerful piece. But even with a symmetrical structure the side with the queen can count on victory, as long as the structure is not blocked.

32. ♖f4! a6 33. ♜b8+ ♔c8 34. b4

34.a4! and only then b4 was more accurate.

34... ♖h7

Black should try 34...b5.

35.a4!

Black is lost as he has too many weaknesses to cover. White's plan is to bring his king to d8 and win the black b-pawn.

35... f5

Or 35... ♖c4 36.b5 axb5 37.axb5 ♖c5 38. ♜d6! ♖c1 39.g4+-.

36. ♜e5 ♖f6 37. ♜c7 ♖c6 38. ♜e7 ♖g6 39.f3 ♖c6

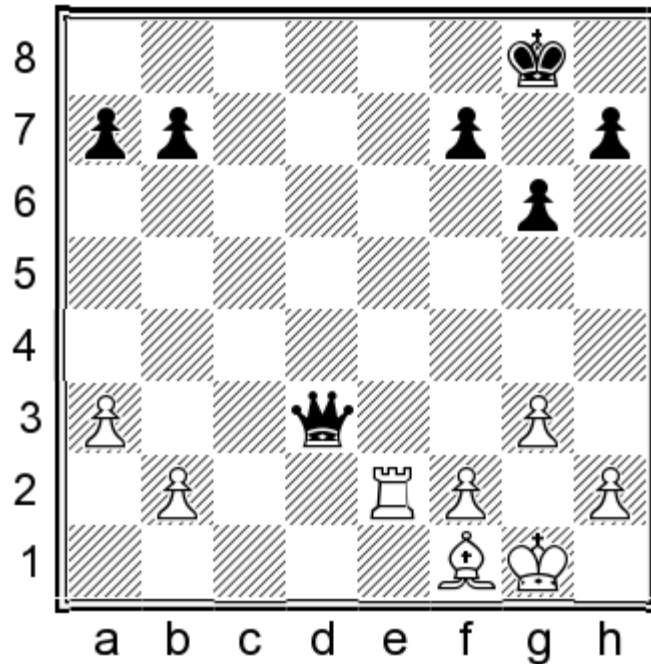
39...b5 40. ♜e8!+-.

40.b5 axb5 41.axb5 ♖c4 42.h4 ♖c2 43.h5 ♖c4 44. ♜f7 ♖c5 45. ♔g3 ♖c2

45... ♖xb5 46. ♜g6+ ♔g8 47. ♜e8+-.

46. ♜g6+ ♔h8 47. ♜e8+ ♔h7 48. ♔f4 ♖c1 49. ♜g6+ ♔g8 50. ♔e5 ♖d7 51. ♜b6 ♖c8 52. ♔d6 ♔h8 53. ♜e3! 1-0

Now White is ready for ♔e7-d8.



28...♚d4!

Centralisation!

29.h4 ♖g7 30.b4 b6 31.♞e7 a5 32.bxa5 bxa5 33.♞e3 ♚c5 34.♞f3 f5!

Black has to advance his kingside pawns and restrict the white pieces.

35.♙g2 ♜f6 36.♜h2 h6 37.♜g1 g5?!

Flexibility is the key word. Better was 37...♚c1+ 38.♙f1 g5 39.hxg5+ hxg5, as then Black would have more options as to how and when to push his pawns.

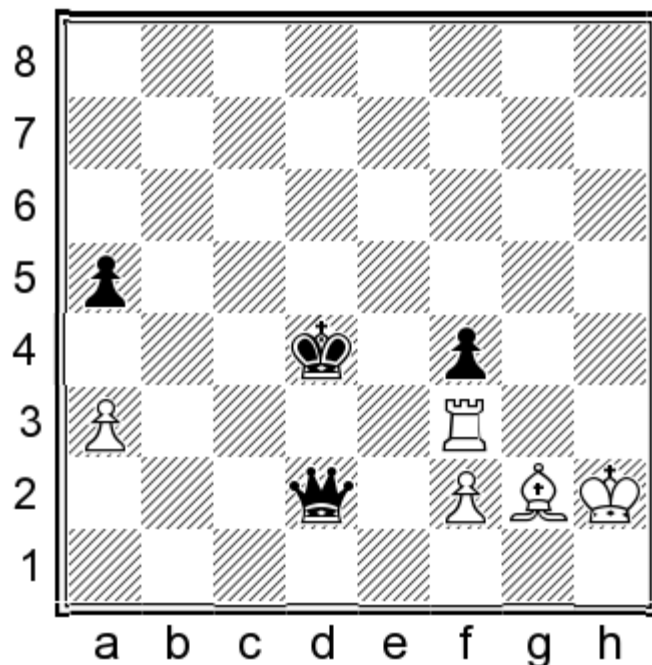
38.hxg5+ hxg5 39.♙h3 f4 40.gxf4 ♚c1+ 41.♜h2

Maybe White should opt for 41.♙f1 gxf4 42.♞b3 ♚c6 and pray.

41...gxf4 42.♙g2 ♚d2 43.♜g1 ♜e5 44.♞h3 ♚d1+ 45.♜h2 ♚e1 46.♞f3 ♚d2

Preferable was 46...♜f5 47.♙h3+ ♜g5 48.♙g2 ♜g4 and White hardly has any good move left: 49.♙h1 ♚xh1+ 50.♜xh1 ♜xf3 51.♜g1 ♜e2 52.♜g2 f3+ 53.♜g3 a4+.

47.♜g1 ♜d4 48.♜h2



48...a4?

Black loses a future useful tempo and in any event didn't need to have his pawn on a4. I think better is 48...♖c1 49.♗h3 ♔e5 50.♗d7 (50.♗g2 ♔f5 51.♗h3+ ♔g5 52.♗g2 ♚e1 53.♗h1 ♚e2 54.♔h3 ♔f5 55.♗g2 ♚e1 56.♔h2 ♔g4+) 50...♔e4 51.♔g2 ♚c7 52.♗g4 ♚g7 53.♔h3 ♚h6+ 54.♔g2 ♚h4+.

49.♔g1 ♚d1+ 50.♔h2 ♔e5 51.♗h3 ♔f5

Black is back on the right track, but unfortunately with his pawn on a4.

52.♗f3?

A bad move but this was a blitz game anyway! 52.♗f3 ♔g4 53.♗c3 ♚d2 54.♗h3+ ♔g5 55.♗f3 ♚e2 56.♗g2 (56.♔g2 ♚e4+) 56...♔g4 57.♔h1 ♚e5 58.♔h2 ♚e1 59.♗h1 and with the black pawn on a5 this position would be a win (see notes above) but now there is nothing to improve.

52...♚c1?

52...♚f1! was winning on the spot!

53.♗g2 ♔f6 54.♗d3 ♚c5 55.♗f3 ♔g5 56.♗h3 ♚d4 57.♔g1?

Simple was 57.♗g2!

57...♚d1+! 58.♔g2 ♚d5!

Now the bishop will be short of squares.

59.♗c8 ♔h4

59...♚c6 60.♗h3 ♔f6 61.♗g4 ♔g6 62.♗h3 ♔g5+.

60.♙h3 ♘g5 61.♞c8 ♚c6 62.♙h3 ♘h5 63.♞f5 ♘h4 64.♙h3 ♘g5 0-1

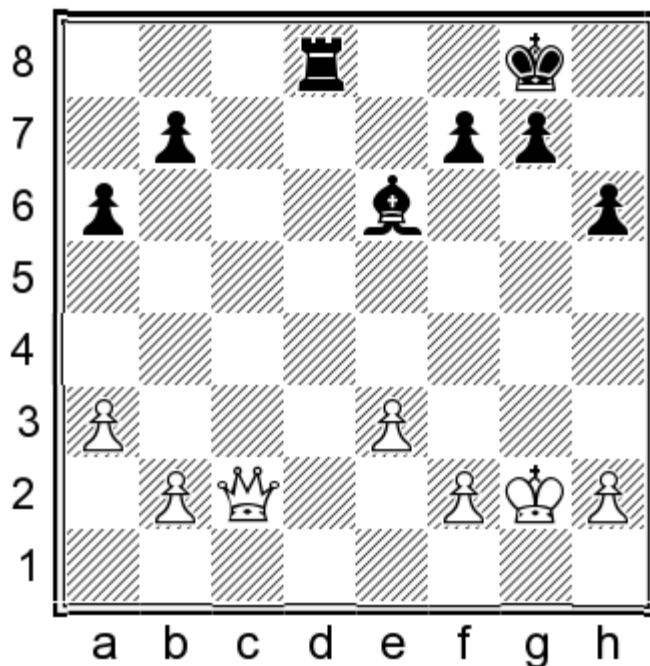
And White has no move left...

10

Wojtaszek Radoslaw

Hammer Jon Ludvig

Skopje 2015



A nice position for White without any counterplay for Black.

25.e4

With the idea of f4-f5.

25...g5

Black's hand was forced but now his king becomes weaker.

26.♚c3 ♘h7 27.f3 ♞d1 28.♚c2 ♞e1 29.♚d2 ♞b1 30.♚c2 ♞e1 31.♔f2!

The white king starts his journey into black's camp.

31...♞h1 32.♔e3 b5 33.♔d4 ♞f1 34.♚g2 ♞c1 35.♔e5 ♙b3 36.h4! ♞c6

Black has no time to win the b-pawn, as after 36...♞c2 37.♚g4 ♙e6 38.♚g3 gxh4 39.♚xh4 ♞xb2 40.♚g3 and ♔f6 decides.

37.♚g3 ♙d1 38.hxg5 hxg5 39.♚g2 ♞h6 40.♔f5

And the g5-pawn is a goner.

40...g4 41.♚xg4 ♞g6 42.♚h4+ ♞h6 43.♚e7 ♙b3 44.f4

The pawn roller starts to act, as the defender (g5-pawn) has been removed.

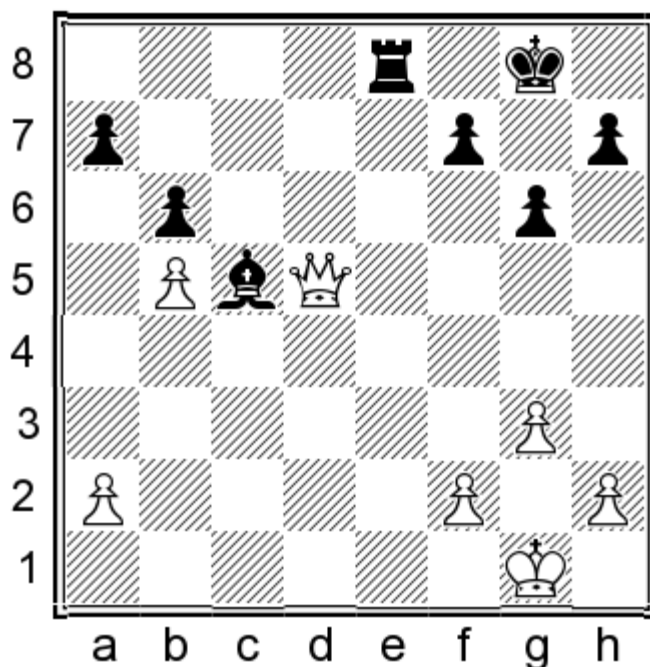
44...♔g7 45.♚e5+ ♔g8 46.♚c3 ♕a2 47.b3 ♖b1 48.♚c1! ♕d3 49.♚c8+ ♔h7 50.♚d7 ♜h5+ 51.♔f6 1-0

11

Cheparinov Ivan

Soza de la Carrera Jose

Antofagasta 2016



31.♔f1 ♔g7 32.g4!

As usual, the white pawns will advance, creating threats around the black king.

32...h6 33.h4 ♜e6 34.a4!

An instructive moment. White places his pawn on a6 as well, making the a7-pawn weaker.

34...♜e7 35.a5 ♜e6 36.a6 ♜e7 37.f4 ♜e6 38.f5! ♜e7 39.♔g2 g5 40.hxg5 hxg5 41.f6+!

After 41.♔f3? f6! there is no way for White to improve.

41...♔xf6 42.♚f5+ ♔g7 43.♚xg5+ ♔h7 44.♚f6 ♔g8 45.♚g5+ ♔h7 46.♔f3 ♜e6 47.♚d5 ♔g7 48.g5 ♜e7 49.♚f5 ♜e6 50.♔g4 ♕d6 51.♚d5 ♕c5 52.♔f5 ♜e1 53.♚a8 ♜e7 54.♚b8 ♕b4 55.♚a8 ♕c5 56.♚d8 ♜e6 57.♚d1 ♜e7 58.♚a1+ ♔g8 59.♚h1 ♔g7 60.♚h6+ ♔g8 61.♚c6 ♔g7 62.♚f6+ ♔h7 63.g6+!

Clearing the way for the white king.

63...♔g8 64.♔g5

64.g7! was strong. After 64...♜e6 65.♚h4 ♔xg7 66.♚g3+ ♔h7 67.♚g2 White wins due to the twin threats ♚b7 and ♔f6. But this is not the human way!

64...♙e3+ 65.♖g4 ♗c5 66.♖h5 ♜d7 67.♞e5 fxg6+ 68.♖xg6 ♞d6+ 69.♖g5 ♖f7 70.♖f5 ♖f8

Or 70...♙a3 71.♞h2 ♜f6+ 72.♖e4 ♞e6+ 73.♖d3 ♗f8 74.♞f4+ ♖g7 75.♞g5+ ♖f7 76.♞f5+ ♖e7 77.♞h7+-.

71.♞h8+ ♖e7 72.♞g7+ ♖d8 73.♞xa7 ♞d5+ 74.♖e4 ♞d4+ 1-0

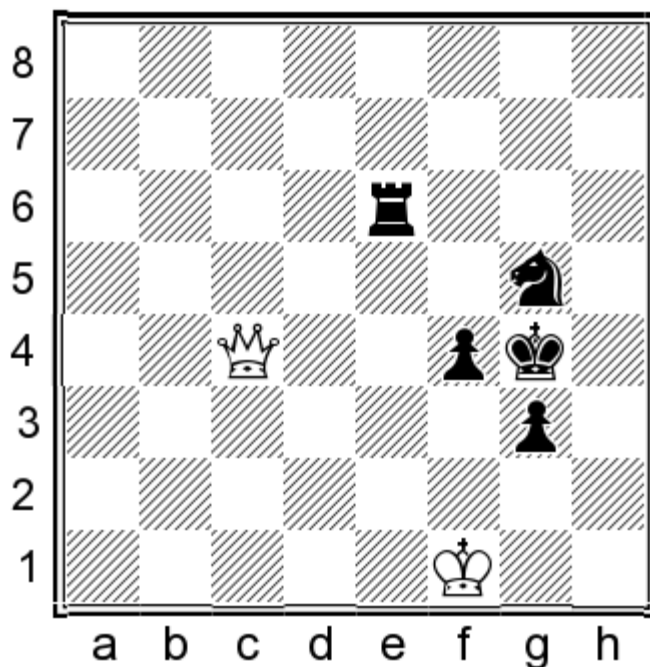
An important technique to remember is the stalemate! It can save the half-point and both sides have to watch out for it.

12

Zagoriansky Evgeny

Tolush Alexander

Moscow 1945



Black has an obvious advantage. However Tolush decided to produce a 'brilliant' win.

1...♖h3?

Black could win by means of 1...♞e8! 2.♞a4 (2.♞d4 ♞e1+!; 2.♞b4 ♖f3; 2.♞b5 f3! 3.♞xe8 g2+ 4.♖f2 ♖h3+-+; 2.♖g2 ♞e2+! 3.♞xe2+ f3+) 2...♞e4 3.♞d7+ ♖h4 and the menace 4...f3 cannot be parried.

1...♖h3? 2.♞xf4! g2+ 3.♖f2

3.♖g1? ♞e1+.

3...♞f6 4.♖g1!

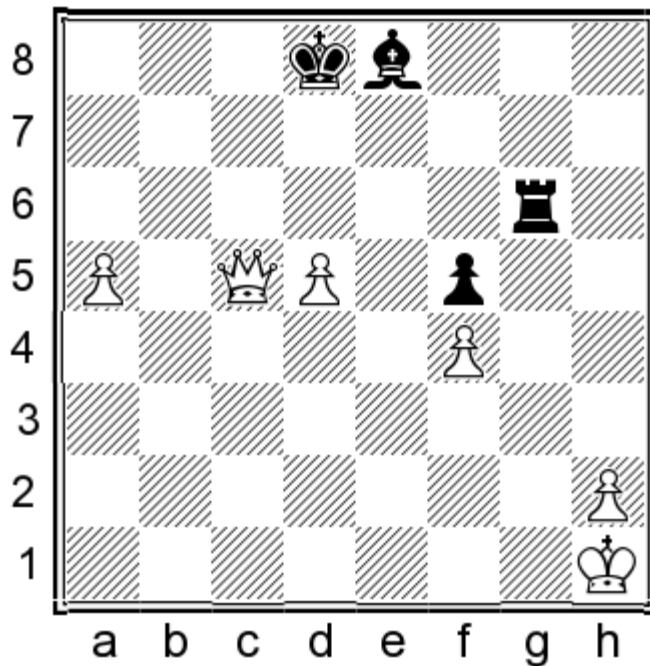
Black had only expected 4.♞xf6? ♖e4+-+.

4...♞xf4 ½-½

Stalemate.

13

Fichtl Jiri
Blatny Frantisek
Bratislava 1956



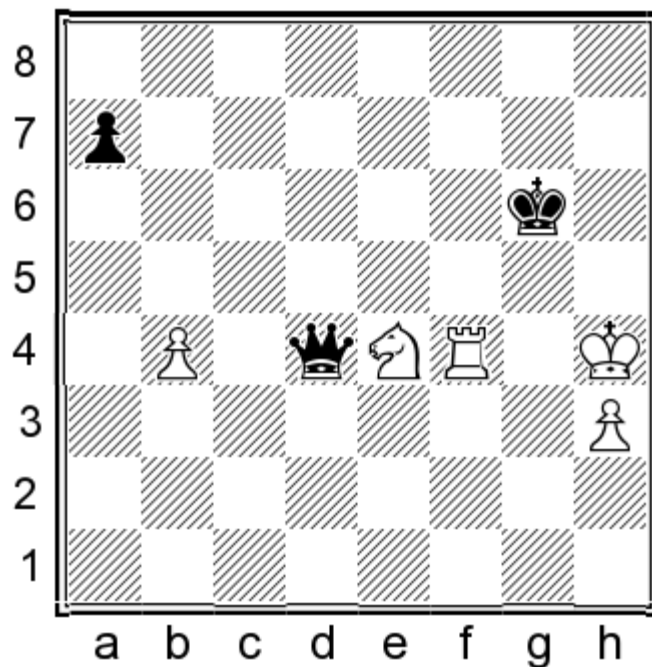
White, in this completely winning position, lowered his vigilance for a moment.

49.d6? ♔c6+! 1/2-1/2

And White accepted the forced draw: 50.♙xc6 ♖g1+ 51.♕xg1 with stalemate.

Drawing mechanisms, such as the one in the following game, often occur:

14
Hector Jonny
Wedberg Tom
Linkoping 2001



A difficult position for White, who should play carefully.

61.b5!

61.♠g4+? ♔h6 62.♗g5 ♚f2+ 63.♠g3 a6 64.♗g4 ♚d4+-+.

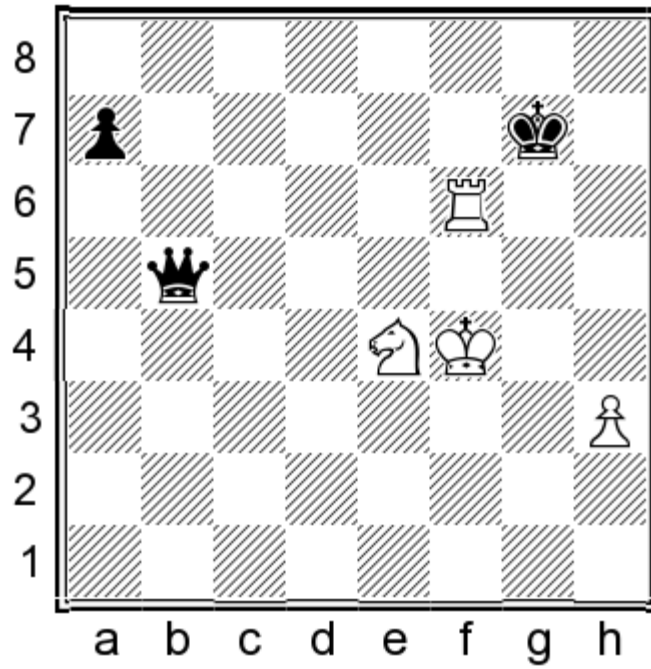
61.b5! ♚d8+

Quite nice variations arise after 61...♚e5 62.♗g4 ♚h5+ (62...♚xb5 63.♠f6+ ♗g7 64.♠f7+! ♗g8 65.♠xa7 ♚e2+ 66.♗f4=) 63.♗g3 ♚xb5. Here it looks like Black has winning chances, but the b5-square is not the best for the black queen: 64.♠g4+! ♗h6 65.♠h4+ ♗g7 66.♠g4+ ♗f8 67.♠f4+ ♗e7 68.♠f7+! (quite amazing co-ordination between the rook and the knight!) 68...♗e6 69.♠f6+ ♗d7 (69...♗e5? 70.♠f5+-) 70.♠f7+ ♗c6 71.♠f6+ ♗c7 72.♠f7+ and Black simply can't avoid the perpetual, while 72...♗b6? even loses after 73.♠b7+!+-.

62.♠f6+

For 62.♗g4 ♚d7+ 63.♗g3 ♚xb5 64.♠g4+= and 62.♗g3 ♚d3+ 63.♗g4 ♚xb5 64.♠f6+= see the previous comment.

62...♗g7 63.♗g4 ♚d5 64.♗f4 ♚xb5



65. ♖f7+! ♔g8 66. ♗d7!

Building a well-known drawing mechanism (♗d7 & ♘f6-h7).

66... ♔f8

The alternative was 66... ♖f1+ 67. ♔e5 ♖e2 68. ♔f4 (68. ♔f5=) 68... ♖h2+ 69. ♔f5 (69. ♔g4? ♖e5 70. ♘g5 a5 71. h4 a4+) 69... ♖xh3+ 70. ♔e5=.

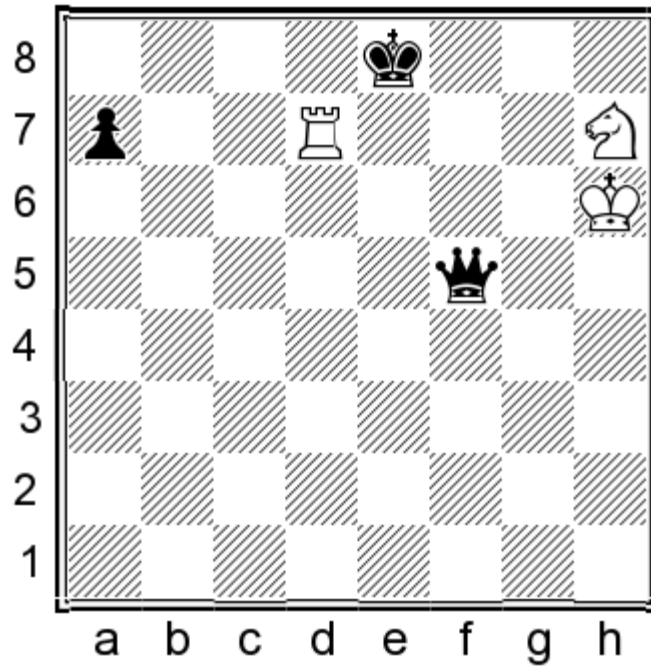
67. ♘f6 ♖f1+ 68. ♔e5 ♖e2+ 69. ♔f5 ♖f3+ 70. ♔g6 ♖g3+ 71. ♔h6 ♖xh3+

Black has even managed to capture White's last pawn with check, however it doesn't help much...

72. ♔g6 ♖g2+ 73. ♔h6 ♖h1+ 74. ♔g6 ♖b1+ 75. ♔h6 ♖f5

The last attempt to break White's drawing mechanism.

76. ♘h7+ ♔e8



77. ♖xa7! ♜h3+ 78. ♔g7 ♜g4+ 79. ♔h8

Finally White's king has found a safe place on h8, and just in time. Note that 79. ♔f6? ♜d4+ was losing.

79... ♜d4+ 80. ♖g7 ♜e5 81. ♗g5 ♔f8 82. ♗h7+ ♔e8 1/2-1/2

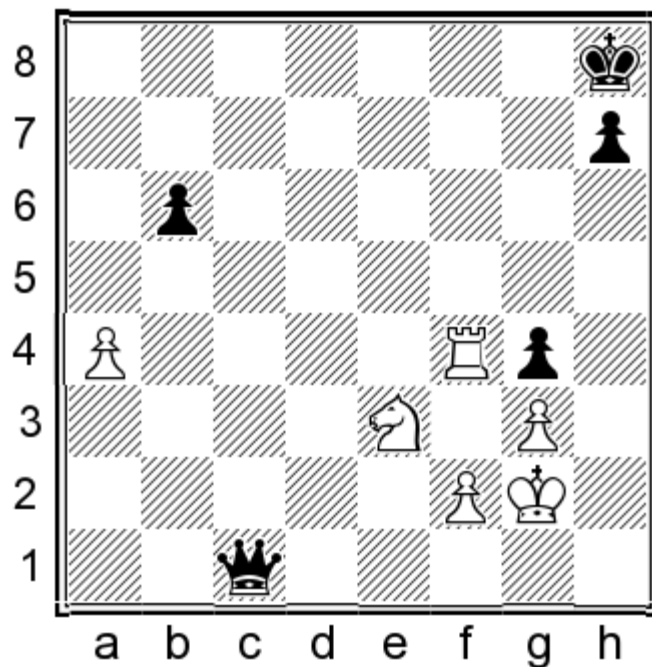
When the 'pieces' side has no weaknesses, strong outposts for the pieces and a 'healthy' king, he usually succeeds in gaining the half-point without much trouble.

15

Karpov Anatoly

Lautier Joel

Monte Carlo 1996



White has good piece co-operation and strong outposts protecting all his pawns. As Black cannot improve, the position is drawn.

39...♚c6+ 40.♔h2 h5 41.♞f5 ♚g6 42.a5

No harm in exchanging pawns.

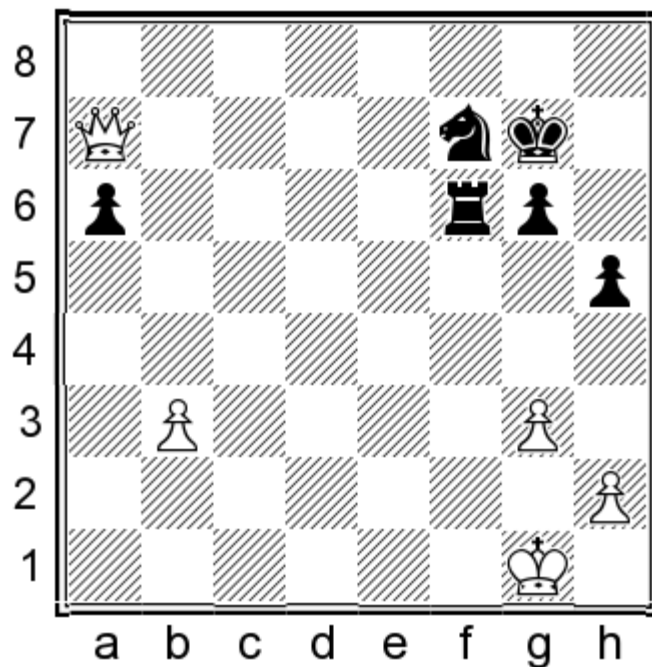
42...bxa5 43.♞xa5 ♔h7 44.♘g2 ♔g8 45.♘h4 ♚b6 46.♞g5+ ♔f7 47.♞f5+ ♔g7 48.♔g1 ♔h6 49.♞f7 ♚e6 50.♞f4 ♚e1+ 51.♔h2 ♚d2 52.♞f6+ ♔g7 53.♞f5 ♔h6 54.♘g2 ♔g6 55.♞f8 ♔g7 56.♞f4 ♔h6 57.♘h4 ♔g7 1/2-1/2

16

Nakamura Hikaru

Howell David

London 2010



Again Black has an optimal position and is not in any real danger of losing. His pawns are more-or-less healthy and his pieces have a lot of safe squares at their disposal. His king is well-protected as well!

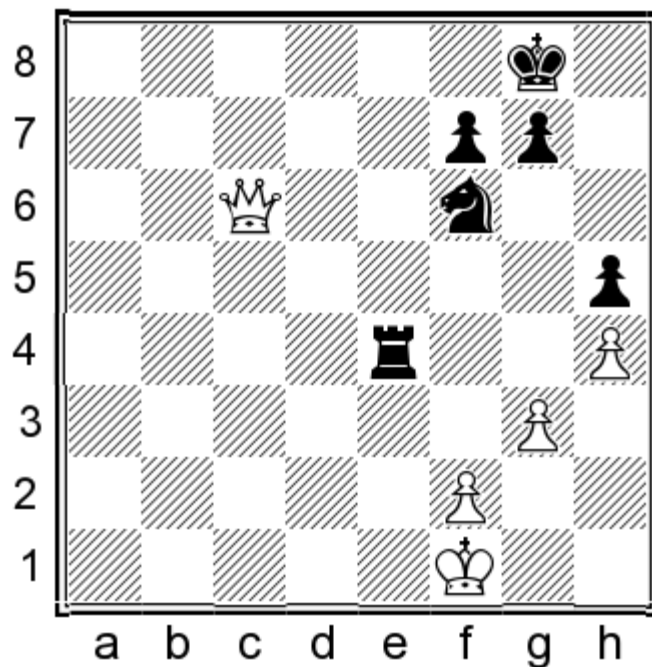
34.h4 ♔g8 35.♚e7 ♔g7 36.b4 ♖f5 37.♚c7 ♖f6 38.♔g2 ♔g8

White has no way to make progress.

39.♚c8+ ♔g7 40.♚c7 ♔g8 41.♚c8+ ♔g7 42.♚c7 1/2-1/2

17

**Polgar Judit
Svidler Peter
Almaty 2008**



A typical drawn position; Black has no weaknesses to be attacked.

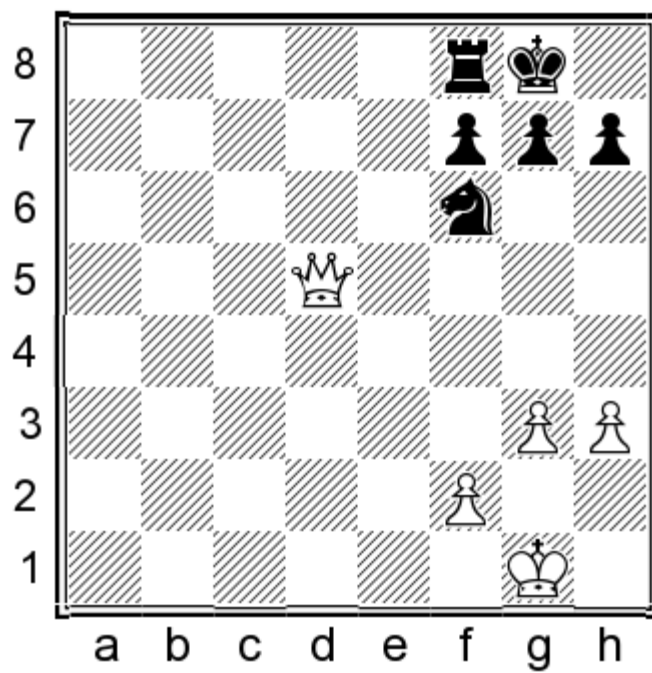
40.f3 ♖e6 41.♙c8+ ♔h7 42.♙c2+ ♗g6 43.♙c4 ♕g7 44.♙d4 ♕g8 45.♙d8+ ♕g7 46.♙d4 1/2-1/2

18

Movsesian Sergei

Vallejo Pons Francisco

Khanty-Mansiysk 2013



A quite similar position to the previous game, so there is nothing to talk about.

43.♙c6 h5 44.♔g2 ♖e8 45.♔f3 ♖e6 46.♙c8+ ♖e8 47.♙f5 ♖e6 48.♔g2 ♗g6 49.♙b5 ♔g7 50.f3 ♔h7 51.g4 hxg4 52.hxg4 g5! 1/2-1/2

Avoiding any nasty surprises with f4.

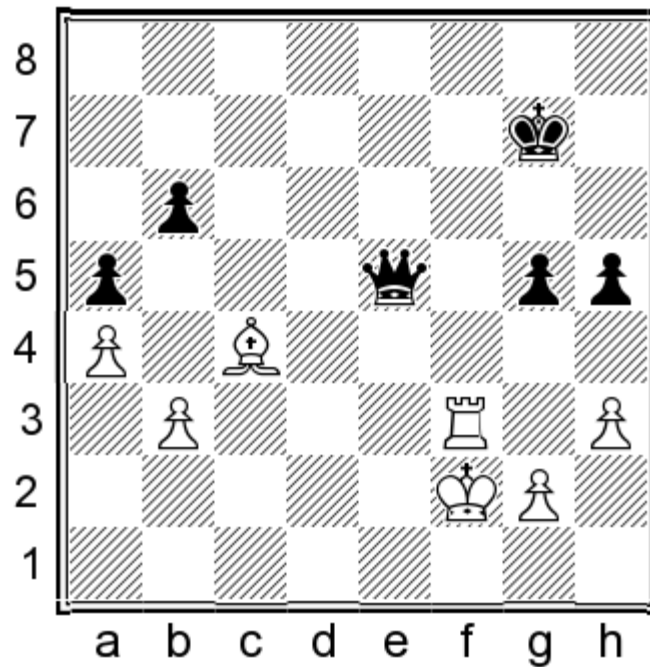
Of course, trying for more in drawish positions cannot harm the 'queen' side. One should have some plan and vision and take advantage of every small slip or time-trouble situation.

19

Delithanasis Dimitrios

Grivas Efstratios

Athens 1994

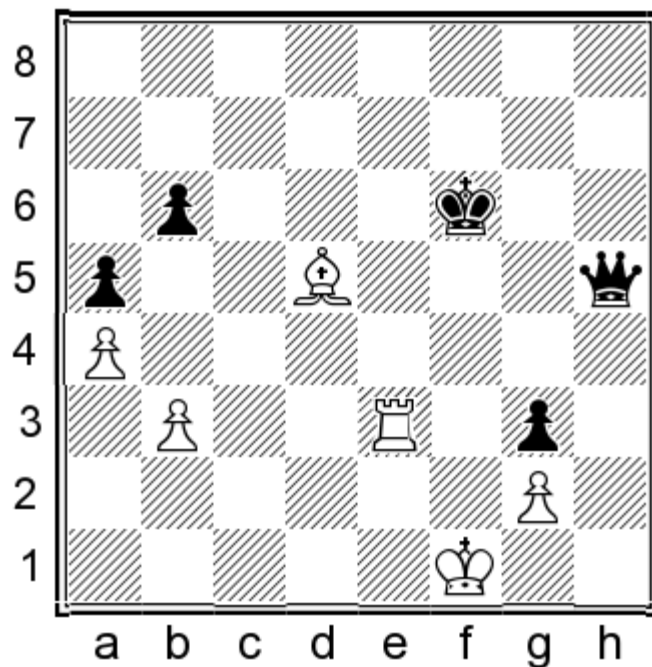


White seems to have created some kind of fortress, as his pieces protect each other and the pawns on the queenside are blocked. Black can of course try to force victory. His plan is the advance of his g-pawn (which will create discomfort to the white king) and of course - as in all endings - the invasion of the king. At a given moment, the return of the extra material and the transition to a winning pawn ending is a very likely eventuality.

57...g4 58.hxg4 hxg4 59.♖e3 ♜f4+ 60.♔e2 ♜h2

Compulsory. If White ever succeeds in playing g3, the black king will be unable to penetrate.

61.♔f2 ♔f6 62.♔f1 g3! 63.♙d5 ♜h5



64. ♕e4?

A serious mistake, allowing Black to conclude the game immediately. White should have defended with 64. ♖f3+ ♔e7 65. ♖e3+ ♔d6 66. ♗f3 ♚f5 67. ♖c3 ♚b1+ (67... ♚e5 68. ♖d3+ ♔c5? 69. ♖d5+ ♚xd5 70. ♗xd5 ♔xd5 71. ♔e1!= but not 71. ♔e2? ♔e4 72. ♔d2 ♔d4 73. ♔e2 ♔c3 74. ♔f3 ♔xb3 75. ♔xg3 ♔xa4 76. ♔f4 ♔b5! 77. g4 ♔c6 78. ♔f5 ♔d7—+) 68. ♔e2 ♚b2+ 69. ♔d3 ♔e5 70. ♗b7 and it is not very likely that Black can improve his position.

64... ♚d1+ 65. ♖e1 ♚xb3 0-1

Of course the ‘pieces’ side is not always condemned to defend and fight for only the half-point. There are many cases where the ‘pieces’ are in the driver’s seat and cashing points as well.

But some additional assets are required, e.g. positional superiority, passed pawn, etc., as the ‘pieces’ alone cannot prevail.

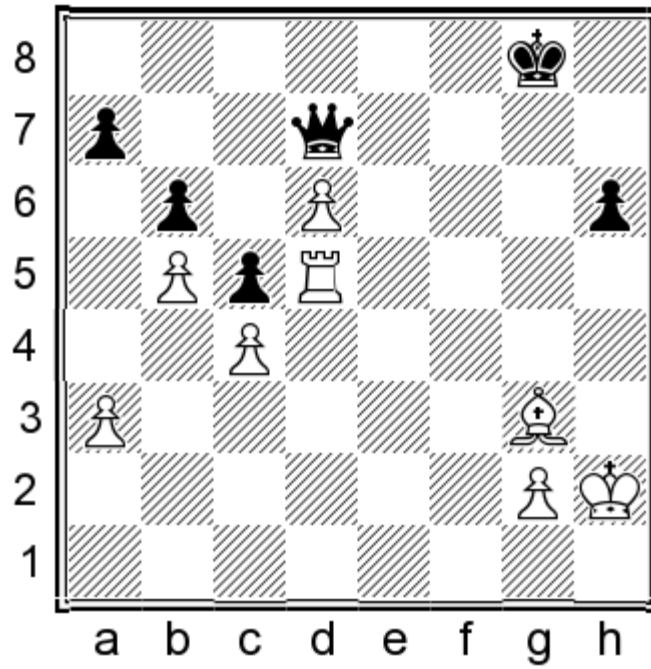
Still, nobody should underestimate the queen’s strength or her enormous possibilities.

20

Harikrishna Pentala

Ivanisevic Ivan

Kallithea 2008



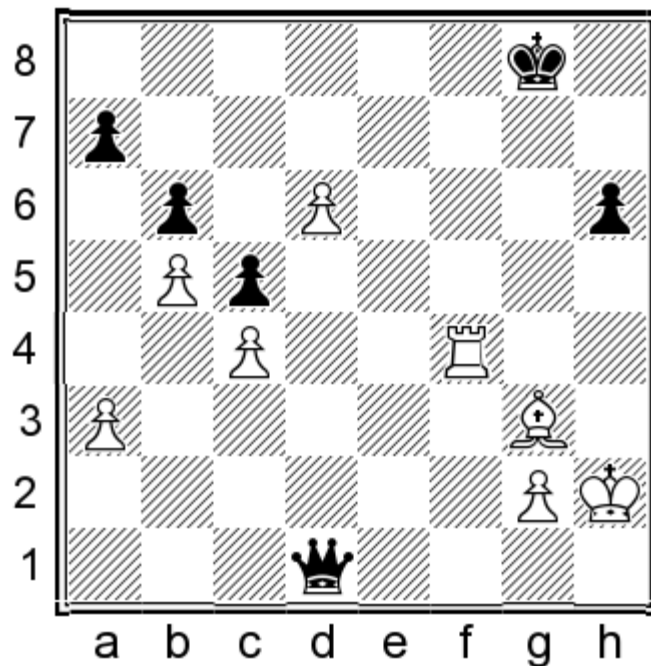
Black stands passively as his queen has to block the passed d-pawn, which is well-protected by both white pieces.

49. ♖f4

Over the next few moves White tries to 'fish for something' (!) and he succeeds. A sensible plan is to place the white a-pawn on a6, but after 49.a4 ♔f8 50.a5 bxa5! (50...♔f7 51.a6) 51.♞xc5 ♚g4! Black is close to the draw.

49. ♖f4 ♚g4 50. ♖g3 ♚d7 51. ♞d3 ♚f5 52. ♞f3 ♚g4 53. ♞f4 ♚d1?

53... ♚e6! was fine.



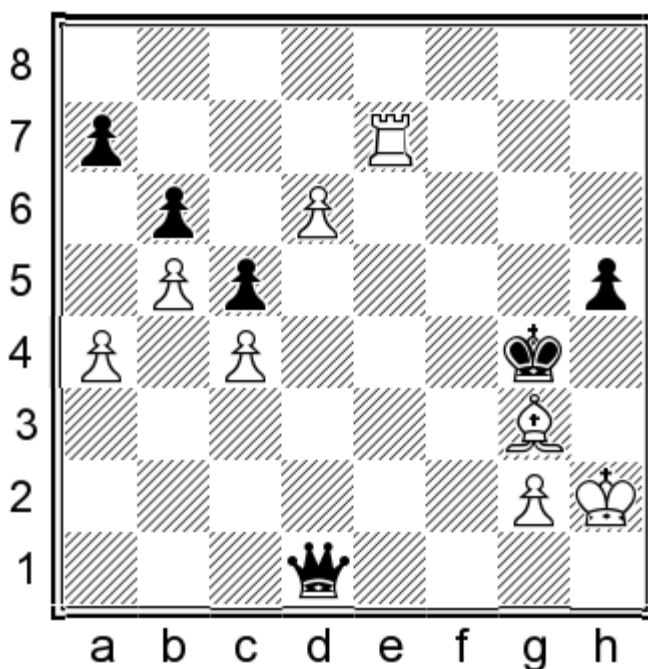
54. ♞h4?

After 54.♖f5! Black is lost: 54...♚d4 (54...♚g4 55.d7 ♜xf5 56.d8=♚++) 55.♞d5 ♜xc4 56.♞d2! ♜c1 57.♙f4 ♜e1 58.g3+.

54...♙h7 55.♙f4 h5 56.♙g3 ♙g6 57.♞e4 ♙f5

57...♚d3! was fine, as after 58.♞e7 h4 59.♙e5 h3! the white king gets naked and perpetual check is looming...

58.♞f4+ ♙g5 59.a4 ♙g6 60.♞e4 ♙f5 61.♞h4 ♙g5 62.♞h3 ♙f5 63.♞h4 ♙g5 64.♞f4 ♙g6 65.♞e4 ♙f5 66.♞e5+ ♙g4 67.♞e7



67...♚d3?

The text move loses. Black had to sac the h-pawn with 67...h4! 68.♞e4+ ♙f5 69.♞xh4 ♚d3 70.♞h7 ♙g6 71.♞xa7 ♚d2 with perpetual check via the open h-file (...♚c1-h6).

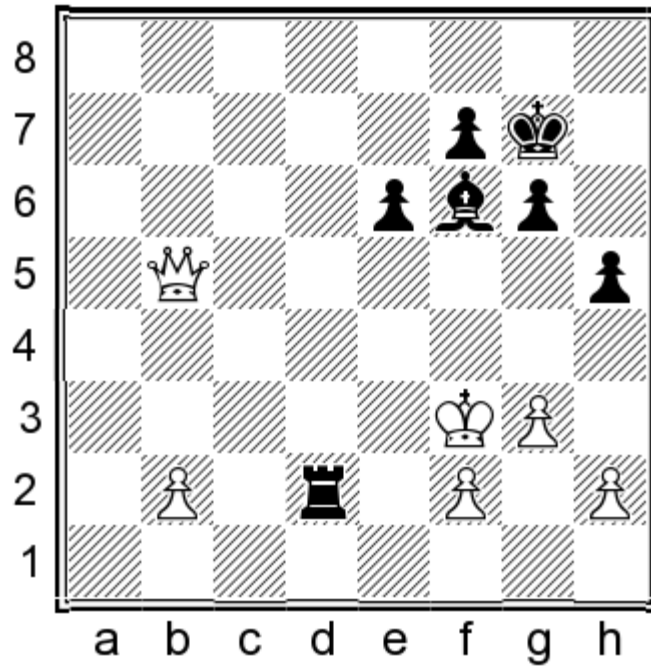
68.♙e5?!

Not so difficult was 68.♞g7+ ♙f5 69.d7 ♙e6 70.♙c7+—, but fortunately White still wins.

68...♙f5 69.d7 ♜xc4 70.♙g3! ♚d3 71.♙c7 ♜c4 72.d8=♚ 1-0

21

Portisch Lajos
Seirawan Yasser
Dubai 1986



47.b4

I would clearly prefer 47.♔e3 ♖xb2 48.♚c4, when I do not think that either side can improve. Black didn't want to be 'passive' or perhaps he even thought that he could stand better, so he chose to preserve his b-pawn rather than the f-pawn.

47.b4 ♕d4 48.♚d7 ♖xf2+ 49.♔e4 e5!

Now the black pieces co-operate perfectly in attacking the white pawns, while the b-pawn will never pass the 6th rank; b6 is controlled by both black pieces.

50.h3 ♖e2+ 51.♔f3 ♖f2+ 52.♔e4 ♖e2+ 53.♔f3 ♖e1 54.♔g2 ♖g1+ 55.♔f3 ♖f1+ 56.♔e4 ♖e1+ 57.♔f3 ♖e3+ 58.♔g2 ♖d3 59.♚c6 ♖d2+ 60.♔f1 ♖f2+ 61.♔e1 ♖f6!

Another white pawn is lost now.

62.♚d5

62.♚g2 ♕c3+ 63.♔e2 ♕xb4—.

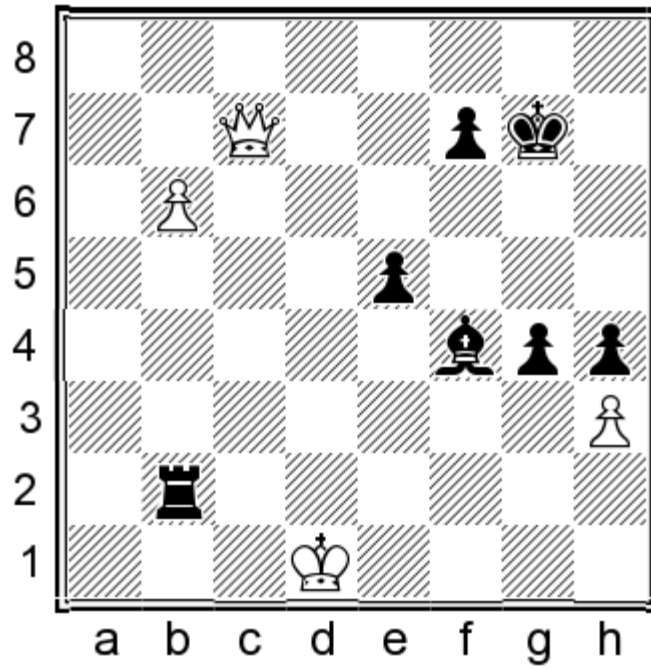
62...♕f2+ 63.♔e2 ♕xg3 64.b5

White's only chance is his b-pawn.

64...♖f2+ 65.♔d1 ♖f1+ 66.♔c2 ♖f6 67.♔d2 h4 68.♚c5 ♖f2+ 69.♔d1 ♖f1+ 70.♔d2 ♖f2+ 71.♔d1 ♖f1+ 72.♔d2 ♕f4+ 73.♔e2 ♖b1 74.b6 ♖b2+ 75.♔d1?!

Passivity is not advisable. White had to opt for 75.♔d3 g5 76.♚c6 g4 77.hxg4 h3 78.b7 ♖b1 79.♔e4! h2 80.♔f5 and he will draw by perpetual check.

75...g5 76.♚c7 g4!



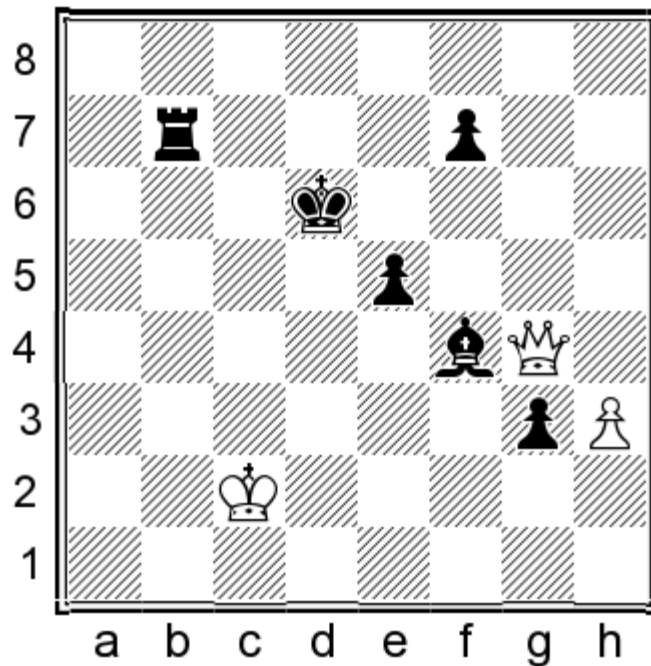
77. ♖c8

Sooner-or-later White will have to go for 77. b7 g3 78. ♖c8 g2 79. ♖g4+ ♔f8 80. b8=♚+ ♜xb8 81. ♖xg2 ♝d8+.

77...g3 78. ♖g4+?

This loses; White had to opt for the variation above.

78...♔f6 79. ♖xh4+ ♔g6 80. ♖g4+ ♔f6 81. ♖h4+ ♔e6! 82. ♖g4+ ♔d6 83. b7 ♜xb7 84. ♔c2



84...♜b6!

Going for g6!

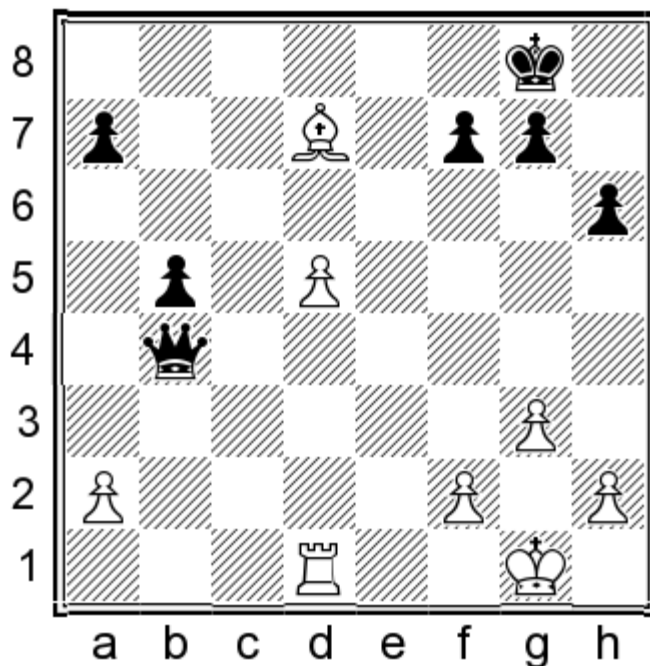
85.h4 ♖e7 86.h5 ♜d6 87.♗c3 ♜d2 88.♞h4+ ♗e8 89.♞g4

Or 89.h6 ♜h2 90.♞g4 ♗e7+.

89...g2 90.♞g8+ ♗e7 91.♞g7 e4! 92.♗c4 ♙h2 93.♞g5+ ♗e6 94.♞h6+ ♗f5 95.♞h7+ ♗g5 96.♞g7+ ♗h4 97.♞f6+ ♗g4 98.♞g7+ ♗h3 0-1

22

Kramnik Vladimir
Anand Viswanathan
Las Palmas 1996



The combined power of rook, bishop & passed pawn is enormous and Black can hardly escape.

29.d6 ♞a4

29...♞a5 loses to 30.♙c6 (or 30.♙xb5!) 30...♗h7 31.d7 ♞d8 32.♞e1 ♞c7 33.♞e8+—

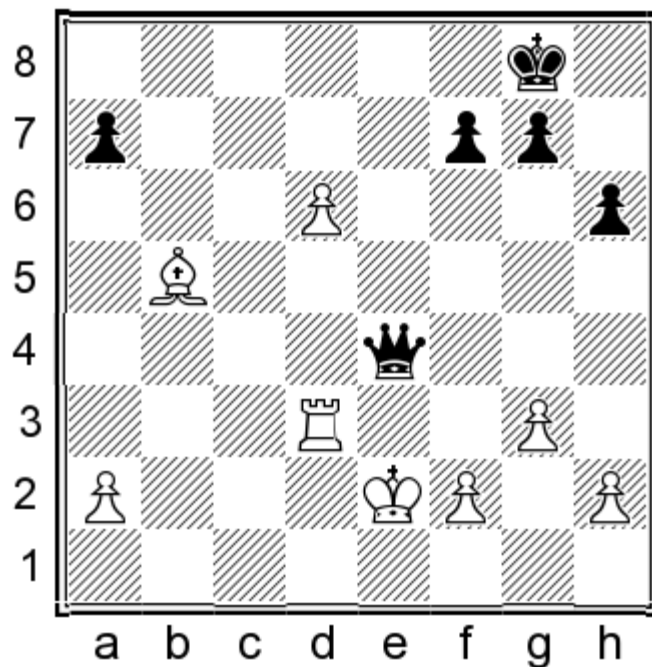
30.♜d3?!

30.♞c1! would be lethal: 30...♞d4 31.♞c8+ ♗h7 32.♙f5+ g6 33.d7 ♞d1+ 34.♗g2 ♞d5+ 35.f3+—.

30...♞e4

Alternatives are no better: 30...♞xa2 31.♙f5 ♞a5 32.d7 ♞d8 33.♞c3+— or 30...♞c4 31.♙f5 ♞c1+ 32.♗g2 ♞c6+ 33.f3 ♞c2+ 34.♗h3 ♞c5 35.♙e4+— or 30...♗f8 31.♙f5 ♗e8 32.h3 (32.d7+? ♗d8?) 32...g6 33.♙c8 ♞xa2 34.d7+ ♗d8 35.♞e3 ♗c7 36.♞e8 ♞d5 37.d8=♞+ ♞xd8 38.♞xd8 ♗xd8 39.♙a6 b4 40.♗f1+—.

31.♙xb5 ♞e1+ 32.♗g2 ♞e4+ 33.♗g1 ♞e1+ 34.♗g2 ♞e4+ 35.♗f1! ♞h1+ 36.♗e2 ♞e4+ 37.♗f1 ♞h1+ 38.♗e2 ♞e4+



39.♔d1! ♚g4+

Or 39...♚h1+ 40.♔c2 ♚a1 41.d7 ♚xa2+ 42.♔d1 ♚b1+ 43.♔e2+-.

40.f3 ♚h3

There is no salvation either with 40...♚b4 41.d7 ♚b1+ 42.♔e2 ♚xa2+ 43.♞d2 ♚e6+ 44.♔f1 ♚h3+ 45.♔g1+-.

41.d7 1-0

Black resigned, as the pawn queens: 41...♚f1+ 42.♔c2 ♚e2+ 43.♞d2+-.

QUEEN VS ROOK & TWO MINOR PIECES

This ending when pawnless is drawn, although naturally the pieces can try for more without too much risk.

The main defensive 'rules of thumb' should be:

1. The 'queen' side's king should try not to be 'edged' or cornered, as then he could be in real trouble.
2. The queen should try, primarily, to check or pin.
3. The main goal should be to reach the 50-moves rule.

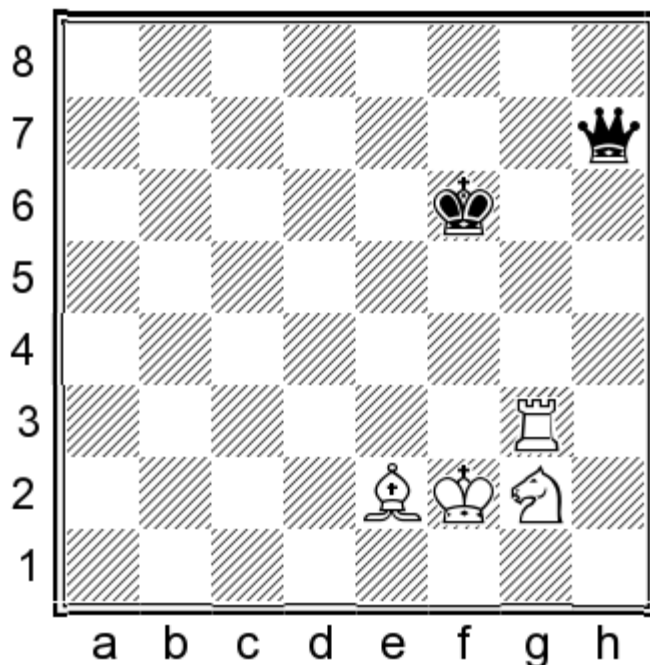
Let's analyse some useful examples from practical play:

1

Durarbayli Vasif

Bajarani Ulvi

St Petersburg 2012



90.♙d3 ♚a7+ 91.♜f3 ♚a8+ 92.♙e4 ♚e8 93.♞f4 ♚e5 94.♞g6+ ♜e7 95.♞d5+ ♜f7 96.♞h6 ♚a1 97.♞c6 ♚f1+ 98.♜e3 ♚e1+ 99.♜f4 ♚f2+ 100.♜e5 ♚b2+ 101.♜f5 ♚f2+ 102.♞f4 ♜e7 103.♞c2 ♚f1 104.♞d2 ♚b5+ 105.♞d5 ♚f1

White has achieved good piece co-ordination but still the game is within drawing boundaries.

106.♙d3 ♚f2 107.♙e2 ♜f8 108.♞e5 ♜g7 109.♙h5 ♚a7 110.♙e8 ♚c7?

Black blunders under pressure. Something like 110...♚f2 would still be OK.

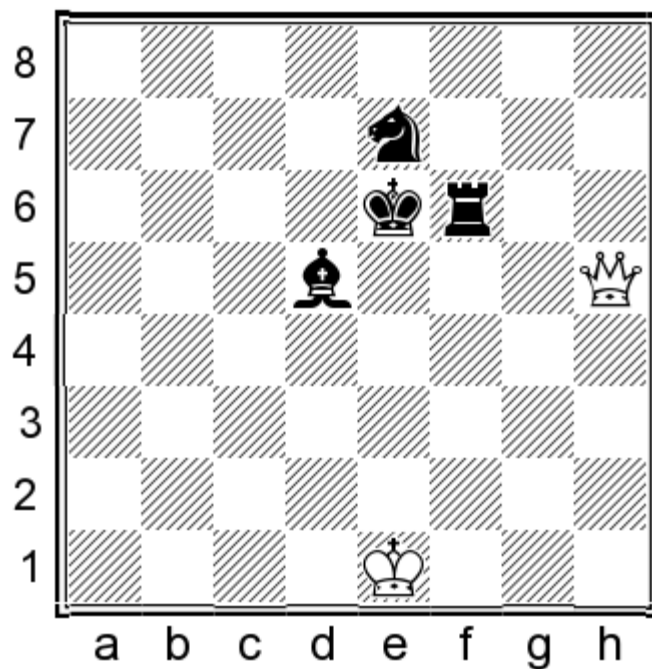
111.♞e6+ 1-0

2

Gurevich Mikhail

Baramidze David

Netherlands 2005



Mikhail Gurevich is an expert endgame player, so he couldn't lose this ending!

90. ♖e2+ ♔d7 91. ♜b5+ ♕c6 92. ♛c5 ♜f4 93. ♛a7+ ♔e6 94. ♛a2+ ♕d5 95. ♛a6+ ♖c6 96. ♛c8+ ♔e5 97. ♛h8+ ♔e4
 98. ♛h7+ ♔d4 99. ♛h6 ♜e4+ 100. ♔d2 ♔c4 101. ♛d6 ♜g4 102. ♔e3 ♜e4+ 103. ♔f2 ♖d4 104. ♛a6+ ♔c5 105. ♛a7+ ♔d6
 106. ♛b8+ ♔e6 107. ♛g8+ ♔e5 108. ♛g7+ ♔d6 1/2-1/2

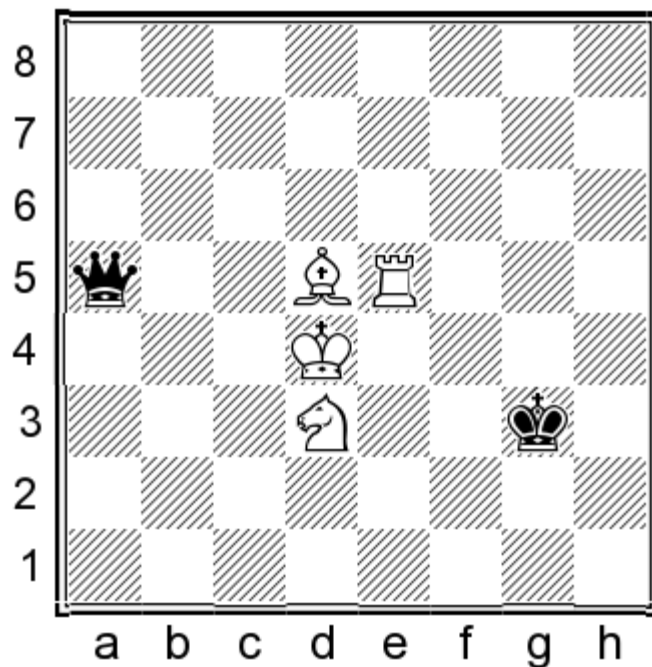
A model game for the defence.

3

Neverov Valeriy

Mastrovasilis Athanasios

Warsaw 2005



Another drawn position.

129...♚a1+ 130.♔e3 ♚a7+ 131.♔e2 ♚d4 132.♞e3+ ♔h2 133.♙e6 ♚c3?

This loses. 133...♚f6 or 133...♚h4 were the only moves.

134.♞h3+?

White had to find 134.♔f3! ♚c6+ (134...♚d2 135.♞e2+-) 135.♞e4! ♚b7 136.♘f4 ♚c6 137.♙d5 ♚b6 138.♞e2+ ♔g1 139.♙e4 ♚f6 140.♙d3 ♔h1 141.♞e6! ♚h8 142.♞g6 ♔h2 143.♞g2+ ♔h1 144.♞g5+-.

134...♔g1 135.♙d5 ♚e1+ 136.♔f3 ♚f1+! 137.♔g4 ♚e2+ 138.♔f4 ♚d2+?

138...♚f1+! draws.

139.♔f5! ♔f1

Now, probably due to shortage of time, both sides start to make decisive mistakes.

140.♘f4?

140.♞h1+ ♔e2 141.♘c1+ ♔e3 142.♞h3+ ♔f2 143.♞h2+-.

140...♚c2+?

140...♚d4!=.

141.♔g5! ♚c8 142.♞h2?

142.♞e3!+-.

142...♚d7?

142...♖d8+=.

143.♙c4+ ♔g1 144.♖g2+ ♔h1 145.♖a2 ♔g1 146.♙d5?

146.♖e2+-.

146...♔f1?

146...♖g7+=.

147.♔h4?

147.♙c4++-.

147...♖g7?

147...♖h7+=.

148.♙g2+ 1-0

148...♔e1 (148...♔g1 149.♘h3+ ♔h2 150.♙e4+--) 149.♘d3+ ♔d1 150.♙f3#.

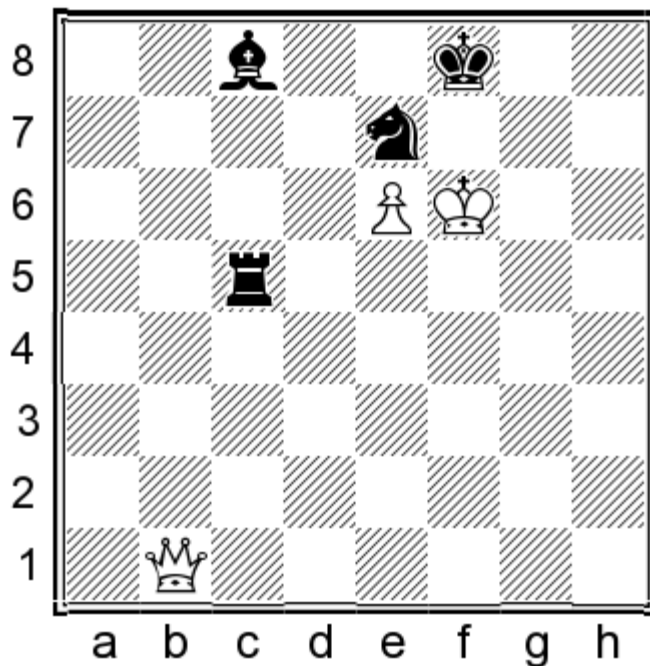
An extra pawn for the 'queen' side is not necessary helpful - see the next example:

4

Mueller Karsten

Bach Matthias

Hamburg 1999



Here the extra pawn doesn't help White, as his king has fewer squares to move to!

79...♘d5+?

Black didn't calculate precisely. He could win with 79...♙b7! 80.♖d3 (80.♖xb7 ♖f5#; 80.♖h7 ♘g8+ 81.♔g6 ♙e4#;

80. ♖f1 ♙e4 81. ♖f2 ♗g8#) 80... ♗d5+ 81. ♗g5 ♗b4+-+.

79... ♗d5+? 80. ♗g6 ♗e7

Again a bad mistake. 80... ♗e7+! 81. ♗h6 ♙xe6 was winning.

81. ♖e4 ♙xe6 82. ♖h4+ ♗d7 83. ♖a4+ ♗d6 1/2-1/2

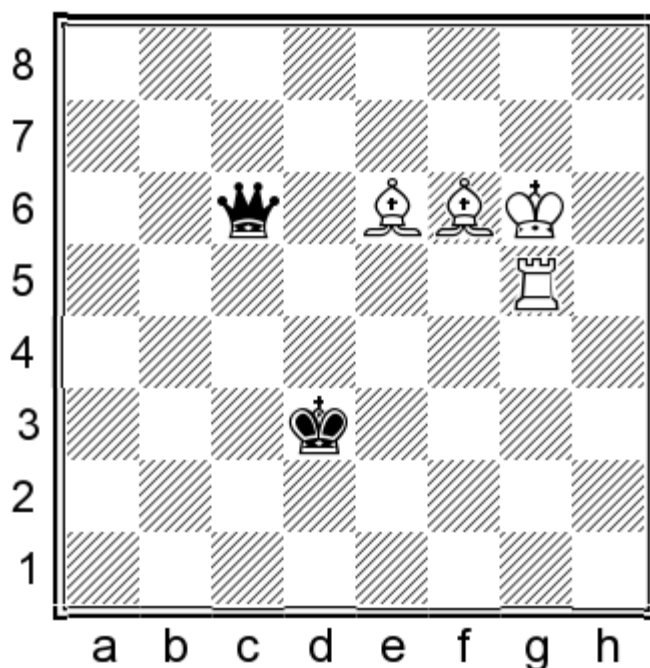
Even when the 'pieces' side has at its disposal the mighty bishop-pair or the 'modest' knight-pair, there is little he can do to improve:

5

Gonzalez Rodriguez Jorge Armando

Shirazi Kamran

Saint John 1988



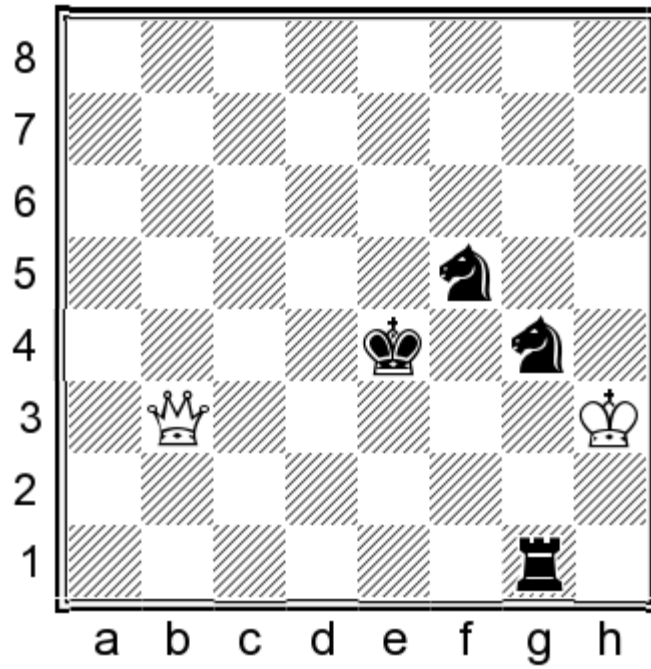
125. ♖g3+ ♗e2 126. ♙g4+ ♗f2 127. ♖c3 ♖e8+ 128. ♗g5 ♖g8+ 129. ♗f4 ♖b8+ 130. ♗f5 ♖b5+ 131. ♙e5 ♖d7+ 132. ♗f4 ♖a4+ 133. ♗g5 ♖e4 134. ♙f6 ♖d5+ 135. ♗f4 ♖d6+ 136. ♙e5 1/2-1/2

6

Matnadze Ana

Dembo Yelena

Istanbul 2012



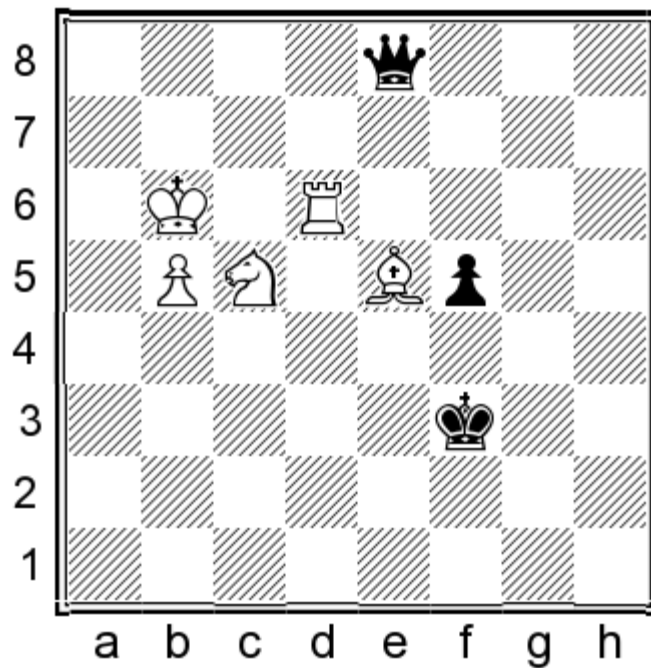
White can successfully defend as it's enough to sacrifice his queen for the rook.

84... ♖ge3 85. ♚b7+ ♜d5 86. ♙h2 ♜f1 87. ♚a6 ♜f4 88. ♚e6+ ♜d4 89. ♚d7 ♜h4+ 90. ♙g1 ♙e5 91. ♚e8+ ♜de7 92. ♚b8+ ♙f6 93. ♚b2+ ♙f7 1/2-1/2

Adding a pawn(s) is a different story:

7

Caruana Fabiano
Negi Parimarjan
New Delhi 2011



80.♞e6

Even better was 80.♗d7 ♞a8 81.♞d4+-.

80.♞e6 ♞c8 81.♙c7 ♞a8 82.♞d6 ♖e2 83.♗e6 ♞e4 84.♗d4+ ♖f2 85.♗c6!

Protecting the king, so the b-pawn can advance.

85...♞c2 86.♖b7 ♞b3 87.b6 f4 88.♖c8 ♞h3+ 89.♞d7 f3 90.b7 ♖g2 91.b8=♞ f2 92.♞b2 ♖h1 93.♗e5 f1=♞

Both pawns were promoted but surprisingly White wins; his king is much safer!

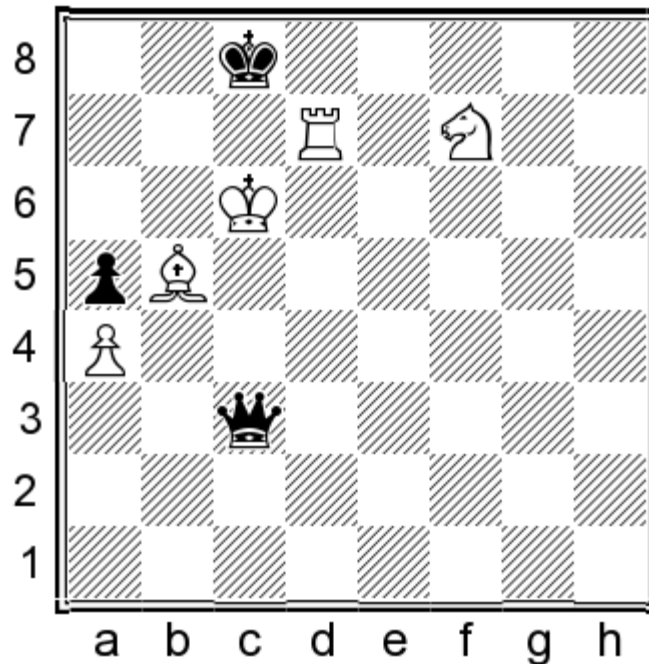
94.♖b8! ♞h8+ 95.♞d8 ♞hf6 96.♞b7+ ♖g1 97.♞g8+ ♖h2 98.♗g4+ 1-0

8

Karpov Anatoly

Timman Jan

Brussels 1986



Black's king is stuck on the edge and his a-pawn is weak as well.

101.♖b6 ♞e3+ 102.♖a6! ♞e6+ 103.♗d6+ ♖b8 104.♞d8+ ♖c7 105.♞c8+! 1-0

And Black resigned: 105...♖xd6 106.♞c6+ ♖d5 107.♞xe6 ♖xe6 108.♖xa5+-.

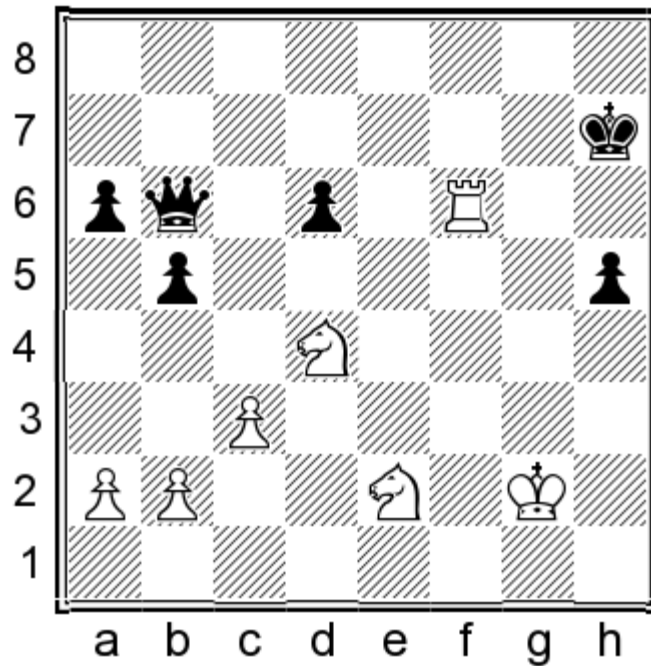
Positions with multiple pawns for each side should be heaven for the 'pieces'. This is because they can add an extra plan (queening) to the original (mate the opponent king) and also because the 'pieces' can easily stop or attack an enemy pawn. And the queen can't...

9

Vouldis Angelos

Grivas Efstratios

Athens 1997



White's huge material advantage settles matters.

40. ♖f4 b4

Trying for some counterplay; what else?

41. ♗f5! ♖b7+ 42. ♕g3 bxc3 43. bxc3 ♖a7 44. ♖xd6?!

Too hasty. White could crown his attack with 44. ♖h6+! ♗g8 45. ♖g6+ ♗h8 (45... ♗f8 46. ♗e6+ ♗e8 47. ♖g8+ ♗d7 48. ♖g7+-) 46. ♖g7!+-.

44... ♖g1+ 45. ♗f3 ♖h1+ 46. ♗e3 ♖c1+ 47. ♗e4 ♖c2+

A 'better' try was 47... ♖e1+ 48. ♗d5 ♖d2+ but after 49. ♗e5 ♖xc3+ 50. ♖d4 ♖c5+ 51. ♗e6 ♖c6+ 52. ♗f7 White will anyway win.

48. ♖d3 ♖xa2 49. ♗e5!

Although there are other ways to victory as well, the attack against the opponent's king is the surest method. White will be attacking with four pieces, while Black can defend with only one.

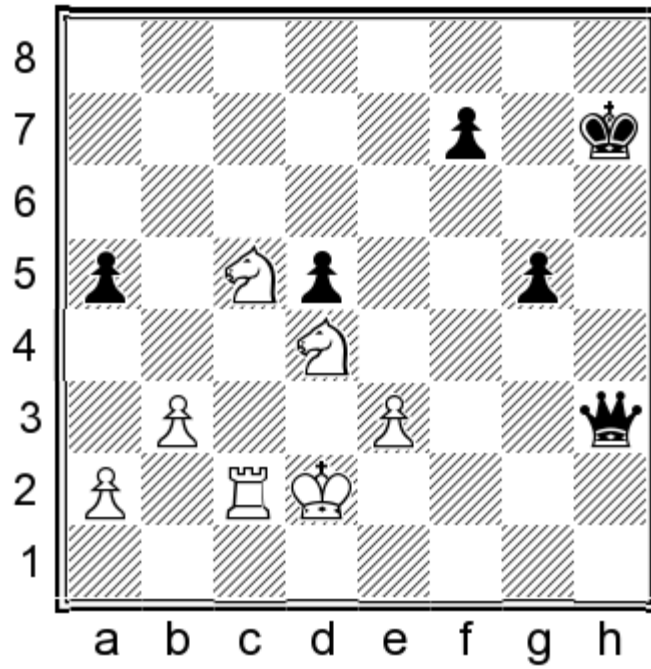
49... ♖a4 50. ♖g3 ♖b5+ 51. ♗f6 ♖c6+ 52. ♗e6 ♗h8 53. ♗e7 ♖e8 54. ♖g7 1-0

10

Kortchnoi Viktor

Adianto Utut

Novi Sad 1990



White needs to reshuffle and co-ordinate his pieces.

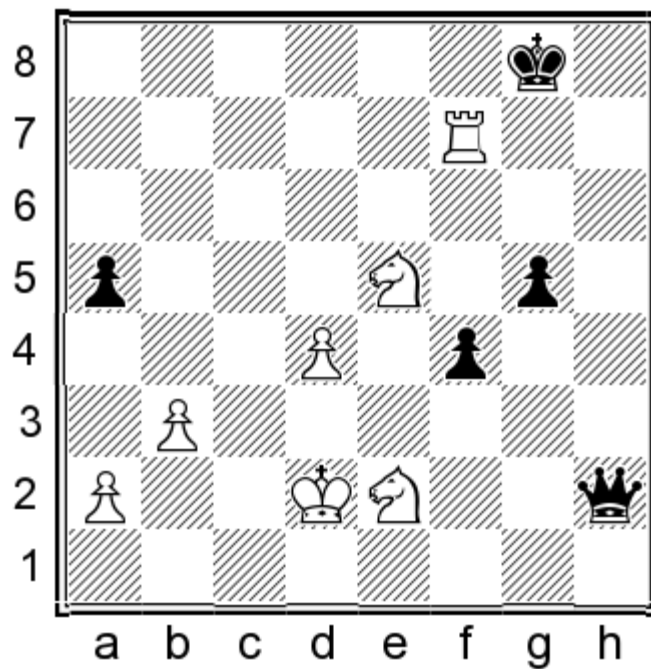
49.♘d3 ♕h2+ 50.♘e2 d4!?

An interesting try, aimed at creating a pair of passed pawns (f & h). After 50...g4 51.♖c5 ♕d6 52.♘ef4 Black should lose.

51.exd4 f5 52.♘e5?

White should go in for 52.d5! f4 53.♖c7+ ♔h6 54.♖f7+-.

52...f4 53.♖c7+ ♔g8 54.♖f7



54...♖h3!

And now Black has sufficient resources to save the half point.

55.♟f6 ♔h7! 56.♟f7+ ♔g8 57.♞c1 g4?

A clear blunder, losing his pride; the connected passed pawns. Black could logically go for 57...♞e3+! 58.♔c2 ♞f2+ (58...♞xd4 59.♞cd3+=) 59.♔b1 ♞xd4 60.♞cd3 ♞e4=.

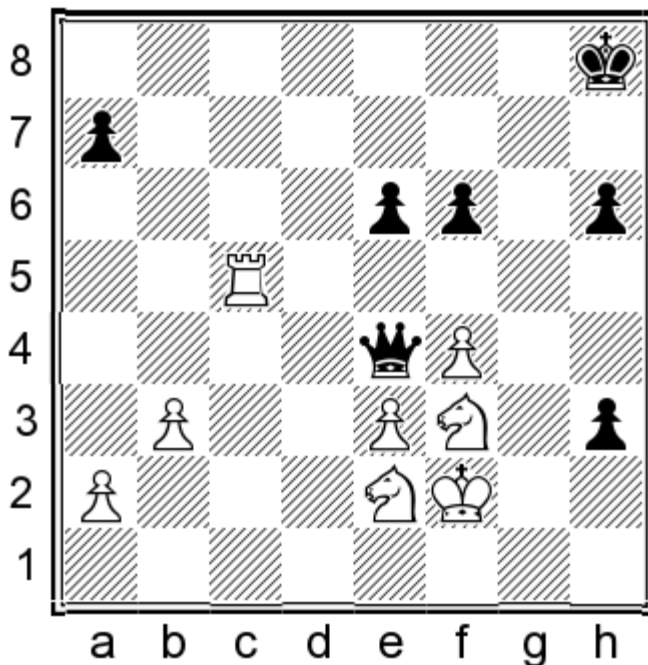
58.♟xf4 g3 59.♞e2 g2 60.♞f3 1-0

11

Wojtkiewicz Aleksander

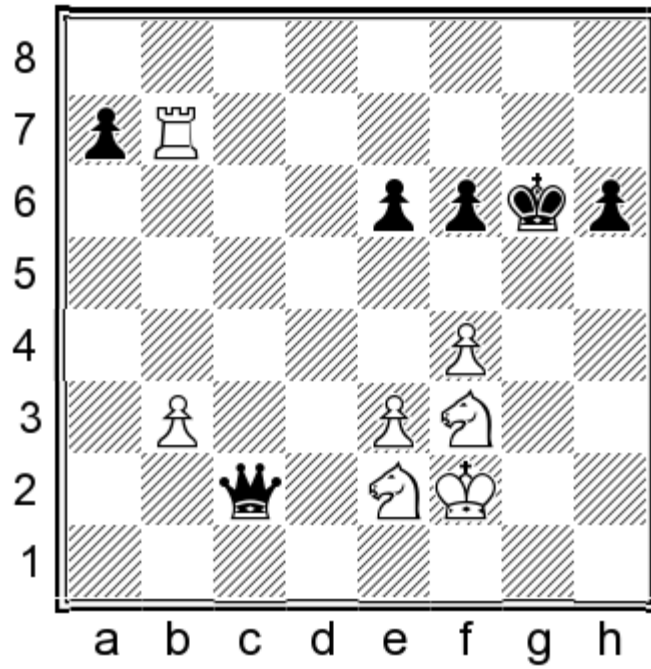
Markowski Tomasz

Polanica Zdroj 1995



White's healthy structure and active pieces will prevail, as the queen is lacking real targets.

30.♟h5 ♔h7 31.♟xh3 ♞b1 32.♟h5! ♞xa2 33.♟b5 ♞c2 34.♟b7+ ♔g6



35.b4

35.♘fd4! ♚d2 36.♘xe6+–.

35...♚a2 36.b5 h5 37.♙e7 ♚d5 38.♘ed4 1-0

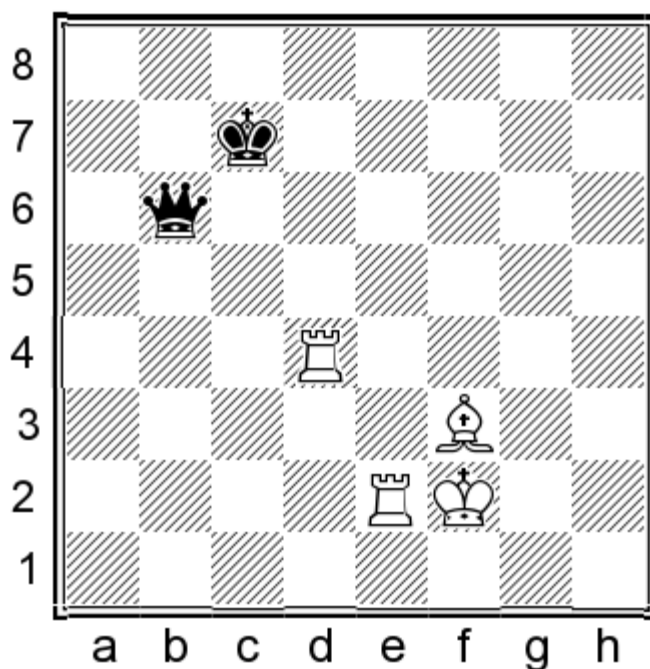
And as the pawns will fall, Black resigned.

QUEEN VS TWO ROOKS & MINOR PIECE

A queen vs two rooks & minor piece is hopeless for the queen, in pawnless or non-pawnless cases. Her only chances for survival are stalemate and, in some extreme cases, perpetual check.

The pieces will try to deliver mate or win the queen under favourable circumstances, ensuring that he will emerge a rook ahead.

Example 1



1. ♖c2+ ♔b8 2. ♖cc4!

Black must now abandon the pin on the rook.

2... ♕f6

Useless is also 2... ♕a7 3. ♖b4+ ♔c8 4. ♖a4 ♕b6 5. ♖ac4+ ♔b8 6. ♖b4 or 2... ♕b2+ 3. ♔g3 or 2... ♕a5 3. ♖d5 ♕a2+ 4. ♔e2 ♕b3 5. ♖d8+ ♔a7 6. ♖c7+ ♔b6 7. ♖b8+.

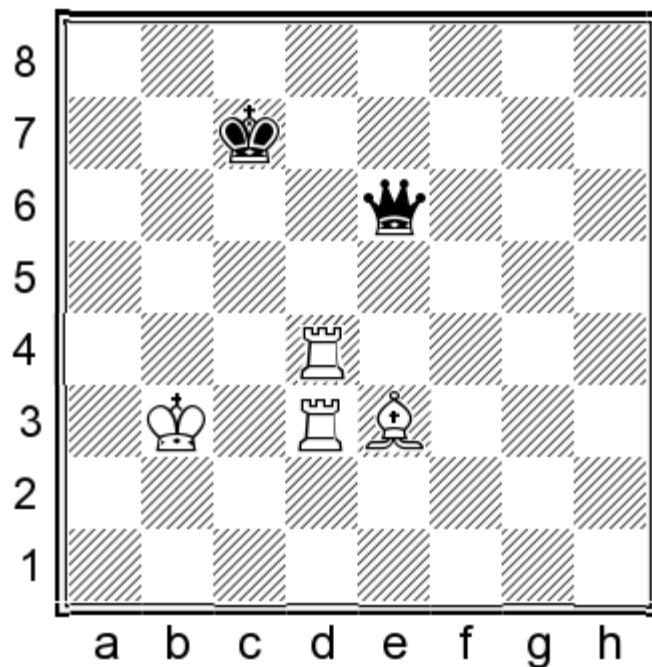
3. ♖b4+ ♔c8 4. ♖dc4+ ♔d8 5. ♖b8+ ♔d7 6. ♖b7+ ♔d8 7. ♖a4! 1-0

1

Szczepinski Michal

Czarnota Pawel

Krynica 2003



71.♞c4+ ♔b7 72.♔c3 ♚e5+ 73.♔c2 ♚f5 74.♔d2 ♚a5+ 75.♞dc3 ♚d5+ 76.♔c2 ♚f5+ 77.♔b2 ♚e5 78.♞b4+ ♔a8
79.♙d4?

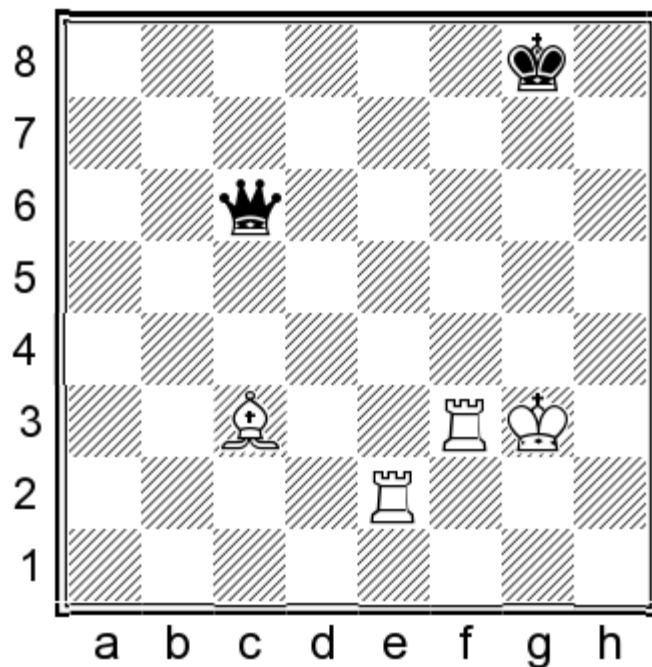
A grave blunder! Winning was 79.♙d2 ♚f6 80.♔a2 ♚f7+ 81.♞cb3.

79...♚e2+ 80.♔a3 ♚a2+! 81.♔xa2 1/2-1/2

Stalemate!

2

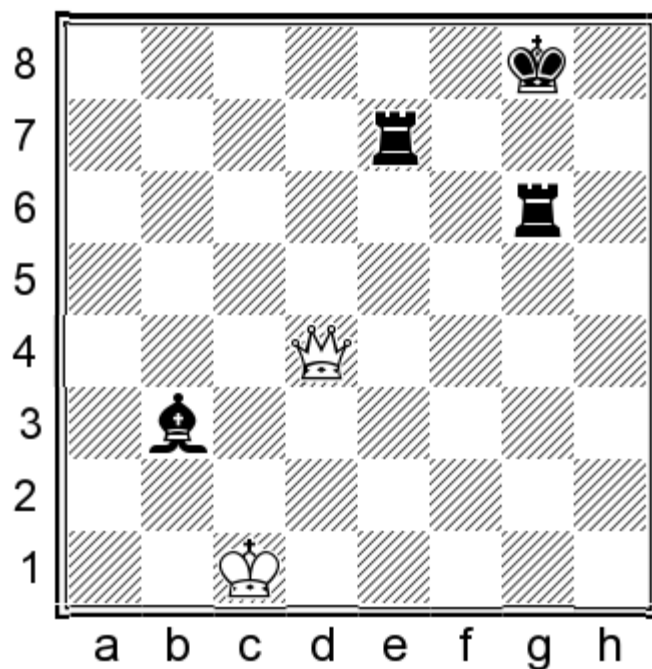
Rakic Marija
Goczó Melinda
Belgrade 2015



123.♞g2 ♔h7 124.♔f2 ♚c5+ 125.♔f1 ♚c4+ 126.♔g1 ♚c5+ 127.♔h1 ♚c8 128.♞f7+ ♔h6 129.♙d2+ 1-0

3

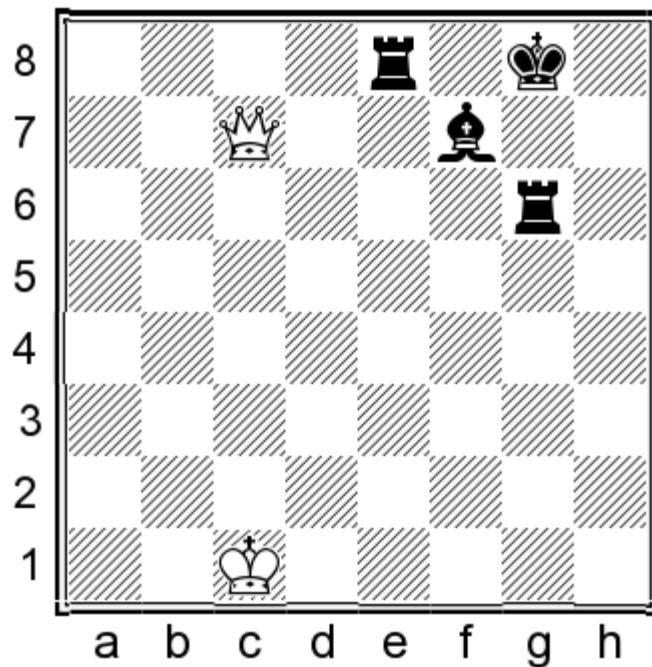
Nunn John
Piket Jeroen
Monte Carlo 1994



88...♙f7

88...♞g2! 89.♚d8+ ♔f7 90.♚a5 ♞e6 91.♚c3 ♙d5 92.♔d1 ♞a6 93.♚d4 ♞a1+ 94.♚xa1 ♞g1++.

88...♔f7 89.♖d8+ ♚e8 90.♗c7



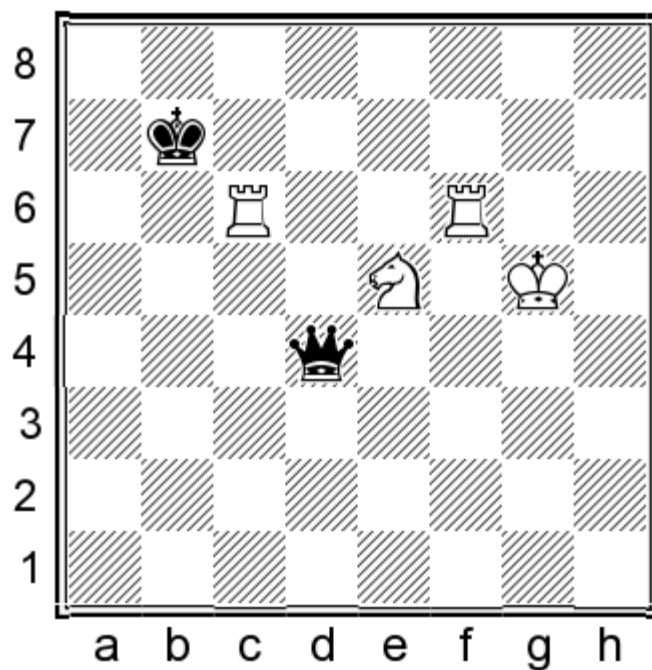
90...♖g2! 91.♗c3 ♚e6 92.♗f3 ♚c8+ 93.♕b1 ♚a2+ 0-1

4

Prie Eric

Sandu Mihaela

West Bromwich 2005



83.♖ce6

83.♖f7+ ♘b8 84.♞e6 ♞d2+ 85.♔f6 ♞f4+ 86.♔g7 ♞g3+ 87.♘g6 ♞c3+ 88.♔g8+-.

The king find its shelter between the pieces.

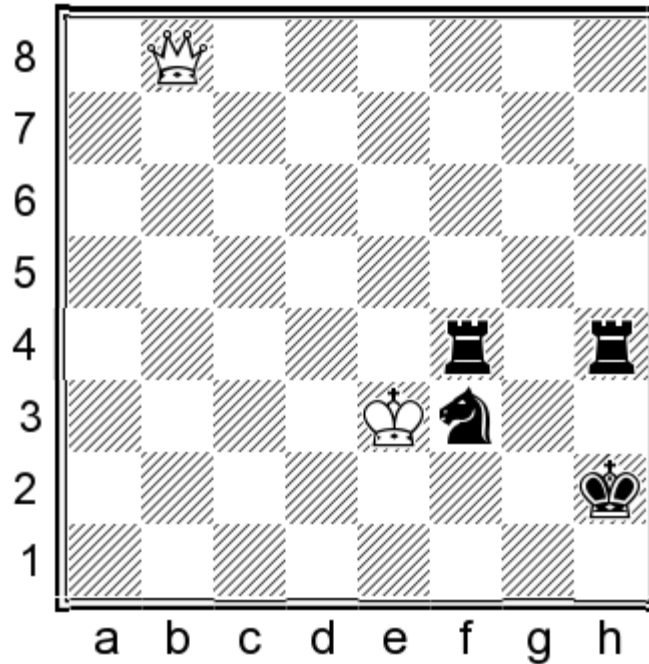
83.♞ce6 ♞g1+ 84.♔h6 ♞h2+ 85.♔g7 ♞g3+ 86.♘g6 ♞c3 87.♔g8 1-0

5

Finkel Alexander

Yudasin Leonid

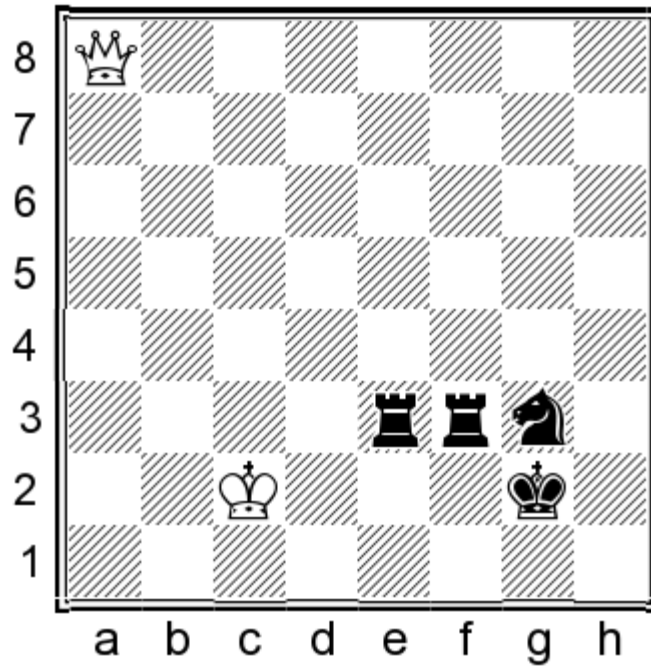
Israel 1996



78...♔g3 79.♞c7 ♘d4

Even the black king will assist his pieces to deliver mate.

80.♞b8 ♘f5+ 81.♔d3 ♔g2! 82.♞b2+ ♞f2 83.♞b7+ ♞f3+ 84.♔d2 ♘g3 85.♞a8 ♞d4+ 86.♔c2 ♞e4 87.♔d2 ♞e2+ 88.♔d1 ♞e3 89.♔c2

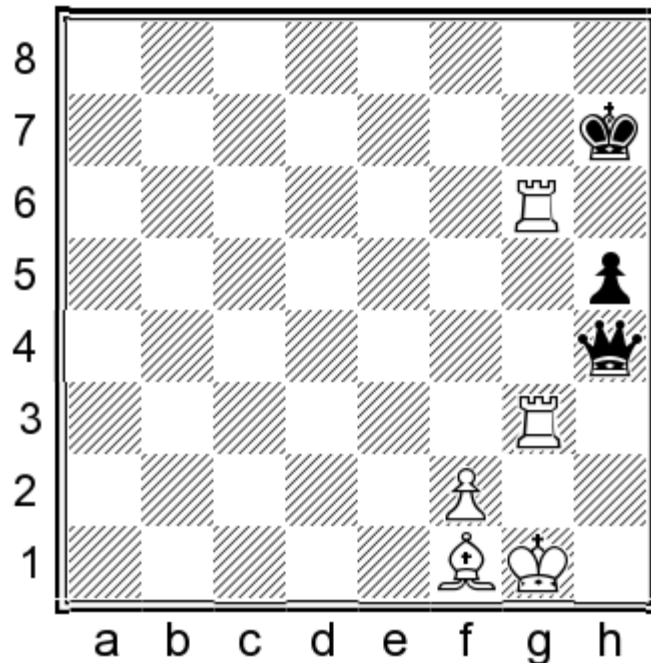


89...♔g1! 90.♚a7 ♜f2+ 91.♔d1 ♜b3 92.♔c1 ♞e2+ 0-1

With extra pawns the win is more secure, as the 'pieces' side has an extra plan- to queen a pawn! Also, the pawns usually offer their king better protection against the perpetual check.

6

Howell David
Saeed Ishaq
Dubai 2016



The co-ordination of the white pieces is strong and mate soon follows:

71.♞g7+ ♔h8 72.♞g8+ ♔h7 73.♙d3+ 1-0

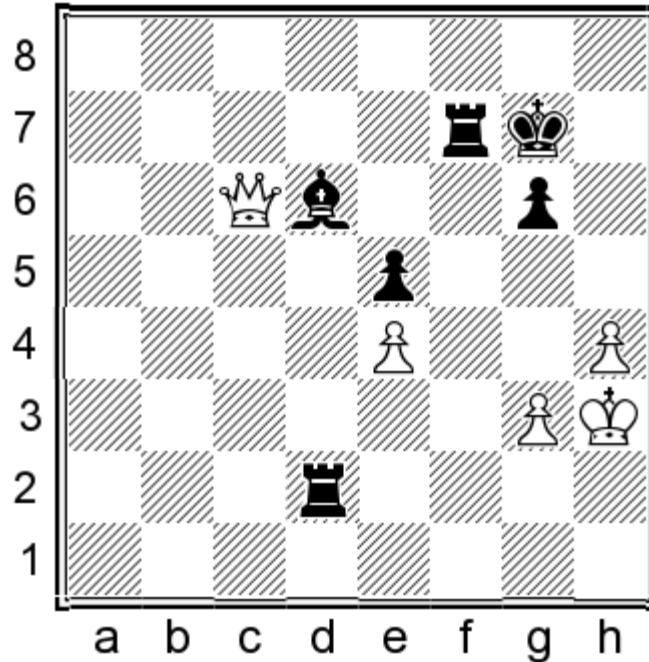
Black resigned: 73...♔h6 74.♞h8#.

7

Van Wely Loek

Shirov Alexei

Monte Carlo 1997



49...♞d3! 50.h5

Trying to complicate matters, as 50.♔g2 ♞f8 51.♞b5 ♞ff3— would be curtains as well.

50...♞ff3

Also good was 50...gxf5 51.♔h4 ♔g6 52.♞c8 ♙e7+ 53.♔h3 ♞ff3 54.♞e8+ ♔f6 55.♞h8+ ♔e6—.

51.♞d7+ ♔h6 52.hxg6 ♞xg3+ 53.♔h2 ♞xg6

A natural capture, but 53...♞ge3! 54.♔g2 ♞e2+ 55.♔f1 ♞f2+ 56.♔g1 ♞d1+ 57.♔xf2 ♙c5+ was quicker!

54.♞d8 ♞f3 55.♞h8+ ♔g5 56.♞d8+ ♞ff6 57.♔h3 ♔f4 58.♔h2 ♔f3! 0-1

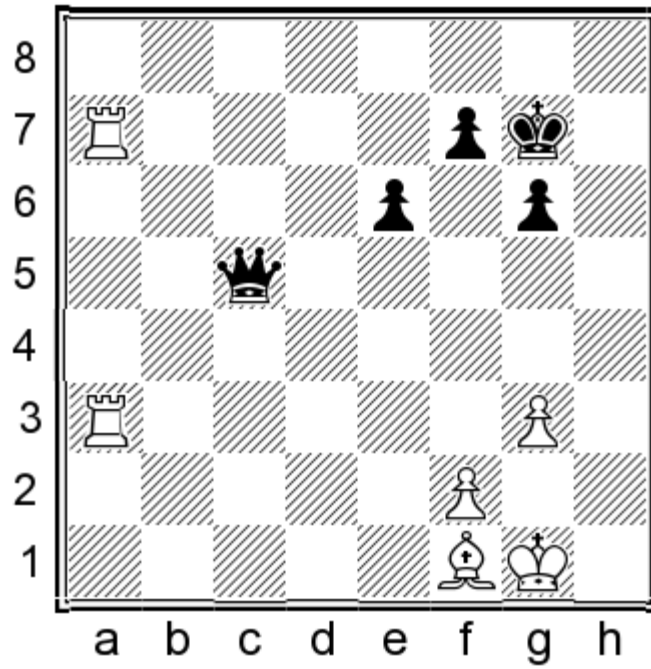
And mate soon follows.

8

Dreev Alexey

Kulaots Kaido

Gausdal 2007



39.♖3a6!

Trying to create weaknesses in the black pawn structure.

39...e5

If 39...♚d4 then the doubling of the rooks against f7 is fine: 40.♖c7 g5 41.♖aa7+.

40.♖b7 e4 41.♖aa7 e3 42.♖xf7+ ♔h6 43.fxe3 ♚xe3+ 44.♔h2

The white king has enough protection - no need to worry!

44...♚c5 45.♖h7+ ♔g5 46.♙g2 ♚e5 47.♖ad7! ♚b2 48.♖d5+ ♔f6 49.♖b7 ♚c1 50.♖b6+ 1-0

50...♔e7 (50...♔g7 51.♖d7+ ♔h6 52.♙e4+-) 51.♖xg6+-.

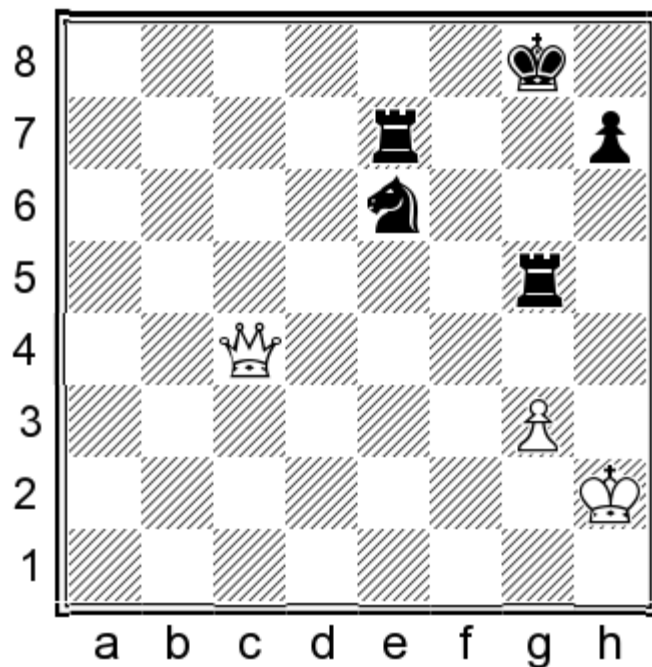
The short-range knight might be not as strong as the longer-range bishop, but it is still a mighty force.

9

Melkumyan Hrant

Postny Evgeny

Sarajevo 2012



52. ♖c8+ ♜f8 53. ♚c4+ ♜f7 54. ♚b3 ♜d7 55. ♚e6 ♜g7 56. ♚e3 h6 57. ♜h3 ♜e5 58. ♚e4 ♜f3!

Targets must be attacked!

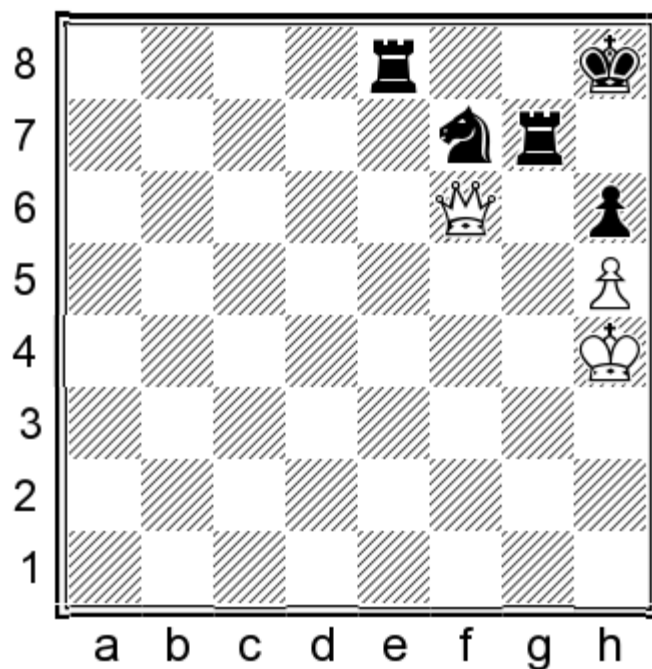
59. ♚b7+ ♜g6 60. ♚e4+ ♜f6 0-1

10

Shaw John

Gretarsson Hjorvar Steinn

Reykjavik 2006



Here the white pawn is even weaker. Black need only co-ordinate his pieces and the bacon will come home by itself!

66...♔g8?!

But on the other hand, an immediate tactic could finish the game at once: 66...♞e4+! 67.♔h3 ♚g5+ 68.♔h2 (68.♔g2 ♚h7+--+) 68...♞h4+ 69.♔g1 ♚h7+--+.

66...♔g8?! 67.♞d4 ♞g5 68.♞c4 ♞ee5 69.♞c8+ ♔g7 70.♞d7 ♞xh5+

The pawn is felled and White continues just praying for a miracle.

71.♔g4 ♞hg5+ 72.♔h4 h5 73.♔h3 ♞gf5 74.♔g3 ♞e3+ 75.♔g2 ♞f4 76.♞c7 ♞g4+ 77.♔h2 h4 78.♞d7 ♞ee4 79.♔h3 ♞g6 80.♞a7 ♞g3+ 81.♔h2 ♞f4

81...♞e2+ 82.♔h1 ♞e1+ 83.♔h2 ♞d3 84.♔g2 h3+--+.

82.♞a1+ ♞f6 83.♞d4 ♚g5 84.♔h1 ♔g6

Hoping for 84...♚f3? 85.♞xf6+! ♔xf6 stalemate!

85.♞c4 ♞e6 86.♞c2+ ♔h6 87.♞f5 ♞ge3 88.♞f2 ♞e1+ 89.♔g2 ♞1e2 0-1

QUEEN & MINOR PIECE VS TWO ROOKS

Not an often-met ending, but still certain knowledge is required.

Starting with the bishop, we can notice that the long-range piece is strong and can defend and attack from far away.

This fact is, of course, a great help for the 'queen' side and usually delivers the point to the boss. We often see endings with queen vs rook resulting, as one rook has to be sacrificed for the bishop in order to avoid immediate mate.

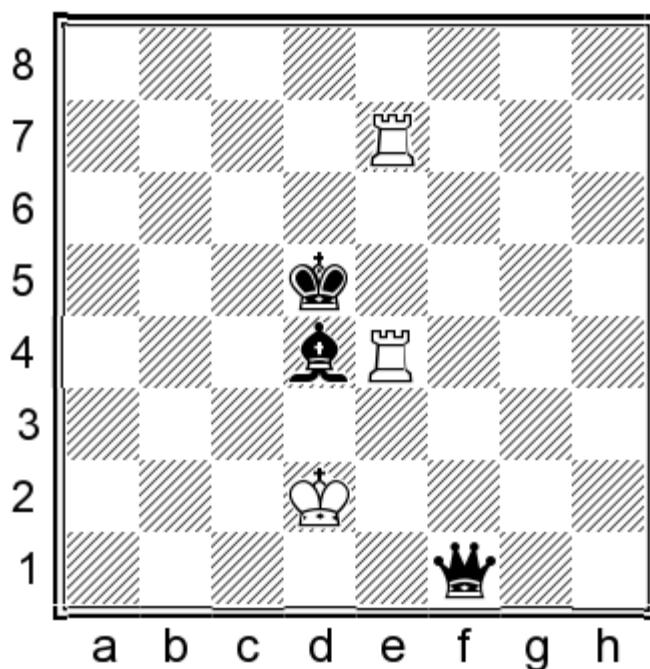
I have found only four examples in my database, which proves how rare this ending is...

1

Zaremba Andrie

Pixton Aaron

Dallas 2002



Black will combine his forces of king, queen and bishop to force mate or win material.

92...♙f6! 93.♞e8 ♙g5+ 94.♔c2 ♚c1+ 95.♔b3 ♙f6!

To further restrict the white king on the edge of the board.

96.♞e2 ♚b1+

Quicker is 96...♚c3+ 97.♔a2 ♚b4 98.♞8e4 ♙d4 99.♞e6 ♔c4 100.♞c6+ ♔d3 101.♞ec2 ♚a4+ 102.♔b1 ♚a1#.

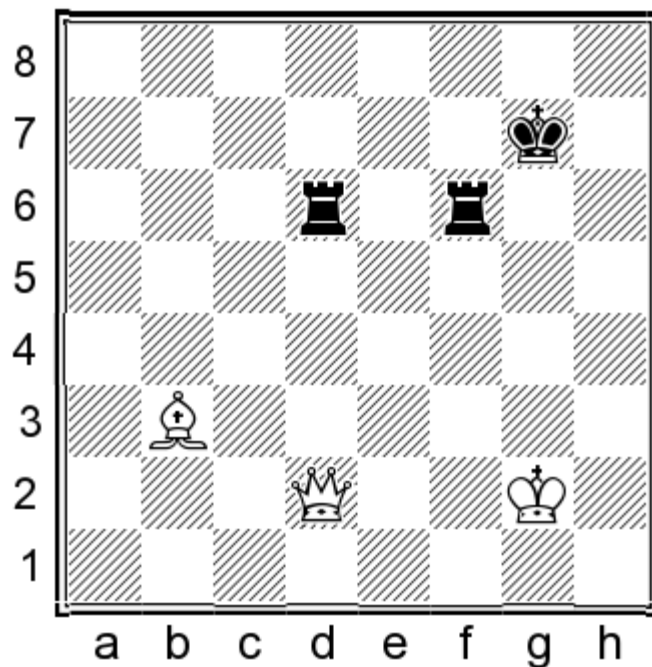
97.♔a3 ♙d4 98.♞d8+ ♔c4 99.♞c2+ ♔d3 100.♞dc8 ♚b5 101.♞2c6 ♙b2+ 102.♔a2 ♚b4 103.♞a8 ♙c3 104.♞d8+ ♔c2 0-1

2

Rios Parra Alejandro

Miguel Lago Victor Miguel

Tunja 1989



69. ♖c3 ♔f8 70. ♚c8+ ♔e7 71. ♚c7+ ♔e8 72. ♙c4 ♔f8 73. ♔g3 ♜g6+ 74. ♔f4 ♜gf6+ 75. ♔e5 ♔e8 76. ♙b5+ ♔f8 77. ♚c8+ ♔g7 78. ♙c4

The bishop helped the queen to push the king to the edge and now returns to restrict the rooks.

78... ♔g6 79. ♚g4+ ♔h6 80. ♙f7! ♜b6 81. ♚g8 ♜g6

Black had no choice other than to play the ending of queen vs rook: 81... ♜fd6 82. ♚h8+ ♔g5 83. ♚h5#.

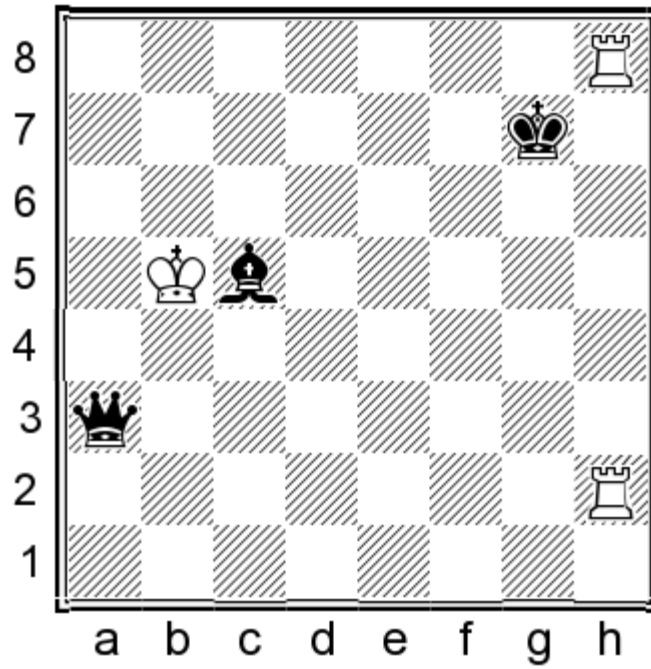
82. ♙xg6 ♜xg6 83. ♚d8 ♔g7 84. ♔f5 ♔h7 85. ♚e8 ♜g7 86. ♔f6

The 'Philidor Position'!

86... ♜g1 87. ♚d7+ ♔h8 88. ♚c8+ 1-0

3

Przybylski Wojciech
Wiewiora Eneas
Jastrzebia Gora 2015



97...♖b4+ 98.♔c6 ♜b6+

Black cannot push the enemy king to the edge with the bishop so close. He should opt firstly for 98...♙e3.

99.♔d5 ♜d6+ 100.♔c4 ♙e3 101.♞h5 ♔g6 102.♞h3 ♜d4+ 103.♔b5 ♙g5!

The rooks are far away and they cannot assist their king.

104.♞h7 ♜d5+ 105.♔b4 ♙d2+ 106.♔a3 ♜b5 107.♞h2 ♙f4 108.♞h1 ♙c1+

Simpler was 108...♙d6+ 109.♔a2 ♜e2+ 110.♔b3 ♜d3+ 111.♔b2 ♙e5+ 112.♔c1 ♜c3+ 113.♔d1 ♙f4+.

109.♞xc1

Forced due to 109.♔a2 ♜b2#.

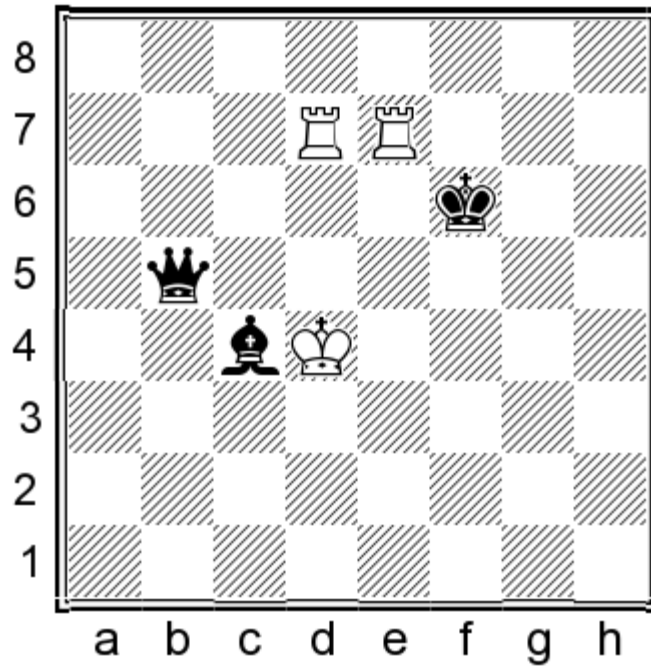
109...♔xh7

And now we have once again the queen vs rook ending!

110.♞c3 ♔g6 111.♞b3 ♜a5+ 112.♔b2 ♔f5 113.♔b1 ♔e4 114.♞b2 ♔d3 115.♞b3+ ♔c4 116.♞b2 ♔c3 117.♞c2+ ♔d3
118.♞b2 ♜a4 119.♞h2 ♜b3+ 120.♞b2 ♜d1+ 121.♔a2 ♔c3 122.♞b8 ♜d5+ 123.♔a1 ♜h1+ 0-1

4

Papp Gabor
Martinovic Sasa
Szombathely 2008



85...♔e6!

The 'usual' move which gets the bishop away from the enemy king and restricts the rooks.

86.♞c7 ♜d5+ 87.♔c3 ♞b3+ 88.♔d4 ♞b4+ 89.♔d3 ♔e5!

The king assists.

90.♔e3 ♞b3+ 91.♔d2 ♔d4 92.♔c1 ♔d3 93.♞ed7+

The only way to avoid mate is to sac material.

93...♔xd7 94.♞xd7+ ♔e3 95.♞e7+ ♔f2 96.♞c7 ♞e3+ 97.♔c2 ♞e4+ 98.♔b3 ♞e6+ 99.♔c2 ♞g6+ 100.♔c1 ♞g5+ 101.♔c2 ♞f5+ 102.♔d1 ♔e3 103.♔c1 ♔d3 104.♞c2 ♞e4 105.♔b1 ♞a4 106.♞h2 ♞b4+ 107.♔a2 ♞a5+ 108.♔b1 ♞e1+ 109.♔a2 ♞e6+ 110.♔b1 ♔c3 111.♞b2 ♞e4+ 112.♔a2 ♞a4+ 113.♔b1 ♞d1+ 114.♔a2 ♞d4 115.♔a1 ♞g4 116.♔a2 ♞d1 117.♞b8 ♞d2+ 118.♔b1 ♞e1+ 119.♔a2 ♞f2+ 120.♔b1 ♞g1+ 0-1

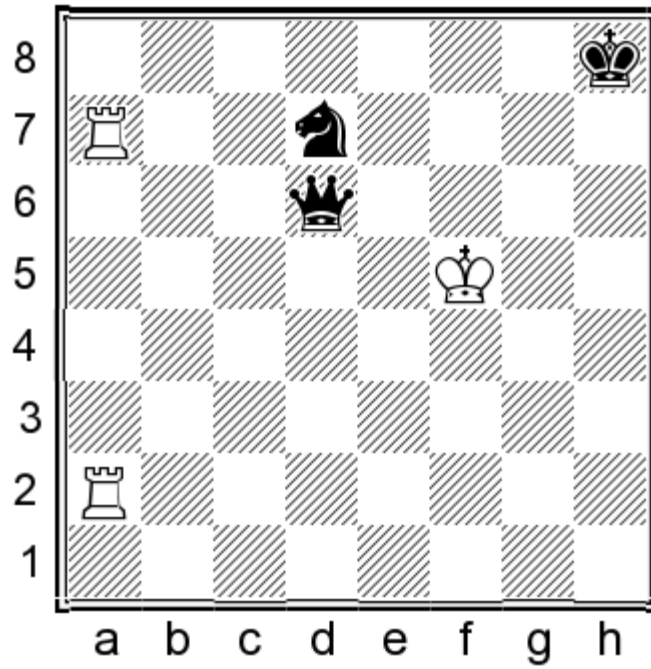
When we come to the knight, things are tougher! The knight is a short-range piece and cannot usually attack and defend simultaneously and thus can't really restrict the rooks.

The win is much longer and contains a lot of possibilities to go wrong, for both sides of course!

There are some positions where both the rooks placed on the 3rd/6th rank can draw. This is an amazing discovery by the analysis engines!

5

Simonyi Zoltan
Frick Christoph
Budapest 2009



61...♖e5+ 62.♔g4 ♜e6+ 63.♔f4 ♔g7 64.♞2a6

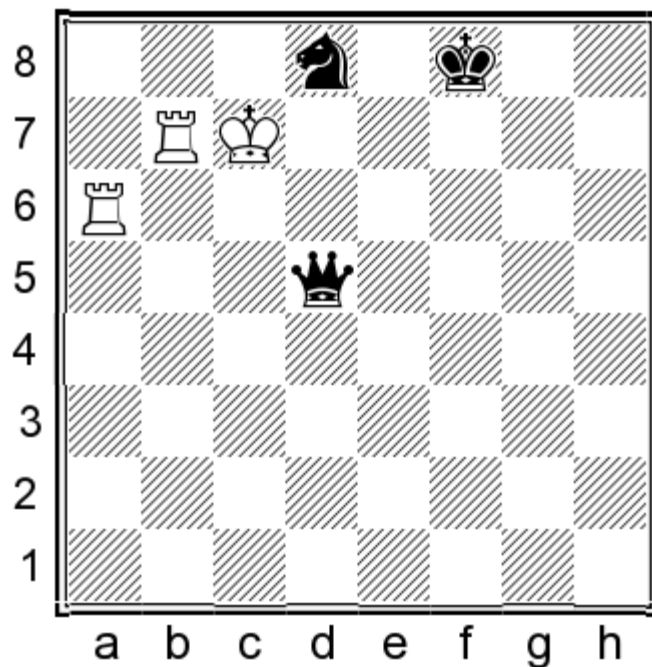
64.♞d2? ♜h6+—+.

64...♜e5+ 65.♔f3 ♔f8 66.♞a5 ♖c5 67.♔g4 ♜e4+ 68.♔g5 ♖b7

68...♜f3 (restriction) is better and quicker.

69.♞f5+ ♔g7 70.♞a8 ♖d6 71.♞a7+ ♔g8 72.♞fa5 ♖f7+ 73.♔f6 ♜c6+ 74.♔f5 ♔g7 75.♞5a6 ♜f3+ 76.♔e6 ♜e4+ 77.♔d7 ♜d5+ 78.♔c7 ♔f8 79.♞b7 ♖d8?

A critical mistake, not only because Black could finish the game with 79...♜d8+ 80.♔c6 ♜f6+ 81.♔b5 ♜b2+ 82.♔c6 ♖d8+—+, but also because now White can achieve the draw!



80.♖bb6?

80.♖f6+! ♔g7 81.♖bb6 ♜f7 82.♖a6 is a draw according to the tablebases. Hard to believe it as a human, but tablebases know better! Actually this is the 6th rank defence!

80...♔e7 81.♕b8 ♖e5+ 82.♕c8 ♖c5+ 83.♕b8 ♜f7?

83...♖d5 84.♖a7+ ♔e8 85.♖h7 ♖e5+-+.

84.♖f6 ♜e5 85.♖fe6+?

85.♖ae6+! ♔d7 86.♖d6+ ♔e7 87.♖de6+= - the 6th rank defence!

85...♔d8?

85...♔f7!.

86.♖ad6+ ♜d7+ 87.♕b7 ♖b5+ 88.♕a7 ♖a5+ 89.♕b7 ♖b4+ 90.♕a6 ♖c5 91.♕b7 ♖a5 92.♖h6?

92.♖f6! ♔e7 93.♖de6+ ♔d8 94.♖d6= - the 6th rank defence!

92...♖b5+ 93.♕a7 ♔e7 94.♖de6+ ♔f7 95.♖c6 ♜c5 96.♖c7+ ♔g8 97.♖g6+ 1/2-1/2

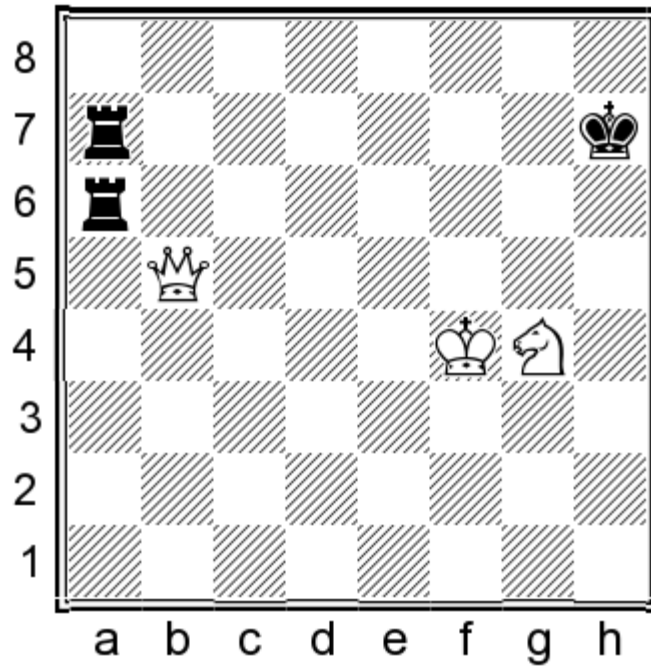
And here the game ended in a draw, but Black is winning: 97...♔f8 98.♖h7 ♖a4+ 99.♕b6 (99.♕b8 ♖e8+) 99...♖a6+ 100.♕xc5 ♖xg6-+.

6

Voroblievas Arturas

Ranario Daniel

Rynia 2013

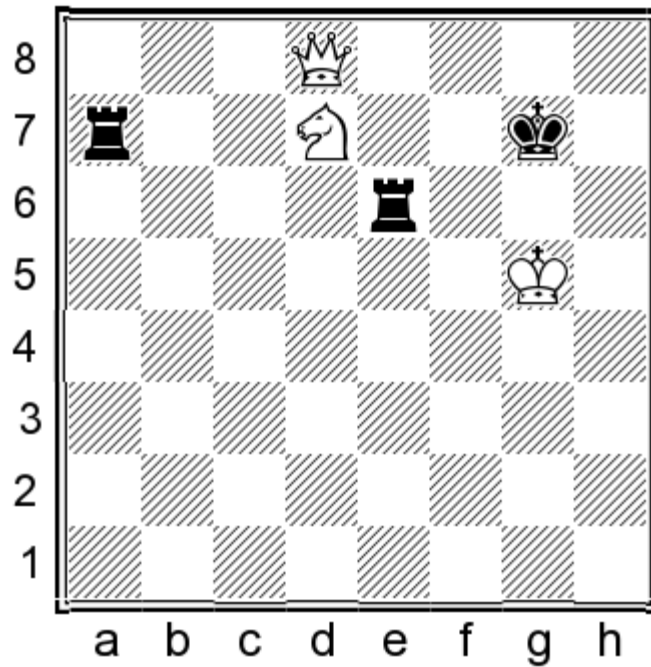


64. ♖h5+ ♔g7 65. ♗g5+ ♔f8 66. ♗d8+ ♔g7 67. ♗d4+ ♔g8 68. ♗d8+ ♔g7 69. ♕e5 ♜f6+ 70. ♔g5 ♜e6?

70... ♜aa6! and it is one of these drawn positions with both rooks on the 6th rank!

71. ♘d7?

71. ♗d4! was the only way to go: 71... ♜aa6 (71... ♜ae7 72. ♘g6+-) 72. ♘c6+! ♔f8 73. ♗d8+ ♔f7 74. ♗d7+-.



71... ♜aa6!

Black found the only (theoretical) way!

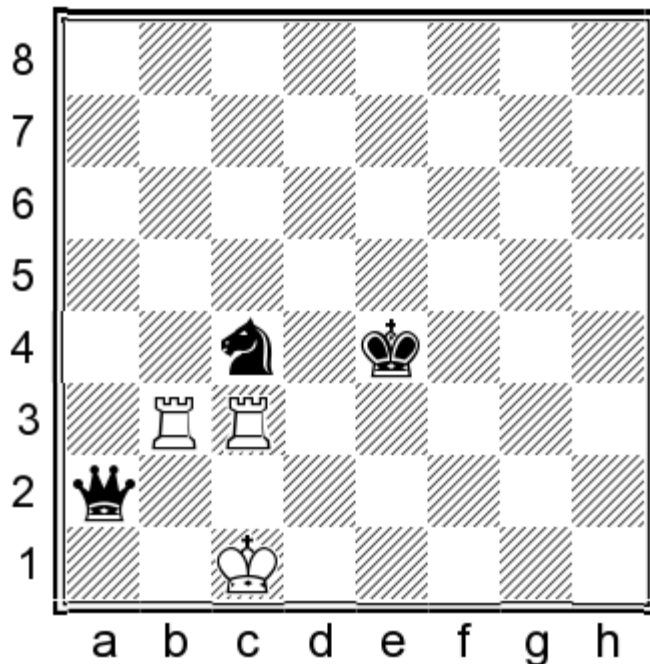
72. ♖f8+ ♔h7 73. ♗f5+ ♕g8 74. ♗f8+ ♔h7 75. ♗f7+ ♕h8 76. ♗f8+ ♔h7 ½-½

7

Nouro Mikael

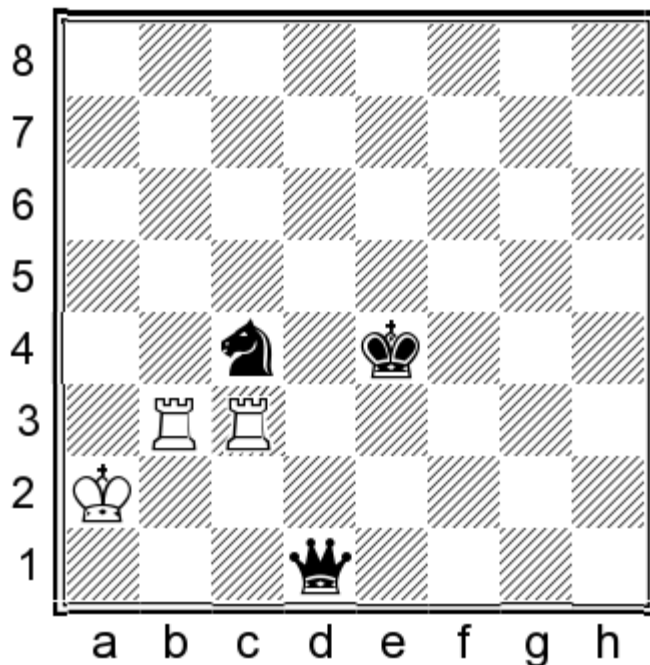
Nielsen Peter Heine

Copenhagen 1996



The rooks are placed on the 3rd but this is not one of ‘those’ positions, as the black knight is quite helpful.

61... ♗d2+ 62. ♔b1 ♗d1+ 63. ♔a2 ♕d2?



Black could force the win of material with 63... ♗e2+ 64. ♔a1 ♗f1+ 65. ♔a2 ♗f2+ 66. ♔a1 (66. ♔b1 ♕d2+-+) 66... ♗a7+ 67. ♔b1 ♕d2+-+.

64.♖b4+ ♔d5 65.♖b2?

65.♞d3+! ♔c5 66.♞dd4! (66.♖b2 ♞a4+ 67.♞a3 ♞c4+ 68.♔a1 ♞c1+ 69.♔a2 ♖c4-+; 66.♞bd4 ♞c2+ 67.♔a3 ♖b1#)
66...♞c1 67.♞f4 makes the win quite long and uncertain...

65...♞a4+ 66.♞a3 ♞c4+ 67.♔a1 ♔e4?

Why not again 67...♞c1+ 68.♔a2 ♖c4-+?

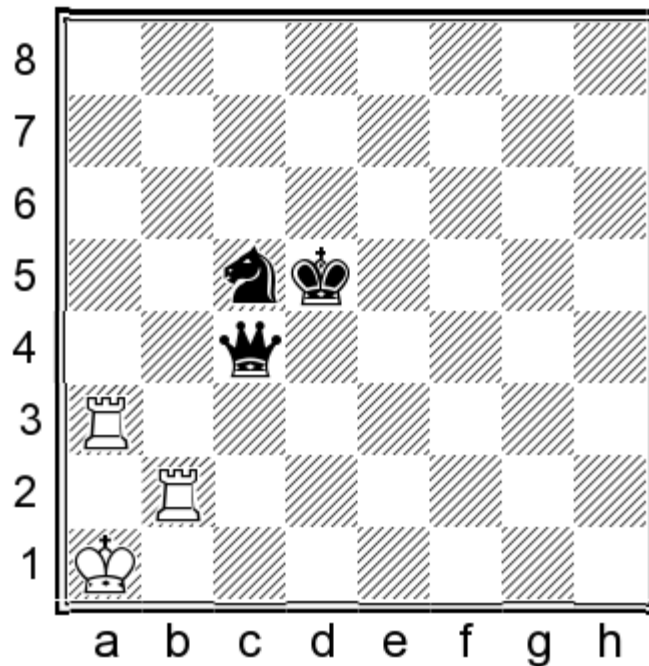
68.♞a7 ♖b3+ 69.♔a2 ♖c5+ 70.♔a3 ♞c1 71.♔a2 ♔d4 72.♖b4+ ♔c3 73.♖b3+! ♔d4

73...♖xb3 74.♞c7+=.

74.♖b4+ ♔d5 75.♞a3?

White should go for 75.♞a8 and the win is at least 40 (perfect) moves away.

75...♞c2+ 76.♖b2 ♞c4+ 77.♔a1

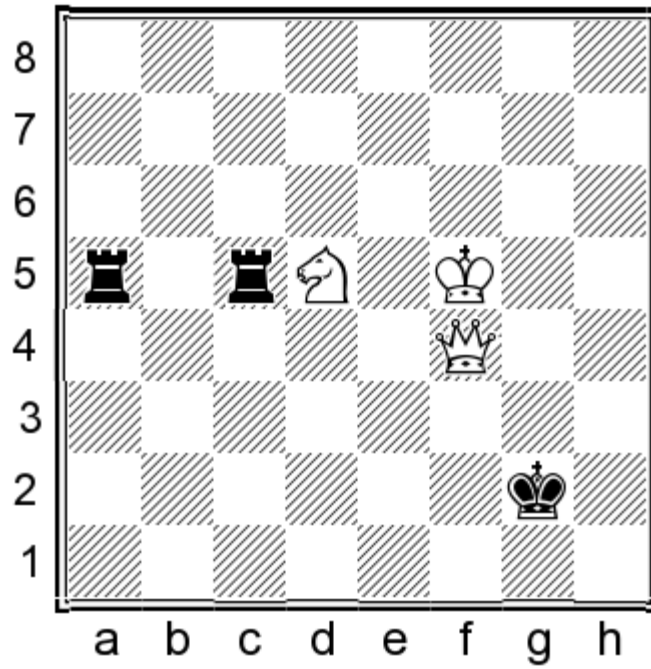


77...♖d3! 78.♖bb3 ♞c1+ 79.♔a2 ♞d2+ 80.♔b1 ♞d1+ 0-1

White resigned due to 81.♔a2 ♖c1-+.

8

Hofene Josef
Sonnleitner Ernst
Dortmund 1987



Black shouldn't have trouble drawing this ending, as the white knight is pinned.

59. ♖d2+ ♔f3 60. ♗d1+ ♔g2 61. ♗e2+ ♔h1 62. ♗f1+ ♔h2 63. ♗f2+ 1-0

But somehow here he resigned! Of course he should avoid 63... ♔h3? 64. ♔f4 ♖a4+ 65. ♔e3+- but 63... ♔h1 was perfectly good.

CHAPTER 4.

QUEEN VS BISHOP & PAWNS

A lone bishop cannot be a match for a mighty queen; it cannot offer even a stubborn defence!

Moving on only the half squares of the board, due to its inherent nature, means that the opposing side can work mating nets on the opposite-colour complexes.

Note that usually the 'bishop' side resigns early, trusting the 'technique' of the opponent, but we have numerous blitz games where the weaker side tries all possible chances, mainly relying on the time factor!

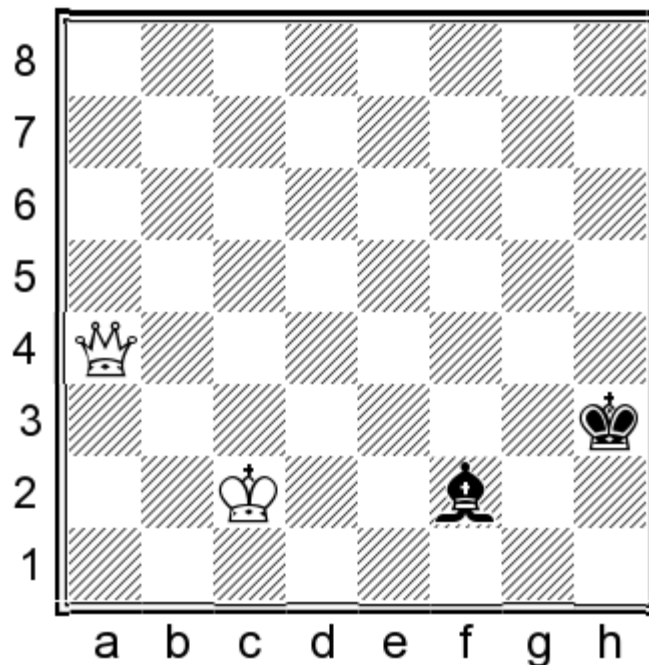
Let's study three typical examples in order to understand the winning concept:

1

Chlevistan Jaromir

Ruzicka Vaclav

Valasska Bystrice 2016



White will either corner the black king and deliver mate, or he will win the bishop with a double attack.

68. ♕d7+ ♔h2 69. ♕h7+ ♔g2 70. ♕g6+ ♔f1 71. ♔d1 ♚e1

71... ♚g3 72. ♕f5+ ♔g2 73. ♔e2 ♚h4 74. ♕f3+ ♔h2 75. ♔f1 is the end of the story.

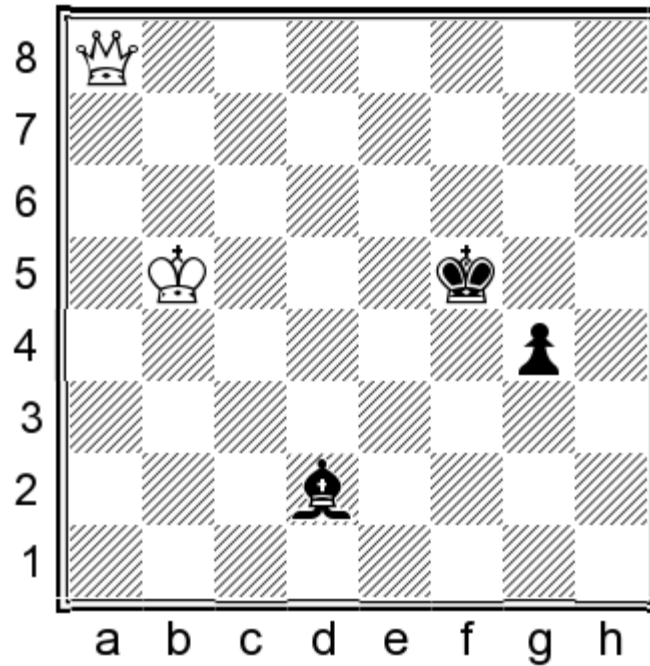
72. ♕d3+ 1-0

With an extra pawn for the 'bishop' side the win remains trivial, as the pawn can hardly play any important role.

2

Amaro Jose Roberto

Campos Otavio Moraes



64. ♖g2 ♗f4 65. ♔c5

White needs both of his pieces to win the game.

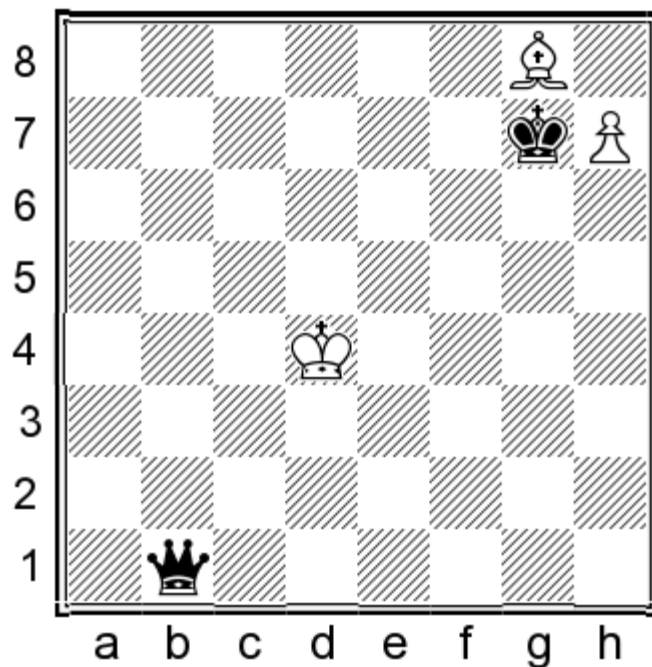
65...g3 66. ♔d5 ♔g4 67. ♔e4 ♗c7 68. ♔e3

68. ♖f3+ ♔h3 69. ♔f5 ♔h2 70. ♔g4 ♗b8 (70...g2 71. ♖h3+ ♔g1 72. ♔f3+-) 71. ♖e2+ ♔g1 72. ♔f3+-.

68...♗b6+ 69. ♔e2 ♗f2 70. ♖e4+ ♔h3 71. ♔f3 ♔h2 72. ♖h7+ ♔g1 73. ♖h3 1-0

3

Maslikova Veronika
Tokhirjonova Gulruhbegim
Baku 2016



One of the 'difficult' positions, as the black king is obliged to guard against the promotion of the pawn and therefore it seems that he cannot assist his queen in the mating nets. One winning plan for Black is to stalemate the white king with his queen, forcing the bishop to move. The other one was played in the game.

44... ♖f5 45. ♔c4 ♖h5

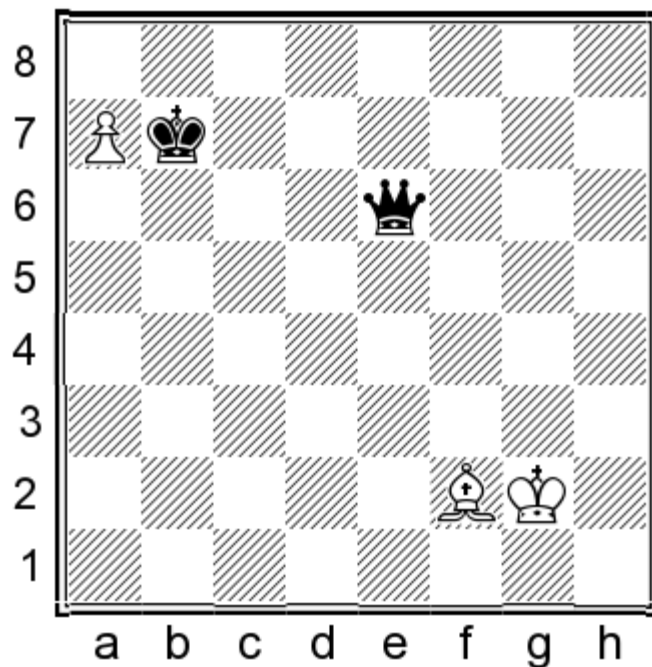
The queen will work 'extra' guarding the promotion of the pawn and restricting the white king on the edge of the board - always with the assistance of her king!

46. ♔d4 ♔f6 47. ♔e4 ♖e5+ 48. ♔d3 ♔e7 49. ♔c4 ♔d6 50. ♔b4 ♔c6 51. ♔c4 ♖f4+ 52. ♔d3 ♖h4 53. ♔e3 ♔c5 54. ♔d3 ♔b4 55. ♔c2 ♖d4 56. ♔b1 ♖c3 57. ♔a2 ♖d2+ 58. ♔b1 ♖h2 59. ♔a1

59. ♔c1 ♔c3 60. ♔d1 ♖d2#.

59... ♔a3 0-1

Example 1



Even with the bishop better placed, the win is again trivial. The queen will perform two duties and in co-operation with her king will finish the job.

1... ♖g4+ 2. ♔f1 ♜f3 3. ♔g1 ♔c7 4. ♙e1 ♔d6 5. ♗f2 ♔e5 6. ♔f1 ♔f4 7. ♔e1 ♜d5 8. ♔e2 ♔e4 9. ♗b6 ♜a2+ 10. ♔e1 ♔d3 11. ♔f1 ♜e2+ 12. ♔g1 ♜f3 13. ♗c5 ♔e2 14. ♗b6 ♜g4+ 15. ♔h2 ♔f1 16. a8=♜ ♜h4# 0-1

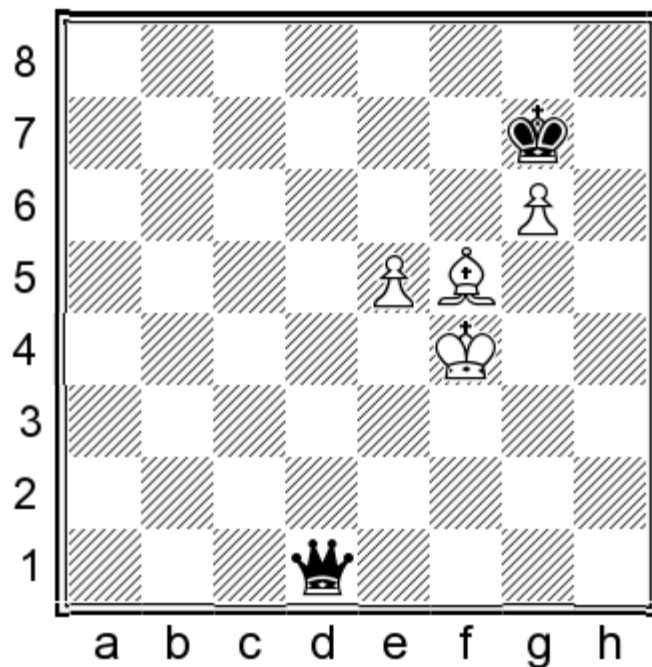
Positions with two pawns are still no match for the queen, as long as they are not so far-advanced. In general the queen prevails.

4

Jessel Stephen

Palencia Morales Guillermo Wilson

Baku 2016



Separated pawns are not a real problem.

84...♖d4+ 85.♗e4 ♘h6 86.♘f5 ♚b4 87.♘f4 ♚e7

The black queen stops both pawns and frees her king to assist.

88.♘f5 ♘h5 89.♗f3+ ♘h4 90.♗e4 ♘h5 91.♗f3+ ♘h6 92.♗e4 ♚h4!

White is in immediate trouble, losing one of the pawns.

93.♗d3

93.e6 ♚g5#.

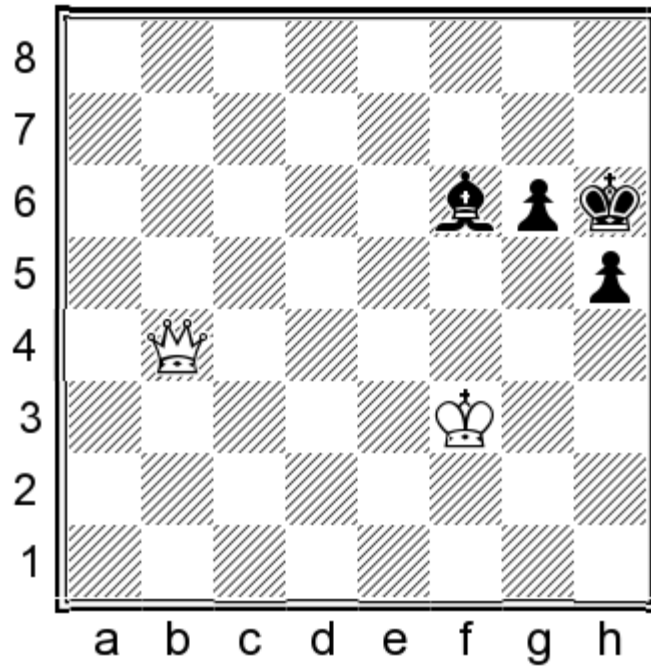
93...♚h3+ 94.♘e4 ♘xg6 95.♘d4+ ♘f7 96.♗c4+ ♘e7 0-1

5

Kaulich Philipp Theodor

Thieme Daniel Otis

Kiel 2016

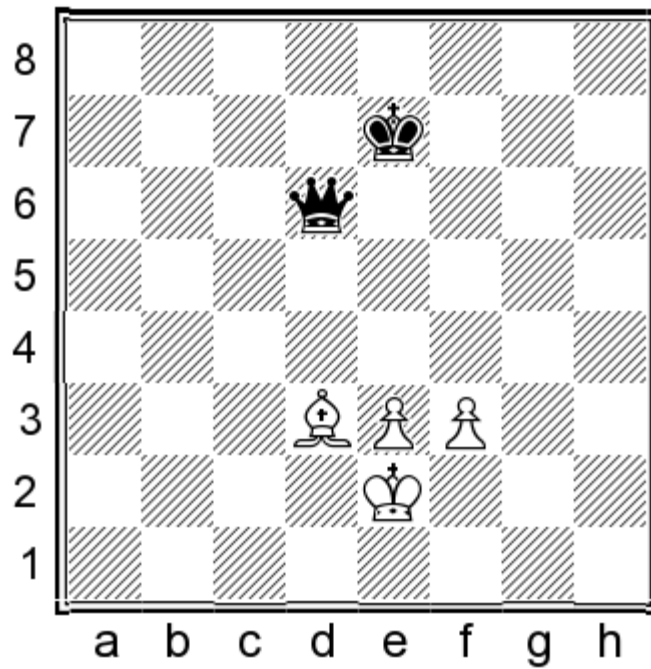


Even connected pawns are difficult to defend.

58.♔f4 ♕g5+ 59.♗e4 ♖h4 60.♚f8+ ♜h5 61.♚f3+ ♜h6 1-0

Black resigned, in view of: 62.♗e5 ♕e7 63.♗e6 ♕g5 64.♗f7 ♕d8 65.♚d3.

Example 2



1...♚h2+ 2.♗e1 ♗d6

2...♚g3+ 3.♗e2 ♚g2+-+.

3.♙e2 ♖d5 4.♙d1

4.♙d3 ♜g3+ 5.♗e2 ♜g2+-+.

4...♗c4 5.♙e2+ ♖c3 0-1

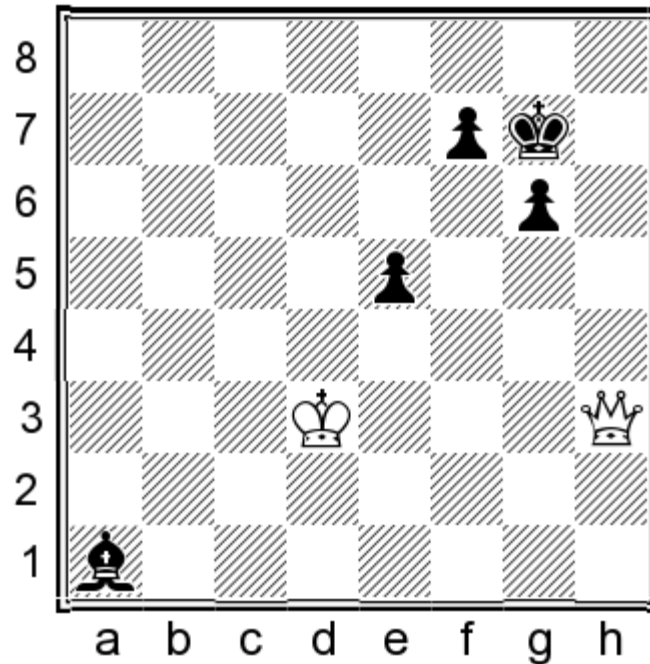
With three pawns things can be more complicated and sometimes all results are quite possible! The 'blockade factor' is the secret!

6

Valerga Diego

Rivero Jose Luis

Buenos Aires 1992



Connected pawns are not necessarily a force in this ending as White will prevail by combining his forces against the only point that they can attack - the f7-pawn. After its movement, the white king will work on the weakened light squares around the enemy king.

42.♗e4 ♙d4 43.♗d5 ♙a1 44.♜h4 ♙d4 45.♗d6 f5

If Black waits with 45...♙b2, then the win is gained by 46.♗e7 ♙a3+ 47.♗e8 f5 48.♗d7 ♙b2 49.♗e6 e4 50.♜f2 ♙c3 51.♜a7+-+.

46.♗e6 e4 47.♜e7+

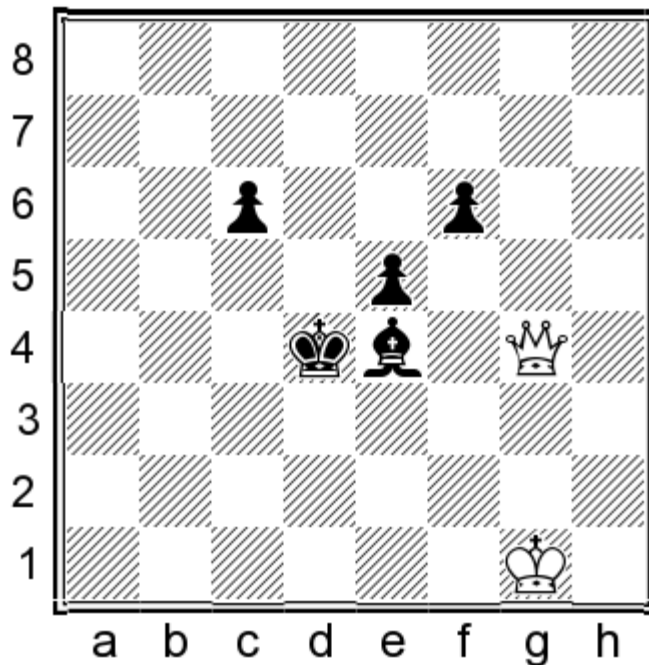
Also possible is 47.♜f4 ♙a1 48.♜e3 as in the previous note.

47...♗h6 48.♗f7 ♗h5 49.♜d6 1-0

7

Nikolic Predrag

Polgar Judit



A rapid game, but White encounters no problems in winning it.

110. ♖d7+! ♔d5 111. ♔f2

111. ♗f5 is good as well, but the king is badly needed in such endings!

111...c5 112. ♗f5 c4 113. ♗xf6 c3 114. ♗b6+ ♔c4 115. ♔e3 ♔h1 116. ♗c7+ ♔b3 117. ♔d3 e4+ 118. ♔d4 1-0

Black resigned: 118...c2 119. ♗c3+.

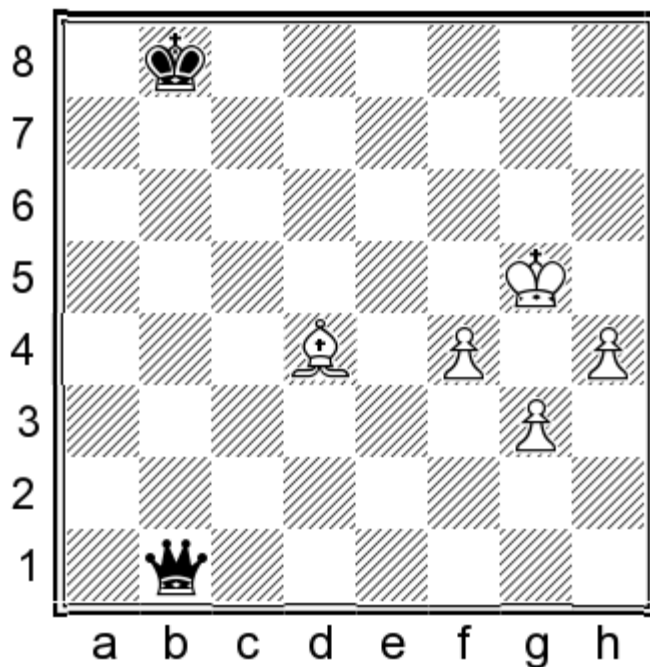
Judit Polgar had already experienced this ending, as two years earlier she was able to win it against a top-GM, in a normal time-control game.

8

Illescas Cordoba Miguel

Polgar Judit

Las Palmas 1994



Here it is all about blockade - if Black succeeds in setting one up, then she will win.

66...♔c8

Black's king has to assist his queen in the personal fight against the enemy king.

67.g4 ♕d7 68.h5 ♕e6 69.h6 ♕f7

Firstly, the h-pawn must be blocked by the king and then the queen will create a zugzwang.

70.♙g7

Or 70.f5 ♖c1+ 71.♔h5 ♗h1+ 72.♔g5 ♖e4 73.♙b2 ♖e2 74.♙g7 ♖e7+ 75.♔h5 ♔g8 76.♙a1 ♔h7 77.♙g7 (77.g5 ♖e2+ 78.♔h4 ♖e1+ or 78...♖e4+ 79.♔h5 ♖xf5 in some variations) 77...♖d8! and White is in zugzwang!

70...♖c1 71.♙e5 ♔g8 72.♙g7 ♔h7 73.♔f5 ♖c2+! 74.♔g5 ♖d2 75.♔f5

Nice is 75.♙e5 ♖d5 76.♔h5 (76.♔f6 ♔xh6) 76...♖h1+ 77.♔g5 ♖xh6+ 78.♔f5 ♖g6#.

75...♖d5+ 76.♔f6 ♖d8+ 77.♔f5

77.♔e6 ♖e8+ 78.♔f5 ♖g6+-+.

77...♖e7!

White is in zugzwang and he must push his g-pawn.

78.g5

78.♙f6 ♖c5+ 79.♔e6 ♔xh6+-+.

78...♖d7+ 79.♔f6 ♖d3! 80.♔e6 ♔g6 81.♙e5 ♖f5+ 82.♔d5 ♔f7 83.♔d4 ♔e6 84.♔e3 ♔d5

Now that all the pawns are blocked, Black's task is not that difficult - he will mate the white king!

85.♔f3 ♖h3+ 0-1

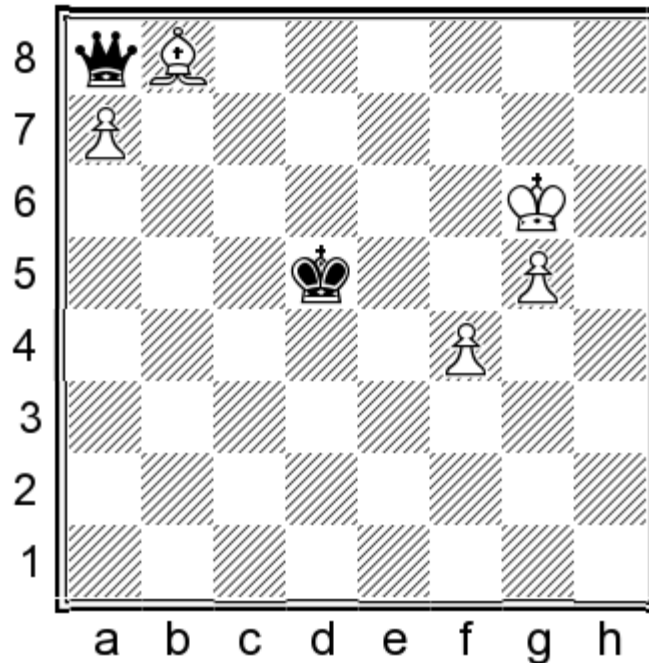
85...♖h3+ White resigned. A sample variation is: 86.♔e2 ♔e4 87.♔d2 ♖d3+ 88.♔c1 ♖e2 89.♔b1 ♔d3 90.♔a1 (90.h7 ♖e1+ 91.♔a2 ♔c2) 90...♔c2 and mate follows.

9

Ovetchkin Roman

Golubev Mikhail

Internet 2006



Firstly, I must note that this was a blitz game. Here White's pawns are well-advanced and the separation of them is not so bad, as long as they can cause danger! Both sides must be careful to hold on here!

79.f5 ♖c6+

79...♖b7 was OK as well: 80.♔f6! (80.f6? ♔e6+-) 80...♔e4 81.g6 ♖d5 82.g7 ♖xf5+ 83.♔e7 ♖c5+ with a draw by perpetual check.

80.f6?

A natural blitz move, but the correct one was 80.♔g7 ♔e4 81.f6 ♔f5 82.♔e5! ♔xe5 83.f7 ♖b7 84.a8=♖ ♖xa8 85.f8=♖ ♖xf8+ 86.♔xf8 ♔f5 87.♔g7 ♔xg5=.

80...♔e6! 81.f7 ♖c2+?

A terrible, losing blunder. Black could prevail by 81...♔e7+! 82.♔g7 ♖c3+! 83.♔g6 (83.♔g8 ♖c8+! [83...♖f3? 84.♔d6+!+-] 84.♔g7 ♖f8+ 85.♔g6 ♖xf7+ 86.♔h6 ♖f8+ 87.♔h5 ♖f3+ 88.♔h6 ♔f7+-) 83...♖f3! 84.♔f4 ♖d5+-.

82.♔g7 ♖b2+ 83.♔g8 ♖g2 84.♔f4 1-0

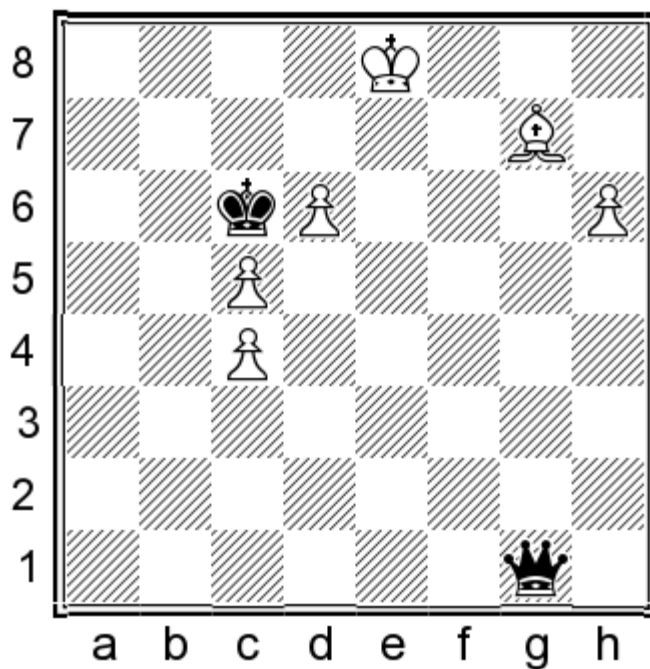
With four or more pawns, everything depends on the specific position.

10

Mehmeti Dritan

Sutovsky Emil

Istanbul 2012



Weak pawns are not a healthy issue!

89...♙g6+ 90.♔e7 ♜e4+

The queen's operation via the light squares (as White has the dark-squared bishop) has no match.

91.♔f7 ♔d7!

The black king approaches to assist the mating nets.

92.♙f6 ♜e8+ 93.♔g7 ♔e6 94.♙e7 ♜f7+ 95.♔h8 ♔f5 0-1

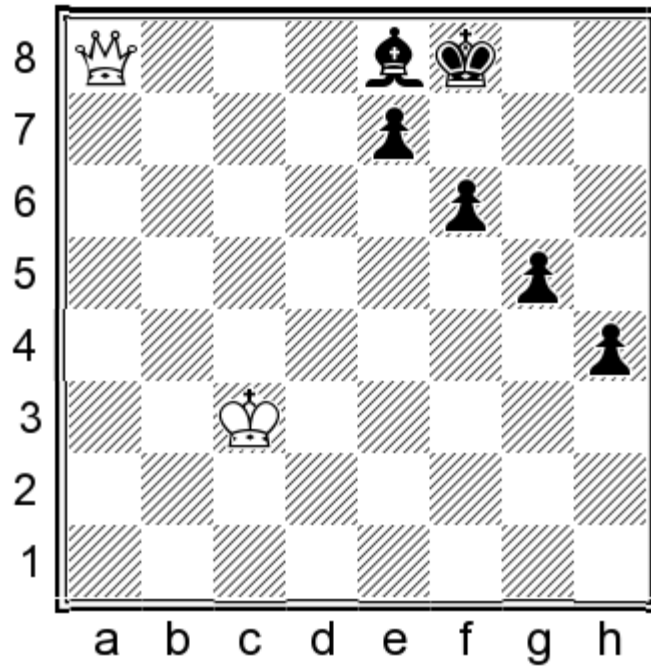
And as...♔g6 is coming, White resigned.

11

Novotny Josef

Splichal Stanislav

Czech Republic 2008

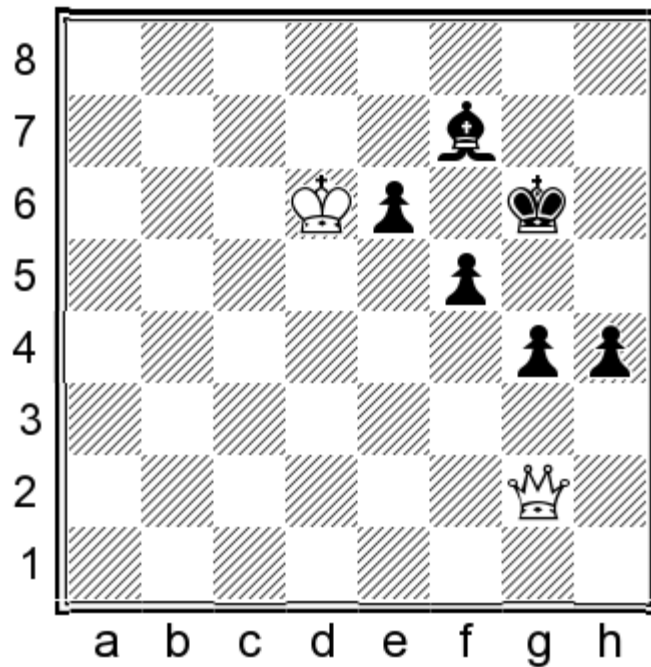


Four connected pawns to fight against looks a bit scary, but everything depends on the blockade. Note that the pawns are not far advanced; a factor that helps the 'queen' side.

51. ♖c8 ♔f7 52. ♜f5 ♔g7 53. ♕d4 ♚f7 54. ♕c5 e6 55. ♜g4 ♔g6 56. ♕d6 f5 57. ♜g2

57. ♜d4 f4 58. ♕e7 ♚g8 59. ♜d8 looks quicker.

57...g4



58. ♕e5 h3

Or 58...g3 59. ♜d2 h3 60. ♜f4 g2 61. ♜g3+ ♔h6 62. ♕f6+.

59. ♖g3 ♔g5 60. ♗f4+ ♕h4 61. ♔f6 ♘e8 62. ♕xe6 ♙c6

Black is forced to abandon his pawns: 62... ♙g6 63. ♔f6 ♙h7 64. ♕g7+- or 64. ♗h6+ ♔g3 65. ♗xh7+-.

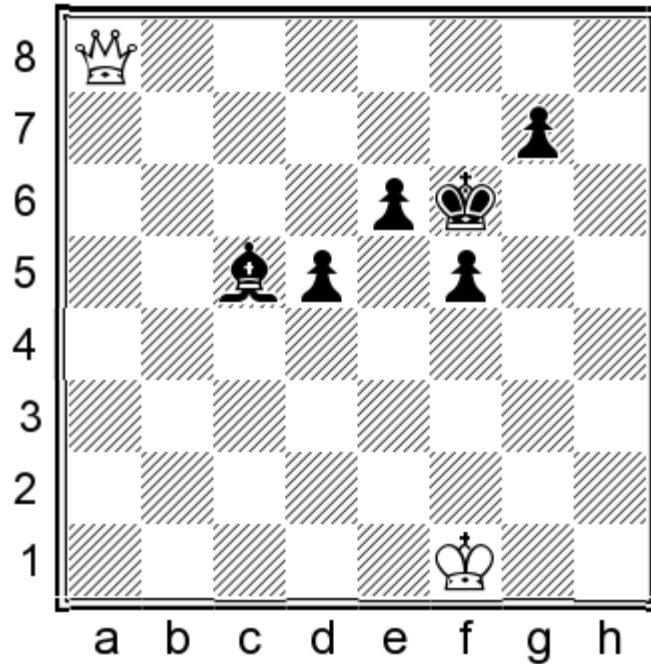
63. ♕xf5 ♙f3 64. ♗e5 ♙e2 65. ♕f4 g3 66. ♗g5# 1-0

12

Goh Weiming

Long James

Singapore 1998



Here again White can win.

47. ♕e2 ♙e7

Black would love to advance his g-pawn by 47...g5 but this loses to 48. ♗h8+ ♔f7 (48... ♔g6 49. ♗c8+-) 49. ♗h5+ ♔f6 50. ♗h6+ and the pawn falls.

48. ♗a4?!

The e5-square is a critical one, so White should continue with 48. ♗b8 g5 49. ♔d3 f4 (49...g4 50. ♔d4+-) 50. ♔d4+-.

48... ♔f7

Black stays put, which is a bad policy. 48...g5 should have been tried, although after 49. ♔d3 g4 50. ♗d4+ ♔g6 51. ♗b6 ♔f7 52. ♗c7 White is on the right track.

49. ♔f3 ♙f6 50. ♗d7+ ♙e7 51. ♔f4 ♔f6 52. ♗c7! ♙b4

52...g5+ 53. ♔e3 f4+ 54. ♔d4 ♙a3 55. ♗e5+ and Black loses one of his pawns.

53. ♗e5+ ♔f7 54. ♗b8!

Making way for her king.

54...♙e1

54...♙e7 55.♖e5 ♘f6+ 56.♗d6 ♙e7+ 57.♗d7 and the end is near.

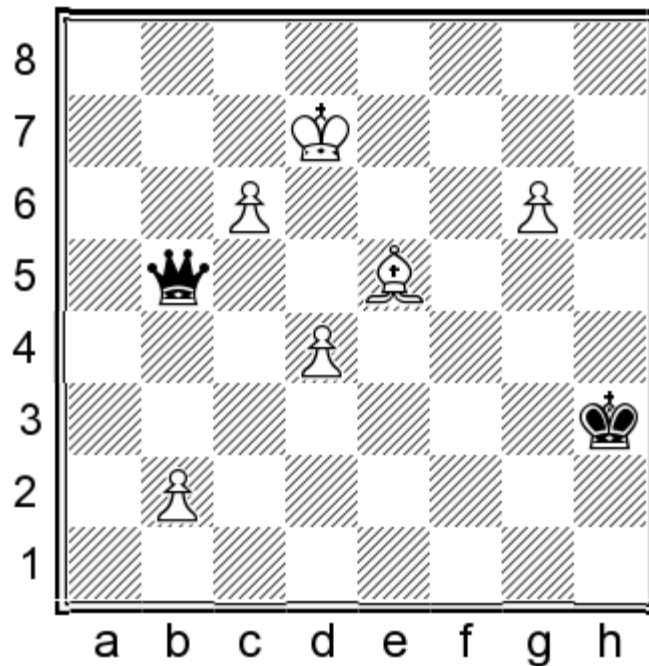
55.♜a7+ ♔g8 56.♗e5 ♘h4 57.♗xe6 ♘f6 58.♞a8+ ♔h7 59.♞xd5 1-0

13

Morozevich Alexander

Grischuk Alexander

Dubai 2002



The pawns are well-advanced, so Black has to settle for a draw.

66...♞d5+ 67.♗c7 ♔g4 68.g7 ♗f5 69.b4 ♞f7+ 70.♗b6 ♗e6 1-0

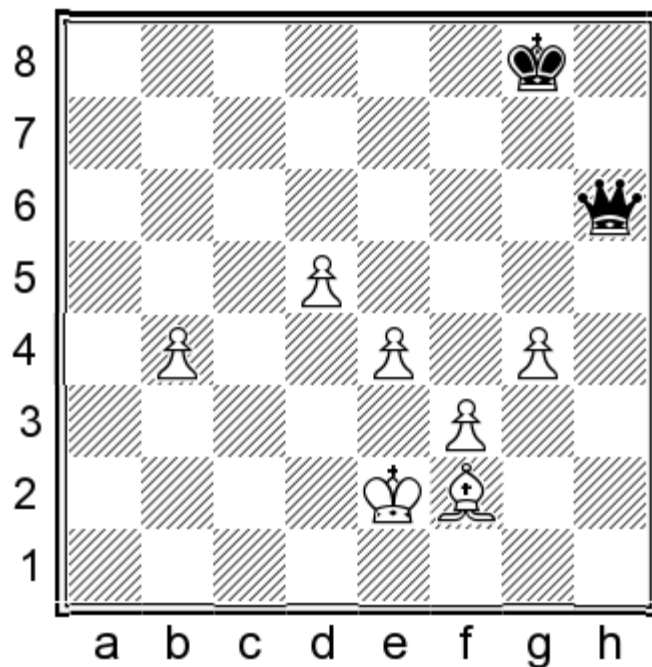
Here Black lost on time (in a rapid game). The game might have continued with 71.b5 ♞g8 72.♗b7 ♗e7 73.b6 ♞d5! (73...♞c4? 74.♘f6+! ♗xf6 75.c7 ♞d5+ 76.♗b8 ♞xd4 77.b7!+-) 74.♘h2 (74.♗c7 ♞d8+ 75.♗b7 ♞d5=) 74...♞g2! and there is no win in sight for White, as long as the black queen can operate on the light squares with efficiency.

14

Molchanov Yevhen

Henry Liam

Kapuskasing 2004



White's five healthy pawns secure his position and Black has to settle for a draw.

58.b5! ♕c1 59.b6 ♖c4+ 60.♗e3 ♗c5+ 61.♗e2 ♖c4+ 62.♗d2 ♗b4+ 63.♗e2 ♖c4+ 64.♗d2 ♗b4+ 65.♗e2 ♖c4+ 1/2-1/2

When the 'queen' side has an extra pawn (or pawns) the win is trivial, because the stronger side has at his disposal added values:

1. The extra pawn (or pawns), if not passed, can stop one or more of their opponent's pawns, freeing his pieces to deliver the mate.
2. If passed, then a new queen can be promoted or material can be won.

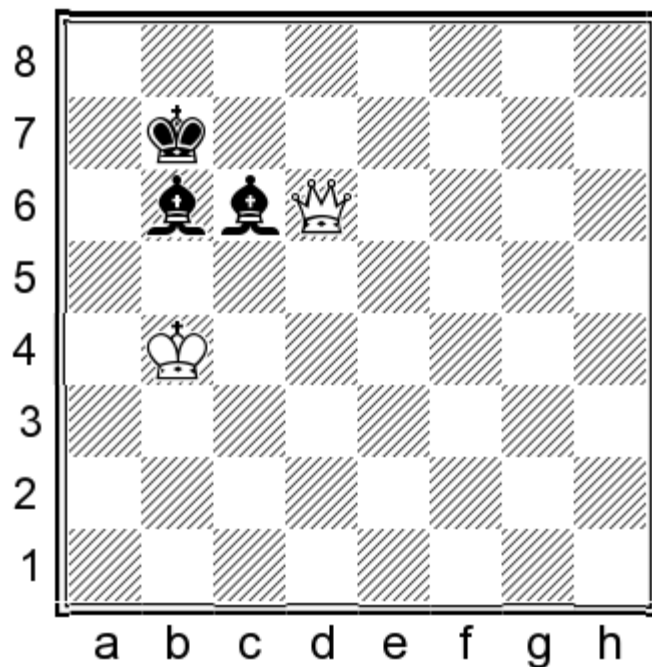
Keep in mind that 'rules' in chess are only a guide to proceed with ideas; each position is unique and should be treated with care and responsibility, paying attention to specific moves and calculation.

QUEEN VS TWO BISHOPS

Two bishops, curiously enough, are almost never able to draw against a queen, although the winning process is often complicated and requires many dozens of moves.

The only drawing position was discovered as early as the 18th century:

Example 1
Lolli Giambattista
Study 1763



1. ♖e7+ ♔c8 2. ♕e6+

In case of 2. ♕d6 ♔b7 3. ♔c4 Black should play 3... ♕a7! (3... ♕c7? loses to 4. ♖e7 ♔b6 5. ♕b4+ ♔a6 6. ♔c5+-) 4. ♖e7+ ♔b8 with the idea of... ♕b6= or even 4... ♔b6=.

2... ♔b7 3. ♕d6 ♕a7

3... ♕c7 4. ♖e7 ♔b6= is also playable, as White has no 5. ♕b4+.

4. ♖e7+ ♔b6!

Rather than 4... ♔b8? 5. ♔a5+-.

5. ♕d8+ ♔b7 6. ♔a5 ♕c5! ½-½

White is in zugzwang, as every possible move allows the black bishop to return to b6. If White brings his king to e7, the bishop occupies the c7-square, with the same position.

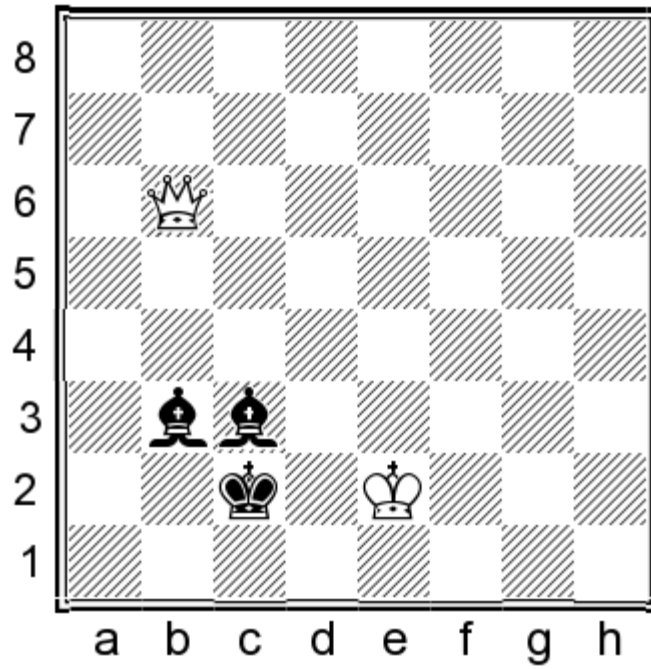
This defensive method saves Black only when his king is on b7 or symmetrically on g7, b2, and g2 and the bishops are placed next to each other and horizontally.

1

Nguyen Duc Hoa

Hoang Canh Huan

Ho Chi Minh City 2013



The position is drawn, as Black has achieved the ideal set-up. But in practice it is more difficult to defend than to attack!

60. ♖c6 ♜b2 61. ♞b5 ♜c2 62. ♜e3 ♜d2+?

62... ♜a2 is the only move.

63. ♜d4?

63. ♜e4! ♜c3 64. ♞e2+ ♜b1 65. ♜d3+-.

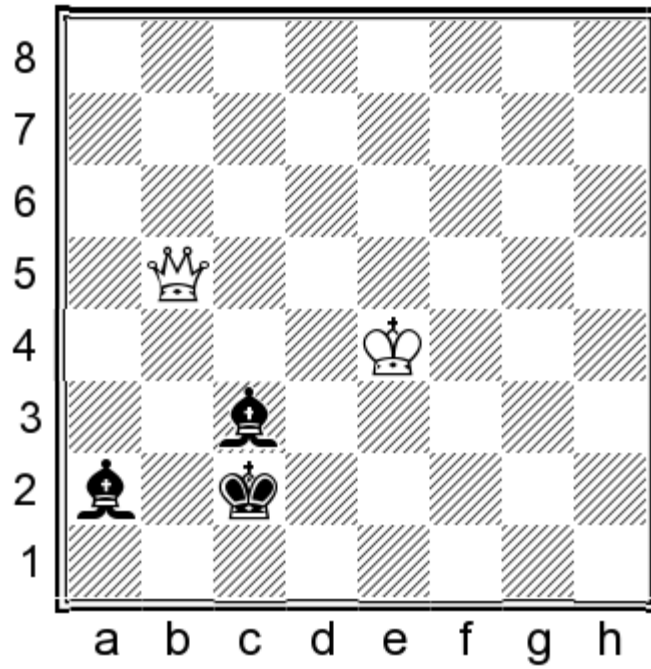
63... ♜c3+ 64. ♜e4 ♜a2! 65. ♜e3

If now 65. ♞e2+, then 65... ♜b3! 66. ♜d3 ♜b1+ 67. ♜e3 ♜a2=.

65... ♜d2+! 66. ♜e2 ♜c3 67. ♞d3+ ♜b2!

67... ♜b3? now loses to 68. ♜d1.

68. ♞b5+ ♜c2 69. ♜e3 ♜d2+ 70. ♜d4 ♜c3+ 71. ♜e4



71...♔b1!

The only move! 71...♔b3? 72.♚e2+ ♔b1 73.♕d3+-.

72.♕e3 ♔d2+ 73.♕e2 ♔c3 74.♚b7 ♔a2 75.♚e4+ ♔b2 76.♚a4 ♔b3

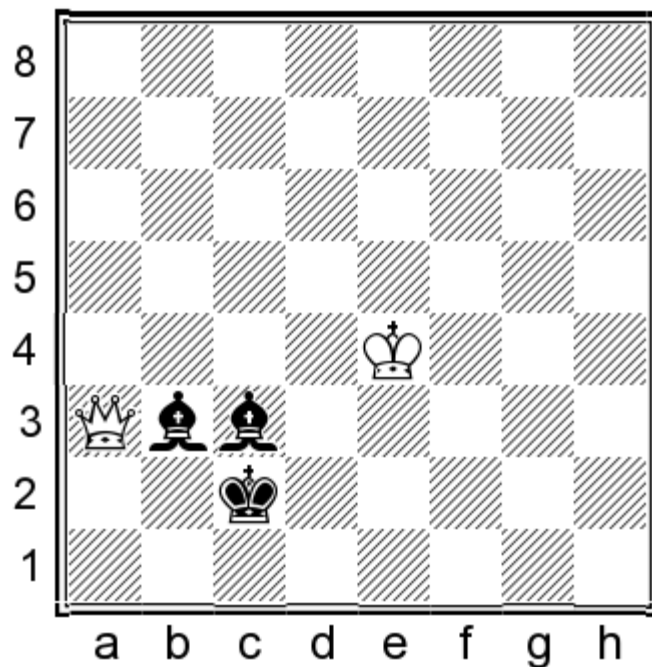
76...♔b1 draws as well.

77.♚b5 ♔c2 78.♚c5 ♔a2?

Again Black blunders - he should have gone for 78...♔b2!=-.

79.♚f5+?

It was difficult to find the only winning move: 79.♚a3! ♔b3 80.♕e3 ♔d2+ 81.♕e4 ♔c3



82. ♖a6! ♔b2 83. ♜b5! ♔c2 84. ♜e2+ ♔b1 85. ♔d3+-.

79... ♔b2 80. ♜b5+ ♔c2 81. ♜a4+ ♔b3?

81... ♔b2! had to be played.

82. ♜a6?

White again misses the winning continuation mentioned above: 82. ♜a3!

82... ♔b2 83. ♔e3 ♔a2 84. ♜b5+ ♔c2 85. ♜a4+ ♔b2!

But now he reacts correctly!

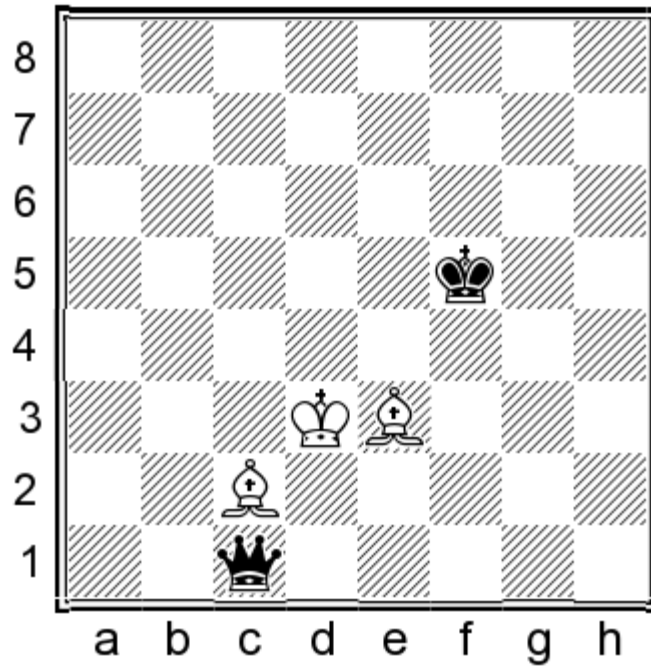
86. ♜e4 ♔b1 87. ♜b7+ ♔c2 88. ♜b5 ♔d2+ 89. ♔e2 ♔c3 90. ♜a4+ ♔b2 91. ♔d1 ♔d3! ½-½

And White decided that he'd had enough!

But let's examine some examples on the winning process when the 'bishops' side hasn't achieved the desired drawn set-up.

2

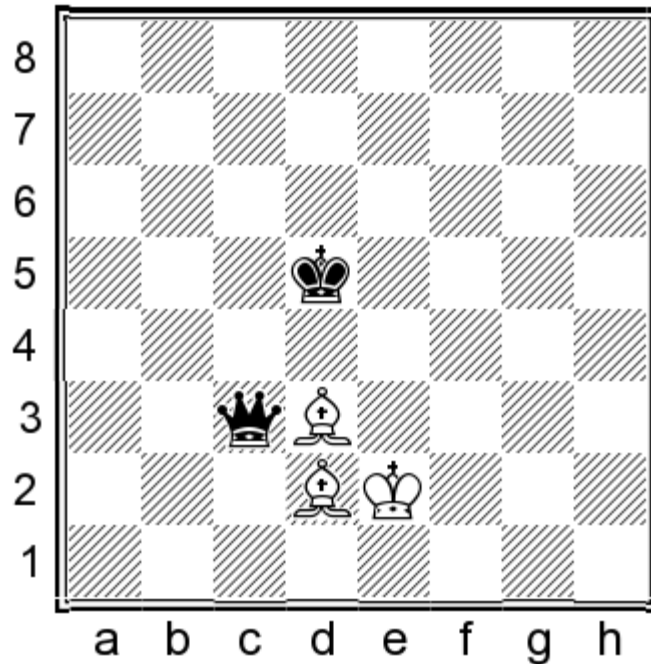
Thoren Per
Faibisovich Vadim
 Sweden 1999



The white king is far from the critical squares (b2, b7, g2 and g7), so Black can win.

58...♖a3+ 59.♔d2+ ♕e5 60.♙d3 ♜b2+ 61.♔d1 ♞c3 62.♕e2 ♔d5 63.♙d2?!

63.♙f2 makes the win much longer; the opponent's king must be restrained from the squares needed to enter White's small fortress. And the bishops are best placed horizontally: 63...♜f6 64.♙e3 ♞b2+ 65.♕e1 ♞c3+ 66.♕e2 ♕e5 (zugzwang) 67.♙f2 ♔f4 68.♙e3+ ♔g3 69.♙f2+ ♔g4 70.♙e3 ♞b3! 71.♙d2 (71.♙f2 ♞b2+ 72.♕e3 ♞e5+ 73.♔d2 ♔f3+) 71...♞e6+ 72.♙e3 ♞a2+ 73.♙d2 ♔g3 and so on.

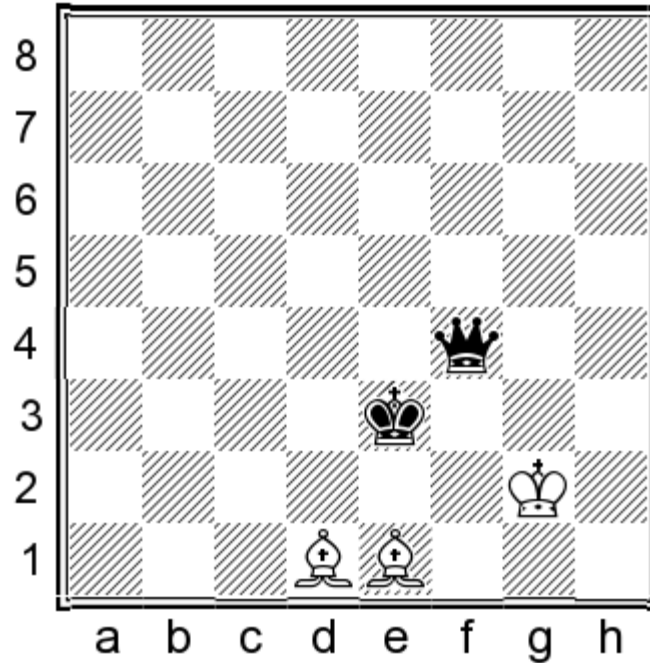


63...♞b2! 64.♕e3 ♞e5+ 65.♔f2 ♔d4 66.♙e2 ♞f5+ 67.♕e1 ♞c2 68.♙f4 ♔e4 69.♙d2 ♞b1+ 70.♔f2 ♞b6+ 71.♔f1 ♞d4 72.♙e1

72.♔e1 loses to 72...♚g1+ 73.♙f1 ♕f3 74.♙h6 ♚f2+.

72...♚a1 73.♔f2 ♚f6+ 74.♔g1

74.♔g2 should hold according to the theory of this ending, but the bishops haven't yet taken up their appropriate positions, so White is losing after 74...♔e3 75.♙g4 ♚f4 76.♙d1

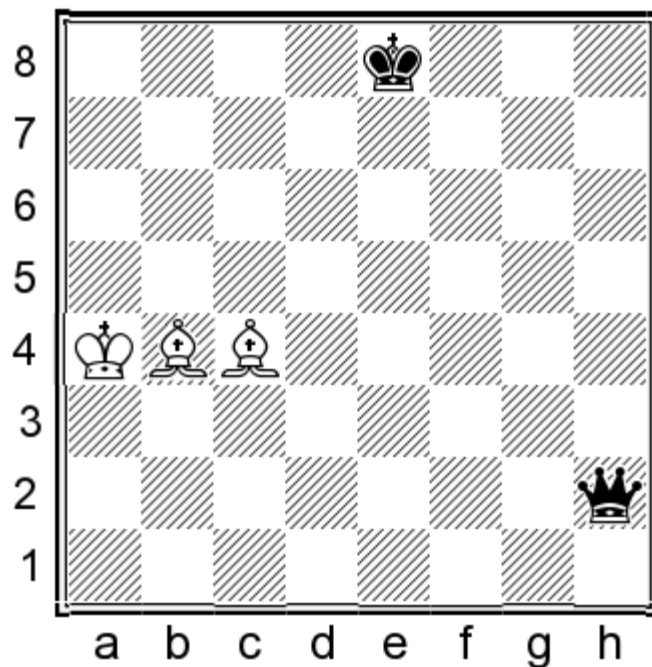


76...♚f5! (restriction of the light-squared bishop and zugzwang!) 77.♔g3 (77.♙h4 ♚d5+--+) 77...♚f1--.

74...♔e3 75.♙f1 ♚g6+ 76.♙g2 ♚b1 77.♔f1 ♚d3+ 78.♔g1 ♚d1 0-1

3

Roig Squar Jason
Giner Mayor Jose
Benidorm 2002



69...♔d7 70.♙b5+

70.♗b3 ♕c6 71.♕c3 is a better try - do not forget the 50-moves rule!

70...♔c7 71.♙c4 ♕b6 72.♕a3 ♖c2! 73.♙b3 ♗b1 74.♙c3 ♕b5 75.♙b2 ♗e1! 76.♕a2 ♖d2 77.♕b1 ♕b4 78.♙c2

An 'ideal' set-up but it should be one file further up the board!

78...♗e2

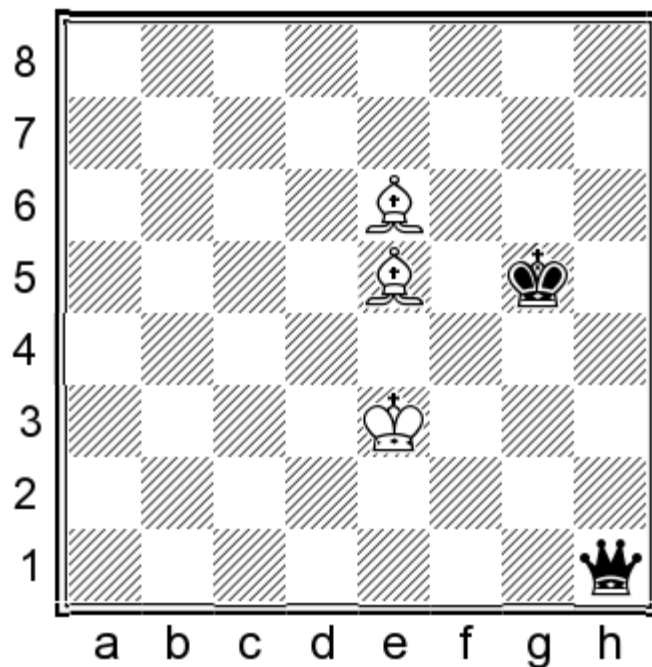
78...♗e1+ 79.♕a2 ♗f1 creates a zugzwang: 80.♙a1 (80.♙b3 ♗a6+) 80...♗c1 81.♙f5 ♗d2+ 82.♕b1 (82.♙b2 ♗d5+-+) 82...♗e1+ 83.♕a2 ♗f2+-+.

79.♕c1 ♕c4 80.♕b1 ♖d2 81.♙a4 ♗e2 82.♙c2 ♕b4 83.♕c1 ½-½

As Black didn't know what to do, he accepted the draw offer! Of course he is easily winning with 83...♗e3+ 84.♕b1 ♗g1+ 85.♕a2 ♗f1, as mentioned above.

4

Meszaros Gyula
 Vujosevic Vladimir
 Hungary 2006



80...♖c6 81.♗f4+ ♔f6 82.♗g4 ♚d5 83.♗f3 ♚c5+ 84.♔e4 ♚c2+ 85.♔e3 ♔f5 86.♗g3 ♚c5+ 87.♔e2

White is very close to the drawing set-up, so Black must be precise.

87...♚c3?

A blunder. 87...♚g1! was the only move, restricting the white king from reaching the g2-square.

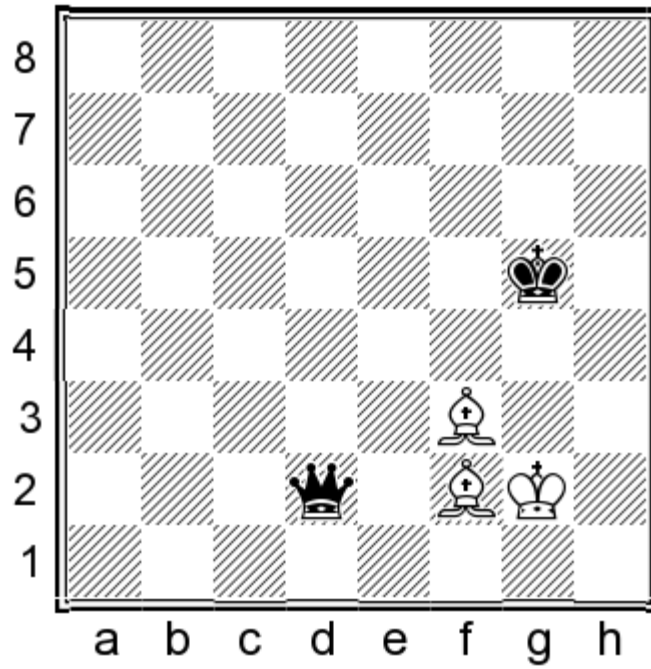
88.♔f2! ♚d2+ 89.♔f1!

89.♗e2 is losing to 89...♔e4 90.♔f1 ♚e3 91.♗f2 ♚h3+ 92.♔g1 ♔f4+.

89...♚e3 90.♔g2

The 'Lolli Position' achieved!

90...♔g5 91.♗f2 ♚d2



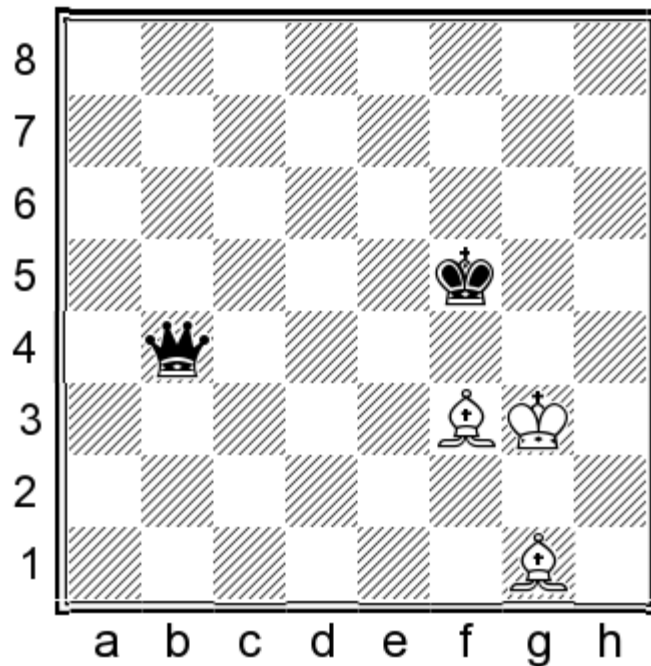
92.♔g3! ♚b2 93.♙e3+ ♔f5 94.♙g1!

White is playing only moves and he gives the impression that he has carefully studied the ending.

94...♚d2 95.♙g4+

The text move and 95.♙h2 are the only good moves here.

95...♔g5 96.♙f3 ♚c3 97.♙f2 ♔f5 98.♙g1 ♚b4



99.♙e3?

White has defended well until here and now he should continue with 99.♔g2 or 99.♙h2 or 99.♕f2 remaining within the drawing set-up.

99...♚e1+! 100.♙f2 ♚c1

The set-up is broken; White loses.

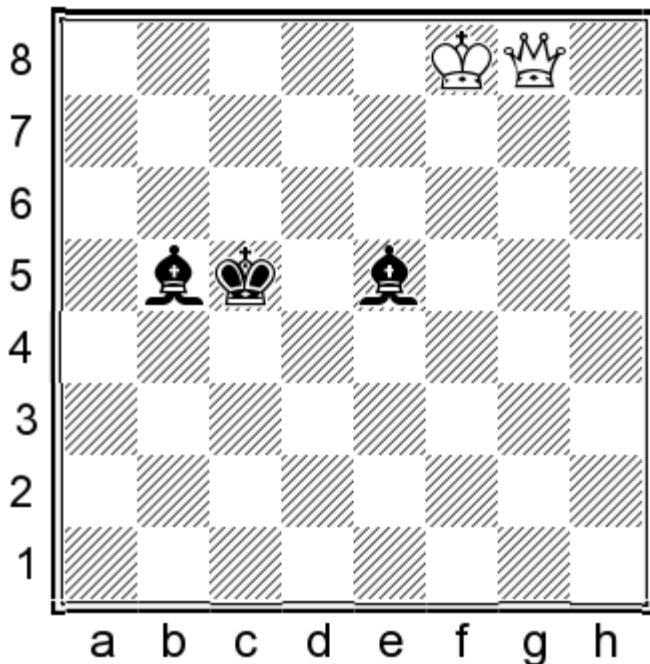
101.♙g4+ ♕e5 102.♙f3 ♚g5+ 103.♕h2 ♕f4 104.♙g2 ♚h6+ 105.♕g1 ♚d6 106.♕h2 ♕g4+ 107.♕g1 ♚d2 108.♙f1 ♚c1 109.♕g2 ♚d1 110.♙a6 ♚c1

110...♚f3+ is quicker: 111.♕g1 ♕f4 112.♙f1 ♚d1 113.♕g2 ♚g4+ 114.♕h2 ♕f3 115.♙e1 ♚f4+ 116.♕h1 ♚c1—.

111.♙e2+ ♕f4 112.♙f1 ♚c2 113.♕g1 ♚d1 114.♕g2 ♚g4+ 115.♕h1 ♕f3 116.♙g1 ♚h5+ 117.♙h2 ♕f2 0-1

5

Tolan John
Riley Simon
Leeds 1999



69 moves to win from this position!

72.♚g5 ♕d5 73.♕e7 ♙d3 74.♚h5 ♙e4 75.♕d7 ♕d4 76.♚d1+ ♙d3 77.♕e6 ♙f4 78.♚g4 ♕e4 79.♚g2+ ♕e3 80.♕d5 ♙e2?

80...♙f5 was practically the only continuation, when with the correct defence White will need 46 moves to win, much longer in total than the 50-move rule. But it is natural for the 'bishops' side to fall into some tricks, blundering material or otherwise shortening the defeat.

81.♚e4+ ♕d2 82.♚xf4+ ♕e1 83.♕d4 ♙d1 84.♕e3 ♙f3 85.♚h2 1-0

QUEEN VS TWO BISHOPS & PAWNS

Of course this chapter is directly connected with the previous one and it is more-or-less an easy nut to crack!

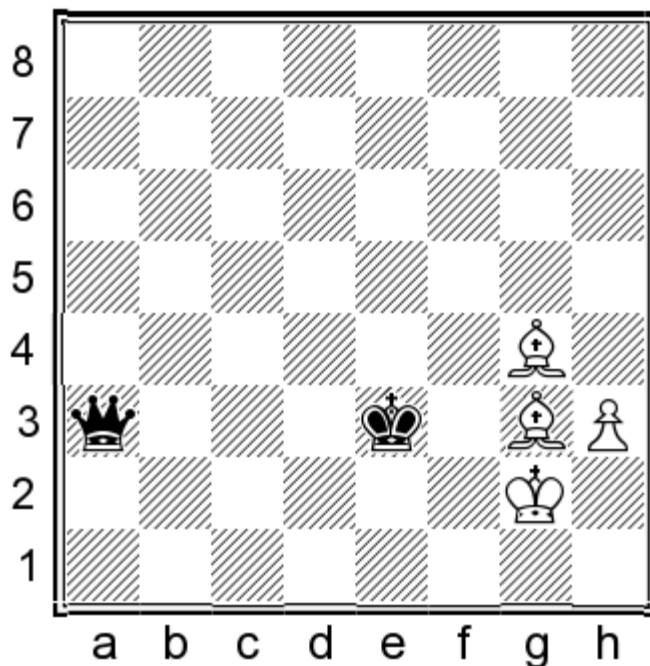
With one pawn for the 'bishops' side, things seem to be quite clear: draw! Well, beware of the exceptions of course! Let's examine some positions:

1

Cmilyte Viktorija

Sebag Marie

Mallorca 2004



This position without the h-pawn is lost for White. Here the pawn's role is to protect the bishop, thus the position is drawn.

74. ♕f2+ ♔f4 75. ♙e1 ♚a8+ 76. ♖g1 ♚a1 77. ♔f2 ♚b2+ 78. ♖g1 ♔e3 79. ♙g3

The text move and 79. ♙h4 are the only drawing continuations.

79... ♚d2

If not for the pawn on h3, Black would win with 79... ♚g7.

80. ♔f1 ♔e4 81. ♖g1 ♔e3 82. ♔f1 ♚d5 83. ♖g1!

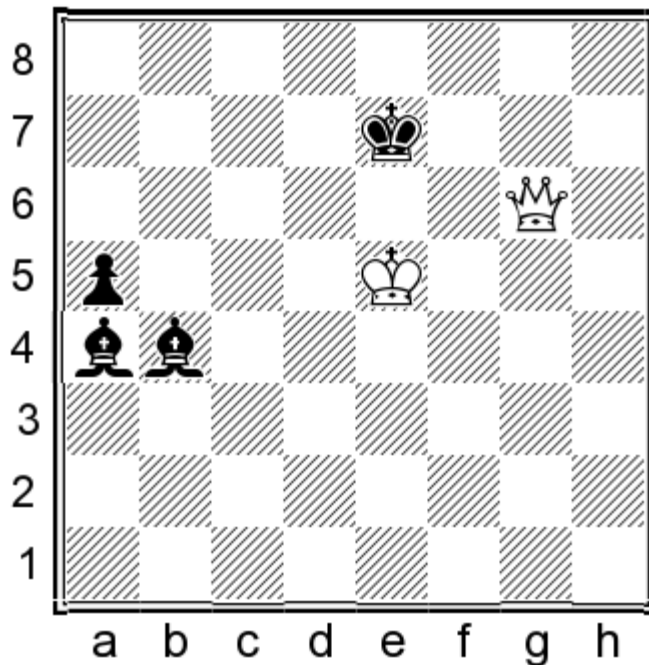
Black was hoping for something like 83. ♙h4? ♚h1#.

83... ♚c6 84. ♕f2+ ♔f4 85. ♖h2 ♚c1 86. ♖g2 1/2-1/2

2

Sadvakasov Dargen

Sorokin Maxim



No problem here for Black either; the black a5-pawn protects one of the bishops.

82. ♖e6+ ♔d8!

The black king has to go for the queenside, as there lie his bishops. Losing was 82... ♔f8? 83. ♖f6 ♕c3+ 84. ♖f5 ♕b4 85. ♖e5.

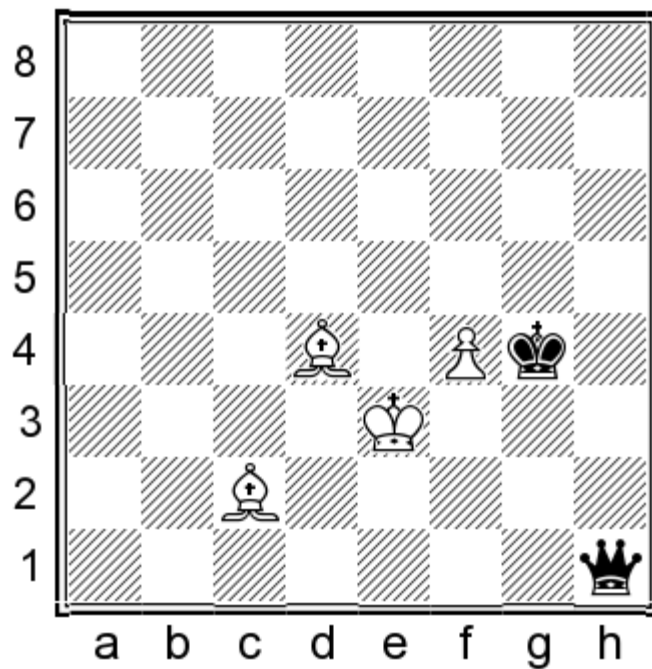
83. ♖b6+ ♔c8 84. ♖a6+ ♔c7 85. ♖c4+ ♔b7 86. ♖d5 1/2-1/2

White accepted that he has no chances, settling for the draw.

White could build an unbreakable fortress, just he needs to be careful:

3

**Thoren Per
Faibisovich Vadim
Sweden 1999**



White immediately goes wrong with:

56.f5?

White needed firstly to protect his pawn with 56.♔e5! =.

56...♚c1+! 57.♕d3 ♜xf5 0-1

And Black achieved a winning position, cashing the point in on the 78th move.

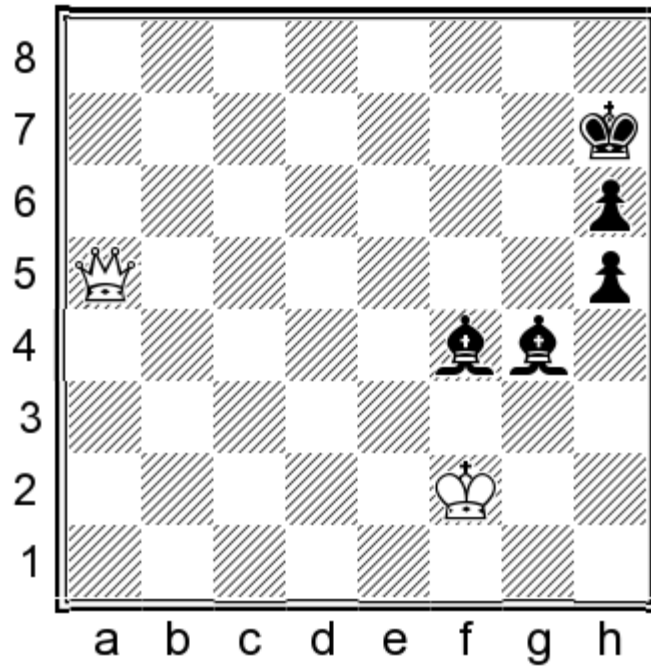
With two pawns, it seems that there is no real difference to the result:

4

Thorvaldsson Jonas

Timman Jan

Helsinki 1972



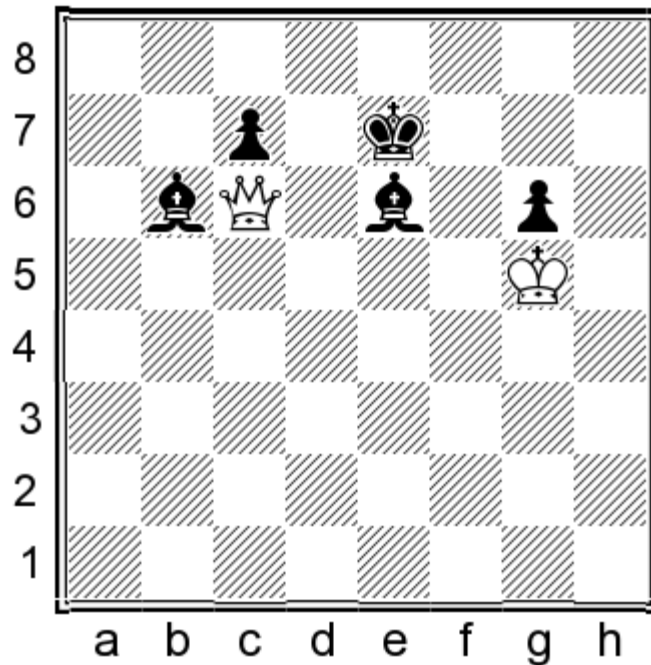
Here Black can even protect both of his bishops and it is not a surprise that he has no troubles!

49. ♖d5 ♔g6 50. ♜g8+ ♔f6 51. ♔g2 ♚g5 52. ♔g3 ♔e5 53. ♞f7 ♔e4 54. ♞c4+ ♔e5 1/2-1/2

And the game ended in a draw on the 78th move.

5

Papan Cyril
Kanak Filip
Ostrava 2010



Black should be OK, but White can try for a bit...

49...♔f5 50.♖f4 ♕f7 51.♖e5 ♖e7 52.♗f6+ ♕d7 53.♗f7+ ♖c6?

And Black bites at the 'decoy'! 53...♖c8 was OK.

54.♗d5# 1-0

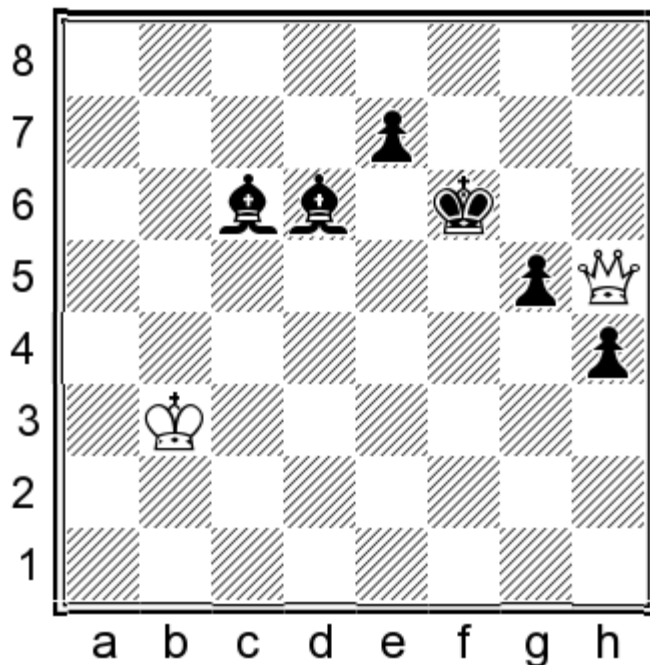
Some problems for the 'queen' side can arise when the pawns' number is increased to three or more. Black has some chances but White should be able to draw.

6

Ward Tom

Rajlich Vasik

Lansing 1998



64...♔g2

With the deadly threat...h3-h2-h1.

65.♗g4 h3 66.♖c3?

Losing a critical tempo. White had to opt for 66.♖c2! e6 (66...♔f4 67.♖d1=) 67.♖d2 ♔c5 68.♖e2=.

66...♔f4! 67.♖d3

Now 67.♖c2 loses to 67...♔e4+ 68.♖d1 h2. Also, after 67.♖d4 e6! 68.♖c3 ♖e5, the black king will go to f2, winning.

67...♔f1+ 68.♖e4

Or 68.♖d4 h2 69.♗f3 e5+ 70.♖c5 ♔e2 71.♗e4 g4+.

68...h2 0-1

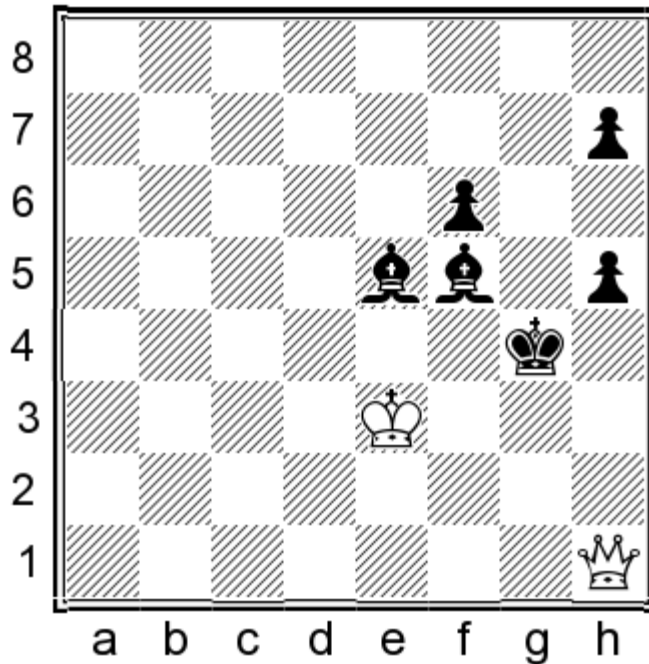
White resigned due to 69. ♖f3 ♗a6 70. ♔d4 e5+ 71. ♔c5 g4 72. ♕e4 ♗f1 and...g3-g2.

7

Antic Dejan

Vaulin Alexander

Nis 1993



The doubled h-pawns helps White, who faces no real problems.

52... ♗f4+ 53. ♔f2 h4 54. ♕c6 ♗g3+ 55. ♔g1 h3 56. ♕c4+ ♗f4 57. ♕g8+ ♔f3 58. ♕g2+!

Pretty and also effective! 58. ♕b3+ draws as well.

58... ♔e3

58... hxg2 is stalemate.

59. ♕f2+ ♔e4 60. ♕c2+ 1/2-1/2

QUEEN & PAWNS VS TWO BISHOPS & PAWNS

This is a very interesting ending, where the queen usually prevails but things are not so clear-cut or easy, to put it mildly.

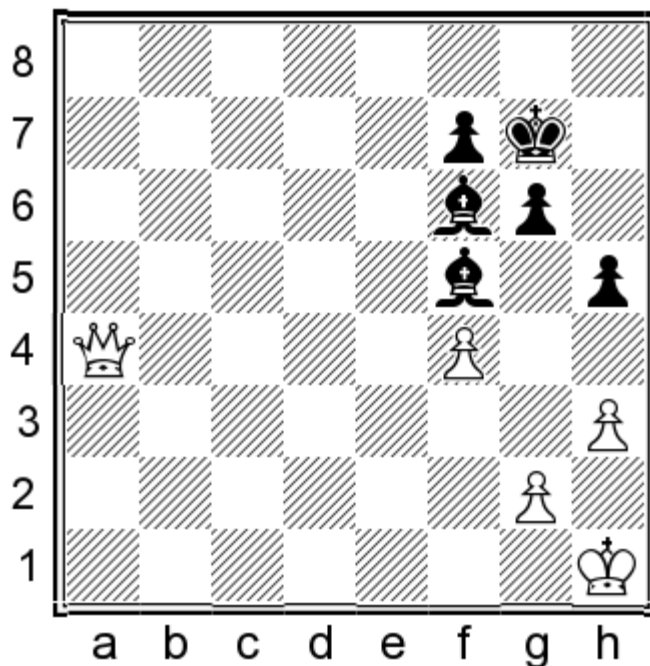
We will start with examples involving ‘same-side’ pawns:

1

Corbet Laurent

Lupu Mircea Sergiu

Bourbon Lancy 1998



White usually wins in this kind of ending by exchanging all the pawns and achieving a won, non- ‘Lolli Position’!

39.♔h2 ♕e6

Another move could be 39...h4. Then White proceeds by exchanging pawns: 40.g4 hxg3+ 41.♔xg3 ♕d8 42.h4 ♕f6 43.♖b5 ♔h6 44.♖b6 ♕e6 45.♖c5 ♔g7 46.h5 gxh5 47.♖xh5. Then he will go f5 and his king will walk to e8. Black will face problems to retain his bishop on the a2-e6 diagonal. But probably this was Black’s best practical chance.

40.g3 ♕f5 41.♖d1 ♕e6 42.g4 hxg4 43.hxg4 g5 44.♔g3

44.f5 is Polugavsky,L-Geller, E, Skopje 1968.

44...♔h6 45.♖h1+ ♔g7 46.♖h5 gxf4+

Black has no time to place his bishops on the diagonals a1-h8 and b1-h7: 46...♕a2 47.fxg5 ♕e5+ 48.♔f3 ♕b1 49.g6+.

47.♔xf4 ♕e7 48.g5 ♕d6+ 49.♔e4 ♔f8

49...♕a3 loses to 50.♖h6+ ♔g8 51.g6! ♕b2 52.gxf7+ ♕xf7 (52...♔xf7 53.♖h5+ ♔g7 54.♖e8+→) 53.♖g5+ ♕g7 54.♔f5+.

50.♖h7 ♔e8 51.♗d4 ♗d8 52.♞g8+ ♗d7 53.g6!

According to the tablebases this move is a mistake, as it is adding 20 more moves to mate. But from the human point of view it is justified.

53...fxg6 54.♞xg6 ♔e7

White has of course achieved a winning position, but here he decided to make a draw! A common mistake from low-rated players (when facing much stronger opponents) with little knowledge of theoretical endings...

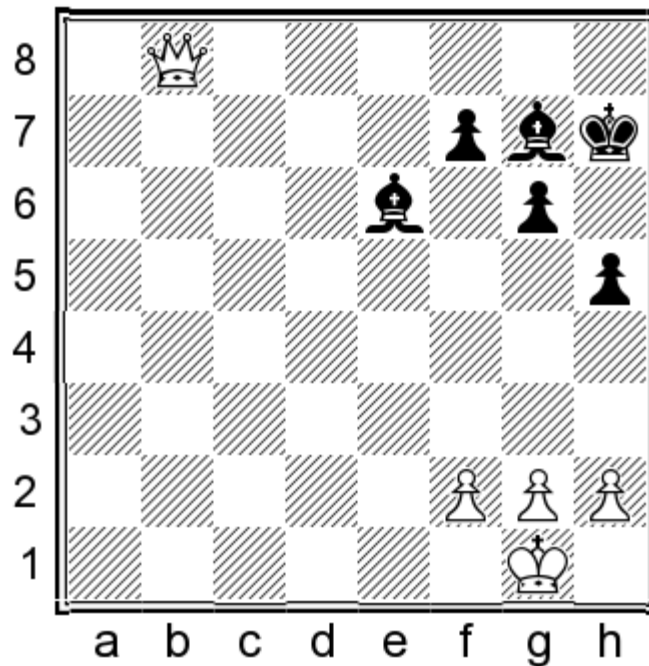
55.♞xe6+? ♔xe6 1/2-1/2

2

Polugaevsky Lev

Geller Efim

Skopje 1968



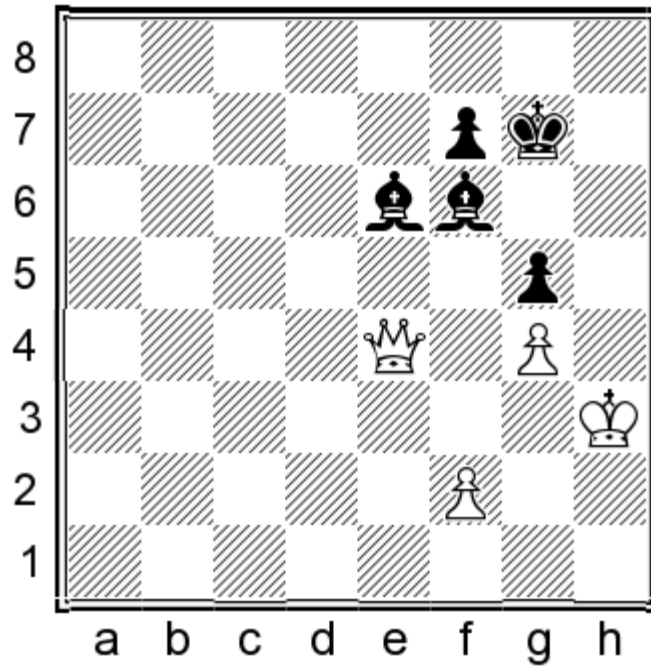
We have nearly the same position as in the previous game.

31.♞f4 ♗c3 32.h3!

Preparing the pawns' advance.

32...♗g7 33.g4 hxg4 34.hxg4 ♗f6 35.♞e4 g5 36.♗g2 ♗e7 37.♗h3 ♗f6 38.♞b4?

The text move allows Black to create a fortress, so White had to go for



38.f4! gxf4 39.♖xf4 ♔g6 (Black must not allow easily the g5-g6 advance - see previous example) 40.♗b8! (40.♗e4+ ♔g7 41.♔g3? ♕g5 42.♗d4+ f6=) 40...♕g5 (40...♔g7 41.♗b5 ♔g6 42.♗h5+ ♔g7 43.♔g3+-) 41.♗g8+ ♔h6 42.♗h8+ ♔g6 43.♗h5+ ♔f6 44.♔g3 ♕d5 45.♗h7 ♕e6 46.♗h8+ ♔g6 47.♗h5+ ♔f6 48.♗h7 ♕e3 49.♗h8+ ♔g6 50.♗h5+ ♔f6 51.♔f3 ♕g5 52.♔e4 ♕b3 53.♗h3 ♕a2 54.♗h2 ♕c4 55.♗h7 ♕e6 56.♗h8+ ♔e7 57.♗g7 ♕f6 58.♗g8 ♕d7 59.g5+-.

38...♕d8?

After 38...♕e5 and... ♕f4, Black would have built a fortress.

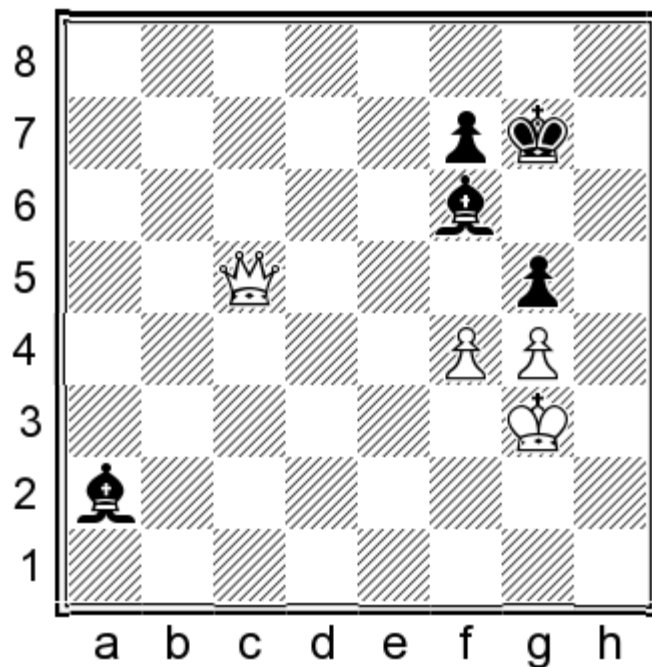
39.♔g3?

39.f4! is obligatory.

39...♕f6?

Again Black could go for 39...♕c7+! 40.♔f3 ♕f4=.

40.♗c5 ♕a2 41.f4



41...♙b1!?

After 41...gxf4+ 42.♗xf4 ♔g8 (Black has no time for 42...♙b1 43.g5 ♙b2 44.♖b4 ♙c1+ 45.♔g4 ♙g6 46.♗c3+-) 43.g5 ♙g7 44.♖c8+ ♙f8 45.♖b8 ♙c4 46.♖d8 ♙a2 47.g6! fxc6 48.♔g5 the end is near, so Black decided to let White push his pawn on f5.

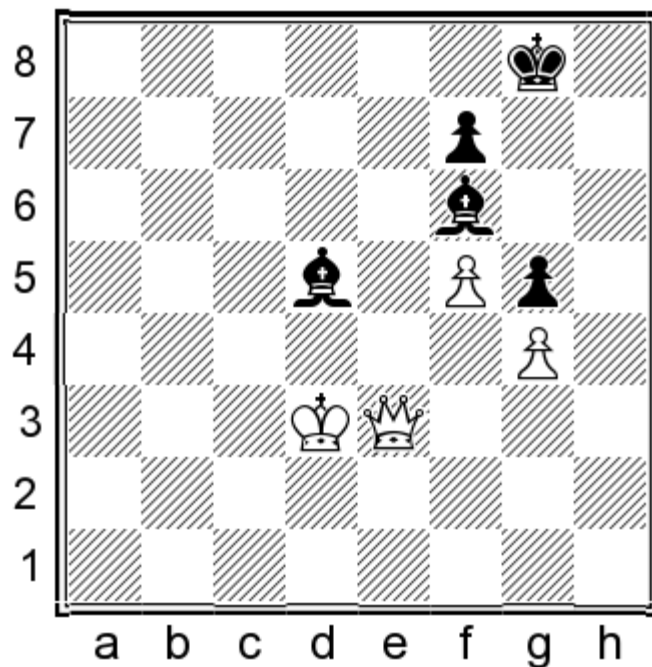
42.f5!

After 42.fxg5? ♙a1 43.♔f4 ♙g6 44.♖a5 ♙b2 45.♖d2 ♙a1 Black seems to have created a kind of fortress, as the white king cannot pass to the opponents camp; the a1-h8 and b1-h7 diagonals are fully controlled, blocking his passage via the queenside, and on the kingside he is restricted by his own pawns!

42...♙e4 43.♔f2 ♙h1 44.♔e3 ♙b7 45.♖c7 ♙g2 46.♖d6 ♙b7 47.♔d3

White starts his king journey to the 8th rank. He must only take care of his weak g4-pawn.

47...♙f3 48.♖g3 ♙d5 49.♖e3 ♔g8



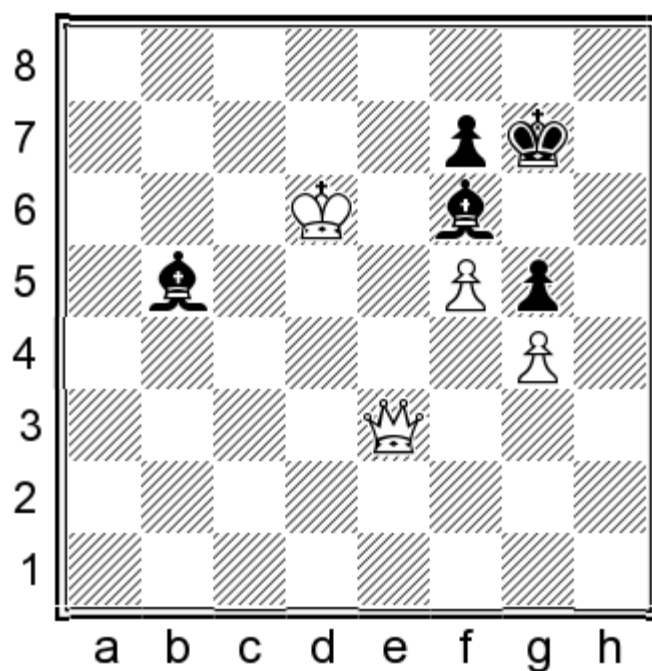
50.♔d2!

A smart manoeuvre! As the light-squared bishop is placed excellently, controlling the squares c4 and f3, it has to be driven away!

50...♔g7 51.♔c2 ♔g8 52.♚d3! ♘c6

52...♘a2 loses to 53.♚a6+-.

53.♚d6 ♘e4+ 54.♔b3 ♔g7 55.♔c4 ♘f3 56.♚g3 ♘h1 57.♚h3 ♘e4 58.♚e3 ♘c6 59.♔c5 ♘d7 60.♔d6 ♘b5



61. ♖b3!

Targeting f7!

61... ♗e2

61... ♗e2 loses to 62. ♖c4! ♖h7 (62... ♗g8 63. ♖c8 ♖f8 64. ♗d5! ♗e7 65. ♗e5 ♗a3 66. f6+-) 63. ♖e4 ♗b5 64. ♗c5 ♗d7 65. ♖b7 ♗e8 66. ♖a8 ♗e7+ 67. ♗d5 ♗d7 68. ♖b7+-.

62. ♖b4 ♗f3 63. ♖c4 ♖g8 64. ♗d7 ♖f8 65. ♖c5+ ♖g8 66. ♗e8 ♗g7 67. f6

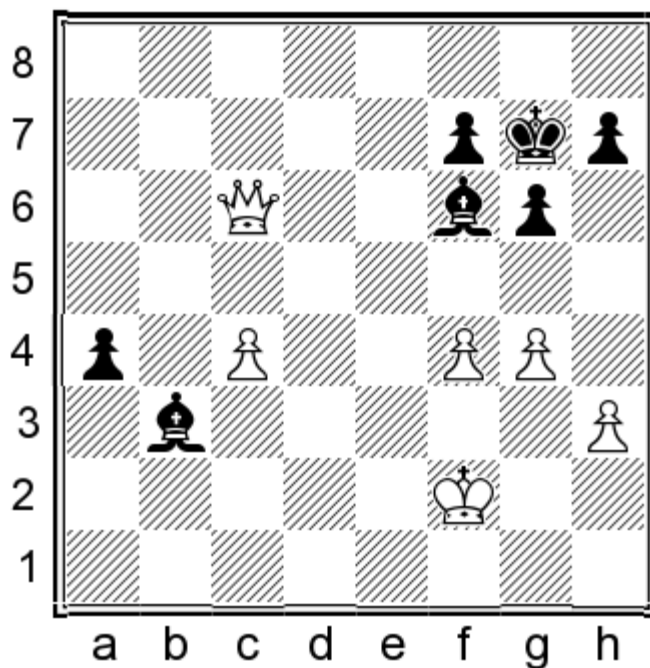
67. ♖c4 is also curtains.

67... ♗h6 68. ♖c4 1-0

With pawns on both sides things are easier for the 'queen' side, as the 'bishops' side has to protect all of its pawn(s) and this is just an extra headache!

3

Atalik Suat
Solak Dragan
Istanbul 2003



The extra pawns on the queenside is of course an advantage for the stronger side.

31. ♖b5!

White blocks the advance of the black a-pawn, and allows his own c-pawn to advance.

31... ♗e7 32. ♗e2

Good enough but 32. c5 ♗e6 33. f5 gxf5 34. gxf5 ♗c8 (34... ♗xf5 35. c6 ♗e6 36. c7) 35. ♖b8 ♗xc5+ 36. ♗f3+- or 32. ♖e5+ ♗f6 33. ♖c5 and ♖b4 was good as well.

32...f5 33.g5 ♘f8 34.c5 ♙f7 35.♖b8+

35.♗xa4 ♙xc5 36.♗a5 ♙e7 37.♗e5 ♙g8 38.♘f3 and h4-h5 would win as well.

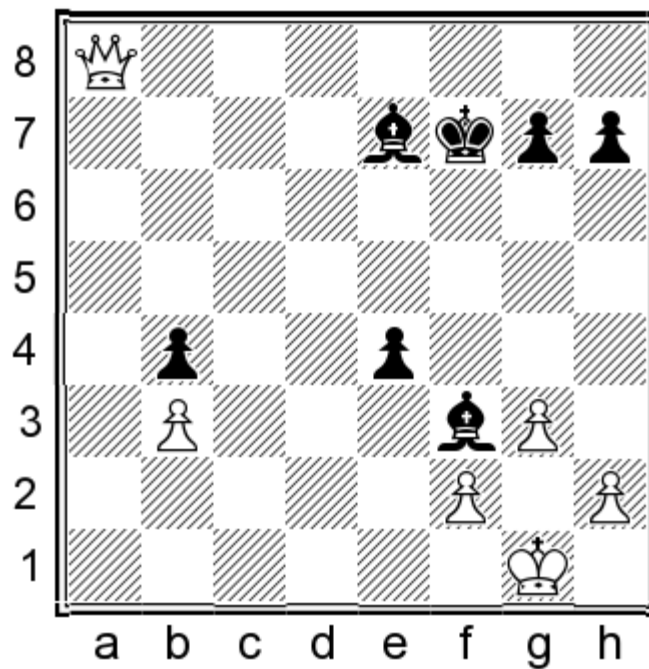
35...♘g7 36.♗e5+ ♘f8 37.♗h8+ ♙g8 38.c6 a3

38...♙d8 39.♗e5 a3 40.♗b8+-.

39.c7 a2 40.c8=♗+ ♘f7 41.♗hxg8# 1-0

4

Lputian Smbat
Sulskis Sarunas
New York 1998



In view of the protected position of the bishops and pawns, White can only win if he can succeed in traversing the open route g1-f1-e1-d2-e3-d4/f4, and can then produce a mating attack with the king and queen alone, based on the offside position of the bishop on f3.

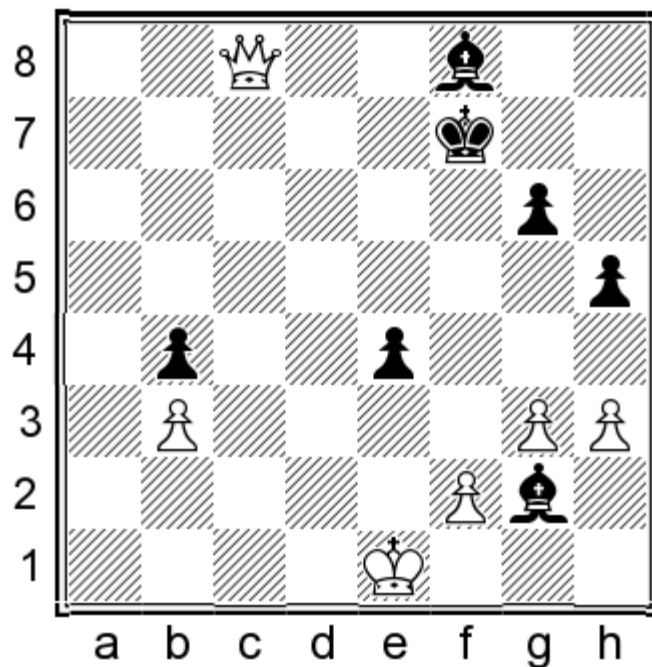
38.♗d5+ ♘f6 39.♗c6+ ♘f7 40.♗d5+ ♘f6 41.♗d4+ ♘f7 42.h3 h5 43.♗e5 g6 44.♘f1 ♙f8

44...♙f6 45.♗d5+ ♘f8 46.♗d6+-.

45.♘e1 ♙g2 46.♗d5+

46.g4 looks good as well: 46...♙xh3 (46...♙f3 47.♗d5+ ♘g7 48.♗d7+ ♘g8 49.♗e8 ♘g7 50.g5+-) 47.♗f4+ ♘g7 48.gxh5 ♙f5 49.♗g5 ♘h7 50.♗f6 ♙g7 51.hxg6+ ♙xg6 52.♗e7+-.

46...♘f6 47.♗d8+ ♘f7 48.♗d7+ ♘f6 49.♗c8 ♘f7



50.♔e2

Because of the necessity of defending b4, the king cannot be denied entrance to e3.

50...♙f3+ 51.♔e3 ♚h6+ 52.♔d4 ♚g7+ 53.♔c5 ♚c3

A more stubborn defence was 53...♙f8+, although Black will not escape: 54.♕b6 ♚e7 55.♔c7 ♚g2 56.♖d7 ♕f6 57.g4 hxg4 58.hxg4 ♙f3 59.g5+ ♕f7 60.♗d5+ ♕f8 61.♗e6! ♙xg5 (61...♙h5 62.♗xe4 ♙xg5 63.♗xb4+-) 62.♗xg6 ♙e7 (62...♙f4+ 63.♕d7+-) 63.♕d7+-.

54.♔d6 ♕g7 55.♔e7 ♚d4

55...♙d1 56.♗f8+ ♕h7 57.♗f7+ ♕h8 58.♗d5+-.

56.♗f8+ 1-0

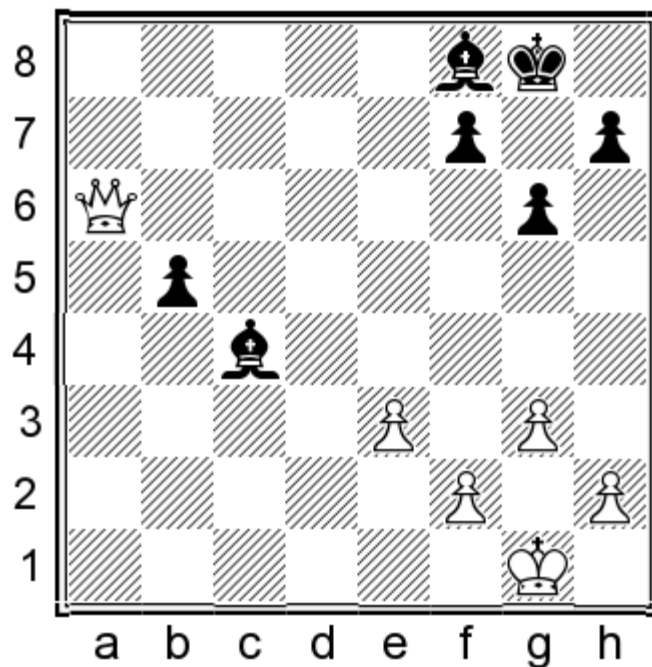
Black resigned, as mate is near: 56...♕h7 57.♕f7 g5 58.♗g8+ ♕h6 59.♗g6#.

5

Ding Liren

Ganguly Surya Shekhar

Doha 2014



White will not allow the black b-pawn to be pushed further and at the same time he will advance his own majority and his king.

30.e4 ♖d3 31.f3 h5 32.♔g2 ♔g7 33.e5! ♙c4 34.♚c6 ♔g8 35.f4 ♙e7 36.♔f3 ♙f8 37.♔e3 ♙e7 38.♔d4 ♙f8 39.♚d7 ♙a3 40.f5!

The decisive breakthrough, which creates new weaknesses in Black's camp.

40...gxf5

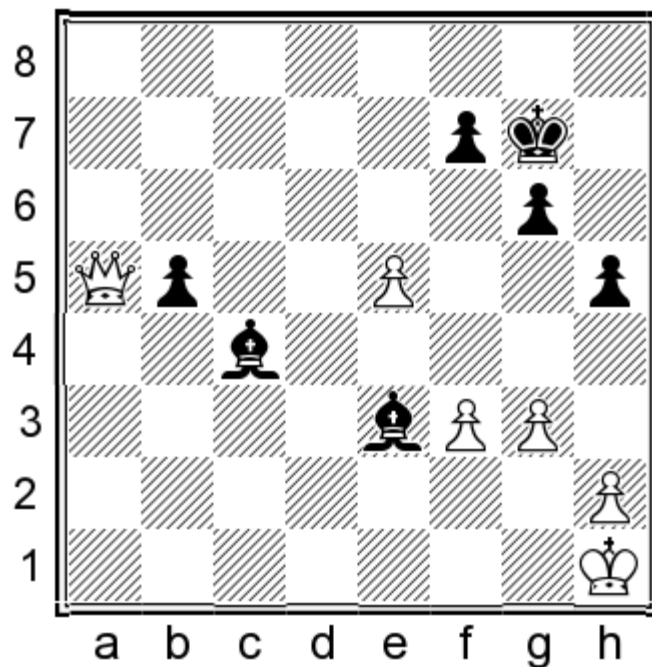
40...♙f8 41.fxg6 fxg6 42.e6+–.

41.♚xf5 ♙e6 42.♚g5+ ♔f8 43.♚xh5 ♔b4 44.♚h8+ ♔e7 45.♚b8 ♙b2+ 46.♔c5 ♔b3 47.♚d6+ ♔e8 48.♔b6 1-0

And since ♔c7 is lethal, Black resigned.

6

**Khairullin Ildar
Vallejo Pons Francisco
Khanty-Mansiysk 2013**



An almost identical position to the previous example.

48.e6!?

48.♞a6 ♘c5 49.♞c6 ♘e7 50.f4 is the 'known' way, but White decided to go for another set-up.

48.e6!? ♘g5

48...fxe6? 49.♞c3+ would be a cheap trick.

49.exf7 ♔xf7 50.♔g2 ♘e7 51.♞a6! ♘d3 52.♞c6 ♘c4 53.♔f2 ♘f6 54.♔e3 ♔e7 55.h3!

Preparing the pawn advance on the kingside.

55...♘f1

55...♔f7 56.g4 hxg4 57.hxg4 ♘e7 58.f4 ♘e6 59.♞h1+.

56.g4! ♘xh3 57.gxh5 gxh5 58.♞c5+ ♔e6?!

58...♔d7 59.♞xb5+ ♔d6 60.♞xh5+.

59.♞xh5?!

White missed the simple 59.♞c8+.

59...♘f1 60.♞e8+ ♘e7 61.f4

As we know already, a passed pawn for the 'queen' side is heavenly!

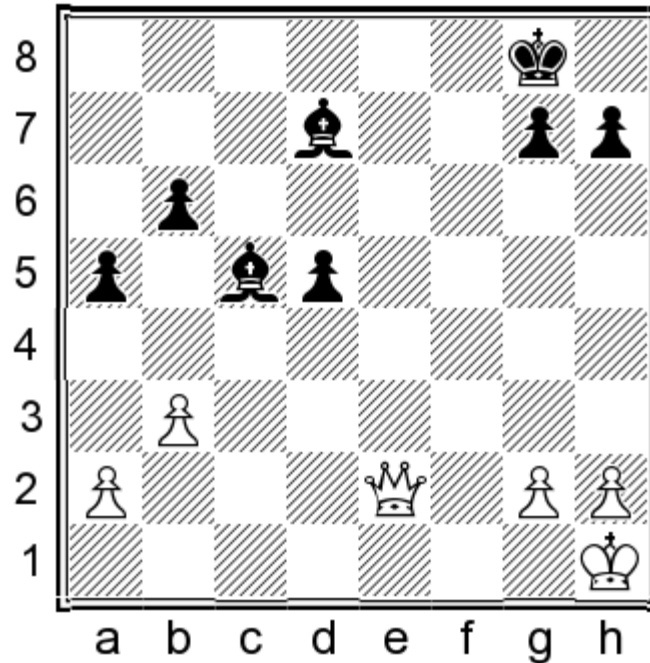
61...b4 62.f5+ ♔d6 63.♞f7 ♘g5+ 64.♔d4 ♘d2 65.♞e6+ ♔c7 66.f6 ♘c3+ 67.♔e3

A nice variation occurs after 67.♔c5 ♔b7 68.f7 ♘g7 69.♞b6+ ♔c8 70.♞c6+ ♔b8 71.f8=♞+! ♘xf8+ 72.♔b6+.

67...b3 68.♙xb3 ♖xf6 69.♙f7+ 1-0

7

Eingorn Vereslav
Fries Nielsen Jens Ove
Hamburg 2005



35.♙e5! ♜f7?!

Black had to opt for 35...♜f8! 36.♙xd5 ♖e8 37.g4, losing later!

36.♙xd5+ ♖e6 37.♙h5+! ♜f6

37...♜g8? 38.♙e8+-.

38.♙xh7

A pawn is won and the white kingside majority will create a passed one.

38...g6 39.♙h8+ ♜f5 40.♙c3 ♖d5 41.a3!

Good outposts for the bishops should be destroyed!

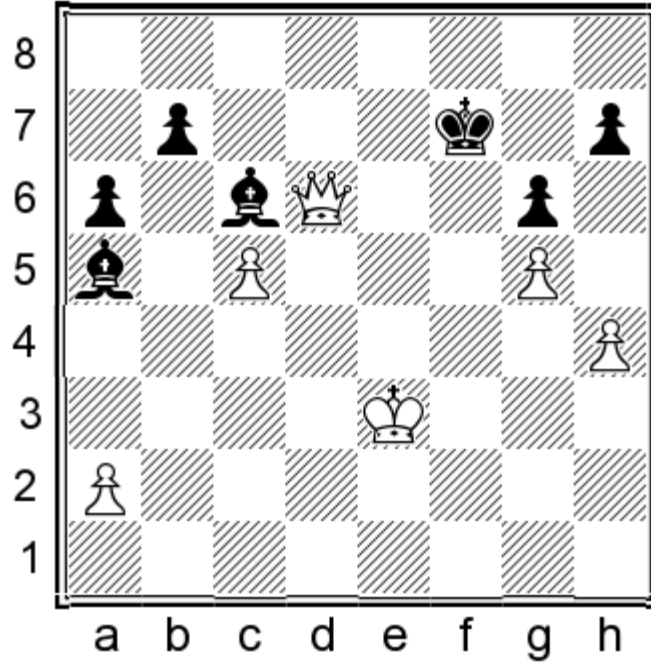
41...♖xa3 42.♙d4! ♖e4

42...♖xb3 43.♙d3+ ♜f6 44.♙xb3 ♖c5 45.g3 is a lost cause.

43.♙xb6 ♖b4 44.♙d4 g5 45.h3 ♖c6 46.♜g1 ♜e6 47.♙e3+! 1-0

47...♜f6 48.♙b6+-.

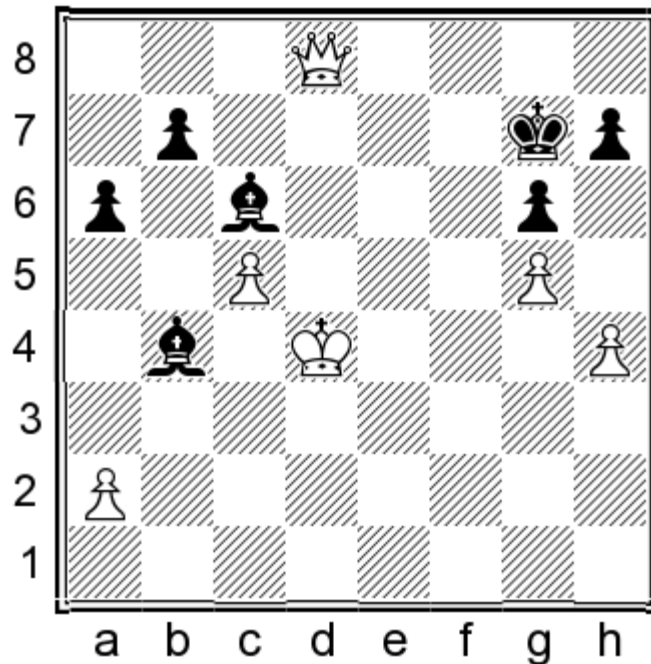
8



Black's pawn structure is healthier and protected but the white king will penetrate.

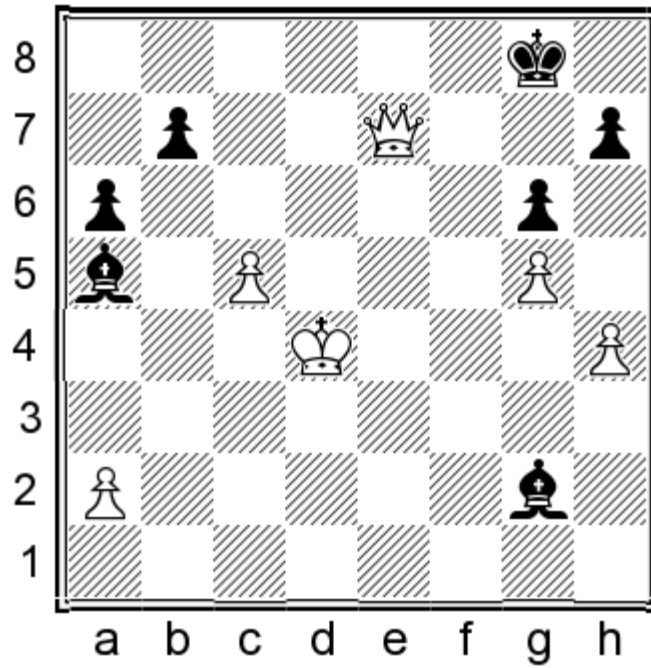
45. ♖d4 ♗g2

45... ♗b4 was a more stubborn try: 46. ♖f6+ ♗g8 47. ♖d8+ ♗g7



48. ♖e7+ (48.a3! is a nice trick, but difficult to find over the board: 48... ♗xa3 49. ♖f6+ ♗g8 50. ♖e6+ ♗g7 51. ♖b3 ♗c1 52. ♖c3 ♗f4 53. ♗d3+--)

46. ♖d7+ ♗g8 47. ♖e8+ ♗g7 48. ♖e7+ ♗g8



49.♔e5

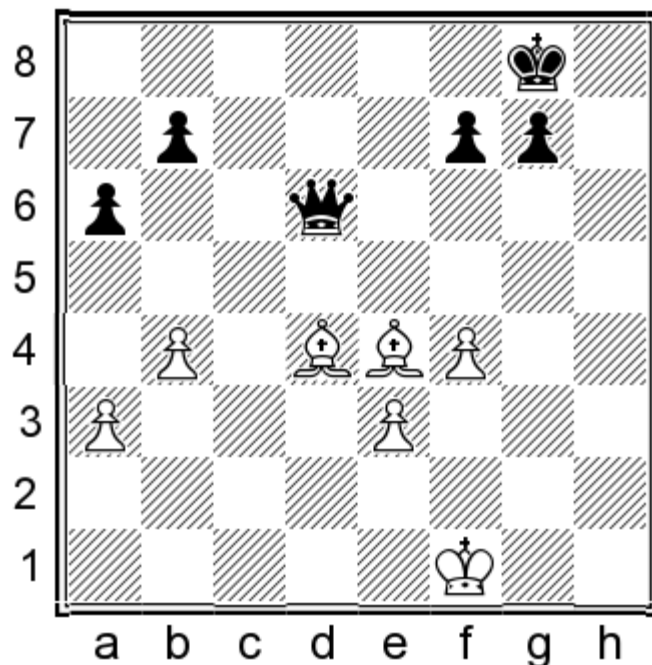
49.♚e6+ ♔f8 50.♚f6+ ♔g8 51.h5! gxh5 52.g6 was curtains.

49...♗c3+ 50.♔e6 ♗h3+ 51.♔d6 ♗g2 52.♚e8+ ♔g7 53.♔e7 1-0

And as mate follows, Black resigned.

9

Andreikin Dmitry
Nepomniachtchi Ian
Kirishi 2005



40...b5!

A good move, preparing the...♖e6-a2 penetration.

41.♔e2 ♖e6 42.♙c2 ♚a2 43.♔d2 ♚xa3 44.♙c3 a5!

The queen needs a passed pawn to feel secure!

45.bxa5 b4 46.♙d4 b3 47.♙b1 ♚xa5+ 48.♔c1 ♚a3+ 49.♔d2 g6

And now the black king will come to assist his queen, combining mating attacks with the passed pawn.

50.♔d1 ♔h7 51.♙f6 ♔h6 52.♙d4 ♔h5 53.♔d2 ♔g4 54.♔d1 ♔f3 55.♔d2 f5 56.♔d1 ♚a6 57.♔d2 ♚a3 58.♙e5

58.♔d1 loses to 58...g5! 59.fxg5 f4 60.exf4 ♚d6-+.

58...b2 59.♙d4 ♚b3 60.♙c3 ♚d5+ 61.♙d4

61.♔c2 ♔xe3 62.♔xb2 ♔xf4-+.

61...g5! 62.fxg5 f4 63.♔c3 fxe3 64.♙xe3 ♔xe3 65.g6 ♚b5 66.♔c2 ♚b4 67.g7 ♚c4+ 68.♔xb2 ♚d4+ 0-1

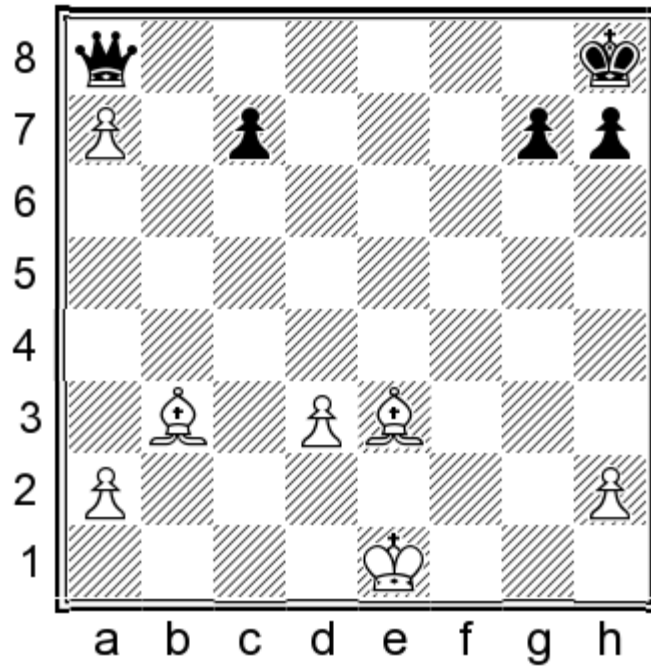
Of course not everything favours the 'queen' side. Sometimes the two bishops, supported by a passed pawn, can be a dangerous weapon.

10

Topalov Veselin

Lautier Joel

Linares 1995

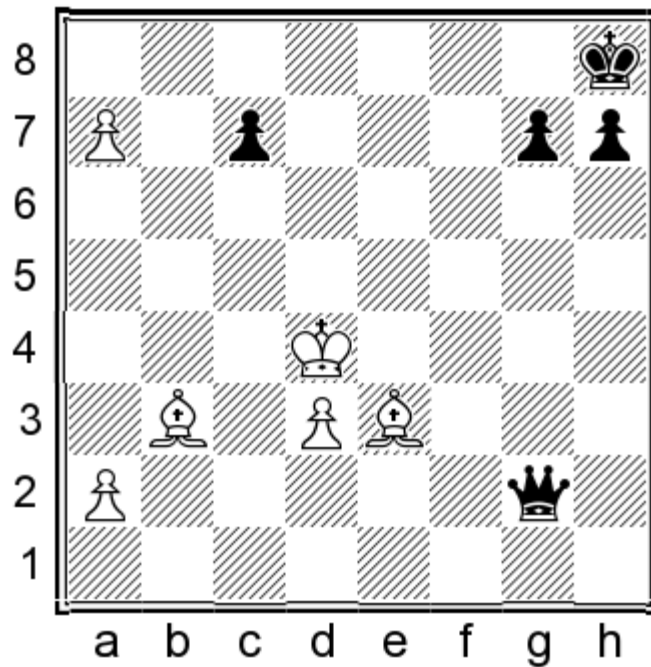


A very interesting position – the bishop-pair and an a-passer vs a queen. If White wants to improve, he has to take the long diagonal with his bishop.

29... ♖h1+

Black is obliged to win the white h-pawn. In this way he will always have counterplay with his kingside pawns. Luckily, he can do that with checks.

30. ♔d2 ♜xh2+ 31. ♔c3 ♜g2 32. ♔d4



With the idea of ♔d5. But maybe 32. ♔f7!? was better: 32... ♜c6+ 33. ♔b4 h5 (33...h6 34. ♔g6 ♜b7+ 35. ♔c4) 34. ♔xh5 ♔h7, but as the white king is too exposed, Black should still be able to draw.

32...♖a8

It's quite amusing that even 32...h5 33.♙d5 ♜b2+ leads to a draw by perpetual check!

33.♗e5 ♜e8+

33...h5 34.♙d5 c6 35.♙e4 h4 36.♗d6 h3 37.♙xc6 ♜d8+ is still a draw by perpetual check. As said, the white king is too exposed.

34.♗f4

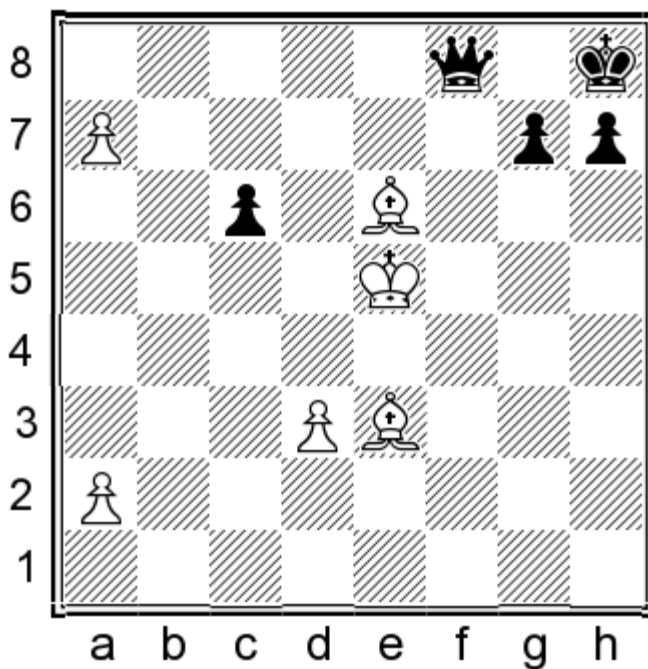
No improvement was 34.♗d4 c5+ 35.♗c3 ♜c6 36.♙c4 h5 37.♙xc5 g5=.

34...c6

Possible was 34...g5+ 35.♗f5 ♗g7! 36.♙d4+ ♗h6= or 34...♜d8 35.♗e4 ♜e8+ 36.♗f4=.

35.♙c5

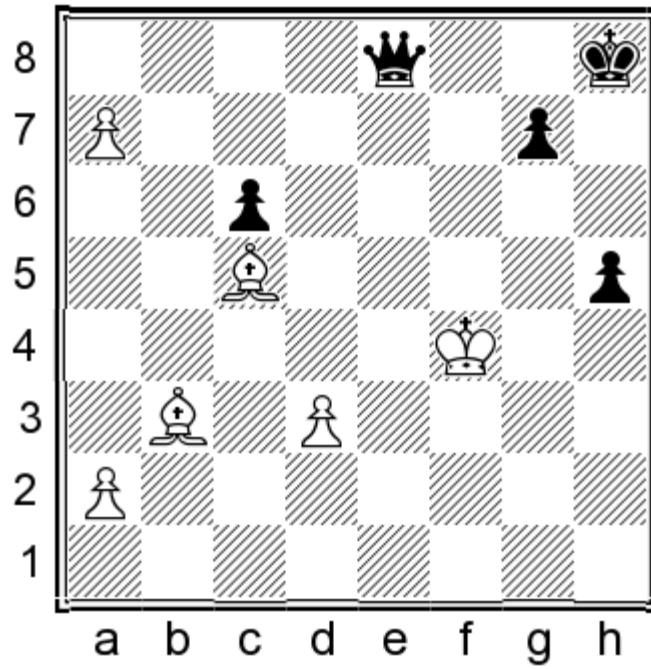
White could try 35.♙e6!? but after 35...♜f8+ 36.♗e5



36...c5! 37.♙d7 the balance remains.

35...h5

35...♜a8 is also good for the draw: 36.♗e5 h5 37.♗d6 ♜d8+ (37...h4? 38.♙a4 ♜d8+ 39.♗xc6 h3 40.♗b7 h2 41.♙c6+—) 38.♗xc6 ♜c8+ 39.♗b6 ♜d8+=.



36. ♖d6

White might have tried 36.d4!, with the idea d5, when Black should be careful: 36...h4 37.♙e6 ♗h7! 38.d5 ♗h6! 39.d6 ♗xe6 40.a8=♚ g5+ 41.♗f3 g4+ 42.♗g2 ♖d5+=.

36... ♖d8

Drawish was 36...♖a8 37.♙b8 h4 38.♗g4 g5 39.♙e6 ♖b7 40.♗xg5 ♖e7+ 41.♗f5 ♖a3 42.♗g5= but the clearest draw was with 36...g5+! 37.♗xg5 (37.♗f3 ♖a8 38.♙b8 ♗g7 39.d4 ♖b7 looks much better, if not winning, for Black) 37...♖e3+ 38.♗g6 (38.♗xh5 ♖xa7) 38...♖g1+ 39.♗h6 ♖g7+ 40.♗xh5 ♖xa7 41.♙e5+ ♗h7 42.d4.

37. ♙b8 ♖d4+

A forced draw was 37...♖a5 38.d4 h4 39.d5 h3 (39...cxd5 40.♗e5 h3 41.♙xd5 ♖e1+ [41...h2? 42.a8=♖+-] 42.♗d6 ♖b4+=) 40.dxc6 h2 41.c7 ♖b4+! 42.♗g3 ♖c3+ 43.♗xh2 ♖d2+=.

38. ♗f5

Of course not 38.♗g5? ♖g4#.

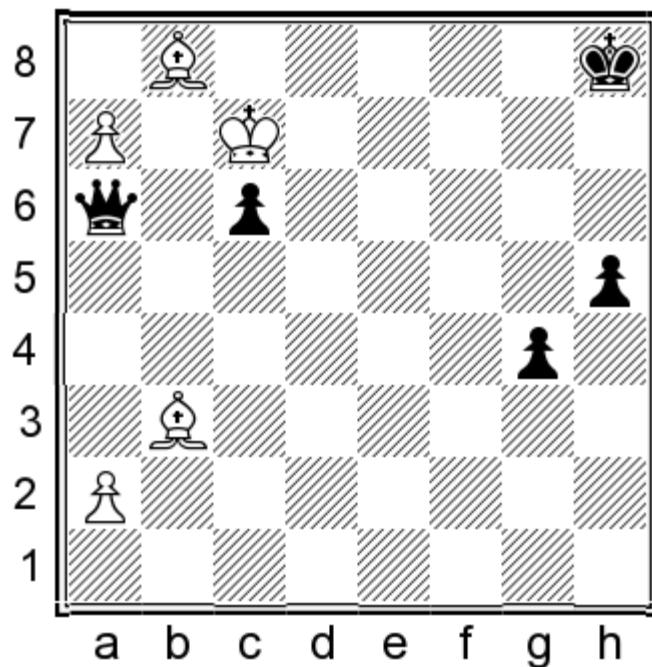
38... ♖xd3+ 39. ♗e6 ♖a6 40. ♗d7

Not really changing anything, but 40.♗d6! g5 41.♗c7 (41.♙c4 ♖a4 42.♙e6 g4 43.♙d7 g3 44.♙xc6 ♖f4+=) 41...h4 42.♙c4 ♖a5+ 43.♗b7 ♖b4+= was more precise.

40...g5

40...♖b7+ 41.♗d6 g5 42.♙c2 ♗g7 43.♙e4 ♗f6 44.♙xc6 ♖e7+= or 40...h4 41.♙e6 (41.♗c7? h3 42.♙c4 ♖xa7+ 43.♙xa7 h2+) 41...♖b7+ 42.♗d6 ♖a6 43.♙d7 ♖xa2 44.♙xc6 ♖a3+=.

41. ♗c7 g4



42. ♖c4

White could try 42. ♖e6 g3 but now not 43. ♖c8? (43. ♖c4 ♜a3 44. ♔b7 ♜b4+ 45. ♔c7=) 43... ♜xa2 44. ♔b7 ♜b3+ 45. ♔c7 g2 46. a8=♜ g1=♜-+.

42... ♜a4

42... ♜a5+ 43. ♔b7 ♜b4+ 44. ♔c7= or 42... ♜xc4 43. a8=♜ g3 44. ♜xc6 ♜xa2=.

43. ♖b3 ♜a6 44. ♖c4 ♜a4 1/2-1/2

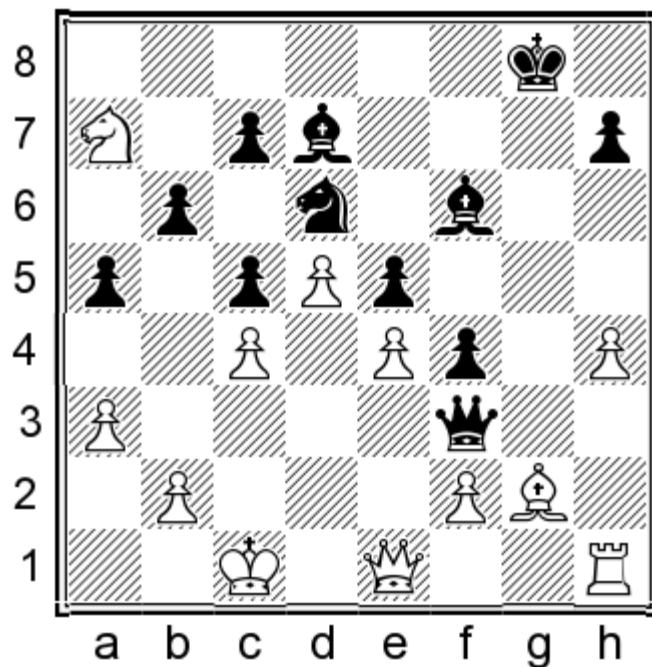
I consider the next game a diamond within our theme, which also proves the strength of Dr. John Nunn, a top-player in the '90s.

11

Piket Jeroen

Nunn John

Wijk aan Zee 1990



30... ♖xg2!

A spectacular queen sacrifice. Nothing is 'offered' by 30... ♖b3 31. ♖c3 ♖xc3+ 32. bxc3 ♗xc4 33. ♕f1 ♗d6 34. f3∞.

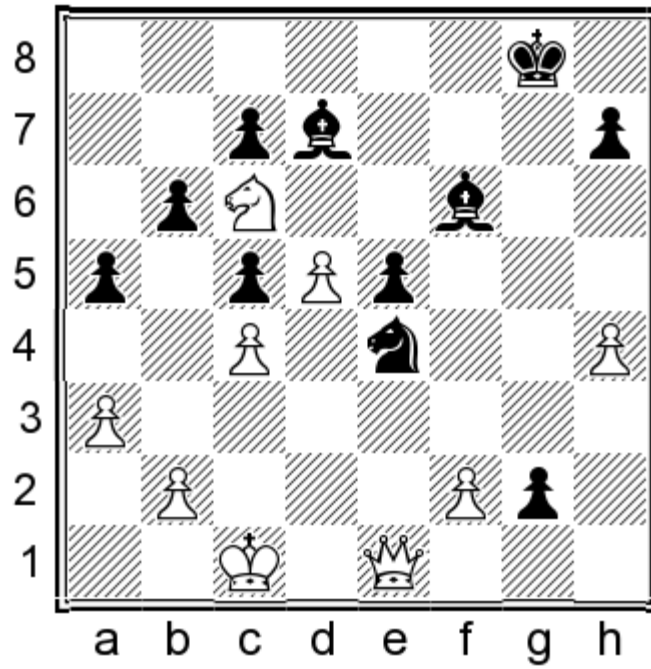
30... ♖xg2! 31. ♖g1 f3

The g2-pawn that will arise soon is surprisingly strong and White's a7-knight is far away from the battlefield. Of course, in general, the above aspects should not be sufficient to justify the queen sacrifice for two minor pieces, but in this case the absence of active counterplay for White is of the essence.

32. ♗b5?!

White is at an important crossroads and I do not really like his last move. He could opt for:

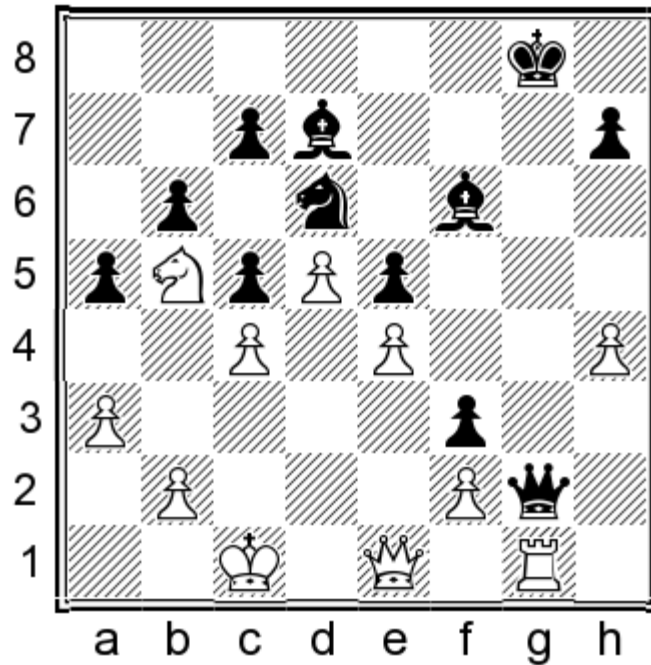
a) 32. ♗c6 ♕g4 (32... ♗xe4? 33. ♖xg2+ fxg2



34.f3! [34.♖g1? ♕h3∞] 34...♕xh4 35.♖g1 ♕g5+ 36.♔c2 ♖g3 37.♖xg2 ♕f4 38.♗d8+— 32...♕h3!? 33.♖xg2+ fxg2 34.♔d2 ♗xc4+ 35.♔c3 ♗d6 36.f3 ♕xh4 37.♖g1 ♕g5∞) 33.♖xg2 fxg2 34.f4 (34.f3? ♕xh4 35.♖g1 ♕xf3—+ 34.♖g1!? ♕f3 35.♔d2 ♗xc4+ 36.♔d3 ♗d6 37.♔e3 ♕xe4 38.f3 ♕xd5 39.♖xg2+ ♔f7∞) 34...♕xh4 35.♖g1 ♕f3 36.♗xe5 ♕xe4 37.♔d2 ♗f5∞.

b) 32.♖xg2+!? fxg2 33.♔c2 ♗xc4 34.♖g1 ♕h3 35.♔d3 ♗d6∞.

These variations are instrumental for the evaluation of the sacrifice and, as far as there is no direct way for White to prove an advantage, the general impression must be positive.



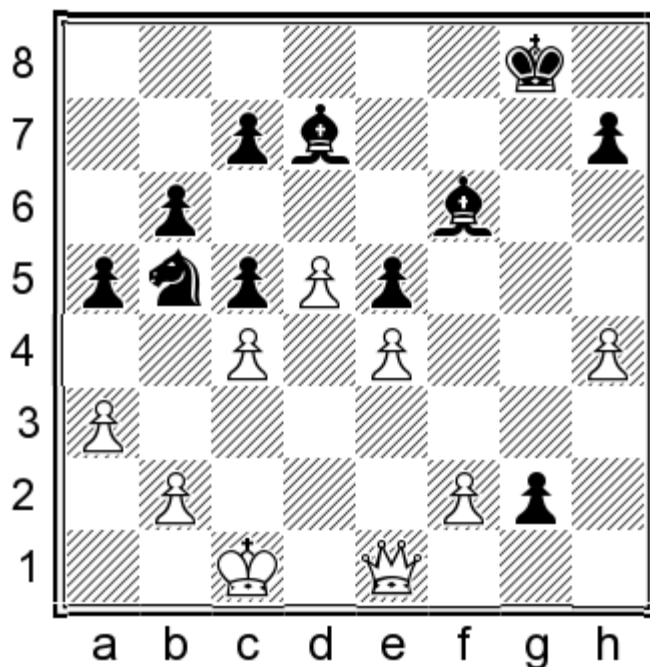
32...♗xb5

Black had some serious alternatives at his disposal:

a) 32...♖xe4? 33.♖xg2+ fxg2 34.f3! (34.♖xc7? ♗xh4 35.♖g1 ♗h3 36.d6 ♖g5! [36...♗xf2 37.d7 ♗xg1 38.d8=♖+ ♖g7+] 37.d7 ♖f3—) 34...♖d6 35.♖g3+ ♖h8 36.♖xd6 cxd6 37.♖xg2 ♗xh4 38.b4±.

b) 32...♗g4 33.♖xg2 fxg2 34.♖xd6 (34.♖c3 ♗xh4 35.♖c2 ♗f3 36.♖d3 ♗g5! 37.♖g1 h5+) 34...cxd6 35.♖g1 ♗h3 which could transpose to positions similar to the game.

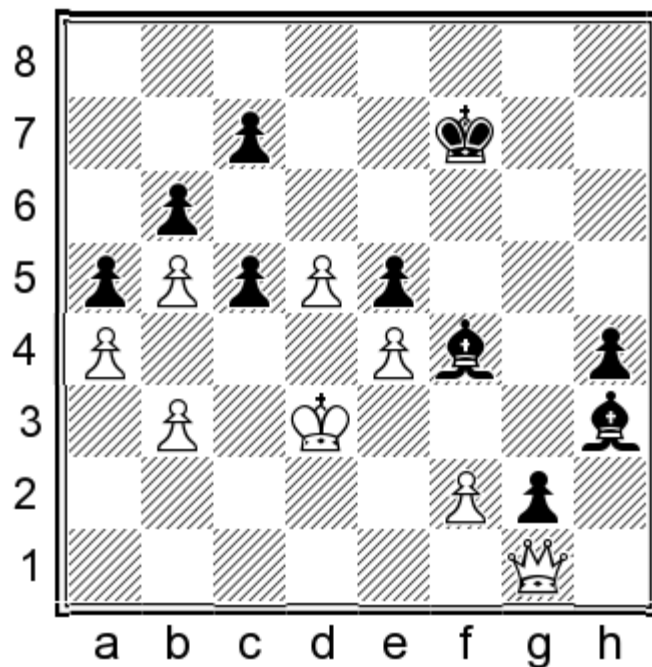
33.♖xg2+ fxg2



34.cxb5?

The last mistake. White had to go for 34.♖g1! ♗h3 (34...♖d4 35.♖xg2+ ♖f7 36.h5! ♖e2+ 37.♖d2 ♖f4 38.♖f3 h6=+) 35.cxb5, which highlights an important difference to the game's continuation: Black's h3-bishop is badly placed, blocking the advance of his h-pawn.

After 35...♗xh4 36.a4! (36.♖c2? a4! 37.♖c3 ♖f7 38.♖c2 ♖e7 39.♖c3 ♖d7 40.♖c2 ♖c8 41.♖c3 ♖b7 42.♖c2 h5 43.♖c3 ♗g5 44.♖c4 h4 45.♖c3 [45.f3 ♗h6 46.♖c3 c4—] 45...c4 46.♖xc4 ♗e7 47.♖c3 ♗c5 48.♖c2 ♗d4 49.♖c1 ♖c8 50.♖c2 ♖d8 51.♖c1 ♖e7 52.♖c2 ♖f7 53.♖c1 ♖f6 54.♖c2 ♖g5 55.♖h2 ♗xf2 56.♖xe5+ ♖g4 57.♖f5+ ♖g3 58.♖e5+ ♖f3 59.♖f6+ ♖e2 60.♖c3 ♗e3! [60...g1=♖? 61.♖d3+ ♖e1 62.♖d1#] 61.♖d3+ ♖f2—) 36...♗g5+ 37.♖c2 ♗f4 38.♖d3 h5 39.b3! h4 40.♖c3 (White has to be careful; any pawn-advance can be lethal. For example the opening of the g1-a7 diagonal with 40.f3? loses by moving the king to the queenside in order to avoid an eventual perpetual check and then place the dark-squared bishop on c5- or on d4-square: 40...♖f7 41.♖e2 ♖e7 42.♖d3 ♖d7 43.♖e2 ♖c8 44.♖d3 ♖b8 45.♖e2 ♖b7 46.♖d3 ♗g5! [zugzwang] 47.♖c3 [47.♖c4 ♗d2 48.♖d3 ♗b4 49.♖c4 ♗a3 50.♖h2 ♗b2— or 47.♖h2 ♗c1 48.♖g1 ♗b2—] 47...♗h6! [47...c4 48.d6!] 48.♖d3 c4+— - see also the notes to White's 36th move) 40...♖f7 41.♖d3



White has obtained the optimal defence (and the ideal pawn-structure) and he can just wait around, as Black has no way to improve his position. The black bishop-pair and the passed g2-pawn are ample compensation for the white queen, but no more.

34...♙xb5 35.♚g1 ♜f1

Now that Black supports his g2-pawn from the f1-square instead of h3, there is no defence to the advance of the black h-pawn (after the capture of the white h4-pawn). The bishop-pair dominates the white queen!

36.♚h2

A last try, as after 36.h5 ♜g5+ 37.♔d1 ♜f4 White can never move his queen (f3 and ♚f2 allows...♜h2), so Black can simply take the h-pawn with his king and then play...h5-h4-h3-h2.

36...♜xh4 37.♚xh4 ♔g1=♚

As there is no perpetual check, Black wins.

38.♚d8+ ♔g7 39.♚xc7+ ♔h6 40.♚xb6+ ♔h5 41.b4

Or 41.♚xc5 ♜e2+ 42.♔c2 ♚d1+ 43.♔c3 ♚d3#.

41...♜d3+ 42.♔d2 ♚xf2+

Not bad either is 42...♚f1! 43.♚xc5 ♚e2+ 44.♔c1 ♚e1+ 45.♔b2 ♚b1+ 46.♔c3 ♚c2#.

43.♔xd3 c4+ 0-1

And White resigned - his queen was of no real help... The bishop-pair dominated throughout the entire ending, producing an excellent example of piece power!

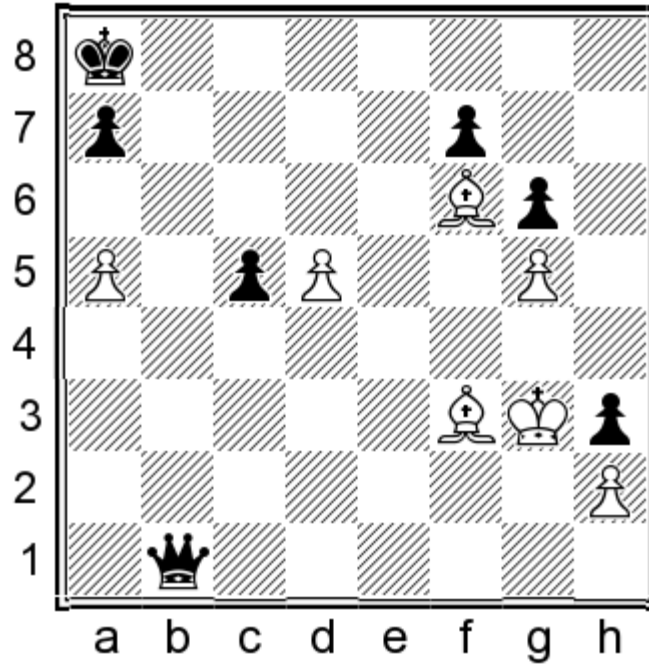
There was a time when the computers were not so powerful and made blunders that today are unthinkable:

12

Kasparov Garry

Comp Fritz 2

Cologne 1992



Passed pawns are important and here White looks like he is on top.

38.d6+ ♔b8 39.d7 ♚e1+ 40.♔xh3 ♚e6+?

A losing blunder by an old computer version! 40...♚f1+ 41.♔g4 ♚g1+! is a perpetual check draw!

41.♙g4 ♚e3+ 42.♔g2!

Of course not 42.♔h4? ♚f2+ 43.♔h3 ♚f1+=.

42...♚d2+ 43.♔f3 ♚d3+ 44.♔f4 ♚d2+ 45.♔e4 ♚b4+

45...♚g2+ 46.♔e5!+-.

46.♔d5 ♚b7+ 47.♔d6 ♚c7+ 48.♔e7 ♔b7 49.♔e8 ♚c6 50.♔xf7 ♚g2 51.♙e6 ♚xh2 52.d8=♚ ♚c7+ 53.♚xc7+ ♔xc7 54.♙c4 ♔d6 1-0

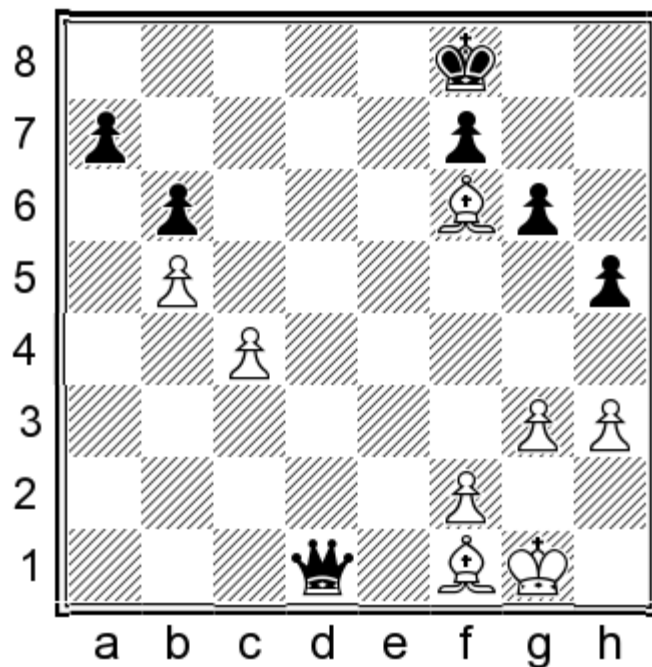
Blockading is a good method of defence for the two bishops. Of course, help from the opponent is welcomed but not guaranteed.

13

Levtchouk George

Cossette Daniel

Quebec 1987



White has achieved good blockade squares and Black has hardly any winning plan.

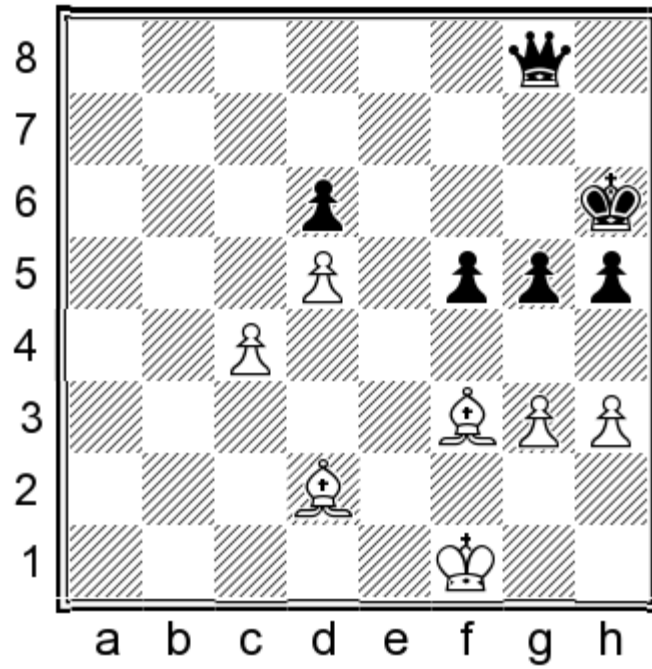
35...♙e8 36.h4! ♖c1 37.♗d4 ♜d7 38.♗e3 ♖a1 39.c5!

Not necessary, but good enough, as now White will have a permanent target on a7.

39...bxc5 40.♗xc5 ♜e6 41.♜g2 ♜d5 42.♗e3 ♖a3 43.♗e2 ♖a1 44.♗f3+ ♜d6 45.♗b7 ♜c7 1/2-1/2

It looks quite difficult for Black to enlist his pawns on the kingside (assisted by the king) and create something dangerous.

14
 Selway Richard
 Fallowfield Jeremy
 England 2016



47...♔g6 48.♕f2

48.h4 gxh4 49.gxh4 ♖g7!-+.

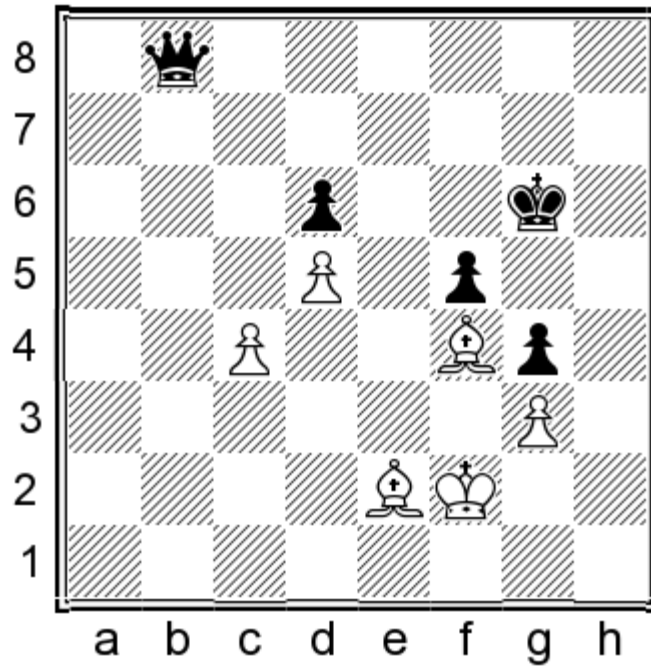
48...g4?!

The text move gives White a good outpost on f4. Black should have opted for 48...♖g7 49.♗e2 ♖d4+ 50.♗e3 ♖e5 and...f4 or...h4 would be lethal.

49.hxg4 hxg4?

But this is a clear blunder, as now Black cannot create a passed pawn. He should have played 49...fxg4 50.♗e4+ ♔f7 51.♗f4 ♖h8! 52.♔e3 ♖c3+ 53.♗d3 h4! 54.gxh4 ♖c1+ 55.♔e4 ♖e1+ 56.♔f5 ♖xh4, winning.

50.♗e2 ♖b8 51.♗f4

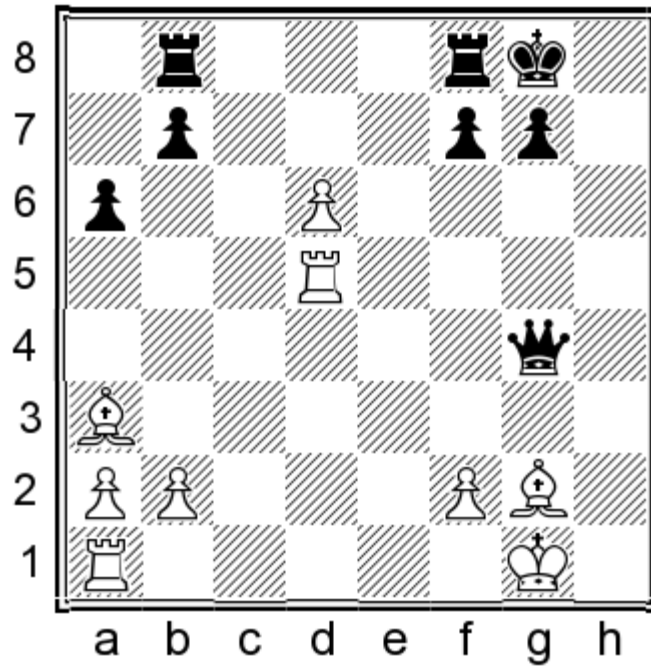


Now all White's pawns are well-protected, while the black ones on d6 and f5 are targets. White has been handed a dream scenario...

51... ♖b6+ 52. ♘e3 ♜b4 53. ♘f4 ♔f7 54. ♘e3 ♜b1 55. ♘f4 ♔e7 56. ♘g5+ ♔d7 57. ♘f4 ♜h1 58. ♔e3 ♜e1 59. ♔d3 ♜b1+ 60. ♔e3 ♜b2 61. ♘d3 1/2-1/2

And we will conclude with another fierce battle, one which contains a lot of interesting variations, mistakes, tension and will to play for the win:

15
Aronian Levon
Giri Anish
Monte Carlo 2011



White has the bishop-pair and a strong passed d-pawn as compensation for the sacrificed queen. So, still some accuracy is needed by Black...

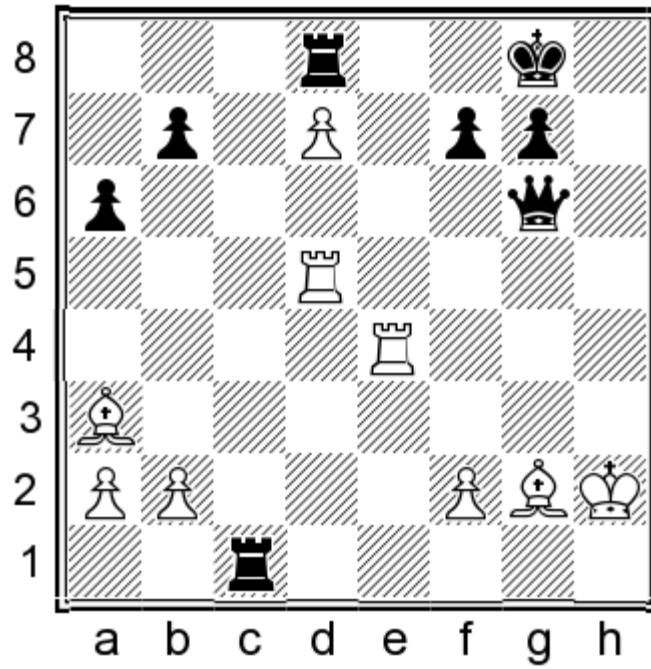
31...♖fd8 32.♗e1 ♜bc8!

A good move, activating the rook. Now the black queen and rook will co-operate to deliver lethal blows to the white king.

33.♗e4

Blocking the c-file with 33.♗c5 doesn't help: 33...♖xc5! 34.♗xc5 ♜xd6 and White has won material, but he no longer has any compensation!! Chess is a strange game - you win material but you lose the game...

33...♖c1+ 34.♔h2 ♚g6 35.d7



35... ♖h6+!

Best and winning!

36. ♔g3

But White is stubborn and plays his last card. 36. ♔h3? ♜h1+ 37. ♔xh1 ♝xh3+ 38. ♔g1 ♞xd7 was curtains.

36... ♞g1?

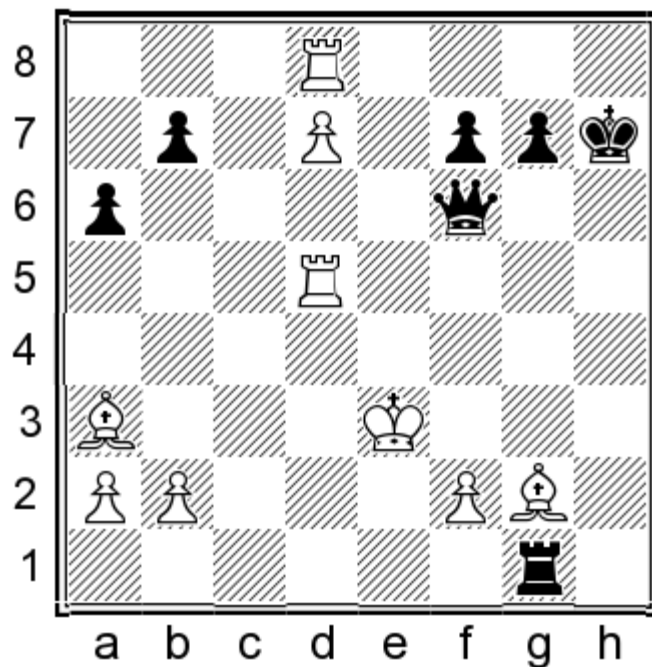
A very bad move that throws away the win. Black could cash the point in with 36...f5! 37. ♞e8+ ♔h7 38. ♞xd8 ♝g5+ 39. ♔f3 ♝g4+, with a forced mate: 40. ♔e3 ♞e1+ 41. ♔d3 ♝e2+ 42. ♔d4 ♞d1+ 43. ♔c3 ♞c1+ 44. ♔b4 ♝c4+ 45. ♔a5 ♞b6+ 46. ♔xb6 ♝c7+ 47. ♔xa6 ♞c6+ 48. ♔b5 ♞b6+ 49. ♔a4 ♝c6+ 50. ♔a5 ♞a6+ 51. ♔b4 ♞a4+ 52. ♔b3 ♝c4#. Obviously White didn't 'see' it...

37. ♞e8+ ♔h7 38. ♞xd8

Now it's a draw!

38... ♝g6+ 39. ♔f4 ♝f6+ 40. ♔e3?

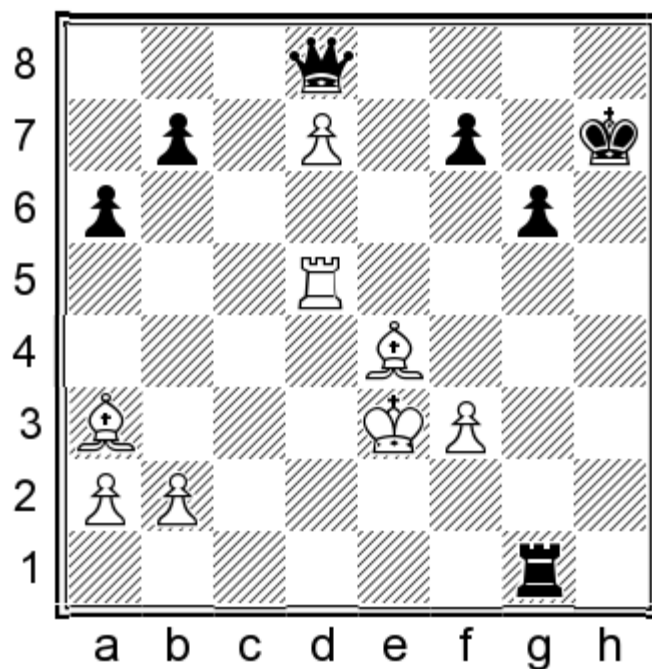
White should have accepted the draw by perpetual, but he decided to give it a try. Well, this was a blindfold game by the way...



40... ♖xd8?

And Black returns the favour. He could win with 40... ♜e1+ 41. ♔d3 ♜d1+ 42. ♕e4 ♜h4+ 43. ♕e3 ♜xd5 44. ♘e4+ g6 45. ♘xd5 ♜xd8 and the mighty d7-pawn falls.

41. ♘e4+ g6 42.f3!



A nice move. 42. ♘e7 fails to 42... ♜xe7 43.d8=♜ ♜e1+. But now White threatens 43. ♘e7.

42... ♜g5?

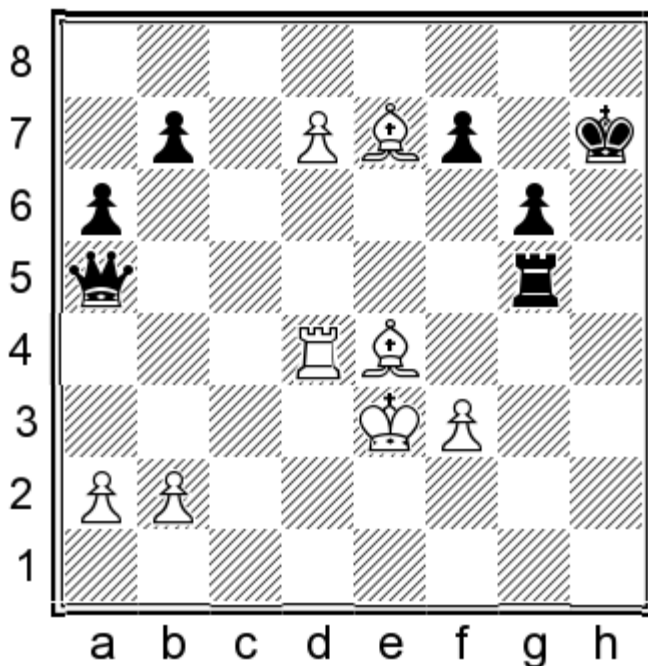
The correct defence is difficult and Black failed to find it. A draw could have been obtained with 42... f5 43. ♘e7 ♜b6+

44. ♖c5 (44. ♔f4?! ♚c7+ 45. ♝d6 ♚c1+ 46. ♗e5 ♚c5+ 47. ♔e6 fxe4 48. ♙f6 ♚xd6+ 49. ♔xd6 ♝d1+ 50. ♔c7 exf3 51. ♙h4 g5 52. ♙g3 b5 53. b4 ♔g6 54. ♙d6 ♝xd6 55. ♔xd6 f2 56. d8=♚ f1=♚ and only Black has chances) 44... ♚d8.

43. ♙e7 ♚b6+?

This loses without a fight. Black had to opt for 43... ♝xd5 44. ♙xd8 ♝xd7 45. ♙f6 and suffer...

44. ♝d4 ♚a5



45. ♙xg5?

Both 45. ♔f2! or 45. d8=♚ ♚e1+ 46. ♔d3 ♚f1+ 47. ♔c3 ♚e1+ 48. ♔b3 ♝b5+ 49. ♔c2 were instantly winning. Now White has to try hard...

45... ♚xg5+ 46. ♔f2 ♚d8 47. ♙xb7

White needs to create another passed pawn and it will be over.

47... a5 48. a3 ♔g7

The problem with Black's position is that there is no counterplay around, so in the long run he is just plain lost.

49. b4 axb4 50. axb4 f5 51. b5 f4 52. ♙e4 g5 53. ♔e2 ♔f6 54. ♝d5 ♔e6 55. b6 g4 56. fxe4 ♔f6 57. b7 1-0

CHAPTER 5.

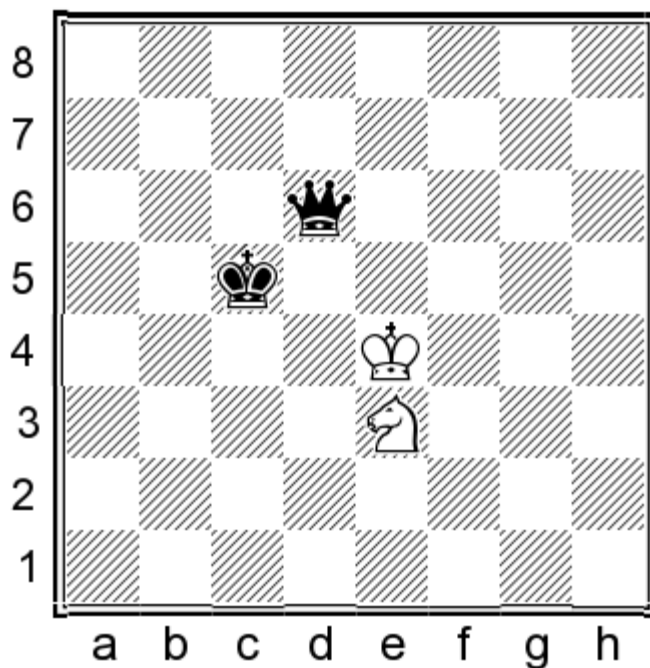
QUEEN VS KNIGHT & PAWNS

A lone knight cannot defend against a mighty queen. Usually the mate takes approximately 10-15 moves and it is quite simple.

Although the procedure looks relatively easy, it should be kept in mind that at this late stage of the game there is not enough time to think, so good knowledge is needed to cash in the points and that's why the ending must be studied.

Let's examine the mating technique on the edge of the board:

1
Gurevich Mikhail
Banikas Hristos
Korinthos 2002



69. ♖f5 ♚e6+ 70. ♜f4 ♚f6 71. ♜g4

71. ♜e4 (centralisation) defends for a bit longer, but ultimately in vain of course.

71... ♜d5 72. ♖g3 ♜e5 73. ♜h3 ♚g5

As usual, restriction of the opposing king on the edge of the board is the secret to mate!

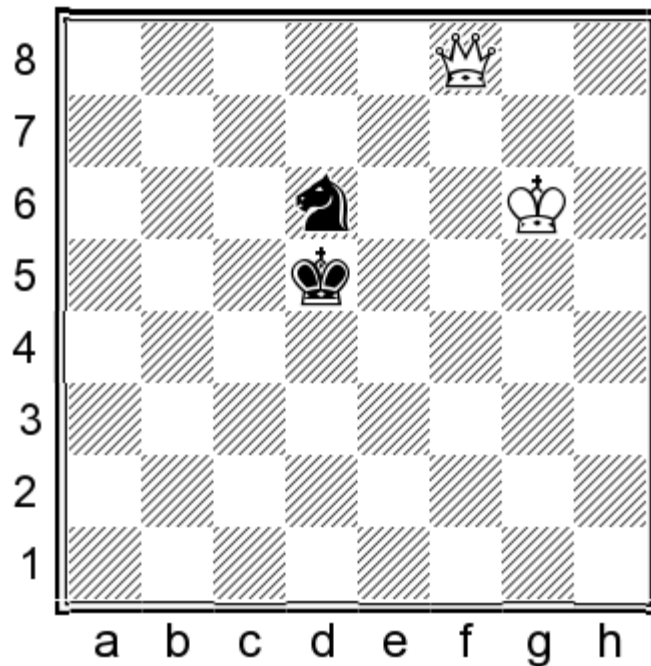
74. ♖e2?!

Blundering the knight is usual as well - anyway the mate is a maximum of 6 moves away with best defence.

74... ♚h5+ 75. ♜g3 ♚xe2 0-1

2

Benjamin Joel
De Firmian Nick
New York 1995



72.♞e7 ♜e4 73.♔f5 ♜d6+ 74.♔f4

The knight is restricted slowly but surely, pushing the king onto the edge of the board.

74...♜c4 75.♞d8+ ♜d6 76.♞d7! ♔c5 77.♔e5 ♜c4+ 78.♔e6 ♜e3?!

Blundering the knight. 'Best' was 78...♔b4, with mate in 12.

79.♞d3?!

Forgetting about 79.♞a7+.

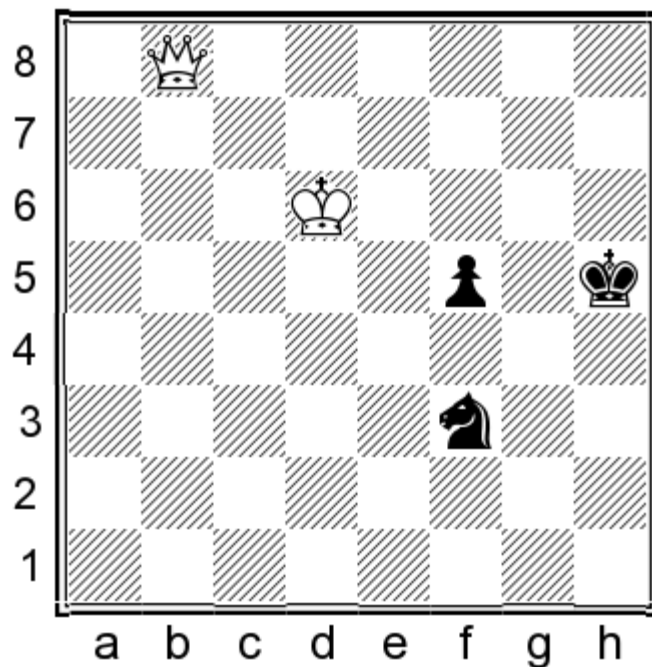
79...♜c4 80.♞c3 ♔b5 81.♔d5 ♜b6+ 82.♔d4 ♜d7 83.♞c8 ♜b6 84.♞c7 ♜a4 85.♞b8+ ♜b6 86.♞b7 ♔a5 87.♔c5 ♜a4+ 88.♔c6 ♜c3 89.♞b3! 1-0

Adding one pawn doesn't really help the knight; the position remains an easy case for the queen.

Of course some exceptions do exist and they are connected with how far advanced the pawn is – the queening threat is always strong!

3

Kasparov Garry
Kramnik Vladimir
Paris 1994



72. ♖f8

72. ♜g8 - restriction - is much quicker.

72... ♔g4 73. ♜g7+ ♔f4 74. ♔d5 ♔e3 75. ♜g3 f4 76. ♜h3 ♔e2 77. ♜g4 ♔e3 78. ♜g6 ♜h4

78... ♜d2 79. ♜h6 ♜f3 80. ♜f6 ♜e1 81. ♜e5+.

79. ♜e4+ ♔f2 80. ♜xf4+ ♔e2 81. ♜xh4 ♔d3 82. ♜g3+ ♔e2 83. ♔e4 ♔d2 84. ♔d4 ♔e2 85. ♜g2+ ♔d1 86. ♔d3 1-0

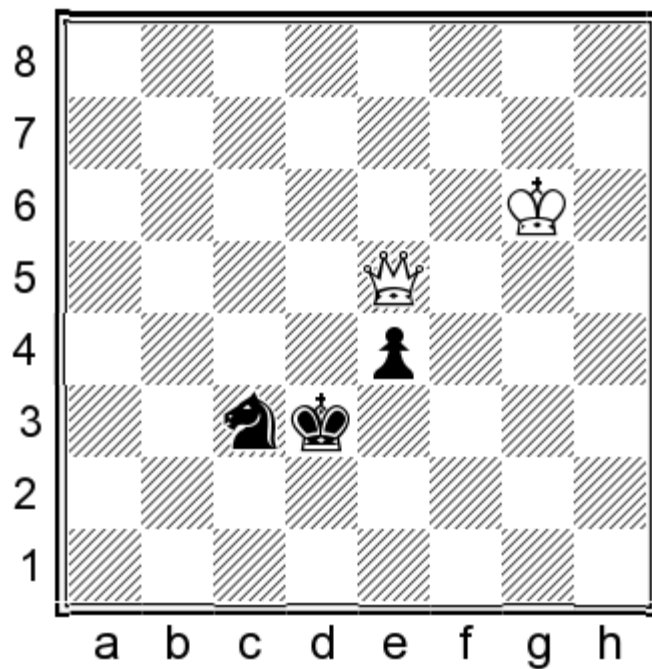
Of course Kramnik was playing on Kasparov's time-trouble, as this was a rapid game - no offence of course!

4

Anand Viswanathan

Wang Yue

Nice 2009



White must use his king to stop the pawn.

55.♔f5 e3 56.♔f4 ♖e2+ 57.♔f3 ♜d4+ 58.♔g2 ♜c2 59.♔f1

The white king returns in time.

59...♜d4 60.♚e8 ♜c2 61.♚g6+ 1-0

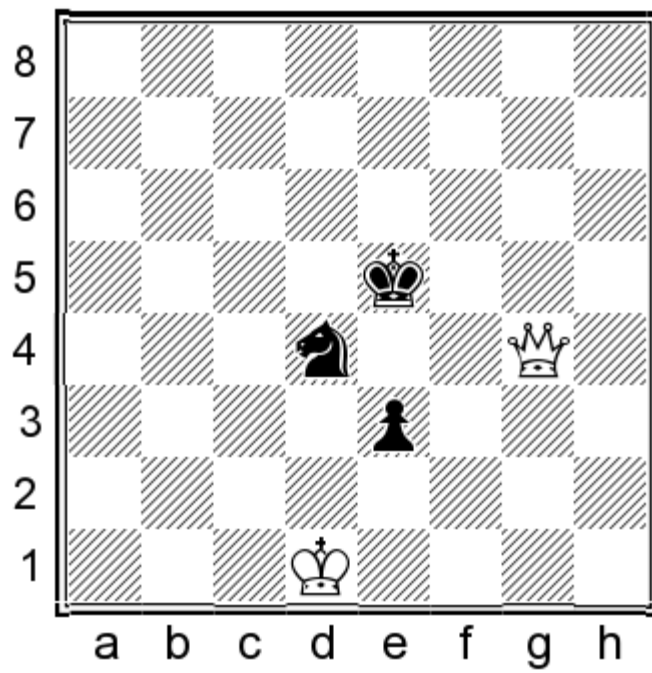
And Black resigned: 61...♔d2 62.♚d6+ ♔c3 63.♚c5+ ♔d2 64.♚d5+ ♔c3 65.♔e2+-.

5

Gajewski Grzegorz

Hjartarson Johann

Reykjavik 2014



55...e2+

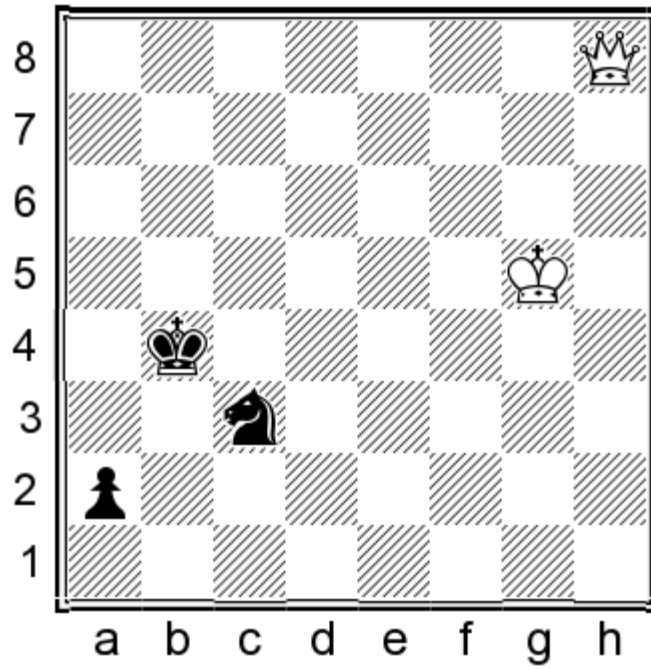
The pawn is fairly well-advanced, but the white king is even better placed!

56.♔d2 ♔d5 57.♚f4 ♔c4 58.♚e4 ♔c5 59.♔d3 1-0

And as the pawn falls, there is nothing left to play for...

6

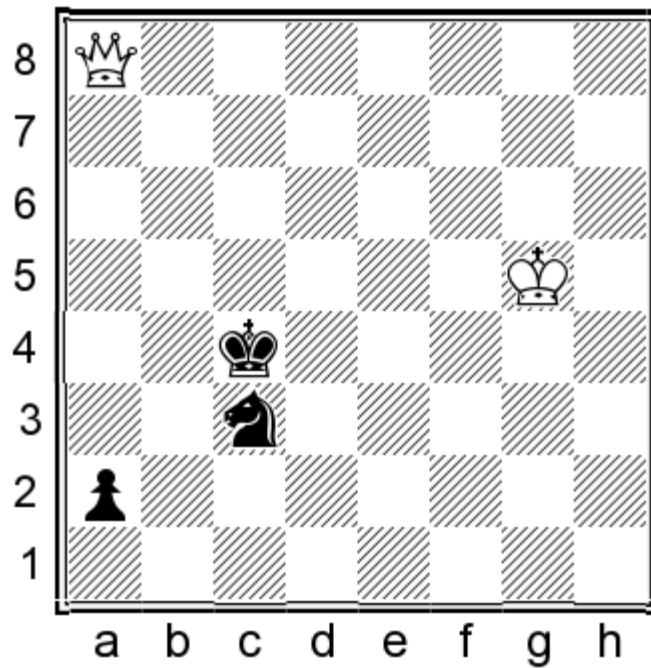
Ulko Jaroslav
Gomes Mary Ann
Moscow 2016



Here the pawn is well-advanced, the black forces well-placed and the white king distant, so the draw is not a surprising result.

69. ♖a8 ♔b3

69... ♕c4? loses to



70. ♖a3!, but 69... ♖a4 was good as well: 70. ♖b7+ ♔c3 71. ♖a6 ♔b2 72. ♖b5+ ♔c1 73. ♖xa4 ♔b1=.

70. ♔f4 ♔b2 71. ♖b7+ ♔c2 72. ♖a6 ♔b2 73. ♖b6+ ♔c2 74. ♖a5 ♔b2 75. ♖b4+ ♔c2 76. ♖a3 ♔b1 77. ♖b3+ ♔c1

77... ♔a1? 78. ♔e3!+-, as Black cannot be in stalemate - he has a knight!

78. ♖xc3+ ♔b1 79. ♗e1+ ♔b2 80. ♗d2+ ♔b1 1/2-1/2

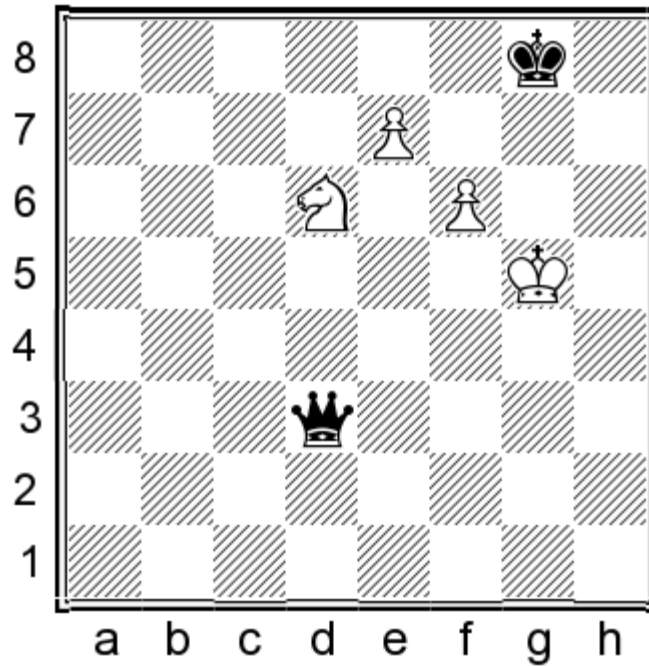
The mighty queen wins against two pawns as well. Some exceptions occur when the pawns are connected and far-advanced. And of course when the 'queen' side has no clue of what to do!

7

Campora Daniel Hugo

Milos Gilberto

San Nicolas 1993



As the pawns are far-advanced and ready to queen, Black must keep the perpetual check.

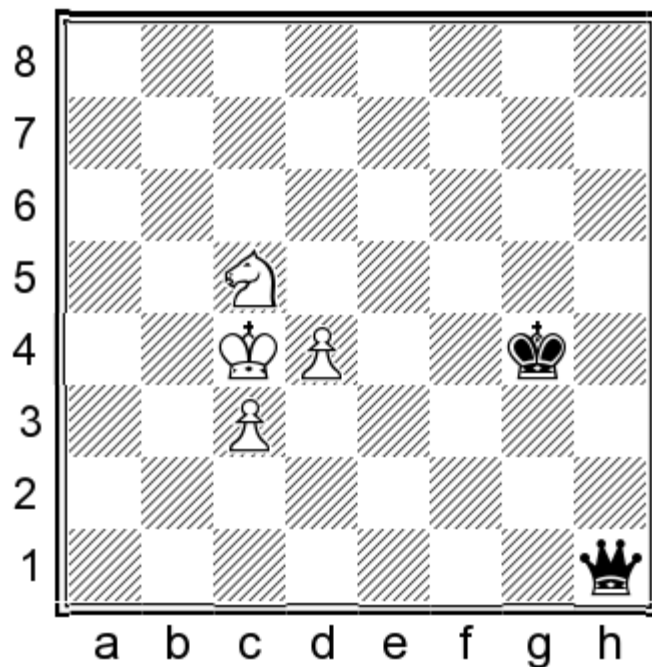
77... ♖g3+ 78. ♔f5 ♗d3+ 79. ♔e5 ♗c3+ 80. ♔e6 ♗b3+ 81. ♔d7 ♗a4+ 1/2-1/2

8

Tiefenbacher Walter

Mitev Stoyan

Pula 1972



White seems to have a good version, but still Black can prevail.

82...♔f5 83.♔b4 ♕f6 84.c4 ♖e1+ 85.♔b5 ♖b1+ 86.♔c6 ♖a2 87.♔d5 ♕e7 88.♗d3 ♖b3 89.♗e5 ♖b7+ 90.♔c5 ♕e6 91.♗c6 ♖b3

Black is 'playing around' without a concrete plan. Good was 91...♔d7 92.♗e5+ ♔c7 93.♗d3 (93.d5?! ♖b6#) 93...♖a8 94.♔b4 ♖a1 95.♗c5 ♖b2+ 96.♗b3 ♔d6 and soon White will be forced to push one of his pawns, affording an entry point to the black king.

92.d5+ ♔d7 93.♗e5+ ♔c7 94.d6+

Suddenly the d-pawn becomes dangerous, while the win has 'increased' by approximately 10 moves!

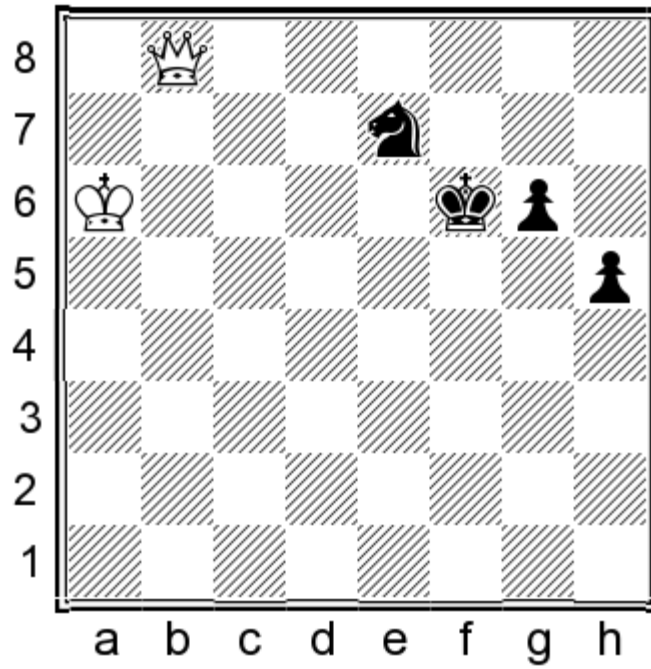
94...♔b7 95.♔d5 ♕c8 96.♔e6 ♖h3+ 97.♔e7 ♖h7+ 98.♔e6 ♖g8+ 99.♔e7 ♖d8+ 100.♔e6 ♖b6 101.♔d5 ♖e3 102.c5! ♖b3+ 103.♔d4 ♖b2+ 104.♔d5 ♖a2+ 105.♔d4 ♖d2+ 106.♔e4 1/2-1/2

Black couldn't find the win and proposed a draw: 106...♖d1! (zugzwang) 107.d7+ (107.♔e3 ♖d5 108.d7+ ♔d8 109.♔f4 ♖xc5-+) 107...♔d8 108.c6 ♕e7 109.♔f5 ♖c2+ 110.♔f4 ♖b1! 111.♔e3 ♖b6+ 112.♔f4 ♕e6 and the pawns fall.

But the win in general is not that difficult; zugzwang and the 'queen' side's king involvement are the usual techniques:

9

**Koblencs Aleksandrs
Kampenuss Peteris
Riga 1962**



94. ♖d6+ ♔f7 95. ♗b5 ♘f5 96. ♚e5 ♔g8 97. ♗c5 ♔h7 98. ♗d5 ♔h6 99. ♚f6

The f6-square belongs to the white king: 99. ♚f4+! ♔g7 100. ♗e6 h4 101. ♚e5+ ♔h7 102. ♗f6 h3 103. ♚h2+-.

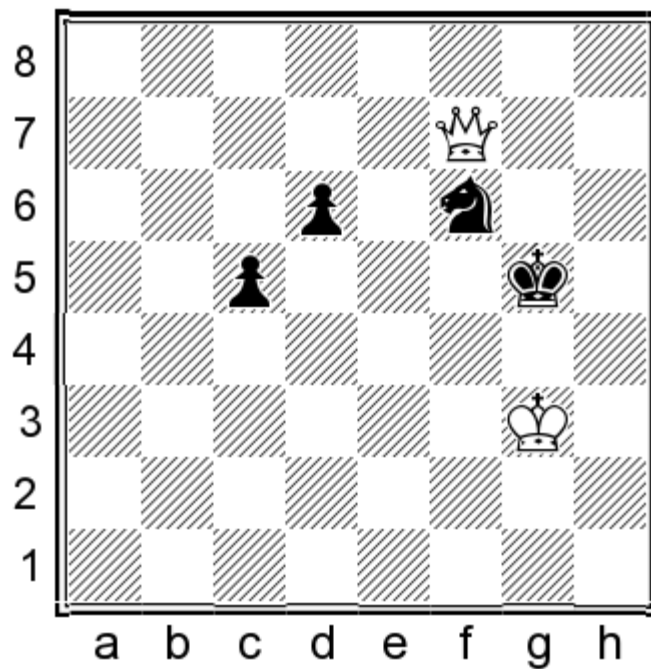
99... ♘e3+ 100. ♗e6 ♘g4 101. ♚e7 ♘e3 102. ♗f7 ♘f5 103. ♚f6 ♘d6+ 104. ♚xd6 1-0

10

Krush Irina

Nataf Igor Alexandre

Montreal 2005



81.♔f3 d5 82.♚c7 c4 83.♚e5+

The pawns are blocked and the black king is far away as well.

83...♔g6 84.♔f4 ♖h5+ 85.♔g4 ♖f6+ 86.♔h4! c3

After 86...♔f7 87.♔g5 Black loses his pawns as well.

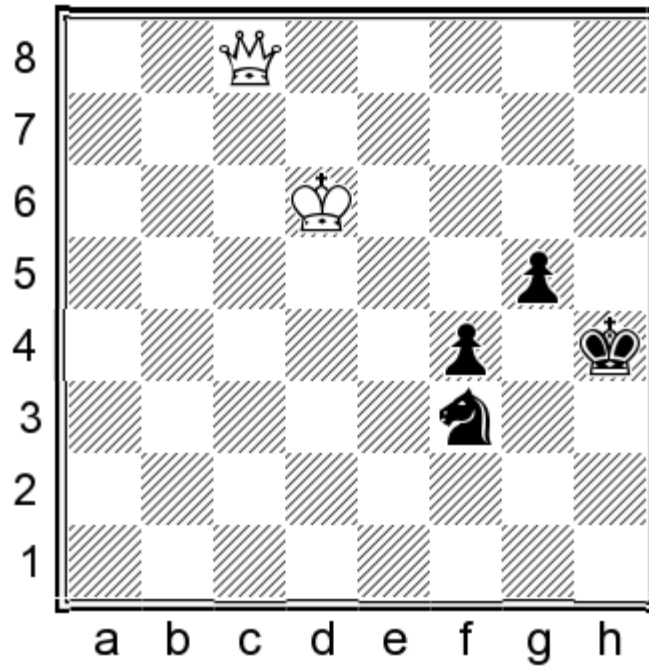
87.♚xc3 ♔f5 88.♚d4 ♔e6 89.♔g5 ♖d7 90.♔f4 ♔d6 91.♔f5 ♖c5 92.♚f6+ ♔c7 93.♚e7+ ♔c6 94.♚e8+ ♔d6 95.♚d8+ ♖d7 96.♔f4 ♔c6 97.♔e3 ♔d6 98.♔d4 ♔c6 99.♚a8+ ♔c7 100.♚xd5 1-0

11

Al Modiahki Mohamad

Domingos Catarino

Bled 2002



85.♔d5 ♔g3 86.♚c3 ♔g4

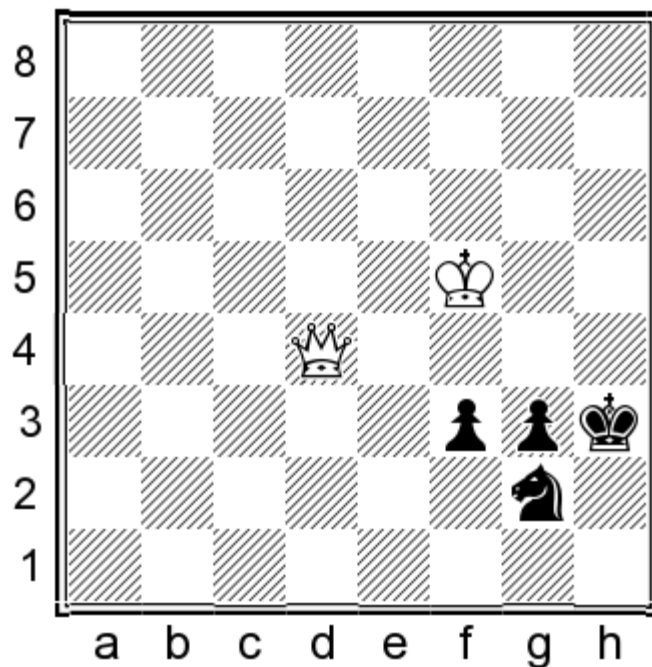
86...g4 87.♔e4 and the pawns fall.

87.♔e4 ♖h4 88.♚c8+ ♔g3 89.♚g8

Accurate was 89.♚c1! ♔g4 90.♚g1+ ♔h5 91.♚d1+ f3 (91...♔h6 92.♔e5+–) 92.♚g1 g4 93.♔e5! ♖g2 94.♚f2 ♔g6 95.♚d2 ♔h5 96.♔f5 ♔h4 97.♚f2+ ♔h3 98.♔g5+–.

89...♔g4

89...g4 90.♚b8 ♖g2 91.♚d6 ♔f2 92.♔f5 ♔g3 93.♚a3+ f3 94.♚d6+ ♔h3 95.♚d4 g3



96. ♖g1! ♜h4+ (96...f2 97. ♚h1#) 97. ♜g5 g2 98. ♚f2 ♜g6 99. ♜xg6 ♜h2 100. ♜g5 ♜h1 101. ♚xf3+.

90. ♖c4 ♜g3 91. ♚g8 ♜g4 92. ♜d3 ♜f3 93. ♜e2 ♜g3 94. ♚b3 g4 95. ♖c3 ♜g2 96. ♚c6 ♜g3 97. ♚d6 ♜h4 98. ♜f1 ♜f3 99. ♚d3 ♜h2 100. ♚c2+ ♜h3 101. ♜f2 ♜h4 102. ♚c8 ♜f3 103. ♚f8 1-0

Although the chances are somewhat increased, the knight is still weak with even three pawns. The 'queen' side's strategy is to win firstly the weakest pawn (if any of course) and then concentrate on the others.

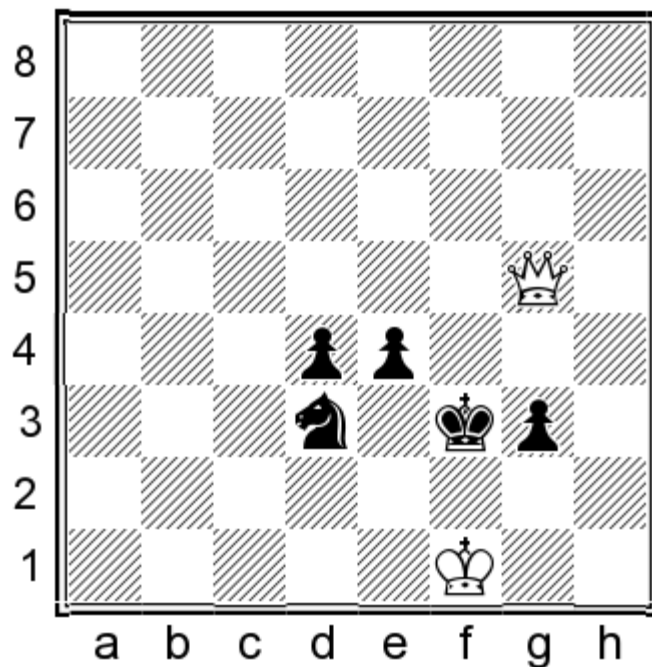
The problem with the knight in contrast to the bishop is that it cannot have mutual protection with a pawn.

12

Sutovsky Emil

Barsov Alexei

York 1999



It doesn't look so easy, but White can win this.

58. ♖h5+! ♔f4 59. ♕d1

Accurate was 59. ♕h8! ♔e3 60. ♕g7 and one of the pawns falls.

59...g2+

59... ♔g5 60. ♔g2 ♔f4 61. ♕h1! and the g-pawn falls.

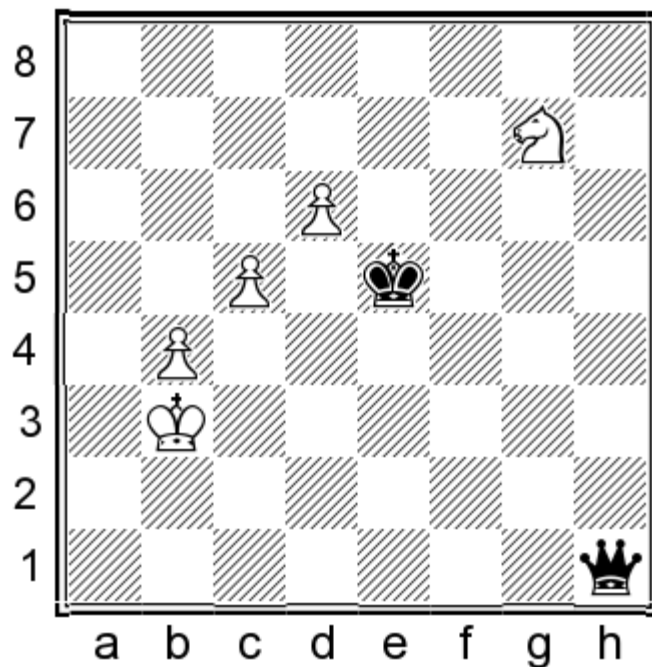
60. ♔xg2 ♔e3 61. ♔g3 ♖e5 62. ♕c1+ ♔d3 63. ♕a3+! ♔e2

63... ♔c4 64. ♔f4 ♖d3+ 65. ♔xe4+-.

64. ♔f4 ♖c4 65. ♕b4 1-0

13

**Ponomariov Ruslan
Harikrishna Pentala
Huaian 2016**



The black king is nearby while the knight can be in danger; Black can prevail.

49...♖b1+! 50.♔a4

Or 50.♔c3 ♖e1+ 51.♔c4 ♖f1+ 52.♔c3 ♖f7—+, as the knight is lost.

50...♖g6

The knight is lost now and the black king is close enough to the pawns.

If 51.d7 ♖c6 wins the pawn and the knight is still trapped.

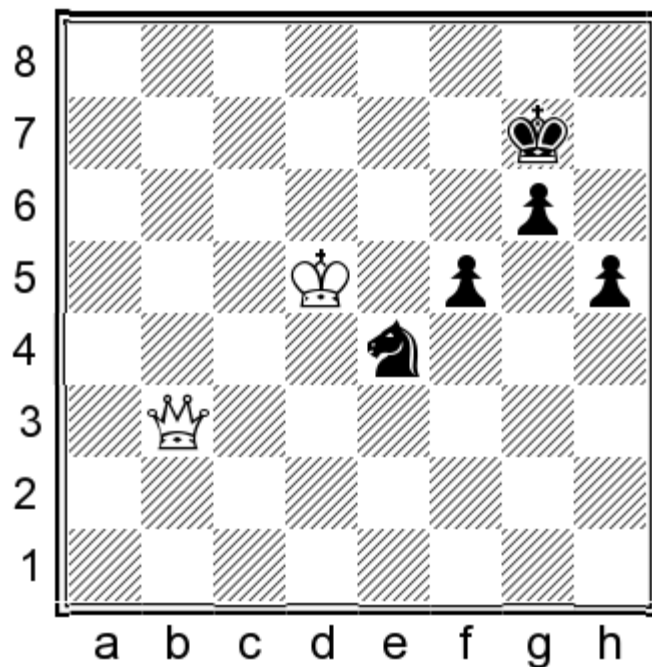
51.♔b5 ♖xg7 52.♔c6 ♔e6 53.b5 ♖d7+ 54.♔b6 ♔d5 55.c6 ♖xd6 56.♔b7 ♔c5 57.c7 ♖b6+ 0-1

14

Dydyshko Viacheslav

Pinkas Karol

Frydek Mistek 1995



54.♔e5 h4

Black cannot stay put and wait: 54...♖c5 55.♚a3 ♗e4 56.♚e7+ ♔h6 57.♔f4 ♗f2 58.♚a3 ♗e4 59.♚f8+ ♔h7 60.♚f7+ ♔h6 61.♚g8+-.

55.♚h3

More precise was 55.♚e3! ♔h7 56.♚h3. As you may have noticed, this kind of ending is won with non-check or non-threat moves!

55...♗g5 56.♚h1

56.♚xh4? ♗f3+-+.

56...h3 57.♔f4 ♔h6 58.♚a8

58.♚e1! ♗f7 59.♚g3+-.

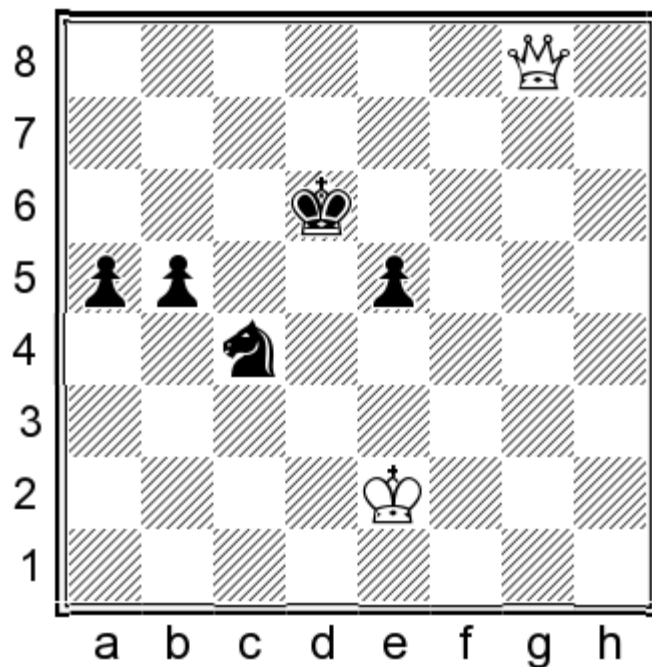
58...h2 59.♚g2 ♗e6+ 60.♔e5 ♗g7 61.♔f6 ♗h5+ 62.♔f7 1-0

15

Schmittdiel Eckhard

Hagesaether Paal Vegard

Gausdal 1995



53.♔d3 ♕c5 54.♜f8+ ♘d6 55.♞f2+

More accurate seems to be 55.♞h8 e4+ (55...♔d5 56.♞a8+-) 56.♔c3 b4+ 57.♔b3+-.

55...♔c6 56.♞a7 a4 57.♔c3 ♘c4

The alternative 57...♔d5 is of no help either: 58.♞b6 ♘e4+ 59.♔b4 ♘d6 60.♞c5+ ♔e6 61.♞c6 ♔e7 62.♞a6 e4 63.♔c5+-.

58.♞a8+ ♔c5 59.♞c8+ ♔d5 60.♔b4 ♘d6 61.♞a8+

Or 61.♞c5+ ♔e6 62.♞c6+-.

61...♔e6

Or 61...♔d4 62.♞d8 ♔d5 63.♞g8+ ♔e4 64.♞g6+ ♔d5 65.♞d3+ ♔c6 66.♞d1! (the usual 'quite' move!) 66...e4 67.♞d4+-.

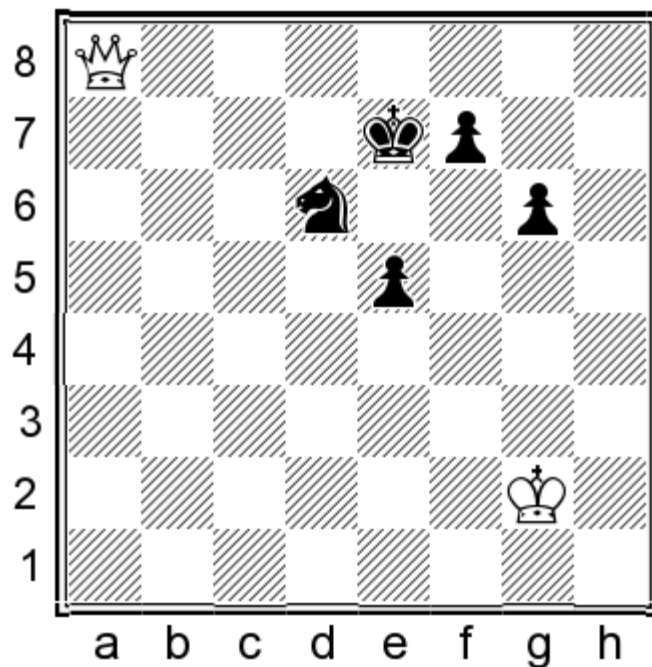
62.♔c5 1-0

16

Renet Olivier

Tiviakov Sergei

Clichy 1991



49. ♖d5!

First centralisation - then domination!

49...f6 50. ♖g8 ♗f5

More stubborn was 50...g5 51. ♔f3 ♕d7 52. ♔g4 ♕e7 53. ♖b3 e4 (53...♕d7 54. ♔h5+-) 54. ♖g8 ♕d7 55. ♖b8 ♕e7 56. ♖c7+ ♕e6 57. ♖h7 ♕d5 58. ♖e7+-.

51. ♔f3 1-0

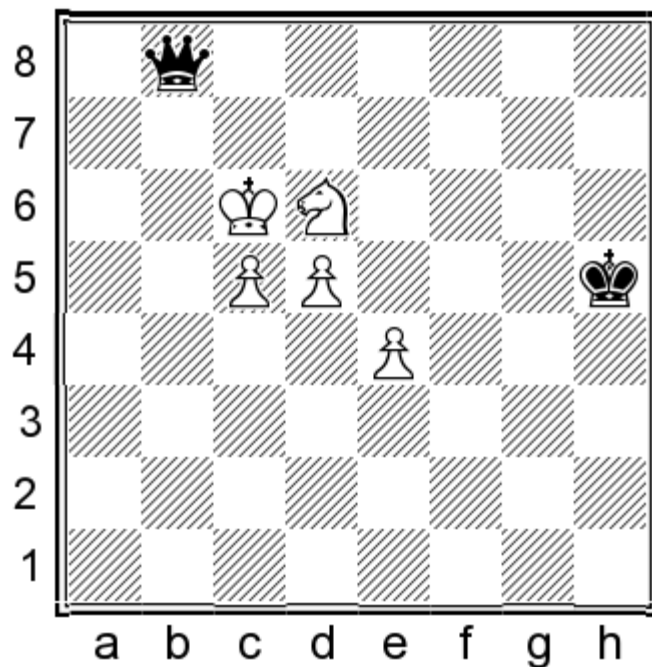
Black resigned, as he is short of moves: 51...♕d6 52. ♖f7 ♗d4+ 53. ♔e3 f5 54. ♖xg6+-

17

Jakesevic Branko

Krizancic Josip

Zagreb 2008



Here we have a good version for the 'knight' side; the pawns are reasonably advanced and the white pieces co-ordinate nicely.

50...♔g5 51.♕d7?

A critical mistake. Pawns should be pushed when they can reach the 7th rank: 51.e5! ♖a8+ 52.♕d7 ♜xd5 53.c6 ♜d1 54.c7 (54.e6 ♜g4 55.c7 ♜a4+ 56.♕d8 ♜a6=) 54...♜a4+ 55.♕d8 ♜a5 56.♕d7=.

51...♜a7+! 52.♕c6 ♕f4

Now White is in trouble.

53.♘b7 ♜b8?!

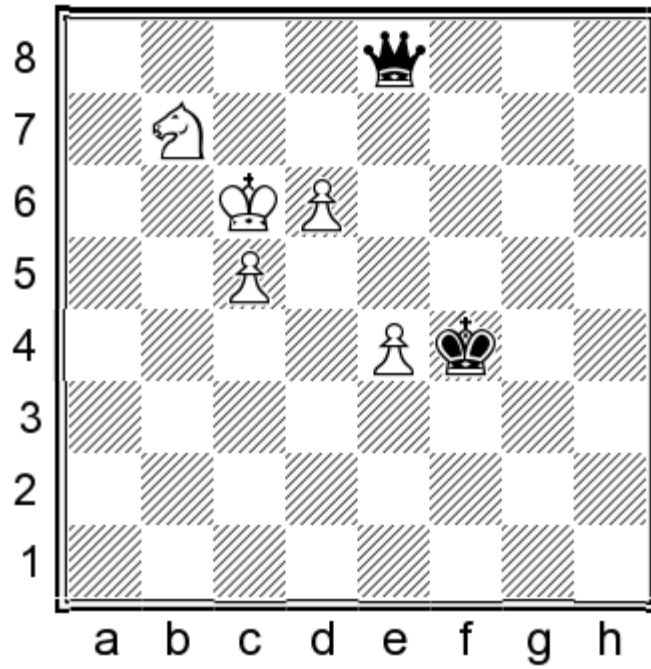
53...♜a6+ 54.♕c7 ♕xe4 55.d6 ♕d5 and Black mates in 12.

54.d6

Or 54.♘d6 ♜a7 55.♕b5 ♜c7 56.♕c4 ♜a5 57.c6 ♕e5—+.

54...♜e8+?

Black, in turn, blunders. Winning was 54...♜c8+! 55.♕b6 ♕xe4 56.c6 ♕d5 57.c7 ♕e6—+.



55.d7!

Now White is about to queen, so Black has to look for perpetual check.

55...♙xe4+ 56.♚c7 ♜e5+ 57.♚b6 ♜b2+ 58.♚c6 ♜f6+ 59.♚c7 ♜e5+ 60.♚b6 ♜b2+ 61.♚a7 ♜a1+ 62.♚b8 ♜e5+ 63.♜d6 ♜xc5

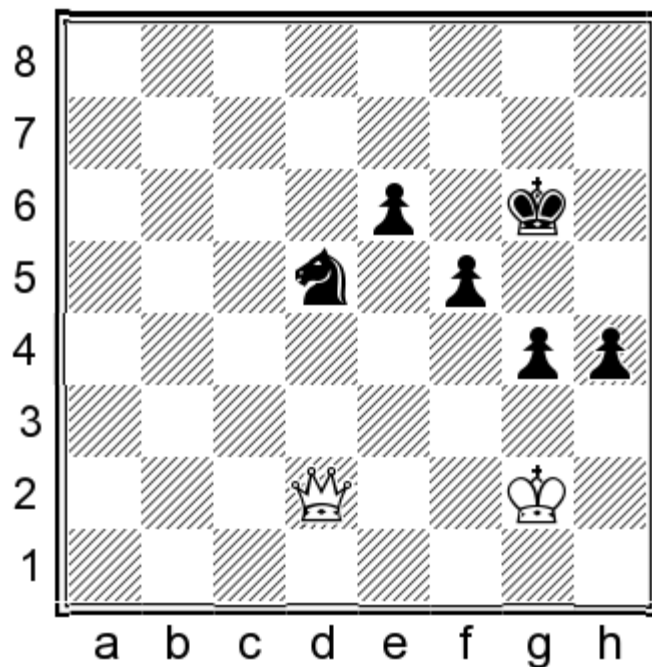
Or 63...♜h8+ 64.♚c7 ♜g7 65.♚c8 ♜g4=.

64.d8=♜ ♜b4+ 65.♚c8 ♜c5+ 1/2-1/2

With four or more pawns the ‘knight’ side has good drawing chances, although it still remains the ‘weaker link’.

Of course healthy, connected and fairly well-advanced pawn structures and the placement of the kings are important and decisive factors.

Example 1



Here Black has at his disposal all of the above positive factors and it seems that he can save himself.

1. ♖d4 h3+ 2. ♔h2 ♕f7 3. ♚a7+ ♔g6 4. ♚b8 ♕f6 5. ♔g3 ♕f7 6. ♚b7+ ♔f6 7. ♚c8 ♕f7 8. ♚d7+ ♔f6 9. ♚e8 ♕e5 1/2-1/2

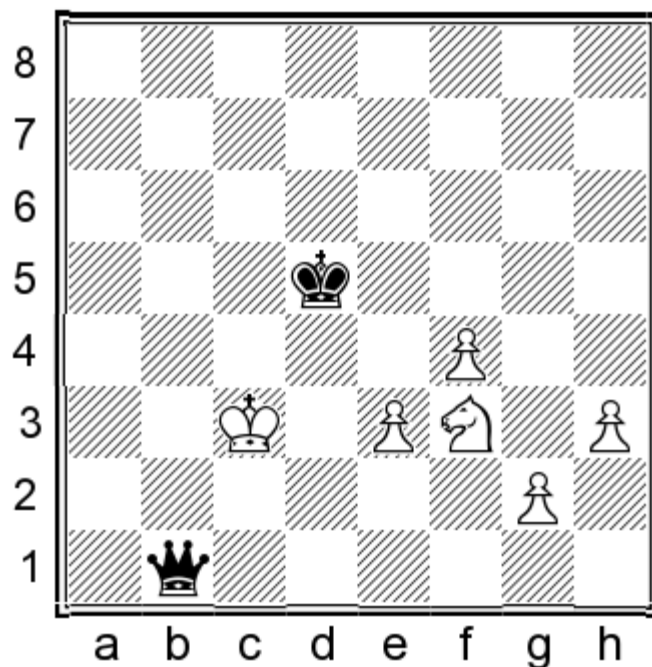
And there isn't much that White can do to improve.

18

Casarin Luis Marcio Pinhatt

Lopes Roberto Juliano Jr

Sao Bernardo do Campo 2012



As the white king is not yet protecting his pawns, Black can realise a decisive advantage.

56...♖a1+

56...♖c1+! 57.♔d3 ♖f1+—.

56...♖a1+ 57.♔d3 ♖a3+?

Of course 57...♖f1+—, but Black hadn't seen the idea...

58.♔e2 ♖a2+ 59.♘d2 ♖a6+ 60.♔f2 ♖d3 61.♘f1

61.♘f3 ♖c2+ 62.♔g3 ♔e4 and the e3-pawn is gone.

61...♖c2+ 62.♔f3 ♖d1+ 63.♔f2 ♔e4 64.♘g3+ ♔d3 65.e4 ♖d2+ 66.♔f3 ♖d1+ 67.♔f2 ♖a4

Preferable was 67...♖b3 68.♔f3 ♔d4+ 69.♔g4 ♖d1+ 70.♔g5 ♖d2—.

68.h4

After this the pawns fall. Relatively best was 68.♔f3, although after 68...♖c6 69.♔f2 ♔d4 70.e5 ♔d3—, White will not last too long.

68...♖d1 69.e5 ♖g4

The end.

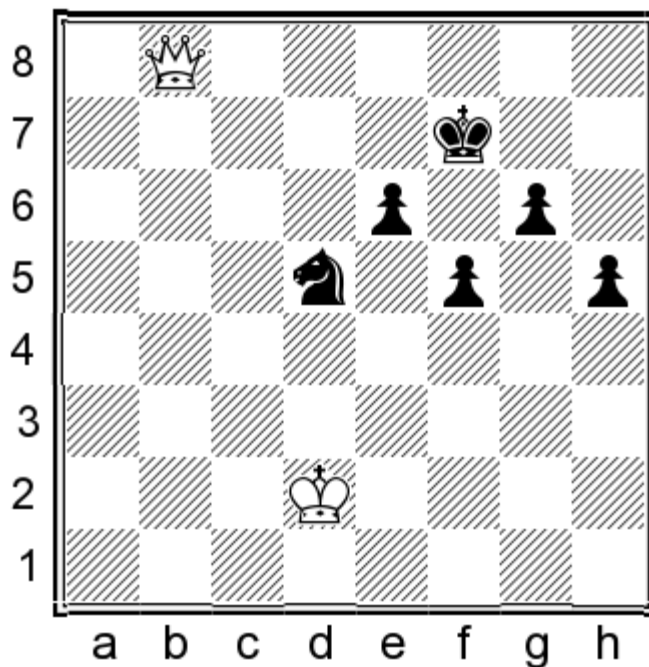
70.♘f1 ♖xf4+ 71.♔g1 ♖xh4 72.g3 ♖d4+ 73.♔g2 ♖xe5 74.♘h2 ♔e2 75.g4 ♖f4 76.♔g1 ♖g3+ 0-1

19

Toth Lili

Horvath Peter Szendro

Aggtelek 2000



The pawns are not so far-advanced, so White is on top in this struggle.

59. ♖h8 ♜f6 60. ♕e3 e5 61. ♕d3 g5 62. ♕c4 f4 63. ♗b8 e4 64. ♗b7+ ♕e6 65. ♕c5

Good was 65. ♕d4 e3 66. ♗c8+ ♕f7 67. ♕e5+-.

65...f3 66. ♕d4 g4 67. ♗c6+ ♕f5 0-1

Here White resigned! She obviously thought that the pawn phalanx was too strong and her playing strength (unrated) and lack of knowledge didn't help her to understand that she is winning! 68. ♗b5+ ♕e6 69. ♗g5 f2 70. ♗e5+ (70. ♗f4? g3! =) 70... ♕f7 71. ♗f4 ♕e6 (71...g3 72. ♕e5+-) 72. ♗xf2+-.

When the 'queen' side has an extra pawn (or pawns) the win is trivial, because the stronger side has at his disposal additional values:

1. The extra pawn (or pawns), if not passed, can stop one-or-more of the opponent's pawns, freeing his pieces to deliver the mate.
2. If passed, then a new queen can be promoted or material can be won.

Keep in mind that such rules in chess are only really a rough guide in order to proceed with ideas; each position is unique and should be treated with care and responsibility, paying attention to specific moves and calculation.

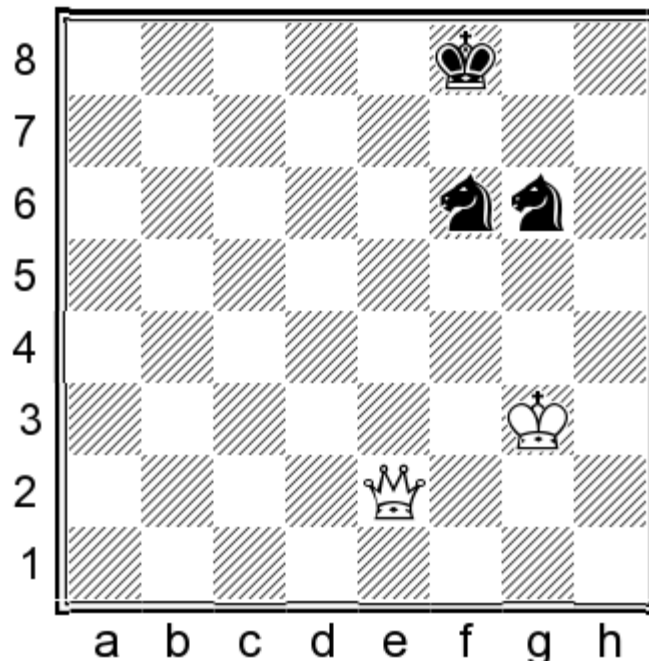
QUEEN VS TWO KNIGHTS

In contrary to the queen vs two bishops ending, it is a bit surprising that the queen vs two knights ending offers the best chances for survival.

In fact the ending is generally a draw if the 'knight' side's king isn't separated from the knights, which should also occupy reasonable positions next to each other.

Also, keep in mind that positions where the knights just protect each other are usually lost, as the important thing is to stop the opponent's king entrance and his co-operation with the queen for delivering mate.

Example 1



This is a basic drawn position.

1. ♖a6 ♗g7

1... ♗f7 or 1... ♗e7 are OK as well.

2. ♗f3 ♗f7

2... ♗h7? 3. ♖b7+! loses, as the harmony among the knights is disturbed and the white king enters: 3... ♗g8 4. ♗e4+-.

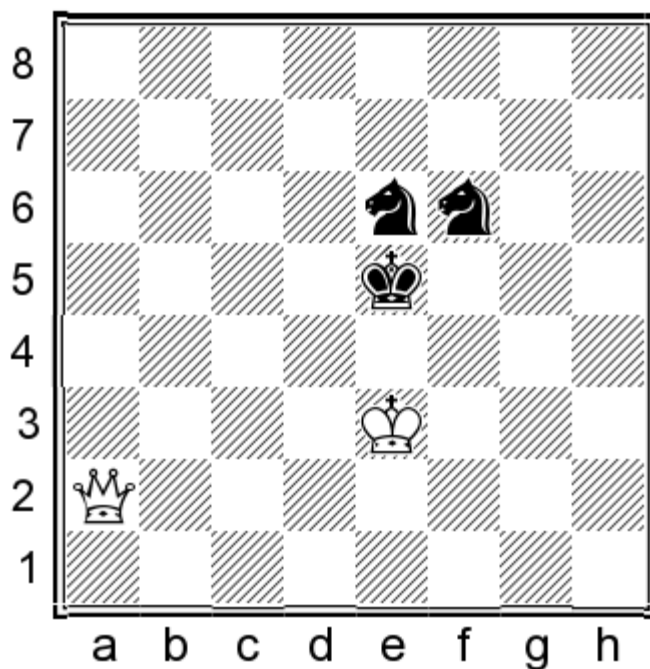
3. ♖b7+ ♗e6!

3... ♗g8? loses to 4. ♗e3 ♗f8 5. ♗d4 ♗g8 6. ♗c5+-.

4. ♖b3+ ♗e7 5. ♗e3 ♗f8 6. ♗d4 ♗e6+ 7. ♗e5 ♗d7+ 8. ♗d5 ♗f6+ 1/2-1/2

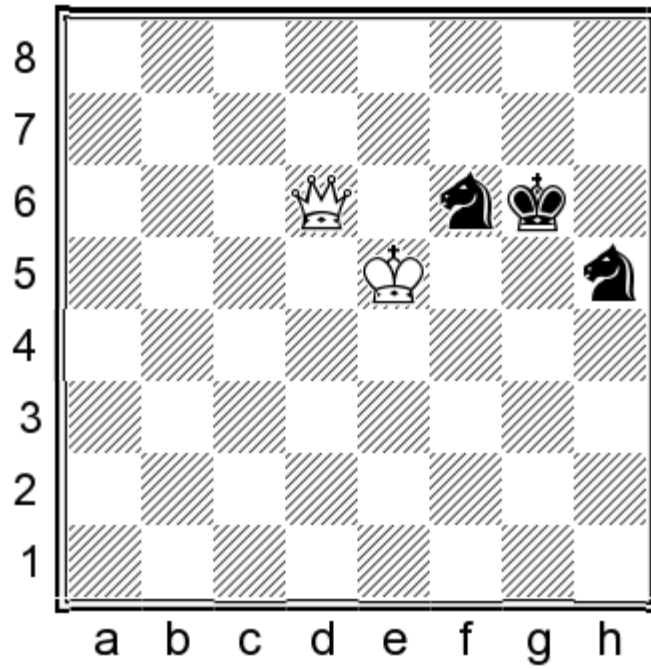
The king should be attached to his knights!

Example 2



1. ♖a5+ ♗d6! 2. ♗d3 ♗c5+!

2... ♗d5? loses, but this is not trivial: 3. ♖a3+ ♗e5 4. ♖b2+ ♗f5 5. ♖f2+ ♗e5 6. ♖e1+ ♗f5 7. ♖a5 ♗e5 8. ♗c4 ♗ef4 9. ♖e1+ ♗d6 10. ♖g3 ♗e5 11. ♗c5 ♗e4 12. ♖h4 ♗f5 13. ♗d4 ♗f6 14. ♖f2 ♗g4 15. ♖c2 ♗g5 16. ♖c5+ ♗g6 17. ♖d6 ♗4h5 18. ♗e5



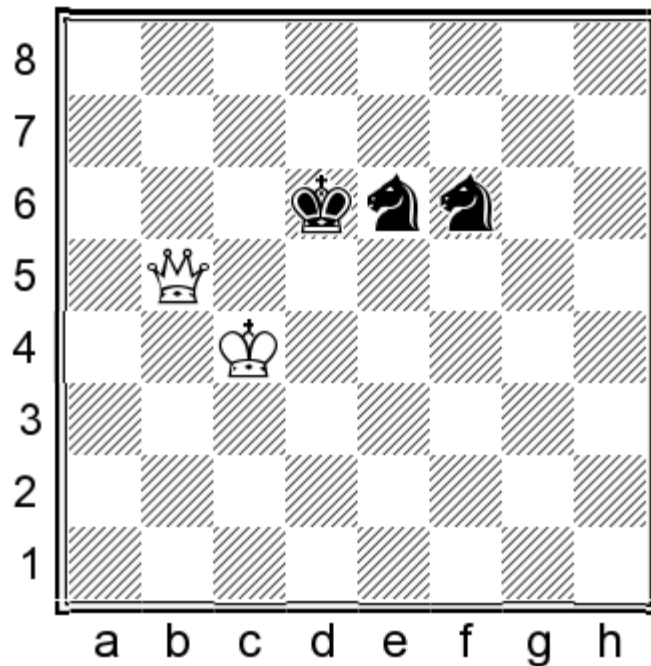
and White wins in 34 moves. All these moves are insane to the human eye and cannot really be explained. Good or bad, we are following an analysis engine line and I do not believe that any human would win it using ultimate best play...

3. ♖c4 ♜e6

After 3...♜fd7? the knights get stuck to each other and immobilised: 4. ♞d2+ ♔e7 5. ♞b4 ♔e6 6. ♖b5 ♔d5 7. ♞d2+ ♔e5 8. ♖c6 ♔e4 9. ♖d6 ♔f5 10. ♞e3 ♔g4 11. ♔d5 ♔f5 12. ♞f3+ ♔g5 13. ♔d6 ♔h4 14. ♞g2 ♔h5 15. ♞g7 ♔h4 16. ♞g6 ♔h3 17. ♔d5 (17. ♞g5? ♜e4+=) 17...♔h4 18. ♞f5 ♔g3 19. ♔d4 ♔h4 20. ♔e3 ♔g3 21. ♞g5+ ♔h3 22. ♔f3 and mate follows.

4. ♞b5

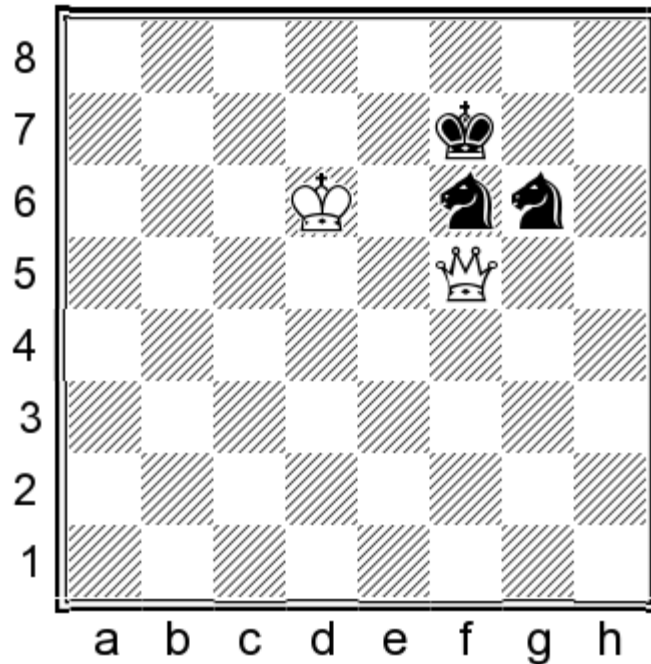
Or 4. ♞a3+ ♔e5! =.



4...♔e7! 5.♚b8 ♔f7 6.♔b5 ♔g6 7.♚e5 ♔f7 8.♔c6 ♚f8!

The only good move, aiming for g6.

9.♚f5 ♚g6 10.♔d6



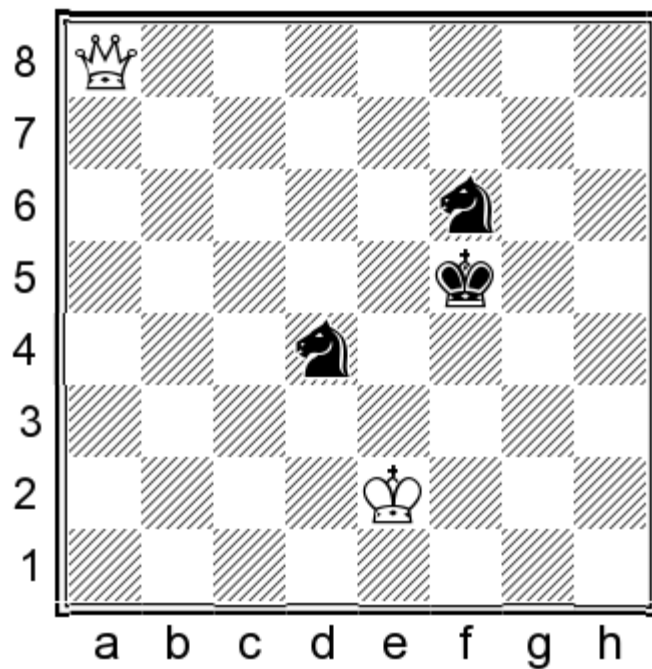
10...♔g7! 11.♔e6 ♚f8+! 12.♔e7 ♚g6+

12...♚g8+ is OK as well.

13.♔e6 1/2-1/2

In the next game Black obtains the optimal knights' position:

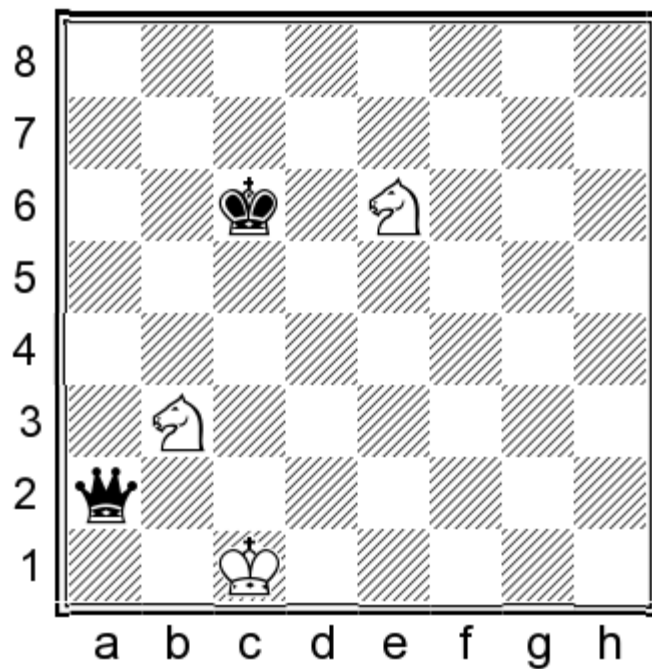
1
Bemporad Filippo
Bove Alessandro
Milan 2009



76.♔e3 ♘e6! 77.♚h8 ♔e5 78.♚b8+ ♔f5 79.♚b5+ ♔g6! 80.♚a5 ♔f7 1/2-1/2

2

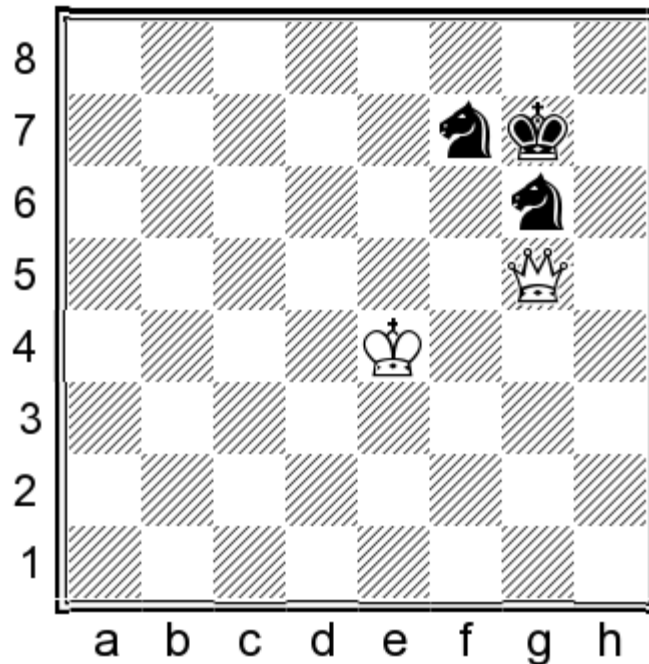
Kludacz Magdalena
Dworakowska Joanna
Sopot 1998



The knights stand badly and Black can win.

64...♔d5 65.♘ed4 ♔c4 66.♔d1 ♚f2! 67.♔c1 ♔c3 0-1

And mate or material loss is next.



Black's knights are badly placed.

79. ♖g3 ♜f6

79... ♗h6 loses to 80. ♖e3 ♗g8 81. ♜f5! ♗h6+ 82. ♜g5 ♗f7+ 83. ♜g4 ♗h6+ 84. ♜h5 ♗g8 85. ♜g5 ♜f7 86. ♖b3+ ♜g7 87. ♖b5 ♗h6 88. ♖b2+ ♜f7 (88... ♜h7 89. ♖b7+-) 89. ♖f6+-.

80. ♖f2+ ♜g7 81. ♖d4+ ♜h7 82. ♜f5 ♗h6+ 83. ♜g5 ♗g8 84. ♖d7+ ♗e7 85. ♖d6?!

85. ♖d4 was quick: 85... ♗g6 (85... ♗c8 86. ♖d3+ ♜g7 87. ♖c3+) 86. ♖e4 ♗e7 87. ♖e6 ♜g7 88. ♖f6+ ♜h7 89. ♖f7+ ♜h8 90. ♜f6+-.

85... ♜g7 86. ♖d4+ ♜f7 87. ♖h8 ♜e6 88. ♖g7 ♜d7 89. ♖f7 ♜d6 90. ♜f4

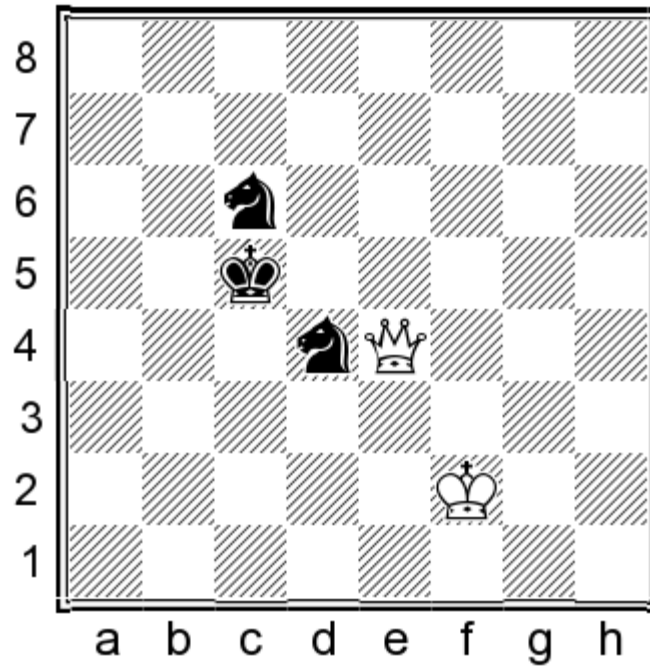
90. ♖b3 is still a win on 28 moves, while the text move needs 47!

90... ♗d5+ 91. ♜e4 ♗ge7 92. ♖f8 ♜e6 93. ♜d4?

93. ♖h6+! wins in 53 moves, which is probably too long...

93... ♗f6! 94. ♖a8 1-0

And Black resigned in a drawn position after 94... ♗d7 or 94... ♗f5+ or 94... ♗g6. A strangely-played ending with an even stranger result!



Although the knights seem to be positioned somehow 'not right', this position is drawn.

85.♔e3 ♔c4?

This loses. 85...♗b5! to go...♘d6 (the optimal knights' position) was correct.

86.♞d3+ ♔d5 87.♞a6?

Another mistake that changes the evaluation. White should go 87.♞d2 (or 87.♞d1) 87...♔e5 88.♞h2+ ♔d5 89.♞h5+ ♔d6 90.♔e4+–.

87...♔e5?

87...♗f5+! 88.♔f4 ♗d6=.

88.♞c4?

88.♞a1!+–.

88...♗f5+! 89.♔d3 ♗cd4?

89...♔d6 90.♞b5 ♗fe7=.

90.♞c5+ ♔f4 91.♞c7+ ♔f3 92.♞e5 ♔g4 93.♔e4

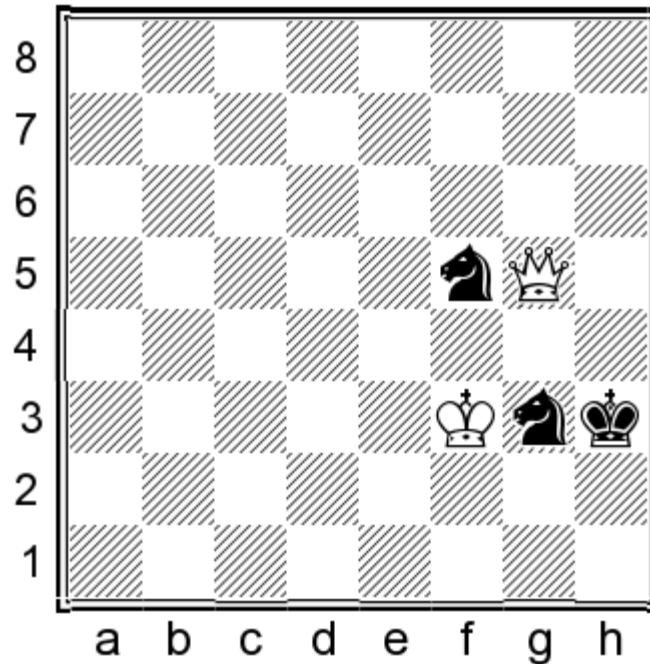
Now the black knights stand really badly and White can hardly go wrong.

93...♔g5 94.♞f4+ ♔f6 95.♞g4 ♔f7 96.♔e5 ♔e7 97.♞g8 ♔d7 98.♞d5+ ♔c7 99.♞c5+ ♔d7 100.♔d5 ♔d8 101.♞a7 ♔c8 102.♞f7! ♔d8 103.♔c5 ♔c8 104.♞e8+ ♔c7 105.♔d5 ♔b7 106.♞d7+ ♔b6 107.♔c4 ♔a6 108.♞c7 1-0

And Black resigned: his king has no move and any knight's move loses material.

5

Abdulaziz Amal
Al Khelaifi Kholoud
Abu Dhabi 2007



87.♔f2?

Here 87.♔f4 or 87.♚g8 or 87.♚g4+ wins, but not the text move!

87...♘h1+?

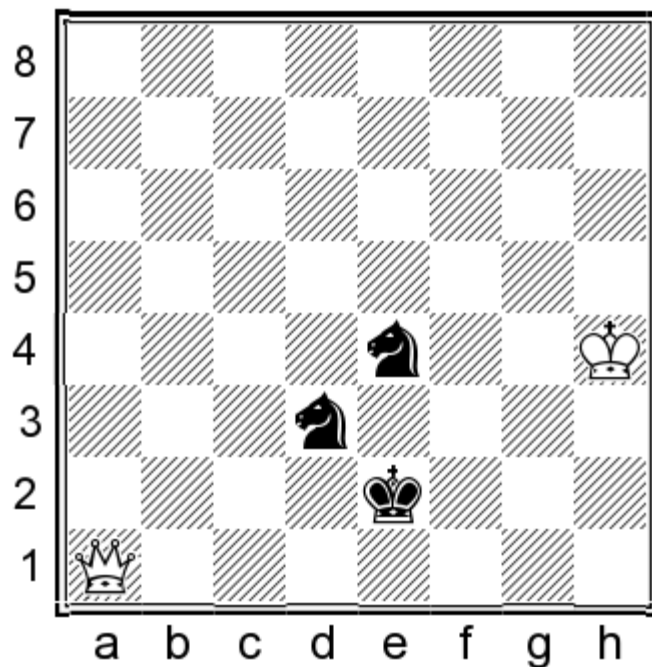
How difficult was it to find 87...♘e4+?=.

88.♔g1 ♘hg3 1/2-1/2

And draw, as White didn't know what to do! Of course 89.♚g6 ♘d4 90.♔f2 ♘df5 91.♚g8 wins.

6

Mikhalevski Victor
Onischuk Vladimir
Stockholm 2016



83.♔g4 ♖ef2+ 84.♔f5 ♜e3 85.♚a7+ ♜e2 86.♚b6 ♜d2 87.♚d4 ♜e2 88.♔g5 ♔f3 89.♔f5 ♜e2 90.♔e6 ♔f3 91.♔d5 ♖f4+ 92.♔c4 ♖2d3?

Until this point Black has played well, preserving the draw. His last move disturbed the drawing zone, however, and now he is losing. 92...♖e2, with the optimal knights' position, was correct.

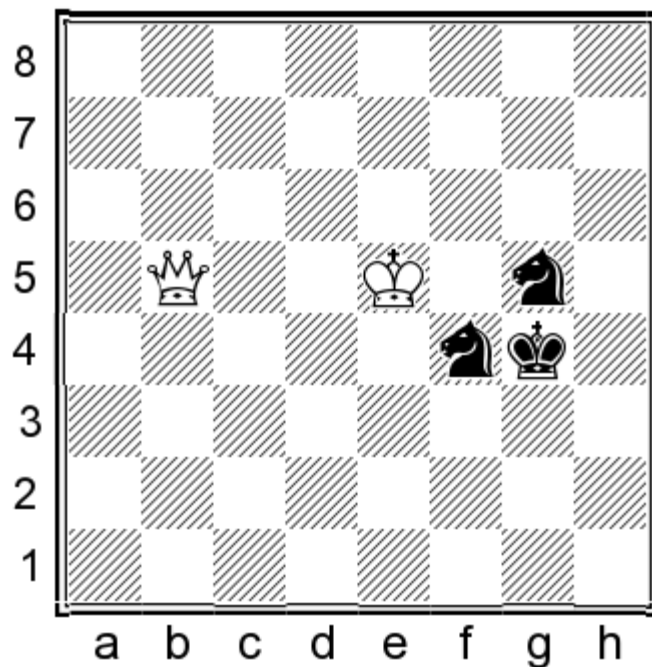
93.♔b3?

Returning the favour! Pinning one of the knights with 93.♚c3 or 93.♚f6, wins.

93...♖f2 94.♚c3+ ♔g4 95.♚e3 ♖2h3 96.♔c4 ♔f5 97.♚c5+ ♔g4 98.♚b5 ♖g5 99.♔d4 ♖ge6+?

99...♖fe6+ or 99...♖g2, draws.

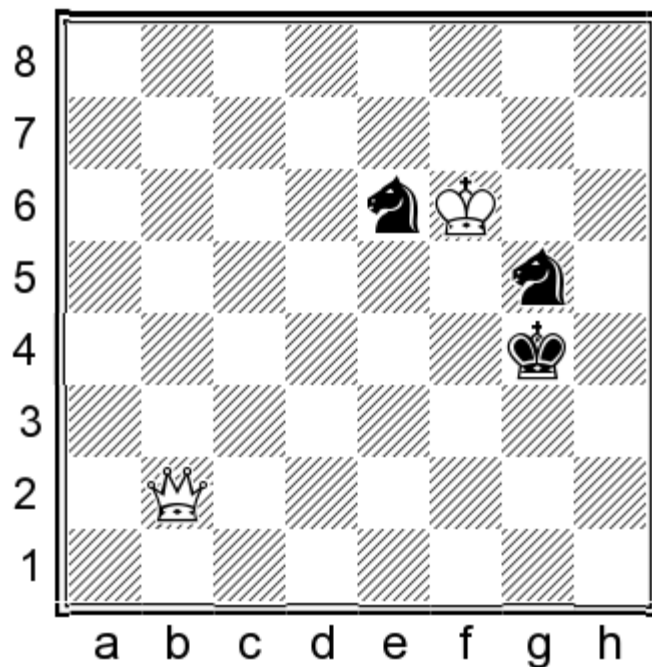
100.♔e5 ♖g5



101. ♖d7+! ♜ge6 102. ♚c8! ♜f3 103. ♚c4 ♜g4 104. ♚b3 ♜h4 105. ♚f3 ♜h3

105... ♜g5 106. ♚g3+ ♜h5 107. ♜f6+--.

106. ♜f6 ♜hg5 107. ♚g2 ♜h5 108. ♚g1 ♜h4 109. ♚g2 ♜h5 110. ♚b2 ♜g4



111. ♚b4+?!

Domination with 111. ♚e5! ♜h4 112. ♜f5 ♜f3 113. ♚f6+ ♜eg5 114. ♜f4 ♜h5 115. ♚c6 ♜h4 116. ♚e8+ ♜h6 117. ♚f8+ ♜h5 118. ♚h8+--. Now the win becomes at least 10 moves longer.

111...♖f4 112.♚c4 ♘ge6?!

112...♗f3! needs 27 more moves.

113.♚e4 ♘g3 114.♚e3+ ♘g4 115.♘e5 ♘h4 116.♘f5 ♘h5 117.♚e5

117.♚g1! ♘h6 118.♚g8!+-.

117...♘h4 118.♚c3 1-0

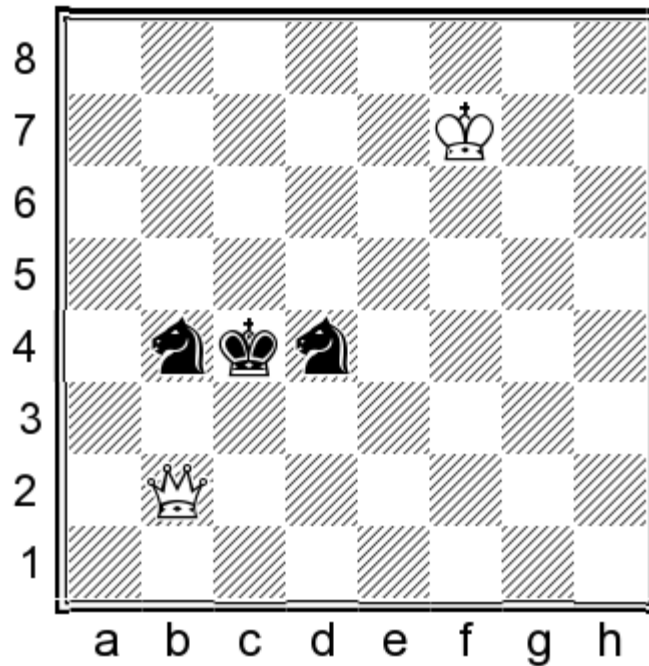
Black resigned, as he must lose one of his knights.

7

Van Wely Loek

Volkov Sergey

Panormo 2002



73.♘e7 ♘d5 74.♘d7 ♘d3 75.♚g2+ ♘c4 76.♘d6 ♗f5+ 77.♘c6 ♘d4+ 78.♘b6 ♘b3?

78...♗f4 79.♚e4 ♘d5+ was good.

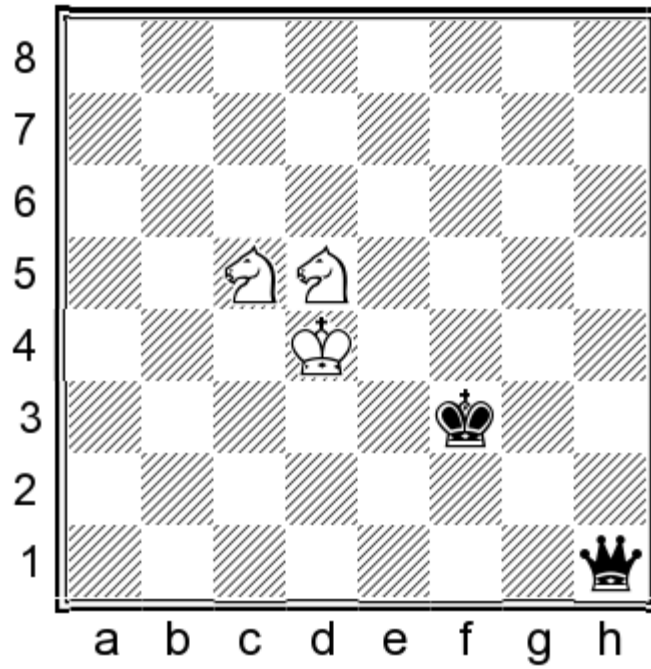
79.♚c2+! 1-0

8

Henriquez Villagra Cristobal

Torre Eugenio

Tromso 2014



The white king stands well and the knights even better - the position is drawn. What is really interesting is that neither side made any mistakes over the next 50 moves! I consider this game to be a model one for the defending side and I think that you should try to remember the way it was played.

63...♖g1+ 64.♗c4 ♜g8 65.♗d4 ♜g4+ 66.♗d3 ♜h4 67.♗c3 ♜f4 68.♗d5 ♜e5 69.♗c4 ♗e2 70.♗c3+ ♗d2 71.♗d5 ♜e2+ 72.♗d4 ♜e8 73.♗e4+ ♗e2 74.♗c5 ♗f3 75.♗d3 ♜b5+ 76.♗d4 ♗g4 77.♗e3+ ♗f4 78.♗d5+ ♗f5 79.♗e3+ ♗f6 80.♗d5+ ♗f7 81.♗d3 ♜a4+ 82.♗e3 ♜a7+ 83.♗e4 ♗e6 84.♗e3 ♜h7+ 85.♗d4 ♜h4+ 86.♗c3 ♜h8+ 87.♗c2 ♗d6 88.♗d2 ♗c6 89.♗e2 ♜h5+ 90.♗f2 ♗b5 91.♗e1 ♗a4 92.♗f2 ♗b3 93.♗f4 ♜h2+ 94.♗f3 ♜h1+ 95.♗g4 ♜e4 96.♗f5 ♜h1 97.♗g5 ♗c4 98.♗g4 ♜g1+ 99.♗f3 ♜g8 100.♗e4 ♗c3 101.♗e5 ♗d2 102.♗e6 ♗e2 103.♗d6 ♗f3 104.♗d4+ ♗g4 105.♗e6 ♜a8 106.♗f6 ♜d5 107.♗e7 ♜c6 108.♗f7 ♜b7+ 109.♗f6 ♜b2+ 110.♗e7 ♗f5 111.♗d6+ ♗g6 112.♗f4+ ♗g7 113.♗e6+ 1/2-1/2

QUEEN VS TWO KNIGHTS & PAWNS

When dealing with only one pawn, the 'queen' side still has some chances. The defending side should mainly 'forget' about the extra pawn and focus on creating the usual drawing line, as per queens vs two knights.

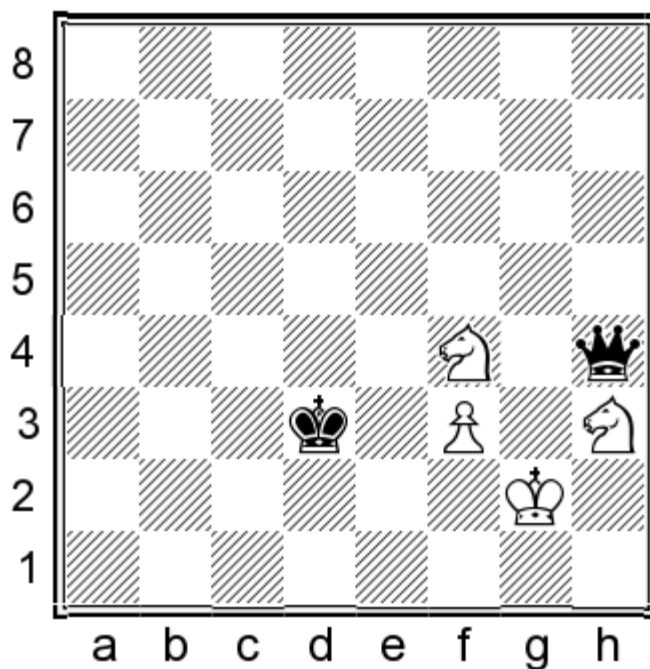
Of course the extra pawn can be used as a good protector of the knight(s) but we should bear in mind that this is not the most important factor; the knights have to gain their optimal positions, just helped by the pawn. The 'knights' side shouldn't feel secure...

1

Saidy Anthony Fred

Kalme Charles

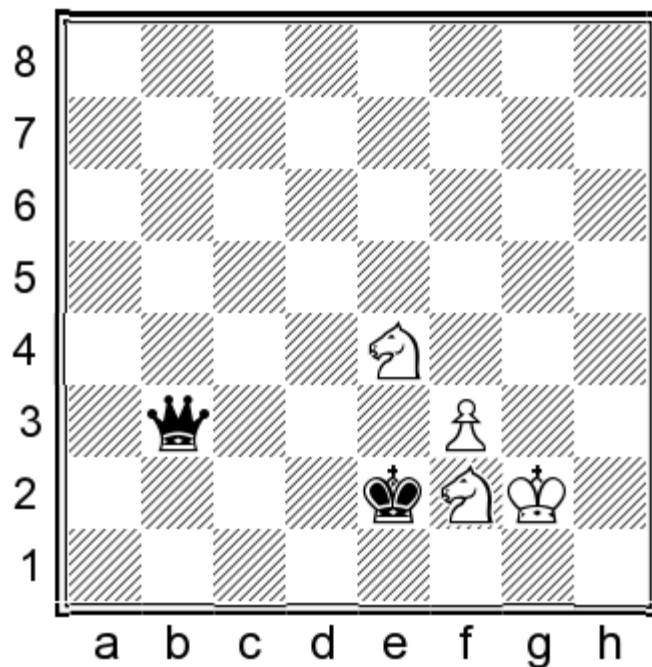
New York 1960



71...♙e3 72.♘d5+ ♙e2 73.♘c3+ ♙e1 74.♘e4

The knight reaches a strong outpost on e4, minimising White's problems.

74...♚h8 75.♘hf2 ♚b8 76.♘d3+ ♙e2 77.♘df2 ♚b3 78.♘g3+

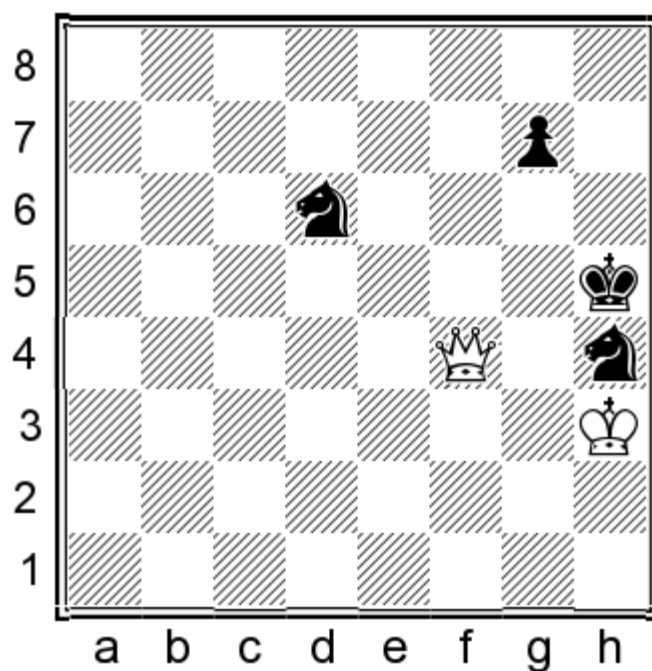


78. ♖g5 ♜e3 79. ♗fh3 was fine as well.

78... ♗e1 79. ♗ge4 ♜e3 80. ♗h3 ♜d3 81. ♗f4 ♜c2+ 82. ♗g3 ♗f1 83. ♗g4 ♜c8+ 84. ♗g3 ♜g8+ 85. ♗h3 ♗e1 86. ♗h4 ♗d1 87. ♗h3 ♗c1 88. ♗e2+ ♗c2 89. ♗f4 1/2-1/2

2

Narciso Dublan Marc
Anton Guijarro David
Gijon 2011



Black seems to be fine, but his next is bad.

61... ♗df5?

The knight on the edge stands badly. Black should simply play 61...♞hf5!.

62.♞g4+ ♔h6 63.♞d1?

The idea is correct but the execution is wrong. Of course White wants to place his king on g4, without checking him, but this needs some very precise and quite difficult to find moves, to create zugzwangs: 63.♞e2 ♔g5 64.♞d2+ ♔h5 65.♞c2 ♔g5 66.♞c1+ ♔h5 67.♞g1 g6 68.♞d1+ ♔g5 69.♞c1+ ♔h5 70.♞g1 g5 71.♞d1+ ♔g6 72.♞c2 ♔h5 73.♞e2+ ♔g6 74.♞e6+ ♔h5 75.♞e8+ ♚g6 (75...♔h6 76.♔g4+-) 76.♞e2+ ♔h6 77.♔g4+-.

63...♔g5?

Anything like 63...♞e3 reshuffling the knights would be OK: 64.♞e2 ♚hf5=.

64.♞d8+ ♔h5 65.♞d3 ♔g5 66.♞e2?

Correct was 66.♞d2+ ♔h5 67.♞c2 as in the above-mentioned winning variation.

66...♚g6!

Now it's a draw again.

67.♞g2+ ♔f6 68.♞d2 ♚h6 69.♞b2+ ♔f7 70.♔g3 ♔f8 71.♔f3 ♔f7 72.♔e4 ♔f8 73.♔d5 ♔f7 74.♔d6 ♚f5+ 75.♔c7 ♚f8 76.♞f2 ♔f6 77.♔d8 g5 78.♞b6+ ♚e6+ 79.♔d7 ♚fd4 80.♞d6 g4 81.♞h2 ♔f5 82.♔d6 ♔e4 83.♞g2+ ♔f4?

Black breaks with the drawing procedure. Good was 83...♔f5 as White can't go for 84.♔d5? ♚f4+-.

84.♔d5 ♔f5

Or 84...g3 85.♞e4+ ♔g5 86.♔e5+-.

85.♞e4+ ♔g5 86.♞e3+?

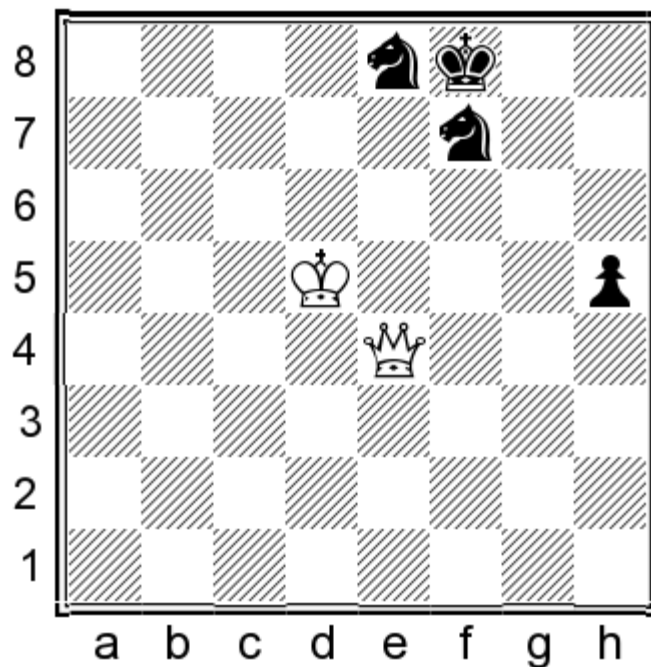
The final mistake. Good was 86.♞h1 ♔f5 87.♞f1+ ♚f3 88.♞d3+ ♔f6 89.♞e4+-.

86...♔h4! 87.♞e4 ♔g3 88.♞e1+ ♔g2 89.♞d2+ ♔f3 90.♞d1+ ♔f4 91.♞f1+ ♔g3 92.♔e5 ♔h2 93.♞f2+ ♔h3 94.♞f1+ ♔h2 95.♞f2+ ♔h3 96.♞f1+ 1/2-1/2

We are humans and we tend to err; nothing wrong with this! Only engines can play this kind of ending perfectly and we should accept this. But as humans we can always try our best, based on knowledge and study.

3

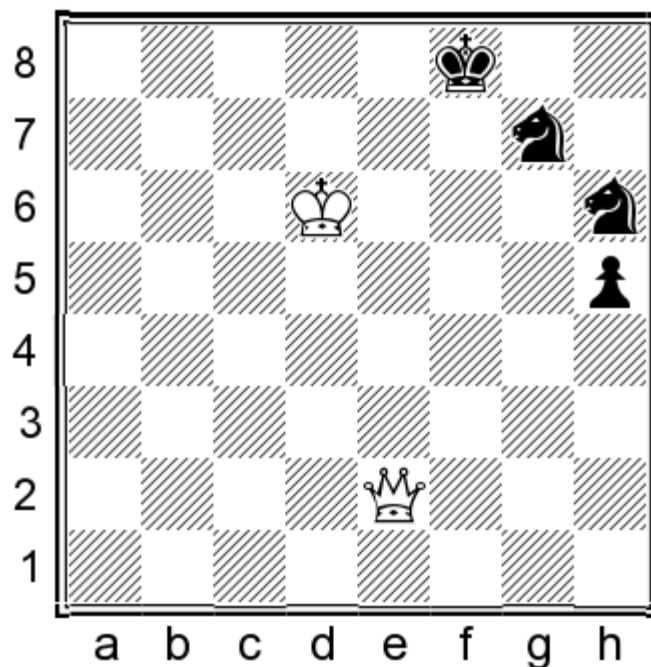
**Lyanguzov Oleg
Ogloblin Nikolay
Sochi 2005**



The knights are badly-placed and the pawn is weak, so White can win.

77. ♖e2 ♜g7 78. ♔c6 ♜h6 79. ♔d6?

Firstly 79. ♜f3+ ♔g8 and only then 80. ♔d6 heading for g6 was the winning line.



79... ♔f7! 80. ♜f2+ ♔g6 81. ♜g1+ ♔f6 82. ♜d4+ ♔g6 83. ♜f4 ♜hf5+?

Black could play 83... ♜gf5+ or 83... ♜f7+ or 83... ♜g4, with a draw. The text move loses as the knights are stacking and the white king can land on g6.

84. ♔e5 ♜h6 85. ♜f6+ ♔h7 86. ♔f4! ♜g8 87. ♜a6 ♜h6 88. ♜d3+ ♔g8 89. ♔g5 ♜f7+ 90. ♔f6 ♜h6 91. ♔g6! 1-0

With two pawns things should be easier, but sometimes the 'knights' side is carried away by the feeling of security - and this can cause damage.

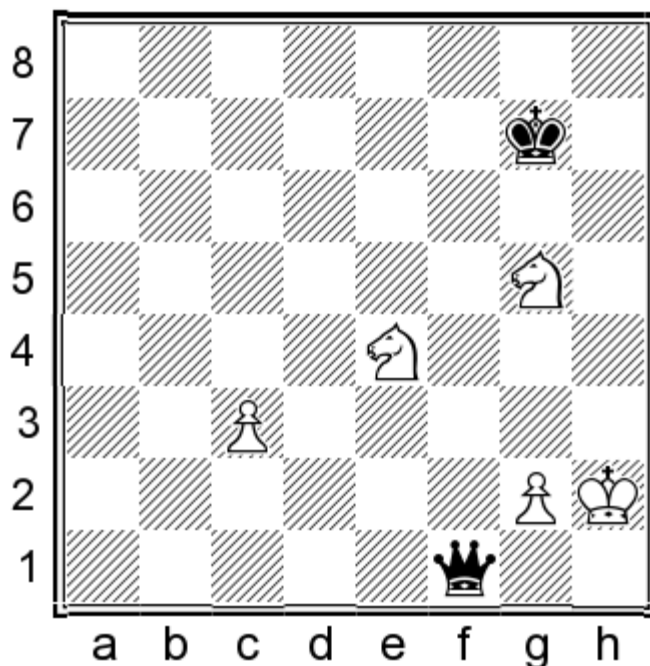
If the pawns are connected no problems occur. But if the pawns are separated, then probably best is to get rid (if pressed too much) of one of the extra pawns, achieving drawn positions with one or no pawn - knowledge of the previous is important!

4

Meyer Fritz

Bastian Herbert

Germany 2015



Although the pawns are separated, White can draw.

44...♔g6 45.♘f3 ♚c1 46.c4 ♕f5 47.♘ed2

This turns a draw into a loss! 47.♘fd2! ♕f4 48.g3+ ♔e3 49.♕h3 is fine for White. Note that without the c-pawn, this position is lost!

47...♕f4 48.g3+

White cannot hand over the c-pawn: 48.♘b3 ♚xc4 49.♘bd4 ♚d3!-+.

48...♔e3 49.♕g2

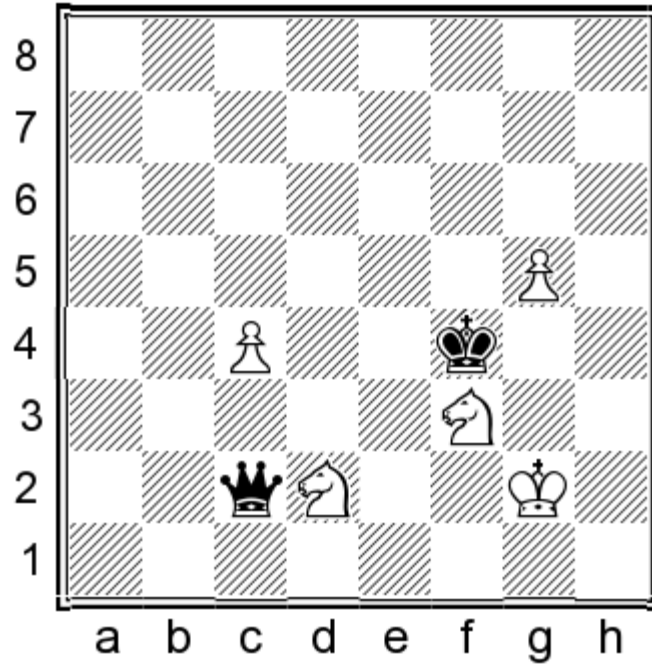
More stubborn was 49.♕h3! ♚c2 (49...♕f2 50.♘g5) 50.♕g2. I have the feeling that White feels secure, so he is not troubled to find the accurate moves or he was simply in time-trouble!

49...♚c2 50.g4

Still losing, but I can't see the logic of handing more squares to the black king.

50...♕f4 51.g5?

Shortening the end by approximately 20 moves. More stubborn was 51.♔f2! ♚d3 52.♔e1.



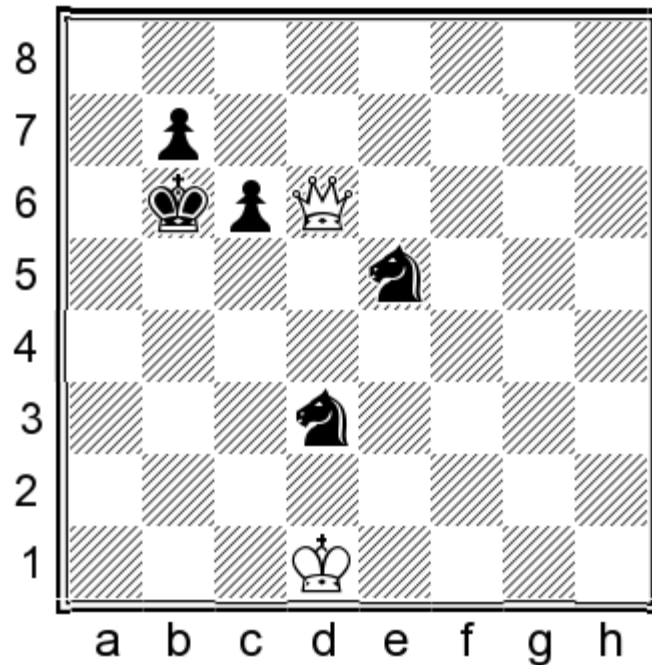
51...♚d3!

The white king ends on a lethal mating net.

52.c5 ♚e2+ 53.♔h3 ♚f2 0-1

5

Lalic Bogdan
Shirov Alexei
Moscow 1994



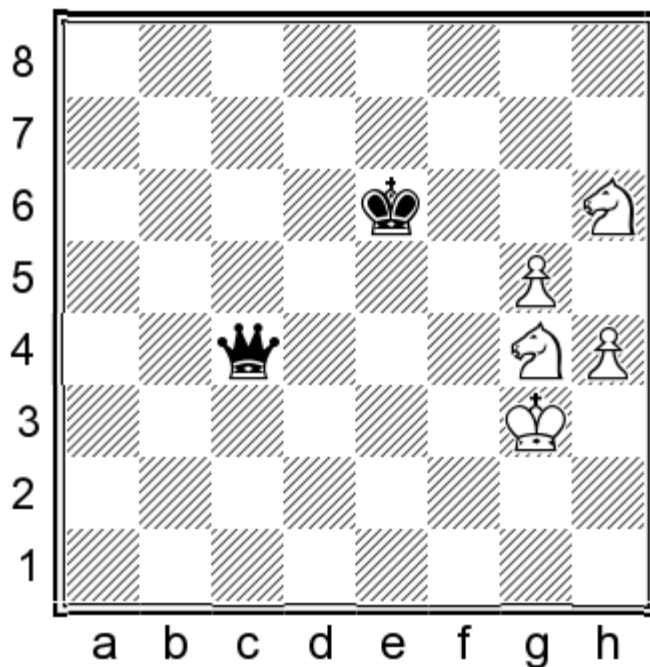
57. ♖e7 c5 58. ♔d2 ♗c6! 59. ♚g7 ♗de5 60. ♕c3 ♖a6 61. ♜f8 b6 62. ♚a8+ ♔b5 63. ♚e8 c4 64. ♚g8 1/2-1/2

6

Grebeniuk Semen

Pasko Alexander

Evpatoria 2006



The pawns are healthy and the knights can gain some good outposts.

73. ♗f6 ♚d3+ 74. ♔g4 ♚e2+ 1/2-1/2

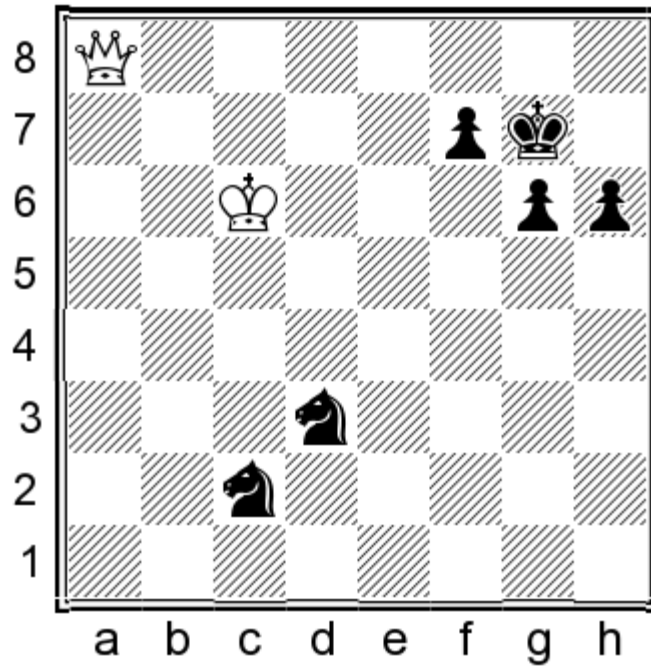
With three or more pawns it is the 'knights' side that can try for a win! The 'queen' side has to be careful and try for perpetual check as soon as it is possible.

7

Parligras Cosmin

Pavlis Jaromir

Zdar nad Sazavou 2011



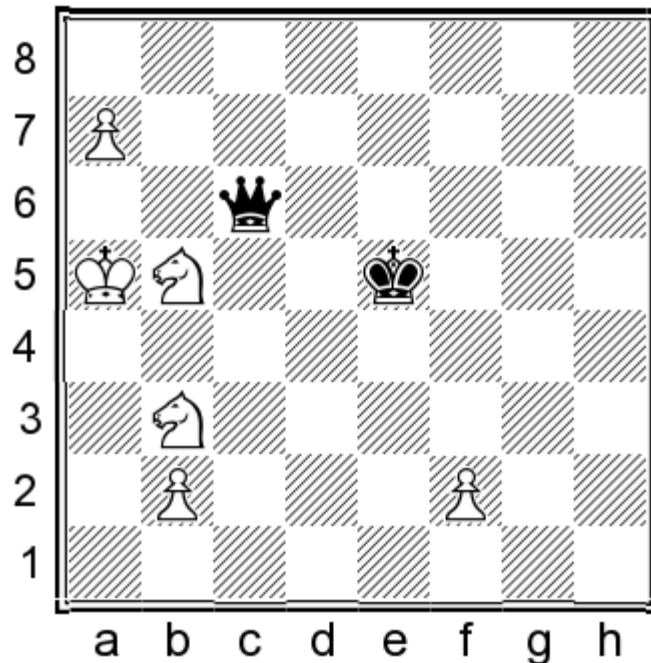
Black has only to connect his knights near his king & pawns.

53...♞cb4+ 54.♔d6 ♞f4! 55.♚a1+ ♔g8 56.♚e5 ♞bd5 57.♔d7 h5 58.♚e8+ 1/2-1/2

I think that Black should try for something more; he has no real chances to lose!

8

Silva Jose Lucas Ferreira
 Mendes Andreia Fernandes
 Famalicao 2016



White's advantage is obvious, as one of his pawns has reached the 7th rank. But I believe that both sides were under extreme time-trouble, producing a series of serious mutual mistakes.

56. ♖3d4?!

56. ♖c5!, with the idea ♖a6-c7, would have cashed the point in.

56... ♜b7 57. ♖f5

57. f4+! ♜f6 (57... ♜xf4 58. ♖e6+ ♜e5 59. ♖ec7+-) 58. b4 is still winning for White.

57... ♜d5 58. ♖fd6 ♜c6 59. f4

59. ♖e8! and curtains!

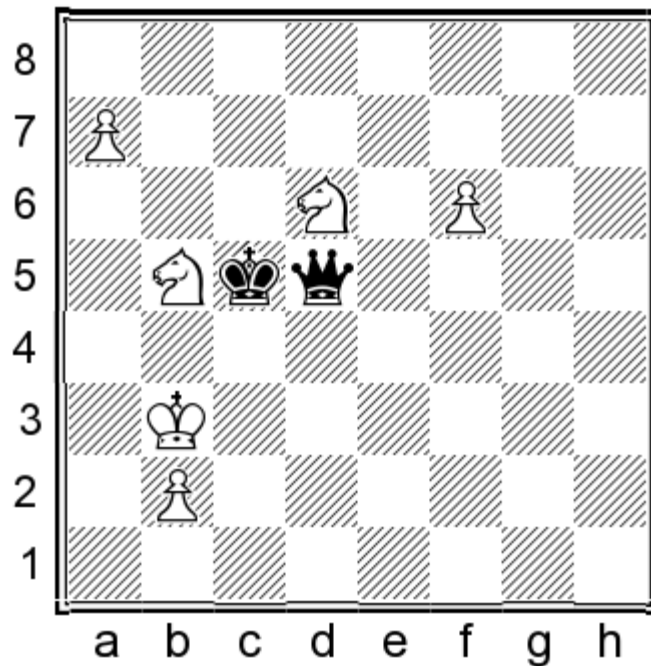
59... ♜c5 60. f5?

60. b4+ ♜d5 61. ♖e8 wasn't difficult either!

60... ♜b6+ 61. ♜a4 ♜a6+ 62. ♜b3 ♜c6?

62... ♜a1! achieving perpetual check was correct.

63. f6 ♜d5+



64. ♜a4?

It was time for 64. ♜a3! ♜d3+ 65. ♜a4 ♜d1+ 66. ♜a5 ♜a1+ 67. ♖a3 ♜h1 68. f7+-.

64... ♜a2+ 65. ♖a3 ♜xb2?

Returning the favour once more. 65... ♜d5! 66. f7 ♜d1+ 67. b3 ♜d4+ 68. ♖ac4 ♜a1+=.

66. ♜a5?

66. ♖e4+!+-.

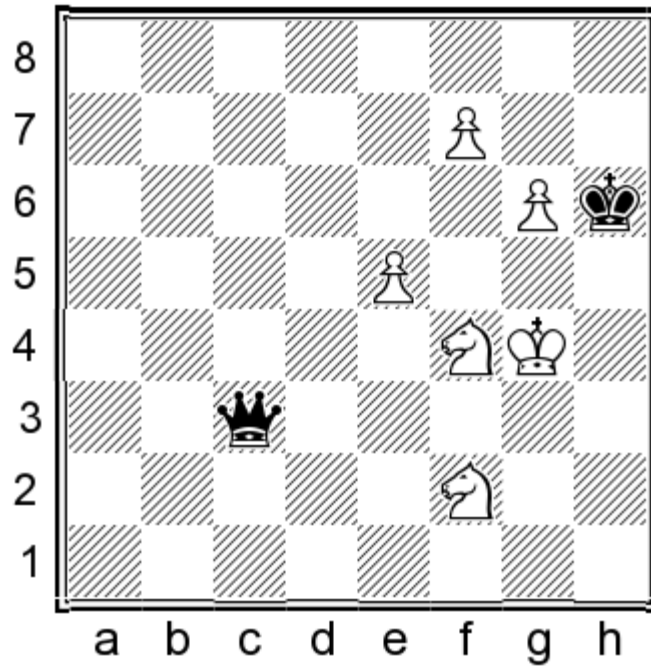
66... ♜b4+

66... ♜xa3#.

67. ♔a6 ♜b6# 0-1

9

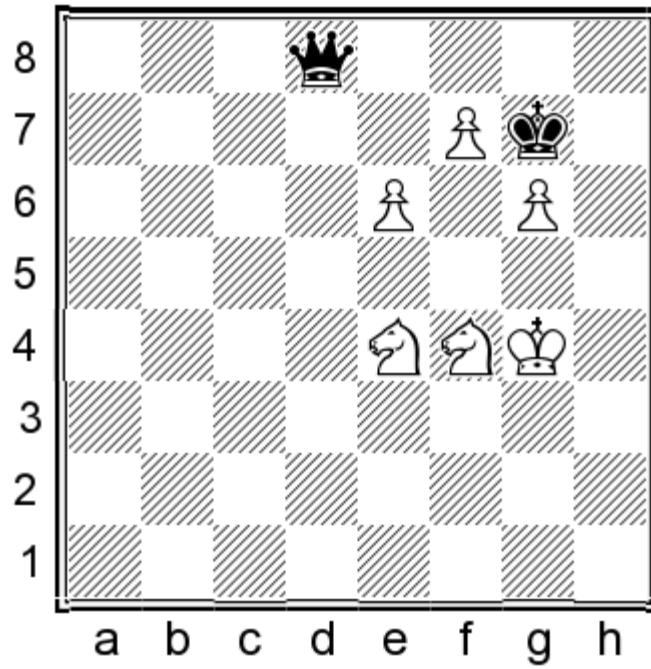
O'Rourke Ray
Freeman Gordon
Dublin 2012



With such advanced pawns there is no doubt that White is winning.

51... ♜c8+ 52.e6 ♜d8 53. ♖e4 ♔g7 54. ♖h5+?

A clear blunder. Simple was



54. ♖g3! ♜f8 55. ♖fh5! (55. ♖f5? ♜g5+!=) 55... ♜e7 56. g7+-.

54... ♜xg6 55. ♖f4+ ♜g7 56. ♖g5 ♜d1+ 57. ♜f5 ♜b1+ 58. ♜g4 ♜g1+ 59. ♜f5 ♜b1+ 60. ♜g4 1/2-1/2

QUEEN & PAWNS VS TWO KNIGHTS & PAWNS

Positions with queen & pawn(s) vs two knights and pawns are usually won for the 'queen' side - the extra pawn(s) here is a great advantage.

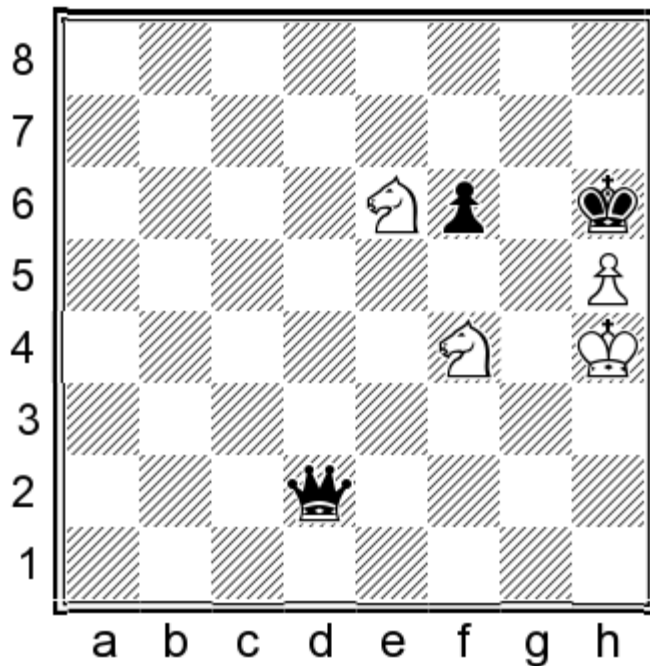
Let's start with one pawn for each side:

1

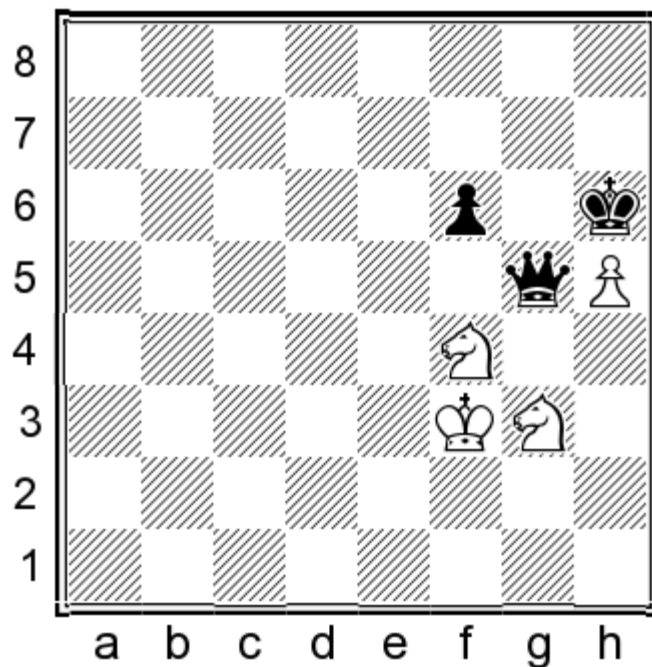
Harini S.

Swati Mohota

Bhubaneswar 2010



72... ♖h2+ 73. ♔g4 ♜c2 74. ♘d4 ♜d1+ 75. ♘de2 ♜b1 76. ♘g3 ♜g1 77. ♔h4 ♜c5 78. ♔g4 ♜g5+ 79. ♔f3



79...f5!

The f-pawn, although blocked, offers excellent outposts on e4 and g4 for the black queen.

80.♖ge2 ♜g4+ 81.♗e3 ♗g5 82.♗f2 ♗h6 83.♗e3 ♜g7 84.♗f3 ♜b7+ 85.♗g3 ♜b3+ 86.♗f2 ♜c2 87.♗g3 ♜e4 88.♗f2 ♜h1 89.♗g3 ♜e1+ 90.♗g2 ♗g5

Finally! Without the king not much can be achieved.

91.♗f3 ♜b4 92.♗g3 ♜e4 93.♗h3 ♜f3+ 94.♗h2 ♗g4

94...♜f2+! 95.♗h3 ♗h6 and a knight will be lost.

95.♗g1 ♜e3+

95...♗g5! 96.♗h2 ♜f2+ 97.♗h3 ♗h6-+.

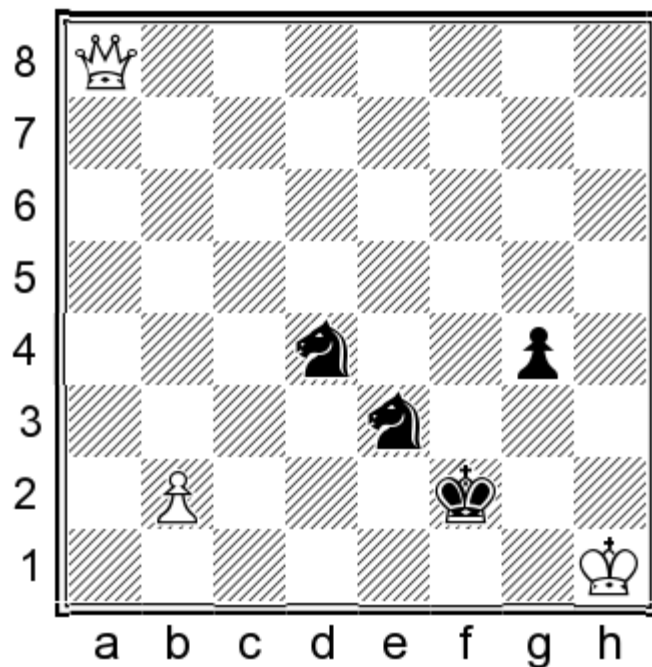
96.♗g2 ♜b6 97.♗h2 ♗f3 98.♗h3 ♜h6 99.♗h4 ♜f6+ 100.♗h3 ♜g5 101.♗h2 ♜g4 102.h6 ♜h4+ 103.♗g1 ♜xh6 0-1

2

Krogius Nikolai

Gusev Nikolay Nikolaevich

Leningrad



The black king is well-protected by his knights and the threat of...g3-g2 is strong. White must find a way to break Black's set-up.

72. ♖h8?

This is best done by 72.b4! (clearing the 2nd rank) 72...g3 73. ♖a2+ ♘e2 74. ♖f7+ ♔e1 75. ♖f3=.

72. ♖h8? g3 73. ♖g8 ♘f3 74.b4 g2+ 75. ♖xg2+ ♘xg2 0-1

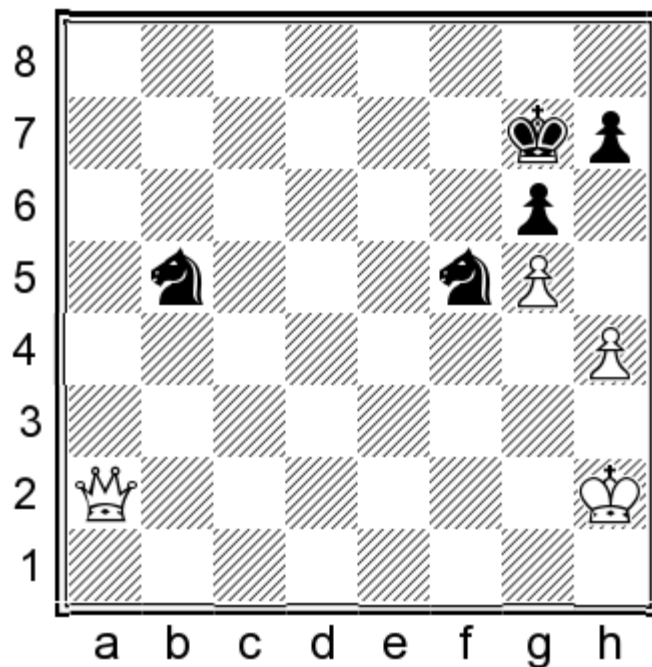
And White resigned, as he is mated due to his extra pawn: 76.b5 ♘e3 77.b6 ♘f5 78.b7 ♘g3#.

Adding an extra pawn for both sides, nothing really changes – although exceptions in chess are always around!

The 'queen' side's pawns help to restrict the opposing pieces and if passed, even better!

3

Ilivitzki Georgi
Kholmov Ratmir
Sverdlovsk 1957



57. ♖b2+ ♜bd4 58. ♜b7+ ♔g8 59. ♜d5+ ♔g7 60. ♜d7+ ♔f8 61. ♔h3

Also possible was 61. ♜xh7 ♜f3+ 62. ♔h3 ♜3xh4 63. ♔g4+-.

61... ♔g8 62. ♜d8+ ♔g7 63. ♜c7+ ♔g8 64. ♜d7!

With this simple triangulation, Black is in zugzwang.

64... h5

64... ♔h8 65. ♜f7 makes no difference.

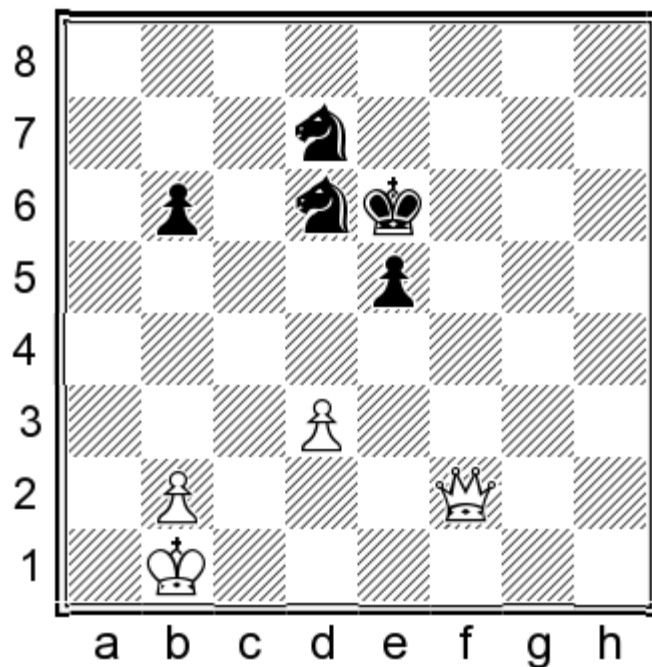
65. gxh6 ♔h8 66. h7! 1-0

4

Andriasian Zaven

Dobrov Vladimir

Moscow 2006



Of course White has the upper hand and he can improve the position of his pieces, while Black has to stay put and wait for his opponent...

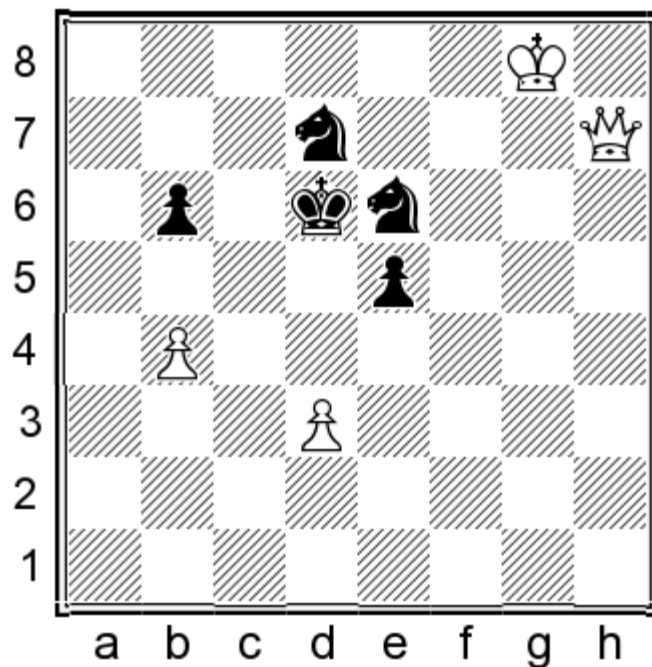
54. ♖e3

Deserving of strong consideration was 54.d4 exd4 55. ♖xd4+-.

54. ♖e3 ♗d5 55. ♖f3+ ♗e6 56. ♖c6 ♗e7 57. ♖d5 ♗e8 58. ♗c1 ♗c7 59. ♖c6 ♗e6 60. ♗d1 ♗d4 61. ♖d5 ♗e6 62. ♗e1 ♗d4 63. ♗f1 ♗e6 64. ♗g1 ♗f4 65. ♖e4 ♗e6 66. ♗h2 ♗d4 67. ♖d5 ♗e6 68. ♗g3 ♗d4 69. ♗h4 ♗e6 70. b4

Now that the white king has approached by a secure route, the white b-pawn will help in the restriction.

70... ♗d4 71. ♗g5 ♗e6+ 72. ♗h6 ♗d4 73. ♖e4 ♗e6 74. ♖h4+ ♗f7 75. ♖f2+ ♗e7 76. ♖f1 ♗df8 77. ♖f5 ♗d7 78. ♖f2 ♗d4 79. ♗g6 ♗f8+ 80. ♗g7 ♗de6+ 81. ♗g8 ♗d7 82. ♖f7+ ♗d6 83. ♖g6 ♗e7 84. ♖h7+ ♗d6



85. ♖h4!

Allowing the white king to come closer.

85... ♗c7 86. ♔f7 ♗d5 87. ♖g4 ♔c7 88. ♖e4 ♔d6 89. ♖f5

89.b5 was fine.

89... ♗xb4 90. ♖e6+ ♔c7 91. ♔e8 ♗c5 92. ♖xe5+ ♔c6 93.d4

White exchanged his b-pawn for Black's e-pawn, thereby creating a passed pawn.

93... ♗b7 94. ♖e4+ ♗d5 95. ♖c2+ ♔b5 96. ♔d7 ♗a5 97. ♔e6 ♗b4 98. ♖e2+ ♔a4 99.d5 ♗b3 100. ♖d1 ♔a3 101.d6
 ♗c5+ 102. ♔e7 ♗c6+ 103. ♔e8 ♗b8 104. ♖a1+ ♔b4 105. ♖a7 ♗ca6

105... ♗bd7 106. ♖xd7 ♗xd7 107. ♔xd7 b5 108. ♔c6+-.

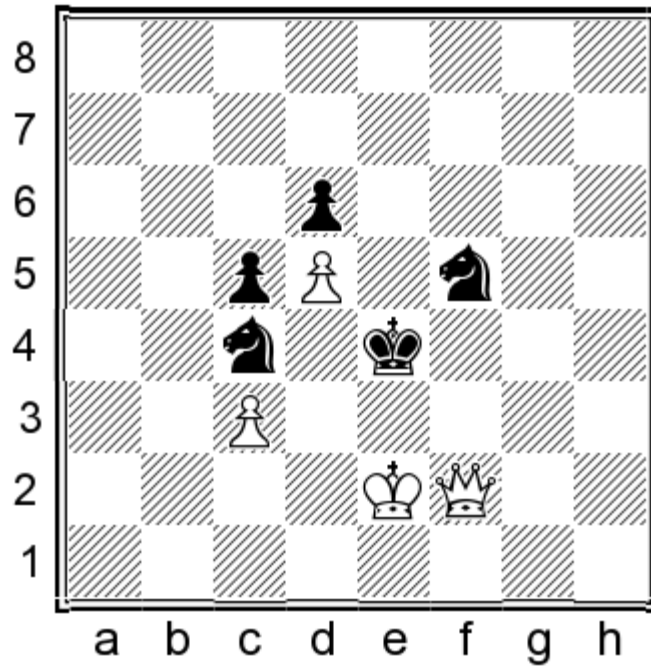
106. ♖xb6+ ♔c3 107.d7 ♗xd7 108. ♔xd7 ♗b4 109. ♖c5+ ♔b3 110. ♔d6 ♗c2 111. ♔d5 ♗b4+ 112. ♔d4 ♗c2+ 113. ♔d3
 ♗a3 114. ♖b6+ ♔a4 115. ♔c3 ♗b5+ 116. ♔c4 ♗a3+ 117. ♔c5 ♗c2 118. ♖b2 1-0

5

Valerga Diego

Sosa Tomas

Buenos Aires 2015



White is on top and can now bring home the full point.

51. ♖f3+ ♔e5 52. ♕d3 ♜ce3

Or 52... ♜b2+ 53. ♔e2 ♜c4 54. ♚d3 ♜ce3 55. ♔f3 ♔f6 (55... ♜xd5 56. ♚e4+-) 56. ♚e4 ♔g5 57. ♚e6+-.

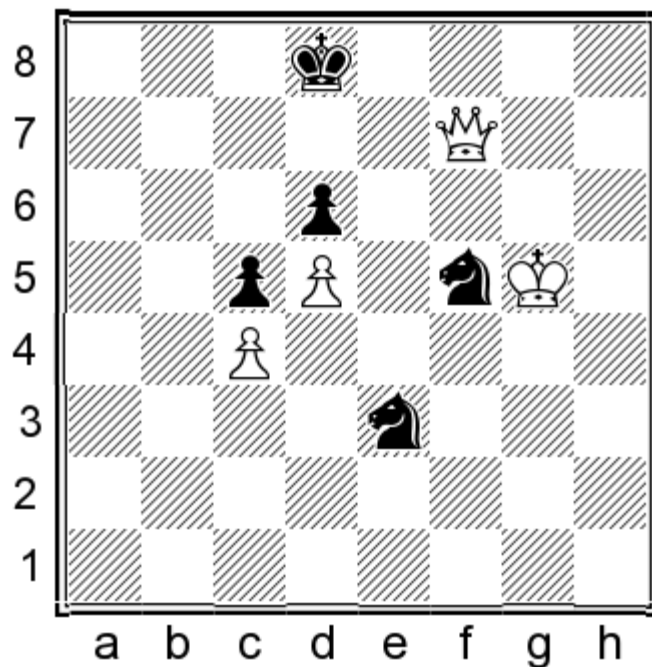
53.c4

53. ♚e4+! ♔f6 54. ♚e6+ ♔g5 55. ♔e4 looks easier.

53... ♔f6 54. ♚f4 ♔g6 55. ♔e4 ♔f6 56. ♚f2 ♔g5 57. ♚h2 ♔f6 58. ♚h8+ ♔g5 59. ♚g8+ ♔f6 60. ♔f4 ♔e7 61. ♔g5

Winning was 61. ♚c8! ♔f6 62. ♚e6+ ♔g7 63. ♔g5 ♔f8 64. ♔f6+-.

61... ♔d7 62. ♚f7+ ♔d8



63. ♖xf5! ♜xf5 64. ♕xf5 ♖e7 65. ♕g6 1-0

More pawns on the board equals better for the ‘queen’ side! The knights are more restricted in general, but if they can find a healthy environment and some good outposts they can be a hard nut to crack.

In chess, the defending side should seek counterplay when some is available of course! Passivity usually turns to nothing; just the normal slow death.

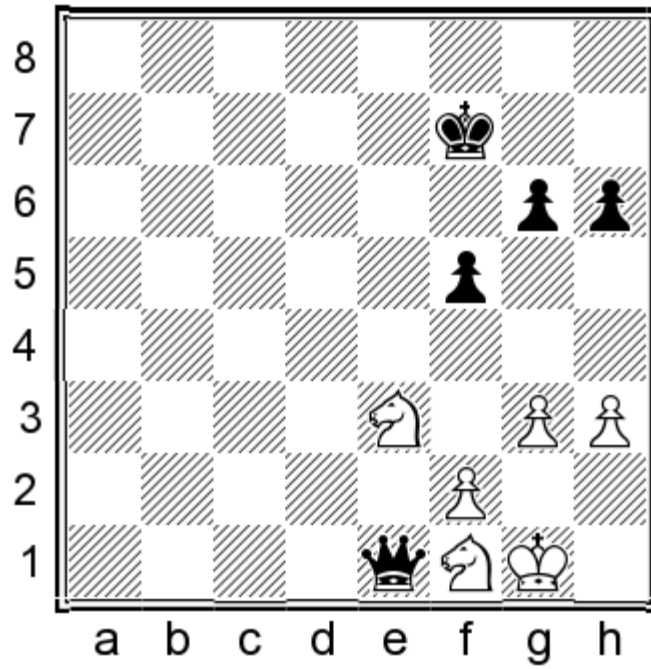
I noticed that when the knights can have a passed pawn as well, interesting positions can arise. And obviously the ‘queen’ side can go wrong, as the knight is a tricky piece, setting traps!

6

Sammour Hasbun Jorge

Waitzkin Joshua

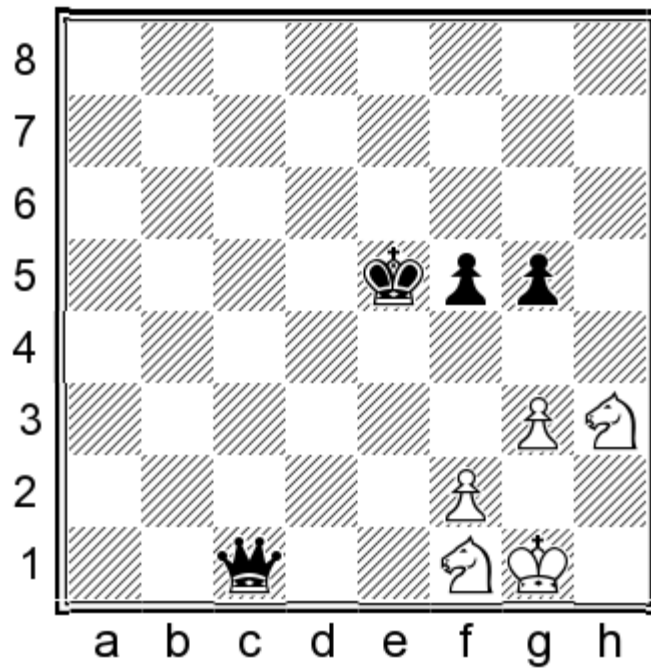
New York 1992



The winning plan is easy to understand: Black will invade with his king and he will push his pawns to restrict the white knights.

45...♔e6 46.h4 ♕e5 47.♘g2 ♚a1 48.♘f4 g5 49.hxg5 hxg5 50.♘h3 ♚c1?

Blundering an important pawn. Good was 50...♔f6! 51.♔g2 ♚a8+ 52.♔g1 ♚e4 53.♘h2 ♚e1+ 54.♔g2 ♚e2—+.



51.♘xg5!

Now the healthy structure achieves the draw.

51...♔d4

51...♙xg5? 52.f4+ ♜xf4 53.gxf4+ ♔xf4=.

52.♗e6+ ♔d3 53.♗f4+ ♔e4 54.♗g2

Even more harmonious was 54.♔g2 ♜c6 55.♗e3 and White should hold.

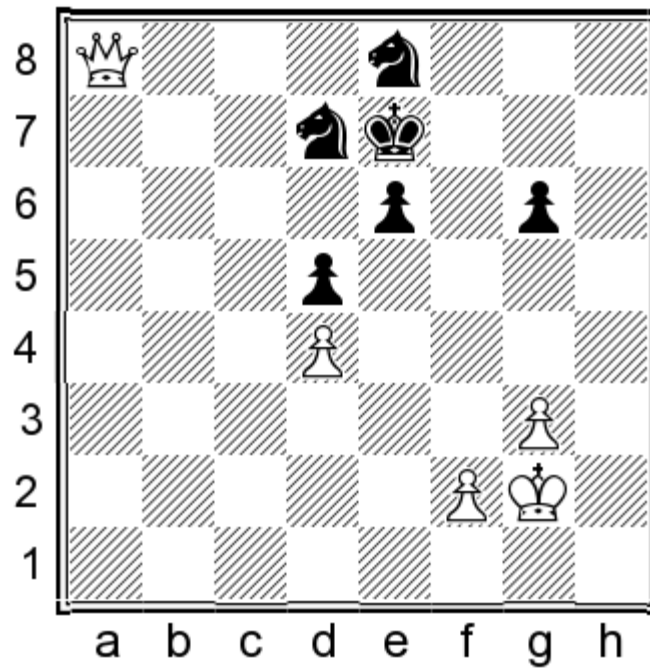
54...♔f3 55.♗f4 ♜d1 56.♗g2 ♜b1 57.♗f4 ♜a1 58.♗g2 ♜b1 59.♗f4 ♜e1 60.♗d3 ♜d1 61.♗f4 ♜a1 1/2-1/2

7

Efimov Igor

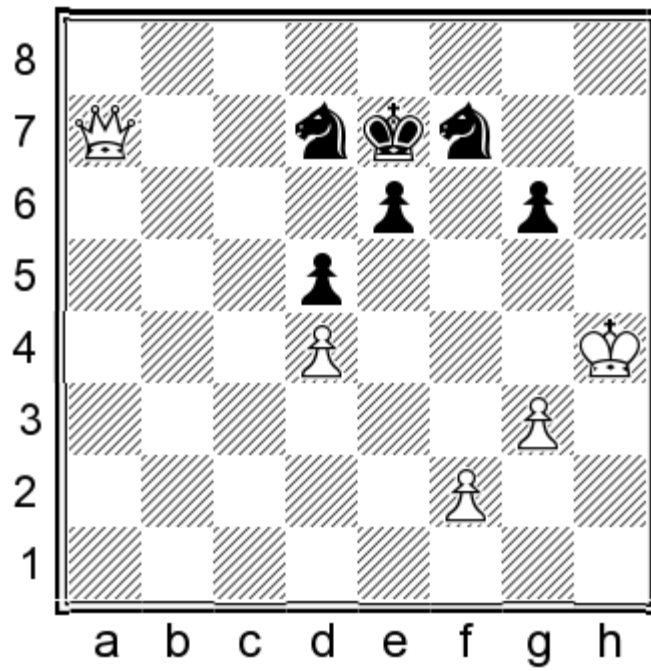
Chernin Alexander

Moscow 1977



Weak black pawns and easy entrance for the white king. White wins.

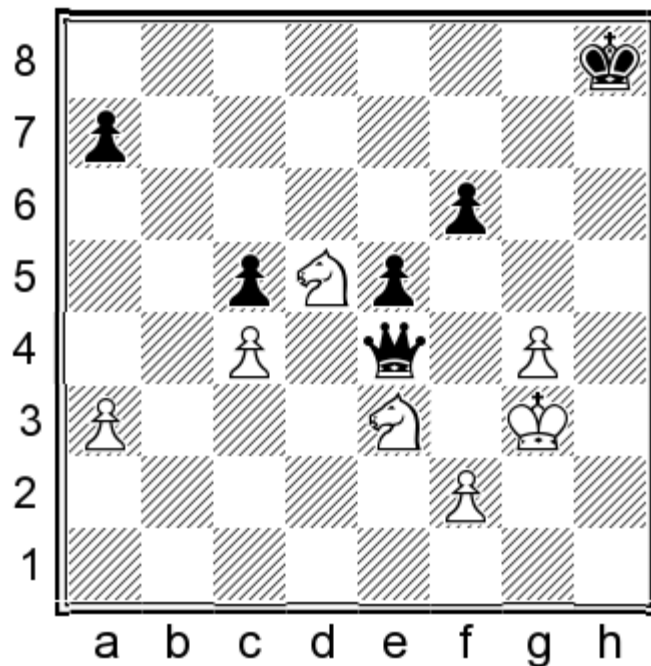
50.♜a1 ♗f8 51.♜a7+ ♗d7 52.♔h3 ♗d6 53.♔h4 ♗f7 54.♜c7 1-0



Black is in zugzwang: 54...♖d6 (54...♔e8 55.♚c2 ♜f8 56.♚c8+ ♔e7 57.♚c5+ ♔e8 58.f4+-) 55.g4 ♜f7 56.f4 ♜d6 57.♔g5.

8

Morozevich Alexander
Caruana Fabiano
Thessaloniki 2013



Although White has strong outposts for his knights, Black can prevail here.

52...a5 53.a4 ♚d4 54.♔h4?!

Making it easier for Black. White had to stay put with 54.♔g2 e4 55.♜f4 ♔h7 56.♜fd5 ♚a1 57.♜b6 ♔g6 and pray...

54...f5!

Creating the important passed pawn.

55. ♖xf5 ♜xc4 56. ♗de7 ♜e6

Possible was 56... ♜xa4 but Black cared more about nasty checks on his king.

57. ♔h5

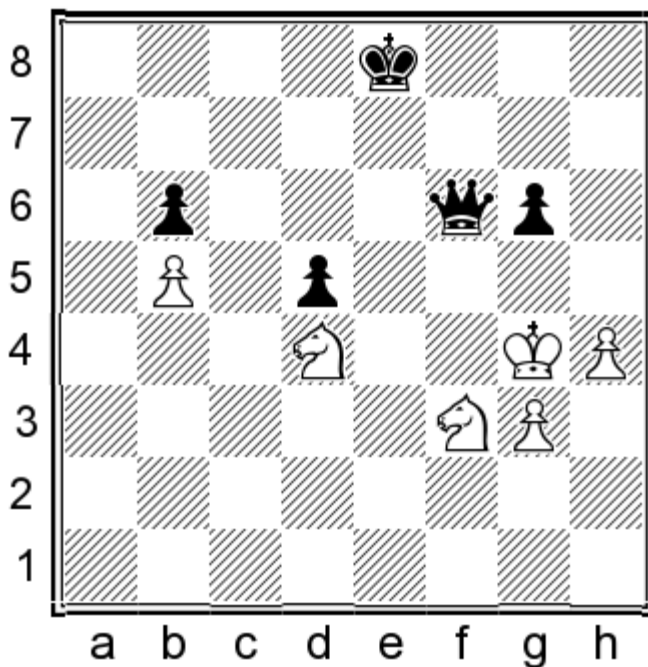
Good or bad, White had to opt for 57.g5 c4 58.g6 c3 59.g7+ ♔h7 60.g8=♜+ ♜xg8 61. ♗xg8 c2 62. ♗f6+ ♔g6 63. ♗e3 c1=♜ 64. ♗fd5 ♜a1-+.

57...c4 58. ♗g6+ ♔g8 59. ♗h6+ ♔g7 60. ♗f5+ ♔f7 61. ♗h6+ ♔e8 62. ♗f5 ♜f6 0-1

White resigned, as after 63. ♗e3 ♔f7 64. ♗h4 c3 65. ♗hf5 ♜g6+ 66. ♔h4 ♜c6 67. ♗c2 ♜xa4 the win is only a matter of time.

9

Gurevich Dmitry
Seirawan Yasser
Seattle 2000



Things are not so easy for Black, as the knights are standing on good outposts, protecting each other. Additionally, the passed black d-pawn is blocked, while White has a potential majority on the kingside.

51... ♜h8 52. ♔f4 ♔e7

Heading for b4/c4.

53.g4 ♜f6+! 54. ♔e3

54.♔g3?! ♚d6+ 55.♔h3 ♚f4 and White is in trouble.

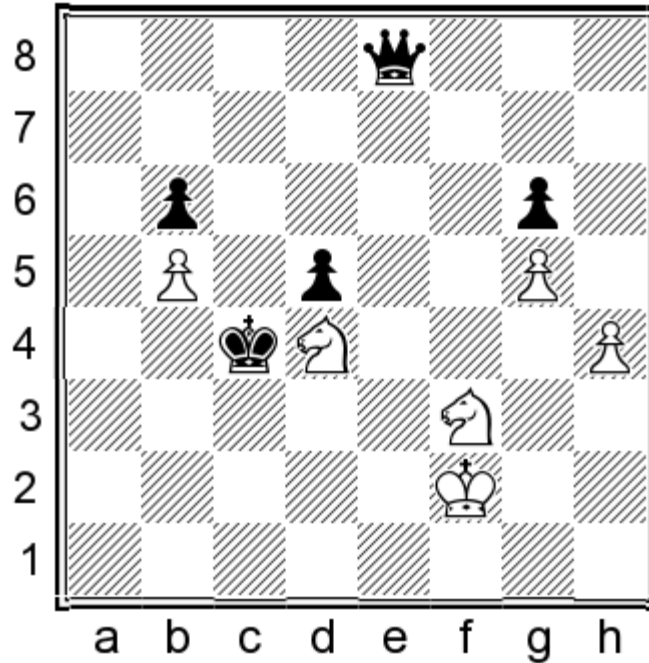
54...♔d6 55.♘c6 ♔c5 56.♘cd4 ♔b4

Now White is short of moves.

57.g5 ♚e7+ 58.♔f4 ♚e4+ 59.♔g3 ♔a4

A strange move. 59...♔c3 60.♘c6 ♔d3 is natural.

60.♔f2 ♚g4 61.♔e3 ♔b4 62.♔f2 ♚e4 63.♘e2 ♚e8 64.♘ed4 ♔c4



65.h5!

A good active try, as the alternative didn't promise much: 65.♘e2 ♔xb5 66.♘f4 ♚e4+.

65...gxf5 66.g6 ♔c5?!

66...♚f8! was accurate: 67.♘c6 ♚f6 68.♘ce5+ ♔c3+.

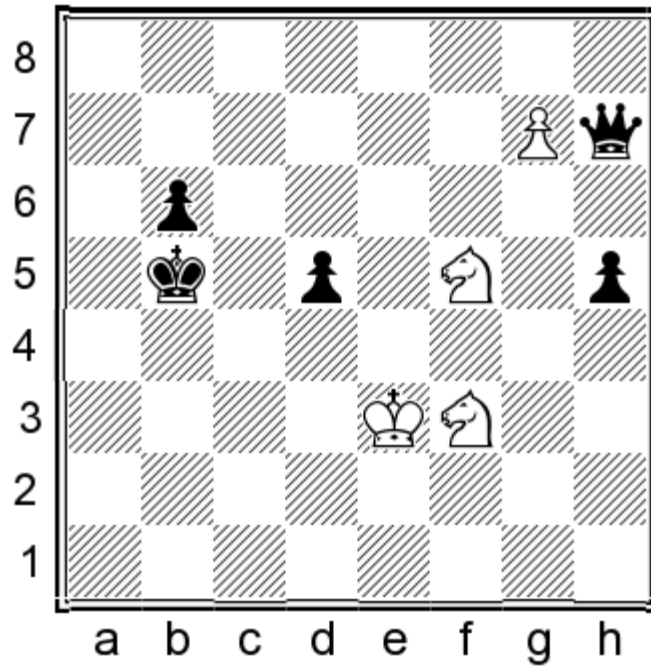
67.g7 ♚g8?

A bad mistake that could have cost the half-point. Good was 67...♚f7! 68.♔e3 ♚g6 69.♔f2 ♚g4+.

68.♘f5! ♚h7 69.♔e3

White could also save himself by 69.♘3d4! h4 70.♔g2 h3+ 71.♔h2 ♚g6 72.♔xh3 ♚h5+ 73.♔g3 ♚g5+=.

69...♔xb5



70. ♖3d4+

Very nice variations occur after 70. ♖f4? h4! 71. ♗3xh4 (71. ♖g5 ♗c4 72. ♖f6 b5 73. ♗g5 ♖g8 74. ♗e7 ♖a8 75. g8=♖ ♖xg8 76. ♗xg8 b4 77. ♗f3 b3 78. ♗d2+ ♗c3 79. ♗xb3 ♗xb3+) 71... ♗a4 72. ♗f3 b5 73. ♗e5 (73. ♗e5 b4 74. ♗g5 ♖g6 75. ♗e6 d4 76. ♗fxd4 b3 77. ♗c5+ ♗b4 78. ♗cxb3 ♖xg7+-) 73... b4 74. ♗g4 b3 75. ♗f6 ♖h2+ (75... ♖g6? 76. g8=♖ ♖xg8 77. ♗xg8 b2 78. ♗f6 b1=♖ 79. ♗xd5=) 76. ♖g4 ♖g1+ 77. ♗g3 b2 78. g8=♖ b1=♖ 79. ♖a8+ ♗b4 80. ♗xd5+ ♗c5 81. ♗f4 ♖bd1+ 82. ♖f3 ♖d7+! (82... ♖xf3+? 83. ♗xf3=) 83. ♖g5 ♖g7+ 84. ♗h4 ♖h2+ 85. ♗h3 ♖d4+ 86. ♗e4+ ♗d5 87. ♖f5+ ♖he5 88. ♗f4+ (88. ♖xe5+ ♗xe5-) 88... ♗c6 89. ♖g6+ ♗b5-+.

70... ♗a4

70... ♗c5 doesn't win: 71. ♗e6+ ♗c4 72. ♗f8 (72. ♗e7 ♖e4+ 73. ♖f2 ♖xe6-) 72... ♖g8 73. ♗d7 d4+ 74. ♖f4 d3 75. ♗f6 ♖b8+ 76. ♗e4 d2 77. g8=♖+ ♖xg8 78. ♗xg8=.

71. ♖f3?

A bad mistake, when White was so close to salvation: 71. ♗c6! ♖xf5 72. g8=♖ ♖e4+ 73. ♗d2=.

71... b5 72. ♖f4 b4 73. ♗c6 b3 0-1

CHAPTER 6.

QUEEN VS BISHOP & KNIGHT

Queen vs bishop & knight is probably the worst of the three cases of queen vs two minor pieces.

According to the tablebases there is a certain drawn position which we should remember.

1. The 'pieces' side's king should move to the same-colour corner as his bishop.
2. The bishop should be placed on the initial fianchetto square (b2-b7-g7-g2).
3. The knight should be placed in the diagonal square defended by the bishop (d4-d5-e5-e4).

If this set-up is achieved, then a fortress is created - keeping the enemy king away.

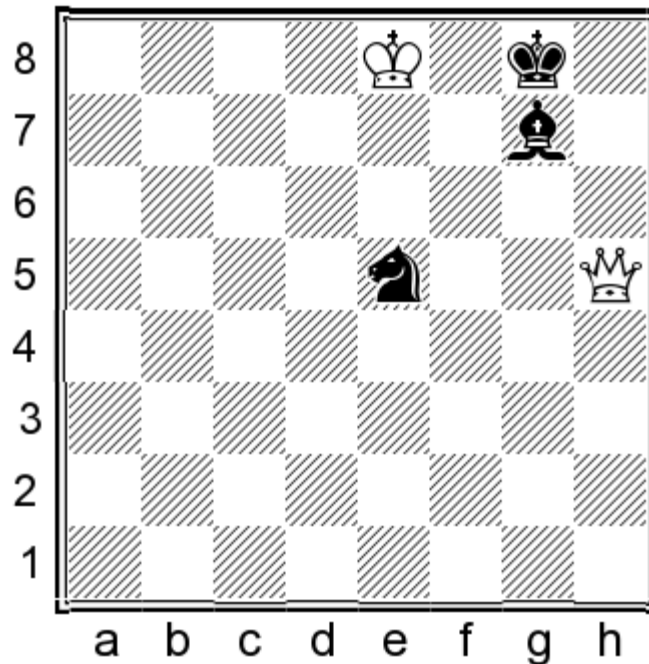
In the first example the pieces are controlling the squares f8, f7, f6, g6 and h6, creating a 'safe zone' which the white king cannot enter, and this is the secret of the fortress.

Let's see this valuable example and some more:

Example 1

Karstedt Max

Study 1903



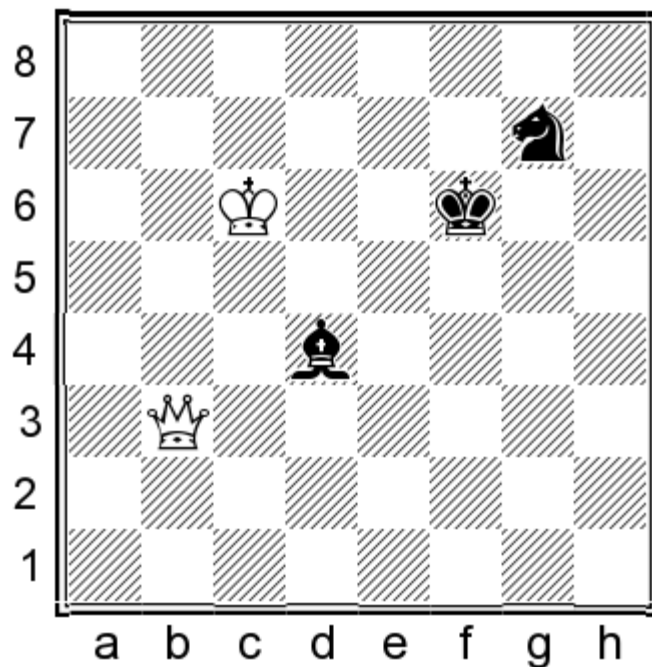
Here (as mentioned) the white king cannot reach any effective square (f8, f7, f6, g6, h6).

1. ♖e7 ♜h8 2. ♖e6 ♜g7 3. ♖f5 ♜h8 4. ♖g5 ♜g7 5. ♚e8+ ♜h7 6. ♖h5 ♜h8 7. ♚e7+ ♜g7 1/2-1/2

Example 2

Berger

Study



Black to play, White wins.

1...♔g5

1...♖e6 2.♔d5!+-.

1...♔g5 2.♔d5 ♕f6 3.♖g3+ ♔f5 4.♖g2 ♕g5! 5.♖c2+ ♔f6 6.♖f2+ ♔g6 7.♔e5 ♕d8 8.♖g2+ ♔f7 9.♖d5+ ♔e7 10.♖b7+ ♔f8 11.♔d6 ♕f6 12.♔d7

12.♖d5! is shorter by 15 moves.

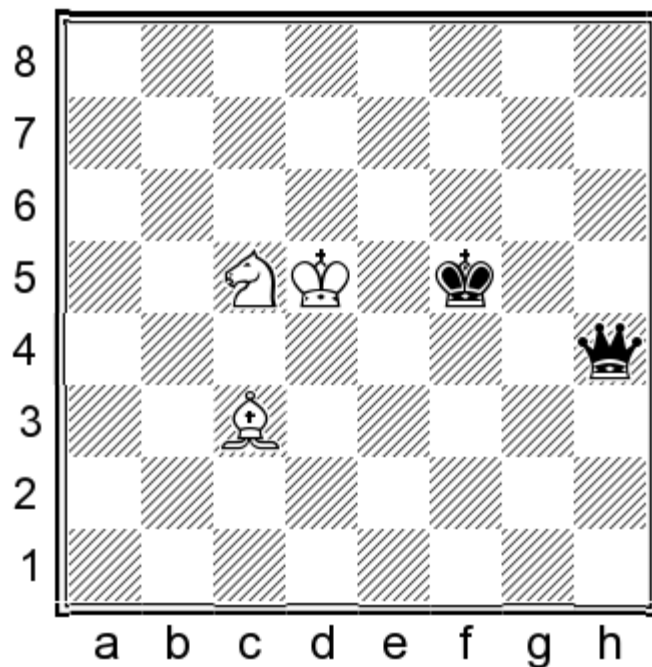
12...♔f7 13.♖e4 ♔f8

And 13...♕g5! is longer by 15 moves.

14.♖g6! ♕h4 15.♖d6+ ♔f7 16.♖d5+ ♔g6 17.♖e4+ ♔h5 18.♖h7+ 1-0

1

**Dambacher Martijn
Smerdon David
Tilburg 2006**



The only fortress for White here is ♖b1, ♙b2 and ♘d4, but he can't get it. According to analysis engines, with best play Black checkmates in 34 moves! This, of course, means that in a practical game drawing chances are considerable! Of course, over the board it is also not easy for the defending side, as he might blunder one of his minor pieces!

95...♙g3 96.♙d4 ♚a3?!

Black needs to separate the enemy pieces. The best way to do that is to play 96...♙g8+! 97.♖c6 ♚c4 98.♙g7 ♙g4 99.♙f8 ♙g2+ 100.♖d6 ♙f3 101.♙e7 ♙d1+ 102.♖c7 ♖e5 and Black is making progress.

97.♖d6

After 97.♖c4! it's mate in 39!

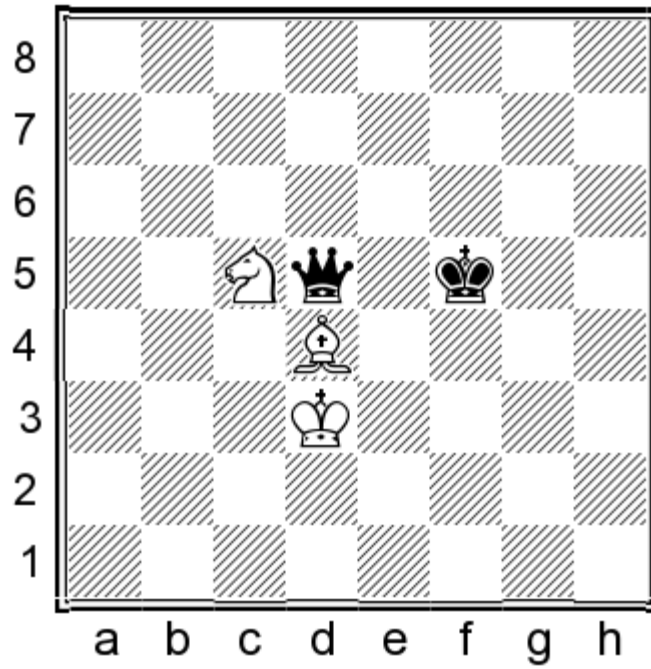
97...♖g6 98.♖d5 ♖f7 99.♖d6 ♖e8

99...♙f3!.

100.♖d5

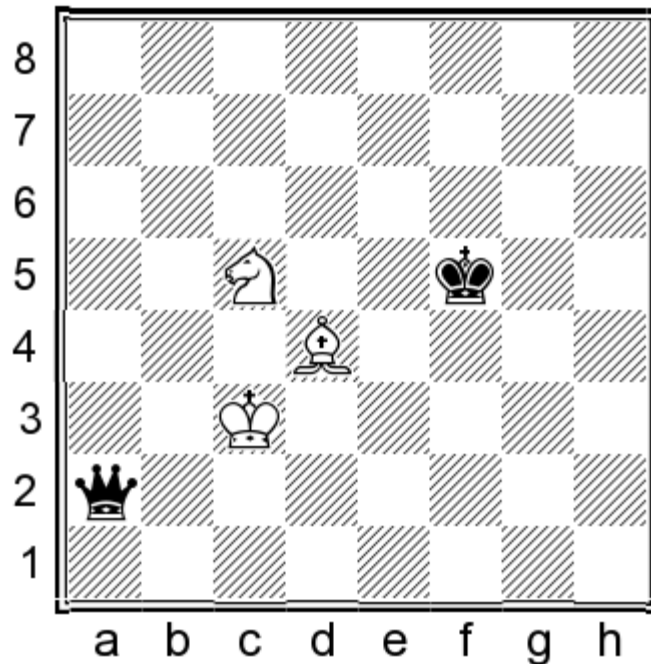
After 100.♖e6! it's mate in 42!

100...♖e7 101.♙e5 ♙a2+ 102.♖d4 ♙b2+ 103.♖d5 ♙e2 104.♙d4 ♙a2+ 105.♖e5 ♙a8 106.♖e4 ♙b8+ 107.♖d5 ♙b3+ 108.♖e5 ♙e6+ 109.♖f4 ♙d5 110.♖e3 ♖e6 111.♖c5+ ♖f5 112.♖d3



Now with best play Black checkmates in 38 moves - as we can see, he has not been making progress.

112... ♖a2 113. ♘c3 ♗f4 114. ♔d3 ♗f3 115. ♘c3 ♗e2 116. ♜b3 ♞a8 117. ♞c5 ♞d5 118. ♜b3 ♗f3 119. ♞c5 ♞c6
 120. ♙g1 ♗e2 121. ♙d4 ♗d1 122. ♙e3 ♞c8 123. ♙d4 ♗c1 124. ♙e3+ ♗d1 125. ♙d4 ♗e2 126. ♗c4 ♗f3 127. ♗c3 ♞g8
 128. ♗d3 ♞d5 129. ♗c3 ♗f4 130. ♞d3+ ♗f5 131. ♞c5 ♞a2



132. ♜b3!?

The knight was ideally placed on c5 - it was secure and it was keeping the enemy king at bay. After 132. ♔d3! Black checkmates in 38 moves, but White would have to make only 13 moves before claiming a draw, thanks to the 50-moves rule!

132...♔e4 133.♘c5+ ♔d5 134.♘b3 ♚a3 135.♙e3 ♚e7 136.♙d4 ♚e2 137.♘c5?

Instead, 137.♔b4! (mate in 24!) would have most likely saved the game - White would then need to hold on for only 8 more moves!

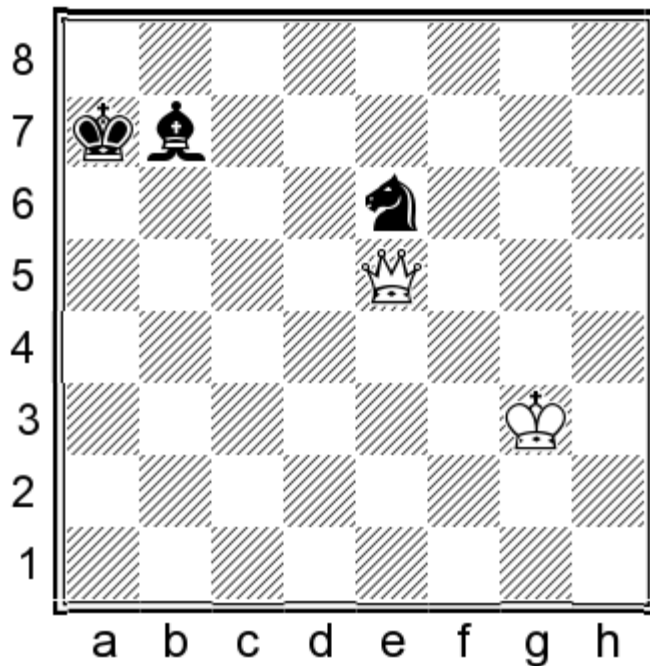
137...♚c4+! 0-1

2

Cornette Matthieu

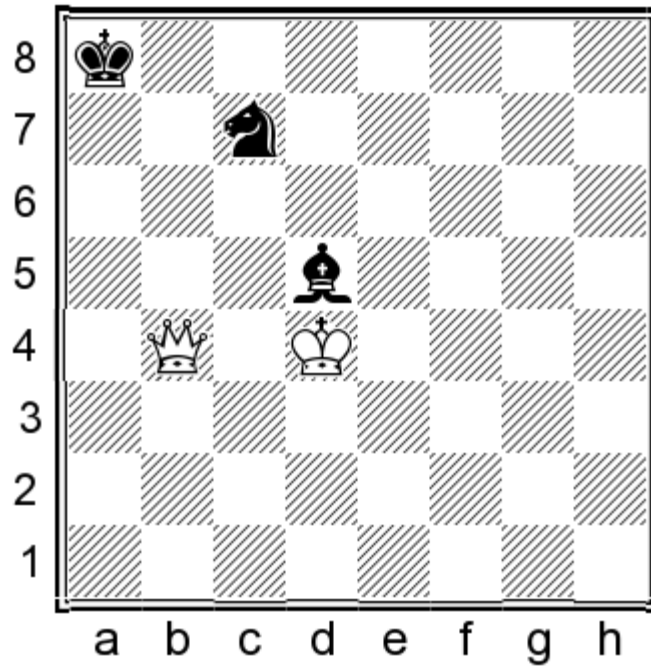
Renet Olivier

Mulhouse 2011



If only the black knight was on d5...

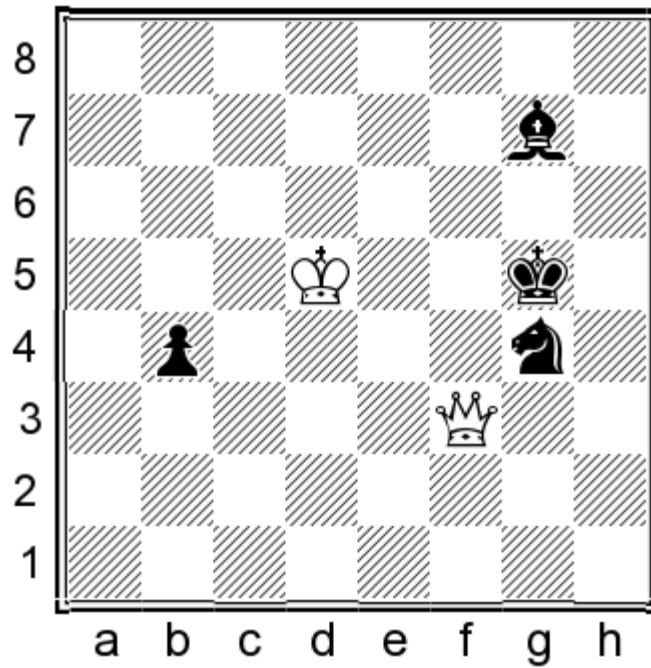
64...♙c8 65.♚d6 ♔b7 66.♔f2 ♘c7 67.♔e3 ♙e6 68.♚b4+ ♔a8 69.♔d4 ♙d5



70. ♔b6! ♚b7 1-0

3

Antipov Mikhail
 Johansson Linus
 Pune 2014



101. ♕e6?

White missed Black's set-up. He should go for something like 101. ♔g3, where he 'can' win in 32 moves.

101...♖e5! 102.♚e4 ♘h6!

The only move to achieve the fortress; the pawn is not important.

103.♚xb4 ♘h7

The optimal drawn set-up is achieved.

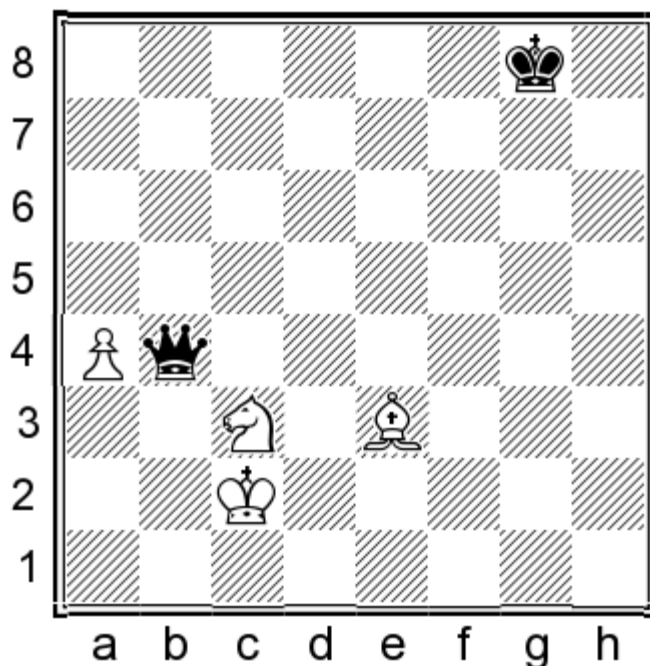
104.♚h4+ ♔g8 105.♚h5 ♙h8 106.♚e8+ ♘h7 107.♔f5 ♙g7 108.♔g5 ♖f3+

108...♙h8 and 108...♙h6+ draws as well.

109.♔h5 ♖e5 110.♚c8 ♙h8 111.♚f5+ ♔g8 112.♚e6+ ♘h7 113.♚e7+ ♙g7 114.♔g5 1/2-1/2

4

Danailov Silvio
Hebden Mark
Toulouse 1990



White hasn't achieved the desirable set-up, so he is losing.

54...♔f7 55.♙c1 ♔e6 56.♙b2 ♔d7 57.♖e2 ♚xa4+ 58.♔c1 ♔c6?

Black would preserve his winning position with 58...♔d6! 59.♖d4 ♚a2! as the white king cannot move to the corner.

59.♖d4+ ♔d5 60.♔b1!

Optimal position achieved!

60...♚d1+ 61.♔a2 ♔c4 62.♙a1 ♚h1 63.♙b2 ♚a8+ 64.♔b1 ♔d3 1/2-1/2

QUEEN VS BISHOP & KNIGHT & PAWNS

The presence of an extra pawn for the pieces is not a significant factor, as still the pieces lose if they do not obtain the optimal drawing positions.

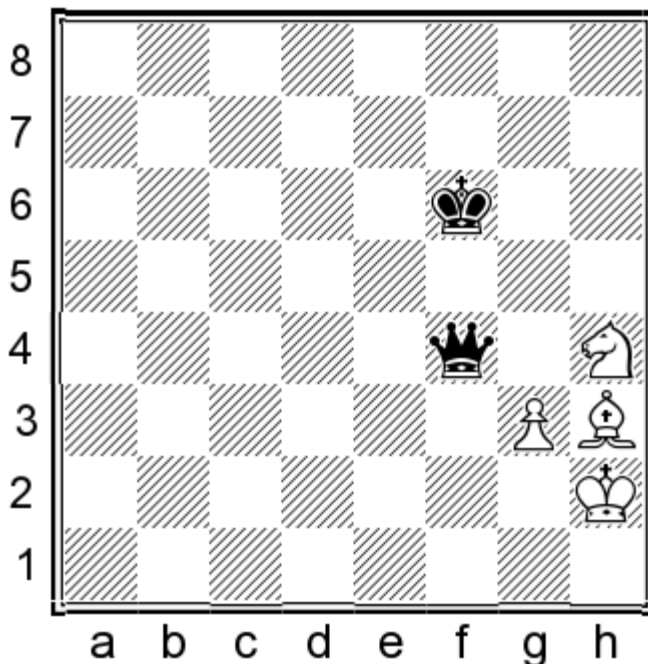
Of course there are some exceptions, connected to squares' control and fortresses.

1

Kotronias Vasilios

Ashton Adam

Hastings 2011



White cannot achieve the drawing set-up and his extra g-pawn is of no importance.

53...♖f2+

53...♖d2+ is at least 30 moves shorter!

54.♙g2 ♘g5 55.♗h3

The problem for White is that he cannot place his knight on e4, obtaining the optimal set-up.

55...♖b2 56.♙e4 ♖h8 57.♙f3 ♖c8+ 58.♗h2 ♖c2+ 59.♗h3 ♖h7 60.♗h2 ♗f6 61.♗g1 ♗e5?

61...♖d3! is the correct move, but I think that the winning procedure is not for humans, so I would expect to end in a draw anyway.

62.♘g2! ♗d4 63.♗f2 ♗d3 64.♘f4+ ♗d2 65.♗g2 ♖h6 66.♘h3 ♗e1 67.♗h2 ♗f1 68.♙g2+ ♗e2 1/2-1/2

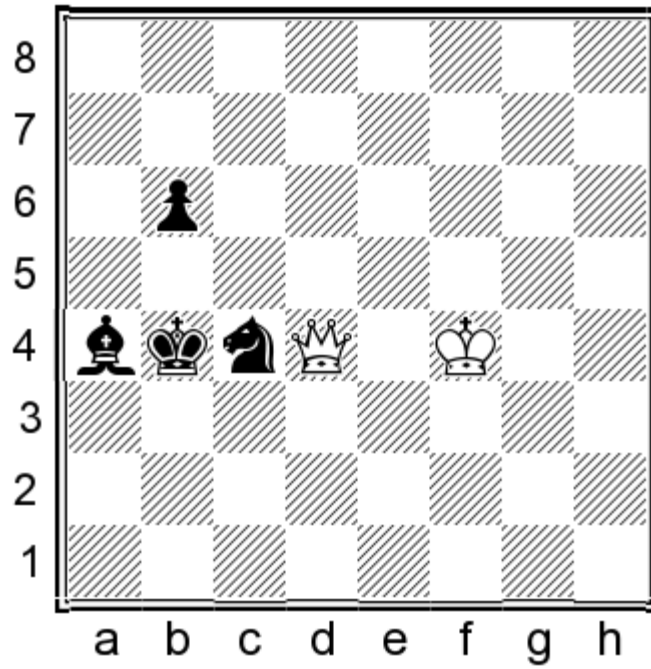
Now the pawn counts as it control the h4-square and the position is a theoretical draw.

2

Vovk Yuri

Ladva Ottomar

Berlin 2015

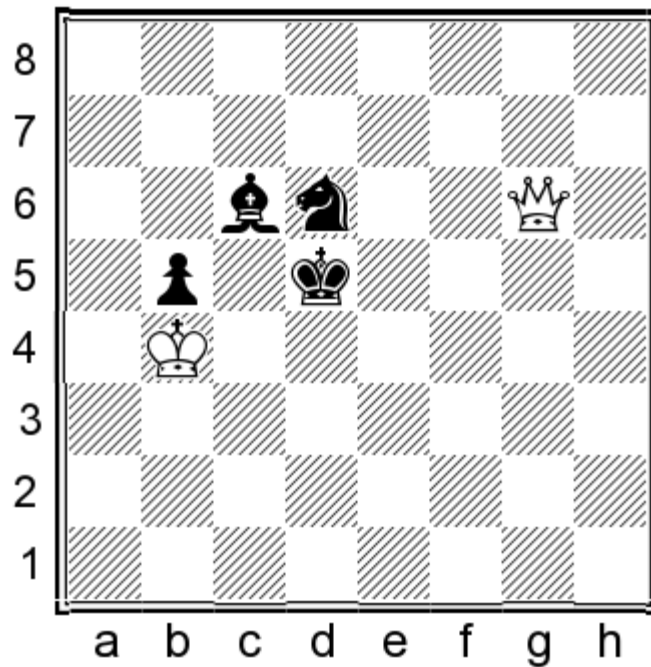


As long as Black cannot obtain the optimal set-up (♔a8, ♕b7 and ♖d5) White can win...

98. ♖f3 ♕c6+ 99. ♗e2 ♕b5 100. ♗d1 ♕a4+ 101. ♗c1 ♕b5 102. ♖d8 ♗c5 103. ♗c2 ♕c6 104. ♗c3 ♖d6 105. ♖e7 ♗d5 106. ♗b4 b5?

While the text move offers nothing important to Black, it hands the square c5 to White, so it can be considered a bad move.

107. ♖g5+ ♗e6 108. ♖g6+ ♗d5 109. ♖g2+?



109. ♖h5+! ♗e6 110. ♗c5!+-.

109... ♖e4 110. ♖f3 ♗d4 111. ♖f4 ♕d5

111...♔d5 was Black's only try, which loses in 42 moves!

112.♕xb5 1-0

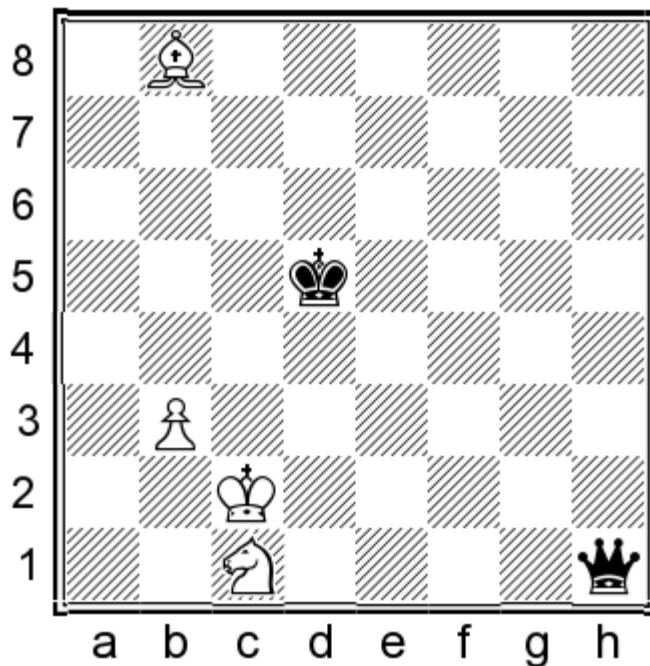
White has won the pawn and the rest is not important - White won on the 151st move!

3

Paoli Enrico

Torre Eugenio

Reggio Emilia 1972



White has a long way to go to place his bishop on b2 and his knight on d4...

56...♖h7+ 57.♔d2 ♕e4 58.♙g3 ♖h1 59.♙b8 ♗g1 60.♔c2 ♜c5+ 61.♕b2 ♞d4+ 62.♕b1 ♕e3 63.♙c7 ♔d2 64.♙a5+ ♕d1 65.♘a2 ♜e4+ 66.♕b2 ♜e5+ 67.♙c3

The alternative was 67.♘c3+ ♔d2 68.♙b4 ♕d3 69.♕a3 ♕c2 70.♕a4 ♜e6-+.

67...♜e2+ 68.♕a3 ♕c2 69.♙a5 ♜e7+ 70.♘b4+ ♕c3 71.♕a4 ♞d7+ 72.♕a3

Or 72.♘c6+ ♕c2 73.♕b5 ♜d5+ 74.♕b6 ♕xb3-+.

72...♜b5! 73.♘c6+ ♕d3 74.♘b4+ ♕d2

74...♕e4 75.♙d8 ♕f5 76.♘a2 ♜c5+ 77.♙b4 ♜e3+ and the bishop is lost.

75.♙d8 ♜e5! 76.♙b6 ♜a1+ 0-1

White resigned: 77.♘a2 ♕c2 78.♙f2 ♜b2+--+.

I was impressed by the following game, as usually the lower-rated players don't win against well-known GMs, simply because they do not believe it!

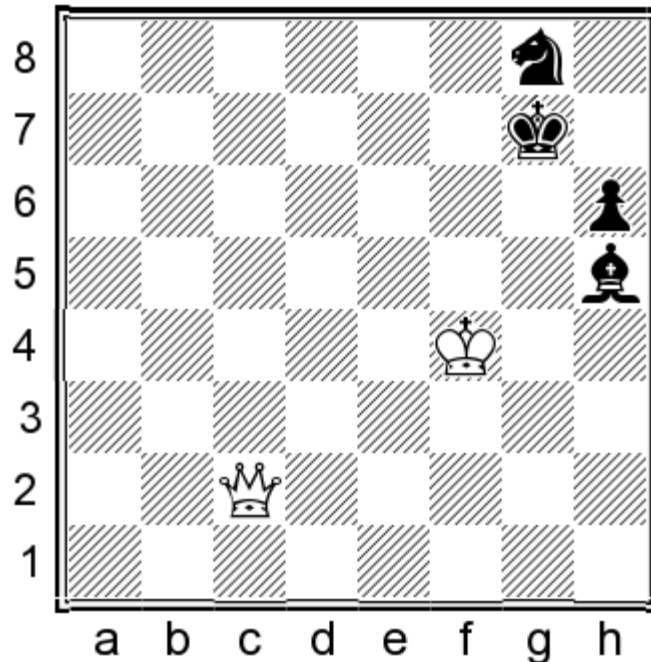
But Dragisevic kept his cool and scored the point, quite easily by the way...

4

Dragicevic Domagoj

Rogers Ian

Canberra 2004



The corner is wrong and White can win.

58. ♖c3+ ♜g6 59. ♖c5 ♜f6

59... ♙e2 60. ♖c2+-.

60. ♖f5+ ♜g7 61. ♜e5

And a piece is lost.

61... ♜h7 62. ♖xh5 ♜g5 63. ♜f5 ♜h7 64. ♖g6+ ♜h8 65. ♜f4 ♜g5 66. ♖xh6+ ♜h7 67. ♜f5 ♜g8 68. ♖g6+ ♜h8 69. ♖e8+ ♜g7 70. ♖e7+ ♜h6 71. ♖f7 ♜f8 72. ♖xf8+ ♜h7 73. ♖e7+ 1-0

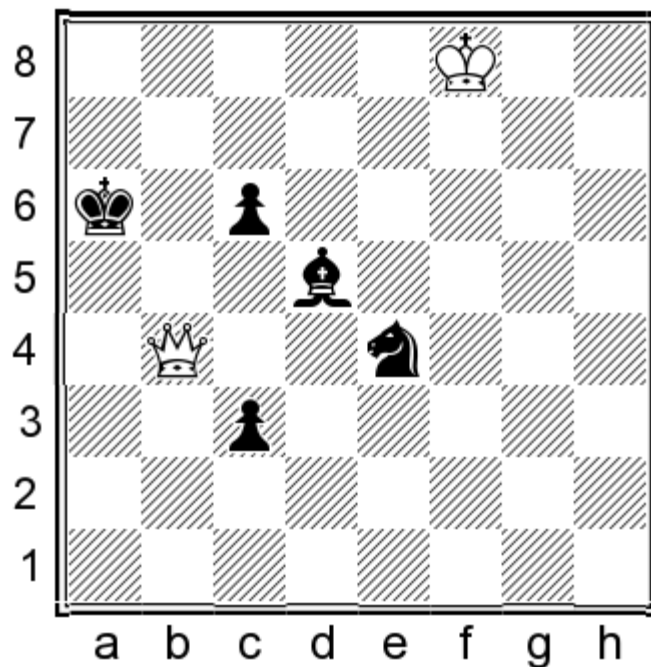
With two pawns the 'pieces' side can draw - the return of the pawns to reach an optimal position should be the main concern.

5

Mamedyarov Shakhriyar

Bareev Evgeny

Moscow 2009

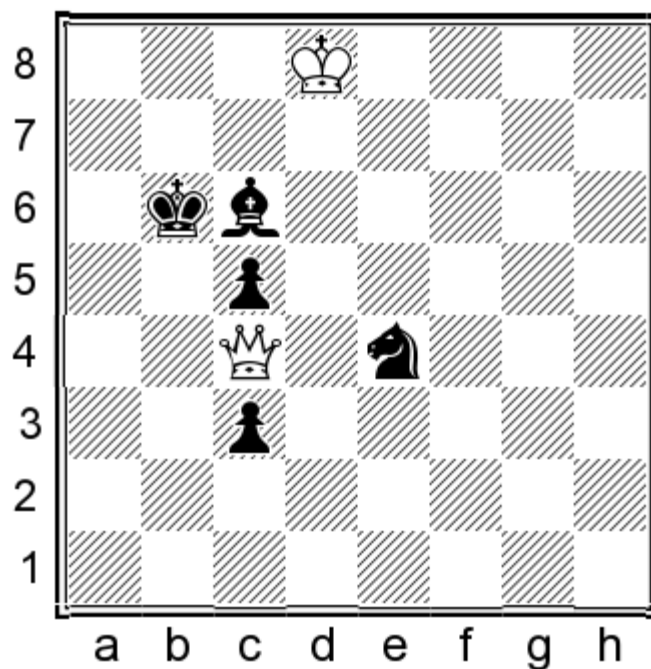


Black cannot wait for long, as White threatens to walk with his king on c7/d8, creating threats.

65...c5! 66.♚a4+ ♜b6 67.♞e7 ♙c6 68.♚b3+ ♜c7 69.♚c4 ♜b6

Black should think of 'losing' both his pawns but gain the optimal set-up: 69...♞b7! 70.♚a2 ♜b8 (70...♞d6? 71.♚h2+-) 71.♞d8 ♞f6! 72.♚h2+ (72.♚f2 ♞d5 73.♚xc5 c2 74.♚xc2 ♜a8=) 72...♜a8 73.♞c7 ♞d5+ 74.♞d6 c2 75.♚xc2 c4 76.♚xc4=.

70.♞d8



70...♞b5?

An immediate blunder. Black should go for 70...♖d6! 71.♙xc3 ♗b5 72.♙d2 ♘b7 73.♙e1 ♘a8 74.♕c8 ♘b7+ 75.♕b8 ♘d5 and this position is a theoretical draw.

71.♙xe4 ♕a5 72.♕c7 c4 73.♙b1 ♘a4 74.♙b6# 1-0

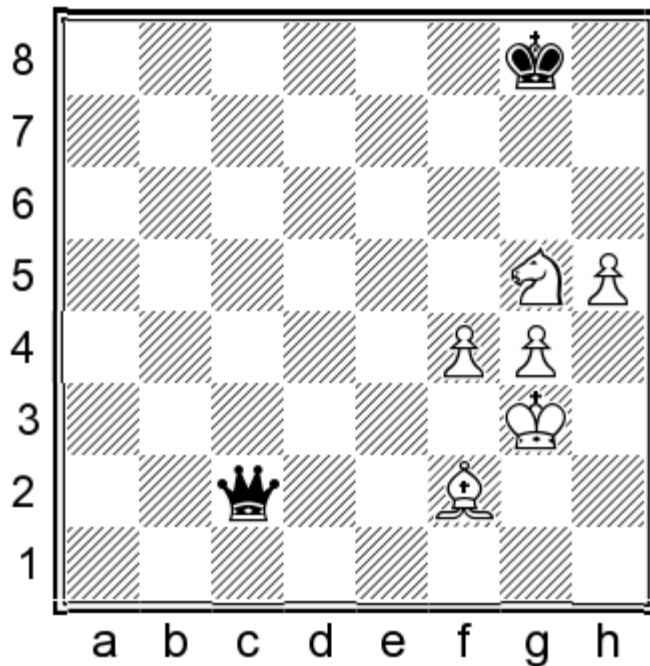
When the pawns are getting up to three or more in number, the 'pieces' might tell and claim victory.

6

Maletin Pavel

Bivol Alina

St Petersburg 2015

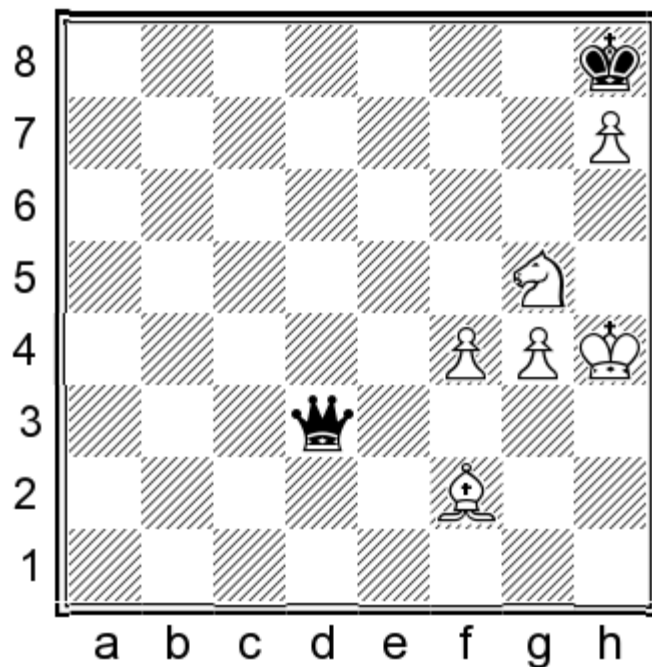


Of course only White has chances, but the queen is a strong piece!

83.h6 ♙d3+ 84.♕h4 ♙d2!

Black must control the d4 square.

85.h7+ ♕h8 86.♕g3 ♙d3+ 87.♕g2 ♙d5+ 88.♕h3 ♙d3+ 89.♕h4



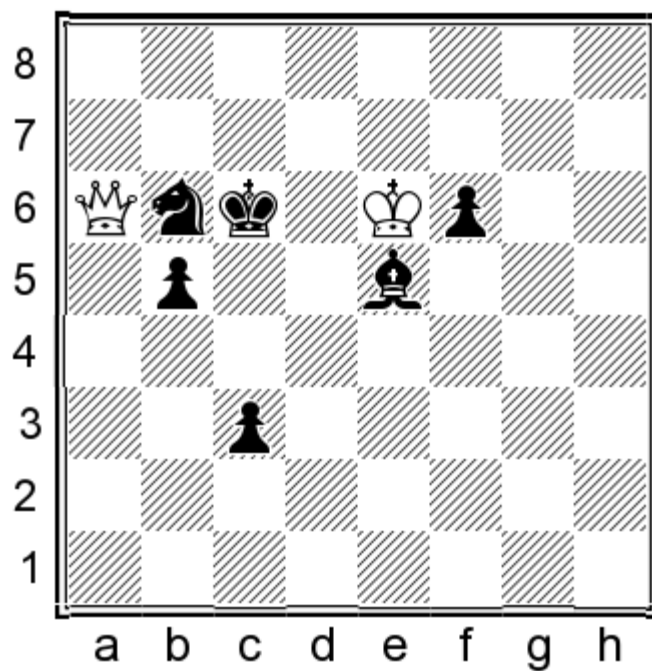
89...♔d2! 90.♙g3 ♚g2! 91.f5 ♚h1+ 92.♘h3 ♔xh7

Securing the draw.

93.♙f4 ♚e1+ 94.♙g3 ♚e7+ 95.♘g5+ ♔h6 96.♙f4 ♚e1+ 97.♔h3 ♚f1+ 98.♔g3 ♚e1+ 99.♔f3 ♚f1+ 100.♔g3 ♚e1+ 101.♔f3 ♚f1+ 1/2-1/2

7

Danielian Elina
Gaponenko Inna
Buenos Aires 1992



Black is winning as her c-pawn is far advanced.

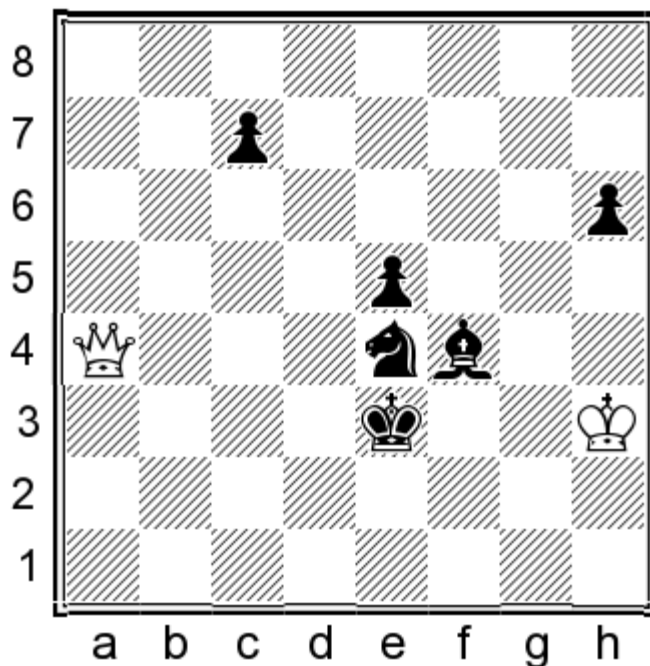
70...c2 71.♚a3 b4! 72.♜f3+ ♔c7 73.♜e3 b3 74.♜c5+ ♔b7 75.♔f5 ♟b2 76.♜e7+ ♔a6 77.♜e2+ ♔a5 78.♜e1+ ♔a4 79.♜e8+ ♔a3 80.♜e7+ ♔a2 81.♜a7+ ♔b1 82.♜xb6 c1=♚ 83.♜xb3 ♜c2+ 0-1

8

Szuper Paul

Lasinskas Povilas

Caleta 2011



Black's centralised pieces and king gives him good chances to prevail.

65...c5 66.♔g2 ♔d3 67.♜a3+ ♔d4 68.♜b2+ ♔c3 69.♔f3 ♟g5 70.♜f2+ ♔c4 71.♔g2 e4 72.♜f7+ ♔d3 73.♜d7+ ♔c2

Checks are over for the time being and Black will improve.

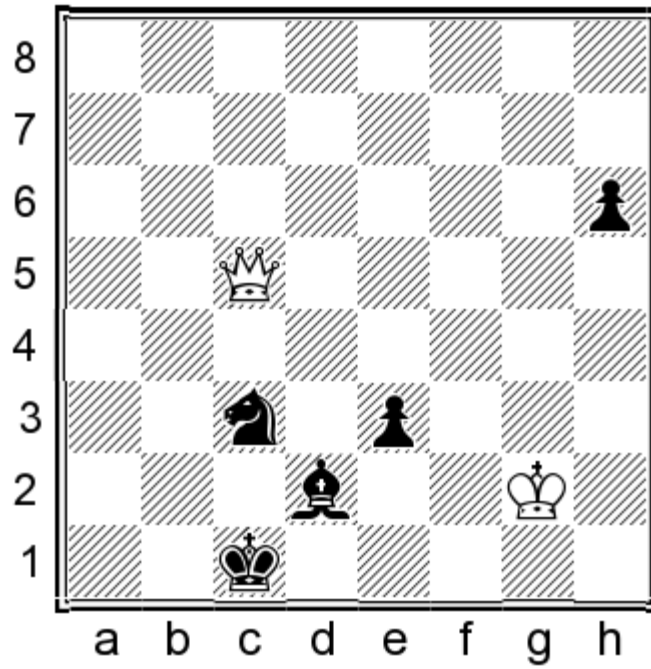
74.♜h7 ♔d1?

74...♟d2! 75.♜g6 ♔c1 is the end, as the threat...e3-e2-e1 cannot be parried.

75.♜f7 ♟d2

75...e3 76.♜d7+ ♔c1 77.♜g7 ♔c2 78.♜h7+ draws.

76.♜h5+! ♔c1 77.♜xc5 e3



78. ♔f3!

Now it's a draw!

78... ♕d1 79. ♖xc3?

Wrong! White could draw with 79. ♖c4! e2 80. ♖b3+ ♕c1 (80... ♕e1 81. ♖b2=) 81. ♖xc3+ ♕xc3 82. ♔xe2=, as the white king can safely go to the h1-square.

79... ♕xc3 80. ♔xe3 ♕e1 81. ♔f3 ♕f1 82. ♔g3 ♕g1

White cannot reach the h1-square!

83. ♔h3 ♕e5 84. ♔g4 ♕g2 85. ♔h4 ♕f6+ 86. ♔h5 ♕g5 87. ♔g4 ♕h2 0-1

QUEEN & PAWNS VS BISHOP & KNIGHT & PAWNS

Adding pawns to the 'queen' side obviously makes her dominating position even stronger.

In the previous chapters we had only one plan for the 'queen' side; to combine forces with her king to attack the enemy one, mating or winning material.

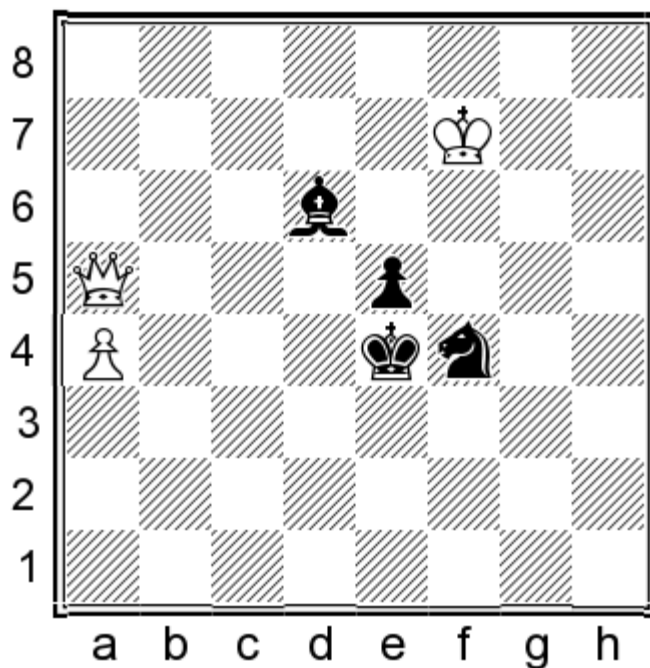
Now, the extra plan is to push the pawns, restricting the opponent pieces or getting promoted to a new queen or, finally, winning a piece for the pawn (if passed).

1

Fridman Daniel

Milov Leonid

Mainz 2010



Things look easy for White; he just has to push his pawn and win one black piece in return for it.

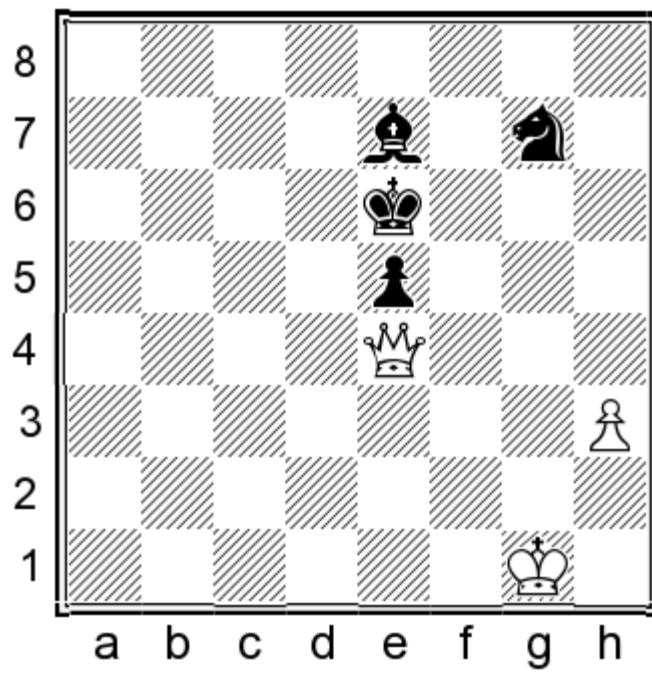
98. ♖b6 ♔d5 99. a5 ♙c5 100. ♕b8 ♞d3 101. a6 1-0

2

Vladimirov Yevgeniy

Smyslov Vassily

Moscow 1990



As in the previous example, White should focus on winning a black piece for his h-pawn.

52. ♖g6+! ♗f6 53. h4!

The pawn is unstoppable.

53... ♗e7 54. h5 ♖e6 55. h6 ♖f8 56. ♖g8 1-0

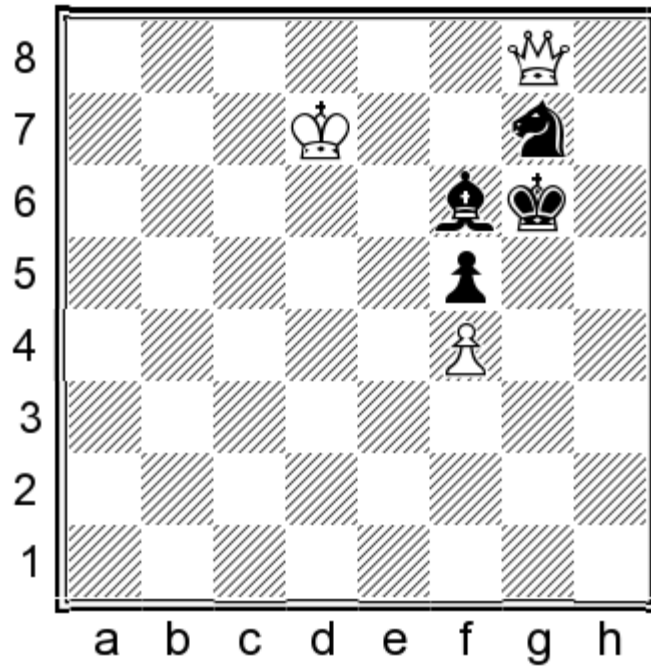
Things might get more complicated if the pawns stand symmetrical and blocked:

3

Anand Viswanathan

Costa Jean Luc

Biel 1988

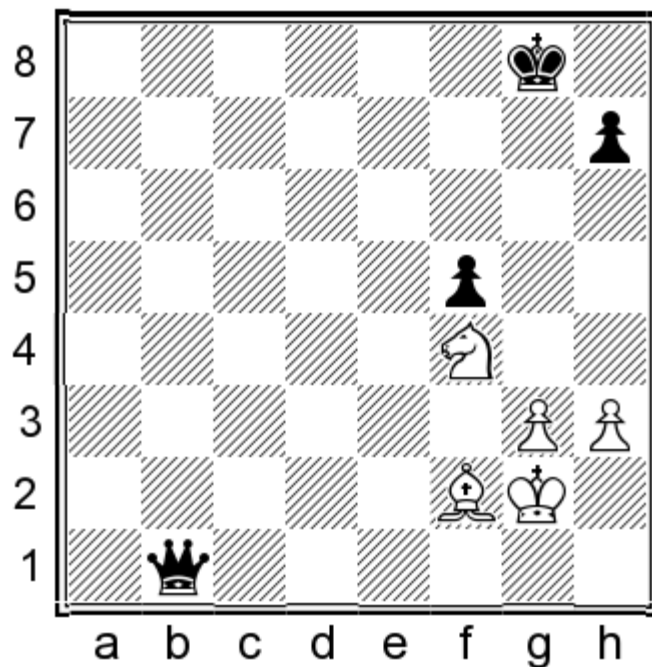


A good position to defend, as the black pawn controls important squares, while the white pawn is of no help; it actually takes away the f4-square from its king! Also, the b1-h7 diagonal is blocked, and is required to win the pawnless position.

90. ♔d6 ♕h4 91. ♚a8 ♜f6 92. ♚c6 ♔f7 93. ♚g2 ♜e7+ 94. ♔d7 ♕h4 95. ♚h3 ♜f6 96. ♚g3 ♜d4 97. ♔d6 ♜f6 98. ♔d5 ♜e7 99. ♚xg7+ 1/2-1/2

Positions with two pawns for each side can be easy for the 'queen' side, if the 'pieces' cannot create a fortress. Of course there are 100's of positions to analyse, but here we will see a few instructive examples.

4
Gurevich Mikhail
Kouatly Bachar
Marseille 1988



It seems that this is another hard nut to crack, but it is easier than you think.

55...♖e4+ 56.♗g1 ♕f7 57.♖h2 ♕f6 58.h4 ♜c2 59.♖g2 ♕e5 60.♘h3 ♕e4 61.♘f4

If 61.♘g5+ ♕d3 62.♘xh7 ♕e2 63.♘g5 ♜c6+ 64.♖g1 ♜c1+ 65.♖g2 ♜f1+-.

61...♜d1 0-1

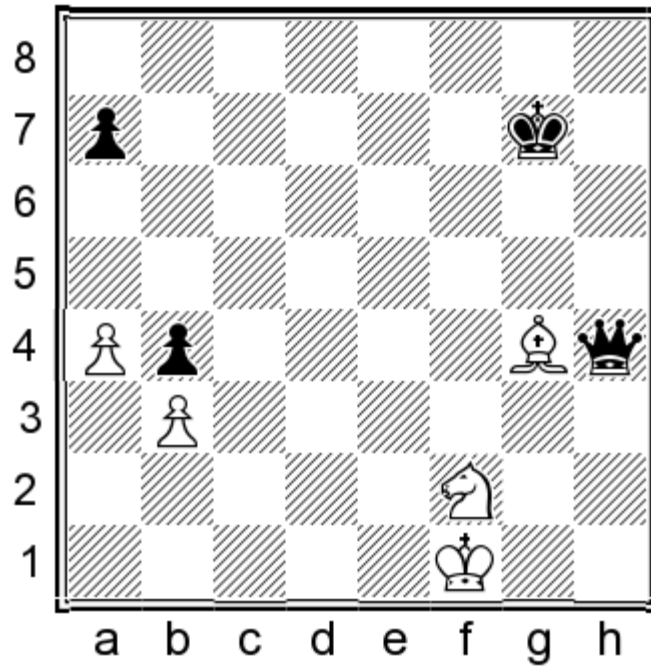
And White resigned due to 62.♘e6 ♜f3+ 63.♖g1 f4! The key move to free the way for the king towards the white camp. 64.♘xf4 ♕f5 65.♘g2 ♜d1+ 66.♖h2 ♜e2 67.♖g1 ♕g4+-.

5

Hjartarson Johann

Pigusov Evgeny

Biel 1993



The pawns are blocked and the base of the white pawn structure, the b3-pawn, can be protected by the bishop. But the black king can invade via the dark squares.

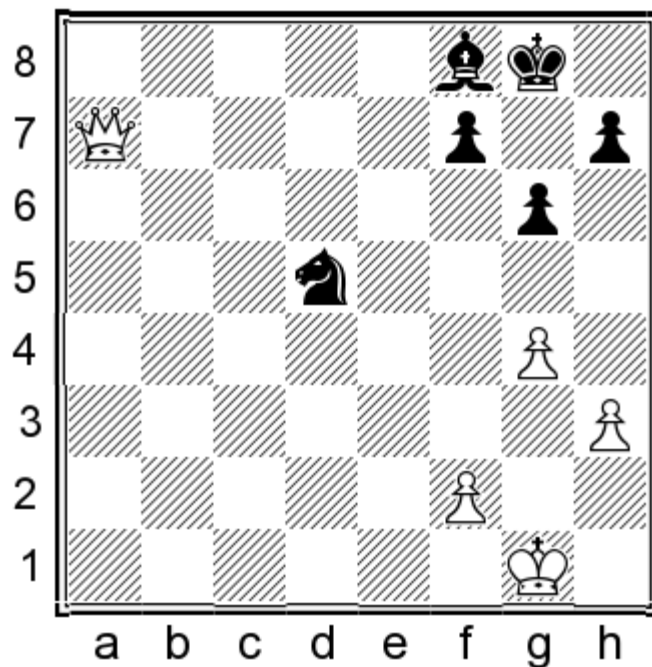
56...♔f6 57.♙e2 ♔e5 58.♙c4 ♔d4 59.♘d1 ♚h2 60.♔e1 a5 61.♘f2 ♚g3 62.♔e2 ♚e3+ 63.♔f1 ♚d2 64.♔g1 ♚c2 65.♔f1 ♔e3 66.♘g4+ ♔f3 67.♘e5+ ♔f4 0-1

And White resigned as after 68.♘d3+ ♔e3 69.♔g1 ♚xd3 70.♙xd3 ♔xd3 Black wins.

Getting to 3vs3 case, it is very likely that the queen will dominate, but there are some exceptions as always, where a defence can be organised.

6

Baburin Alexander
Astaneh Lopez Alex
Galway 2011



The weak white pawn structure helps Black to create a fortress.

37...♟f4 38.h4 h6 39.♔f1 ♘e6 40.♚b8 g5!

Blocking the white pawn structure from advancing. 40...♔g7? would allow 41.♚e5+ ♔g8 42.f4, when Black will not survive.

41.hxg5 hxg5 42.♔e2 ♔g7 43.♚e5+ ♔g8 44.♔d3 ♙c5

Black's defence is pretty easy - just keep the enemy pieces away from the f7-pawn.

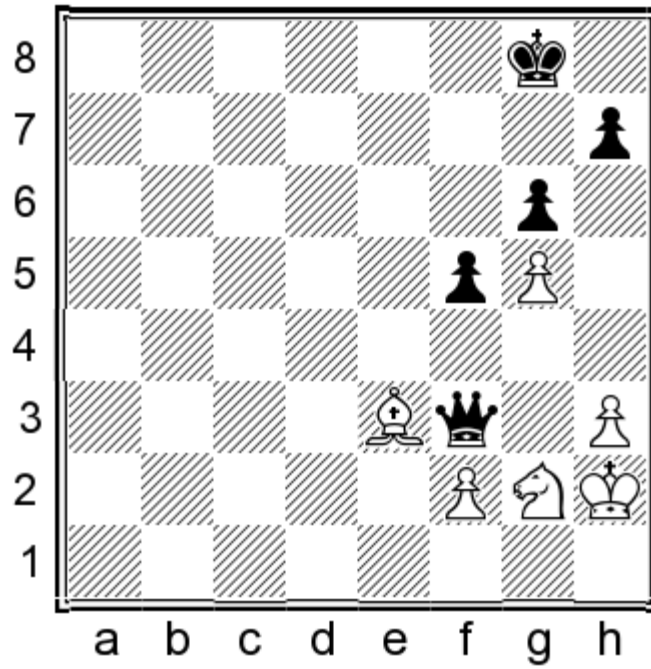
45.♚f5

I do not see a way to break down Black's defence; for example: 45.f3 ♙d4 46.♚d6 ♔g7 47.♔e4 ♔g6 48.♚b8 ♙g7 49.♔d5 ♙f8 50.♔c6 ♔g7 51.♚e5+ ♔g8 52.♔d7 ♙h6 (52...♙g7 53.♚f5 ♙h6) 53.♚c3 ♙g7 54.♚c8+ ♙f8 55.♚b8 ♟f4 56.♚d8 ♟e6 57.♚c8 ♟d4 58.♚b7 ♟e6 59.♔e8 ♟g7+ 60.♔d7 ♟e6 and White has gained nothing, as he cannot create a combined attack of king and queen on f7.

45...♔g7 46.♔c4 ♙e7 47.♔d5 ♙f6 48.♔d6 ♟f8 49.♔c7 ♙e7 50.♔c8 ♙f6 51.f4 ♟e6 52.fxg5 ♟xg5 53.♔d7 ♟e6 54.♚d5 ♙g5 55.♚c4 ♙f4 56.♔e7 ♙g5+ 57.♔e8 ♙f6 58.♚c6 ♔g8 59.♔d7 ♔g7 60.♚d5 ♟g5 61.♚f5 1/2-1/2

7

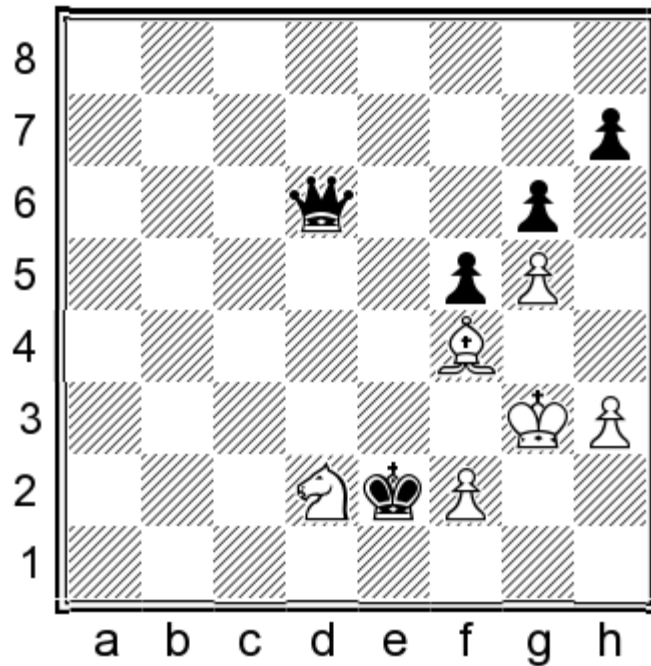
**Gelfand Boris
Li Chao
Moscow 2016**



44...♔f7 45.♘h4 ♚d1 46.♙f4 ♕e6 47.♖g3 ♔d5 48.♗f3 ♕e4 49.♗d2+ ♔d3 50.♖g2 ♕e2

By just advancing his king, Black has deprived his opponent of a lot of defensive moves.

51.♙e3 ♚a4! 52.♖g3 ♚b4 53.♙f4 ♚c5 54.♙e3 ♚d6+ 55.♙f4



55...♚d4! 56.♙e3 ♔f4+! 57.♙xf4 ♚xf2+ 58.♖g4 ♚g1+ 59.♖h4 ♚g2 0-1

59...♔f2 60.♙e5 ♚d1 61.♙f4 ♚h5# was accurate, but of course the text move is good enough and White resigned.

CHAPTER 7.

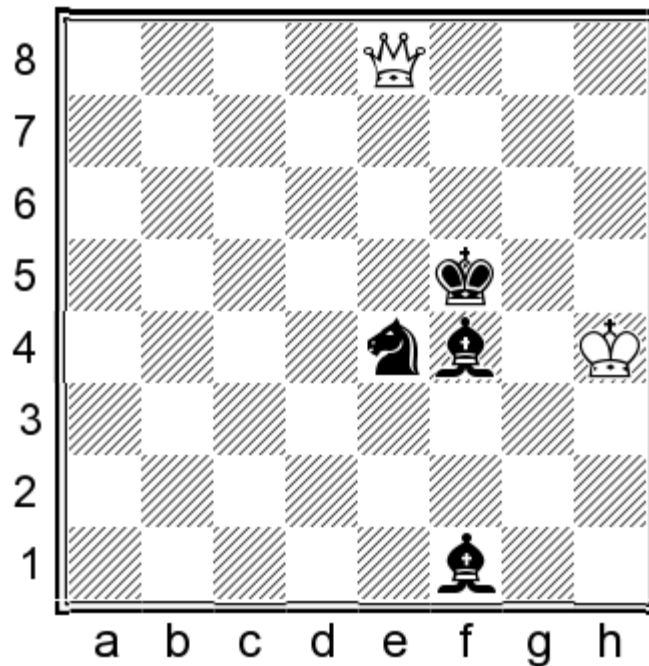
QUEEN VS THREE MINOR PIECES

A very difficult ending to assess and play in a practical game. When pawnless, it looks like a draw, as the minor pieces cannot force the opponent's king into mate. Some exceptions might arise, however, if the king is cornered.

There is also a win for the 'queen' side(!) vs three bishops; all on the same colour, which of course should be a very rare case...

1

Ivic Marko
Kahvedzic Emir
Gorazde 2009

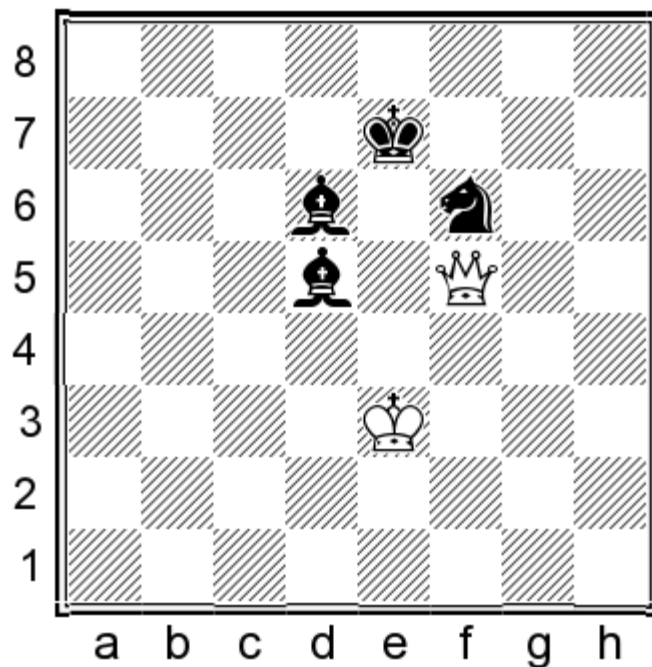


The white king is cornered and mated!

83...♙g5+ 84.♚h5 ♘f6# 0-1

2

Rozenalis Eduardas
Sutovsky Emil
Israel 2010

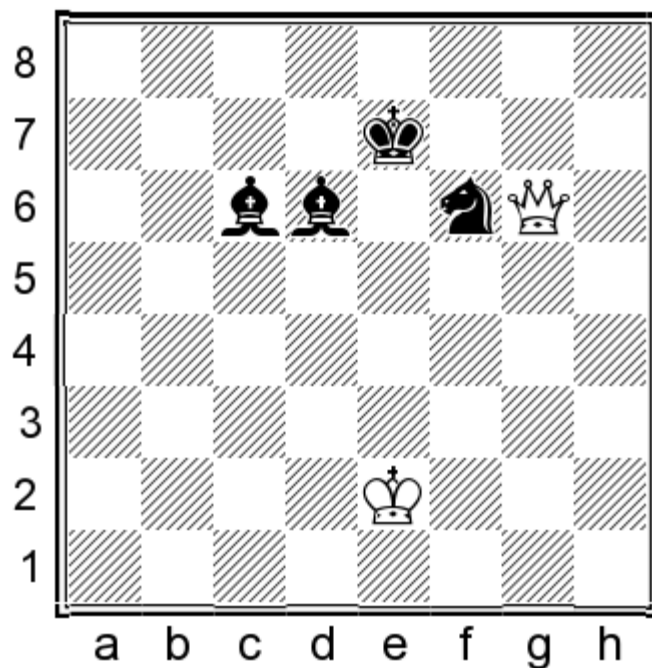


White can defend.

91...♙e6 92.♚g5 ♜f7 93.♜d4 ♙e7 94.♚f4 ♙d8 95.♚d6 ♜d7 96.♜e4 ♙b6 97.♜d3 ♙a7 98.♜e4 ♙b8 99.♚c6 ♜e7
 100.♚b7 ♙d6 101.♜d4 ♙c5+ 102.♜e4 ♙d6 103.♜d4 ♙c5+ 104.♜e4 ♜d6 105.♚a6+ ♜b6 106.♚d3+ ♙d5+ 107.♜f5
 ♜c4 108.♜f6 ♜c6 109.♜f5 ½-½

3

Rodin Mihail
 Smirnov Pavel
 Saratov 2006



Here again White shouldn't have any serious trouble, if he does not get carried away...

73...♙d5 74.♗d3 ♖e6 75.♗e3 ♙e5 76.♗d3 ♗d6 77.♗e3 ♗c5 78.♞c2+ ♙c4 79.♞d2 ♗d5+ 80.♗e4

Black cannot proceed with the squeezing.

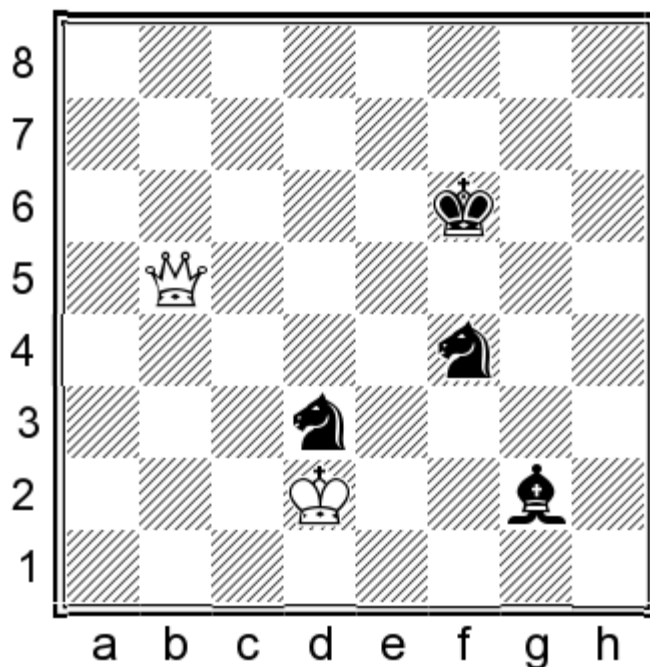
80...♙c3 81.♞f2+ ♗b4 82.♞a7 ♗b3 83.♞b7+ ♗b4 84.♗e3 ♙d5 85.♞b8 ♙c4 1/2-1/2

4

Braeuer Franz

Heck Norbert

Germany 2010



When facing two knights, the ‘queen’ side has an extra option at his disposal; to sac the queen for the bishop, thus making the mission easier.

61...♗e5 62.♞b6+ ♗f5 63.♞f2 ♙e4 64.♞a7 ♗d5 65.♞h7+ ♗g6 66.♞h5+ ♗f4 67.♞h2+ ♗g4 68.♞e2+ ♗f5 69.♞xe4+!
 ♗xe4 70.♗e2 ♗gf4+ 71.♗d2 ♗d4 72.♗c2 ♗c4 1/2-1/2

With extra pawn(s) for both sides the ‘queen’ side can be in danger. What really counts here is optimal piece coordination.

If the ‘pieces’ side succeeds in winning more material, then the opposing side will hardly survive.

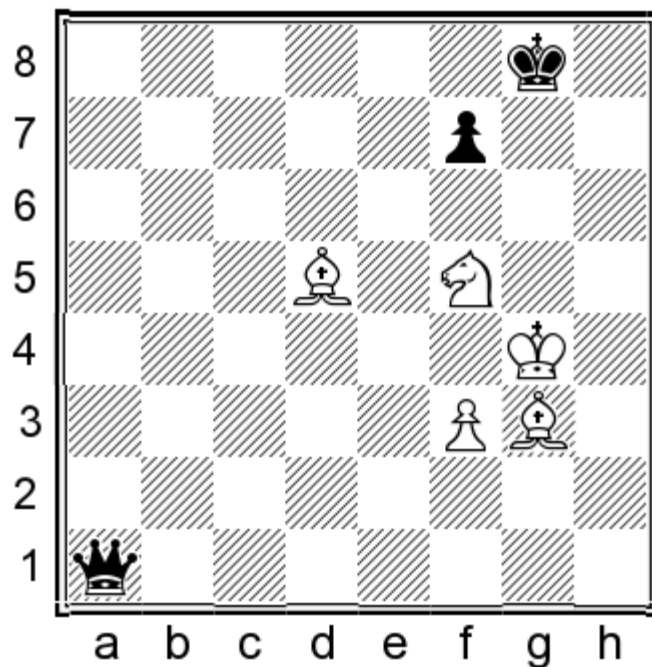
The ‘queen’ side should look for perpetual check and dissemination of the pieces.

5

Gustafsson Jan

Svane Rasmus

Bonn 2011



White will try to target the f7-pawn.

50.♔g5 ♖c1+?

Black shouldn't allow the white king to take up a good position on f6, so he should opt for 50...♗b2! After 51.♙d6 (51.♜h6+? ♔g7 52.♜xf7 ♖d2+) 51...♗g2+ 52.♔f6 ♗g6+ 53.♔e5 ♔h7 54.♙e4 ♗g1 55.♔f6 ♗g6+ 56.♔e7 ♔g8 57.♔e8 ♗e6+ 58.♜e7+ ♔g7 59.♙c5 things look scary for Black. The analysis engines think that Black can hold with very precise moves, but in my opinion this should be lost in a practical game.

51.♔f6 ♗a1+ 52.♙e5 ♗a6+ 53.♜d6 ♖d3 54.♙xf7+ ♔f8 55.f4

White has won the black pawn and now it is a different story, as the f4-pawn assists the white forces perfectly.

55...♗h7 56.♙g6 ♗h4+ 57.♔e6 ♗g4+ 58.f5

According to tablebases, this is a blunder which results in a draw! 58.♙f5 ♗g8+ 59.♔d7 is a win!

58...♗h3

58...♗b4 or 58...♗a4 is a draw: 59.♙e8 ♗b3+ 60.♔f6 ♗e3 61.♙g6 ♗a7.

59.♜c8?

Better is 59.♜e8!±.

59...♗g4?

Black has to take all possible chances, so 59...♗b3+ 60.♔f6 ♗f7+! was obligatory. After 61.♔g5 ♗d5 it seems that Black will survive (by perpetual check) as the white pieces are unco-ordinated.

60.♜b6 ♔g8 61.♜d5

Game over!

61...♔f8 62.♖f4 ♔g8 63.♙f7+?!

63...♙h5! ♖g3 64.♙f7+ ♔h7 65.f6+-.

63...♔h7 64.♖g6 ♖h3 65.♔f6 ♖h6?!

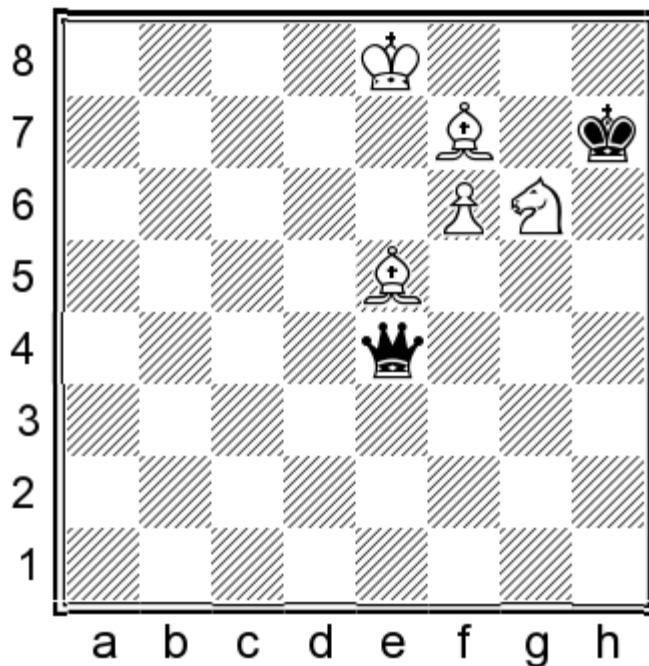
The queen will pose more problems when free to check: 65...♖a3!±.

66.♔e7 ♖g5+ 67.f6 ♖e3 68.♔e8?

With 68.♖f8+! ♔h6 69.♖d7 White achieves optimal piece co-ordination and the end will be near.

68...♖e4?

Returning the favour. After 68...♔h6! it is not easy for White to improve!



69.♖f8+! ♔h6 70.♖d7 ♖a8+ 71.♔e7 ♖a3+ 72.♙d6 ♖e3+ 73.♙e6

And the pawn is unstoppable.

73...♖g5 74.♖e5 ♔h7 75.♙c4

75.♖f3! was simple - the pawn will queen.

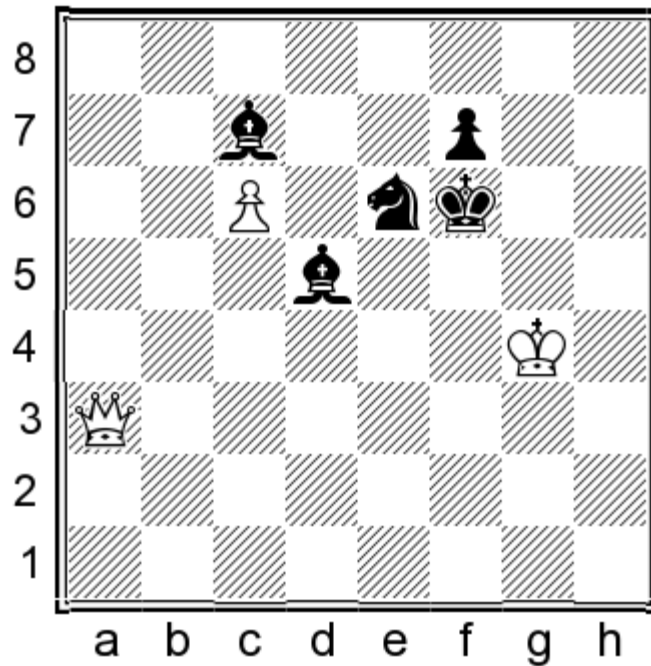
75...♖e3 76.f7 ♖a7+ 77.♔e6 ♖b7 78.♙d3+ 1-0

[Easiest, but also possible was 78.f8=♖ ♖d5+ 79.♔d7! ♖b7+ 80.♙c7 ♖xc7+ 81.♔e6 ♖b6+ 82.♖d6+-.

6

Mikayelyan Mher
Lawrence Danyul
Los Angeles 2011

chesstouring.com



55. ♖a1+?

White allows the black pieces to achieve optimal co-ordination and win the white pawn as well. He should go for 55. ♖e3! ♔e7 56. ♖a3+ ♕d6 57. ♖a7+ ♖c7 58. ♖e3+ and it seems that he will hold.

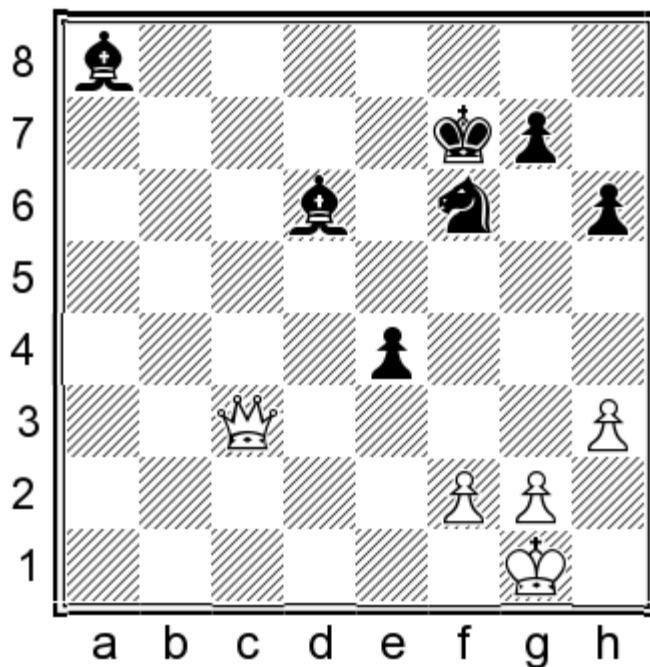
55. ♖a1+? ♕e5 56. ♖f1+ ♔e7 57. ♖f5 ♖f6 58. ♖h7+ ♔d6 59. ♖d7+ ♔c5 60. ♔h4 1/2-1/2

Black should continue: 60... ♖c7 61. ♔h5 ♕xc6 and there is no logical basis for White's survival.

When there are more pawns on board, the pieces can create many problems. Identical pawn structures without weaknesses offer the best practical chances to defend. As we will observe, opinions differs.

7

Shirov Alexei
Carlsen Magnus
Bilbao 2010



A very interesting ending, in which of course only Black can play for a win. White is helped by his healthy pawn structure but he has a very long mission to deal with.

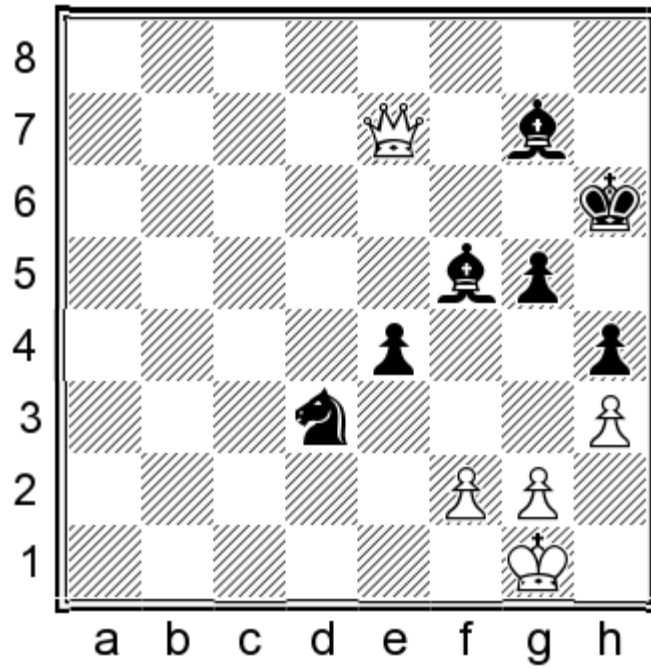
42. ♖d4 ♜d5 43. ♚a7+ ♜e7 44. ♚c7 h5

Alexei Shirov suggested a possible winning plan for Black: leave pawns on g7 and h6, put bishops on e8 and g5, then move the king to h7 and bishop to g6. After that, ... ♜h5 forces g3 and the resulting ending is evaluated by Shirov as winning for Black.

45. ♚e5 g6 46. ♜h2 ♜e6 47. ♜g1 ♜f5 48. ♜f1 ♜e8 49. ♜g1 ♜g7 50. ♚d5+ ♜e6 51. ♚b7 h4

An alternative plan is 51...g5!? 52. ♚d5 ♜g6 53. ♚b7 ♜f6 54. ♚d7 g4 55. hxg4 ♜xg4. Then Black will exchange the g- and h-pawns, advancing with his king as in the previous examples.

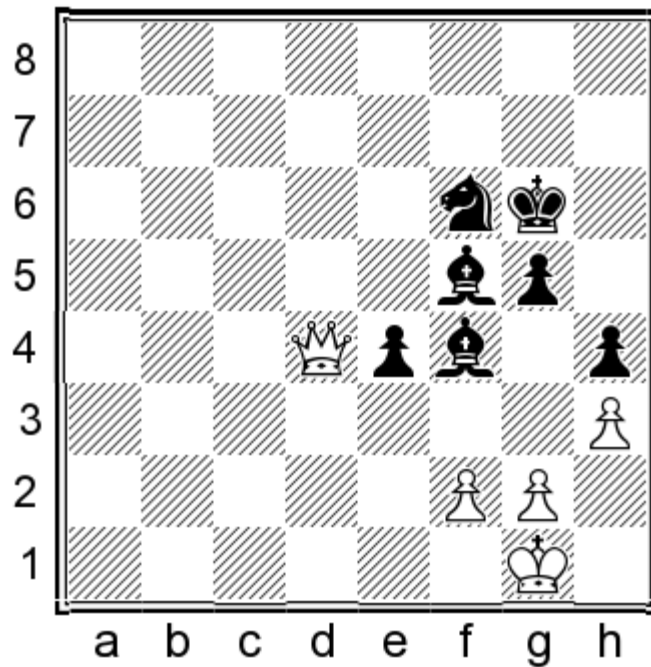
52. ♜h2 ♜f4 53. ♜g1 ♜d3 54. ♜f1 ♜c5 55. ♚d5+ ♜e6 56. ♚e5 ♜f5 57. ♚d5+ ♜e6 58. ♚b7 ♜f8 59. ♚a8+ ♜d8 60. ♚a7 ♜f6 61. ♚b7 ♜g8 62. ♚a7 ♜g5 63. ♜e2 ♜f4+ 64. ♜f1 ♜h5 65. ♜e2 ♜f8 66. ♜f1 ♜f6 67. ♚c7 ♜g7 68. ♚a7 ♜e6 69. ♚b7 ♜d8 70. ♚a7 ♜f7 71. ♜g1 ♜g7 72. ♜f1 ♜e5 73. ♚e7 g5 74. ♜g1 ♜f6 75. ♚b7 ♜g6 76. ♚d5 ♜e5 77. ♚g8+ ♜g7 78. ♚e8+ ♜h6 79. ♚e7 ♜d3



80.♔f1

The black king is too open and he needs piece protection, otherwise Black would have an easy win by targeting f2.

80...♘f4 81.♚d6+ ♔g6 82.♗e7 ♘d5 83.♗e6 ♘f6 84.♔g1 ♕e8 85.♗f5 ♔d7 86.♗e5 ♔g6 87.♔f1 ♕f8 88.♔g1 ♕a3 89.♗c7 ♕b4 90.♗e5 ♔d2 91.♗d4 ♕f4 92.♗b6 ♕e8 93.♔f1 ♕f7 94.♔g1 ♔f5 95.♗a7 ♕e6 96.♔f1 ♔g6 97.♗b6 ♔d7 98.♔g1 ♕a4 99.♗e6 ♕b5 100.♗b6 ♕c4 101.♗d4 ♕e6 102.♔f1 ♕f5 103.♔g1



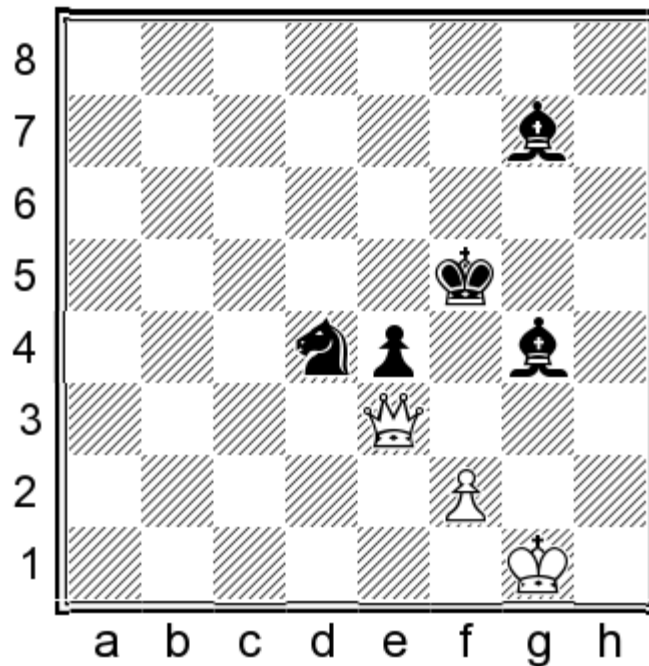
103...g4!

After long manoeuvring Black decides to change the structure.

104.hxg4 ♖xg4 105.♖c3 ♗f5 106.♖b3 ♗g5 107.♗f1 ♖h6 108.♗g1 ♗g6 109.♗f1 ♗d7 110.♗g1 ♗e8 111.♖c3 ♗f7
 112.♖e5 ♗d5 113.♖c3 ♗e6 114.♖e5 ♗d7 115.♖c3 ♗f5 116.♖b3 ♗h5

Black can try 116...e3 117.fxe3 ♗g4, but White can defend: 118.♖g8+ ♖h5 119.♖h8+ ♗h6 120.♖e8+ ♗g6 121.♖h8
 ♗xe3 122.♖e5+ ♗f5!/? (122...♗f5 123.♖e2+ ♗g5 124.♖d2+=) 123.♖e8+ ♗g4 124.♗f2=.

117.♖g8+ ♗g7 118.♖b3 ♗e6 119.♖h2 ♗f6 120.♗g1 ♗g7 121.♗f1 ♗g5 122.♖b6+ ♗f6 123.♗g1 h3 124.gxh3 ♗xh3
 125.♖d6 ♗f5 126.♗g2 ♗f3 127.♖d5 ♗g5 128.♖g8+ ♗g6 129.♖d5+ ♗e5 130.♖d8+ ♖h5 131.♖d5 ♗f5 132.♖f7+
 ♗g4 133.♖g8+ ♗g5 134.♖c4 ♗f4 135.♖g8 ♗e6 136.♖g7 ♗f7 137.♖d4 ♗f5 138.♖c5+ ♗e5 139.♖f8 ♗g6 140.♖c5
 ♗f6 141.♖d6 ♗c4 142.♖c6 ♗e6 143.♖d6 ♗g4 144.♖d5 ♗f3+ 145.♗f1 ♗f7 146.♗g1 ♗e5 147.♖g8+ ♗f5 148.♖c8+
 ♗g5 149.♖g8+ ♗g6 150.♖d5+ ♖h6 151.♖e6 ♗e5 152.♖f5 ♗f4 153.♖f6 ♗g5 154.♖e6 ♗g7 155.♖d7+ ♗e7 156.♖e6
 ♗f6 157.♗f1 ♗g6 158.♗g1 ♗f5 159.♖g8+ ♖h5 160.♖f7+ ♗g5 161.♖g8+ ♗f4 162.♖b8+ ♗g4 163.♖g8+ ♗g5
 164.♖c8 ♗f6 165.♖g8+ ♗f4 166.♖b8+ ♗e5 167.♖b4 ♗d4 168.♖f8+ ♗g5 169.♖g8+ ♖h6 170.♖f8+ ♗g7 171.♖d6+
 ♖h5 172.♖h2+ ♗g5 173.♖g3+ ♗g4 174.♖e3+ ♗f5



175.♖d2? 1/2-1/2

Now the game is drawn according to the 50-move rule. The transmission showed 175.♖d2 as the last move. Either a mistake or else some fun from Shirov, aiming to claim a draw in the event of 175...♗f3+.

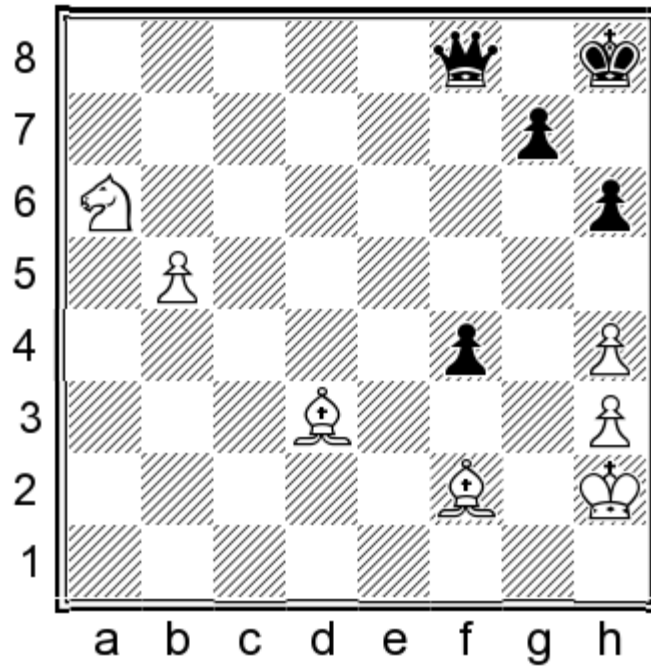
This is one of the very few queen endings in which a passed pawn favours the opponent (the pieces). The reason is logical and obvious; the pieces can stop a passed pawn while the queen cannot!

8

Karjakin Sergey

Navara David

Khanty-Mansiysk 2009

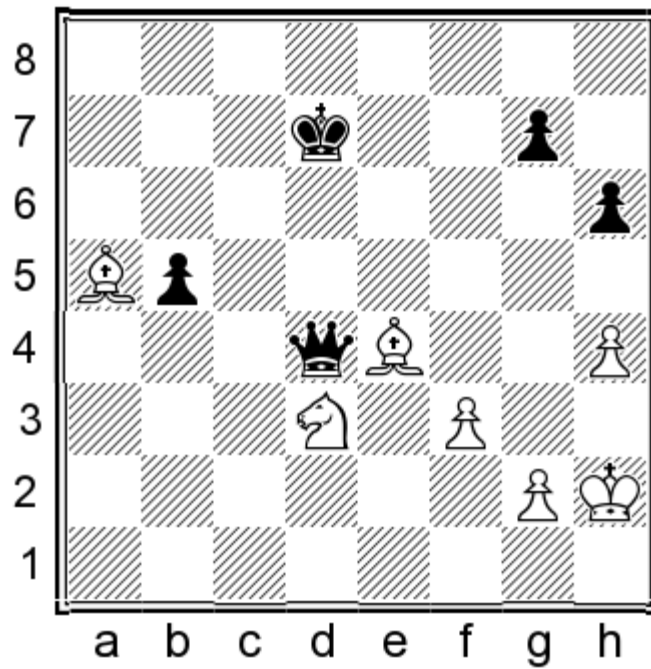


A passed pawn is too much for the queen.

53.b6 ♖c8 54.♘c5! f3 55.b7 ♖c7+ 56.♙g3 1-0

9

Spassky Boris
Geller Efim
Tbilisi 1959



When the pawn structures are not identical and there are passed pawn or majorities in general, the pieces are very strong.

59.h5!

Fixing the target on g7.

59...♙e7 60.♗b4+ ♜f7 61.♗c5 ♞d8 62.g4!

Now the white pawn structure is safe and the white king can start his journey to the queenside, capturing the passed black b-pawn. Then his material will tell. Also, we have to notice the ideal optimal piece co-operation and mutual protection motifs.

62...♞g5 63.♙g3 ♞d2 64.♗a3 ♜g8 65.♗c1 ♞d1 66.♙f4 b4 67.♙e5 b3 68.♙d4 ♞c2 69.♗b2 ♜h8 70.♗c3!

Preparing ♙c4 and ♖b2.

70...♞a2 71.♗b2! ♞b1 72.♙c3 ♞c2+ 73.♙b4 ♙g8 74.♙a3 ♞c4 75.♖c1 1-0

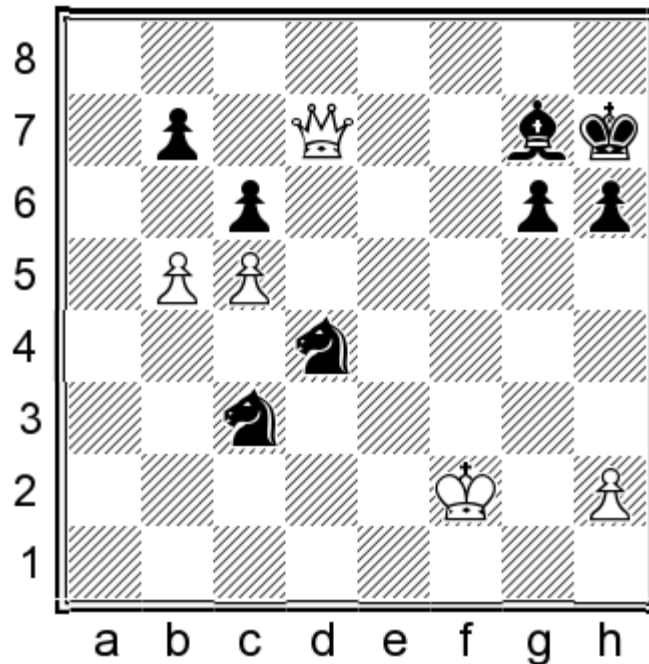
Black resigned as he loses his only activity. White will return his king on the kingside and he will make a passed pawn or simply attack the g7 target.

10

Lautier Joel

Gurevich Mikhail

Munich 1993

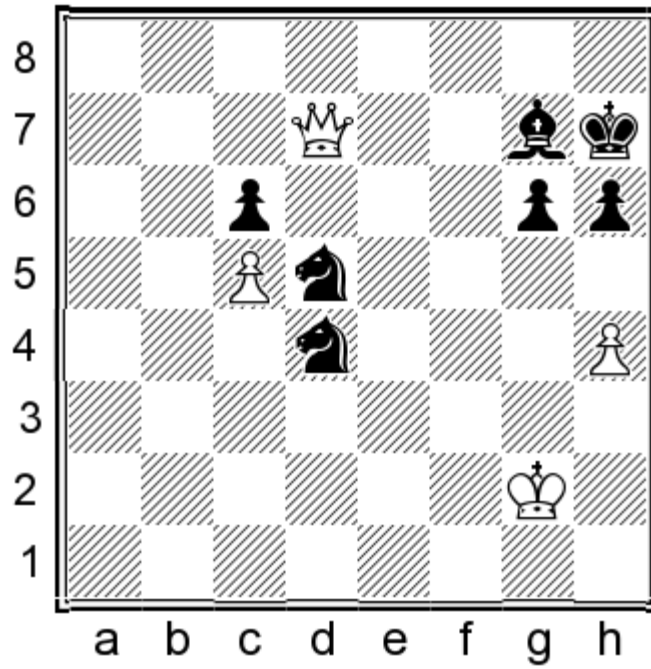


Black has an extra pawn and active pieces; the win is in sight.

54.bxc6

54.b6? is a blunder: 54...♖e4+ 55.♙e3 ♖xc5-+.

54.bxc6 bxc6 55.♙g2 ♖d5 56.h4



56...h5!

Not only fixing the pawn on the colour of the bishop, but avoiding weaknesses on the light squares after a white h5 push.

57.♔h3 ♖f4+ 58.♔h2 ♖fe6 59.♚e7 ♗h6 60.♔h1 ♜f8 61.♚f6 ♜g7 62.♚e7 ♖f8 63.♚e3+ ♗h7 64.♚e8 ♗g8 65.♗g2 ♜f6 66.♔h3 ♖de6! 67.♚xc6 ♜d4

Exchanging the queenside pawns will allow the pieces to concentrate on h4.

68.♚d5 ♜xc5 69.♚b7 ♜d4 70.♚d5 ♗h7 71.♚f3 ♜g7 72.♚f7 ♖d4 73.♗g2 ♖fe6 74.♔h3 ♖c5 75.♚e7 ♖d3 76.♚e3 ♖e6! 77.♗g3

77.♚xe6? ♖f4+-+.

77...♖e5 78.♚b6 ♖f8 79.♚d6 ♖f7 80.♚e7 ♜e5+

80...♖h6 wins as well: 81.♔h3 ♖f5 82.♚e8 ♗g8 83.♚c6 ♜d4+-+.

81.♔h3 ♗g7 82.♗g2 ♖h7 83.♔h3 ♖f6 84.♚e6 ♖g8 0-1

White resigned: 85.♚d7 ♖gh6 86.♚e6 ♖f5 87.♚d7 ♜f6+-+.

QUEEN VS FOUR MINOR PIECES

Four minor pieces versus a queen is a win for the pieces if they are the usual four minor pieces. Alexey Troitsky showed that four knights win against a queen.

The other thing is that with so many pieces and moving parts, the 'pieces' side might have 'co-ordination' problems. That's why as a practical matter, human beings may not win with this kind of advantage.

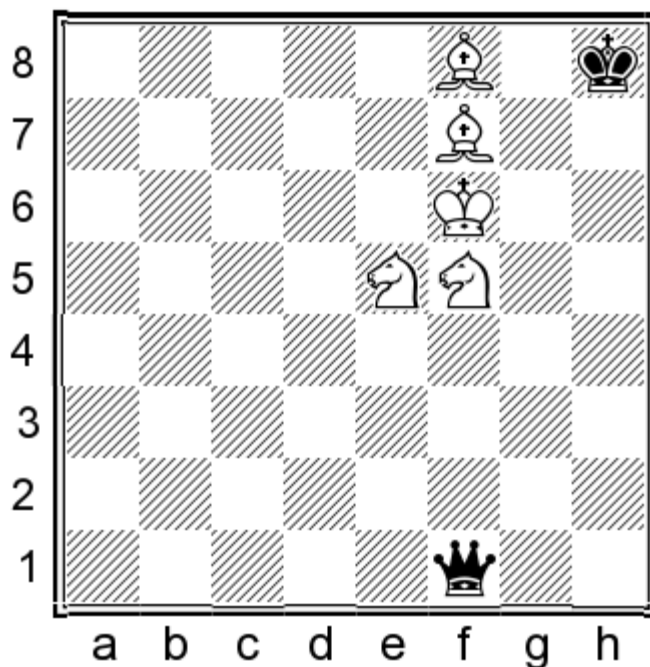
The advantage of a computer is that it can calculate its way around co-ordination problems. If the minor piece synergies indeed give the computer an advantage greater than a minor piece, the computer will find a way to bring this extra

power to bear; a human being may not.

Back to practical games now. The pieces (pawnless or not) will try to mate or gain the queen for two of them - remember that he must have at least bishop & knight - not two knights - remaining!

If there are pawns on the board, the pieces can prevail both easier and more securely, proving their power over the lonely queen...

Example 1
Kling & Horwitz
Study 1851



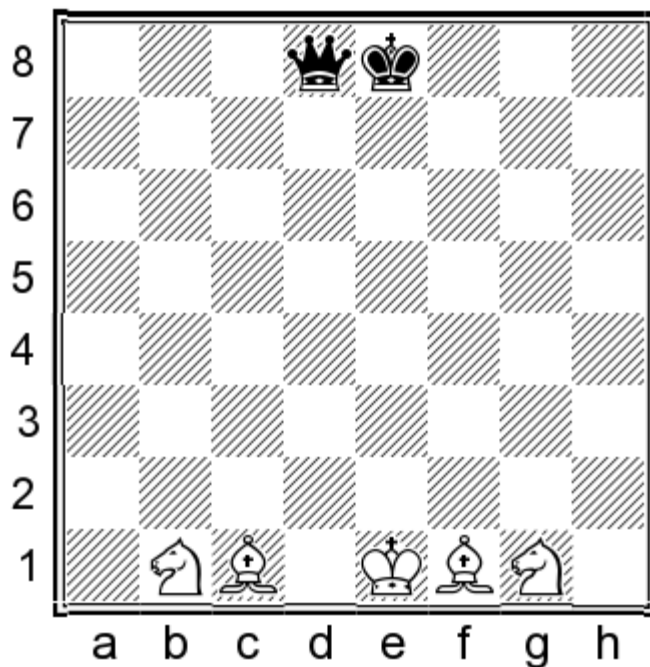
1. ♖c5

1. ♖c4 is faster: 1... ♜g1 2. ♜f7+ ♔g8 (2... ♔h7 3. ♜g5+ ♔h8 4. ♖g7#) 3. ♖h6 ♜g6+ 4. ♔e5 ♔h7 5. ♖e6 ♜g1 (5... ♔g8 6. ♜e7+ ♔h7 7. ♜xg6) 6. ♜g5+ ♔h8 7. ♖g7#.

1. ♖c5 ♔h7 2. ♜d7 ♜a1+ 3. ♖d4 ♜a6+ 4. ♖e6 ♜a8 5. ♔f7! ♜g8+ 6. ♔e7 ♜a8 7. ♜f8+ ♜xf8+ 8. ♔xf8 1-0

An analysis from the 7-piece tablebase follows, starting from the 'initial' position:

Example 2



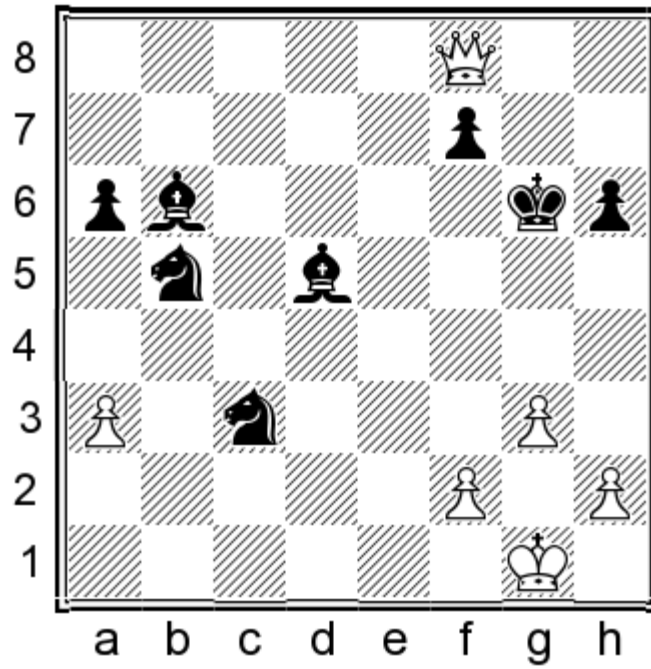
1. ♖f3 ♜a5+ 2. ♜bd2 ♜b4 3. ♜e5 ♜c3 4. ♜d3 ♜f6 5. ♜b2 ♜h4+ 6. ♜e2 ♜h2+ 7. ♜f2 ♜c7 8. ♜d4 ♜f8 9. ♜fe4 ♜e7
 10. ♜e3 ♜d7 11. ♜c4 ♜e7 12. ♜d5 ♜d7 13. ♜f6 ♜c7 14. ♜f3 ♜c1+ 15. ♜e4 ♜c8 16. ♜g5 ♜c2+ 17. ♜e5 ♜c7+ 18. ♜f5
 ♜c2+ 19. ♜ge4 ♜d1 20. ♜c5+ ♜d8 21. ♜e6 ♜e1 22. ♜b6+ ♜c8 23. ♜e7 ♜e2 24. ♜f7 ♜f1 25. ♜c5 ♜f4 26. ♜b7+ ♜b8
 27. ♜c6 ♜f5 28. ♜a6+ ♜c8 29. ♜d7+

The queen is lost and the resulting ending of bishop & knight is a trivial win.

29... ♜xd7+ 30. ♜xd7 ♜xd7 31. ♜b4 ♜c8 32. ♜e6 ♜b7 33. ♜d5 ♜a6 34. ♜e3 ♜b7 35. ♜d6 ♜b8 36. ♜c6 ♜a8 37. ♜c7+
 ♜b8 38. ♜b6 ♜c8 39. ♜a7 ♜d8 40. ♜d5 ♜e8 41. ♜d6 ♜f7 42. ♜e7 ♜g7 43. ♜e3 ♜f6 44. ♜f4 ♜f7 45. ♜g5 ♜e8 46. ♜c6
 ♜f7 47. ♜e5+ ♜e8 48. ♜c6 ♜f8 49. ♜d7 ♜g7 50. ♜e7 ♜g8 51. ♜h6 ♜h7 52. ♜f8 ♜g8 53. ♜g4 ♜h7 54. ♜f7 ♜h8
 55. ♜g7+ ♜h7 56. ♜f6# 1-0

1

Karlsson Lars
 Akesson Ralf
 Stockholm 2007



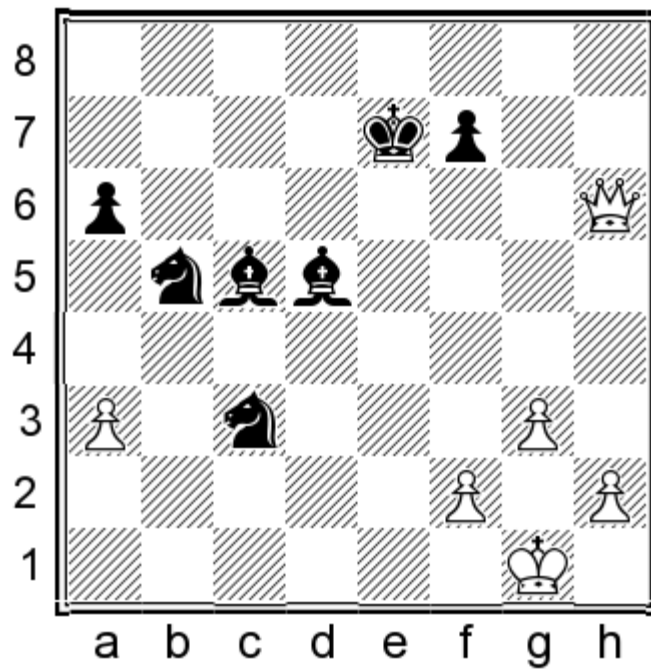
The black pieces seem strong but the black king is weak.

37. ♖g8+ ♔f6 38. ♚h8+ ♔e7

A try for something more than a draw.

39. ♚xh6 ♘c5 40. h4?

Too optimistic. White should concentrate on defence with



40. ♚xa6 ♖xa3 41. ♚d3 ♖ab5 42. ♔f1 ♘d4 43. f3=+.

40... ♖e4! 41. ♚h8

I do not think that White will survive either after 41.♚xa6 ♜xf2+ 42.♜h2 ♜xg3+ 43.♜h3 ♜bd6.

41...♜xf2+ 42.♜g2 ♜xg3 43.h5 ♜f4 44.a4 ♜f6+ 45.♜f1 ♜c7

More harmonious seems 45...♜d6 46.h6 ♜e4+.

46.♚c8

White should try 46.h6, although he will not survive after 46...♜c4+ 47.♜g1 ♜e3+ 48.♜g2 ♜d3 49.♚b8 ♜e4+ 50.♜f1 ♜e6+.

46...♜xh5 47.♚g4 ♜g3+ 48.♜e1 ♜e6

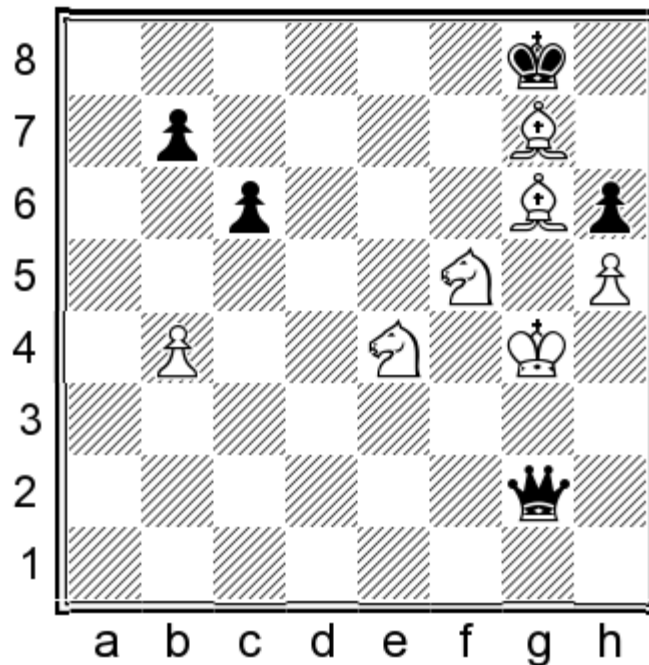
The pieces are harmoniously placed, protecting each other!

49.♚h4+ ♜d7 50.♚h7 ♜c5 51.a5 ♜ce4 0-1

And mate or material gain is near, so White resigned.

2

Skoberne Jure
Mestek Igor
Otocec 2006



The black king tries to breath but the queenside pawns guarantee that there will be no stalemate!

47.♜eg3

47.♜f4 ♚h2+ 48.♜e3 ♚g1+ 49.♜d2 ♚g2+ 50.♜c3 ♚f3+ (50...♚xe4 51.♜xh6+ ♜xg7 52.♜xe4 ♜xh6 53.♜f3+—)
51.♜d4 ♚d1+ 52.♜e5+— is quicker.

47.♜eg3 c5 48.bxc5 b5 49.c6!

Hoping for 49.cxb6? ♖f3+ 50.♗h4 ♖g4+ 51.♗xg4 with stalemate!

49...♖a2

49...♖xc6 50.♗e7+ ♗xg7 51.♗xc6+.

50.♗e5 ♖e6 51.c7 ♗f8 52.♗e4 b4 53.c8=♖+ ♖xc8 54.♗g7+ ♗g8 55.♗f6# 1-0

TWO QUEENS VS VARIOUS MATERIAL

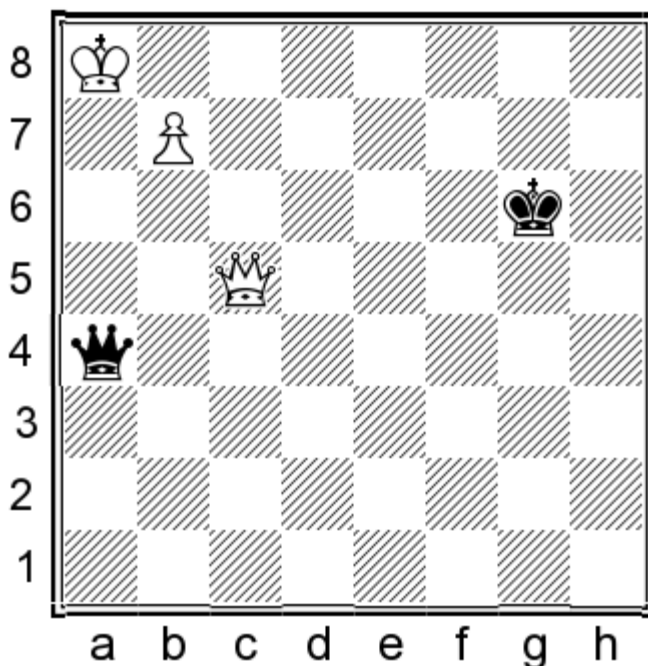
A really very rare case but not completely senseless, as a promotion to a second queen on the board is not out of the question!

In this last chapter we will see some interesting cases with great practical value.

When we have two queens vs queen, the duo will almost always prevail. Of course there are some perpetual check and stalemate cases to consider.

1

Henseler Klaus
Multhauf Stefan
Leverkusen 2001



White is winning, but...

74. ♕a7?

74. ♖b8 wins in approximately 19 moves!

74... ♕e8+! 75. b8=♕ ♕c6+

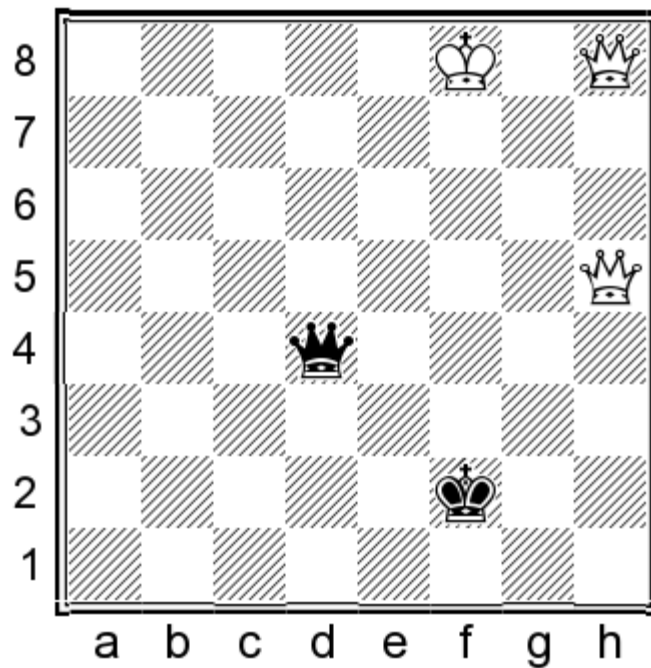
This is a drawing mechanism to be remembered.

76. ♕bb7 ♕e8+ 77. ♕ab8 ♕a4+ 1/2-1/2

Black checks from the squares a4-c6-e8 and there is nothing White can do to prevent the perpetual check.

2

Carlsen Magnus
Gashimov Vugar
Monte Carlo 2011



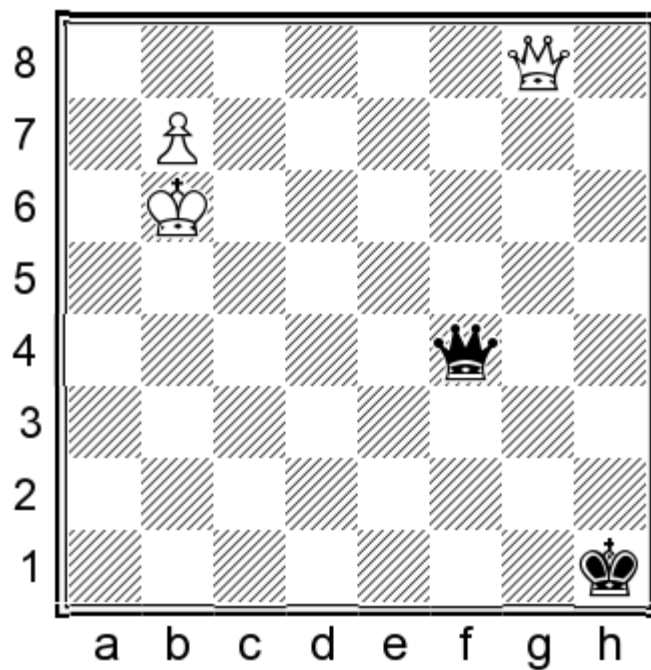
White is winning, as Black's checks cannot last.

83...♖d6+ 84.♔f7 ♜d7+ 85.♔g6 1-0

And Black resigned: 85...♜e6+ 86.♜f6+.

3

Marin Mihail
Bedos Michel
France 1994



79.b8=♖?

79. ♖h8+! ♔g2 80. b8=♚ would be an 'easy' win. Now Black grabs his chances.

79. b8=♚? ♚d6+ 80. ♔b7 ♚c6+! 81. ♔a7 ♚a6+ 1/2-1/2

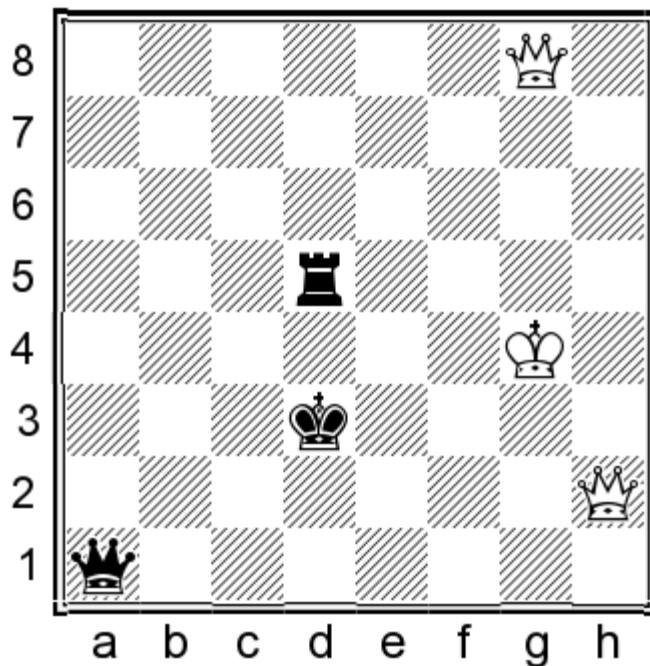
And there is nothing but stalemate after 82. ♔xa6.

Another interesting case is the two queens vs queen & rook ending. Of course the queen duo prevails, but not without careful work and concrete calculations.

But in such a late phase of the game, time-trouble is a reality and playing on the 30 seconds increment is more than a probability; mistakes loom ominously...

4

Gutman Lev
Stisis Yaacov
Israel 1996



White is winning, although not without 'problems'.

79... ♚d4+

Or 79... ♚d1+ 80. ♔g3 ♚e1+ 81. ♚f2 ♚e5+ 82. ♔g2+-.

79... ♚d4+ 80. ♔h3?

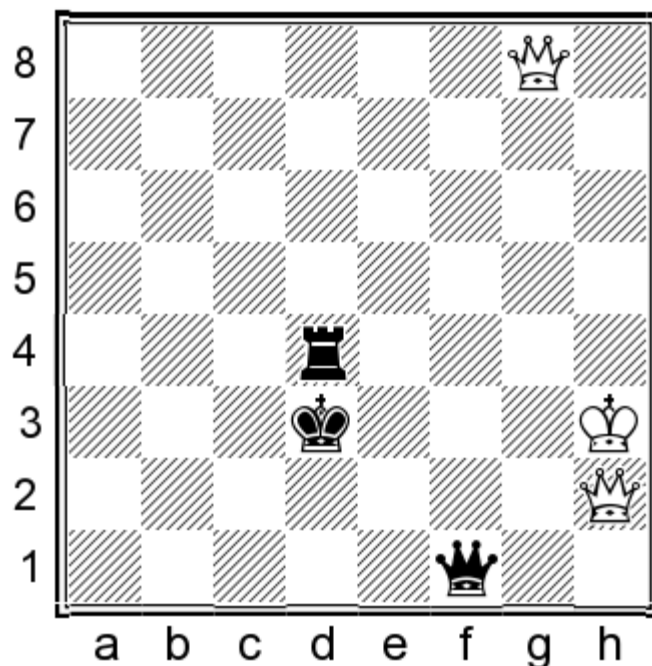
80. ♔g3 was fine: 80... ♚e1+ 81. ♚f2 ♚e5+ 82. ♔g2 ♚e4+ 83. ♚f3+-.

80... ♚f1+

Now it's a draw!

81. ♚hg2

No different is 81.♔g3 ♖f4+ 82.♕g2 ♗d2+ 83.♕h1 ♗d1+ 84.♗gg1 ♗f3+= but

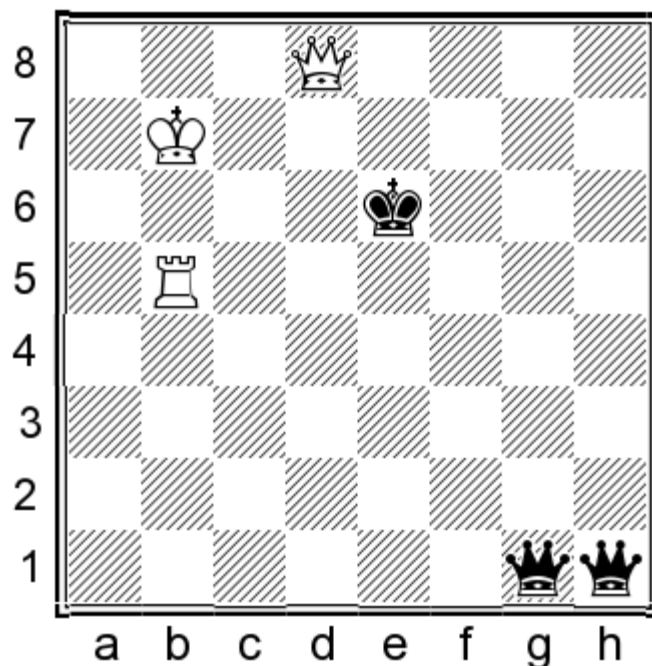


81.♗gg2? is even losing: 81...♗f5+ 82.♔g3 ♖f4+ 83.♕h3 ♗h4#.

81...♗f5+ 82.♕h2 ♖h4+ 83.♕g1 ♗c5+ 84.♗f2 ♖h1+! 1/2-1/2

5

Vedmediuc Serghei
Gajewski Grzegorz
Eforie Nord 2010



Promoting with check is highly important, as it allows the stronger side to be on move; a factor that it is decisive in this ending.

62.♔b8 ♚g3+ 63.♕a7 ♚a3+ 0-1

Easier is 63...♚g7+ 64.♔b8 ♚c6!. Anyway White resigned: 64.♖a5 ♚h7+ 65.♕a6 ♚ad3+ 66.♚xd3 ♚xd3+—+.

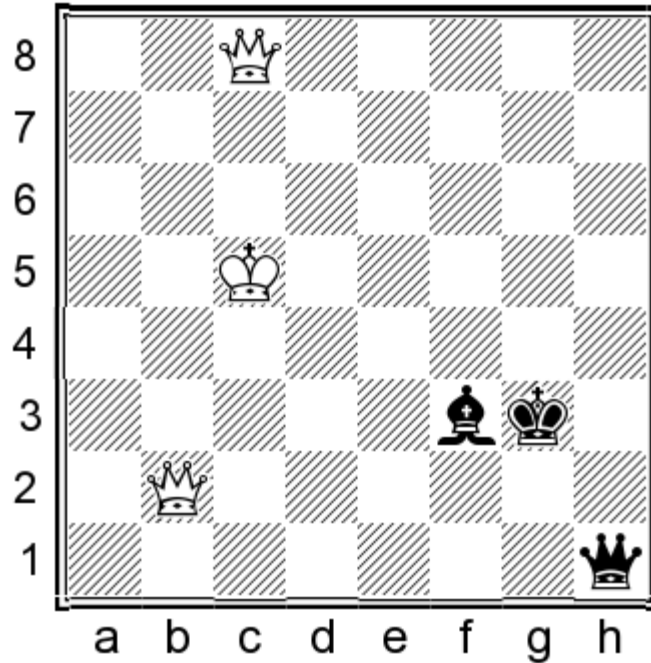
Two queens vs queen & bishop or knight doesn't seem too difficult to handle. The bishop/knight is rather weak for a queen.

6

Vuckovic Bojan

Diamant Andre

Dresden 2008



66...♚g1+ 67.♕b5 ♚a7

Checks are over and White is in command!

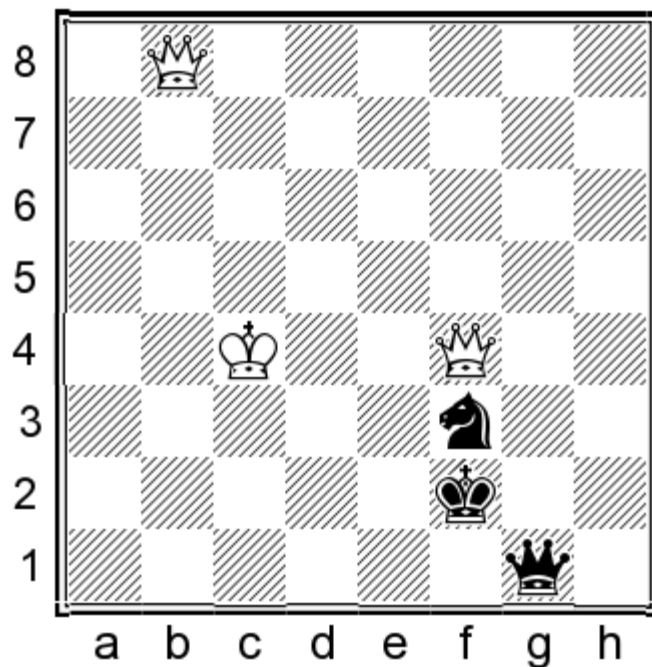
68.♚e5+ ♕g2 69.♚c2+ ♕f1 70.♚c1+ ♕g2 71.♚eg5+ ♕h3 72.♚f1+ 1-0

7

Meier Georg

Donchenko Alexander

Internet 2012



91. ♖b2+ ♔e1 92. ♗bc1+!

Black was hoping for 92. ♗xf3? ♗d4+!=.

92... ♔f2 93. ♗xf3+ ♔xf3 94. ♗xg1 1-0

When the duo has to deal with a queen & two minor pieces, there is only one clear plan: to exchange a pair of queens and play the ending queen vs two minor pieces.

But even there the queen duo side has to examine if a theoretically-drawn position arises.

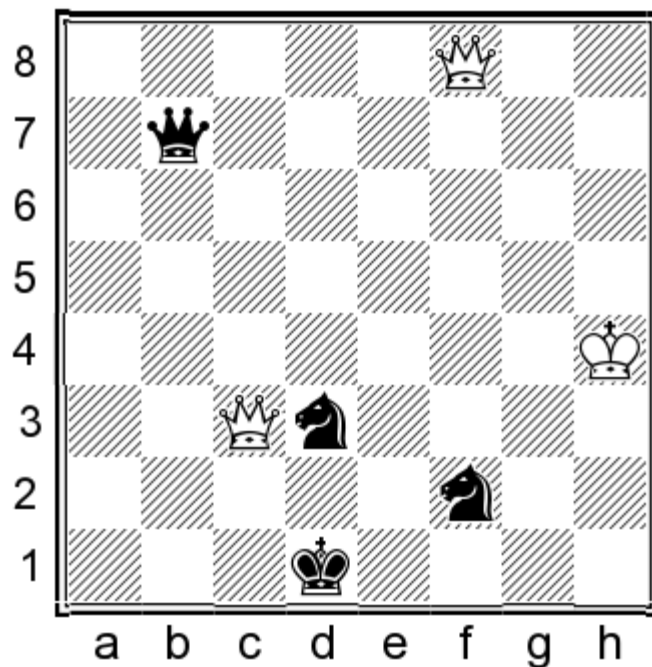
If the exchange cannot be made we usually have a draw, as the king of the queen duo cannot approach due to perpetual check.

8

Mikhalevski Victor

Onischuk Vladimir

Stockholm 2016



80. ♖a1+ ♘e2 81. ♚e8+ ♜e4+

The ending is drawn, but in a practical game I would prefer 81... ♗e4 82. ♚h5+ ♘e3 83. ♚g1+ ♗ef2 84. ♚gg5+ ♘d4 and it doesn't look as though White will win.

82. ♚xe4+ ♗xe4 83. ♘g4 ♗ef2+ 84. ♘f5 ♘e3 85. ♚a7+ ♘e2 86. ♚b6 ♘d2 87. ♚d4 ♘e2 88. ♘g5 ♘f3 89. ♘f5 ♘e2 90. ♘e6 ♘f3 91. ♘d5 ♗f4+ 92. ♘c4 ♗d2d3?

A blunder. Something like 92... ♗e2 should be OK.

93. ♘b3?

93. ♚c3!.

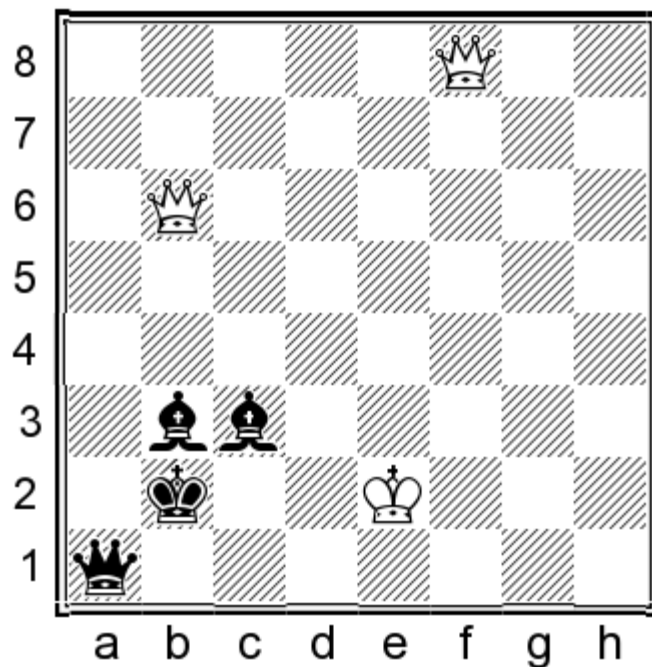
93... ♗f2 94. ♚c3+ ♘g4 95. ♚e3 ♗h3 96. ♘c4 ♘f5 97. ♚c5+ ♘g4 98. ♚b5 ♗g5 99. ♘d4 ♗ge6+?

99... ♗fe6+!.

100. ♘e5 ♗g5 101. ♚d7+ ♗ge6 102. ♚c8 ♘f3 103. ♚c4 ♘g4 104. ♚b3 ♘h4 105. ♚f3 ♗h3 106. ♘f6 ♗hg5 107. ♚g2 ♘h5 108. ♚g1 ♘h4 109. ♚g2 ♘h5 110. ♚b2 ♘g4 111. ♚b4+ ♗f4 112. ♚c4 ♗ge6 113. ♚e4 ♘g3 114. ♚e3+ ♘g4 115. ♘e5 ♘h4 116. ♘f5 ♘h5 117. ♚e5 ♘h4 118. ♚c3 1-0

9

Nguyen Duc Hoa
Hoang Canh Huan
Ho Chi Minh City 2013



White wins, as the tablebases prove.

56. ♕ff2 ♖d1+ 57. ♘e3+ ♕c2

I would certainly prefer the stubborn 57... ♔b1!.

58. ♕e2

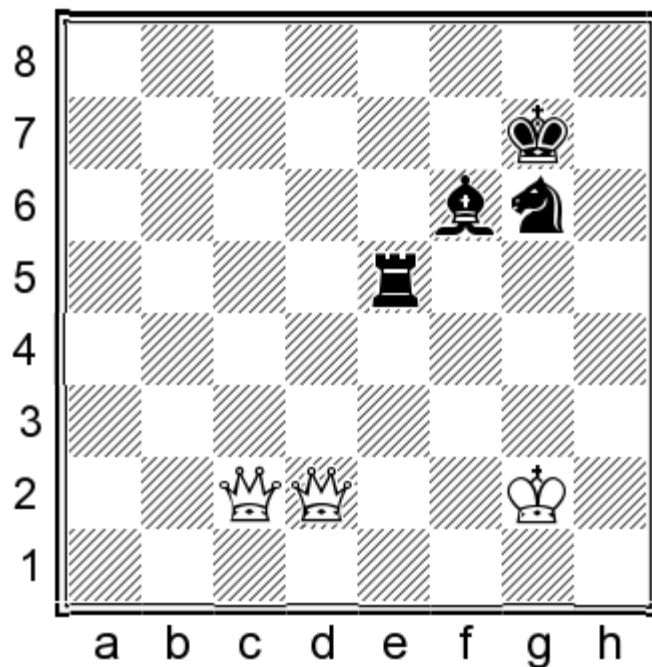
58. ♕xc2+! ♔xc2 59. ♕a6! wins.

58... ♕xe2+ 59. ♘xe2 ♔c2 ½-½

The ending is drawn and it is analysed elsewhere in this book. The game ended in a draw on the 91st move.

The fight of the queen duo vs rook & minor pieces looks good, as one queen can be traded for valuable material.

Example 1



1. ♖d7+ ♜e7

1... ♜e7 2. ♖g4+-.

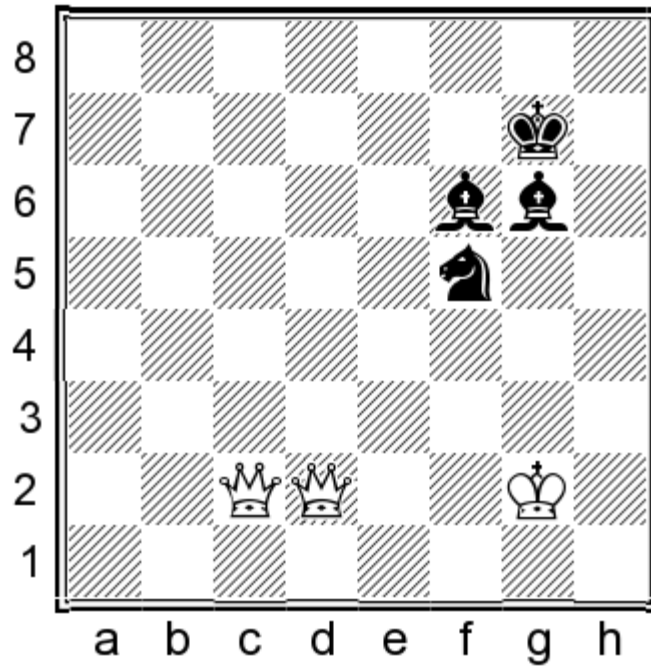
2. ♖cc7 ♜f7 3. ♜f3

3. ♖xe5 ♜xe5 4. ♜f3 wins as well.

3... ♜g5 4. ♖cd6 ♜e5 5. ♖b8! ♜g6 6. ♖be8+ ♜g7 7. ♖g4+ ♜g5 8. ♖e6 ♜f5+ 9. ♜e4 1-0

Two queens vs three minor pieces should be no trouble for the duo. In most cases one queen is traded for two minor pieces and then the ending of queen vs minor piece is trivial.

Example 2



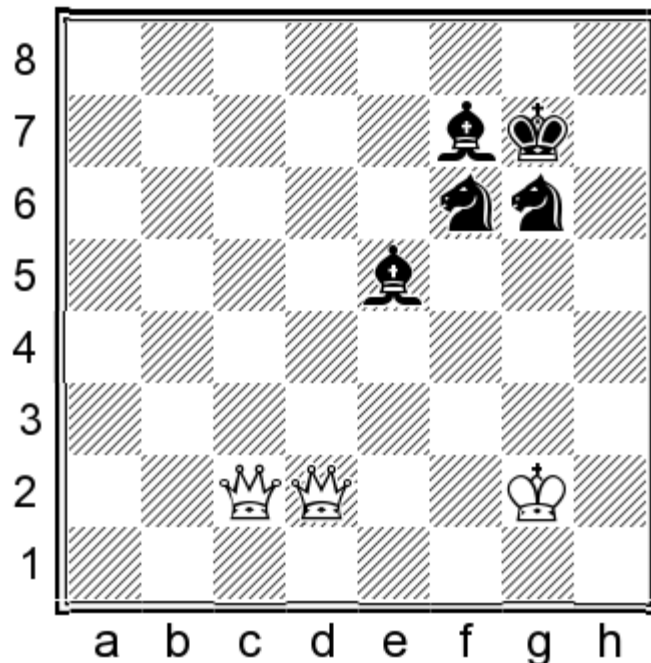
1. ♖c4 ♗e7 2. ♙g4 ♔h7 3. ♚e6 ♕g7 4. ♚dd6 ♗g8 5. ♚c7+ ♗e7

5... ♔h8 6. ♙h3+.

6. ♚cxe7+ ♕xe7 7. ♚xe7+ 1-0

But when it comes to the fight vs four minor pieces I cannot see how to improve!

Example 3



From a practical point of view White has few chances to prevail; best-case scenario will be to trade down to an endgame of queen vs bishop & knight, when the winning positions are a lot more abundant than with the other cases.

1.♔g1 ♖d5 2.♚f5 ♙f6 3.♗g4 ♜de7 4.♗d8 ♜f5 5.♚c7 ♜fe7 6.♗d6 ♖d5 7.♗gd7 ♜ge7 8.♚c5 ♜f4 9.♗g4+ ♜fg6 1/2-1/2

All the above-examined cases refer to pawnless positions, which are the most difficult in my opinion. Adding pawns should be much easier for the queen duo, although we must always keep in mind that each position is unique and only after concrete evaluation and calculation can we draw safe conclusions.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Efstratios Grivas (30.03.1966) is a highly experienced chess trainer and chess author. He has been awarded by the International Chess Federation (FIDE) the titles of:

- International Chess Grandmaster
- FIDE Senior Trainer
- International Chess Arbiter
- International Chess Organizer

His main successes over the board were:

- Silver Medal Olympiad 1998 (3rd Board)
- Gold Medal European Team Championship 1989 (3rd Board)
- 4th Position World Junior Championship U.20 1985
- 5 Balkan Medals (2 Gold — 1 Silver — 2 Bronze)
- 3 times Winner of the International ‘Acropolis’ Tournament
- 28 times Winner of Greek Individual & Team Championships
- Winner of Various International Tournaments
- Among the 120 best players of the World in 1993
- Rating Record in 1999 *2528* (equal to today 2630~)
- An opening variation has been named after him. The ‘Grivas Sicilian’ is characterised by the moves 1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♗c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♖b6

What he does/did:

- Secretary of the FIDE Trainers’ Commission
- Director of the FIDE Grivas International Chess Academy (Athens)
- Director of the UAE Chess Federation FIDE Academy (Abu Dhabi — 2015–2016)
- Technical Director of the Greek Chess Federation (1996–1999)
- Technical Director of the United Arab Emirates Chess Federation (2014–2016)
- Head Trainer of the Turkish Men’s National Team (2006–2012)
- Head Coach of the Greek Men’s National Team (2013)
- Head Coach of the Sri Lanka Men’s National Team (2014)
- Workshops with National Teams of Austria (Women), Jordan (Women), Mauritius (Men) and Sri Lanka (Men & Women)
- Winner of the FIDE Boleslavsky Medal 2009 & 2015 (best author)
- Winner of the FIDE Euwe Medal 2011 & 2012 (best junior trainer)
- Winner of the FIDE Razuvaev Medal 2014 (Trainers’ education)
- Trainer of Various GMs & IMs — In 2009–2011 alone, he formed 7 GMs!
- Trainer of the FIDE World Women Champion Antotaneta Stefanova
- Trainer of the FIDE World Junior Champion U.20 2012 Alex Ipatov
- Trainer of the Gold Medal Winner (Group D’) Team of Sri Lanka in the 41st Chess Olympiad
- Worked over 12.000 hours on training!
- Official Commentator of the FIDE World Rapid & Blitz Ch 2013
- Organiser of the European Youth Championships 1999, FIDE Congress 2015 & Asian Nations Cup 2015
- Lecturer at over 65 FIDE Seminars for Training & Certifying Trainers
- Author of 88 Books in Arabic, English, Greek, Italian, Spanish & Turkish
- Cooperating with the World’s Most Important Magazines