

# Czech and Slovak highlights

## Prizewinners explained

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Last June I spent a highly enjoyable week in my favourite European city of Prague. The match between grandmasters David Navara and Sergey Movsesian was held in the Michna Palace and I was invited by the tireless organizer Pavel Matocha to present a selection of my endgame studies and even to compose an original study especially for the event.

A highlight in my stay was a pleasant meeting with the Czech composers Jaroslav Pospišil, Emil Vlasák, Jaroslav Polášek and Michal Dragoun. I also met Jozef Marsalek, a veteran member of the Olympic team who is also represented with a study in HHdbIV and promotes our art in his books. The Czech (and Slovak) art of the endgame study has had a long and glorious tradition and among the earlier books I have especially enjoyed since my younger years were the monographies of grandmasters Richard Réti, Dr. Jindrich Fritz and Vladimir Pachman.

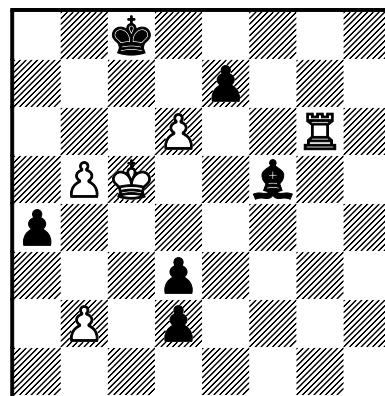
Still under the strong impression of this visit I would like to introduce here some highlights from the remarkable award in the recent biennial tourney of the superb monthly *Československý šach* (2009-2010).

It's a delicious cocktail of fashionable topics displayed in a human and players-friendly manner. This time I let the instructive comments of judge Stanislav Nosek (translated by Emil Vlasák) speak for the moves.

**1.Rg8+! i Kd7 2.dxe7 Bg6! /ii** To keep winning chances black needs to block the b5-pawn with the king. **3.e8Q+ Bxe8 4.Rg7+! /iii** A key move slacking up the bK.. **4...Kc8! /iv 5.Rg1 Bh5 6.Kd4 (Kc4) d1Q 7.Rxd1 Bxd1 8.Kxd3 Kb7** Black has reached the planned goal with a small delay. **9.Kd4! /v** A fantastic

**A.1. J. Polášek (Czech Republic, Praha)**  
& **M. Hlinka (Slovakia, Košice)**

1st Prize *Československý šach* 2009-2010



c5c8 0130.34 5/6 Draw

saving move. **9...Kb6 10.Kc4! zz.** The wind slowly hauls. **10...Bc2! 11.Kc3!** Preparing another zugzwang. **11...Bd1/vi** This forced move leads to a repetition. **12.Kc4!** (Kb4? Bb3;) **Ka5 13.Kc5 Be2 14.b6 Bf3** White is finally trapped? **15.b7! /vii** No, the pawn's sac crowns the precise defence. **15...Bxb7 16.Kc4!** The bishop doesn't control d1, time to transfer the king to the stalemate corner. **16...Bd5+!** A last try (Bc8; b4+). **17.Kxd5 Kb4 18.Kc6!** And Black's win has definitely become only a illusion. **18..Kb3 19.Kb5** draw. The study is dedicated to Marco Campioli. A memorable study for zugzwang lovers, but also for all chess-players..

i) 1.Rg1? exd6+ 2.Kd4 Bg4 wins.

ii) Kxe7 3.Rg1 Bg4 4.Kd4 d1Q 5.Rxd1 Bxd1 6.Kxd3 draws.

iii) Insufficient is 4.Rg1!? Bh5 5.Kd4 d1Q 6.Rxd1 Bxd1 7.Kxd3 Bb3 8.Kc3 Kc7 9.Kb4 Kb6 zz wins.

iv) Ke6 5.Rg1 Bh5 6.b6 Bf3 7.b7 Bxb7 8.Rd1 draws.

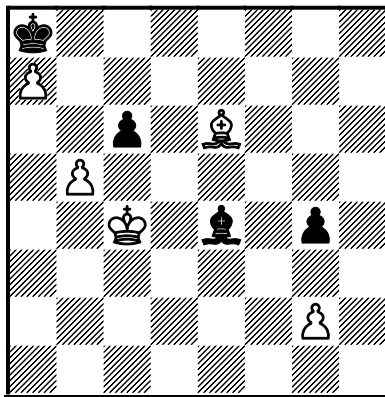
v) Else White would be blown off with the zugzwangs' twister. 9.Kc4?! Kb6 zz 10.Kb4 Bb3 zz 11.Ka3 Ka5; 9.Kc3?! Bb3 10.Kb4 Kb6 zz; 9.Kd2? Bb3 10.Kc3 Kc7 11.Kb4 Kb6 win.

vi) Again 11...Bb3 12.Kb4 zz draws.

vii) 15.Kc4? Kxb6 16.Kb4 Bd1 17.Ka3 Bb3 wins.

viii) But not 18.Kd4? Kb3 19.Kc5 Kxb2 wins.

**A.2.** L'uboš Kekely (Slovakia, Snežnica),  
Ladislav Salai (Slovakia, Martin),  
Matej Vyparina (Slovakia, Žilina)  
& Ján Hlas (Slovakia, Žilina)  
3rd prize *Československý šach* 2009-2010



c4a8 0040.21 5.4 Win

**1.b6/i g3/ii 2.Bh3 c5!/iii** The bB needs some space immediately. **3.Kb5!/iv** A tempo battle begins **3...Bb7!/v 4.Kxc5/vi Bc8!** The battle is moved to another diagonal (Be4; Kd4). **5.Kc6!/vii Bb7+ 6.Kd6!/viii** Controlling the central squares e6 and e5 and in this way limiting the bishop's movement. **6...Bc6!/ix 7.Kc5!** Tempo! **7...Bb7 8.Kd4 Bc8 9.Kc3!** wins. The composers found a maximum form in a simple same-colour bishop ending. A nice study for o.t.b. players!

i) 1.g3? cxb5+ 2.Kc5 Kxa7 draws.

ii) Bg2? 2.Bxg4 Kb7 3.Kc5 Bh1 4.Bc8+ wins.

iii) Bd5+ 3.Kc5 Be4 4.Kd6 c5 5.Bd7 Bxg2 6.Bc6+ Bxc6 7.Kxc6 g2 8.Kc7 g1Q 9.b7+ Kxa7 10.b8Q+ Ka6 11.b6 mate.

iv) 3.Kxc5? Kb7 4.Kd4 Bc6 draws.

v) Bad is Kb7 4.Kxc5 Ka8 5.Kd4 Bc6 6.Ke3 Kb7 7.Bg4 Kxb6 8.Bf3 wins.

vi) 4.Bd7? c4 5.Kc5 Bxg2.

vii) 5.Bxc8? stalemate, after 5.Kd6? Bxh3 6.gxh3 g2 7.Kc7 g1Q 8.b7+ Ka7 9.b8Q+ Ka6 the critical square b6 is guarded.

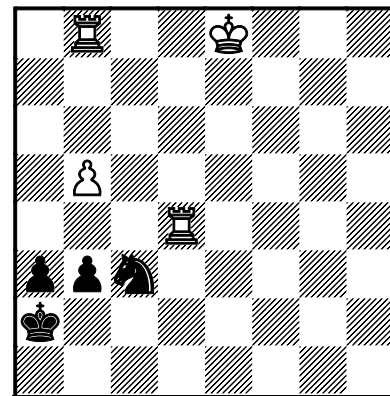
viii) 6.Kc7 Be4 7.Kd6 Bc6 8.Kc5 transposes to the main line.

ix) Bc8? 7.Be6; Be4? 7.Ke5 win.

**A.3.** Emil Vlasák

(Czech Republic, Ústí nad Labem)

4th/5th prize *Československý šach* 2009-2010



e8a2 0203.12 4/4 win

**1.b6 b2 2.Rb4!** (Rd2 Kb3;) **2...Sd5!** Introduction to strong stalemate counter play. **3.Rxb2+!/ii Kxb2!/iii 4.b7 Sc7+!** Closing the c-file with a tempo. (a2; Rc8). **5.Ke7!/iv a2 6.Ra8! Sxa8 7.b8Q+! Sb6 8.Qe5+ Kb3 9.Qe3+ Kb2 10.Qd4+ Kb3!** The threat is Sc4-a3-c2. **11.Kd6! Sc4+/v 12.Kc5!** In this way White creates a mating net. **12...Sa3** Too late. After 5.Kf7? the wK would be on d5 and Black would keep the position. **13.Qb4+ Kc2 14.Qxa3** wins. White's win seems to be optically questionable in the setting. The king is moving in a real-time and although the chess-board is not curved like space, he still reaches in time. Einstein would have liked this study, too.

i) Se4? 3.Ra8 Sd6+ 4.Kd7 wins.

ii) 3.Rb5? Sxb6 4.R5xb6 b1Q 5.Rxb1 stalemate.

iii) axb2 4.Ra8+ Kb3 5.b7 Sc7+ 6.Kd7 Sxa8 7.b8Q+ wins.

iv) 5.Kd7 (Kf7)? a2 6.Ra8 Sxa8 7.b8Q+ Sb6 draws.

v) Sa4 12.Qa1 Ka3 13.Kd5 wins.