CORNERS REVISITED

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***Prizewinners explained***

Exactly a year ago Oleg Pervakov published here his first thematic article "Let's go to the corner" introducing a selection of stunning and somewhat paradoxical moves to one or more of the four remotest squares on the chessboard. Oleg himself was meanwhile involved in a major event whose mighty award displays, among others, two more brilliancies with the maximal form of the same motive.

The well known Russian trainer **Mark Dvoretsky** is a great fan of our art which has regularly provided him with innumerable lively free items for his famous card-index and many books as well as for his training sessions at all levels. That is why he chose to give something in return and to celebrate his own 60th birthday by organizing a composition tourney with a generous prize fund. Mark was assisted by Oleg with whom he collaborated in judging this both quantitatively and qualitatively outstanding event.

A.1 N. Rezvov & S.N. Tkachenko
1st prize Dvoretsky 60 JT 2007
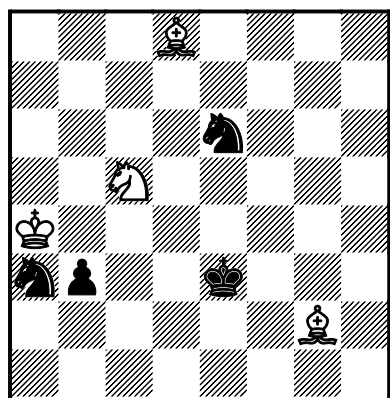
a4e3 0027.01a4e3 4/4 Win

1.Bf6 The pawn must be stopped since after 1.Sxe6? b2 2.Bg5+ Kf2 a drawish queen vs. three minor pieces ending pops up. **1...b2!**

Knight tempo moves are the only hope to maintain minimal material damage. **2.Bxb2 Sc4 3.Bh8!!** The bishops will in fact seek shelter at the corners as it will soon become apparent that these are the best squares to avoid an intermediate knight's tempo move. However laziness wouldn't pay as choosing the closer corner fails: 3.Ba1? Sxc5+ 4.Kb5 Sb3 draws; equally wrong is 3.Bc1+? Kf2 4.Ba8 Sxc5+ 5.Kb5 Sd3 draws. **3...Kf2! 4.Bh1!!** This time laziness does pay! Why not all the way to the opposite corner at once? Let's try: 4.Ba8? Sxc5+ 5.Kb5 Sd7! 6.Bd4+ Se3 and Black rescues both his knights **4...Kg1!** since a direct attempt to trade the knight would prove futile following: 4...Sxc5 5.Kb5 Se3 6.Kxc5 Sg2 7.Bd4+! The king nonetheless is driven away from his knights **5.Ba8!!** **Sxc5+** or 5...Sb6+ 6.Kb5 Sxa8 7.Sxe6+- **6.Kb5!** An amazing position**:** The desired fork has been finally achieved and the bishops are beyond the reach of a sudden knight assault. **6…Sd7 7.Bd4** wins. Thanks to his far sighted fourth move Black is unable to cover this check by his knight and following its fall there is a theoretical win which in this particular case would last just 36 more moves. It is hard to imagine that less than four decades ago this ending was still considered a draw thus hindering the creation of such a masterpiece and at the same time enabling quite a few unfortunate incorrect ones.

David Gurgenidze has always been not just one of the most successful composers of all time but also a distinguished endgame theoretician who devoted a great deal of research to the queen vs. rook and pawn endings. Nowadays you may get it all in a mouse-click yet

David still manages to add special artistic flavour to a dry looking piece of chess theory.

A.2 D. Gurgenidze
Special prize Dvoretsky 60 JT 2007
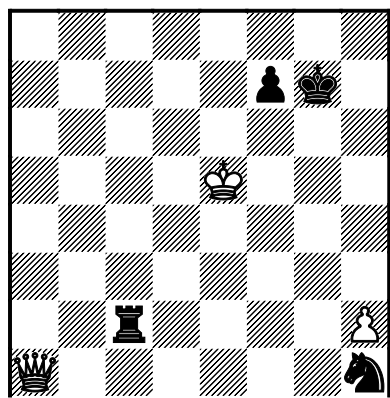
e5g7 1303.11 3/4 Win

1.Kf4+! What exactly the struggle is about might be explained by the following try: 1.Kd6+? Kg8 2.Qxh1 Rd2+ 3.Kc5 Rc2+ 4.Kd4 Rd2+ 5.Ke3 Rd6 6.Qa8+ Kg7 7.Qa1+ Kg8 with a theoretical draw as White cannot crack this rock-solid fortress despite his huge material advantage. The black Rook strolls from e6 to h6 avoiding zugzwang. This ending has already appeared more than once in top over the board events and curiously even between two **EG** readers:

A.3 J. Timman – J .Nunn
Wijk aan Zee 1982
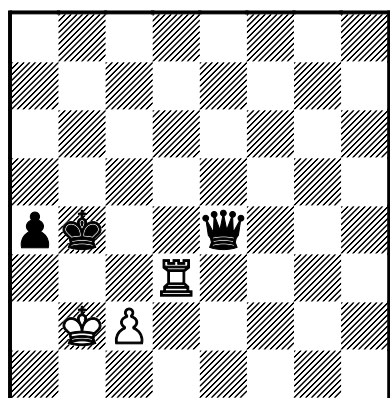
White to move

John writes: "**1.Ra3!** is the only move to draw. After 1...Qe5+ 2.Ka2 Black cannot make progress. White should keep his king on b2 except when checked, and otherwise keep his rook posted on a3 or d3. Jan however went wrong with **1.Ka2??** and resigned after **1...a3!** as now Black can force the exchange of pawns

by 2.Rb3+ (2.Kb1 Qe1+ 3.Ka2 Qc1 4.Rb3+ Ka4 is even worse) 2...Kc4 3.Kxa3 Qxc2 leading to a winning ending of Q vs R in 23 moves". "However", concludes John, "I was happy that Timman did not require me to demonstrate it!"

In our study White's task would be to prevent black from achieving this goal. A queen on f8 or h8 would do the trick but not before an intensive journey through all four corners of the board takes place! **1...Kf8! 2.Qa8+** Not immediately 2.Qxh1? Re2 3.h4 Re6 draws. **2...Kg7 3.Qxh1 Rf2+** Black opts for the above explained plan. An alternative attempt would prove no better: 3...Re2 4.Qg1+ Kh7 5.Qc5 Rxh2 (5...Re6 6.Qf8 wins; 5...Kg7 6.Qg5+ Kf8 7.h4 wins) 6.Qa7! Kh8!? (Kg7; Qg1+) 7.Kf5 wins. **4.Ke3 Rf6 5.Qa1! Kg6 6.Kd3!** So that the rook will not get to e6 with a check tempo. **6...Rd6+ 7.Kc4! Re6** or 7...Kh7 8.Qa3! Re6 9.Qf8! and wins. **8.Qh8!** Mission accomplished! The all round tour as a natural part of a technical process reminds us of the one which is displayed in Pervakov & Sumbatyan (1st-2nd prize Nona 2005) to be found in Pervakov's article.

The Dvoretsky 60 JT was a powerful demonstration of fine art and might also serve as a great source of potential candidates for Study of the Year. An English version would also be welcome in order to enjoy in full the thorough analysis and the instructive comments of the jury.

A non prizewinner explained We conclude this corner revisit with a non prizewinner, for a change, from yet another recent jubilee tourney. In fact it is not too difficult to understand this unique creation. The plan is rather prosaic: annihilate the advanced pawns even at the price of the pair of rooks and win the remaining knight ending thanks to the extra pawns.

1.Rg7+!! Attempts to let Black promote do not look very promising: 1.Rgc3!? f1Q 2.Rxc2 Sf2+ 3.Rxf2 Qxf2 draws; 1.Rgf3!? c1Q 2.Sb6 Sg3+ 3.Kd4 Se2+ 4.Ke4 Sg3+ draws. But why not 1.Ra1? Be patient as the reason for the outstanding key becomes ap-

A.4 Gady Costeff
1st hon. ment. Stoffelen 70 JT 2008
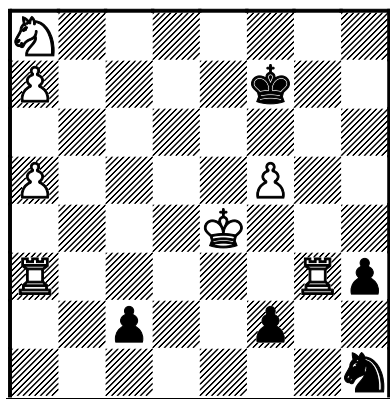
e4f7 0204.33 7/5 Win

parent as late as on move 10th! **1...Kxg7 2.Ra1 f1Q 3.Rxf1 Sg3+ 4.Kd3 Sxf1 5.Kxc2 Se3+** A technical win is obtained following 5...h2 6.Sb6 h1Q 7.a8Q Qh2+ 8.Kb3 Qg3+ 9.Ka4 Qf4+ 10.Kb5 Qxf5+ 11.Qd5 Qb1+

12.Kc6 Qa1 13.Kb7 wins. **6.Kd3** 6.Kb3? leads to the main variation where White will have no better than 12.Kc4? **6...Sd5 7.Sb6 Sc7 8.Sd5 Sa8 9.Sf4 h2 10.Sh5+** what could we do now if not for that far sighted key?! **10…Kh6 11.Sg3 Kg5 12.Ke4** 12.Kc4? Kf4 13.Sh1 Kxf5 14.Kd5 Kf4 15.Kc6 Ke5! 16.Kb7 Kd6 17.Kxa8 Kc7 18.Sg3 Kc8. **12…Kg4 13.Sh1** and the rest is not too complicated.

Prosaic? Not quite! It is most probably the first time that two slow walking creatures such as the knights exchange their initial squares at the opposite corners in such a natural fashion.

What cannot be easily explained is why this highly original and daring concept did not find its worthy place among the prizewinners.

ARVES 20th ANNIVERSARY TOURNEY

The Dutch-Flemish Association for Endgame Study (Alexander Rueb Vereniging voor schaakEindspelStudies) ARVES organizes an international composing tourney for endgame studies. Judge: Marcel Van Herck. Three money prizes will be awarded:

1st prize: 300 euro; 2nd prize: 200 euro; 3rd prize: 100 euro.

Entries (not more than three per composer) should be sent to the tourney director Luc Palmans, Sieberg 55, 3770 Riemst, Belgium or palmans.luc@skynet.be before December 31st, 2008.

The award will be published in the first half of 2009.

Theme: A study in which White wins after forcing Black to incarcerate a minor piece (B/S). Voluntarily incarcerations for self-stalemate are not thematic.

Example:

Alexei Troitzky
hon. ment. *Sydsvenska Dagbladet Snällposten* 1912
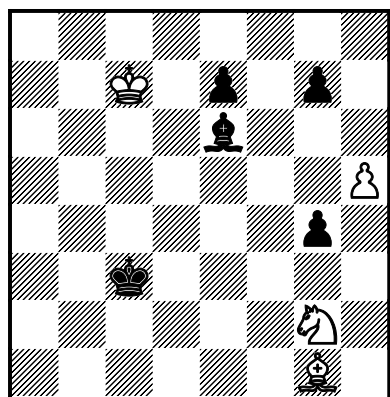
White wins

1.Kd8 Bf7 2.Kxe7 Bxh5 3.Sf4 g6 (thematic move) **4.Se2+ Kc4 5.Sg3 Kd5 6.Kd7 Ke5 7.Be3 Kd5 8.Kc7 Ke6 9.Kc6 Ke5 10.Kc5 Ke6 11.Bd4 Kd7 12.Kd5 Ke7 13.Be5 Kd7 14.Bd6! Ke8 15.Ke6 Kd8 16.Be5 Kc8 17.Kd6 Kb7 18.Bd4 Ka6 19.Kc6 Ka5 20.Bc3+ Ka4 21.Kc5 Kb3 22.Kd4 Kc2 23.Kc4 Kd1 24.Kb3 Kc1 25.Ba5 Kd1 26.Bb4 Kc1 27.Kc3 Kb1 28.Ba3 Ka2 29.Bb2 Kb1 30.Kb3 g5 31.Sxh5** wins.