

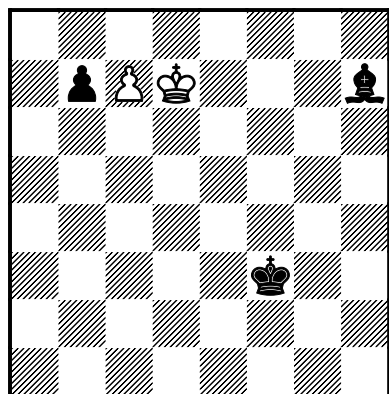
**Prizewinners
explained**

THE POSITIONAL DRAWS OF SARYCHEV

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This column usually selects a couple of recent prizewinners and tries to make their contents as transparent as possible. This time I permit myself to deviate and to pay tribute to a deceased composer whose 100th anniversary is commemorated this year. We don't know too much about the private life of **Aleksandr Vasilievich Sarychev** (1909-1987), only that he was a Russian living in Baku, studying oil technology in its national oil academy. That is the institute in which the problemist Professor Mejnun Vahidov was among the victims of a terror-attack on April 30th. Alexander had also a twin brother, Kiril Vasilievich (1909-1950) with whom he collaborated in creating some 14 of a total output of roughly 80 studies. The brothers published their first study as early as in 1927 and in the following year, when they were merely 19, they came up with their most renowned creation:

A.1 A. & K. Sarychev
commendation *Shakhmatny Listok* II/1928
version



d7f3 0030.11 2/3 Draw

Most of the readers are likely to be familiar with this classical baby-study yet it is always a pleasure to witness one of the most amazing paradoxes chess can offer:

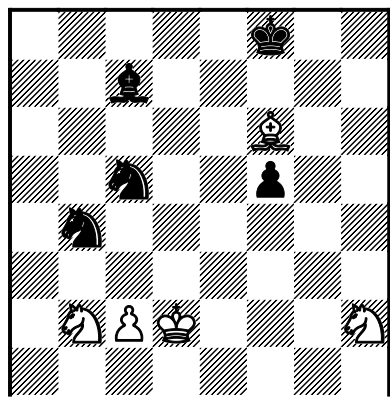
Apparently there is no obvious way to trade pawns: 1.Ke6? Ke4! Or 1.Kd6? Bf5 2.Kc5 Ke4 3.Kb6 Bc8 4.Ka7 b5 etc. The only way is the stunning **1.Kc8!!** where White not only blocks his own pawn but also loses two tempi letting the black pawn proceed to promotion undisturbed. **1...b5 2.Kd7!!** This stunning switch-back is the only move doing the trick. It is essential to prevent the protection of the black pawn while blocking its counterpart on the key post c8. **2...b4 3.Kd6 Bf5 4.Ke5!** That is the point! By attacking the Bishop White wins back the invested tempi in a Réti-like manner and gets to the pawn just in time. **4...Bc8 5.Kd4** Mission accomplished!

The collaboration between the two brothers ceased in 1930 and Kiril probably did not publish any studies thereafter. That was also the first break Alexander took from his artistic activity (the second one, for 6 years, occurred following Kiril's premature death). It was not until five years later that he published his next study for the first time on his own. From then on throughout the rest of his career the dominant theme in his studies were mainly mechanisms of positional draws. In this modern era when numerous obscure positional draws are often presented on endless pages of computer output, I sometimes badly miss the clarity and purity of classicists such as Kasparian, Gurvich, Liburkin, Sarychev and others who man-

aged to create complex draw mechanisms as true pieces of art, accessible to the average human consumer and offering pleasure rather than torture. Here is a selection of first prize winners by the late master for your enjoyment. Actually there is nothing much to explain, as all three of them are crystal clear.

A.2 A. Sarychev

1st prize *Sakhmaty v SSSR 40 JT* 1966

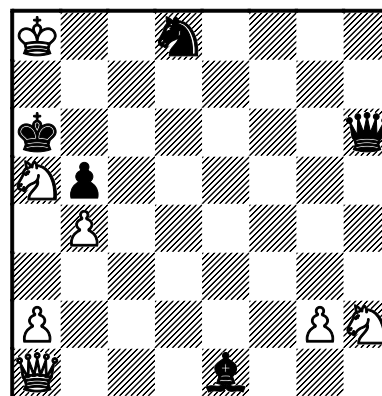


d2f8 0048.11 5/4 Draw

White is facing a double threat: a direct one on his knight and a fork against his Bishop. **1.Sf3! Se4+ 2.Kc1! Sxf6 3.Sd4 Be5 4.Sxf5** (4.c3? Bxd4 5.cxd4 Sbd5) **4...Sa2+ 5.Kb1 Sc3+ 6.Ka1!** As 6.Kc1 allows mate in two) **6...Sa4** (6...Sd1 7.c3! Bxc3 8.Kb1 Sxb2 9.Kc2) **7.c3! Bxc3 8.Ka2 Sxb2 9.Kb3 Be5** (9...Se4 10.Sd6; 9...Sd5 10.Se3) **10.Sh4!** threatening **11.Sf3 10...Bg3 11.Sf5 Be5 12.Sh4** positional draw!

A.3 A. Sarychev

1st prize *Gorgiev MT* 1977



a8a6 4035.31 7/5 Draw

In view of the heavy threats on the eighth rank White's only chance is to centralize his queen. **1.Qe5!** whereas now after **1...Qf8 2.Qb8! Qe7 3.Qc8+ Kb6 4.Qb8+** it is perpetual check. **1...Qg6 2.a4! Qxg2+** (Not **2...bxa4?? 3.Qe2+ Kb6 4.Sc4+ Kc7 5.Qe7+** and wins) **3.Sf3!** This Knight will just disturb the great defensive idea. **3...Qxf3+ 4.Kb8 Sc6+! 5.Sxc6 Bg3** Black has finally managed to set the deadly pin however... **6.axb5+ Kb6 7.Ka8!** The point becomes apparent: **7...Bxe5** is stalemate! **7...Qa3+ 8.Sa5!** Again, following **8...Bxe5** and the white knight is pinned with a stalemate on a different line **8...Qf3+ 9.Sc6 Qf8+ 10.Sb8! Qf3+** (10...Bxe5, a third stalemate with pin and again on a new line!) **11.Sc6** And so on: positional Draw or stalemate!