

VIVE LA PETITE DIFFÉRENCE

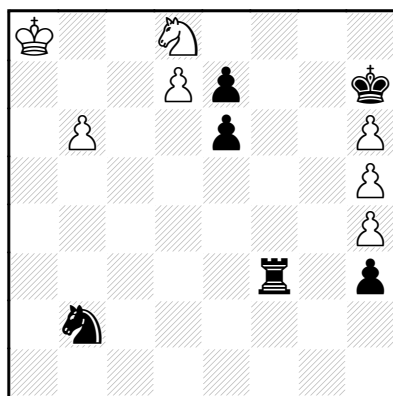
Prizewinners explained

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EG is first and foremost a documentary periodical aimed at collecting and reprinting all published studies from around the world. As such, it usually introduces just diagrams and moves and rarely offers additional verbal explanations. Owing to permanent space distress, EG trusts its readers to successfully navigate through the mazes of piles of main and side lines. This is often not that easy and even far from appetizing, especially for newcomers. This new column, a welcome initiative of the new editor-in-chief, will try to partially make up for the lack of the “human touch” by selecting a couple of recent complex prizewinners and serving them in a more digestible and comprehensible manner.

A.1 Andrei Visokosov

1st pr. Vecherny Krasnoturinsky 10 JT 2005



a8h7 0304.53 7/6 Draw

This first column pays tribute to the ever superior Russian art of the endgame study composition. The two first prizewinners below, which excelled in recent Russian tournaments, have a lot in common despite looking so different. They both display a strong thematic try that fails for missing one “tiny” detail which appears in the actual solution to make the entire difference. The **logical try** has be-

come the trademark of two of the leading composers of our time, yielding for both so many prizes and distinctions.

In No. 1 the thematic try appears as early as in move two.

A rook down, White’s surviving chances lie in promoting one of his advanced pawns. But which one?

1.b7!

Not the other pawn: 1.Sxe6? Rd3 2.Sf4! (2.Sg5+ Kxh6 3.Sxh3 Sa4 wins; 2.Sf8+ Kxh6 3.b7 h2 4.b8Q Ra3+ 5.Kb7 h1Q+ 6.Kc8 Qc6+ 7.Kd8 Ra8 wins) 2...h2! 3.Sxd3 h1Q+ 4.b7 Qd5! 5.Sc5! Sa4!! 6.Sxa4 Qxd7 7.Sb6 Qc6! 8.Ka7 Qc7! 9.Sa8 Qa5+ 10.Kb8 Qc5 11.Sc7 e5 and Black wins easily.

Now, how to stop the pawn? The direct approach would fail: 1...Ra3+ 2.Kb8 h2 3.Sc6 Rd3 4.Kc7 h1Q 5.b8Q Qh2+ 6.Kc8 Qxb8+ 7.Sxb8 e5 8.d8Q Rxd8+ 9.Kxd8 e4 10.Sc6 e3 11.Sd4 e5 12.Sc2 Sc4 13.Ke7 draws.

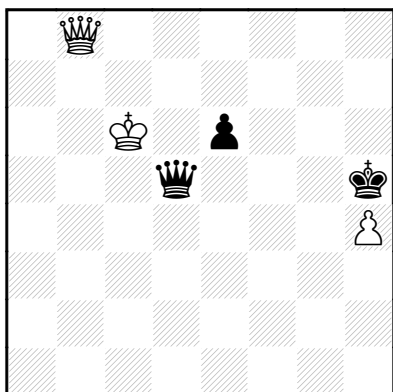
1...Sc4!

A highly efficient prophylactic move against both pawns, as demonstrated in the following try 2.b8Q? Ra3+ 3.Kb7 Rb3+ 4.Kc7 Rxb8 5.Kxb8 Se5 6.Sxe6 Sxd7+ 7.Kc7 h2 wins. Alternatively, letting queens on board by: 1...h2 2.b8Q Ra3+ 3.Qa7 h1Q+ 4.Sb7 Qa1 5.Qxa3 Qxa3+ 6.Kb8 is good for just a draw.

2.Sf7!!

Here we come to the thematic crossroad. There are two knight’s moves to create a double threat: promoting the d-pawn as well as a fork on g5. The **thematic try** shows the essence of the entire idea: 2.Sxe6? Sb6+ 3.Ka7 Sxd7 4.Sg5+ Kxh6 5.Sxf3 Kxh5! 6.Ka8! e6 and it is reciprocal zugzwang position! Here it

is White to play and he loses after: 7.Se5 h2 8.Sxd7 h1Q 9.Ka7 Qc6 10.b8Q Qxd7+ 11.Kb6 Qd4+! 12.Kc6 Qd5+!



The point! The earlier move 6...e6 eventually enabled this last winning move (see diagram) as following 13.Kb6 Qb3+ wins, or 13.Kc7 Qe5+. Black trades queens and his last pawn decides. Therefore white will strive to prevent the move 6...e6 simply by not capturing the pawn standing there as early as in move two!

2...Sb6+ 3.Ka7 Sxd7 4.Sg5+ Kxh6 5.Sxf3 Kxh5! 6.Ka8!

Here it is! Avoiding the capture in the second move leaves now Black in zugzwang however deprived of the waiting move 6...e6.

6...e5

What else? A king's waiting move also fails: 6...Kh6 (Kg4? 7.Se5+!) 7.Se5! h2 8.Sg4+ draws.

7.Sxe5 h2 8.Sxd7 h1Q 9.Ka7! Qa1+

We have arrived at a positional draw e.g. 9...Qd5 10.b8Q Qxd7+ 11.Kb6! Qd4+ 12.Kc6! Kxh4 13.Qh2+! =

10.Kb6! Qd4+ 11.Kc7 Qd6+ 12.Kd8!

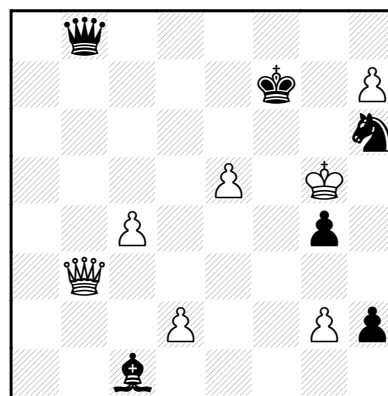
And Black can make no progress. **Draw**

The same theme is used in No. 2 however in a different context somewhat easier for the solver:

Black threatens to have a second queen while the original one is taboo: 1.Qxb8? Bxd2+ 2.Kh4 h1Q+ mates quickly. Who is supposed to win here? The white strategy is to lock the black king in the corner.

A.2 Nikolai Ryabinin

1st pr. Moscow Tourney 2006



g5f7 4033.52 7/6 Win

1.e6+! Kg7! 2.h8Q+! Qxh8 3.Qb7+ Kg8 4.Kg6! Ba3

The moment of truth: 5.Qc8+? Bf8 6.Qd7 Qg7+ 7.Qxg7+ Bxg7 8.e7 h1Q 9.e8Q+ Bf8 10.Qe6+ Kh8 11.Qe5+ Kg8 12.Qd5+ Kh8 and now 13.Qd7? will be met by Qb1+ 14.d3 Qb6+ thus White should settle for a draw by perpetual check (13.Qd4+ Kg8=) which suggests that the white queen on b7 might do the trick. But how would she get there?

5.c5!!

That's it! By getting rid of his own pawn, White paves the way for his queen to descend further along the **staircase** right to its destination.

5...Bxc5 6.Qc8+! Bf8 7.Qd7! Qg7+

Or 7...Qf6+ 8.Kxf6 h1Q 9.Kg6 Qb1+ 10.d3! Be7 11.Qxe7 Qxd3+ 12.Kxh6 Qe3+ 13.Qg5+ trading queens to a winning pawn ending.

8.Qxg7+ Bxg7 9.e7 h1Q 10.e8Q+ Bf8 11.Qe6+ Kh8 12.Qe5+ Kg8 13.Qd5+ Kh8 14.Qd4+ Kg8 15.Qc4+!

Enabled by the right choice in move five

15...Kh8 16.Qc3+ Kg8 17.Qb3+ Kh8 18.Qb2+! Kg8 19.Qb7! Sf5 20.Qf7+ Kh8 21.Qxf8 mate.

Nowadays it is not that easy for composers to find new themes and original positions. Logical studies, however difficult to execute, seem to offer plenty of room for creativity and originality.