# How many strings to twist...

OLEG PERVAKOV

In the previous article we began our discussion with an important endgame study area - the systematic manoeuvre. First, we saw ladder movements of king, queen, rook and their combinations. Now we will continue with another interesting family: the basic movement of a bishop looking like a snake or a string.

This reminds me of a well-known Russian proverb: Сколько веревочку ни витъ, а концу бытъ! ("However many strings you have to twist, the end will come").

Let's start now with the classical **P.1.**:

P.1. H. Rinck
*El Noticiero* 1926
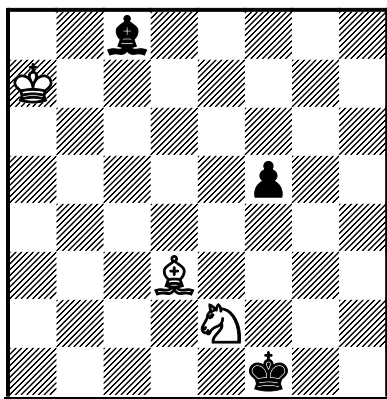
Win

Here we see a snake movement performed by two pieces – the wK and bB.

1.Kb8! Bd7. The bishop cannot escape from the "jungle". If it tries it will be captured by a bishop and knight battery. **2.Kc7 Be8** (2...Ba4 3.Sc3+ Ke1 4.Sxa4 wins, e.g. f4 5.Sc5 f3 6.Se4 f2 7.Sg3) **3.Kd8 Bf7 4.Ke7 Bg8 5.Kf8 Bh7 6.Kg7.** There is no space to run farther away, so White wins.

This discovery by Rinck was followed by numerous imitations. Perhaps the most successful development of his idea is shown in the following study:

P.2. E. Belikov & An. Kuznetsov
1st prize *Bulletin Central Chess Club USSR* 1975
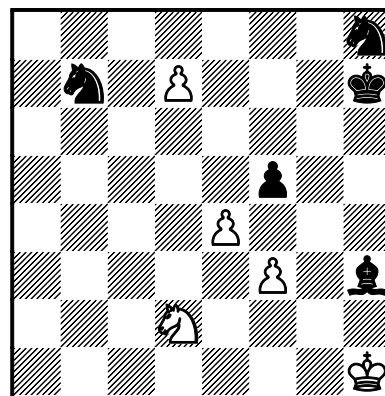
Draw

1.Kh2 fxe4! 2.Sxe4 (Kxh3? e3;) **2...Bf1!** Here the motivation for the movement of the bB is thinner: the bishop has restricted freedom because of forks, either aimed at king and bishop or at knight and bishop, for example: 2...Bf5 3.Sd6! **3.Kg1 Be2** (3...Ba6 4.Sc5!; 3...Bc4 4.Sd6!) **4.Kf2 Bd1 5.Ke1 Bc2 6.Kd2 Bb1 7.Kc1 Ba2 8.Kb2 Bf7! 9.Sd6!** An excellent ending! 9.Sg5+? fails to Kg6 10.Sxf7 Sxf7 11.f4 Kf5!, and the bK stops the pawn before Troitzky's line and Black wins! **9...Sd8 10.Sxf7 Shxf7 11.f4 Kg6 12.f5+!** Now the pawn has crossed Troitzky's line and it is a draw!

An even thinner motivation for the opposition of wK and bB, based on mutual zugzwang, is seen in **P.3.**

1.Rc1 Bb2! 2.Rf1! The 7th and the 8th ranks are only accessible to the wR from the f-file. After 2.Rh1? Black wins in a curious way: Kb7! 3.Rh7+ Kc8 4.Rh1 a1Q 5.Rxa1 Bxa1 6.Kxa4 Kc7! 7.Kb5 Bf6! 8.a4 Be7 9.a5 Bg5 10.a6 Be7 11.c6 Kb8! 12.Kb6 Bd8+ 13.Kc5 Bc7! 14.Kd5 Bb6! 15.Kd6 Kc8! 16.c7 Bxc7+

P.3. A. Visokosov
Chess Weekly 2003
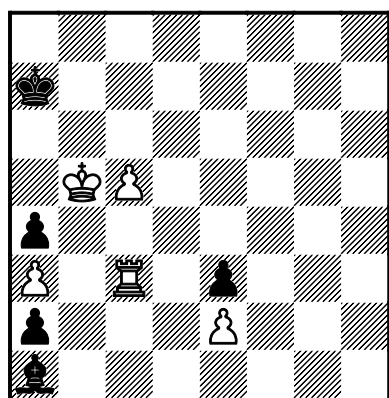
Draw

17.Kc6 Bb8! 18.Kb6 Be5! 19.a7 Bd4+ 20.Ka6 Bxa7 21.Kxa7 Kc7! **2...a1Q.** Now in case of 2...Kb7 there is a simple draw: 3.c6+ Kc7 4.Rf7+ Kb8 5.Rf8+. **3.Rxa1 Bxa1 4.Kxa4 Bb2 5.Kb3! Bc1 6.a4 Kb7 7.Kc3(Kc4) Kc6 8.Kd4! Bd2 9.Kc4 Be1 10.Kd3!!** And here we have a thematic try: 10.Kd4? Bf2 - mutual zugzwang, 11.Kc4 Bh4! 12.Kd4 Bg5 13.a5 Kb5 14.Kd5 Kxa5, wins. **10...Bf2 11.Kd4!** Now Black must move, so White is rescued – **11…Bg1 12.Kc4 Bh2 13.a5! Bf4 14.a6!**, draw.

The vertical bishop snake was presented for the first time by the well-known author of **P.4.** Here we see a new motivation for the bishop's manoeuvre – protection against a mate threat.

P.4. V. Korolkov
1st-2nd prize *Shakhmaty v SSSR* 1934,
correction
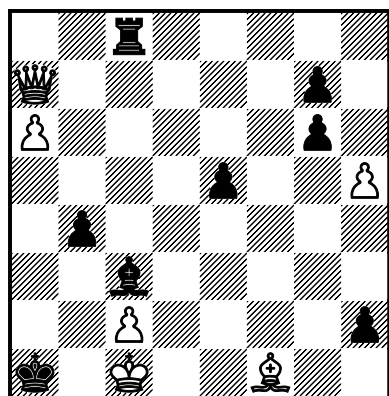
Win

1.Qb7. The queen must urgently enter play. An early mate awaits White after 1.Bg2? Rd8 or 1.Qd7? Bb2+ 2.Kd2 h1Q 3.Qxc8 Qxf1 4.a7

Bc1 mate. **1...e4!** In this paradoxical picture with a queen in the board's centre, Black increases his threats! Poor is 1...Rd8 2.Bd3 e4 3.Qxe4 Re8 4.a7 or 1...Rf8 2.Bd3 Rf7 3.a7 h1Q+ 4.Qxh1 Rxa7 5.Bxg6. **2.Qxe4** (2.Qxc8? h1Q 3.Qh3 Qg1! with mate in 4) **2...Re8!** (2...Rd8 3.Bd3 Re8 4.a7 h1Q+ 5.Qxh1) **3.a7!** The rook is invulnerable: 3.Qxe8? Bb2+ 4.Kd1 h1Q 5.Qe2 Qd5+ 6.Qd3 Qxh5+ 7.Be2 Qh1+, or 4.Kd2 Bc3+ 5.Ke2 h1Q 6.hxg6 Qh2+ 7.Kd3 Qd6+ 8.Ke4 Qd4+ 9.Kf3 Qf6+ 10.Kg2 Qg5+ 11.Kh1 Qh4+ 12.Kg2 Qg4+. **3...h1Q!** (3...Bb2+ 4.Kd2 Rxe4 5.a8Q+) **4.a8Q+! Rxa8 5.Qxh1 Re8! 6.Be2! Rd8.** The best chance. 6...Rxe2 7.Qa8 mate, or 6...b3 7.cxb3 Rxe2 8.Qf3 Bb2+ 9.Kd1 Re6 10.Kc2 Re8 11.Qg4 Ra8 12.b4 with mate in 7. **7.Bd3 Re8 8.Be4.** Without turning off the highway. It is only a draw after 8.Kd1? Re1+ 9.Qxe1 Bxe1 10.Kxe1 gxh5 11.Kd2 Kb2 12.Bg6 h4 13.Bf5 g5 14.Be6 g4 15.Bxg4 b3 16.c4 Ka3 17.c5 b2 18.Bf5 h3 19.c6 h2 20.c7 h1Q, or 11.Bc4 Kb2 12.Bb3 h4 13.Kf2 g5 14.Kf3 h3 15.Kg3 g4 16.Kh2 Kc3. However, White could have flirted, played first 8.h6!? gxh6, and then returned to the main plan with 9.Be4 Rd8 10.Bd5 Re8 11.Be6 Rd8 12.Bd7 – but why extend the play for a whole move, and even give away a pawn? **8...Rd8 9.Bd5 Re8 10.Be6! Rd8 11.Bd7!** Now the square 8 is inaccessible to the rook, and White wins.

At approximately the same time **P.5.**, by another well-known author with a similar motivation, appeared.

P.5. G. Kasparyan
*Shakhmaty v SSSR* 1935
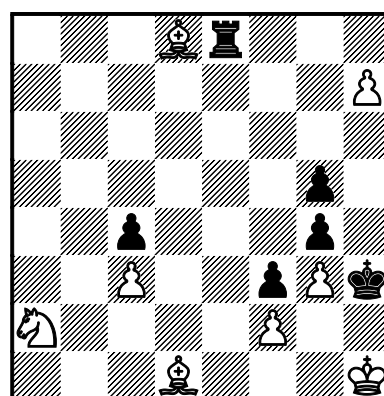
Win

For the first time a stalemate resource was used for the representation of the idea.

1.Be7! Rd8! 2.Bd6! Re8 3.Be5 Rd8 4.Bd4. Continues the descent. Too early is 4.h8Q+? Rxh8 5.Bxf3 gxf3 6.Bxh8 g4, and Black is stalemated. **4...Re8 5.Be3.** Again not 5.h8Q+? Rxh8 6.Kg1 Ra8 7.Sc1 Ra1 8.Be3 Rxc1 9.Bxc1 with the same stalemate outcome. **5...Rd8 6.Bd2 Re8 7.Be2!** Here White has a much more tempting choice. To an accurate draw leads 7.h8Q+? Rxh8 8.Kg1 Rd8 9.Be1 Rxd1 10.Kf1 Ra1 11.Sb4 Ra5 12.Sc6 Ra6 13.Se5 Ra4 14.Bd2 Ra1+ 15.Be1 Ra4 16.Kg1 Ra1 17.Kf1 Ra4 18.Sd7 Ra6 19.Se5 Ra4 20.Sf7 Ra5 21.Kg1 Re5 22.Kf1 Ra5. It is more difficult to prove the inaccuracy of 7.Bxf3?! This variation is absent in both the author's, and later comments. To me the black draw tasted like a candy! 7...gxf3 8.Sb4 Rh8 9.Sc6! Rxh7! 10.Se5! Rd7! 11.Sxf3 Rd3 12.Sxg5+ Kg4 13.Be3 Rxc3 14.Kg2 Ra3 15.f3+ Kf5 16.g4+ Kg6 17.Kf2 c3 18.f4 c2 19.f5+ Kf6 20.Bc1 Ra1 21.Se4+ Kf7 22.Bd2 c1Q 23.Bxc1 Rxc1 – draw (EGTB). **7...fxe2 8.Be1 Rh8 9.Sc1 Rxh7 10.Sxe2 Re7 11.Sg1 mate.**

In the following study (**P.6.**) the bishop snake is caused by the threat from a violent black rook.

P.6. T. Gorgiev
1st prize *Revista de Romana de Sah* 1937
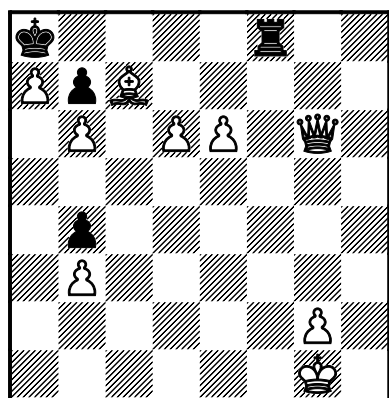
Win

1.Qe8+! Rxe8 2.d7 Rh8! The rook unambiguously aims at "biting" the white king. The bishop comes to the rescue. **3.Bh2! Rg8 4.Bg3 Rh8** (Rf8; Bf4) **5.Bh4 Rg8 6.Bg5 Rh8 7.Bh6**

Rg8 8.Bg7 Rh8. And what next? Avoidance of stalemate: **9.Bc3! bxc3 10.e7** wins.

P.7 has had a difficult fate. The author's edition appeared with a cook. Subsequently, A. Chéron seemed to have corrected the study, but during the preparation of this article I found out that the study has a shorter solution after all. So its task – three snakes by the bishop – has not been accomplished yet.

P.7. V. Korolkov
2-3rd hon. men. Sverdlovsk ty 1946
Correction by A. Chéron,
*Journal de Genève* 1969
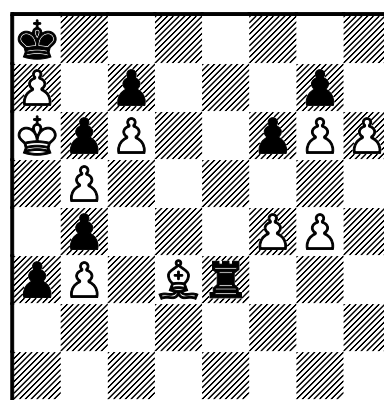
Win

1.h7! Rh3 2.Bb1 a2 3.Bxa2 Rh1. This creates maximum difficulty for White. Easier is 3...Rh2 4.Bb1 f5 5.Bc2! Rh1 6.Bd1 Rh2 7.Be2 Rh1 8.Bf1 Rh2 9.Bg2 Rh4 10.gxf5 Rh1 11.Bf1 Rh2 12.Be2 Rh1 13.Bd1 Rh2 14.Bc2 Rh1 15.Bb1 Rh2 16.f6! gxf6 17.g7 or 3...f5 4.Bb1! Rh2 5.Bc2 and so on. **4.Bb1! Rh2 5.Bc2 Rh1 6.Bd1 Rh2 7.Be2 Rh1 8.Bf1 Rh2 9.Bg2 Rh4! 10.f5?!** This is the moment of truth! The second snake of the bishop, however, is not essential. It is possible to continue with 10.Be4! Rh2 11.Bb1 Rh1 (f5; Bc2 look above) 12.f5 Rh4 13.g5!, arriving at the required position three moves earlier. **10...Rh1 11.Bf1 Rh2 12.Be2 Rh1 13.Bd1 Rh2 14.Bc2 Rh1 15.Bb1 Rh4 16.g5! Rh2 17.Bc2 Rh1 18.Bd1 Rh2 19.Be2 Rh1 20.Bf1 Rh2 21.Bg2 Rh4 22.gxf6 gxf6 23.g7.**

Another interesting motive for a snake – now figuring the bK and wB – was shown by the author of **P.8.**

1.Ke2. Bad is 1.Ra1? Bc5+ 2.Ke2 g2 or 1.Bb7+? Kc7! *(but not 1...Kxb7 2.Rb3+ Kc6*

P.8. M. Liburkin
1st hon. men. Chigorin MT 1949
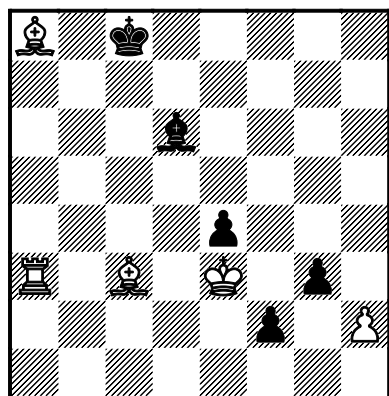
Win

3.Ke2) 2.Ba5+ Kxb7 3.Rb3+ Ka6 4.Ke2 gxh2 5.Rb1 Kxa5. **1...f1Q+** (Bxa3; hxg3) **2.Kxf1 gxh2.** And now White should clear one of the lines because the rook wants to escape from the attack with a tempo. **3.Bb7+ Kd7** (3...Kc7 4.Ba5+ Kxb7 5.Rh3) **4.Bc8+ Ke8 5.Bd7+ Kf7** (5...Ke7 6.Bf6+ Kxf6 7.Rh3) **6.Be8+ Kg8 7.Bf7+ Kh7** (7...Kxf7 8.Ra7+ Kg6 9.Kg2) **8.Bg8+ Kg6** (8...Kh6 9.Bd2+ Kg6 10.Rh3) **9.Bh7+ Kh6.** Now the black king is compelled to choose a square of another color, in view of 9...Kh5 10.Ra5+. But now the second bishop enters the play: **10.Bd2+ e3 11.Bxe3+ Kxh7 12.Ra7+ Kg6 13.Kg2**, wins.

At the time I liked this study very much, but I then thought: would it be possible to expand its content, even at the cost of a truncation of the white bishop's path? This happened: (**P.9.**).

P.9. O. Pervakov
1st prize *Schakend Nederland* 1993
correction, original
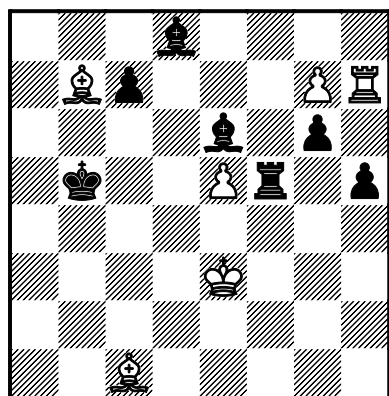
Win

At first we use the unsuccessful configuration of the black rook and bishop on the squares e6 and f5.

1.Bc8! Rxe5+! It is necessary to check at once. After 1...Bg8 White has 2.Bxf5 Bxh7 3.Bxg6 Bg8 4.Ke4 h4 5.Kf5 h3 6.Bf4 c6 7.e6 Kc4 8.Bf7, or 6...c5 7.Be8+ Kb4 8.Kg6 winning. **2.Kf4 Bg8!** (2...Rf5+ 3.Kg3 h4+ 4.Kh2! Bd5 5.Bxf5 gxf5 6.Rh8 loses) **3.Rh8.** Exchanging the rooks would favor Black – 3.Kxe5 Bxh7 4.Bd7+ c6 5.Be8 Ba5 6.Bb2 Bd2 with a draw. **3...Bf6 4.Rxg8 g5+!** After the tempting 4...Re7 5.Ba6+ Ka4 6.Bb5+ Kb3 7.Ba4+ Kc4 8.Bb3+ Kc3 9.Bd2+ Kb2 10.Bf7 Be5+ the wK escapes through the hole on g5: 11.Kg5! wins. **5.Kf3!!** The thematic try is: 5.Kg3?! Re7 6.Ba6+ Ka4 7.Bb5+ Kb3 8.Ba4+ Kc4 9.Bb3+ Kc3 10.Bd2+ Kb2 11.Bf7 Be5+! 12.Kh3 Kc2 13.Bg6+ Kxd2 14.Rd8+ Bd6 15.g8Q Re3+, and Black achieves a draw by perpetual check! **5...Re7 6.Ba6+! Ka4!** (6...Ka5 7.Bd2+ Ka4 8.Ra8 Bxg7 9.Bc4 mate) **7.Bb5+! Kb3! 8.Ba4+ Kc4!** (8...Ka2 9.Ra8 Bxg7 10.Bc2 mate) **9.Bb3+! Kc3.** The bK now hides in the shade of the c-pawn, but now the second bishop enters the scene: **10.Bd2+! Kb2!** It seems, that this safely avoids danger, but… **11.Bf7!** Interrupts the interaction between bR and bB. **11…Kc2 12.Bg6+ Kd1!** The black king continues to hide behind the white pieces. **13.Bc3! Bxc3 14.Rd8+ Bd2.** Now the hasty 15.g8Q will is refuted by 15…Re3+ with perpetual check, but White has a finishing blow: **15.Bc2+! Ke1 16.g8Q Re3+ 17.Kg2 Re2+ 18.Kh1**, and White wins, because the black king has improperly occupies the important square 1!

The study took first prize in a prestigious competition, and finished up in the *FIDE Album* – **but with a black pawn on h6!** For what reason did I put it there? I do not know myself! Probably, I had decided to secure one or the other variant. There were no strong computer programs in Russia at the time, so studies had to be checked manually. A couple of years ago, Mark Dvoretsky and Garry Kasparov, independently from each other, informed me about an inaccuracy: 4...Re7!

5.Ba6+ Ka4 6.Bb5+ Kb3 7.Ba4+ Kc4 8.Bb3+ Kc3 9.Bd2+ Kb2 10.Bf7 Be5+! The white king does not have access to square field g5, and the study collapses!

Having looked more deeply into the position now, I have found the source of all evil – the black pawn on h6. So sometimes it is rather simple to correct a study! And now, the initial position without the h6 pawn, even became much more attractive…

An interesting movement mechanism of two bishops as a snake was published by the authors of **P.10.**

P.10. T. Gorgiev & V. Rudenko
1st prize Réti MT 1965
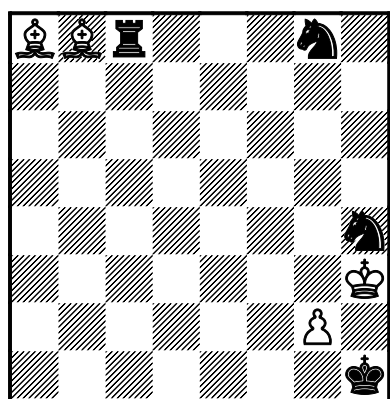
Draw

Already White's first move contains a healthy logical idea. **1.g3+!!** But not 1.g4+?! (thematic try) in view of 1…Kg1 2.Ba7+ Kf1 3.Bb7 Rc7 4.Ba6+ Ke1 5.Bb6 Rc6 6.Ba5+ Kd1 7.Bb5 Rc5 8.Ba4+ Kc1 9.Bb4 Rc4 10.Ba3+ Kb1 11.Bb3, but now 11…Rc3+! – because the king is naked! **1...Kg1 2.Ba7+ Kf1 3.Bb7?! Rc7 4.Ba6+ Ke1 5.Bb6 Rc6 6.Ba5+ Kd1 7.Bb5 Rc5 8.Ba4+ Kc1 9.Bb4 Rc4 10.Ba3+ Kb1 11.Bb3 Rc3 12.Bxg8**, draws.

Unfortunately, the beautiful systematic manoeuvre has blinded both authors and the grateful spectators so much, that they all overlooked the simple 3.Be4!, leading to an immediate draw (3…Sf6 4.Bd3+).

However, two years later Gorgiev published a similar study (**P.11.**).

This miniature is undoubtedly a great achievement although in comparison with the

**P.11.** T. Gorgiev
Tidskrift för Schack 1967,
correction 1971
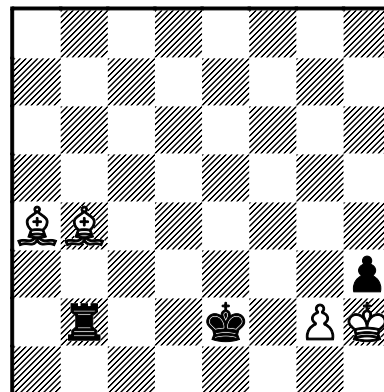
Win

previous position the thematic try has disappeared.

1.Bc3 Ra2 2.Bb3 Ra3 3.Bc4+ Ke3! (Kd1; Bb4) **4.Bb4!** (Bb2? Ra4;) **4...Ra4 5.Bc5+ Ke4** (Kd2; Bb3) **6.Bb5! Ra5 7.Bc6+ Ke5 8.Bb6! Ra6 9.Bc7+ Ke6 10.Bb7 Ra7 11.Bc8+ Ke7 12.Bb6! Ra8.** The white-squared bishop is attacked again, but is has already achieved the object of its long trip – the diagonal c8-h3. **13.Bxh3** (loss of time is 13.Bc5+ Kf7 14.Bxh3), wins.

In conclusion – the unique study **P.12.** where the authors managed to present a combination of three snakes: wB, wR, and bK (!).

P.12. V. Kovalenko & A. Skripnik
1st prize *Shakhmatnaya Kompozitsia* 2002,
version
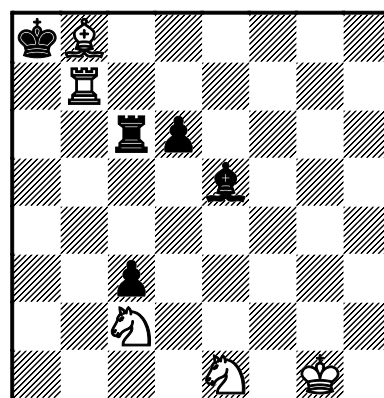
Win

The wB is imprisoned on the b8 square, therefore accurate play by White is necessary. Bad is: 1.Rb1? Rc8, or 1.Rb5 Rc8 2.Rxe5 dxe5 3.Bxe5. Well, attack is the best form of

defence! **1.Rc7! Ra6!** Covering square 7. Now White creates a battery trying to save the white pieces. **2.Rc8! Kb7 3.Rd8! Ra8.** 3...Bg3 looses 4.Sd3! Ra8 5.Bc7 Ra2 in view of 6.Sdb4! *(but not 6.Scb4? Ra1+ 7.Kg2 Kxc7 8.Rh8 c2 draws).* **4.Bc7! Ra6! 5.Rd7! Kc8!** (5...Kc6 6.Re7 Ra7 7.Bd8 Ra8 8.Rc7+ Kb5 9.Bh4) **6.Re7!** The movement of the wB, wR and bK somewhat reminds us of a children's «steam locomotive» – don't you think too? **6…Ra7 7.Bd8!** It is not possible to play 7.Bxd6? Bxd6 8.Rxa7 because of 8…Bc5+. **7...Ra6 8.Re8! Kd7 9.Rf8! Ra8 10.Be7! Ra4!** The black rook tries to replace the horizontal pin for a vertical pin. **11.Bf6** (11.Rf7? Ke8 12.Rh7 Ra7) **11...Rf4.** Achieved? Far from that! **12.Sd3!** (bad is 12.Rd8+? Kc7 13.Bxe5 Rg4+!) **12...Rxf6 13.Sxe5+ Ke7 14.Rxf6**, and a white win according to Troitzky. Don't you like the three routes Rb7-c7-c8-d8-d7-e7-e8-f8, Bb8-c7-d8-e7 and Ka8-b7-c8-d7?

More next time, chess friends!

Announcement

Harold van der Heijden 50 JT

– No set theme.
– A maximum of 4 studies per composer.
– Only original studies (also no corrections or versions).
– **Artistic** studies with "database material" are welcomed, but please do not send **technical** endings without artistic content (this also applies to endings with more material!).
– Do not send studies directly to me!

Total prize fund: 600 EUR (co-sponsor: ARVES)

Extra prizes: endgame study books, endgame study databases: HHdbIV (!)

Judge:
Harold van der Heijden

Tourney director:
René Olthof,
Achter 't Schaapshoofd 7,
5211 MC 's-Hertogenbosch, the Netherlands.
E-mail: raja@newinchess.com

Submission deadline:
December 18th, 2010

The award will be published in **EG**

Please re-print!