

StrateGems 2019 Studies Award

by L'uboš Kekely

I thank Franjo Vrabec for asking me to judge this tourney. Fifteen studies from 13 authors from 11 countries were published in 2019. I checked the problems for anticipations and soundness. Here is my decision:

Prize

Steffen S. Nielsen

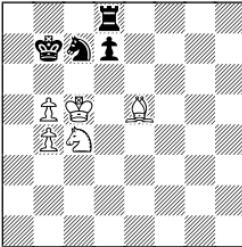


Win

(4+6)

Honorable Mention

Petr Kiryakov

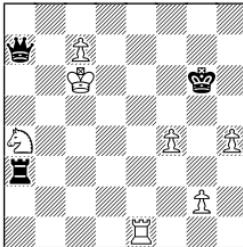


Win

(5+4)

Honorable Mention

Peter S. Krug



Draw

(7+3)

Prize - (Steffen S. Nielsen - E0371) A beautiful study with mate attack and sacrifices of queens and rooks on both sides. Which king survives we will know at the end. The switchback by the white queen (13.Qa7!) creates a R/Q battery and dashes all hopes of Black's counterplay.

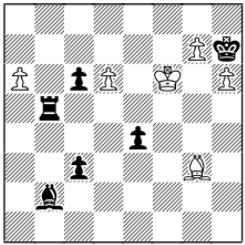
Solution: 1.Rd4+! (1.Qxb8? Qe1+! with a perpetual check) 1...Ke2 (1...Ke1 2.Re4+ Kd1 3.Qxb8) 2.Re4+ Kf3 3.Qg7 (3.Qh7? Qa1+ 4.Sxa1 Rb1+) 3...Qc5+! (3...Qxg7 4.Sd2#, or 3...e5 4.Qxe5 +-) 4.Rd4 (4.Sd4+? Qxd4+ 5.Qxd4 Rb1+, or 4.Sxc5? Rb1+ 5.Re1 Rxе1#, or 4.Qd4? Qxd4+) 4...Qf5! (4...Qh5 5.Sd2+ Ke2 6.Sf1 +-, or 4...Rxb3 5.Qg4+ Ke3 6.Qe4#) 5.Sd2+ (5.Rd1? Rxb3 6.Rf1+ Ke2 (6...Ke4) 7.Rxf5 exf5 =) 5...Ke3 [5...Ke2 6.Re4+ Kd1 (6...Qxe4 7.Sxe4 Rb1+ 8 Kg2 +-) 7.Qa1+ with a winning attack] 6.Sf1+ [6.Sc4+? Kf3 7.Rd3+ Qxd3 8.Se5+ Ke2 9.Sxd3 Rb1+=, or 6.Re4+? Qxe4 7.Sxe4 Rb1+= (7... Kxe4=)] 6...Qxf1+ [6...Ke2 7.Sxg3+ (7.Rd2+)] 7.Kxf1 Rb1+ 8.Kg2 (8.Rd1? Rxd1+=) 8...Bb7+ 9.Kh3 (9.Kxg3 Rg1+)

9...Rh1+ 10.Kg4 Bf3+ 11.Kg5 Rh5+ 12.Kg6 (12.Kf6 Kxd4 =) **12...g2** [12...Rd5 13.Rc4 (13.Rb4) (13.Ra4)] **13.Qa7!** [13.Kf7? Rd5 14.Rxd5 (14.Ra4? Rd7+) 14...exd5 15.Qg3 Ke2 =] **13...Ra5** (13...g1Q+ 14.Rg4+ +-) **14.Qb6!** [14.Qxa5? g1Q+ 15.Kf6 Be4 16.Qd2+ (16.Qc3+ Kf4 =) 16...Kf3] **14...Rb5** [14...Ra6 15.Rd3+ (15.Qc5 Ra5 16.Qc3+ +-)] **15.Rd3+** [15.Qxb5? g1Q+ 16.Kf6 Qe1 17.Qc5 (17.Qe5+ Kf2) 17...Ke2 =, or 15.Qa7 Ra5 16.Qb6 Rb5 17.Rd3+ waste of time] **15...Kxd3** **16.Qxb5+ Ke3** **17.Qe5+** (or 17.Qb6+ Ke2 18.Qg1 +-) **17...Ke2** **18.Qg1+-.**

Honorable Mention - (Petr Kiryakov - E0370) Congratulations to the author for finding a novelty with Zugzwang. Solution: **1.Sa5+!** (1.Sd6+? Ka8! =) **1...Ke8 2.b6 d6+!** (2...Sa6+ 3.Kb5 +-) **3.Bxd6 Sa6+** [3...Rxd6 4.Kxd6 (4.b7+? Kd7 =) +-] **4.Kc6 Sb8+** (4...Rxd6+ 5.Kxd6 +- see main line after White's 8th move) **5.Kd5!** (5.Bxb8? Kxb8 6.b7 Rd4! 7.b5 Ra4! 8.Kb6 Rxa5 9.Kxa5 Kxb7 =) **5...Rd7** (5...Rxd6 6.Kxd6 +-) **6.Kc5!** [6.b7+? Rxb7 7.Sxb7 Sc6!! 8.b5 (8.Kxc6 stalemate, or 8.Sa5 Sxa5 9.bxa5 Kb7 =) 8...Sa7 9.Bc5 Sxb5 10.Kc6 Sa7+! (10...Sc7 +- mate in 50) 11.Kb6 (11.Bxa7 stalemate) 11...Sb5! (11...Kb8 +- mate in 75) =, or 6.b5? Rb7! 7.Sxb7 Kxb7 8.Bxb8 Kxb8 9.Kc6 Kc8 10.b7+ Kb8 = (mutual zz #1)] **6...Sa6+ 7.Kc6 Rxd6+ 8.Kxd6 Kb8!** (8...Sxb4 9.b7+ Kb8 10.Kc5 +-) **9.b7!** (9.b5? Sb4 10.Sc6+ Kb7 11.Sxb4 Kxb6 =) **9...Ka7** (9...Sxb4 10.Kc5! Sd3+ 11.Kb6! Sb4 12.Sc6+ +-) **10.Kd7!** [10.b5? Sb4! (mutual zz #2) 11.Kc7 Sd5+ 12.Kc6 Sc3! =] **10...Kb8** (10...Sxb4 11.Kc8 Sa6 12.Sc6+ Kb6 13.Sb4 +-) **11.Kc6 Ka7 12.b5 Sb4+ 13.Kd6!** (mutual zz #2) **13...Kb8 14.Kc5!** (14.Sc6+? Kxb7 15.Sxb4 Kb6 =) **14...Sd3+ 15.Kb6 Sb4 16.Sc6+! Sxc6 17.Kxc6** (17.bxc6 stalemate, mutual zz #1) **17...Ka7 18.b8Q+ Kxb8 19.Kb6+-.**

Honorable Mention - (Peter Krug - E0369) After good foreplay we get original ending position with surprising back moves 9.Ke3! and 10.Kf2!. Solution: **1.h5+!** (1.Re6+? Kf7 2.Re7+ Kf6 3.Re6+ Kxe6 4.c8Q+ Ke7 5.Sc5 Qxc5+) **1...Kh6 2.Re6+ Kg7 3.Re7+ Kf6 4.Re6+ Kxe6 5.c8Q+ Ke7 6.Sc5 Qxc5+ 7.Kxc5 Rc3+ 8.Kd4 Rxc8 9.Ke3 Rc1 10.Kf2 Rc2+ 11.Kf3 Ke6 12.g4 =.**

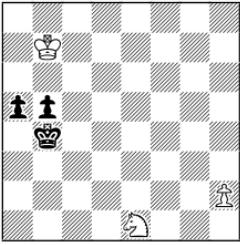
Honorable Mention
Martin Minski



Win

(6+6)

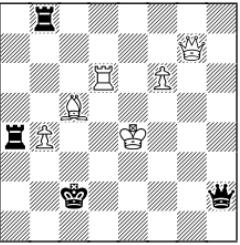
Honorable Mention
Yechiel Robinson



Win

(3+3)

Honorable Mention
Árpád Rusz



Win

(6+4)

Honorable Mention - (Martin Minski - E0365) Funny study in which Black has a queen ahead but white passed pawns are stronger after a nice move 8.Be5!. Solution: **1.g8Q+!** (1.Kf7? Rf5+ 2.Ke6 c2=, or 1.d7? c2+ 2.Kf7 Rf5+=) **1...Kxg8 2.Kg6!** (2.a7? Kh7! 3.a8Q c2+ 4.Be5! Bxe5+ 5.Kf7 Rb7+! 6.Qxb7 c1Q=) **2...e2 3.a7!** (3.d7? Rg5+! 4.Kxg5 c1Q+ 5.Kg6 Qd1 6.a7 Qg4#) **3...Rg5+!** (3...Ra5 4.d7+-) **4.Kxg5 c1Q+ 5.Kg6 Qa1 6.d7** (6.h7+? Kf8 7.d7 Ke7+-) **6...Bf6 7.h7+** (7.Be5?! Qg1+! 8.Kxf6 Qf2+/Qf1+=) **7...Kh8 8.Be5!! Qg1+ 9.Kxf6 Qxa7 10.Kg#.**

Honorable Mention - (Yechiel Robinson - E0366) The tireless knight is fighting against dangerous pawns in a miniature. His demise leads to the original position, which is resolved by precise move 11.Qa8! – from one corner to another. Solution: **1.h4! Kc4 2.h5 b4 3.Sf3! Kd3!** (3...b3 4.Sd2+!) **4.Sd4!** (4.h6? b3!, or 4.Se5+? Kc3!, or 4.Se1+? Ke4!) **4...a4** (4...Kxd4 5.h6 b3 6.h7 b2 7.h8Q+) **5.h6 b3 6.Sb5 b2 7.Sa3 Kc3 8.h7 Kb3 9.Sb1!** (9.h8Q? Kxa3 =) **9...Kc2 10.h8Q Kxb1 11.Qa8! Kc1 12.Qe8+! Kb1** (12...Kd2 13.Qd7+ or 13.Qf5 +-) **13.Qe4!!** (13.Qg4? a3!) **13...a3 14.Qb3! a2** (14...Ka1 15.Qxa3+) **15.Qd1+**

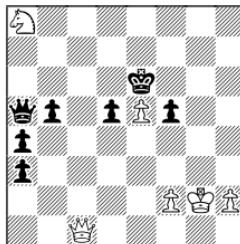
Honorable Mention - (Árpád Rusz - E0367) A nice key creates the royal battery. What follows is a series of mutual Zugzwangs with White making sure that the f8-square is available for its King's escape! Solution: **1.Qg6! Kb2** (1...Qe2+ 2.Kd5+ Kb2 3.Qe4 Qxe4+ 4.Kxe4 +-) **2.f7 Raxb4+!** [2...Qe2+ 3.Kf5 Raxb4 4.Qf6+! (4.Bxb4? Rb5+! 5.Kf6? Qe5#) 4...Kc2 5.Bxb4 Rb5+ 6.Kg6 Qg4+ (6...Qh5+ 7.Kg7 +-) 7.Kh7 Rh5+ 8.Qh6 Rxh6+ 9.Kxh6! (9.Rxh6? Qxb4 =) 9...Qxb4 10.f8Q +-) **3.Bxb4 Qe2+!** [3...Rxb4+ 4.Kf5! (4.Kd5? Qe2! = mutual zugzwang) 4...Qf4+ (4...Rf4+ 5.Ke6 Qe2+ 6.Kd7 +-; 6.Kd5? Rb4! = mutual zugzwang) 5.Ke6 Qe3+ 6.Kf6 Qc3+ 7.Ke7 Rb7+ 8.Rd7 Qe5+ 9.Qe6 Qg5+ 10.Qf6+ +-] **4.Kd4!!** [Thematic try: 4.Kd5? Rxb4 mutual zugzwang 5.f8Q? Rb5+ 6.Kc6 (6.Kd4 Qe5+ 7.Kd3 Rb3+ 8.Kd2 Qe3+ 9.Kd1 Qc1+ 10.Ke2 Re3+ 11.Kf2 Qe1+ 12.Kg2 Re2+ 13.Kh3 Qh1+ 14.Kg4 Qg1+ 15.Kh4 Rh2#) 6...Qc4+ 7.Kd7 Rb7+ 8.Ke8 Qa4+ position X 9.Kd8 Qa8#] **4...Rxb4+ 5.Kd5!** mutual zugzwang **5...Rb5+!** (5...Qc4+ 6.Ke5 Qf4+ 7.Ke6 Qe3+ 8.Kf6 Qc3+ 9.Ke7 Rb7+ 10.Rd7 Qe5+ 11.Qe6 Qg5+ 12.Qf6+ +-) **6. Ke6 Qc4+ 7.Kd7 Rb7+ 8.Ke8 Qa4+ position X 9.Kf8! Qa8+10. Kg7+-**

Special H.M.

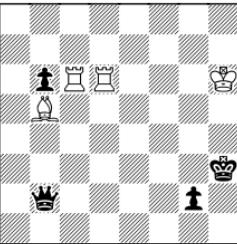
Peter Krug
& Mario Garcia

Commendation

Michal Hlinka
& Mario Garcia



Win



Draw

(4+4)

We thank L'uboš for a quick and comprehensive award. Please send comments to Franjo Vrabec by October 1st.

Special Honorable Mention - (Peter Krug & Mario Garcia - E0368) After knight sacrifice, the black king falls under mate threats. This special award is given because the end is known from an unsound study by Fiedler 1992. Solution: **1.Sc7+!** [1.Sb6? Kxe5! 2.Qc5 (2.Qe3+ Kd6 =) 2...Qd2! 3.Qxa3 (3.Qe7+ Kd4 =) 3...Qg5+ 4.Kf1 Qh4 =] **1...Kxe5** (1...Kd7 2.e6 +-) **2.Qc5!** (2.Qe3+? Kd6! =) **2...a2** (2...Qd2 3.Qe7 +-) **3.Qe7+!** [3.Qxd5+? Kf6 4.Qe6+ Kg7! (4...Kg5? 5.h4+! +-) 5.Se8+ Kf8! 6.Sd6 Qc7 =] **3...Kd4 4.Se6+ Ke4** [4...Kd3 5.Qa3+ Qc3 6.Sf4+ Kc4 (6...Kc2 7.Qxa2+ Qb2 8.Qxd5 Qb3 9.Qxf5+ +-) 7.Qxa2+ Qb3 8.Qe2+ Kc3 9.Qd3+ Kb2 10.Qd2+ Ka3 11.h4 +-; 4...Kc4 5.Qc5+ Kb3 6.Sd4+ Kb2 7.Qc2+ Ka3 8.Qc1+ Kb4 9.Sc6 +-] **5.Sf4+!** (5.Sc5+? Kd4 6.Se6+ Ke4 7.Sf4+ is loss of time) **5...Kxf4** [5...Kd4 6.Qe3+ Ke4 7.Qd3+ Kb4 (7...Kc5 8.Qxd5+ Kb6 9.Qd8 +-) 8.Qd2+ Ka3 9.Qxa5 a1Q 10.Sd3 Qd4 11.Qxb5 Qg4+ 12.Kf1 Qd1+ 13.Se1 +-] **6.Qe3+ Kg4 7.Qh6!** (7.h3+? Kh5 =) **7...f4 8.Qg6+ Kh4 9.Qf6+ Kh5** **10.h4 f3+ 11.Kh3!** (11.Kg3? Qc7+ 12.Kxf3 Qc1! =) **11...Qd2 12.Qg7 Qh6** (12...a1Q 13.Qh7+ Qh6 14.Qf5 +-) **13.Qg4#.**

Commendation - (Michal Hlinka & Mario Garcia - E0360) A collaboration between the rooks and bishop assures a draw in the fight against two black queens in two variations.

Solution: **1.Kh7!** [Try: 1.Rd3+? Kh2 2.Rd1 Qh8+! (2...g1Q? 3.Rxg1 Kxg1 4.Rxb6! Kf2 5.Kh7! = see solution, or 4...Qc1+ 5.Kg6 Qc5 6.Rb7 Kg2 7.Be8! Qc2+ 8.Kh6! =, or 2...Qxb5? 3.Rc2 Qe5 4.Rdd2 =) 3.Kg6 Qe5 4.Rd2 Qe4+ 5.Kg7 Qd4+ 6.Rxd4 g1Q+ 7.Kf7 Qxd4 +-] **1...g1Q** (1...Qxb5 2.Rh6+ =) **2.Rh6+** (2.Rd3+? Kg4 3.Rg6+ Kf4 4.Rxg1 Qh2+ +-) **2...Kg2 3.Rcg6+!** (3.Rhg6+? Kf3! 4.Rxg1 Qh2+ 5.Kg6 Qxg1+ +-) **3...Kf2 4.Rxg1 Kxg1 5.Rg6+!** [Thematic try 5.Rxb6 Kf2! zz 6.Kg6 Kg3! 7.Kf7 Qb3+! 8.Kg7 (8.Ke7 Qe3+ +-) 8...Qc3+ 9.Rf6 Kg4! 10.Kg6 Qc2+ +-] **5...Kf2** [main 5...Kh1 6.Bc6+! (6.Rh6+? Kg2 7.Rxb6 Kf2! 8.Kg6 Kg3 +- similar to try) 6...Kh2 7.Rg2+ Qxg2 8.Bxg2 Kxg2 9.Kg6 Kg3 (9...b5 10.Kf5 b4 11.Ke4! =) 10.Kf5 Ke3 11.Ke5 Kd3 12.Kd5 b5 13.Kc5 =, or 5...Kh2 6.Rxb6 Kg3 7.Rg6+ =] **6.Rxb6 zz Qe5 7.Kg6 Qg3+ 8.Kh5!** [8.Kf5? Qb3 9.Kf6 Kg3! 10.Ke7 (10.Kg7 Qc3+ similar to Try) 10...Qe3+ +-] **8...Qf3+ 9.Kg6 Qb3 10.Rf6+!** [10.Kf5? Qc2+ 11.Ke6 (11.Kf6 Qc5+ +-) 11...Qg6+ +-].