Chess Study Art 2023

The theme of the tourney asked composers to show something interesting with 8-11 pieces and the main line within 10 moves. Such studies dominated in the past that's why I think this size is classical. Eleven pieces suffice to realize even some complex ideas while the requirement of 10 moves makes composers present them concisely. So, it was an opportunity to charm people who like studies without long introductions and wild initial positions. Hopefully, they will enjoy some of the awarded works.

17 studies participated. I liked 10 of them.

Anticipated studies:
Jan Timman (Kh2/Kf4) added more sacrifices to a study by Kalinin 1967 but they didn't improve it.
https://eg.org.ua/chessgame/kalinina-0440-11h7d6/
Vladislav Tarasiuk (Ka1/Ka4) couldn't prevent an anti-stalemate check Nc1 better than Pogosyants and Yakimchik did in 1968. https://eg.org.ua/chessgame/pogosyantse-yakimchikv-0313-11h7h5-v/
Micaloni and Gatti (Kb6/Kd5) discovered a study by Klinkov published in Italy in 1968.
https://eg.org.ua/chessgame/klinkovm-0140-01c7f4/
Arpad Rusz found the same queen sacrifice a few years before Martin Minski and Volker Hergert (Kf5/Kh6). https://eg.org.ua/chessgame/rusza-0603-42c5a5/

Michael Pasman
1st prize
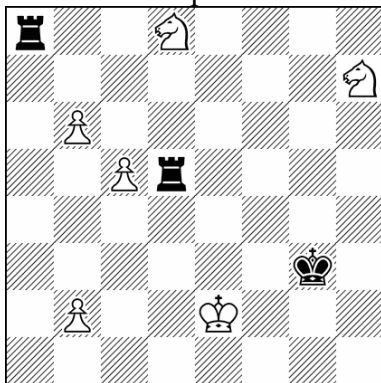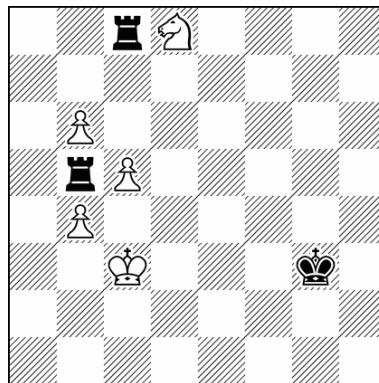
| Draw | Position after 5…Rc8! | Position after 8…Kf4 |
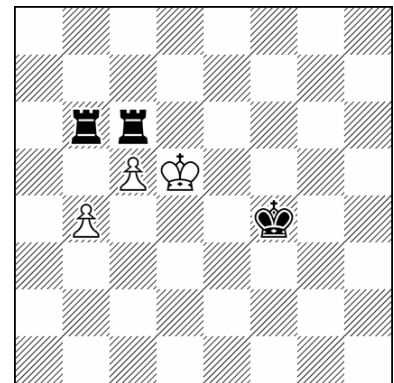
1.♘f6! ♖e5+ [1...♖dxd8 2.c6 ♔f4 3.c7 ♔f5 4.cxd8♕ ♖xd8 5.♘h5=] **2.♘e4+!** [2.♔d3? ♖xd8+ *(2...♖xc5? 3.♘e4+)* 3.♔c4 ♖e6 4.♘d5 ♖e4+ 5.♔b5 ♖xd5 6.b7 ♖e8 7.♔b6 ♖d4 8.c6 ♖b4+–+] **2...♖xe4+** [2...♔f4 3.♘c6! ♖xe4+ 4.♔d3 ♖e6 5.b7=] **3.♔d3** Now the attacked rook slows down the passed pawns **3...♖b4** and after **4.♔c3 ♖b5 5.b4** it is immobilized too. The other rook hurries to its rescue **5...♖c8!** but it can't stop the knight: **6.♘c6!!** [6.♔c4? ♖xb6; 6.♔b3? ♖cxc5] **6...♖xc6 7.♔c4! ♖bxb6 8.♔d5! ♔f4** [8...♖a6 9.b5] **9.b5!=**
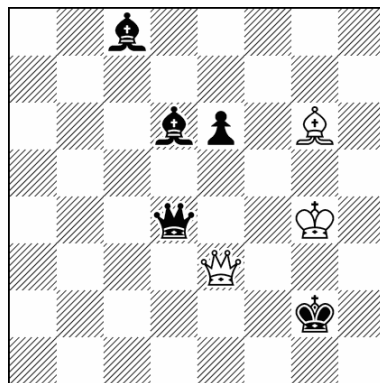
The knight's display of courage in the intro is admirable. The following imprisonment of the black rook is funny. The decoy sacrifice Nc6 is astonishing. The finale is picturesque. The blend of humour and subtleties in this study persuaded the judge that this is the winner of the tourney.
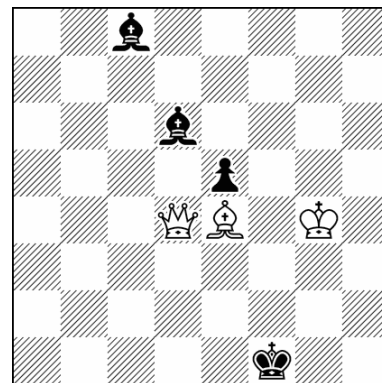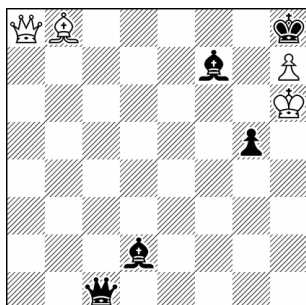
Steffen Nielsen
2nd prize
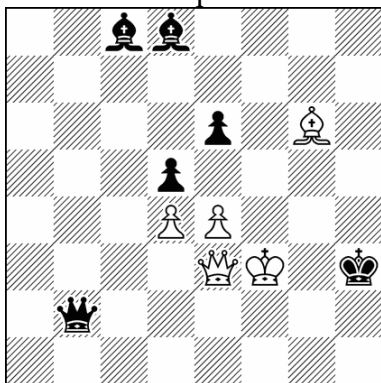
Draw

Position after 4…Qxd4!

Position after 6…e5+

1.♔f4+ ♔g2 [1...♔h2 2.♕g3+ ♔h1 3.♕e1+ ♔g2 4.exd5 ♗c7+ 5.d6 ♗xd6+ 6.♔g5=] **2.exd5** [Too early is 2.♕g3+? ♔f1 and Bd3+ is impossible.] **2...♗c7+** [2...exd5 3.♕g3+ ♔h1 *(3...♔f1 4.♗d3+)* 4.♕e1+ ♔g2 5.♕g3+; 2...♗b8+ 3.♔g4 exd5+ 4.♗f5=] **3.d6! ♗xd6+ 4.♔g4** [4.♔g5? ♕b5+ 5.♔f6 ♕f1+ 6.♔g7 ♕f8+–+] **4...♕xd4+!** [4...e5+ 5.♔h5 exd4 *(5...♕xd4 6.♗e4+ ♔f1 7.♗d3+ ♔g2 8.♗e4+=)* 6.♗e4+ ♔h2 7.♕f3! ♕b5+ 8.♔h6=] Here a little black combination meets a white one. **5.♗e4+! ♔f1 6.♕xd4 e5+ 7.♗f5 ♗xf5+ 8.♔f3 exd4** stalemate.

The idea to counter a queen sacrifice with a self-pin check is one of many inventions by the current world champion. In his earlier study he already managed to end this combination in a stalemate but the new mechanism is better. Now the finale is perfect.
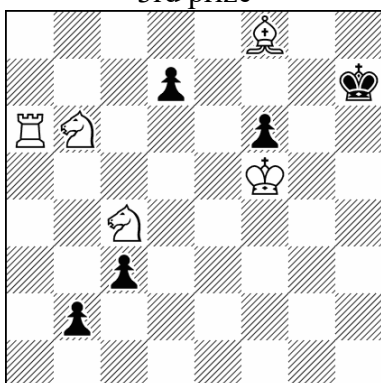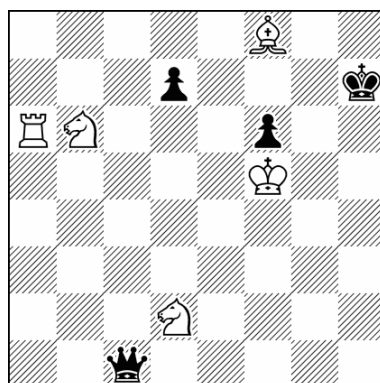

Steffen Nielsen 1/2
3.p e4-e5 2016

6...♕c6+ [6...♕h1+ 7.♗h2+ ♕xa8 8.♗e5#] **7.♗d6+** [7.♕xc6? g4+ 8.♗f4 ♗xf4#] **7...♗e8 8.♕a1+ ♗c3 9.♕xc3+ ♕xc3 10.♗e5+ ♕xe5** stalemate.
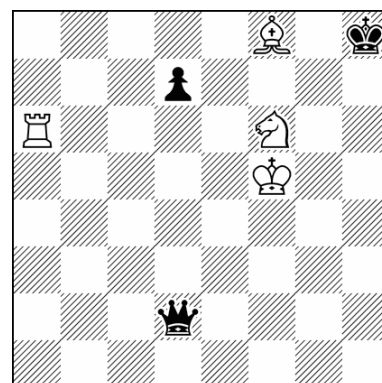
Martin Minski
3rd prize

Win

Position after 3…c1=Q

Position after 5…Kh8

1.♘a3 [1.♘xd7? b1♕+ 2.♔e6 ♗g6=] **1...b1♕+!** [1...c2 2.♘d5 b1♕ 3.♘xf6+ ♔h8 4.♖a4 c1♕+ 5.♘xb1+–] **2.♘xb1 c2 3.♘d2! c1♕ 4.♘d5!** White keeps the Pd7 alive because it prevents stalemate. [4.♘xd7? ♕xd2 5.♘xf6+ ♔h8=] **4...♕xd2 5.♘xf6+ ♔h8** Can the rook shield his king

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from checks? **6.♖a5!!** Yes. A brave move! [6.♖a4? ♕c2+ 7.♔e4 d5 8.♔g6 ♕xe4+=] **6...♕xa5+** [6...d6 7.♔g6 ♕c2+ 8.♖f5+–] **7.♔g6 d5 8.♗g7#**

A quiet rook sacrifice that leaves White with bishop and knight is impressive. A similar sacrifice was shown by Amann.
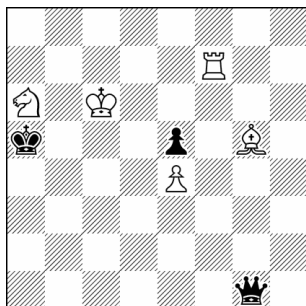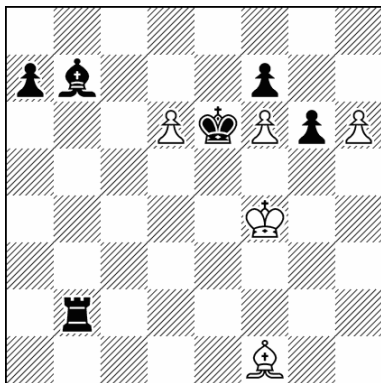

The position has a white pawn but the cage for the black king is more spacious which adds to the paradox.
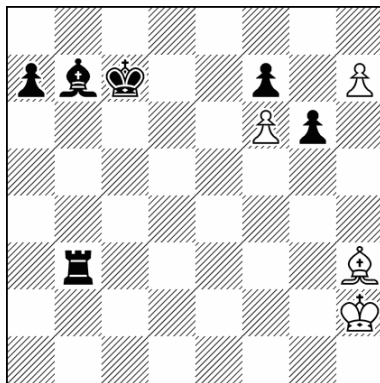
Gunter Amann 1-0
7/8.p WCCT-8 2005

7.♖f2! **♕xf2** [7...♕a1 8.♘c5; 7...♕xg5 8.♖a2#; 7...♔xa6 8.♖a2#]
8.♘c5! ♕c2 [8...♔b4 9.♘d3+] **9.♗d2+ ♕xd2 10.♘b3+ ♔b4 11.♘xd2**
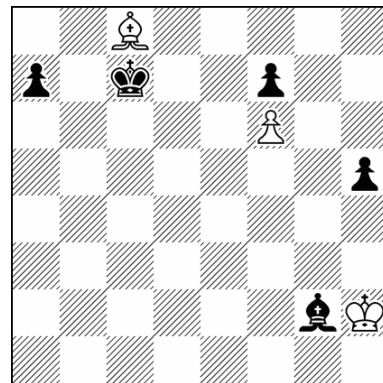
Jan Timman
1st honourable mention


Draw

Position after 5.Kh2

Position after 8…gxh5

1.d7! [1.♗h3+? ♔xf6 2.d7 ♖d2–+] **1...♔xd7 2.♗h3+ ♔c7!** Anticipating 6.Bc8! [2...♔d6 3.h7 ♖b4+ 4.♔g3 ♖b3+ 5.♔h2 ♗g2 6.♗c8 ♖b5 7.h8♕ ♖h5+ 8.♕xh5 gxh5 9.♔xg2=] **3.h7 ♖b4+ 4.♔g3 ♖b3+ 5.♔h2 ♗g2! 6.♗c8!** [6.♗xg2? ♖b8–+] **6...♖b5 7.h8♕ ♖h5+ 8.♕xh5 gxh5** Now the black king attacks the bishop but **9.♗e6!** wins the important pawn.

A nice duel of the fearless bishops: 5…Bg2! opens the b-file for the rook, 6.Bc8! closes the 8th rank but opens the h-file.
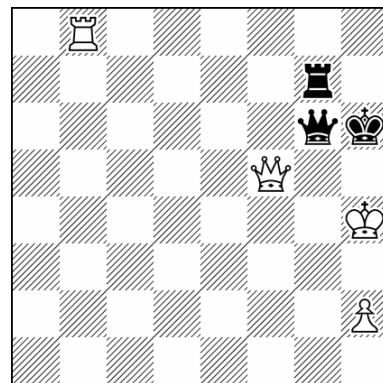
Steffen Nielsen
2nd honourable mention
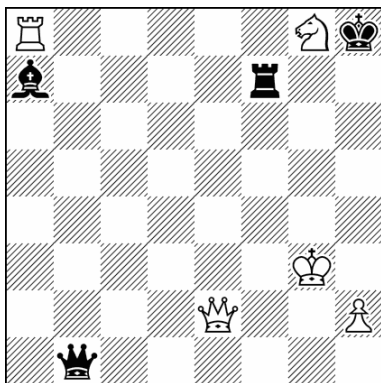

Win
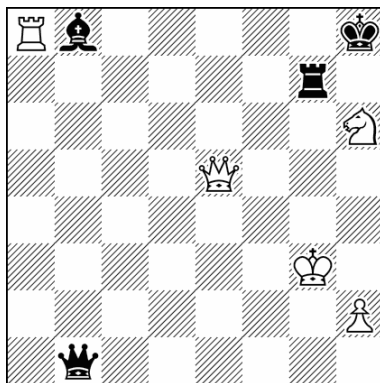
Position after 3…Rg7+

Position after 6…Kxh6

1.♕h5+! This check forces the rook to block the h7–square. [1.♘h6+? ♗b8+ 2.♕e5+ ♔h7! 3.♖xb8 ♕g1+=] **1...♖h7 2.♘h6+ ♗b8+ 3.♕e5+ ♖g7+ 4.♔h4 ♔h7** [4...♕b4+ 5.♔h5 ♔h7 6.♖xb8+−] **5.♖xb8 ♕g6 6.♕f5! ♔xh6 7.♖b6!** [7.♖h8+ ♖h7 8.♕f8+ ♕g7 9.♕d6+ ♕g6=] **7...♖xb6 8.♕h5#**
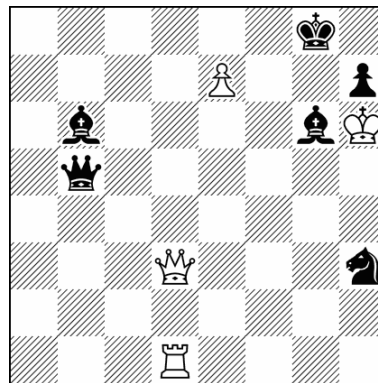
Three consecutive self-pins 3...Bb8+ 4.Qe5+ Rg7+ may convince chess players that it's an effective method to defeat their opponents. These dangerous stunts are performed by professional composers; do not repeat them in your games.
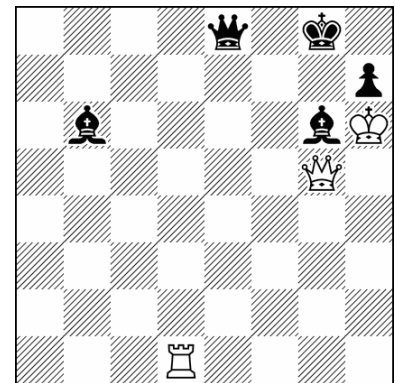
Michael Pasman
3rd honourable mention
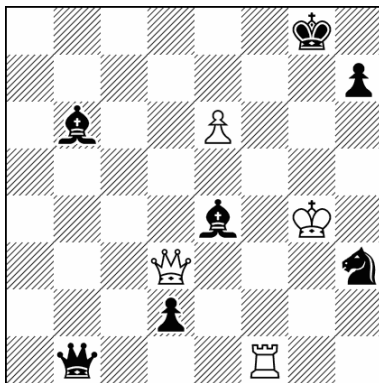
Draw

Position after 4…Qb5

Position after 8…Bg6

1.e7 ♗f5+! 2.♔h5! [2.♕xf5? ♕xf5+ 3.♔xf5 ♔f7−+] **2...d1♕+! 3.♖xd1 ♗g6+ 4.♔h6! ♕b5!** [4...♕xd3 5.♖xd3 ♔f7 6.♖xh3=] The position is more digestible now. **5.e8♕+!** [5.♕d8+? ♗e8! 6.♖g1+ ♔f7 7.♖g7+ ♔e6 8.♕c8+ ♕d7 9.♕c3 ♔d6 10.♕g3+ ♔c6−+] **5...♕xe8 6.♕b3+ ♗f7** [6...♔f8 7.♕xb6=] **7.♕g3+!** [7.♕xb6? ♕f8#] **7...♘g5 8.♕xg5+ ♗g6 9.♖d8!** Fuel dump before landing the queen. [9.♕d5+? ♔h8] **9...♗xd8 10.♕e7!** with an inevitable stalemate. [10.♕d5+? ♗f7 11.♕xd8 ♗g6! 12.♕d5+ ♕f7 13.♕d8+ ♕f8+ 14.♕xf8+ ♔xf8−+]
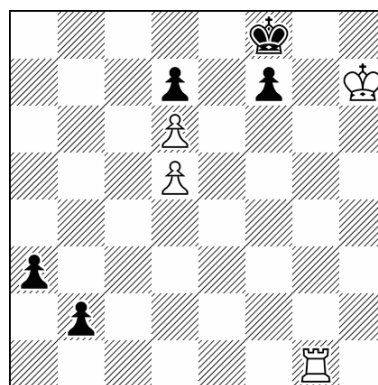
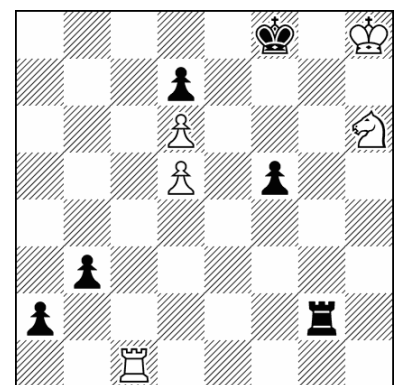This study teaches us not to kill the bishops.

Daniele Gatti
special honourable mention
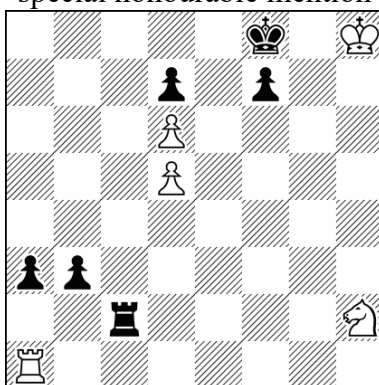
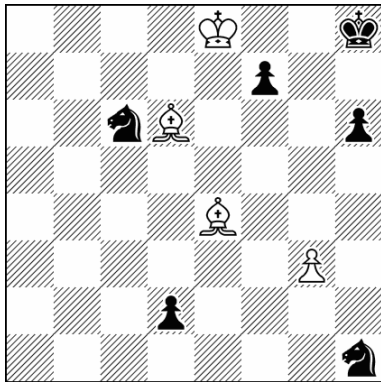Draw

Position after 7.Rg1 (A)

Position after 6.Nh6 (B)

The rooks are going to the g-file soon that's why the knight should close it. **1.♘g4!** [1.♘f3? a2! 2.♖g1 ♖g2! 3.♖xg2 a1♕+]

Main **A. 1...♖c3 2.♘f6 ♖h3+ 3.♘h7+ ♖xh7+ 4.♔xh7 b2 5.♖g1** [5.♖b1? ♔e8! 6.♔g7 ♔d8! 7.♔xf7 ♔c8! 8.♔e7 a2! 9.♖xb2 a1♕−+] The f-pawn is a switch between two draws: **5...f5** [5...f6 6.♖g8+ *(6.♔g6? a2! 7.♖h1 b1♕+)* 6...♔f7 7.♖g7+ ♔e8 8.♖g8+ perpetual check to the black king.] **6.♔g6! a2 7.♖h1 ♔g8 8.♖e1 ♔f8 9.♖h1=.**

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Main **B. 1...a2 2.♖g1! ♖g2** (now the white rook can leave the g-file) **3.♖c1 ♖c2 4.♖g1 ♖g2 5.♖c1 f5 6.♘h6! ♖g8+ 7.♔h7 ♖g7+ 8.♔h8** perpetual check to the white king.

Each main line has two positional draws. They all are simple but the construction is great, each pawn is involved. Maybe that's the reason why at some moments I like this study more, but then I look at the draws and I like it less. This explains its special distinction.
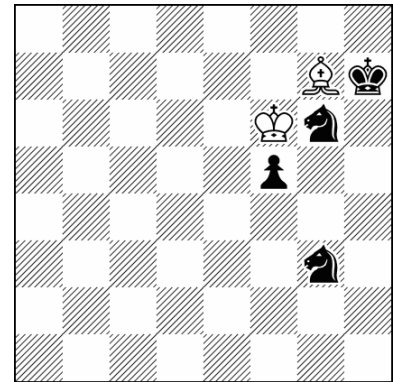
Thomas Niessen
commendation

Draw
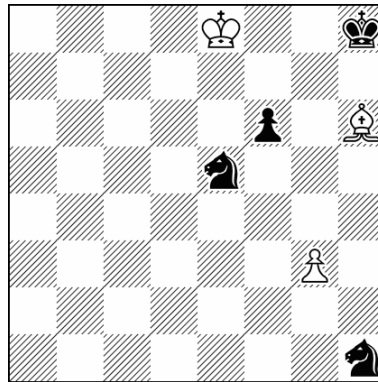
Position after 4…Ne5

Position after 8…Nxg3

1.♗f3 [1.♗c2? ♔g8 2.♗f4 ♘d4 3.♗a4 h5! 4.♗xd2 ♘xg3–+] **1...f6** [1...♔g8 2.♗f4 ♘d4 3.♗h5=] **2.♗f4 ♘e5 3.♗xd2!** [3.♗h5? ♔g7 4.♗xd2 ♘xg3–+] **3...♘xf3 4.♗xh6 ♘e5** [4...♔h7 5.♗f7 ♔xh6 6.♔xf6=] **5.♔f8!** White prepares his bishop's dive on g7. [5.♔e7? ♘g4 6.♗d2 ♔h7 7.♔e6 ♔g6 8.♗c3 f5–+] **5...♔h7** [5...♘g4 6.♗g7+ ♔h7 7.♗xf6 ♘xf6 8.g4=] **6.♗g7 ♘g6+ 7.♔f7 f5 8.♔f6 ♘xg3 9.♔g5! ♔xg7** stalemate.
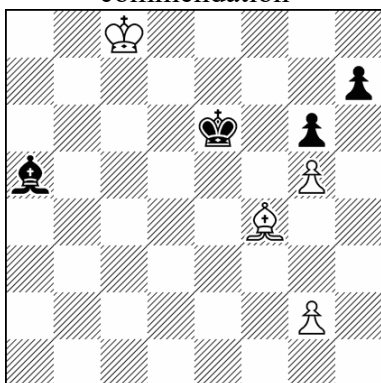
The idea of a stuck bishop in the battle vs. two knights and a pawn is new but it's hard to do better than Kasparyan.
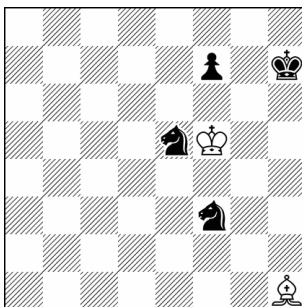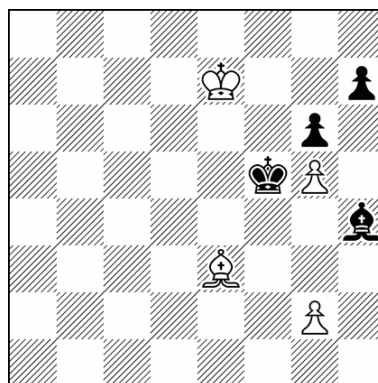

Genrikh Kasparyan 1/2
4.p UV CSTV 1977

1.♔f6 ♔g8 2.♗g2 ♘d7+ 3.♔e7 ♘de5 4.♔f6 ♘g4+ 5.♔e7 ♘gh2 6.♔f6 ♔f8 7.♗h3 ♘d4! [7...♘d2 8.♗f5!] **8.♗c8! ♘f1! 9.♗b7! ♘e3 10.♗f3! ♘xf3** stalemate.
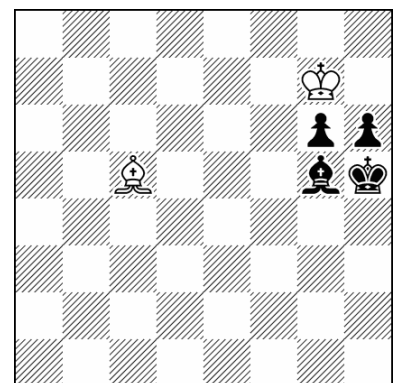
Jan Timman
commendation

Draw

Position after 3…Bh4

Position after 7…h6

1.♗e3! The bishop should be ready to stop the h-pawn from f2. [1.g4? ♔d5 2.♔d7 ♔e4 3.♗c1 ♗b6 4.♔e6 ♗e3–+; 1.♗c1? ♔f5 2.♔d7 ♗e1 3.g4+ ♔xg4 4.♔e6 ♗h4 5.♔f6 h6 6.♔xg6 ♗xg5–+] **1...♗e1** [1...♔f5 2.♔d7 ♗e1 3.♔e7 comes to the same.] **2.♔d8 ♔f5** [2...♗h4 3.g4!] **3.♔e7 ♗h4 4.g4+!** **♔xg4 5.♔f6 ♔h5** [5...h6 6.♔xg6 ♗xg5 7.♗f2=] **6.♔g7 ♗xg5 7.♗c5** [or 7.♗d4] **7...h6 8.♔h7!** [8.♗f8? ♔g4! 9.♔xg6 h5–+] **8...♗f4** [8...♗h4 9.♗f8 g5 10.♗xh6 g4 11.♗f4=] **9.♗f8! ♗e3 10.♗g7=** The h-pawn is an uncomfortable opponent for the bishop. So, White finds a way to win this pawn or keep the black pieces busy with its defense.
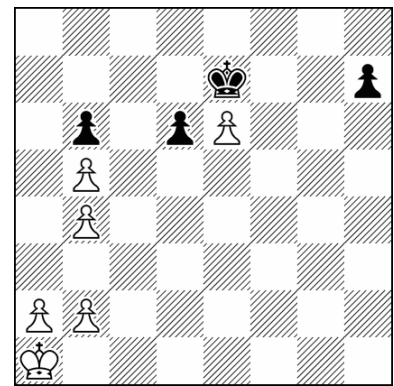
Vladislav Tarasiuk
commendation
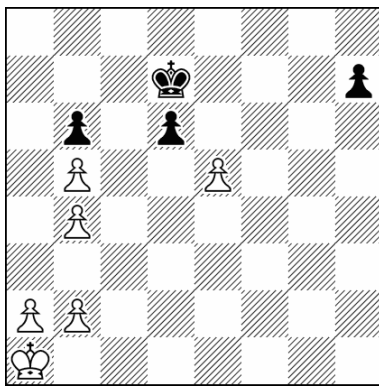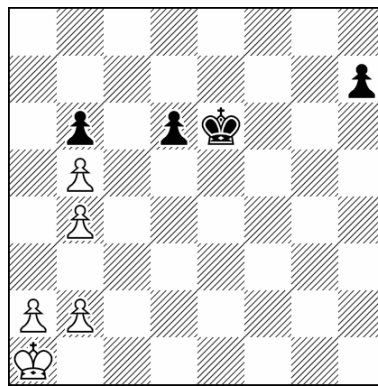
Draw | Position after 1...Kxe6 (A) | Position after 1...Ke7 (B)

Dedicated to M. Zinar.
1.e6+! [1.b3? h5 2.e6+ ♔e8! 3.♔b2 h4 4.♔a3 h3 5.♔a4 h2 6.a3 h1♕ 7.e7 ♕a8#]

Main **A. 1...♔xe6** [1...♔e8 2.a4+–] **2.b3!** [2.a3? ♔d5! 3.♔a2 ♔c4–+] **2...h5 3.♔b2 h4 4.♔a3 h3 5.♔a4 h2 6.a3 h1♕** stalemate.

Main **B. 1...♔e7! 2.a3!** (2.b3? d5! 3.♔b2 d4 4.♔a3 d3 5.♔a4 d2 6.a3 ♔d6 7.e7 d1♘!–+) **2...h5 3.♔a2 h4 4.♔b3 h3 5.♔a4 h2 6.b3 h1♕** stalemate.

The king's reaction to 1.e6+ makes White change the order of his tortoise moves.

Judge of the tourney
Serhiy Didukh