

British Endgame Study News

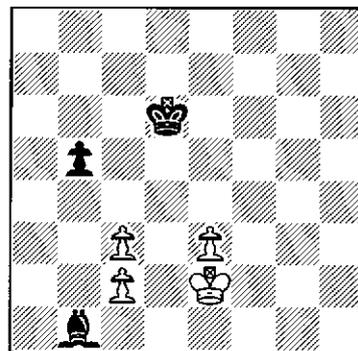
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Contents of this issue

Editorial	81
Recently published British originals	82
Three Flemish musketeers	83
Evolution of a study by Paul Byway	84
From the world at large	86
News and notices	88



by P. Kiryakov

White to play and draw

This issue. British originals continue to be thin on the ground, which gives me space to report a fine book from Flanders. Paul Byway, who values naturalness of setting even more than I do, contributes an essay on the evolution of a study, and "From the world at large" features two surprising positions of reciprocal zugzwang. Try the position above before looking inside. All you have to do is to swap off Black's last pawn, but...

And our gradual coverage of British study composition continues with a special number featuring studies from 1987-89.

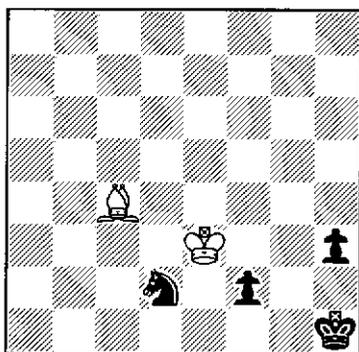
Copyright. Our reader Marco Campioli has been invited to start a study column in the Italian magazine *Scacco!* (congratulations!) and has asked me for permission to quote material from *BESN*. I have no authority to waive the rights of others, but as far as I am personally concerned anything I write on studies, whether in *BESN* or elsewhere, may be quoted without payment or formality. I ask only that there be due acknowledgement.

Spotlight. Paul Byway has sent me the Pogosyants on which his study on page 75 of our last issue was based: *Shakhmaty v SSSR* 1983, wKf3, Qg8, Bd7, bKd3, Qa1, win by 1 Bf5+ etc. John Nunn quotes this in *Secrets of pawnless endings* as an example of the difficulty of composing a study with this material in which the moves are strictly unique. To Paul, such a statement is a challenge!

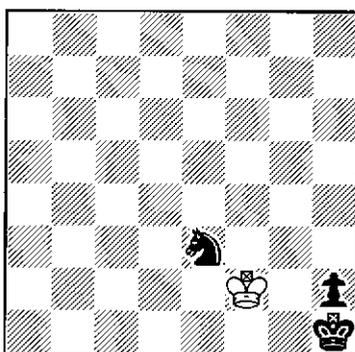
Less pleasantly, *EG* reports that the Rumyantsev study quoted on pp 78-9 is unsound. Black can play 4...Qh3+ 5 Ke8 Kg6 6 Rxe7 Qh8+ 7 Kd7 Qd4+ 8 Kc6, and now there is a quick but complicated win by 8...Bf4 ("the main line is 9 Kb5 Kf6 10 Re8 Qd3+ 11 Kc6 Kf7 12 Re1 Be3") but more clear-cut is Emil Vlasák's 8...Ba3 9 Re6+ Kf7 10 Rce5 Bd6 11 Re4 (11 Rd5 Qc4+ 12 Kxd6 Qa6+) Qc5+ 12 Kb7 Qb5+ 13 Ka7 Bc5+ 14 Ka8 Qd7 15 Kb8 Bd6+ 16 Ka8 Qc8+ 17 Ka7 Bc5+.

What conclusions, if any, can we draw from this? Should we perhaps say that with 2R v Q + B, the composer needing a draw should be expected to demonstrate analysis at least up to the point where the rooks are safely defending each other?

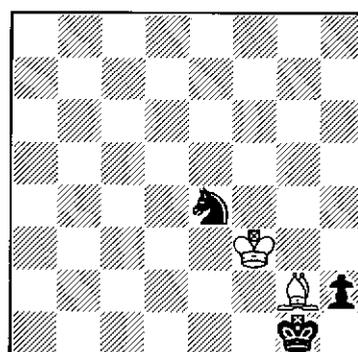
Recently published British originals



1 - draw

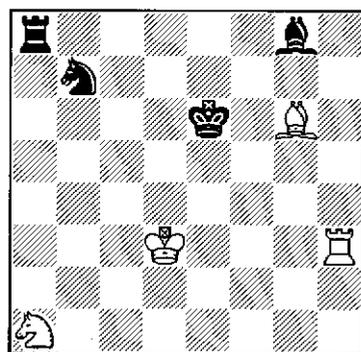


1a - reciprocal zugzwang

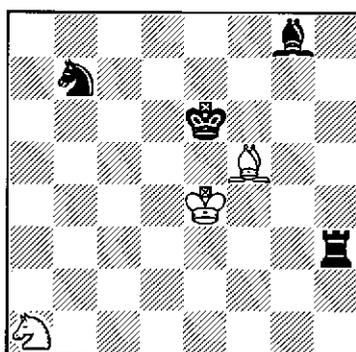


1b - 1...h2, after 4 Bg2

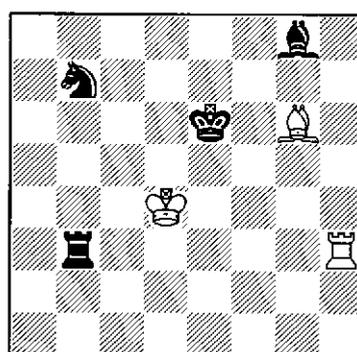
Paul Michelet's **1** was in the January-March issue of *diagrammes*. It depends on the fact, certainly known to Ercole del Rio and probably known long before, that positions such as **1a** are reciprocal zugzwang: White to move loses immediately, but Black to move cannot win despite having knight and defended pawn against nothing. So the natural 1 Kxf2 does not work because Black gains the zugzwang, 1...Nxc4 2 Kg3 h2 3 Kf2 Ne3, but 1 Bf1! loses a tempo and this is crucial: 1...Nxf1+ 2 Kxf2 Nd2/Ne3 3 Kg3 h2 4 Kf2. Another interesting position occurs after 1...h2 2 Kxf2 Ne4+ 3 Kf3 Kg1 4 Bg2 (see **1b**), when White can hold out though he must be careful; there are several lines in which Black wins (for example, 4...Nc3 5 Bh1 Nd5 6 Bg2 Nf4 7 Bh1 Ng6 8 Kg3? Kxh1 etc). **1b** is in fact another reciprocal zugzwang, but this is academic since there is no try leading to the same position with White to move.



2 - win (Black to move)



2a - 2 Ke4 Rxh3 3 Bf5+

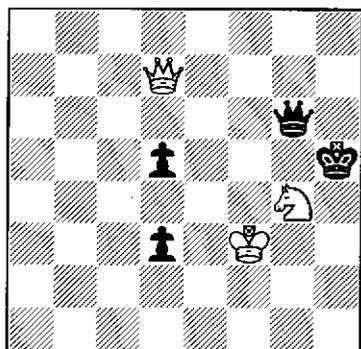


2b - main line, after 3 Kd4

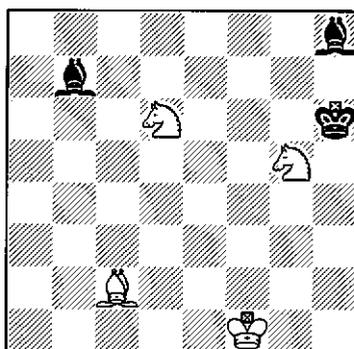
Mike Bent's **2** was in the March *Problemist*. Black needs to win a whole rook (R+B+N don't win against R+B), and it is easily done: 1...Ra3+. Now White can try 2 Ke4 hoping for 2...Rxh3 3 Bf5+ (see **2a**) winning the rook back, but Black can interpose 2...Nd6+ guarding f5 and White is helpless. But those who know their Mike Bent will try another track: 2 Nb3+! Black has to take this, 2...Rxb3+, and now the move is not 3 Ke4 (3...Nd6+ still wins) but 3 Kd4! (see **2b**). Black must take his rook, 3...Rxh3, and although the fork 4 Bf5+ doesn't win it back it doesn't matter because 4...Kxf5 is stalemate.

Three Flemish musketeers

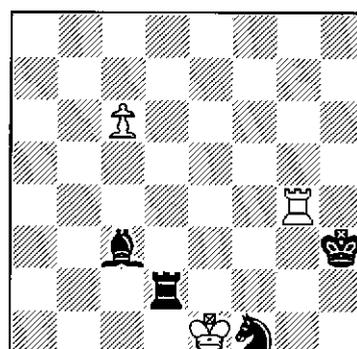
Recently published is *Flemish miniatures*, a beautifully printed selection of 123 miniatures by Julien Vandiest, Roger Missiaen, and Ignace Vandecasteele. Each is a strong analyst whose studies are frequently deep and difficult, and the reader will need to get out board and men. For once, I will omit our usual intermediate diagrams and ask *BESN* readers to do the same. Be it noted that the book contains a lot of analysis that I have not quoted; all significant alternatives are worked out in detail.



1 - win



2 - win



3 - draw

Julien Vandiest specializes in Q + B v Q and Q + N v Q, and 1 won 3rd prize in the 1997 Joseph Centenary tourney. Play starts **1 Kg3** (White must cover h4 even at the cost of immobilizing wN) **d2** (best) and now comes a triangulation: **2 Qxd5+ Qg5 3 Qf7+ Qg6 4 Qd7!** Quiet moves are always pleasant in queen endings. Black has nothing better than **4...d1Q** (we shall see ...Qc2/Qb1 later), and after **5 Qb5+** there are two lines: **5...Qg5 6 Qe8+ Qg6 7 Qh8+ Kg5 8 Qe5+ Qf5 9 Qg7+ Qg6 10 Qe7+** and mate in a move or two, or **5...Qd5** (to decoy wQ) **6 Qxd5+ Qg5 7 Qf7+ Qg6 8 Qd7!** (with wQ on f7 instead of e8, Qe5+ is not available, but this will do instead) **Qc2/Qb1** (now this is necessary) **9 Qd5+ Kg6 10 Qg8+** and bQ will soon go.

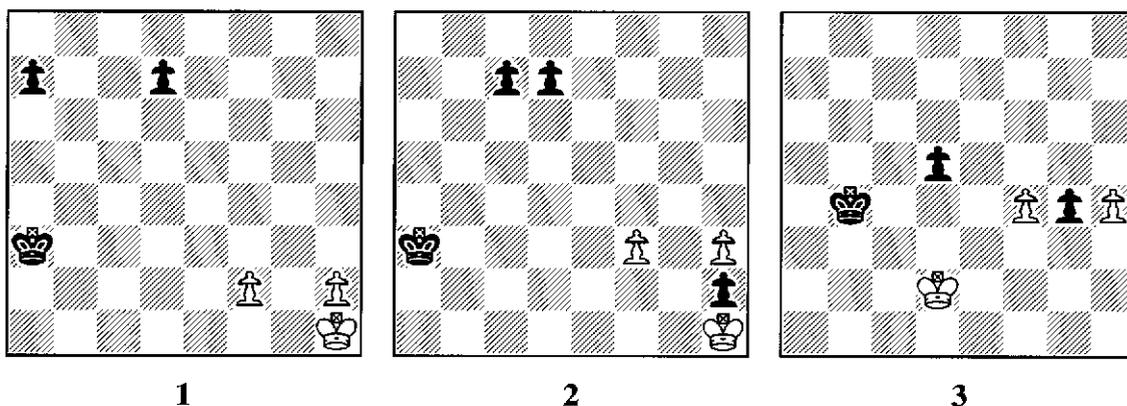
Roger Missiaen is best known for minor-piece domination studies, and 2 (4th HM, Rueb Memorial tourney, *Schakend Nederland* 1982-3) is one of his personal favourites. **1 Ngf7+** fails (**1...Ba6+** etc), but **1 Ne6** threatens both Nxb7 and Nf7+. Hence **1...Ba6+ 2 Kg2**, and now **2...Kh5** is best. Play continues **3 Bd1+ Kg6 4 Nc5**, and Black must counterattack: **4...Be5**. But there follows **5 Bc2+ Kh5**, and **6 Nf7** is decisive: one of Black's bishops must fall. Every man has moved at least once.

Ignace Vandecasteele's polished style is best exemplified by a multiple-stalemate study such as 3, from his 1994 book *64 studies op 64 velden*. An immediate **1 c7** fails against **1...Rd8+** etc, and White must attack bB: **1 Rc4**. This forces **1...Ba5**, and **2 Kxf1** follows. Black homes in on wK, **2...Kg3**, and after **3 c7 Rf2+ 4 Kg1 Bb6** wK is again menaced by a battery. But White has **5 Rg4+!** (if **5...Kxg4** then **6 c8Q+** and the battery has no time to open), and we have two lines: (a) **5...Kf3 6 c8Q Rc2+ 7 Kh1 Rxc8 8 Rg3+! Kf2** (**8...Kxg3** stalemate) **9 Rg2+ Kf1** (**9...Kxg2** stalemate) **10 Rg1+** and either **10...Bxg1** stalemate or a book draw with R v R + B, and (b) **5...Kh3 6 c8Q Rf8+ 7 Kh1 Rxc8 8 Rg3+ Kxg3** and yet another stalemate.

Evolution of a Study

by Paul Byway

Our story begins with a very nice idea from Grigoriev (diagram 1, 2nd Pr 64 1930). White wins with a systematic manoeuvre:- 1 f4 (and not 1 Kg2 Kb3) Kb4 2 h4! (2 Kg2 a5!) d5 3 f5 Kc5 4 h5 (4 Kg2 Kd6) d4 5 f6 Kd6 6 h6 d3 7 f7 Ke7 8 h7 d2 9 f8Q+ Kxf8 10 h8Q+ and wins. Unfortunately there is a second solution. White can also win with 5 Kg2 Kc4 6 f6 d3 7 f7 d2 8 f8Q d1Q 9 Qf1+ etc. This is embarrassing, for now we have a fine example of a systematic movement - but no study to illustrate it. What happens next?



A technical fix

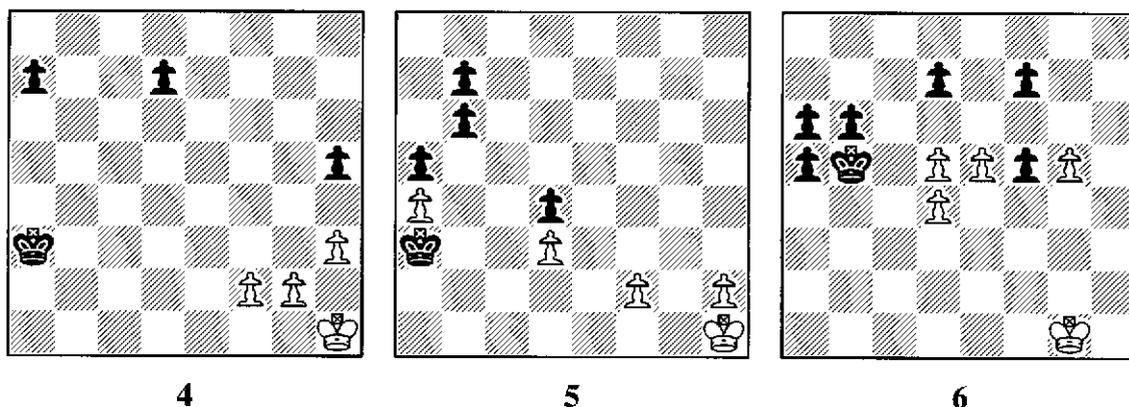
If the idea is a good one, then it's likely that an attempt will be made to find a sound setting. In the case of the Grigoriev a White pawn was added at f3 by Halberstadt in 1951 - but it proved to be unsound. 5 Kg2 is still possible, with a won queen ending after 5...Kc4 6 h6 etc. Incidentally, it doesn't help to put the pawn at g2 instead - White can still win with 5 Kg1. Eventually a sound setting was given by Chéron in 1955 (diagram 2, *Journal de Genève* 16 August 1955), with the same solution as diagram 1. He showed that the following lines would not win for White. (a) 1 Kxh2 d5 2 f4 d4 3 f5 d3 4 f6 d2 5 f7 d1Q 6 f8Q+ Qd6+ 7 Qxd6+ cxd6 (b) 1 h4 d5 2 h5 d4 3 h6 d3 4 h7 d2 5 h8Q d1Q+ 6 Kxh2 Qxf3 (c) 1 f4 Kb4 2 f5 (or (d)) Kc5 3 h4 (or 3 Kxh2 Kd6 4 Kg3 Ke7 5 Kf4 c5 6 h4! c4 7 h5! c3 8 Ke3 d5 9 Kd3 d4 10 Kc2 Kf6 11 h6 Kf7) Kd6 4 h5 Ke5 5 h6 Kf6 6 Kxh2 c5 7 Kg3 c4 8 Kf4 c3 9 Ke3 d5 10 Kd3 d4 11 Kc2 Kf7 12 Kd3 Kf6 (d) 2 h4 d5 3 h5 (or (e)) d4 4 h6 d3 5 h7 d2 6 h8Q d1Q+ 7 Kxh2 Qd2+ 8 Kg3 Qe3+ 9 Kg4 Qe2+ 10 Kg5 Qg2+ 11 Kf5 Qc2+ 12 Ke6 Qc4+ etc (e) 3 Kxh2 d4 4 f5 Kc5 5 h5 d3 6 f6 Kd6 7 h6 d2 8 h7 d1Q 9 h8Q Ke6. Finally, in 1982 Jon Speelman came across the Grigoriev while preparing *Batsford Chess Endings* and corrected it 'en passant'. He simply pushed the pawn up to h3 and added a Black pawn at h2, omitting the other changes made by Chéron.

Well, an unwanted solution has been removed - and we now have a sound setting - but the solution is not really satisfactory: the Black pawn at h2 is very ugly.

An artistic response

Diagram 3 (Khachaturov after Grigoriev, *Shakhmatny* 1947) shows a line of development that seems to be altogether more satisfactory. **1 f5 Kc5 2 h5 g3 3 Ke1! d4 4 f6 Kd6 5 h6 g2 6 Kf2 d3 7 f7 Ke7 8 h7 g1Q+ 9 Kxg1 d2 10 f8Q+ Kxf8 11 h8Q+** and wins. If White tries 1 h5? then he cannot win:- 1...g3 2 Ke1 d4 3 h6 d3 4 h7 g2 5 Kf2 d2 6 h8Q g1Q+ 7 Kxg1 d1Q+ and draws. Nor can he improve with 1 Ke1 d4 2 f5 Kc3 3 f6 d3 4 f7 Kc2 5 f8Q d2+ 6 Kf2 d1Q 7 Qc5+ Kb3 8 Qb5+ Kc3 etc. Chéron gives much more analysis than I have shown. A pleasant study this, with Black having his own pawn pair struggling to promote: the only criticism would be that the systematic movement has been truncated.

In 1993 I found that it was possible to correct diagram 1 with the idea of Khachaturov, itself derived from Grigoriev. The addition of a sacrificial introduction gave diagram 4 (*Tidskrift för Schack* 1994). The solution runs as follows:- **1 f4 Kb4 2 g4 hxg4 3 h4! d5 4 f5 Kc5 5 h5** etc. For me the chief merit of diagram 4 is the natural setting: clearly the 'technical fix' can now be discarded. Even so we have not reached the end - for the idea may be capable of further development.



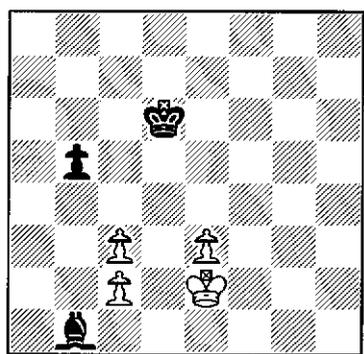
New ideas

Maizelis tried his hand in 1954 and produced diagram 5 (383 in the original edition of *Pawn Endings*, 207b in the 1959 Spanish edition). The solution runs as follows:- **1 f4 Kb4 2 h4 b5 3 f5! Kc5! 4 h5 b4 5 f6 Kd6 6 h6 b3 7 f7 Ke7 8 h7 b2 9 f8Q+ Kxf8 10 h8Q+ Ke7 11 Qh7+ Kd6 12 Qxb7** and wins. The idea must be that the new White queen might have difficulty stopping the Black pawn: it seems to me too slight to carry all that dead weight.

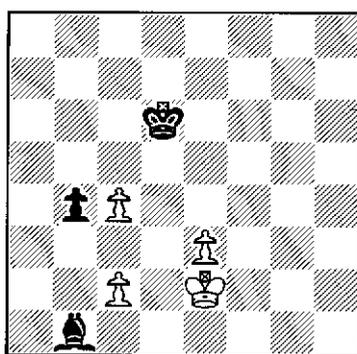
And there the story must have ended if *EG* had not come through my door two days ago: on page 328 we find diagram 6 from Harrie Grondijs. **1 e6 dxe6 2 dxe6 fxe6 3 d5 a4 4 dxe6 Kc6 5 g6 a3 6 e7 Kd7 7 g7 a2 8 e8Q+ Kxe8 9 g8Q+** and wins. The expected move fails after 3 g6? a4 4 g7 a3 5 g8Q a2 6 Qe8+ Ka5. After 3 d5 exd5 loses easily to 4 g6. We can see that, as in the case of the Maizelis study, hindering the Queen requires rather a lot of dead wood. The idea that a White pawn might change file, on the other hand, is an interesting new departure: somehow I don't think the story has ended yet.

From the world at large

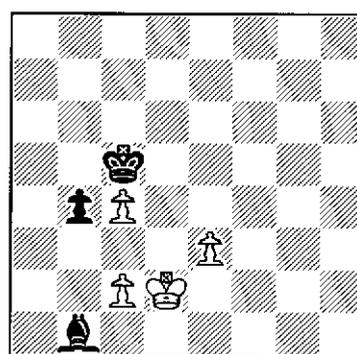
One of the strengths of *EG* is Jürgen Fleck's column "Spotlight". Its primary purpose is to point out flaws in recently published studies, and it does this with deplorable efficiency; Jürgen's own considerable analytic ability is backed up by contributions from Marco Campioli and Luis Miguel González, and their combined efforts have made several recent tourney awards look like World War I battlefields. But of greater interest are his comments to perfectly sound studies, where his analysis has highlighted matters which *EG*'s sometimes scanty sources have glossed over.



1 - draw



1a - after 1...b4



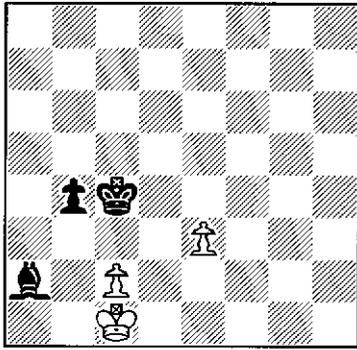
1b - reciprocal zugzwang!

P. Kiryakov's **1** only received a commendation in the tourney to celebrate the 850th anniversary of the city of Moscow and *EG* reported no judicial comment, but Jürgen rightly uses words like "delight" and "delicious" about it. White "only" needs to capture or exchange bP, but it isn't so easy. **1 c4** is the start, and if 1...bxc4 then 2-3 Kc3 draws. So **1...b4**, giving **1a**, and how is wK to defend wPc2?

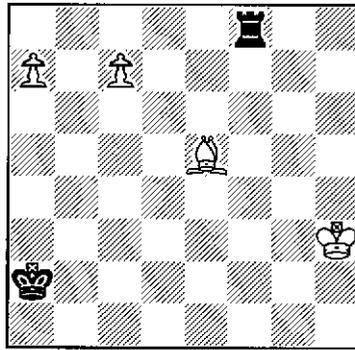
The easiest to refute is 2 Kd3. This pins wP, allowing 2...b3, and bK is near enough to force the win: 3 Kc3 Bxc2 4 e4 Kc5 5 e5 Bd1 6 Kb2 Kxc4 and bB will stop wPe5. But why not the natural 2 Kd2? The answer is that 2...Kc5 puts White in zugzwang (see **1b**). 3 Kd3 still walks into the pin, 3 Kc1 is met by 3...Ba2 and if 4 c3 then 4...bxc3 wins (but we shall come back to this line), and 3 e4 leads to 3...Kxc4 4 Kc1 Ba2 5 Kb2 Bb3! 6 cxb3 Kd4 and Black wins even with one pawn against two.

But White has **2 Kd1!** If 2...Ba2 then 3 c3, a line pointed out by Jürgen (bK still being on d6, 3...bxc3 4 Kc2 is a draw, and if 3...b3 then 4 Kc1 and White reaches the book draw against Ba2/Pb3), and after **2...Kc5 3 Kd2** we have **1b** with Black to move. Remarkably, this turns out to be *reciprocal zugzwang*, even though Black can play **3...Kxc4**. After **4 Kc1 Ba2** we have **1c** and the natural 5 Kb2 fails much as before (5...Bb3 6 cxb3 Kd3 etc), but **5 Kd2!** draws (5...Bb1 6 Kc1 repeating, or 5...K-- 6 c3, or 5...Bb3 6 cxb3 Kxb3 7 e4 and both pawns will promote). In the line 2 Kd2 Kc5 3 e4 Kxc4 4 Kc1 Ba2 we had **1c** with wP on e4, and after 5 Kd2 Black would have had 5...Kd4 winning (6 c3 bxc3+).

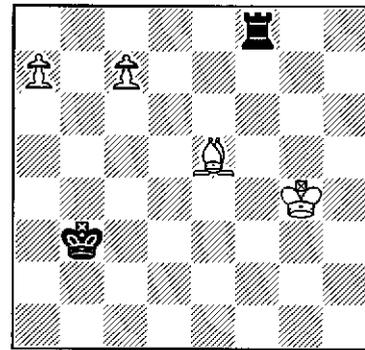
Jürgen also praises F. Novitzky's **2**, which received a special prize for a "windfall" from *Shakhmatny vestnik* in 1993. He describes the position **2a**, which arises after **1 Kg3! Kb3 2 Kg4**, as "one of the most delicate zugzwangs I've ever seen", and adds



1c - after 4...Ba2



2 - win

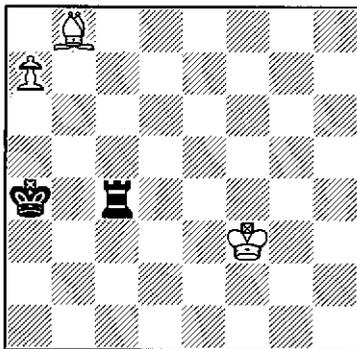


2a - reciprocal zugzwang!

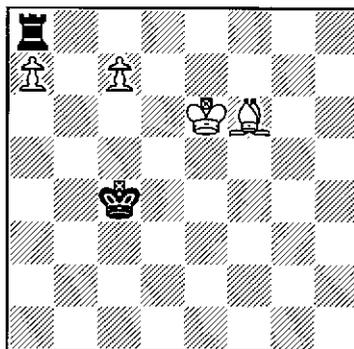
that the subtle logic underlying it deserves a detailed explanation. I agree.

“Why are there no good moves for Black? The black king would like to approach the pawns, but he cannot cross the 4th rank: 2...Kb4 3 Bd6+ is clearly bad, while after 2...Ka4(c4) 3 c8Q Rxc8 4 Bb8 Rc4+ 5 Kf3 the king obstructs his rook” (my bolding throughout, and see 2b). “The clever try 2...Kc2 (hoping for Kc2-d3-e4) fails to a surprising tactical blow: 3 Bf6 Ra8 4 Kf5 Kd3 5 Ke6 Kc4 ...” (see 2c) “... 6 Bd4! Kxd4 7 Kd6 Kc4 8 Kc6 and wins.

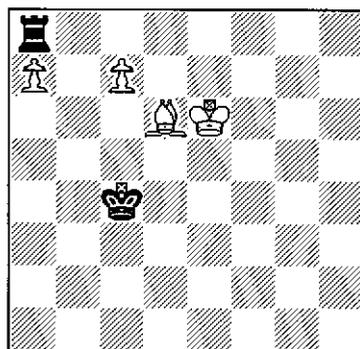
“So the rook must move, allowing the white king to get closer. 2...Rc8 3 Kf5 Kc4 4 Ke6 Ra8 5 Bd4! leads to a win we already know, while after 2...Ra8 3 Kf4! (but not 3 Kf5 Kb4!) Re8 (3...Rc8 4 Kf5 as above) 4 Ke4 the black king must finally enter the mined 4th rank: 4...Kb4 5 c8Q Rxc8 6 Bb8 Rc4+ 7 Ke3 Rc3+ 8 Kd2 Ra3 9 Bd6+ and wins.



2b - 2...Ka4, after 5 Kf3



2c - 2...Kc2, after 5...Kc4



2d - 2 Bd6, after 4...Ra8

“And after 1 Kg4? Kb3 why are there no good moves for White? 2 c8Q Rxc8 3 Bb8 Rc4+ and ...Ra4 doesn't work here, as the black king does not obstruct the 4th rank, while 2 Kg5 Kc4 3 c8Q Rxc8 4 Bb8 allows ...Rc5+ and ...Ra5. Does the bishop have any useful moves? The straightforward 2 Bd6 Rc8 3 Kf5 Kc4 4 Ke6 Ra8 leaves the bishop wrong-footed (White would win if his bishop could move to d4, e3, f2 or g1 now), ...” (see 2d) “... while 2 Bf4 cedes a useful square to the Black king for no compensation: 2...Kc3 and White cannot make progress any more: 3 Kf3 Kd4 draw; or 3 Kg5 Kc4 (as above) or 3 Bd6 Rc8 (as above).”

Thank you, Jürgen. Analysis like this makes reading studies a pleasure.

News and notices

Meetings. The next *EG* readers' meeting will be at 17 New Way Road, London NW9 6PL, on **Friday October 2** at 6.00 pm. Non-subscribers are welcome, but please bring £5 towards the buffet (except on a first visit). Bring the latest *EG*!

Tourneys. The latest issue of *Šachová skladba* announces a tourney to celebrate the 90th birthday of František Macek, whose collection of over 50,000 studies (on beautifully neat diagrams - I've seen some of them) may still rank as the world's largest. Send entries (any theme, any number) to Jiří Jelínek, Španielova 1313, 163 00 Praha 6, Czech Republic, by 29 March 1999. Judge: Jaroslav Poláček (Praha).

Vladislav Buňka confirms that the Kutná Hora tourney on the theme "my notion of the problem at the turn of the millennium" (see June, page 80) will indeed accept studies. I have contributed a wholly frivolous item based on a computer which is suffering from the millennium bug and interprets i9 as a1...

Limitations on men in tourney entries. My coat-trailing at the bottom of page 79 in the last issue, where I suggested that the number of men in tourney entries should be restricted because it is so difficult for a judge to place a light study above a heavy one, provoked strong disagreement from Harold van der Heijden. Harold considers that there should be no restriction, since a good judge will weigh content against material, and he puts forward a specific example: suppose a composer were at last to achieve the "Babson" task in a study (each of the four different promotions of a Black pawn answered by exactly the same promotion of a White), would he not deserve a first prize?

My personal answer would be that I imagine he would certainly *receive* a first prize (I remember noticing how the problemists' "Brian Harley Award" for two-movers seemed automatically to go to settings of the "nine Black interferences" task in the 1960s), but whether he would necessarily *deserve* one is perhaps another matter. Do other readers have a view on this point?

Books. The book *Flemish miniatures* described on page 83 (184pp, 123 studies, text in English) has a singularly attractive cover featuring a 15th-century woodcut of a chess game in progress, and would look very well in a bookshop display. I hope the author will be able to arrange distribution through a mainstream chess outlet, because the book deserves a wider sale than it can expect to command through specialist endgame study channels. For the moment, I think it is available in the UK only through myself, at £12.50 including UK postage (£13.75 to Ireland and mainland Europe, £15 to the rest of the world).

Anybody wishing to give notice here of any event, product, or service should contact the Editor. There is no charge and no account is taken of whether the activity is being pursued for commercial profit, but notices are printed only if they seem likely to be of particular interest to study enthusiasts. Readers are asked to note that the Editor relies wholly on the representations of the notice giver (except where he makes a personal endorsement) and that no personal liability is accepted either by him or by any other person involved in the production and distribution of this magazine.