# **British Endgame Study News**

Volume 8 Number 4 December 2003

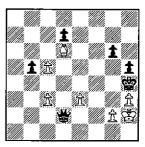
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This issue. The middle pages address a slightly off-beat topic, and there is a special number devoted to the studies of excellent French composer Frédéric Lazard. Our annual index is also included.

The studies of Artur Mandler. Readers whose subcriptions were paid up as at October 1 should have



by Paul Michelet (correct diagram!) White to play and win

received a complimentary copy of *Depth and Beauty*, my English edition of Artur Mandler's book *Studie*. Any who did not should contact me at once. The book is now available from me at £10 including UK postage (£11 to mainland Europe, £12 elsewhere). It is also available from ARVES (Ton van Oosterhuit, Max Havelaarlaan 341, 1183 LW Amstelveen, NL - Nederland), and purchasers in the euro zone may find it more convenient to go to ARVES than to myself.

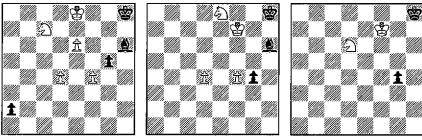
I have not yet received any analytic challenge, but anyone citing a study should please correct some source misprints. Pages 24/111, Národní osvobození; 45, Prager Presse; 99, Lidová demokracie; 110, Lidová kultura; 128 x 2, Šachové umění.

Accounts for 2003. My costs have again been unchanged, and UK readers have been charged the usual £6 for the year (£7 to mainland Europe, £9 elsewhere). If your subscription has now run out, there will be a reminder letter with this issue; otherwise, please assume that you remain in credit until I tell you otherwise.

**Spotlight.** Readers who wondered why last time's front-page study was so easy to solve will have realised when they looked inside that I had miscopied the diagram. Very sorry. The study deserved its front-page exposure, and I repeat it above.

Regarding special number 36, Timothy Whitworth possesses a copy of the 1993 booklet in which Andrzej Lewandowski presents 50 of his studies, and he points out that the line 3...Kxg4 in 9 is in fact given as the main line by the composer himself. He also comments on some of the sources. 2, the version gained 3rd HM in *Gazeta Czestochowska* 1977; 3, the prize relates to the Polish Ring Ty 1987 (a "ring tourney" covers all magazines and columns which do not run their own tourneys, and I presume that the actual source "Razem" remains correct); 8, 1HM Gazeta Czestochowska 1979 (sorry, this was my misreading of the database code); 9, 1987, not 1986.

## **Recently published British originals**



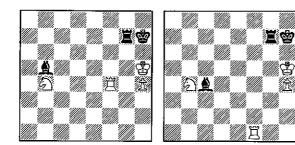
1 - draw 1a - after 4...g4 1b - after 7 Nxd6

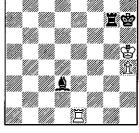
Timothy Whitworth sent 1 to the recent Paoli Jubilee Tourney, and obtained 1st Commendation. 1 e7 (1 Kf7 Bf8 2 Kxf8 a1Q 3 e7 Qxd4 4 Kf7 Qd7 5 fxg5 Qxc7 6 g6 Qc4+ is a Black win) a1Q 2 Kf7 (2 Kd7/Kd8 Qxd4+ 3 Kc8 Qe4 4 e8Q+ Qxe8+ 5 Nxe8 g4 6 Nd6 g3 7 Nf7+ Kg7 8 Ne5 g2 9 Nf3 Bxf4 etc, or 2 Ne6 gxf4 3 Kf7 Qa4 4 Nxf4 Qd7 5 Ne6 Bg5 6 Nxg5 Qf5+) Qa4 (2...Qa2+ 3 d5 Qa4 wastes a tempo and loses, 4 e8Q+ Qxe8+ 5 Nxe8 gxf4 6 d6 etc) 3 e8Q+ Qxe8+ 4 Nxe8 (4 Kxe8 gxf4 etc) g4 (4...gxf4 5 Nd6/Nf6) gives 1a and one pair of pawns have cancelled each other out, though not without alarms and excursions on both sides. Now, how do we cope with the fleeing g-pawn? 5 d5 (the only move, 5 f5/Nd6 g3 and wins) Bxf4 (now 5...g3 can be met by 6 d6, and both sides will promote) 6 d6 (anyway) Bxd6 (6...Bc2/Bd3 don't help, 7 d7 Ba5/Bb6 8 Nd6 g3 9 Nc4 Bc7/Bd8 10 Ne3) 7 Nxd6 (see 1b) and at last we are on familiar ground: 7...g3 8 Kf8 (only move) g2 9 Nf7+ Kh7 10 Ng5+.

We saw last time that Paul Michelet's front-page study yielded to 1 Be7+ g5 2 Bd8! Qxe3 3 Bc7 Qf2 4 Bd6! with a known finish (4...Qf4+ 5 g3+ Qxg3+ 6 Bxg3 mate). Paul tells me that he is in the habit of showing his compositions at the Bangkok Chess Club, and I can well believe that he finds an appreciative audience.

Paul takes a particular delight in diamond tours of this kind. There is a famous mate-in-six problem in which a White bishop outwits a Black rook by just this manoeuvre, and Paul has been trying to realise the same thing in a study. But in one setting, it turned out that Black could outwit White by an unexpected sacrifice of a knight, and we liked the result so much that we decided to turn the board round and present the study as a draw.

This gave 2, which does indeed say "draw" even though White is material ahead. His king is trapped in the open and menaced along two diagonals, and he will be fully stretched keeping Black at bay. Black has in fact two immediate threats of mate in two, 1...Be8+ and 1...Be2+, so the opening move 1 Re4 is automatic, and 1...Ba4 renews the pressure (Black too must act with urgency, else White will disentangle himself with Nd5 and Nf6+). Now there is a pseudo-brilliant decoy sacrifice by 2 Nc2, when 2...Bxc2 allows 3 Rg4 drawing (3...Bd1 is stalemate, and 3...Bg6+ allows either 4 Kg5 etc or 4 Rxg6 Rxg6 with another stalemate) but 2...Bc6! 3 Re3 Bd5 leaves White helpless. Instead, 2 Re1 Bb3 (2...Bd7 3 Re4 Ba4 4 Re1 merely





2 - draw

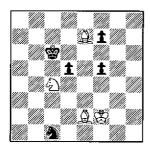
2a - after 3...Bc4

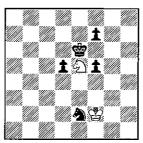
2b - after 5 Re1

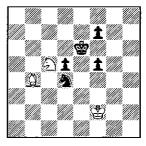
repeats the position) **3 Rf1 Bc4** (3...Be6 4 Rf4 Bd7 5 Re4 again repeats) and we have **2a**. Now the apparently necessary 4 Rf2 allows 4...Bb5 completing the diamond and White will succumb in a few moves (5 Nc6 Bxc6 6 Rf8 Bb5), but White has **4 Nd3!** 

This time the decoy sacrifice is successful. Black might as well take straight away (a preliminary 4...Bb5 loses a tempo, and after 5 Re1 Bxd3 6 Re6 White threatens a relieving check on h6), and 4...Bxd3 5 Re1 gives 2b. But Black is still not done. 5...Bc4 renews the mate threat, and only a second sacrifice 6 Re6! holds him at bay (6...Bxe6 stalemate); 5...Bf5 also renews the mate threat and the equivalent sacrifice 6 Re4 fails (6...Bxe4 is indeed stalemate, but 6...Bg6+ and 7...Bxe4+ wins), but White has an alternative in 6 Rg1! (6...Rxg1 stalemate, 6...Bg6+ 7 Rxg6 Rxg6 stalemate).

This appeared as by Paul and myself and I don't see how else it could have been attributed, but in all essence it was a chance discovery and all I did was to put some positions on the computer and tell Paul what I had found (he is currently travelling in Thailand and cannot conveniently perform such testing himself).







3 - win (Black to move)

**3a** - 3...Ke6 (wB to be added)

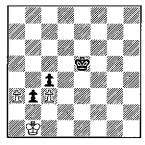
3b - after 5 Nc5+

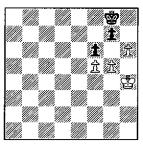
Room for a Mike Bent. 3 appeared in *Correspondence Chess* last year. Black must regain a piece, but 1...dxc4 fails to 2 Bxc4 and a preliminary 1...Nxe2 is met by 2 Ne5+ rescuing the White knight. So Black tries 1...Kd7 intending 2 B-- Nxe2 3 Ne5+ Ke6 (see 3a), and where should the White bishop go?

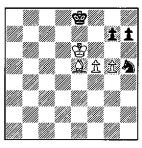
The natural square is c5 to stop ...Nd4, but correct in fact is 2 Bb4 holding c3. Now 2...Nxe2 3 Ne5+ Ke6 can be met by 4 Nd3 forcing 4...Nd4, and 5 Nc5+ gives Black a problem (see 3b). A move to e5 or f6 allows the crippling pin 6 Bc3, and if 5...Kd6 then 6 Nb3+ Ke5 7 Bc3 and we have the pin anyway.

## Nature failing to imitate art?

We all know about players who have claimed to have reached and solved celebrated study positions before the publication of the study (see for example our issue for March 2002). Here we shall look at another aspect of the matter: the possible occurrence in play of positions which have already appeared in studies, combined with the failure of the player to find the study solution over the board.







1 - Black to move

2 - win

3 - White to play move 60

I was prompted by two things. The first was the appearance of 1 in Leonard Barden's *Guardian* column during September. We were told that two masters had analysed this to a draw by 1...Kd5 2 Kb2 Kc5 3 Kb1 Kb5 4 Ka1! Ka4 5 Kb2, and what did they miss?

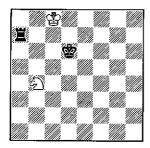
Well, it's easier if you know there is something to look for: 1...Ke4 2 Kc1 (2 Kb2 Kd3 and White must advance his a-pawn, after which the win is straightforward) Ke3! (but after 2...Kd3 3 Kb2 Black will make no progress) 3 Kb1 (3 Kd1 Kd3 etc) Kd2! (letting the White pawn run, but...) 4 a4 Kxc3 5 a5 b2 6 a6 Kb3 7-8 a8Q c2 mate.

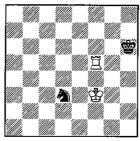
Very nice, but surely such a finish had already been discovered and exploited in a study? Indeed it had; Harold van der Heijden's "Endgame study database 2000" gave me Horwitz's 2, which is the first of the "Advanced chess-endings" in the 1889 Horwitz and Kling book (and please don't write to tell me that I should already have known this, because in practice I didn't). The database gives its original source as *The Chess Player* 1879. Play starts 1 g6 gxh6, and we can work out the rest.

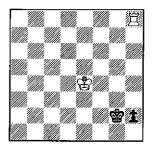
So I wrote to Leonard pointing this out and saying that I would be interested to know the source of 1, and I received a reply to the effect that he had originally seen it reported, by someone he believed trustworthy, as having come from a game played in France in 1984. But the million-plus BIG99 database that came with Chessbase 7.0 appears to contain no game from 1984 ending with K+2P v K+2P in this formation, and only one such game from any period. This was won by Jon Speelman in the 1996 AEGON man-against-computer challenge match, and came down to 3: 60 Bd6 h6 61 g6 Nf6 62 Be5 Nh5 63 Kd6 Kf8 64 Kd7 Nf6+ 65 Bxf6 gxf6 66 Kd6 and for some reason the spoilsport computer threw in the towel and played 66...h5 at once.

But Jon's lead-in to the pawn ending wouldn't have worked with the White king back at d4, and I have yet to find a convincing sequence that does. Perhaps a reader

will be able to do better (or to cite chapter and verse for the game), but for the moment I fear we have another example of somebody now unknown having misrepresented a composed position as an occurrence from play, and others having then passed it from hand to hand as genuine. I am not satisfied it is what I had hoped it was, an example of a study position actually reached in play with the solution then being missed.







4 - Black to play move 71

5 - White to play move 83

6 - Black to play move 67

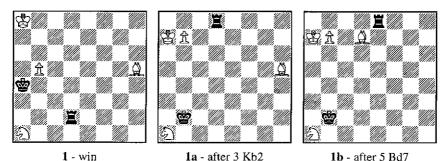
My second prompt came from looking to see whether some of the classic R v N positions had occurred in play. Yes, they had, and in fact there are no fewer than 356 games in BIG99 that come down to K+R v K+N at least transitorily. 83 were won, though 13 of them should not have been; the remaining 273 were drawn, though three should have been won (I am taking account only of the "best play" result at the start of the R v N ending, and have not looked for games where one side threw this result away and the other then handed it back). However, two of the wins appear to have resulted from resignation in palpably drawn positions, and inevitably I wonder if the results were misrecorded (it's an easy mistake to make).

Once again I failed in my quest, though there were compensations. Most of the endings proved to be quick wins or dead draws, and most of the "wrong" results were caused by strategic blunders (in particular, not keeping king and knight together) and not by failing to reproduce a difficult study finale. Even so, the way the mistakes were exploited was sometimes of interest. 4 was won by Jan Christensen in 1979. The lead-in was a common one: in a rook-and-pawn ending, Black promoted and made the enemy rook take the new queen, but White then ran his last pawn and reached what should have been a draw by knight promotion (with wKc8/Pb7 against bKc6/Rf7, play 69 b8N+). However, Black tried 69...Kd6 70 Na6 Ra7, and White played 71 Nb4 instead of the drawing 71 Nb8. Retribution was swift: 71...Ra3!! with a capture, fork, pin, or mate next move. This is of rare elegance for a move played over the board. It cannot occur in a normal study, because ...Ra4 (played by Steinitz in 1870, position reflected) also wins, but it is much neater and crisper than the alternative; we do lose something by frowning on "shortest win" compositions.

Two more examples, chosen for amusement rather than depth. I suppress the players' names. 5 (1987) is most simply won by Ke3, though Ra5/Rb5/Rd5 also win. It is *not* won by 83 Ke4, when 83...Kg6 left White without a good move. 6 (1990) was a comedy of errors. It's drawn, of course, but not by the "clever" 67...h1N. But White must have been on auto-pilot: 68 Rxh1 handing the draw back again!

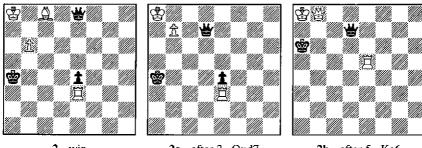
## From the world at large

EG 150 contained the most recent of the "studies of the year" that are chosen by the sub-committee for studies of the Permanent Commission for Chess Composition of the Fédération Internationale des Échecs (I hope I have got all this right). I quote from page 148 of EG, editing slightly. "A 'study of the year' was chosen for each of the current FIDE Album tourney years 1998, 1999 and 2000. This was done by working with three selections made by two of the three Album judges, for each year. [...] The three studies [...] will, we hope, be publicised widely throughout the world, thereby recruiting new adherents from the otb [over-the-board] community."



In the past, I have tended to ignore these "studies of the year" as being no more than the selections of a committee whose tastes were rather different from my own. This time the gap is smaller. 1 (B. Gusev and K. Sumbatyan) shared first and second prize in the 1998 Moscow Town tournament. White's material advantage is already enough to win and he needs only to collect his scattered forces, and Black must get something back before he can do so. This leads to 1 b6 Ka3 2 b7 Rd8+ 3 Ka7 Kb2, giving 1a. Now things get interesting: 4 Bg4! (to meet 4...Kxa1 by 5 Bc8) Re8 (the move that holds out longest) 5 Bd7 (see 1b). Where will bR go? Try 5...Rf8: no, 6 Nb3! and after 6...Kxb3 (now or never) 7 Bc8 Rf7 8 Be6+ we have a fork. All right, try 5...Rh8: no, this time we have 6 Nc2! (6...Kxc2 7 Bc8 Rh7 8 Bf5+). Once all this has been seen, Black's other moves are easily dealt with.

This was the "study of the year" for 1998. That chosen to represent 1999 had fourteen men on the board, but Yochanan Afek's 2 (1/2 Pr Kralin-55 JT), the choice for 2000, had more appeal. 1 b7 Qc6 2 Bd7 Qxd7 gives 2a, and surely White's promotion will give an easy win on material? But 3 b8Q allows 3...Qd5+ 4 Qb7 (if 4 Ka7 then 4...Qd4+ at once) Qd8+ 5 Ka7 Qd4+ 6 Qb6 Qd7+, and White has saved wR only by allowing Black to repeat or force stalemate (7 Ka6 Qb7+, 7 Kb8 Qc8+ 8 Ka7 Qa8+, 7 Ka8 Qd5+ 8 Kb8 Qa8+ 9 Kc7 Qc8+ 10 Kd6 Qc5+). So we must interpolate 3 Rxe4+. Now most replies do allow 4 b8Q, but not 3...Ka5 (4 b8Q Qd5+ 5 Qb7 Qd8+ 6 Ka7 Qb8+ with an echo). Same again? Yes, 4 Re5+, and 4...Ka6 will be met by 5 b8N+. But 4...Kb6 leads to 5 b8Q+ Ka6 (see 2b) and Black threatens 6...Qd5+. Has he escaped? No, White can play 6 Rb5! and 6...Qxb5 7 Qa7 is mate.



2 - win

2a - after 2...Qxd7

2b - after 5...Ka6

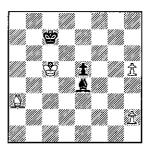
Two subtle studies, though with every respect to their composers I feel that the introductory moves to 1 merely add length and that those to 2 are positively harmful (start at 2a, omit the now unnecessary bPe4, and we have a very fine five-man study). But we journalists are asked to publicize them in order to recruit new adherents from the mainstream chess community, and from this point of view I have my doubts.

Ideally, a study put forward to tempt a mainstream player should offer:

- a starting position which is natural, or at least simple and superficially plausible;
- · an unexpected result;
- something striking in the play (and the more striking the play, the more we can expect our audience to tolerate an artificial starting position).

Here, the starting positions, though light, are characterless and untidy, not in the least like those that occur in real life. The result is in sight from the outset, and White's task is merely to overcome Black's immediate counterplay. And while the climaxes are indeed striking, there is some rather shapeless and uninteresting play to be waded through before we reach them. For the purpose stated, I would expect to find a hundred examples more suitable just by trawling through the pages of Averbakh.





3 - win

3a - main line, after 7 Kg7

3b - 1 Ba3, after 5...Kc7

Or what about Alexander Kazantsev's 3 (2 Pr Shakhmaty v SSSR 1950), quoted by Yochanan Afek in the September Problemist? The starting position is again somewhat characterless, but the play 1 Bh8!! and 2-7 Kg7! gives ample and immediate compensation. Yochanan spells out the details: 1 Bh8 Kb7 2 Kb2 Bxd3 3 Kc3 Bf5 4-6 Kf6 Ke8 7 Kg7 (see 3a) e5 8-9 h7 e3 10 Kh6 e2 11 Bc3 and wins, but 1 Ba3 Bxd3 2 Kb2 Be4 3 Kc3 e5! 4-5 Kc5 Kc7 (see 3b) and bK will get across to f7.

#### News and notices

EG for 2004. I am still willing to accept subscriptions to EG in sterling, but the rise in the euro means that I must now ask \*\*£16\*\* per year and not £15 as hitherto. There will (I hope) be a notice to this effect in EG 151. That said, those who have already sent a £15 subscription in good faith will be treated as having paid in full.

**Meetings.** The next *EG* readers' meeting will be at 17 New Way Road, London NW9 6PL, on **Friday January 9** at 6.00 pm; non-subscribers welcome, but please bring £5 towards the buffet (except on a first visit). Bring the latest *EG* with you!

**Databases and composition tourneys.** EG 150 continues the debate on whether studies obtained by mining definitive endgame databases (Thompson, Nalimov, etc) should compete in composition tourneys. As a small contribution, let me state what currently happens in *diagrammes* (I say "currently" because I am dropping out at the end of the year, and my successors may have quite different ideas).

diagrammes, like any other sensible magazine, is willing to print anything likely to interest and entertain those who have paid good money to receive it. Good studies extracted from databases are as warmly welcome as any others. However, its rules as regards their participation in composition tourneys are currently as follows.

- As a general principle, studies extracted from databases are judged separately from studies composed conventionally.
- They are not eligible for normal honours, but the judge can reward them with "special" honours (special prize, special HM, etc).
- Where a study has been produced partly by database extraction and partly by
  conventional composition, the judge has a discretion either (a) to judge the entire
  study with the "database" studies or (b) to ignore the database element and judge
  the conventional contribution with the conventional studies.
- A study which could have been extracted from a database at the time of its receipt by diagrammes is treated as if it actually had been.

It is clear from EG 150 that tourney practices worldwide range from the unconditional acceptance of database-extracted studies to their complete exclusion, but it is my impression that these rules are regarded as a reasonable resolution of a difficult issue.

**Tourneys.** Readers who share my admiration for the work of David Gurgenidze may care to note that he will be holding a 50th birthday tourney next year. Entries to Iuri Akobia, Iosebidze Str. 72-B, ap. 132, 380060 Tbilisi, Goergia, laluka@geo.net.ge, by **31 May 2004**. There is no set theme, nor is there a limit on the number of entries a composer may submit.

Anybody wishing to give notice in BESN 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.