

# British Endgame Study News

Special number 23

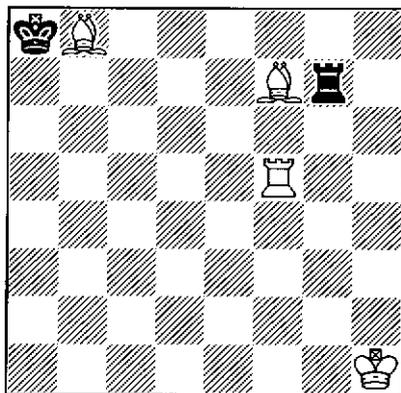
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*Edited and published by John Beasley, 7 St James Road, Harpenden, Herts AL5 4NX*

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*E-mail: johnbeasley@mail.com*

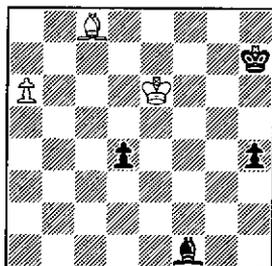
## Some British studies from 1975-79



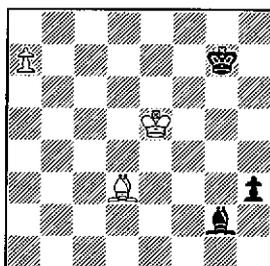
Which is wBb8's only safe square?

## Some British studies from 1975-79

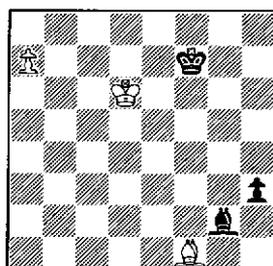
A very pleasant feature of 1975-79 was the appearance of some original studies by John Nunn and Jonathan Speelman. It is always good to see masters leaving the cares of tournament play for a little relaxation, particularly as they seem to do it rather well.



1 - win

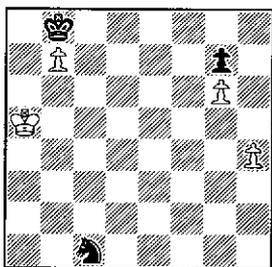


1a - after 4...h3

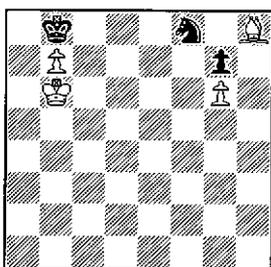


1b - after 6 Kd6

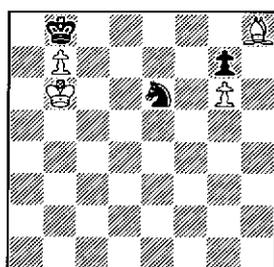
John Nunn's **1** appeared in *EG* in 1979. Play starts **1 a7 Bg2 2 Ke5** intending Bf5+ and Be4, and if 2...h3 then 3 Bxh3 Bh1 4 Kxd4 will win. Hence 2...d3, and after **3 Bf5+ Kg7 4 Bxd3 h3** (see **1a**) Black can meet 5 Be4 with 5...Bxe4 6 Kxe4 h2 and a skewer. This ends the introduction, and already every man on the board has moved. Play continues **5 Bf1 Kf7** (best for bK, if 5...Kh7 then 6 Kf6 as below) **6 Kd6** giving **1b**, and where is bK to go? If 6...Kg7 there follows 7 Ke7 Kh7 8 Kf6 Kh6, and now White can play 9 Bxg2 since 9...hxg2 10 a8Q will lead to mate. Alternatively, Black can try 6...Kf6, but now we have 7 Bxg2 hxg2 8 a8Q g1Q 9 Qf8+ and 10 Qg8+.



2 - win

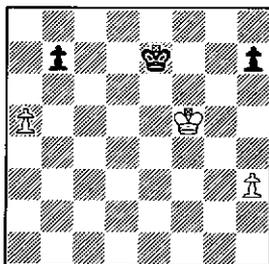


2a - after 5 h8B

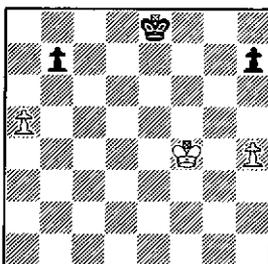


2b - after 8 Kb6

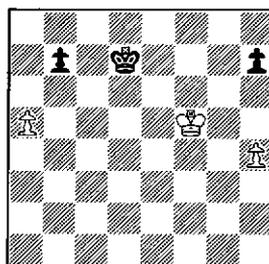
Jonathan Speelman published **2** in *EG* in 1978. The starting position is natural enough and **1 h5** forces a pawn through, but after **1...Nb3+ 2 Kb6 Nd4 3 h6 Ne6 4 h7 Nf8** White must play **5 h8B** (see **2a**). Who said that such positions could not occur in play? But the win is still there: **5...Ne6** (if 5...Nd7+ then simplest is probably 6 Kb5 and 7 Bxg7) **6 Kc6** (now White must be exact, since 6 Ka6 allows 6...Nc7+ drawing) **Nd4+** (6...Nd8+ 7 Kd5 etc, 6...Ka7 7 Kd7 N-- 8 Kc8) **7 Kc5** (wK must keep in touch with b6) **Ne6+** (7...Nf5 8 Kb6 similarly) **8 Kb6** (see **2b**) and bN must abandon g7.



3 - win

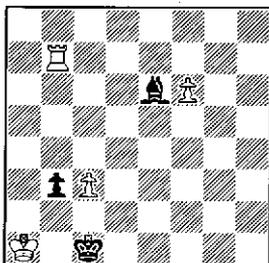


3a - after 6...Ke8

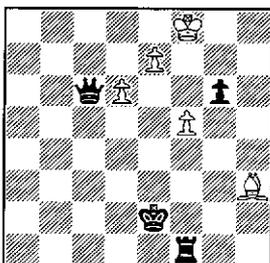


3b - 7 Ke4 Kd7 8 Kf5

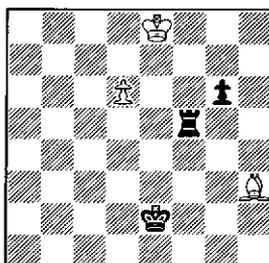
Jonathan's 3 (*EG* 1979) is a textbook pawn study. White naturally goes for h7, **1 Kg5 Kf7 2 Kh6 Kg8 3 h4 Kh8**, and now comes the first opposition fight: **4 Kh5!** (4 Kg5 Kg7 and draws) **Kg8** (4...Kg7 makes it easier for White) **5 Kg4 Kf8 6 Kf4 Ke8** (see 3a). 7 Ke4, continuing the pattern? No, 7...Kd7 8 Kf5 (see 3b) and Black will play 8...Kc6 and win the race, or 8 Kd5 h5! and White has lost the opposition. White must turn Black's position straight away: **7 Kg5! Kf7 8 Kf5 Ke7 9 Ke5 Kd7 10 Kf6**. Now we have 3b but with wK on f6, and it is White who wins the race: **10...Kc6 11-12 Kxh7 Kxa4 13 Kg7 b5 14-17 h8Q b1Q 18 Qa8+ and 19 Qb8+**.



4 - win



5 - win



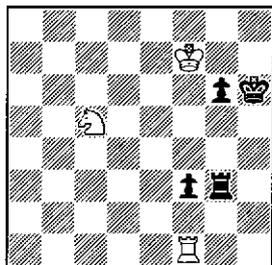
5a - after 2...Rxf5

Some more modest names also appeared above study diagrams for the first time, and among them was that of C. J. McSheehy. His 4 appeared in *The Problemist* in 1976. 1 f7 Bxf7 2 Rxf7 b2+ is hopeless; what to do? **1 e4!** Black must take, **1...Bxc4**, but now **2 f7 Bxf7** can be followed by **3 Rc7+**, driving bK away before bB is captured. "Clearing a line by forcing Black to capture" dates back at least to Sam Loyd: a rare example of a problem manoeuvre showing to good advantage in a study.

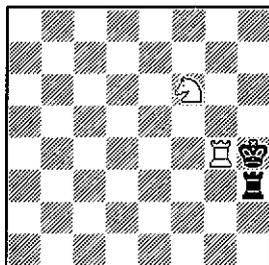
John Finch's 5 was one of a trio which appeared in the *BCM* in 1978. **1 e8Q+ Qxe8 2 Kxe8 Rxf5** gives 5a, and the natural 3 Bxf5 leads to 3...gx f5 4-5 d8Q f3 with an exceptional Q v Pf3 draw. However, Black only draws because bK is on e2, and interpolating **3 Bg4+**! gives White his win: any move puts bK on to a losing square.

So you need not be a master to produce a piquant study, and I hope that reprinting these two "first compositions" will cause other readers to try their hand. All you need is a pointed idea, set neatly and simply with the minimum of fuss. Send the result to any editor, and he will welcome it.

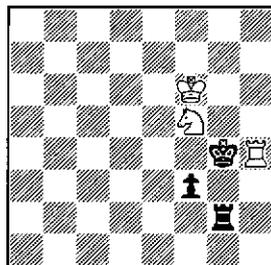
Timothy Whitworth was another who came into prominence during this period. He produced several good things, either alone or in collaboration with W. H. M. Lemmey (a student at King's Taunton, where Timothy taught for many years). One of his favourites has already been reproduced in *BESN* (see June 1997 p 44); here are some more.



6 - win

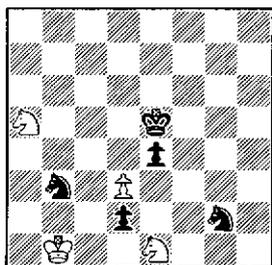


6a - mate threatened by 2 Rg1

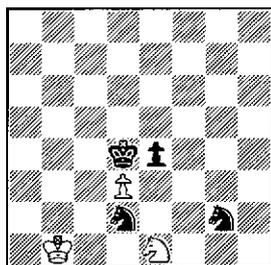


6b - 5...Kh5, 8 Rh4 mate

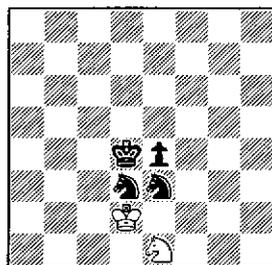
6 (*EG* 1977) was a Lemmey-Whitworth joint composition. 1 Ne4 attacks bR and threatens mate in two, hence 1...Rh3, and 2 Rg1 threatens 3 Rxc6+ Kh5 4 Nf6+ Kh4 5 Rg4 mate (see 6a). Black can give bK some air by 2...Rh2, but 3 Rxc6+ Kh5 4 Ng3+ Kh4 5 Nf5+ Kh3 6 Rg3 gives the same mate down a rank, or 5...Kh5 6 Kf6 (threat 7 Rg5 mate) Rg2 7 Rh6+ Kg4 8 Rg4 mate (see 6b). Black can avoid immediate mate only by 2...g5 3 Rxc5 Rh1, when 4 Rg6+ Kh5 5 Ng3+ will win bR. "Of course, the mates themselves are familiar enough; it is their combination that makes the study."



7 - draw

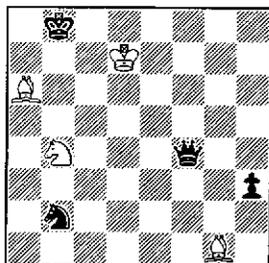


7a - after 2...Nxd2+

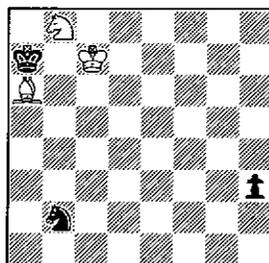


7b - after 6...Nxd3

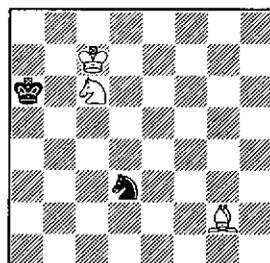
Timothy's 7 (*EG* 48, July 1977, version *BCM*, June 1989) starts 1 Nc4+ Kd4 2 Nxd2 Nxd2+ (see 7a), and if 3 Kb2 Nxe1 4 dxe4 then 4...Nc4+ and 5...Ne5 with a book win. Two knights win against an e-pawn if a knight (not the king) can blockade it on its fifth rank or below, but the pawn usually draws if it can reach the sixth rank. Hence 3 Kc1 Nb3+ 4 Kd1 (4 Kb1/Kb2 Nxe1 5 dxe4 Nc5 and 6...Ne6, blockading wP on c5) Ne3+ (now 4...Nxe1 only draws, because after 5 dxe4 Black must waste a move rescuing bNe1 and wP will have time to reach e6) 5 Ke2 Nc1+ 6 Kd2 Nxd3. Surely Black has now won (see 7b)? Not at all: 7 Nf3+ exf3 stalemate!



8 - win

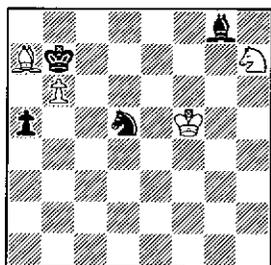


8a - after 5 Kc7

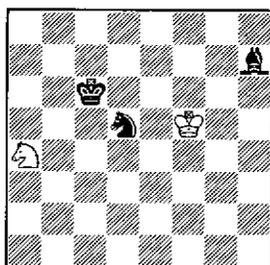


8b - after 9 Bg2

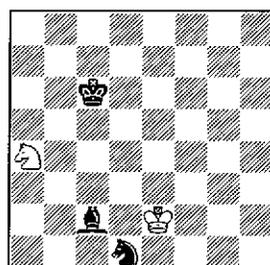
8 (*BCM* October 1979) was another Lemmey-Whitworth joint composition. It comes down to a win with B + N v N, an ending which is now completely analysed but had certainly not been completely analysed in 1979. **1 Bh2 Qxh2** gets bQ out of the way, and **2 Nc6+ Ka8 3 Kc8** threatens mate next move. Black can prevent this mate only by sacrificing bQ, **3...Qxb8+**, and **4 Nxb8 Ka7 5 Kc7** gives **8a**. This sets up another mate threat, **6 Bb7** and **7 Nc6**, and only **5...h2 6 Bb7 h1Q** prevents it. White's **7 Bxh1** allows bN to come into play, but after **7...Nc4 8 Bb7 Na5/Ne5 9 Bd5** it will soon fall (the stalemates are easily avoided). **7...Nd3**, therefore, but after **8 Nc6+ Ka6 9 Bg2!** (see **8b**) a bN move will allow **10 Bf1+** mating, while **9...Kb5 10 Bf1 Nc4 11 Ne5+** loses bN to a fork. Black has sacrificed two queens to no avail.



9 - draw

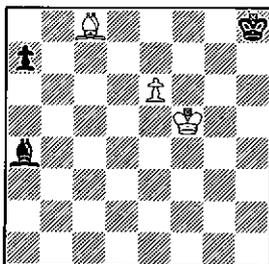


9a - after 6...Bh7+

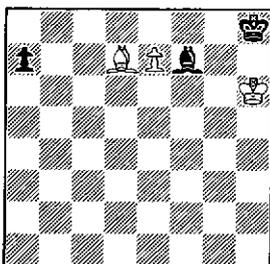


9b - after 9...Bc2

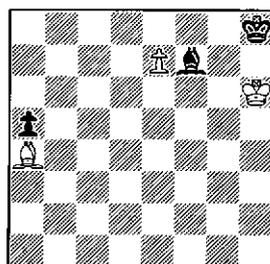
9 (Lemmey and Whitworth 1978) shows the knight escaping. There is much analysis here and I shall abbreviate (for full details see *EG* 57 pp 223-4), but the main line goes **1 Nf8** (an unlikely way of dealing with the fleeing a-pawn, but *EG* examines the alternatives and Hiarcs confirms that Black will win) **a4 2 Bb8** (wB can contribute nothing directly, but by threatening to come into play it forces Black to allow a tempo-gaining check) **Kxb8 3 Nd7+ Kc8 4 b7+ Kxb7 5 Nc5+ Kc6 6 Nxa4 Bh7+** and we have **9a**. The natural move now is perhaps **7 Ke5**, but **7...Bc2 8 Nb2 Kc5 9 K-- Kd4** etc will win wN, and **7 Ke6** is no better (**7...Bc2 8 Nb2 Kc5 9 Ke5 Nb4**). Only **7 Kg4!** keeps White in the game (**7...Bc2 8 Nb2 Kc5 9 Kf3** and **10 Ke2**). But does not **7 Kg4** allow **7...Ne3+** with **...Nd1** and **...Bc2** to follow? Yes, but after **8 Kf3 Nd1 9 Ke2 Bc2** (see **9b**) White can play **10 Nc3**; **10...Nxc3** will be met by **11 Kd2** regaining the piece. This was one of the "Judge's Choice" studies in the Roycroft Jubilee tourney.



10 - win

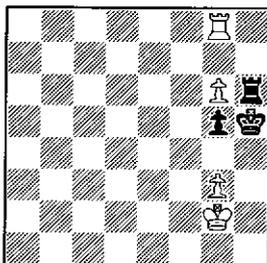


10a - after 5 Kh6

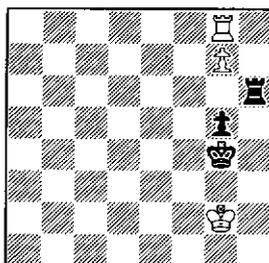


10b - reciprocal zugzwang

Hugh Blandford's 10 corrects another "Judge's Choice" from the Roycroft Jubilee. **1 Bd7 Bb3 2 e7 Bf7 3 Kf6 Bh5 4 Kg5 Bf7 5 Kh6** gives 10a, and **5...Kg8** will be met by **6 Be6** pinning. So bP must move, and White must be careful: **5...a5 5 Ba5**, but **5...a6 6 Bc6**. The point is that the position after **6...a5 7 Ba5** is reciprocal zugzwang (see 10b). BTM loses as we have seen (**7...Kg8 8 Bb3**); WTM, as after **5...a6 6 Ba4 a5**, only draws as **7 B-- a4 8 Bxa4 Kg8 9 Bb3 Kh8!** and **10 Bxf7** is stalemate.

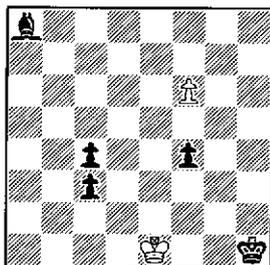


11 - win

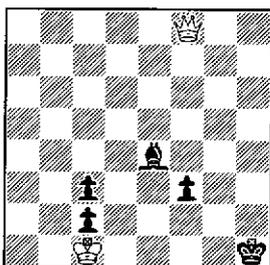


11a - after 2 g7

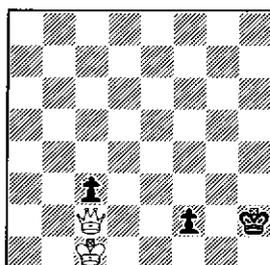
Andrew Miller's 11 appeared in *The Problemist* in 1975. **1 g7** is met by **1...Kg6**, hence **1 g4+**, and **1...Kxg4 2 g7** gives 11a. If **2...Rh7** then **3 Kf2 Rh2+ 4 Kg1 Rh7 5 Kg2**, and Black has no good move. If instead **2...Rg6** then wK goes the other way, **3 Kh2**, and after **3...Rh6+ 4 Kg1! Rg6/Rh7 5 Kg2** Black again has no good move. This delightful triangulation echo took 3rd Prize in the magazine's 1974-75 tourney.



11 - win

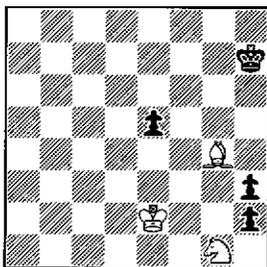


11a - after

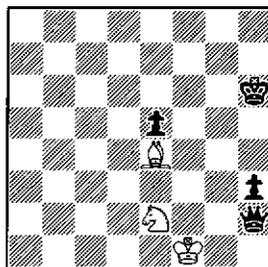


11b - after 8 Qxc2

Andrew's 11 (*The Problemist* 1976, 4th HM 1976-77) has a practical point. 1 f7 c2 2 Kd2 Be4 3 f8Q c3+ 4 Kc1 f3 gives 11a, and now the only move to win is 5 Qf4; checks by wQ allow Black to draw. Play continues 5...Kg1 (White threatened 6 Qg3 and 7 Qf2, and if 5...Kg2 then 6 Qxe4 pinning) 6 Qg4+ Kh2 (6...Kf2/Kf1 obstruct bP, and 6...Kh1 allows 7 Qxe4 pinning) 7 Qxe4 f2 8 Qxc2 (see 11b), and White has just done enough to win. The pin prevents 8...f1Q, and the pawn on c3 will deny Black his usual Q v Pf2 stalemate defence: 8...Kg1 9 Qg6+ Kh1 10 Qh5+ Kg2 11 Qg4+ Kh1 12 Qf3+ Kg1 13 Qg3+.

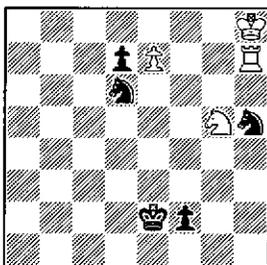


12 - draw

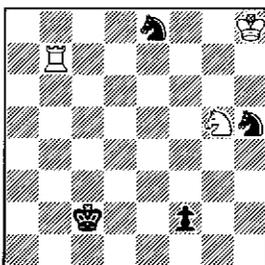


12a - after 3...Kh6 4 Ne2

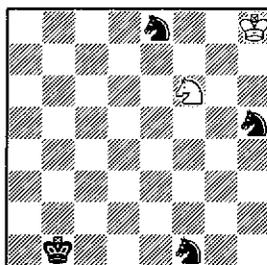
Several of the preceding studies have had an element of practical usefulness. Mike Bent takes little account of this; his compositions are intended solely to entertain. His delightful little 12 appeared in *Schakend Nederland* in 1976. Black's promotion cannot be prevented, but 1 Kf1 limits him to 1...h1Q and 2 Bf3 forces 2...Qh2. Now comes 3 Be4+ and 4 Ne2 (see 12a), and what can Black do? bQ cannot move at all, bK cannot cross the line c1-c3-d3-d4-f4-f3-g3, and wK can oscillate indefinitely between e1 and f1. In Mike's words, White's fortress holds a dungeon.



13 - draw

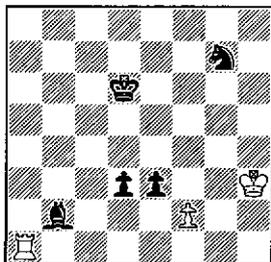


13a - after 5...Kc2

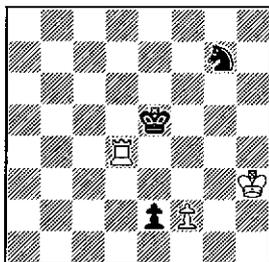


13b - after 8 Nf6

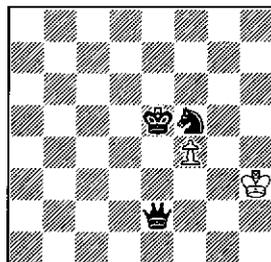
Play in 13 (*Československý šach* 1978) starts 1 e8Q+ Nxe8 2 Re7+ Kd1 3 Rxd7+ Kc1 (3...Kc2 4 Rd2+) 4 Ra7, and Black's promotion is temporarily prevented (4...f1Q 5 Ra1+). But Black has 4...Kb2 5 Rb7+ Kc2 (see 13a), and White resistance seems at an end. The answer is 6 Rb1! The capture 6...Kxb1 is forced, but 7 Ne4 now prevents ...f1Q because of the fork on d2, and after 7...f1N we have a fork on f6 instead: 8 Nf6! (see 13b) and either capture will give stalemate.



14 - draw

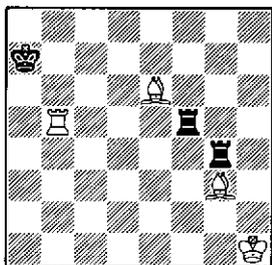


14a - after 3...Ke5

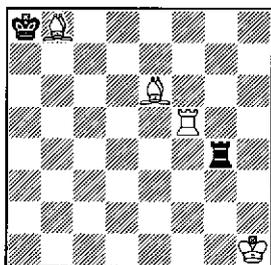


14b - after 7 f4+

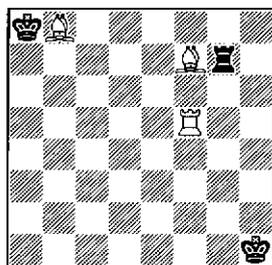
14 (*Schakend Nederland 1979*) yields another unexpected stalemate. Play starts **1 Rd1**, and the apparently natural **1...d2** offers no real winning chances (*The Best of Bent* gives **2 Kg2** as drawing, and the computer thinks that **2 fxe3** is also good enough). More aggressive is **1...e2**, because **2 Rxd3+** can be met by **2...Bd4** (controlling e3) **3 Rxd4+ Ke5** and promotion is assured (see 14a). But **4 Rd3** threatens **5 Re3+**, and if Black plays **4...Nf5** to stop this White has **5 Rd2!** Yes, Black can promote, **5...e1Q**, but **6 Re2+** forces **6...Qxe2**, and now **7 f4+** will leave White stalemated whatever Black does (see 14b).



15 - win



15a - after 2 Rxf5



15b - after 3...Rg7

15 (*Schakend Nederland 1977*) puts the boot on the other foot. Play starts **1 Bb8+**, and if **1...Ka6** then **2 Rxf5** wins easily. **1...Ka8** sets more problems, because it seems to tie wR to the defence of wBb8 and if **2 Bxf5** then the counterattack **2...Rb4** saves the day (**3 Rxb4** will be stalemate). But White *can* play **2 Rxf5** (see 15a), since **2...Kxb8** will be met by **3 Rf8+/Rb5+** and **4 Bxg4**. So Black must rescue his rook first, attacking wBe6 by **2...Rg6** to gain a tempo, and after **3 Bf7** he has **3...Rg7** (see 15b) with another stalemate in view after **wBb8 retreats** (**4 Bh2 Rxf7 5 Rxf7**). White has only one winning move: **4 Be7!** interrupting the line from f7 and killing the stalemate. Like most of Mike's studies, this must have been great fun to solve.

*Our next special number of this kind is scheduled for December 2001, and will cover studies from 1970-74. As usual, please will composers and their friends and admirers draw my attention to studies that they would like to see included, and also to any from 1975-95 which should have appeared in the series but have been overlooked. - JDB*