

British Endgame Study News

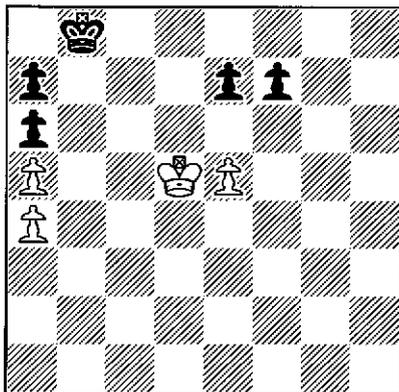
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Some studies by

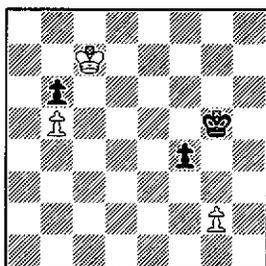
František Dedrle



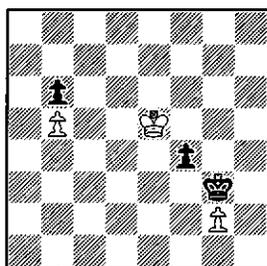
When to allow a protected passed pawn

Some studies by František Dedrle

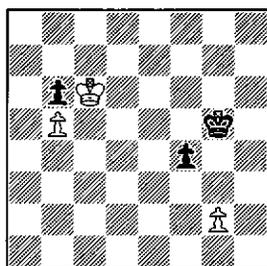
The Moravian composer and analyst František Dedrle (1878-1957) was an all-rounder whose interests embraced problems, studies, and endgame theory. Problemists know him from *Böhmische Schachminiaturen* (1922), from his introduction (in English) to A. C. White's book *Bohemian garnets* on the problems of Miroslav Havel (1923), and from his trilingual book *Echo* (1927). His writings on the endgame included an article on Drtina's theory of critical squares in pawn endings (1919) and a book *Studie* (1925) containing 150 studies with detailed analysis, neither of which I have seen, an exposition of K+Q v K+R+P (in *Národní osvobození*, 1937-38), and a book *Moderní koncovka* (1950) which was intended as the first part of a comprehensive five-volume encyclopedia. But the second volume did not get beyond the manuscript stage, and both it and his extensive collection of studies and endings are now lost. Even so, his name appears frequently in textbooks on the endgame, and in 1994 SNZZ in Brno published a collection of his studies (compiled by Vladimír Kos and Jan Kalendovský) and also a new edition of his exposition of K+Q v K+R+P.



1 - win



1a - after 3 Ke5

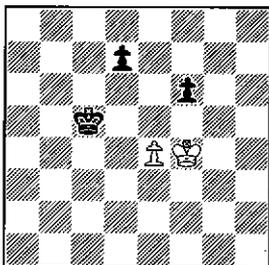


1b - reciprocal zugzwang!

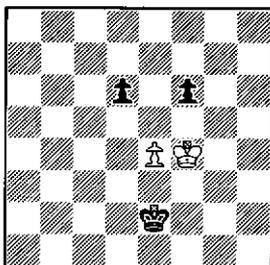
Dedrle's most famous pawn study is his 1st-2nd prizewinner from the 1936 2P v P tourney of *La Stratégie*, wKd5, Pg2/h2, bKf5, Ph7, intention 1 Kd6 Kf6 2 Kd7 Kf7 and only now 3 h3, but the computer has shown 2 h3 not just to win but to do so more quickly, and this seriously compromises the study. I am going to give preference to 1 (28.říjen 1926), which is in several textbooks. The natural 1 Kxb6 is met by 1-3...Kxg2 and 4-5...f2 drawing; what to do? **1 Kc6! Kg4** (Black wants to keep the opposition, and if 1...Kg6 then bK has strayed too far from wPg2 and now 2 Kxb6 *does* win) **2 Kd6 Kg3** (nothing else is better) **3 Ke5** (see 1a) **Kg4** (if 3...Kxg2 then 4 Kxf4 and 5-8 Kxb6) **4 Kf6** (a classic turning movement) **Kh4** **5 Kf5 Kg3** **6 Kg5** (now we have 1a with wK on g5) and Black must allow the exchange of pawns.

Strategically, the point is that 1 Kxb6 fails because the K-side is vulnerable, so White must come across and liquidate the K-side threats before making the capture. But he must be precise. Suppose he goes straight for his goal by 1 Kd6, intending 1...Kh4 2 Ke6 Kg4 3 Kf5 etc; now Black can play 1...Kh6, because there is no threat to b6, and if 2 Kc6 hoping to redeem matters then 2...Kg5! This is the same position as after 1 Kc6 (see 1b), and it is one of the chessboard's more remarkable reciprocal

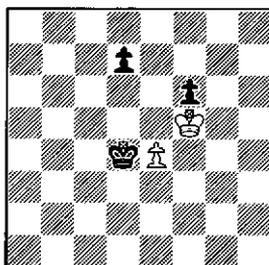
zugzwangs. Far from being in opposition, the kings are an elongated knight's move apart; but White to play cannot usefully claim the opposition, and Black can claim it only by ...Kg6 losing at once or by ...Kg4 allowing an eventual turning movement.



2 - BTM wins, WTM draws

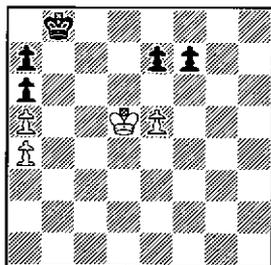


2a - White has been turned

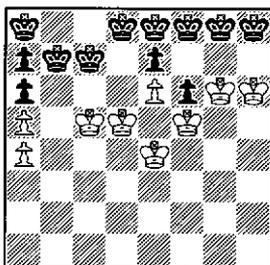


2b - how to defuse a tempo

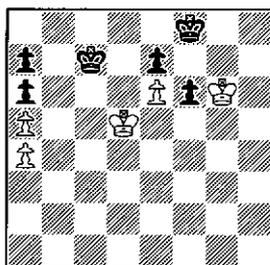
2 (*Kagans Neueste Schachnachrichten* 1922) is another textbook study. Black has a pawn tempo in hand (d7-d6), and if he has the move he wins: 1...Kc4 (1...Kd4? 2 Kf5 as below, see 2b) 2 Ke3 (nothing else is better) d6! 3 Ke2 Kd4 4 Kf3 Kd3 5 Kf4 Ke2 (see 2a) and so on. But White to move can force Black to waste his tempo too soon: 1 Kg4! Kc4 2 Kf4 Kd4 3 Kf5 (see 2b) and if 3...Kd3/Ke3 then 4 e5 draws. So Black must play 3...d6 prematurely, and after 4 Kf4 White has the opposition.



3 - draw



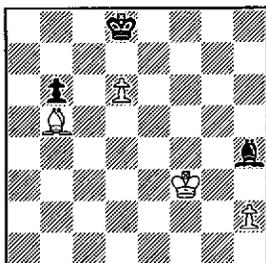
3a - see text



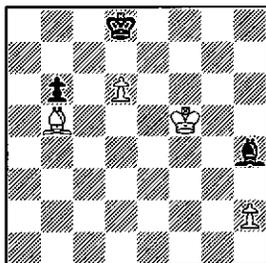
3b - the key positions

In contrast, 3 (*Československý šach* 1928) might almost have been composed to make the textbook look silly. We all know that a protected passed pawn normally wins in a pawn ending, so the one move White should *not* play is 1 e6 allowing Black to create such a pawn; yet in fact it is the only way to draw!

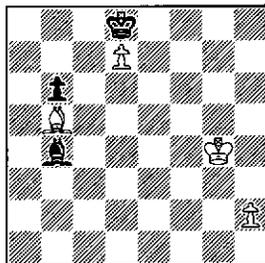
The reason is that 1 e6! f6 gives 3a, and now White can draw by patrolling the line c5-h6. But the patrol must be accurate, because we see from 3b that ...Kf8 must be met by Kg6 (if White tries Kh6 then bK will come back to c7 and c6), and ...Kc7 by Kd5 (if Kc5 then bK will reach f8 and g7). Hence 2 Kc4! (White must put wK an even number of ranks below bK and one file to the right, and if 2 Kc6 then 2...Kc8 and he has no good continuation) Kb7 3 Kc5 Kc7 4 Kd5 Kc8 5 Kd4 Kd8 6 Ke4 Ke8 7 Kf5 Kf8 8 Kg6 and so on. The wins if White lets bK get into play, and the draws if the f-pawn advances unsupported, are standard bookwork.



4 - win



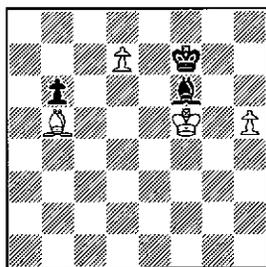
4a - after 5 Kf5



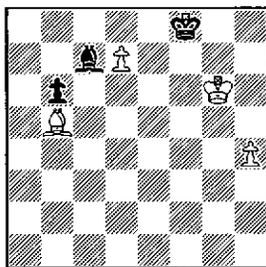
4b - 4...Be1, after 7 d7

4 (1 Pr BCM 1931-2) is a difficult and instructive study which appears in several collections. Black's king is cut off, so why cannot White simply play 1 Kg4 and force Black to give up his bishop for the h-pawn? Because Black will sacrifice it for the d-pawn instead, leaving White with a side pawn and the wrong bishop (1...Be7 2 dxe7+ Kxc7 and bK gets across, or if 2 d7 then 2...Kc7 and again bK gets across). The correct line is **1 Kf4 Bf6** (1...Bc7 2 Ke5 shortens things) **2 Ke4 Be7 3 Ke5 Bg5 4 Ke6 Bh4 5 Kf5** and Black has to find a move (see 4a). If 5...Be7 then 6 dxe7+ Kxe7 7 Kg6 Kf8 8 Bc4 and White wins. If 5...Kc8 then 6 Kg4 (playable now that the reply ...Be7 is unavailable) Bf6 7 h4 Be5 8 d7+ Kd8 9 Kf5 and wins.

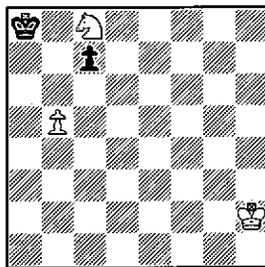
This leaves **5...Be1/Bd2 6 Kg4 Bb4/Bc5 7 d7** (see 4b), but White has still gained enough time to win. Black must bring bB back to cover d8 and release bK, but if he tries 7...Be7 we have 8 h4 Bf6 9 h5 Kc7 10 Kf5 Kf7 (see 4c) 11 h6 Bd8 12 Bc4+ Kf8 13 Kg6 and wins. Alternatively, he can play **7...Ke7** and play to bring bB round via d6 and c7, but this leads to **8 h4 Bd6 9 Kf5 Bc7 10 Kg6 Kf8** (see 4d) **11 Kh7 Bd8 12 h5 Bh4 13 h6 Bd8 14 Bc4 Ke7 15 Kg6** and again White wins. For a more detailed analysis, see Chéron, 2nd edition, Vol II, pp 387-8.



4c - 7...Be7, after 10...Kf7

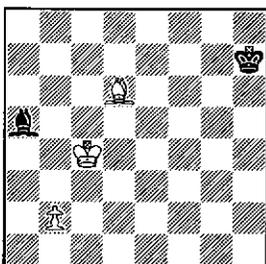


4d - main line, after 10...Kf8

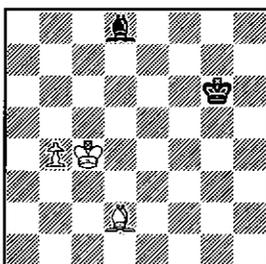


5 - win

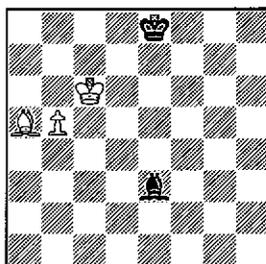
After these lengthy manœuvres, let's have something short and sweet. In 5 from 1925 (no source given in the 1994 SNZZ booklet), Black threatens 1...Kb7 chasing the knight away and then 2...Kb6 winning the pawn, and if White plays the natural 1 Ne7 then still 1...Kb7 and either 2 Nd5 c6 or 2 Nf5 Kb6 3 Nd4 Kc5. What to do? **1 Nb6+**! If 1...Kb7 then 2 Nc4 keeps bK at bay, and 2...c6 will be met by 3 b6; if 1...cxb6 then 2 Kg3 and White will win the pawn ending.



6 - win



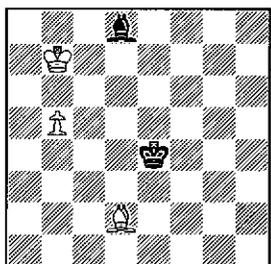
6a - after 3 b4



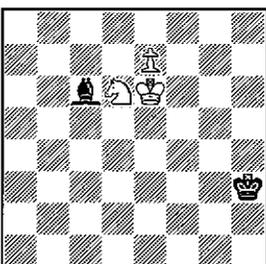
6b - 3...Kf7, after 7...Be3

Dedrlé drew a distinction between "endings" and "studies", and 6 (Sp Pr Šach 1930) has more the flavour of the former. But the winning manoeuvres are interesting and instructive, and the alternatives that exist at various points seem unimportant.

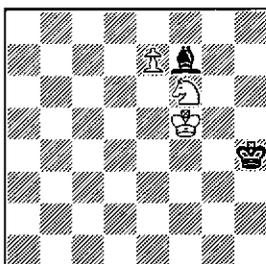
The hardest square for wP to cross will be b6, because by then bK will be in play. So 1 Bb4 Bd8 2 Bd2 (to stop 4...Kf4 in the main line, though the computer says that Be1 leads to mate one move sooner) Kg6 (2...Be7 is met by 3 Be3 and 4 Bc5, so Black concedes b4 and brings up bK) 3 b4 and we have 6a. If now 3...Kf7 then 4 Kd5 Bh4 5 Kc6 Ke8 6 b5 Bf2 7 Ba5 Be3 (see 6b) 8 Bb6 (forcing bB to a5-d8) Bd2 9 Bd4 Ba5 10 Bf6 (now bB has no good move) Kf7 11 Be5 and 12 Bc7, and once wP is over b6 the rest is book. If instead 3...Kf5, which Dedrlé gives as the main line, then 4 Kd5! Kg4 (an unexpected move, but wK will go to b7 and a6 and bK wants to follow him in) 5 b5 Kf3 6 Kc6 Ke4 7 Kb7 (see 6c) Bh4 (Black seizes the chance to bring bB to a better diagonal) 8 Ka6 Bf2 9 Ba5 Kd3 (9...Kd5 is no better) 10 Bb6 (forcing bB back to d8-a5) Bh4 11 Ba7/Bg1 Bd8 12 Bf2 Kc4 (12...Ke2 merely delays the end by one move) 13 Be1 and 14 Ba5, and again wP will safely cross b6.



6c - main line, after 7 Kb7



7 - win

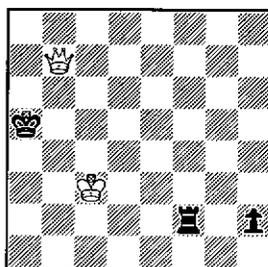
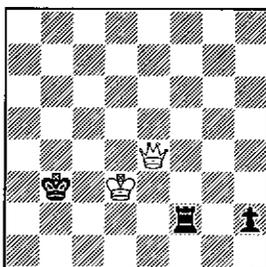
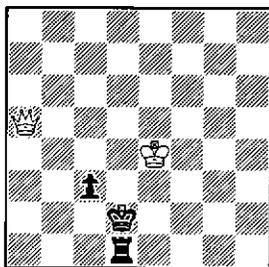


7a - after 5 Kf5

7 (Časopis českých šachistů 1919) also seems worth quoting despite an inaccuracy. 1 Ne4 threatens 2 Nf6 and 3 Nd7, and the natural defence is 1...Be8 to occupy the promotion square. But 2 Ke5 leaves bB without a move, and 2...Kh4 leads to 3 Nf6 Bg6 4 Kf4 Bf7 5 Kf5 (see 7a) and Black must allow Kg5 etc. Black also has 1...Ba4 intending ...Bb3+ and ...Bf7, but 2 Nf6 Bb3+ 3 Ke5 Bf7 4 Kf4 Kh4 5 Kf5 again gives 7a. The inaccuracy is that 1...Be8 also allows 2 Nf6 at once (if 2...Bg6 3 Kc5 Kg3 then 4 Ne4+ Kh4 5 Nd6 Kg5 6 Ke6), but the position remains instructive.

Dedrie's 1937-38 analysis of K+Q v K+R+P appeared in a non-specialist periodical with the positions only in notation, and it was almost completely overlooked by later analysts. That said, the definitive computer analysis now available has shown that ten of the 113 positions diagrammed in the 1994 SNZZ edition were wrongly assessed. Par for the course, or a little on the high side?

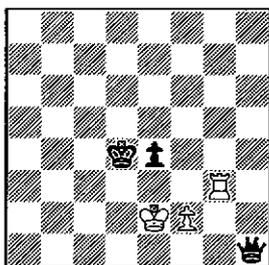
There appear in fact to be eight distinct errors (three of the faulty assessments derive from the same error), but it seems to me that only two can be counted as bad ones; the remainder result from overlooking genuinely obscure moves or manoeuvres which only exhaustive calculation could be expected to find. Dedrie thought his work was definitive, and he would have been distressed had he foreseen the computer's verdict; but this is an ending where commentators have been making mistakes since the days of Kling and Horwitz, and it appears to be much more amenable to the blind brute force of computer analysis than to the logical reasoning of the human mind.



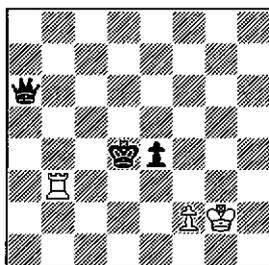
8 - WTM wins, BTM draws 9 - reciprocal zugzwang 9a - 1 Qb7+, after 2...Ka5

Dedrie was producing a theoretical survey rather than a collection of studies, but one position which I must cite has wKd2, Qc6, bKb8, Rd8, Pd3, win by 1 Ke1 d2+ 2 Kd1 passing the move to Black, because it completely anticipates the little study of my own which I reprinted in our issue of December 2000. Of rather heavier metal is 8. White to play wins this without too much trouble: 1 Kd4 Rc1 2 Kc4 Kc2 3 Qa2+ Kd1 4 Kd3 etc, or 2...Rc2 3 Qd5+ Ke1 4 Kb3 Rc1 5 Qg5 Kd1 6 Qf4 c2 7 Kc3. Black to play draws, but only by sacrificing his rook: 1...Rg1! 2 Qd5+ Kc1 3 Qc5 c2 (simplest) 4 Qxg1+ Kb2. 3...Rg4+ and 3...Rg3 also draw, but again Black will have to sacrifice the rook. And the first move must be precise: 1...Kc2 2 Qa2+ Kc1 3 Ke3 Rd2 4 Qb3 c2 5 Qc3, 1...Rh1 2 Qg5+ Kd1 3 Qg4+ Kc1 4 Kd3 c2 5 Kc3.

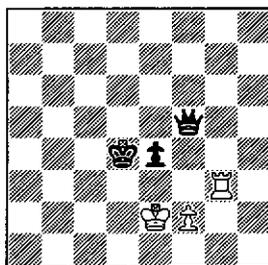
The complexity of Q v R+P is shown by the existence of no fewer than 240 positions of reciprocal zugzwang (Black to move loses, White to move cannot win). Dedrie identified only a small proportion of these (it is again a task for a computer rather than a human analyst), but one to which he drew attention is 9. Black can hope to draw by moving bR to and fro along the second rank, because if wQ captures it bP will promote, and if White is to move he must allow this (for example, 1 Qb7+ Ka4 2 Kc3 Ka5 and bR will always have a free square, see 9a). But Black to move must withdraw or obstruct his king, and White can take advantage: 1...Kb2 2 Qb4+ Ka2 3 Qb7 Rb2 4 Qd5+ (4 Qa8+ Kb3 is drawn) Kb1 5 Kc3 and soon wins, or 1...Ra2 2 Qc4+ Kb2 3 Qc2+ Ka3 4 Qc3+ Ka4 5 Kc4.



10 - draw



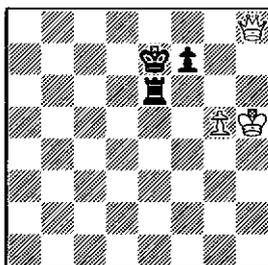
10a - 1 Rb3, after 4 Kg2



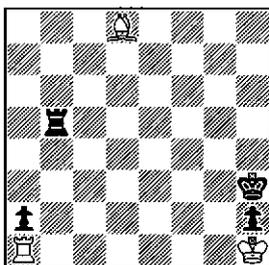
11 - draw

10 and 11 (28.říjen 1925) would be easy draws without the Black pawn, because the rook would simply oscillate between e3 and g3, and it is not immediately obvious how the pawn is going to make a difference. In fact it may do so by allowing Black to give up Q for R and win the pawn ending! This forces White to be very careful, and in 10 the only drawing move is 1 Ra3. Try 1 Rb3 instead: no, 1...Qh5+ 2 Ke1 (2 Kd2 Qa5+ is easy) Qa5+ 3 Kf1 Qa6+ 4 Kg1/Kg2 (4 Ke1 Qa1+ etc) gives a position like 10a, and with wK on the g-file Black can play 4...Qd3 (5 Rxd3+ exd3 and 6-7...Kc2). Try 1 Re3: no, 1...Qh5+ 2 Ke1 (2 Kf1 Qf3!) Qa5+ 3 Kf1/Ke2 Qb5+ 4 Ke1 (4 Kg1/Kg2 Qd3 as before) Qb1+ 5 Kd2/Ke2 Qb2+ 6 Ke1/Kf1 Qc1+ 7 Ke2 Qxe3+ 8 fxe3+ Kc3. And if 1 Kd2 then 1...Qf1.

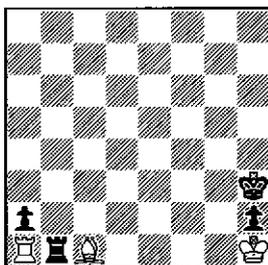
11 is much the same. The only drawing move is 1 Ke1; if 1 Kf1 then 1...Qf3! And in the colours-reversed 12, from the same set, White wins by 1 Qb8 Rg6 2 Qb4+ Ke8 (2...Rd6 doesn't help) 3 Qe4+ and either 3...Re6 4 Qxe6+ or 3...K-- 4 Qxg6.



12 - win



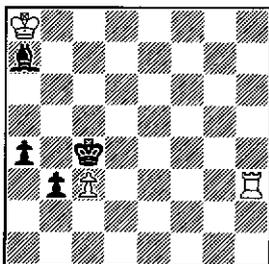
13 - draw



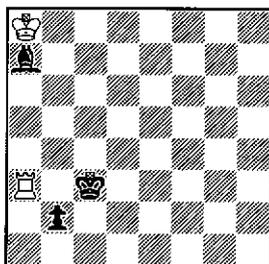
13a - after 3 Bc1

The 1994 SNZZ booklet describes 13 (*Československý šach* 1933) as a classical stalemate miniature. Black threatens 1...Rb1+, but 1 Bh4 defuses this (1...Rb1+ 2 Be1 Rxa1 stalemate). All right, 1...Rb2, and if 2 Be1 then 2...Rb1 3 Rxb1 axb2B. True, White can play 2 Bg5 transferring the bishop's attack to c1, but now it no longer guards g3 and after 2...Rb1+ 3 Bc1 Black has a waiting move with his king (see 13a). But it is to no avail; 3...Kg3 certainly forces 4 Rxb1 and the underpromotion 4...axb1B again threatens mate, but now 5 Bf4+ gives White a way out.

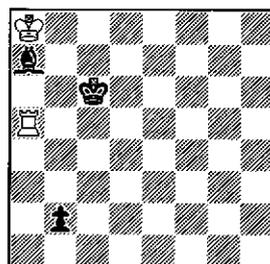
And why not 1 Ba5 with the same idea? Because Black has 1...Rg3 threatening 2...Rg3 and 3...Rg1+, and if 2 Be1 then 2...Rb1 as previously.



14 - draw

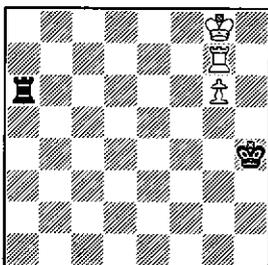


14a - after 3 Ra3+

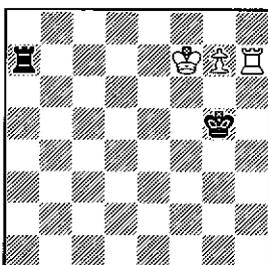


14b - after 5...Kc6

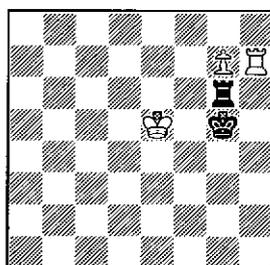
14 (*Časopis českých šachistů* 1916) starts with a double-capture introduction that Dedrlé might have omitted in later years, **1 Rh4+ Kxc3 2 Rx4 b2**, but once this is passed we have **3 Ra3+** (see 14a) and how is bK going to escape the checks? To go down will invite a pin, to go to the b-file will invite Rxa7 and a skewer. So he goes up the c-file, **3...Kc4 4 Ra4+ Kc5 5 Ra5+ Kc6** (see 14b), and White has no more checks (6 Ra6+ Bb6). But in going to c6, Black has taken a flight square from wK, and as soon as we realise this the next move is obvious: **6 Ra1!**



15 - win



15a - after 3...Ra7+



15b - reciprocal zugzwang

To finish, another study that went straight into the textbooks. 15 (*Časopis českých šachistů* 1917) starts **1 Rh7+ Kg5 2 g7** threatening 3 Kh8 etc, but Black can start checking, **2...Ra8+ 3 Kf7 Ra7+** (see 15a), and how will wK escape? He must surely go left, when bR will claim the g-file and bK will come up and kill the pawn.

Let's play on. **4 Ke6 Ra6+**, and now not **5 Ke5**, when **5...Rg6** will give 15b with White to move and wK will have to retreat and allow ...Kf6, but **5 Kd5! Rg6 6 Ke5** and we have the same position with Black to move. Now even **6...Kg4** is a losing move, because it lets White play **7 Rh1**; **7...Rxb7** is met by **8 Rg1+**, and if instead **7...Kf3** then **8 Rf1+ Ke3/Ke2/Kg2** (**8...Kg3/Kg4 9 g8Q**) **9 Rf7** and **10 Kf5** etc.

A simple and completely natural position, and a surprisingly elegant way to win: what more could we ask for?

I fear the SNZZ booklets on which this special number is based are now out of print, but for an up-to-date list contact ing. Zdeněk Závodný, Hoblíkova 8, 613 00 Brno, CZ (Czech Republic), e-mail smzsnzz@brno.comp.cz - JDB