

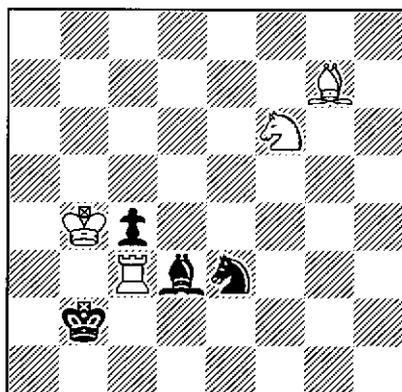
British Endgame Study News

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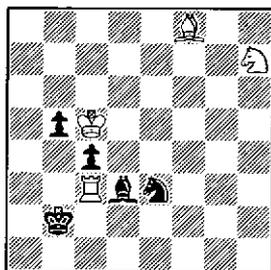
Some British studies from 1960-67



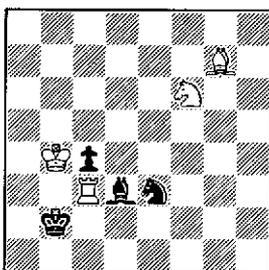
White wins only by 4 Bh8!

Some British studies from 1960-67

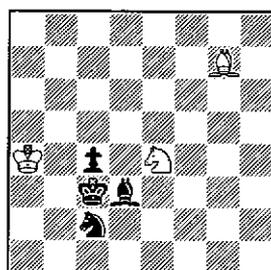
The outstanding event of 1960-67 was John Roycroft's founding of *EG* in 1965, and we must start with John's 1 even though it has already appeared in one of our special numbers. This was *EG* study number 1, and John has always been quietly proud of it.



1 - win



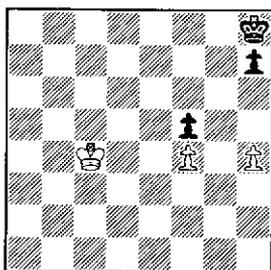
1a - after 3...Kb2



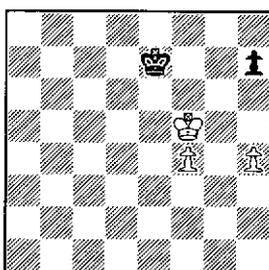
1b - 6 Ne4 mate!

1 **Bg7** guards wR and threatens various nastinesses, and Black's natural reaction is to get out of the line of fire by **1...Kb1** or **1...Ka2** (it doesn't seem to matter which). This in turn threatens **2...b4** followed by further pawn advances, because **3 Kxb4** will be met by **3...Nd5+**, and so White must play **2 Nf6** to guard d5. Black plays **2...b4** anyway, forcing **3 Kxb4**, and **3...Kb2** once again leaves wR without a move (see **1a**).

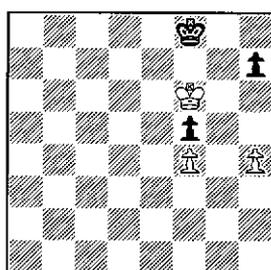
Positive moves by White now fail (**4 Rxd3 cxd3 5 Ng4+ Kc1 6 Nxc3 d2** and draws), and the answer is the waiting **4 Bh8!** But cannot Black play **4...Nc2+**, forcing wK away from wR? Yes, but after **5 Ka4 Kxc3** he finds that **6 Ne4** is mate (see **1b**)!



2 - win



2a - WTM only draws

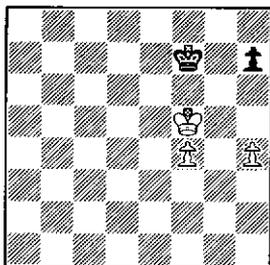


2b - after 7 Kf6

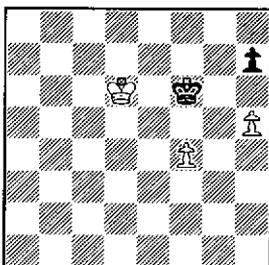
David Hooper's 2 took 5th Prize in the 1961 *New Statesman* tourney. White can win **bPf5** easily enough, but the reply **...Ke7** will draw since **bPh7** stops wK from penetrating (see **2a**). To prevent this, White must make an unlikely feint against **h7**.

White's first task is to gain the opposition, and neither **Kd5** nor **Kd4** is sufficient (1 **Kd5 Kg7**, 1 **Kd4 Kg8**). The correct move is **1 Ke5!** If now **1...Kg7** then **2 Kd5** as below, hence **1...Kg8**, and **2 Kc6** achieves the first objective. There follows **2...Kg7** (**2...Kf7 3 Kd7**) **3 Kd5 Kf8** (**3...Kf6 4 Kd6** again, **3...Kf7 4 Ke5**) **4 Kd6 Kg7 5 Ke7**

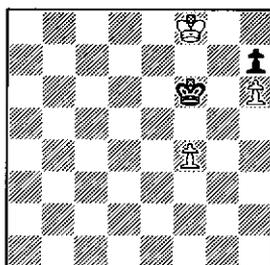
Kg8 6 Ke6 (6 Kf6 Kf8) **Kf8 7 Kf6!** (see 2b) and White's ambitious aim has been achieved. Black must play **7...Kg8** to avoid the loss of his h-pawn, and White can play **8 Kxf5** since...Ke7 is now impossible. Black replies **8...Kf7** as his best remaining option, and we have 2c.



2c - after 8...Kf7



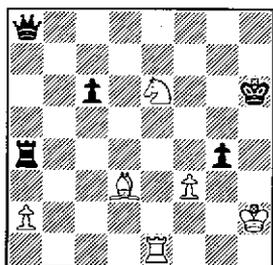
2d - after 11...Kf6



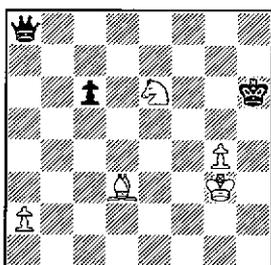
2e - after 15...Kf6

White now starts to have a choice (previously, the slightest false step would have cost the win), but the play is still not easy. He cannot force the f-pawn through, but he can use it to decoy bK and then go once more for the h-pawn. **9 Ke5** (9 h5 is as good) **Ke7 10 h5** (first tempo to gain the opposition) **Kf7** (10...h6 11 f5 is book, 11...Kf7 12 f6 Kf8 13 Ke4! Ke8 14 Kf4 Kf8 15 Ke5 with 15...Kf7 16 Kf5 or 15...Ke8 16 Ke6) **11 Kd6 Kf6** (see 2d) **12 h6** (second tempo) **Kf7 13 Kd7 Kf6** (13...Kf8 14 Ke6 Ke8 15 f5 Kf8 16 Kf6 etc) **14 Ke8!** (the classic turning movement) **Ke6 15 Kf8 Kf6** (see 2e) **16 Kg8** (not the clever 16 f5, when 16...Kxf5 17 Kg7 Ke6 draws) **Kg6 17 f5+**.

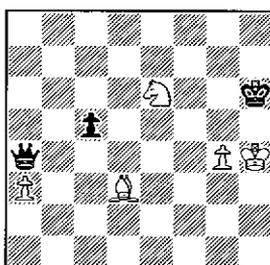
Anyone who follows all this with the aid of a computer will learn a lot about pawn endings. David, of course, had to compose it without such help.



3 - win

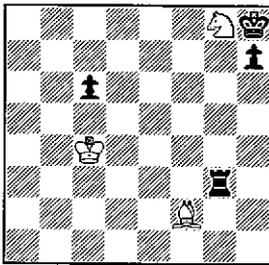


3a - after 4...Kh6

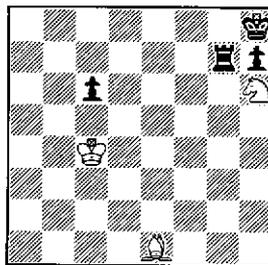


3b - after 6...c5

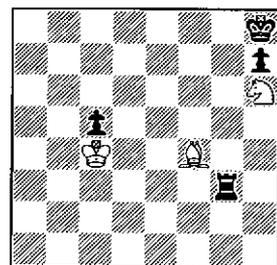
The *BCM* study column was in the hands of Hugh Blandford, whose 3 gained a special prize in the same tourney. **1 Rh1** threatens mate, and **1...Ra5 2 Kg3+ Rh5 3 Rxb5+ Kxb5 4 fxb4+ Kh6** is almost automatic. It has brought us to 3a, and **5 Kh4** threatens mate anew. Black must pin, **5...Qa4**, and **6 a3** leaves bQ without a move. True, he has **6...c5** (see 3b), but a further advance of bP will be just as damaging as a bQ move and so all White has to do is triangulate with wB: **7 Bb1 Qc4 8 Bf5 Qa4 9 Bd3**. Note that the move order is forced: **7 Bf5 Qc4 8 Bb1** would allow **8...Qxe6**.



4 - win



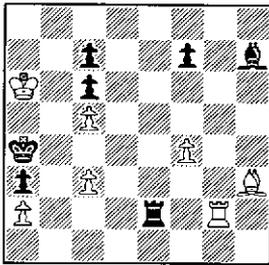
4a - after 2 Be1



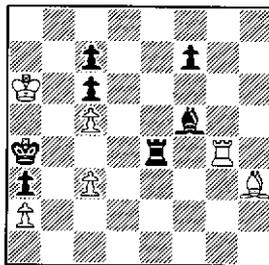
4b - after 4 Bf4

Hugh's 4 appeared in 1961 in the *BCM* itself. **1 Nh6** saves wN and stops **1...Rg4+**, and bR is threatened not only with immediate capture but with the equally damaging **2 Bd4+ Rg7 3 Nf5**. The only answer is **1...Rg7**, and now it starts getting tricky.

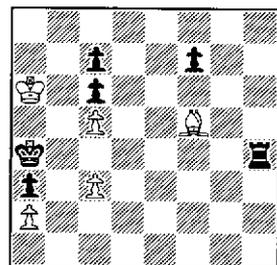
The immediate pin **2 Bd4** allows **2...c5**, and if wB retreats along the pin line it will be stalemate. All right, try **2 Bh4**, aiming for f6: no, **2...Rg6**, and wN must move. The answer is **2 Be1** aiming for c3 (see 4a), after which any bR move loses quickly, and after **2...c5** then **3 Bd2**. Black must reply **3...Rg3**, and this allows **4 Bf4** (see 4b). **4...Kg7** allows **5 Nf5+**, so Black can only play **4...Rg7**, and **5 Bd6** clinches matters. The rook must move, but **...Rc7** is met by a capture and **...Rg5** by a fork; he has only nondescript moves such as **5...Rg1**, and **6 Be5+ Rg7 7 Nf5** finishes him off.



5 - win



5a - after 2...Re4

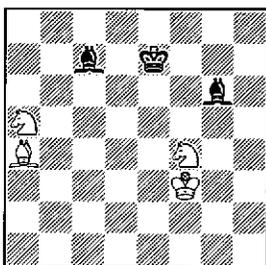


5b - after 4 Bxf5

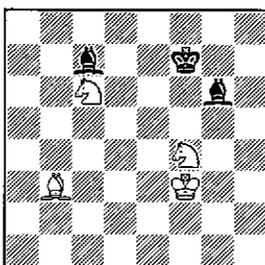
P. C. Wason's 5, which took an equal 2nd/3rd Prize in the *New Statesman* tourney of 1962, shows another battle between wB and bR. **1 f5** threatens **2 Rg4+** with mate to follow, and after **1...Bxf5** White can still play **2 Rg4+**; if Black captures, **2...Bxg4**, White has **3 Bxg4 Rd2/Re1 4 Bf3** and mate in two. Better is **2...Re4** giving 5a, and now what? If wR stays on the rank, it is lost; if it moves off, wB goes instead.

The answer is **3 Rh4!!** Black naturally plays **3...Rxb4** (interpolating the spite check **3...Bc8+ 4 Bxc8** doesn't help), and play continues **4 Bxf5** (see 5b) **Rh2 5 Bg4 Rd2** (**5...Rxa2 6 Bd1+**, **5...Rh1 6 Bf3**) **6 Bf3 Rd5 7 Be4**. White has two potential mating lines, c6-a4 and d1-c2-a4, and bR is run off his feet.

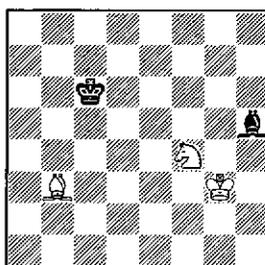
Mike Bent was also active, of course, and I have selected three typical domination studies. In 6 (*Tidskrift för Schack* 1966), **1 Nc6+ Kf7 2 Bb3+** gives 6a, and both **2...Kg7** and **2...Kf6 3 Nd5+ Ke6 4 Nxc7 Kd6** wins



6 - win

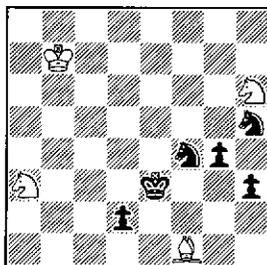


6a - after 2 Bb3+

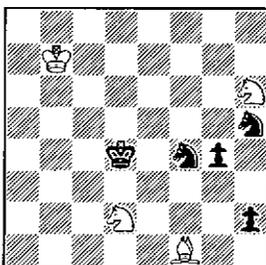


6b - after 7 Nf4

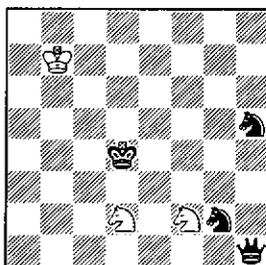
the piece back. Yes, but **5 Nd5** prevents an immediate capture (**5...Kxc6 6 Ne7+**), and if Black tries **5...Bh5+** we have **6 Kg3 Kxc6 7 Nf4** and bB is caught after all (**6b**).



7 - draw

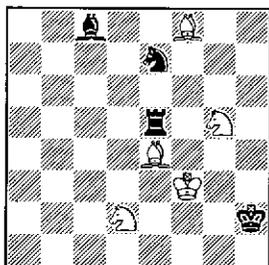


7a - after 2...h2

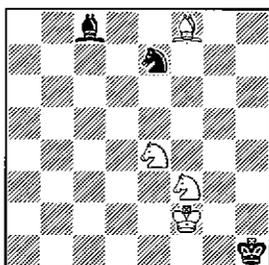


7b - after 5 Nf2

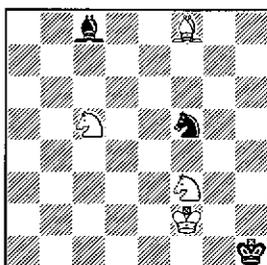
In 7 (4th HM *ÚV ČSTV* 1965) it is bQ that will suffer. **1 Nc4+ Kd4 2 Nxd2** kills one advanced pawn, but **2...h2** forces the promotion of another (see 7a). So what? **3 Bg2 Nxc2 4 Nxc4 h1Q 5 Nf2** gives 7b, and the queen has no good square.



8 - win



8a - after 3 Nxe4

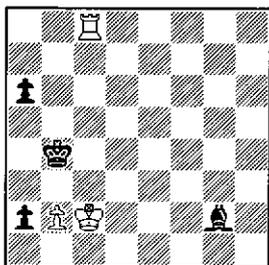


8b - after 4 Nc5

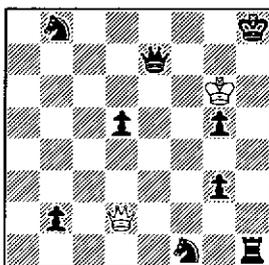
8 took 1st HM in *L'Italia Scacchistica* in 1967. **1 Kf2** threatens mate, and both **1...Rxc5 2 Nf3+ Kh3 3 Nxc5+ Kg4 4 Bxe7** and **1...Rf5+ 2 Ndf3+ Kh1 3 Bxc7 Rf4 4 Ke3 Rg4 5 Ne5+** leave White two pieces ahead. Hence **1...Rxe4**, after which **2 Ndf3+ Kh1** shuts up bK and **3 Nxe4** threatens mate (see 8a). Black has only **3...Nf5**, which blocks bB, and **4 Nc5** leaves both pieces suddenly dominated (8b).

One of British endgame study composition's more enigmatic figures is that of C. Sansom. John Roycroft tells me "Claude, b. 1914, when last heard of/from lived in Orpington", but they have not been in touch "for many years now". He published a number of original studies in *Correspondence Chess*, but he seems to have had little contact with other composers and I would know little about his work had he not produced a book *End-game studies* in 1992 (see *EG* 108, p 219). This book was printed from a mixture of manuscript and typescript, clearly produced by the author himself, and my copy has a pasted-in correction dated 1994.

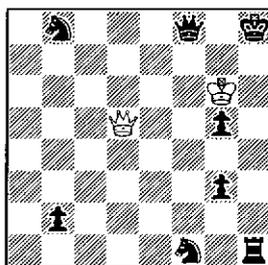
End-game studies contains 156 compositions, all but one from the period 1952-77. The creation of good endgame studies is difficult even now and was far harder in the days before computer testing, and when a man working on his own starts generating originals in quantity there are really only two possibilities: either he is someone of unusual talent, or he is producing pallid settings of manoeuvres which other people have already realised in better style. I am afraid that most of Sansom's work comes into the latter category, but one or two stand out above the general level.



11 - draw



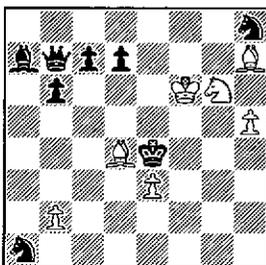
12 - win



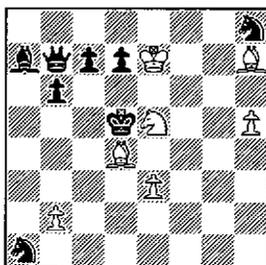
12a - after 5...Kh8

The neat little **11**, dated "April 28, 1960" and quoted in the *BCM* in 1984, is a case in point. How can we deal with the a-pawn? 1 Rb8+ Ka4 2 Rb3 invites 2...a1N+, but **1 Rc4+** is playable because 1...Kxc4 will allow 2 b3+ and 3 Kb2. Hence 1...Kb5 evading the issue, and **2 Rc5+** repeating the question. All right, **2...Kb6**, but **3 Ra5** offers wR on a third square and this time Black has nothing better than **3...Kxa5 4 b4+**. Note that an earlier move to the a-file would fail: 2 Ra4 Kxa4 3 b3+ Ka3 and bP will reach home. And note also that bB is not just decoration, since without it White could play 1 Rc3 and let bP promote. The set-up "Ra3/c3, Ph2, K guarding P" is a fortress against K+Q alone, and I don't think bPa6 makes any difference.

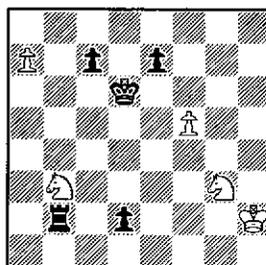
12, dated "May 1, 1966", is a staircase study offering more than most of its kind. **1 Qc3+ Kg8 2 Qc8+** forces Black to block f8, **2...Qf8**, and **3 Qe6+ Kh8 4 Qe5+ Kg8 5 Qxd5+ Kh8** produces **12a**. White can now capture on h1, but Black will reply **6...Nh2** and White will get no further. We must get rid of bPb2 first: **6 Qd4+ Kg8 7 Qc4+** and down to **10 Qxb2+ Kg8**, then **11 Qb3+** and back to **15 Qd5+ Kh8**. Now we have **12a** without bPb2, and the capture is playable: **16 Qxh1+**. The reply **16...Nh2** holds off mate for a while, but White can keep going by **17 Qa1+**, and a final haul up the staircase brings us to **26 Qe6+ Kh8**. White has at last gained access to the h-file, **27 Qh3+**, and mate will follow.



13 - draw



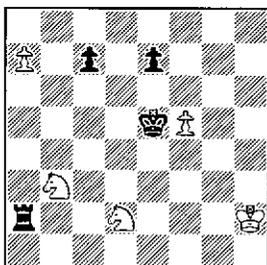
13a - after 2 Ke5



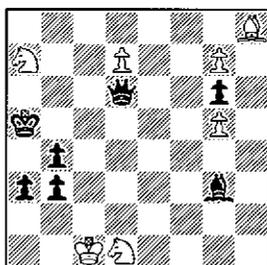
14 - win

Mike Bent's 13 (*Tidskrift för Schack* 1967) will appeal to anti-clerical republicans. 1 Ne5+ Kd5 2 Ke7 threatens mate (see 13a), and Black has two defences. If 2...Qc8 then 3 Bb1 Qa6 4 Bh7 Qc8 5 Bb1, with a B/Q pendulum. If instead 2...Qa8 then 3 Bb1 Bb8 4 Bh7 Ba7 5 Bb1, and it is the bishops who are left gently swinging to and fro.

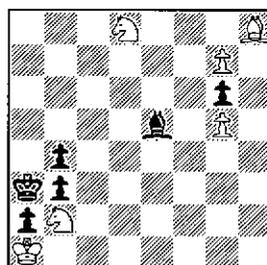
Don Stallybrass was better known as a problemist, but he occasionally turned his hand to studies and 14 was commended in *Magyar Sakkélet* in 1965. 1 Ne5+ forces 1...Ke5 (1...Kd7 2 Nc5+ and 3 a8Q+), and 2 Nexd2 deals with Black's advanced pawn; how to preserve White's after 2...Ra2 (see 14a)? Ah, 3 Na5, since 3...Rxa5 will allow a fork. But Black also has 3...Rxd2+ 4 K-- Rd8 controlling a8 another way - no, he doesn't, 5 Nc6+ and the other knight forks instead.



14 - after 2...Ra2



15 - win



15a - after 6...Ka3

And for a final trifle, what about Mike Bent's 15 (*Tidskrift för Schack* 1967)? 1 d8Q+ Qxd8 2 Nc6+ puts White well ahead on material, and Black must attack wK to have any chance. Hence 2...Ka4, and after 3 Nxd8 Bf4+ 4 Kb1 a2+ 5 Ka1 Be5+ 6 Nb2+ he has 6...Ka3 (see 15a). Now 7 g8Q Bxh8 8 Qxh8 will be stalemate: ah! 7 g8N! and 7...Bxh8 will be met by 8 Nf6.

My thanks to Harold van der Heijden's "Endgame study database 2000" for several of the above. Our next special number of this kind is scheduled for June 2003, and will cover studies from 1950-59. As usual, please will readers draw my attention to particular studies that they would like to see included, and also to any from 1960-95 which should have appeared in the series but have been overlooked. - JDB