

# British Endgame Study News

Special number 54

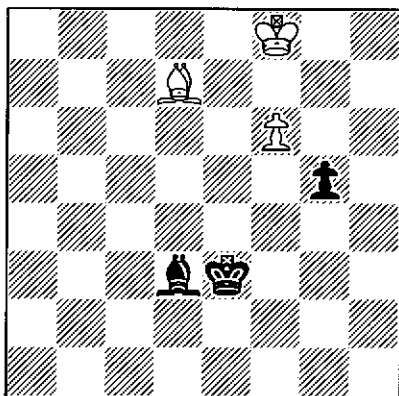
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## Some foreign studies in the *New Statesman* (1)



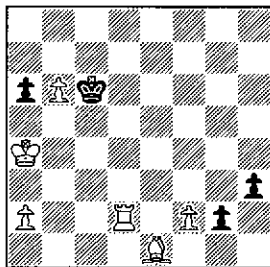
Does White play Ke7, or Kg7, or what?

## Some foreign studies in the *New Statesman* (1)

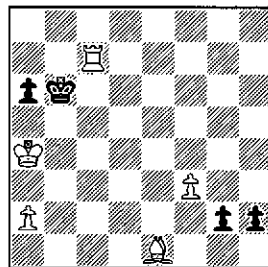
While I was writing the last of our series "Some British studies from ...", it occurred to me that "Foreign studies which first appeared in Britain" might make a suitable subject for a successor series. I asked Timothy Whitworth how feasible he thought the idea, and he immediately suggested the tourneys of the *New Statesman* as a possible starting point. These were a leading feature of the British endgame study world from 1951 to 1975, and at least two of the period's most famous compositions appeared in them.

However, this will not be a mere parade of prizewinners. One reason is that prize lists tend to be burdened with complicated heavyweights which are not to my personal taste. A second reason is that a surprisingly large proportion of the prizewinners subsequently proved to be unsound. On the evidence of Harold van der Heijden's "Endgame study database III" and some routine computer testing of my own, over forty per cent of *New Statesman* prizes went to unsound compositions, and this was far too many.

I say "a surprisingly large proportion", but Walter Veitch would not have been in the least surprised. "Dishonesty comes in various forms," he wrote about lazy and faulty game annotators in *EG* 15. "Sometimes, and I know this applies also to a number of composers of endings, there is deliberate avoidance of thorough research into a position as it might reveal a fault." On the evidence of the present tourneys, it is impossible to disagree with him.



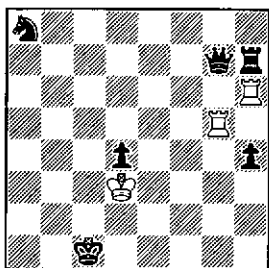
1 - win



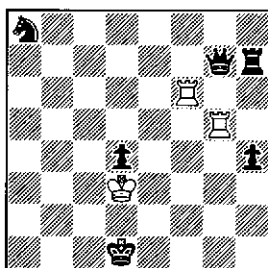
1a - after 3 Rc7

Fortunately, enough survived to give us more than enough material for two special numbers. Alois Wotawa's **1** gained 2nd Honourable Mention in the 1970 tourney. Black's pawns appear to be out of reach and **1 Rc2+** seems to be a mere spite check, but it sets problems. Play the natural **1...Kxb6**; **2 f3** prevents **2...g1Q** and threatens **3 Rxc7** **hxg2** **4 Bf2+**, and after **2...h2** White has the lovely move **3 Rc7!** threatening mate (see **1a**). **3...Kxc7** allows **4 Bg3+** and **5 Bxh2**, hence **3...a5**, but **4 Bf2+** gives Black no choice: **4...Kxc7** (**4...Ka7** allows another mate) **5 Bg3+** and **6 Bxh2**.

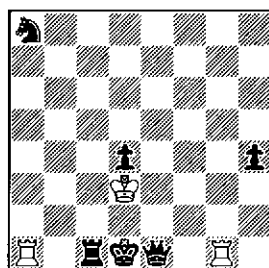
Other Black first moves are easily dealt with: **1...Kb7** **2 Rc7+ Ka8** (**2...Kb8** **3 Rg7** shortens things) **3 Ra7+ Kb8** **4 Rg7 h2** **5 Bb4** (say) **g1Q** **6 Bd6+** and mate in a few, or **1...Kd5/Kd7** **2 b7 g1Q** **3 b8Q** and White will soon escape the checks.



2 - win

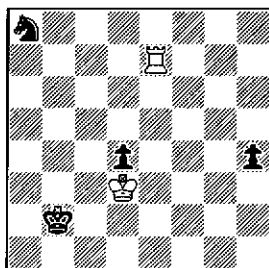


2a - after 2 Rf6

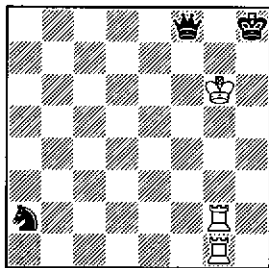


2b - after 5...Rc1

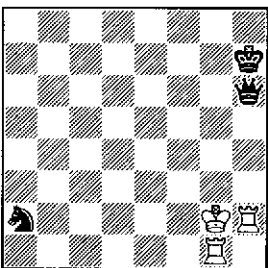
Paul Heuacker's 2 appeared as an ordinary column piece in 1953. 1 Rc5+ Kd1 leaves White with no useful move, but 1 Rc6+ Kd1 2 Rf6! puts Black elegantly under pressure (see 2a); he must give up the queen by 2...Qe7 to avoid a quick mate. Play continues 3 Rg1+ Qe1, but 4 Rxe1+ gets nowhere and 4 Rff1 is soon seen to be met by 4...Rf7. But White can switch the attack to the other wing by 4 Ra6, and the new mate threat gives Black no time to play ...QxR (this is why White checked on g1 rather than f1). 4...Rc7, therefore, and after 5 Ra1+ Rc1 (see 2b) which piece should White take first? The answer is soon seen to be 6 Rxc1+, because after 6...Kxc1 7 Rxe1+ Kb2 8 Re7 the knight has no good move (see 2c). Play concludes 8...h3 9 Rb7+ Kc1 10 Rb8 Nc7 11 Rc8 pinning, and if instead 8...Kc1 then 9 Rb7 with the same finish.



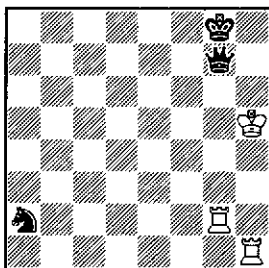
2c - after 8 Re7



3 - win

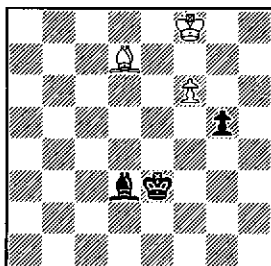


3a - 1 Rh2+, after 5...Qh6

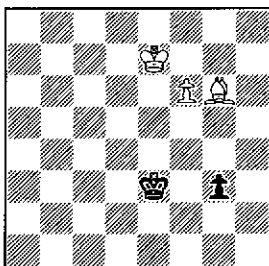


3b - 1 Rh1+, 2...Qg7

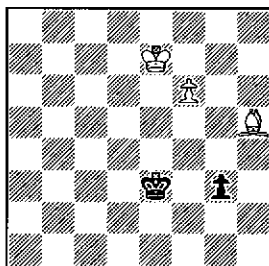
Aleksandr Gulyaev's 3 shared 3rd/4th HM in 1955. Try 1 Rh2+ Kg8 2 Kh5+ Kh7 3 Kg4+ Kg8 4 Kh3+ Kh7 5 Kg2+: no, 5...Qh6 (see 3a), and after 6 Rxh6+ Kxh6 the knight can get back to safety. So it must be 1 Rh1+, and after 1...Kg8 2 Kh5+ Kh7 3 Kg5+/Kg4+ Kg8 4 Kh4+/Kh3+ Kh7 5 Kg3+ Kg8 6 Kh2+ Kh7 7 Kg1+ Qh6 it is the rook on the first rank that will capture and the knight will fall. And if Black tries 2...Qg7 (see 3b), hoping for 3 Rxg7+ Kxg7 and again a draw, White can play 3 Rhg1! moving the point of exchange to g2, and again the knight will go. The duals at moves 3 and 4 are unfortunate, but I think the study is worth having in spite of them.



4 - win



4a - 1 Ke7, after 3...g3

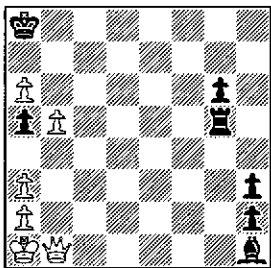


4b - main line, after 4...g3

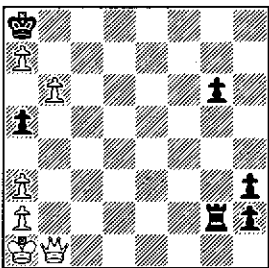
W. Issler's 4 (3rd Prize 1970) was perhaps the finest *New Statesman* study, and although we reprinted it in September 2001 I think we have to repeat it here. The obvious line is 1 Ke7 Bg6 (1...Bc4 2 Be6) 2 Be8 apparently chasing the Black bishop away, but Black has 2...g4! and 3 Bxg6 g3 (see 4a) 4-5 f8Q g1Q is only a draw. The alternative 1 Kg7 is hopeless (1...Bc4 etc), and 1 Be6 is met by 1...g4! with sufficient counterplay to draw: 2 Kg7 (2 Bxg4 Kf4 3 Be6 Bg6) g3 3 Bd5 (3 Bh3 Bc4) Be4.

The winning move is the remarkable 1 Kf7! remaining in front of the pawn. This threatens 2 Be6 and 3 Kg7, and if 1...g4 then 2 Bxg4 and White wins because his king is one rank lower than after 1 Be6 g4 2 Bxg4. So Black plays 1...Be2, ready to meet 2 Be6 by 2...Bh5+ and 2 Kg6 by 2...Bc4. Now White plays 2 Ke7, and after 2...Bh5 3 Be8 g4 4 Bxh5 g3 we have 4a with White's bishop on h5 instead of g6 (see 4b). This allows him to play 5 Bf3, and after 5...Kxf3 he will queen with check.

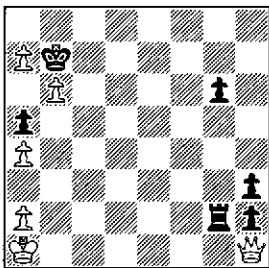
It is an unusually subtle decoy manoeuvre. In the natural line 1 Ke7 Bg6 2 Be8 g4 3 Bxg6 g3 the White bishop ends up on g6 and the move Be4 doesn't help White, but the opening move 1 Kf7 decoys the Black bishop to e2, and after 1...Be2 2 Ke7 Bh5 the White bishop will capture its counterpart on h5 and Bf3 will win.



5 - win



5a - 3...Ka8, after 4 Qb1

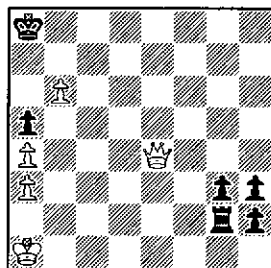


5b - main line, after 4 a4

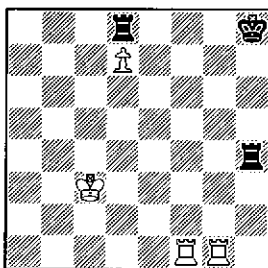
John Selman's 5 gained 3rd Prize in 1966. I do not care for the opening capture 1 Qxh1+, but after 1...Rg2 2 b6 things get more interesting. The threat is 3 b7+ Kb8 4 Qb1 and if 4...Rg1 then 5 a7+ etc, hence 2...Kb8, and 3 a7+ sets Black a problem. If 3...Ka8 then 4 Qb1 (see 5a) Kb7 5 Qe4+ Kxb6 6 a8Q h1Q+ 7 Qb1+ Qxb1+ 8 Kxb1 Rg1+ 9 Kc2 Rg2+ 10 Kd1 Rg1+ 11 Ke2 Rg2+ 12 Kf1 and Black's checks have run out, hence 3...Kb7, and after 4 a4 we have 5b. 4...Ka8 will now allow 5 Qb1 with a

crisper version of the preceding line (with the pawn on a4 guarding b5, White can meet 5...Kb7 with 6 a8Q+ Kxa8 7 Qe4+ and a staircase as after diagram 5c in the main line), but Black has 4...g5. White can only continue 5 Kb1 (he will need a3 for a tempo move later on), and now Black can play 5...Ka8 without fearing Qb1 in reply.

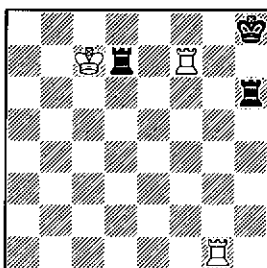
White therefore tries a different tactic: 6 Ke1 Kb7 7-8 Ke1 Kb7 9 Kf1. He now threatens 10 Qxg2+ hxg2+ 11 Kxg2 wiping out Black's K-side, so Black must play 9...g4, and this tips the Ka8/Qb1 tempo battle in White's favour. Back to the Q-side, therefore: 10 Ke1 Ka8 11-13 Kb1 Kb7 14 Ka1. Black can try 14...g3, but White has 15 a3, and Black must finally play 15...Ka8 and allow 16 Qb1: 16...Kb7 17 a8Q+ Kxa8 18 Qe4+ (see 5c) Kb8 19 Qe5+ Ka8 20 Qd5+ Kb8 21 Qd6+ Ka8 22 Qc6+ Kb8 23 Qc7+ Ka8 24 Qa7 mate.



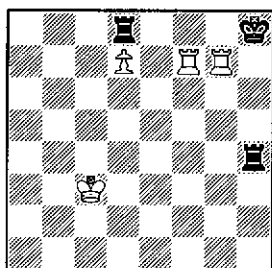
5c - after 18 Qe4+



6 - win



6a - 1...Rh3, after 5...Rxd7+

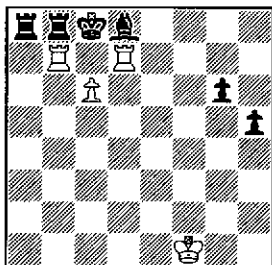


6b - main line, 4...Kh8

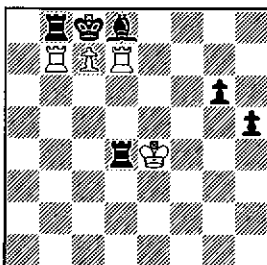
A. Herberg's 6 was an ordinary column piece in 1955. The natural move 1 Rd1 allows 1...Rh7 winning the pawn (2 Rh1 Rxh1 3 Rxh1+ Kg7 4 Rd1 Kf7 etc), hence 1 Rf7, and Black has two significant defences. The first is 1...Rh3+, which at first sight seems to be a bad move driving the White king where he wants to go, because after 2 Kc4 Rh4+ 3 Kc5 Rh5+ 4 Kc6 Rh6+ 5 Kc7 Black has 5...Rxd7+ with visions of a desperado rook (see 6a). However, White can circumvent this by playing 6 Rxd7 Rc6+ 7 Kd8 Rc8+ 8 Kc7 Re8+ 9 Kd6 Re6+ 10 Kd5 and coming down the d-file to d1.

The second defence is 1...Rd4, when 2 Kxd4 allows 2...Rxd7+ drawing at once, and if 2 Rgg7 then 2...Rd3+ 3-5 Kc6 Rd6+ 6 Kc7 R6xd7+ 7 Rxd7 Rc8+ and this time the desperado rook is inescapable. Better is 2 Rh1+ Kg8 3 Rhh7, and now 3...Rd3+ 4 Kxd3 Rxd7+ can be met by 5 Rxd7 releasing the stalemate. But Black has 3...Rh4, when 4 Rxh4 Kxf7 will be easy, and after 4 Rhg7+ Kh8 what is White to do (see 6b)?

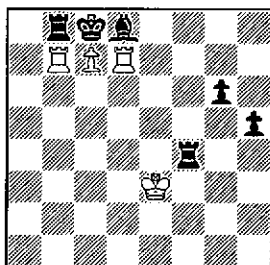
If 5 Re7 then 5...Rxd7 6 Rxd7 Rc4+ and again the desperado rook will be inescapable. If 5 Rg6 (intending 6 Rgf6) then 5...Rh7 6 Rxh7+ Kxh7 attacking the rook, and after 7 Rd6 Kg7 8-9 Kc5 Ke7 10 Kc6 Ra8 the R + P v R ending is drawn. But after 5 Rg5 the corresponding ending will be won (White will have 11 Re5+), and if Black tries 5...Rd4 White can play 6 Rf8+ Rxf8 7 Kxd4 Rd8 8 Rd5 and again win the R + P v R ending. This last option is not available if White plays 5 Rg3/Rg2/Rg1.



7 - win



7a - 2 Ke2, after 4...Rd4+



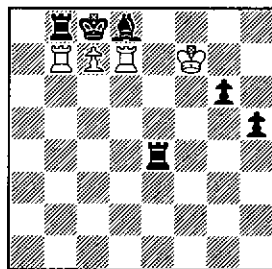
7b - 3...Rf2+, 5 Kd3

Robert Brieger's 7 gained an HM in 1968. 1 c7 threatens all sorts of things and moves like 1...Bh4 provide no remedy (2 cxb8Q+ Rxb8 3 Rbc7 mate), so Black must start checking. 1...Ra1+, therefore, and if White moves to a dark square Black will rescue his bishop with check and then take on b7. Try 2 Ke2? No, 2...Re1+, with 3 Kd3 Rd1+ 4 Ke4 (4 Kc2 5 Rc1+ K~ 6 Rxc7) Rd4+ and Black has a perpetual check on the d-file (see 7a) or 3 Kf3 Re3+ and he has one on the e-file.

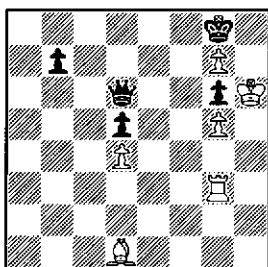
So it must be 2 Kg2, when the check from below fails and Black must resort to 2...Ra2+. The dark squares are still poisoned; try 3 Kh3? No, it's a dead end; 3...Ra3+, and White must come back to g2 and try again. Hence 3 Kf3, and if 3...Rf2+ then 4 Ke4 Re2+ (4...Rf4+ 5 Ke3 and the rook shields the king from the bishop, see 7b) 5 Kd5 Rd2+ 6 Ke6 Re2+ (now the dark-square check fails because the White king is too close, 6...Rd6+ 7 Kxd7 Be7+ 8 Rxe7 and if 8...Rxb7 then 9 Re8 mate) 7 Kf7 and we are about to rejoin the main line (we have 7c with the rook on e2 instead of e4).

This main line follows the alternative check 3...Ra3+, when 4 Ke2 leads nowhere and only 4 Ke4 offers hope. If 4...Re3+ then 5 Kd5 Rd3+ (5...Re5+ 6 Kd4 and again the rook shields the king from the bishop) 6 Ke6 Re3+ 7 Kf7, and we have 7c with the rook on e3. The alternative is 4...Ra4+, after which 5 Kd3 leads nowhere and White must try 5 Kd5. Try 5...Ra5+: no, 6 Ke6, with 6...Ra6+ 7 Kf7 Rf6+ 8 Kg7 and again the king is shielded or 6...Re5+ 7 Kf7 and we have 7c with the rook on e5. This leaves 5...Rd4+, with sequel 6 Ke6 Re4+ 7 Kf7 and we have 7c exactly.

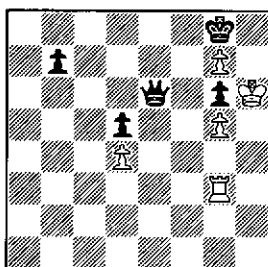
The rook's precise square on the e-file is soon seen not to matter a great deal, but the lines placing it on e3 and e4 force White to continue most precisely. 7...Re7+ loses quickly (8 Rxe7 Rxb7 9 cxd8Q+ etc), hence 7...Rf4+. Now 8 Kg8 fails (8...Rf8+ and if 9 Kh7 then 9...Rxb7), and White must play 8 Kxg6. 8...Rf6+ allows 9 Kg7 and the king is shielded, hence 8...Rg4+. If the rook were on g5, 9 Kh6 would now win, and if it were on g2 9 Kxh5 would win (White could escape the perpetual by coming down to h3). As it is, only 9 Kh7 works, and after 9...Rg7+ there is a final twist: not the clever 10 Kh8 hiding from the bishop once again, when Black plays 10...Kxb7 and the reply 11 cxd8Q+ no longer wins because the queen is pinned, but the simple 10 Rxxg7.



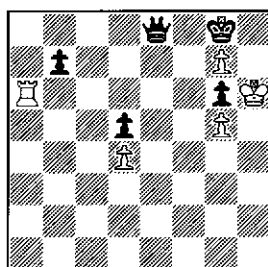
7c - after 7 Kf7



8 - draw



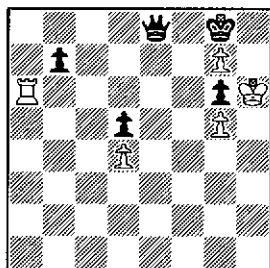
8a - after 2...Qxe6



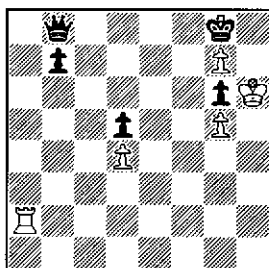
8b - after 4 Ra6

Gia Nadareishvili's 8 appeared in 1970. White's rook is under attack, and if 1 Rf3 then 1...Qh2+ 2 Kxg6 Qh7+ and his advanced pawn goes instead. The answer is **1 Bg4**, preparing to meet 1...Qxg3 by a mate on e6 and making 2 Rf3 a genuine threat (2...Qh2+ can now be met by 3 Bh3). The only move not to lose is **1...Qe7**, and **2 Be6+!** **Qxe6** brings the Black queen to a square from which the only h-file square it threatens is h3 (see 8a). This square being guarded, White's rook is free to move along the rank, but 3 Rc3 threatens nothing and 3 Rf3 is met by 3...Qe7 (4 Rf8+ Qxf8 5 gx8Q+ Kxf8 6 Kxg6 Kg8 7 Kf5 b5 and Black will win the pawn ending). This leaves **3 Ra3**, and how will Black guard his back rank?

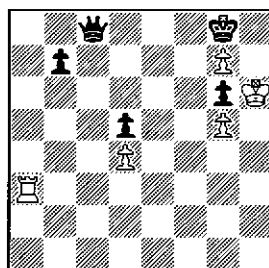
The natural move is 3...Qc8 keeping up the pressure on h3, but 4 Re3 is soon seen to draw: 4...Kf7 5 Rf3+ Kg8 (5...Ke7 6 Kh7 is probably won for White) 6 Re3 repeating, or 4...Qd7 5 Re8+ Qxe8 stalemate. This leaves **3...Qe8**, when the pressure is off h3 and the rook can move on the file. However, a nondescript move such as 4 Ra7 threatens nothing of importance and allows Black to play 4...b5, after which the freeing of b7 allows Black an easy win (given is 5 Ra6 Qb8 6 Ra2 Qb7). Necessary is **4 Ra6** (see 8b), when White threatens a quick self-stalemate by 5 Re6 Q- 6 Rc8+, and if 4...b6 then 5 Rxb6 and the threat is inescapable.



8b repeated - Qe8/Ra6

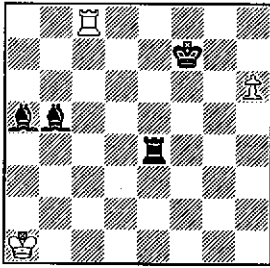


8c - Qb8/Ra2

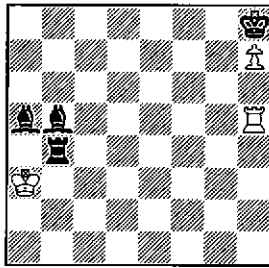


8d - Qc8/Ra3

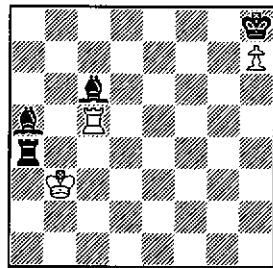
We have now reached the final tableau. Black's only hope is **4...Qb8** threatening h2, and White must reply **5 Ra2** giving 8c. This in turn threatens Re2 and Re8+, so Black is limited to ...Qc8 and ...Qe8. Suppose **5...Qc8**. White plays **6 Ra3** giving 8d, and now the threat is Re3 and Re8+; and if **6...Qe8** to meet this, **7 Ra6** takes us back to 8b again. It is one of the more exotic of rook-against-queen perpetuals.



9 - draw



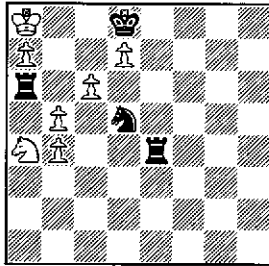
9a - 4 Ka3, after 5...Kh8



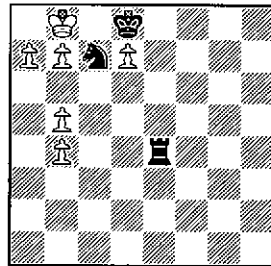
9b - main line, after 10 Rc5

G. M. Kasparyan's 9 shared 1st and 2nd Prizes in 1964. 1 h7, and if 1...Re8 then 2 Rc5 picks up a bishop. Hence 1...Rh4, and if 2 h8Q Rxb8 3 Rxb8 then 3...Bc3+. So White goes for the bishops, 2 Rc5, but Black can defend his front bishop by 2...Ra4+ 3 Kb2 (3 Kb1 Bd3+) Rb4+, and if 4 Ra3 then 4...Kg7 5 Rh5 Kh8 (see 9a). White will have to release the pressure, and Black will disentangle himself.

The answer? Play 4 Ka2! Kg7 5 Rh5 Kh8 6 Ka3, and we have 9a with Black to play. If 6...Rb1 then 7 Ka2 Rb4 8 Ka3 and Black has made no progress; if 6...Ra4+ then 7 Kb3 keeps up the pressure, and the bishop will be hounded (given is 7...Be8 8 Re5 Bd7 9 Rd5 Bc6 10 Rc5, see 9b). Black's only way out is to play 10...Rb4+ preparing a refuge at b5, but after 11 Ka3 Bb5 White simply plays 12 Rh5 repeating.



10 - draw



10a - after 4 Kb8

Jan Rusinek's 10 gained 3rd HM in 1970. 1 Nc5 forks the rooks, but 1...Rb6 threatens mate. 2 Nb7+ Rxb7 3 cxb7 Nc7+ 4 Kb8 gives 10a, and we have reached the heart of the study. If 4...Kxd7, the move is 5 a8N, and if 5...Nxb5 then 6 Nb6+ Kc6 7 Ka7 Re1 8 Nc4 and Black will get nowhere; not 5 a8B hoping for 5...Nxb5 stalemate, because Black has 5...Re6 with 6 b6 Rxb6 7 Ka7 Ra6+ 8 Kb8 Nd5 and mate on c6. If instead 4...Nxb5 then 5 a8B with an eventual draw (given is 5...Nd4 6 Ka7 Nc6+ 7 Kb6 Re6 8 b5 Nb8+ 9 Ka7 Nxd7 10 b8Q+ Nxb8 11 Kxb8 Rb6+ 12 Ka7), but not 5 a8N, when 5...Re6 wins the knight and again mate is not far away.

More next time.

*As usual, my thanks to Harold van der Heijden's invaluable "Endgame study database III" and to the BCPS Library. - JDB*