

Sarhan Guliev & Logman Guliev

Test Your Chess Skills

Practical Decisions in Critical Moments

New In Chess 2018

Contents

Explanation of symbols.	6
Authors' foreword.	7
Exercises.	9
Solutions.	65
Index of players	203
Bibliography	206

'Life is a game of chess.' – Miguel Cervantes

'We are in truth but pieces on this chess board of life, which in the end we leave, only to drop one by one into the grave of nothingness.' – Omar Khayyam

Authors' foreword

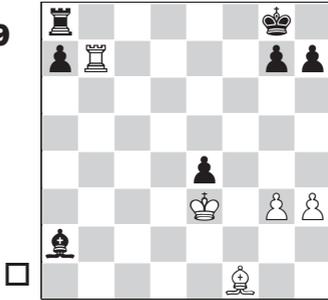
Anyone who began studying chess in the late 1970s or early 1980s will remember very well the remarkable book *The Best Move* by the two Czech Vlastimils – Hort and Jansa. The present authors are no exception. This unusual book, written in an original style (part puzzle book, part philosophical, somewhat satirical, but in all respects excellently done) remained forever in our memory. The years have passed and the 'former' readers (although we remain readers until the end of our days) and currently active players have themselves amassed many interesting games, filled with striking and instructive episodes. And sometimes they, as authors, want to share their finds with chess lovers. Thus was the present work born.

The authors have accompanied the examples with proverbs and quotations from well-known personalities, in a bid to underline the fact that chess and philosophy have much in common. We sincerely hope that in reading this book, you will again feel just what a wonderful game chess is, and will love it even more. New horizons of chess art will open up before you. The positions given are of varied character, and you will find striking tactical blows, deep strategic manoeuvres, opening traps, standard endgame devices, etc.

Good luck!

Sarhan & Logman Guliev
Baku, September 2018

89

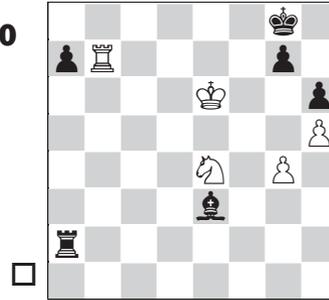


Is White's position:

- A) hopeless;
- B) equal;
- C) worse?

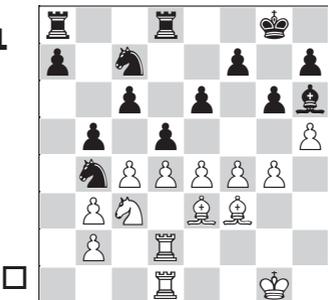
(solution on page 120)

90



Does White's active king
compensate for the pawn minus?
(solution on page 121)

91

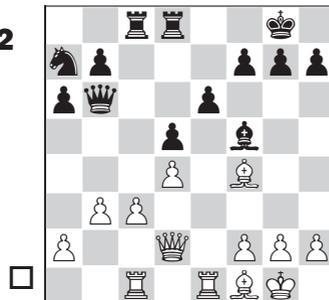


Is White's position:

- A) better;
- B) equal;
- C) worse?

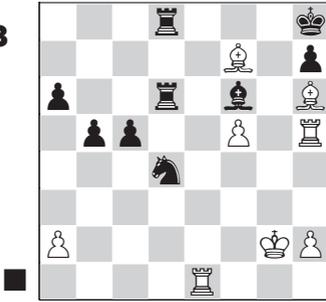
(solution on page 121)

92



Show a plan of play for White.
(solution on page 122)

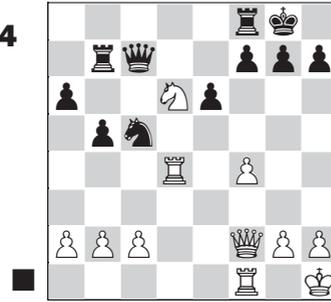
93



Is Black's position:

- A) worse;
 - B) better;
 - C) slightly better?
- (solution on page 122)

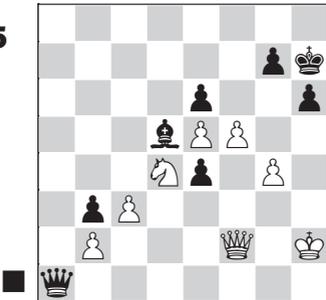
94



Is Black's position:

- A) better;
 - B) equal;
 - C) worse?
- (solution on page 123)

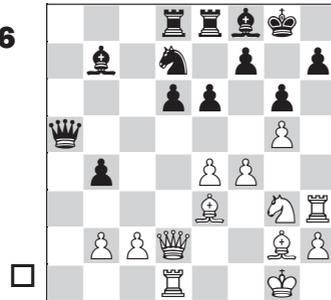
95



Is Black's position:

- A) better;
 - B) equal;
 - C) worse?
- (solution on page 123)

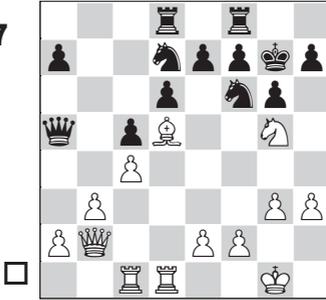
96



Is White's position:

- A) better;
 - B) equal;
 - C) worse?
- (solution on page 124)

97

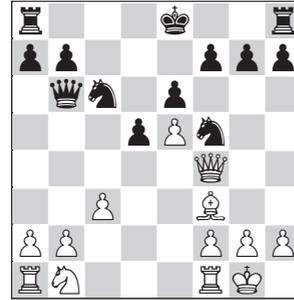


Is White's position:

- A) better;
- B) equal;
- C) worse?

(solution on page 125)

98



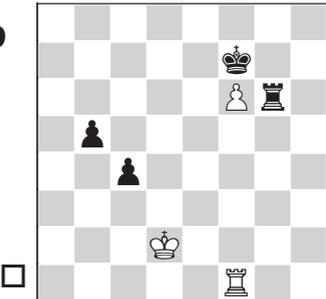
Is White's position:

- A) better;
- B) equal;
- C) worse?

Can he play 14. ♖xd5 ?

(solution on page 126)

99



Can White save himself?

(solution on page 126)

100



Is White's position:

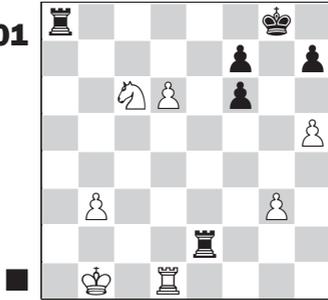
- A) better;
- B) equal;
- C) worse?

What should he play:

- A) 15. ♖xe7;
- B) 15. ♖f3;
- C) 15. ♖e4 ?

(solution on page 127)

101

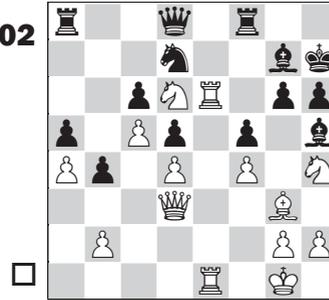


Is Black's position:

- A) hopeless;
- B) winning;
- C) equal?

(solution on page 127)

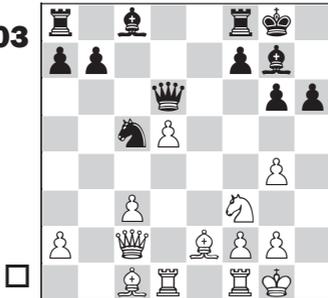
102



How can White realise his advantage?

(solution on page 128)

103

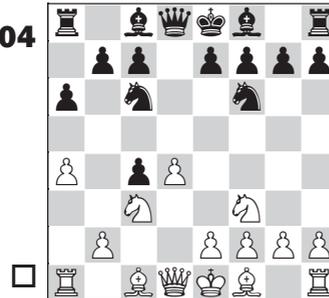


Is White's position:

- A) better;
- B) equal;
- C) worse?

(solution on page 129)

104

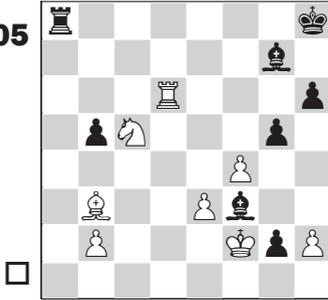


Is White's position:

- A) better;
- B) equal;
- C) worse?

(solution on page 129)

105

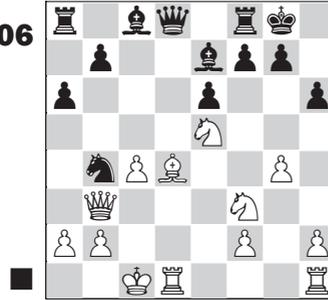


Is White's position:

- A) better;
- B) equal;
- C) hopeless?

(solution on page 130)

106

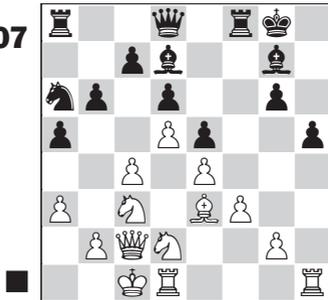


Is Black's position:

- A) better;
- B) equal;
- C) worse?

(solution on page 130)

107

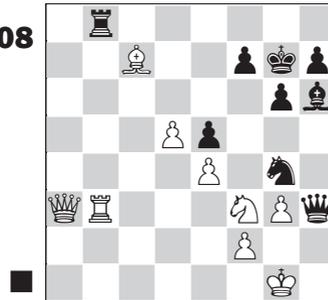


Is Black's position:

- A) better;
- B) equal;
- C) worse?

(solution on page 131)

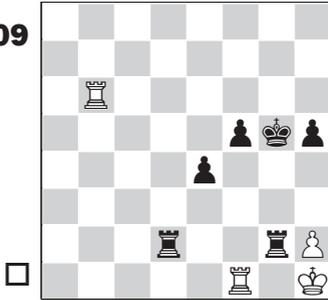
108



What should Black play?

(solution on page 132)

109

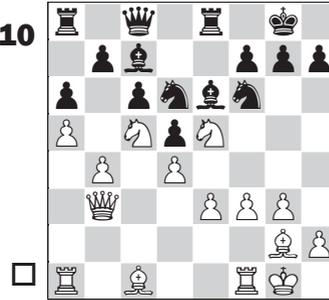


White chose 45.h4+. How should Black reply:

- A) 45...♔g4;
- B) 45...♔xh4 ?

(solution on page 132)

110

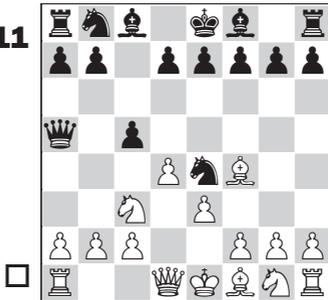


Is White's position:

- A) better;
- B) equal;
- C) worse ?

(solution on page 133)

111

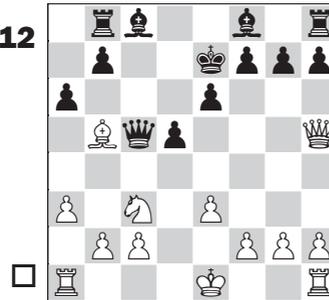


How should White continue:

- A) 6.♔d3;
- B) 6.♔e2 ?

(solution on page 133)

112

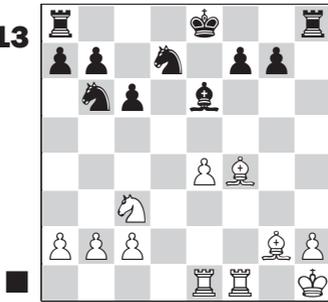


Is White's position:

- A) better;
- B) worse;
- C) winning ?

(solution on page 134)

113



Is Black's position:

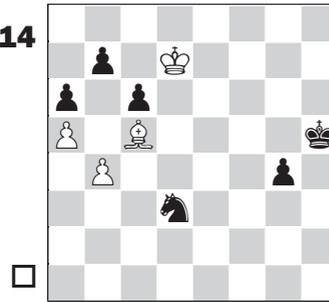
- A) worse;
- B) better;
- C) equal?

How should he continue:

- A) 21... 0-0-0;
- B) 21...0-0;
- C) 21...♗h3;
- D) 21...f6;
- E) 21...♘c4 ?

(solution on page 134)

114



Is White's position:

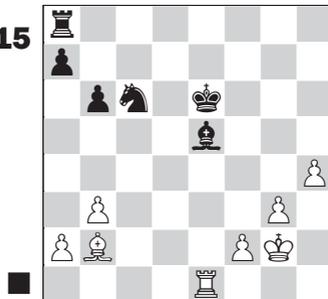
- A) equal;
- B) hopeless?

What should he play:

- A) 68.♖a7;
- B) 68.♖d6;
- C) 68.♖g1 ?

(solution on page 135)

115



Is Black's position:

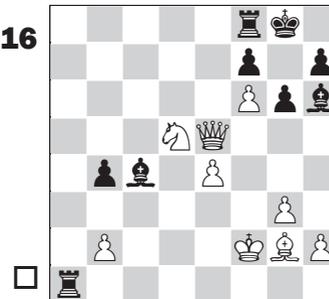
- A) better;
- B) lost;
- C) equal?

What should he play:

- A) 35...♗f6;
- B) 35...♗f5;
- C) 35...♗d5 ?

(solution on page 136)

116

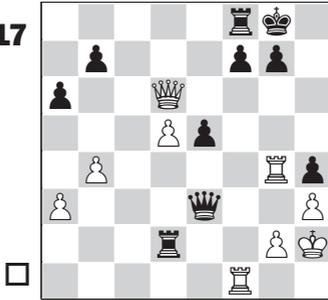


Is White's position:

- A) winning;
- B) hopeless;
- C) equal?

(solution on page 137)

117

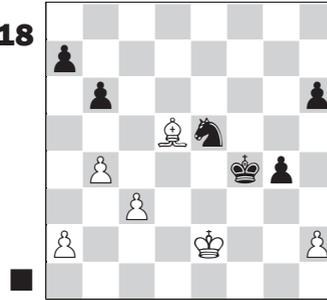


Is White's position:

- A) winning;
- B) equal;
- C) worse?

(solution on page 138)

118

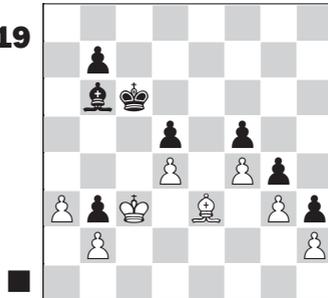


Is Black's position:

- A) better;
- B) worse;
- C) equal?

(solution on page 138)

119

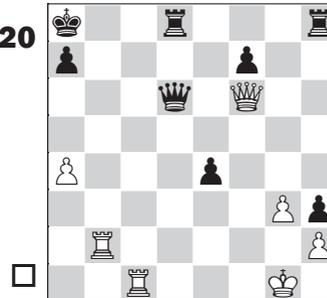


Is Black's position:

- A) lost;
- B) equal?

(solution on page 139)

120

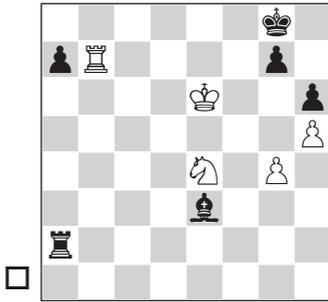


Is White's position:

- A) better;
- B) worse;
- C) equal?

(solution on page 140)

Solution 90

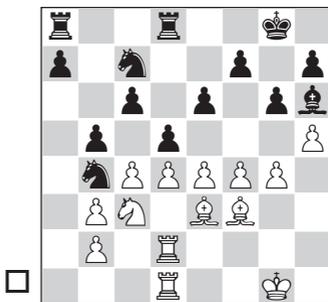


Yes, it compensates fully. In the game Samoliuk-S.Guliev (Moscow 1996) White ended the game nicely: **36. ♖f6+! gxf6 37. ♖b8+ ♔g7 38. ♖b7+ ♔g8 39. ♖b8+** With perpetual check.

Conclusion: How often have you regretted preferring material over activity?

Thus the eternal creative argument: material or the initiative? – Garry Kasparov

Solution 91



White, who has two bishops, has the advantage. In accordance with the classical canons of chess, he has advanced his pawns as far as possible to gain space (without

putting the pawns themselves in danger), creating the conditions for the bishops to work more actively. Now he needs to open the game and use his pieces to support the advanced pawns.

In the game S.Guliev-Drozdoz (Moscow 1996), by means of **23.hxg6 fxg6 24.cxd5 cxd5 25. ♖h2! ♕f8 26.e5! a5 27. ♗e2! a4 28.bxa4 bxa4 29.f5!**

White exploited the superiority of his position and went over to a strong attack. There followed: **29...a3 30.bxa3 ♖xa3 31. ♕g5 ♖d7 32. ♖f1 ♗c6 33. ♕f6! exf5 34.gxf5 gxf5 35. ♖g2+ ♕g7 36. ♖c1! ♖a6 37. ♗f4**

White's large advantage is obvious. **37...♗f8 38. ♕xd5 ♗xd5 39. ♕xg7+ ♗e7**

39...♖xg7 40. ♗e6+.

40. ♕f6+ ♗xf6 41. ♖g7+ ♗e8 42.exf6 ♖xg7+ 43.fxg7 ♗f7 44.d5 ♗d8

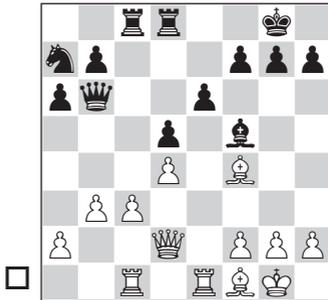
45. ♖c7+ ♗g8 46. ♖c8 ♖d6 47. ♗h5

And Black resigned.

The first to speak about the superiority of two bishops was the first World Champion, Wilhelm Steinitz. He worked out the method of play for the player with the bishops. The essence of this method is that, by advancing his pawns along the whole front, the stronger side takes away squares from the short-stepping knights of the opponent. – Alexander Panchenko

Conclusion: Do you have a special notebook of important practical positions and analyses, where we meet the advantage of the two bishops?

Solution 92



White has two bishops. How should he play, so they will be felt?

In the game S.Guliev-Iskusnyh (Moscow 1996) White played:

20.f3!

In this way, White attacks the enemy bishop, which is cut off from its other forces. He advances his pawns with tempo – at first on the kingside, and then on the other flank, seizing space for the successful use of his bishops.

20.♖e3 with the idea of ♗g3 is also decent for White.

There followed:

20...♗g6 21.g4 f6 22.♖h1 ♖e8 23.h4 ♜c6 24.♗e3

Also interesting was 24.h5 ♗f7

25.♗d3 and then ♖g1 and g4-g5.

24...♖c7 25.c4 ♜cd8 26.cxd5 exd5

27.h5 ♗f7 28.♖g2

White's space advantage is already obvious.

28...♜d7

Stronger was 28...♖b6.

29.♗f4 ♖b6 30.♜xe8+ ♗xe8 31.♜c5

♗f7 32.♖c3 ♖e7 33.a3 ♖e8 34.b4

♜d8 35.♗c7

35.♜c8!?

35...♖e6 36.♗xd8 ♜xd8 37.♗d3 g6

38.h6!?

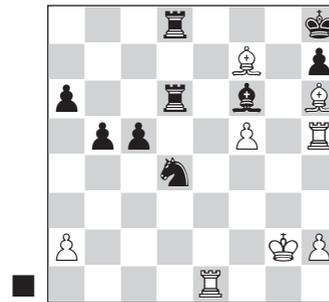
38.hxg6!?

38...f5?! 39.gxf5 gxf5 40.♖c1! ♖d6
41.♗xf5 ♖h8 42.♖g5 ♗g6 43.♜xd5!
 And Black resigned.

Conclusion: One must carefully study the different ways of exploiting the two bishops in positions with a space advantage.

If the front door to the hall is open, avoid the back door. – Henrik Ibsen

Solution 93



An extra pawn, well-placed and coordinated pieces, a strong passed c-pawn and the weakened position of the white king all allow us to conclude that Black has a winning position! Thanks to his two bishops, White has certain chances of attack, but at the moment, these have come to nothing. Now it is time for Black to begin his attack!

In the game Belikov-L.Guliev (Moscow 1996) Black quickly won, by combining the advance of the c-pawn with an attack on the white king.

32...c4 33.♗f4 ♖6d7 34.♗e8

White, in order somehow to sustain the flame of his attack, tries a regrouping of his forces, but it is too late.

34...♖g7+ 35.♖h3?! ♜f3! 36.♜f1

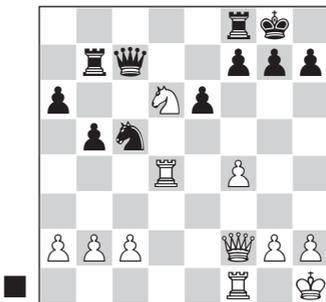
♜g1+ 37.♜xg1 ♜xg1 38.♗g6 ♜d7

39. ♖h6 c3! **40.** ♗e8 ♜d3+ **41.** ♗g3
 ♜dxg3+! **42.** hxg3 ♖h1+ 0-1

Conclusion: Chess has many positions in which one does not need to calculate long variations in order to find the correct plan or best move. But how can one identify these positions?

We think in generalities, but live in specifics. – Alfred North Whitehead

Solution 94



Black's position is better. The reason is the unfortunate white knight, trapped in the enemy position.

After

1... ♖b6!

in the game Galdunts-L.Guliev (Moscow 1996) White could not cope with his emotions and blundered:

2. ♜fd1?

Correct was 2. ♗e4 ♗xe4 3. ♜xe4 ♜d8 (or 3... ♜c6), settling for the fact that Black has some advantage, thanks to his control of the d-file. Now, however, Black wins a pawn, thanks to the fork.

2... ♜xd6! 3. ♜xd6 ♗e4 4. ♖d4

4. ♖b6? ♖xb6 5. ♜xb6 ♗f2+.

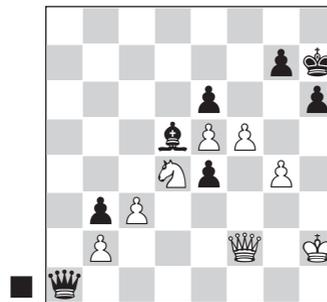
4... ♗xd6 5. ♖xd6 ♖xc2

And after a long battle, Black realised his extra pawn.

Conclusion: Look out carefully for any chance to land a fork, especially with a knight!

The ability to wait perhaps consists only in the ability to prevent small mistakes becoming bigger ones. – E. Bogat

Solution 95



In positions where the players have castled on opposite sides, in the great majority of cases the outcome depends on which side first begins the attack. The attacking side dictates the conditions of the game.

It is obligatory to act more or less aggressively, as soon as given the chance. The initiative should be seized at the first opportunity. The initiative is an advantage. – José Raul Capablanca

The present position is just such an example. It occurred in the game Zaitsev-L.Guliev (Moscow 1996). If it were White's move, he would be able to turn the scales in his favour with 1.fxe6. But it is Black to move! This fact gives him a large advantage.

1... e3! 2. ♖e2 ♖h1+ 3. ♗g3

And now after 3... ♖g1+! 4.♔h3 (4.♘h4 ♖f2+) 4...♖f2! there is no defence against the threat of 5...♙g2+ and 6...♙f3+.

In the game, however, Black left the main path. Instead of 3...♖g1+ he played

3... ♖e4?!

but in time-trouble, after mutual errors and adventures, he won all the same:

4.♘xe6 ♙c4 5.♖f3 ♖b1?! 6.g5?

6.♖xe3!.

6... ♖g1+ 7.♔f4 ♖f2 8.g6+ ♔h8

etc.

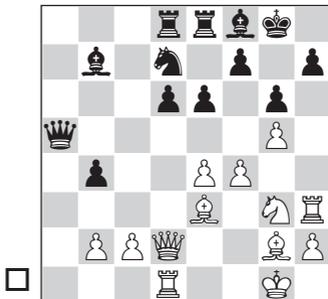
There are heroes among the lower ranks, too. – Alexander Suvorov

The soldierly heroism of the e3-pawn in this example inevitably reminds one of the great commander's words.

The player with the initiative is obliged to develop it actively, otherwise it will pass to the opponent. – Wilhelm Steinitz

Conclusion: Bravery is a state of mind, not a matter of titles.

Solution 96



We have before us a typical Sicilian position, where White usually

attacks on the kingside and Black tries to organise counterplay in the centre and on the queenside. The white pieces are better mobilised (especially on the kingside), and so his position is preferable. In the game L.Guliev-Dragomaretsky (Moscow 1996) White chose an original path:

23.♘h1!!

Before the decisive battle, White regroups his forces. The knight transfers to g4 and the queen to f2.

23... ♙g7

Possibly he should have tried to open play in the centre with 23... f5!?, exploiting the temporary absence of the knight from the game.

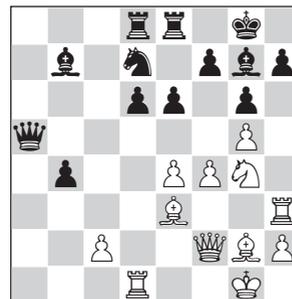
24.♘f2 ♙xb2

White has sacrificed a pawn, with the aim of improving the positions of his pieces. Perhaps Black should have declined and tried to prevent White from implementing his plan with 24...f5.

25.♘g4 ♙g7

Now 25...f5 is dangerous because of 26.exf5 ♙xg2 27.♘h6+.

26. ♖f2



White's attack takes on a dangerous character. The threat is 27.♖h4, after which it is not obvious how Black can defend. Therefore he

sacrifices the exchange, trying to transfer play to the centre and at the same time deflect White from the kingside.

26...f5 27.gxf6 ♘xf6 28.♗xf6+ ♕xf6
29.♕b6 ♖a8 30.♕xd8 ♖xd8



31. ♖g3?

Although White has an extra exchange and the better game, the position remains very complicated since Black has a pawn and the two bishops. White needs to be accurate.

A) For example, the variation
 31.e5? dxe5 32.♖xd8+ ♕xd8 33.♕xb7
 (33.fxe5? ♖a1+! 34.♕f1 ♖a5!-+)
 33...♖xb7 and ...♕b6 next favours
 Black;

B) White should have played
 31.f5!, after which he is better.

31... ♖c8

Black could have taken the pawn:
 31...♕xe4 32.♕xe4 ♖xe4 33.♖e3 ♖f5.

32. ♖b3!? ♗h8 33. ♖xb4 ♖xc2

34. ♖hd3!

The black bishops cannot show their strength. The loose position of the black pieces and White's extra exchange decide the assessment of the position.

34... ♖d7 35. ♖xd6 ♕c3 36. ♖a3!

36. ♖c5?? ♖xd1+ 37. ♖xd1 ♖xd1+
38. ♗f2 ♕d4+.

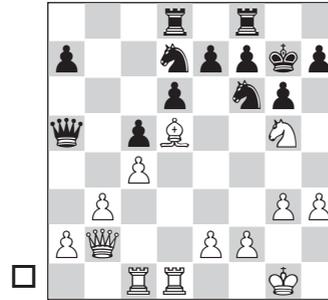
36... ♖f7 37. ♖c1 ♕b2 38. ♖a8+!

♕xa8 39. ♖xc2 1-0

Conclusion: Do not be afraid to play original moves. Often they are strongest.

In unusual positions, normal moves rarely work. – Aron Nimzowitsch

Solution 97



White is better. His active play in the centre and on the kingside is more important than Black's play on the queenside and along the b-file.

In the game S.Guliev-Zaitsev (Moscow 1996) there followed:
22.f4! h6 23.♗e4 ♗h7 24.♗xf6+
♗xf6 25.♕f3 ♖c7 26.♖d2! ♖g8
 Black goes over completely to defence. If he tries to organise play on the b-file, he will not be able to cope with White's kingside initiative. For example: 26...a5 27.e3 and g4-g5 etc. For positions of this type, a particularly instructive example is the classic game Keres-Szabo (Hastings 1954/55).

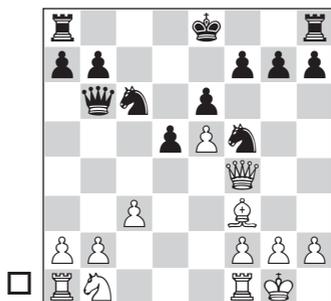
27. ♗h2 g5 28. e3 ♖g7 29. ♖g1!

And White obtained a large positional advantage.

Conclusion: In studying opening systems, it is valuable to be familiar with the games of specialists in that opening. Why reinvent the wheel?

He who forgets the past is condemned to repeat it. – Santayana

Solution 98



Black's position is better. White has problems defending the pawns on b2 and e5.

In the game Vorotnikov-S.Guliev (Moscow 1996) White tried to solve his problems in a radical way, but after

14. ♖xd5? exd5 15. ♚xf5 ♚xb2!
16. e6 0-0! 17. ♚xd5 ♚xa1 18. ♚d2
fxe6 19. ♘a3 ♖ad8! 20. ♚c2 ♘d4!
21. cxd4

(21. ♚d3 ♚xc3!)

21... ♚xd4

Black had a winning position.

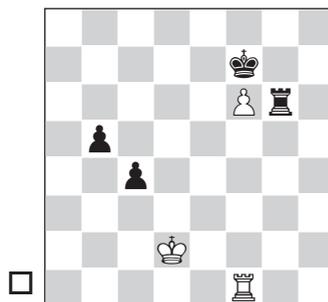
White should have played 14.b4!

(intending the manoeuvre ♘b1-d2-b3) to fight for equality, although even here, after 14... ♗fe7 or 14... ♗ce7, with the threat 15... ♗g6, Black's chances are superior.

Conclusion: One must be able to defend!

For success, the defender needs to be able to play combinatively better than the attacker, seeing all the critical variations and calculating them deeply! – Bent Larsen

Solution 99



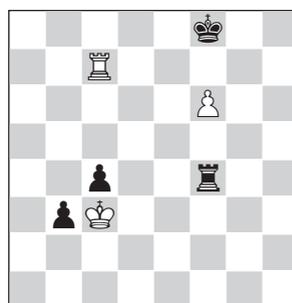
The position is drawn, although it looks bad for White. But thanks to the strong position of his rook and the discoordinated black pieces, he is able to hold.

The game S.Guliev-Zaitsev (Moscow 1996) ended as follows:

49. ♖f5! b4 50. ♖b5 ♖g2+ 51. ♔c1 b3
52. ♖b6 ♖a2 53. ♖c6 ♖a4

53... ♖c2+ 54. ♔b1 c3 55. ♖b6! ♖b2+ 56. ♔c1 ♔g6 57. ♖c6! – this is a position of reciprocal zugzwang.

54. ♖b6 ♖a1+ 55. ♔b2 ♖a2+ 56. ♔b1
♖f2 57. ♖c6 ♖c2 58. ♖b6 ♖f2 59. ♖c6
♖f4 60. ♔b2 ♔e8 61. ♔c3 ♔d7
62. ♖b6 ♔e8 63. ♖b7 ♔f8 64. ♖c7

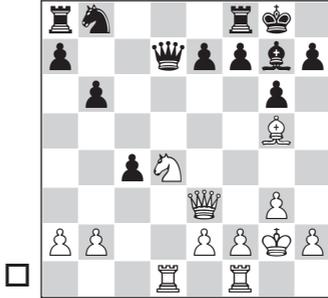


And a draw was agreed.

Conclusion: How many theoretical positions in rook endings do you remember?

A high quality of endgame technique is an unmistakable mark of chess mastery.
– Mikhail Botvinnik

Solution 100



White's pieces are very actively placed. However, he is a pawn down and his king is exposed, which may allow the opponent to gain a tempo at some point. White's queenside pawns are also weak. On the other hand, Black has not yet developed his queenside. These factors show that the game is sharp and dynamic. To assess such positions, one must be able to calculate accurately and deeply, as well as correctly judging the underlying course of the game. In the game S.Guliev-Zaitsev (Moscow 1996) White went in for the most principled variation, winning the exchange, but the strong pawn mass in the centre forces one to prefer Black's position.

15. ♖f3 e5

Better was 15... ♙xd4! 16. ♖xa8 ♘c6 ♗xd4 ♘xd4 ♖e4 ♗e8.

16. ♖xa8

16. ♘b5 ♖c6!, but 16. ♘e6 is slightly better for White: after 16... ♖xe6 17. ♖xa8 ♘c6, White has 18. ♖b7.

16...exd4 17. ♖f3 ♘c6 **18.** ♙f6 ♙xf6 **19.** ♖xf6 ♗e8 **20.** ♗fe1 ♗e5 **21.** e4 ♗a5?!=

In the initial position, White should have chosen another continuation, promising equality – this would have accorded more with the requirements of the position:

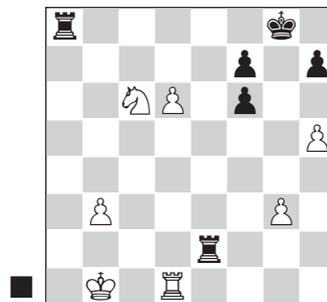
15. ♖xe7 ♖xe7 (15... ♗e8?! 16. ♖xd7 ♘xd7 17. ♘b5!) **16.** ♙xe7 ♗e8 **17.** ♙a3! (17. ♙g5!?) **17...♘a6! 18.** e3=.

Also interesting is 15. ♖e4, to keep the knight protected (compared to the game, 15... ♙xd4 is not attractive anymore) and with the idea to meet 15...e5 with 16. ♘e6.

Conclusion: Always consider very carefully whether it is correct to disturb the balance.

The nature of the struggle in equal positions differs sharply from the dynamic change of situations that is inherent in positions with an advantage for one of the players. In such positions, the struggle, as a rule, should be conducted much more calmly. Ill-considered actions can immediately tip the scales in favour of the opponent, so the best way to fight when the forces are equal is long manoeuvring – striving to create weaknesses in the enemy position, whilst avoiding the weakening of one's own position. – Oleg Chebotarev

Solution 101

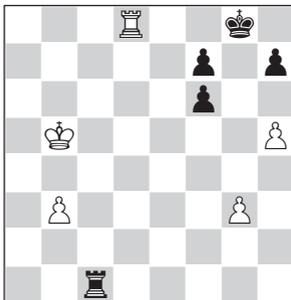


Each side has his plusses. White has an advanced, protected passed pawn, but his king is in a dangerous situation. The black rooks have good chances of organising an attack. In such positions, it is difficult to keep one's head and remain objective! As well as ability and knowledge, one also needs a strong character to take the correct decision.

In the game Drozdov-S.Guliev (Moscow 1996) Black overestimated the strength of his rooks and played: **35...♖ea2?!**

After

36.♞d3! ♖a1+ 37.♔b2 ♜8a2+ 38.♕c3 ♜c1+ 39.♕b4 ♜xc6 40.d7 ♖a8 41.♕b5 ♜c1 42.d8♚+ ♜xd8 43.♜xd8+



he reached a difficult rook ending, where he eventually lost after failing to exploit all of his resources. However, if he had kept his cool, he would probably have realised that the position is equal, but that he needs to control the second rank.

By means of **35...♜aa2! 36.d7 ♜ab2+** Black gives perpetual check. The following variations show that White must also settle for this outcome:

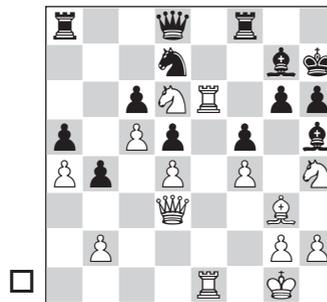
A) **36.♞d3 ♜eb2+ 37.♔c1 ♜c2+ (37...♜g2!-+) 38.♔d1? ♜g2-+;** or

B) **36.♘b4 ♜ad2 (36...♜eb2+ 37.♔c1 ♜a1+) 37.♔c1 ♜xd1+ 38.♔xd1 ♜e6** with advantage to Black, etc.

Conclusion: The miser pays twice.

The aim of all manoeuvres on open files is to penetrate to the enemy camp on the 7th or 8th ranks. – Aron Nimzowitsch

Solution 102



As a rule, a successfully conducted attack should end with a tactical blow. This usually lands at the most vulnerable point in the enemy position (with rare exceptions). Another important factor is the concentration of the attacking forces in that region.

Even a casual glance at the diagram position is enough to reveal that White has a large advantage and a great likelihood of a combination. In the game L.Guliev-Terekhin (St Petersburg 1997) White decided that the time had come to act!

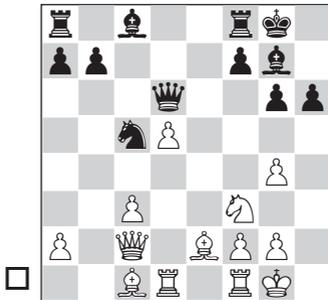
25.♘xf5! gxf5 26.♘f5 ♘f6 27.♞d6 ♜b8 28.♜e7 ♖a7 29.♘g7+ ♙g6 30.♚e2 ♜xe7 31.♚e7 ♜f7 32.♚e3 ♘e4 33.♜xg6 ♜xg7 34.f5 ♜f8 35.♚xh6+ ♔g8 36.♙e5

And Black resigned.

Conclusion: General tasks are achieved through strategy, specific ones through tactics.

Tactics in the service of strategy. – Max Euwe

Solution 103



Thanks to the extra pawn and strong passed pawn on d5, the assessment is not in doubt: White has the advantage. The main things one needs to note are the weak white pawns (doubled and isolated pawns), the lack of obvious weaknesses in Black's camp and the more active position of the black pieces. These factors give Black reasonable hopes of compensation for the pawn. In the game Zakharevich-L.Guliev (St Petersburg 1997) Black even considered his position satisfactory. He hoped to be able soon to place his rooks satisfactorily and obtain good play. However, White's next move came as a great surprise:

18. ♖d4!

A very strong move: the rook defends the g4-pawn, creates the threat of 19. ♕f4, and also gives the game a dynamic character. Black should probably decline the 'Trojan Horse' and go for one of 18...

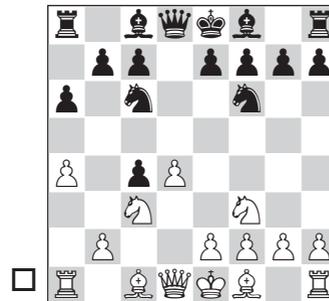
b6, 18... ♗d7, 18...g5 etc. But at the board, he could not resist the lure of material:

18... ♗xd4 19.cxd4 ♖a6 20. ♗e5! ♜d8 21. ♛d2! ♜f8 22. ♕c4 ♗c7 23.d6 ♗e6 24. ♕a3 ♜g7 25. ♜e1 g5 26. ♛d3 ♜f6 27. ♜e3 ♜g7 28. ♜f3 f6 29.d7 1-0

Conclusion: Art requires sacrifices!

In any sphere, success requires a little bit of madness. – William Shakespeare

Solution 104



The game is in the early opening stages, and we should first of all develop the pieces.

A) However, after the direct 6.e4 Black seizes the initiative with 6... ♗g4 7.d5 ♗a5!;

B) 6.d5 ♗a5! is also favourable to Black;

C) whilst after 6.e3 ♗a5 7. ♗d2 ♕e6 we get a complicated game with mutual chances, Even so, White's position is superior!

In the game S.Guliev-Mirzoev (Baku 1997) White, temporarily forgetting about development, played **6.a5!**

This ensures him the better chances. The game continued as follows:

6...♙g4 7.d5 ♘a7 8.♗e5!?

It was also worth considering 8.e4.

8...♗b5 9.♗xg4 ♗xg4 10.e4 ♗e5

11.f4 ♗d3+ 12.♙xd3 cxd3 13.♖xd3

c6 14.0-0 e6 15.♗d1

Even stronger was 15.♗xb5 axb5

16.♙e3!.

15...exd5 16.exd5 ♙c5+ 17.♖h1 0-0

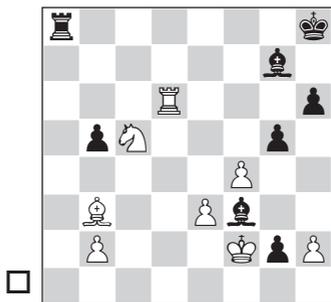
18.♗e4 ♙d4 19.♗g5 g6 20.♖h3!

And White obtained a serious attack.

Conclusion: Sometimes the circumstances themselves prompt the correct decision.

The smallest fighting unit on the chessboard, the 'staunch wooden soldier', the pawn, is ready without hesitation to perform any task of the commander. – Alexander Koblencs

Solution 105



In this situation, 'playing by nose' is not sufficient. It is essential to calculate variations accurately and only then take a decision! If, after doing this, you came to the conclusion that the game is equal, you are right!

In the game S.Guliev-Yagupov (Moscow 1997) White, by means of **37.♙d5**

managed to head to drawing waters. The continuation 37.f5

♙f8 or 37.♗e6 g4! 38.♗xg7 (Black threatened ...♙g7-f6-h4#) 38...♗a1 looks dangerous.

37...♗a1 38.♗d8+ ♙f8!!

38...♖h7? 39.♖xf3! g1♖ 40.♙e4#.

39.♗xf8+ ♖g7 40.♗f7+ ♖h8 41.♗f8+ ♖g7

The only move; after 41...♖h7 42.♖xf3 g1♖ 43.♙e4+ ♖g7 44.♗e6# Black again gets mated.

42.♗e6+ ♖g6 43.f5+ ♖h7

43...♖h5? 44.♙xf3+.

44.♖xf3 g1♖ 45.♗f7+ ♖g8 46.♗f8+ ♖h7 47.♗f7+

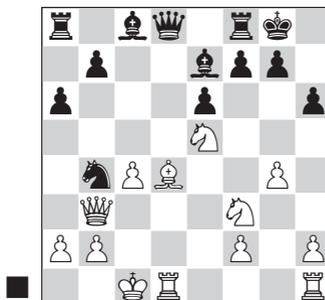
And here a draw agreement followed.

Conclusion: Risk is a noble cause.

... with correct play, one equal position leads to another. – Wilhelm Steinitz

When such adventures end in a draw, one cannot help recalling Steinitz's words. Although, if one looks at the diagram position, it is quite obvious that, during the game, each side was taking a considerable risk and did not play very accurately.

Solution 106



White's pieces occupy active positions, and at first glance, he has

a large advantage. But by delving into the position more deeply, one can understand that Black is better. The position of the white king is weak and if Black manages to organise an attack on the queenside, then his superiority will become clear. For this, he needs first of all to avoid the exchange of queens.

With this aim, in the game Lastin-S.Guliev (Moscow 1997) Black played

19... ♖e8!

After 19... ♖c7?! 20.a3 ♘c6 21. ♖b6! White achieves the desired exchange.

20.a3

Otherwise Black obtains a strong attack by playing ...f7-f6.

20... ♘c6 21. ♘c6?!

Now the black attack develops unhindered. White should have played solidly, choosing between 21. ♖b6 and 21. ♖b6.

21... ♖xc6 22. ♘e5 ♖e8 23.f4 b5!

24.c5 ♖b7 25. ♖hg1 ♖d5 26. ♖c2



26...b4! 27.axb4 a5 28.bxa5 ♖xa5

29. ♖g3 ♖b5! 30. ♖d2 ♖d8

And Black obtained a winning attack.

Conclusion: Do you remember the methods of conducting the fight: attack, defence, manoeuvring?

Combining attack and defence is one of the precious and essential qualities of every player. Being too absorbed in one's own thoughts usually leads to an underestimation of the opponent's actions. – David Bronstein

Solution 107



Black is somewhat better. In such positions, typically arising from a King's Indian, much depends on the prospects for Black's dark-squared bishop. If it manages to secure active play or be exchanged off, then Black generally has a good game, whereas in the opposite case, he often gradually falls into a difficult position. Here, with the help of a typical manoeuvre, Black succeeds in exchanging off the bishop and create play on the kingside dark squares.

In the encounter Loginov-L.Guliev (St Petersburg 1997) Black achieved his aim as follows:

18... ♖f6! 19. ♖b1 ♖g5 20. ♘f1 ♘c5

21. ♖f2 ♖xe3 22. ♖xe3 ♖f6 23. ♘d2

♖f4 24. ♖e2 ♖f7 25.g3 ♖f6 26. ♖h2

a4 27. ♖e3 ♖af8 28. ♖f1 ♖h7 29. ♖a2

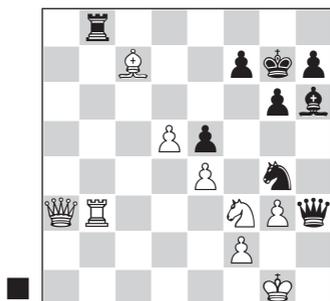
g5 30. ♖fh1 h4 31. ♖e1 ♘d3 32. ♖e3

♘c5 33. ♖e1 ♘d3 34. ♖e3 ♘c5 1/2-1/2

Conclusion: How to determine the boundaries of self-belief?

Moving the pieces lightly, without going into the game deeply, I was committed to believing that the right thing would eventually prevail. – Siegbert Tarrasch

Solution 108



In the game Vaulin-L.Guliev (Smolensk 1997), the black forces are all pointing at the white king. In such situations, there is very often a decisive blow...

31... ♖e3! 32. ♕xe5+

Nor is he saved after 32.fxe3 ♔xg3+ or 32.♖xe3 ♖b1+ 33.♗e1 ♔h2+.

32... ♗xe5

And White resigned in view of the following variations:

A) 33.♗xe5 ♖xb3 34.♔xb3 ♔xg3+ 35.♗h1 ♔h3+ 36.♗g1 ♕xf2+;

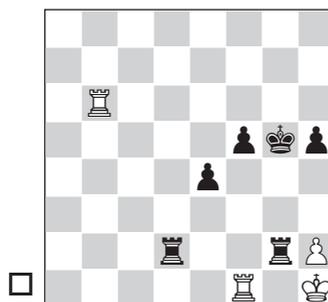
B) 33.♖xe3 ♗xf3+ 34.♖xf3 ♖b1+.

In this example, it is instructive that all of the black pieces were taking part in the attack as a unified group. But the most honourable place in this ensemble goes to the rook. This was the piece that destroyed the main white forces on the queenside!

Conclusion: Chess has its heroes too.

Whenever a person does something stupid, he does it out of the highest motives. – Oscar Wilde

Solution 109



White's position looks hopeless. However, it is always too early to resign. He still has some resources to put up resistance! He can enter a single-rook ending, where there are some chances of saving the game, and there are also stalemate motifs. After spotting an interesting trap, which is easy to miss in a practical game, White decided to try his last chance.

In the game L.Guliev-Shchekachev (Smolensk 1997) White played:

45.h4+!?

Black, already mentally having chalked up the point in the tournament table, did not look deeply into the position at all, and fell for the trap:

45... ♗g4??

And White was twice able to exploit the motif of the 'desperado rook', to set up a stalemate:

46. ♖g6+ ♗h3 47. ♖f3+!!

And the players agreed a draw, because of the following variations:

A) 47...exf3 48.♖g3+ ♗xh4

49.♖g4+ ♗h3 50.♖g3+;

B) 47...♗xh4 48.♖h3+ ♗xh3

49.♖g3+ ♗h4 50.♖g4+.

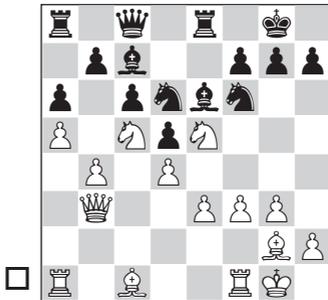
Correct was **45... ♗xh4! 46. ♖xf5**

♖h2+, and Black retains every chance of winning the game.

Conclusion: One must fight to the very end!

Try every possibility. It is always important to know that you have done everything possible. – Charles Dickens

Solution 110



White is better. His active knights and the possibility of beginning a pawn storm on the kingside determine his advantage. By means of **21.g4!** White could have started a strong attack. It is not easy for Black to find a satisfactory regrouping of his minor pieces. However, in the game S.Guliev-Timman (Pula 1997) White chose **21.♖d1?**

and after the moves

21...♙h3 22.♞a2 ♙xg2 23.♞xg2 ♘f5 the game became sharper. There followed:

24.f4?

White should probably have gone for **24.g4 ♘h4 25.♞e2** with sharp play.

24...♘d6 25.g4

White finally plays this move, but it's rather late.

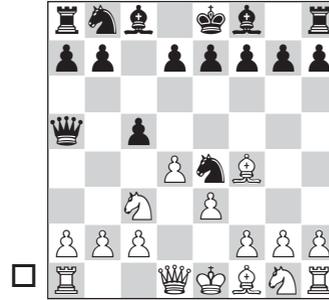
25...♘fe4

And Black had no problems at all. Having missed the chance to play **21.g4!** at the right time, White played it in an inferior form!

Conclusion: Active moves played at the wrong time are like over-ripe fruit.

Everything at its right time. (proverb)

Solution 111



If you suggested **6.♙d3?**, then you fell for a trap and lost: **6...♘xc3 7.♞d2 cxd4 8.exd4 e5!! 9.♙xe5 ♙b4.** In the game S.Guliev-Vaisser (Pula 1997), White, having seen this hidden trap, played

6.♘e2!

and after the moves

6...d5?!

(more solid was **6...cxd4 7.exd4 d5**)

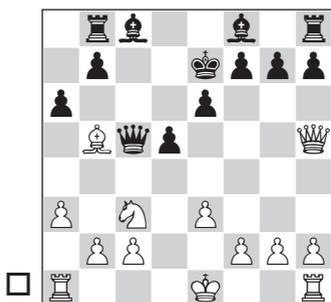
7.dxc5! e6 8.a3!

obtained the better game. As the saying goes, do not dig a pit for someone else, because you might fall into it yourself. In life generally, this is bad and can be very dangerous, although in chess, there is sometimes value in falling into trouble, so as to acquire experience of defending difficult positions.

Conclusion: After the opponent has made his move, it is useful to ask yourself: what does he want?

He who expects too much from the opening gets nothing. – Hans Kmoch

Solution 112



White has a decisive advantage. However, if he is cowardly and retreats the bishop, then after 13. ♖d3 f5!, and then ...g7-g6 and ...♖g7, Black will be able to consolidate his position. Therefore in the game S.Guliev-Vaisser (Pula 1997) White, after long thought, decided on the sharp continuation

13.0-0-0

after which White's attack is hardly to be resisted.

However, **13. ♖e5!** was even stronger, for example: 13... ♗d6 14. ♘xd5+ ♕d8 15. ♗g5+ f6 16. ♘xf6 h6 17. ♗h4+-.

There followed

13...axb5 14. ♖e5 f6

(14... ♖a8 15. ♘xd5+ ♕e8 16. ♘c7+)

15. ♖xb8

and White obtained a winning position.

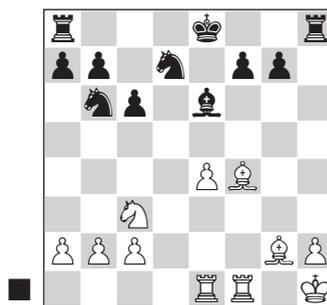
A) We should note that, in the event of 13... ♗c7 14. ♖xd5 axb5 15. ♘xb5 ♗c6 (after 15... ♗a5 16. ♖d3, with the threats 17. ♗c5 and 17. ♖hd1, or 15... ♗b6 16. ♖d6 ♗a5 17. ♖hd1, White's advantage is not in doubt) 16. ♖c5 ♗xg2 17. ♖d1 ♗xf2 18. ♗e5 the black position is very difficult;

B) If 13...f5, then 14.e4! axb5 15.exf5 is very strong for White.

Conclusion: If the enemy king is trapped in the centre and unable to castle, then attack it decisively, not being afraid of sacrifices!

... the ability to play combinations, to find in any position the most purposeful move, leading most quickly to the fulfilment of the plan, is above all principles – more than that, it is the **ONLY** principle in chess, that is capable of definition. – Mikhail Chigorin

Solution 113



Certainly, the position is very complicated. Black, with the exception of the 'hole' on d6, has a position with no weaknesses and a healthy pawn structure. White has two bishops and good development. The next few moves should determine the picture of the game. If Black manages to establish a blockade on the e5-square (for example with ...f7-f6 and ...♘e5), his position will be better.

In the game Kengis-S.Guliev (Pula 1997) Black thought about all this for a long time and eventually even fell into time trouble. A significant role in this was played by the next choice of move.

There followed:

21...0-0-0

A) In the event of 21...♙h3 22.♙xh3 ♜xh3 23.e5! ♘c5 24.♙g2! (24.♙e3! ♘e6?! 25.♙xb6 axb6 26.♘e4 with attack) 24...♜h8 25.b4 ♘e6 26.♘e4!

White's advantage is not in doubt;

B) Also after 21...♘c4 22.e5 ♘xb2 23.♜b1 ♘c4 24.♜xb7 ♘cxe5 25.♜e1 f6 26.♙xe5 fxe5 (26...♘xe5 27.♜xg7!) 27.♙xc6 Black's position is difficult;

C) He is also under pressure after 21...f6 22.e5 f5 23.♙g5! (also interesting is 23.♜e3!? with the idea of transferring the rook to g3);

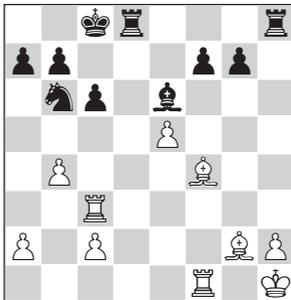
D) Only the sensible 21...0-0 allows Black to retain equality, e.g. 22.e5 ♘d5 (22...♜fe8!?) 23.♘xd5 cxd5!, and Black is perfectly all right. **22.e5 ♘c5?!**

More solid was 22...♘d5! 23.♘xd5 cxd5, although here too, after 24.♜e3! ♖b8 25.♜g3 White's pressure is obvious.

23.b4?!

23.♙e3!±.

23...♘ca4 24.♜e3? ♘xc3 25.♜xc3

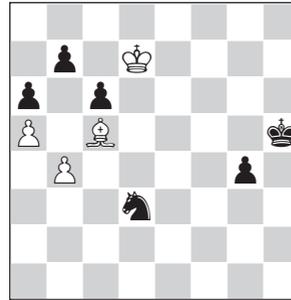


And now instead of 25...♘d7? 26.b5!, after which White's advantage assumed real proportions, Black could have got the better chances after 25...♜d4 26.a3 ♘d5 27.♙xd5 ♙xd5+ 28.♙g1 ♜h4 29.♙g3 ♜he4.

Conclusion: By studying one's own games, one can learn many wise lessons!

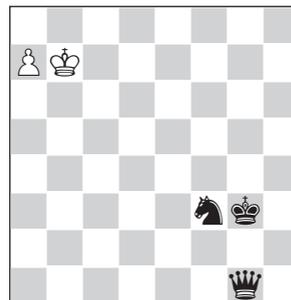
Always play honestly, if you have all the trumps in your hand. – Oscar Wilde

Solution 114



White's position is hopeless. His counterplay is insufficient to make a draw. However, by stubborn resistance, he can force his opponent to be extremely accurate. This can be achieved as follows:

68.♙d6! ♖h4 69.♙c7 g3 70.♙xb7
 (70.♙xg3+ ♙xg3 71.♙xb7 ♘xb4 72.♙b6 ♙f4 73.♙c5 ♙e5 74.♙xb4 ♙d4–+) **70...g2 71.♙h2 ♘xb4**
72.♙b6 ♙h3 73.♙g1 ♙g3 74.♙c5 ♘d3+
75.♙xc6! (75.♙b6 ♘f2 76.♙xa6 ♘h3 77.♙b7 ♘xg1 78.a6 ♘f3 79.a7 g1♙ 80.a8♙ ♙b1+! 81.♙c7 ♙h7+ 82.♙b6 ♘e5–+) **75...♘f2**
76.♙b6 ♘h3 77.♙xa6! ♘xg1 78.♙b7 ♘f3 79.a6 g1♙ 80.a7!.



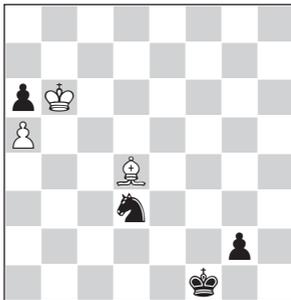
analysis diagram

As we see, an unusual position is reached almost by force. Black has

queen and knight, and White has a strong pawn on a7. I finished my analysis here and for a long time considered the position drawn. When I was trainer of the Turkish team, I once showed my analysis to IM Atakishi, and he found a surprising way to win for Black. It involves allowing the a7-pawn to promote. The win is as follows: 80...♖b1+ 81.♔a6 ♜d3+ 82.♗b7 ♜d7+ 83.♗b8 ♘e5—+.

But the game S.Guliev-Timman (Pula 1997) continued:

68.♙g1? ♗xb4 69.♗c7 g3 70.♗xb7 ♗g4 71.♗b6 ♗f3 72.♗c5 ♗g2 73.♙d4 ♗d3+ 74.♗xc6 74.♗b6 c5! 75.♗xa6 cxd4 76.♗b5 ♗f2 77.a6 g2 78.a7 g1♖ 79.a8♖ ♖c1—+.
74...♗f1 75.♗b6 g2



Black is ready to play 76...♗f2, after which White lacks one tempo to achieve a theoretically drawn position, and so he resigned.

In my first analysis after the game, written out in 1997, I believed the most tenacious continuation to be 68.♙a7?! g3 69.♗c7 g2 70.♙g1 (70.♗xb7 c5!) 70...♗g4 71.♗xb7 ♗xb4 72.♗b6 ♗f3 73.♗c5 ♗d3+ 74.♗xc6! ♗e2 75.♗b6 ♗f1 76.♙h2 ♗f2 77.♗xa6 ♗g4 78.♗b7 ♗xh2 79.a6 g1♖ 80.a7.

But in 2003, whilst browsing through my old notebook, I found mistakes in my analysis. Black can easily refute these white tries, in two different ways:

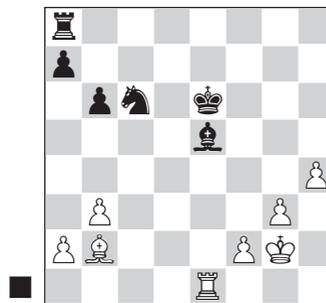
A) 68...♗xb4 69.♗c7 ♗d3 70.♗xb7 c5! 71.♗xa6 g3! (71...c4 72.♙d4) 72.♙b8 g2 73.♙h2 c4 74.♗b5 (74.♗b7 c3 75.a6 ♗c5+) 74...c3 75.a6 c2 76.a7 c1♖ 77.a8♖ ♖c5+ 78.♗a6 ♖a3+ 79.♗b7 ♖xa8+ 80.♗xa8 ♗e1! 81.♙g1 ♗g4 82.♗b7 ♗f3 83.♗c6 ♗e2 84.♗d5 ♗f1 85.♙a7 ♗d3 and ...♗f2—+;

B) The second path is even more convincing: 68...g3 69.♗c7 c5! 70.bxc5 ♗e5! 71.♗xb7 ♗c6—+.

Conclusion: From time to time, it can be useful to revisit your old analyses.

I do not understand evil-doing. If you want to annoy someone, it is enough to tell the truth about them. – Friedrich Nietzsche

Solution 115



A very complicated position. White has three passed pawns against a piece.

Since the white pawns are not very far advanced, they are not very dangerous. Black faces a difficult

choice. The move 35...♔f5?? is bad because of 36.g4+! ♕f4 37.f3! and there is no defence against 38.♖e4 mate.

In the game Akopian-S.Guliev (Pula 1997) Black, who was in time trouble, saw this and quickly played

35...♔f6?!

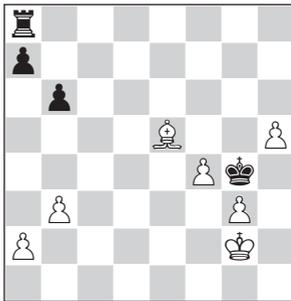
missing

36.♖xe5! ♘xe5 37.f4

Surprisingly, here the chances of the two sides are still roughly equal! There followed

37...♔f5! 38.♙xe5 ♔g4 39.h5!

(otherwise Black can seize the initiative with the manoeuvre ...♖a8-c8-c2)



39...♖c8?? 40.h6 ♖c2+ 41.♔g1 ♖c1+ 42.♔f2 ♖h1 43.♙g7 ♔f5 44.♔g2 ♖h5 45.♔f3 ♖h3 46.♙f8 b5?! 47.b4 a6 48.♙g7 ♔g6 49.♔g2 ♖h5 50.g4 ♖h4 51.♔f3 ♖h2 52.f5+ ♔g5 53.♔e4 and Black resigned.

However, by keeping his cool Black could have defended successfully with 39...♔xh5!, e.g. 40.♔f3 ♖c8 (also good is 40...♖e8 or 40...♖g8) 41.g4+ ♔g6 42.♔e4 ♖c2 with roughly equal chances.

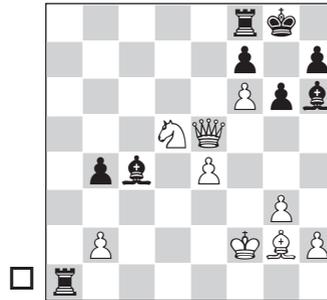
The position in the diagram is also equal. It was just necessary to spot all the traps and play **35...♔d5!**.

Black overlooked 36.♖xe5 and then, in shock, missed 39...♔xh5 as

well. As we see, the old saying that misfortunes rarely come in singles is true in chess as well!

The height of power is power over your own thinking. – Winston Churchill

Solution 116



White is winning. However, the position remains complicated. It is essential to be brave and purposeful and play sharply! **1.♘e7+! ♔h8 2.g4!** and Black has no satisfactory defence against the threat of 3.g5!. For example:

A) 2...♙d2 3.♖c5! ♙e1+ 4.♔e3 – the ♙c4 is attacked and 4.♘xg6+ threatened;

B) 2...♖fa8 3.g5 ♙f8 4.♖c5 (also good is 4.h4). Black has a very difficult, scarcely defensible, position.

If you did not find this variation, do not despair, because in the game S.Guliev-Korotylev (Moscow 1997) White also missed this chance and played:

1.♘xb4? ♖d8 2.♘d5 ♖c1?

After 2...♙xd5 3.exd5 ♙f8!, despite the two-pawn deficit, the initiative passes to Black and his position is already preferable.

3.♘e7+ ♔h8 4.g4!?

White finds this idea a little late, and here Black has an original way to save himself:

4...♙d2!!

4...♗d2+? 5.♖g3!+-.

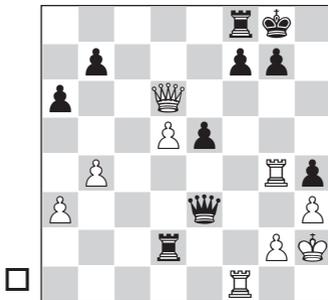
5.♖c7 ♙e1+ 6.♖e3 ♙d2+

And White cannot avoid perpetual check.

Conclusion: In the attack, one should not worry about trifling amounts of material, but should as a priority try to realise the main idea.

The aesthetics of chess are for me primarily the correctness of the idea, its truth, revealed in the clear logic of thought. – Vasily Smyslov

Solution 117



It is well known that then Soviet theorist Peter Romanovsky described major-piece endings as the fourth stage of a game of chess. As a rule in such positions, the attack on the king is one of the defining features. Unlike his opponent's, all of White's forces are pointed at the enemy king. This fact is of decisive significance here. White is winning. Before the final assault, he must activate his last piece. In the game L.Guliev-Zheltnin (Kaluga 1997) White played

1.♗f5!

(but not 1.♖f6?? ♖g3+) and after **1...♗d1 2.♗xg7+ ♖xg7 3.♖f6+** Black resigned.

As the following variations show, White's attack is irresistible even after other black first moves:

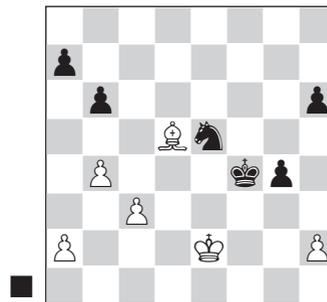
A) 1...♗d4 2.♗xg7+ ♖xg7 3.♖f6+ ♖g8 4.♗g5+;

B) 1...f6 (the most tenacious) 2.♖e6+ ♗f7 3.♗xh4, and the only defence against the threat of 4.♖e8+ ♗f8 5.♗h8+ ♖xh8 6.♖xf8+ ♖h7 7.♗h5+ ♖g6 8.♖e8, mating, is 3...♖e2, but here too, after 4.♗g4 there is no stopping 5.♗h5 and 6.♖e8+.

Conclusion: In major-piece endings, a weak king is a very important factor.

The proper tone must be kept, Else your wishes won't be met! – M.Akhbeli

Solution 118



Endgame experts, who know how to take the initiative, will not be confused. Black is winning. In the game Dovliatov-S.Guliev (Baku 1998) Black first crippled White's pawn majority on the queenside.

49...b5

His further plans involve the advance of the pawns on the kingside. The game continued:

50. ♖b7 h5 51. ♗a6 h4 52. ♗xb5 h3!

The key move of Black's idea.

Although White has won a pawn, in the meantime the black kingside pawns have advanced too far and cannot be stopped.

53. c4 ♗f3! 54. ♗d7

54. c5 ♗d4+ and then ♗xb5—+.

54... ♗xh2 55. c5 ♗f3 56. ♖f1

56. c6 h2 57. c7 h1 ♖ ♗ 58. c8 ♖ ♗e1+

59. ♖d3 ♗d2+ 60. ♖c4 ♗xd7

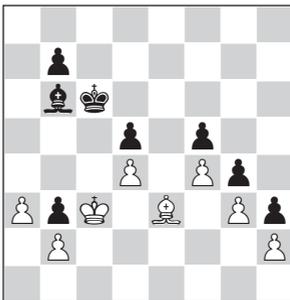
61. ♗xd7 ♗e5+.

56... ♖g3 57. ♗xg4 h2 0-1

Conclusion: In the endgame, with pawns on both flanks, a bishop is not always superior to a knight.

The best mountains can only be ones I have never been on. – Vladimir Vysotsky

Solution 119



White will win the b3-pawn. Naturally, this promises him some chances. However, the unfortunate pawn structure, hampering his bishop, prevents him counting on the victory. The game is equal. In the game Gadzhili-S.Guliev (Baku 1998), after the following

moves, the players realised that neither of them could strengthen his position and so a draw was agreed.

59... ♗a5+ 60. ♖xb3 ♗e1 61. ♗g1

The only move; the threat was 63... ♗xg3!.

61... ♖b5 62. ♖c2 ♖a4 63. ♖d1 ♗a5

64. ♖c2 ♗e1 65. ♖d1 ♗a5 66. ♖c2

½-½

As we know, one of Capablanca's golden rules was:

When the opponent has a bishop, you should usually try to place your pawns on the same colour squares as this bishop. On the other hand, if you have a bishop, then regardless of whether or not the opponent also has one, place your pawns on the opposite colour squares as those on which your bishop stands.

However, I don't think it is superfluous to point out that the original author of this rule was the French master Philidor, who in his book *Analysis of the Game of Chess* (published in 1749) wrote:

If my bishop controls the light squares, I should place my pawns on dark squares: in this case, my bishop can attack the enemy pieces which tried to hide amongst the pawns.

As we see, it is precisely this factor that prevents White getting the benefits of his extra pawn.

Conclusion: Rules are made to be observed.

Do not despise advice before examining it. – Ivan Krylov