

Karsten Müller / Jerzy Konikowski

Tactical Endgames



Joachim Beyer Verlag

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JBV Chess Books

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Preface

Our extensive work on tactical endgames is divided into three parts. In Part I, 100 interesting and instructive examples from master practice are thoroughly analyzed and commented on in detail. These are assigned to five topic areas that are particularly important in the endgame, such as 'zugzwang', 'king activity', etc. The focus is deliberately on examples in which fascinating elements are combined with instructive and therefore practical ones. Many useful rules of thumb and their often even more important exceptions are also explained and illustrated.

In Part II 'Practice makes perfect', the reader has the opportunity to immediately test his previous knowledge and everything he has learned in Part I. The 50 exercises from practice contain various combinatorial elements. While knowledge of the more advanced endgame theory is not required, basic knowledge is necessary to recognize and correctly assess elementary drawing or winning positions.

Part III offers 100 fascinating studies. We felt it appropriate to include a larger number of examples of this chess art form, as that is where the majority of tactical endgame ideas emerge most clearly and instructively. We have attached great importance to the fact that these are practice-oriented positions that could well have been taken from a real game and whose solutions are clearly comprehensible. And only in a few cases have we included examples of a different kind, namely when it was a matter of conveying to the reader what we felt to be a particularly important and instructive motif.

However, you can also view the book as a pure textbook and turn directly to the solutions, because even with this approach you can enrich your existing knowledge with many typical endgame motifs and procedures.

We are sure that the fascination in the realm of endgames will also captivate you and that you will enjoy the final phase of the game accordingly.

We would like to thank Frederic Friedel and Rainer Woisin from ChessBase for the idea of working with QR codes, Robert Ullrich from Beyer Verlag for the harmonious cooperation and Thomas Beyer for the exemplary layout.

Karsten Müller and Jerzy Konikowski
Hamburg / Dortmund, August 2024

Part I

Main tactical motifs in the endgame

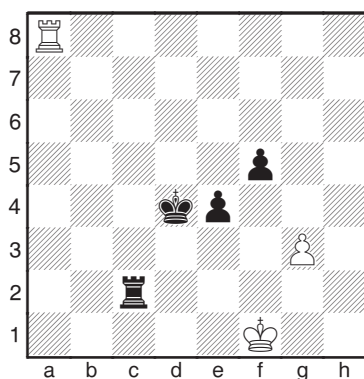
Chapter 1

The active role of the king

In the opening and middle game, the king rarely takes an active role, since a full board means that he still has to be careful and needs protection. However, this usually changes completely in the endgame, because then his activity and mobility often have a major influence on the final result. This is confirmed and illustrated in most of the examples selected for this book – but especially in the following examples 1 to 20.



Example 1



White to move

73.♖f8? turned out to be the wrong approach.

The lateral attack **73.♖a5!** leads to a draw after **73...♔d3** and the intermediate check **74.♖d5+!** with the possible continuation **74...♔e3 75.♖xf5 ♖c1+ 76.♔g2 ♔e2 77.♖f2+ ♔d3 78.♖f8 (78.♖a2? ♖c2+ -+) 78...e3 79.♖d8+ ♔e2 80.♖a8 ♔e1 81.♔f3 e2 82.♖a2 ♖c3+ 83.♔f4 ♔f1 84.♖a1+ e1♖ 85.♖xe1+ ♔xe1 86.g4=.**

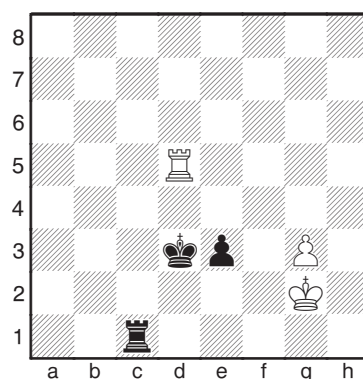
73...♔d3!

This pointed pawn sacrifice ensures the activation of the king.

74.♖xf5 ♖c1+!

Not the hasty **74...e3? 75.♖d5+ ♔e4 76.♖d8=.**

75.♔g2 e3 76.♖d5+



76...♔e4!

Now the double threat **♔xd5** and **e2** is decisive.

76...♔e2? would be a loss of tempo, because after **77.g4! ♖d1 78.♖e5 ♔d3 79.♖d5+ ♔c2 80.♖e5**, White could save the endgame.

77.♖d8 e2 78.♖e8+ ♔d3 79.♖d8+ ♔c3 80.♖c8+ ♔b2 81.♖b8+

81.♖xc1 ♔xc1 82.♔f2 ♔d2+-

81...♔a3 82.♖e8 e1♖ 83.♖xe1 ♖xe1 84.g4

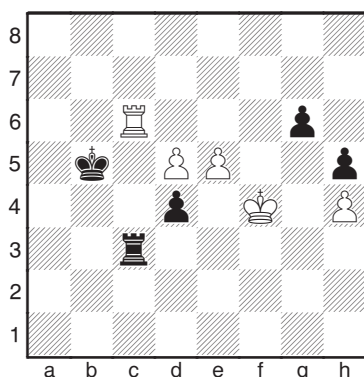
This advance allows the king to be cut off directly.

However, 84.♔f3 also loses, because after 84...♖b4 85.g4 ♕c5 86.♔f4 ♕d6-+, the black king returns in time.

84...♞e3 and 0-1 because of 84...♞e3 85.g5 ♞e5 86.g6 ♞g5+ -+, Vetoshko – Fernandez Guillen, Sitges 2023.



Example 2



White to move

52.♞xg6!

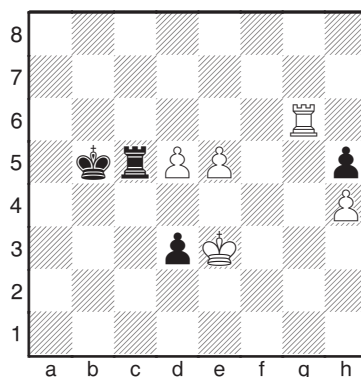
After this correct approach, the connected passed pawns will win.

– On the other hand, 52.♞xc3? dxc3 53.♔e3 ♕c4 leads to a theoretical draw in a queen endgame: 54.d6 ♕b3 55.d7 c2 56.d8♞ c1♞+ 57.♞d2 ♞g1+ 58.♞f2 ♞c1+ 59.♔e4 ♞c6+ 60.♔f4 ♞e6 61.♞e3+ ♔c4 62.♞e4+ and now the triangle maneuver 62...♕b5 (62...♕c5? 63.♕g5+-) 63.♕g5 ♕c5= secures the draw.

– 52.♔e4? is also wrong in view of the continuation 52...♞xc6 53.dxc6 ♔xc6 54.♔xd4 ♔d7 55.♔d5 ♔e7 56.e6, because now the breakthrough 56...g5 secures the draw after 57.hxg5 h4 58.g6 h3 59.g7 h2 60.g8♞ h1♞+ =.

52...d3 53.♔e3 ♞c5

After 53...♔c4, White wins with 54.♞c6+ ♕b3 55.♔d2 ♞c2+ 56.♞xc2 dxc2 57.♔c1.



54.♔xd3!

The right decision: White parts with one of his passed pawns so that he can then use the king dynamically.

The alternative 54.♞d6 ♔c4 55.e6 ♔c3 56.♞c6 ♞xc6 57.dxc6 d2 58.c7 d1♞ 59.c8♞+ ♕b3 60.♞d7 also wins, but is far too laborious and time-consuming.

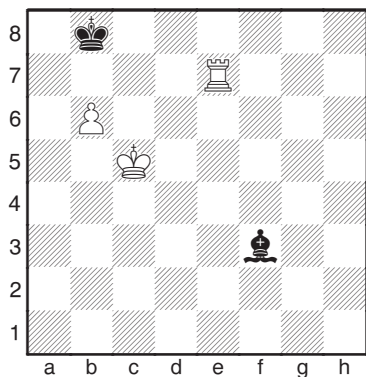
54...♞xd5+ 55.♔e4 ♕c5 56.♞g8 ♞d4+ 57.♔f5 ♞d5

57...♞xh4 58.♞c8+ ♔d5 59.♞d8+ ♔c6 60.e6+-

58.♔f6 ♕c6 59.e6 ♞d6 60.♔f7 ♞d4 61.e7 ♞f4+ 62.♔e6 ♞e4+ 63.♔f6 and 1-0 because of 63...♔d7 64.♞d8+ +- or 63...♞f4+ 64.♔e5+-, Visakh – Tarhan, Sitges 2023.



Example 3



White to move

110.b7!

Since the pawn hinders the activation of the king, White has to get rid of it.

110...♔a7

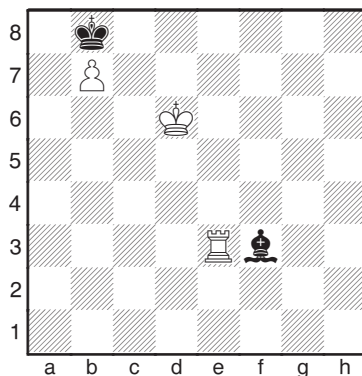
After 110...♔xb7? 111.♕b6+–, it would be over immediately.

111.♕d6 ♕b8 112.♖e3

Moving the king to b6 also led to a win; e.g. 112.♕c5!? with the possible continuation 112...♕a7 113.♖c7

– 113...♕b8 114.♕b6 ♕g4 115.♖f7+–

– 113...♔xb7 114.♕b5! ♕b8 115.♕b6 ♕e4 116.♖e7 ♕g6 117.♖g7+–



112...♕g2

After 112...♕xb7, White wins with 113.♖e8+ ♕a7 114.♕c7 ♕d5 115.♖e5 ♕c4 116.♖a5+ ♕a6 117.♖a1+–.

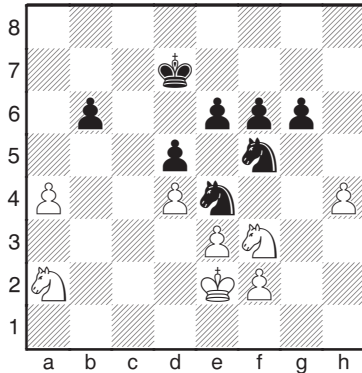
113.♖b3 ♕e4 114.♖b2 ♕f3 115.♕c5 ♕xb7 116.♕b6

After the king has closed the mating net, the fight is over. Normally the pawnless endgame '♖ ↔ ♕' is a draw, but this is an exception.

1-0 because of 116...♕c8 117.♖c2+ ♕b8 118.♖h2+–, Fernandez Guillen – Alekseenko, Sitges 2023.



Example 4



White to move

After 53.♖d2? White simply loses a pawn without gaining the slightest counterplay.

The correct defense was 53.♖b4! with the possible continuation 53...♖c3+ 54.♔d2 ♖xa4 55.♕c2 b5 56.♖d3 ♕e7 57.♖f4 ♕f7 58.♕b3, and White is sufficiently active to hold the position; e.g. 58...♖b6 59.♕b4 ♖d6 60.♕c5 ♖bc8 61.♖d3=.

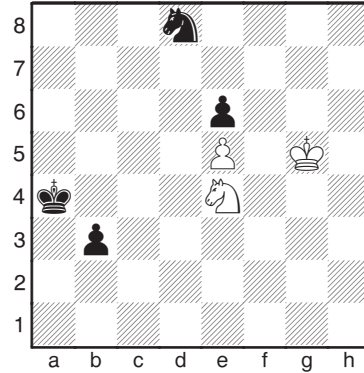
53...♖xd2 54.♕xd2 ♖xh4 55.♖b4 ♖f5 56.♖d3 g5 57.♕c3 ♕c6 58.♕d2 ♖d6 59.f3 ♕b7 60.♖f2 ♕a6

Now the king will penetrate the opponent's position.

61.e4 dxe4 62.fxe4

62.♖xe4 ♖xe4+ 63.fxe4 ♕b7--+

62...♕a5 63.♕d3 ♕xa4 64.e5 fxe5 65.dxe5 ♖f7 66.♕d4 ♖d8 67.♖e4 g4 68.♕e3 b5 69.♕f4 b4 70.♕xg4 b3 71.♕g5



71...♖c6

The activation of the knight is a proof of good endgame technique.

However, the direct approach 71...b2 also wins after the possible continuation 72.♕f6 ♕b4 73.♖d2 ♕c3 74.♖b1+ ♕d4 75.♕e7 ♖c6+ 76.♕xe6 ♖xe5--.

72.♖c5+

72.♕f6 ♖d4--+

72...♕b4 and 0-1 in view of the possible lines:

– 73.♖xe6 b2--+

– 73.♖xb3 ♕xb3 74.♕f6 ♖d4--+

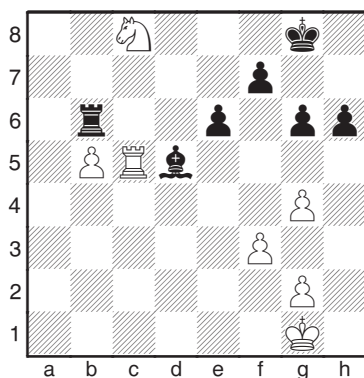
– 73.♖d3+ ♕c3 74.♖c5 b2 75.♖a4+ ♕b3 76.♖xb2 ♕xb2 77.♕f6 ♖d4--+

Vidit – Carlsen, Samarkand (Rapid) 2023

In the next endgame we also see Carlsen's king in exemplary action.



Example 5



Black to move

39...♖b8?

This mistake leads to a lost rook end-game because White's king can come to the aid of the passed pawn.

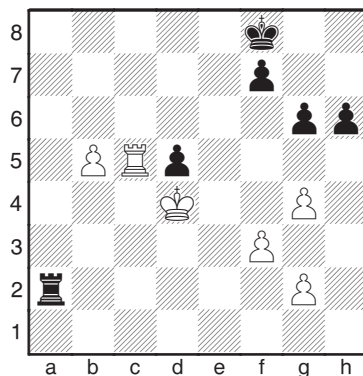
After the correct 39...♖b7!, Black's king could also be activated; e.g. 40.♔f2 ♕f8 41.♔e3 ♖b8 42.♔d4 ♕f6 43.♘a7 ♖b7 44.♘c6 ♕e8 45.♘b4 ♕b3, and Black can hold the position, although the defense over the board is still not easy.

40.♘e7+ ♕f8 41.♘xd5 exd5 42.♔f2

Here comes Carlsen's king!

42...♞a8 43.♔e3 ♞a2 44.♔d4!

... and marches forward undeterred.



44...♞xg2

After 44...♞d2+ White wins with 45.♔e5 in the following lines:

- 45...♔e8 46.♞xd5 ♞xg2 47.♔f6 ♞f2 48.♞d3 ♞b2 49.♞e3+ ♔f8 50.♞e7 ♞xb5 51.♞xf7+ ♔g8 52.♔xg6+-
- 45...d4 46.♔f6 ♞e2 47.♞c6!

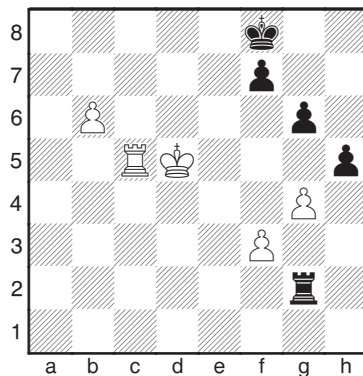
The point of this subtle move is that the rook shields the powerful king.

- 47...♔e8 48.♞c8+ ♔d7 49.♞c4+-
- 47...♔g8 48.♞c8+ ♔h7 49.♔xf7 ♞e5 50.♔f6 ♞xb5 51.♞c7+ ♔g8 52.♔xg6 ♞b6+ 53.♔f5 ♞d6 54.♞c2+-

45.♔xd5 h5

45...♔e7 46.b6 ♔d7 47.♞c7+ ♔d8 48.♞xf7 ♔c8 49.f4+-

46.b6



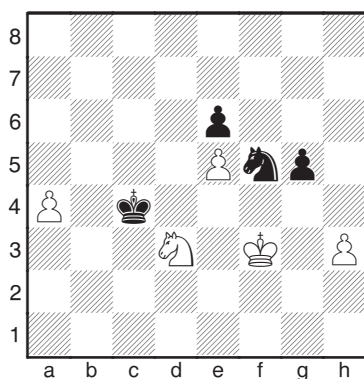
Chapter 2

The power of the pawns

It's only in the endgame that the enormous power of pawns comes to the fore, after all, each and every one of these simple foot soldiers has the potential to become a new queen. This power is evident in numerous special endgame motifs, such as: passed pawn, protected passed pawn, distant passed pawn, far-advanced passed pawn, connected passed pawns, races, breakthrough and the like.



Example 21



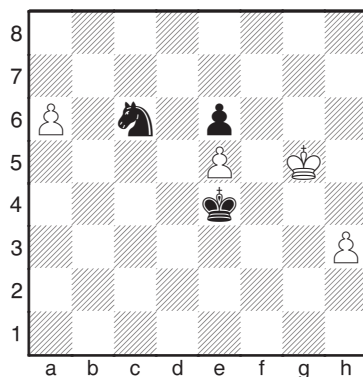
White to move

With **51.a5!** White sacrificed his knight so that his passed pawn could advance as far as possible. Now the opponent's knight has to guard it and cannot perform any other tasks.

51...♙xd3

51...♙b5 is of course followed by 52.a6! ♙xa6 53.♖c5+ ♙b5 54.♗xe6 ♙c4 55.♗xg5 ♙d5 56.♙f4 ♗e7 57.e6 with an easy win.

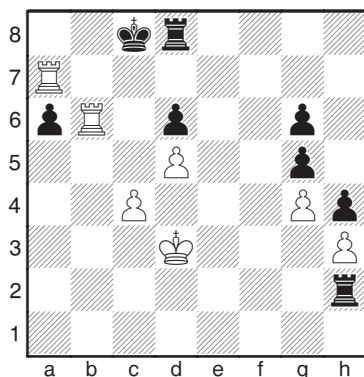
52.a6 ♗d4+ 53.♙g4 ♗c6 54.♙xg5 ♙e4



55.h4! ♙xe5 56.h5 and 1-0, because after the sacrifice of the center pawn, the h-pawn can advance unhindered, Cheparinov – Alhassadi, Baku 2023.



Example 22

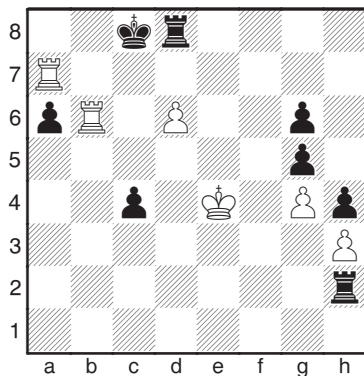


White to move

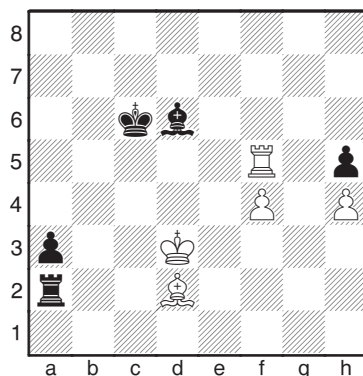
With the precisely calculated clearing sacrifice **40.c5!** White gives his rooks even more effectiveness, creates a passed pawn and allows his king to escape checks and advance into the opponent's camp.

40...dxc5 41.d6 c4+ 42.♔e4!

This is the simplest and quickest way to win, because after 42.♔xc4 Black could still delay the loss with 42...♖c2+ 43.♔d5 ♖d2+ 44.♔e6 ♖e2+ 45.♔f6 ♖f2+ etc.

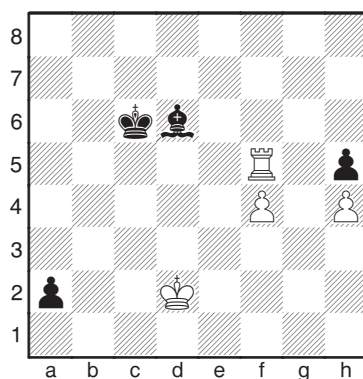


Example 23



Black to move

After the clearing sacrifice **47...♖xd2+!** the a-pawn received the green light, and after **48.♔xd2 a2 ...**



... White immediately resigned. Because after 49.♖a5 ♖b4+ 50.♔c2 ♖xa5 51.♔b2 one of the passed pawns is lost, but after

Chapter 3

Zugzwang

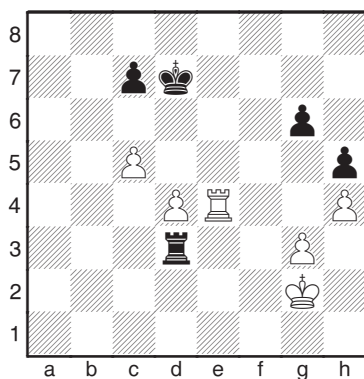
Normally, it's an advantage when it's your turn to make a move. But with only a few pieces left on the board, the downside of the obligation to move sometimes becomes apparent. Because if all the pieces are already optimally placed, any move you make must logically lead to something becoming more or less worse. The technical term for this phenomenon is *zugzwang* (German for *obligation to make a move*) – and it occurs in exceptional situations when you are forced to make a move that worsens your own position, gives up the win or even leads to defeat.

In view of the fact that there's not only 'one-sided' but also 'mutual' zugzwang, we have also included some examples of this sort.

As a rule, zugzwang is the sharpest endgame weapon. In many situations in which other means would also lead to the goal, the use of zugzwang is often a proof of good endgame technique. And in still other situations, without zugzwang no progress is possible at all.



Example 41



White to move

With **56.♔f2!** the Chinese women's world champion put her opponent in zugzwang.

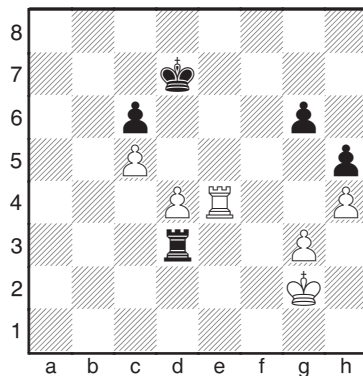
56...c6

– 56...♔c6 is followed by 57.♖e6+ ♔d5 58.♖xg6 ♔xd4 59.♖g5 ♔e4 60.♔g2 ♖d2+ 61.♔h3 ♔f3 62.♖f5+ ♔e4 63.♖xh5+–.

– 56...♔d8 57.c6 ♖c3 58.♖e6+–

57.♔g2!

And again Black is in zugzwang.



57...♖d1

57...♔d8 58.♖e6 ♖xd4 59.♖xg6 ♖d5 60.♖g5+–

8.♔f3 ♖f1+ 59.♔e3 ♖f7 60.♖f4 ♖g7 61.♔d3 ♔e6 62.♖f8 ♖a7

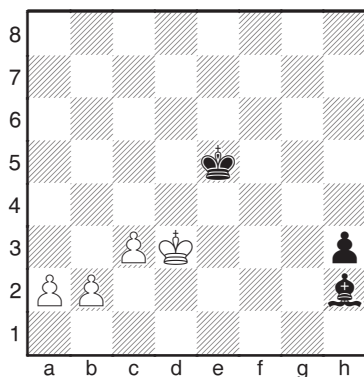
62...g5 is met by 63.♖c8 ♔d7 64.♖h8+–

63.♔e4 ♖a1 64.♖d8 and **1-0** in view of the possible continuation 64...♖e1+ 65.♔f4 ♖f1+ 66.♔g5 ♖f3 67.♖d6+ ♔f7 68.♖xc6 ♖xg3+ 69.♔f4 ♖g4+ 70.♔e5 ♖xh4 71.♖c7+ ♔e8 72.d5+–, Ju – Firouzja, Wijk aan Zee 2024.

Zugzwang is often used to bring to bear an extra piece against a king and several pawns.



Example 42

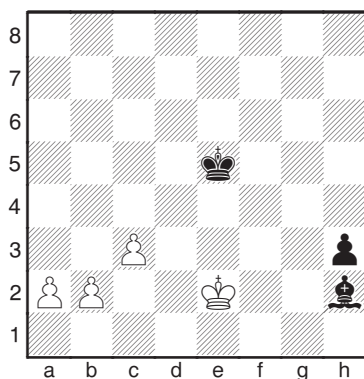


White to move

After a bishop move, the h-pawn threatens to promote. Of course, White's king can prevent this, but his first move is crucial.

45.♔e3?

We will soon see why this move loses. Only 45.♔e2! led to a draw.



Because the king reaches the saving square on f1 in time:

– 45...♙g3 46.♔f1 ♔e4 47.♔g1=

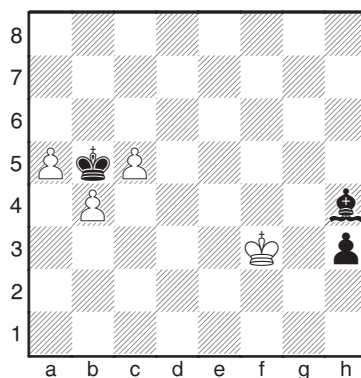
– 45...♙g3 46.♔f3=

– 45...♔f4 46.♔f2 ♔g4 47.a4 ♔f4 48.a5 ♔e4 49.a6 ♙b8 50.♔g1 ♔d3 51.♔h1=

45...♙g3! 46.♔f3 ♙e1

Now the bishop is active and Black can stop the pawns.

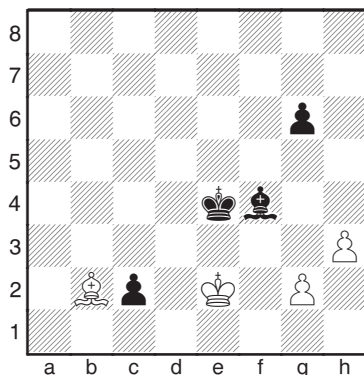
47.a4 ♔d5 48.a5 ♔c5 49.b3 ♔b5 50.b4 ♙h4 51.c4+ ♔a6 and 0-1, as after 52.c5 ♔b5 ...



... all pawns are lost due to zugzwang; e.g. 53.c6 (53.♔g4 h2+) 53...♔xc6 54.a6 ♔b6 55.b5 ♔a7+, Pragganandhaa – Chigaev, Wijk aan Zee 2019.



Example 43



Black to move

A common mistake is the premature (almost automatic) promotion of a passed pawn. Sometimes the right conditions have to be created first.

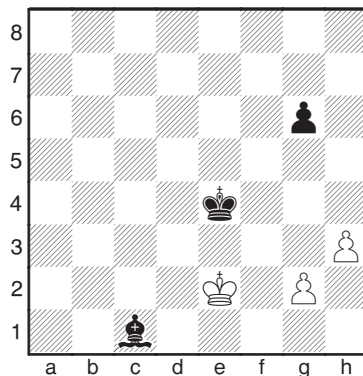
The premature promotion **71...c1♚?** was a typical mistake.

The correct approach was the initial use of zugzwang with **71...♙h6!** and the following lines:

1) 72.♙a3 ♙e3 73.♙b2 ♚f4 74.g3+ ♚e4 75.♙a3 ♙h6 76.♚f2 ♚d3 77.♚f3 ♚c4 78.♚e4 ♚b3 79.♚d3 ♙e3 80.h4 ♙f2-+

2) 72.g3 ♙g5 73.♙a3 ♚d4 74.♚f3 ♚c3 75.♚e4 ♚b3 76.♚d3 ♙e3 77.g4 ♚xa3 78.♚xc2 g5 79.♚d3 ♙f2-+

72.♙xc1 ♙xc1



73.g3?

73.♚f2! draws after e.g. **73...♙e3+ 74.♚g3 ♚f5 75.h4 ♙f4+ 76.♚f3 ♙e5 77.g4+ ♚e6 78.g5 ♚f5 79.h5 gxh5 80.♚g2 ♚xg5 81.♚h1=.**

73...♙e3!

After this single winning move, zugzwang again leads to the decision.

After, for example, **73...g5?** and the continuation **74.♚f2 ♙e3+ 75.♚g2 ♙d4 76.g4 ♚f4 77.h4 gxh4 78.♚h1=**, White's king could reach the saving corner square in time.

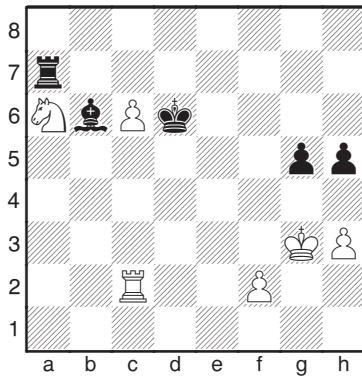
0-1 in view of the possible continuation **74.♚f1 ♚f3 75.g4 ♚g3 76.♚e2 ♙b6 77.♚f1 ♚xh3-+**, D. Gurevich – Dlugy, Saint Louis 2023.

Part II

Practice makes perfect



Exercise 1

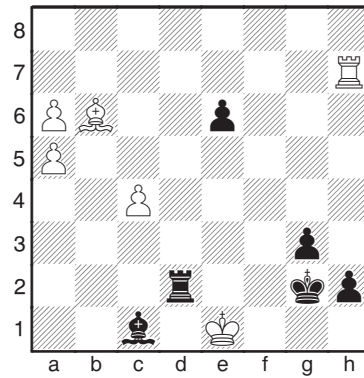


White to move

- a) White can even win without promoting the passed pawn.
- b) The endgame is equal.



Exercise 2

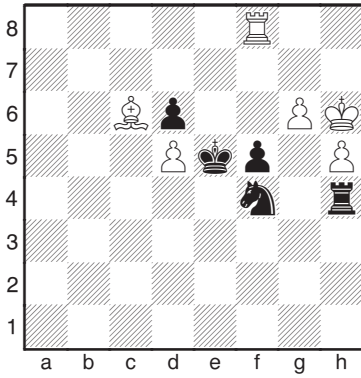


Black to move

- a) The immediate promotion h2-h1♔ wins.
- b) It only leads to a draw, but another move wins.



Exercise 3

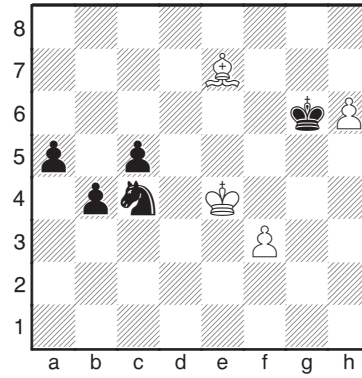


White to move

- a) ♔g7 wins.
- b) ♔g7 only draws, but another move wins.



Exercise 4



Black to move

- a) Only ♘d2+ wins.
- b) Only b3 wins.
- c) Both moves win.

Part II

Solutions of the exercises

Solution 1: a)

After **50.c7!** White liquidates to a winning pawn endgame: **50...♙xc7 51.♜xc7 ♖xc7 52.♖xc7 ♜xc7 53.h4!** and **1-0** in view of the following winning lines:

1) 53...g4 54.♙f4 ♜d6 55.♙g5 ♜e6 56.♙xh5 ♜f5 57.♙h6 ♜f4 (57...♙f6 58.h5+-) 58.h5 ♜f3 59.♙g5+-

2) 53...gxh4+ 54.♙xh4 ♜d6 55.♙xh5 ♜e5

a) 55...♙e7 56.♙g6 ♜f8 57.f4 ♜g8 58.f5 ♜f8 59.♙f6+-

b) 55...♙e5 56.♙g5 ♜e6 57.f4 ♜f7 58.♙f5!+-

Nepomniachtchi – Khismatullin, Russia 2018

Solution 2: b)

Races of passed pawns can be very sharp and sometimes the fastest possible promotion is not the right way.

1) For example, **46...h1♞+?? 47.♖xh1 ♜xh1 48.a7 g2 49.a8♞+-** would even lose.

2) The right rook move to deal with the problem of White's passed pawn is **46...♖f2!**, because then 47.a7 could be answered with 47...♖f8, which leads to victory after **48.♙c7 ♖a8 49.♙b8 ♙e3 50.♙e2 ♙f2 51.a6 h1♞ 52.♖xh1 ♜xh1+-**.

47.♙c5 ♖a2

Once again, the right rook move.

48.♙b4

48.a7 ♖xa5+-

48...♙e3 and **0-1** because of **49.c5 ♙f3 50.a7 ♖a1#**, Garcia Ramos – Safarli, Sitges 2022.

Solution 3: b)

With **63.♙g7?** White missed the win.

It could only be achieved with **63.♖e8+!**, because after **63...♙f6** the blockade can be radically broken with **64.♖e6+!**; e.g. **64...♙xe6 65.dxe6** with the following winning lines:

1) 65...♖g4 66.e7 ♙xe7 67.♙g7 ♜e6 68.h6 d5 69.h7 ♖h4 70.h8♞ ♖xh8 71.♙xh8+-

2) 65...♙xe6 66.g7 ♖g4 67.♙h7 ♙f7 68.♙d5+ ♙f6 69.g8♞ ♖xg8 70.♙xg8 ♙g5 71.♙f3 and now, sooner or later, decisive zugzwang sets in; **71...♙h6 72.♙d1 d5 73.♙e2 d4 74.♙d1 d3 75.♙f3 d2 76.♙d1 f4 77.♙f3+-**.

In the game, Black was able to build a functional blockade position with **63...♙xh5+ 64.♙f7 ♖g4 65.♖e8+ ♜d4 66.♖h8 ♖g5** and after **67.♖xh5 ♖xh5 68.♙f6 ♖h1 69.♙xf5 ♖f1+ 70.♙e6 ♖g1** and a few more irrelevant moves the game ended with a draw, ½-½, Perkampus – Saraci, Biel 2023.

Solution 4: b)

The approach **47...♙d2+?** was not enough to win.

It could only be forced with **47...b3!**; e.g. **48.♙d3 ♙e3!** with the following winning lines:

1) 49.♙c3 ♙d5+ 50.♙xb3 ♙xe7 51.♙c4 a4+-

2) 49.h7 ♙xh7 50.♙f6 ♙d1 51.♙d2 b2 52.♙c2 a4 53.♙e7 a3 54.♙f6 ♙g6 55.♙h8 ♙f5 56.♙g7 ♙f4 57.♙f6 ♙xf3+-

48.♙d3! ♙b3

Part III

Endgame tactics – test your skills

The following 100 exercises are so-called ‘studies’, which means fantasy products that primarily serve to provide sophisticated entertainment and aesthetic enjoyment. However, they can also convey certain teaching content (an interesting example can be found below).

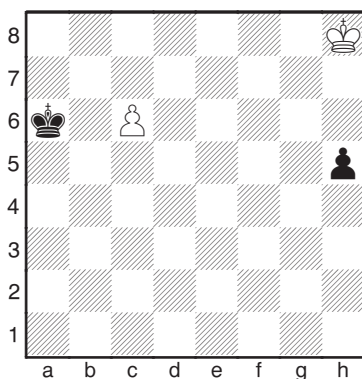
Studies can be divided into two groups: tactical and analytical. While in our book ‘Endgame Magic’ (Joachim Beyer Verlag 2023) we dealt with the analytical ones, in this new work we would like to introduce the reader to studies with more tactical solutions.

Our selection covers the whole spectrum from ‘easy’ to ‘difficult’ and if you find yourself reaching your limits and getting stuck, please don’t hesitate to make things easier by studying the lines in the solution section to make sure you can actually enjoy the whole thing.

First of all, we would like to point out that, as a rule, *White is to move* in studies, so that only the desired result is given above the respective diagram: ‘+–’ for ‘White wins’ or ‘=’ for ‘White draws’.

What you can learn from studies, for example

Perhaps you know this little jewel among the studies in which its creator Richard Réti demonstrates in an exquisitely minimalist way that two kings and two pawns are enough to conjure up a little stroke of genius on the board.



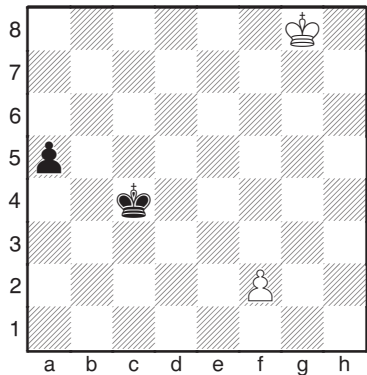
White to move and draw

1.♔g7!! (1.♔h7? h4–+; 1.♔g8? h4–+) 1...h4 2.♔f6! ♔b6 (2...h3 3.♔e7 followed by ♔d7=) 3.♔e5! and now 3...h3 4.♔d6= or 3...♔xc6 4.♔f4=

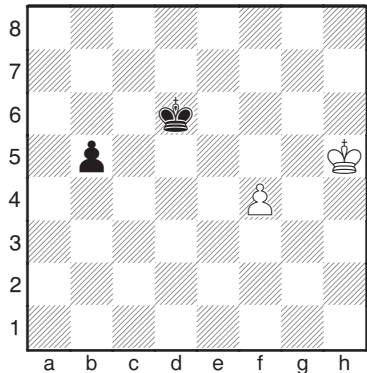
And if you are wondering what can be learned from this precious miniature for the practical game: the movement on a diagonal is a movement in *two* directions at the same time!



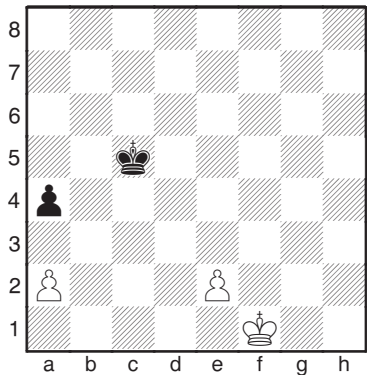
Exercise 1 =



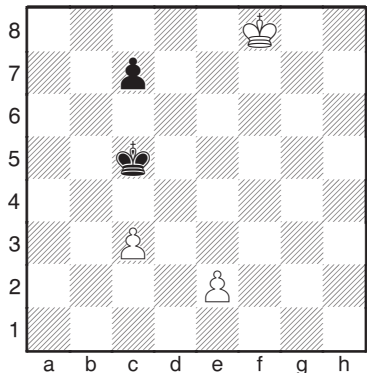
Exercise 2 =



Exercise 3 +-

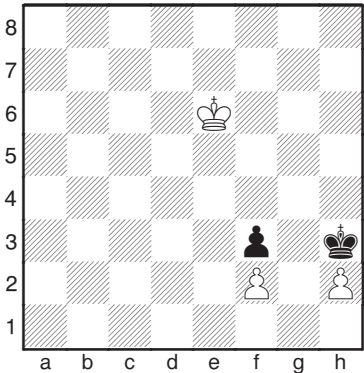


Exercise 4 +-

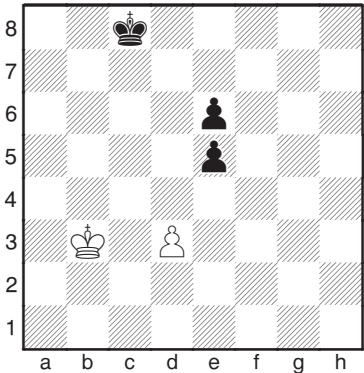




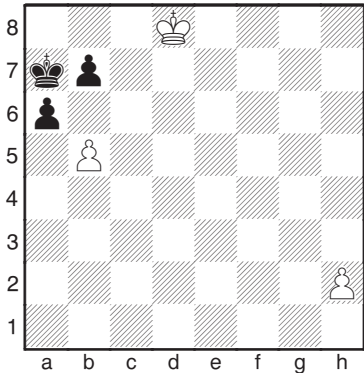
Exercise 5 =



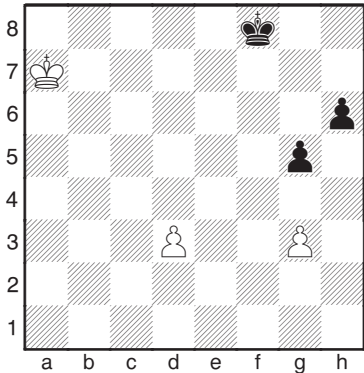
Exercise 6 =



Exercise 7 +-



Exercise 8 =



Solutions

Exercise 1

1.f4!

1.♠f7? a4 2.f4 a3

– 3.♠g6 a2 4.f5 a1♗ 5.f6 ♠d5 6.f7 ♗h8–+

– 3.f5 a2 4.f6 a1♗–+

1...♠d5

1...a4 2.f5 a3 3.f6 a2 4.f7 a1♗ 5.f8♗=

2.♠f7! ♠e4

2...a4 3.f5 a3 4.f6 a2 5.♠g8! a1♗ 6.f7=

3.♠e6!

3.♠g6? ♠xf4–+

3...a4

3...♠xf4 4.♠d5=

4.f5 a3 5.f6 a2 6.f7 a1♗ 7.f8♗=

(E. Pallasz, 1991)

Exercise 2

1.♠h6!

1.♠g6? b4 2.f5 b3 3.f6 b2 4.f7 b1♗+

5.♠g7 ♗g1+ 6.♠f6 ♗f2+ 7.♠g7 ♠e7–+

1...b4 2.f5 ♠e5 3.♠g6 b3 4.f6 b2 5.f7

5.♠g7=

5...b1♗+ 6.♠g7 ♗b7 7.♠g8=

(E. Pallasz, 2002)

Exercise 3

1.♠e1!

1.♠f2? ♠b4 2.e4 ♠a3 3.e5 ♠xa2 4.e6 a3

5.e7 ♠b2 6.e8♗ a2=

1...♠b4 2.♠d2!

2.e4? ♠c5 3.♠e2 a3 4.♠e3 ♠d6 5.♠d4

♠e6 6.♠c4 ♠e5 7.♠b3 ♠xe4 8.♠xa3

♠d5 9.♠b4 ♠c6=

2...♠a3 3.e4 ♠xa2 4.e5 a3 5.e6 ♠b3

6.e7 a2 7.e8♗ a1♗ 8.♗b5+ ♠a3 9.♗a5+ ♠b2 10.♗b4+ ♠a2 11.♠c2+–

(E. Pallasz, 2002)

Exercise 4

1.♠g7!

1) 1.e4? ♠d6 2.♠e8 ♠e5 3.♠d7 ♠xe4

4.♠xc7 ♠d3=

2) 1.♠e7? ♠c4

2.e4 ♠xc3 3.e5 c5 4.♠d6 c4 5.e6 ♠b2

6.e7 c3 7.e8♗ c2=

3) 1.e3? ♠d5 2.♠e7 ♠e4 3.c4 ♠xe3 4.c5 ♠d4=

4) 1.♠f7? ♠d5 (1...♠c4? 2.e4+–) 2.♠f6 ♠c4 3.e4 ♠xc3 4.e5 c5 5.e6 c4 6.e7 ♠d2 7.e8♗ c3 8.♗d7+ ♠c1=

1...♠d5

1) 1...♠d6 2.♠f6 ♠d5 3.♠f5 ♠c4 4.e4 c5

5.e5 ♠xc3 6.e6 c4 7.e7+–

2) 1...♠c4 2.e4 c5 3.e5 ♠xc3 4.e6+–

2.♠f7!

2.♠f6? ♠c4 3.e4 c5 4.e5 ♠xc3 5.e6 c4

6.e7 ♠d2 7.e8♗ c3 8.♗d7+ ♠c1=

2...♠e5

1) 2...♠c4 3.e4 ♠xc3 4.e5 c5 5.e6 ♠d2

6.e7 c4 7.e8♗ c3 8.♗d8+ ♠c1 9.♗g5+

♠b1 10.♗g1+ ♠b2 11.♗d4 ♠b3 12.♠e6

c2 13.♗a1+–

2) 2...c5 3.♠e7 ♠e5 4.♠d7 ♠d5 5.♠c7

c4 6.♠b6 ♠e4 7.♠c5+–

3.♠e7

3.♠e8+–

3...♠d5 4.♠d7

4.♠d8? ♠c4 5.e4 ♠xc3 6.e5 c5 7.e6 c4

8.e7 ♠d2=

4...♠c4

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About the author

GM Dr. Karsten Müller was born on November 23rd, 1970 in Hamburg. He studied mathematics and received his doctorate in 2002. From 1988 to 2015 he played for the 'Hamburger SK' in the German 'Bundesliga' and in 1998 he was awarded the title of Grandmaster.

The busy and globally recognized end-game expert was named 'Trainer of the Year' by the German Chess Federation in 2007



He is the author (or co-author) of the following highly esteemed works:

- Secrets of Pawn Endings (with Frank Lamprecht, Everyman/GAMBIT 2000)
- Fundamental Chess Endings (with Frank Lamprecht, GAMBIT 2001)
- Danish Dynamite (with Martin Voigt, Russell 2003)
- Chess Cafe Puzzle Book: Test and Improve Your Tactical Vision (Russell 2004)
- How to Play Chess Endgames (with Wolfgang Pajeken, GAMBIT 2008)
- Chess Cafe Puzzle Book 2: Test and Improve Your Positional Intuition (Russell 2008)
- Bobby Fischer, The Career and Complete Games of the American World Chess Champion (Russell 2009)
- Chess Cafe Puzzle Book 3: Test and Improve Your Defensive Skill! (with Merijn van Delft, Russell 2010)
- Chess Cafe Puzzle Book 4: Mastering the positional principles (with Alexander Markgraf, Russell 2012)
- The Magic Tactics of Mikhail Tal: Learn from the Legend (with Raymund Stolze, Edition Olms 2012)
- Fighting chess with Hikaru Nakamura (with Raymund Stolze, Edition Olms 2013)
- The slow (but venomous) Italian (with Georgios Souleidis, New in Chess 2016)
- The Magic of Chess Tactics 2 (with C.D. Meyer, Russell 2017)

His excellent series of ChessBase–DVDs Chess endgames 1-14 also attracted attention.

Müller's popular column Endgame Corner was published at 'www.ChessCafe.com' from January 2001 until 2015, and his column Endgames is published in Chess-Base Magazine since 2006.

To date, numerous of his books have been published by JBV Chess Books (Joachim Beyer Verlag) – a total of 24 in German and the following titles also in English:

- Magical Endgames (2020) (together with Claus Dieter Meyer)
- The Human Factor in Chess (2020) (together with Luis Engel)
- The Human Factor in Chess, The Testbook, Find out your Player Type (2022) (together with Luis Engel and Makan Rafiee)
- The Best Endgames of the World Champions Vol 1 – From Steinitz to Tal (2021)
- The Best Endgames of the World Champions Vol 2 – From Petrosian to Carlsen (2021)
- World Chess Championship 2021 (together with Jerzy Konikowski and Uwe Bekemann)
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- Typical King's Indian, Effective Middlegame Training (2024)
- Tactical Endgames (2024) (together with Jerzy Konikowski)

FIDE Master Jerzy Konikowski (born 1947) is a recognized German trainer and chess theorist of Polish origin. He completed his studies as a chess coach in Warsaw and was the Polish national coach from 1978 to 1981.

In 1981 he moved to Germany and received German citizenship. He coached the youth team of North Rhine-Westphalia for 15 years and played in various teams in the German 'Bundesliga' from 1983–1994.

His numerous books and articles have been translated into several languages and published in many countries.

His other passion is correspondence chess. He won several tournaments in the European class and represented Germany in the final of the 17th European Correspondence Chess Championship (1993–1998), where he placed 7th.

He is also a renowned chess composer who created about 400 chess problems, over 100 of which received awards in international competitions. Eight of his problems have been included in FIDE albums, the collections of the world's best problems.

