

Some endgame exercises – part 2 solutions

Jan Cheung, 3 October 2024

Position 1. White to move

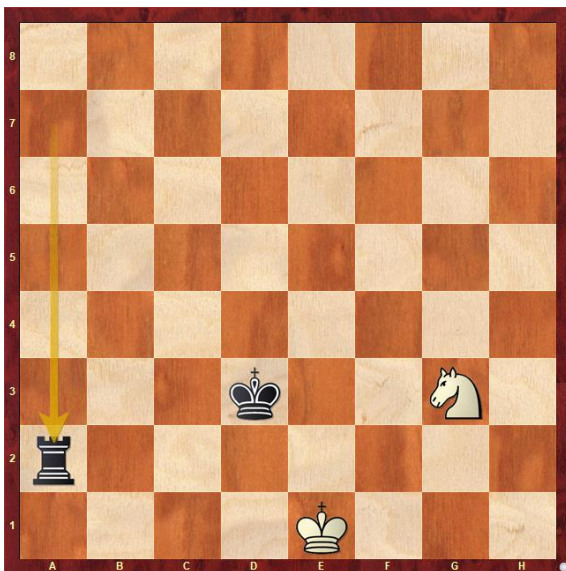


Analysis position of Giedraitis – Keough, after 101...Rc2-e2 102.Nd1-c3 Re2-e7.

A thumb rule for the defender is to put the knight close to the defending king, to keep the enemy king at a distance. If the knight is moved far away from the defending king, it will risk to be cut off.

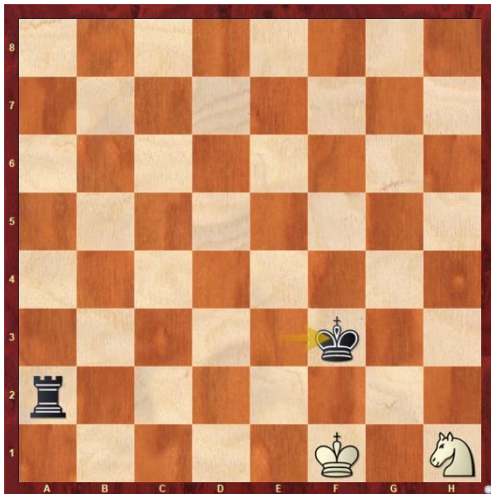
As a result of this thumb rule, **103.Nd1** should be played.

Position 2. White to move



Giedraitis – Keough, after 122...Ra7-a2.

Keeping in mind the thumb rule we have discussed before, White has two candidate moves. 123. Kf1 and 123.Nf1. After **123.Kf1 Ke3** White has only 1 move: **124.Nf5+** (Because after 124.Nh1? Kf3 the knight has no room to move:



Analysis position: the defending side should avoid this position because the knight at the corner has not adequate space to move. After 125.Kg1 Rg2+ 126.Kf1 Rg8 Black switches the rook at the other side of the board and the knight will be lost after 127.Nf2 Ra8 128.Kg1 Ra1+.)

124...Kf4 125.Nd4 defending the invasion square f3 while being a mobile knight.

Position 3. Black to move.



Stuhr – Pirs, position after 33.Qe3-e2.

Whites rooks are more active than blacks counterparts. White can make progress if he can prepare f4-f5. At the moment, this pawn move is not possible because Black has adequately defended the f5 square. With White on move in this position, what would you play? You will find 1 move that is problematic for Black: Rg1-g5. To neutralize this move, Black should play **33...Rf5**. After **34.Rg5** Black can defend with **34...Rh8**.

The game continued with 33...Reh8? 34.Rg5! a6 and now White should strike with 35.f5! Qe7 36.e6+ fxe6 37.fxe6+ Qxe6 38.Qxe6+ Kxe6 39.Rxg6+

Position 4. Black to move.



Stuhr – Pirs, position after 38.Rf2xf5.

To defend against Tf5-f6 and Qc2-f2, Black has 2 candidate moves, 38...Rh6 and the counter attack move 38...Rg8. The game continued with 38...Rh6 39.Qf2 Ke8 and now White could continue with 40.Rg5! Rg6 41.Rh5 winning the h pawn. Stronger was **38...Rg8!** to get active piece play. White now has to spend time to put the King in the corner before doing any actions, for example **39.Kb1 Rg1+ 40.Ka2 Qg6 41.Qf2 Ke8 42.Qf3 b4! 43.cxb3 c3 44.bxc3 Rg5 45.Rxg5 Qc2+** with perpetual check.

Position 5. White to move.



Stuhr – Pirs, position after 39...Kd7-e8.

Black h pawn is vulnerable, but Black has counter chances with a6-a5 and b5-b4, if White is not fast enough to create a threat at the other wing side. The most accurate move in this position is **40.Rg5!** with threat Rg8+. Black has several ways to defend. A) **40...a5 41.Rg8+ Ke7 42.Kb1 Rh5 43.Qg2 b4 44.axb4 axb4 45.Qg7** with a decisive attack. B) **40...f6 41.Rg7 fxe5 42.dxe5** with a decisive attack. C) **40...Kf8 41.Kb1 a5 42.Qg2 Rh8 43.h3** White keeps the initiative, but Black have still chances. D) **40...Rg6 41.Rh5 Rg8 42.Rxh4 a5 43.Rh7 Qg6 44.Rh3** White has a pawn up, but Black has active piece play.

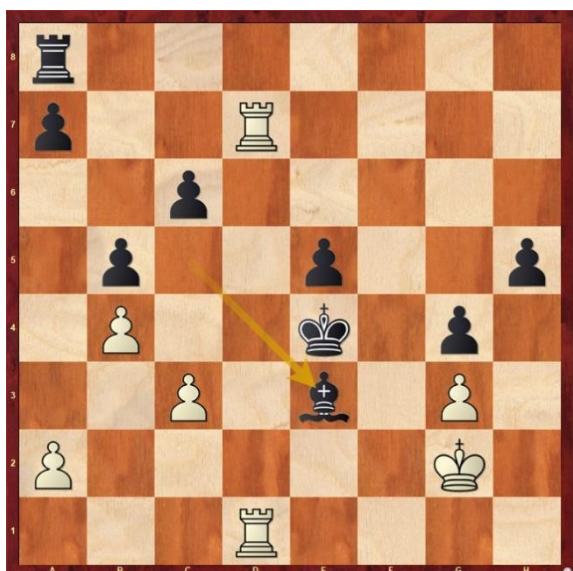
Position 6. Black to move.



Unruh – Onley, position after 32.Le6-f5+.

After **32...Rxf5! 33.exf5+ Kxf5** Black has sacrificed the minor exchange for 2 pawns, has got active pieces and the Black king is adequately defended. The White rooks need space, so it is recommended to exchange a pair of rooks with **34.Rd8 Rxd8 35.Rxd8** creating threats at both wings. Chances are equal.

Position 7. White to move.

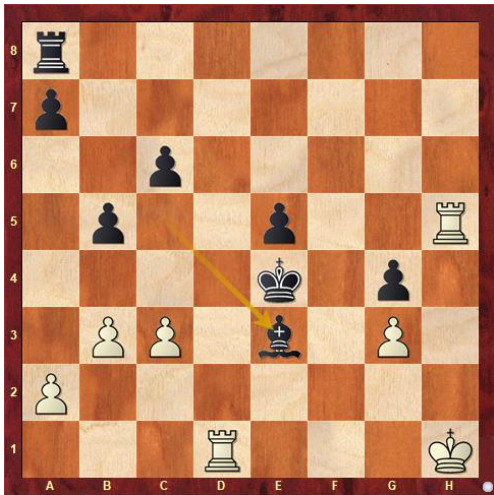


Unruh – Onley, position after 35...Bc5-e3.

White has a number of candidate moves, including 36.Rd8 (exchanging 1 pair of rooks), 36.Rh7 (attacking pawn h5), 36.Re1 (restricting the Black king) and the move of the game, 36.Rf7.

First look at forcing moves. After **38.Rd8 Rxd8 39.Rxd8 Bb6** both sides have equal chances. There are no other forcing moves.

After the other candidate move **36.Rh7 Ke4 37.Rxh5 Be3**



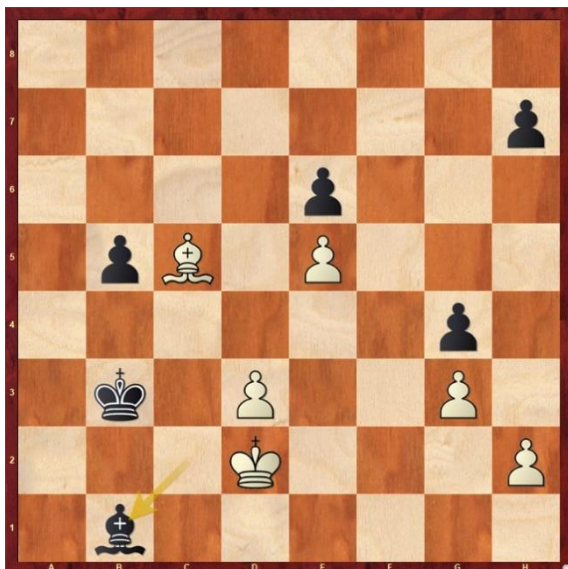
White has lost time to pick up a pawn, the White rook at h5 is temporarily displaced, while Black has active pieces. In this position, Black can play easy moves to improve the position and White should be very careful to continue, so this means that 36.Rd8 is a better candidate move than 36.Rh7.

The third candidate move **36.Re1!?** restricts the Black King. It also has a clear plan: Rd7-d2-e2 attacking the bishop. Black can defend with **36...Rf8 37.Rd2 Rf3** or also play the ambitious **36...a5!?** **37.Rd2 axb4 38.Rde2 bxc3 39.Rxe3+ Kd4** with an unbalanced position.

The move played in the game, **36.Rf7?**, is passive. Black responded with **36...a5!** Invading the a file with the rook. White cannot prevent this plan, lost the initiative and later lost the game.

Position 8. White to move.

Choose between 52.Be7 and 52.d4.



Tetepoulidis – Delfino, position after 51...Bc2-b1.

Looking at the position, you notice:

- Equal material
- Bishops of unequal colours. These positions are known to have many drawing chances.
- Black has a passed pawn while White has no passed pawn.
- The Black king is more active than the White king.
- The pawn at d3 and the White bishop are working well together, defending important invading squares.

The first assessment is that Black has attacking chances and that White should be careful. At the moment, The Black king has no invading squares. The played move in the game, **52.d4?**, hoping to create a passed pawn with d4-d5, only gives Black more chances, without giving White more chances:

- The Black king suddenly gets the invading square c4.
- The Bishop at b1 is suddenly active.
- It is easy to prevent the plan d4-d5 with ...

52...Kc4!, activating the passed pawn at the same time. This means that it is better for White to play the other candidate move, **51. Be7** where both sides cannot make progress.