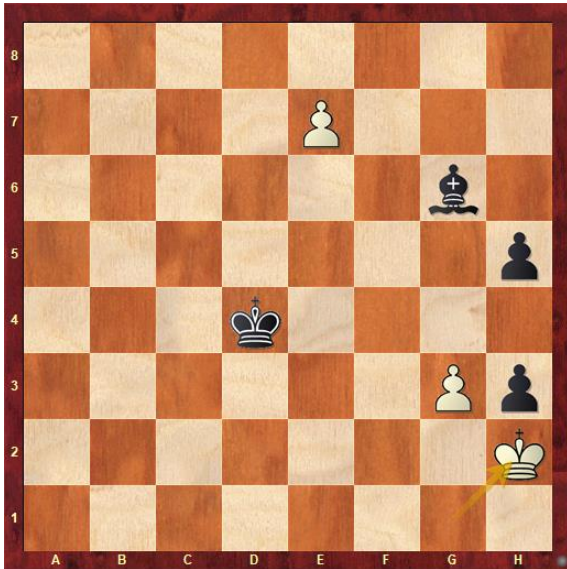


Some endgame exercises – part 3 solutions

Jan Cheung, 11 October 2024

Position 1. Black to move.



Tetepoulis – Delfino, position after 80.Kg1-h2.

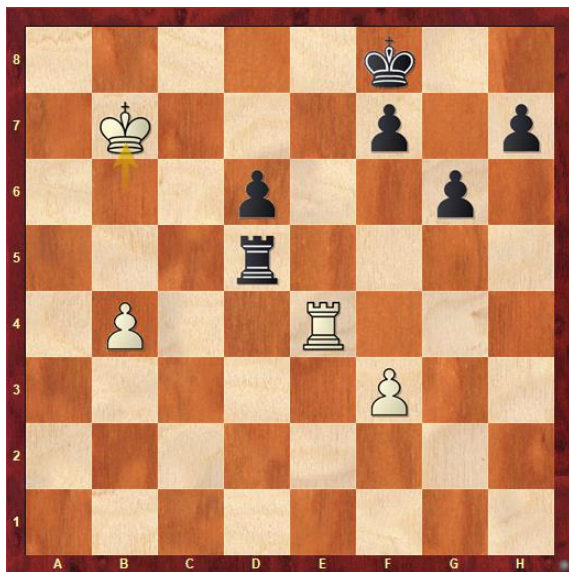
In this position, Black has two tasks, stopping pawn e7 from promotion and preventing that White can exchange all the Black pawns. Pawn h3 cannot be saved because the bishop has to guard promotion square e8. Therefore, the Black king has to guard square g4 to prevent a pawn exchange. The Black king has two paths to contest square g4, by Kd4-e3-f3 or Kd4-e4/e5-f5. This means that Black has three candidate moves, 80...Ke3, 80...Ke4 or 80...Ke5.

Analyzing the candidate moves, you will notice the following difference.

Once covering square g4, the next question for Black, is how to improve the position. With a Black king at f3, Black can only move 1 piece, the Black bishop along the diagonal e8-g6. The White king, after Kxh3, can continue with Kh4 to keep contesting square g4. How can Black conquer this square? This is not possible, if the Black king is at square f3! If the Black king is at square f5, Black can win a tempo with the bishop, then the White king has to retreat to square h3, giving Black the opportunity to play Kf5-g5, forcing the White king to give up square g4.

Translated in moves, with the game continuation **80....Ke3?** Black cannot improve the position after **81.Kxh3 Kf3 82.Kh4 Be8 83.Kh3** and the game later ended in a draw. The other candidate moves **80...Ke4!** or **80...Ke5!** gives Black the opportunity to improve the position after **81.Kxh3 Kf5! 82.Kh4 Be8 80.Kh3 Kg5 81.Kh2 Kg4 82.Kg2 Bd7 83.Kh2 Bc6** winning pawn g3 and the game.

Position 2. Black to move.



Sauer – Michalowski, position after 37.Kb6xb7.

Black is two pawns up, but more important is that both sides has passed pawns. Therefore, every tempo will be important. This means that Black should give preference to mobilize the king side pawns instead of spending time to attack pawn f3.

There are candidate moves to mobilize the king side pawns, 37...h5, 37...g5 and 37...f5.

Compared with the other 2 candidate moves, 37...f5 wins a tempo and should be analyzed first. Let's have a look.

After **37...f5** White has 2 choices.

A) **38.Rh4 h5** The kingside pawns are temporary stopped, but the White rook is temporary out of play. **39.Kc6 Rd3 40.b5** With the White rook out of play, Black has time to active the king. **40...Ke7**



Analysis position

Now it costs White much time to mobilize the passed pawn at the queen side, while Black can easily mobilize the passed pawns at the king side. For example: **41.Rb4 Rxf3 42.b6 Rc3+ 43.Kb5 Rc8** Black has the emergency exit to stop the passed pawn by sacrificing the rook after which the passed pawns at the king side will be decisive, or **41.f4 Rc3+ 42.Kb7 d5 43.b6 d4 44.Rh2 d3 45.Ka7 Rc2 46.Rh1 Ra2+** and White has difficulties to stop the passed pawn at d3, while the passed pawn at b6 can be stopped easily.

B) **38.Rc4 g5 39.Kc6 Rd3 40.b5 Rxf3 41.Kxd6**



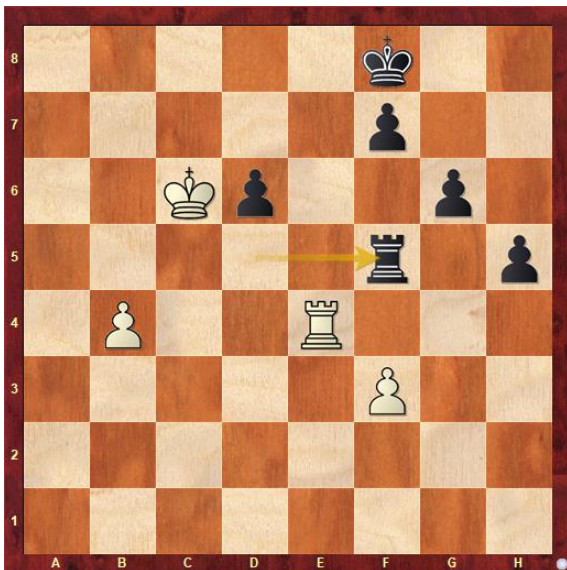
Analysis position

Now Black has a narrow road to keep the advantage.

41...f4! Moving the furthest passed pawn. **42.Ke5 h6!** **43. Kf6 Ke8 44.Kg6 Rf1! 45.Kxh6 f3 46.Kxg5 f2** and the pawn will promote soon.

We have seen that with the forcing move 37...f5 Black still has to play accurately to mobilize the pawns at the king side. The other candidate moves will give White more chances to draw the game. In the game, 37...h5 was played. After 38.Kc6 Rf5 we reach the exercise of position 3.

Position 3. White to move.



Sauer – Michalowski, position after 38...Rd5-f5.

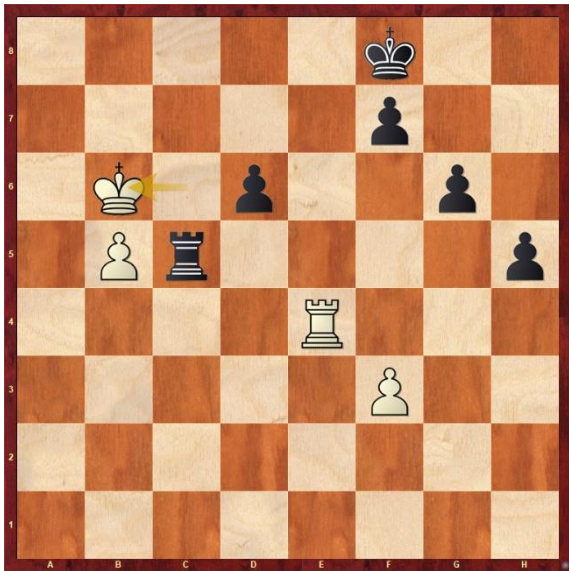
The candidate moves are 39.Kxd6, 39.b5 and 39.f4.

After 39.Kxd6? g5! the Black pawns at the king side will decide the game.

There is no time to lose. As a thumb rule, White should play at the side where he is stronger than his opponent.

After **39.b5! Rc5+ 40.Kb6**

Black should find a way to mobilize the pawns at the king side, while at the same time delaying the march of the White passed pawn.



pawn.

The rook should stay behind the passed pawn, so

40...Rc3! 41.Ka5

Now Black should mobilize the pawns at the king side.

41... f5! (41...Ra3? 42.Kb4 mobilizing the passed pawn) **42.Rb4 Ra3+ 43.Ra4 Rxa4+ 44.Kxa4 Ke7 45.Ka5 h4 46.b6 Kd7 47.Ka6 h3 48.b7 h2 49.b8Q h1Q** and Black has good chances to win this Queen Endgame.

In the game, White tried to delay the pawns at the king side with 39.f4, but after 39...h4 40.b5 Rc5+ 41.Kb6 h3 42.Re2 f6 43.Rh3 Rc3 44.Ka5 Black now should play 44...Ke7! helping the rook to stop the b

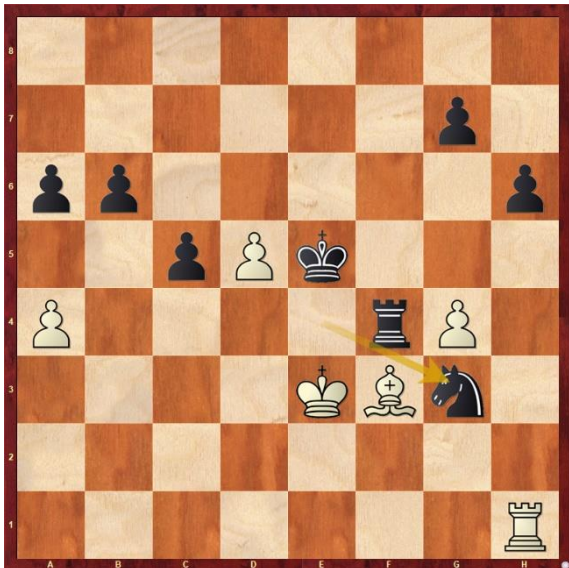
Position 4. Black to move.



Jacob – Mestek, position after 41.Re1-h1.

Black has a superior position because he controls the Black squares.

A forced move is **41...Nxe4**. Black should calculate this candidate move first. After **42.g3! Nxe3**

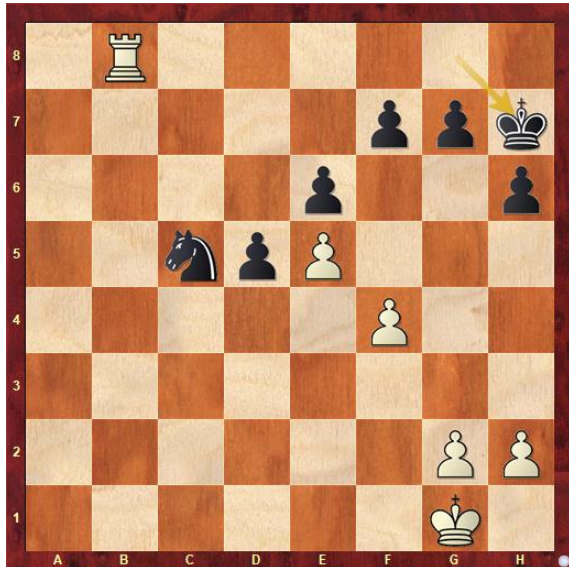


43.Rd1!

Black cannot save the knight without stopping the d pawn: 43...Rd4 44.Rxd4 cxd4+ 42.Kf2 h5 46.Kxg3 hxg4 and Black will dissolve the white pawns, with a draw as result, but this was not the plan.

This means that **41...Nxe4?** is not playable. A better candidate move is **41...Rf6** with the goal to fix the pawn structure at the king side first with **42.Rc1 c4 43.Rh1 g5** and b6-b5 will follow.

Position 5. White to move.



Violini – Pedersen, position after 34...Kg8-h7.

Looking at the material and the pawn structure, Black has adequate play for the minor exchange, because he has good chances to exchange pawns. If Black could play g7-g5, more pawns will be exchanged, increasing the drawing chances.

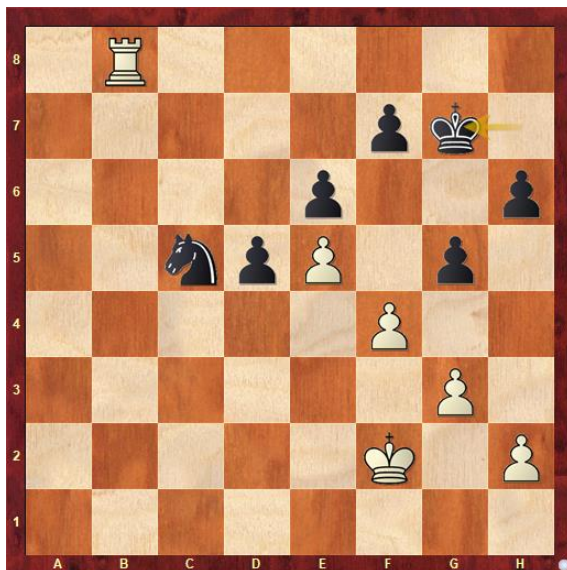
Therefore, White should delay g7-g5 with **32.Rf8!**

After **32...Kg6 34.Kf2** White can activate the king and mobilize the pawns at the king side. Black best plan is to find ways to exchange pawns, without weakening his own pawn structure, for example **34...h5 35.Kf3 Ne4 36.Ke3 Nc3 37.Re8 Kf5 38.Re7 Kg6 39.g3 Ne4 40.Ke2 Nc3+ 41.Kd3 Ne4 42.Ke3 Nc3**

43.h3.

In the game, White played 33.Kf2 allowing Black the chance to exchange pawns with 33...g5! After 34.g3 Kg7 (Better was 34...Kg6 to try to exchange pawns after 35.Ke3 Ne4 36.Kd4 h5) we reach the position of the next exercise.

Position 6. White to move.



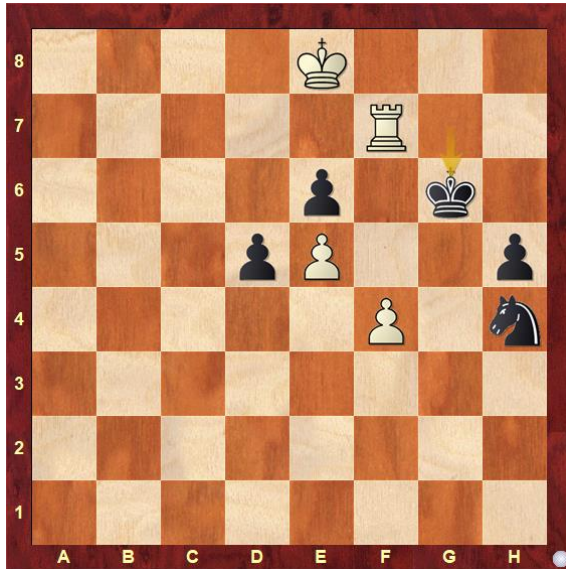
Violini – Pedersen, position after 34...Kh7-g7.

At the moment, Black's only weakness is pawn f7. It can only be attacked if the white king is activated.

After **35.Ke3**

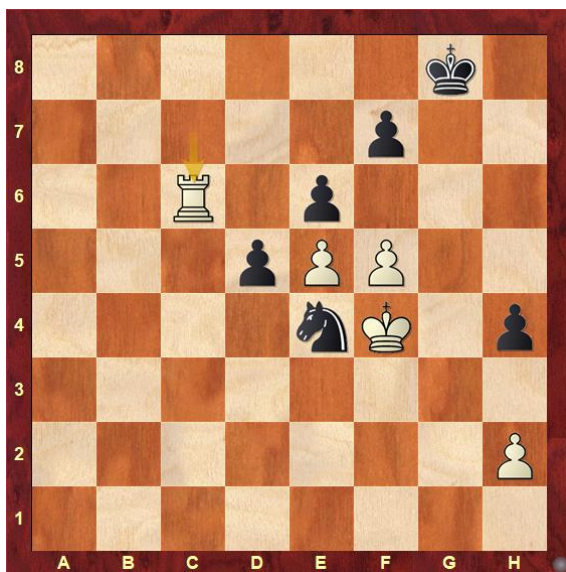
Black has several options.

- A) **35...gxf4+ 36.gxf4 h5** Preventing an invasion at the king side, but the White king will travel through the queen side to reach f7, for example (or 36...Kg6 37.h4 Ne4 38.h5+ Kg7 39.f5) **37.Rc8 Nd7 38.Rc7 Nf8 39.Kd4 Nh7 40.Kc5 Kg6 41.h4 Nf8 42.Kd6 Kg7 43.Ke7 Ng6+ 44.Ke8 Nxf4 45.Rxf7+ Kg6**



46.Kf8! with the threat Kg8 and Rf6+.

- B) **35... Ne4** White now has the opportunity to play **36.f5!** restricting the Black king. (36...exf5 37.Rc8 Kh7 38.Kd4) **36...h5 37.Rb7 Kg8 38.Rd7 h4 39.gxh4 gxh4 40.Rc7** restricting the Black knight. **40...Ng5 41.Kf4 Ne4 42.Rc6**



With a decisive invasion.

Position 7. Black to move.



Koksal – Pietruszewski, position after 41.Rb7-b8.

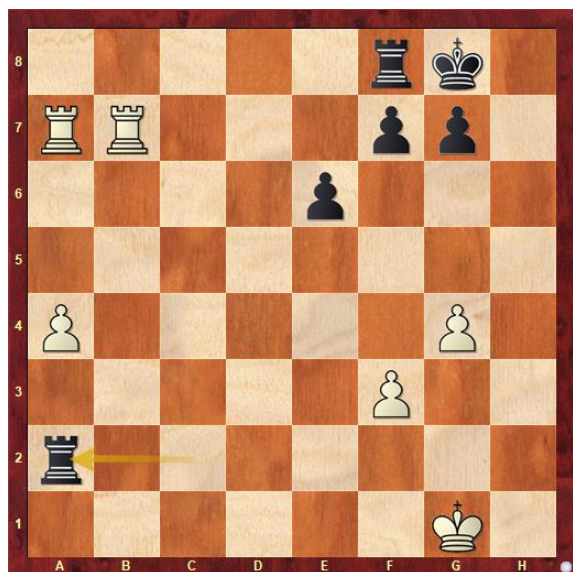
Black has to defend, or...

There are 2 categories of candidate moves.

- Passive defence moves as 41...Re6, 41...Kf6 and 41...Kd5. For example 41...Re6 42.Rd8 Kf6+ 43.Kf3 Ke5. Although Black is currently not in danger, he might risk to get into a bad situation by letting White having the initiative.
- An active defence move, played in the game: **41...f4+!** **43.gxf4 Kf5**. For a pawn, Black has activated the King. There is a big change Black will win pawn f4 or h4 back, with active pieces. This is preferable.

Position 8. White to move.

Choose between 34.Kf1, 34.a5, 34.Rd7 and 34.Rb1.



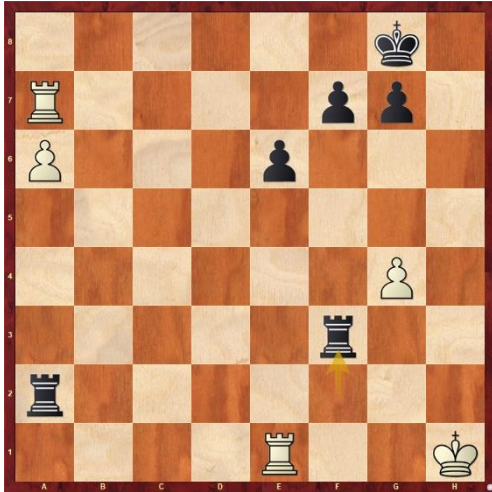
Kries – Middaugh, position after 33...Rc2-a2.

Looking at the position, you note the following things.

- Material is equal.
- White has a passed pawn.
- A rook behind a passed pawn is very effective.
- The White king is exposed and also cut off from the scene.
- The White rooks along the 7th rank are not yet effective because pawn f7 is adequately guarded.
- If Black is at move, he can play Rf8-c8/d8 threatening mate along the 1st rank.

The conclusion is that White should be careful in this position. Can the position of the rooks easily be improved? No: it does not matter if the rook is at square b7 or at square d7. Can the position of the White King be improved? Yes, a little, by moving towards the centre. In both positions, the central question remains: *What can White do against Rf8-d8 or Rf8-c8?* White has 2 candidate plans against this threat, covering the 1st rank with a rook, or blocking the file with a rook. The last candidate move has one disadvantage. After a rook exchange, White will lose the a pawn, with a resulting rook end game with 1 pawn down, but Black has no passed pawns, and all pawns are at the same side, resulting in an endgame where White has good chances to survive.

So White has the choice to defend a position in which all his pieces are worse, or a position with a pawn down, but good chances to save the game. Which choice do you prefer to make? We have analysed **34.Kf1** (or 38.a5) **Rd8 35.Rd7 Rxd7 36.Rxd7 Rxa4 37.Kg2** with good drawing chances. Let's look at the other candidate move, **34.Rb1**, the game continuation. After **34...Rc8 35.Re1 Rcc2** (In the game the lesser continuation 35...Rc4 was played, giving white time to defend with 36.Ra5! heading to h5, defending invasion square h2) Black has at least a draw with perpetual check. Does he have more than a draw? Let's find out. **36.a5 Rg2+ 37.Kh1 Rgf2 38.a6 Rxf3**



Analysis position

White has lost a pawn, and all his pieces are worse, Black still has the opportunity to have perpetual check, and the passed pawn at a6 is not a threat because it is guarded by a Black rook behind the pawn. In this position, Black has good chances to win the a pawn, or the g pawn, or both pawns.

Conclusion: White should head to the opportunity to trade rooks, In the resulting endgame with a pawn down, the drawing chances are high. The passed pawn at the a file is not a serious threat because a rook should be put behind a passed pawn.