

WIN? DRAW? by Macon Shibut



Dedrle, 1928



OLVING ENDGAME STUDIES is one of the best ways to train for over-the-board play. Here I'll share one particular study that afforded me several hours of interesting analytic practice.

The diagram position originally appeared with the challenge "White to Play and Win," but the published solution contains a mistake. Far from depriving the study of value however, the error opens a Pandora's Box of unexpected possibilities. Before reading farther, I recommend that you set up the position on your board and attempt to solve the problem without moving the pieces. (If you finish your analysis in *less than an hour*, read on if you must but I can practically guarantee you are guilty of some serious oversights!)

We first investigate a direct attack against h3. Black's only defense is counterattack against d2, so the play is relatively forced and the analysis shouldn't be too difficult.

1. Kf5 Kb5

Right off the bat we discover a potentially critical point: Black must waste a tempo as he cannot rush directly to the counterattack. He's got to hang around to defend d5! Thus 1...Ka4 falls just short after 2. Ke5 Kb3 3. Kd5 Kc2 4. Kc4 Kd2 5. Kd4 Ke2 6. c4 Kf2 7. c5 Kg2 8. c6 Kh2 9. c7 Kg2 10. c8=Q h2 11. Qc6 Kg1 12. Qc1 Kg2 13. Qd2 Kg1 14. Ke3! h1=Q 15. Qf2#

- 2. Kg4 Ka4
- 3. Kh3 Kb3
- 4. Kg3 Kc2
- 5. h4 Kd2
- 6. h5 d4!

and Black draws, as can be readily verified. But not to worry! Returning to the original position, we notice that White is to the rear of Black's pawns. Our next try will be to maneuver with the object of gaining the opposition and ultimately conquering the queenside pawns.

1. Kf7!?

1 Kf5 Kb5 or 1 Kf6 Kb6 both yield the opposition, which seems contrary to the theme we are pursuing. Still, we should not forget



about these moves. They will merit reconsideration if our primary idea doesn't pan out.

1....Kb5

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We already established 1...Ka4? 2. Ke6 Kb3 3. Kd5 etc is too slow.

2. Ke7 Kc5

Nor can Black afford to let White play Kd6.

- 3. Kd7 d4
- 4. Ke6 dc3
- 5.dc3 Kc6
- 6. Ke5 Kc5
- 7. Ke4 Kc6
- 8. Kd4 Kd6
- 9. Kc4

Now I will permit something that you should normally avoid if you wish to get the full training value out of working with studies: we will "peek" at the answer! I'll reveal that Dedrle's proposed solution does in fact lead to the diagramed position.



Actually Dedrle gets here by a different and, to my mind, less convincing move order. But that's another story. The important thing for our present purposes is that this position is critical to the "official" solution.

9....Kc6

Without the h-pawns this would secure a book draw. But as things stand White can continue...

10. Kd4 Kd6

11. Ke4 Kc5 12. Kf4 Kc4 13. Kg3 Kc3 14. Kh3 Kd4 15. Kg4 Ke5 16. Kg5! and wins.

Returning to the previous diagram, another point of the study is that counterattack by 9...Ke5 evidently fails because of 10. Kd3 Kf4 11. Ke2! and Black is shut out. All fine and good, except in this latter variation Dedrle overlooked that 10...Kd5! gains a tempo and draws: 11. Ke3 (11. c4 Kc5 12. Kc3 Kc6 13. Kd4 Kd6 etc won't help) Kc4 12. Kf3 Kc3 13. Kg3 Kd4 14. Kh3 Ke5 15. Kg4 Kf6. Oops!

So we have tried two basic approaches for White and both appear to fall just short. In cases such as this, an answer frequently lies in somehow *combining the ideas*, threatening Black in more than one way and eventually gaining a tempo or forcing a weakness or, generally speaking, *getting a somehow improved version of either Plan A or B*.

When I first examined this study, Dedrle's "solution" surprised me. Not only did it contain a relatively obvious mistake, but it seemed unaesthetic to make no use whatsoever of the direct attack on h3 ("Plan

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A"). Moreover, I thought I had worked out my own solution using just such a combined method! I checked some other sources (Fine's *Basic Chess Endings*; Portisch & Sarkozy's 600 Endgames; Averbakh and Maizelis' Pawn Endings; Speelman's Endgame Preparation) but none of them carried this ending. Later I learned that the pawn ending volume of Encyclopedia of Chess Endings has it, plus commentary by Minev pointing out the same drawing resource as mentioned above. But as far as I know, neither Minev nor anyone else has considered the possibility that a replacement for Dedrle's incorrect solution may exist.

Reflecting back on Plan A, Black must be far enough along to answer Kxh3 with ...Kb3. Otherwise his counterattack is too late. Therefore, when White is at g4 (threatening h3) Black's king must be at least to a4.

Also, whenever White plays Ke5, attacking the d-pawn, Black must defend from c5 or c6.



The diagram indicates these relationships with symbols "A"/"a" and "B"/"b". Furthermore, White has two "C" squares, f4 and f5, that border both A and B. Thanks to White's c3 pawn, Black has access to only one analogous square "c," namely b5. Thus if White maneuvers K-f4-f5 (or K-f5-f4) Black should find himself in zugzwang.*Voile!* I thought I'd solved the ending as follows:

1. Kf5 Kb5 2. Kf4! Kc5 If 2...Ka4 3. Ke5 etc. Or if 2...Kc6 3. Kg3 etc.

3. Kg3 d4

3...Kb5 doesn't make it either — 4. Kh3 Ka4 5. Kg3 Kb3 6. Kf3 Kc2 7. Ke3.

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4. Kh3



- 4....dc3 5. dc3 Kd5 6. Kg3 Ke4 7. h4 Kd3
- 8. h5 Kc3
- 9. h6

Black's pawn will reach the seventh rank. Often that's sufficient for a bishop pawn to draw versus a queen, but this position is lost due to the proximity of White's king:

9...Kb3 10. h7 c3 11. h8=Q c2 12. Qa1! followed by Qc1; or,

9...Kb2 10. h7 c3 11. h8=Q Black's pawn is pinned on the sixth rank, a book win; or,

9...Kd3 10. h7 c3 11. h8=Q c2 12. Qh6! and again Qc1; or finally,

9...Kd2 (best try) 10. h7 c3 11. h8=Q c2 12. Qb2! Kd1 13. Kf2! Kd2 (if 13...c1=Q 14. Qe2#) 14. Qd4 Kc1 15. Qb4! Kd1 16. Qe1#

I must say, I was rather pleased with myself. But then I recalled Lasker's dictum that even the most barren looking position contains resources! I combed

62nd Virginia Closed State Championship September 5-7, 1998

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VCF Business Meeting at Noon 9/5. Hotel \$55/1-4, (804) 296-5501. NS, NC, W. *Enter:* Mark Johnson, PO Box 241 Barboursville, Va 22923



through the variations one more time, trying to improve Black's defense. Sure enough, returning to the previous diagram I found that an "insignificant" transposition,

4. ... Kd5!!

complicates matters considerably! Let's see why:

5. Kg3 Ke4 6. h4

6. Kf2 consumes a vital tempo. Black draws after 6...dc3 7. dc3 Kd3 etc. Likewise 6. cd4 Kd4 7. Kf2 Kd3 8. Ke1 c3 9. dc3 Kc3 K-d4-e5-...-h8 is a draw

6. ... Kd3!

The point! By targeting d2 instead of c3 Black avoids having to spend another tempo later getting out of the c-pawn's way. Now 7. h5 Kd2 8. cd4 c3 9. h6 c2 10. h7 c1=Q 11. h8=Q Qc3 12 Kf4 Kd3 eliminates the last pawn. So...

7. cd4! Kd2

Black has no choice: 7...Kd4? 8. h5 Kd3 (8...Ke5 would catch the h-pawn but lose the c-pawn and the game.) 9. h6 Kd2 10. h7 c3 11. h8=Q c2 12. Qb2 Kd1 13. Kf2! winning.

8. d5 c3 9. d6 c2 10. d7 c1=Q 11. d8=Q

So we reach the notorious ending Q+RP vs Q! To what can White look forward now? How about a grueling effort to escape check— if only for

one turn— so as to inch forward with the pawn? And then, after one move, the endless harassing checks will begin anew...

Many textbooks analyze this ending only with the pawn already on the seventh rank.; the winning procedure is so difficult even then that they don't bother with positions in which the pawn is farther back. (Several years ago I got into this ending in a tournament game and my opponent, with the pawn, offered a draw immediately, without pressing for even one single move!) But the defender's task is not simple either! Playing these endings is so tough, both sides are sure to make a lot of mistakes. In practice the pawn wins as often as not. Moreover, the winning chances in theory look better today than before. This was one of those endings that have been "solved" by computer retrograde analysis. As long ago as 1985 the program BELLE completed a database of won and drawn positions. Assuming there's no programming error, BELLE "plays" Q+RP vs Q perfectly. Statistics derived from BELLE's database reveal more winning positions than had been expected previously.

There remained a practical problem of turning BELLE's raw analysis into something comprehensible by humans. Edmar Mednis published a useful article in 1986 ("Belle dame sans merci," *New In Chess*, 1986, #6; also in some other publications in abbreviated form.) He used BELLE to examine six examples from recent (human) master practice. All six had been previously annotated by grandmasters, so their analysis went under the microscope as well. Guess what? Both the original play and the subsequent analyses were full of mistakes. This should not surprise anyone who has suffered through a queen and pawn ending; as Mednis notes, "the extreme tediousness...makes them very unpleasant for a human analyst."

It was the kind of article from which everyone reads the text but nobody actually sets up a board and plays through all the moves. Mednis probably anticipated as much and therefore went a step further, attempt-

> ing to distill from BELLE's output some rules of thumb for practical play. Some are obvious and intuitive surprise, surprise, an active centralized queen is an asset for either side — but others are excep-



tional. In particular, it's not a good idea for the defender to use his king to stop the pawn. This represents a significant difference between Q+RP vs Q other basic [piece + pawn] vs [piece] endings. Also, a centralized king is a disadvantage for the defender in this ending! Why? Because the basic defensive plan is not to stop the pawn's advance directly, but rather, to use the queen's mobility to harass the enemy king with infinite checks. The defender's king has no role in this plan; a "well-placed" king in this ending really means one that doesn't get in the way. A well placed king in the traditional sense (i.e. centralized or blockading the pawn) is apt to interfere with its own queen or, worse yet, expose itself to countercheck (ie, the defender's check is answered by a queen interposition that itself gives check and forces exchange of queens). The best place for the defending king in Q+RP vs Q is around the far opposite corner from where the pawn is due to promote — near a1 in the present case.

For the side with the pawn, it's worth noting that the *queen alone is sufficient to force the pawn through a blockade*. The king doesn't need to help! Here again



we're at variance with most other basic endings. In Q+RP vs Q, the aggressor king's primary mission is to stay out of check. It should head wherever necessary to that end. Frequently it pays to *head in the direction of the defender's king*, so as to increase the chances of interference or countercheck.

OK, let's get back to the position at hand.



Not having access to BELLE I can't absolutely resolve this position, but it seems to me White's winning chances are excellent. (Mednis's examples included some winning positions that look tougher on the surface.) To start with, Black is in check so White already has the initiative. Worse yet for Black, his king can't go to the c-file, nor to the c1-h6 diagonal so long as White's queen can check from f4, g5, or h6. Nor can he flee to f1. White would give a check on the f-file, another check at f2 or f3, and force a queen trade (or mate) shortly. And Black can't go to d4 either as long as White has Qf4 in hand. So we see that the universe of safe squares is very limited! If we imagine the same position except White's queen at d4 instead of d8 the queen trade would be forced, e.g. 11...Ke2 (11...Ke1 12 Qg1; or 11...Kc2 12 Qc4) 12 Qe4 and White skewers Black's pieces next turn.

This helps clarify White's threat: to zigzag back with his queen, repeatedly giving check on the d- and efiles, and eventually crowd Black into a forced queen swap. To avert this concrete tactical threat Black must scramble to the center for breathing space. But



now we recall Mednis' principle: from a positional standpoint, the center is precisely where Black's king does not want to wind up!

11. ... Ke2!

Forced

12. Qe7

12. Qe8 Kd3! 13. Qg6 will lead to the same position as the text after 13...Kd4 14. Qd6 Ke4 15. Qe6 Kd4.

12. Qd4!? is interesting but I don't believe it's better than the text move.

12.... Kd3! (again forced) 13.Qd6 Ke4 14.Qe6 Kd4 15. h5



Now Black can start checking. But before long he will experience the consequences of his centralized king. For example:

{a} 15...Qg5? 16. Qg4 Qg4 17. Kg4 Ke5 18. Kg5 wins;

{b} 15...Qc3 (or Qa3) 16. Kg4 already White will get to push his pawn again;

{c} 15...Qc7 16. Kg4 Qg7 17. Kh4 escapes checks for the time being, and threatens to win by 18 Qg4;

15. ... Qg1

Not surprisingly, this most obvious move is best. From here on exhaustive analysis is impossible (unless you're BELLE) but the following variation is certainly plausible:

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16. Kf4 Qf1

16...Qf2 (or Qh2) offers a different menu of checking angles but the ultimate effect would be much the same as the text. After 17 Kg5 Black dare not check on the g-file, so 17...Qd2 and White will seek shelter in the vicinity of e7/f7/f6 as in the main variation.

17. Kg5 Qc1

17...Qg1? 18. Qg4

18. Kg6 Qc2 19. Kf6

And now the checks are coming to a end. For instance, if 19...Qf2 20. Ke7 etc. (Had Black played 18...Qb1 instead of Qc2, then 19. Qf5 Qg1 [19...Qb6? 20. Qf6] 20. Kf6 with similar consequences.) White will get to nudge the pawn again.

Can Black defend in the long run? We see the burden of his exposed king, which is not easily remedied. In my opinion Black is

lost. And if my suspicion is correct, Dedrle's position is indeed "White to Play and Win"... but hardly the way the composer had in mind!



METRO YOUTH TOURNAMENT #6

by Peter Hopkins

29 SCHOLASTIC PLAYERS turned out for the first in a series of three summertime 4-SS events at the Dumbarton Library in Richmond on June 20. The tournament was played in two sections with separate trophies awarded in four different grade categories.

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The top section combined high school and middle school. 9-yearold Jack Barrow, from Chesterfield County's Clover Hill Elementary School, was first overall with $3^{1/2}$ points. Jack took home the first place trophy for middle schools.

Derek Rowe and David Courtois, from J E J Moore Middle and Prince George High Schools respectively, each scored 3-1 after playing to a draw head-to-head in the final round. Derek won the first place trophy for high schools and David claimed the second place trophy for middle schools. James Barlowe, from Henrico High School, and Clover Hill High School's Chris Carrell were 2nd and 3rd place trophy winners. Andrew Kolhoff, from Henrico County's Moody Middle School, claimed the 3rd place trophy in his category.

In the lower section, combining grades K-5, Joey Schools, from Mechanicsville in Hanover County, went undefeated after scoring a second round upset against top-seeded James Habboush, from Henrico's Dumbarton Elementary School. In an unusual 4-way tie for second place, duplicate 2nd place trophies for grades 3-5 were awarded to Habboush and Clover Hill Elementary's Jordan Bakos. Lakeside Elementary's Chad Manke was awarded the 3rd place trophy. Ben Haskins, out of Mehfoud Elementary in eastern Henrico, was K-2 winner, losing only to Joey Schools in the 3rd round. Cooper Jones, a home schooler from Richmond and Lakeside Elementary's Dylan Kolhoff won the 2nd and 3rd place K-2 trophies with 2 points each.

The tournament was organized by Richmond Chess and directed by Peter Hopkins. Individual standings and crosstables are available online at

http://gsgis.k12.va.us/gsgis/clubs/ gschess.html



Emporia Open October 10-11, 1998

Greensville Ruritan Club Ruritan Rd (off of Hwy 58 West) Emporia, VA 23847 5-SS, 40/90, G/60. \$\$G900, class prizes b/ 5 per class: 250-150-100; X (if no X wins place prize), A, B, C, each \$75; D, E each 50. EF: \$35 if rec'd by 10/6, \$40 at site, free to unrateds; players under 19 may pay \$6 and play for trophy/book prizes. Reg 9-9:45 am, rds 10-3-8, 9-2. NC. W. Free significant refreshments provided. Enter: Woodrow Harris, 1105 West End Drive, Emporia, VA 23847. (804)-634-2725.

CHARLOTTESVILLE OPEN

The 8th annual Charlottesville Open, July 11-12, was a great success. No fewer than 81 players turned out, including an exceptionally strong field atop the open section. Senior Master Emory Tate clinched clear 1st with a last-round draw versus Frederick Kagan. Kagan and two-time state champion Rusty Potter were equal 2nd-3rd. The amateur section also saw a clear winner with 4¹/₂ points. Barry Quillon took a half-point bye in round 3 and otherwise won all his games. Andrew Boekhoff, Roddney Fett, John Beasley, Robert Kramer, Andrew Miller & Lloyd Arnold comprised a logjam at 4-1. *Virginia Chess* hopes to have a more detailed report on this event next issue.



Monticello

ACC QUICK CHAMPIONSHIP

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Ray Kaufman was the clear winner of the 1998 Arlington Chess Club Quick Championship, July 17. His 6-1 score was good for a 2402 performance rating and put him a half-point ahead of his father. Reigning state champion Steve Greanias was part of 3-way tie for 3rd at 4¹/₂. Browse complete results at *http://www.wizard.net/~matkins/98quick.htm*



Hampton's newly-formed Peninsula Chess Club meets at Thomas Nelson Community College every Thursday at 7pm. The club's inaugural rated tournament is planned for Saturday, August 22nd: a 5 round, double swiss played at a rate of game/15. Registration will be from 8-8:45 am with the 1st round to start at 9. A web page is planned for the near future. In the meantime club info is available from Tim Schmal, 423 Dunham Massie Dr, Hampton VA 23669. Phone (757) 851-3317 home, or (757) 764-2316 office. Or email, *tcschmal@aol.com*

5th Best Western Mt Vernon Northern Virginia Open November 7-8, 1998

Best Western Mt Vernon Hotel 8751 Richmond Highway Alexandria, Virginia 22309

6-SS, G/100, \$\$1750 (top 3 G, rest b/60): \$50-300-200, X, A, B, C, D, below 1200 each 125. EF \$40 if rec'd by 11/1, \$50 at site, scholastic entry for 18 & under \$10, \$15 at site, non-cash prizes only, count 20% toward b/60. Reg 9:00-9:45am, rds 10-2-6, 10-2-5:30. One half point by available. VCF memb reqd, OSA. Hotel \$63/1-2, (703) 360-1300. NS, NC, W. Info: (703) 360-3391 but no phone entries!, or http://www.wizard.net/~matkins/nova.htm, or e-mail matkins@wizard.net Enter: Catherine Clark, 5208 Cedar Rd Alexandria VA 22309 20 Grand Prix points!

FREDRICKSBURG OPEN

Fifty-six players turned out for the 1998 Fredricksburg Open, June 20-21. Dimitri Barash won clear first place in the Open section, defeating top-ranked Frederick Kagan in the penultimate round. Virgilio Carter secured clear 1st in the under-1800 Amateur group by drawing his last round game versus Eugene Frank, who was also undefeated but took a half-point bye in the middle of the tournament. Crosstables courtesy of Jim Zacchetti.

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	Name rtng	ro	1 1	rð	l 2	rd 3	rð	l 4	rd	5	TOT
1	BARASH, DMITRIJ2218	W	9	W	15	H—	W	2	W	7	4.5
2	KAGAN, FREDERICK2346	W	13	W	10	W 11	L	1	W	4	4.0
3	MURADOV, NIZOMIDDINunr.	W	12	D	11	L 10	W	17	W	13	3.5
4	HARRIS, GEORGE L1992	D	5	W	б	Н—	W	8	L	2	3.0
5	GUILL, JAMES ROBER1887	D	4	D	14	L 6	W	12	W	11	3.0
6	LANCE, MARK N	D	7	L	4	W 5	D	11	W	15	3.0
7	GRAY, WILLIAM F1988	D	б	D	16	D 9	W	15	L	1	2.5
8	LARSON, RICHARD ER1918	L	11	W	12	W 16	L	4	D	9	2.5
9	THOMAS, JAMARL L1786	L	1	B-	-	D 7	D	13	D	8	2.5
10	FISCHER, ROBERT J2165	W	17	L	2	W 3	U-	-	U—		2.0
11	COHEN, HARRY S2126	W	8	D	3	ь 2	D	6	L	5	2.0
12	PENN, ROBERT M1973	L	3	L	8	W 14	L	5	W	17	2.0
13	SKIRPAN, STEPHEN J1972	L	2	W	17	H—	D	9	L	3	2.0
14	HAUSER, DAN	L	15	D	5	L 12	B-	-	U—		1.5
15	CAMPBELL, JOHN T1804	W	14	L	1	H—	L	7	L	6	1.5
16	RUFTY, ALAN E	H-	_	D	7	L 8	U-	-	U—		1.0
17	FOUCAULT, JEAN-LOU1930	L	10	L	13	B—	L	3	L	12	1.0

CHESS CLUBS

Please send additions / corrections to the Editor.

🚆 🕱 Alexandria: Fairfax County Chess Club, Lee District Park, Thursdays 6:30-9:30pm in the Snack Bar, info Walter Scott, *WScott123@aol.com* Arlington: Arlington Chess Club, Central United Methodist Church, 4201 N Fairfax Dr (across street from Ballston metro), Fridays 7pm, (Registration for rated Ladder and Action events ends 8pm) 🛨 Cherrydale Senior Citizens Chess Club, Madison Community Center, Old Glebe Rd. Every Monday 10am-3pm 🛛 🗮 🗄 Blacksburg: Chess Club of Virginia Tech, GB Johnson Student Center, Rm 102, Virginia Tech, Wednesdays 7-9pm 🖉 🗮 Burke: Pohick Chess Club, Pohick Regional Library Meeting Room, 6450 Sydenstricker Rd, Burke VA. Sundays 3:30-5:45pm. info (703) 455-8168 置置 Charlottesville: Charlottesville Chess Club, St Mark Lutheran Church, Rt 250 & Alderman Rd, Monday evenings 🛛 🚊 🖺 Chesapeake: Zero's Sub Shop, 3116 Western Branch Blvd (Rt 17), (Poplar Hill Plaza near Taylor Rd intersection), Mondays 6pm to closing T Great Bridge United Methodist Church, corner of Battlefiled Blvd & Stadium Dr, Tuesdays, 6:30-10pm, info 686-0822 📱 Culpeper: Culpeper Chess Club, Culpeper Middle School Library, 14300 Achievement Drive (off route 229 North Main St Extended), mobile trailer #5. Tuesdays 7-10pm, info Vince LoTempio 672-0189 or www.geocities.com/Colosseum/Loge/6739 🛛 🗮 Fort Eustis: contact Sorel Utsey 878-4448 🛛 🗮 🖺 Fredricksburg: Spotsylvania Chess, Lutheran Church Rte West 4.7 miles from Exit 130 on I-95. Every Tuesday 6-9pm, info Mike Cornell 785-8614 🛛 🕱 🛣 Glenns: Rappahannock Community College Glenns Campus Chess Club, Glenns Campus Library, Tuesdays 8-10pm in the student lounge, info Zack Loesch 758-5324(x208) **H** Hampton: Peninsula Chess Club, Thursdays 7pm, Thomas Nelson Community College, info Tim Schmal, 757-851-3317 (h) or 757-764-2316(w) or *tcschmal@aol.com* 🚆 Harrisonburg: Shenandoah Valley Chess Club, Lutheran Church across from Burger King on Rt 33, Fridays 7pm 🛛 🗮 🛛 Norfolk: Larchmont Public Library, 6525 Hampton Blvd, Wednesday 6-9pm 🛨 ODU Chess Club, Webb Univ Ctr, Old Dominion University, info www.odu.edu/~chess 🚆 Purcellville: Blue Ridge Cafe, Thursdays 5-7pm and Saturdays 1-4pm (& bi-wkly 4-7pm), info Douglas A Gripp, 540-668-7160 🛛 🗮 🗮 Reston: The Reston Recreation Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road, every Thursday 7:30-10:30pm, info 476-4500 🛛 🚊 🛚 Richmond: The Kaissa Chess Club, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 2800 Grove Avenue. Thursdays 5:30-9pm. info Alfredo Franco 367-1154 🛨 Knights at Noon, 12noon at Dumbarton Library, 6800 Staples Mill Rd. Peter Hopkins 358-2842 **1** The Side Pocket, Cross Roads Shopping Center, Staples Mill Rd. A billiards parlor with chess tables set up any hour, every day **1** Huguenot Chess Knights, Bon Air Library Community Room, 1st & 3rd Friday of each month, 7-11pm, info Dean Taylor, 794-0986 **1** Jewish Ctr CC, 5403 Monument Ave. 4-6pm every other Sunday beginning 1/8/95. (804) 288-0045 **2 R**oanoke: Roanoke Valley Chess Club, Grandin Ct Rec Ctr, Corner of Lofton & Barham Rd SW, Fridays 7:30-11:00pm, Info Brian Roark (540) 772-1435 🗮 🕱 Virginia Beach: Tidewater Community College CC, Princess Anne Rd, Bldg D Kempsvill Cafeteria, Mondays & Wednesdays 7-10pm, http://users.exis.net/~rybarcz/ Williamsburg: Williamsburg Chess Club, Williamsburg Landing - Main Building, 2nd floor lounge, 5700 Williamsburg Landing Dr, Mondays 7-10pm, info Frank Preston (757) 565-3811

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	Amateur											
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1	CARTER, VIRGILIO1759	W	24	W	9	W	12	W	10	D	3	4.5
2	HICKEY, RONALD D1785	D	20	W	32	H-	-	W	13	W	6	4.0
3	KRANK, EUGENE M1760	W	15	W	16	H-	-	W	7	D	1	4.0
4	YEE, CHRISTOPHER1619	W	26	W	35	L	18	W	14	W	10	4.0
5	GEORGE, BRUCE B1679	W	37	W	30	L	10	D	9	W	17	3.5
б	MEADOR, JOHN R1595	W	28	W	29	H-	-	W	18	L	2	3.5
7	CAHILL, PETER	W	22	W	27	H-	-	L	3	W	19	3.5
8	PRESICCI, MANNY R1566	L	29	W	28	B-	-	W	11	D	12	3.5
9	MILLER, ANDREW J1501	W	33	L	1	W	25	D	5	W	16	3.5
10	DECKER, JOSEPH L1744	W	21	W	19	W	5	L	1	L	4	3.0
11	HUFFMAN, CHARLES J1738	L	30	W	37	W	20	L	8	W	25	3.0
12	WAH, DARREN	W	25	W	14	L	1	D	19	D	8	3.0
13	STAPP, TIMOTHY D1600	L	27	W	26	W	24	L	2	W	20	3.0
14	MEADE, PATTY1438	W	36	L	12	W	29	L	4	W	24	3.0
15	DOETSCH,R N1433	L	3	W	22	W	35	L	16	W	28	3.0
16	KANEV, SVETLOZAR1519	W	34	L	3	D	30	W	15	L	9	2.5
17	STEWARDSON, DON1513	D	23	L	20	W	32	W	21	L	5	2.5
18	ODELL, HENRY R1507	D	32	W	23	W	4	L	6	U-	-	2.5
19	BRANDT, WADE1484	W	38	L	10	W	27	D	12	L	7	2.5
20	WISE, CHRISTOPHER1435	D	2	W	17	L	11	W	30	L	13	2.5
21	YAKOVENKO, NIKOLAI1410	L	10	W	34	H-	_	L	17	W	27	2.5
22	WALSH, DWAYNE P1286	L	7	L	15	D	33	W	38	W	30	2.5
23	MILLER, BRIAN D1053	D	17	L	18	W	38	L	24	W	31	2.5
24	DONIHEE, JOHN E1415	L	1	W	33	L	13	W	23	L	14	2.0
25	SCHATZ, PETER J1386	L	12	W	36	L	9	W	29	L	11	2.0
26	HYDORN, DAVID N1329	L	4	L	13	L	34	W	36	W	32	2.0
27	LOTEMPIO, VINCENT1323	W	13	L	7	L	19	W	34	L	21	2.0
28	HAZLETT, JOHN	L	6	L	8	W	36	W	35	L	15	2.0
29	SHING, PHILLIP1233	W	8	L	б	L	14	L	25	W	34	2.0
30	KOVATS,JIRI F1399	W	11	L	5	D	16	L	20	L	22	1.5
31	CHERMAN, ALEKSEY1310	U-	_	U-	-	H-	-	W	33	L	23	1.5
32	STAPP, NATHAN C 995	D	D 18		L 2		L 17		_	L	26	1.5
33	STAPP, KYLE T 872	L	9	L	24	D	22	L	31	W	35	1.5
34	CORSER, DANIEL M1059	L	16	L	21	W	26	L	27	L	29	1.0
35	HOLLINGSWORTH, TYL	B-	_	L	4	L	15	L	28	L	33	1.0
36	HOLLINGSWORTH, ALECunr.	L	14	L	25	L	28	L	26	W	38	1.0
37	STEIN, ADAM1365	L	5	L	11	H-	-	F-	-	U-	_	0.5
38	STAPP, JARED 582	L	19	H-	_	L	23	L	22	L	36	0.5



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KING & PAWN ENDINGS: BP+RP vs RP on the same side

by Stephen Cheyney

HESE ENDINGS ARE RELATIVELY COMMON, and many authors consider them important. They are treated in many books, but usually not very clearly. Although they appear simple at first glance, they can be a bit involved. You can learn how to handle most of these positions by memorizing four cases and some associated positions, lines of play, and specific rules.

Case I -The defender's rook's pawn has moved from its original square: *A win*.

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Case II -The defender's rook's pawn has not moved, but the attacker's rook's pawn has moved, and the attacker's king cannot get in front of his bishop's pawn: *A draw*.

Case III -The defender's rook's pawn has not moved, but the attacker's rook's pawn has advanced two squares, and the attacker can get in front of the bishop's pawn, also advanced two squares, giving the defender the opposition: *A win*.

Case IV -The attacker's rook's pawn has not moved: *A win*.

To summarize: If the attacker has not moved his rook's pawn, then he wins. If the attacker has advanced his rook's pawn, then the defender can draw some positions with his rook's pawn on its original square.



Ι

The attacker wins when he can set up the following position (and he usually can):



To attempt to defend, Black must keep the "opposition," meaning the opposition when White's king stands on d6, and the "correspondence" (a nongeometrical version of the opposition) when White's king stands on d5. The squares c8 and d5 are "corresponding squares," or "related squares," which is to say that they act like oppositional squares: whoever must move must give way and allow the opposing king to invade. So White wins when he can answer either ...Kc7 with Kc5, ...Kd8 with Kd6, or ...Kc8 with Kd5.

White to play (if Black to play, he must give way, and White wins with Kb6 and Ka6): 1. Kd5 Kc8 (the only square from which Black can meet both of White's threatened invasions at c5 and d6. Now, with two adjacent rear support squares, White can triangulate to lose a tempo. Since Black cannot play ...Kc7 for fear of Kc5, he has only one access square to c8-well, one on either side—and cannot triangulate.) 2. Kd4 (or 2. Kc4) 2...Kb8 (or 2...Kd8, since White is not in position to respond Kd6) 3. Kc4 Kc8 (3...Kc7 4. Kc5) 4. Kd5 and, since White now has the "opposition/correspondence," Black must move and lose: 4...Kd8 5. Kd6 and wins.





Maizelis 1955

Black to play: 1...Kc52.Kb3Kb6! (not2...a6?? transposing into Case I) 3. Kb4 Kc6 4. a4 Kb6 5. a5+ Kc6 and draws. Black draws when he can keep the attacker's king from getting in front of the passed pawn. But if White played first, he could muscle his king in front of the bishop's pawn with 1. Kb4 followed by advancing the a-pawn.

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If White cannot lead with his king, but must lead with the pawn, then Black must defend positions like the next one.



Black defends by refraining from moving his rook's pawn until he absolutely has to, and by following a rule specific for only this circumstance: when forced to retreat to the first rank, play the king to the square of the same color as that of the attacker's rook's pawn. Here, that would be c8. If White's rook pawn were on a3 or a5, Black would retreat to d8.

Black to play: **1...Kc82.Kd6Kd8 3. c7+** (3. a5 Kc8 (not 3...a6??, leading back to Case I) 4. a6 (or 4. c7 a6) 4...Kd8 5. c7+ Kc8 6. Kc6 stalemate) **3...Kc8 4. Kc6 a6 5. Kb6 a5 6. Ka5 Kc7** and draws. III



Maizelis 1955

White to play: **1. Kd5 Kd7** (...a6 at any point transposes into Case I) **2. a5 Kc7 3. Ke6 Kc6 4. a6!** (This is the key position for which the attacker aims. His rook's pawn and the two kings are in line on the sixth rank and the defender is on the move, with the bishop's pawn two squares away.) **4...Kc7** (or 4...Kc5 5. Kd7 Kc4 6. Kc6! wins) **5. Ke7 Kc6** (5...Kc8 6. Kd6 Kd8 7. Kc6 Kc8 8. c5) **6.** Kd8 Kd6 7. Kc8 Kc6 8. Kb8 Kb6 **9. c5+ Kc69. Ka7 Kc7 10. c6** and wins.

Black to play: 1...Kd7 2. Kd5 Kc7 3. a5 (3. c5 transposes into Case II) 3...Kd7 4. a6 Kc7 5. Ke6 Kc66.Ke7 Kc7!7.c5 Kc68. Kd8 Kc5 9. Kc7 Kd5 10. Kb7 Kd6 11. Ka7 Kc7 draws.

IV

This one is easy because it's basically the flip side of Case II. Here, however, the attacker's unmoved rook's pawn trumps the defender's unmoved rook's pawn. The attacker simply runs his bishop's pawn down until the defender's king must retreat to the first rank. At the proper time the attacker will be able to advance his rook's pawn either one square or two, as appropriate.



White to play: 1. Kb4 Kc7 (of course 1...a6 transposes into Case I) 2. Kb5 Kb7 3. c6+ Kc7 4. Kc5 Kc8 (or 4...Kd8 5. Kd6 Kc8 (or 5...a5 6. a4 or 5...a6 6. a3 a5 7. a4) 5. c7 a6 6. a3 a5 7. a4 Kb7 8. Kd7 and wins. The parenthetical lines are basically the same as the main line, which you need not memorize provided that you can calculate well. You only need to remember the basic idea, and you can figure out the rest over the board.) 5. Kd6 Kd8 6. c7+ Kc8 7. Kc6 a6 (7...a5 8. Kb6 a4 9. a3) 8. Kb6 a5 9. a4 Kd7 10. Kb7 and wins.

Just for the Record —A Couple Exceptions



Grigoriev 1920

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White to play: **1. Kf2 Kg42. Ke3! h6** (Black started out with the ingredients normally required for a win, but because of his funny king placement he cannot both keep the rook's pawn on its original square and hold on to the bishop's pawn. We are now in Case II.) **3. Kf2 Kf4 4. Ke1!** and draws. Of course, if Black played 2...h5 White would go 4. Kf1!





Cheron 1952

White to play: **1. Ke1 h5 2. Kf1 h43. Kg1** (if 3. Ke1 Kg2; or if 3. h3 Ke4! 4. Ke2 Kf4 5. f3 Kg3 =) **3...Kg4!** (not 3...h3? 4. Kf1) **4. Kg2 h3+ 5. Kg1 Kf4 6. Kf1 Kf3 7. Ke1 Kg2** draws. So with the attacker's bishop's pawn unmoved and his king on the first rank, the defender can draw with the optimum king placement. This is a plain exception to Case IV described above.

It is possible to compose other, less natural, positions where funny pawn and king placement lead to violations of the rules given above. However, most such exceptions would be obvious and trivial. My synthesis (drawn mostly from Averbakh and Maizelis' *Pawn Endings*, but compared with a number of other works as well) seems to hold for most normal, natural positions.



TWO ENDGAME BOOKS

THE UNIVERSE OF ENDGAME BOOKS is composed mostly of *Tomes* and *Textbooks*. Tomes are dense encyclopedias whose titles contain the words *Complete*, or *Comprehensive*. Here you will find dense analysis concluded with

words like: "Now we return to diagram 23 and shift all the pieces one file to the left..." Textbooks include *Practical, Essential* or *Winning* in their names. They emphasize "general principles" rather than analysis and nearly all draw upon the same limited set of "classic" examples, as if Alekhine-Capablanca, Buenos Aires 1927 was the only game in the history of chess where a grandmaster got his rook behind an outside passed pawn.

Tomes are wonderful for reference, or if you want to really delve into a particular ending. For a broader study program, however, they

are apt to prove discouraging. I know a couple people who claim to have actually pounded their way clear through Levenfisch & Smyslov's *Rook Endgames*. But alas, far more have bogged down somewhere around "R+P vs R+P"

No chess player's education is complete without reading one or two endgame Textbooks. (Averbakh's *Es-sential Chess Endings* is particularly good.) Reading more does no harm, of course; but how often need you be reminded that the rook must be kept active, that the bishop likes mobile pawns on both flanks, that an outside pawn can draw away the defender's pieces to set up a "decisive infiltration" on the opposite flank?

Two fairly recent endgame books transcend the usual limitations. With its narrow focus — a mere subset of pawn endings — *The Final Countdown*, by Willem Hajenius & Herman van Riemsdijk, would tend towards tome-ishness except that its words-to-analysis ratio stays way up. Not only that, but the words in

question are not merely routine blather about cen-

tralizing your king. The authors really have a lot to say; the wealth of novel insights about such an ultra-fundamental topic is amazing.

In conventional terms this is a book about opposition and zugzwang, but the authors quickly dismiss such commonplace ideas as mere "aids to memory," the tip of "a much deeper and richer system." And so they start down a road that experienced readers will probably have seen before under the name "coordinate squares." Hajenius & van Riemsdijk are not content to illustrate the method with a

few examples and point out some typical co- ordinate patterns, however. In the spirit of Kmoch's *Pawn Power*, they construct a new vocabulary — "ap-



system" will now be applied to direct the black king to a bad square 1.Kg6! Ka6 (Black must "confess" his rank and colour) 2.Kg7! Ka7 3.Kg8! Ka8 (again the only move, as Ka6 or Kb6 lose due to 4.Kf8!

 ...Kb7 loses because of 4.Kf7 and 3...Kb8 due to 4.Kf8) 4.c5! due5 5.c5! and the white pawn promotes with check! White wouldn't have won with 1.Kg6! Ka6 2.Kf7! Kb7 3.Kg8 Kc8!

(Black still has all 6 squares for defence) 4.c5 Kc7! (4...Kd7? 5.Kf7! and wins) 5.Kf7 dsc5 drawing: White no longer queens with check.

Many endgame compositions are born "by accident". Here we want to share with you an original piece of work coming into being:

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pended squares", "vertical three-rank system," — to explain a procedure for assessing, analyzing, in theory *solving* all pawn endings involving maneuver with the king.

The world of *The Final Countdown* is a strange place. It's frankly difficult to purge familiar concepts like distant opposition from one's thinking in order to apply the Hajenius/van Riemsdijk system. After all, they long ago proved their practical worth in many endings. But it's worthwhile to make the effort, if only as an academic exer-

cise during your reading of this book. You will acquire an arsenal of new concepts that, at the very least, you can call upon as needed to supplement the old-style techniques.

I fear strong players will pass over Andrew Soltis' Grandmaster Secrets: Endings. The non-standard (9x6 1/2) dimensions, playful layout, abundant cartoons and whimsical sidebars ("Thou Shalt Not Trade Down to 🖤+& Unless You Can Safely Bet Your First-Born Child On The Result") give the impression of a beginner's book. Don't believe it! Chockfull of genuinely interesting examples and insightful commentary, this is the Textbook that finally shatters the Textbook mold. Terrifically readable but with no shortage of analytic meat, it will benefit players of almost any grade.

The unifying format is a Socratic dialog between mythical grandmaster Noah Tall (get it?) and protoamateur Pat Sayre. In fact, Sayre appears to be a more-than-competent analyst; he just doesn't have a clue about endgames. What to do? GM Tall is not fazed:

Pat: So what do I really need to know?

Noah: You can put everything you must absolutely know on a fairly short list. Basically, you need to know what it takes to win.

Pat: You mean like you can mate with æ+2 vs æ but not with @+2@? Even I know that sort of stuff.

Noah: Perhaps. But you'd be surprised how even veterans of international play err badly. Here's a case in point. White has a choice between having an extra \mathbb{Z} or having his B+Wvs B+Z. He makes a disastrous choice.

Pat: I don't get it. The difference between $\frac{W}{US}$ vs and $\frac{Z}{US}$ nothing is about the same. So why did Black draw?

Noah: In the middlegame the differences are about the same. But in an ending with none of your own pawns left, $\frac{1}{2}$ vs $\stackrel{1}{\equiv}$ can turn out to be just 1 piece vs 1 piece.



Ambrosz - Ciocaltea Baile Herculane 1982 White to Play

1 a7!

This should end matters quickly (1... Ra4 2 Rh8! Ra3+ 3 Kc4 Ra4+ 4 Kb3 Rxa7 5 Rh7+ Ke6 6 Rxa7)

1	Rxh4
2 Rf8+	Kxf8
3 a8=Q+	Ke7
4 Qb7+	Drawn



After Black puts his 🛎 at some safe square (g4, e5, f5) his fortress is im-

pregnable.

But with 2 Rh8! White would emerge a clear ahead and win without much effort.

For example, 2...Rh3+ 3 Kd4 Rh4+ 4 Kd5 Ra4 5 a8=Q Rxa8 6 Rxa8 g5 7 Ke4 Kg6 8 Ra6 and Black

runs into zugzwang (8...g4? 9 Kf4 or 8... h4 9 Kf3 Kf5 10 Ra5+ Kg6 11 Kg4).

Throughout, GM Soltis/Tall's focus is not so much on loading up his pupil with theory as he is in changing habits of thought. The result is a dramatic improvement in Sayre's technique. Perhaps he can do the same for you.

The Final Countdown by Willem Hajenius & Herman van Riemsdijk, Cadogan. Soft cover, 128 pages. List \$17.95

Grandmaster Secrets: Endings by Andrew Soltis, Thinker's Press. Soft cover, 214 pages. List \$20.00



Grandmaster Noah Tall (center) with colleagues Gary Kasparov & Siegbert Tarrasch — three of Rob Long's numerous characatures in Grandmaster Secrets: Endings

READERS' GAMES & ANALYSIS

Tim Hamilton - Paul Dimitrijevic 1998 World Open Dunst

Notes by Tim Hamilton

1 Nc3 (My opponent should not be confused with Darko Dimitrijevic, who was playing in the Open section.) d5 2 e4 d4 3 Nce2 e5 4 Ng3 Nf6 5 Bc4 Nc6 6 Nf3 Be7 7 0-0 Qd6 (An unusual idea: evidently he planned to defend e5 and hopefully win the bishop pair, but White is willing to allow this. Black will have to make too many positional concessions to carry out his plan.) 8 d3 Na5 9 Bb5+ c6 10 Ba4 b5 11 Bd2 Nb7 12 Bb3 Nc5 13 Bb4 Qc7 14 c3 (Black is still uncastled, so White likes opening the center.) dxc3 15 Bxc3 Bd6 16 d4 Ncd7 (An abrupt change of plan, but White is developing a strong initiative.) 17 Nf5 (White can chase bishops too...) Nxe4 18 dxe5 Bxe5



(Things really open up now, but alternatives were hard to find.) **19 Nxg7+ Kf8 20 Nxe5 Nxc3? 21 Ne6+** (21 Nxf7—Zarkov's inhuman move—21...Nxd1 [21...Ne5!? 22 Qh5 and White stands a bit better.] 22 Ne6+ Kxf7 [22...Kg8 23 Nh6#] 23 Nxc7+ etc.) **21...fxe6** (21...Kg8 22 Qg4++; 21...Ke7 22 Nxc7 Nxd1 23 Nxc6+ Kd6 24 Nxa8) **22 Qf3+ Ke7** (22...Kg7 23 Qf7+ Kh6 24 Ng4+ Kg5 25 f4+ Kh4 26 g3+ Kxg4 27 Bxe6#) **23 Nxc6+ Kd6 24 Qxc3** (Threatening mate.) **24...Qxc6 25 Qg3+** (25 Qd4+! is perhaps more accurate, but Black is crushed either way; and taking the rook wouldn't have been bad either.) 25...e5 (25...Ne5 26 Rfd1+ Ke7 27 Rac1 and White is winning.) 26 Rfd1+ Kc7 27 Bd5 1-0 (Even the other rook is vulnerable.)



Editor's Note: Tom Braunlich submitted some interesting rejoinders to my notes to our game from the Virginia Open (Virginia Chess 1998/3, p 7). Concerning the position after 1 d4 Nf6 2 Bg5 c5 3 Bxf6 gxf6 4 d5 d6 5 e3 Na6 6 c3 Qb6 7 Qd2 e6 8 e4 Bh6 9 Qxh6 Qxb2 10 Qxf6 Rf8 11 e5 {diagram} I analyzed 11...Qxa1 as leading to a draw and 11...Qc1+ as probably winning. However...



Braunlich-Shibut 11 e5!

by Tom Braunlich

i) 11...Qxa1

I still think White has more than a draw after 11...Qxa1. After 12 exd6 Qxb1+ 13 Kd2 Qb2+ now, instead of perpetual check by 14 Kd1 Qb1+ etc, White can play 14 Ke3 Qc1+ 15 Ke4! (instead of your 15 Kf3)



The idea behind this unusual "king centralizing" move is that if Black plays the natural response 15...exd5+ White only then plays 16 Kf3 when the Black pawn on d5 shields the d6 pawn from being captured by Black's queen along the d-file. For example, if then 16...Qd1+ (the move which wins against the immediate 15 Kf3) White can interpose 17 Be2 and win. I don't see anything else for Black after 16 Kf3 except 16...Bg4+, which doesn't last long.

Better than 15...exd5+ is **15...Qc2+** but this is strongly met by **16 Bd3**. One of the points is that if now 16...Qa4+ 17 Kf3 Qd7 (apparently defending) 18 Bb5! wins.

Therefore **16...exd5+17 Ke3 d4+** (17...Qc1+18 Kf3 Qd1+19 Be2 transposes to the winning line above) **18 Ke4!** (a move found by Rollie Tesh) **Bf5+** (what else?) **19 Ke5!** and wins.

A strange "triangulation" king maneuver in the middle game!

I can't find anything to do about this. It does appear that 11...Qxa1 loses. —Shibut

ii) 11...Qc1+

I agree that this move is one that turns the tables for Black. However, I'm suggesting a line that perhaps allows White to keep enough pressure to fight for a draw.

11...Qc1+ 12 Ke2 Nc7 Here instead of the moves you analyze (13 Nd2; 13 Nf3; 13 Kf3), White can

keep an "echo" of the previous attacking variations alive by trying **13 exd6!? Nxd5 14 Qg7 Qb2+ 15 Nd2 Qxa1** [Tom doesn't mention it but I note en passant that 15...Nxc3+ fails after 16 Kd3 (16 Kf3 is worse after 16...Qxd2!), eg, 16...c4+ 17 Nxc4 (not 17 Kxc4? Bd7! with too many threats) 17...b5 18 Qxc3 bxc4+ 19 Qxc4 (again not 19 Kxc4 Ba6+ 20 Kd4 e5+) 19...Qxa1 20 Qc6+ Kd8 21 Qc7+ Ke8 22 Qe7# — Shibut] **16 Ne4**



Here White is only the exchange down and threatens to reestablish the mate threat with 17 Nf6+ Nxf6 18 Qxf6. If Black tries 16...f5 then he has to deal with 17 d7+ Bxd7 18 Nd6+(although this is unclear and could work for Black). [*I don't see how*—*Shibut*]

Perhaps best for Black is 16...Bd7 17 Nf6+ Nxf6 18 Qxf6 Bb5+ 19 Kf3 (if only White didn't have to go to a light square!) Qd1+ 20 Ke3 Qc1+ 21 Kf3 Bc6+ 22 Kg3 and now Black can save his king with tempo by 22...Rg8+ 23 Kh4 Kf8.

White finally looks dead. But perhaps he can try 24 Ne2 Qc2 (24...Qd2?! 25 Nf4 Qxd6 26 Bc4 Qe7 27 Nxe6+! gives White chances [but Black can do better than this Qe7 move, for example 26...Ke8 and White has nothing as far as I can tell—Shibut] 25 Nf4 (threatening Nxe6+) 25...Qf5 26 Qe7+ (Black apparently would win the ending after 26 Qxf5 exf5 although it isn't necessarily easy) 26...Kg7 27 Nh5+ Kh8 28 f3!? (threatening Bd3! — White is still kicking!) 28...h6! (achieving a queen trade. Not 28...Rae8? 29 Qf6+!) 29 Bd3 Qg5+ 30 Qxg5 Rxg5

White might have some drawing chances in this endgame if he can keep the passed d-pawn, perhaps with a move like 31 Be4. I suppose Black ought to win somehow, but it isn't clear to me.

[In that case let's round up the d-pawn by force by retaking the queen with the pawn —check!—instead of the rook: 30...hxg5+ 31 Kg3 (31 Kg4 f5+) 31...Rgd8 etc. —Shibut]

One Final Postscript by Macon Shibut

Since we seem to agree that this is all good for Black it may be just a question of degrees of winning, but going back to the diagram it seems to me White's threat is not so serious and Black has more options. For example simply 16...Qxa2+is good and strong since if, say, 17 Kf3 even a move like 17...Qb3 is fine because if 18 Nf6+ we're back to 18...Nxf6 19 Qxf6 Qd1+ and ...Qxd6.

A final note: As I explained in my original annotations, Black's queen went down to b2 fully expecting to take on a1 next (or — likewise inadequate as it turned out — first 11...Nc7 and then Qxa1). If I had been great and realized that the best thing was going to be the queen check on c1 in any case I might have played this even earlier, ie on move 10 before White has pushed e5:



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The point is that after **11 Ke2** Black can just as well play **11...Rg8**, which is better than f8 in that the rook is not only active on an open file but also it doesn't crowd the king. Again White's game is messed up by his horrible king position and it's not clear how to stop Black from going back for the a1 rook. 12 c4 tries to use the queen for defense, exploiting the fact that the diagonal from f6 back to a1 is still open, but then **12...Qxc4+ 13 Ke1** (else ...Qxf1) **Qc1+14 Ke2 Bd7** looks like an irresistible attack. Clearly this has nothing to do with the game as it was played, however, and I hesitate to even mention it lest I open a whole new can of worms...

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