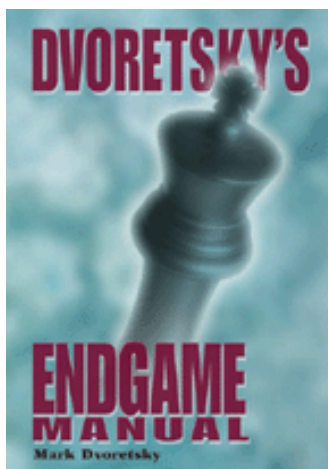




COLUMNISTS

The Instructor

Mark Dvoretsky



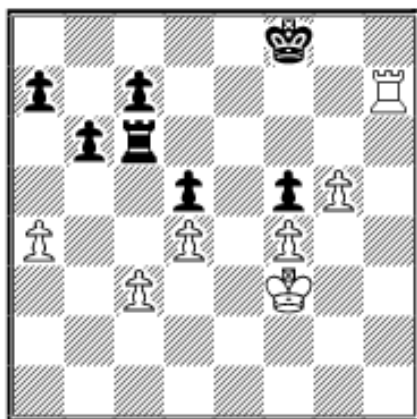
Going Deep Into Analysis

I was moved to write these lines by an analytical piece, written by GM Igor Zaitsev, published in the Russian chess magazine *64 - Shakhmatnoye Obozreniye* (*Chess Review*) #5/2004.

Next to each diagram, you will find an indication of whose turn it is to move; in a number of cases, you will also find a question mark. This indicates that, if you like, you may use the position as an exercise: try to find the strongest continuation by calculating the necessary variations.

The classic game Capablanca - Tartakower is given in almost every book on endgame theory, *Dvoretsky's Endgame Manual* among them.

Capablanca - Tartakower
New York, 1924



W?

The only way to exploit the unfortunate placement of Black's king is to follow Aron Nimzovich's motto: "All forces - advance!"

35.Kg3!

White's king joins in the attack; and for this, he will jettison pawns. The primitive 35. Rd7? Rxc3+ 36. Ke2 Ra3 37. Rxd5 Rxa4 38. Rxf5+ Kg7 would lead only to an unclear position.

35...Rxc3+ 36.Kh4 Rf3 37.g6 Rxf4+ 38.Kg5 Re4

38...Rxd4 39. Kf6 is also hopeless.

39.Kf6!

For the time being, the f5-pawn is handy as an “umbrella” against checks on the file.

39...Kg8 40.Rg7+!

Good technique: before gobbling the pawn, it's useful to make Black's king position a little worse.

40...Kh8 41.Rxc7 Re8 42.Kxf5!

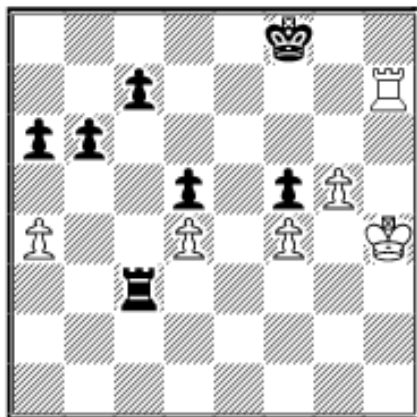
Now it's time to take the f5-pawn, which otherwise could advance (42. Kf7 Rd8, with f5-f4 to follow). With the rook defending passively from the 8th rank, it's impossible to force a knight pawn to queen (as opposed to a bishop pawn).

42...Re4 43.Kf6 Rf4+ 44.Ke5 Rg4 45.g7+!

Here's the point of the check inserted at the 40th move: White brings the pawn under the rook's protection with tempo (45...Rxc7 46. Rxc7 Kxc7 47. Kxd5 would be hopeless).

45...Kg8 46.Rxa7 Rg1 47.Kxd5 Rc1 48.Kd6 Rc2 49.d5 Rc1 50.Rc7 Ra1 51.Kc6 Rxa4 52.d6 and Black resigned.

Savielly Tartakower lost without a fight when, in fact, he might have made his opponent's job much more difficult. Master Vladimir Goldin suggested that, instead of 36...Rf3!?, Black could have played **36...a6!**, leaving the pawn at c7 for the time being, where the rook protects it, and getting the other pawn off the 7th rank.



W

In the mid-90s, a lively theoretical discussion appeared on this theme in the pages of the Russian chess press. Recently, even Garry Kasparov joined in the analysis – while preparing a new edition of the 1st volume of his monumental *My Great Predecessors*.

On 37. Rd7?! Rf3 38. g6 Rxf4+ 39. Kg5 Re4, or 37. g6?! b5 38. ab ab 39. Kg5 b4 40. Rf7+! Kg8!, no win could be demonstrated. Nor could anyone find a win after 37. Kh5 b5 38. a5 Rc6 39. g6 b4 40. Kh6 b3 41. Rh8+ Ke7 42. Rb8 Rc2!, or 38. ab ab 39. Kg6 Kg8! (intending Rc6+) 40. Rh1 b4 41. Kxf5 Kg7!

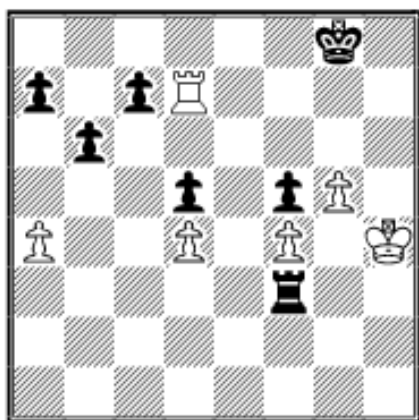
It was GM Zaitsev who found the key to this position: **37.Kh5! b5 38.Kg6!! Kg8**

(38...ba 39. Kxf5 a3 40. Rh6 doesn't save him) **39.Rg7+! Kf8 40.Rf7+ Kg8 41.Rf6!**, with the unstoppable threat 42. Rxa6. If White had exchanged pawns on b5 first, then Black could have met the threat by 42...b4 43. Ra6 Ra3! 44. Rc6 Rc3 =.

The variations presented offer only a small digest of the results of many players' analytical efforts. For those who prefer greater detail, I recommend looking into Kasparov's 2nd volume: at the very end, you will find corrections and additions to some examples from the 1st volume, including this endgame.

In 2004, Master Goldin made a fresh attempt to defend Black's position, suggesting the logical, healthy move **35...Kg8!?**, forcing the rook to retreat: **36.Rd7** (after 35...Rxc3+ 36. Kh4 Kg8? would be senseless, in view of 37. g6.)

36...Rxc3+ 37.Kh4 Rf3



W

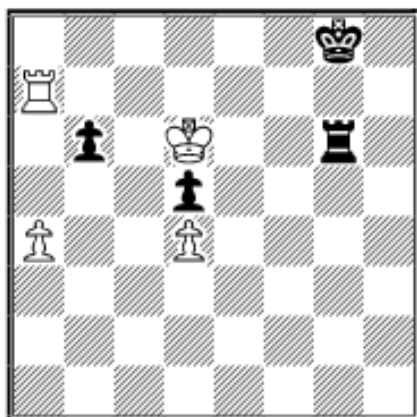
On 38. g6?! Rxf4+ 39. Kg5 Re4, Goldin's analysis shows no win. White therefore plays **38.Kh5! Rxf4 39.Kg6 Kf8 40.Kf6 Re4 41.Rf7+! Kg8 42.Rxc7 Re8** (42...f4?? 43. Rc8+ Kh7 44. g6+ Kh6 45 Rh8#) **43.Kxf5 Re4 44.Kf6! Rf4+ 45.Ke5 Rg4 46.Rxa7**

46. Kxd5 Rxc7+ 47. Ke6 Rg6+ 48. Kf5 Rh6 49. Rxa7 Kf8 is weaker – here, a draw is the likely result (Goldin); or if 48. Ke7!? Rg7+!

49. Kd8 Rg4! 50. d5 Rd4 51. Rd7 Rxa4 52. d6 Rd4, and Black should draw (Zaitsev). Now, let's extend this last line a bit, to confirm Zaitsev's assessment: 53. Kc7 Rd1 (53...b5 54. Kc6 is weaker) 54. Rd8+ (54. Kc6 is now useless, in view of 54...Rc1+ 55. Kb7 Rd1) 54...Kf7 55. Rc8 Ke6! 56. Re8+ Kd5 57. d7 Kc4 =.

46...Rxc7+ 47.Kd6 Rg6+

Zaitsev also examines 47...Rg4 48. Kxd5!, and 47...Kf8!? 48. Ra6! – in both lines, he demonstrates a win for White.

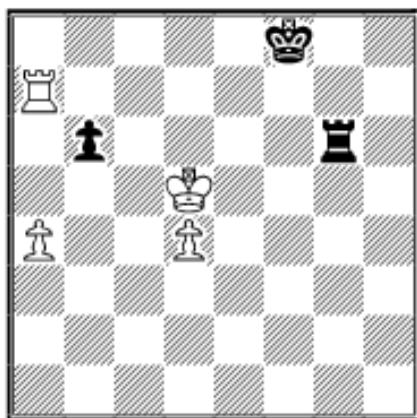


W

Goldin thought Black could draw after 48. Kxd5 Kf8. Zaitsev suggested 48. Kc7!?, and showed that this move led to a win. Here's his main line: 48...Rg4 (48...Kf8 49. Rb7!) 49. Kxb6 Rxd4 50. a5 Rb4+ 51. Kc5 Rc4+! 52. Kb5! (if 52. Kxd5? Rf4? 53. Ke6!+- is a mistake; however, Black has 52...Rg4!! 53. Re7 Ra4 =) 52...Rc1 53. Rd7 Rb1+ 54. Kc6 Rc1+ 55. Kb6 Rb1+ 56. Kc7! Rc1+ 57. Kd8! Ra1 58. Rxd5 Kf7 59. Kd7 Ra2 60. Rf5+ Kg6

61. Rb5, followed by Kc7-b7.

When Goldin's analysis was printed, I fed it into my computer (which has the "full version" of this endgame in ChessBase format); as a matter of course, I gave the commentator's main conclusions a quick once-over. I was struck by doubt that the concluding position of his analysis, with an extra pawn for White, could be drawn. Let's play **48.Kxd5!? Kf8**



W?

Black brings his king to the center, aiming to defend as in the basic Philidor position. He will keep his rook on the 6th until the White pawn reaches that rank; then, when the king no longer has any shelter from checks on the file, he will send his rook to the last rank. Of course, this carries the risk of losing the b6-pawn and being two pawns down; but not all such positions are lost.

For example: 49. Ke5 Ke8 50. d5 Kd8 51. d6 Rg1 (51...Kc8 52. Kd5 Rg1 53. Kc6 Rc1+ 54. Kxb6 Rb1+ 55. Ka6 Rd1 56. Rc7+ Kd8 57. Rc6 Kd7 58. Rb6 Rd5 59. a5 Kc8 also draws) 52. Ke6 Re1+ 53. Kd5 Rc1 54. Rb7 Kc8 55. Rxb6 Rd1+ 56. Kc6 Rc1+ 57. Kb5 Rb1+ 58. Ka6 Rd1 59. a5 Rd5.

However, **49.Rc7!** wins rather simply. On 49...Ke8, 50. Rc6 Rg5+ 51. Kd6 decides. After **49...Rg5+ 50.Kc6 Rg6+**, White continues, not with 51. Kb5? Rd6 52. d5 Ke8 (52...Rxd5+? 53. Kxb6+-) 53. Kc4 (53. Rc6 Rxd5+ 54. Kxb6 Kd7 =) 53...Rd8 =, but **51.Kb7! Rd6** (51...Ke8 52. Rc6) **52.Rc4 Ke7 53.Kc7**. It's not even zugzwang here: White to move would win also by 54. d5.

The entire preceding portion of this article is merely a wide-ranging introduction

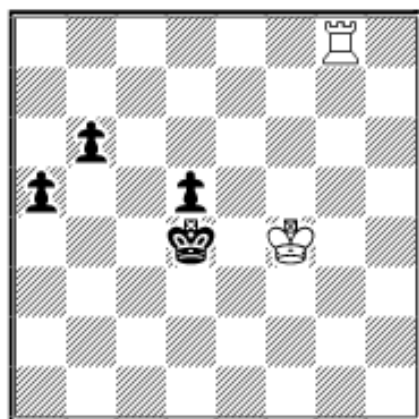
to our main theme: endgames where a rook faces two connected passed pawns. The most important ideas in such endgames are laid out in “How to Study Endgames”, from *Technique for the Tournament Player*, by Dvoretsky and Yusupov (Volume 3 in our *School of Future Champions* series). The theme gets a little more detailed treatment in *Dvoretsky’s Endgame Manual*, mentioned at the beginning of this article. Here, I don’t intend to reproduce the basics of the theory, but to offer you analysis of some complex examples, which you may use, if you wish, as training in the technique of the lengthy and accurate calculation of variations.

— But what does this have to do with the Capablanca endgame? — you ask. Soon, this will be made clear.

In the Goldin variation we examined earlier, **35...Kg8!? 36.Rd7 Rxc3+ 37.Kh4 Rf3 38.Kh5! Rxf4 39.Kg6 Kf8**, Zaitsev found a way to win the rook by **40.Rf7+!? (instead of 40. Kf6!?) 40...Ke8 (40...Kg8? 41. Rxc7+-) 41.Kf6 Rxd4 42.g6 Rxa4 43.g7 Rg4 44.Rxc7 a5 45.g8Q+ Rxc8 46.Rc8+ Kd7 47.Rxc8.**

The GM considered this endgame drawn, continuing as follows:

47...Kd6! 48.Kxf5 Kc5 49.Kf4 Kd4



W?

50. Rb8 a4 51. Rxb6 Kc3 52. Ke3 a3 53. Ra6 (53. Rc6+ Kb2 54. Kd2 a2 55. Rb6+ Ka3 56. Kc2 a1N+ 57. Kc3 d4+, and the knight gets out of the corner - Dvoretsky) 53...Kb3 54. Kd2 a2 55. Rb6+ Kc4!, and draws.

A tremendous boon in the analysis of such positions is the computer, equipped with Thompson’s analytical base (in the easy-to-use form known as “Nalimov”). This base contains all positions containing a total of five pieces (and quite recently, some positions with six pieces were added, as well).

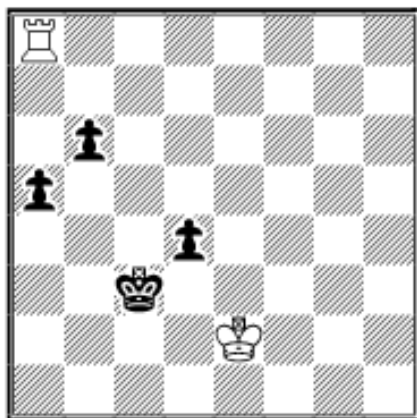
In the last diagram, there are six pieces; however, the “rook vs. three pawns” endgame has not yet been added to the base. On the other hand, in most lines, one pawn is quickly lost, after which the computer immediately comes up with the correct assessment of the resulting situation. Without this assistance, we would have to run down each variation one at a time, which would make our job a lot more complicated, and increase the likelihood of errors.

Analytical programs are a major support for the commentator. But practical players should limit their use of them because, once he accepts the computer's analysis, today's chessplayer (as opposed to one from a previous generation) doesn't train himself in the calculation of variations and the search for the strongest moves. As a result, he will sometimes find himself insufficiently prepared to resolve complex tasks in the course of tournament play, where computer assistance is, of course prohibited (except for so-called "advanced chess", or the attempts of a few hoodlums to get secret help from their machines).

Back to the diagrammed position. I believe it to be lost in any case, after the strong move **50.Ra8!**, freezing the Black pawns – in accordance, by the way, with one of the rules put forth in the above-mentioned chapter in *Dvoretsky's Endgame Manual*, which reads: "***The best position for the rook is behind the most advanced pawn.***"

Both 50...b5 51. Rxa5 b4 52. Kf3 b3 53. Ke2+-, and 50...Kd3 51. Ra6! Kc4 52. Ke3 (just not 52. Rxb6? a4 =) 52...d4+ 53. Kd2 Kb5 54. Ra8+- fail.

50...Kc3 51.Ke3 d4+ (51...Kb3 52. Rb8+-; 51...Kb4 52. Kd3 a4 53. Rd8 a3 54. Kc2+-) **52.Ke2**



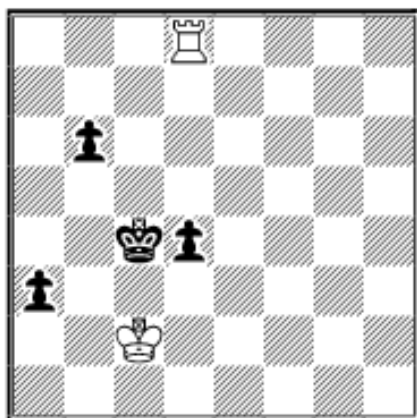
B

Here, 52...d3+ 53. Ke3 is hopeless. Play breaks down into two interesting variations:

A) 52...Kb3 53. Rb8 Kc2 54. Rxb6 d3+ 55. Ke3 a4 56. Rc6+ (56. Ra6 d2 57. Rc6+ might be simpler) 56...Kb2 57. Kd2! a3 58. Rb6+ Ka1 59. Kc3! d2 60. Rd6+-;

B) 52...Kb4! 53.Kd3 a4 54.Rd8 a3 55.Kc2!

Kc4 (see next diagram)



W?

There appears to be no direct way to win. But even in such sharp, move-on-move endgames, sometimes it pays to remember that most important endgame technique: playing for zugzwang.

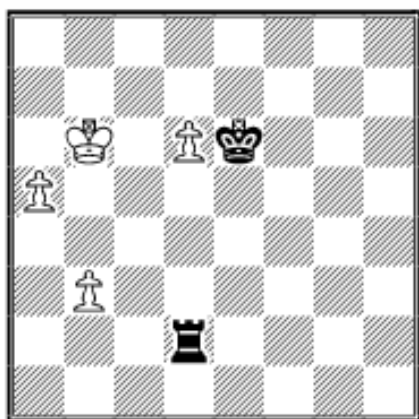
56.Rd7 b5 57.Rd8! (zugzwang!) **57...b4 58.Rc8+ Kd5 59.Kb3 d3 60.Kxb4 a2 61.Rc1 +-**

And so, Zaitsev's plan of winning the rook is, contrary to his opinion, enough to win after all. Of course, I can't guarantee that my own analysis is error-free; if it isn't, I ask you not to judge too harshly. This article is being written during the course of a training session with French players, and I had no time to check my variations for accuracy.

I would direct those who want to study endgames of "rook vs. two or more pawns" in more detail, first, to one of my books mentioned above, in order to gain an understanding of the basics of the theory. And then, you may "employ" the knowledge you have gained to examine some new endgames, such as the ones to which I now direct your attention.

In *Dvoretsky's Endgame Manual*, the explanation of nearly every theme ends with exercises for independent study, as well as the "Tragicomedies." Here are placed examples from practical games, where players — some of them quite strong — erred in situations which have just been studied. If the following two examples had been included in my book, I would certainly have included them under "Tragicomedies."

Tukmakov - A.Schneider
Donetsk Zonal, 1998



Of course, Black needs to take on d6. But which way — king or rook?

55...Kxd6?

55...Rxd6+! 56. Kb7 Rd7+! would have won:

A) 57. Kc6 Ke7! 58. a6 (58. b4 Kd8 59. b5 Kc8-+ is no better) 58...Kd8 59. Kb6

Kc8 60. a7 Rd6+, and next move, the a-pawn will be stopped.

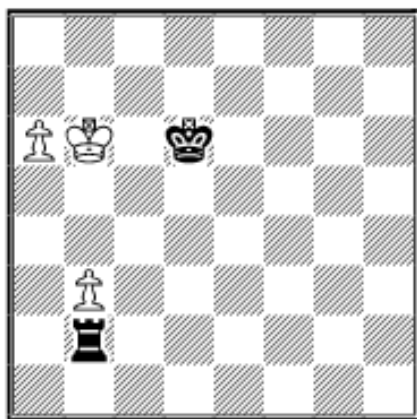
B) 57. Kc8 Kd6 58. b4 Rh7 59. b5 Kc5 60. b6 Kc6 61. Kb8 Rg7 (zugzwang) 62. Ka8 Rg5-+.

C) 57. Kb6 Rd3! 58. a6 (58. b4 Kd7 59. Kb7 Rb3-+) 58...Kd7! (greed is misplaced here: Black gets only a draw after 58...Rxb3+? 59. Kc7 Ra3 60. Kb7 Kd7 61. a7 Rb3+ 62. Ka8!) 59. a7 Rxb3+ 60. Ka6 Kc7-+. The mate threat forces White to promote to a knight; but in the corner, the knight, as is well known, is immediately lost.

56.a6

56. b4? Kd7 57. b5 Kc8-+ or 57. Kb7 Rb2-+ would be a mistake.

56...Rb2



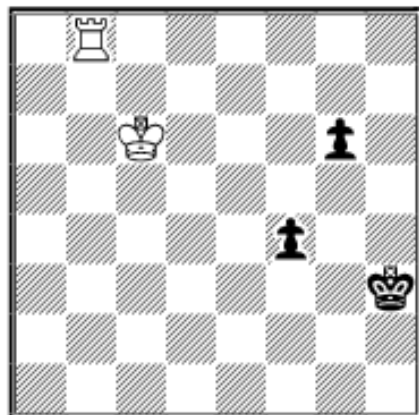
57.a7??

A terrible blunder in a standard position, important for the theory of the “rook vs. pawn” endgames. 57. Kb7! Rxb3+ 58. Kc8 =, or 57...Kd7 58. a7 Rxb3+ 59. Ka8! = was necessary.

57...Rxb3+ 58.Ka6 Kc7 59.a8N+ Kc6 60.Ka7 Rb1 White resigned.

Ovetchkin - Selin

Tula, 1999



W?

In principle, this exercise should not be for solving, but for playing out. Try to find White's moves, while covering up Black's replies, one after another.

63.Rf8!

The exact move order: the rook must go immediately to the rear of the most advanced pawn. On 63. Kd5? f3 64. Rf8, Black's king gets to g2, with a draw.

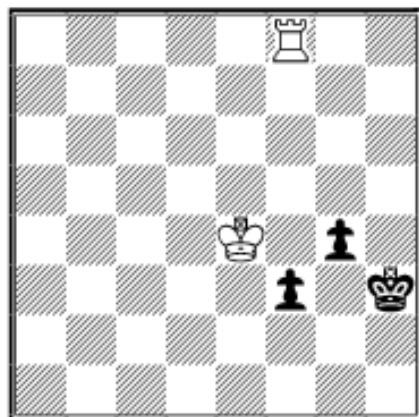
63...g5

On 63...Kg3, White is just in time to stop the f-pawn: 64. Kd5 f3 65. Ke4 f2 66. Ke3.

64.Kd5 g4 (64...Kg3 65. Ke4) **65.Ke4!**

Of course not 65. Rxf4? g3 =.

65...f3



W?

66.Ke3?

A rather subtle error, allowing Black to escape. The key to this position is the need to prevent Black's king from getting to g2. The way to do that is by the fine prophylactic move 66. Rf4!!, and the rest is not too complicated: 66...f2 (on

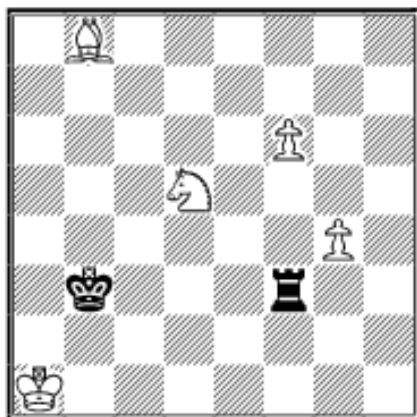
66...Kg3 or 66...Kh4, 67. Ke3 decides) 67. Rxf2 g3 68. Rf8 g2 69. Kf3 g1N+ 70. Kf2 Kh2 71. Rh8+ Nh3+ 72. Kf3+-.

66...Kg2! 67.Rf4 Kg3?

Just as in our previous example, the opponent returns the favor and loses a drawn position. After 67...g3! 68. Rxf3 Kh2 69. Rf8 g2 70. Rh8+ Kg1! 71. Kf3 Kf1 72. Ra8 g1N+, there is no win, since the knight does not appear on the corner square.

68.Ra4 Black resigned.

P.Benko, 1988



W

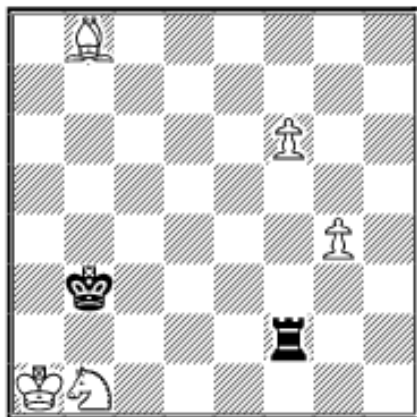
For the rook White has, not just two pawns, but two minor pieces as well. His king is, however, so dangerously situated in the corner of the board that he will have to give up both his pieces to avoid mate.

1.Nc3! Rf1+

Other moves are harmless. For example:

1...Rxc3 2. Kb1; 1...Kxc3 2. Ka2 (or 2. Kb1); 1...Rxf6 2. Be5.

2.Nb1 Rf2! (see next diagram)



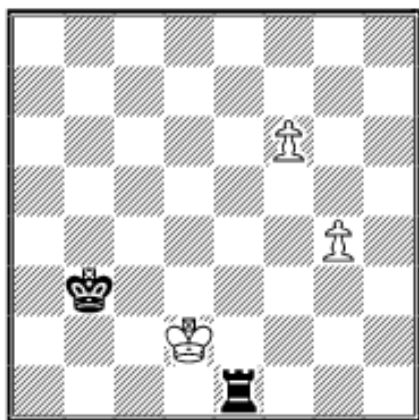
W?

The first two moves went without much thought, being forced. But now, it's time to stop and calculate carefully, because we have a choice between returning the knight to c3 or playing 3. Na3. Try to find the right solution yourself.

First, let's look at 3. Nc3?! (psychologically, it's understandable that you would want to return to a move that has already proved successful). But after Black has improved his rook's position to f2, he can go ahead and take the knight: 3...Kxc3. He's threatening 4...Kb3; White can't play 4. Kb1, because of 4...Rb2+ and

5...Rxb8. On 4. Ba7 Re2 5. Kb1 Rb2+ 6. Ka1 (6. Kc1 Ra2+) 6...Rb5 is decisive, threatening not only a check at a5, but also 7...Kc2.

The only other move to try is 4. Bg3 Rf3 (4...Rg2 is just as good) 5. Be1+ Kb3 6. Kb1 Rf1 7. Kc1 Rxe1+ 8. Kd2



B

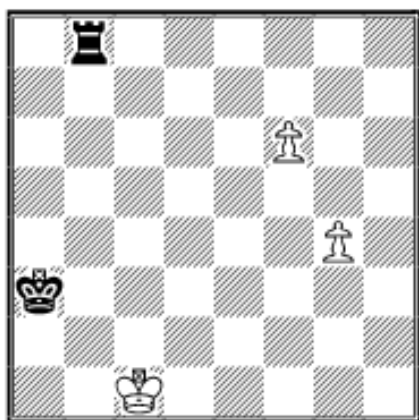
8...Rf1! (as usual, the rook goes behind the farthest-advanced pawn) 9. Kd3!?

“Shouldering aside” the Black king. The primitive 9. g5 Kc4 10. Ke3 Kd5 loses without a struggle. Now Black must resist temptation, as taking the pawn leads only to a draw: 9...Rxf6? 10. Ke4 Kc4 11. g5 Rf1 12. Ke5 Rg1 13. Kf6 Kd5 14. g6 =.

So instead he plays 9...Kb4! If 10. Kd4, now he can go ahead and take the pawn: 10...Rxf6 11. Ke5 Rg6 (11...Ra6 12. g5 Kc5 13. Kf5 Kd6 wins, too) 12. Kf5 Rg8 13. g5 Kc5 14. g6 Kd6 15. Kf6 Rf8+.

10. Ke4 is no help either: 10...Kc5! 11. Ke5 Re1+ 12. Kf5 Kd6 13. g5 Rf1+ (or 13...Kd7 right away) 14. Kg6 Rg1! (14...Ke6? would be a mistake: 15. Kg7 Rf2 16. g6! Rxf6 17. Kh7 Rf1 18. g7 Rh1+ 19. Kg8 =) 15. Kf5 Kd7 16. g6 Ke8, and the pawns are stopped.

3.Na3!! Kxa3 (3...Rxf6 4. Be5 =) 4.Kb1 Rb2+ 5.Kc1 Rxb8



W

6.g5 Rf8 (7. g6 was the threat) 7.Kd2! Kb4 8.Ke3 Kc5 9.Kf4 Kd6

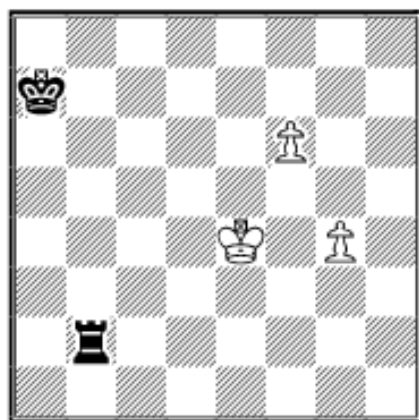
Once again, things look bad for White. After 10. Kf5 Ra8, he loses after either 11. g6 Ra5+ 12. Kg4 Ke6, or 11. Kg6 Ke6 12. Kg7 Ra7+ 13. Kg6 Rb7 (or 13...Ra5 14. Kh6 Kf7) 14. Kh6 Kf5. Unexpectedly, however, he has a pawn sacrifice.

10.g6!! Ke6

On 10...Rxf6+ 11. Kg5 Rf1 12. g7 Ke7 13. g8N+! the draw is obvious.

11.Kg5 Ra8 12.f7 Ke7 13.Kh6 Kf6 (13...Kf8 14. Kh7 Rb8 15. Kh8! also leads nowhere) 14.Kh7 Rb8 15.f8Q+! Rxf8 16.g7 Rf7 17.Kh8 Rxf7, when this engrossing struggle ends in stalemate.

In all the examples we have looked at, the rook was stronger than the pawns, and the side with the material advantage was playing to win. But the opposite situation also happens frequently. If the pawns are far advanced, and the enemy king stands far away, the side with the rook is the one that has to work to save itself. Sometimes, achieving the draw requires unremitting accuracy and resourcefulness; even then, sometimes, the draw is unattainable.



B?

This position came up during my analysis of one of the episodes of that grandiose struggle, Em. Lasker - Ed. Lasker, written up in the long article *Historical Serial*, which is still available in the [ChessCafe Archives](#).

Black's chief worry is the advance of the g-pawn. For example: 84...Kb6? 85. g5 Rf2 86. Ke5 Kc7 87. g6+-, or 84...Rg2? 85. g5! Rxc5 86. f7 Rg4+ 87. Ke3 Rg3+ 88. Kf2+-. So how is he to meet this threat?

84...Re2+!!

A paradoxical move: Black drives the king forward, where one would have thought him most willing to go.

85.Kf5

On 85. Kf3 Black continues 85...Re1 86. g5 Kb6.

85...Rf2+ 86.Kg6

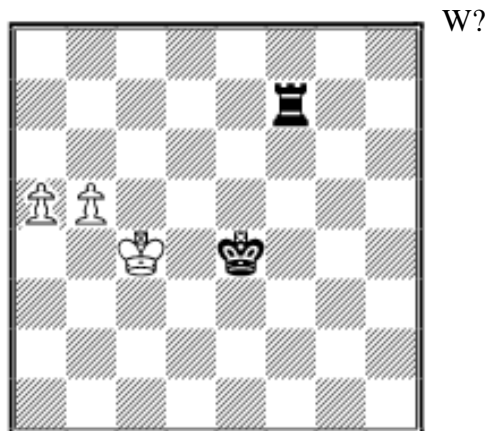
If 86. Ke6 Re2+!, and White can't continue 87. Kf7, because of 87...Rg2.

86...Kb6

Only now, when the White king is under the feet of the g-pawn, is it the right moment to bring up the king.

87.f7 Kc6 88.Kg7 Kd6 89.f8Q+ Rxf8 90.Kxf8 Ke5 =

H.Keidanz, 1915



An old study, but still just as instructive as ever. Play it out (just as with the Ovetchkin - Selin endgame) for the White side.

1.b6!

1. a6? Rc7+ 2. Kb4 Kd5! 3. b6 Kc6 leads to a draw. And 1. Kc5? runs into 1...Rf5+.

1...Rf1!

The standard defensive plan: the rook goes behind the White pawns.

2.a6!

2. b7? Rc1+! 3. Kb5 Kd5 4. Kb6 Rb1+ 5. Kc7 Rc1+ 6. Kd7 (6. Kd8 Rb1 7. a6 Kc6 8. Kc8 Rh1 =) 6...Rb1 7. a6 Rb6! 8. Kc7 Rc6+ forfeits the win. By the way, the same endgame also occurred in the game Smagin - Bronstein, replayed in my book, *School of Chess Excellence I - Endgame Analysis*.

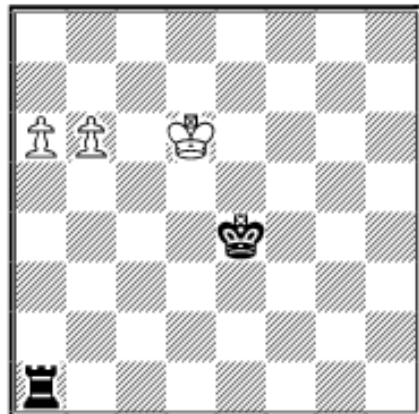
2...Rc1+ 3.Kb4!

The risk of error dogs White at every turn. On 3. Kb5? Black replies 3...Kd5! 4. a7 (4. b7? would even lose: 4...Rb1+ 5. Ka5 Kc6) 4...Rb1+ 5. Ka6 Kc5 (or 5...Ra1+ 6. Kb7 Kc5). Black's king successfully "grabs onto the tail" – attaches itself to the rear White pawn, while the rook restrains the forward one; this strategy guarantees the draw in such cases.

3...Rb1+

On 3...Kd4, White has to choose which pawn to push. The right one is 4. a7! Rb1+ 5. Ka3! Kc3 6. Ka2 Rb2+ 7. Ka1+-. But 4. b7? would let Black draw: 4...Rb1+ 5. Ka3 Kc3 6. Ka2 Rb6! 7. a7 Ra6+ 8. Kb1 Rb6+ 9. Kc1 Rh6! (typical pursuit of a king stuck at the edge of the board) 10. Kd1 Kd3 11. Ke1 Ke3 12. Kf1 Kf3 13. Kg1 Rg6+.

4.Kc5 Rc1+ 5.Kd6 Ra1



W?

6.a7

6. b7? Rxa6+ 7. Kc5, in hopes of “riding the escalator” to c3 and b2 – as in: 84...Rg2? 85. g5! in our previous example, would be a mistake: after 7...Ra5+ 8. Kc4, Black has the strong reply 8...Ra1!

6...Kd4 7.Ke6!

White’s task is to prepare b6-b7. Right now, this move fails: 7. b7? Ra6+. And 7. Kc7? Kc5 also leads to a draw – once again, the king “grabs onto the tail” of the White pawns. And on 7. Kc6?! Kc4, the best White can do is to return to the previous position: 8. Kd6! Kd4.

7...Ke4 (7...Ra6 8. Kf5!; 7...Re1+ 8. Kd7) 8.Kd7

Now it’s possible to make headway – although, in my opinion, it wouldn’t hurt to temporize a little while longer: 8. Kf6!? Kf4 9. Ke7 Ke5 10. Kd8.

8...Kd5 9.Kc8! Kc6 10.b7 Rh1 10.b8N+! Kd6 12.a8Q

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