



The 5th FIDE World Cup in Composing

Section D – Endgame studies

Preliminary award by

Steffen Slumstrup Nielsen

MMXVII

Participants

D01	M.Minski (DEU)	D22	A.Stavrietsky (RUS)
D02	A.Rusz (HUN)	D23	B.Miloseski (TUR)
D03	O.Holscher (DEU)	D24	A.Shpakovsky (RUS)
D04	M.Zinar (UKR)	D25	J.Timman (NLD)
D05	L.Topko (UKR)	D26	V.Tarasiuk (UKR)
D06	A.Avni (ISR)	D27	M.Campioli (ITA)
D07	K.Barikbin (IRN)	D28	D.Hlebec (SRB)
D08	M.G.Garsia (ARG)	D29	A.Jasik (POL)
D09	H.Yassine (DZA)	D30	G.Sonntag (DEU)
D10	A.Oganesjan (RUS)	D31	S.G.L.Flores (MEX)
D11	V.Nejshtadt (RUS)	D32	S.Osintsev (RUS)
D12	A.Skripnik (RUS)	D33	I.A.L.Olmos (MEX)
D13	A.Litvinov (LTU)	D34	L.M.Gonzalez (ESP)
D14	L.Kekely (SVK)	D35	D.Kachakovski (MKD)
D15	Y.Bazlov (RUS)	D36	A.Sochnev (RUS)
D16	P.Arestov (RUS)	D37	A.Gasparyan (ARM)
D17	M.Hlinka (SVK)	D38	R.Becker (USA)
D18	I.Aliev (AZE)	D39	J.Kristiansen (DNK)
D19	J.Mikitovics (HUN)	D40	V.Vlasenko (UKR)
D20	A.Zhukov (RUS)	D41	Y.Afek (NLD)
D21	V.Kalashnikov (RUS)	D42	V.Samilo (UKR)

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I received 42 studies from 42 composers from x countries and I want to thank every composer for making my first judging job such an enjoyable one.

I thank Siegfried Hornecker for anticipation checking. In addition I consulted my friend, club player Hans Christian Andersen (yes, that is his name). I wanted the point of view of a chess player who is not familiar with the conventions of our art. There were strong differences in our evaluations of five studies. D06, D20 and D27 he would have placed high in the rankings. The second prize winner D16 and the third prize winner D25 on the other hand, left him largely untouched.

As is often the case in competitions where each composer is allowed only one contribution, the level of this tournament was very uneven. The level of the top studies was nevertheless excellent and despite my resolution of being a strict judge, I saw myself "forced" to award four prizes.

Before presenting the award, I would like to point out some unfortunate tendencies, that I noticed while judging.

A lack of idea

Precision and economy does not make a study. Showing the complexity of chess is not the job of study composers. In some of the studies I saw no idea at all. This was typically the case in studies without accompanying prose.

Amatzia Avni correctly pointed the need for textual explanations out in a lecture at the Belgrade WCCC last year.

An urge for epicness

On average the studies of this tournament had a mainline of more than 14 moves. This is too long, I feel. On several occasions a nice clear idea was blurred by a long, complicated introduction. On other occasions interesting play faded out into a long aftermath consisting of technical moves. I believe the computer plays an unfortunate role in this tendency. It is easy to add moves both before and after one's idea. In the same manner it is easy to add another main line if the computer shows something interesting. But in many cases the extra mainlines in the studies in this tournament would function better as sidelines. I realize the irony of the prize winning studies having an average mainline of 14,5 moves as well. But I really missed some short, pointed studies for this tournament.

Here are some words about some of the studies that I did not find room for in the award.

D01: One tactical shot is not enough. The rest of the play has little interest and is rather forced.

D03: After the initial underpromotion play becomes technical in character.

D05: The introduction offers too many exchanges and a capture of an unmoving piece to justify the final idea.

D06: The introduction steals too much focus from the dramatic position occurring after Black's 10th move.

D07: A remarkable position of domination. But more play is needed and the position is rather heavy and requires heavy analysis.

D08: Accurate, technical domination. But I fail to see the the artistic element.

D10: 6. ♘f5 and 6. ♙c7 in Mainline B cooks. In Mainline A, the final point is known from HHDBV #10834 (Sizonenko) and #17829 (Topko).

D11: The general exchange on c3 ruins it for me.

D12: The quiet move 8. Qe5 is admittedly excellent, but the play surrounding it is of little interest and the sidelines feature numerous non obvious perpetuals and are extremely difficult.

D17: The difficult sidelines of this study makes it incomprehensible to me.

D18: The static nature of the play, the choice of square duals and the fact that this actually is a #21-problem prevents me from awarding this study with an otherwise clear and human idea.

D19: Very long and precise play to convert an extra pawn, but I fail to see the idea.

D20: This study has an abundance of spectacular moves and queen sacrifices, but there is no clarity or overriding idea. The composer himself mentions "Sacrificial fireworks" in his

comments, but these fireworks are split up into so many lines, sublines and sub sublines, that they have a blinding effect on me.

D21: Yet another study with two mainlines. The play is clearly understandable, but without any surprises or difficult moves. The Bg7 never moves and there are some partial anticipations.

D23: Several cooks towards the end of the study the first being 9. Nc5.

D27: The final part of this study has some exciting paradoxes but I don't see how the introduction fits with this. I would consider starting this study with 10. Bc7.

D29: I fail to see the idea of these dramatic events.

D30: The introductory play is good, but after the knight promotions in the mainline the play becomes technical and tablebaseish.

D32: Very long foresight, but the play between the try and the climax is of little interest.

D34: Precise technical play to secure a draw.

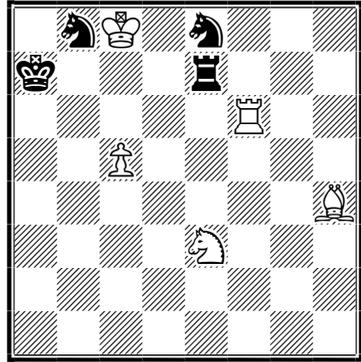
D35: Good finesse 2. ♖h8+ but the rest is without surprises. A good study for solving.

D36: Long study with precise play where White slowly makes progress. I would have likes prose to accompany the lengthy variations.

D39: Forced play to reach an incarceration position known from several studies and the wild game Kupferstich-Andreassen 1953.

D40: Cook 4... ♖b8!

1st Prize – Gold medal
YURI BAZLOV
Russian Federation



+

5+4

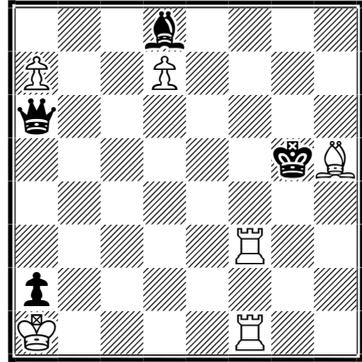
3... ♖c8!!+ What a move. A misprint? Not at all.

Before this, all the main actors are brought into play. The composer has shown great technical skill in luring White's rook into its cave (well, grave) on f3. The sidelines in this part of the study are unfortunately difficult and require help from tablebases. But then comes..... 3... ♖c8!!+ Did I mention this move already? Now White has only a narrow king route to avoid a perpetual or loss of his rook. In the end the trip seems to no avail as the rook is forked leaving the drawing material of KBN vs KN. But Black's knight is dramatically trapped midboard and it is conquered just one move before the black king comes to the rescue. A memorable study in classical style.

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1. ♖f3! ♖e5! 2. ♜f2! 2. ♜g3?
 ♖:c5+ 3. ♘d8 ♘c7! 4. ♜:c7 ♘c6+
 5. ♘c8 ♘b8! 6. ♘d8 ♘c6+ draw.
2... ♖:c5+ 3. ♘d8 ♖c8+! 3... ♘d6
 4. ♘c4 ♘b7+ 5. ♘e7 ♘a6 6. ♜:c5
 ♘:c5 7. ♘d6 or 7. ♖f8 win. **4. ♜:c8**
♘d6+! 5. ♘c7. 5. ♘d8? ♘c6+ 6. ♘c7
 ♘b5+7. ♘c8 (7. ♘:c6 ♘d4+; 7. ♘d7
 ♘e5+ draw) 7... ♘d6+ perpetual
 check. 5... ♘b5+ 6. ♘d8! ♘c6+
7. ♘e8! ♘c7+ 8. ♘f8! 8. ♘d7(f7)?
 ♘e5+ draw. 8... ♘e6+ 9. ♘g8!
♘e7+ 10. ♘h8! 10. ♘f7 (h7)? ♘g5+
 draw. 10... ♘g6+ 11. ♘h7! ♘g5+
12. ♘:g6 ♘:f3 13. ♘f1+! ♘b7
14. ♘f5! ♘c6 15. ♘f4! +

2nd Prize – Silver medal
 PAVEL ARESTOV
Russian Federation



+

6+4

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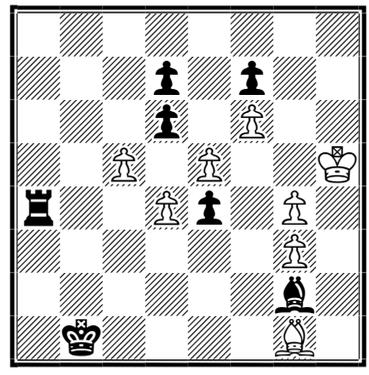
Generally speaking, I am not a fan of studies with several main lines (not to speak of sub main lines), as it conflicts with the principle of clarity which is dear to me. But here the thematic coherence between the three lines reaches a very high level. We witness three rook promotions on square d8 to avoid three different stalemates. In addition there are two other stalemates after queen promotions. In the five stalemates Black's king is caught on five different squares, f5, f8, g5, g8 and h7. The economy is excellent, especially considering the task nature of the study. It may not be obvious to everyone that RRB vs Q is a general win, but this weakness is an inherent part of the scheme and the final moves of the study offer good clarity. This study in my view shows the highest level of

constructional skill in the tournament.

1. ♖f5+ ♔h6 2. ♕e8! ♚:a7
 3. ♖f6+! ♕:f6+
 3... ♔g7(♔g5) 4. ♖g6+ +.
 4. ♖:f6+ with 2 thematic lines:
 A) 4... ♔g5! 5. ♖g6+! 5. d8♚?
 ♚d4+! 6. ♚:d4 – stalemate №1.
 5... ♔f5! 6.d8♖! white phenix №1.
 6.d8♚? ♚d4+! 7. ♚:d4 – stalemate
 №2. 6... ♚c5
 6... ♚b6? 7. ♖:b6+ +. 7. ♖gd6!
 ♚c1+ 8. ♔:a2 ♚c2+ 9. ♔a3 ♚c3+
 10. ♔a4 ♚c4+ 11. ♔a5 win.
 B) 4... ♔g7 5. ♖g6+! with:
 5. ♖f7+? ♔g8! 6.d8♚ (6.d8♖
 ♚b6=) 6...Qd4+! 7. ♚:d4 – echo-
 stalemate №3;
 5.d8♚? ♚g1+ 6. ♔:a2 ♚g2+ 7. ♔b3
 ♚g3+ 8. ♔c4 ♚g4+ 9. ♔c5 ♚g5+ =.
 B1) 5...Kh7! 6.d8♖! white phenix
 №2. 6.d8♚? ♚d4+! 7. ♚:d4 – echo-
 stalemate №4.
 6... ♚c7 7. ♖gd6! ♚c3+ 8. ♔:a2
 ♚c2+ 9. ♔a3 ♚c3+ 10. ♔a4 ♚c4+
 11. ♔a5 win.
 B2) 5... ♔f8! 6.d8♖! white phenix
 №3. 6.d8♚? ♚g1+! 7. ♖:g1 –
 stalemate №5.
 6... ♚a5 6... ♚c7 7. ♖gd6! ♔e7
 8. ♖d7+ +. 7. ♖gd6! ♚c3+ 8. ♔:a2
 ♚c2+ 9. ♔a3 ♚c3+ 10. ♔a4 ♚c4+
 11. ♔a5 ♔e7 11... ♚c5+ 12. ♕b5+
 +. 12. ♖6d7+! +.



3rd Prize – Bronze medal
 JAN TIMMAN
 Netherlands



= 8+7

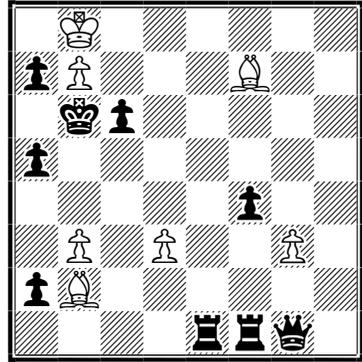
A study with a well hidden theme. The initial position is rather unnatural (the pawn confrontation c5-e5 vs. d6 being my main complaint), but this is adequately compensated by the tour de force that follows. In fact this study more than anything highlights the art of creating an introduction. Obviously the composer must have worked his way back from the final unavoidable stalemate. But the introduction has so many fine intricacies (the line openings 3...e3 and 7. d5 just to mention a couple) that one forgets that it is an introduction. In other words, the two parts of the study - introduction and climax - melt together into a harmonic whole.

The final stalemate is known from a (cooked) study by Emil

Richter (#66127), preventing this study from fighting for first prize.

1.c6! 1.g5 d:c5 2.d:c5 e3 3.♙:e3 ♙d5+ 1...d:c6 1...♞a8 2.c:d7 e3 3.e6 e2 4.♙f2 f:e6 5.g5= or 1...e3 2.c:d7 e2 3.♙f2 ♞a8 4.e6!= 2.e6! e3! 2...♞a8 3.e:f7 e3 4.♙:e3 ♞f8 5.g5 ♞:f7 6.♞g6 ♙d5 7.♞f5 (7.♙f4=) 3.♙:e3 3.e:f7 e2 4.f8♞ e1♞ 5.f7 ♞a5++ 3...♙d5 4.e7 ♞a8 5.♞h6 ♙e4 6.♞g7 6.d5 ♞g8+ 6...♙g6 7.d5! c:d5 8.♙b6! 8.♙h6 d4 9.g5 d3 10.g4 ♙e4+ 8...♞e8 9.♙e3! Switchback 9...d4 9...♞c2 10.♙h6 d4 11.g5 d3 12.g4 ♙e4 13.♞:f7 d2 14.♞:e8 d1♞15.f7 (15.♞f8=) 10.♙:d4 ♞c2 11.♙e3 d5 12.♙h6! ♞d3 13.g5 ♞e4 14.g4 Stalemate is unavoidable.

4th Prize
VLADISLAV TARASIUK
Ukraine



+ 7+9

Already from the configuration of the pieces in the top left corner of the diagram one suspects that a knight promotion is coming up. But what this knight then goes on to undertake makes this a very good study. The fact, that there is also a logical element makes it a great one.

After the quiet key we have some introductory (and perhaps not strictly necessary) sacrifices leading up to the key position after 5...♞xc4. Now White has to foresee a bishop sac on b2, a knight promotion and consequent trip to b2. Then he has to foresee the long mating switch back of the knight to its promotion square. And then he has to foresee the Black escape attempt 16...a4, which works after 6. bxc4? but not 6. dxc4!

This study gives some insights to the nature of good logical studies.

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The most important thing is the quality of the play between the try (move 6) and the climax (move 16). This play has to be interesting in itself to make a good logical study. In this particular study it never gets boring.

There are a number of additional subtleties, for instance the arrival of the black queen on g1 to cover c5 avoiding the dual mating move 17. ♖c5#. Also, the way the composer has managed to avoid the move transposition 7. b8♖+? deserves praise.

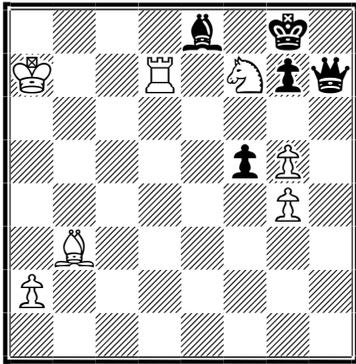
The mating picture is known from a study by Aliev (#6777).

1. ♖c8! Try: 1. ♖a8? ♖c7!!
 2. b8♗+ ♖d7 3. ♗b7+ ♖d6! 4. ♗b8+ ♖d7, positional draw 1... ♗e8+!
 1... ♖a6 2. ♖c4+, wins, or 1... ♖c5
 2. b8♗, wins 2. ♖:e8 ♖a6!! 2... ♖c5
 3. b8♗ ♗e3 4. ♗:a7+, wins, or
 2... ♖b5 3. d4!, wins 3. ♖f7! 3. b8♗?
 ♗b6, and black wins 3... ♗c1!
 3... ♗c5 4. ♖c4+ ♗:c4 5. d:c4 ♗e1
 6. b8♖+! ♖b6 7. ♖d7+ ♖a6 8. ♖f6,
 wins 4. ♖:c1 ♗c5 5. ♖c4+ ♗:c4!
6. d:c4! Thematic try: 6. b:c4? a1♗
 7. b8♖+ ♖b6, draw, e.g. 8. ♖b2
 ♗:b2 9. ♖d7+ ♖a6 10. ♖c5+ ♖b6
 11. ♖a4+ ♖a6 12. ♖:b2 f:g3 13. ♖a4
 g2 14. ♖c5+ ♖b6 15. ♖d7+ ♖a6
 16. ♖c7 a4 **6... a1♗ 7. ♖b2!!**
 Thematic try: 7. b8♖+? ♖b6 8. ♖b2
 ♗e1(h1)! (8... ♗:b2? 9. ♖d7+ wins,
 see main line; 8... ♗h1! 9. ♖d7+
 ♖a6 10. ♖c5+ ♖b6 11. ♖d4! ♗h3+
 12. g4! ♗:g4+ 13. ♖d7+ ♖a6
 14. ♖c7, wins) 9. ♖d7+ ♖a6
 10. ♖c5+ ♖b6 11. ♖a4+ ♖a6, draw
 or 7. b8♗? ♗h8+ 8. ♖c7 ♗e5+!,

draw 7... ♗:b2 7... ♗e1 8. b8♗ ♗e8+
 9. ♖c7 ♗e7+ 10. ♖:c6, wins
8. b8♖+! ♖b6 9. ♖d7+ ♖a6
10. ♖c5+ 10. ♖c7? ♗g7, and black
 wins ♖b6 11. ♖a4+ ♖a6 12. ♖:b2
f:g3 13. ♖a4! Try: 13. ♖d3? a4
 (13... g2? 14. ♖c5+ ♖b6 15. ♖d7+,
 win, see main line) 14. b4 ♖b6!,
 and black wins 13... g2 14. ♖c5+
 ♖b6 15. ♖d7+ ♖a6 16. ♖c7! g1♗
 17. ♖b8#



1st Honourable Mention
 YOCHANAN AFEK
 Netherlands



+

7+5

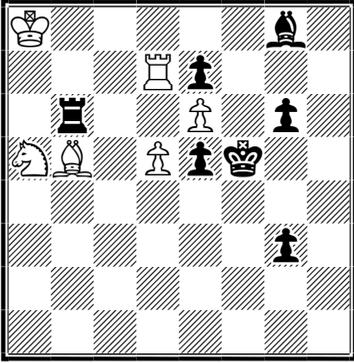
Not all epic studies are bad. This one has two phases of equal value. A tactical festival of forks and sacs followed by an interesting knight endgame.

1. **♠d8+**! ♖h8 1...♗f8 2. ♗e6+ ♗g8 3. ♗:g7+ ♗:g7+ 4. ♗:g7+ ♗:g7 5. g:f5+- 2. **♗e7!** ♗g6 After queen moves such as 2...♗h2 3. ♗:e8+ ♗h7 4. g:f5 ♗f2+ 5. ♗a6 ♗:f5 6. ♗e6 ♗d3+ 7. ♗b6 ♗d6+ 8. ♗b7 ♗d7+ 9. ♗c7 white should win on material. 3. **♗f7!** Not 3.g:f5? eg 3...♗h2 4.f:g6 ♗:a2+! 5. ♗:a2 stalemate! 3...♗:f7 Any queen move fails eg 3...♗h3 4. ♗e8+ ♗h7 5. ♗g8+ ♗h8 6. ♗f7+ ♗:f7 7. ♗:f7+ ♗h7 8.g6+ ♗h6 9. ♗h8+ 4. **♗:f7+ ♗g8 5.g6!! ♗:g6 6. ♗e5!** The queen is dominated! 6...♗f6 Or 6...♗d6 7. ♗e8+ ♗h7 8. ♗h8+ ♗:h8 9. ♗f7+- 7. **♗e8+ ♗h7 8.g5! ♗:g5 9. ♗h8+! ♗:h8 10. ♗f7+ ♗h7 11. ♗:g5+ ♗h6** The second phase is

starting: a subtle chase of the black pawns 12. ♗f7+! Switch back of the knight for the third time to its initial square! 12. ♗f3? g5 13. ♗b6 g4 14. ♗e5 ♗g5= 12...♗g6 13. ♗e5+ 13. ♗d6? ♗f6! 14.a4 g5 15.a5 g4 16.a6 g3= 13...♗f6 14. ♗d3! g5 15. ♗b6! f4 16. ♗c5! f3 17. ♗d4 g4 18. ♗c5!! 18. ♗e4? ♗e6 19.a4 f2!! 20. ♗:f2 g3 21. ♗d3 g2! 22. ♗f4+ ♗d6 23. ♗:g2 ♗c5 24. ♗d3 ♗b4=; 18. ♗e3? ♗e6! 19. ♗f2 (19. ♗f4 ♗d5 20. ♗:g4 ♗c4) 19...g3 20. ♗e4 g2 21. ♗g5+ ♗d5 22. ♗:f3 ♗c4= 18...♗f5 19.a4! g3 19...f2 20. ♗e4 f1♗ 21.a5 g3 22. ♗:g3+! +- 20. ♗e3 g2 21. ♗f2 ♗e5 22.a5 ♗d6 23.a6 ♗c7 24.a7 +- The hidden purpose of White's 18th move finally becomes apparent

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2nd Honourable Mention
 ALEXEY GASPARYAN
 Armenia



+

6+7

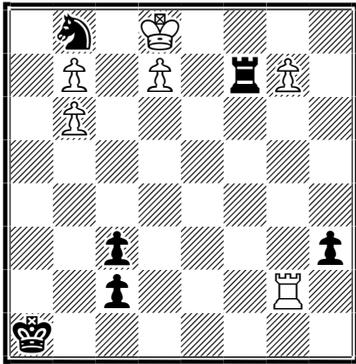
Technically and economically speaking this is a very good study and the introduction leading up the key position is pleasing. After 7. ♖c8 Black is facing a deadly discovered check. The only hiding place for the queen is g5, but going there immediately will result in zugzwang after 8. Kb8. After a little queen and king dance, White manages to pass the move to Black. Instead of bringing the queen back into the line of fire he tries a final escape ending in a fine double check mate. The static nature of the position after 7. Bc8 downgrades this study a little.

1. ♖d3 ? ♜f6 2. ♜f1 ♖b1! draws.
 1. ♜f1 ! And now 1... ♖b1? 2. ♜h3 ! ♜f6 3. ♜c4 ♖h1 4. ♜g2 ♖d1 5. ♖c7 +- . 1... ♖a6 ! 2. ♜:a6 2. ♖a7? ♖:a7 3. ♜:a7 e4 4. ♜c4 g5 5. ♜b6 ♜f4 6. d6 !? ♜:e6 7. de ♜f7 = 2... g2 3. ♜c6 ! 3. ♜c8 ? g1♖ 4. ♜c6

♖c5 = 3... ♜f6 or 3... ♜:e6 4. de g1♖ 5. ♖:e7 etc.. +- 4. ♜:e7! 4. ♜c8? g1♖ 5. ♜:e7 ♜:e6 6. de ♖c5 ! = 4... ♜:e6 5. de g1♖ 6. ♜g8 ♜:e6 7. ♜c8! ♖g2 7... ♖g5? 8. ♜b8 ! ZZ +- 8. ♜a7 ! 8. ♜b8? ♖g5! = ZZ 8... ♖g1 9. ♜b7! ♖g2 9... ♖h1 10. ♜b8 +- 10. ♜c7! ♖g5 !? and now 11. ♜b8!! ZZ If 11... e4 12. ♖a7 ♜d6 13. ♖a6 ♜e5 14. ♖a5 +- . And after 11... ♖f5 12. ♖d4#



3rd Honourable Mention
 VLADIMIR SAMILO
 Ukraine



+

6+6

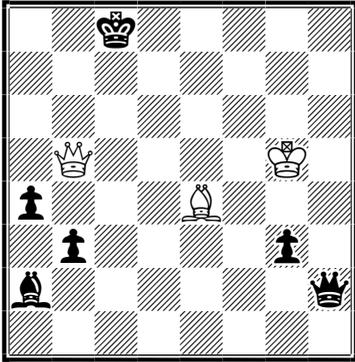
A tribute to the founders of the endgame study. The winning manouvre starting with 13. Kc6 was shown by Kling and Horwitz in 1851! (#83878). On his eighth move White can chose among three moves. In two cases the Black rook ends up on d3 and d2 respectively securing him a draw. In the third it ends up on d4, which proves a decisive weakness in the black position.

1. **♖g1+**! 1. ♖:c2? ♖:g7!=, not 1... ♖:d7+? 2. ♘c8 ♖:g7 3. ♘:b8 ♖h7 4. ♘a8! ♘b1 5. ♖:c3 h2 6. b8♙ h1♙ 7. b7+/- 1... ♘b2 2. g8♙ ♖:d7+ 2... h2 3. ♖h1 3. ♘c8 h2! 3... ♖d1 4. ♖g5! c1♙ 5. ♖b5+ ♘c2 8. ♙b3+ ♘d2 9. ♙a2+ 4. ♖h1! 4. ♖f1? ♖d1 5. ♖f5 h1♙! 6. ♖b5+ ♘c1 7. ♙g5+ ♖d2 8. ♘:b8 ♙g2= 4... c1♙

5. ♖:c1 ♘:c1 6. ♙h8! 6. ♙g5+? ♖d2! =, not 6... ♘b2? (6... ♘b1 7. ♙b5+) 7. ♙h5 c2 8. ♙:h2 6... ♘b1 6... c2 7. ♙:h2 ♘b1transfers. 7. ♙:h2 7. ♘:b8? c2 8. ♙:h2 c1♙= 7... c2 8. ♙:b8!! Try A) 8. ♙:c2+? ♘:c2 9. ♘:b8 ♙d3!= Or Try B) 8. ♙h1+? c1♙+ 9. ♙:c1+ ♘:c1 10. ♘:b8 ♖d2!= 8... ♖f7! 9. ♙c7 ♖f8+ 10. ♘d7 c1♙ 11. ♙:c1+! 11. b8♙?! ♙d1+! (11... ♖:b8 12. ♙:b8 ♙d1+ 13. ♙d6!+/-) 12. ♘e7 ♖:b8 13. ♙:b8 ♙e2+!= 11... ♘:c1 12. ♘c7! 12. ♘c6? ♘b2 13. ♘b5 ♘b3 14. ♘a6 ♘b4 15. ♘a7 ♘b5!= (15... ♖f7? 16. ♘a8!+/-) 12... ♖f7+ 13. ♘c6 ♖f8 14. ♘b5! ♘b2 15. ♘a6 ♘b3 16. ♘a7 ♘b4 16... ♖f7 17. ♘a8!+/- 17. b8♙+

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4th Honourable Mention
 RICHARD BECKER
United States of America



+

3+6

White's main plan 1. ♖b6? ♗d2+ 2. ♘g6 fails to 2... ♗d7 3. ♙c6+ ♘e6 4. ♚d5+ ♘xd5 when Black's pawns secure him a draw. Therefore White must first get rid of the pawn on a4. This requires a foreplan of 22 accurate moves.

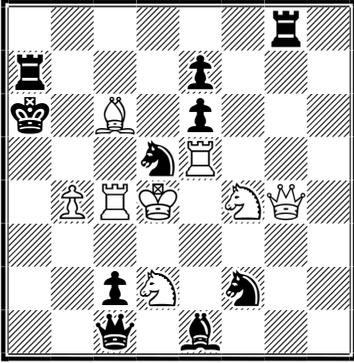
1. ♙b7+! ♘b8 1... ♗c7 2. ♖c6+ ♘b8 3. ♖c8+! (3. ♖b6? ♗f2=) 3... ♗a7 4. ♖c7 ♗d2+ 5. ♗h5 ♗h2+ 6. ♗g4 g2 7. ♖:h2+- or 1... ♗d8 2. ♖b6+ ♗e7 3. ♖c5+ ♗d7 4. ♙c6+ etc.

2. ♙d5! 2. ♖b6? ♗f2= 2... ♗c7 3. ♖c6(c5)+ ♗d8 4. ♖b6+ ♗d7 5. ♙c6+ ♗d6 6. ♙b7+ ♗d7 7. ♖c6+ ♗e7 8. ♖c5+ ♗d7 9. ♙c6+ ♗c7 10. ♙b5+! 10. ♙:a4+? ♘b8 11. ♖d6+ ♗a7 12. ♙c6 ♗e2= 10... ♗b7 11. ♖c6+ ♗b8 12. ♖d6+ ♗b7 13. ♙c6+ ♗b6 14. ♙d7+ ♗a7 15. ♖c7(c5)+ ♗a6 16. ♖c6+ ♗a7 17. ♖:a4+ ♗b8 18. ♖b5+ ♗a7 18... ♗c7 19. ♖c6+ ♗d8 20. ♖d6 g2

21. ♖:h2 b2 22. ♙f5+- 19. ♖c5+ ♗b7 20. ♙c6+ ♗c7 21. ♙e4+ ♗d8 22. ♖d6+ ♗c8 23. ♖b6 ♖d2+ 24. ♗g6 ♗d7 25. ♙c6+! 25. ♙f5+? ♗e8!= 25... ♗e6 26. ♙d5+! ♗e5 27. ♖f6+ ♗:d5 28. ♖d8++

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1st Commendation
 DARKO HLEBEC
 Serbia



= 8+10

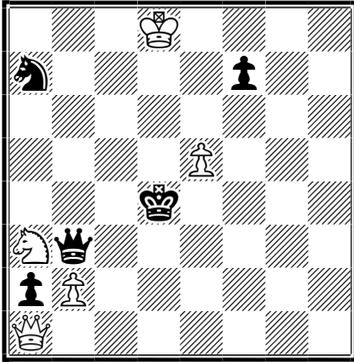
This study may have been inspired by Darko Hlebec's Special Prize from the FIDE Olympic Tournament in Composing 2016 showing a stalemate with five pinned pieces. The five pieces are here pinned in a different pattern offering a clear improvement. The composer has managed to spare a pawn and a piece and has avoided the "Black to move" stipulation. The play also flows more naturally beginning with 4 quiet half moves (in this kind of position I consider the capture of a pawn to be a quiet move).

I only have praise for the composer. But still, this is a task style problem and considering the task had already been accomplished by someone else, a commendation is the maximum honour I am able to give.

1. ♖c5! 1. ♖e2? ♗:d2+ 2. ♗:d2 ♕:d2 3. ♕:d5 e:d5+ 1... ♜:b4 1... ♜:g4? 2.b5+ ♘a5 3. ♜b3# or 1... ♗:d2 2. ♕b5+ ♘b7 3. ♕c6+ ♘a6 4. ♕b5+= 2. ♗:e6! 2. ♖:b4? ♜e4+! 3. ♖:e4 ♕f2+ 4. ♘c4 ♖:g4 5. ♖:e6 ♗f1+! 6. ♜:f1 c1♖++ 2... ♜c7 3. ♖:b4 ♜e4+! 4. ♖:e4 ♕f2+ 5. ♖ed4 ♖g5+ 6. ♜d5 ♗a3 6... ♗a1 7. ♗c8+! ♖:c8 8. ♖b6+ ♘a7 9. ♖b7+ ♘a8 10. ♖c7+= 7. ♜c4 c1♖ 7... ♖:d5+ 8. ♘:d5= 8. ♗c8+ ♖:c8 Ideal stalemate with 5 pinned white pieces.

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2nd Commendation
 ARPAD RUSZ
 Hungary



=

5+5

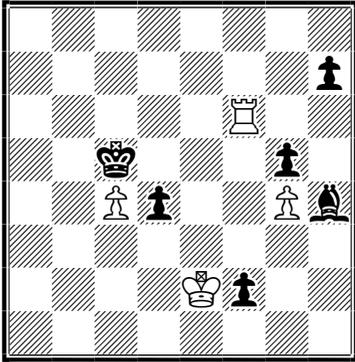
A clear and excellent idea. Rundlauf of the White queen. Unfortunately this happens at the cost of a capture on a7. Also at the peak of the study (7. b4!!) I need help from the tablebases to understand why other moves like 7. ♖e1+ or 7. ♘e7 are insufficient to draw.

1. ♖g1+ ♘e4! Black is trying to avoid the capture of the white pawn. 2. ♖g4+! ♘d5 2... ♘:e5 3. ♗c4+= 3. ♖d7+ ♘:e5 3... ♘e4 4. ♖g4+ perpetual check. 4. ♖:a7! Only now is possible to take that knight, after the black king has moved to e5. 4... a1♖ 4... ♖d1+ 5. ♘e8!= 5. ♗c4+! White fires the knight battery. This check was the reason why black tried to avoid capturing the e5-pawn. 5... ♖:c4 6. ♖:a1 The queen returns to a1 and rebuilds the pawn battery which, unlike in the initial

position, is not blocked any more. 6...f5! Black is not afraid of the white battery! 7.b4+!! Thematic try: 7.b3+? ♖d4+! 8. ♖:d4+ ♘:d4-+ 7... ♖d4+ 8. ♖:d4+ ♘:d4 9. ♘c7! White is starting a Reti manoeuvre to catch the black pawn! 9.b5? ♘c5 10. ♘c7 ♘:b5 11. ♘d6 f4-+; 9. ♘d7? f4 10.b5 ♘c5-+. 9... ♘c4 9...f4 10.b5 f3 11.b6 f2 12.b7 f1♖ 13.b8♖= 10. ♘c6! ♘:b4 10...f4 11.b5= 11. ♘d5=

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3rd Commendation
 ALEXANDER SHPAKOVSKY
Russian Federation



+

4+6

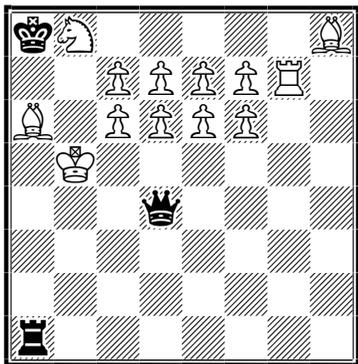
♠g3 10...♙c6 11.♜f6+ ♘c5
 12.♙d3 – main line 11.♜f3 ♜h4
 12.♜f6+ ♘c5 13.♙d3! ♠g3 14.♜f3
 ♜h4 15.♜f5+ ♘~ 16.♙:d4 +

The idea of this study is clear. A tempo move is necessary for White to make progress. The actual variations are less clear. It takes a lot of work to convince oneself that the intended solution is indeed the only way to win. This is in part due to some loss of time duals and transpositions to the mainline.

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1. ♙d3! ♠g3 **2. ♜f3 h6!** 2...♜h4?
 3. ♜f5+ ♘~ 4. ♙:d4 +- **3. ♜f5+ ♙d6**
 3...♙c6? 4. ♜f6+ ♘c5 5. ♜f3 ♜h4
 6. ♜f5+ ♘~ 7. ♙:d4+- **4. ♙e2**
 4. ♙:d4? ♜f4! +- **4...♜h4 5. ♙f1!!** A
 tempo move. 5. ♙d3? h5! =; 5. ♜~5?
 - loss of time by repetition or even
 draw in case of 5. ♜d5+ ♘c6
 6. ♜:d4? ♙c5! 7. ♜e4 ♘b4! =
5...♙c6 6. ♜b5! ♜a5, ♜d5 or ♜e5 -
 loss of time. **6...♙c7** 6...♙d6
 7. ♜d5+ ♘c6 8. ♙e2 – main line
7. ♜c5+ ♘b6 8. ♜d5 ♙c6 9. ♙e2!
 ♘b6! 9...♠g3? 10. ♜:d4! ♘c5
 11. ♜d3 ♜h4 12. ♜c3 +- **10. ♜f5**

4th Commendation
 MIKHAIL ZINAR
Ukraine



+ 13+3

Poor judge. He was really put to the task by this amusing task study. How to place this? The idea here is not simply showing the fivefold knight promotion (which has been show on other occasions, even in pawn studies), but rather the systematic and humorous movement of the Black king and the entire forest of white pawns. In fact the economy of the study is excellent, leaving only the necessary White army to force the win in the end.



1. ♖b7+ ♜a7 2. c8♗+! ♜:b8 3. c7+ ♜:b7 4. d8♗+! ♜:c8 4... ♜a8 5. ♗b6+ 5. d7+ ♜:c7 6. e8♗+! ♜:d8 6... ♜b8 7. ♗c6+ 7. e7+ ♜:d7 8. f8♗+! ♜:e8 8... ♜c8 9. ♗d6+ 9. f7+ ♜:e7 10. ♗g6+ ♜e6 11. f8♗+! 1-0