



The 11th FIDE World Cup in Composing

Section D – Studies

Final award by

Branislav Djurašević

MMXXIII

Participants

D01 Kekely L. (SVK)	D22 Hlebec D. (SRB)
D02 Minski M. (GER)	D23 Egorov E. (KAZ)
D03 Avni A. (ISR)	D24 Dimitrov O. (BUL)
D04 Hlinka M. (SVK)	D25 Costeff G. (ISR)
D05 Stavrietsky A.	D26 Tarasiuk V. (UKR)
D06 Gasparyan A. (ARM)	D27 Didukh S. (UKR)
D07 Timman J. (NLD)	D28 Kopylov E.
D08 Aliev I. (AZE)	D29 Sumbatyan K.
D09 Varitsky A.	D30 Murashov V.
D10 Topko L. (UKR)	D31 Samilo V. (UKR)
D11 Pye R. (IRL)	D32 Zamanov V. (AZE)
D12 Pervakov O.	D33 Pallier A. (FRA)
D13 Mikhalevski A. (ISR)	D34 Niessen T. (GER)
D14 Kuzmichev V.	D35 Eilazyan E. (UKR)
D15 Osintsev S.	D36 Bazlov Y.
D16 Matjushin G.	D37 Pasman M. (ISR)
D17 Gatti D. (ITA)	D38 Sprenger J. (ITA)
D18 Bondar I.	D39 Nielsen S. (DEN)
D19 Syzonenko V. (UKR)	D40 Riye S. (CHN)
D20 González L. M. (ESP)	D41 Cutian L. (CHN)
D21 Arestov P.	D42 Afek Y. (NED)

From a neutral judge I received 41 studies for evaluation on anonymous diagrams (one of them in versions form). The overall impression is that the received entries are of high quality, which is expected for a tournament of this importance. It was an honour for me to be chosen as a judge for this great tournament. The studies that are not ranked will have a chance to win their distinction in other tournaments. The unspoken rule is that sometimes it is better not to award a good study, than to give it an inadequate rank.

Three very intriguing pawn studies have arrived (**D14**, **D40**, **D41**). Unfortunately, two were dropped due to anticipation, so I wanted to keep the rest in the award.

The authors of the winning entries analyzed and commented on their studies quite well and completely, so I, as a judge, can only agree with that and I did not additionally feel the need to intervene too much. Hence my comments may be too short for a tournament like this. My enthusiasm for these studies is precisely this ranking.

Within the appeal deadline there were a couple of official complaints:

1) the author of **D33** objected that the variation marked as a dual was

not stated by him, but that the study ends earlier. I accepted the argument, but in the meantime I have found another inaccuracy in that study. So, I have returned the study to the author for revision. The best would be if that variation is not presented as a try;

2) for **D15**, I don't think that a dual has been found. All cases can be classified as a "waste of time". I have already talked about the other flaw of the study in the original commentary.

For **D35**, there was an objection that the theme of square blockading is known since a long time ago, and an example was given of its conceptual predecessor (P. Arestov, M. Hlinka, L. Kekely, Zadachi i Etyudy (2022),+).

I have partly accepted this remark, but only to the extent that the position of this study has been lowered by one place. So, this study wins 1.h.m., and study number **D12** thereby wins the 4th prize;

3) In the meantime, the author of **D26** himself provided a shortened version of his study and it now matches my taste. Moreover, I would shorten it even more so that it begins with 6.♙g4+ in the original version without insisting on the move 2...b5!. Still, I thought that the subsequent acceptance of the shortened version is a sufficient concession and did not consider that there is a basis for

change in its ranking. I wish the author more luck with the placement of his study in the future FIDE Album.

In general, in the solutions, I have kept all the authors' comments, although I don't really agree with some of them, especially with the one in **D35**.

Now I would like to say a few words about the unawarded studies. I divided them into the following groups:

- A: (incorrect);
- B: (direct anticipated);
- C: (insufficient quality for this kind of tournament and/or partially anticipated);
- D: (good, quality studies, but still not included in the award)

A (incorrect):

- **D1 (=, ♘a5-♘a7, 6+6)**. The study is not correct because, in several variations, the endgame RB against BS appears where the opposing bishops are of different colours and this is lost for the weaker side according to EGTB. (See my study: B.Djurašević, 2nd comm. Selivanov 55 JT 2022, point in 4th move of main variation);

- **D24 (+, ♘f5-♘h8, 4+3)**. Two duals, one on the 7th move. In several places, it is solved in more than one way. One of the striking ones is 4. ♖g7+ next to the intended 4. ♗hg5 and 7. ♗fd8+ instead of the intended 7. ♗e5+;

- **D30 (+, ♘b3-♘d5, 8+14)**. A bulky and long study with some imprecision in several places. The main unsound is after 44... ♖a7! Nevertheless, even without this defect, I would not have awarded this type of study.

- **D33 (+, ♘b8-♘f2, 5+5)**. The author made a mistake when he stated in the solution that in the try 7.e8♘? the continuation 9... ♘f8? 10. ♘d7+ loses, but it's still a draw based on EGTB analysis. In spite of this, there is no clear connection between the play in the solution 1. ♘f6! and in the try 1. ♘b2? except for the sacrifice of the black pieces. In my opinion, it is not enough to be awarded in such a strong tournament for several reasons: as much as the anti-dual game at three places seems interesting to the author, it is not so much to the solvers, and not even to the judge. Furthermore, there should be a more effective finale, the position has been diluted into an ordinary one.

B (direct anticipated):

- **D36 (+, ♘e6-♘c5, 6+5)**. This study already exists in Harold's database under the number 7251 after the 4th move. (13100) Bazlov, Y., Bent MT The Problemist, 2007

- **D40 (+, ♘d3-♘b2, 7+7)**. This study was a high candidate to enter into the Award, and even to get some of the prizes. But the author asked to withdraw it, probably because of a partial but strong predecessor. A complex study,

interesting and rich in details. I especially like the transformation from a pawn endgame into an endgame of light pieces, and then into a queen endgame.

- **D41 (+, ♖h1-♖h4, 9+9)**. The author insisted on an opening play with pawn captures to break up the monotony of getting a tempo that is repeated a dozen times. But such motives are well known and repeated several times:

Blathy, O. (v) U2, *Vielzugige Schachaufgaben#37*, 1890, stipulation: mate in 108. U2: *Wiereyn=P HHdbV#82421 13-2-2011*.

Zinar, M., *sp.hm Victory AT*, 2020, (EG#23303).

Knoppel=J. *Springaren*, 1962, (Van_der_Heijden=H *HHdbIV#32790 22-7-2010*).

C (insufficient quality for this kind of tournament and/or partially anticipated):

- **D3 (=, ♖e4-♖e2, 4+4)**. Try 1.♖h1? is refuted by 1...♗f6+ 2.♗f5 ♗d5! where black wins after 187 moves. Namely, the endgames of ♖♗♗ vs ♖♗ are mostly won, but even in the starting positions where these pieces are on the base row there are exceptions. This already deters the judge from awarding the study, and the author has further discredited his work by offering an unnecessary version.

- **D4 (=, ♖h8-♖h5, 5+5)**. This study was on the verge of being included in the award because of

white's unusually precise play, as well as the stalemate on the tied white pieces in the side variation 3...♗f7. The opening play with black on the move (unfortunately) should have justified the play of the white knight.

- **D5 (+, ♖g1-♖a8, 8+11)**. Insufficient quality for such a strong tournament.

- **D6 (+, ♖h3-♖e2, 6+6)**. There are more than a dozen of studies with this ending material and type of checkmate, even studies by the greatest composers. One of them is this by Matous, M. 1.pr. *Sachove Umenie 1982* ([yacpdb/276300](https://yacpdb.org/276300))

- **D9 (+, ♖a1-♖c5, 11+11)**. Not a good enough opening play leads to a globally familiar position that has been exploited many times so far.

- **D10 (=, ♖h1-♖h3, 5+4)**. Insufficient quality and lack of originality.

- **D11 (=, ♖a6-♖c8, 5+4)**. No clear idea. The bishop on h4 does not play.

- **D13 (=, ♖d4-♖g2, 5+7)**. If it weren't for the World Cup, I would advise the author to start the study at least from the second move. The way it is now, with a rough taking of a piece in the first move, the author himself has disqualified the study from this eminent tournament.

- **D19 (+, ♘c5-♘e7, 4+2)**. Not enough quality for the World Cup.

- **D29 (=, ♘h6-♘f7, 5+5)**. A familiar idea. It even reminds me of my study: B. Djurašević, 4th Commendation Nielsen JT 45 2020.

- **D31 (=, ♘d8-♘a6, 6+9)**. A study without a clear idea. Unique moves do not guarantee that the study is good, as one great composer once said in his award.

- **D32 (+, ♘c6-♘f5, 4+3)**. Here, several things bother me. One is that the pawn on e6 is taken on the black's first move.

D (good, quality studies, but still not included in the Award):

- **D16 (=, ♘d2-♘d5, 5+6)**. This study contains numerous precise moves, although none of them is in the spirit of problem solving in the true sense of the word. The author himself mentions the switchback of the black king and the white knight on the starting square as one of the main themes of this study, but these are moves that are, as a rule, random in the group of studies.

- **D18 (+, ♘g4-♘e6, 5+5)**. Spectacular check entry. I don't like so much the intro play with a lot of taking. A similar idea was already presented by Mirko Miljanić, 9th place, J. Mikitovics JT-70 (2019).

- **D21 (=, ♘a3-♘f3, 3+4)**. Although a miniature with a

relatively complex play, this study does not leave nearly as strong an impression as D20.

- **D23 (+, ♘a5-♘e8, 6+5)**. An enjoyable play from start to finish. However, the final material is almost exhausted.

- **D25 (=, ♘b1-♘g1, 9+10)**. Two logical tries. It is an intelligent logical idea with the points Ba6 for white and Bb1 for black, but the realization seems a little violent and more reminiscent of a problem than a study. When looking only at the main line there is not much enthusiasm, and the final position is disappointing, with 7 technical pawns that are only there because of previous attempts. I can praise it for an intelligent idea and recommend it for another tournament.

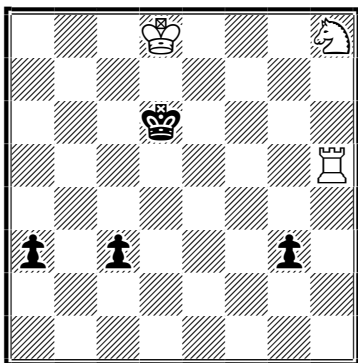
- **D28 (+, ♘e6-♘b3, 7+6)**. A study that could have won a commendation in this tournament, but I wish the author better luck and even a better distinction in another one.

- **D34 (=, ♘a8-♘c1, 4+5)**. Solid play, giant fight. In such endgames with little material, precise moves come to the fore.

- **D39 (+, ♘g3-♘h8, 5+4)**. A solid study, but not enough to enter in this award.

- **D42 (+, ♘f3-♘a8, 5+3)**. Nice position with an interesting play. I regret a lot for omitting this study from the award.

D20 – 1st Prize, Gold medal
 LUIS MIGUEL GONZÁLEZ
 Spain



+ 3+4

1. ♖f7+ ♜c6! [1... ♜e6 2. ♜e8! g2
 3. ♞e5+ ♜f6 4. ♞e1+-]

2. ♜e5+ ♜d5! 3. ♜d3+! [3. ♜f3+?
 ♜c4! 4. ♜e1 a2 5. ♜c2 ♜b3 6. ♜a1+
 ♜b2 7. ♞h1 c2=]

3... ♜e4! [3... ♜c4 4. ♜c1! +-]

4. ♜e1 [4. ♜c1? g2 5. ♞g5 ♜f3=]

4... ♜e3 5. ♜c2+! ♜f2! [5... ♜d2
 6. ♜xa3 ♜e1 7. ♜c2+ ♜f2 8. ♞f5+
 ♜e2 9. ♞g5 ♜f2 10. ♜b4! g2
 11. ♜d3+ ♜f1 12. ♞f5+ ♜e2
 13. ♜f4+ +-]

6. ♞f5+ ♜e2! 7. ♞e5+ ♜f1!

8. ♞e7!!

Thematic tries:

8. ♞e6? g2! 9. ♜e3+ ♜e2
 10. ♜xg2+ ♜d2 11. ♜f4 c2 12. ♞d6+
 ♜e3 13. ♜d5+ ♜d4! 14. ♜b4+
 ♜c5= with double attack;

8. ♜d7? g2! 9. ♜e3+ ♜e2
 10. ♜xg2+ ♜d2 11. ♞d5+ ♜c1!
 12. ♜e3 a2 13. ♞a5 ♜b1!=

8... ♜g1! [8... g2 9. ♜e3+ wins
 similarly to the main line]

9. ♞g7! 1st round trip [9. ♜e1? a2!
 10. ♞a7 ♜f2 11. ♜d3+ ♜e3
 12. ♞xa2 ♜xd3=]

9... ♜f2 10. ♞f7+ ♜e2! 11. ♞e7+
 ♜f1! 12. ♜e8!

Thematic try: 12. ♜c8? g2!
 13. ♜e3+ ♜e2 14. ♜xg2+ ♜d2
 15. ♜f4 c2 16. ♞d7+ ♜e3 17. ♜d5+
 ♜d3 18. ♜b4+ ♜c3 19. ♞b7 c1♙
 20. ♜a2+ ♜d2+ 21. ♜xc1 ♜xc1=

12... ♜g1! 13. ♞g7! (2nd round
 trip) 13... ♜f2 14. ♞f7+ ♜e2!
 15. ♞e7+ ♜f1! 16. ♜f8! ♜g1!
 17. ♞g7! (3rd round trip) 17... ♜f2
 18. ♞f7+ ♜e2! 19. ♞e7+ ♜f1!
 20. ♜g8! ♜g1! 21. ♞g7! (4th round
 trip) 21... ♜f2 22. ♞f7+ ♜e2!
 23. ♞e7+ ♜f1! 24. ♜h7! ♜g1!
 25. ♞g7! (5th round trip) 25... ♜f2
 26. ♞f7+ ♜e2! 27. ♞e7+ ♜f1!
 28. ♜g6!

Thematic try:

28. ♜h6? g2! 29. ♜e3+ ♜e2
 30. ♜xg2+ ♜d2 31. ♜f4 c2!
 32. ♞d7+ ♜e3 33. ♜d5+ ♜d3
 34. ♜b4+ ♜c3=

28. ♞e8? ♜g1 29. ♞g8 ♜f2
 30. ♞f8+ ♜e2 31. ♞e8+ ♜f1
 32. ♜g6 waste of time

28... g2 [28... ♜g1 29. ♜f5! g2
 30. ♜e4! ♜f2 31. ♞f7+ ♜g3 32. ♜d4
 a2 33. ♜e2+ ♜g4 34. ♞g7+ ♜h5
 35. ♜g3+ ♜h6 36. ♜f5+ ♜h5
 37. ♜f4 a1♙ 38. ♞g5#;

28... a2 29. ♞a7 g2 30. ♜e3+ ♜e2
 31. ♜xg2 c2 32. ♞xa2 ♜d1
 33. ♜e3+ +-]

29. ♜e3+ ♜e2 30. ♜xg2+ ♜d2
 31. ♜f4! c2 32. ♞d7+ ♜e3 33. ♜d5+
 ♜d2 34. ♜b4+ ♜c3 35. ♞b7 c1♙!
 [35... c1♙ 36. ♜a2+ ♜d2 37. ♞d7+
 ♜c2 38. ♞c7+ ♜b2 39. ♜xc1+-]

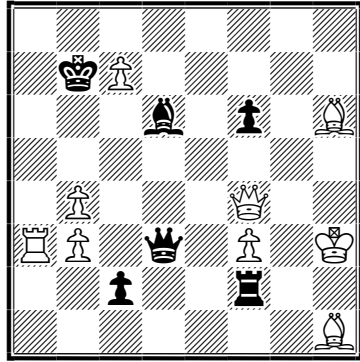
36. ♖d5+! ♜d4 [36... ♜c2
 37. ♖e3+ ♜c3 38. ♖c7+ ♜b2
 39. ♖c4+ ♜b3 40. ♖xa3+-]

37. ♖c7! [37. ♖b1? ♖d3! 38. ♖d1
 ♜c4 39. ♖e3+ ♜c3=]

37... ♜xd5 38. ♖xc1

In the photo finish, this study stood out to take the admiring epithet of first prize. Very complex manoeuvres to gain tempo, not repeated too often. The crucial point is 28. ♜g6! instead of 28. ♜h6? to avoid check by the promotion of the c1 black pawn into queen. I am aware that without the use of EGTB such a study could not have been composed. But it is our reality to use ordinary computer programs to compose studies for D15, as well as EGTB for D20, are almost the same. Still, the author is like a pilot in an airplane, in charge of deciding which variations are displayed and which are not. I had in mind also that this kind of study, with its miniature form and complex play, would attract more problem chess lovers comparing with its competitors for the first place with twice as many pieces in the starting position. A wonderful variation (28... ♜g1 29. ♜f5!), as really surprise minor promotion in 35th black move, complete such a pleasant impression!

D15 – 2nd Prize, Silver medal
 SERGEY OSINTSEV



+

9+6

1. ♖a7+!

Try 1. c8 ♖+? ♜xc8 2. ♖xf6 ♖h2+
 3. ♜g4 ♖xh6 4. ♖xh6 ♖d4+ 5. ♜h3
 ♖g1! 6. ♖e6+ (6. ♖xd6 ♖xh1+
 7. ♜g3 ♖g1+ 8. ♜h4 ♖f2+ 9. ♜g4
 ♖g2+ 10. ♜f5 ♖xf3+=) 6... ♜c7
 7. ♖f7+ ♜b8! 8. ♖e8+ ♜c7 9. ♖f7+
 ♜b8 10. ♖a8+ ♜xa8 11. ♖d5+ ♜a7
 12. f4 ♖e3+! 13. ♖f3 ♖xf3+!
 14. ♖xf3 c1 ♖=;

1. ♖xd6?? ♖xd6 2. ♖a7+ ♜c8!-+

1... ♜xa7 2. ♖xd6!

Thematic try 2. c8 ♖+?! ♜a8!
 3. ♖xd6 ♖f1+! 4. ♜g4 f5+ 5. ♜xf5
 ♖h3+ 6. ♜e4 (Position A1)
 6... ♖xc8= (6. ♜e5 ♖h2+ 7. ♜e4
 ♖xd6 8. ♖xd6 ♖h2 9. ♖g5 ♖xh1=);
 3. ♖xd6 ♖f1 4. ♖xf6 ♖xh1+ 5. ♜g4
 ♖g1+ 6. ♜h4 ♖h1+= perpetual
 check.

2... ♖f1+! (refusal to capture,
 2... ♖xd6 3. c8 ♖+! thematic fork
 3... ♜b8 4. ♖xd6 ♖f1 5. ♖g2+-
 Black postponed the capture until
 later!

3. ♖g4 f5+! 4. ♜xf5 ♖h3+ 5. ♜e4!
(Position A). [5. ♜e5? ♖h2+ 6. ♜f5
 ♖xd6 Queen capture! 7. c8♗+ ♖b8
 8. ♗xd6 ♖h2 9. ♜e3 ♖xh1=;
 5. ♜g6? ♖xh6+! 6. ♜xh6 c1♖+=]

5... ♖h4+ 6. ♜d5!

Thematic try 6. ♜d3? c1♖!
 (6... ♖xf3+? 7. ♜xf3 c1♖ 8. c8♗+!
 ♖xc8 9. ♜e3++-) 7. ♜xc1 ♖xf3+!
 8. ♜xf3 (8. ♜c2 ♖h7(e4)+ 9. ♜b2
 ♖xb3+! 10. ♜xb3 ♖c2+ 11. ♜xc2=
 stalemate) 8... ♖c4+! 9. ♜e3 ♖e6+!
 10. ♜e4 (10. ♜f2 ♖e1+! 11. ♜xe1=
 stalemate) 10... ♖h3+ 11. ♜d4
 ♖c3+! 12. ♜d5 ♖xb3+! 13. ♜c6
 ♖a4+ 14. ♜d5 ♖b3+ 15. ♜e5
 ♖e6+! 16. ♖xe6= stalemate; try
 6. ♜f4? ♖h7+! 7. ♜d4 ♖h8+! 8. ♜d5
 ♖h5+! 9. ♜d4 ♖h8+ 10. ♜d3 ♖h7+
 11. ♜c4 c1♖+! 12. ♜xc1 ♖c2+
 13. ♜b5 ♖f5+ 14. ♜a4 ♖xc1 15. b5
 ♜b7! 16. f4+! ♖xh1 17. ♖c6+ ♜c8
 18. ♖xh1 ♖xf4+ 19. ♜a5 ♖d2+!
 (19... ♖xc7+? 20. ♜a6! ♖d6+
 21. ♖c6+! ♖xc6+ 22. bxc6+-) 20. b4
 ♖a2+ 21. ♜b6 ♖e6(f2)+= perpetual
 check.

6... ♖h5+ 7. ♜d4! ♖h4+ 8. ♜c3!
 [8. ♜c5? c1♖+! 9. ♜xc1 ♖c2+
 10. ♜b5 ♖h5+! 11. ♜a4 ♖xc1=
 Thematic try 8. ♜d3?]

8... ♖xf3+!! Black opens the long
 diagonal, stalemate counter play.

9. ♜b2! refusal to capture.
 Thematic try 9. ♜xf3? c1♖+!
 10. ♜xc1 ♖c4+! 11. ♜d2 ♖xc1+
 12. ♜xc1= stalemate; 9. ♜xc2?
 ♖e4(♖c3)+=

9... ♖xb3+! 10. ♜a2! refusal to
 capture, 10. ♜xb3? ♖c4+! 11. ♜a4
 ♖a2+ 12. ♜b5 ♖c4+! 13. ♜xc4

c1♖+ 14. ♜d5 ♖c4+! 15. ♜xc4=
 stalemate. **(Position B).**

10... ♖b2+! [10... c1♖ 11. ♜xc1
 ♖f2+ 12. ♖d2! +-]

11. ♜a3! refusal to capture,
 11. ♜xb2? =

11... ♖a2+! [11... ♖h3+ 12. ♜f3!!
 ♖xf3+ 13. ♜xb2+ -]

12. ♜b3! refusal to capture,
 12. ♜xa2? ♖c4+= **(Position B1)**, the
 white King and black Rook have
 changed places!

12... c1♗+! [12... c1♖ 13. c8♗+
 ♖xc8 14. ♜e3++-; 12... ♖h3+
 13. ♜f3!! ♖xf3+ 14. ♜xa2+ -]

13. ♜xc1 ♖b2+ 14. ♜a4! refusal to
 capture, 14. ♜xb2? ♖c4+!
 15. ♜xc4= stalemate.

14... ♖a2+ 15. ♜a3 [15. ♜b5?
 ♖a5+! 16. ♜xa5 ♖xb4+! 17. ♜xb4=
 stalemate]

15... ♖xa3+ 16. ♜xa3 [16. ♜b5?
 ♖a5+! 17. ♜xa5 ♖xb4+! 18. ♜xb4=
 model stalemate]

16... ♖h3+ 17. ♜f3! [17. ♜a4?
 ♖b3(a3)+ 18. ♜x♖= model
 stalemate]

17... ♖xf3+ 18. ♜a4 ♖c6+!
 [18... ♖f5 19. ♖d4+! (19. ♖c5+?
 ♖xc5 20. bxc5 ♜b7 21. ♜b5 ♜xc7=)
 19... ♜b7 20. ♖c4! ♖c8 (20... ♜c8
 21. ♖a6+ ♜xc7 22. ♖a5+ ♖xa5+
 23. ♜xa5 ♜b7 24. ♜b5+-) 21. ♖d5+
 ♜a7 22. ♖c6 ♖g4 23. c8♗(♜)++-;
 23. c8♖? ♖xb4+! 24. ♜xb4=
 stalemate; 18... ♖a8 19. ♜b5!
 ♖d5+! 20. ♖c5+! +-]

19. ♜a5 refusal to capture,
 19. ♖xc6? = another model
 stalemate. **(Position C)**

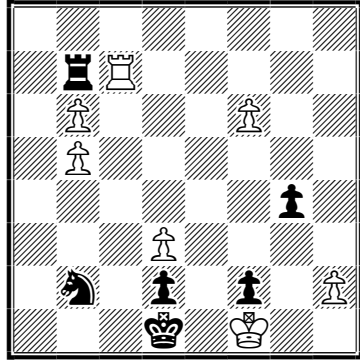
19...♔d5+! refusal to capture,
19...♔xd6 20.c8♕+ +- thematic
fork.

20.♔c5+! refusal to capture,
20.♔xd5? = another model
stalemate. (Position C1). The
Queens have changed places!

20...♔xc5+ 21.bxc5 ♖b7
22.c8♔+! ♖xc8 23.♖b6+-

Superb study! For a long time, it
was my candidate for the first
prize. Perhaps the detail that
prevailed was the white move
2.♔:d6, (taking the black bishop at
the early stage of the solution).
With the move 8...♞:f3!! black
changes his defense strategy and
plays to a stalemate position. An
exceptional study, with rich
content dominated by "refusal to
capture" motives. The last part of
the study is the icing on the cake!

D37 – 3rd Prize, Bronze medal
MICHAEL PASMAN
Israel



+

7+6

1.f7! [1.♞xb7? ♖c2(c1)]

1...♞b8 2.b7! g3!

If black starts 2...♞xb7 white has
to make the opposite move:
3.♞xb7! (pos. L4) (Logical try now
is 3.b6? ♞b8 4.b7 (4.♞c6 ♕xd3
5.b7 ♕e5 6.f8♔ ♞xf8 7.♞c8 ♕d7!
8.♞xf8 ♖c2 9.♞xf2 = (pos. W2
draw) 4...g3! 5.hxg3 ♞xb7! 6.♞xb7
Pos.L2 6...♖c2 7.♞c7+ ♖b3 8.f8♔
d1♔+ 9.♖xf2 ♕xd3+ 10.♖e3
♔e1+ 11.♖xd3 ♔xc3+ (pos. S2))
3...♖c2 4.♞c7+ ♖b3 5.f8♔ d1♔+
6.♖xf2 ♕xd3+ 7.♖e3 ♔e1+
8.♖xd3+- and no check on g3
8...♔g3+ (pos. S4) 9.hxg3

3.hxg3 ♞xb7 4.b6!

Logical try (change from previous
2...♞xb7 line): 4.♞xb7? (pos. L1)
4...♖c2 5.♞c7+ ♖b3 6.f8♔ d1♔+
7.♖xf2 ♕xd3+ 8.♖e3 ♔e1(g1)+
9.♖xd3 ♔xc3+ (pos. S1 - c7 under
attack) 10.♖d4 ♔xc7; 4.f8♔??
♞xc7

4... ♖b8 [Switchback] 5. ♖c6!!

Logical try: 5.b7 ♖xb7! 6. ♖xb7
(pos. L2 - again the rook on 7th
will be under attack 6... ♗c2
7. ♖c7+ ♗b3 /b1 8. ♗xf2 d1♙
9.f8♙ ♗xd3+ 10. ♗e3 ♙e1(g1)+
11. ♗xd3 ♙xg3+ (pos. S2) 12. ♗d4
♙xc7]

5... ♗xd3 [now 5... ♖xb6 6. ♖xb6
(pos. L3 - white rook on b6) 6... ♗c2
7. ♖c6+ ♗b3 8. ♗xf2 d1♙ 9.f8♙
♗xd3+ 10. ♗e3 ♙e1+ 11. ♗xd3
♙xg3+ (pos. S3 - white rook on c6 -
can't be attacked 12. ♗d4+–]

6.b7 ♗e5 [6... ♖h8 7.f8♙! ♗xf8
8. ♖c8 ♖h8 9. ♖xh8 ♗c2 10. ♖c8+
♗b2 (pos. U2) 11.b8♙++–]

7.f8♙! [7. ♖c8 ♗xf7! 8. ♖xb8 ♗c2
9. ♖c8+ ♗d3! 10. ♗xf2 d1♙
11.b8♙ ♙e2(d2)+ perpetual check]

7... ♖xf8 8. ♖c8 ♗c6! [8... ♗d7
9. ♖xf8 ♗c2 10. ♖xf2+– (pos. W1 is
winning]

9. ♖xc6 [9. ♖xf8? ♗c1]

9... ♖c8! [9... ♖b8 10. ♖c7 ♖h8 is
as main 11. ♖c8! (11.g4? ♖h1+
12. ♗xf2 ♖h8 13. ♖c8 ♖xc8
14.bxc8♗? ♗c1 (pos. Y2, pawn on
g4) 11... ♖xc8 12.bxc8♗! (pos. X1,
pawn on g3; 9... ♖h8 10. ♖c8 ♖xc8
11.bxc8♗! (pos. X1)]

10. ♖c7!! [Switchback]

[10. ♖xc8/bxc8♙ stalemate]

10... ♖b8!

Thematic line: 10... ♖h8 11. ♖c8!
Logical try: 11.g4? ♖h1+ 12. ♗xf2
♖h8 13. ♖c8 ♖xc8 14.bxc8♗??
♗c1 (pos. Y2 (see Y1 in end of
main line), and g4 square is
occupied) 11... ♖xc8 12.bxc8♗!!
(pos. X1, pawn on g3)

11.g4! ♖h8 [11... ♖e8 12.g5 ♖e1+
13. ♗xf2 ♖e8 14. ♖c8 ♖xc8
15.bxc8♗!! ♗c1 (Y1) 16. ♗g4;
11... ♖c8 12.g5! ♖b8 13.g6]

12.g5!

Logical try 12. ♖c8 ♖xc8
13.bxc8♗?? (pos. X2, white pawn
on g4 not allows ♗g4 (13.bxc8♙=)

Logical try: 12. ♖c6? ♖h1+!
(12... ♖c8 13. ♖c7!) 13. ♗xf2 ♖h8
idea ♖f8 14. ♖c8 ♖xc8= (pos. Z2)

12... ♖h1+! [12... ♖c8 13.g6]

13. ♗xf2 ♖h8! 14. ♖c8! [14.g6?
♖f8+!]=]

14... ♖xc8 [pos. Z1, pawn on g5]

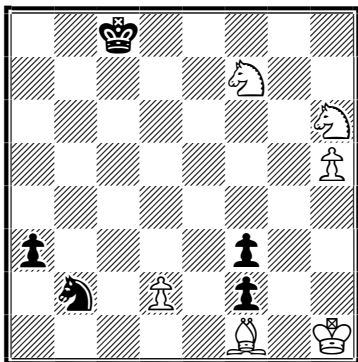
15.bxc8♗! [15.bxc8♙ stalemate]

15... ♗c1 [pos. Y1]

16. ♗g4

With an inventive counterplay,
black sets traps that white effectively
avoids. The bishop promotion
element is found in many studies but
here there are many more elements
woven together, so the study is
original with logical play in its finest!

D12 – 4th Prize
OLEG PERVAKOV



+ 6+5

Natural position.

1. ♖g4!

Logical try: 1. ♖f5? a2 2.h6 a1 ♙
3. ♖g3 ♖c4! 4.h7 ♖xd2 5.h8 ♙+
♙xh8+ check! 6. ♖xh8 ♖xf1=.

1...a2 2.h6 (2. ♖h2? ♖d3 3.h6
♖f4 4.h7 ♖g6=)

2...a1 ♙ 3. ♖h2 ♙b1!

Now 3... ♖c4! 4.h7 ♖xd2 5.h8 ♙+
♙xh8 without check! 6. ♖a6+! ♖d7
7. ♖xh8 ♖e6 8. ♖g6!+-.

4.d3 ♖xd3 5.h7 ♙a1! 6.h8 ♙+
♙xh8 7. ♖xh8 ♖e5!

Black knight dominates! But...

8. ♖b5!

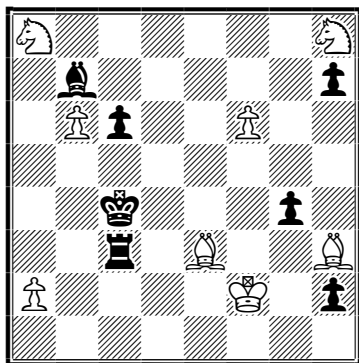
Make room for knight. 8. ♖h3+?
♖d8 9. ♖f5 ♖e7 10. ♖g6+ ♖f6! =.

8... ♖d8 9. ♖f1! Make room for king.

9... ♖e7 10. ♖h2 ♖f6 11. ♖g3 ♖g7
12. ♖f4! And finally White dominates
over dominant centralized knight!

Study starts with a logical try.
Clear idea with successive
dominations, very cute!

D35 – 1st Honorable mention
EDUARD EILAZYAN
Ukraine



+ 8+7

Dedicated to Maria Manakova

1. ♖f1+! White carries out the logical
maneuver, the purpose of which is to
transfer the ♖a2 to the a3.

Logical try: 1. ♖g2? ♖c2+! 2. ♖g3
♖xg2+ 3. ♖xg2 g3 4. ♖c5 (4.f7 c5+!)
4... ♖xc5 (Position P1) 5. ♖f7 ♖xa8
6.b7 ♖xb7 7. ♖d8 ♖a6! (7... ♖a8?
8. ♖e6+ ♖d6 9. ♖c5 h5 10.a4 +
(Position P2, see solution)) 8.f7 ♖c4
(or 8... ♖f1+ 9. ♖h1 ♖c4) 9.f8 ♙+
♖b5! (Position P3) 10.a4+ ♖a6
11. ♙c5 ♖d5+ 12. ♙xd5 cxd5 =.

1... ♖b4! 2. ♖g2 [2.f7? g3+ 3. ♖xg3
h1 ♙ 4.f8 ♙+ c5 5. ♙f4+ ♖a3=; 2.a3+?
♖xa3! =]

2... ♖c2+ 3. ♖g3 ♖xg2+ 4. ♖xg2 g3
5.a3+!

This check became possible thanks to
the check by the Bishop on the 1st move.

5. ♖c5+? ♖xc5 (Position P1, see
Logical try)

5... ♖c4 6. ♖c5! The first blocking of
the c6-pawn. Doesn't win 6.f7? c5+

7. ♖xg3 h1♚ 8.f8♚ ♚g2+ 9. ♖h4 ♚h2+ 10. ♖g5 ♚e5+ =.

6... ♖xc5 The 2nd blocking of ♖c6.

7. ♖f7! But not 7.f7 ♖b5 8.f8♚ c5+ =.

7... ♖xa8 8.b7 ♖xb7 9. ♖d8 ♖a8

Here the move 9... ♖a6? does not save: 10.f7 ♖f1+ 11. ♖h1! ♖c4 12.f8♚+ ♖b5 (Position P4).

The related positions P3 and P4 differ only in the position of the pawn. This difference ♖: pa2-pa3 is decisive. In position P4 a check by the Queen is possible 13. ♚b4+! (the effect of foresight is 13 moves deep!), and White checkmates, for example, 13... ♖a6 14. ♚a4+ ♖b6 15. ♚xc6+ ♖a5 16. ♖b7#.

10. ♖e6+ ♖d6 11. ♖c5! The 3rd blocking of the ♖c6.

11...h5 12.a4! (Position P2) 12...h4 13.a5 ♖xc5. The 4th blocking of the ♖c6.

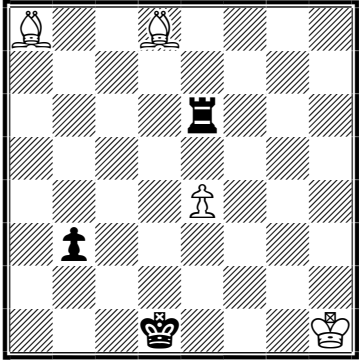
14.f7 ♖b5 the pawn is unblocked, but after 15.f8♚ Black cannot make a saving battery blow, because the base of the battery – Bishop a8 – is attacked by the Queen.

15... ♖b7 16. ♚e7! ♖a6 17. ♚c5! The fifth blocking of the c6-pawn! White wins. Checkmate for the black King is inevitable: 17... ♖a8 18. ♚b6#.

The main theme of the study: multiple blocking of a pawn to prevent a battery check. This theme is made in the form of a logical study with the effect of foresight in 13 moves.

I do not agree with the author's view that there are 5 blocks here, but only three. Namely, I would count only those that are made with white pieces, but not with the black king. Excellent study, clear idea, multiple blocking of the c5 square. A small drawback is not playing ♖a8.

D17 – 2nd Honorable mention
DANIELE GATTI
Italy



= 4+3

1.e5! ♖e2 (main line)
Secondary lines with all unique moves:

1... ♚xe5 2. ♖f6 b2 3. ♖f3+!
[logical try 3. ♖e4? ♚xe4! 4. ♖xb2 ♚e1+ 5. ♖g2 ♚e2+] 3... ♖d2 4. ♖e4 ♚xe4 5. ♖xb2 (= theoretical draw)

1...b2 2. ♖e4 ♚c6 3.e6! ♚xe6 4. ♖b1 [logical try 4. ♖f5? ♖e2! 5. ♖g2 ♚d6! 6. ♖g5 ♚d3! 7. ♖g4+ ♖e1 8. ♖h4+ ♖d2 9. ♖g5+ ♖c2 10. ♖f5 b1♚] 4... ♖c1 5. ♖f5 (= positional draw)

2. ♖f6 ♖e3 [2. ♖d5? b2 3. ♖e4 ♖e3! 4. ♖b1 ♖f2 5. ♖h4+ ♖f3 6. ♖h2 ♚xe5 7. ♖f2 ♚e2+! 8. ♖h3 ♚e1 9. ♖e4+ (9. ♖xb2? ♚h1#) 9... ♚xe4 10. ♖xb2 ♚b4)

3. ♖g5+ ♖d3 [3... ♖d4 4. ♖c1! ♚a6 5. ♖b2+ ♖c5 6. ♖e4 ♚a2 7.e6! = positional draw]

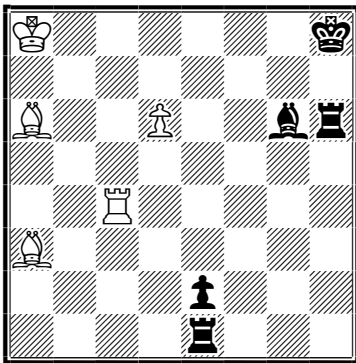
4. ♖d5 b2 5. ♖a2 ♚xe5 [5... ♖c2 6. ♖xe6 b1♚+ 7. ♖g2 ♚b7+ 8. ♖g3 = (tablebase draw)]

6. ♖f6 ♜e1+ 7. ♗g2 ♜a1 8. ♜e6!
 b1♙ [8. ♜f7? ♜g1+! 9. ♗h2 b1♙
 10. ♜g6+ ♜xg6; 8. ♜g8? ♜g1+!
 9. ♗h2 ♜h1+! 10. ♗g2 b1♙
 11. ♜h7+ ♜xh7)

9. ♜f5+.

Good study with a lot of precise moves. I especially like the finale with 8. ♜e6!, not 8. ♜f7? and 8. ♜g8?

D8 – 3rd Honorable mention
 ILHAM ALIEV
 Azerbaijan



+

5+5

1. ♜b2+ [1. ♜c8+? ♗h7]
 1... ♗h7 [1... ♗g8 2. ♜c8+ ♜e8
 3. d7]
 2. ♜c7+ ♜f7 3. ♜xf7+ p3. ♜d3+?
 ♜g6 4. d7 ♜a1+ 5. ♜xa1 e1♙=
 3... ♗g6 4. ♜f6+ ♗g5 5. ♜xh6
 ♜a1!

[Main 5... ♗xh6 6. ♜xe2! ♜xe2
 7. d7 ♜d2 8. ♜c1 ♗g6 9. ♜xd2+-]

6. ♜c1+!! An unexpected victim!

[6. d7? ♗xh6 7. d8♙ ♜xa6+=;

6. ♜xa1? e1♙ 7. d7 ♗xh6=;

6. ♜h5+? ♗xh5 (♜a6 cannot capture the e2 pawn)

6... ♜xc1 [6... ♗f5 7. d7]

7. ♜h5+!! Another unexpected victim! Thematic try 7. ♜xe2? ♜a1+! (7... ♗xh6 8. d7 ♜g1 9. ♜g4! see main line) 8. ♗b7 ♜b1+ 9. ♗c7 ♜c1+=) (7. d7? ♜d1=)

7... ♗xh5 (7... ♗f6 8. ♜xe2 ♗e6 9. ♜h6+-)

8. ♜xe2+ With the distraction of the bishop, this move became possible!

8... ♗h6 9. d7 ♜g1! The last trap! [9... ♜a1+ 10. ♗b7 ♜b1+ 11. ♗c7 ♜c1+ 12. ♗d6+-]

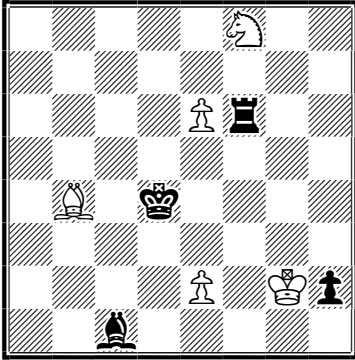
10. ♜g4! [10. d8♙? ♜g8! 11. ♙xg8 stalemate. Try 10. ♜h5? ♜a1+! (10... ♜g8+? 11. ♜e8+-) 11. ♗b7 ♜b1+ 12. ♗c7 ♜c1+ 13. ♗d6 ♗xh5! 14. d8♙ ♜d1+=]

10... ♜a1+ (10... ♜xg4 11. d8♙+-)

11. ♗b7(b8) ♜b1+ 12. ♗c7 (other moves of loss time) 12... ♜c1+ 13. ♗d6 (other moves of loss times Sacrifice of three white figures!)

Consecutive sacrifices of the white pieces. The sacrifices of black and white figures as well as the avoidance of capture are harmoniously arranged in intensity, which leaves a strong pleasant impression.

D7 – 4th Honorable mention
 JAN TIMMAN
 Netherlands



+ 5+4

1.e3+! Closes the e-file for the Black rook: 1.e7 ♖f2+ 2.♔xf2 h1♚ 3.e8♚ ♚h2+=

1...♔xe3 [1...♔d3 2.e7 ♖h6 3.♔h1+; 1...♔xe3 2.e7 ♖f2+ 3.♔h1 ♔f4 4.♔e6+ ++]

2.e7 h1♚+ In search of counterplay. 2...♖f2+ 3.♔h1 ♔f3 4.♔e6! ♔g3 5.♔e1+-.

3.♔xh1 ♔f2 [3...♔f3 4.♔c5! ♔a3 5.♔xa3 ♔g3 6.♔g1 ♖b6 7.♔f1+-]

4.♔c5+ ♔f1 5.♔h2 ♖f3! 6.♔e6! [6.♔g6? ♔g5 7.e8♚ ♔f4+! 8.♔xf4 ♖h3+! =]

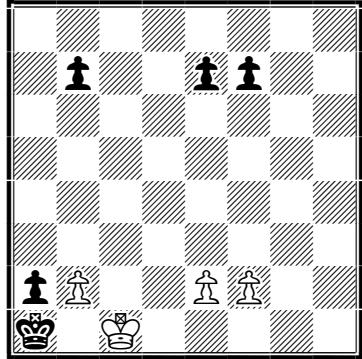
6...♔d2 (a waiting move) **7.♔f2!** [The only way to avoid stalemate and perpetual check. 7.e8♚? ♔f4+ 8.♔xf4 ♖h3+=; 7.♔d6? ♔e3! 8.♔g3 ♔g1+ 9.♔h3 ♔f2 10.e8♚ ♖xg3+ 11.♔h2 ♖g2+=]

7...♔b4 [7...♖xf2+ 8.♔h3 ♖f3+ 9.♔g4+-]

8.e8♚ ♔d6+ 9.♔g3! ♖xg3 10.♚b5+ ♖d3+ 11.♔h1 +-.

Exceptional play, several stalemate endings. The ♔f2 move is exceptional. It is regrettable that an effective finale is missing.

D14 – Special Honorable mention
 VLADIMIR KUZMICHEV



+ 4+5

1.e4? f6!! – Festine Lente (FL)

1.f4? e6!! – FL

1.♔c2! - forcing black pawns to play first:

1...f6! 2.f3!! (return echo FL)

2...e6! 3.e3!! (second return echo FL)

3...b6! 4.b3!! – third return echo FL and there is Position A:

3...e5 4.e4! f5 5.exf5 e4 6.fxe4! b5 7.f6! b4 8.f7! +-, for example 8...b3+ 9.♔xb3 ♔b1 10.f8♚ a1♚ 11.♚f1#.

It is interesting that it does not matter in what sequence black pawns will play "FL" on the first and second moves (They can play six times in different ways) - in response, white pawns will similarly play "FL" and Position A will arise.

There are thematic tries in the variation 1...f6 2.b3? f5! 3.f4 b6!! (reciprocal echo FL of the black pawn) 4.b4 b5! 5.e3 e6!! (second reciprocal echo FL of the black pawn) 6.♘c1 e5 7.fxe5 f4 8.exf4 – stalemate.

It will be similar in the thematic try in another variation 1...e6 2.e3!! b6 3.b3!! f6 4.f3!! (Position A) – 2.b3? e5! 3.e4 b6!! 4.b4 b5! 5.f3 f6!! (third reciprocal echo FL of the black pawn) 6.♘c1 f5 7.exf5 e5 8.fxe5 - stalemate

In case of variant **1...b6 2.b3!! e6 3.e3!! f6 4.f3!!** (Position A) thematic tries will be 2.e4? f6!! = and 2.f4? e6!! =)

Continuation of position A: **4...b5 5.b4!**

5...e5 6.e4! f5 7.exf5! e4 8.f6! (8.fxe4? stalemate) **8...e3 9.f7! e2 10.f8♘!** with the inevitable mate.

5...f5 6.f4! e5 7.fxe5! f4 8.e6! (exf4? stalemate) **8...f3 9.e7! f2 10.e8♘!** with the inevitable mate.

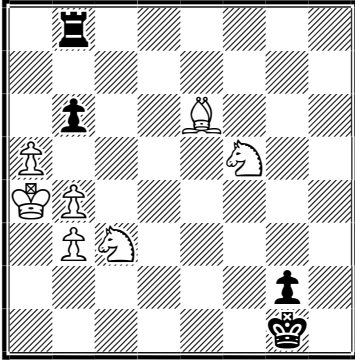
The paradoxical global idea is realized for the first time: in the solution, all three white pawns echo the black pawns for a short move (FL), and in the tries, on the contrary, the black pawns echo back from the short moves (FL) of the white pawns.

An orchestra of six pawns (three white and three black) play the triple symphony Festine Lente!

At a glance, it looks like it is an excellent theoretical position and a great invention. The white king must move away from the first row

so that it is not under check after the later black promotion. The author has made a very good effort to present the solution as clearly as possible. That is, the above analyses are entirely his own. With such analyses, he has pompously introduced his study as an outstanding discovery. I, as a judge, and some of my colleagues with whom I consulted about this particular study, are not so euphoric. It looks like the use of Festina Lente makes more sense with passed pawns. Here it is just avoiding running out of moves. So, let this study be discussed later in various forums, time is the best judge! Therefore, this distinction is the highest, and perhaps too much, that this study could receive in the World Cup tournament.

D26 – 1st Commendation (version)
 VLADISLAV TARASIUK
 Ukraine



+ Black to move 7+4

Black on the first move blocks White on the edge of the board with the aim of mate or stalemate, but thanks to the accurate play of the bishop ♖e6-g4-h3-f1-c4!, the white king, in the final, comes out of the blockade...

1...b5+! 2.♘a3 ♜f2 3.♙d1+!
 [3.♙e4+? ♘e2! 4.♙eg3+ ♘d3-+]

3...♘e2 4.♙d4+ ♘xd1 5.♙g4+!
 ♘c1! [5...♘e1 6.♙h3! ♘f2 7.♙xg2
 ♘xg2 8.♙xb5 ♙xb5 9.♘a4!+;

5...♘d2 6.♙h3! ♙d8 7.♙xg2 ♙xd4
 8.♘b2! ♙d6 9.♙f1 ♙d5 10.a6+-]

6.♙h3!! The white bishop needs to control the c8-square. Logical try-1: 6.♙f3? g1♙ 7.♙e2+ ♘b1 8.♙xg1 (position A with w♙f3) 8...♙c8! 9.♙e2 ♙c2 10.♙e4 ♘a1! 11.♙xc2 stalemate]

6...g1♙ 7.♙e2+ ♘b1! 8.♙xg1 (position A with w♙h3) 8...♙f8 9.♙e2 ♙f2 10.♙c3+! [Not 10.♙g4? ♘a1! 11.a6 ♙f6 12.♙c8 ♙f2!

(12...♙c6? 13.♙d4! ♙xc8 14.♙xb5 ♙c6 15.♙c7! +-) 13.♙g4 ♙f6 positional draw.]

10...♘a1 11.♙f1!! The white bishop needs to control the c4-square. 11.♙xb5?? ♙a2#. Logical try-2: 11.♙d7? ♙b2 (position B with w♙d7) 12.♙xb5 ♙xb3+! 13.♘a4 ♙a3+! 14.♘xa3 stalemate

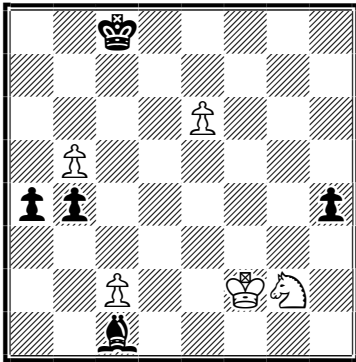
11...♙b2! (position B with w♙f1) [11...♙xf1 12.♙xb5 ♙f2 13.♙c3! +- (13.♘a4? ♙a2+ 14.♙a3 ♘b2=)]

12.♙c4!! The final point of the Bishop. It's not too late to be wrong: 12.♙xb5? ♙xb3+! 13.♘a4 ♙a3+! 14.♘xa3 stalemate]

12...bxc4 13.bxc4 ♙b3+! 14.♘a4!
 [14.♘xb3? stalemate] 14...♙a3+!
 15.♘b5!

An interesting and very rich play in the main variations, as well as in byvariations. Black is playing for stalemate.

D27 – 2nd Commendation
 SERGEY DIDUKH
Ukraine

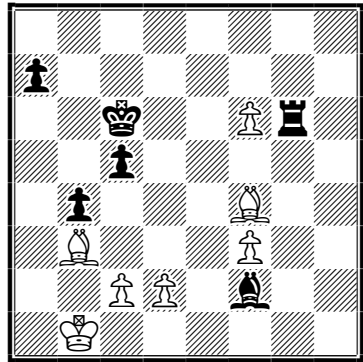


= 5+5

- 1.e7 [1.b6? ♖g5+-]
 1...♗d7 2.b6 ♜b2 3.c3! [3.b7?
 ♜d4+ 4.♗e2 ♜a7 5.♙xh4 b3!
 6.cxb3 a3+-]
 3...♜xc3 4.b7 ♜d4+ [4...♜e5
 5.♙xh4 b3 6.♙f3 ♜d6 7.♙d2 b2
 8.♙b1 ♗xe7 9.♗e2 ♗d7 10.♗d2
 ♗c7 11.♗c2 a3 12.♙d2 ♗xb7
 13.♙c4 ♗c6 14.♗b1 (14.♙xb2? a2)
 14...♗d5 15.♙xb2=]
 5.♗e2 ♜a7 6.♙xh4 a3 [6...b3
 7.♗d2!]
 7.♙f5 a2 8.♙d6 ♗xe7 9.♙c8+
 ♗d7 10.♙xa7 ♗c7 11.♙c6 ♗xb7
 12.♙a5+ ♗a6 13.♙b3! =

An elegant and light study
 suitable for solvers.

D38 – 3rd Commendation
 JAN SPRENGER
Italy



+ 7+6

This study shows two occurrences
 of the Berlin theme: the logical try
 leads to immediate checkmate, but
 a foreplan opens up a square for
 the white king. After that, the
 Black check is harmless. See also
www.berlinthema.de for definition
 and examples.

- 1.f7 ♜g1+ [1...♜f6 2.♙h6 c4
 3.♙a4+ +-]
 2.♗a2 ♜d4 (thematic threat
 ♜a1#)
 3.♙a4+! Berlin theme #1: logical
 removal of the bishop to open the
 b3 square for the king. Logical try:
 3.f8♗? ♜a1#! Thematic try:
 3.♙d5+? ♗xd5! 4.f8♗ ♜a1+
 5.♗b3 ♜a3#
 3...♗d5! Renews the threat, now
 with ♜a1+ and ♜a3#.
 4.♙c6+! It is still too early for
 4.f8♗? ♜a1+ 5.♗b3 ♜a3#
 (thematic try); 4.c4+? ♗xc4

5. ♖b5+ ♜xb5 6. f8♞ ♞a1+ 7. ♜b3 c4+ 8. ♜c2 b3#)

4... ♜c4! The logical main line is 4... ♜xc6 5. f8♞ [no w ♖b3, compare 3. f8♞?] 5... ♞a1+ 6. ♜b3 ♞a3+ 7. ♜c4+

5. d3+ [5. ♖b5(d5)+ would lose as seen above]

5... ♜c3 6. ♖a4! [6. ♖e5? (or 6... ♖e3 with identical lines) 6... ♖xe5 (b3+ transposes) 7. f8♞ b3+! 8. cxb3 ♖d4. The Black counterplay is sufficient, e.g. 9. ♞e8 ♞g2+ 10. ♜a3 ♞g1 11. ♜a4 ♞a1+ 12. ♜b5 a6+! 13. ♜b6 c4+; 6. f8♞? b3+! 7. cxb3 ♜c2]

6... b3+! (6... ♖g7 7. ♖e5+! ♖xe5 8. f8♞+)

7. ♖xb3 ♜b4 8. ♖d2+ ♜b5 (thematic threat ♞a1#)

9. ♖c4+! [9. f8♞? ♞a1#, 9. ♖a4+? ♜xa4!]. Berlin theme #2: again White plays for the logical removal of the bishop to open the b3 square for the king, and this time Black cannot refuse. Black is able to defend the endgame after 9. ♖d5 ♖g7 10. c4+ ♜b6 11. ♖c3 ♖f8.

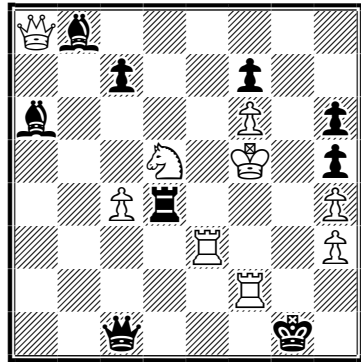
9... ♜a4! 10. ♖b5+!! Thematic try 10. ♖c3? ♖xc3 11. ♖b5+ ♜b4!-+

10... ♜xb5 [no white ♖b3]. White has avoided the checkmate, but perpetual check is still threatening. Hence:

11. ♖c3! [11. f8♞? ♞a1+ 12. ♜b3 ♞b1+] 11... ♖xc3 12. f8♞ ♞a1+ 13. ♜b3 ♞b1+ 14. ♜xc3, and the white king has escaped.

A nice example of the Berlin theme, well explained by the author.

D2 – 4th Commendation
MARTIN MINSKI
Germany



= 9+9

1. ♞g2+ [1. ♞g3+? ♜xf2 2. ♞g2+ ♜f1!-+]

1... ♜h1! 2. ♞f2! [2. ♞ge2? ♞b1+ 3. ♜e5 ♞e4+! 4. ♞xe4 c5+ 5. ♖c7 ♖xc7+--+]

2... ♞b1+ [2... ♜g1 3. ♞g2+ ♜h1 4. ♞f2] 3. ♜e5 ♞e4+! [3... c5+?? 4. ♖c7+ ♞e4+ 5. ♞xe4+ ♞xe4+ 6. ♜xe4+-]

4. ♞xe4 c5+ 5. ♖c7! [5. ♜f5? ♖c8#] 5... ♖xc7+ 6. ♜f5! self pin

6... ♞d3 [main 6... ♖xc4 7. ♞d5!! ♖xd5 8. ♞h2+! ♖xh2/♜xh2 pin stalemate; 6... ♖b7?? 7. ♞xb7 ♞xb7 8. ♞e1#]

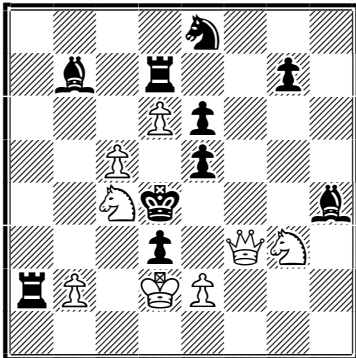
7. ♞b7!! ♞d7+ [main 7... ♞xh3+ 8. ♞g4+ ♖xb7 9. ♞h2+! ♖xh2/♜xh2 pin stalemate (9... ♞xh2 10. ♞g1+! ♞xg1/♜xg1 stalemate); main 7... ♖xb7 8. ♞h2+! ♖xh2/♜xh2 pin stalemate]

8. ♞e6+ ♖xb7 9. ♞h2+! [9. ♞f1+? ♜h2! 10. ♞h1+ ♜g3!-+]

9... ♜g1 10. ♞g2+! ♖xg2/♜xh2 pin stalemate

This time a triple pinning, one piece by another corresponding piece of black colour, on three pinning lines. Two queen sacrifices. Witty, but cumbersome position.

D22 – 5th Commendation
 DARCO HLEBEC
Serbia



+ 8+10

1.c6! [1.♖g4+? ♜xc5 2.♖xh4=]
 1... ♗xd6 2. ♗xd6 ♕xc6! 3.♖e3+!
 ♜d5 4. ♗ge4 ♕g5! 5.♖xg5 ♖xb2+
 6. ♜c3 ♖xd6 7.♖e3! [7. ♗xd6? d2
 8. ♖d8 d1 ♗+! =]
 7... ♖c2+ 8. ♜xd3 ♖c4 9.♖c5+!!
 ♖xc5 10. ♗f6+! gxf6 11.e4#

Checkmate to 5 blocks.
 Unfortunately, two blocks already exist in the starting position (pawns on e5 and e6). This rank is a reward for the author's effort.

Branislav Djurašević,
 August 26, 2023