



The 7th FIDE World Cup in Composing

Section D – Endgame Studies

Final award by

Vladislav Tarasyuk

MMXIX

Participants

D01	S. Hornecker (DEU)	D20	U. Sayman (TUR)
D02	A. Sergiienko (UKR)	D21	D. Keith (FRA)
D03	M. Zinar (UKR)	D22	M. Miljanic (SRB)
D04	P. Rewitz (DNK)	D23	S. Nielsen (DNK)
D05	A. Almammadov (AZE)	D24	I. Aliev (AZE)
D06	S. Didukh (UKR)	D25	J. Kristiansen (DNK)
D07	V. Samilo (UKR)	D26	A. Jasik (POL)
D08	M. Minski (DEU)	D27	A. Avni (ISR)
D09	A. Pallier (FRA)	D28	E. Kopylov (RUS)
D10	P. Kiryakov (RUS)	D29	D. Hlebec (SRB)
D11	A. Gasparyan (ARM)	D30	A. Sochnev (RUS)
D12	Y. Bazlov (RUS)	D31	Z. Mihajloski (MKD)
D13	V. Neistadt (RUS)	D32	A. Avedisian (URY)
D14	P. Arestov (RUS)	D33	C. Yoo (USA)
D15	Y. Afek (NLD)	D34	L. González (ESP)
D16	B. Djurašević (SRB)	D35	O. Pervakov (RUS)
D17	R. Becker (USA)	D36	A. Stavrietsky (RUS)
D18	M. Pastalaka (UKR)	D37	V. Syzonenko (UKR)
D19	G. Østmoe (DNK)		

In accordance with the rules of the 2019 World Cup, tourney Director Alexander Bulavka sent me for judging 37 endgame studies in anonymous form on uniform diagrams and with standard solution texts.

The entries belonged to all sorts of trends; many of them, however, featured well-known ideas. Therefore, when estimating the endgame studies I focused primarily on the originality of the way the authors expressed the concept and how successful their technical presentation was. Preference was given to compositions with internal links in the play forming a clear-cut scenario climaxing in the effect of the final position.

To support and maintain the high status of the tournament, 10 endgame studies were included in the award; according to the author's opinion and taste, they are the most interesting ones while demonstrating great variance in style. The prize winners stand out among them; their clear and attractive solutions are best at popularizing the realm of endgame composition.

The other entries, for various reasons, failed to stand the competition and so they authors can use them at their own discretion.

D01, D02 - pawn-based entries with play of little interest, devoid of surprises or unexpected moves.

D04 - a stalemate idea with a lonely white king facing two black knights and final sacrifice of white bishop is

not new, conf. G.Kasparyan (Československý šach, 4th Prize, 1977), but more unpleasant is White's first move, a capture.

D05 - final play as in J. Moravec (28 Rijen, 1924), but ... with three superfluous in the finale.

D09, D10, D32 - no distinct idea behind the dramatic (piece-exchanging) events of these endgame studies.

D11 - little original content compared to N. Pandzhakidze's endgame study (Merani, 1986).

D12 - the author conceived an interesting idea of blockade of black queen and knight; but it would be nice to see it without the somewhat heavy introduction involving corner moves of two standing rooks of both sides.

D13 - the concluding positional draw involving 15 (!) pieces does not impress at all.

D14 - the visually attractive "mini" leaves a dual impression. Unfortunately, the enigma of its scenario is revealed only beyond the limits of the solution: the picture becomes perfectly clear (White wins) as many as seven moves after the end of the main solution line, when special accuracy is no longer required of White.

D15 - EGTB confirms that, instead of the sacrifice 10. ♖a2+, White also wins after 10. ♖f2+.

D16 - in technical terms, White succeeds in holding the black passers, but there is no visible artistic element in how it happens.

D17 - two echoed mates on the 3rd and 13th moves of the solution; but the impression is more reduced by the solving difficulty of the by-variants.

D19 - an endgame study with a well-known mate looks a bit boring anyway: pieces fight one another within a small space, not daring to leave the place where the play begins and ends. The forced sacrifices of the doomed rooks of both sides can hardly generate an emotional response.

D20 - the short play of pieces with the idea of promoting a pawn is not impressive, suggesting a need for elaborate the endgame study towards a more intense encounter of the sides.

D21 - an endgame study with two bifurcations and a couple of white queen sacrifices varying in value; the shorter variant is obviously inferior to the main one, which features a final mate by knight and decoy 9. ♖f1! already shown by I. Akobia (E. Minerva-50 JT, 4th Prize, 2012).

D22 - the idea was presented in a nicer and more economical way by A. Maksimovskikh (Bulletin of the Central Chess Club of the USSR, 3rd h.m., 1970).

D25 - anticipated by F. Richter (Československý šach, 1954), as well as containing duals 5.g6+ and 6. ♗f3+.

D26 - with final domination of the promoted queen; however, it is unpleasant to see that the rook standing in the center of the board

(and in the epicenter of events) does not even make a single move.

D27 - one can see no link between the exchanges of pieces in the introductory part and the interesting culmination in the finale.

D28 - the middlegame play leads to a finale with two attractive model mates, but there is a lack of a bright point: the sacrifices 6. ♖:f4+ and 8. ♖:d4+ are forced.

D29 - the rook mate with four active blockings by pieces coming to the desired squares in the course of the play; but the composition is devoid of any subtle or bright moves, while the concluding (and only) sacrifice of the white king is always a standard in such concepts. Moreover, the final picture is spoiled by the presence of the black pawn h6.

D31 - in the solution, the well-known final pawn promotion to a rook is supplemented with a second variant, in which the play is uninspiring and uninteresting.

D35 - the implementation of the synthesis of a foresight effect and the final sacrificial extravaganza of the white knight (a similar idea, but with two knight sacrifices, was presented by E. Pogosyants, (Schakend Nederland, sp. comm., 1976) is nevertheless impaired (spoiling the impression) by the introductory part, which, in spite of its large-scale nature, is a bit too long; and also by the difficult variant 7... ♖c4 in which it is hard for White to win, the extensive maneuvering of the pieces are quite tiresome. Furthermore, the main play starting

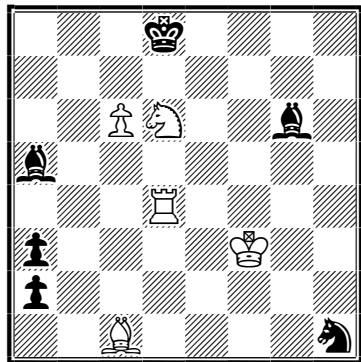
from White's 8th move is marred by the fact that both queens and rooks leave the scene – the aggregate material is too heavy to justify the logic involving the d-pawn. It is very much hoped that the author will present his synthesis in a lighter form; in that case, the endgame study will be a clear contender for the highest places in tourneys.

D36 - dual 13. ♖e7+ ♔g7 14. ♜f7 ♘h8 15. ♜:g7+.

D37 - Black is clearly weak, his king maneuvering senselessly instead of putting up a fight and coming up with solid arguments.

On the whole, the level of the tournament is reflected by the endgame studies in the award.

1st Prize – Gold medal
SERGEY DIDUKH
Ukraine



= 5+6

The black passed pawns are a powerful force, while the white passer is easy to hold. How can White save himself?

1. ♖b5+! (The play begins with a battery salvo; bringing the bishop into play would be premature and erroneous: 1. ♖g5+? ♘c7 2. ♖b5+ ♘b6! 3.c7 a1♖ 4.c8♖ ♖f1+ -+) **1... ♘e8!** (Weaker is 1... ♘c8 2. ♖f4! a1♖ 3. ♖a7#) **2.c7** and two thematic lines of play:

A) 2... ♖:c7 3. ♖:c7+ ♘f7 4. ♜d7+! (4. ♜f4+? ♘g8 5. ♜f8+ ♘h7! -+) **4... ♘g8 5. ♜d8+ ♘h7 6. ♜d7+ ♖f7! 7. ♜:f7+ ♘g6** This is the key position of the endgame study. **8. ♜g7+!!** (An unexpected and accurate rook sacrifice! The similar 8. ♜f6+? ♘:f6 9. ♖d2 a1♖ 10. ♖c3+ ♖:c3+ is no good, since the king is in check.) **8... ♘:g7 9. ♖e3! a1♖ 10. ♖d4+! ♖:d4 11. ♖e6+ ♘f6 12. ♖:d4 =**

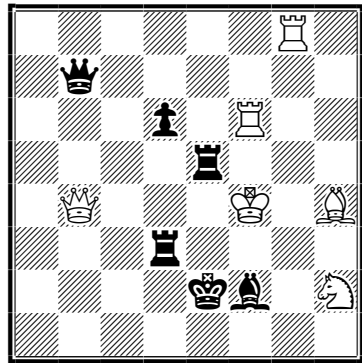
~

B) 2...♙h5+! 3.♚f4! (The right square to move to. 3.♚g2? ♙:c7 4.♙:c7+ ♚f7 5.♞d7+ ♚g6 6.♞d6+ ♚f5 7.♞d5+ ♚e4 8.♞d4+ ♚:d4 9.♙h6 ♚e4 10.♙g7 ♙f3+ -) **3...♙:c7+ 4.♙:c7+ ♚f7 5.♞d7+ ♚g8!** (5...♚f6 6.♙e3 a1♚ 7.♙d4+ =) **6.♞d8+ ♚h7 7.♞d7+ ♙f7! 8.♞:f7+ ♚g6 9.♞f6+!!** (Earlier, this was a losing move; now it ensures draw, while the previously saving move 9.♞g7+? now leads to defeat: 9...K:g7 10.♙e3 a1♚ 11.♙d4+ ♚:d4+ and again with check!) **9...♚:f6 (9...♚h7 10.♞f7+ ♚g8 11.♞f8+ =) 10.♙d2! a1♚ 11.♙c3+! ♚:c3 12.♙d5+ once again with the saving fork. 12...Ke6 13.♙:c3 =**

An excellent example of development of the classical combinational direction – J. Fritz (Norodni Listy, 1933). The core of this endgame study consists in sacrificial combinations performed in a simple position; these are mirror-reflected in the homogeneity of play in the two thematic, skillfully intertwined variants. A minimal difference in the position of the white king (f3 vs. f4) brings about a unique interchange of sacrifices of white rook and bishop which form a geometrically strict “echo.” It should be noted that the passiveness of the black knight, which is unrelated to the main idea, is compensated for by the natural-looking diagram position, the light construction and the

availability of tries with change of play – the additional strengths of this eye-catching find in the genre of endgame studies.

2nd Prize – Silver medal
MARTIN MINSKI
Germany



= 6+6

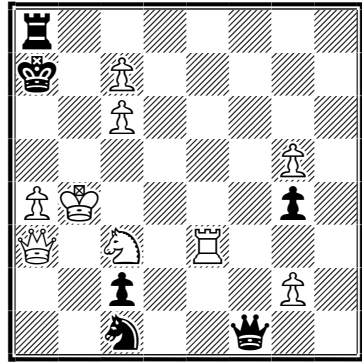
In the initial position, White has some chances to be saved in view of the black king's being slightly severed from his forces. The dramatic position promises double-edged play and these expectations are really met!..

1.♚c4! (It would be adventurous to play 1.♚:b7? ♞d4+ 2.♚e4+ ♞d:e4#) **1...♙e3+ 2.♚g3 ♙f2+ 3.♚f4 ♚c6! 4.♚a2+!** (The purpose of this unexpected maneuver will not be clear until the finale. The try 4.♚:d3+? ♚:d3 5.♞:d6+ ♚:d6 6.♞d8 ♙g3+ 7.♚:g3 ♞g5+ 8.♚f2 ♚:d8 leads to defeat, while the capture of the queen is again punished by a mating attack: 4.♚:c6? ♞d4+ -) **4...♞d2 5.♚:d2+**

♔:d2 6. ♖:d6+! (6. ♜f3+? ♔e2
 7. ♜:e5 d:e5+ -+) 6... ♗:d6 7. ♖d8
 ♜g3+! 8. ♔:g3 ♖g5+! (Hoping for a
 miracle: 9. ♔h3? ♖g3+! 10. ♜:g3
 ♗:d8 -+ or 9. ♔f3? ♗:d8 10. ♜:g5+
 ♗:g5 -+ (the fork ♜f3+ is
 unavailable)) However, White
 plays accurately until the very end:
 9. ♔f2! with the final denouement:
 9... ♗:d8 10. ♜:g5+! ♗:g5 11. ♜f3+
 =

A witty encounter of pieces (the
 irony of the plot dictates that
 White should twice refuse to
 capture the queen in the starting
 phase), which becomes hotter and
 more inspiring with each move,
 ends with a fork-blow by the
 knight at the very conclusion of the
 play (the difference in the black
 king's final position on d2 vs. d3
 playing the key role). In the
 solution, White performs a
 preliminary logical maneuver
 (4. ♗a2+!) in order to sacrifice his
 queen on the right square; and a
 couple of moves before the
 conclusion of play he needs to
 make an accurate move by his king
 9. ♔f2!, making everything planned
 happen. This cohesive concept,
 with sacrificial play by pieces of
 both sides (in cases like this one,
 sacrifices are not irritating) is
 presented in a fresh and (from the
 endgame study viewpoint)
 harmonious way.

3rd Prize – Bronze medal
 CHRISTOPHER YOO
 USA



+ 9+6

The black king's unfortunate
 position at the end of the board
 allows White to organize an attack
 against him...

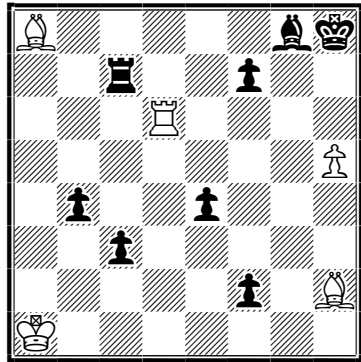
However, a trap is already set
 for White in the diagram position
 of this endgame study – through
 the self-suggestive first move
 White lets victory slip away:
 1. ♖e5? ♔b6! 2. ♜d5+ [2.a5+ ♔a7!
 (2... ♔a6? 3. ♜e2! ♗f8+ 4. ♖c5 ♜:e2
 5. ♗d3+ +) 3.a6 ♖c8 =] 2... ♔a6
 3.c8 ♗+ ♖:c8 4. ♜c7+ ♖:c7 5. ♖a5+
 ♔b6 6. ♗e3+ ♔:c6 7. ♗c5+ ♔d7
 8. ♗d5+ ♔e7 9. ♗e5+ ♔d7
 10. ♖d5+ ♔c8 11. ♗e8+ ♔b7
 12. ♖b5+ ♗:b5+! with draw; also
 premature is 1. ♔a5? ♜b3+!
 2. ♗:b3 ♗a6+ 3. ♔b4 c1 ♗ -+. The
 correct way is to play 1. ♖e1! An
 amazing move which ruins Black's
 plans 1... ♗:e1 2. ♔a5 ♜d3 3. ♗b4!
 (To a square controlled by the
 knight! White would lose by

playing 3. ♖b3? ♜:c3+ 4. ♖:c3 c1♜
 5. c8♘+ ♘b8+ -+) 3... ♜:c3!
 (3... ♘:b4 4. ♘b5#) 4. c8♘+! First it
 is necessary to get rid of the c7-
 pawn. 4... R:c8 5. ♖:c3 ♜:c6! (Now
 5... c1♜ 6. ♖g7+ ♘a8 is met with
 7. ♖b7#) 6. ♖:c6 c1♜ 7. ♖a6+
 (7. ♖b6+? ♘a8 8. ♖a6+ - loss of
 time; 7. ♖:c1? ♘:c1 8. g6 ♘b3+
 9. ♘b4 ♘d4 10. g7 ♘c6+ 11. ♘c4
 ♘e7 12. ♘d3 ♘b6 13. ♘e4 ♘a5
 14. ♘f4 g3! 15. ♘:g3 ♘f5+ =)
 7... ♘b8 8. ♖:d3 ♖:g5+ 9. ♖b5+! +-

A heated and intriguing encounter between the two sides, which are quite generous in spectacularly sacrificing the quartet of their major pieces. Remarkably, both White and Black consecutively refuse to capture the queens; and the play itself ends in advantageous exchange of the strongest pieces – a tool frequently used in over-the-board play. Still, the impression from the good and inventive play in the introductory part (White and Black are worth one another) is somewhat diminished by lack of luster in the finale itself.



Special Prize
 STEFFEN SLUMSTRUP NIELSEN
 Denmark



+ 5+8

In the initial position, where the antagonistic kings are scattered on the opposite corners of the board, Black has far advanced passed pawns which seem poised to ensure his win. However, White aims at the black king; and White's right to make the first move enables him to start a victorious battle.

1. ♘e5+ ♒f6! (1... ♘h7 2. ♘:e4+ f5
 3. ♘:f5#) 2. ♜:f6! (One of the two
 possible captures is a hard-to-see
 trap: 2. ♘:f6+? ♘h7! [2... ♜g7?
 3. ♜d1 e3 4. h6 ♘h7 5. h:g7 e2
 6. ♘e4+ ♘h6 7. ♜h1#] 3. ♘:e4+
 ♘h6 =) 2... ♜a7+ 3. ♜a6+ (3. ♘b1?
 ♘a2+! 4. ♘c2 ♘g8 5. ♘:e4 ♘c4 =)
 3... ♜g7 (3... Kh7 4. ♘e4#) 4. ♜h6+
 (4. ♘:g7+? ♘:g7 -+) 4... ♘h7 At this
 point, when Black seems to triumph,
 an irresistible attack follows: 5. ♜f6!
 with switchback and ambush! Black has two

alternatives:

A) 5... ♖a7+ (5...e3 6. ♖f8+ ♕g8 7.h6 ♜h7 8. ♕:g7 e2 9. ♕e4#)

6. ♜b1 (6. ♖a6+? ♜g8 =) 6...e3+

(6...♜g8 7. ♕d5+ +) 7. ♖g6+ ♖g7

8. ♕:g7+ ♜g8 9. ♕d5# White acts

faster than Black and mates.

B) 5... ♖g1+ 6. ♜a2 ♕g8+ 7. ♖f7+

(7. ♖e6+? ♖g7 -+) 7... ♖g7 8. ♕:g7+

♜h7 9. ♕:e4# with another echoed

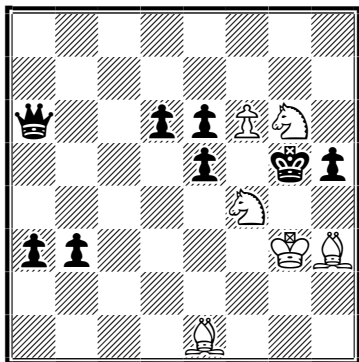
mate.

A large-scale endgame study with dynamic piece play. The pivot of the wide encounter is the key a1-h8 diagonal, on which consecutive play of the white battery (step by step, White exploits the black king's lack of space) is combined with two variants of equal value leading to finales with echoed mates. In this entry, quite attractive is the active participation of actors directly involved in creating the conceptual plot; yet the play is somewhat schematic. As to the straightforward construction, however (technical pawns are often inevitable when implementing such concepts), it is seen as a positive point of the entry, which, by the way, is executed in Bohemian style; it is interesting to compare it with the endgame study of M. Havel, (2nd Prize, Norodni Listy, 1929), which also features battery play and two mates with the participation of three white pieces.

1st Honourable Mention

ALEXEY SOCHNEV

Russian Federation



+

6+8

Since Black has a queen and two passed pawns, his chances seem to be better; however, the company of White's minor pieces proves that the opposite is true.

1.f7 ♖a8 (1...e:f4+ 2. ♕:f4 ♖c8

3. ♕:e6+! ♜f6 4.f8♖+ ♖:f8 5. ♕c3+!

♜e7 6. ♕:f8, +; 1...h4+ 2. ♜h2! e:f4

3. ♕:f4! ♖a8 4. ♕:e6+ ♜f6 5.f8♖+

♖:f8 6. ♕c3+ -+) **2.f8♖ ♖:f8**

(2...h4+ 3. ♜h2! [It would be wrong

to play 3. ♜f2? ♖:f8 4. ♕:f8 b2

5. ♕8:e6+ ♜f6, with draw – it

appears that the e1-h4 diagonal is

closed for the bishop] 3...♖:f8

4. ♕:f8! b2 5. ♕8:e6+! ♜f6 6. ♕:h4+

♜f7 7. ♕f5 a2 8. ♕g6+ ♜g8 9. ♕d5

b1♖ 10. ♕e7+ ♜h8 11. ♕f6#)

3. ♕:f8 e:f4+ 4. ♜h2! (A subtle move

by the king; now Black has nothing

else to do but accept White's

winning arguments. Any other

move by the white king lets victory

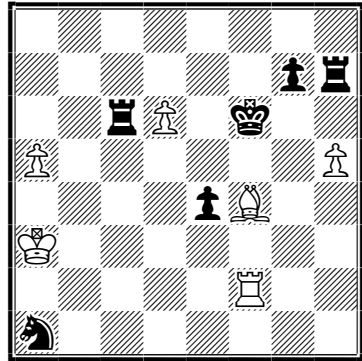
slip away: 4. ♜f2? b2 5. ♕:e6+ ♜g6

6. ♖:f4+ ♜h6! 7. ♙f5 a2 8. ♜e6 b1♙! -+; 4. ♜g2? b2! 5. ♜:e6+ ♜f6 6. ♙c3+ ♜g6 7. ♜:f4+ ♜g5 8. ♜e6+ ♜g6 9. ♙f8+ ♜g5 10. ♙d2+ ♜f6 11. ♙c3+ ♜g5 12. ♜e6+ ♜g6 with equality – now the f1-h3 diagonal is closed for the other bishop; also wrong is 4. ♜f3? b2 5. ♜:e6+ ♜f6 6. ♙c3+ ♜g6 7. ♜:f4+ ♜g5 8. ♜e6+ ♜g6 9. ♙f1?? b1♙ 10. ♙d3+ ♙:d3+ with check -+)

4...b2 (4...e5 5. ♙e6 b2 6. ♙a2 +) **5. ♜:e6+ ♜g6 6. ♜:f4+ ♜g5** (6...♜h6 is no rescue in view of 7. ♙f5! a2 8. ♜e6 b1♙ 9. ♙h4 a1♙ 10. ♙g5#) **7. ♜e6+ ♜g6 8. ♙f8+! ♜g5 9. ♙d2+ ♜f6 10. ♙c3+ ♜g5 11. ♜e6+ ♜g6 12. ♙f1! b1♙ 13. ♙d3+! ♙:d3 14. ♙f4+ ♜f5 15. ♜:d3 +**

A logical endgame study with a foresight effect and a knight fork in the final act. The main idea consists in the king's unexpected trick 5. ♜h2! the sense of which is revealed only 6-8 moves later. The capture of the white motionless knight f4 in the solution is not necessary (♜g3, ♙e1, ♙h3, ♙g7 – ♜g5, ♙a3, b3, d6, f5, h5; 1...f4+ 2. ♜h2!), but the author uses it in view of the additional variant 2...h4+ with another case of foresight displayed by the white king (also with repetition of the high point on the h2-square) and mating attack. If Black displayed more ingenuity in his play and queens were not e: changed in the introductory part, the entry would most likely be placed higher in the award.

2nd Honourable Mention
VLADIMIR SAMILO
Ukraine



= 6+6

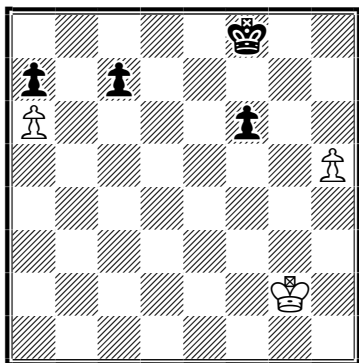
Black's material advantage is compensated for by the presence of far advanced white passers. In this connection, there is no doubt as to White's first move.

1.d7 ♜e7 2. ♙d2 ♙c3+ 3. ♜b2! (3. ♜b4? ♙b3+ 4. ♜c4 ♙d3 5. ♙a2 ♙b3 6.a6 ♙:h5 7.a7 ♙a5+ 8. ♜b4 ♙c6+ -+) **3... ♙d3** (3... ♙b3+ 4. ♜:a1 ♙d3 5.a6 ♙:d2 6. ♙:d2 ♜:d7 7.a7 ♙h8 8. ♙c3 =) **4. ♙:d3 e:d3 5.a6 ♙h8 6.d8♙+! ♜:d8** (6... ♙:d8 7. ♙g5+ ♜e8 8. ♙:d8 d2 9.a7 d1♙ 10.a8♙ =) **7.a7! 7.h6? ♜c8! 8.h:g7 ♙g8 9. ♜:a1 ♙:g7, -+. 7... ♜e7! 8.h6!** (The passer sacrifices itself to make the other one stronger. It would be too early to play 8. ♙b8? d2 9.a8♙ d1♙ 10. ♙d6+!? ♙:d6 11. ♙:h8 ♙f6+! 12. ♜a2 [12. ♜b1 ♙b3 -+] 12... ♙c2 -+) **8...g:h6** (8... ♙c8 9.h7 =) **9. ♙b8 d2 10.a8♙ d1♙ 11. ♙a7+!** (The other check is a losing one:

11. ♖e4+? ♔d8! 12. ♜d6+!? ♕:c7
 13. ♖e5+ ♔d7 14. ♖:h8 h5
 15. ♖g7+ ♕e6 -+) 11... ♖d7
12. ♜d6+! (12. ♖c5+? ♕f7! 13. ♖h5+
 ♕f8(f8) -+) **12... ♕e6!** (12... ♕:d6
 13. ♖d4+ ♕e6 14. ♖g4+ =) **13. ♖e3+**
 ♕:d6 (13... ♕f7! 14. ♖f3+!
 [14. ♖f2+? ♕g8! 15. ♖g3+ ♖g7+ -
 +] 14... ♕g6 15. ♖g2+! [15. ♖g3+?
 ♕h7! 16. ♖d3+ ♕g8 -+] 15... ♕h7
 16. ♖e4+ ♕g8 17. ♖a8+! ♕h7
 18. ♖e4+ with positional draw)
14. ♖d4+! (14. ♖g3+? ♕d5!
 15. ♖f3+ [15. ♖d3+ ♕e6 16. ♖h3+
 ♕e7! -+] 15... ♕e5 16. ♖e3+ ♕f6! -
 +) **14... ♕e6** 15. ♖g4+! (The capture
 of the rook is punishable 15. ♖:h8?
 ♖b5+! 16. ♕:a1 ♖e5+, with
 exchange of queens and defeat)
15... ♕e7 16. ♖g7+ ♕d6 17. ♖d4+!
 with positional draw. (17. ♖:h8?
 ♖b5+! -+)

This endgame study, with its piece play that is by no means apparent, presents a complex of heterogeneous ideas: the Roman sacrifice 6.d8♖, the point 8.h6!, reciprocal refusals to make captures. Quite unexpected is the original ending itself, with the non-obvious sacrifice of the white bishop 12.♜d6+!, which nullifies Black's efforts to win. It is noteworthy that the author tries to extend the intervals between the departures of some pieces from the board, making the actors live, move and choose the right squares leading to the conceptual finale in which Black, in spite of material advantage, has to settle for positional draw.

Special Honourable Mention
 MIKHAIL ZINAR
 Ukraine



= 3+4

The position of the white units is cheerless: Black's extra pawn is a serious argument for winning. And yet, the position is defensible...

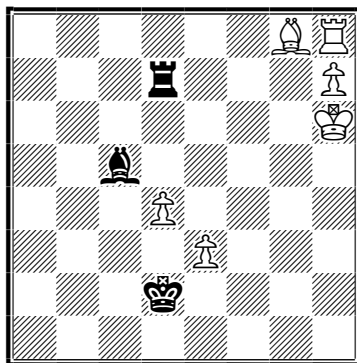
1. ♕f3 White cannot get by with a little help from his king **1... ♕g7**
2. ♕e4!
A) 2...c6! This slow move leaves White with a hard choice. **3. ♕d3!** (Try 3. ♕d4? ♕h6! zz, driving White into reciprocal zugzwang. 4. ♕c5 f5 5. ♕:c6 f4 6. ♕b7 f3 7. ♕:a7 f2 8. ♕b7 f1♖ 9. a7 ♖b5+ 10. ♕c7 ♖a6 11. ♕b8 ♖b6+ 12. ♕a8 ♕g5 13. h6 ♖c7 14. h7 ♖c8#)
3... ♕h6 (3... ♕h7 4. ♕c4 ♕h6 5. ♕d4! zz =) **4. ♕d4! zz** (4. ♕c4? f5! 5. ♕c5 f4 -+ Now Black is in zugzwang and has to play) **4...c5+** (4... ♕:h5 5. ♕c5 f5 6. ♕:c6 =)
5. ♕:c5 f5 **6. ♕d5!** ♕:h5 **7. ♕c6 f4**
8. ♕b7 f3 **9. ♕:a7** and White saves the game.

B) 2... ♖h7! 3. ♔d4! (Bad is 3. ♔d5? ♖h6 zz 4. ♖c6 f5 5. ♗:c7 f4 6. ♖b7 f3 -+) **3... ♖h6 4. ♔d5! zz 4...c5!** (4... ♗:h5 5. ♖c6 f5 6. ♗:c7! =) **5. ♗:c5 f5 6. ♔d5!** and then play along the line of variation A.

A good development of the queen vs. pawn idea from the endgame study by M. Zinar (Georgian Internet Tourney, com., 2011). The highlights of the miniature included in this award include the well-thought-out actions of the white king in the two variants (3. ♔d3! and 3. ♔d4!) and the slow-looking move 6. ♔d5!; they determine the inner life of this endgame study – simple in form but interesting in content. If in the diagram position the white king is shifted to f3 and the white pawn from a6 to a5, this results in an additional choice on the first move (1.a6! ♖g7 2. ♖e4 and then as in the solution; the wrong choice is 1. ♖e4? a6! 2. ♔d5 ♖g7 3. ♖e6 c5! 4. ♔d5 ♖h6 5. ♗:c5 f5 6. ♖b6 f4 -+) with play of the pawn couple on the a-file.

The following endgame studies are awarded commendations ex aequo.

Commendation e. a.
MIKHAIL PASTALAKA
Ukraine



+ BTM 6+3

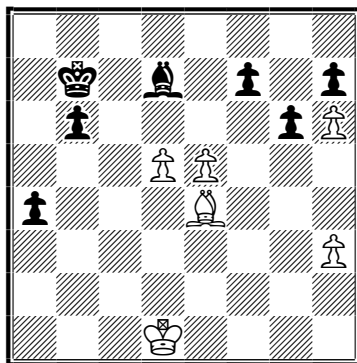
Looking at the initial position, one may think that it will not be particularly hard for White to win; but that impression is deceptive.

1... ♖:d4! (1... ♖f8+ 2. ♖g6(h5) ♖g7 3. ♖e6 ♖:h8 4. ♖:d7 ♗:e3 5. d5 ♖d4 6. ♖c6(c6) +-) **2. ♖e6!** (2. ♖d5? ♖h4+ 3. ♖g5 ♖h2 4. e4 ♖d4=; 2. ♖f7? ♖d6+ 3. ♖h5 ♖:e3 =; 2. e:d4? ♖:d4 =) **2... ♗:e3** (2... ♖d6 3. ♖g5! ♖:e3+ 4. ♖f5 ♖d4 5. ♖f8! ♖c3 6. ♖f6 ♖d8 7. ♖g8 ♖:f6 8. ♗:f6 ♖d6+ 9. ♖g5 +-) **3. ♖a8! ♖h4+ 4. ♖g6 ♖d4** Black's primary task is clear: to hold the white passer. **5. ♖a3+** (5. ♖a4? ♖h2 =) **5... ♖e4 6. ♖f5+!** (Victory slips away after 6. ♖a4? ♖h2 7. ♖g4 ♗e3 8. ♖:d4 ♖:h7 =) **6... ♔d5 7. ♖a5+ ♗c4!** (7... ♔d6 is no rescue in view of 8. ♖a4 ♔d5 9. ♖g4 ♖:g4+ 10. ♖h5 ♖g1 11. ♖:d4+! +-) **8. ♖a4+ ♗c3 9. ♖h3! ♔d3** (9... ♖:h3 10. ♖a3+ +-) **10. ♖g4! ♖:g4+ (10... ♖h2**

~

11. ♖:d4+! ♔:d4 12. ♕h5 +-)
 11. ♔h5 ♖g1 12. ♖:d4+! ♔:d4
 13. h8♖+ +-

Commendation e.a.
 ILHAM ALIEV
 Azerbaijan



+

6+7

A restrained-looking but, on balance, appealing endgame study in which the white duo (♖+♕), by maneuvering skillfully, helps preserve and advance his h7-pawn to the promotion square. Very attractive are the two consecutive sacrifices of the bishop 9. ♕h3! and 10. ♕g4! Black's first move, which is a pawn capture, however, does not make the preamble and the endgame study as a whole look any better. The final part of the play is reminiscent of the ending of the endgame study by M. Banaszek (Tidskrift for Schack, Prize, 1994).

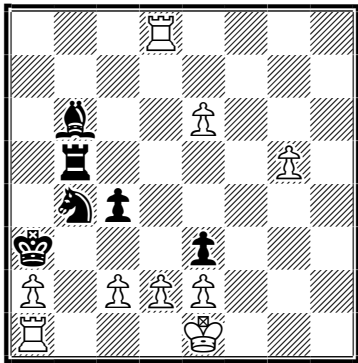
The initial position is nice-looking; how about the play?!

1.e6! f:e6 (1...f5 2.e:d7 ♔c7 3.♕c2 a3 4.♔c1 b5 5.h4 +-) **2.♕:g6!** (2.d:e6+? ♔c7 3.e:d7 ♔:d7 4.♕:g6 ♔e7 5.♕:h7 ♔f7 =; 2.d6+? ♔c8 3.♕:g6 a3 4.♔c1 e5 5.♕:h7 ♕e6 6.♕e4 ♕g8 7.♕f5+ ♔d8 8.h4 e4 9.h7 ♕:h7 10.♕:h7 ♔d7 11.h5 ♔:d6 =) **2...a3 3.♔c1!** (White has to choose squares for his king cautiously. Try 3.♔c2? e:d5 4.♕:h7 ♕e6 5.♕e4 ♕g8 6.♕:d5+?! ♕:d5 7.h7 ♕e4+, with loss of pawn and defeat.) **3...e:d5 4.♕:h7 ♕e6 5.♕e4! a2** (5...d:e4 6.h7 +-) **6.♔b2 ♕g8 7.♕:d5+!** (7.h7? ♕:h7 8.♕:h7 ♔c7 =) **7...♕:d5 8.h7 +-**

This bishop ending seems to have been taken from an OTB game; in it, there is no limit to the white bishop's sacrifice for the sake of creating a passed pawn on the

kingside. The motifs are similar to those in the endgame study by E. Onate (H. Lommer JT, 1 h.m., 1970), but the logical choice 3.Kc1! in this entry adds freshness to it.

Commendation e.a.
 LUIS GONZÁLEZ
Spain



+ 9+6

White has no time to waste; so his plan is clear: to advance the e6-pawn immediately...

1.e7 ♖:g5! (1... ♗:c2+ 2. ♖d1(or ♖f1) ♗:a1 3. ♖a8+ ♖b2 4.e8♞ ♖:g5 5. ♖h8+! +.) **2.0-0-0!** (The number of endgame studies with a castling increases year by year. Wring is 2. ♖f1? e:d2! [but not 2... ♖e5? 3.e8♞ ♖:e8 4. ♖:e8 e:d2 5.e4! ♖b2 6. ♖e2! c3 7. ♖b8! ♖:a1 8. ♖d1 ♗c5 9. ♖c8 ♗e7 10. ♖:c3 ♖b2 11. ♖b3+ ♖:a2 12. ♖:d2 +] 3.e4 ♖b2! 4. ♖d1 ♖e5 5.e8♞ ♖:e8 6. ♖:e8 c3! 7. ♖e2 ♗:a2 8. ♖:d2 c:d2 9. ♖:d2 ♗a5+! =; 2.e8♞? ♖g1#) **2... ♖b5!** **3. ♖a8+** (3. ♖b1? ♗c6+ 4. ♖a1 ♗:e7 =; 3.e8♞? ♗:a2#)

3... ♗a5 **4. ♖:a5+!** ♖:a5 **5.e8♞!** (The self-suggestive 5.e8♞? leads to Black's stalemate rescue: 5... ♗:a2+ 6. ♖b1 ♗c3+! 7.d:c3 ♖b5+ 8. ♖a1 [8. ♞:b5? – stalemate] 8... ♖b1+! 9. ♖:b1 – stalemate) **5... ♗:a2+** (White also wins after 5...e:d2+ 6. ♖:d2! ♗:a2+ 7. ♖d1 +) **6. ♖b1 e:d2** (6... ♗c3+ 7.d:c3 ♖b5+ 8. ♖a1 ♖b1+ 9. ♖:b1 ♖a4 – and there is no stalemate) **7. ♖:d2!** (7. ♖e3+? ♖b4! [7...c3? 8. ♖:d2! +] 8. ♖:d2 ♗c3+ 9. ♖:c3 ♖:c3 =) **7... ♖b5+** **8. ♖a1 ♗c3** **9. ♖a8+** +

An endgame study that is useful for OTB players on account of the initial position and the spirit of the struggle, which is close to what is observed in an OTB game; it is decorated with castling, an underpromotion to rook (phoenix), and sacrifices of pieces. However, this endgame study is lacking in a real high point; and the concluding moves do not look impressive against the background of previous play. A different interpretation of the finale is also possible: 7... ♗c3+ 8. ♖c1! 8. ♖a1? ♖b4+ 9. ♖b2 ♖a2+ 10. ♖c1 ♖a1+ 11. ♖b2 ♖b1#; 8... ♗a2+ 9. ♖d1 ♗c3+ 10. ♖e1 with return of the king to his initial square and win.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all the participants in the tournament and congratulate the laureates, as well as to wish all of you, your families and friends good health – and necessarily new creative discoveries and sporting successes!