



The 8<sup>th</sup> FIDE World Cup in Composing

# Section D – Endgame Studies

Final award by

**Yohanan Afek**

MMXX

## Participants

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D01	V. Kuzmichev (RUS)	D29	Y. Bazlov (RUS)
D02	P. Rewitz (DNK)	D30	P. Arestov (RUS)
D03	I. Aliev (AZE)	D31	D. Gatti (ITA)
D04	V. Samilo (UKR)	D32	B. Djurašević (SRB)
D05	P. Muljadi (USA)	D33	M. Formela (POL)
D06	M. Halski (POL)	D34	O. Dimitrov (BGR)
D07	R. Staudte (DEU)	D35	O. Pervakov (RUS)
D08	P. Kiryakov (RUS)	D36	V. Vlasenko (UKR)
D09	G. Østmoe (NOR)	D37	J. Sprenger (DEU)
D10	I. Bondar (BLR)	D38	L. Katsnelson (RUS)
D11	M. Hlinka (SVK)	D39	D. Gurgenedze (GEO)
D12	S. Nielsen (DNK)	D40	L. Topko (UKR)
D13	J. Aagaard (GBR)	D41	M. Minski (DEU)
D14	G. Costeff (USA)	D42	J. Timman (NLD)
D15	A. Avni (ISR)	D43	M. Pastalaka (UKR)
D16	A. Pallier (FRA)	D44	L. González (ESP)
D17	I. Yarmonov (UKR)	D45	D. Hlebec (SRB)
D18	V. Tarasiuk (UKR)	D46	A. Sergiienko (UKR)
D19	A. Kostyukov (RUS)	D47	A. Shpakovsky (RUS)
D20	M. Campioli (ITA)	D48	E. Kopylov (RUS)
D21	V. Neistadt (RUS)	D49	E. Wyckoff (USA)
D22	A. Antipov (RUS)	D50	A. Sochnev (RUS)
D23	S. Abramenko (RUS)	D51	M. Pasma (ISR)
D24	V. Suchkov (RUS)	D52	A. Gasparyan (ARM)
D25	C. Yoo (USA)	D53	A. Stavrietskiy (RUS)
D26	D.-C. Gurgui (ROU)	D54	M. Zinar (UKR)
D27	S. Osintsev (RUS)	D55	K. Barikbin (IRN)
D28	J. Mikitovics (HUN)	D56	S. Didukh (UKR)

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# I ntroduction

I would like to open with a short personal statement. In a judging “career” of some four decades I have always tried my best to produce decent and unbiased awards, consulting experts regarding the soundness and originality of the candidate entries for the provisional award. This major event is no exception. The present task however has been by far the most demanding and painful one with both provisional and final awards being the fruit of quite a few sleepless nights.

While most criticism on the award was honest and respectful, a couple of participants chose to express their opinion publicly in rather improper language and defaming words against the gold medal study and myself. It is not for me to judge their motives, just wonder whether other official competitive disciplines would tolerate such approach.

## Appeals

I have received from the tournament director appeals from 2 participants against 4 awarded studies. I use this opportunity to thank Gady Costeff for his invaluable assistance in checking all 20 candidate entries for the preliminary award for soundness and originality. At the moment of writing these lines the number of cooked studies in the preliminary award is: zero!

1) A cook in the first prize-winner was claimed as follows: After

1...f1=♖+ 2. ♖h:f1 ♗:f1+ 3. ♗e2 ♖a:d5 4. ♗e5 ♗g3+ 5. ♗f3 ♗f6 6. ♗b4+ ♖7d6 7. ♗b7+ ♗e6 8. ♗c4!

**Cook?** According to the claim after this move Black loses the pawn f5 and White achieves the database win on material ♗+♗ — ♖+♗+♗ (or ♗+♗ — 2♖+pawn). The main line given to support the claim was: 8... ♖d3+ 9. ♗g2 ♖d8! 10. ♖f3! ♖:f3 11. ♗c6+! ♗e7! 12. ♗:f3 13. ♗b7+ ♗e6 14. ♗c6+ ♗e7 15. ♗d6+ ♗f7 16. ♗d5+ ♗f8 17. ♗f3! ♗e4 18. ♗:f5+-. However, this line, just like all other extensive (not to say obsessive) efforts to cook the winner, seems to be refuted by: **9... ♗e4!** and no win is indicated by the machine. For example: 10. ♗c8+ ♖d7 11. ♖f3 ♖3d4 (Costeff). GM Alon Greenfeld, who kindly agreed to check the solution thoroughly, confirmed this conclusion, adding the following instructive line: 9... ♗e4! 10. ♗:d6 ♖d2+ 11. ♗f3 ♖d3+ 12. ♗e2 ♖d2+! 13. ♗e1 ♖:d6 after which 14. ♗c8+ ♗e7! Capturing the pawn is met by 15... ♗c3+ followed by a fork, while after 14. ♗b3+ ♗e5! 15. ♗f3(♗e3) ♗e6! there is no way for White to improve his position. After 13... ♖:d6 the white rook remains out of play and an attempt to bring it to play would lead to rook exchanges and consequently to a tablebase draw: 14. ♖f3 ♗h4+ 15. ♗e2 ♖d2+ 16. ♗f1 ♖f2+=.

The study is therefore assumed correct.

The burden of proving incorrectness rests squarely on those who claim a study is cooked. In this

case the judge has reviewed several claims, not one claim survived.

The statement "Where are the guarantees that White can't be able to capture pawn f5?" tries to shift the burden to the composer. This is not acceptable - it is the claimants' responsibility to cook the study with moves, not prose.

## Originality

2) Originality, like any other factor, is not algebra. The judge has to weigh in depth what it even means.

The winning study was claimed to be anticipated by A. Kofman, 2nd Pr. Shakhist 1937. Consider the Kofman study:

1. Kofman has two active selfblocks, Hlebec four.

2. Kofman has three non-participating pawns in the final position, Hlebec has none.

3. Kofman has three pawn blockers, easier to arrange, compared with 4 pieces for Hlebec.

The writer's threshold of similarity is so low that if applied in general, almost all studies concluding with mate with selfblocks, including numerous masterpieces by the great Bazlov, would be "anticipated". The writer has the right to use this approach when he judges, but those who feel differently have equal right to use their own approach.

In summary, the claim does not live up to his burden of proof.

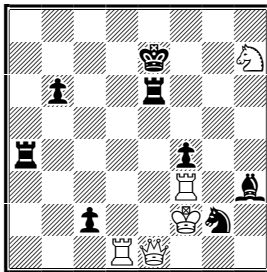
Having failed to provide proof, he gives his personal opinions, but

states them as if they are fact, or "truth", or a law of nature. They are none of those things, they are just an opinion. Everyone has their own opinion, that is the beauty of art, but it was the judge who was selected and chosen to provide his own opinion, and that is the opinion that matters for the award.

## A Late Version

Both the judge and the composer of the winning study did not ignore the criticism regarding the early moves of the solution as well as its tablebase depending validity. The composer came up with the following fresh post-competition version which I could not consider for this tourney as it arrived after the closing date, however it still seems to deserve attention and may be used in future publications.

Darko Hlebec (version)



+

1. ♖d7+! ♙:d7 2. ♚d2+ ♜d6  
 3. ♜f6+! (3. ♚:c2? ♜ad4 4. ♜f6+  
 ♙d8! =>) 3... ♙e6 4. ♚:c2 ♜ad4  
 5. ♜e4 ♜f5 6. ♚b3+ ♜dd5 7. ♚:b6+



## Final Award

I would like to thank Andrei Selivanov for inviting me, for the second time, to act as the judge of this major tourney, to tourney director Aleksandr Bulavka for skilfully and patiently coordinating the entire event and to my old friend Gady Costeff on checking the candidate studies for soundness and originality. Last but not least to be thanked are all participants for their creative efforts.

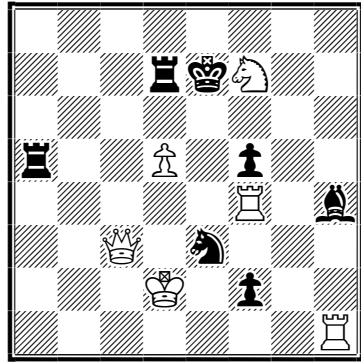
The general standard of the field was not as high as expected from such a major event and no obvious winner was at sight. Nevertheless, the eventual award displays a fine selection that would hopefully appeal to the general chess community.

I received 56 entries on anonymous diagrams. I had to exclude one of the final 20 candidates **D12** (♔h1/♕a6) due to a cook: 3. ♖:e4 ♜:c6 (3...b2 4. ♜d5 b1=♚ 5. ♖:e2 ♔b6 6. ♖e8) 4. ♜d5 ♜:d5 5.c:d5 b2 6. ♖:e2 b1=♚ 7. ♖e6+ = Tablebase.

The following candidates had significant anticipations: **D9**(♔b4/♔h5), **D22**(♔h1/♔b5), **D27** (♔c1/♔g3), **D46** (♔h1/♔g4), **D54** (♔d1/♔c6). Their composers were notified.

The remaining 14 candidates I have finally ranked as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> Prize – Gold medal  
DARKO HLEBEC  
*Serbia*

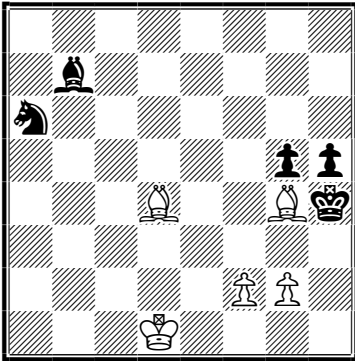


+ BTM 6+7

- 1...♔f1=♔+! 2. ♖h:f1!  
[2. ♖f:f1? ♔:f1+=]
- 2...♔:f1+ 3. ♔e2!  
[3. ♖:f1? ♖a:d5+= or 3. ♖d:d5=]
- 3... ♖a:d5 4. ♔e5!  
[4. ♖:h4? ♔g3+ 5. ♚:g3 ♖d2+=]
- 4... ♔g3+ 5. ♔f3 ♜f6 6. ♚b4+!  
[6. ♚a3+? ♖7d6 7. ♚a7+ ♔e6=]
- 6... ♖7d6 7. ♚b7+  
[7. ♔c4? ♜c3 8. ♚a3 ♖d3+ 9. ♔g2 ♜e5! =]
- 7... ♔e6 8. ♚c8+ ♔:e5  
[8... ♔e7 9. ♔c6+ +]
9. ♚:f5+! ♔:f5 10. ♖e4#

The most daring entry in the field. A single Rook mating in midboard following 4 active self-blocks! The fluent and natural introductory play with all units active is highlighted by a queen sacrifice. The first 3 moves with Black to play and piece exchanges should better be improved.

2<sup>nd</sup> Prize – Silver medal  
OLEG PERVAKOV  
*Russian Federation*



+ 5+5

1. ♖h3!

[1. ♖e2? ♖b4! 2.g3+ ♜h3 3. ♖:h5 ♜g2=; 1. ♖f5? ♖:g2=]

1... ♖f3+! - Black king in trouble

[1... ♖b4 2. ♜d2!+-; 1...g4?  
2. ♖f6#]

2. ♜e1!

[Try 2. ♜d2? ♖g4! 3.f3 ♜g3  
4. ♖e5+ ♜h4! 5. ♜e3 ♖b4! 6. ♖d6 ♖d5+ 7. ♜f2 ♖f4 8. ♖:g4 h:g4  
9.g3+ ♜h3 10.g:f4 g:f4=]

2... ♖b4!

[2... ♖g4 3.f3 ♜g3 4. ♖e5+ ♜h4  
5. ♜f2+-]

3. ♜f1! ♖g4!

[3... ♖c6 4. ♖c3! ♖g4 5. ♖e1+-;  
3... ♖d5 4. ♖f5+-; 3... ♖d3  
4. ♖f5+-; 3... ♖c2 4. ♖e5+-]

4.f3 ♖d3

[4... ♖:f3 5. ♖f2#; 4... ♜g3 5. ♖e5+ ♜h4 6. ♜g1+-]

5. ♖f2+! ♖:f2 6. ♜:f2 zz - Original mutual zugzwang, domination

6... ♖:f3 [Main A]

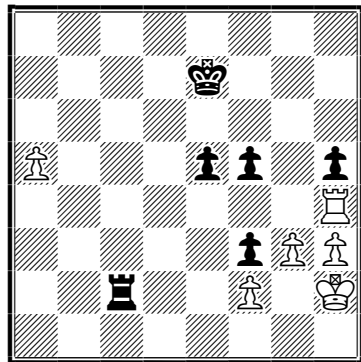
[Main B: 6... ♖:h3 7.g3#! Ideal pawn mate №1; 6... ♖c8 7. ♖:c8+-]

7. ♜:f3 g4+ 8. ♜f4 g:h3 9.g3#! - Ideal pawn mate №2

A subtle eye-catching struggle of minor pieces to trap the Black monarch leads to a surprising mutual Zugzwang followed by a pair of ideal mates. The quiet and precise support of the white King all the way through is impressive. An original piece of fine art!

3<sup>rd</sup> Prize – Bronze medal

JACOB AAGAARD  
*Great Britain*



= 6+6

1.g4!

[1. ♖:h5? ♖:f2+ 2. ♜g1 ♖g2+  
3. ♜f1 ♜e6 +-; 1. ♜g1? ♖c1+  
2. ♜h2 e4 3. ♖:h5 e3 +-]

1...h:g4

[1... ♖:f2+ 2. ♜g3 ♖f1 3.g:f5! ♜f6  
4. ♖a4=; 1...f4 2.g:h5 ♖:f2+  
3. ♜g1 ♖g2+ 4. ♜f1 e4 (4... ♜f7?  
5.h6 ♜g8 6. ♖g4+-) 5. ♖:f4

♖a2=; 1...e4 2.♗g3=]

**2.♗g3!** The king has to come  
[2.h:g4 f4+; 2.♖h7+? ♗e6 3.♗g3  
f4+ 4.♗:g4 ♖:f2 transposing to  
4.♖h7+?]

**2...f4+ 3.♗:g4 ♖:f2 4.a6!**

[4.♖h5? ♗e6 5.a6 ♗d5 6.a7 ♖a2  
7.♗:f3 ♖a3+ 8.♗g4 ♖:a7+]

[4.♖h7+? ♗e6! (4...♗f6 5.♖h6+  
♗e7 6.a6) 5.a6 e4 6.♗:f4 ♖g2!

(6...♖a2 7.♖b7) 7.♗:e4 (7.♖b7  
f2 8.♖b1 ♖g1) 7...f2 8.♖h6+

(8.a7 f1=♗ 9.a8=♗ ♖e2+ -+)

8...♗f7 9.♖h7+ ♗g6 10.a7 f1=♗

11.a8=♗ ♖e2+ -+]

**4...♗e6 5.♖h8**

[5.♖h6+? ♗d5 6.♖b6 ♖g2+

7.♗:f3 ♖g3+ 8.♗f2 ♖a3!-+

(8...♖:h3? 9.♖b5+ ♗e4 10.♖a5=)]

**5...♖a2 6.♗:f3 ♖a3+ 7.♗g2!** A  
natural move, as king belongs to  
g1 or h1 and never e1 and f1, when  
the king comes to e3/f3 threatening  
mate with tempo, winning.

[7.♗g4? ♖g3+ 8.♗h4 ♖g7!

(8...♖a3? 9.♖h7! e4 10.♗g4 f3

11.♗g3 ♖a2 12.a7 ♖g2+ 13.♗h4

♖g8 14.♖g7! ♖f8 15.♗g3 f2

16.a8=♗ f1=♗+ 17.♗g2 ♗e3+

18.♗g3 ♖:a8 19.♗f4=) 9.♖f8!

♗d5 10.♗h5 ♗e4! 11.h4 f3

12.♗h6

A) 12...♖c7!? 13.h5 ♗e3

(13...♖c6+? 14.♗g5 ♖:a6 15.♗g4

♖a3 16.h6=) 14.♖f6 f2 15.♗g6

♖c6 16.♖:c6 f1=♗

17.♖f6 ♗d3+! 18.♗g7 ♗d7+

19.♗g6 ♗e8+ 20.♖f7 e4+;

B) 12...♖a7! 13.♖f6 ♗e3 14.h5

f2! (14...e4?! also wins and is

fascinating, but not relevant)

15.♗g6 ♖:a6 16.♖:a6

f1=♗ This is surprisingly very  
far from a fortress. You would  
believe that White has drawing  
chances, with the idea of giving  
up the rook for the pawn and  
draw with the hpawn, but this is  
never possible.

17.♖f6 ♗g2+ 18.♗f7 ♗e4

19.♗e6 ♗d4 20.♖g6 ♗d5+

21.♗f6 e4 22.h6 e3 23.♖g4+

♗d3 24.h7 ♗d6+ 25.♗g5 ♗e5+

26.♗g6 e2+]

[7.♗f2? ♗f5 8.♖a8 ♗e4 9.a7

♖a2+ 10.♗g1 f3+ transposing to  
move 10]

**7...♗f5**

[7...♖a2+ 8.♗f3; 7...♖g3+ 8.♗f2

♖g7 9.♖a8 ♗f5 10.h4 ♗e4 11.h5

f3 12.h6 ♖h7 (12...♖g2+? 13.♗f1

♖h2 14.a7 ♗e3 15.♖g8+)

13.a7=; 7...♖:a6?? 8.♖h6+ +- ]

**8.♖a8 ♗e4 9.a7 ♖a2+**

[9...♖g3+ 10.♗f2 ♖g7 11.h4 f3

12.♖f8=]

**10.♗h1!**

[10.♗f1 ♗f3+; 10.♗g1? f3

A) 11.♗h1 ♗e3 12.♖e8 ♖:a7

13.♖:e5+ ♗f4 14.♖e8 (14.♖e1

♗g3 15.♖b1 ♗:h3+ ) 14...♖a1+

15.♗h2 f2 16.♖f8+ ♗e3 17.♗g2

♖g1+ -+;

B) 11.♗f1 ♗e3+;

C) 11.h4 This is point. When

forced to advance the pawn,

White is lost. 11...♗e3 12.♖e8

♖a1+ 13.♗h2 f2 14.♖:e5+ ♗f4

15.♖e7 ♖h1+ 16.♗:h1 f1=♗+

17.♗h2 ♗f2+ 18.♗h1 ♗g3!

(18...♗:h4+ 19.♗g1=) 19.♖g7+

♗h3! -+ The king is safe from



checks]  
**10...f3** Mutual zugzwang  
 [10... ♖e3 11. ♜e8=]

**11. ♜g1! ♖e3 12. ♜e8 ♜a1+**  
**13. ♜h2 f2 14. ♜:e5+ ♜f4 15. ♜e7!**  
 [15. ♜e8? ♜h1+ 16. ♜:h1 f1=♚+  
 17. ♜h2 ♚f2+ 18. ♜h1 looks  
 similar, but loses to 18... ♚f3+!  
 19. ♜h2 ♚g3+ -+ It is important  
 to notice that it would be a  
 fortress if the white rook was on  
 g4 and pawn on h3.]

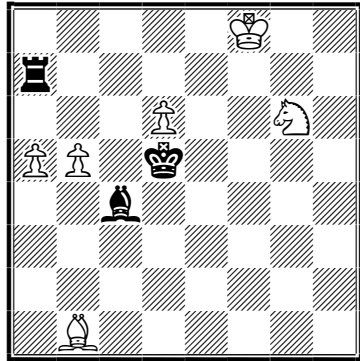
**15... ♜h1+! 16. ♜:h1 f1=♚+ 17. ♜h2**  
**♚f2+ 18. ♜h1 ♜g3 19. ♜g7+!** Now  
 this is a draw, because the black  
 king cannot hide.

**19... ♜:h3 20. ♜h7+!=**

An inventive tactical Rook ending likely to be appreciated as a practical challenge. In a seemingly desperate position White actively exploits his only counter chances to be eventually saved by a positional draw following reciprocal Zugzwang. The choice between the tempting 15. ♜e8? and the surprising 15. ♜e7! is instructive.



4<sup>th</sup> Prize  
 BRANISLAV DJURAŠEVIĆ  
 Serbia



+ 6+3

**1.b6 ♜b7!**

[1... ♜d7 2. ♜f5! ♜:d6 3. ♜e7+!  
 ♜a6 (3... ♜c6 4. ♜e8!+-) 4. ♜f4+  
 ♜e5 (4... ♜c6 5. ♜e4+ ♜c5  
 6. ♜e6+! +-) 5. ♜d3+! ♜:d3 6.b7!  
 +-]

**2. ♜a2! ♜:a2 3.a6 ♜f7+!**

[3... ♜b8+ (3... ♜:b6 4.a7! ♜a6  
 5.d7+-) 4. ♜e7 ♜c4 5.a7 ♜a8  
 6. ♜e5! +-]

**4. ♜:f7 ♜:d6+ 5. ♜f8!**

[5. ♜e8? ♜c6! 6.b7 ♜c7 7. ♜e7  
 ♜e6! 8. ♜c6 ♜d7+! =; 5. ♜f6?  
 ♜c4! 6.a7 ♜d5 7. ♜e5 ♜c5!  
 8. ♜d7+ ♜d6! =]

**5... ♜c4!**

[5... ♜c6 6.b7! (6.a7? ♜b7=),  
 6... ♜c7 7. ♜e7! (7. ♜e5? ♜d5! =)  
 ♜e6 8. ♜c6! +-, no check on d7]

**6.a7 ♜d5 7. ♜e5!**

[Thematic try: 7. ♜e7? ♜b7  
 8. ♜e8 ♜c5 9. ♜c8 ♜c6 10. ♜d8  
 ♜a8! = white king could not pass  
 over c8 because it is occupied by



♖e8 13.c:d6 ♗:d6 14.♗b4 h3  
 15.♗c5 ♖e4+! (15... ♗e8? 16.d6  
 ♗:d6 17.♗:d6 e1=♚ 18.♗:e1 h2  
 19.e8=♚ h1=♚ 20.♚a4+ ♗b2  
 21.♚c2+ ♗a3 22.♗d3 ♚a1  
 23.♚c4 ♚b1 24.♗c7! zz etc. as in  
 the main solution) 16.♗b4 ♗d6!  
 17.♗c5 ♖e4+ 18.♗d4 ♗d6  
 positional draw]  
 [6.♗b4? a1=♚ 7.♗d3+ ♗b1  
 8.♚:a1+ ♗:a1 9.f6 e:f6 10.e7 ♗c7  
 11.c5 ♗d5+=!]

### 6...h4

[6... ♗c7 7.f6 e:f6 8.e7 h4 etc. as  
in the main solution]

### 7.f6! e:f6 8.e7 ♗c7 9.♗b6

[Thematic try 3: 9.c5? d:c5 10.d5  
♗e8 11.♗b5 h3 12.♗d3+ ♗b1!  
13.♚:a2 ♗:a2 14.♗c1+ ♗a3!  
15.♗:e2 c4! (15... ♗d6+?  
16.♗c6!+→) 16.♗:c4 ♗d6+  
17.♗c5 ♖e4+! 18.♗d4 ♗d6  
19.♗c5 ♖e4+=]

### 9... ♗e8 10.c5 d:c5 11.♗:c5!

[Logical try: 11.d:c5? a1=♚  
12.♗d3+ ♗b1 13.♚:a1+ ♗:a1  
14.c6 h3 15.c7 ♗:c7 16.♗:c7  
e1=♚ 17.♗:e1 h2 18.e8=♚ h1=♚  
19.♚a4+ ♗b2 20.♚c2+ ♗a3  
21.♗d3 ♚a1 22.♚c4 ♚b1! zz  
23.♗c1 ♗b2! (23... ♚h7+?  
24.♗b6 ♚b1+ 25.♗c6 ♗b2  
26.♗d3+ ♗a3 27.♚c3+ →)  
24.♗d3+ ♗a3 25.♗c5 (25.♚c3+  
♚b3 26.♚a5+ ♚a4 27.♚c3+  
♚b3=) 25... ♚h7+! (25... ♗b2?  
26.♚b3+! ♗a1 27.♚a3+ ♚a2  
28.♗b3+ ♗b1 29.♚c1#) 26.♗b6  
♚b1+! 27.♗c7 ♚h7+= positional  
draw]

### 11...a1=♚

[11...h3 12.♗d3+ ♗c2 13.♚:a2+

♗:d3 14.♚a1 ♗d2 15.d5 e1=♚  
 16.♚:e1 ♗:e1 17.d6 h2 18.d7  
 h1=♚ 19.d:e8=♚ ♚g1+ 20.♗b5!  
 ♚f1+ 21.♗a5! ♚d3 22.♚d8!+→  
 and white wins easily]  
 [11... ♗b3 12.♚b4+! ♗c3  
 13.♚c4+ ♗d2 14.♚c2+ ♗:e1  
 15.♚:a2 ♗f1 16.♚a1+ e1=♚  
 17.♚:e1+ ♗:e1 18.d5 h3 19.d6+→  
 etc.]

### 12.♗d3+ ♗b1 13.♚:a1+ ♗:a1 14.d5 h3 15.d6 ♗:d6 16.♗:d6 e1=♚!

[16...h2 17.e8=♚ h1=♚  
18.♚a4+→]

### 17.♗:e1 h2 18.e8=♚ h1=♚

### 19.♚a4+ ♗b2 20.♚c2+ ♗a3

### 21.♗d3! ♚a1

[21... ♚b7 22.♚c1+ ♗a2 23.♚d2+  
♗b1 24.♚e1+ ♗c2 25.♗b4+  
♗b3 26.♚d1+ ♗a3 27.♚a1+  
♗b3 28.♚a2+ ♗c3 29.♚c2+  
♗:b4 30.♚b2+→]

### 22.♚c4! ♚b1 23.♗c7! zz 23... ♚b3

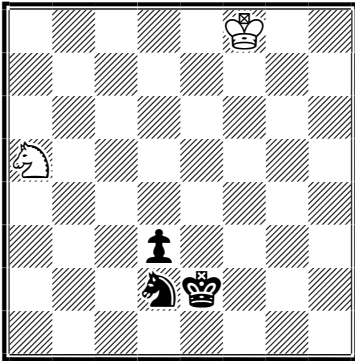
### 24.♚a6+ ♚a4 25.♚d6+ ♗a2

### 26.♚h2+ ♗a3 27.♚b2#

A two phase study starting with  
an eventful epic introduction  
leading to a O+ Kt vs. Q+P new  
ending highlighted by a familiar  
Mutual Zugzwang.



1<sup>st</sup> Special Prize  
VLADIMIR KUZMICHEV  
*Russian Federation*



=

2+3

**1. ♖e7!**

[1. ♜f7? ♜f3! (1... ♜e4? 2. ♜c4! ♜d6+ 3. ♜:d6 d2 4. ♜e4! d1=♚ 5. ♜c3+!)= 2. ♜b3 ♜e3! (2. ♜c4 ♜e5+! 3. ♜:e5 d2!) 3. ♜f6 ♜d2! (3... ♜d4? 4. ♜a5! ♜d2 5. ♜c4+! ♜c3 6. ♜a3! ♜b3 7. ♜b1! ♜f3 8. ♜f5! ♜b2 9. ♜e4! ♜e5 10. ♜d2! ♜c2 11. ♜f1!)= 4. ♜c1 ♜e4+! 5. ♜e5 d2! – black wins]

**1... ♜d1 2. ♜e6!**

[2. ♜d7? ♜c1! 3. ♜c6 ♜b2! 4. ♜b5 ♜a3! (4... ♜c3? 5. ♜a4! ♜c4 6. ♜b3! ♜b6+ 7. ♜a3! ♜c4+ 8. ♜a4! ♜b2 9. ♜b4! ♜b6 10. ♜d2! =) 5. ♜c5 ♜b3+! 6. ♜c4 d2! 7. ♜c3 d1=♚! 8. ♜c4+ ♜a2!–+]

**2... ♜c1**

[2... ♜c2 3. ♜c6! ~ (3... ♜c3 ♜e5! =) 4. ♜b4+ =]

**3. ♜d7!**

[3. ♜e5? ♜c2! 4. ♜e4 ♜f3+!; 3. ♜d5? ♜b1! 4. ♜e6 ♜b2! 5. ♜d5

♜c3! 6. ♜b7 ♜e4! 7. ♜:e4 d2! – black wins]

**3... ♜b1**

[3... ♜b2 4. ♜e6! ♜c3 5. ♜d5! =]

**4. ♜e7! ♜a1**

[4... ♜a2 ♜c6! ~ 5. ♜b4/♜e5 =]

**5. ♜d7!**

[5. ♜d6? ♜a2! 6. ♜d5 ♜b1! 7. ♜d4 ♜c2! 7. ♜e6 ♜b2! 8. ♜d5 ♜c3! 9. ♜b7 ♜e4! 10. ♜:e4 d2!]

**5... ♜b1**

[5... ♜a2 6. ♜c6! ~ 7. ♜b4/♜e5 =]

**6. ♜e7! ♜c1 7. ♜d7! ♜b2 8. ♜e6!**

**♜c3 9. ♜d5! ♜b2 10. ♜e6! ♜c1**

**11. ♜d7! ♜b1 12. ♜e7! =** The

original eternal maneuver!

**1... ♜f3 2. ♜b3! ♜e3 3. ♜d6! ♜d2**

[3... ♜d4 4. ♜a5! ♜e4 5. ♜c4! ♜b3 6. ♜e6! ♜d4 7. ♜e5! ♜c5+ 8. ♜f5! d2 9. ♜f3+! =]

**4. ♜a5! ♜d4 5. ♜c6! ♜e4**

[5... ♜c4 6. ♜b3! ♜c3 7. ♜c5! d2 8. ♜e4+! =]

**6. ♜b5! ♜c3 7. ♜c4! ♜b3 8. ♜a5+!**

**♜b2 9. ♜b4! ♜d2**

[9. ♜a4? ♜c3+! 10. ♜b4 ♜d5+!

11. ♜a4 ♜b6+! 12. ♜b4 d2! – black wins]

**10. ♜a4! ♜c3 11. ♜b5! ♜e4**

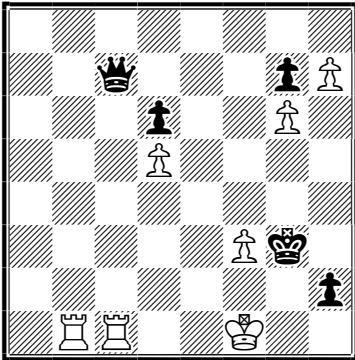
**12. ♜c4! =** The original eternal

maneuver!

Royal corresponding squares in a knight ending with just 5 pieces! All squares around the white king are empty and still after each and every black move just one of them is available to hold on. A remarkable positional draw! the study is partly anticipated by a malyutka with a similar setting by

V. Tarasiuk, Comm. ChessStar,2016. Nevertheless, it still displays in its main lines original contents that considerably enrich the corresponding squares theme and justify keeping it in the prize-winning category.

2<sup>nd</sup> Special Prize  
 LUIS MIGUEL GONZÁLEZ  
 Spain



+ 7+5

**1.h8=♖!**

[1.h8=♖? h1=♖+! 2.♖:h1 ♖c4+ 3.♔e1 (3.♖:c4 stalemate) 3...♗b4+! 4.♔d1 (4.♖:b4 stalemate) 4...♗d4+ 5.♔e2 ♗e3+! 6.♔:e3 stalemate; 1.♖:c7? h1=♖+ 2.♔e2 ♗:b1 (also 2...♗:f3+=) 3.h8=♖ ♗b5+ 4.♔d2 ♗:d5+= perpetual check]

**1...♗d8!**

[1...♗a7 2.♔e2! ♗a2+ 3.♔e3 ♗a7+ 4.♔d3 ♗a3+ 5.♖c3 ♗a6+ 6.♖c4 ♗a3+ 7.♔d4 ♗a7+ 8.♔e4! ♗a2 9.♖cb4!+]

**2.♖h5!**

[2.♖h7? ♗f6! 3.♖b3 ♗d4 4.♔e2!

(4.f4+ ♔g4 5.♖bc3 ♗g1+ 6.♔e2 h1=♖ 7.♖:h1 ♗g2+ 8.♔e3 ♗f3+ 9.♔d4 ♗e4+! 10.♔:e4 stalemate) 4...♗:d5! 5.♖bc3 ♗e5+ 6.♔d2 ♗d5+ 7.♖d3 ♗a2+ 8.♖c2 ♗a5+ 9.♖dc3 d5! 10.♔d3 (10.f4+ ♔g4! 11.♔d3 ♗b5+ 12.♔d4 ♗b4+ 13.♔:d5 h1=♖+ 14.♖:h1 ♗e4+! 15.♔:e4 stalemate) 10...♗b5+ 11.♔d4 ♗b6+ 12.♔:d5 ♗d8+! possible 13.♔c4 ♗g8+! 14.♔d4 (14.♔d3 ♗:h7!)=) 14...♗d8+! 15.♔e3 ♗b6+! 16.♖c5 ♗e6+ 17.♔d4 ♗d6+ 18.♔c4 ♗e6+ 19.♔b5 ♗e8+=]

**2...♗f8! 3.♖b3!**

[3.♖c3? ♗f5! 4.f4+ ♔g4 5.♖:f5 h1=♖+=; 3.♖g5+? ♔f4! 4.♖h5 ♔g3 5.♖b3 loss of time]

**3...♗f5! 4.♖h8!** switchback

[4.♖h7? ♗:d5! 5.♖bc3 ♗b5+! 6.♔e1 ♗e5+ 7.♔d2 ♗d5+= transposes to the supporting line after 2.♖h7?; 4.f4+? ♔g4! 5.♖:h2 ♗:f4+ 6.♖f2 ♗:c1+=]

**4...♗:d5 5.♖bc3! ♗d2!**

[5...♗b5+ 6.♔e1 ♗e5+ 7.♔d2 ♗d5+ 8.♖d3 ♗a2+ 9.♖c2 ♗a5+ 10.♖dc3 d5 11.♔d3 ♗b5+ 12.♔d4 ♗b6+ 13.♔:d5+- and now 13... ♗d8+ no possible, compare with the supporting line 2.♖h7?]

**6.f4+ ♔g4! 7.f5!**

[7.♖hh3? d5! 8.♖cg3+ ♔:f4 9.♖f3+ ♔g4!+=; 7.♖3c2? h1=♖+! 8.♖:h1 ♗:f4+=]

**7...d5!**

[7...♗f4+ 8.♔g2 ♗d2+ 9.♔h1 ♗d5+ 10.♔:h2+-; 7...♔g5 8.f6!+]

**8.♖3c2!**

[8.f6? d4! 9.♖3c2 h1=♖+!

10. ♖:h1 ♗f4+ 11. ♖f2 ♗:c1+  
12. ♖g2 ♗c6+!= possible]

**8...h1=♖+! 9. ♖:h1 ♗f4+ 10. ♖f2!**

[10. ♖e2? ♗e4+ 11. ♖d2 ♗d4+  
12. ♖e1 ♗e3+ 13. ♖d1 ♗f3+  
14. ♖d2 ♗f4+ 15. ♖c3 ♗c4+  
16. ♖d2 ♗d4+ 17. ♖e2 ♗e4+  
18. ♖f2 ♗f3+ 19. ♖g1 ♗e3+  
20. ♖f2 ♗:c1+ 21. ♖g2 loss of  
time]

**10...♗:c1+ 11. ♖g2**

[now 11... ♗c6+ no possible,  
compare with supporting line  
8.f6?]

**11... ♗e3 12. ♖hf1!**

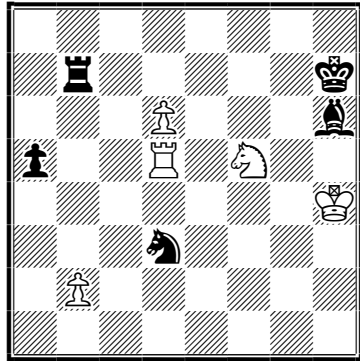
[12.f6? ♗e4+! 13. ♖h2 ♗e5+  
14. ♖g1 ♗e1+ 15. ♖g2 ♗e4+=]

**12... ♗g3+ 13. ♖h1 ♗h3+ 14. ♖g1  
♖g5 15.f6!+-**

A rook pair is often capable of giving an enemy queen a fair fight yet an extra rook right from move one is a game changer. They defend efficiently along rank and file against all Black's attempts to steal a perpetual. The extra rook is eventually given away in good timing to secure the desired breakthrough to promotion. An interesting saga however overloaded with supporting side play and lacking a touch of brilliancy.

~

1<sup>st</sup> Honourable Mention  
JAN SPRENGER  
Germany



+

5+5

**1.d7!**

[1. ♖:d3? ♗f4! 2.b3 (2.d7 ♗c7  
3.b3 ♗d8+ 4. ♖g4 ♖g6 =) 2...  
♗:d6 3. ♗:d6 ♖b4+ 4. ♖g5 a4 =]

**1... ♖b4+!**

[1... ♗e5!? 2.d8=♗ ♗g5+ 3. ♖:g5  
♗f7+ 4. ♖f6 ♗:d8 5. ♖:d8 ♖b6+  
6. ♖d6 ♖:b2 7. ♖d7+ ♖h8 (7...  
♖g8 8. ♗h6+ ♖h8 9. ♗f7+ ♖h7  
10. ♗g5+) 8. ♖d3!+- Mate is  
imminent: 8... ♖b6+ (8... ♖f2  
9. ♖g6 ♖g2+ 10. ♗g3) (8... ♖g8  
9. ♗e7+) (8... ♖b8 9. ♖h3+ ♖g8  
10. ♗e7+) 9. ♖f7 ♖b7+ 10. ♗e7  
♖c7 11. ♖h3#]

[1... ♖b8 2. ♖:d3 ♖d8 3. ♗e7]

**2. ♗d4!**

[2. ♖d4? ♖:d4+ 3. ♗:d4 ♗g5+!  
4. ♖:g5 ♗e5 5.d8=♗ (5.d8=♗  
♗f7+ 6. ♖f6 ♗:d8 7. ♖e7 ♗b7  
8. ♗b3 a4=) 5...a4 6. ♗8e6 ♗c4 =]

**2... ♗e5!**

[2... ♗f4 3.d8=♗ ♗:d5 4. ♗:d5

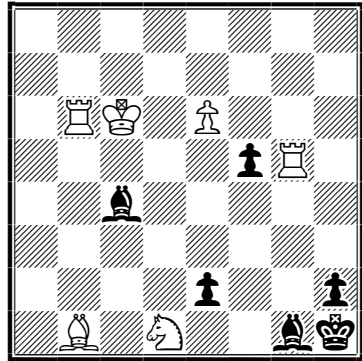
♙g7 5. ♖:a5 ♜:d4+ 6. ♗h5+]  
**3.d8=♖ ♙g5+!** 4. ♗:g5  
 [4. ♖:g5? ♗f3+ 5. ♗h5 ♗:g5  
 6. ♗:g5 ♜:b2 =]  
**4... ♗f7+ 5. ♗f6 ♗:d8 6. ♜d7+**  
 [6. ♜:d8 ♜:b2 =]  
**6... ♗h6 7. ♜:d8 ♗h5**  
 [7... ♗h7 8. ♗e6 ♜b6 9. ♜d2 +-]  
**8. ♗f5!**  
 [8.b3 a4 =]  
**8... ♗h4 9. ♜h8+ ♗g3 10. ♗e2+**  
 ♗f3  
 [10... ♗g2 11. ♗f4+ ♗g1 12. ♗d3  
 ♜d4 13. ♜h3 +-]

**11. ♜h2! +- White consolidates his position and wins with a piece up, since capturing the pawn with 11... ♜:b2 is answered with 12. ♗g1+ ♗e3 13. ♜:b2**

A fierce battle rich with mutual tactical blows to secure the last pawn is finally decided by a battery created on the other side of the board.

~

2<sup>nd</sup> Honourable Mention  
 MARTIN MINSKI  
 Germany

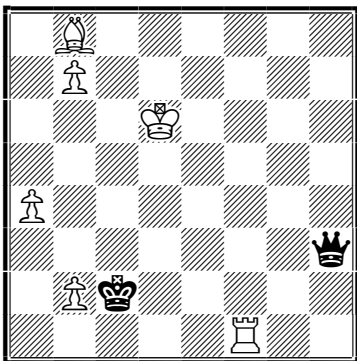


+ 6+6

**1. ♗f2!**  
 [1. ♗e3? e1=♖=; 1. ♗:f5? ♗d5+!  
 2. ♗:d5 e:d1=♖+ -+]  
**1... ♗:f2 2. ♗:f5 ♗d3!** play for stalemate  
 [2... e1=♖ 3. ♜b1+ -]  
**3. ♗:d3 e1=♖ 4. ♗c4!** (threatens 5. ♗d5+)  
 [thematic try 4. ♜b1? ♗g1! switchback unpin 5. ♗c4 (5. ♜:e1 pin stalemate) 5... ♖:e6+! 6. ♗:e6 pin stalemate; 4. ♗d7? ♖e3! =]  
**4... ♖c1!** pin **5. ♜b1!** counter pin  
**5... ♗e1!** echo unpin **6. ♜g4!**  
 [6. ♜:c1? pin stalemate]  
**6... ♖d1! 7. ♜b4!**  
 [7. ♗d5+? ♖:d5+ 8. ♗:d5 pin stalemate]  
**7... ♖g4**  
 [7... ♗:b4 8. ♗d5+ ♖:d5+ 9. ♗:d5+ -]  
**8. ♗d5+ ♗g1 9. ♜:g4+ +-**

Struggle for mate is encountered by a play for stalemate. A fine demonstration of mutual pinning and unpinning is displayed all the way to decision.

3<sup>rd</sup> Honourable Mention  
YURI BAZLOV  
*Russian Federation*



+ 6+2

White has a sufficient advantage to win, but how to implement it? The rook is decentralized, and it is also under attack, the bishop blocks a pawn that is ready to turn into a queen, but cannot immediately make way for it. Useless 1. ♖a7? or 1. ♖c7? because of 1... ♗d3+, and white faces an unenviable choice between eternal check and losing his pass. If 1. ♜f2+?, intending after 1... ♗b3! 2. ♜f4 to block the important vertical b for black, then 2... ♗h1 (the simplest) 3. ♗c7 3... ♗h6 4. ♜d4 ♗g7+ 5. ♜d7 ♗:b2

6.a5 ♗a4! 7. ♖a7 ♗c3(e5)+, forcing a draw.

### 1. ♜f4! ♗d3+!

[In other continuations, the king easily hides from prosecution in the first vertical, and 1... ♗e3 refutes 2. ♜c4+ etc]

### 2. ♗c7!

[2. ♗c6? ♗a6+! 3. ♗c7 ♗:b2 4. ♖a7 with the transition to the main option is refuted by refusing to take 3... ♗b3! 4.a5 ♗b5! - white can't enhance the game. After the 2. ♗c5? ♗e3+! 3. ♗b5 ♗e8+ 4. ♗a6 ♗c6+! 5. ♗a7 ♗c5+ 6. ♗a8 ♗a5+ 7. ♖a7 ♗d8+! 8.b8=♗ ♗d5+! 9. ♗b7 ♗d8+! 10. ♖b8 ♗a5+ 11. ♗a7 ♗d5+! white, despite the huge material superiority, are forced to agree to a draw. Or 3. ♗c6 ♗e8+ 4. ♗b6 ♗:b8 5. ♜b4 ♗d6+ 6. ♗b5 (6. ♗a5 ♗c5+ 7. ♜b5 ♗a7+ 8. ♗b4 ♗d4+) 6... ♗d7+ 7. ♗a6 ♗c6+! 8. ♗a7 ♗c5+ 9. ♜b6 ♗a5+ 10. ♜a6 ♗c5+ 11. ♗a8 ♗c4! 12. ♜a5 ♗b4! 13. ♜a6 ♗c4 14. ♜a5 positional draw (14. ♜a7 ♗e4(b4,d4,f4, g4,h4,c5,b3)=)]

### 2... ♗e3!

[On 2... ♗a6 only won 3. ♜b4! ♗a5+ 4. ♜b6 ♗e5+ (4... ♗:a4 5. b4!+) 5. ♗c6! ♗e8+ 6. ♗c5 ♗:b8 7. ♗c4 win. White lost the victory after 3. b4?! ♗b3! 4.a5 ♗h6! 5. ♜d4 ♗c1+! 6. ♗b6 ♗e3 7. ♖e5 ♗:e5 8. ♜g4(h4) ♗e6(f6)+ 9. ♗a7 ♗:g4(h4) draw]

### 3. ♜c4+! What else? 3... ♗:b2

### 4. ♖a7!

Without clearing the b8 square, even at the cost of your own



bishop, you can't win. But white doesn't even have a pawn b2...

4... ♖:a7! 5. ♜b4+!

[Thematic try 5. ♜c6? ♜a2!

6. ♜b6 ♜a3! zz WTP 7.a5 ♜a4!

8. ♜c6 ♖b8! - white's own pawn prevents him from strengthening the game. 8.a6 also doesn't help because of 8... ♜a5! 9. ♜c6 ♜b5! zz WTP- draw]

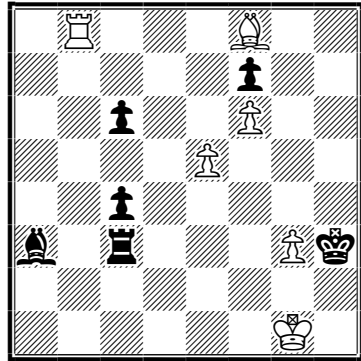
5... ♜a2! 6. ♜b5! zz BTP 6... ♜a3

7. ♜b6! zz BTP 7... ♜:a4 8. ♜c6!

♖b8 But now white doesn't have the a4 pawn and maybe 9. ♜a6+! ♜b4 10. ♜a8 ♖ ~ 11.b8=♖ with a win.

The only way for White to convert his huge advantage is by sacrificially luring the enemy queen to the upper corner and then force the decision by a couple of Zugzwangs.

1<sup>st</sup> Commendation  
MIKHAIL PASTALAKA  
*Ukraine*



+ 6+6

1.e6!

[1. ♜f2? ♜g4 2.e6 ♜:f8 3.e7 (3. ♜:f8 ♜f3+ 4. ♜e2 ♜:f6 5.e:f7 ♜f5 =) 3... ♜c2+ 4. ♜e1 ♜h6 5. ♜b1 (5.e8=♖ ♜c1+ 6. ♜f2 ♜c2+ 7. ♖e2+ ♜:e2+ =) 5... ♜c3 6.e8=♖ ♜e3+ 7. ♖:e3 ♜:e3 8. ♜b7 ♜d4 9. ♜:f7 c5 10. ♜f8 ♜f5 11.f7 ♜f6 12. ♜e2 ♜e7=]

1... ♜:g3+

[1... ♜e3 2. ♜:a3 ♜:e6 3. ♜e7 ♜:g3 4. ♜f1 ♜f3 5. ♜b2 +-]

2. ♜f2 ♜g6 3. ♜e7 ♜c5+!

[3...f:e6 4. ♜f3 ♜h6 5. ♜a8 ♜b4 6. ♜a4 ♜:e7 7.f:e7 ♜h8 8. ♜a1 ♜h2 9. ♜a2+ ♜h1 10. ♜e2 +-]

4. ♜e2

[4. ♜f3? ♜g3+ 5. ♜e2 ♜e3+ 6. ♜d2 ♜:e6 7. ♜:c5 ♜:f6 =]

4... ♜:e7

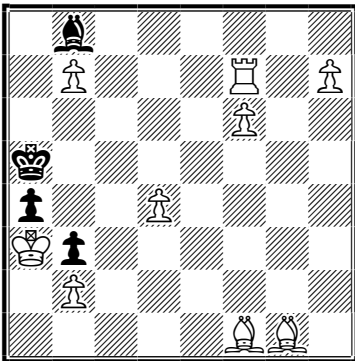
[4...f:e6 5. ♜f8 ♜:f6 (5... ♜g2+ 6. ♜d1 ♜d4 7. ♜h8+ ♜g4 8. ♜g8+

~

♖h3 9.f7) 6. ♜h8+ ♔g4 7. ♕:f6 +-]  
**5. ♜h8+**  
 [5.f:e7? ♜:e6+ 6. ♖f3 ♜f6+ 7. ♖e4  
 ♜e6+ =]  
**5... ♖g4 6. ♜g8! ♜:g8**  
 [6... ♕:f6 7.e:f7 ♕g7 8. ♜:g7 ♜:g7  
 9.f8=♚ +-]  
**7.e:f7 ♜f8 8.f:e7 ♜:f7 9.e8=♚ +**

In an uncompromising struggle to secure promotion all is given away for an unstoppable pawn pair on the seventh rank.

2<sup>nd</sup> Commendation  
 EDDIE WYCKOFF  
 USA



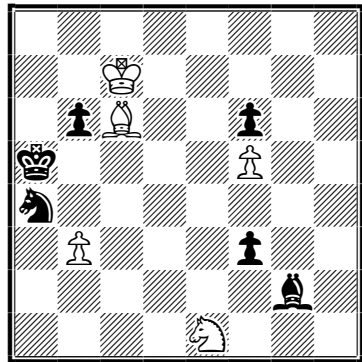
+ 9+4

**1. ♕h2!**  
 [1. ♜d7 ♕d6+ 2. ♜:d6 =]  
**1... ♕:h2 2.b8=♚!**  
 [2.b8=♚ ♕d6+ 3. ♚:d6 =]  
**2... ♕:b8 3. ♜a7+ ♕:a7 4. ♕b5!**  
 [4.h8=♚ ♕c5+ 5.d:c5 =]  
**4... ♕:d4 5. ♕:a4 ♕:f6 6. ♖:b3**  
 [6. ♕:b3? ♕e7+ 7. ♖a2 ♕f6 allows  
 Black to defend]

**6... ♖b6 7. ♖a3 ♖c7 8.b4 ♖d6 9.b5**  
 +- now the Black king and bishop  
 cannot switch roles in time.

To avoid stalemate White is obliged to sacrifice almost his entire property in order to win the resulting opposite colour bishops ending. The white Bishop is given away and reborn to serve an appealing Phoenix starter.

3<sup>rd</sup> Commendation  
 DAVID GURGENIDZE  
 Georgia



+ 5+6

**1. ♕c2!**  
 [1. ♖d3? ♕f1 2.b4+ ♖a6 3. ♕f2  
 ♕c3 4. ♕:f3 ♖b5=]  
**1... ♕c3**  
 [1... ♕h3 2.b4+ ♖a6 3. ♖d4 ♕c5  
 4. ♕b5+ ♖a7 5.b:c5 b:c5 6. ♕c6+  
 ♖a8 7. ♕a6 f2 8. ♕b7#]  
**2.b4+ ♖a6 3. ♖d4 f2**  
 [3...b5 4. ♕b7+ ♖a7 5. ♕c6#]  
**4. ♕:g2 ♕b5+ 5. ♕:b5 f1=♚ 6. ♖b8!**  
 [6. ♕:f1? stalemate]  
**6... ♚:b5**



example in this way: 12.d6 c4  
13.d7 ♖c5+ 14.♙f7 ♖c7 Ther way  
to stop d7 pawn movement in  
Queen endgame 15.♖h2+ 6-th  
diagonal winning check in this  
endgame - and White winning  
**12.d6** This endgame without  
a5,b5,c5 pawns and only a4 or b4  
or c4 black pawn is drawn. But 3  
pawns are only obstruction for  
black.

### 12...c4

[12...♖g5+ 13.♖f6 +- And black  
can do nothing to stop d pawn]

**13.d7 ♖c5+ 14.♙e8 ♖c6** The  
common defense in this type of  
Queen endgame and the only way  
to stop d7 pawn advance

**15.♖h1+ +- 7-th diagonal winning  
check in this endgame - and White  
winning**

[15.♖h7+ ♙e3 is draw]

[15.♖h5 ♙d4 16.♙e7 ♖c7 is  
draw]

Early piece exchanges result in  
a pawn ending which after move 5  
splits to sixth different variations  
each ending up in a queen  
promotion followed by a different  
skewer on a different diagonal. The  
study is anticipated by Mikhail  
Zinar sp.pr. L'Italia Scacchistica,  
1982.

And yet a refreshing novelty  
leaves the study in the award: The  
extra main line 5...g3! not just sets  
a record of queen skewers but also  
completes a pair of “reversed”  
skewers: Following 5...h4 white’s  
queen stands on c6 and her  
counterpart on h1, while after

5...g3 the queens exchange places.  
I find this additional content still  
deserving a special distinction  
recommend adding the heading  
“After Mikhail Zinar”.

Congratulations to the awarded  
composers!