

The
Tournament
Player's
Collection

Tactical Chess Endings

John Nunn

A CSWU Special Edition



COMPETITIVE

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A BATSFORD CHESS BOOK
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Preface to the Reprint

Whenever a game is played containing an important opening innovation, it is immediately published all over the world. But if a game contains an interesting ending it may appear in one magazine and then sink into obscurity. The reasons are manifold. Chess columnists and to a lesser extent magazine editors are usually short of space, so they prefer short games to long ones. Secondly, there is a great demand for opening theory and so there are specialist publications dealing exclusively with it, whereas there is no magazine devoted to over-the-board endgames and precious few which have a regular endgame feature. Finally, there is a general impression that endgames are boring. Of course many are, but there are also plenty of exciting endgames as I hope to demonstrate in this book.

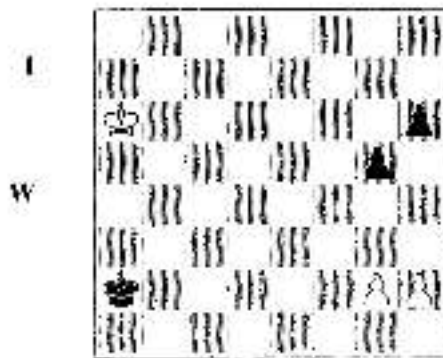
I am delighted that B.T. Dutton Ltd. have decided to reprint *Tactical Chess Endings*. This has given me the opportunity to correct a number of mistakes which have been pointed out to me over the years. I am very grateful to all those who spoke to or wrote to me with analytical contributions: their efforts have not gone to waste. Particular thanks are due to C.D. Meyer, who translated *Tactical Chess Endings* into German and found a number of errors in the process. I would also like to thank L. Barden, N. Davies, H. Hurme, W. Proskurowski, J. Spielmar, J. Timman, R.G. Wade, Dr. Allitach and C. van Wijgerden for bringing various points to my attention.

I am sure that errors remain and as before I am happy for them to be pointed out so that corrections may be included in any future editions.

Introduction

When the word 'tactics' is mentioned, most people think of the vast array of possible middle-game combinations. Everyone would agree that forks, pins, discovered attacks and skewers are tactical and most would accept that almost any forcing sequence of moves in the middle-game is tactical. But I feel that tactics is something far more general than the above examples, which are more properly described as combinations, would indicate.

Chess ideas are often classified as 'tactical' or 'strategical'. Strategy is concerned with the creation of plans. When a player decides to give his opponent doubled pawns, it is not usually because he has calculated specific variations leading to the capture of one of the weak pawns, but because he knows from experience that sooner or later the doubled pawns will be indefensible. This sums up the difference between strategy and tactics. We can say that an idea is tactical if it is necessary to calculate specific variations to ensure its correctness, whereas it is strategical if it is based on general considerations rather than concrete calculation. With this definition, it is clear that tactics can occur at any stage of the game. Indeed, simplified endgames are especially prone to be tactical, since in such positions it is possible to calculate every worthwhile variation and hence to be absolutely certain which is the best move. Consider, for example, the following position:



Win

*N. D. Grigoriev, 1st Pr.,
Shakmaty v SSSR 1937*

The reader is invited to find out for himself how White can win this position before the solution is revealed in Chapter 11. I think the reader will agree that tactics predominate in the solution, since White cannot possibly play the right moves unless he has calculated up to the final zugzwang position.

This book is about such tactical endgames. It is surprising how frequently the smooth positional flow of endgames is interrupted by the intervention of an unexpected tactic and it is clear from many of the examples in this book that players miss their chances in this respect. People don't expect tactics to break out in the ending and so they don't look for them.

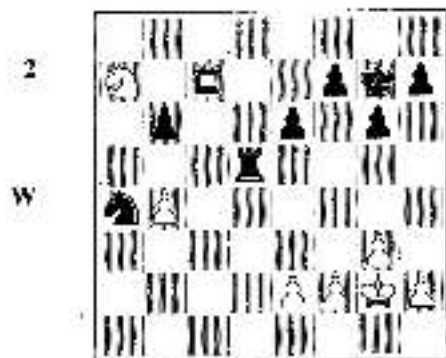
The positions in this book were selected for their interest and, in many cases, their entertainment value. The reader will not find a logical progression from start to finish, since a series of positions with similar ideas is rather dull. I have grouped the positions in chapters, but the classification is so broad that there is enormous diversity within each chapter. Whilst the primary purpose of this book is to entertain, playing through the analysis of the positions cannot help but educate at the same time. I should mention that I have assumed the reader to have a basic knowledge of endgame theory when writing this book, but no more than would be possessed by any club player.

The reader will find that there are a number of studies (i.e. composed positions in which White to play must either win or draw – the stipulation is placed below the diagram in this book) in amongst the game positions. I have chosen these both for the elegance of their solutions and because (with the exception of position 128, perhaps) they have natural positions of considerable relevance to over-the-board play. The reader may wish to solve them himself or he may prefer just to play over the solutions. Conversely, study composers will find many stimulating ideas contained in the over-the-board examples!

Happy endings!

1 Mate

Although mate is the object of the game, it might seem a strange topic to find in a book on the endgame. It is true that mating ideas appear relatively infrequently in the endgame, but one consequence of this is that players are not looking for them and this can lead to dreadful oversights. We shall see some of these later in the chapter. But mate can also occur in the normal course of an ending, as in the following example.



Smyslov-Benko, Monte Carlo 1969

Black suffers from two problems. First, his knight is temporarily out of play and secondly the f7 square is very weak. Smyslov, a noted expert on endgame play, uses these factors to launch an attack on Black's king.

1 Nc6!

The threat is 2 c4, followed by 3 Ne5, while 1...Nc5 is impossible owing to 2 Ne7. Since the rook is going to be driven away from d5 anyway, Benko decides on an immediate counter-attack against White's c-pawn.

1	...Rd2
2 Nc5	Rxe2
3 Nxf7	b5

Played in order to avoid the loss of the h-pawn after Ng5+.

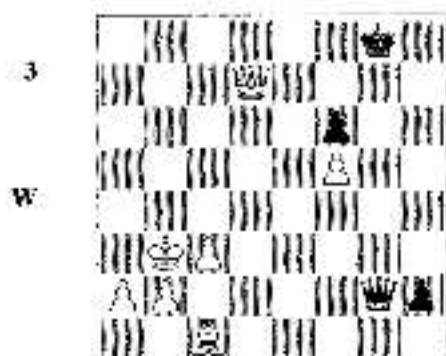
4 Ng5+	Kf6
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This allows a mating combination, but after 4...Kf8 5 Kf1 Re5 6 f4 Re3 7 Kf2, winning the e-pawn, Black is still losing.

5 Kf1! R×f2+

If the rook moves away then 5...Rh2 6 f4 Kf5 7 h3! forces mate by Rf7. After 5...R×f2+ Smyslov finished by 6 K×f2 K×g5 7 Ke3 Kg4 8 h5 Kh3 9 Re4 Nb2 (9...Nc5 10 R×c5) 10 Re2 1-0 since 10...Na4 11 Kf4 h4 12 g×h4 K×h4 13 Ke5 wins easily.

The mating attack in the next position is as sudden as a bolt of lightning.



Siragin-Bronstein, Moscow 1947

With a second Black queen about to arrive it appears that White will have to be content with perpetual check. But one move changes the picture completely.

1 Rg5! h1=Q

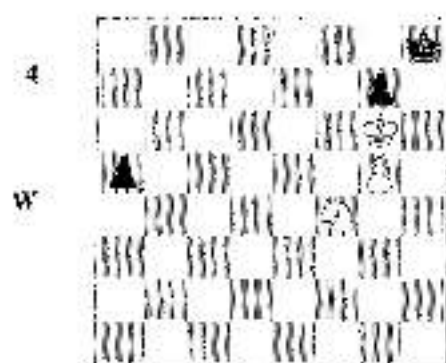
Black challenges White to prove that a mate does exist, but there was little choice since 1...f×g5 2 f6 is certainly mate, while after 1...Q×g5 2 Qd8+ Kh7 3 Qc7 and 4 Q×h2 White's material advantage is decisive.

2 Qe8+ Kg7
 3 Qg6+ Kf8
 4 Q×f6+ Kg8
 5 Qd8+ Kg7
 6 Qc7+ Kg8
 7 Qe8+

1-0

All Black's moves were forced except for 5...Kg7, but any other fifth move led to the same thing. Now White mates in three by 7...Kg7 (7...Kh7 8 Qg6+ Kf8 9 Bf6 mate) 8 f6+ Kh7 9 Qh7+ and 10 Qg7 mate.

Even when the material has been greatly reduced, one should never forget the possibility of mate:



Vesely-Annos, CSSR 1968

White's material advantage would normally be enough to win easily, but if White simply plays his knight to the queenside to block the a-pawn it would be unable to take any further part in the action on the other side of the board. Even with the infinite supply of tempi provided by the knight this would leave a drawn king and pawn ending, e.g. 1 Nd5? a4 2 Nb4 a3 3 Kf7 Kh7 4 g6+ Kh8 5 Kf8 a2 with stalemate. But a little finesse makes all the difference.

1 Kf7? a4

If 1...Kh7 2 g6+ Kh8 3 Kf8 and 4 Ne6-d8-f7 mate.

2 Ng6+! Kh7
3 Ne5 a3

Thanks to the position of the king, White gains a tempo with his pawn.

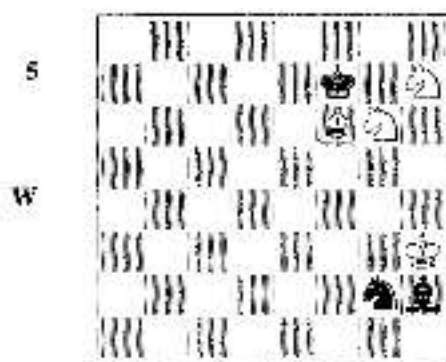
4 g6+ Kh6

Or 4...Kh8 5 Kf8 and mates.

5 Ng4+ Kg5
6 Ne3 a2
7 Ne2

1-0

Once Black has committed his king to h6 rather than h8 blocking the a-pawn is enough to win, since 7...Kh6 8 Na1 picks up the g-pawn.



Win

P. Sabolevsky, Shakhmaty v SSSR 1951

This study has a surprising mating finale after several moves of tactical interchanges. The advantage of one piece is not enough to win without pawns, but two extra pieces are enough to win, except for two knights against king. So White must move his knight on g6 and hope to pick up a piece from the king fork.

1 Nf8+

1 Nf8 allows Black to avoid loss of material with 1...Bd6, so this is the only reasonable move.

1 ...Kg8

Black must continue attacking a piece. Now it seems that White can win with either capture, but 2 Kxh2 (2 Ng5 Ne3! is similar) Ne3! draws as Black has the twin threats of 3...Kxh7 and 3...Ng4+.

2 Kxg2 Bf4

Forced, or else White simply defends all his pieces by 3 Ng5.

3 Ng6 Bb6!

A subtle defence. Black prevents 4 Nh8 and prepares a stalemate trap!

4 Ng5 Bg7!

White must avoid the exchange of his bishop, but 5 Be7 allows 5...Bf6! giving White the unpleasant choice between stalemate, an exchange of bishops, or the loss of a piece. Also 5 Bd8 Bf6! 6 Ne3! Kf8 7 Nh2+ Ke8 leads to a draw.

5 Ne7+

The only remaining move, but a good one. The top right corner is reflected about the diagonal of h8, so the Black king can be forced

to approach the White one! If Black replies 5...Kf8 then 6 Nc6 wins.

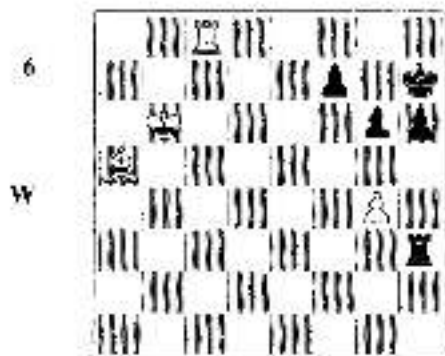
5	...	Kh8
6 Nf7+		Kh7
7 Bb4!		

Now this does win!

7	...	Bf6?
8 Ng5+		Kb6
9 Ng8+		Kh5
10 Nxf6+!		Kxh4
11 Nf3 mate		

A mate which one is unlikely to see in practice!

Since players don't expect mate to occur in the ending it sometimes happens that a golden opportunity for a brilliancy is missed, as in the next two positions.



Zilber-Seirawan, Hastings 1979-80

Materially White does not have sufficient advantage to win, since Black can quite easily exchange White's last pawn by ...Rg3 followed by ...h5, for example. But Black's king is in an unfortunate predicament. In the game White chose 1 Bc3, but after 1...g5 2 Rh8+ Kg6 3 Rg8+ Kh7 4 Rg7+ Kh8 5 Bc5 (surprisingly White cannot profit very much from his battery, e.g. 5 Bf6 Rf3 6 Rxf7 1 Kg8 7 Rg7+ Kh8 8 Be5 Rf4 9 Bxf4 Kxg7, followed by ...Kg6 and ...h5 drawing) Re3 6 Rxg5+ Kh7 7 Rf5 (7 Rg7+ Kh8 8 Bb4 Re4 gives White nothing) Kg6 8 Kc5 Re4 9 Rf6+ Kg5 10 Kd5 Rxg4 11 Rxf7, and the game ended in a draw after another 41 moves. But White could have won by playing a more drastic move.

1 g5!

Hard to see, because one normally doesn't voluntarily give away

one's last pawn, but by preventing ...g5 Black's king is imprisoned and he is forced to give up his rook.

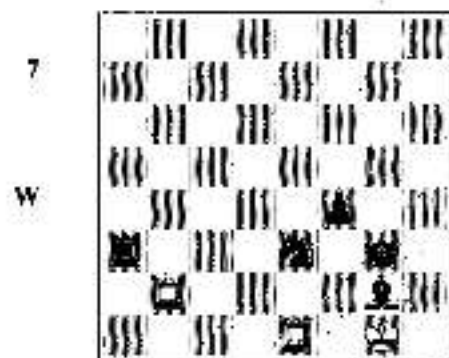
1 ...Rb3+
2 Ka6 h×g5

2...Kg7 3 Bc3+ f6 4 g×f6+ is hopeless and 2...Ra3 3 Kb5 h×g5 is worse than the main line, as the White king is nearer the kingside.

3 Bc3 R×c3
4 R×c3 g4
5 Kb5 Kh6

6 Kc4 Kg5 7 Kd3 f5 (however Black plays White can always bring his king in front of the pawns) 8 Kc2 f4 9 Re4 f3+ (9...Kf5 10 Re5+ and both 10...Kf6 11 Kd3 and 10...Ke4 11 Rg5 are easy wins) 10 Kf2 Kh4 11 Re8 and Black must allow the king in to g3, with a simple win.

In the next position one of the world's top grandmasters overlooks an unusual mating chance and was very lucky to win the game.



Gufeld-Andersson, Camaguey 1974

Black must have been feeling confident in this position, since he has a decisive material advantage and 1 R×c3 f×c3 2 R×g2 1 Kf3 wins easily after 3 Rg8 Ra1+ 4 Kh2 c2 5 Rf8+ Kg4 etc. But Gufeld found a surprising move which put Andersson off his stride.

1 Rb3! Ra2?

Of course if 1...R×b3? 2 R×c3! is stalemate however Black recaptures, but Black could have forced mate by 1...f3! 2 Rh×c3 (2 Rh2 Ra8 is similar, while 2 Re×c3 Ra1+ mates at once) Ra8! and White is so paralysed by the threat of ...f2 mate that he cannot prevent ...Rh8 and ...Rh1 mate (3 R1e2 Ra1+ 4 Re1 R×e1+ 5 R×e1 f2 mate or 3 R3c2 f×c2 wins).

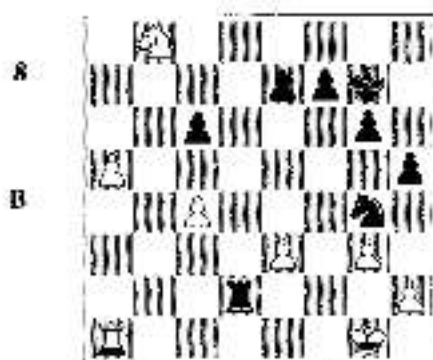
2 Rb×c3+ f×c3

2...f3 no longer works because of 3 Rb3 Ra8 4 Rb2 Rh8 5 R×g2 1
f×g2 6 Re3+ Kf4 7 Ra3 with a draw

3 R×e3+ Bf3

This position, despite the bad position of White's king, is a theoretical draw. However, in the continuation Gufeld lost his way (and the game): 4 Kf1 Rd2 5 Re8 Rd7 6 Rg8+ Kf4 7 Re8 Rd2 8 Ke1 Rd1+ 9 Kf2 Rd2+ 10 Ke1 Rh2 11 Re7?? (11 Rh8 was correct, when after 11...Be4 12 Rb3 prevents the king from advancing to the sixth rank) **Be4!** (now Black is winning—the bishop can interpose on d3 or f3, so the Black king is assured a quiet life on e3) 12 Kd1 (loses quickly), but even the best defence wouldn't last much longer: 12 Ra7 Ke3 13 Rf7 Rg2 14 Rh5 Bg6! 15 Rf6 Bd2 16 Re6- Be4 17 Rf6 Rc2+ 18 Kf1 Rc2 19 Kg1 Rg2+ 20 Kf1 Rg5! 21 Ke1 Bf5! and mate can no longer be avoided—a line which dates back to Philidor) **Kc3 13 Ke1** (forced) **Rc2+** 14 Kd1 **Rc8** 15 **Re5** (White can only move the rook up and down the e-file) **Rh8 16 Ke1 Rh8 17 Rh5 R×h5 0-1.**

In the following pair of positions White allows a mating attack which could have been avoided. In the first position the oversight amounts to a blunder, but in the second both the mate and especially the defensive move could easily be overlooked.



Hamann-Bednarski, Aarhus 1971

Black clearly has a draw by perpetual check with ...N×h2 and ...Nf3+, but in view of the proximity of the a-pawn to the queening square it is hard to believe that Black can do more.

1	...N×h2
2 a6	Nf3+
3 Kf1	g5

Black has his draw in reserve, so this winning attempt involves no risk.

4 a7?

Overlooking the threat! 4 Nxc6! forces the draw, since 4...h4 5 g×h4 g×h4 6 Ndd halts Black's attack and wins.

4 ...b4!

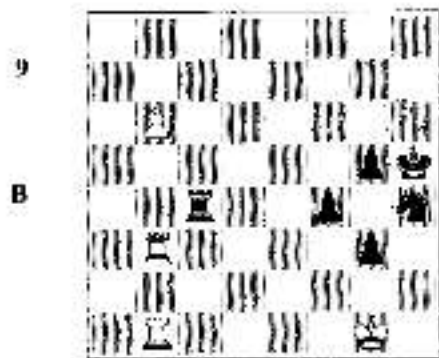
So that if 5 a8=O h×g5 threatens 6...g2 mate and 6...Rf2 mate.

5 g×h4 g4

With the same idea. White manages to avert mate, but only by giving up the exchange.

6 Ra5 g3
7 Rg5+ N×g5

and Black should win; but the further course of the game was erratic: 8 h×g5 (8 a8=O g2- and 9...Nf3 mate) Ra2 9 N×c6 e6 10 e5 Ra6? (a move which threatens nothing and serves only to lose the g-pawn - 10...Kg6 followed by the advance of the king win easily) 11 Kg2 Kg6 12 Ne5+? (incomprehensible. Simply 12 K×g3 K×g5 13 Kf3 f5 14 Ke2 e5 and now, not 15 Kd3? f4 16 e×f4 e×f4 17 Ke4 f3 18 Kb5 Ra1 19 Na5 f2 20 a8-Q f1=Q4, when Black should win, but 15 N×c5 R×a7 16 Kf3 is a draw even without the e-pawn - but note that if Black prepares ...c5 by 14...Kf6 then 15 Kd3! is even good for White) K×g5 13 N×f7+ Kh4 14 Kf3 R×a7 0-1. Rather a dismal end to an imaginative game.



Jovic-Rajkovic, Belgrade 1977

Black's attack is very dangerous, but with accurate play White could have drawn.

1 ...f3
2 h7

2 R×f3 N×f3+ 3 Kg2 Kg4 leads to a quick mate, so White has no

choice but to press on and hope the pawn queens in time.

2 ...Rc2
3 b8=Q?!

One can hardly blame White for playing such a natural move, since many players would use the logic that if 3 b8=Q fails then White must be lost. However 3 R11! would have put up a much stiffer fight. The win can only be achieved by a remarkable idea; 3 Rf1! Rg2+ (3...g2 is met by 4 Rbb1! and White wins, rather than 4 b8=Q? f2-! with the reverse result) 4 Kh1 Re2!! (4...f2 5 R×g3 R×g3 6 b8=Q Rh3+ 7 Qh2 draws while 4...Rh2+ 5 Kg1 g2 6 Rfb1! Rh1+ 7 Kf2 is another win for White) and now:

- 1) 5 Rb×f3 (5 Kg1 g2 will transpose after 6 Rbb1, while 5 Rf×f3 Re1+ loses at once) g2+ 6 Kg1 g×f1=Q+ 7 K×f1 Rb2 wins on material.
- 2) 5 Rfb1 g2+ 6 Kh2 f2 and White has nothing better than 7 b8=Q, when Black wins as in the game.
- 3) 5 b8=Q g2+ 6 Kg1 f2+ 7 Kh2 g1=Q+ as in line 2.
- 4) 5 Rbb1 g2+ 6 Kg1 g×f1=Q+ 7 K×f1 Nf5! 8 b8=Q Nc3+ 9 Kg1 f2+ 10 Kh1 Re1+ (this move explains why Black had to transfer his rook from c2 to e2) 11 Kh2 Ng4+ 12 Kg3 f1=Q and White has only one check, whereupon Black either mates or (after Qe8! for example) wins on material.

3 ...f2+
4 kh1 g2+
5 kh2 g1=Q+
6 R×g1 Nf3+!

Perhaps White had missed this move. 6...f1=Q+ 7 Kh1 is no good for Black.

0-1

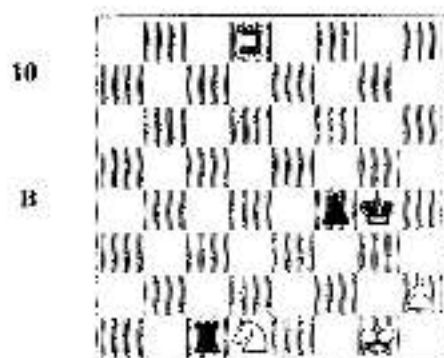
because of the three lines 7 R×f3 f1=Q+ and mates in three more moves at most, 7 Kg3 f×g1=Q+ 8 K×f3 Qg4+ 9 Kc3 Re2+ 10 Kd3 Qe4+ and 11...Rc2 mate or finally 7 Kh3 g4+! 8 R×g4 f1=Q+ 9 Kg3 Qg2+ 10 Kf4 Q×g4+ 11 Kc3 Qd4+ 12 K×f3 Rf2+ 13 Kg3 Qh4 mate.

The next position reduces to an interesting ending of R+N v R.

White's material advantage is enough to win, but his pieces are badly tied up. In order to free himself it is necessary to sacrifice the h-pawn and try for a mating attack.

1 ...f3?

Black's rook is not well placed on c1 if the position reduces to R+N v R, since it is within the range of influence of the White knight. Black could have drawn by withdrawing his rook as far as possible by 1...Ra1! and now:



Pedersen-Hecht, Denmark-W. Germany 1972

(A) 2 Kg2 (3+ 3 Kf1 (3 Kf2 Ra2- 4 Kgl Ra1 5 Rd4+ transposes to B) Kh3 4 Rd2 (4 Rh8+ Kg4 5 Ke1 (2+ draws) f2! and the position reduces to a R+N v R ending which Black can draw fairly comfortably.

(B) 2 Rd5 (3 Rd4+ Kh3 is similar to the game, but with the rook on a1, which as we shall see would have made a big difference.

(C) 2 Kf1 (3 3 Ke1 Kh3 4 Rd2 Rb1 5 Rd2 Rcl 6 Kd2 Rb1 7 Ke2 Rb8 8 Kc3 Rc8+ with a comfortable draw, since the White king cannot move to the second rank or to the d-file (due to ... Rd8+).

2 Rd4+ Kh3
3 Kf2!

The only move, for if White hesitates Black will play ...Ra1 and draw.

3 ...Rc2+!

Black must play to win the pawn, or else White improves his position by Ne3.

4 Kxh3 Kxh2
5 Ne3! Rc3?

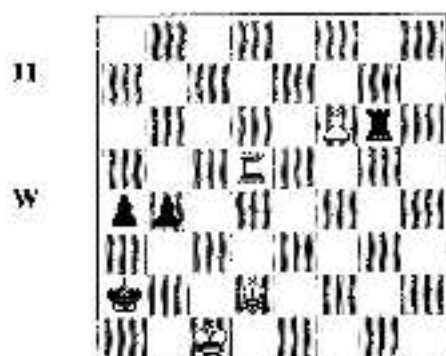
Allows a straightforward win. The main line is 5...Rc1 (5...Ra2/b2 6 Ng4+ Kh3 7 Nf2+ Kh2 8 Rh4+ mates) 6 Rh4+ (6 Rd8 Ra1 or 6 Rd2- Kh3 7 Rd8 Kh4 only leads to a draw) Kgl 7 Rg4+ Kh2 (7... Kh1 8 Kf2 mates) 8 Rg3! (threatening mate in three, starting with 9 Ng4+) Rc3 (8...Kh1 9 Kf2 Kh2 10 Ng4+) 9 Kc2 (threatens 10 Ng4/f1+ and 11 Rg1 mate) Rcl 10 Ng4+ Kh1 11 Rh5 mate.

6 Rh4+ Kg1
7 Rg4+ Kh2
8 Kf2 Kh3

If the Black rook were on a3 rather than c3 he would be able to hold the draw by 8...Ra2-.

9 Rg3+ 1-0

as Black loses his rook after 9...Kb4 10 Nf5 !



Win

G. M. Kasparian. 1st Pr.,
Shakhmaty v SSSR 1939

This study is one of my favourites, mainly because of its witty finish. Black threatens 1...Rg1+, so the lines 1 f7 Rf6 2 Rd7 Rf1+ and 3...b3+ or 1 Rf5 Rg1+ 2 Kc2 b3+ 3 Kc3 (3 Kd3 allows Black to promote with check) b2 4 f7 Re1 + 5 Kd4 Re8 are not good enough.

1 Bg5

Black's rook is immobilised and White threatens 2 f7. Black presses ahead with his counterplay.

1 ...b3
2 Rd2+ Ka1
3 f7!

The position of the Black king in the corner might tempt White to try 3 Be3, but 3...b2+ 4 Rxb2 Rxb2 (6 5 Bd4 Rf1+ 6 Kc2 a3! leaves White with nothing better than 7 Rh1 - Ka2 8 Rxd1, with stalemate. 3 f7 looks very strong since the reply 3...a3 loses after 4 Rd1! Rd6 (the only chance) 5 f8-Q b2+ 6 Kc2- Rxd1 7 Qxa3 mate.

3 ...R×g5?
4 B=Q Rg1+
5 Rd1 Rg2!

(1 5...b2+ 6 Kc2+ Rxd1 7 Qa3 mate, but the surprising defence in the main line threatens 6...Rc2 mate and 6...b2 mate. What can

White play? If 6 Qa3+ (6 Rd2 is just a draw by repetition) Ra2 7 Qc5, for example, then not 7...b2+ 8 Kd2+ b1=Q+ 9 Ke1 and wins, but simply 7...Rh2? threatening ...b2 mate again and leaving White with nothing better than a repetition. But there is a win hidden in this line!

6 Qa3+ Ra2
7 Rd2! Rxa3

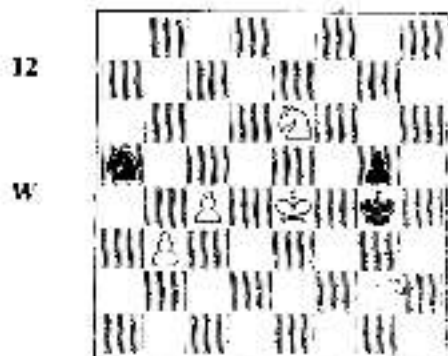
Or 7...b2+ 8 Qxb2+ Rxb2 9 Rxb2 a3 10 Rh1+ Ka2 11 Rb8 Ka1 12 Kc2 a2 13 Kb3 Kb1 14 Ka3+ Ka1 15 Rh8 Kb1 16 Rh1+ winning.

8 Rb2 Ra2

A novel zugzwang!

9 Rb1 mate

The next position ends with mate, but the main interest lies in the intricate knight and pawn ending leading up to it.



Yanofsky-Golombek, Hastings 1951-2

1 c5??

White should not have given up his b-pawn. Simply 1 Nd4! Kh5 2 c5 g4 3 b4 Nb7 4 Kd5 Nd8 5 c6 wins easily.

1 ...Nxb3

White can still win, but only with very accurate play.

2 c6 Na5
3 c7 Ne4
4 Kd5 Nb6+
5 Kc6 Nc8

More or less forced up to here, but now White must decide whether to try Kb7 or Kd7.

6 Kd7 Nb6+

The only move because 6...Na7 allows 7 Nd4, followed by Nc6 promoting the pawn.

7 Kc6

White decides to go back, since after 7 Kd8 Kh4! (not 7...Kf5? 8 Nc8 g4 9 Nd7 g3 10 N+ b6 and White promotes with check) 8 Nf8 g4 9 Nd7 g3 10 N+ b6 g2 11 c3-Q g1=Q the knight is too far away for White to have any winning chances.

7 ...Nc8
8 Kb7 Ne7!

This time the other move is correct! If 8...Nd6+ 9 Kb8 Kf5 (9...Kh4 10 Nd4 g4 11 Ne5+ and 9...Kh5 10 Ng7+-c8 are just as bad) 10 Nd4+ and 11 Nb5 and White wins.

9 Nd4 Kf4!

The only square. If 9...Kh4 (after 9...Kh3 White promotes with check) 10 Ne6 Nf5 11 Kb8 Nd6 12 Nd4 and the threat of 13 Nf5+ gains a decisive tempo.

10 Ne6 Nf5
11 Kb8?

This move leads to an ending of Q+N v Q which should be drawn with correct play. White could have won with the paradoxical move 11 Kc8! blocking the pawn; the threat of Kd7 forces 11...Nd6 - 12 Kd7 Nc4 13 Ne7 Kc5 (there is nothing better as White threatened 14 Kc6), but now 14 Nf5! wins. Whether Black takes the knight or not White will play Kc6, and even 14...Nb6+ 15 Kc6 Ne8 16 Kb7 is no help. Notice the curious way the White king performs a complete circuit b7-c8-d7-c6-b7 around the pawn. The alternative idea 11 Nb4 (intending 12 Nd5+ and 13 Kc6) fails to 11...Nd6 - 12 Kc6 Ne8 13 Kd7 (13 Nd5+ Kf3 14 Nb6 g4 leads to a drawn Q+N v Q position) Nb6+ 14 Kd8 Kc4 (stopping Nd5) with a draw.

11 ...Nd6
12 Nd4 g4
13 Nb5 g3
14 Nxd6 g2
15 c8=Q g1=Q

Black needed just a few more accurate moves to be sure of a draw, but he blundered and White was granted a half-point he didn't really deserve after his mistakes at moves 1 and 11.

16 Qf5+ Kg3
 17 Ne4+ Kg2
 18 Qg4+ Kh2??

After 18...Kh1! White cannot make progress with checks (19 Of3+ Kef 20 Qc3+ Kc2) and his king is exposed to too many checks to allow a quiet move.

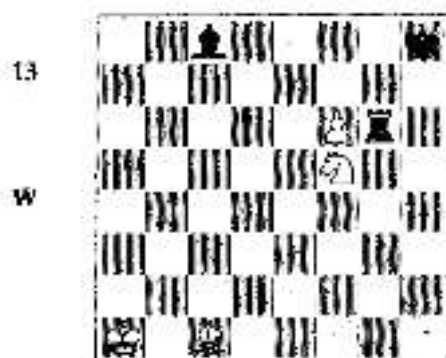
19 Qh4+ Kg2
 20 Qg3+ Kh1

White avoids 21 Nf2+ Qxf2 22 Qxf2 stalemate and delivers mate instead.

21 Qh3+ Qh2+
 22 Ng3+

1-0

From the diagram it is hard to see how the following study can end in mate, but the solution is surprisingly clear-cut.



Win

V. Karolko, 1st Pr., I.lov 1951

1 f7 Ra6+

Forced, as 1...Rf6 2 Bb2 and 1...Rg8 2 f×g8=Q+ K×g8 3 Ne7+ lose at once. But after 1...Ra6+ White has a problem, since 2 Kb2 allows 2...Rf6, while 2 Kb1 drops the knight with check.

2 Ba3! R×a3+
 3 Kb2 Ra2+!

Not 3...Rb3+ 4 Ka2, stopping the checks. Where should White head with his king to escape the barrage of checks? Going up the board doesn't work: 4 Kc3 Rc2+ 5 Kb4 (5 Kd4 Rd2+ and 6...Rd8) Rb2+ 6 Kc5 Rc2+ and after 7 Kh6 Rb2+ or 7 Kd6 Rd2+ White cannot

advance to the seventh rank without allowing a check on b7 or d7, followed by ...R>f7. The right plan is to head for the kingside and shelter behind the knight.

4 Kc1! Ra1+

Not 4...Rc2+ 5 Kd1

5 Kd2 Ra2+

6 Ke3 Ra3+

7 Kf4 Ra4+

8 Kg5

8 Kg3? Rg4+ and 9...Rg6 really would draw.

8 ...Rg4+!

Now the lines 9 Kh5 (9 Kxg4 Bxf5+ 10 Kxf5 Kg7 draws) Rg8 and 9 Kf6 Rg8 10 Ne7 Rd8 only give White half a point.

9 Kh6! Rg8

Or 9...Rg6+ 10 Kxg6 Bxf5+ 11 Kh6 winning.

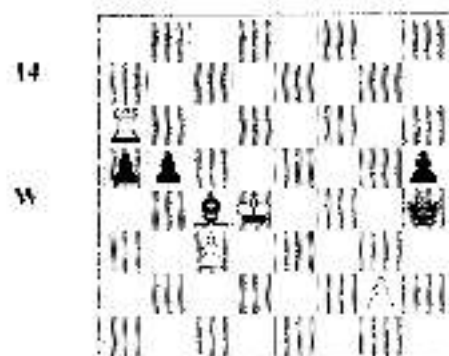
10 Ne7 Bc6

Black had no choice as the rook must cover f8 and g6.

11 fxg8=Q+ Bxg8

12 Ng6 mate!

The rest of the chapter is in the nature of light entertainment. The next three positions show mate simplifying a technical task.



Maldejarov-Samuilov, USSR 1974

Bearing in mind the principle that one should never win positionally when mate is available, White continued

1 Rg6!

Probably not (the only move to win, but by far the simplest).

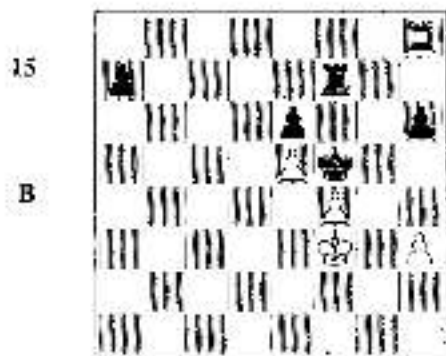
1 ...a4

If 1...Be2 (to free the king by ...Bg4) 2 Ke3 Bg4 3 Kf4 a4 4 Rd6 (with the idea of 5 Rd3 and 6 Rh3+!) Be2 5 Rd2 and mate occurs after all upon 5...Bf1 6 Rf2 Be4 7 Rf3 Be6 8 Rh3+!

2 Ke3!

The most accurate, preventing ...Be2.

2 ...a3
 3 Kf4 a2
 4 Rg3 Be6
 5 Rh3+ Bxh3
 6 g3 mate



Novak-Ryc, USSR 1978

1 ...hg6

White was threatening 2 Rxh6, for example 1...a5 2 Rxh6 a4 3 h4 a3 4 h5 a2 5 Rg6, forcing mate. If 1...Rb7 (intending ...Rb3+) 2 Rf8+ Kg6 3 Rf6+ and 4 Rxe6 wins comfortably.

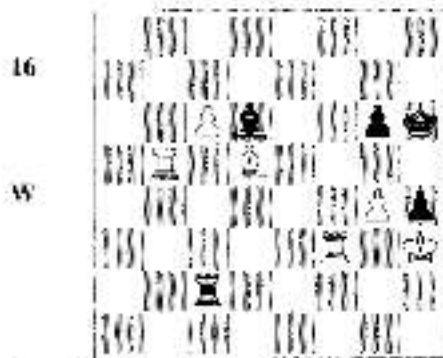
2 Re6 Kf5
 3 h4!

White correctly decides to play for mate. Black cannot reply 3...h5 owing to 4 Rg8.

3 ...a5
 4 h5 a4
 5 Rh8 a3

Poor Black can only move his a-pawn.

6 R×h6 a2
 7 Rg6 a1=Q
 8 Rg5 mate



Shomkoich-Vesin, Palma de Mallorca 1967

Black has sacrificed a rook but in return has a very dangerous threat of mate on b2. But it is White to move and he strikes first with his own mating attack?

1 g5+!

1 K×h4 allows mate in two, while 1 Rf2 R×f2 2 Bg2 is a clear draw, so this is the only move. If Black retreats the mating threat disappears so the reply is forced.

1 ...Kh5
 2 Rg3! 1-0

2 Rf2 still only drew, but this is instantly decisive due to the unavoidable check/mate) on f3.

We finish the chapter with a selection of unfortunate accidents which have befallen various people over the years. It is likely that many of these disasters were the result of 'chess blindness'—simply not bothering to look for a mate in the endgame.

With his two bishops and active king White must have been feeling happy and his next move carries the dual threats of 2 Bf5 and 2 Bxh7.

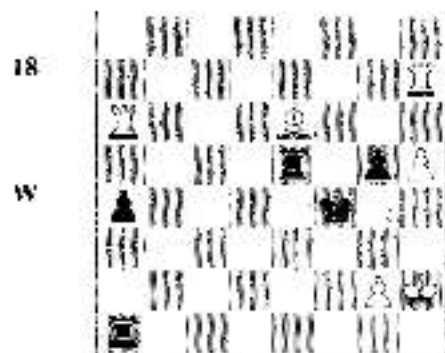
1 Be4

Unfortunately . . .

1 . . . b5!
0-1



Olsson-Andersson, Sweden 1969



Donner-Spaniard, Holland 1961

White is a clear piece up and might well have been annoyed that Black hadn't already resigned. It is true that after 1 Rf7+ followed by 2 h6 Black would have more than a little trouble continuing the game. But Donner decided on a different plan.

1 Rha7

Mopping up the a-pawn. Black's only potential counterplay . . .

1 . . . Rh1+!
2 Kxh1 Kd3
0-1
20

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