

**One Rook Saves the Day:
A World Champion's Favorite Studies**

Sergei Tkachenko

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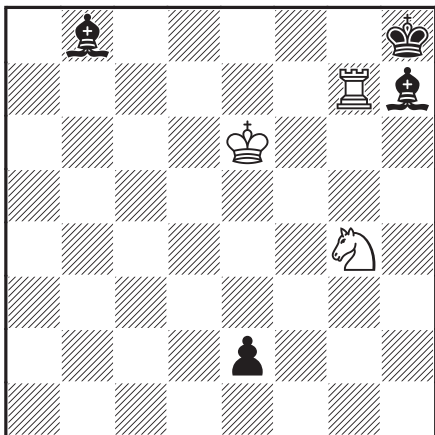
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No. 1



White to move and draw

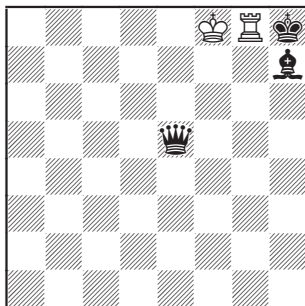
White's king and knight block lines for white's own rook. So how can he stop the black pawn?

1.♔f7! ♕e5! White isn't afraid of black queening in this position: 1...e1=♚ 2.♖f6! ♚h1 3.♗xh7+ and a draw.

2.♘xe5 e1=♚ 3.♔f8! Threatening 4.♘f7+ and so on.

3...♚xe5. Nor can black win with 3...♚b4+ 4.♗e7 ♕f5 (4...♚b8+ 5.♗e8) 5.♘g6+! ♕xg6 and stalemate.

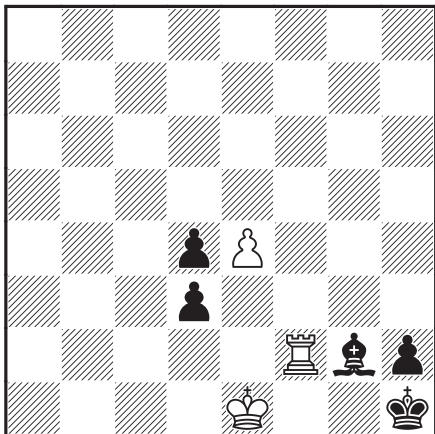
4.♗g8+!! That was unexpected!



4...♕xg8. Stalemate.

Author E. Somov-Nasimovich, 1927

No. 2



White to move and draw

White's position looks hopeless: 1.♖f8? ♔g1
2.♖h8 ♕xe4! and white can resign.

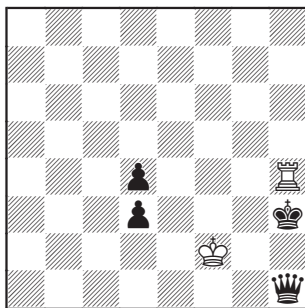
But there is a solution:

1.♖f4!! ♔g1 2.♖h4 ♕xe4! It's a simple draw
after 2...h1=♚ 3.♖xh1+ ♕xh1 4.e5 ♕d5 5.♚d2 ♕c4
6.e6!, and the black pawns die.

3.♖xe4 h1=♚ 4.♖g4+ ♔h2+ 5.♚f2 ♔h3.

Black has avoided getting mated and is ready to
celebrate victory...

When suddenly: **6.♖h4+!!**



6...♔xh4. Mirror stalemate!

Author H. Mattisons, 1918 (position after
black's 2nd move)