



2020 PUZZLE QUEST



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SYSTEM OF SIGNS

±	white stands slightly better	↗	diagonal
∓	black stands slightly better	⊕	centre
±	white has the upper hand	»	king's side
∓	black has the upper hand	«	queen's side
+-	white has a decisive advantage	×	weak point
-+	black has a decisive advantage	⊥	ending
=	even	♖♗	pair of bishops
∞	unclear	♖♗	bishops of opposite color
∞	with compensation for the material	♖♗	bishops of the same color
⊙	development advantage	○○	united pawns
○	greater board room	○●○	separated pawns
→	with attack	♙♙	double pawns
↑	with initiative	♙	passed pawn
↔	with counter-play	>	advantage in number of pawns
⊙	zugzwang	⊕	time
♯	mate	75/199 Chess Informant	
!	a very good move	E	12 Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings
!!	an excellent move	♚	3/b Encyclopaedia of Chess Endings
?	a mistake	N	a novelty
??	a blunder	(ch)	championship
!?	a move deserving attention	(izt)	interzonal tournament
?!	a dubious move	(ct)	candidates' tournament
△	with the idea	(m)	match
□	only move	(ol)	olympiad
△	better is	corr.	correspondence game
↔	file	RR	editorial comment
		R	various moves
		L	with
		┘	without
			etc
		—	see

Foreword

Dear readers and chess friends, the book in your hands is a result of continuous labour and numerous hours dedicated to research and work with students in “Šahovska Akedamija Šampiona” – Beograd. Eventually, we decided to gather some of the material used in lectures during last year and present it in book format. Our main objective was not to teach puzzle solving as such, but instead to teach diligent evaluation of positions, chess judgment and over-the-board decision-making.

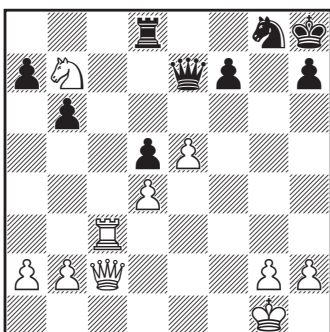
The book is aimed at motivated club players, students, all the way up to the grandmaster level. So, for your easier browsing through material all the puzzles are organised according to their relative level of difficulty (one ★ indicating the simplest exercises, ★★★★★ indicating the most difficult positions), and in chronological order starting from January and ending in December of 2020. However, exercises are not divided in sections according to exact type of combination, or tactical motif. We intended puzzles to mimic a real game, as much as possible, where you need to figure out what to do in each position. Of course, if you are told exactly what to look for in any given position, then the puzzle becomes too easy and loses much of its intended instructional value. In some of the puzzles, the solution is a devastating sacrifice that leads to swift mate, while some other exercises may require the right strategic plan, and most efficient way of execution. First, you will need to establish what the main objective is: to checkmate, to gain a strategic advantage, to equalise, and so on.

On the other hand, all the puzzles are extracted from games played during 2020, and that placed several limitations to our effort. As we all know, the previous year was severely crippled by COVID-19 pandemic, so most of the traditional chess tournaments were either cancelled, or held online in shorter time controls. As a result, the games contained many unexpected mistakes and blunders, so we tried to offer you the most instructive examples, even though the correct moves were often not played in the game. (* after the names of players indicates that the example is based on game variation).

Finally, we hope you will find these exercises to be of great practical value, and highly instructive for your chess progress. Last but not least, we wish you many pleasant hours of solving and learning!

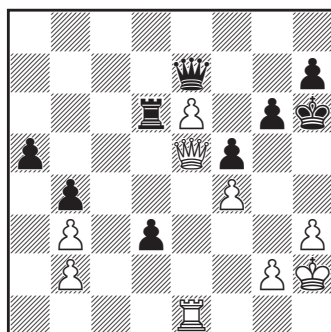
Šahovska Akedamija Šampiona
GM Ivan Ivanišević, GM Miloš Perunović, GM Branko Tadić

106. E. TOMASHEVSKY 2701 – S. LOMASOV 2533
Moscow 2020



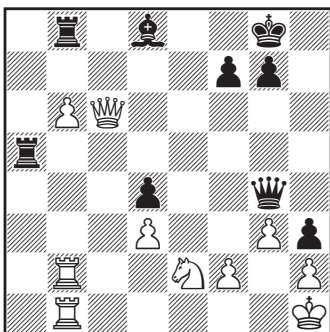
1...? +–

107. D. ANTÓN GUIJARRO 2674 – R. ROBSON 2670
chess24.com (Internet-m/2-b blitz) 2020



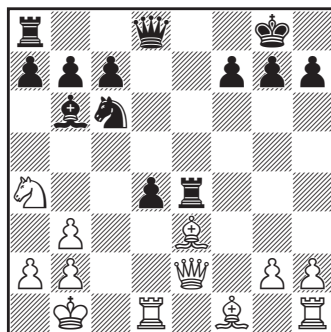
1 ? +–

108. I. NEPOMNIACHTCHI 2774 – DING LIREN 2805
Yekaterinburg (ct) 2020



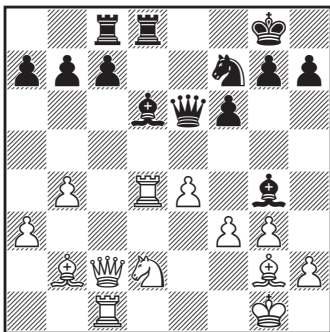
1...? =

109. N. STUDER 2546 – S. BRUNELLO 2528
Bad Ragaz 2020



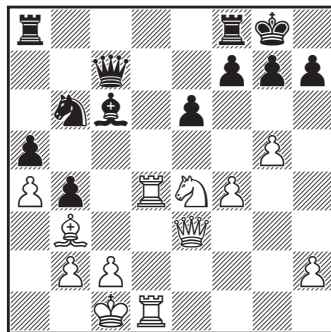
1. ? +–

110. P. TOWNSEND 2217 – M. SOČKO 2413
Great Britain 2020



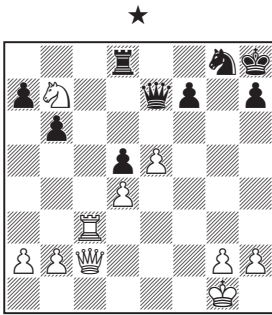
1...? +–

111. ZENG CHONGSHENG 2567 – LU SHANGLEI 2615
Thessalomiki 2020



1. ? +–

106. E. TOMASHEVSKY 2701 –
S. LOMASOV 2533

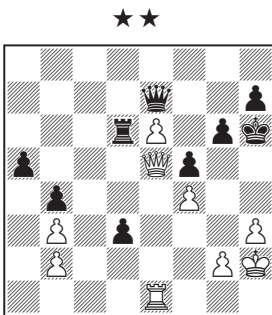


The b7-knight is trapped, however some further caution is much required.

1... ♖d7!

[1... ♖xb7?? 2. ♖c7+- E. Tomashevsky - S. Lomasov] **2. ♜d6 ♖xd6!+-**

107. D. ANTÓN GUIJARRO 2674 –
R. ROBSON 2670



The black king is in a really poor position, allowing White to win the game.

1. g4!

[1. ♖e3? D. Antón Guijarro - R. Robson] **♖d8** [1... ♖c6 2. g5+ ♔h5 3. ♖d5+-; 1... fxg4 2. ♖g5+ ♖xg5 3. fxg5+ ♔xg5 4. e7+-] **2. g5+ ♔h5 3. ♖e3** Black cannot prevent the opposing king's arrival on g3 which leads to unstoppable mate. **3... ♖b7**

[3... d2 4. ♖d1 ♖d6 5. ♔g3+-] **4. e7 ♖e8 5. ♖xd3 ♖xe7 6. ♖xe7 ♖xe7 7. ♖f3+ ♔h4 8. ♖f2+ ♔h5 9. ♔g3 ♖e4 10. ♖d2+-** Followed by ♖d1.

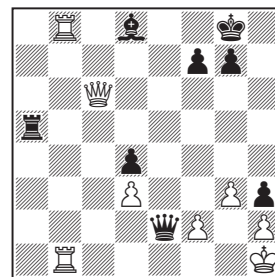
108. I. NEPOMNIACHTCHI 2774 –
DING LIREN 2805



The black h3-pawn is extremely important in restricting the white monarch. Black secures a draw by combining threats on the 1st rank and along the a8-h1 diagonal! Furthermore, he is obliged to execute a whole series of hard-to-find moves in order to reach the equality!

1... ♖xb6!!

[1... ♖c5? 2. ♖e8+ ♔h7 3. ♜g1 ♖xb6 4. ♖xd8 ♖xb2 5. ♖xb2 ♖c1 6. ♖h4+- I. Nepomniachtchi - Ding Liren] **2. ♖xb6 ♖xe2** [2... ♔xb6? 3. f3 ♖f5 4. ♖xb6 ♖a1+ 5. ♜g1+-] **3. ♖b8**

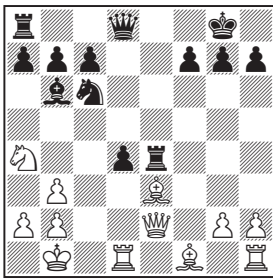


3... ♖e5!! The threat on the 1st rank forces White to return the material and accept an

equal ending! 4. ♖xd8+ ♕h7 5. ♖h8+ [5. ♖g1 ♜xf2 6. ♖h8+ ♕xh8 7. ♜c8+ ♕h7 8. ♜xh3+ ♕g6 9. ♜g4+=] ♕xh8 6. ♜c8+ ♕h7 7. ♜xh3+ ♕g6 8. ♕g1 ♜xd3=

b5+-] ♗xd6 3. fxf4 cxb4 4. ♜b1 [4. ♜a4 ♖xc1+ 5. ♕xc1 ♜c8 6. ♗b3 (6. ♕b2 ♜c5+ 7. ♕h1 ♗c4+-) ♜c2+-]

109. N. STUDER 2546 –
S. BRUNELLO 2528



White breaks the pin in a very elegant fashion and retains a piece.

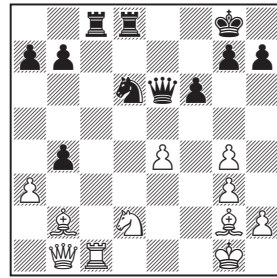
1. ♕g5! ♜d5 2. ♜b5 [2. ♗c3! ♖xe2 3. ♗xd5 ♖e5 4. ♗xb6 axb6 5. ♕f4+-] ♜e6 3. ♜c4 ♜g4 4. ♕d3+-

110. P. TOWNSEND 2217 –
M. SOČKO 2413



The opening of the c-file proves to be deadly for White!

1... c5! 2. ♖xd6 [2. ♖d5 cxb4+-; 2. ♖c4



4... ♗b5! 5. ♖xc8 ♜xc8 6. ♜a2+ ♕h8 7. ♜c4 bxa3 8. ♜xb5 axb2 9. ♜xb2 ♜c5+ 0 : 1

111. ZENG CHONGSHENG 2567 –
LU SHANGLEI 2615

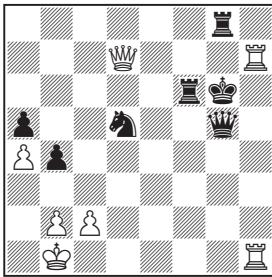


White sacrifices his remaining knight thus destroying Black's king pawn shelter. Furthermore, by advancing the f-pawn White's bishop starts playing an important role in the attack. Also, the 4th rank is being cleared in the process, so the white rook can shift to the kingside very quickly.

1. ♗f6+!! gxf6 2. gxf6 ♕h8 3. f5 ♜xh2 4. fxe6 fxe6

[4... ♜h5 5. e7 ♖fe8 6. ♖d8+-] 5. f7 ♕d5 [5... ♖xf7 6. ♜xe6+-] The black queen is overloaded with defensive tasks, especially protecting the long a1-h8 diagonal, allowing

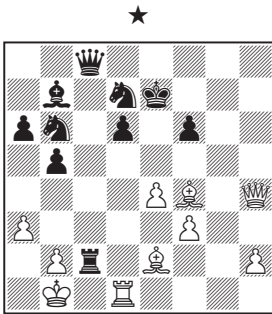
White to strike with: **6. ♖h4!** [Also, White wins after 6. ♖xd5! ♜xd5 7. ♙xd5 ♖ad8 (7... b3 8. ♖d2+-; 7... ♖a6 8. ♖g1+-) 8. ♖g5+-] **♖d6 7. ♖f2 ♖e5** [7... e5 8. ♙xd5 ♜xd5 9. ♖f5! h6 10. ♖xd5+-] **8. ♙xd5 ♜xd5** [8... exd5 9. ♖dh1 ♖g5+ 10. ♖b1 h6 11. ♖xh6+ ♖g7 12. ♖h7+ ♖g6 13. ♖xb6+-] **9. ♖dh1 ♖g5+** [9... ♖e3+ 10. ♖xe3 ♜xe3 11. ♖xh7#; 9... ♜f6] **10. ♖b1 ♖g7 11. ♖xh7+ ♖g6 12. ♖e2 ♖xf7** [12... ♖e3 13. ♖g4+ ♖f6 14. ♖h4+ ♖e5 15. ♖e1+-; 12... ♜f4 13. ♖e4+ ♖f5 14. ♖7h6+ ♖g5 (14... ♖g7 15. ♖d4+ e5 16. ♖h7+ ♖f6 17. ♖d6+ ♜e6 18. ♖1h6+ ♖g5 19. ♖h5+-) 15. ♖e3 ♖xf7 16. ♖1h4+-] **13. ♖xe6+ ♖f6 14. ♖d7 ♖g8**



15. ♖7h6+! ♖xh6 16. ♖g1+ [16... ♖g5 17. ♖xg5+ ♖xg5 18. ♖xd5+-] **1 : 0**



112. K. ALEKSEENKO 2698 - M. VACHIER-LAGRAVE 2767

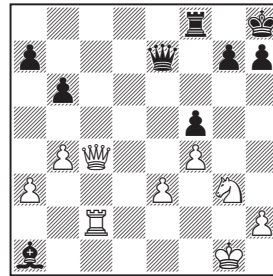


The black king is in danger, but a strong counter-attack may save the day.

1... ♖xb2+! 2. ♖xb2 ♜a4+ 3. ♖b1 ♜c3+ 4. ♖a1 [4. ♖b2 ♜a4+=] **♜xd1 5. ♖h7+ ♖d8 6. ♖g8+ ♖e7 7. ♖h7+** [After the queen swap an equal ending ensues 7. ♖xc8 ♙xc8 8. ♙xd1 ♜e5=] **♖d8=**



113. S. LOMASOV 2533 - E. NAJER 2661

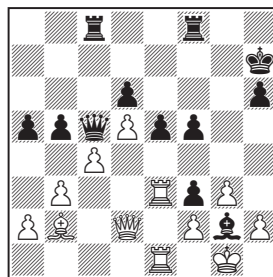


White exploits the back-rank weakness in Black's camp and wins a pawn!

1. ♜xf5! ♖d7 [1... ♖xf5? 2. ♖e4! ♖f8 3. ♖e6 ♖f6 4. ♖c8+-] **2. ♜g3±**



114. J. TOMCZAK 2605 - LI CHAO 2683

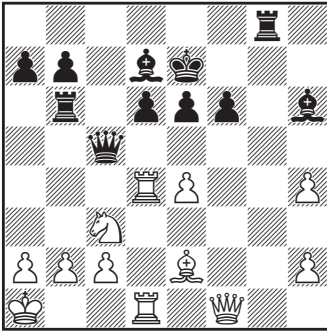


Black's bishop is stranded on g2, while his king is exposed. Therefore, White must find the way to the enemy king.

1. ♙xe5! dx5 2. ♖xe5 ♖f6

482. A. GRISCHUK 2777 –
G. OPARIN 2652
lichess.org (Internet-m/6-blitz) 2020

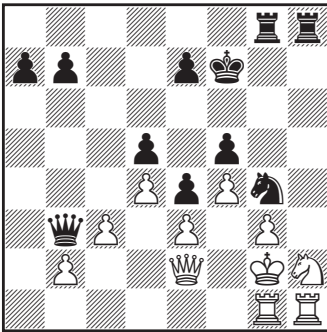
★★



1...? -+

484. A. STEFANOVA 2466 –
MAX. LAGARDE 2651
Sitges 2020

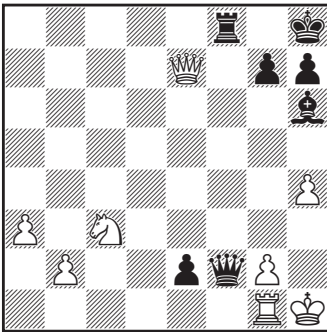
★★



1...? -+

486. DANIIL DUBOV 2702 –
T. RADJABOV 2765
chess24.com (Internet-m1/4-rapid) 2020

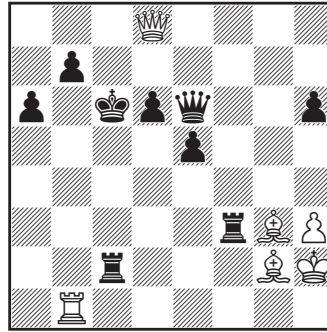
★★



1...? -+

483. W. SO 2770 –
M. VACHIER-LAGRAVE 2784
chess24.com (Internet-m1/2-rapid) 2020

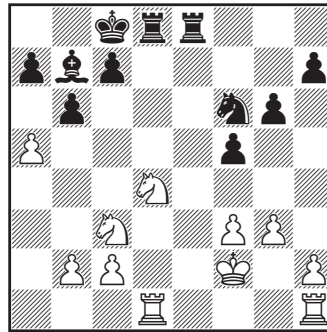
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1...? -+

485. HI. NAKAMURA 2736 –
L. ARONIAN 2781
chess24.com (Internet-m2/2-rapid) 2020

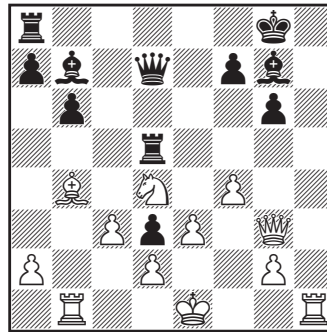
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1...? -+

487. W. SO 2770 –
M. VACHIER-LAGRAVE 2784
chess24.com (Internet-m3/2-rapid) 2020

★★



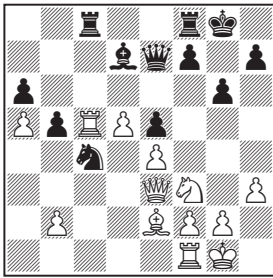
1. ? +

1. ♖e2! ♜e6 [1... ♔d7 2. ♗xg7+ ♗xg7 3. ♖xe8+ ♝f7 4. ♙xg7+-] 2. ♖xe6! 1 : 0

1... ♙c1! [1... ♗e5∞ A. Grischuk - G. Oparin] 2. ♖xc1 ♗xd4+-

481. N. STUDER 2582 -
A. FIER 2558

★★

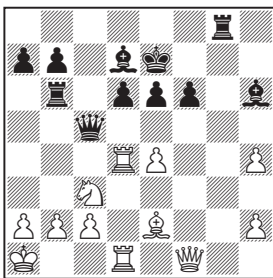


White's major pieces, queen and rook, are under attack. However, he manages to seize a decisive edge by launching counterattack on the black queen.

1. d6! ♗xd6 2. ♖d5 ♜xe3 [2... ♗e6 3. ♙xc4 bxc4 4. ♖xe5+-] 3. ♖xd6 ♜xf1 4. ♖xd7 ♜g3 [4... ♖c2 5. ♙xf1 ♖xb2 6. ♜xe5 ♖a2 7. ♜c6+-] 5. fxg3+-

482. A. GRISCHUK 2777 -
G. OPARIN 2652

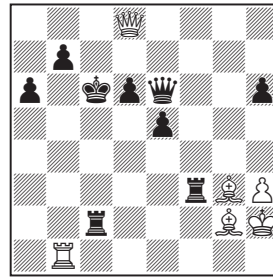
★★



This position derived from the Richter-Rausser Sicilian, with the b6-rook adding some subtlety. How can Black benefit from it?

483. W. SO 2770 -
M. VACHIER-LAGRAVE 2784

★

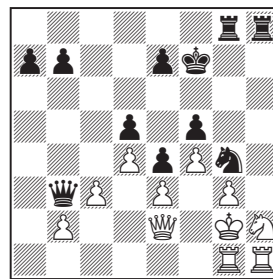


Black liquidates into the queen endgame with a few extra pawns.

1... ♖xg2+! 2. ♝xg2 ♖xg3+ 0 : 1

484. A. STEFANOVA 2466 -
MAX. LAGARDE 2651

★★



The white pieces are passively positioned, so Black crashes through in style!

1... ♜xe3+! 2. ♗xe3 ♗xb2+ 3. ♗f2 [3. ♝f1 ♖xh2+-] ♖xg3+! The point of Black's play! 4. ♝f1 [4. ♝xg3 ♖g8+ 5. ♝h3 ♗xf2+-] ♗b1+ 5. ♗e1 ♖xg1+ 6. ♖xg1 ♗d3+ 7. ♗e2 ♖xh2 8. ♗xd3 exd3+-