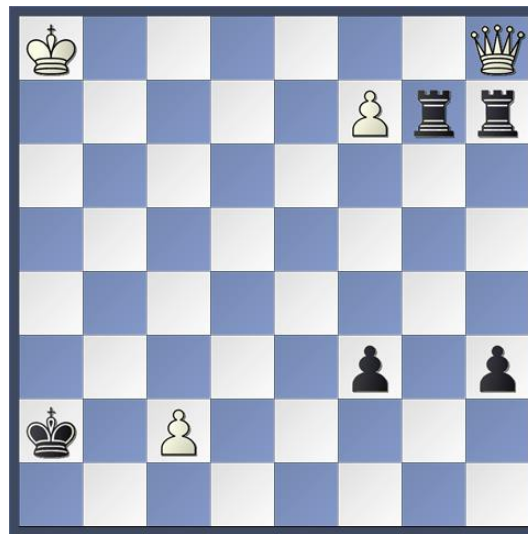(1)
Árpád Rusz
Marwitz-100 MT, 2016
Special Prize
- version -

White wins

The try, the thematic try, and the solution all feature different systematic movements:

Try: **1.f8Q? Ra7+ 2.Kb8 Rab7+!** 2...Rhb7+? 3.Kc8 Rc7+ 4.Kd8 Rd7+ 5.Ke8 Re7+ 6.Qxe7+– **3.Kc8 Rbc7+ 4.Kd8 Rcd7+ 5.Ke8 Rde7+ 6.Qxe7 Rxh8+ 7.Kd7 h2 8.Qf7+ Kb1 9.Qb3+ Kc1=** 9...Ka1? 10.Qc3++–

Getting another queen didn't work so white has to try capturing one of the rooks before promotion. At first sight, it seems more logical to leave a rook on g7 (and not on h7 behind a passed pawn).

Thematic try: **1.Qxg7? Rxg7 2.f8Q h2 3.Qxf3** Now 3...Rh7? would lose after 4.Qh1. Although 3...Rg1? seems better, it also loses because of a Queen staircase manoeuvre on the a and b-files from b3 to b8! 4.Qb3+ Ka1 5.Qa3+ Kb1 6.Qb4+ Ka1 (6... Kc1 7.Qf4+ +–) 7.Qa5+ Kb1 8.Qb6+ Ka1 (8...Kc1 9.Qh6+ +–) 9.Qa7+ Kb1 10.Qb8+ +–
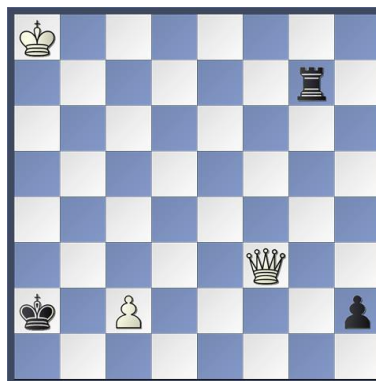
3...Rg8+!!

Paradoxically, black lets the white king to escape from the eight rank! **4.Kb7 Rg1!** Only now!

Another check would be fatal: 4...Rg7+?
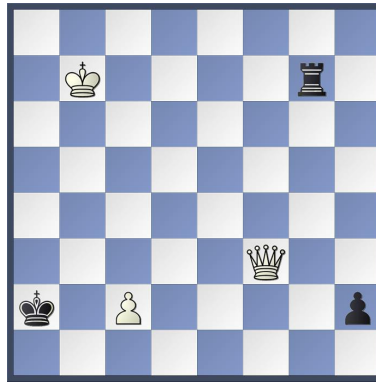
5.Kc8!!

In order to win, the white king needs to go back to the 8th rank! (5.Kc6? Rg1 6.Qb3+ Ka1 7.Qa3+ Kb1 8.Qb4+ Ka1 9.Qa5+ Kb1 10.Qb6+ Kc1!= and 11.Qh6+ is impossible) 5...Rg8+ 6.Kd7!+– **5.Qb3+ Ka1 6.Qa3+ Kb1 7.Qb4+ Ka1(2) 8.Qa5+ Kb1 9.Qb6+ Ka1(2) 10.Qa7+ Kb1(2)=**


Solution: **1.Qxh7! Rxh7** Surprisingly, it is better for white to leave black's rook behind one of the dangerous pawns than to have it on g7 as in the thematic try.
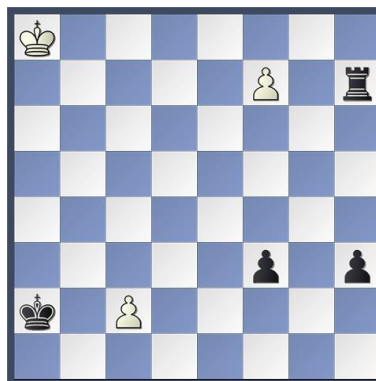

2.f8Q f2! 2...h2 6.Qg8++– **3.Qxf2** 3.Qg8+? Ka1! 4.Qxh7 f1Q=; 3.c4? Rh8! 4.Qxh8 f1Q=**3...h2** Unfortunately for white, the queen cannot reach h1 in one move. **4.c4+! Kb3 5.Qf3+ Kb4!** 5...Kxc4 6.Qe4++– **6.Qh1 Kc5!**
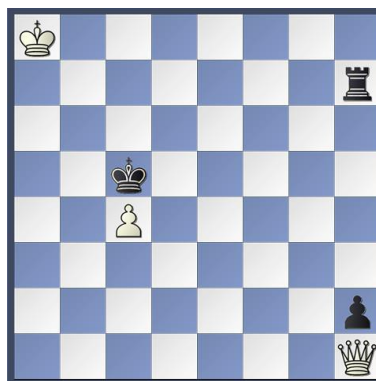
Now the white king is stuck on the eight rank. The plan that looks logical is starting to move the white king towards the rook. But it doesn't work yet! While the black king is on c5 the rook can leave the seventh rank (e.g. by moving to h5). **7.Qd5+ Kb4 8.Qd2+ Kc5 9.Qf2+ Kb4 10.Qb2+ Kc5 11.Qb5+ Kd4 12.Qd5+ Kc3 13.Qh1 Kd4** The black king is not on c5 so the white king can make a move towards the rook! **14.Kb8!** The first step. **14...Kc5** Back to c5... White needs to repeat this 8-move-long manoeuvre to gain a tempo for another king move.
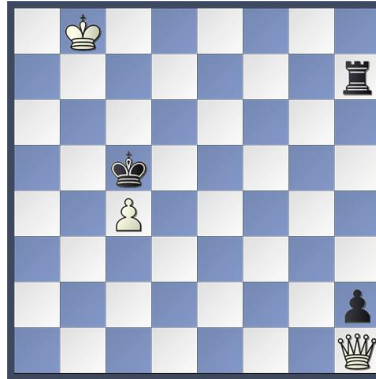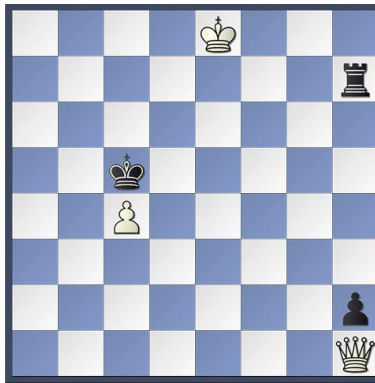

15.Qd5+ Kb4 16.Qd2+ Kc5 17.Qf2+ Kb4 18.Qb2+ Kc5 19.Qb5+ Kd4 20.Qd5+ Kc3 21.Qh1 Kd4 22.Kc8! The second step. **22...Kc5**
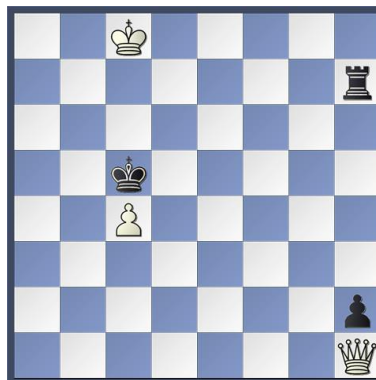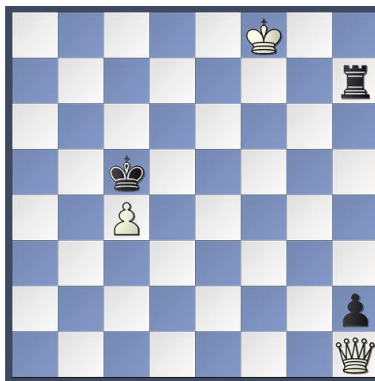

23.Qd5+ Kb4 24.Qd2+ Kc5 25.Qf2+ Kb4 26.Qb2+ Kc5 27.Qb5+ Kd4 28.Qd5+ Kc3 29.Qh1 Kd4 30.Kd8! The third step. **30...Kc5**
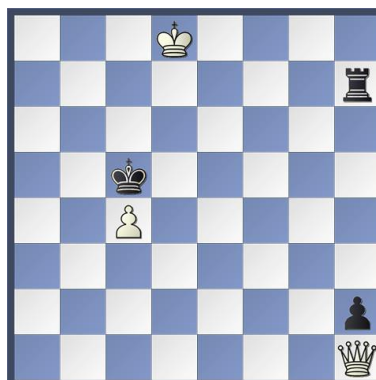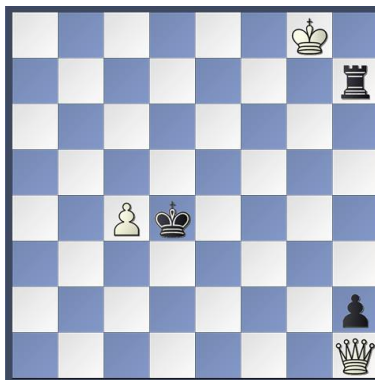

31.Qd5+ Kb4 32.Qd2+ Kc5 33.Qf2+ Kb4 34.Qb2+ Kc5 35.Qb5+ Kd4 36.Qd5+ Kc3 37.Qh1 Kd4 38.Ke8! The fourth step. **38...Kc5**

39.Qd5+ Kb4 40.Qd2+ Kc5 41.Qf2+ Kb4 42.Qb2+ Kc5 43.Qb5+ Kd4 44.Qd5+ Kc3 45.Qh1 Kd4 46.Kf8! The fifth step. **46...Kc5**


47.Qd5+! It is still too early to attack the rook: 47.Kg8? Rh5! 48.Kg7 Kb6! = **47...Kb4 48.Qd2+ Kc5 49.Qf2+ Kb4 50.Qb2+ Kc5 51.Qb5+ Kd4 52.Qd5+ Kc3 53.Qh1 Kd4 54.Kg8! +-** The last step along the 8th rank.


The white king will finally escape from the eight rank. White has a winning position. The last move was exactly the 50th one since the last capture or pawn push (4.c4+) so, according to the FIDE rules, this position would be a draw! Fortunately, endgame study composition codex doesn't care about that artificial "draw by 50 moves" rule!
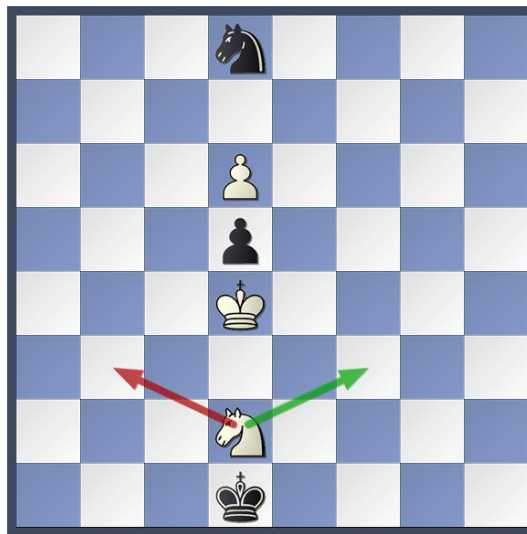
White wins

Thematic try: **1. Nb3? Ne6+! 2. Ke5!** 2. Kxd5 Nf8 3. Nd4 Kd2 4. Ne6 Nd7 5. Kc6 Ne5+ 6. Kd5 Nd7 positional draw **2... Nf8 3. Nc5 d4 4. Kf6 Kc2 5. Kf7 d3 6. Nxd3 Nd7 7. Ke8 Nf6+!** 7... Nb6? 8. Nc5 Kc3 9. Na4+! = **8. Ke7 Nd5+ 9. Ke6 Nb6 10. Nb4+ Kb3**
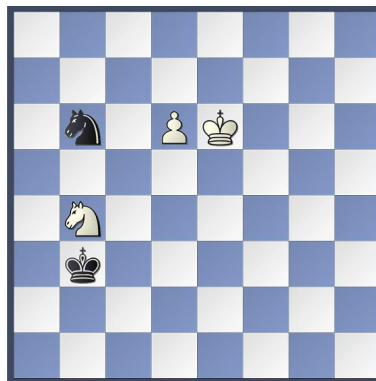
Position X'

12. Nd5 Unfortunately, the white knight must block the d5 square. **11... Na4! 12. d7** 12... Kd5 was not possible anymore. **12... Nc5+ =**

Black thematic try: 1... Nc6+? 2. Kxd5 Nb8 3. Nc5 Kc2 4. Na6! Nd7 5. Ke6 Nb6 6. Nc7 Kb3
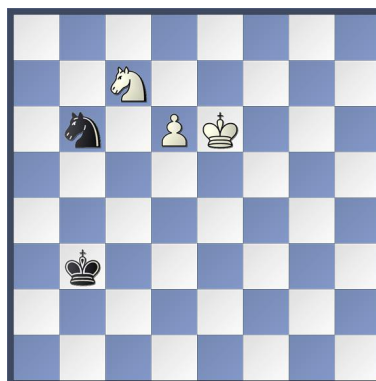
7. Na8!!

The white knight leaves the d5 square empty for the king. 7... Na4 8. Kd5! +-

Solution: **1. Nf3! Nc6+!** The black knight tries to stay on the other flank compared to the white knight's position. 1... Ke2 2. Ne5 Ne6+ 3. Kxd5 Nf8 4. Ng6! +- **2. Kc5!** 2. Kxd5? Nb8 3. Nd4 Kd2 4. Nc6 Nd7 5. Ke6 Nc5+ 6. Kd5 Nd7 positional draw **2... Nb8 3. Ne5 d4! 4. Kb6!** There is no time to pick the pawn! **4... Ke2 5. Kb7!** The black knight is caught but it will manage to escape. **5... d3 6. Nxd3** There was no time to pick the black knight. **6... Nd7 7. Kc8!** This is the best square to avoid some nasty knight forks. 7. Kc6? Nf8! 8. Ne5 Kd2! (8... Ke3? 9. Kd5 = mutual zugzwang) 9. Ng6 Nxg6 10. d7 Ne5+ = **7... Nb6+!** Before going to the longer flank, the black knight tries to chase the king to a less favourable square. **8. Kc7 Nd5+ 9. Kc6 Nf6** By pushing the white king to c6, black has managed to dismiss g4 as a square for a knight sacrifice. **10. Nf4+ Kf3**
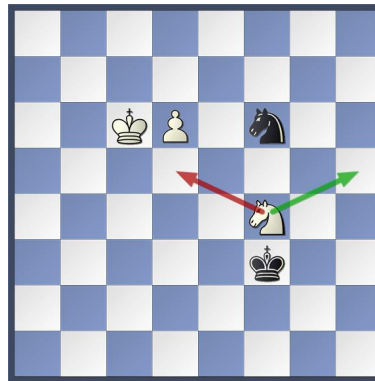

Position X

We have a situation similar to the initial position: the attacked knight has to decide again which way to go. **11. Nh5!!** The white knight finds another square to sacrifice itself using the extra file. 11. Nd5? is bad because it blocks the d5 square: 11... Ng4! 12. d7 Ne5+ = **11... Ng4 12. Kd5! +-** The white king returns to the d-file which was the symmetry axis of the initial position. This move is the reason why the d5 square was left empty!

It is paradoxical that the knight is better placed on the edge of the board (h5) or even on a corner square (a8) than in the centre (d5)!

(3)
Árpád Rusz
JPA 85 JT
2017
Special Honourable Mention
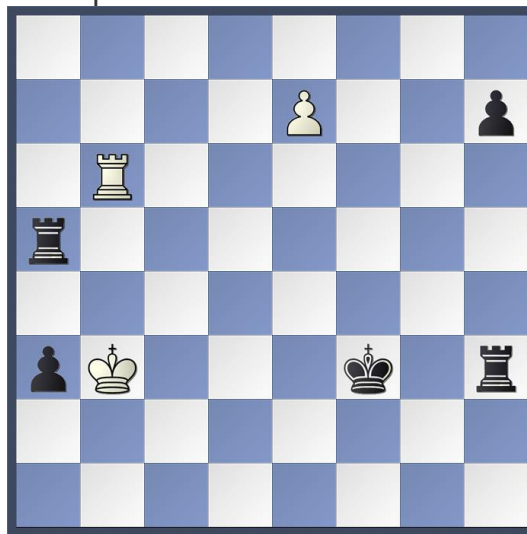
Draw

Black has exactly twice as much material than white so it looks very natural to start with a queen promotion. But that would be wrong as black wins by an inner study with two echo checkmates: **1. e8=Q? a2 2. Rf6+ Kg2+ 3. Kc2** 3. Kc4 Ra4+! 4. Qxa4 Rh4+ -+ **3... a1=N+!** Black chooses to promote the pawn to a knight! 3... Rc3+? 4. Kd2 Rd5+ 5. Ke2 Rc2+ 6. Ke3 Rc3+ 7. Ke2 =

Variation A:

4. Kb2 Rb3+ 5. Kc1 Rc5+ 6. Kd2 6. Kd1 Rb1+ 7. Ke2 Rc2+ 8. Kd3 Rd1+ 9. Ke3 Re1+ -+ **6... Rc2+ 7. Kd1 Rb1#**
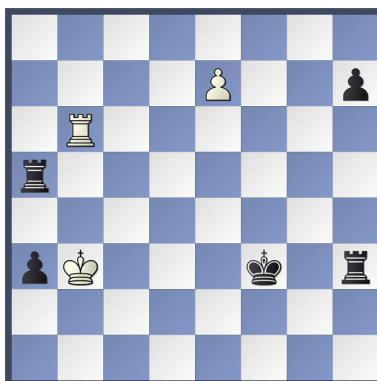

Variation B:

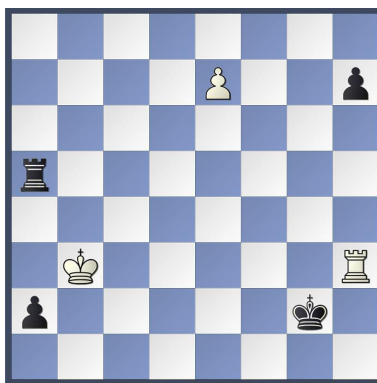**4. Kd1 Rh1+ 5. Kd2 Ra2+ 6. Kd3 Rd1+ 7. Kc3 Rc2+ 8. Kb4 Rb1+ 9. Ka3 Rb3+ 10. Ka4 Ra2#**
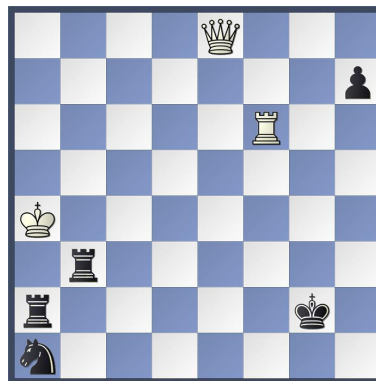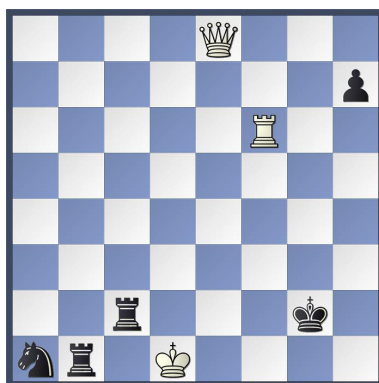
echo checkmates

Let's go back to the initial position of the study. The actual solution starts with a surprising sacrifice:


1. Rh6!!

1...a2! 1... Rxh6 2. e8=Q a2 3. Qf7+! (3. Qf8+? Kg2 4. Qg7+ (4. Qxh6 a1=Q -+) 4... Rg6 5. Qb2+ Kh3 6. Qc3+ Rg3 -+) 3... Kg2 4. Qb7+! Kg1 5. Qg7+ Rg6 6. Qd4+ = **2. Rxh3+ Kg2**

3. Rh1!!

3. e8=Q? a1=Q 4. Qe4+ Kxh3 5. Qf3+ Kh4 6. Qf4+ Kh5 -+ **3... Kxh1** 3... Re5 4. Ra1 Rxe7 5. Rxa2+ Kg3 6. Ra5 Rc7 7. Rd5! Kg4 8. Rd4+ Kg5 9. Rd5+ Kg6 10. Rd6+ Kg7 11. Rd5! Rc6 12. Kb4! Kg6 13. Kb5 Rc8 14. Rd6+ Kg5 15. Rd5+ Kg4 16. Rd4+ Kg3 17. Rd3+ (17. Rd5? Rh8 -+) 17... Kg4 18. Rd4+ Kg5 19. Rd5+ Kg6 20. Rd6+ perpetual check) **4. e8=Q** Finally, the pawn promotes to a queen. **4... a1=Q 5. Qe4+ Kh2**
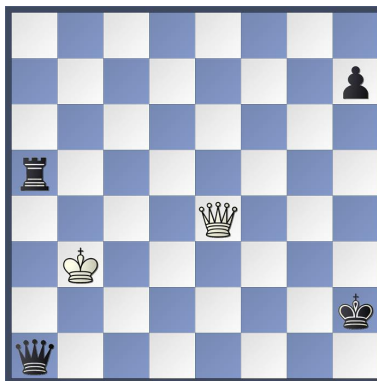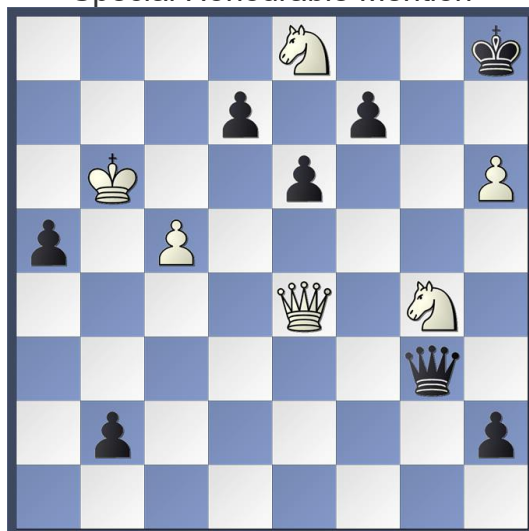

6. Qh4+ Kg2 7. Qg4+ Kf2 8. Qf4+ Ke2 9. Qe4+ Kd2 9... Kf2 10. Qf4+ Kg2 11. Qg4+ Kh2 12. Qh4+ perpetual check **10. Qd4+! Qxd4** stalemate
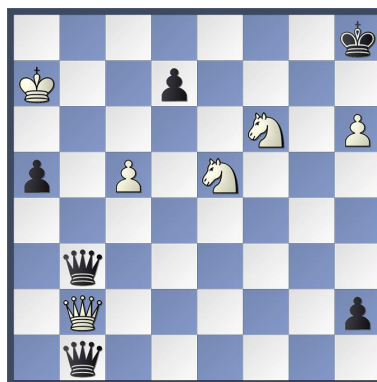
(4)
Árpád Rusz
Tarasiuk-50 JT
2017
Special Honourable Mention

White wins

1. Qd4+ e5 2. Nxe5 f6! 3. Nxf6 b1=Q+ 3... h1=Q 4. Nf7# **4. Ka7 Qgb3** 4... Qh7 5. Nxh7 Kxh7 6. Qxd7+ Kxh6 7. Ng4+ Kg5 8. Nxh2 +- **5. Qb2!!**
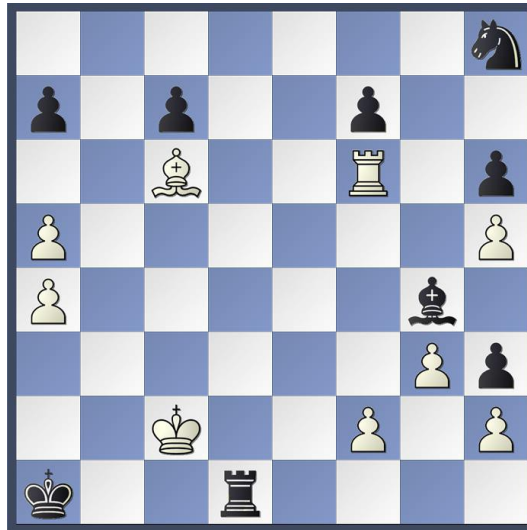

Sandwich Theme

5... Qb7+! Domino Theme 5... Q1xb2 6. Ng6#; 5... Q3xb2 6. Nf7#; 5... h1=Q 6. Qxb3 Qxb3 7. Ng6# **6. Qxb7 Qxb7+ 7. Kxb7 h1=Q+ 8. Kb6!** The king returns to its initial square after drawing a triangle on the board. 8. Ka7? Qxh6 9. Nf7+ Kg7 10. Nxh6 Kxf6 11. Kb6 a4 =; 8. Kc7? Qh2 =; 8. Kc8? Qa8+ =; 8. c6? Qxc6+! 9. Nxc6 dxc6 10. Kxc6 a4 = **8... Qxh6 9. Nf7+ +-**

(5)
Árpád Rusz
Joiţa MT
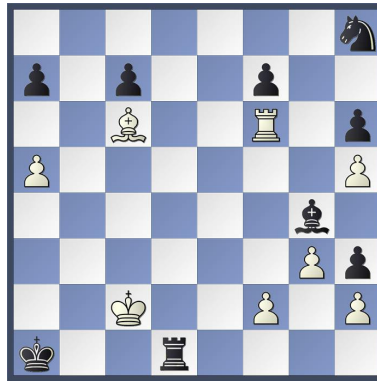2018
1st Honourable Mention

White wins

The a4 pawn prevents white's main plan (1.Rf4 followed by 2.Ra4#). In order to win, white will try to reach the same position but without the a4 pawn. But how does this magic trick of "disappearing pawn" work?

1. Bf3! Logical try: 1. Rf4? Rd6! -+; 1. f3? Rf1! = **1... Rd4** 1... Bxf3 2. Rxf3 Saavedra 2... Rh1 3. Ra3#; 1... Rd6 2. Rxd6 Bf5+ 3. Rd3! +- **2. Kc3!** Due to the white king's poor position, the exchange doesn't work: 2. Bxg4? Rxg4 3. Rxh6 Rg8 4. Rc6 Rb8! 5. Rxc7 Rb2+ 6. Kc3 Rxf2 7. Rxa7 Rxh2 = **2... Rxa4 3. Kb3 Bd7!** The rook cannot return to its previous place: 3... Rd4 Now the exchange does work because the white king has an improved position. 4. Bxg4! Rxg4 5. Rc6! Kb1 6. Rxc7 a6 7. Rc6! Rg8! 8. Rxa6 Kc1 9. Rd6! f5 (9...f6 10. Rd7! +-) 10. Rxh6 (10. Rd7? Rf8 11. a6 Nf7 12. f4 Ra8 13. a7 Nd7= zz) 10... Kd2 11. Re6! Nf7 12. f4 Rxg3! 13. Kb4! +- **4. Bc6! Rd4** 4... Bxc6 5. Rxc6 Saavedra 5... Rxa5 6. Rc1# **5. Kc3!** White cannot exchange yet: 5. Bxd7? Rxd7 6. Rxh6 Rd8 = **5... Rd1 6. Kc2 Bg4** The rook move is again irreversible, the exchange wins due to the better position of the white king: 6... Rd4 7. Bxd7 Rxd7 8. Rf4! +-
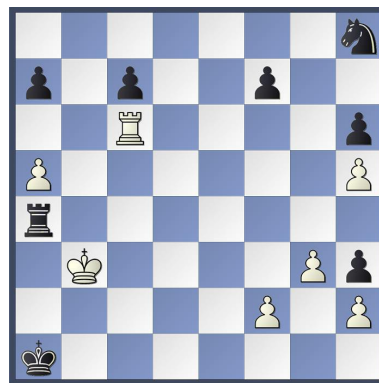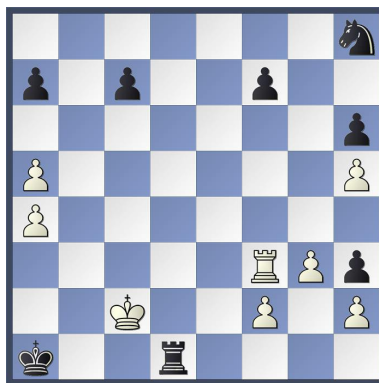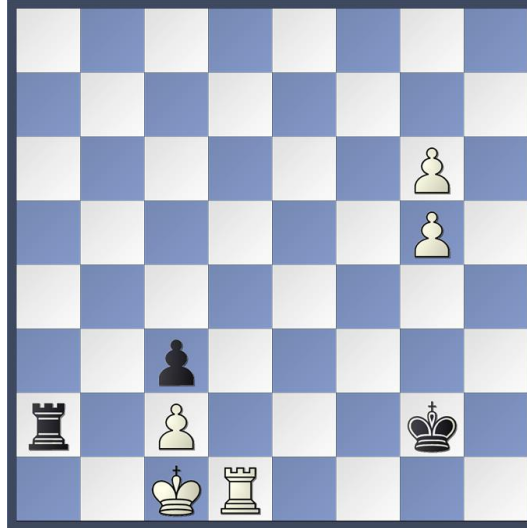

Saavedra's double attack (echo)

Now we are back to the initial position but the a4 pawn has disappeared! The magic trick worked!

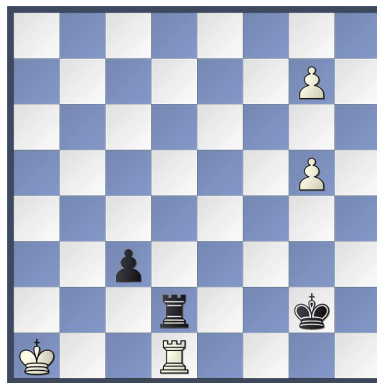The initial position
without the a4 pawn

White can carry out its main plan: **7. Rf4! Rd6 8. Ra4#**

White wins

1. Kb1 1. g7?? Ra1# **1... Rb2+ 2. Ka1!** The king moves to the first corner square. **2... Rxc2 3. g7 Rd2**

4. Rh1!!

This surprising sacrifice to the second corner is the only way to win. Besides attracting the black king to a worse square, the white rook has the idea – in case if it is not captured by the king - of getting to the other side of the yet unborn queen! 4. g8=Q? Rxd1+ 5. Ka2 c2 =; 4. Rxd2+? cxd2 5. g8=Q d1=Q+ =; 4. Rc1? Rd8 =

Thematic try: 4. Rf1? This move also attracts the black king to a worse square, but as we will see, it has some negative effect few moves later. 4... Rd8 (4... Kxf1? 5. g8=Q Rd1+ 6. Ka2 c2 7. Qc4+ +-) 5. Rf8 Rd1+ 6. Ka2 c2 7. g8=Q?? (7. Rc8 =) 7... c1=Q -+
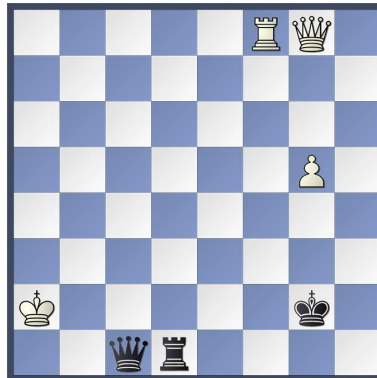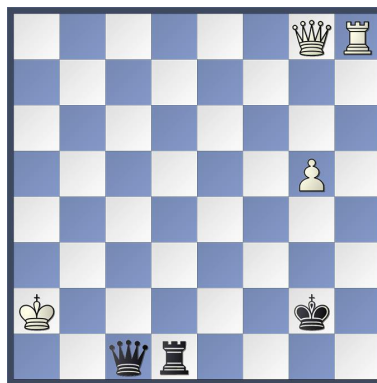

Position X'

In a QR/QR endgame, the winner is usually the one who gives the first check. Now 8. Qa8+ is impossible, and black is going to win!

Let's return to the main line.

4... Rd8 4... Kxh1 5. g8=Q Rd1+ 6. Ka2 c2 7. Qh7+ +- **5. Rh8!** This is the third move to a corner square! **5... Rd1+ 6. Ka2 c2 7. g8=Q c1=Q** Unlike in the thematic try, here the white rook doesn't block the queen's path to the fourth corner. 7... Ra1+ 8. Kb3! (8. Kxa1? c1=Q+ =) 8... c1=Q 9. Qd5+ +-

Position X

8. Qa8+! White completes the task of visiting all corners of the board. **8... Kg3 9. Qb8+ Kg4 10. Qb4+ Qf4 11. Rh4+! +-** The game suddenly ends with another rook sacrifice.