

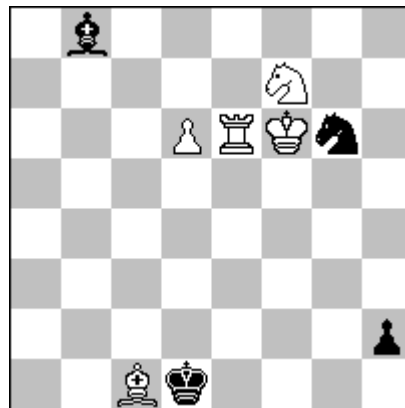
## Tata Steel-75 AT 2013 - Provisional Award

The Tata Steel Chess Tournament, arguably the most prestigious contemporary chess event has celebrated its 75th edition this year and, among other festivities, a special composing tourney was announced by its organizing committee with a generous prize fund. I was expecting a great happening and indeed my colleague composers did live to the expectations in regards to both quantity and quality and I am grateful to each and every one of them for their much appreciated efforts.

I received 89 entries from our devoted tourney director Harold van der Heijden in anonymous PGN files (one with the full solutions and another one with just the artistic lines) as well as a detailed report specifying soundness and originality of all entries. The general standard was one of the highest I have witnessed for years and the decision making turned to be a rather tough job.

As we are celebrating a major over the board event, I have tried to pay a special attention to “human” and players’ friendly entries. I sincerely hope that the following selection achieves this aim. It certainly is a combative one with a clear majority of winning studies over the more peaceful ones, notably among the prize winners.

**Y. Bazlov**  
1st – 2nd Prize

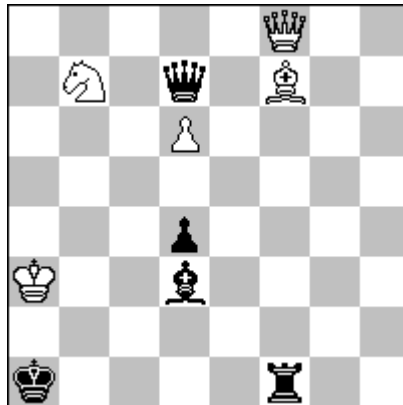


Win

**1.d7 Bc7 2.Rd6+ Ke1** (2...Bxd6 3.d8Q h1Q 4.Bg5 Qf3+ 5.Kxg6 Qd3+ 6.Kh6 wins) **3.Rc6 Ne5!** (3...Nf8 4.Bf4 Nxd7+ 5.Kf5 Kf1 6.Rc1+ Kg2 7.Rc2+ Kg1 8.Be3+ Kf1 9.Rxc7 wins) **4.Nxe5** (4.Rxc7? Nxd7+ draws) **4...Bd8+** (4...Bxe5+ 5.Kxe5 h1Q 6.Bd2+ Ke2 7.Rd6 wins) **5.Kg7 h1Q 6.Bg5!! Bxg5** (6...Qd5 7.Bxd8 Qxe5+ 8.Bf6 wins) **7.d8Q! Qxc6! 8.Qa5+! Bd2 9.Qa1+ Qc1 10.Nd3+ Kd1 11.Qa4+!** (11.Nxc1? Bc3+ 12.Qxc3 stalemate!) **11...Qc2 12.Qg4** mate.

1st – 2nd Prize: No.15 - **Yuri Bazlov (Russia)**. This outstanding entry was initially the outright winner of this tourney thanks to its rich tactical play, highlighted by an amazing position of two newborn queens, actively hanging in the open at the very same moment. Just before writing the textual part of the award it was discovered that the final mate had appeared earlier in the try of an incorrect study by Lamoss (HHdbIV#28782). Despite this blemish I have decided to leave this magnificent study at the top of the award in view of its multiple other artistic merits. Nevertheless in view of the new finding it seems to me more appropriate to share the top honours.

**O. Pervakov & K. Sumbatyan**  
1st – 2nd Prize

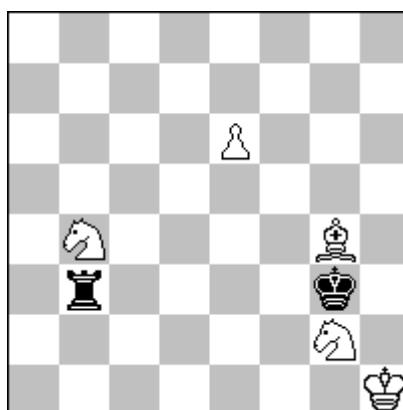


Win

**1.Qg7!** (1.Qh8? Qg4! draws) **1...Rf4!** (1...Qxb7 2.Qxd4+ Kb1 3.Qxd3+ wins) **2.Qg2!** (2.Qg1+? Bf1 3.Qh2 Rf3+ 4.Bb3 Rxb3+ Black wins) **2...Be2! 3.Qxe2 Qa4+! 4.Kxa4 d3+ 5.Qe4! Rxe4+ 6.Kb3 d2 7.Kc2** (7.Bh5? Kb1 8.Kc3 Re5! draws) **7...Rb4!** (7...Rd4 8.Bh5 Ka2 9.Bd1! Ka3 10.Kc3 Rd5 11.Kc4 wins) **8.Na5!** (8.Nc5? d1Q+ 9.Kxd1 Rd4+ 10.Kc1 Rc4+!, and 11.Bxc4 stalemate, or 11.Kd2 Rd4+! 12.Kc2 Rxd6 13.Nb3+ Ka2 14.Nd4+ Ka1! draws) **8...d1Q+ 9.Kxd1 Rd4+ 10.Kc1! Rd3! 11.Bg8!** zz (11.Bc4? Rxd6 12.Nb3+ Ka2 13.Nd4+ Ka3! 14.Nb5+ Kb4 15.Nxd6 Kc5 draws) **11...Rxd6 12.Nb3+ Ka2 13.Nd4+ Ka3** (13...Ka1 14.Nc2 mate) **14.Nb5+ Kb4 15.Nxd6** wins.

1st – 2nd Prize: No.23 – **Oleg Pervakov & Karen Sumbatyan (Russia)**. A breathtaking queen duel ends up in mutual neat royal sacrifices clearing the podium to a second phase: two minor pieces dominating a single rook with a subtle reciprocal zugzwang following **11. Bg8!!**

**D.Keith & M. Minski**  
3rd Prize



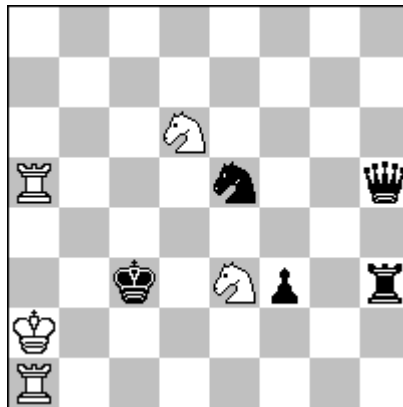
Win

**1.Bf5! Rf3!** (threatens Rf1 mate or Rxf5. 1...Rxb4 2.e7 Rb8 3.Bg6 wins) **2.Bd3 Kf2 3.Kh2 Rf6! 4.Bf5!** switchback **4...Rxf5** (4...Rh6+ 5.Bh3) **5.Nd3+ Ke2! 6.Ngf4+!** (6.e7? Rh5+ 7.Kg1 Rh8, or 6.Ndf4+? Kd2 7.e7 Re5 draw) **6...Kf1! 7.e7 Rf8! 8.Nh5!** (8.exf8Q? stalemate. 8.Ne2?)

Rh8+! draws, but not 8...Re8? 9.Ng3 mate) **8...Rh8 9.e8Q!**, and: **9...Rxe8 10.Ng3** mate, or **9...Rxb5+ 10.Kg3** (10.Qxh5? ideal stalemate) wins.

3rd Prize: No.64 – **Daniel Keith (France) & Martin Minski (Germany)**. One of the best miniatures I have seen lately. A lengthy and tense struggle to secure promotion evolves a wealth of artistic elements: stalemates, switchback, sacrifices and mates, all in a flowing sequence of events. Black's heroic counter-play against the white monarch along rank and file intensifies the thrill.

**M. Minski & A. Ruz**  
4th Prize

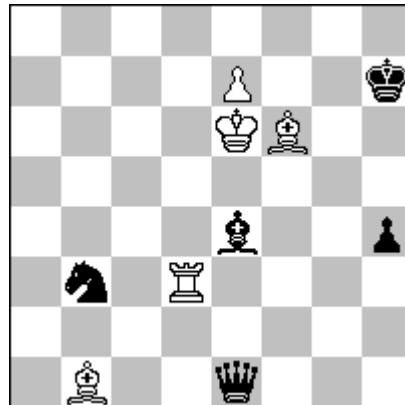


Win

**1.Rd5!** (threatens 2.Se4+. 1.Ra3+? Kd2!, or 1.Rc1+? Kd2! draw) **1...Rh2+! 2.Ka3 Nc4+!**  
**3.Ndxc4 Rh1!** (3...Qxd5 4.Rc1+! Kd4 5.Rd1+! Kc3 6.Rxd5 Rh1 7.Ka4 f2 8.Nd2 wins)  
**4.Nd1+!** (Thematic try: 4.Rad1? Qh7! and because of the obstacle wSc4 there is no check (mate) on c5. 4.Rxh1? Qxh1 draws. 4.Rxh5? Rxa1 mate) **4...Kxc4 5.Ne3+ Kc3 6.Rad1!**  
(threatens Rd3 mate) **6...Rxd1** (6...Qh7 7.Rc5 mate, compare with the thematic try) **7.Nxd1+ Kc2 8.Ne3+!** (8.Rxh5? Kxd1 9.Rf5 Ke2 10.Kb2 f2 draws) **8...Kc3 9.Rxh5** wins.

4th Prize: No.20 – **Martin Minski (Germany) & Árpád Ruzs (Hungary)**. An excellent logical study in which White has to get rid of his own knight in order to leave the c-file vacant. Both kings are subject to sharp threats of the heavy guns as part of the thematic mechanism.

**P. Krug**  
5th Prize



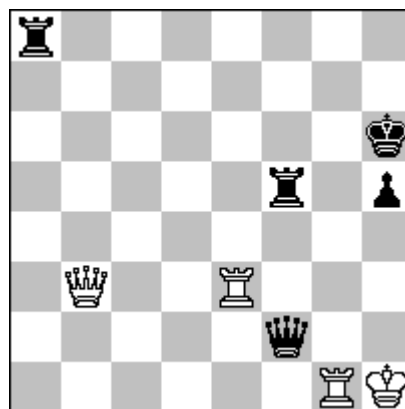
Win

**1.e8Q Bf5+!** (1...Bxd3+ 2.Be5 Nc5+ 3.Kf7 Qf2+ 4.Bf6) **2.Kxf5 Qxe8 3.Kf4 Qb8+ 4.Kg5!** (4.Kg4? Qc8+! 5.Kxh4 Nd4!, and 6.Rc3+ Nf5+, or 6.Rxd4+ Kh6 7.Rd6 Qg4+ 8.Kxg4 stalemate) **4...Qg8+ 5.Kxh4 Nd4! 6.Rg3+ Nf5+! 7.Bxf5+ Kh6 8.Rh3** (8.Rxg8? stalemate) **8...Qg2 9.Bd3** (or 9.Bb1) **9...Qg8 10.Be4 Qg1 11.Rh1 Qg8 12.Rh2 Qg1 13.Rh3 Qg8 14.Rh1 Qg1 15.Kh3 Qg8 16.Bb2 Qc8+ 17.Kh4 Qe6 18.Kg3+ Kg5 19.Bc1+ Kf6 20.Rh6+** wins.

5th Prize: No.11 – **Peter Krug (Austria)**. The white rook changes its role in the course of an exciting battery play against her majesty: from a front piece of a bishop battery to a rear piece in a king battery. The slight dual on the ninth move is of minor importance.

In view of the high standard I decided to award three special prizes to the following remarkable studies. All three of them might well have won the top honours in any other event and their only "drawback" is that they are definitely judge's friendly perhaps not players' friendly enough...

**S. Didukh**  
1st Special Prize

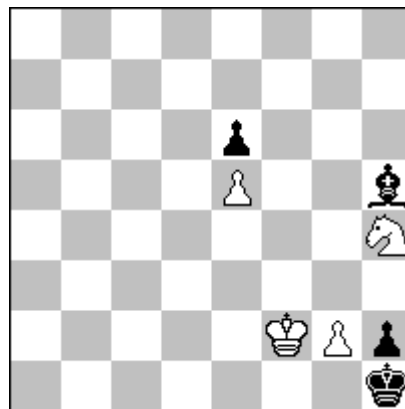


Win

**1.Reg3!** (1.Re6+? Kh7! 2.Qb7+ Rf7, and 3.Qe4+ Qf5! 4.Re5 Qxe4+ with check, or 3.Qb1+ Rf5! 4.Qb7+ Rf7 draws) **1...Raf8** (1...Rf6 2.Qd5! wins) **2.Rg6+!** (Try: 2.Qe6+? R5f6! 3.Rg6+ (3.Qd5 Qf5 4.Qd2+ Qf4 5.Qg2 Rg8! 6.Rxg8 Qh4+ 7.Qh2 Qe4+ 8.R8g2 Rf4! draws) 3...Kh7 4.Rg7+ (4.Qe7+ R8f7! 5.Rg7+ Kh6! draws) 4...Kh8 5.Rg8+ Kh7 6.R1g7+ Kh6 7.Rg6+ Kh7 White is unable to conquer Black's fortress, e.g. 8.R8g7+ Kh8 9.Rg8+ Kh7 10.Qe7+ R8f7! 11.R8g7+ Kh8 12.Qe8+ Rf8 13.Rg8+ Kh7 14.R6g7+ Kh6 15.Qxh5+ Kxh5 16.Rh7+ Rh6 draws) **2...Kh7 3.Rg7+ Kh8 4.Rg8+ Kh7 5.Qb7+! R8f7** (5...R5f7 6.Qb1+ Rf5 7.R1g7+ Kh6 8.Rxf8 Qh4+ 9.Kg2 Qf2+ 10.Kh3 Rf3+ 11.Rxf3 Qxf3+ 12.Rg3 wins) **6.R8g7+!** (Logical try: 6.R1g7+? Kh6 7.Rg6+ Kh7 8.R8g7+ Kh8 9.Qc8+ Rf8 10.Rg8+ Kh7, and: 11.Qd7+ R5f7! draws, because 12.Qd3 is not a check, or 11.Qc7+ R5f7 12.R8g7+ Kh8 13.Rxf7 Qh4+ 14.Kg2 Qe4+ 15.Kf2 Qd4+ draws) **6...Kh8 7.Qc8+ Rf8 8.Rg8+ Kh7 9.Qd7+! R5f7** (9...R8f7 10.R8g7+ Kh8 11.Qe8+ Rf8 12.Rg8+ Kh7 13.Qg6 mate) **10.Qd3+** with check **10...Qf5** (10...Rf5 11.R1g7+ Kh6 12.Rxf8 wins) **11.R8g5! Qxd3** without check! **12.Rxh5** mate.

1st Special Prize: No.12 – **Sergiy Didukh (Ukraine)**. An original battle of the heavy artillery, inspired by the game Ding - Szczepowski, played in Istanbul Olympiad last year, displays strong systematic and logical elements. The construction is surprisingly almost aristocratic.

**D. Blundell**  
2nd special Prize

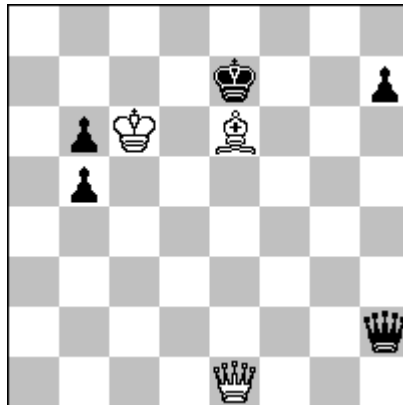


Win

**1.g3** (Thematic try: 1.g4? Bxg4 2.Ng6 Bf5 3.Nf8 Bh3 4.Nd7 Bg4 5.Nc5 Bf5 6.Nb3 Bh3 7.Nd2 Bg2 draws. 1.Kf1? Be2+ 2.Kf2 Bh5 draws) **1...Bf3 2.Ng6 Bh5 3.Nf4 Bg4 4.Nd3 Bf5 5.Nb4 Bg4 6.Na2 Bf5 7.g4 Bxg4 8.Nc1!** zz (8.Nb4? Bf5 9.Nc6 Bh3 10.Nd4 Bg4 and White cannot make progress; 8.Nc3? Bf3 9.Kxf3 Kg1 10.Ne2+ Kf1 11.Ng3+ Kg1 zz 12.Kg4 Kg2 13.Kh4 Kf2 14.Kh3 Kg1 15.Ne2+ Kf2 16.Ng3 Kg1 draws) **8...Be2** (8...Bd1 9.Nd3 Bg4 10.Nf4 wins) **9.Nb3 Bf3 10.Nc5 Bd5 11.Nd3** (11.Nd7? Be4 draws) **11...Bf3 12.Kxf3** zz **12...Kg1 13.Nf2 Kf1 14.Nh1 Kg1 15.Ng3 h1Q+ 16.Nxh1 Kxh1 17.Kf4** (or 17.Kg4) **17...Kg2 18.Kg5 Kf3 19.Kf6** wins.

2nd special Prize: No. 37 – **David Blundell (Great Britain)**. The general concept of a knight challenging the bishop's umbrella to access a cornered king, has already been dealt with as the composer himself pointed out: Krug f1h1 (#71705), but also Elkies c4a1 (#54373), Petren c2a1 (#41022). The present version nonetheless displays fresh elements and introduces a strong thematic try.

**R. Becker**  
3rd special Prize

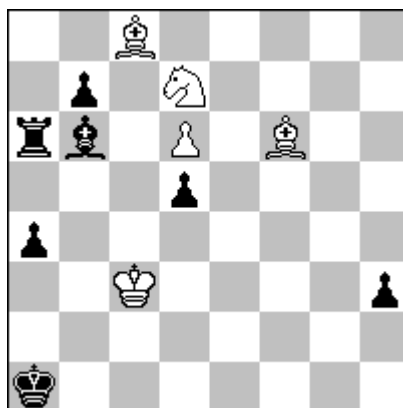


Win

**1.Bh3+! Kf8 2.Qb4+ Kf7 3.Qb3+ Kg7 4.Qc3+ Kg6 5.Qd3+ Kh6 6.Qe3+ Kh5 7.Qf3+ Kh6 8.Qf6+ Kh5 9.Qf5+ Kh6 10.Qe6+ Kg5 11.Qg4+ Kh6 12.Qh4+ Kg7 13.Qg5+ Kf7 14.Bg2! Ke8 15.Qg8+ Ke7 16.Qg7+ Ke8 (16...Ke6 17.Bh3+ Qxh3 18.Qd7+ wins) 17.Qg5! (17.Kb7? Qd6 18.Bc6+ Kd8, or 17.Bf3? Qh4 18.Bg4 Qh1+ 19.Kd6 Qh2+ 20.Ke6 Qa2+, or 17.Qd7+? Kf8 18.Qd8+ Kf7 19.Bd5+ Kg6 20.Be4+ Kh5 21.Qf6 Kg4 draw) 17...b4 (17...h6 18.Qg8+ Ke7 19.Qg7+ Ke8 20.Be4, or 17...Qg1 18.Qg8+ Ke7 19.Qg7+ Ke8 20.Kb7 wins) 18.Qg8+ Ke7 19.Qg7+ Ke8 20.Qg5 b5 21.Qg8+ Ke7 22.Qg7+ Ke8 23.Qg5 b3 24.Qg8+ Ke7 25.Qg7+ Ke8 26.Bf3! Qh4 (26...b2 27.Kb7 Qd6 28.Bh5+ Kd8 29.Qg8+ Ke7 30.Qf7+ Kd8 31.Qe8 mate. 26...Qh3 27.Qe5+ Kf8 28.Qf6+ Ke8 29.Kc5 wins) 27.Bg4! Qh1+ 28.Kd6 Qh2+ 29.Ke6 wins.**

3rd Special Prize: No.67 – **Richard Becker (USA)**. White repeats the same queen manoeuvre time and again until Black is running out of waiting pawn moves and is eventually forced to block a crucial line. This familiar concept is presented here with remarkable economy and utmost aesthetics.

**O. Pervakov**  
1st Honourable Mention

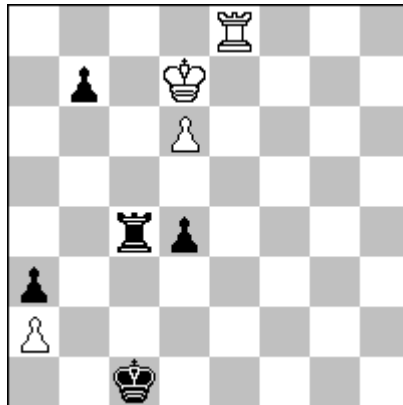


Win

**1.Kc2+!** (First battery. 1st thematic try: 1.Nxb6? h2! 2.Bxb7 h1Q 3.Kc2+ Ka2 4.Bxd5+ Qxd5 5.Nxd5 Rxd6 6.Nc3+ Ka1! 7.Ne4+ 2nd battery, but: 7...Rxf6 draws. 1.Bxb7? Bd4+! 2.Bxd4 Rxd6 3.Kc2+ Ka2 4.Nb6 h2 5.Bxd5+ Rxd5 6.Nxd5 h1Q 7.Nc3+ Ka1 8.Ne2+ Ka2 9.Nc1+ Qxc1+ draws) **1...Bd4!** (1...Ka2 2.Bxb7!, and 2...Ra5 3.Nxb6 Rc5+ 4.Kd3 h2 5.Nxd5! h1Q 6.Nb4+ 3rd battery 6...Kb3 7.Bxh1 wins, or 2...Bf2 3.Bxd5+ Ka3 4.Ne5! Rxd6 5.Be7 Bc5 6.Nc4+ Kb4 7.Nxd6 wins) **2.Bxd4+ Ka2 3.Nb6! h2! 4.Be6!** (2nd thematic try: 4.Bxb7? h1Q 5.Bxd5+ Qxd5 6.Nxd5 Rxd6, and: 7.Nc3+ Ka1! 8.Nb5+ 4th battery, but: 8...Rxd4 draws, echo - see 1st thematic try, or 7.Nb4+ Ka3 8.Bc5 Rd7! 9.Nd5+ Ka2 10.Nc3+ Ka1 11.Ba3 Rb7 (or 11...Rd2+) draws) **4...h1Q 5.Bxd5+ Qxd5 6.Nxd5 Rxd6 7.Nb4+ Ka3 8.Bc5!** (the same position as in the 2nd thematic try, but with bPb7), and: **8...Rh6 9.Nd3+!** 5th battery **9...Ka2 10.Nc1+ Ka1 11.Bd4** mate, or **8...Rd7 9.Nd5+!** again the 5th battery **9...Ka2 10.Nc3+ Ka1 11.Ba3! Rh7 12.Bb2** mate.

1st Honourable Mention: No. 29 – **Oleg Pervakov (Russia)**. Rich battery play with a fashionable logical element of avoiding a capture emphasized by a thematic try.

**N. Kralin & Y. Shvyrkov**  
2nd Honourable Mention

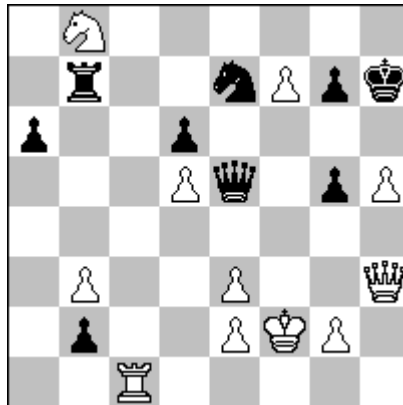


Draw

**1.Ke6!** (1.Re1+? Kc2! 2.Re2+ Kc3! 3.Re5 d3 4.Rd5 d2 5.Ke6 Rc6 6.Ke5 Rc8 7.d7 Rd8 8.Kd6 b6 9.Kc7 Rxd7+ 10.Rxd7 b5 wins) **1...d3 2.d7 d2 3.d8Q** (3.Rc8? Rc6+ 4.Rxc6+ bxc6 5.d8Q d1Q 6.Qb6 Qc2 7.Kd6 c5 wins) **3...d1Q** (3...Rc6+ 4.Kf7 d1Q 5.Qxd1+ Kxd1 6.Re3 Ra6 7.Rb3 b6 8.Ke6 draws) **4.Qxd1+** (4.Qg5+? Qd2 5.Qxd2+ Kxd2 6.Ra8 Rc3 7.Kd5 Kc1! 8.Ra7 b5 9.Rb7 Rc2! 10.Rxb5 Rxa2 11.Ra5 Rd2+ 12.Kc4 a2 13.Kc3 Rc2+ 14.Kb3 Kb1 wins) **4...Kxd1 5.Kd5!** (5.Ra8? Rc3 6.Kd5 Kc1! wins) **5...Rc2 6.Ra8! Rxa2 7.Kc4! Rc2+ 8.Kb3 a2 9.Rh8!** (9.Rg8? a1N+ 10.Ka3 Rc6! 11.Rg1+ Ke2 12.Rg2+ Kf3! wins) **9...a1N+! 10.Ka3 Rc6! 11.Rh1+ Ke2 12.Rh2+ Ke3 13.Rh3+! Kf4 14.Ka2! Nc2 15.Rb3, and 15...b6 16.Rxb6! Rxb6** stalemate!, or **15...Rc7 16.Rxb7! Rxb7** stalemate.

2nd Honourable Mention: No. 76 – **Nikolai Kralin & Yuri Shvyrkov (Russia)**. A natural and lively rook scene ending up in a stalemate following an underpromotion.

**S. Didukh**  
3rd Honourable Mention

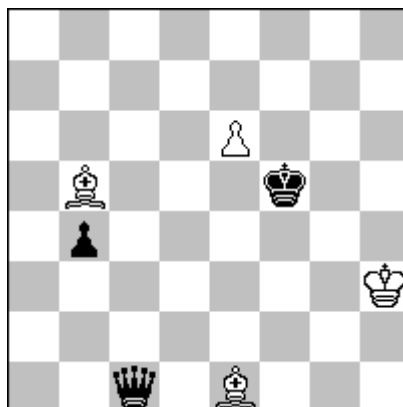


Win

**1.Nd7! Rxd7** (1...Qxd5 2.f8Q bxc1Q 3.h6 wins) **2.f8N+!** fork **2...Kg8!** (2...Kh8 3.Ng6+! fork 3...Nxb6 4.hxg6+ Kg8 5.Rc8+ wins. 2...Kh6 3.Nxd7 Qe4 4.Rh1 g4 5.Qg3 Nf5 6.Qf4+ with check, wins) **3.Nxd7 Qe4!** (3...bxc1Q 4.Nxe5 dxe5 5.Qe6+ Kf8 6.d6 wins) **4.Rg1!** (invisible ambush behind three pawns! 4.Rd1? g4 5.Qg3 Nf5 6.Qf4 no check 6...g3+ 7.Ke1 b1Q draws) **4...g4** (4...b1Q 5.Rxb1 g4 6.Qh1! g3+ 7.Kxg3 Nf5+ 8.Kh2 Nxe3 9.h6 wins) **5.Qf3! gxf3** (5...b1Q 6.Qf8+ Kh7 7.Rxb1 Nf5 8.Nf6+! gxf6 9.Qf7+ Kh8 10.Qxf6+ Kh7 11.Rd1 Qxe3+ 12.Ke1 wins) **6.Nf6+!** fork **6...gxf6** **7.gxf3+ Qg6!** **8.hxg6 Nxd5** **9.Rb1! Nc3** **10.Rxb2 Nd1+** fork **11.Ke1 Nxb2** **12.Kd2** wins.

3rd Honourable Mention: No. 71 – **Sergiy Didukh (Ukraine)**. In a middle-game like position Black is building up in secret the unexpected opening of the crowded g-file: a surprising triple ambush which should appeal to players of any level.

**S. Nosek**  
4th Honourable Mention



Draw

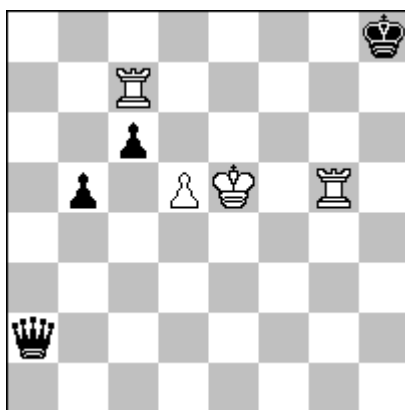
**1.e7!** (1.Bd7? Qxe1 2.e7+ Kf4 3.e8Q Qh1 mate) **1...Qe3+** **2.Bg3 b3!** (2...Qxe7 3.Bd3+ Ke6 4.Bc4+ Kd7 5.Bb5+ Kc8 6.Ba6+ draws) **3.Bd7+!** (3.e8Q? Qxe8 4.Bxe8 b2, and: 5.Bh5 b1Q 6.Kg2 Qb2+ 7.Kg1 Ke4, or 5.Bc6 b1Q 6.Bf3 Qf1+! 7.Bg2 Qd3! 8.Bc6 Kg5 9.Ba8 Qf5+



10.Kg2 Kg4, or 5.Bd7+ Kg5 6.Bh4+ Kg6 7.Be8+ Kh6 win) **3...Kg5! 4.e8Q Qxe8 5.Bf4+!** (5.Bxe8? b2, and 6.Bf4+ Kf5!, or 6.Bc6 b1Q 7.Bf3 Qf1+! Wins. 5.Bh4+? Kh6 6.Bxe8 b2 wins) **5...Kf6** (5...Kxf4 6.Bxe8 b2 7.Bg6 draws) **6.Bxe8 b2 7.Be5+! Kxe5 8.Bg6** draws.

4th Honourable Mention: No. 25 – **Stanislav Nosek (Slovakia)**. The power of the bishop pair in a charming miniature.

**P.Krug**  
5th Hon. Mention

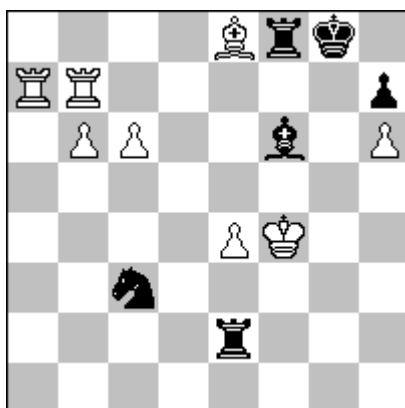


Win

**1.Kf6! Qf2+ 2.Kg6 Qf8 3.Rh7+ Kg8 4.Rd7 cxd5 5.Rg1!** (5.Rgxd5? Qe8+ 6.Kf6 Qf8+ 7.Kg5 Qb4 8.Rd8+ Kf7 9.Kf5 Qb1+ draws) **5...d4 6.Rg5 zz 6...d3 7.Rgd5 Qe8+ 8.Kf6 Qf8+ 9.Kg5 Qb4 10.Rd8+ Kf7 11.Kf5** wins.

5th Honourable Mention: No. 9 – **Peter Krug (Austria)**. A pair of rooks is artfully taming the enemy queen. A remarkable development of an old scheme by Ladislav Prokeš (#21343).

**J. Timman**  
Special Honourable Mention



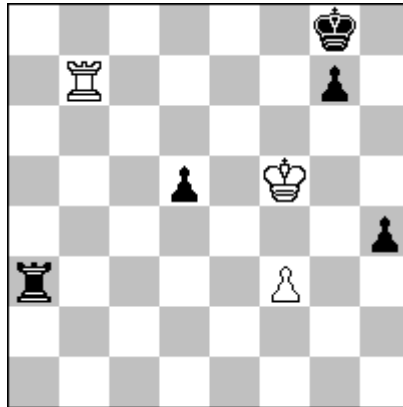
Win

**1.Bf7+ Kh8 2.Rb8** (2.Rd7? Rxe4+ 3.Kf5 Bd4! draws) **2...Rxb8 3.c7 Rf8 4.Ra8! Rxa8** (4...Be5+ 5.Kf5! Rxa8 6.b7 Re8 7.c8Q Rf2+ 8.Kg4 Rg2+ 9.Kf3 Rg3+ 10.Kf2 wins) **5.b7**

**Rxe4+ 6.Kf3! Re3+** (6...Rf4+ 7.Kxf4 Nd5+ 8.Bxd5 Bd8! 9.Kf5! wins) **7.Kxe3 Nd5+ 8.Bxd5 Bd8! 9.Bb3! Rb8 10.cxb8N!** (10.cxb8Q? stalemate; 10.cxb8B? Bc7 11.Ba7 Bb6+! 12.Bxb6 stalemate) wins.

Special Honourable Mention: No.50 – **J. Timman (the Netherlands)**. A similar idea in a similar setting has been already shown by Tkachenko a6a8 (#57608). However the daring sacrificial fore-play is a considerable improvement.

**I. Akobia & R.Becker**  
1st Commendation

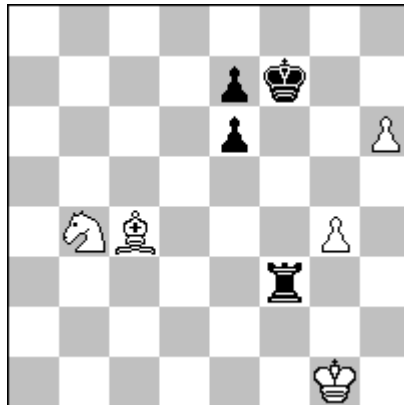


Draw

**1.Rb8+!** (1.Rd7? h3 2.Rxd5 h2 3.Rd8+ Kh7! 4.Rd1 Rxf3+, or 1.Kg4? h3! 2.Rb2 Kf7 3.Rf2 Ke6 4.Kxh3 d4 5.Kg3 Kd5 win) **1...Kf7** (1...Kh7 2.Kg4! Ra4+ 3.f4 Ra6 4.Kxh4 Rd6 5.Kg3 d4 6.Kf2 d3 7.Ke1 d2+ 8.Kd1 e.g. 8...Kg6 9.Rb5 draws) **2.Rb7+ Kf8 3.Rd7! Rxf3+ 4.Kg4 Rd3 5.Kxh4 Rd1** (5...Rd2 6.Kh3! Rd1 7.Kg2! Rd4 8.Kg3! draws) **6.Kh3! Rd2 7.Kh4!** (Thematic try: 7.Kg3? Rd4 zz 8.Kf3 Kg8! zz 9.Ke3 Re4+ 10.Kf3 Re5 11.Kf4 Rh5 12.Rd8+ Kf7! wins, but not 12...Kh7? 13.Rd6 see main line) **7...Rd1 8.Kh3 Rd4 9.Kg3** zz (9.Kg2? Rg4+ 10.Kf3 Rg5 11.Kf4 Rh5 12.Kg4 g6 wins) **9...Kg8 10.Kf3** zz **10...Kf8 11.Kg3** positional draw, or **11...Kg8 12.Kf3 Kh7 13.Ke3 Rd1 14.Ke2 Rd4 15.Ke3 Re4+ 16.Kf3 Re5 17.Kf4 Rh5 18.Rd6!** (18.Kg4? Kh6 19.Rd6+ g6 wins), and: **18...g6 19.Rd7+ Kh6 20.Kf3** (or 20.Kg3) **20...Rg5 21.Kf4 Rf5+ 22.Kg4 Re5 23.Kf4 Re4+ 24.Kf3 Rd4 25.Ke3 Rd1 26.Ke2 Rd4 27.Ke3** positional draw with perpetual attack along the d-file, or **18...Kg8 19.Kg4 Re5 20.Kf4 Rh5 21.Kg4** positional draw with perpetual check along the 5th rank.

1<sup>st</sup> Commendation: No.27 – **Iuri Akobia (Georgia) & Richard Becker (USA)**. Positional draws following consecutive reciprocal zugzwangs. A rook ending with theoretical merits rather than artistic ones.

**P. Panayotov**  
2nd Commendation

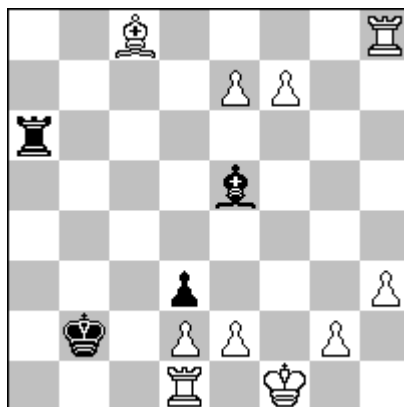


Win

**1.Nd3** (1.Nc6? Rh3 2.Kg2 Rxf6 draws) **1...Rh3** (After 1...Kg8 not 2.Bxe6+? Kh7 3.Ne5 Rf6 4.Nf7 Kg6 draws, but 2.Ne5! Re3 3.Bxe6+ Kh7 4.Nf7 Kg6 5.Bd5 Re1+ 6.Kf2 Rd1 7.Bb3 Rd2+ 8.Ke3 Rb2 9.Bc4 Rb4 10.Kd4 e5+ 11.Kc5 wins) **2.Bxe6+! Kf8** (2...Ke8 3.g5! Rg3+ 4.Kh2 Rxf6 5.Nf4 Kf8 6.Kh3 Rg1 7.Kh4 Rh1+ 8.Kg5 Rg1+ 9.Kf5 Rh1 10.Kg6 wins. 2...Kf6 3.g5+ wins) **3.Nf4 Rxf6 4.g5 Rh7** (4...Rh4 (Rh8) 5.Ng6+ wins) **5.Bf5! Rf7 6.Ne6+ Kg8 7.Be4! Kh8 8.Kg2 Kg8 9.Bg6** wins.

2nd Commendation: No.6 – **Petromir Panayotov (Bulgaria)**. Domination of a rook by a pair of minor pieces with a little help of friends and enemies.

**A. Stavrietsky**  
3rd Commendation



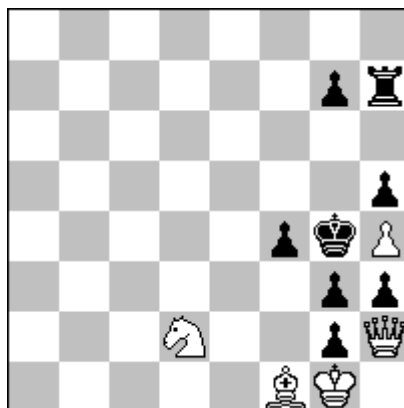
BTM, Win

**1...Rf6+ 2.Bf5!** (Thematic try: 2.Kg1? dxe2 3.Re1 Rf1+! 4.Rxf1 Bd4+ 5.Kh2 exf1N+! 6.Kh1 Ng3+ 7.Kh2 Nf1+ draws) **2...Rxf5+ 3.Kg1 dxe2 4.Rb8+! Bxb8 5.Re1 Rf1+! 6.Rxf1 Ba7+ 7.d4! Bxd4+ 8.Rf2!** wins.

3rd Commendation: No.53 – **Aleksandr Stavrietsky (Russia)**. The Roman theme in action: A double sacrifice lures the black bishop to a remote square from which check would allow

the crucial pawn push to vacate the second rank for the decisive pin. The thematic try should end with the thematic refutation 4...Bd4+! avoiding the unnecessary black "duals" afterwards.

**V. Kovalenko**  
4th Commendation

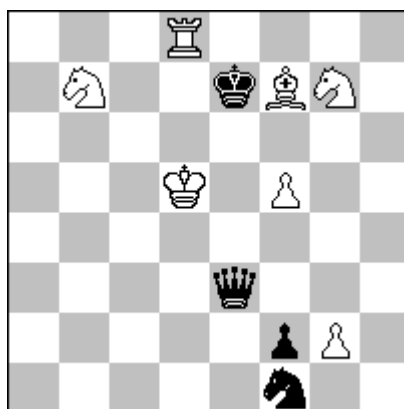


Win

**1.Be2+!** (Thematic try: 1.Qxh3+? Kxh3 2.Bd3 g6! 3.Bxg6 Rg7 4.Bf5+ Rg4 5.Bd7 f3 6.Nxf3 stalemate, because of wPh4) **1...f3! 2.Bxf3+ Kxh4 3.Qxh3+ Kxh3 4.Be4! g6! 5.Bxg6 Rg7 6.Bf5+ Rg4** (6...Kh4 7.Nf3 mate) **7.Nf3! zz 7...h4 8.Ng5** mate.

4th Commendation: No.56 – **Vitaly Kovalenko (Russia)**. A logical effort to secure Black an extra move and consequently a vital tempo for mating instead of just stalemating.

**J. Mikitovics & A. Skripnik**  
5th Commendation



Draw

**1.Nh5! Qd3+ 2.Kc6! Qc3+ 3.Kb6 Kxf7 4.Rc8! Qd4+ 5.Kc6! Ng3** (5...Qe4+ 6.Kb6 Qb4+ 7.Kc6 Ne3 8.Rc7+ Kg8 9.Nf6+! Kf8 10.Nh7+ Kg8 11.Nf6+ positional draw) **6.Nd8+!** (Thematic try: 6.Rc7+? Kg8! 7.Rc8+ Kh7 8.Rc7+ Kh6 wins), and: **6...Ke7 7.f6+ Qxf6+ 8.Nxf6 Kxf6 9.Rc7! Nf5!** (9...Kg6 10.Rf7 Nf5 11.g4 draws) **10.g4! Nh6! 11.g5+! Kxg5 12.Nf7+!** (12.Ne6+? Kf5! 13.Nd4+ Kg6! wins) **12...Kg6 13.Nxh6 f1Q 14.Nf7** draws, or: **6...Kg8 7.Ne6+! Kh7 8.Nxd4 Nxh5 9.f6 Nxf6** (9...f1Q 10.f7 Qa6+ 11.Kc7 Qa7+ 12.Kc6



Harold van der Heijden for a tremendous job well done thoroughly checking all entries, preparing the supporting reports and giving useful advises; to ARVES for promoting this tourney and supporting the composition events in Tata Steel Chess tournament.

This award will remain open to appeal until March 31<sup>st</sup> 2013.

Yochanan Afek, International Judge  
Amsterdam, January 2013