

VAN PERLO'S
ENDGAME
TACTICS

A Comprehensive Guide to the Sunny Side of Chess Endgames

Foreword by the author

'Endgame Tactics' is the result of approximately 30 years of collecting, analysing and categorizing. It has grown into a collection of endgames that have a particular charm for me on account of their special character. I have cast them into a framework and little by little, a course of instruction developed, treating many varieties of tactical possibilities that occur in endgame practice. I have drawn on every source I could find. Original analyses I have often rewritten or placed in a different context. I have used the original manuscript for a series on the endgame in the Dutch correspondence chess magazine *Schaakschakeringen*. Relevant reactions by readers I have later incorporated in this book.

Many players consider the study of the endgame a necessary evil. Resignedly, they plough their way through one or more standard works, restricting themselves to basic positions or, on the contrary, a few exceptionally ingenious studies. Most of them do not find it very exciting.

Actually this is a pity, for in the endgame, too, there is a lot to be enjoyed and a thorough study of a great number of practical fragments has taught me that even this phase of the chess struggle can produce many different types of drama. Clever tactical tricks, gruesome blunders and other tragicomic scenes, it's all possible. When after many hours of toil the end of the game is nigh, it is a difficult task for many to keep a clear head, to control their nerves and to make optimal use of the opportunities that present themselves.

Especially a well-developed feeling for the multitude of tactical possibilities contained in the endgame often signifies the difference between a full point and an annoying zero!

Of course, an investigation like this can always be continued, supplied and extended with new and previously undiscovered older material. I don't know if I will be able to do this, or if others will take over. But it is clear to me that it is important that the entire field of tactical possibilities is charted and will be in the future.

I owe many thanks to the New In Chess staff, who have cooperated with me, screened my work scrupulously and moulded it into a form which suited my purposes perfectly.

I sincerely hope that the reader will derive as much pleasure from studying the presented material as I have derived from writing it.

G.C. van Perlo

Preface to the new, improved and expanded edition

For this new edition of Van Perlo's Endgame Tactics we have prepared a special surprise for you: an extra part with almost 300 fresh examples!

In 1998, after Wim Andriessen had started working on the first edition of this legendary tome, Ger van Perlo sent him another 100-page manuscript which had not yet been published in Dutch. It consisted of some fantastic new material in rook endgames, organized in the same structure as Part III in Endgame Tactics, which corresponds with booklets 2 and 3 of the version that had been published in Dutch in the 1990s. The Dutch correspondence chess grandmaster and chess author suffered a stroke shortly afterwards and passed away in 2010.

At the time it was decided not to include this new part into the compilation, for various practical reasons. First we wanted to see if there was a market for this work at all. Well, as you may know, worldwide the reactions exceeded all expectations. So now that the time came for a fourth edition, six years after the third, we decided to take another plunge and add Van Perlo's 'secret book' to the manuscript, expanding it to a whopping 600-odd pages.

We could have added this material to the chapters in Part III, but decided against this as Van Perlo had written it as an independent new book in Dutch, and in order to keep the work 'pure Van Perlo' we thought it better to present it as a separate part in the back of this book. As a new feature, the Dutchman had added a series of exercises for the reader to test himself with. You'll find all this in Part V from page 465 in this edition!

Also in this new part you will find a fresh number of exciting endgame struggles, brilliancies and tragic mistakes, all celebrated by Van Perlo in his contagiously humoristic style. This part has also been scrutinized by my colleague René Olthof with the help of Houdini 1.5 and the tablebases. And, infected by Van Perlo's enthusiasm, we couldn't help but make an addition here and there. For example, when I saw position 1294 (Smyslov-Flohr), I was immediately reminded of the very recent fragment Peng-Burg, played in Groningen last year.

And then of course there were still enthusiastic readers from all over the world who kept writing through the years, enriching and refining the already published material. With the help of Steve Murdoch we were able to refine the analysis of fragment 127 (Zhilin-Chernov), and both Eckhard Hoffman and David Hotham pointed out to us that in Smirin-Polovodin we had given a wrong line. Karsten Müller told us that Grünfeld may not actually have resigned in fragment 5, against Colle, and Hans Ree told us how his victory over Polugaevsky actually went (diagram 439).

And so we're getting ever closer to the truth, although, like Achilles in the race with the Tortoise in Zeno's paradox, we will never quite catch up with it!

Many thanks to all these contributors to this wonderful project, which will undoubtedly remain alive for years to come.

Peter Boel
New In Chess
March 2014

Contents

Part I	Pawn Endgames	17
Chapter 1	More than Meets the Eye	18
	A) Is it really all that simple?	18
	B) Trompe l'oeil	20
Chapter 2	Typical Motifs	23
	A) Zugzwang	23
	B) Breakthrough	27
	C) Outside passed pawns	31
	D) Pawn sacrifices	36
Chapter 3	Upsets	40
	A) Marvellous tricks	40
	B) A few more blunders	43
Part II	Queen Endgames	45
Chapter 1	Pure Queen Endgames	46
	A) Zugzwang	48
	B) The march of the passed pawn	49
	C) Mating attacks	50
	D) Stalemate tricks	52
	E) Pawn sacrifices, liquidations and other goodies	60
	F) Some more blunders to round off	63
Chapter 2	Queen + Minor Piece versus Queen + Minor Piece	66
	A) Queens with Bishops of opposite colour	67
	B) Queens with Bishops of the same colour	70
	C) Queen + Knight versus Queen + Knight	74
	D) Queen + Bishop versus Queen + Knight	80
Chapter 3	Queen + Rook versus Queen + Rook	88
	A) Mating attacks	88
	B) Queen sacrifices	90
	C) Rook sacrifices	93
	D) Stalemate combinations	98
	E) Queen + Rook versus Queen + Rook: Miscellaneous	100
Chapter 4	Queen Endgames: Various Types	104
	A) Queen + Rook versus Queen + Bishop	104
	B) Queen + Rook versus Queen + Knight	108
	C) Queen versus Rook + Minor Piece	110
	C1) The battle of Queen versus Rook + Bishop	110
	C2) The battle of Queen versus Rook + Knight	114

C3) Stalemate tricks	115
D) Queen versus Two Rooks	117
E) Queen versus other material	121
E1) Queen versus Rook	121
E2) Queen versus Minor Pieces/Pawns	126
E3) Queen versus Queen + Minor Piece	129
Part III Rook Endgames	133
Chapter 1 Introduction	134
Chapter 2 Pure Rook Endgames	136
A) Disappointment, despair and discontent	136
B) Stalemate tricks	138
C) Rook Endgames with equal number of Pawns	152
C1) Rook + Pawn versus Rook + Pawn	152
C2) Rook + 2 Pawns versus Rook + 2 Pawns	154
C3) Rook + 3 Pawns versus Rook + 3 Pawns	157
C4) Rook + 4 Pawns versus Rook + 4 Pawns	159
C5) Rook + 5/6/7 Pawns versus Rook + 5/6/7 Pawns	163
Chapter 3 Pure Rook Endgames with Extra Pawn(s)	168
A) Rook + 2 Pawns versus Rook + 1 Pawn	168
B) Rook + 3 Pawns versus Rook + 2 Pawns	178
C) Rook + 4 Pawns versus Rook + 3 Pawns	186
D) Rook + 5 or 6 Pawns versus Rook + 4 or 5 Pawns	193
E) Two or more Extra Pawns	198
Chapter 4 Rook + Minor Piece versus Rook + Minor Piece	203
A) Rooks with Bishops of the same colour	204
B) Rooks with Bishops of opposite colour	219
C) Rook + Knight versus Rook + Knight	231
D) Rook + Bishop versus Rook + Knight	243
Chapter 5 The Exchange – Rook versus Minor Piece	264
A) Rook versus Bishop	264
A1) The Rook side dominates	265
A2) The Bishop side dominates	269
A3) Balanced positions	272
B) Rook versus Knight	275
B1) The Rook side dominates	275
B2) The Knight side dominates	278
B3) Balanced positions	280
C) Two Rooks versus Rook + Bishop	283
C1) The Two Rooks are stronger	283
C2) Bishop and Rook in the attack	285
C3) Balanced positions	289
D) Two Rooks versus Rook + Knight	291
E) Rook and Minor Piece versus Two Minor Pieces	294
Chapter 6 Other Endgames of Rooks with Minor Pieces	299
A) Rook versus Bishop pair	299
B) Rook versus Two Knights	302
C) Rook versus Bishop and Knight	303
D) Rook + Bishop versus Rook	308
E) Rook + Knight versus Rook	314

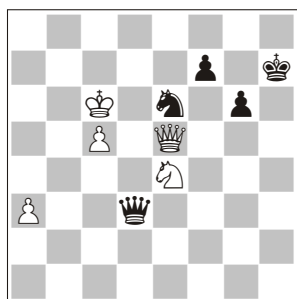
F) Bizarre curiosities	318
Chapter 7 Endgames with 4 (or 3) Rooks	319
A) Rampant Rooks	319
B) Mating attacks	325
C) Other tricks	330
Chapter 8 Rook versus Pawn(s)	337
A) Rook versus 1 Pawn	337
B) Rook versus 2 Pawns	340
C) Rook versus 3 or more Pawns	345
D) Rook with Pawn(s) versus Pawns	347
Part IV Minor Piece Endgames	355
Chapter 1 Pure Bishop Endgames	356
A) Bishops of the same colour	356
B) Bishops of opposite colour	373
Chapter 2 Pure Knight Endgames	386
Chapter 3 Bishop versus Knight	404
A) The Bishop side dominates	406
B) The Knight side dominates	416
Chapter 4 Endgames with More Minor Pieces	430
A) The possession of the Bishop pair	430
B) The possession of Two Knights	436
C) Knight + Bishop versus Knight + Bishop	439
D) Various Endgames with Minor Pieces	443
Chapter 5 Minor Piece(s) versus Pawn(s)	445
A) Bishop versus Pawns	445
A1) The Pawns set the tone	445
A2) The Bishop dominates	448
A3) The position is balanced	450
A4) Stalemate tricks	451
B) Knight versus Pawns	454
B1) The Pawns set the tone	454
B2) The Knight dominates	456
B3) The position is balanced	460
B4) Stalemate tricks	461
C) More Pieces against Pawns	462
Part V More Rook Endgames	465
Chapter 1 Introduction	466
Chapter 2 Pure Rook Endgames	468
A) Disappointment, despair and discontent	468
B) Stalemate tricks	472
C) Rook Endgames with equal number of Pawns	477
C1) Rook + Pawn versus Rook + Pawn	477
C2) Rook + 2 Pawns versus Rook + 2 Pawns	478
C3) Rook + 3 Pawns versus Rook + 3 Pawns	479
C4) Rook + 4 Pawns versus Rook + 4 Pawns	481
C5) Rook + 5/6/7 Pawns versus Rook + 5/6/7 Pawns	482
Solutions to the Exercises	484

Chapter 3	Pure Rook Endgames with Extra Pawn(s)	488
	A) Rook + 2 Pawns versus Rook + 1 Pawn	488
	B) Rook + 3 Pawns versus Rook + 2 Pawns	490
	C) Rook + 4 Pawns versus Rook + 3 Pawns	493
	D) Rook + 5/6/7 Pawns versus Rook + 4/5/6 Pawns	494
	E) Two or more Extra Pawns	495
	F) Analogies with Pure Rook Endgame studies	497
	Solutions to the Exercises	499
Chapter 4	Rook + Minor Piece versus Rook + Minor Piece	502
	A) Rooks with Bishops of the same colour	503
	B) Rooks with Bishops of opposite colour	507
	C) Rook + Knight versus Rook + Knight	513
	D) Rook + Bishop versus Rook + Knight	517
	D1) Positions where the bishop dominates	517
	D2) Positions where the knight dominates	527
	Solutions to the Exercises	536
Chapter 5	The Exchange – Rook versus Minor Piece	544
	A) Rook versus Bishop	544
	B) Rook versus Knight	548
	C) Two Rooks versus Rook + Bishop	551
	D) Two Rooks versus Rook + Knight	555
	E) Rook and Minor Piece versus Two Minor Pieces	555
	Solutions to the Exercises	558
Chapter 6	Other Endgames of Rooks with Minor Pieces	562
	A) Rook versus Two Minor Pieces	562
	B) Rook + Minor Piece versus Rook	565
	C) Bizarre curiosities	571
	Solutions to the Exercises	572
Chapter 7	Endgames with 4 (or 3) Rooks	574
	Solutions to the Exercises	586
Chapter 8	Rook versus Pawn(s)	588
	Solutions to the Exercises	591
	Index of Names	592
	Glossary of Terms	605

C) Queen + Knight versus Queen + Knight

After playing around with the niceties that we may come across in endgames with queens and bishops, we move on to a highly fanciful subject, a type of endgame of which some are scared to death.

We start with a trick that we may justifiably call the dream of every chess player. In certain positions the queen can be sacrificed with a terrific blow, to be regained by a knight fork, with a transfer to a winning endgame or a rescue from a hairy predicament, or simply with the infliction of severe psychological injury upon the enemy!



129

Our first example is Ljubojevic-Karpov, Linares 1991. White served the organizers of this tournament – always keen on a spectacle – quite well:

1. ♖f6+ ♜h6?

There is no lethal discovered check after 1...♔g7!

2. ♞e3+!

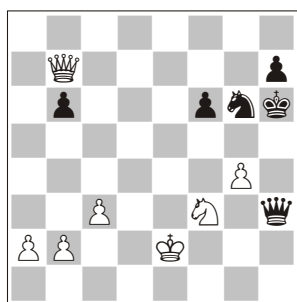
There it is. Black lands in a lost endgame, as soon becomes clear.

2... ♞xe3 3. ♘g4+ ♔g5 4. ♘xe3 ♔f4

and now, very sadistically,

5. a4!

and White won with his unstoppable a-pawn.

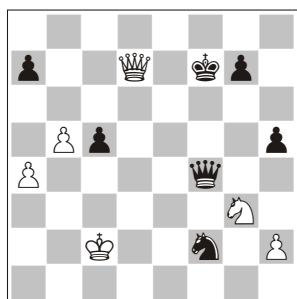


130

Diagram 130 stems from Maroczy-Rubinstein, Prague 1908. At first sight things do not look good for White, as 1. ♞xb6? fails miserably to 1...♘f4+. But Maroczy, who knew a thing or two about the game, thought of something better – you probably see it already.

1. g5+! fxg5 2. ♞xh7+!

and Black resigned. The resulting knight endgame offers him no chance at all.



131

This position is from Timman-Kosashvili, Curaçao 2002. After a move like 1...♔f8 there is not much going on. However, the second player, though certainly tactically gifted, produced the unbelievable

1... ♔g6?

We jump up enthusiastically with Timman and unleash

2. ♞xg7+! ♔xg7 3. ♘h5+ ♔f7 4. ♘xf4

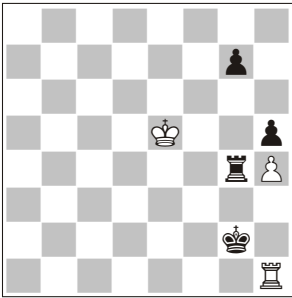
Probably too upset to resign immediately, Kosashvili played on for a few more moves, deprived of his leading position in the tournament and also of another illusion.

Chapter 3

Pure Rook Endgames with Extra Pawn(s)

We will now examine rook endgames in which one side has one or several extra pawns and investigate how much this increases the tactical possibilities. In the previous chapter, we have already paid attention to the ‘simple’ rook plus one or several pawns versus bare rook and that is why we now start with:

A) Rook + 2 Pawns versus Rook + 1 Pawn



□

367

As an intro, a cunning trap set by White in the game Rozenfeld-Nei, Estonia 1955.

1. ♖a1

Nei fell for it:

1... ♜xh4?

He should not have done that, as with a little more patience he would have won quickly, by playing first 1... ♖g3 and only then 2... ♜xh4, for instance 1... ♖g3 2. ♖h1 ♜xh4 3. ♖g1+ ♖f3 4. ♜xg7 ♜e4+ 5. ♖f5 ♜f4+ 6. ♖e5 h4.

2. ♜a2+! ♖g3 3. ♜a3+ ♖g4

and here it comes – watch out:

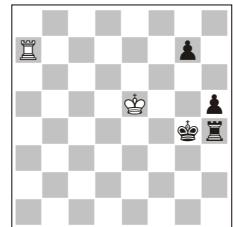
4. ♜a7!

with the nasty point that 4...g6 or 4...g5 is met by 5. ♖f6!.

There followed

**4... ♖f3 5. ♜a3+! ♖g4 6. ♜a7 ♜h1
7. ♜xg7+**

and Black settled for the draw.



4. ♜a7!

Chapter 5

The Exchange – Rook versus Minor Piece

One of the most interesting elements of the chess game is the exchange sacrifice in the middlegame. In the endgame, too, things get no less lively if one side has an exchange less, whether or not compensated for by pawns or other sorts of counterchances.

As these counterchances are often based on tactical elements, it will be clear that there is a lot of material for us in this area!

To retain some consistency in my arguments, it seems advisable to make a clear division of the material. It seems feasible to do so as follows:

- A) Rook versus Bishop
- B) Rook versus Knight
- C) Two Rooks versus Rook plus Bishop
- D) Two Rooks versus Rook plus Knight
- E) Rook + Minor Piece versus two Minor Pieces

A) Rook versus Bishop

I must prepare you for the fact that we are not at all dealing with simple material here. There are precious few general rules that can be formulated. Sometimes the exchange is more than compensated for by one pawn, sometimes not even two or three pawns are sufficient compensation.

And in the case of strongly reduced material, for instance in endgames of rook + 1 pawn versus bishop + 1 pawn, the win can be quite difficult, as was shown, for instance, in the famous endgame Timman-Velimirovic, Rio de Janeiro 1979, which, by the way, lies outside the scope of this book. For this endgame we must refer you to theoretical works, where it has been discussed exhaustively.

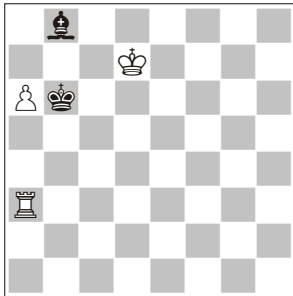
It is possible to claim in general that the outcome of this type of endgame is mainly determined by many combinations of details in the position and out of those many details, we will select the tactical aspects to examine in the following. Here also, for the sake of clarity and transparency, it seems desirable to make a further division. We have chosen:

- A1) Positions where the rook side dominates;
- A2) Positions where the bishop side dominates;
- A3) Balanced positions.

With the help of the above, we hope to develop some feeling as to how positions should be assessed in which one side or the other has tactical chances, and to increase our tactical skills in practice.

A1) The Rook side dominates

Firstly, we will discuss a few examples where the rook side has an extra pawn, but with reduced material.

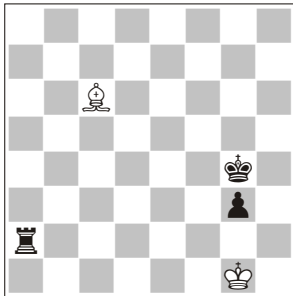


614

The first of this small series is Larsen-Miles, Portoroz 1979. You should study this position well, as White has a sinister little joke at his disposal that is worth keeping in mind. Do you see it?

1.a7!

and there was nothing left for Miles but to resign, as 1...♙xa7 is obviously met by 2.♖c8 and the bishop is lost.



615

There was another complete surprise for the white player in Baratz-Tartakower, Paris 1933:

1...g2!

in order to answer 2.♙xg2 with 2...♖g3 (3.♙f1 ♖a1). White did not give up all hope yet and tried to elude his fate, but in vain.

2.♖h2 ♖f2! 3.♙d7+

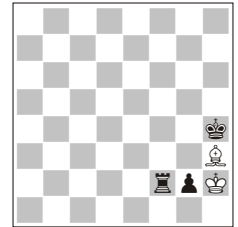
Or 3.♙b7 g1 ♖+! 4.♖xg1 ♖g3.

3...♖h4 4.♙h3

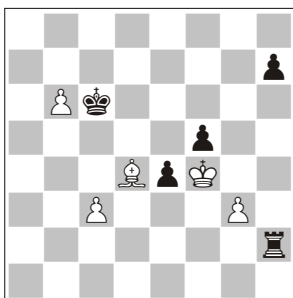
and now it is possible:

4...g1 ♖+! 5.♖xg1 ♖g3

White resigned.



4...g1 ♖+



616

From the classics, we can learn a different possibility to convert surplus material. We move back in time towards a game Bird-Janowski, played in Hastings 1895, though not in the famous tournament.

1...♖d2!

Coming straight to the point: a favourable liquidation by returning the exchange.

2.g4

2.♖xf5 is also met by 2...♖xd4 and if White tries to avoid this by 2.♙e3, then 2...♖d3 leaves him without any chance.

2...♖xd4 3.cxd4 e3!

Pay attention! Not 3...fxg4 4.♖xg4 and White escapes.

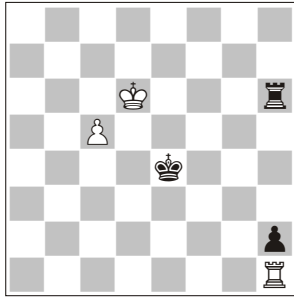
4.♖xe3 fxg4 5.♖f4 h5 6.d5+ ♖xb6 7.♖e5 ♖c7

White resigned.

C) Rook Endgames with equal number of Pawns

C1) Rook + Pawn versus Rook + Pawn

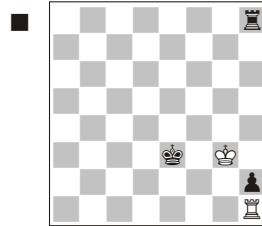
We cannot expect great fireworks here, but nevertheless I have found a few remarkable examples.



1129

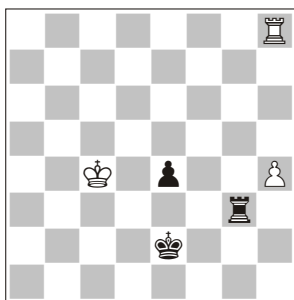
Diagram 1129, from Neishtadt-Volkevich, Moscow 1958, should certainly be regarded as such. White stands appallingly. He tries to save himself with a long king march towards the pawn on h2.

**1.♔e7 ♔d5 2.♔f7 ♔xc5 3.♔g7 ♖h3 4.♔g6 ♔d4
5.♔g5 ♔e3 6.♔g4 ♖h8 7.♔g3**



The aim seems to have been achieved.

EXERCISE 8 – Do you see the tactical refutation?
(solution on page 486)



1130

Now let's follow the course of the game from diagram 1130, Eisinger-Haag, European team championships, Oberhausen 1961.

1...e3 2.h5 ♔e1 3.h6 e2

A fully-fledged pawn race.

4.♖f8

Or 4.h7 ♖g7, threatening 5...♖f7. White wants to avoid this.

4...♖h3 5.♖f6 ♔d2 6.♖d6+ ♔c2 7.♖e6

7...♖h4+!

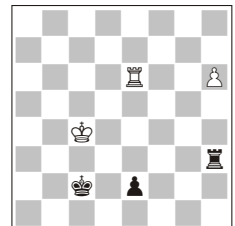
Again an intermediate check, which is often so important to obtain a decisive advantage. Here the point is that the white king cannot go to the 6th rank, for instance 8.♔c5 ♔d2 9.♖d6+ ♔c3 10.♖e6 ♖h5+ 11.♔c6 and now, as we saw, 11...♖xh6!

**8.♔b5 ♔d3 9.♖d6+ ♔c3
10.♖e6 ♖h5+ 11.♔a4**

Forced, as we know.

11...♔d3 12.♖d6+ ♔c4

And wins, as 13.♖e6 is still met by 13...♖h1! and the black e-pawn cannot be taken on account of 14.♖a1 mate.



7.♖e6