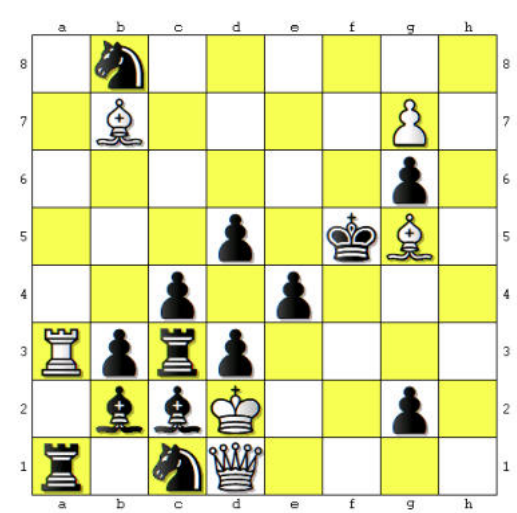




Vladimir Kuzmichev

White to move and win

>>> 1st Prize <<<

This study emerged very quickly as the leading contender for the highest distinction of the tourney. At first sight, the initial position may appear almost incomprehensible: dense, overloaded, seemingly chaotic, like the creation of a visionary mind unconcerned with conventional harmony. Yet the moment one

understands the splendid key move, the whole position suddenly begins to illuminate itself from within. And that's just the beginning. The white Queen cannot be captured because of immediate mate. Then comes the astonishing strategic core of the study: the creation of a blockade vortex based on the a2 square, where Queen and Bishop cooperate in a highly unusual mechanism in order to deflect the black Queen toward a7 with forced tempo. Finally, after an enormous concentration of Black material and energy, White concludes with an almost surreal model mate delivered by only two pieces.

This is not "normal" chess aesthetics. It is chess pushed deliberately toward the extreme borders of what seems constructively possible. And that is exactly what I was aiming at, when I organized this tourney, and it's expressed in the best form possible for my taste and for my idea of coherence and chess composition in general. An incredible and unforgettable story.

Some judges may hesitate in front of the unusual initial configuration and the relative lack of naturalness. I understand such reservations. However, I also believe that certain ideas simply cannot exist inside fully conventional forms. Sometimes the price of reaching unexplored artistic territory is accepting positions that look improbable at first glance, but become deeply coherent once their inner logic is revealed.

In this sense, the study reminds me of **artistic expressionism**: works initially perceived as distorted, excessive or even disturbing, before later generations recognized that they were expanding the language of the art itself.

And this is perhaps the main reason for making this entry the absolute winner of the tourney.

Comments on the solution are by the Author.

Solution: 1. Qh5 {!!}

A magnificent and unexpected move! "From the frying pan into the fire"

The white Queen is sacrificed under the attack of the black pawn and gives up control of the g1 square. And the blacks calmly put a new Queen.

(1. Qe1 {?} - the white Queen escapes the attack and retains control over the g1 square, preventing the black Queen from appearing. - but Bd1 {!!} No win for White.)

(1. g8=Q {?} Bxd1 {!} 2. Qxd5+ Kg4 3. Bc8+ Kg3 4. Qe5+ Kf2 {!} 5. Qf4+ Kg1 {!} 6. Qe3+ Kh1 {!} 7. Qh3+ Kg1 {,= =})

1. .. g1=Q

(1. .. gxh5 2. g8=Q {!} e3+ 3. Bxe3 {!})

2. Bc8+

(2. Qxg6+ {?} Kxg6 3. g8=Q+ Kh5 {, = =})

2. .. Ke5 3. Bf6+ {!!} sacrifice Bishop

(3. Bf4+ {?} Kxf4 4. Qh4+ Kf3 {!} 5. Qf6+ Kg2 {!} 6. Qxg6+ Kh1 {! = =} – The black king is saved in the corner again)

3. .. Kxf6 4. g8=N+ {!!} Kg7 5. Qh6+ Knight sacrifice Kf7

(5. .. Kxg8 6. Be6#)

Qh7+ Kf8 7. Qe7+ coercion to accept sacrifice Kxg8 8. Be6+ Kh8

White sent the black king to the opposite corner, but what changes?

9. Qf8+ Kh7 10. Bg8+ Kh8 11. Bxd5+ Kh7 12. Bg8+ Kh8 13. Bxc4+ Kh7 14. Bg8+ Kh8

15. Bxb3+ Kh7 16. Bg8+ Kh8 17. Ba2+ Kh7 18. Ra7+ {!!} Rook sacrifice Qxa7 19. Bg8+

Kh8 20. Bf7+ – the white Bishop plays on all squares of the diagonal a2-g8 during the

decision process - Kh7 21. Qg8+ Kh6 22. Qxg6# model mate

Not a single black piece was captured in the main variation - only pawns.