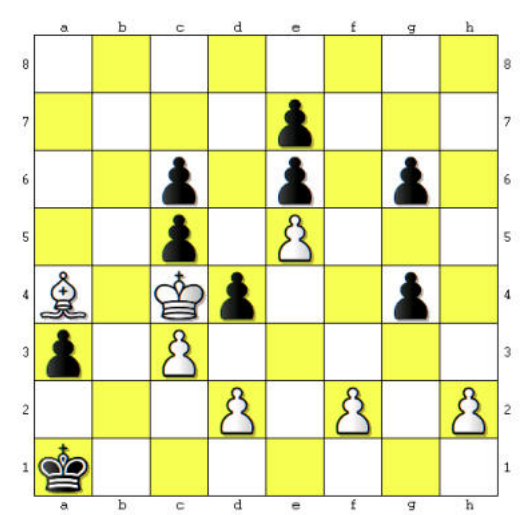




Serhiy Didukh

White to move and win

1st Special Prize

The Author presents his study with these words integrated in the PGN file: *"The Pe7 was the last piece added by Daniele Gatti in his study with the Babson Task. The pawn made the solution correct and the position remained legal. Thus an impossible task has been achieved in a study for the first time. The Pe7 is the most dangerous of all black pawns in my study. White has to stop its promotion."*

A charming and highly personal study inspired by a famous detail from the judge's Babson-Task study published in early 2025. The black pawn on e7, originally introduced as the final ingredient that made an apparently impossible construction both correct and legal as if someone pushed a magic button, reappears here as the central protagonist of the play.

The study combines precise calculation with an appealing strategic narrative. Black's early sacrifice 1...g3! forces White to choose the correct capture with an impressive long-range foresight effect, after which a dangerous phalanx of advancing pawns creates a race of remarkable tension. Particularly enjoyable is the sequence of Bishop manoeuvres, whose purpose is not only to harvest Black's pawns but also to avoid unexpected stalemate resources.

Throughout the solution, the e7-pawn remains the most persistent threat, faithfully reflecting the role it played in the study that inspired the composition. The quiet final move 13. d3! provides an elegant conclusion and completes a work that successfully combines artistic content, humour and a genuinely personal tribute.

Whether viewed as a study or as a compositional conversation between generations of ideas, it leaves a memorable impression as a demonstration of creative boldness combined with high-class technique.

Solution: 1. **Kb3! g3** {! This early sacrifice makes White calculate 10 moves ahead.}

2. hxg3 !

{Logical try} (2. fxg3 ? a2 3. Kc2 d3+ 4. Kc1 c4 5. Bd1 g5 6. Bg4 c5 7. Bxe6 g4 8. Bxc4 e6 9. Bxd3 c4 10. Bf5 exf5 11. e6 f4 12. e7 f3 ! 13. e8=Q f2 14. Qe2 f1=Q+ {(excelsior)} 15. Qxf1 {stalemate!})

2. .. a2 3. Kc2 d3+ 4. Kc1 c4 {! . Now a funny part of the study - the Bishop's dance to prevent stalemate.} **5. Bd1 g5 6. Bg4 c5 7. Bxe6 g4 8. Bxc4 e6 9. Bxd3** (9. Bd5 ? c4 {! zugzwang}) **9. .. c4 10. Bf5 ! exf5 11. e6 f4 12. e7 f3 13. d3 ! 1-0**