

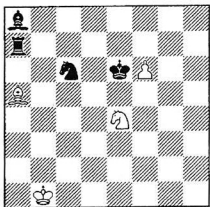
More Works of Simkhovich (cont'd)

by Harrie Grondijs

In earlier installments in STES JOURNAL 2,1 and STES JOURNAL 2,2, we looked at 5 more or less mature studies found in the legacy of F.M. Simkhovich (sent to me by V. Rossomakho from St. Petersburg). This leaves us with just 6 more billets of original material: the **three billets with two diagrams each**, the **one billet with the indication "WIN"**, and the **two billets with study sketches**.

The entries of the last category mentioned, **two billets with study sketches**, that we will discuss this time, pose a formal problem. Obviously, both sketches show only the final of a study as the solution is just a few moves deep! The second one of these sketches demonstrates a very curious logical manoeuvre. It might certainly have ranked highly in a tourney, if only it could show an adequate introduction. As it stands, the correct thing to do is probably to destroy the billets and try to forget the positions, until someday a composer re-invents them. But then, for all I know 'tout St. Petersburg' knows these positions already! A further possibility might be for me to construct worthy settings for these sketches. However, I think the result would be too idiosyncratic, ie, in accordance with my personal taste (and limited technical skill) to still be called a correction or a 'near version' of the original idea. The only other option is to publish the positions as they are. Anyway, 'Ideas have no Owners', and I think these 2 sketches are ideas, and admirable ideas. Therefore by publishing the two positions they are made public, and some composers may be stimulated into finding sparkling settings. STES Journal will gladly publish any correct attempts!

SIM971



Stipulation: DRAW

GBR code: 344.10

Rueb code: E85

Themes: cascaded domination publication: STES Journal

'In the 4th edition of his Fins de Partie [R1414] Rinck for the first time names some of his ideas. Among those 'domination', one of the finest gems of chess poetry according to Rinck, takes an important place ... Domination guards squares and implies a threat (RUEB V, page 96).'

1. Ba5 - b6 Ra7 - a3
2. Kb1 - b2

Now the rook is lost wherever it may go.

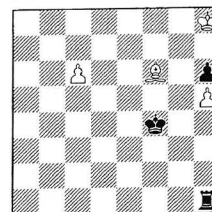
DRAW

'Of course, the impression of domination grows with the number of squares available to the piece... With its circle the

knight has access to a maximum of 8 squares, The bishop on its 'x'-cross to 13, a rook on its '+'-cross to 14, the queen-star to 27 squares. It is always tempting to go after the maximum ... the king, being the ideal of aggression, is very well suited for guarding squares, because it is often untouchable for the minor pieces (RUEB V, page 99).'

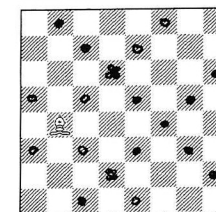
The style of this study is typical classical following the examples set by Kubbel, Rinck, the Platov brothers and others in their search for directly or indirectly dominating all the squares of a line piece. In his Schachtaktik I-IV, written between 1927 and 1930 the Swiss expert Erwin Voellmy describes the various ways in which a piece can guard many squares directly and indirectly. He speaks about the 'reach' of a piece, adding very illustrative diagrams. Below is one example.

971a



J. de Villeneuve - Esclap-
on
L'Echiquier Francais 1909
WIN 310.21

A971a



Complete 'indirect reach'
of bishop in A971
Schachtaktik I
1927
E. Voellmy

Solution 971a: 1. Bc3 Rxb5 (1. ...Rb1(d1) 2. c7 +-; 1. ... Rcl 2.Bd2+ +-; 1. ... Rh3 2. Bd2+ +-) 2. Bb4 wins (2. ... Re5 3. Bd6 +-; 2. ... Rh1 3. c7 Rcl 4. Bd2+ +-; 2. ... Rh2 3. Bd6+ +-), the rook cannot stop the pawn from promoting, even if it still requires two moves.

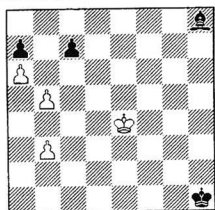
The second diagram A971a shows the complete bishop 'first order reach' (comprised of the directly guarded squares marked with the white bullseyes, and the indirectly guarded squares with the black bullseyes; reaches of the second order and beyond are also possible).

Voellmy goes on to discuss the case when several pieces cooperate to form a 'common reach' that will nail the enemy piece down: interconnected reaches ('verbundene Bereiche'). In this case the indirect reach is not based on some leverage mechanism, normally a check, but on the well-coordinated effort of several pieces.

The notion of 'reaches' invites a systematic search for the maximum freedom that a piece can have and still be dominated. Studies of this kind are typical Type D: impressive for their display of technical skill, but not very surprising or deep.

Obviously, the Simkhovich is a result of such a search. The added value is the cascading of the domination process, with a nice play of weakenings (the bishop opening up a-file squares for the rook) and reinforcements: the guarding of b3 and c3 by the attack on the rook and the guarding of square e3 by the bishop from b6. The rook initially has thirteen flight squares, twelve times it will be lost directly or indirectly (after a knight check), a thirteenth time it gives White a chance to correct the imperfect domination with the king's attack, perfecting the guard over the a-file as well as controlling the third rank. Arguably, the 'real' purpose of 1. Bb6 is to take possession of square e3. The key move also functions as an indirect means of correcting the initial imperfection (the white king being on square b1 instead of b2).

SIM972



Stipulation: WIN

GBR code: 3.32

Rueb code:

Themes: Ad-decoy, square blockade, moves order

First publication: Stes Journal

This sketch is a striking idea in a miniature setting.

1. b3 - b4

1. **Kd5?** Bc3 2. Kc6 Ba5 and Black wins.

1. Bh8 - c3

Already, Black is without defence against White's threat.

2. b5 - b6 c7 x b6

3. b4 - b5

WIN

This sketch implements a logical thought: White wants to lock in Black's pawns on a7 and b6 and for that must temporarily vacate b5. It appears that if this square is cleared immediately, White has helped Black to organize his defence. After 1. b6? cxb6 2. b4 Black has been given

the opportunity to unblock the b6-square. The weakness of this sketch is that, after White has made the right choice of moves order, the race is run: Black can't defend against White's unconditional threat. Would it be possible to implement the idea without such flaw?

There exist a number of manoeuvres that at the same time are simple, surprising and charming.

To ardent endgame composers, like you and me, they are like dear icons, and we feel free to wrap these inventions into new diadem settings.

The Réti manoeuvre

The Cassidy manoeuvre

The Otten manoeuvre

The Cook manoeuvre

The Kling-Horwitz manoeuvre

The Rey manoeuvre

The first Duras manoeuvre

The Joseph manoeuvre

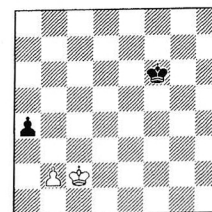
The van Vliet manoeuvre

The Neumann manoeuvre

The second Duras manoeuvre

These manoeuvres are as universal as they are simple. (this list lays no claim for completeness). Somehow it seems unavoidable that they have miniature format, but one can well accept that some of these manoeuvres found their first setting in a more complex form. Perhaps such subtle jewels deserve to be gently and carefully taken from their settings and given in their purest form.

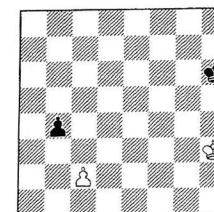
972a



D. Cassidy

1884 WIN 0.11

972b



R. Bianchetti

Finali di soli pedoni

1925 WIN .11

Solution **972a**: 1. Kc3? a3 2. b3 Ke6 3. Kb1 Kd5 4. Ka2 Kc5 5. Kxa3 Kb5 =. **1. Kb1! a3 2. b3 Ke6 3. Ka2 Kd6 4. Kxa3 Kc6 5. Ka4 Kb6 6. Kb4 and wins.**

Solution **972b**: 1. Kg4? Kg6 2. Kf4 Kf6 3. Ke4 Ke6 4. Kd4 b3 5. cxb3 Kd6 =. **1. Kh4! Kg6 2. Kg4 Kf6 3. Kf4 Ke6 4. Ke4 Kd6 5. Kd4 and wins.**

Some of the manoeuvres I mentioned have been verified and paraphrased over-and-over again, whereas others have been left alone to this day.

Perhaps the little Simkhovich-trick belongs in this list.

A comparable type of "correction" is found in the Cassidy manoeuvre (see 972a).

If White plays directly 1. Kc3, then after 1. ... a3 (the disturbing pawn advance) the pawn guards the square where the white king must go. It can go there should the black pawn advance further, but it wants to be there immediately, when it can still get in front of the b-pawn in time.

After 1. Kb1 black's counterplan is thwarted because the king has access to a2 now. The loss in time is not important as long as the king comes in front of its pawn, without the black king seizing the opposition.

In 972b the black king can be allowed to draw closer to the battlefield as the white pawn after capturing will not be on the a-rank. This time, ignoring the black pawn's sacrifice won't do: White must immediately seize the opposition.

But in the end, in all 3 positions it is vitally important for White to anticipate further events.

(to be continued)