

Martin Weteschnik

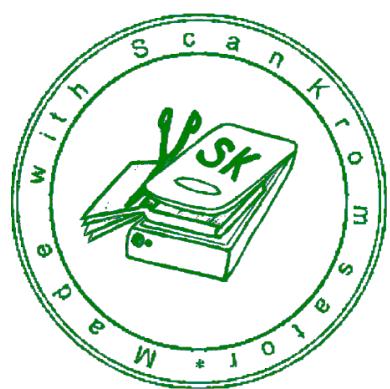
Chess Tactics from Scratch

Understanding Chess Tactics
2nd edition



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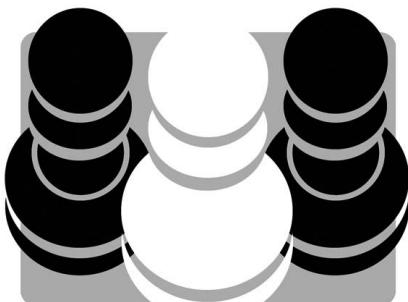
Chess Tactics from Scratch

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2nd edition

By

Martin Weteschnik



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CHESS TACTICS FROM SCRATCH

Understanding Chess Tactics 2nd edition

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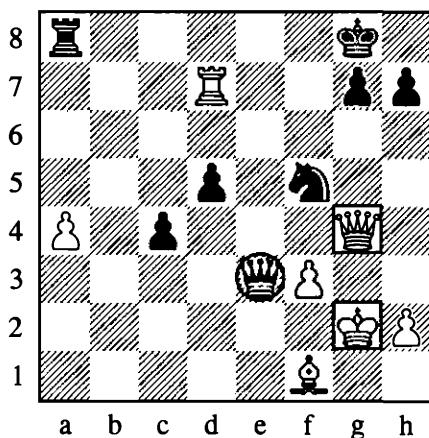
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Key to symbols used

+	White is slightly better
++	Black is slightly better
++	White is better
++	Black is better
+-	White has a decisive advantage
-+	Black has a decisive advantage
=	equality
8	with compensation
↑	with counterplay
?	unclear

?	a weak move
??	a blunder
!	a good move
!!	an excellent move
!?	a move worth considering
?!	a move of doubtful value
#	mate

○	a circled square represents a ‘tactical base’
□	a boxed-in square represents a ‘tactical target’
△	a white arrow pointing up indicates ‘White to move’
▼	a black arrow pointing down indicates ‘Black to move’



Foreword by Tibor Karolyi

Dear Reader,

When my friend and former pupil Martin asked me to write a foreword to his book, I did not expect that I would learn so much from reading this work, but that is what happened. The first reason is that, in addition to some classic examples, he has found tactical examples that I did not know, thus avoiding one problem of many combination books. The second reason is rather different. I start working with pupils when they have already reached a high level, which means I can find a style for my pupil according to his or her natural talent and then pass on the required technical knowledge. However, I rarely work on combinations. In contrast, Martin learned chess quite late and worked hard at it, which gives him great insight into the difficulties of improving, in the same way that adults who become fluent in a foreign language see it differently from native speakers.

Working through this book will help the reader to understand combinations and tactical play much better. Martin's advice is very useful. His carefully selected examples are not only instructive but very entertaining as well: many of them make a great artistic impression.

I am sure that studying this book will not only bring great joy, but also improve your chess considerably.

Tibor Karolyi

International Master Tibor Karolyi is a successful author and a renowned trainer who has worked with Peter Leko and the Polgar sisters.

Foreword by the Publisher

The original edition of this book, *Understanding Chess Tactics*, is hailed as “a modern classic”. *Chess Tactics from Scratch* is an expanded and updated version that benefits from major improvements. All text and analysis has been revised and improved. Also, two completely new chapters on *Overloading* and *Candidate Moves* have been added. Many readers of *Understanding Chess Tactics* suggested that they would like more exercises to test the understanding they gained by reading the book. So this book concludes with 300 brand-new test positions of varying difficulty.

We hope that *Chess Tactics from Scratch* is as well received as its illustrious predecessor.

John Shaw
January 2012

What is this book about?

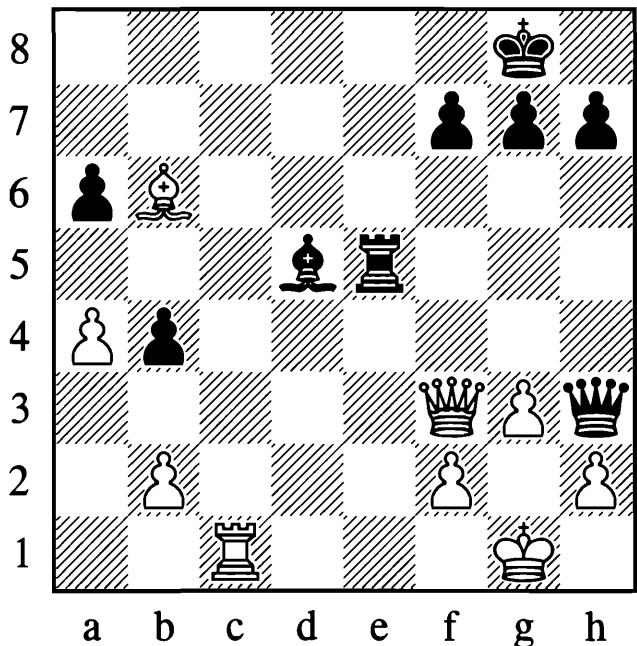
Chess is a visual game. A chess player must be able to recognize elementary patterns, therefore the tactics in this book will be primarily explained graphically. This approach is supported by a large numbers of diagrams, which will also allow the reader to study this book without a chessboard.

Chess is also a game of logic. Logic, in the same way as chess tactics, depends on collecting and processing information. This book will show you how to accurately find the elements of tactics, and work with them creatively.

This book is divided into the following parts:

Chapter 1

Becoming Familiar with the Pieces!



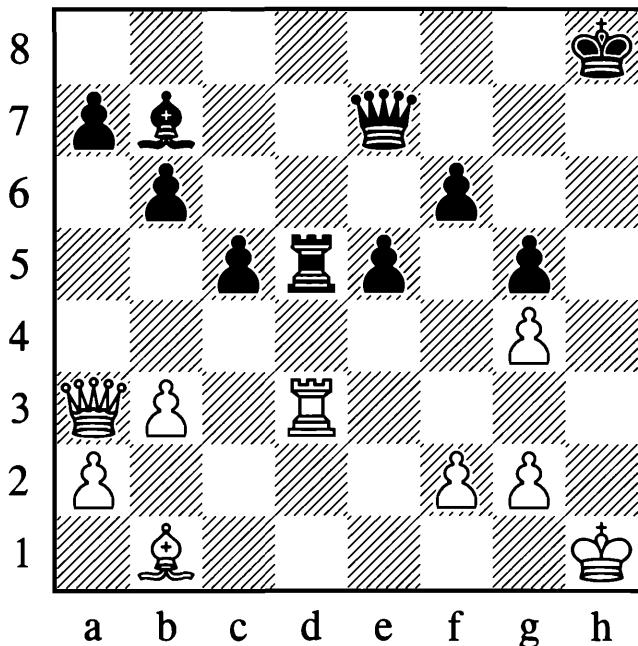
1.g4!

It is an illusion to assume that after 1.g4 the black queen could take the white queen, because Black must defend against $\mathbb{Q}c8$ mate. That is also why the black bishop has no time to take the white queen.

In this chapter you will learn (among other things) to safeguard yourself against illusions of this kind.

Chapter 2

The Pin



1... $\mathbb{W}h7\#$!

There is much more to know about the pin than might appear at first sight. 1... $\mathbb{W}h7\#$ looks like a mistake because of:

2. $\mathbb{B}h3$

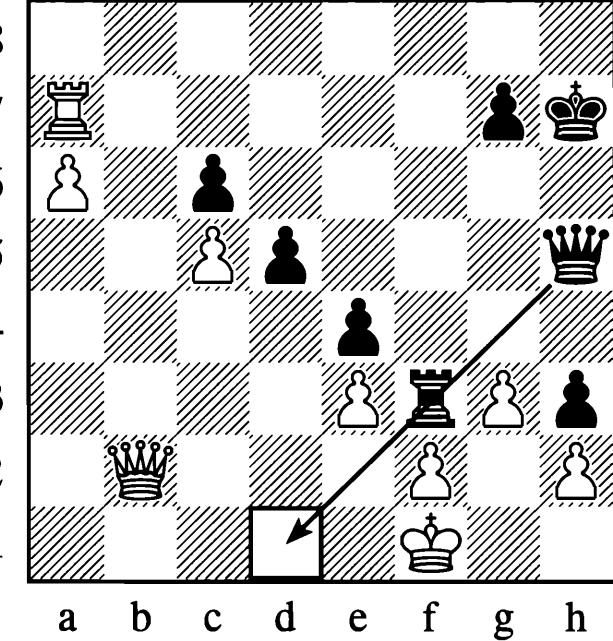
But we shall see in this chapter that Black has it all under control...

The theme of this chapter is the chain of three points that constitutes the formation of a pin:

- The pin's interaction with other pieces and squares on the board.
- How to recognize the pin if it is in a preliminary state (only two points out of three).
- How to create a pin and work with it.

Chapter 3

The Discovered Attack



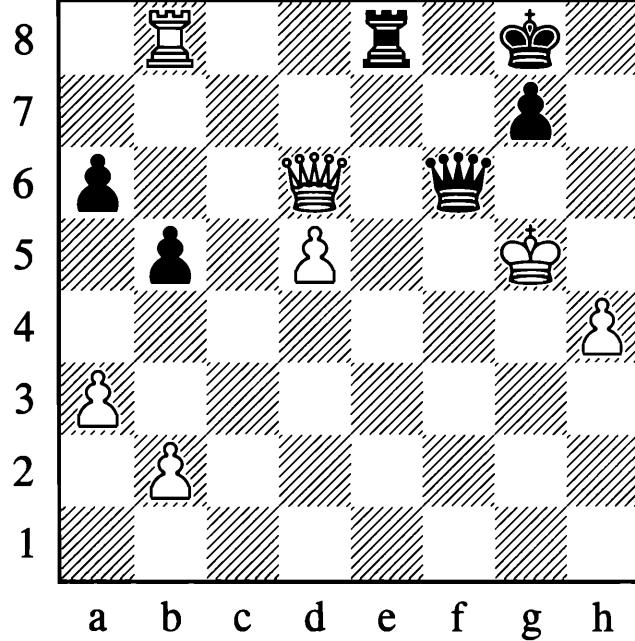
1... f7

This time the target of the discovered attack is a square. The formation $\mathbb{W}h5-\mathbb{B}f3-d1$ is a similar formation to a pin.

Detailed information about what constitutes a discovered attack and how to create and strike with the discovered attack are demonstrated in this chapter.

Chapter 4

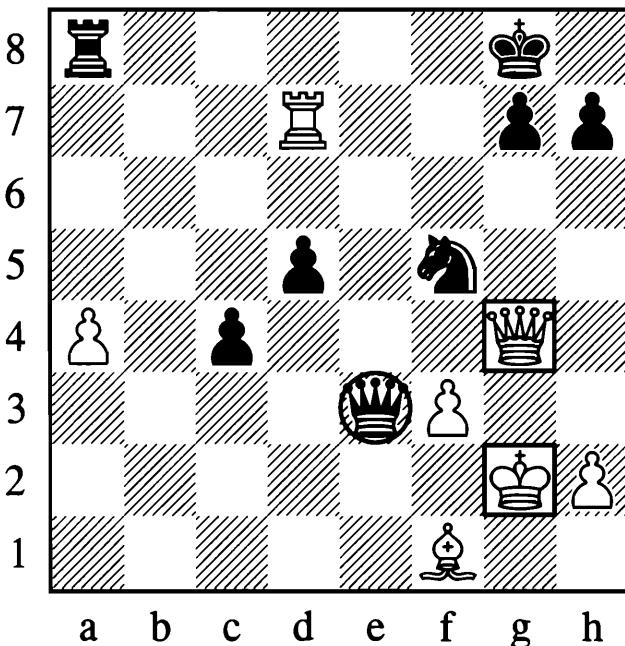
The Reloader



This is the end of a nice combination by Tal. The black queen gave check on f6 forcing White to take. But the black pawn will take back with a check and reload itself with deadly force. Thus White has no time to save his rook. What the first piece occupying f6 (the black queen) did not achieve on this square, the following piece will do.

The reloading of pieces is explained here and – strangely enough (and deservedly!) – recognized as a tactical motif in its own right and finally given a name in chess literature.

Chapter 5 The Double Attack



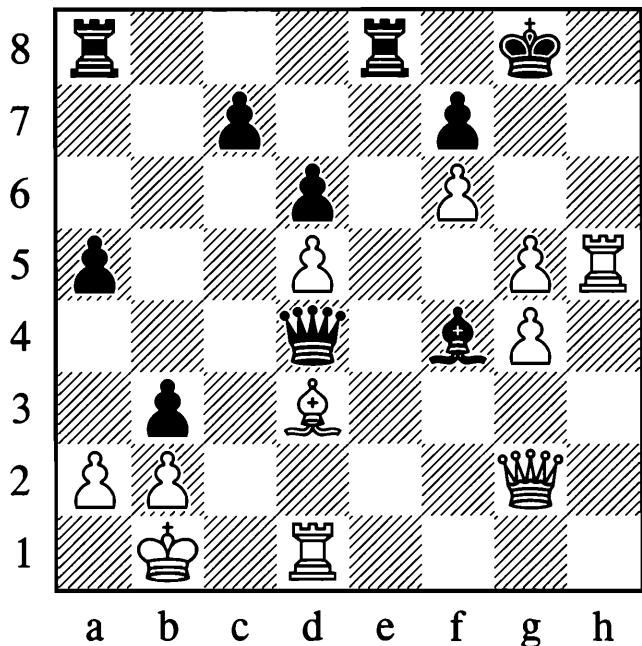
White has just played $\mathbb{W}g3-g4?$ running into a double attack.

1... $\mathbb{W}e6!$

The boxed-in squares show the targets of the f5-knight. The encircled square on e3 is the point from where the knight strikes. 1... $\mathbb{W}e6$ wins the necessary tempo against the undefended d7-rook.

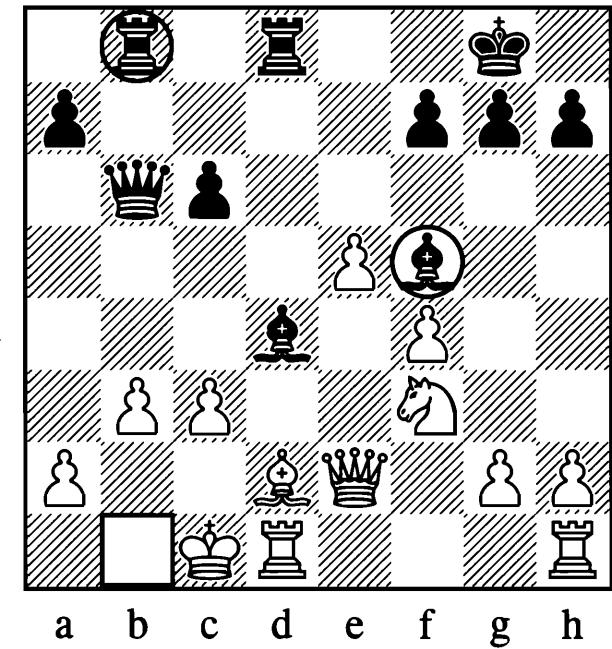
An easy example, but this chapter will also reveal to you the finer points of this motif.

Chapter 6 Overloading



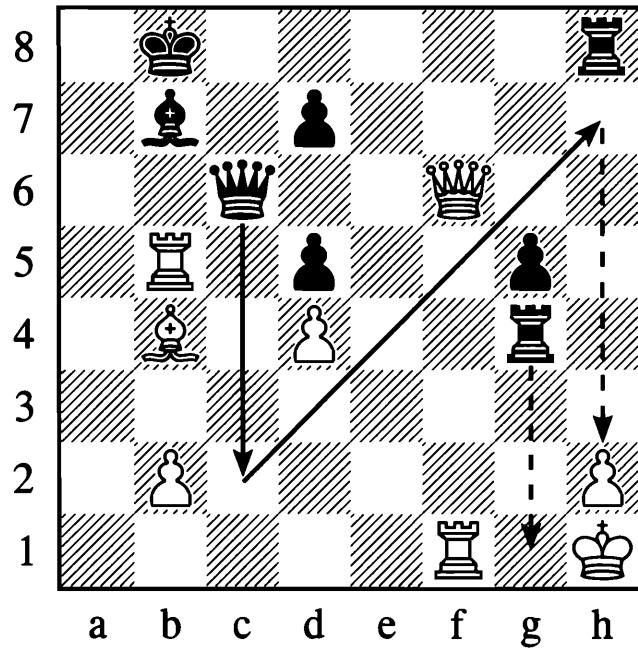
Overloading is when a piece has a responsibility on two important squares. In the diagram the d1-rook is *obviously* defending the d3-bishop, but when we note that the rook must also cover the back rank then we should ask – is the bishop really defended?

1... $\mathbb{W}xd3\text{!}$

Chapter 7**Mate**

1...♝xb3!

Knowledge of mating patterns (here a potential rook and bishop mate) is essential. This chapter will teach you all of the important ones.

Chapter 8**Gain of Tempo/Intermediate Move**

1...♝xb3!

The tempo lets us find efficient ways to bring our pieces to squares that would otherwise be impossible to reach with a normal timetable. Black was under enormous pressure, but he finds *time* to transfer his queen via c2 (with check) to the mating square h7.

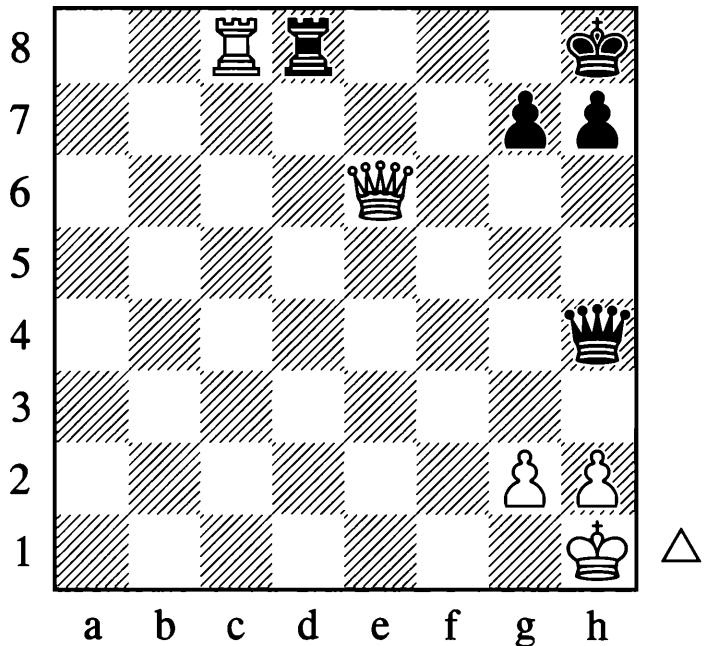
This chapter will tell you how to make combinations possible in the nick of time. Other related themes are also investigated in this chapter.

Chapter 9

The X-ray Attack

Chapter 10

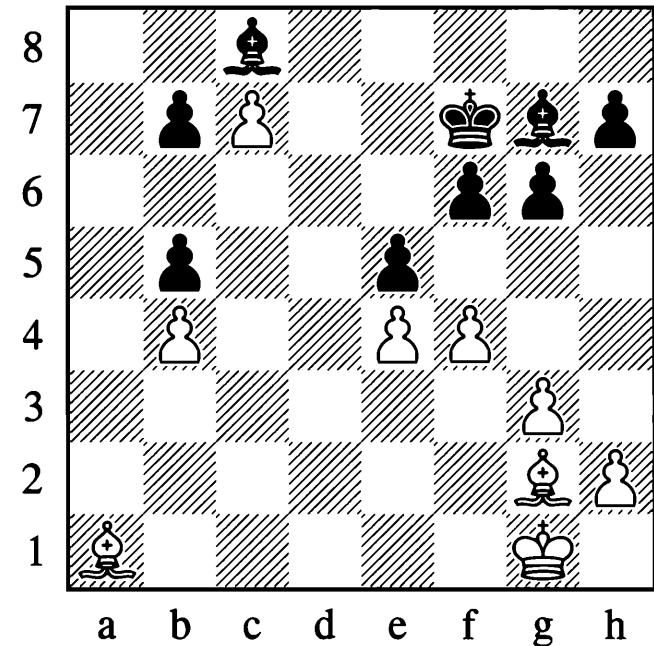
Opening and Closing Lines of Communication



1. $\mathbb{W}e8\ddagger$

Simple but effective: the X-ray attack!

This small chapter shows you how this frequently misunderstood little motif can clearly be detected and utilized.



1. $\mathbb{Q}h3!$

Lines for attack or defence; lines between pieces, squares and tasks; lines to open; lines to close and interrupt – all these are the story of this chapter.

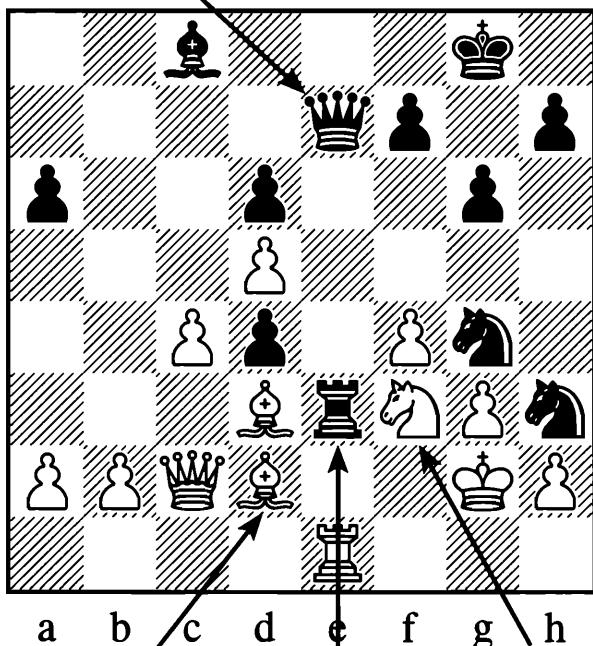
Realize the importance of your pieces working together and learn how to cut off your opponent's pieces from their colleagues.



Chapter 11

Status Examination

Target Square=h4-f2



Not defending the e1-rook (because it must defend e3)

e3=target of knight
double attack

Not defending h4
(because it must
defend e1-rook)

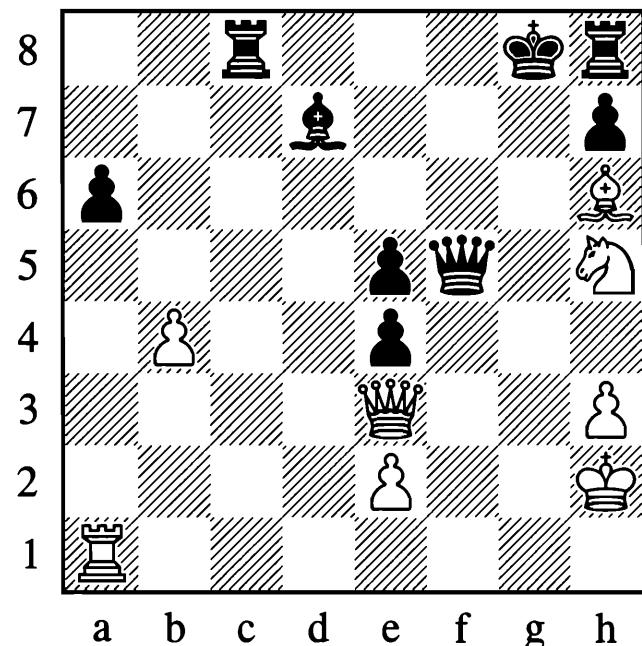
1... ♞xf4†!

In this chapter we will learn how to organize and effectively prune the calculation process when working with tactics.

This chapter brings it all together: from the easy questions such as ‘How many retreat squares does a piece have?’ to finding complex combinations like the one above.

Chapter 12

Candidate Moves



△

In this chapter on candidate moves you will learn much more about the above position. The previous eleven chapters are largely about *what to look for*. This last chapter is about *how to look*.

Well, I called Chapter 12 the final chapter and that is true up to a point, as then it's time for the reader to stop reading and start working! Next are 300 puzzles to test your newfound understanding. I will say more about the puzzles on page 233.

Introduction

Tactics can be broken down into basic elements and systematically analysed. Therefore everybody should be able to understand tactics and use tactics successfully in his or her games.

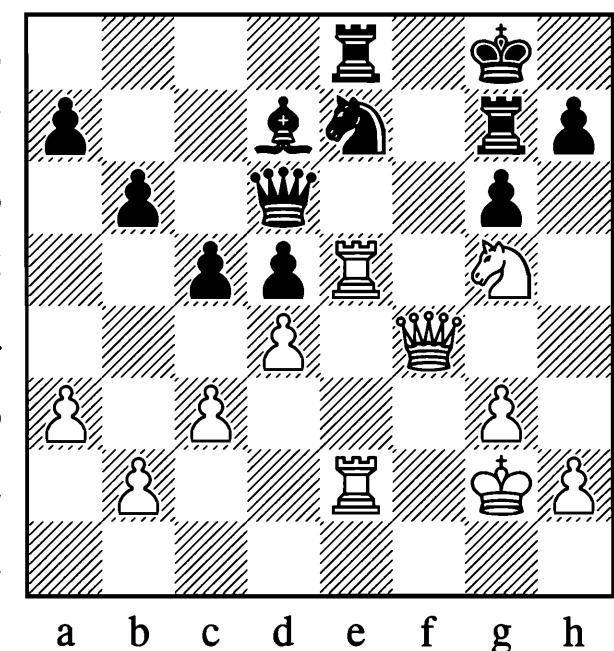
Steinitz, the first official World Champion, once pointed out that combinations are not coincidences or strokes of genius but the results of concrete positions. He taught us how to analyse any given position for its *elements*. The same method used to analyse positions can be applied to combinations. They too can be broken down into their elements. Although tactics sometimes can be very complicated, there is good news: tactics consist of basic elements that can be learned like a language or mathematics.

Some years ago I trained for about two years with the former trainer of Peter Leko, Tibor Karolyi. With Tibor I mainly studied openings, middlegame strategy, and endgames. During this time I also solved a lot of combinations to sharpen my tactical skills. I had developed my own little routine. Whenever I thought I had discovered some mechanism or characteristic of a position, I started taking notes. The work on thousands of positions grew first into a collection of unsorted tactical insights, but finally resulted in a structured overview of tactics. Over time seemingly unconnected information turned into a coherent concept. The book you are now holding in your hands is my attempt to communicate this understanding of tactics.

Most of the positions discussed in this book

are original positions from my notes. It does not really matter for teaching purposes whether these examples are well known or not. However, my experience when teaching club players is that most players did not know these positions.

When I was asked to train a local club team, I thought it might be a good idea to have a look at their games from a team championship in order to find out about their playing strength. I saw the following position.

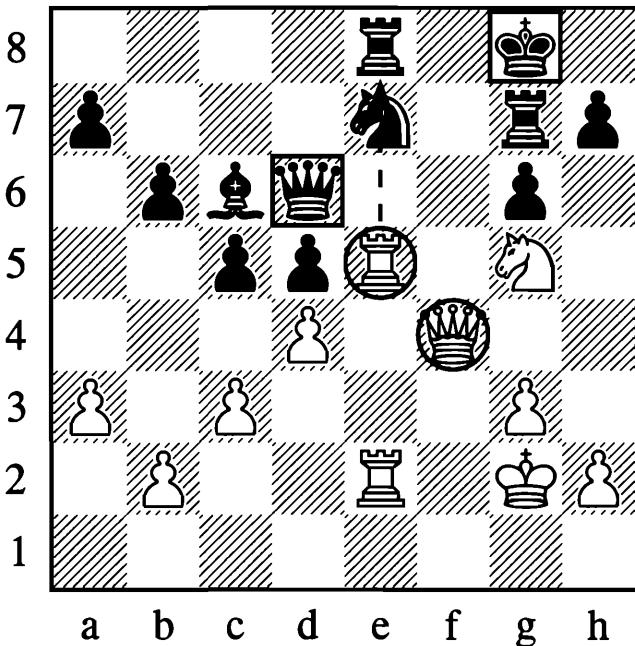


White is a piece down but has just played $\mathbb{W}h4-f4$, and I wondered why they were asking for training if they could play moves like this!

Black obviously did not know what was going on, as he now played:

1... c6?!

Now I was expecting White to win back his piece. Surprisingly the player from my future club moved his queen back to h4. Now I knew they definitely needed my help. Let's look at the diagram again:



After studying this book, you will immediately realize the combinative idea of the solution to the diagram position. It is the typical pattern for a discovered attack. The game should have continued:

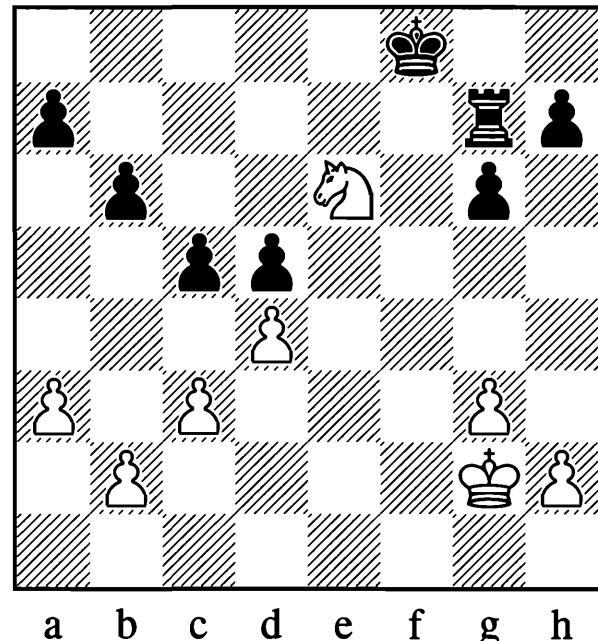
2. $\mathbb{E}xe7 \mathbb{W}xf4$

2... $\mathbb{W}xe7$ 3. $\mathbb{E}xe7 \mathbb{B}gx e7$ is equal.

3. $\mathbb{E}xe8\# \mathbb{Q}xe8$ 4. $\mathbb{E}xe8\# \mathbb{W}f8$ 5. $\mathbb{E}xf8\# \mathbb{Q}xf8$

6. $\mathbb{Q}e6\#$

Forking king and rook.



From being a piece down at the beginning of the combination, White could have forced an equal pawn endgame. To calculate this over the board might have been difficult for you. Nevertheless, with the knowledge of this

pattern (the discovered attack) you might have found it after all.

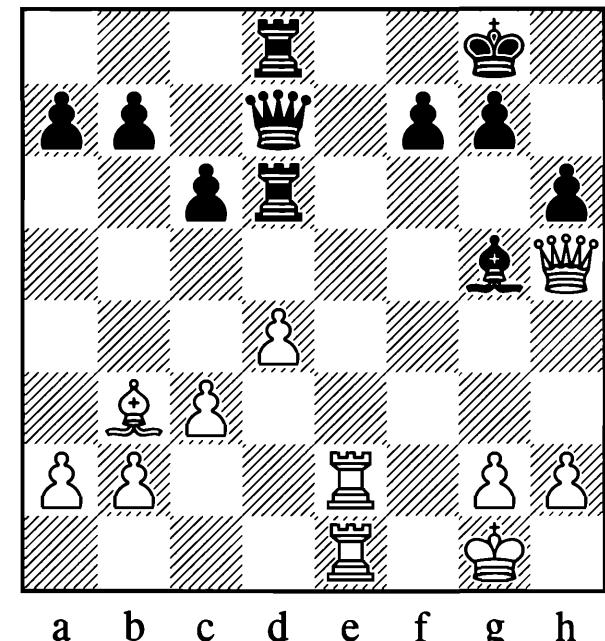
This book will teach you two things:

- 1) It will systematically introduce you to all the elementary patterns and tactical formations.
- 2) It will teach you how to create and use them in your games.

Another game from this club will illustrate quite dramatically what happens when a player is not familiar with the basic patterns and elementary motifs.

Witt – Hoellwarth

Germany 2004



In this position there are three ways to win material:

1. $\mathbb{E}e7$ (motif: line interruption) 1... $\mathbb{Q}xe7$
2. $\mathbb{W}xf7\# \mathbb{Q}h8$ 3. $\mathbb{E}xe7 \mathbb{W}xe7$ 4. $\mathbb{W}xe7$ and White wins.

1. $\mathbb{Q}xf7\# \mathbb{W}xf7$ 2. $\mathbb{E}e8\# \mathbb{Q}xe8$ 3. $\mathbb{E}xe8\# \mathbb{W}f8$ (motif: X-ray attack) 3... $\mathbb{W}f8$ 4. $\mathbb{E}xf8\#$ and White wins.

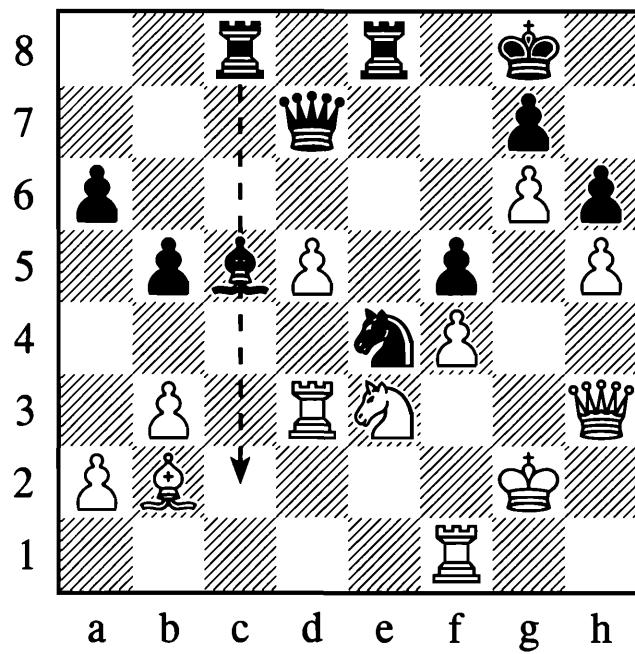
1. $\mathbb{W}xf7\# \mathbb{W}xf7$ (motif: pin) 2. $\mathbb{E}e8\# \mathbb{Q}xe8$ 3. $\mathbb{E}xe8\# \mathbb{Q}h7$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ and White is a pawn up but stuck with opposite-coloured bishops.

Holger Witt, the translator of this book, brooded over the board for half an hour and found an “ingenious” fourth possibility: losing the game...

A few weeks later Holger, who had just started to translate this book, was playing in a tournament. A couple of days before this tournament he had been working on the chapter on double attacks. The basic pattern in mind, he had already seen a possible double attack on c2 against king and bishop. Finally the time had come to cash in on the idea he had been harbouring in his mind for quite a while.

Schwappach – Witt

Deizisau 2005



1...♝xe3

Eliminating the defender of the c2-square. After his opponent took back on e3 with his queen:

2.♛xe3

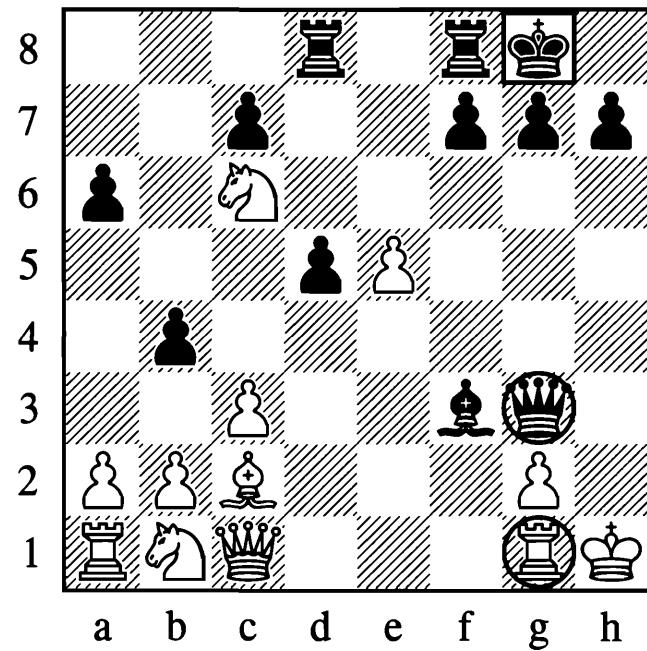
Holger finished the game with the decisive double attack:

2...♜c2†

The difference between the two games was that Holger had learned to recognize a basic tactical pattern, which he then used in the game.

As in the previous example, most amateur chess games are decided tactically. Therefore, the quickest way to improve your chess is to study tactics. However, solving tactical puzzles without fully understanding the underlying mechanisms is not the most efficient way to learn. Instead you must first *understand* the elements of combinations. Do not exercise what you do not understand!

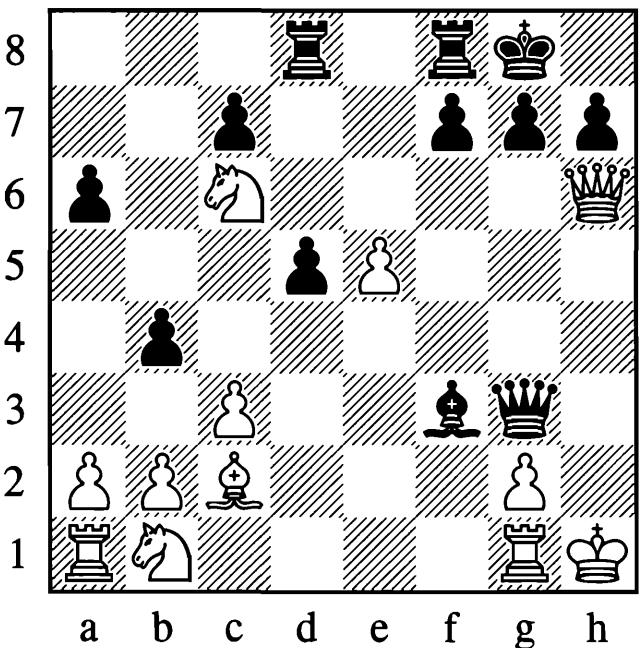
Working through this book will help to improve your understanding and your results just like the players of the club I coached. On average the players improved by between one hundred to two hundred rating points and the club’s team has been promoted twice in three years to a higher league. And maybe one day you will be able to uncork tactical champagne like this:



Black is threatening mate with ...♛h3 or ...♛h4. Obviously White is desperately looking for a good reply.

Again you notice the visual and obvious structural components of a tactical motif: three pieces in a row constitute a pin, here the g1-rook and Black’s king and queen. Based on this basic pattern of a pin, White could have found the answer:

1. $\mathbb{W}h6!!$



With this move White covers both threats and is threatening mate on h7 himself. If Black took the queen, White would simply take the bishop on f3, winning back his queen with a material advantage.

I am sure that by reading this book you will understand elementary tactics completely and you will successfully implement them in your games.

The first twelve chapters of this book are not about solving puzzles (that comes later!) so I purposely did not give detailed analysis for each position unless I thought it necessary. For a successful journey through the first twelve

chapters I would advise you to concentrate on reading and understanding rather than solving the problems. Consequently, you will find a lot of diagrams in this book enabling you to read it without a chessboard.

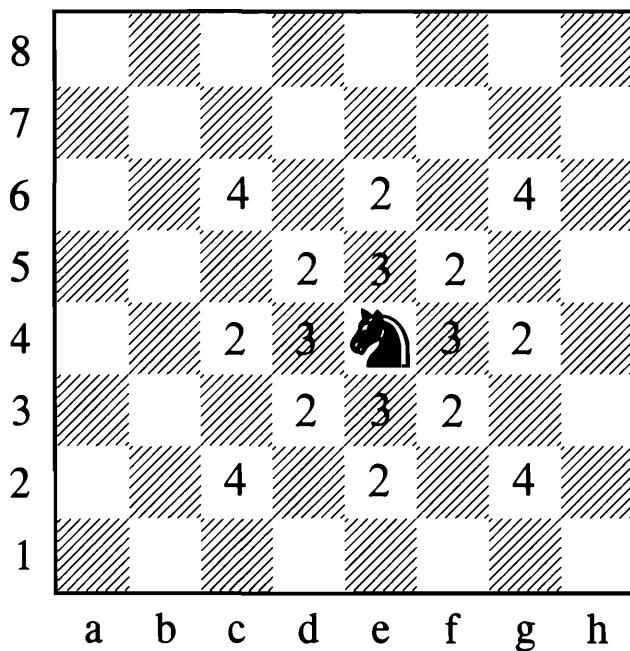
You will benefit most from this book if you *read* through everything once and then go back to study certain themes more closely. My own experience taught me that I have trouble finishing a chess book when I lose myself in unnecessarily detailed analysis. I have read many of the classics from start to finish, such as Steinitz, Tarrasch, Lasker, Nimzowitsch, Reti, Capablanca, Alekhine, Spielmann, Tartakower, Kmoch, Euwe, Averbakh, Bronstein, Fischer and Vukovic. But, apart from them, my bookshelf is a graveyard for unfinished chess books that feature endless variations and sidelines.

At the end of the book 300 puzzles are given to test the reader's newfound understanding. Do not despair if you cannot solve many of them, as some are rather demanding. Consider the exercises as small lectures: they help you to understand the subjects of the relevant chapters. Understanding is the first and most important step. If you are willing to take another then you have to practise combinations and venture into practical play.

Chapter 1

Becoming Familiar with the Pieces!

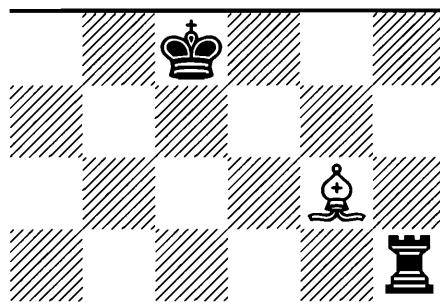
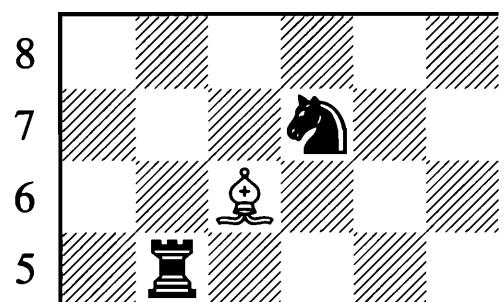
This small chapter is a reminder that you need the simple things at your fingertips. As an example we might take a look at the knight. For many people calculating knight moves over the board seems to be difficult. Here is a little diagram that might help you to avoid nasty knight tactics.



The numbers in the diagram indicate the moves the knight needs to reach these squares.

Imagine you are in time trouble. You have to find a safe square for your king. The clock is ticking and you cannot afford a long calculation. Now you know where to put your king in order to avoid forks for some time. For example, by placing your king on a square with the number 4.

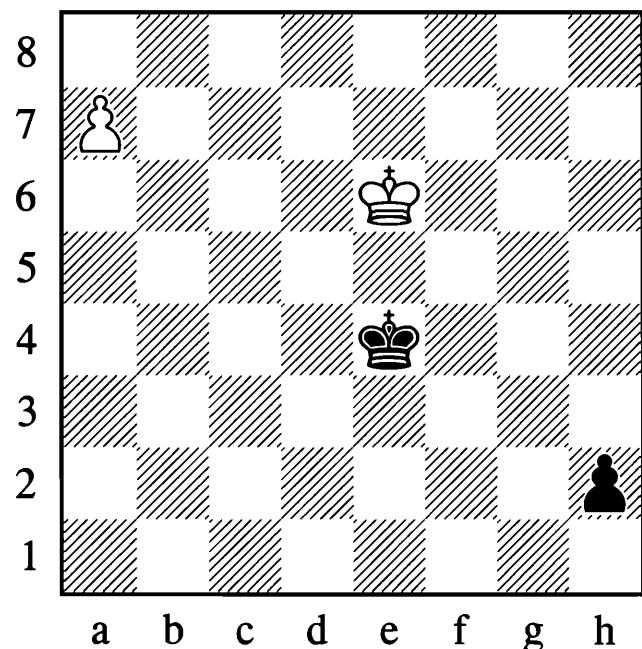
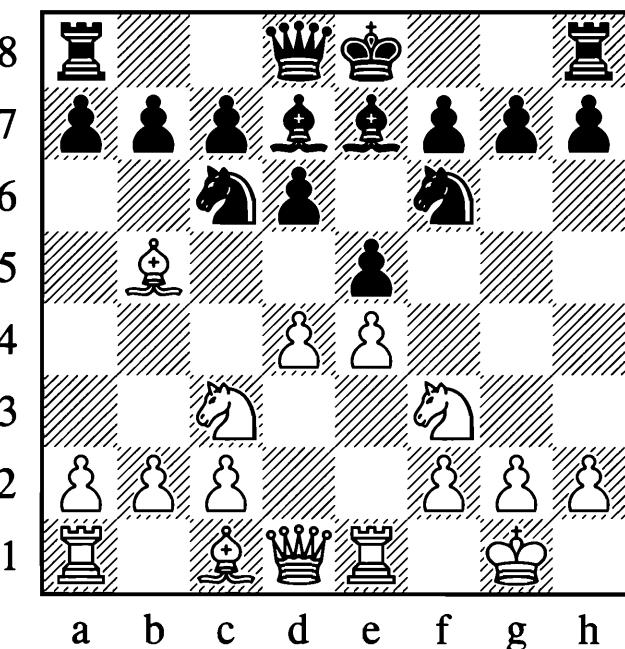
The next diagrams might look even more trivial.



But this pattern might turn up in complicated situations. Only if you know these simple patterns by heart, will you be able recognize them in very difficult circumstances.

In the Ruy Lopez there is the following variation:

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 d6 4.d4 ♗d7
5.♘c3 ♘f6 6.0-0 ♕e7 7.♕e1



If Black castles there will be a series of forced exchanges resulting in the elementary pattern given above.

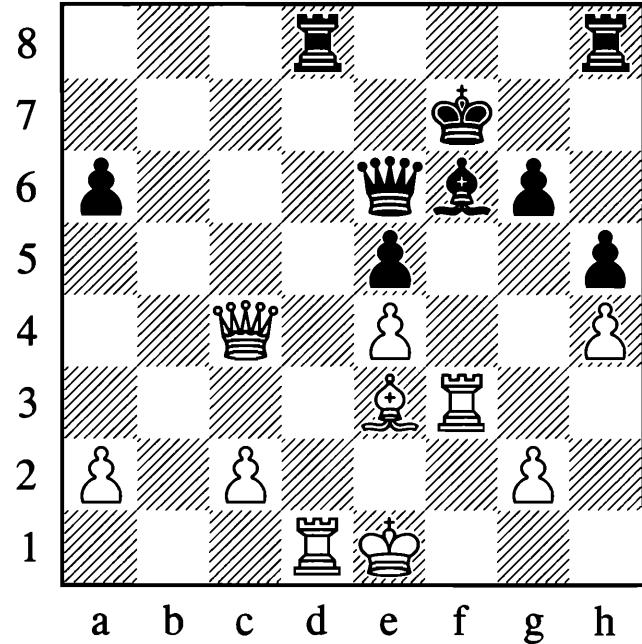
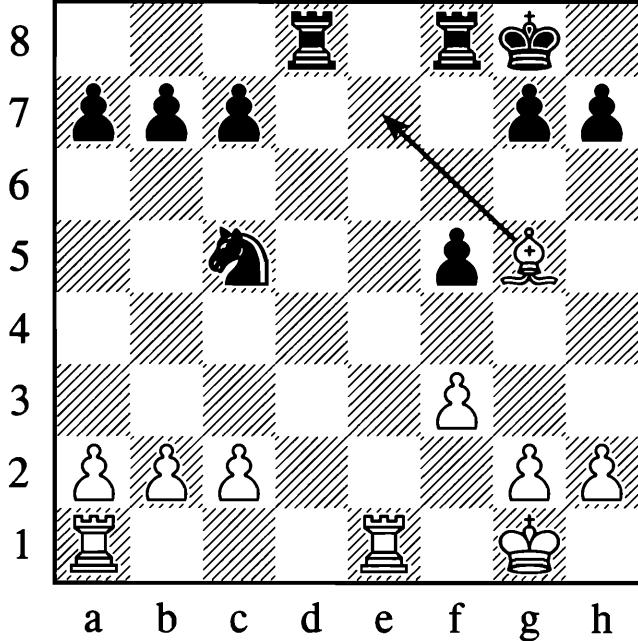
7...0-0? 8.♕xc6 ♕xc6 9.dxe5 dxe5 10.♗xd8 ♜axd8

10...♝fxd8 also loses.

**11.♘xe5 ♘xe4 12.♘xe4 ♘xe4 13.♘d3 f5
14.f3 ♜c5† 15.♘xc5 ♘xc5 16.♕g5!**

Although Black will queen first, he will lose the game due to the characteristic movement of the queen. Because of this the white queen will skewer Black's king and queen.

In the next example it is the bishop that skewers the king and a piece. The basic pattern in mind, we just have to take the bishop to set up the skewer:



**1.♝xf6† ♜xf6 2.♗g5† ♜f7 3.♗xe6†
Or 3.♗c7†!**

3...♛xe6 4.♝xd8

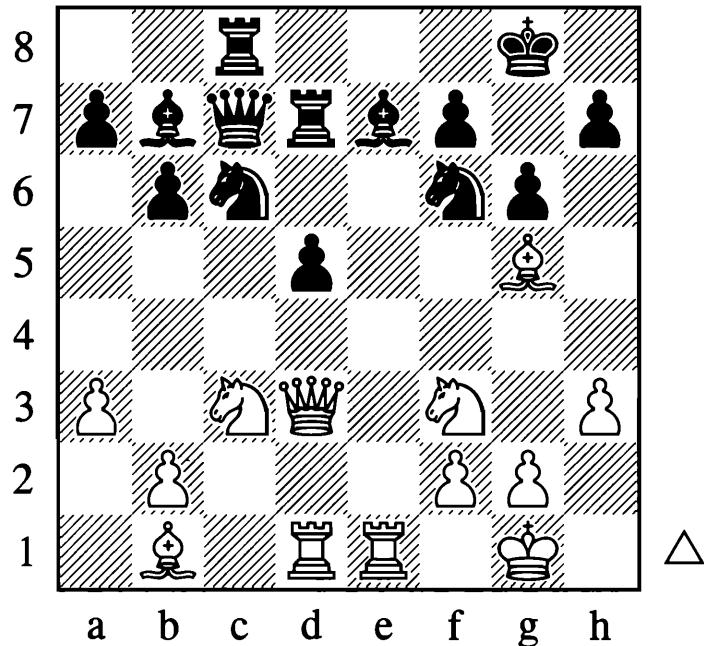
Winning a piece in Held – Feustel, Wuerzburg 1996. Exchanging operations of

Another thing that should be etched into your brain is the specific attacking tendencies that derive from the characteristic movement of any piece.

Black will lose the exchange.

this kind will be looked at while discussing the different motifs.

Even though simple exchanging operations do not belong to the realm of tactical motifs, you should always be aware of these simple mechanics of piece movement. In any case, we will come across these mechanics while going through the motifs. In Chapter 11 especially we will have a look at the relations between the pieces.



If we examine the status of the f6-knight we recognize that it is defended by the e7-bishop. If in this position we could substitute a rook for the bishop then the f6-knight would be lost, as it is no longer defended. Thus:

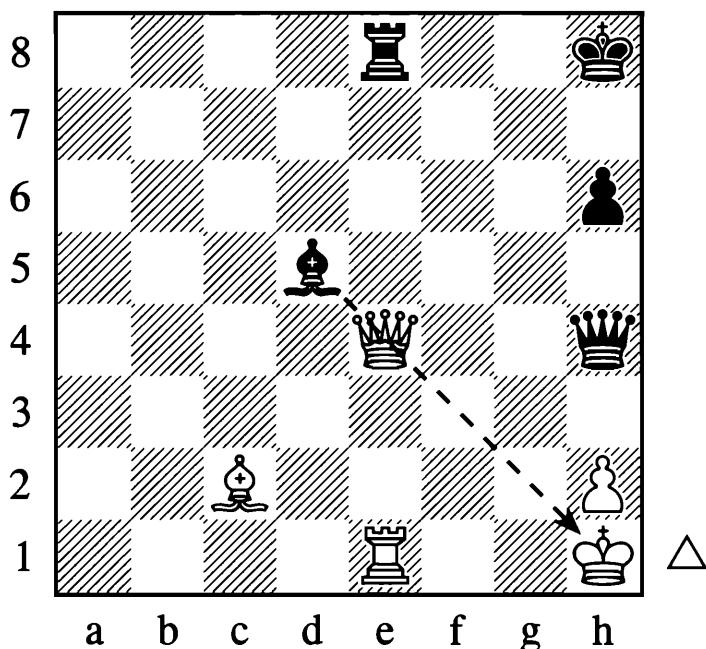
1. $\mathbb{E}xe7 \mathbb{E}xe7$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

Winning two pieces for the rook – analysis position from **Szabo – Van Seters**, Hilversum 1947.

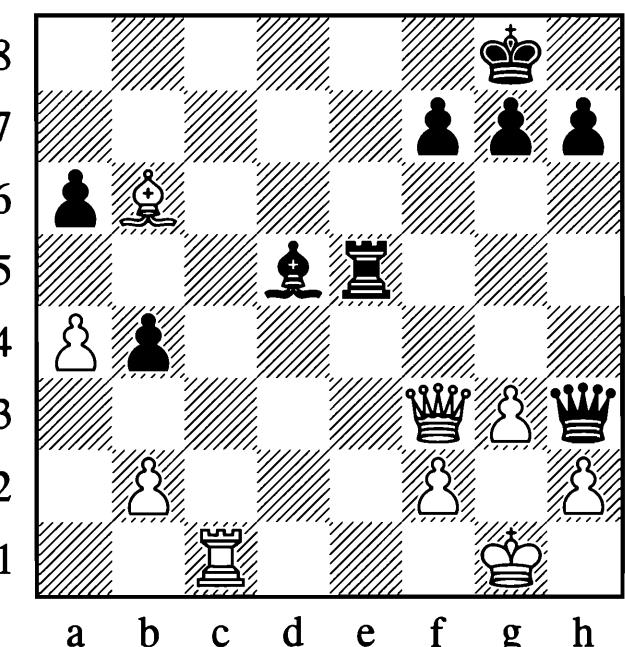
Another piece of advice! Even when you occupy yourself with such simple things as piece movement, important lessons can still be learned. A lot of people smiled when Mikhail Tal admitted that he liked to watch children's chess programmes on television. But, despite being a World Champion and one of the greatest tacticians of all time, he claimed that

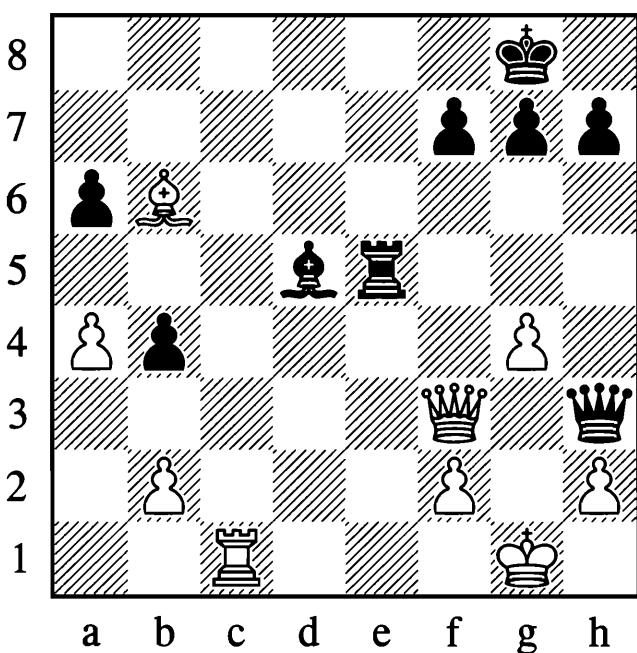
he was still learning from these simple patterns.

Everybody knows how to move the pieces. Yet sometimes their freedom of movement is restricted. This may seem trivial but obviously it is not easy to see. Otherwise, how could you explain the number of blunders made while calculating a variation over the board? Often people think that a certain piece can move when it really can't.



Over the board you could save calories not calculating moves like $\mathbb{W}xe8$ or $\mathbb{W}xh4$ as the white queen is pinned. Therefore, it is only able to move on the diagonal between its king and the opponent's bishop. You might also take the bishop. But all other moves are not an option. Beware of these optical illusions.

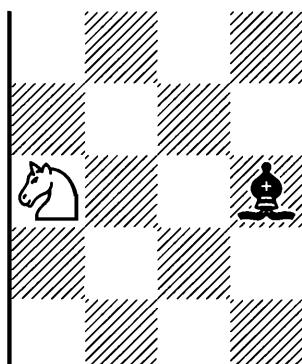


1.g4!

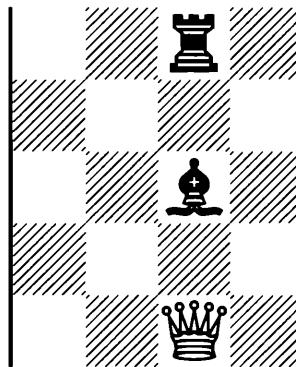
You may be under the impression that this is a blunder as it leaves White's queen *en prise*. But from h3 the queen was performing an all-important duty: covering the back rank mate by the white rook on c8. Consequently the white queen is untouched. Right from the start the freedom of movement of Black's queen was restricted.

The following examples show how the freedom to move can be restricted. This can be the consequence of:

1. Restriction by other pieces
2. Restriction by an obstacle
3. Restriction by obligations
4. Restriction by tactical motifs

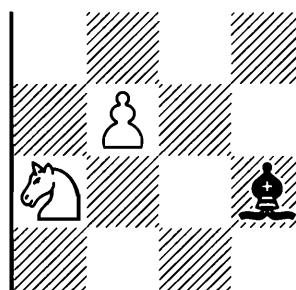
1. Restriction by other pieces

The knight is not able to move.

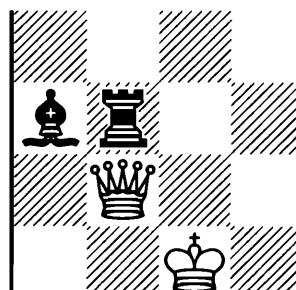
2. Restriction by an obstacle

The rook cannot jump over its own bishop.

When a bishop is restricting a rook, as in the example above, you should look out for discovered attacks.

3. Restriction by obligations (e.g. defending a mate)

The bishop is not able to control the knight, as the pawn is threatening to promote.

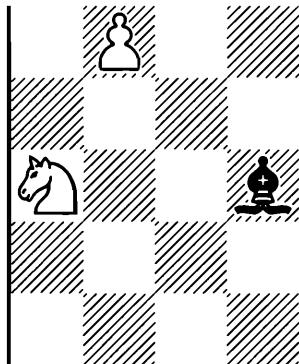
4. Restriction by tactical motifs

The queen is only able to take the bishop.

On the other hand the freedom of movement might be regained by:

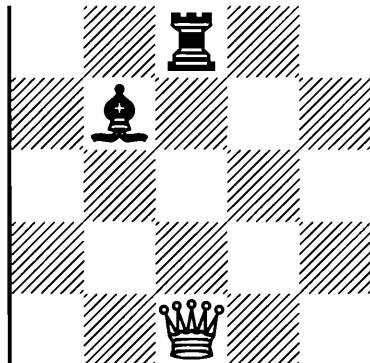
1. Release of the control by other pieces
2. Removal of an obstacle
3. Relinquishment of duties
4. Neutralization of a tactical motif

1. Release of the control by other pieces



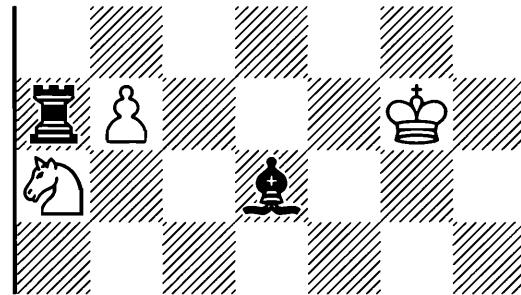
When taking the queening pawn, the bishop has to give up control over the knight.

2. Removal of an obstacle



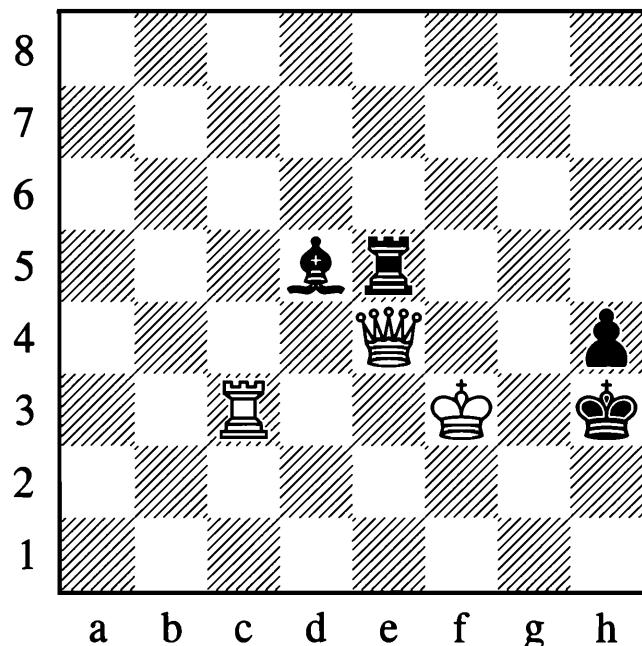
The rook gains additional squares as the bishop moves aside.

3. Relinquishment of duties



The bishop gains additional squares as the rook (stopping the pawn by a pin) releases the bishop from its task.

4. Neutralization of a tactical motif



1. ♕f2† ♔h2

The white queen can now take on e5, or just give mate on h4!

Chapter 2

The Pin

Have you ever lost due to an unforeseen pin? Try to find the games, then put the positions on a board and try to figure out why these pins came as surprises. Don't be satisfied with just being able to pinpoint the exact mistakes. Always try to understand the underlying causes of your defeats. In some sense all defeats are caused by lack of understanding. So the question one must ask oneself after a loss is: What more do I need to understand in order to improve my chess?

Essentially a pin is a chain of three chess pieces. The first point in this chain is the attacking piece, the second point is the pinned piece, and the third piece is the target of the pin.

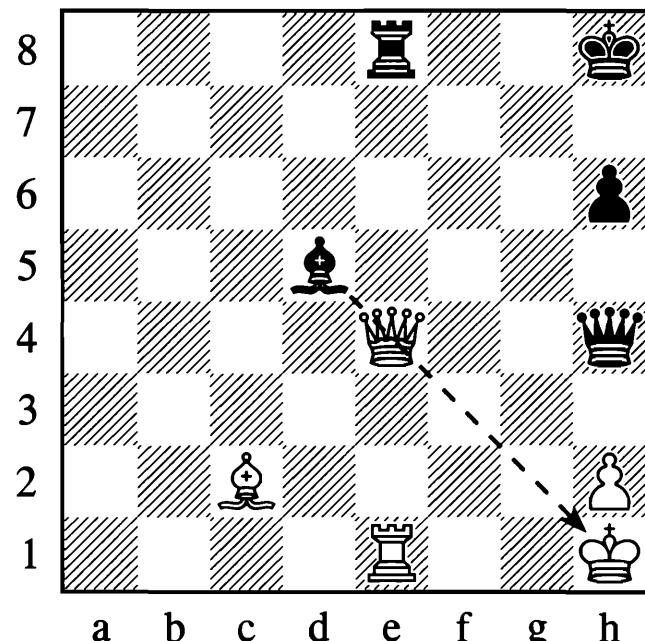
In this chapter I will at first take a closer look at the different kinds of targets, then I will examine the pinned piece, and finally the attacker. The final points to examine are the conditions to set up and to break a pin.

I. The target

1. The King

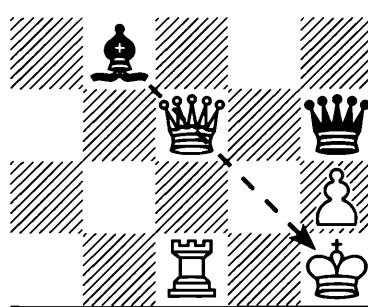
When the king is the target of a pin, the freedom of movement of the pinned piece is always radically reduced. A knight becomes totally immobile; other pinned pieces are only able to move on the line between the attacker and the king. So the pieces lose the attacking and defending functions they might have had before.

In the following diagram the white queen is only allowed to move diagonally between g2 and d5 as it is pinned against the king.

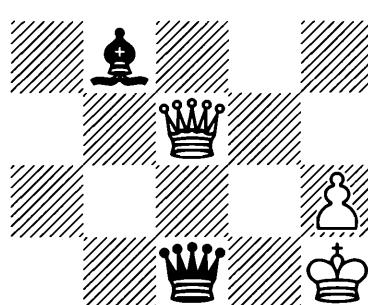


Consequently Black's rook and queen are not under attack by the white queen and there is no mate on h7 either.

The next two diagrams show how the defensive function of the queen disappears with the pin. She can neither defend the rook:



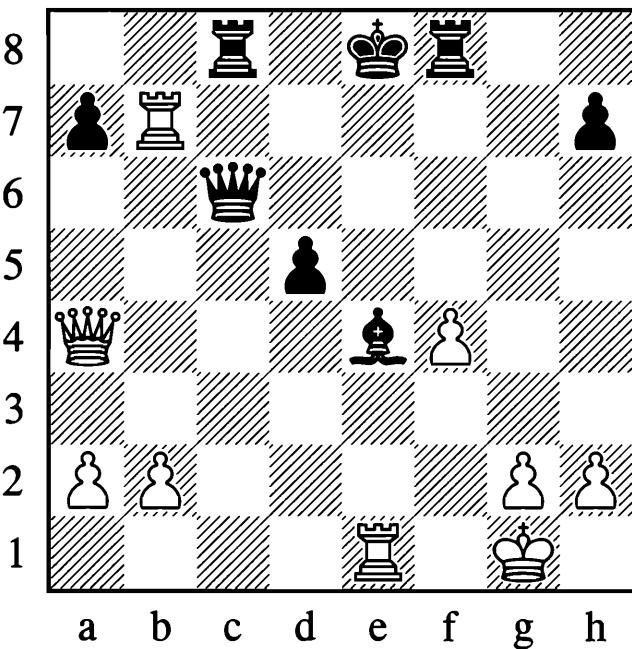
Nor defend a square (mate):



The next example demonstrates the loss of function of a pinned piece rather drastically.

Shumov – Winawer

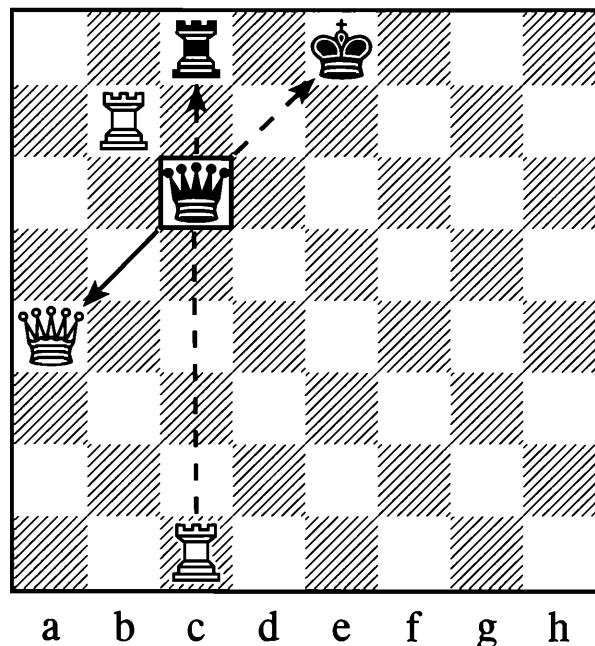
St Petersburg 1875



1. $\mathbb{Q}c1$

Black will lose the queen or be mated.

As the black queen is pinned by the white queen against the king it loses all its attacking power concerning the white rook on c1 and its mobility to defend the c8-rook against $\mathbb{Q}c1xc8$ with mate.



If the target is the king the pin is always effectual and we can draw the following conclusions:

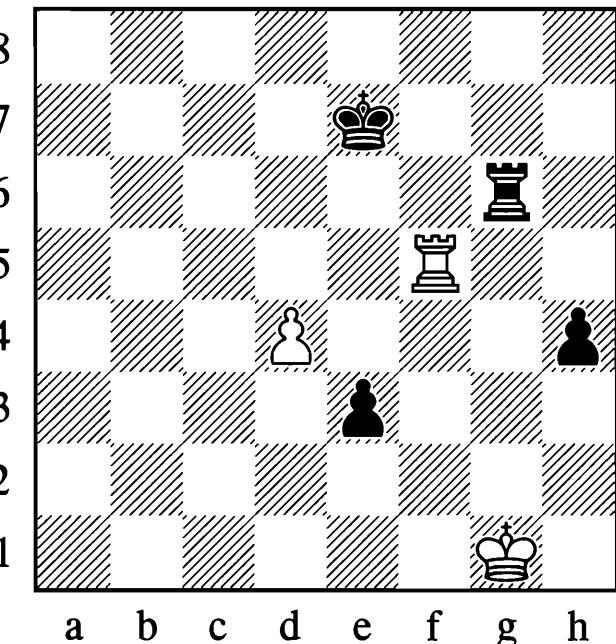
The freedom of movement of the pinned piece is radically (in the case of the knight totally) reduced. The piece is only able to move in the line of fire of the attacking piece.

Therefore, the pinned piece has no chance to defend itself against additional attacks.

Bearing this in mind, it is not very difficult to see that these consequences of a pin against the king also have strategic repercussions. In an endgame the weaker side will try to hold the game by neutralizing the opponent's advantageous pawn structure or even an extra pawn with a piece. What the weaker side is trying to avoid is the exchange of this very last piece. One of the strategic consequences of a pin against the king would be the elimination of a remaining piece by setting up this pin and exchanging the last important piece, transforming the position into a won king and pawn endgame.

Beliavsky – Yusupov

USSR 1987



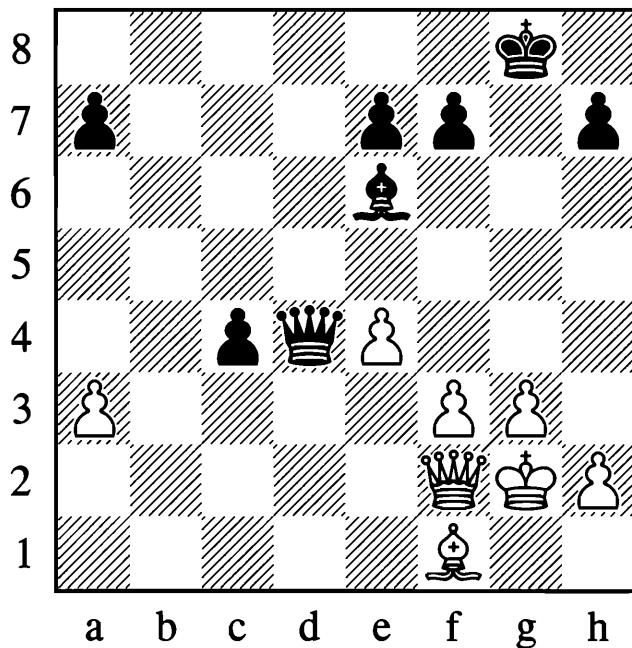
If White wants to stop the e-pawn the king has to move to the f-file. So in this position White resigned because:

1. $\mathbb{Q}f1 \mathbb{B}f6$

Black will swap off the rooks and one of his pawns will make it to the eighth rank. 1.♔h1 e2 2.♕e5† ♕e6! also does not save the day.

Lengyel – Brinck Claussen

Varna (ol) 1962



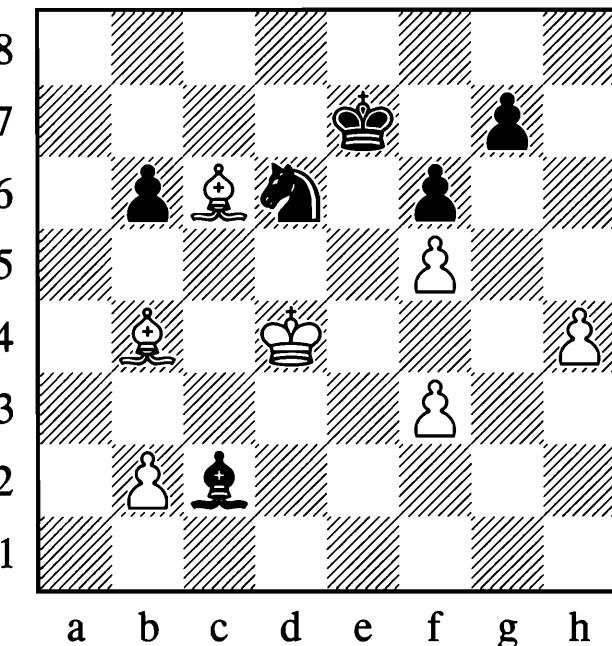
1...♝h3† 2.♔g1 ♜a1

All the white pieces are paralysed and Black's c-pawn, having no adversary left, will march towards the eighth rank.

Another beautiful example is:

Polugaevsky – Pinter

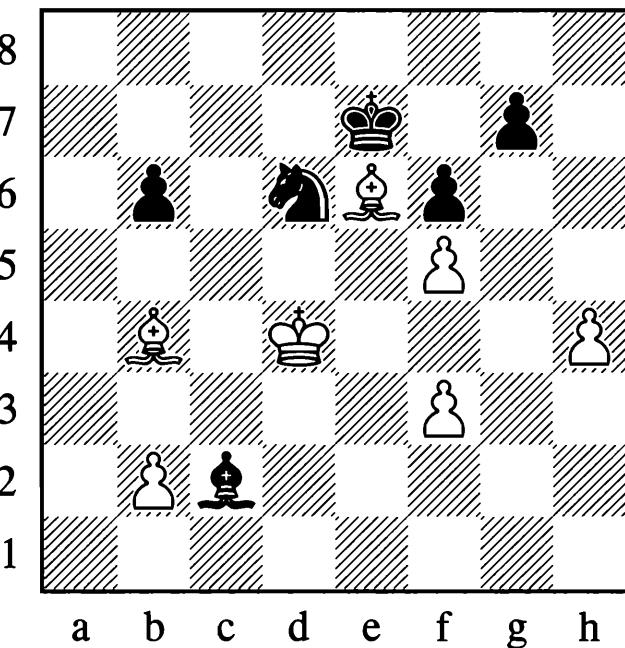
Zagreb 1987



Black's last move was 74...♝b3-c2 (74...♝d1 would have lost as well).

Now followed:

75.♔e4 ♛b3 76.♔d5 ♛c2 77.♔e6

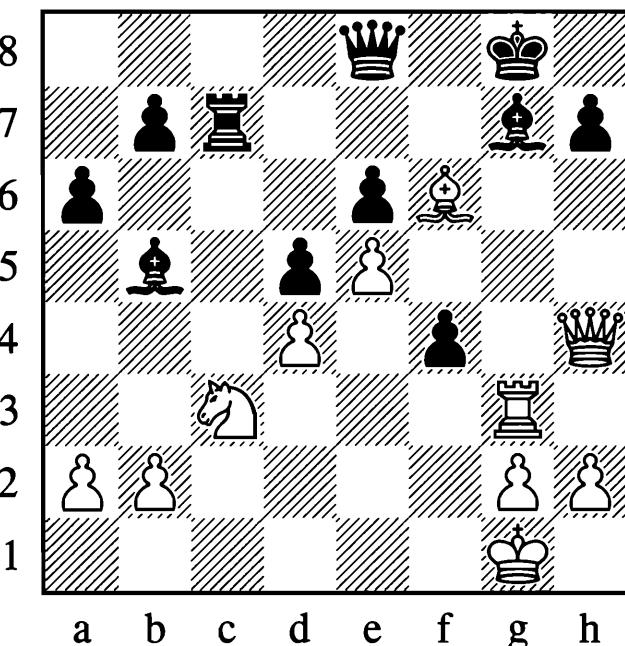


And now White is winning as the knight is pinned against the king and any king move would lose material

In the following example, Black has sacrificed a pawn with 24...f4. Using a pin White turns his material superiority into a won pawn endgame.

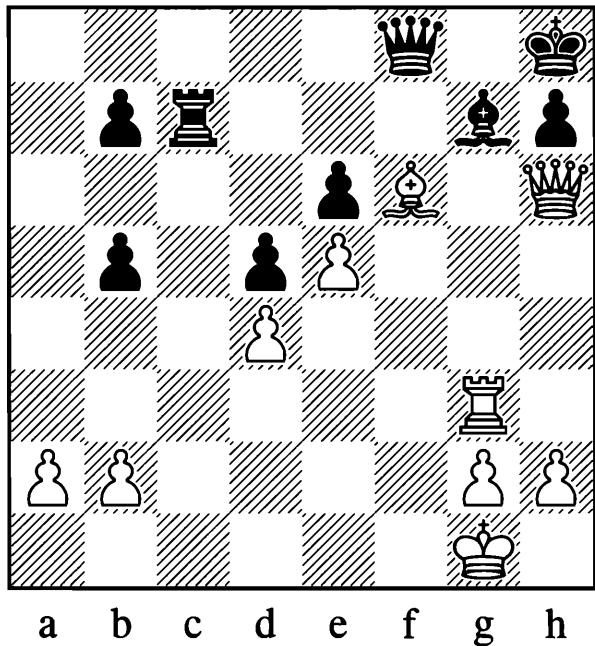
Morphy – Anderssen

Paris (11) 1858

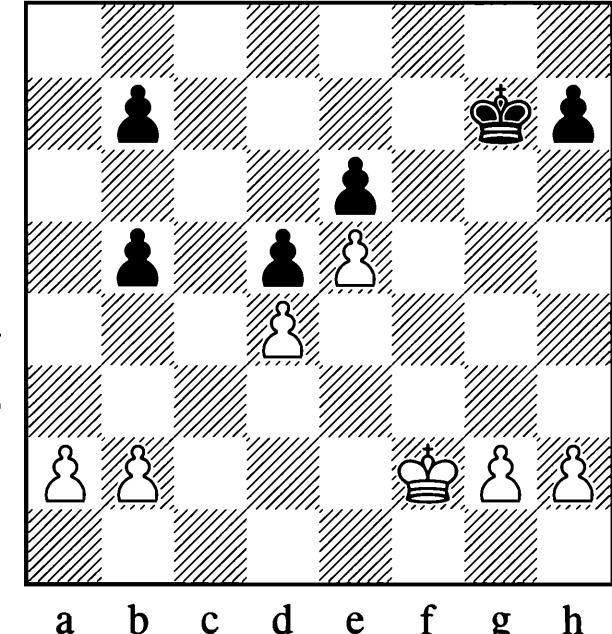


25. $\mathbb{W}xf4$ $\mathbb{W}f8$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ $axb5$ 27. $\mathbb{W}h6$ $\mathbb{K}h8$

With the threat of 28... $\mathbb{W}xf6!$.



28. $\mathbb{B}xg7$ $\mathbb{B}xg7$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}f2!$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 30. $\mathbb{W}xg7\#$ $\mathbb{W}xg7$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$



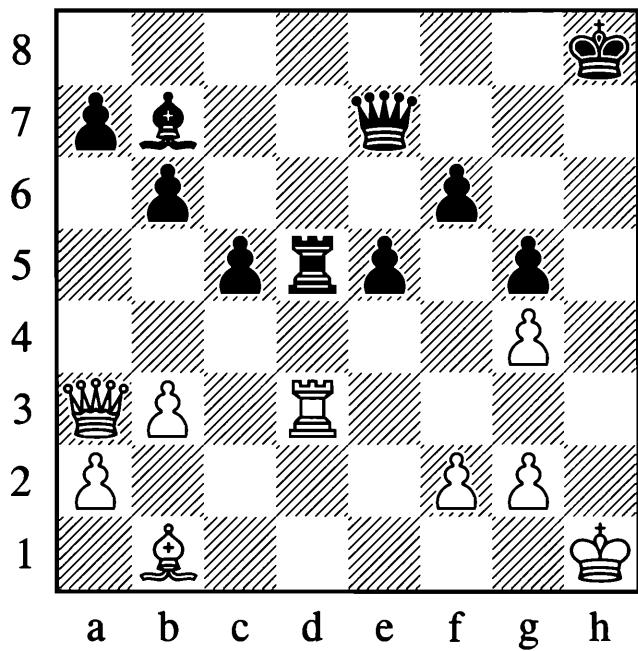
And White won the pawn endgame with his extra pawn on the kingside.

Tarrasch once pointed out that it is always dangerous when your king and the opponent's queen are on the same line, no matter how many pieces are in between.

The next example shows that this advice should be taken seriously.

Schatz – Giegold

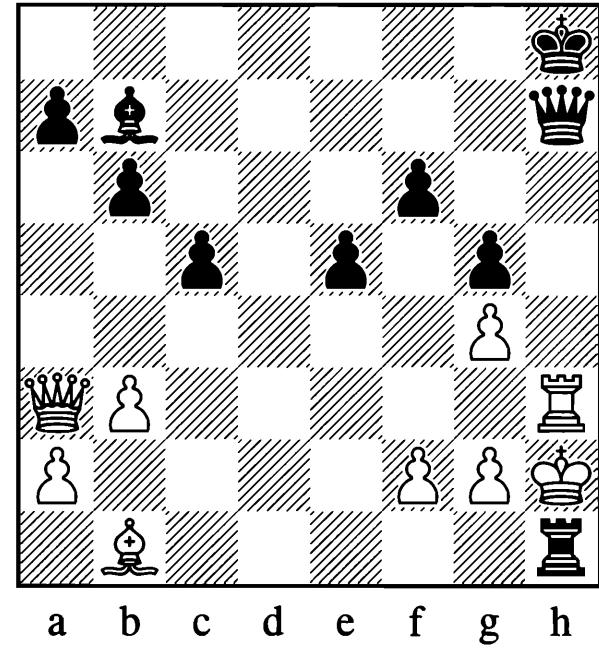
Hof 1928



1... $\mathbb{W}h7\#$

Black gave his opponent the possibility to set up a pin against his king but the pin against the white king was even stronger.

2. $\mathbb{B}h3$ $\mathbb{B}d1\#$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{B}h1\#!!$



White finds out rather painfully that after 4. $\mathbb{Q}xh1$ the black queen is pinned but not immobile. The rook and now also the g2-pawn are pinned against the king. Consequently, the rook is not defended. 4... $\mathbb{W}xh3\#$ and White loses the rook and the game at once.

Yet the game continuation did not help White either. After

4. ♕g3

he ran into

4... ♘h4†!!

forcing mate with **5. ♘xh4 gxh4!!**. The black queen, though pinned and restricted, could still do her job along the h-file.

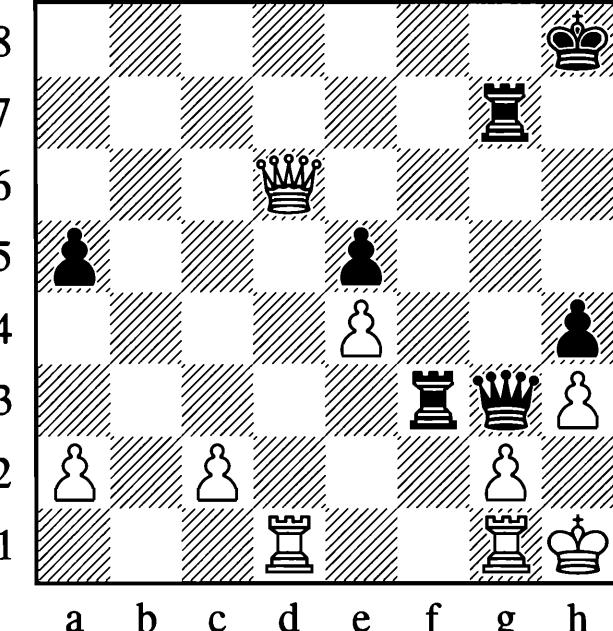
"It is always dangerous when your king and the opponent's queen are on the same line."

Tarrasch

Now we know how dangerous it is for other pieces to enter into the line of attack between queen and king. With regard to the great value of king and queen we can also see that there will always be a threat of pinning if two of our own pieces are on one line or diagonal. Therefore you need to train your vision for these configurations on the board that might turn into a pin. The example of king and queen is the best to bring out the general principles of the pin. Note how simple things sometimes are:

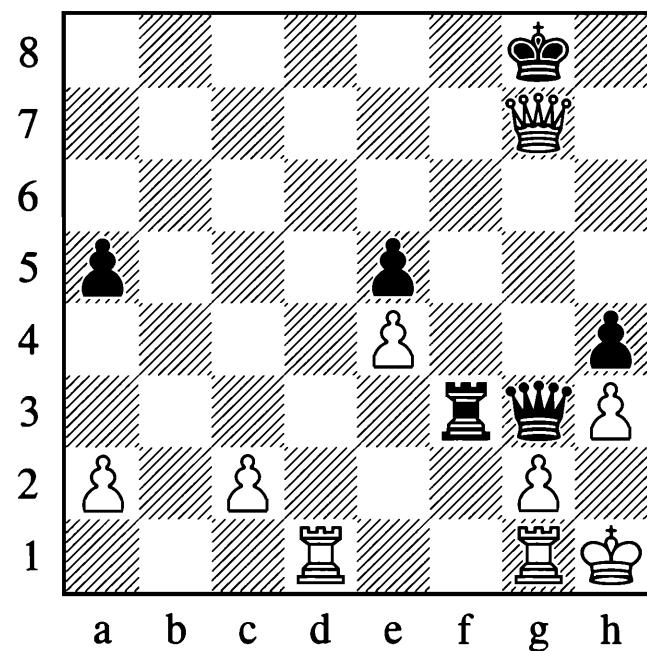
Schlechter – Leonhardt

Bad Pistyan 1912



As you can easily see, the white rook and the black queen are already on one file but the file is not open. What you actually need to do *first* is to bring the king onto this file as a target:

1. ♘h6†! ♘g8 2. ♘xg7†

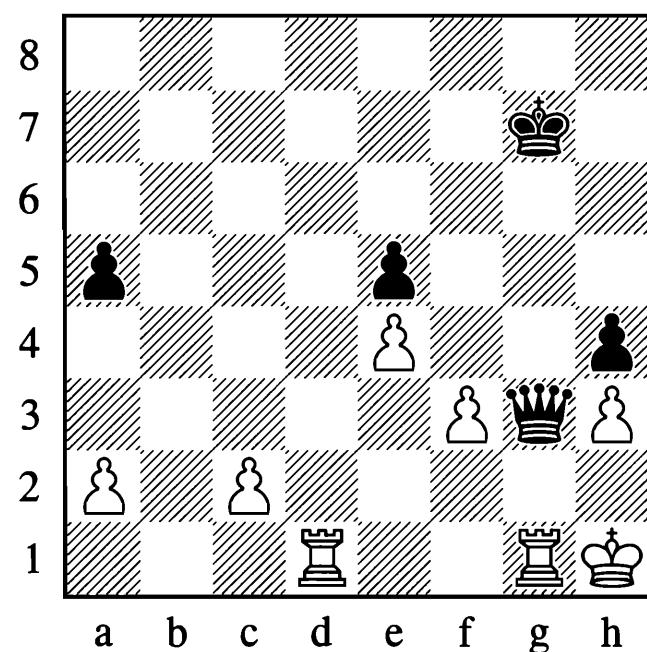


And *second* is to open the g-file after

2... ♘xg7

with

3. gxf3



Remember that a pin is made up of three pieces. Yet sometimes the target piece can also be just a square. In the last example we already had two of the three components for a pin

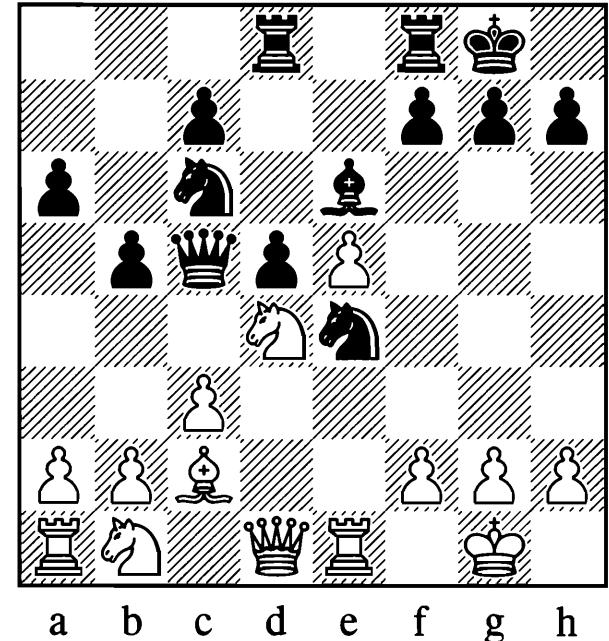
on the board: the black queen was opposing the white rook. The only thing you had to do was to create that missing third point behind the queen against which she could be pinned. If the king is somewhere near, then it is not difficult to turn him into the target of a pin. If you understand how simple it is to set up a pin against the king, then you will later recognize more easily other pins or possibilities for pins as well.

This example also shows the need to create the elements of a tactical motif, which does not only apply for the pin. Good players will threaten to create only the second of the three conditions of this motif and their opponents, in order to stop them, might get into a desperate situation on other sections of the board. Good players, therefore, work with the motifs, and they are able to do so as they understand every component of the motif they are working with.

Let's stay with the king as a target for a little while:

Gelbmann – Gyimesi

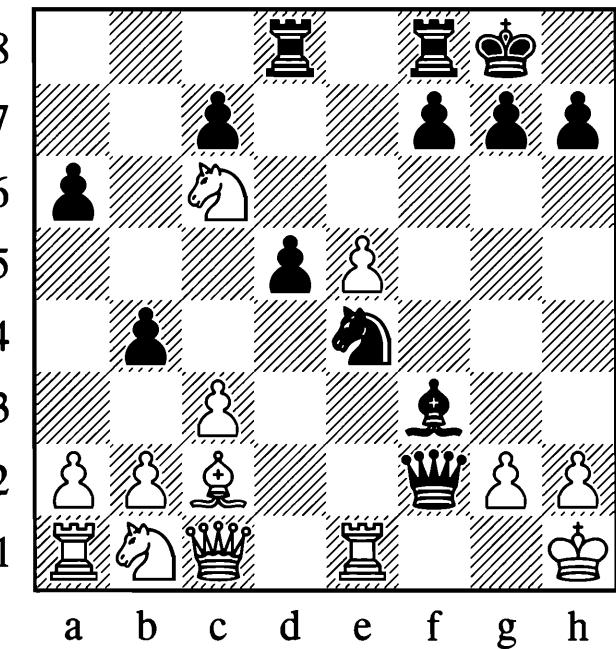
European U-20 Championship, Siofok 1996



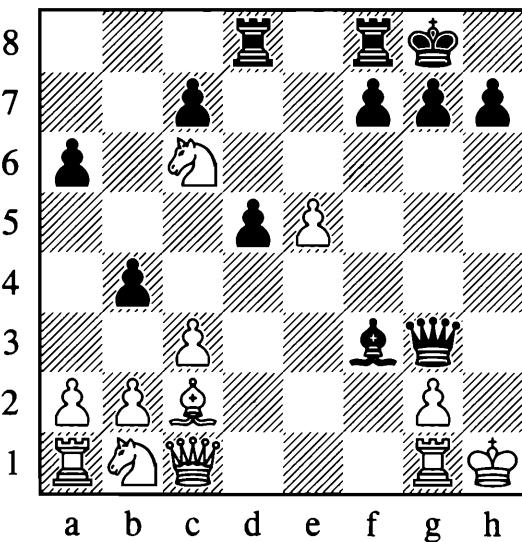
1...b4!?

With this move Black entered a little adventure.

2. $\mathbb{Q}xc6 \mathbb{W}xf2\#$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}h1 \mathbb{Q}g4$ 4. $\mathbb{W}c1 \mathbb{Q}f3$

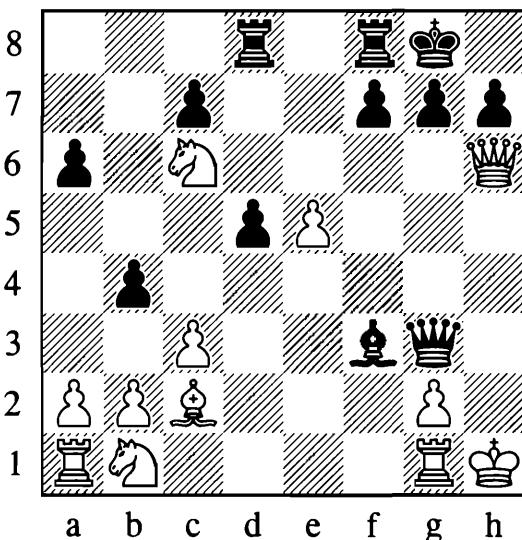


In a classic example of the trapper being trapped, Gyimesi had only expected 5.gxf3 and found out only now that 5. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ is actually winning for White. 5. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ at first looks bad, because after 5... $\mathbb{Q}g3\#$ 6.hxg3 $\mathbb{W}xg3$



it looks as if White is not able to take the bishop on f3 or to defend against the mate on the h-file.

Yet Gyimesi (with an excellent poker face! I was there watching the game and did not see any sign of worry on his face...) now saw the surprising 7. $\mathbb{W}h6!!$, which would solve all White's problems:



The h-file would be covered, White would be threatening mate on h7, and if Black took the queen, White would uncover the pin of queen against king by taking the black bishop with the pawn.

Although two pawns had been covering the pin we have to spot the elementary configuration of rook, queen, and king on one file. Once we have spotted this configuration we are able to use it to our advantage.

White did not see this during the game and played

5.gxf3?

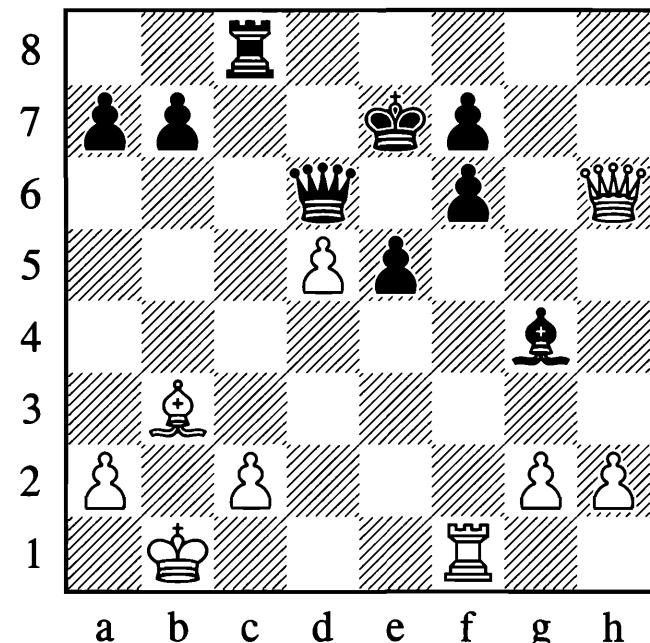
giving Black the chance to eventually set up a perpetual check and so the game ended in a draw.

If both players had been able to see the three points of the pin more clearly, the game would have taken another course. We can see how important it is to recognize the configuration of the pin as early as possible and we have to see *all three* links of a pinning chain.

One of these points is the target. To see a possible target when the piece is the king is fairly easy. But it is not only the king that can turn into a target: it could also be the surroundings of the king. Often pieces around the king have important defensive duties to perform. This gives ample opportunities to set up tactical operations.

Van den Berg – Eliskases

Beverwijk 1959



Superficial analysis might arrive at the conclusion that the pawn on f6 is attacked twice and defended twice.

Yet after White has gained a tempo attacking the bishop with his queen the picture changes completely as White is now able to set up a pin.

1. $\mathbb{Q}h4!$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 2. $\mathbb{B}xf6$ $\mathbb{W}xf6$ 3. $d6\#$

1–0

The pinning chain of queen, queen and king makes it impossible for Black to save his queen.

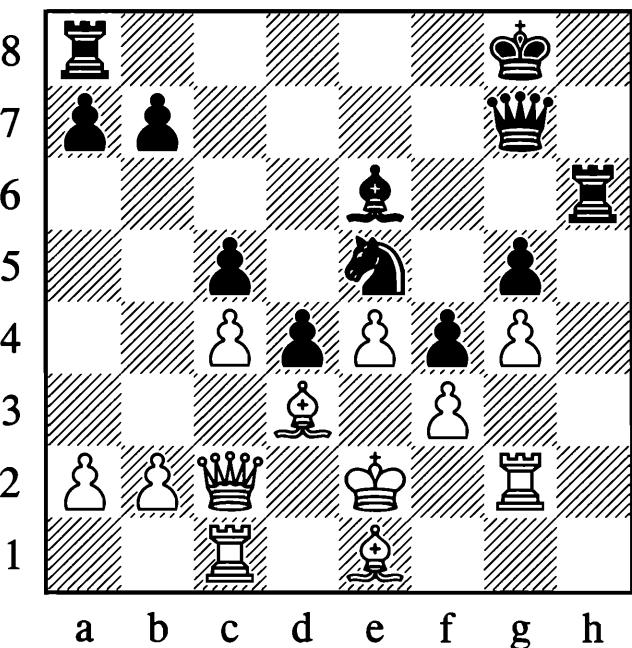
In this example we first had the pin and then a sacrifice to win material. In the next example we will see the sacrifice first and then the material is won back by the pin.

The effect of an elementary motif may occur in the beginning of a combination or later. It can either support another motif or be the winning motif itself.

It is important to recognize the configuration of the pin as early as possible and we have to see all three links of a pinning chain.

Ed. Lasker – Alekhine

Dusseldorf 1908

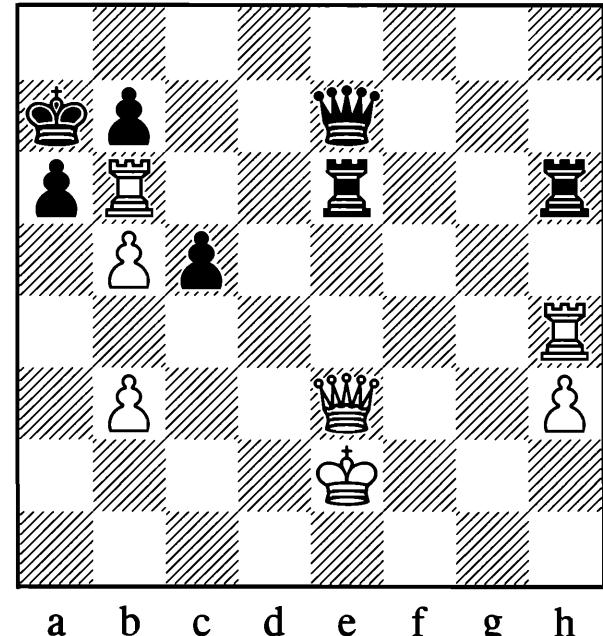
**1...♝h3 2.♝f2 ♗xf3!**

3...♝xg4 will follow and White finds himself in a deadly pin.

0–1

Sometimes it can be very helpful to remember that there are two kings on the board that can be pinned.

In a study by **Horwitz and Kling** from 1873:



It looks as if White was lost due to a lethal pin after:

1.♝xe6 ♗xe6

But Black is lost due to a counter-pin (what do we have the second king for!).

2.b6†

Now Black has the “pleasant” choice to lose with either:

2...♛xb6 3.♝h6

With a deadly pin, or with:

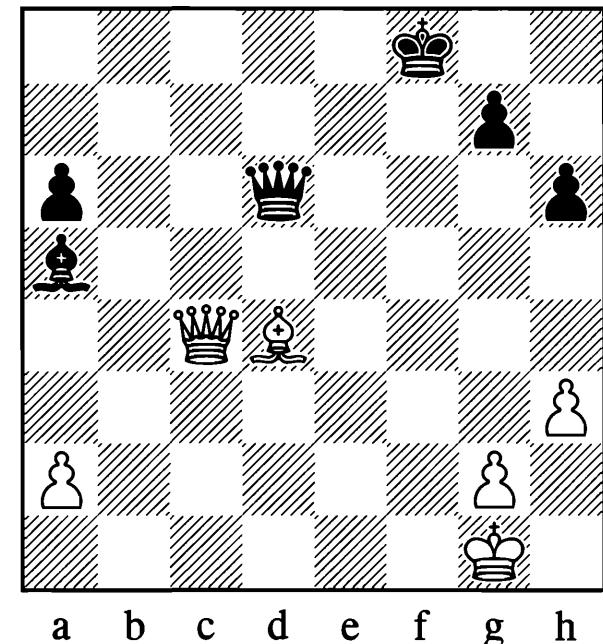
2...♛b8 3.♝h8†

With mate to follow.

These counter-pins do not only occur in studies.

Bruendtrup – Budrich

Berlin 1954



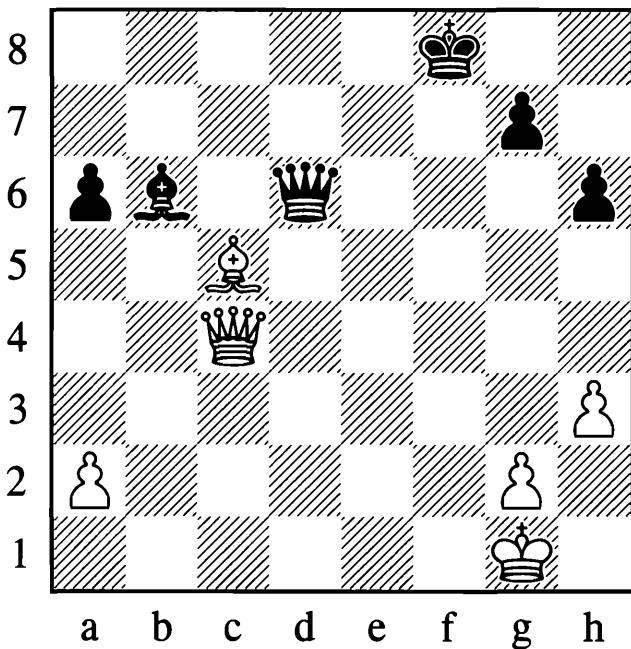
White pinned Black's queen with:

1.♝c5

Black thought he could solve the problem with the counter-pin:

1...♝b6

After all, White's bishop is now attacked twice but only defended once. Yet it is Black who will lose material because there is the pretty:

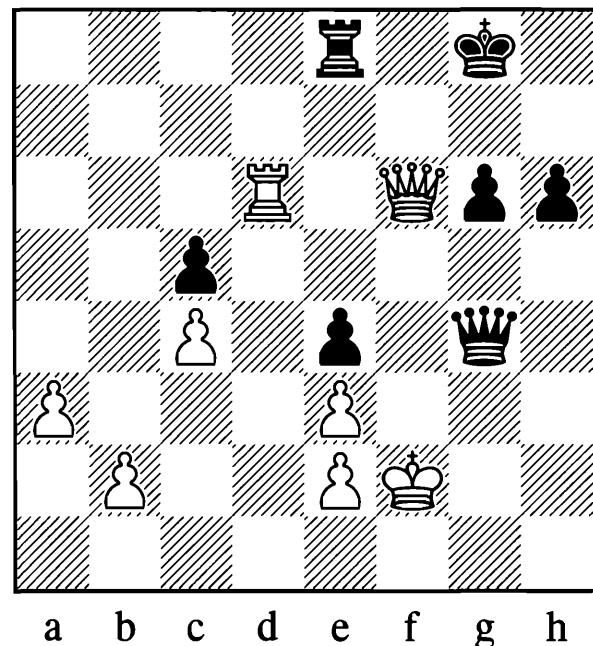


2... $\mathbb{W}f4\#!$

Again the second king plays a decisive role. White's pinning piece is attacked twice, pinned against its own king and so unable to capture the black queen, but even so White's pin is enough to win the game.

We have seen how to win the pinned piece in a pinning chain. Remember that this piece can be attacked from all other directions but the king's direction as the pinned piece is not allowed to expose the king to an attack.

In the game **Makogonov – Chekhover**, Tbilisi 1937, Black played:



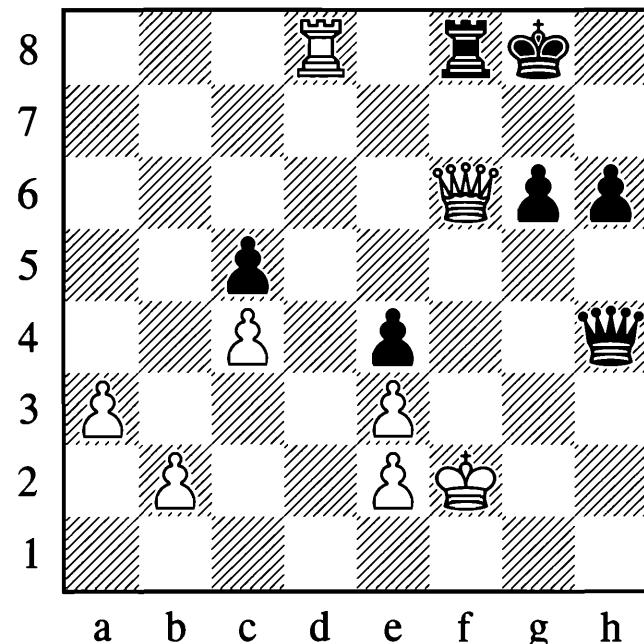
1... $\mathbb{R}f8!$

Allowing White to set up a pin.

2. $\mathbb{R}d8$

Again the rook is attacked twice but only defended once. Still it has to be remembered that this piece is pinning White's queen against the king, setting up the pinning chain of the f8-rook, the queen on f6 and the king on f2. Black simply wins the pinned piece by playing

2... $\mathbb{W}h4\#!$



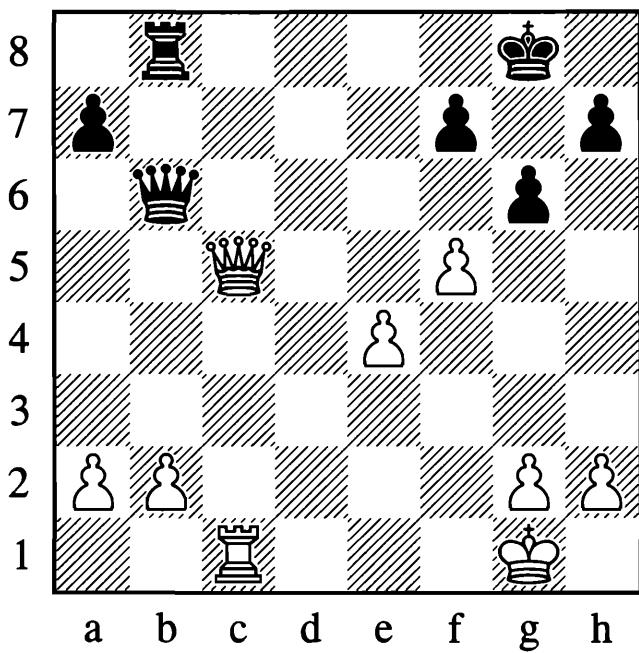
Once again the pinned piece was able to perform its pinning task. Furthermore, we have to remember that in a counter-pin both defending pieces can lose their defensive properties.

The pinned piece can be attacked from every other direction except from the king's direction, as the pinned piece is not allowed to expose the king to an attack.

The next example shows that the target can be conquered with tempo, especially when the king is around somewhere.

Donner – Huebner

Buesum 1968



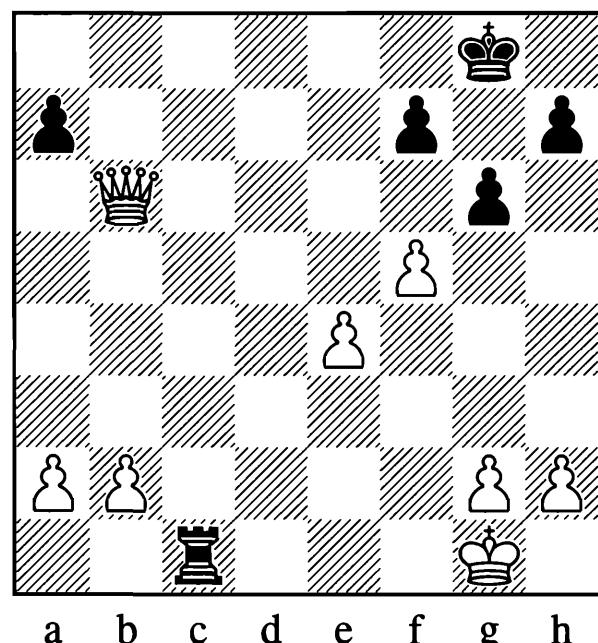
The German GM played:

1...♝c8

Attacking the white queen, which is pinned against the king on g1. After:

2.♛xb6

Black simply took the rook with check.

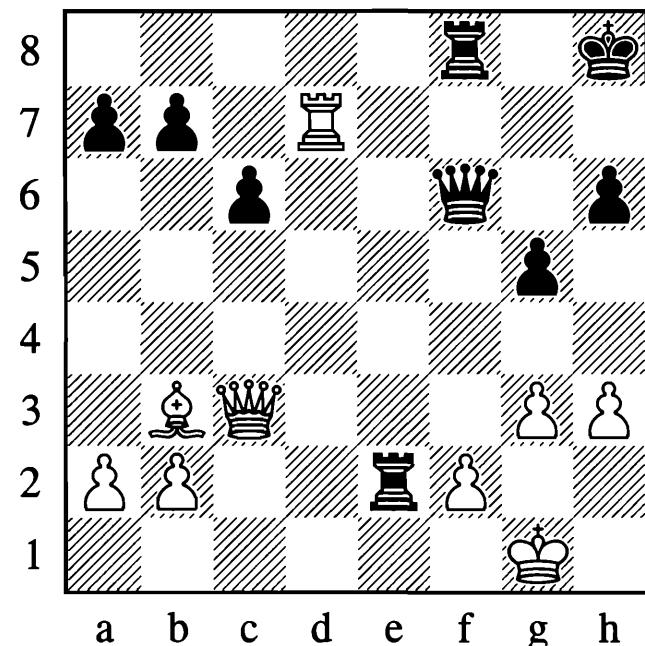
2...♝xc1†

Gaining a crucial tempo to win back his opponent's queen on the next move.

Sometimes the extra tempo can be used by the attacker to retreat to safety after winning a piece.

Mjasnikov – Cistjakov

USSR 1965



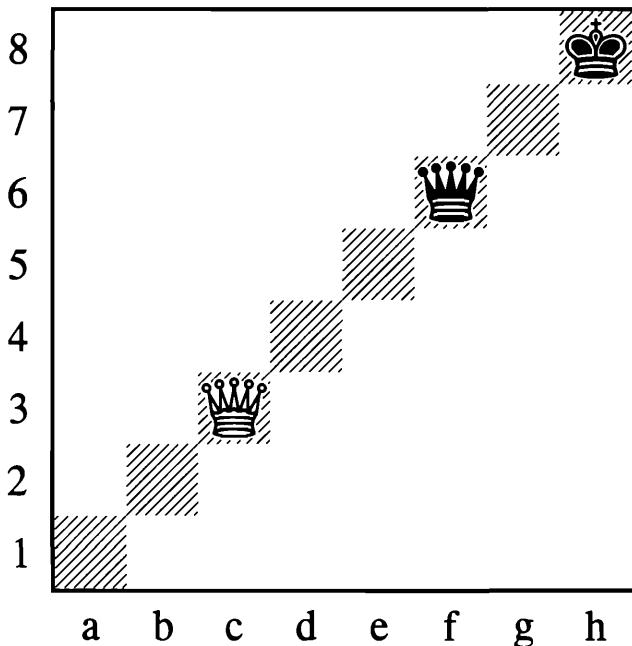
White played:

1.♜d8

And won.

Let's take a closer look at this example in order to train our visual abilities for pins against the king.

The black queen is pinned against the king. Therefore her freedom of movement is severely restricted and you have to see that at once. No matter what the queen seems to be attacking, the c3-g7 diagonal is the only way the queen is able to move due to the pin. Therefore that is the only movement of the black queen we have to take into account. Consequently, we need not think about the black queen as a defender of any other squares that are not on that diagonal, such as d8, nor is this queen defending any pieces such as the rook on f8. So when we are calculating this position we should actually see the queen not as in the first diagram but rather like this:

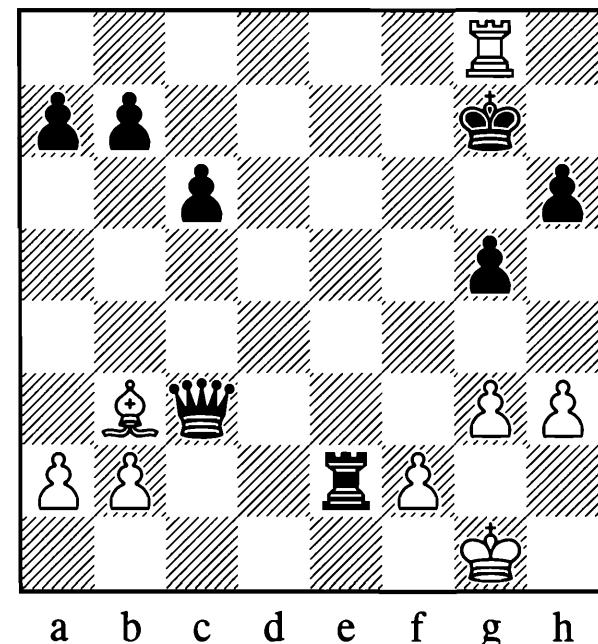


Going back to the original position, the f8-rook is defending the already attacked queen on f6; this rook is on the same line as its king.

If we pin the rook, *both* pieces will have lost their defence!

Taking into consideration that often tempos can be won against the king, you will not hesitate to play 1. $\mathbb{R}d8$ in the initial position.
After:

1... $\mathbb{W}xc3$ 2. $\mathbb{R}xf8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 3. $\mathbb{R}g8\#$



The white rook has reached a safe haven and White ends up with an extra piece.

2. The pin against more valuable and more important pieces

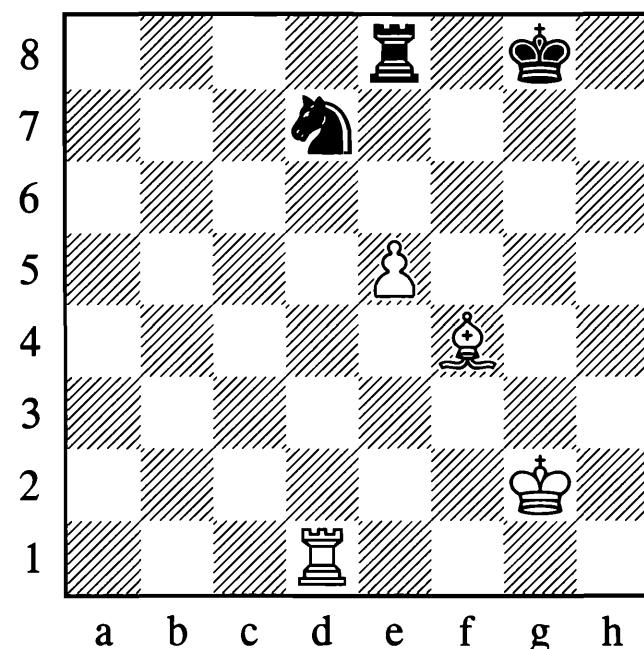
Having learned that the king is an excellent target of a pinning chain, it is not too far-fetched to assume that a pin is increasingly effective the more important the target in the pinning chain is.

The value of the king is obvious. This is also clear in the case of a queen being protected by a pawn against the attack of a bishop. But what about when the value of the target is lower than the pinned piece? With decreasing value the target will also receive decreasing attention.

The material value of the pinned piece is often unimportant for recognizing a potential pin. What is important is the target piece or square in order to create a pin. But this target piece or square can often be created with exchanges, attacks or by assigning a piece or square an important duty. **In principle every attacked piece standing in front of a colleague has to be seen as pinned.**

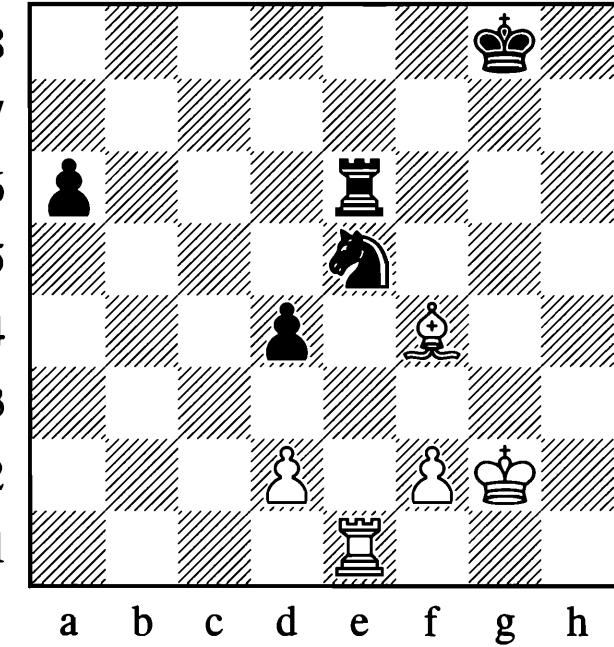
3. Pinning against an undefended piece

The importance and value of the target is not so relevant if the target piece will be lost when the pinned piece moves and is not able to defend the target piece.



In this position it would be suicidal if the black knight took the pawn. The black knight would be lost after $\mathbb{E}e1$ as it is not able to move out of the pin and defend the rook, which therefore remains undefended.

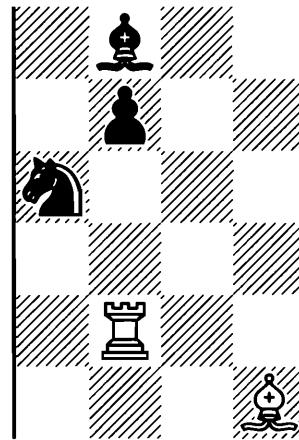
But sometimes it is not necessary to defend the target directly.



In this position (inspired by an example Tarrasch gave) Black has won a pawn on e5 and White pinned Black's knight against the rook. Yet with 1... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ Black threatens to fork White's rook and king if White takes the rook. Think twice when you set up a pin against an undefended target because there is more than one way of defending a piece.

A pin against an undefended piece as a target does not always aim at this target. Quite often it is enough to employ this motif to render the pinned piece impotent. The restriction of the performance of a pinned piece can have both a tactical and strategic meaning.

The restricted performance of a pinned piece can have both a tactical and strategic significance.

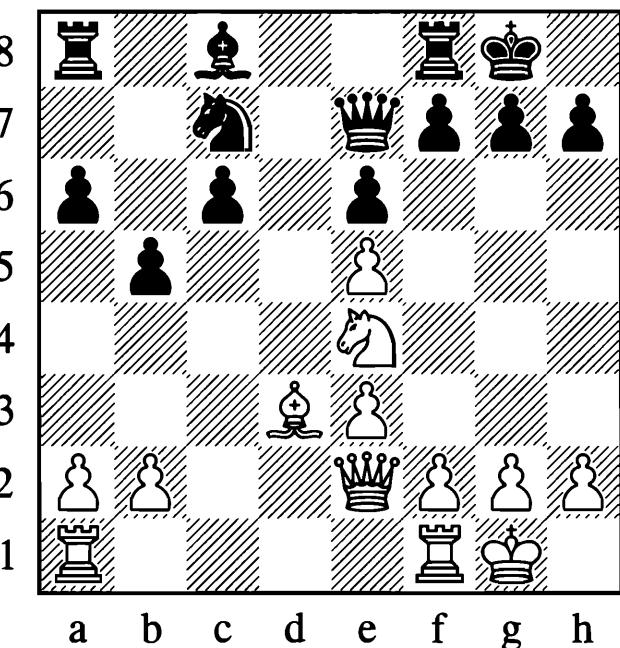


White to move would immediately win a piece by capturing the knight. The pieces are not able to defend each other, neither directly nor indirectly. You can also see in this example how easily the pinning chain of rook, pawn and bishop can be detected. On this simple optical impression we have to build our tactical ability to use a pin. From here the most complicated configurations can be understood and created.

Now that we have seen how we can use the pin against an undefended target tactically let us turn to the strategic side of this motif.

Klebaner – Maleha

Correspondence 1965



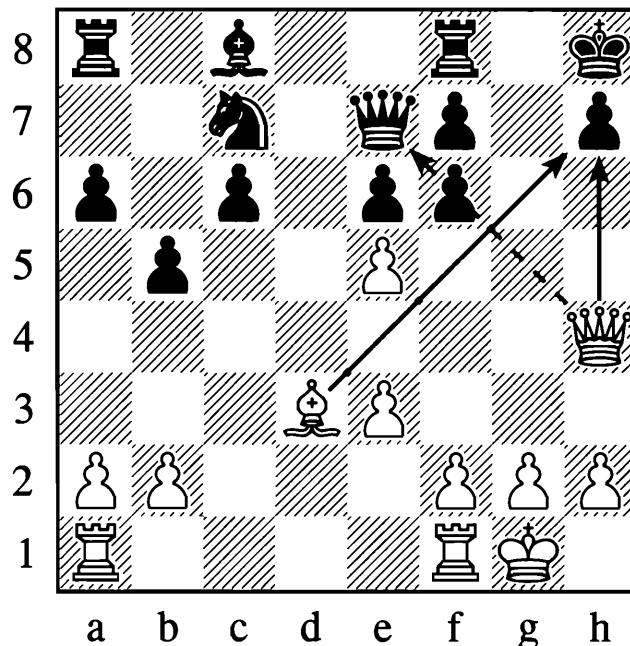
Here the strategic motif is the attack against the black king. After:

1. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$ gxf6 2. $\mathbb{W}g4\#$ $\mathbb{K}h8$

White has opened the all-important diagonal for his bishop, eyeing h7.

3. $\mathbb{W}h4!$

White threatens mate and at the same time sets up a pinning chain, as the pawn on f6 is not able to close the diagonal without exposing the black queen to the attack by its white opponent.



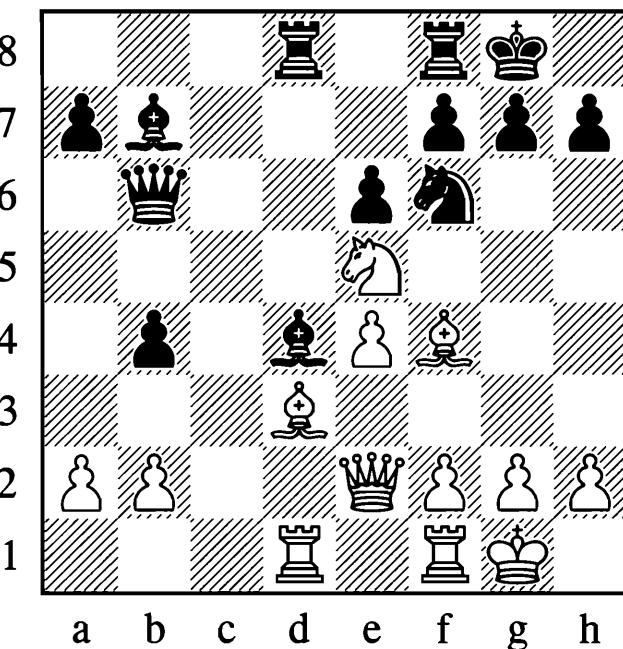
One undefended piece or square should already set off alarm bells with regard to any tactical motif. With two such points in a row and the last point undefended, it is pinning time.

When looking to set up a pin, it is better to focus on the fundamental configuration rather than being too concerned about the value of each component. Indeed, searching for any tactic you should concentrate on the function of the pieces rather than on their value.

If we are looking for the three components of a pin, it is better to look for the fundamental configuration rather than for the value of each component. This recommendation is nicely illustrated by the next example.

Bisguier – Pomar

Malaga 1971



1... $\mathbb{W}c7$

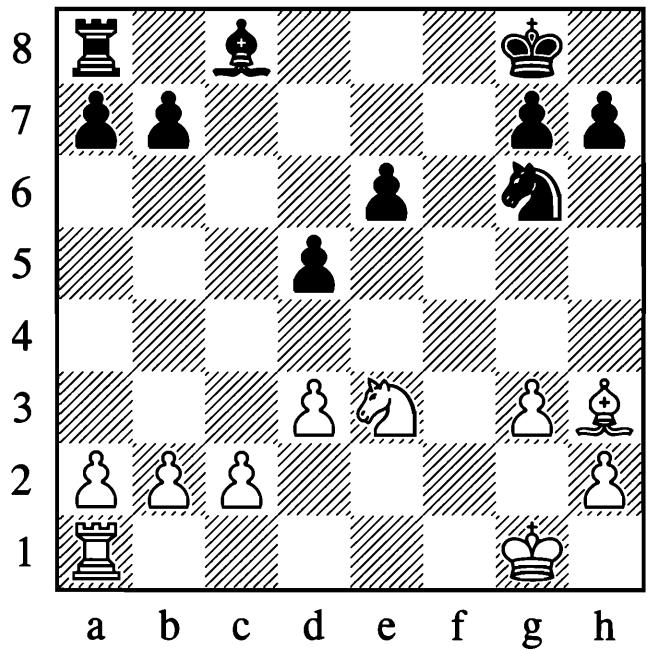
Black set up a rather unusual pin. After:

2. $\mathbb{Q}g6$ e5 3. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ exf4

The white knight was trapped and Black had a good game with two pieces for a rook and a pawn.

Again I would like to stress, and this is applicable to all other motifs, that **it is easier to find all the information for a tactic when you concentrate on the function of the pieces rather than on their value**. When sacrificing to give mate we do not care about the value of the pieces. It is the function that counts. Opening lines to the enemy king, or cutting off the king's escape route as in a smothered mate, takes priority over the value of the pieces used in these operations.

Concluding this part about the pinning of an undefended piece, we should be aware of the danger of creating undefended targets ourselves.

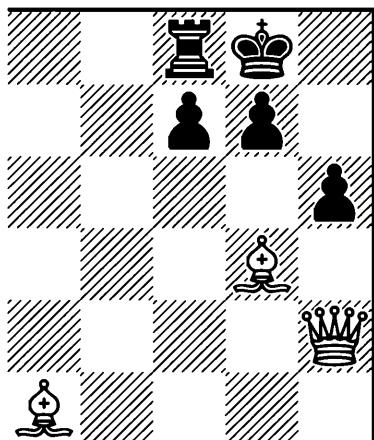


The natural desire to develop the bishop on c8 by 1... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ creates a pinning chain and the pawn on d5 will be lost after 2. $\mathbb{N}xd5$.

Similar motifs occur after castling when the king gives up a possible defence of d7 and e7.

4. Setting up a pin against a square or motif

The last point in a pinning chain can also be a square. As this concept is a little more difficult to see, let's start with a simple example.



The pawn on h6 is pinned against the h7-square. If it moved, White would give mate on h7 with his queen.

II. The pinned piece

As with the target piece in a pinning chain, any chess piece can become a pinned piece as well. But in contrast its value must always be lower than the value of the piece it is covering. Its line of communication with the target piece is of special importance. Sometimes it might be able to move out of the line of fire and defend the target at the same time. This is why it is sometimes important to control its retreating squares.

Often it is not difficult to overload the second piece with duties, especially when the target piece is an important one. As the pinned piece must already perform an important task it becomes increasingly difficult to fulfil other obligations.

On the other hand we have to keep in mind that the pinned piece in some cases might turn the pin into a discovered attack. This special case will be examined later.

III. The attacking piece

Not every piece can turn into a pinning piece during its chess career. Kings, knights and pawns can never be the attacking piece of a pinning chain, as they cannot pin other pieces.

Generally it is a mistake to believe the pinning piece must be of lesser value than the pinned piece. This misguided concept will keep you from thinking about setting up a pinning chain as in Bisguier – Pomar, page 35.

Of crucial importance is whether the pinning piece needs to be defended or not. In Shumov – Winawer, page 24, the pinning piece was undefended, but won the game anyway, whereas in Donner – Huebner, page 32, material was won with tempo thanks to the pinning piece being defended. So always keep in mind the status of your pieces. As we have already seen, it makes a big difference for any of the three points of the chain of a pin if that point is defended or not.

IV. Pinning and unpinning

To set up a pin, a chain of three links must be completed. We have already sufficiently examined each of the three points: the pinning piece, the pinned piece, and the target. But what should be regarded as a precondition for a pin? Which link in the chain should already exist before considering setting up a pin?

The primary conditions that make up the single links of a pinning chain are found in the role and position of each link in this chain, whose presence, value and status disclose to us the idea to use and to set up a pin.

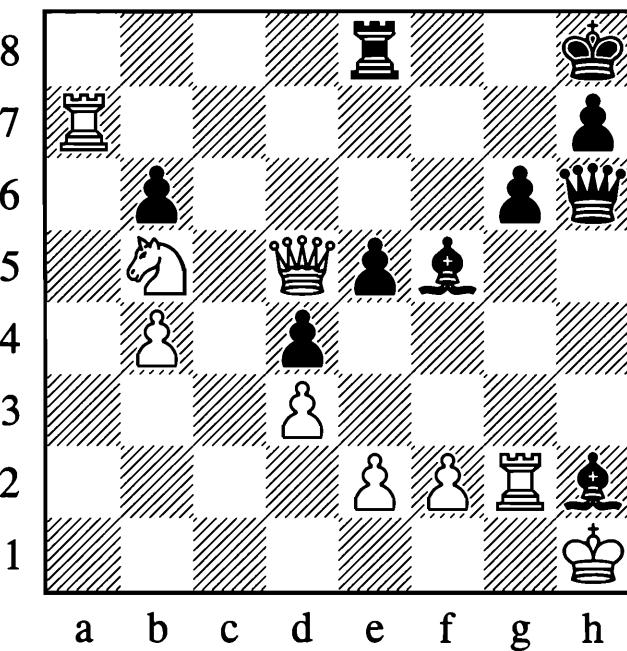
The king quite often fulfils the condition of presence, a queen often that of value, and a piece with a specific defensive task assigned to it the condition of status.

All three promise an advantageous use of a pin. Therefore it is best, when setting up a pin, to start thinking of the desired result. Only if we can gain an advantage will we consciously resort to the elementary motif of the pin.

Therefore the reason to intentionally apply the motif of the pin should be:

a) The gain of material

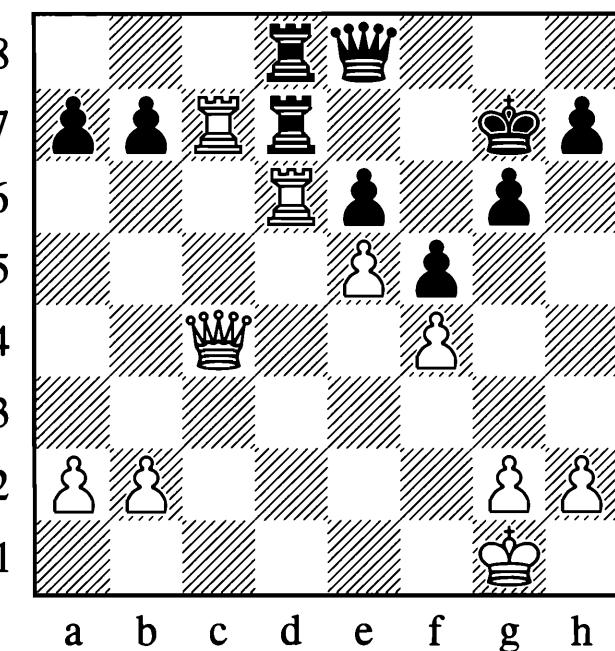
To find a good reason for searching for the possibility of a pin and to set up this motif can first of all be found in the prospect of cashing in on an attack against the pinned piece or the target piece. The aim is the pin itself. Let's win with the pin:



1. $\mathbb{Q}xh7\#!$ $\mathbb{W}xh7$ 2. $\mathbb{B}xh2$ $\mathbb{Q}h3$ 3. $\mathbb{W}f3$

And the pin wins White the black bishop on h3.

Another example of a winning pin against a piece is **Pachman – Gunnarsson**, Vrnjacka Banja 1967:



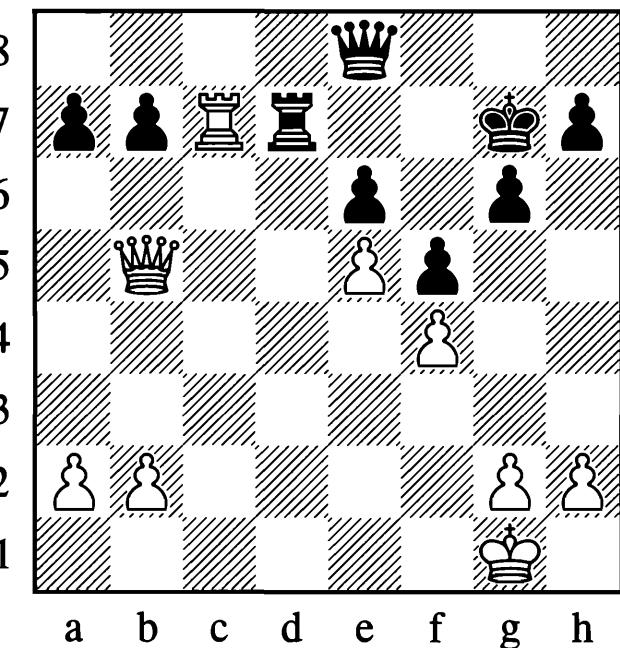
Simplifying the pin by:

It is best, when setting up a pin, to start thinking of the desired result. Only if we can gain an advantage will we consciously resort to the elementary motif of the pin.

1. $\mathbb{Q}xd7\#$

And setting up the final pin with:

2. $\mathbb{W}b5$

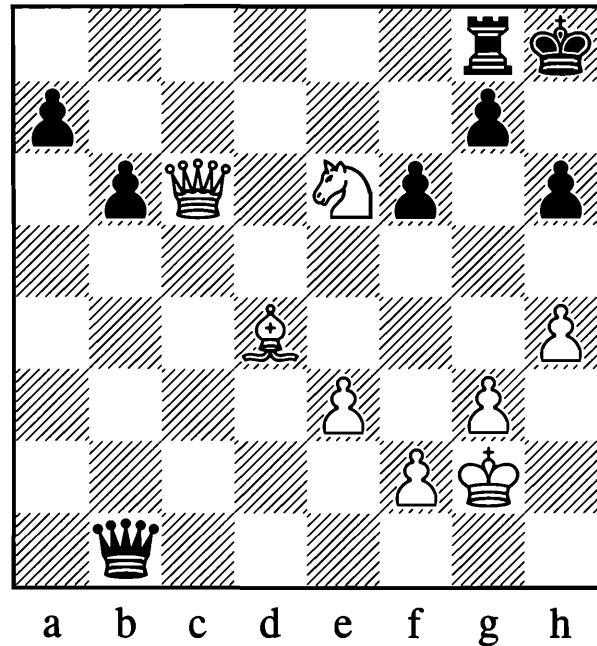


Now the d7-rook is pinned twice (against king and queen) and material will be lost.

Of course, setting up the winning pin is more fun when material is sacrificed for that purpose:

Capablanca – Alekhine

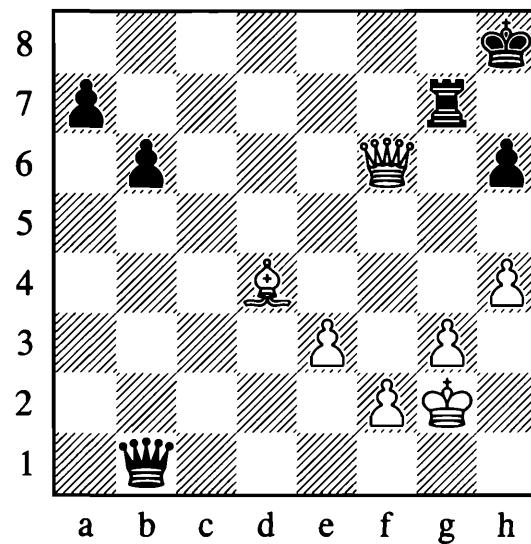
Argentina (3) 1927



1. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$

This was too strong to be answered with

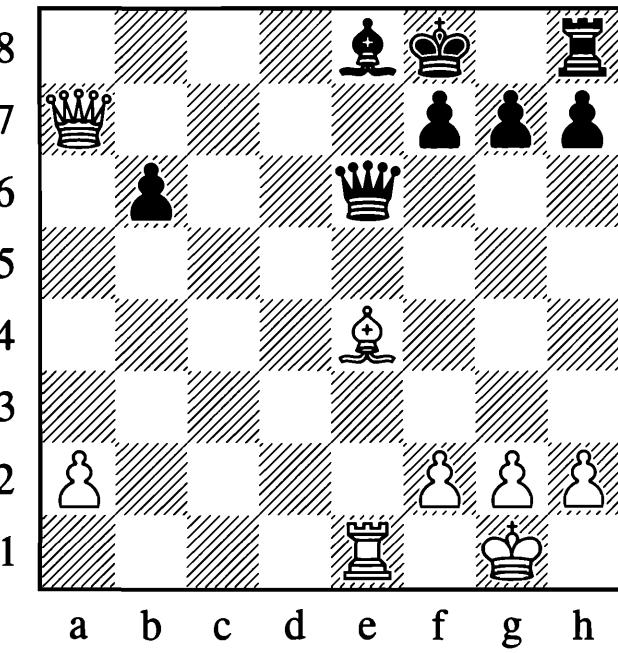
1... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ because then 2. $\mathbb{W}xf6$ would bring about a noxious pin.



The attack against the pinned piece results in a won pawn endgame: 2... $\mathbb{W}e4\#$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{W}g4$ (or 3... $\mathbb{W}b7$) 4. $\mathbb{W}xh6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 5. $\mathbb{W}xg7\#$ $\mathbb{W}xg7$ 6. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 7. $\mathbb{Q}f1!$

Although Alekhine wisely refrained from taking the white knight on g7, he could not avoid the loss of the game. We will see a little later that Alekhine in this match also knew how to use the pin to his advantage.

In the next game, **Evans – Bisguier, USA 1958**, the pinning side is out to win with an attack against the target piece (square):

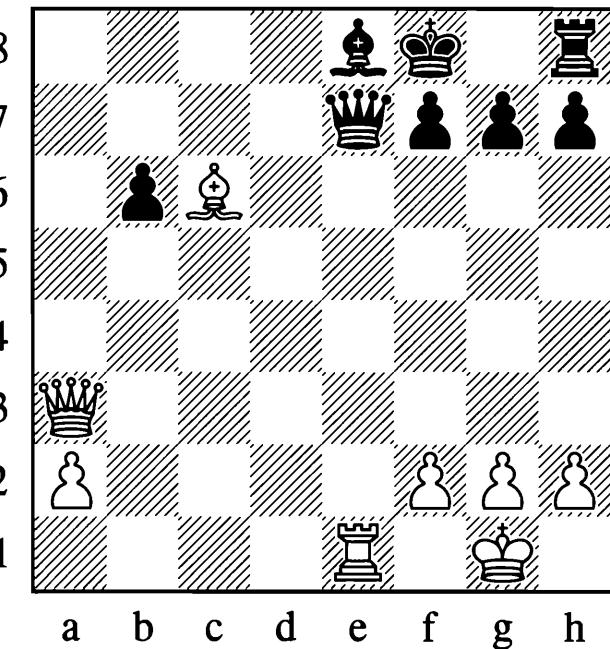


1. $\mathbb{W}a3\#$

1... $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xh7\#$

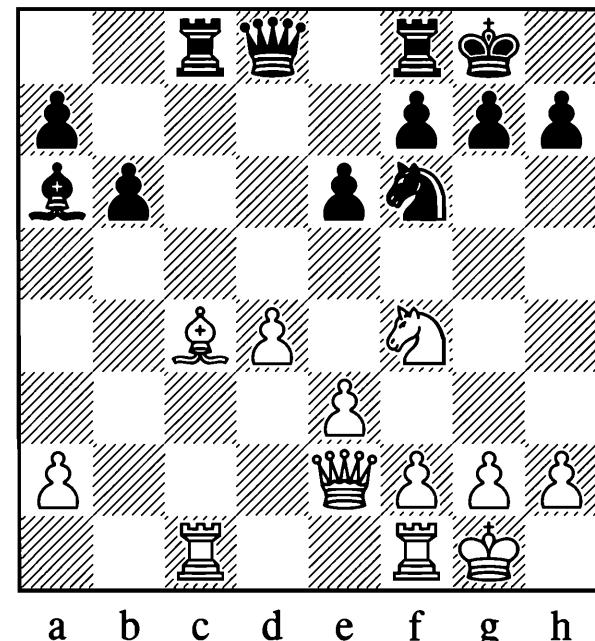
2. ♜c6!

Offering the valuable queen, but aiming to win the target piece (square) for the even more profitable mate.



Notice once again the black queen's inability to take the e1-rook.

Often the threat of attacking the pinned piece or the target piece is enough to win material elsewhere.

**1... ♜xc4**

Setting up the pin.

2. ♜xc4 ♖e4

Positioning the knight for a double attack

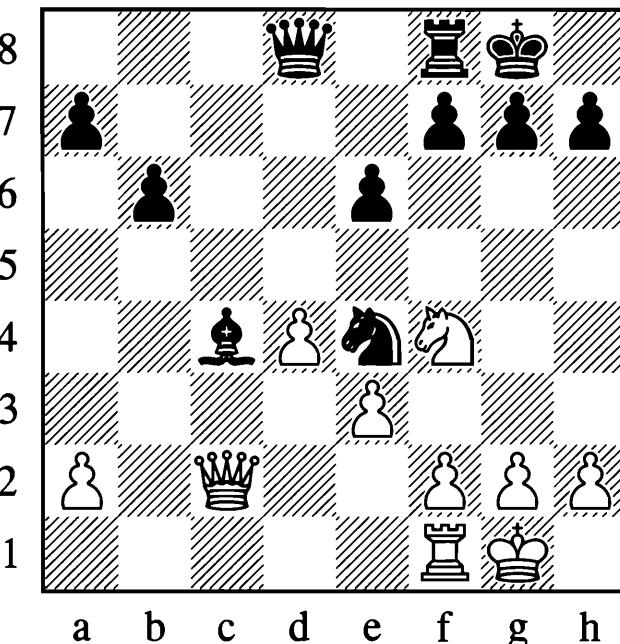
from d2 and threatening to attack the pinned piece and win the exchange with 3... ♖d6. It does not help White to dissolve the pin with

3. ♜c2

because

3... ♜xc4!

leaves White with the same result:



Regardless of which piece White takes, he will lose the exchange.

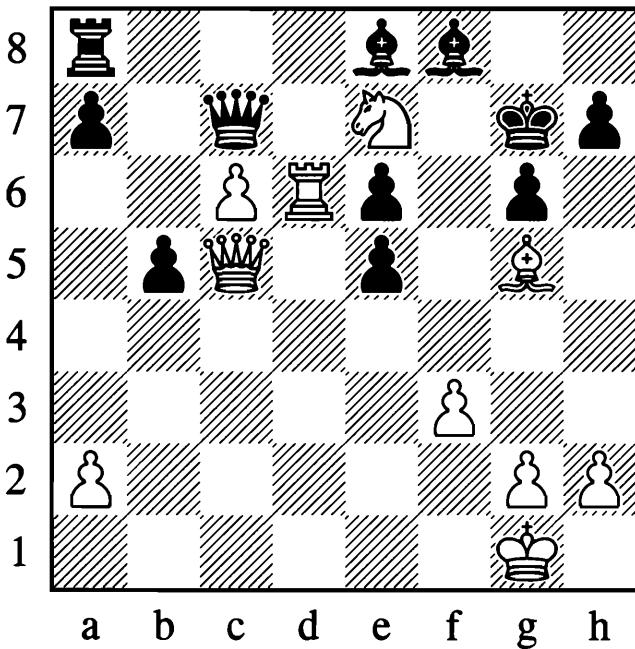
So winning the pinned piece directly may be the first thing we are looking for, but as the last example showed (with the possibility of a knight fork on d2) other motifs may also be possible on squares not related to the pin itself. Thus we should consider the neighbouring squares in connection with other motifs.

Often the threat of attacking the pinned piece or the target piece is enough to win material elsewhere.

To understand how the pin can be related to other motifs, let's take a look at the following game.

Gligoric – Szabo

Venice 1949 (analysis)



White has just played 1. $\mathbb{R}d1-d6$. This seems to be a blunder as it cuts off the defence of the knight on e7. Yet after:

1... $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 2. $\mathbb{B}xe7$ $\mathbb{Q}xe7?$ 3. $\mathbb{R}d7!$

White has set up a pin. If Black takes the rook with his queen, he loses his queen. If he takes with the bishop the result will be the same.

We should consider the pin's neighbouring squares in connection with other motifs.

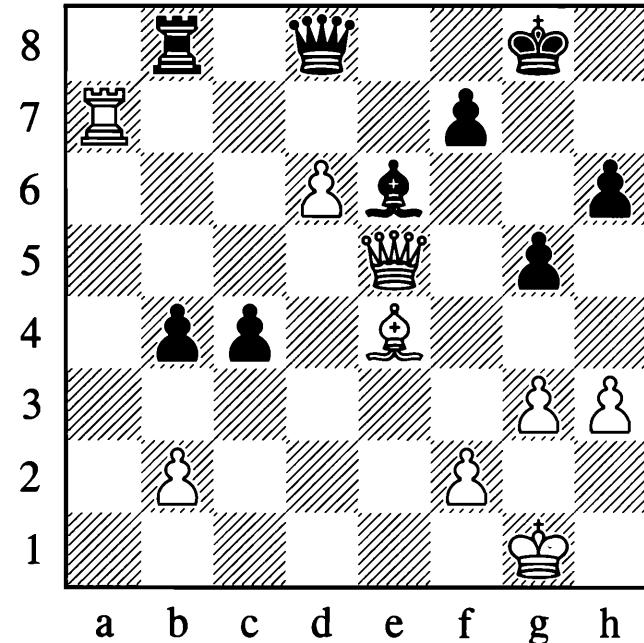
The aims of this pinning operation can be classified as follows:

- Gain of material through a pin
- Control of squares through a motif (the knight remains untouched although 1. $\mathbb{R}d1-d6$ has cut its line of defence)
- Combination of two motifs (discovered attack and pin)

b) Taking away the ability to fulfil duties (Rendering your opponent's pieces useless)

The effect of a pin increases with the value of a pin's target. This might go as far as totally restricting the freedom of movement: the pinned piece is rendered completely immobile.

Kasparov provided an example in his game against Browne in Banja Luka 1979:



1. $\mathbb{R}g2-e4$ looked like an innocent developing move. Assuming this, Black carried on with his plans and played:

1... $c3$

Only to find himself in the frying pan after:

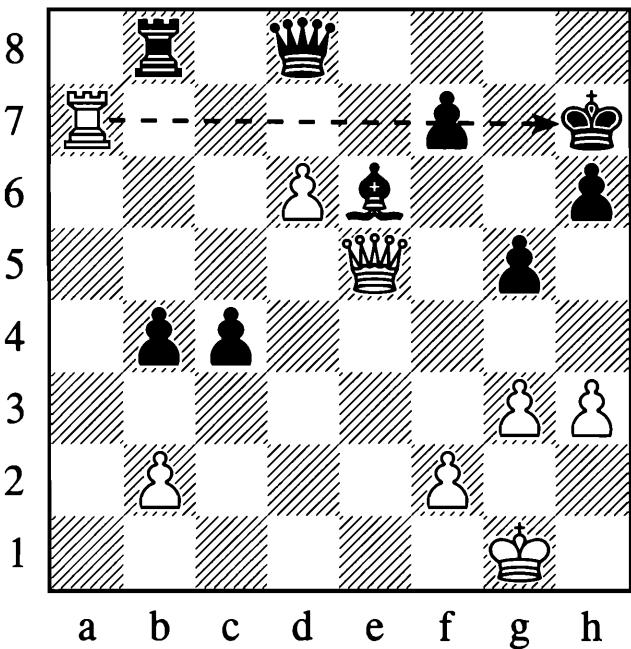
2. $\mathbb{Q}h7\#$! $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ 3. $\mathbb{W}xe6$

Mate along the second rank or loss of the queen would follow.

1–0

Looking at the starting diagram you will easily see that the pawn on f7 has several tasks to fulfil. Firstly, it is defending the bishop on e6. Secondly, it is also blocking the formation of a queen and rook battery on the seventh rank with the lethal threat of a mate on g7. Two elements of a pinning chain already existed: the rook on a7 – the pinning piece, and the

pawn on f7 – the pinned piece. What was still missing was the target. In the initial position the pawn had only one task to perform: defending the bishop. It might be a good idea to overload its capacity by giving it another job to do. If we could lure the king behind the pawn:



We would have completed the pinning chain with the black king as a perfect target. Consequently we would render the pawn immobile. The white bishop is the bait that forced the king into the pin. In order to activate the mechanism of the pin you needed to be able to see this possibility right from the first diagram.

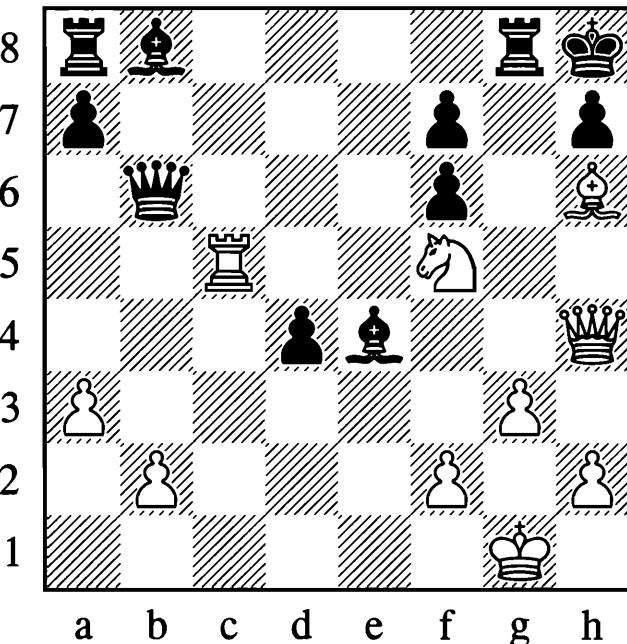
Anything that was protected by the pawn on f7 is now *en prise* due to the pin created by the check of the white bishop.

This is a little gem that shows how pawns and pieces can lose their power when they are pinned against a valuable piece. Discovering the possibilities of a pin and creating a pin are closely connected.

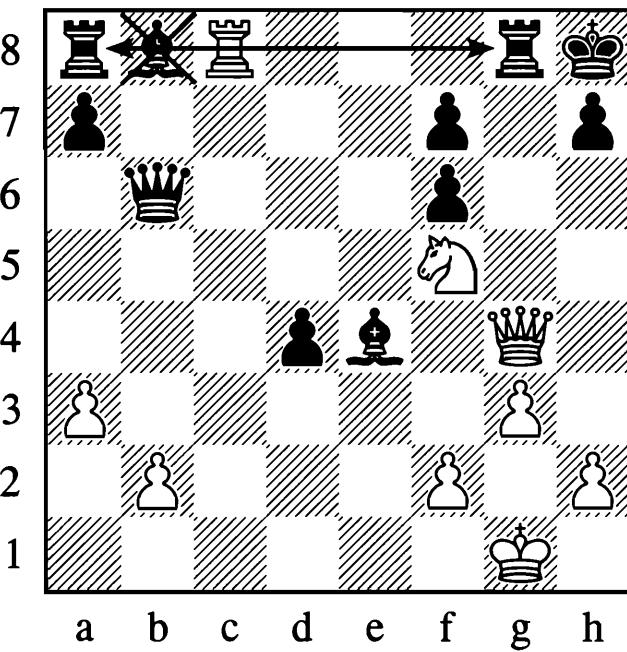
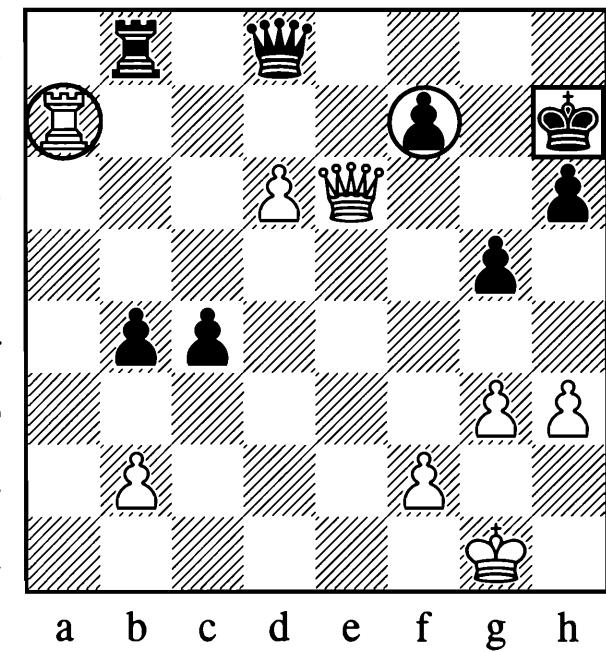
The next example also shows very graphically how helpless a pinned piece can become.

Henneberger – Bernstein

Zurich 1934



1. $\mathbb{Q}g7\# \mathbb{B}xg7$ 2. $\mathbb{R}c8\# \mathbb{B}g8$ 3. $\mathbb{W}g4$

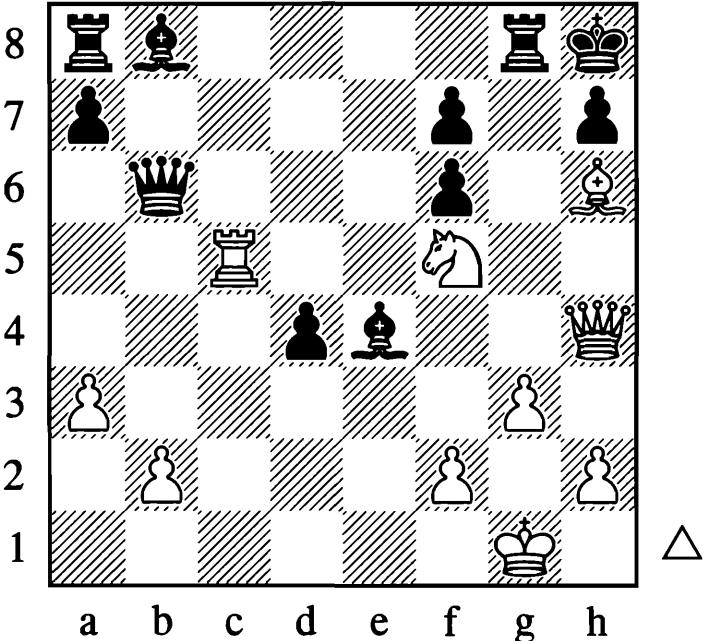


The rook loses all the power it had over the g-file. Its actual value is decreased drastically as the job it is performing at the moment could also be performed by a feeble pawn.

When I started studying tactics I always looked at the conditions that made a combination possible. This way I learned a lot about strategy, too. I found out how to avoid certain situations and conditions (such as undefended pieces; as John Nunn aptly remarked: *Loose pieces drop off...*).

A very simple example: I realized the importance of the weak squares around the king when a lot of combinations occurred in the absence of a fianchetto bishop. I understood that the offer of a rook for the fianchetto bishop is often to my advantage.

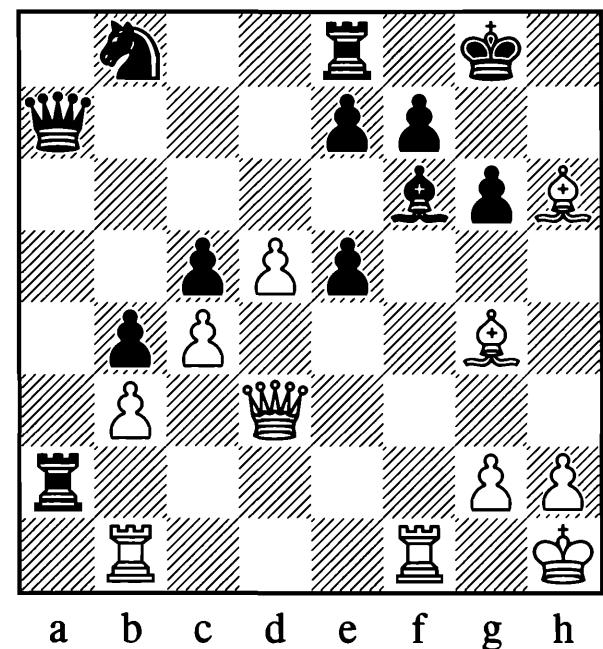
When solving exercises, you should always consider why a combination has worked.



Besides Black's weakened king position you should have noticed in the diagram above the awkward positioning of the a8-rook and the b8-bishop. It is exactly this inept placement of the b8-bishop that gave White the possibility for his mating attack (1. $\mathbb{Q}g7\#$ and 2. $\mathbb{E}c8\#$). The black bishop on b8 is disrupting the vital defensive line of the black rooks on his back rank. If Black were allowed to take the b8-bishop right off the board, he would have had good chances to survive the game!

Sumets – Oney

Istanbul 2011



1.e6

Black resigned. White threatens 2. $\mathbb{W}xg6\#$ as the f7-pawn no longer defends g6, and 1... $\mathbb{H}h7$ would fail to 2. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$

By registering the circumstances that allow a combination you will gain important knowledge for your own games. From the mistakes of others you can learn to recognize and avoid ugly strategic set-ups. Thus it is possible to learn from tactical examples how to play strategically.

One of the simple lessons I learned from looking at tactics, which helps to eliminate the reason for many losses, was: **avoid placing your pieces awkwardly!** Even sacrificing material is sometimes a better option. There is often a superior solution to misplacing a piece, as the harmonious piece co-ordination in most grandmaster games demonstrates.

A useful aid might be to ask whether Tal or Kasparov (or any other of your favourite players) would have played an intended but somehow awkward-looking move. If it looks awkward, it probably is.

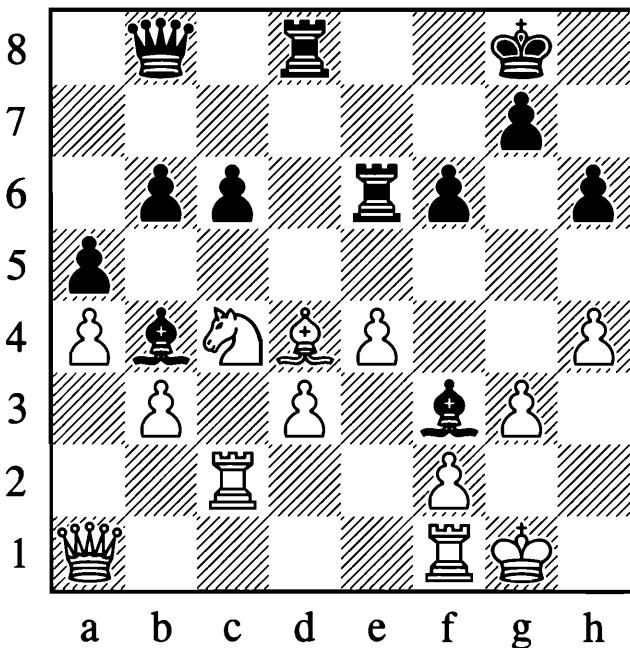
Be aware of such simple principles and you will automatically play one class better.

c) Tactical and strategic elimination of pieces

It is not only the loss of the defensive power of a pinned piece that can have dramatic consequences. The inability to move can also become the beginning of the end.

Hickl – Pelletier

Switzerland 2010



1... $\mathbb{W}xd4$

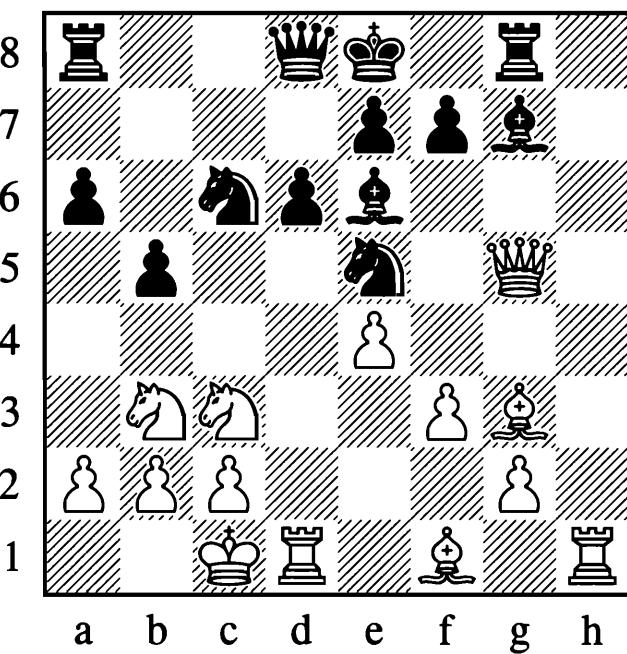
0–1

White resigned because after 2. $\mathbb{W}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 3. $\mathbb{W}c3$ Black has seized control of the c5-g1 diagonal, pinned the f2-pawn and thus eliminated the defence of g3. So it would be mate-in-one with 3... $\mathbb{W}xg3\#$.

Quite often such a pin will be connected with the threat of mate. This kind of strategic pin that is constructed around the inability of the king to move has already been examined in the section on pins against the king. Frequently this motif occurs during the endgame, where it becomes very difficult to get rid of it as material is reduced on the board and a further exchange of pieces could result in a lost pawn endgame. However, a pin can be very annoying during the opening stages of a game as well.

Weteschnik – Ruck

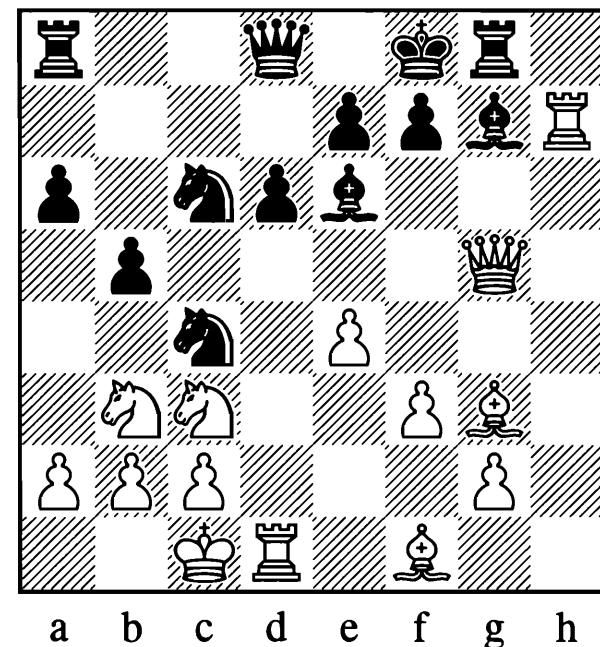
Koszeg 1996



White has just gobbed up a pawn with $\mathbb{W}xg5$. What is more, Black ends up in a very annoying pin. The black rook opposite the queen and the possibility of a discovered attack by Black's bishop are no real threats at all.

1... $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 2. $\mathbb{B}h7$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$

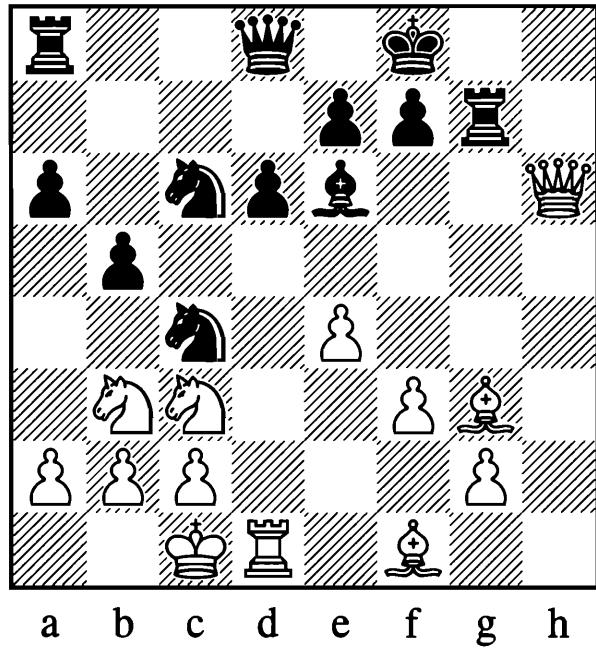
2...f6 3. $\mathbb{W}g6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 4. $\mathbb{B}xg7$ also wins for White.



It is never a good sign when in the middlegame the king already has to come to the rescue of a piece...

3. $\mathbb{Q}xg7!$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 4. $\mathbb{W}h6$

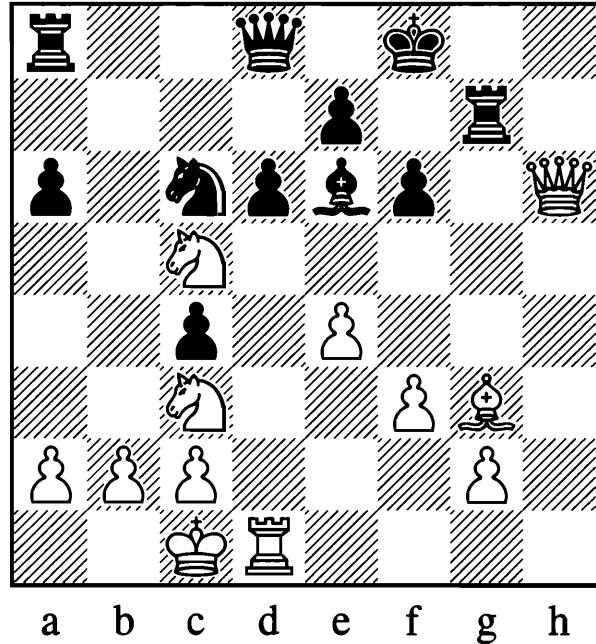
Pinned again!

**4...f6**

After 4... $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 5. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $bxc4$ 6. $\mathbb{W}h1$ f6 7. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ taking the bishop on g3 is not an option as this would result in mate.

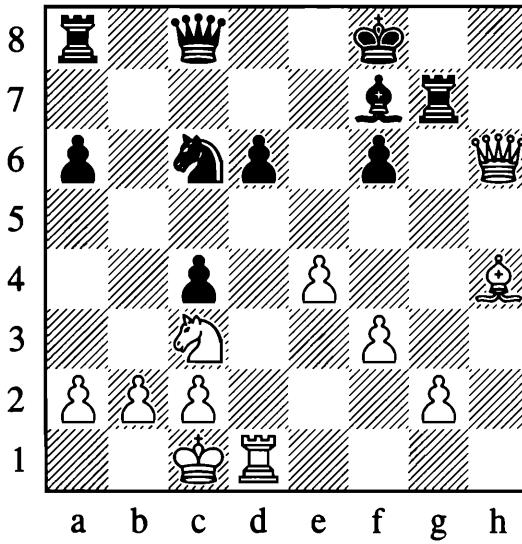
5. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $bxc4$ 6. $\mathbb{Q}c5$

This is an example of a piece being activated by exploiting another pin. Black chose to avoid complications with:

**6...dxc5**

Giving up the queen for two rooks. The bad co-ordination of the black pieces, and the inferior black pawn structure gave White a very good game.

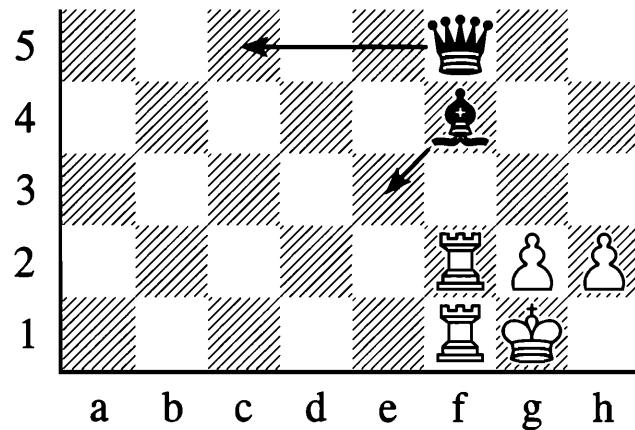
The following variation (instead of 6...dxc5) should underline the power of the initial pin: 6... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 7. $\mathbb{Q}b7$ $\mathbb{W}c8$ 8. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ $exd6$ 9. $\mathbb{Q}h4$



and Black has to invest more tempos to get rid of the pin in order to develop. White clearly has the initiative.

The art of unpinning – trapping the trapper

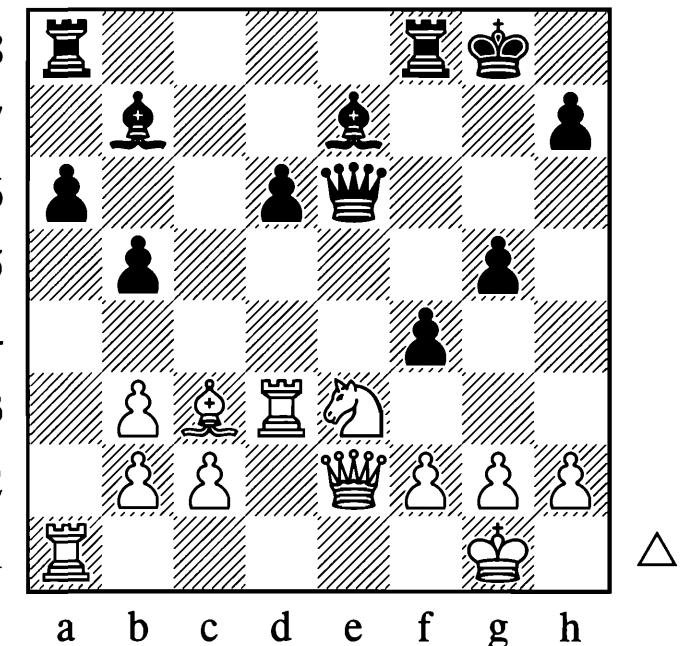
The principle of unpinning is quite simple. Either the target piece or the pinned piece attacks other valuable pieces or sensitive squares of the pinning side. Usually it is the pinned piece that performs this trick but the target can spring to life as well.



Both the queen (target) and the bishop (pinned piece) can attack the pinning white rook by pinning it to the king.

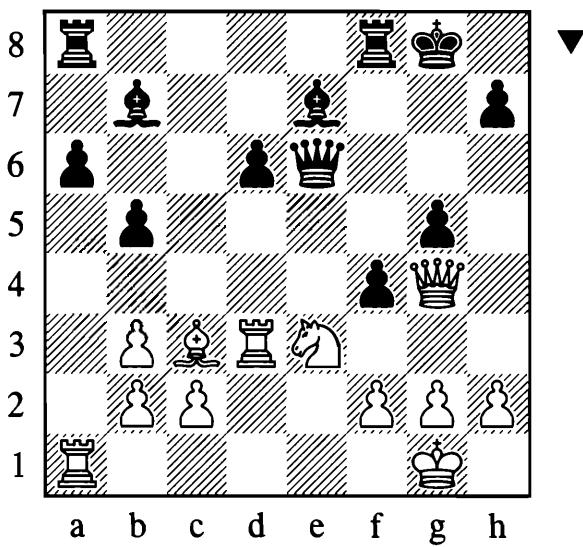
Now, let's see an example of the pinned piece breaking the pin, which is the common case. (Analysis of **Gipslis – Rashkovsky**,

Dubna 1976, where Black played ... $\mathbb{B}f7$ instead of ... $f4$ as in the example.)



White advantageously dissolves the pin with 1. $\mathbb{Q}f5!$ as the white knight is heading for greener pastures (mate on h6!) so he is willing to offer his queen to the pinning piece. (1. $\mathbb{Q}g4?!$ also escapes the pin but Black can equalize with 1... $\mathbb{B}f7!.$)

Note that with 1. $\mathbb{W}g4$ White could also have dissolved the pin by moving the target piece of Black's pin.

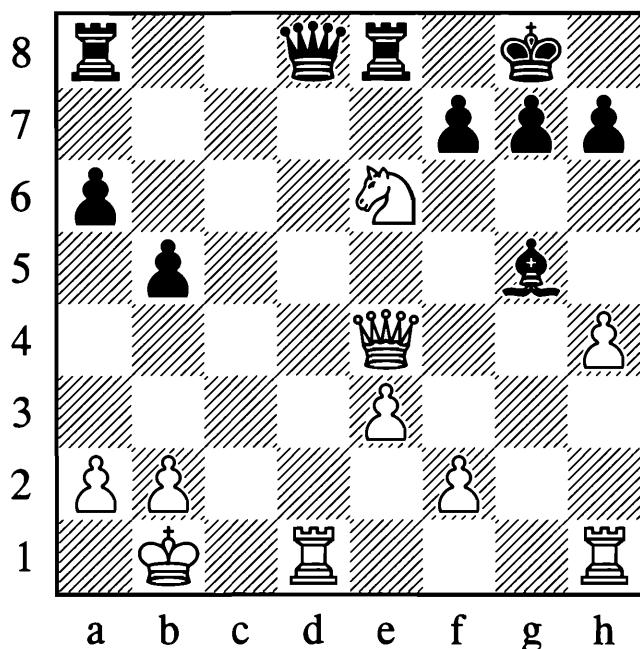


So unpinning by an attack on the pinning piece brings about a change in the status of the first piece in the pinning chain. The attacker is turned into the attacked. If the initial attacker was undefended or of too great a value, the unpinning manoeuvre turns into a discovered attack as also seen in the next game.

This is an example of a target that turns into an attacking piece. This is also an example of how closely pins and discovered attacks are connected in principle.

Alekhine – Yates

Hamburg 1910



With his last move (1. $\mathbb{Q}d4-e6$) White deliberately pinned his own knight against his queen (target). Although this appears to be suicidal, there is a snag for Black: the white knight discovered an attack on the black queen, so the rook cannot take the knight even though it is pinned (the d1-rook would take the black queen with check). What is worse, Black's bishop is *en prise* and, to make things even more complicated, White will open the h-file once he has taken the bishop on g5, discovering very unpleasant threats to h7 and the black king. So Black has to move his queen first, but then White will take the bishop burdening Black with nightmares about his h-file.

So the pinned knight on e6 turned out to be the protector of its queen, buying time with the discovered attack on the black queen for White to gain material.

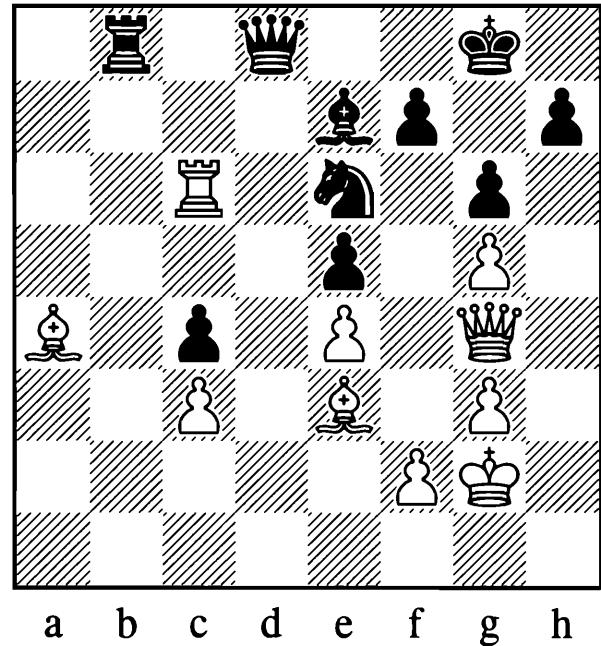
The target piece, the white queen on e4, had nothing to worry about.

Although this all seems rather trivial even the greatest players sometimes buy their way out of a desperate situation by knowing just a trifle more about elementary tactics than their opponent.

The next example is well known but it is, for teaching purposes, a classic. Bobby Fischer demonstrates how to change the status of the points in the chain of a pin. Here the attacking piece is uprooted and deprived of its defence. Thus a pin is changed into a discovered attack.

Fischer – Shocron

Mar del Plata 1959



1. $\mathbb{R}xe6$

The future World Champion seems to be in deep trouble. It looks as if Fischer had overlooked that his rook could be pinned against his queen by:

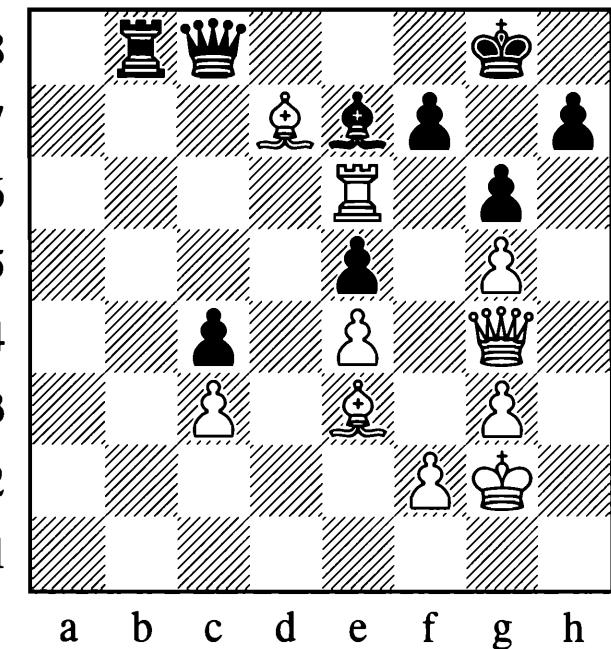
1... $\mathbb{W}c8$

Black cannot immediately take the rook with $1...fxe6$ $2.\mathbb{W}xe6\#$ $\mathbb{K}f8$ $3.\mathbb{W}xe5$ because the dominating white bishops would lead to Black's doom. So here we are: the black queen is the attacker, the rook the pinned piece, and the white queen the target. Both the white rook and queen cannot move without drastic consequences. What is more, the black rook on

b8 protects the attacker. Time to resign? Not yet! White's idea is to lure the queen away from the eighth rank so it is no longer defended.

2. $\mathbb{Q}d7!!$

Now it really was time to resign, but it was Black who had to stop the clock.



The bishop proves to be the final temptation for the queen. If Black takes the bishop with $2... \mathbb{W}xd7$, White will play $3. \mathbb{B}xg6\#$ and the pin has transformed into a discovered attack, as the rook on the eighth rank no longer defends the black queen.

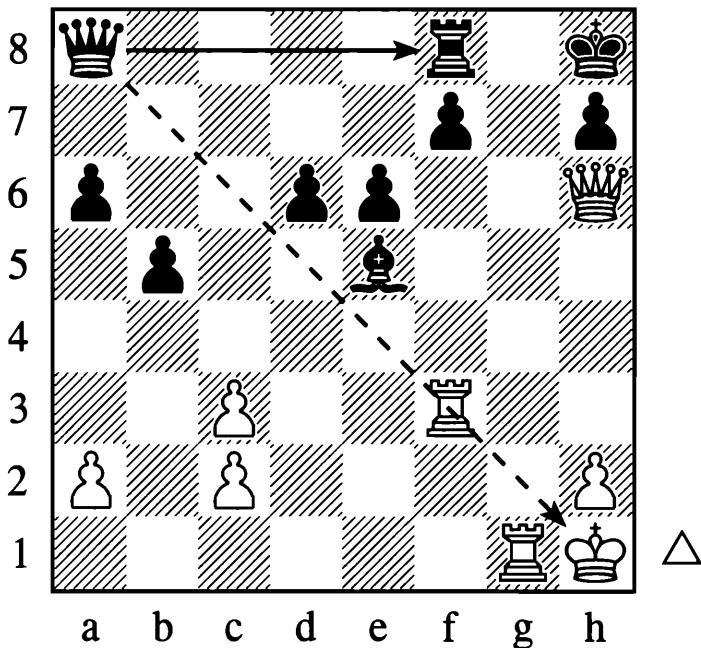
The lesson to be learned here is quite simple: always be on the lookout for drastic changes in a pinning chain.

Don't miss your chances of turning an attacking piece into a potential target of a counterattack by destroying its defence or luring it into dangerous territory where it is no longer defended and the pin turns into a discovered attack.

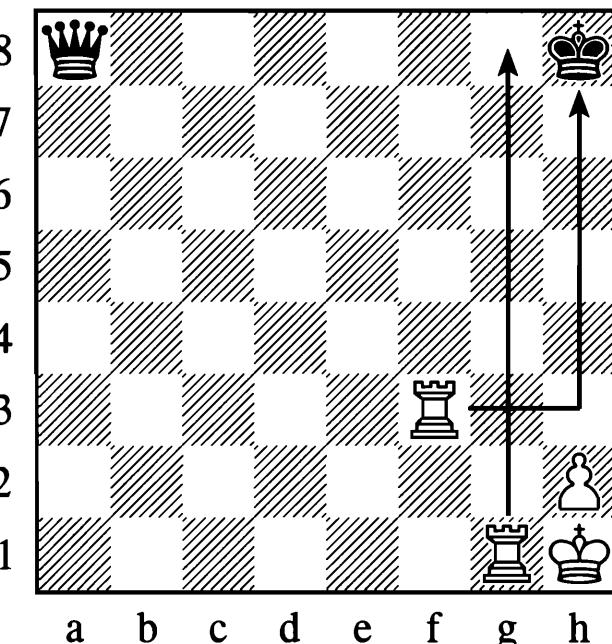
Things can also become messy when the attacker has to perform another important task thus suffering from overwork. Creating such a scenario might sometimes prove difficult but taking advantage of it, when it already exists, should be something everybody can easily achieve.

Soultanbeieff – Borodin

Brussels 1943



Black's queen is the attacker as it pins the white rook on f3 to the king in the corner. Yet the black queen also has to defend its rook on f8, which is under fire from the white queen. If the black queen leaves the eighth rank White would mate by taking the rook. The tactical idea that leads us to the final solution is a pattern we will encounter when dealing with mating patterns.

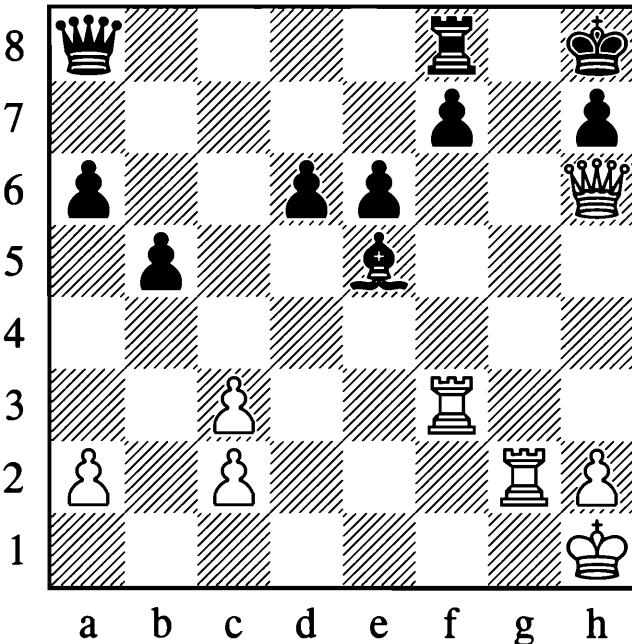


If the f3-rook were not pinned it could give mate on h3.

In the initial position, it is White to move and he proves that small changes can have

drastic consequences. Advancing his rook on g1 just one square breaks the pin on the f3-rook: White wins!

1. $\mathbb{R}g2!!$

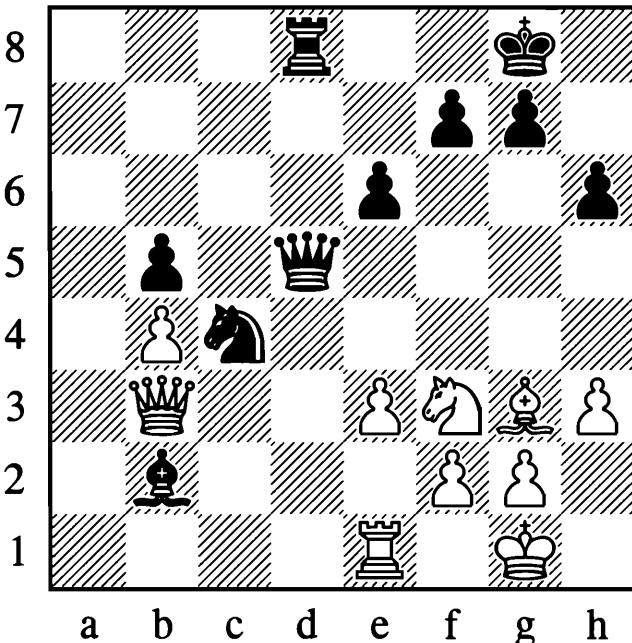


Either the black queen takes the rook with 1... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ and White mates with 2. $\mathbb{W}xf8$, or he tries 1... $\mathbb{R}g8$ but then the queen sacrifice 2. $\mathbb{W}xh7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ 3. $\mathbb{R}h3$ mate will win the day.

Even a world champion might end up as the trapper being trapped. In an already difficult position a tactical inaccuracy may have helped to decide the close match between Capablanca and Alekhine.

Capablanca – Alekhine

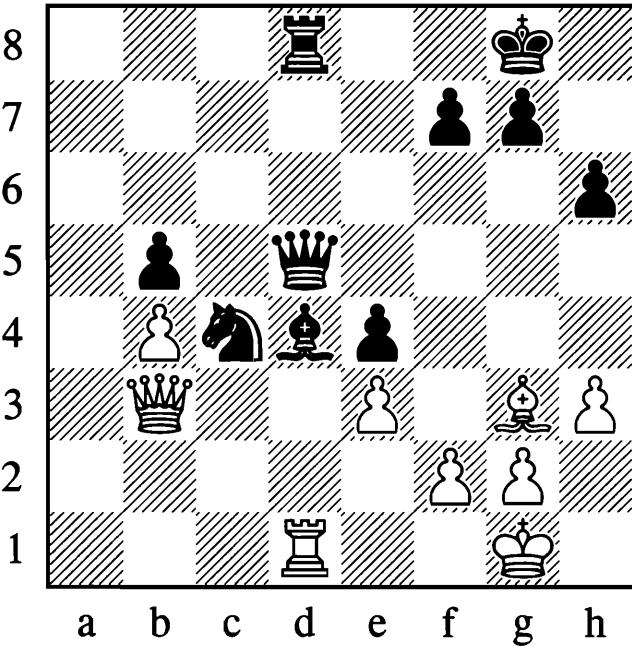
Argentina (21) 1927



1...e5

Black has cut off his bishop from its hinterland and White attacks it immediately.

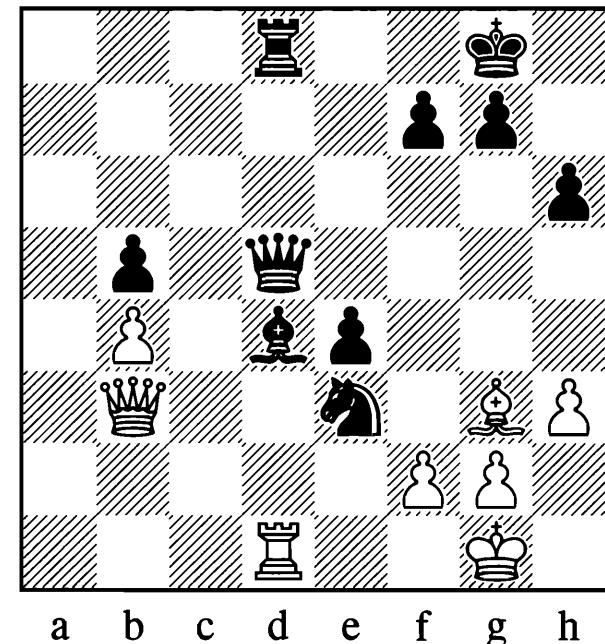
2.♗b1 e4 3.♕d4 ♖xd4 4.♗d1



Once again a classic pinning chain: the white rook being the attacker, the bishop the pinned piece, and the black queen the target. Furthermore the pinned piece is attacked by a pawn. Yet Alekhine obviously saw a solution to this problem as he played:

4...♝xe3!

Winning the game.



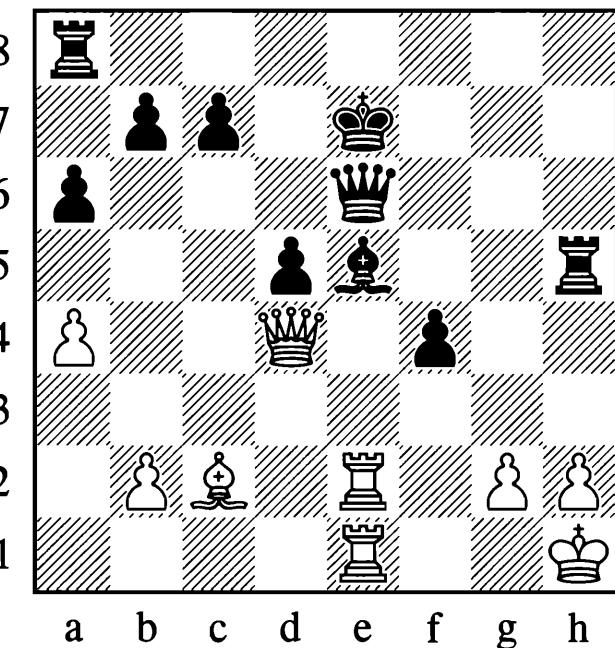
If White retakes with the pawn the black bishop unpins by taking the pawn with check and then, no matter what White does, he will lose material.

You, too, would have performed like a World Champion at this moment had you seen that you can unite the two unpinning principles we have discussed: the second piece (pinned piece) is unpinning with tempo, giving check and discovering an attack on a piece that it is not well enough defended.

So a pin should not cause us horror and desperation unless it can be turned into a real advantage. Even when our opponent is turning the heat up, the pinned piece might not be lost.

Hradeczky – Bessenay

Hungary 1963



Surely the black bishop must be doomed as it is more often attacked than defended and also pinned to the queen, which is pinned to the king by doubled rooks. Only a miraculous move will save the bishop and here it is:

1...♝xh2†!

The white king has to take as after 2. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ Black would unpin by 2... $\mathbb{Q}xd4\#$ taking White's queen with check. Nevertheless, after:

2. $\mathbb{Q}xh2 \mathbb{B}h8\#$

White is doomed as after:

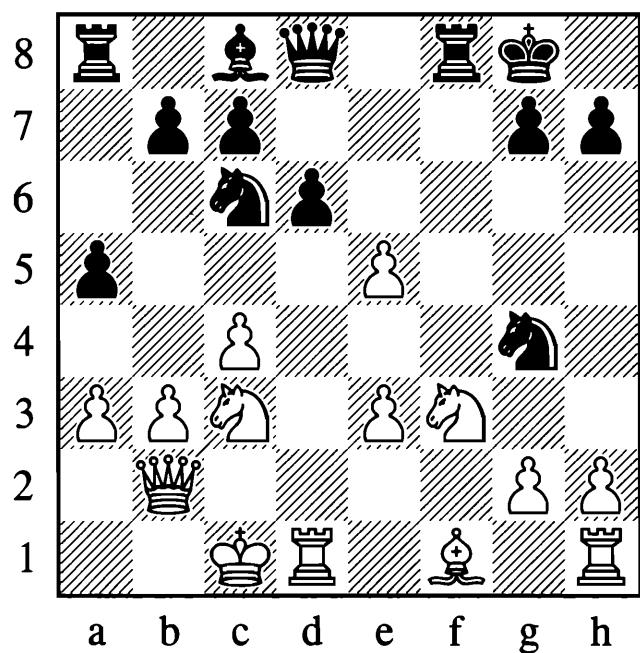
3. $\mathbb{Q}g1 \mathbb{Q}xd4\#$

Black has yet again escaped the reach of the pin by taking White's queen with check.

Finally, an example showing that I have also learned tactics the hard way.

Bodzyn – Weteschnik

Berlin 1997

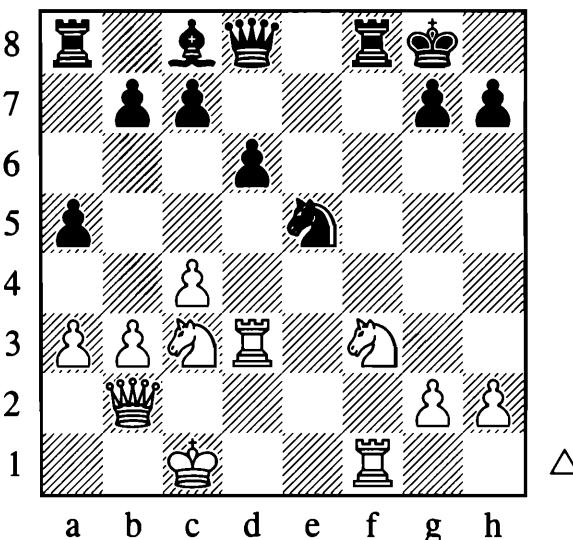


I unnecessarily complicated things with 1... $\mathbb{B}xf3$. Instead with 1... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ I could have simply won a pawn. After 2. $\mathbb{B}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 3. $\mathbb{B}xf1$ the black knight strikes with 3... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$.

Although the black knight is not really defended by the pawn on d6 as this pawn is pinned against the queen, the knight is still not *en prise* on e5 as the knight on f3 is pinned against the undefended rook on f1.

Summary

- Always be on the lookout to create or prevent a pin.
- A piece pinned against the king is extremely vulnerable and often totally immobile.
- King and queen on the same file or diagonal always constitutes a motif for pinning.
- Every undefended piece is a potential candidate for a pin.
- Every attacked piece of yours standing in front of another of your pieces should be considered as pinned.
- In a pinning chain the function and not the value of each piece is what matters most.
- Take note of already existing parts as preconditions for a pin.
- Two pieces of the same colour on a diagonal or file should already be regarded as a precondition for a pin.
- Consider possible changes of the points in a pinning chain.
- A pin can turn into a discovered attack.

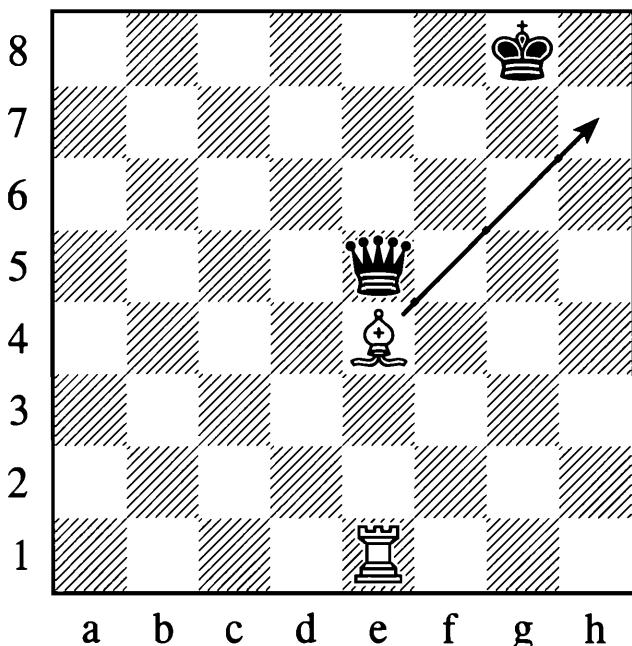


Chapter 3

The Discovered Attack

The discovered attack has a strong schematic resemblance to the pin. As in the pin there are three pieces in a row. But in contrast to the pin there is a fourth point. The first piece and the discoverer are pieces of the same side; the third point is a piece or square of the other side. The fourth point is taken or occupied by the discoverer. What sounds complicated in words is simple in pictures.

So take a look at the next diagram for a simple example:



The discovered attack consists of four points:

1. rook = the principal attacker
2. bishop = the discoverer
3. queen = the victim point (victim piece/square)
4. h7/king = the discoverer's target

We have two pieces of the same side: White's e1-rook and e4-bishop. Then there is the third piece, the black queen on e5. These three pieces

together look like a pinning chain. As already mentioned, that similarity in formation is why a pin can transform into a discovered attack and vice versa. The difference compared to a pin is an additional target – the king on g8 and the h7-square. We will call this the discoverer's target.

After White has played 1. $\mathbb{R}h7\#$ we have a situation similar to a double attack: White is attacking two pieces: the rook is attacking the queen, and the bishop is attacking the king. As Black is not able to answer both threats with one move, he will lose his queen.

A discovered attack is a simultaneous attack against two points where one attack against the first enemy piece is discovered by the attack on the second.

The attacker and the discoverer in this mechanism *have* to be pieces; their targets can be either pieces or squares. First we are going to take a look at the pieces you need for a discovered attack: principal attacker and the discoverer. Then we will look at the victim piece, paying special attention to the king. Finally we will have a look at the discoverer's target.

The principal attacker

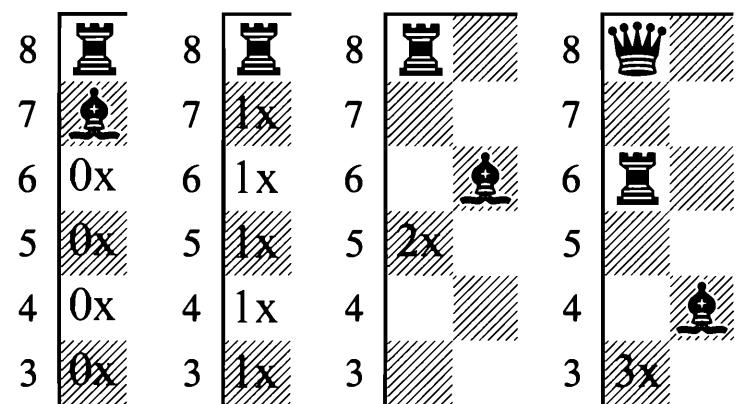
Looking back at the first diagram, you will easily understand that the principal attacker can never be a king, a knight or a pawn. This

leaves only the long-range pieces (queen, rook and bishop) as possibilities for the principal attacker. This may sound trivial but it helps to discover the vital formation over the board, especially in complex positions.

If the principal attacker is to attack the victim piece, it has to be of lower value if the victim piece is defended. If the victim piece of this attack is undefended, value does not matter with regard to the principal attacker. If the victim point in the discovered attack is not a piece but a square there has to be a winning trick the principal attacker can perform from its new square.

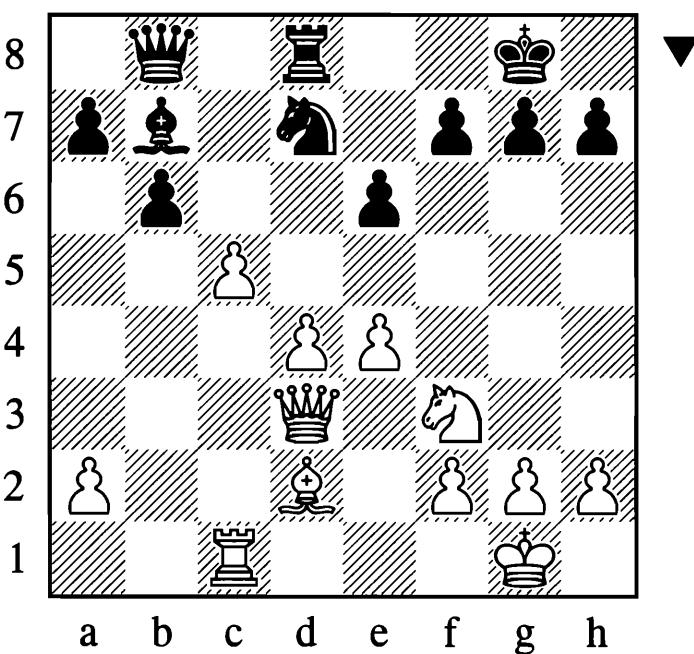
Always keep in mind the long-range impact of the principal attacker.

The following diagram shows the arithmetic of the discovered attack:



Initially the pieces do not exert any control down the file. If you removed the bishop, all squares on this file would be attacked once. If the bishop moved, one square is attacked twice. In the last case *one* move made by the bishop would mean a sudden control of *three* times (!) on that square.

Bearing this in mind, you always have to include the control of the first piece in your calculation. Sometimes you may be able to defend a piece indirectly this way, as you can see in this game:

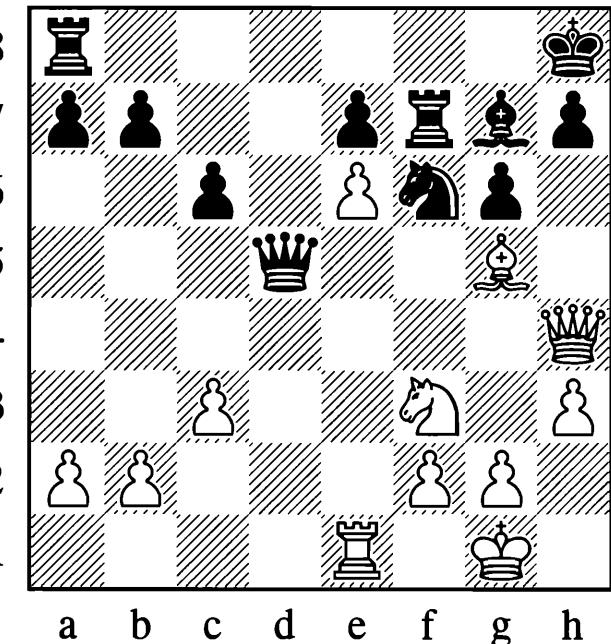


With 1... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ Black wins the c5-pawn and its colleague on e4 is lost as well. This shows the impact of the d8-rook, the principal attacker of this discovered attack, which is felt beyond the third point, the d4-pawn (which was pinned).

Sometimes the principal attacker in a discovered attack does not need to take the victim piece. In the case that the principal attacker is pinning the victim piece and rendering it immobile, other pieces or squares that were formerly defended are now defenceless and the discoverer might take them at will.

Tal – Kolarov

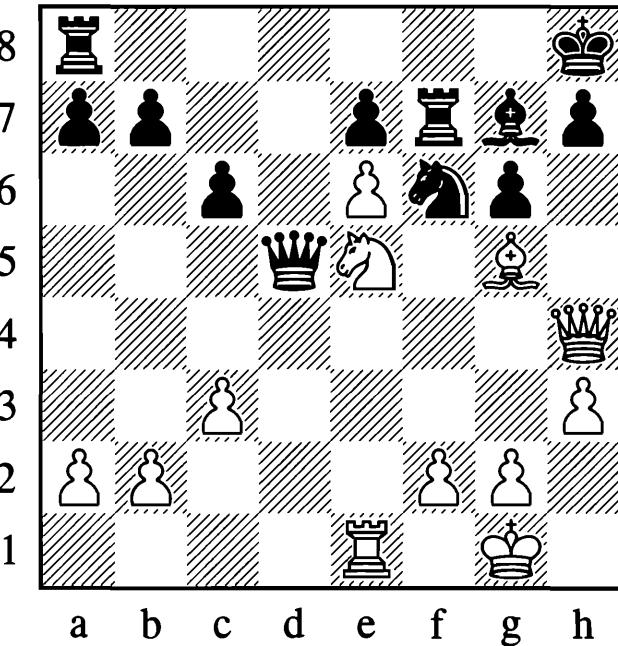
Austria 1970



The e6-pawn is defended directly by the e1-rook. After White played:

1. $\mathbb{Q}e5$

The pawn remained defended, although the line of communication between rook and pawn is interrupted by the knight.



If 1... $\mathbb{W}xe6$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xg6\#$ and the queen is lost, and if 1... $\mathbb{B}f8$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xg6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}xe7\#$ the black queen is back in the box as well. With his position shattered and material down, Black should have resigned on the spot instead of trying:

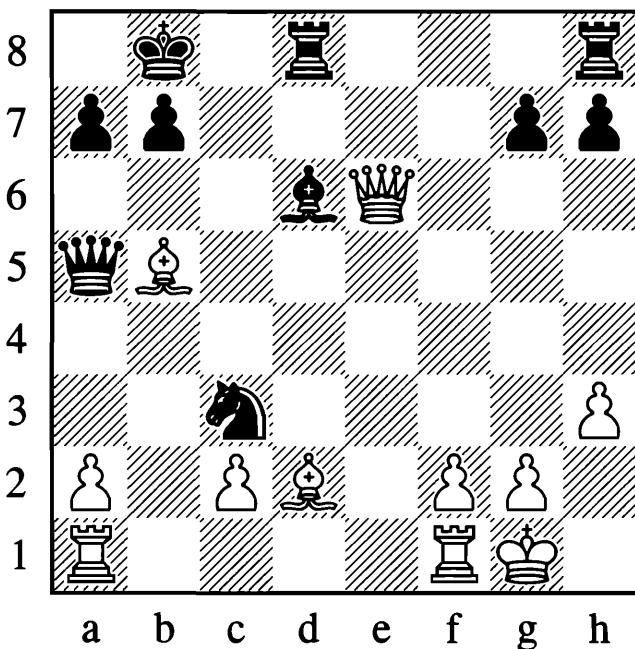
1... $\mathbb{Q}h5$

But who would not have liked to play on a bit against the 'Magician from Riga'...

We can also learn from this example that the principal attacker in our pattern for the discovered attack can be undefended if the discoverer discovers the attack with tempo.

The discovered attack may be used to defend a piece indirectly.

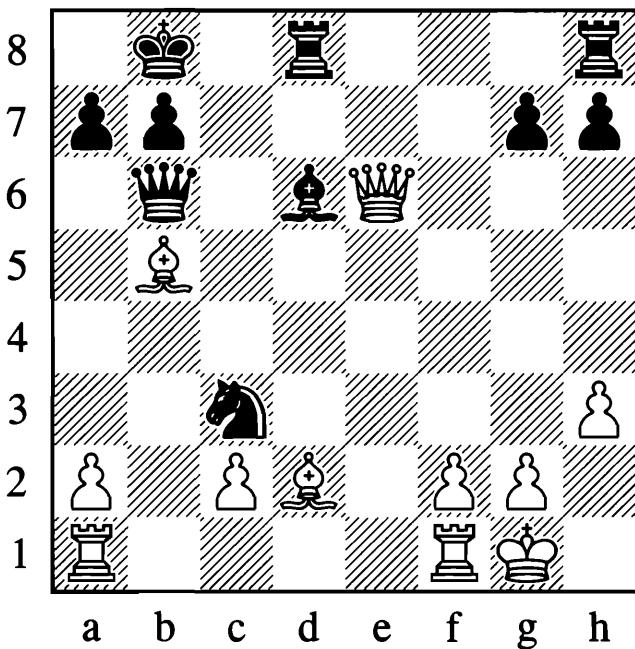
Sometimes it is enough to put the principal attacker in place, threatening a discovered attack. Take a look at **Thimann – Felbecker**, Correspondence 1968:



White has just moved his bishop to d2 pinning the knight to the black queen. Not a bad idea you may think with regard to the last chapter 'The Pin'. Yet with this move he gave Black the opportunity to set up the mechanism of a discovered attack with:

1... $\mathbb{W}b6!$

Escaping the pin with tempo and equalizing the game. Black threatens 2... $\mathbb{Q}h2\#$ winning the white queen.



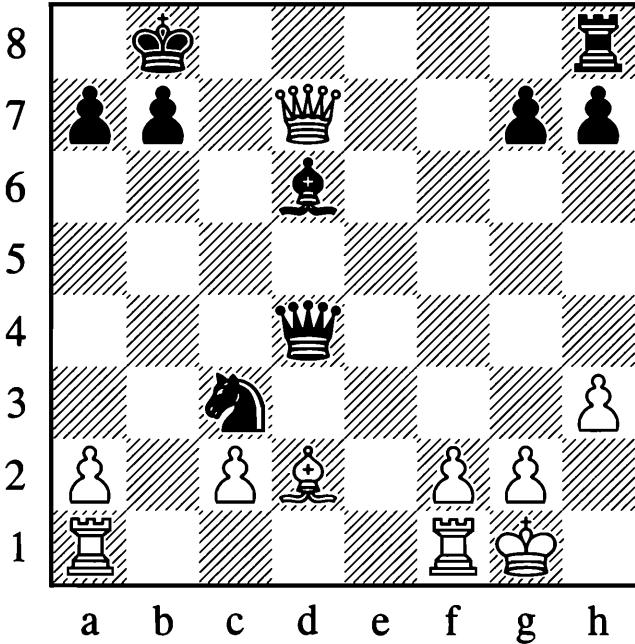
White now missed his chance to play 2. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ and played:

2. $\mathbb{Q}d7?!$

This move looks okay; after all, the white queen is now defended against the potential

discovered attack by the black bishop, and it also seems to save the white bishop. But White was in for a rude awakening.

2...♝xd7! 3.♛xd7 ♜d4

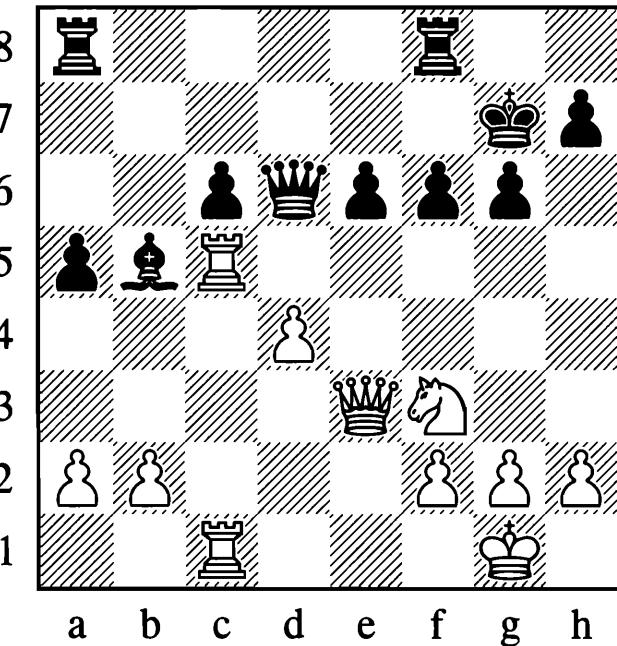


So here we are again: the second discovered attack set up by the black queen, but this time not horizontally but vertically. Two pieces in a row (the queen on d4 and the d6-bishop) and a third piece (the queen on d7) that can be attacked by moving the bishop to h2 with check and gain of tempo. Although it is quite clear that after 4.♝xc3 ♚h2† Black will hardly gain a decisive advantage by winning White's queen, you can notice how fate changes by knowing how to create threats using tactical motifs. After all, it was White who misjudged the pin in the beginning while Black was working nicely with the motif of the discovered attack that improved his position.

At times it is possible to force your opponent into a discovered attack by sacrificing material. This example is taken from **Miles – Martin**, Birmingham 1977:

In this position we already see the discoverer and the victim piece of the pattern, the discoverer being the c5-rook and the victim piece the undefended queen on d6. Now Miles

lures the bishop to a square that is in the line of fire of the future principal attacker of the discovered attack. The bait is a pawn:



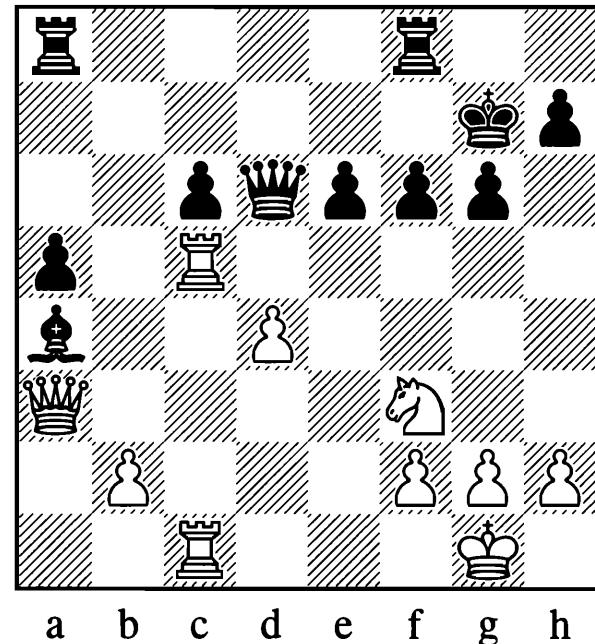
1.a4!!

Black must take as otherwise his c6-pawn is hanging.

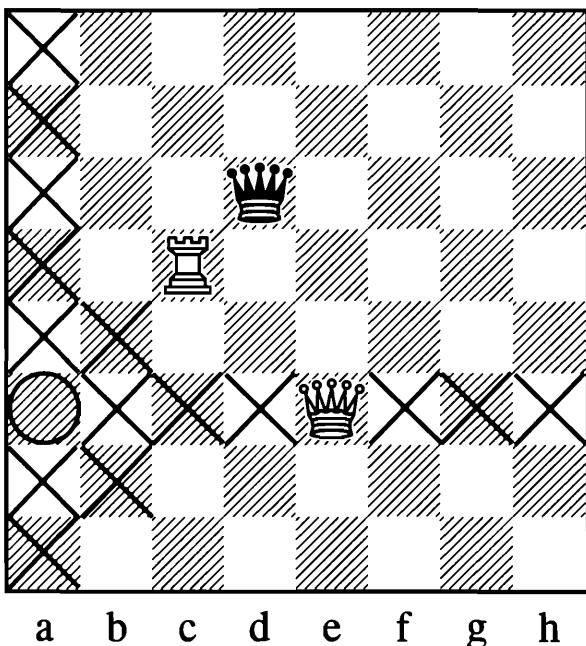
1...♜xa4

Now he is on the hook.

2.♛a3



To make life easier for you, here is a picture explaining the underlying tactics in this operation. It is important to understand the situation thematically; otherwise you will not be able to enjoy what is coming next.



The crosses mark the theoretical influence of the white queen when it moves to the a3-square, constituting the principal attacker of a possible discovered attack formation ($\mathbb{Q}a3-\mathbb{R}c5-\mathbb{Q}d6$). If Black were to avoid the discovered attack by losing time saving his queen, he leaves White dominating all the squares the white queen can reach from a3.

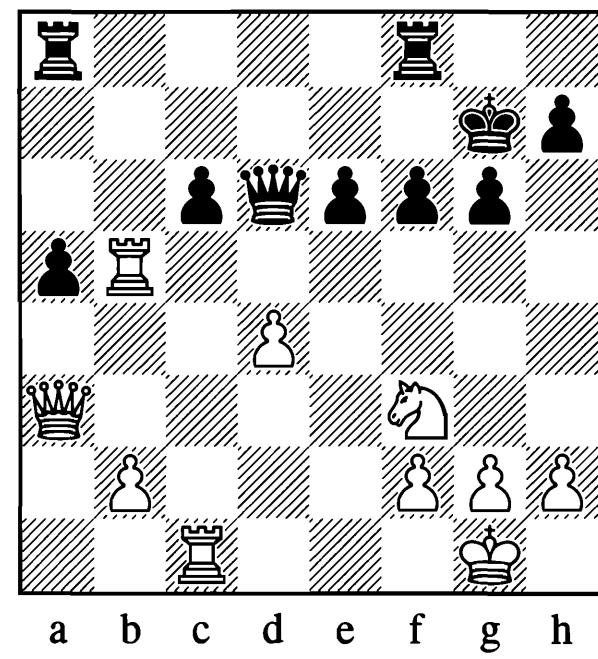
To save the bishop, Black played:

2... $\mathbb{B}b5$

But Miles just took it.

3. $\mathbb{R}xb5$

Now a discovered attack on the black queen is revealed.

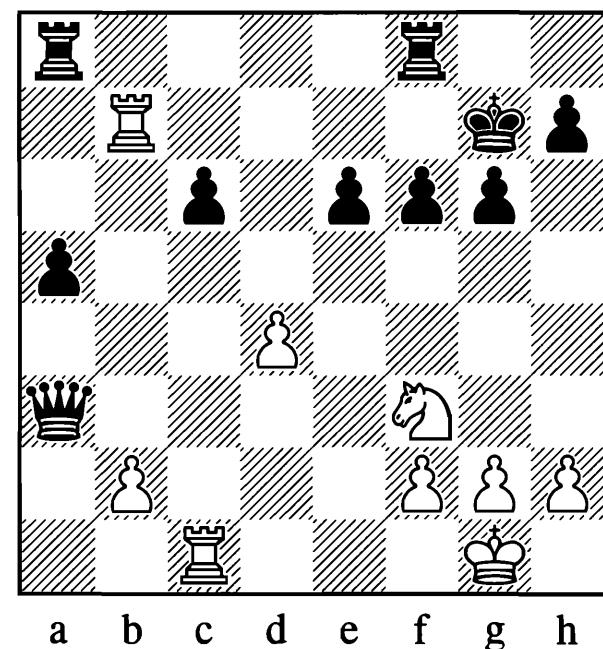


Black took the queen with

3... $\mathbb{Q}xa3$

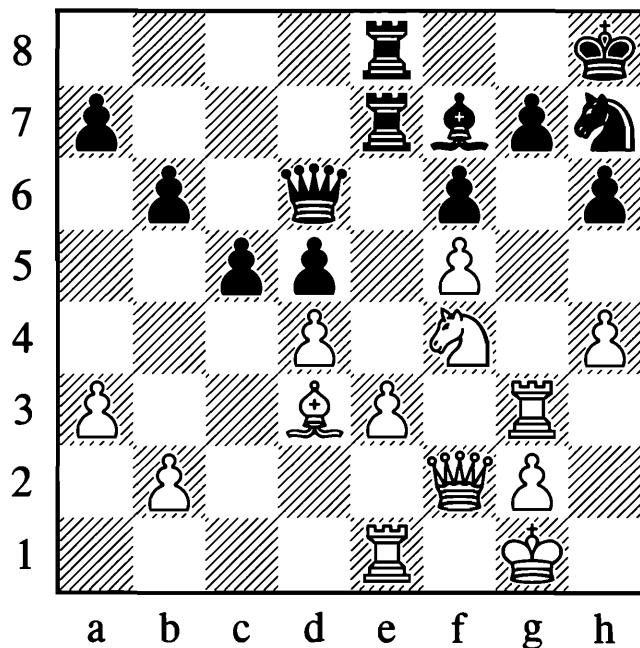
And Miles played:

4. $\mathbb{R}b7\#$



Gaining that all-important tempo, winning back the queen and a whole piece in the course of the operation. As you can see, completing the mechanism by occupying the square of the principal attacker gained a tempo.

Things become pressing for the defending side in **Marshall – Kupchik, USA 1926**, as the king is once again involved in a discovered attack



You will note that we have an undefended black queen as a possible victim piece, and the f4-knight as a possible discoverer on the same diagonal. If the white queen were on g3 the black queen would be lost.

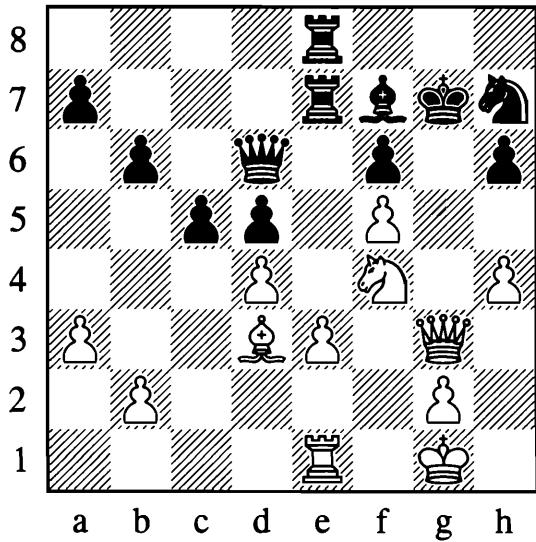
So all Marshall had to do was to clear the g3-square:

1. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$

Black resigned, because if he had recaptured Marshall would set up the discovery:

1... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 2. $\mathbb{W}g3\#$

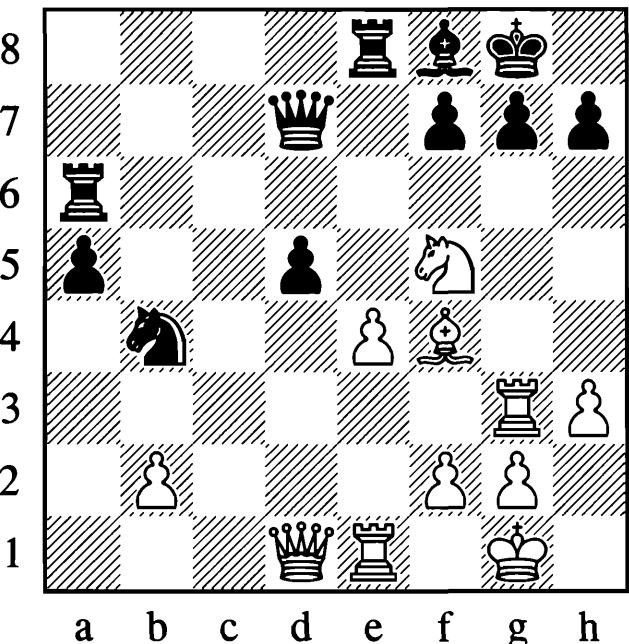
Now the black queen is lost after White's next move: a knight check.



Visual chess! This is what you should have envisioned: the chain of three pieces – the queen on g3, the f4-knight and the queen on d6.

Try to grasp formations of this kind optically. Then you will find them automatically in *any* given position. In regard to this chain it also helps to notice that the black queen is undefended and that the discoverer (the f4-knight) has a target in the nearby black king. We will see how to collect this kind of information more systematically in Chapter 11, Status Examination.

Mating threats in connection with the threat of a discovered attack can also be poison for your future opponents. Take a look at the game **Keres – Gligoric, Yugoslavia 1959**:



1. $\mathbb{Q}xg7\#$! 2. $\mathbb{W}g4$

Keres has set up the pattern: the queen on g4 as principal attacker, the f5-knight as discoverer and the queen on d7 is the victim piece. Black had to give up his queen for insufficient material compensation or else he would have been mated.

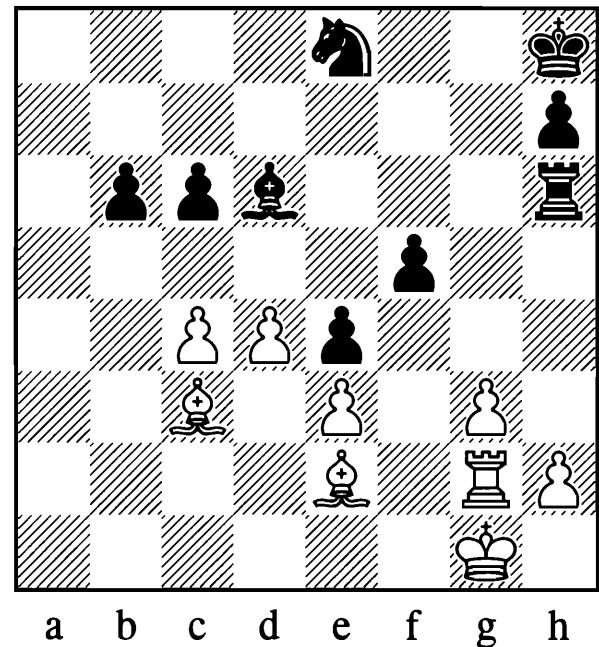
The discoverer

The discoverer in the pattern of the discovered attack is the piece that is discovering the attack of the principal attacker against the victim piece. At the same time it is threatening to gain material or a tempo, or creating and supporting other tactical motifs on the discoverer's target. Contrary to the principal attacker, every chessman can be the discoverer in a discovered attack, as the discoverer in the mechanism does not necessarily need to be a long-range piece.

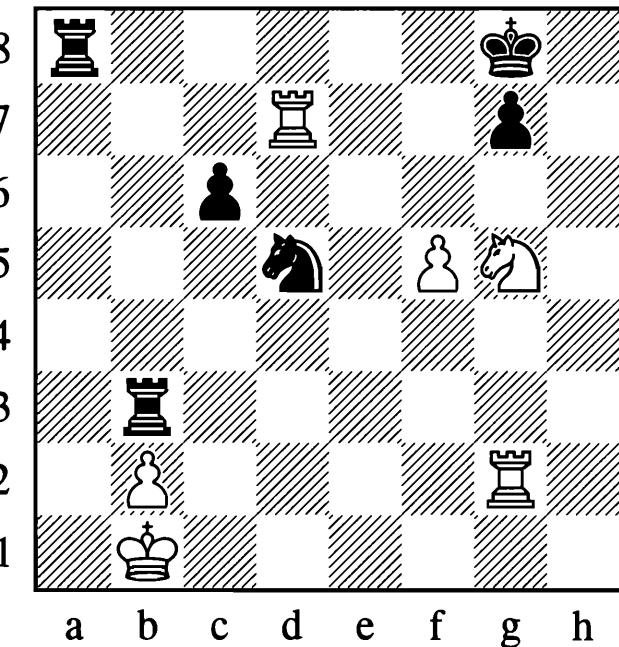
The discoverer need not only gain material at its target, but could also perform all kinds of tactical tricks from there afterwards. Occasionally though it is enough for the discoverer to create weaknesses other pieces might exploit; or it changes the situation of the victim piece in the discovered attack.

The most dangerous form of discovering an attack on the victim piece is a check by the

discoverer, as this threat must be answered. To illustrate this consider **Anderssen – Morphy**, Paris 1858.



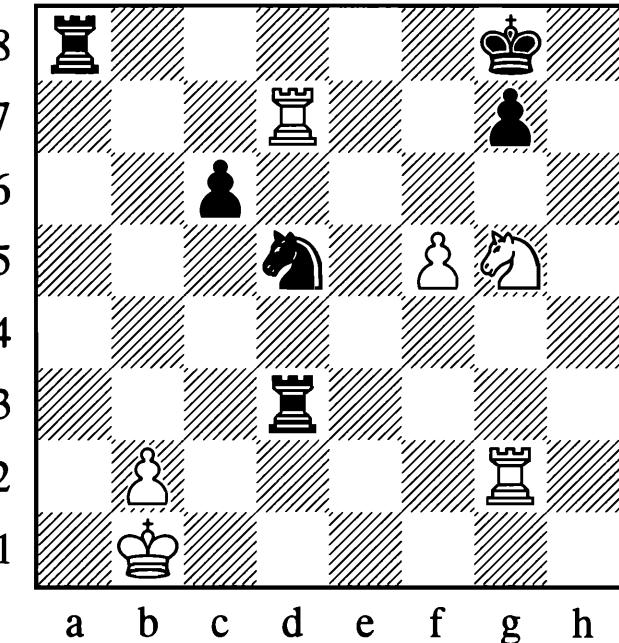
threat of the discoverer against the king that does the trick. Take a look at **Alekhine – Em. Lasker**, St Petersburg 1914:



White has just played 1. $\mathbb{R}d7?$. This creates two points of the pattern: the d7-rook is the victim piece and the d5-knight is the discoverer. Obviously Alekhine ignored an important rule: **Moving behind a piece that is able to give check means inviting the creation of a discovered attack**. And remember: just creating the mechanism might be fatal for the defender as he might lose a crucial tempo once the discovered attack is threatened.

Thus Lasker played:

1... $\mathbb{R}d3$



In this situation White was able to play

1.c5!

as the c5-square was only seemingly defended twice. As White is able to discover an attack against the king with the d4-pawn, it is *White* who is controlling the square. After

1... $\mathbb{Q}c7$

White should have continued with:

2.d5†! $\mathbb{Q}g8$

Other moves are worse.

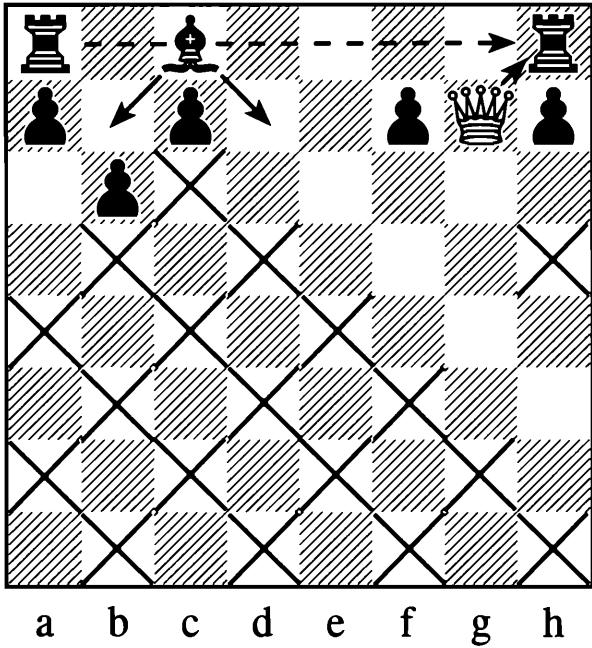
3.d6

Winning a piece as otherwise the passed pawn, supported by the bishops and the rook, would be fearsome. (This would have been much better than the game continuation of 3. $\mathbb{Q}c4$. In the game White had to wait for hours before Black finally resigned – in an endgame where he had missed some possible drawing chances.)

In the previous example an attack by the principal attacker against a victim piece had to be defended. In the next example it is the

The discovered attack formation has been completed ($\mathbb{E}d3-\mathbb{E}d5-\mathbb{E}d7$ with the king on b1 as the discoverer's target). Now just moving the d7-rook away would not help because of 2... $\mathbb{E}d1\#$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}e3\#$ winning the g2-rook. In dire straits, Alekhine sacrificed the exchange only to lose the game in a long endgame.

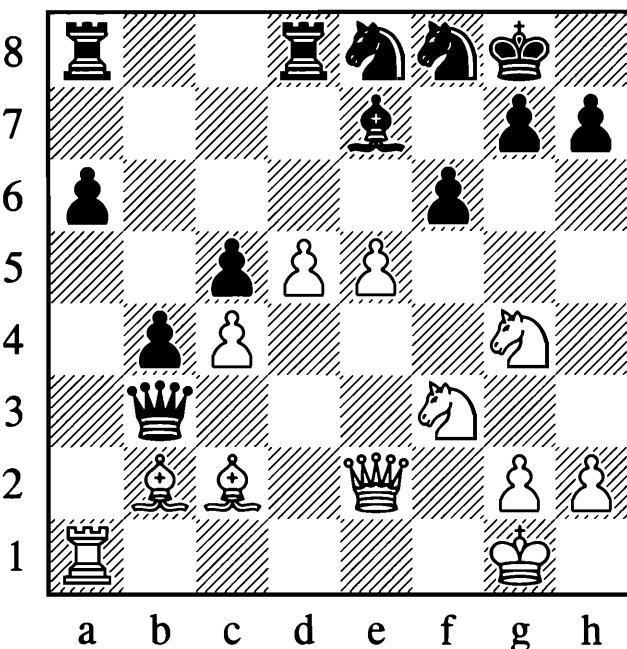
The enormous scope of the discoverer can easily be seen in the next diagram.



If White's queen were to take the h8-rook then a white king on any of the marked squares would be a target within reach of the discoverer, the c8-bishop, and the white queen would be won by the a8-rook.

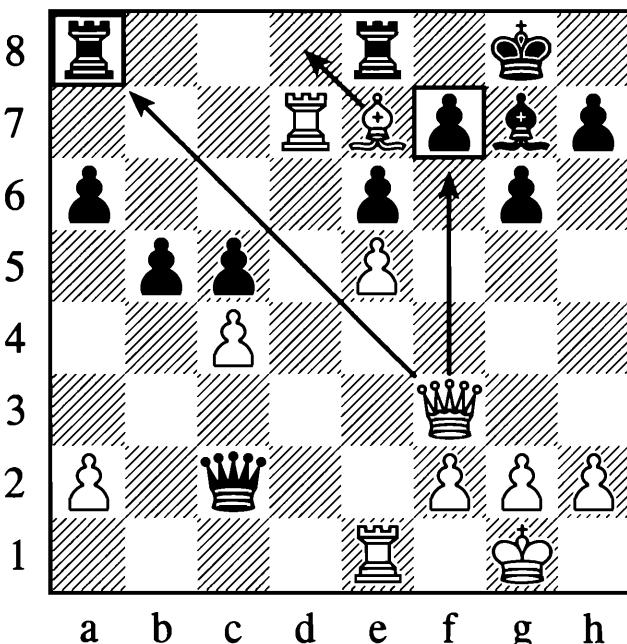
The most dangerous form of discovered attack on a victim piece is to give a check with the discoverer.

If you analyse any given position and find a discovered attack with check, as in the diagram above, then the discoverer may be able to interrupt the line of communication between its own pieces without losing anything. Take a look at the game **Gruenfeld – Steiner**, Moravska Ostrava 1933:



Here White has been able to play 1. $\mathbb{Q}f5-c2$ as the b2-bishop remains defended, although it is seemingly cut off from the defence of the queen on e2. Yet you will already have discovered that Black's 1... $\mathbb{W}xb2$ will run into 2. $\mathbb{Q}xh7\#$.

This mechanism also works in a reversed form against the defender. Sometimes the discoverer is just interrupting lines of communication. As mentioned earlier, the discoverer is not always the aggressor. It sometimes is enough to offer extra options for other pieces. Consider **Duenhaupt – Kuenert**, Correspondence 1952/53:

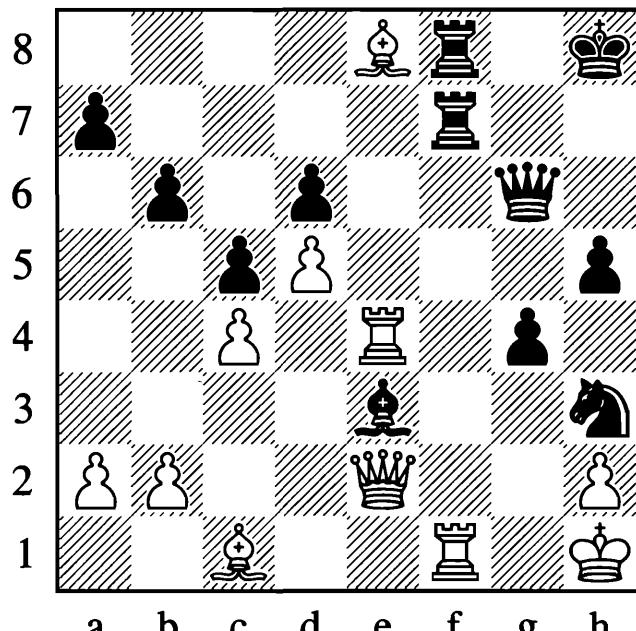


White played:

1. ♕d8

Interrupting the communication between the black rooks, so they do not defend each other anymore. Thus the queen on f3 is now attacking the undefended a8-rook. The small step by the bishop also discovered an attack on the f7-square: it is a double attack by the white queen on the a8-rook and f7. So it is decision time for Black: either lose a rook or lose the game straight away.

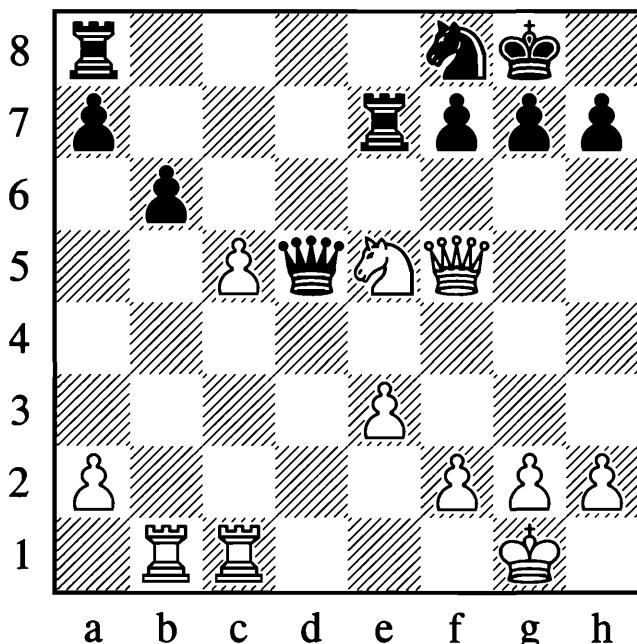
Interrupting lines of communication was also the trick in **Osnos – Yuhtman**, USSR 1968.



Black has just played 1... ♕f4-e3! creating two threats in one move. The e4-rook is *en prise* now, as it is cut off from its defender, the e2-queen. Additionally, Black threatens to win the f1-rook. This was simply too much and White threw in the towel.

Sometimes the discover is just interrupting lines of communication.

Now that we know that the discoverer in a discovered attack can bring death and destruction into the ranks of the defender, it is time to look at what the discoverer can do for the principal attacker. Here is an example from **Krogius – Sergievsky**, USSR 1959:

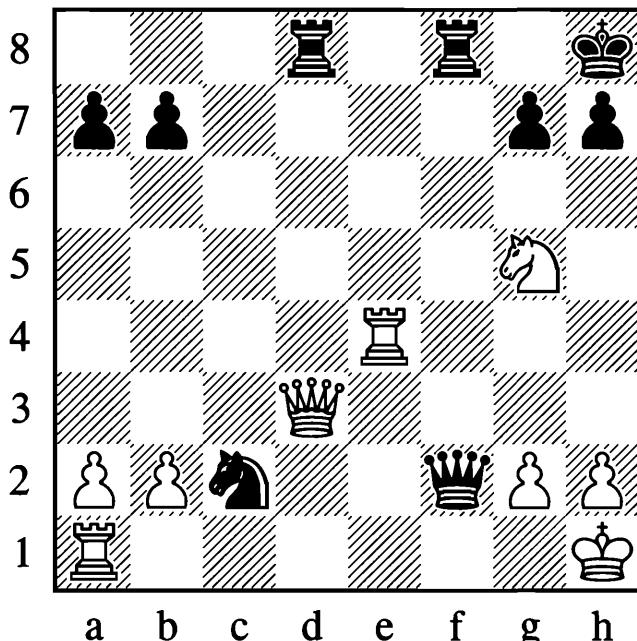


1. ♔g6!!

1–0

Knights are nasty pieces. Here the horse jumps to g6, discovering an attack on the black queen. If Black plays 1... ♕xf5, White strikes back with 2. ♔xe7† winning the rook, forking queen and king. So the knight defends the white queen indirectly.

Occasionally it may be possible to defend a piece directly as well. Take a look at **Travnicek – Janata**, Czechoslovakia 1961.

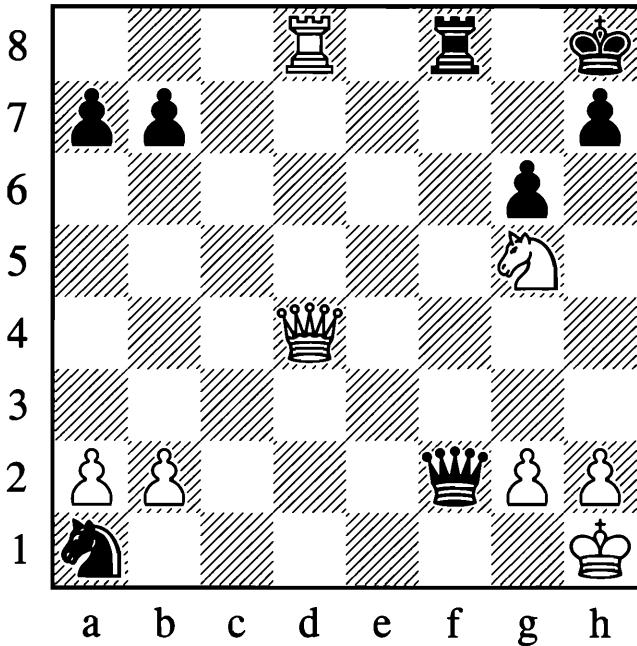


1. ♕d4

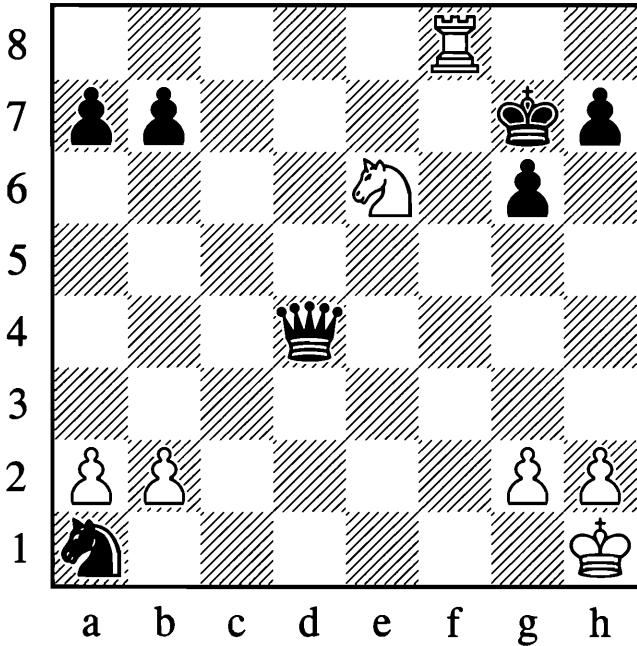
This shields the white queen against the attack of the d8-rook. At the same time it is opening the d3-h7 diagonal for its queen, threatening mate. Thus the rook as the

discoverer in a discovered attack is directly defending the queen. White is winning, for example:

1...g6 2.♗xd8 ♗xa1 3.♗d4†



3...♗xd4 4.♗xf8† ♔g7 5.♘e6†



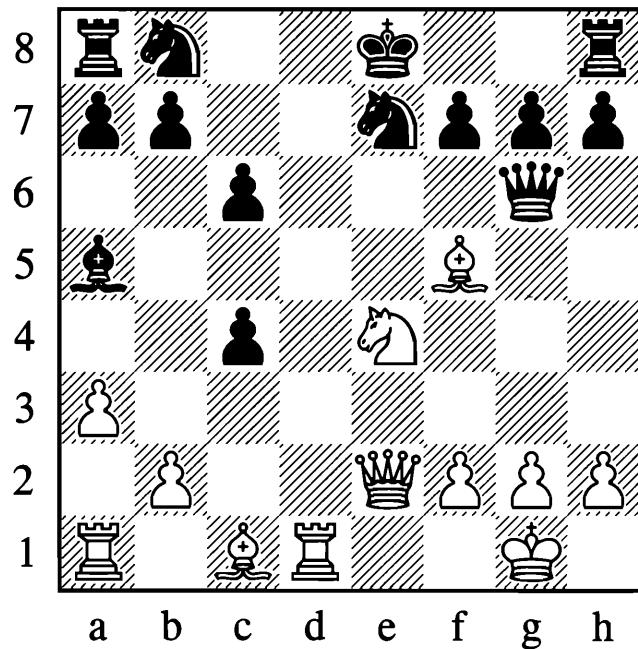
White is going to win all of Black's pieces, as the black knight is trapped. You can see again how powerful the connection of two tactical motifs can be, in this case the discovered attack and the double attack.

The strongest pieces, if pinned against the king, lose all their power

The victim point: the king

Nothing is better than an attack against the king. Even if your opponent gained your whole queen's wing, if you could find a mate all his material advantages will not matter. The strongest pieces, if pinned against the king, lose all their power, and even a check by a feeble little pawn has to be answered.

Discovered checks are among the most devastating weapons in a player's tactical arsenal. When they come as double check it is usually *Game Over*, as you will see in the next game, **Petroff – Szymanski, Warsaw 1851**:



White has just played 1.♗g4-f5. The queen has no escape square at hand. Even worse, the queen cannot take the offending bishop, as White would simply fork queen and king with the knight on d6. So the only option here is

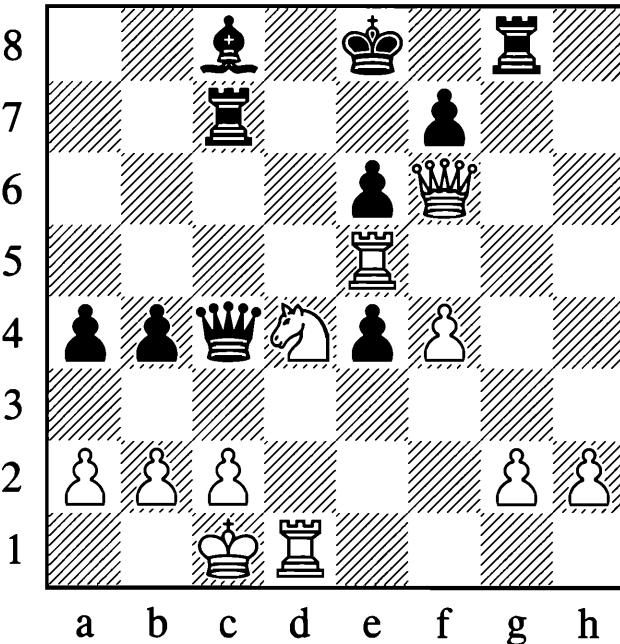
1...♘xf5

which runs into

2.♘f6† ♔f8 3.♗e8 mate

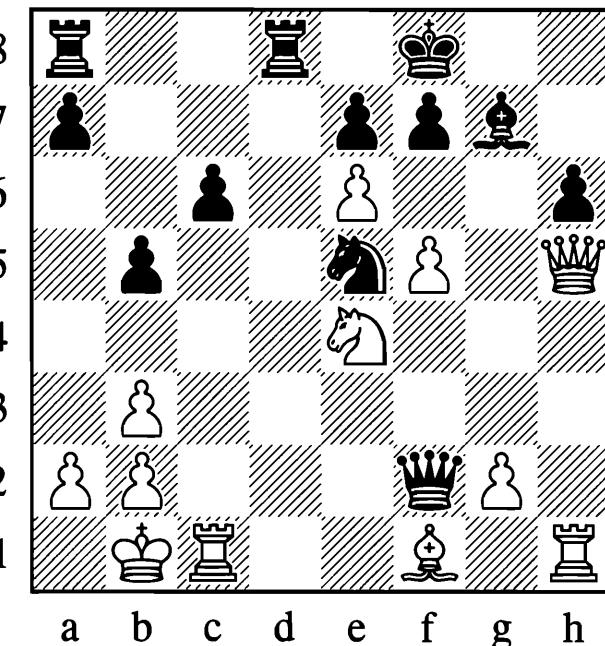
The discovered check by the knight has to be followed by a king move from Black, so there was no escape.

Creating a double check is often done by luring the king to the crucial square with a sacrifice or by eliminating parts of the king's pawn shield. In **Katalymov – Muhin**, USSR 1976, we see an example of the first case:



1... $\mathbb{Q}d8\# \mathbb{K}xd8$ 2. $\mathbb{N}c6\# \mathbb{K}e8$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}d8$ mate

In **Elsukov – Ermakov**, USSR 1969, we see an example of the latter case:

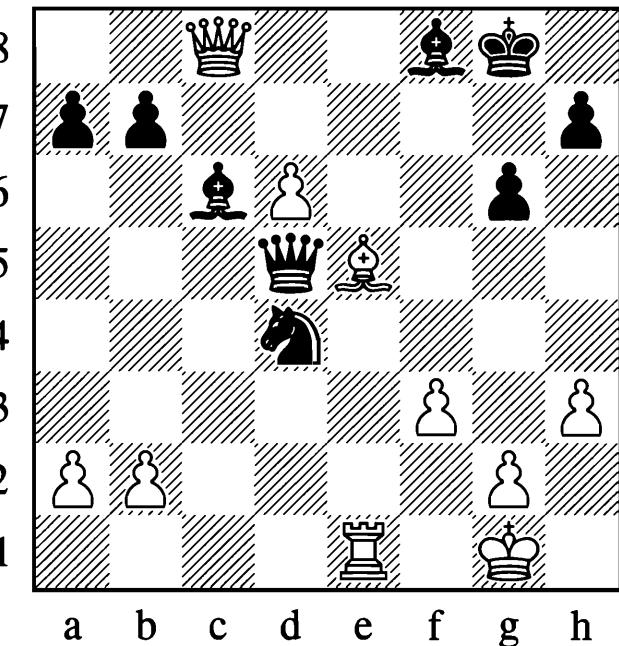


1... $\mathbb{Q}xb2\# \mathbb{K}xb2$ 2. $\mathbb{N}c4\# \mathbb{K}b1$

3. $\mathbb{K}c2$ changes nothing.

3... $\mathbb{Q}a3$ mate

Black gains a decisive material advantage with the help of a discovered check in **Grigore – L'Ami**, Bratto 2010:

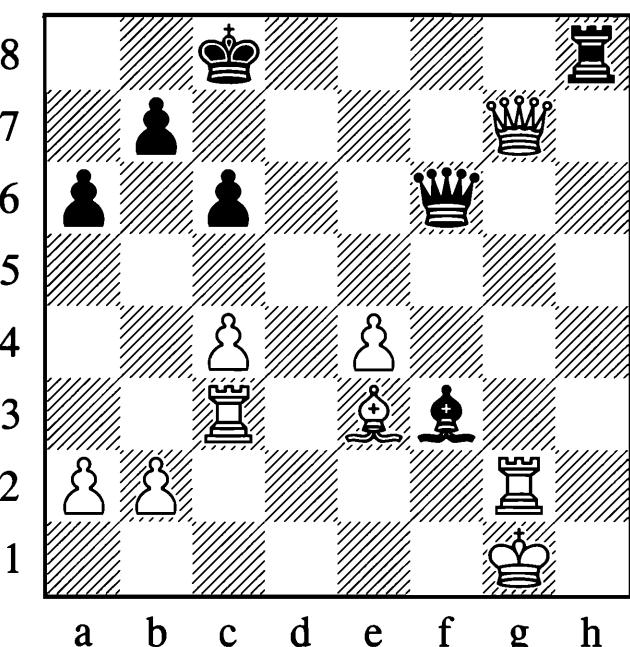


1... $\mathbb{Q}xf3\#!$

White resigned since he is forced to capture the knight with 2. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$, which leads to a loss of queen on c8 after 2... $\mathbb{W}c5\#$! 3. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ (3. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ is not any better due to 3... $\mathbb{W}f2\#$) 3... $\mathbb{Q}xf3\#$ and Black takes the undefended queen on the next move.

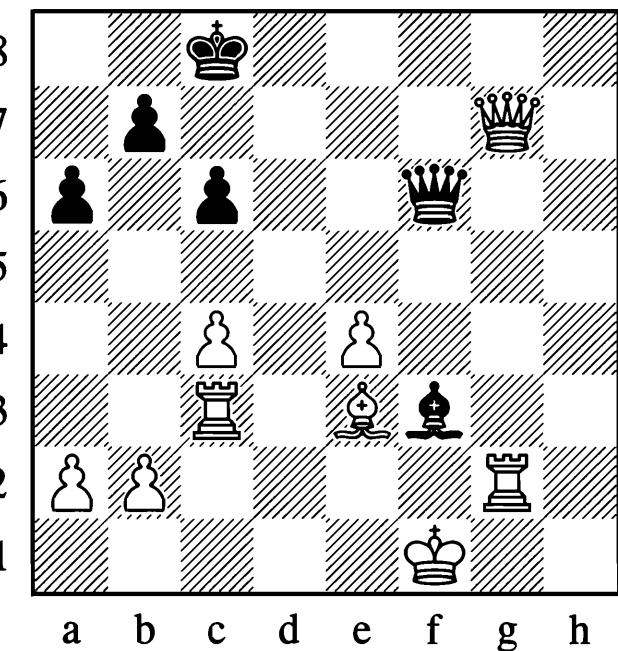
0–1

The fatal force of the double check as a special case of the discovered attack against the king is also illustrated in the game **Olei – Grigorov**, Correspondence 1968:



If the king were on f1 there would be a double check, so Black plays:

1... $\mathbb{Q}h1\# \mathbb{K}f2 \mathbb{Q}f1\#! 3.\mathbb{Q}xf1$



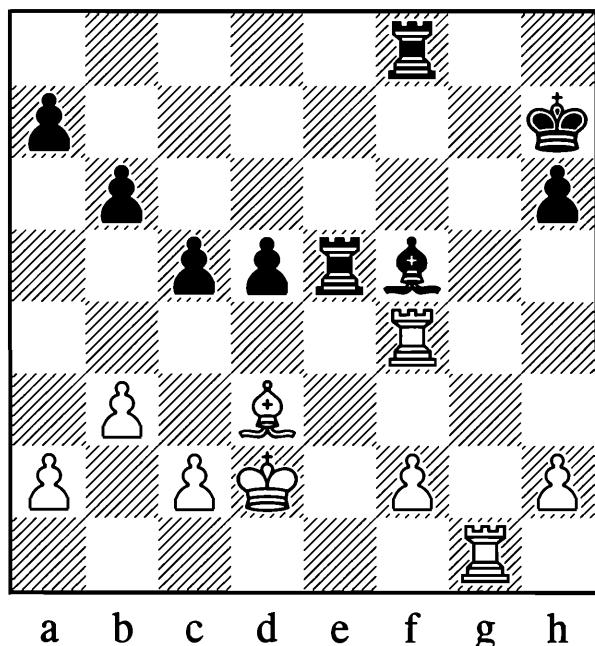
Forcing the king to the critical square.

3...Qxg2†

Please note how the black queen survives this operation undefended and how the other queen, stripped of its own defence, has to watch the doom of her groom.

The fact that the double check is the most deadly form of a discovered attack against the king does not mean that a simple discovered check is not dangerous as well.

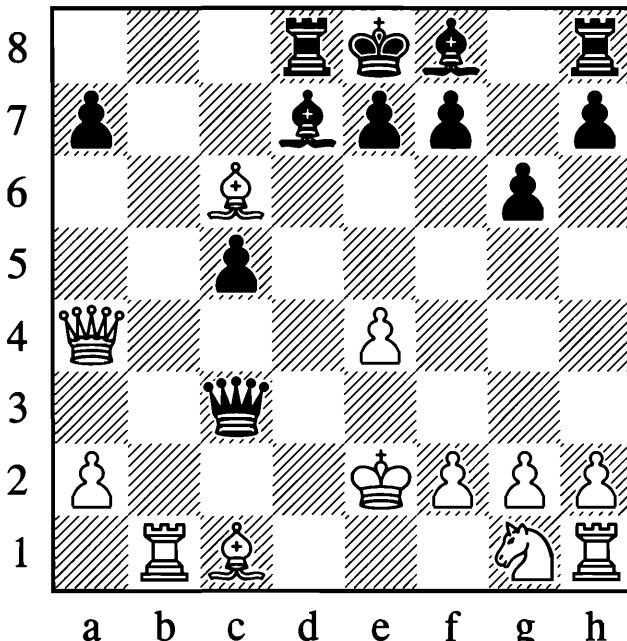
Even if you just exchange pieces in a configuration like this, it always happens with a gain of tempo, as in **Miagmasuren – Bisguier**, Tallinn 1971:



1.Rxe1! Rxe1 2.Rxf5!

But not 2.Qxf5?? Rxf5!. After the correct rook takes, White wins a piece.

Generally it is easy to win a tempo when the victim piece in a discovered attack is the king. If the discoverer is already able to take a piece, it is sometimes worth a sacrifice in order to lure the king into the discovered attack, as in **Isakov – Nikitin**, Correspondence 1947:

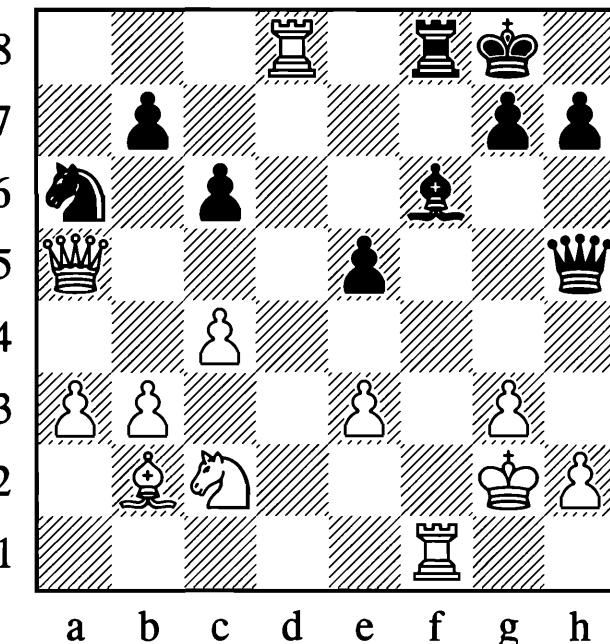


1...Wd3†!!

Black generously offers his queen, because the d7-bishop will have the c6-bishop for starters and then the queen on a4 as a main course. And if you think two courses are not enough, have another one:

Mititelu – Stanciu

Bucharest 1963



Black booked a three-course dinner with

1... $\mathbb{W}e2\#$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}g1 \mathbb{W}xf1\#$!

0-1

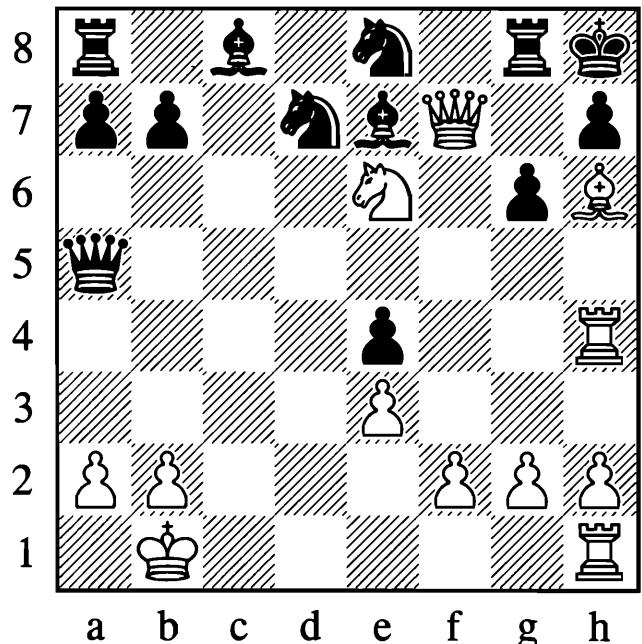
This first capture will be followed after 3. $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ by the second capture 3... $\mathbb{Q}xd8\#$ and then the third capture when the bishop will take the queen after White moves his king.

Note how Black had to ‘invite’ the king before he could strike.

After these two examples it will not be very difficult for you to find out what is going on in the next diagram:

Spindler – Deilitz

Correspondence 1973



The first thing you should see is the chain of three points with the h4-rook as principal attacker, the h6-bishop as the discoverer, and the king on h8 as the victim piece. Once you have seen the pattern, it is easy to find:

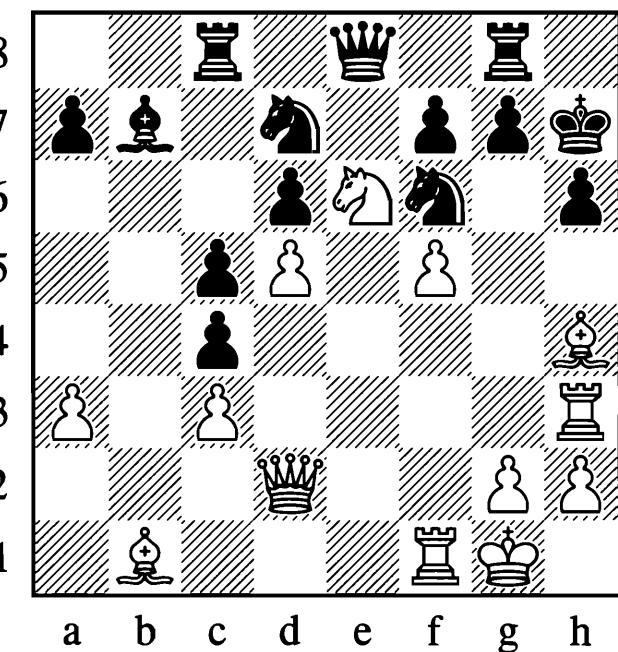
1. $\mathbb{W}xh7\#$

Followed by 2. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ mate.

Here, as in the next example, the rook and bishop worked as a tactical unit.

Enevoldsen – Andersen

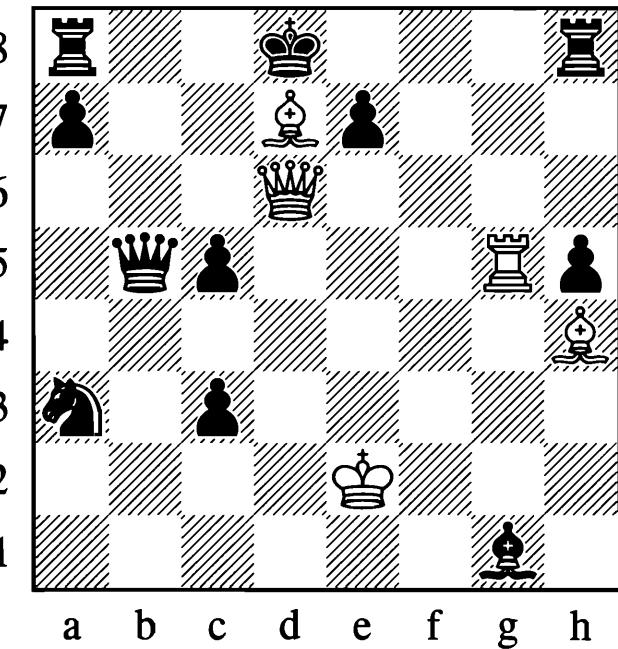
Denmark 1937



1. $\mathbb{Q}xg7\#$

No matter whether the king or rook takes the knight, 2. $\mathbb{W}xh6\#$ will follow and if the queen is taken the discovered attack by the h4-bishop with 3. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ will be mate. (In this example White could even change the move order: 1. $\mathbb{Q}xf6!$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$, and if instead Black tries 1...fxe6 White has yet another deadly discovery with 2.fxe6#.)

Consider the following wild position:



Do not forget to take into account the discovered attack formation: g5-rook – h4-bishop – the king on d8! After

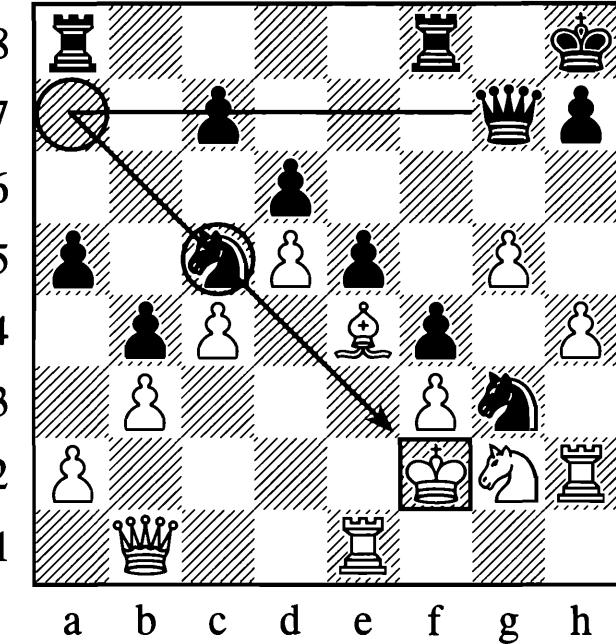
1. $\mathbb{Q}xb5\# exd6$

the discovered attack with

2. $\mathbb{R}xc5$

results directly in mate.

In **Morales – Lehmann**, Leipzig (ol) 1960:

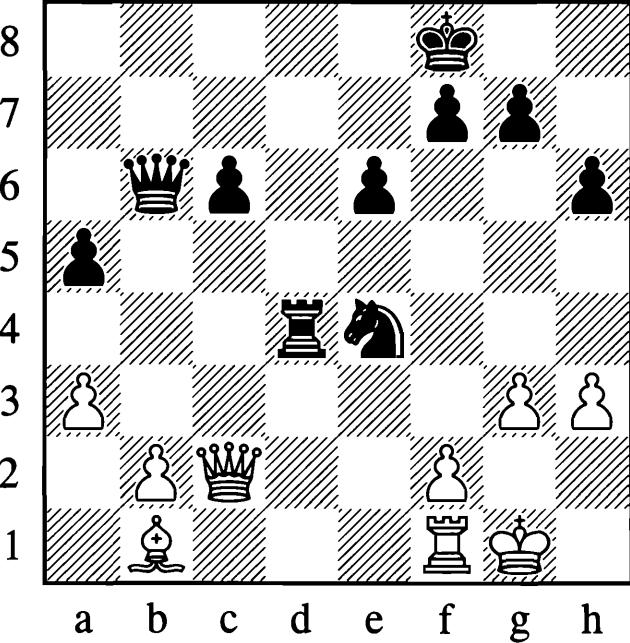


Black successfully created the possibility of a discovered attack against the king with:

1...c6!! 2.dxc6 $\mathbb{Q}a7$

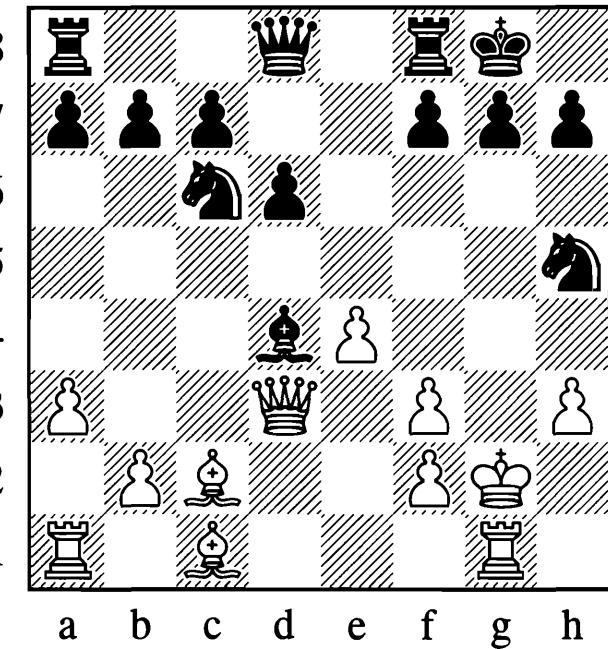
White now has no way to deal with knight from c5 to somewhere with a deadly check.

Sometimes the discovered attack is just the overture for other operations like in **Rogulj – Miles**, Mendrisio 1985.

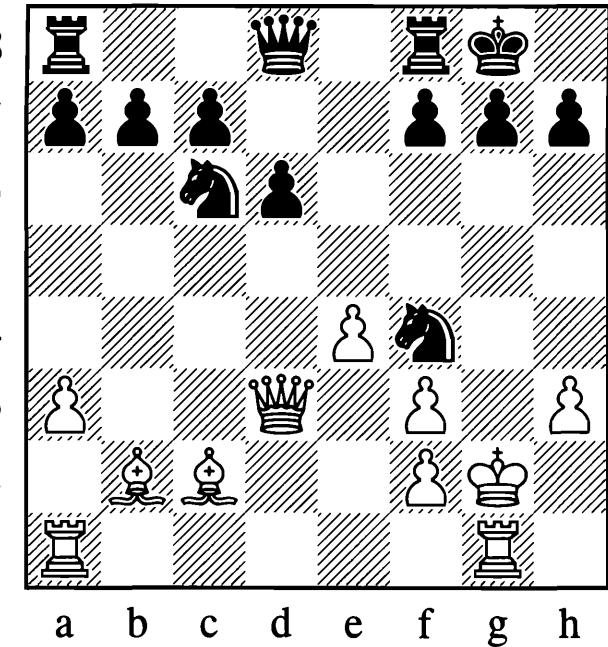
**1... $\mathbb{Q}xg3$**

This takes advantage of the chain: queen on b6 – d4-rook – king on g1.

Being alertly on the lookout for configurations like this will help you to avoid being a trapper trapped as in the example of **Hartlaub – N.N.**, Berlin 1913.

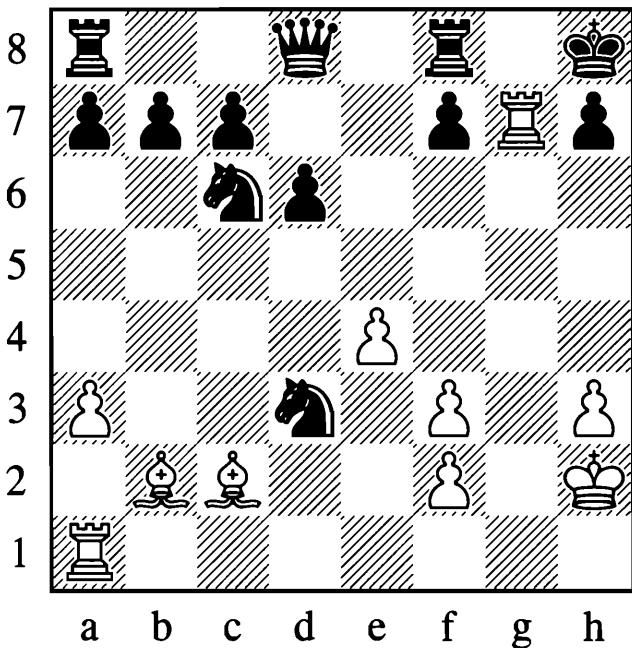


Black wants to distract the defender of the f4-square, which is where his knight would like to hop, forking king and queen. So he thought that the b2-pawn was undefended.

1... $\mathbb{Q}xb2?$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xb2 \mathbb{Q}f4\#$ 

Obviously White had fallen for Black's simple plan. But White had a plan of his own.

3.♕h2 ♜xd3 4.♝xg7† ♕h8

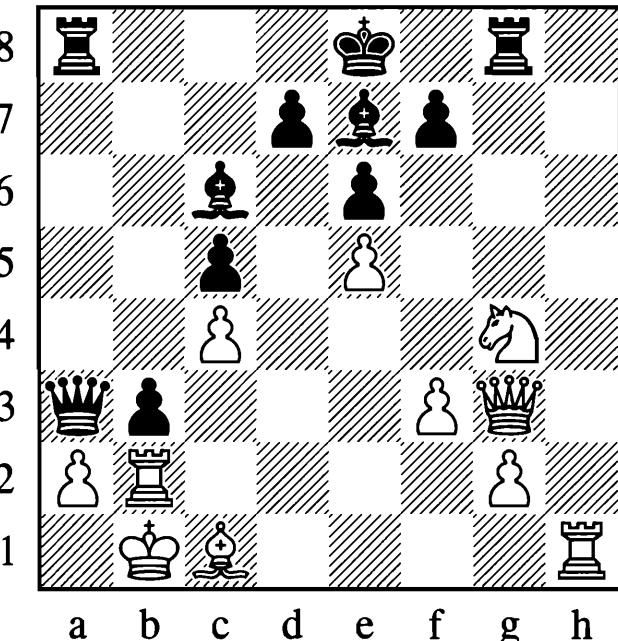


5.♝g8†!!

The notorious double check leaves Black no chance to take the b2-bishop with his knight, and it will be curtains after 6.♝g1† next move.

The victim point: the other pieces

It was not difficult to recognize the king as a potential victim piece of a discovered attack. It is a little more difficult with other pieces. Nevertheless, looking for two pieces in a row is not too complicated and so you may find all the possibilities for a discovered attack in **Orehov – Petrusha, USSR 1967:**



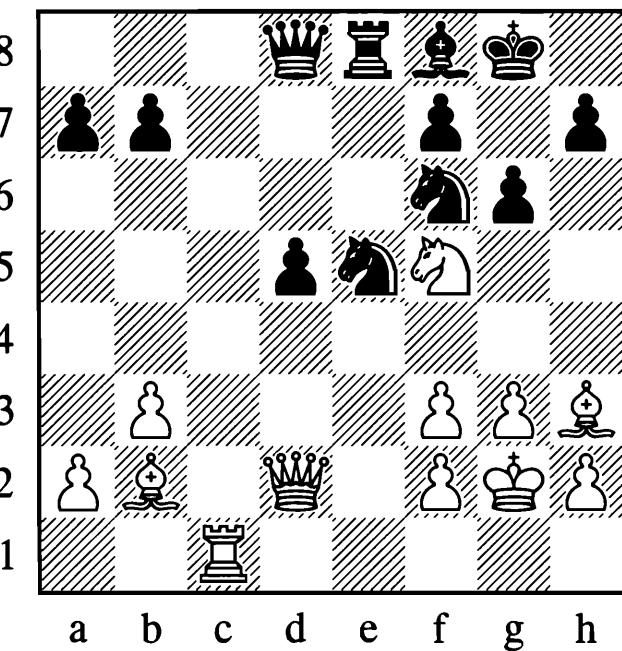
You score one point if you found the configuration g3-queen, g4-knight and g8-rook; two points if you also discovered the c1-bishop, b2-rook and a3-queen; three points if you spotted the a3-queen, b3-pawn and g3-queen. Wait a minute, you may want to ask, the last one is not really a possible discovered attack as there is a white pawn on f3 in the way. That is exactly what Black changed with his next move:

1...♞e4†

Now it is either mate after 2.♔a1 ♜xa2† or White will lose the queen after 2.fxe4 bxa2† 3.♔a1 ♜xg3.

This should be an important lesson for you: **no matter how many pieces and pawns are in-between two long-range pieces or a long-range piece and the king there is always the potential for a discovered attack** as there is always the potential for a pin. Pieces might disappear or be cleared away with tempo and suddenly you find yourself trapped.

If there is nothing on the square where we would like a victim piece to be, then we have to persuade a piece to go there as in **Veltmander – Cherepkov, USSR 1950.**



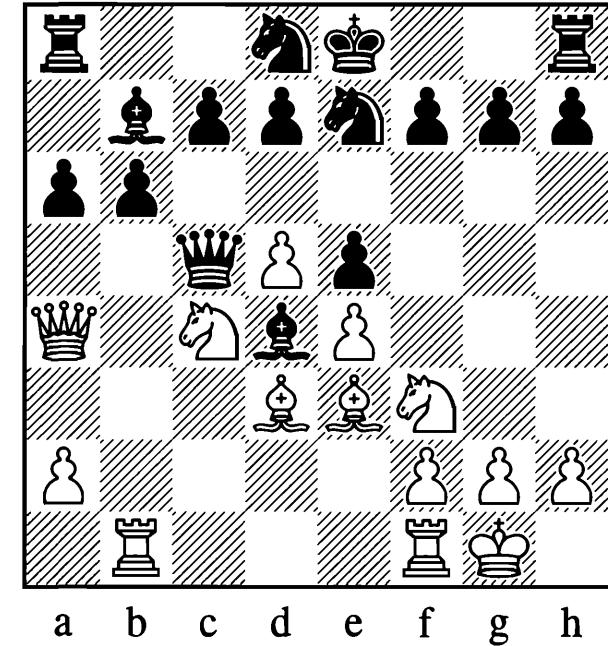
After studying the position for a few seconds you will have noticed the necessary

configuration of two of your pieces: the h3-bishop and f5-knight sharing one diagonal is a good start for constructing a discovered attack. You may also have noticed that the knight can evacuate the f5-square with check, so all you need is a victim piece to complete the discovered attack. This is why Veltmander played:

1. $\mathbb{B}c8 \mathbb{W}xc8$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}e7\#$

Winning the queen.

Sometimes a victim piece already occupies the desired square but the value of that piece is too low. In this case an exchange on this square might help to increase the value of this point considerably. As an example consider **Chigorin – Steinitz, Havana 1889**:



The board is pretty crowded but you still might have spotted the chain of the queen on a4, the c4-knight and the d4-bishop. Again, the knight is able to discover the attack with check. The only problem is that the bishop is not really a big fish. But with a queen on d4 it would be a different story. So White cashed in on this configuration with:

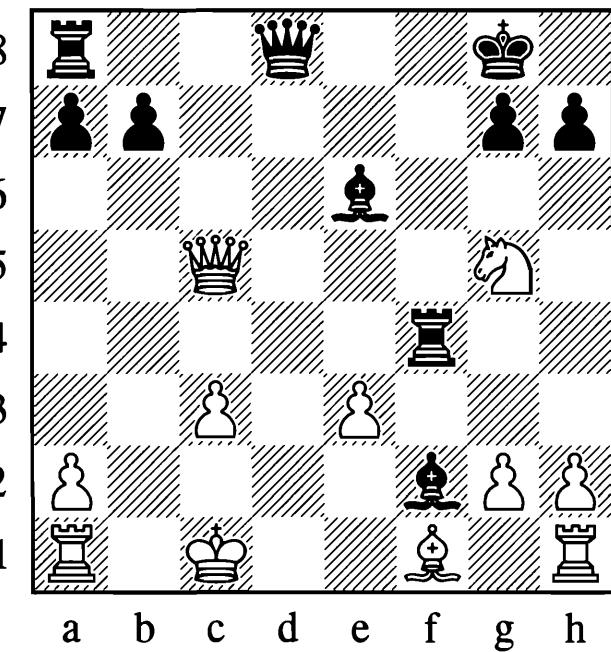
1. $\mathbb{Q}xd4 exd4$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xd4!$

Now the queen is unable to recapture on d4 without meeting a dreadful end after 3. $\mathbb{Q}d6\#$.

The next instructive example features a queen sacrifice in order to enhance the value of the victim piece.

Fakler – Mek

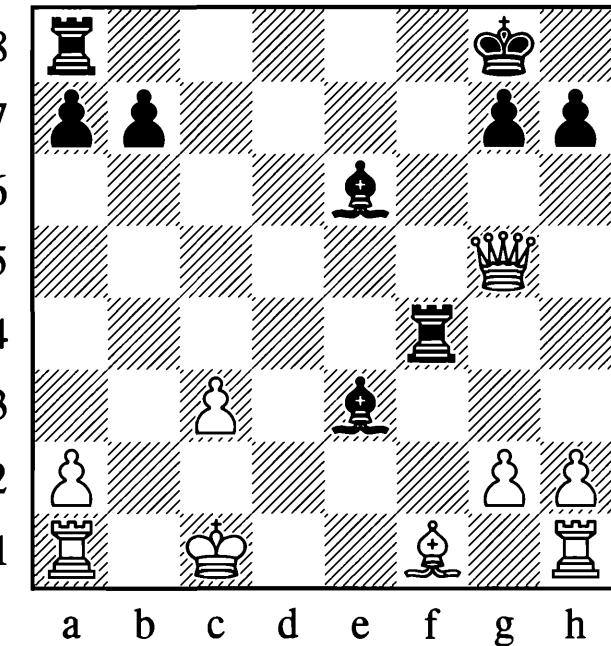
Basel 1933



Black has to be a little more creative than in the previous example, and invest more to set up the discovered attack. But after

1... $\mathbb{W}xg5$ 2. $\mathbb{W}xg5 \mathbb{Q}xe3\#$

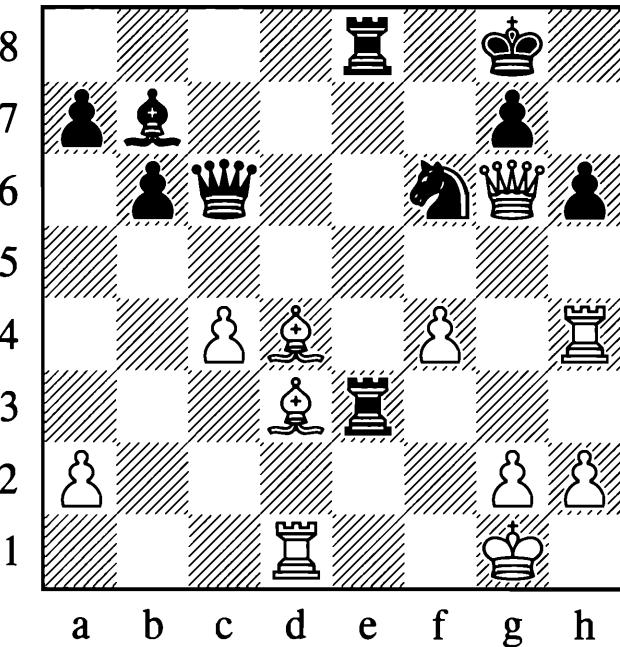
a discovered attack with check on Black's next move will win back the investment with interest.



Here is another illustration of how to adjust the position in order to trigger a discovered attack.

Tolush – Antoshin

USSR 1956



Black first sacrificed the exchange with:

1...♝xd3 2.♝xd3

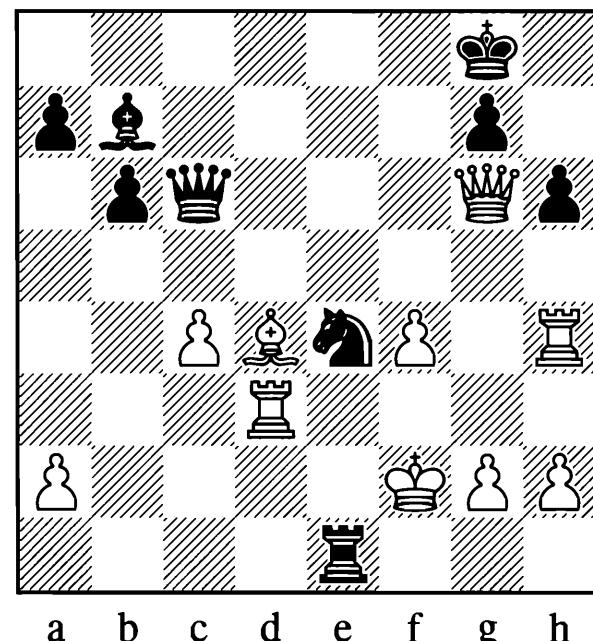
Then added a little back rank check for good measure.

2...♜e1† 3.♞f2

And finally finished the whole thing off with a charge of the cavalry!

3...♝e4†

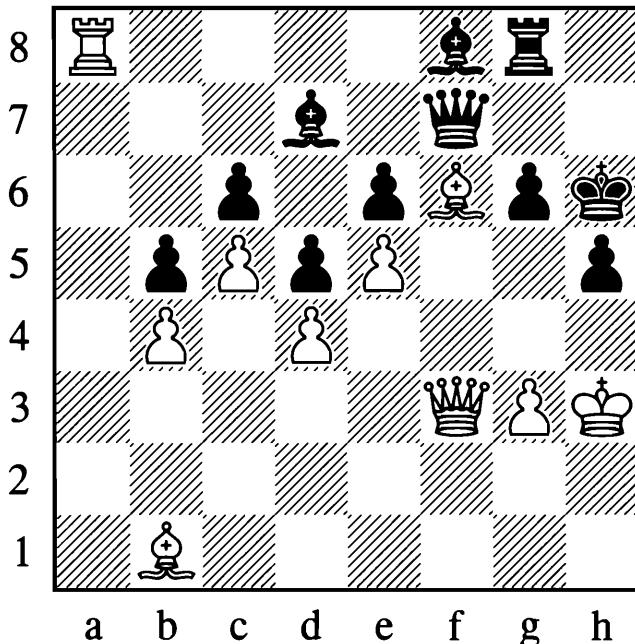
All to win the white lady on g6.



Occasionally, friendliness pays off in chess, when you really insist that your opponent accepts your generous offer. (The next position has been altered to fit my purposes. An h-pawn has been eliminated and the white king moved from g2 to h3.)

Sliwa – Tarnowski

Poland 1952



1.♝g5†

The main idea behind the sacrifice is that after 1...♛xg5 White has 2.♝e3† and will deliver mate on f4 next move.

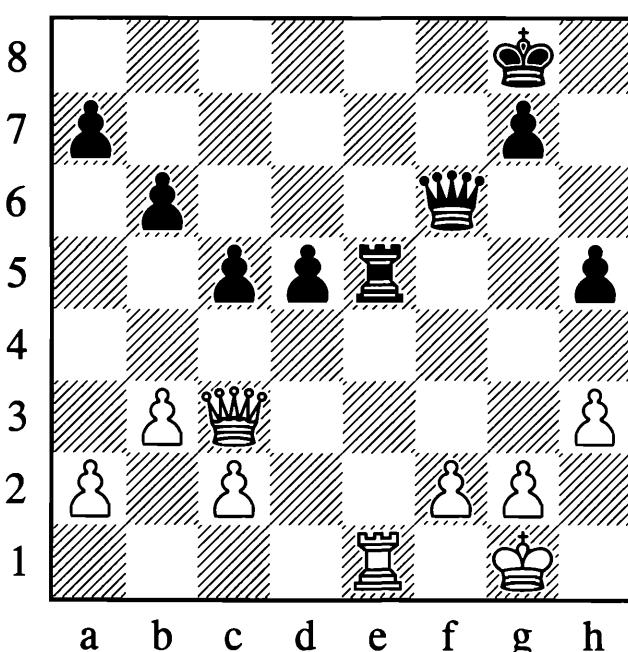
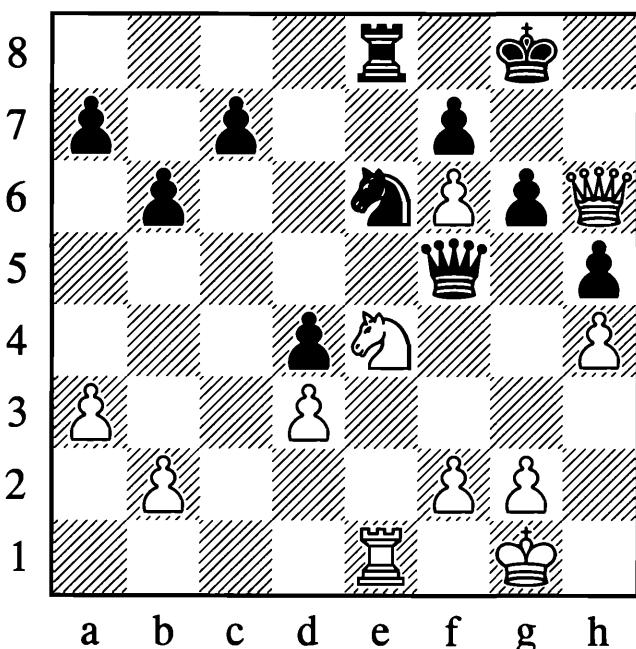
1...♛g7

So Black avoids the trick, but White is persistent.

2.♝h6†!

Black finally has to accept the gift of a bishop in exchange for his queen.

So far all these operations have been rather materialistic. But sometimes it is not material you are interested in, but changing the function of a victim piece. Eliminating a defender might be an operation well worth considering, as in **Polugaevsky – Gulko, USSR 1975**:



Within seconds you will have spotted the three points of the chain: e1-rook, e4-knight and e6-knight. The knight is defending the g7-square that is coveted by the white queen. So White used a discovered attack to eliminate the knight:

1. $\mathbb{Q}d6!$

Not 1. $\mathbb{Q}g5?$ $\mathbb{W}xf6.$

1–0

The knight is attacking both the queen on f5 and the e8-rook, while even more importantly opening the line of fire for the e1-rook, which is ready to sacrifice itself on e6, removing the defender of g7.

A discovered attack might also be changed into a pin. The chance of this happening increases when there is more than one piece in the line of fire of the principal attacker.

In most of the previous examples the boards have been quite crowded. Here is an example where it is fairly empty. Nevertheless, the solution found in **Bagirov – Holmov**, USSR 1962, is rather pretty.

1... $\mathbb{B}e2!!$

This move looks like a blunder, but actually is an ingenious move. We have already encountered this motif: see Donner – Huebner, page 32. If:

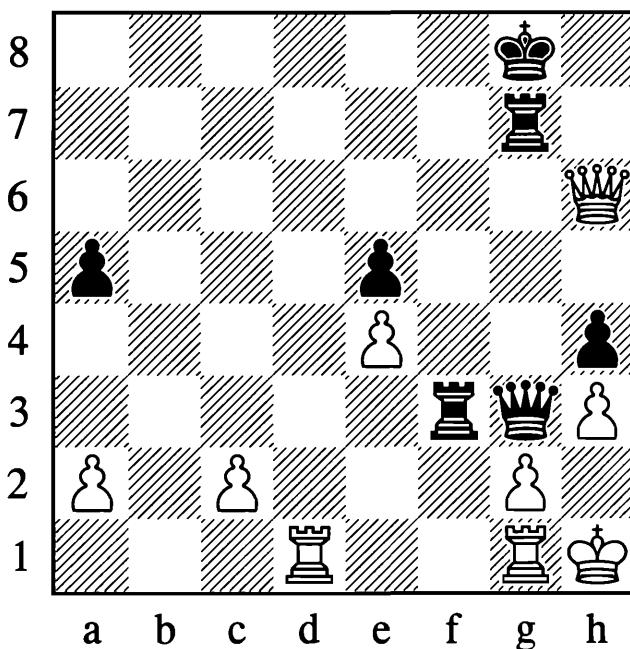
2. $\mathbb{W}xf6$

Black in return gains one little tempo by playing:

2... $\mathbb{B}xe1\#$

And then gets the queen back on the next move.

A discovered attack might also be changed into a pin. The chance of this happening increases when there is more than one piece in the line of fire of the principal attacker. The game **Schlechter – Leonhardt**, Bad Pistyan 1912, should not be unfamiliar to you:



You see the chain of three points: the g1-rook, g2-pawn and queen on g3. But there is more: the g7-rook and the king on g8. Playing the discovered attack now would be suicidal as 1.gxf3 allows 1... $\mathbb{W}xh3$ mate. But there is a little trick:

1. $\mathbb{W}xg7\# \mathfrak{Q}xg7$

Now the discovered attack produces a totally different result:

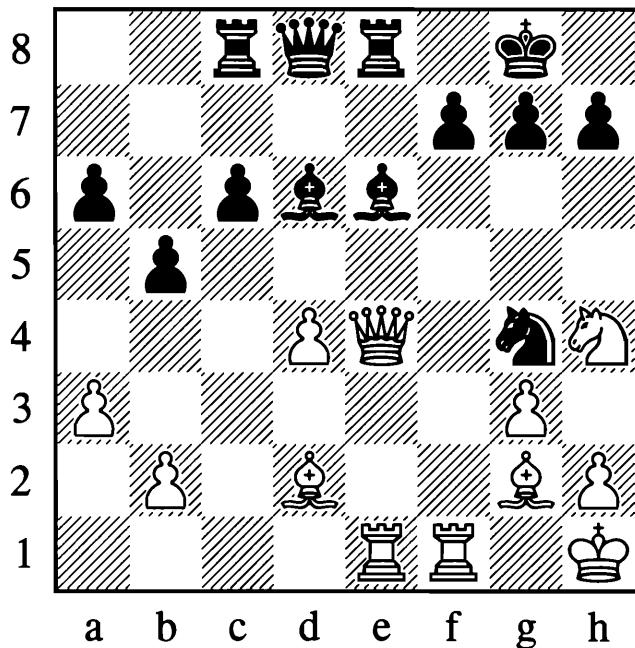
2.gxf3

Pinning the queen against the king, which is, as you will remember, an absolute pin and White is winning.

In the next diagram you can see another combination of discovered attack and pin.

Shabalov – Ramirez

USA 2011



1... $\mathfrak{Q}xh2!$ 2. $\mathfrak{Q}xh2$

We can see the g3-pawn is pinned to the king, but the h4-knight is still defended by the white queen. It's time to use a discovered attack:

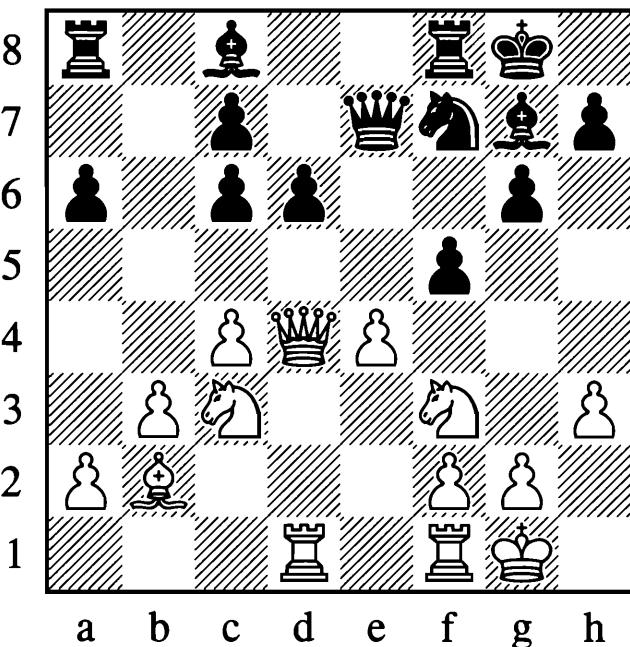
2... $\mathfrak{Q}d7!$

Now the white queen cannot continue covering h4.

3. $\mathbb{W}f3 \mathbb{W}xh4\#$

0–1

What would happen if you could boost the power of the principal attacker in a discovered attack? This question is answered in the next diagram:



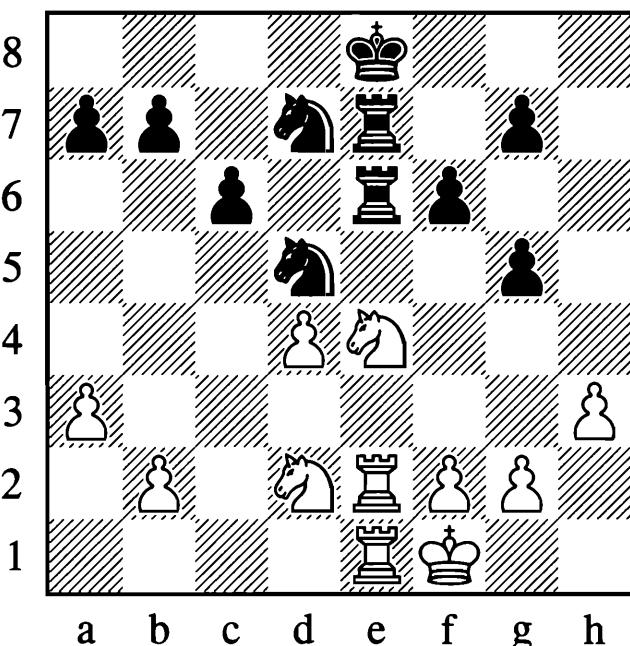
In **Reilly – Alexander**, Hastings 1931, White boosted his attack on g7 by discovering an attack by the b2-bishop with:

1. $\mathfrak{B}d5!!$

1–0

Suddenly the attack had a double impact.

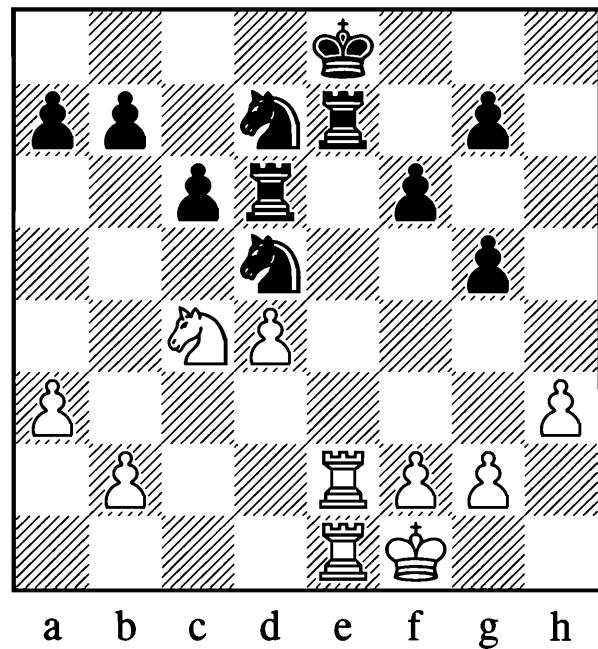
Sometimes you can boost your attack by simply opening a line, as in **Glotov – Osipov**, USSR 1978.



1. $\mathbb{Q}d6\#!! \mathbb{R}xd6$

Black had no choice: the e6-rook was hanging.

2. $\mathbb{Q}c4$

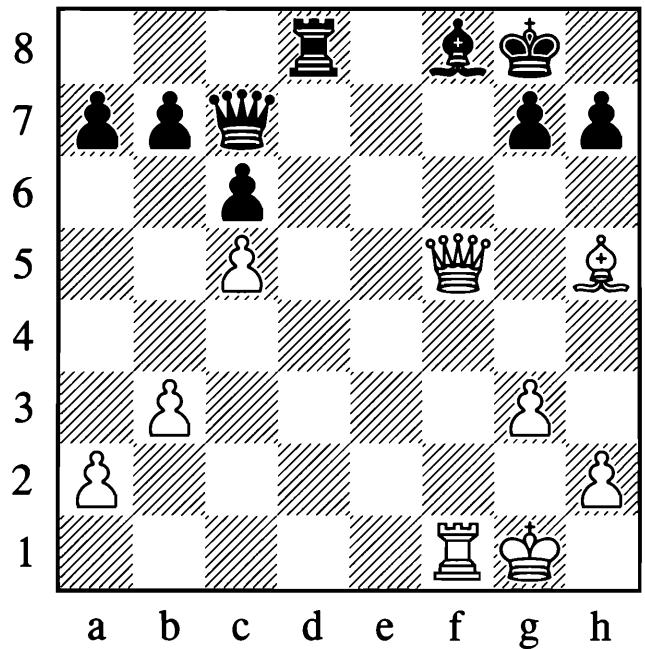


The black rook cannot turn back to e6. It is important to notice that this operation was only possible because the black king was on e8 and because the knight on d7 (g6 eyeing f4 would be a sensible square) is not doing anything except blocking escape routes for the king.

Tactics reflect and punish inadequate strategic play. We might say that from tactics we can learn prudent strategic play.

The victim point in a discovered attack does not necessarily have to be a piece: quite often it is a square of great importance.

The last example of this kind shows another important possibility to modify the status of the victim piece before you can play a discovered attack. In **Reti – Bogoljubow**, New York 1924, the line of defence for a victim piece is interrupted before it is picked up tactically.

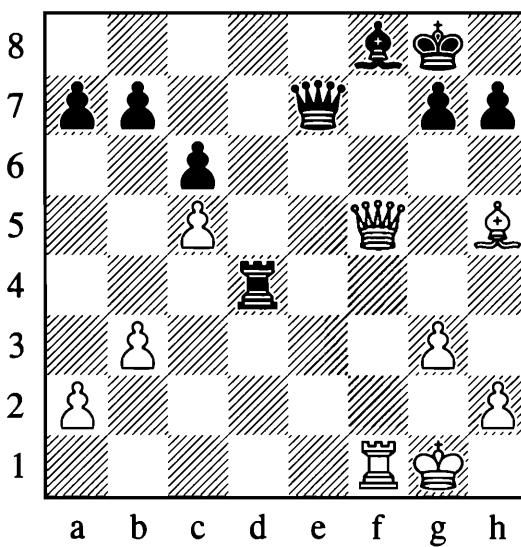


Black has just played ... $\mathbb{R}d4-d8$ and seems to be defending the f8-bishop sufficiently, but White does not think so:

1. $\mathbb{Q}f7\# \mathbb{Q}h8$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}e8\#!!$

1–0

Instead of ... $\mathbb{R}d4-d8$, ... $\mathbb{W}c7-e7$ would have led to the following position where White also has a combination:

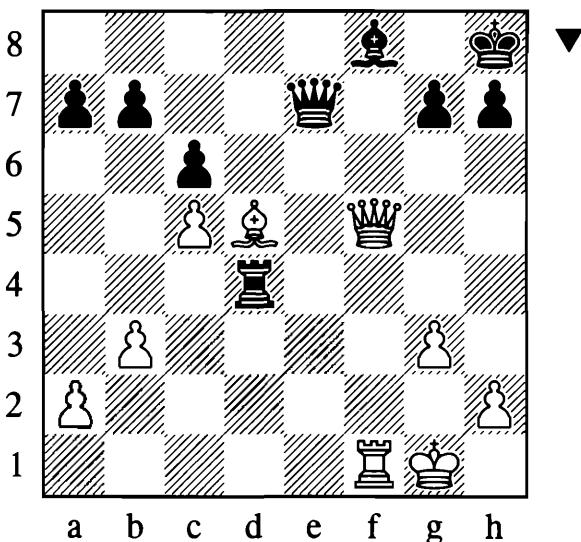


1. $\mathbb{Q}f7\#$

There is nothing new under the sun.

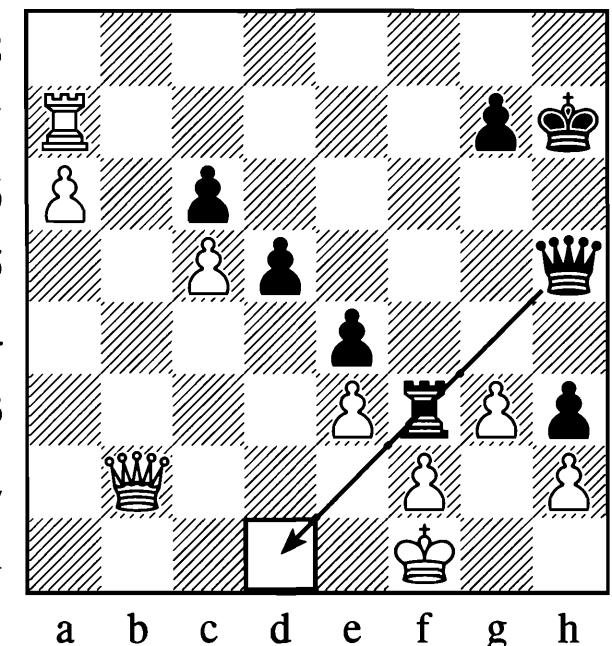
1... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}d5\#$

White's threat of mate wins the f8-bishop. The black king is no longer defending the victim piece on f8, and the black rook is shut out, so it cannot return to help the trapped bishop.



The victim point: a square

As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, the victim does not necessarily have to be a piece: quite often it is an important square. For example, a strategic point of a double attack, or a square you need to occupy in order to give mate, as in **Roux Cabral – Eliskases**, Mar del Plata 1949.



Here the chain of three points are the queen on h5, the f3-rook and the d1-square, which gave Black the opportunity to counter White's attack against g7 very effectively with a discovered attack threatening mate on d1:

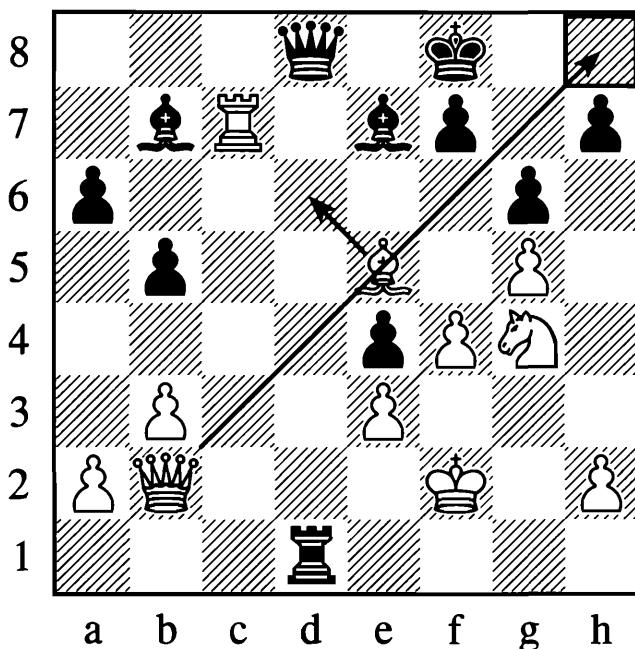
1...♝f7!

0–1

The same year, the same trick, just another country and different players.

Alfeis – Torman

West Germany 1949

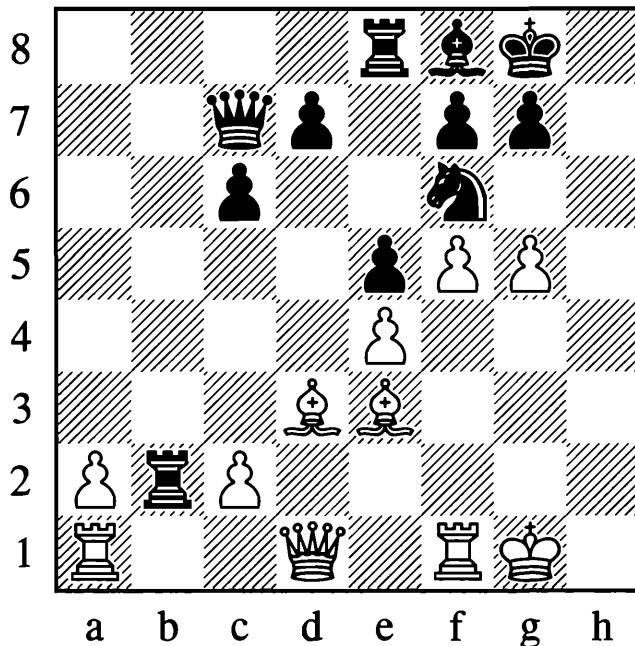


1.♗d6!

1–0

The white bishop opens a path to the mating square h8. $1...\text{♝xd6} \ 2.\text{♝h8}$ is still mate as the c7-rook controls the flight square on e7.

In the analysis of the game **Tal – Geller**, USSR 1971, White's attack looked very impressive, but the black knight had an opportunity to become very active indeed:



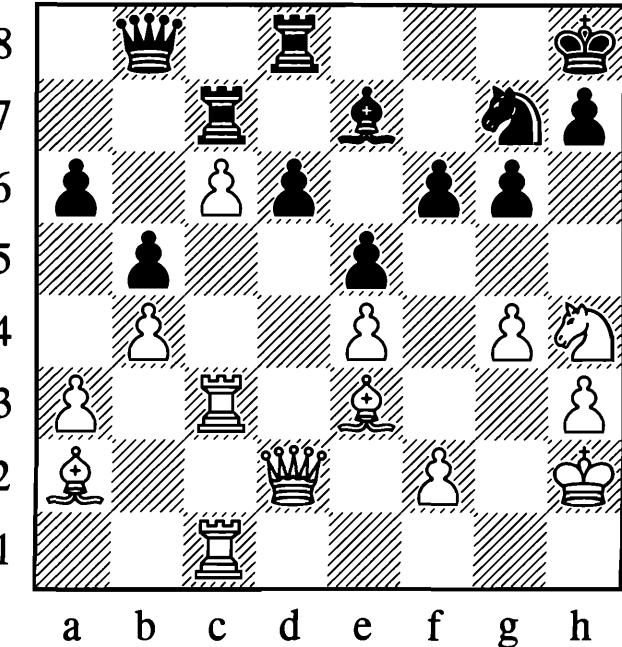
1...♞d5!

If White takes the knight, Black would simply play 2...e4, opening the b8-h2 diagonal and gaining the g3-square for the black queen. On g3 the queen has a double attack against the king and e3-bishop and, all of a sudden, White's attack has vanished in a haze.

If the “victim” is a square rather than a piece, the discovered attack can be difficult to spot:

Deshauer – Meier

Correspondence 1953



Look closely at this position and you see that the black king is unable to move. If you could attack the king just once, it would be mate. This can be achieved with the white queen on h6 after ♜xg6† ...hxg6 opens the h-file. Again the victim of the discovered attack is an important square:

1.♕a7!

Discovering the way to h6 with tempo.

1...♛xa7 2.♜xg6†!

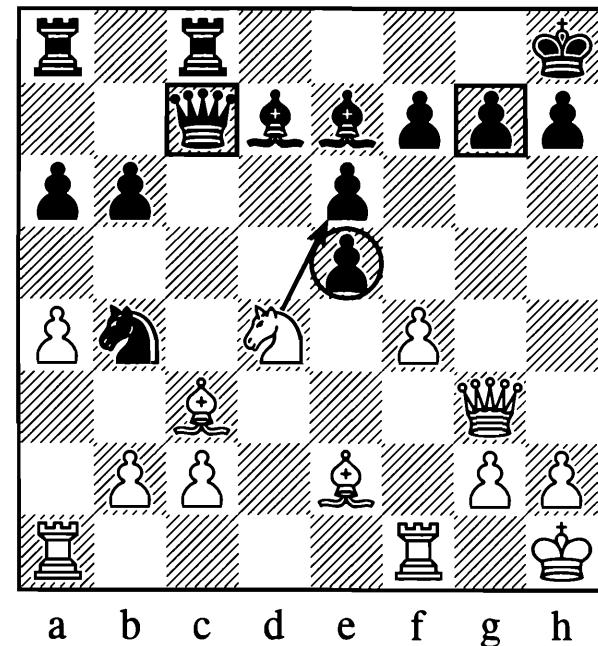
Opening the h-file with tempo.

2...hxg6

And now simply:

3.♛h6 mate

In **Klovan – Petkevich, USSR 1979**, we see a sacrifice on a square in order to occupy another square with tempo.

**1.♞xe6**

White is both threatening the queen and mate on g7, so Black has to accept the offer.

1...♝xe6

The knight discovered the attack of the c3-bishop on the e5-square, and now this square allows a double attack by the bishop:

2.♝xe5

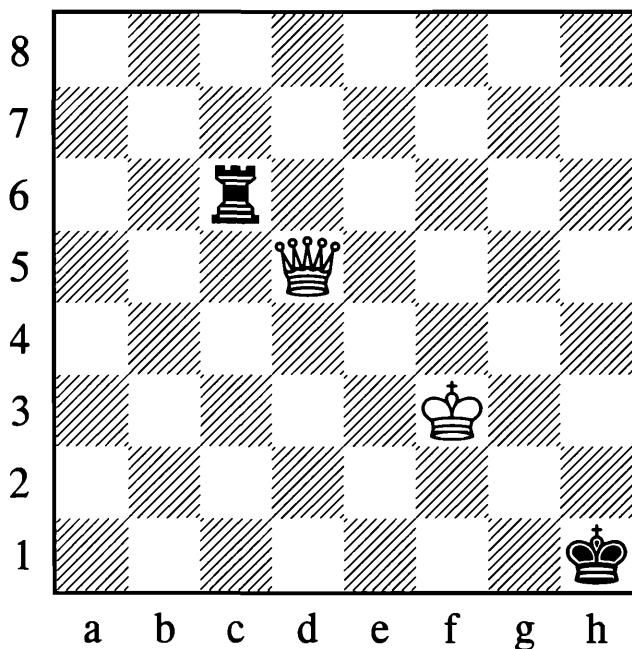
White wins the queen as otherwise it would be *Game Over* for Black.

The discoverer's target

Concluding this chapter, let's take a look at the discoverer's target in a discovered attack. As you will remember, the discoverer's target is the square the discoverer moves to in order to discover the attack of the principal attacker on the victim piece or victim square.

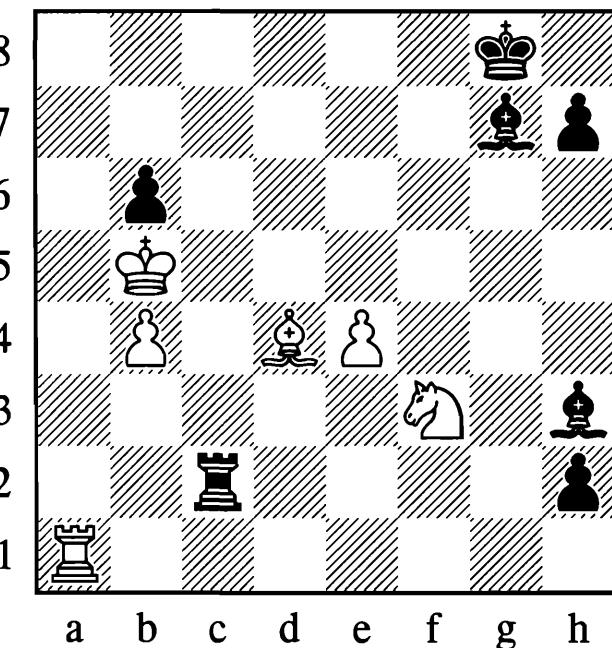
In rare cases the discoverer can move to the discoverer's target even without any direct impact on the position.

For example, there is a small finesse in the endgame of queen versus rook:



White has just played 1. $\mathbb{W}d5$ setting up a discovered attack formation. Even a check by the rook will give White a tempo because the white king's move will give check.

It is common for the discoverer to gain a tempo on its target. The classic example is a check and in this case you are advised to observe the consequences of this on all other points in a discovered attack. Let's examine **Kan – Botvinnik, Moscow 1936:**

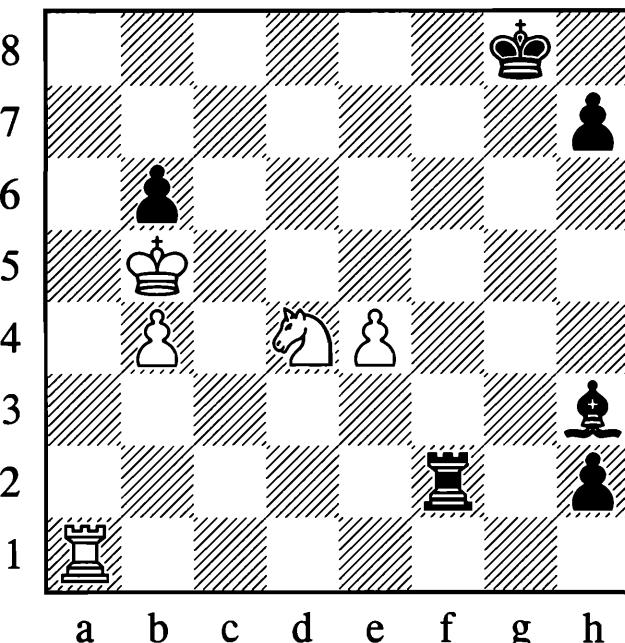


It is not difficult to see what the h2-pawn is dreaming about: becoming a queen. Unfortunately, the a1-rook will have none of it. But if you could cut off the white rook from the defence of h1, the pawn would rapidly decide the game. But there is another problem:

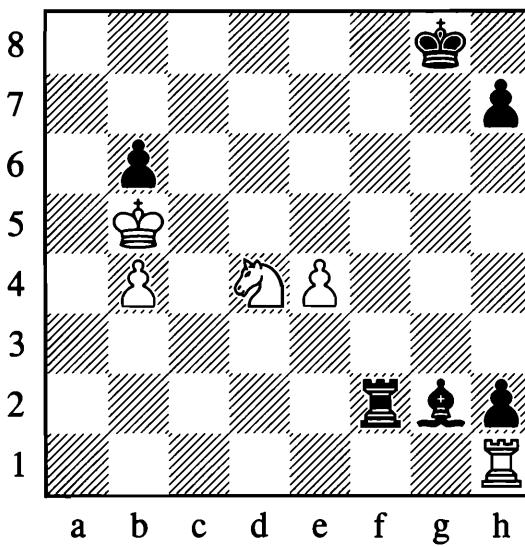
if later you put the black rook or the black bishop on f1, White's knight would simply snatch the h2-pawn. Consequently the knight has to be chased away first.

1... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 2. $\mathbb{N}xd4 \mathbb{E}f2!$

White resigned here, and with good reason: now the knight cannot help to stop the h-pawn. In addition, if the white rook tries to defend from h1 it will be lost:

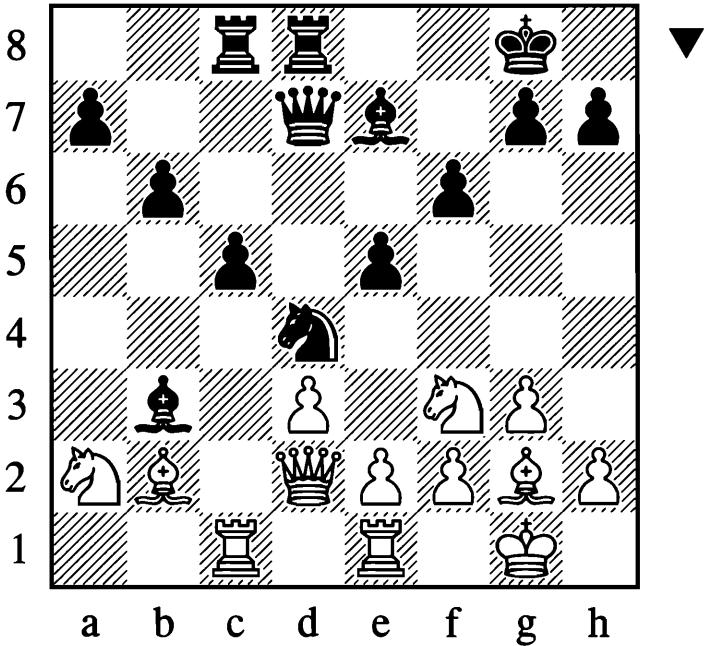


3. $\mathbb{E}h1 \mathbb{Q}g2!$



Botvinnik is finally able to use the discoverer's target (the king on b5) to support the pawn. This is the moment when we should remember that we can leave a piece or pawn without direct protection if it is "defended" by a possible discovered attack. The attacked white rook cannot take the pawn because of 4... $\mathbb{Q}f1\#$.

An exchange on the discoverer's target has to be analysed carefully, otherwise the discovered attack might not deliver the desired result, as in this position, which is analysis of **Kirillov – Botvinnik**, USSR 1931:



White hoped to win a piece as he thought his a2-knight was defended by the discovered attack against the d4-knight. But Botvinnik had prepared an intermediate move:

1... ♔xf3†

After White recaptures the knight, Black can take on a2, as now the discovered attack would only regain a pawn.

Summary

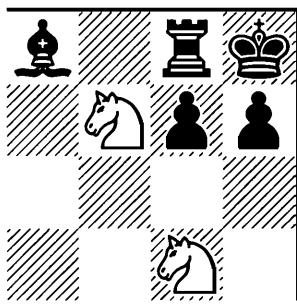
- A discovered attack is always created by three points in a row. The fourth point is the target of the discoverer.
 - Always look at the long-range impact of the principal attacker beyond the discoverer.
 - Sometimes just threatening a discovered attack might be enough to win.
 - When creating a discovered attack you can use squares near any of the four points as well, employing other tactical motifs.
 - A discovered attack against the king is often highly profitable.
 - As a check from a discoverer is extremely dangerous, moving onto the same line as a piece that is able to give a check provokes the creation of a discovered attack.
 - The discoverer might be able to support the creation of all other tactical motifs (double attack, pin, etc.).
 - You can create the victim point of a discovered attack by forcing one of your opponent's pieces to move there.
 - The victim point does not have to be a piece. Sometimes empty squares are worthy of a discovered attack, especially in connection with a threat of mate.

Chapter 4

The Reloader

In the early sixties Billy Wilder directed one of the best film comedies ever: *One, Two, Three*. It told the story of a soft drinks manager in Cold War Berlin and how he accomplished his jobs just one, two, three, snapping his fingers, “motivating” his subordinates to work harder and faster. The reloader works on the principle of one, two, three; one: you put one of your pieces onto a square for your opponent to take it; two: he takes it; three: you advantageously retake on the same square with another of your pieces. As simple as that.

As always in chess, it is not as easy as soft drinks management in Cold War Berlin. For starters there are two varieties of this motif. The first possibility is to reoccupy the square with the same type of piece, as in this diagram:



After the bishop has taken the knight on f7, the knight on g5 will take the black bishop, reloading the square with an identical piece. This is the simplest form of the reloader. The rule for this case is:

Two pieces of the same kind are able to occupy a square without any loss of impact when it is only defended once.

The other possibility is to reoccupy the square with a piece of a different type.



The white knight is replaced by the bishop after the black pawn on g7 has eliminated the knight.

The rule for this case is:

The second piece occupying the square does not have to be of higher value than the first but its action has to compensate for the loss of the first piece.

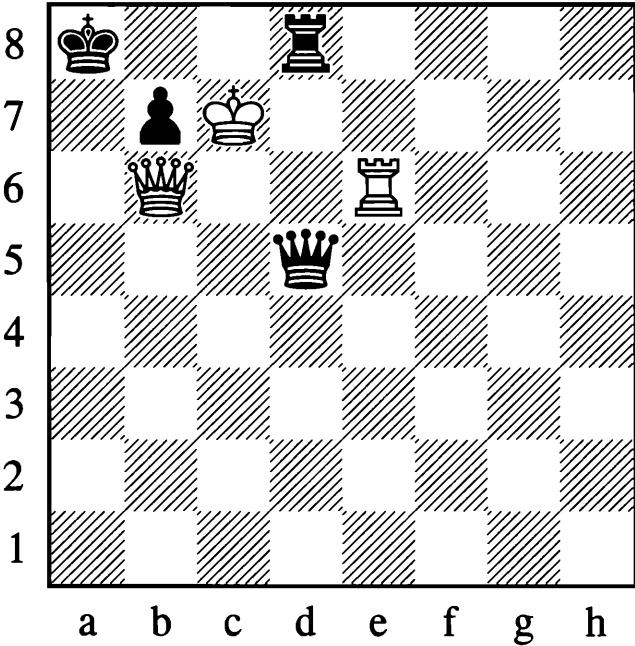
It is important to note that the second piece that is reoccupying the square has to gain something, in our example checkmate. The trick is that the sacrifice of the first piece, which your opponent is not able to turn down, enables the second piece to occupy a square it would not have been able to occupy otherwise.

In many cases the occupation of the crucial square by the first piece creates the motif for the second. Therefore, this motif is sometimes difficult to spot. But here is a little trick for you: it helps a lot to be on the lookout for squares you wish to place your pieces on, even if your wish doesn't seem possible. The dream square might become reality by moving

another (!) piece to that square first, paving the way for you to occupy it once more; this time with the piece you initially envisioned for that glorious square.

This way you will spot the motif and also find a way to clear the path for the second, reloading, piece.

Let's take a closer look at the first case of the reloader. In the following diagram we see a black king in trouble. With a closer look, you will easily discover that the black king would be mated if you could put the rook on a6 without it being taken.



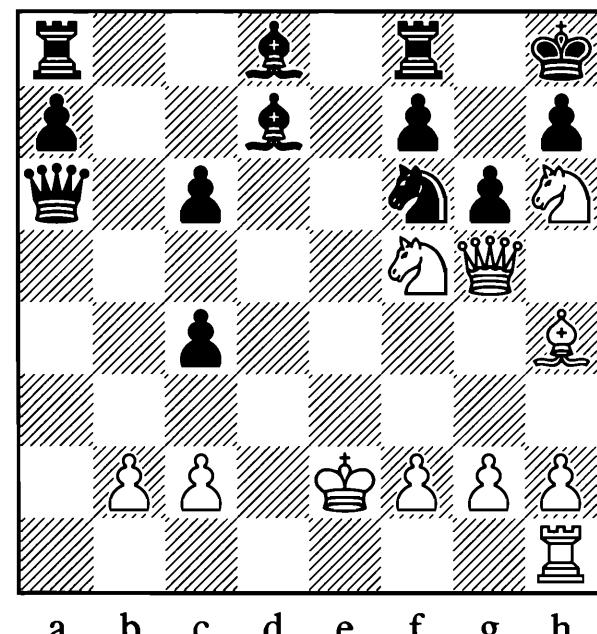
The only thing remaining to do is to clear a6 of all influence by Black.

1. $\mathbb{W}a6\#$ bxa6 2. $\mathbb{B}a6$ mate

The trick worked because the a6-square was only defended once but attacked twice by pieces with similar abilities, i.e. to move vertically and horizontally. Therefore, either queen or rook could have given mate on a6 if it had not been defended at all.

The destruction of the protective pawn structure around the enemy king, as in the previous example, is a common use of this motif.

In the next position (analysis of **Tal – Smyslov**, Yugoslavia 1959) it is the combination of queen and bishop that proves a deadly force:



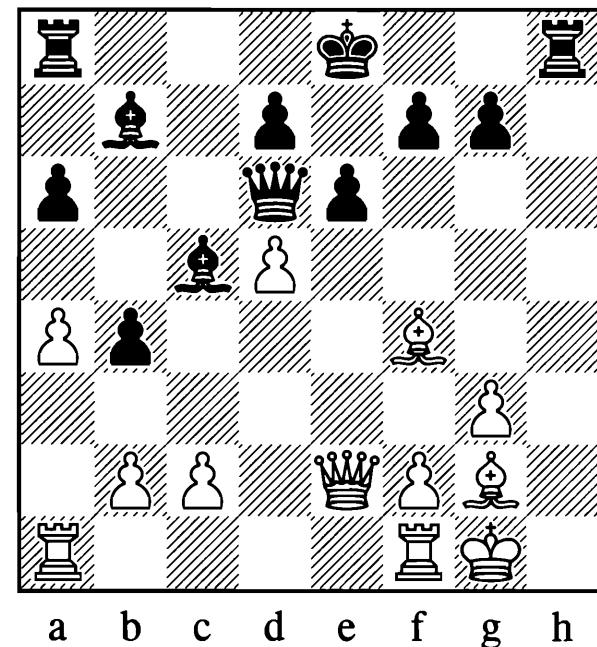
1. $\mathbb{W}xf6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ mate

It is not important whether the first piece captured a piece or not; the important thing here is that the second piece is able to occupy the square. The devastating effect of the second piece is the characteristic of the reloader.

Another characteristic is the provocation of your opponent or, as the *Godfather* would have put it, you are making an offer he cannot refuse.

Gutop – Roshal

USSR 1963



1... $\mathbb{W}xd5!$

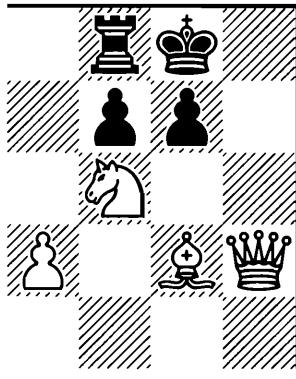
0-1

White has to accept the offer, as otherwise it would soon be mate: 2. $\mathbb{Q}xd5 \mathbb{Q}xd5$. The bishop reloads on d5 with the same diagonal quality as the queen. Now a rook and bishop mate (the initial idea of the combination) is unstoppable as the only move that would save the day, f2-f3, is prevented by a pin from the c5-bishop. This is a fine example of how different motifs can work together with deadly force.

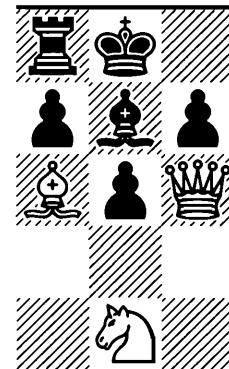
If the initial idea of giving mate is prevented by your opponent, you have to look for elementary tactics to realize your aim. **The reloader may be used to eliminate a defender** with the first piece and to create a tactical situation for the second piece. But you have to be careful here not to open escape routes for the king with the elimination of the first defender. In this case your tactical fireworks will backfire on you as you have changed the preconditions for the tactics of the second piece with the first. (See the first diagram on the previous page. After 1. $\mathbb{W}a6\#$ bxa6 the b-pawn *might* have created a flight square for the black king. In this case nothing really changed because the white king still covered the square from which the pawn had moved.)

A common motif of the reloader is its mission right at the frontline of the king's position.

Take a look at the next diagrams:



Black has to take the knight. But the knight is replaced by the bishop (or in some cases even the pawn), which will assist the queen for the mate.



1... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$ 3. $\mathbb{W}xh7$ mate

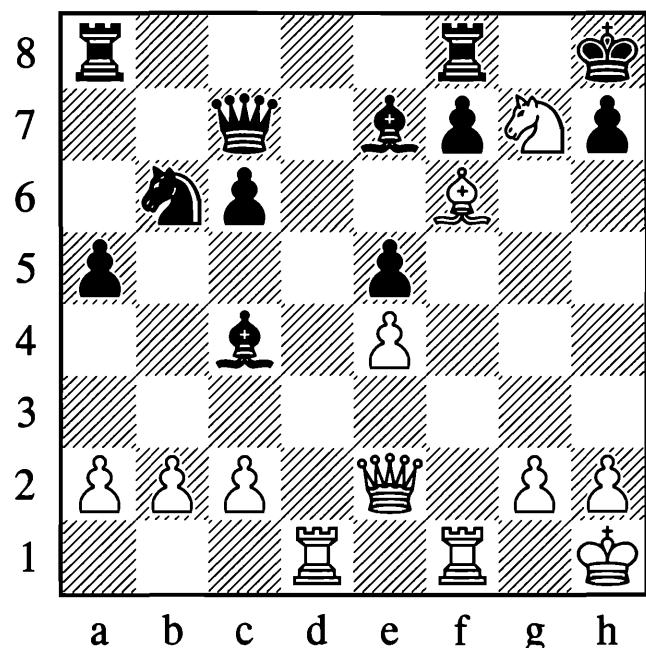
1. $\mathbb{W}h6!$ might very well have been the initial move. The second piece, the g4-knight ready to reload with mate on h6, made it possible for the first piece to occupy that square.

So far we have seen examples where the first piece makes the occupation of the second, the reloading piece, possible.

There is also the possibility that the second piece comes to help when the first piece is already in place:

Stein – Portisch

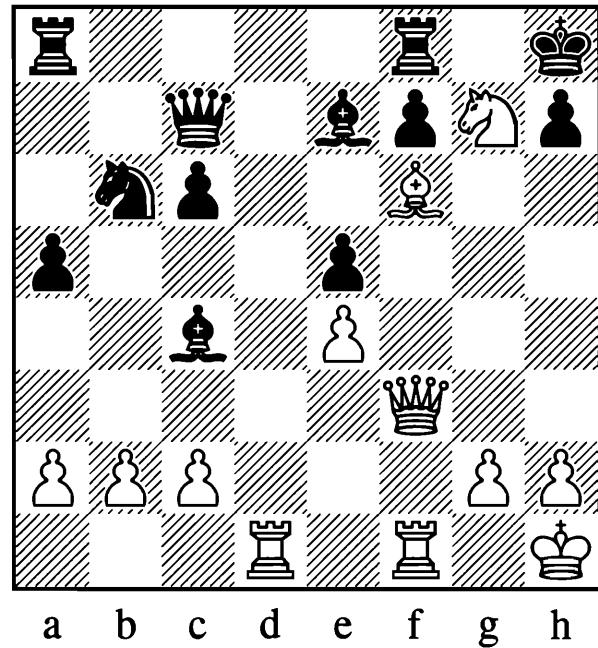
Stockholm 1962



We will come across this example once more when looking at mating patterns. White is threatening $\mathbb{Q}e8\#$ with an attack on the black queen.

1. $\mathbb{W}f3$

The second piece is coming to the aid of the first piece (the f6-bishop), which is already in place.



Now Black cannot escape, because even if he took the f6-bishop, after 1... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 2. $\mathbb{W}xf6$ the white queen would have reloaded on f6 (threatening 3. $\mathbb{Q}f5\#$ and 4. $\mathbb{Q}h6$ mate).

Black's fate is sealed as refraining from taking on f6 is also hopeless: 1... $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}f5$ or 1... $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}e8\#$ or 1... $h6$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}e8\#$.

Note that 'reloading against the reloader' (countering 1. $\mathbb{W}f3$ by strengthening the e7-bishop with 1... $\mathbb{W}d8$) was not possible because the d1-rook controls the d8-square.

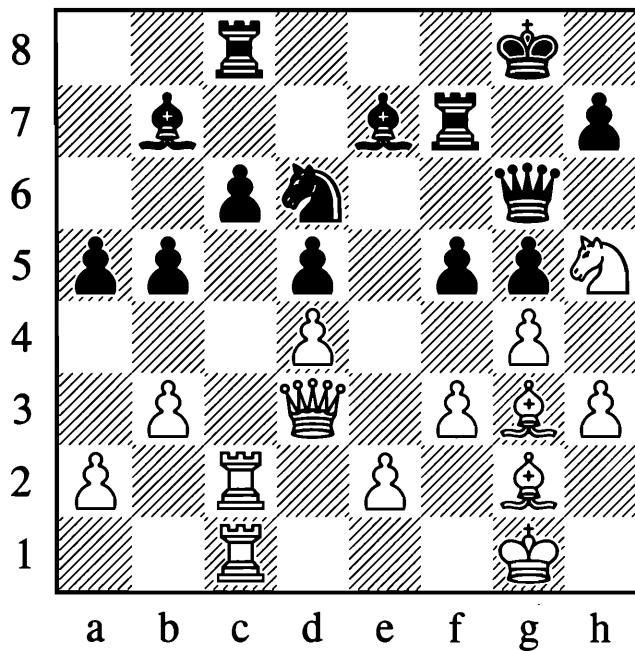
Again a good look at Black's position clearly tells you why the tactics are starting to work against him: note not only the exposed position of his king but also the placement of his rooks compared to the active white rooks. The same applies to nearly all of Black's pieces compared to their white counterparts. Black's extra piece does not provide compensation for his positional deficits.

As with the other motifs, the points of this motif's pattern can be created in more than just one order.

In the following example the reloader is already completely set up:

Lundin – Botvinnik

Groningen 1946



The future world champion played:

1... f4!

He was not afraid of the exchange of queens on g6, as the reloading piece, a pawn, would win the knight on h5. For this reason Lundin did not exchange queens.

2. $\mathbb{Q}f2$

Now Botvinnik exchanged queens himself, disrupting White's pawn structure.

2... $\mathbb{W}xd3$ 3. $exd3$ b4!

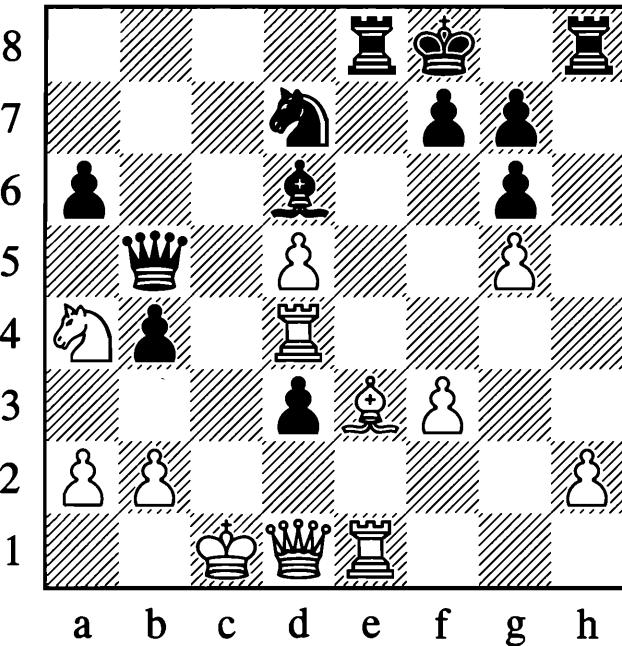
Locking in the white pieces. Guess who won...

To spot a reloader, be on the lookout for diagonals and files into your opponent's camp and for squares where you could, for example, nicely perch a knight, especially around your opponent's king.

Now for the reloaders with different types of pieces replacing each other. This type of motif can be more difficult to spot, as the second piece is of a different type and consequently performs different tricks on the square that has been cleared by the first. Therefore, imagining what you could do on a particular square with different pieces is very important if you want to discover the motif.

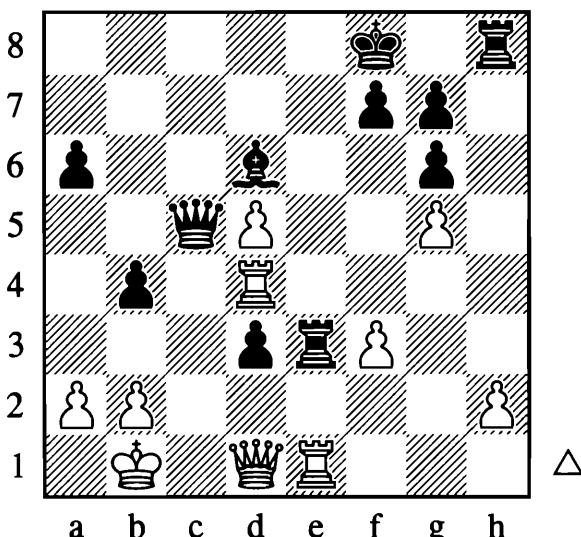
Gofshtein – Afek

Israel 1992



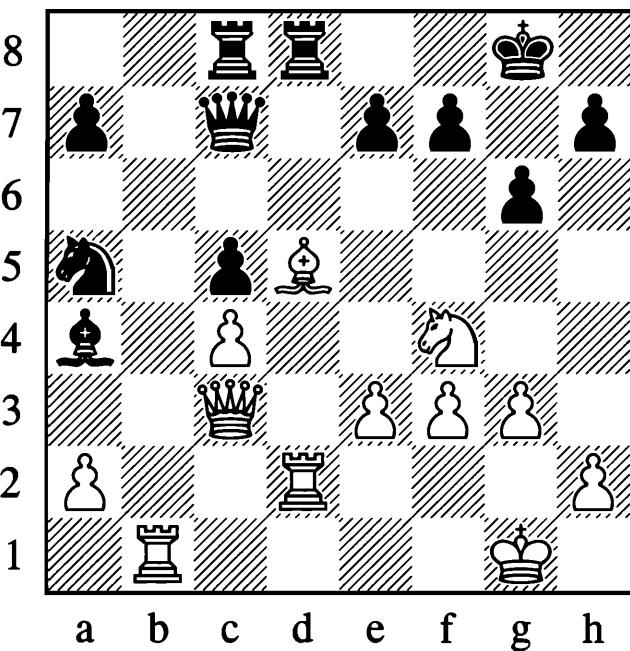
1... $\mathbb{Q}c5!$

Like a minesweeper, the knight is clearing the influence of the enemy knight, eliminating the defender of the c5-square in order for the queen to appear there with devastating effect:
2. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ $\mathbb{W}xc5\#$ 3. $\mathbb{B}b1$ $\mathbb{B}xe3$



Black wins a piece. White saw all of this and resigned after 1... $\mathbb{Q}c5$.

It is increasingly difficult to spot the key move when the first piece greatly changes the conditions on the square for the second piece to perform a special tactic on this square, which the first piece would not have been able to perform there. Tactics can be beautiful and here is a good example from 1961, the year the wall was built in Berlin (remember: *One, Two, Three*):



The porous wall around Black's king will not last long. **Kirillov** was playing **Suetin**, a GM and opening expert from Belarus who later became a second to Petrosian during his World Championship matches in 1963, 1966 and 1969. Yet all his expertise did not help against:

1. $\mathbb{Q}e6!$

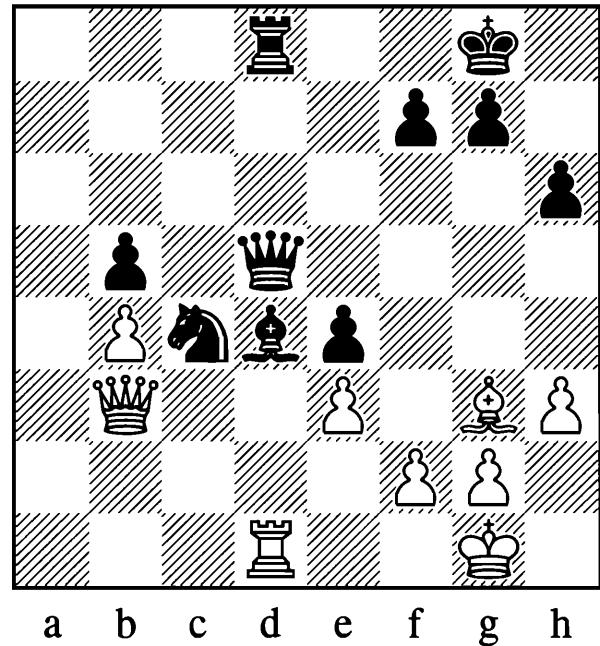
Suetin was faced with the "pleasant" choice of losing his queen, if the knight is not taken, or being mated. The pawn on f7 is defending its king against the check of the bishop on d5. Consequently, it is not able to perform other tasks such as defending the e6-square. Therefore, after its elimination, the bishop reloads on e6 and the game is over:

1... $fxe6$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xe6\#$ 3. $\mathbb{W}h8$ mate

This example shows very nicely that even very strong players are prone to overlooking motifs like the reloader; this is your chance and it might happen in any game you play.

The reloader enables pieces to occupy vital squares that are defended by the enemy's pawns or pieces.

In the next case discovering the reloader was a small step on the road to the World Championship (this is a further explanation of an example we have already seen in the chapter on the pin).

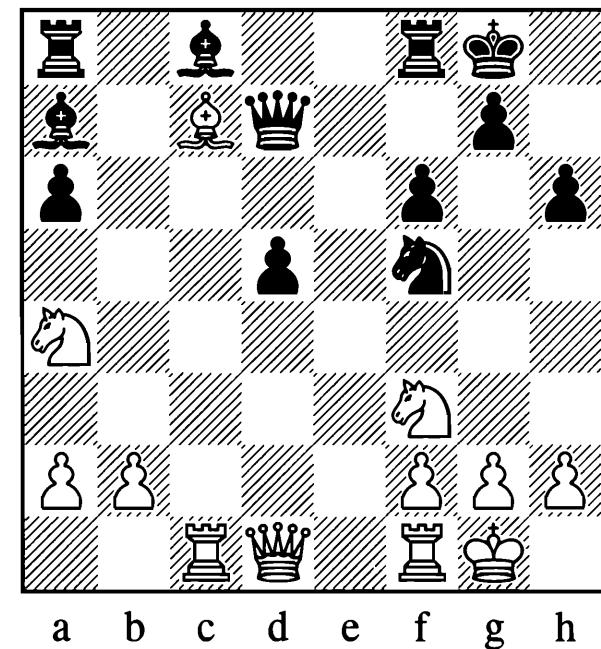


Alekhine's 1... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ against Capablanca helps to clear the path for his bishop to eliminate the real defender of the white king, which is the pawn on f2. Capablanca resigned as after 2. $\mathbb{W}xd5$ (2. $\mathbb{B}xd4$ doesn't help either) 2... $\mathbb{B}xd5$ 3.fxe3 $\mathbb{Q}xe3\#$ the bishop reloads with a check and a discovered attack on the d1-rook.

Remember that the reloader is not changed in its effect, whether the square for your first piece is originally occupied or not.

In the next game, which brings us back from the classics of yesteryear, **Ftacnik** has just played 1. $\mathbb{B}a1-c1?$ against **Seirawan** in Haninge 1990, to defend the c7-bishop (moving the bishop with 1. $\mathbb{B}b6$ would have been better). White

clearly had not realized that c1 was not a good square for his rook. It is easy to overlook that the e3-square is a point of trouble connected with the c1-square. After all, who would place a piece on the e3-square, as it looks so well defended by a pawn...?



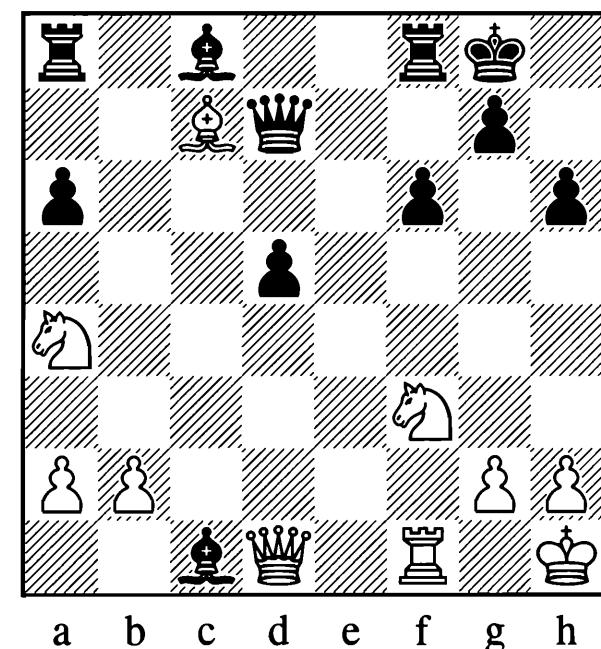
1... $\mathbb{Q}e3!$

This surprising move, forking rook and queen, is exactly the kind of offer one cannot refuse.

2.fxe3 $\mathbb{Q}xe3\#$

Forking rook and king. This is another typical example of how the first piece clears a square for the second piece to use its different ability to perform a trick on this square.

3. $\mathbb{Q}h1 \mathbb{Q}xc1$



4.♕b6

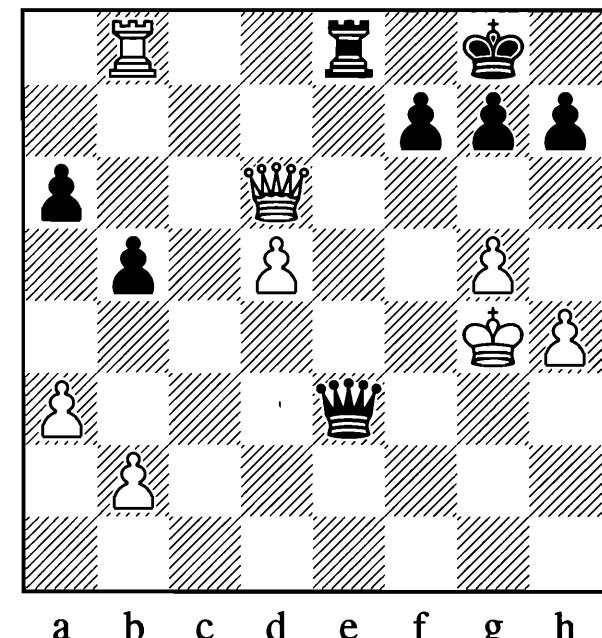
The white queen is overloaded as she cannot simultaneously protect the c7-bishop and a4-knight.

4...♛xc7 5.♕xa8 ♛c6

Black is a pawn to the good and won the game later on.

When looking to employ the reloader motif, there is a simple guideline: Think about what a defending piece could do if it moved to the square of the piece it is defending.

The next example was created by one of the greatest tacticians of all time, the famous Wizard of Riga. **Tal** was Black against **Evans** during the Amsterdam Interzonal in 1964. Probably Tal did not have a name for the motif he was using, but this did not stop him from employing it in an ingenious way.

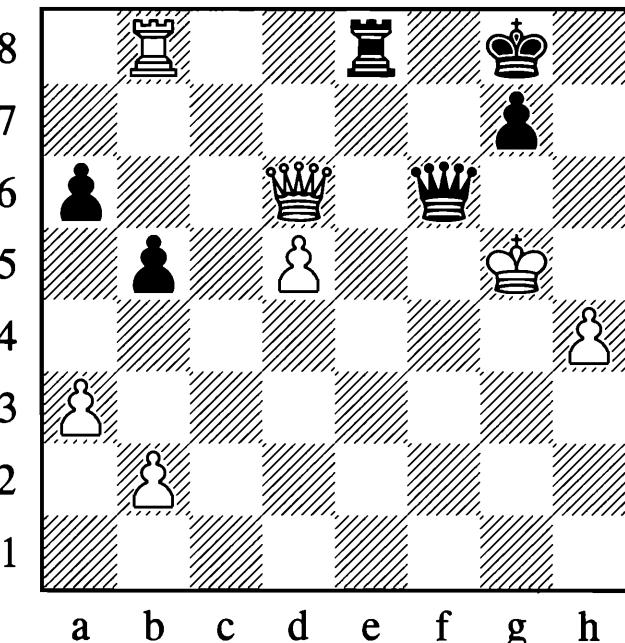


1...f5†! 2.gxf6 h5† 3.♔xh5 ♛f3† 4.♔g5

White had little choice as if 4.♔g6 then 4...♛g4 is mate.

4...♛xf6†

Forking king and queen.



After the queens are swapped off:

5.♛xf6 gxf6†

Black gains a crucial tempo to win White's rook. The game ended:

6.♛xf6 gxf6† 7.♔xf6 ♜xb8 8.d6

8.♔e7 would draw were it not for 8...♝b7†!.

**8...♔f8 9.h5 ♘b7 10.♔e6 ♘h7 11.♔d5
♔e8 12.♔c6 ♔d8**

0–1

The motif of the reloading pawn was the mere gain of a tempo against the king, which left no time to save the white rook.

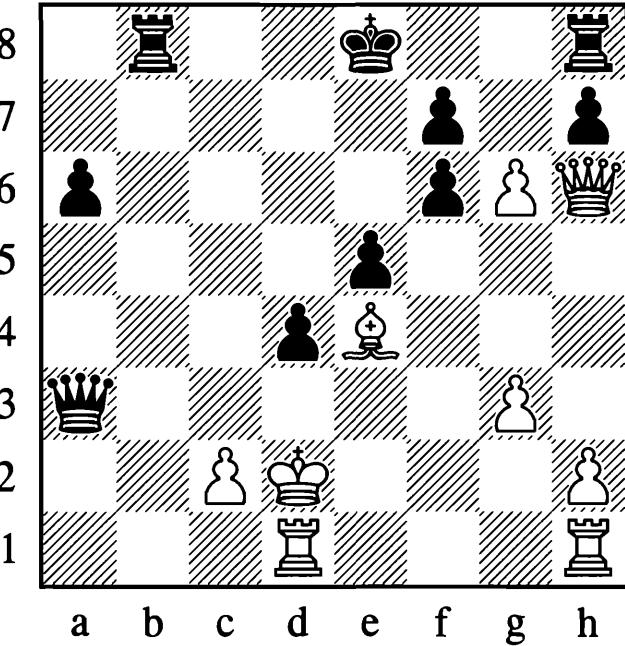
When looking for this motif, there is a simple guideline: Think about what a defending piece could do if it moved to the square of the piece it is defending.

Another thing to remember well is that **if you use the reloader against the enemy king, it will almost always mean a gain of tempo**. And, as we have learned from Tal, in chess a gain of tempo can make all the difference. (So when will using a reloader against the king not gain a tempo? In those very rare cases when the

check can be answered by a check. Of course this will never happen to you...)

After the ingenious, yet not unusual, application of the reloader by World Champion Tal, let's look at a final example where the reloader appeared in a quite unusual fashion.

The following example is based on analysis by Naiditsch of the game **Naiditsch – Sutovsky**, Dortmund 2005.



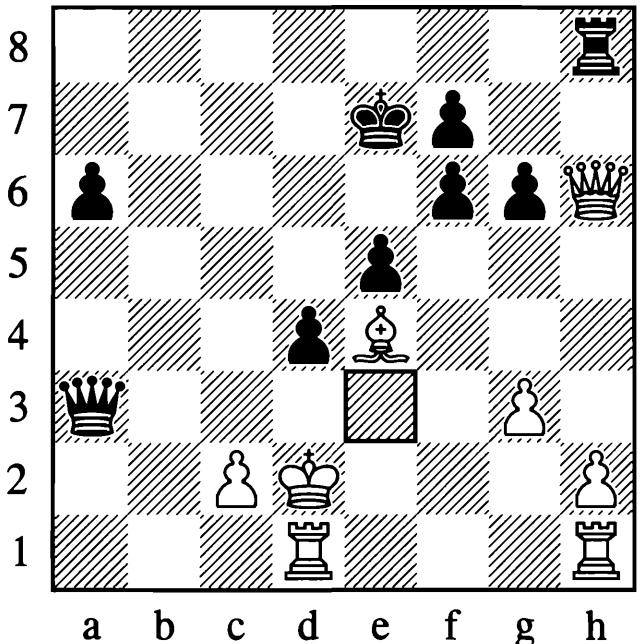
Black's dream is ... $\mathbb{W}e3$ mate. The white queen defends against this mate but can do so only from the h6-square. Why not harass the white defender?

1...hxg6!! 2.♔xh8† ♔e7 3.♔h6

The queen hurries back to defend e3.

3...h8!!

And Black wins.



An unusual, slightly delayed, but very pretty reloader. The second rook on h8 is decisive as the white queen is bound to the h6-square.

Summary

- Two pieces of the same kind are able to occupy a square without any loss of impact when it is only defended once.
 - The second piece occupying the square of the first does not have to be of higher *value* but it has to compensate for the *loss* of the first.
 - The reloader may be used to eliminate a defender.
 - The reloader enables pieces to occupy vital squares that are defended by the enemy's pawns and pieces.
 - Think about what a defending piece could do if it moved to the square of the piece it is defending.
 - If you use the reloader against the enemy king, it will almost always mean a gain of tempo.

Chapter 5

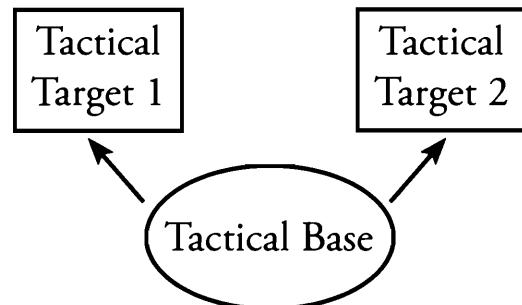
The Double Attack

Imagine you are preparing pancakes for breakfast. There you are in front of the oven and in the pan are delicious golden pancakes; they are just about ready. The telephone rings. Now you face a tough choice: either answer the call and let the pancakes burn, or say ‘stuff communication, I’m hungry’ and do not answer the call.

This is what the double attack is about: one piece is attacking two enemy pieces and only one can be defended or moved. If, for example, both pieces are undefended or of greater value than the attacking piece, one of the two attacked pieces will be lost.

The explanation is trivial yet a lot of players, and very good players as you will see in this chapter, forget about it: in chess you are allowed to move only one piece at a time. *Every* chess piece has the ability to perform this tactical trick. It is the most common motif in chess. So beware.

If we create a scheme for the double attack we could break it down into three points. There are two points which are attacked. I will call them tactical target 1 and tactical target 2. They are marked with a box. The third point is the square from where the attacker is threatening the two enemy pieces. I will call this point the tactical base and it is marked with a circle.



This graphic shows the moment when you can take advantage of your opponent’s situation to create a double attack. All three basic components of the double attack are there to see.

But this chapter is not only about the components and their character, it is also about the timing and how to create the situation represented by the scheme given above. And although this motif is called double attack and the scheme shows only two tactical targets, there might be more. Who has not dreamt of a knight forking king, queen and rook?

Whenever you start to create the situation of a double attack, it does not matter *where* you start, whether it is the tactical base or one of the tactical targets. Sometimes you might even start from scratch. And there is no set sequence in which you have to construct your double attack. You can start with either tactical target or the tactical base. Because the formation of the double attack is sometimes incomplete, it is difficult to see the hidden motif.

In connection with the double attack I have also called the attacked opponent's pieces tactical targets. This is not to make things more difficult for you, but simply to avoid confusion when tactical targets are squares or motifs.

I will start my lesson on the double attack with the tactical base, paying special attention to the knight. Then I will take a look at the tactical targets, and here the king, as always in tactics and in chess in general, naturally plays the most important role.

The Tactical Base

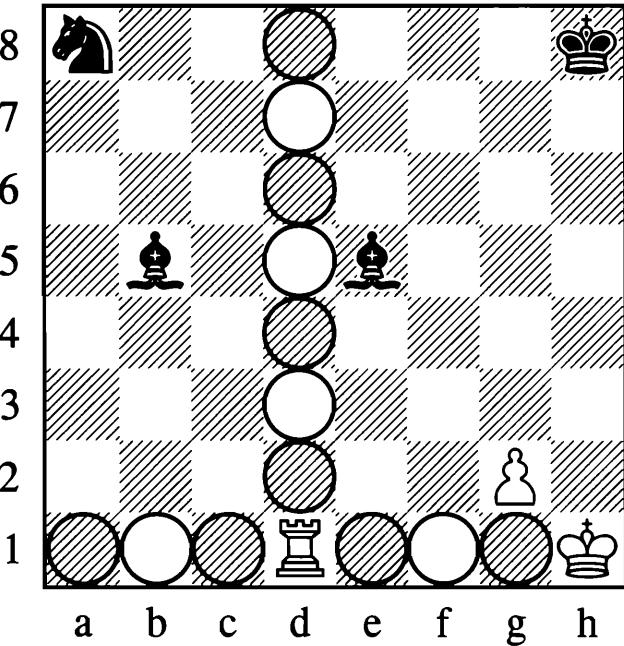
The tactical base is the square that a piece has to occupy in order to attack two or more of the opponent's weaknesses at the same time. As every chess piece (knights, pawns and king included) can perform this nasty trick, the rules and recommendations for the tactical base apply for every piece on the board. However, from Orwell's *Animal Farm* we know that some animals are more equal than others, and in the case of the double attack, it is the pawn and the knight that are special.

A double attack by a pawn is often devastating, as the pawn itself does not have great material value. If it is lost in the course of the operation it does not really matter, as it normally faces pieces of greater value.

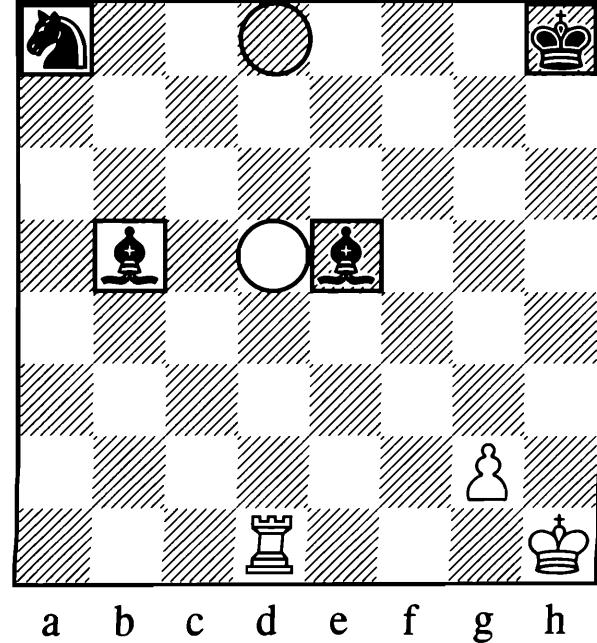
But the real specialist for double attacks is the knight. Due to its peculiar way of moving, when a knight attacks other kinds of pieces they cannot strike back and take out the offender. Its strange movement is also responsible for the double attack by a knight being one of the most common oversights in chess. But, before we go deeper into the mechanics of the knight, let us take a closer look at the tactical base in general.

It is important to note that after a piece has landed on a certain square all points it could

reach from this point are prospective squares for a double attack. These squares are the possible tactical targets of your double attack. The diagram below shows every possible square of the rook on d1.

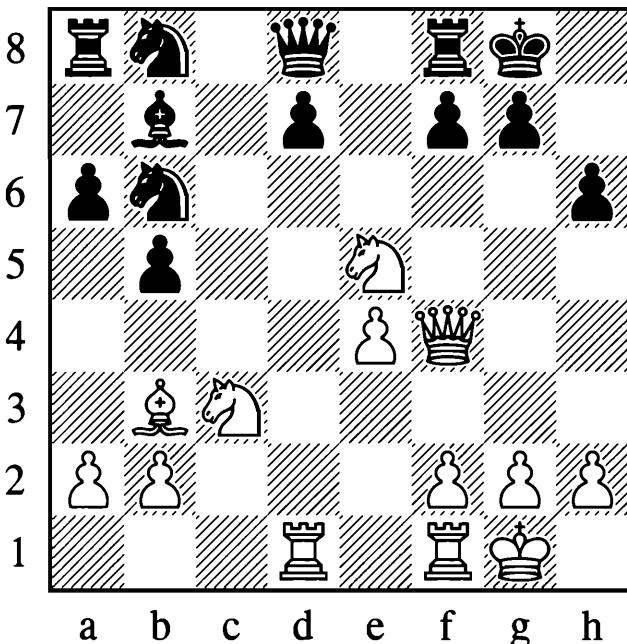


In the next diagram the circled squares are the sensible tactical bases from where the rook would be able to perform a double attack on two tactical targets marked by a box.



So much for the theory, now let us see what it looks like in a real game.

The following position is from one of the games **Paul Morphy** played against **Schulten** in New York 1857.

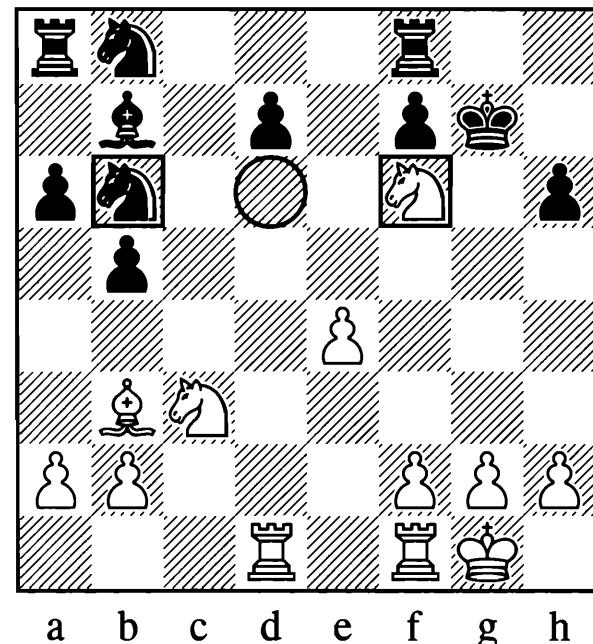


With the knowledge you have already acquired you will be able to see why Schulten's next move

1... $\mathbb{W}f6$

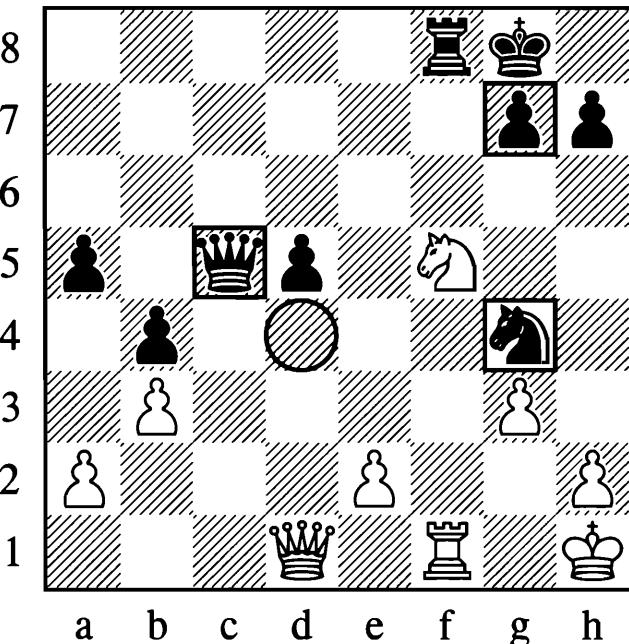
did not solve all his problems. The game continued:

2. $\mathbb{W}xf6$ $gxf6$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}g4$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$



If Black takes the knight with his king then two of the three elements of the double attack would already be on the board. Both the king on f6 and the b6-knight are the tactical targets of the d1-rook, which could perform a double attack from d6, the tactical base for this motif.

More than 100 years later the trick was still working. The following position is from **Jansson – Pytel**, Stockholm 1975:



The tactical base is d4 and it is the white queen that could attack three tactical targets from there: the black queen on c5, the black knight on g4 and the pawn on g7, threatening mate. Wait a minute, isn't d4 defended by the black queen? Only if Black desperately wants to lose instantly. If the black queen takes its opposite number on d4, White would simply play $\mathbb{Q}e7\#$ and, after the forced ... $\mathbb{Q}h8$, White mates with $\mathbb{Q}xf8$. So the queen cannot leave the c5-e7 diagonal. Therefore, the only possible way to meet

1. $\mathbb{W}d4$

was to take the white knight with:

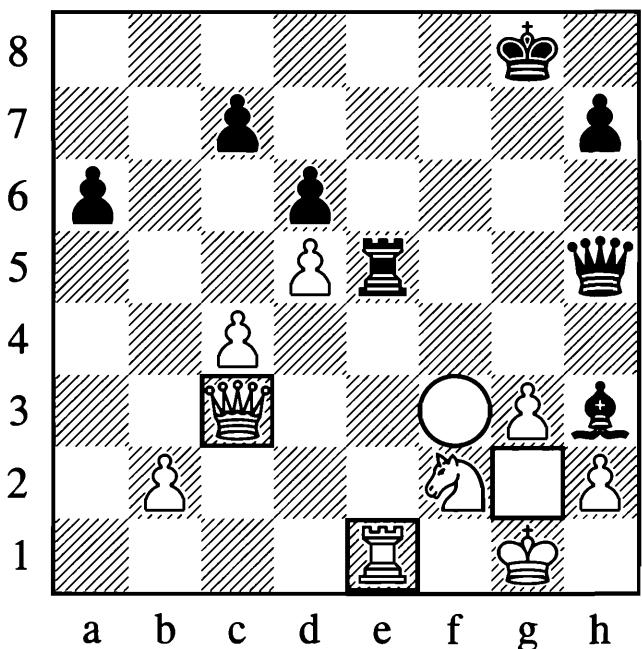
1... $\mathbb{B}xf5$

eliminating the threat of mate.

2. $\mathbb{W}xc5$ $\mathbb{B}xf1\#$

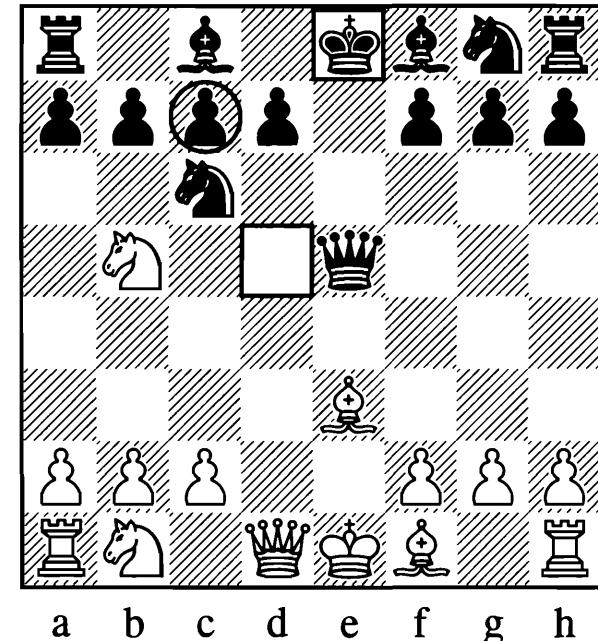
However Black did not have full compensation for his queen.

Two years later it was possible to see that Pytel had learned his lesson well. In Le Havre he played **Lederman** and this time Pytel put a piece on a tactical base that was seemingly defended.



This applies not only for the tactical base but for tactical targets as well.

After $1.e4 e5 2.\mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{Q}c6 3.d4 exd4 4.\mathbb{Q}xd4 \mathbb{Q}h4 5.\mathbb{Q}e3 \mathbb{Q}xe4 6.\mathbb{Q}b5 \mathbb{Q}e5$ the following position is reached:



Here we have a double attack with an attack on the mating square g2 and simultaneously on the defender of the e1-rook, the white queen on c3.

Black was able to occupy the tactical base on f3 with:

1...Qf3!

Because the white queen cannot give up the defence of the e1-rook with $2.\mathbb{Q}xf3$ as Black would simply play $2...\mathbb{Q}xe1$ mate.

This leads us to our first important conclusion about the tactical base: **The attacker can occupy a tactical base without risk if the piece on the tactical target defending this tactical base has more important tasks to perform.** (In our two examples the queen had to defend against mate threats.)

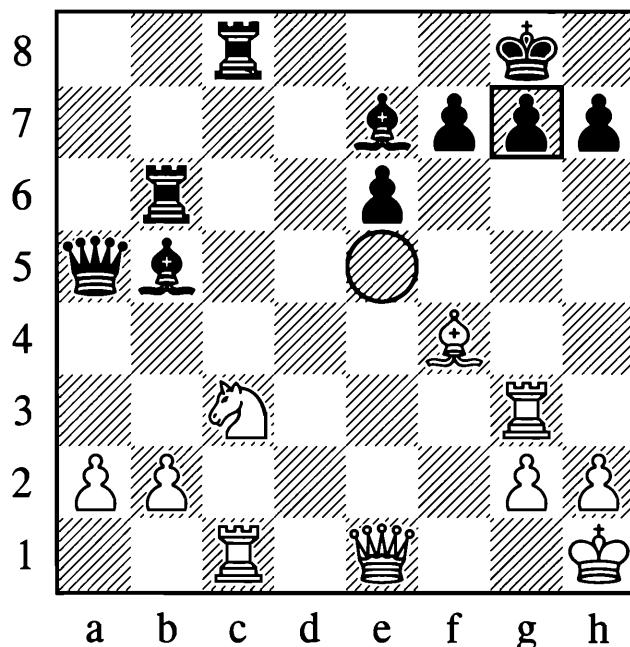
If you examine a tactical base you always have to take into account all possible tactical targets. You will not recognize the full potential of the tactical base if you only look at the obvious tactical targets.

You see the marked tactical targets of the b5-knight if it occupied c7. Consequently, the black queen is not defending d5, as it has to prevent the knight from hopping to c7. So $7.\mathbb{Q}d5!?$ is possible in this position. The black queen is overloaded as in our previous examples.

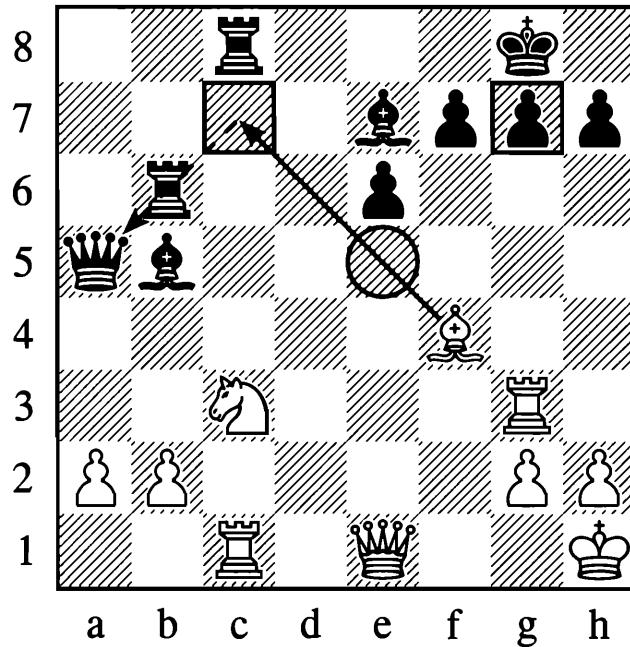
There is another important lesson to be learned here: **if you examine a tactical base you always have to take into account all possible tactical targets.** You will not recognize the full potential of the tactical base if you only look at the obvious tactical targets.

As a double attack requires at least two tactical targets, it is easy to recognize the possibility for a double attack if we already have a tactical base and one tactical target. The only thing to do now is to create the second tactical target to trigger the mechanism.

Former World Champion Boris Spassky gives a fine example of how to do this. Take a look at the next diagram showing a position from **Spassky – Averkin, USSR 1973.**



If you played 1. $\mathbb{W}e5$ you would threaten mate on g7. So g7 is your first tactical target. Looking deeper into this position you will find for the white queen on e5 the only other noteworthy tactical target is c7. This is the only sensible square for the f4-bishop to occupy. Note the unfortunate formation of the b6-rook and queen on a5.



On c7 the white bishop threatens to win the exchange. To prevent this, Black has to take the bishop with the c8-rook but then this rook would enter the second tactical target the white queen needs for a successful double attack. So Spassky played:

1. $\mathbb{Q}c7!!$

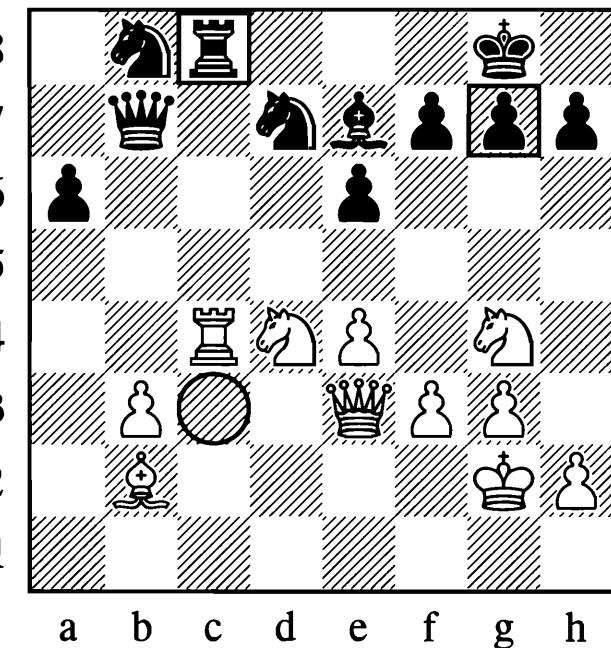
Winning the exchange. If the b5-bishop in the above position had been defended only once it would have become a tactical target of the queen on e5 as well.

We started our examination of the position from the tactical base, the square from which we could attack something. That gave us our first tactical target. Then we created the second tactical target in order to make the occupation of this square a double attack.

Finding a tactical base for a double attack becomes less complicated when the two tactical targets necessary for the operation are already there.

B. Larsen – Matanovic

Zagreb 1965



Larsen had only to get rid of the knight on d4 in order to play $\mathbb{W}c3$, which is the tactical base with its tactical targets c8 and g7.

1. $\mathbb{Q}xe6!$

In fact 1. $\mathbb{Q}f5!$ works beautifully as well.

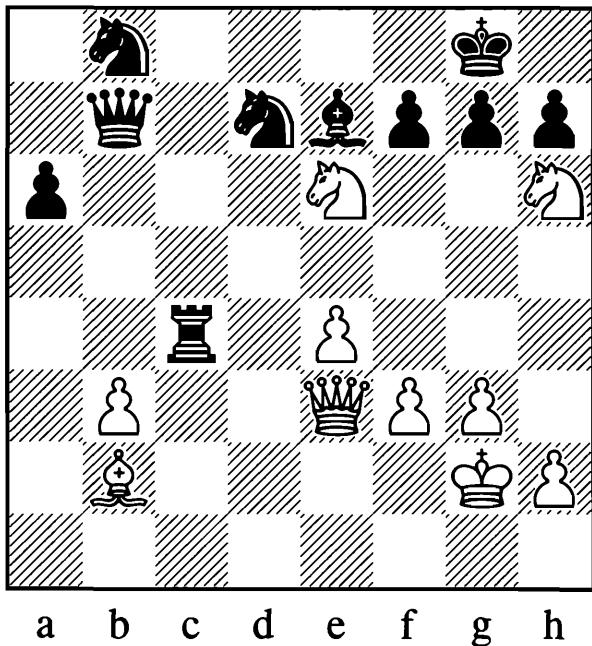
After 1. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ it was decision time for Matanovic. If 1... $f \times e 6$ then 2. $\mathbb{W}c3$ and White wins the rook. Therefore he tried:

1... $\mathbb{R}xc4$

But ran into

2. $\mathbb{Q}h6\#!$

and had to resign.

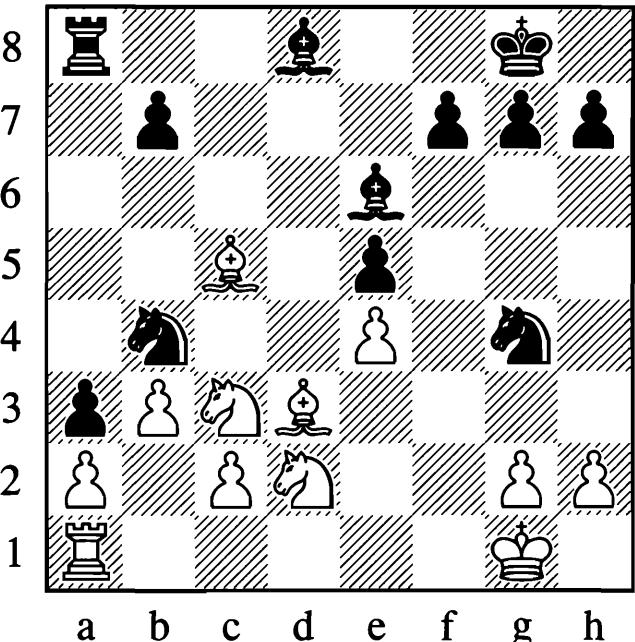


2... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ is mate, and after 2...gxh6 3. $\mathbb{W}xh6$ there is no defence to the threatened mate.

But things can be tricky at times even when the two tactical targets already exist. Take the next position as an example.

Sterner – Boleslavsky

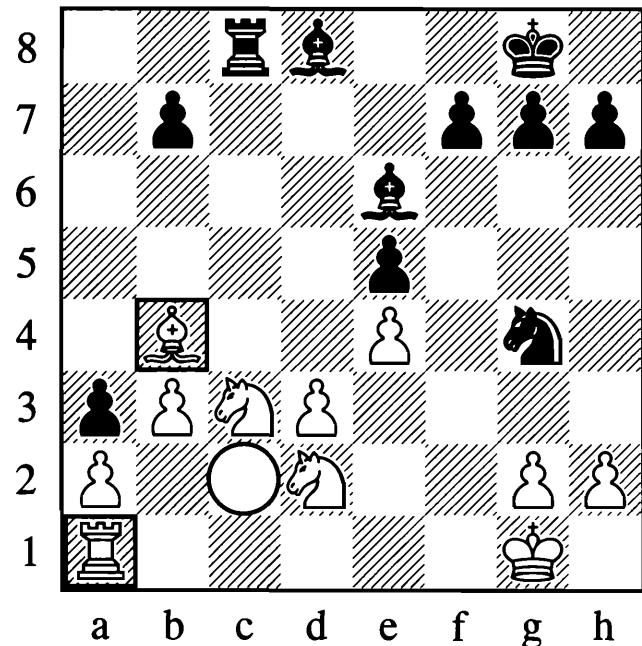
Stockholm 1954



Everything seems to be calm with no double attack in sight. The game continued:

1... $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ 2. $\mathbb{C}xd3$ $\mathbb{E}c8$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}b4$

We now have this position:



As you can see from the diagram, there is a tactical base for a knight on c2 with the two tactical targets of the a1-rook and b4-bishop. The reason why you may not have recognized c2 as a tactical base in the first diagram is the apparent impossibility of Black moving a knight there.

3. $\mathbb{Q}b6\#$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}e3\#$ 5. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}c2$

The knight finally lands on the tactical base. Therefore, **you should always be aware of the configuration for a double attack if there are two tactical targets even if the occupation of the tactical base seems to be unlikely or even impossible at the time.**

Quite often you, or your opponent, might be able to reach the tactical base with gain of tempo, and suddenly a knight becomes a long-range piece as it is virtually allowed to move twice in a row. And remember: **every piece on the board can perform a double attack**. So when you are analysing a position always **look for the possible structure of a double attack with its tactical base and two or more tactical targets on both sides of the board**. (Just collect those damn tactical targets!)

The previous example showed the double attack by a knight. The knight is a good example to look a little deeper into the nature of the double attack. You will also learn a lot about why the knight is such a great piece for a double attack.

You have to look for possible tactical targets for a double attack when you are looking for a knight's tactical base. The king and undefended pieces are typical tactical targets for knights.

The secret of the knight is its peculiar way of moving over the board. As it moves differently from the other chess pieces, the sudden appearance of a knight on a certain square is sometimes difficult to predict. So we can say about the knight:

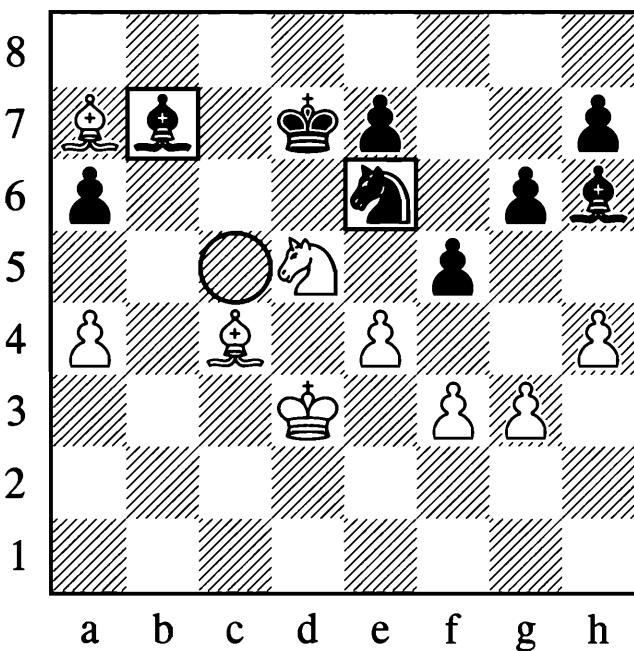
- Knight moves are difficult to predict.
- Knight moves are more difficult to calculate.
- The pieces on tactical targets of a knight's double attack often do not communicate, that is, they cannot defend each other.
- The tactical targets cannot take the knight unless they are knights themselves.
- The value of the knight is often relatively low compared with the value of its targets.

You have to look for possible tactical targets for a double attack when you are looking for a knight's tactical base. The king and undefended pieces are typical tactical targets for knights.

Marked in the next diagram are two tactical targets for the white knight.

Unzicker – Pesch

Solingen 1964



You can see that White is able to eliminate the black knight that is defending the tactical base c5 of the white knight.

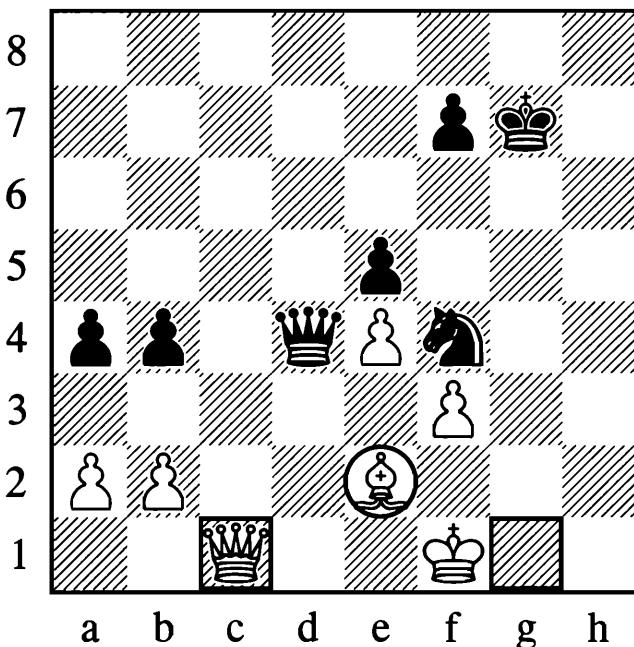
**1. ♜b6† ♕d6 2.e5† ♕xe5 3. ♜b8† ♕f6
4. ♜d7† ♕f7 5. ♜xe6† ♕xe6**

Everything is prepared for the white knight.

6. ♜c5†

Black will have to surrender the bishop.

Another classic in connection with the knight's tactical base is a queen sacrifice. All you need for this tactic to be successful is that one of the tactical targets is your opponent's queen.



Looking at this diagram you will easily detect how **Simagin** with Black won the game against **Tolush**, USSR 1952, by sacrificing his queen. All he had to do was to lure the king onto the second tactical target connected with the black knight's tactical base on e2.

1...Bg1†!

Now after

2.Qxg1

Black gets back his investment with

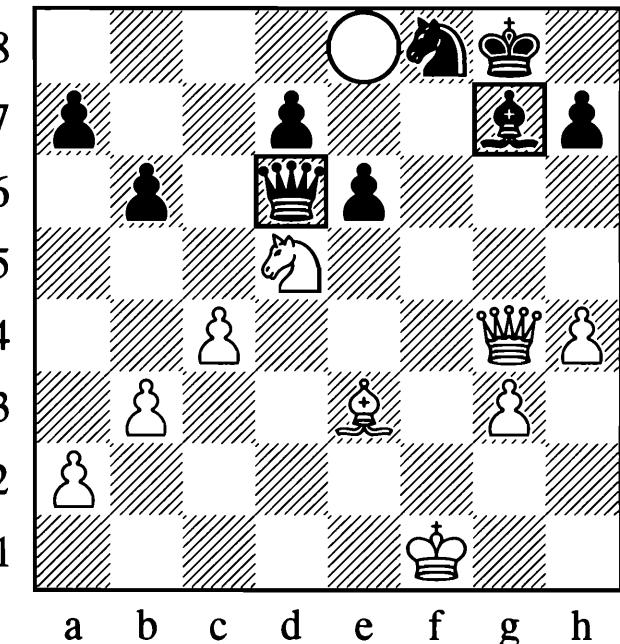
2...Qxe2†

with the bishop as the dividend.

Queen sacrifices are thrilling; we all would like to impress our friends with such a grand finale. Here is another example, giving you more ideas of how to sac the queen. This time the queen takes the material herself:

Dueckstein – Johannsson

Moscow (ol) 1956



Dueckstein played:

1.Qf6†

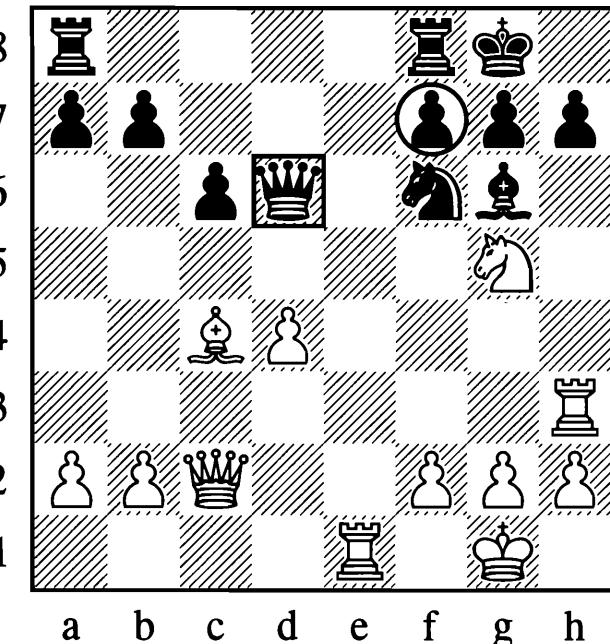
As the bishop is pinned against the king by the white queen, Black has only two options:

...Qf7 or ...Qh8. Whichever he chooses, White will sacrifice the queen on g7. The king takes and the nasty knight hops to e8, the tactical base for this double attack; White will win back the queen on d6. This combination was only possible because Dueckstein used two motifs together: the pin and the double attack.

The next example is more complicated, but the method of finding the tactical base by first looking at the tactical targets remains the same.

Levenfish – Riumin

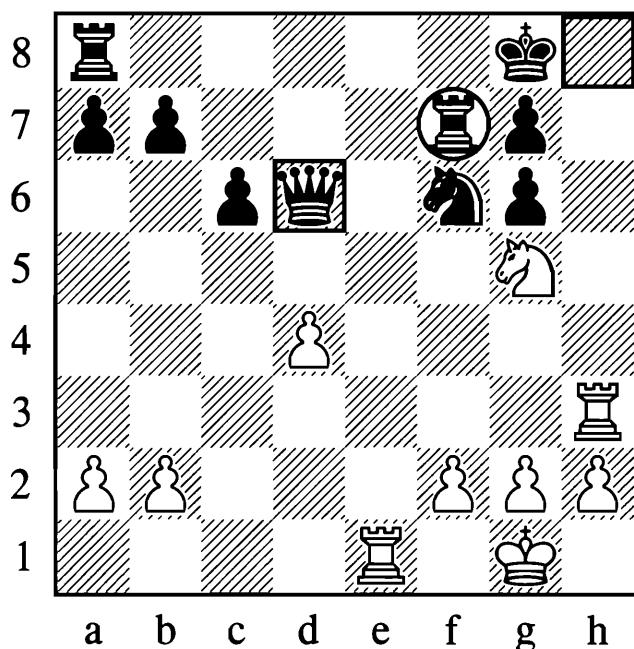
Moscow 1935 (analysis position)



If you carefully examine the above position, you will notice that the queen on d6 is a possible tactical target for a double attack by the white knight. This may give you the tactical base on f7. What is still missing is the second tactical target. However, the black king is close to the tactical base, so he might be a likely candidate.

The reason why this is a slightly more complicated example is the rather elaborate preparation needed before the actual double attack comes into play. At the moment the tactical base f7 is defended three times: by the f8-rook, g6-bishop and king on g8. So White decides to strip this point of its guards at all costs:

1. $\mathbb{W}xg6!$ $hxg6$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xf7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xf7$



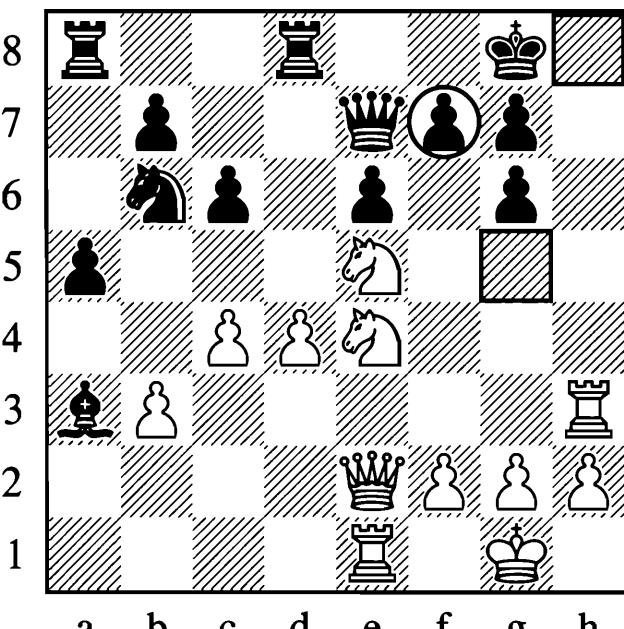
Now the position is radically transformed. Two protectors of the tactical base f7 have been eliminated and the h-file has been opened. This is where White will strike next, crowning his operation with the motif of the double attack:

3. $\mathbb{B}h8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xh8$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}xf7\#$

Finally, the knight occupies the tactical base, regaining the queen with an extra pawn.

Yates – Reti

New York 1924



Yates only needed to make minor modifications before his knight could strike:

1. $\mathbb{Q}g5$

Reti resigned because after:

1... $\mathbb{W}xg5$

White has deflected the queen, which had to give up control of the tactical base f7, and moved the black lady onto a tactical target of this tactical base.

2. $\mathbb{B}h8\#$

Forcing the king onto a tactical target and then the knight lands on its tactical base f7 suffering from an embarrassment of riches.

2... $\mathbb{Q}xh8$

Now White wins easily with:

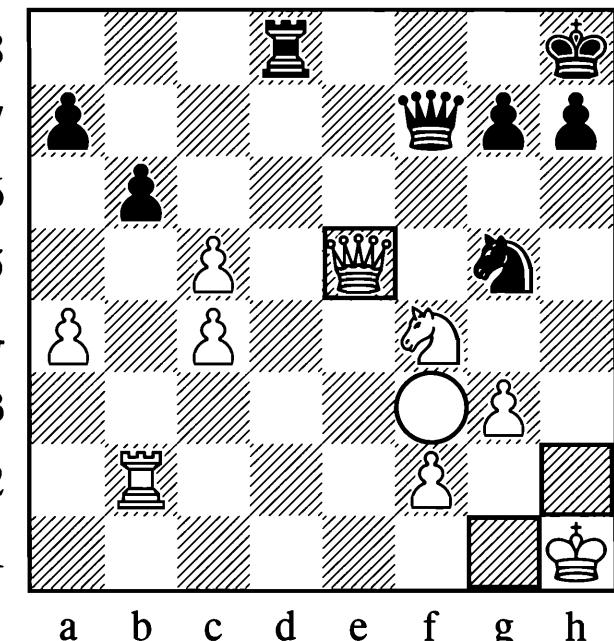
3. $\mathbb{Q}xf7\#$

Never forget that all squares that can be reached from a tactical base should be automatically regarded as a potential tactical target.

If you ever forget this, you might suffer a similar defeat to the next game (although I must admit deleting a white pawn on h2 from the real position):

Przepiorka – Ahues

Kecskemet 1927



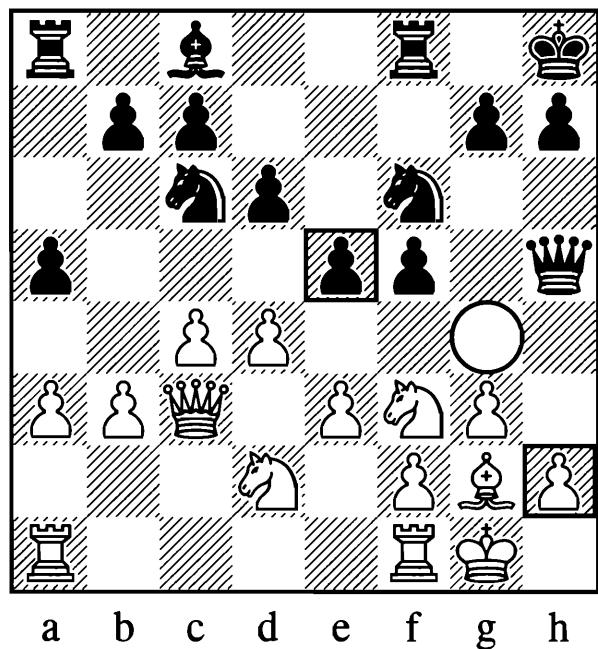
From the knight's tactical base f3 we can see that one tactical target is the white queen. This alone should be enough to set alarm bells ringing. Furthermore, you can see that there are several tactical targets near the king.

1...♝d1† 2.♔g2 ♘g1†

Now, whether the king takes the rook or moves to h2 he will find himself on a tactical target of Black's knight. Of course, the squares e1, d2, d4, and h4 could have been marked as well as tactical targets. On the one hand they were not considered in the tactical calculation, as they were not important. On the other hand, to find this motif you had to take a look at all possible tactical targets of the tactical base in order to decide where a double attack would be possible. Trying to find all the tactical targets will automatically lead, after a little practice, to a sensible selection. Just get used to listing all targets!

Taking a close look at a piece's tactical base can do even more than help you to recognize spectacular tactics that win games. Sometimes an examination of the tactical base will also help you to avoid blunders.

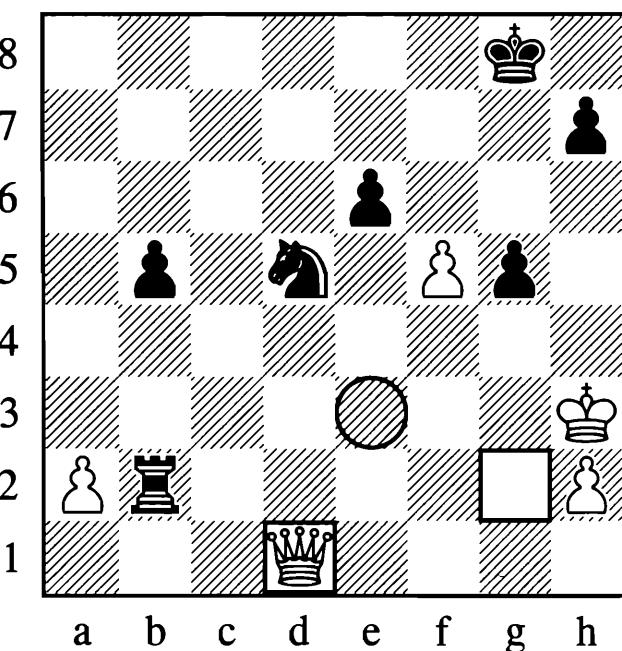
When Reti analysed the following position from **Bogoljubow – Alekhine**, Hastings 1922, he remarked that exchanging on e5 until the bitter end would, of course, have ruined White's game...



1.dxe5 dxe5 2.♘xe5? ♘xe5 3.♗xe5 ♘g4

Black wins. White's third move would have exposed the queen to a double attack, because e5 and h2 are tactical targets of the tactical base g4.

The game **Bellon Lopez – G. Garcia**, Cienfuegos 1976, shows how a tactical target of a knight is occupied, before the horse jumps to its tactical base.



1...♝g2!!

Occupying the tactical target before the knight has occupied the tactical base e3. White is caught between the devil and the deep blue sea. If he does not take the rook, he will be mated. But if he takes the rook, he will have to give his queen for a rook and a knight:

2.♗f1

2.♔xg2 ♘e3† wins the queen.

2...♞f4† 3.♗xf4 gxsf4 4.♔xg2 e5!

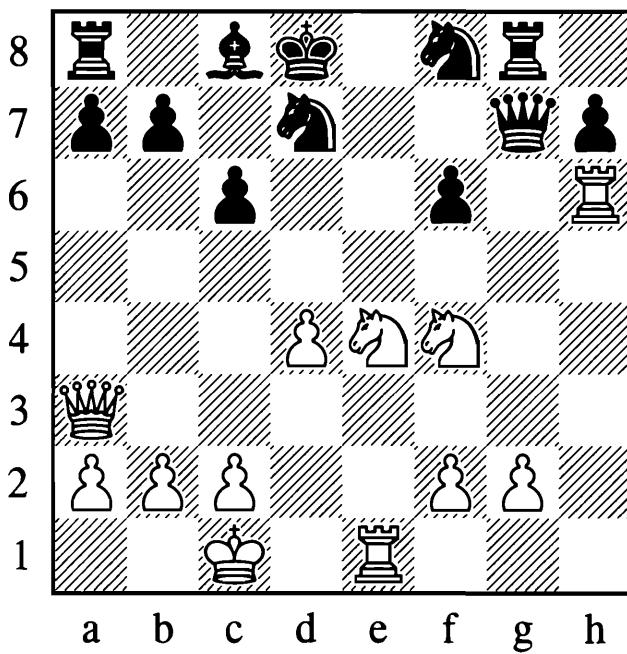
The pawn endgame is simply won for Black.

Every square that can be reached from a tactical base should be seen as a potential tactical target.

Sometimes a tactical base can be used for an indirect defence of a piece.

Alekhine – Fahrni

Mannheim 1914



Alekhine played:

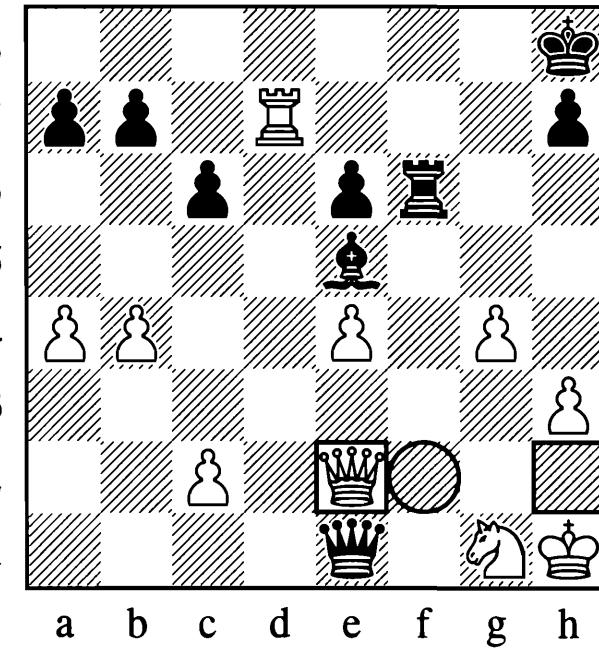
1.♕d6

If the queen takes the h6-rook, it would have moved onto the tactical target of the tactical base f7. As one of the other tactical targets of f7 is the black king on d8, the rook is defended by the tactical motif of the double attack.

In the next game we have a rook defending a seemingly hanging queen, although this example is far more spectacular.

Dantas – Wexler

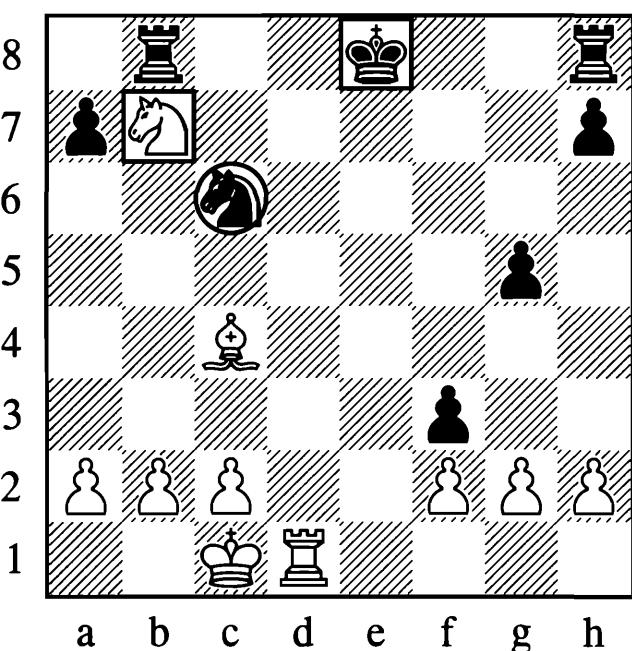
Mar del Plata 1951

**1...♜f2**

This was too hot to handle for Dantas. If White takes the queen it is mate with ...♜h2. If he takes the rook, he would first lose the queen and then the game.

The last example is an interesting case. Although the f2-rook does not have direct control over e1, it is indirectly defending the black queen on this square by a threat of mate. On the other hand, from e1 the queen is directly defending the f2-rook. Note the possible influence of the tactical base on squares that are not within its direct reach.

We have seen that there is no fixed sequence for the occupation of the tactical base and the tactical targets. If one of the tactical targets is originally occupied then the motif of the double attack is more difficult to see. Another difficulty of setting up a double attack might be the creation of the necessary configuration of three or more points. The next diagram is an example of a potential double attack that is not so easy to see.

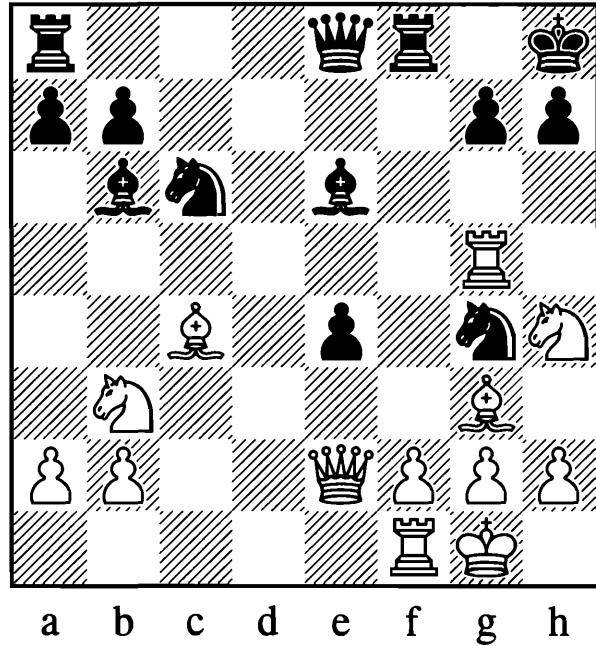


White has the chance to defend his b7-knight with 1.♘b5. If Black then captures on b7, White would take the c6-knight, forking rook and king.

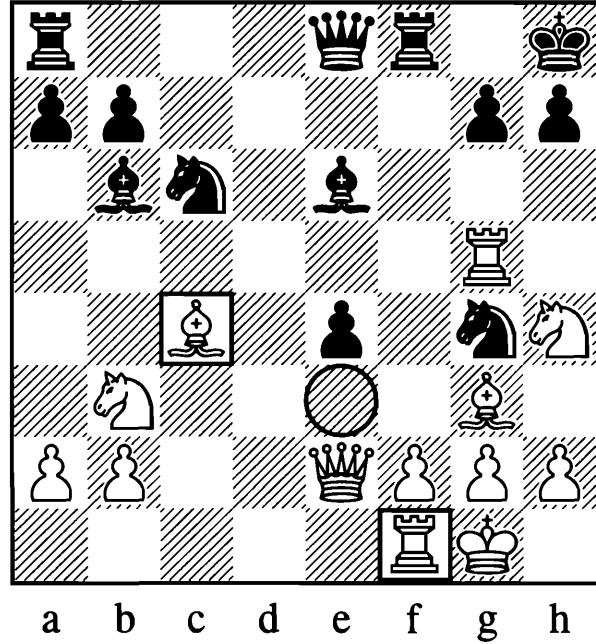
Consequently, there are two things you should keep in mind when you study the possibility of a double attack:

1. Make sure you have checked all possible sequences for occupying the three different points.
2. Keep in mind that you might have to create the second tactical target.

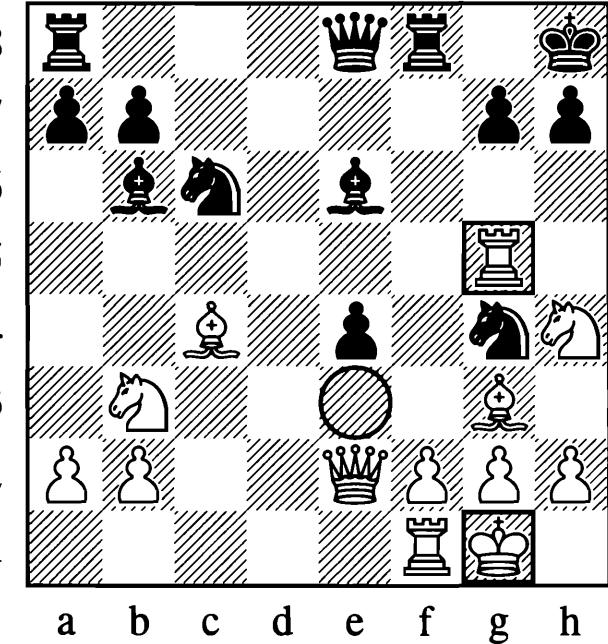
The previous example leads us to the topic of the tactical target but is also a nice illustration of the function of the tactical base as well. Try to find every tactical base and tactical target for the g4-knight and the b6-bishop in **Kapengut – Kupreichik, USSR 1976:**



I am sure that you have found the tactical base for the black knight on e3, although it is defended at the moment.



I hope you saw that e3 is a tactical base for the black bishop on b6, too.



If you have found both possible double attacks then it is not difficult to exploit this situation:

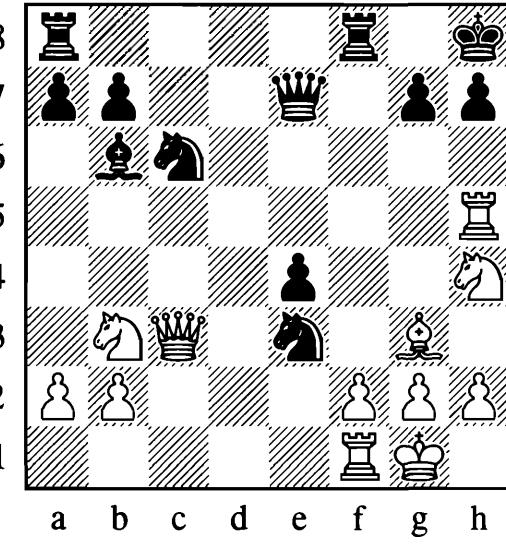
1... ♗xc4

Creating a tactical target for the knight.

2. ♜xc4 ♖e3! 3. fxe3 ♗xe3†

If it has occurred to you that this looks like a form of the reloader, you are absolutely right.

For the sake of beauty (and in case you considered this variation): 3. ♜c3!? would also lose. After 3... ♗e7 (covering the mate on g7 and simultaneously attacking the g5-rook) 4. ♜h5

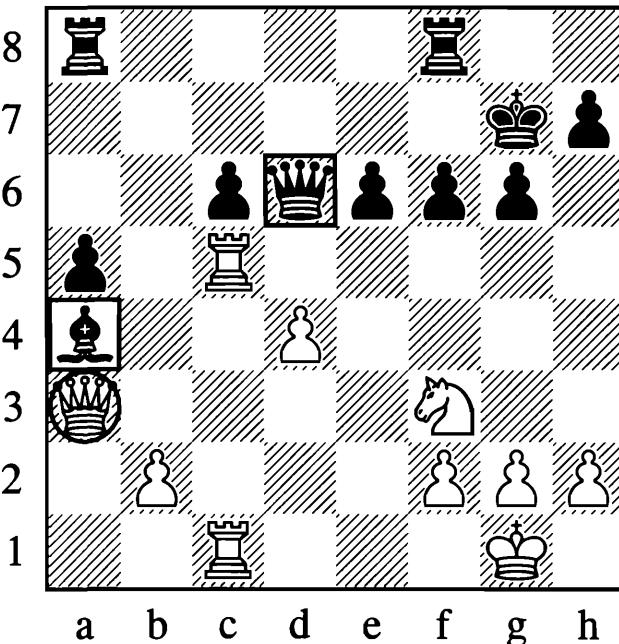


White threatens $5.\mathbb{Q}g6\#$ forking king and queen, but $4...\mathbb{W}f7!$ ends all of White's hopes. Both white rooks are hanging, and now there are no more tricks.

The Tactical Target

We have already learned a lot about the tactical target while examining the tactical base. Nevertheless, there are still some points we did not consider and some things that might appear in a slightly different perspective.

A tactical target is a piece or a square that can be attacked from the tactical base. If the tactical target is a piece then it is easy to see. If it is a square or another tactical motif, then it becomes more difficult to identify. A good example to illustrate this phenomenon is **Miles – Martin**, Birmingham 1977, which we also saw on page 54.



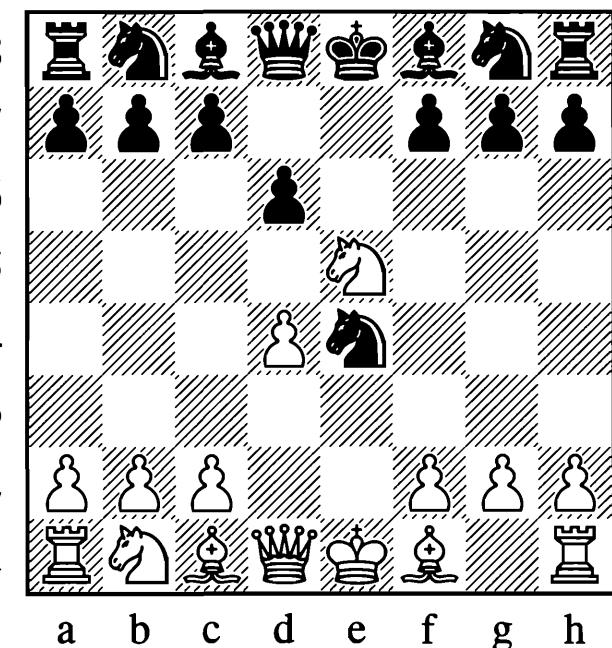
After White gave up a pawn on a4 he occupied the tactical base a3 with his queen. The first tactical target of an ensuing double attack is the bishop on a4. The second tactical target is more difficult to see: it is a discovered attack on the black queen. Here it is not a square but a tactical motif that constitutes the second tactical target. You will recall what happened in the game:

$1...\mathbb{B}b5$ $2.\mathbb{B}xb5!$ $\mathbb{W}xa3$ $3.\mathbb{B}b7\#$

The idea of using a discovered attack as a second tactical target for a double attack is sometimes used as early as the opening.

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.d4 ♖xe4 4.♘xe5 d6

We have reached the following position of the Petroff (or Russian) Defence:

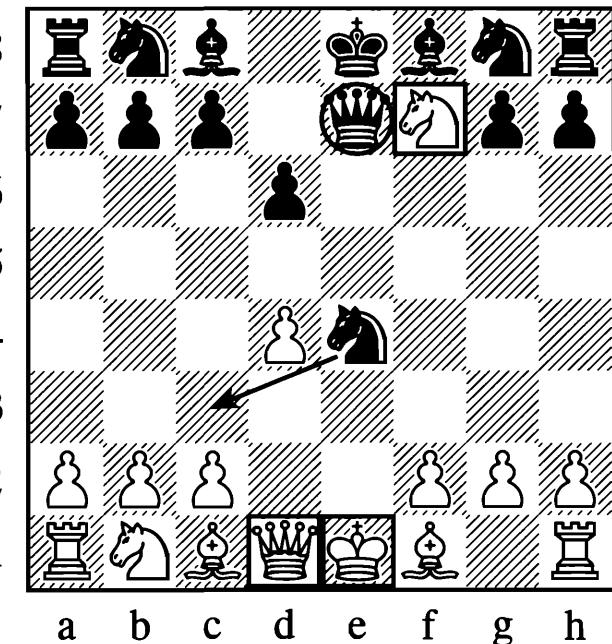


5.♘xf7??

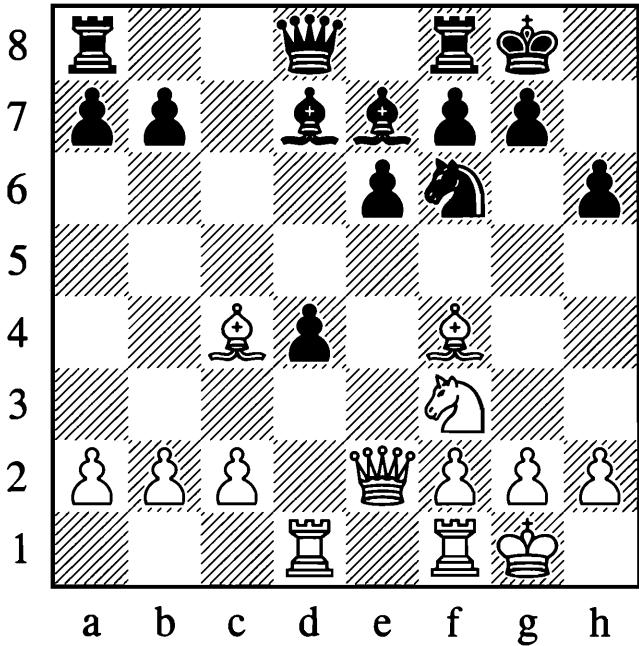
The idea is $5...\mathbb{W}xf7??$ $6.\mathbb{W}h5\#$ $g6$ $7.\mathbb{W}d5\#$ regaining the knight, but in fact White has made a terrible blunder. Now Black can set up a double attack with:

5...♗e7!

Now the first tactical target is the f7-knight and the second tactical target is the motif of a devastating discovered attack ($6.\mathbb{Q}xh8$ $\mathbb{Q}c3\#$) against White's king.

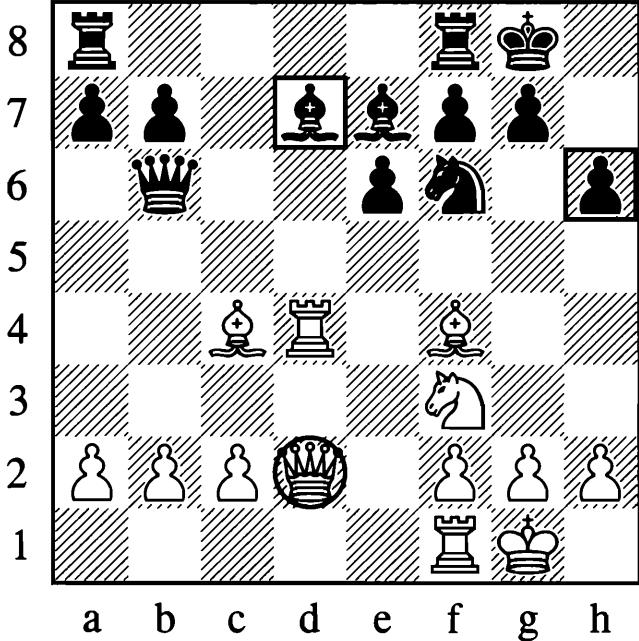


The next example shows the second tactical target can be the possibility of a positional sacrifice. In the fourth game of the 1965 Candidates match between **Tal** and **Portisch** the following position was reached:



Tal took the pawn on d4 with his rook in order to create a threat with a tactical target.

1. $\mathbb{R}xd4!?$ $\mathbb{W}b6$ 2. $\mathbb{W}d2$

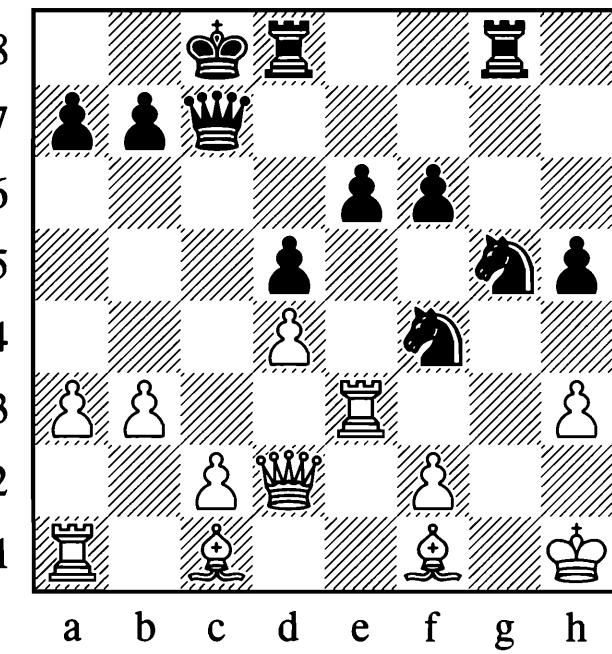


Black has to save the d7-bishop, which will give Tal the opportunity to complicate the game with a sacrifice on h6.

The next example shows the second tactical target as a square that can be used for other operations.

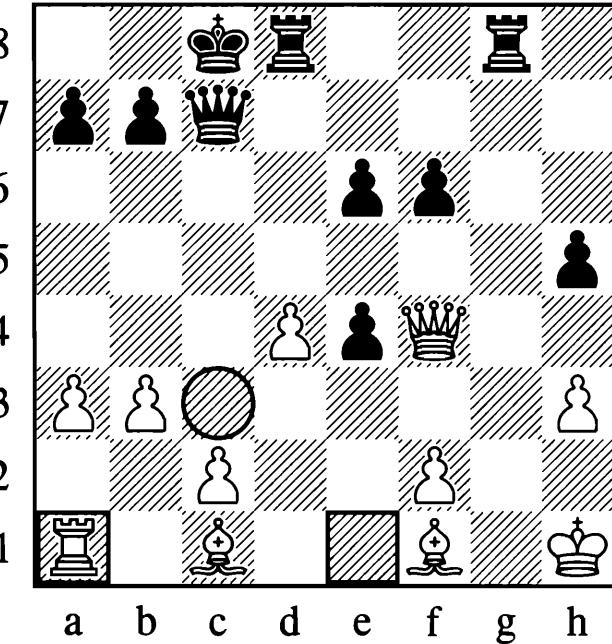
W. John – Alekhine

Hamburg 1910



Alekhine had planned a double attack and played:

1... $\mathbb{Q}e4!!$ 2. $\mathbb{R}xe4$ $dxe4$ 3. $\mathbb{W}xf4$

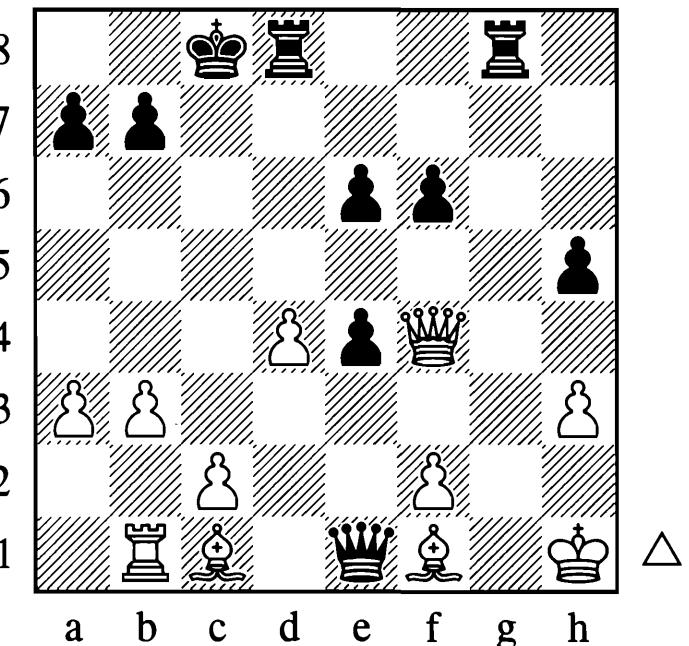


The tactical base and the two tactical targets could be discerned in the first diagram, but are even more apparent in this position. It was easy to see the black queen's tactical base on c3 with the a1-rook as one tactical target. That the other tactical target was worthwhile prey for a double attack was not so clear. Now you see that the tactical target on e1 offers the queen the start of what looks like an unstoppable attack.

This example shows once again that **it is necessary to collect all the information about tactical motifs in one position before we start bothering with their realization.**

However, games are not won simply by spotting hidden tactical motifs, as Alekhine did in the initial position, and the future World Champion had to find many more good moves:

3... $\mathbb{W}c3$ 4. $\mathbb{B}b1$ $\mathbb{W}e1$



It looks as if the game is over. White has to sacrifice material to stop mate (for example 5. $\mathbb{B}b2$ followed by 6. $\mathbb{W}c1$). But if you look at the formation *b1-rook, c1-knight and queen on e1* then this chain should remind you of a pin – and this formation also resembles the main part of a discovered attack. As a pin can transform into a discovered attack, White used this possibility to temporarily save himself with:

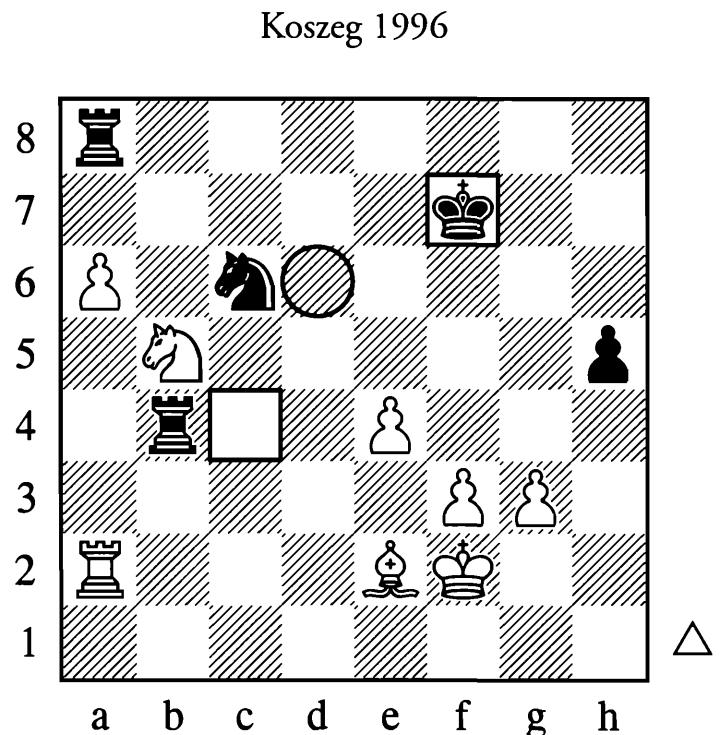
5. $\mathbb{W}c7\#!$ $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ 6. $\mathbb{Q}f4\#$ e5 7. $\mathbb{B}xe1$

Later, White fought hard to reach a rook ending with one pawn each, which could be drawn with accurate play. However, after such a long uphill struggle, White was not up to the task and lost in the endgame.

Another tactical target that deserves special consideration is the king. It is a tactical target that is very easy to spot. A simple rule for the king as tactical target applies: **a check is generally regarded as a tactical target.**

It is obvious that the king can become a tactical target in the endgame when he becomes a fighting unit and moves out in the open. The next position is taken from one of my games against a Hungarian GM.

Weteschnik – Forintos



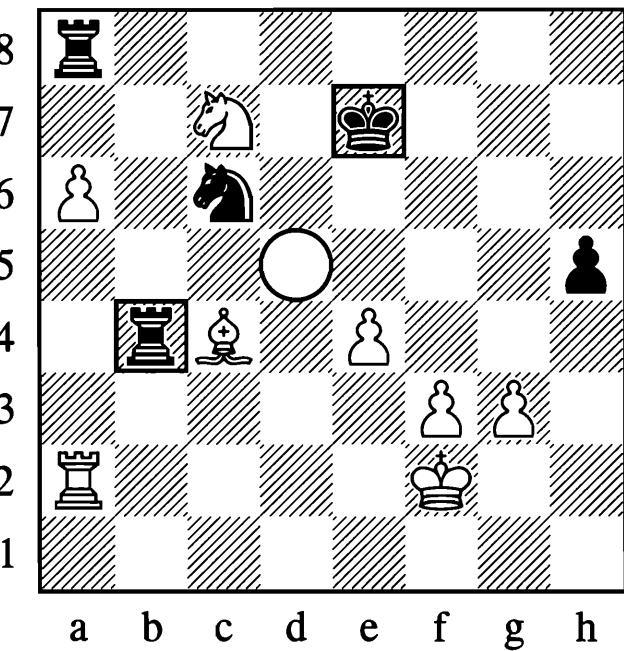
The tactical base for the b5-knight is d6 where it would attack the king with check (tactical target 1) and the c4-square (tactical target 2). Any black piece occupying this square would automatically be lost as the knight strikes with tempo from d6.

This is an important point to keep in mind when the king becomes a tactical target of a double attack: **a double attack with the king as tactical target usually gives the attacker an extra tempo.**

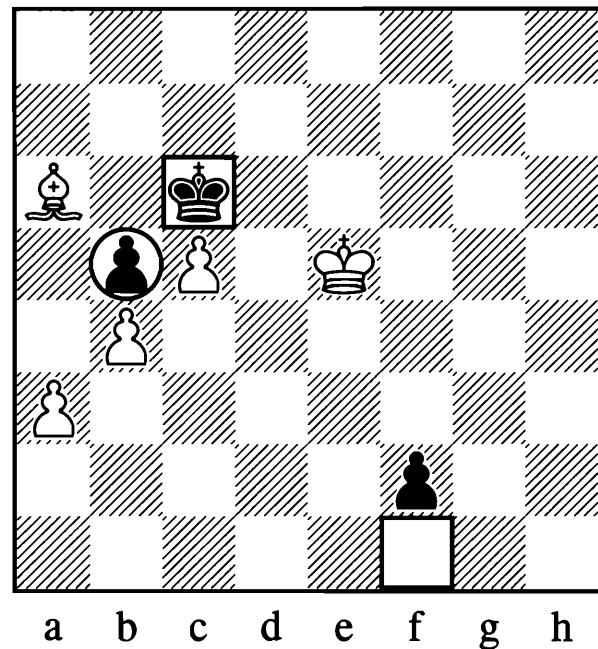
White played:

**1. $\mathbb{Q}c4\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$
1... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}d5$**

2. $\mathbb{Q}c7$



The king has become a tactical target for another possible double attack. Black no longer has any hope.

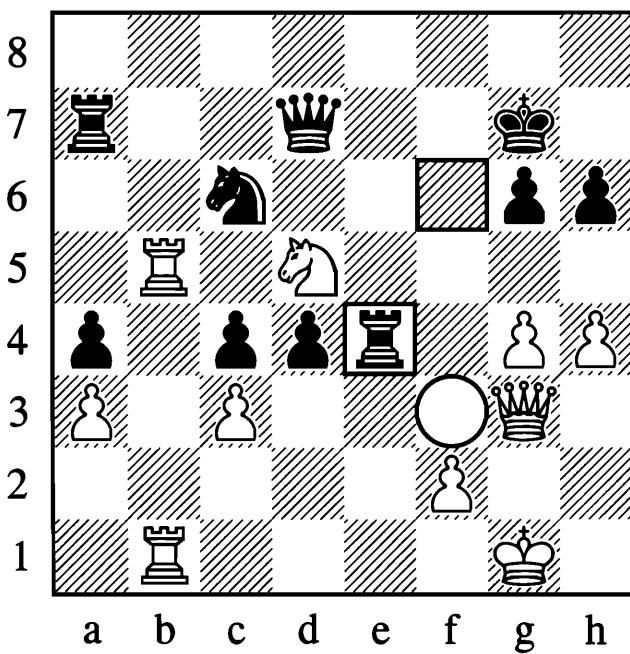


Another endgame position and another use of the double attack. 1.a4 is the logical move here. If Black promotes next move, White's bishop will occupy the tactical base b5 with tempo against the first tactical target (the king) and the newborn queen on f1. If Black takes the white a-pawn, the white king will catch the black pawn on a1 while the bishop stops the f-pawn on the newly opened diagonal.

During the middlegame it is more difficult to turn the king into a tactical target. Often he has to be 'motivated' by a sacrifice to leave his safe position. As usual, it helps to make an offer that cannot be refused.

Vasiukov – Taimanov

Tallinn 1965



1. $\mathbb{Q}f6!$

Forking rook and queen. Black had to take:

1... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 2. $\mathbb{W}f3\#$

Winning the exchange and the game.

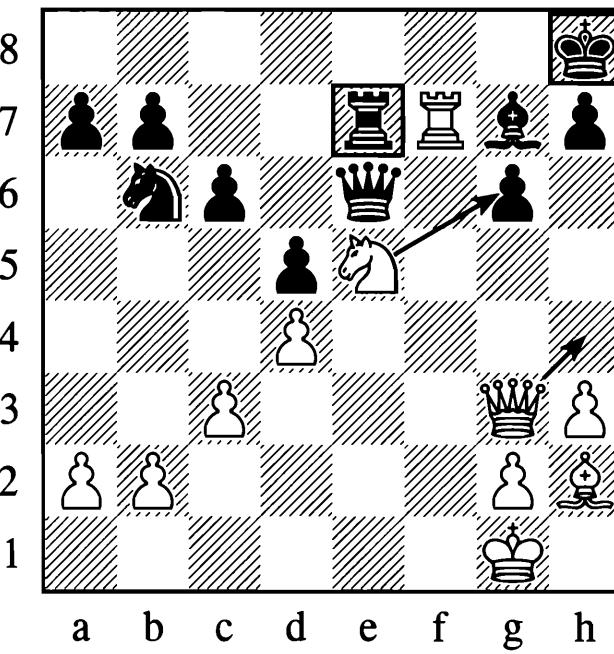
In this position the f3-square is the tactical base of the white queen. The undefended e4-rook is the first tactical target for the double attack. All other squares on the f-file are possible second tactical targets. You should pay special attention to the squares close to the black king. The trick of this double attack was to force the king onto one of these squares (f6). Consequently, not only the king but also **the squares next to the king have to be considered as potential tactical targets in relation to the king**.

When you are thinking about a double attack and you have already found one tactical target you should always watch for options against the king, as he is a wonderful second tactical target. Sometimes the king is already where you want him, but if not you might be able to 'persuade' his majesty to move a little to make life easier for you.

The easiest way to get within reach of the king is to open lines into his position. Looking over the walls of the castle we see the king in the garden. Let's get rid of the walls!

Faibisovich – Etruk

USSR 1975



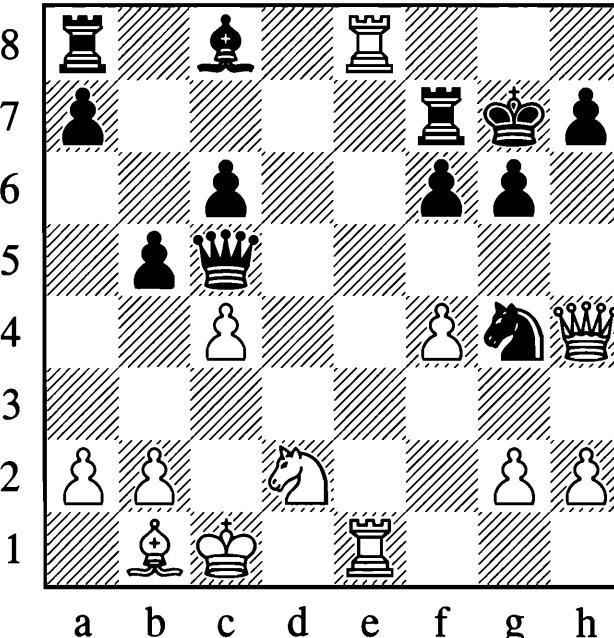
1. ♔xg6†!

The h-file is opened and we can use the king as a tactical target.

Once again, remember that a check is a possible part (tactical target) of a double attack that also gives an extra tempo to the attacker.

Knezevic – Kupreichik

Stary Smokovec 1975



White is first going to open a line against the king and then gain material:

1. ♕xg6!

1.f5 and 1.♘xc8 are also advantageous, but not nearly as strong as the game continuation.

1... xg6

Of course 1...hxg6 allows mate in one, but now the king becomes a tactical target for the following double attack:

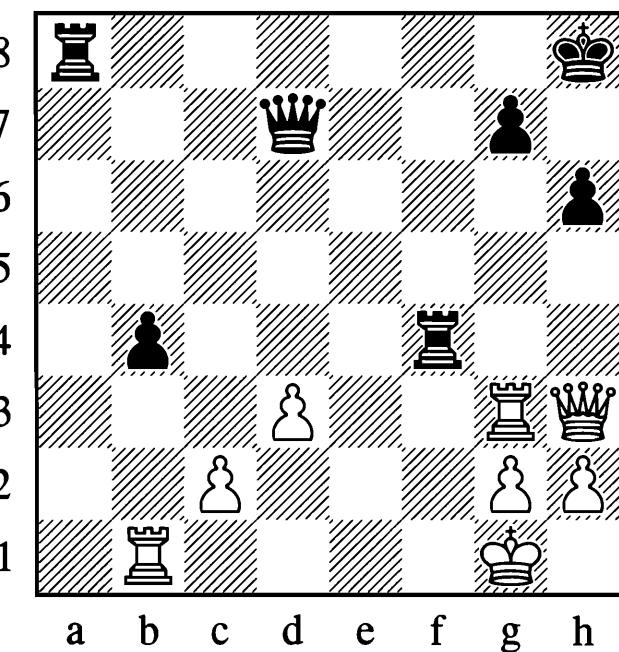
2. $\mathbb{N}xc8$

Now if Black recaptures then:

2... \blacksquare xc8 3. \blacktriangle g4†

And off goes the black rook.

The tempo gained by a check is used in the following example (constructed for demonstration purposes) to occupy a weak back rank.



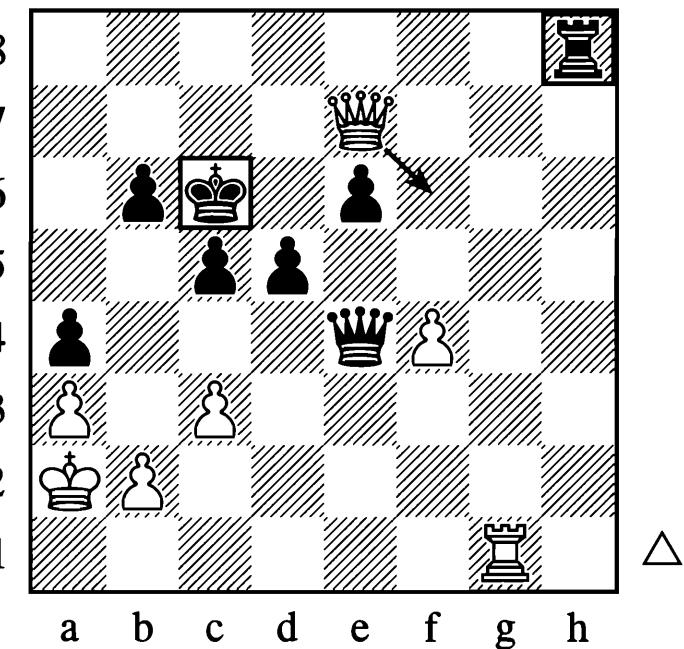
1...**h**al! 2.**x**al

All other moves also lose.

2... $\mathbb{W}d4\#$ 3. $\mathbb{B}e3 \mathbb{W}xa1\#$ 4. $\mathbb{B}e1 \mathbb{W}xe1$ mate

We should not forget to implement the basic tactical patterns in our overall strategy. Tactics should be used to support strategy.

In **Weteschnik – Schwarz**, Kecskemet 1992, White looked to be on his way to losing the game.



Black is a pawn up and his central pawns are threatening to advance. The f-pawn looks rather shaky and the white king needs defence.

The only thing that can rescue White is a combined attack with queen and rook against the black king. But the white rook cannot immediately leave the first rank: 1. $\mathbb{R}g7?? \mathbb{Q}c4\#$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}b1 \mathbb{R}h1\#$ with mate to follow.

White has to lure the black queen away in order to avoid the check on c4. The motif of a possible double attack assists White's counterattacking plan:

1.f5! $\mathbb{Q}xf5$

1...exf5?? 2. $\mathbb{R}f6\#$ picks up the black rook.

2. $\mathbb{R}g7$

Now the black queen can no longer give check on c4. A draw was agreed shortly thereafter, as the black king cannot find a safe haven.

Summary

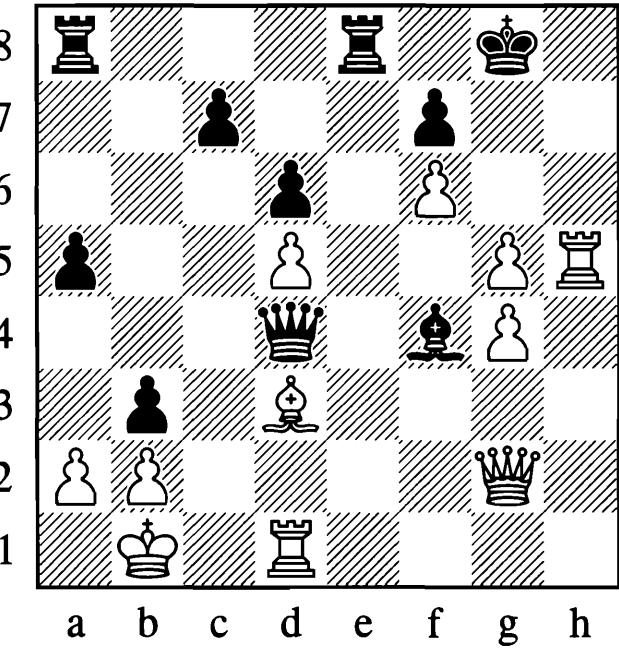
- A double attack consists of a tactical base and two (or more) tactical targets.
- *Every* square that can be reached from the tactical base must be considered as a potential tactical target.
- The tactical base can be occupied if a piece defending the tactical base has a more important task to perform.
- In order to occupy the tactical base with material gain, you might first have to sacrifice.
- If you have got a tactical base and only one tactical target you might be able to create the second tactical target.
- A tactical target can be a piece, a square, or a tactical motif.
- Look out for undefended pieces! They are likely candidates as tactical targets of a double attack.
- A check should always be considered as a potential tactical target.
- If the king is a tactical target, the tactical base will almost always be occupied with tempo (check).
- The squares next to the king might be turned into tactical targets.

Chapter 6

Overloading

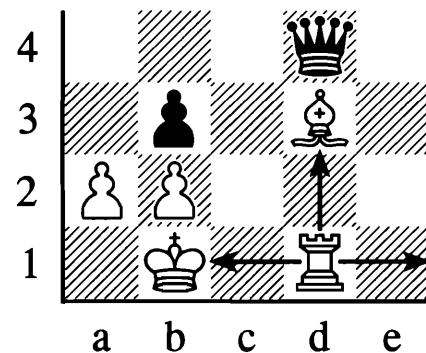
Overloading is the opposite of the double attack. It is when a piece rather than attacking two squares of importance, has a responsibility on two important squares. In this case we talk about a piece being **overloaded**. This is only relevant if the opponent can in some way exploit this.

In the game **Stocek – Prokopchuk** played in the 2010 Czech Open Rapid Championship they reached the following position:

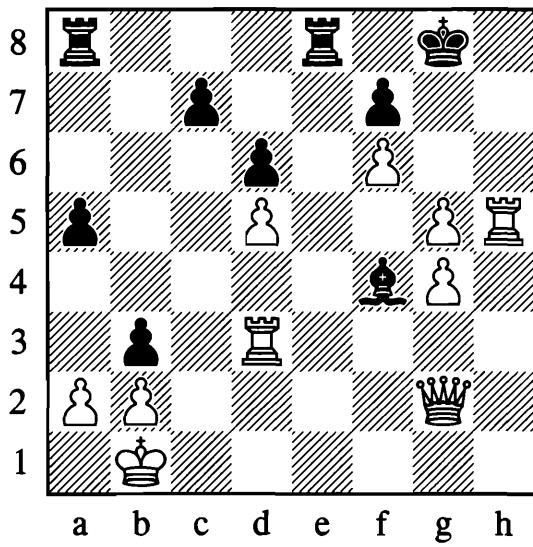


Black had probably mentally resigned himself to being mated after 2. $\mathbb{R}h8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xh8$ 3. $\mathbb{W}h3\#$. He cannot prevent this with 1... $\mathbb{R}e3$, as White can also give the check on h1 with 2. $\mathbb{R}h8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xh8$ 3. $\mathbb{W}h1\#$.

However, Black missed an opportunity to take advantage of the overloaded white rook on d1 when he played the mistaken 1... $\mathbb{B}xa2\#?$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}a1$ and had to resign.



The way to exploit this overloading was by taking the bishop on d3 with 1... $\mathbb{W}xd3\#!$ when White would have no real alternative to 2. $\mathbb{R}xd3$.

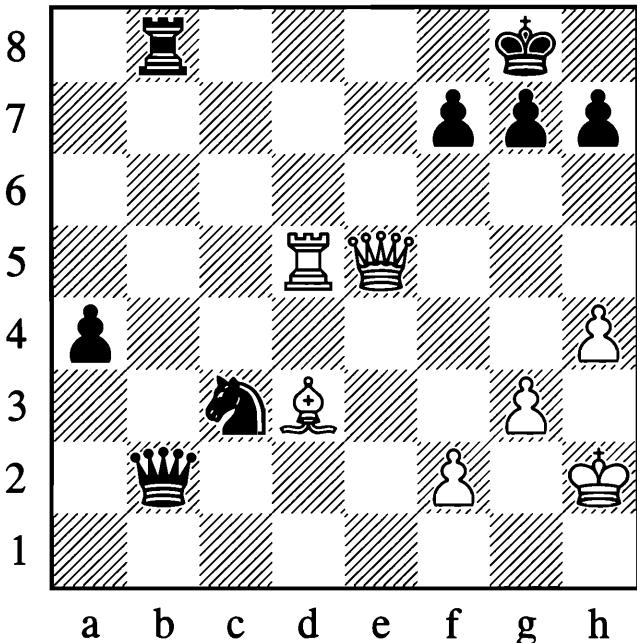


However, this allows 2... $\mathbb{R}e1\#$ with mate next move.

Overloading is quite a common theme in tactics and we will come across it throughout this book, often in combination with another theme.

B. Larsen – Szabo

Beverwijk 1967



In this case Black looks better at first. He has an extra pawn which is advancing quickly towards glory. However, a few short-term themes are also in the air. The knight on c3 is *sort of* pinned (although the b8-rook is defending the queen) and Black's back rank is fragile, making the b8-rook overloaded.

Bent Larsen managed to take advantage of all of these themes with one surprising move:

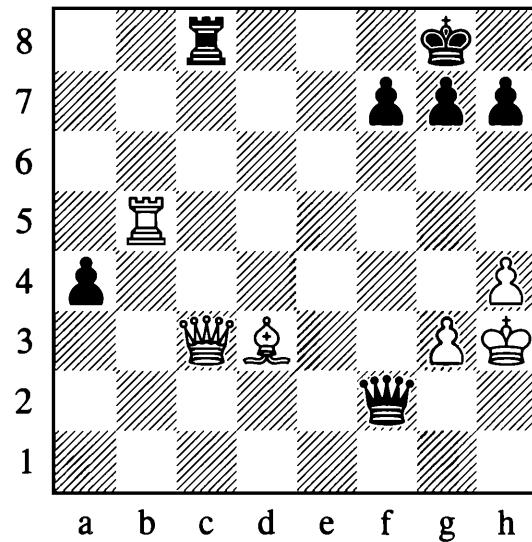
1. $\mathbb{R}b5!!$

Szabo had not seen this coming. None of the black pieces can take the rook. 1... $\mathbb{R}xb5$ allows 2. $\mathbb{W}e8$ mate. 1... $\mathbb{W}xb5$ just loses the queen – and after 2. $\mathbb{R}xb5$ Black cannot even recapture without being mated. Finally 1... $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ blocks the b-file in the middle and so White mates with 2. $\mathbb{W}xb8$ (okay, 2. $\mathbb{W}xb2$ is the second best move).

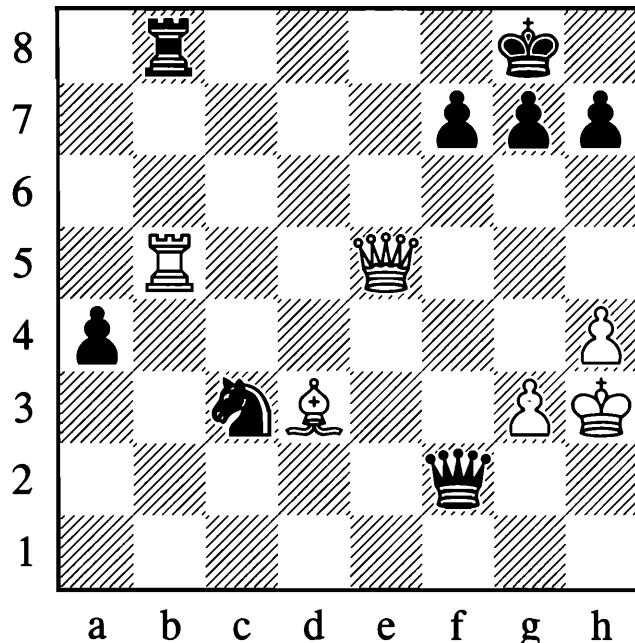
Szabo decided to take on f2 and face his problems afterwards.

1... $\mathbb{W}xf2\#$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}h3$

The pin on the knight is gone, but Black is still struggling to keep his back rank in order. 2... $\mathbb{R}c8$ still loses the knight to 3. $\mathbb{W}xc3$,



because of 3... $\mathbb{R}xc3$ 4. $\mathbb{R}b8\#$ with mate on the next move. Again the rook is overloaded.



2... $\mathbb{R}f8$ 3. $\mathbb{W}xc3$

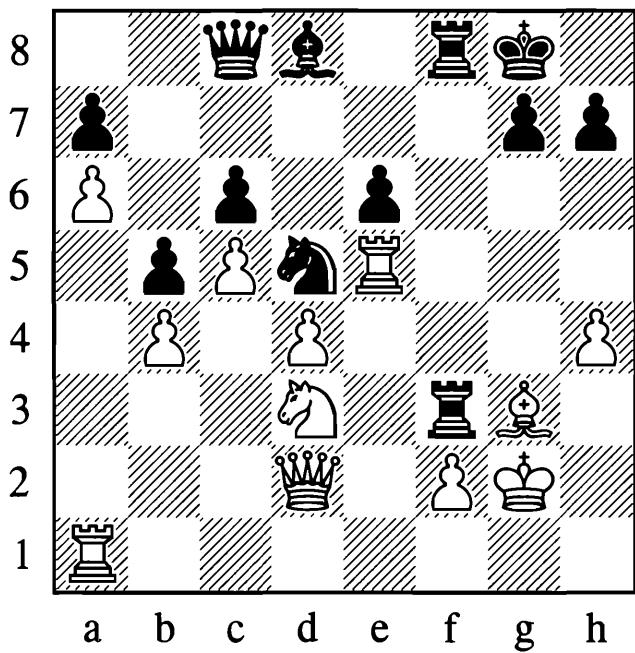
White has won a piece and went on to win the game.

It might be a coincidence, but many of Bent Larsen's most famous combinations involved taking advantage of the opponent's overloaded pieces. In the following example he managed to get his grip into the collar of a reigning World Champion.

Overloading is quite a common theme in tactics, often in combination with other themes.

Karpov – B. Larsen

Montreal 1979



There are two themes in play here. One is the double attack of d3 and g2, which the knight can perform from f4. The other is the overloading of the bishop on g3, which has to look after the pawn on h4 as well as the f4-square. Larsen grabbed his chance with:

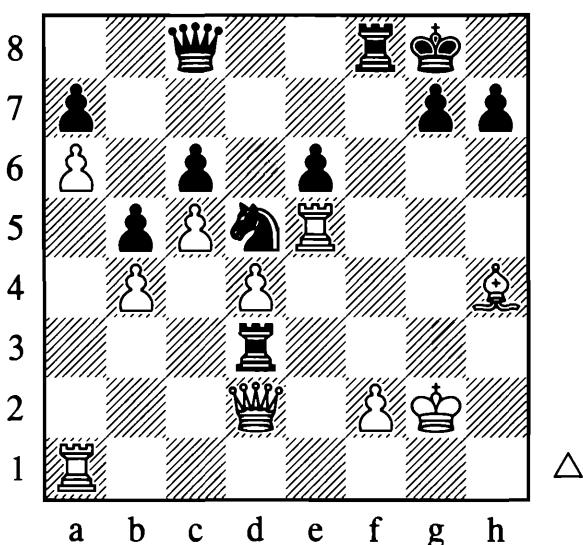
1...♝xh4!

Karpov now decided to accept the loss of the pawn and tried to hold the position with 2.♔e2.

If he had taken on the challenge, he would quickly have been forced to resign:

2.♝xh4 ♞xd3!

The potential knight fork on f4 is devastating.

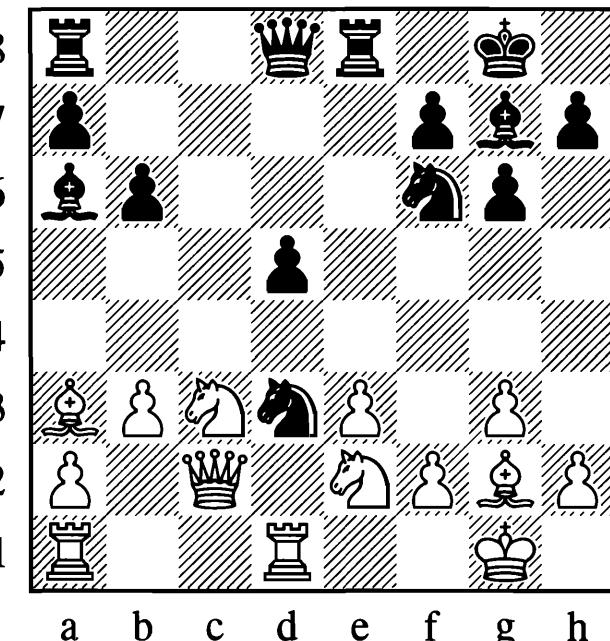


Often a piece is overloaded without it having any great importance. It is not hard to imagine that a piece is defending several important squares, but the opponent cannot take advantage of it. We should not overstate the importance of this theme; only pay dutiful attention to it, in the same way as we pay attention to other tactical themes.

However, it can be quite unpleasant when we find that we have two pieces that are overloaded, which is exactly what happened to Robert Byrne as White in a famous game against Bobby Fischer in the 1963 US Championship, which Fischer famously won with the perfect score of 11/11.

R. Byrne – Fischer

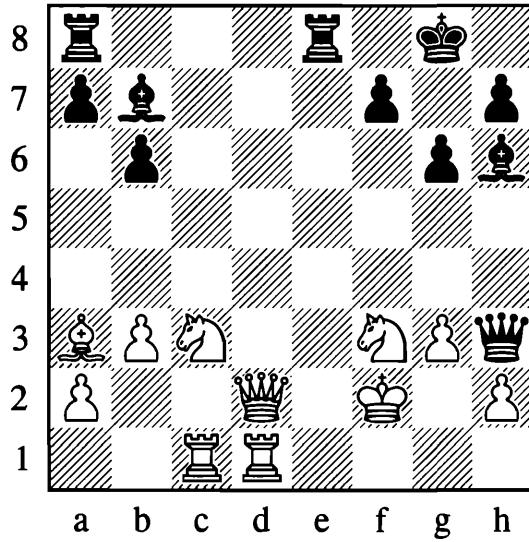
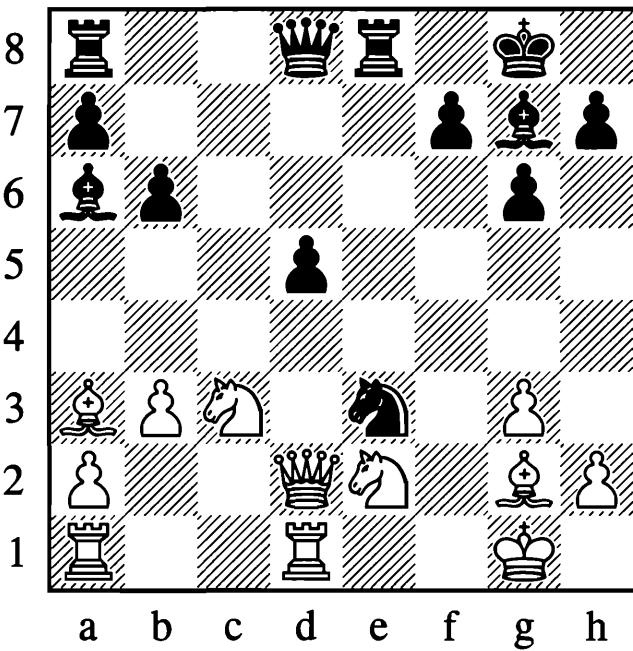
US Championship 1963



Here Fischer calculated far ahead and played a brilliant combination:

1...♞xf2!! 2.♔xf2 ♞g4† 3.♔g1 ♞xe3 4.♗d2

Byrne had no doubt predicted this moment and expected Fischer to play 4...♝xd1, when the two minor pieces are more or less okay against the rook and two pawns. However Fischer had seen something far more attractive.

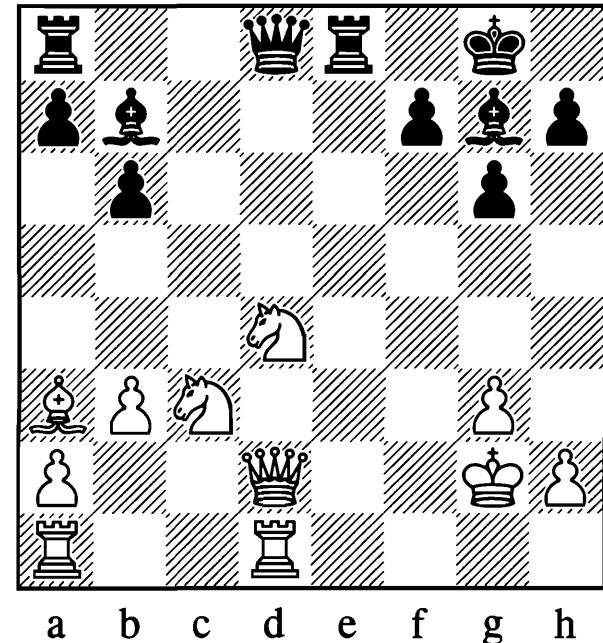


After 10. $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{A}e3\#$ 11. $\mathbb{W}xe3$ $\mathbb{E}xe3$ 12. $\mathbb{C}xe3$ $\mathbb{E}e8\#$ 13. $\mathbb{C}f2$ $\mathbb{W}f5$ Black wins the endgame.

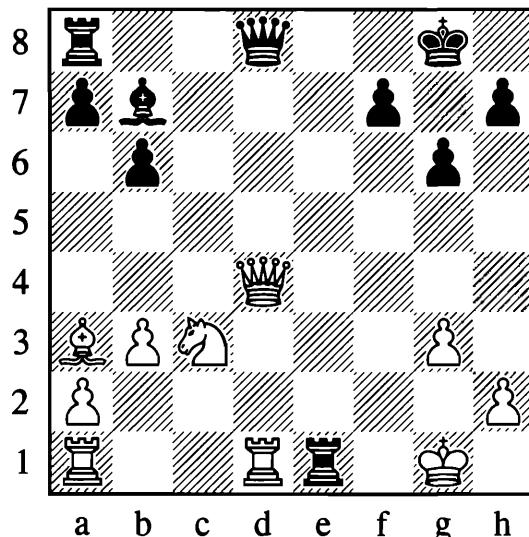
4... $\mathbb{Q}xg2!!$

Black is basing his combination on weakening the light squares around the white king. With two pawns for the piece he is not running an excessive risk, but needless to say, Fischer had calculated everything to the end, so the only risk he took was that there was some oversight in his calculations. Obviously there was not.

5. $\mathbb{C}xg2$ $d4!$ 6. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{A}b7\#$



And after 7. $\mathbb{C}g1$ Black can immediately take advantage of the overloading of the rook on d1 with 7... $\mathbb{A}xd4\#$ 8. $\mathbb{W}xd4$ $\mathbb{E}e1\#$,



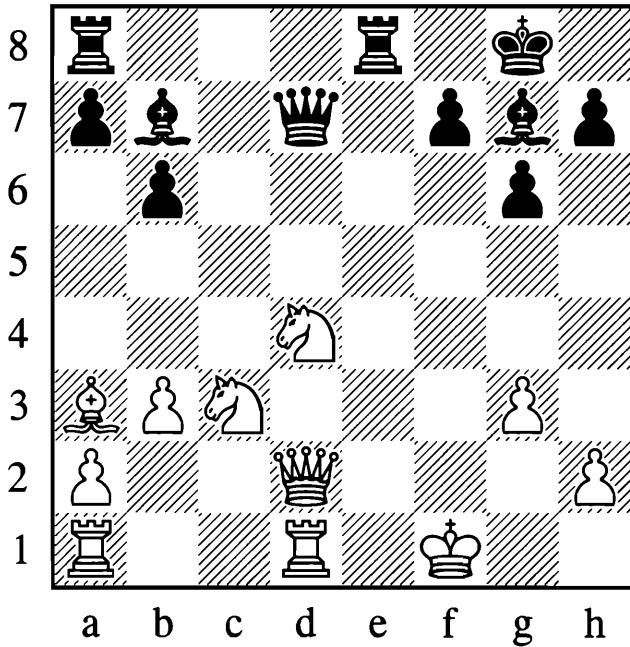
which besides tempting the d1-rook to give up the protection of the queen, is an X-ray attack on the rook on a1, as shown after 9. $\mathbb{C}f2$ $\mathbb{W}xd4\#$ 10. $\mathbb{E}xd4$ $\mathbb{A}xa1$.

White chose to go to f1, which did not work out any better.

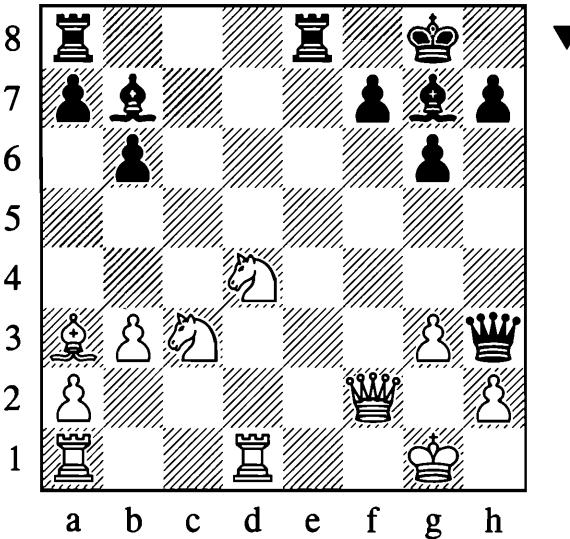
7. $\mathbb{C}f1$ $\mathbb{W}d7!$

Fischer played this quickly and Byrne was left to consider his options. Eventually he decided to resign the game, as he realized that his intended defence would not work out.

An unpleasant situation for White. The king has three likely squares to go to (as going to h3 is obviously hopeless). Byrne correctly decided that it was impossible to play 7. $\mathbb{C}f2$, which would lose to 7... $\mathbb{W}d7-h3$ and ... $\mathbb{A}h6$, as follows: 7. $\mathbb{C}f2$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 8. $\mathbb{E}ac1$ $\mathbb{W}h3$ 9. $\mathbb{C}f3$ $\mathbb{A}h6$

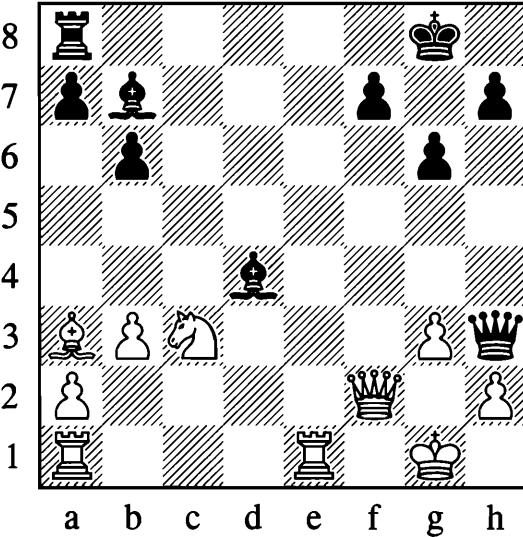


After 8. $\mathbb{W}f2 \mathbb{W}h3\#$ 9. $\mathbb{Q}g1$



White seemingly is holding everything together. But the sad reality is that both his queen and d1-rook are overloaded. Both of them are defending the knight on d4 and the e1-square, while the queen has a third and even more important engagement with the g2-square, where she is defending against mate in one move.

When Fischer had initiated his combination he had seen that White would not be able to keep this shaky defence going. The white queen is dislodged from her defence of g2 by two deflectors. First comes 9... $\mathbb{R}e1\#$!!, which exploits the overloading of the rook by taking it away from the vital defence of the d4-knight. However, there is no choice, so White must play 10. $\mathbb{R}xe1$, when it is time to deflect the attention of the queen with 10... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$.



The mission is completed. The combination that started with stripping the white king of his defending pawns and bishop has progressed to removing the overloaded heavy artillery that flew to the king's aid. And not only can the queen not take on d4, due to the mate on g2, she is also pinned and thus unable to defend against the mate anyway.

Overloaded pieces are found on the board most of the time. The key is to work out when their dual responsibilities are causing problems.

Summary

- Overloading is the opposite of the double attack. It is when a piece rather than attacking two squares of importance, has a responsibility on two important squares.
- Overloading is quite a common theme in tactics and we will come across it throughout this book, often in combination with another theme.
- Often a piece is overloaded without it having any great importance. It is not hard to imagine that a piece is defending several important squares, but the opponent cannot take advantage of it.
- Overloaded pieces are found on the board most of the time. The key is to work out when their dual responsibilities are causing problems.

Chapter 7

Mate

The following statement may come as a surprise, yet there might be a grain of truth in it: The ultimate aim when playing chess is checkmate. Either you are able to attack the enemy king directly, or you gain a material plus which you will use in the endgame to finish off your opponent's hapless monarch.

In order to give mate you should **know the standard mating patterns**. They will save you time and energy. The reason why professionals find more combinations in less time than amateurs is that they have stored countless patterns in their minds. Whenever they are confronted with one of these patterns they will remember it and instantly know what to do. This is not a question of ingenuity but of learning and experience. After a while you too will be able to retrieve acquired patterns.

These mating patterns also function as a yardstick to judge the strategic and tactical implications of a position, or a move, that you are considering.

But mating patterns can do more for you. They often function as a starting point for a deeper analysis of a position. As with the tactical motifs, **looking beyond the circumstances of the current position helps a lot**. Once you have discovered the crucial pattern, it is helpful to mull over a position for a while. The mating pattern might function like the beam of a lighthouse. Suddenly you get an idea of how to navigate your ship in order to reach the desired position. It is always easier to devise a plan when you know where you want to go. And

if your operation does not result in mate, then the threat of mate may be enough to give you the necessary tempo to gain a crucial material advantage.

So try to keep in mind the apparently strange idea of *starting* your calculations from a *final* position (an aim) that anticipates the tactical realization, as the final position already comprises the moves leading to it.

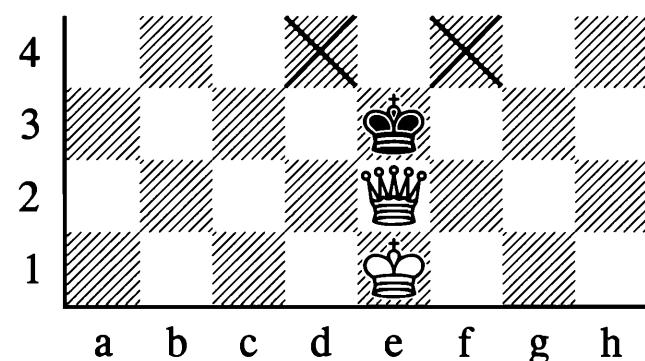
No other tactical motif will demonstrate this method as well as the mate, because it is the most clear and final tactic in chess.

The mating patterns

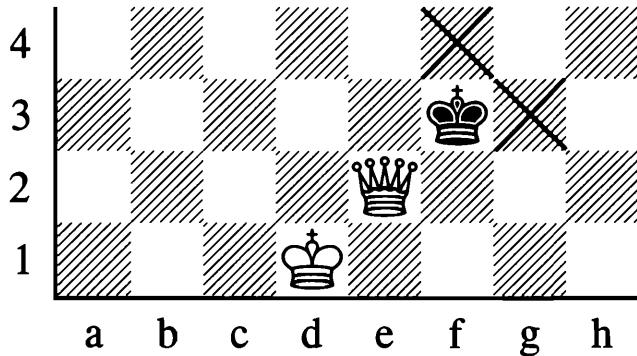
Mate with the queen

The queen is the most powerful piece on the board as it combines the patterns of movement of rook and bishop. Thus the queen is able to control a lot of squares around the king and control of squares is crucial when it comes to giving mate.

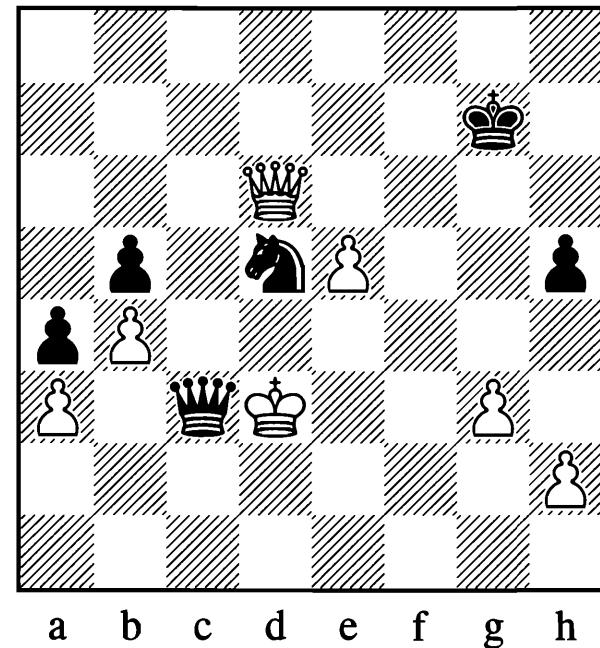
In the following position, the queen (aided by her king) has control over six of the eight possible squares the black king could move to.



The squares marked with a cross are like the epaulettes, that is shoulder-pieces, of a uniform. If these two squares were controlled by White or occupied by black pieces, it would be mate. This also works diagonally:



It is not very difficult to recognize this pattern, yet even good players seem to forget it sometimes. Take a look at the game **Stern – Maiwald, Germany 1992**:



1.♕e4??

Giving Black a chance for an epaulette mate, but Black missed this golden opportunity.

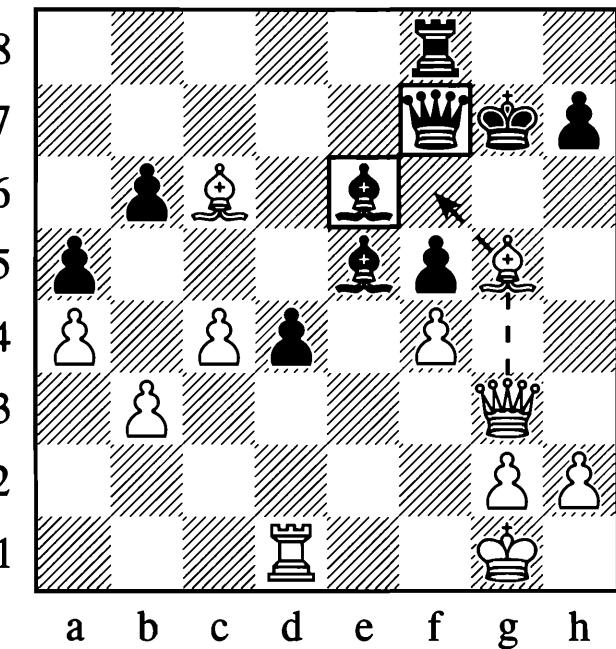
1...♝c4† 2.♔f3

2.♔f5 ♝g4 is mate directly. Now Black missed his chance with:

2...♝d3†??

Instead with 2...♝f1†! 3.♔e4 ♘e2† 4.♔xd5 ♘c4 mate, he would have won on the spot.

Here is another example to train your eyes for the pattern where the two diagonal squares next to the king's "back" are occupied. Do you see the decisive move for White?

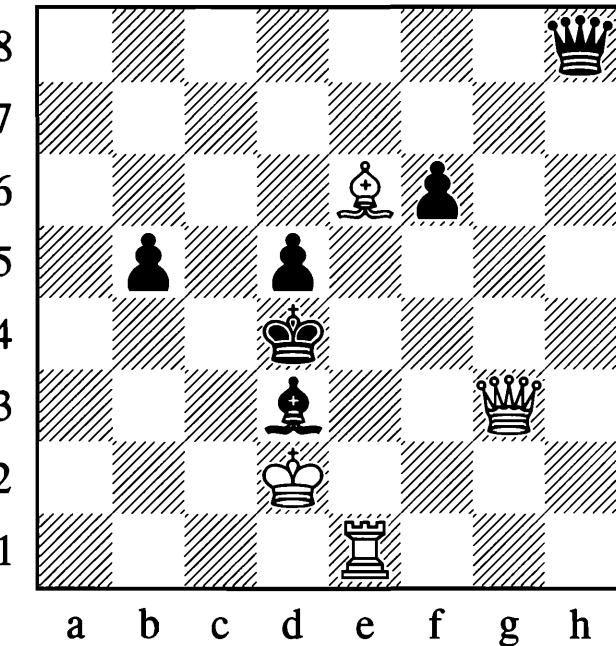


If you played:

1.♗f6†

You would have set up the pattern with the black bishop and queen taking away the king's two possible escape squares.

The next example works with the epaulette pattern as well. How does White mate in two?

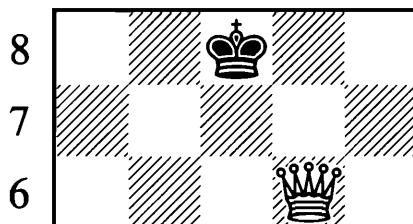


1.♗e4†!

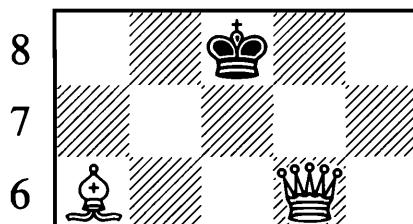
Black is mated on the next move no matter what he does: 1...♔xe4 2.♗e3, 1...dxe4 2.♗d6,

1... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 2. $\mathbb{W}c3$ and 1... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 2. $\mathbb{W}c7$.

Usually the powerful queen still needs to be supported by her own pieces in order to execute a mate. In the next diagram the queen controls all the dark squares around the king.



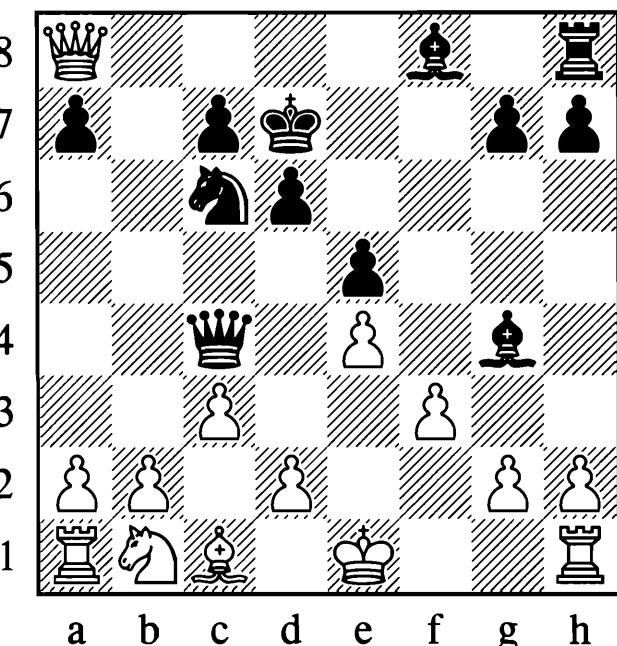
The only thing missing for a mate is control over a couple of light squares. Put in a bishop and you have a mate.



This is what happened in the following game.

Rodzinski – Alekhine

Paris 1913



1... $\mathbb{Q}xf3!$

This is so that the h4-e1 diagonal cannot be

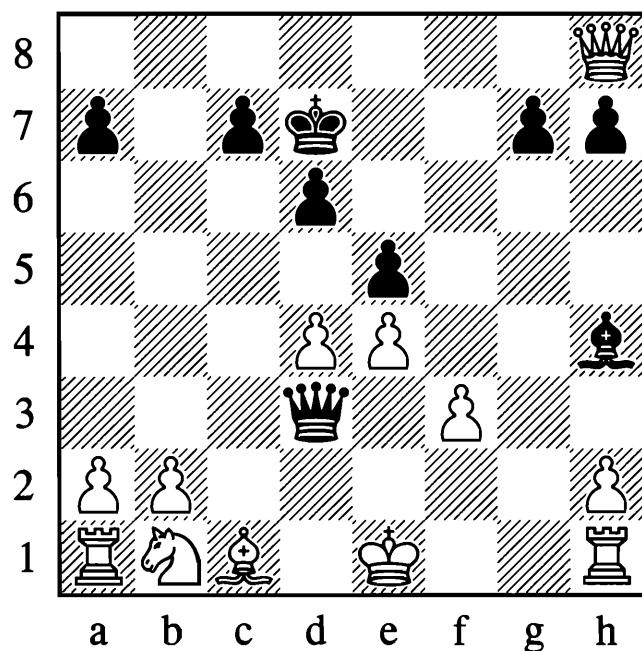
closed. 1... $\mathbb{Q}d4??$ would have been premature as it allows 2.d3! $\mathbb{W}xd3$ 3.cxd4 (clearing the c3-square for the white knight) 3... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}c3!!$ controlling the crucial e2-square (4.gxf3? $\mathbb{Q}e7!$) and White is winning because on 4... $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ White wards off the mating attack by either 5. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ or 5.dxe5 with the idea 5... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 6.e6† and the exchange of queens after 7. $\mathbb{W}d5†$.

2.gxf3 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 3.d3??

White failed to anticipate the mating attack. Instead 3.cxd4! $\mathbb{W}xc1†$ would have given back material with a close to equal game.

3... $\mathbb{W}xd3$ 4.cxd4 $\mathbb{Q}e7!!$ 5. $\mathbb{W}xh8$ $\mathbb{Q}h4$ mate

Note the mating pattern of queen and bishop in the final position:

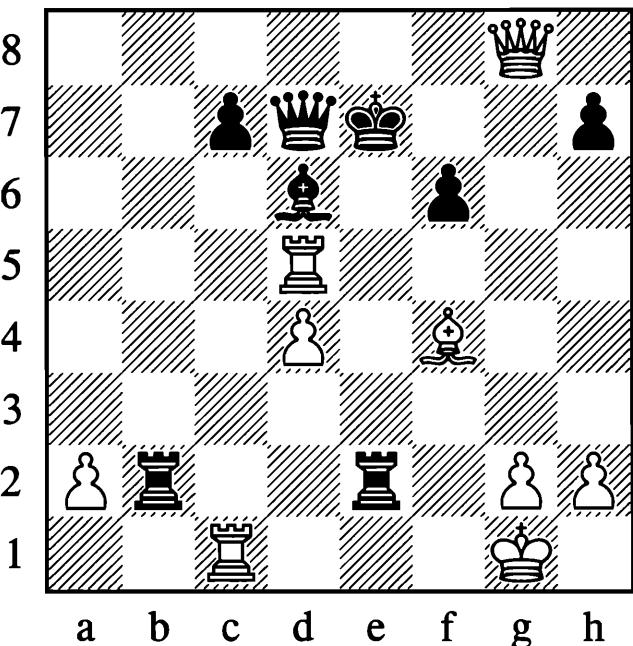


The influence of the queen on the squares around the king is often underestimated. Consequently, you have to recognize the squares controlled by the queen in order to avoid disaster.

Knowing the standard mating patterns will save you time and energy. Whenever you are confronted with one of these patterns you will instantly know what to do.

Nisipeanu – V. Bagirov

Cuxhaven 1994



Why pussyfoot about when you can finish the game in style? Nisipeanu played:

1.♕g5!

He realized that the rook cannot be taken: 1...fxg5 2.♕xg5 mate. If you take the f-pawn off the board, it is easy to see that a diagonal check would be mate as the white queen already controls five of the black king's escape squares.

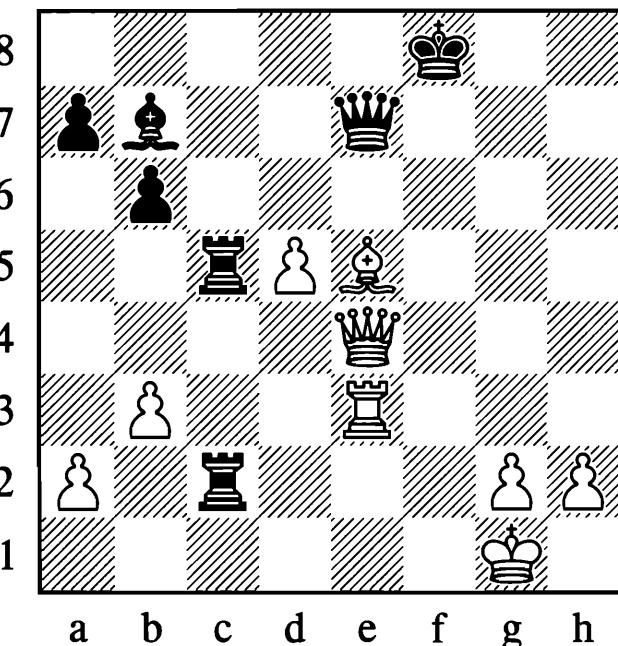
**1...♗xf4 2.♕g7† ♔d6 3.♗xd7† ♔xd7
4.♔g4†**

This picks up the f4-bishop as well and thus ends the game.

Especially during the endgame, or in positions with an open king, the old (and generally true) saying “A queen cannot deliver mate on its own” might turn out to be treacherous advice when we think of the queen’s power to control squares.

Zukertort – Blackburne

London 1883

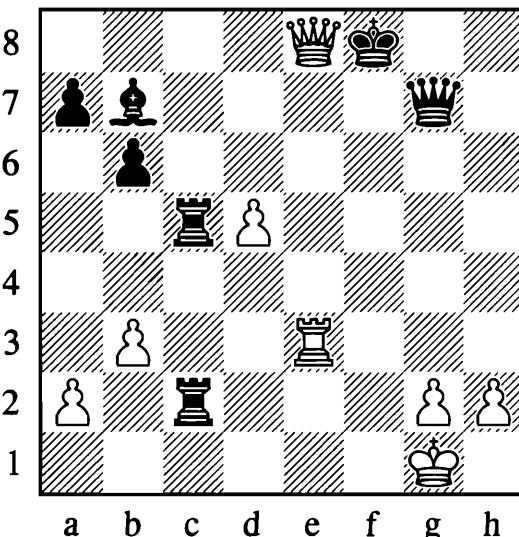


1.♕g7†

If the black queen takes on g7 then it’s mate on e8. Okay, the old saying remains true, as the white queen is not quite on her own.

1–0

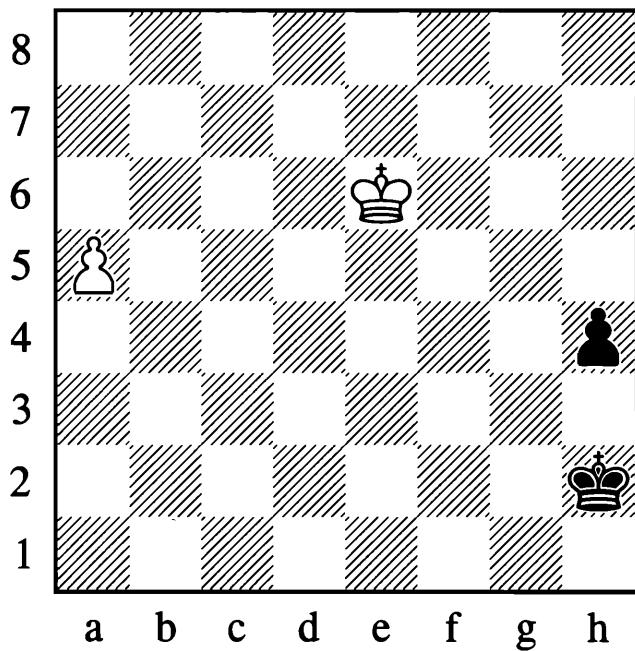
The next diagram, given so you can see the important configuration, shows the key position. It might fire your imagination.



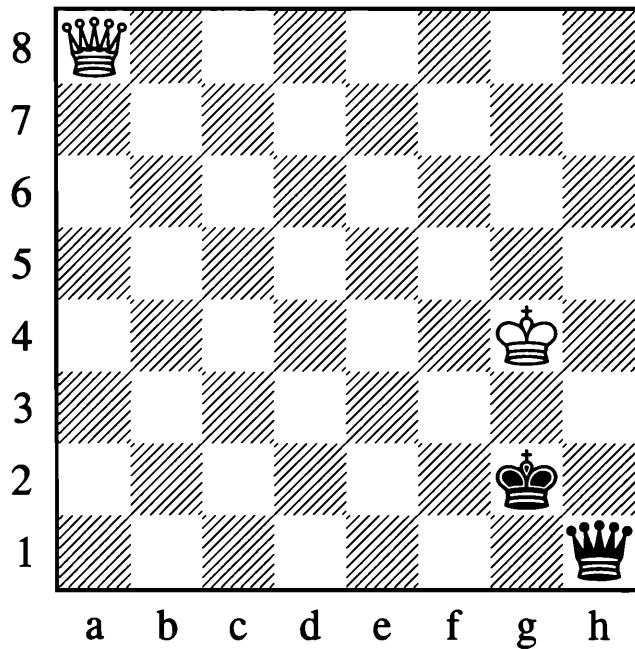
The iron grip of the attacking queen on the squares around the king, which cannot be relieved even by the defending queen, is often the key to the solution of endgame problems:

Especially during the endgame, or in positions with an open king, the old (and generally true) saying “A lone queen cannot deliver mate” can be treacherous advice.

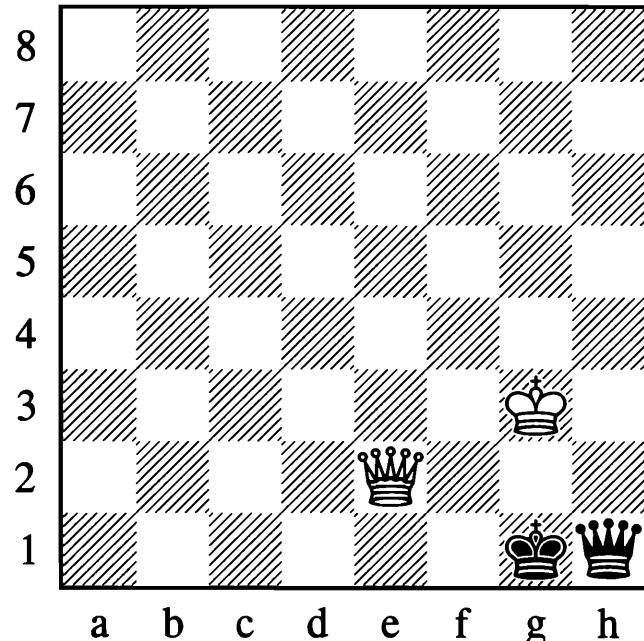
Prokes 1937



1. $\mathbb{Q}f5$ h3 2. $\mathbb{Q}g4$ $\mathbb{Q}g2$ 3. a6 h2 4. a7 h1= \mathbb{W}
5. a8= $\mathbb{W}\dagger$

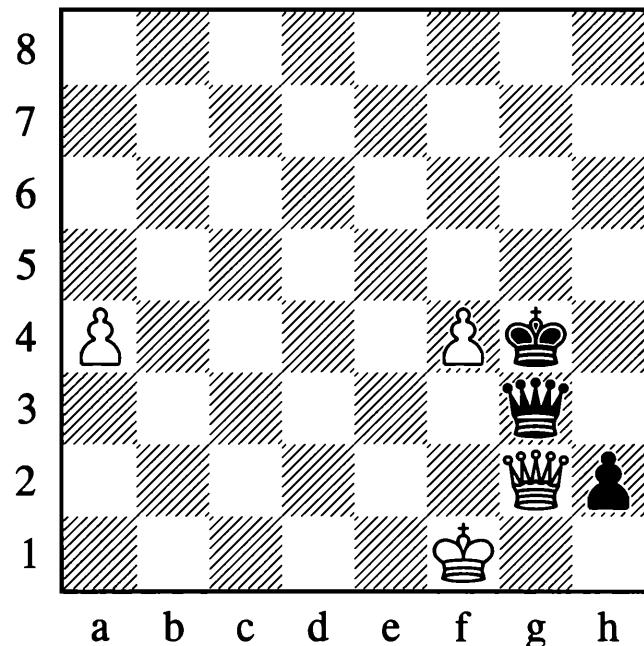


5... $\mathbb{Q}g1$ 6. $\mathbb{W}a1\dagger$ $\mathbb{Q}g2$ 7. $\mathbb{W}b2\dagger$ $\mathbb{Q}f1$ 8. $\mathbb{W}c1\dagger$ $\mathbb{Q}g2$ 9. $\mathbb{W}d2\dagger$ $\mathbb{Q}f1$ 10. $\mathbb{W}d1\dagger$ $\mathbb{Q}g2$ 11. $\mathbb{W}e2\dagger$ $\mathbb{Q}g1$ 12. $\mathbb{Q}g3$



Although it is Black to move and material is equal, Black is lost.

If you like, sharpen your skills with this newly acquired pattern by solving a fancier position. Then please cover the solution given below this position from **G. Morrison – Emms**, British Championship 2005:

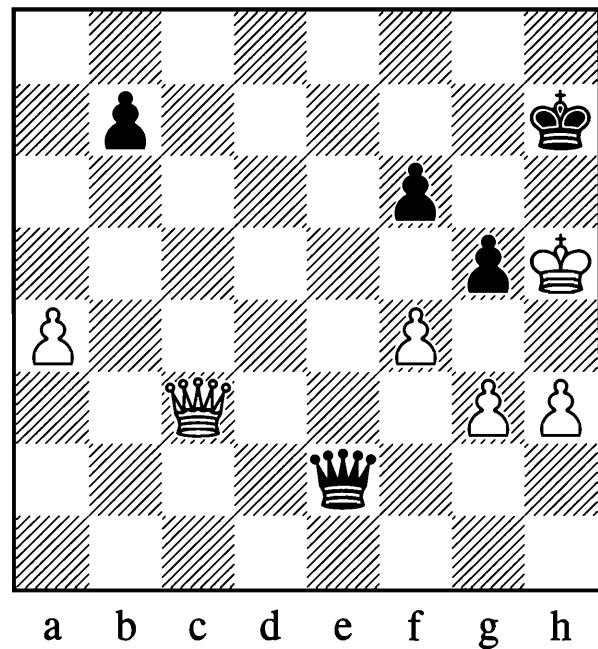


Black played 1... $\mathbb{Q}h4$ and won comfortably, but he could also have won with:

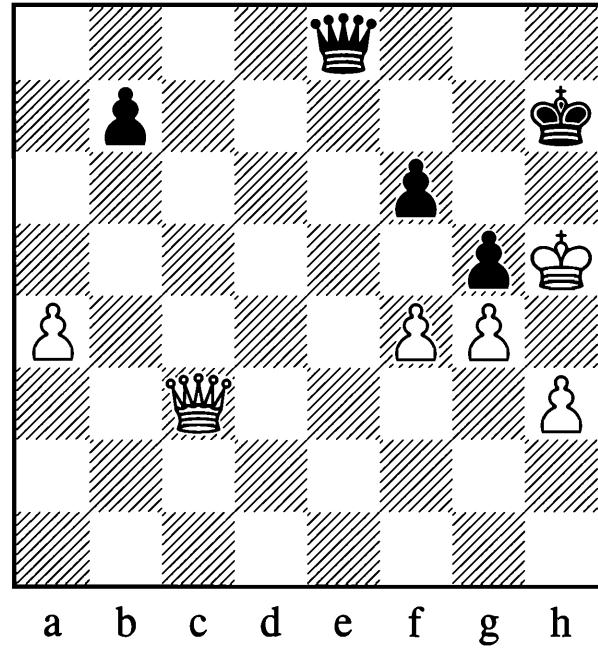
1... h1= $\mathbb{W}\dagger$! 2. $\mathbb{W}xh1$ $\mathbb{W}d3\dagger$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{W}d2\dagger$
4. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{W}d1\dagger$ 5. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{W}e2\dagger$ 6. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}g3$

And we have the same position as above, only with a couple of irrelevant white pawns scattered over the board.

The last example is a reminder of how powerful the queen really is. In **De Rooi – Kramer**, Beverwijk 1962, closing one diagonal was simply not enough.

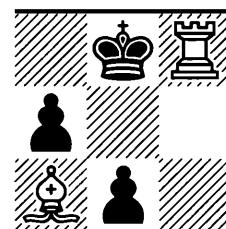


1.g4 ♕e8 mate

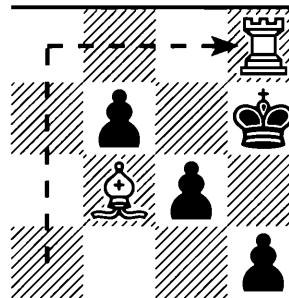


Mate with rook and bishop

In contrast to the queen, all the other pieces usually have to co-operate in order to give mate. Recognizing the typical pattern of these mates will also give you ideas for combinations.



This is a common position of a rook and bishop mate.

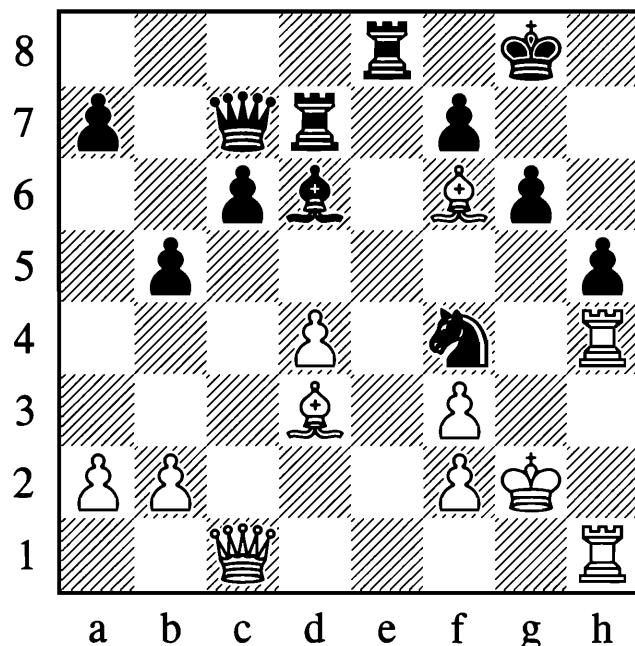


The rook can strike the king from the back rank, too.

In the following diagram White's bishop is controlling that all-important diagonal. Furthermore, he has already doubled his rooks on the h-file. If the black h-pawn disappeared, he could give mate at once. But the pawn is there, and it is defended by the black knight, however White is able to eliminate the defender of this vital pawn:

Blackburne – Schwarz

Berlin 1881

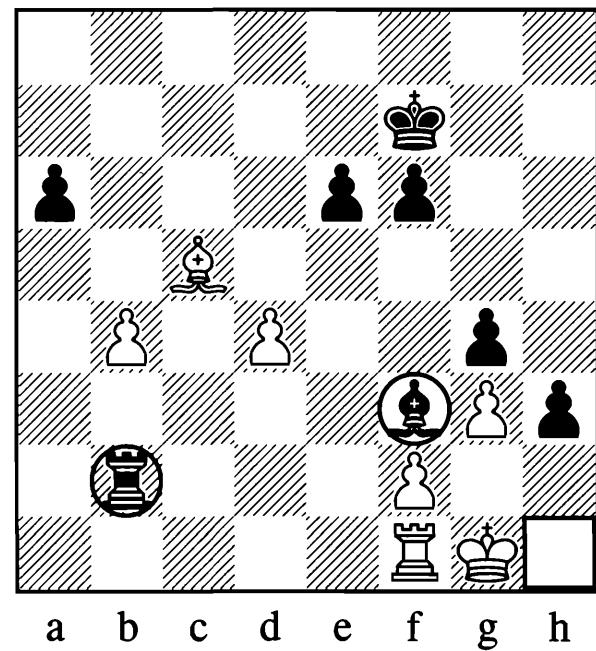


1. $\mathbb{W}xf4!$

Although Black will take the queen and White has to sacrifice another rook on h5, Black has no way of stopping White from giving mate on the h-file with the remaining rook.

Recognizing the basic pattern of the mate made it possible for White to realize that he could sac queen and rook in order to win. The thing to remember here is the co-operation between rook and bishop. The bishop defends the rook from outside as the rook enters the lion's den to give mate (1... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ 2. $\mathbb{R}xh5$ $gxh5$ 3. $\mathbb{R}xh5$ with mate to follow).

This is a position from **Letelier – Smyslov**, Havana 1967:



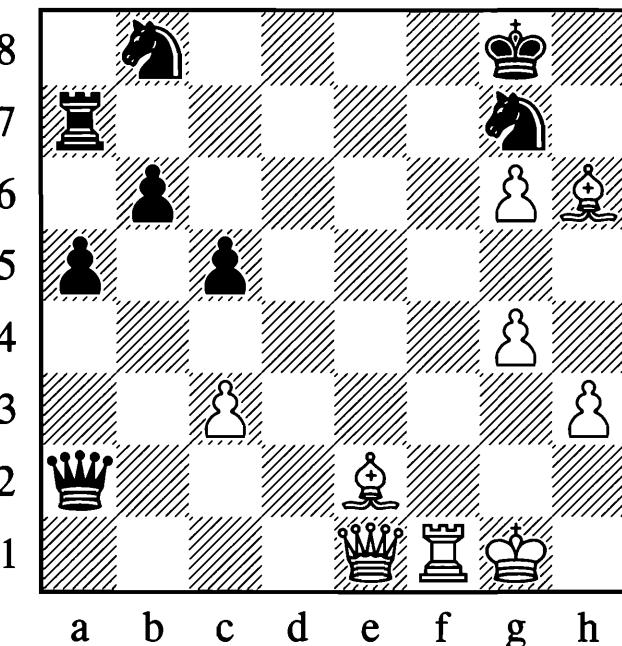
The circles on the board mark the important ingredients for a rook and bishop mate. One element, the bishop poking through the window, is already there. The only thing Black has to accomplish is opening the h-file – the gate – to enter the white king's castle. So Smyslov played:

1...a5! 2.bxa5 h2†

White resigned. Nothing is going to stop the black rook from travelling via b8 and h8 to h1, as White's king will not have enough time to evacuate the danger zone.

Chigorin – N.N.

St Petersburg 1894



You don't have to be a grandmaster to predict White's next move.

1. $\mathbb{Q}c4†!$

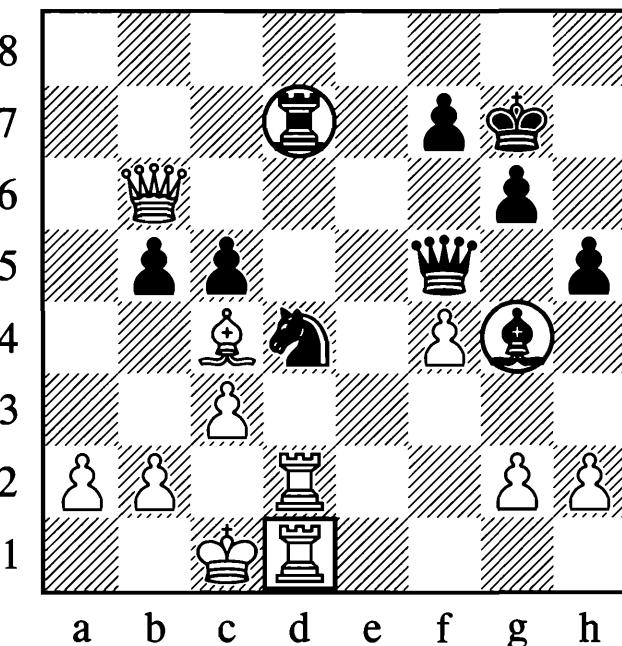
Best, as it forces mate.

1... $\mathbb{W}xc4$

1... $\mathbb{R}f7$ 2. $gxf7†$ with mate to follow.

2. $\mathbb{W}e8† \mathbb{Q}xe8$ 3. $\mathbb{R}f8$ mate

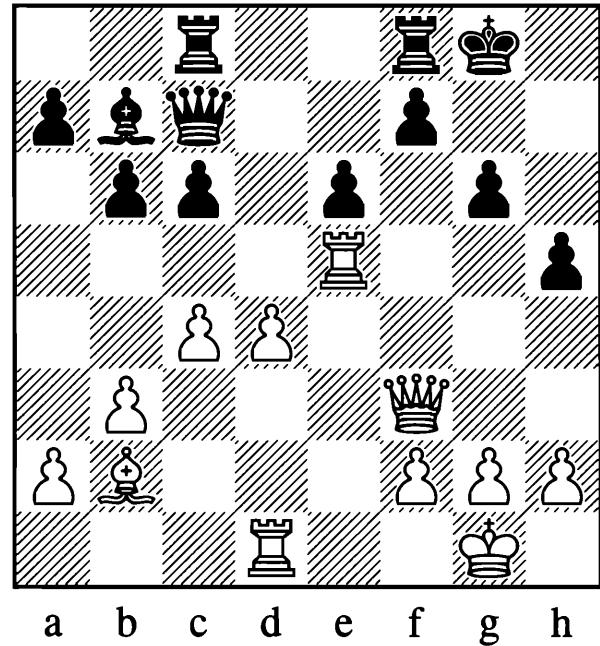
After recognizing the basic pattern of the rook and bishop mate (the bishop seems to keep the rook on a long leash) in **Driksna – Strautins**, Correspondence 1968, it is easy to find the solution to this little problem.



1... $\mathbb{W}c2\#!!$ 2. $\mathbb{B}xc2$ $\mathbb{Q}b3\#$

Whether White takes the knight or not, the black rook strikes with mate.

In the next example, **Larsson – Andersson**, Sweden 1972, all the dark squares around the king are weak.



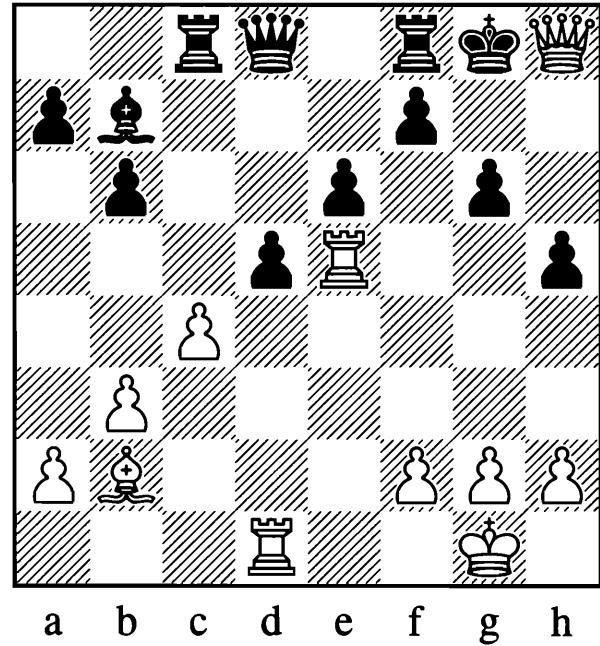
White is able to use them for a tactical operation and Black cannot prevent this as he has lost all control over the dark squares. Where is Black's dark-squared bishop? Without it, Black's prospects look rather grim.

1.d5!

A pawn break that opens a line for the bishop.

1...cxd5 2. $\mathbb{W}f6$ $\mathbb{W}d8$ 3. $\mathbb{W}h8\#!$

Making use of a discovered attack, in fact a double check, White creates another rook and bishop mate:



Black resigned because of 3... $\mathbb{K}xh8$ 4. $\mathbb{W}xh5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 5. $\mathbb{W}h8$ mate.

The knowledge of the pattern indicated the solution. This approach of starting to calculate the correct route from an aim (for example a mate) is an effective method (and we shall examine it further).

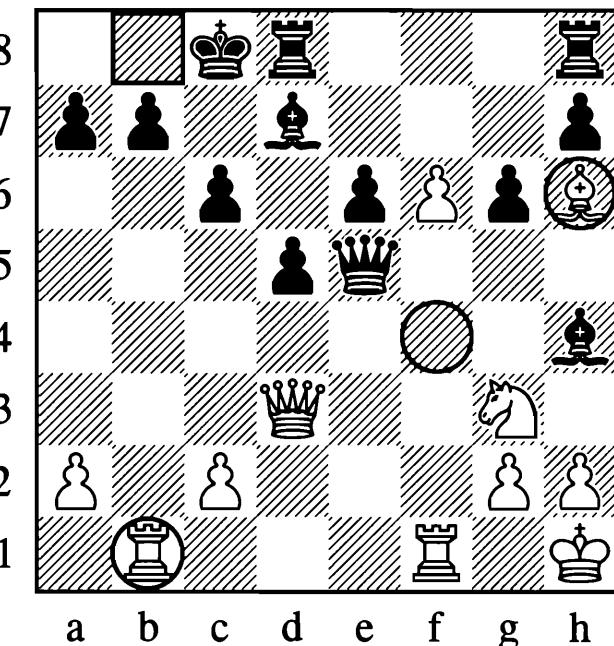
This position shows that sometimes you shouldn't only consider the mere realities of the current position. Search for and start out with a target.

In the above position the e5-rook ends up diagonally on h8. So ignore the laws of chess for a moment when looking for a profitable target. It might turn out you are able to achieve your goal even if it doesn't seem possible. The above position suggests the motto:

Move your rooks diagonally!

Estrin – Rudensky

USSR 1947



1. $\mathbb{Q}f4$

White is not only attacking Black's queen but also starting to design a rook and bishop mate.

1... $\mathbb{W}xf6$

One element of the mechanism is already there: the bishop is staring into the king's position (note how the bishop controls the king's escape squares).

With the sacrifice of the queen on a6, the second element is created: an open road for the rook to enter.

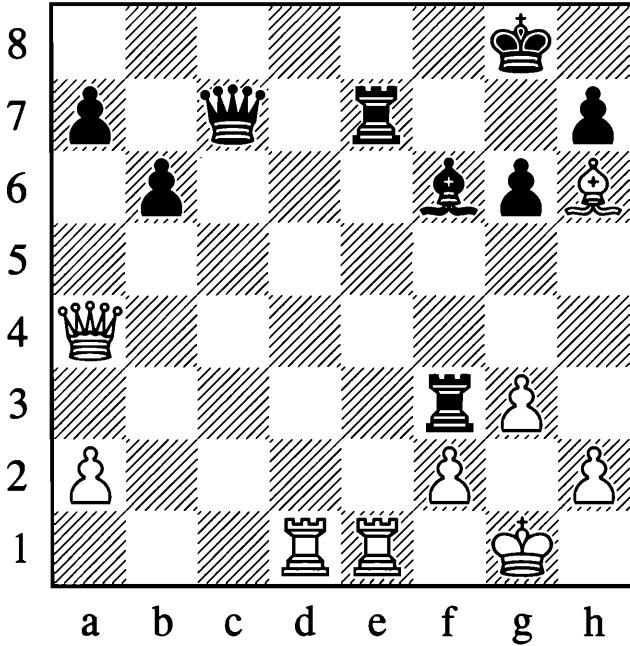
2. $\mathbb{Q}a6$ $bxa6$

2... $\mathbb{E}df8$ just prolongs the agony. Now it ends instantly:

3. $\mathbb{R}b8$ mate

Belov – Maslak

Irkutsk 2010



1. $\mathbb{W}c4\#!$

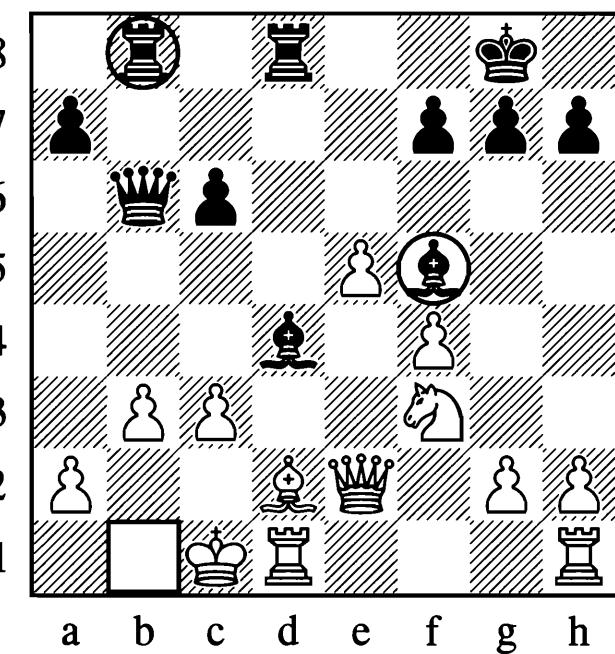
This fun move decoys the black queen away from its crucial role in defending d8.

White had an alternative that also won:
 1. $\mathbb{B}xe7?$! $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ (1... $\mathbb{W}xe7$ allows 2. $\mathbb{W}c4\#$ $\mathbb{W}f7$
 3. $\mathbb{W}c8\#$ with a quick mate) 2. $\mathbb{W}e8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 3. $\mathbb{B}d8$ $\mathbb{W}c5$ (or 3... $\mathbb{W}f7$ 4. $\mathbb{W}e2$ with heavy material gains) 4. $\mathbb{W}e6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 5. $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{B}f7$ 6. $\mathbb{B}xf8\#!$ $\mathbb{B}xf8$ 7. $\mathbb{W}b2\#$ And mate follows.

1... $\mathbb{W}xc4$ 2. $\mathbb{B}d8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 3. $\mathbb{B}f8\#$
 1–0

Rosanes – Anderssen

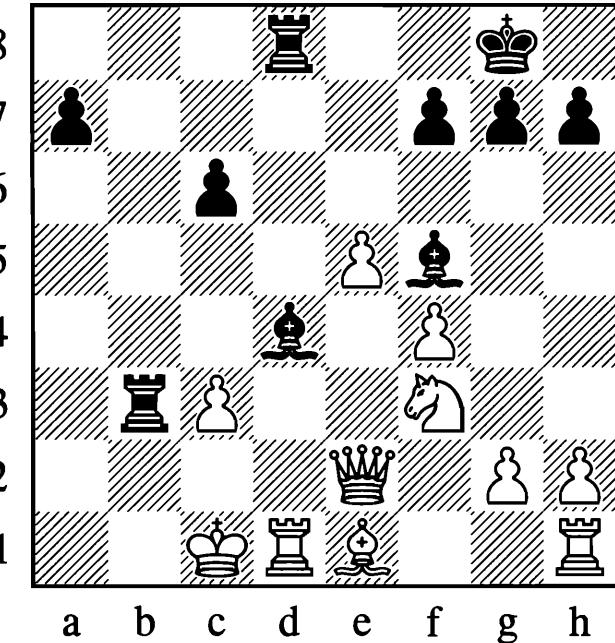
Breslau 1862



1... $\mathbb{W}xb3!$

Anderssen spotted the potential mating pattern and sacrifices his queen to make it a reality.

2. $a xb3$ $\mathbb{B}xb3$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}e1$



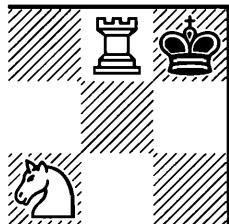
The d2-square is free, so it looks as if White will be able to run from the bill, but Black has one cracker left.

3... $\mathbb{Q}e3\#!$

4... $\mathbb{B}b1$ mate cannot be stopped.
 0–1

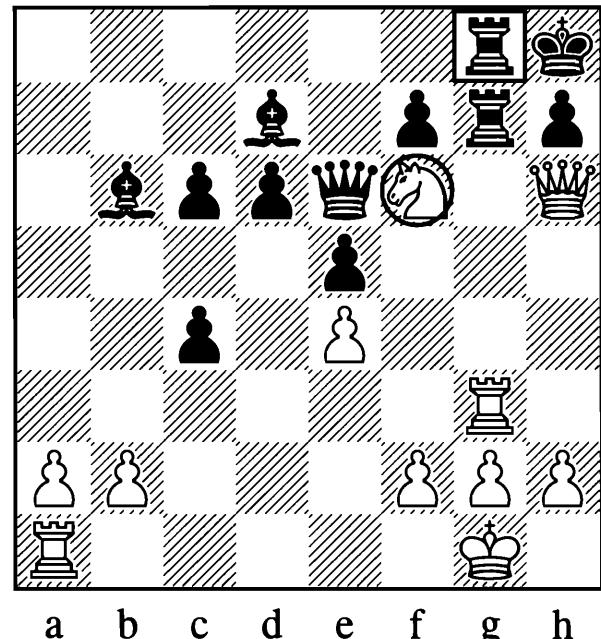
Mate with rook and knight

The combination of rook and knight offers many different patterns. But there is one pattern that can be considered to be the classic:



The king is pushed into the corner and the knight has control over two crucial squares: on g8 it is defending the rook and on h7 it cuts off the escape route of the king that the rook cannot control.

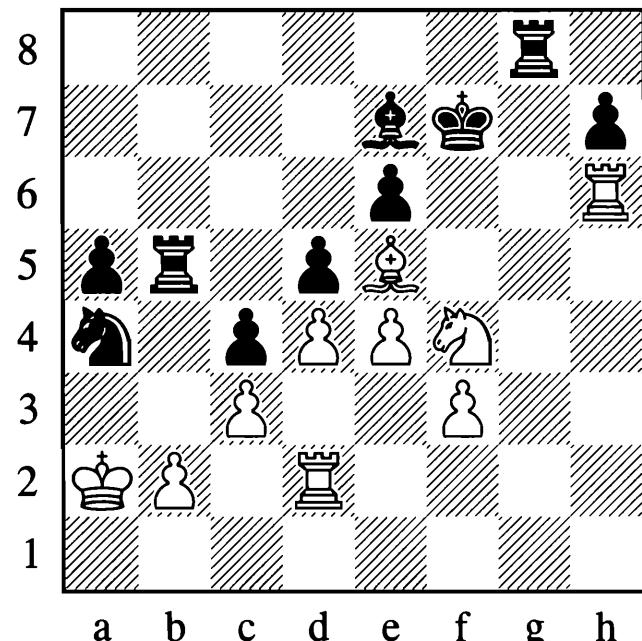
Post – Flamberg, Mannheim 1914, shows how things look in real-life chess.



1. $\mathbb{W}xh7\#$ $\mathbb{B}xh7$ 2. $\mathbb{R}xg8$ mate

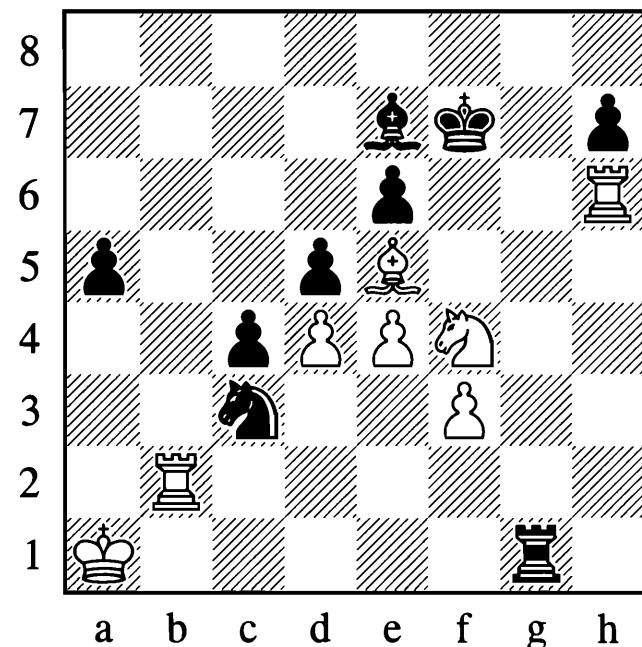
Some mating patterns are so well known that experienced players will spot them immediately upon looking at a position.

Rymler – Mikelait, East Germany 1974, reached this position:



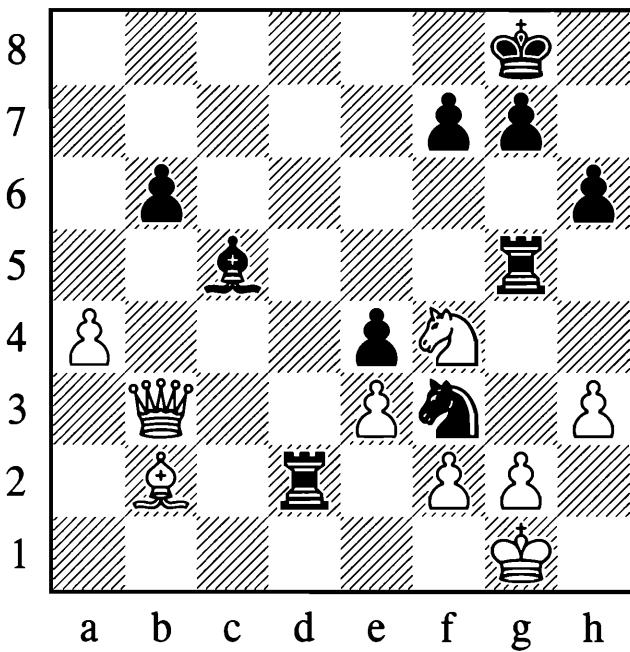
If the black knight gets to c3, the white rook will not be enough to stop the mate on b1, as Black will be attacking this square one time more than it is defended. So the only thing Mikelait had to do was destroy the defence of c3:

1... $\mathbb{B}xb2\#$ 2. $\mathbb{R}xb2$ $\mathbb{N}xc3\#$ 3. $\mathbb{K}a1$ $\mathbb{B}g1\#$



With mate next move.

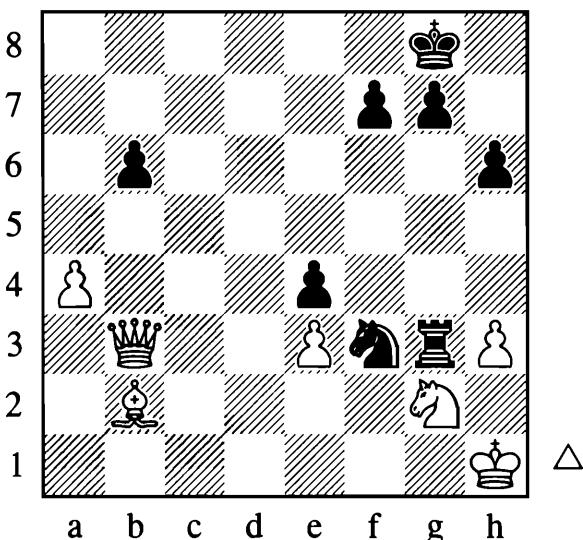
The next position is from **Sunye Neto – Kasparov**, Graz 1981:



Here White played

1.♕f1

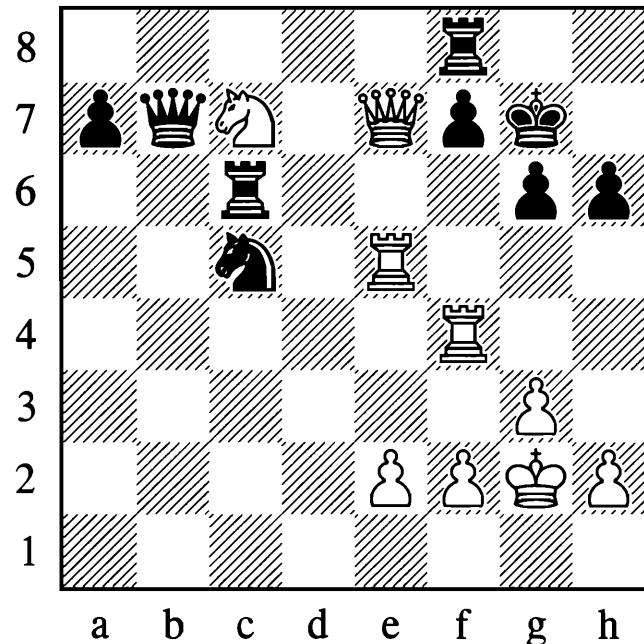
but still had to resign some moves later. What interests us is that 1.♔h1 would not have helped either on account of 1...♗xe3! 2.fxe3 ♜dxg2 3.♗xg2 ♜g3.



In this pretty variation Black threatens mate on h3 and if the white knight moves then it is mate on g1.

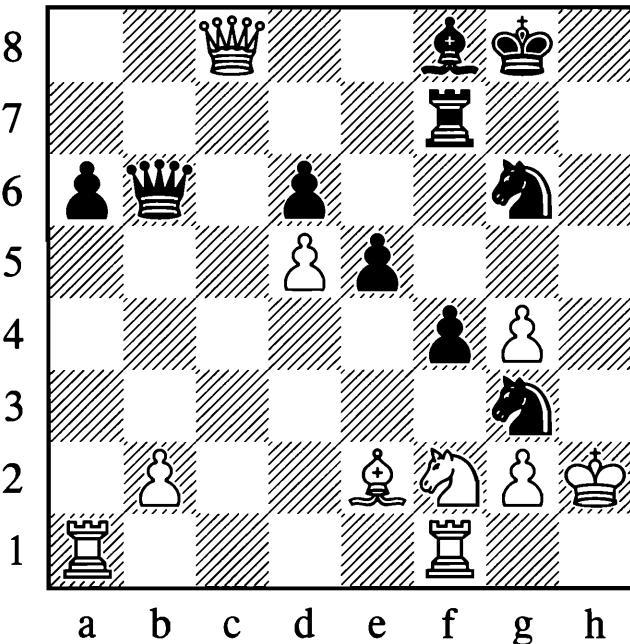
Bringing a knight to the sixth rank in combination with a rook often means trouble for your opponent.

Bringing a knight to the sixth (or third) rank in combination with a rook often means trouble for your opponent, as **Seidman** found out in Hollywood 1955, when he was Black against **Donald Byrne**.



**1.♘e8† ♔g8 2.♘f6† ♔g7 3.♖xf8† ♔xf8
4.♖e8† ♔g7 5.♖g8 mate**

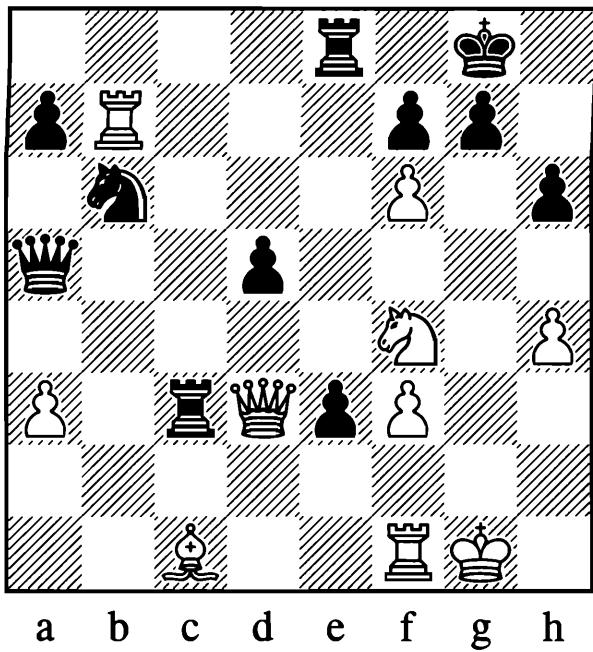
In this mating pattern other squares can be wonderful homes for the knight as well. Take a look at **Ermenkov – Lanka**, Jurmala 1978:



1...♜xf2!

If Lanka had found this move then White would have had to resign because of 2.♖xf2 ♜h7† 3.♔g1 ♜h1 mate. Instead Black played 1...♗xe2 and needed another 30 moves to win.

Next is a heavyweight clash from the sixties:
Bronstein – Geller, USSR 1961.



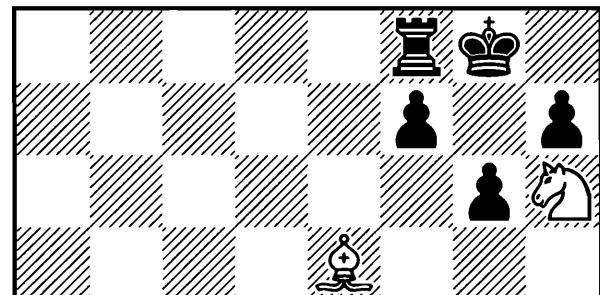
1. $\mathbb{W}g6!$

Black resigned. He would be mated after 1...fxg6 2. $\mathbb{B}xg7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ (or h8) 3. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$. Note that 1. $\mathbb{B}xf7$ was also mating, just more slowly.

Mate with bishop and knight

Mating with bishop and knight is more complicated when the kings are the only other pieces remaining on the board, although a mating method can be learned by heart, as the endgame books demonstrate. With other pieces still on the board the task may become considerably easier.

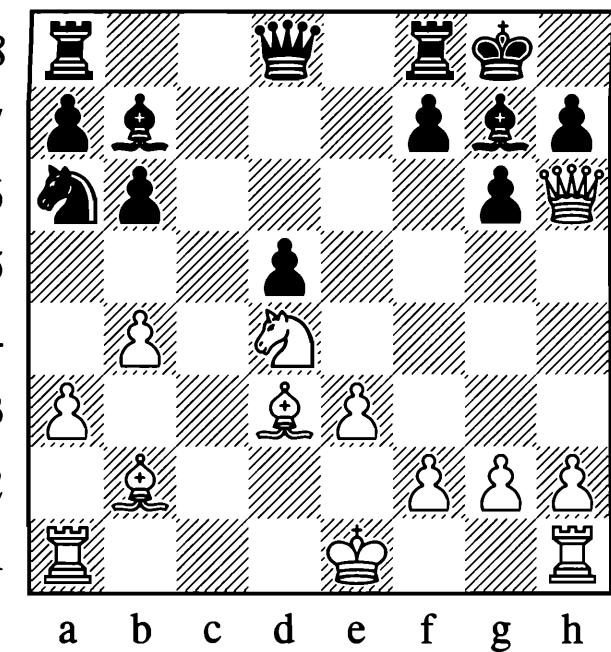
The most common form of a bishop and knight mate sees the bishop controlling the squares around the king, and the knight giving mate.



Quite often a discovered check by the knight gives the attacker the necessary tempo.

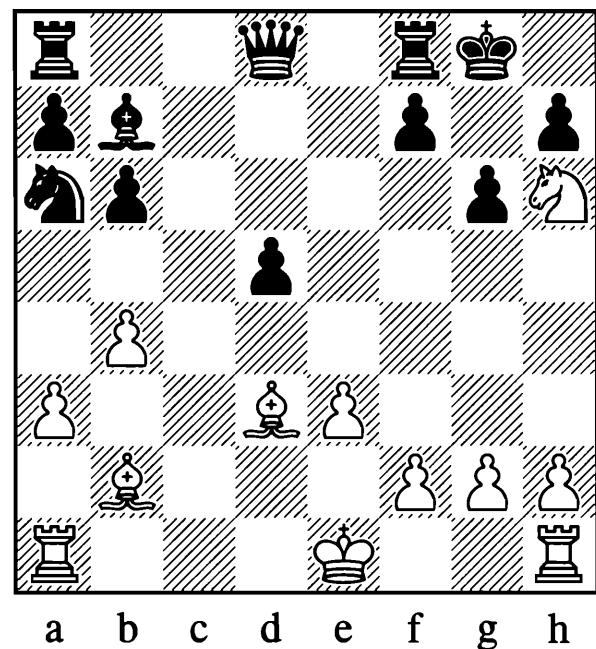
Cramer – Zilverberg

Leeuwarden 1992

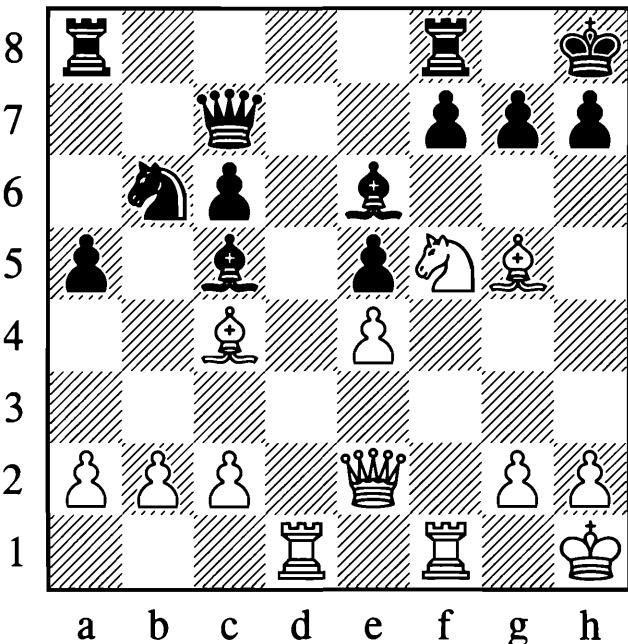


Black has just played ... $\mathbb{N}f6-g7$, which was a most unfortunate move as it allows a typical bishop and knight mate:

1. $\mathbb{W}xg7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 2. $\mathbb{N}f5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 3. $\mathbb{N}h6$ mate



The game **Stein – Portisch**, Stockholm 1962, has already caught our attention, but now we see the position a couple of moves earlier in the game. Here it is the threat of the bishop and knight mate that forces other fatal consequences:



1. $\mathbb{Q}xg7 \mathbb{Q}xc4$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}f6$

Now if 2... $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ we have our mate with 3. $\mathbb{Q}f5\#$ or 4. $\mathbb{Q}h6$. This is why Black played:

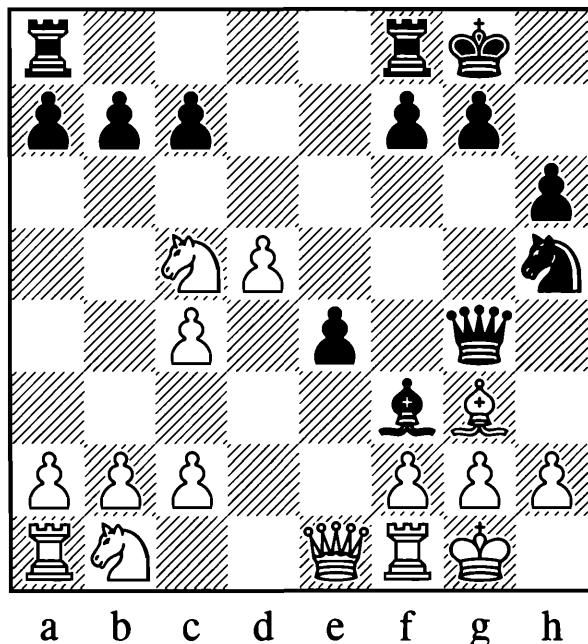
2... $\mathbb{Q}e7$

But after:

3. $\mathbb{W}f3$

Black resigned anyway. If he takes the bishop, White simply reloads on f6 and the discovered check of the knight becomes a motif again.

Quite often the h3- or h6-squares are cleared by sacrificing another piece (e.g. the queen). After the defender takes with the pawn he loses control over the critical square and the cavalry rides in with a final charge. Here is an example from **Fild – Tenner**, USA 1933, where Black sacs his queen.



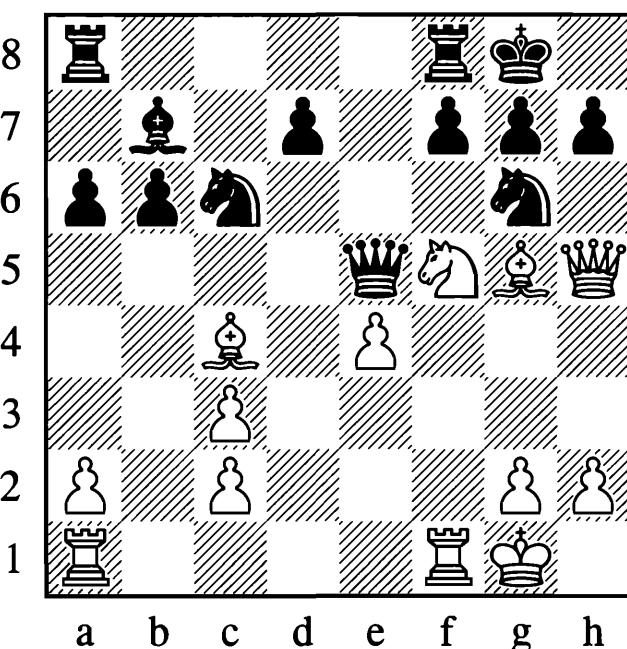
1... $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$

Or 2. $\mathbb{Q}xf3 \mathbb{W}h3$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ and mate on g2 cannot be averted.

2... $\mathbb{W}h3!$

If White takes the queen then 3... $\mathbb{Q}xh3$ mate, while if he takes the bishop then 3... $\mathbb{W}g2$ mate.

If the queen is collaborating with a bishop and knight, then even the gain of a tempo might not be enough to save the defender, as **Kinnmark – Strom**, Sweden 1955, illustrates:



1. $\mathbb{Q}f6!$

Now 1... $\mathbb{W}xf6$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}h6\#$ wins the queen and 1... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 2. $\mathbb{W}h6$ is also deadly, but instead Black does have a check:

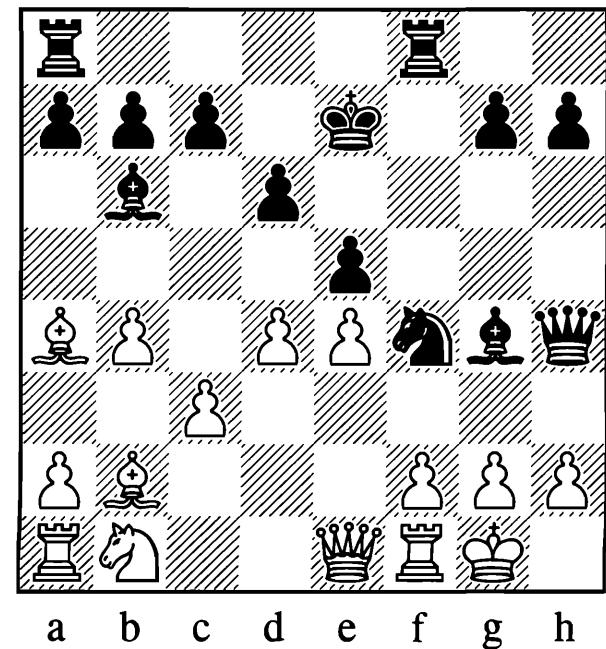
1... $\mathbb{W}c5\#$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}h1 \mathbb{W}xc4$ 3. $\mathbb{W}h6$

The attack has become overwhelming.

1–0

The most common form of a bishop and knight mate sees the bishop controlling the squares around the king, and the knight giving mate.

Here is another example of the apocalyptic trio at their best. This position is taken from a correspondence game between **Larsson – Erlandsson**, Sweden 1967.

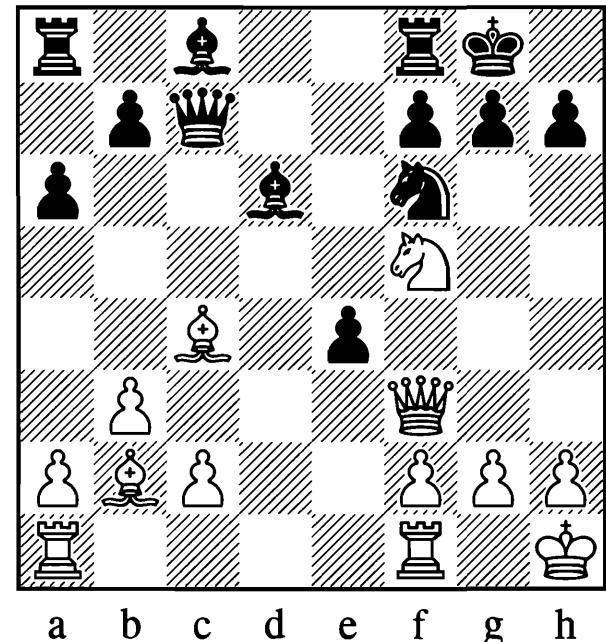


1...Wh3!

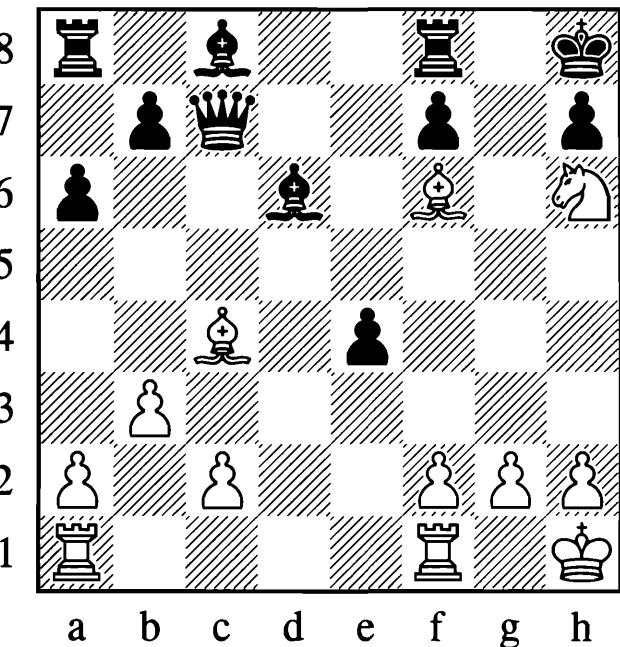
This made the two players stop exchanging postcards. After 2.gxh3 ♔f3! and mate with ...Qh3 cannot be stopped. White's queen and rook helpfully smother their king.

0–1

Sometimes, as in **Westerinen – Miyasaki**, Skopje (ol) 1972, it is the bishop and not the knight that kills the cat.

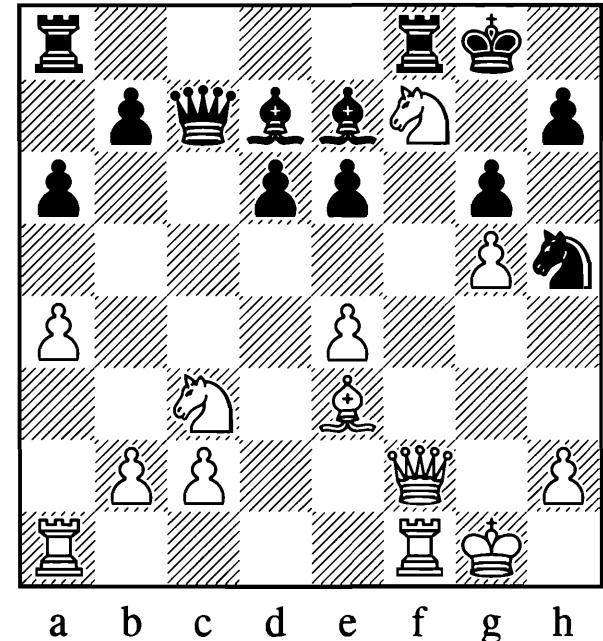


1.Qh6† ♔h8 2.Wxf6 gxf6 3.Qxf6 mate



A picture well worth remembering.

Sometimes the attacker, here this is White in **Geller – Anikaev**, USSR 1979, has to overcome several obstacles to give mate with bishop and knight. Nevertheless, the attacker can throw half a dozen pieces at his opponent, and if he reaches the critical position the game will be over and the material imbalance irrelevant.



The first problem for Geller in this position is to keep the d4-h8 diagonal open. So, in order to prevent Black closing it with ...e6-e5, he plays:

1.Qd5 exd5 2.Qh6† ♔g7

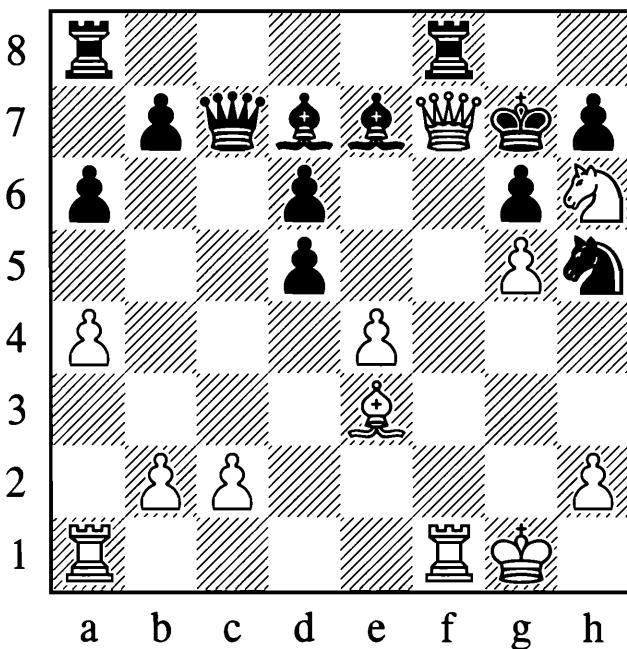
Now it is time to move in for the kill.

3. $\mathbb{W}f7\#!$

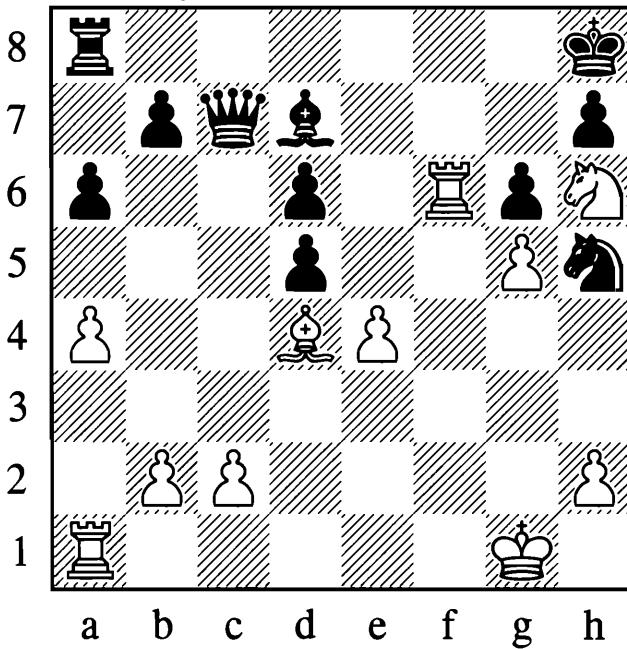
3. $\mathbb{Q}d4\#$ is also winning after 3... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xh6$, but more difficult to play. Geller invests his queen in order to eliminate the king's protector.

Drawing on mating patterns saves time and energy when it comes to calculating tactics against the enemy king. More importantly, they do not restrict your creativity in the game. Mating patterns are rather like cooking methods, and there is still plenty of scope for the chef to vary the ingredients and seasoning. This is where your creativity comes in.

So in our final example we see a slightly different design of mate with bishop and knight. In **Alekhine – Fletcher**, London (simul) 1928, one of the greatest chess chefs prepared his own specialty bishop and knight mate:

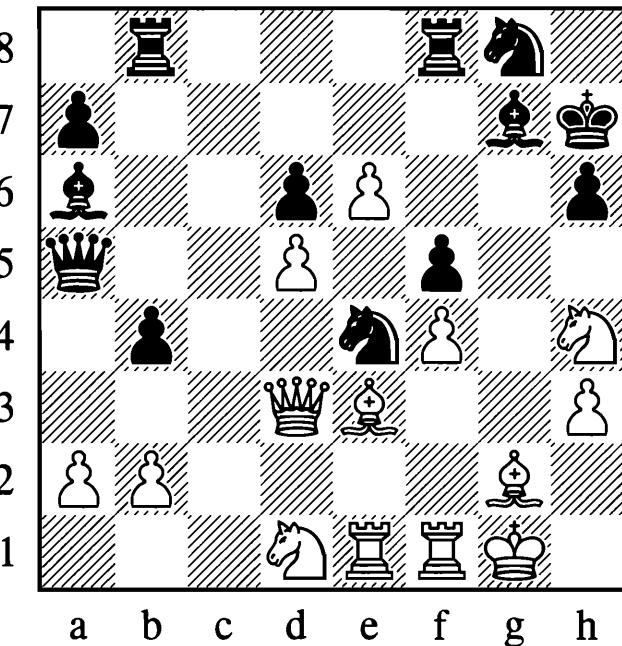


3... $\mathbb{B}xf7$ 4. $\mathbb{B}xf7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 5. $\mathbb{Q}d4\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 6. $\mathbb{B}xf6!$

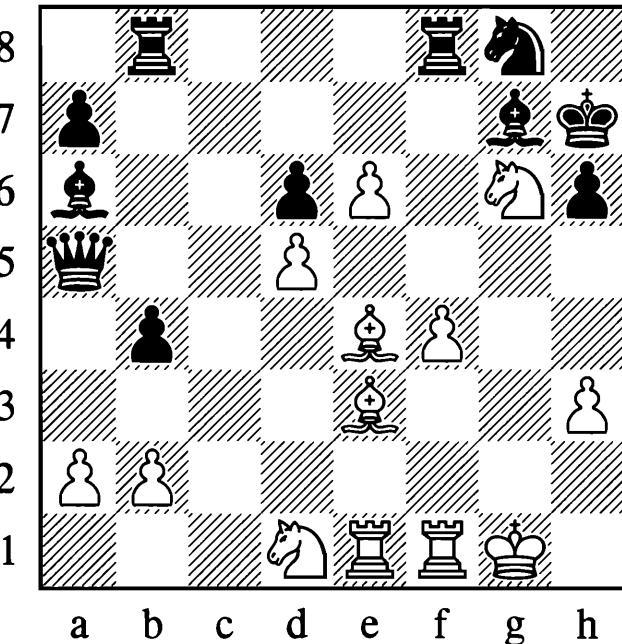


Black is lost, as taking the rook with the knight would run into 7. $\mathbb{B}xf6$ mate. Meanwhile, the main threat is 7. $\mathbb{B}f8$ mate. The only move to delay the end is 6... $\mathbb{Q}g7$, when White wins with 7. $\mathbb{B}f7$. For example, 7... $\mathbb{B}g8$ 8. $\mathbb{Q}xg7\#$ $\mathbb{B}xg7$ 9. $\mathbb{B}f8\#$ and mate next move.

1–0



1. $\mathbb{W}xe4$ $\mathbb{fxe4}$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xe4\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}g6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$

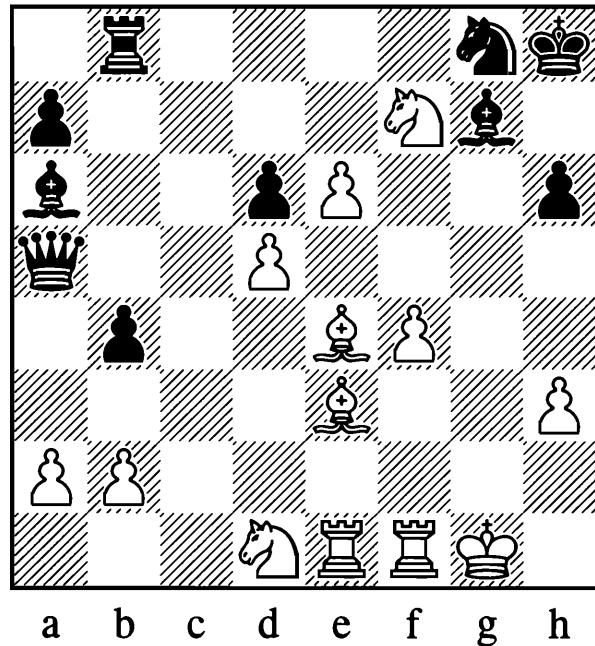


Now the defender of the crucial f7-square is taken out of the game.

4.♕xf8† ♜h8 5.♘g6† ♜h7 6.♘e5†

A discovered check to gain the final tempo.

6...♜h8 7.♘f7 mate



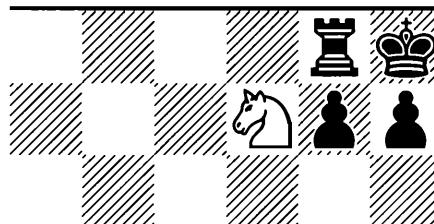
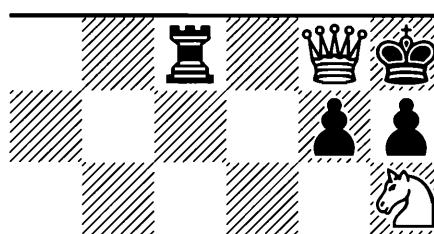
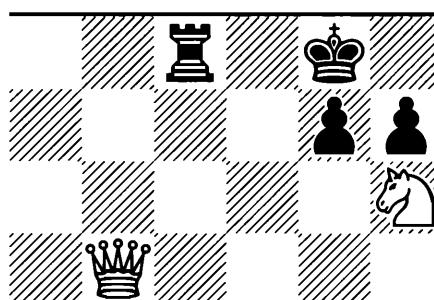
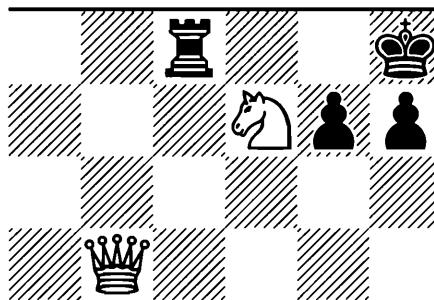
If you look at the diagram of the initial position for this combination you can see that at the beginning there was the idea that a check on the b1-h7 diagonal might be lethal for Black. Now that you had the fundamental idea, it was not too difficult to calculate the rest, especially with the mating pattern in mind. Without recognition of the basic idea and some calculation, you might have been under the impression that the white queen had to simply move away and give up the exchange. Only the mating pattern gave the idea that White can sacrifice the queen.

Mate with queen and knight (smothered mate)

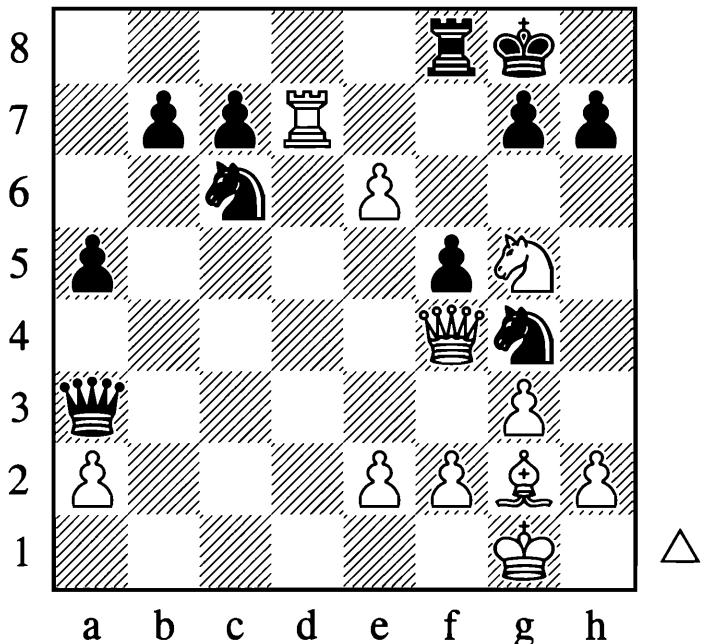
In the bishop and knight mate we could of course replace the bishop with a queen, as the queen moves diagonally as well. But the queen and knight can also perform a special trick that is especially pleasing: smothered mate. The knight, by discovering a check,

gains control over a square a second time. The queen is sacrificed, and the piece that captures the queen takes away the last breathing space of the king, then the knight gives mate.

As usual, pictures are faster than words, so the following four diagrams show the four steps towards the final pattern.



The fact that this mating pattern is famous does not mean that every chess player will manage to defend against it, and sometimes even a world class player can be caught. Look what happened in **Timman – Short**, Tilburg 1990.

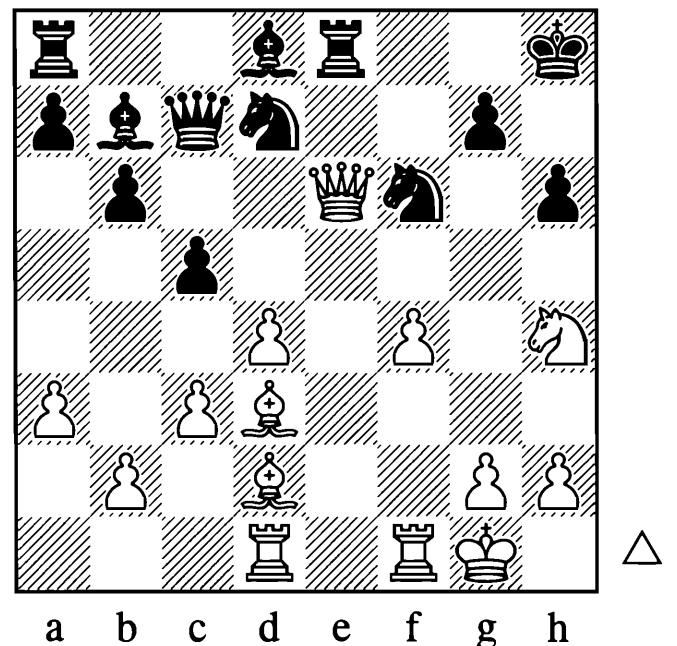


1. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $bxc6$ 2. $e7$ $\mathbb{B}e8$ 3. $\mathbb{W}c4\#$

The king must die (see the mating pattern above).

1–0

A game by Alekhine will be the next illustration of the pattern. In a simultaneous display in Breslau in 1933 he found a clever solution for the following position.

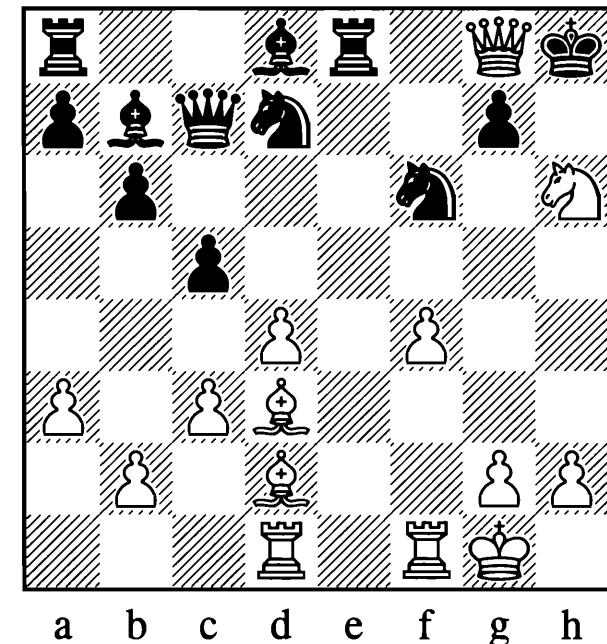


1. $\mathbb{Q}g6\#$ $\mathbb{K}h7$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}e5\#$ $\mathbb{K}h8$

Black's choices were rather grim: 2... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ loses material and 2... $g6$ runs into a mate.

3. $\mathbb{Q}f7\#$ $\mathbb{K}g8$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}xh6\#$ $\mathbb{K}h8$ 5. $\mathbb{W}g8\#$

Finally!



5... $\mathbb{B}xg8$ 6. $\mathbb{Q}f7$ mate

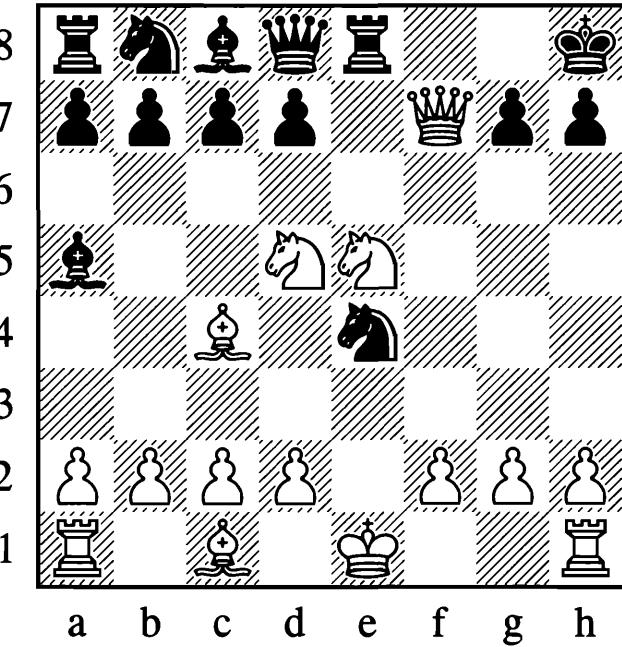
Note that the bishop on d3 controls the black king's only escape square.

With the last diagram in mind, let's take a final look at the characteristics of this pattern:

- The knight gains the tempo to get to its final square with a discovered check on the king.
- A queen or a bishop controls the crucial diagonal.
- The queen sacrifice takes away the king's breathing space.

The fact that a mating pattern is famous does not mean that every chess player will manage to defend against it, and sometimes even a world class player can be caught.

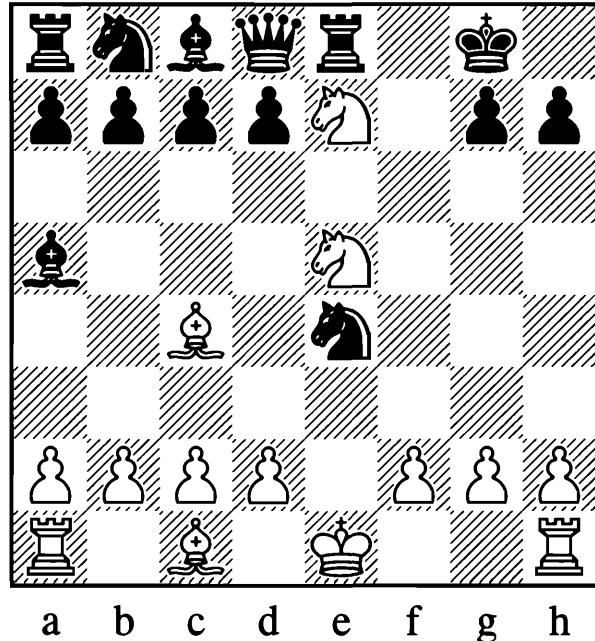
The last example for this pattern, taken from the game **Owen – Vishniakov**, Russia 1904, shows a variation of the already familiar theme. It should remind you that sometimes you have to be a little more creative in order to draw any reward from your knowledge of a mating pattern.



1. $\mathbb{N}g8\#!$

This brings the king onto the same diagonal as the c4-bishop, gaining the chance for a discovered check by the d5-knight. Obviously 1... $\mathbb{B}xg8$ does not work because of 2. $\mathbb{Q}f7$ mate.

1... $\mathbb{Q}xg8$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}e7\#$



2... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}7g6\# h \times g 6$

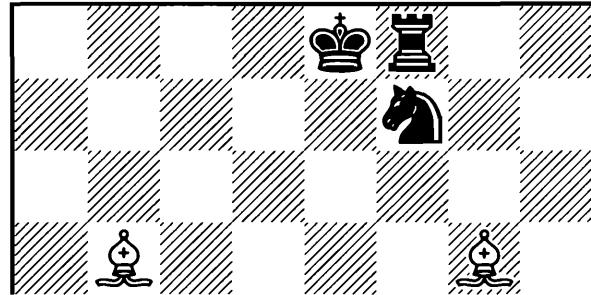
Now White simply reloads with:

4. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ mate

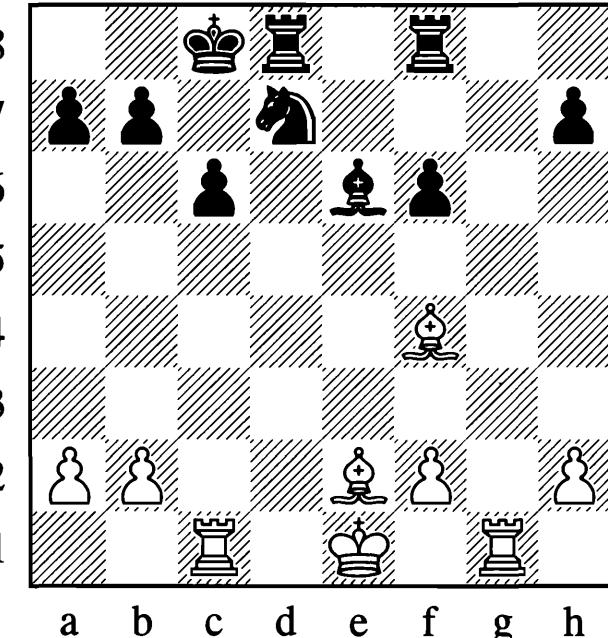
Mate with two bishops (criss-cross mate)

Since the two bishops each control diagonals and squares of a different colour, they usually create an almost identical mating pattern.

They often control a box of four squares in which the king is mated.



As is always the case with the bishop, a queen can replace it. And now let's see an example of how this mate happens in practice:



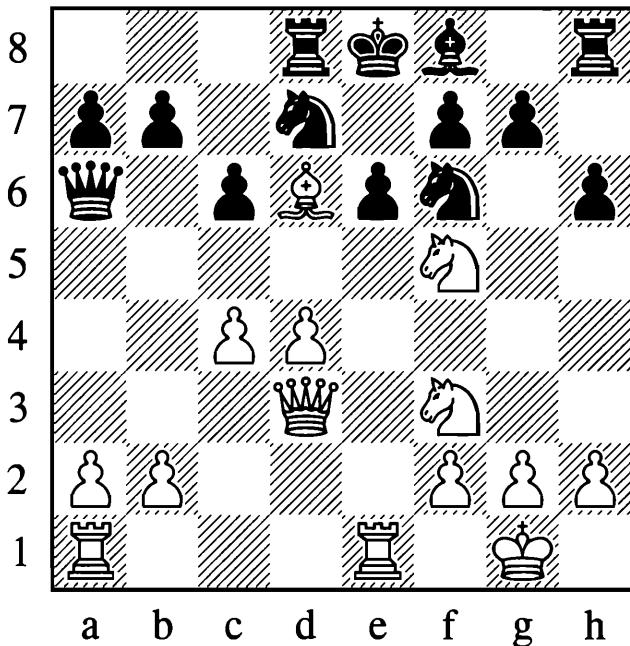
In **Karlsson – Rodgaard**, Sweden 1978, White happily sacrificed the rook with:

1. $\mathbb{R}xc6\#!$

As he had seen that after 1... $b \times c 6$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}a6$ was mate. This image is also known as Boden's Mate.

1–0

The initial idea for this mate, especially with more complicated examples, is often the control over two squares next to the enemy king by a bishop. The starting point for calculating is the mating pattern with two bishops, and often the second diagonal for the bishop (or queen) has to be opened by force, as in **Klitsch – Gratschal**, East Germany 1948:



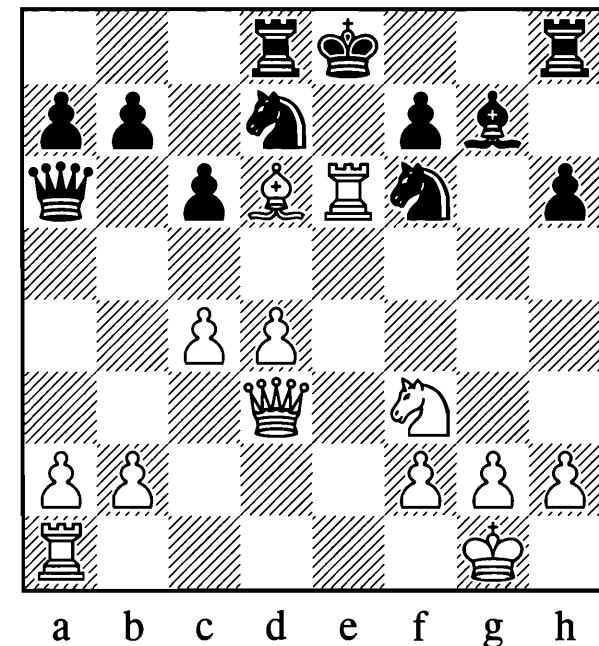
The initial idea is that a check on the h5-e8 diagonal could be mate.

1. $\mathbb{Q}xg7\#!$

Deflecting the bishop and opening a line for the queen to go to g6.

1... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 2. $\mathbb{B}xe6\#!$

Opening the crucial diagonal by force.



2...fxe6

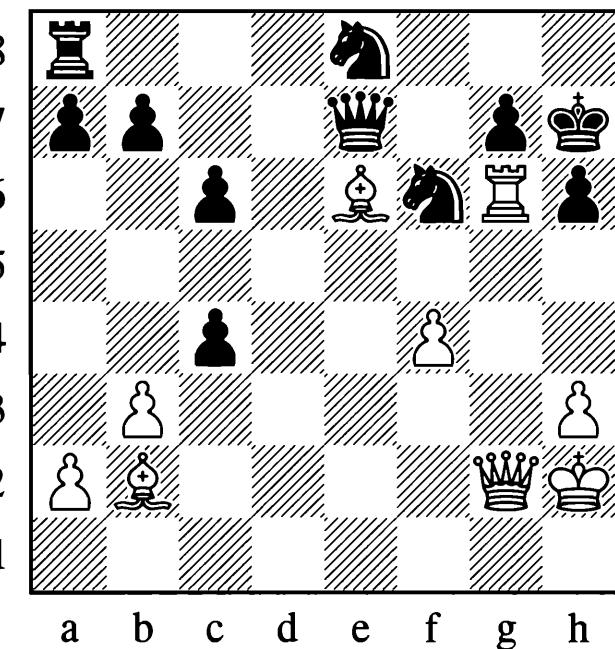
And finally:

3. $\mathbb{W}g6$ mate

Sometimes, in order to find the solution, you have to imagine a clogged-up diagonal clearing dramatically:

Bauer – Golner

Berlin 1956



1. $\mathbb{B}xh6\#!!$ $\mathbb{Q}xh6$

Or 1... $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ 2. $\mathbb{W}g5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 3. $\mathbb{W}h4\#$ and now 3... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 4. $f5$ mate, or 3... $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 4. $\mathbb{W}xh5$ mate.

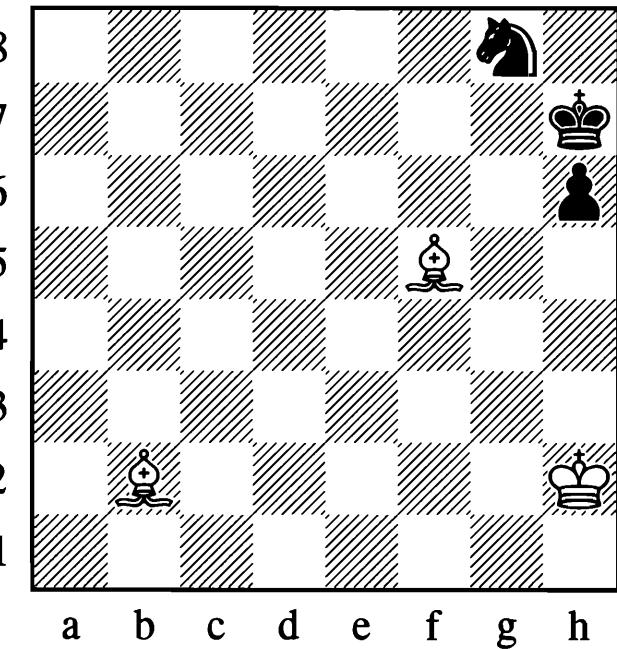
2. $\mathbb{W}g8\#$

Taking away an escape square from the king and opening the decisive diagonal at the same time.

2... $\mathbb{Q}xg8$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}f5$ mate

Since the two bishops each control diagonals and squares of a different colour, they usually create an almost identical mating pattern.

The previous example showed once again the necessity of recognizing a pattern in its simple form before starting to calculate the combination. Only with the desired position clearly pictured in your mind's eye will you find the moves required to make it happen. The next diagram shows what you should have imagined:

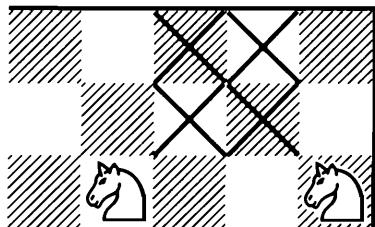


With a bishop on f5 it is mate. The only thing you have to do now is to change the initial position to match your dream position.

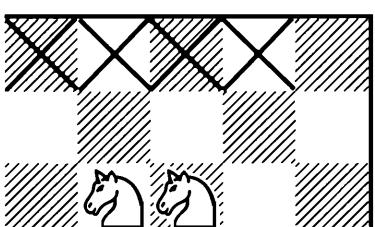
Mate with two knights

You may already know that mate with two knights against a lone king can only be achieved when the defending side helps with bad moves. But with chessmen around the king a mate with two knights is not so difficult to accomplish. There are two theoretical possibilities.

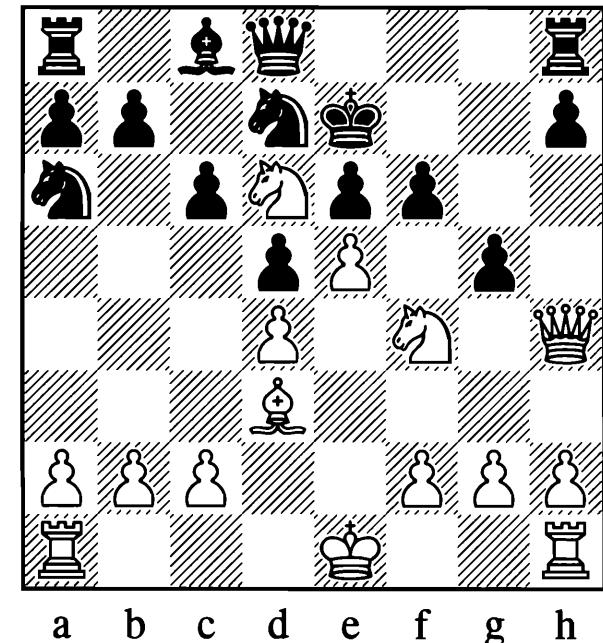
The first is when the two knights cover four squares in the shape of a box.



The second possibility is when they control four squares on one rank or file



The first possibility is a rare bird in tournament chess but occasionally it is sighted, as in Amsterdam in 1902 when **Speyer** played **Couvee**.



1. $\mathbb{W}xh7\#$

To get rid of the defender of g6.

1... $\mathbb{B}xh7$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}g6$ mate

In this position it was not essential to recognize a pattern. In this case it was enough to know that e8 and f7 are controlled by one knight, and e7 and f8 by the other. Interestingly enough, knights do control diagonals, but only very short ones! This thought could be useful in a game if you are searching for a possible way to control two neighbouring diagonal squares. Remember: chess is a visual game!

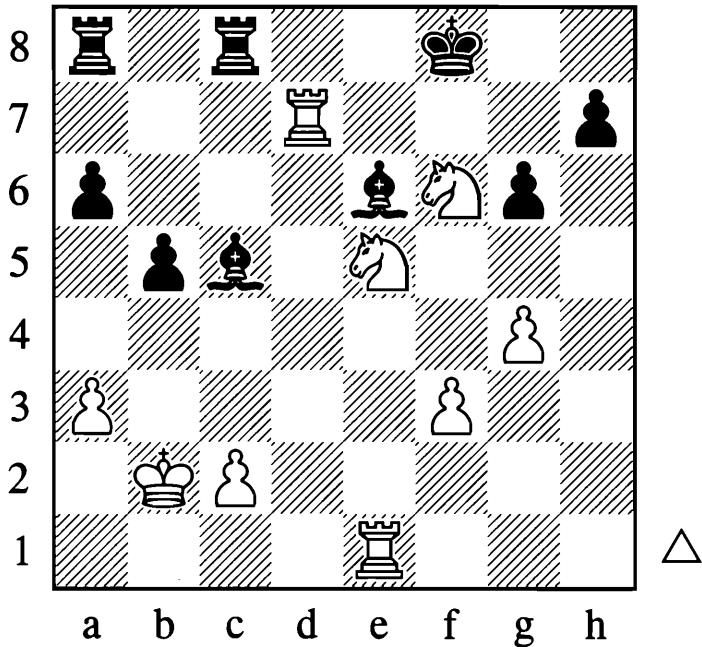
There are countless mates with two knights. They do need the help of other pieces: friendly pieces from their own side or ‘persuaded’ pieces from the enemy. As we already know, two knights and a king against a king is an endgame with no winner.

Often the knights need the kind of help found in smothered or semi-smothered mates. In Chapter 11 we will study the technique of taking away the king’s flight squares.

Nevertheless, when looking at mate with the knights, contrary to most mating patterns, it is not important to visualize specific patterns. Instead try to appreciate their power to control squares around the king.

Liss – Kahn

Budapest 1995



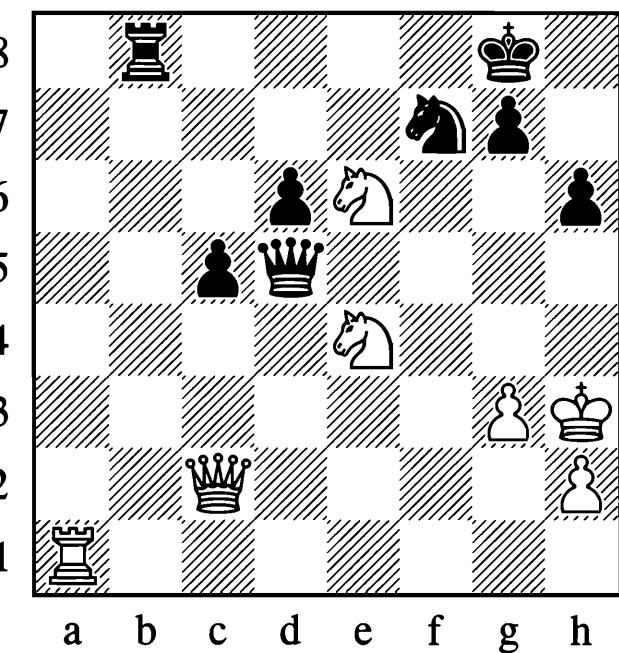
It is easy to see that if the e5-knight could safely move to g6 it would be mate, because the combined knights control all the king's squares on the back rank. Therefore:

1. $\mathbb{Q}xh7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ mate

The last example of this kind does not show a mate by two knights, but rather their domination of squares around the king, which leads to a different mate:

Ulibin – Bezold

Stockholm 1999



1. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$!

The powerful influence of the knights spells mate, but this time by the queen: 1...gxf6 2. $\mathbb{W}g6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 3. $\mathbb{W}g7$ mate, or 1... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 2. $\mathbb{W}h7$ mate.

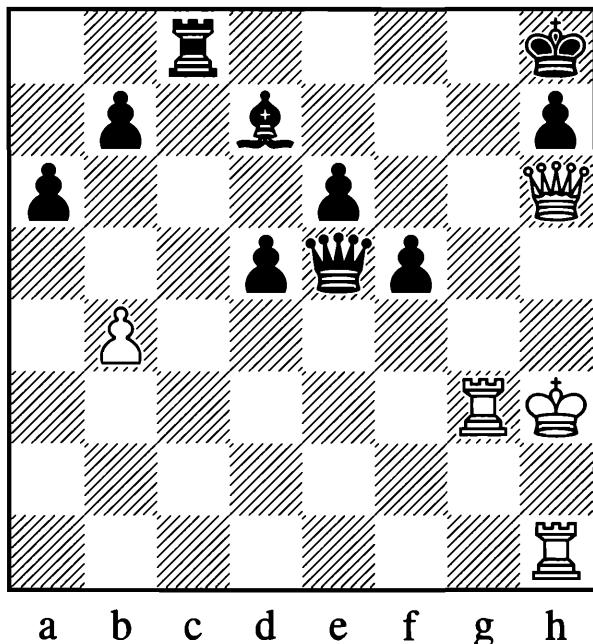
1–0

Mate with two rooks

This mating pattern is rather easy to see, as two parallel lines controlled by two rooks can be mate. Typically this pattern must be used on the edge of the board if there are no other pieces or pawns available to prevent the attacked king from escaping. The benefit of the edge of the board is obvious: there is no need to control a third parallel line, as the king cannot escape to the i-file.

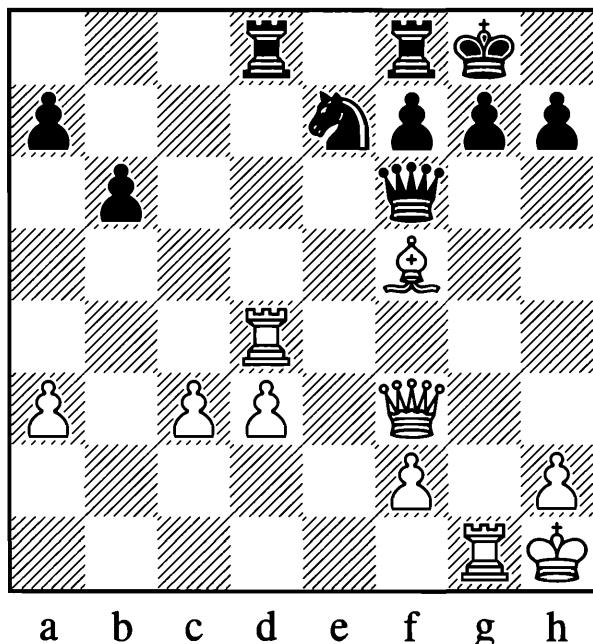
The position Speyer vs. Couvee, "Amsterdam 1902" (previous page), has been assigned to wildly different countries, dates and tournaments in various sources. In this way chess "history" is as open for discussion as "real" history.

Here is an example from **Pillsbury – Maroczy**, Paris 1900:



1. $\mathbb{Wxh7\#}$ 2. $\mathbb{Qg2}$ mate

The problem with this pattern is not spotting it, but using it in association with other tactical motifs. Take a look at the position from **Cembaev – Smit**, USSR 1973:



1. $\mathbb{Qxh7\#}$

1... $\mathbb{Qh8}$ would also lead to a double rook mate.

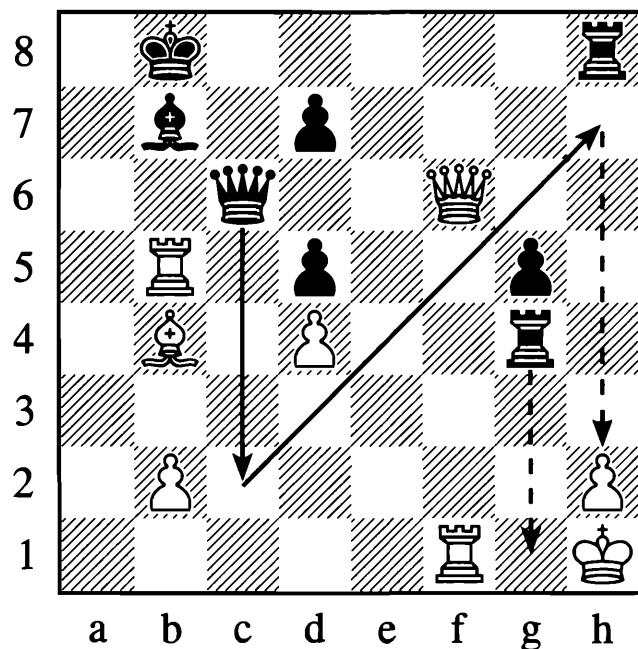
2. $\mathbb{Wxf6 gxf6}$ 3. $\mathbb{Qh4}$ mate

As with the two-bishop pattern, a rook can of course be replaced by a queen. But the queen's

ability to move diagonally as well naturally gives her additional options.

Malevinsky – Gefenas

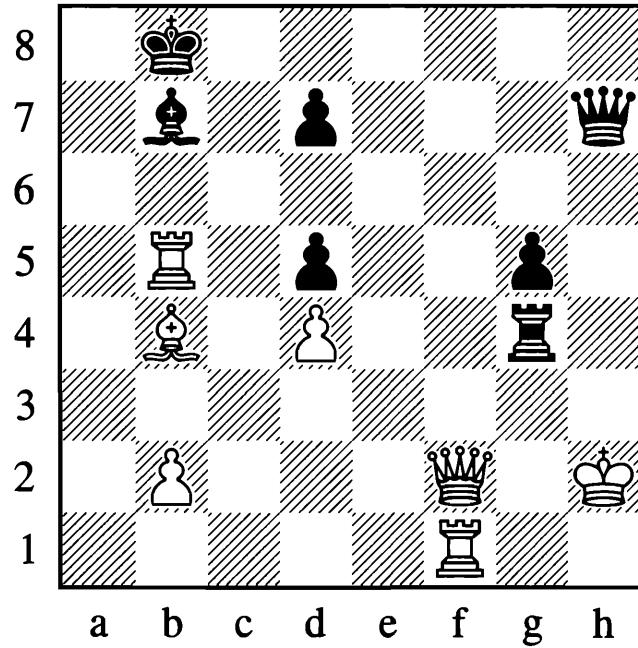
USSR 1978



1... $\mathbb{Rxh2\#!!}$

This rook sacrifice allows the black queen to make an impressive journey.

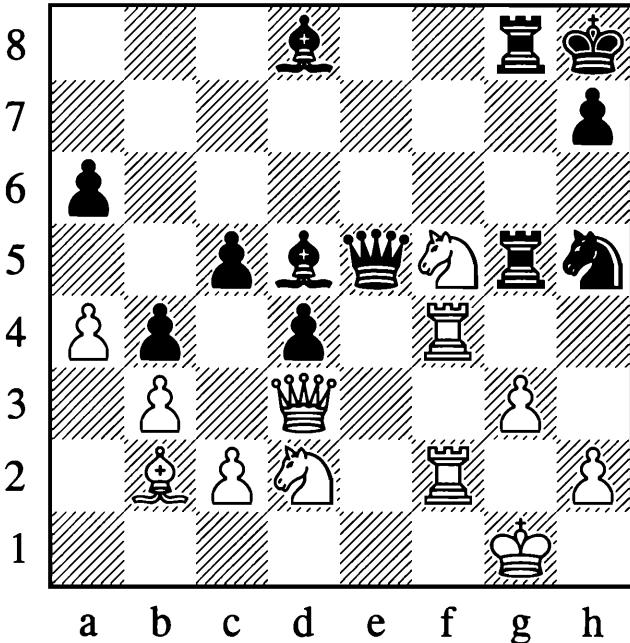
2. $\mathbb{Qxh2 Wc2\#}$ 3. $\mathbb{Wf2 Wh7\#}$



0–1

You may be surprised to find the next example in this category and not as an example of a back rank mate. However, it is a brilliant example of

how to start the calculation with the desired pattern as a focus. In **Tarrasch – Walbrodt**, Hastings 1895, Tarrasch started his tactical operation from this position:



1. $\mathbb{Q}xd4!$

The mating pattern is not easy to foresee as it only becomes possible after Black is forced to start his violent attack against g3.

1... $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ $\mathbb{Q}xg3\#$ 3. $h \times g 3$ $\mathbb{Q}xg3\#$
4. $\mathbb{Q}f1$

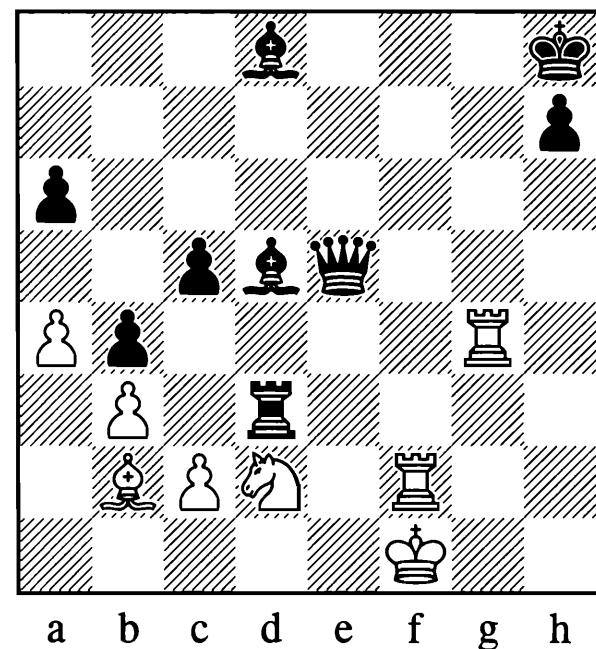
Black could not resist taking that juicy bite...

4... $\mathbb{Q}xd3$

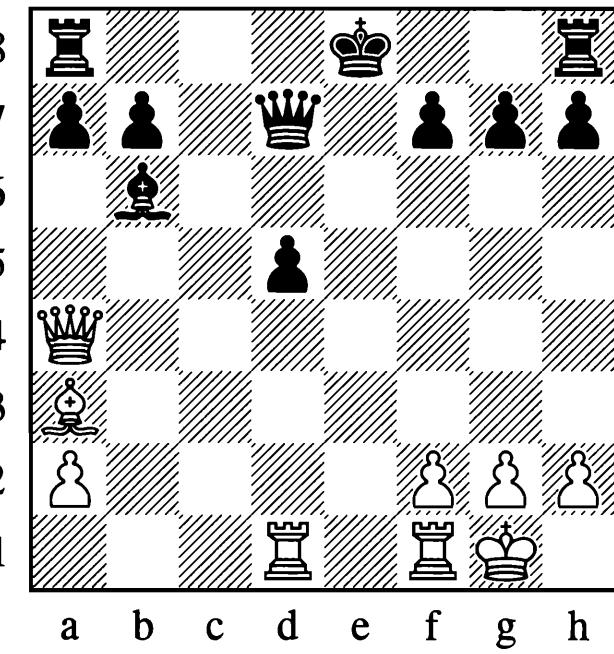
But had to accept that after:

5. $\mathbb{Q}g4!$

There is no escape from mate.



In **Lehmann – Blau**, Switzerland 1952, it looked as if the white queen was *en prise*.



1. $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$

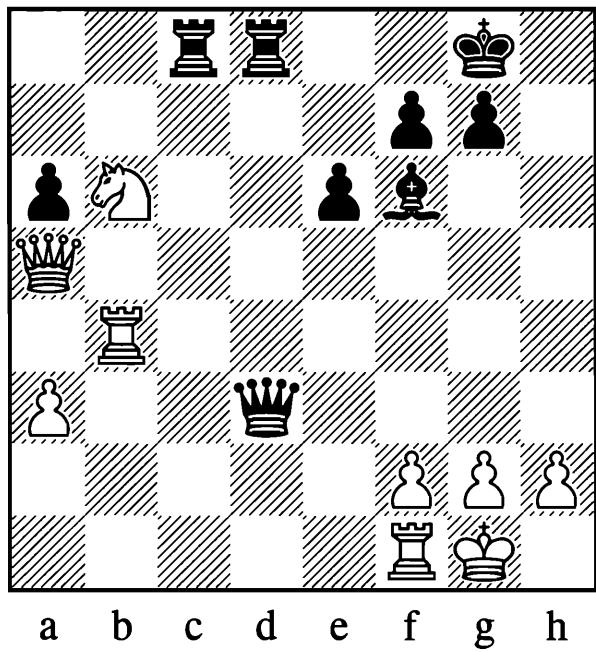
Remember the pin? (Black's queen can only move diagonally.) Together with our newly acquired motif it does the trick: the white queen is not needed because if 1... $\mathbb{W}xa4$ then 2. $\mathbb{Q}e1\#$ will soon result in mate.

The back rank mate

This pattern is created by a horizontal check by either rook or queen. Another essential ingredient is the unmoved pawn formation in front of the king. If a pawn has moved the back rank mate will need extra help to cover the escape square. Such an escape square is commonly known as a luft, which is an abbreviation of the German word *Luftloch*, meaning an air-hole: kings need to breathe!

The back rank pattern is not difficult to see. Consequently the recognition of the pattern is not what catches out the defender; it is his misplaced belief in the soundness of his defence of his back rank or the impression that the attacker would not be able to get to the back rank that leads to his downfall. Therefore, as in the case with a queen and king on the same file or diagonal, even the slightest inkling of a back rank mate should be enough to set off alarm bells.

Here is an example of an overoptimistic player who thought his back rank was sufficiently defended. In **Fontein – Euwe**, Amsterdam 1939, White found out that after:

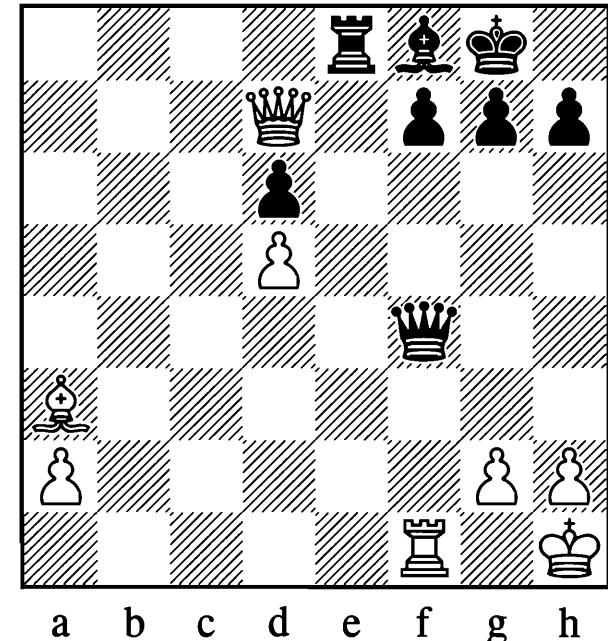


1...♝c1!!

Neither the f1-rook nor the back rank was sufficiently defended. Of course White cannot take on c1 because of mate on d1.

0–1

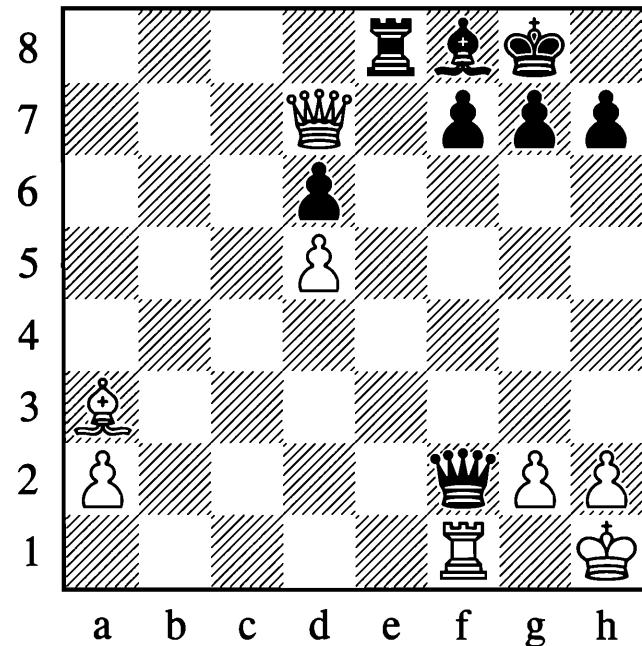
Big names have fallen into the same trap, as **Reshevsky – Fischer**, Palma de Mallorca Interzonal 1970, shows. In this confusing position White must choose his next move with great care:



1.♔g1??

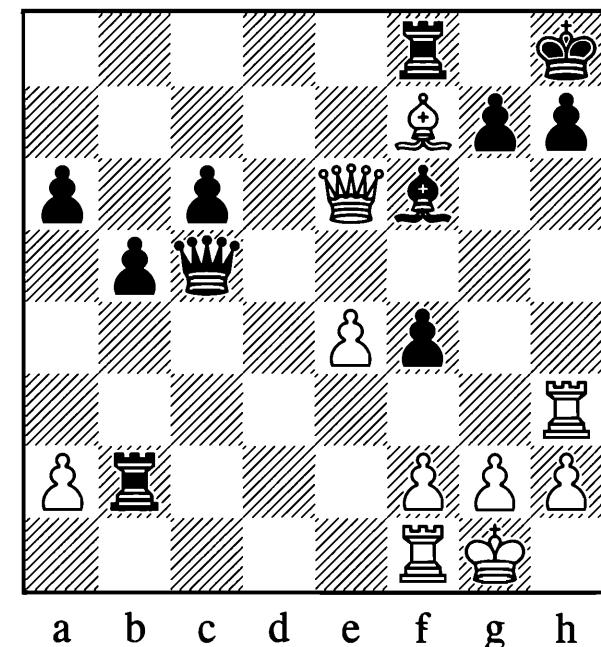
1.♗b5 was necessary. Fischer now accepted the invitation to finish the game at once.

1...♝d4† 2.♔h1 ♛f2!



Now 3.♗b5 would not have saved the game because after 3...♜e1 4.♝xe1 ♛xe1† it is mate next move. Instead White resigned.

The previous example showed a direct attack on the defender of the back rank. Sometimes the defender is lured away from its all-important post by a sacrifice, as in **Vilup – Pitkasaar**, USSR 1956:



1...♛xf2†

An offer White cannot refuse.

2. $\mathbb{R}xf2$

The defender has left the back rank.

2... $\mathbb{B}b1\#$ 3. $\mathbb{R}f1$

The white rook rushes back but after

3... $\mathbb{Q}d4\#$

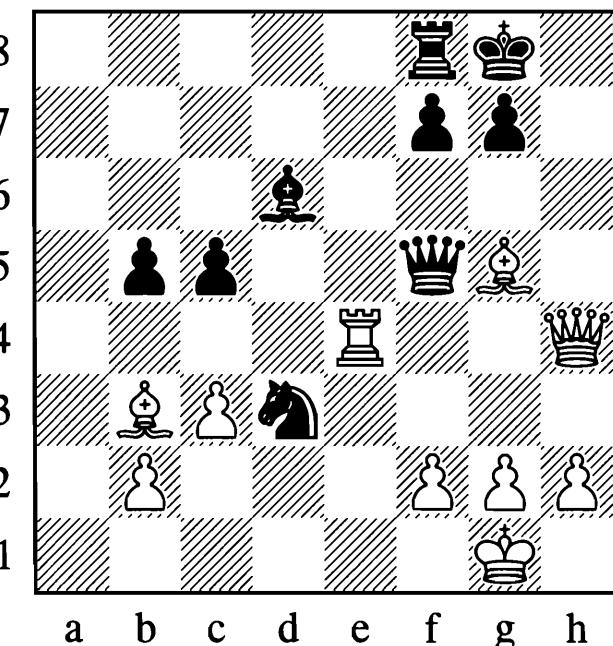
the rook suddenly loses its support from the king, and mate follows.

0-1

Sometimes the defender is aware of the back rank mate, but miscalculates the possibility of the attacker getting through to the back rank. So next we have an example of a defender who firmly believed his opponent was never going to make it:

Wikman – Jovcic

Correspondence 1955

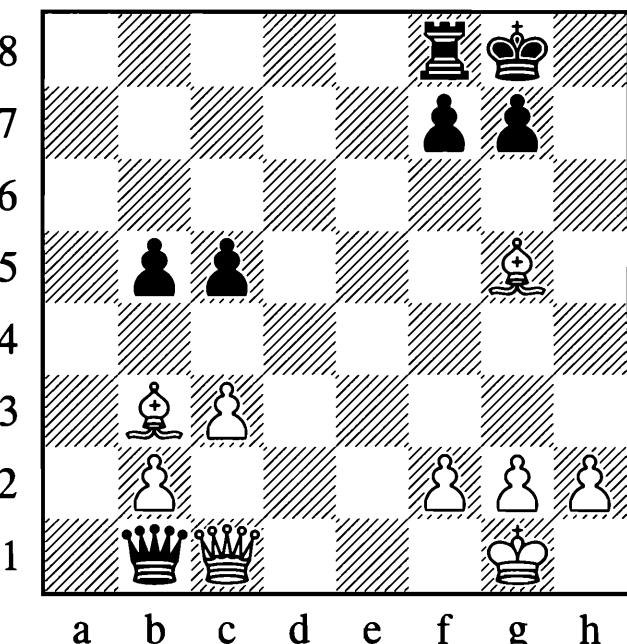


White realized with Black's next postcard that he might have been wrong.

1... $\mathbb{Q}f4!$

A superb move. Disappointingly, the crude 1... $\mathbb{R}a8$ also works.

2. $\mathbb{R}xf4$ $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ 3. $\mathbb{W}xf4$ $\mathbb{W}b1\#$ 4. $\mathbb{W}c1$



White has managed to battle his way home to the back rank, blocking the mate and heading for victory, or so he must have hoped. But another bombshell destroyed this illusion.

4... $\mathbb{W}xc1\#$ 5. $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ $\mathbb{R}a8!!$

After this brilliant resource, which is easy to see here but hard to spot earlier, White must give up a bishop to avoid mate.

This mating pattern develops enormous power. The strength of the f8-rook in the initial position was not obvious, especially as White might have consoled himself with thoughts like: "If he moves his rook, I'll create a luft then." The only problem was, when Black finally played the move, White could not find a tempo to do it. Therefore, if you are faced with the potential threat of a back rank mate, take a very good look at the position. **Calculating a few moves too many is not as painful as discovering an unstoppable back rank mate after having wasted a few stamps.**

Finally, a few useful hints about back rank mates. The direction of movement of the blocking piece has to be carefully analysed as the following two examples show:

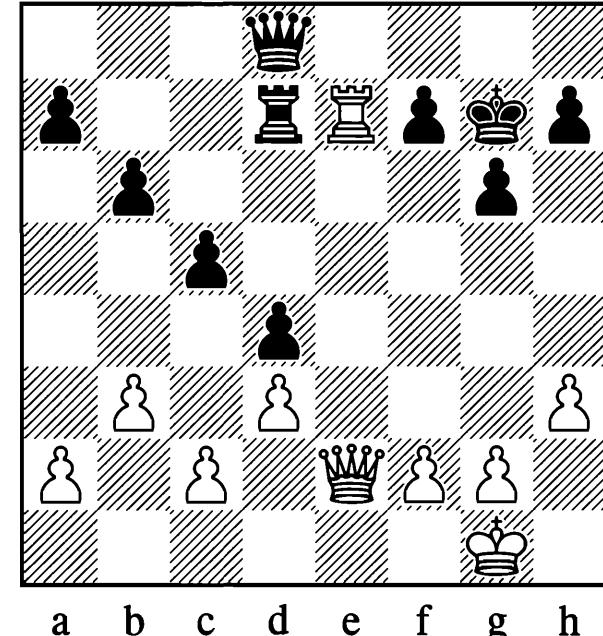


1... $\mathbb{W}e1\#$ 2. $\mathbb{R}f1 \mathbb{W}xf1$ mate



1... $\mathbb{W}f1\#$ 2. $\mathbb{R}g1 \mathbb{W}f3$ mate

In both cases the bishop blocked the mate by the queen but only for one move. The last game is an example of how sensitive the back rank is and how easy it is to fall for this pattern, although it seems to be so obvious. In **Kwilezki – Roslinski**, Poland 1954, it looks as if the back rank is sufficiently defended but:



1. $\mathbb{W}e5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$

1... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 2. $\mathbb{W}f4\#$

2. $\mathbb{W}f6!$

Now it is easy to see that Black has left the back door unlocked. Both 2... $\mathbb{R}xe7$

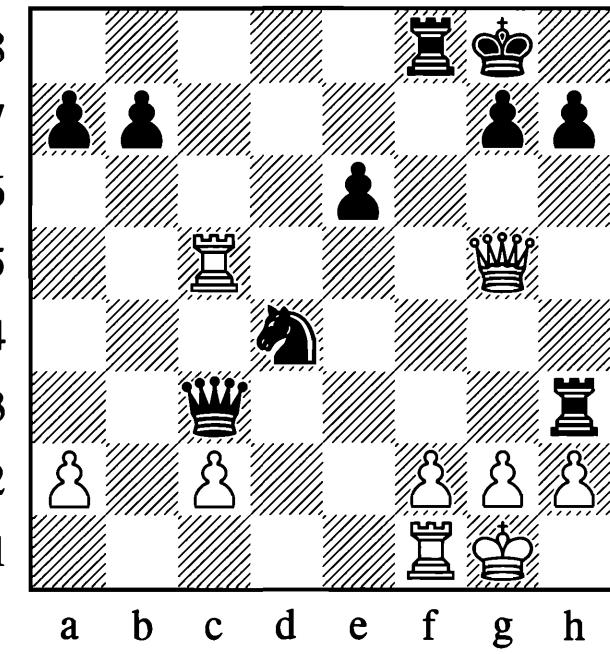
and 2... $\mathbb{W}xe7$ are answered by 3. $\mathbb{W}h8$ mate. Although the rook is attacked three times and defended only once, Black is unable to take it.

1–0

Other frequently employed patterns

Now we will examine other patterns that are quite common but do not fall into any of the aforementioned categories. Nevertheless, as they are fairly common you should become familiar with them, both to use them to your advantage and to recognize a possible threat from your opponent. Naturally, the various patterns all share the idea of controlling squares.

The next example, taken from the famous game **Levitsky – Marshall**, Breslau 1912, shows a combination of different motifs. Most likely you will have seen this game before, but it is illegal to omit this position from a tactics book.

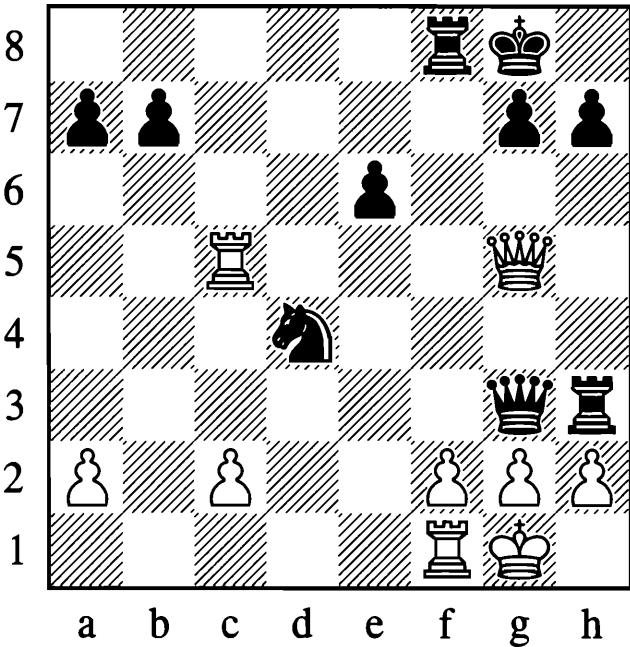


The story goes that the spectators showered the board with gold coins after Black's next move:

1... $\mathbb{W}g3!!!$

The only move in chess history that is traditionally given three exclamation marks,

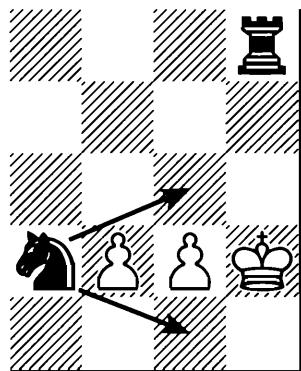
despite the fact many other moves also win. White wisely resigned as he loses in all lines.



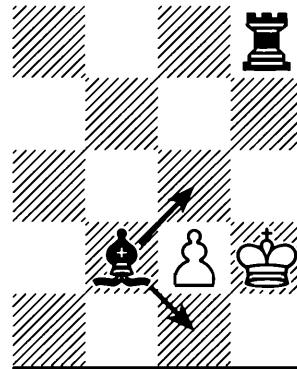
If White plays 2.hxg3 then 2... $\mathbb{Q}e2$ mate.
If 2.fxg3 then 2... $\mathbb{Q}e2\#$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ mate.
And if 2. $\mathbb{W}xg3$ $\mathbb{Q}e2\#$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}xg3\#$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}g1$
and, among others, Black can play 4... $\mathbb{Q}e2\#$ keeping an extra piece.

One important point in our discussion of mating patterns is the position after 1... $\mathbb{W}g3$ 2.hxg3 which leads to a mating pattern that is very common, although the sequence is reversed. That is, the rook is executing the coup de grace after the knight has taken control over the g1- and g3-squares.

Two common mating patterns:



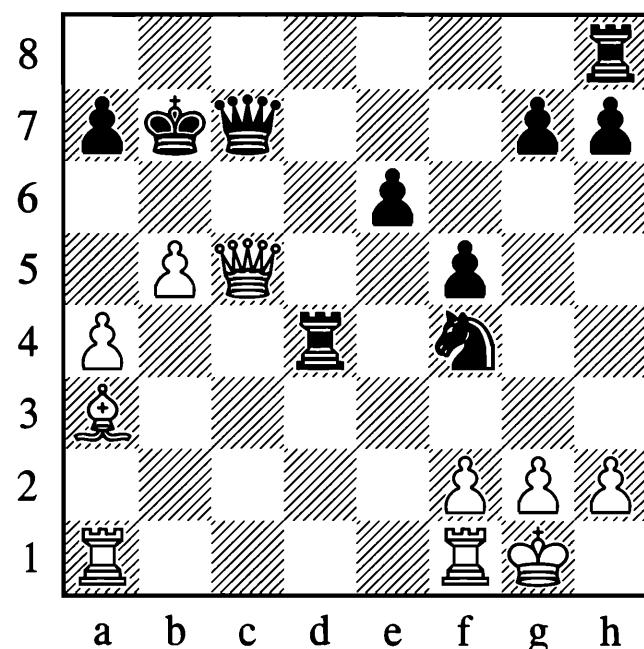
If the attacking side has no knights then a bishop on f2 does just as well.



The recipe for this mating pattern (let's assume an example of Black mating on the kingside) follows the previously mentioned *one, two, three* process:

1. The h-file is opened by a sacrifice.
2. A piece that is able to control g1 and g3 occupies the second rank.
3. A rook or queen gives mate on the h-file.

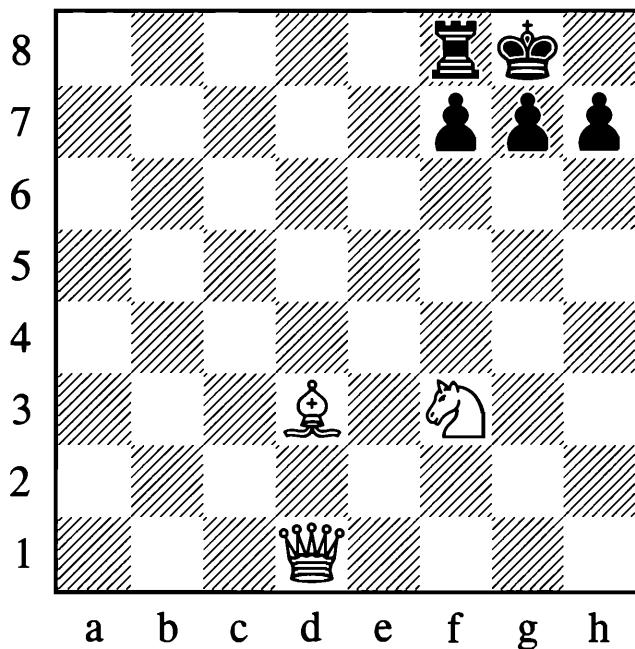
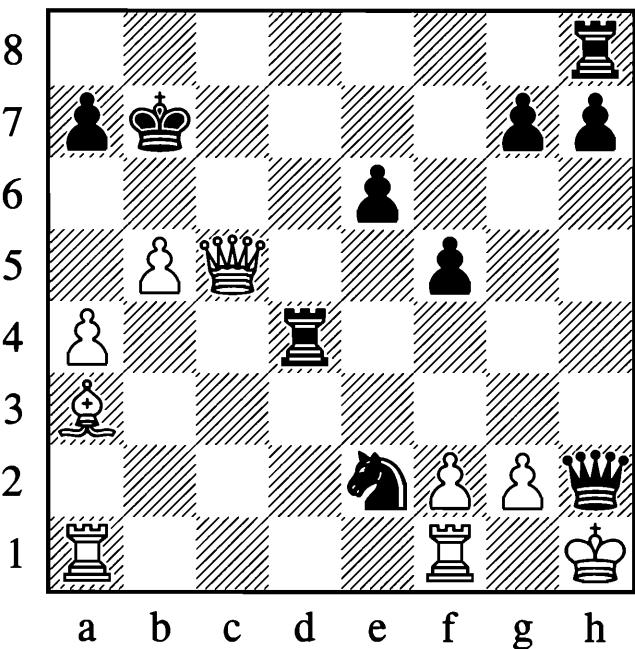
Although this sounds rather simplistic it has worked several times in the past. The sequence was changed in **Meo – Giustolisi**, Italy 1959:



1... $\mathbb{Q}e2\#$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}h1$

In this example, step two comes first, and then the sacrifice to open the h-file:

2... $\mathbb{W}xh2\#!$



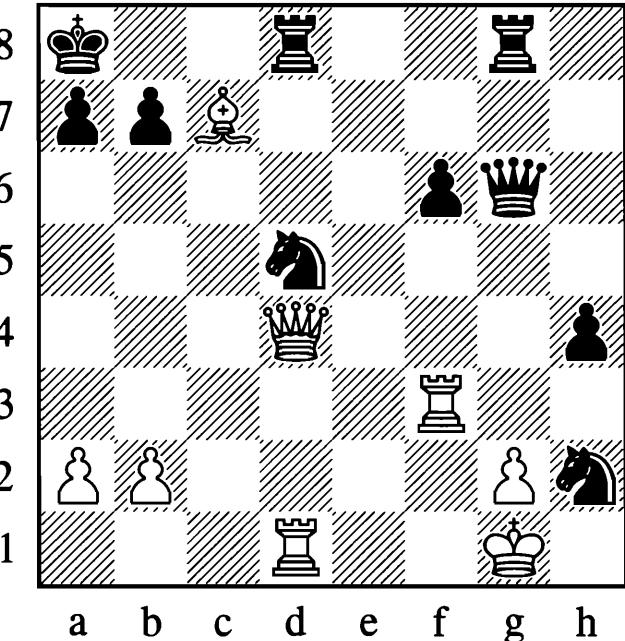
After the king has finished his last meal with

3. ♜xh2

the rook lets the head roll:

3... ♕h4 mate

A few years earlier in Paris **Tartakower** had outwitted his opponent **Falk** with the same trick.



1. ♜xa7† ♔xa7 2. ♜a3 mate

We have already seen that the gang of queen, bishop and knight can be a nuisance in any neighbourhood, and there is another special trick they like to perform on any innocent bystander:

In this set-up h7 is a traditional square for a bishop sacrifice against the castled king.

1. ♜xh7† ♔xh7 2. ♜g5† and if 2... ♔g8 then 3. ♜h5 threatening mate.

Often Black remains in trouble even if the f8-rook moves. Although the rook move gives the king another flight square, frequently another black piece on e7 stops the king's flight and after ♜h7† and ♜h8† the game might be over anyway.

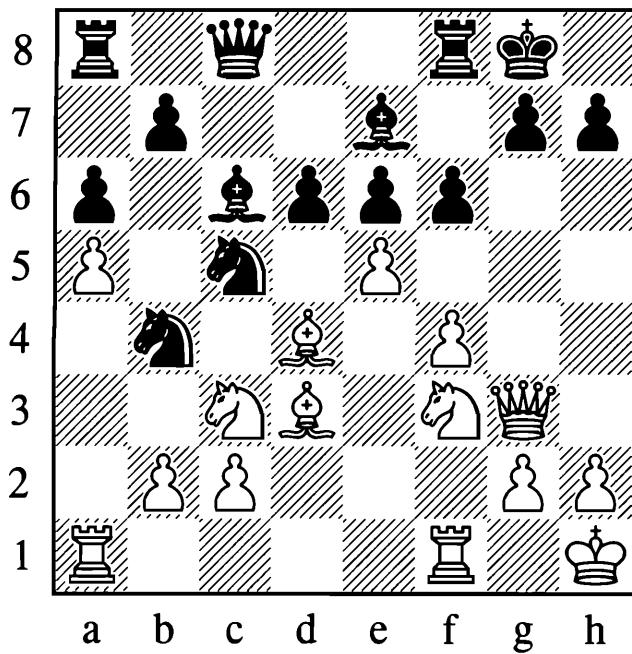
If the king moves into the open with 2... ♔g6 then 3. ♜g4 is a common continuation, creating many threats. On the other hand, calculating the tactics after 2... ♔g6 is sometimes not easy, and more than one attacker has ended up a piece down for nothing.

After a Greek Gift sacrifice on h7, the king may be able to move into the open with ... ♔g6. Calculating the ensuing tactics is not always easy, and must be done accurately to avoid the ignominy of ending up a piece down for nothing.

Even Anand could not decipher the consequences of one of those ... ♔g6 variations and refrained from playing the bishop sacrifice in his match against Kasparov:

Anand – Kasparov

New York (3) 1995



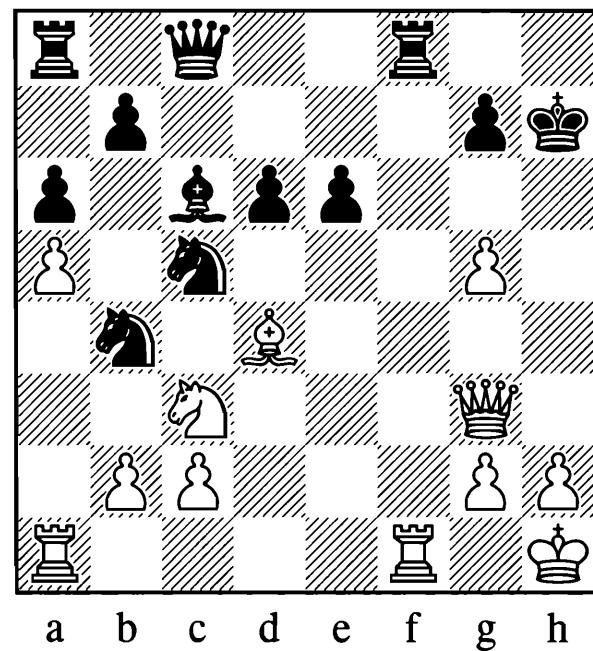
1.exf6!

This move would have forced Black to recapture with the rook and thereby lose the exchange as after the most natural reply:

1... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

White has the following outstanding combination, which was first suggested on ICC by my editor Jacob Aagaard, something he has asked me not to mention in this book. The combination goes:

2. $\mathbb{Q}xh7\#$! $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}g5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ 4.fxg5



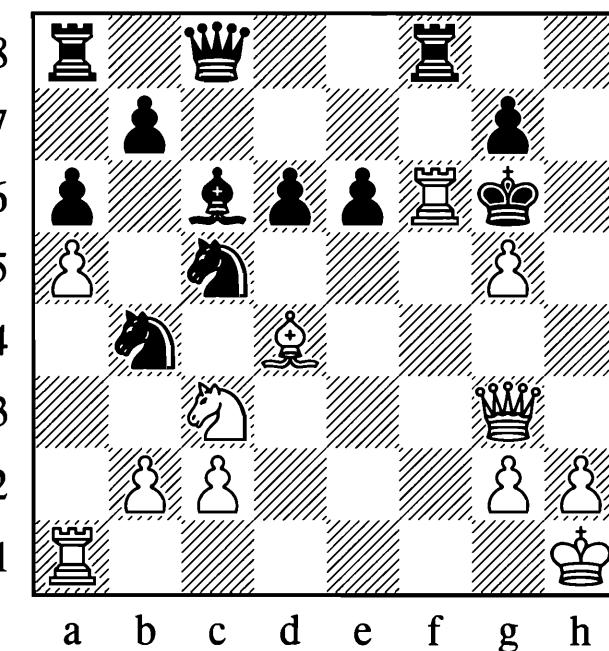
The position is very complicated and there are many variations, which we will ignore as they do not fit our purpose. White is threatening to play 5.g6† and 6. $\mathbb{W}h3$ establishing a winning 7. $\mathbb{W}h7\#$. Therefore the main defence is:

4... $\mathbb{Q}g6$

White can punish the wandering king with the violent:

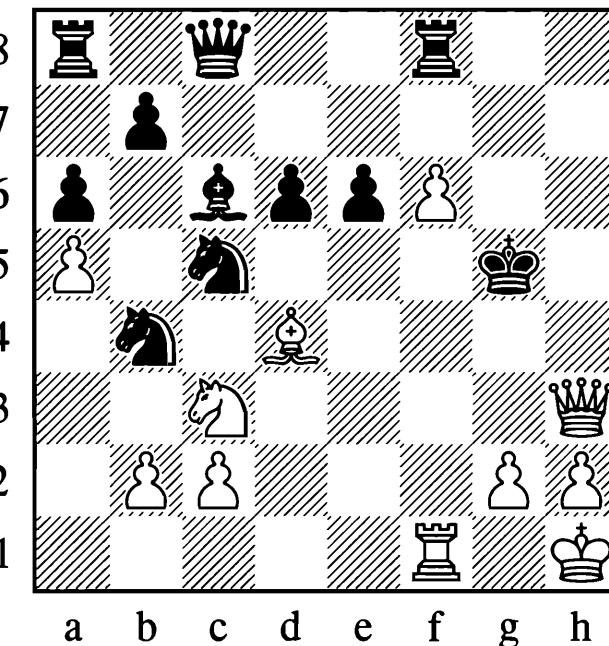
5. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$!!

Drawing the black king further up the board:



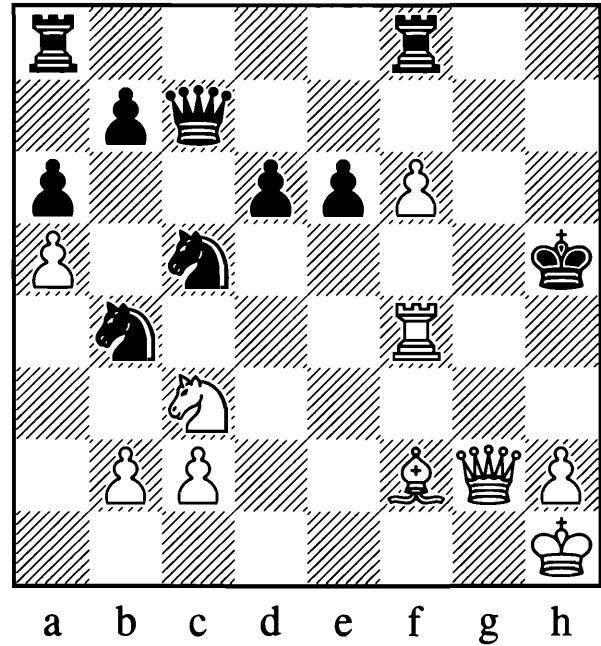
Black has no alternative but to accept the sacrifice with:

5...gxsf6 6.gxf6# $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 7. $\mathbb{W}h3\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g5$ 8. $\mathbb{Q}f1$!



The black king is trapped in a mating net. All lines lead to mate, for example:

8... $\mathbb{W}c7$ 9. $\mathbb{W}g3\#$ 10. $\mathbb{B}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}xg2\#$ 11. $\mathbb{W}xg2$
 $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 12. $\mathbb{Q}f2$

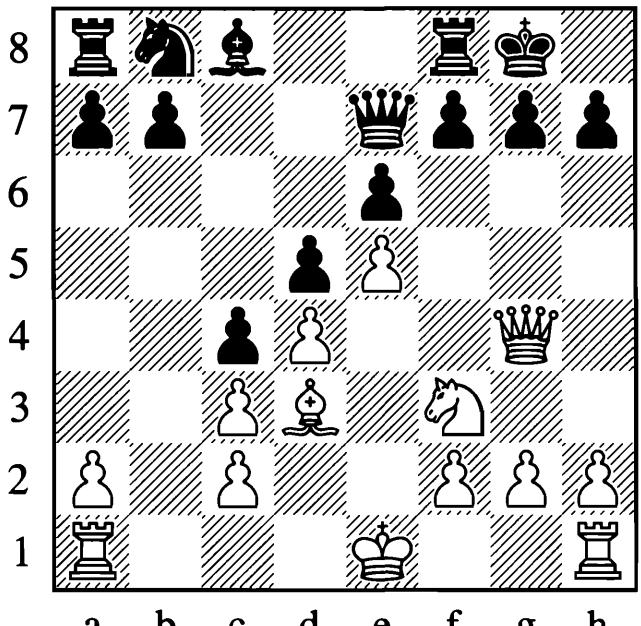


Black cannot avoid the mate with two heavy pieces after 13. $\mathbb{B}h4$. The quiet move 8. $\mathbb{R}f1!$, bringing the rook into the attack, should be easy to understand now.

So although Anand missed a chance to deliver this classic Greek Gift sacrifice, it was in a very complicated setting.

A lack of defenders for the black king (especially there being no knight on f6) is likely to invite the bishop sacrifice on h7. This will often happen when the knight has been ousted by a white pawn on e5.

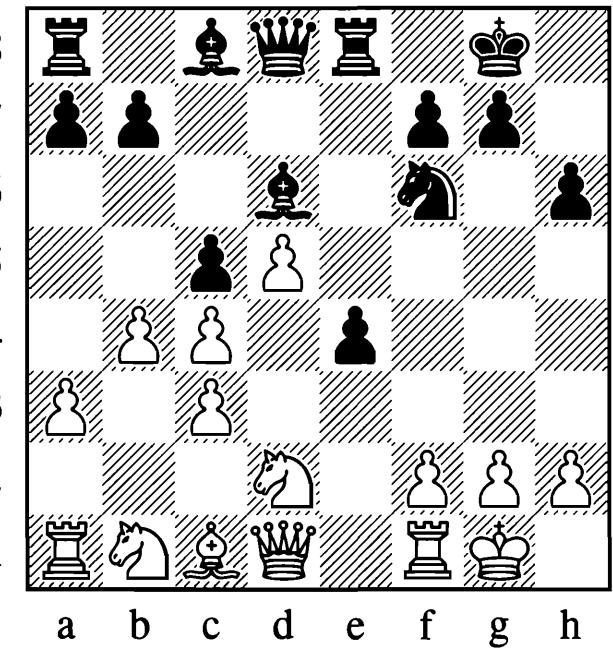
In many cases the calculations are not so complicated. In **Yates – Marin y Llovet**, Hamburg (ol) 1930, we see a typical invitation for the bishop sacrifice on h7: there are no defenders of Black's castled king. Especially there is no knight on f6, therefore take note of White's advanced and ousting pawn on e5, which makes sacrifices like this more likely.



1. $\mathbb{Q}xh7\#$ 2. $\mathbb{W}h5\#$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{R}d8$
4. $\mathbb{W}h7\#$ 5. $\mathbb{W}h8$ mate

The black queen blocks the only escape of the king, an important point in understanding this example.

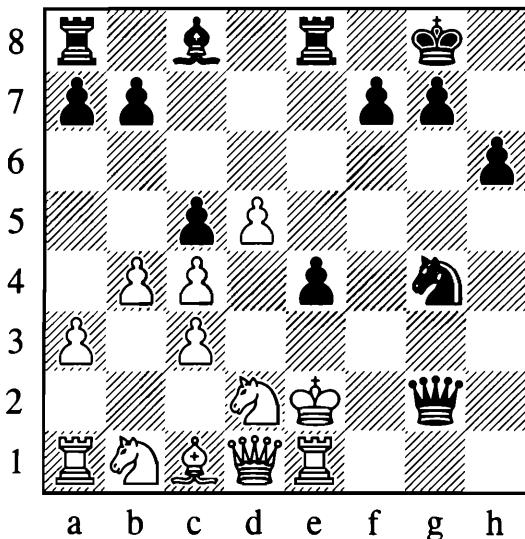
With colours reversed we can study this classic mating pattern in **Fuetterer – Zinkl**, Znaim 1897.



1... $\mathbb{Q}xh2\#$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xh2$ $\mathbb{Q}g4\#$

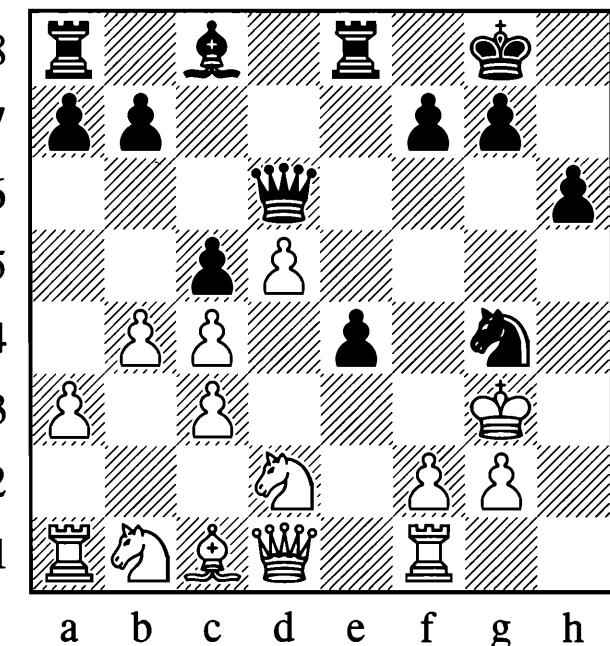
Now we can take a look at both variations.

After 3. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ the black queen finishes the job with: 3... $\mathbb{W}h4$ 4. $\mathbb{R}e1$ $\mathbb{W}xf2\#$ 5. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{W}h4\#$
6. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{W}h2\#$ 7. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{W}h1\#$ 8. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{W}xg2$ mate



In the variation played in the game, Fuetterer must have hoped his king had a chance to survive in the open, but it is another case of jumping out of the frying pan into the fire:

3.♕g3 ♜d6†

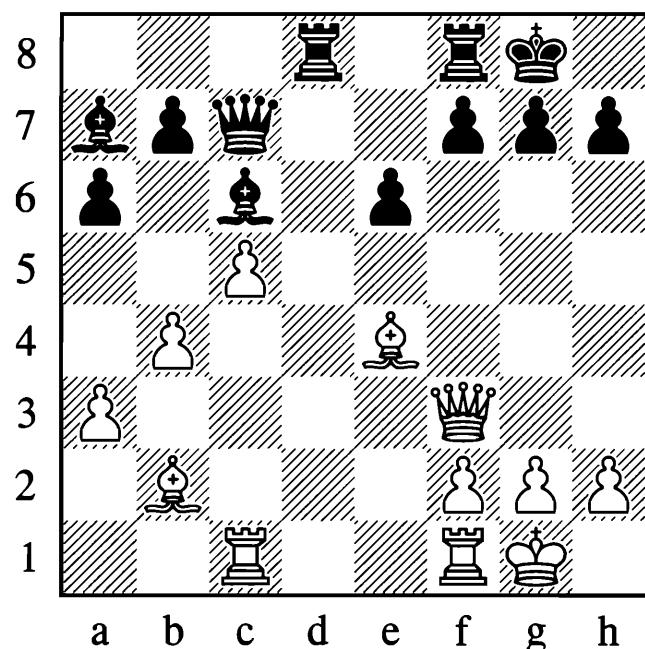


Although Black did not stick to the classical pattern, he won convincingly.

4.f4 exf3† 5.♔xf3 ♜e3 mate

If the knight is replaced by a bishop, then the newly formed gang has other ways to cause trouble. Typically both bishops are sacrificed to open lines against the king and then the queen invites a rook to finish off the king now that he has been stripped of his protection.

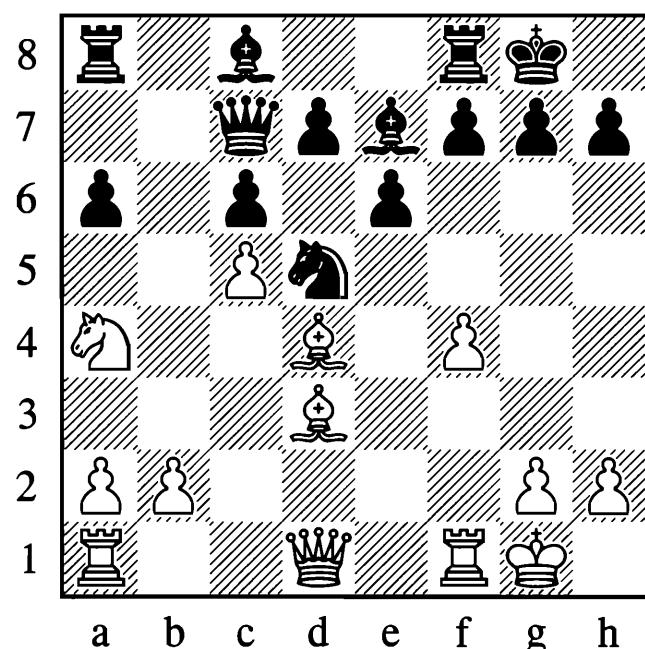
In **Miles – Browne**, Lucerne (ol) 1982, Browne missed two chances to swap bishops on e4. Perhaps time-trouble addict Browne was already suffering from his usual problem, as otherwise he would never have missed this standard mating pattern.



**1.♖xh7† ♔xh7 2.♗h5† ♔g8 3.♕xg7 ♔xg7
4.♗g5† ♔h8 5.♗f6†!**

Now nothing can stop the c1-rook from travelling via c4 to help the queen finish the attack.

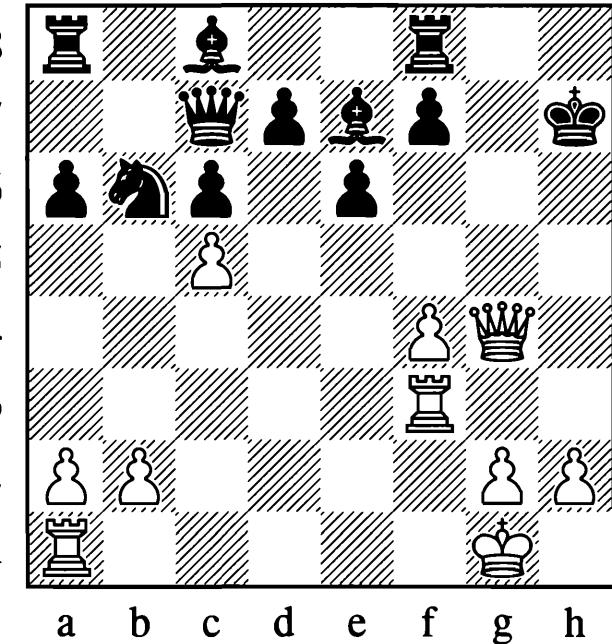
And if you enjoyed the last massacre, here is another one. **Sveshnikov** has just played ...♗f6-d5 against **Gennadi Kuzmin** in Moscow in 1973, and surely regretted this move almost immediately:



1. $\mathbb{Q}b6!$

The capture on h7 does not work at once because at the stage White plays $\mathbb{R}f3$ Black could reply ... $\mathbb{Q}xf4!$ and there is no mate.

**1... $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xh7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ 3. $\mathbb{W}h5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$
4. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 5. $\mathbb{W}g4\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 6. $\mathbb{R}f3$**



As we anticipated above, with the knight decoyed to b6, there is no ... $\mathbb{Q}d5xf4$ to save the day. All Black has left is a spite check.

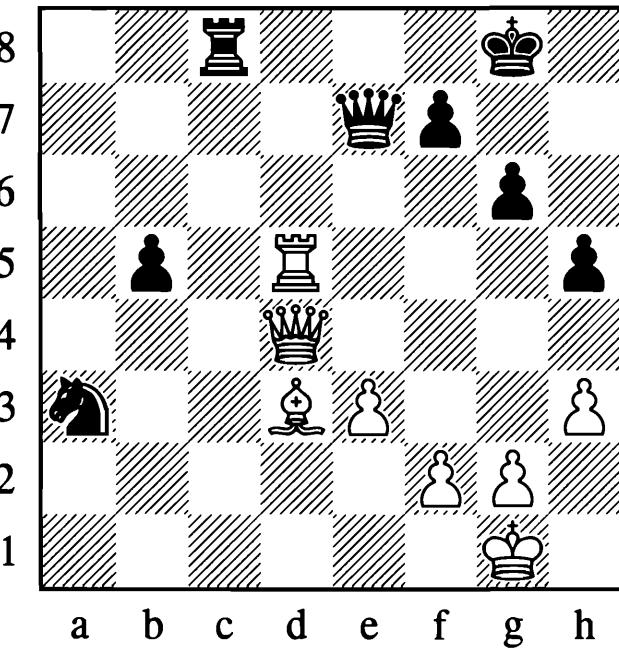
6... $\mathbb{Q}xc5\#$ 7. $\mathbb{Q}h1$

1–0

Two devastating examples, but the fact that world-class players fell for this trick should be a warning. Although it is a well-known method, it catches players of all levels, although naturally more often in amateur chess than in the higher echelons.

The final section in this extravaganza of mating patterns is the rook on the seventh rank. Here it is not the pawn gobbling monster that you should fear, but its ability to restrain the king to the back rank and to aid other pieces to give mate. Here is an example by **Petrosian** who, quite undeservedly, is not remembered for his tactical brilliance. In this game he was playing against **Gipslis** in Riga 1958, and

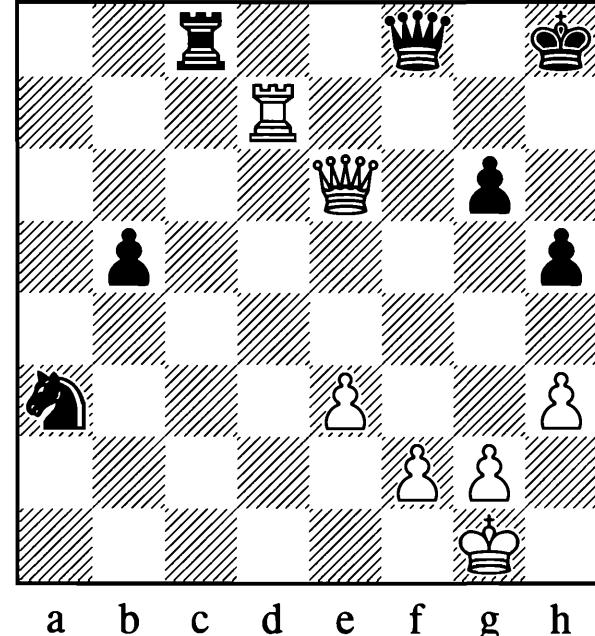
after his opponent had weakened his king's position the future World Champion struck with precision. If it were not for the f7-pawn, a rook on the seventh would rule over this rank. Without much further ado, Petrosian changed that:



1. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ $f\times g6$ 2. $\mathbb{R}d7$

Seventh heaven!

**2... $\mathbb{W}f8$ 3. $\mathbb{W}d5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 4. $\mathbb{W}e5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 5. $\mathbb{W}e6\#$
 $\mathbb{Q}h8$**

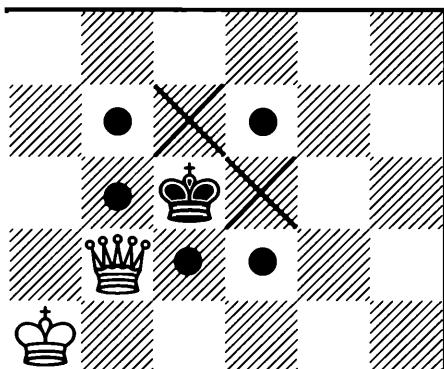


6. $\mathbb{W}xg6$

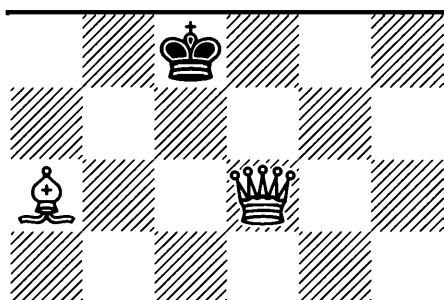
Now nothing can stop the white queen from giving mate.

1–0

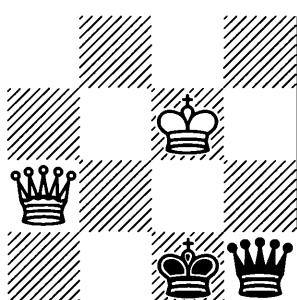
Pattern overview



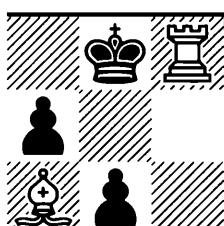
The powerful influence of the queen



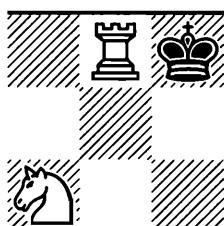
The queen assisted by a bishop



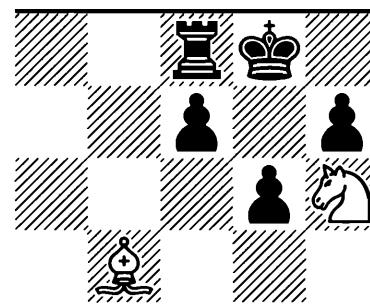
The queen should never be underestimated!



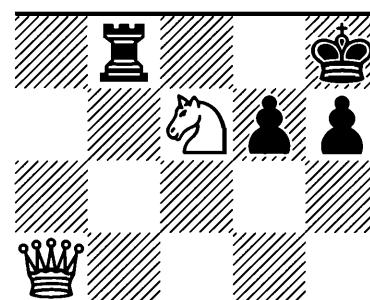
Typical rook and bishop mate



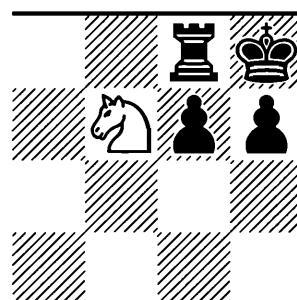
Typical rook and knight mate



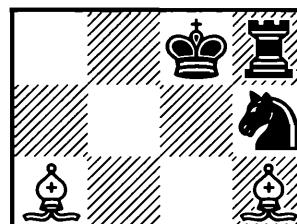
Bishop and knight mate



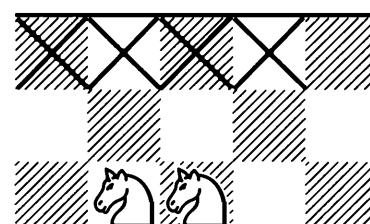
1) Start of a smothered mate



2) End of a smothered mate



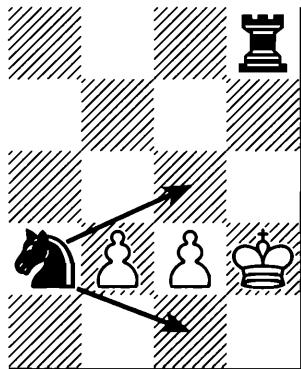
Mate with two bishops (criss-cross mate)



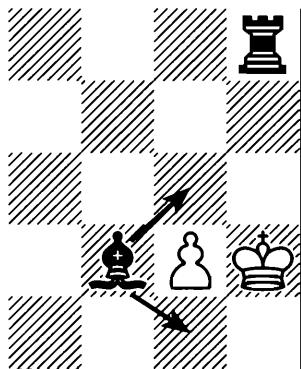
Two knights do have mating power. But you should look for their ability to control squares rather than for specific patterns.



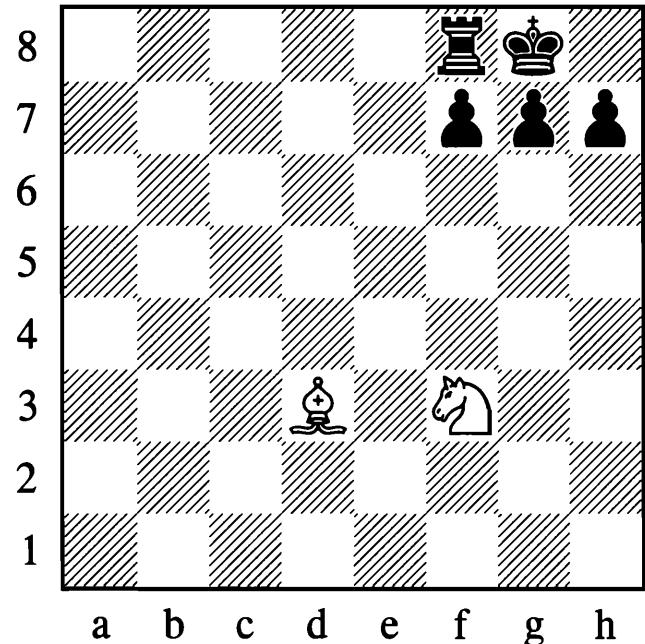
The mate with two rooks is executed along two adjacent files or ranks. Often there is a sacrifice against the rook's pawn prior to the mate.



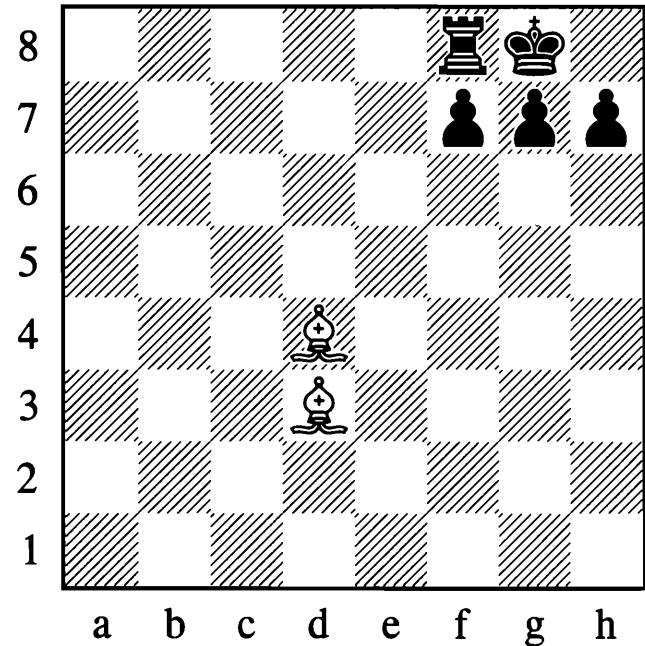
1) This frequently employed pattern is often executed along the h- or a-files. The position of the knight is typical.



2) Standard position of the bishop in this pattern.



Typical formation to start a sacrifice of the bishop on h7. Note the absence of a defending knight on f6.



A possible sacrifice of the two bishops against the castled position.

Every piece or pawn aiming at the king should be regarded as having the potential to give mate. Place your pieces actively and try to control squares around the king. Then mate, in whatever form, will crown many of your games.

Summary

The knowledge of mating patterns is a good compass when visualizing a possible attack against the king.

However it is equally important to bear in mind the control of the squares around the king, and look for the forces needed without sticking to patterns in a stereotypical way.

A detected mating pattern or a possibility of mate should not be taken lightly. The pattern often becomes a reality earlier than the defending player might have calculated. In this case, miscalculations result in mate.

Consider leaving flight squares for your king. Of course, weakening the kingside by h3 or ...h6 is often unnecessary or even downright bad in a castled position. Nevertheless, when the middlegame shows no more danger of an attack, it sometimes is a good idea to lose a tempo to prevent any later accidents on the back rank.

Mating attacks and patterns with their strong and clear targets represent a good way of how to think in chess. These strong motifs represent the ideas from which you should *start* your thinking and calculating process. You should start from a target, an idea, and then find a way to realize it.

Chapter 8

Gain of Tempo/Intermediate Move

Napoleon once pointed out that “From the sublime to the ridiculous is but a step.” In chess, we call this step a tempo.

We talk about a gain of tempo if one player moves a piece and the other player has to respond to this particular move and is not free to move another piece at will. It looks as if one player has gained the right to move twice in a row. A gain of tempo, small as it seems, can have drastic consequences as we have seen in previous chapters. Sometimes it is possible to gain the tempo for a second piece and then this piece might start a tactical operation such as a discovered or double attack.

In this chapter we will study three different aspects of the gain of tempo. We will examine:

1. The gain of tempo in general
2. The gain of tempo against the king
3. The intermediate move

1. The gain of tempo in general

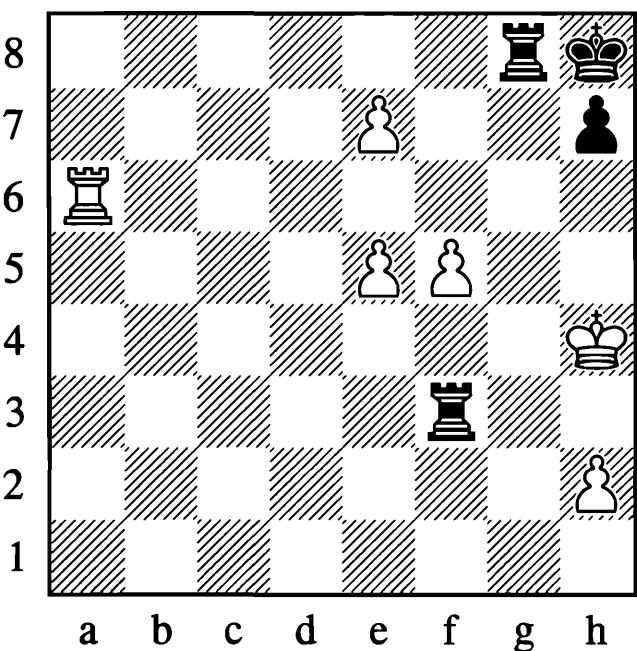
Whenever you want to move a piece you should check whether you could gain a tempo with that piece. This sounds a little cumbersome and you may argue that you will waste a lot of time if you do this on every move. On the other hand, looking for a gain of tempo will soon become second nature to you and after a while you will not be thinking about it consciously any more.

If you are planning to relocate a piece, there are two points where you can gain a tempo: either the piece gains the tempo on the way to its target square or right on the target square.

The following example illustrates this rather nicely. Black can win in various ways, but the simplest is to gain a tempo:

Urankar – Radic

Germany 1980

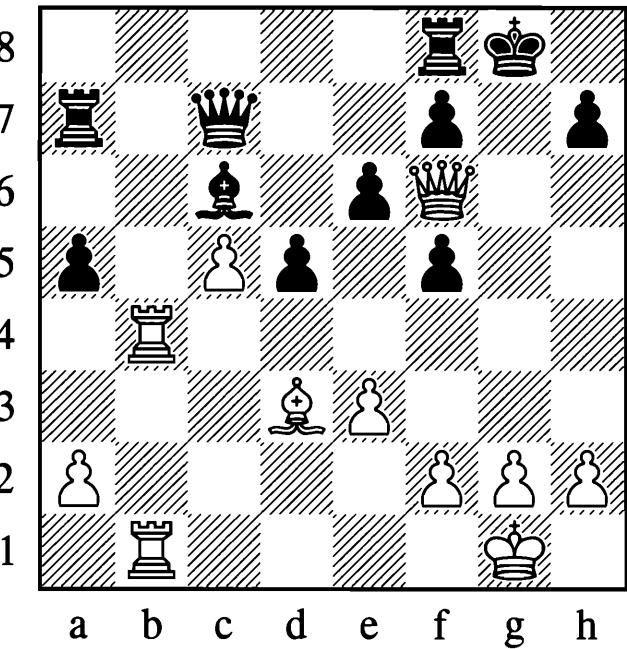


1... $\mathbb{R}f4\#$

The rook's real target is the f5-pawn, but first Black sets up a gain of tempo. The white king has to move. If White plays 2. $\mathbb{K}h5$ then 2... $\mathbb{R}xf5\#$ gains a tempo. Or if White plays 2. $\mathbb{K}h3$ then 2... $\mathbb{R}xf5$ would also gain a tempo, as Black threatens mate next move.

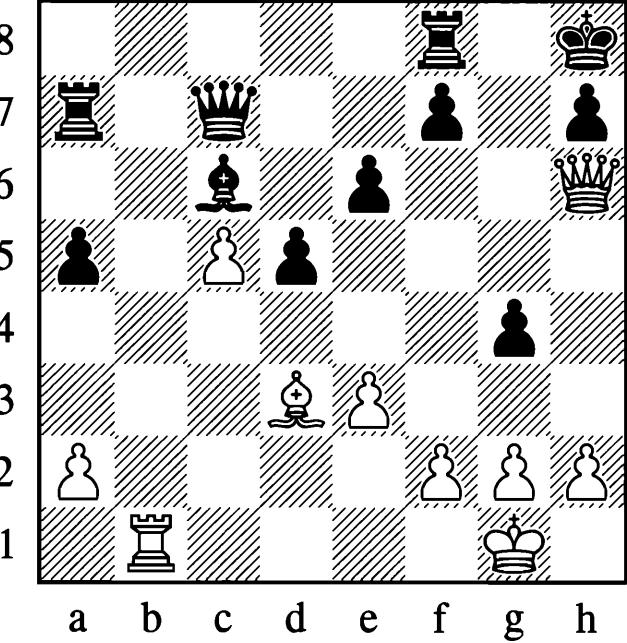
We have to keep in mind that on every square we put one of our pieces, we might either gain a tempo with the piece that has been moved or for other pieces of our army.

This is exemplified in **Hort – Portisch**, Madrid 1973:



1.Bg4† fxg4 2.Wg5† ♔h8 3.Wh6

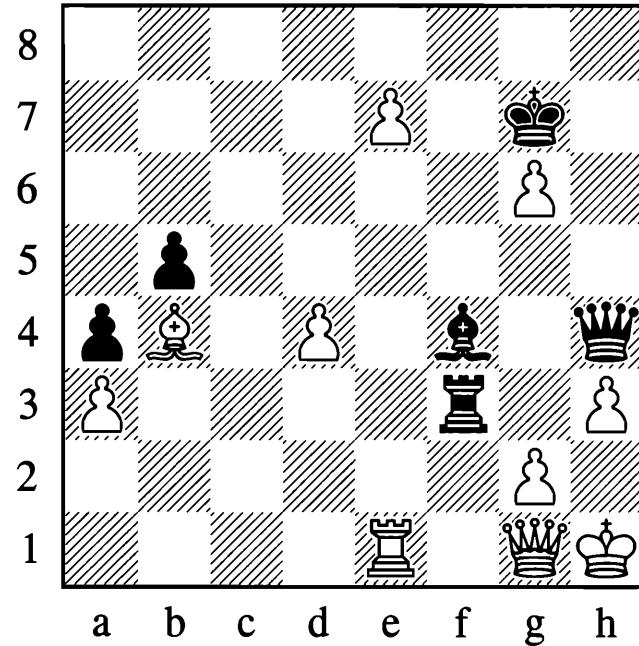
We have now reached the following position:



If the queen had moved to h6 directly from f6, the king would still be defending the rook and Black could have played ...f7-f5, blocking the diagonal of the d3-bishop. But the short stopover on g5 changed the position radically and now mate is inevitable.

There are many positions and phases in the game in which you can gain a tempo. Sometimes you feel a desperate need to gain a tempo, in other situations you are surprised by a gain of tempo by your opponent. But if you develop a feeling for the tempo in small tactical operations, you might also be aware of the power of that little extra time when it comes to taking strategic decisions.

The next diagram shows a razor-sharp position from a clash between **Spassky** and **Korchnoi**, USSR 1955.



White urgently needs more time (a gain of tempo) in order to defend against the threat of mate after a rook sac on h3. And he gained this time with an ingenious move:

1.Wh2!!

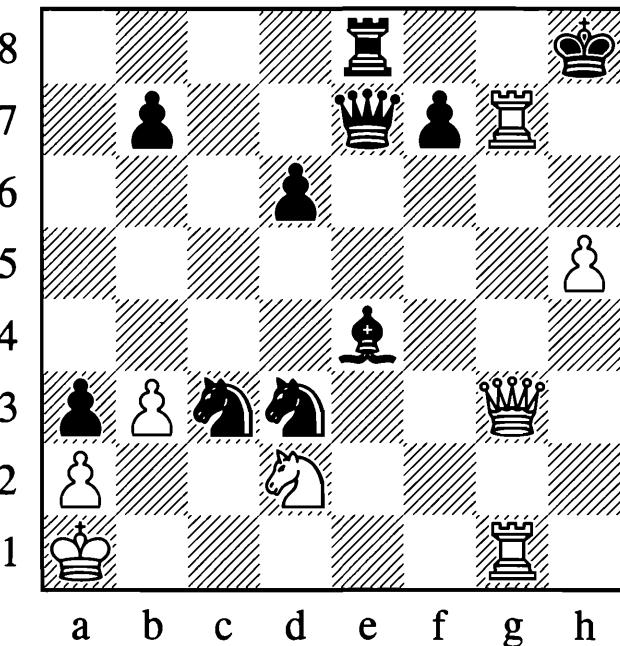
White not only wins time, but also the game. 1...Rxh2 would give White the opportunity to promote his pawn with 2.e8=W.

1–0

Now, as there are no more tempos to win against the white king, the black king is exposed to a short, but lethal, attack by the newly arrived white queen. This time Black's lack of tempo prevents the black pieces from helping the endangered king.

This example leads us to another important conclusion: **You can effectively gain time by stopping your opponent from gaining tempos against your pieces.** So the sacrifice of White's old queen destroyed all Black's hopes of winning further tempos against White's king and therefore bought the time to promote the pawn, creating a new queen and the possibility to win tempos against the black king.

In our next example it is just one tempo that decided the game. In **de la Bourdonnais – McDonnell**, London (21) 1834:



Black has to defend against the threat of mate down the g-file. After that, all he has to do is find a way to check the white king, so he played:

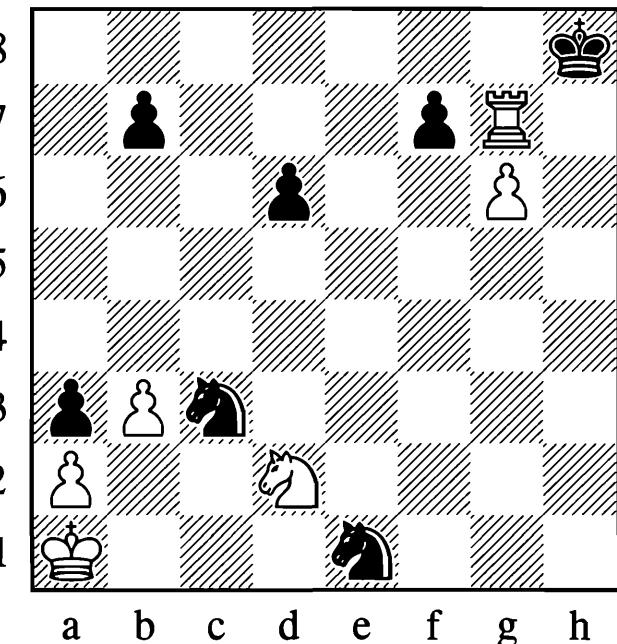
1...♝g6?!

An interesting idea, but it actually loses. Better is 1...♝f6!, which wins.

2.hxg6 ♜e1† 3.♝xe1??

The clever 3.♝b1! won convincingly, but the temptation of grabbing the queen proved too great.

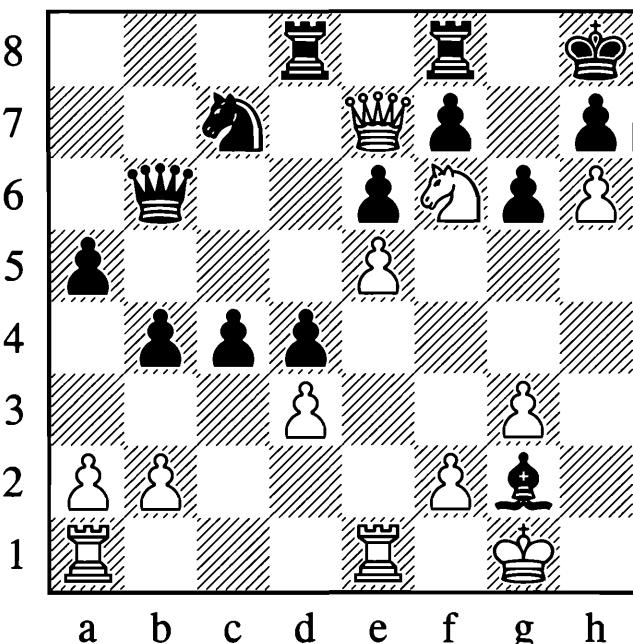
3...♝xe1† 4.♛xe1 ♜xe1



Now White has only a few spite checks before ...♝c2 mate.

0–1

There are many possible motifs we could study in connection with the gain of tempo, but let's stay with cutting the lines of communication and take a look at **Zilberstein – Dementiev**, Grozny 1968.



White needs just one tempo to clear f6 for his queen.

1.♝e8!

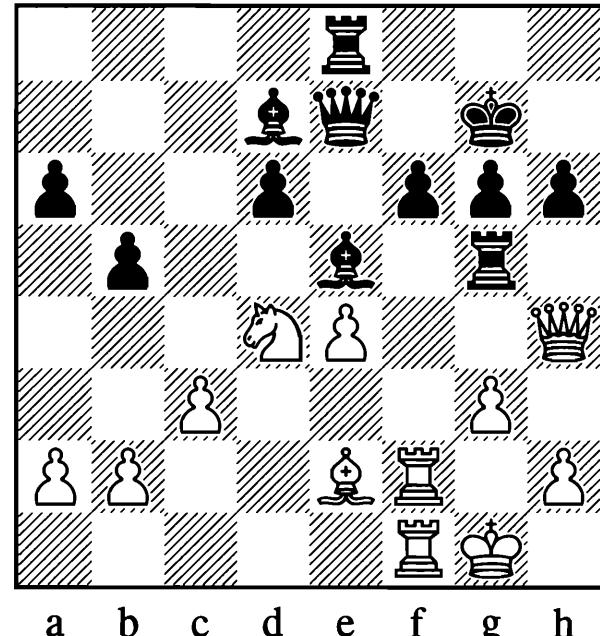
White cuts the line of communication between the rooks and threatens 2.♛xf8 mate.

If Black re-establishes communications by taking on e8 with either rook then 2. $\mathbb{W}f6\#$ will lead to mate. Or if Black tries 1... $\mathbb{Q}g8$ then 2. $\mathbb{Q}xc7$ is deadly.

1–0

By the way, 1. $\mathbb{Q}d7?$ would not have done the trick, because of 1... $\mathbb{Q}d5!$ when White has nothing better than 2. $\mathbb{W}xf8\#$ $\mathbb{E}xf8$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ $\mathbb{Q}xb6$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ c3 with an unclear ending.

Evacuating a square in connection with a gain of tempo to enable another piece to occupy this square can be compared to a discovered attack. Simply moving a piece to another square and then replacing it for a winning motif is not very interesting to look at. Things change, though, when the piece that is evacuating a square supports the motif of its successor on this square, as we can see in **Radovici – Kolarov, Romania 1957**:



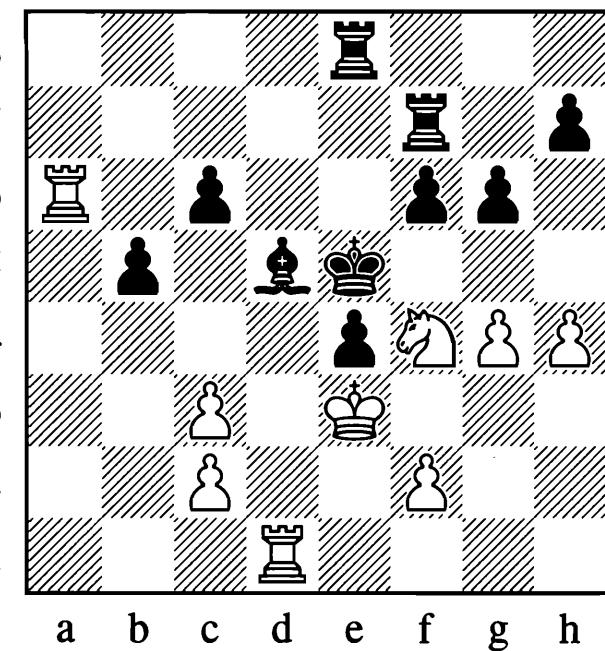
1... $\mathbb{E}h5!!$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ g5 3. $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ $\mathbb{W}xe8$

0–1

The black rook cleared the square for the pawn that will trap the white queen. At the same time the e8-rook was replaced by the black queen and consequently h5 is no longer an option for the white queen.

In the next example the black king is in the middle of the board, but it is not time for the endgame yet. In **Opocensky – Hromadka**,

Kosice 1931, White restricts Black's king and finally gives mate. After seeing the solution, you may argue that breaking up an en passant possibility is a structural change rather than a gain of tempo. I am inclined to agree. Evacuating a square is not a motif in itself but is about winning a tempo for a subsequent motif. The knight will perform the tempo theme here. In this position tempos are gained in order to execute a motif, a mate. Even if I am completely wrong, you will at least enjoy a pretty combination:



1. $\mathbb{E}xd5\#$ cxd5

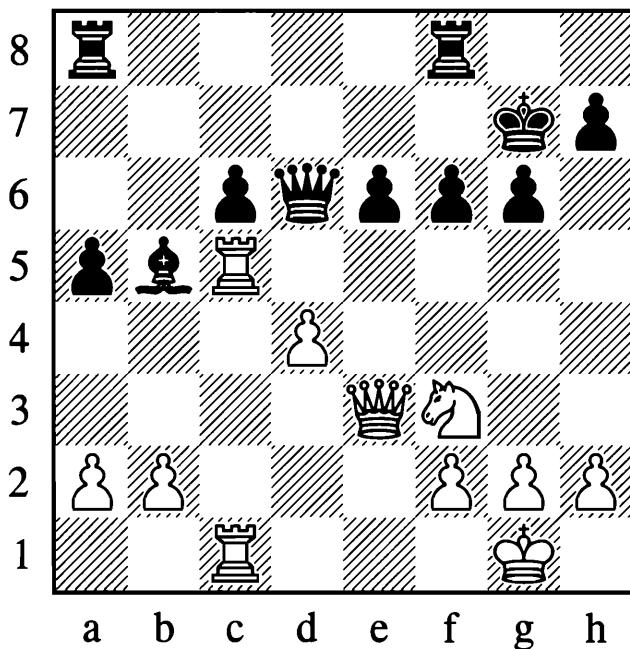
The sixth rank is opened for the a6-rook cutting off all the king's backward escape routes.

2. $\mathbb{Q}d3\#$

Evacuating the f4-square for the white f-pawn with a tempo while simultaneously eliminating the black e-pawn with its en passant possibility ...exf3. White will therefore be able to play 3.f4 mate.

1–0

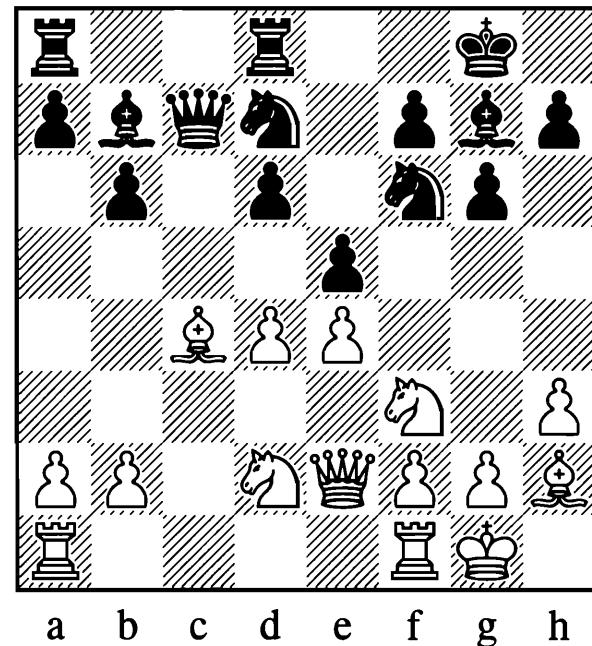
You are already quite familiar with **Miles – Martin, Birmingham 1977** (pages 54 & 95), but the gain of tempo here shows very clearly how tactical operations (motifs) are often introduced with a gain of tempo:



1.a4!

The move order can be decisive when we consider the gain of tempo.

The next position is similar to **Capablanca – Reti, London 1922**, where I placed the black rooks differently for instructive purposes. This is how a gain of tempo influences positional play.



1.♘ac1! ♜b8

And only now:

2.d5

With 1.d5 White would have closed the diagonal of the c4-bishop and rendered a discovered attack by the bishop against the black queen and king impossible, failed to gain

a tempo for the development of the a1-rook, and would have allowed Black to develop the a8-rook to c8 without the awkward placement of the black queen on b8.

The gain of tempo against the king

A gain of tempo against the king means giving check so the piece that is giving check can move a second time. Again, it looks as if you are allowed to move twice in a row.

In the course of a combination this check can come at any stage. If it is somewhere in the middle of the sequence we call it an intermediate move, and this will be dealt with a little later.

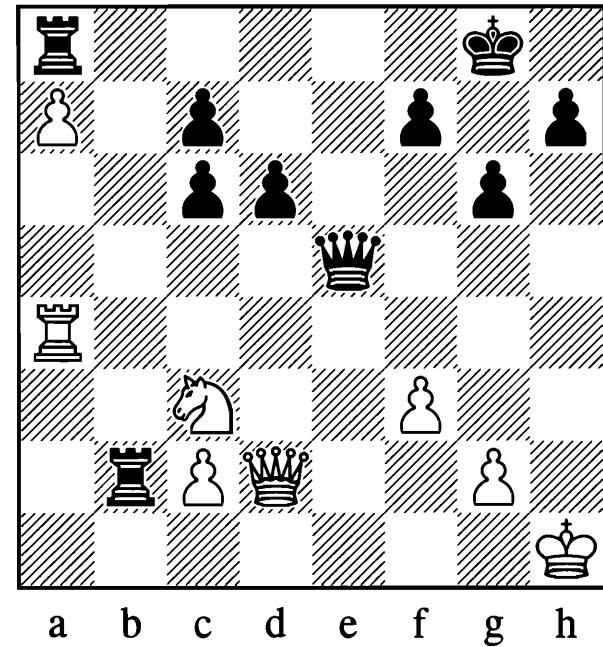
With a few rare exceptions, tactical chess is always connected with a gain of tempo, as we want to be able to move again and again without allowing our opponent a moment's peace. Therefore the king is a great target when it comes to planning tactical operations. Here are some things you should remember about the king in connection with the gain of tempo:

- The gain of tempo against the king permits putting pieces on squares they could normally only have reached in two moves. This even turns a knight into a long-range piece.
- Suddenly you are able to control squares you would not have been able to control without the gain of tempo against the king.
- A gain of material and tempo can be combined if we take another piece while giving check.
- Sometimes one tempo is enough to escape an otherwise indestructible mating net.
- If you promote a pawn with check in an endgame, this one tempo often proves decisive as the other player could be losing a crucial move in a pawn race.

Let us take a look at a few examples. Transferring a piece to another square using a check does not need special explanation. But keep this situation in mind when you are analysing your opponent's possibilities. Let's have a simple example of what we are talking about:

Nimzowitsch – Capablanca

St Petersburg 1914



Black wants to transfer his queen to c5. From there it would exert pressure down the c-file and also keep an eye on the a7-pawn. So you could play 1... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ but there is a better way to get there.

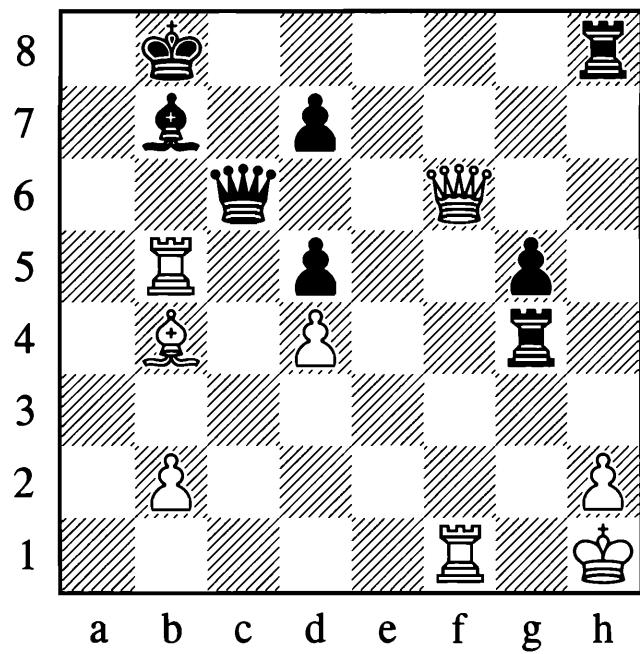
1... $\mathbb{Q}h5\#$ 2. $\mathbb{K}g1 \mathbb{Q}c5\#$

Black has transferred his queen to c5 without any loss of time and after

3. $\mathbb{Q}h2 d5$

White resigned a couple of moves later.

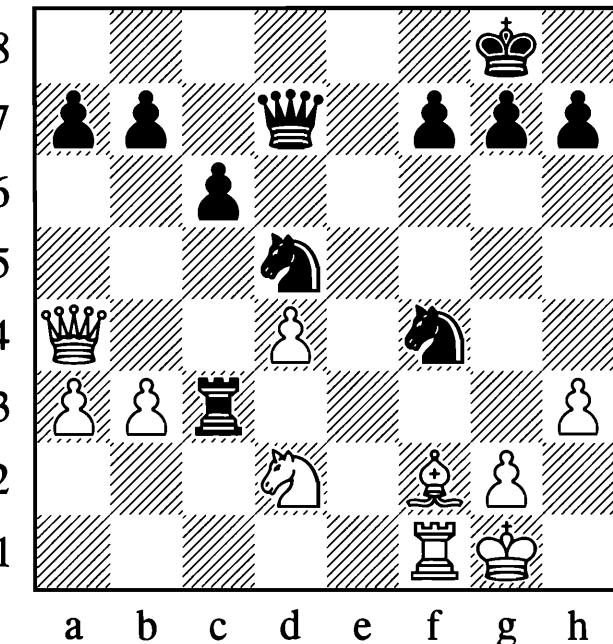
Quite often this transfer with gain of tempo is not so obvious when it is connected with other tactical motifs. We have seen this in **Malevinsky – Gefenas**, in the chapter on mating patterns, page 128.



1... $\mathbb{Q}xh2\#$

Black is able to gain more tempos and transfer the queen to the kingside where it will join the remaining rook to give mate. The transfer route of the queen is ... $\mathbb{Q}c6-c2-h7$. During this journey the queen gains a tempo on c2, because this is a check against the king on h2. Here the technique of gaining a tempo against the king is part of a mating combination.

Botvinnik created another fine example as Black against **Bondarevsky** in the following game played in the USSR in 1941.



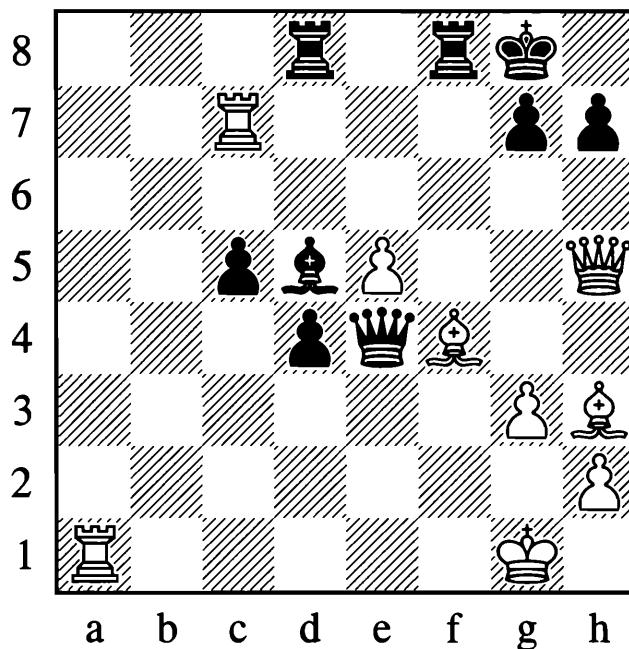
1... $\mathbb{Q}e2\#$ 2. $\mathbb{K}h2 \mathbb{Q}xh3\#$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}df4$

With mate next move. Of course, White's position was calamitous right from the

start of the operation, and Botvinnik could have played 1... $\mathbb{Q}xh3$ as the first move of this combination. Nevertheless, playing it as a second move, gaining a tempo towards an uninterrupted combination, was more precise, as now the sacrifice could no longer be declined.

0-1

You might argue that the gain of tempo in the last example was rather irrelevant but the next game graphically illustrates that the move order is often crucial for success. In **Petursson – Short**, Reykjavik 1987, Black continued accurately with:



1... $\mathbb{W}h1\#$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{B}xf4\#$

If you changed the move order with 1... $\mathbb{B}xf4$ it would allow the counter strike 2. $\mathbb{B}xg7\#$! $\mathbb{Q}f8!$ with a very complicated position. Short's move order gave the whole sequence a forcing character and left no way out for White.

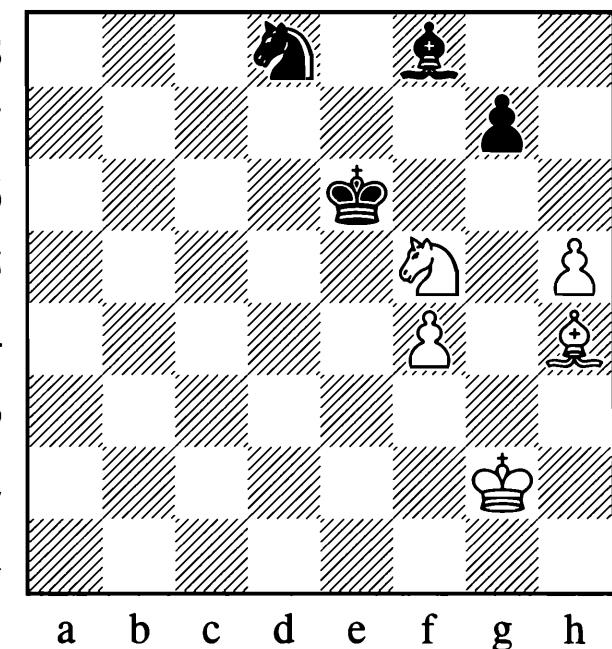
Botvinnik and Short's move orders are the no-nonsense approach to tactics, not allowing any hope for their opponents. **The gain of tempo within a combination helps to create a forcing sequence of moves.**

In the game White was not given the chance to play 2. $\mathbb{B}xg7\#$ and lost a few moves later:

3. $\mathbb{g}xf4$ $\mathbb{W}xh2\#$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{W}g3\#$ 5. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}c4\#$
6. $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{W}d3\#$

White resigned.

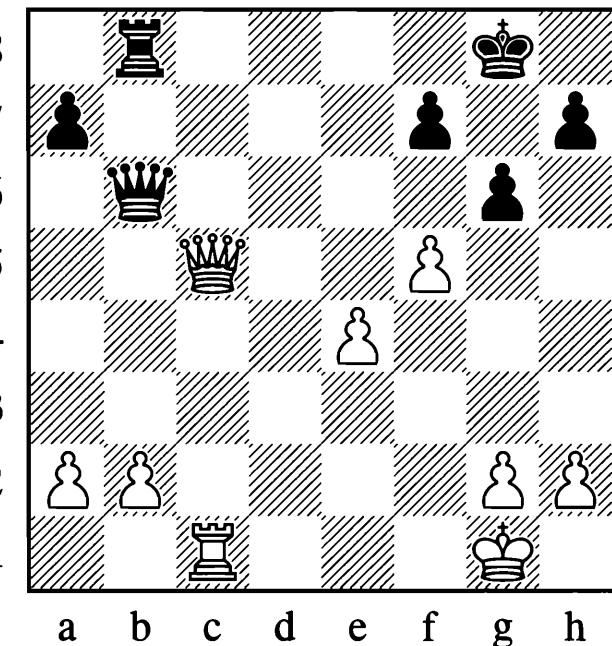
Here is a simple example from **Maxim Bloch's Combination Art** in which White gains a tempo against the black king.



The knight wins the pawn with check. Thus White makes sure he does not lose the right to move. He takes the pawn first and then, on his next move, the knight:

1. $\mathbb{Q}xg7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xd8$

We saw another example of the importance of move order in the game **Donner – Huebner** on page 32.



1...♝c8!

And after White takes the black queen with:

2.♛xb6

Black wins because the c1-rook can be taken with gain of tempo. Black takes the rook first:

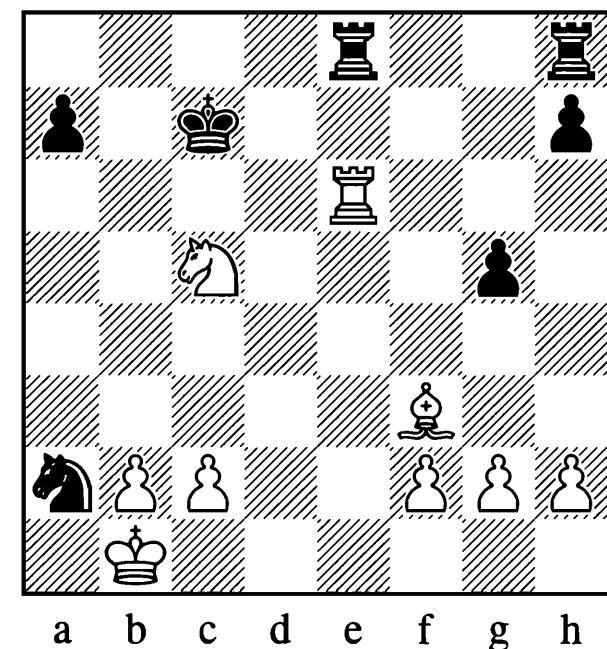
2...♝xc1†

And only then plays:

3.♞f2 axb6

Of course, the other way round would have lost Black the game.

It is the tactical wizard Tal who shows the tricks of the trade in **Tal – Lutikov**, Tallinn 1964.



Black has grabbed a pawn on a2 and now he takes the rook, reckoning that he might hang on in the endgame. Tal, on the other hand, has no intention of playing the endgame Black has in mind.

1...♝xe6 2.♞xe6†

Gaining a tempo!

2...♚d7

2...♚d6 3.♞xg5 wins back a pawn, and gains another tempo as the knight threatens to fork king and rook on f7.

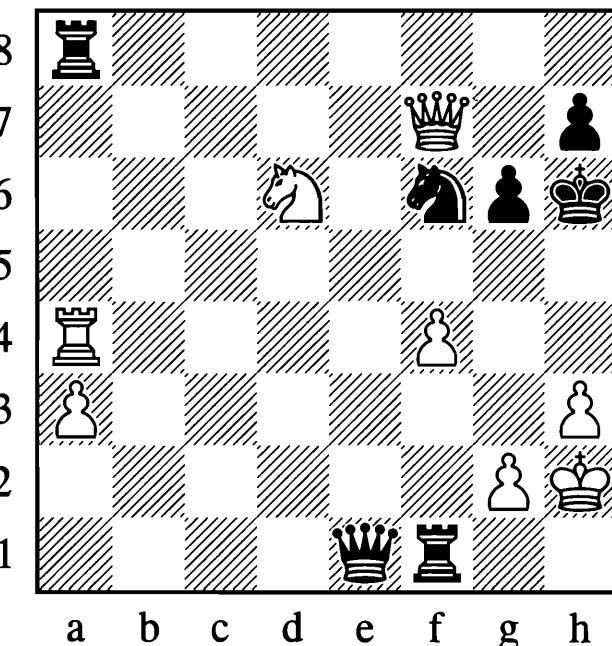
3.♞c5†

Gaining another tempo!

3...♛d6 4.♞d3

Controlling b4, the flight square of the a2-knight. Black had seen enough and resigned.

We have seen in the previous example how many tempos can be gained against the king. However, sometimes losing only one tempo is like missing the decisive penalty kick in a football match. And sometimes the tempo gained by a check is the only path to safety, as this adaptation of the game **Medina – Sanz**, Olot 1975, shows. In order to keep the beautiful mate while underlining the need to find a saving tempo, I have added the rook on a8 to the original position.



White looks in dire straits. He will only survive if he manages to gain a tempo against the black king. In this example this tempo actually leads to a stunning finish.

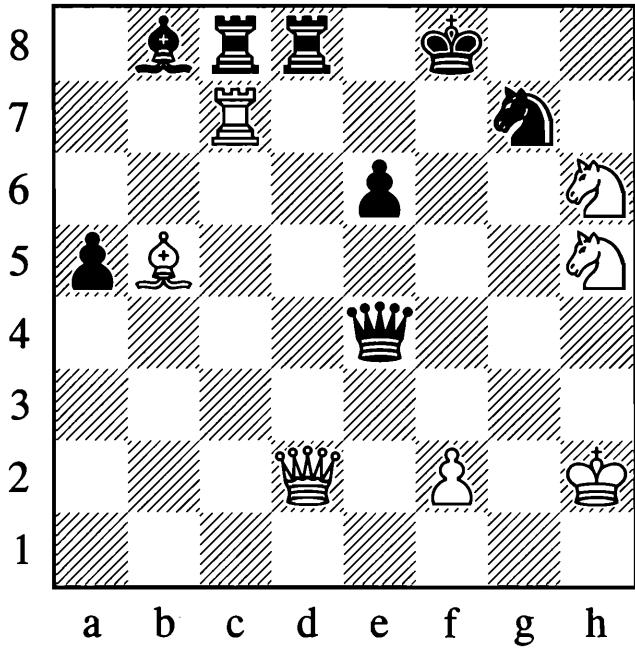
1.♞f5† ♚h5

1...gxsf5 2.♛xf6† ♚h5 3.♛g5 mate.

2.♛xh7† ♚xh7 3.g4 mate

We know there is symmetry in chess, so it is not only the gain of a tempo against the king that can lead to the downfall of a proud kingdom, the loss of a tempo can have the same disastrous effect.

I do not know where the next position is from, but it is very instructive.



1. $\mathbb{W}d6\#!!$

Now the white rook will be free to move and thereby deliver mate on f7. White gained a tempo and Black lost it and with it the game.

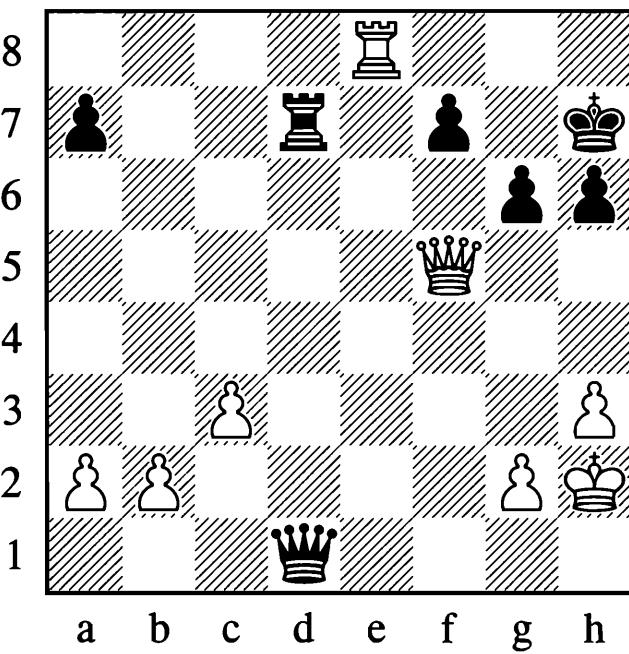
1–0

Capablanca, although better known as a strategist rather than a deadly tactician, was superb in dealing with elementary tactics. A thorough study of Capablanca's games will teach the reader a great deal about the subjects you will encounter in this book.

Obviously you have to protect your king against a gain of tempo by your opponent. If you fail to pay attention to this issue you might ruin the work of a whole, long game within a second.

Capablanca – Alekhine

St Petersburg 1914



In this position Capablanca played:

1. $\mathbb{W}e5!$

This wins much more easily than 1. $\mathbb{W}f6$ would have.

A queen exchange is the only remedy to save the black king from mate. 1. $\mathbb{W}e5$ prevents 1... $\mathbb{W}d6$ coming with a check and a tempo, as White blocks the diagonal to his king. Black had to give up another pawn first by playing:

1...f6

In order to exchange queens after:

2. $\mathbb{W}xf6 \mathbb{W}d6\#$

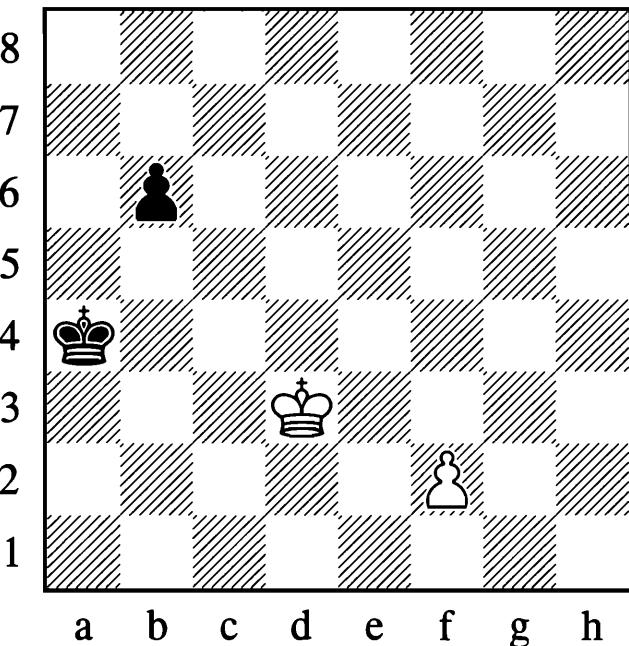
He resigned two moves later.

Capablanca, although better known as a strategist rather than a deadly tactician, was superb in dealing with elementary tactics. Therefore, a thorough study of Capablanca's games will teach the reader a great deal about the subjects you will encounter in this book. In Capablanca's smooth positional style you will also discover why some tactics just don't work against players of his class. Their pieces always work together harmoniously.

Without “loose ends” (like undeveloped and undefended pieces) there is unlikely to be any tactical misfortune.

When it comes to an endgame, a tempo often decides the game. So the result of an 80-move struggle might be decided by the smallest difference in timing.

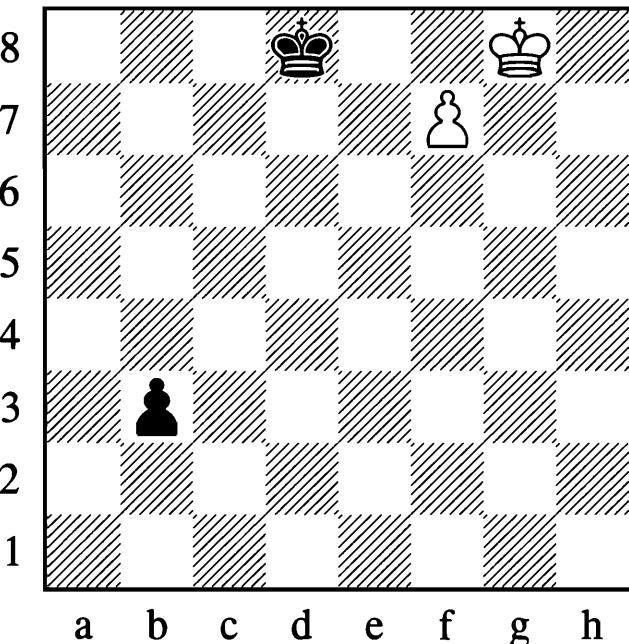
Grigoriev 1929



From this diagram there are two possible variations and in both the black king loses a crucial tempo.

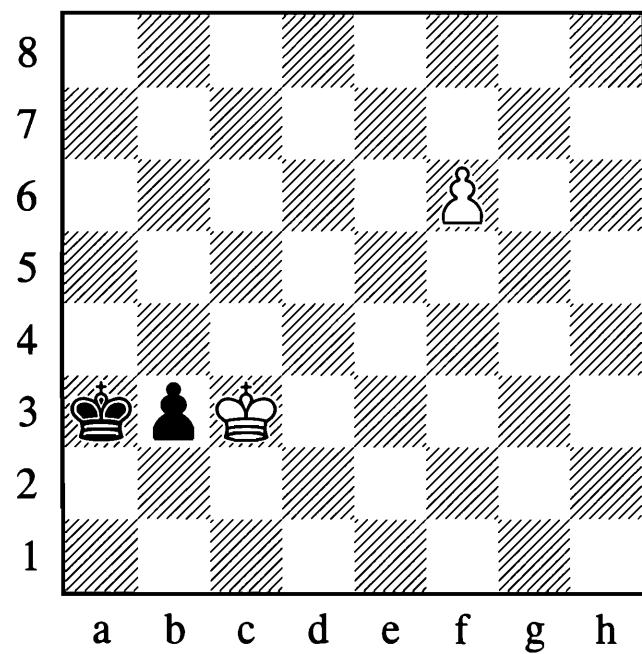
**1. ♔d4 ♔b5 2. ♔d5 ♔a6 3. f4 ♔b7 4. f5 ♔c7
5. ♔e6 ♔d8 6. ♔f7 b5 7. f6 b4 ♔g8 b3 9. f7**

The white pawn will promote with check.



If, from the first diagram, Black tries another plan, he will not survive either:

1. ♔d4 b5 2. f4 b4 3. f5 b3 4. ♔c3 ♔a3 5. f6



Again Black is lacking one tempo.

5...b2

5...♔a2 6. f7 b2 7. f8=♕ b1=♕ 8. ♕a8 mate.

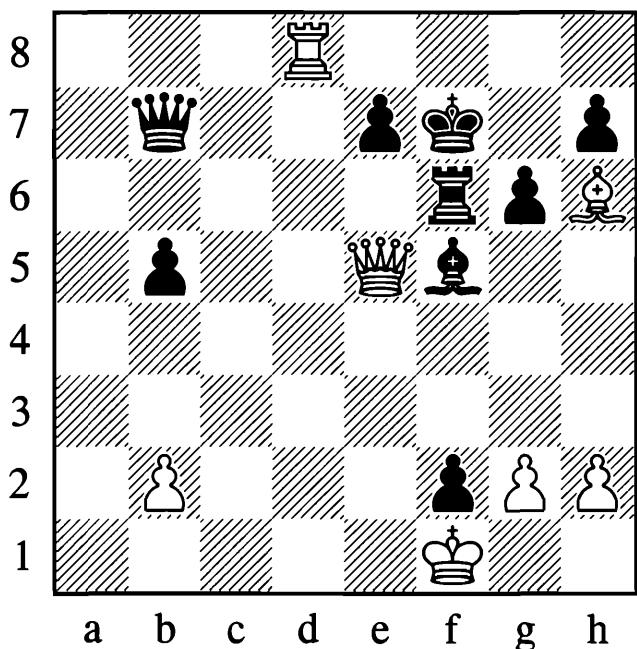
**6. f7 b1=♕ 7. f8=♕† ♔a4 8. ♕a8† ♔b5
9. ♕b7†**

Black loses his queen.

There are many endgame studies where promoting with check is the key to the solution, and gaining or sometimes losing a tempo (triangulation) is often the clue to “solving in style”.

When it comes to an endgame, a tempo often decides the game. The result of an 80-move struggle might be decided by the smallest difference in timing.

Here is an example of a promotion during a middlegame. The following position from **Baseler – H. Mueller**, London 1962, looks rather complicated. But looking beyond the circumstances of the current position will help you to find the solution.



If we could get rid of the f5-bishop and the white king, the pawn would promote. As the pawn would promote with check if the king were somewhere nearby, we could afford to sacrifice heavily to make this happen. And there you have it:

1...Qd3†

Black removes the first obstacle.

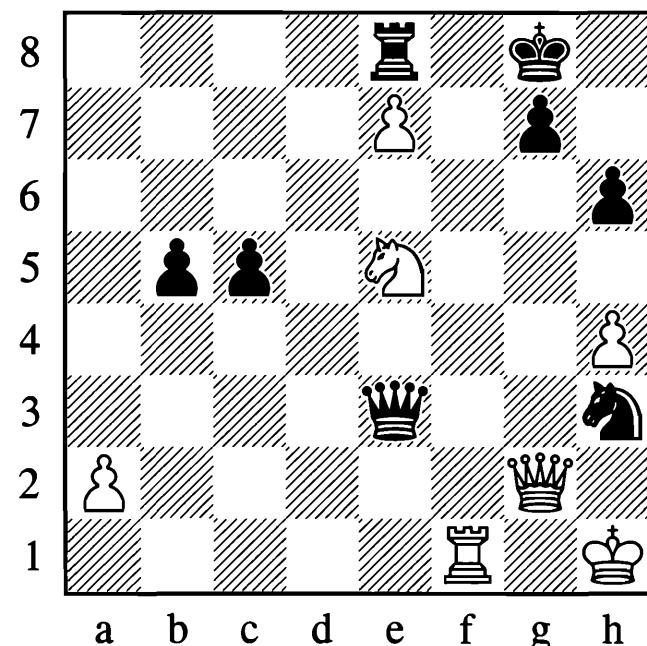
2.Qxd3 Qxg2†

Black also feels free to invest his queen, as he will get a new one.

3.Qxg2 f1=Q† 4.Qg3 Qxd3†

Black wins.

Successful promotion is often connected with the gain of tempo. At times, it even pays to promote the pawn to a humble knight as in **Gulko – Grigorian**, USSR 1971:

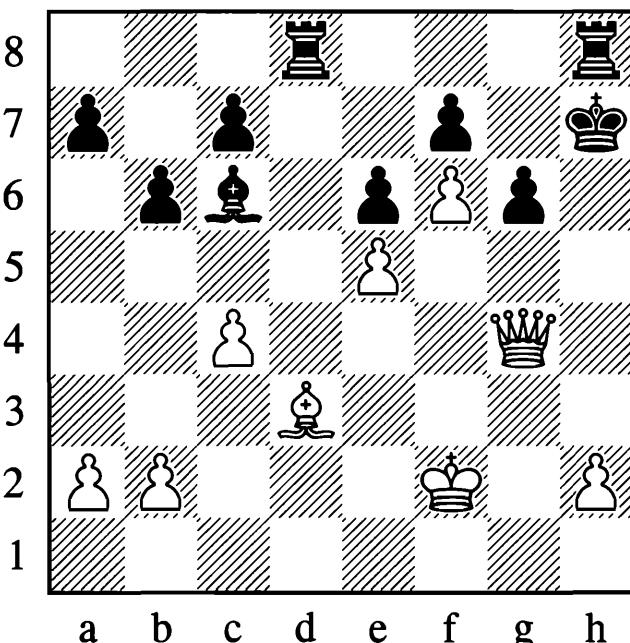


1.Qf8† Qxf8 2.Qd5† Qh7 3.exf8=N†!

If 3...Qh8 4.Qeg6 mate, so...

1–0

The tempos you may gain against the king will help to redeploy your troops freely. A queen might change diagonals using check to gain a tempo. Another common use of the tempo against the king is the situation when the pawns defending the king have been attacked and the king is exposed to the enemy pieces. Sometimes entire pawn chains are pulverized this way as **Filipowicz – Ujtelky**, Budapest 1976, shows.



1.Qxg6† fxg6 2.Qh3† Qg8 3.Qxe6†

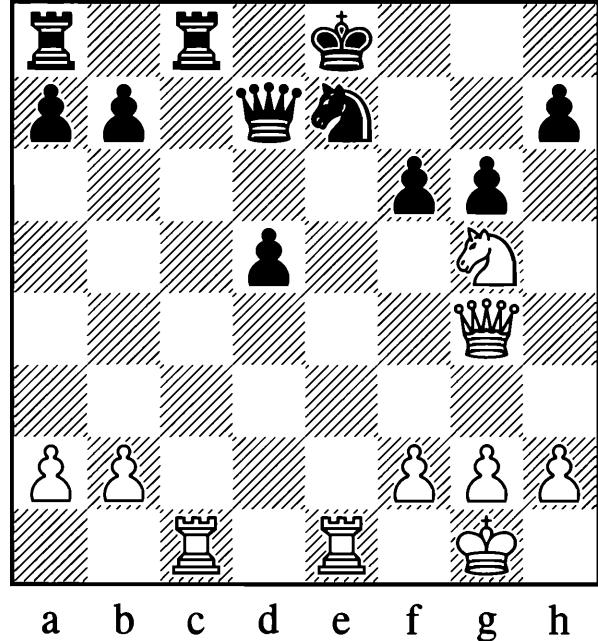
1–0

Sometimes an entire game illustrates how difficult it is for the king's defenders to help if their king is attacked with tempo, and how easy it is for the attacker to sac one piece after another to finish off the king. The following example is a very famous game from the first World Champion.

Steinitz – von Bardeleben

Hastings 1895

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗c4 ♗c5 4.c3 ♘f6
 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 ♗b4† 7.♘c3 d5 8.exd5
 ♘xd5 9.0–0 ♗e6 10.♗g5 ♗e7 11.♗xd5
 ♗xd5 12.♘xd5 ♖xd5 13.♗xe7 ♘xe7
 14.♗e1 f6 15.♗e2 ♖d7 16.♗ac1 c6 17.d5
 cxd5 18.♘d4 ♔f7 19.♘e6 ♖hc8 20.♗g4 g6
 21.♗g5† ♗e8



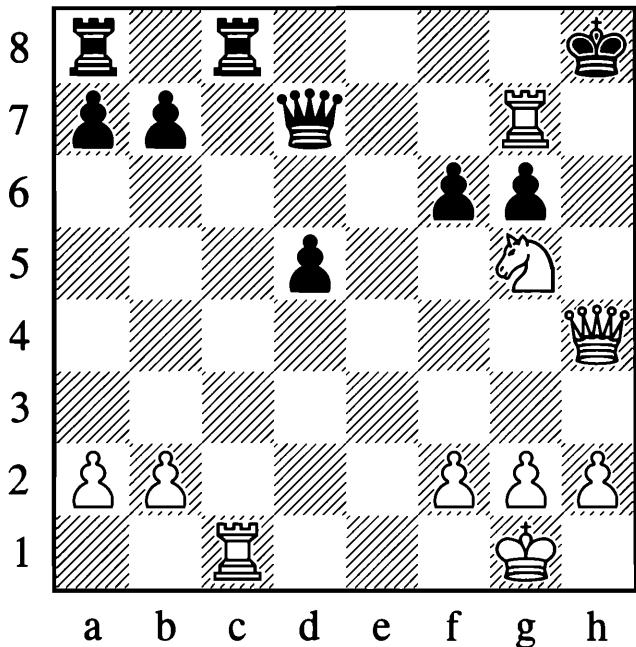
22.♗xe7†!

This rook is like a loose cannon rolling on the deck of a man-of-war.

22...♔f8 23.♗f7† ♔g8 24.♗g7† ♔h8
 25.♗xh7†

Infamously, von Bardeleben now left the playing hall and allowed himself to lose on time. The finish should have been:

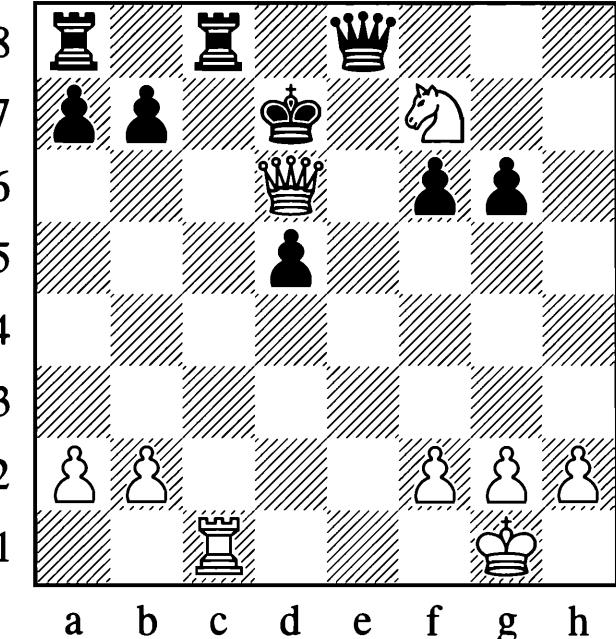
25...♔g8 26.♗g7† ♔h8 27.♗h4†



27...♗xg7

Finally the king eliminates the cheeky rook but it does not help at all.

28.♗h7† ♔f8 29.♗h8† ♔e7 30.♗g7† ♔e8
 31.♗g8† ♔e7 32.♗f7† ♔d8 33.♗f8† ♔e8
 34.♗f7† ♔d7 35.♗d6 mate



All of White's last moves came with tempo...

When the opposing king is attacked with tempo, it is sometimes possible for the attacker to sac one piece after another to finish off the king.

So what have we learned so far about the gain of tempo against the king:

1. Be on the lookout for enemy pieces that might change their location with check
2. A gain of tempo against the king practically enables the attacker to move twice
3. If you can gain a tempo against the king, look for possible elementary motifs on the new square of the checking piece
4. A gain of tempo might unpin pinned pieces, if the target of the pin is not your king
5. A gain of tempo might be the last resort in a desperate position

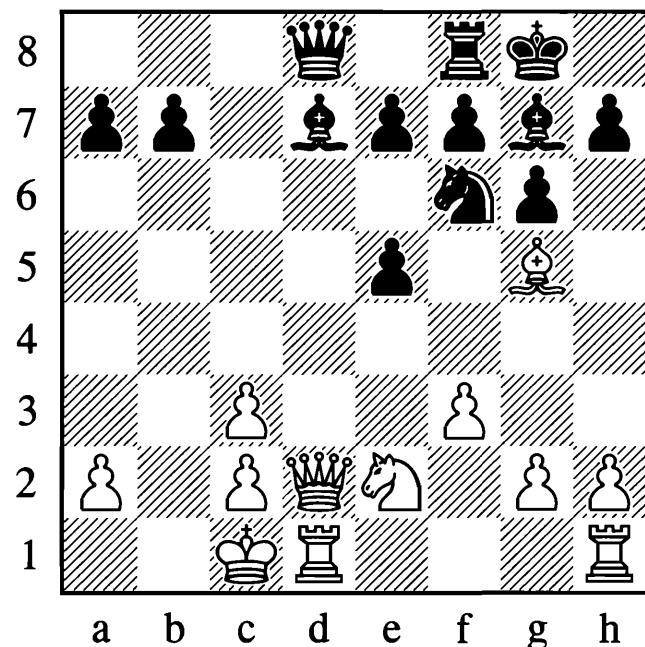
The intermediate move

What exactly is an intermediate move?

An intermediate move is a move that is inserted into a seemingly forced sequence of moves. The intermediate move is not the main move of the sequence and it is not the final move that is finishing the sequence. So why bother with it? Because the intermediate move can change the tactical situation on the board: the intermediate move can create a follow-up motif or prevent a follow-up motif, or the intermediate move can guarantee an uninterrupted series of moves. If the intermediate move is a check then it interrupts the opponent's tactical operations, and this is why the intermediate move often comes as a surprise.

The trick is to start a sequence of moves, then insert a move in-between that gains a tempo, so that the initial operation can be finished without losing the initiative. Before we all get lost in definitions, let's take a look at a position and everything will be clearer.

A common motif in a series of exchanges is an in-between capture of a piece with tempo before restoring the material balance. This motif plays a role in the following opening analysis of the Sicilian Dragon.



It looks as if White will win a piece. But after:

1... $\mathbb{W}a5$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

Black does not take back immediately but plays the intermediate move:

2... $\mathbb{Q}f5!?$

If:

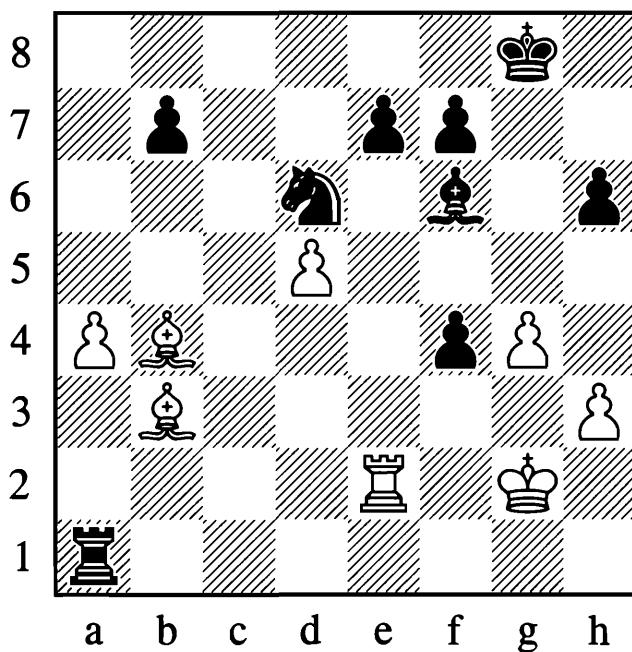
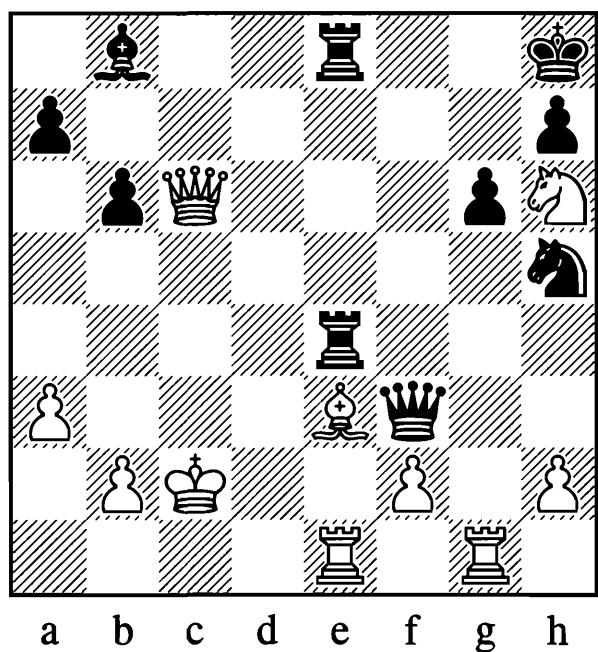
3. $\mathbb{Q}xg7 \mathbb{W}xa2$

Then Black wins time with the threat of 4... $\mathbb{W}a1$ mate, and as White's queen also has to protect c2 against mate, White will either lose his queen or his king.

An even more effective, but less pretty, variation is 2... $\mathbb{W}a3\#$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ with another intermediate move: 3... $\mathbb{Q}e6!$

An intermediate move is a move that is inserted into a seemingly forced sequence of moves.

In the previous example a piece was saved that seemed lost. In the next example, constructed by **Maxim Bloch**, we see a different kind of save.



Black would love to play 1... $\mathbb{R}xe3$ but after an exchange of queens, this seems to leave the e8-rook hanging. How can the rook be saved? Maybe with the help of an intermediate move? Yes, help is on the way:

1... $\mathbb{R}xe3$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xd6 f3\#$

And now an intermediate move solves all the problems:

2... $\mathbb{R}c8\#$! 3. $\mathbb{Q}b1 \mathbb{R}xf3$

Black has won a piece. Black just postponed the main move, ... $\mathbb{R}xf3$, until after the other rook was out of trouble.

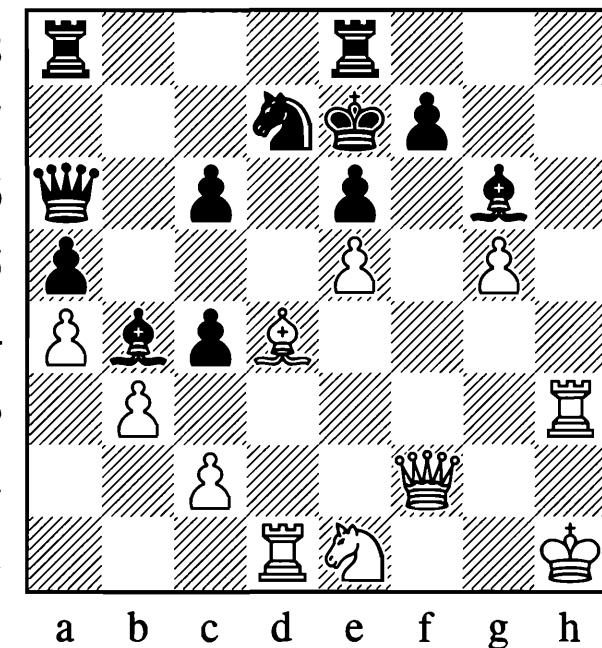
Postponing retaking is not the only use of the intermediate move in combinations. Sometimes a combination only works because somewhere on the way to the final position the attacker gains a tempo with an intermediate move. This gain of tempo often comes as a surprise; therefore a combination with an intermediate move is harder to spot and defend against. But the most stunning feature of the **intermediate move** is that it **allows a combination to start before certain obstacles have been removed and before creating any weaknesses in the opponent's position**.

Sounds incredible? Well, have a look at **Rossetto – Sherwin**, Portoroz Interzonal 1958:

1... $\mathbb{R}b1$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xd6 f3\#$

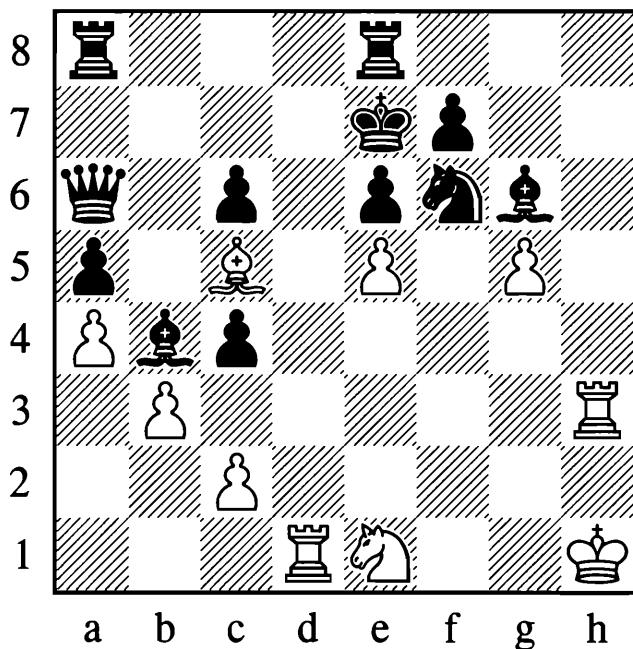
If Black had started the combination with 1... $f3\#$, creating the target by drawing the king to f3, it would not have worked. White would have found time (and the e3-square for his rook) to defend against ... $\mathbb{R}b1$ with $\mathbb{R}e3$. But now the b3-bishop is taken with check.

The next example is an altered version of **Vladimirov – Kharitonov**, USSR 1977, where the bishop on g6 was a pawn in the original example! Again an intermediate move is used to open lines against the king:



1. $\mathbb{W}f6\#$! $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}c5\#$

With this intermediate move the rook gains control over the d-file.



2... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}gxf6\#$

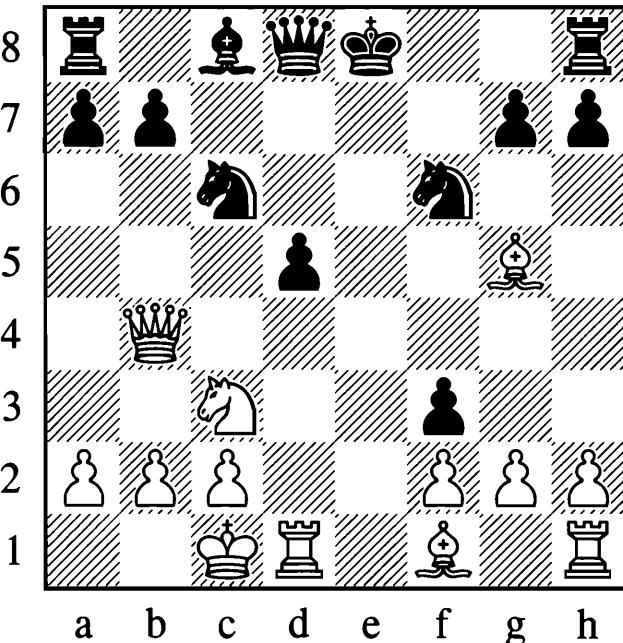
Only now White does recapture.

3... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}h8$ mate

With Tal behind the white pieces, there are intermediate moves galore in the next game.

Tal – Lutikov

USSR 1964

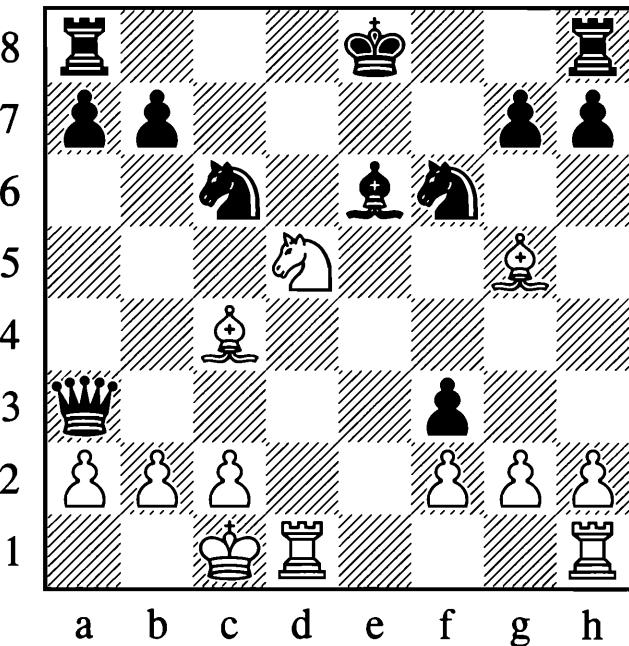


1. $\mathbb{Q}a3$

Instead 1. $\mathbb{Q}h4$, reinforcing the pin, followed by $\mathbb{Q}e4$ or $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ would have been the best continuation. But note that when deciding between the other options of 1. $\mathbb{Q}a3$ and 1. $\mathbb{Q}c5$, Tal chose to play the queen to the

protected square on a3. In a possible variation 1. $\mathbb{Q}a3$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xa3$ the intermediate move 3. $\mathbb{Q}c7\#$ would be possible. Not so with an undefended queen on c5.

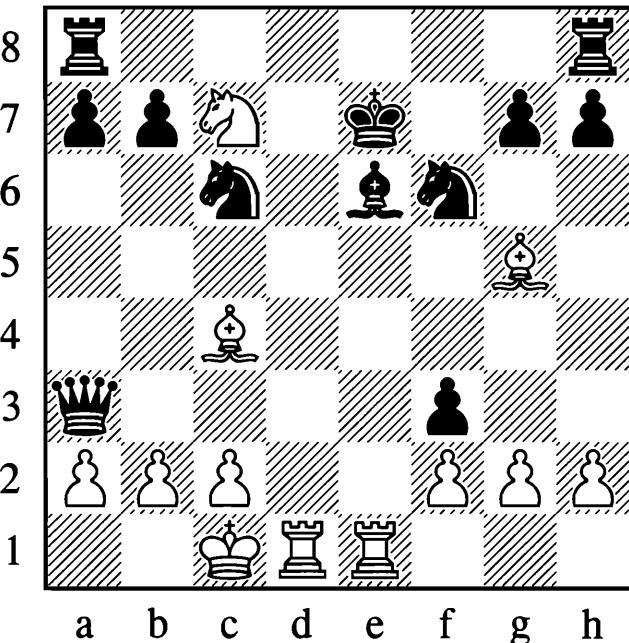
1... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xa3$



4. $\mathbb{Q}c7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$

Now Tal played an intermediate move:

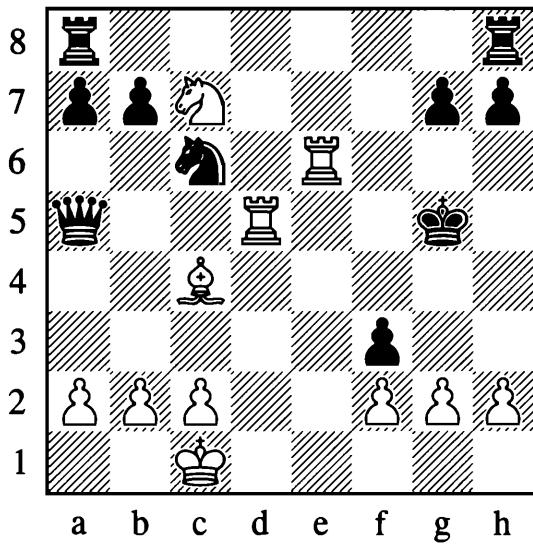
5. $\mathbb{Q}he1!!??$



Although we all like a good intermediate move from time to time, 5. $\mathbb{Q}he1$ unnecessarily complicates matters and is not at all convincing. Tal refrained from recapturing the queen because he believed that White's attack against the black king would be strong enough.

And in the game this worked. But bringing the h1-rook into play should have been too slow if Black had found the best defence. It is true that in this complex position Black's queen does not have many good retreating squares. Perhaps that is why Tal, who never wanted to play a dull game, went for 5.♗he1.

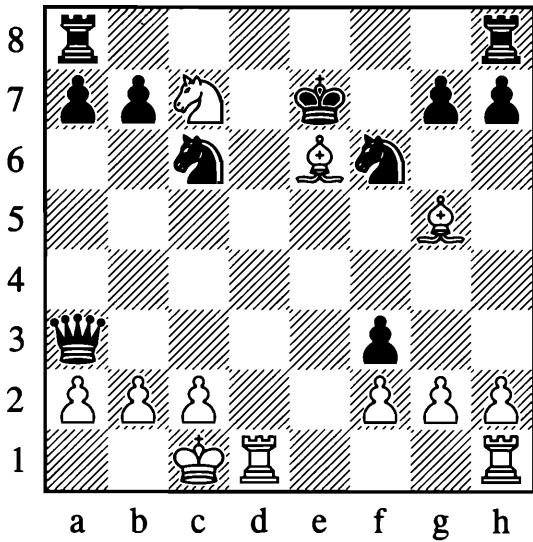
But if Black had found the correct squares for his queen, Tal surely would not have enjoyed the uphill struggle after 5...♛a5!. Now the black queen has to fear being caught in just one variation: 6.♕xf6† ♛xf6! 7.♗xe6† ♛g5 8.♗d5†



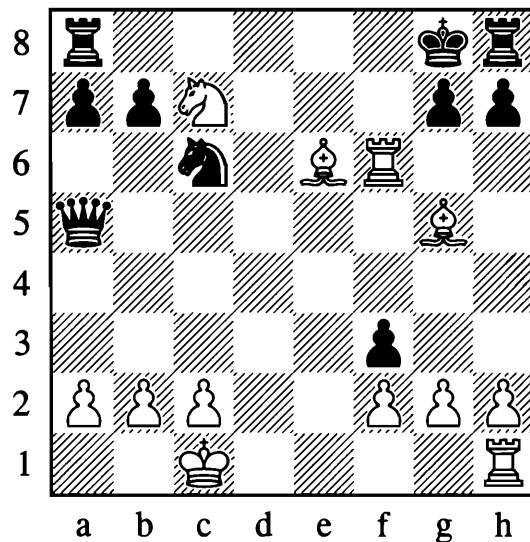
White regains the queen but faces an unpleasant endgame.

Of course 6.♗xe6† ♛f8 7.♗f4 is another option for White, but the resulting tough battle against the black queen cannot have been Tal's intention.

Instead of 5.♗he1 he should have settled for 5.♗xe6!!.



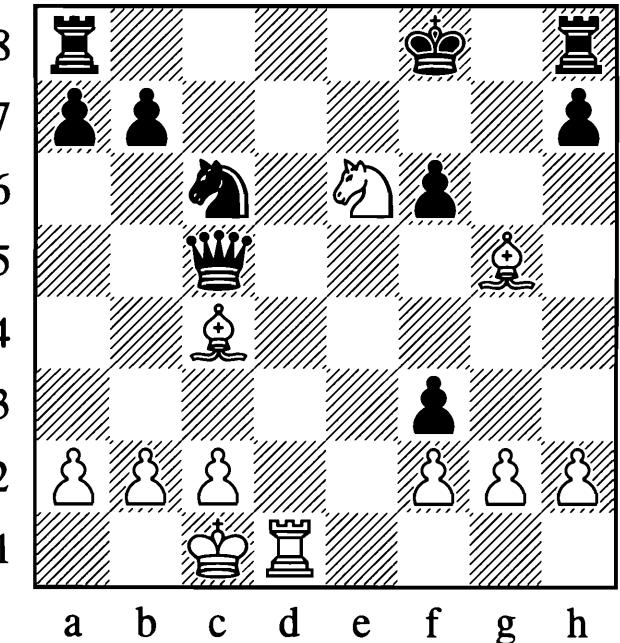
Another intermediate move. If Black now tries to save his queen he gets mated: 5...♛a5 (other queen moves lose by the same way except 5...♛d6, which simply returns the queen unfavourably) 6.♗d7† ♛f8 7.♗f7† ♛g8 8.♗xf6 mate.



Yet in the actual game Lutikov believed Tal (who would not have done so?) and played:

5...♛c5?? 6.♗xe6† ♛f8 7.♗xf6† gxf6 8.♔e6†

Regaining the queen with a small advantage for White.



So sometimes even world champions can go wrong with intermediate moves, but they definitely consider intermediate moves at all times.

So don't forget intermediate moves, and try to make use of them in your games!

Summary

Whenever you want to move a piece you should check whether you can gain a tempo with that piece.

You can also gain time by stopping your opponent from gaining tempos against your pieces.

Tactical operations (motifs) are often introduced with a gain of tempo.

A gain of tempo against the king permits putting pieces on squares they could normally only have reached in two moves.

This even turns a knight into a long-range piece.

It becomes possible to control squares that were out of reach without the gain of tempo against the king.

A gain of tempo within a combination helps to create a forcing sequence of moves.

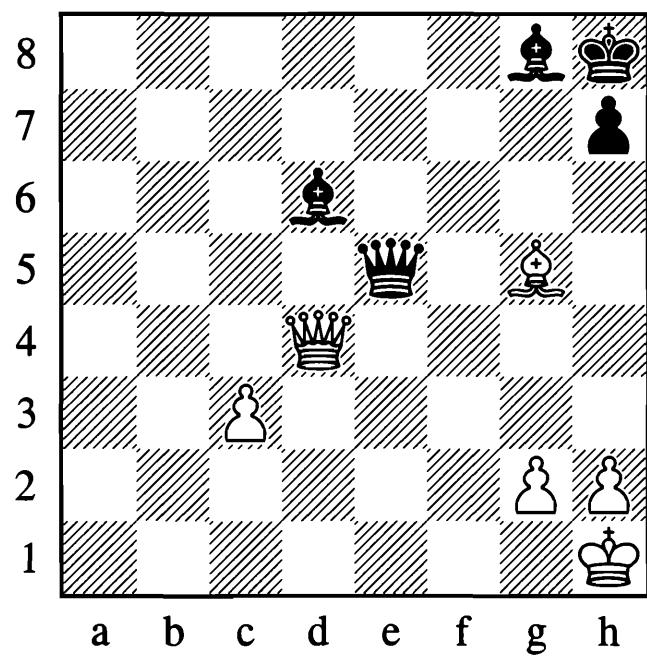
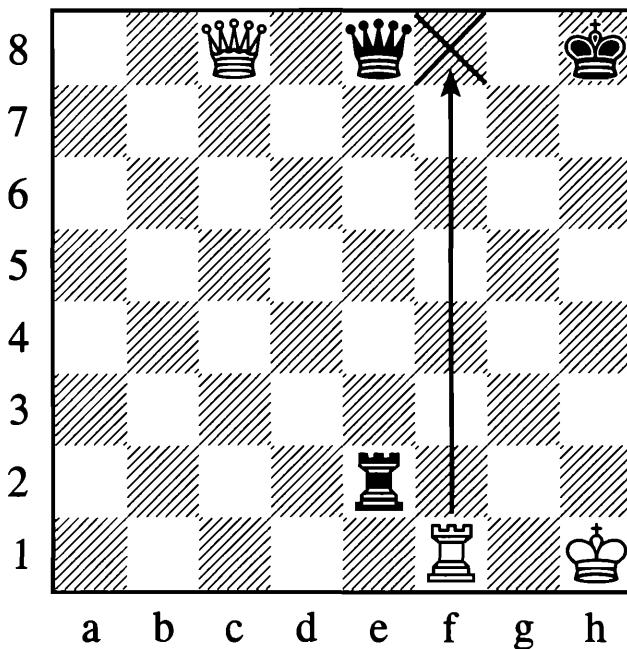
An intermediate move allows a combination to start before certain obstacles have been removed and before creating any weaknesses in the opponent's position.

Chapter 9

The X-ray Attack

In an X-ray attack **one of the pieces controlling a square is exercising this control indirectly, all the way through an enemy piece.** This sounds almost incredible, defying the laws of chess physics, but a look at the next diagram will help explain the concept.

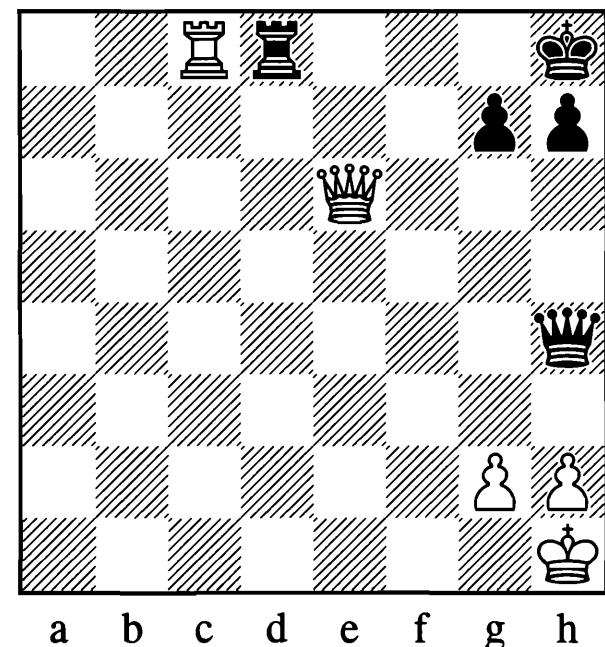
either two rooks or a rook and a queen, or on a diagonal by bishop and queen, as the next two diagrams illustrate.



1. $\mathbb{R}f6\#$

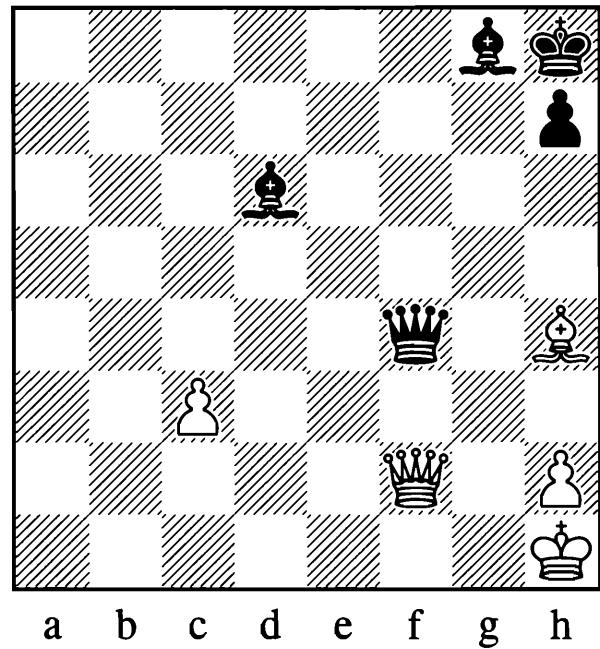
White can play 1. $\mathbb{R}f8\#$ because f8 is already defended by the white queen, although the black queen seems to block this control. This is the important thing to remember with the X-ray attack. Although it does not look like it, effectively the attacking side is controlling the key square more often than the defending side. The enemy piece finds itself sandwiched between two attackers.

There are two different types of X-ray attack. The first can only be performed by the long-range pieces. In the first type the attacking pieces share a connection, that is, they move in the same direction. This can be achieved by



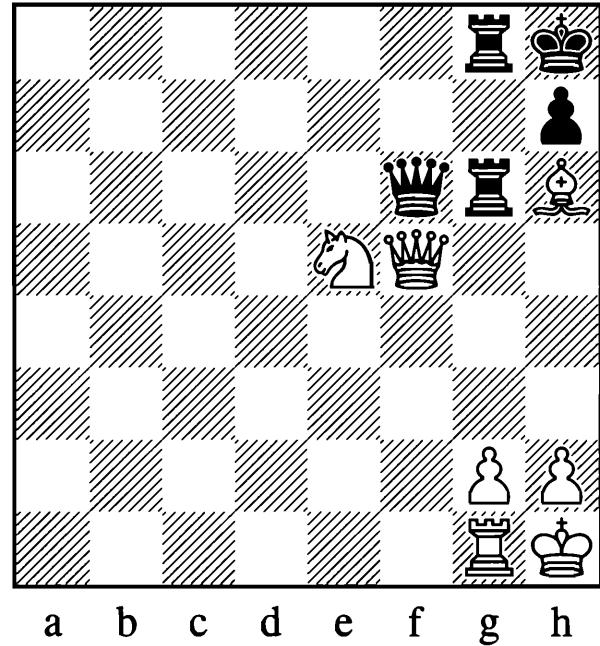
1. $\mathbb{Q}e8\#$

The second type is a little more difficult to see as only one attacker is attacking the enemy piece in the sandwich position. In this type any of the pieces can be part of the X-ray attack.



1. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$

The bishop is defended by the queen from f2.

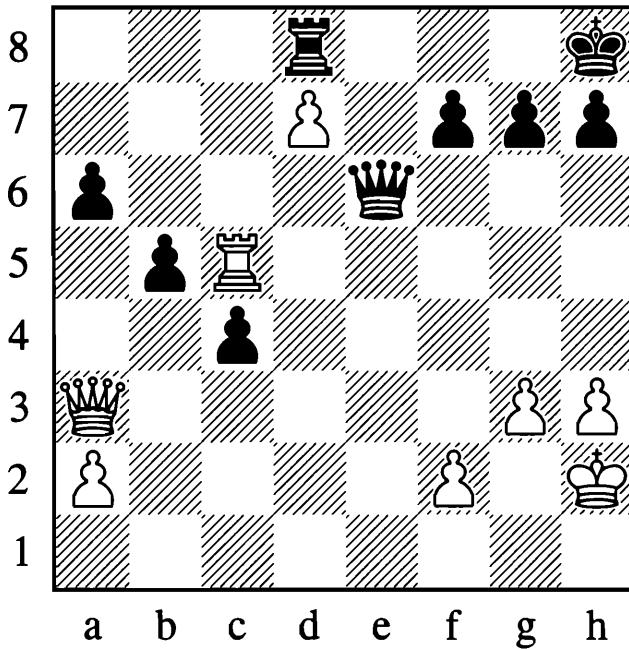


1. $\mathbb{Q}f7\#$

The knight is defended by the queen from f5. In a way the X-ray attack is a special case of the reloader: one piece is sacrificed on a certain

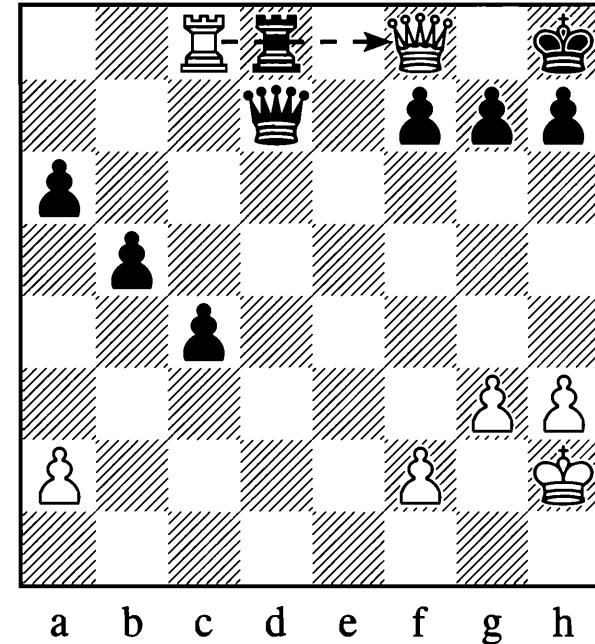
square and the second occupies it after the first has been eliminated. The only difference is the sandwich position of the defender in the X-ray attack.

The X-ray attack can be used to stunning effect, as **Alekhine – Nestor**, Trinidad 1939, shows:



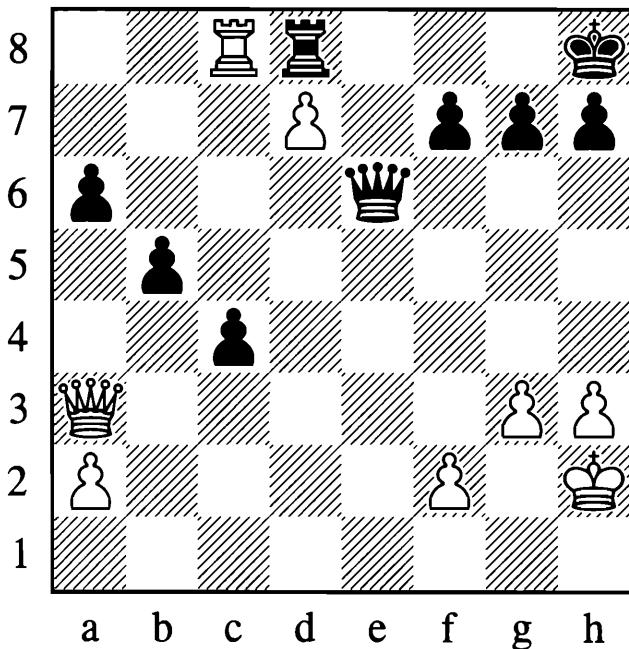
1. $\mathbb{B}c8!$ $\mathbb{W}xd7$ 2. $\mathbb{W}f8\#$

There is no way to stop the back rank mate:



With the X-ray attack, although it does not look like it, the attacking side is effectively controlling the key square more often than the defending side.

Let's return to the position after 1. $\mathbb{R}c8!$:



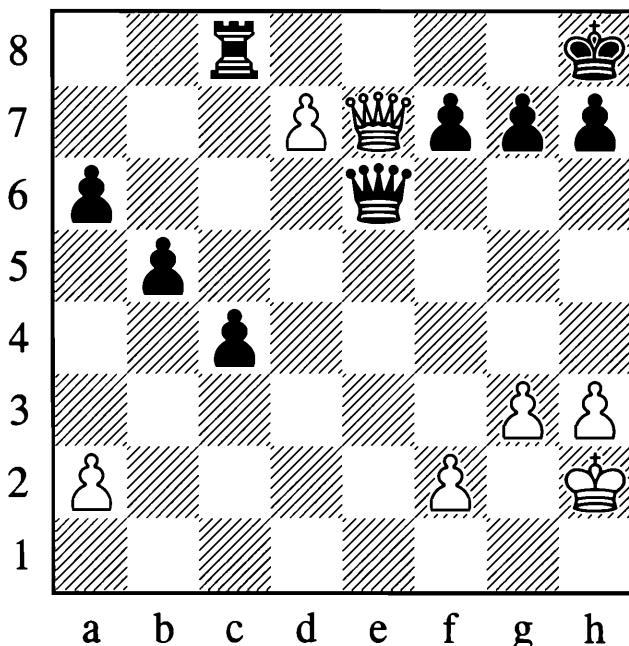
We should consider what happens if Black takes the rook:

1... $\mathbb{R}xc8$

White has a stunning reply:

2. $\mathbb{W}e7!!$

A truly beautiful move:



Black cannot take the queen: 2... $\mathbb{W}xe7$ 3. $\mathbb{d}xc8=\mathbb{W}\dagger$ followed by mate. Although Black's queen is defending the c8-rook with an X-ray motif, Black is lost. White threatens to eliminate this defence with 3. $\mathbb{W}xe6$ and at the same time menaces queening the pawn with 3. $d8=\mathbb{W}\dagger$.

2... $\mathbb{W}c6$

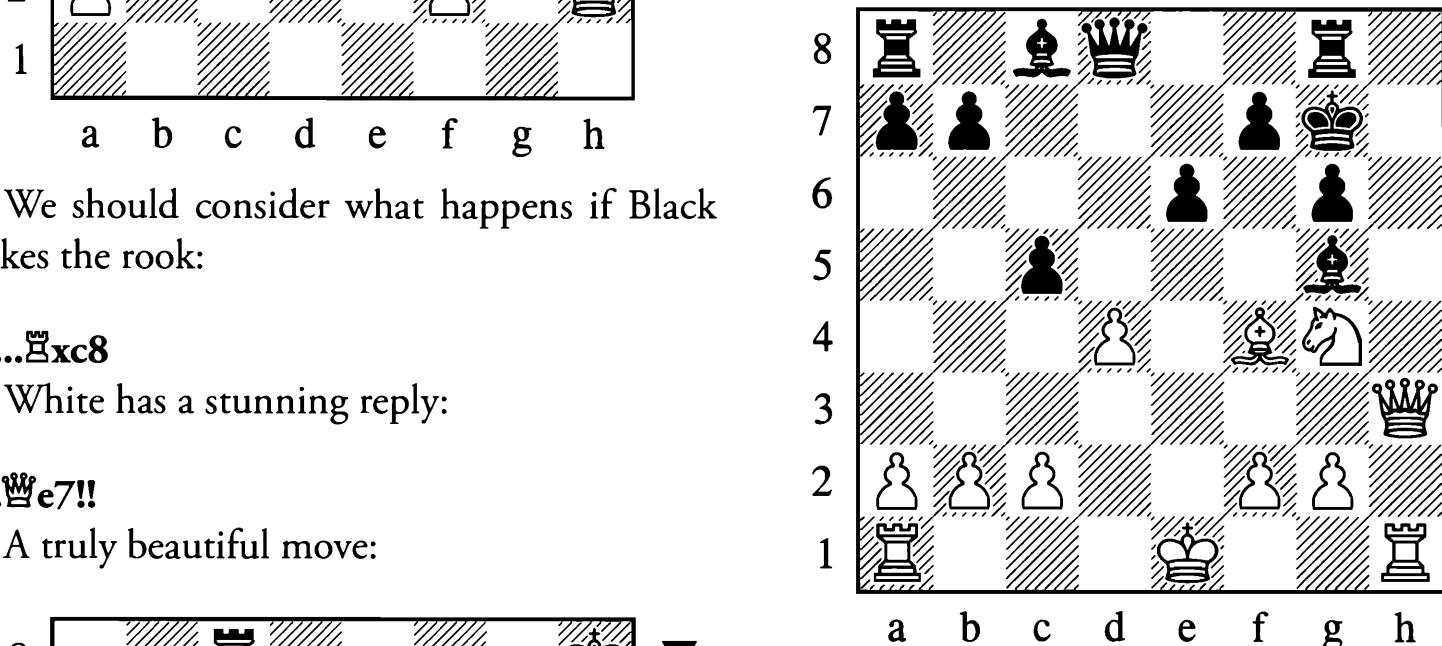
Black could also try 2... $\mathbb{W}f5$ but it would lose in the same way as the game.

3. $d8=\mathbb{W}\dagger$

The next example is also quite spectacular:

Magrin – Sawij

Spain 1968

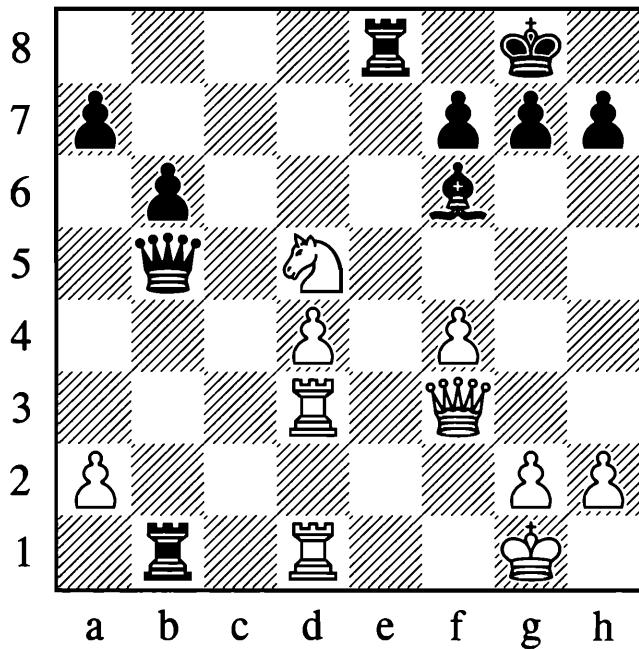


1. $\mathbb{W}h6\dagger!$ $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xh6\dagger$ $\mathbb{K}h7$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}f8\dagger$ $\mathbb{W}h4$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}xh4$ mate

Again the attacker is reloading on a square he hits more times than the defender. The value of the reloading piece is not important ("3 points"); it is its performance that matters.

In a way the X-ray attack is a special case of the reloader: one piece is sacrificed on a certain square and the second occupies it after the first has been eliminated.

As with all other tactical motifs, the X-ray attack can be combined in many ways. For example, pins and interrupting lines of communication as in **Tukmakov – Gufeld**, USSR 1972, with Black to move:



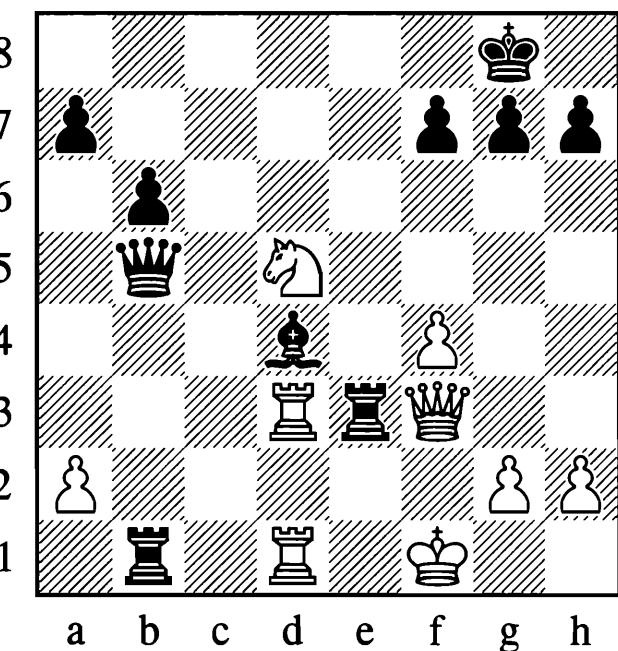
1...Qxd4†!

Now 2.Qxd4 would be answered by 2...Qe1† (X-ray attack) 3.Qf2 Qf1†. This move is possible because the queen on b5 controls f1. This is why 1...Qe1† was not winning immediately.

2.Qh1 would run into 2...Qe1† and the X-ray attack is a prelude to mate. So instead the white king has to go to f1 and turn itself into the target of a pin by the black queen on the d3-rook:

There can be an overlap between an X-ray and a discovered attack. If we have a potential discovered attack, then the attacking piece could be said to have an X-ray influence through the piece that may move away.

2.Qf1 Qe3!



Cutting off another line.

0–1

Remember that the d3-rook is not defended by its colleague on d1, as this rook is also pinned against the king. 3.Qxe3 Qxd3† would not help White.

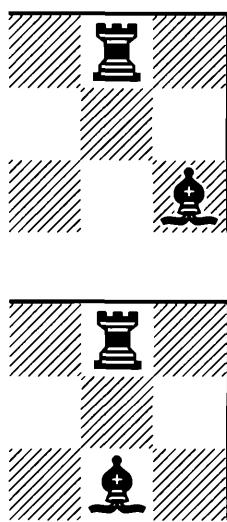
Summary

- In an X-ray attack the piece controlling a square exercises this control indirectly, all the way through an enemy piece.
- In some cases the X-ray attack can look like a special case of the reloader: one piece is sacrificed on a certain square and the second occupies it after the first has been eliminated. The only difference is the sandwich position of the defender in the X-ray attack.
- As with all other tactical motifs, the X-ray attack can be combined in many ways.
- As we shall see in the puzzle section, there can be an overlap between an X-ray and a discovered attack. If we have a potential discovered attack, then the attacking piece could be said to have an X-ray influence through the piece that may move away.

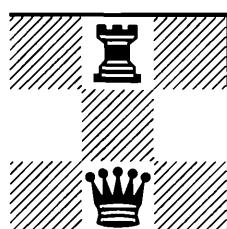
Chapter 10

Opening and Closing Lines of Communication

The first diagram shows no line of communication between the pieces. In the second diagram a line of communication exists as the rook defends the bishop.

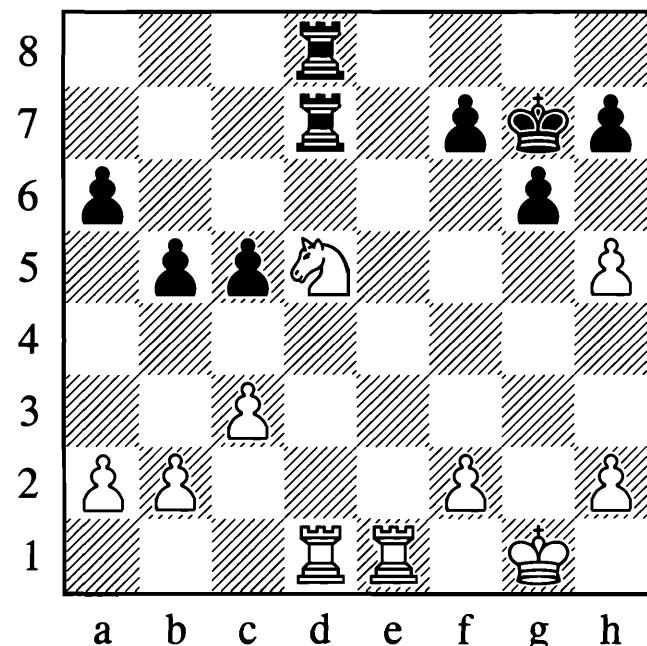


If both pieces move in the same way we can say that there is a two-way communication:



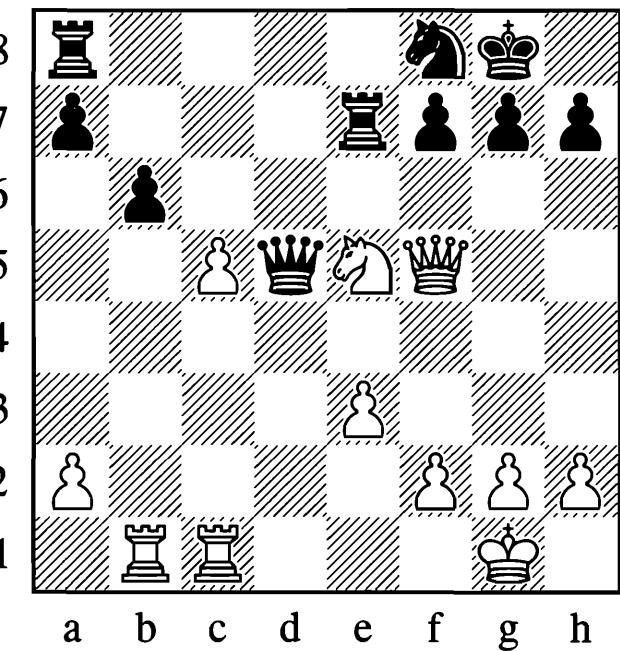
The tactician is interested in these lines of communication as they can be opened or closed and this might be crucial for the success of a combination.

As a simple example, the next diagram shows the final position of a combination that would have been reached in **Pogrebissky – Levenfish**, USSR 1939, if Black had not resigned two moves earlier!



With 1. $\mathbb{N}e3$ the knight opens a line of communication with the d1-rook. Thus White eliminates the pin and holds on to his material advantage.

Let's have another look at the game **Krogius – Sergievsky**, USSR 1959. A line of communication is advantageously established between two pieces of different movements.



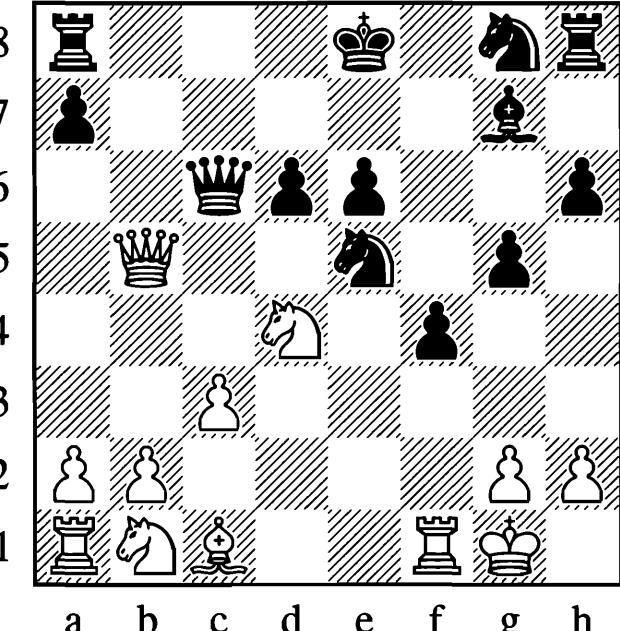
1. ♜g6!

This move discovers the attack of the queen from f5 on its rival on d5 and also threatens to occupy the tactical base e7 in case of 1... ♕xf5, forking king and queen, winning a rook.

Sometimes lines are opened and closed during the same operation, and it can even happen on the same move.

Thomas – Horn

Hastings 1948

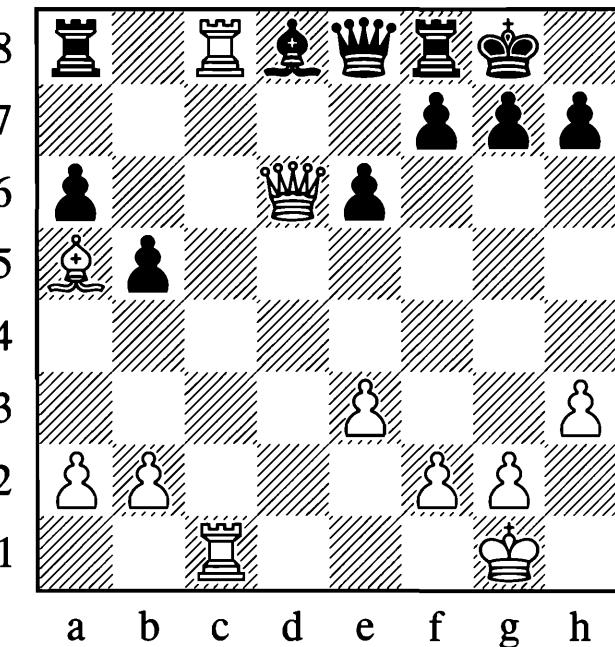


1... ♜f3†!

Now White cannot take with the knight as this would hang the queen.

2. gx f3 ♜xd4†

Black destroys the communication between knight and queen, eliminating the defence of the white queen with tempo, thus winning the queen. If White had played 2. ♔h1 ♜xd4, Black would not only have broken the communication between White's queen and knight, but also re-opened a line of communication between his own knight and queen. Our next position shows a two-way line of communication being destroyed for one side and re-established by the other, helped by the following blunder by Black:

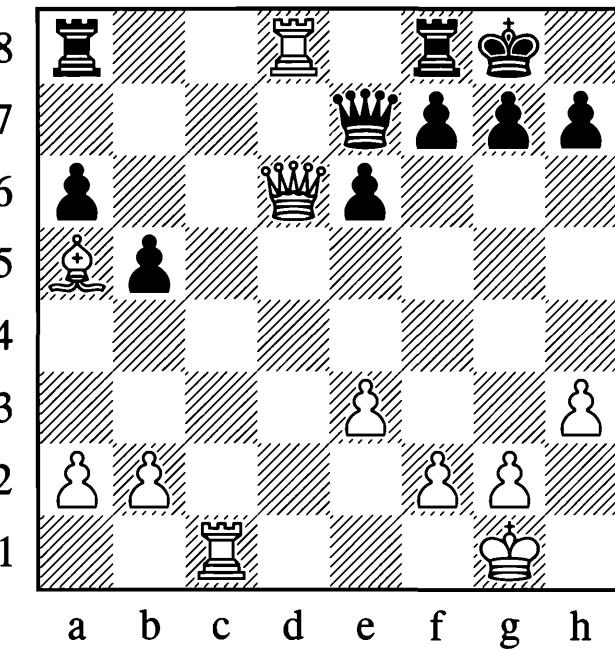


1... ♕e7??

Now, White destroys this communication line with:

2. ♜xd8

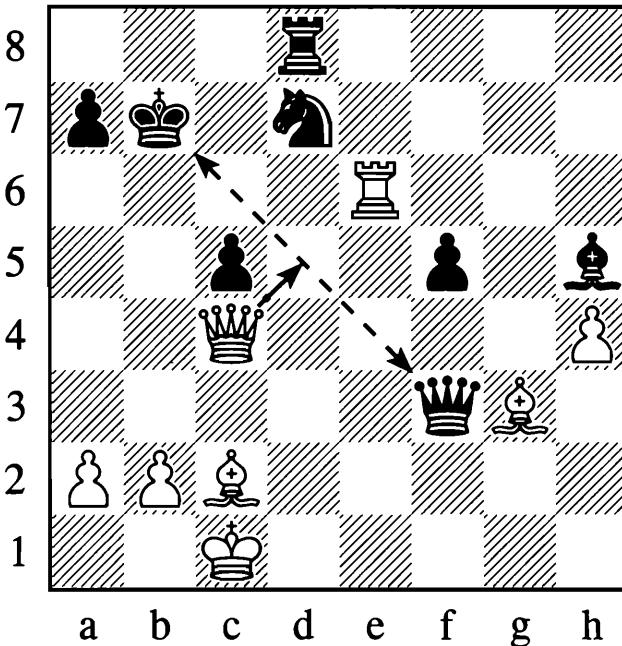
Simultaneously establishing a line of communication with the queen on d6:



Black will end up losing his bishop as his queen is now attacked and unprotected while the white queen is defended by the d8-rook.

Instead of the slip 1... $\mathbb{W}e7??$, much stronger would have been 1... $\mathbb{B}xc8$ 2. $\mathbb{B}xc8$ $\mathbb{Q}e7!$ with an equal game.

We have already seen how a line of communication can be destroyed by the obvious method of taking one of the pieces. But simply interrupting a line of communication can be just as effective, as shown in **Urzica – Honfi**, Bucharest 1975:



1. $\mathbb{Q}e4\#$

Black now has to defend the diagonal against an invader of lower material value, the white bishop on e4.

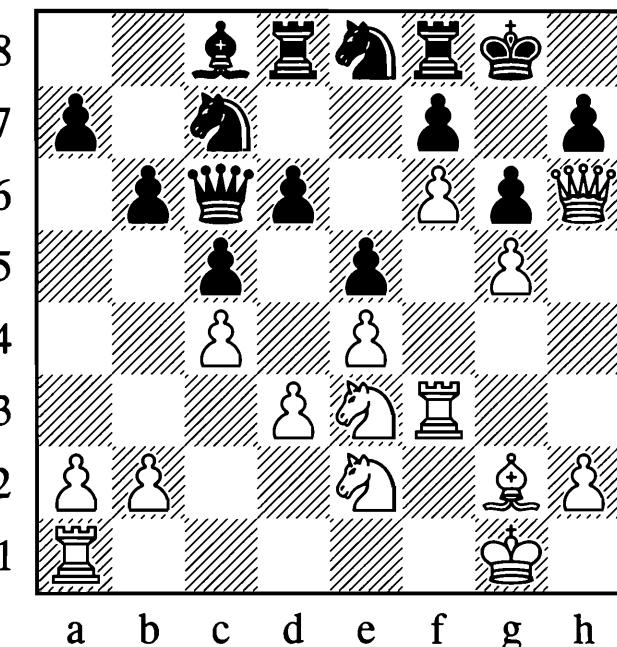
1...fxe4

Now the line of communication between the black king and queen is interrupted with drastic consequences:

2. $\mathbb{W}d5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 3. $\mathbb{W}c6$ mate

In this example the line of communication of a piece and a square was interrupted, but lines of communication between two pieces can be interrupted in the same way, although the first case is easier to accomplish as a square cannot defend itself!

In **Reshevsky – Persitz**, Haifa 1958, White cut the line of communication between the c8-bishop and the h3-square.

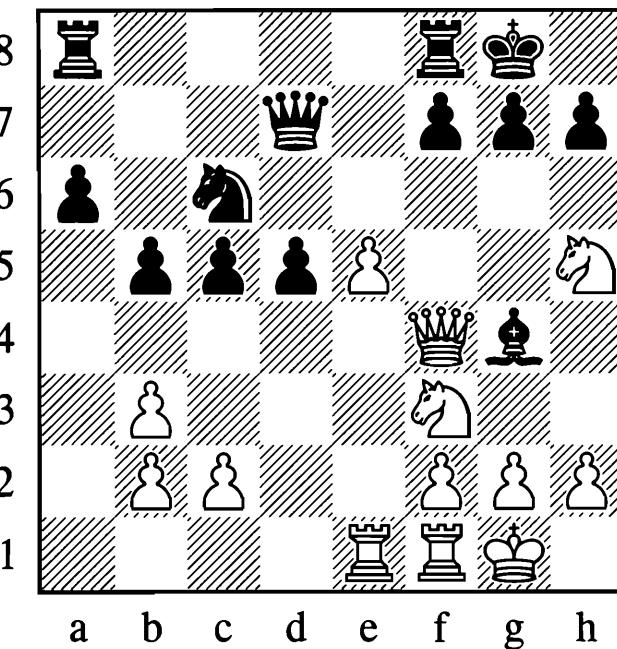


1. $\mathbb{Q}f5!$

After 1... $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ 2. $exf5$ the white rook will reach h3 with devastating effect.

1–0

Pawns are ideal for interrupting lines of communication as they are of relatively low value compared to the other pieces, as we can see in **Kirpichnikov – Veksler**, USSR 1965.



1. e6!

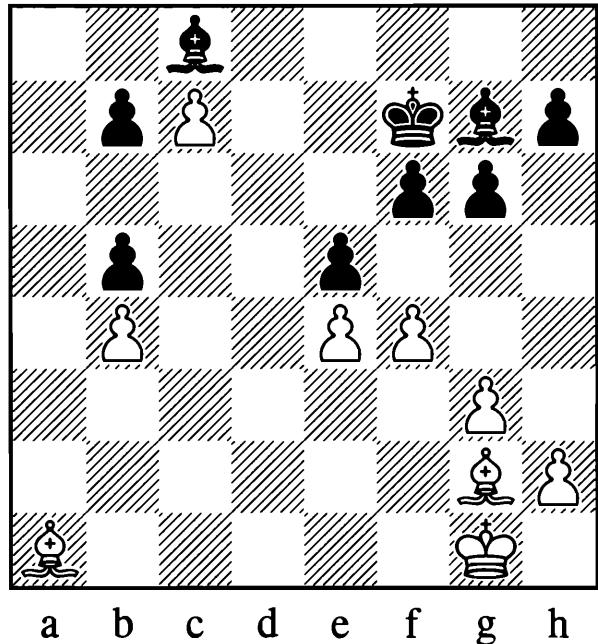
A small step for a pawn but a giant leap towards victory.

1...♝xe6 2.♛e5

1–0

The reason for resigning is that White will be able to place the queen on e5 threatening mate on g7, which can only be stopped by ...f7-f6, losing the e6-bishop. Should Black avoid taking the e5-knight, for example sidestepping with 2...♝b7, White's queen reaches e5 anyway after 3.♝xc6 ♜xc6 4.♛e5. Again the only way to stop mate on g7 is 4...f6 and Black drops his bishop.

Sometimes a line of communication is created just to lure a piece away from its initial square. Once it has left this square the line is interrupted again. Take a look at **Shashin – Gik**, USSR 1967.



1.♝h3!

White establishes a line of communication between the two bishops.

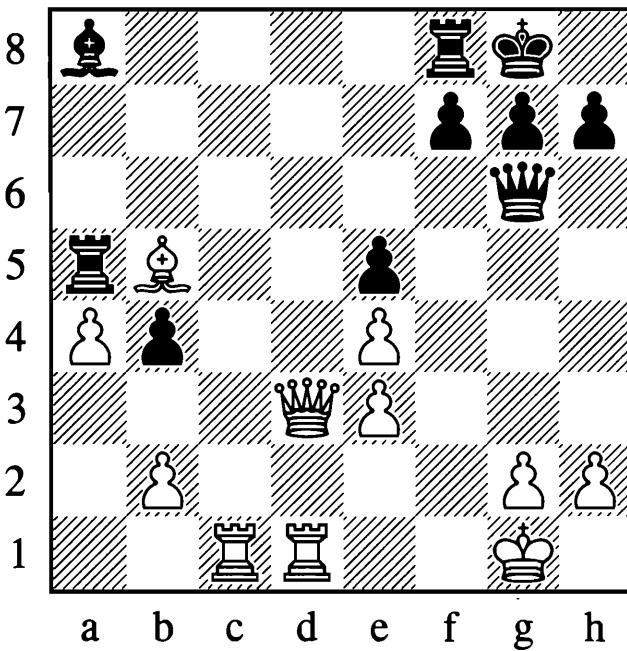
1...♝xh3

1...f5 2.♝xe5 is not much good either:
2...♝xe5 3.fxe5 ♔e6 4.g4! and White wins.

2.f5!

Now White wins as the bishop no longer controls c8.

In the next example interrupting a line of communication with the threat of mate allows White to use his most valuable piece for the interruption. In **Douven – Greenfeld**, Groningen 1988, Black fell for a common trick (we have seen a similar example in Fontein – Euwe, page 130). Here the line between the back rank defender and his king is successfully interrupted.



Black has just played ...♝f6-g6?? and there is no way to save the game after:

1.♜c8!

If 1...♝xc8 the white queen exploits the fact that the defender has been lured away from its king with 2.♛d8†, forcing a back rank mate.

1...♝b6

Black should have played the queen here at once instead of ...♝f6-g6. Now it is too late because of:

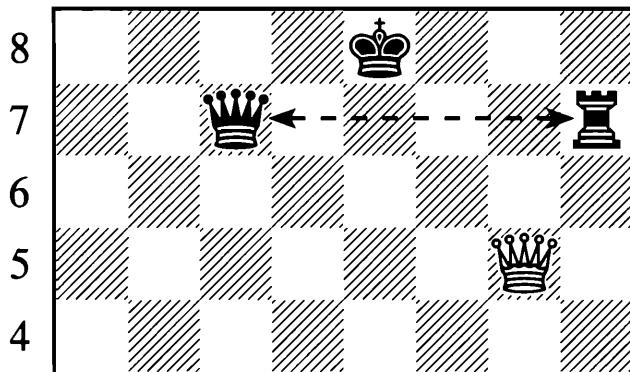
2.♛d8!

1–0

This still does the trick, though it is not exactly mate. But 2...♝xd8 3.♜dxd8 g6 will leave Black a rook and bishop down, which is bad enough...

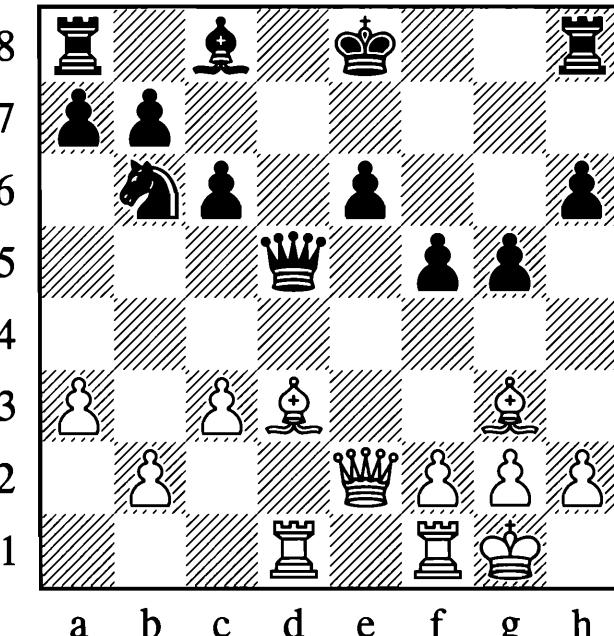
Therefore, you should **check whether a piece that is performing a significant role can be lured away from its initial square in order to cut it off by interrupting its line of communication with the initial square.**

If the king is involved the interruption may be achieved with tempo. If the king is the interrupting piece, it usually inflicts enormous damage on its own side.



With 1. $\mathbb{W}g8\#$ the queen forces the king to the seventh rank, cutting the line of communication between the black rook and queen.

In **M. Pytel – Mathis**, Zurich 1989, we see an interruption of the line of communication. The interrupting piece occupies its new square with tempo.



1. $\mathbb{N}e5$

Cutting off the queen from the defence of the f5-pawn.

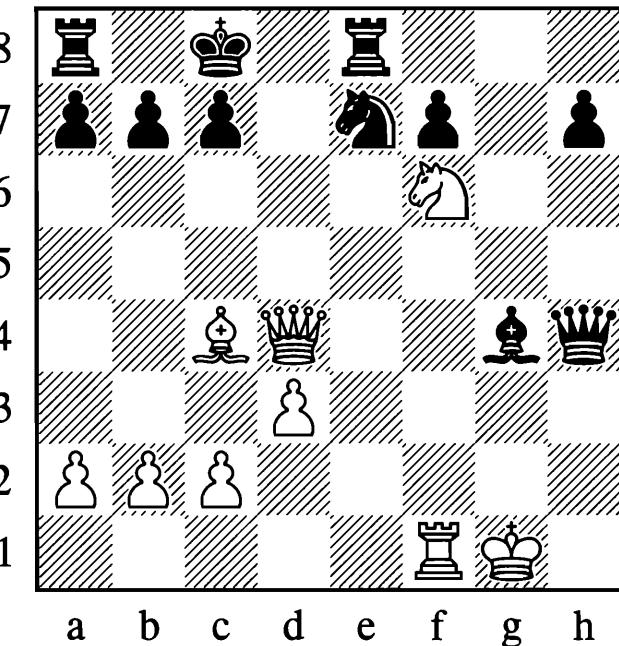
1...0–0 2. $\mathbb{Q}xf5!$

White gains another tempo through the discovered attack on the queen by the d1-rook. Again you can see how two motifs are put together in one combination.

Sometimes it is possible to interrupt the line of communication on a square that seems well defended by a piece. When the defender has more important tasks to perform it is often unable to reopen the line of communication by itself.

Chigorin – Davidov

St Petersburg 1874



White decided the game by delivering a line-closing blow:

1. $\mathbb{Q}e6\#$

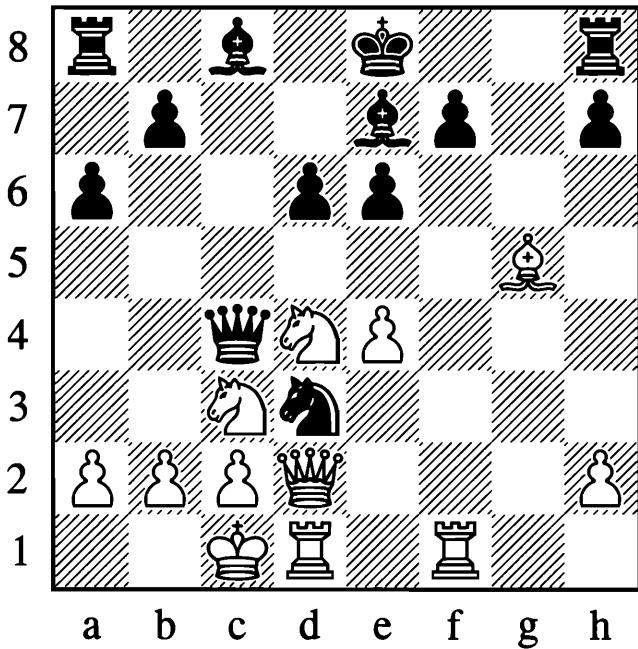
The g4-bishop, which is defending against the mating threat on d7, is pinned against the queen on h4. So Black tried:

1... $\mathbb{Q}b8$

Now White won in great style with:

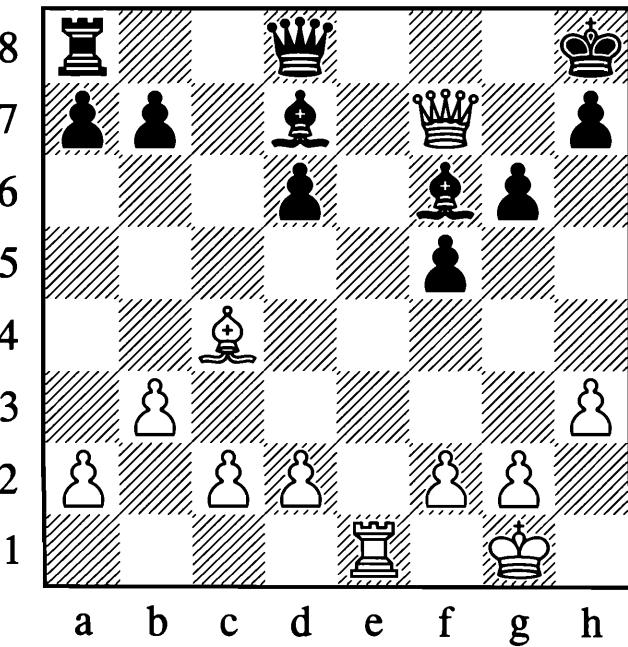
2. $\mathbb{Q}d7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}c5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}a6\#$ $bxa6$
5. $\mathbb{W}b4$ mate

Quite often a piece is burdened with two jobs and not able to undo a line interruption by leaving its square. Consequently, this piece's control over a line or diagonal can very easily be cut off. All the pieces behind the point of interruption lose their defence. If there is not enough time to move away, they are lost. The next diagram shows this quite well.



Before the black knight appeared on d3, the d4-knight was defended twice. Now that the line of communication has been interrupted it is no longer defended. And, as the interrupting piece moved in with tempo, there is no time to move the d4-knight. Taking on d3 with the queen would be a fine solution, except the g5-bishop would be abandoned.

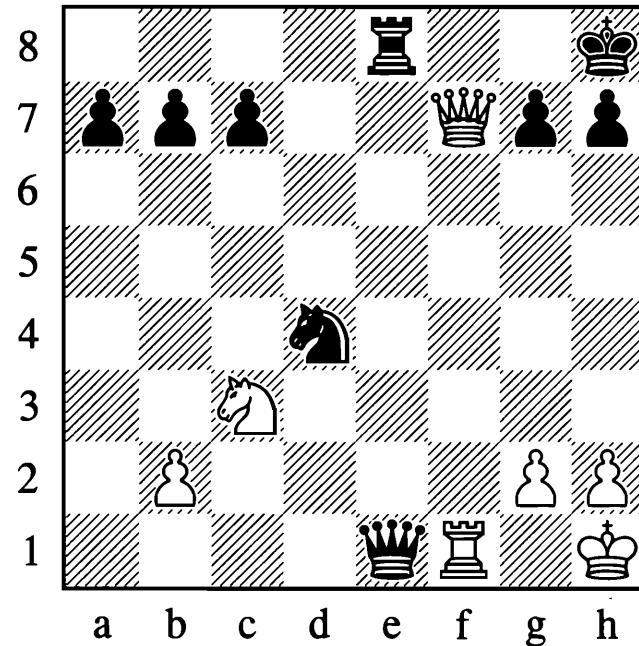
The next position shows a similar dilemma for the defender:



1. $\mathbb{Q}e8\#!$

A knockout blow. The queen cannot capture as she needs to defend the f6-bishop (1... $\mathbb{W}xe8$ 2. $\mathbb{W}xf6$ mate). And if the bishop takes the rook, 1... $\mathbb{Q}xe8$, the line of communication between the queen on d8 and the king on h8 is cut and White can play either 2. $\mathbb{W}f8$ or 2. $\mathbb{W}g8$ mate.

The worst-case scenario for a line interruption between two pieces is when both pieces have an important duty to fulfil and cannot move, as you will see in **Seliavkin – Belousenko, USSR 1973**.

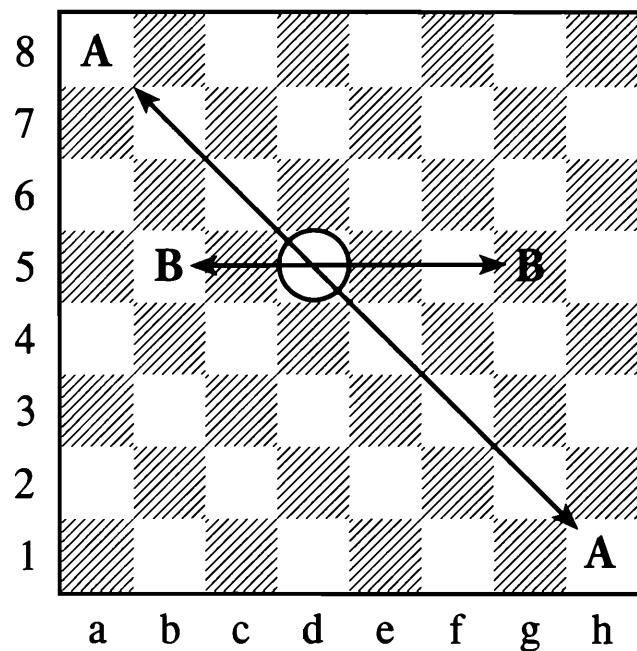


1. $\mathbb{Q}e4!!$

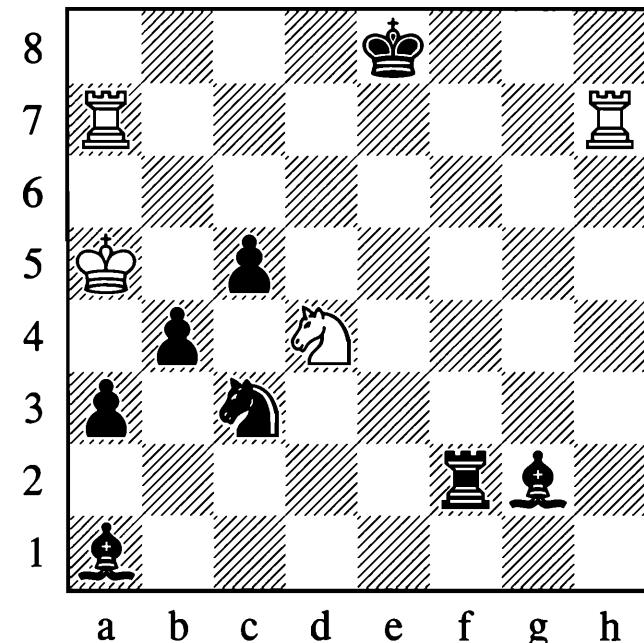
Black's queen and rook both have two jobs to do: preventing the mate and defending each other. Now that their line of communication is interrupted, one will be lost.

Quite often a piece is burdened with two jobs and not able to undo a line interruption by leaving its square. Consequently, this piece's control over a line or diagonal can very easily be cut off.

If two lines intersect, occupying the crossing point would mean cutting two lines with one piece. In our scheme the diagonal A-A and the horizontal B-B cross each other on d5.



Next is a study whose origins I have been unable to discover – even the omniscient Harold van der Heijden does not have it in his *Endgame Study Database III*. However, its unknown origin does not reduce its illustrative impact.

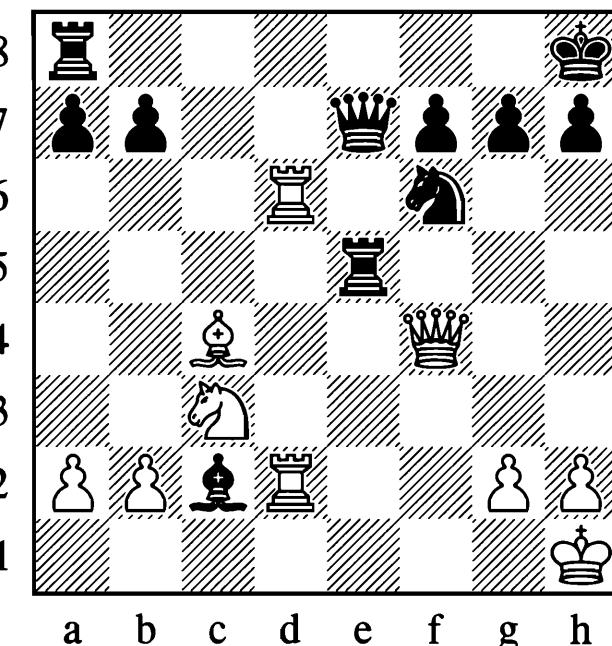


1. $\mathbb{Q}f3!$

This is not the only path to mate but it is the shortest and by far the most beautiful. The f2-rook was guarding f8, the g2-bishop

was watching a8. Whichever piece takes the knight, one of the two crucial squares will be left unguarded and it will be mate next move.

On rare occasions this kind of interruption has been seen in tournament chess as well. In **Fuchs – Korchnoi**, Yerevan 1965, the c4-bishop and the line of communication of the d2-rook cross each other on d3.



1... $\mathbb{Q}d3!!$

This kind of double line-closing on a key square is often labelled *interference*. White will have to give up protection of one of two squares, either by closing the line d2-d6, as in the game, or c4-f1 when mate would follow.

2. $\mathbb{Q}xd3$

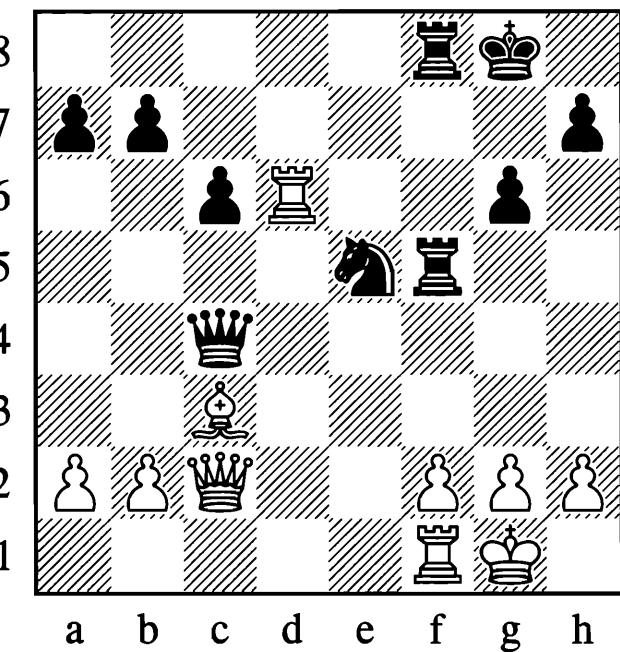
As already stated, 2. $\mathbb{Q}6xd3 \mathbb{Q}e1\#$ leads to mate.

2... $\mathbb{W}xd6$

Black won.

Opening lines

Opening a line is done by moving a piece out of the way of another as in the motif of the discovered attack. In connection with the book's themes, this can be done with gain of tempo, as in **Szabo – Ivkov**, Bath 1973.



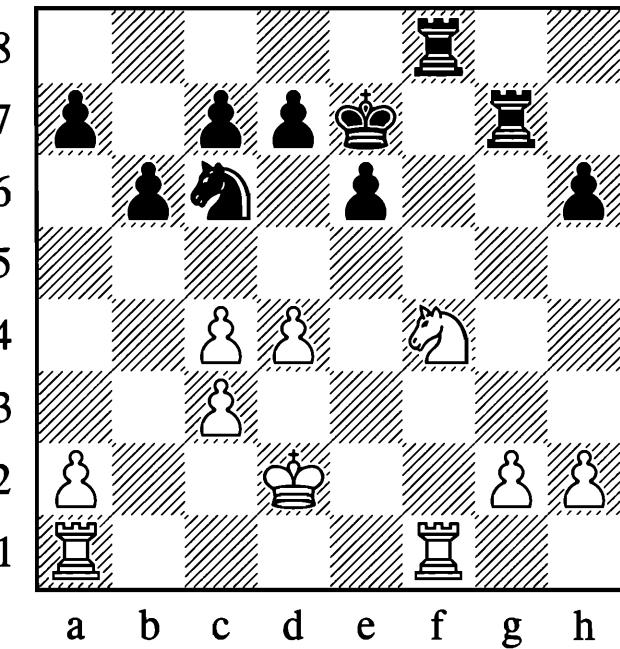
1... $\mathbb{Q}f3\#$

White has a dismal choice: 2. $gxf3$ $\mathbb{E}g5\#$
3. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{W}xf1$ mate or 2. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{W}xf1$ mate.

0-1

Alekhine – Tartakower

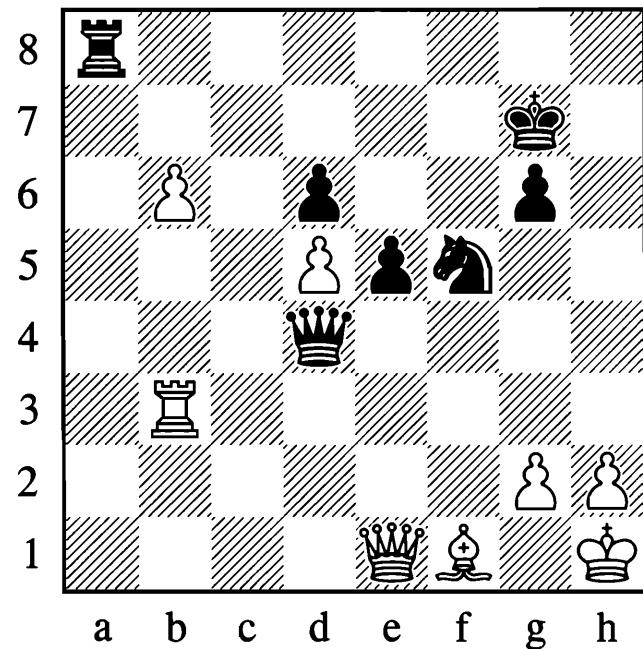
Hamburg 1910



1. $\mathbb{Q}d5\#$!

A line is opened to get rid of a defender: the black king (which is defending the f8-rook). Black has nothing better than 1... $\mathbb{E}e8$ when 2. $\mathbb{Q}xc7\#$ clearly indicates that White is on a roll.

As with most other motifs, the king is an ideal target for the sudden opening of a line as **Karpov – Taimanov**, Leningrad 1977, demonstrates very nicely.



White seems to be in control. He is a pawn up and has a very strong passed pawn. But with his next two moves Black managed to turn the tables.

1... $\mathbb{E}a1!$

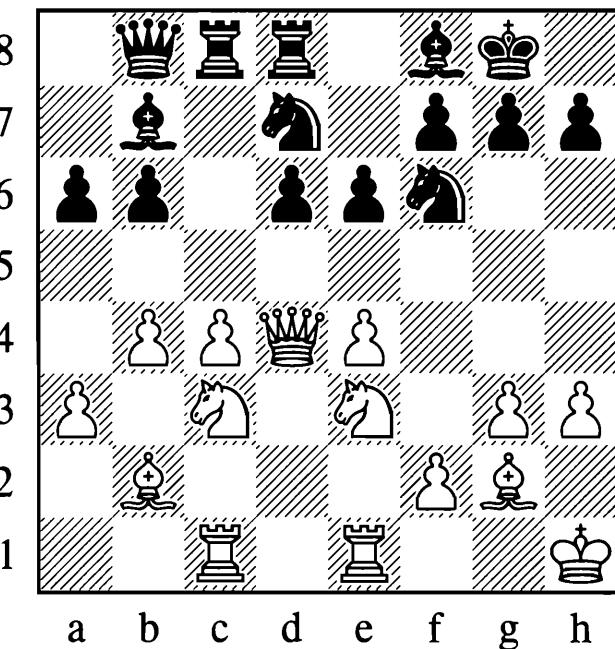
This apparently desperate move persuades the white rook to return to the first rank and in this way ruins the co-ordination of the white pieces.

2. $\mathbb{E}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}g3\#$!

This surprising sacrifice opens the h-file, which proves to be the final nail in the coffin. Now there is no defence. The queen is forced to look after the first rank, and after 3. $hxg3$ $\mathbb{E}a8!$ the rook has returned home to prepare a deadly check on h8.

Opening a line is done by moving a piece out of the way of another as in the motif of the discovered attack.

If you cannot get at the king, the second best target is his wife, as **Renman – Kasparov**, Skara 1980, shows:



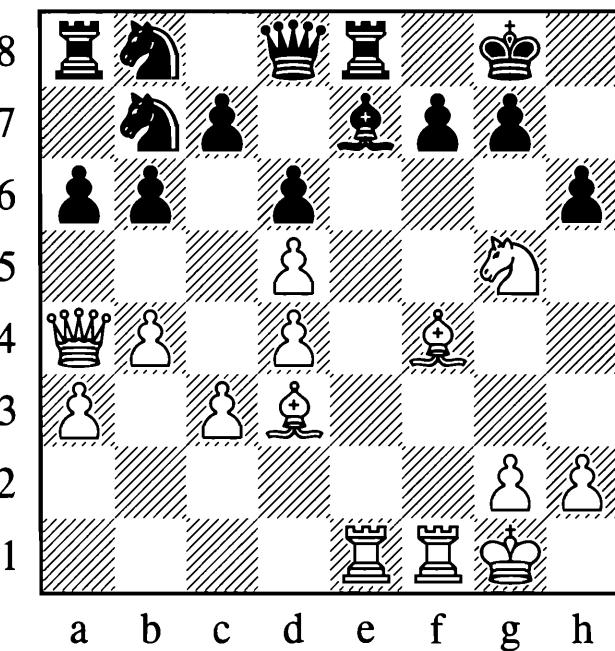
1...Qc5!

Here the potential opening of a line (the d-file) hits the white queen hard as she lacks retreating squares. Now if:

2.bxc5 dxc5

The only place the white queen can go is back in the box.

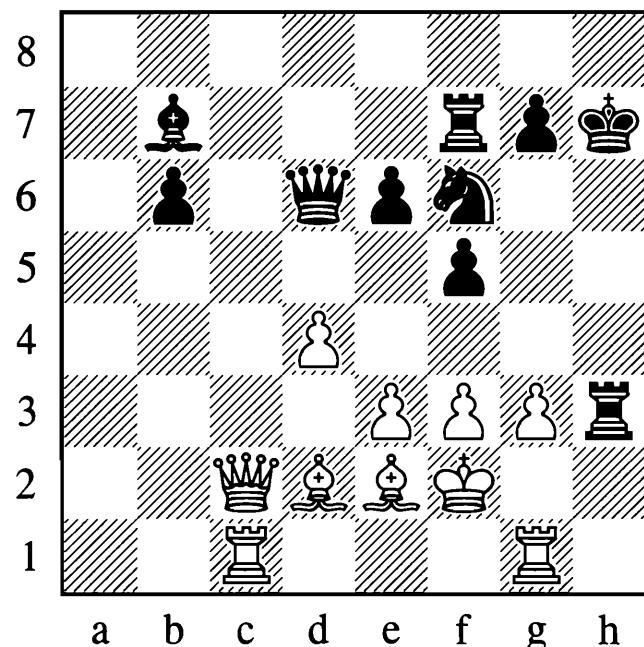
Always check the complete line of a long-range piece, no matter how many other pieces are in the way at the moment. Otherwise you might learn this the hard way, as Black did in **Kislov – Viktorov**, USSR 1971.



1.Qh7† Qf8 2.Qe6† fxe6 3.Qxd6! mate

Suddenly the f8-square is under the control of the f1-rook and the e7-bishop is pinned by the d6-bishop.

Very often there is no significant gap between strategy and tactics: the tactical blow becomes the crowning moment of a long-term strategy. Take a look at **Portisch – Huebner**, Bugojno 1978:



It is not difficult to perceive that the moment has come to finish off the white king with a tactical blow (line opening):

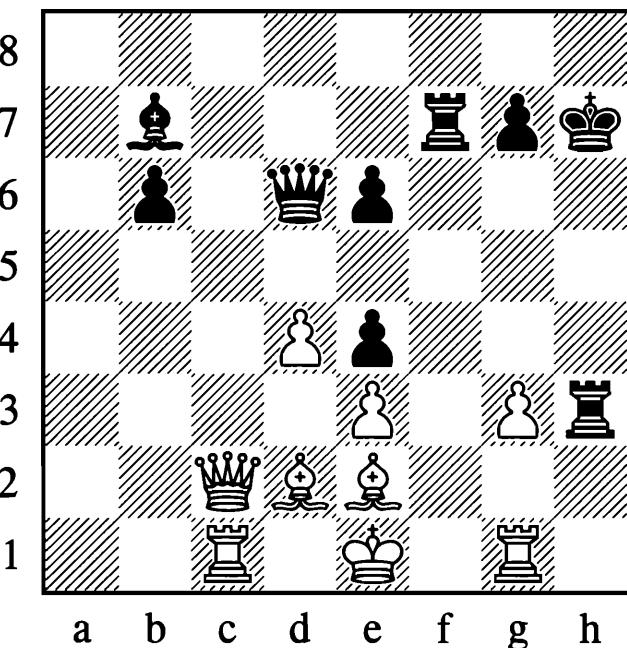
1...Qe4†!

Already placed on the same file as the white king, the f7-rook wants to take part in the attack. Refusing to take the knight would not help, as White would be material down with his king in constant danger. One sample variation: 2.Qe1!? Qxg3 3.f4!? Qxe2 4.Qxe2 Qh2† 5.Qd1 e5 There is no need to give exclamation marks for Black's moves. Nearly everything is winning for Black, as the black queen via h6 or h4, together with ...Qf3†, will eventually infiltrate White's position with deadly force.

2.fxe4 fxe4†

The f-file is opened as a result of the sacrifice.

3.♕e1



3...♝xg3†

If 4.♝xg3 then 4...♝h1† 5.♚f1 ♝hxg1† 6.♗e2 ♞xf2 mate.

Or instead 4.♔d1 ♘xg1† 5.♗e1 ♝xe3 leaves White in a hopeless position.

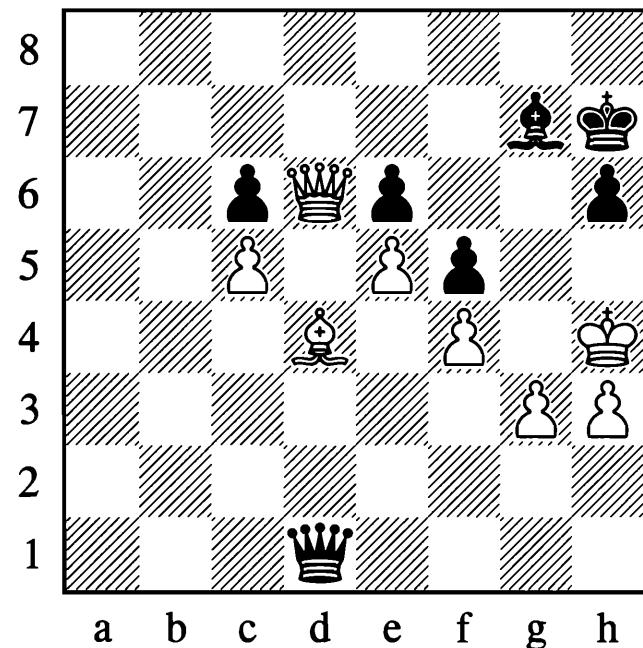
0–1

Closing lines

Closing a line is usually a defensive measure, as you deny your opponent's pieces entry into your position. However, you might gain a tempo this way, which as we have already learned, can make a huge difference.

Very often there is no significant gap between strategy and tactics: the tactical blow becomes the crowning moment of a long-term strategy.

Buza – Kovacs, Hungary 1964, is quite instructive.

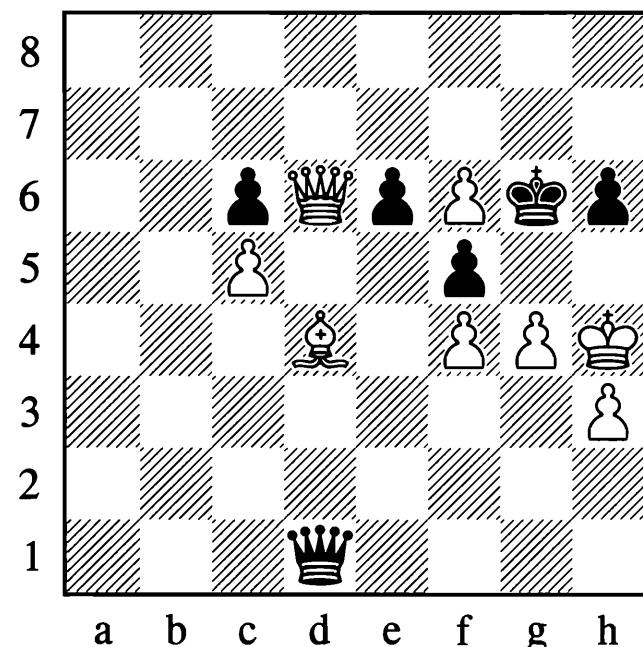


The black king wants to get to g6 without having to worry about ♘xe6†.

1...♞f6†! 2.exf6 ♔g6

Threatening 3...♝h5 mate, which can only be avoided in one way.

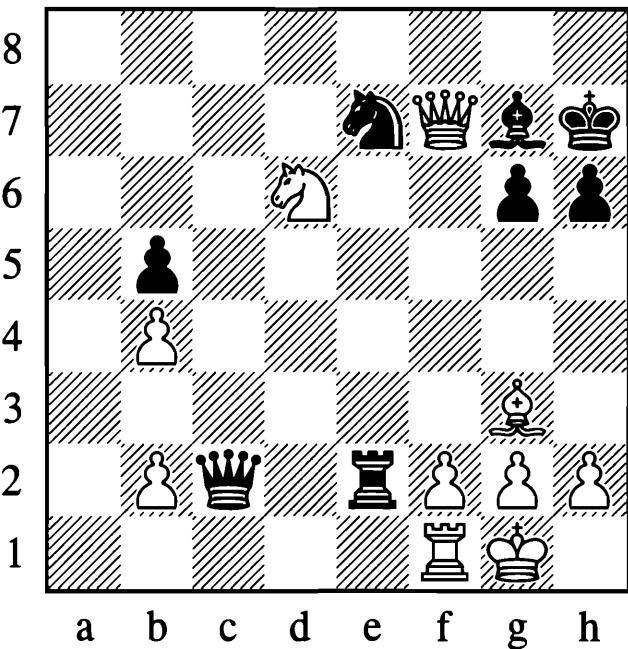
3.g4



3...♝e1†

Nothing will stop the mate.

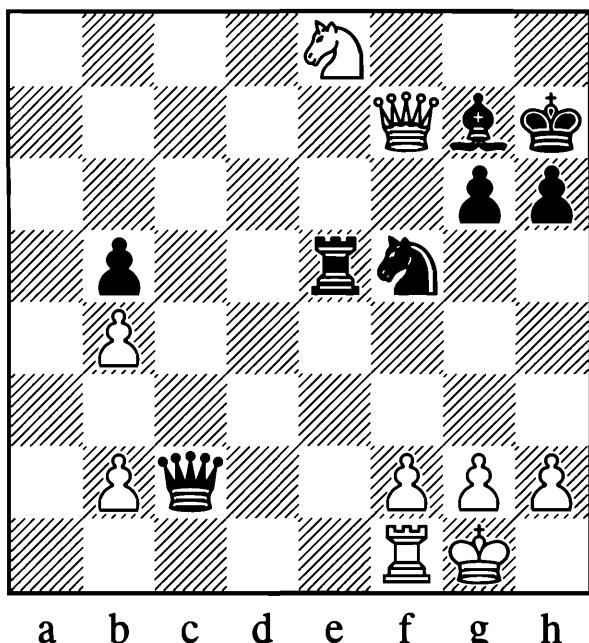
Sometimes a line is closed in order to enable other tactical operations, as in **Keller – Nievergelt**, Zurich 1960.



1. ♕e5!

Closing the b2-g7 diagonal. Premature is 1. ♔e8 ♖xb2 defending the g7-bishop.

1... ♖xe5 2. ♔e8 ♖f5



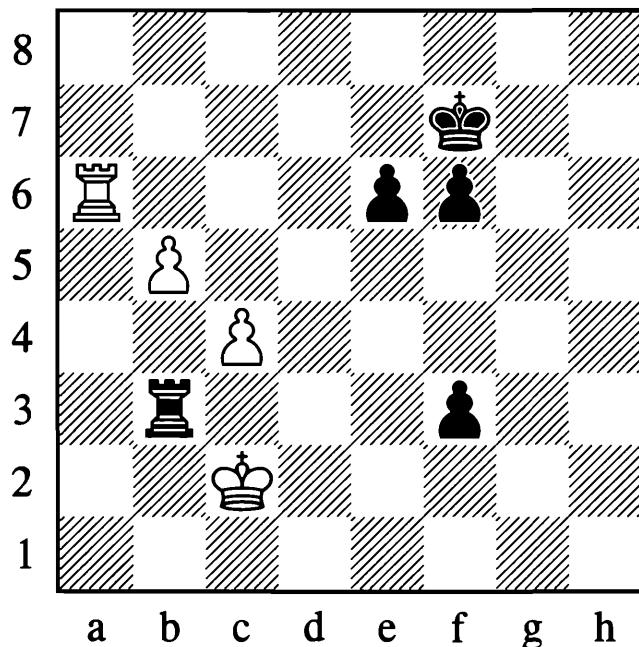
3. ♔f6† ♔h8 4. ♖g8 mate

The queen on c2 has successfully been shut out of the game in order to give mate.

Whenever you want to restrict your opponent's pieces, closing a line might be a good trick. Sometimes this method can produce stunning

sacrifices, as in **Oms – Karls**, Bremen 1929, below.

It is as though you are searching in your tactical toolbox for the right implement (motif) to get the job done. You should ask yourself: can I close a line to prevent a piece from doing its job?

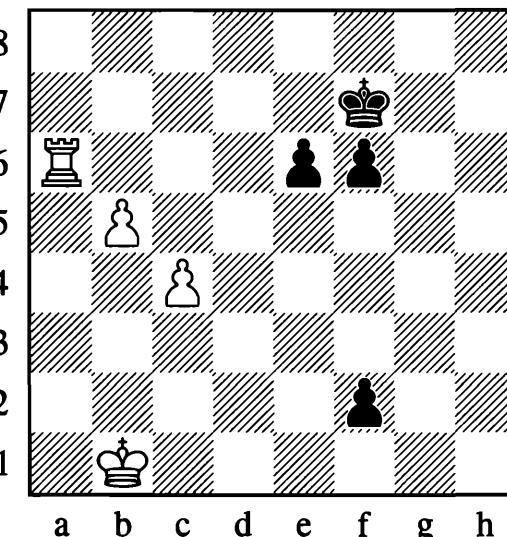


How can the *only* defender stopping the pawn from queening be shut down?

Answer: by the motif (tool) of line closing.

1... ♖b1!!

This seals the defensive line of the a6-rook. Now after 2. ♔xb1 f2



the pawn will promote as the king blocks the way on the first rank for its own rook.

Summary

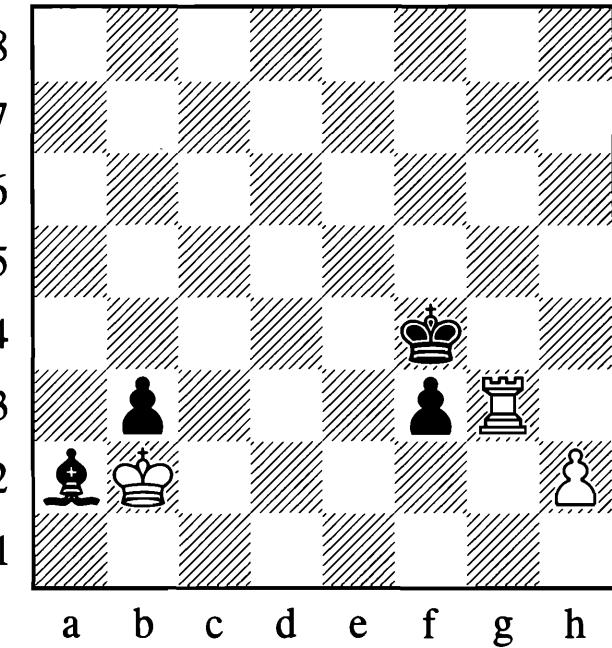
- Pawns are ideal for interrupting lines of communication as they are of relatively low value compared to the other pieces.
- Sometimes a line of communication is created just to lure a piece away from its initial square. Once it has left this square the line is interrupted again.
- Sometimes it is possible to interrupt the line of communication on a square that seems well defended by a piece. When the defender has more important tasks to perform it is often unable to reopen the line of communication by itself.
- Check the complete line of a long-range piece, no matter how many other pieces are temporarily in the way.
- Whenever you need to restrict your opponent's pieces, closing a line might be a good trick.

Chapter 11

Status Examination

A few preliminary thoughts about status examination

Consider the game **Borisenkov – Mezenev**, USSR 1950:

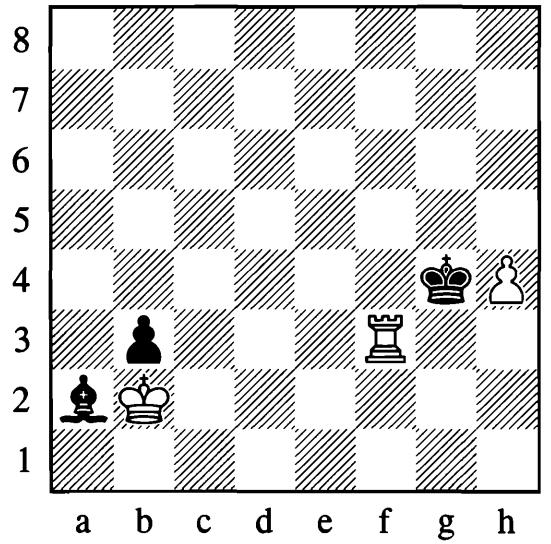


At first glance it looks as if this position is winning for White. Both sides of the board seem to be under his control. The white king has a firm grip on the black bishop, and the rook might sacrifice itself (using a check on the f-file) for the f-pawn if it advances, then White could win by pushing the h-pawn. The only way to deal with the rook check would be to put a piece between the king and the rook when it turns up on f8.

But if the bishop moves it is taken. The prospects look rather grim for Black.

The frustrating word *zugzwang* must ring in Black's ears. If he moves his king, then White's h-pawn will queen.

For example: 1... \hat{Q} e3 2.h4 \hat{Q} f4 3. \hat{B} xf3†! and even if Black tries to be clever and goes after the pawn with 3... \hat{Q} g4 instead of 3... \hat{Q} xf3, White answers:

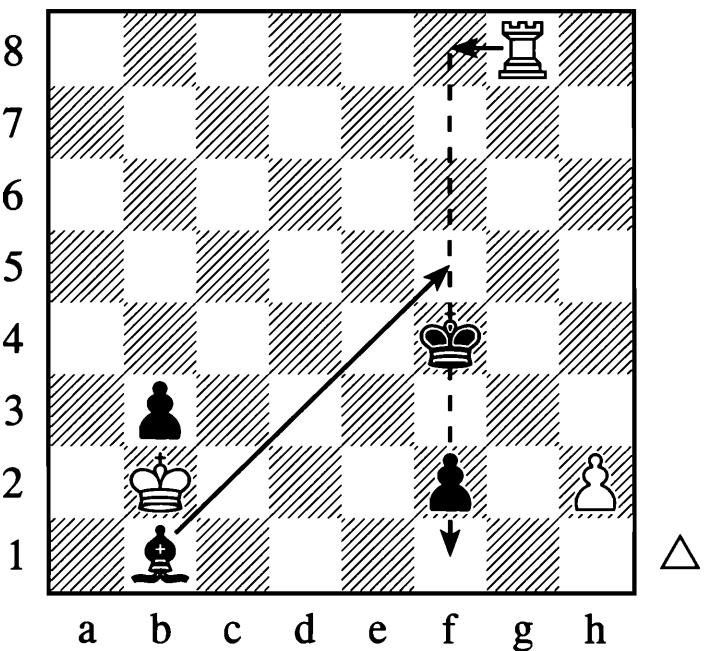


4. \hat{B} h3!

Again offering the rook while saving the pawn. Black would lose because of zugzwang as the black king can only temporarily block the white pawn.

The individual elements of this analysis may be correct, but there is a crucial point missing: the interaction of the two sides of the board. Only if you see all the individual pieces *together* will you get the full picture and this looks a little different:

1...f2!! 2. \hat{B} g8 \hat{Q} b1!



White has nothing better than taking the bishop, because 3. $\mathbb{E}f8\#$ is met by 3... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ and the f-pawn queens anyway.

But by taking the bishop:

3. ♔xb1

The status of the king is radically changed as it is now on the first rank.

3...f1=†

The f-pawn promotes with check, winning a crucial tempo.

This is a good example that understanding all the individual elements of a position does not necessarily mean understanding the whole position.

After you have learned about the elements of tactics, you need a method that will enable you to analyse a position as a whole. Otherwise you might arrive at faulty conclusions, as in the initial analysis of the position above. This method has to be easy to understand and it also has to be easily applicable. Above all, the method should not turn into a tyrant. If it required you to go through every step every time it was your move, you would not use it. If you tried, you would lose on time. On the other hand it makes sense to have some kind of checklist, in the same way pilots do.

You cannot take back moves on the board. Decisions are final in chess. It is a bit like flying a plane where every mistake could be the last. Nevertheless, there must be a safe way for pilots as every day thousands of planes fly around our globe, landing safely at their destinations.

The status examination provides you with similar checklists.

Advanced players might not need any of these checklists. Nevertheless, they will still benefit from reading through this chapter, as some of the points made will deepen their understanding of tactics.

Initially weaker players will benefit from these checklists as they help them to become aware of and avoid blunders and oversights. But they should abandon checklists whenever they feel they have become useless routines.

The points dealt with in this chapter will hopefully turn you into a high-flying chess player instead of an accident-prone woodpusher.

Status Examination

The status examination does exactly what its name says: it takes a close look at the status of each piece on the board. Principally, you have to look at two things with each piece. First, you have to find out its current status: whether it is attacked, defended, hanging, pinned, etc. Then you have to see this piece as an element of a picture, which is related to other elements. Ask yourself how the status of this piece changes the status of other pieces. If you find out, for example, that a knight is pinned against your king, the status of the knight is absolutely pinned. The king cannot be exposed to an attack. Consequently, the status of all other pieces that were formerly defended by the knight is affected. If they were only defended by this knight, they are now *en prise* if they are attacked.

The basics of the status examination

Impartial stocktaking is what the status examination is about. Neither ideas about the original tactical value and dynamic potential of a piece, nor any premature strategic conclusions about a position, should stop you from going through the basic status examination. Assessing the pieces' status dispassionately before you move is necessary. You should do it for the situation before and after the move as a change of position by one piece might alter the whole situation. And here Orwell does not apply: all pieces are equally important. Do not be fooled by jumping to any instant conclusions.

For example, looking at the board, you discover you could win a pawn but your opponent would get some strategic compensation for it. Without further ado you calculate the operation and execute it; after all, you do not want to end up in time trouble. Yet continuing the status examination of the position, you might have noticed the possibility for an even more profitable continuation.

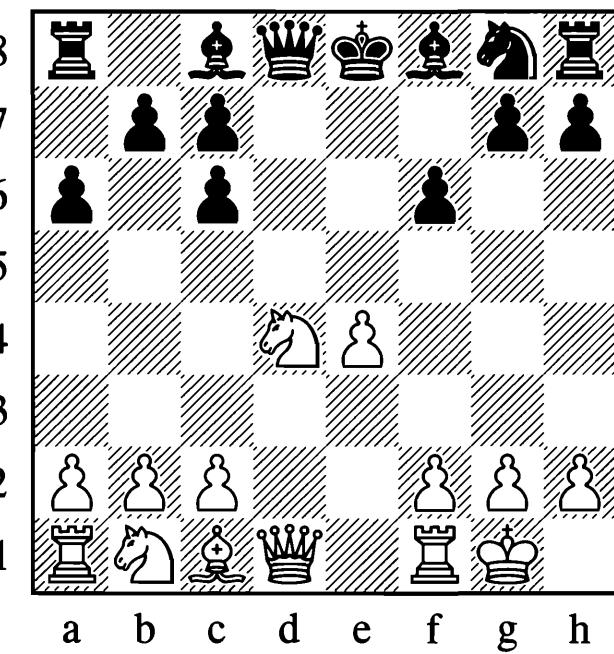
So before you move you should look at the following:

1. What is the status of each piece? (Is it defended, does it have duties to perform, restricted movement, etc.) What is the new status of the piece if moved to its new square? Does it have a retreating square and, equally importantly, how has it changed the status of all other pieces connected with it?
2. Which squares can be occupied? Here you have to check for direct occupation and indirect occupation. Remember, sometimes a square only seems to be defended.
3. Are there further connections of pieces and squares in more complex positions?

The status examination is not about restraining intuition. The status examination is a safety device for your intuition.

Let's start with a simple example. Take a look at a position arising after:

**1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗xc6 dxc6
5.0–0 f6 6.d4 exd4 7.♘xd4**



This is a normal opening position where 7...♗c5? is not an option due to 8.♗h5†.

You can either find this when looking at the black king (*always* consider possible checks) or the white queen.

A seasoned competitor will automatically become aware of these things in a split second, but for many amateurs it does no harm to gain the same information a few times during the process of calculation.

In any case, many of these things will eventually become routine, but first we need to work methodically on what will become automatic later.

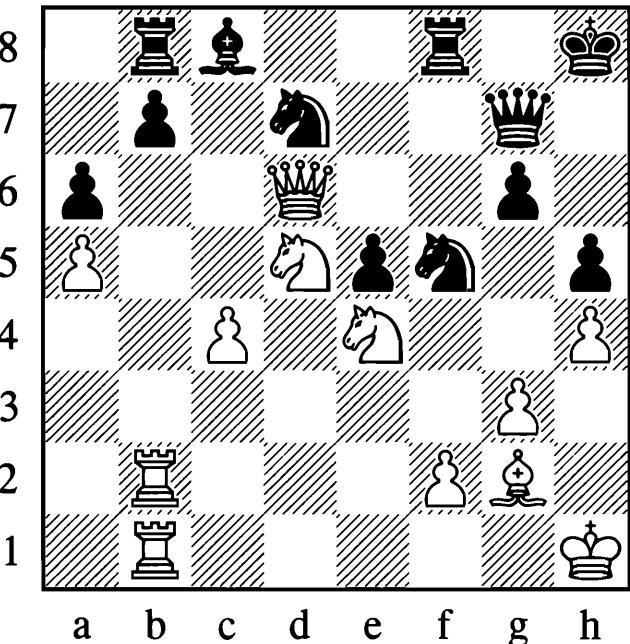
Status examination does exactly what its name says: it takes a close look at the status of each piece on the board.

The status of a piece

It may sound a little banal but it remains true anyway: start your analysis of a position looking at the status of each piece. If you do not know the status of each piece, you are flying your jet with your eyes closed, and who would like a pilot to do this? Yet even the famously careful and prophylactic Tigran Petrosian sometimes forgot about this, as you can see in the next diagram:

Petrosian – Bronstein

Amsterdam 1956

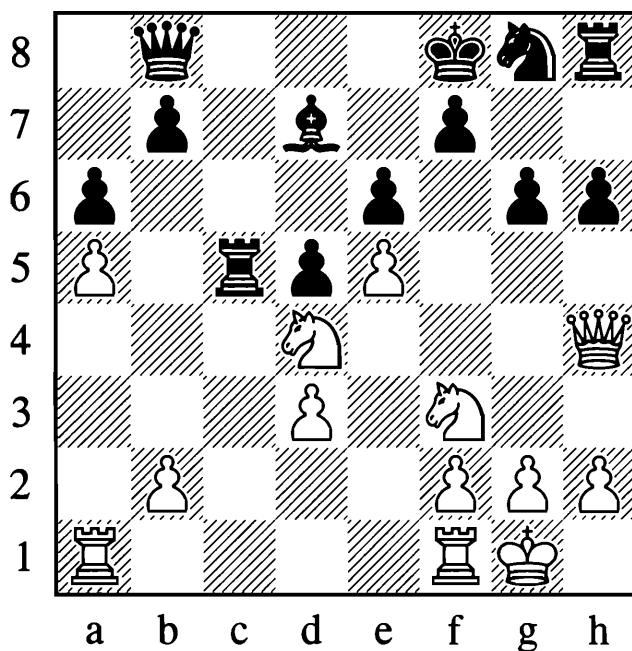


Petrosian played $1.\mathbb{Q}g5??$. This shows that even the greatest players sometimes need to run a systematic basic check-up before they make a move. Perhaps Petrosian was so preoccupied with positional questions that he forgot about the basics. And if you can learn something from a world champion here, it is that relying on a rough estimate will give you a rough ride.

You should start your analysis of each piece by looking at its current situation. When you are clear about the status you can go deeper into the position.

Loboda – Pankevich

USSR 1972



$1.\mathbb{N}xe6\#$

Black resigned because of $1...\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $2.\mathbb{W}b4$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ $3.d4$ and the rook is speared.

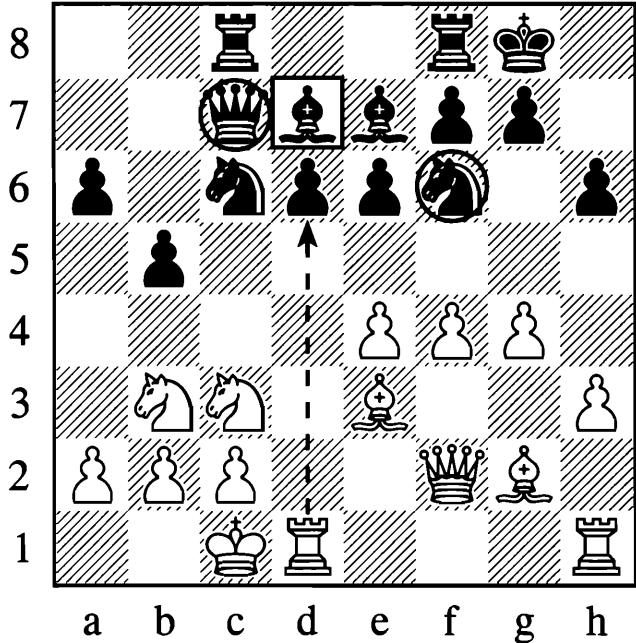
1–0

A status examination of the c5-rook shows that the rook is undefended. Furthermore, you will notice that it shares a diagonal with the black king and of course you remember that two pieces in a row constitutes the precondition for a pin.

Just this information would have been enough to start you looking for a possible combination to exploit the results of the status examination of the c5-rook.

Start your analysis of a position by looking at the status of each piece. When you are clear about the status you can go deeper into the position.

The previous example was a fairly trivial combination, but much more complex operations might be triggered by simply looking at the status of each piece as **Sax – Jansa**, Yugoslavia 1982, shows.



The result of the status examination of the d7-bishop should be that it would be attacked if the d-file opened. The status examination of its defenders (marked with circles) shows that they can be eliminated. The outstanding tactician and Olympiad gold medallist Gyula Sax (I really enjoyed training with him a few times) therefore played:

1.e5! dx_e5?

Black had to grovel with 1... $\mathbb{Q}e8$, but he probably thought he had it all under control.

2.g5! hxg5 3.fxg5 $\mathbb{Q}h5$

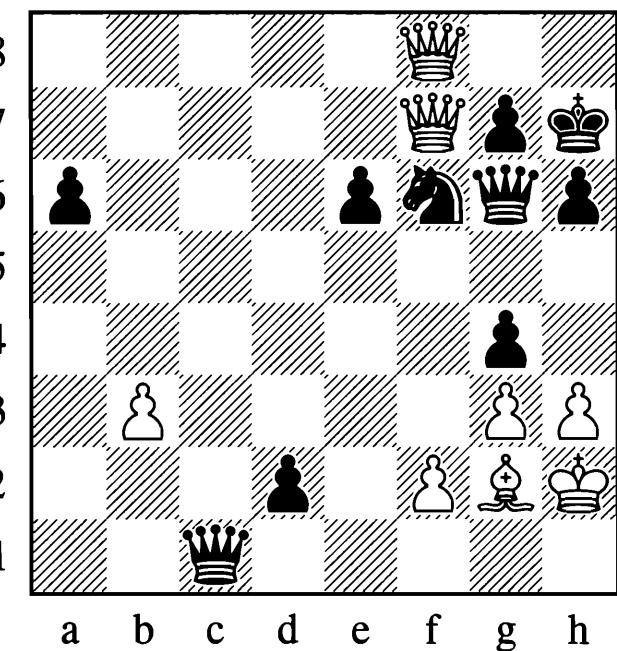
There is no escape. If 3... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ then 4. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ exd5 5. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{W}d8$ 6. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#!$ triggers a deadly attack. In this line if Black tries 5... $\mathbb{W}b7$ then White has an even quicker win with 6. $\mathbb{Q}a5!$ $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ 7. $\mathbb{Q}xe7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 8. $\mathbb{W}h4$ mate: a familiar mating pattern.

4. $\mathbb{Q}b6$ $\mathbb{W}b7$ 5. $\mathbb{Q}a5$ $\mathbb{Q}xg5\#$ 6. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{W}b8$

7. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$

Winning the bishop and the game.

Even in the most unusual positions the status examination will help you to find the winning move (I have not been able to find the origins of the following position).



The four queens on the board should not distract you from spotting that the status of the e4-square is undefended, as both the f6-knight (defending g8) and the g6-queen (defending g7) are bound to the defence of the king. Therefore:

1. $\mathbb{Q}e4!$

This wins as the bishop will take out one of the king's bodyguards.

Black has a clever try to confuse the issue.

1... $\mathbb{W}h1\#?$! 2. $\mathbb{Q}xh1!$ The only winning move.

2. $\mathbb{Q}xh1$ leads to equality after 2... $\mathbb{W}xf7$ 3. $\mathbb{W}xf7$

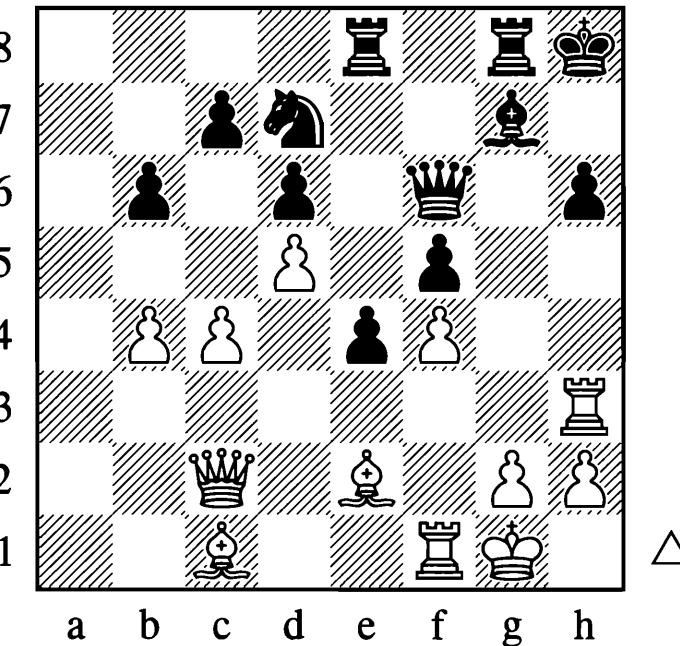
d1= \mathbb{W} . 2... $\mathbb{W}xe4\#$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{W}g6$ 4. $\mathbb{W}xg6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xg6$

Once again White has to find an only move to win: 5. $\mathbb{W}d6!$ with the point that 5... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 6. $\mathbb{W}xe6\#$ is easy (while after 5. $\mathbb{W}d8??$ $\mathbb{Q}d5!$ Black would collect an undeserved point).

There is no doubt that the duties certain pieces have to perform are important for the status examination and possible combinations based on it. Here are some useful questions to ask when it comes to this subject:

Is it possible to place another duty on the shoulders of a piece that is already occupied with other important matters?

In Ratner – Podgorny, Moscow 1946, White asked himself this question and came up with the following answer:



1.Qb2!

If the queen takes on b2, White simply plays 2.Rxh6†. And 1...Bg6 runs into 2.Qh5. Therefore...

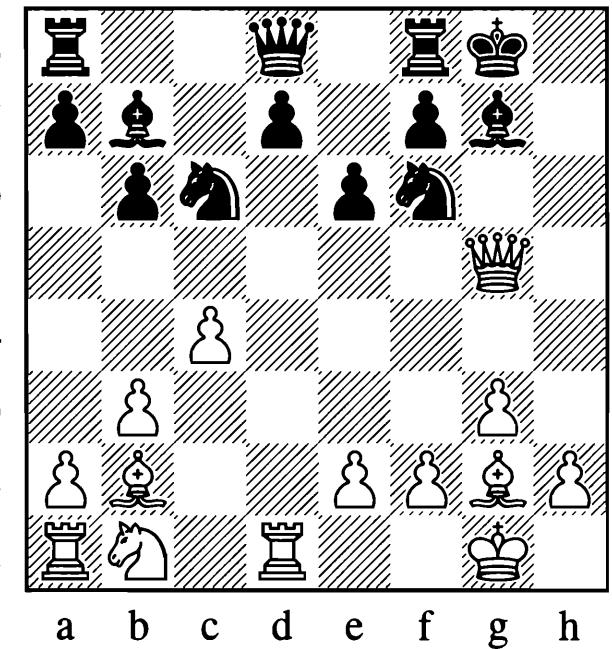
1–0

The status examination of the g7-bishop shows that it has to take back on h6 in order to defend the king. The bishop is unable to defend both the h-pawn and the queen, so the queen is lost. Consequently one answer to our question is: **you can overload the defender of one square by giving it another square to defend.** Forcing the queen to the b2-square was simply based on the status of the g7-bishop.

Another useful question is: *Are there any duties that interfere with each other?*

Can I attack the defender so it is no longer able to perform its task and from which squares can the defender do its duty?

Take a look at the game Romanishin – Plaskett, London 1977:



The status examination of this position should deliver the following results:

- The black queen has to defend the f6-knight. If Black loses the knight, he will be mated.
- The f6-knight is blocking White's path to the g7-bishop and thus preventing mate.
- The g7-bishop is pinned by the white queen against the king and cannot recapture on f6 as long as it is still pinned.
- The d7-pawn is undefended as all its defenders are occupied with other important duties. The d7-pawn is attacked by the d1-rook.

Taking a look at the list, you will easily see that White can snatch the d7-pawn with

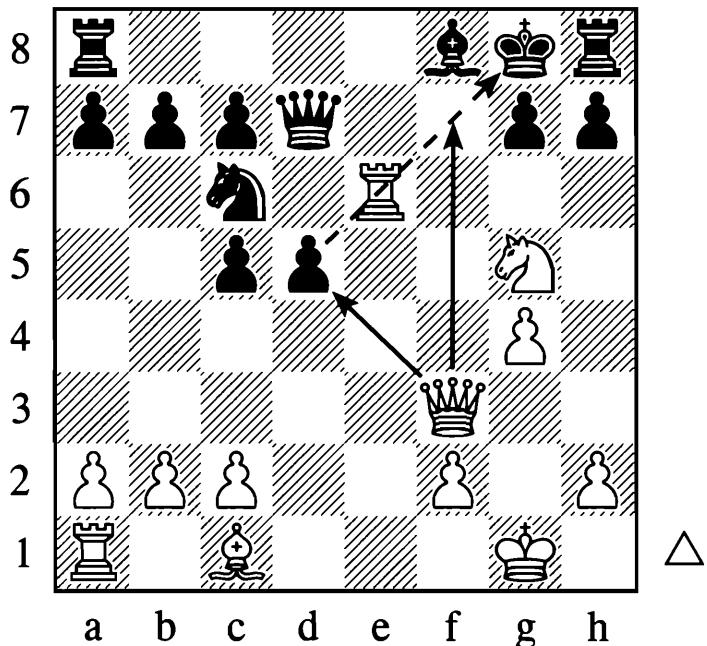
1.Rxd7!

Questions you may always ask in this context are:

Can I attack the defender so it is no longer able to perform its task and from which squares can the defender do its duty?

Maroczy – Vidmar

Ljubljana 1922



The queen has to stay on d7 in order to defend the d5-pawn and the f7-square. So White played

1.♕e7!

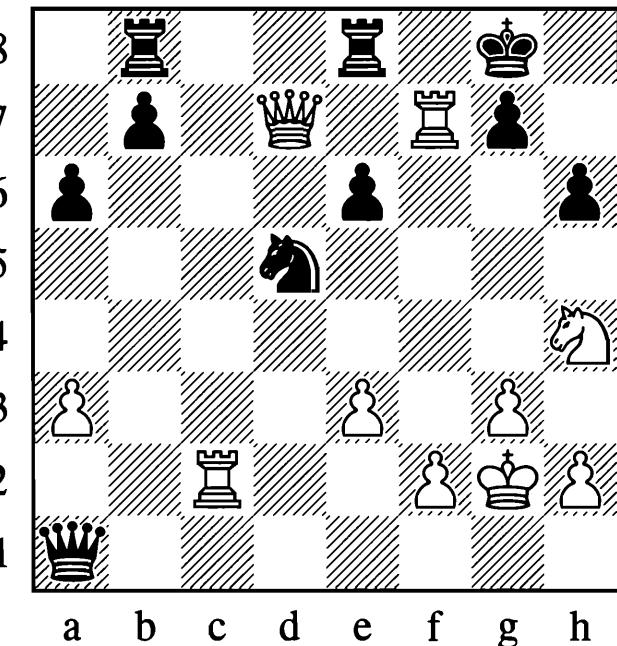
1.♕d6 does not work because after 1...♝xd6 Black no longer fears a check on d5 as ...♚f8-d6 has given the black king a new flight square.

After the text move Black cannot take the rook with his bishop or the knight, as this would interrupt the line of communication between the queen and the f7-square. But if the queen takes the rook then 2.♕xd5† leads to mate.

If you look even more deeply into a defending piece's position you could also analyse the tactical motifs for other pieces if they took the defender on that square.

Chekhover – Verlinsky

USSR 1933



1...♝b6 2.♕c7 ♜bc8

The white queen defending the f7-rook was attacked and had to move to a square where she still defends the rook. There she ran into a pin against the c2-rook. Black is winning.

Hence, if you are attacked, examine carefully the flight squares of your defending pieces as well. **Consider flight squares as being of the same importance as initial squares.**

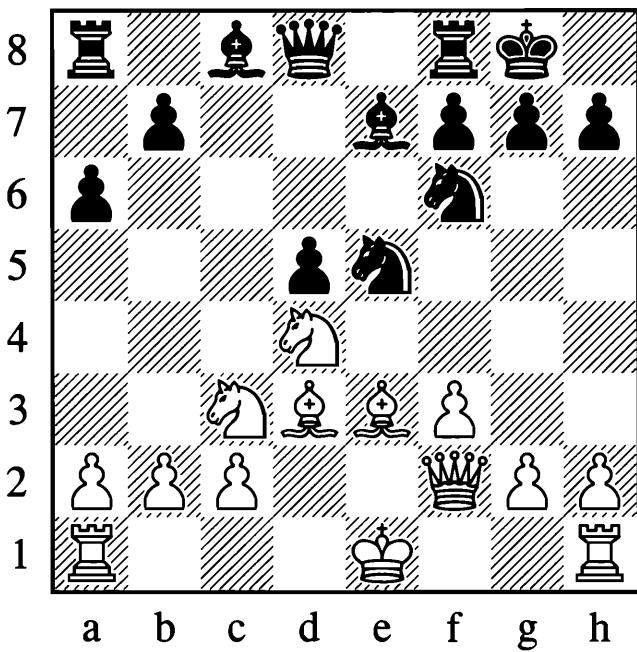
If you see a piece performing a duty you should analyse the status of that piece carefully. **Every defender is a possible tactical target.** You have to take a close look at the changes of the position of any defender after each move.

Another useful consideration is what happens if the defender has to recapture after the piece it was defending is captured?

If you see a piece performing a duty you should analyse the status of that piece carefully. **Every defender is a possible tactical target.**

Balashov – Spraggett

Taxco Interzonal 1985



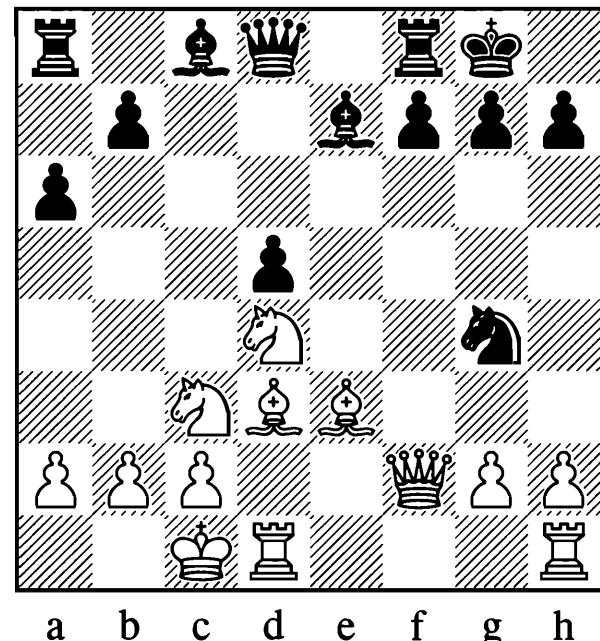
1.0–0 was the game move, but what would have happened after

1.0–0–0?

The answer is:

1... ♜fg4! 2.fxg4? ♜xg4

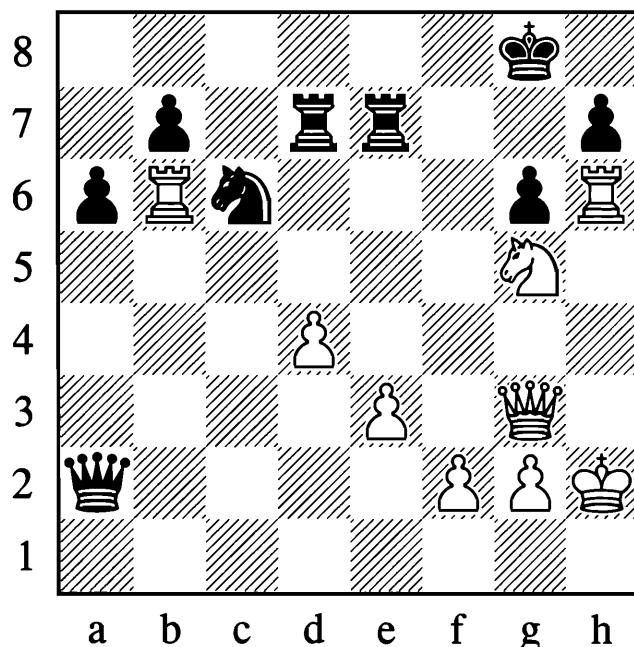
Black would regain his piece and win a pawn as the white queen is not able to defend the e3-bishop (that is, move to the e3-square) because of ...♜e7-g5 exploiting the fact that the king and queen share a diagonal.



The status examination of the e3-bishop revealed the motif of a pin against the king so the motif would naturally apply for the queen as well. Accordingly, a square or a defended piece must always be analysed together with the defender.

Here are a few more examples of what can be discovered by taking a closer look at your pieces.

Sometimes just looking in the direction your pieces move may give you some ideas about tactics as in **Safuta – Maletzky**, Poland 1964:



As you probably learned during your first encounter with chess, the queen is able to move both vertically and horizontally. But the key word for this position is diagonally. Thus the following combination is not really difficult to find:

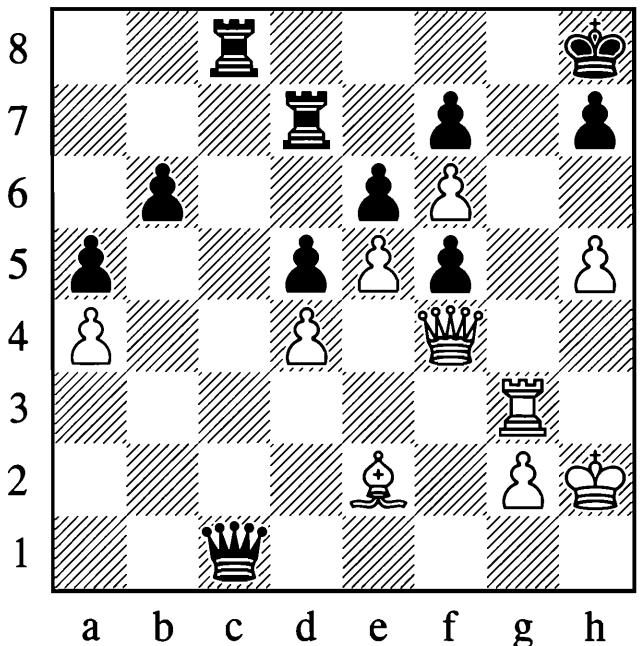
**1.♝xc6 bxc6 2.♛b8† ♕g7 3.♝xh7† ♛f6
4.♛f4 mate**

This diagonal was too beautiful to miss.

Sometimes just looking in the direction your pieces move may give you some ideas about tactics.

Sturua – Kozlov

USSR 1975



Looking down the g-file may have started devious ideas in White's mind:

1. $\mathbb{E}g8\#!$

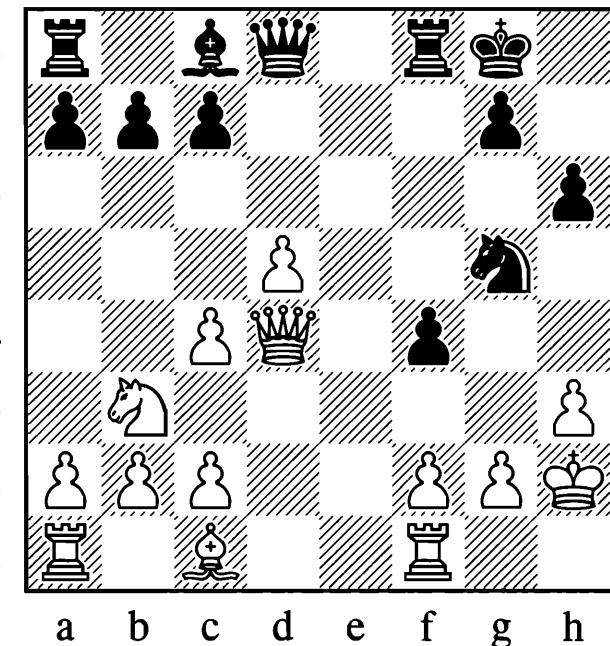
1–0

The status examination for the c8-rook shows that it is bound to the defence of the black queen. Unfortunately, the poor rook also has to keep an eye on g8 as the following status examination for other pieces and squares reveals. The status examination for the g7-square will tell you that it is a possible mating square for the white queen. Thus the king on g8 would run into a deadly tempo by $\mathbb{W}g3\#$. You would also have discovered this if you had started your status examination with the position of the black king, especially as you already know that not only the king's position but also the squares around him are of crucial importance (in this example: the possibility of gaining a tempo on g8).

A simple method to find neat tactics is to count how many times a point is attacked and how many times it is defended...

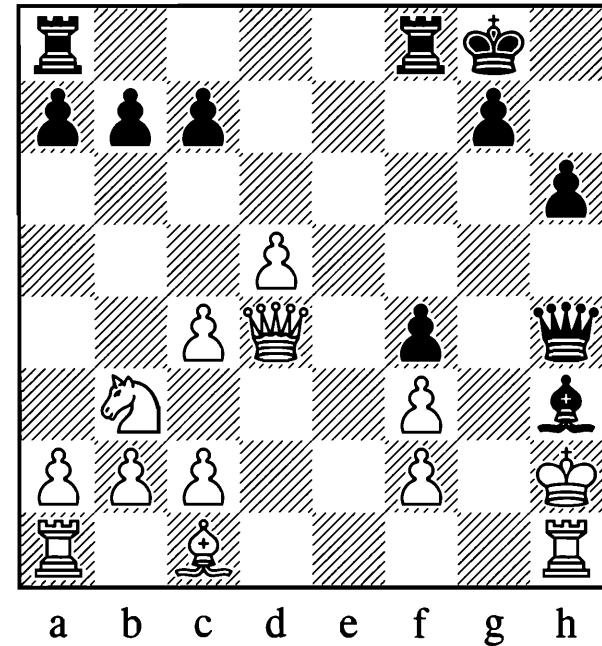
de Riviere – Morphy

Paris (match) 1863



The h3-pawn is an important defender of the king. At the moment it is defended twice. The question is how many times it can be attacked:

1... $\mathbb{Q}f3\#!$ 2. $\mathbb{g}xf3 \mathbb{W}h4$ 3. $\mathbb{E}h1 \mathbb{Q}xh3\#!$



Probably White only considered a queen capture on h3. The real problem here is that White is facing an eventual mate on g2.

4. $\mathbb{Q}d2 \mathbb{E}f6$

White resigned. Black's simple plan is ... $\mathbb{E}g6$ and there is no reasonable way to stop it.

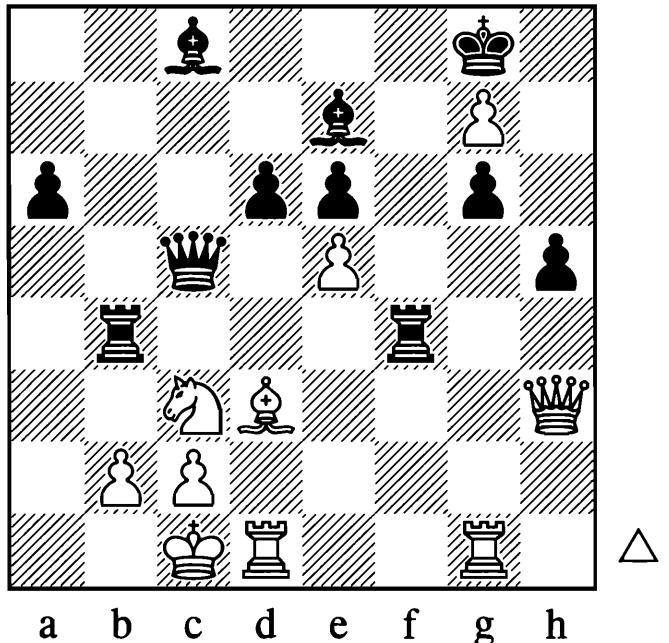
One important feature of the status examination is to consider both the value of a piece (say, a valuable rook or a mere pawn) and also its method of moving.

Whereas moving backwards might be an important option for a rook, it is, of course, never an option for a pawn. The value of a piece also has consequences when, for example, it comes to a status examination of the king's position. So let's take a closer look at each piece in turn.

The pawn

Apart from the en passant rule, the status examination for the pawn is no different from other pieces. Yet the relatively low value of the pawn compared to the other pieces is of crucial importance in the event of a double attack. A pawn's fork always hurts.

A key characteristic is the pawn's lust for expansion, as Nimzowitsch once called its desire to make it to the back rank, dreaming of promotion. The possibility of promoting should always be part of a pawn's status examination, and not only when it has reached the seventh rank as in **Lobigas – Micheli, Skopje (ol) 1972**.



You may pity the g7-pawn. Undefended and desolate, it is opposing the enemy king.

So far Black has missed three opportunities to eliminate the offending peasant. He will not get a fourth:

1. $\mathbb{Wxh5!}$

Black resigned because of 1...gxh5 2. $\mathbb{Qh7\#}$.

So when you look at the status of advanced pawns always keep in mind the possibility of their promotion.

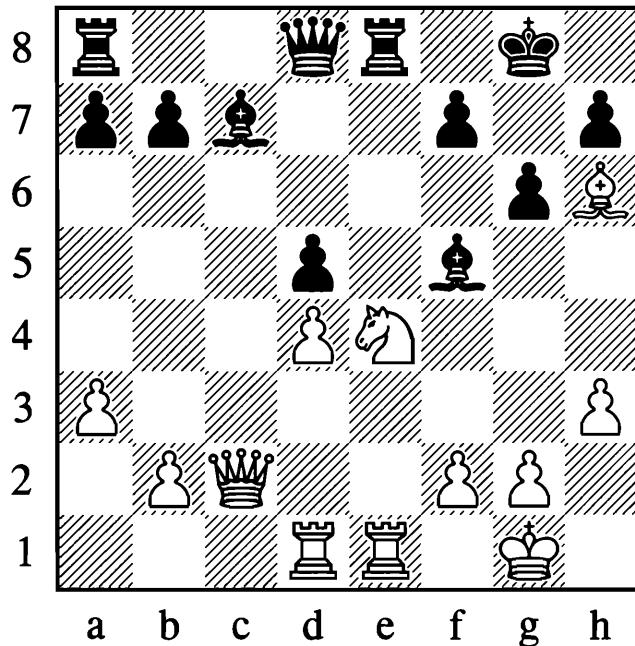
The knight

As we have already seen in the chapter on the double attack, the knight is a born double-attacker. When you do a status examination for a knight, look for possible tactical bases and tactical targets in your own and your opponent's camp. And remember: with an extra tempo knights can suddenly turn into long-range pieces. Another knight speciality is the check it gives. You cannot put a piece in between, so after a knight check the king must move if the knight cannot be captured.

If you combine all these simple facts about a knight, you may find something inspired in the following position:

Ligterink – Pachman

Amsterdam 1994



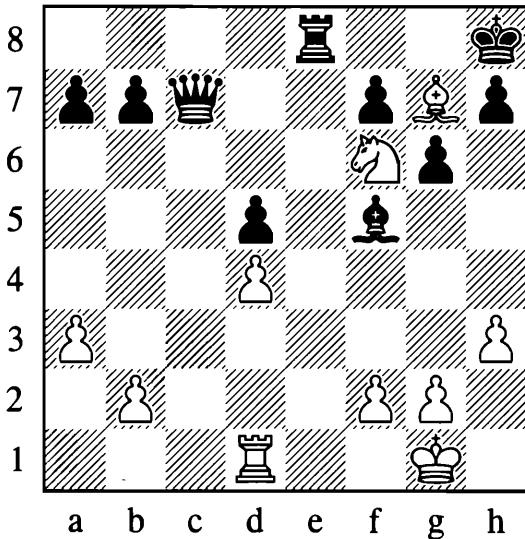
What does a knight look for that we do not yet see? The knight's owner played:

1. $\mathbb{W}xc7!! \mathbb{W}xc7?$

1... $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$ is better but after 2. $\mathbb{W}xb7 \mathbb{B}b8$ 3. $\mathbb{W}xa7 \mathbb{B}xb2$ 4. $\mathbb{W}a4$ White still has an advantage.

2. $\mathbb{Q}f6\# \mathbb{Q}h8 3. \mathbb{B}xe8\#!$

Black resigned. The big idea, of course, was:
3... $\mathbb{B}xe8$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}g7\#!!$

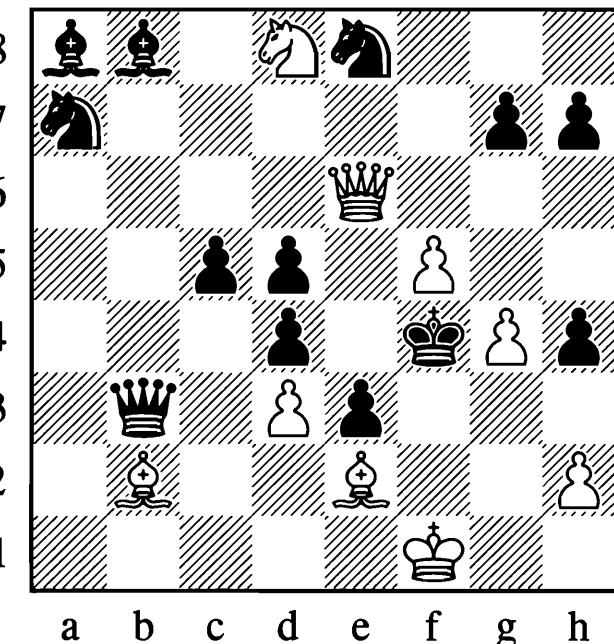


4... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 5. $\mathbb{Q}xe8\#$, winning. Now we can see that in the initial position the knight on e4 was already scrutinizing his future tactical target on c7.

One important feature of the status examination is to consider both the value of a piece and also its method of moving.

The bishop

The bishop is a long-range piece. Therefore it can control squares from far away and does not have to be where the action is. This is why the bishop is such a fine piece in an open position. Remember to examine every square on a bishop's diagonal when you do the status examination of this piece.



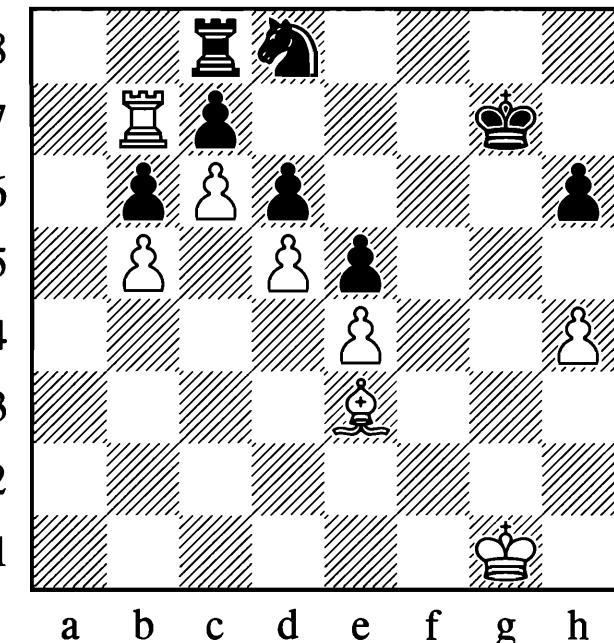
1. $\mathbb{W}xe3\# dx e3$

Of course 1... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ allowed 2. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ mate, but now the bishop on b2 suddenly is controlling important flight squares of the king and thus it's mate after:

2. $\mathbb{Q}e6$

Plater – Sliwa

Warsaw 1947



1. $\mathbb{B}xc7\#! \mathbb{B}xc7 2. \mathbb{Q}xb6$

This is a little combination based on the motif of the pin. If Black invested a tempo in defending the knight, the bishop would simply take the knight and the pawns would become unstoppable. Euwe said that when

two connected pawns have no more than four moves combined for both to reach the back rank, a rook cannot stop them. This would be precisely the situation here.

So if Black had tried:

2...♝c8 3.♛xd8 ♜xd8 4.b6

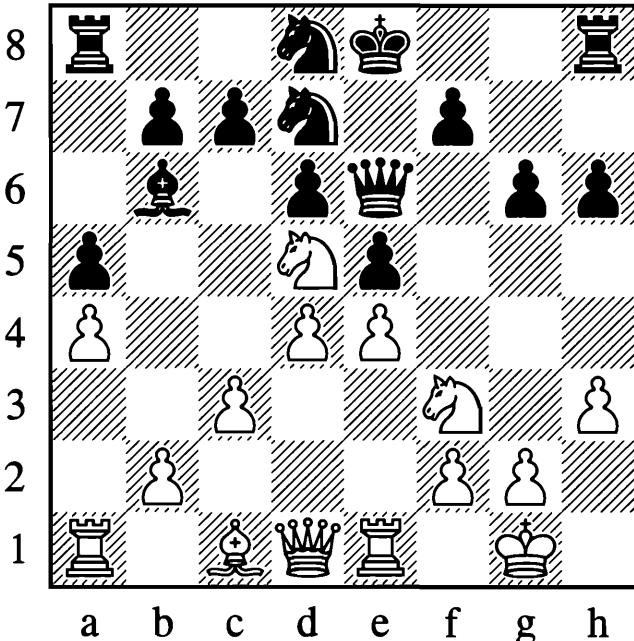
The pawns are too strong for the rook.

The queen and the rooks

The queen is the most powerful long-range piece, followed by the rooks. The high value of these pieces often turns them into targets for all kinds of tactical operations. Therefore you should always have an escape route open for the queen and rooks if things become too hot to handle. A boxed-in queen or rook very quickly becomes a target of lethal tactics.

Morphy – de Riviere

Paris (match) 1863



A status examination for the black queen shows that she is immobile. If she could be attacked from the g5-square by the f3-knight she would be lost. Therefore Morphy simply played:

1.♕xh6!

The king

The king is the most valuable piece on the board. Consequently your status examination for the king has to be flawless. However, the precision you will learn in doing the status examination for the king will also help you to become more precise for other pieces.

As we have seen throughout the book, the king is the Number One tactical target. We have also seen that not only the king's current square is important but also the squares around the king. These are:

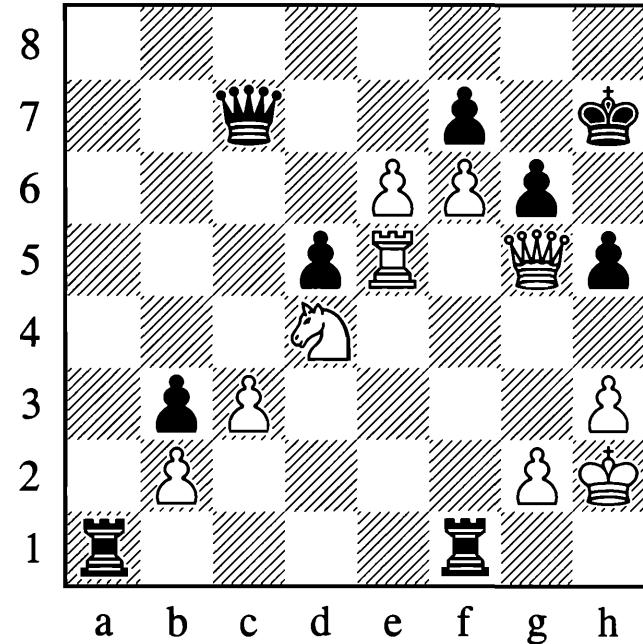
1. Flight squares for the king
2. Squares next to the king

1. The flight squares

Start with simple check-ups. For the king, the simplest question to ask is which squares he could move to and whether these possible flight squares could be controlled. After all, this is what the game is about: controlling all the squares the king could possibly move to and then attacking him. As most arbiters know, mate ends the game. Looking for possible mating patterns is a good remedy against being caught by surprise.

Luczynowicz – Szymanski

Poland 1953



The status examination for the white king shows the g3-square as the only escape route (and the move g2-g3 would allow ... $\mathbb{K}f2$ mate).

1... $\mathbb{W}xe5\#$ 2. $\mathbb{W}xe5$ h4 3. $\mathbb{W}xd5$

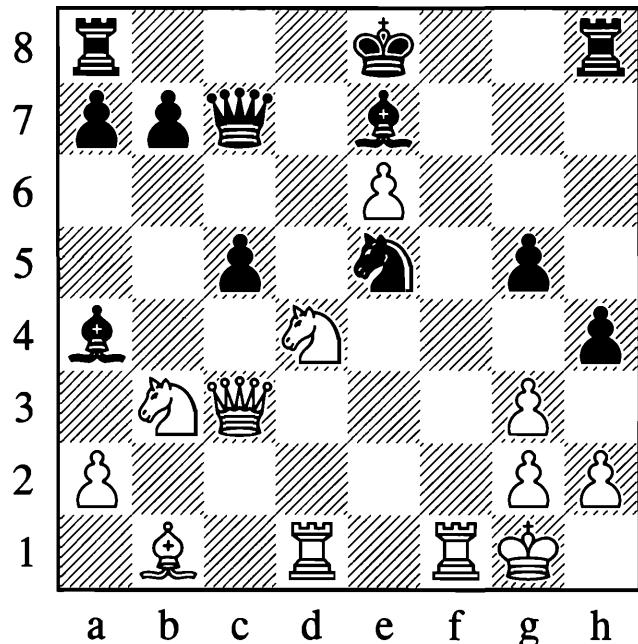
3.g4 $\mathbb{K}f2$ mate.

3... $\mathbb{K}h1$ mate

Black used his findings to close the king's last loophole.

Bramaier – Broistadt

West Germany 1972



1. $\mathbb{Q}b5$

White opens the d-file for his rook.

1.... $\mathbb{Q}xb5$

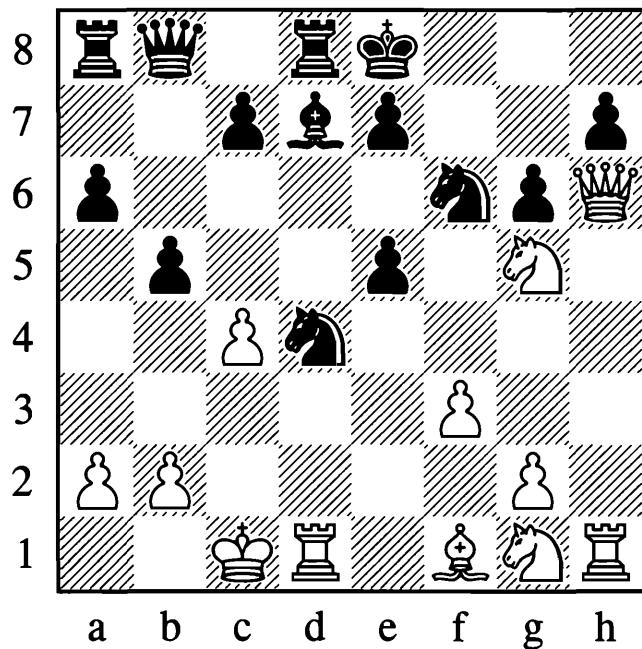
Now the black king has no flight squares, a check by the white bishop will be the end of the game, thus:

2. $\mathbb{W}xe5!$

Eliminating the knight that controls g6.

1–0

The examination of the next king's position helped to find a spectacular finish in O'Kelly – Ramirez, Malaga 1963:



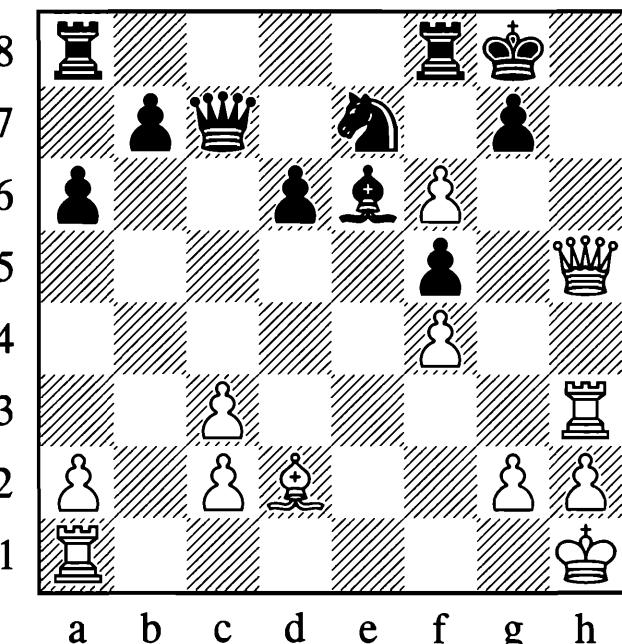
1. $\mathbb{W}xg6\#$

In this case it is easy to find the sacrifice, as the king's restriction is evident at first glance.

In most cases the opponent is not as cooperative as in the last example. But with a little help from you, your opponent may have to change his king's position in a way he would not have done without your persuasion. A good question about the king is how additional squares can be taken away from him.

Springer – Ebersbach

Berlin 1958

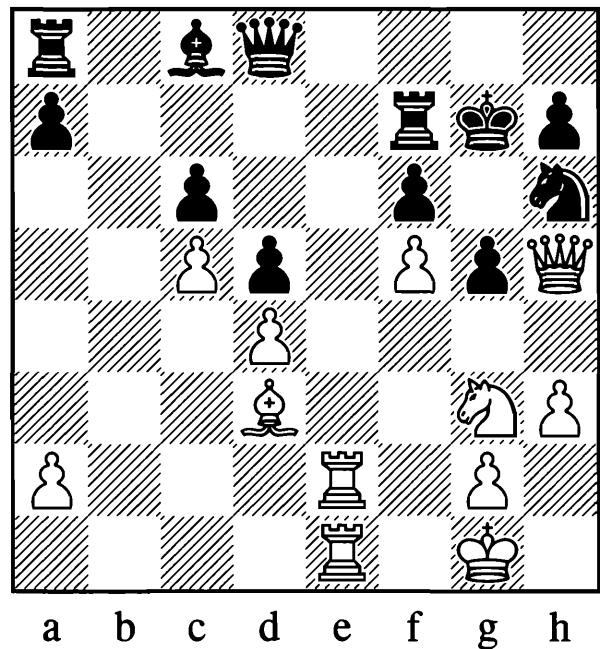


Here we shall see a classic trick. Take flight squares away by placing your *opponent's* pieces on them!

1.f7†

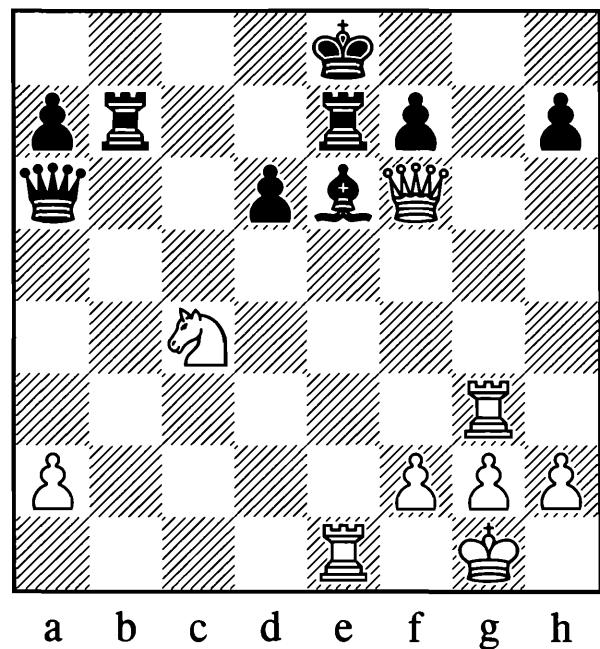
White changes the black king's status in order to give a back rank mate. One of the black pieces will have to take on f7 blocking the final flight square.

In **Van den Ender – Praszek**, Poland 1974, White needed to control the squares on the back rank:



1.Ke8 Wc7 2.Wxg5†! fxg5 3.Qh5 mate

Another classic trick to control squares in the king's camp is to open lines into his position. Quite often it does not really matter whether the line is opened first and then occupied or if this operation is done the other way round. The next diagram is an example of stunning simplicity. This is **Timman – Tatai**, Amsterdam 1977:

**1.Qe5!**

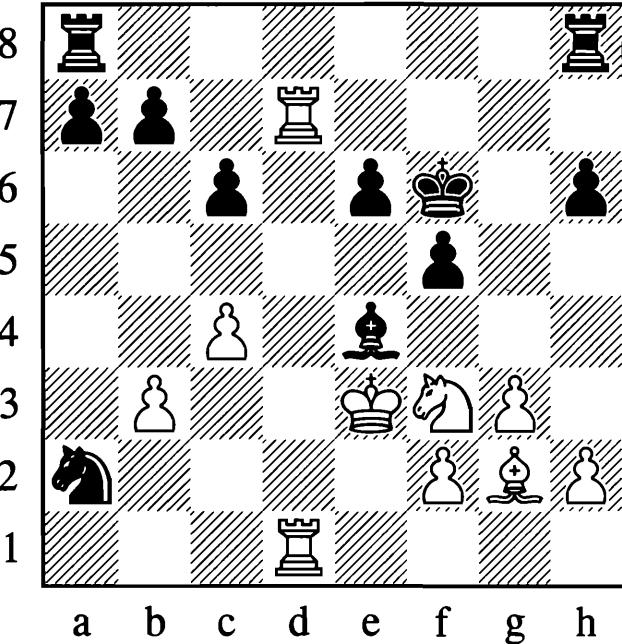
Taking control of d7. Now after 1...dxe5 2.Qd1 Black must lose a decisive amount of material to avoid Wh8 mate.

1–0

However, the defending side might use the same trick in order to thwart your efforts to attack the king. If a once open line can be closed again, the attack might be over before it even begins.

Hodgson – Agdestein

London 1986



1.Qe5! Qxe5 2.Qf7

White has restricted the freedom of movement of the black king quite nicely.

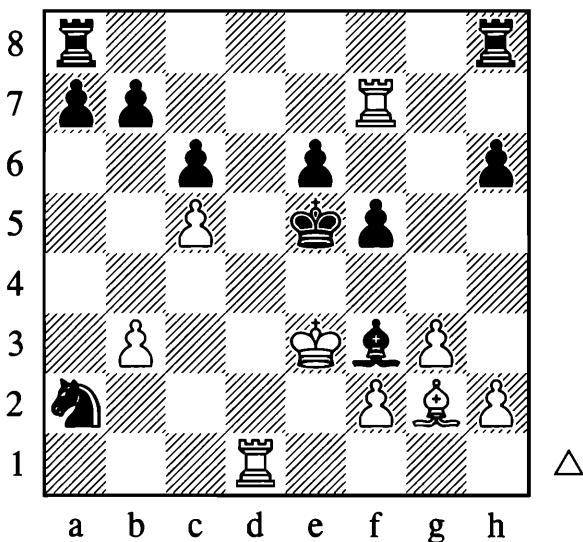
2...Qd5

This creates a new flight square, but 2...Qf3! immediately blocking the f-pawn was best, even though White keeps the advantage.

Unfortunately for Black, White can take away the new flight square with:

3.c5

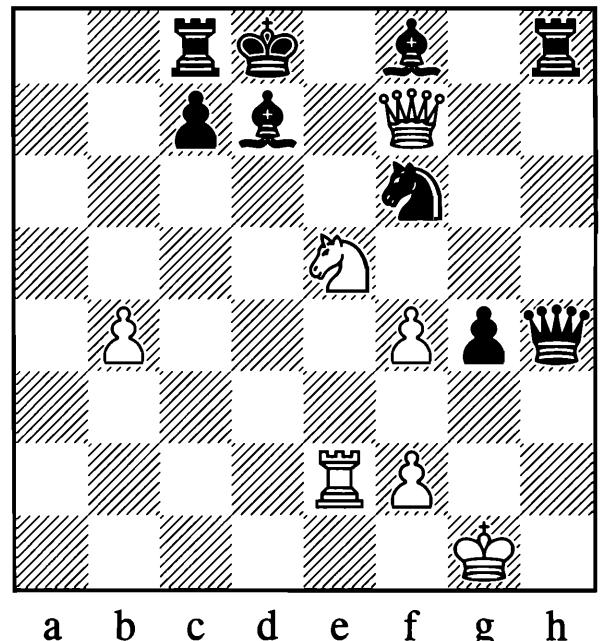
Here closing the line would have worked for the defender, as Black could have escaped the mate by again playing 3...Qf3!!:



For example, 4. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ $\mathbb{R}af8$ when Black is worse but not yet dead. Instead he succumbed to the pressure and was mated after:

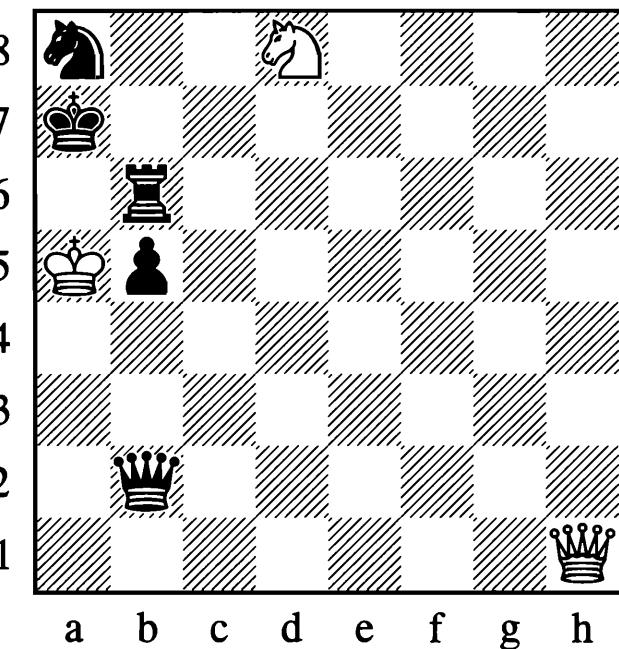
3...f4†?? 4.gxf4 mate

One way to make sure occupied potential flight squares stay occupied is to attack the piece on this square twice, so that when it is captured the king is unable to take back and create a new flight square.



1. $\mathbb{W}xd7† \mathbb{Q}xd7$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}f7$ mate

Black's king gained no additional squares after the captures on d7. The defending bishop was eliminated without opening any new escape routes.

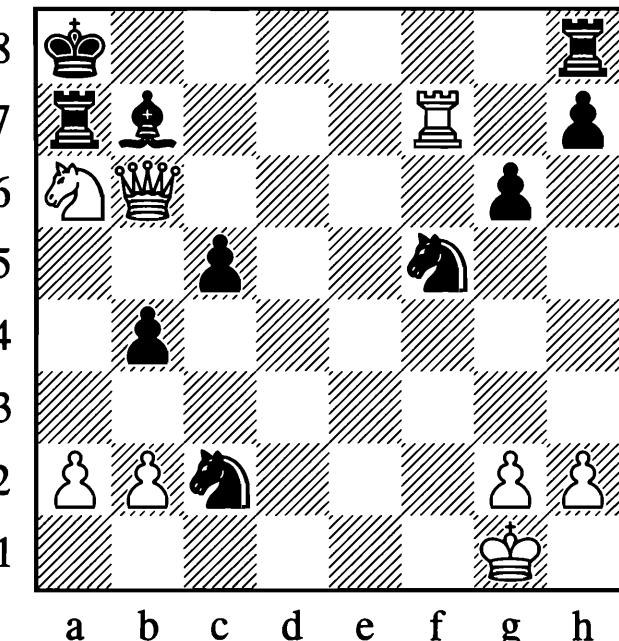


1. $\mathbb{W}b7† \mathbb{R}xb7$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}c6$ mate

Again the flight square is eliminated without giving Black the opportunity to create new escape routes.

To avoid giving the impression that this only happens in composed positions, here is one from real life...

This is **Zotov – Glebov, USSR 1975:**

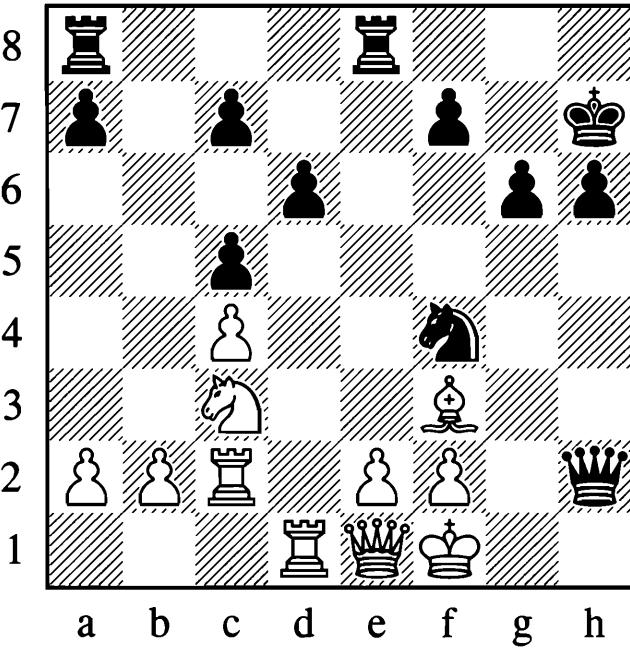


1. $\mathbb{W}c7!$

White sneaks around the corner to perform a variety of smothered mate. Black has no defence: 1... $\mathbb{R}c8$ 2. $\mathbb{W}b8† \mathbb{R}xb8$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}c7$ mate.

1–0

Another trick is to cut down the options of the attacked side. Block the pawns in front of the king so they cannot move and create escape routes. As an illustration let's take a look at **Friedman – Thornblom**, Stockholm 1973. If you do a status examination for this position you will see a potential mate on g1. How would White be able to escape this? The only route is to play e3 and then run. So the only thing that remains is to stop e2-e3 at all costs.



1... $\mathbb{E}e3!$

Now the white king cannot escape and Black will quickly deliver mate after 2.fxe3 $\mathbb{Q}h3$.

0-1

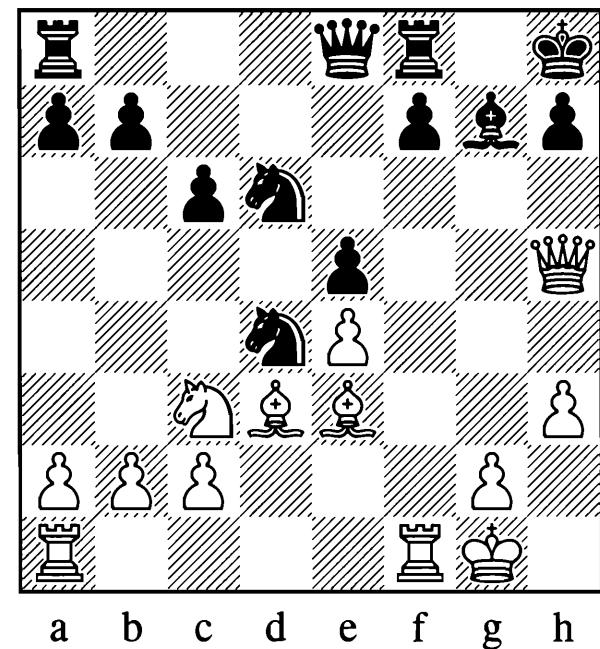
From my teaching experience I know that many players are unfamiliar with even the most famous chess positions.

You may know the following example. However, the classics are always good teaching examples. And why not take a classic example from a legendary player? Moreover, from my teaching experience I know that too many players are not familiar with these standard examples.

So if you know this example take pleasure in its beauty again, otherwise study and enjoy!

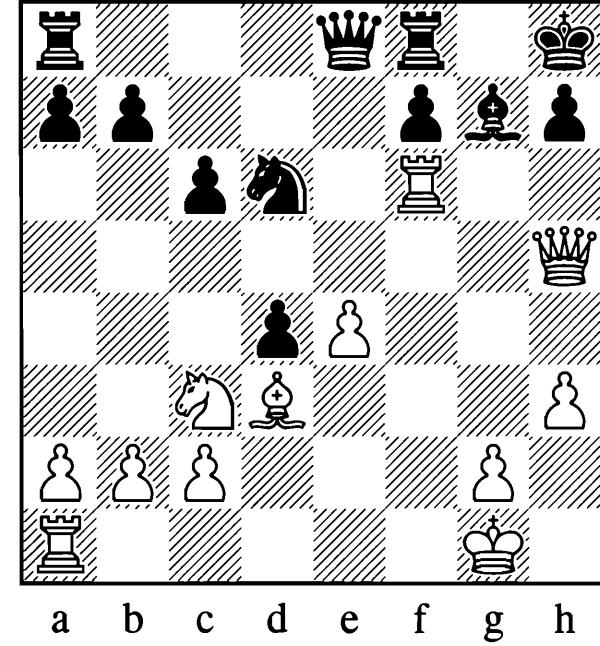
Fischer – Benko

USA 1963



Black would love to play ...f7-f5, gaining some breathing space for his king. Fischer had seen that and acted accordingly:

1. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ exd4 2. $\mathbb{E}f6!!$



Black is thoroughly cornered and after:

2... $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 3.e5 h6 4. $\mathbb{Q}e2$

Black resigned, as moving the d6-knight now would allow 5. $\mathbb{W}f5$ leading to mate.

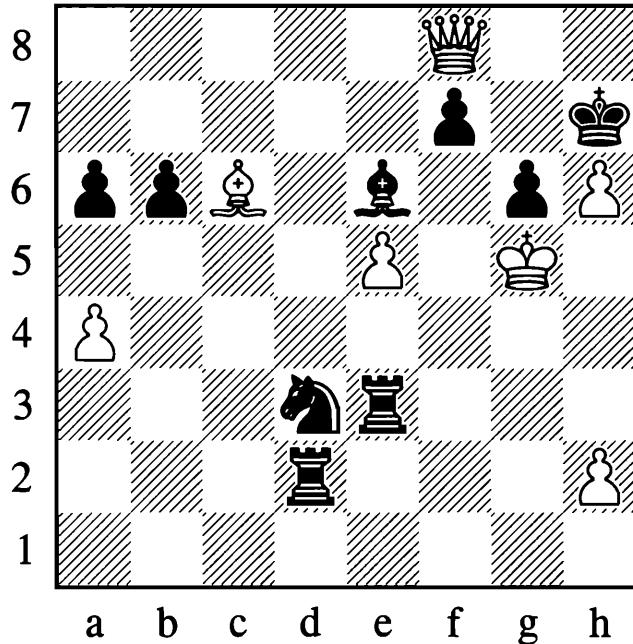
Blocking the f-pawn restricted the black king's position, and prevented the possibility of opening up flight squares.

Look at how many squares the king has available. A restricted king surrounded by enemy pieces should trigger the idea of a mating net.

As we are occupied with beautiful pictures, here is another one from a correspondence game:

Kilander – Ceki

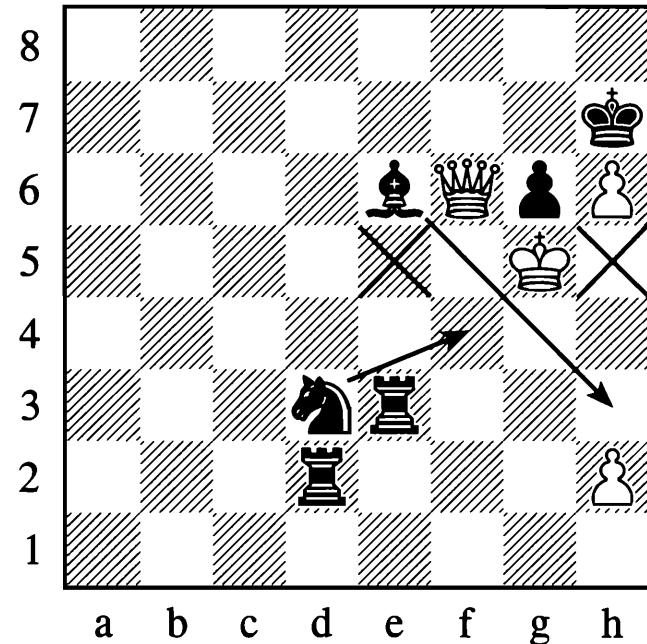
Correspondence 1967



There is more than taking the pawn on e5! The white king is exposed to the attack of four black pieces. This formidable force would prove too strong if Black cut off the king's escape route from the battlefield. So...

1...f6†!

This is much stronger than the obvious but weak capture on e5. The idea that pops up when making the status examination of the white king is using a beautiful rook journey with e3-e5-h5-h3. In this box many squares are already under Black's control. After 2.♘xf6 we would have the following skeleton position:



Notice Black's 'wall' f5, f4, f3, and f2, which the imprisoned white king will find impossible to climb (the crosses mark additional squares controlled by Black helping the rook to make stops along his journey for mate).

So the following variation is possible: 2...♜e5† 3.♔h4 ♜h5† 4.♕g3 ♜h3 mate. Just in case you were wondering: yes, the queen could have sacrificed herself but White's position would be hopeless.

White's alternatives are 2.exf6 ♜e5† 3.♔h4 ♜h5† 4.♕g3 ♜h3 mate, and 2.♕xf6 "only" losing the queen after 2...♜f2†.

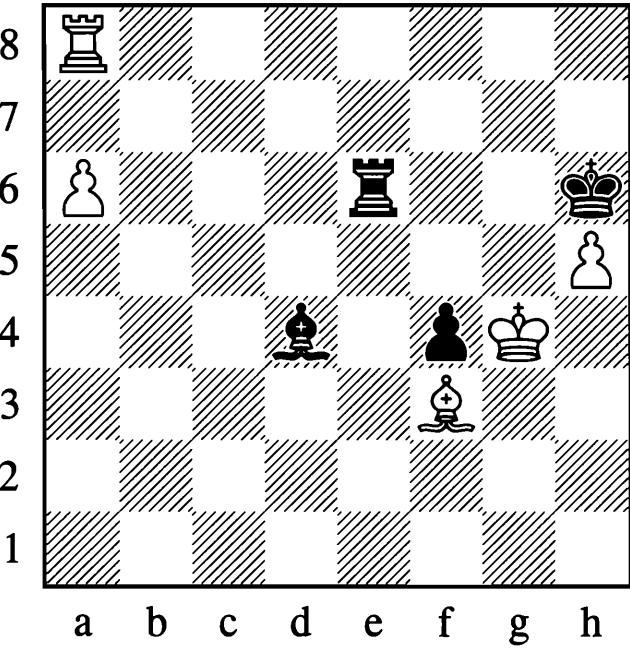
In most cases mating attacks run into tough resistance from the defender. As he is fighting for his life he is determined to find every resource. Hence, your examination of the king's position also has to take into account every square both your pieces and the defenders control. An experienced player's intuition will often tell him about possible mating nets. The less advanced player might pick up this idea by looking at how many squares a king has available. A restricted king surrounded by enemy pieces should trigger the idea of a mating net (in the next diagram: the white king and h-pawn already control adjacent squares and the rook and bishop are just waiting to join the action).

Note how the increasingly restricted position of the king influences the other pieces in **Ivanovic – San Segundo**, New York 1988. It's Black to play and at first his king seems to have little to worry about. However after a few more moves...

analyse every piece, the whole board, before you embark on such an important operation as a mating attack. In reduced positions like this you have to exploit every resource at your command, otherwise your attack might not succeed.

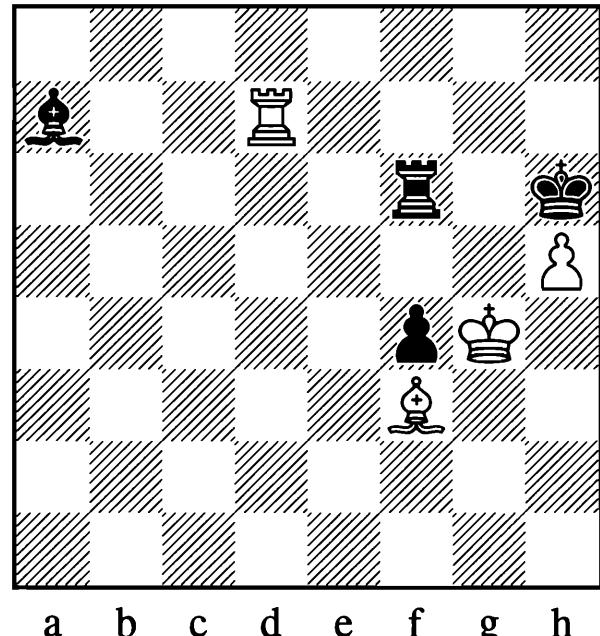
Strangely enough, sometimes the inability to move is the only chance of surviving an attack. Stalemate may be your opponent's last resort, and there is nothing more annoying than dropping half a point because you did not anticipate it. Consequently, stalemate has to be one of the items on the checklist when you are doing the status examination for the king, especially during the endgame. So if your status examination renders **the result that the enemy king has no flight square** it could be stalemate time.

A classic example is **Post – Nimzowitsch**, Barmen 1905.



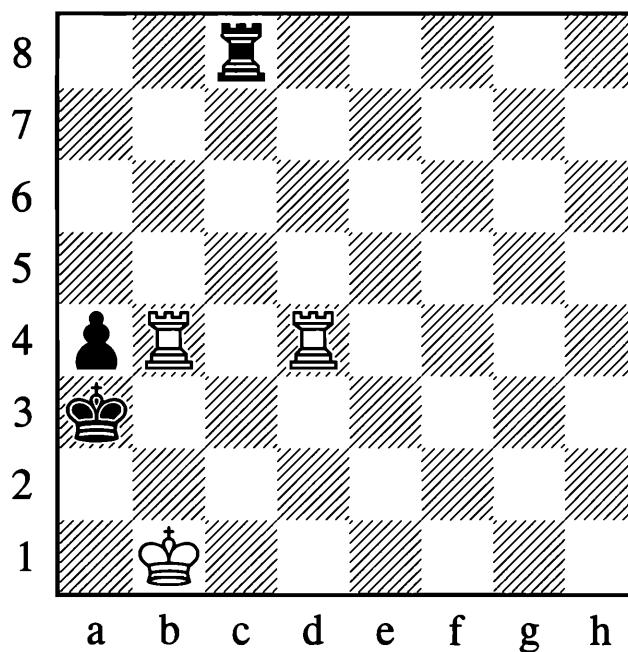
1...♝f6 2.♜d8 ♛e3 3.a7 ♜xa7 4.♜d7

White has sacrificed a pawn in order to take away squares from the king and so weave a mating net.



Rescuing the black bishop would spell mate after ♜f3-e4.

Notice how the a-pawn, far away from Black's king, was used in this manoeuvre. This should be a reminder that you have to

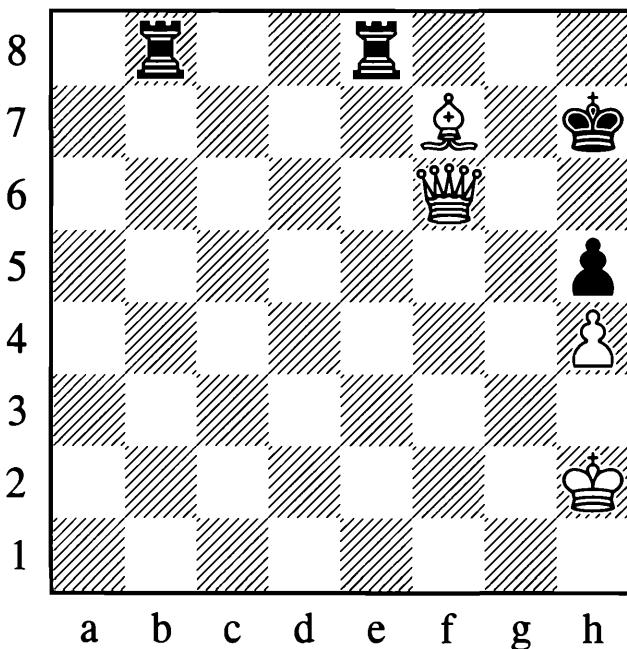


Here Nimzowitsch played:

1...♝b8!

Forcing an immediate draw.

In **Zweig – Westin**, Skopje (ol) 1972, the black king is stalemated already. If he could get rid of all his pieces it would be a draw.



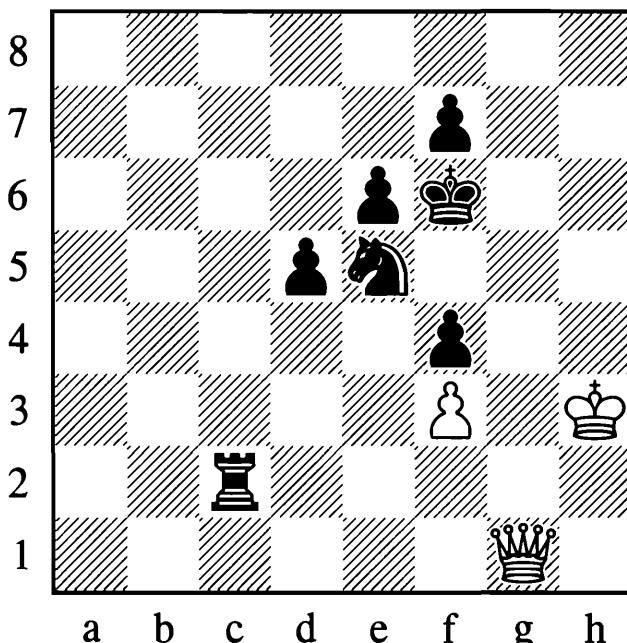
1...Rc2† 2.Qh3 Rb3†! 3.Qxb3 Rh2†

And a draw was agreed. The king can avoid capturing the rook when it checks on h2 and g2, but a check on f2 would exchange rook for queen and leave White with a rook pawn and the “wrong” bishop.

Sometimes creating a stalemate requires cutting off your king’s escape routes yourself. Here is an example where the trick is performed with a queen sacrifice.

Kaberel – Tipary

Hungary 1955



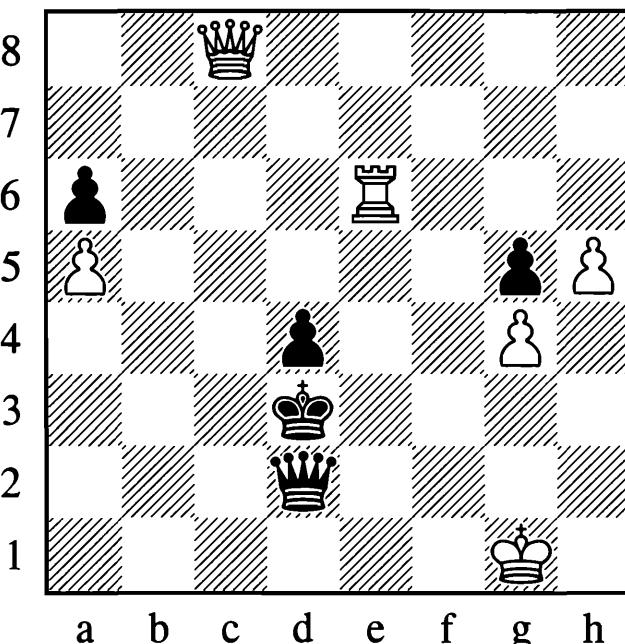
1.Qg5†! Qxg5 stalemate

Besides getting rid of the last mobile piece, the sacrifice closed the final flight square on h4.

In other cases, creating the stalemate involves pure tactics and the knowledge of how many squares a piece is able to control.

Titenko – Murey

USSR 1963

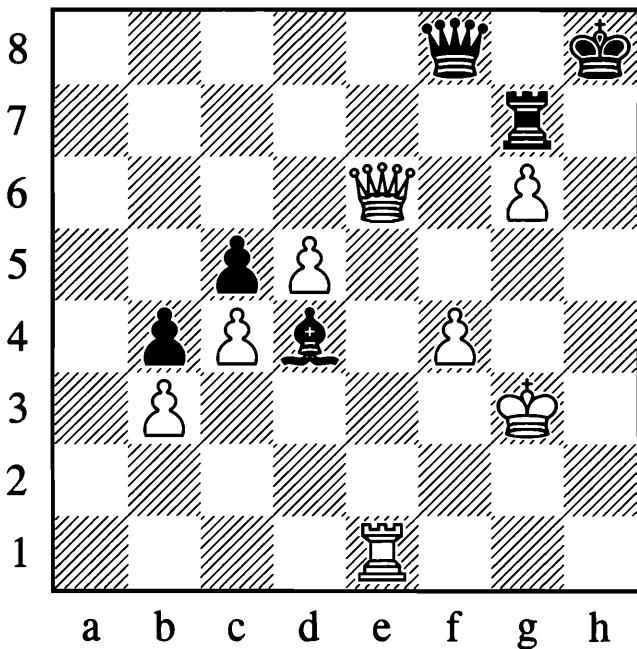


1...Qc1†

A double attack on king and queen. The new position of the white queen on c1 creates an instant stalemate as the queen, moving vertically, horizontally and diagonally takes away all the flight squares of the black king.

All these examples show that the player who is about to lose the endgame has one last option: stalemate. Therefore you should always look for this configuration. There is a little trick to see the stalemate more easily. Ask yourself which piece on which square would take away the final flight squares. And, with regard to the last example, remember that elementary tactics might even be employed on the last move of the game. Just like the opera, it is not over until the fat lady sings.

As we have already seen with the elementary tactical motifs, it helps to envision a specific target position. In **Nismeev – Boltobekov**, Correspondence 1977, after Black found the initial idea (the black king has no squares with a white queen on g6), he also found a way to get rid of his remaining pieces:



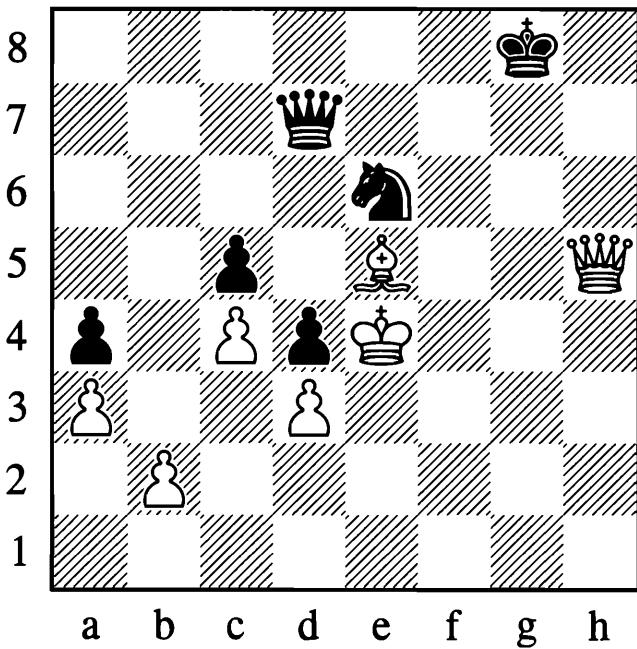
1... $\mathbb{Q}xg6\#$ 2. $\mathbb{W}xg6 \mathbb{Q}f2\#$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}xf2 \mathbb{W}xf4\#$

Black draws with either perpetual check or stalemate.

The following example shows that sometimes you have to try hard a little harder to force the stalemate.

Pietzsch – Fuchs

West Germany 1963



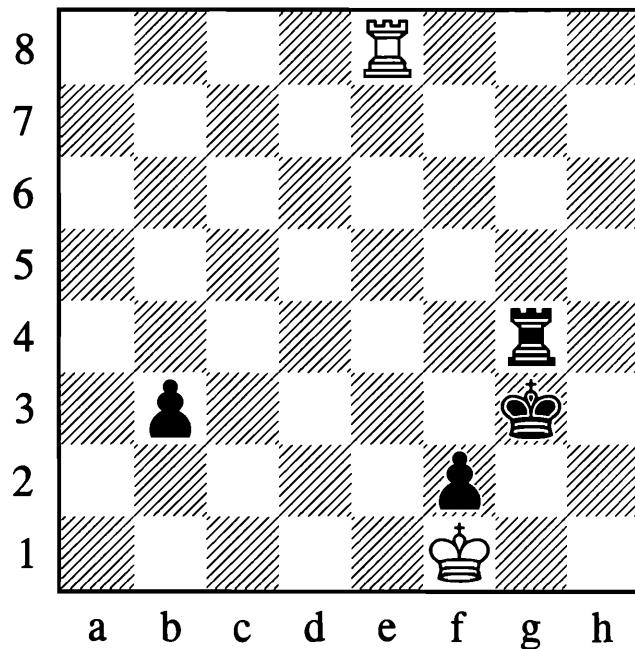
The status examination for the white king shows that after:

1... $\mathbb{W}c6\#$

The only square he can move to is f5. Unfortunately, he runs into a fork by the knight, which has to be taken. But now Black's king has very few squares left... Black offers his last piece on g6 where either capture guarantees stalemate:

2. $\mathbb{Q}f5 \mathbb{Q}g7\#$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}xg7 \mathbb{W}g6\#$

The next and final example of this kind (composed by the author) nicely demonstrates that we *continually* have to consider this motif during our calculation process.



It looks as if Black is in total control of the position and that almost any move should win. In fact, there is only one winning move for Black!

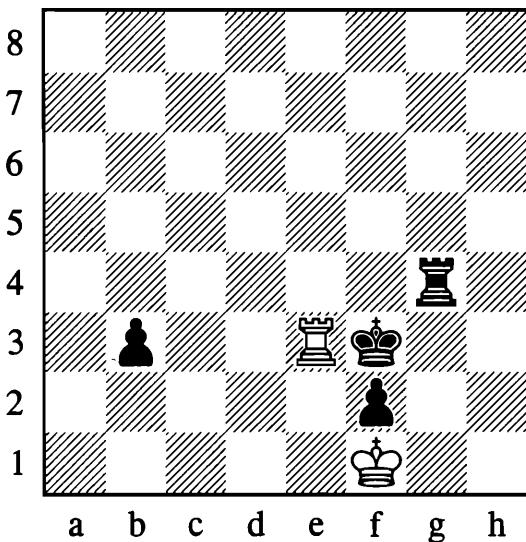
White's last chance in this position is stalemate. Black must continually apply the status examination of the white king for every position during his calculation.

Strangely enough, this helps us to find the winning move easily. As always (!) we systematically analyse the possible options.

They are:

- a black king move
- a black rook move
- pushing the b3-pawn

If the black king moves away from his f2-pawn, it will be lost. Hence only 1... $\hat{f}f3$ makes sense. But the status examination for White's king after this move reveals it is stalemated. White simply has to get rid of his rook. After 1... $\hat{f}f3?$ then 2. $\hat{E}e3\#!$ will result in stalemate or the direct loss of both the b-pawn and the f-pawn thereafter.



The black king blocks the only white flight square e2 from either f3 or e3. This makes 2. $\hat{E}e3\#!$ possible.

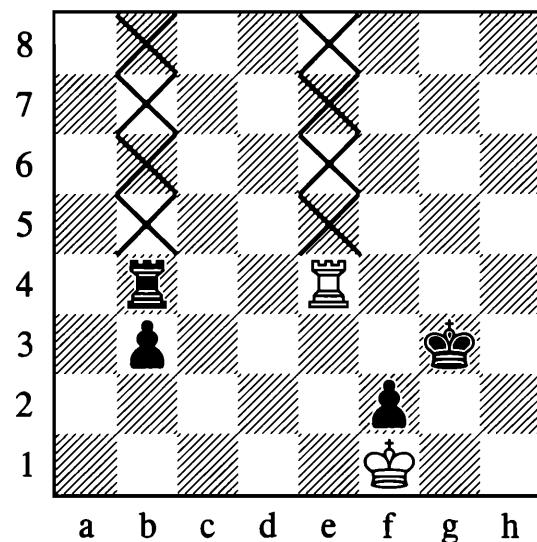
Thus a king move will not win, so whatever you do, don't touch the king!

Alternatively, if Black wants to move his rook, there are only two plausible squares: f4 or b4. Otherwise White will pick up the b-pawn after a check with his rook.

On f4 the rook might shield its king and protect the f-pawn. But again the white rook will strike: 1... $\hat{E}f4$ 2. $\hat{E}e3\#!$ $\hat{E}f3$ 3. $\hat{E}xf3\#!$ $\hat{X}xf3$ with stalemate.

On b4 the black rook supports the promotion of the pawn. But once again we have to look at the remaining flight squares of the white king in order to avoid stalemate:

1... $\hat{E}b4$ 2. $\hat{E}e4!$



Having done the status examination for the white king it is obvious that again e2 is the only remaining flight square. A black rook would control this square if it moved onto the e-file. Thus Black cannot capture the rook in the above diagram because of stalemate. But the undefended b4-rook cannot escape! Moving along the b-file will not solve the problem, as the white rook will shadow the black rook along the e-file. For example: 2... $\hat{E}b8$ 3. $\hat{E}e8!$ with "eternal rook", as the Russians say.

A rook move will not win either, so hands off the rook!

Finally we have found the solution. If there is a win, it *must* be the only option left: pushing the b-pawn.

1...b2! 2. $\hat{E}b8$ $\hat{E}h4!$

Black wins.

The winning motif is a well-known procedure in positions of this kind: Black will give up the b-pawn on b2 or b1 after which he will win the white rook with a check on the first or second rank. This motif does not depend on the position of the black king.

If you enjoy positions of this kind, you can make use of them quite effectively by solving endgame studies.

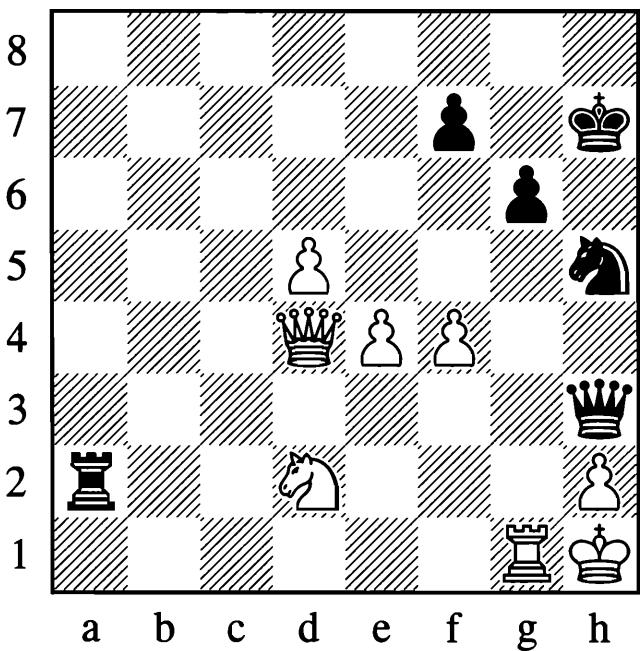
Of course, stalemate is not the only way to force a draw. Another, more common, way is a perpetual check or, in short, a perpetual. Here, as with stalemates, the status examination

of the king shows a restricted freedom of movement. Any piece can perform this lifesaving operation.

Our first example shows that sometimes even the strongest player needs a default option in case things go wrong.

Portisch – Kasparov

Moscow 1981

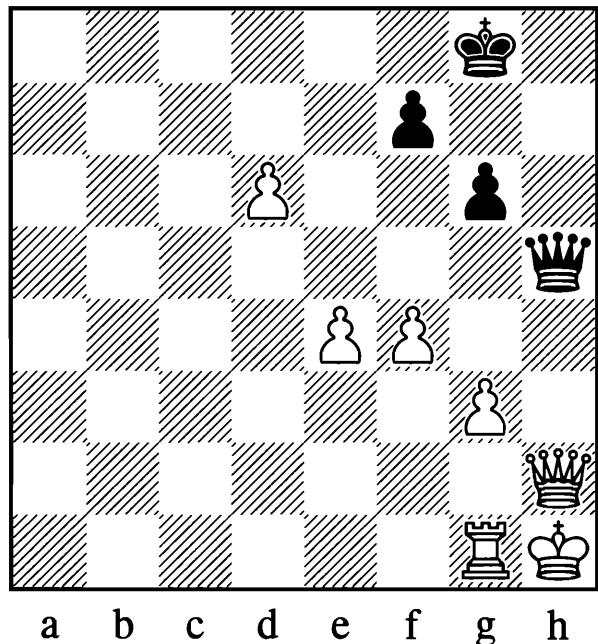


The prospects look pretty grim for Black. He needs a miracle move and he finds one:

1... $\mathbb{Q}g8!!$

Now the position is already a draw.

**2.d6 $\mathbb{R}xd2$ 3. $\mathbb{W}xd2$ $\mathbb{W}f3\#$ 4. $\mathbb{W}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}g3\#$
5.hxg3 $\mathbb{W}h5\#$ 6. $\mathbb{W}h2$**

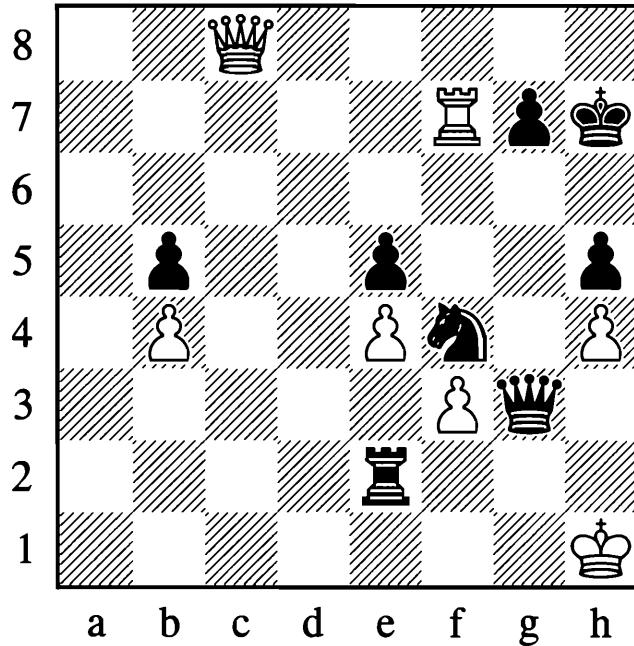


Now we can see why **1... $\mathbb{Q}g8!!$** was such an ingenious move: the black queen is not pinned against her king. White has two pieces to defend against Black's three possible checks. The white king cannot escape, as with every check one of the white pieces will occupy and close the flight square:

6... $\mathbb{W}f3\#$ 7. $\mathbb{B}g2$ $\mathbb{W}d1\#$ 8. $\mathbb{W}g1$ $\mathbb{W}h5\#$ 9. $\mathbb{B}h2$ $\mathbb{W}f3\#$

And White finally accepted that he could not win this game.

The next example shows a cheeky combination of stalemate and perpetual. In **Evans – Reshevsky**, New York 1963, the game had reached the following position:

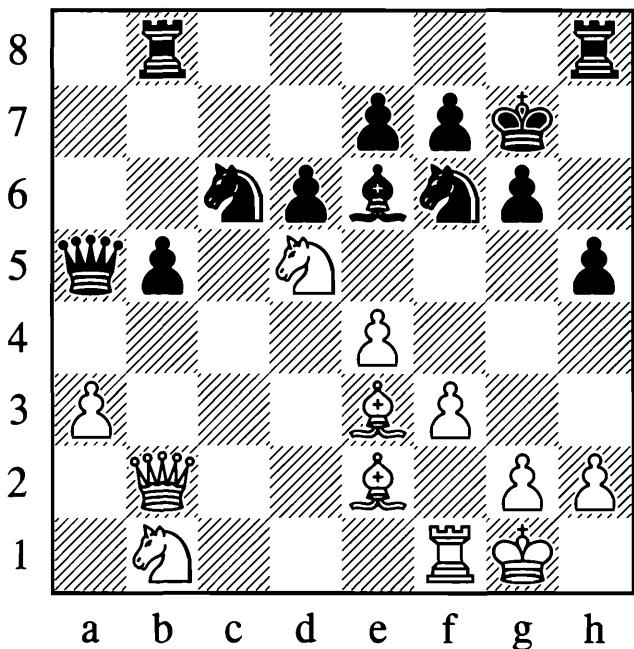


1. $\mathbb{W}g8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xg8$ 2. $\mathbb{B}xg7\#$

If the king (or queen) takes it would be stalemate. Yet not taking is no better, as the rook simply follows the king like an annoying little dog barking check, check, check...

If the status examination renders the result that the king has no flight square, it could be stalemate time.

What is achievable for the major pieces is also possible for the minor ones. In **Steinberg – Makarov**, USSR 1966, it is the bishop that gives perpetual check.



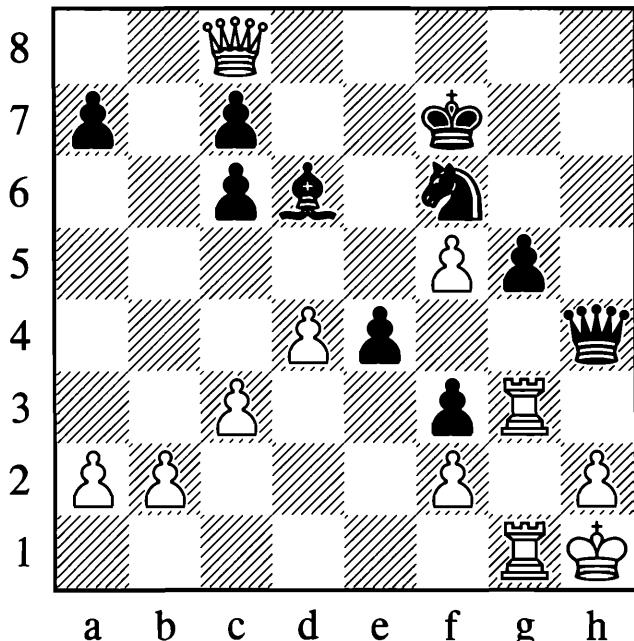
1. $\mathbb{Q}xe7 \mathbb{Q}xe7?$

1... $\mathbb{Q}e5!$ and Black is still an exchange up.

2. $\mathbb{W}xf6\#! \mathbb{Q}xf6 3. \mathbb{Q}d4\#$

Now the king is unable to escape the bishop's checks.

Finally, the knight shows that it can play this trick as well. In **Stojanovski – Guzel**, Yugoslavia 1958, Black sacrificed the queen as a trailblazer for the knight.



1... $\mathbb{W}xh2\# \mathbb{Q}xh2 \mathbb{B}g4\#$

The knight can control all three (!) of the king's remaining squares.

All four examples demonstrate that it is not enough just to look at the squares around the king; you also have to look at the other pieces that could change the situation there.

2. The squares next to the king

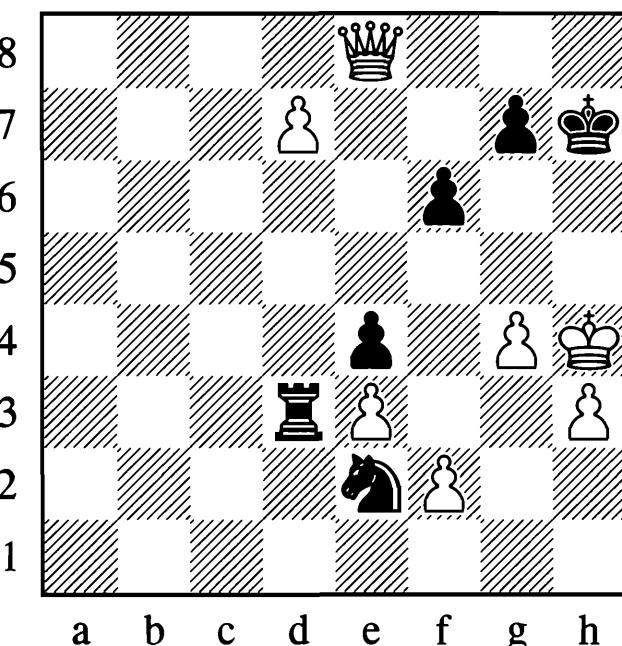
The squares next to the king are all squares that allow a direct or indirect tactical impact on the king's position. All files, ranks, and diagonals into the king's position have to be examined carefully.

Squares and lines with possible checks have to be analysed for their tactical implications and simultaneously be seen in possible relation to other parts of the board.

Does that sound complicated? A simple case is to follow the consequences of a check. Often it pays to see where a check will lead.

Block – Felderhof

Amsterdam 1912



White is confronted with a great temptation: his pawn has made it to the seventh rank.

We have already encountered a pawn's lust for expansion but here White's pawn should have stepped on the brakes. White should have noticed that after the possible ...g7-g5† his king has only one square: a sign of danger. Instead he fell into the only remaining trap:

1.d8=♕??

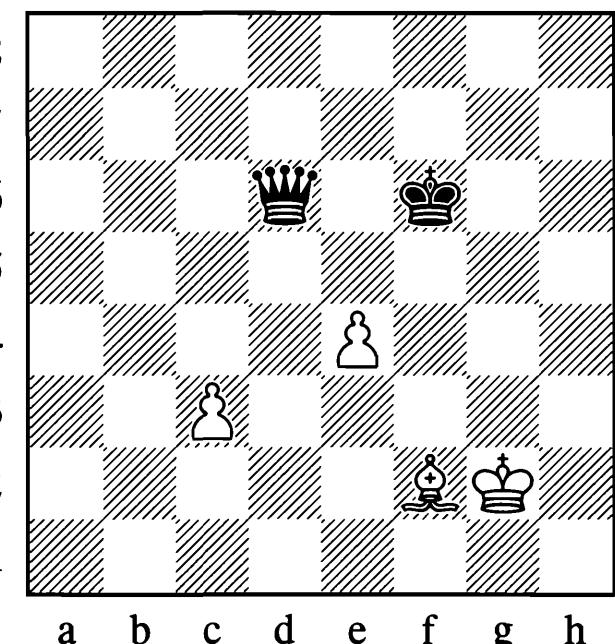
Many moves win for White: 1.♕xe4†, 1.g5 and 1.f4 among others.

1...g5†! 2.♔h5 ♔f4†! 3.exf4 ♕xh3 mate

Black just had to follow the first check to see that White's second queen would only be a decoration for his triumph.

Whenever a piece is directly attacking the king, its check always has an effect on other squares as well. We have already seen many examples of this.

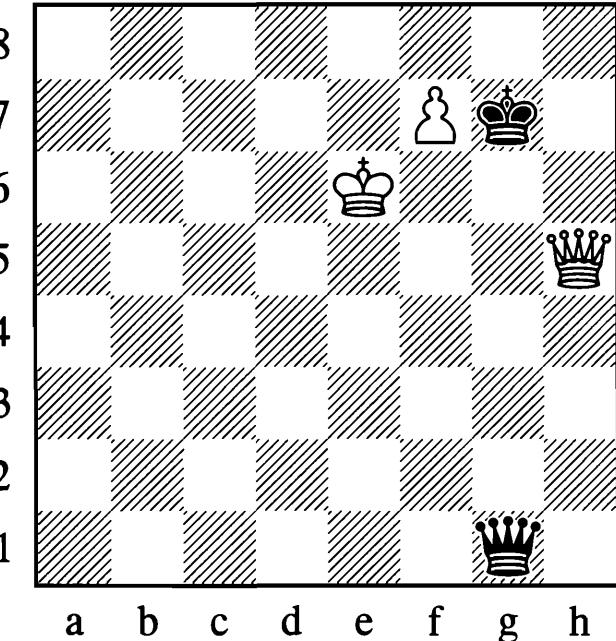
But apart from obvious checks there may also be checks *hidden* in a position. These could be sacrifices next to the king, checks made possible by the opening of lines, or checks that are only created after a certain number of moves. The next two diagrams offer simple illustrations:



1.e5†

The first check is easy to see, but the audacious pawn is using the fact that the square it has

just occupied is rather unhealthy for both king and queen because of the nasty pins the bishop threatens (from d4 or the "new" check on g3) due to the diagonal configuration of king and queen.



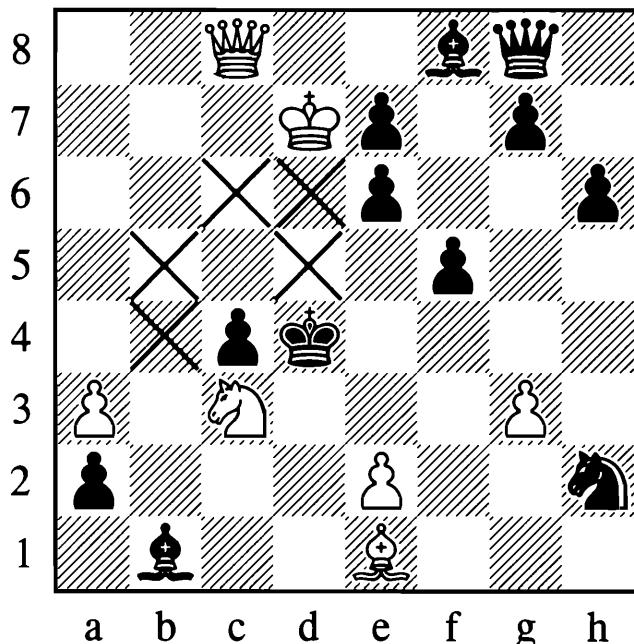
The black king is certainly able to stop the pawn, however...

1.f8=♕† ♔xf8 2.♕f7 mate

The squares next to the king are all squares that allow a direct or indirect tactical impact on the king's position.

As we have seen with many elementary tactical motifs, it is sometimes possible to force the king to another square where the motif could then be used. In the case of a double attack, for example, the king often served as a tactical target to win material. But if a mate is possible on one of the squares next to the king, the game could be over very quickly.

Sometimes you should check how the king's status would be on his neighbouring squares, too!



The crosses mark the squares that are under fire by the white pieces. If the black king were on c5, a diagonal check (on the g1-a7 diagonal) would be terminal, thus White can simply play:

1. $\mathbb{W}c5\#$

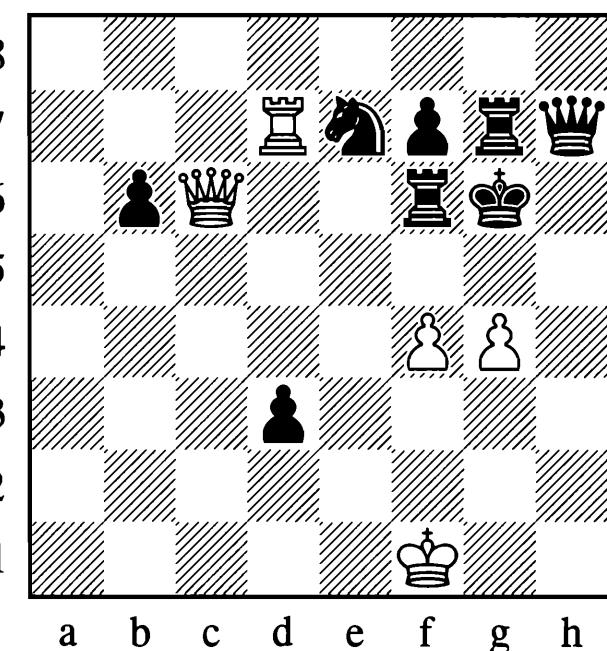
Forcing Black to play:

1... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$

And now:

2. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ mate

When a square next to the king is occupied by a piece you still have to do a status examination for this square, as the king might have to retake on this square if the piece is captured.

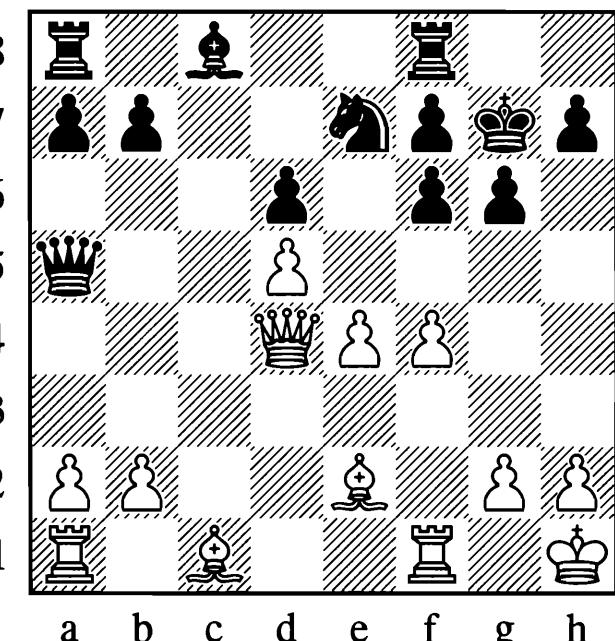


1. $\mathbb{W}xf6\#$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}d6$ mate

You can conclude from this example that **every piece defended by the king is a possible target for a sacrifice to lure the king to that square.**

Rules of thumb like this make it possible for you to research the tactical potential of every king position in a systematic manner. Therefore, tactics (unless strategically motivated) are not strokes of genius and can be learned (as can the judgement needed for most strategic sacrifices by the thorough study of the elements of positional chess).

If you take a look at the squares next to the king in **Vanka – Skoda, Prague 1940:**



You will see that with the king on f6 there could be a mate on the long diagonal. The tempo for this operation could be gained by:

1. b4!

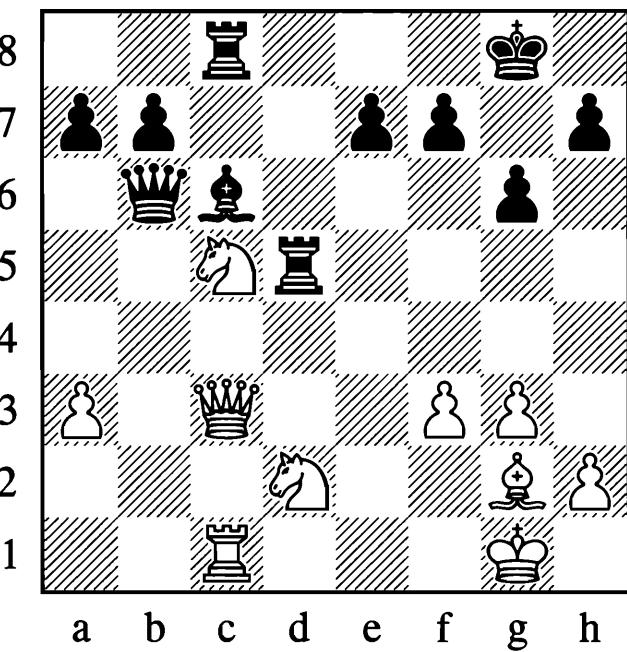
Now the black queen has to find a safe square but wherever she turns 2. $\mathbb{W}xf6\#$ and 3. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ will be fatal.

Of course you should look not only at the squares next to your opponent's king but also around your own...

Pay attention to any piece that is within the *horizon* of its king.

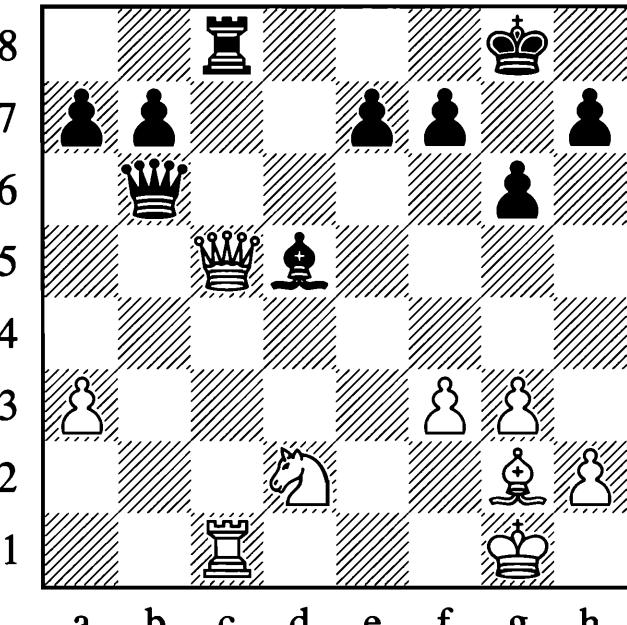
Matlak – Kupreichik

Poland 1991



The c5-knight is pinned against the king. White has just played $\mathbb{Q}d2$, desperately hoping to hold on to his pinned knight. But Black left him no chance:

1... $\mathbb{B}xc5!$ 2. $\mathbb{W}xc5 \mathbb{Q}d5$

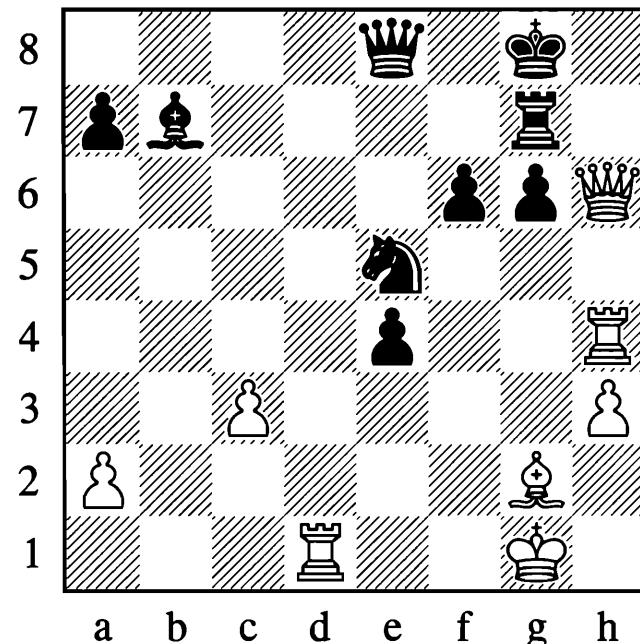


White will lose his c1-rook as it is on the same rank as his king, thus providing Black with an extra tempo. White resigned because if 3. $\mathbb{W}xb6$ then 3... $\mathbb{B}xc1\#$ and 4...axb6 will follow.

Any piece in line with its king has to be seen as a factor in the status examination of the king, because these pieces could be taken with check, gaining a tempo. And if the loss of tempo does not alarm you, the loss of material should.

Szabo – Bronstein

Zurich 1953



1. $\mathbb{B}d8!$

Forcing the queen to a square where the king cannot defend her.

1... $\mathbb{W}xd8$ 2. $\mathbb{W}h8\#$ 3. $\mathbb{W}f7$ 4. $\mathbb{W}xd8$ g5 5. $\mathbb{B}h6$
1–0

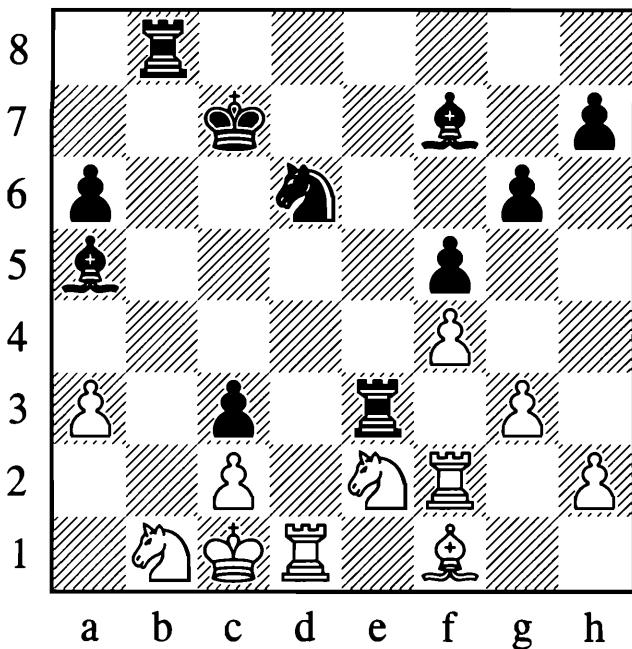
Any piece in line with its king has to be seen as a factor in the status examination of the king.

Elimination of the Retreat

What is true for the king is certainly true for other pieces as well (on their initial *and*, if decoyed, on their neighbouring squares): if they run out of retreat squares and are inadequately defended, they will be in trouble if they are attacked.

Carnic – Legky

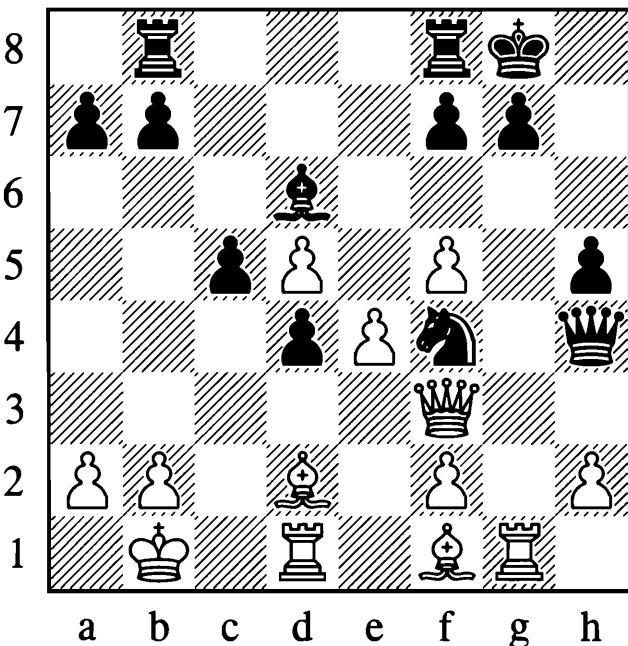
Novi Sad 1988



The status examination of the b1-knight shows that it is immobile. If Black attacks it one more time, it is lost. Therefore, a strong move is:

1...♝a2

In **Steinitz – Chigorin**, Havana 1889, White capitalized on the fact that the f4-knight had no retreat.



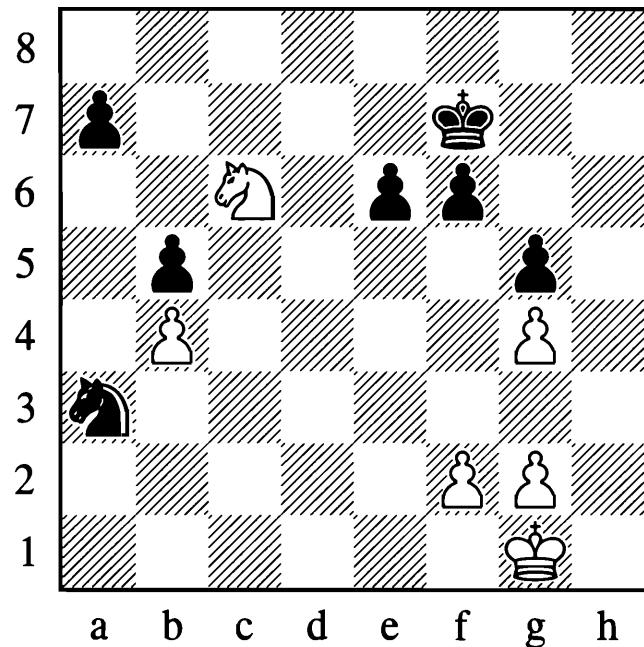
1.♛g3!

Trying to reload with a pawn on g3 to trap the knight. At the same time the black queen and king are under attack.

1...♝g4 2.f3 ♜xg3 3.hxg3

And White wins the knight.

This motif is very important in endgames. Here is a classic example of how to catch a knight taken from **Riumin – Capablanca**, Moscow 1936:



1...♚e8

Now White is lost because he cannot take the pawn:

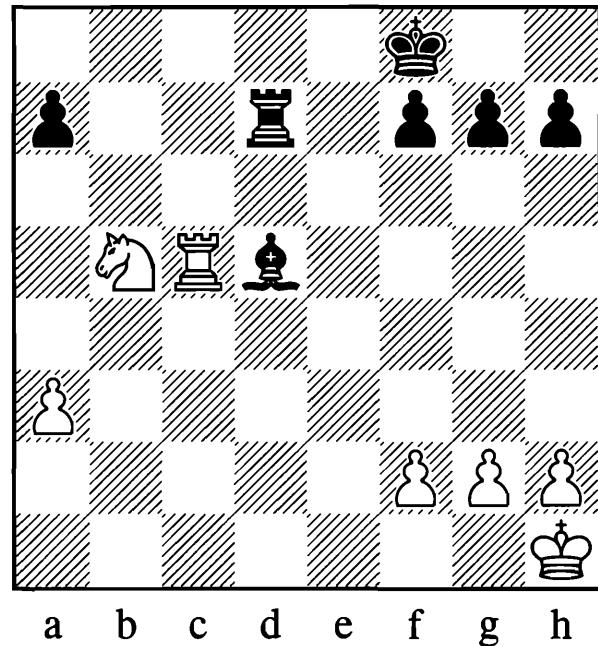
2.♞xa7 ♜d7 3.♝f1 ♜c7 4.♝e2 ♜b7

The king may not be the fastest piece on the board but here it was certainly fast enough.

If a piece runs out of retreat squares and is inadequately defended, it will be in trouble if attacked.

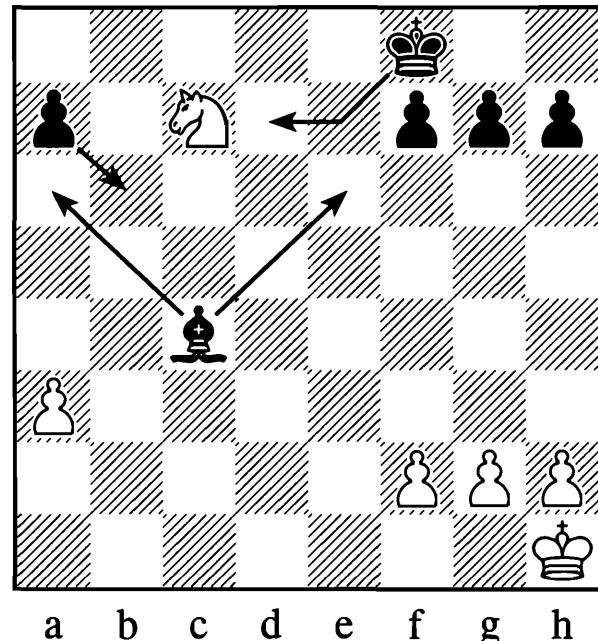
In Chapter 1 *Becoming Familiar with the Pieces* we talked about restricting a piece.

There we had a poor knight placed at the edge of the board having no squares to go to because these were controlled by a bishop. This also happened in one of my games:



My opponent could have drawn easily with, for example, 1. $\mathbb{Q}g1$. But he forgot to check where his knight would end up after:

1. $\mathbb{B}c7?? \mathbb{B}xc7$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}xc7 \mathbb{Q}c4!$

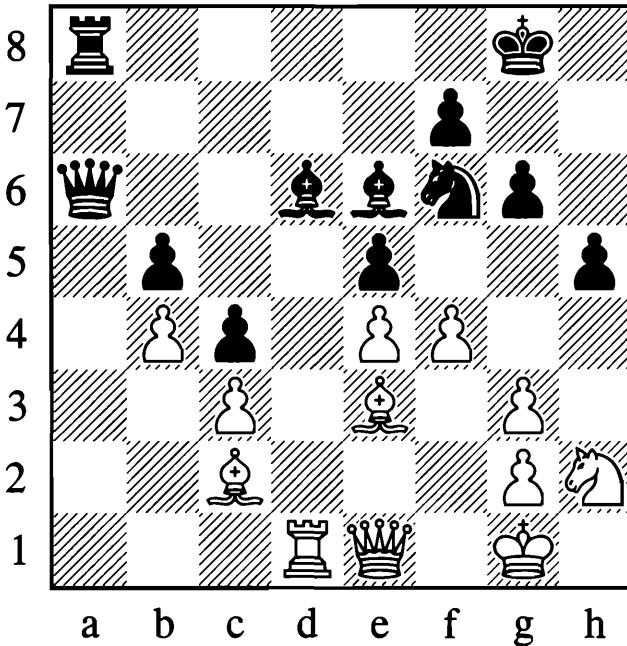


The knight has no retreat squares as the escape route $\mathbb{Q}c7-a8-b6$ is controlled by Black's a-pawn. The black king will attack the knight and so White had to resign a well-played game just because he did not check the status on its new square of his only remaining piece...

Advancing a3-a4 would save the knight but not the game, because Black will soon be a pawn up in the ensuing pawn ending.

Together with the status examination, you should not only take a close look at the piece's

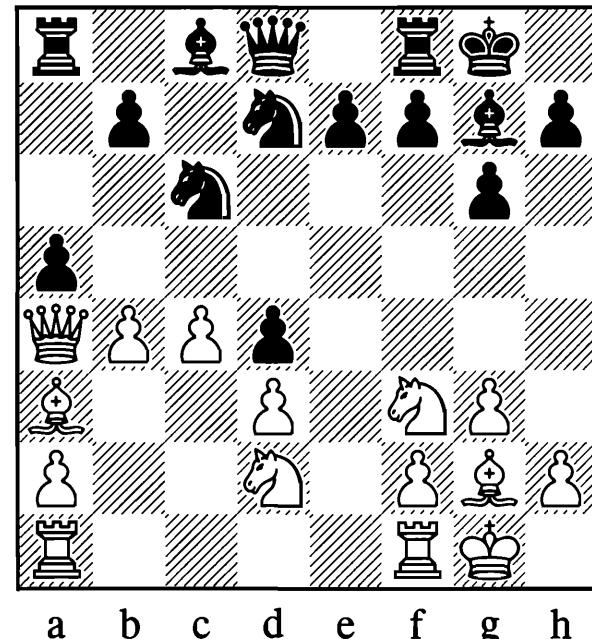
current square, but also examine the other squares to which it may have to move. If the defender has to recapture on the square of a piece it was defending, you need to examine this square in advance. If you think you can do without, you may end up like Black in **Blau – Donner**, Switzerland 1958.



1. $\mathbb{B}xd6! \mathbb{W}xd6$ 2. $fxe5$

Donner ran into a fork by the pawn. The black queen has no retreat from the e5-square after 2... $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}f4$.

So if you take or recapture a piece you should know how to leave the square you took on (in case you can be attacked there). Here **Castaldi – Reshevsky**, Dubrovnik (ol) 1950, is quite instructive:



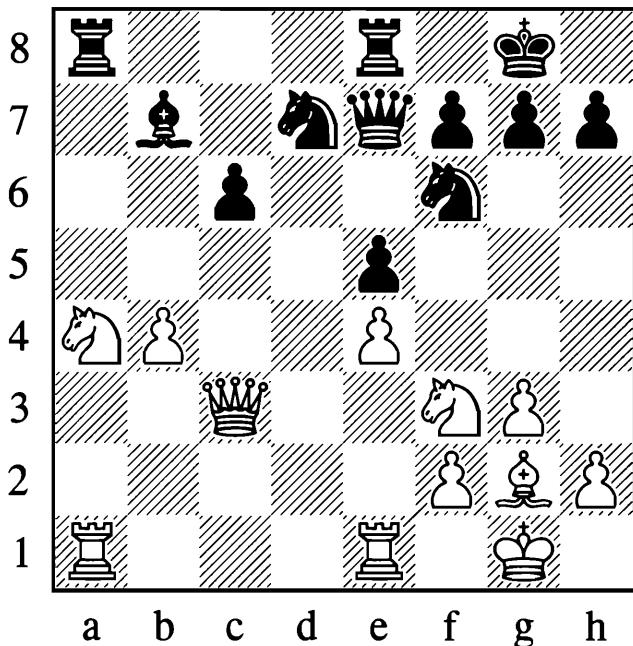
1...axb4! 2.♕xa8 ♜b6

And the queen is trapped.

If a piece cannot escape from the square it takes on, then you do not need to defend material there.

Kallai – Leko

Hungary 1992



1...♝a6

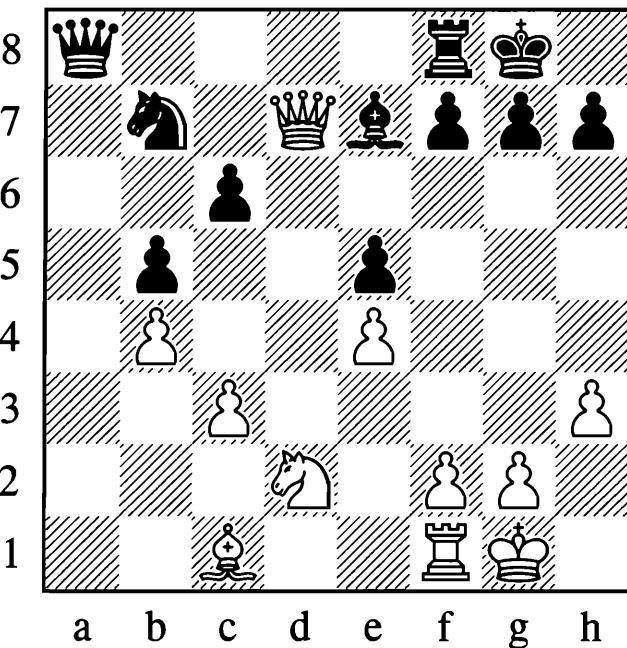
Finding a better place for the bishop on b5. The c6-pawn is poisoned (2.♕xc6 ♜ec8 and the queen is trapped), so the queen had better refrain from taking it.

Before you take material you should make sure that the capturing piece has a retreat available. If the piece cannot escape from the square it takes on, then the material on that square is indirectly defended.

Sometimes though, it is more than a pawn that is hanging in your position.

Karaklajic – Bely

Budapest 1957

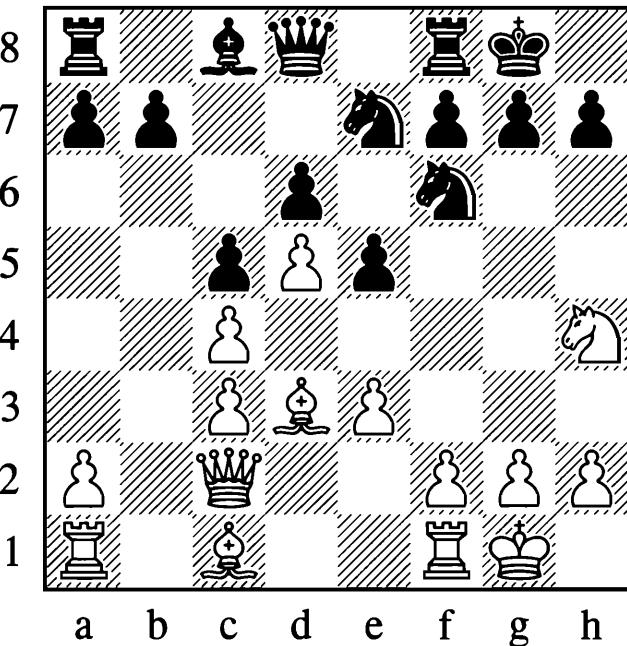


Black could not care less about the e7-bishop and played:

1...♛c8!

If White takes the bishop then 2...f6! would shut the doors and the trapped queen would soon be attacked by the rook.

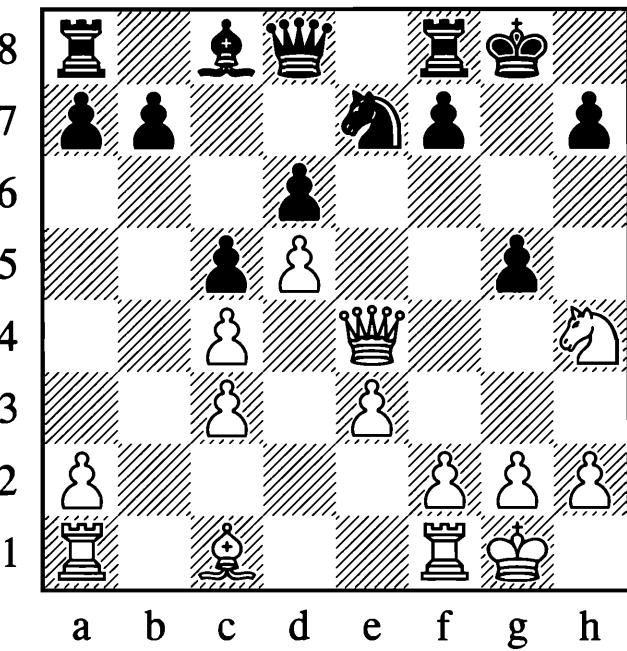
Napolitano – Batik, Correspondence 1956, is particularly interesting. It shows that you have to think not only about the retreating piece, but also about other pieces affected on the way out.



1...e4! 2.Qxe4

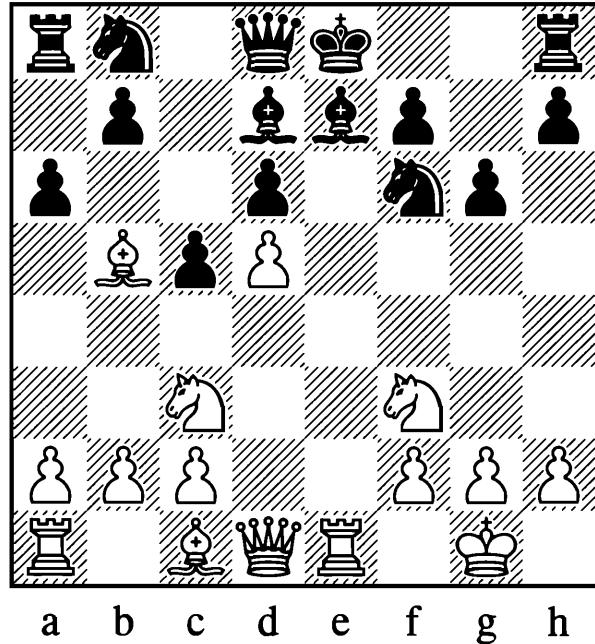
2.Qe2 g5 is not any better.

2...Qxe4 3.Wxe4 g5!



If the knight moves to its last open square (f3), then the queen will suddenly be embarrassed after ...Qf5.

A very pretty move in connection with the retreat motif was played by **Berkes** against **Andi** in Szekszard 1997. Berkes' trainer at the time, Meszaros, was very fond of tactics and his young pupil must have been, too. You will now see why:



The usual move would be 1.Qxd7† Qxd7 2.Qh6 restricting the black king with a very pleasant positional advantage for White.

But by using tactics there is a clearer solution.

White played:

1.Qh6!!

He ignores that his b5-bishop is hanging. On 1...axb5 (1...Qg4 admits the positional bankruptcy without even trying to collect some material as compensation) Black will lose material *and* have a bad position after 2.Qg7 because now both the h8-rook and the f6-knight (because of the pin of the e7-bishop) are hanging.

The game continuation puts the question to White. But White's reply did not leave any questions unanswered:

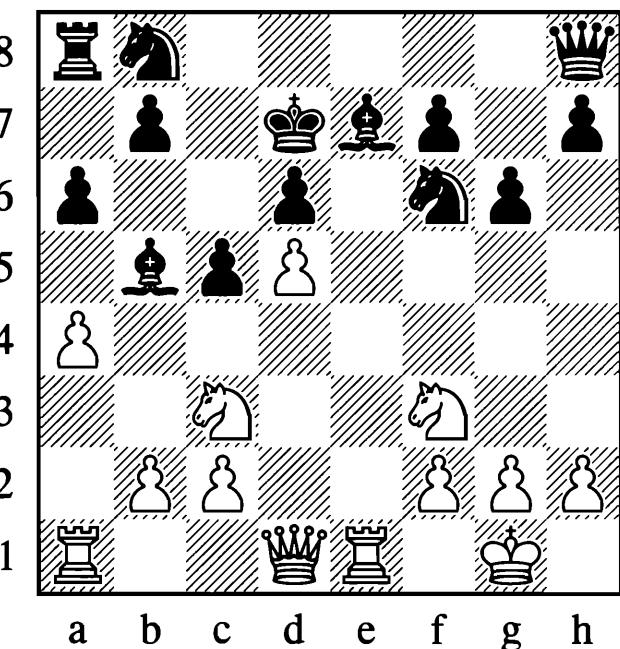
1...Qxb5

Making room for the king.

2.Qg7 Qd7

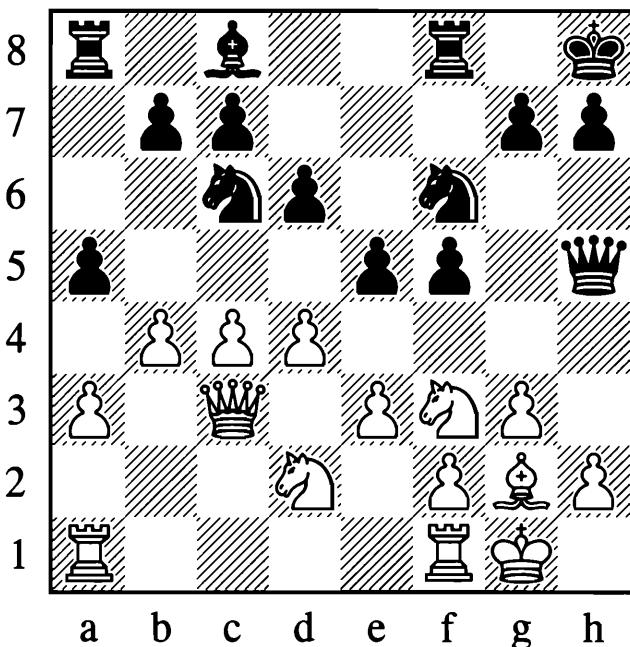
Thereby protecting the rook.

3.Qxh8 Wxh8 4.a4!



Now we can see why White's combination works: the bishop has no retreat. White has a material and positional advantage, so it is not surprising that he won about ten moves later.

In the game **Bogoljubow – Alekhine** (page 92), Reti's analysis showed why 1.b4 would be a mistake:

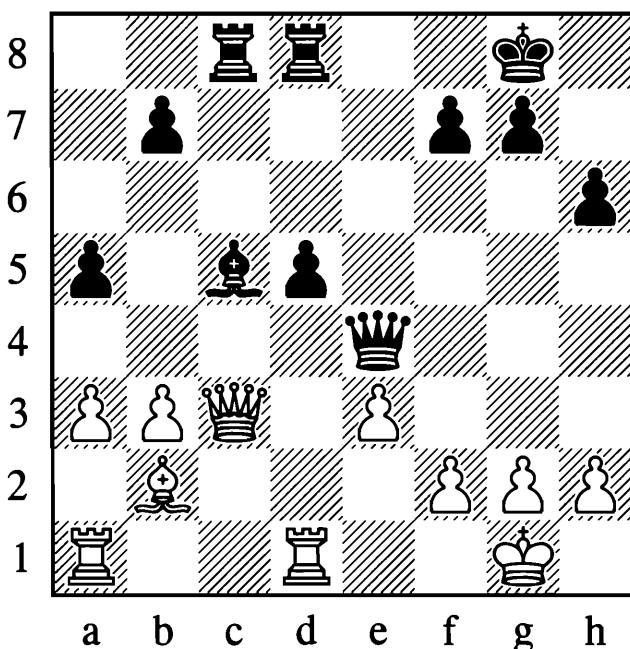


You may have spotted that 1...e4 2.Qe1 axb4 wins a pawn, as the retreat of the knight to e1 cut off the defence of the a1-rook. Instead of 2.Qe1 White could try 2.b5, but after, for example, 2...exf3 3.Qxf3 Qg4 4.Qxg4 fxg4, material will soon be level but the light squares around White's king are very weak.

The final example shows that this author has learned about tactics the hard way as well.

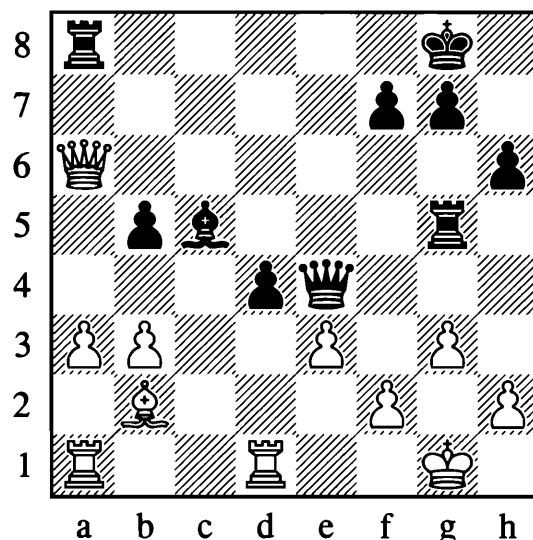
Iszak – Weteschnik

Balatonalmadi 1996



I played 1...f6?!. In the post mortem Iszak showed that it was stronger to play 1...d4!.

After 2.Wxa5 Ed5 3.Wa4 Eg5 4.g3 b5 5.Wa6 Ea8 Black is winning.



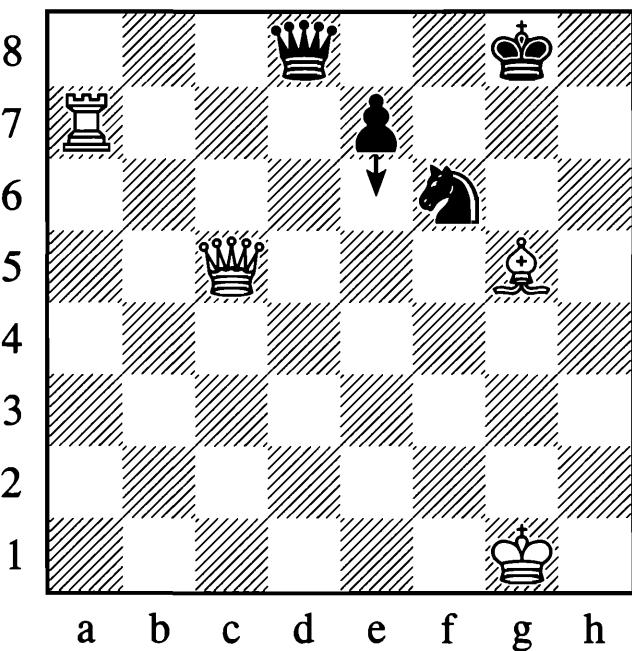
The queen can only retreat by taking on b5, moving into a possible discovered attack by the bishop. So 6.Wxb5 would give Black options such as 6...dxe3 when the attack is overwhelming.

Whenever you move a piece, you are changing the position and a new position calls for a fresh look.

Whenever you move a piece to a certain square you should have a retreat as a default option. Otherwise you are running great risks with your pieces, which might be cut off in the wilderness of enemy territory surrounded by enemy pawns and pieces. Although I do not consider the retreat as a tactical motif in itself, it plays an important role when you are doing the status examination for any piece you want to move.

Whenever you move a piece, you are changing the position and a new position calls for a fresh look. And never forget that leaving a square changes things at home as well.

That a simple pawn move can change a position completely is shown in the next skeleton position.



1...e6 changes the status of the pawn as the formerly defended pawn turns into an undefended pawn. But a lot of other things have changed as well:

- The a7-rook has an open 7th rank
- The queen on c5 is now attacking f8 as well, a square next to the king
- The f6-knight loses one defender
- The g5-bishop is now pinning the knight against the queen

Do not be afraid to start the status examination for every move you make. Usually you will see in a split second whether it is worth putting the effort into more detailed research of a square. Only then will you need to continue with the complete status examination for the move.

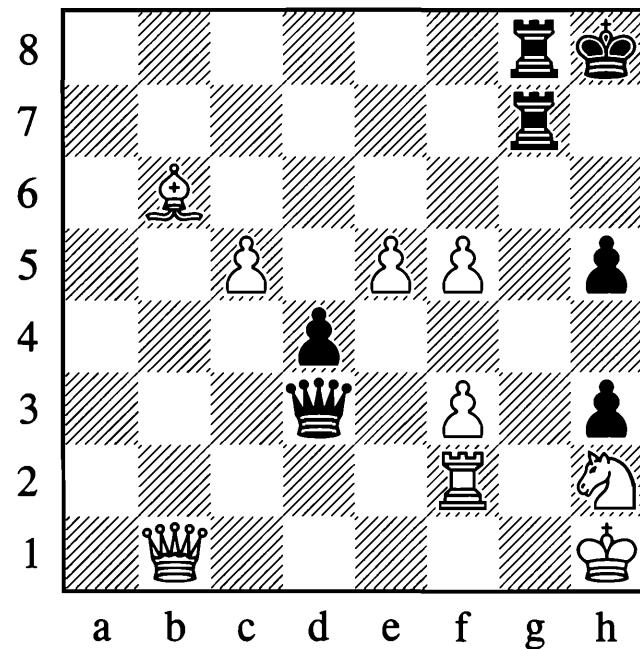
The occupation of squares

This part of the chapter is not about finding the important squares you want to occupy. It is about whether you can move to a certain square and under which circumstances.

You can move to a square directly if you have more control over it or the value of the piece occupying it does not matter.

Psakhis – Agzamov

USSR 1987



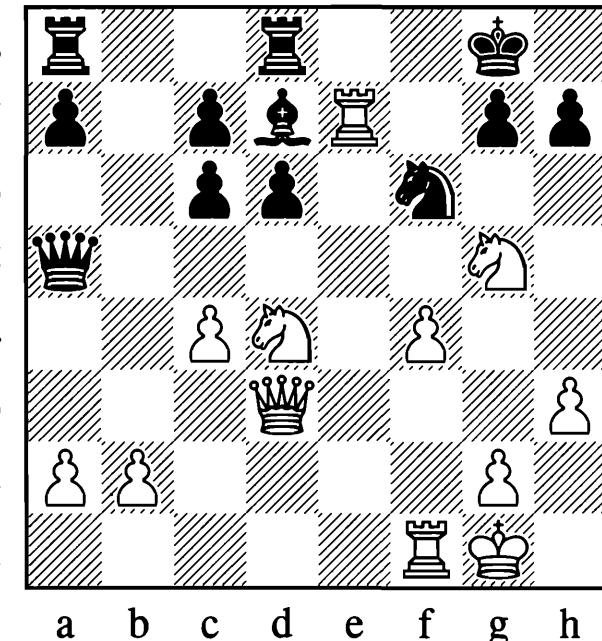
1. $\mathbb{Q}b2??$

1. $\mathbb{W}c1$ was correct. The text was a poor choice, losing immediately. The status examination for this move shows that a new diagonal for the black queen was opened (e3-g1) If you follow this diagonal to its end you will see that after:

1... $\mathbb{W}e3$

The g1-square will be attacked three times while remaining defended only twice.

Frequently the control of a square is diminished or even destroyed by exchanging on another square, as in **Schlechter – Havasi**, Kosice 1918.



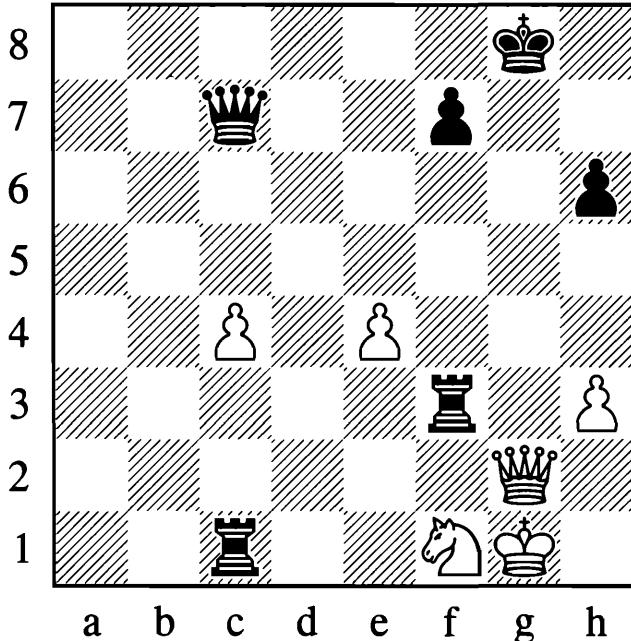
1. ♜xh7

Black resigned, anticipating 1... ♜xh7 2. ♜g6. Here I do not regard the elimination of the defence of the g6-square as a separate tactical motif, because it only serves for another motif to follow (mate on g7). But the elimination of a defender has to be considered when you do the status examination for a piece.

If you cannot occupy a square directly, you might be able to get there indirectly, employing a tactical motif. Here is a sample for each motif and how to use it:

A. The pin**Dus Chotimirsky – Capablanca**

Moscow 1925



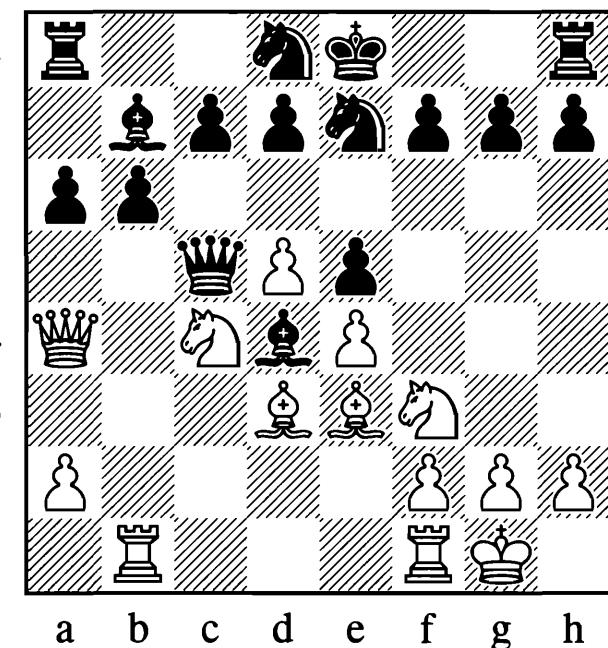
1... ♜g3

The g3-square is defended only once, because the f1-knight is pinned.

Do not be afraid to start the status examination for every move you make. Usually you will see in a split second whether it is worth putting the effort into more detailed research of a square.

B. The discovered attack**Chigorin – Steinitz**

Havana 1889

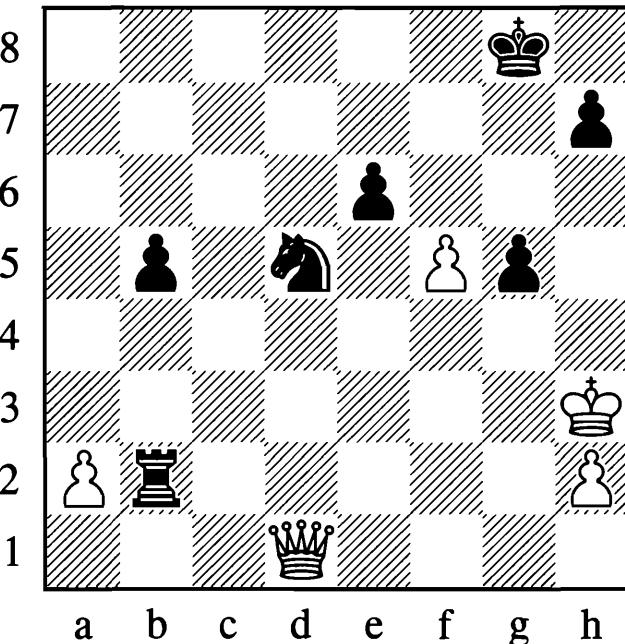


1. ♜xd4 exd4 2. ♜xd4

The queen should not recapture as there would be a discovered attack with 3. ♜d6†.

C. The double attack**Bellon Lopez – S. Garcia**

Cienfuegos 1976

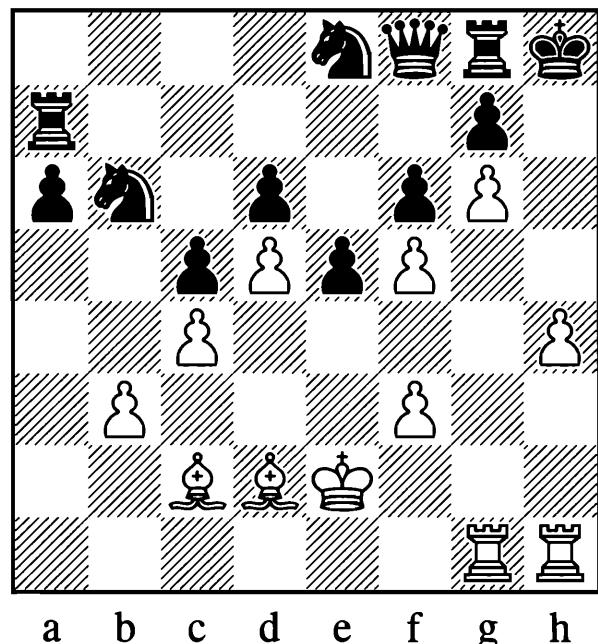


1... ♜g2!!

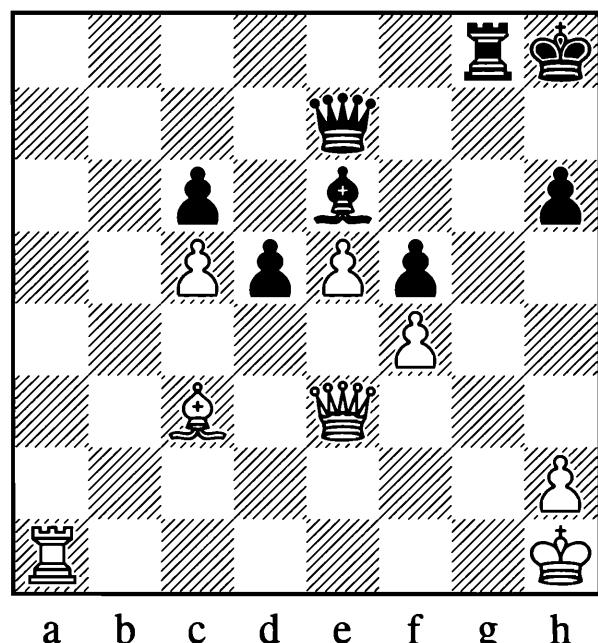
The g2-square would be a new tactical target of a double attack.

D. Opening a line**Borisenko – Nakhimovskaya**

USSR 1969

**1.♕g5!**

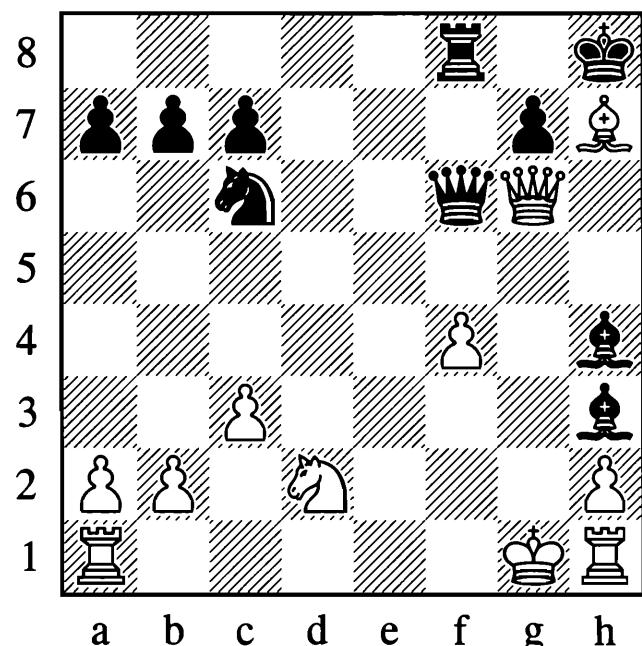
Black cannot take on g5 as this would open the h-file.

1–0**E. Evacuation****1...d4!**

The d4-square can be occupied by the black pawn although this square was defended twice (the threat of the succeeding motif on the evacuated d5-square is worth far more than a pawn).

F. Reloader**Marshall – Soldatenkov**

USA 1928

**1...♝d4**

Again the piece is untouchable, as the queen would reload on the square with mate. The game finished with:

2.♛h5

Played to stop ...♝e2 mate.

2...♛g5†!**0–1**

So when you want to occupy a square and it is not possible to get there directly, you should check your arsenal of elementary tactics for an indirect way.

The analysis of complex positions

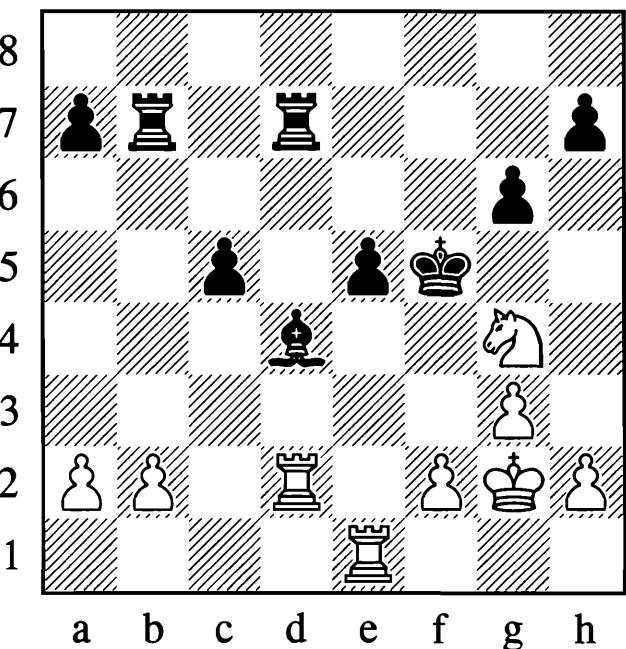
Bringing together the results of the status of each piece is the starting point for combinations. Consequently a combination is always the result of elements that can be discovered by a status examination. There might be only one result of a status examination for each piece but many different ways to combine these results.

Looking at the single elements of each position, we are able to unearth combinations we might not have seen otherwise.

Another important ability is to envision a position beyond the tangible tactical realities. In a dream you can achieve anything. So why not imagine a position you would like to have, even if it looks impossible to reach at the moment. We have already seen a similar approach when dealing with mating patterns. Discovering the weaknesses of your opponent's pieces and position can still create an image that will give you a target for your plans and calculations. Consider the following position:

Petrosian – Ivkov

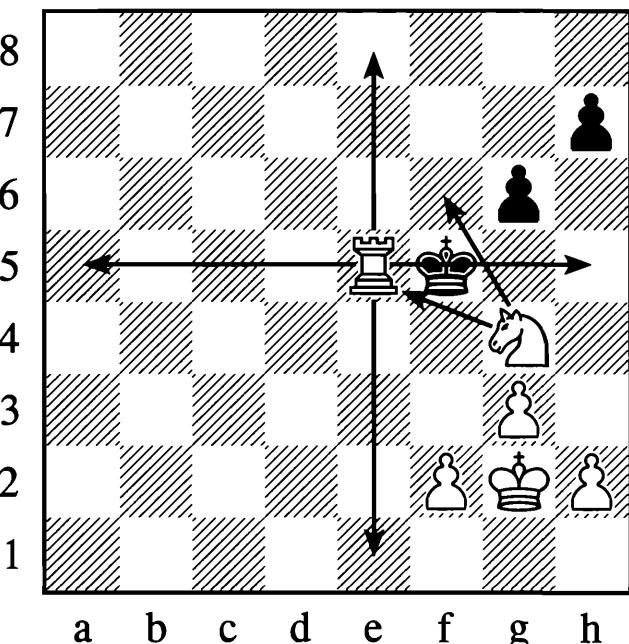
USSR-Yugoslavia 1979



Petrosian played:

1. $\mathbb{B}xd4$ exd4 2. $\mathbb{B}e5\# \mathbb{K}xg4$ 3. f3 mate

Recognizing the main motif is not very difficult when you take a look at this position (the black king's position, and the e1-rook's possibility of controlling squares around the king). Potential elements are part of the analysis of the position above. You have to ask yourself, what would happen if a rook landed on e5. At the moment this move is impossible, or at least ridiculous. Imagining the rook on e5 you will eventually find the solution for the position:



If the knight were defended, it would be mate already. This should have been the starting point of the combination. Now we discover that if Black took the knight the king would run into White's pawn formation with either f3 or h3 mate.

Therefore, in the initial position you just have to get rid of the bishop protecting e5.

Sometimes it may even be helpful to imagine illegal or impossible moves when you dream of a position, if you can make use of it afterwards back in chess reality.

A status examination can be the first step on the way to changing the current position to your dream image. Another step is combining the elements you have learned about in this book.

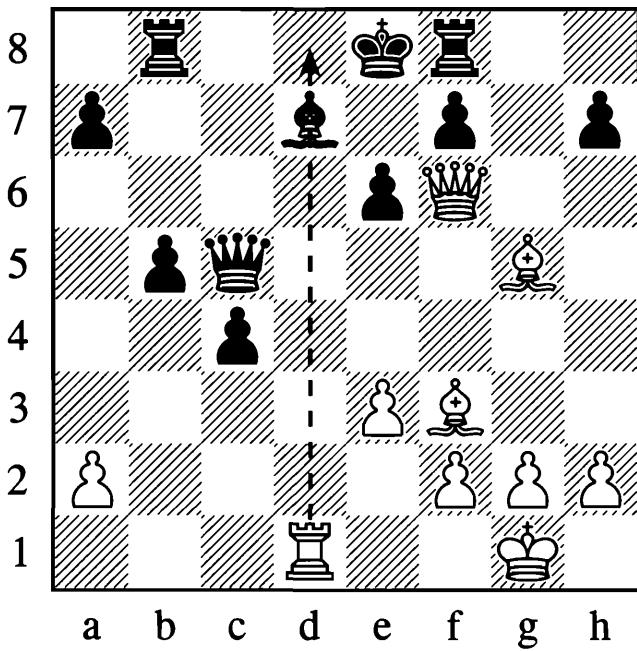
On a basic level you have to see the possible collaboration of two pieces in a rook and bishop mate, for instance, or the three-piece configuration of a pin.

The relation between the pieces and the motif is the decisive step.

In a dream you can achieve anything. So why not imagine a position you would like to have, even if it looks impossible to reach at the moment.

Erbis – Kempf

West Germany 1954

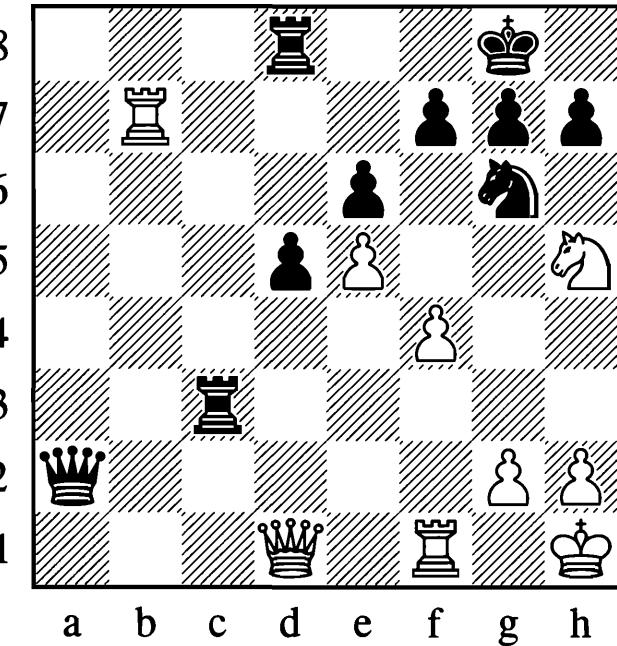


1. $\mathbb{Q}c6!$

1–0

Your target idea should be a rook and bishop mate on d8, seeing the file of the d1-rook all the way through to the end. The d7-bishop is blocking the way to that deadly d8-square. Only from the c6-square can the f3-bishop force the d7-bishop to move. A look at the c6-square shows that it is defended twice by Black. The status of these two pieces reveals that neither can move (the black queen has to defend e7 against mate). Putting it all together gives you the information that 1. $\mathbb{Q}c6$ is the move in this position.

Take a look at **Neukirch – Malich**, Gera 1962:



The rook is undefended and a possible tactical target for a double attack of the white queen on d4. From there it is not difficult to spot the possible mate on g7. So let's calculate the combination:

1. f5!

Good effort!

1...exf5 2. e6 d4?

2... $\mathbb{W}c4$ 3. $\mathbb{B}xf7$ $\mathbb{B}c8!$ would give chances to survive.

Black is now blocking the tactical base of the white queen from where she would have been aiming a double attack at the undefended c3-rook and the mate square g7. But Black has just blundered. If you have done the status examination of the d8-rook you will see that the rook is one of two defenders against a back rank mate. A timely e6-e7 (as your pawn moves, your status examination should go along with it!) would control f8, crushing the “saving” move ... $\mathbb{Q}g6-f8$. So there is only one defender of the back rank left, the black rook on d8. But this is the one that also has to defend the pawn on d4. So:

3. $\mathbb{W}xd4!$

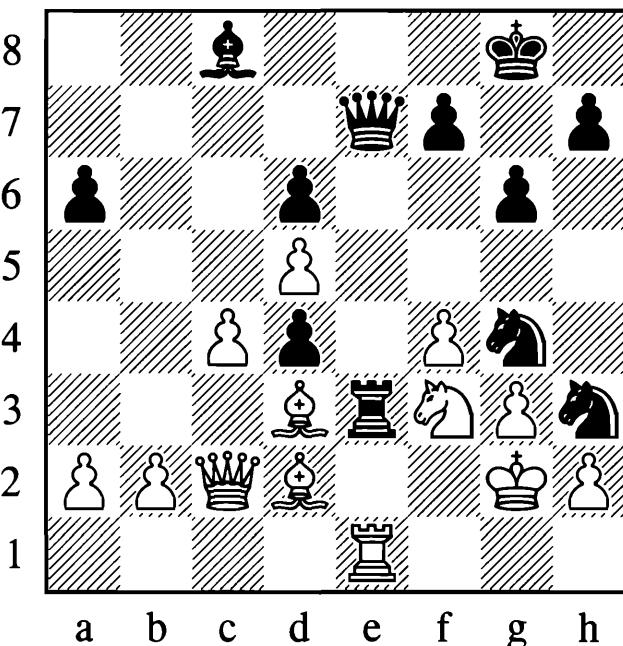
3... $\mathbb{B}xd4$ 4. $\mathbb{B}b8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 5. e7 with mate to follow.

1–0

How to run a complete status examination for a position

As usual, Tal's combinations are a little wilder and more difficult to analyse but a lot of fun.

In **Thorbergsson – Tal**, Reykjavik 1964, things look pretty messy. But analysing it piece by piece we will uncover some of the magician's secrets.



Looking beyond the configuration of the actual position we find h4 or f2 as target squares for the black queen. Infiltration into the opponent's position is a theme we often find with attacking players. Of course, they are aiming to establish their most powerful piece in the midst of the enemy's camp.

For us this might be a difficult idea to start with, but once we get used to it and get a clear view of the tactical implications we will become more daring in looking for such possibilities.

The e1-rook is only defended by the knight, as the d2-bishop has to defend the tactical base e3 of the g4-knight. So whether Black takes on e1 on the first or the second move, it is only the knight that will be able to take back. Consequently, we can deflect the knight, so the black queen might be able to move to h4. Of course, at the moment the h4-square is defended twice but we already know how we could strip it of one defender. Then only the g3-pawn would be defending h4. And the g3-pawn is already bothered with defending its colleague on f4.

If we could get the queen to h4, she would control the f2-square. Remember that the bishop was not able to take on e3, so the line of communication between the queen on c2 and the f2-square remains interrupted. Another

square that the black queen would control is h2 as the f3-knight will be deflected and on e1 it is no longer controlling h2.

The pawn on g3 is the only defender we need to eliminate. So taking on f4 might be the solution for all of Black's problems. This is exactly what Tal did:

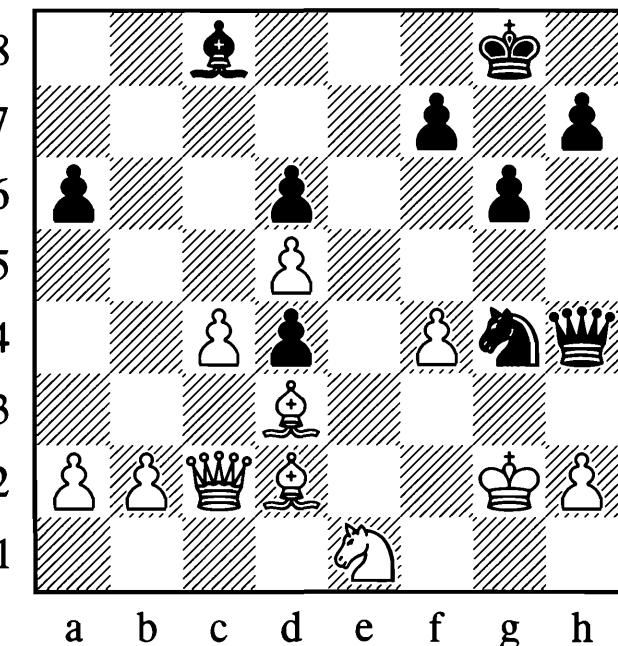
1... ♔xf4†! 2.gxf4

One defender is gone.

2... ♜xe1 3. ♔xe1

Suddenly h4 is approachable for the queen:

3... ♕h4

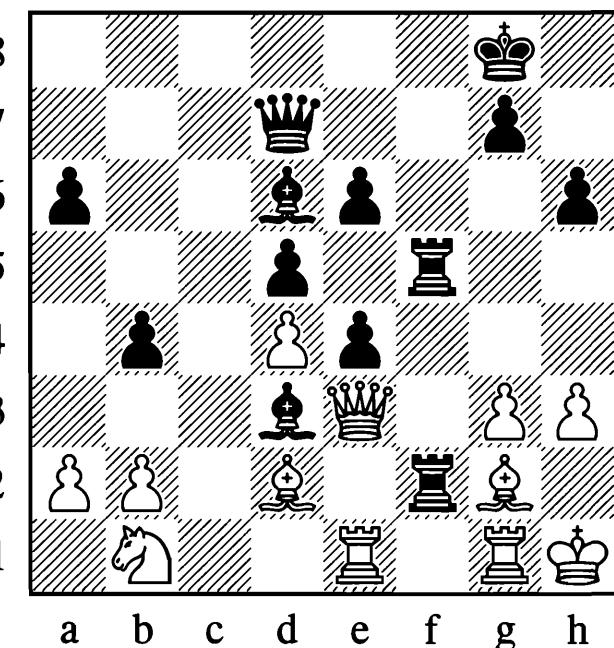


Collecting the basic information for all the pieces and squares around the king does not tell you how to create a position such as the first diagram of this game. But you will be able to understand this combination and maybe one day you will unleash a tactical firework worthy of Tal.

In contrast to the endgame, very few middlegame positions require a status examination for every single piece on the board. As always there are exceptions and here is a spectacular one:

Saemisch – Nimzowitsch

Copenhagen 1923



Black has just played 25...h6!! reaching an unbelievable position: with his last move Black has created zugzwang, which is something usually reserved only for the endgame. Every white move loses! If you make a status examination for each piece, you will arrive at the same conclusion:

- The white queen has run out of squares (25...h6 took her last square on g5 in case of 26... $\mathbb{Q}f5f3!!$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}xf3 \mathbb{Q}xf3$ trapping the queen)
- The g2-bishop has no move
- The g1-rook has no move
- The b1-knight has no move
- The e1-rook is bound to its square because of 26... $\mathbb{Q}e2$ trapping the queen
- $\mathbb{Q}h1-h2$ would move into a pin. The g2-bishop would be pinned and would lose its control over f3 and, consequently, after ... $\mathbb{Q}5f3$ the queen dies
- The d2-bishop has no move (see the game continuation)

Therefore after just 25 moves of the game, every move by a white piece loses instantaneously! Pawn moves will not answer the threat of trapping the queen with 26... $\mathbb{Q}5f3$.

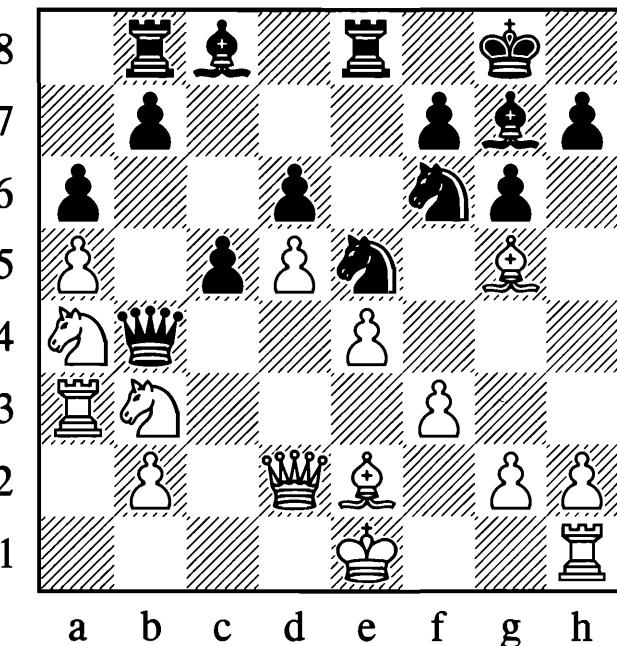
26. $\mathbb{Q}c1 \mathbb{Q}xb1$

0–1

Let's have another lesson with the great Tal.

Franco – Tal

Varna (ol) 1962

**1... $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$ 2.exd5 h6!**

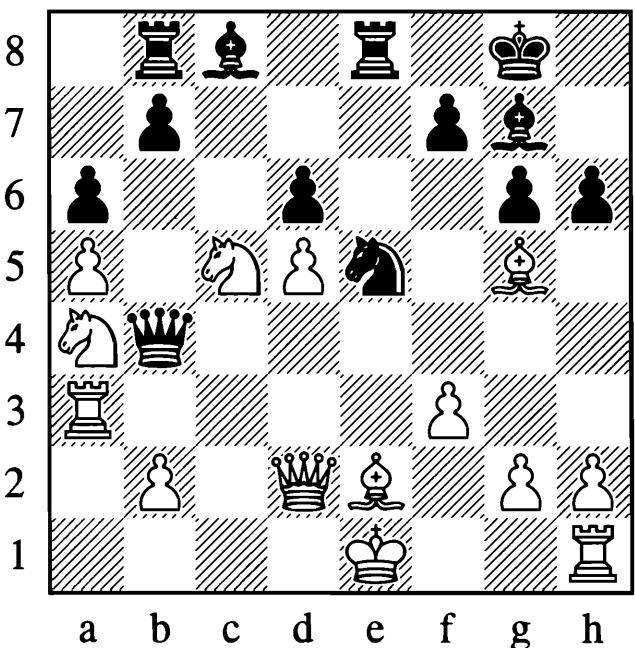
Attacking the bishop. The first move might be attributed to the attacking instinct of Tal but the second move was surely found by taking a closer look at the elements of the position. The status examination for the g5-bishop after the opening of several (!!) lines of attack (the e-file, the 4th rank for the black queen, and the h8-a1 and f5-b1 diagonals) shows only two retreat squares for this piece: f4 and e3.

The f4-square is not a safe haven as this square is a tactical target of a double attack by the e5-knight if it hops to d3. The e3-square is not any better. After the discovered attack ... $\mathbb{Q}xf3\#$ the bishop becomes the prey of the e8-rook.

The status examination for the white queen shows that she is pinned against the king. So the queen no longer controls the e3-square, which is vital knowledge if the bishop moves there. The status examination of the black queen shows that she cannot be taken without losing a tempo for White as the pawn reloads attacking the a3-rook. The status examination for the b3-knight is of crucial importance for this game. A black rook on e3 would pin the knight against the a3-rook and would be difficult to defend, and the a4-knight might be lost as well. So:

3. ♜bxc5!

This did not come as a real surprise.



White returns the piece, controlling the tactical base d3 of the black e5-knight and consequently the f4-square becomes a retreat for the g5-bishop. White was just slightly worse in the resulting position.

Wow! That was a lot of examination and calculation.

Fortunately you usually don't have to analyse such difficult positions as Tal because you (unfortunately) don't play like he did (yet!?).

Summary

- Understanding all the individual elements of a position does not necessarily mean understanding the whole position.
- After you have learned about the elements of tactics, you need a method that will enable you to analyse a position as a whole. The status examination provides such a method.
- The status examination takes a close look at the status of each piece on the board. Principally, you have to look at two things with each piece. First, you have to find out its current status: whether it is attacked, defended, hanging, pinned, etc. Then you have to see this piece as an element of a picture, which is related to other elements. Ask yourself how the status of this piece changes the status of other pieces.
- Impartial stocktaking is what the status examination is about.
- Before you move you should look at the following:
 1. What is the status of each piece? (Is it defended, does it have duties to perform, restricted movement, etc.) What is the new status of the piece if moved to its new square? Does it have a retreating square and, equally importantly, how has it changed the status of all other pieces connected with it?
 2. Which squares can be occupied? Here you have to check for direct occupation and indirect occupation. Remember, sometimes a square only seems to be defended.
 3. Are there further connections of pieces and squares in more complex positions?
- The status examination is not about restraining intuition. The status examination is a safety device for your intuition.

Chapter 12

Candidate Moves

In his classic work *Think like a Grandmaster* Soviet grandmaster Alexander Kotov explained how he developed from a promising player into a world-class grandmaster by training his calculation. In the process he brought two new concepts into chess terminology, *the tree of analysis* and *the candidate move*. His aspiration to have a human being think like a mechanical device has since been discredited many times over, not the least by the editor of the 1995 Batsford edition, who points out that even computer programs do not religiously calculate one line to the end.

Having said that, Kotov was right on the money when he emphasized the importance of **organizing your calculation of variations** as well as **the importance of looking for ideas**. Up to this point this book has been focused on *what to look for*, more than on *how to look*. No other approach would make sense; there is no reason to learn how to look, if you do not know what to look for.

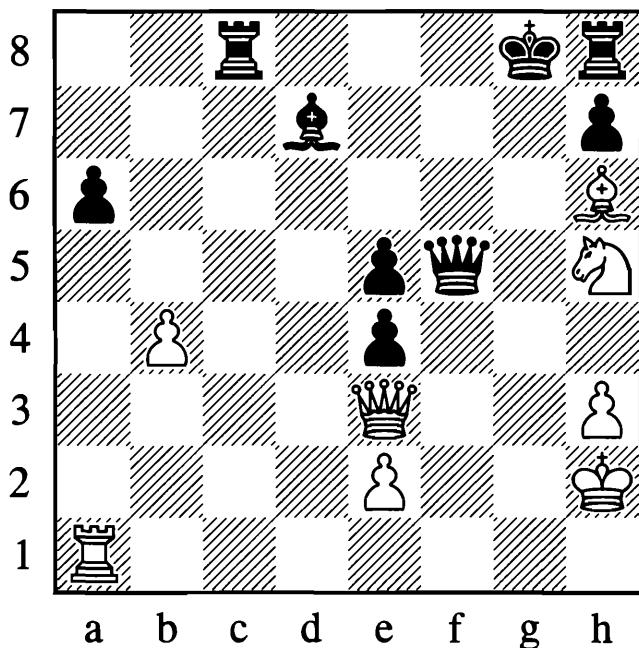
For this reason we shall use this final chapter of the book to discuss calculation and especially the importance of using candidate moves as a technique.

A complicated example

Let's start with a complicated example.

Nikolov – Papin

Zurich 2010



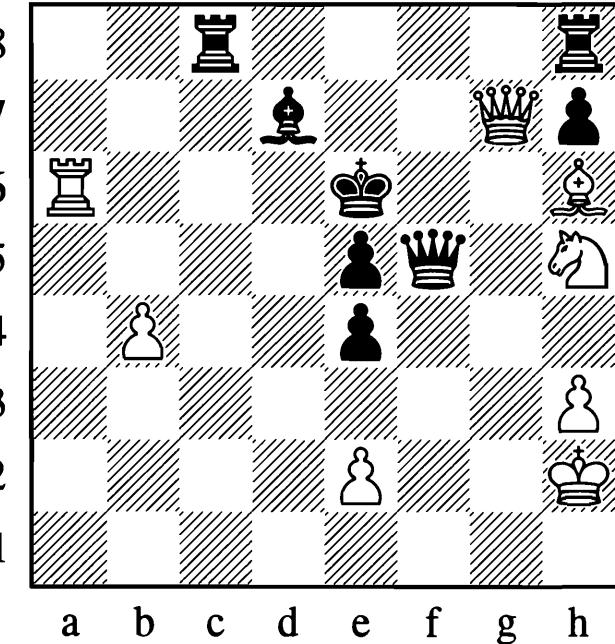
Often a player will look at a position such as this and quickly see one or two “obvious” moves and then consider which one to choose based on a more or less random thought process.

Before discussing these obvious moves I invite you to look for ideas of your own.

Please come up with at least three ideas before you continue. They do not have to be calculated accurately at all, just make sure that it is more than a random check with no concept of what it is trying to achieve.

In this position these would be the rook check on g1 and the queen check on g3. Especially the latter seems initially attractive, as there is another check on g7 and then even one on a6, which at the same time is a capture. So in the game White played 1. $\mathbb{W}g3\#?$ probably looking forward to 1... $\mathbb{W}g6$ 2. $\mathbb{W}xe5!$ and the combination of $\mathbb{E}g1$ and $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$ would give White an entirely winning attack.

Instead Black danced away with 1... $\mathbb{Q}f7!$ 2. $\mathbb{W}g7\#?$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$. White was no doubt happy to bring another piece into the game with 3. $\mathbb{E}xa6\#:$

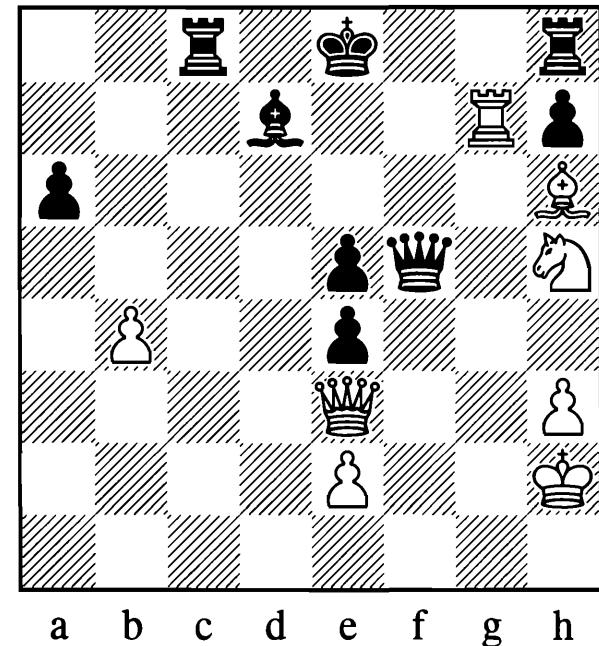


But after 3... $\mathbb{Q}c6!$ his attack has come to an end. White lost the game after: 4. $\mathbb{W}g4$ $\mathbb{W}xg4$ 5. $\mathbb{h}xg4$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 6. $\mathbb{Q}g7$ $\mathbb{E}hd8$ 7. $\mathbb{Q}f6$ $\mathbb{E}a8$ 8. $\mathbb{E}xa8$ $\mathbb{E}xa8$ 9. $e3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 10. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{E}g8$ 11. $\mathbb{Q}h6$ $\mathbb{E}xg4$ 12. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{E}g6$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}f8$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}d7\#$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{E}g2$ 16. $b5$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 17. $b6$ $\mathbb{E}g4\#$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ 19. $b7$ $\mathbb{E}g8\#$
0-1

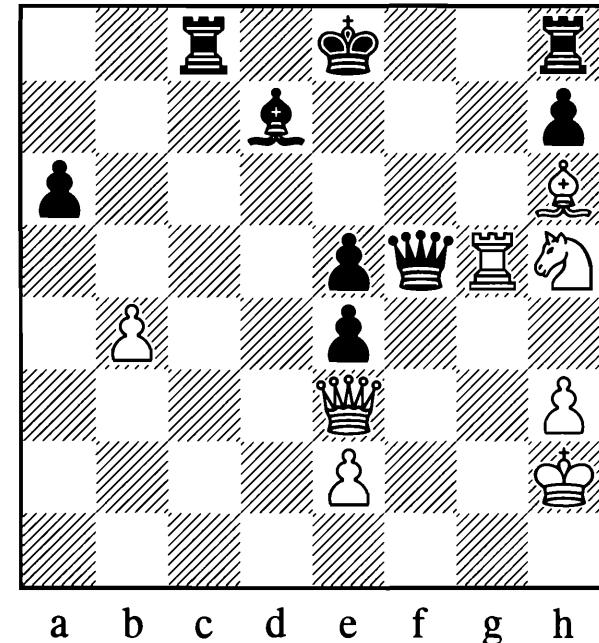
White could have defended better, but this does not justify his poor initial decision. For

example he would still have been equal after 2. $\mathbb{E}xa6!$, although the details are not too important for us at the moment.

1. $\mathbb{E}g1\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 2. $\mathbb{E}g7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$



Looking at this position (in our heads) we might get the impression that White's attack has come to an end, but actually he can still keep the advantage with 3. $\mathbb{E}g5!!:$

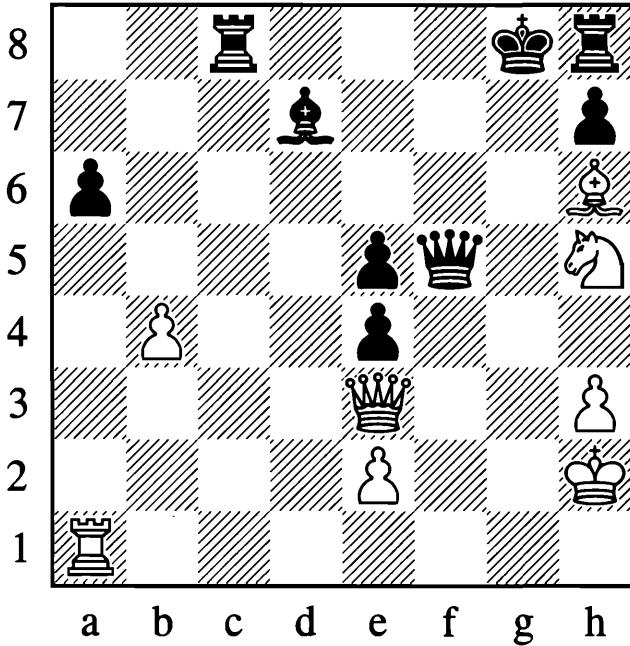


The freeing of the g7-square for the knight as well as the attack on the e5-pawn and the open position of the black king in general means that Black has no choice but to give up a piece with 3... $\mathbb{W}xh3\#$ 4. $\mathbb{W}xh3$ $\mathbb{Q}xh3$, when after 5. $\mathbb{Q}xh3$ White has the advantage of two minor pieces against a rook in the endgame.

To convert this would be tough, but maybe it is possible.

A lot of us would be very happy to have seen this 3. $\mathbb{E}g5$ -move and proudly shown it to our friends after the game, whether we managed to win the ending or not. However our entire approach to the position would have been flawed.

Let's return to the original position and see what ideas you have come up with.

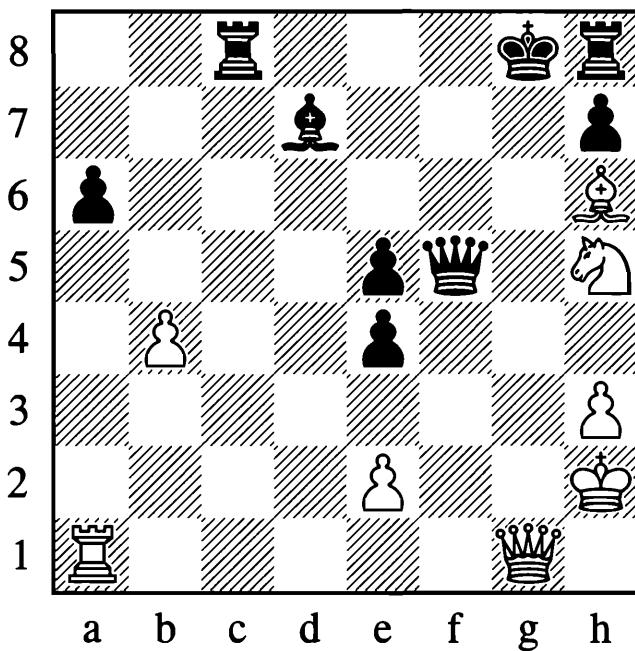


Here I asked Grandmaster Keti Arakhamia-Grant to look at the position for 10 minutes in order to see how many ideas she was able to come up with. She quickly rejected 1. $\mathbb{W}g3\#$ because of the lack of a follow-up, but her four other candidates did include 1. $\mathbb{E}g1\#$ and Keti mentioned 3. $\mathbb{E}g5$ in her notes.

Let's look at the first idea that came to her head once these two "obvious" checks had been briefly assessed. (Here it is worth mentioning that rather than mechanically looking for ideas first, grandmasters would quickly look a few moves ahead until they find resistance in their calculation, so that they have some feeling of the importance of the idea. This would for example be after 1. $\mathbb{E}g1\#$ $\mathbb{F}f7$ 2. $\mathbb{E}g7\#$ $\mathbb{E}e8$, when it would take extra effort to find 3. $\mathbb{E}g5$. Some grandmasters might do this and only then quickly assess the consequences, before looking for other ideas. **Human beings don't**

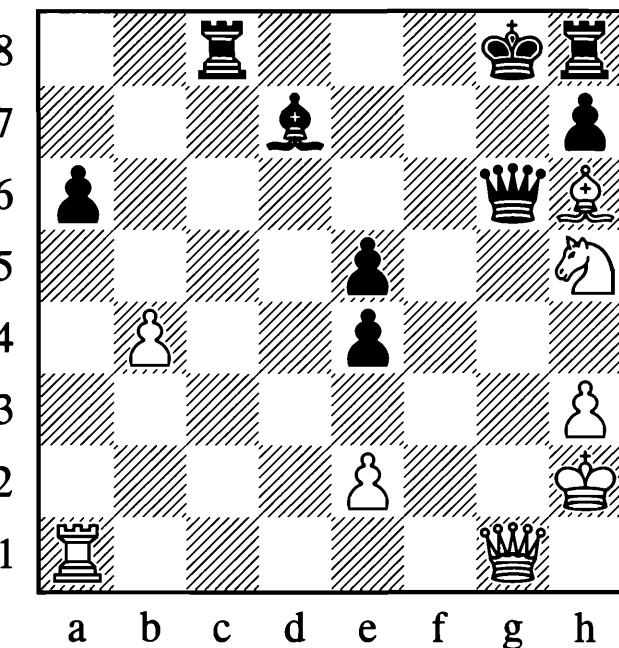
think like computers – and computers don't think like trees!)

The first idea was 1. $\mathbb{W}g1\#$:



The idea is simple: Black now cannot run with 1... $\mathbb{F}f7$ because of 2. $\mathbb{E}f1$, winning the queen. Instead he would have to play 1... $\mathbb{W}g6$, something Keti could not find a great idea against. She gave 2. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$ $\mathbb{F}f7$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ $\mathbb{W}xh6$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}xe5\#$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ as unclear.

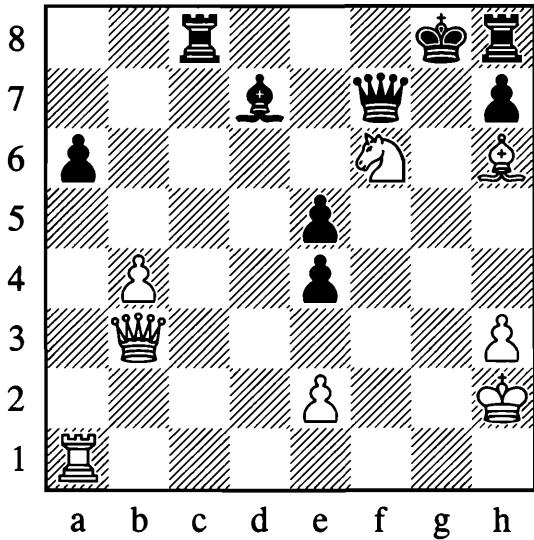
If she had not found something more promising to investigate, she would have returned to this line and studied it carefully to find improvements – basically, she would have used the idea of candidate moves again on move two, in order to find something better.



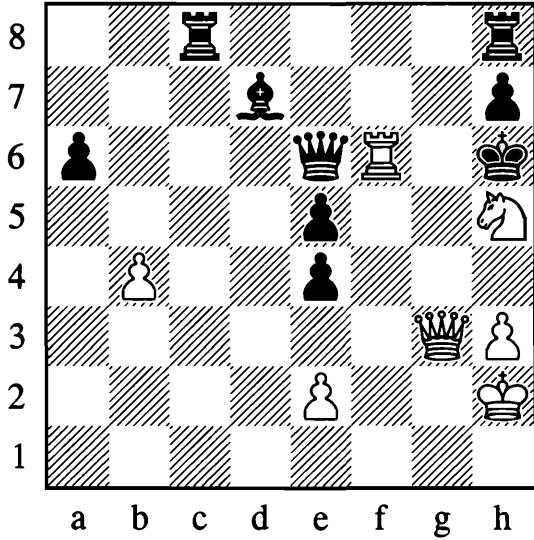
White to play – Can you find a powerful move?

We will return to this position, but first let's continue following Keti's thinking.

The next idea she got was to give a check with 1. $\mathbb{W}b3\#$, with the basic idea that 1... $\mathbb{W}f7?$ would be met with 2. $\mathbb{Q}f6$ mate!



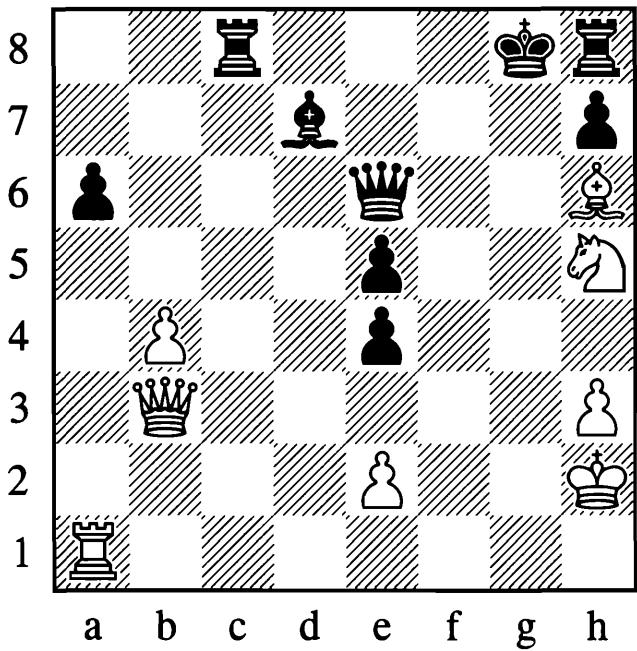
But of course Black should not walk straight into mate in one, but put a piece on e6. Keti quickly saw 1... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 2. $\mathbb{B}g1\#$ $\mathbb{K}f7$ 3. $\mathbb{B}g7\#$ $\mathbb{K}e8$ 4. $\mathbb{W}a4\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 5. $\mathbb{W}xd7\#$ and mate in a few moves, but she struggled a bit to find anything after 1... $\mathbb{W}e6$ 2. $\mathbb{B}g1\#$ $\mathbb{K}f7$ 3. $\mathbb{B}f1\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 4. $\mathbb{W}g3\#$ $\mathbb{K}xh6$ 5. $\mathbb{B}f6\#$:



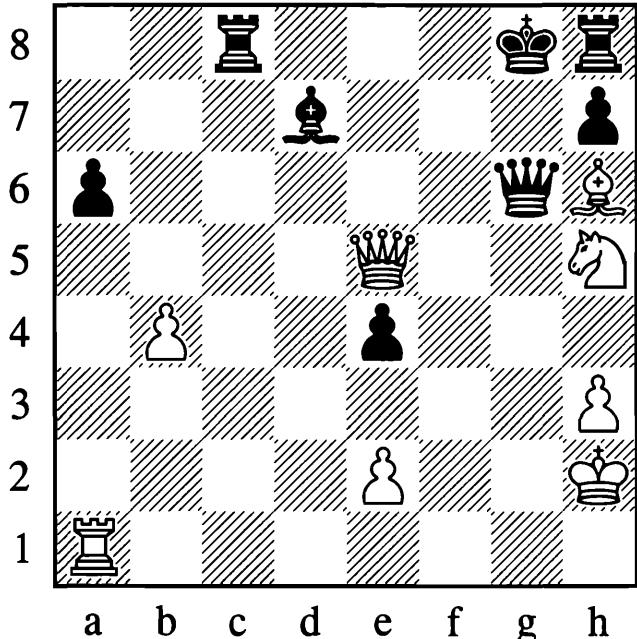
After 5... $\mathbb{K}xh5!$ 6. $\mathbb{B}xe6$ $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ 7. $\mathbb{W}xe5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 8. $\mathbb{W}xe6\#$ $\mathbb{K}g7$ it was not entirely clear to her that White was that much better in the endgame with a queen against two rooks.

However, Keti was attracted to the mate she had seen at first, and she did not want to let

go of this check immediately, so she looked for candidates on move 2:



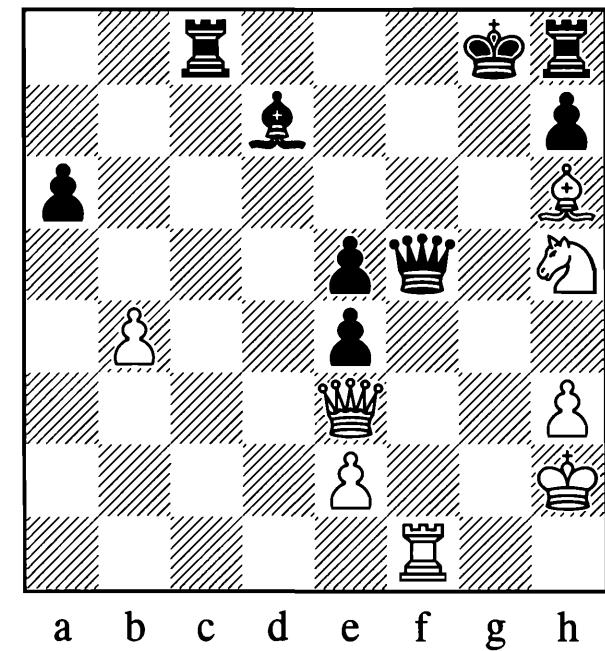
And she quickly found that things had changed slightly and that the black king's escape path had now been blocked, so now is the time for 2. $\mathbb{W}g3\#$!. Black has no choice but to play 2... $\mathbb{W}g6$, when White has 3. $\mathbb{W}xe5$ with a completely winning position, as established earlier.



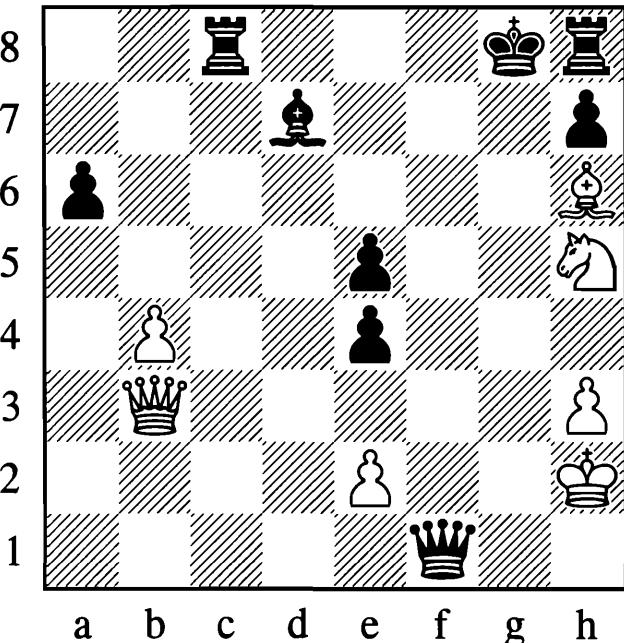
We can see how she benefitted from calculating just a few moves forward from 1. $\mathbb{W}g3\#$ before rejecting it. As Keti is an experienced player, she quickly understood that the small difference of the queen being on e6 instead of f5 would matter greatly. (Actually

many grandmasters will have trained using *The Method of Comparison*, as popularized by Mark Dvoretsky, where the student is asked to pay specific attention to small tactical nuances and compare their effects on the various plans available to them.)

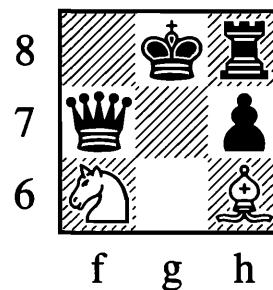
At this point you might have suspected that Keti was completely satisfied and would simply play this. But at this point her attention was drawn towards a different idea, the move that turns out to be the best one: 1. $\mathbb{Q}f1!!$



There are not many lines to calculate. If Black takes on f1 White will give the queen check on b3: 1... $\mathbb{W}xf1$ 2. $\mathbb{W}b3\#$



Black will have to bring the queen home to f7 this time, after which he is mated. We see how it is this “chunk” (where the queen is pinned and thus cannot take the knight),

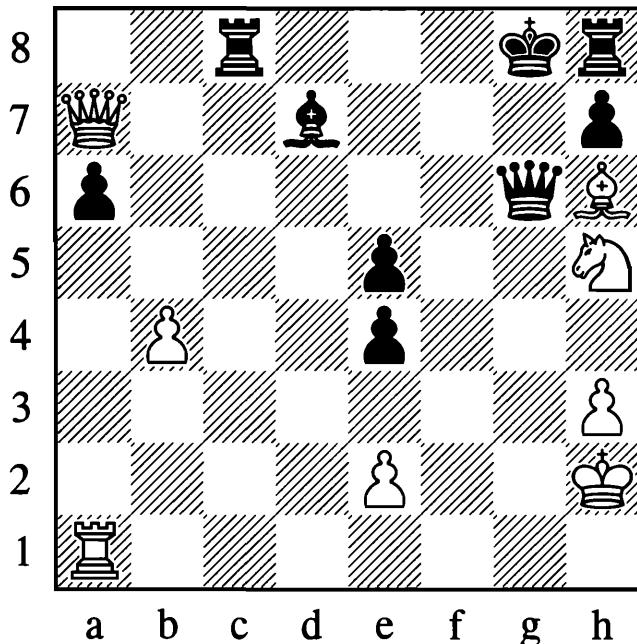


which worked its wonders in Keti’s mind and reappeared from one variation to the other.

After finding this easy winning move, Keti admitted she rather lost interest in the entire exercise and did not look for more solutions.

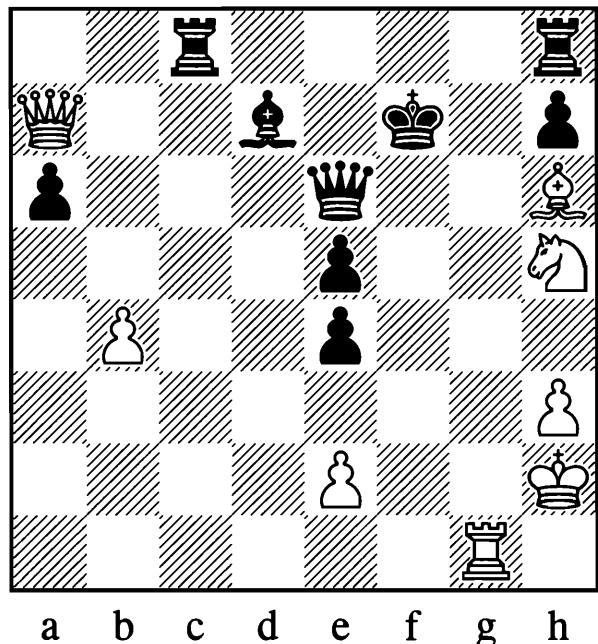
There were some additional options, such as 1. $\mathbb{Q}xa6!?$, preventing ... $\mathbb{W}g6$ and thus leading to a strong attack.

And then there was the strong second move to be found after 1. $\mathbb{W}g1\#$ $\mathbb{W}g6$. This is 2. $\mathbb{W}a7!!$.



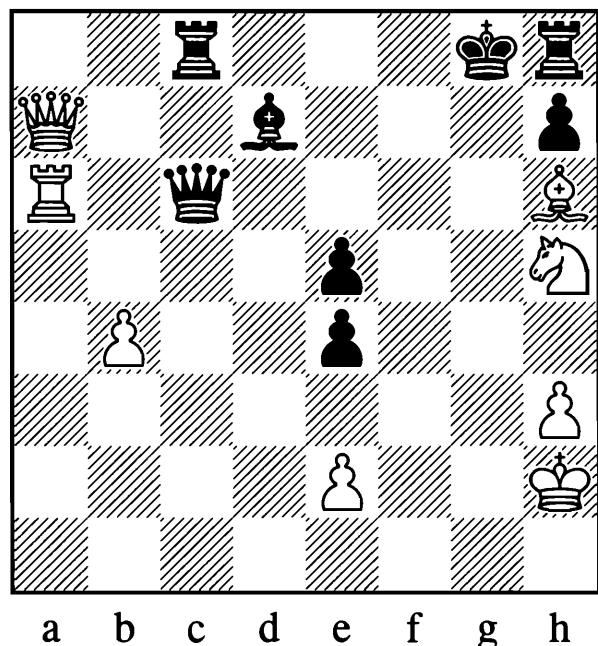
Surprisingly White is absolutely winning again. 1. $\mathbb{W}a7?$ was not possible, as Black would have 1... $\mathbb{W}xh3\#$, but now when the queen is on g6, there is no such check available. Instead there is a direct threat of 2. $\mathbb{E}g1$, winning the queen.

It is very hard for Black to come up with a defence. For example 2... $\mathbb{W}e6$ 3. $\mathbb{B}g1\#$ $\mathbb{K}f7$:



Now White has 4. $\mathbb{B}f1\#$ followed by 4... $\mathbb{K}g8$ 5. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$ or 4... $\mathbb{K}e7$ 5. $\mathbb{Q}g5\#$, winning everything.

And after 2... $\mathbb{W}c6$ 3. $\mathbb{B}xa6$:



Black must resign in view of the queen retreat, 4. $\mathbb{W}g1\#$, which will be devastating.

So, White had a number of ways to win the game, only not with the two most “obvious” moves, 1. $\mathbb{W}g3\#$ and 1. $\mathbb{B}g1\#$. To be able to understand this, White did not have to calculate long variations with tricks and

traps along the way, but simply be aware of some different ideas and images, such as the checkmate with the knight on f6.

The candidate moves are not the good moves, they are the moves you decide are worth checking out.

A common misconception

If you go back over the last few pages and look at the lengths of the various variations, you will note that they are three or four moves long and generally without many sidelines. The candidate moves would be the first move, which in Ket's case included 1. $\mathbb{W}g3\#$, 1. $\mathbb{W}g1\#$, 1. $\mathbb{B}g1\#$, 1. $\mathbb{W}b3\#$ and 1. $\mathbb{B}f1$. She did not consider 1. $\mathbb{B}xa6$, so this was not a candidate for her.

In the interesting book *Rapid Chess Improvement*, De la Maza criticizes Kotov and sets up an imaginary training session where an amateur suggests a move and is told “this is not a candidate move”. However, by thinking about the move, the amateur automatically makes the move a candidate.

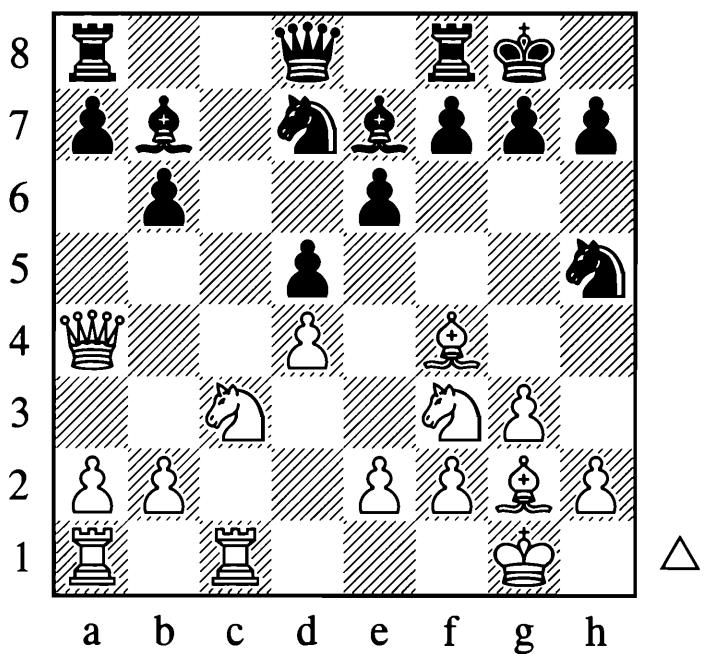
Let me stress this clearly once and for all – **the candidate moves are not the good moves, they are the moves you decide are worth checking out.** The conclusion does not come before the selection, it quite naturally comes after.

When we are talking about looking for candidate moves, we are talking about consciously looking for ideas, not for a list of random moves to calculate. We calculate to find a good move to play, we don't play to calculate as much as possible.

Take a look at the next position, taken from the very end of the opening.

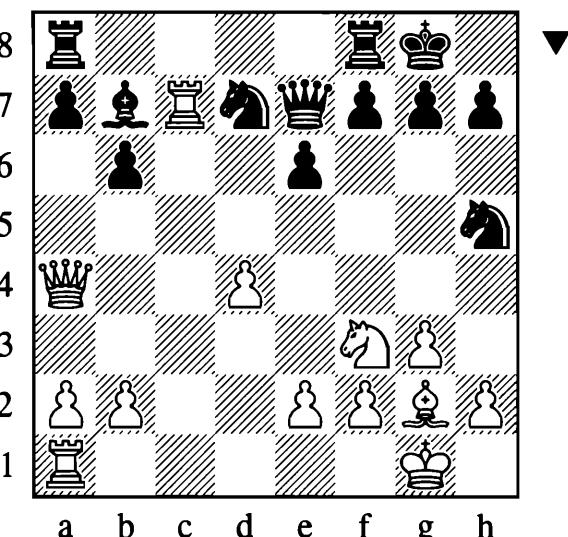
Kuzubov – Sivuk

Ukraine 2011



White to play – what is the strongest move?

Not much has happened in the opening. Both players have developed their pieces and now have to look for middlegame plans. It would not be hard to imagine that Black was focusing mainly on strategic ideas when he put the knight out on h5. Instead he was met with a small tactic that made his situation worse. After 1.♗c7! Black felt he had to hide the queen away on e8, when White had promising control of the position. The reason for this was that 1...♕xc7? 2.♘xd5 ♕d8 3.♘xe7† ♕xe7 4.♗c7 lands with a strong double threat.



After 4...♗c8, which is the only way to avoid

losing the piece back immediately, White has many strong continuations. For example 5.♗e5 ♕d8 6.♗ac1 ♘xe5 7.dxe5 ♘b8 8.♗xa7 and White wins.

After 1...♕e8 White played 2.♗b3 preparing ♘b5, and won this favourable position after a further 35 moves of great chess. This small tactic did not “win the house”, but it did prevent Black from playing ...♘xf4. Instead the white bishop was a permanent pain in the neck.

At times deep calculation is necessary, but many games are decided by the calculation of lines of that are two to four moves long.

More ideas about calculation – What is important?

Calculation is not only looking for ideas – candidate moves – but also at times going deep into a position; at least this is true at grandmaster level. For most amateurs 99% of all important lines of calculation will be two to four moves long. When I say “important”, I mean the calculation that decides games. At the level of titled players you will see feats of calculation of long variations, especially in games between world class grandmasters, but just as often you will find that the games are decided by far simpler oversights.

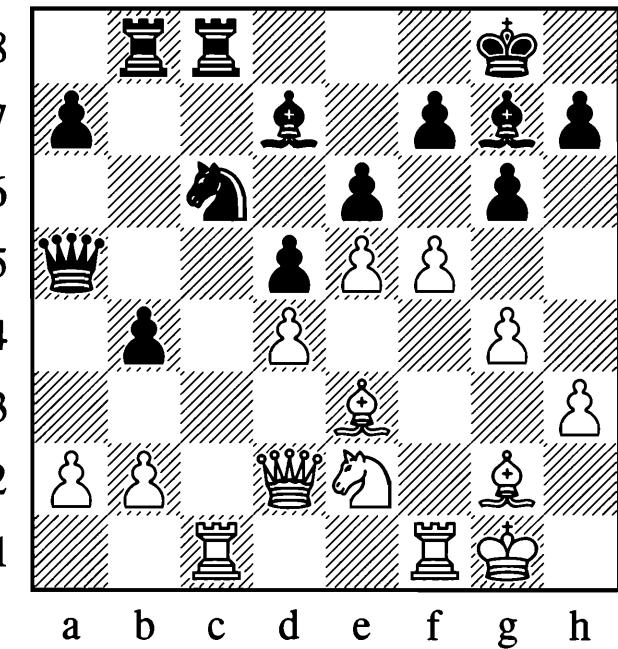
To illustrate this I have chosen a game played between two Italian IMs in the 2011 Italian Championship. It is a normal game for the level, with vast complications and thus also a number of mistakes. To someone following the games live on the Internet with an engine buzzing along, these errors might seem silly, but in fact they are a symptom of chess being a difficult game and eventually also of the players running short of time.

I have done my best to reduce the complexity of the game and for this I have used the method of candidate moves. Everything becomes easier to understand once it is structured well.

I want you to pay special attention to the way the players make mistakes every time they delve into long variations and how winning the game did not require deep calculation, but instead a concentrated effort in looking at what is really happening on the board.

Genocchio – Mogranzini

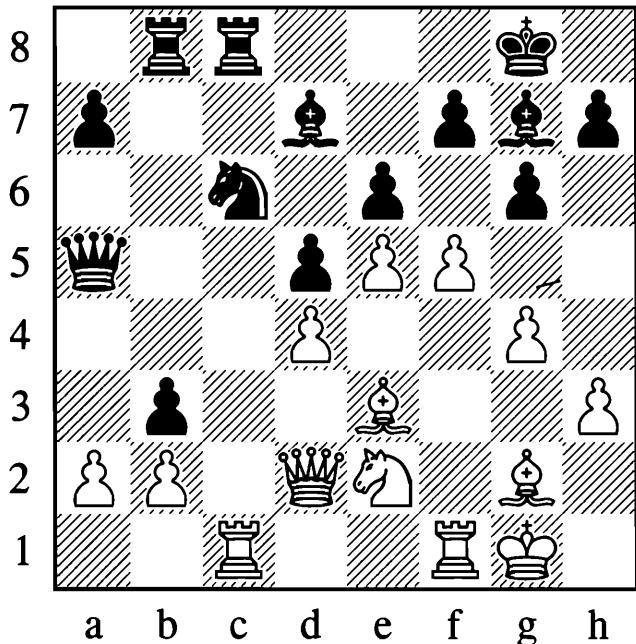
Perugia 2011



We join the game just after the opening phase, when White has offered Black a pawn in return for opening the f-file. It seems to me that Black should have accepted this offer with 20...exf5! 21.gxf5 ♖xf5, as he can defend with ...♘e7 and possibly ...♗b6, coming to the rescue along the 6th rank if White manages to create any real threats.

Instead Black started a misguided tactical operation.

20...b3?!

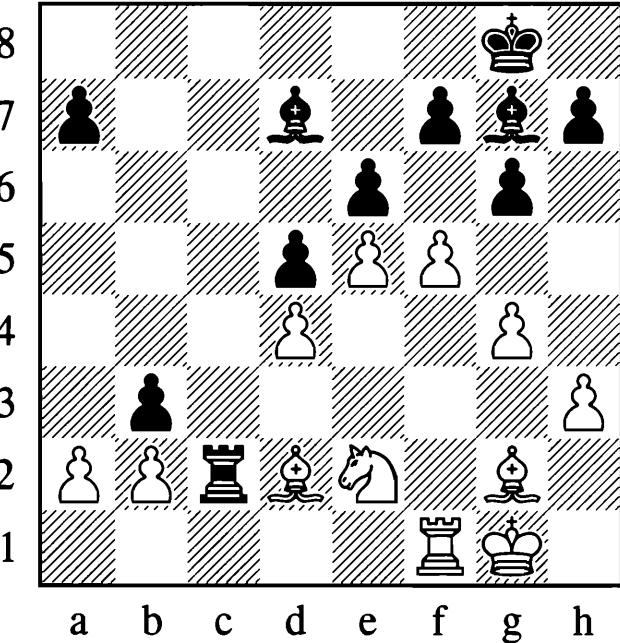


Black's positional aspiration was for play to continue with 21.♘xa5 ♗xa5, when the knight is coming to c4 and the pawn on b2 would be under severe pressure. This is all based on a tactical idea that arose in the game.

21.♗xc6!

The obvious tactical idea. In the short term White wins a piece by removing the defender of the queen and winning a tempo with the check on c8. However, Black had seen this and planned to win the piece back.

21...♕xd2 22.♗xc8† ♗xc8 23.♔xd2 ♗c2



Here we see Black's idea. White cannot avoid returning the piece and the rook is active on

the second rank. The main point is 24... $\mathbb{R}d1?$ $bxa2$ and the rook on d1 is severely overloaded and White has no answer to the threat of 25... $\mathbb{B}xd2!$, when White cannot recapture as Black would get a new queen.

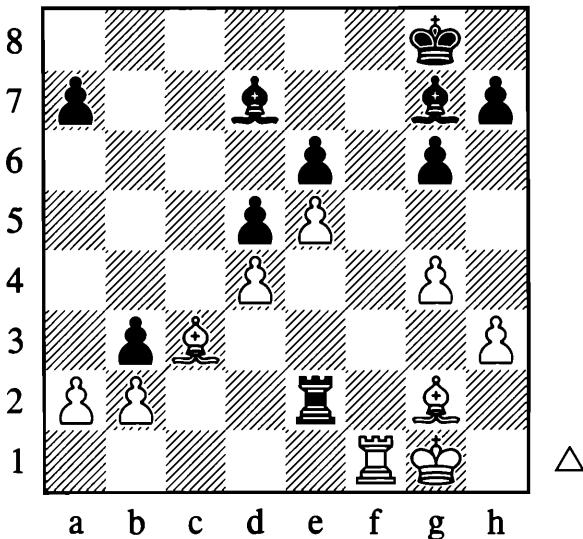
However this 4-5 move tactical idea does not work, and it appears Black was not in control of the lines he was calculating. Rather than playing the timid 24... $\mathbb{R}d1?$, walking straight into Black's plan, White decided to return the piece immediately.

24... $\mathbb{B}c3!$

This move is not hard to find once you think about it. White is a piece up and he cannot hold on to it, so what is the best policy? Return the one you care the least for of course, and save the one you like the best. Here the bishop is better, because it can protect the important b2- and d4-pawns.

Now suddenly Black's options have reduced drastically. Let's imagine that he plays the first move that pops into his mind, which would be 24... $\mathbb{B}xe2$. White would no doubt exchange the pawns on e6 and then take on b3, securing an extra pawn. Black would get a little counterplay with ... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ and the game would go on, although it is no fun to be a pawn down.

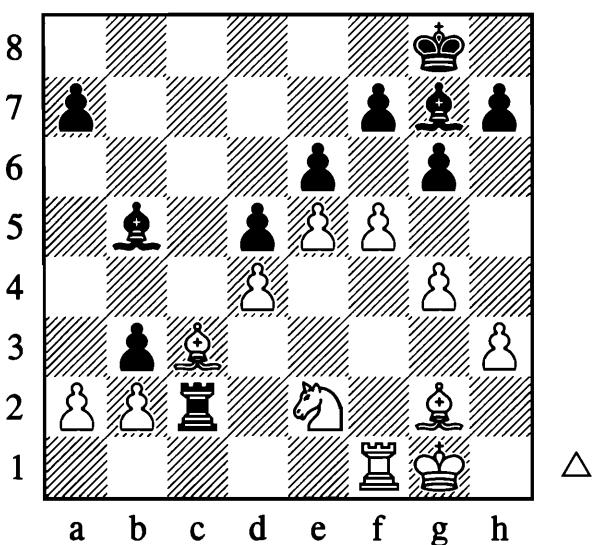
I guess this is why Black decided to avoid this line – what more argument would he need? But let's for a moment assume that we are White after 25.fxe6 fxe6:



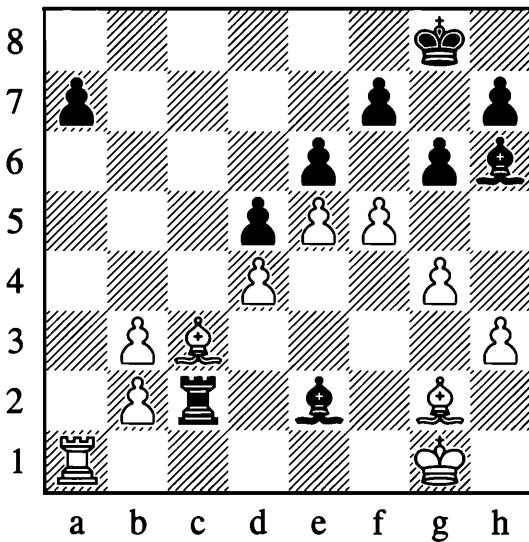
Sure, 26.axb3 looks reasonable, but if we study our opponent's intentions (26... $\mathbb{Q}h6!$ with some counterplay) we can see that 26.g5! is the best move, eliminating the bishop from the game. After 26... $bxa2$ 27. $\mathbb{R}a1$ the rook gets into the game and the a7-pawn is doomed. White looks to be on the way to claiming a full point.

Such attention to the opponent's counter-chances is usually called *prophylactic thinking* and is one of the most powerful thinking tools at our disposal. For those who are already rated a good deal over 2000 and are willing to work hard to reach international level, I recommend studying prophylaxis in such high-level books as *Strategic Play (School of Chess Excellence 3)* by the highly esteemed Russian trainer Mark Dvoretsky. (At the same time I would like to warn all others not to go near it. Studying material that is far beyond you will only dishearten you, not assist you.)

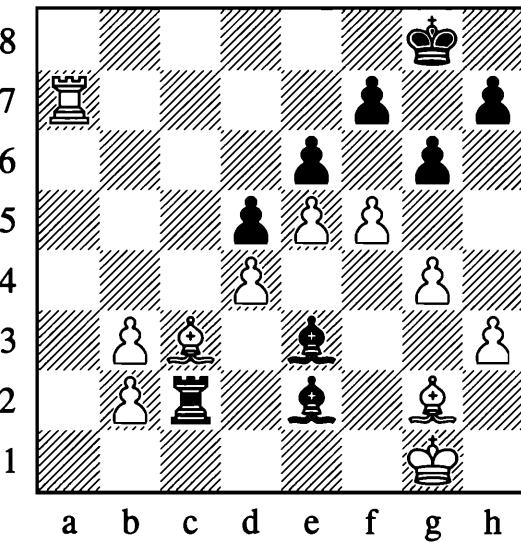
Returning to our game, Black could also attempt to complicate matters by bringing in his light-squared bishop with 24... $\mathbb{B}b5!?$.



White could of course consider securing the extra pawn immediately with 25.axb3 $\mathbb{B}xe2$ 26. $\mathbb{R}a1$, but in this case Black has 26... $\mathbb{Q}h6!$ with strong counterplay:

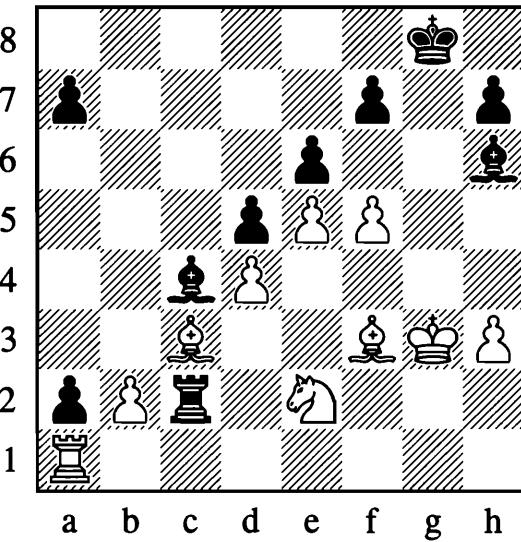


Actually it could be that White is simply worse. For example, he cannot take on a7, as the check on e3 is devastating: 27. $\mathbb{Q}xa7?$ $\mathbb{Q}e3\#$

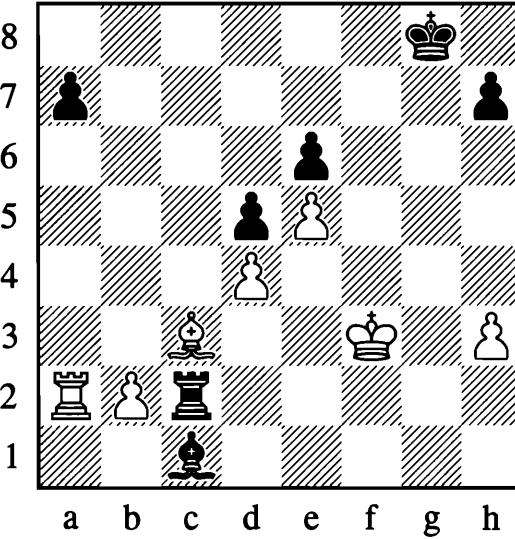


White is lost. If he plays 28. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ Black can play 28... $\mathbb{Q}f1!$ pinning along the second rank, and if White plays 28. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ Black has the even stronger 28... $\mathbb{Q}c1\#$ planning 29. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ mate.

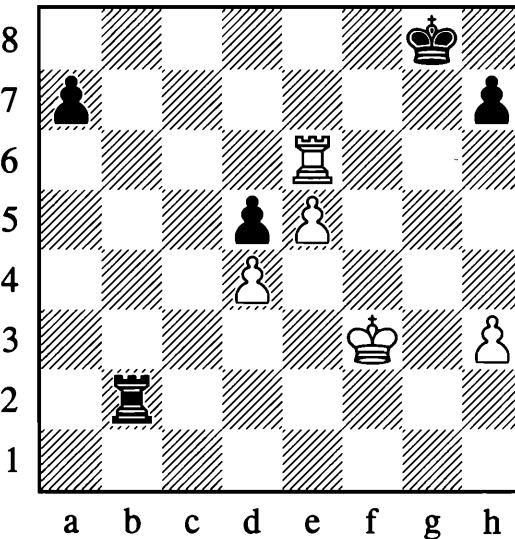
Instead White should play 25. $\mathbb{Q}f3$, when the following variation is deeply complicated: 25... $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ $\mathbb{Q}xa2$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}a1$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}g3!$



White is a piece up, but the a2-pawn is very strong and most of White's pieces are temporarily tied down. Deep analysis shows that White is a good deal better after: 29... $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}xa2$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ $\mathbb{Q}c1$



33. $\mathbb{Q}a6!$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 35. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$



White has very good winning chances in this ending and we could no doubt analyse even further with the electronic tools at our disposal, but no doubt we have already made at least one mistake in the analysis, which would dilute the value of whatever conclusions were reached.

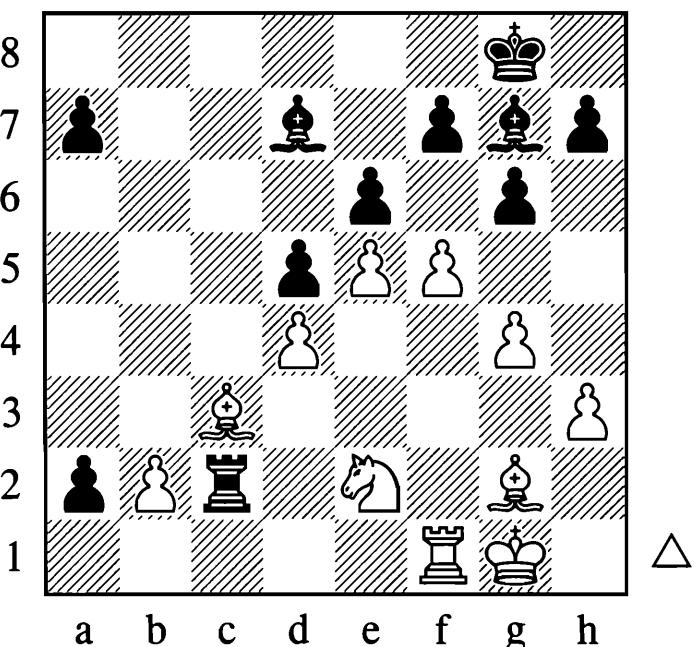
Also – this long line **has nothing to do with the game!** Obviously it springs from the game and is interesting, but the players were never close to reaching this position. To say that these lines are complicated understates it! We have to look ten moves forward before the

position has any kind of clarity (White has the advantage, but how far this reaches is still not clear). **The fact that we can analyse our way to a final conclusion at home is not so relevant when we are sitting at the board and have to calculate the variations in our heads.** Mogranzini is an International Master and a gifted tactician, but he had no chance of seeing all these lines in practice.

However, he could have made the correct decision, if he had used *The Method of Elimination* to compare 24... $\mathbb{E}xe2$, 24... $\mathbb{Q}b5$ and his eventual choice 24... $bxa2$, in which we line up our candidate moves (here just three of them) and then try to eliminate them one by one, to choose between the ones left standing.

This would *not* be by analysing ten moves deep, but by using our ability to look for candidate moves to see what is wrong with our own candidates. Had Mogranzini used this technique, there is no doubt he would have found the right choice, 24... $\mathbb{Q}b5!$, but instead he took the pawn on a2.

24... $bxa2$?



Black was no doubt looking forward to playing ... $\mathbb{Q}b5$ and ... $\mathbb{Q}h6$, as well as the simple ... $\mathbb{E}xe2$.

It is clear that there are many options here for White, just as it is reasonably clear that this could be a deciding moment of the game and that it is therefore justified for him to spend a good deal on time on choosing a good move. Using the idea of candidate moves mechanically, we could get quite a long list: 25. $fxe6$, 25. $f6$, 25. $\mathbb{Q}f4$, 25. $\mathbb{Q}g3$, 25. $\mathbb{Q}f3$, 25. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ and so on. Most of these are sensible moves to consider and a quick look at all or most of them certainly makes sense.

However, if we do not actually *look* – and by this I mean spend time looking – we might miss a logical move, as indeed I have deliberately done in drawing up this list. The move itself is innocuous, but the ideas behind it are not obvious unless we spend a bit of time actually looking at what is happening, rather than trying to shoehorn the pieces into fitting our plans.

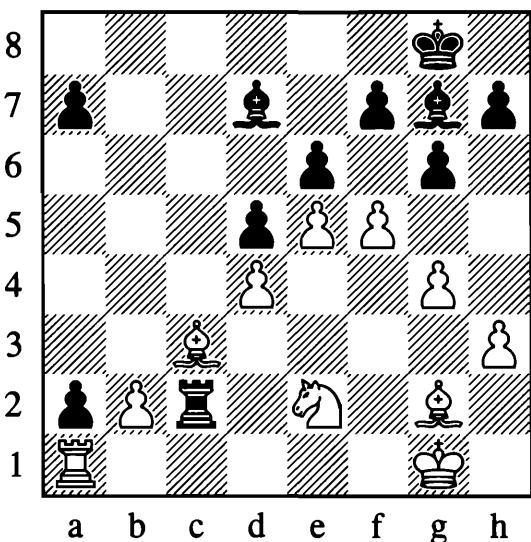
In the game White became excusably confused by the large number of decent-looking moves and went for what appears to be the least logical of all of them.

25. $f6$?

From the lines we have already calculated, we already know that Black wants to play ... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ to activate the bishop. So it does not appear logical for White to provoke Black into playing this move. But you can easily understand White's thinking if you try – and most of us have good reasons for playing the moves we do, only not always the right reasons!

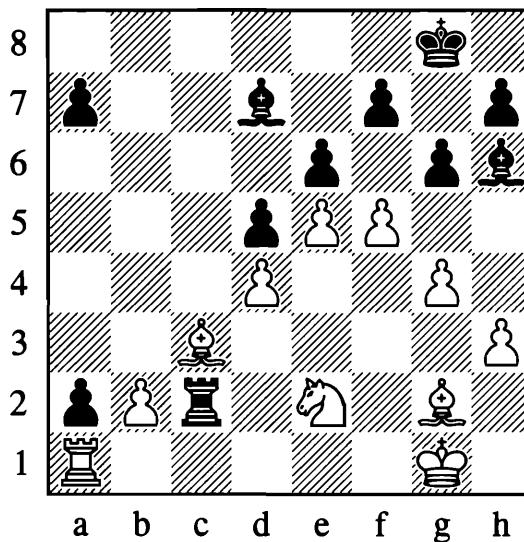
In this case White was hoping that the fact that the black king will be under threat of a back rank mate for the rest of the game would matter greatly. But as we shall see, he is giving Black extra activity and thus this dream scenario does not arise.

The winning move was to go straight for the a-file with: 25. $\mathbb{E}a1!!$



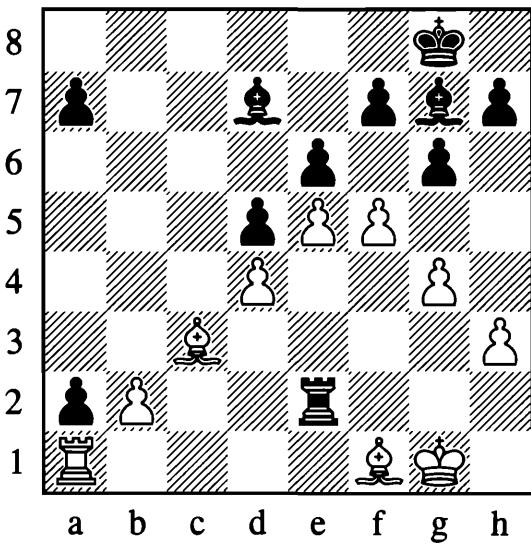
Winning the a-pawn and thus being a piece up for nothing.

Finally there is a more complicated idea, which we have seen before and would think of based on these two lines. Black could play 25... $\mathbb{B}h6!?$:



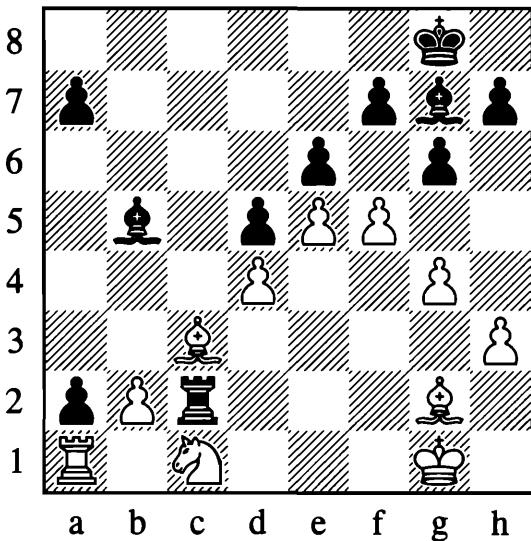
This move might not look aggressive at first, but if you spot the ideas connected with it, you will quickly realize that it is absolutely decisive.

First of all, Black cannot simply regain the piece with 25... $\mathbb{B}xe2$, as the rook will be trapped after 26. $\mathbb{Q}f1$:



With the ideas 26... $\mathbb{B}c2$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ or 26... $\mathbb{B}e3$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}f2!$.

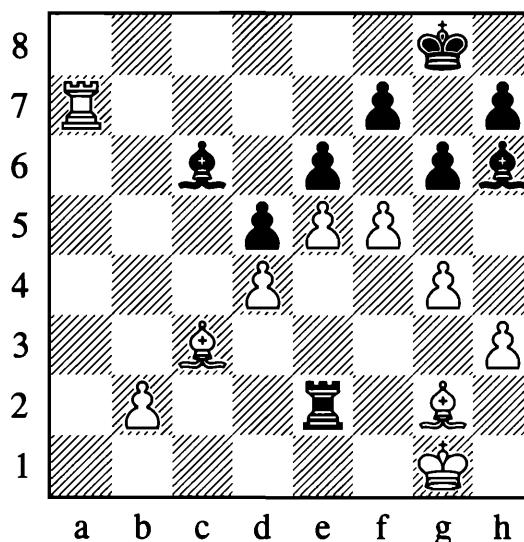
Previously Black had been able to play 25... $\mathbb{B}b5$ in many positions, but at this point the other bishop has not yet arrived at h6 and White would have 26. $\mathbb{Q}c1!$.



The ideas are to prevent White from playing 26. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ (and meet other escape attempts by the knight with ... $\mathbb{B}c1\#$, exchanging the rook on a1) and to assist the black rook so that it would not get trapped.

All very sound reasoning, but we must also remember that White is a piece up and does not have to fight for the survival of the knight (which has nowhere sensible to go!).

Instead he can simply win a pawn with 26. $\mathbb{B}xa2!$ when Black's choices are limited. 26... $\mathbb{B}xe2$ 27. $\mathbb{B}xa7$ Winning a pawn. 27... $\mathbb{Q}c6$



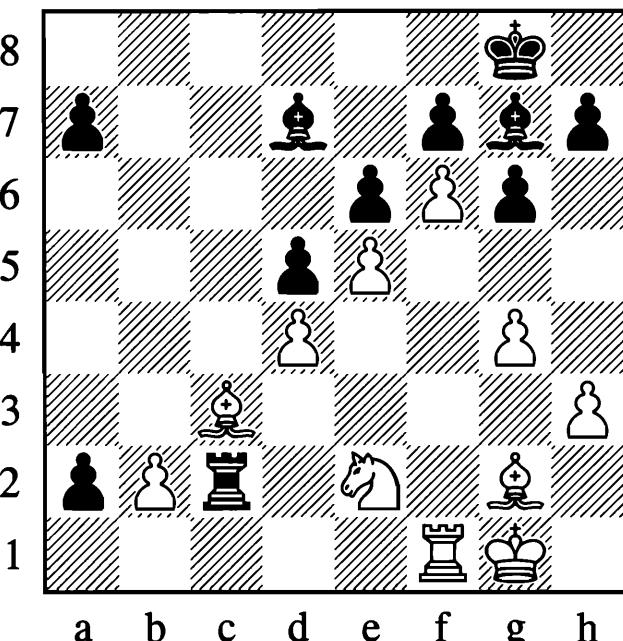
Now 28. $\mathbb{B}c7!$ is powerful. We don't need to calculate further (or maybe even this far) to

see that White has a strong attack on the black king as well as an extra pawn. And contrary to previous lines, White is not in danger of getting mated, as the black rook is on e2 rather than c2 and cannot check the king.

This is obviously really difficult stuff, but using the technique of candidate moves White would have stood a good chance of finding most of this. And note that the most complicated line he needed to see was again only three or four moves long. The difficult thing was to pick the right move to analyse and to do this in a reasonably organized way.

Calculating variations is exceptionally difficult and even the best players in the world struggle with this. The thing to remember is that **improvement is always possible, but perfection is not**. Chess is a draw with perfect play, but it can end in any of three results in a game between two humans. The best we can do is to prepare ourselves for the fight, so we can take advantage of our opponents' mistakes.

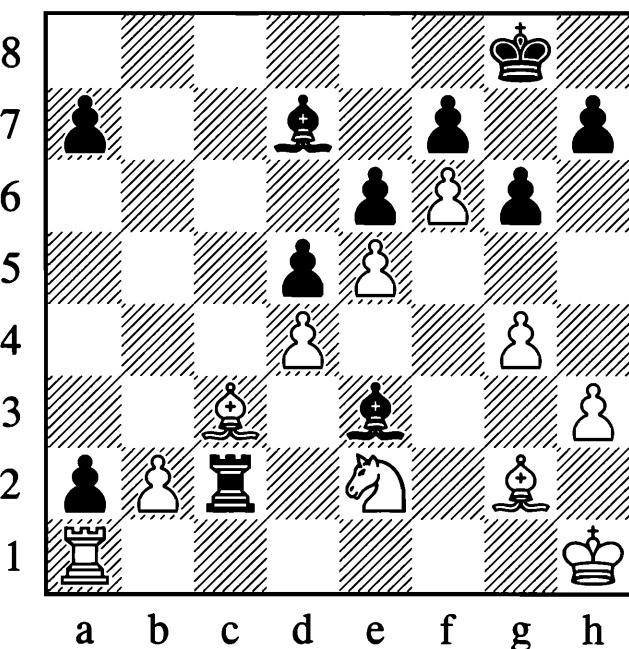
Let's return to the game.



25...Qh6!

An easy choice for Black. From here the bishop becomes very active.

26.Qa1 Qe3† 27.Qh1



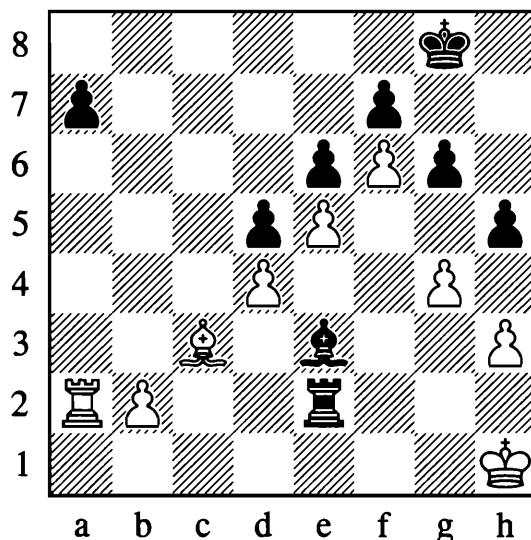
Black is faced with a simple choice. If he goes for 27...Bxe2? 28.Qxa2 White is going to take on a7 with serious threats against the black king. Presumably this is the line White was attracted to a few moves ago. But Black does not have to go in this direction.

27...Bb5!!

A great move. Black stays a piece down in order to gain a tempo to defend the a-pawn.

White now cannot play 28.Qxa2? Bxe2 as we have already seen once by transposition. Black has the stronger attack and would win instantly after 29.Qxa7? Bc1† 30.Qh2 Bf4 mate.

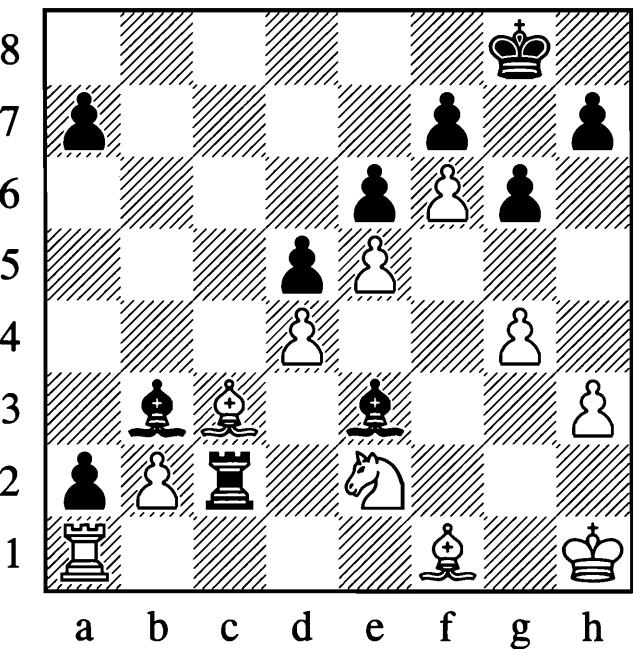
White can play 28.Qf1, but this time Black is better off after regaining the piece: 28...Bxe2 29.Qxe2 Bxe2 30.Qxa2 h5



The ending offers equal chances. A funny little line goes 31... $\mathbb{Q}xa7$ h4! 32.b4 $\mathbb{Q}f2$ and Black has perpetual check. But also something like 32... $\mathbb{Q}f4$ would give him enough counterplay, so it is not something we need to see in advance.

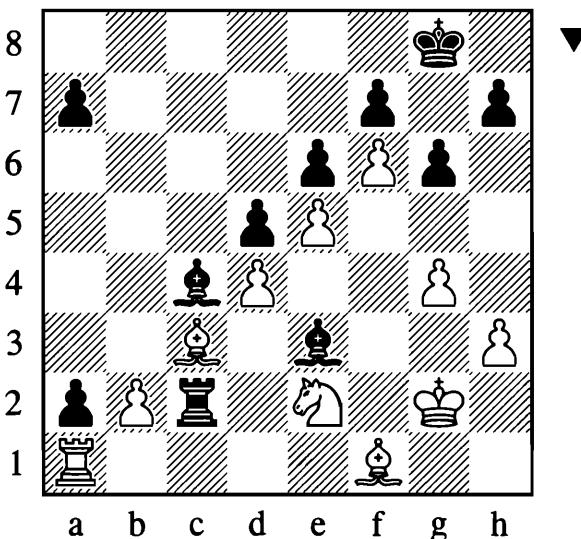
White decided to stay a piece up for the time being:

28. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}b3$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}e2$



30...a5?!

There is nothing objectively wrong with this move, but Black could have forced a draw immediately with 30... $\mathbb{Q}c4$. He probably rejected this move on account of 31. $\mathbb{Q}g2$, when taking the piece back is not on the cards, as White will move his king to f3 in the end, regaining the extra piece.

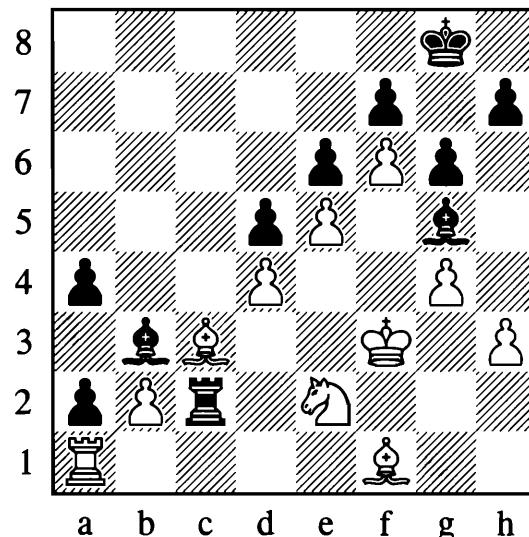


But instead Black can play 31... $\mathbb{Q}c1!$, with the threat of 32... $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ and 34... $\mathbb{Q}b1$. White needs to be able to meet this with 34. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ to stay in the game, so he would play 32. $\mathbb{Q}g1!$. Here the draw is immediate with 32... $\mathbb{Q}e3\#$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}c1$.

I think Black missed 31... $\mathbb{Q}c1$, but there is of course a slim chance that he really liked his position and wanted to play for a win (not really). We should also remember that we are approaching move 40 and both players would be running short of time at this point, considering all the difficult choices they had to make earlier. But again we should note that the solution to Black's problems was only two moves long.

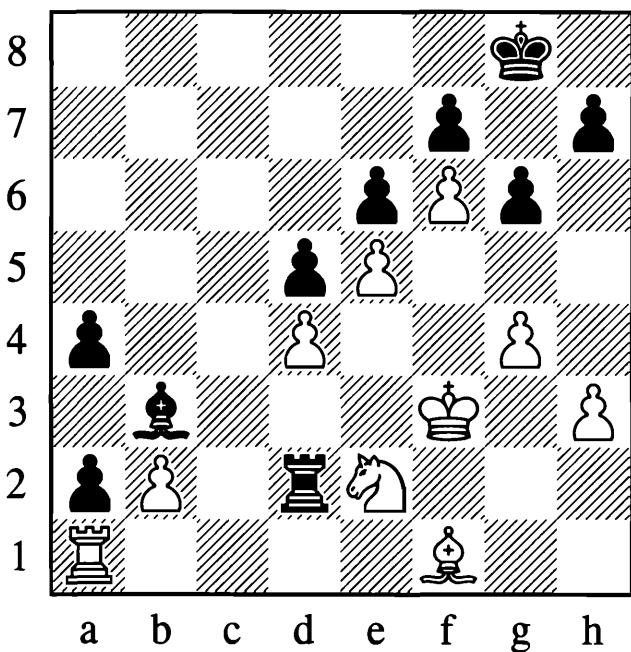
31. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ a4 32. $\mathbb{Q}f3$

White has made a little progress, but besides kicking the bishop back, he has not achieved much. At this point Black would retain enough counterplay if he had played 32... $\mathbb{Q}g5!$.



It is not easy to see how White would make real progress and probably he had no idea either. However Black was probably caught out by the psychological trap that, being a piece down, he had to do something. Actually he should just have stayed put when the draw would still be within reach.

32... $\mathbb{Q}d2?!$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ $\mathbb{Q}xd2$



White is apparently in a tight spot. Black is about to play ... $\mathbb{E}xb2$, which is not such a great problem, but ... $\mathbb{E}d1$ is a more serious threat, and if White played 34. $\mathbb{E}g2?$ Black would reply 34... $\mathbb{E}c4!$ 35. $\mathbb{E}c3 \mathbb{E}xb2$.

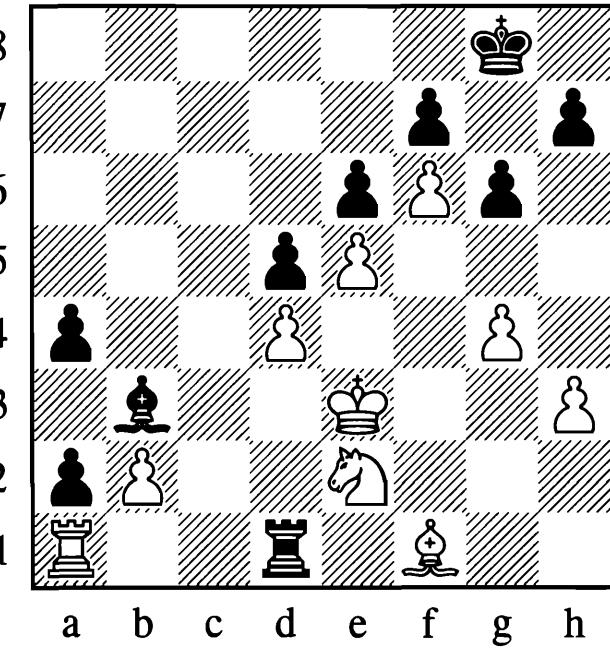
White correctly evaluated the situation and brought the king closer.

34. $\mathbb{E}e3!$

At this point Black should have played 34... $\mathbb{E}xb2$, even though White would have the pawns under control after 35. $\mathbb{E}c3$ with ideas such as $\mathbb{E}c3$ -b5-a3 or $\mathbb{E}f1$ -b5.

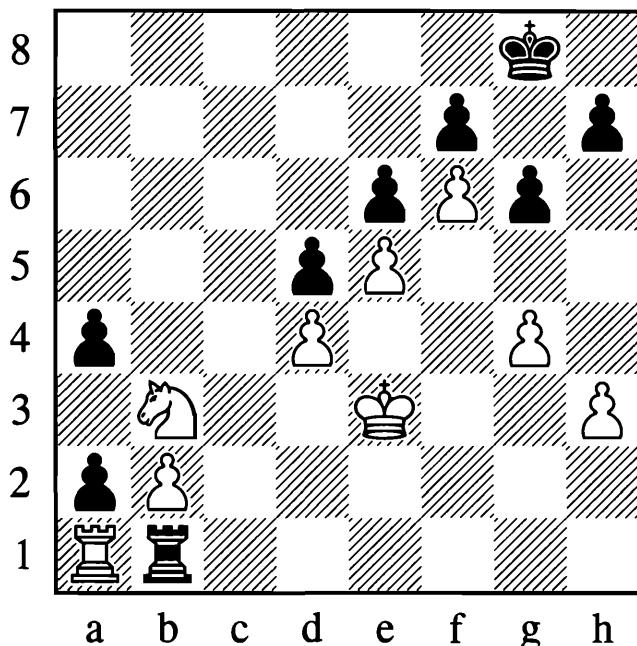
Instead Black went for a tactical solution:

34... $\mathbb{E}d1?$



Black had a specific combination in mind, but there is a big hole in his idea.

35. $\mathbb{E}c1 \mathbb{E}xf1?!$ 36. $\mathbb{E}xb3 \mathbb{E}b1$



Black was relying on this position. White will have to return the piece after which the b2-pawn cannot be defended. All in all a brilliant combination, if only there had not been a small problem with it.

37. $\mathbb{E}xa2!$

1–0

Black resigned as after 37... $\mathbb{E}xb3$ White has 38. $\mathbb{E}a8$ mate!

Black could have improved slightly with 35...a3 36.bxa3 $\mathbb{E}xf1$, but after 37. $\mathbb{E}xb3 \mathbb{E}b1$ 38. $\mathbb{E}xa2$ White would be a pawn up and would win the rook ending without great difficulty.

Some final words

This game was rich in tactical moments and shows how important tactics are in modern tournament play. Both players made plenty of mistakes and oversights and a number of them changed the evaluation from lost to drawn and back again. We are not talking about ten-move variations with swinging swords, but 2-4 move long variations with a minimum of sidelines.

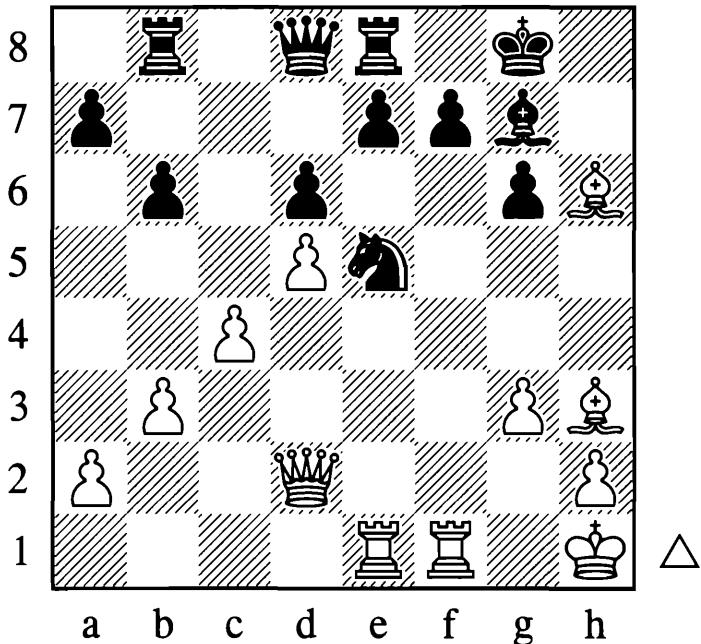
Still, chess is desperately difficult and we can only feel sympathy for the players as they struggled with the variations and their steadily depleting time.

The players' tasks would have been easier if they had trained in the use of candidate moves (we will return to this in the exercise section). Also useful would have been prophylactic thinking, the method of comparison and the method of elimination. But it does not really make great sense to discuss these elaborate methods of calculation at this point, when the emphasis should be on getting into the habit of looking for ideas, using the technique of candidate moves, before they are analysed one by one.

If you read the first edition of this book, I hope you have found this new chapter useful and a valuable addition to your concept of chess tactics. Using this technique will help you in the next section, where you will have the chance to put your new knowledge to the test.

Please wait a moment before you rush to test yourself with the tactical exercises. There is one more thing I would like to point out: Tactics will only come about in your games if you activate your pieces! Like cannons in a cellar, your pieces will be tactically useless until they are placed on the firing line. Don't let your troops celebrate at home, send them to the battlefield!

300 Test Positions



Too tough for this book? White to play and win

This book has evolved many times since its original self-published German edition, with minor improvements included for each reprint. It is forgiving for the author that the book is never truly finished, and with this new version it is possible for new (as well as old) readers of this book to benefit from the huge amount of feedback I have received over the years. For example, it is now hard to understand why the first edition did not have arrows next to the diagrams showing who is to move...

Much of the feedback related to the exercises. In previous editions there were a few at the end of most of the chapters, but in total not very many. Readers often praised the understanding of tactics the text gave them, but were frustrated that they did not have more exercises to test their newfound knowledge.

So when I started work on this edition I considered writing a complementary volume of exercises, a workbook if you like. I began selecting relevant positions and quickly

decided to focus on recent games (even so, a number of Bent Larsen's best combinations are used – this is meant as a tribute to the ferocious great Dane).

When I was quite far along in the process it suddenly dawned on me that my efforts to assist the reader could be seen as profiteering. Although I had around 400 good test positions (a number that equals some of the other puzzle books available) I was not certain the audience would support my efforts. It was for this reason that I, in agreement with the publisher, decided to make the workbook a part of the new edition. It was not a commercial decision, but hopefully neither the publisher nor I will be punished for increasing the printing and transport costs by making the book 128 pages thicker! I also decided to eliminate about a hundred of my collected exercises to make sure I only had appropriate positions with clear solutions. Less is sometimes more.

The content

The sorting of the positions is based first of all on the corresponding chapter earlier in the book. Look at the headers at the top of the page to see where you are. It did not make sense to create exercise sections for *Getting Familiar with the Pieces* or *Double Attack*, as most exercises include double attacks and all of them involve moving the pieces! Instead I created sections on *Openings* and *Endings*, to add some colour. I could have written chapters on these subjects, but I had to stop somewhere, and there are whole books in print about tactics in the opening or endgame...

Within each section the exercises are organized in increasing level of difficulty. I have used the traditional system of 1-5 stars, but of course opinions will vary about how difficult each position is (“Five stars? I solved it instantly.”).

Suggested working method

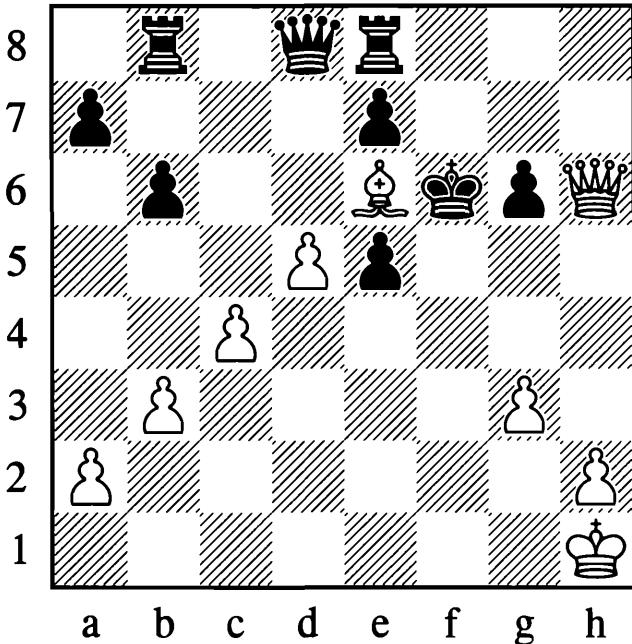
The set-up in this section is the standard format for exercise books by Quality Chess. The diagrams are on the right-hand page and the solutions are on the next page (safely out of sight!). For this reason I suggest you solve six exercises at a time. Especially I recommend that you **write down your solutions!** If nothing is written down it is easy to trick oneself into thinking “Oh yes, I spotted that idea.” Improvement comes from having measurable results. If you do not write down your solutions, you are not really measuring the value of your solving.

The level of the positions

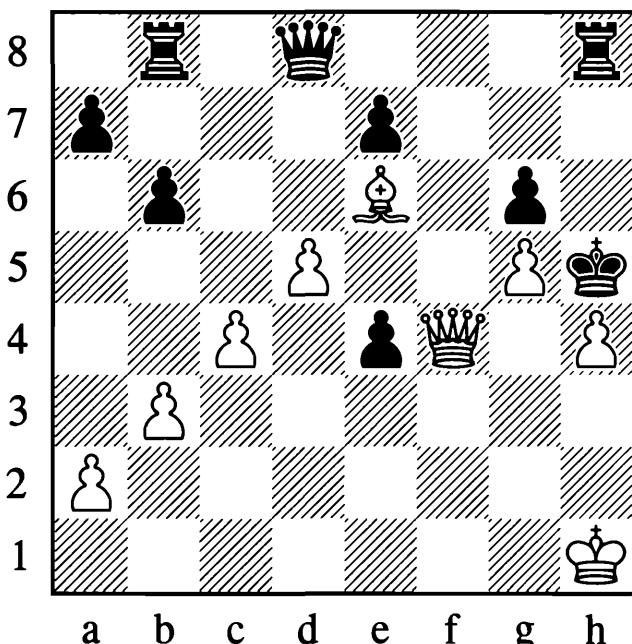
This is *not* the most difficult exercise book on the market. I selected the positions to fit the audience and build up basic skills. When you have tried to solve all the positions in this book, you should be ready for the many other exercise books that are available. I would naturally recommend the *Quality Chess Puzzle Book* as the next step, to be loyal to my publisher!

I rejected a few positions because they were too difficult, including the one on the previous page. Judge for yourself! It is from **Barbosa – Demianjuk**, Moscow 2011:

1.♗xe5! Eliminating an important defender of the light squares. **1...dxe5** **1...♗xe5** does not change much: **2.♗xf7!** **♔xf7** **3.♕e6† ♔f6** **4.♗g5#** **2.♗xf7!** **♔xh6!** The only try, but also a move it is possible to overlook. Did you see it? **2...♔xf7?!** **3.♕e6† ♔f8** **4.♗f2#** **3.♗xh6** **♔xf7** **4.♕e6† ♔f6**

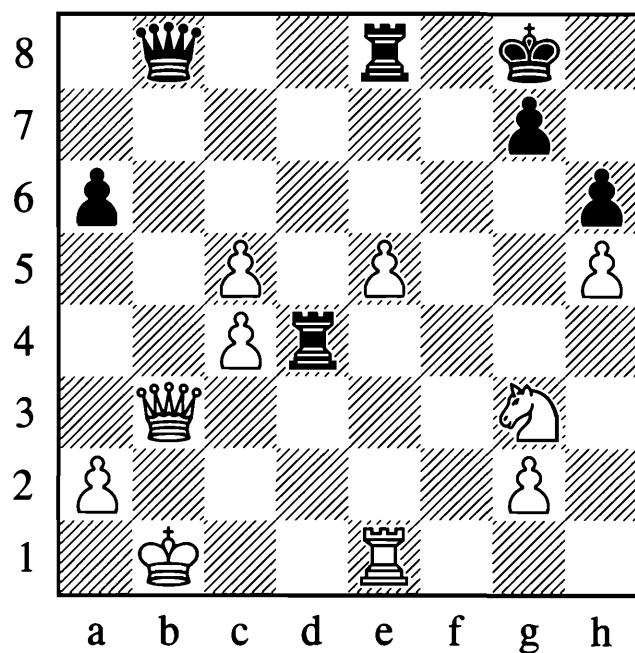


5.g4! With the threat **6.g5#!** **5...e4** Thus this is the only move, but it has a drawback. **6.♗f4† ♔g7** **7.♗f7† ♔h6** **8.h4!** With the threat of **9.g5† ♔h5** **10.♗h7#**, so again forcing Black's hand. **8...♗h8** **9.g5† ♔h5** **10.♗f4**

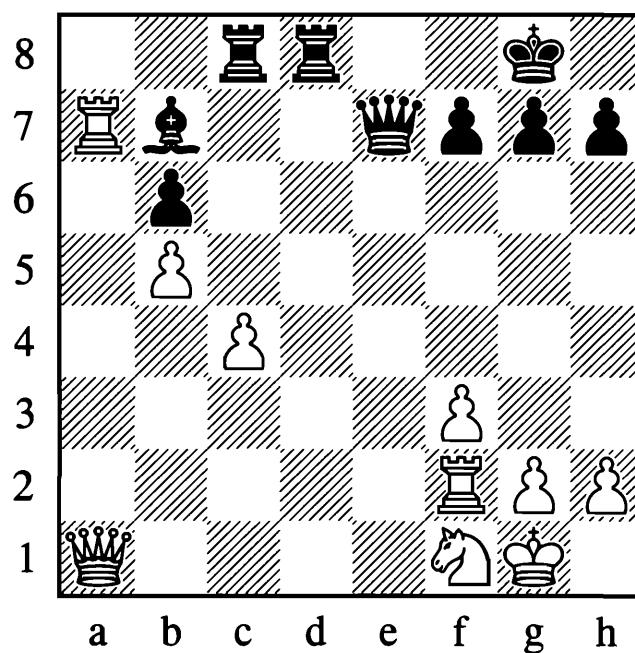


This time there is no escape. White mates with **11.♗g4#**. **1-0**

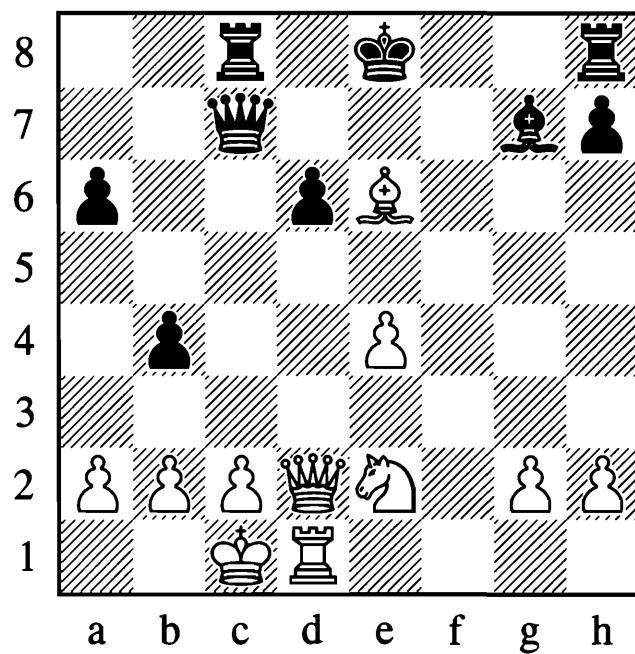
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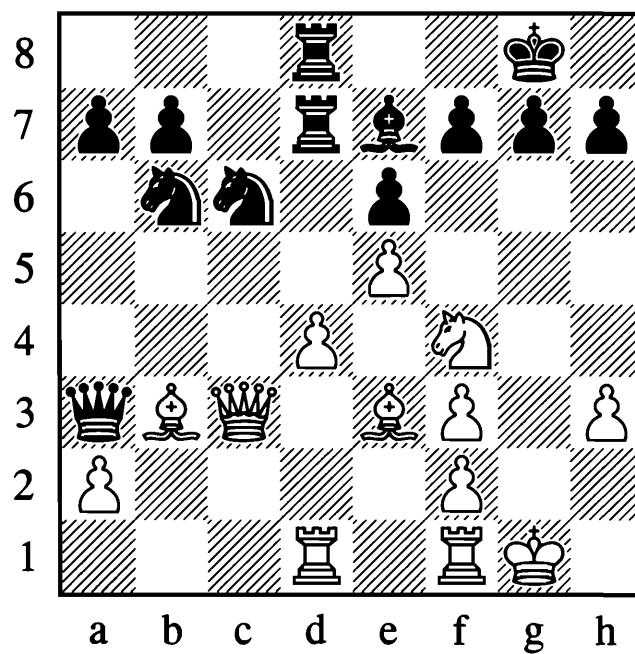
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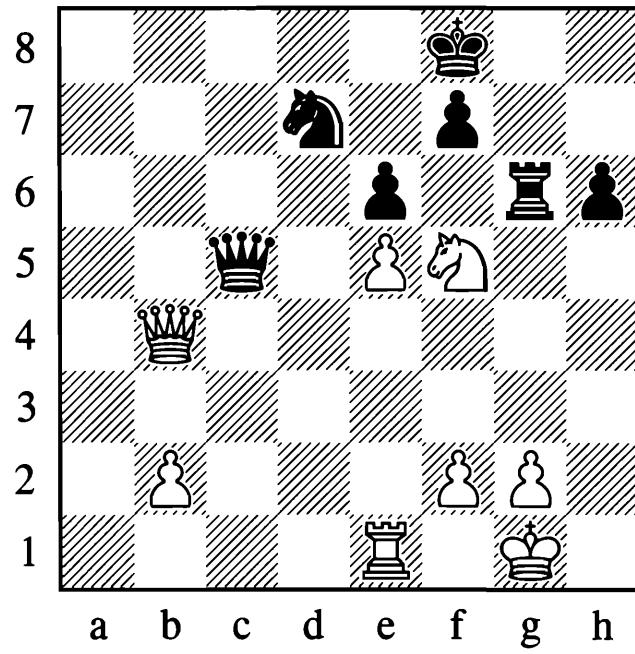
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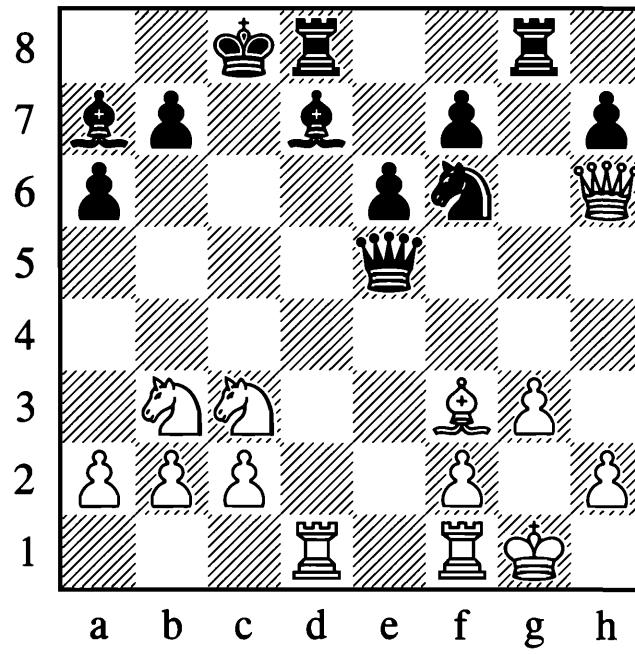
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3



6



(1) Zapata – Kacheishvili, Arlington 2010

Black was already doing quite well, but after 31... $\mathbb{B}d3!$

White simply resigned.

(2) A. Hunt – Cheparinov, Plovdiv 2010

20... $\mathbb{B}h6!$ 0–1

(3) Edouard – St. Novikov, Moscow 2011

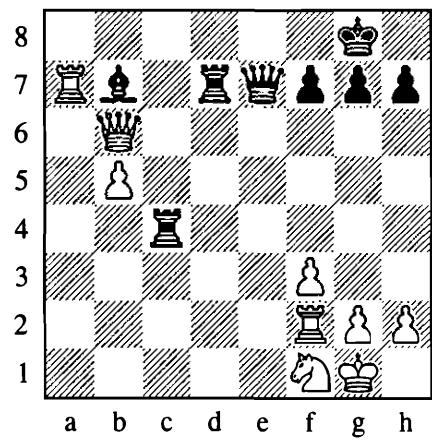
39. $\mathbb{B}c1!$ A typical combination. 1–0

(4) Granda Zuniga – Gonzalez Garcia, Mexico 2010

White won a crucial pawn with: 27. $\mathbb{W}a6!$ $\mathbb{B}d7$ 27... $\mathbb{B}xa6$ 28. $\mathbb{B}xe7$ wins a piece. 28. $\mathbb{W}xb6$ $\mathbb{B}xc4?$ (Diagram A)

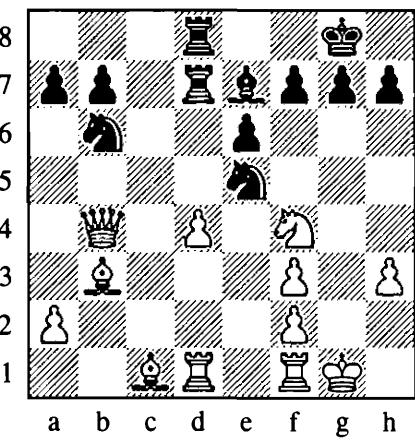
29. $\mathbb{B}d2?$ 29. $\mathbb{B}e2!$ would have won the b7-bishop, because 29... $\mathbb{W}xe2$ 30. $\mathbb{W}xb7!$ leaves Black's back rank inadequately defended. 29... $\mathbb{B}xd2?$ It is hard to say why Black did not play 29... $\mathbb{B}cc7$. 30. $\mathbb{B}xb7!$ $\mathbb{B}xg2\#$ 30... $\mathbb{B}d7$ 31. $\mathbb{B}b8\#$ 31. $\mathbb{B}xg2$ 1–0

A



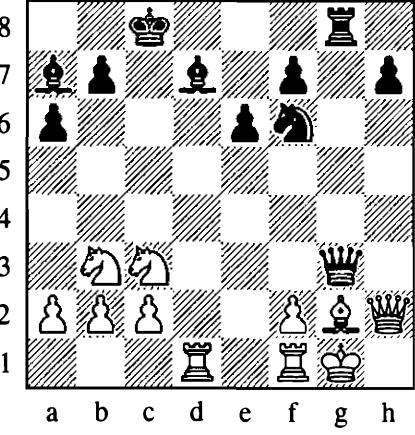
△

B



▼

C



▼

(5) Kosteniuk – Kacheishvili, Las Vegas 2010

The pins from d7 to d1 and a3 to c3 decided the game after: 21... $\mathbb{Q}xe5!$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ 22. $dxe5$ $\mathbb{B}xd1$ and Black wins.

22... $\mathbb{W}b4$ 23. $\mathbb{W}xb4$ (Diagram B) The following knight checks are quite funny. 23... $\mathbb{Q}xf3\#$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}h4\#$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}f5\#$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}g4$ $\mathbb{Q}h6\#$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}h5$ $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $fxe6$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ $\mathbb{B}xd4$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}xe6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{B}xd4$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 33. $f4$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $h6$ 35. $\mathbb{Q}g6$ $hxg5$ 36. $\mathbb{B}xg5$ $\mathbb{Q}xf4\#$ 37. $\mathbb{Q}f7$ $\mathbb{B}d6$ 0–1

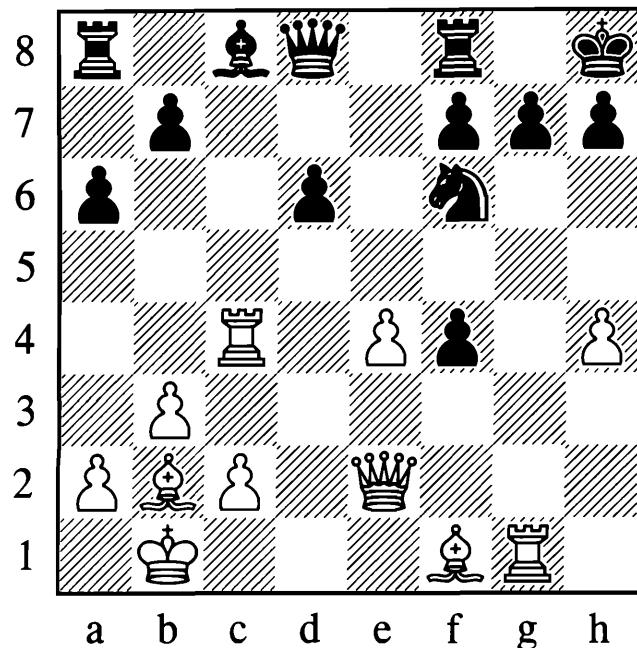
(6) Salgado Lopez – Smirin, Paks 2011

18... $\mathbb{B}xg3\#$! 19. $hxg3$ $\mathbb{W}xg3\#$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{B}g8$ 21. $\mathbb{W}h2$

(Diagram C) 21... $\mathbb{Q}c6!$ 22. $\mathbb{W}xg3$ $\mathbb{B}xg3$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ Black also wins against the best defence: 23. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{B}xg2\#$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 26. $\mathbb{B}xd5$ $\mathbb{B}xf2$ 27. $\mathbb{B}dd1$ $h5$ and the ending is eventually winning. 23... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 24. $\mathbb{B}xd5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{B}g5$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $f5$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}h3$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}d6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{Q}xf2\#$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $e5$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}a5$ $e4$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $f4$ 0–1

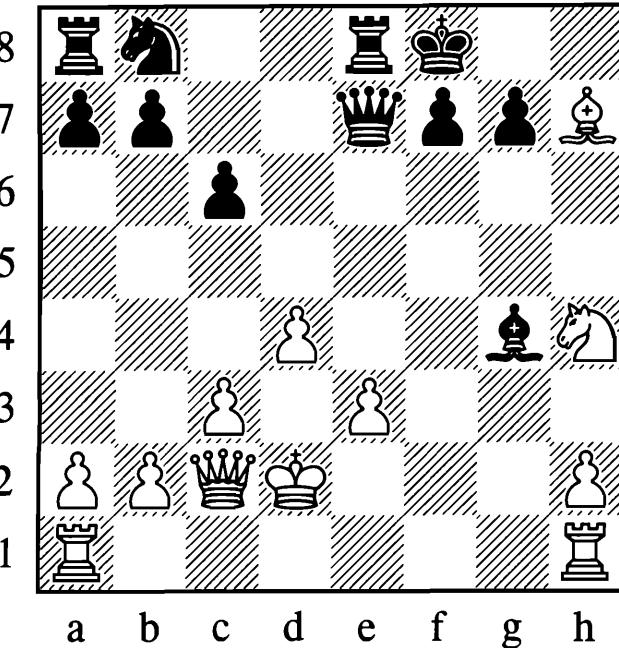
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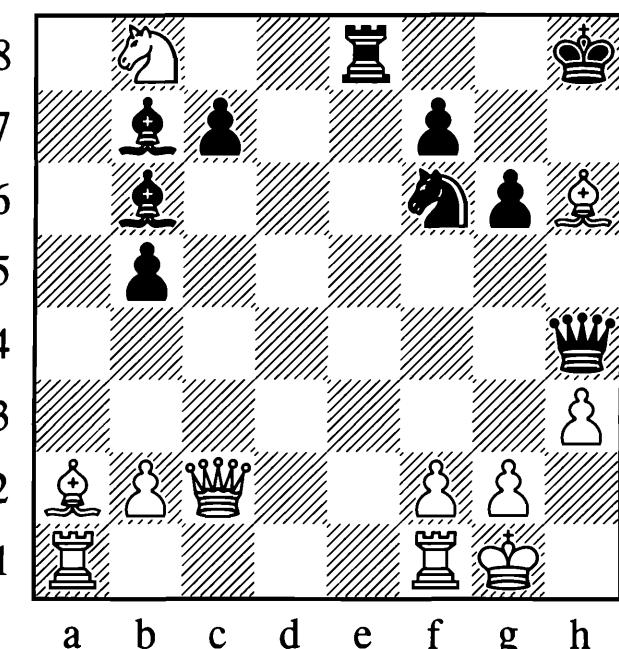
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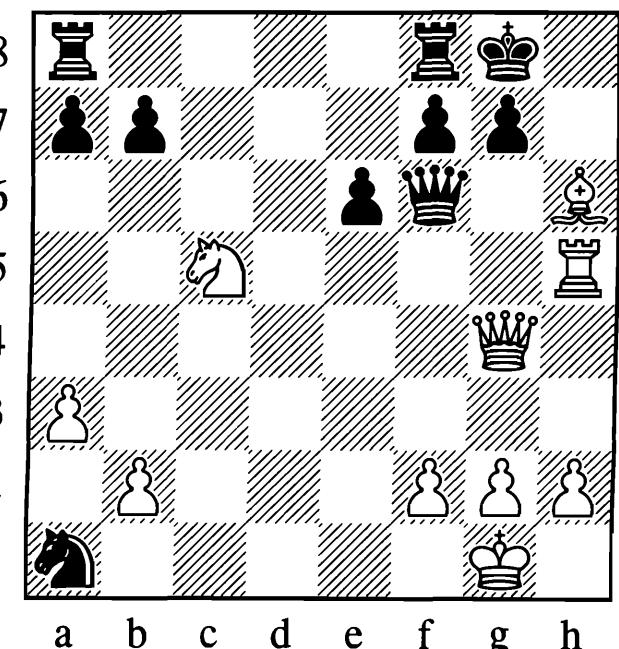
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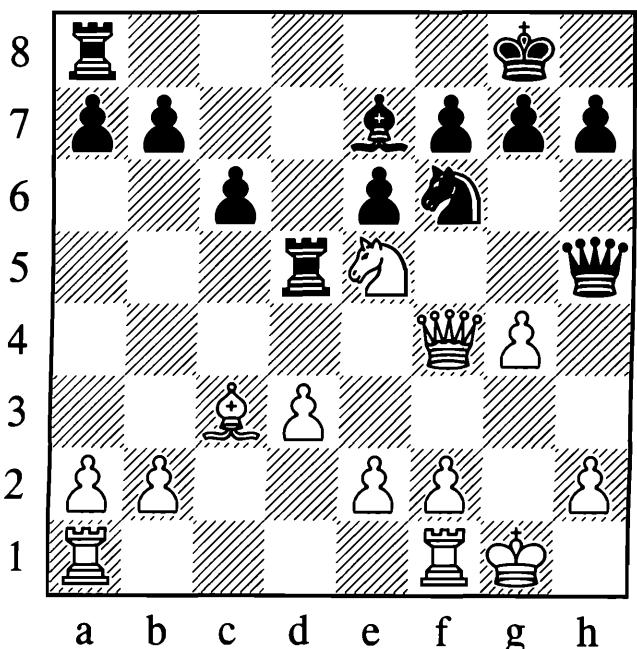
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(7) Kyrkjebo – Andersen, Fagernes 2011

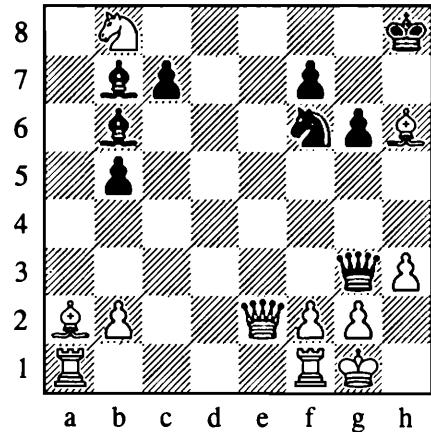
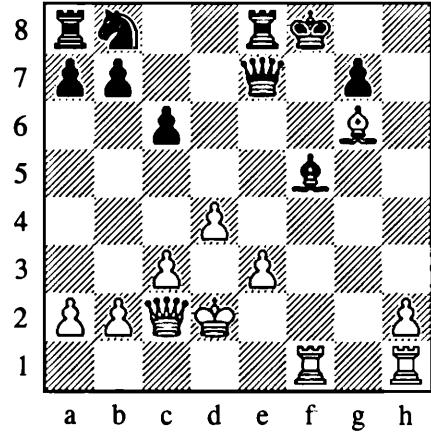
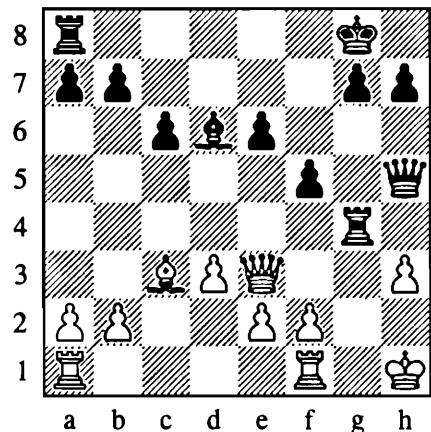
20.♗xg7! d5 The main point is 20...♔xg7 21.♗g2† ♔h8 22.♗g5 and White wins. **21.exd5 ♗e8 22.♗xe8†! ♗xe8 23.♗xf6 h5 24.♗g5† ♔h7 25.♗d3† 1–0**

(8) P. Chen – Teichmann, Canberra 2011

28.♗e8! Black resigned, due to: 28...♗xe8 29.♗xe8† ♗xe8 30.♗xf6† ♔g8 31.♗b3†

(9) Khairullin – Ni Hua, Khanty-Mansiysk 2011

20...♗xg4! 21.♗xg4 21.♗xg4 ♗xe5 is the basic point.
21...♗d6 22.♗f3 ♗g5 23.h3 f5 Black is winning.
24.♗e3 ♗xg4† 25.♔h1 (Diagram A) **25...♗e8?!**
25...♗g3! would have won the game immediately.
26.f4 ♗c5 27.♗f3 ♗h4 28.♗xh5 ♗xh5 Black won on move 57... 0–1



(10) Zivic – Zivkovic, Nis (blitz) 2010

1.♗g6†! fxg6 2.♗af1† ♗f5 3.♗xg6 (Diagram B) The point; the pin is decisive. **3...♗xe3† 4.♔d1 ♗e1†** The only defence, but the ending after **5.♗xe1 ♗xe1† 6.♔xe1 ♗xc2 7.♗xc2** is winning for White anyway. 1–0

(11) Kamsky – Svidler, Khanty-Mansiysk 2011

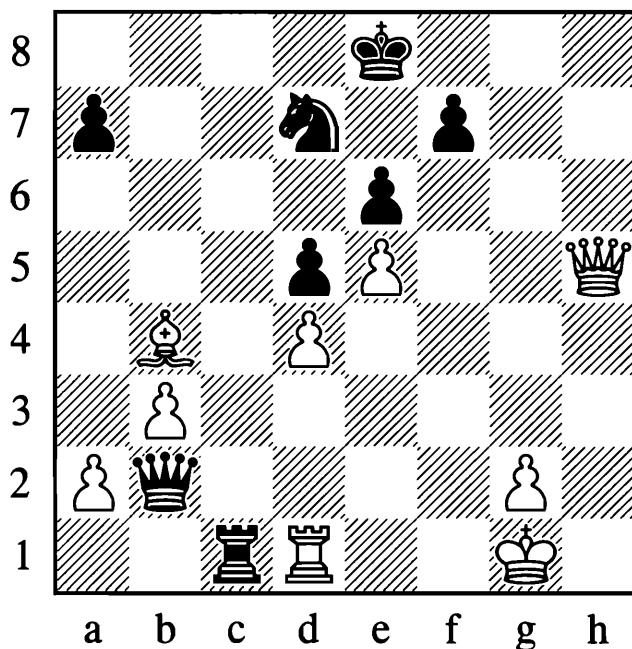
26...♗e2! 26...♗g3 27.♗c6 ♗e2 28.♗c3 ♗xf2† 29.♔h1 ♗xc3 30.bxc3 ♗xc6 31.♗fd1 ♗c5 32.♗d2 ♗xg2† 33.♔h2 ♗d6† 34.♔g1 ♗c5† would have been enough to qualify for the next round of the World Cup, as Svidler had already won the first game. However, Svidler went for more. **27.♗c3 27.♗xe2 ♗g3** (Diagram C) with mate to follow. **27...♗xf2** White is mated. **28.♗c6 ♗xf1† 0–1**

(12) Andreikin – Dreev, Baku 2011

25.♗xg7! ♗g6 25...♗xg7 26.♗g5 ♗xg5 27.♗xg5† ♔h7 28.♗d7 and White wins. **26.♗f6! 1–0**

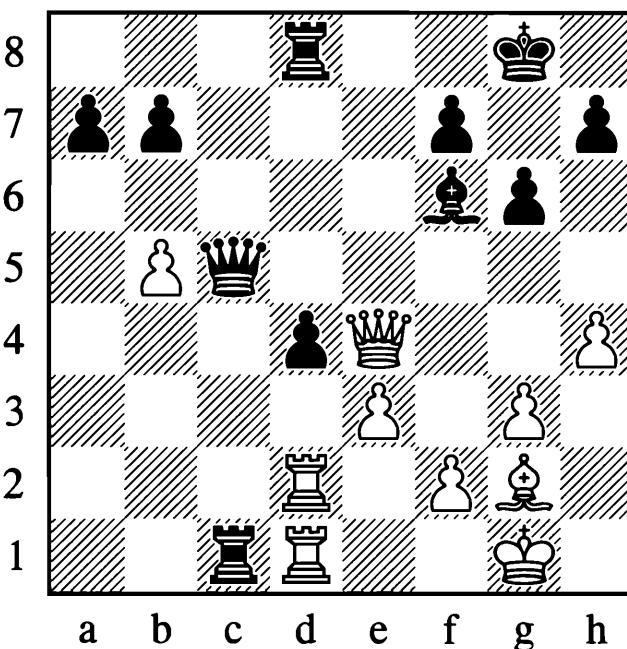
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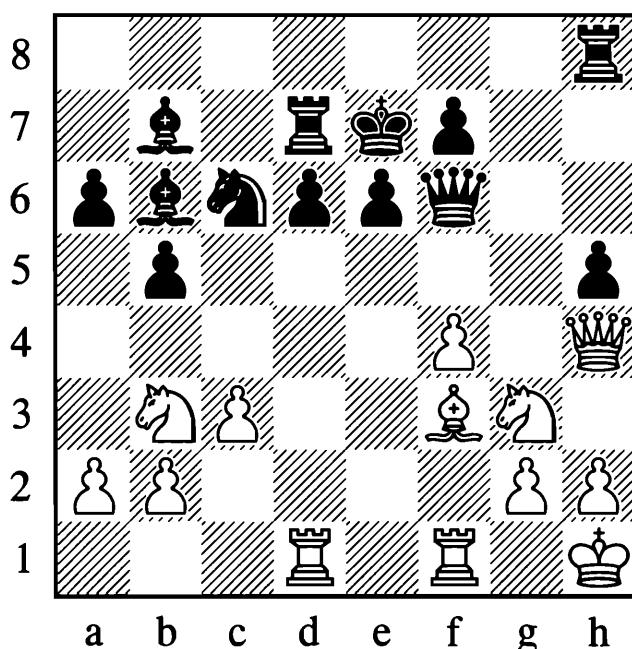
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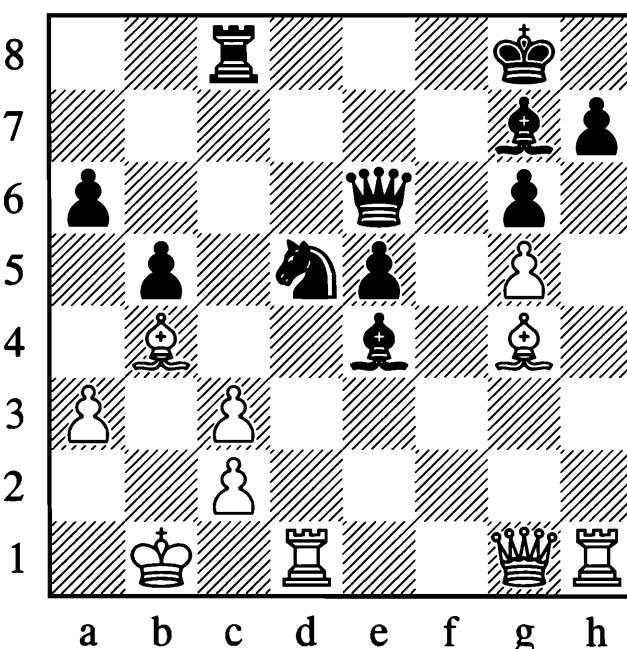
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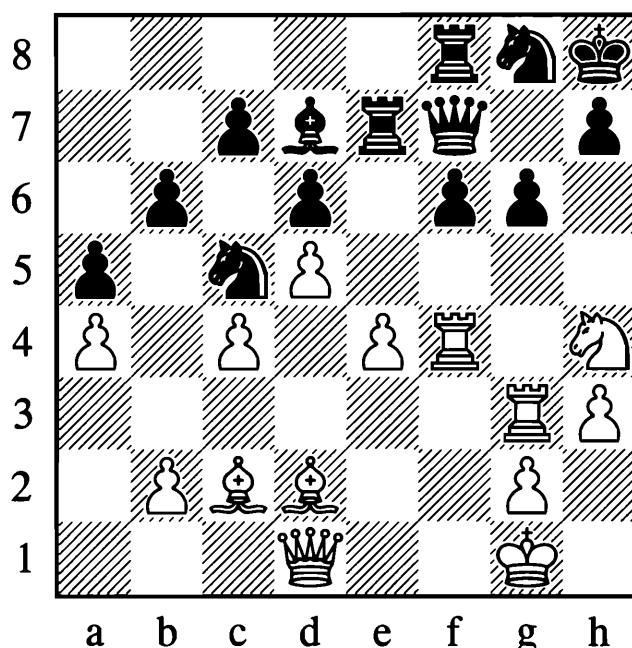
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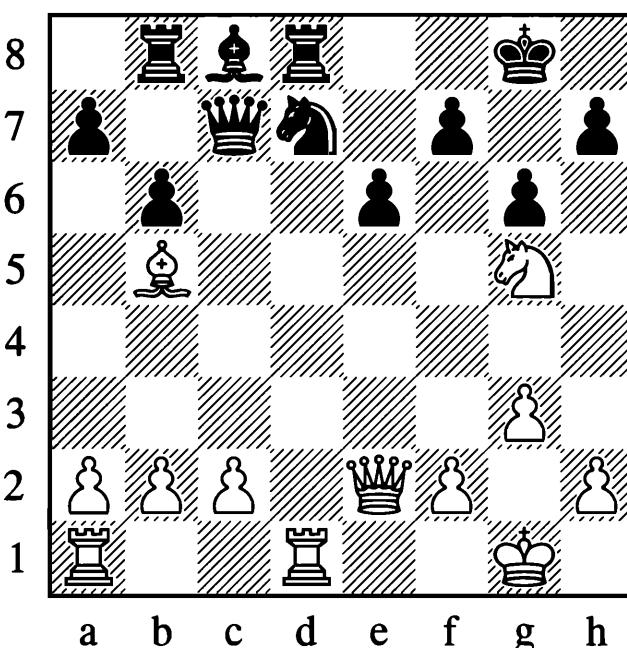
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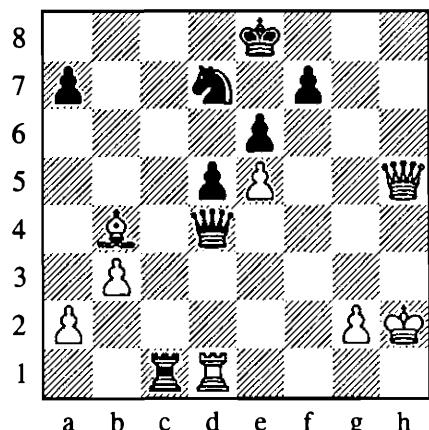
(13) Zherebukh – Eljanov, Khanty-Mansiysk 2011

Black is winning, but has to work out exactly how to do it. 27... $\mathbb{W}xd4\#$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ (Diagram A) 28... $\mathbb{B}xd1?$ The winning move was 28... $\mathbb{W}xb4!$ when next ... $\mathbb{W}f4\#$ is highly useful. 29. $\mathbb{W}h8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 30. $\mathbb{W}xf8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 31. $\mathbb{W}d6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 32. $\mathbb{W}c6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}a5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 34. $\mathbb{W}d6\#$ 1–0

(14) Peters – Coleman, Los Angeles 2011

25. $\mathbb{Q}f5\#$! 1–0 Black resigned because of 25... $\mathbb{exf}5$ 26. $\mathbb{B}fe1\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 27. $\mathbb{B}xe5\#$! $dxe5$ 28. $\mathbb{B}xd7\#$.

A

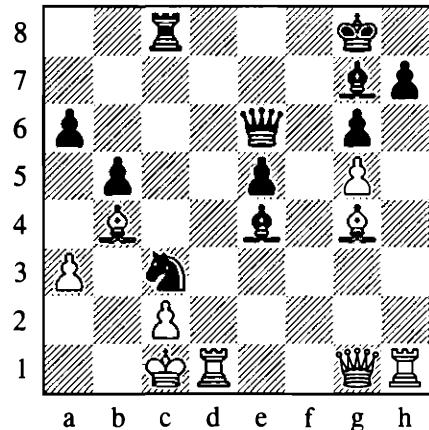
**(15) Su.B. Hansen – Carlhammar, Gothenburg 2011**

26. $\mathbb{Q}xg6\#$! 26.e5 $dxe5$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}xg6\#$ is essentially the same combination (and not 27. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ $exf4!\infty$). 27... $hxg6$ 28. $\mathbb{B}h4\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 29. $\mathbb{B}h7\#$! The only difference. 29... $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ 30. $\mathbb{W}h5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}xg6\#$ 26... $hxg6$ 27. $\mathbb{B}h4\#$ 27.e5!? $dxe5$ 28. $\mathbb{B}h4\#$ transposes to the line above, and not taking the pawn does not work either. 27... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 28. $\mathbb{W}h5\#$ 28. $\mathbb{W}c1?$ also wins. 28... $\mathbb{B}fe8$ 29. $\mathbb{W}h8\#$ 1–0 Black resigned due to 29... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}h6\#$.

(16) Matthiesen – Su.B. Hansen, Denmark 2009

The back-rank pin decided the game after: 37... $\mathbb{dx e 3!}$ 38. $\mathbb{B}xd8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ 39. $\mathbb{W}e8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 40. $\mathbb{W}xd8$ $e2!$ 0–1

B

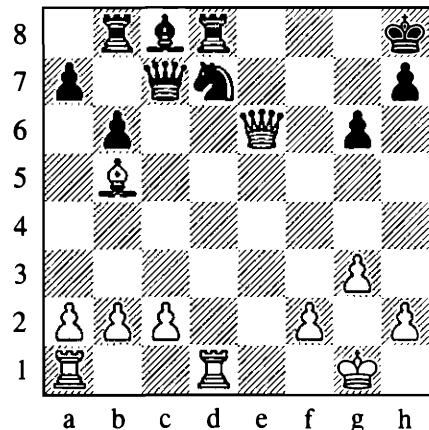
**(17) Areshchenko – Korobov, Plovdiv 2010**

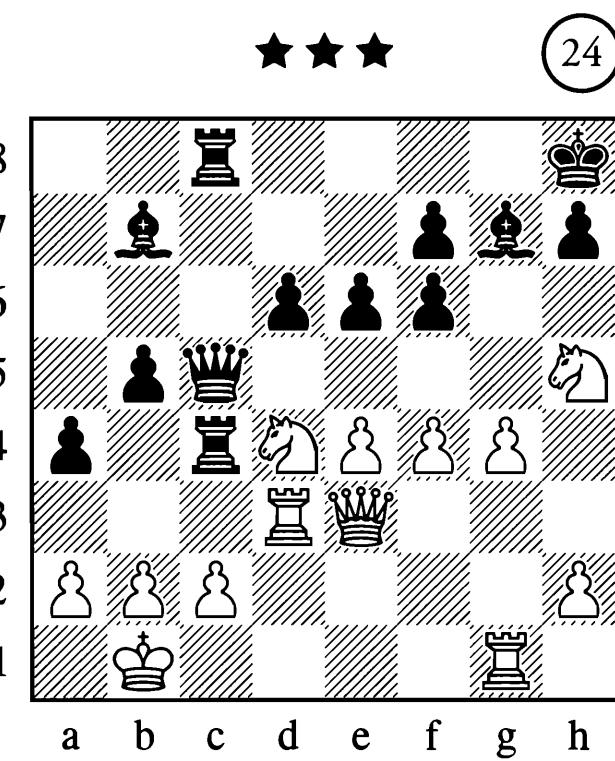
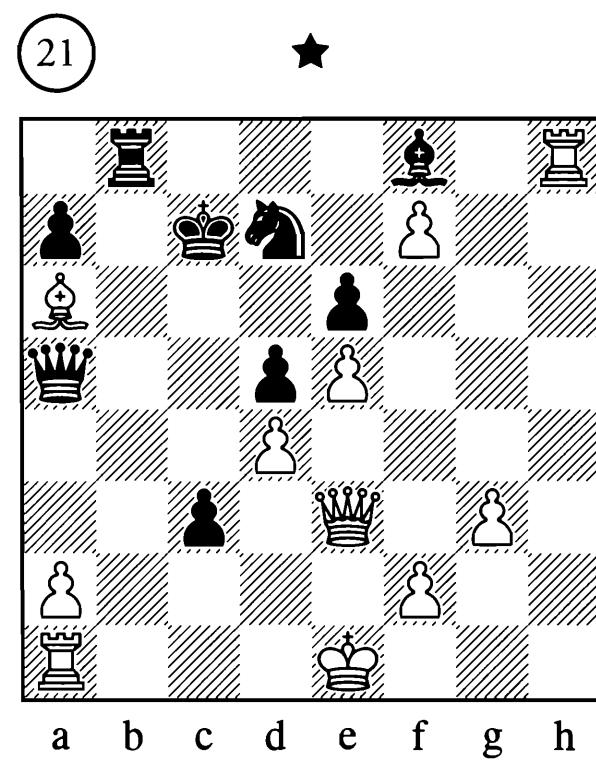
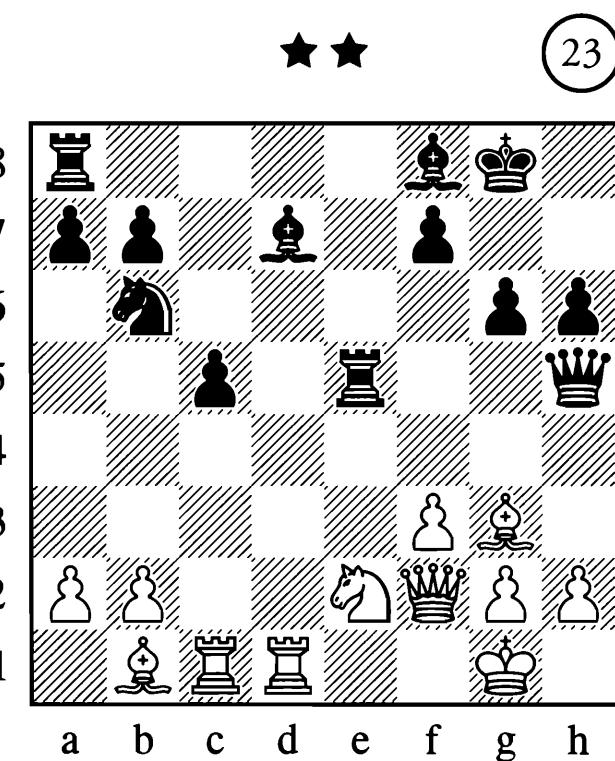
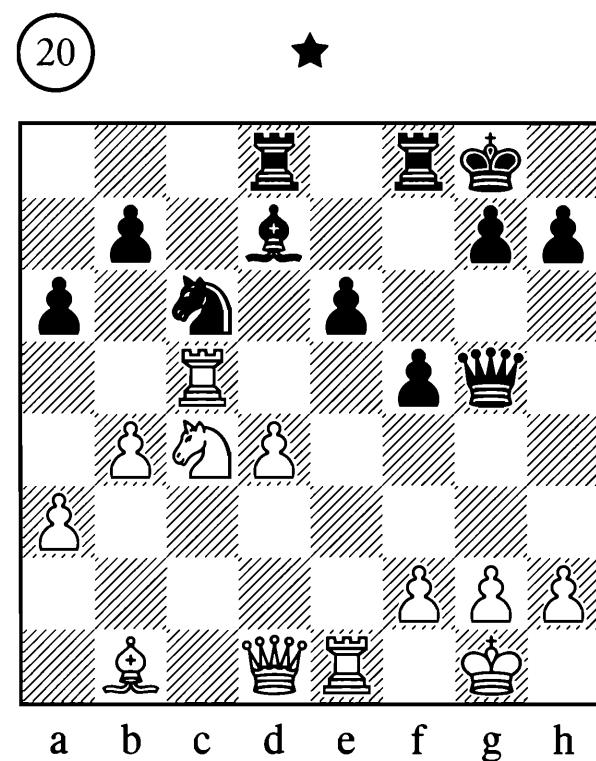
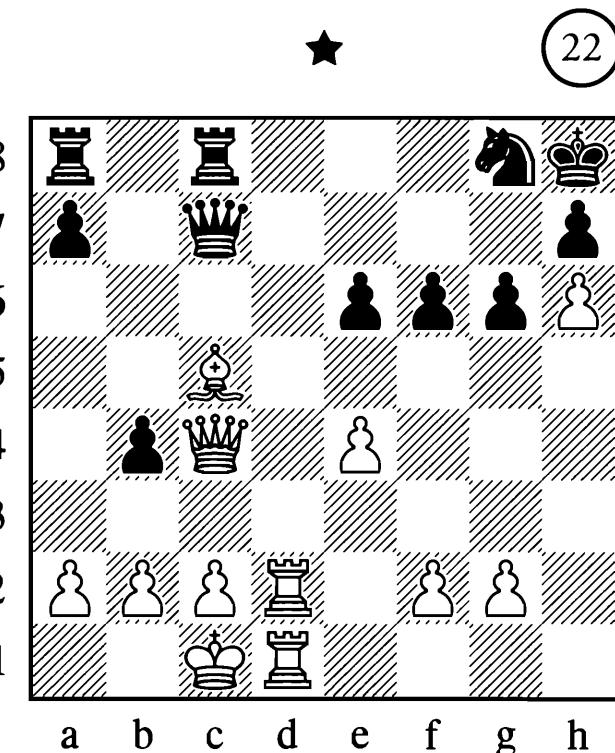
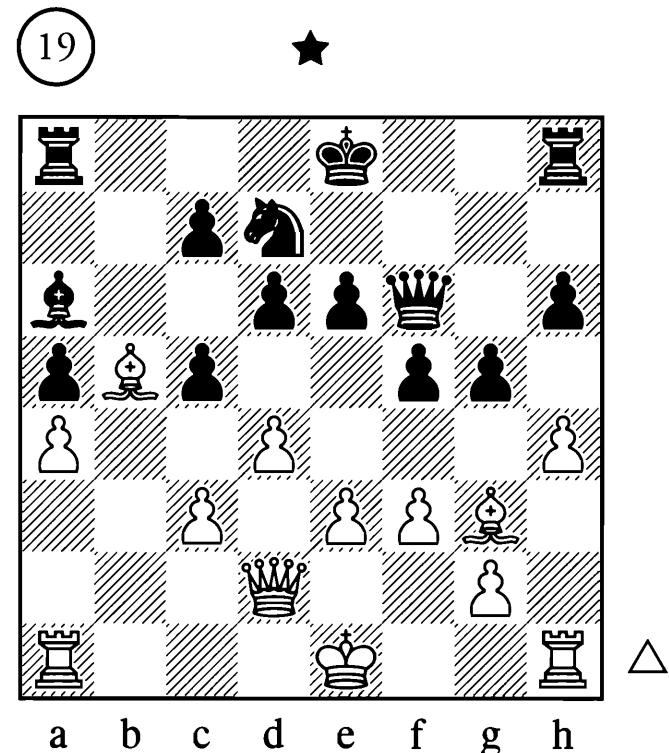
26... $\mathbb{Q}xc3\#$! 27. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ A more complicated line goes: 27. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ (Diagram B) 27... $\mathbb{W}a2!$ 28. $\mathbb{W}h2!$ $\mathbb{W}a1\#$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{B}d8\#$ (29... $\mathbb{Q}xd1?$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}e6\#$ would be embarrassing) 30. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd1\#$ 31. $\mathbb{B}xd1$ $\mathbb{B}xd1$ 32. $\mathbb{B}xd1$ $\mathbb{W}d4\#$ And Black wins eventually. 27... $\mathbb{W}b3\#$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{B}xc2$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}e6\#$ $\mathbb{W}xe6$ 30. $\mathbb{B}d8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}a1$ $\mathbb{Q}xh1$ 32. $\mathbb{W}f1$ $\mathbb{W}f7$ 33. $\mathbb{W}xh1$ $\mathbb{B}f2$ Black is in control and won eventually. 34. $\mathbb{B}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}xa3$ 35. $\mathbb{W}a8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 36. $\mathbb{W}xa6$ $\mathbb{B}f1$ 37. $\mathbb{B}xf1$ $\mathbb{W}xf1\#$ 38. $\mathbb{Q}a2$ $\mathbb{W}c4\#$ 39. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{W}e4\#$ 40. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{W}c4\#$ 41. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{W}e4\#$ 42. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 43. $\mathbb{W}xb5$ $\mathbb{Q}xg5\#$ 44. $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{W}f3\#$ 45. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{W}f5\#$ 46. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{W}e6\#$ 47. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 0–1

(18) Rublevsky – Zhou Jianchao, Ningbo (rapid) 2010

19. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $f xe 6$ 20. $\mathbb{W}xe6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ (Diagram C) White lacks a heavy punch as a follow-up. But it is not needed, as the pin decides. 21. $\mathbb{B}d2!$ $a6$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}c6$ $b5$ 23. $\mathbb{B}ad1$ $\mathbb{B}b6$ 24. $\mathbb{B}xd7$ 1–0 24... $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ is hopeless after 25. $\mathbb{W}f6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}d5\#$.

C





(19) Prohaszka – Pacher, Cappelle la Grande 2011

19.♕xd7† ♕xd7 20.♕e5! (Diagram A) White won the exchange, as 20...dxe5 21.dxe5† wins the queen. White won on move 40... 1–0

(20) Le Roux – Iordachescu, Mulhouse 2011

21...♝xd4! This works because of 22.♗xd4?! ♜c6! and g2 comes under fire. 22.♗e5 ♜b5 Black is a good pawn up. **23.♔h1 b6** A quicker win existed in 23...♗f4! 24.f3 b6 25.♗c1 ♗h4 26.g3 ♗h5 27.♗c7 ♛xf3 with a total collapse. **24.♗c7 ♗f4 25.a4? ♜e2! 0–1**

(21) Kuljasevic – I. Ivanisevic, San Marino 2006

23...♝b1† 0–1

(22) D. Mastrovasilis – Short, Porto Carras 2011

White is pinned, but decided the game with a discovered attack, showing that the c8-rook was overloaded.

25.♕f8! ♘xc4 25...♝e7 26.♕g7† ♔g8 27.♘xe6# is no better. **26.♕g7# 1–0**

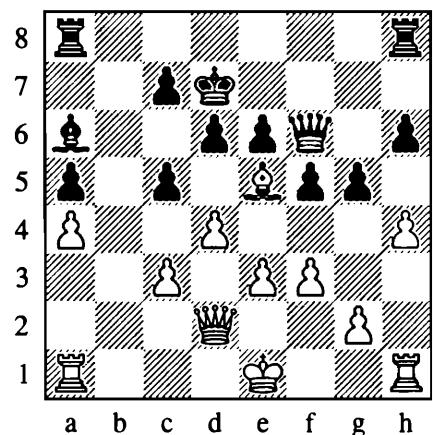
(23) Moiseenko – Esen, Khanty-Mansiysk 2011

24.♝f4 ♘g5 25.♝xg6 ♜ee8 Black is simply lost. After 25...fxg6 (Diagram B) 26.f4 wins. **26.♝xf8 ♔xf8 27.♜xc5 ♘e3 28.♘xe3 ♜xe3 29.♝f4 ♜e6 30.♝h5 1–0**

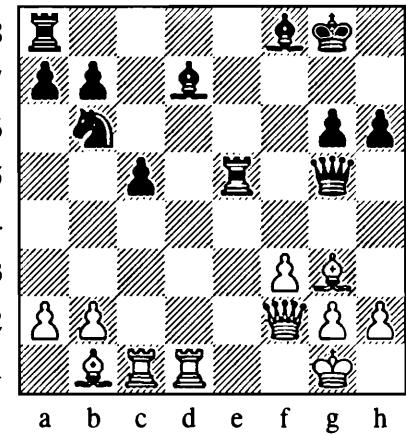
(24) A. Vovk – Jankovic, Cappelle la Grande 2011

25...♝xe4! Making use of the X-ray from g7 to d4. **26.♘xe4 f5 27.♘e2** 27.gxf5 ♜xd4 28.♗gd1 (Diagram C) was not better. Black destroys the white king's position with: 28...♝xb2! 29.♔xb2 ♜xc2† 30.♔b1 ♜c1† 31.♔b2 b4 Mate cannot be averted for long. **27...♝xd4** Black is winning and clinched the point on move 48... 0–1

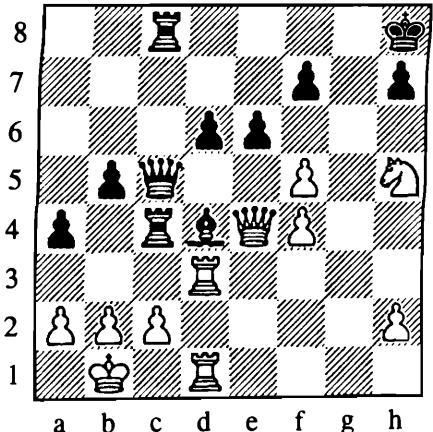
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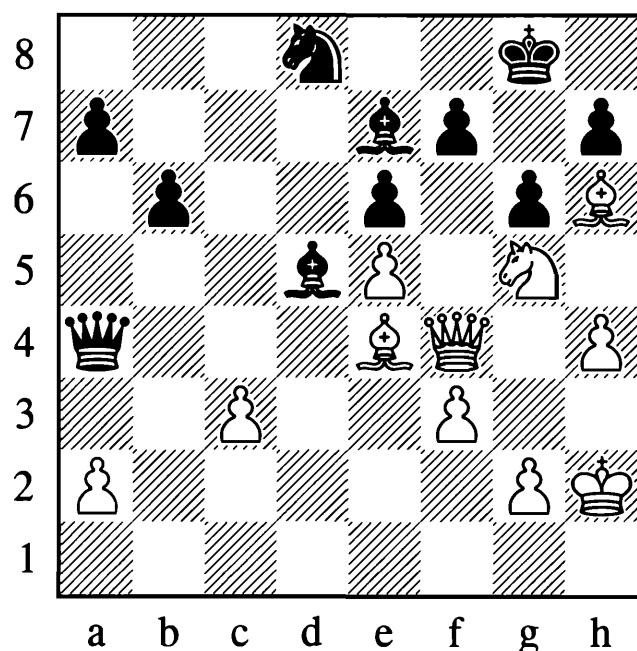


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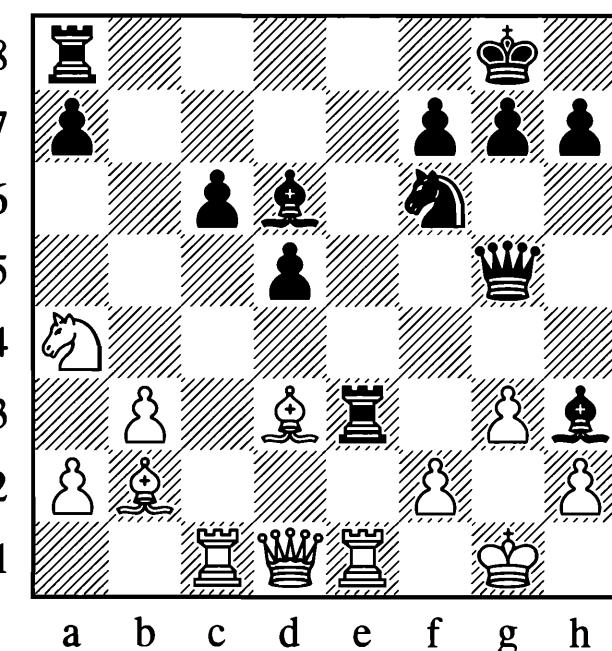
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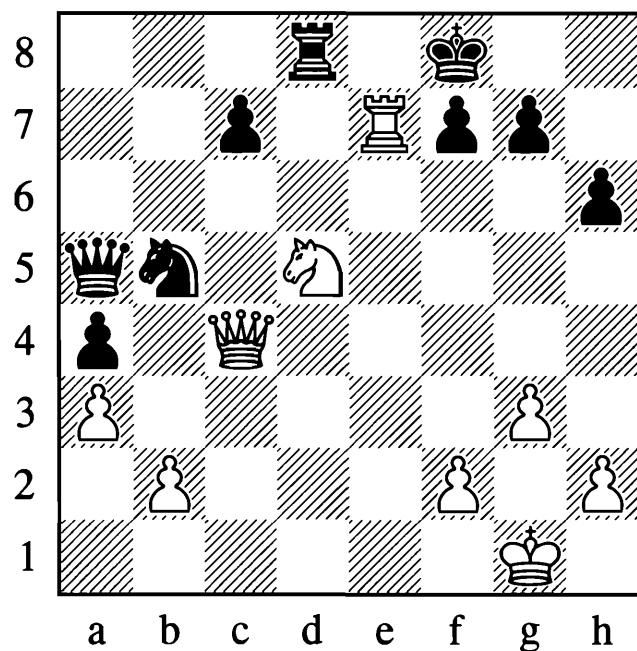
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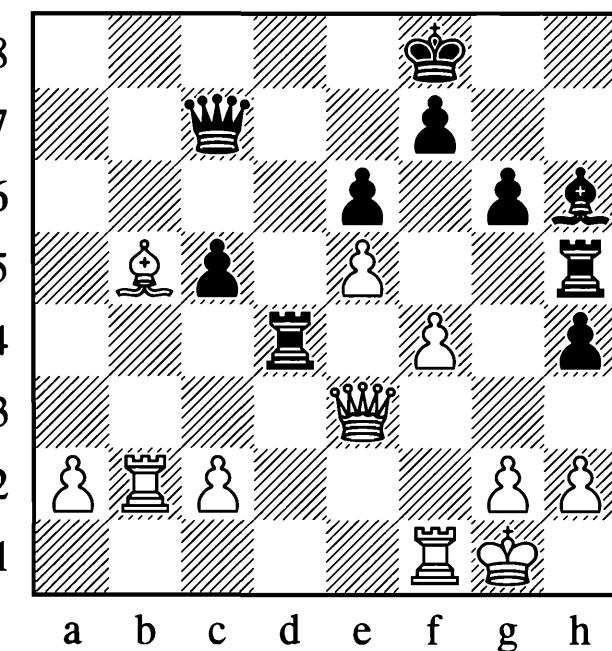
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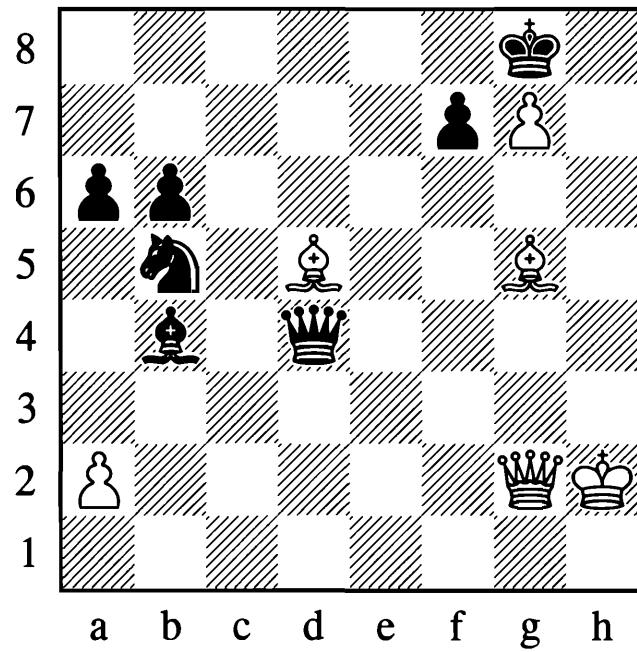
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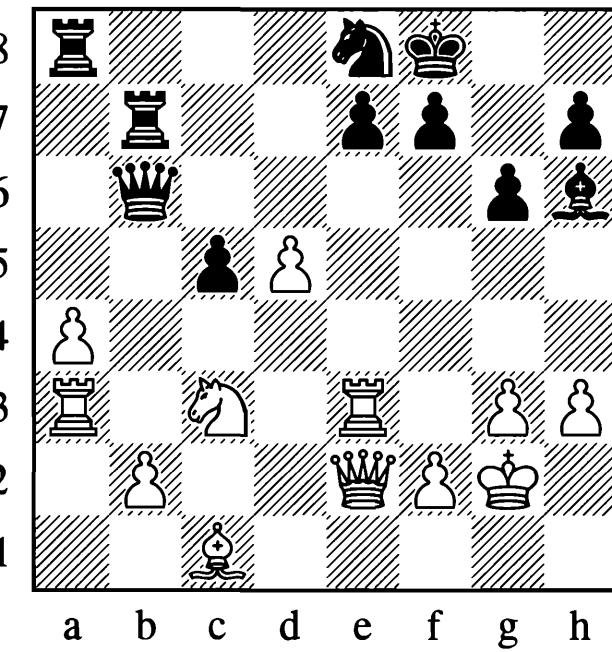
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(25) Sveshnikov – Oll, Kuibyshev 1986

Black probably thought he was in control, until White played **25.♘xh7!** destroying the black position. The knight is immune because of **♕xg6†**, winning the queen. And other moves simply don't work: **25...♗xe4 26.♘f6† ♕h8 27.♘xe4** With a deadly attack: **27...♛e8 28.♘f6 ♜b5 29.♘g5 ♖c6 30.♘g4** Mate is not far away. **1–0**

(26) Kasimdzhanov – Parligras, Turkey 2011

White missed the chance to deliver a deadly combination with: **40.♝xf7†!** Instead the game went: **40.♝e5?** **♔g8?** (**40...♞d6** would have saved the day) **41.♞e7† 1–0** **40...♝xf7 41.♞f4†** (Diagram A) **41...♝d5** The only move that avoids mate: **41...♚f6 42.♛e6† ♔g5 43.h4#;** **41...♚f8 42.♞g6† ♔e8 43.♛e6#;** **41...♚e8 42.♛e6† ♔f8 43.♞g6# 42.♛xd5† ♔e7 43.♛e6† ♔d8 44.♛g8† ♔e7 45.♛xg7†** White wins.

(27) Kreisl – Tripoteau, Merlimont 2011

39.♝xf7†! 1–0 Black resigned because of **39...♝xf7 40.g8=♛†! ♔xg8 41.♞f6†** winning the queen.

(28) Alvarez Pedraza – Pozo Vera, Ourense 2009

Black has already won a pawn, but he went for more, banking on a discovered check: **17...♝xg3!** **18.hxg3** **18.♝xe3** is met by: **18...♞xh2†!** **19.♔xh2 ♛g2#** **18...♝xg3† 19.♔h2** (Diagram B) **19...♞g4†!** **19...♝g2† 20.♔xh3** **♝xf2** also wins. **20.♔xg3 ♗e3† 21.♔xh3** **21.♔f3 ♛g4†** with mate to follow. **21...♛g2† 22.♔h4 ♛h2† 0–1** White resigned due to **23.♔g5 ♛h6#.**

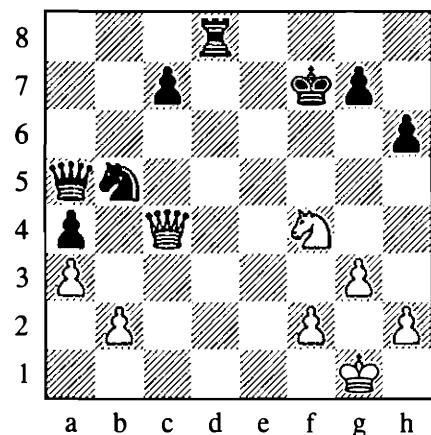
(29) Lujan – Sharevich, Dresden (ol) 2008

26...♝xf4! **27.♛h3** Black's point was that after **27.♝xf4** she has **27...♝xe5 28.♛c1** (**28.♝xf7† ♔xf7 29.♛f3†** **♝f5** does not help) **28...♝xf4 29.♛xf4** **♝e1†**, when the discovered check decides the game. **27...♛xe5** Black won... **0–1**

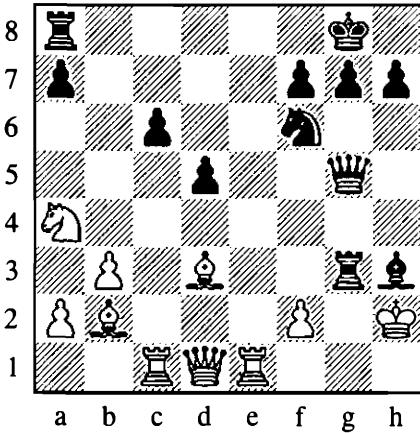
(30) Sargissian – Caruana, Ohrid 2009

21.♝e6! A brilliant discovered attack. The pin from h6 to c1 turns out to be a weakness for Black. **21...fxe6** **22.♞xh6† ♔g8** (Diagram C) **23.♝b3!** The point. Black now ends up a piece down, or is mated after **23...♛xb3** **24.♛xe6† ♔h8 25.♛f7** when defending against **♛f8#** allows **♝g7#.** **1–0**

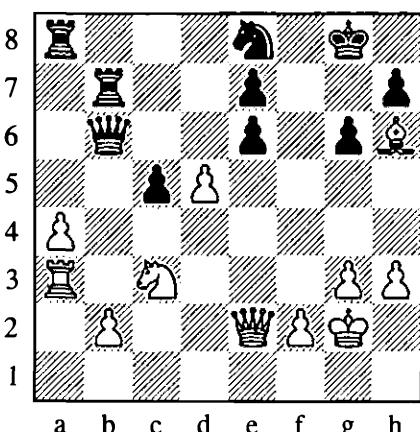
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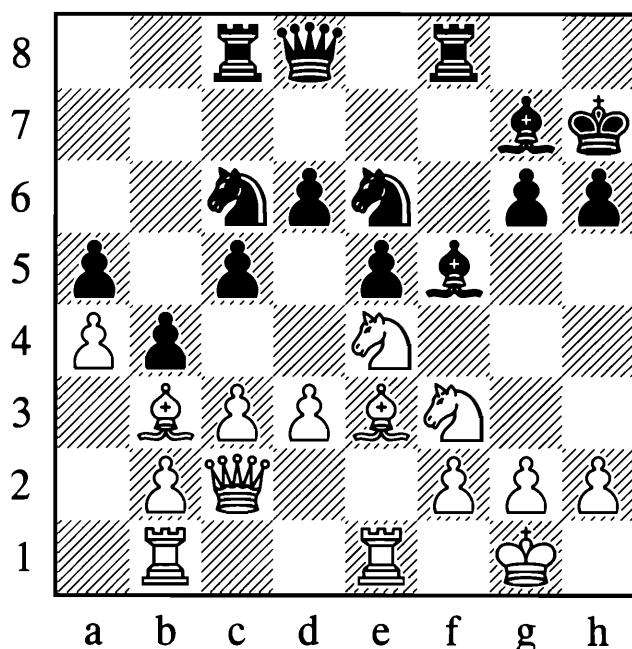


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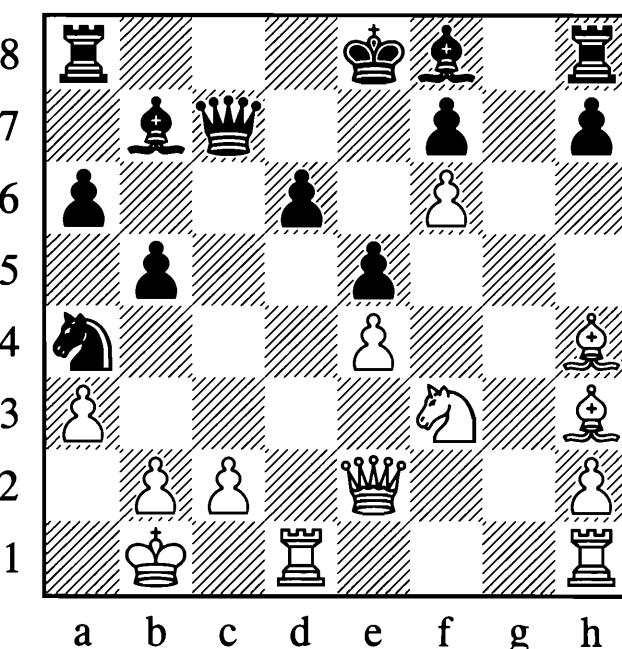
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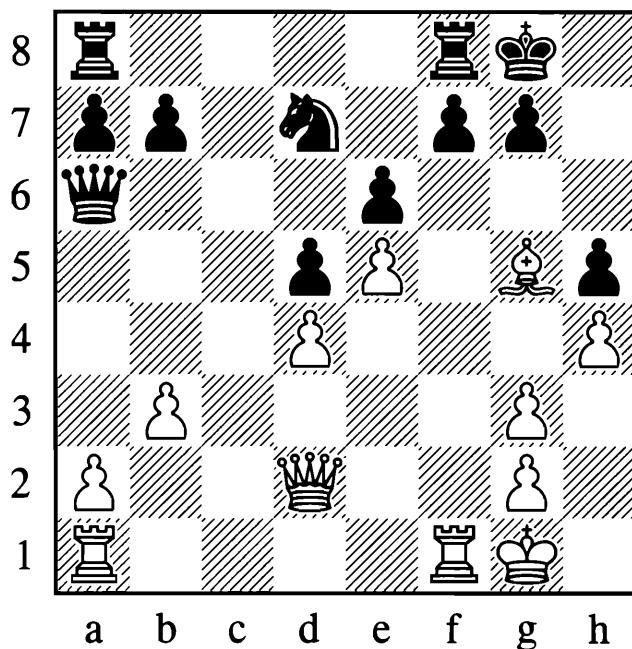
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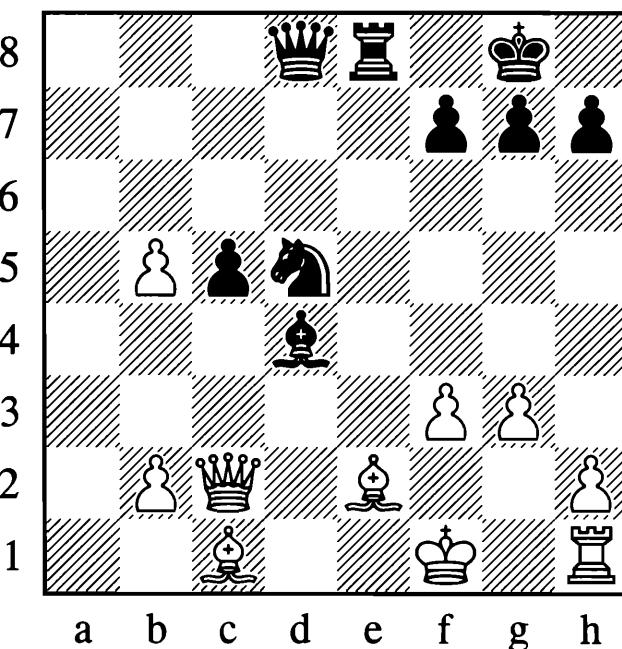
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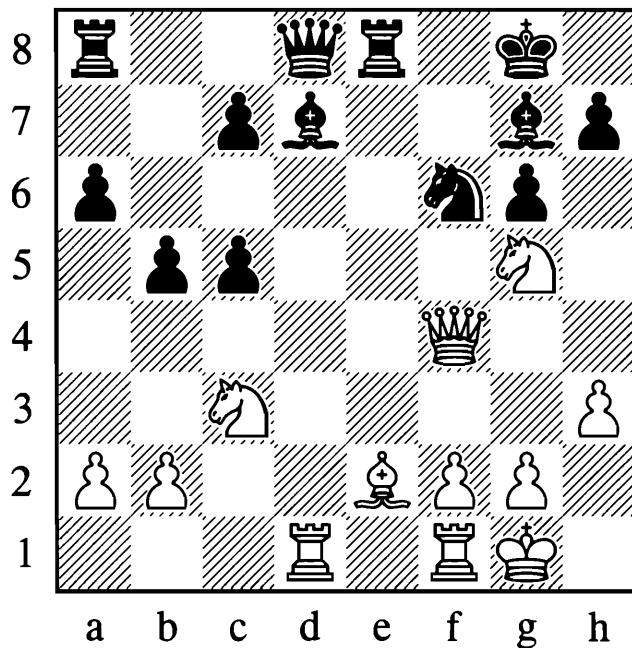
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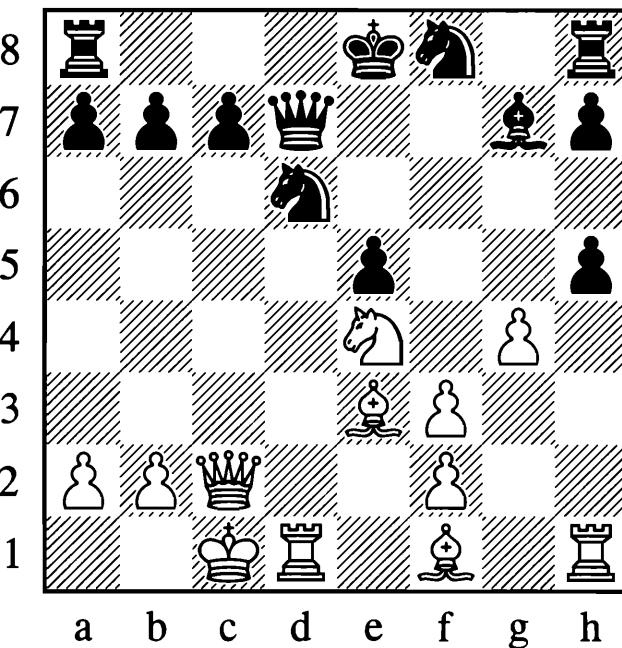
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(31) Degraeve – Lagarde, Lille 2011

22.♕xe6 ♕xe6 23.♗fg5† A basic reloader; White wins. **23...hxg5 24.♗xg5† ♔g8 25.♗xe6 ♕d7 26.♗xf8 ♕xf8 27.d4 cxd4 1–0**

(32) Lahno – Khotenashvili, Tbilisi 2011

17.♖f6! A simple reloader. **17...gxf6 17...♗xf6 18.exf6 ♕b6** is not working either. White plays coolly **19.♖ad1** with a winning attack. For example: **19...♔h7** (anticipating **♕g5**). **20.fxg7! ♕g8 21.♖xf7 ♕xg7 22.♖df1 ♕ag8 23.♖1f6!** and Black is mated. Also hopeless is: **17...♕b6 18.♗xg7 ♕xg7 19.♕g5† ♔h7 20.♕xh5† ♔g8 21.♕g4†** (21.♗f4 also gives a winning attack, but the main line is much more convincing.) **21...♔h7 22.♗f6!** With the threat **♕h5†, ♕g5†** and **♕h6#** White forces Black to comply with the reloader. **22...♗xf6 23.exf6** Black is busted. He has to give up the queen or be mated after **23...♕g8 24.♕h5#**. **18.exf6 ♕fc8** Black also has no chance of survival after: **18...♗xf6 19.♖xf6** (of course **19.♕g5†** exists, but as this could occur after **17...♗xf6 18.exf6 gxf6**, this line is more convincing) **19...♕fc8 20.♕g5† ♔f8 21.♖af1 ♕c7 22.♖h6 19.♕h6 ♗xf6 20.♕g5†! ♔f8 21.♕xf6** Black resigned due to **21...♕c7 22.♕h8†** winning a rook.

(33) Ni Hua – Stolberg-Rohr, Esbjerg 2011

20.♖c4†! Black resigned. White wins after **20...bxc4 21.♕xc4† ♔h8 22.♗f7†** as usual: **22...♔g8 23.♗h6† ♔h8 24.♕g8† ♕xg8 25.♗f7#**

(34) Can – Guliev, Turkey 2011

Black looks under great pressure and he would be finished except for the following reloader that leads to a favourable endgame. **20...♕c3! 21.bxc3 ♗xc3† 22.♗b2 ♗xe2** This is not winning, but Black's chances have gone from dim to better. **23.♗xe5?!** White tries complications, but they do not work. **23.♗f5!** was better with some compensation, but Black is still to be preferred after ...♗e2-f4-e6. **23...dxe5! 24.♗d7† ♕d8 25.♗g4† ♕c7 26.♗d7† 26.♗xe2 ♕xe4** gives Black great chances in the endgame. **26...♔c6 27.♗xf7 ♗f4 28.♗d7† ♕b6 29.a4 ♕c5 30.♗f5 ♕c8 31.♗d1 bxa4 32.♗xc8 ♕axc8 33.♗dd7 ♕c6 34.♗e1 ♕hd8 35.♗xd8 ♕xd8 36.♗xh7 a3† 37.♔a2 ♗e2 38.♔a5 ♕b8 39.♗c7† ♕d6 40.♗e7 ♕b2† 41.♔a1 ♗d4 0–1**

(35) Petritaj – Ntirlis, Pyrgos 2011

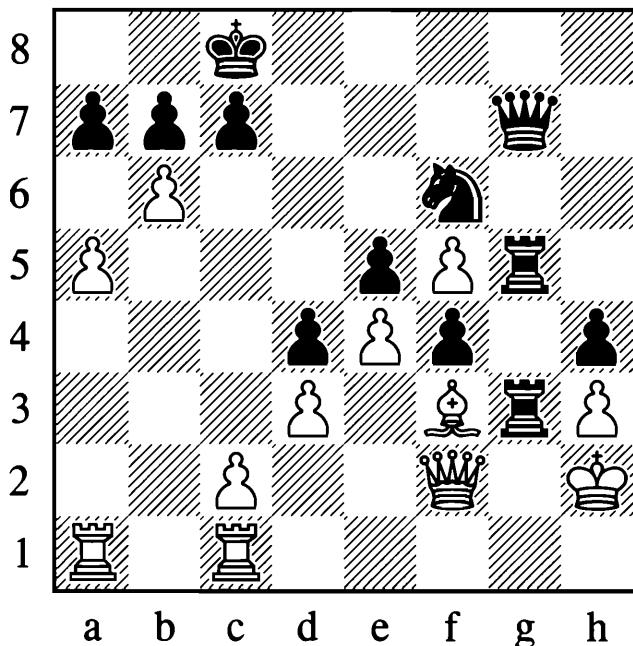
25...♗e3! was the winning move. White is not allowed to hide on g2 with the king. Instead Black played **25...♗e3†?** and the game was later drawn. **26.b3** This is the best chance, as can be seen from the following line: **26.♕d1 ♕xc1 27.♕xc1 c4!** (**27...♗e3† 28.♗e1 c4** works less elegantly. It is better to keep the knight flexible. But obviously Black still wins.) **28.♕d2** (**28.h4 ♗e3† 29.♗g1 ♗f5** and the white position collapses. **28.♕xc4? ♗e3†** and **29...♗xc4** followed by an invasion with the queen.) **28...♗e3† 29.♗e1 ♗g2† 30.♗d1 ♕a8!** White is lost. One possible line is: **31.♗c2 c3! 32.♕d3 ♕a4† 33.b3 ♕a2† 34.♗xc3 ♕e3+– 26...♗xc1 27.♕xc1 ♗e3† 28.♗e1 ♕d4** Black has a winning attack. **29.b6 ♗g4! 30.fxg4 ♕e4** Black wins. Obviously it does not make sense to see all of this in advance. Simply know that you want the knight to preside on e3, not the bishop, and then set up the reloader.

(36) L.E. Johannessen – Ker, Queenstown 2009

White has a winning attack no matter what, but he decided the game quickly with: **16.♗xd6!** Black resigned because of **16...cxd6 17.♔b5! ♕xb5 18.♗xd6†** and the double attack decides.

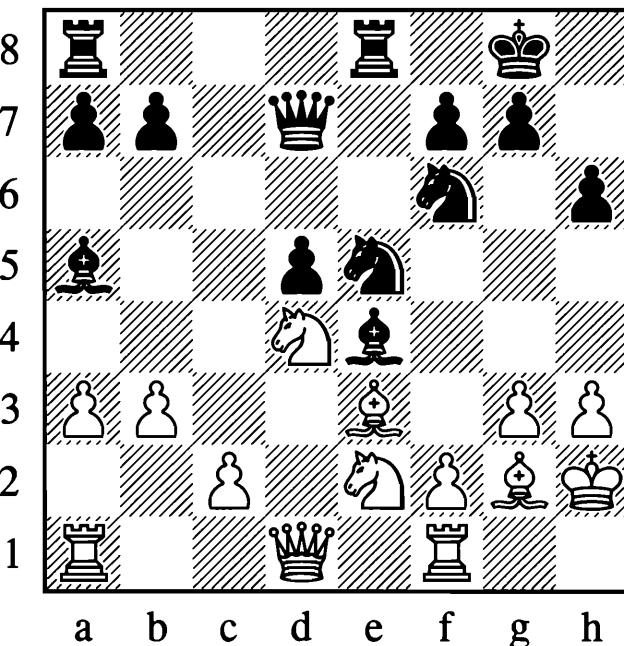
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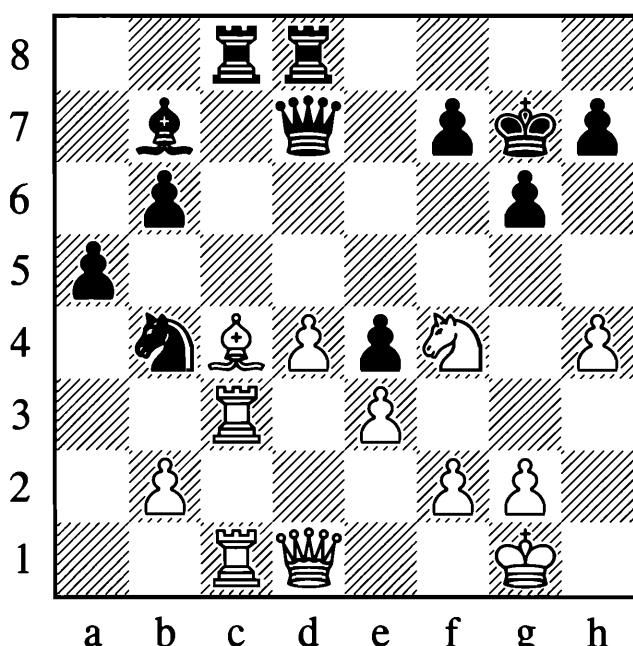
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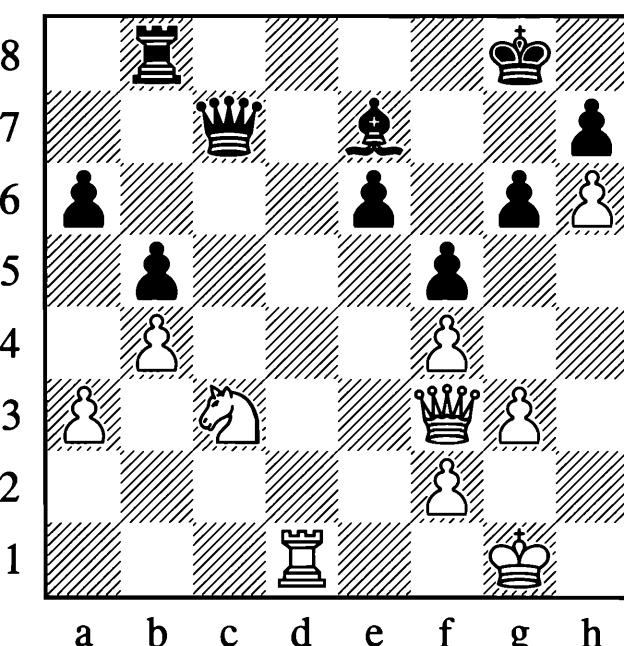
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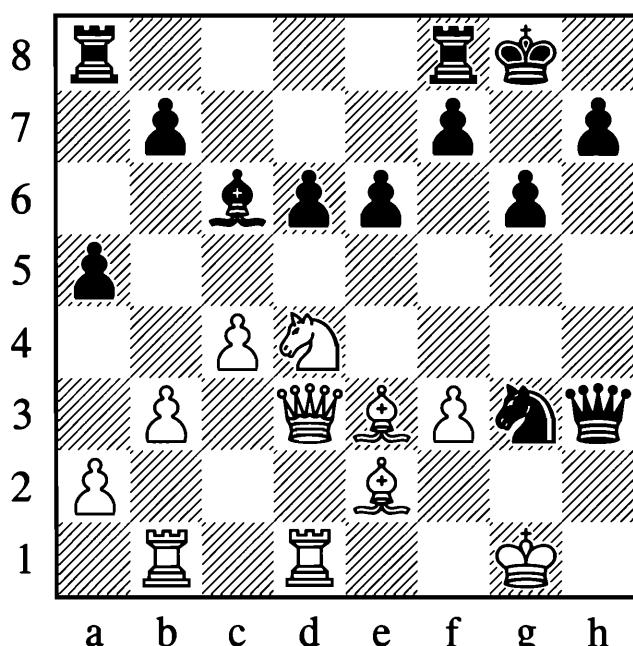
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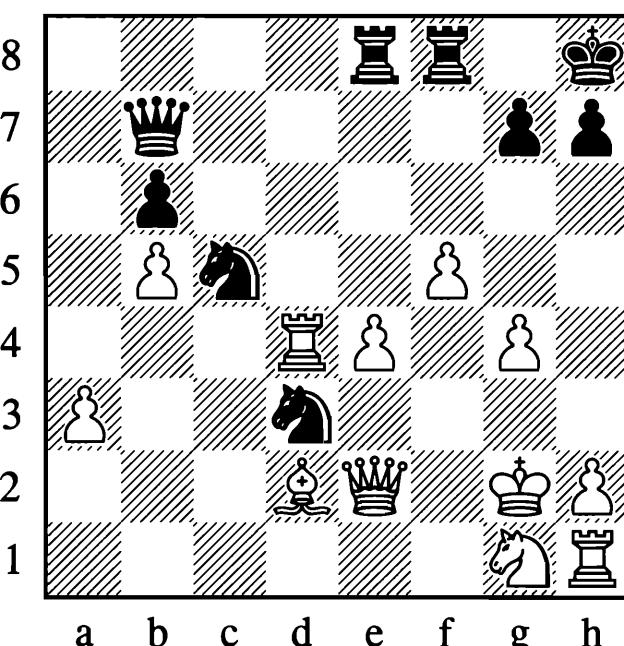
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(37) Mammadov – Vl. Georgiev, Golden Sands 2011

33...♝xh3†! The first reloader is on g3. **34.♚xh3 ♜g3† 35.♚h2 ♜g4†** The second is on g4 – and it works in an amusing way as well: **35...♛g4? 36.♜xg4** (**36.♛f1 ♜xf3** is no alternative, of course) **36...♜xg4† 37.♚h1 ♜xf2† 38.♚h2 f3** White is mated on the next move. **36.♜xg4 ♛xg4 37.♛f1 f3 38.♜a2 0–1**

(38) Bischoff – Meijers, Bundesliga 2010

Black probably thought all was safe and well, then a surprising move hit him, based on a reloader on e6. **23.♚e6! ♜xc3** The point was **23...fxe6 24.♜c7! ♜xc7 25.♜xc7 ♛xc7 26.♜xe6†** winning the queen. **24.♜xd7 ♜xc1 25.♛xc1 ♜xd7 26.♛c4** And White won... **1–0**

(39) P.H. Nielsen – B. Larsen, Denmark 1997

Black has sacrificed a piece, but does not have an easy finish available – or so it seems! **23...♚e4! 24.fxe4?!** **24.♛c3?** allows **24...♜xe2† 25.♜xe2 ♜xf3 26.♚f4 ♛h1† 27.♚f2 ♜xd1.** Maybe White's best fighting chance was **24.♛d2 ♜xb1 25.♜xb1 ♛h1† 26.♚f2 ♛xb1 27.♚xg3,** but Black would win the ending eventually. **24...♛h1† 25.♚f2 ♜xe4† 26.♛xe4 ♛xe4 27.♚f3 ♛h4† 28.♚g2 a4** The pawns are too strong for the minor pieces. Black is winning... **0–1**

(40) V. Popov – Khalifman, Aix-les-Bains 2011

19...♝eg4†! **19...♝fg4†** would give White some chances with **20.♚g1!†. 20.hxg4 20.♚g1 ♜xg2 21.♚xg2 ♜xe3** transposes. **20...♝xg4†** The first reloader. **21.♚g1 ♜xg2 22.♚xg2 ♜xe3!** And the second reloader motif is set up. Black has won a pawn fair and square. He later also won the game... **0–1**

(41) Atalik – Jojua, Vrachati 2011

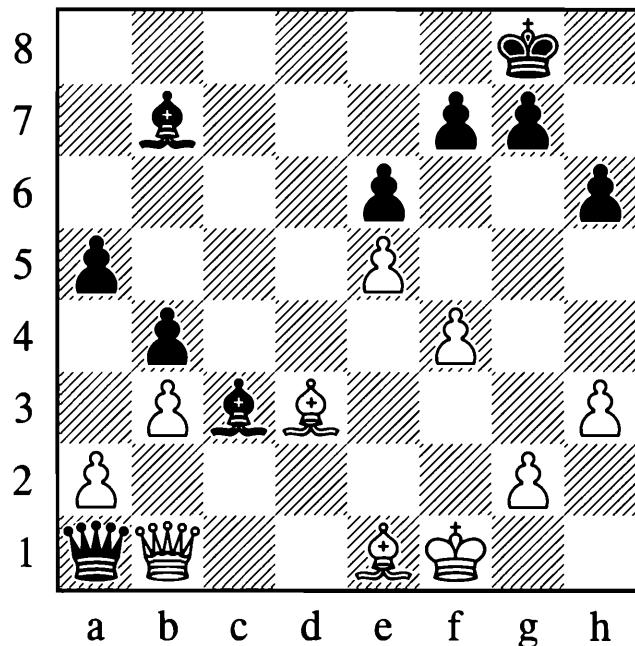
29.♝d5! White opens up the black king's position with a nice reloader. **29...exd5** Black might as well take the knight. After **29...♛b7 30.♝xe7† ♛xe7 31.♛c6!** he is lost all the same. **30.♛xd5† ♚f8 31.♛d4! ♛c4 31...♚d6 32.♛f6†!** and Black does not even get to lose a rook ending after returning the piece. Instead **31...♚e8 32.♛h8† ♚f8** is maybe the toughest defence. White wins after **33.♜e1† ♚d7 34.♛xh7† ♚c8** (**34...♚d6 35.♜d1†!** and the queen is lost) **35.♜e8† ♚b7** and now either **36.♛xc7† ♚xc7 37.h7!** or **36.♜xb8† ♚xb8 37.♛g8!.** **32.♛g7† ♚e8 33.♛h8† 1–0**

(42) Volkov – Bruzon Batista, Baku 2011

This is a really difficult position, because it requires some patience. **30...♜xe4!** **30...♜xe4 31.♛xd3 ♜xd2†** looks very dangerous, but it is not as effective: **32.♚f3! ♜xf3 33.♛xf3 ♜e2† 34.♚g3 ♛e7 35.♚f6! ♛e5†** (not **35...♜xf6?? 36.♛xe2!** while after **35...gxh6 36.♛f4** both players have their chances) **36.♛f4 ♜e3† 37.♚f2 ♜e2† 38.♚g3=** **31.♜xe4 ♜e8!!** The big point. Because of the pin, Black is able to bring the rook to e4, where it will cause a lot of damage. **32.♚f1 32.♚f3 ♜xe4 33.♛d1 ♜xg4† 34.♚f1 ♛d5 35.♛e2 ♜e4+ 32...♜xe4 33.♛g2 ♜e5! 34.♚h3 ♜c4 35.♚g5 ♜xg4! 36.♛xg4 36.♛xb7 ♜xd2† 37.♚e2 ♜xb7+ 36...♜xh1† 37.♚f2 ♜xh2† 38.♚f1 ♜xd2† 39.♚e1 ♜d3† 40.♚d1 ♜f2† 0–1**

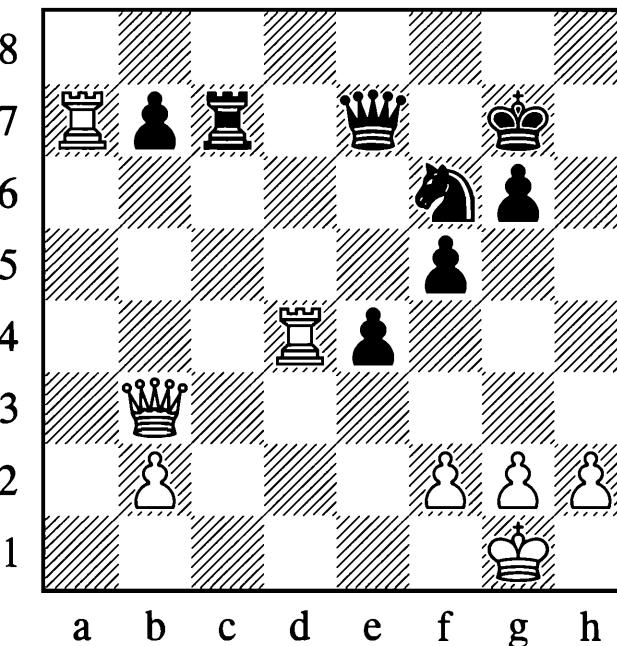
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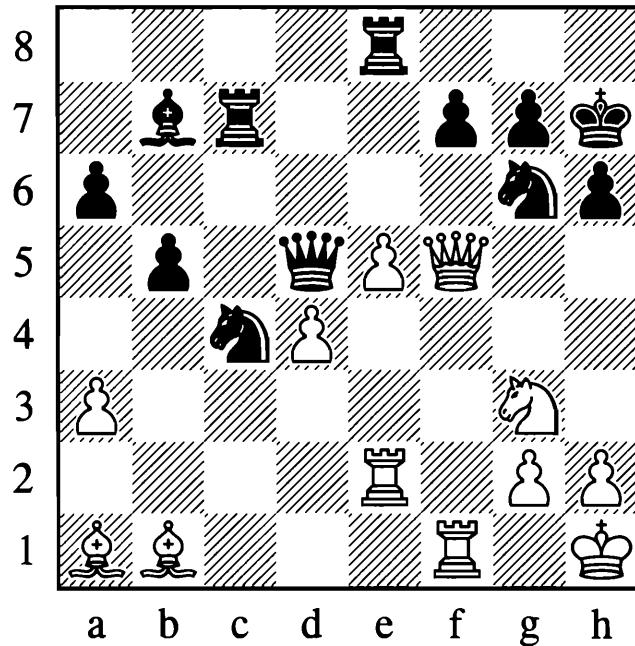
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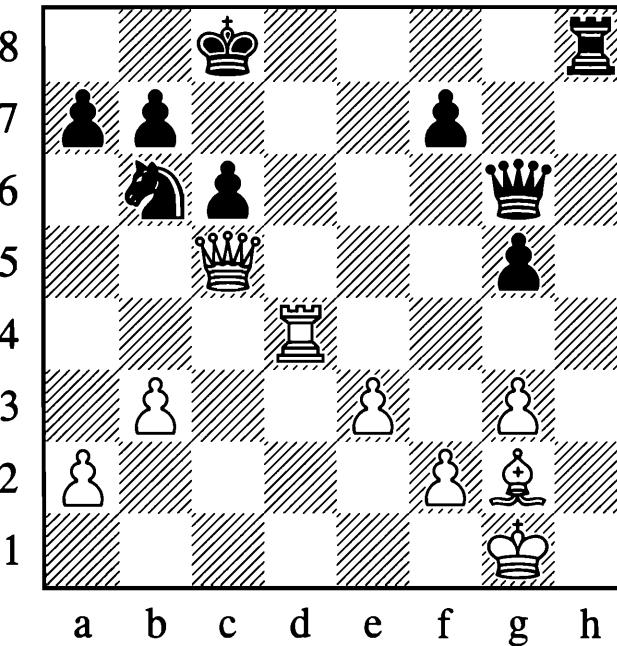
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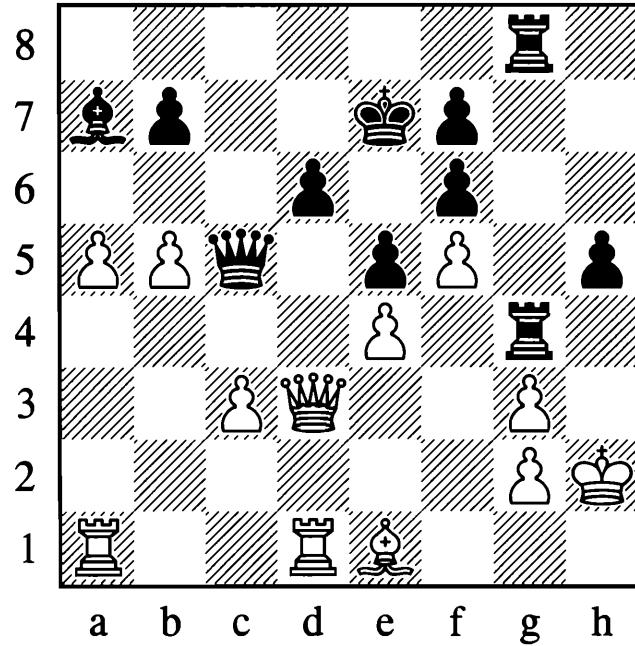
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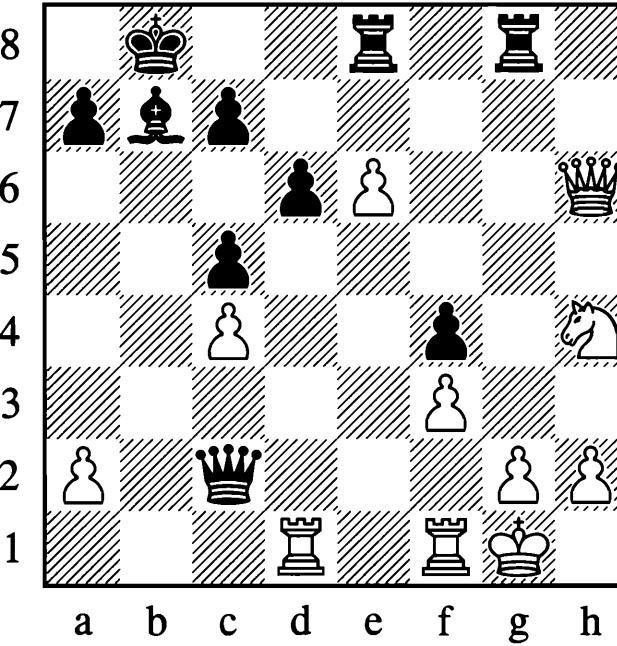
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(43) Uhlmann – B. Larsen, Las Palmas 1971

36... $\mathbb{Q}a6!$ White resigned due to 37. $\mathbb{W}xa1$ $\mathbb{Q}xd3\#$ 38. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}xa1$.

(44) Shen Yang – T. Kosintseva, Sochi (blitz) 2009

Blitz games rarely produce high levels of play, but they can produce instructive moments. 27... $\mathbb{Q}xa3?$ Black misses the chance to simply win the exchange with 27... $\mathbb{Q}e3!$, as the rook on e2 is overloaded by its obligation on g2. 28. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ White is back in the game. 28... $\mathbb{W}e6?$ 28... $\mathbb{W}d7$ was better, with chances for both sides. 29. $\mathbb{W}h5?$ White misses her chance to win with 29. $\mathbb{Q}xb7!$ when Black is forced to lose the exchange with 29... $\mathbb{W}xf5$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}d6$, as after 29... $\mathbb{Q}xb7?$ 30. $\mathbb{W}f3!$ the double attack wins a piece. 29... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 32. $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 33. $d5$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}f5$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 35. $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}e8?$ There have been small chances for both sides, but now Black gives her opponent a big one. 35... $\mathbb{W}c7?$ was unclear. 36. $\mathbb{W}g3??$ A horrible blunder. 36. $\mathbb{Q}xg7!$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5!?$ 37. $\mathbb{Q}h5!$ would have won the game. **0–1**

(45) Gashimov – Gajewski, Warsaw (rapid) 2010

32. $\mathbb{Q}f2!$ The black queen has too great a responsibility to the king and the d6-pawn, so this exploitation of the overloading wins easily. It might look as if White has a superior position even without this trick, but actually he would have to fight for a draw after 32.b6? h4!! 33. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}hxg3\#$ 34. $\mathbb{W}xg3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6!$ and Black is close to winning after 35. $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}xg2\#$ 36. $\mathbb{W}xg2$ $\mathbb{Q}xg2\#$ 37. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ $\mathbb{W}xe4\#$ 38. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}b8$. 32...h4 There is nothing else, but this is of course nonsense. 33. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ $\mathbb{Q}hxg3\#$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}xc5\#$ 35. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 36. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}h2$ 37. $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f2$ 38. $\mathbb{W}xg4$ **1–0**

(46) Richter – E. Berg, Gothenburg 2011

Both the d4-rook and the b3-queen are overloaded due to their responsibilities to the first rank. Black exploited this with 36... $\mathbb{W}b4!$ which forced immediate resignation. For example: 37. $\mathbb{W}d1$ $\mathbb{W}xd4!$

(47) Khalifman – Bukavshin, Moscow 2011

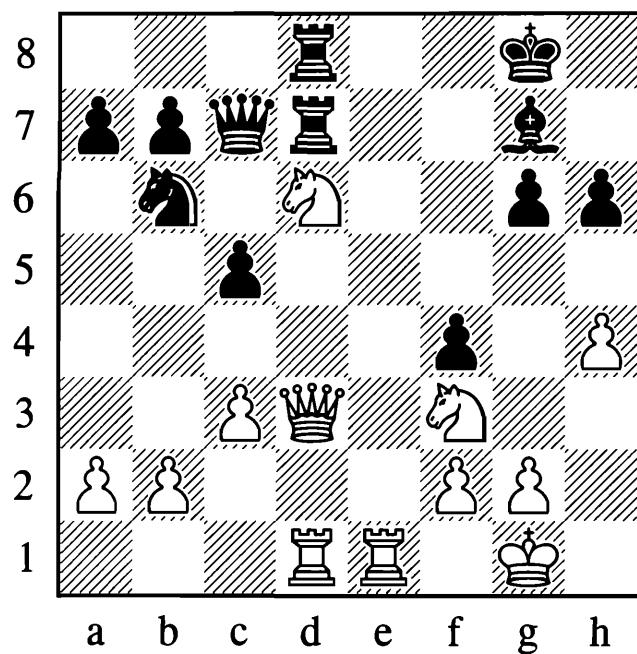
The rook on h8 has too many responsibilities. 24. $\mathbb{Q}h3\#!$ Black resigned because of: 24... $\mathbb{Q}xh3$ (24... $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 25. $\mathbb{W}e5\#$) 25. $\mathbb{W}f8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 26. $\mathbb{W}d8\#$

(48) Dzagnidze – Kosteniuk, Beijing (rapid) 2011

Black missed the chance to exploit the general overloading in the white position with 27... $\mathbb{Q}xf3!$ when the bishop is strangely immune. Instead the game went: 27... $\mathbb{W}xc4?$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}f5?$ (29. $\mathbb{Q}d2!=$) 29... $\mathbb{W}xa2$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}b1\#$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 32.g3 fxg3 33. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ $\mathbb{W}f2\#$ **0–1**

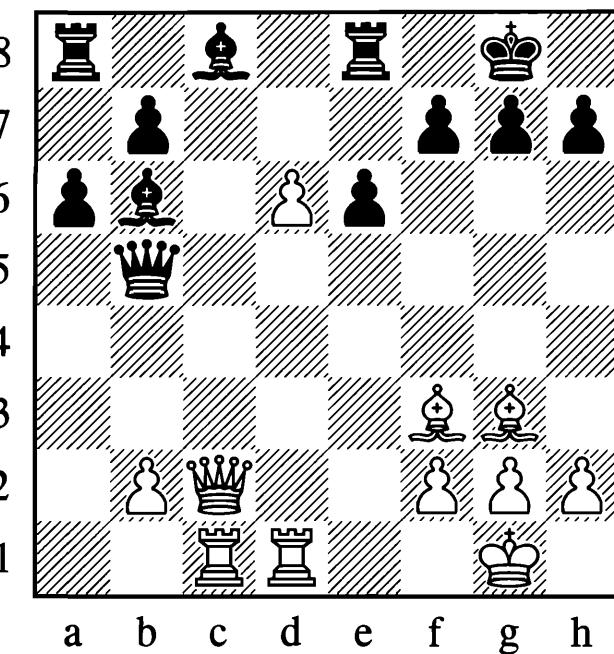
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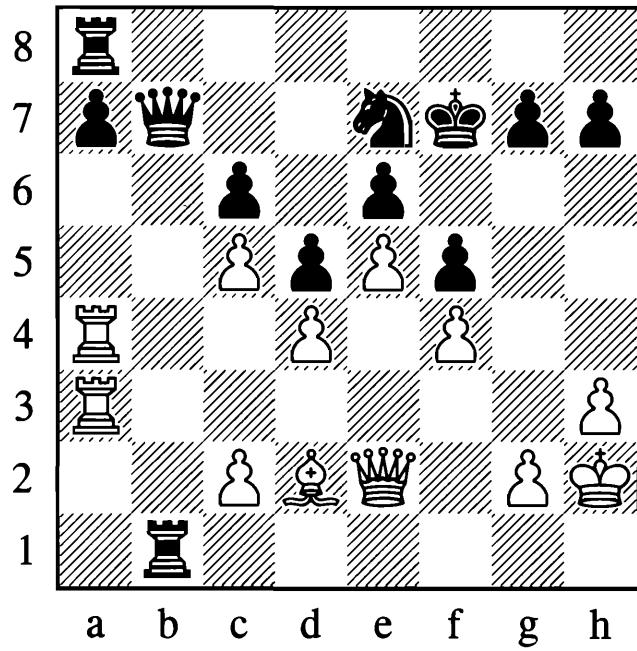
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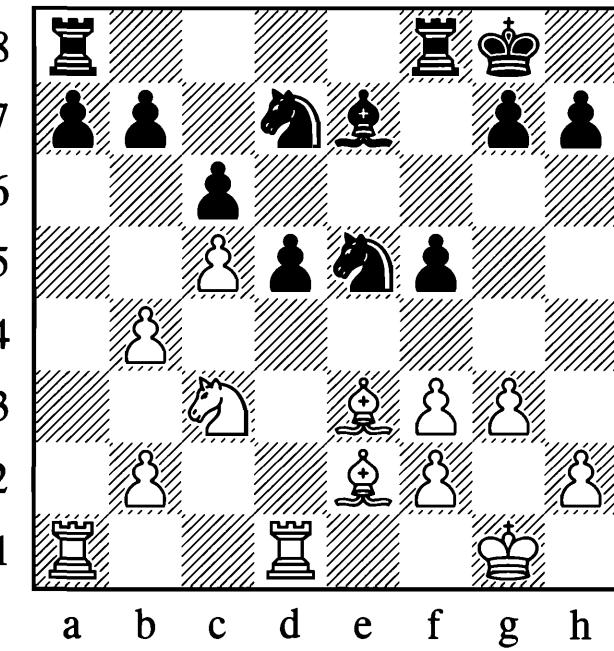
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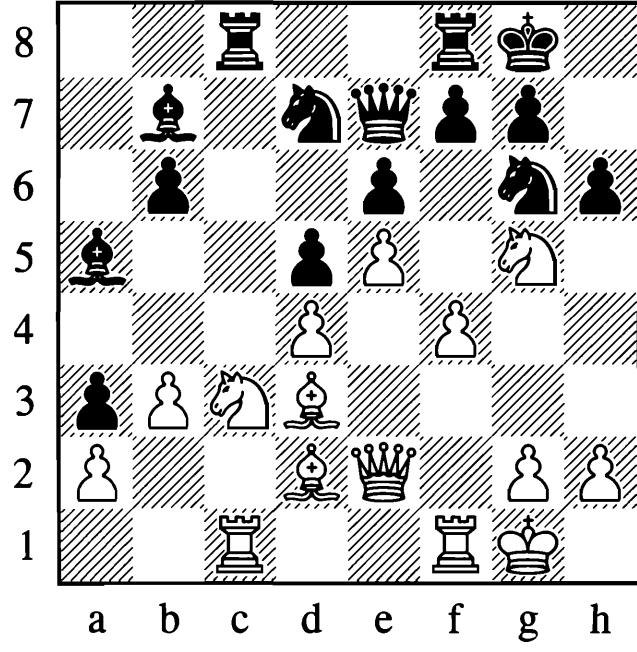
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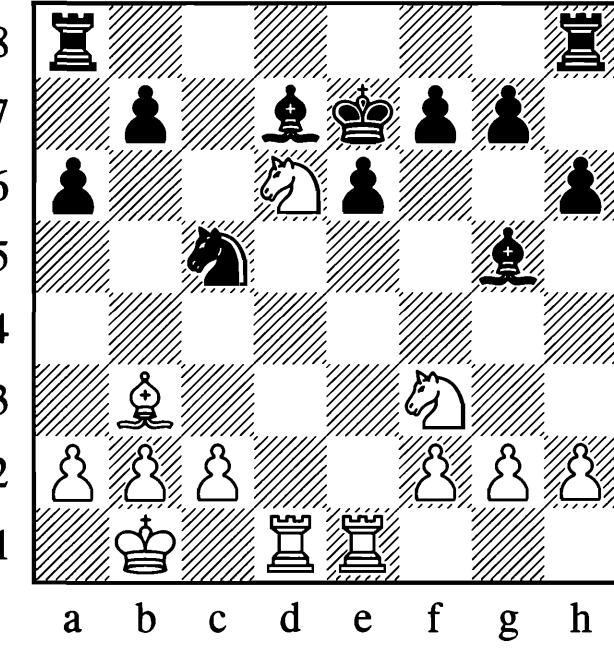
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(49) St. Novikov – Uzhva, Moscow 2010

Black has gone *all in* on pinning the white knight, but unfortunately he will find that his rook on d8 is overloaded, as it has to cover both d6 and e8. 23.♕xg6! ♜e7 Pure resignation. The point of White's combination comes after 23...♜xd6 24.♜xd6 ♕xd6 25.♜e8† when Black loses the queen. 24.♘f5 ♜xe1† 25.♜xe1 ♕f7? Adding to the misery, but Black was lost anyway. 26.♘xh6† 1–0

(50) Kamsky – Ragger, Moscow 2011

Here the rook on a8 is overloaded and has to protect the a7-pawn. White won with: 29.♕h5†! ♘g6 29...♗g8 30.♜xa7! is an important point. The rook on a8 has to protect e8 as well. 30.♕xh7! White has won a pawn and will win the game. Right now he is threatening ♜g3. 30...♜h8 31.♕xh8 ♘xh8 32.♜xa7 ♘g6 33.♗g3 ♘e7 34.♜xb7 ♜xb7 35.♜a2 ♔e8 36.♗f2 ♘c8 37.♗e2 ♜a7 38.♜b2 ♔d7 39.♜e1 ♔c7 40.♜b3 ♔d7 41.♜h4 ♔e8 42.g4 1–0

(51) Nabaty – Ni Hua, Chennai 2011

22.♘xe6! Exploiting the double responsibility of the f7-pawn. 22...fxe6 Rather pessimistic, but Black is equally busted after 22...♕xe6 23.f5 ♔e8 24.fxg6 fxg6 25.♗b5! and the knight will be decisive on d6. 23.♕xg6 White has won a pawn and added the full point on move 41... 1–0

(52) Gunina – Ushenina, Cotoroceni 2011

The black queen is overloaded and cannot keep control over d7. 27.d7! ♜xd7 28.♔e2 ♕a4 Black cannot escape his fate. 28...♜ec8 is refuted by: 29.♕xc8†! (29.♕xb5 ♜xc2 30.♕xd7 ♜xb2 offers Black a few drawing chances) 29...♜xc8 30.♜xc8† ♕xc8 31.♕xb5 axb5 32.♖a1! White is a rook up. Also 28...♜ac8 29.♕xb5 ♜xc2 30.♕xd7 ♜xc1 31.♕xc1 ♜d8 32.♕c8 is simply hopeless. 29.b3 ♕c6 30.♕b1 Other moves win as well. 30...♕c5 31.b4 ♜xf2† 32.♕xf2 White won on move 52... 1–0

(53) Khenkin – Vorotnikov, Geneva 2010

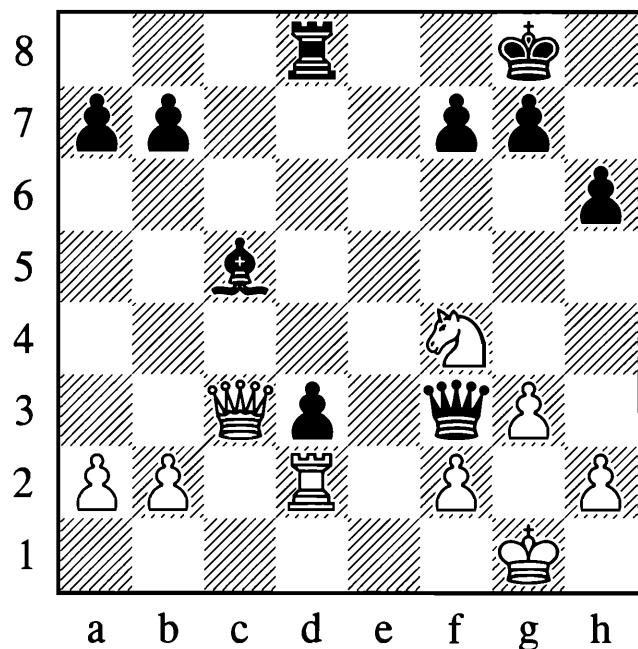
16.♘xd5! cxd5 17.♜xd5 The black knights cannot get out of their predicament. White ends up with an extra pawn at least. 17...♗f7 17...♜fd8 18.♖ad1 ♗f7 19.f4 is similar. 18.f4 White won with good technique. 18...♗e6 19.♖ad1 ♜fd8 20.b5 ♜f6 21.♖d6† ♗e7 22.fxe5 ♘xe5 23.♜xd8 ♜xd8 24.♖a1 a6 25.bxa6 bxa6 26.♜xa6 ♜b8 27.♜b6 ♜a8 28.f4 ♜g4 29.♜b7† ♗d8 30.♕xg4 fxg4 31.b4 ♜a1† 32.♗f2 ♜a2† 33.♗f1 1–0

(54) Delchev – Erdogan, Plovdiv 2010

Both the black king and the black knight on c5 have too many jobs, protecting d7, f7 and e6. With a nice combination White exposes this. 19.♘xf7! ♗xf7 20.♗e5† ♗e7 21.♘xd7 ♘xb3 Black decided to fight on with a pawn less. We see the overloading of the knight after 21...♘xd7? 22.♗xe6† ♗d8 23.♗ed6 with a winning endgame. 22.axb3 ♜ac8 23.b4 ♜hd8 24.♗c5 ♜xd1† 25.♗xd1 ♜c7 26.♗e1 ♜c6 27.♗xb7 ♜f4 28.g3 ♜c7 29.♗c5 ♗f6 30.c3 g5 31.h3 ♗f5 32.g4† ♗f6 33.♗c2 a5 34.♗e4† ♗e7 35.b5 1–0

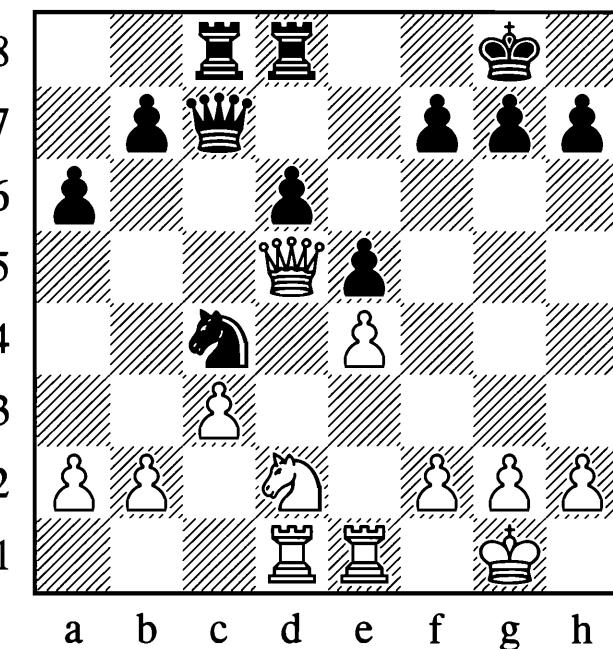
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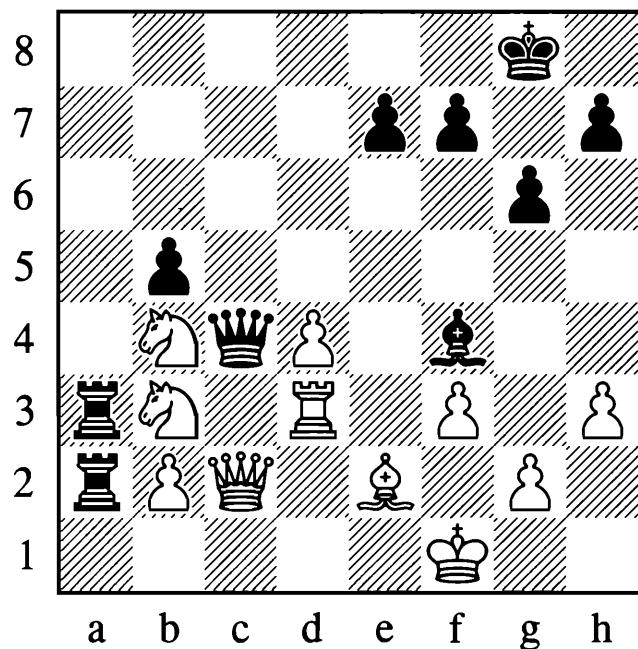
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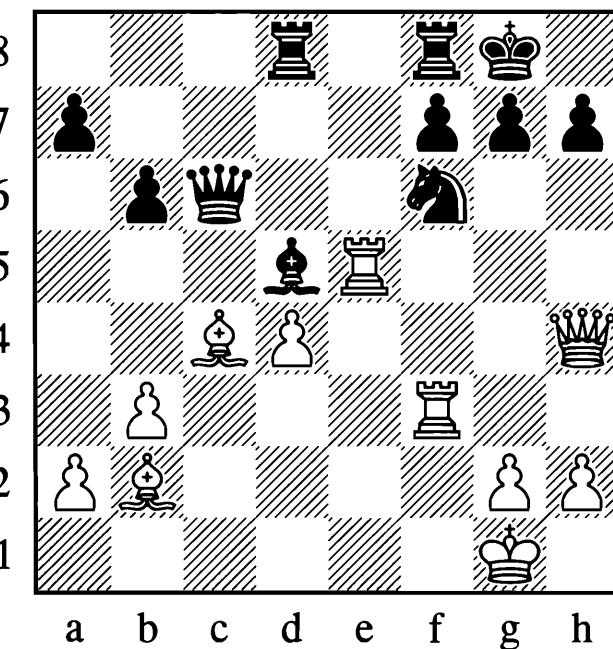
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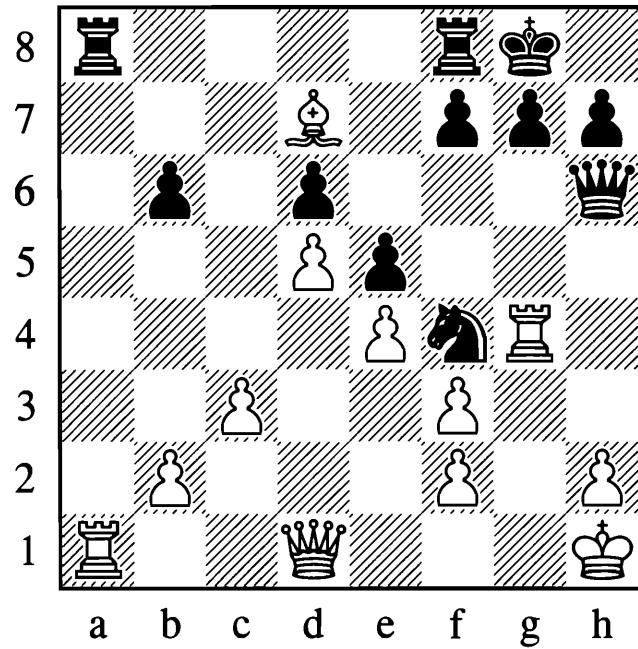
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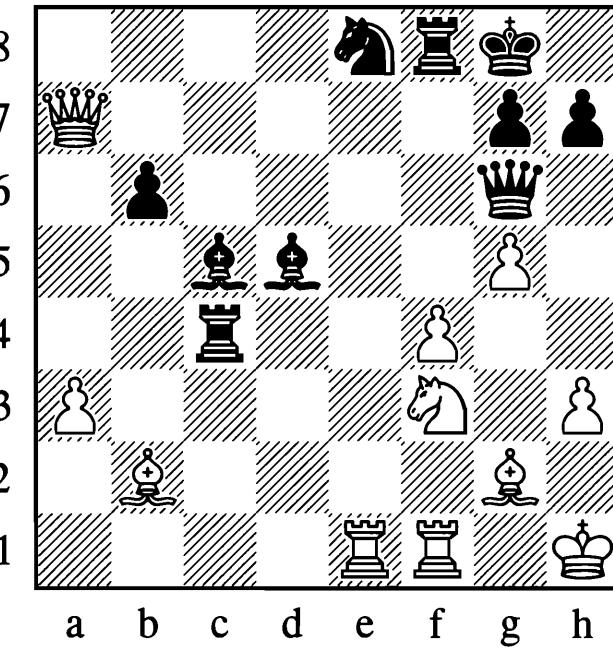
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(55) Wirig – Gajewski, Cappelle la Grande 2011

34...♜xf2†! Exploiting the overloaded d2-rook. The feeble 34...♝b6 should also win, but White could resist a bit. **35.♝xf2 ♜xf2†! 36.♝xf2 d2** Black promotes the pawn and wins. Note that if 37.♞h5, Black should choose a knight on d1, not a queen! **0–1**

(56) Bu Xiangzhi – Gupta, Khanty-Mansiysk 2011

32...♝a4! This was not easy to see. The b4-knight is overloaded, having any responsibility at all. Instead Black played the logical-looking 32...♝a1†? and after 33.♞xa1 ♜xa1† 34.♝d1 ♜xd1† 35.♛xd1 ♜xb4 Black had some advantage, but not enough to win the game. Eventually he overpressed and lost on move 61. **33.♛xc4 bxc4 34.♝xa2 cxd3 35.♞bc1 dxe2† 36.♛xe2 ♜xd4** Black wins easily.

(57) Hou Yifan – Caruana, New Delhi 2011

Black has sacrificed a pawn to get a good knight. **28...♞d3!** Exploiting the overloaded white queen. 28...♝xa1 29.♛xa1 ♜d3 would also give Black some chances, but White still has some defensive resources. With Black in control of the a-file, everything is over. **29.♝g2** White is also in deep trouble after 29.♝g2 ♜xb2 30.♛b1 ♜xa1 31.♛xa1 ♛d2 32.♛b5 ♜d1!, when besides winning a pawn, Black's knight dominates. 29.♝xa8? ♜xf2† is an important point, of course. **29...♝xa1 30.♛xa1 ♛d2 31.♛f1 h5 32.♛g3 ♜a8!** Bringing in the last piece with decisive effect. **33.♛b5 ♜f4† 34.♛h1 ♛xb2 35.♛g1 ♛xc3 36.♛e2 ♜a2 37.♛d1 ♛d4 0–1**

(58) Petenyi – Houriez, Merlimont 2011

The overloaded d8-rook has to keep track of the 8th rank and the d6-pawn. **21.♝xc4! ♛xc4 22.♛xb7** White has won a pawn. Black should now play 22...g6 or similar, simply accepting this, instead he went for the critical line, which leads straight to despair: **22...♝b8?!** **23.♝xd6!!** Now Black blundered a rook with **23...♛xa2?** **24.♝ed1!** as 24...♝f8 is met by 25.♛xb8!. Best was 23...♝dc8! but 24.♛d5 ♛xd5 25.exd5 ♜xb2 26.♝c6 should eventually win.

(59) Nevednichy – Smeets, Aix-les-Bains 2011

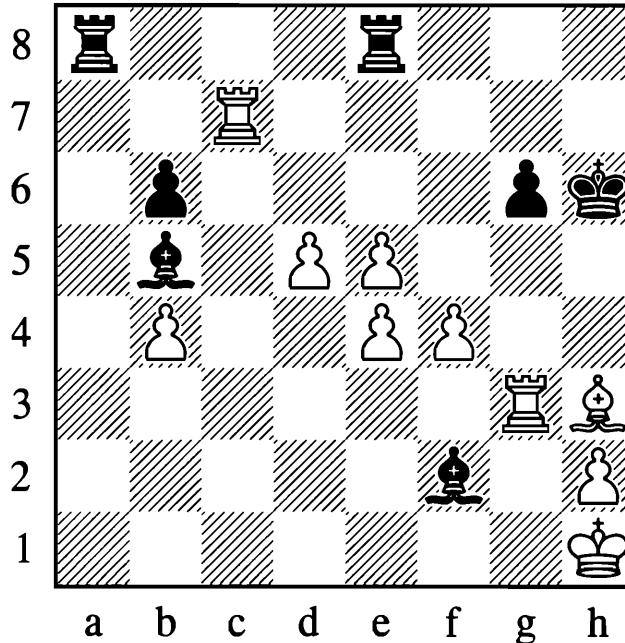
The queen on c6 is overloaded with its responsibilities on d5 and the kingside, where it is the only defender. **23.♝xf6! gxf6 23...♛xf6 24.♛xf6 gxf6 25.♝xd5** wins easily. **24.♝d3! h6** Also 24...f5 25.♝xf5 ♛g6 26.♝g5 is all over. **25.♝e3?!** White missed the elementary 25.♛g4†! ♔h8 26.♛f5 with mate. **25...f5 26.♝xf5** White's attack rages on and eventually he won on move 63 after mistakes from both players... **1–0**

(60) Cioara – Wichmann, Bundesliga 2011

The f8-rook is looking after both f5 and e8, but ineffectively. And the queen is tied down to the defence of g7 and f5, again ineffectively. White can exploit this with: **30.f5!** Without this move, Black would have excellent compensation for the pawn due to his active bishops. Now **30...♝xf5?** lost a piece immediately to **31.♝xe8†!** forcing the hopeless **31...♚f8** as 31...♛xe8 allows 32.♛xg7#. But Black is also lost after the best defence: **30...♛f7 31.♛xf7† ♚xf7** This avoids immediate loss of material, but Black is still struggling with his coordination: **32.♞e5! ♜c2** (**32...♝a4 33.♝xf7 ♔xf7 34.♝d5#** is an amusing mate) **33.♞a1 ♜c7** (**33...♞a2 34.♝d7** and White wins material) **34.♝xf7 ♜xf7 35.♝e5! ♜xa3 36.♝d1** Black's position collapses. For example, **36...b5 37.♝xc7 ♜fxc7 38.♝d8† ♔f7 39.♝e1!** and Black has to give up the exchange because of the threat of ♔d5#.

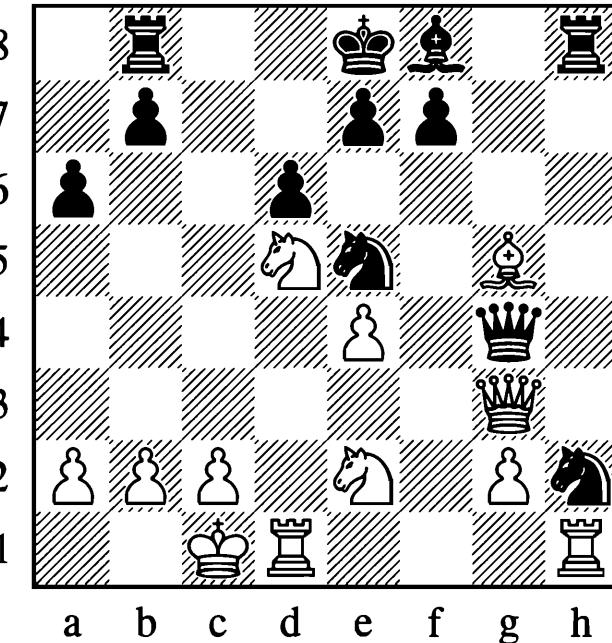
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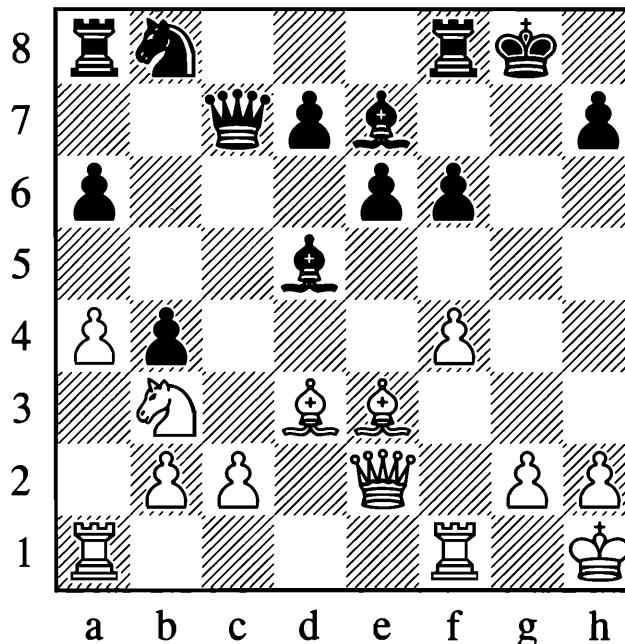
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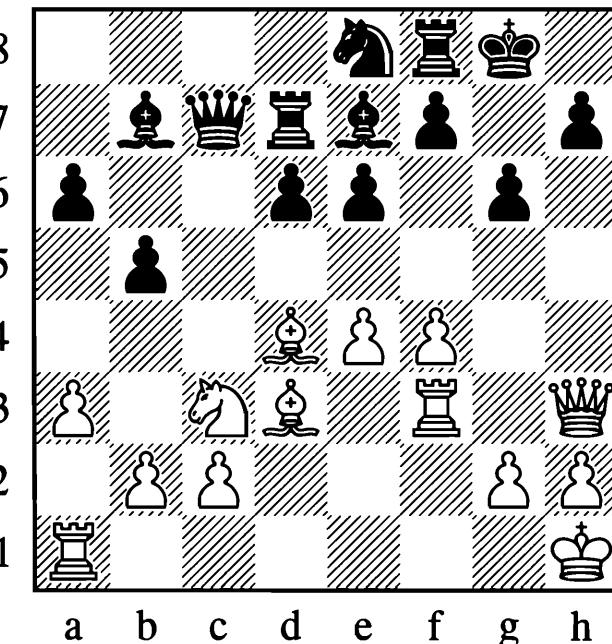
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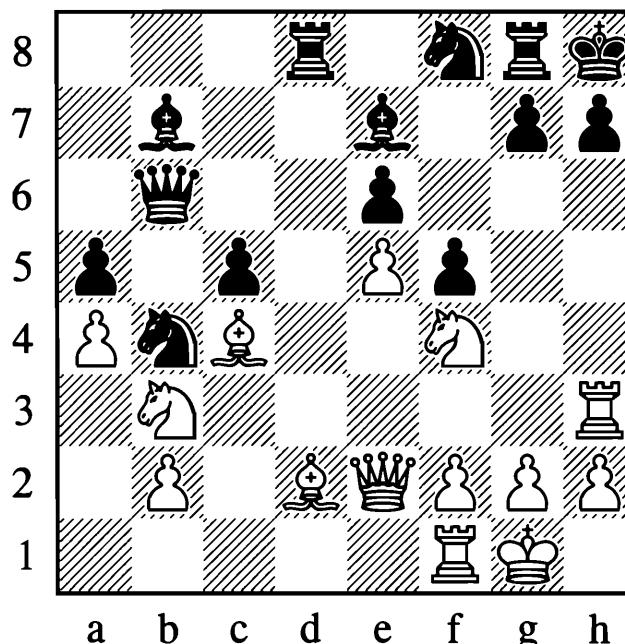
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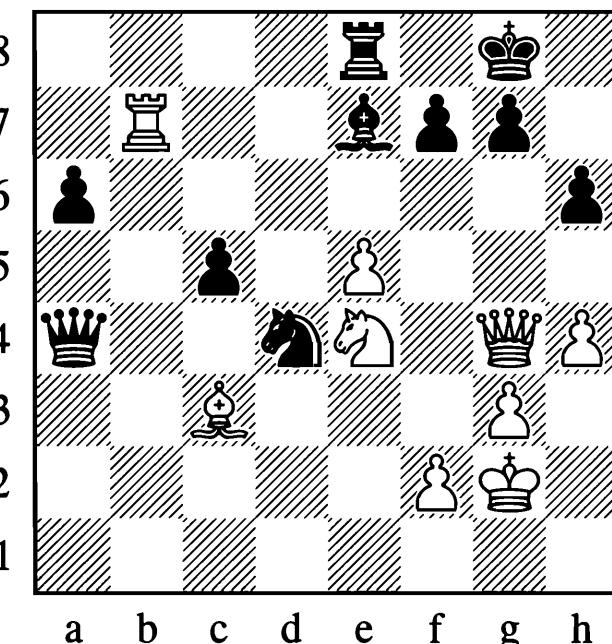
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(61) Baburin – S. Short, Galway 2010

32.♕xg6†! Black resigned, due to 32...♔xg6 33.♕f5† or 32...♔h5 33.♕h7† ♔xg6 34.♕f5# (Diagram A).

(62) Shanava – Simonian, Jermuk 2010

17.♕xh7†! The vastly superior move among many tempting ones. 17...♔xh7 18.♖h5† ♔g8 18...♔g7 19.♕f3 is just as hopeless. 19.♕g6† ♔h8 20.♕f3! (Diagram B) Opening up for the a1-rook to enter the game. 20...♕xf3 21.gxf3 ♕c5 22.♕h5† 1–0

(63) Sjugirov – Memeti, Plovdiv 2010

24.♕xh7†! (Diagram C) A nice sacrifice. No matter how Black recaptures, there is mate on the next move. 1–0

(64) Petrisor – Berbatov, Germany 2010

White played the incredible 20.♕c7†? and later justly lost this advantageous position. He would have been absolutely winning after 20.♕xe5! based on 20...dxe5 21.♕c7#.

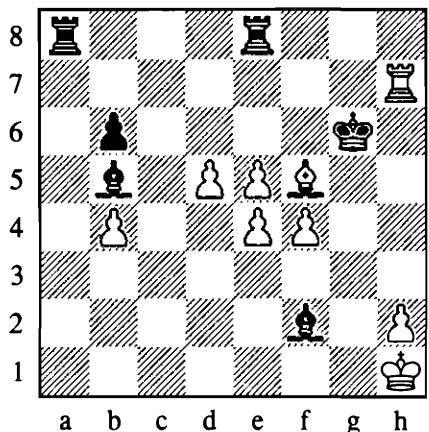
(65) Fedorchuk – Petre, Aix-les-Bains 2011

18.♕xh7†! A standard sacrifice. Black resigned, facing 18...♔xh7 19.♕h3† ♔g8 20.♕h8#.

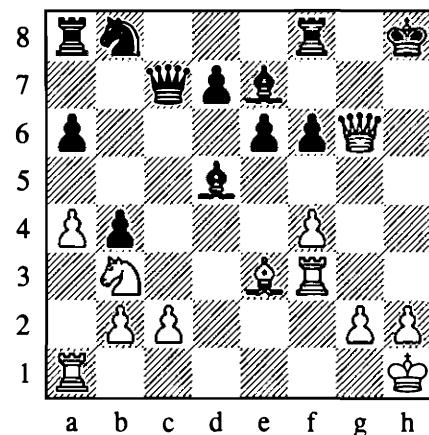
(66) Navara – Bruzon Batista, Havana 2011

32.♕xe7! Clearing the back rank. 32...♕xe7 33.♕f6† Preventing the king from escaping to h7. 1–0

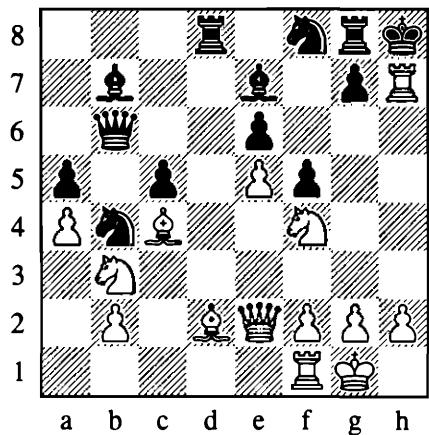
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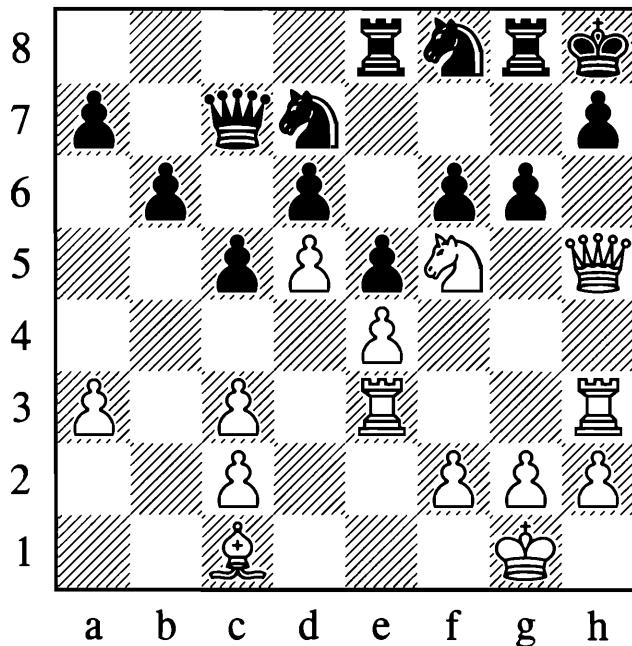


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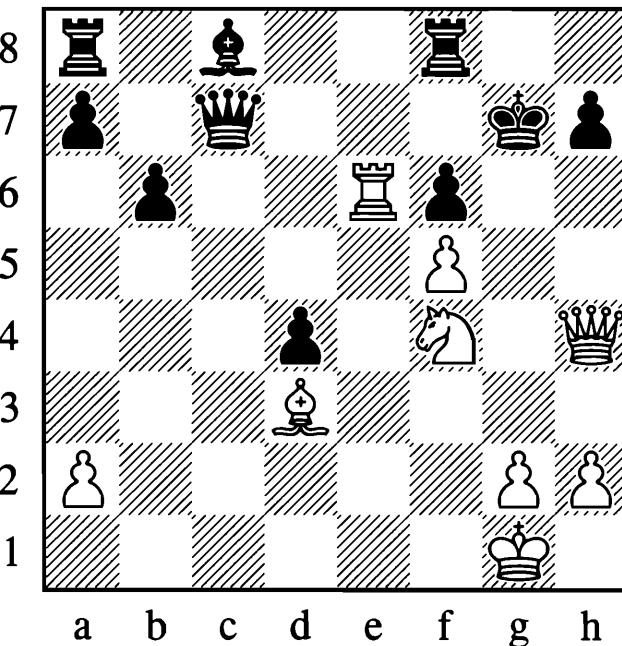
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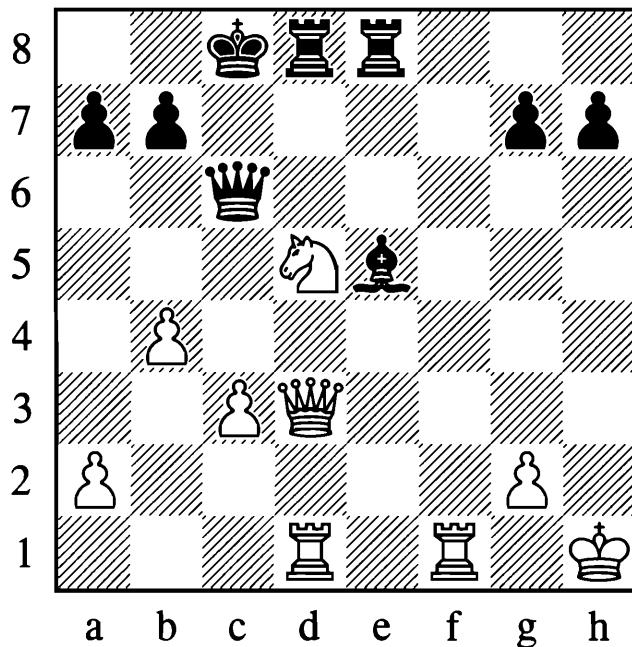
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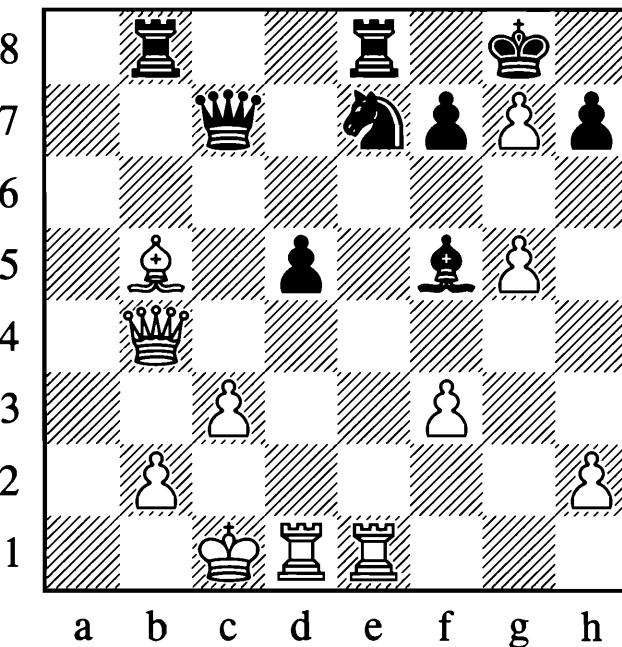
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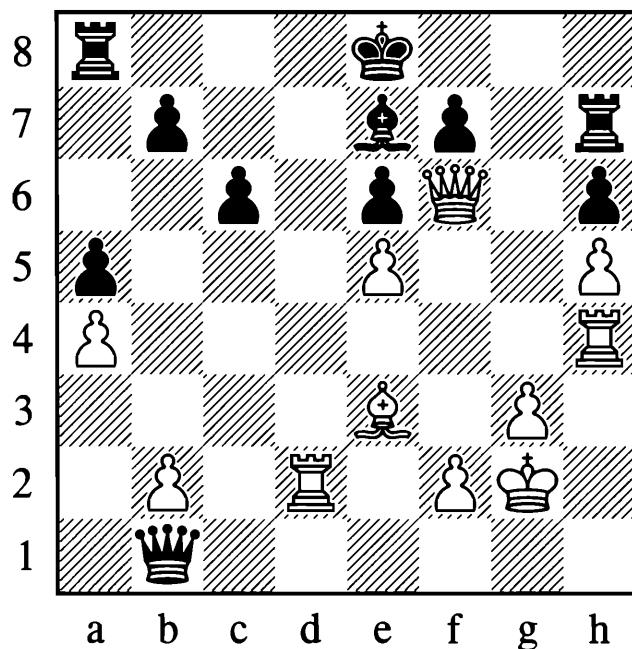
71

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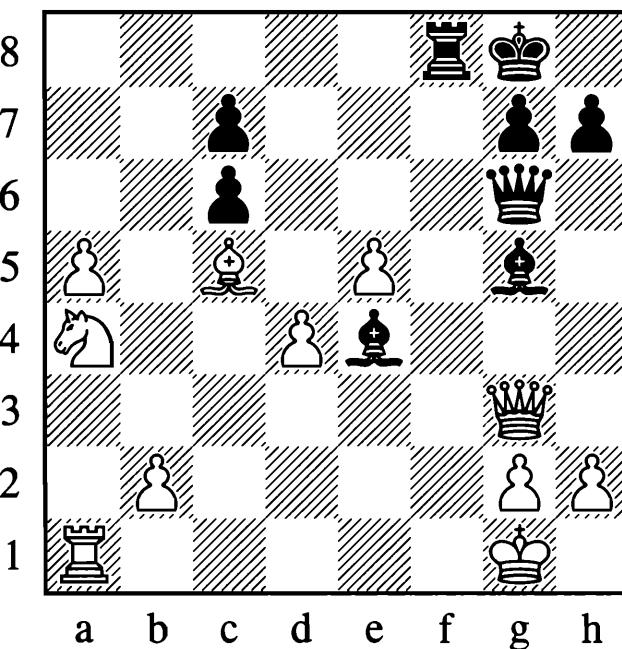
69

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72

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(67) Kanli – O'Donoghue, Rogaska Slatina 2011

25.♕xh7†! Black resigned, due to 25...♝xh7 26.♝xh7† ♕xh7 27.♝h3#.

(68) Das – Lalith, Hastings 2012

Black lined up a mate by preventing ♘h3 and eliminating the defence of the e3-square in one blow. **24...♝xd5!** White resigned, before he was mated by 25.♘xd5 ♘h6† 26.♔g1 ♘h2† 27.♔f2 ♘e3#.

(69) Wang Yue – Yu Ruiyuan, Shenzhen 2010

30.♝g4! Black resigned, due to 30...♜xf6 31.♝g8† ♔e7 32.♚c5#.

(70) Korobov – Ax. Smith, Pardubice 2010

27.♝h5† ♔h8 28.♘xf6†! Classical deflection, combined with destruction of property. **28...♝xf6** 28...♔g8 (Diagram A) is best met by 29.♔c4! and mate is very near. **29.♝e8† ♜f8 30.♝xf8# 1–0**

(71) Sjugirov – De La Riva, Khanty-Mansiysk (ol) 2010

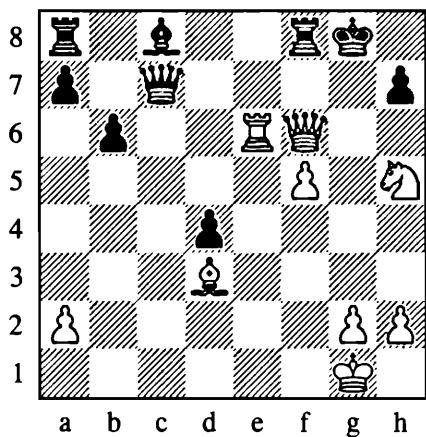
30...♝xb5! Less convincing and certainly less inspired was 30...♘xh2 when Black merely has a big advantage.

31.♘xb5 ♘f4† 32.♝d2 (Diagram B) **32...♝a8!** White resigned, as the only way to delay the mate is to jettison a rook or two. For example, 33.♔d1 ♜a1† 34.♔e2 ♘e5† and White loses material and gets mated anyway.

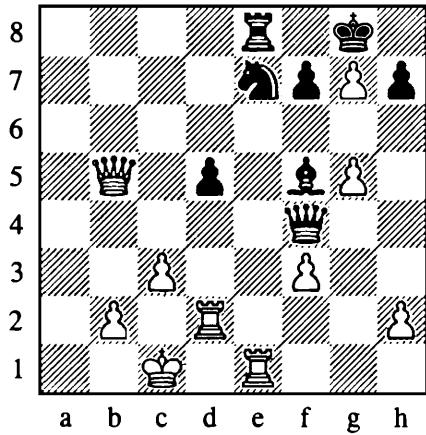
(72) Alsina Leal – Feller, Khanty-Mansiysk (ol) 2010

White is positionally winning, but unfortunately he is also getting mated. **23...♜e3† 24.♔h1 ♜f2** The immediate threat is ...♜xg2†. **25.♘xg6 hxg6 26.d5** The real point of Black's play is disclosed after 26.♝g1 (Diagram C), when he delivers mate with **26...♜xg2†! 27.♝xg2 ♜f1† 28.♝g1 ♜xg1#.** **26...♜xg2 0–1**

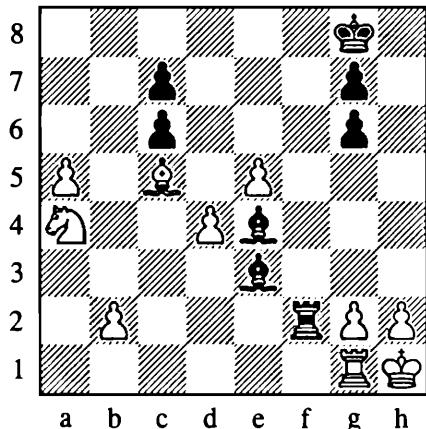
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B

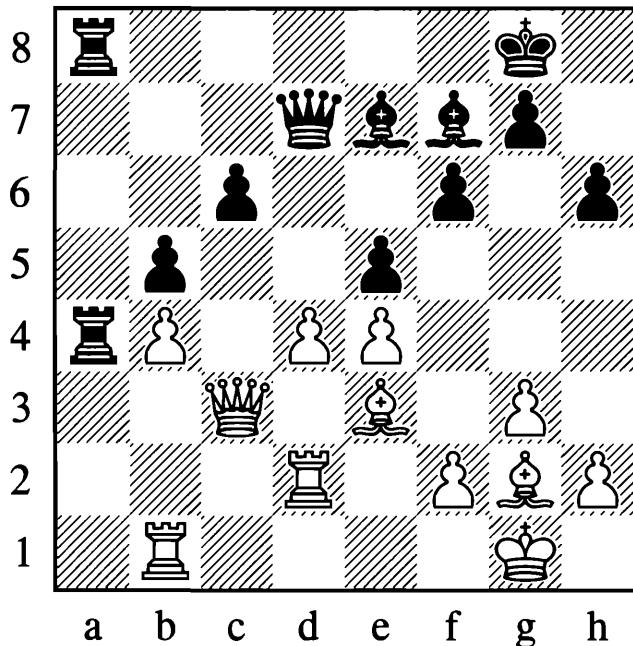


C

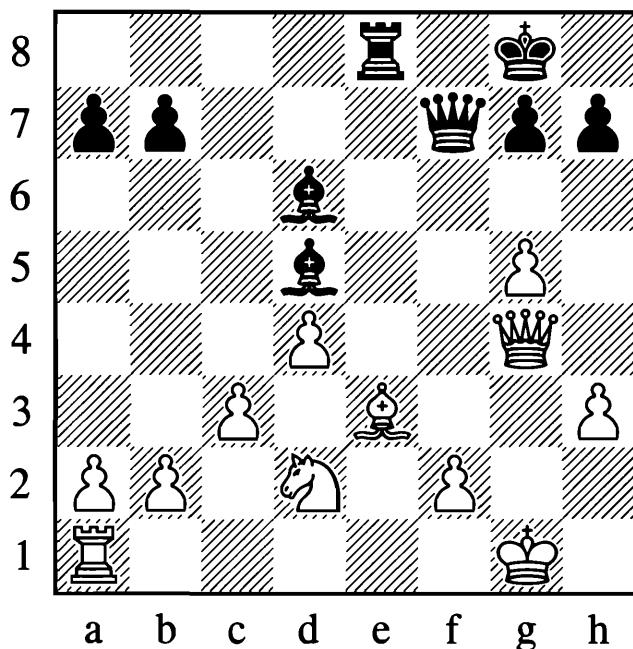
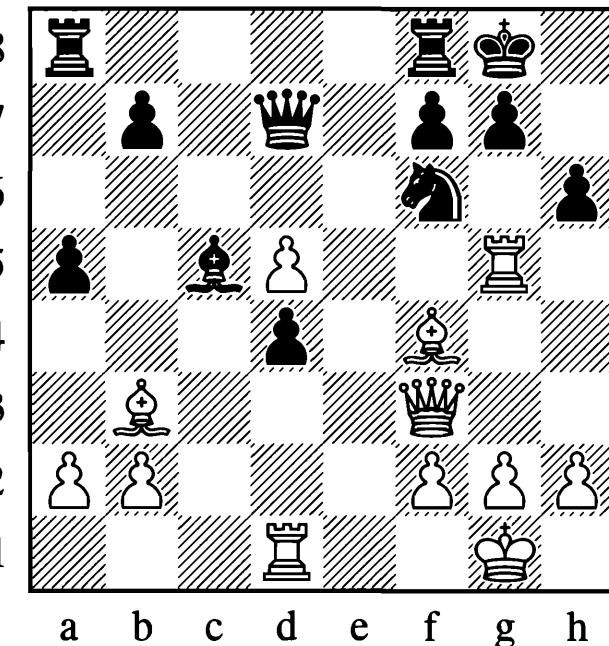




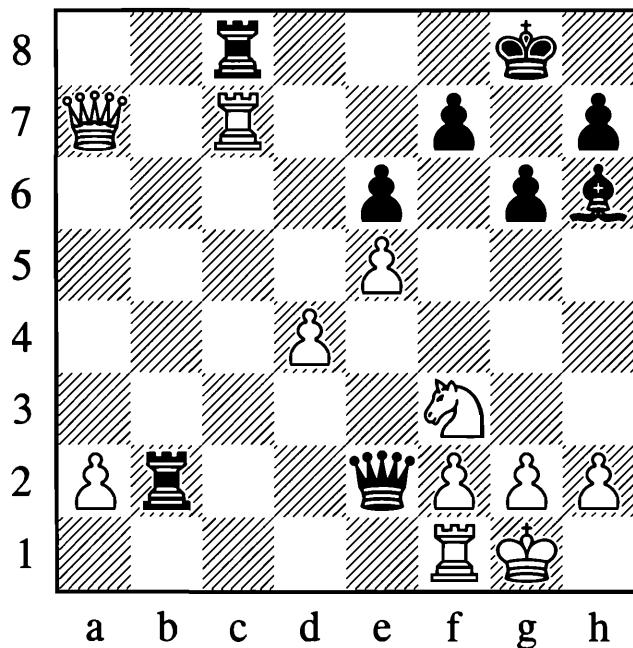
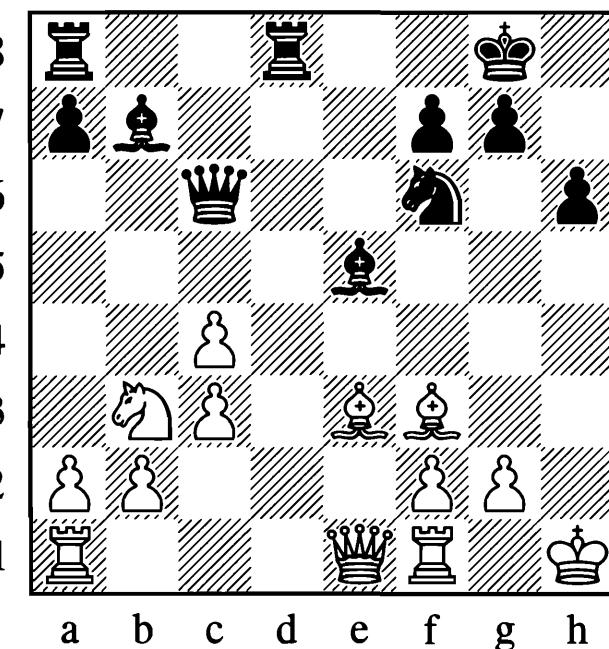
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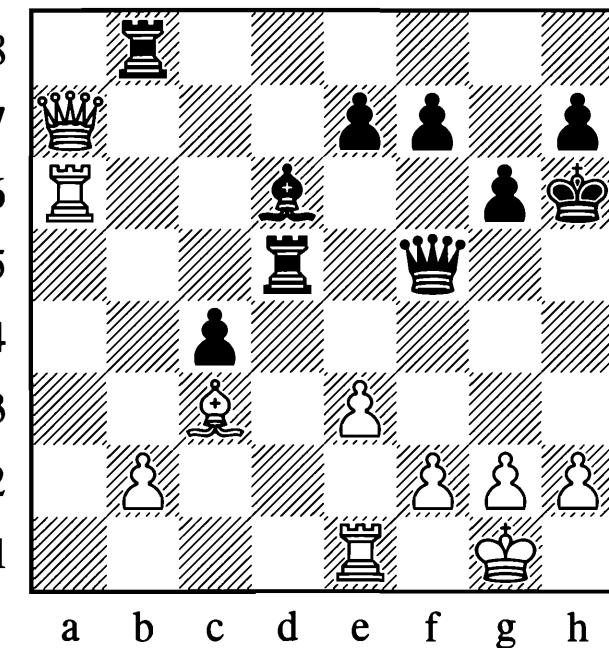
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77



78



(73) Vassallo Barroche – Recuero Guerra, Sauzal 2010

26... $\mathbb{Q}xb4$! Brilliant exploitation of the first rank. After **27. $\mathbb{B}xb4$ $\mathbb{B}xb4$** White resigned, due to **28. $\mathbb{W}xb4$ $\mathbb{B}a1\#$** **29. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{W}h3$** delivering mate in three.

(74) Glidzhain – Ponkratov, Moscow 2010

24... $\mathbb{B}xe3$! White decided to play on with three useless pawns for the piece after this sacrifice, as after **25.fxe3** Black has **25... $\mathbb{Q}h2\#$** with mate. **25. $\mathbb{B}f1$ $\mathbb{B}e8$ 26.b3 $\mathbb{W}c7$ 27. $\mathbb{B}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 28. $\mathbb{W}f5$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 29. $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 30.h4 $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 31. $\mathbb{B}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{W}e6$ 33. $\mathbb{B}e1$ $\mathbb{W}g4\#$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{W}h3\#$ 35. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{B}xe1\#$ 36. $\mathbb{Q}xe1$ $\mathbb{Q}h2\#$** 0–1

(75) Moiseenko – Yusupov, Warsaw (rapid) 2010

24... $\mathbb{W}xf2\#$! A nice classical theme. **25. $\mathbb{B}xf2$ $\mathbb{B}b1\#$** White resigned, as **26. $\mathbb{B}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}e3\#$** is mate.

(76) Tregubov – Sudakova, Warsaw (rapid) 2010

White wins by demolishing the black king's position. **23. $\mathbb{B}xg7\#$! $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}xh6\#$!** Black resigned. She is mated after **24... $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ 25. $\mathbb{W}xf6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ (Diagram A)** **26. $\mathbb{Q}c2\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 27. $\mathbb{W}g5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 28. $\mathbb{W}h6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 29. $\mathbb{W}h7\#$.**

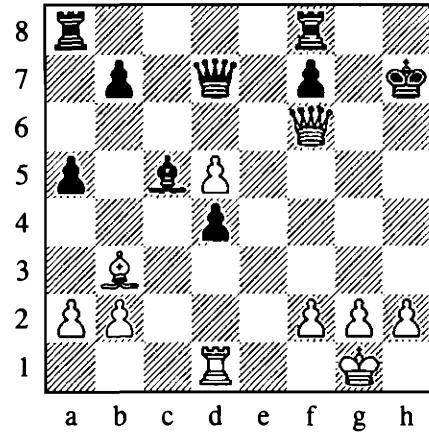
(77) Malakhatkko – Timoshenko, Kiev (rapid) 2003

23... $\mathbb{W}xf3$! White resigned, probably still in shock. The mate arises after **24.gxf3 $\mathbb{Q}xf3\#$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$** (Diagram B), when the only way to avoid it is the dubious **26. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ 27. $\mathbb{W}e8\#$ $\mathbb{B}xe8$ 28. $\mathbb{B}fe1$** with two pieces less.

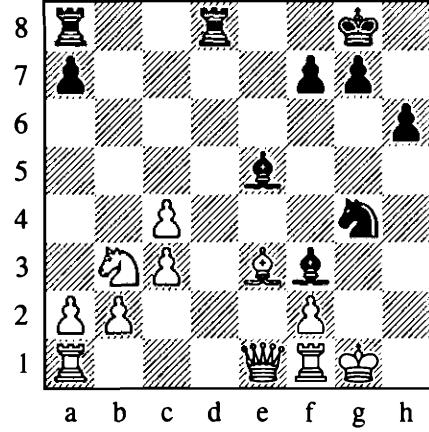
(78) Savchenko – Bogdanovich, Donetsk 2010

29... $\mathbb{Q}xh2\#$! A nice sacrifice. **30. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}xh2$ $\mathbb{W}xf2$ with ... $\mathbb{B}h5\#$ coming next. 30... $\mathbb{B}d7$ (Diagram C)** White's queen is trapped, so he resigned.

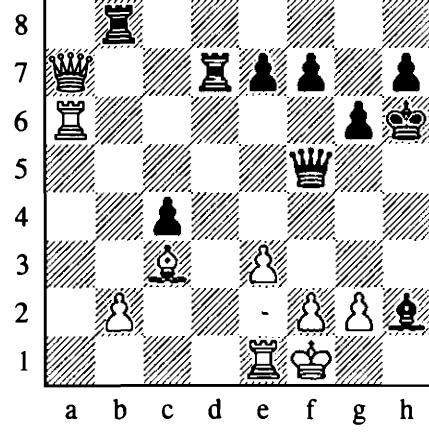
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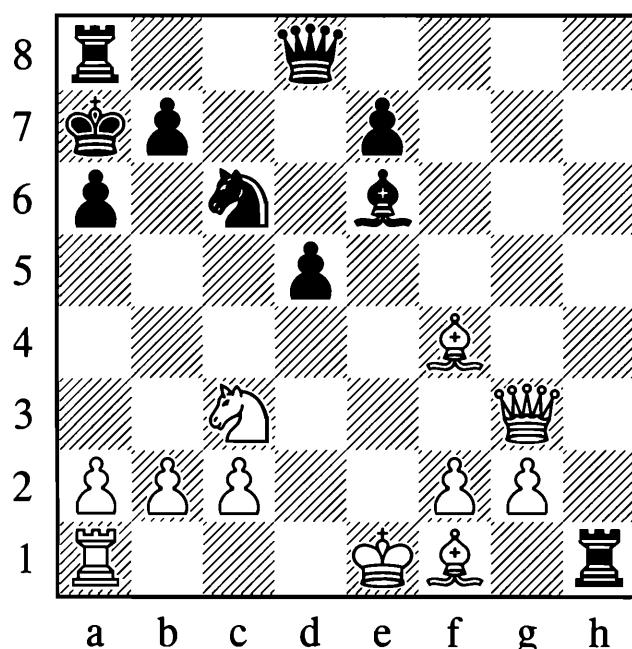


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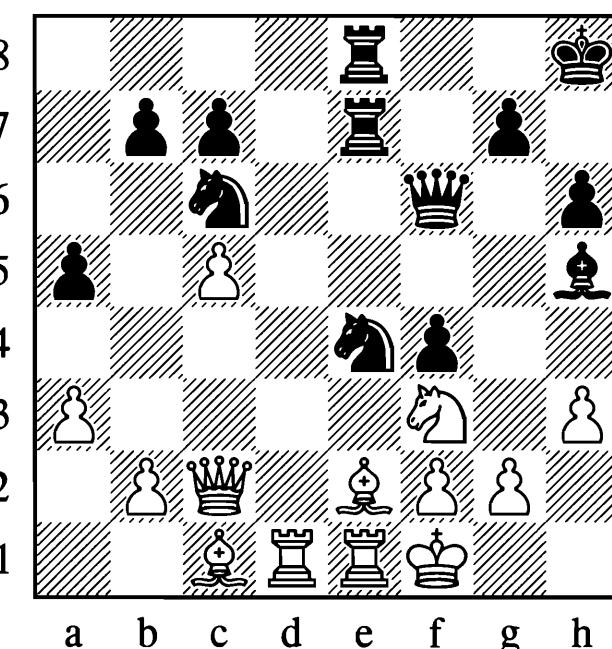
79

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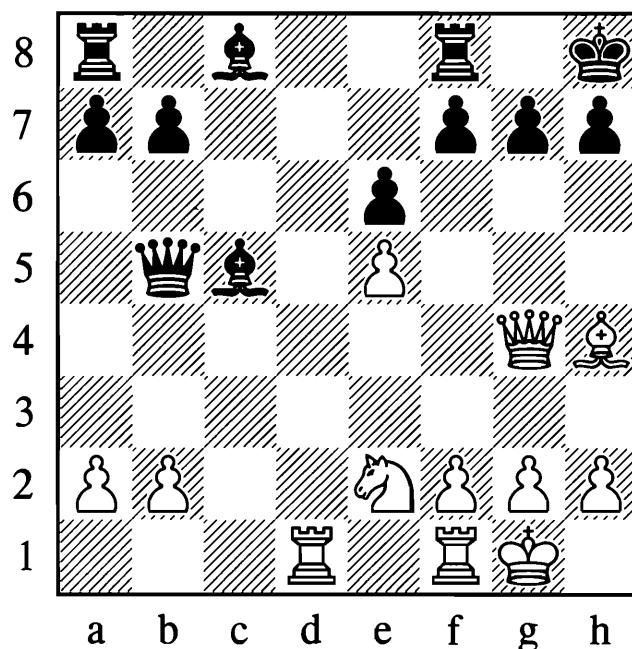
82

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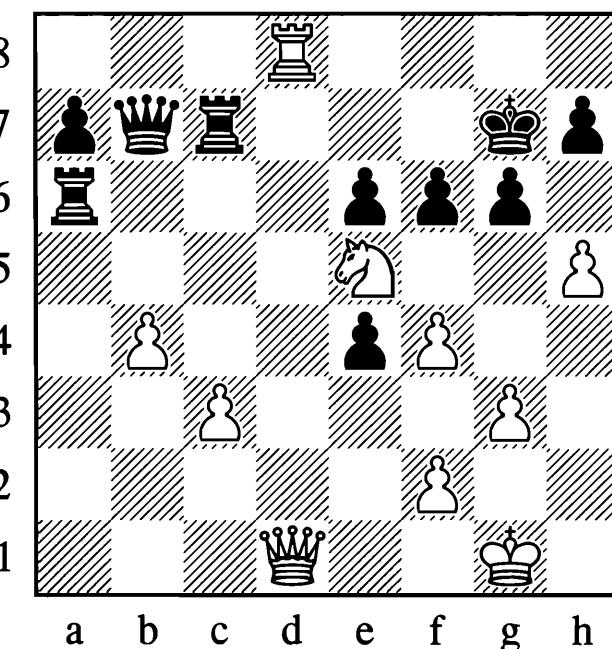
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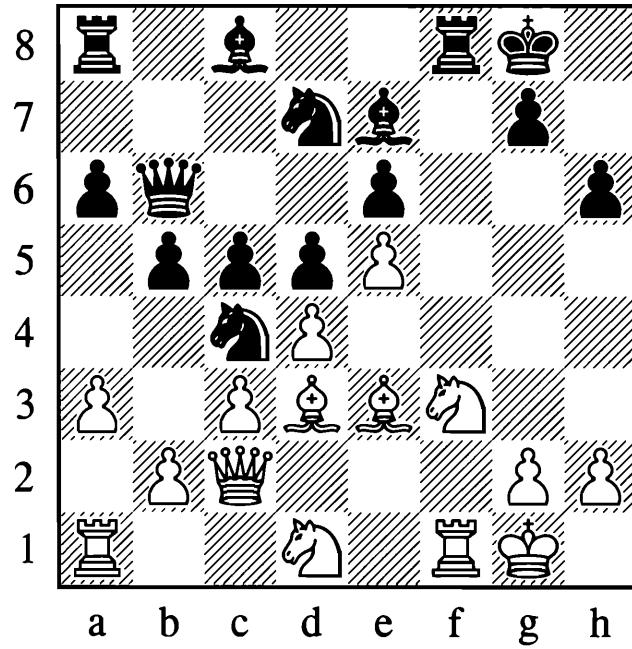
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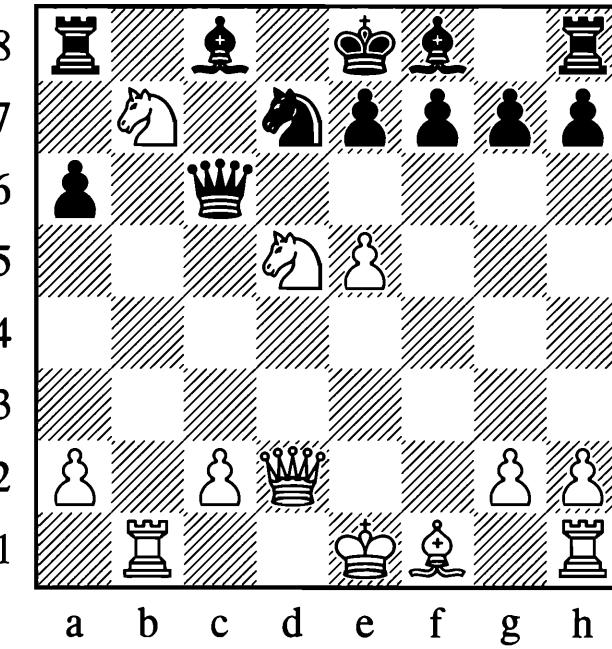
81

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84

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(79) S. Zhigalko – Kovchan, Turkey 2011

18.♕c7! White can also change the move order with:
18.♗b5† axb5 19.♕c7! 18...♔xc7 There is nothing else.
18...♔d7 19.♗b5† axb5 20.♔a3† ♔a5 21.♔xa5#
19.♔xc7 d4 20.♗a4 ♕c8 21.♗b6† ♔a8 22.♗c5 1–0

(80) Grischuk – Genba, Khanty-Mansiysk 2011

21.♖f6! **gxsf6 22.exf6** Black resigned. **22...♗g8** (Diagram A) is met with **23.♗d8!** when mate is near.

(81) Teran Alvarez – Dizdar, Seville 2011

17.♕xh6! **gxh6 17...♔h8?!** would accept the loss of a significant pawn and thus not last long in general. Still it is nice that White has **18.♕h7!** winning immediately. This also shows that White could have given the check before taking on h6. **18.♕h7† ♔h8 19.♔g6** Black resigned.

(82) Caruana – Giri, Reggio Emilia 2011

This is from Anish Giri's first big tournament win. The young Dutch grandmaster had started poorly with 1/4, before staging a great comeback, starting with this game:
25...♗xf2! 26.♔xf2 ♕xf3 27.gxf3 27.♔xf3 ♘h4† is no better. **27...♘h4† 28.♔f1 ♘xh3† 29.♔f2 ♘g3†**
30.♔f1 (Diagram B) **30...♗e5** There is no defence to
...♗h5. **31.♔xf4 ♘xf4 32.♔c4 ♗e4!** **33.♔b5 ♘g3 0–1**

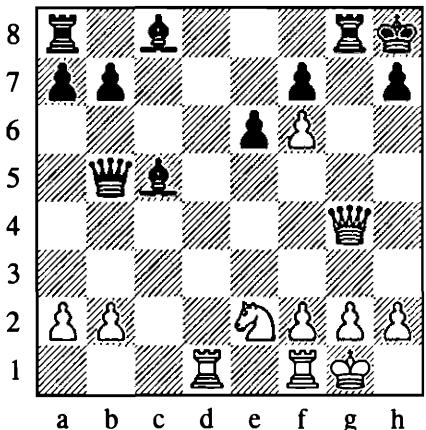
(83) B. Larsen – Kristiansen, Denmark 1991

32.♗g8†! The gain of tempo allows White to deliver mate on the dark squares. **32...♔xg8 33.♔d8† ♔g7** (Diagram C) **34.h6†!** Another important tempo-gainer.
34...♔xh6 35.♗g4† ♔h5 36.♗xf6† ♔h6 37.♗g4† Black resigned. He is mated after **37...♔g7 38.♔f6† ♔g8 39.♗h6#.**

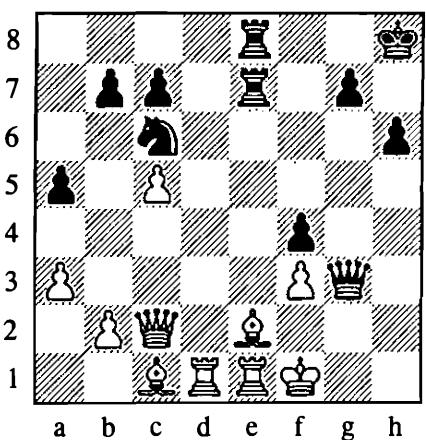
(84) Nakamura – Van Wely, Amsterdam 2010

White actually had two ways of winning here. **17.♗b6!**
17.♔a5?! **♕xb7 18.♗c7† ♔d8 19.♗xa8† ♔c8 20.♗b3!** with a winning attack is rather circumspect, but should get the job done. **17...♗xb6** Black decided to accept his fate and play for the audience. **17...♔a4 18.♗c7#**
18.♗f6†! exf6 19.♔d8# 1–0

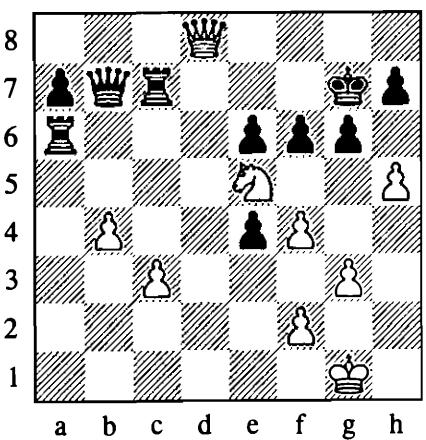
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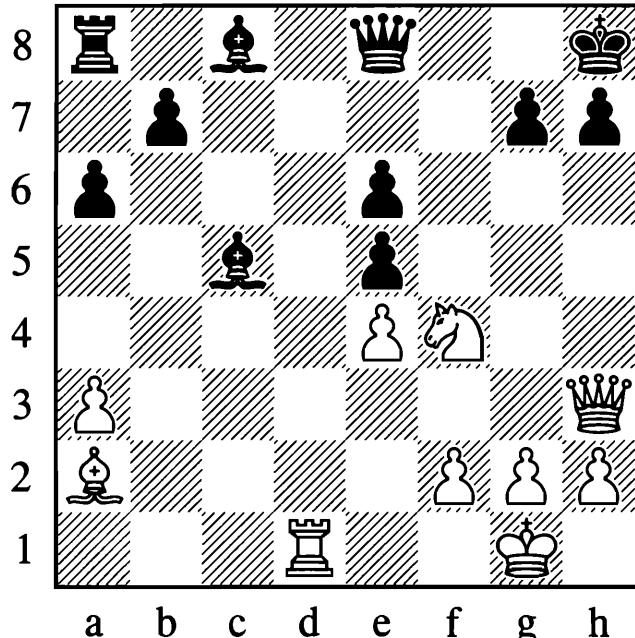


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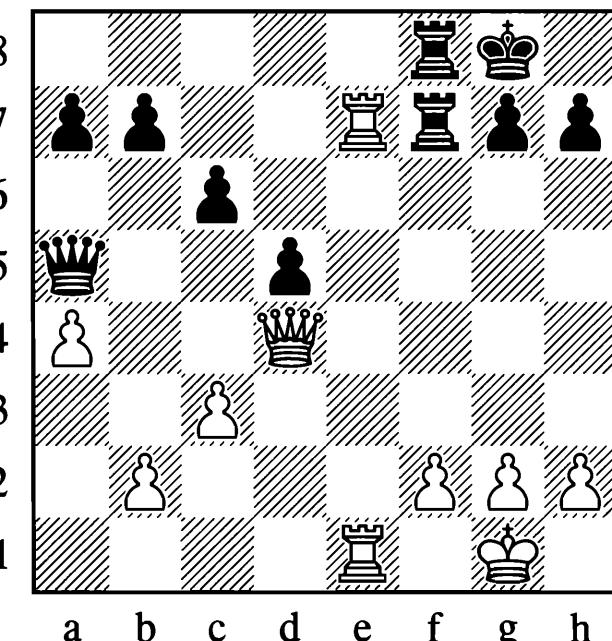
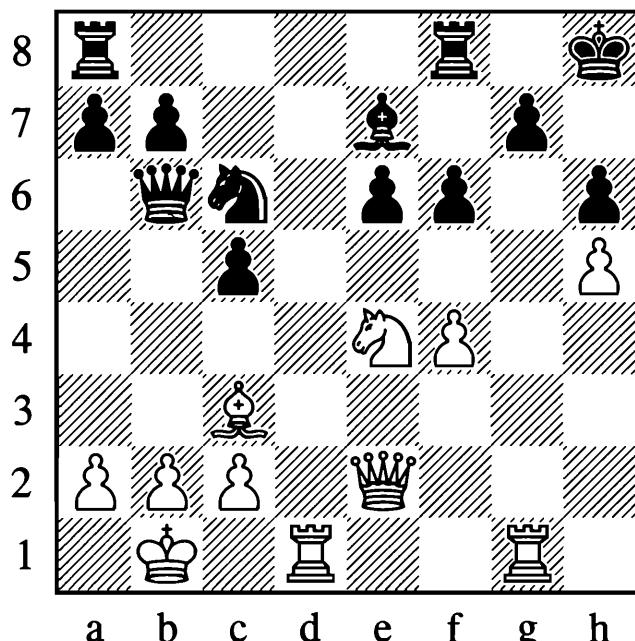
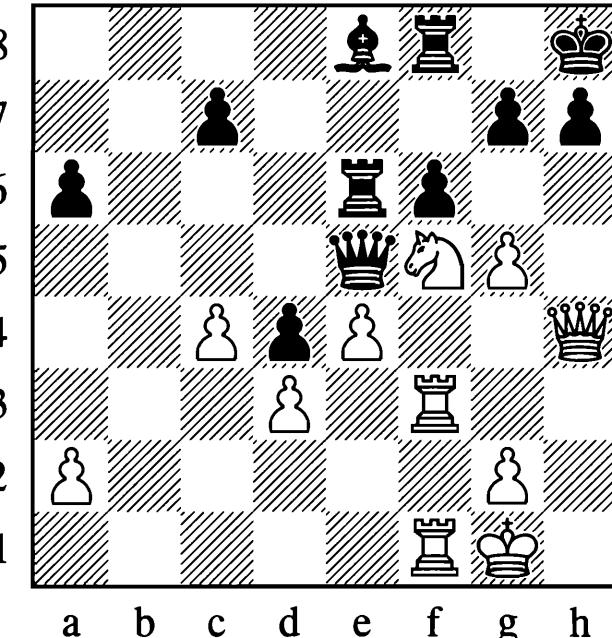




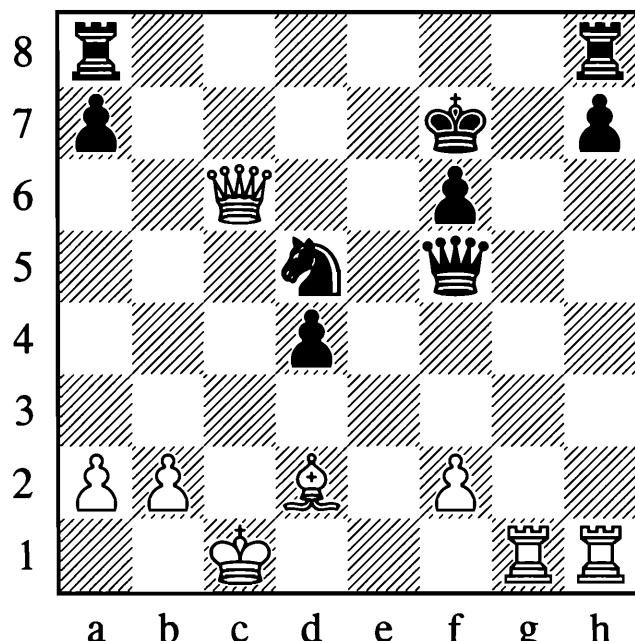
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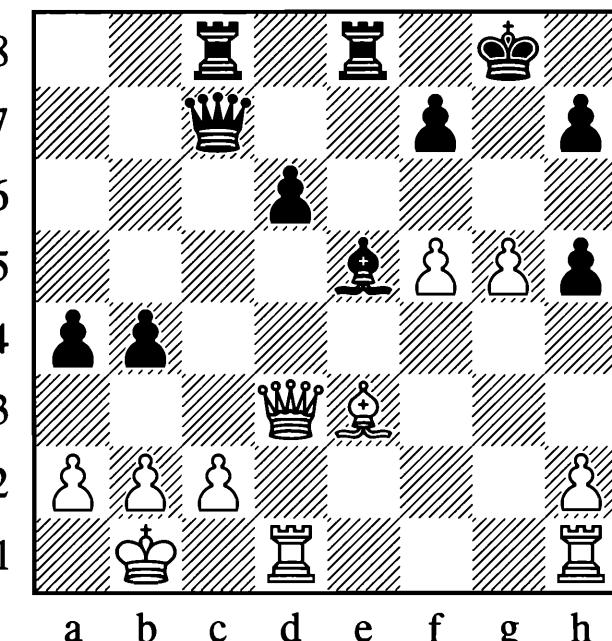
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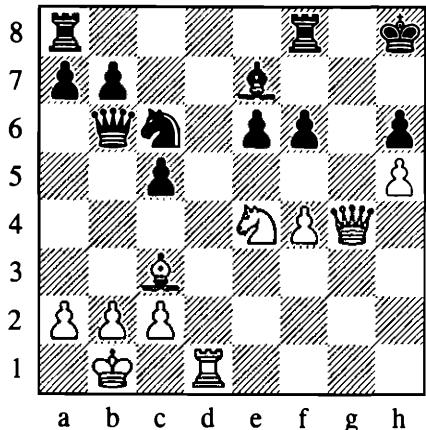
(85) Khachiyan – Kleist, USA 2010

28.♗d8! Black resigned (note that 28.♗g6† ♔g8 29.♗d8! transposes). The end could have been 28...♝xd8 29.♗g6† ♔g8 30.♝xe6† ♔xe6 31.♔xe6#.

(86) Hou Yifan – Le Thanh Tu, Guangzhou 2010

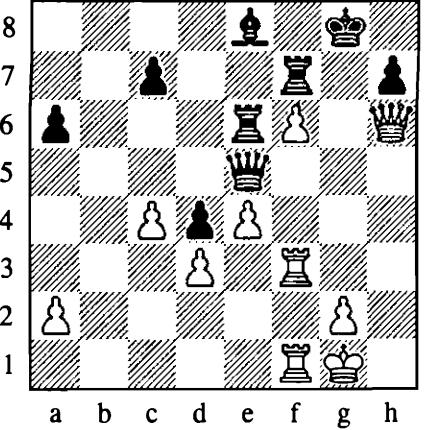
White is very active and would have a great advantage after 22.♗d7 for example. But the Women's World Champion saw something even clearer: **22.♗xg7!** **♗ad8** This is hopeless, but after 22...♔xg7 23.♗g4† ♔h8 (Diagram A) 24.♗g6! mate is near. **23.♗dg1 ♗d4** **24.♗xd4 cxd4** **25.♗g4 ♗a3** **26.♗h7† 1–0**

A

**(87) Aronian – Stevic, Plovdiv 2010**

32.♗g7†! A fantastic magnetic sacrifice. If White gave the check on b7 immediately, Black would escape to e6 and keep the game going. Now it is just mate. **32...♔xg7** **33.♗b7† ♔g6** **33...♔g8** **34.♗xa8†** and White wins both rooks. **34.♗h6#**

B

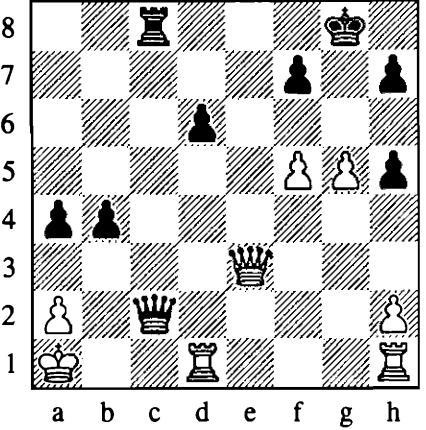
**(88) Gashimov – P.H. Nielsen, Khanty-Mansiysk 2011**

33.♗xg7! A textbook demolition of the king's position. **33...♔xg7** **34.♗h6† ♔g8** **35.gxf6 ♗f7** (Diagram B) **36.♗f5!** The decisive move. The rook cannot be controlled. **36...♗d6** **37.♗g5† ♔h8** **38.♗g7 1–0**

(89) Lorenzana – Sakr, Khanty-Mansiysk (ol) 2010

Surprisingly it is absolutely devastating for Black that his queen is temporarily out of play. **22.♗xf7 ♘xf7** **22...♔xf7** loses to **23.♗e3!?** and **23.♗g4! ♔g8** **24.♗e7** when mate cannot be averted. **23.♗e8† ♘f8** **24.♗e5!** Black resigned, as there is no way to avoid mate. For example: **24...♗c5** **25.♗e6† ♔h8** **26.♗f7!**

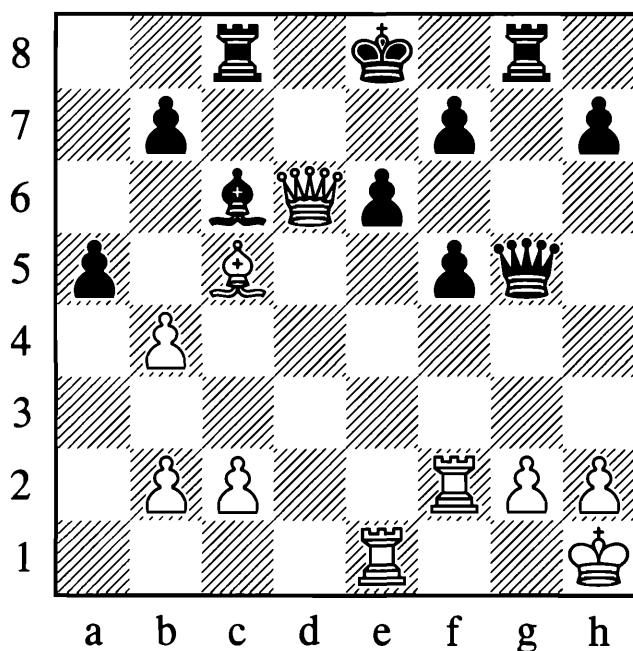
C

**(90) Tseshkovsky – Cebalo, Davos 2008**

A variation taken from the game. Here Black has **24...♗xb2!** when the humiliating **25.♗he1** is the only chance. Instead after **25.♗xb2? ♘xe3!** **26.♗xe3 ♘xc2†** **27.♗a1** (Diagram C) **27...b3** the white king cannot be protected.

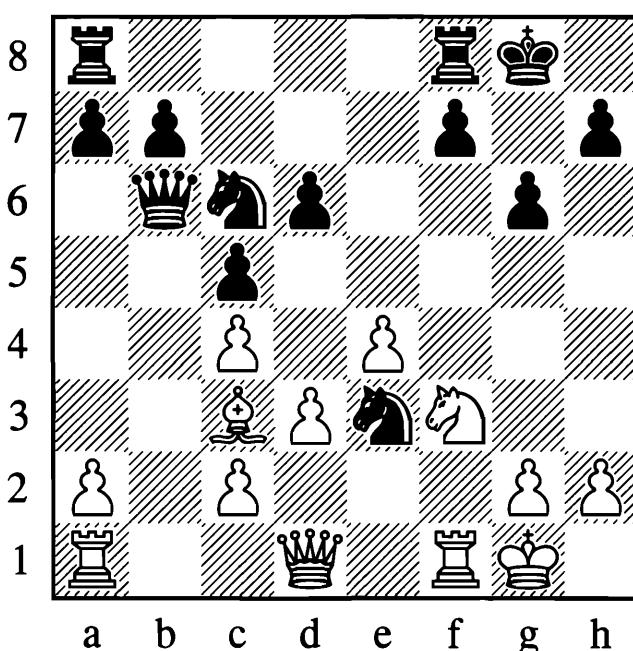
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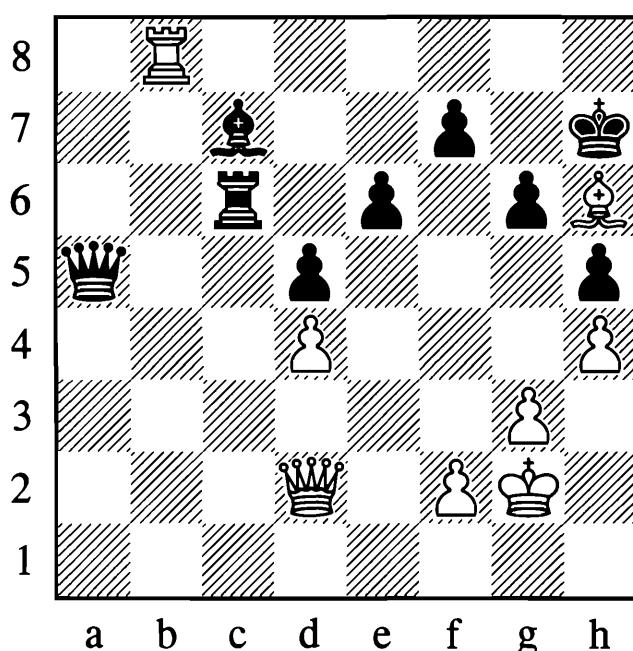
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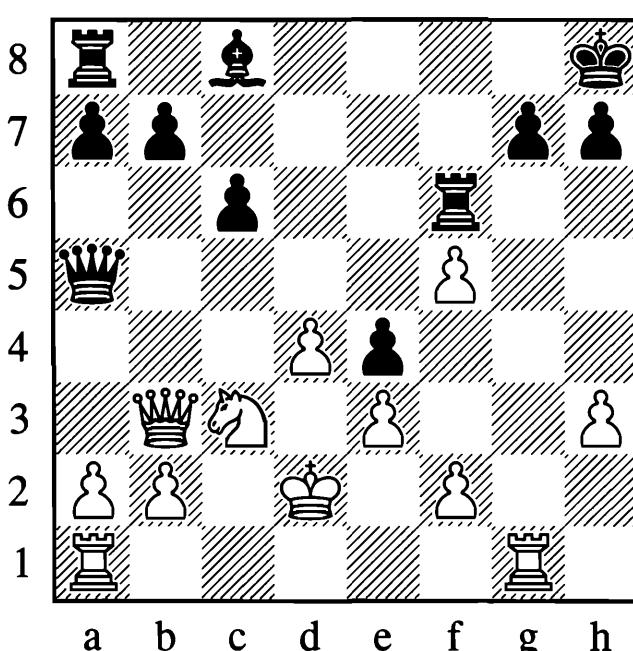
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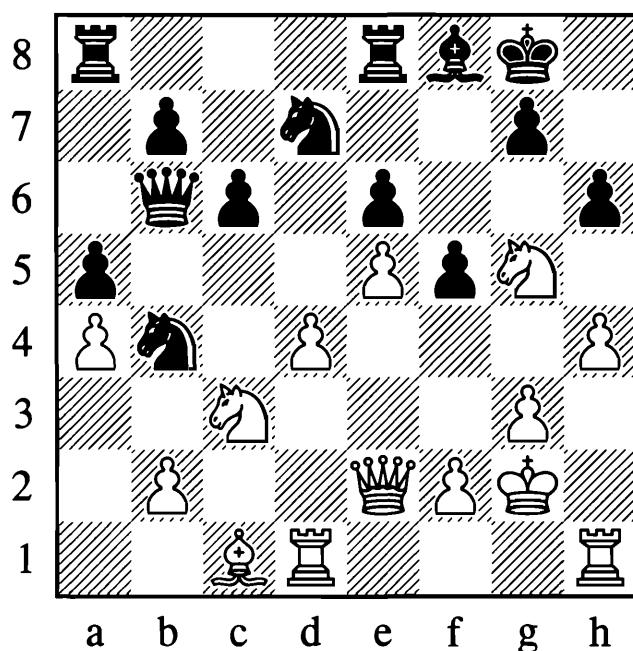
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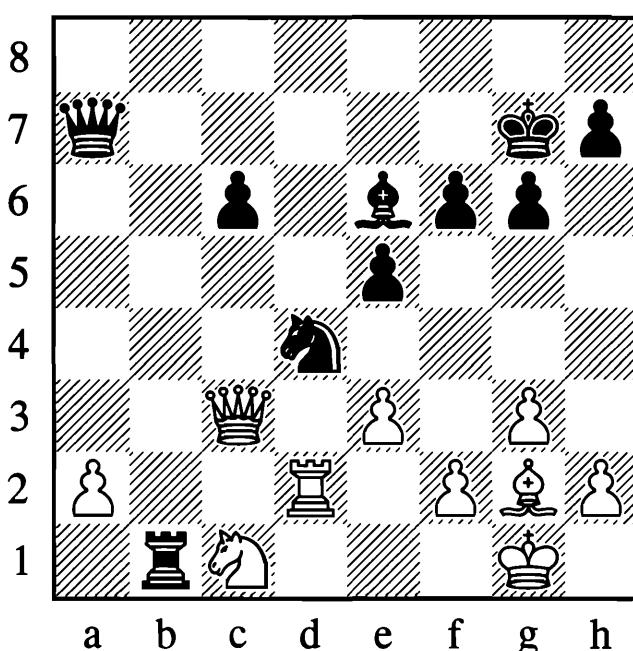
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96

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(91) Alonso – Hevia, Cuba 2008

White decided the game with a delicious double rook sacrifice. 27.♖xe6†! ♜xe6 28.♗xe6† ♔d8 29.♗d2†! Black resigned rather than face 29...♗xd2 30.♗e7#.

(92) Korneev – Stella, Cesenatico 2011

White seems to be in trouble; a pawn down and heading for the endgame. But instead he found a brilliant mating combination: 37.♗g5! With the idea ♘h8†!. 37...♔xb8 38.♗f6! 38.♗f8 also works, but the text move is more elegant. 1–0

(93) Aronian – Zhao, Khanty-Mansiysk (ol) 2010

23.♗h5! ♘e7 23...hxg5 24.hxg5 gives a mating attack. The threat is g6 (maybe with ♘g5 as the follow-up to trap the king) and after 24...g6 25.♗h7#. 24.♗g6! A fantastic resource. Black is forced to open the h-file and White can slowly create a mating battery there. 24...hxg5 25.hxg5 c5 26.♘b5! A nice direct way to win the game. The knight arrives on d6 with devastating effect. However White can win in many ways. For example the bonehead approach of 26.♗h4 ♗c6† 27.♗e4! and the attack on the h-file will be decisive. However, White can also lose his way with 27.f3 cxd4 28.♗dh1? ♗xf3†! and Black has the upper hand. Instead White has 28.♗h8†! ♘xh8 29.♗h5† and 30.g6, still winning. 26...♗c6† 27.f3 cxd4 28.♗h7† 1–0

(94) Bajerani – Chubenko, Baku 2010

15.♗c1! Initiating the attack on the dark squares. 15...♗xf1?! A bit compliant. Black could choose to just lose a pawn with 15...♗g4 16.♗f4! ♗ge5, even though White is still winning, of course. 16.♗f6! Black resigned. There is no adequate defence against the mate.

(95) Korobov – Pridorozhni, Pardubice (rapid) 2010

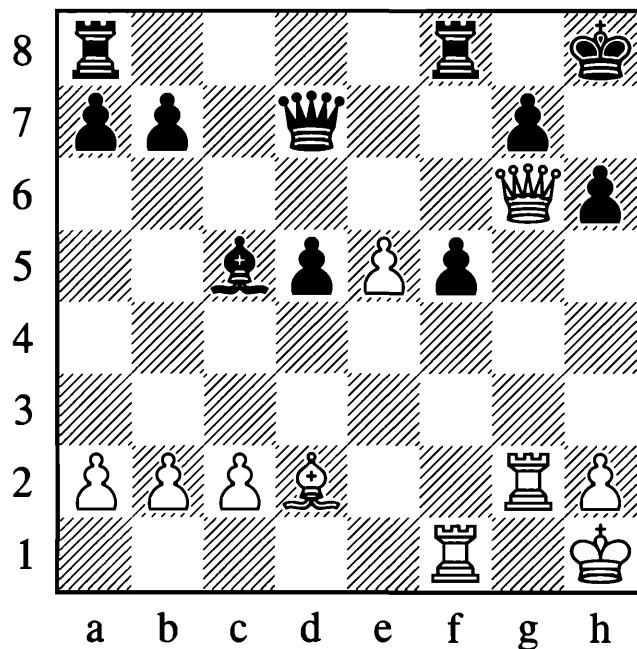
19.♗xg7! A standard attack, but you need to be able to play them! 19...♔xg7 20.♗g1† ♔h6 20...♔f8 21.♗g8† ♔e7 22.♗g7† ♔d6 looks dangerous, and it is no surprise that White wins instantly after either 23.b4! or 23.♗e8. 21.♗g8! The threats of ♗g5# and ♗g7† followed by ♗xh7# can only be met in one way. 21...♗xf5 22.♗g7† ♔h5 23.♗xe4! Bringing the last piece into the attack. 23.♗e2 also wins. 23...♔h4 24.♗g4† ♔xh3 25.♗g1 25.♗g3† also worked. Black resigned, as mate is near.

(96) Trauth – Buglisi, Arco 2010

27...♗a5! A brilliant move, exploiting the white queen's instability. 28.♗xa5 There is nothing else. 28...♗xc1† 29.♗f1 ♔h3 White resigned.

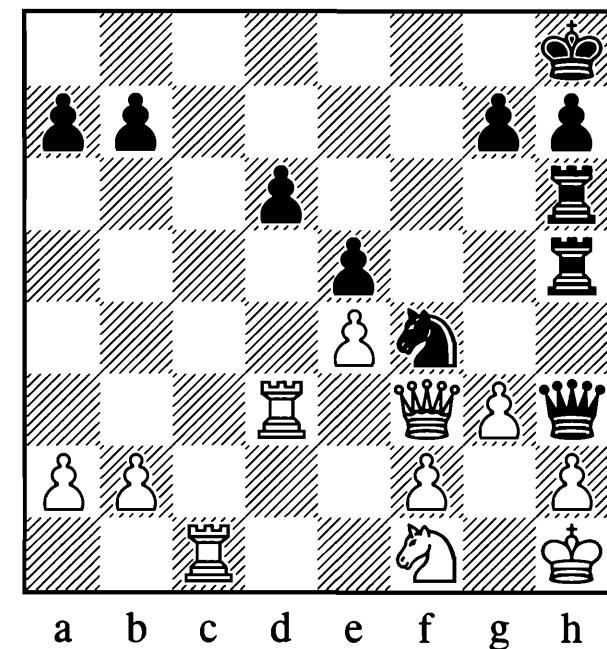
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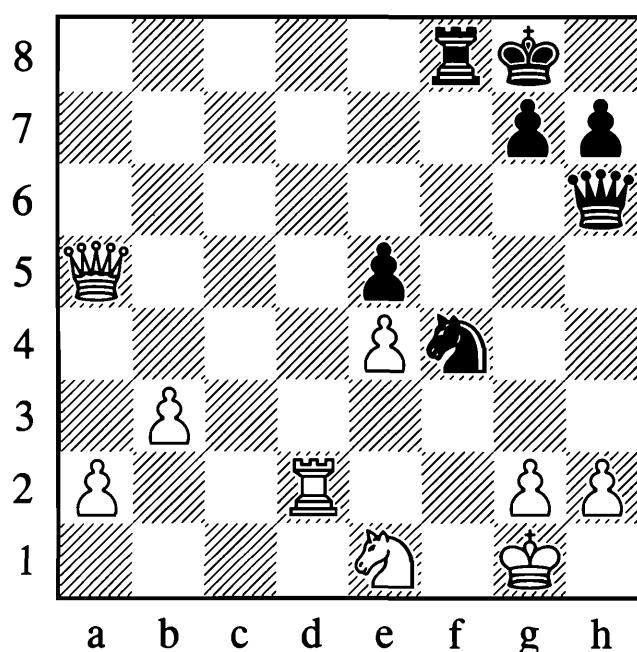
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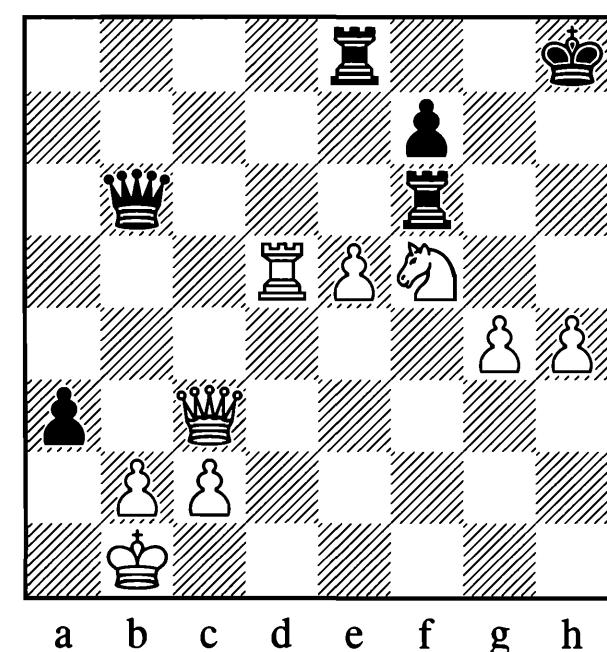
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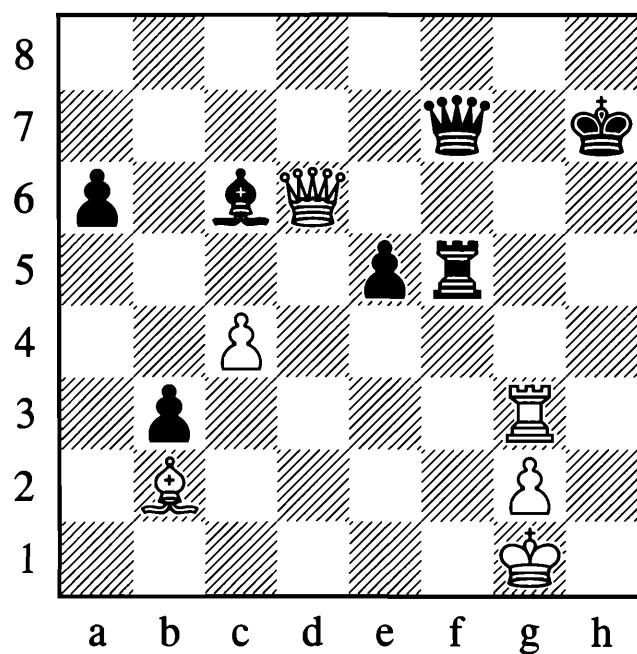
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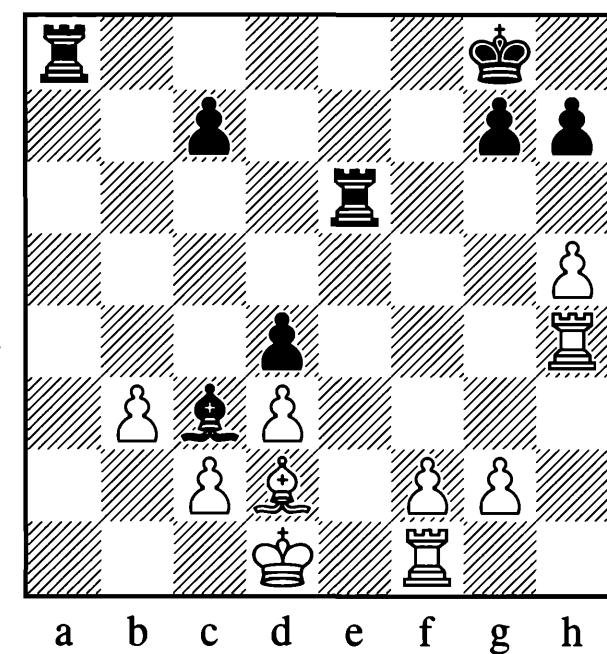
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102

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(97) Krylov – A. Rasmussen, Khanty-Mansiysk (ol) 2010

In the game White threw away his advantage with 26.e6? missing that he could have won with: 26.♕xh6! gxh6 26...♝g8 27.♝f3 and 26...♝f7 27.e6 are both hopeless. 27.♛xh6† ♜h7 28.♛xh7†! ♕xh7 29.♝f3 And mate cannot be prevented.

(98) R. Bagirov – Grigoryan, Aix-les-Bains 2011

30...♝h3†! White resigned. After 31.gxh3 ♜e3† 32.♝g2 ♜g5†! mate comes on the next move.

(99) Qiang Hou – Kaiqi Yang, Thailand 2011

This complicated game speaks loudly about both players' nerves. First it was Black to blunder: 42...♝xg2? The winning combination is well known to us: 42...♝f1† 43.♔h2 ♜h5† 44.♝h3 ♜h1† 45.♝g3 (45.♝xh1 ♜xh3† with mate on the next move) 45...♝xh3† 46.gxh3 ♜f3† 47.♔h4 ♜f4† 48.♔h5 ♜f3# 43.♛d3! e4 44.♛d2 The tables have turned and White's attack is now devastating. 44...♝f3 45.♛d8 45.♝g7†?! would allow Black to draw the ending. 45...♜f8 45...♝g4 46.♛h8† ♜g6 47.♝xg4† and wins. 46.♛d7† ♜f7 47.♛h3†?? An awful blunder, leading to a lost ending. White was completely winning after 47.♝h3† ♜g6 48.♛e6†!. 47...♜h6 48.♛xh6† ♕xh6 49.♝f2 ♜c7 50.♝e3 ♜xc4 51.♝f4 ♜c6 52.♝f5 ♜c5† 53.♝f6 ♜h5 54.♝d4 ♜b5 55.♝f2 ♜g4 56.♝g2 ♜f5† 57.♝g7 ♜h3 58.♝h2 ♜g4 59.♝d4 ♜d5 60.♝c3 ♜c5 61.♝d4 ♜d5 62.♝c3 ♜d3 63.♝e1 e3 64.♝f6 ♜d1 65.♝c3 ♜f1 66.♝b2 ♜c4 0–1

(100) Thybo – Christensen, Denmark 2011

Black was played off the pitch until he finally got lucky with his desperado attack: 29...♛xf1†! 30.♝xf1 ♜xh2† 31.♝g1 ♜g2†! A fantastic point. 32.♛xg2 ♜e2# 0–1

(101) Chelushkina – N. Kosintseva, Khanty-Mansiysk (ol) 2010

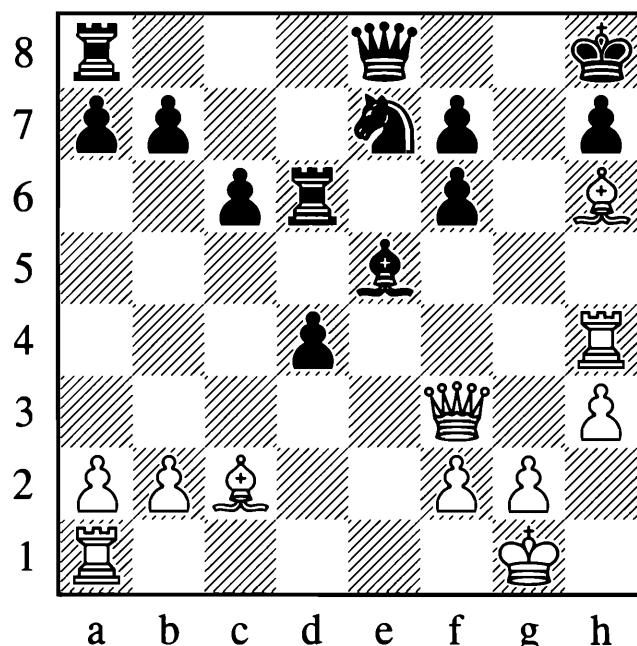
The winning line strips the king bare: 36...♜g1†! The game instead continued: 36...a2†? 37.♝a1 ♜g1† 38.♝xa2 ♜a6† 39.♝a5! ♜xa5† 40.♝xa5 Black won this equal endgame on move 66, but was lucky to do so. 36...axb2?! 37.e6 ♜h7 offers Black great attacking chances, but it would still be a fight. 37.♝a2 axb2! Now this works easily. The black queen is much better placed and there is space for the rooks to join the attack. 38.♝xb2 ♜b6† 39.♝a3 ♜a1† 40.♝xa1 ♜a8† 41.♝a5 ♜xa5#

(102) Deviatkin – Azarov, St Petersburg 2011

Black spotted a nice little mating combination: 27...♝a1† 28.♝c1 ♜b2 29.♝d2 ♜xc1! 30.♝hh1 A bit strange. Resigns make more sense, or 30.♝xc1 ♜c3† 31.♝d1 ♜e1#. 30...♝xf1 31.♝xf1 ♜c3† 32.♝d1 ♜f7 33.f4 ♜e3 34.g4 h6 35.g5 c5 36.♝g1 ♜e6 37.♝h1 ♜f5 38.gxh6 gxh6 0–1

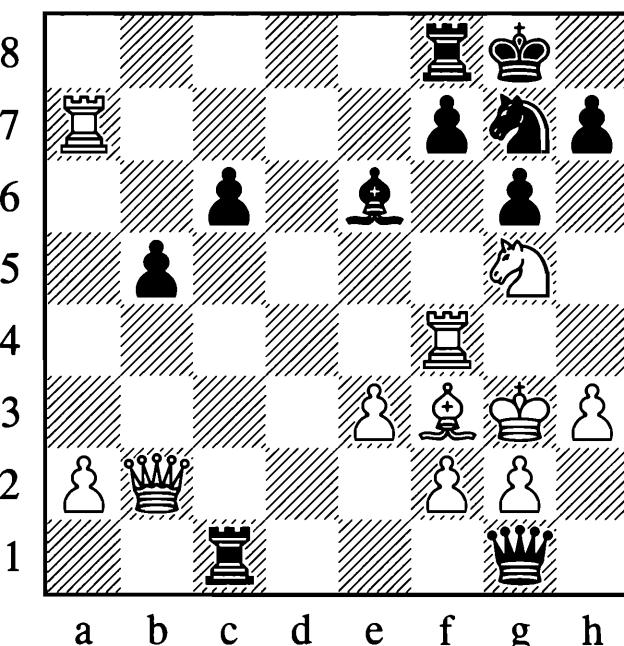
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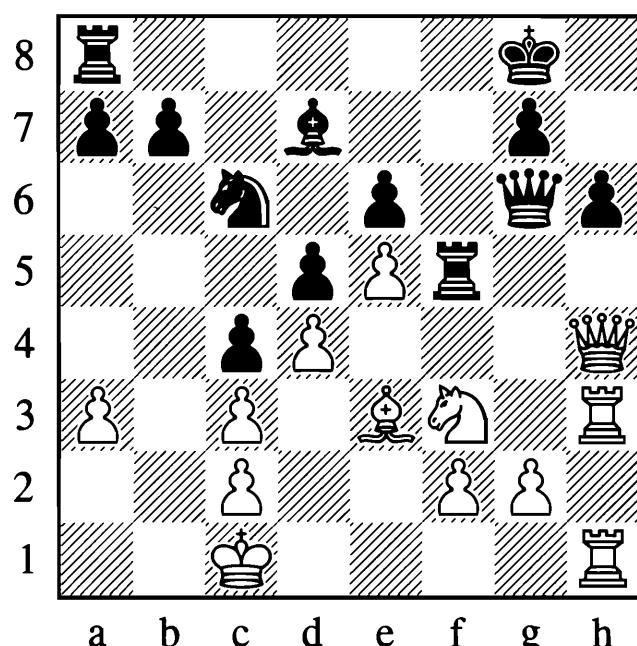
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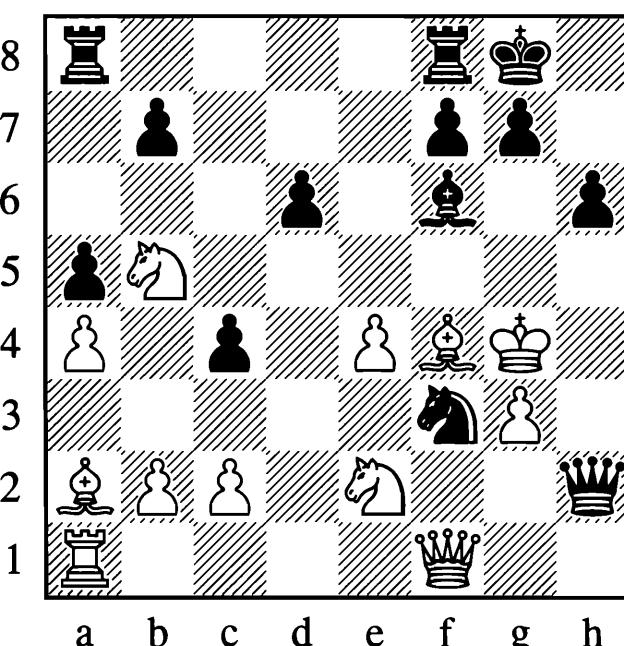
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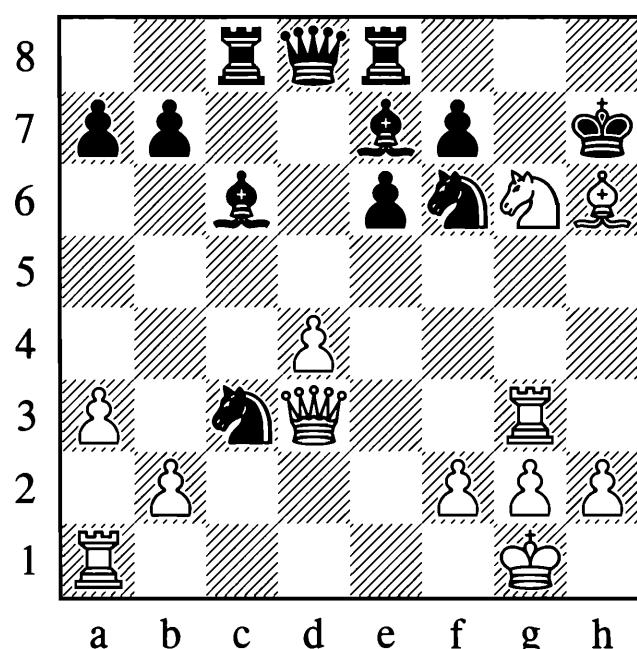
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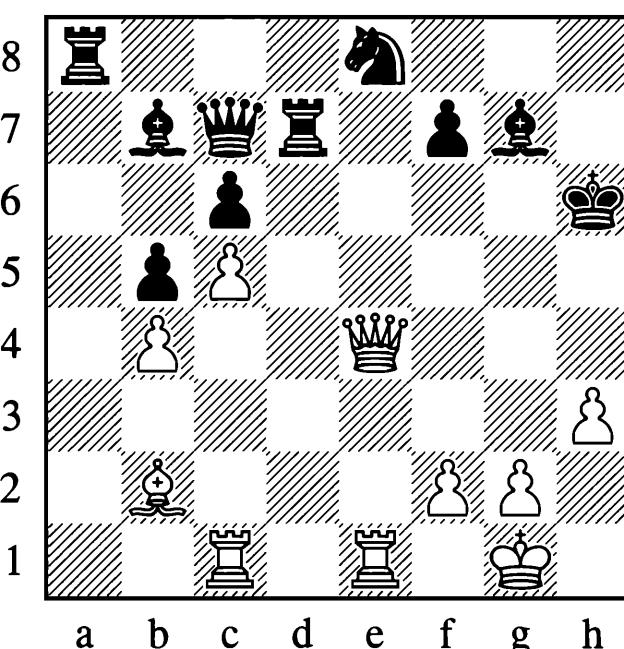
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108

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(103) Mamedyarov – Adly, Dresden (ol) 2008

23.♕xh7! A natural reaction based on the activity of the white pieces. White also has a winning attack after 23.♕f8!? f5 24.♔h5 ♔g8 25.♗e1! but it smells too much of computer chess. **23...♔xh7 24.♕f8† ♔g8 25.♕xe7!** 25.♔h5? f5 would allow Black to defend, with extra material. **25...f5** Allowing White to end up with extra material, but 25...♔xe7 allowed 26.♔g4† with mate next move. **26.♕xd6 ♕xd6 27.♔xf5** White won on move 43... 1–0

(104) Mortensen – Karlsson, Denmark 1988

White cannot defend the c2-square. Black managed to exploit this with: **20...♝xf3! 21.♝xf3 ♜b4!** White resigned. After 22.cxb4 ♜a4 he is mated by the black duo.

(105) Yemelin – Navara, Frydek Mistek 2010

22.♞f8†! The double check is an important factor in this attack. 22.♞xe7† ♔e4 23.♔e3 ♔xe7 24.bxc3 ♔g8 25.♔g5 ♔xg5 26.♔xg5 ♔g6 would allow Black to fight on unnecessarily. **22...♔h8 22...♔xh6 23.♔g6† ♔h5 24.♔h3# 23.♔g7†** 23.bxc3 would of course win the game, but White is looking for mate. **23...♔g8 24.♔xf6† ♔xf8 25.♔g8†!** 1–0

(106) Jumabayev – Ahmad, Jakarta 2011

33.♔xg7†! 33.♔f6!? is also very strong, with the idea that 33...♝c2 34.♝xf7 ♔xf7 35.♝xf7 also leads to a mating attack. But the direct win is of course to be preferred. **33...♔xg7 34.♝xe6†** Black resigned. He is mated after 34...♔g8 35.♝xf7! based on 35...♝xf7 36.♝a8† ♔f8 37.♝xf8#.

(107) Budnikov – Vatinyan, Donetsk 2011

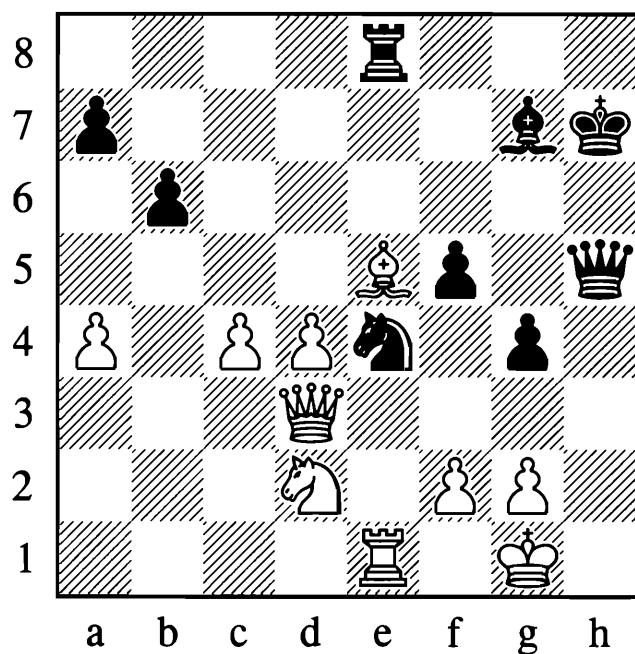
In this game Black missed his chance for immortality: **23...♔h5†!** The game continued: 23...♝e5† 24.♔xe5 ♔xe5 25.♔xc4∞ and White won on move 44. **24.♔xh5 ♜h2!** The threat is mate in two. **25.♔g5!?** The only move. 25.♔h3 g6† 26.♔xh6 ♜f3 leaves White with no defence against ...♔g7#. **25...♔xg5 26.♔xf7† ♔xf7 27.♔xc4† ♔e7** With a winning endgame for Black.

(108) Morozевич – Movsesian, Sarajevo 2008

Morozевич showed a brilliant win in this possible variation from his chaotic game with Movsesian. **31.♝c4!** A great move, clearing the c1-square for the bishop and at the same time bringing the rook into the attack. Black only has one sensible way to go down: **31...♜xb2 31...bxс4 32.♝c1†** ends quickly in mate. **32.♔h4† ♔g7 33.♔g4† ♔f8 34.♔h6†! ♔g7 35.♔xg7 ♜xg7 36.♔h8#** A beautiful combination.

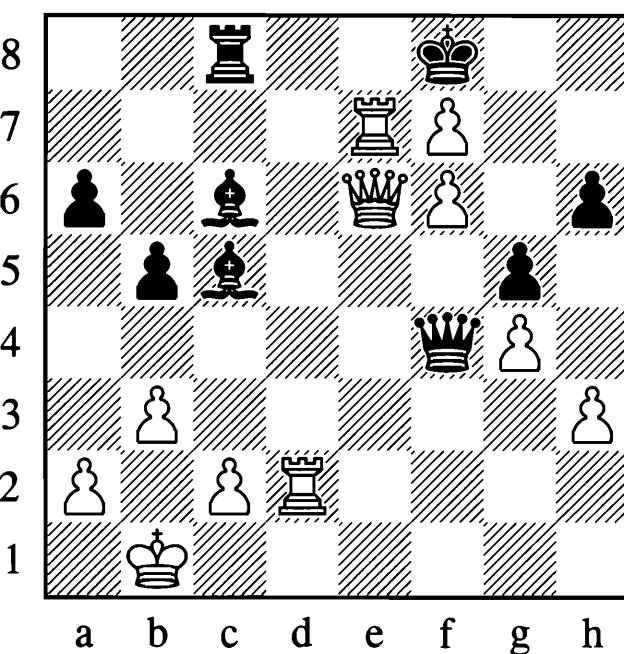
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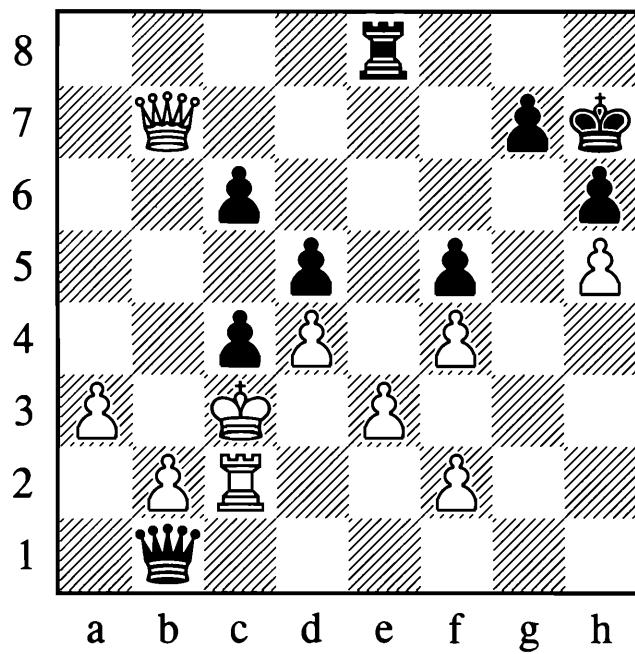
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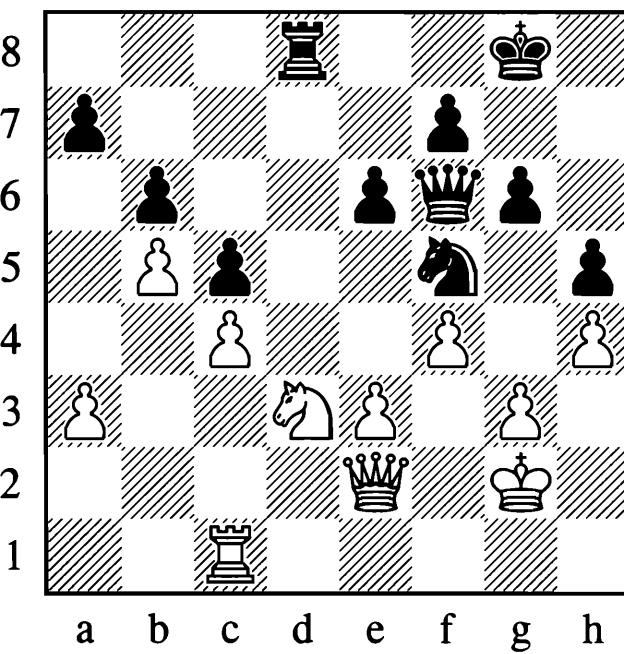
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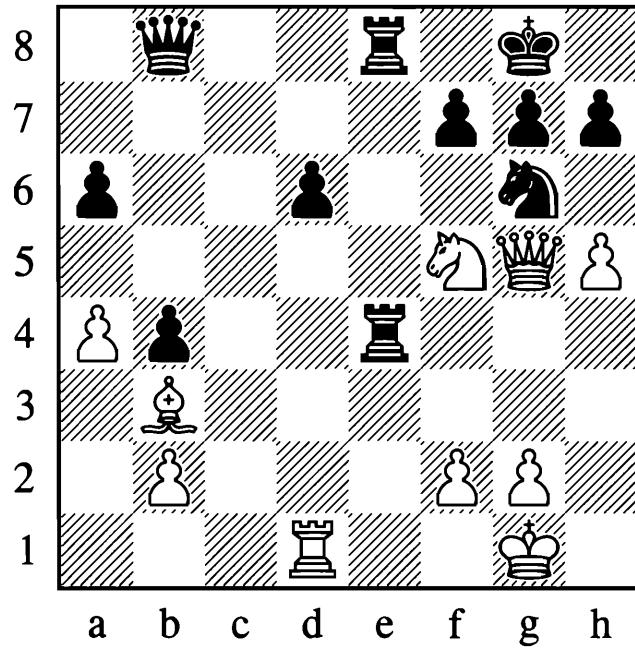
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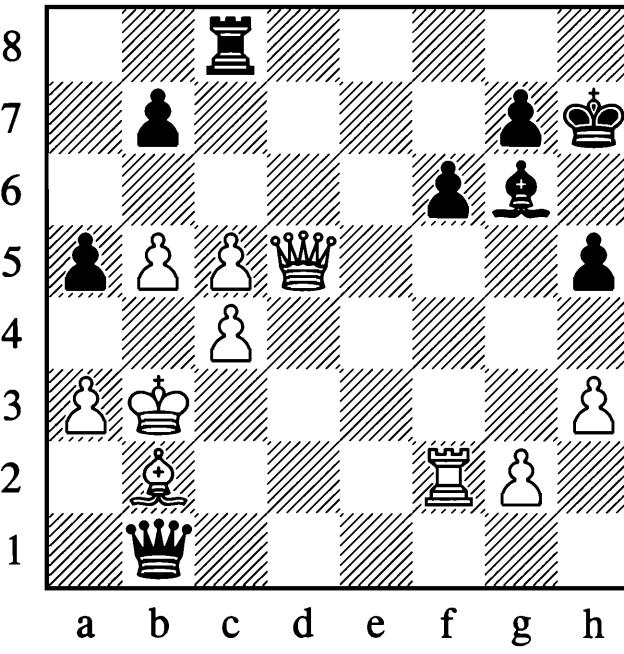
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(109) N. Kosintseva – Zhao Xue, Sochi (rapid) 2009

40... $\mathbb{Q}d6??$ was a horrible blunder that lost the game on move 49. Black missed the chance to win directly with: 40... $\mathbb{W}h1\#$ 41. $\mathbb{Q}xh1$ $\mathbb{Q}xf2\#$ 40... $\mathbb{Q}xe5?!$ with the same idea is less clear: 41. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}h2\#$ 42. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $fxe4$ 43. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{W}g6$ 44.f3 Black would probably win, but a lot of work is needed.

(110) Laznicka – Beliavsky, Aix-les-Bains 2011

49... $\mathbb{W}e1\#$! Black is better after 49... $\mathbb{W}d1$, but despite the unpleasant look of 50.b3 c5! 51.bxc4 cxd4# 52.exd4 dxc4 it is not yet over. 50. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}c1\#$ 51. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3\#$! The beautiful point, winning an important tempo. 52. $\mathbb{Q}b4$ $\mathbb{W}xc2$ 0–1

(111) Kurnosov – Ragger, Austria 2011

29. $\mathbb{Q}xf7\#$! This check decides the game quickly. White did have another way to win in the unnatural 29. $\mathbb{Q}d5?!$ $\mathbb{Q}e1\#$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}h2!!$ based on 30... $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ 31.hxg6 hxg6 32. $\mathbb{W}xg6$ with mate. Less convincing was: 29.hxg6? $\mathbb{Q}e1\#$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}xe1$ $\mathbb{Q}xe1\#$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ d5# 32.g3 hxg6 33. $\mathbb{Q}e7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}xd5\pm$ 29... $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 30.hxg6# 30. $\mathbb{Q}xd6\#?$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{W}e5!$ would give Black some saving chances. 30...hxg6 31. $\mathbb{Q}xd6\#$ Black resigned. 31... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ is over because of 32... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}d8\#$.

(112) Movsesian – Ponomariov, San Sebastian 2009

Black is about to get done in, but is on the move. He found a brilliant way to keep his attack going. 39... $\mathbb{W}f1\#$ 40. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ 40. $\mathbb{W}e1$ $\mathbb{W}xe1\#$ 41. $\mathbb{Q}xe1$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ also wins for Black. 40... $\mathbb{Q}a3\#$! Without this Black could just resign. 41. $\mathbb{Q}xa3$ $\mathbb{W}c1\#$ 42. $\mathbb{Q}b4$ $\mathbb{W}xd2\#$ 42...a5# 43. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ $\mathbb{W}xd2\#$ 44.c3 transposes. 43.c3 a5#! The main point. 43... $\mathbb{W}d8?$ 44. $\mathbb{Q}a3\#$ 44. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ $\mathbb{W}xc3\#$ 45. $\mathbb{Q}a6$ $\mathbb{Q}a8\#$ 46. $\mathbb{Q}b6$ $\mathbb{W}d4\#$ The first time there was an alternative. Black also wins after 46... $\mathbb{W}a5\#$ 47. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ b4# 48. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ (48. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}a6\#$) 48... $\mathbb{Q}d8\#$ 49. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}c5\#$ 50. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{W}c2\#$ with mate in two. 47. $\mathbb{Q}c7$ $\mathbb{W}d8\#$ 48. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ $\mathbb{Q}a6\#$ 49. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ 50. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{W}a5$ 51. $\mathbb{Q}e7$ $\mathbb{W}xa2$ 0–1

(113) Valenti – Plachetka, Courmayeur 2011

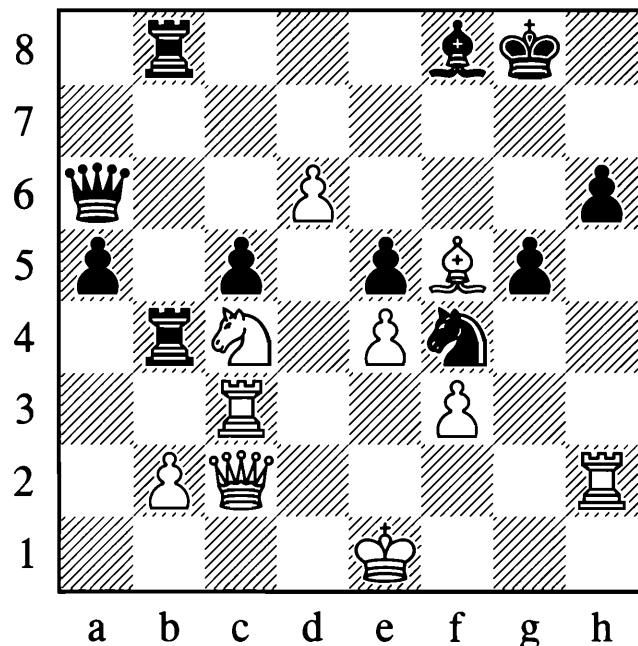
31... $\mathbb{Q}xd3\#$! made White resign. After 32. $\mathbb{W}xd3$ $\mathbb{W}b2\#$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ Black has 33... $\mathbb{W}xc2\#$! 34. $\mathbb{W}xc2$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3\#$.

(114) Van Wely – Kleiman, Las Vegas 2010

52... $\mathbb{Q}xc5!$ Black's attack is suddenly much more dangerous. 53. $\mathbb{W}d7$ The best defence was 53. $\mathbb{W}d2$, although Black is winning in the endgame after 53... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 54. $\mathbb{W}c2\#$ $\mathbb{W}xc2\#$ 55. $\mathbb{Q}xc2$ $\mathbb{Q}xb5\#$!. 53. $\mathbb{W}xc5?!$ would allow Black to show his hand: 53... $\mathbb{W}d1\#$ 54. $\mathbb{Q}a2$ $\mathbb{Q}b1\#$! 55. $\mathbb{Q}a1$ $\mathbb{Q}c2\#$ with mate to come. 53... $\mathbb{Q}d3!$ Black wins. 54. $\mathbb{W}d4$ $\mathbb{W}d1\#$ 55. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4\#$ 56. $\mathbb{W}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ 57. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{W}e1$ 58. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{W}e6\#$ 59. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{W}d5$ 60.b6 $\mathbb{W}c6\#$ 61. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{W}c4$ 62. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ a4 63. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{W}b3\#$ 64. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{W}xb6$ 65. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{W}c6$ 66. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ b5 67. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{W}e4$ 68. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 69. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 70. $\mathbb{Q}f2\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 71. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ g5 72. $\mathbb{Q}b4$ f5 73. $\mathbb{Q}d6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 74. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ f4 75. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 76. $\mathbb{Q}d2\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 77. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{W}c4\#$ 78. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{W}xc2\#$ 79. $\mathbb{Q}xc2$ $\mathbb{Q}f2$ 80. $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ 81. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ f3 82. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ g4 83.hxg4 0–1

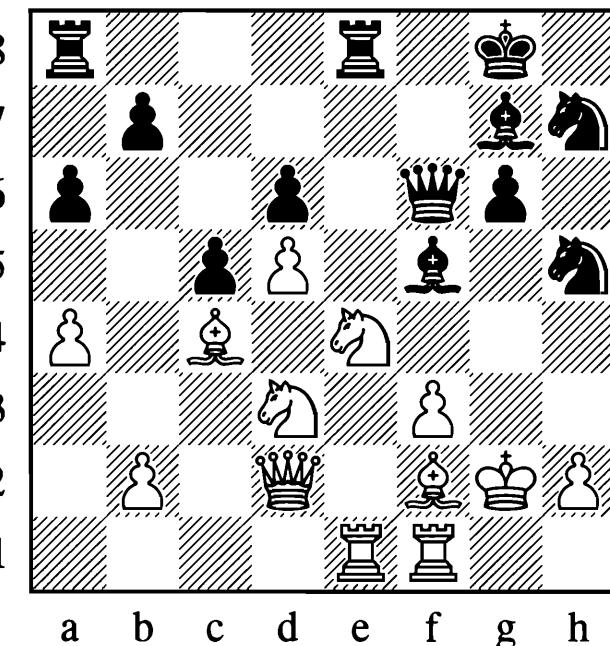
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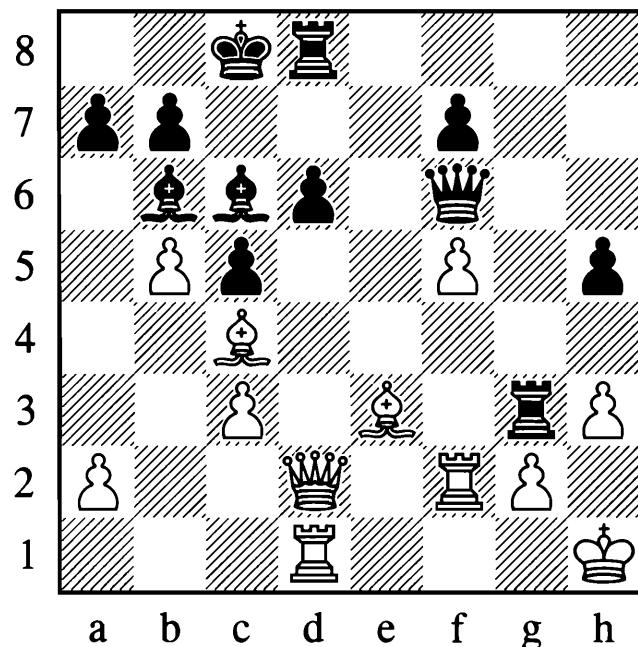
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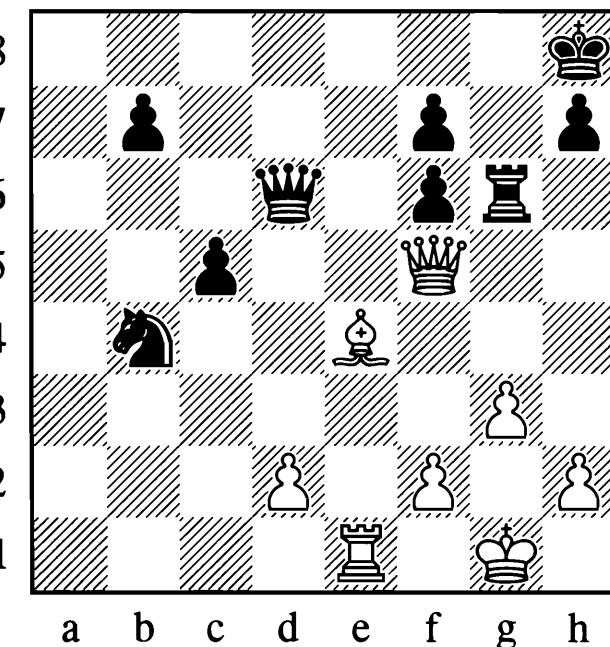
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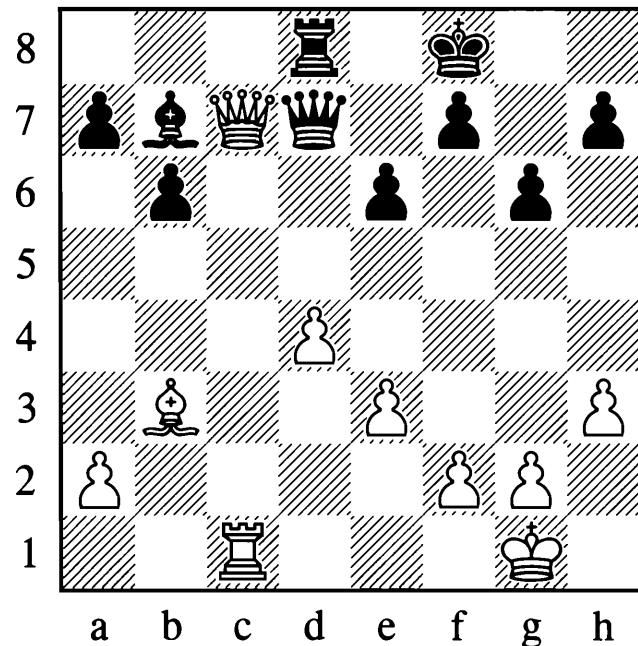
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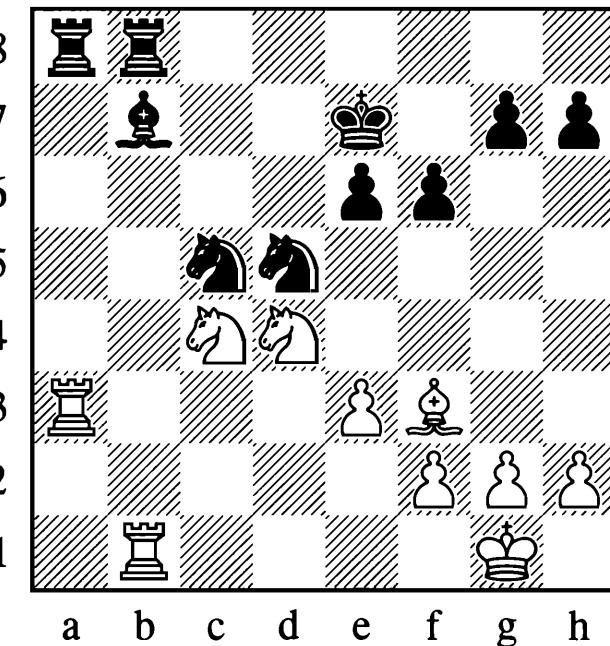
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120

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(115) Ipatov – Firman, Kharkov 2011

Black quickly set up a nice fork with: 29... $\mathbb{E}xc4!$ 30. $\mathbb{E}xc4$ $\mathbb{E}xb2!$ White has no choice but to give up the queen. 31. $\mathbb{W}xb2$ $\mathbb{Q}d3\#$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}e6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 34. $\mathbb{E}xb2$ $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ With the three extra pawns Black won on move 63... 0–1

(116) Brandenburg – Aleksandrov, Aix-les-Bains 2011

25... $\mathbb{E}xh3\#$ 25... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{E}xh3\#$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{W}h4$ 28. $gxh3$ $\mathbb{W}xh3$ 29. $\mathbb{E}g2\#$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{W}h4!!$ The g2-pawn is no longer directly pinned, but it doesn't matter. Also good enough was: 26... $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$ $\mathbb{W}h4\#$ 27. $gxh3$ $\mathbb{E}g8\#$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{W}xc4\#$ 29. $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{W}e4$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}xb5!$ 31. $\mathbb{W}xb5$ $\mathbb{W}xe3\#$ 32. $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{W}xc3\#$ 33. $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{E}e8\#$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{W}xh3\#$ 35. $\mathbb{E}g2$ c4 0–1

(117) Gajewski – Ax. Smith, Stockholm 2012

24. $\mathbb{Q}xe6!$ $\mathbb{fxe6}$ 24... $\mathbb{W}xc7$ 25. $\mathbb{E}xc7$ and White wins. 25. $\mathbb{W}f4\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 25... $\mathbb{W}f7$ 26. $\mathbb{W}xf7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 27. $\mathbb{E}c7\#$ is maybe even more hopeless. 26. $\mathbb{E}c7$ $\mathbb{W}e8$ 27. $\mathbb{E}xb7$ $\mathbb{E}d7$ 28. $\mathbb{W}b8$ $\mathbb{W}xb8$ 29. $\mathbb{E}xb8\#$ White is winning and took the full point on move 72... 1–0

(118) L.E. Johannessen – E. Berg, Esbjerg 2011

23... $\mathbb{Q}h3\#$! 24. $\mathbb{Q}xh3$ $\mathbb{E}xe4$ The white king originally looked just a little exposed, now it's a lot... 25. $\mathbb{fxe4}\square$ 25. $\mathbb{E}xe4$ $\mathbb{W}xf3\#$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{W}xf1\#$ 27. $\mathbb{W}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}g5\#$ 25... $\mathbb{Q}g5\#$ 26. $\mathbb{W}xg5$ $\mathbb{W}xg5$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{W}h6\#$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 29.e5 g5! 30. $\mathbb{Q}g3\#?$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}f2\#$ 30... $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ 31. $hxg3$ g4! 32. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 32. $\mathbb{E}h1$ $\mathbb{W}d2\#$ 32... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 33. $\mathbb{E}xe5$ dxe5 34.d6 $\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 0–1

(119) Galkin – Alekseev, Taganrog 2011

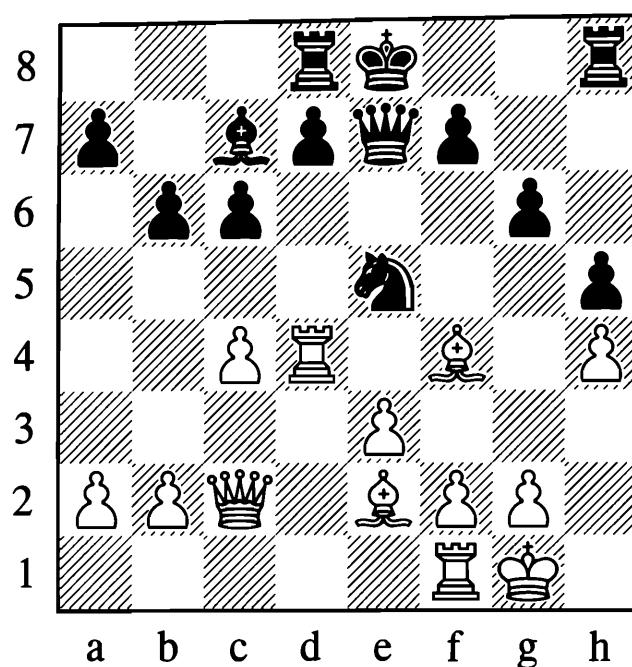
25. $\mathbb{W}c8\#$ $\mathbb{E}g8$ 26. $\mathbb{W}h3\#$! White gains time with every move, so Black never has a chance to bring in defensive reinforcements. 26... $\mathbb{E}g7$ 26... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 27. $\mathbb{W}xh7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 28. $\mathbb{W}h6\#$ $\mathbb{E}g7$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}xb7\#$; 26...f5 27. $\mathbb{W}xf5$ $\mathbb{E}g6$ 28. $\mathbb{W}xf7\#$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}xh7\#$ $\mathbb{E}xh7$ 28. $\mathbb{E}e8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 29. $\mathbb{W}g4\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 30. $\mathbb{E}g8$ 1–0

(120) Ovetchkin – Lintchevski, Olginka 2011

24. $\mathbb{E}a5!!$ $\mathbb{Q}d7?$ 24... $\mathbb{E}c8$ 25. $\mathbb{E}xc5$ $\mathbb{E}xc5$ 26. $\mathbb{E}xb7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{E}a1\#$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{E}cc1$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ g6 30. $\mathbb{Q}b5\#$; 24... $\mathbb{E}xa5$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 26.g4 g5 27. $\mathbb{E}b5$ h6 And now 28.h3+– zugzwang or 28. $\mathbb{Q}xd5\#$. 25. $\mathbb{E}xb7$ $\mathbb{E}xb7$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}c6\#$! $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}d6\#$ Black resigned. After 27... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}e7\#$ he is mated: 28... $\mathbb{Q}g5$ (28... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}f7\#$) 29. $\mathbb{Q}f7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h4$ 30.g3 $\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h3$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}g2\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 32.h3 $\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}f3\#$

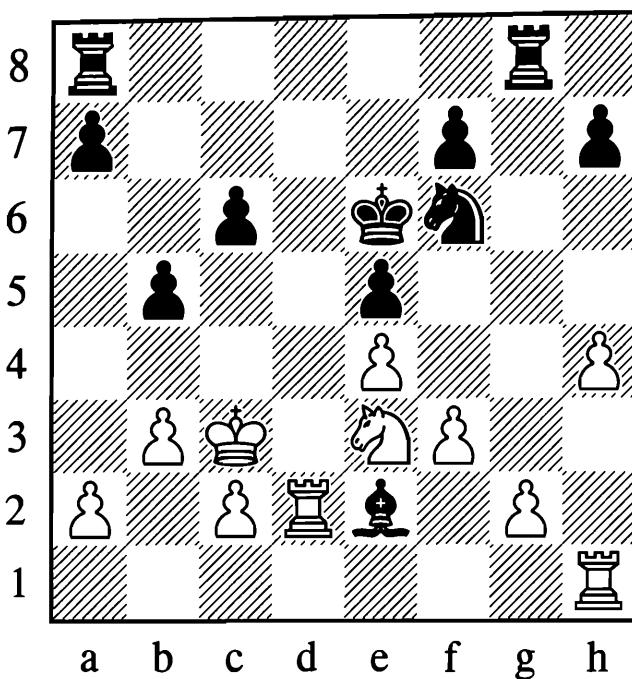
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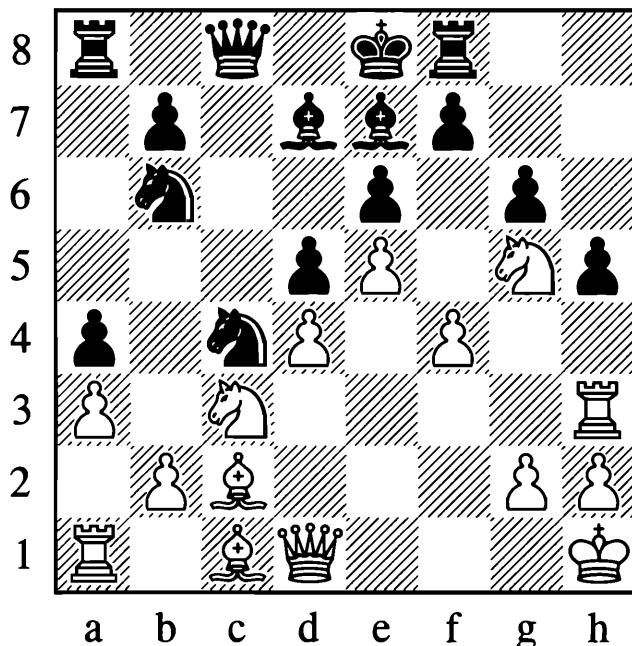
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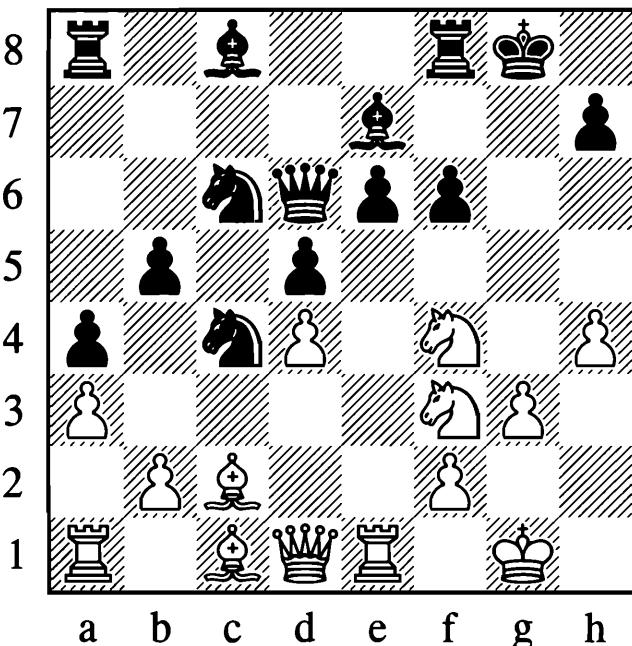
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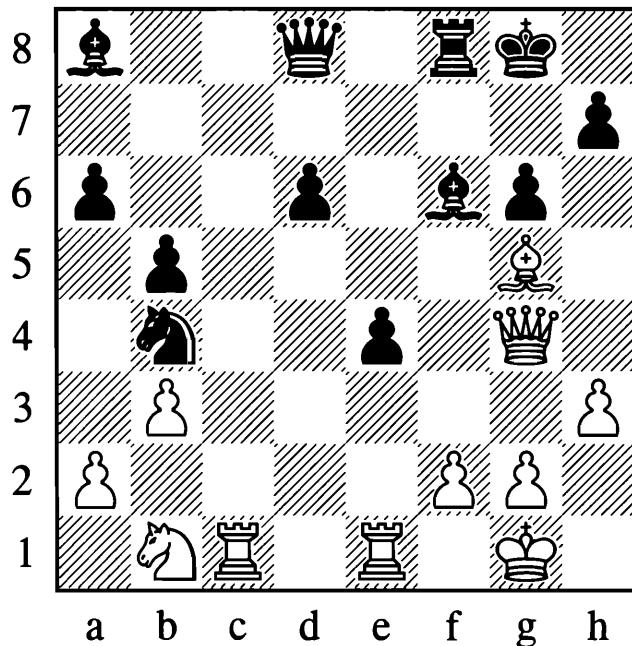
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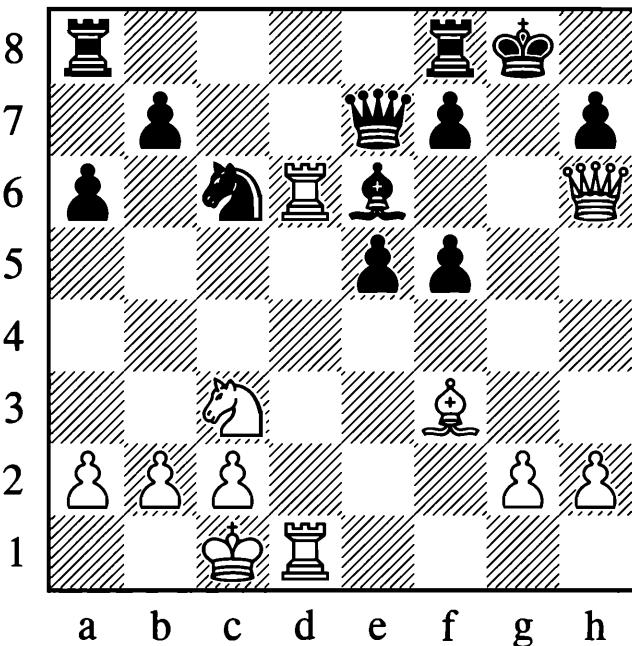
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(121) Potkin – Savchenko, Aix-les-Bains 2011

18.♕g5! f6 19.f4!! Exploiting Black's frail coordination. 19.♕f4 is of course pleasant, but the text move just wins. 19...fxg5 20.fxe5 ♜g7 20...♝g8 does not work either. White wins after 21.♗d3 ♜h7 22.♗f6. **21.♗f6 ♜xe5 22.♗xg6 ♜e7 22...♝xd4 23.♗xg7 ♜xg7 24.♗g6† ♕f8 25.♗xh5** and wins. **23.♗xh5!** Or 23.♗f5?! planning 23...♝xd4 24.♗g8†! ♜xg8 25.♗xh5†+-. 23...♝h2† 23...♝xh5 24.♗g8† ♜f8 25.♗xf8† ♕xf8 26.♗f5†+- **24.♗h1 1–0**

(122) Tiviakov – Lieb, Bad Woerishofen 2011

19.♘xf7! Drawing out the black king. **19...♔xf7 19...♝xf7 20.♗xg6** gives a deadly attack. **20.♗xg6†! ♔g7 20...♔xg6 21.♗xh5† ♔g7 22.♗h7# 21.♗xh5** White could have won a bit quicker with: 21.♗xh5! ♜h8 22.♗h7! Probably the move he missed. 22...♝e8 23.♗h6† ♔f7 24.♗g6† ♔g8 25.♗xh8# **21...♝g8 22.f5 exf5 23.♗g3† ♔h8 24.♗g6 ♜g7 25.♗h5† ♔g8 26.♗f7† 1–0**

(123) Sjugirov – Vachier-Lagrave, Moscow 2011

29.♗e6† ♔g7 30.♗c8! A great tempo gainer. Clearly superior to 30.♗xf6† ♜xf6 31.♗c7† ♔h6 32.♗xf6 ♜xf6 33.♘c3 when a lot of technical effort is required. **30...♝xc8 31.♗xf6† ♔h6 32.♗e7 ♜xf6 32...♝g8 33.♗g7†!** wins immediately. **33.♗xf6** White has won the exchange back, but now with a great positional advantage on top. **33...♘d3 34.♗f1 ♜f5 35.♗h4† ♔g7 36.♗e7† ♔h6 37.♗h4† 37.♗xd6!** was simpler. **37...♔g7 38.♗d8 ♜f8 39.♗d7† ♔h6 40.♘c3 ♘f4 41.♗g4 ♜b7 42.♘e2 ♘d3 43.♗d7 ♔d5 44.♘c3 ♘c5 45.♗c7 ♜a8 46.♘d1 1–0**

(124) Kotronias – Vorobiov, Moscow 2011

White has trapped the black bishop with the hope of reaching an endgame. But after **21...♝xg2!** White resigned (**21...♗xf3 22.gxf3 ♜g3** does not work on account of **23.♗d6†!** with even chances). After **22.♗xg2 ♜xf3** Black follows up with ...♗xe4† and is simply winning.

(125) Ponomariov – Ni Hua, Khanty-Mansiysk 2011

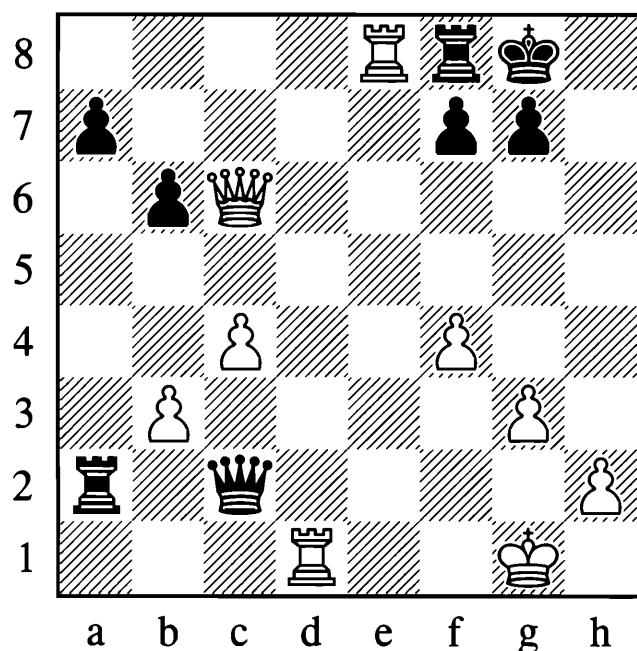
White missed the direct win with: **18.♗xh7†!** In the game White won a decent game with: **18.♘h2? ♜f7 19.♗g4 ♔h8?** (19...♔f8 was only a bit worse for Black) **20.♗h6! ♜g7 (20...♝f8 21.♗g6† gives a deadly attack) 21.♗h5 e5 22.♗xg7 ♔xg7 23.♗h5 ♜e6 24.♗f5† ♜xf5 25.♗xf5 1–0** **18...♔xh7 18...♔g7?!** 19.♗h2! only improves White's attack. **19.♗g5† fxg5 19...♔g8 20.♗gxe6** is decisive. And **20.♗h5** is also winning. **20.♗h5† ♔g8 21.♗g6† ♔h8 22.♗h5! 22.♗xe6 ♜f6 23.♗xf8 ♜f5! 24.♗h6† ♔g8 25.♗e6 ♜e8 26.♗xf6 ♜xe6 27.♗xg5†** is also good enough to win eventually, but still a bit complicated. Black is unnecessarily active. **22...♗f6 23.♗xf6 ♜xf6 24.♗xf6† ♔g8 25.♗xg5†** White has a material advantage and a continuing attack. The win is not in doubt.

(126) Ni Hua – Polajzer, Rogaska Slatina 2011

21.♗d7! White had a less spectacular alternative way to win the game in **21.♗e4?! fxe4 22.♗xe4 f6 23.♗xe6!** when the endgame after **23...♜g7 24.♗xg7† ♔xg7 25.♗d7† ♜f7 26.♗ed6** followed by ♜d5 or ♜xh7 would win eventually. **21...♝b4** The main point is of course **21...♝xd7 22.♗d5** winning. And after **21...♝xd7 22.♗xd7 ♜xd7 23.♗d5** Black will suffer heavy material loses. **22.♗d5 ♜xd5 23.♗g5† ♔h8 24.♗f6† ♔g8 25.♗xd5** The attack on f7 decides. **25...♝f4† 26.♔b1 1–0**

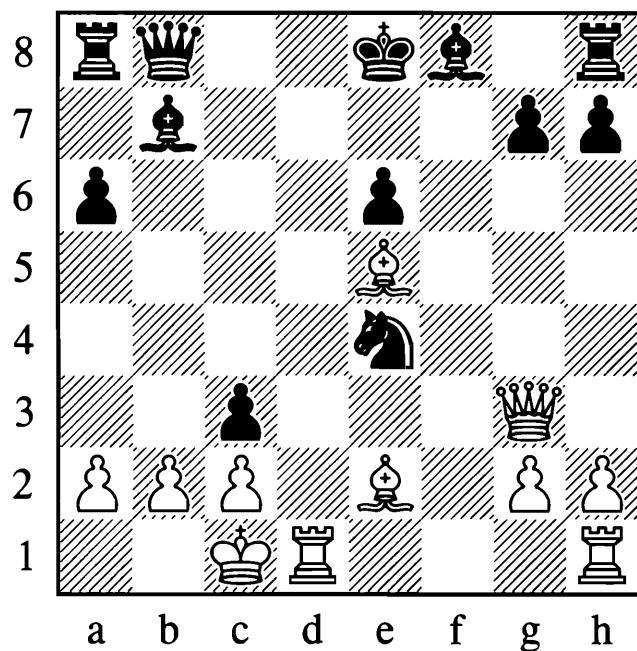
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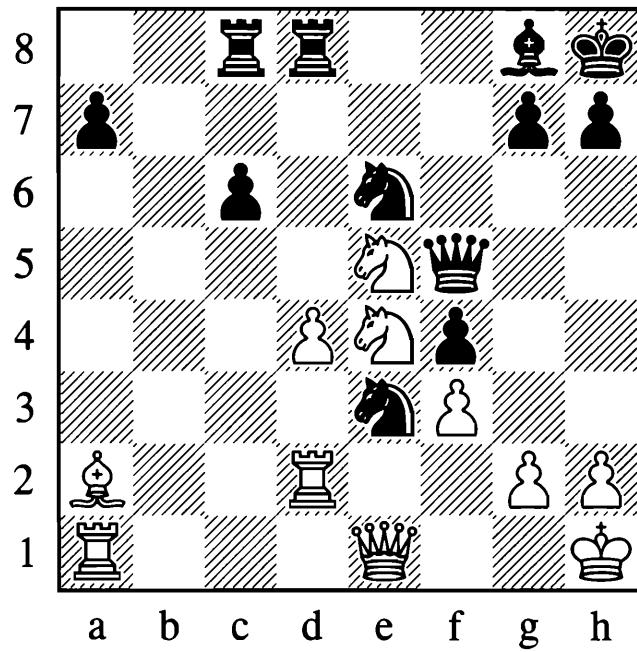
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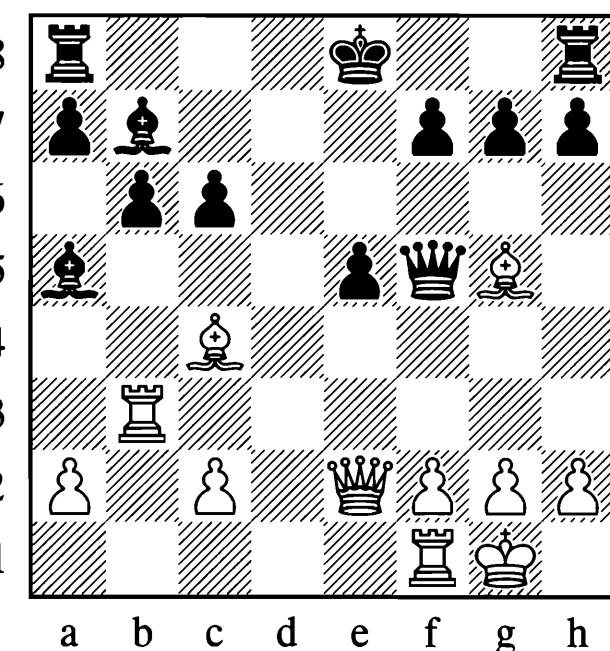
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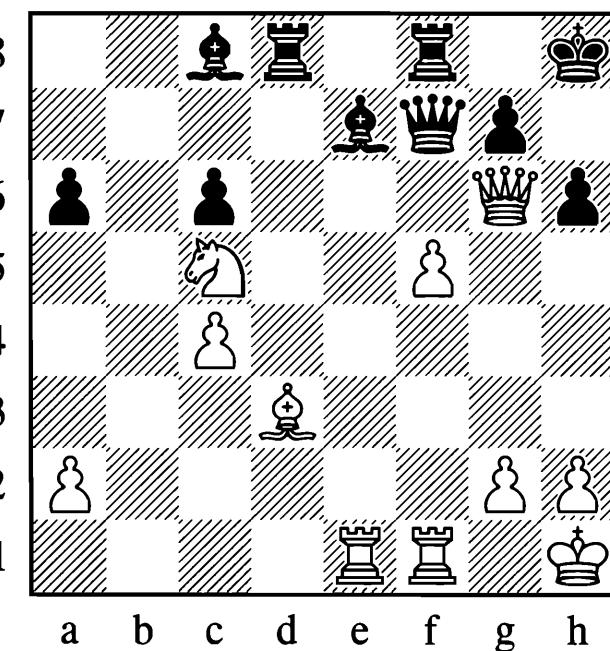
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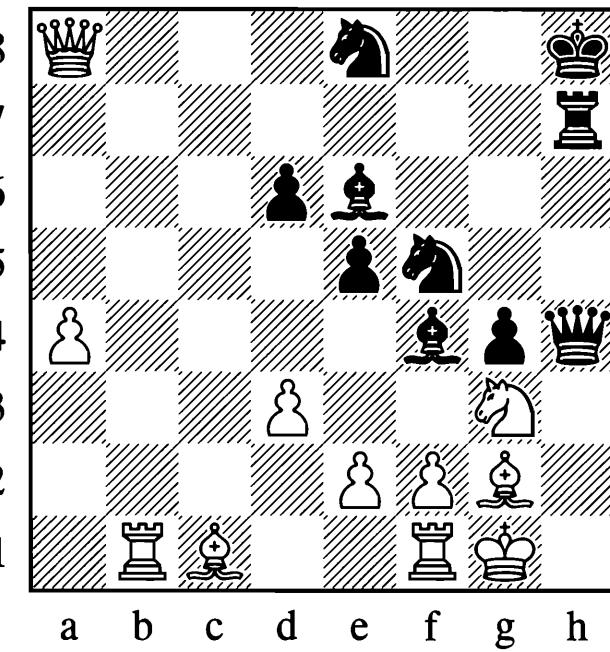
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132



(127) Chatalbashev – Nyback, Rogaska Slatina 2011

It is not so hard to see the first move. **28.♕xf8†** But you have to guess what Black's answer will be! **28...♔h7!** Black of course avoids direct mate: **28...♔xf8 29.♖d8† ♔e7 30.♗d6# 29.♕h8†!** **29.♗f3?** would allow Black to escape with a perpetual check: **29...♗xh2† 30.♔f1 ♗h3† 31.♔e1 ♗e6† 32.♔f1 ♗h3† 29...♔xh8 30.♗c8†** Black resigned. The game could have ended with: **30...♔h7 31.♗h3† ♕g6 32.♗g4† ♔h6 33.♗g5† ♔h7 34.♗h5† ♕g8 35.♗d8#**

(128) Recuero Guerra – Paredes Sanchez, Madrid 2010

White won by first opening up the black king and only then bringing in the rook for the attack. This way he did not have to lose time moving his queen. **17.♔h5†! g6 18.♕xg6† hxg6 19.♗xg6† ♔e7 20.♗hf1!** Importantly White is not clearly better after **20.♗xb8 ♔h6†! 21.♔b1 ♕axb8 22.b3 ♕bg8 23.♗h5 ♕g5 24.♗e2 ♔d2†∞.** **20...♔h6† 21.♔b1 ♕e8?!** Allowing mate, but Black was lost anyway. **21...♗f8 22.♗xf8 ♕axf8 23.♗xh8 ♕xh8 24.♗d4** leads to a technical win. And a direct mate occurs after **21...♗f8 22.♗h7† ♕e8 23.♗d7# 22.♗f6† 1–0**

(129) Pogonina – Paikidze, Tbilisi 2011

37.g4!! The e3-knight looks good but in fact it's vulnerable, especially as Black also has a soft spot on g6. **37...fxg3 37...♗f8 38.♗g6† hxg6 39.♗h4† ♔h7 40.♗xe6+– 38.♗xe3 ♕xd4 39.♗xg3 ♕f6 40.♗xd4 ♕xd4 41.♗c3 c4 42.♗c3 c4 43.♗e1 1–0**

(130) ‘Erebuni’ – ‘CapilanoBridge’, Internet 2011

18.♗xf7†!! A real bolt from the blue. **18...♔d7 18...♗xf7 19.♗xe5† ♔d7 20.♗f3!+– (20.♗d1†? ♔c8 21.♗f3+–) 19.♗h5?†** The cleanest kill was: **19.♗d1† ♔c7 (19...♔c8 20.♔e7 a6 21.♗f3+– 20.♔e7 ♔c8 21.♗f3 ♕g4 22.h3 ♕a4 23.♔b3 ♕b5 24.♔c4 ♕a4 25.♔d6† ♔b7 26.♔a6# 19...g6 20.♗f3 gxh5 21.♗xf5 ♕af8 22.♗d1† ♔c8 23.♔e7 ♔c7 24.♔d6†** Black resigned.

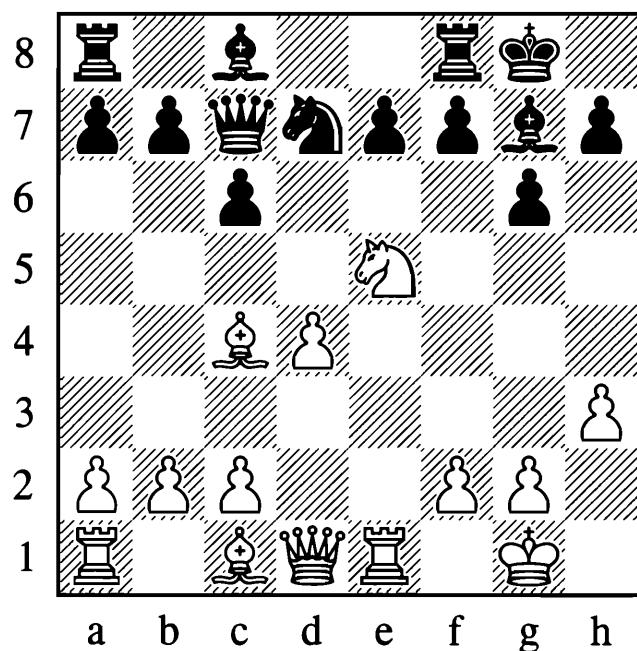
(131) Istratescu – Lazarev, Mulhouse 2011

29.♗xe7!! Maybe not so difficult, but fun all the same. **29...♗xe7 30.f6 gxf6 30...♗xd3 31.fxg7† ♕xg7 32.♗xd3 ♕xf1† 33.♗xf1+– 31.♗xh6† ♕g8 32.♗f3 ♕f7? 32...♗g4 33.♗g6† ♕g7 34.♗xg7† ♕xg7 35.♗g3 f5 36.h3+–; 32...♗e1†! 33.♗f1 ♕f7 34.♗d3! ♕e7 35.♗f4 f5 36.♗g3† ♕g7 37.♗g6 ♕f6 38.♗h8† (38.c5?! ♔e6 39.♗h8† ♕f7 40.♗e5† ♕xe5 41.♗xg7† ♕xg7 42.♗xd8 ♕a1 43.♗g1 ♕xa2 44.♗c7† ♕f6 45.♗xc6 a5±) 38...♗f7 39.♗e5† ♕xe5 40.♗xg7† ♕xg7 41.♗xd8 ♕a1 42.♗c7† ♕f6 43.♗xc6† ♔e6 44.♗f3± 33.♗g3† ♕g7 34.♗h7† ♕f8 35.♗h8† 1–0**

(132) Flores – Fulgenzi, Argentina 2008

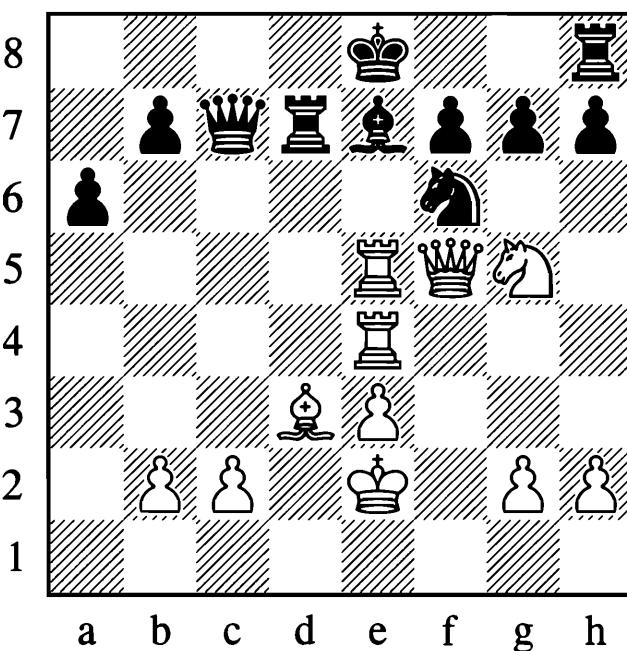
31.♗xe8† ♔g8 32.♗xg8†! The black king is much less secure than it had appeared. **32...♔xg8 33.♗d5† ♕f7□** Not a move Black wanted to play, but even worse was **33...♔f8 34.♗b8† ♔e7 35.♗xf5†. 34.♗xf4 exf4 34...♗e7 35.♗xf7† ♔xf7 36.♗d2+– 35.♗xf5+– ♕h3 36.♗b4 ♕h5 36...g3 37.♗xf7† ♔xf7 38.fxg3 ♕xf5 39.♗bxg4+– 37.♗xf4 1–0**

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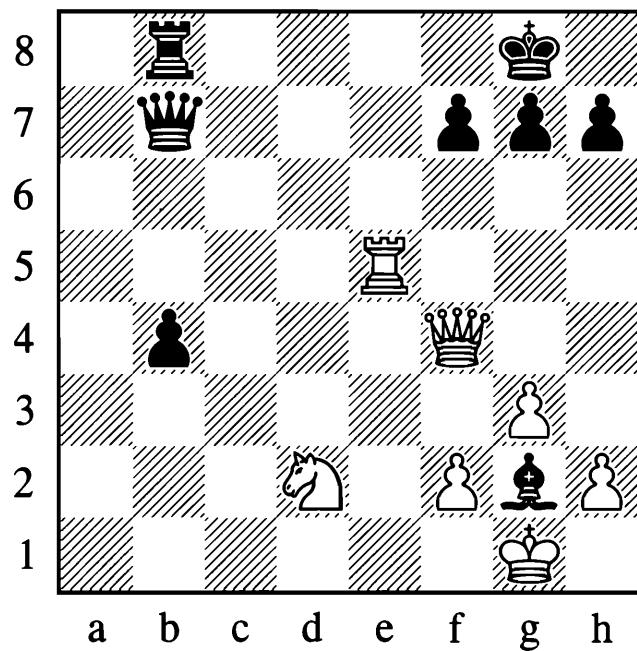


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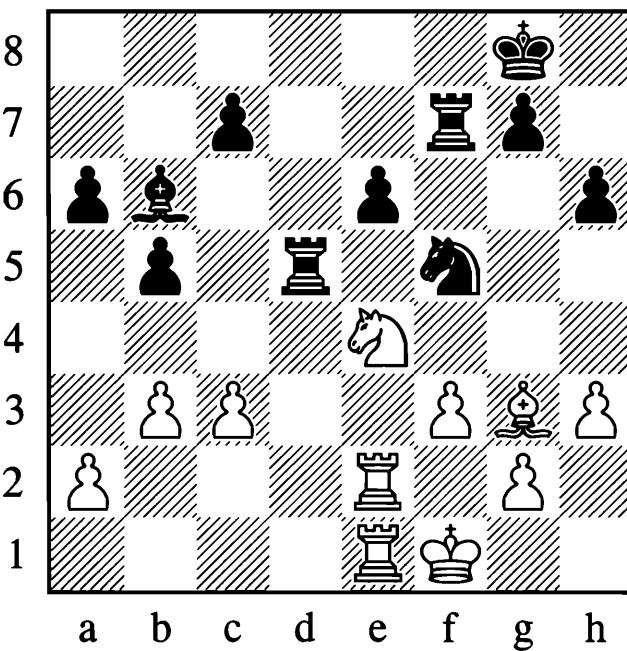
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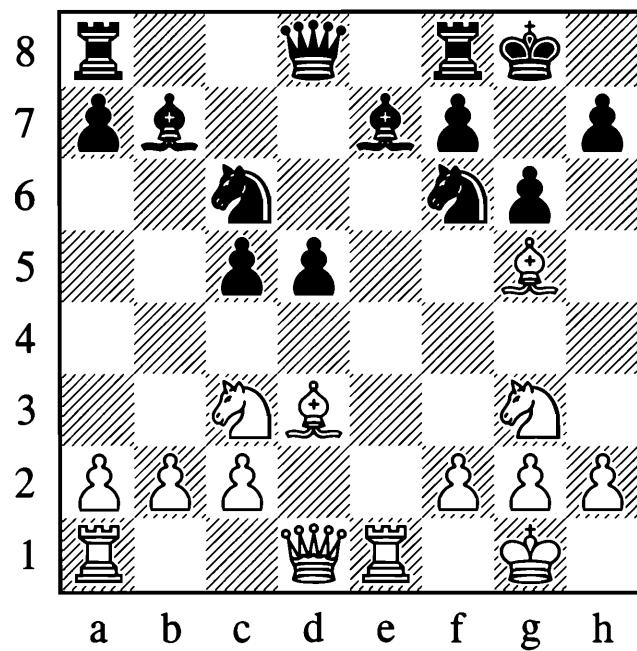
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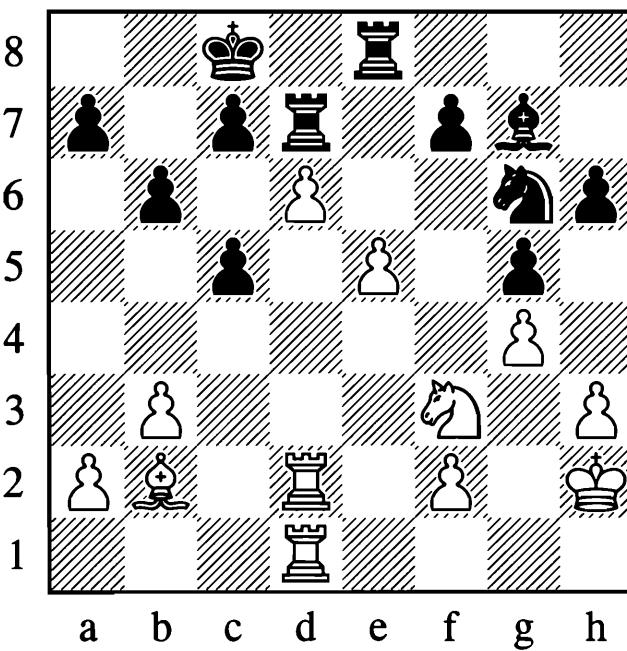
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(133) Safarli – Peschel, Ohrid 2011

12.♕xf7! ♜b6 12...♜xf7 13.♜xe7 and White wins.

13.♕h6† ♔h8 14.♔b3 White is completely winning, but now Black makes it worse. 14...e5? 15.dxe5 a5 15...♚xe5 16.♕f7† and wins. **16.e6 ♜e7 17.♕f7† ♔g8 18.♔g5 ♜f6 19.♔xf6 ♜xf6 20.e7 1–0**

(134) Yevseev – Bocharov, Belgorod 2010

The X-ray is from f4 to b8. White won in one move with:

28.♜e7! Black resigned because of: 28...♜xe7 29.♜xb8† ♜f8 30.♜xf8† ♔xf8 31.♔xg2

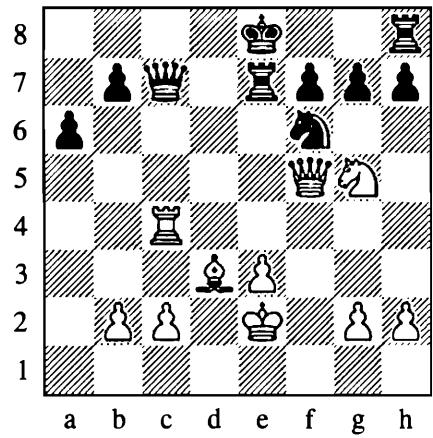
(135) Borries – De Santis, Arco 2010

In the game White played 13.♕f1?? and was mated on move 31. He missed the famous combination **13.♜xe7!** when the X-ray from g5 to d8 is transformed into a deadly pin after **13...♜xe7 14.♕xd5.**

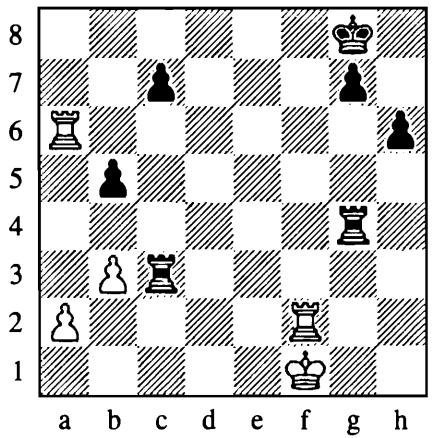
(136) Kamsky – A. Kovacevic, Plovdiv 2010

White has an X-ray threat on the c8-square, which he exploited by first clearing the diagonal there and at the same time preventing Black's rook and bishop from going to d8. **26.♜xe7†! ♜xe7 27.♝c4!** (Diagram A) Black is lost; ♜c8† wins the queen anyway. **27...♜xc4 28.♝xc4 0–0 29.♝d3 ♜fe8 30.♝xh7 ♜xe3† 31.♚f2 ♜e4† 32.♝xe4 ♜g8xe4 33.♝g5 ♜e2† 34.♝g3 ♜2e3† 35.♝f3 ♜e6 36.h4 1–0**

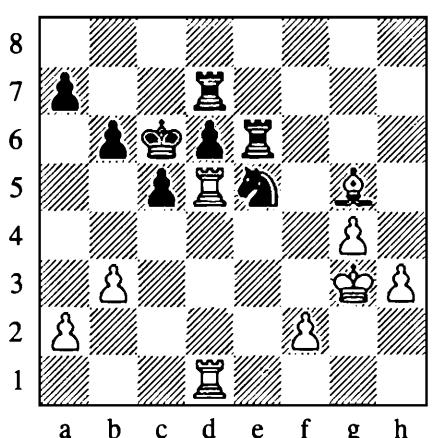
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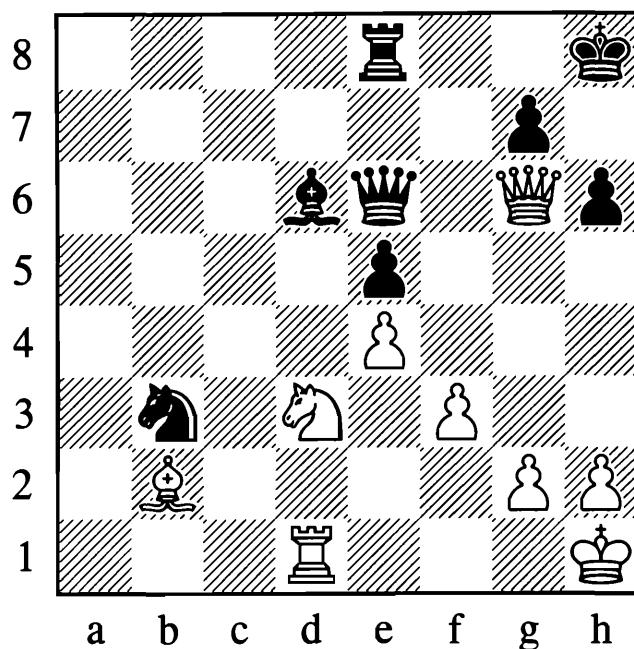
**(137) Inarkiev – Bruzon Batista, Barcelona 2010**

Black wins a pawn by setting up a great X-ray attack on the g1-square. **25...♝xg3† 26.♝xg3 ♜g5 27.♝e4 ♜xf3†! 28.♚f2 28.gxf3 ♜g1# 28...♜xc3 29.g4 ♜xf2 30.♜xf2 ♜xh3 31.♜xe6 ♜xg4 32.♜xa6 ♜c3 (Diagram B) 33.♜f5 b4 34.♜aa5 ♜h4 35.♝g2 ♜d4 36.♜f3 ♜dd3 37.♜xd3 ♜xd3** Black won on move 46... **0–1**

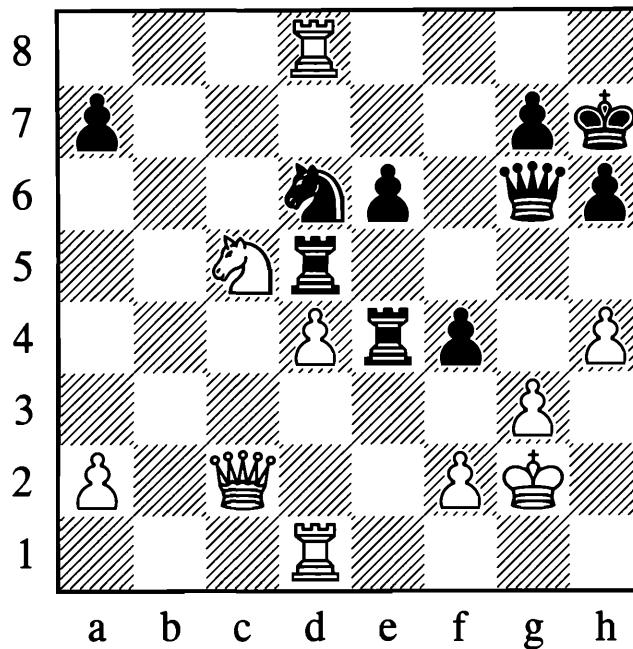
(138) Polgar – Topalov, Mexico City 2010

White uses the b2-g7 and the d6-d7 X-ray attacks with a nice line opener. **27.e6! ♜xe6** The main point was 27...fxe6 28.♝xg7 ♜xg7 29.d7†, winning. **28.♝xg7 cxd6 29.♝xh6 f6 30.♝g3 ♔c7 31.♝d5 ♔c6 32.♝xg5 fxg5 33.♝xg5 ♜e5 (Diagram C) 34.h4 b5 35.f4 ♜f7 36.f5 ♜e4 37.♝f4 c4 38.bxc4 bxc4 39.g5 c3 40.♝d5 d3 ♜c4 41.g6 c2 42.♝c1 ♜d8 43.♝d2 1–0**

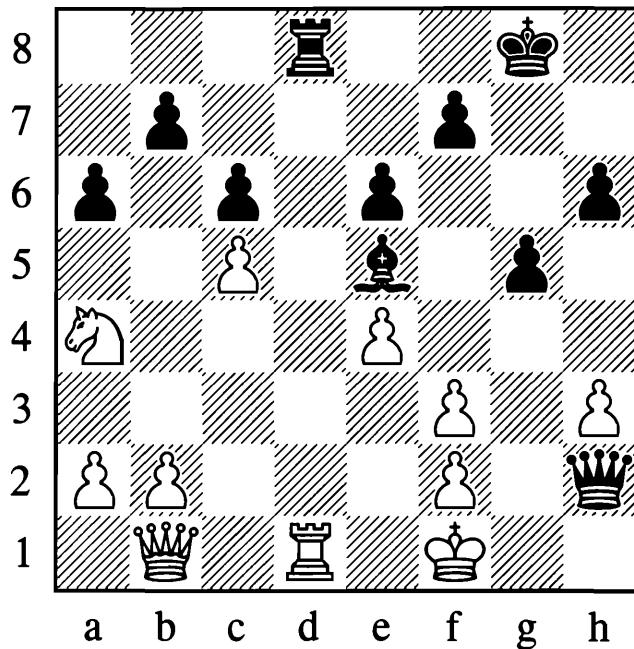
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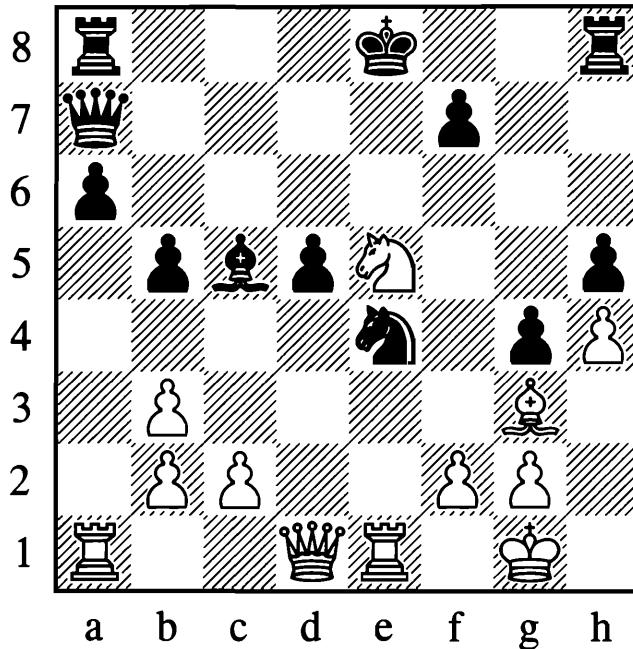
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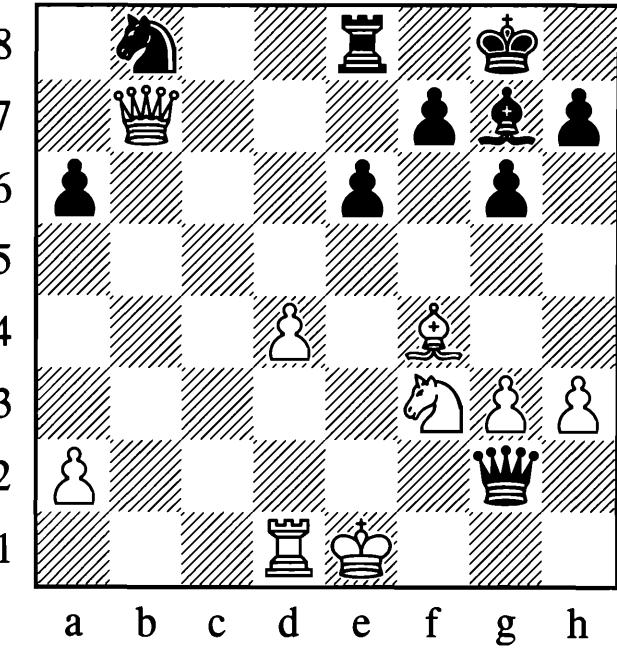
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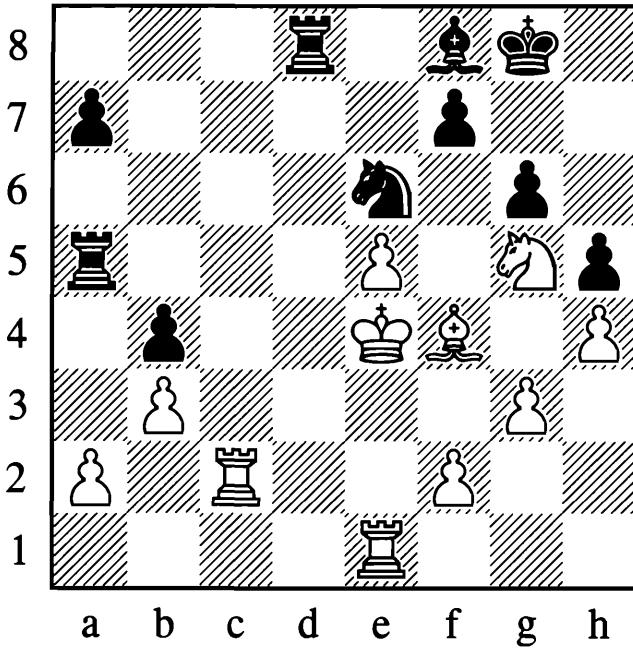
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(139) Dreev – Edouard, Mulhouse 2011

The X-rays from b2 to h8 and d1 to d6 decide: **48.♕f4!**
 Black resigned. After 48...♝xg6 49.♝xg6† ♕h7 50.♝xd6
 (Diagram A) White is a piece up.

(140) A. Grant – Wohl, Hastings 2011

The X-ray threat on the white queen decided the game after: **29...♝d2! 0–1**

(141) Postojev – Burmakin, Schwaebisch Gmuend 2011

31...e5! White resigned. The point is that the queen is hanging on b7, making the X-ray from e8 to e1 all the more deadly: 32.dxe5 ♕xe5 33.♕xe5 ♜xe5†! 34.♝xe5 ♜xb7

(142) Pavasovic – Ribli, Austria 2011

The X-ray from g6 to c2 decided the game after **46...f3†!** when White resigned, unable to find a square for the king that did not allow a discovered check winning the queen.

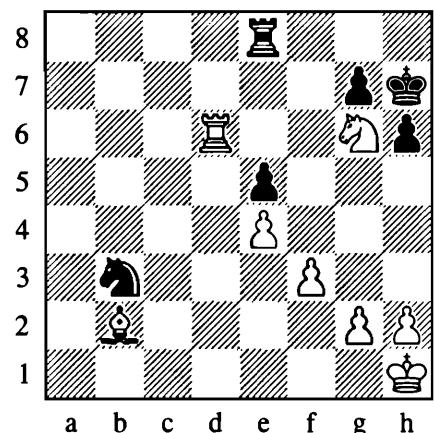
(143) Aveskulov – Shabala, Alushta 2011

White wins through the X-ray from d1 to d7. First the relevant defenders have to be removed: **22.♜xe4! dxe4**
 (Diagram B) **23.♜xa6!** Black resigned, facing 23...♝xa6 24.♝d7† with mate.

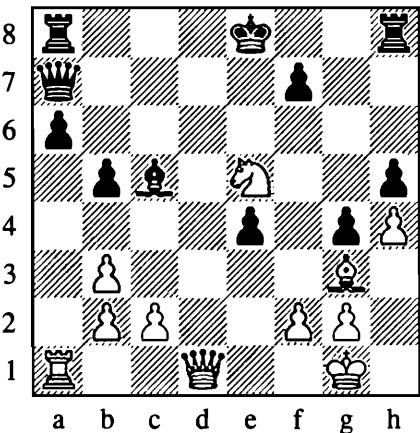
(144) Howell – Adams, British Championship 2011

White had been close to winning, but a blunder has opened up for the X-ray e8 to e1: **28...f5†! 29.♔e3**
 The point was 29.exf6 ♜xg5† 30.hxg5 ♜e8†, winning a rook. Also 29.♔f3 ♜d4† is no good. **29...♝c5† 30.♜xc5 ♜xc5**
31.♜xc5 (Diagram C) Black won on move 54... **0–1**

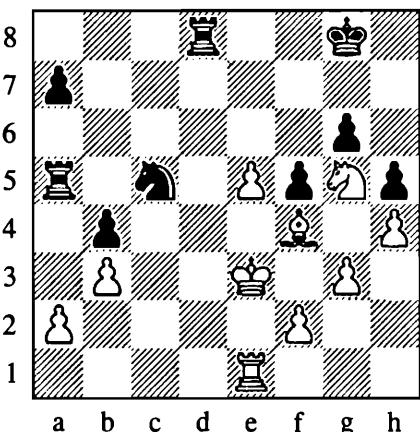
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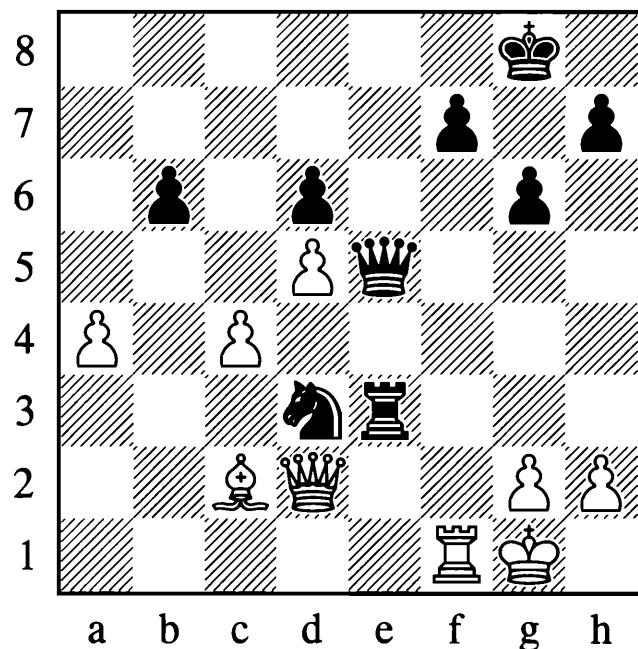


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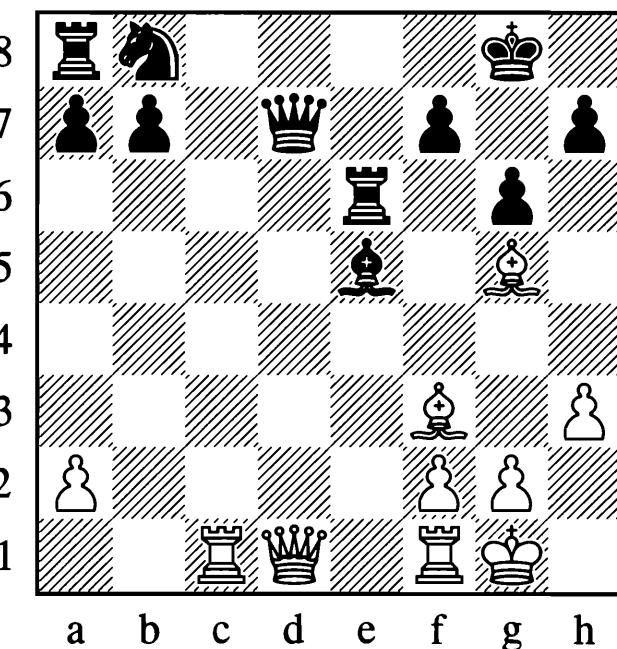
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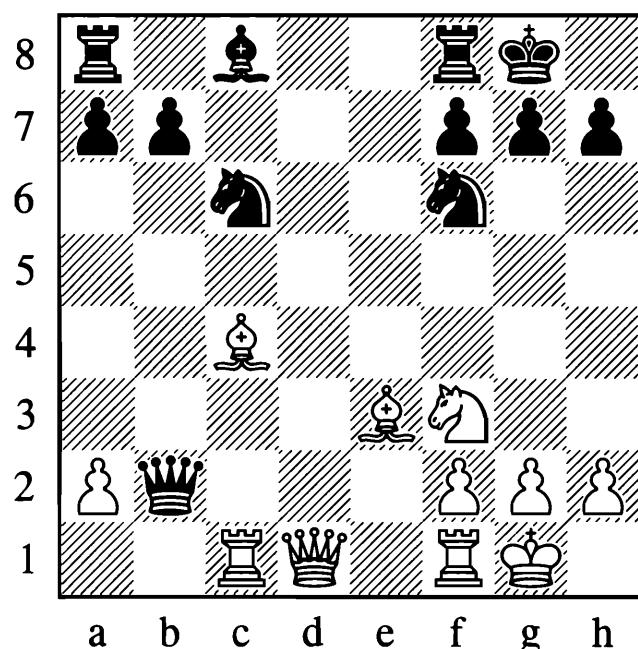
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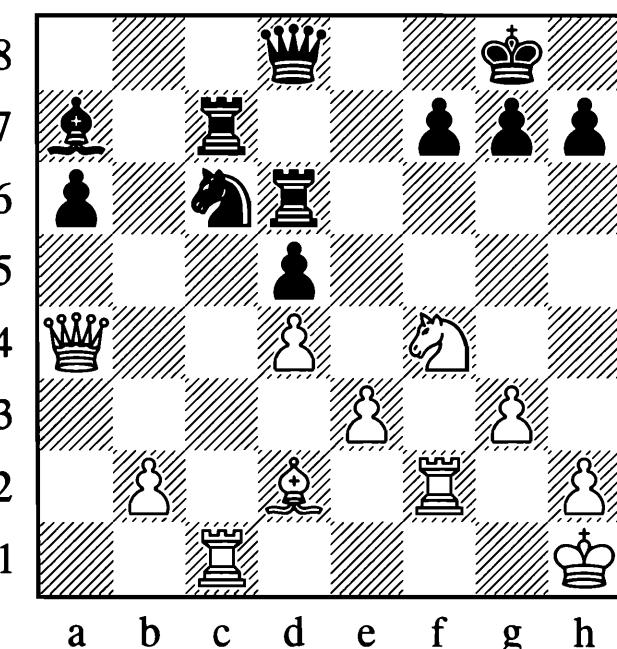
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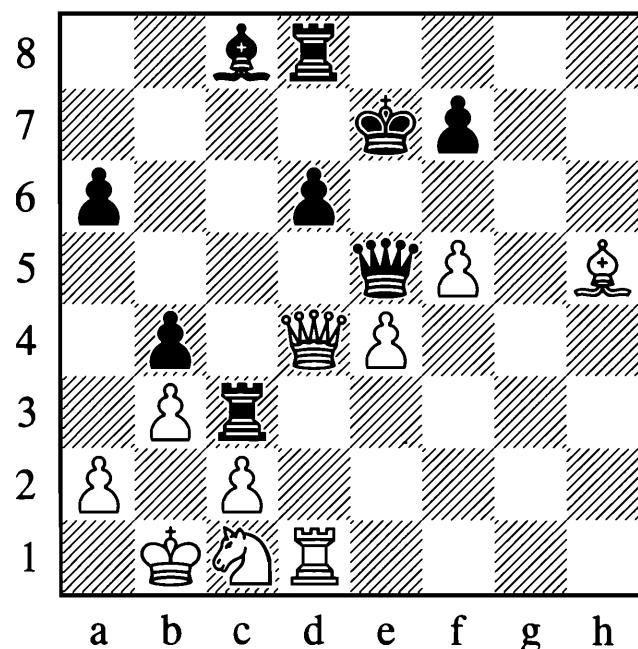
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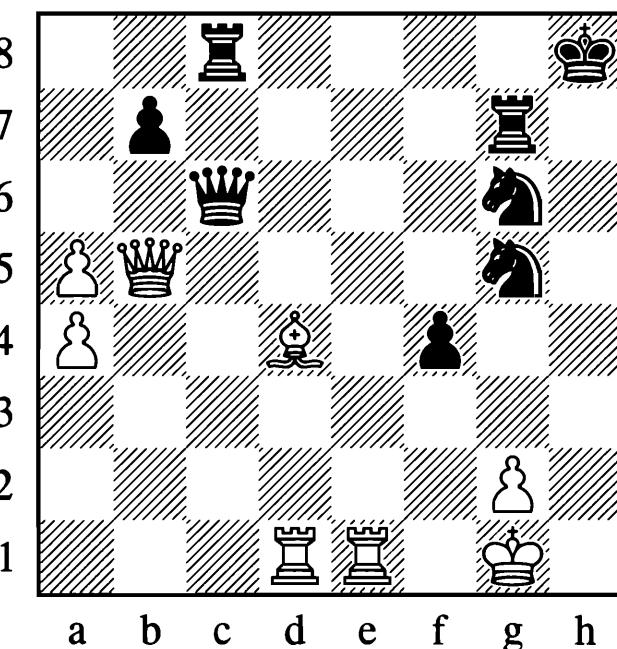
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(145) Nithander – E. Berg, Gothenburg 2011

Black wins with an X-ray attack on d2 and f2 with: 37... $\mathbb{W}d4!$ 38. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{E}e1!$ 39. $\mathbb{E}xe1$ $\mathbb{Q}f2\#$
 40. $\mathbb{W}xf2$ $\mathbb{W}xf2$ Black won on move 51... 0–1

(146) Tarrasch Defence analysis

This position can be found in *Grandmaster Repertoire 10 – The Tarrasch Defence*. The authors recommend that Black avoids this position because of 15. $\mathbb{E}c2!$ $\mathbb{W}b4$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}c5!$ when White wins the exchange on account of 16... $\mathbb{W}xc5?$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}xf7\#$.

(147) Bitalzadeh – Hillarp Persson, Wijk aan Zee 2009

White missed the chance to play: 37. $\mathbb{W}xe5\#$! $dxe5$ 38. $f6\#$! $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 39. $\mathbb{Q}xf7\#$! $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 40. $\mathbb{E}xd8$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$
 41. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ with an easily winning endgame. Instead he played: 37. $\mathbb{W}xb4?$ $a5?$ (37... $\mathbb{W}c5!$ would have been okay for Black) 38. $\mathbb{W}b6$ $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 39. $f6\#$! $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 40. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 41. $\mathbb{E}e1$ $\mathbb{W}f5$ 42. $\mathbb{Q}xf7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xf7$
 43. $\mathbb{W}xd8$ $\mathbb{E}xd3$ 44. $\mathbb{W}e7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 45. $\mathbb{E}g1\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 46. $\mathbb{W}e8\#$! 1–0

(148) B. Lalic – Tikkanen, Gatwick 2011

The X-ray from d1 to d8 could have won the day: 18. $\mathbb{Q}xb7!$ As pointed out by Steve Giddins in *Chess*. 18. $\mathbb{W}d5?$ was played and soon a draw was agreed. 18... $\mathbb{W}xb7$ 19. $\mathbb{W}d8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 20. $\mathbb{E}c8+-$

(149) Tomashevsky – Svidler, Moscow 2007

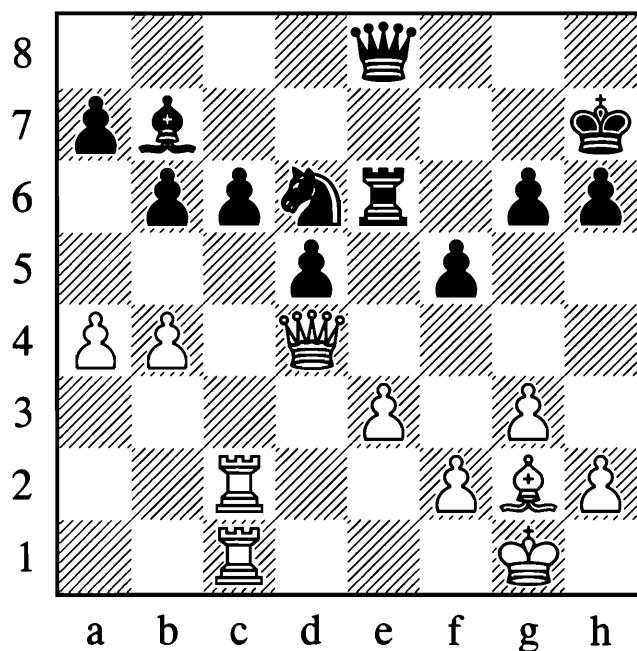
The X-ray threat of $\mathbb{W}e8\#$ decides the game after: 30. $\mathbb{Q}a5!$ $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ 31. $\mathbb{E}xc7$ White has won the exchange and won the game on move 45... 1–0

(150) Tan Zhongyi – Ju Wenjun, Xinghua Jiangsu 2011

Black wins through the X-ray from g7 to g1. There are a lot of pieces in the way, but this is quickly solved. 38... $\mathbb{Q}f3\#$! 39. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ The main point is found in this line: 39. $gxf3$ $\mathbb{Q}e5\#$ 40. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{W}xf3\#$
 41. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{W}h3\#$ 42. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{E}c2\#$ Where Black is also able to make use of the original X-ray from c8 to c2. 39... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ Good enough to win. An even quicker win was possible with 39... $\mathbb{W}c2\#$! 40. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$
 (40. $\mathbb{E}e2$ $\mathbb{W}xd1$) 40... $\mathbb{Q}h4\#$ 41. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{E}f8\#$ 42. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{W}f5\#$ 43. $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{E}d8\#$ with mate. 40. $\mathbb{E}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}f6$
 41. $\mathbb{E}h1\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 42. $\mathbb{W}b3\#$ $\mathbb{W}f7$ 43. $\mathbb{W}xf7\#$ $\mathbb{E}xf7$ 44. $\mathbb{E}h5$ $\mathbb{E}c6$ 45. $\mathbb{E}b4$ $\mathbb{E}e7$ 46. $\mathbb{E}b6$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 47. $\mathbb{E}xc6$
 $\mathbb{B}xc6$ 48. $g3$ $\mathbb{F}xg3\#$ 49. $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ $\mathbb{E}e4$ 50. $\mathbb{E}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 51. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{E}xa4$ 52. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 53. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 0–1

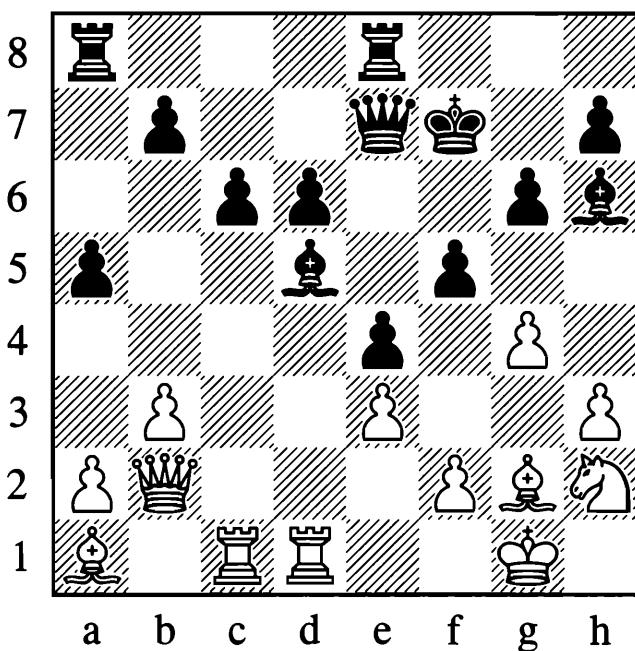
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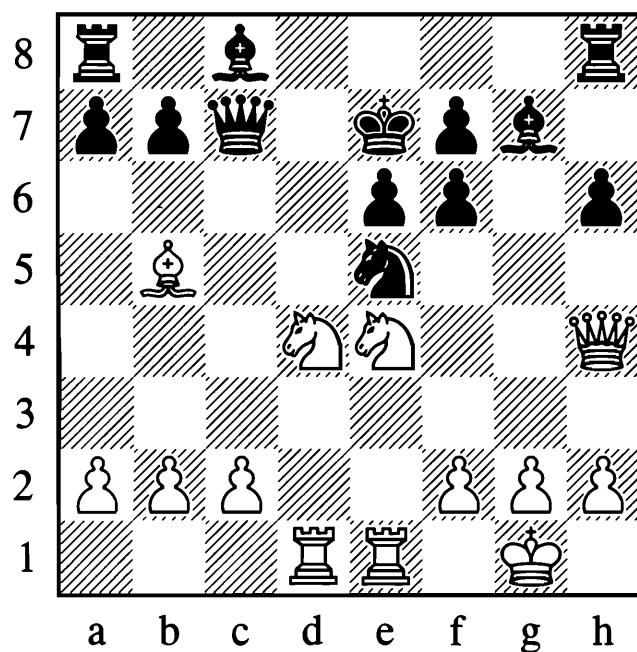
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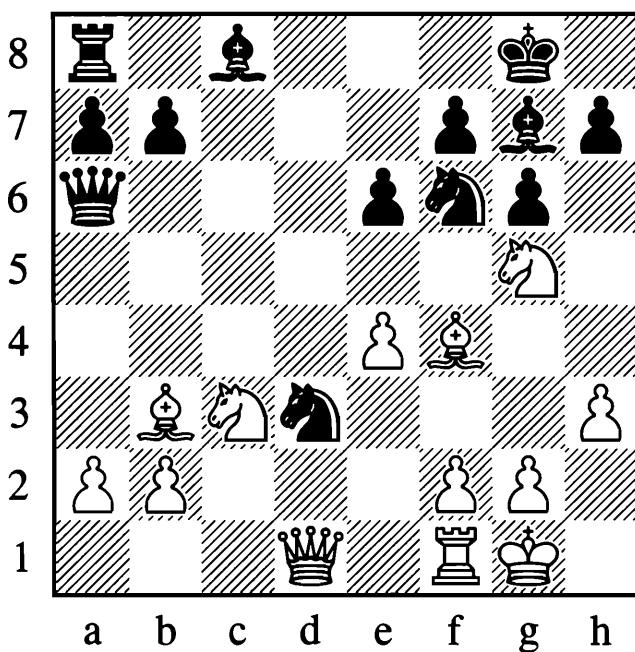
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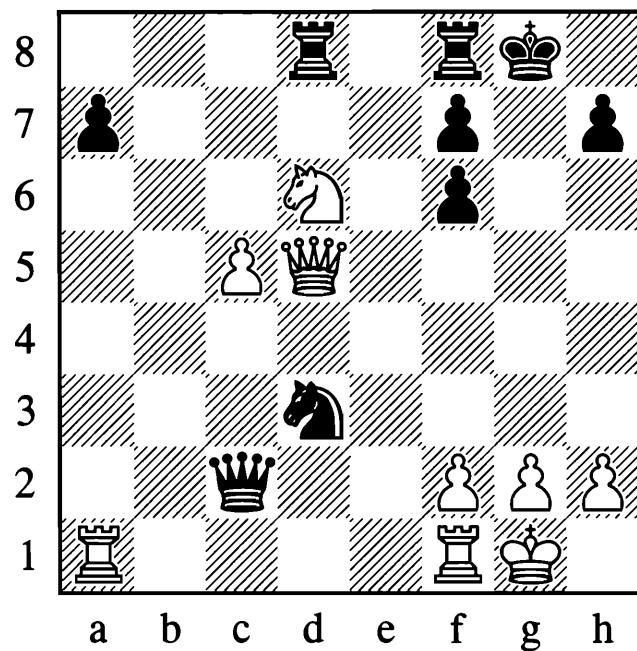
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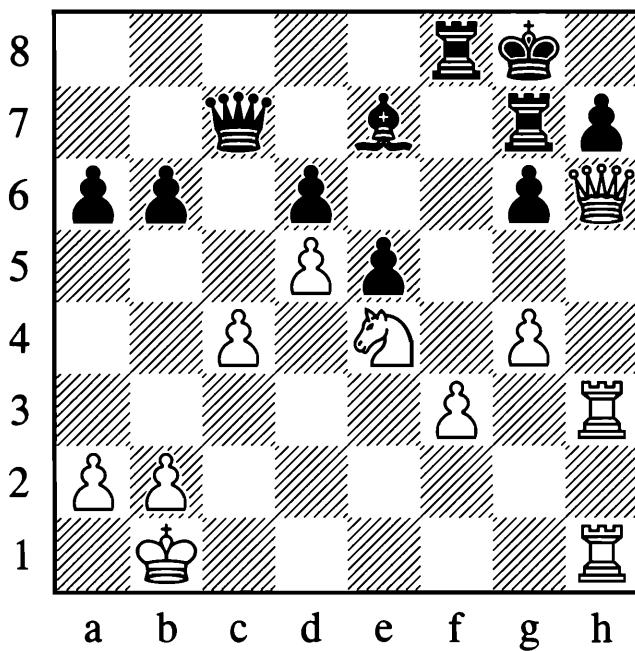
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156

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(151) Su.B. Hansen – Reiss, Bundesliga 2010

The X-rays attacks from c2 to c7 and later on c7 to h7 are translatable into a mating attack. 40.♕xd5! cxd5 41.♗c7† ♜e7 (Diagram A) 42.♗f6! Forcing Black to take on c7. Also winning was 42.♗e5!. In both cases the ending after 42...♝c8 43.♗xe7† is trivial. 1–0

(152) Acs – Belezky, Bundesliga 2011

White wins because of the X-ray from e1 to e7 and h4 to b4! 16.♘xf6! ♜xf6 17.♘f5†! exf5 18.♗xe5† White could also have won with 18.♗b4† ♜e6 19.♗c4† ♜xc4 20.♗d6#. 18...♗xe5 19.♗b4† ♜e6 20.♗c4† ♜d5 21.♗xd5† ♜e5 22.f4#

(153) Sargissian – Balogh, Ningbo 2011

26.♗f3? gave White a clear advantage, but eventually it was not enough to win the game. White also would not be fully winning after 26.♗ad1 ♜xc5, with the idea 27.♗c1? ♜d3! and suddenly White would have to draw an endgame. The winning move was: 26.♗a3! ♜xc5 White also wins after 26...♝f4 27.♗g3† ♜g6 28.h4 (Diagram B), when the threat of h4-h5 is devastating. 27.♗g3† ♜h8 28.♗xf7† The X-rays are in action: d5 to d8 and a3-g3. Black is mated.

(154) Jorgensen – Hajenius, Thessaloniki 2011

White is of course a piece up for only two pawns, but this is no reason not to win at once! 26.♗xd5! cxd5 27.♗c7! The point. 27...♗xc7 28.♗f6† ♜g8 29.♗h8† Black resigned, as 29...♝f7 30.♗xh7† wins the queen.

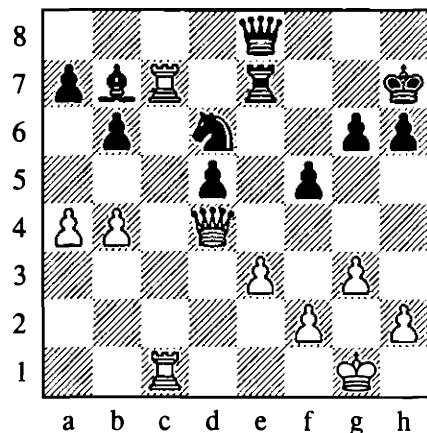
(155) P.H. Nielsen – Volokitin, Rogaska Slatina 2011

18.♗c2! Black resigned. 18...♝xf4 19.♗d8† ♜f8 20.♗xf6 and White wins.

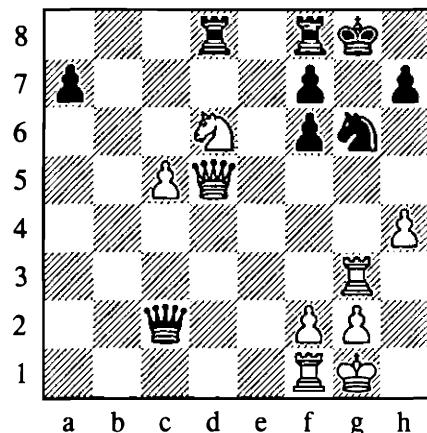
(156) Robson – Khachiyan, Saint Louis 2011

White started with a queen sacrifice: 33.♗xg7†! ♜xg7 34.♗xh7† ♜g8 (Diagram C) Now he can exploit the X-ray attack along the 7th rank in two different ways to create a mating net. 35.♗g5!? 35.♗f6†! also won the exchange, as after 35...♝xf6 White has: 36.♗h8† ♜f7 37.♗1h7# 35...♜xg5 Objectively best is 35...♜xc4 36.♗h8† ♜g7 37.♗1h7† ♜f6 38.♗e4†, but White is winning anyway. 36.♗h8† 1–0

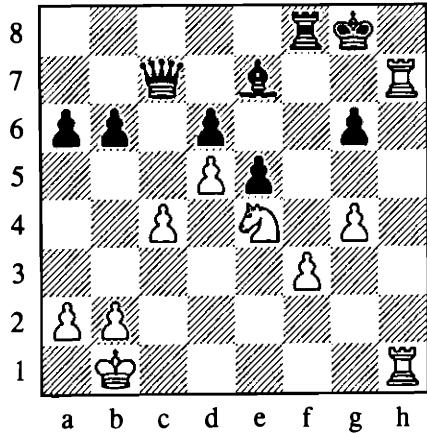
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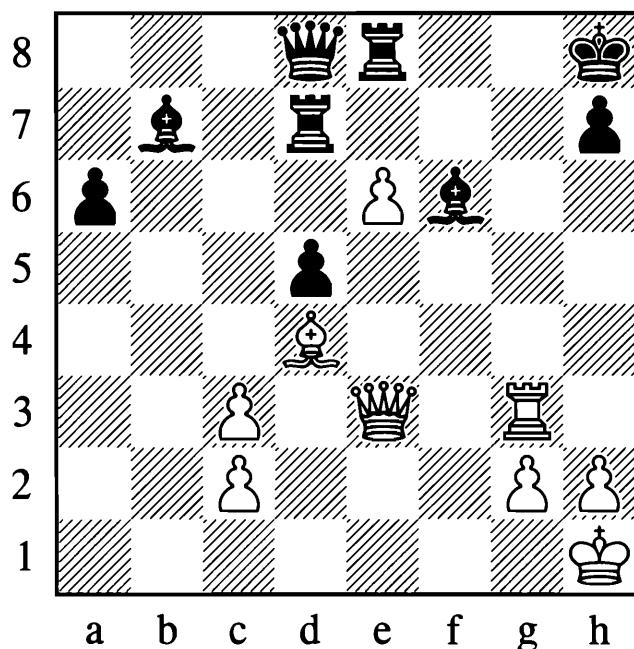


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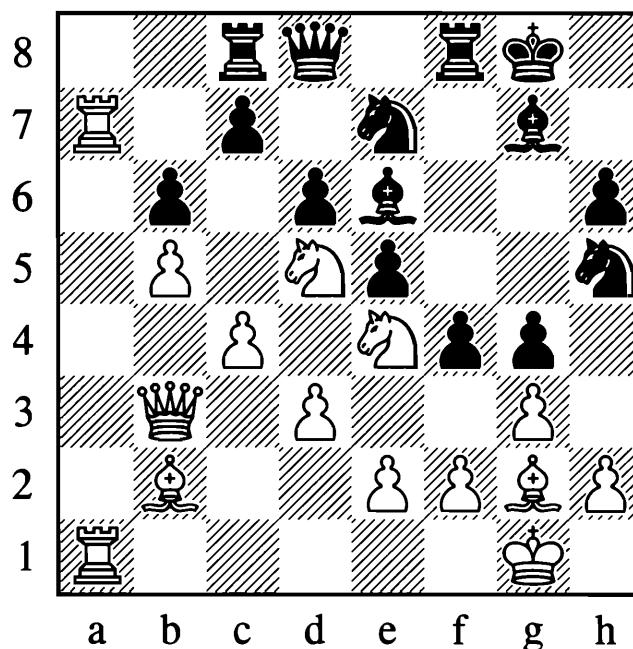
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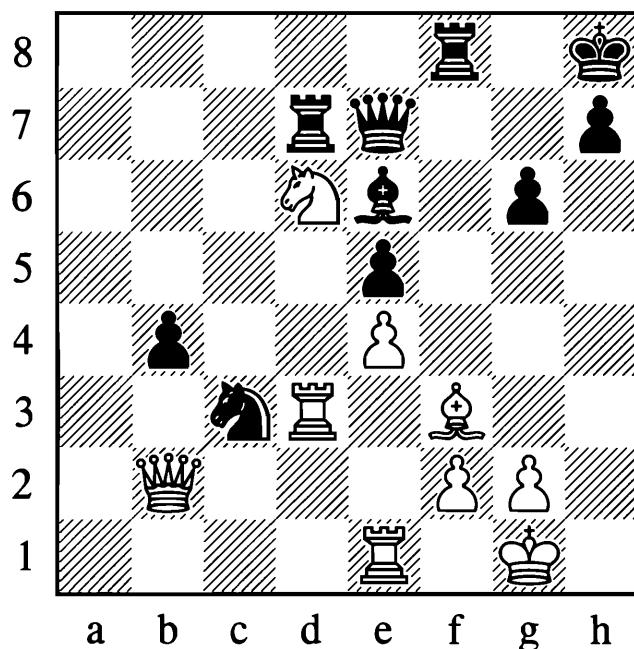
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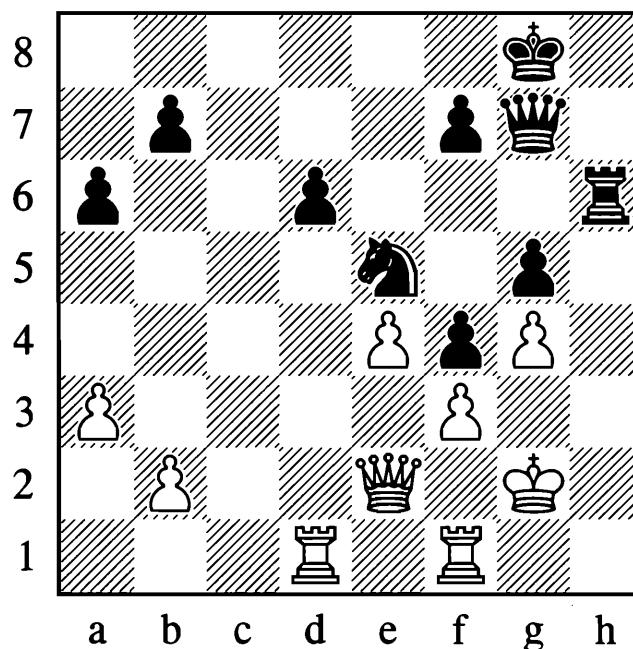
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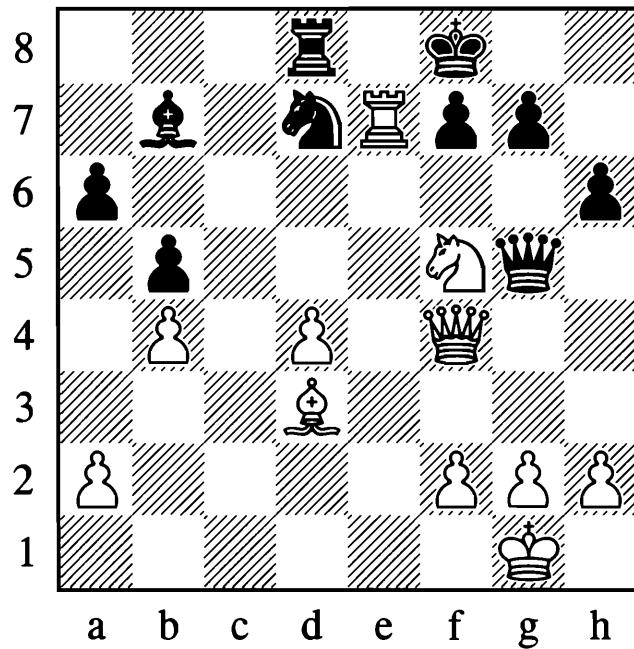
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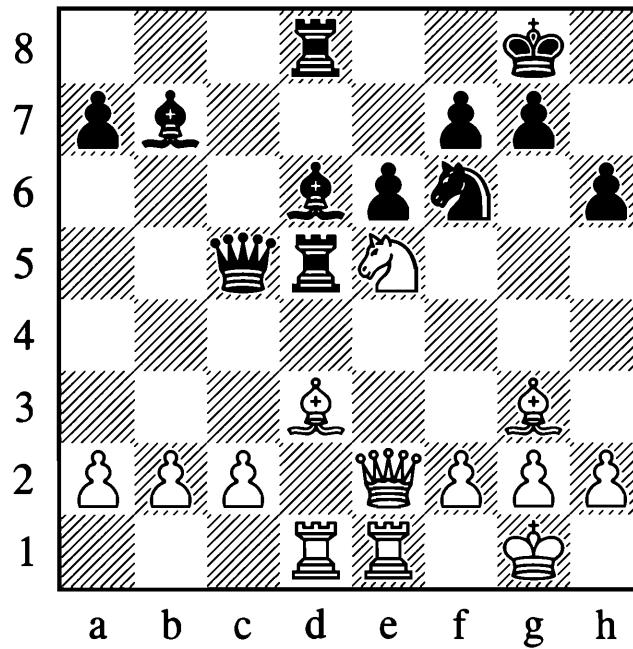
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162

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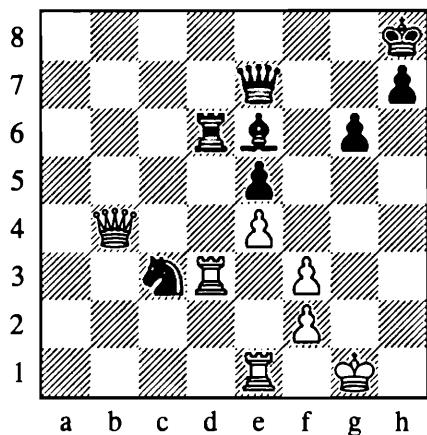
(157) Areshchenko – Ftacnik, Germany 2010

Taken from analysis from the game. White is able to win only through using the X-ray from e3 to e8. **31.e7!** Black is finished. The main line is: **31... $\mathbb{W}xe7$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$ $\mathbb{W}xf6$ 33. $\mathbb{W}xe8\#$**

(158) Kovalev – S. Zhigalko, Warsaw (rapid) 2011

32... $\mathbb{B}xf3!$ An important point. After **32... $\mathbb{B}xd6?$ 33. $\mathbb{W}xb4$ $\mathbb{B}xf3$ 34. $\mathbb{W}xd6$** White manages to keep the balance. **33.gxf3** **33... $\mathbb{B}xf3$ $\mathbb{W}xd6$** and wins. **33... $\mathbb{B}xd6$** Black is winning. In the game White was kind enough to show how: **34. $\mathbb{W}xb4?$ (Diagram A) 34... $\mathbb{W}g5\#$ 0–1**

A

**(159) Holm – K. Lee, Reykjavik 2011**

White used the X-ray of f4 to f7 to eliminate the protection of the black queen with a nice combination. **25. $\mathbb{B}xf7\#$! $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 25... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}d6\#$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}xh6\#$** Black resigned, as $\mathbb{W}xg5$ would follow.

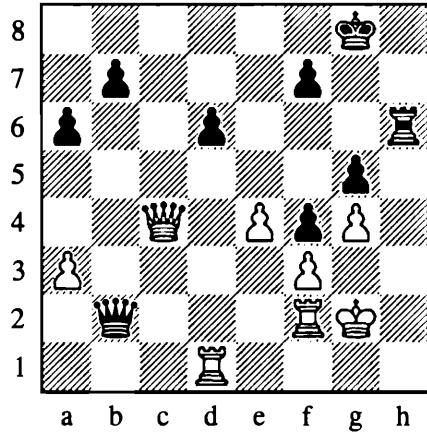
(160) Halkias – Aloma Vidal, Aix-les-Bains 2011

White won the game through the pressure from a7 to e7. This became really important after the following shot: **21. $\mathbb{Q}xd6!$ f3** Black is lost no matter what: **21... $\mathbb{W}xd6$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}a3$, 21... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ or 21... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 22.cxd5**, all winning material. **22. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$** White has won a pawn and the exchange. **22... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 23.cxd5 $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ 1–0**

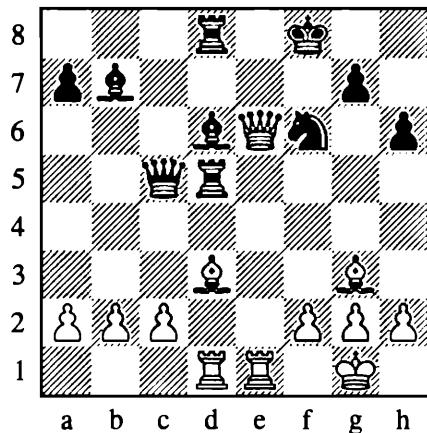
(161) Eljanov – Cornette, Mulhouse 2011

The X-ray from g7 to b2 starts the combination. The other X-ray is from b2 to h2. **45... $\mathbb{Q}c4!$ 46. $\mathbb{B}h1$** The main line is **46. $\mathbb{W}xc4$ $\mathbb{W}xb2\#$ 47. $\mathbb{B}f2$ (Diagram B)** **47... $\mathbb{B}h2\#$! 48. $\mathbb{Q}xh2$ $\mathbb{W}xf2\#$ 49. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{W}xf3\#$** and the ending is hopeless. **46... $\mathbb{Q}e3\#$ 47. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{B}xh1\#$ 48. $\mathbb{Q}xh1$ $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ 49. $\mathbb{W}xd1$ $\mathbb{W}xb2$ 50. $\mathbb{W}xd6$ $\mathbb{W}e2$** Black is winning. **51. $\mathbb{W}d8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 52. $\mathbb{W}xg5$ $\mathbb{W}xf3\#$ 53. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{W}xe4$ 54. $\mathbb{W}c5$ $\mathbb{W}e2\#$ 55. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{W}f3\#$ 0–1**

B



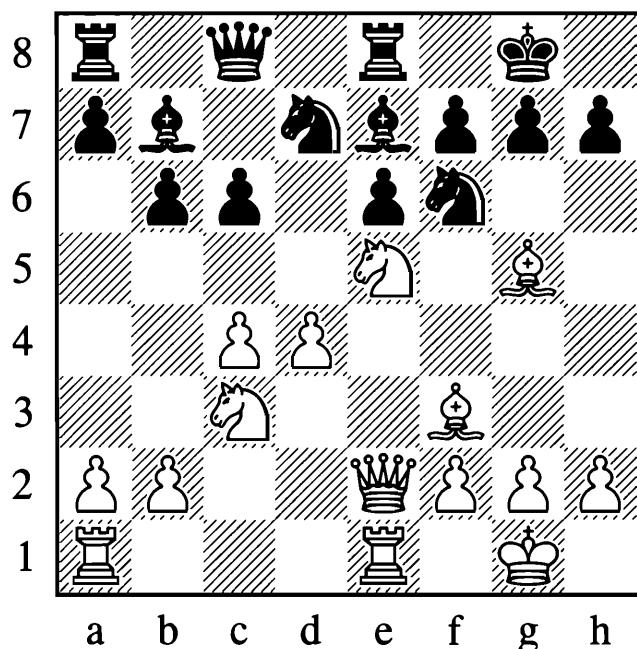
C

**(162) Efimenko – Ekeberg, Rogaska Slatina 2011**

19. $\mathbb{Q}xf7!$ $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ The nice X-ray based point comes after **19... $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 20. $\mathbb{W}xe6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ (Diagram C) 21. $\mathbb{Q}g6!$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}xd6\#$ $\mathbb{B}5xd6$ 23. $\mathbb{B}xd6$ $\mathbb{B}xd6$ 24. $\mathbb{W}e8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ 25. $\mathbb{B}xe8\#$. 20. $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ 1–0**

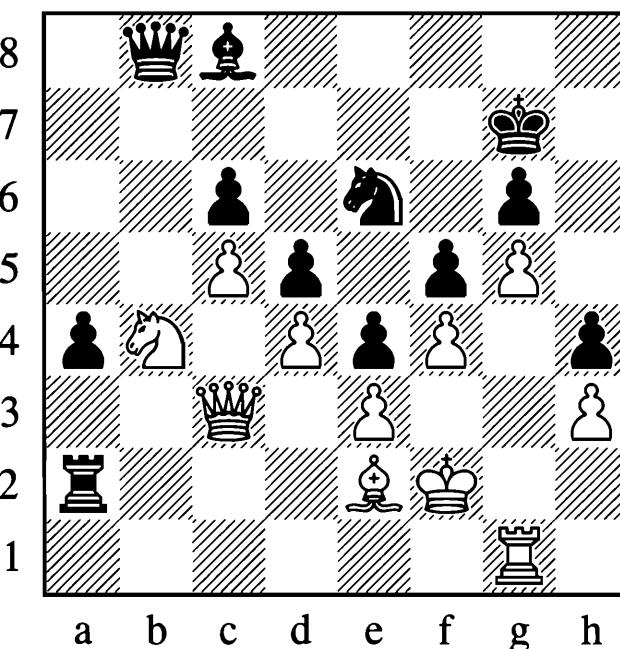
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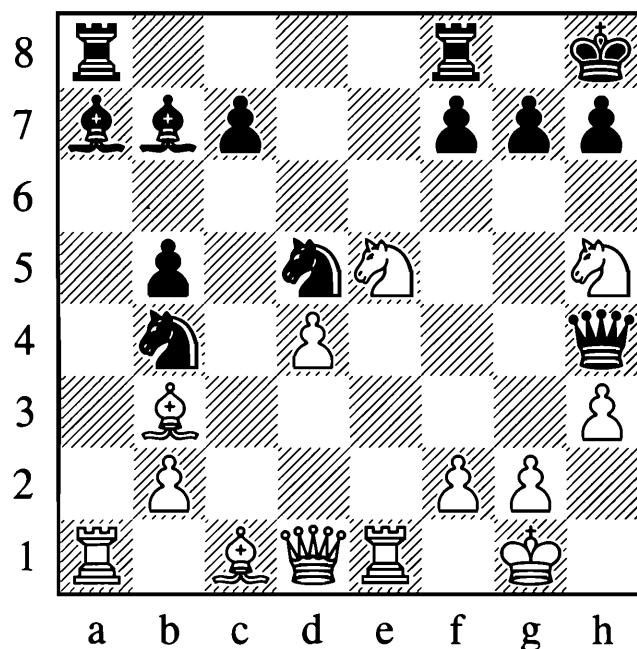
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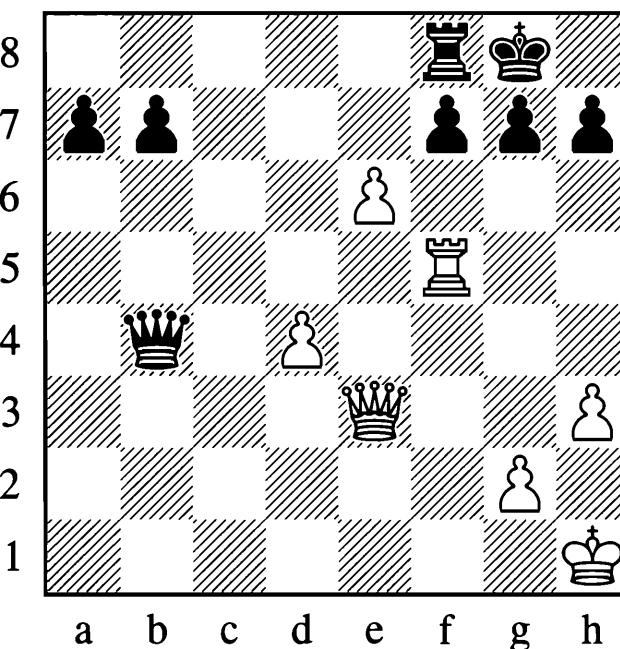
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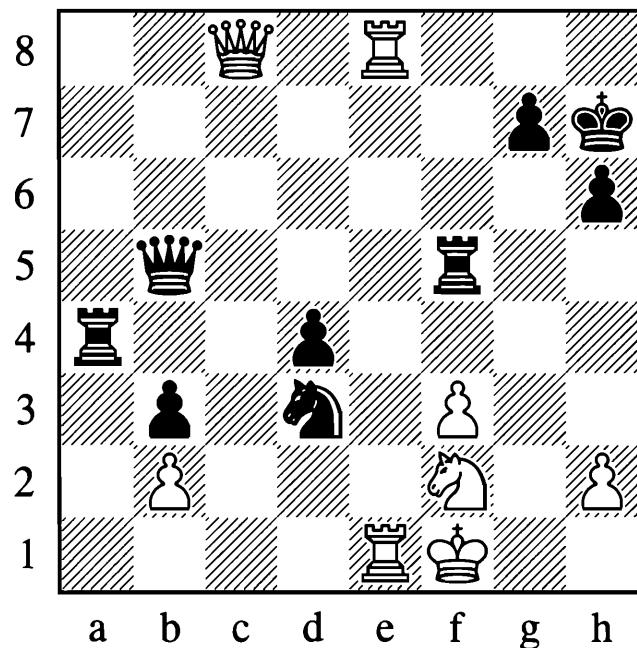
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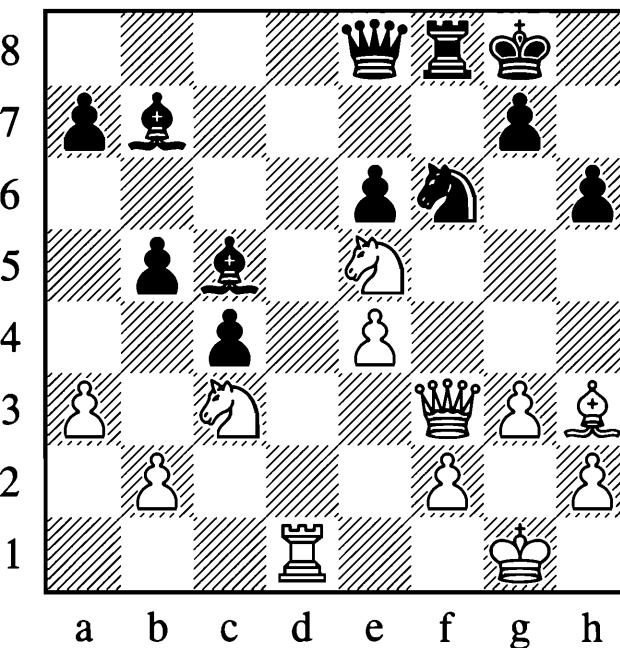
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168

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(163) Movsesian – Piorun, Warsaw (rapid) 2010

15.♕xf7 ♕xf7 16.♗xe6† ♔f8 Stepping forward is no better: 16...♔g6 17.♔c1 ♔c5 18.♔h5† ♔xh5 19.♗e5† ♔g6 20.♗g5† ♔h6 21.♗f7+– 17.♔h5!! The X-ray from g5 to e7 is exploited. 17...♔e5 17...♔xh5 18.♔xe7† ♔xe7 19.♗xe7† ♔g8 20.♔e4! ♗d8 (20...♗e8 21.♔d6+–) 21.♔d6+–; 17...g6 18.♔h6# 18.♗xe5 1–0

(164) Kulaots – Antonsen, Borup 2010

The X-ray of e1 to e8 decided the game beautifully after: 21.♗xa7! ♗xa7 22.♔g5! Black resigned. After 22...♗xg5 23.♕xf7† ♗xf7 24.♗e8† he is mated.

(165) Short – Morozevich, Reggio Emilia 2010

White received a lucky chance when his opponent missed the rook's ability to go to b8: 34.♗h8† ♔g6 35.♗e6† ♔h5 35...♗f6 36.♗e4† and wins. 36.♗b8! A big surprise; White wins a piece. 36...♗e5 36...♗xb8 37.♗xf5† g5 38.♗xd3 and wins. 37.♗xe5 ♘a1† 38.♗e1 ♘xe1† 39.♗xe1 ♘xe1 40.♗xe1 ♘xf3 41.♗d8 ♘e3† 42.♗f1 ♘c3 43.bxc3 dxc3 44.♗d3 1–0

(166) Kapnisis – D. Mastrovasilis, Greece (ch) 2010

In this slightly more advanced example, it is the X-ray from c8 to h3 that eventually decided the game. 44...♗xf4! 45.exf4 ♗xf4† 46.♔e1 ♘xe2†! Deadliest, but Black is also very successful in the endgame after 46...♗h2 47.♗xa2 ♗xg1† 48.♔d2 ♗xg5† when the multitude of pawns would overpower the pieces. 47.♔xe2 ♗h2† 48.♔f1 f4! White resigned; everything is lost.

(167) Moiseenko – Drabke, Rogaska Slatina 2011

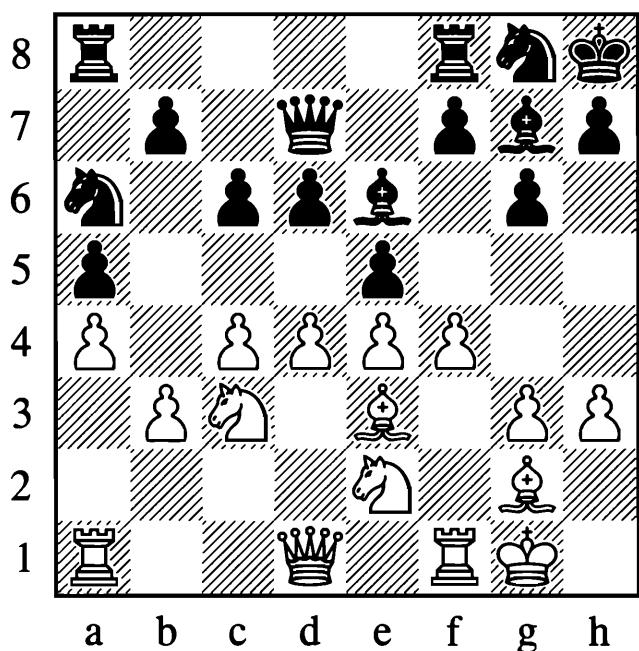
White wins through an exquisite X-ray from e3 to e8. The following trick is really special. 26.e7! ♘e8 26...♗b1† 27.♔h2 ♗xf5 does not change anything. White has the same point as in the game. 27.♔d5! ♗b1† 27...♗a4 28.♔d8 h5 29.♔xe8† ♗xe8 also does not save the game. After 30.d5 Black is just lost. 28.♔h2 ♗b6 29.♔d8! Black resigned. The main point is that the pawn does not take the rook, but instead queens: 29...♔xd8 30.e8=♗†! ♘xe8 31.♗xe8#

(168) Tkachiev – Wojtaszek, Warsaw (blitz) 2010

The X-ray is not immediately apparent in this position, but once established, it is deadly. 24.♗d8!! ♗xd8 24...♗e7 25.♗xf8† also wins, due to 25...♗xf8 26.♗g6†. 25.♗xe6† ♘f7 Black decides to bleed material because of 25...♔h8 26.♗g6† ♔h7 27.♗f5! when the X-ray is decisive. After 27...♔e8 White delivers a smothered mate: 28.♗f8† ♔h8 29.♗h7† ♔xh7 30.♗g6# 26.♗xf7 ♗e7 27.♗f5 White is winning. 27...♔f8 28.♗e5 ♔e8 29.♗d5 ♘xd5 30.exd5 ♘d6 31.♔f7† 1–0

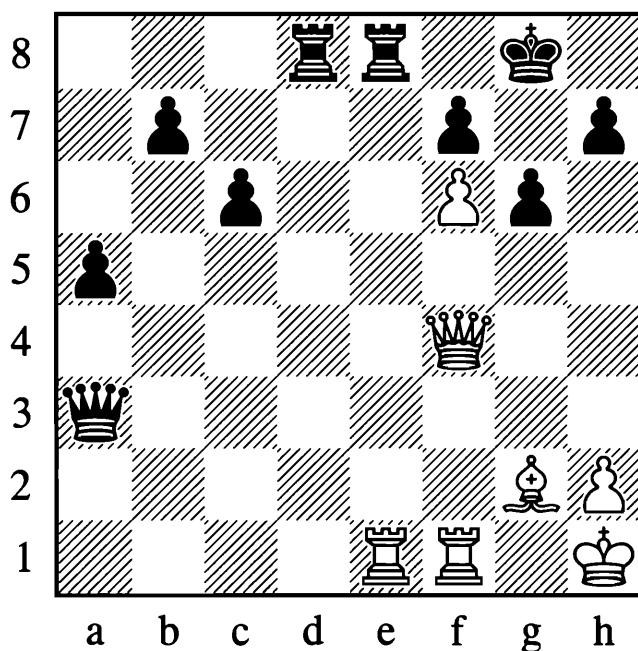
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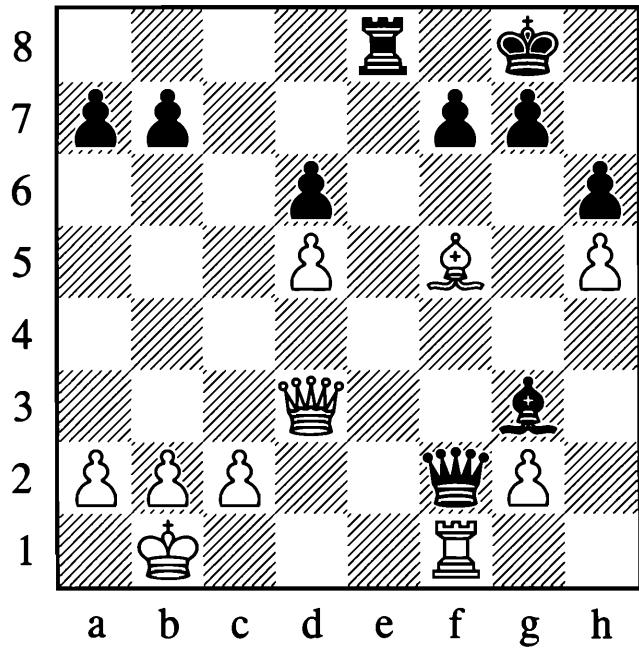
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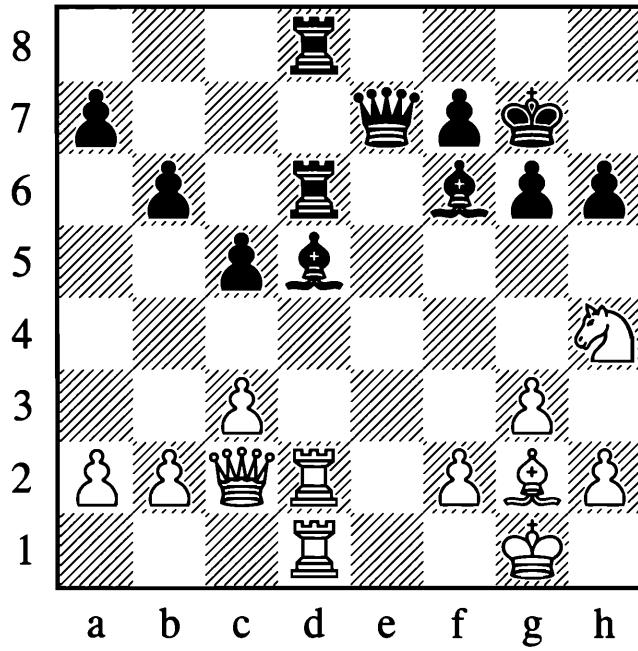
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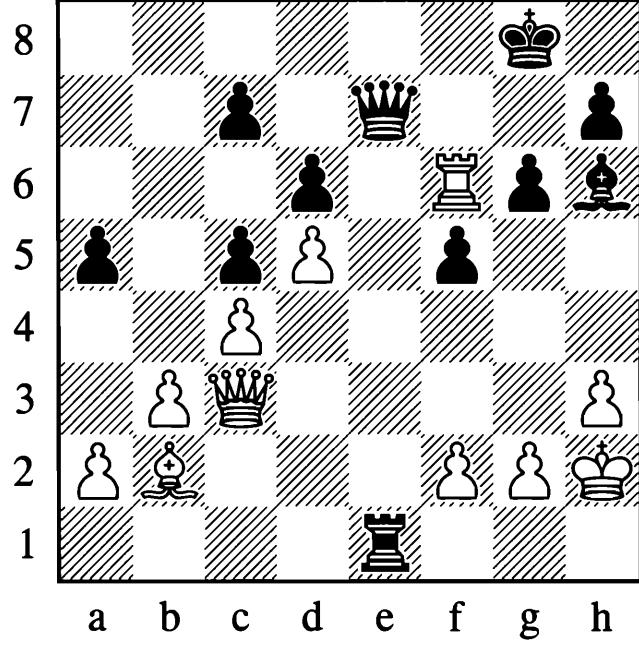
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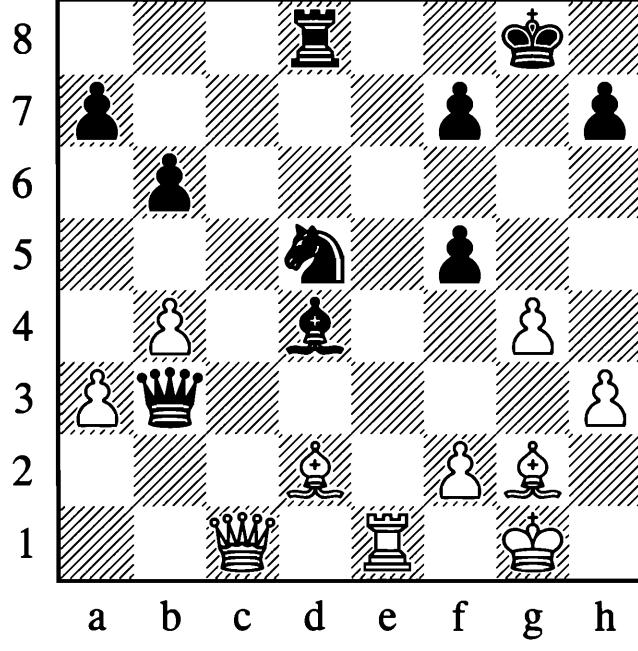
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174

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(169) Johansen – Akshayraj, Sydney 2009

15.f5! Closing the diagonal from e6 to h3. **15...gxf5**

16.d5 White wins a piece so Black resigned.

(170) Pavlovic – Rosenthal, Winterthur 2010

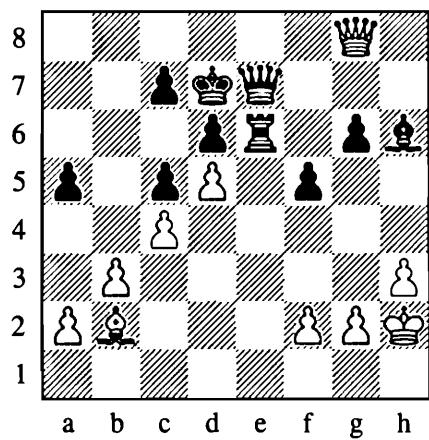
Black has based his defence on the resource ... $\mathbb{E}e1\#$.

White can eliminate this powerfully: **26. $\mathbb{Q}e6!$** Because of the attack on f7, Black decided to give up the queen. **26... $\mathbb{W}xf1\#$ 27. $\mathbb{W}xf1$ fxe6 28. $\mathbb{W}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 29. $\mathbb{W}b3$ 1–0**

(171) Soumya – Vishnu, Indian Championship 2010

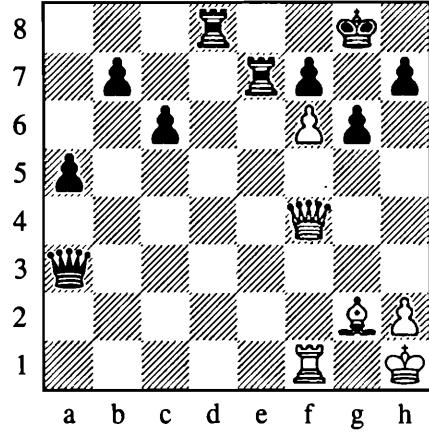
White manages to create a fantastic attack by opening the long diagonal. **34. $\mathbb{E}e6!$ $\mathbb{E}xe6$ 35. $\mathbb{W}h8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 36. $\mathbb{W}xh7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 37. $\mathbb{W}g8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ (Diagram A) 38.dxe6! $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 38... $\mathbb{W}xe6$ 39. $\mathbb{W}h7\#$ wins the bishop. 39. $\mathbb{W}a8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 40. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 1–0**

A



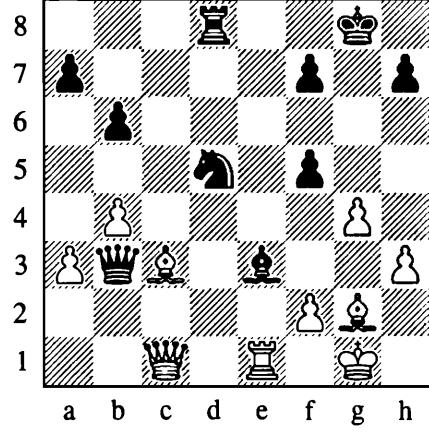
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C



△

(172) Zatonskikh – Sebag, Antakya 2010

Black wants to bring her queen back to f8, but soon found this to be impossible. **32. $\mathbb{E}e7!$ $\mathbb{W}xe7$ A hopeless choice, but there were no alternatives. 32... $\mathbb{E}xe7$ (Diagram B) 33. $\mathbb{W}h6$ is mating. 33.fxe7 $\mathbb{E}xe7$ 34. $\mathbb{W}g5$ White won on move 52... 1–0**

(173) Milovanovic – Zivic, Nis 2009

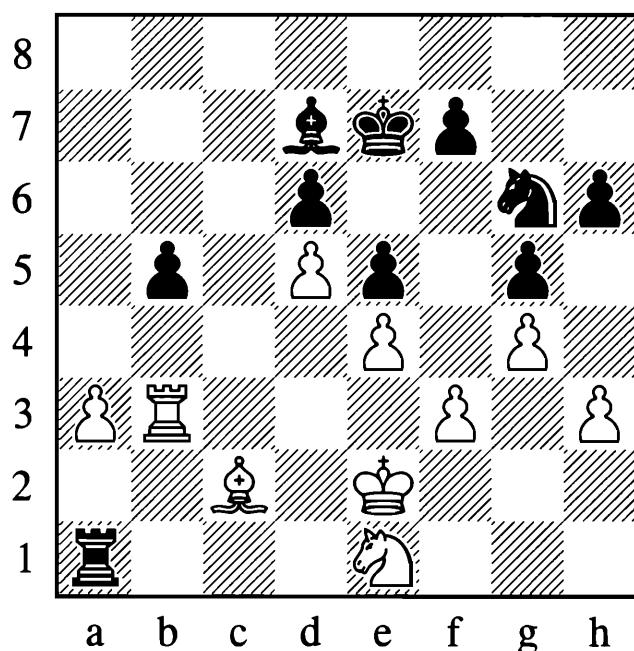
Black opened the d-file with a great tempo gainer. **1... $\mathbb{Q}b3!$ 2.axb3 $\mathbb{E}xd2$ 3. $\mathbb{E}xd2$ $\mathbb{W}e1\#$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{E}xd2$ 5. $\mathbb{Q}f5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 0–1**

(174) Dreev – Fish, Ohrid 2009

White exploited the indirect threat of $\mathbb{W}g5\#$ with: **34. $\mathbb{Q}c3!$ Black tried to confuse matters with 34... $\mathbb{Q}e3$ (Diagram C) but had to resign after 35. $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$ 1–0**

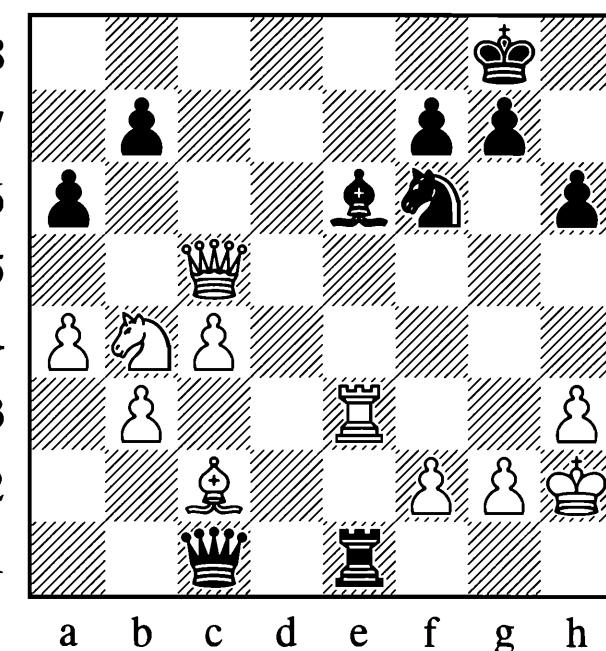
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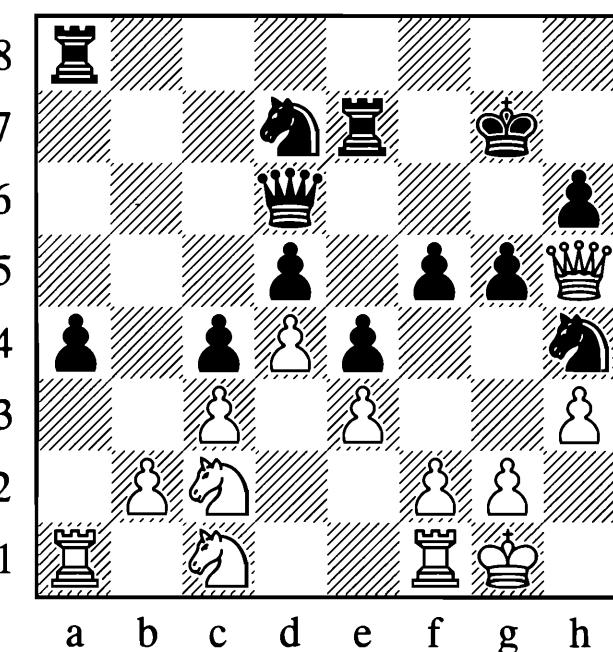
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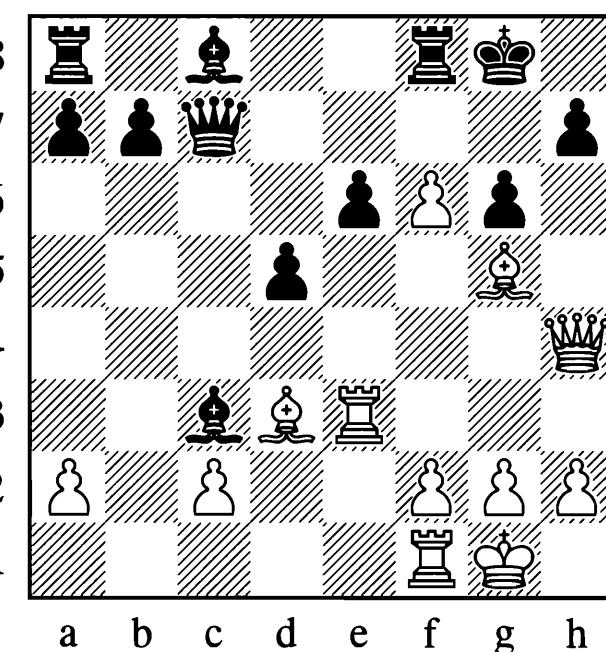
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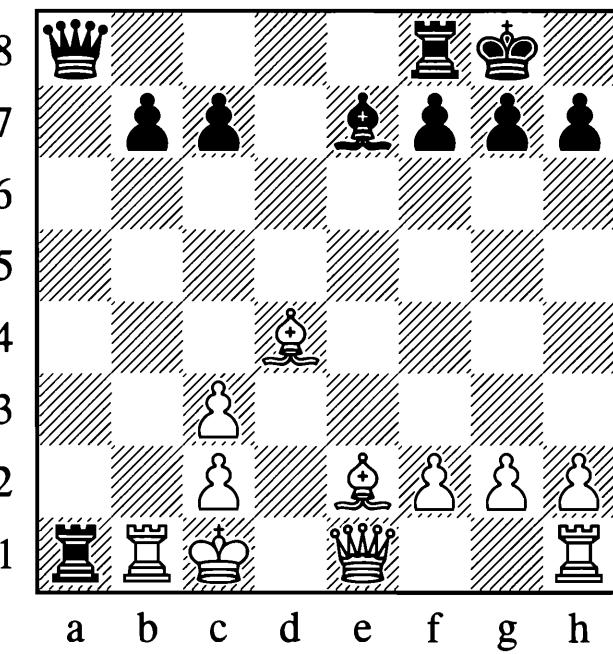
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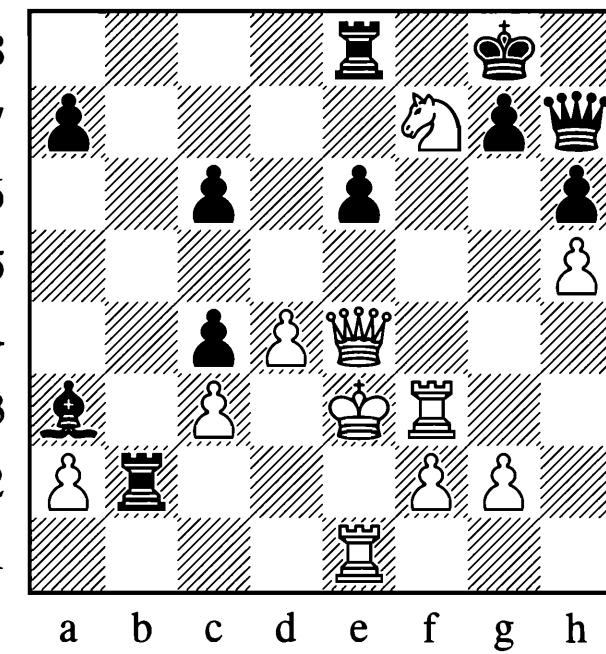
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(175) Vallejo Pons – Bok, Bundesliga 2010

White trapped the rook on a1 and won an exchange. 49.♕b1! ♜f4† 50.♔d2 b4 51.♔c2 ♜xa3 52.♕xa3 bxa3 53.♖xa3 ♜xh3 54.♖a7 ♜f4 55.♕d3 ♜g6 56.♕b5 ♜f8 57.♕c6 ♜e8 58.♖a8† ♔e7 59.♖xf8! Black resigned. After 59...♜xc6 60.dxс6 ♜xf8 61.c7 the pawn queens.

(176) Panarello – Drasko, Arco 2010

43...♝f3†! White resigned in view of 44.gxf3 ♜f6 trapping the queen.

(177) Philippe – Koch, Mulhouse 2011

Black has sacrificed a piece for a serious attack and now decides the game by preventing the white king from running away. This is an important technique to master: when the opponent's king is in trouble it is tempting to check it repeatedly, but often this only allows it to run to safety. It is more important to keep the enemy in harm's way. 20...♚g5† 21.♔e3 ♜xe3† 22.fxe3 ♜d8! Threatening mate in one. 23.♕d3 ♜xd3! The point. 24.cxd3 ♜a3† White resigned. He can either lose the queen or play 25.♔c2 and be mated after 25...♜a2† 26.♔d1 ♜a4†.

(178) Vidit – Paragua, Mashhad 2011

Black has given up a pawn for the attack. If he does not produce something immediately, White will simply be much better. 35...♜h1† 36.♕g3 ♜xh3†! 37.gxh3 37.♔f4 g5† 38.♔e5 ♜d7† and wins. 37...♝g1† 38.♔f3 38.♔f4 ♜xf2† wins the queen. 38...♚g4†! The great point. 39.♔f4 39.hxg4 ♜xg4# 39...g5† 39...♜xf2† also won. 40.♔e5 ♜d7† 41.♔d6 ♜h2† 0–1

(179) Ni Hua – Wang Chen, Guangzhou 2010

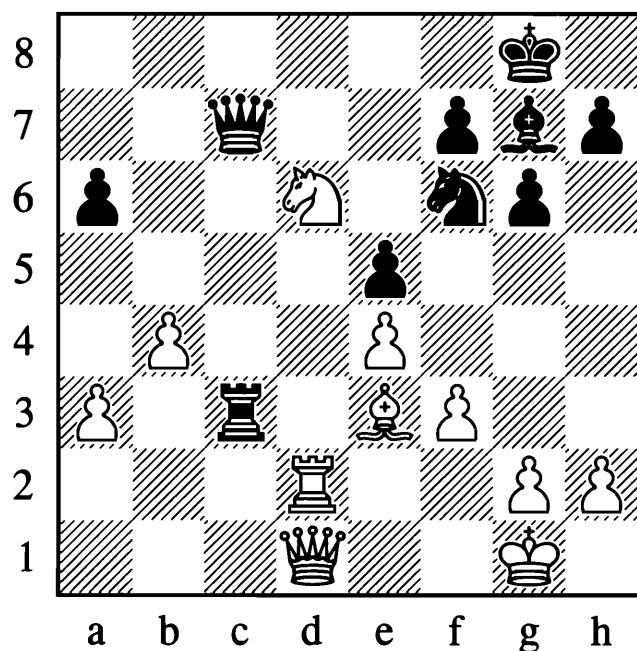
18.♚xg6! Opening the king's position decisively. White is also better after 18.♜h3 e5! 19.♔c4! but the game would not be over yet. 18...hxg6 19.♜h3 ♜a5 19...♚e5 also loses: 20.f4! ♜d6 (20...♜d4† 21.♔h1 ♜b6 22.f5! with a devastating attack. If Black takes with the e-pawn, the check on the e-file is decisive, and if he takes with the g-pawn, ♜h5† and ♜g6† decides.) 21.f5! exf5 22.f7†! (22.♔e1 also wins – keeping the king in trouble) 22...♜xf7 23.♜h7† ♜e8 24.♔e1† 20.♔d2! 20.♔f4 also wins: 20...e5 (20...♜d7 21.♜g5 is simple) 21.♜xe5 ♜d7 22.♔d6 It is all over. However 20.♔e3? e5! is not clear. 20...♜b6 20...♚f7 21.♜xa5 ♜xa5 22.♜h7† ♜xf6 23.♜f3† and White wins. 21.♚b4 1–0

(180) Corrales Jimenez – Stellwagen, Khanty-Mansiysk (ol) 2010

28...♜e2†!! White resigned. He loses the queen after 29.♜xe2 ♜c1†.

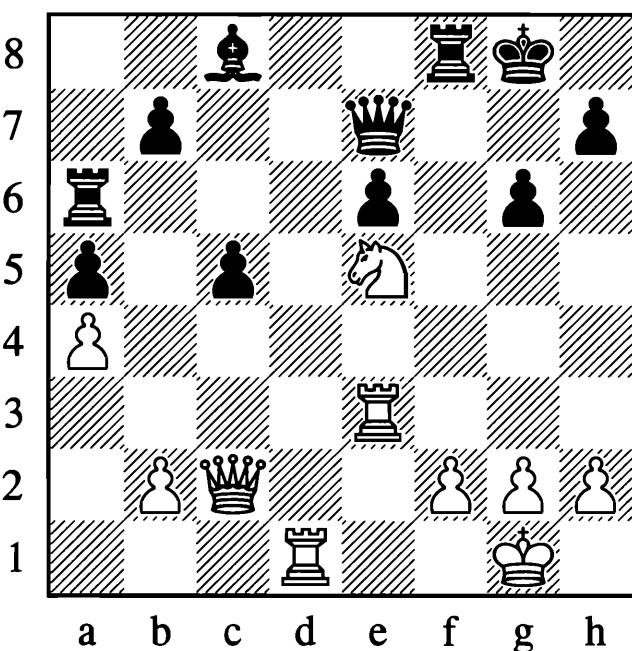
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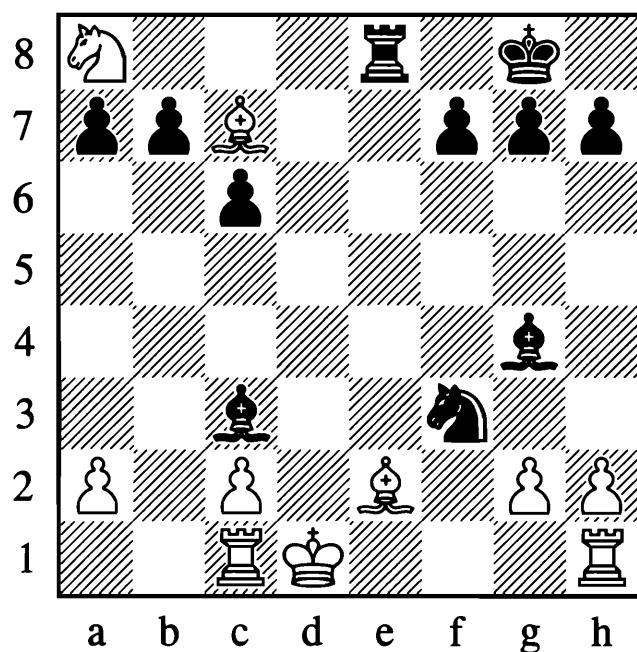
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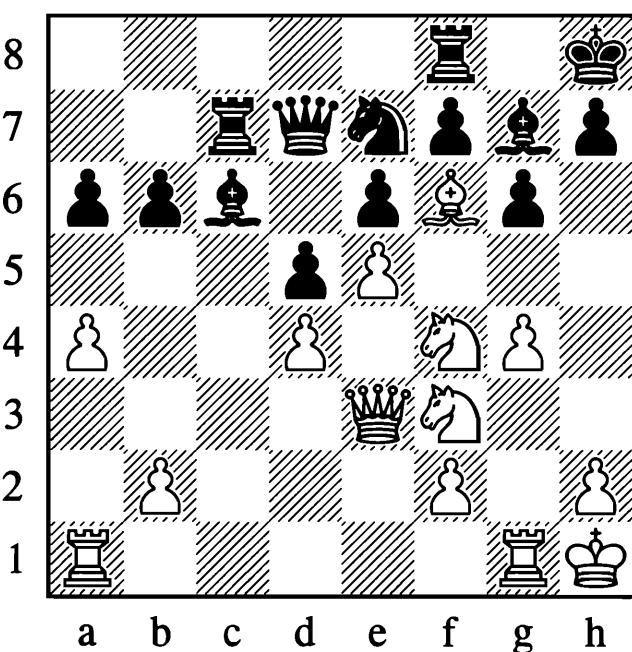
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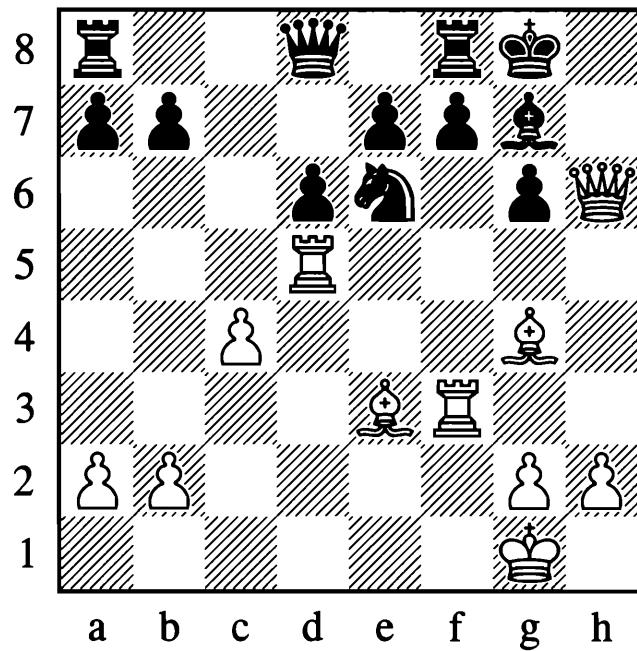
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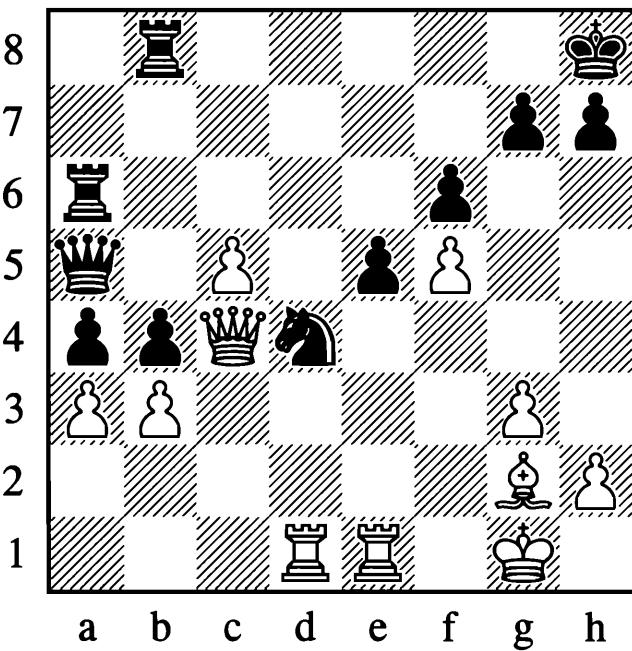
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(181) Koneru – Fierro Baquero, Plovdiv 2010

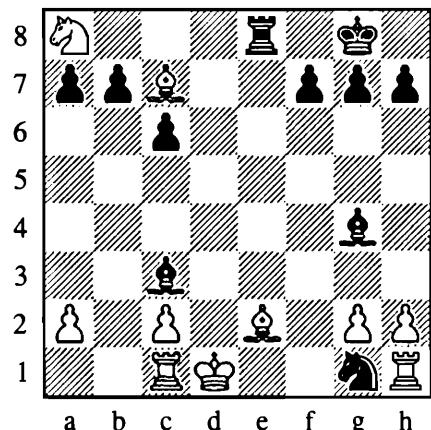
White opens the d-file with a tempo-gaining sacrifice.

27.♗b5! axb5 28.♗d8† ♕f8 29.♕h6 ♘b6† 29...♗d7 30.♘xd7! also does not work. **30.♔f1 ♘xd8 31.♘xd8 ♗d7 32.♕d2 ♘d3 33.♔e2 ♘d6 34.♕h6 ♘d4 35.♔e3 ♘d6 36.♘a5 ♔g7 37.♘xb5 ♕e7 38.a4 ♕f6 39.a5 ♗f8 40.a6 1–0**

(182) Korneev – Milla de Marco, Malaga 2005

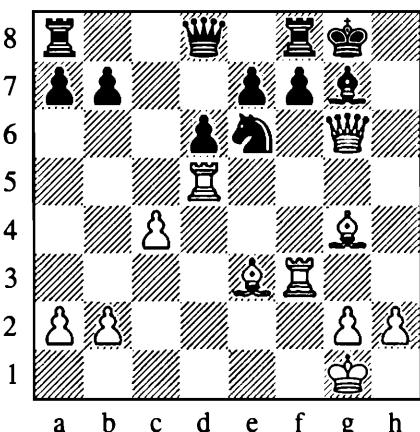
White has won a lot of material, but with an ingenious move Black prevents the h1-rook joining the defence. **20...♗g1!!** (Diagram A) **21.♗b1 ♘xe2** White resigned, as he is unable to prevent or even delay ...♖e1#. A great victory for Black who was out-rated by 510 points.

A

**(183) B. Larsen – Petrosian, Santa Monica 1966**

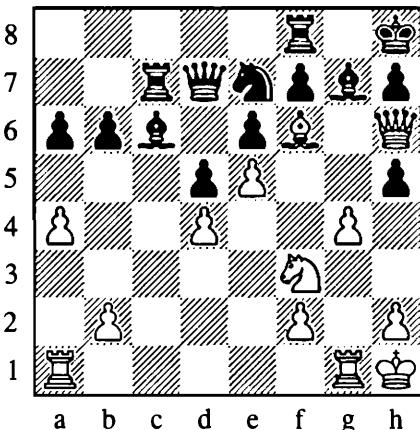
25.♘xg6! (Diagram B) It looked obvious that the queen had to retreat, but sadly for Black it was not so. **25...♗f4 25...fxg6 26.♕xe6† ♘f7 27.♗xf7** transposes. **26.♗xf4 fxg6 27.♕e6† ♘f7 28.♗xf7 ♔h8 29.♗g5 b5 30.♗g3 1–0**

B

**(184) D'Amore – Vezzosi, Arvier 2007**

26.♗xg6! A nice combination that opens up the black king and thus wins the queen. **26...hxg6 27.♘xg6† ♘g7 28.♕h5!** **28.♗c2** works in the same way. **28...♗h7 29.♗g3† ♔h8 30.♘e5† 1–0**

C

**(185) Friedel – Sareen, Reykjavik 2011**

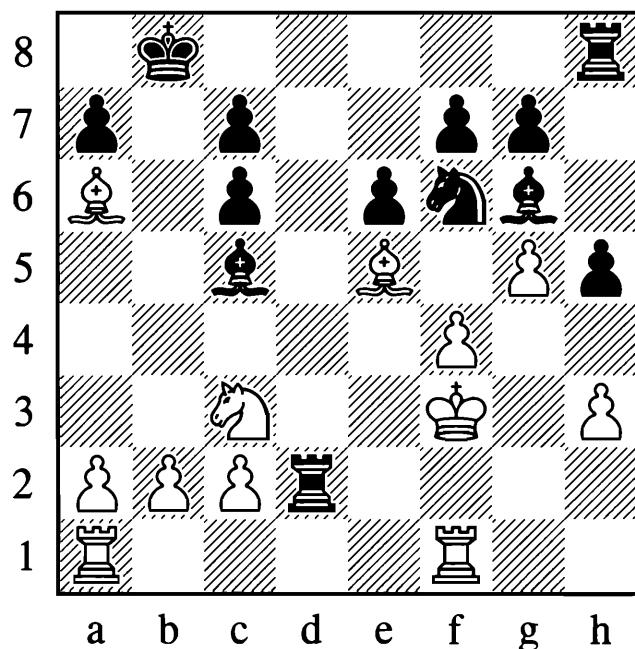
26.♗h5! Black resigns. After opening the g-file everything wins! So following 26...gxh5, there is for example 27.gxh5 ♘xf6 28.♕h6! or 27.♘h6! (Diagram C) 27...♘xf6 28.♗xf8† ♗g8 29.exf6.

(186) Motylev – Kuznetsov, Olginka 2011

White opened the e-file and then used the overloading of the black pieces to win everything. **29.♗xd4! exd4 30.axb4** Black cannot recapture or defend the a6-rook. **1–0**

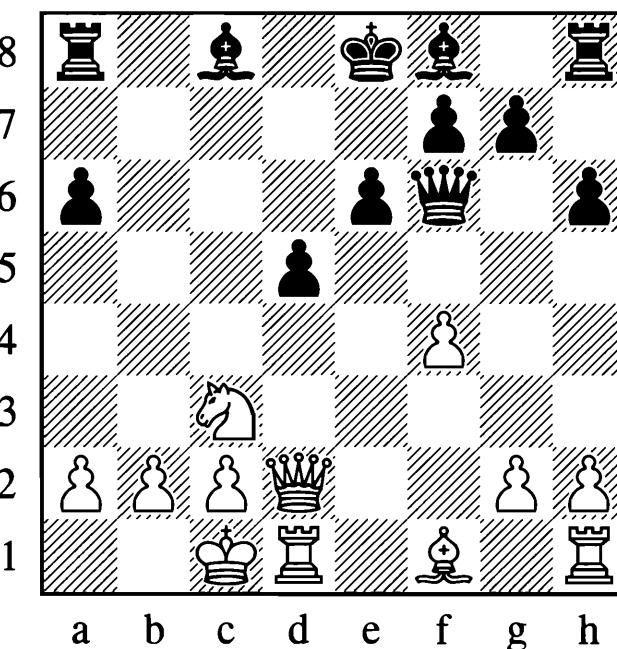
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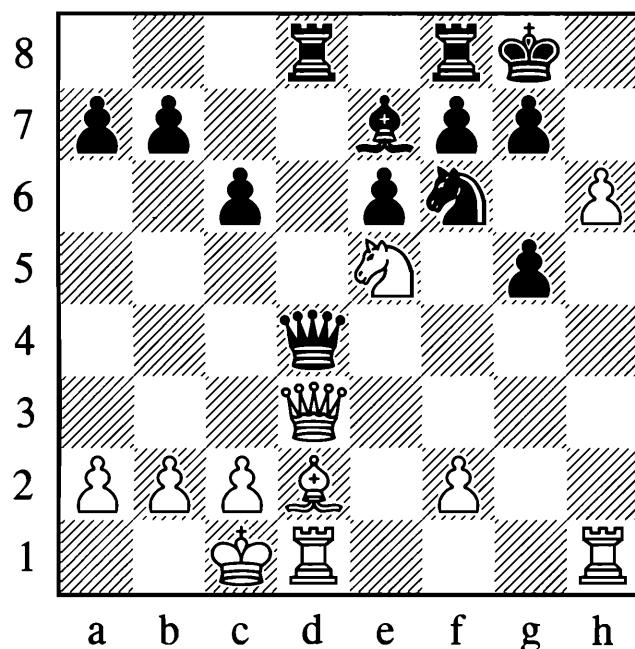
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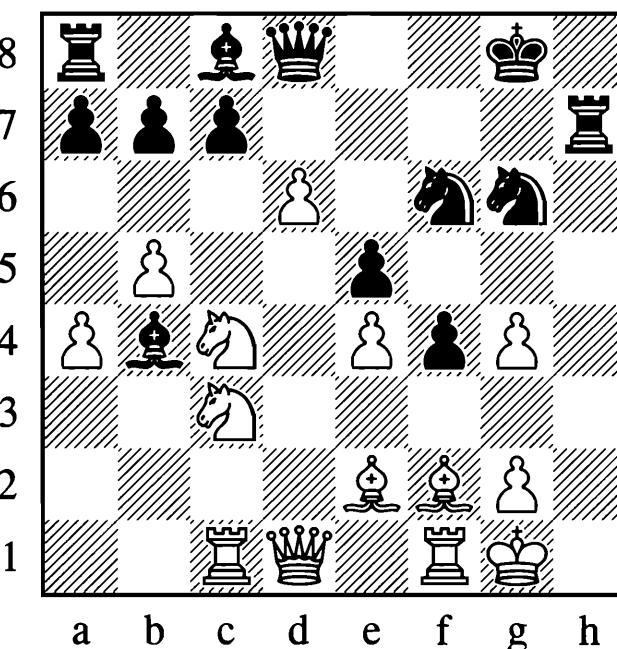
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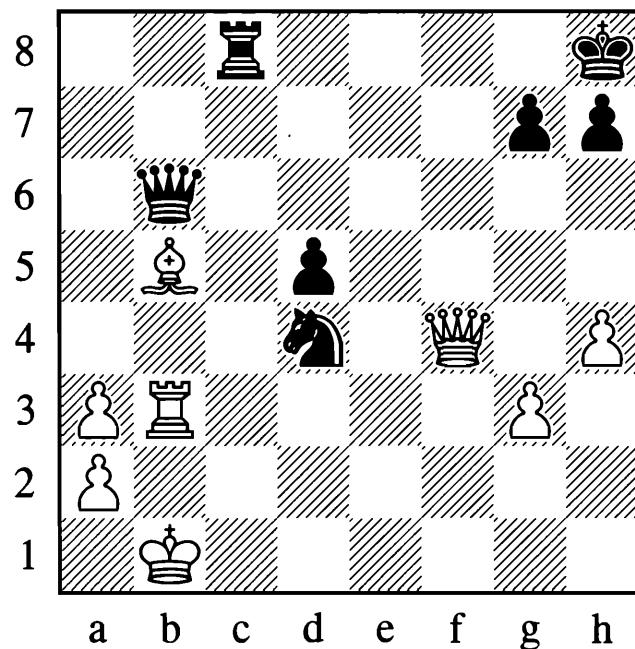
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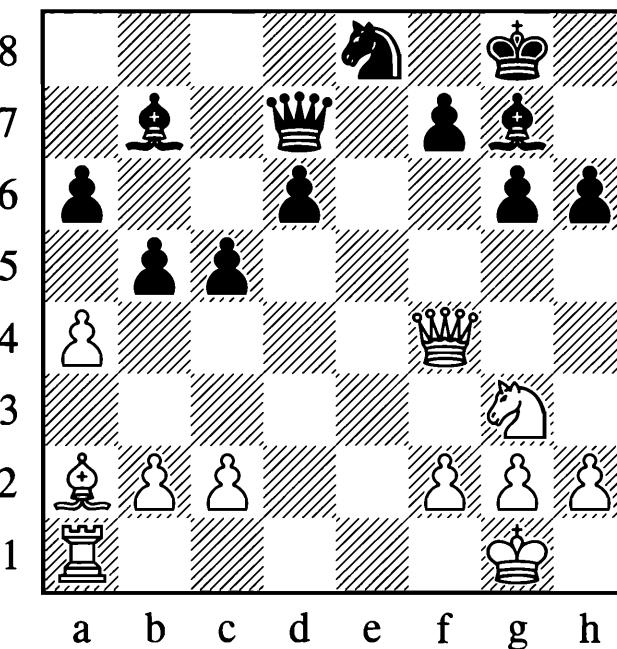
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192

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(187) Terrieux – Prie, Belfort 2010

23...Qg4! White resigned. There is no hope in 24.Qfd1 Qh2† 25.Qg3 h4#, 24.h4 Qh2† or 24.hxg4 hxg4† 25.Qxg4 Qf5† 26.Qf3 Qh3#.

(188) Corrales Jimenez – Kogan, Zaragoza 2010

White has two ways to win. **20.hxg7! Rfe8** 20...Qxg7 21.Qxg5 is devastating: 21...Wxd3 22.Qh6† Qg8 23.cxd3 and White wins. **21.Wg3 Qh7 22.Rxh7! Qxh7 23.Wf3!** It would be time for Black to resign. Or 20.Wh3 g6 (20...g4 21.Wh2 g6 22.Qa5 Wc5 23.h7† Qh8 24.Qxd8 Qxd8 25.Qxd8! also wins) 21.Qxg6! fxg6 22.Wxe6† Rf7 23.h7†! and White wins. Sadly White found a third option: 20.Qg6? Not a winner. 20...fxg6 21.Wxg6 Qh7! Black is now in control. 22.Wxe6† Rf7 23.hxg7 Qf6 24.Wb3 Wb6 25.Wa3 Rfd7 26.Wf8† 0–1

(189) Gallardo Garcia – Rojas Keim, Collado Villalba 2009

White found a nice drawing combination with: **35.Qe8! Wc5! 36.Rc3! Wb6† 37.Rb3 Wc5 38.Rc3 Wb6† ½–½**

(190) Savchenko – Maghalashvili, Baku 2010

13.Qxd5!! A brilliant way to open the position. **13...exd5** Black has little choice. 13...Wd8 14.We3! followed by Qb6 wins the exchange. **14.Wxd5 Qe7** Black gives up the rook, facing deadly alternatives. White's combination was based on the rapid inclusion of the h1-rook, by sacrificing the f1-bishop in order to quickly open lines: 14...Ra7 15.Qb5†! axb5 16.Rhe1† Qe6 (16...Qe7 17.Wd8#) 17.Wc6† Qe7 18.Wd6† Qe8 19.Wb8† Qe7 20.Wd8#; 14...Rb8 15.Qb5† Rx b5 16.Rhe1† Qe6 17.Wd7# **15.Wxa8 Wxf4† 16.Qb1 0–0 17.Wf3 Wc7 18.Qd3** White has the position under control and won easily by move 29... 1–0

(191) Bykhovsky – I. Ivanisevic, Tromso 2010

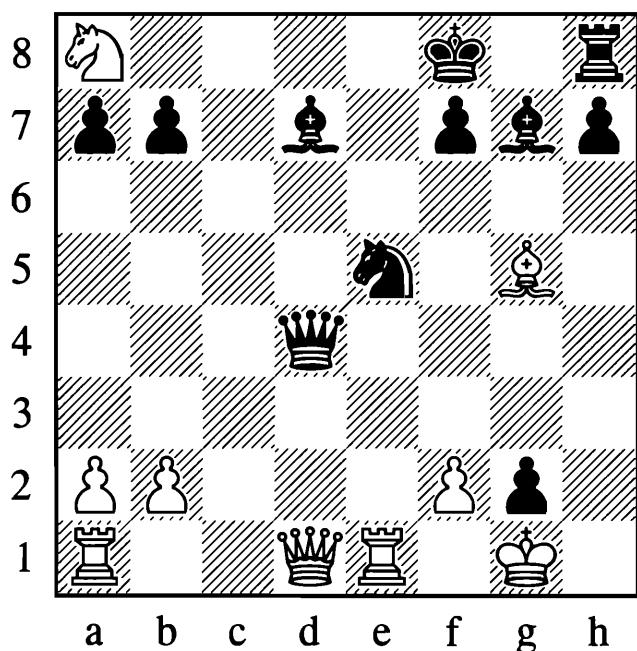
Black wins by clearing the 8th rank to start an attack down the h-file. **23...Qg7! 23...Qf7! 24.g5 Wh8** works in much the same way. **24.g5 24.g3 Wh8 25.Qf3** also does not save the day. Black has a mating attack after 25...Qxg4! for example: a) 26.Qxg4 Rh1† 27.Qg2 Wh2† 28.Qf3 Qxg4† 29.Qxg4 Wh5# or b) 26.Re1 Rh1† 27.Qxh1 Wh2† 28.Qf1 Wxf2#. **24...Wh8! 25.gxf6† Qf8 26.Qh5 26.Qh4 Qc5† 27.Rf2 Rxh4** is no better. **26...Rxh5 27.Wxh5 Wxh5 28.dxc7 f3!** Opening up the king's position. **29.g3 Qf4** White resigned; his king cannot survive.

(192) Hess – Inarkiev, Barcelona 2010

White is an exchange up, but Black has strong bishops and a pawn, so the outcome is not obvious. However, White saw his chance to decisively exploit the a-file. **28.axb5! Qe5** Desperation. Black realized that White wins easily after 28...axb5 29.Wxf7†! Wxf7 30.Qxf7† Qxf7 31.Ra7 with an extra exchange against no compensation. **29.Wxh6 d5 29...axb5 30.Wxg6† 30.bxa6 Qa8 31.Re1** White is winning. Black eventually resigned a truckload of material down on move 50... 1–0

193

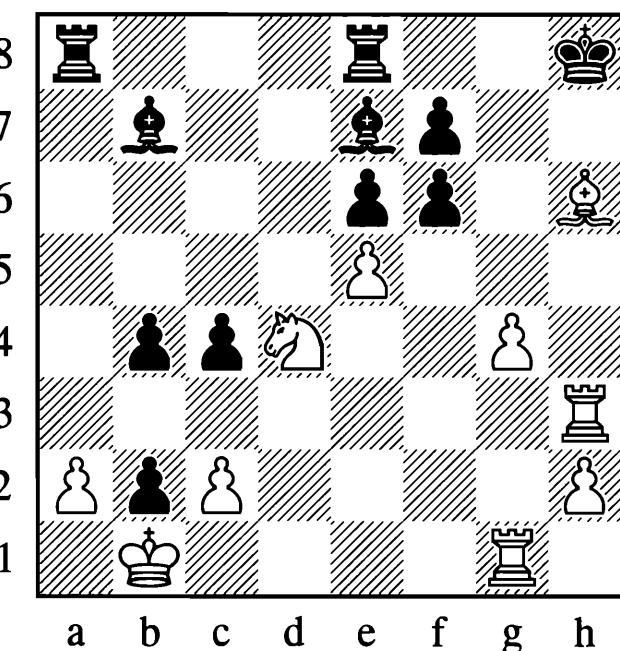
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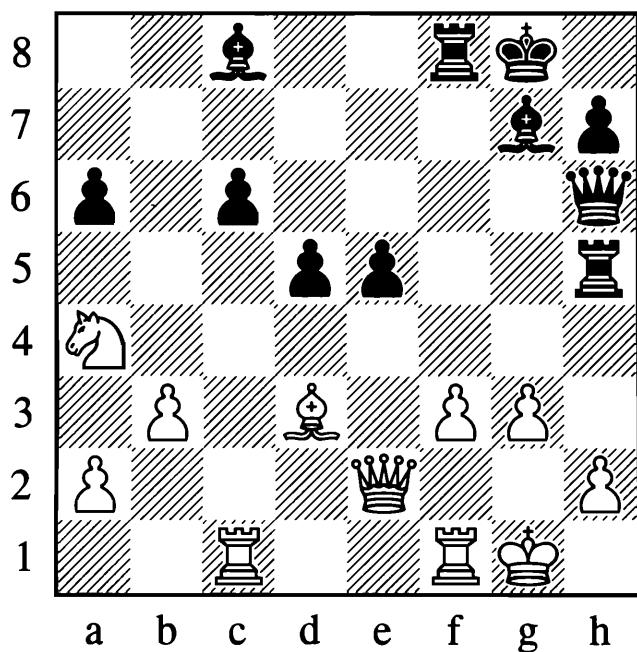
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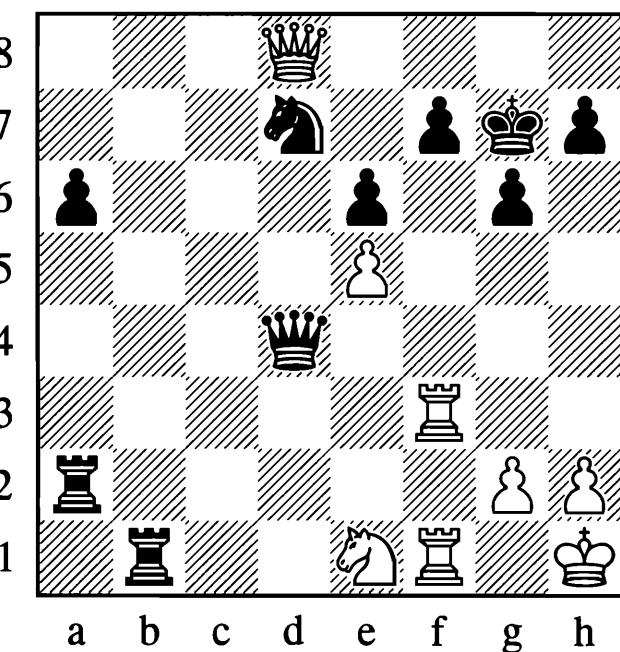
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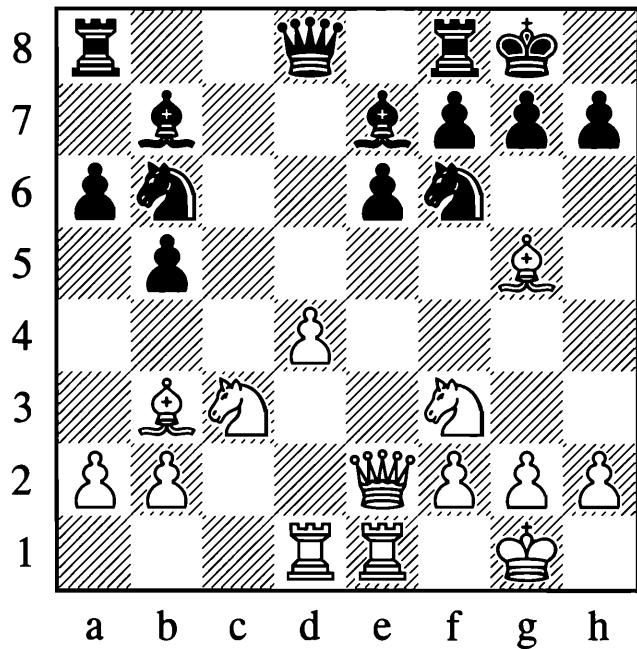
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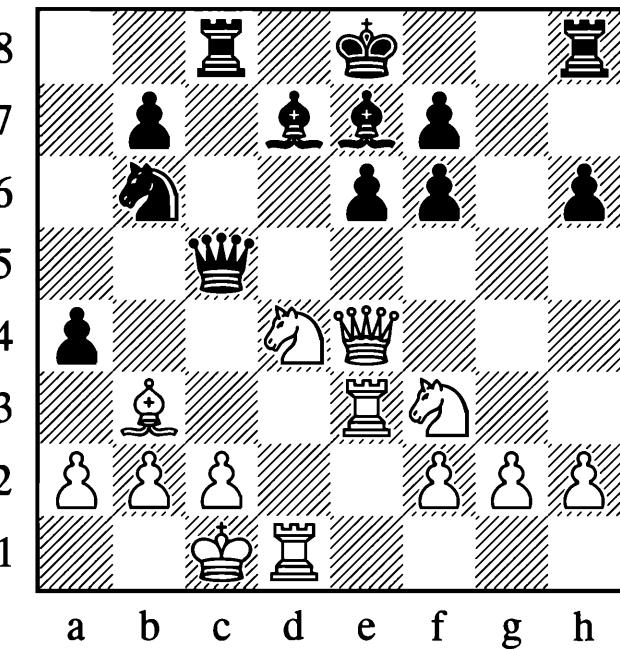
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198

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(193) Movsesian – Caruana, Moscow (blitz) 2010

White won with a nice surprise. **20.♕e7†!** $\text{20.}\mathbb{Q}\text{x}\mathbb{e}5 \mathbb{W}\text{x}\mathbb{e}5 \text{21.}\mathbb{W}\text{x}\mathbb{d}7 \mathbb{W}\text{x}\mathbb{g}5$ is okay for Black. **20...♔g8** $\text{20...}\mathbb{Q}\text{e}8 \text{21.}\mathbb{Q}\text{c}7† \mathbb{Q}\text{x}\mathbb{e}7 \text{22.}\mathbb{W}\text{x}\mathbb{d}4$ would be unfortunate. **21.♗xe5 ♔xe5 21...♔xe5** $\text{22.}\mathbb{W}\text{x}\mathbb{d}7$ leaves White a piece up. **22.♗xd4 ♔xd4 23.♗d1 ♔xf2† 1-0**

(194) Eames – Edouard, Hastings 2010

Black has the advantage after $23\dots\mathbb{Q}\text{h}3$, but instead he won the game quickly by closing the line from e2 to h2 with the g7-bishop. **23...e4! 24.fxe4 ♔d4† 25.♔h1 ♔f2!** Exploiting the overloading of the f1-rook. $25\dots\mathbb{R}\text{f}2$ worked similarly. **26.♗xf2** White has no choice. $26.\mathbb{h}4 \mathbb{R}\text{x}\mathbb{h}4† \text{27.}\mathbb{g}\text{x}\mathbb{h}4 \mathbb{W}\text{x}\mathbb{h}4† \text{28.}\mathbb{Q}\text{g}2 \mathbb{W}\text{h}3\#$ **26...♔xc1† 27.♗f1 ♔xf1† 28.♗xf1 ♔xf1† 29.♔xf1 dxe4 30.h4 ♔g4 31.♔g1 e3 32.♗c3 a5 33.♔d3 ♕c5 34.♔c4† ♔g7 35.♔f1 ♔f5† 36.♔e1 ♔f2 37.♔e2 ♔xe2 38.♗xe2 ♔f6 39.a3 ♔e5 40.b4 axb4 41.axb4 h5 0-1**

(195) Milanovic – Lukovic, Kragujevac 2011

White is fully mobilized and wins by opening the centre. **15.d5!! e5** A sad move to play. White wins a piece after $15\dots\mathbb{Q}\text{fx}\mathbb{d}5 \text{16.}\mathbb{Q}\text{x}\mathbb{d}5 \mathbb{Q}\text{x}\mathbb{d}5$ ($16\dots\mathbb{Q}\text{x}\mathbb{g}5 \text{17.}\mathbb{Q}\text{x}\mathbb{b}6$ and White wins) $17.♔xe7 \mathbb{W}\text{x}\mathbb{e}7 \text{18.}\mathbb{Q}\text{x}\mathbb{d}5 \mathbb{Q}\text{x}\mathbb{d}5 \text{19.}\mathbb{Q}\text{x}\mathbb{d}5$. **16.♗xe5** White won on move $35\dots 1-0$

(196) B. Larsen – Gligoric, Manila 1974

31.♗f5!! Black resigned, as there is no defence against $\mathbb{Q}\text{g}7†$. For example, $31\dots\mathbb{Q}\text{h}7 \text{32.}\mathbb{Q}\text{x}\mathbb{e}7 \mathbb{B}\text{x}\mathbb{e}7 \text{33.}\mathbb{Q}\text{f}8†$. Instead $31.♔f8†?$ $\mathbb{Q}\text{g}8 \text{32.}\mathbb{Q}\text{x}\mathbb{e}7 \mathbb{B}\text{x}\mathbb{e}7$ was maybe what Gligoric was hoping for, when Black is much better. For example: $33.\mathbb{e}\text{x}\mathbb{f}6 \mathbb{B}\text{d}7 \text{34.}\mathbb{Q}\text{f}5 c3! \text{35.}\mathbb{Q}\text{e}7†?!$ $\mathbb{B}\text{x}\mathbb{e}7 \text{36.}\mathbb{f}\text{x}\mathbb{e}7 \mathbb{Q}\text{d}5!$ and Black wins.

(197) Abrahamyan – Goletiani, Saint Louis 2011

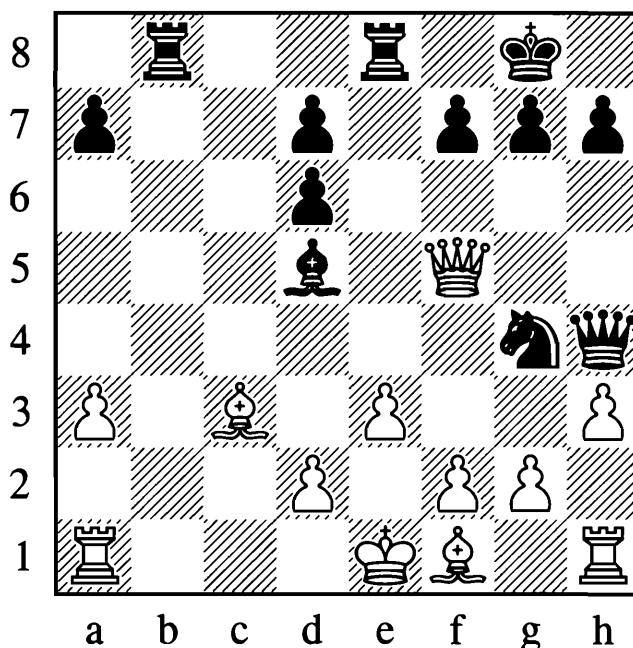
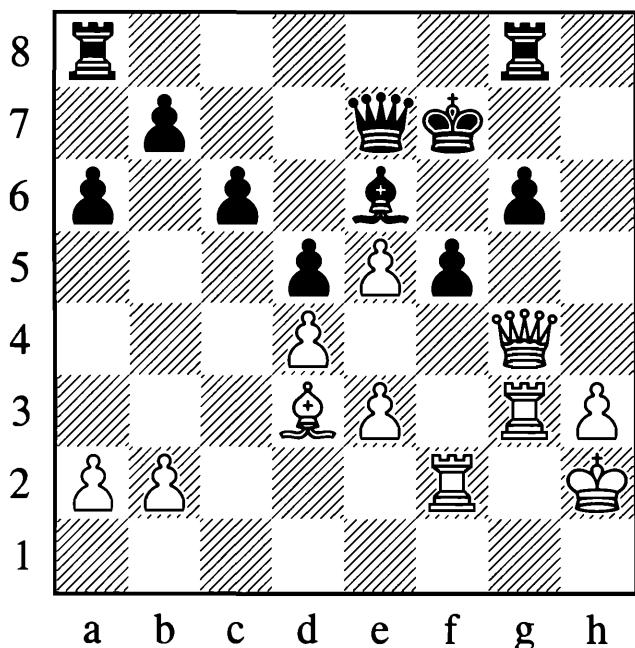
Black is facing a huge attack on f7, but she could have closed the f-file and at the same time put pressure on the 1st rank with: **37...♗f2!!** Instead the game ended tragically with $37\dots\mathbb{W}\text{x}\mathbb{e}5?? \text{38.}\mathbb{B}\text{x}\mathbb{f}7† \mathbb{Q}\text{h}6 \text{39.}\mathbb{W}\text{x}\mathbb{d}7 \mathbb{B}\text{x}\mathbb{e}1 \text{40.}\mathbb{B}\text{x}\mathbb{h}7† \mathbb{Q}\text{g}5 \text{41.}\mathbb{W}\text{e}7† 1-0$. Even $37\dots\mathbb{B}\text{x}\mathbb{e}1?!$ would have been better. After $38.♔x\mathbb{f}7† \mathbb{Q}\text{h}6 \text{39.}\mathbb{B}\text{x}\mathbb{e}1$ Black has $39\dots\mathbb{W}\text{e}4! \text{40.}\mathbb{B}\text{g}1 \mathbb{B}\text{x}\mathbb{g}2!$ with a perpetual check on the cards. **38.♗g1 38.♗1xf2 ♕xf2!** is all over. **38...♗xf3 39.♗xf3 ♕xg1† 40.♗xg1 ♕d5** Black would win the endgame.

(198) Kleijn – Braun, Bundesliga 2010

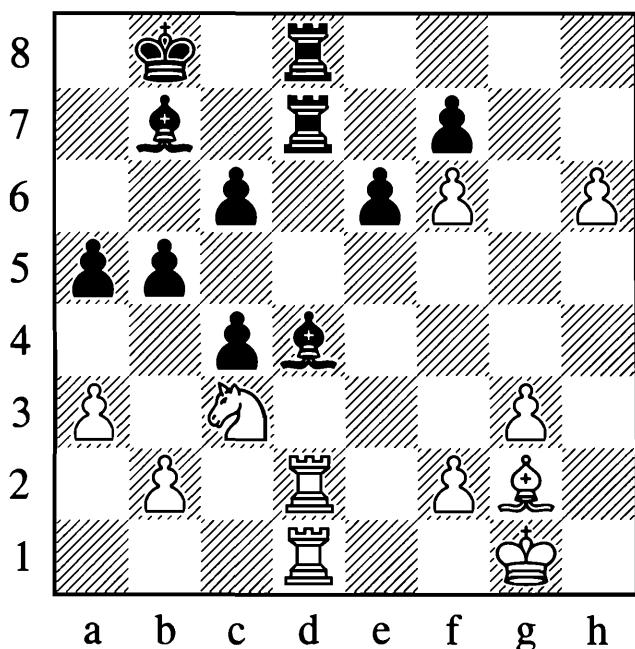
21.♔xe6! ♔xe6 The best resistance was offered by $21\dots\mathbb{f}\text{x}\mathbb{e}6$, when White wins with $22.♔g6† \mathbb{Q}\text{f}8 \text{23.}\mathbb{Q}\text{e}5! \mathbb{W}\text{x}\mathbb{e}5 \text{24.}\mathbb{B}\text{x}\mathbb{e}5 \mathbb{f}\text{x}\mathbb{e}5 \text{25.}\mathbb{Q}\text{x}\mathbb{e}6† \mathbb{Q}\text{x}\mathbb{e}6 \text{26.}\mathbb{W}\text{x}\mathbb{e}6$. **22.♗xe6 fxe6 23.♔g6† ♔f8 24.♗d4! ♕c6 25.♗xc6 ♕xc6 26.♗g3!** $1-0$



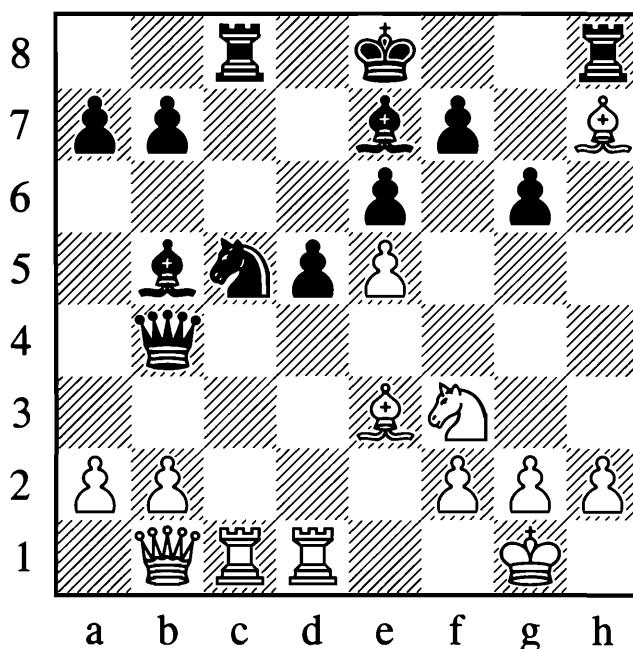
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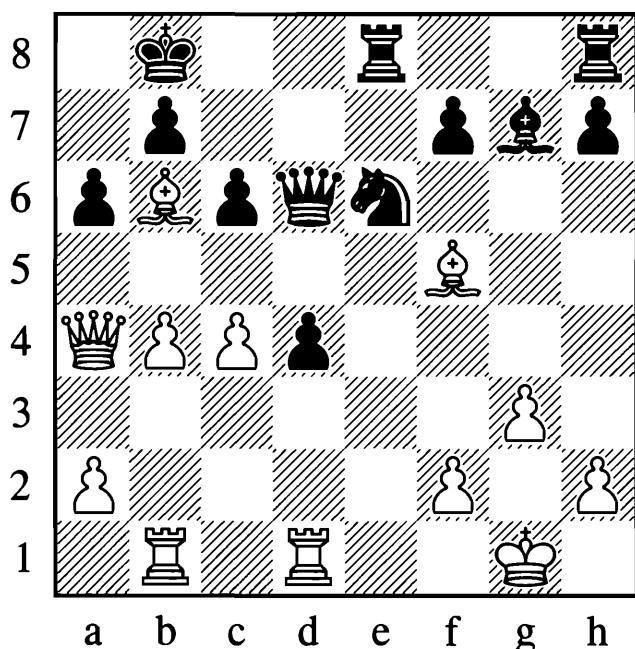
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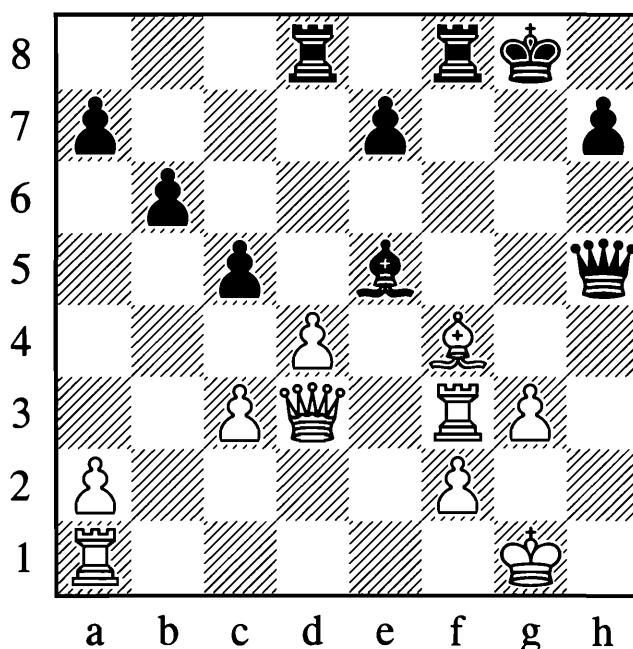
A row of four solid black five-pointed star shapes.



三



☆☆☆☆



(199) Tkachiev – Maze, Mulhouse 2011

28.♕xf5! **gxf5** 28...**♕xf5** 29.**♝xf5†** **gxf5** 30.**♛xf5†** is mate. **29.♛h5†!** 29.**♝xf5†?!** would be mistaken even if White is better after 29...**♔e8** 30.**♛xg8†** **♕xg8** 31.**♝xg8†** **♔d7** 32.**♝xa8**. **29...♗f8** 30.**♝xg8†** **♕xg8** White wins everything after 30...**♔xg8** 31.**♝g2†** as well. **31.♝xf5†** Black resigned due to 31...**♕f7** 32.**♛h8#** or 31...**♔g7** 32.**♝g5†** **♔f8** 33.**♛h6†**.

(200) Ding Liren – Filippov, Manila 2010

White has an obvious advantage, but found a combination that won instantly. **28.♝xd4!** **♝xd4** **29.♝xd4** **♝xd4** **30.♗d5!** Black resigned. 30.**♗d5?!** is a bit less clear: 30...**b4!** 31.**h7 bxc3** 32.**h8=♛†** **♔c7** 33.**bxc3** **♝xd5** 34.**♛f8** **♝d7** 35.**♛c5** White should win, but it will take some time.

(201) Grischuk – Svidler, Moscow (blitz) 2010

24.b5! **cxb5** 25.**cxb5** **♛xb6** 26.**bxa6** Black resigned. 26...**♗c5** 27.**♛xe8†** is one reason.

(202) Flores – Felgaer, Argentina (ch) 2008

Black wins by opening up the white king position. **19...♗xe3!** **20.dxe3** **♝xe3†** **21.♗d2** 21.**♕e2** loses to brutality: 21...**♝xe2†** 22.**♗xe2** **♛c4†** 23.**♗d2** (23.**♛d3** **♕e8†** 24.**♗d2** **♛f4†** and White loses the queen) 23...**♕e4!** 24.**♛a5** **♛d3†** 25.**♗e1** **♕e8!** and White is mated. **21...♝xc3!** A truly elegant win, but it was also possible to win prosaically with 21...**♕e4**, where White's only move is 22.**♗f6!**, leading to a bad endgame after 22...**gxf6** 23.**♛g4†** **♛xg4** 24.**hxg4** **♝eb3** 25.**f3**, with negligible saving chances. **22.♛xd5** 22.**♗xc3** **♝b3†** 23.**♗c2** **♛d4** leads to mate. **22...♝c5** 23.**♛d3** **♝b2†** 24.**♗d1** **♛a4†** 25.**♗e1** **♛a5†** White resigned. Next comes ...**♝d5**.

(203) Fedorchuk – Anton Guijarro, Madrid 2010

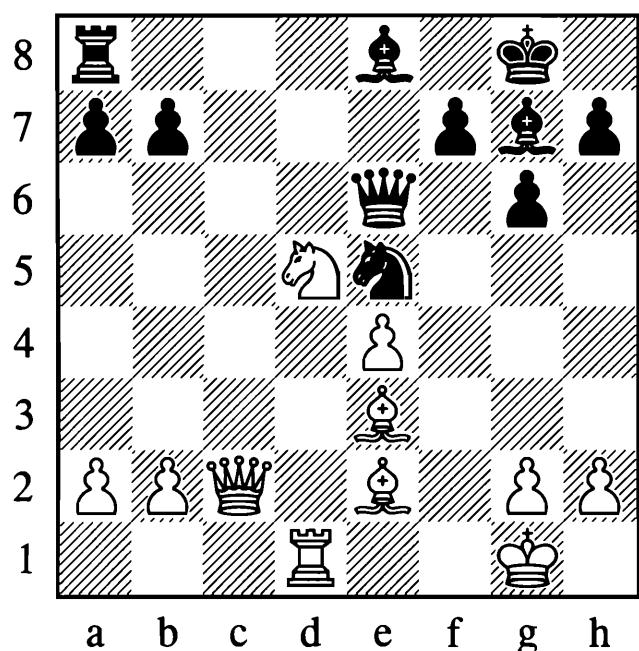
White has apparently gotten his bishop trapped on h7. However, various threats make it possible to open the d-file so the king cannot escape. **19.♝d4!** **♕c4** White is also winning after 19...**♛a5** 20.**b4** **♛a6** 21.**♕xg6** **fxg6** 22.**bxc5** **♝g8** 23.**♝g4**. **20.♕xg6!** **fxg6** 21.**♝cxc4!** **♛xc4** Desperation. Black is mated after 21...**dxc4** 22.**♛xg6†** **♔f8** 23.**♝f4†**. 22.**♝xc4** **dxc4** 23.**♛xg6†** **♔d7** 24.**♗d4** **a6** 25.**f4** **♝hf8** 26.**f5** **exf5** 27.**e6†** **♔d8** 28.**♗xf5** **♝f6** 29.**♛g8†** **♝f8** 30.**♛h7** 1–0

(204) Gelfand – Mamedyarov, Moscow (analysis) 2010

Mamedyarov realized too late that his planned double pin combination did not work and decided to try something else (which was not sufficient either). The refutation of the combination was: **28.♛c4†** **♝f7** 28...**♔h8** 29.**♗xe5†** is check. **29.g4!** and White wins a piece.

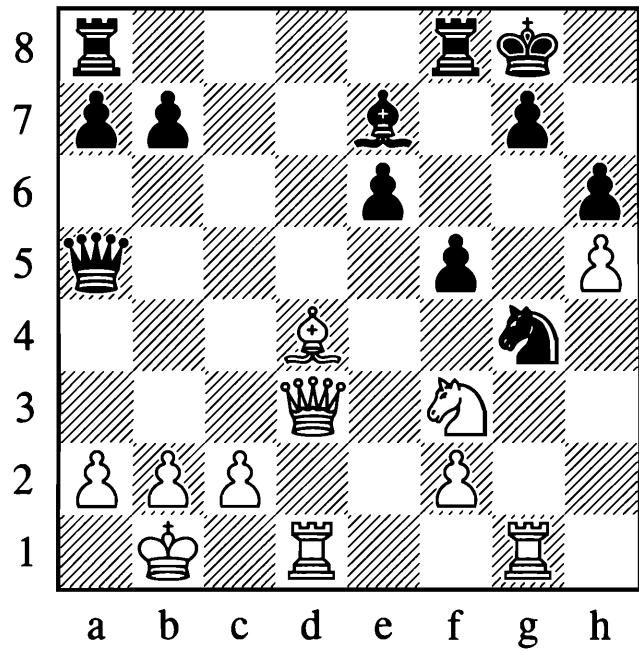
205

★★★★★



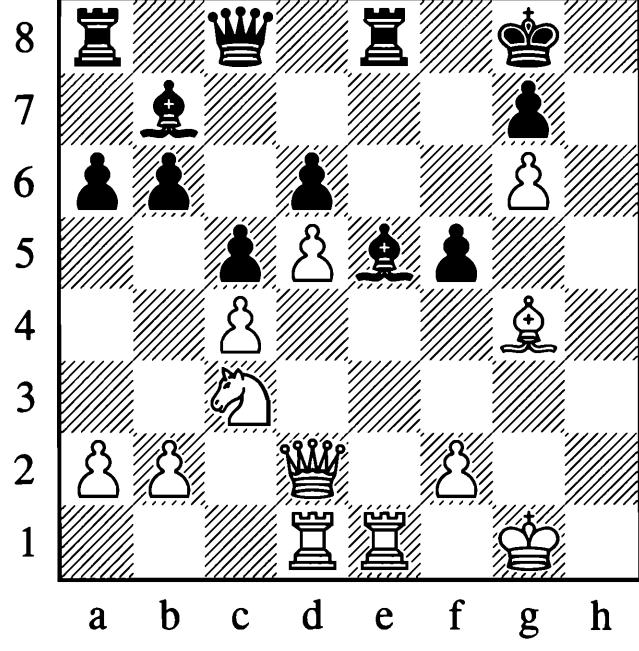
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★★★★★



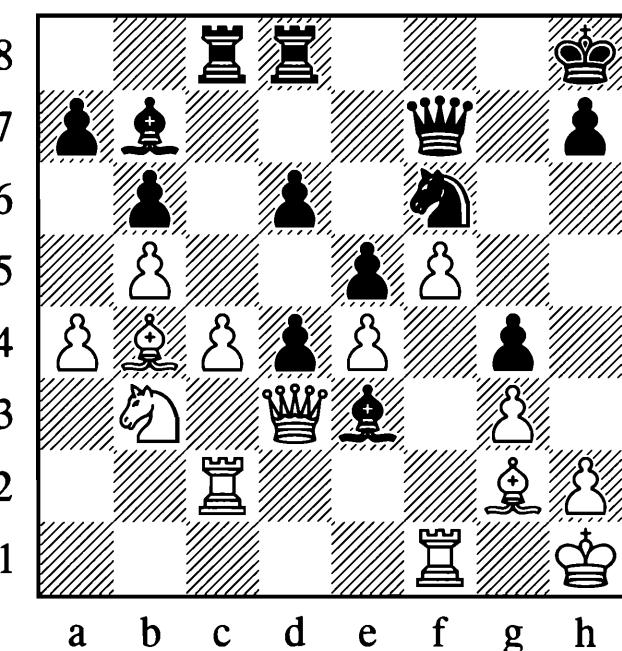
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★★★★★

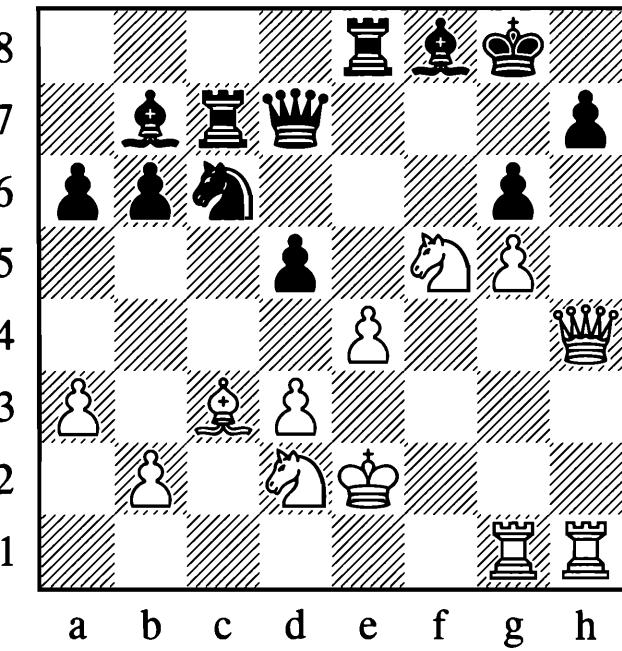
208



a b c d e f g h

★★★★★

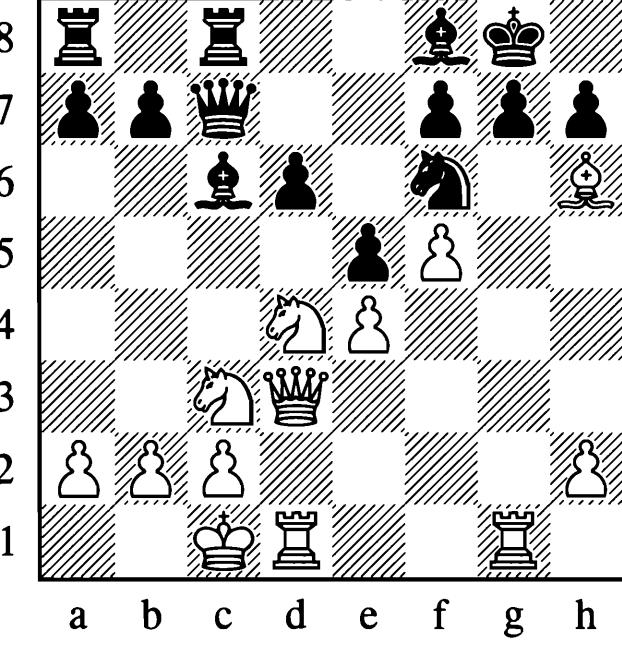
209



a b c d e f g h

★★★★★

210



a b c d e f g h

(205) B. Larsen – Uhlmann, Aarhus 1971

White won the exchange by a nice deflection. **20.♕c7 ♜c8 21.♗d8!! ♜xc7 21...♝xd8 22.♕xe6 ♜xe6 23.♖xa7** wins too. **22.♘xc7** and White won in 35 moves... **1–0**

(206) Safarli – Kovchan, Turkey 2011

21.♕xg7! Initiating a typical attack. Black can only hope that it yields no more than perpetual check. **21...♔xg7 21...♝fd8 22.♗d4 ♔f8 23.♗xg4! fxg4 24.♗h7!** also wins quickly. **22.♗xg4† ♔xg4 23.♗g6† ♔h8 24.♗xh6† ♔g8 25.♗xe6† ♔f7?!** The toughest defence was: **25...♔h8 26.♗e5! ♔f6 (26...♗b6 27.♗g6† ♔g7 28.♗xg4+–) 27.♗g6† ♔g7 28.♗d7† ♔h6 29.♗xf8 ♜xf8 (29...♗e5 30.♗xe5 ♜xe5 31.♗h7† ♔g5 32.♗e6† ♔f5 33.♗c5+–) 30.♗e4!+–** The threat of **♗g6#** forces Black to play **30...♔xh5**, when the computer likes moves such as **31.c4** and **31.f3** best, as Black cannot prevent **♗d5†** winning the queen anyway. **26.♗e5 ♜af8 27.h6! 27.♗g1** is also sufficient. **27...♗a6 28.h7† ♔xh7 28...♔g7 29.♗xg4†** is mating. **29.♗h1† ♔h4 30.♗xh4† ♔g7 31.♗xg4† ♔h7 32.♗xa6 bxa6 33.♗xf7 ♜xf7 34.f4 ♔h6 35.b3 ♔h5 36.♗g5† ♔h4 37.♗g6** **1–0**

(207) Akopian – Simantsev, Dubai 2011

White won by rushing the queen to the h-file: **23.f4! ♔d4† 24.♗f1 ♜xg4** White also wins after **24...♝e3 25.♗h2! ♜xg4 26.♗h7† ♔f8 27.♗xe3 ♜xe3 28.♗e1!.. 25.♗h2 ♜e5 26.♗h7† 26.♗xe5? ♜f5† 27.♗e2 ♜xg6** gives both players chances. **26...♗f8 27.♗h8† ♔e7 28.♗xg7† ♔d8 29.♗f6† ♔c7 30.♗xe5** Now that he controls the f5-square, White can take the rook. **30...♗b8 31.♗d3 ♔a7 32.♗b5†!** **1–0**

(208) Tikkanen – Vitiugov, Rogaska Slatina 2011

White is fragile on the long diagonal and his queen is overloaded, and he is duly punished: **30...♗xe4!! 31.♗xe4 ♜xc4!! 32.♗d2** After **32.♗d2 ♜xc2 33.♗xc2** Black has many winning moves, most pleasing to the eye being **33...♗c4!.. 32...♝xb4 33.♗fc1 ♔xd2 34.♗c7 ♔xe4† 35.♗xe4 ♗f6 36.♗b7 ♔xc1 37.♗f7 ♗h6 38.♗e7 ♔g5 39.f6 ♜b1†** **0–1**

(209) Herman – David, Milan 2010

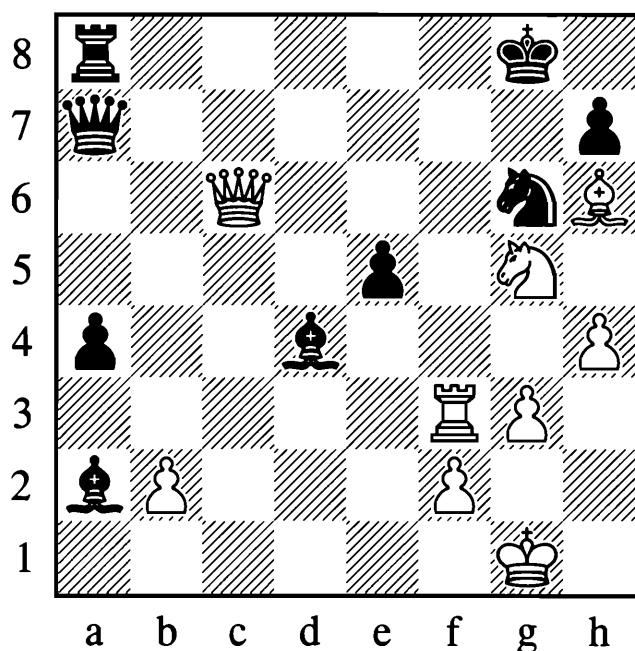
29.♗g7! **29.♗g7** is based on the same idea, but is inaccurate. Black can defend with: **29...♜xg7 30.♗xh7† ♔f8 31.♗xg7 ♗d4†! 32.♗d1 ♗xg7 33.♗f1† ♜f7 34.♗xg7† ♔xg7 35.♗h7† ♔xh7 36.♗xf7† ♔g8 37.♗xb7** and White still has to show technique to win the game. **29...♗xg7** A sad necessity. **29...♜xg7** is refuted by **30.♗xh7† ♔f8 31.♗f1† ♔e7 32.♗f7†!**, winning everything. **30.♗xg7 ♜xg7 31.♗d1 ♗e5 32.♗g3 ♜c8 33.d4 ♗c4 34.♗xc4 ♜xc4 35.e5 ♔c5 36.♗g4 ♔xa3 37.bxa3 ♜gc7 38.♗e1 ♔c6 39.♗e2 ♔b5 40.♗f2** **1–0**

(210) Kryakvin – Khismatullin, Taganrog 2011

18.♗xg7†! ♔xg7 19.♗g1 ♗h5 White also wins after **19...♗b6 20.♗xg7! ♗xd4 21.♗g3 ♗h5 22.♗g5 ♗xg1† (22...h6 23.♗xh6† ♔h7 24.♗g3 with a mating attack) 23.♗xg1 f6 24.♗h6† ♔h8 25.♗g4**. And **19...♗e8 20.♗xg7!** is equally hopeless. **20.♗xg7! 20.♗xg7† ♗xg7 21.♗g3 f6 22.♗e6 ♗e7 23.♗xg7 ♔f7** would allow the black king to escape in an unclear position. **20...exd4 20...♗xg7 21.f6** is hopeless. **21.♗xd4† ♔f8 22.♗h3 ♔e7 22...♔xe4 23.♗xh5 d5** does not work either. White plays **24.♗g4!** preventing ...♗f4†, with a winning attack. **23.♗xh5 ♜f8 24.e5 ♜ad8?!** A blunder, but **24...♔d8 25.♗h6 ♜e8 26.exd6 ♗d7 27.♗f6† ♔c8 28.♗g7** also leads to a victory for White. **25.♗xd6† ♜xd6 26.♗c5 ♗a5 27.♗xd6† ♔xd6 28.♗h6†** **1–0**

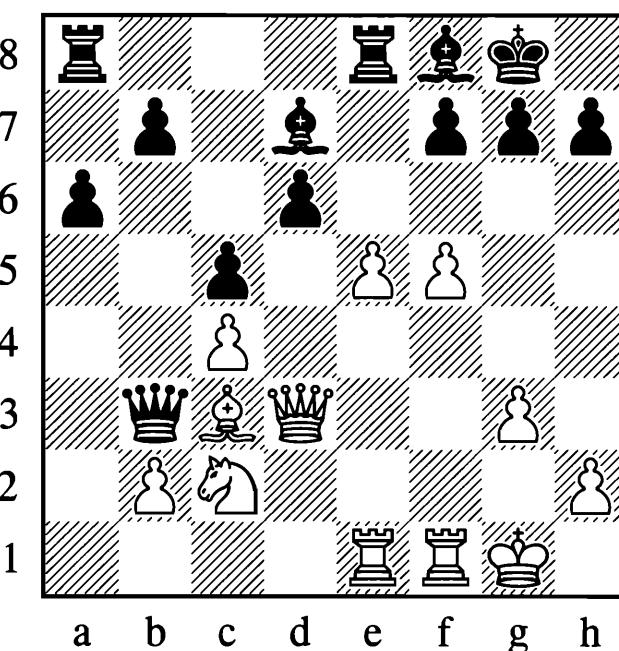
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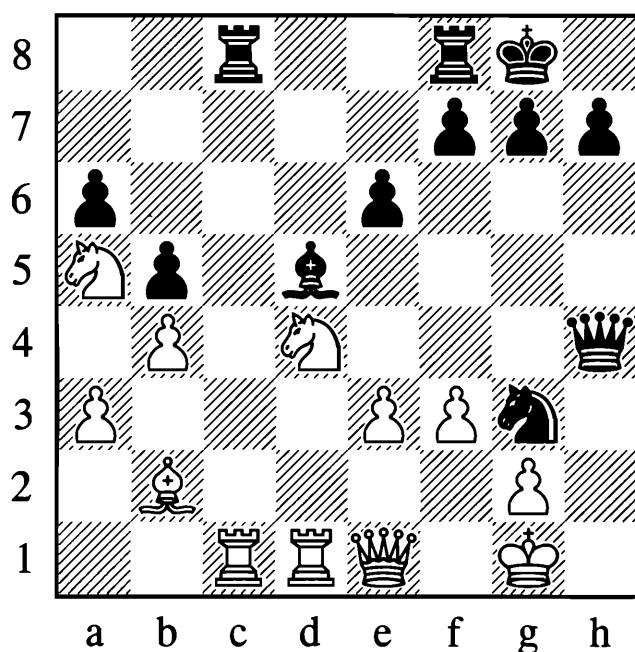
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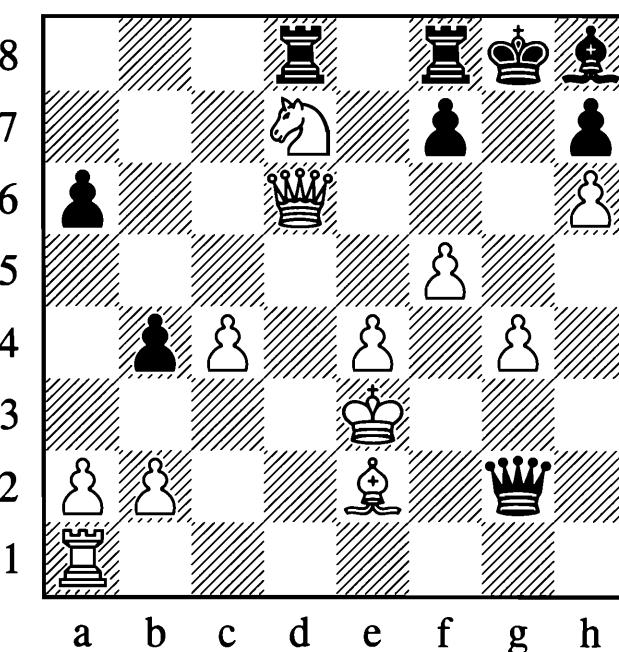
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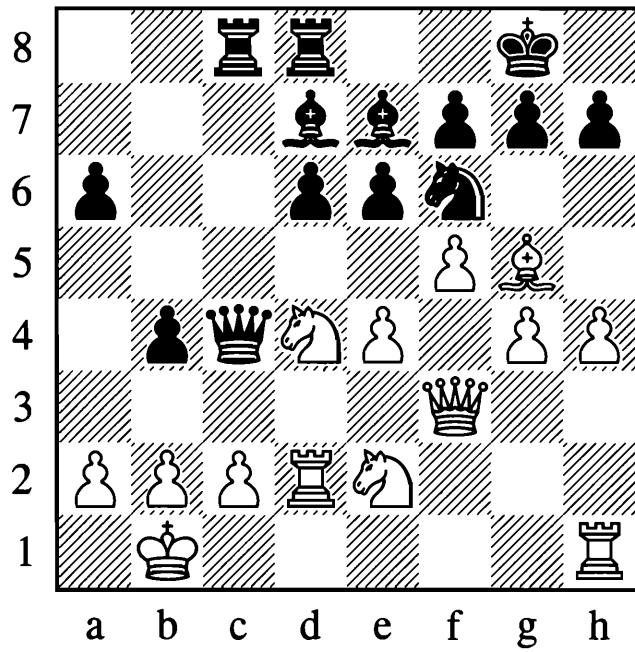
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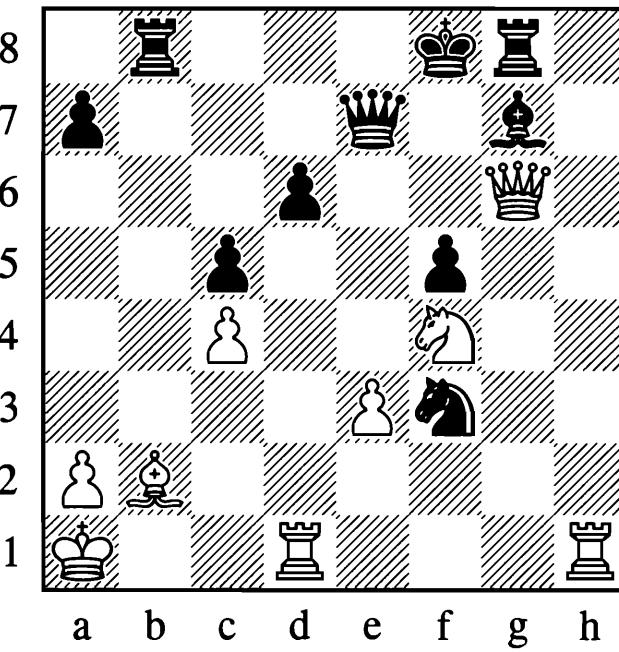
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216

★ ★ ★ ★ ★



(211) Mamedyarov – Radjabov, Corsica (rapid) 2010

30.b3! Closing the important a2-g8 diagonal. **30...♝xb3 31.♝xb3 axb3 32.♛e6†! 32.♛d5†? ♜h8 33.♝f7† ♜g8** only offers White perpetual check. **32...♜h8 33.♝f7† ♜g8 34.♝d8†!** The point. Black resigned. **1–0**

(212) Wenjun Ju – Skripchenko, Beijing (rapid) 2011

Black missed a brilliant way to open up the white king. **24...♝xf3!!** After **24...♛h1†?? 25.♝f2 ♜h4** White later won a complicated fight, but could already have claimed a decisive advantage with **26.♝dc6!**, excluding a lot of the black pieces from the game. **25.♝xf3** Giving Black the e4-square, but the alternatives do not work either. **25.gxf3 ♜h1† 26.♝f2 ♜h2#.** The best try might be **25.♛xg3 ♜xg3 26.♝xf3**, but after **26...♝xc1 27.♝xc1 f6** Black is in control. **25.♝f2 ♜xd1 26.♝xd1 ♜fd8** also leaves Black in a winning position. **25...♛h1† 26.♝f2 ♜e4† 27.♝e2 ♜xg2†–+** and so on.

(213) Rasulov – Khismatullin, St Petersburg 2011

A generally pleasant position was not enough for Khismatullin, who played a miraculous combination: **19...♝xe4!! 20.♛xe4 ♜xg5 21.b3!** **21.hxg5 ♜c6–+** was the first point. **21...♜c6!!** Without this, the pin would disappear, leaving Black a piece down. **22.♝xc6 ♜xc6 23.♝xc6 ♜xd2 24.♝e7† 24.♝xd8 ♜xd8† 24...♚f8 25.♝xc8 ♜xc8?!** Black plays it safe. **25...exf5!** promises a significant edge: **26.♝b6 ♜e8 27.♝h2 fxg4** The bishop works very well with the four pawns; White will suffer. **26.♝d1 ♜e3 27.♝xd6 27.fxe6 fxe6 28.♝xd6 ♜e7 29.♝d3** would have given White decent drawing chances. **27...exf5 28.gxf5 ♜e8! 29.c4 ♜f2!** Black has a clear advantage in the endgame, and he managed to win in 40 moves... **0–1**

(214) Vallejo Pons – Turov, Nakhchivan 2011

27.e6!! fxe6 27...♜c6 28.exf7† ♜xf7 29.f6 g6 does not hold back White's attack: **30.♝e7†! ♜xe7 31.fxe7† ♜g8 32.♛e2 ♜d7 33.♛e4** and Black is finished. **28.fxe6** White could also win with **28.f6 gxf6 29.♝xf6 ♜e7 (29...♜g7 30.♝f7!! ♜xf7 31.♛xh7+– based on 31...♜g8 32.♝f1† ♜e7 33.♝f6†!) 30.♝e3 ♜g7 (30...♜g7 31.♛xd6 ♜xf6 32.♛xf6 ♜f7 33.♝g4 and White wins) 31.♝ef1 ♜b6 32.♝g4! ♜xg4 33.♛f3** with mate in four: **33...♜g7 34.♝g6 ♜xg6 35.♛f7† ♜h8 36.♛f8† ♜xf8 37.♝xf8# 28...♝xe6 28...♜xe6 29.♝e4!** is decisive. The threat is **30.♝h4**, and there is nothing to do about it. (But White also wins after **29.♝xf8†? ♜xf8 30.♝xe6.**) **29.♛f5 ♜xe1 30.♛f7† ♜h8 31.♝xe1 1–0**

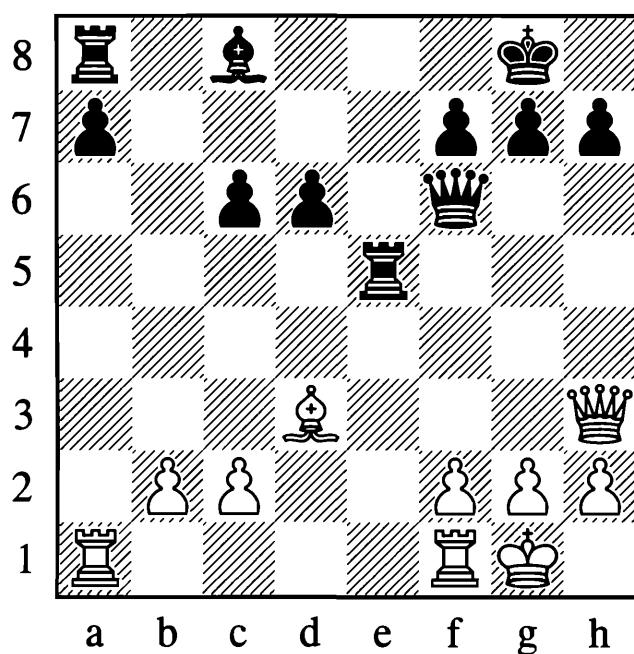
(215) Kotsur – Cheparinov, Moscow 2011

In this complex position, Black's extra exchange may not be important if, for example, White is in time to play **♝d1** and **♝f6†** or **c4-c5-c6**. Black found a brilliant way to take control of the d-file and win the queen in the process. **26...♝xd7!! 27.♛xd7 ♜f6 28.c5** Trying to save the queen with **28.♛c7** fails to **28...♝d8!.** **28...♜g5† 29.♝d3 ♜d8 30.♛xd8† ♜xd8 31.♝c1 ♜h3† 32.♝c4 ♜e3 33.♝c2 ♜xe4† 34.♝b3 a5 35.♝d2 ♜g5** **0–1**

(216) B. Larsen – Kavalek, Lugano 1970

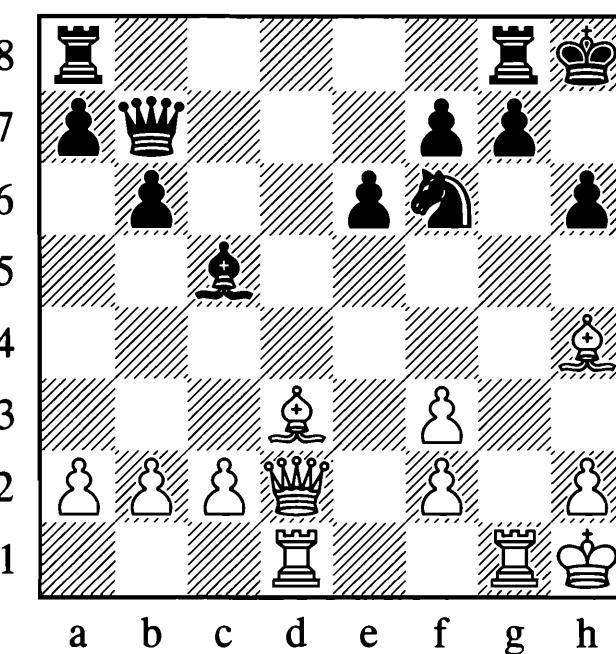
White opened lines with various sacrifices in this classic combination: **30.♝e6†! ♜xe6 31.♜xg7†** Not **31.♛xe6? ♜xb2† 32.♝b1 ♜a3†** with a draw. **31...♜e7 32.♝f8†!!** The crux of the combination, allowing the h1-rook to enter the attack. **32...♝bx8 33.♝h7† 1–0** Black is mated after **33...♝f7 34.♝xf7† ♜xf7 35.♛xd6† ♜e8 36.♛d8#.**

217



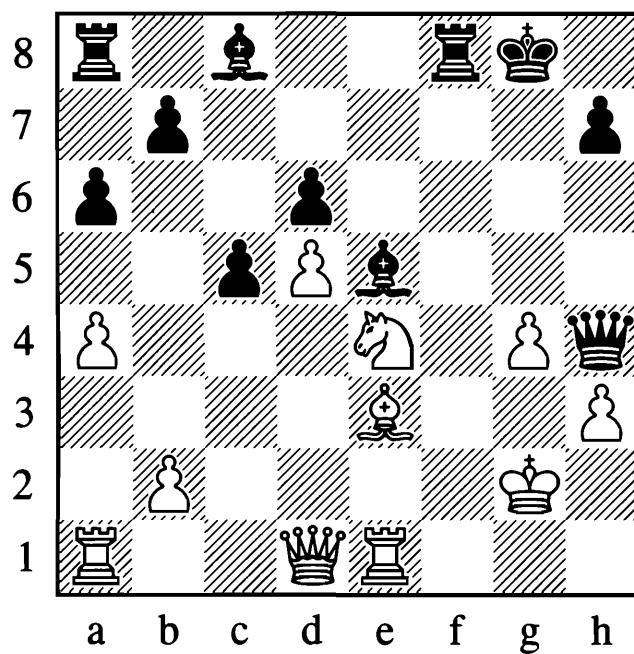
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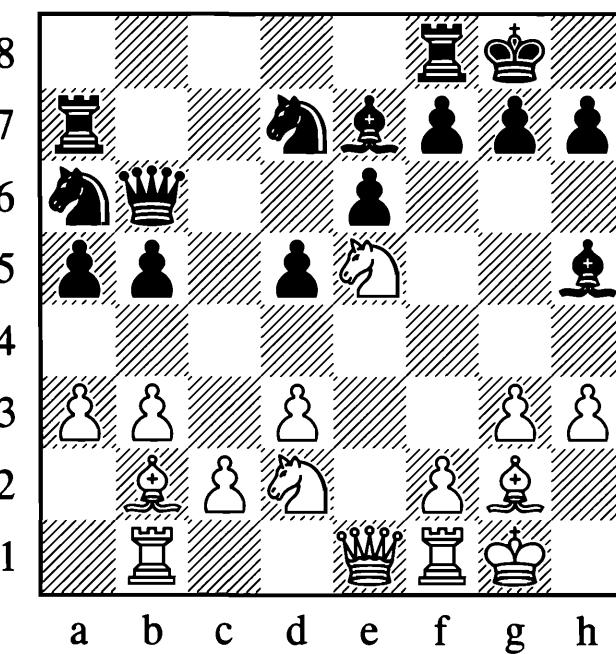
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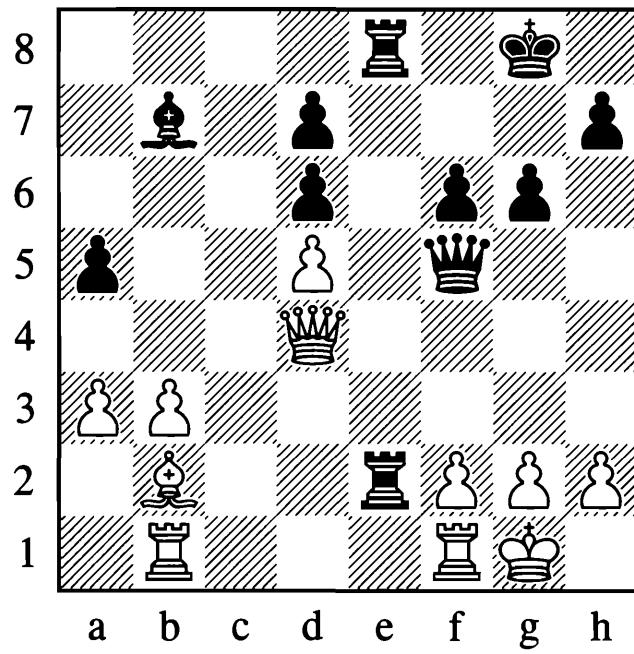
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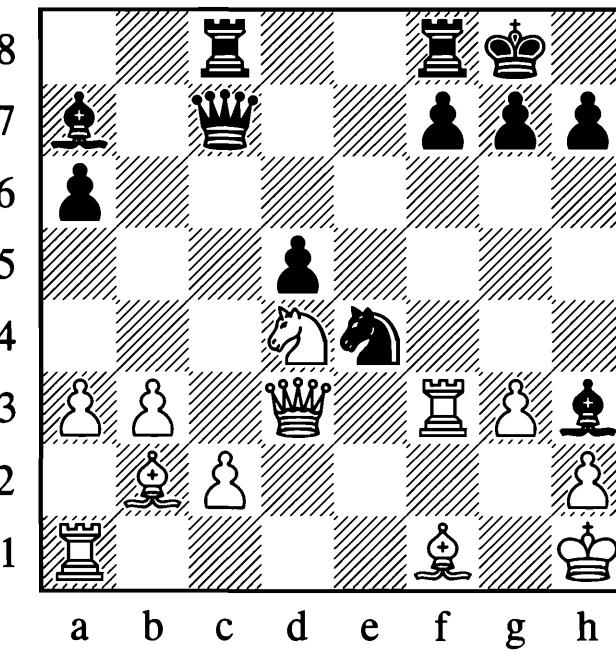
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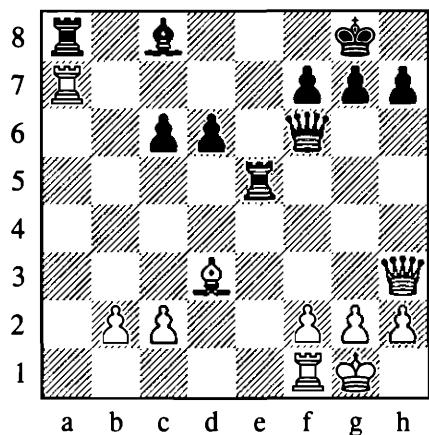
(217) Zelcic – Malaniuk, Katowice 1992

21.♗xa7! (Diagram A) Far stronger than the obvious 21.♔xh7†. Black cannot take on h3 because of the mate.
21...♝b8 22.♔xh7† Now this is mating. 1–0

(218) Ax. Smith – S. Brunello, Denmark 2010

21...♝f5! This strong move exploited the weaknesses around the white king in expert fashion. Black won easily after: 22.gxf5 ♔xe4† 23.♔f3 ♔xf3† 24.♕xf3 ♘xf5† 25.♔e4 ♘h5 26.♗g1† ♔h8 27.♗g5 ♘h4† 28.♗g4 ♘xh3 29.♕xc5 ♘e8 0–1

A

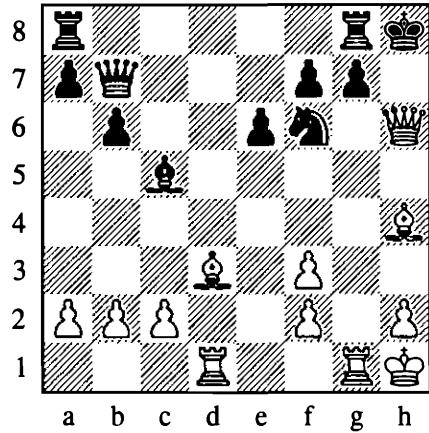
**(219) Cu. Hansen – B. Larsen, Esbjerg 1988**

A new TV channel had opened in Denmark, and a clever guy convinced them to sponsor a match between Denmark's then only two Grandmasters. This was the most memorable moment, especially since the game was annotated in *Chess Informant* and this option was completely ignored. **27...♝f7?** "The only moment in the game where I played really badly," said Larsen. Indeed 27...♔xb1! would have won instantly. However, Black is still much better and won a good game. 28.♗bd1 ♘8e4 29.♔c3 ♘f4 30.f3 ♘c2 31.♔e3 ♘xb2 32.♔fe1 ♔g7 33.♔e8 ♘xd5 34.♗e7† ♔h6 35.♔f8† ♔g5 36.♔xh7 ♘xg2† 37.♔h1 ♘xh2† 0–1

(220) Sreeves – Rugsit, Porto Carras 2010

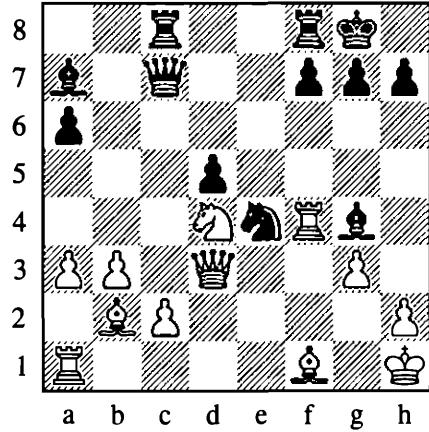
20.♔xh6†! (Diagram B) 20...gxh6 21.♗xf6† ♘g7 22.♗e4 Preventing counterplay; White is just winning.
22...♔xe4 22...♔c8 23.♗xg7 23.♗xg7† ♔h7 24.fxe4
1–0

B

**(221) D'Amore – Genocchio, Italy (ch) 2010**

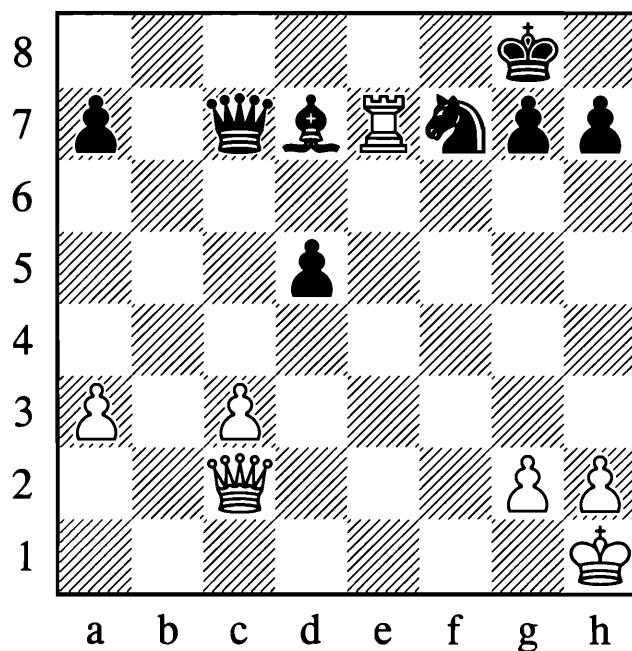
White manages to exploit the loose bishop on h5.
16.♗xd7 ♘xd7 17.♔e5! Black resigned. 1–0

C

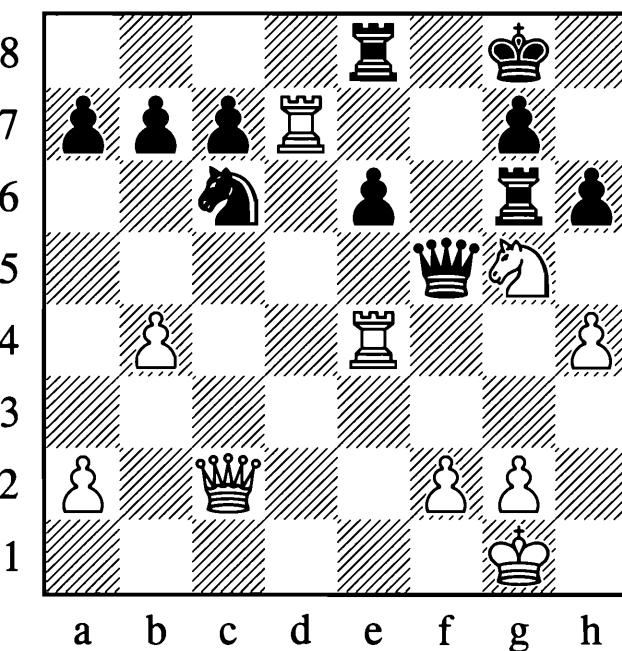
**(222) Shengelia – A. Rasmussen, Khanty-Mansiysk (ol) 2010**

26...♝g4! The rook is short of squares. 27.♗f4 (Diagram C) 27...♔xf4! 28.gxf4 ♗f2† 29.♔g2 ♗xd3 30.♔xd3 ♘fe8 and Black won the endgame... 0–1

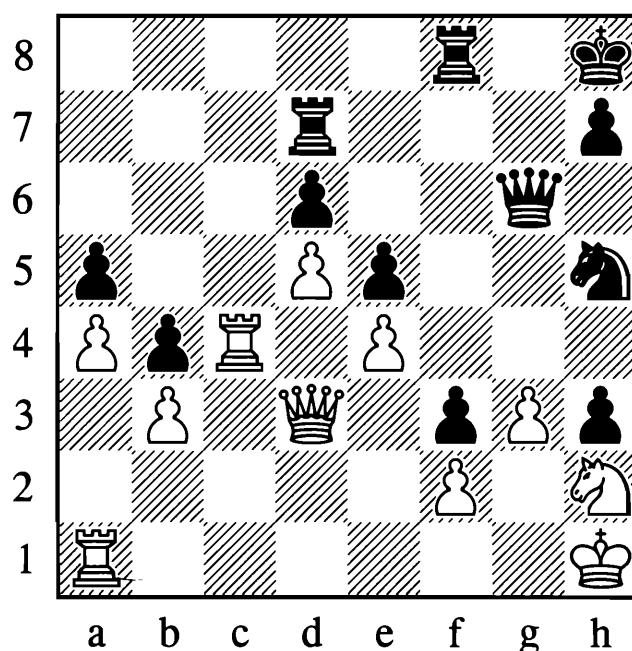
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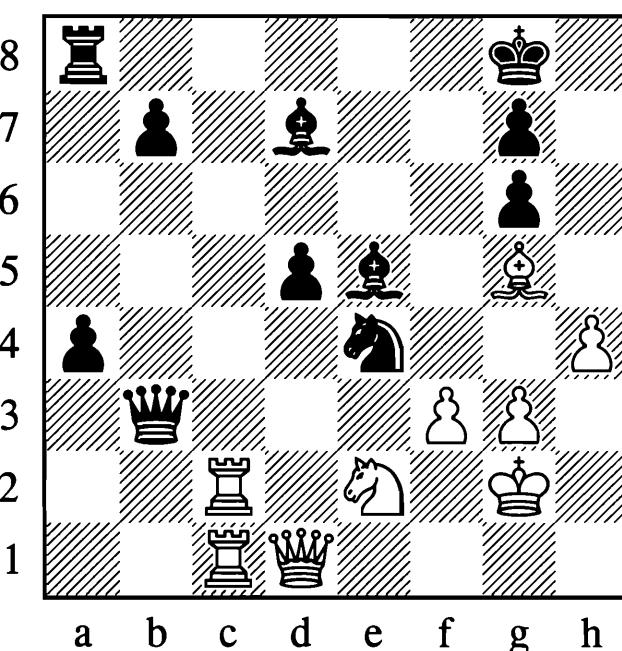
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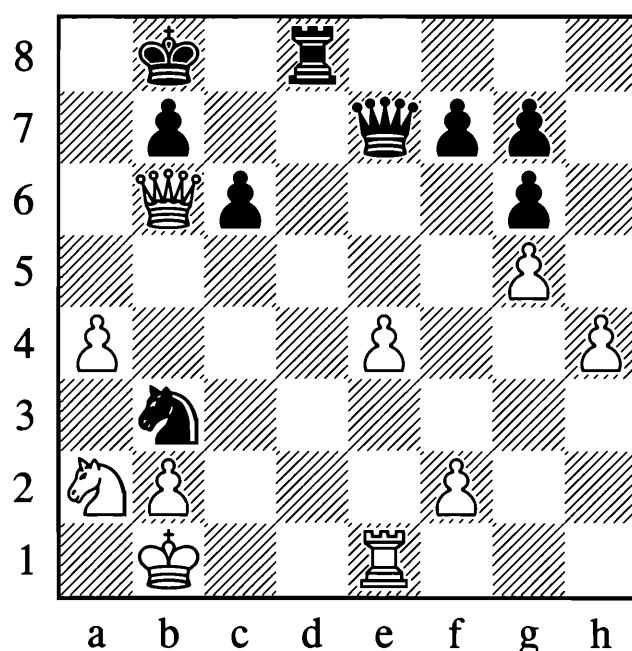
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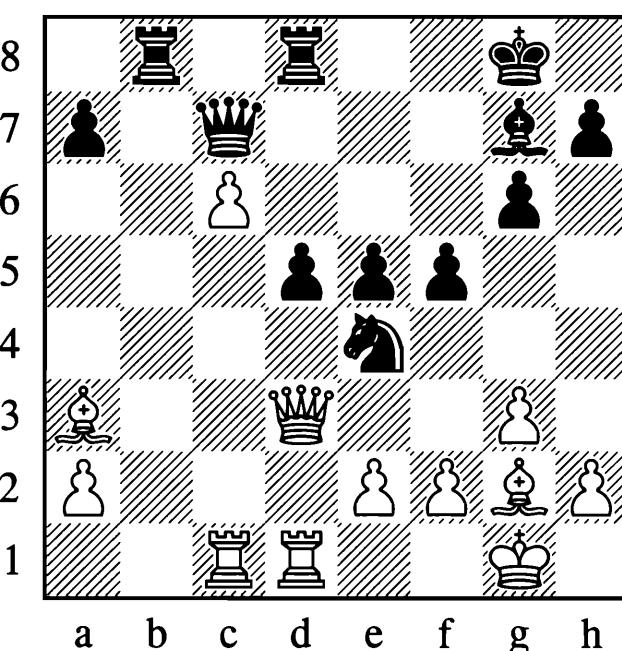
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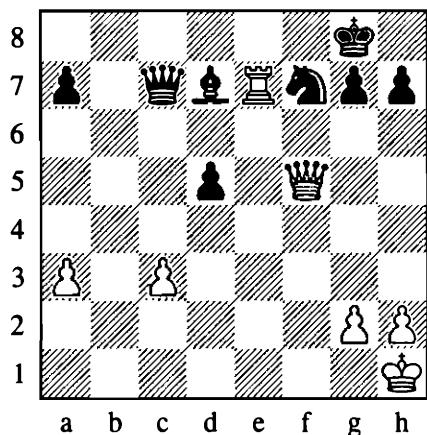


(223) Spoelman – Kraemer, Bundesliga 2011

29.♕f5! (Diagram A) Black resigned. Everything goes.

1–0

A



(224) Konyshov – Bologan, Olginka 2011

31...♗xg3! forced White to resign. After 32.fxg3 White is mated: 32...♝xg3† 33.♔g1 f2# (Diagram B)

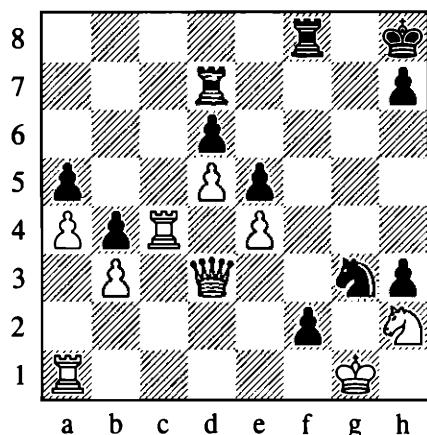
(225) Zhao Xue – E. Danielian, Shenzhen 2011

27...♝d1†! The immediate strike. 28.♔c2 28.♝xd1 ♗xe4† 29.♝d3 ♗xd3# 28...♝xe1 and Black duly converted her extra exchange... 0–1

(226) Aronian – Anand, Sao Paulo 2011

25.♝xe6! (Diagram C) The World Champion resigned immediately. 1–0

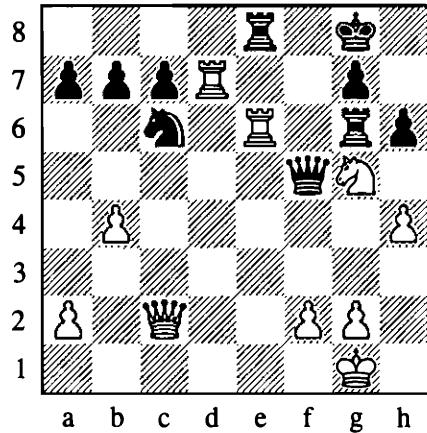
B



(227) Istratescu – Sengupta, Hastings 2012

33...♝h3†! decided the game. White struggled on, but had no real chance of salvation. 34.♔h2 34.♝xh3 ♝f2† is elementary. 34...♗xf3 35.♗xd5† ♔h7 36.♗g1 ♝xg5 37.♗xe5 37.♗xf3 ♝xf3† 38.♔xh3 ♝xg1† 39.♔xg1 a3 40.♔a2 b5 is no fun either. 37...♗f2† 38.♔h1 ♝f3 0–1

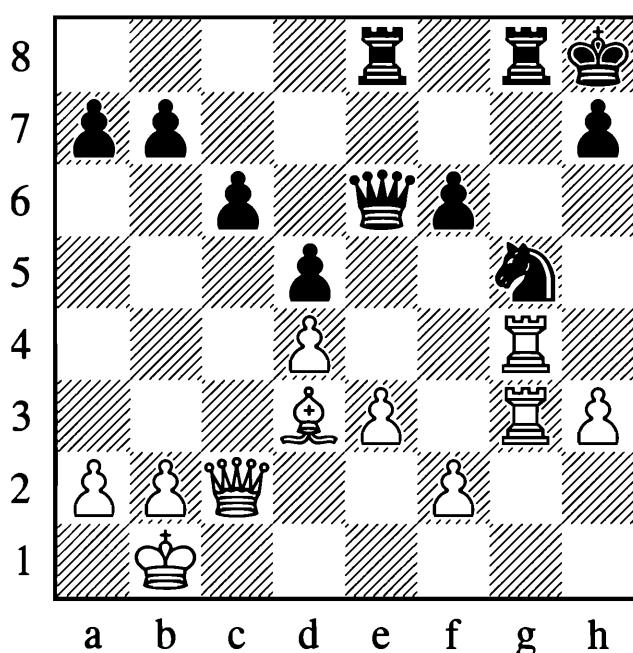
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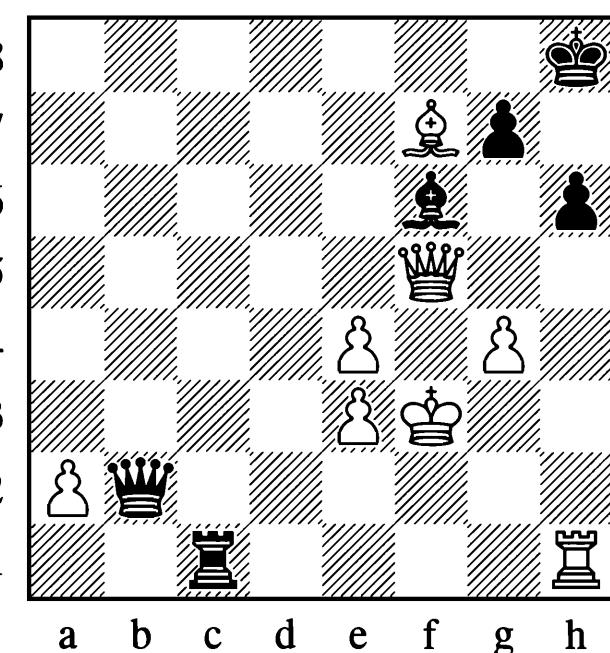
(228) Zoler – Haub, Dieren 2010

23.♝e7! Black cannot protect d5, so after 23...♗xe7 24.c7 he lost the exchange. 24...♝bc8 25.cxd8=♛† ♜xd8 26.♝xe4 fxe4 27.♝b3 ♛d6? 28.♝xd5! 1–0

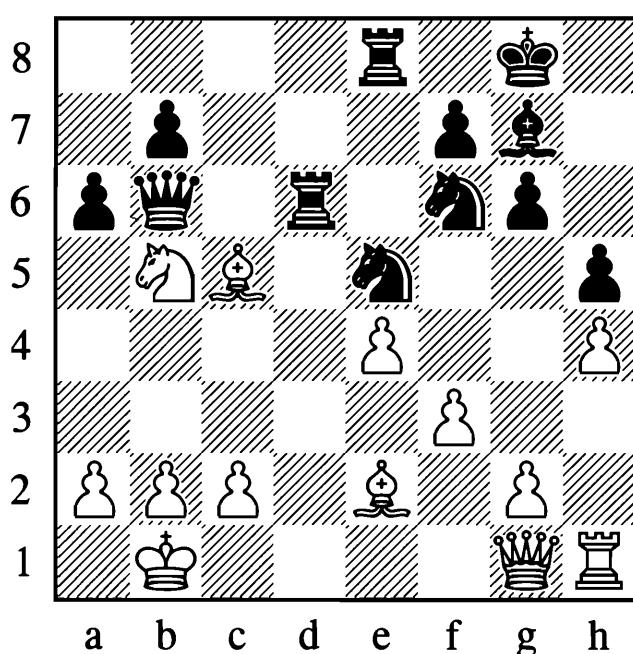
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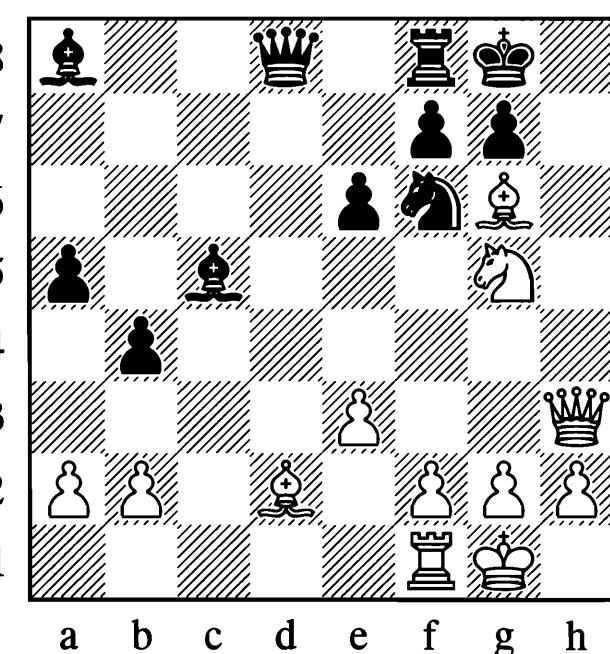
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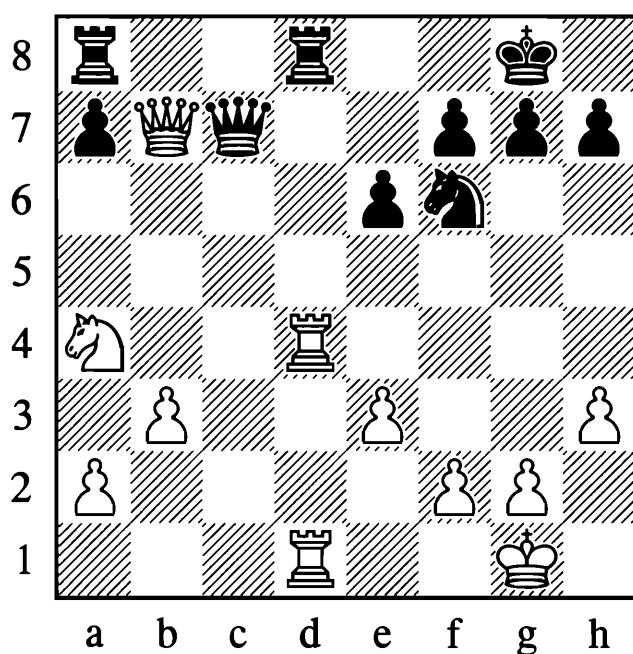
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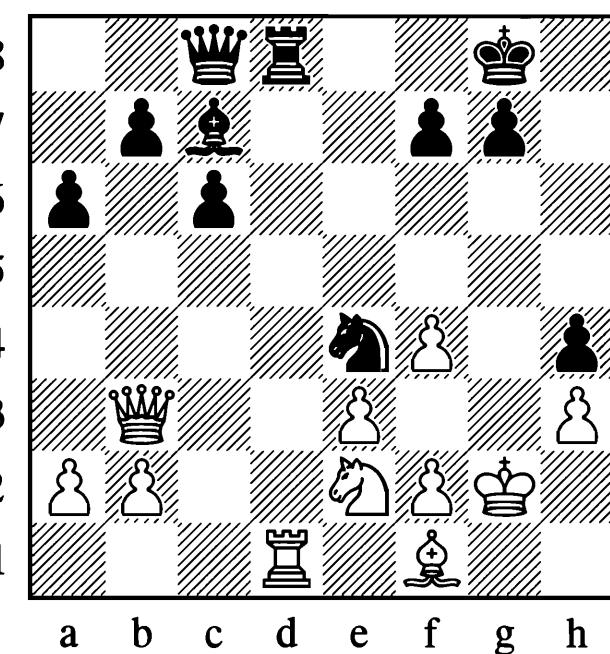
233



231



234



(229) Moiseenko – Schloetzer, Dresden 2010

25.♕xh7! Black resigned due to: 25...♝xh7 26.♗xh7†!

♚xh7 27.♕h4#

(230) Karagollu – Yilmazyerli, Turkey (ch) 2011

White was hoping to win back his sacrificed rook, but after 24...♝d1†! (Diagram A) he had to accept that he would end up a piece down. **0–1**

(231) Grahovac – Drino, Sarajevo 2011

Black resigned. Instead he could have won with:

23...♗xb7 24.♗xd8† ♜e8! Evidently he imagined that he had to recapture on d8.

(232) Jumabayev – Maletin, Moscow 2011

38...♝h4! This decides the game in fine style. **39.♗xh4**

♝f1† 40.♔g3 ♘g1† 41.♔f4 g5† 42.♗xg5 ♘f1† 0–1

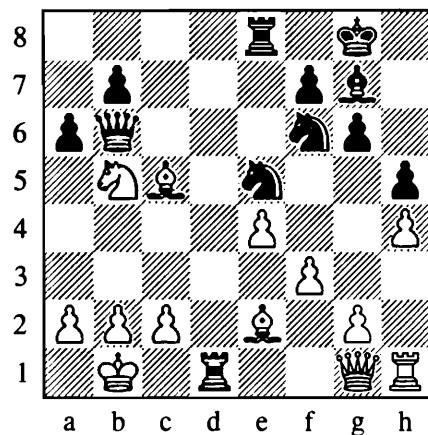
(233) Fressinet – Brunner, Mulhouse 2011

22.♕xf7†! 22.♕h7† ♜h8 23.♗d1 ♗b6 24.♕c1 gives White a continuing attack, but there is no knockout punch. **22...♝xf7** (Diagram B) **23.♗h8†!** 23.♗xe6 ♗d5 is not fully clear, but the text move forces a quick resignation. **23...♜xh8 24.♕xf7† ♔g8 25.♕xd8 1–0**

(234) Seirawan – Postny, Vlissingen 2011

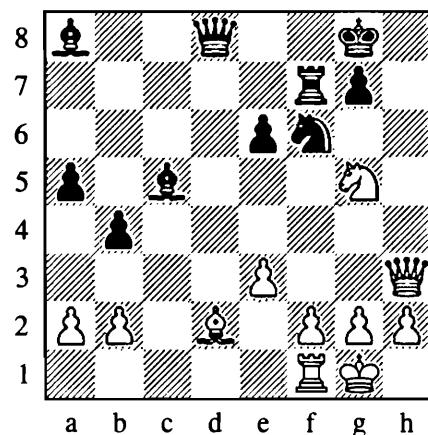
Black won two pawns with: **28...♝xd1 29.♗xd1** ♗xh3†! 30.♔xh3 ♜xf2† 31.♔xh4 ♜xd1 32.e4 ♜xb2, but then misplayed the ending badly. **33.e5 c5 34.♔g4** ♜c4 35.♔h3 ♜d2 36.♔g2 b5 37.♔c3 (Diagram C) **37...b4?** Why Black allowed the exchange of knights is hard to understand. Instead Black could play something like 37...c4 38.♔e4 ♜b1 and his pawns would be deadly. **38.♔e4 ♜xe4 39.♔xe4 c4 40.♔d5 c3 41.♔b3** ♔f8 42.♔f5 ♔e7 43.♔e4 g6 44.♔c2 ♔b6 45.♔b3 ♔g1 46.♔c2 ♔h2 47.♔b3 ♔d7 48.f5 g5 49.e6† fxe6 50.fxe6† ♔e7 51.♔f5 ♔f4 52.♔c2 ♔d2 53.♔b3 ♔c1 54.♔c2 ♔e3 55.♔b3 a5 56.♔c2 ♔c1 57.♔a4 ♔d2 58.♔b3 ♔f4 59.♔a4 ♔e3 60.♔b3 ♔f4 61.♔a4 ♔d6 62.♔b3 ♔d8 63.♔xg5 ♔c7 64.♔a4 ♔b6 65.♔f5 ♔c5 66.♔e4 ♔c4 67.♔e3 ♔e7 68.♔e2 ♔g5 69.♔d1 ♔d3 70.♔b5† ♔d4 71.♔c2 ♔d5 72.♔d7 ♔c4 73.♔a4 ♔e7 74.♔d7 ½–½

A



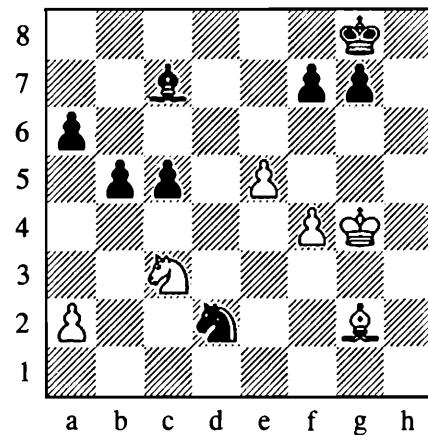
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B



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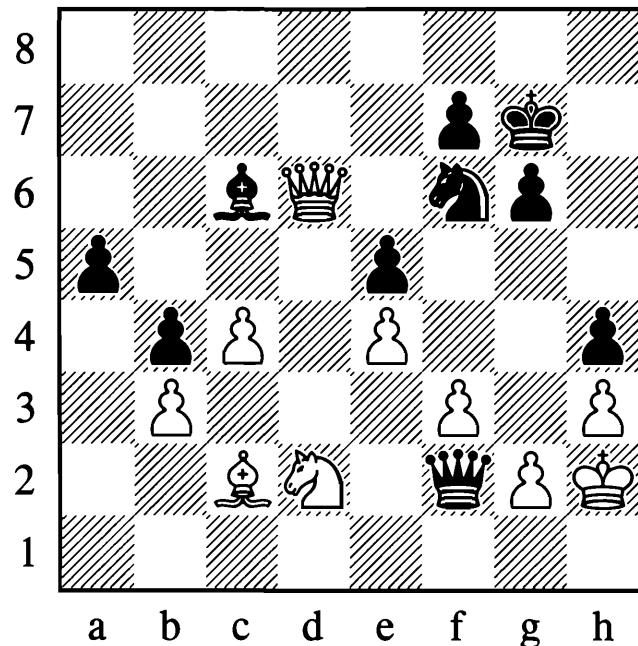
C



▼

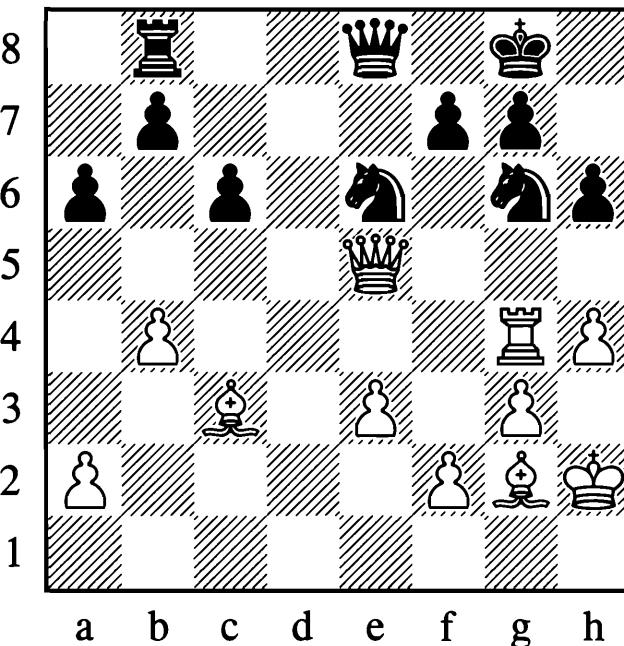
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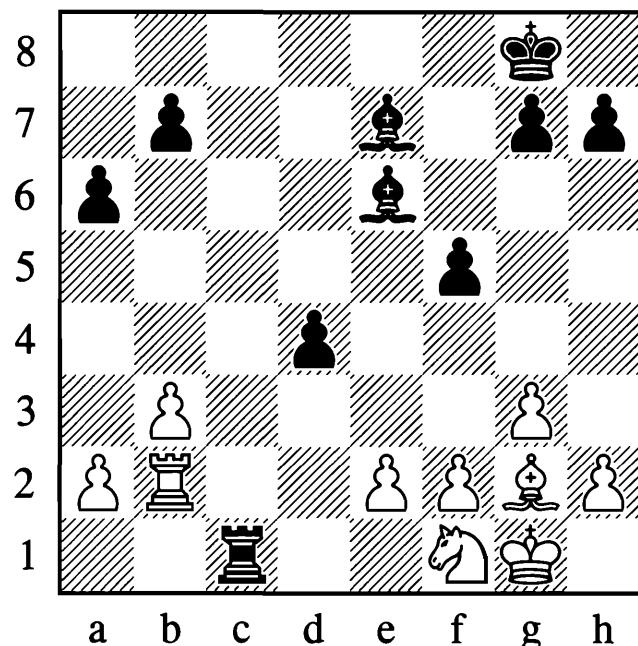
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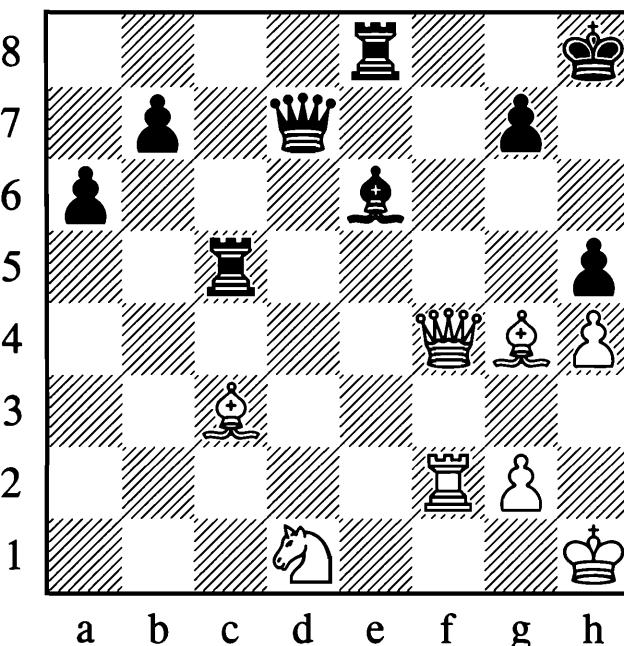
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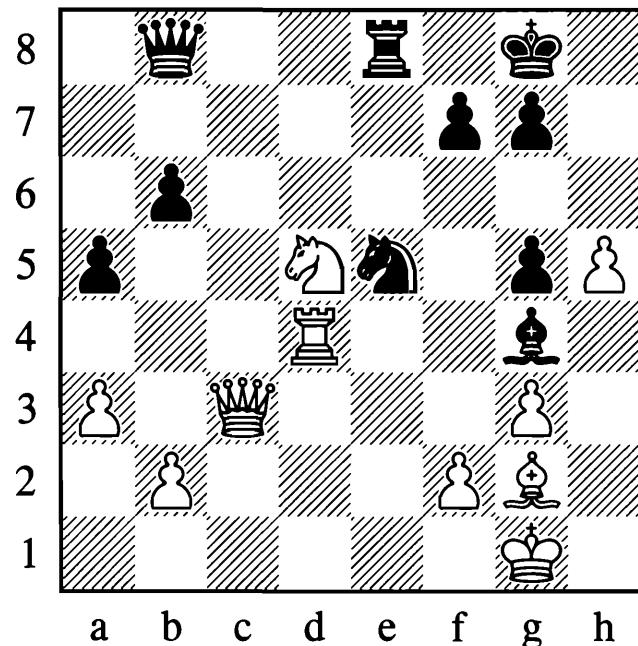
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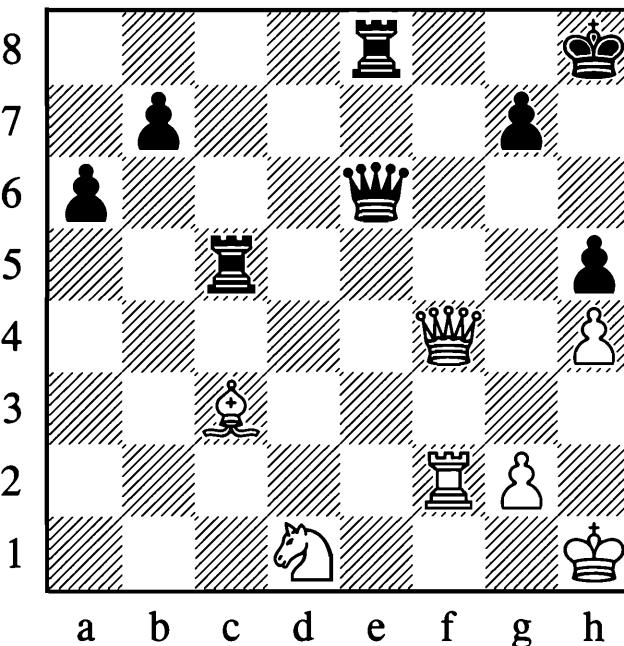
237

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240

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(235) Ding Yixin – Tan Zhongyi, Xinghua Jiangsu 2011

38...♝d7! broke White's resistance. There is no defence to the sacrifice on h3. **39.♚h1 ♝xh3 40.gxh3 ♜h5 41.♛xe5† ♚h7 0–1**

(236) Lalith – Istratescu, Hastings 2011

26...♜b4! White resigned. His rook is trapped and trying to save it leads to ruinous losses. For example: 27.a4 (27.e3 d3–+) 27...♝c3 28.♜a2 ♜xb3 29.♜a3 ♜c4

(237) Lalith – Sengupta, Hastings 2012

31.h6! (Diagram A) This undermines the black position. The direct threat is ♜xg4. **31...♝e6?!** Missing the main idea. 31...♝e6? is refuted with 32.f4! ♜d7 33.♝e7† ♜xe7 34.♜xd7 and there are too many threats. 31...♛c8 was the best defence, but the ending after 32.♛xc8 ♜xc8 33.hxg7 ♜xg7 34.♝xb6 is very promising for White, of course. **32.♜xg4 1–0**

(238) S. Ernst – Lobzhanidze, Groningen 2010

38.♜xg6! fxg6 39.♝h3 (Diagram B) White is winning. **39...♛f8 39...♝f7 40.♜xe6† ♛xe6 41.♜xg7† ♛e8 42.♜h8†** and White wins material. **40.♛xe6† ♛h7 41.♝g2 ♛e8 42.♜d7 ♛e7 43.♜d3 ♛f7 44.a4 h5 45.a5 ♛a2 46.e4 ♛b3 47.♜d4 1–0**

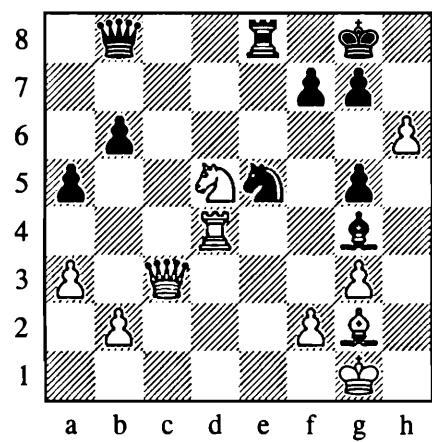
(239) Ding Yixin – Hou Yifan, Jiangsu Wuxi 2011

33.♛h6†! This move should not be missed. **33.♝xe6?!** **♛xe6** leads to the next exercise. (**33...♝xe6 34.♛f8† ♛h7 35.♛xc5 ♛xd1† 36.♝h2+–**) **33...♝g8** (Diagram C) **34.♝xg7!** Black resigned. **1–0**

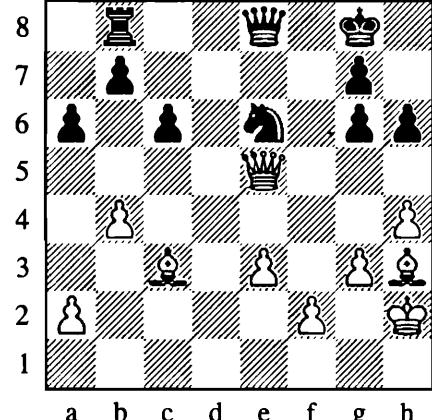
(240) Ding Yixin – Hou Yifan, (analysis) 2011

34.♜e2! and White wins, due to **34...♛xe2 35.♛h6† ♛g8 36.♛xg7#**

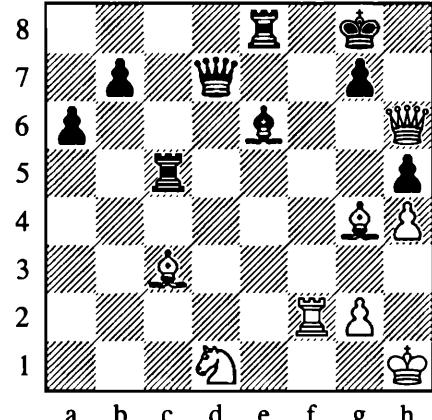
A ▼



B ▼

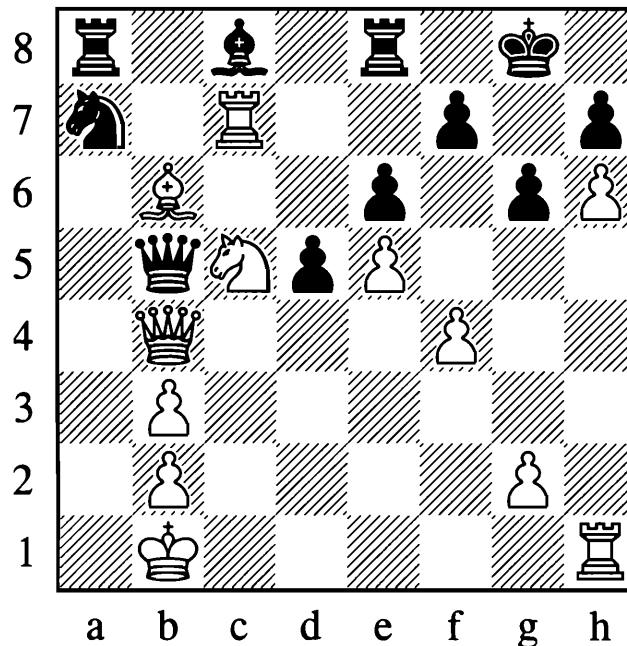


C ▲



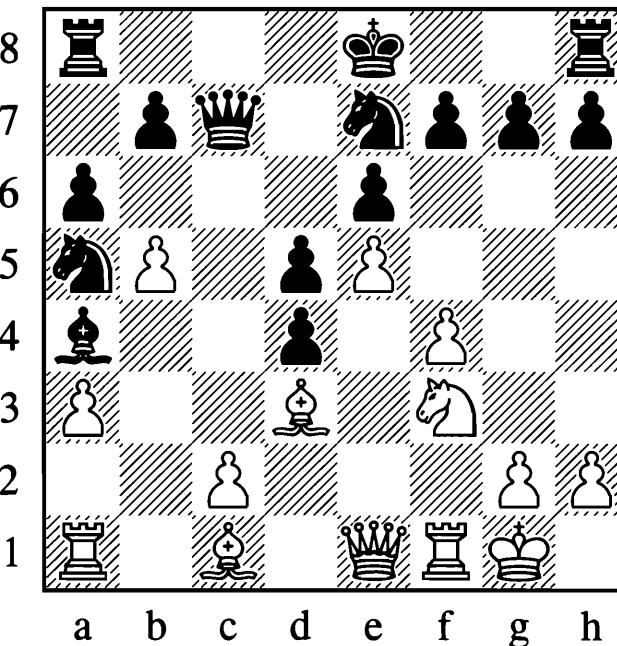
241

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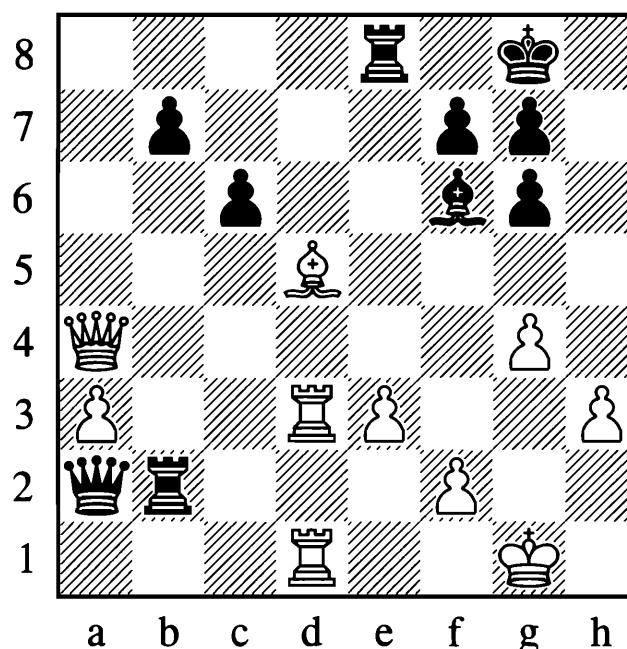
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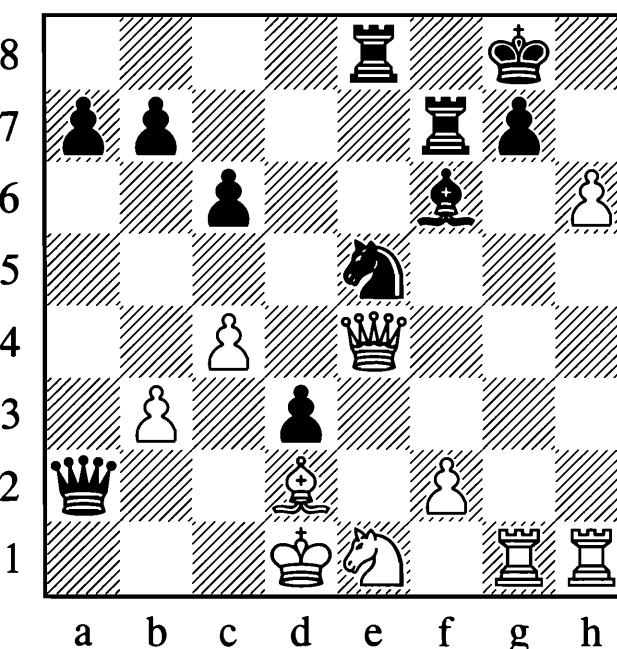
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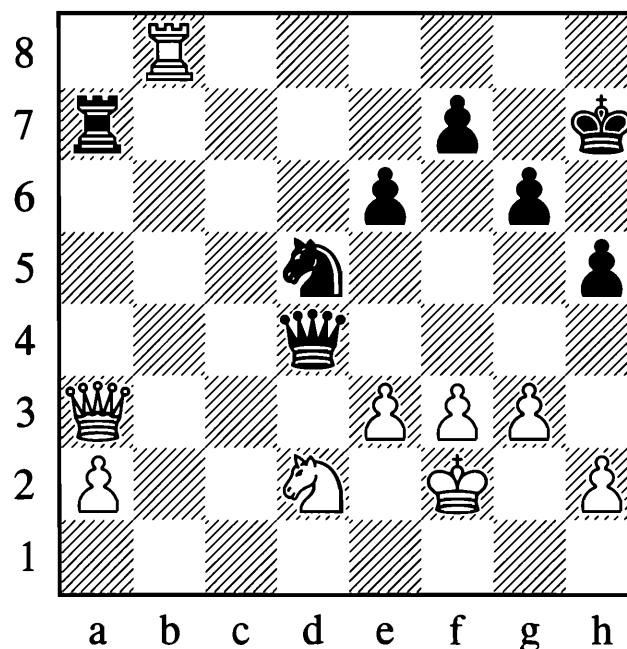
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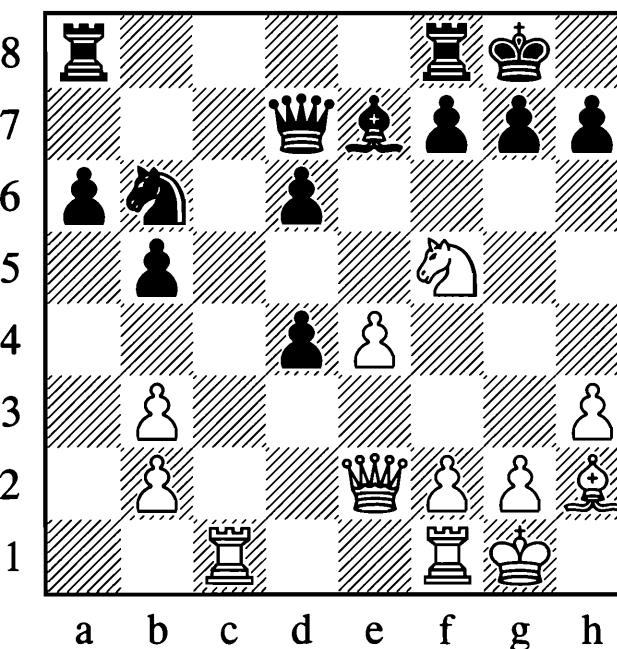
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246

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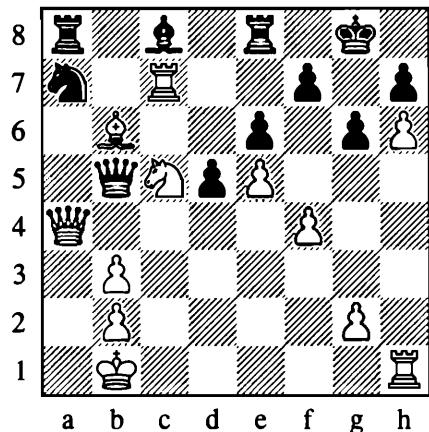
(241) Michalczak – Spice, Plovdiv 2010

26.♘a4! (Diagram A) This was enough to make Black resign. He loses the knight on a7. **1–0**

(242) McShane – Adams, London 2010

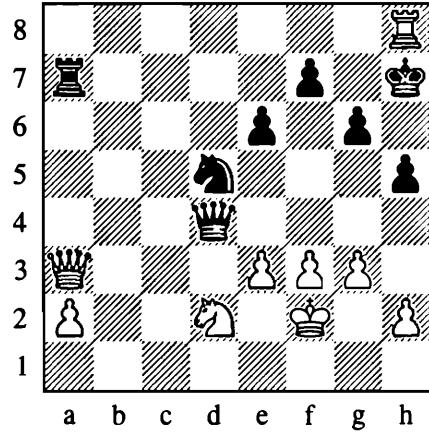
31...b5! This leads to a draw. **31...cxd5?** **32.♗xe8† ♕h7** does not work. White has two ways of winning: **33.♗xf7** (Or **33.♗xd5 ♗xf2 34.♗e4!** and Black's attack is not happening. On top of this White is threatening **♗h5†.**) **33...♗xf2 34.♗xd5** and White will win with **♗3d2. 32.♕xa2 bxa4 33.♗1d2 ♗eb8 34.♔g2 ♔f8 35.♕c4 ♗xd2 36.♗xd2 ♔e7 37.♗c2 ♗b2 38.♗xb2 ♕xb2 39.♔d3 ♕xa3 40.♔c2 g5 41.♔xa4 c5 42.♔b3 ♕b4 43.♔c4 ♕e1 44.♔f1 ½–½**

A

**(243) B. Larsen – Andersson, Buenos Aires 1979**

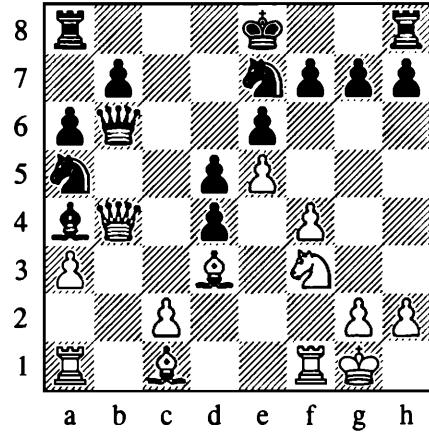
Bent Larsen surprised his opponent with a brilliant shot. **40.♗h8†!** (Diagram B) In time trouble Andersson blundered the queen with **40...♔xh8?** and just resigned. Larsen incorrectly says that **40...♗xh8 41.♗xa7 ♗c3** is equal. (**41...♗b2** is a better try, but after **42.♗xf7† ♕h6 43.♔e1**, White will probably still win.) But White wins after **42.♗xf7†! ♕h6 43.♗f8† ♕h7 44.♔e4!** This must be what he underestimated. The e3-pawn is not important. **44...♗xe3† 45.♔g2 ♗c1 46.♔h3+–** and White is “only” a pawn up – for now!

B

**(244) Stellwagen – Driessens, Netherlands 2011**

15.b6! ♗xb6 16.♗b4 (Diagram C) Black resigned. He cannot avoid the loss of a piece. **1–0**

C

**(245) Bacrot – Leko, Elista 2008**

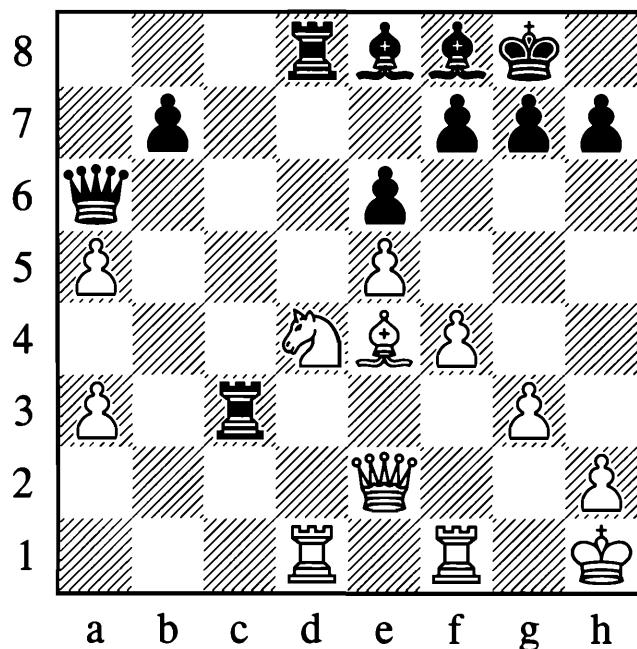
31.♗h7†! Black resigned. **1–0**

(246) Pavlov – Mamonova, Alushta 2011

21.♗c6! ruined the coordination of Black's position. She immediately resigned on account of: **21...♗ab8 22.♗xb6! ♗xb6 23.♗g4** and **♗h6†** will win the queen if mate is averted.

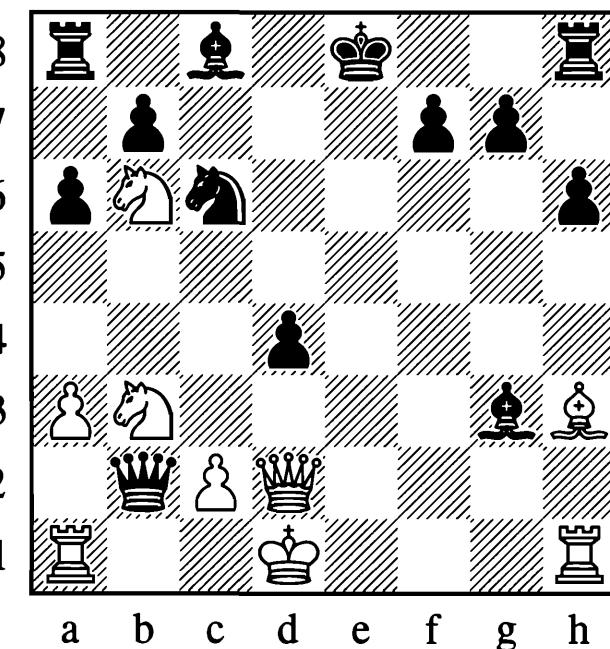
247

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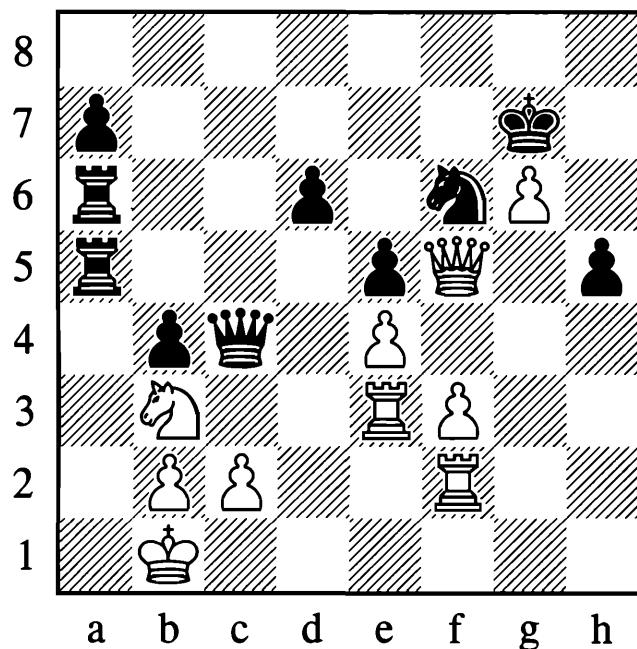
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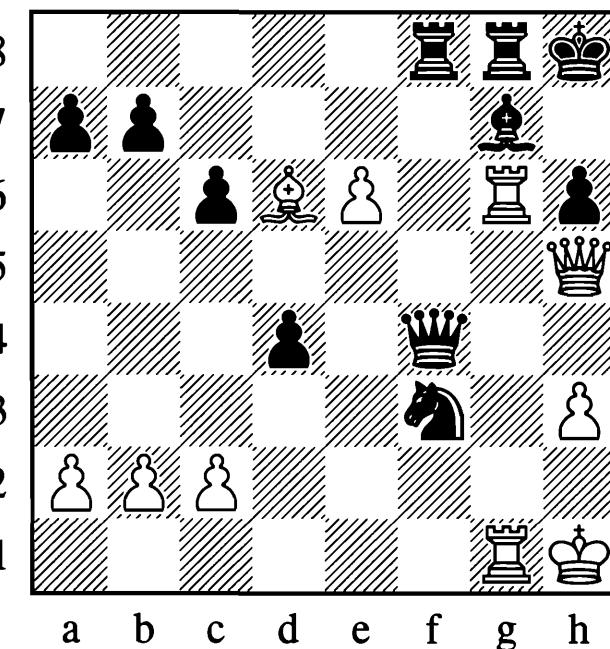
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★★★



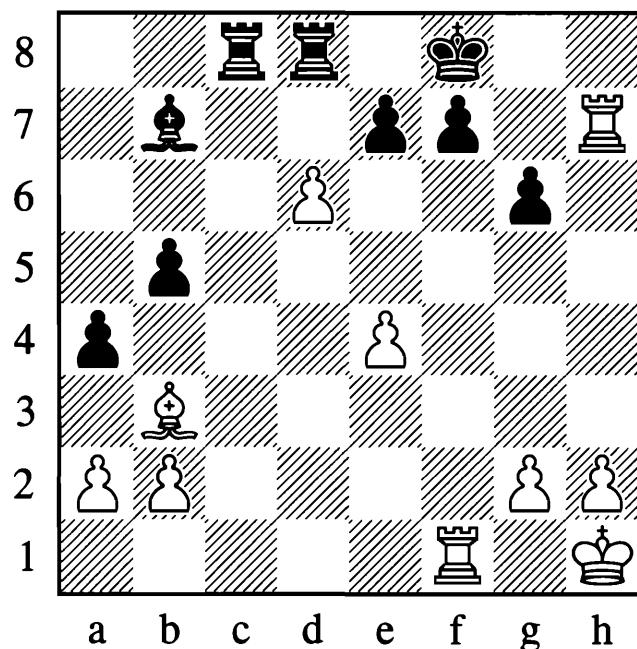
251

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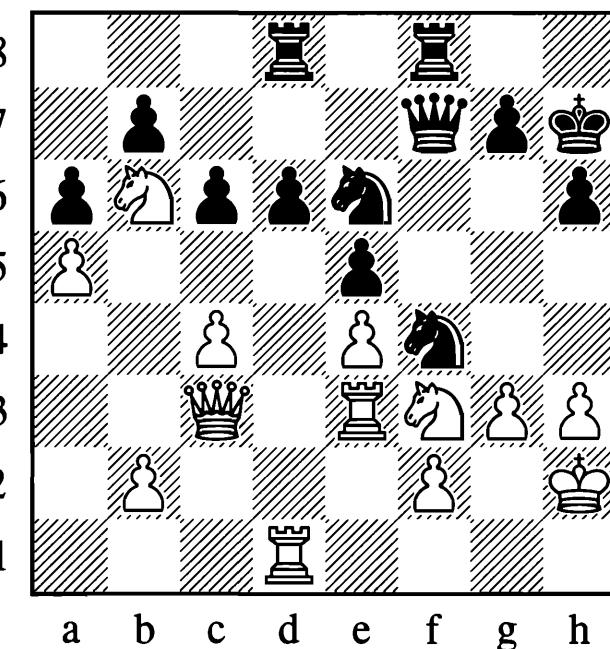
249

★★★



252

★★★★



(247) Moehring – Plachetka, Strbske Pleso 1978

It is very difficult to spot moves where we head towards another piece, but stop on the way: **30... $\mathbb{W}c4!$** 30... $\mathbb{W}xa5$ with a clear advantage is also possible, but the text move is absolutely decisive. **31. $\mathbb{W}xc4$** 31. $\mathbb{W}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ wins a piece. **31... $\mathbb{B}xc4$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}xh7\#$** 32. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{B}xd4$ 33. $\mathbb{B}xd4$ $\mathbb{B}xd4$ 34.a6 was maybe more of a defence, but after 34... $\mathbb{B}a4$ Black is in control. **32... $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{fxe6}$ 34. $\mathbb{B}xd8$ $\mathbb{Q}c6\#$ 0–1**

(248) Kotronias – Ivanchuk, Gibraltar 2011

32... $\mathbb{W}d4!$ This square was supposed to be protected, but a quick look is enough to show that it isn't. **33. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ $\mathbb{W}d1\#$** Looking for mate. Both 33... $\mathbb{W}xe3$ and 33... $\mathbb{B}xa5$ won a piece. **34. $\mathbb{Q}a2$ $\mathbb{B}xa5\#$ 35. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{W}a1$ 36.c3 36. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{W}xb2$ 37. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{B}a3\#$ 38. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{B}a1$** and the white king will not escape. **36... $\mathbb{W}a4\#$ 37. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{B}xc3\#$ 0–1**

(249) Leks – Zakharchenko, Ostrava 2011

The game concluded with the horrific **32...axb3?** 33. $\mathbb{B}xf7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 34. $\mathbb{B}xe7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 35. $\mathbb{B}h8\#$. John Saunders pointed out that **32... $\mathbb{Q}g8!$** would have prevented the white rook taking on f7 with tempo. **33.dxe7** (33. $\mathbb{B}xf7$ $\mathbb{B}c1\#$ 34. $\mathbb{B}f1\#$ axb3 35. $\mathbb{B}xc1$ $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ with an extra piece) **33... $\mathbb{B}e8$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ 35. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{B}c7$** and Black wins.

(250) G. Guseinov – P.H. Nielsen, Aix-les-Bains 2011

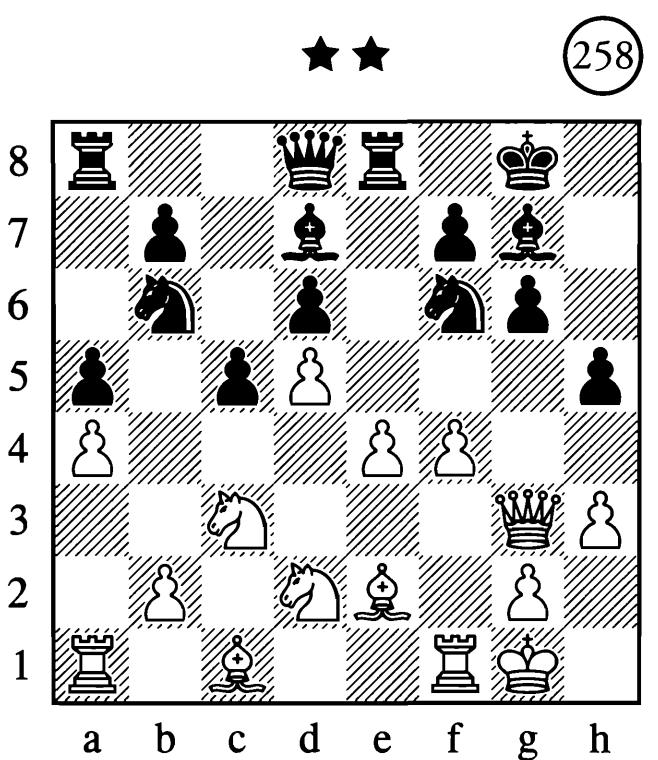
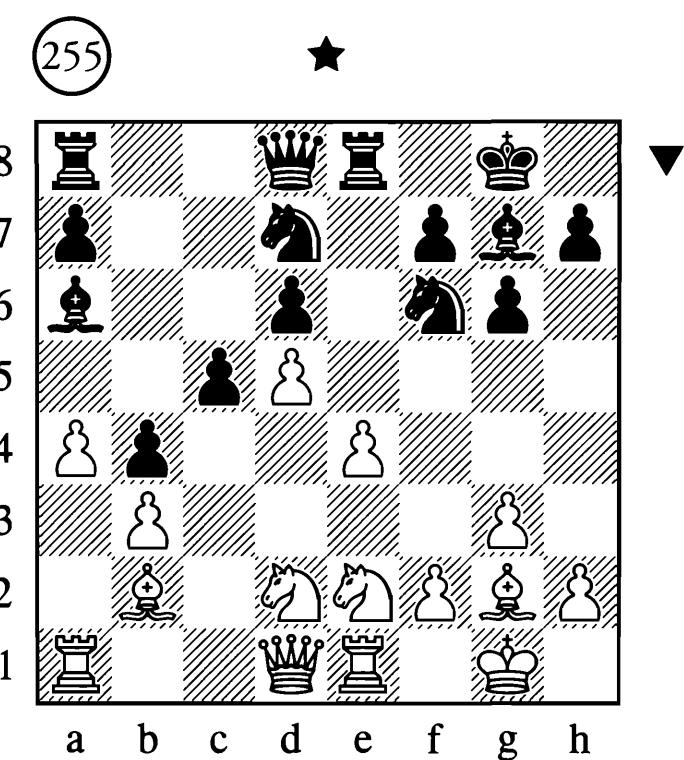
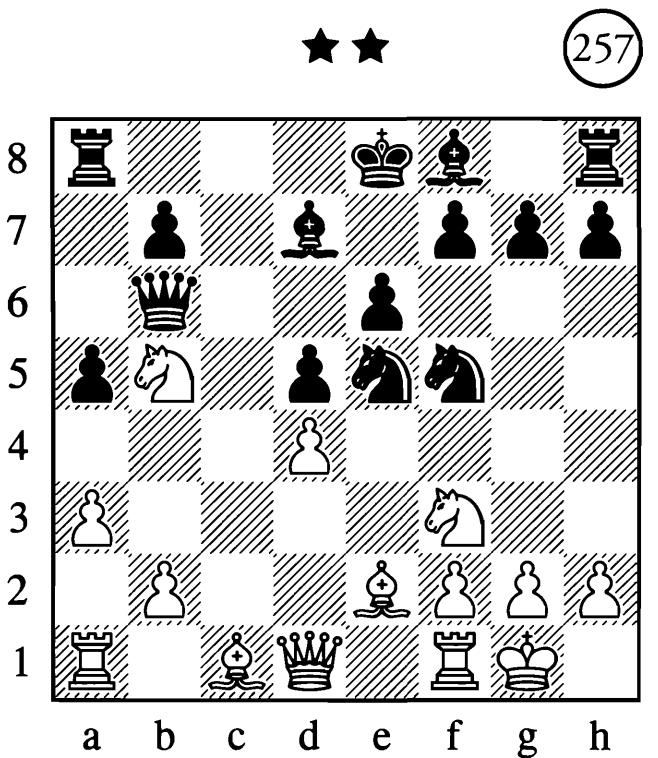
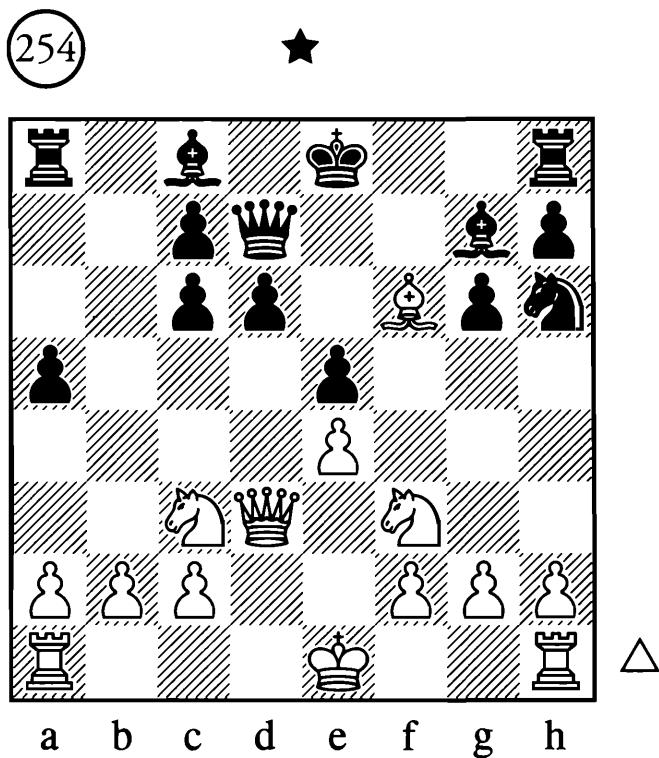
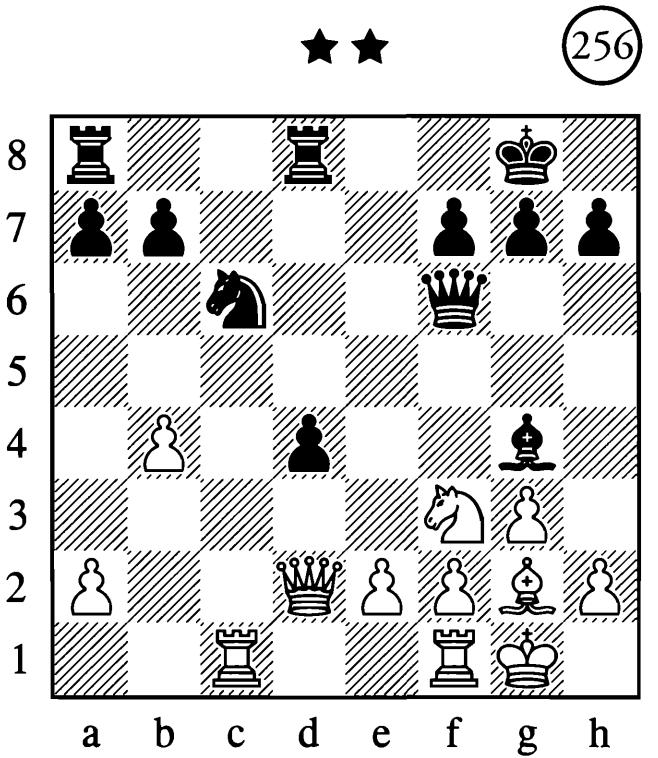
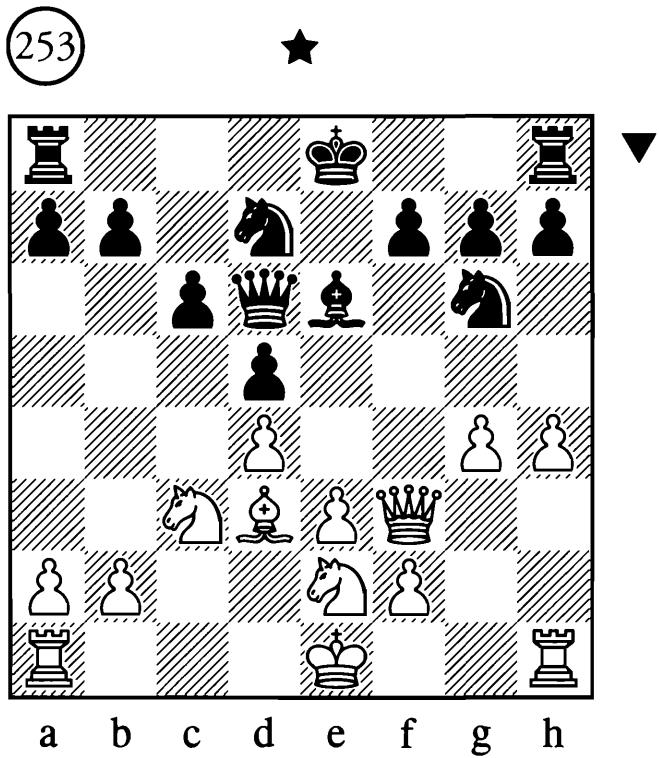
Black could win with **20...d3! 21. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ 0–0**, when the white position is a complete ruin. Instead, the horrible blunder **20...0–0?** was actually played. After **21. $\mathbb{Q}a4$** the black queen was trapped and White converted his advantage to a win on move 57.

(251) Fressinet – Van Oosterom, Plovdiv 2010

30... $\mathbb{W}e4?$ Black missed the chance to fend off White's counterplay with **30... $\mathbb{B}f5!$** , when Black is just a piece up. **31. $\mathbb{B}1g4$** White can also draw with **31. $\mathbb{B}xh6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ 32. $\mathbb{W}xh6\#$ $\mathbb{W}h7$ 33. $\mathbb{B}xg8\#$ $\mathbb{B}xg8$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}e5\#$! $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 35. $\mathbb{W}f6\#$ with perpetual check. **31... $\mathbb{W}e1\#$** Black has to go for the draw. White wins after **31... $\mathbb{W}f5?$ 32. $\mathbb{B}xh6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ 33. $\mathbb{W}xh6\#$ $\mathbb{W}h7$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ or 31... $\mathbb{B}f5?$ 32. $\mathbb{W}xh6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ 33. $\mathbb{B}xh6\#$. But **31... $\mathbb{W}xc2$ 32. $\mathbb{B}xh6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ 33. $\mathbb{W}xh6\#$ $\mathbb{W}h7$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ $\mathbb{W}xh6$ 35. $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ d3 36. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ d2 37. $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ 38.e7 $\mathbb{B}e8$ 39. $\mathbb{B}d4$ $\mathbb{B}xe7$ 40. $\mathbb{B}xd2$ also ends up as a draw. **32. $\mathbb{B}g1$ $\mathbb{W}e4$ 33. $\mathbb{B}1g4$ $\mathbb{W}e1\#$ 34. $\mathbb{B}g1$ ½–½********

(252) Antoniewski – Bartel, Warsaw (rapid) 2011

Black correctly evaluated that there was no need to move the knight from the great f4-square. After all, it can quickly be replaced: **29... $\mathbb{W}h5!$ 30.gxf4 $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}xh3\#$** Here 31... $\mathbb{B}f7!$ to double rooks was even stronger, but many things win. For example: 31... $\mathbb{W}g6\#$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{W}g2\#$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}xh3$ and the white position is falling apart. **32. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}f4$** Good enough, but 32... $\mathbb{B}f7$ was again stronger. **33. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}g2\#$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ 35. $\mathbb{W}xe3$ $\mathbb{B}f4$ 36. $\mathbb{B}g1$ $\mathbb{B}df8$ 37. $\mathbb{B}g3$ g5 38. $\mathbb{B}h3$ $\mathbb{B}h4$ 39. $\mathbb{B}g3$ $\mathbb{B}ff4$ 40. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{B}h1$ 41.c5 $\mathbb{W}g6$ 42. $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{dx}c5$ 43. $\mathbb{Q}d7$ c4 44. $\mathbb{W}xc4$ $\mathbb{W}d6\#$ 45. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}xd7$ 46. $\mathbb{W}c3$ 0–1**



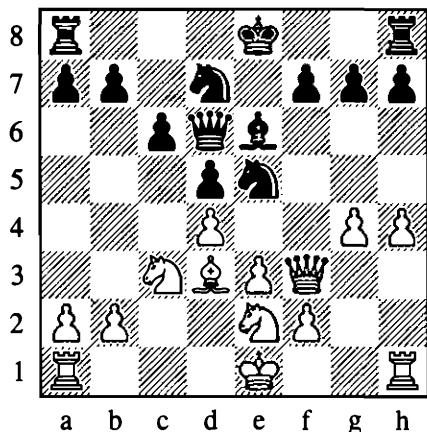
(253) Su.B. Hansen – Antonsen, Esbjerg 2010

13...♞ge5! (Diagram A) A famous trick that no grandmaster should fall for. Black can start with the other knight as well. **14.dxe5 ♞xe5 15.♗g2 ♞xd3† 16.♔f1 ♞xb2 17.♗b1 ♞c4 18.♗xb7 0–0 0–1**

(254) Todorovic – Pancevski, Belgrade 2011

1.♞xe5! Black resigned. After **1...dxe5 2.♗xd7† ♔xd7 3.♕xg7** White has won a pawn and the exchange will follow. **1–0**

A

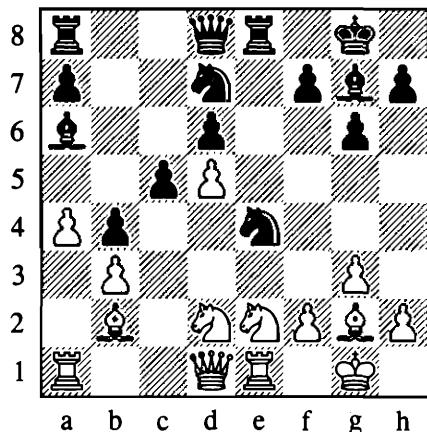


△

(255) Aaberg – Agrest, Sweden 2002

15...♞xe4! (Diagram B) A standard combination, winning a pawn. **16.♞xe4 16.♕xg7 ♞xd2 17.♔b2 ♞xb3** and Black is two pawns up. There is no real counterplay on the dark squares. **16...♔xb2 17.♗a2 ♕e5 18.f4 ♕g7 19.♘xd6 ♘e3 20.♘b5 ♗b6 21.♔h1 ♘ae8 22.♔f1 ♕b7 0–1**

B

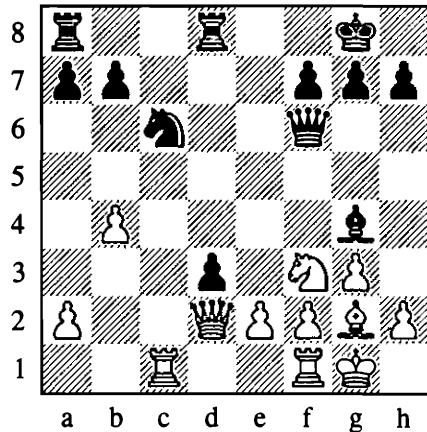


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(256) Wohl – Kanep, Gibraltar 2011

16...d3! (Diagram C) White's position is falling apart, so he simply resigned. **17.♗e3 dxe2 18.♗fe1 ♘e8 19.♗a3 a5 20.b5 ♘b4** is an example of how things can disintegrate.

C



△

(257) Byron – Willis, Reykjavik 2011

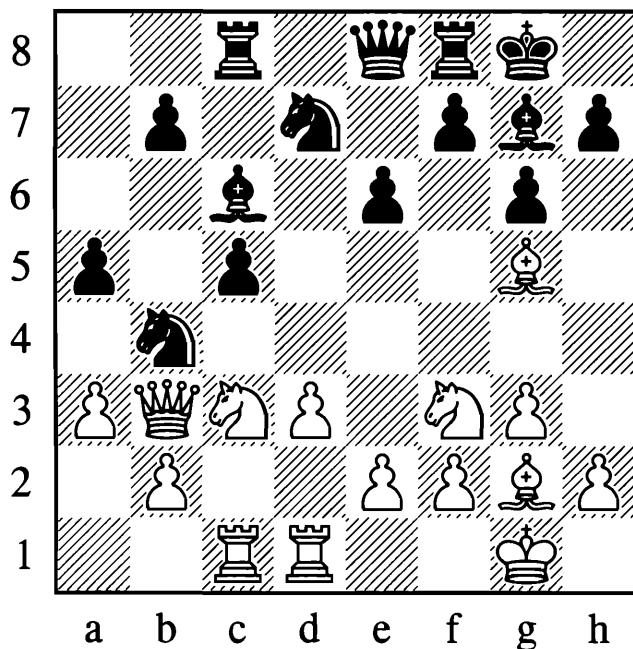
12.dxe5 ♘xb5 13.♗b3! White wins a piece. **1–0**

(258) Tregubov – Akopian, Aix-les-Bains 2011

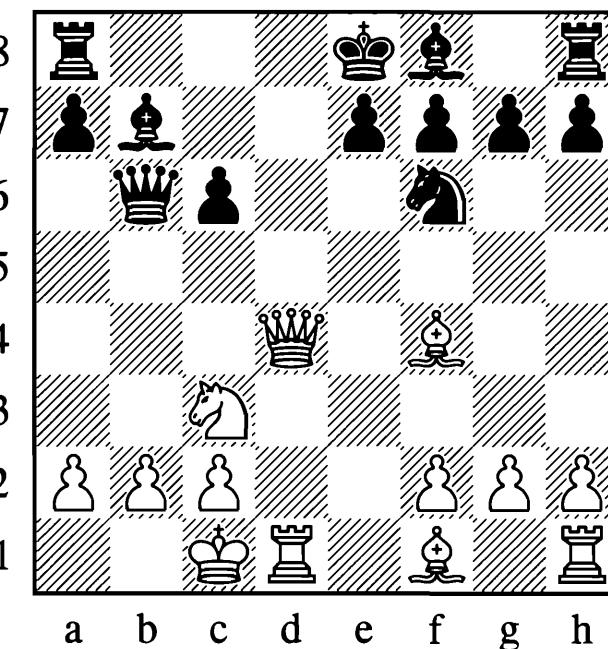
15...♞fxd5! The defence of the bishop on e2 is eliminated. **16.exd5 ♘xc3 17.bxc3 ♘xe2** The extra pawn is everything, the weak dark squares very little. **18.f5 h4 19.♗d3 ♘e8 20.fxg6 fxg6 21.♘c4 ♘xc4 22.♗xc4 ♘e4! 23.♗b3 ♘xa4 24.♗b2 24.♗xb7 ♘b5! 25.c4 ♘xc4 26.♗f4 ♘e7 27.♗c6 ♘xc6 28.dxc6 ♘b5** also wins for Black. **24...♘b5 25.c4 ♘xc4 26.♘h6 ♘e5 27.♗xb7 ♘xd5 0–1**



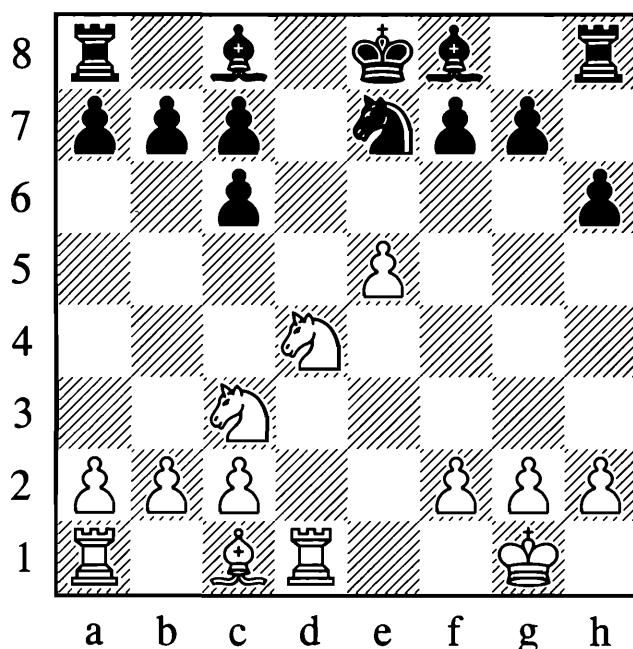
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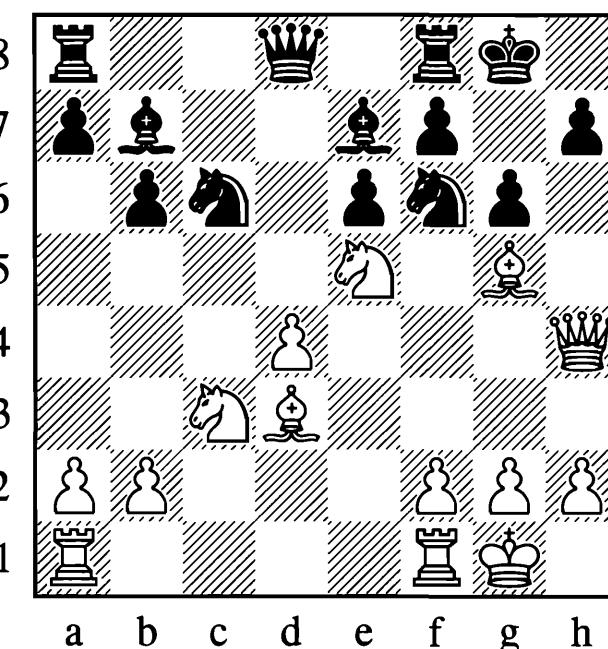
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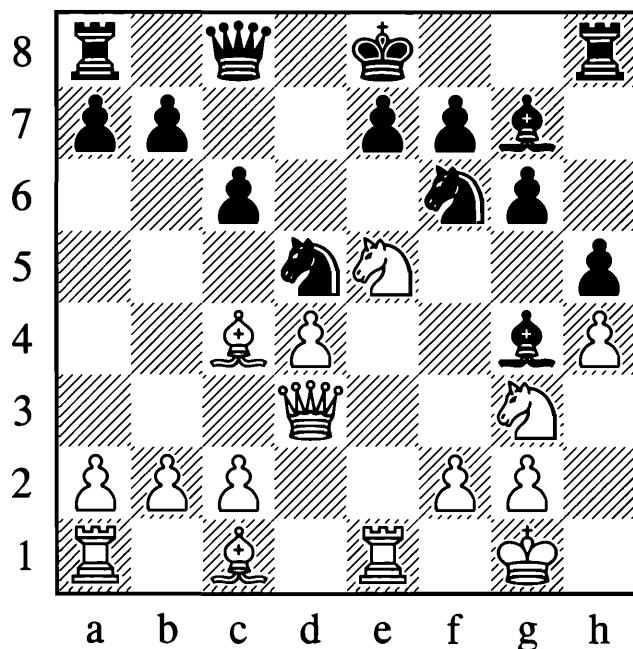
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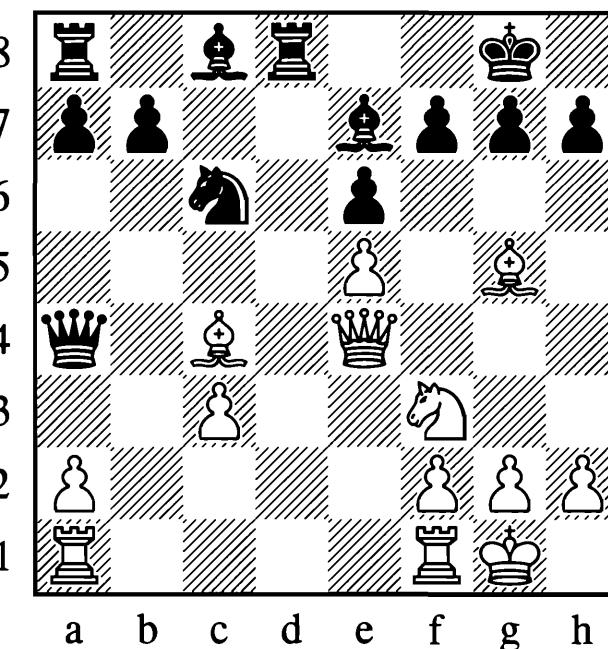
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三



1



(259) Gelfand – Kamsky, Kazan (2.7) 2011

On his way to challenging Anand for the World Championship, Boris Gelfand was almost eliminated by a nasty tactical shot: 16...c4! 17.♘xc4 17.dxc4 ♜c5 traps the queen. 17...♕xf3 18.♕xf3?! Desperation. 18.♗h4 ♕xg2 19.axb4 f6 and Black wins. 18...♗xc4 19.dxc4 ♜c6 20.♗b5 ♜c5 21.b4 axb4 22.axb4 ♜xb4 23.♗b1 ♜ba6 24.♗d6 ♘a4 25.♗xb7 ♜xb7 26.♗xb7 ♘xc4 27.♗f3 h6 28.♗e3 ♜b4 29.♗bc1 ♜c2 30.♗a7 ♘a4 31.♗b6 ♜d4 32.♗xd4 ♜xd4 33.♗d3 ♜f6 34.♗c7 ♘d8 0–1

(260) Saric – Gonda, Sibenik 2011

12.♗db5! Black is not able to defend c7. 12...cxb5 13.♗xb5 ♜d7 14.♗xc7† ♔d8 15.♗xa8 ♜c8 16.♗e3 The knight is not going to be trapped. 16...♗c6 16...♗c6 17.♗xa7! 17.♗xa7 b5 18.a4 b4 19.♗b6 ♜d5 20.♗xd5 ♜xd5 21.♗c7 ♜e4 22.a5 ♔b7 23.♗d1 1–0

(261) Delchev – Miton, Porto Carras 2011

Black did not make it to safety with his king and now it is too late: 13.♗xg6! ♗xg6 14.♗xg6† ♔f8 15.♗xe7! Opening up the king's position. 15.♗xd5 ♜xd5 16.c4 ♘e8! would allow Black to fight on in a bad position. 15...♗xe7 16.♗xg7† ♔d6 17.♗xd5?! A quicker win existed: 17.♗f4†! ♜xf4 18.♗xf6† ♔c7 19.♗xf4† and Black has no chance of survival. 17...cxd5 18.♗xf6† ♘e6 19.♗f4† ♔c6 20.♗xe6† ♜xe6 21.♗e1 White still has a big advantage and went on to win on move 41... 1–0

(262) Rudd – Sreeves, London 2010

11.♗b5! Black resigned. After 11...cxb5 12.♗xb6 axb6 13.♗xb5† ♜d7 14.♗xd7 White wins.

(263) Halkias – Polgar, Warsaw (rapid) 2010

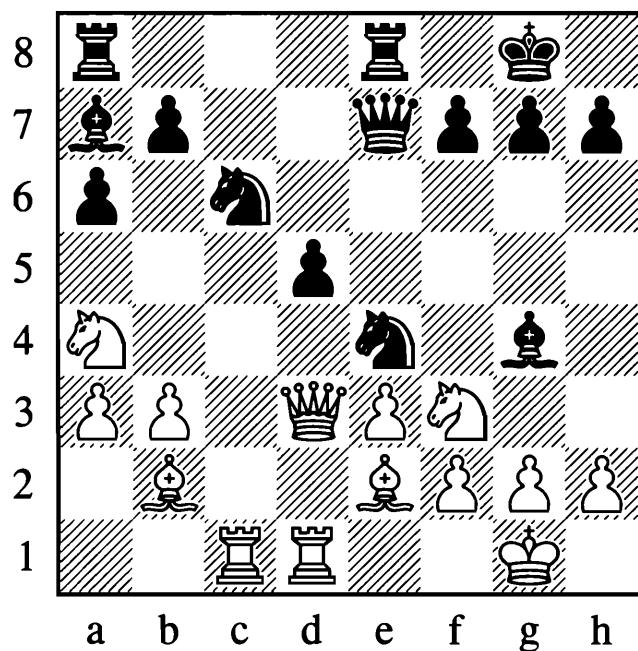
14.♗a6! This move ruins the black coordination. 14...h6 Desperate, but also best. 14...♗xa6 15.♗xc6 wins a piece. 15.♗xh6 ♜xe5 16.♗xb7 ♜fg4 17.♗h3 ♘xd4 18.♗xa8 ♘xa8 19.♗ad1 White won on move 47... 1–0

(264) Markun – Jeric, Ljubljana 1997

15.♗xe7 ♜xe7 16.♗g5 White should not miss such chances. 16...♗d7?! Not true resistance, but it is easy to get discouraged. 16...♗g6 17.♗xf7! is the point. White wins a pawn as the knight is immune. 17...♗f8 18.♗d6 ♘f4 19.♗e2 and White was winning in Novikova – Filippov, Novosibirsk 2002. 17.♗xh7† ♔f8 18.♗h8† ♜g8 19.♗h7† ♔e7 20.♗xg7 ♜c6 21.♗g5 ♘f8 22.♗xe6 ♘f4 23.g3 ♘a4 24.♗xf7 1–0

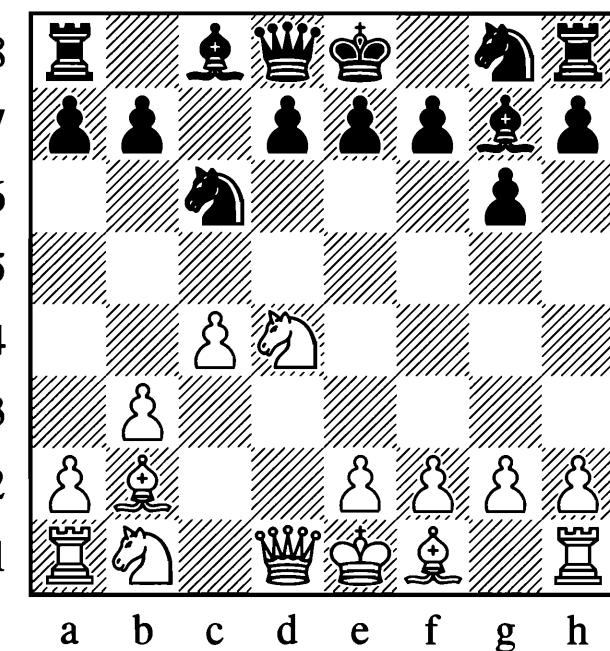
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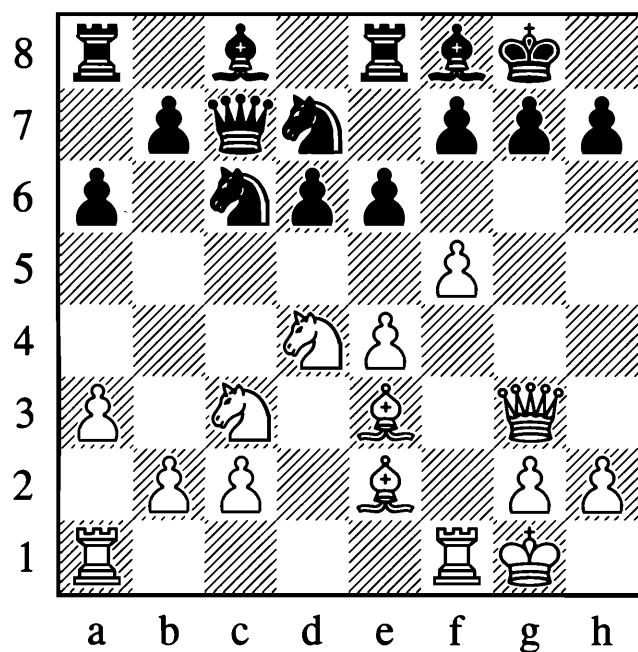
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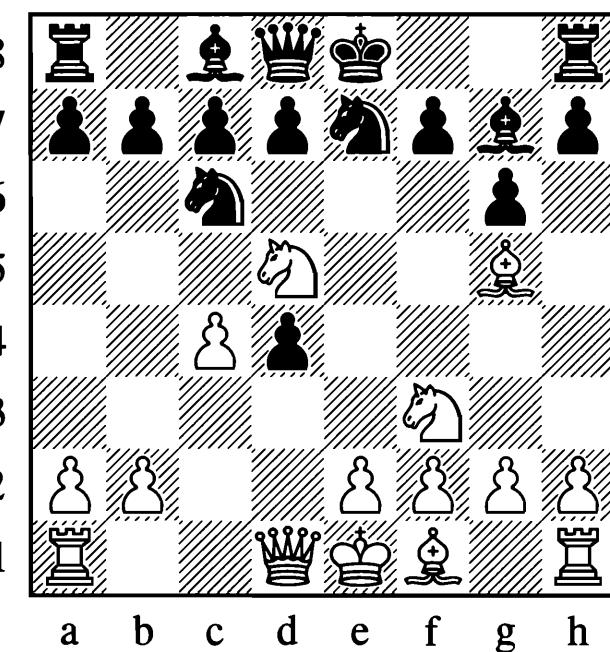
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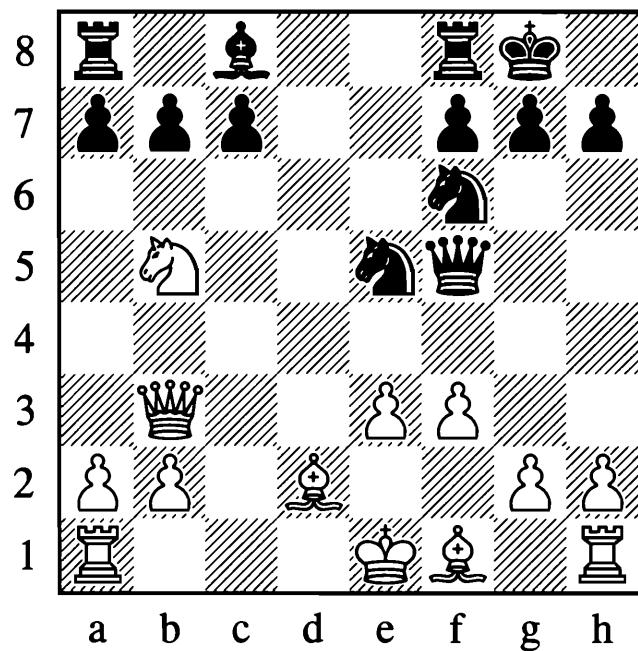
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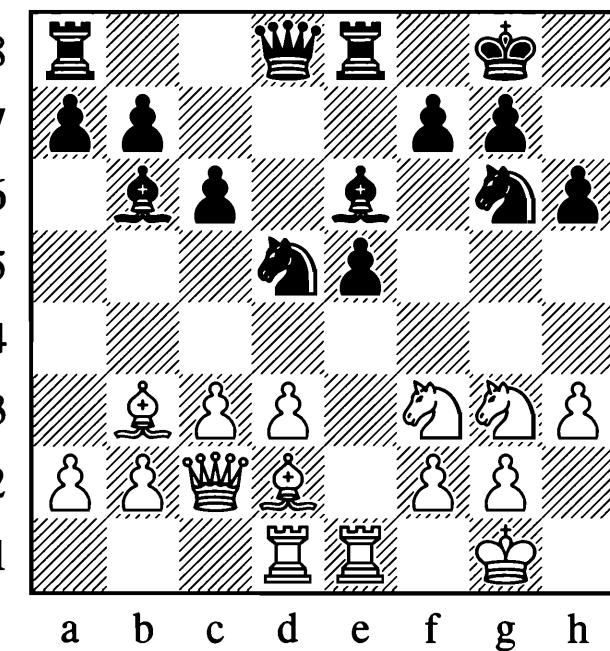
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270

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(265) K. Rasmussen – Aagaard, Denmark 2011

16...Qxf2! Classic destruction of the dark squares in a position where the defender is focusing on the light squares. **17.Qxf2 Qxe3† 18.Qf1 Qxf3** The knight is eliminated and the dark squares are laid bare. **19.Qxf3 Wh4 20.Qc2 20.Qd2 Whxh2 21.Qe2 Qf4† 22.Qd1 Qac8** also wins for Black. The white king cannot escape. **20...Whxh2 21.Qe2 21.Qf2 Qa7** and wins. **21...Qd4† 0–1**

(266) Alhousseyni – Shobaita, Khanty-Mansiysk (ol) 2010

14.fxe6 fxe6 15.Qh5! Black was no doubt surprised that his kingside suddenly opened up like this. **15...Rxe7 15...g6 16.Qxg6** and wins. **16.Qxe6! Wa5 16...Rxe6 17.Qf7†** and wins. **17.Qd5 1–0**

(267) Dreev – Gajewski, Warsaw (rapid) 2011

13...Qxf3†! 14.gxf3 Whxf3 15.Qg1 Qe4 White finds it awkward to defend f2. **16.Qg2 Qh3 17.Qxg7† Qxg7 0–1**

(268) Henriksson – A. Rasmussen, Stockholm 2012

6...Qxd4! White resigned, realizing that **7.Qxd4 Wa5† 8.Qc3 Wxc3†!** costs him a piece.

(269) Andreikin – Karjakin, Moscow (blitz) 2010

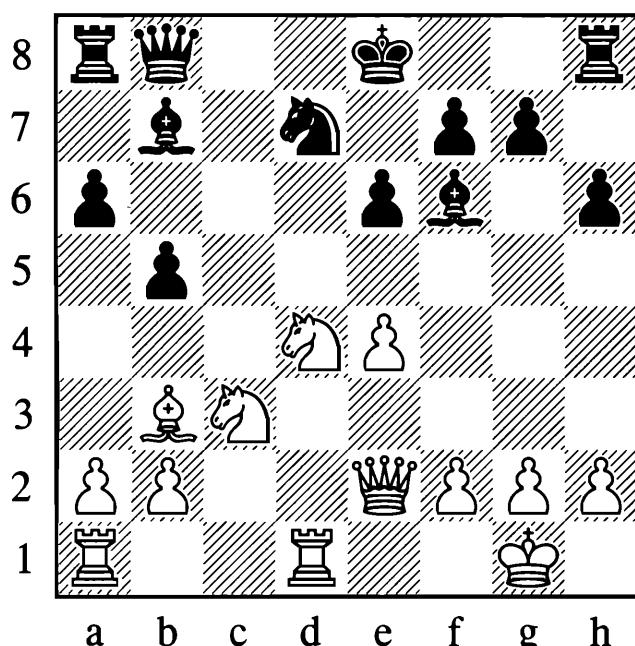
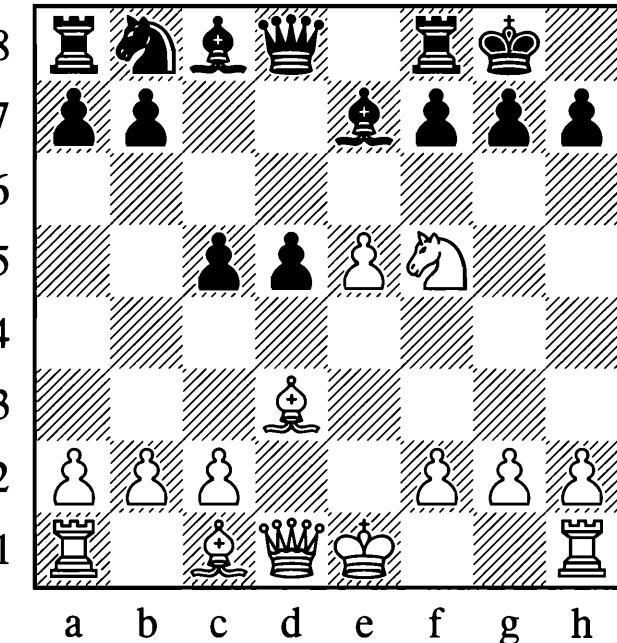
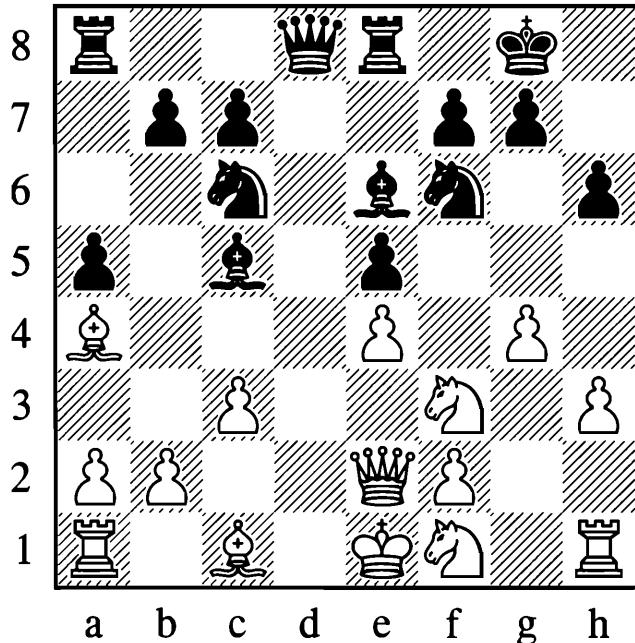
7.Qxd4! Black has fallen for a famous opening trap. **7...Qxd4 7...f6** is of course possible, but it loses material. **8.Wxd4!** **8.Qxe7?** looks promising, but Black is able to escape with **8...Qxf2†! 9.Qxf2 Qxe7 10.Qf6† Qf8 11.Wd4**, when after **11...d6** White has nothing better than **12.Qd7† Qg8 13.Qf6† Qf8 14.Qd7†** with a draw. **8...0–0 8...Qxd4 9.Qf6† Qf8 10.Qh6#** is bad news when your rating is 2760. **9.Qf6† Qh8 10.Qg4†** Black resigned, due to: **10...Qxd4 11.Qf6† Qg8 12.Qh6#**

(270) Ivanchuk – Karjakin, Romania 2011

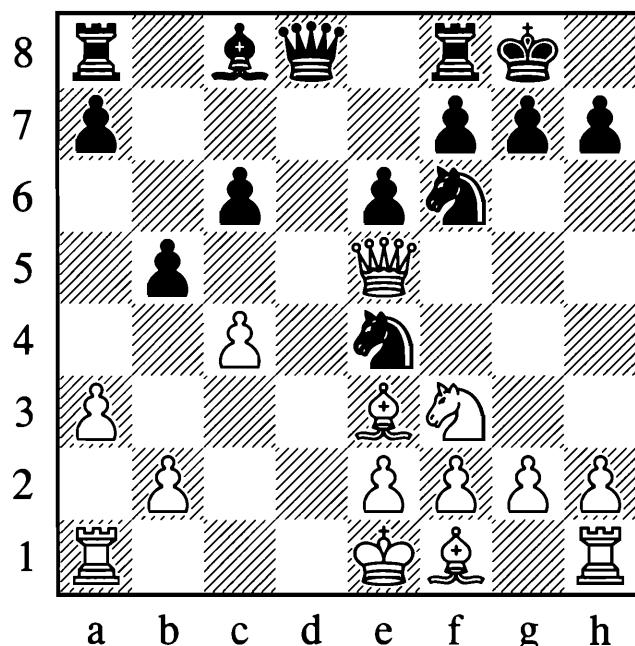
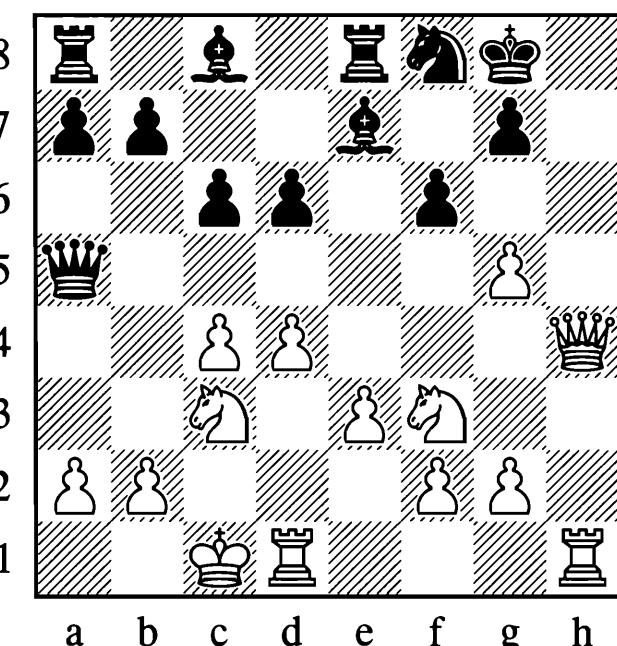
Ivanchuk was very surprised when his young opponent snatched a pawn. **16...Qxh3!** **17.c4 17.gxh3 Wh6 18.Qg2 Qh4†!** is the point of Black's combination. After **19.Qxh4 Whxf2† 20.Qh1 Whxg3** White is lost. **17...Qdf4 18.c5 Qxg2! 19.cxb6 Wh6 20.Qh2 Qxe1 21.Qxe1 axb6** The tactical flurry has come to an end and Black is just winning. **22.Qc3 Qe6 23.Qe3 Qf4 24.Qf3 Wh4 25.Qd2 Qg4 26.Qc4 Qe6 27.Qc2 Qxb3 28.Qxb3 Qe6 29.a3 Qae8 30.Qb4 Qf6 31.Qe4 Qee6 32.Qe2 Qxe2† 33.Qxe2 Qxf3 34.Qxf3 Qg6† 35.Qh1 Qf6 36.Qg3 Whg3 37.fxg3 Qd6 0–1**



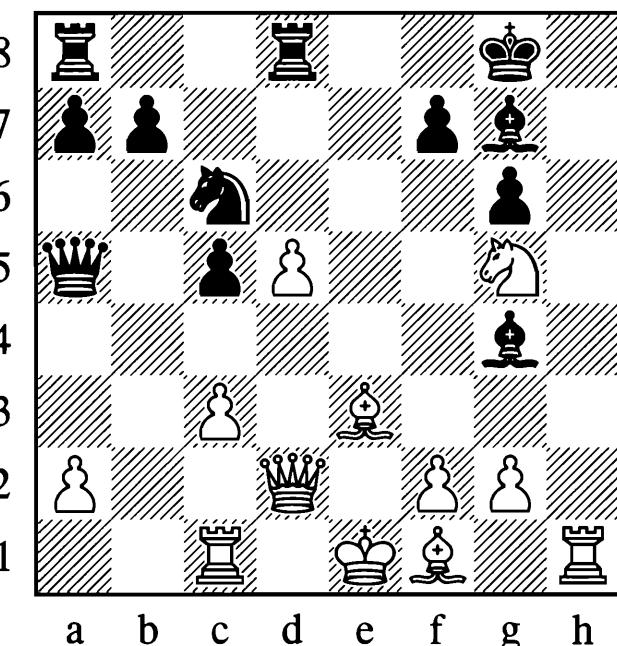
A row of five solid black five-pointed stars, evenly spaced from left to right.



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5 of 5



(271) Mamedov – Nguyen Anh Dung, Khanty-Mansiysk (ol) 2010

13...Qxe4! Black makes use of his lead in development. **14.Wxe4 Qd5 15.We2 e4! 16.Qxc6** **16.Qg1 e3 17.f3 Qe5** with the idea of ...Qc4 followed by ...Qd3†. White is completely lost. **18.b3 Qxf3 19.Qxf3 Qd3† 20.Qd1 Qf4†** for example. **16...Qxc6 17.Qd4 e3 18.Qxe3 Qxh1+–** Black won on move 58... **0–1**

(272) Sandipan – E. Danielian, Chalkis 2010

15.Qxe6! fxe6 15...Qxc3 allows White to play **16.Wh5 g6 17.Wh3 Qe5 18.bxc3**, when he is just winning. **16.Wh5† Qd8 17.Qxd7†!** The striptease of the black king has made it to the underwear. **17...Qxd7 18.Wf7† Qe7 18...Qc6 19.Wxe6† Qc7 20.Qxb5† axb5 21.Qc1†** is also bad. **19.Wxe6† Qc7 20.Qc1 Qd6 21.Qxb5† Qb6 22.Qxd6 Qa7 23.We7 Qd8 24.Qxb7 1–0**

(273) Morozевич – Ponomariov, Moscow 2008

The black knight on e4 turns out to be poorly placed after White's next move: **12.g4! c5** **12...h6 13.h4 Qxf2 14.Qxf2 Qxg4 15.Qc3** does not offer Black any real compensation. **13.g5 Wa5† 14.b4! 14.Qd2?! Qxd2 15.Qxd2 Qd7! 16.Qxa5 Qxe5 17.cxb5** is winning as well, but with only an extra pawn. **14...cxb4 15.gxf6 Qb7 15...bxa3† 16.Qd2 Qb7 17.Qg1 g6 18.f3** and White wins. **16.Qd2** White is a piece up and won on move 37... **1–0**

(274) Gashimov – Gelfand, Lugo 2009

11.Qxg7! Qxg7? This is a bit compliant. Black had to try **11...c4 12.Qf5 Qh8**, even though White is much better after **13.Qxe7 Wxe7 14.Qe2 Wxe5 15.0–0**. **12.Wh5 Qh8 13.Qh6† Qg8 14.e6! fxe6 14...Qxe6 15.We5 Qf6 16.Wg3†** and White wins. **15.Wg4† Qf7 16.Wg7† 1–0**

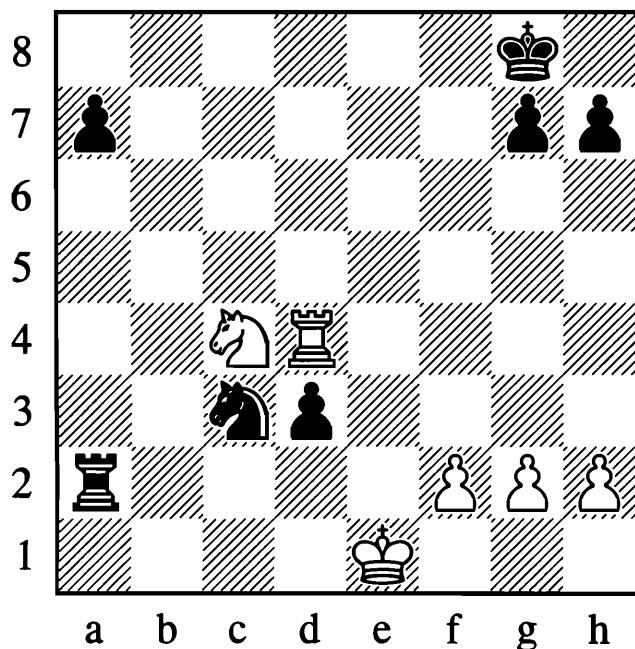
(275) A. Mastrovasilis – Kanakaris, Thessaloniki 2011

16.Wh8† Qf7 17.Qh7! A great move. **17...Qf5 17...Qxh7** looks logical, but White wins with: **18.g6†! Qxg6 (18...Qe6 19.Wxe8 Qf8 20.d5† quickly leads to mate) 19.Wxe8† Qf5 20.g4† Qxg4 21.Wg6† Wg5 22.We4† Qh5 23.Qh1† 18.Qxg7† Qe6 19.d5† Qd7 20.gxf6 1–0**

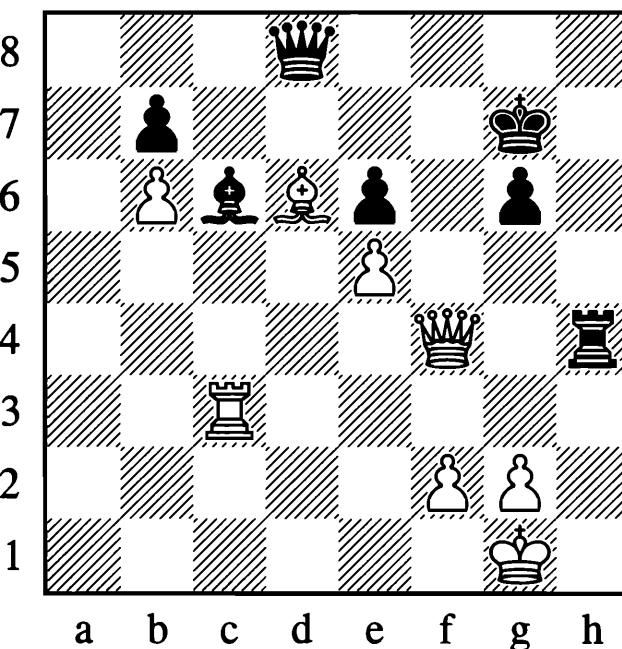
(276) Zakhartsov – Kurnosov, Irkutsk 2010

16...Qxd5! A pleasing variation on a classical theme. **17.Wxd5 Qxc3† 18.Qxc3 18.Qd2 Qxd2† 19.Wxd2 Qe8†** and everything goes. **18...Wxc3† 19.Qd2 Qd8!** The great point. Black wins the queen and hence the game. **20.f3 20.Wxc3 Qd1# 20...Qxd2 21.Qxd2 Wa1† 22.Qf2 Wxa2 23.Qe3 Qf5 24.g4 Qe7 25.Qh2 Qd5† 26.Qe2 c4 27.gxf6 c3 28.Qe4 cxd2 29.Qxd2 Wa6† 30.Qf2 Wb6† 31.Qe1 Wc7 32.Qe2 Qf4 33.Qe8† Qg7 34.Qd1 Wd7 35.Qe4 Wxf5 36.Qc4 b5 37.Qb3 Wf6 38.Qb4 Wa1† 39.Qc2 Qe2 40.Qe4 Wc3† 41.Qd1 Qd4 42.Qe1 0–1**

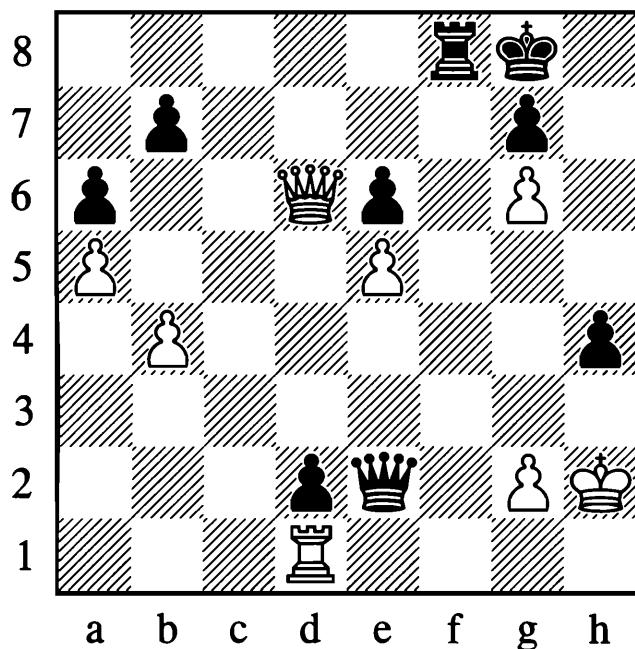
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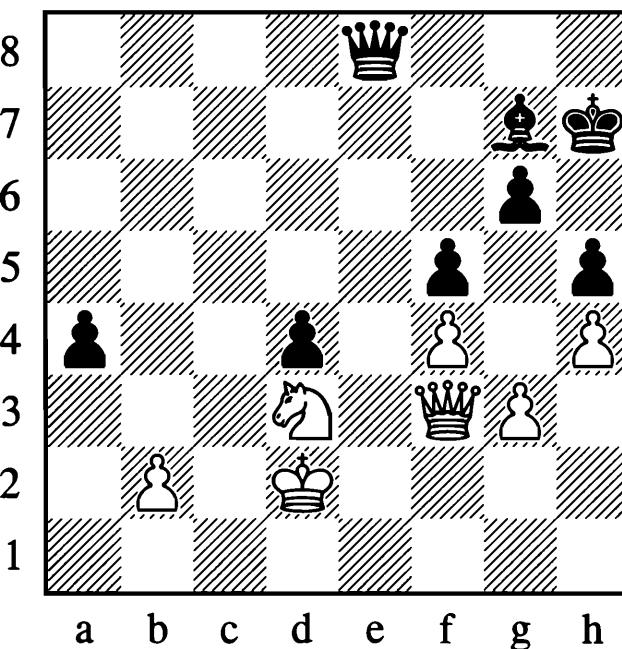
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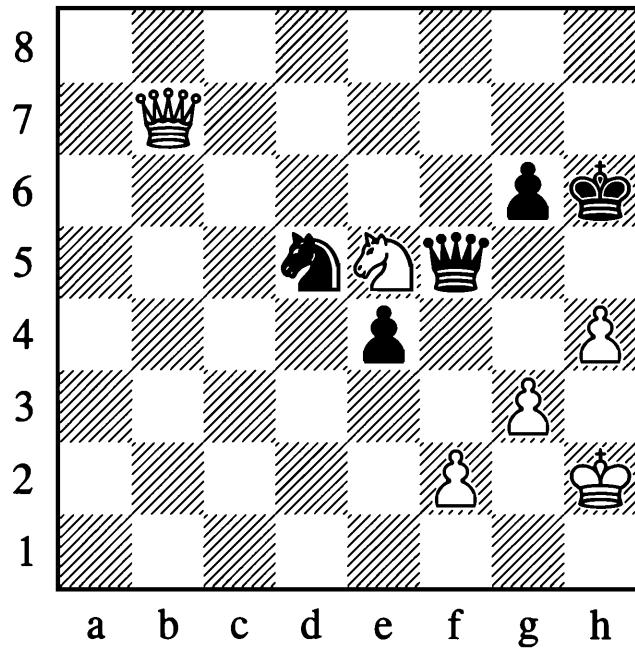
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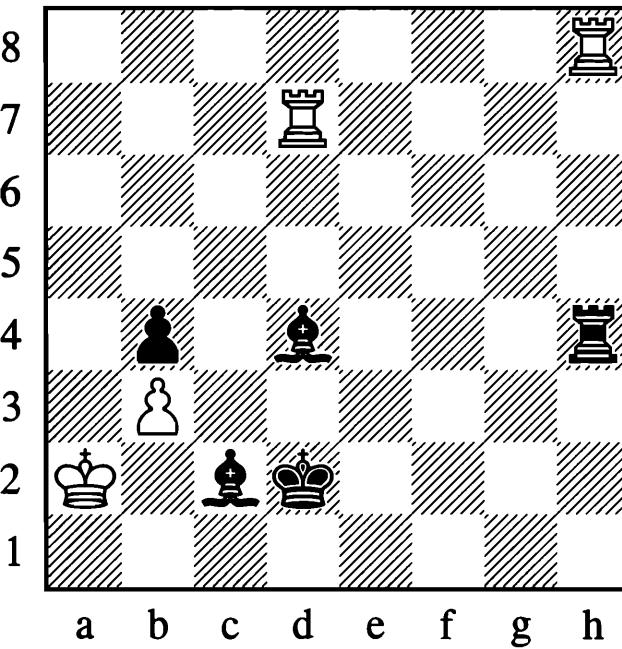
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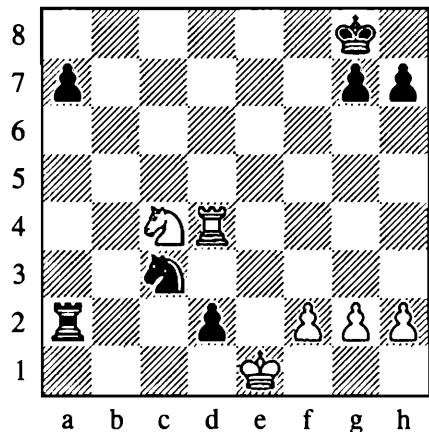
(277) Hebden – Wheeler, Daventry 2010

33...d2†! (Diagram A) Interference. White loses a piece.
 34.♕xd2 ♜a1† 35.♕b1 ♜xb1† 36.♔d2 ♜b5 37.♗d7
 ♜b2† 38.♔e3 a5 Black won on move 46... 0–1

(278) Rapport – Balogh, Szombathely 2011

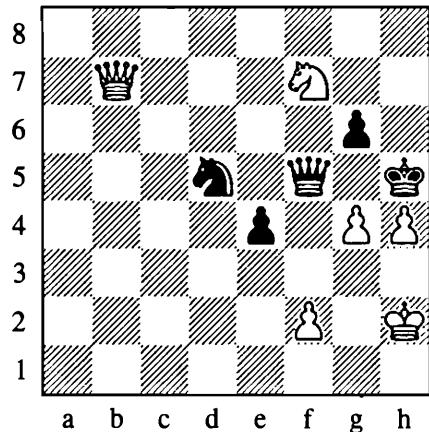
42...♝xd1! 42...♝g4? would keep a solid advantage, but would not necessarily win the game. 43.♝xe6† ♔h8
 44.♝e7! This was White's plan all along. The double attack on f8 and h4 is hard to meet – but Black finds a way. 44...♝h1†! 45.♔xh1 d1=♛† 46.♔h2 ♛d8! 0–1

A

**(279) Onischuk – Brodsky, Kharkov 2011**

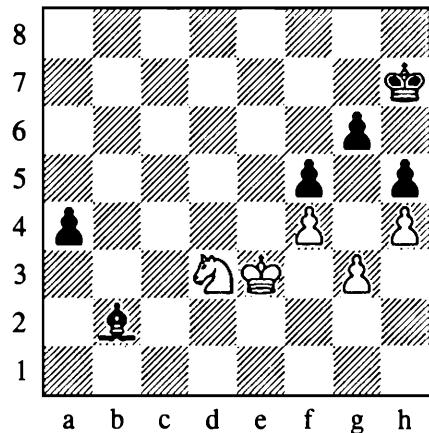
White is a pawn up, but without a well-aimed shot there is no win. 72.♞f7† ♔h5 72...♝g7 73.♞d6† is trivial. 73.g4†! (Diagram B) The big point. 73...♝xg4 73...♚xg4 74.♞h6† and wins. 74.♝xd5† ♔xh4 75.♝d8† g5 76.♝h8† ♛h5 77.♝xh5† ♔xh5 78.♝g3 White wins easily. 1–0

B

**(280) Suba – Okhotnik, Courmayeur 2011**

White first eliminates the queen, then creates a decisive passed pawn through a standard breakthrough. 44.♝f6†! ♛xf6 45.exf6† ♔xf6 46.♜xc6! ♜d4 46...bxc6 47.b7 and wins. 47.♕c7 ♜d1† 48.♔h2 bxc6 49.b7 ♜b1 50.b8=♛ ♜xb8 51.♔xb8 c5 52.♔g3 1–0

C

**(281) Papin – Kurnosov, Taganrog 2011**

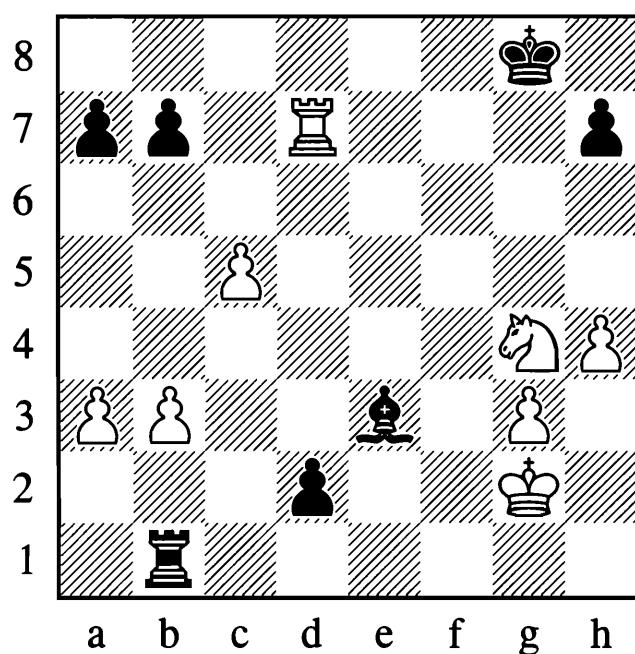
A typical combination. The knight is worthless against the a-pawn. 57...♝e3†! 58.♝xe3 dxe3† 59.♔xe3 59.♔c2 e2 is an easy win, as after 60.♔d2 ♜xb2 nothing has really changed. 59...♜xb2! (Diagram C) 60.♞b4 Avoiding the immediate loss by 60.♞xb2 a3, when the a-pawn cannot be stopped, but Black wins easily anyway. 60...♚c3 61.♞c2 ♚b2 62.♔d3 a3 63.♞b4 ♚g7 64.♔c2 ♚d4 65.♔b3 ♚f2 66.♔xa3 ♚xg3 67.♔d5 ♜xh4 68.♔b3 ♚g3 69.♔c2 h4 70.♔d3 h3 0–1

(282) Dominguez – Polgar, Khanty-Mansiysk 2011

Black can win quickly with: 74...♚c1! 75.♜c8 Or 75.♜xh4 ♜b1#. 75...♜h5!. In the game 74...♜xh8? was played, allowing White to escape into a rook and bishop versus rook ending. A lost one, it should be said, although later on White missed an opportunity to save the game, before eventually going down on move 112.

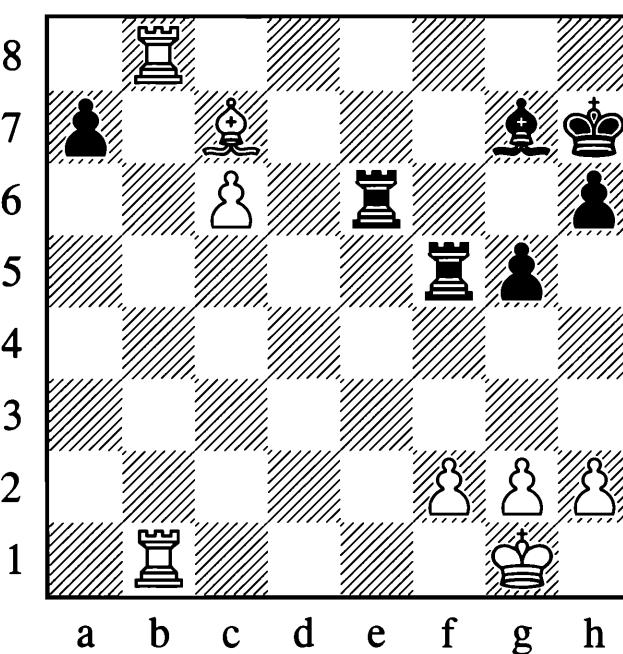
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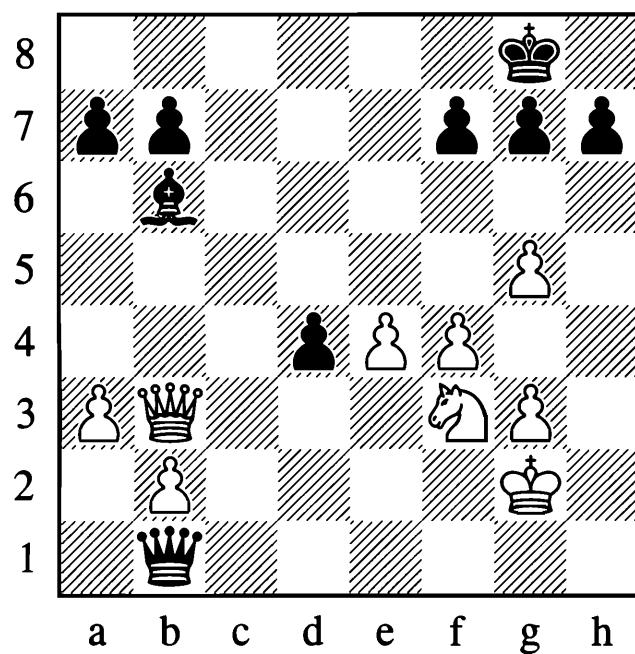
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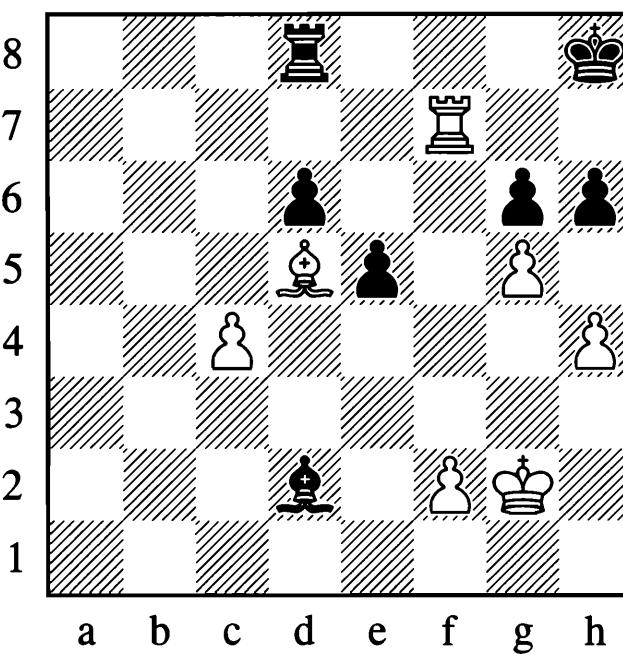
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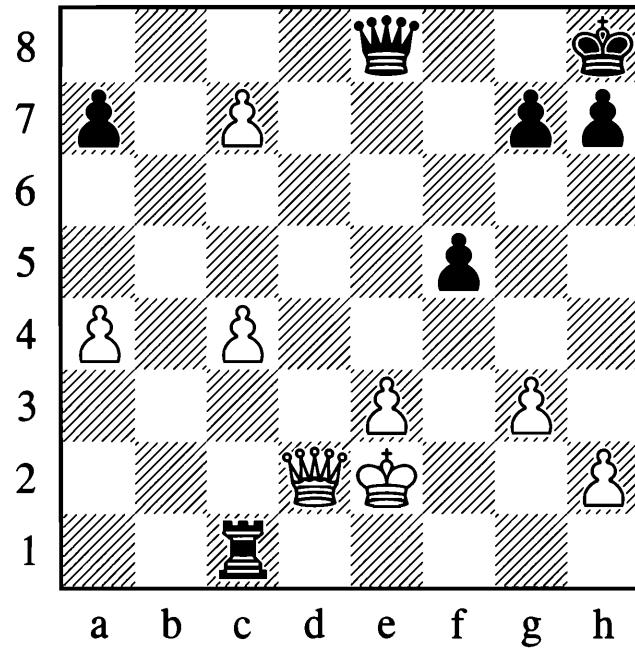
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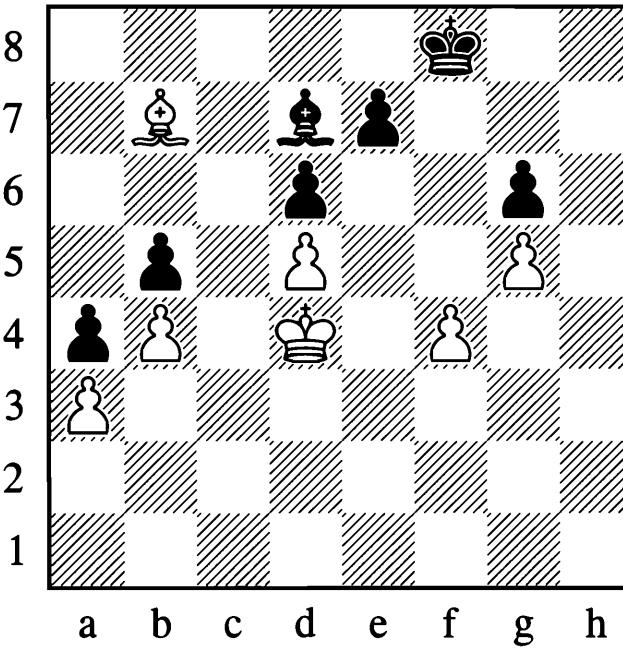
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(283) Kristensen – P.H. Nielsen, Denmark (rapid) 2011

Black could have won with: 34... $\mathbb{Q}d4!$ In the game, the strong Danish grandmaster for some reason allowed his opponent to get away with a perpetual check after 34...d1= \mathbb{W} ? and a draw was soon agreed. 35. $\mathbb{B}xd4$ d1= \mathbb{W} 36. $\mathbb{B}xd1$ $\mathbb{B}xd1$ 37. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8!$ Simplest. 37... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 38. $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ $\mathbb{B}d3$ is also promising though. 38. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{B}d3$ 39.b4 $\mathbb{B}xa3$ 40. $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{B}b3$ 41.b5 a5! and the passed pawn should win the game.

(284) Krasenkow – Thejkumar, Mumbai 2008

30.g6! A nice tactical shot. 30...hxg6 31. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 32. $\mathbb{W}a4!$ 1–0

(285) M. Lee – T. Taylor, Chicago 2006

28... $\mathbb{W}h5\#?$ Black missed a simple win in 28... $\mathbb{B}xc4$ 29. $\mathbb{W}d8$ $\mathbb{W}g8!$, when he will play ...h6 and ... $\mathbb{Q}h7$ before rounding up the c-pawn. 29. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{B}xc4?$ Some chances remained after 29... $\mathbb{W}e8$ 30. $\mathbb{W}xc1$ $\mathbb{W}d7\#$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{W}xc7$, although 32.c5 should win. 30. $\mathbb{W}b4!$ 30. $\mathbb{W}b2?$ also wins, but only if White finds the fantastic follow up: 30... $\mathbb{W}e8$ 31. $\mathbb{W}b8$ $\mathbb{B}e4$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}e2!!$ (32.c8= \mathbb{W} ? $\mathbb{B}xe3\#$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{B}e4\#$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{B}e5\#$! secures the draw) 32... $\mathbb{B}xe3\#$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ and the king will be safe on h3. 30...h6 31. $\mathbb{W}xc4$ $\mathbb{W}d1\#$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{W}e1\#$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{W}d2\#$ 34. $\mathbb{W}c2$ $\mathbb{W}b4\#$ 35. $\mathbb{Q}a2$ 1–0

(286) Gareev – Bykhovsky, Berkeley 2011

27. $\mathbb{Q}d6!$ A simple enough move, but pretty none the less. 27... $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 27... $\mathbb{B}xd6$ 28.c7 and wins. 28.c7 $\mathbb{B}xf2$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}c5!$ Black resigned, because of 29... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 30.c8= \mathbb{W} and wins. 29. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{B}c2$ 30. $\mathbb{B}d8$ would also win eventually, it seems, but the game move is much better. Black's trick was 29.c8= \mathbb{W} ? $\mathbb{B}fe2\#$ with a draw.

(287) Polgar – Edouard, Aix-les-Bains 2011

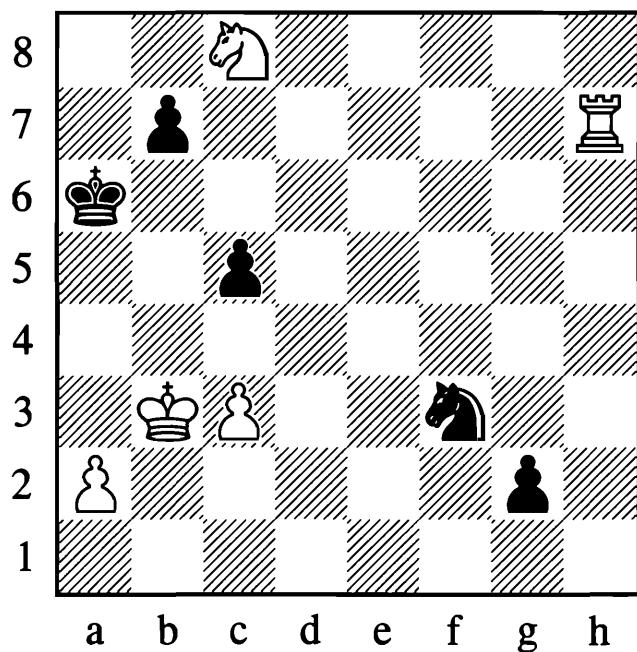
36.h5! 36.gxh6 $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ is unpleasant for Black, but probably drawn. 36... $\mathbb{B}g8$ The only try. 36...gxh5 37.g6 is mate in three. 37. $\mathbb{B}d7$ $\mathbb{B}g7$ 38. $\mathbb{Q}f7!$ Elegantly trapping the black king. 38. $\mathbb{B}d8\#?$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 39. $\mathbb{B}xd6$ $\mathbb{B}c7$ is bad for Black, but some drawing chances remain. 38... $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ 38... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ 39.hxg6 and White wins with a check on the back rank eventually. 39. $\mathbb{B}d8\#$ The direct win. 39... $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 40.g6# $\mathbb{B}xg6\#$ 41. $\mathbb{Q}xg6\#$ 42. $\mathbb{B}xd6\#$ 1–0

(288) Polgar – G. Guseinov, Aix-les-Bains 2011

61. $\mathbb{Q}c6!$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ White wins in elementary fashion after 61... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 62. $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ 63. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 64.f5 $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 65.fxg6 $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ 66. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 67. $\mathbb{Q}f5$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 68.g6# $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 69. $\mathbb{Q}e6$. 62.f5! Black resigned at the prospect of fighting a war on two fronts. 62. $\mathbb{Q}xd7\#?$ $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 63. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ e6! does, however, not win. And 62. $\mathbb{Q}e4?$ $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ 63.dxc6 e6! would even be winning for Black!

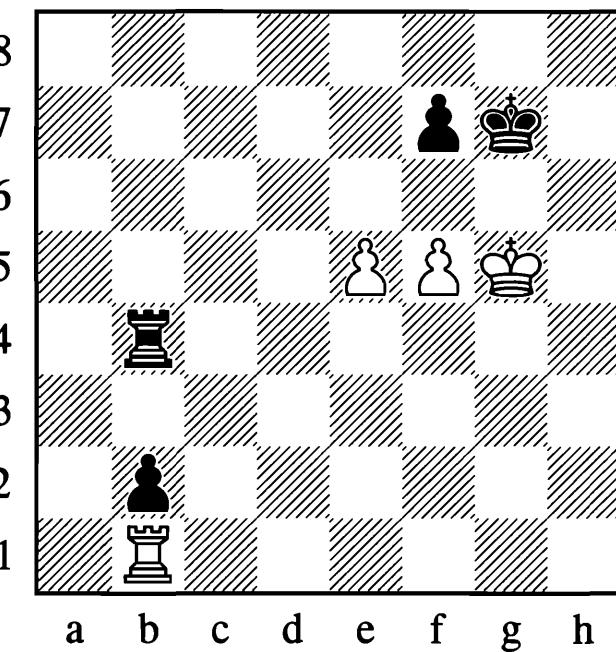
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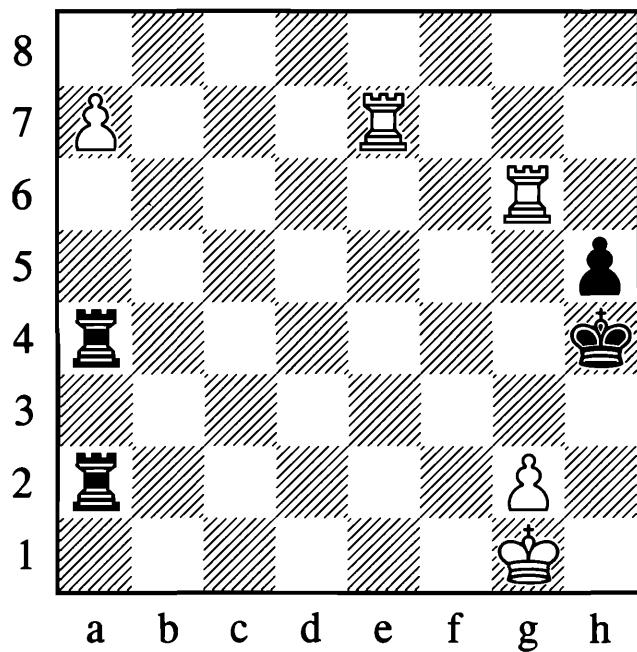
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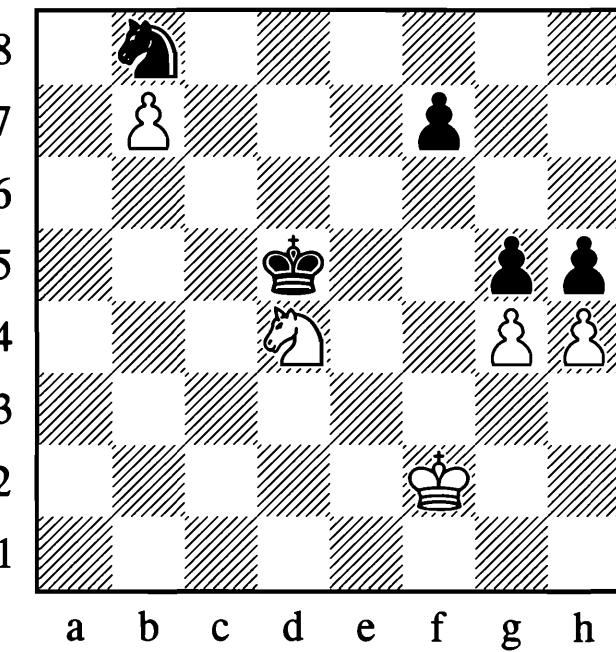
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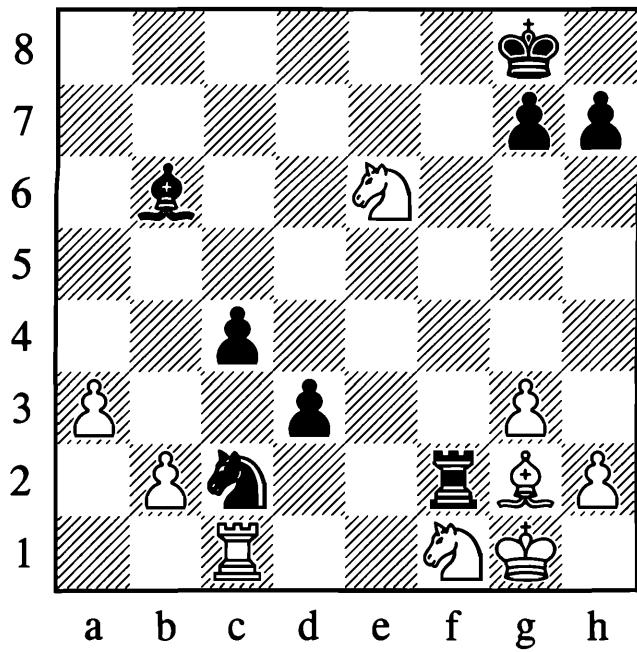
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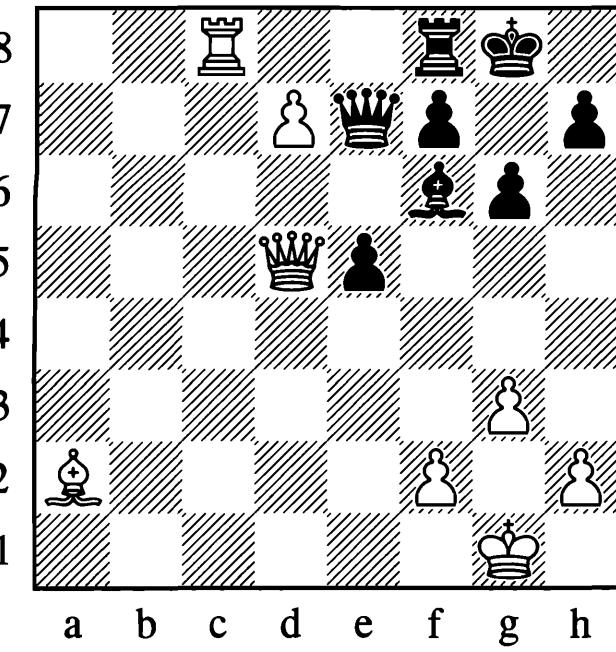
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294

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(289) Shirazi – Plane, Metz 2002

White cannot prevent Black from queening, but he can decide the game elsewhere. 52.† $\mathbb{Q}a4!$ b5† 52...† $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 53.† $\mathbb{Q}h6!$ † $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 54.† $\mathbb{Q}g6$ and wins. 53.† $\mathbb{Q}a3!$ 53.† $\mathbb{Q}b3?$ would be a blunder because of 53...c4†! 54.† $\mathbb{Q}b4$ g1=†! and White only gets a draw from 55.† $\mathbb{Q}a7!$. 53...b4† 54.† $\mathbb{Q}a4$ 1–0

(290) Van den Berg – Bolleman, Vlissingen 2011

White looks to be winning, but there is stalemate to take into account. 55...† $\mathbb{Q}a1!$ 56.† $\mathbb{Q}h2$ 56.† $\mathbb{Q}f2$ † $\mathbb{Q}4a2!$ 57.† $\mathbb{Q}e2$ † $\mathbb{Q}xe2!$ 58.† $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ † $\mathbb{Q}xa7$ is a trivial draw. 56...† $\mathbb{Q}h1!$ 57.† $\mathbb{Q}xh1$ † $\mathbb{Q}a1!$ 58.† $\mathbb{Q}h2$ † $\mathbb{Q}h1!$ 59.† $\mathbb{Q}xh1$ ½–½

(291) Odnorozhenko – Oleksienko, Alushta 2011

27...† $\mathbb{Q}e1!$ (Diagram A) A killer move. 27...d2?! 28.† $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ † $\mathbb{Q}xd2!$ 29.† $\mathbb{Q}h1$ † $\mathbb{Q}e3$ favours Black, but there is a lot of play remaining in the position. 28.† $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 28.† $\mathbb{Q}xe1$ † $\mathbb{Q}e2!$ wins for Black, as after 29.† $\mathbb{Q}h1$ † $\mathbb{Q}xe1$ the d-pawn is unstoppable. 28...† $\mathbb{Q}g2!$ Mate comes on the next move. 0–1

(292) Korobov – Nepomniachtchi, Rogaska Slatina 2011

44...f6†! 45.† $\mathbb{Q}h5$ Not a serious defensive try, rather an avoidance of 45. exf6† † $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 46.† $\mathbb{Q}h6$ † $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 47.† $\mathbb{Q}h5$ † $\mathbb{Q}xf5$, when the black king goes to c2. 45...fxe5 46.† $\mathbb{Q}g5$ † $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 47.f6 e4 0–1

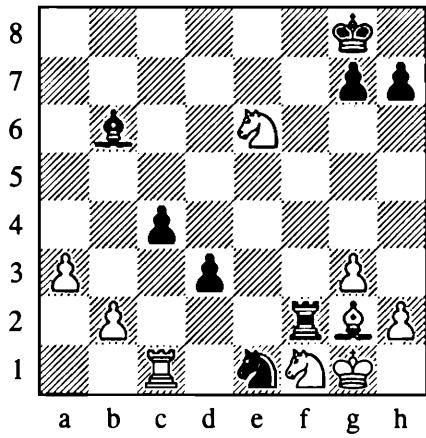
(293) Nyzhnyk – Bok, Wijk aan Zee 2011

The solution is: 60...† $\mathbb{Q}xd4!$ 61.† $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ † $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 62.h6 † $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 63.† $\mathbb{Q}h5$ (Diagram B) 63. hgx5† † $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 64.† $\mathbb{Q}e3$ f6 and draws. It looks as if Black is paralysed, but the g-pawn secures him a draw. 63...† $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 64.† $\mathbb{Q}f3$ † $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 65.† $\mathbb{Q}e4$ † $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 66.† $\mathbb{Q}d5$ † $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 67.† $\mathbb{Q}d6$ g4= Instead Bok played: 60...hxg4? 61.h5 † $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 62.† $\mathbb{Q}g3$ f5 (62...† $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 63.† $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ † $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 64.† $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ also wins easily) 63.h6 f4† 63...† $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 64.† $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ and White wins. 64.† $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ † $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 65.† $\mathbb{Q}h5$ f3 66.† $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ g4 67.† $\mathbb{Q}g5$ † $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 68.† $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 1–0

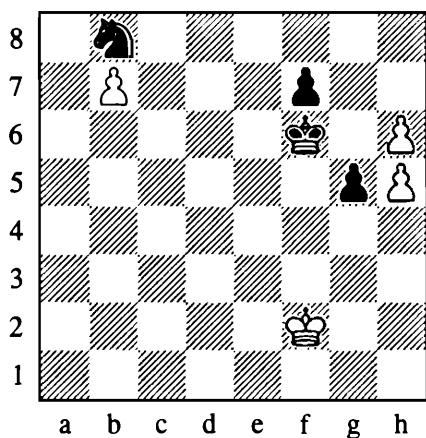
(294) Korobov – Kovchan, Aix-les-Bains 2011

White has a great advantage, but needs a breakthrough. This comes through a pin, using the fact that the queen is overloaded. 37.† $\mathbb{Q}e8!$ (Diagram C) 37...† $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ 38.† $\mathbb{Q}xf7!$ † $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 39.dxe8=† 1–0

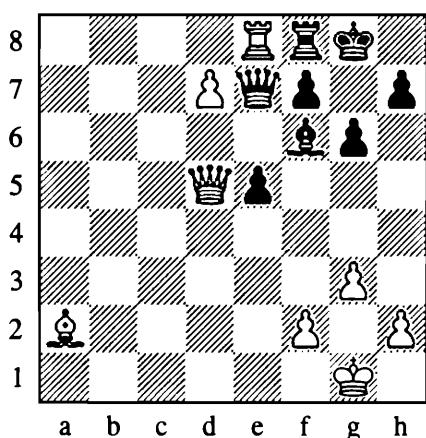
A



B

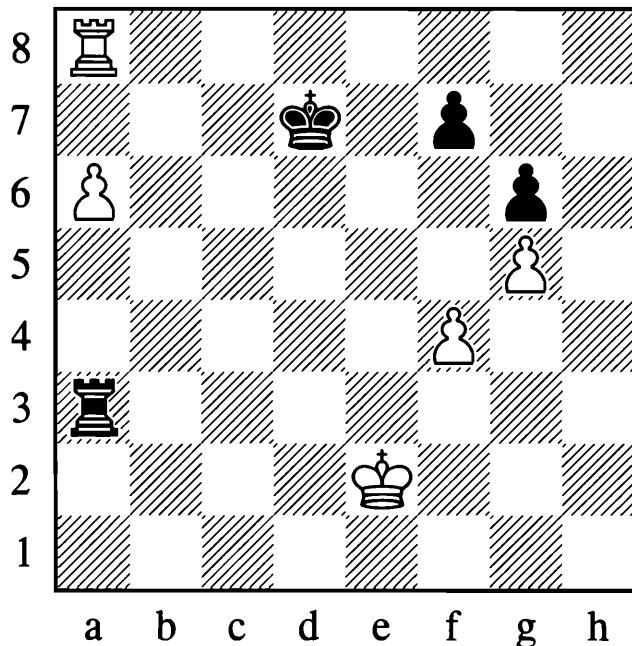


C



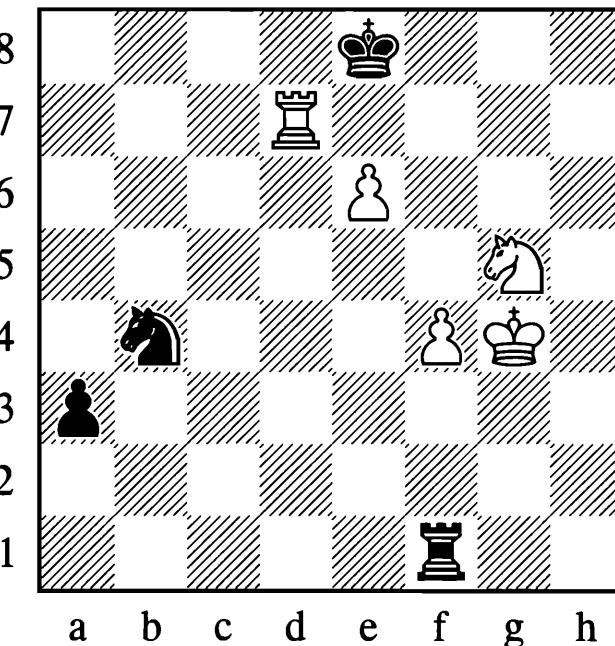
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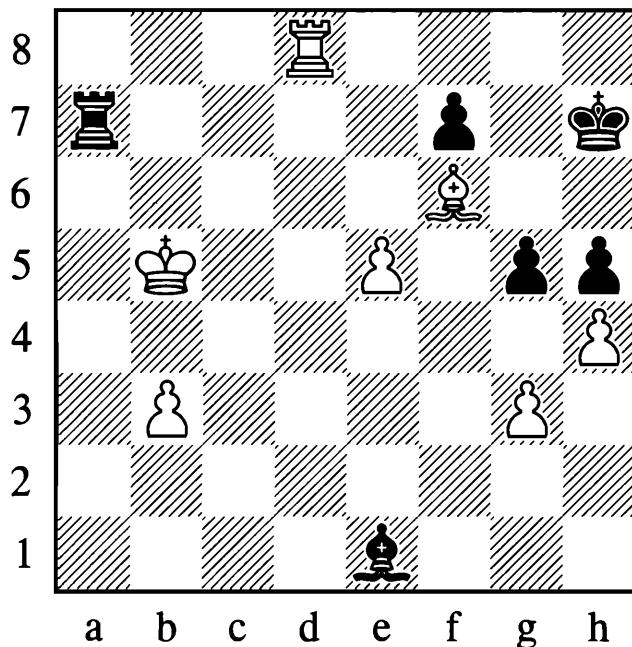
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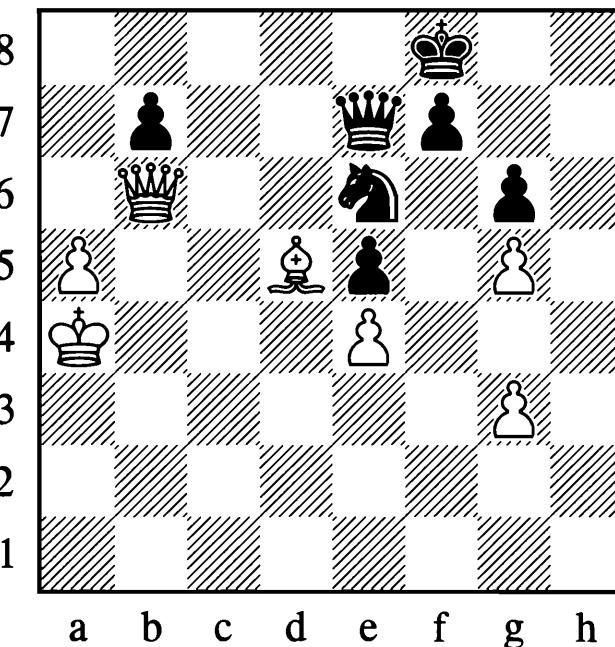
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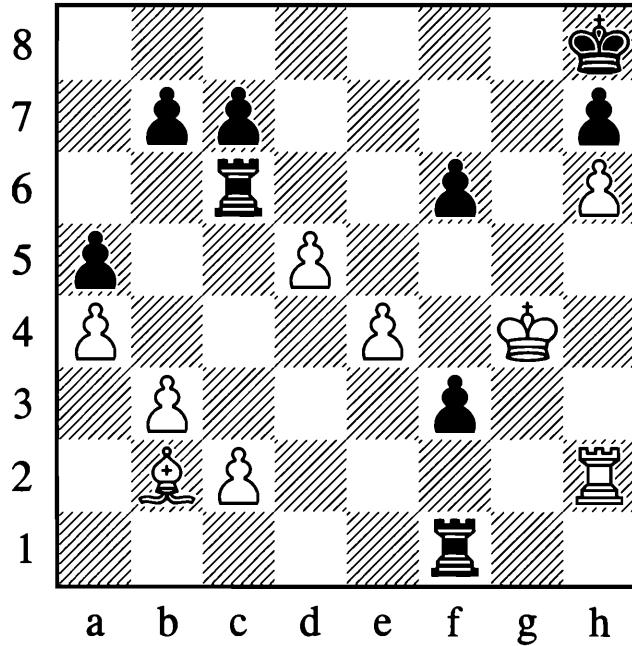
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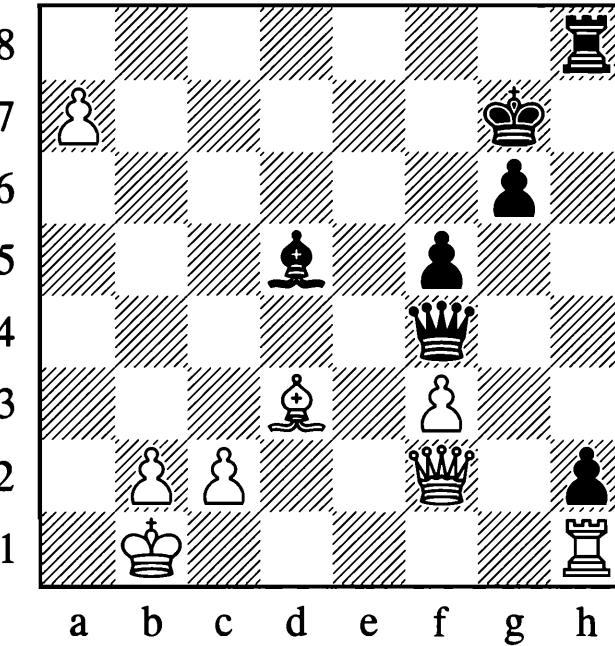
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(295) Giri – Ponomariov, Dortmund 2011

White is a pawn up in the ending. Usually in endings where the rook is in front of the a-pawn, it is best placed on the 6th rank, to allow the white king to hide from checks on a7. However, in this case White can exploit the unfortunate position of the black king. **62.a7! ♖c6** $62\dots\text{R}e7$ **63.f5!** is the whole point of it all. White is threatening fxg6 fxg6 followed by $\text{Rh8}!$, winning the rook. And after $63\dots\text{gxf5}$ he has **64.g6!** again based on $64\dots\text{fxg6}$ **65.Rh8**, and White wins. **63.Rc8† ♖b7** **64.Rf8!** Black resigned. White wins after $64\dots\text{Rxg6}$ **65.Rxf7† ♖b6** **66.Rf6†** with his two extra pawns.

(296) Yemelin – Swiercz, Czech Republic 2011

41.g4! Black resigned. Avoiding mate will be too costly. $41\dots\text{hxg4}$ **42.h5!** and $41\dots\text{gxh4}$ **42.gxh5** both lead to mate. $41\dots\text{Rg6}$ **42.Rg8† ♖h7** **43.Rg7† ♖h8** **44.Rxf7†** and wins. $41\dots\text{Ra5†}$ **42.Qc4** Rg6 **43.Rg8† ♖h7** **44.Rg7† ♖h8** **45.hxg5** with a decisive attack. The main threat is **46.Rg6† ♖h7** **47.Rh6†** followed by mate.

(297) McShane – Kramnik, London 2011

39...Rd6? Passive play that gives White an extra chance. **39...f2!** **40.Qf3** (**40.dxc6 Rg1†** is easy, of course) **40...Rxc2** just won. **40.c4?** After **40.Qf5!** **f2** **41.Qd4** White could have defended. **40...Rg8** **41.c5 f5†!** **42.Qxf5 Rg6** Black won on move 69... **0–1**

(298) Aronian – Short, London 2011

55.Qe4! **55.Qh7? Qd5** **56.Rxd5 a2** **57.Ra5 a1=Q** allows Black to escape with a draw. **55...Qd5!?** **56.Rxd5 a2** **57.Rd7!** This was the deep point of White's play; his attack is decisive. **57...a1=Q** **57...Rg1†** **58.Qf5 Rg7** **59.Rxg7 a1=Q** **60.Qf6†** and wins. **58.Qd6† ♖f8** **59.e7† ♖g8** **60.e8=Q#** **1–0**

(299) Kuzubov – Danielsen, Chennai 2011

56.Qb4! The minor piece ending is an elegant win. **56...Qd8** **57.Qxe7† ♖xe7** **58.Qb5!** **58.Qxb7?** would be too soon. Black is okay after **58...Qxb7** **59.a6 Qc5†** **60.Qb5 Qxa6** **61.Qxa6 f5** with a draw. **58...Qd7** **59.Qb6 ♖c8** **60.Qxb7†!** Only now does this work. **60...Qxb7** **61.a6 Qd6** **62.a7 Qc4†** **63.Qa6** The pawn queens. Black resigned. **1–0**

(300) Sjugirov – Solovjov, St Petersburg 2009

White looks lost at first sight, but he has a clever way to turn the tables. **34.Qe4! fxe4** **35.Qd4†** **Qf6** **35...Qh7!?** **36.Qxd5 exf3** was an interesting attempt. If Black gets the pawn to f2, he can probably draw, so White needs to find: **37.Qd7†! ♖h6** **38.Qh3† ♖g7** **39.Qxh8† ♖xh8** **40.a8=Q†** **Qh7** **41.Qa7†** **36.Qxd5 Qxf3** **37.Qb7† ♖f6** **38.Qxh2! Qf1†** **39.Qa2 Rxh2** **40.a8=Q Qc4†** **41.Qb3** **1–0**

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