

Trapped Rook

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Introduction

Trapping the opponent's rook can greatly increase our winning chances. However, noticing:

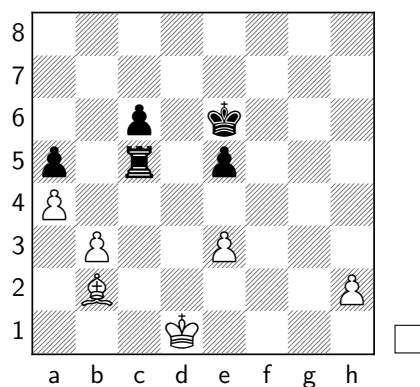
- When we may trap a rook
- When should we trap a rook
- How to take advantage of a trapped rook

may be difficult for players. This article aims to explore these points in both practical and aesthetic dimensions.

The concept in isolation

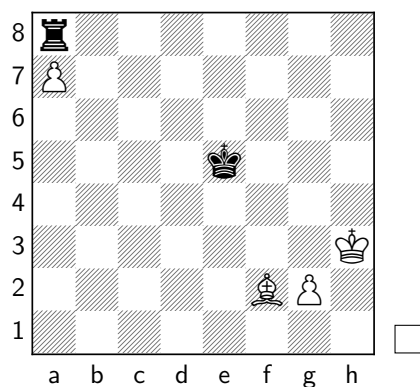
We begin with a few simple examples where the trapped rook is the focus of the position.

Example 1



1 e4! traps the rook. ♖d2 and ♙a3 will follow to win the rook and the game.

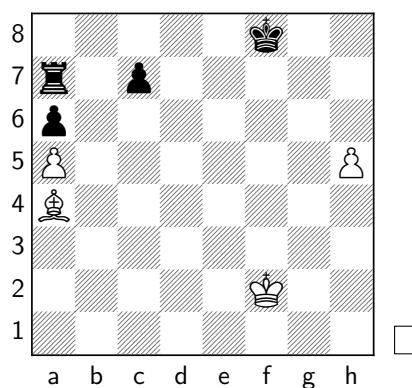
Example 2



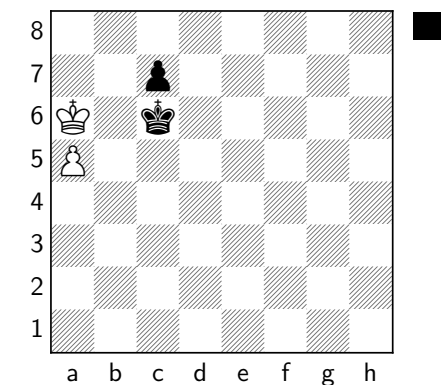
Black is threatening to go into a drawn endgame by sacrificing the rook for the g-pawn. However, White has the resource 1 ♙g3! ♖f5 2 ♙b8, and the g-pawn will advance safely.

The next example requires calculation to determine the evaluation of the position.

Example 3



1 ♙c6! traps the rook. Black can win the pawn after 1... ♖e7 2 h6 ♖f6, but White can go after Black's rook: 3 ♖g3 ♖g6 4 ♖g4 ♖xh6 5 ♖f5 ♖g7 6 ♖e6 ♖f8 7 ♖d7 ♖f7 8 ♖c8 ♖e7 9 ♖b8 ♖d6 10 ♖xa7 ♖xc6 11 ♖xa6



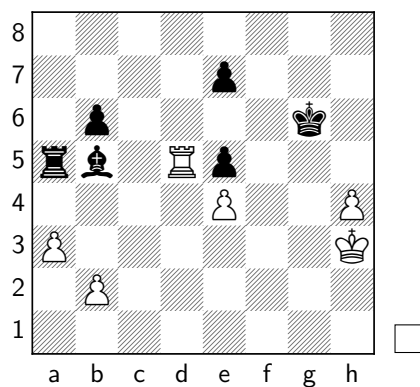
and Black is lost due to his c7-pawn.

Sacrificing in order to trap a rook

The evaluation of a sacrifice to trap the opponent's rook requires careful analysis of the resulting position.

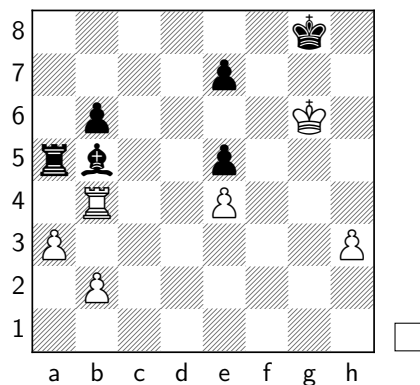
Consider the following positions e-pawn.

Example 4



White must play **1 ♖xb5!** to save their position. After **1... ♗xb5 2 b4**, Black's rook is trapped and the game is drawn.

Example 5



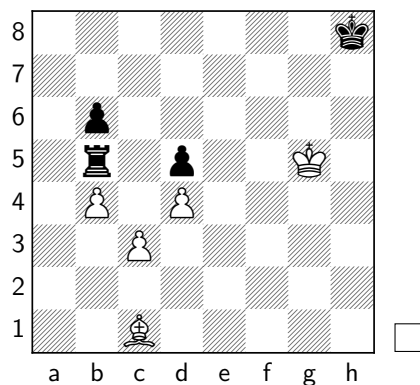
White is lost in position, as after **1 ♗xb5 ♖xb5 2 b4**, Black can afford to sacrifice his rook back: **2... ♖d5!**. The rook is cannot be taken due to the

Taking advantage of a trapped rook

When a rook is trapped, it can be taken advantaged of by:

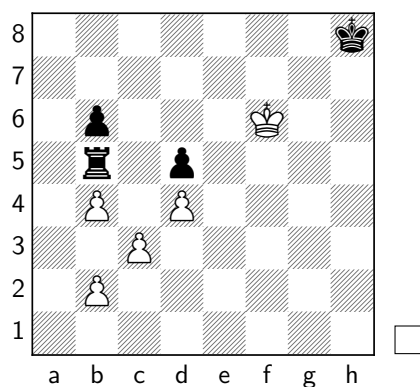
- Playing in the opposite wing (Example 6)
- Winning the rook (Example 7)

Example 6



Black's rook is trapped, however White cannot directly win it. Instead White should play in the opposite wing until the rook is forced to move: 1 ♖g6 ♜g8 2 ♜h6 ♜h8 3 ♜f7 ♜h7 4 ♜g7. The rook is lost.

Example 7



White can simply head towards Black's rook in this position.

Puzzles

