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Just the Facts!

Winning Endgame Knowledge In One Volume

by
GM Lev Alburt
and GM Nikolay Krogius

Published by:

Chess Information and Research Center

For ordering information, please see page 412.

Distribution to the book trade by:

W.W. Norton, 500 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY

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Cover

Mark Kostabi's painting
"Red Handed"

Drawings

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Photos courtesy

The Chess Cafe
www.chesscafe.com

U.S. Chess Federation
www.uschess.org

Bill Hook

Computer Analysis:

ChessBase USA
www.chessbaseusa.com

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ISBN: 1-889323-06-3

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 99-066852

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed in the United States of America.

Note to Reader

You should be able to read a chess book without squinting, without forever flipping pages back and forth to find the relevant diagram, and without trying to keep a 12-move variation in your head. We've tried to produce *Just the Facts! Winning Endgame Knowledge in One Volume* in a way that makes it enjoyable for you to get the most out of the unique instruction it contains. Lots of diagrams make it easier. And look for color-coded diagrams and "break-outs" that call your attention to the most important positions and ideas. These will be especially worth revisiting and even committing to memory.

A special note on notation and ranks

Just the Facts! uses the now universal algebraic notation. In the text, however, when we discuss general rules—such as rooks belonging on their seventh rank or the king being cut off on its fourth rank—we fall back on the English descriptive tradition of relative perspective. This technique is so widely used in both conversation and writing that it will come naturally to readers, and it obviates the use of tedious and confusing repetition ("The second rank for White, or the seventh for Black," etc.).

For more on notation, see volume 1 of the *Comprehensive Chess Course*.

Introduction

"Just the facts, ma'am."

—Detective Joe Friday of the popular 1950s *Dragnet* television series, to countless crime witnesses tempted to stray from the essential points of the case.

We've taken our cue from Jack Webb's famous *Dragnet* detective. In a hurry to solve a case, he wanted witnesses to give him quickly "Just the facts." We know that's what you want when you sit down to spend your precious free time to improve your chess.

Providing "just the facts" of all the endings you're likely to encounter in a lifetime of chess was a considerable challenge. It required the team of famous player, writer, and teacher GM Lev Alburt and renowned endgame expert and trainer GM Nikolay Krogius. Their decades of both championship-level play and teaching on all levels, and their keen interest in producing the most helpful material possible, led to a uniquely effective approach.

The endgame is the last lap in the race for chess victory. In another sports analogy, C.J.S Purdy called the ending the "putting" of chess. Joe Friday might have said it was the perpetrator's court conviction that served as the epilogue of every episode of *Dragnet*. Whatever the metaphor, it's

clear that, depending on your endgame knowledge, you can either enjoy the victory your hours of concentration in the opening and middlegame have earned you, or you can spoil it all. If you know some basic ideas and techniques, you can even save some "lost" games. Such climaxes and anticlimaxes happen over and over in every chess tournament.

The best news is that your endgame play can improve dramatically in a very short time—with the proper help. And a real knowledge of endgame play will never go out of fashion. Here you have the essential ideas, principles and positions. *Just the Facts!* will serve you well through many, many years of chessboard battles.

Just the Facts! Winning Endgame Knowledge in One Volume is the final volume of the *Comprehensive Chess Course*, a series that has earned a special status with chess players. Each of its books has been a widely praised best seller since first publication. That's because each book is a careful distillation and *explanation* of hundreds of years of master practice and teaching.

The entire series focuses on making the most effective use of your time. Only the important ideas are included. No sidetracks down theoretical curiosities. No long, unexplained lines that leave you scratching your head and looking at your watch. No asides that will lead you to a Jack Webb staccato-like "Just the facts!" See page 412 of this book to order volumes of the course.

After the hard work and high expectations, we're very proud that the seventh World Chess Champion, Vassily Smyslov, could write: "The right endgame knowledge is the magic key to chess mastery. *Just the Facts!* gives you that key!"

Al Lawrence, Executive Editor

Former Executive Director of the U.S. Chess Federation

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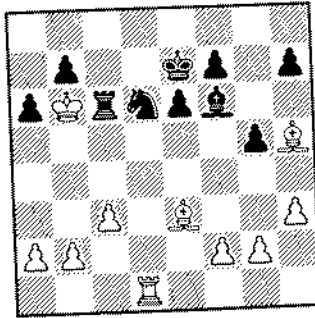
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Commonly Used Chess Symbols

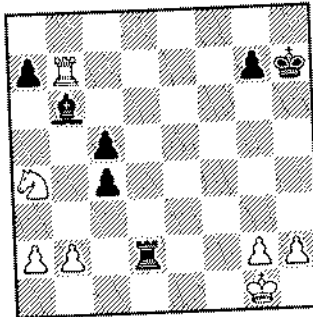
<i>excellent move</i>	!?	<i>interesting move</i>
<i>check</i>	?!	<i>dubious move</i>
<i>double check</i>	=	<i>an equal position</i>
<i>excellent move</i>	±	<i>White is better</i>
<i>outstanding move</i>	≠	<i>Black is better</i>
<i>winning move</i>	+-	<i>White is winning</i>
<i>blunder</i>	-+	<i>Black is winning</i>

Chapter 1: What Is an Endgame?

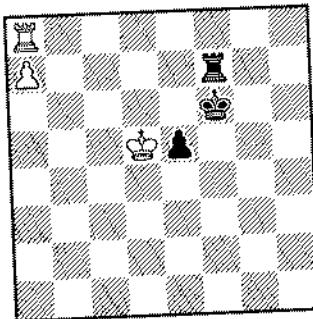
Some Important Ideas to Look For



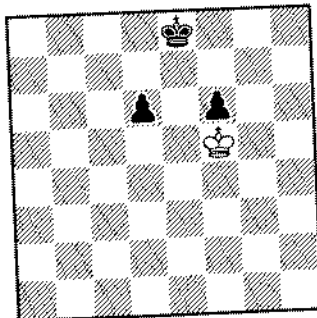
- ◆ Triumphant penetration of the king
White plays 6. Ka7.
See Diagram 2.



- ◆ Power of the passed pawn
Black plays 1... Rxb2!
See Diagram 12.



- ◆ The winning power of zugzwang
White plays 1. Ke4!
See Diagram 19.



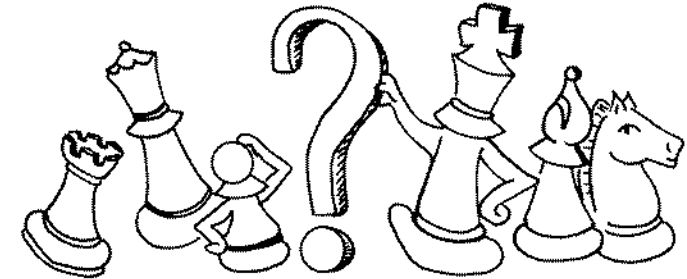
- ◆ The drawing power of zugzwang
White plays Ke6!
See Diagram 21.

Chapter 1

What Is an Endgame?

Three Distinguishing Characteristics

You'd think that something so widely studied and discussed as the chess



endgame would be commonly well defined. Sometimes it's described simply as the final stage of a chess game. This definition isn't accurate. Many games finish before they ever reach an endgame—for example, when a player resigns or is checkmated in the middlegame, or when he blunders fatally in the opening. The exchange of queens is often heralded as the onset of the endgame. But this is an oversimplification. There are endgames with queens and there are middle games without them.

Perhaps it's better to define the endgame simply as the stage of the game with relatively few pieces on the board. Beyond this generalized definition, there are three distinguishing characteristics that can help us to both recognize the endgame and at the

same time play better when we reach one:

- ✦ Endgames favor an aggressive king;
- ✦ The importance of passed pawns is greatly increased in the endgame;
- ✦ Zugzwang—the "compulsion to move" when doing so forces a player into a worsened or even losing position—is often a factor in the endgame while almost unheard of in the other stages.

In this chapter, we'll take a look at each of these key characteristics in turn.

ENDGAME KNOWLEDGE—THE KEY TO CHESS MASTERY

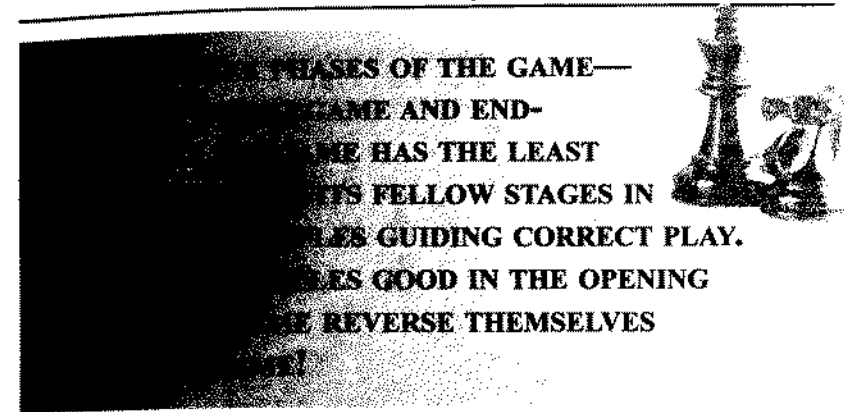
Former World Champion Vassily Smyslov has called the endgame "the magic key to chess mastery." We hear and read constantly of new subtleties in the opening said to confer an important advantage. The unexpected combinations and sacrificial attacks of the middlegame excite our fighting spirit and imagination. Why not just concentrate on these two phases? Regretably, too many players fall into just that very trap. They shortchange their endgame knowledge by spending all of their time for chess on the first two parts of the game.

If you want to win at chess, begin with the ending.

—Irving Chernev

But any truly good player or coach will tell you that an approach that ignores the endgame is both illogical and impractical. As we'll see throughout this book, many middlegame plans—and, occasionally even opening strategies—have the goal of creating favorable endings. Without practical endgame skill, you won't be able to realize the opening or middlegame advantage you fought so hard to achieve.

With knowledge of the basic endgame techniques, you can enjoy the victory you've spent the whole game earning. At times, you'll even be able to pull yourself free of the steely jaws



of "certain" defeat. And, as the great world champion Jose Capablanca was fond of pointing out, no stage of the game reveals the true powers of the pieces as does the endgame. Those who study the endgame know the essence of chess.

THE ACTIVE KING

To be a winning endgame general, you must know the key differences between the ending and the other phases of the game, the opening and middlegame. The critical distinction is that, in the endgame, the king often becomes an active, even an aggressive piece. The sacred middlegame commandment enjoining you to protect your king at all costs loses its sanctity in the endgame, where the king attacks pawns and pieces and is often first to penetrate the opponent's position.

Let's look at two examples that illustrate the active role of a king in endings.

In Diagram 1, White's chances are better because he has the two bishops and an extra pawn on the queenside. Despite these advantages, after 1. ... Nc4 2. Bc1 Rc7, Black could reasonably hope for a successful defense. But the line Black chose in the game allowed the White king to penetrate the queenside.

The king is a strong piece—use it!

—Reuben Fine

SVESHNIKOV—BROWNE
WIJK AN ZEE, 1981

Black should
play 1. ... Nc4
2. Bc1 Rc7.
You can learn
from his mistake.

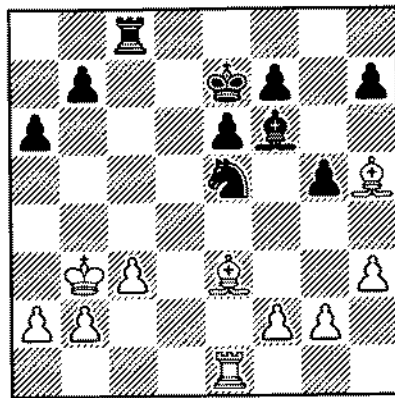


Diagram 1
Black to move

1. ... Nd3? 2. Rd1 Nc5+

Better was 2. ... Ne5. As often happens, one mistake begets another.

3. Kb4! Ne4

If 3. ... b6, then White plays 4. a4, with the threat of 5. a5.

4. Ka5 Nd6 5. Kb6 Rc6+ 6. Ka7

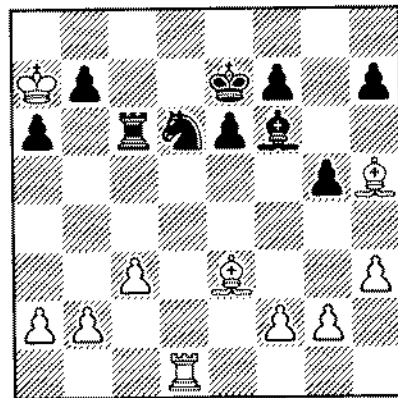


Diagram 2

A triumphal march of the king! Now Black can't protect his pawns.

6. ... Rc7 7. Bb6 Rc6 8. Ba5 Be5 9. Bf3 Rc5 10. Bb4 Rc7

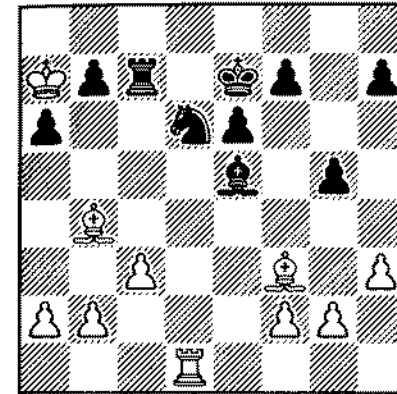


Diagram 3

11. Kb6!

White correctly delays capturing the pawn on b7.

11. ... Rd7 12. Re1 f6 13. a4 Kd8 14. Bxd6 Rxd6+
15. Kxb7

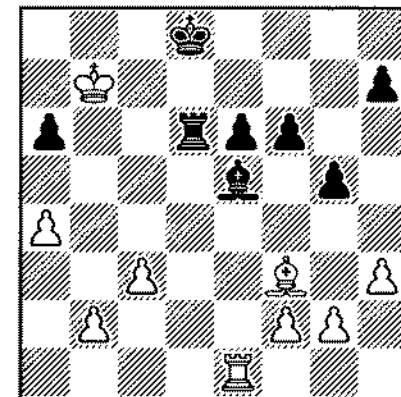


Diagram 4

White has a passed c-pawn, and a potential passed pawn as its neighbor. These guarantee White an easy win.

15. ... Rd2 16. Rd1 Rxd1 17. Bxd1 a5 18. Kb6 Bc7+
19. Kc6



**THE FIRST CRUCIAL DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN THE ENDGAME
AND OTHER STAGES:
ENDGAMES FAVOR
AN AGGRESSIVE KING!**

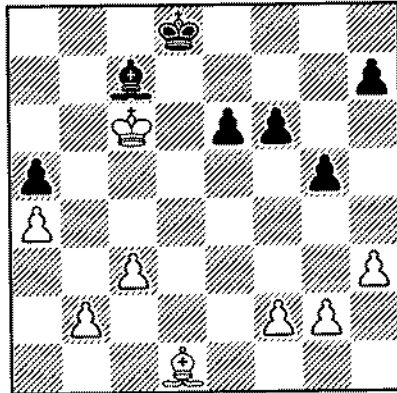


Diagram 5

19. ... Bf4 20. Kb7 Be5 21. Be2 Bd6 22. g3 f5 23.
Kc6 Bb8 24. Bc4 e5 25. b4

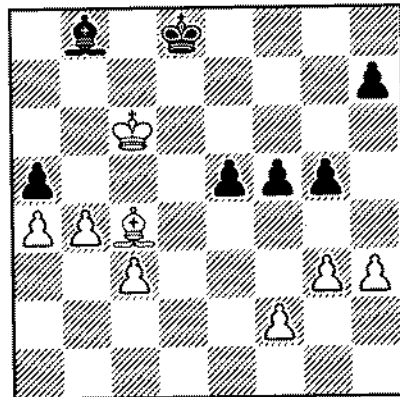


Diagram 6

25. ... Ba7 26. Kb7 Bxf2 27. bxa5 Bxg3 28. a6 Bf2
29. Be6

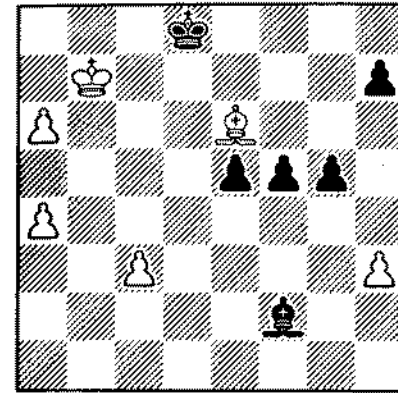


Diagram 7

Neutralizing Black's passers.

29. ... f4 30. Bd5 h5 31. Bf3, Black resigns.



GRUND—UST
WEIMAR, 1968

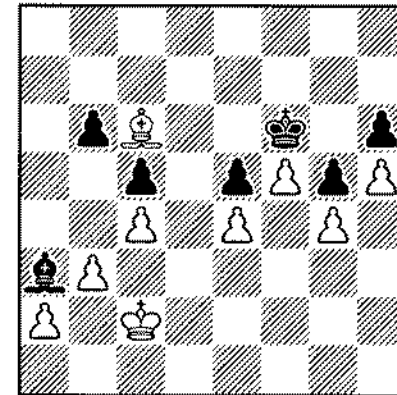


Diagram 8

White to move

White's king must penetrate Black's position to attack the pawns at b6 and h6. Black's pawns and bishop block his way. But White can sacrifice to create a path for his king.

1. b4! Bxb4

If 1. ... cxb4, then 2. Kb3 Bc1 3. Kxb4 Be3 4. Kb5 Ke7 5. Bd5 Bg1 6. a4 Bd4 7. c5! bxc5 (or 7. ... Bxc5 8. a5) 8. Bc4 and White will queen one of his pawns.

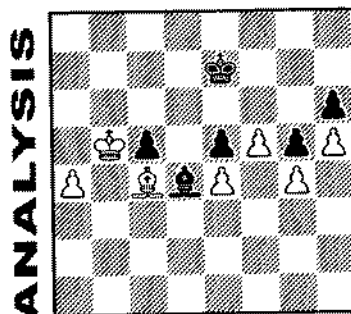


Diagram 9
After 8. Bc4

2. Kb3 Ba5 3. Ka4 Ke7 4. Kb5 Kf6 5. Bd5 Ke7

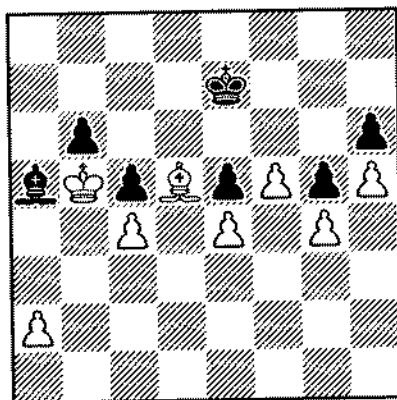


Diagram 10

6. Kc6

Zugzwang.

6. ... Kf6 7. Kd7 Bc3 8. a4 Ba5 9. Ke8

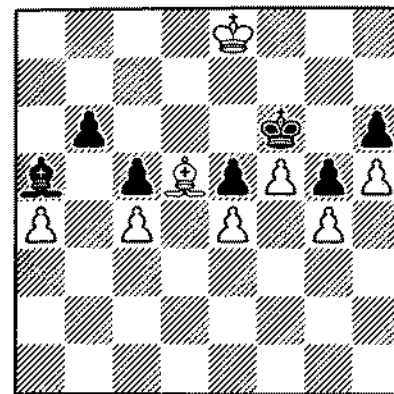


Diagram 11

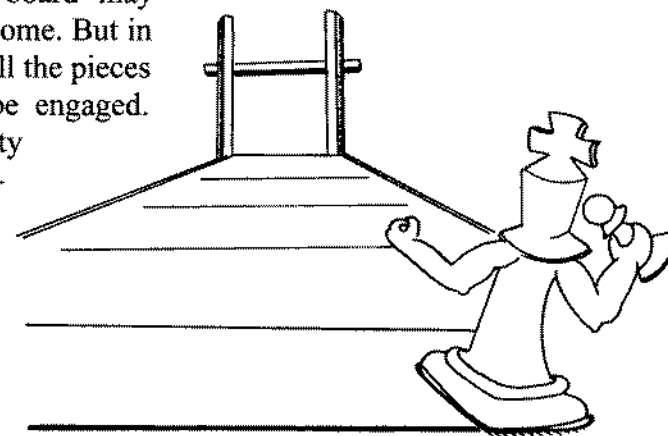
9. ... b5

Or else White plays 10. Kf8-g8-h7xh6. If 9. ... Kg7 then 10. Ke7.

10. axb5 Bc7 11. Kd7, Black resigns.

PASSED PAWNS

Passed pawns play an increasingly important role in the endgame, often determining victory or defeat. In the mid-game, only a piece or two of the many on the board may decide the outcome. But in the endgame, all the pieces are likely to be engaged, and their activity sometimes centers on forwarding or stopping a passed pawn.



ORTUETA—SANZ
MADRID, 1934

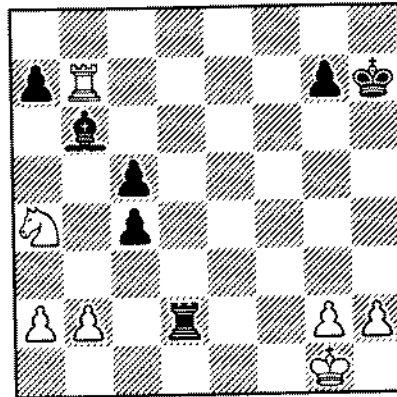


Diagram 12
Black to move

At first glance there is no serious threat to White's position and the outcome should most likely be a draw. But ...

1. ... Rxb2! 2. Nxb2 c3 3. Rxb6

Or 3. Nd3 c4 + 4. Rxb6 cxd3, and the Black pawns are unstoppable.

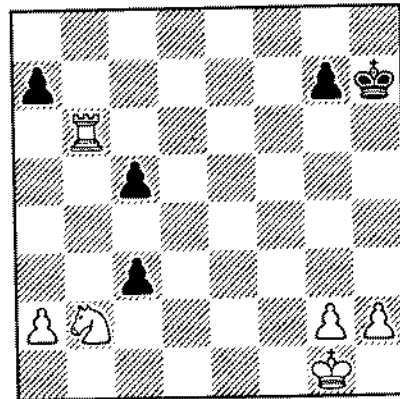
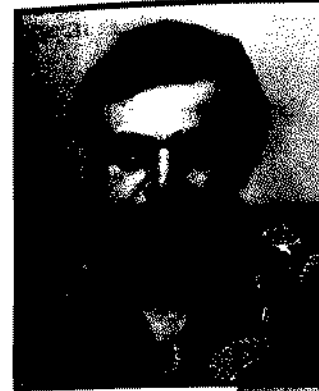


Diagram 13

3. ... c4!

Co-Author: International Grandmaster Lev Alburt



Place of Birth: Orenburg, Russia

Date of Birth: August 21, 1945

GM Alburt lived for many years in Odessa, a Ukrainian city located on the Black Sea. He won the highly competitive Ukraine championship three times, in 1972-1974. He won the European Cup Championship twice, in 1976 and 1979.

*Renowned
player, teacher
and writer*

*Mentored by
world champion &
pre-eminent teacher
Mikhail Botvinnik*

◆ Three-time
US Champion:
1984, 1985, 1990

◆ Twice US Open
Champion: 1987,
1989

◆ Three-time
Ukraine Champion:
1972-74

◆ Popular
Chess Life
Columnist

◆ Sought after
teacher

◆ Architect
of best selling
*Comprehensive
Chess Course*

In the days when there were still a Berlin wall and a tight KGB-guard on "Soviet" GMs, Alburt defected while at a tournament in then West Germany.

In 1979, he came to the U.S., making his home in New York City. He won the U.S. Championship an impressive three times—in 1984, 1985 and 1990.

Famous for providing aspiring players easy access to master-level ideas, Alburt is the only top-echelon GM to devote his career to teaching non-masters. His *Comprehensive Chess Course*, of which this book is the seventh and final volume, is a long-time best seller.

He provides lessons through-
the-mail, over-the-telephone,
and face-to-face. Write to
GM Lev Alburt at PO Box 534,
Grace Station, New York,
NY, 10028, or call him at
(212) 794-8706.



This star move takes the d3-square away from White, and threatens 4. ... c2. That's why White responded ...

4. Rb4 a5! 5. Na4

If 5. Rb5, then 5. ... c2. And if 5. Rxc4, then ... cxb2.

5. ... axb4, White resigns.

An effective demonstration of the power of the far-advanced passed pawns!



**KROGIUS—DOROSHKVICH
KAZAN, 1964**

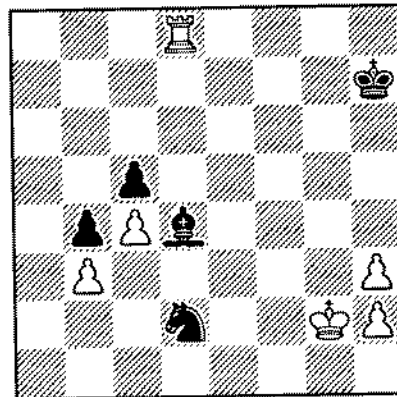


Diagram 14
White to move

White's position looks hopeless, but the Exchange sacrifice allows him to create a dangerous passed pawn. The game continued:

1. Rxd4! cxd4 2. c5 Ne4

To stop the pawn: 2. ... Nxb3 leads to a drawish queen and knight versus queen ending.

3. c6 Kg6

Or 3. ... d3 4. c7 d2 5. c8(Q) d1(Q) 6. Qb7+, with a drawish queen ending.

4. c7 Nd6 5. Kf3 Kf5 6. h4 Ke6 7. h5

Now Black has to switch his attention to another passed pawn.

7. ... Kf5

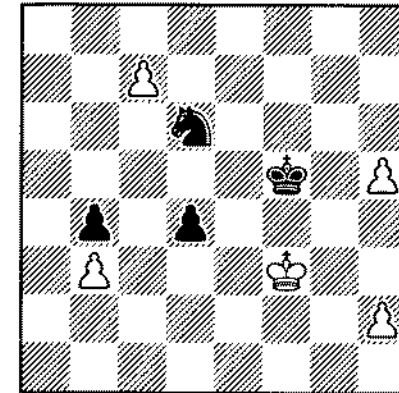


Diagram 15

8. h6 Kg6 9. c8(Q)

The try 9. Kf4 Kxh6 10. Ke5 d3 11. Kxd6 d2 would also lead to a draw.

9. ... Nxc8 10. Ke4 Ne7 11. Kxd4 Nc6+ 12. Kc5 Ne5, draw.



In some cases, a passed pawn can successfully oppose major pieces—a rook or even a queen.

**THE SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN THE ENDGAME AND THE
MIDDLE GAME OF THE CHESS GAME IS
THE INCREASED IMPORTANCE
OF PAWNS.**



TROITSKY

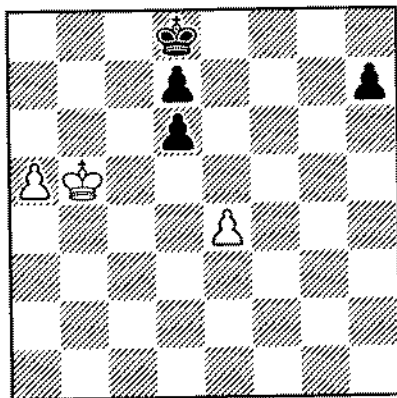


Diagram 16
White to move

In this endgame study by Troitsky, White draws with:

1. Kb6! Kc8

Otherwise, a pawn will queen.

**2. a6 Kb8 3. a7+ Ka8 4. Kc7 h5 5. Kxd6 h4 6. Kxd7 h3
7. e5 h2 8. e6 h1(Q) 9. e7**

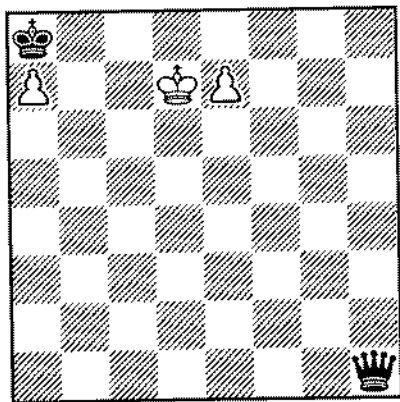


Diagram 17

9. ... Qd5+ 10. Kc7 Qe6 11. Kd8 Qd6+ 12. Kc8!

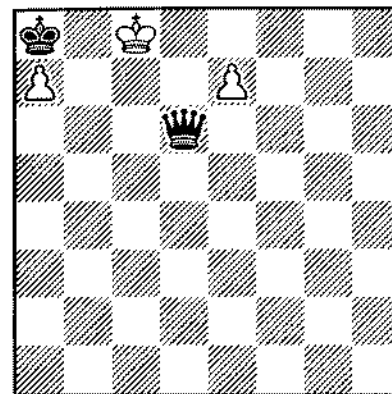


Diagram 18

12. ... Qc6+

On 12. ... Qxe7, it's stalemate.

13. Kd8 Kb7 14. a8(Q)+!

If White plays 14. e8(Q)?, then 14. ... Qc7 checkmate!

14. ... Kxa8 15. e8(Q), draw.

A passed pawn increases in strength as the number of pieces on the board diminishes.

—Jose Capablanca

ZUGZWANG

Because of the small number of pieces in the endgame, play often takes on a very forceful character, with every move, every tempo increasingly important. On the other hand, the choice of acceptable variations gets narrowed, sometimes leading to a situation in which one of the sides exhausts all useful moves and would like to simply "sit" on the position he's built.



WHEN A PLAYER MUST MOVE, BUT ANY MOVE WORSENS HIS POSITION, HE IS SAID TO BE IN *ZUGZWANG*. AT SUCH A MOMENT THE PLAYER WANTS TO "PASS." BUT, ALAS, PASSING IS NOT PERMITTED IN CHESS. A PLAYER MUST MOVE!

FOLTYS—MAKARCHIK
WARSAW, 1949

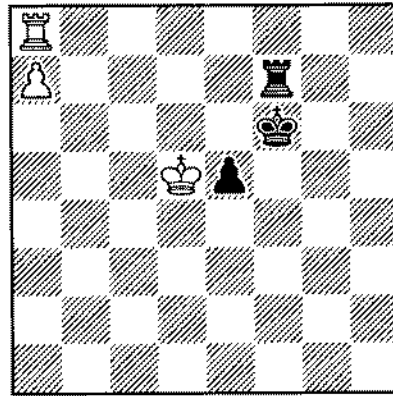


Diagram 19
White to move

1. Ke4!

Black is in zugzwang—the compulsion to move. He doesn't have any moves that would prevent the White rook's moving from a8 with check, allowing the promotion of the a7-pawn to a queen.

This is the perfect example of all three themes—zugzwang, the importance of passed pawns, and the active king—all working together.

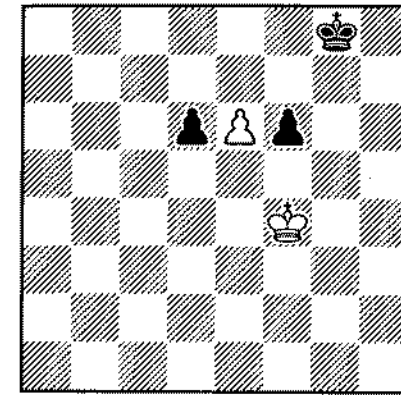


Diagram 20
White to move

In this study, White is a pawn down and struggling for a draw. He gets his wish by sacrificing his only pawn.

1. Kf5 Kg7 2. e7 Kf7 3. e8(Q)+! Kxe8 4. Ke6!

NO SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE OF
FROM THE OTHER STAGES
GAME: ZUGZWANG IS A FREQUENT
IN THE ENDGAME. ZUGZWANG
TAKES PLACE IN THE OPENING
EXTREMELY RARE IN THE MIDDLEGAME.



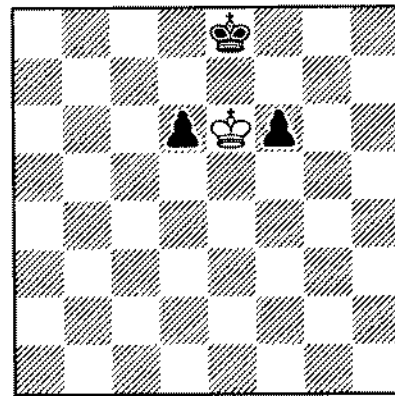


Diagram 21

Only this move, which forces Black into a zugzwang, leads to a draw. If 4. Kxf6? Kd7 5. Kf5 Kc6 6. Ke4 Kc5 7. Kd3 Kd5, and Black is winning. Now, however, Black cannot make constructive use of his material advantage. For example ...

4. ... Kd8 5. Kxd6 or 4. ... f5 5. Kxf5 Kd7 6. Ke4 Kc6 7. Kd4

We arrive at a well known drawn position.

Summary: Paradoxically, chess games can end without an "endgame." Endgames aren't easy to define—for example they can sometimes involve queens on the board. Still there are three defining characteristics that make them very different from the opening or middlegame: endgames often favor an active king; passed pawns greatly increase in importance, and zugzwang can become a factor. You should make time to learn basic endgame techniques. Seventh World Chess Champion Vassily Smyslov pointed out that "the right endgame knowledge is the magic key to chess mastery."



Krogius the year his team won the World Student Team Championship

Central in training a whole generation of dominant Soviet GMs

◆ Special trainer to World Champion Boris Spassky

◆ Russian Federation Champion

◆ Repeated winner of the prestigious Sochi and Varna International Tournaments

◆ Doctorate in psychology

◆ Renowned endgame expert

Co-Author: International Grandmaster Nikolay Krogius

Place of Birth: Saratov, Russia

Date of Birth: July 22, 1930

GM Nikolay Krogius is a famed endgame expert, renowned trainer, and pioneering chess psychologist. He is so highly valued that World Champion Boris Spassky, in his successful 1969 title match against Tigran Petrosian and his 1972 defense against Bobby Fischer,

insisted on Krogius as a special coach. Krogius helped train a famous generation of Soviet players who still dominate world chess.

Krogius became a grandmaster in 1964. Among other impressive results as a player, he was twice co-champion of the Russian Federation—in 1952 and 1964. He placed first in a long list of the prestigious international tournaments—among which are Sochi, 1964 (ahead of Spassky); Sochi, 1969 (equal with Spassky and Zaitsev); Varna, 1969 (ahead of Hort) and Bad Libenzell (1995).

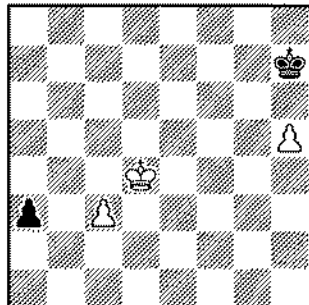
For more than 10 years, Krogius was in charge of the entire Soviet chess juggernaut. He is the author of a number of highly praised books on the endgame and chess psychology.

Nikolay Krogius now lives in Staten Island, New York.

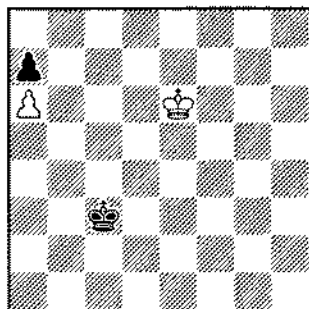


Chapter 2: Pawn Endings

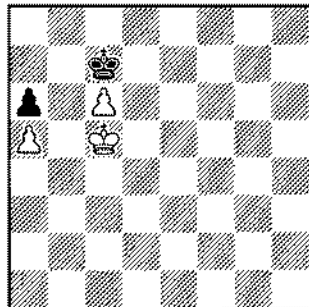
Some Important Ideas to Look For



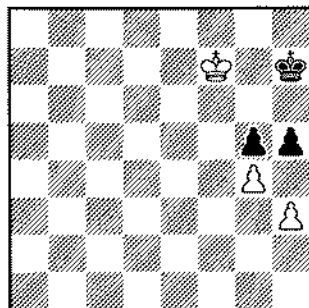
- ◆ Barricades & the Rule of the Square
White's on move, but is blocked.
See Diagram 29.



- ◆ The "moving screen"
White plays 2. Kd5.
See Diagram 60.



- ◆ Losing a move to win the game
White plays Kd5-Kc4-Kd4-Kd5.
See Diagram 68.



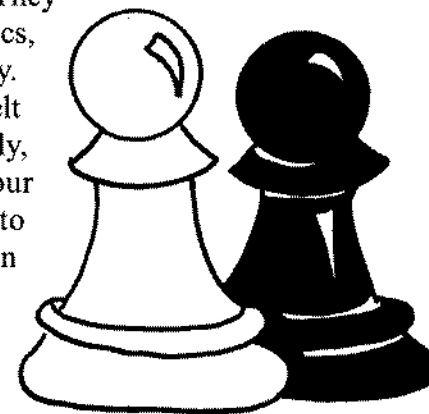
- ◆ Breakthrough thinking
White plays 2. h4! and queens.
See Diagram 87.

Chapter 2

Pawn Endings:

Atomic Chess

Pawn endings are the irreducible wins, losses, and draws of chess. They are the atoms of chess physics, the foundation of endgame play. Nearly all ending positions can melt down, sometimes quite suddenly, into a pawn endgame. So your endgame play must take into account the possibility of a sudden reduction of forces to one of these fundamental, atomic positions—and what your fate would be if this happened. The good news is that you don't have to be an atomic physicist to play these endings like a master!



There are two principal features that determine play in any pawn ending—the position of the kings and the presence of passed pawns. These two features intertwine in practice. But it will help us to focus on them separately. In Part I, we'll spot-

light the king positions. Then in Part II we'll concentrate on the role of passed pawns.

PART I: KING POSITION

KING AND ONE PAWN VS. KING

— THE FUNDAMENTALS

Let's start by looking at the basic positions where king and pawn oppose a lone king. Your knowledge of the small diagrams that follow will often determine your game plan with more pawns on the board. These endings are common and the superior side wins only about 50% of the time, so you can save many games by knowing some simple defensive techniques. White wants simply to queen his pawn, when mate would follow easily and quickly. From a defender's point of view, the crucial two fundamentals are a "one or the other approach" that's easy to master and remember.

- ♣ If the enemy pawn can be attacked and captured before queening and before the opposing king can support it, then that's the obvious choice. Let's take a look at this simple process.

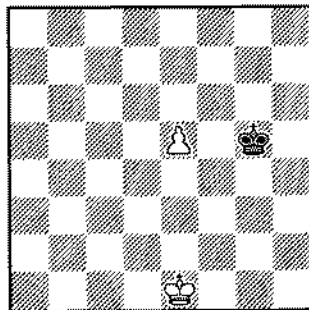


Diagram 22

Here the superior side's king is too far away to support his pawn, and the defending king can get to it before it queens. Black draws easily, no matter who moves first, by moving toward the White pawn and capturing it. If it's Black's move, 1. ... Kf5 does the trick. The only losing idea would be to move

the king farther away from and "below" the pawn, allowing the foot soldier to get an uncatchable lead—for example, 1. ... Kf4. If it's White's move, Black still plays 1. ... Kf5, unless White first plays 1. e6, when 1. ... Kf6 guarantees the extermination of the pawn.

- ♣ If the pawn can be supported in time by its king, so that it can't simply be captured, then the defending king must get in front of the pawn—such blocking is the only hope. But this simple strategy, when correctly followed up, frequently draws.

Here's an example of a basic position illustrating the importance of blocking—a technique that you should internalize as defensive instinct.

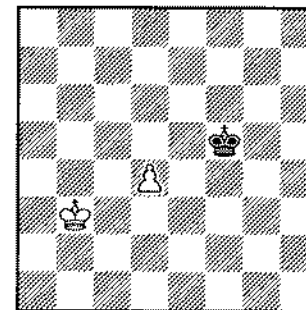
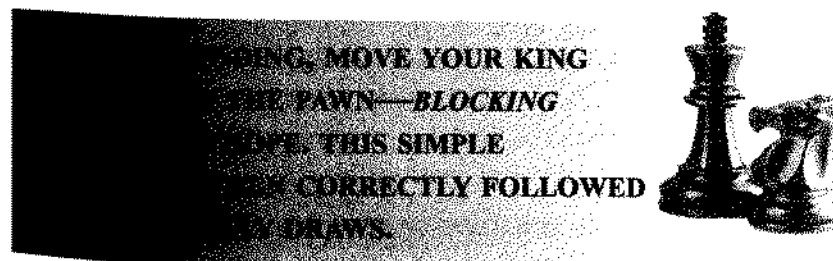


Diagram 23

With Black to move, he draws with 1. ... Ke6, getting immediately into the path of the pawn. If, as many beginning players will do, he plays 1. ... Ke4 to "attack" the pawn immediately, he loses! White would play 2. Kc4, eventually queening the pawn. (Volume 2 of the *Comprehensive Chess Course* thoroughly covers such ending fundamentals. See page 412.)



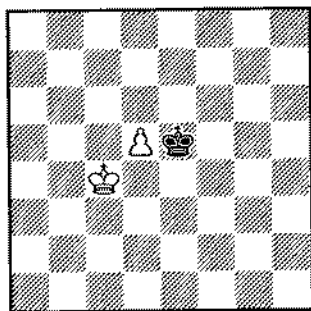


Diagram 24

You can't stop a pawn from the side. Block it!
You can't stop the pawn from behind. Block it!

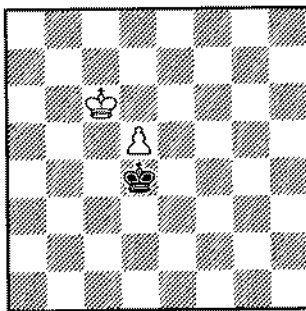


Diagram 25

CHESS IS A GAME FOR SQUARES

Many times in king-and-pawn endings, it's necessary to know whether a king can catch an unsupported pawn breaking for its eighth rank. Of course, when the king and pawn are close to each other, you can quickly play out each move in your head—the pawn goes here, the king moves there. But when the king and pawn are farther apart, such a method takes time and can lead to errors, so we need a better technique. One method is called "counting." You count the number of moves the pawn needs to reach the queening square and then count how many moves the king requires. If the pawn moves first, the king will arrive in time if it requires an equal number, or fewer, moves.

There's even a simpler method by which, with a little practice, you can tell at a glance who'll win the race. It presumes that the king is unblocked from its shortest path. (If the king faces obstacles, the counting method is best.) It's called the rule of the square. There's probably no single more important calculation tool in the endgame. Although it's taught all over the world, credit is hardly ever given to the 19th-century Austrian player and writer who invented this fundamental tool—Johann Berger. (He's the same fellow who invented a tie-breaking system for chess tournaments. Too bad for Johann that he didn't have a friendly patent office in his native Graz!)

Berger pointed out, and Tarrasch popularized the idea, that you

could simply imagine an equal-sided box drawn from the pawn's current square to its promotion square. Draw the square toward the king. If the king is within the square, or on move can get into the square, he can catch the pawn. If he can't, he'll lose the race. No calculating or counting necessary! Just be careful if the pawn is in its original position, and take into account its first-move option of leaping two squares forward.

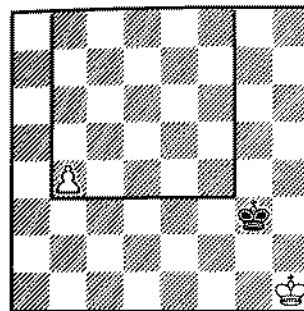


Diagram 26

Black to move
The king catches the pawn.

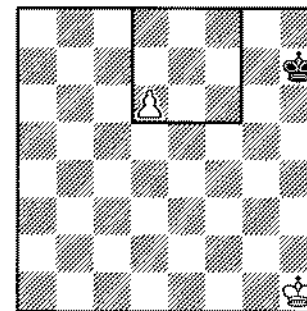


Diagram 27

White or Black to move
The pawn will queen.

From Diagram 26, with Black to move, his king enters the square, catches and captures the pawn, drawing: 1. ... Kf4 2. b5 Ke5 3. b6 Kd6 4. b7 Kc7. With White to move, he wins by advancing the pawn out of reach of the defending king.

From Diagram 27, Black is lost, whoever is to move.

ON MOVE, CAN
SQUARE, IT CAN CATCH
IN TIME.



But sometimes the presence of other pawns can complicate the issue of whether a king can catch an enemy passed pawn.

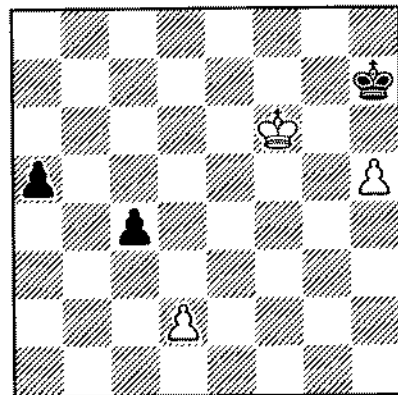


Diagram 28
White to move

1. Ke5

It seems that the passed pawn could be easily stopped—after all, the king is within the square. However, Black has a trick that blocks the White king's path.

1. ... c3! 2. dxc3 a4 3. Kd4 a3

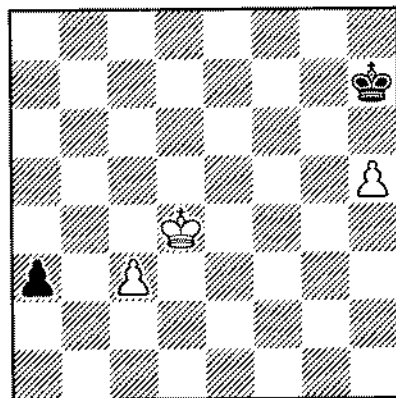


Diagram 29

Black's pawn now queens easily.



Here's an example where the "tricks" help the defender.

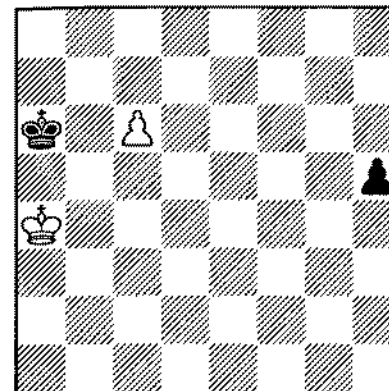


Diagram 30
White to move

At first glance, White's position is hopeless. He can't catch Black's pawn, and his own pawn could be easily stopped by the Black king. But as White's king moves to support his advanced pawn, Black must take the time to move his own king to defend against its promotion. Suddenly White's king is within the magic square, able to catch the opposing pawn and draw!

1. Kb4 Kb6

If 1. ... h4, then 2. Kc5 h3 3. Kd6 h2 4. c7 Kb7 5. Kd7 with the draw.

2. Kc4 h4 3. Kd5 h3

Or 3. ... Kc7 4. Ke4.

4. Kd6 h2 5. c7, draw.

HOW TO WIN A PAWN UP: THREE RULES FOR BATTLING A BLOCKING KING

Blocking the pawn, the best defense short of winning the pawn, doesn't always draw—unless the pawn is a rook's pawn. (We'll take a look at this special case in a moment.) The side with the

pawn should keep in mind the three rules for winning.

1. Move your king in front of your pawn. (This means, given a choice, you will move your king before advancing your pawn.)

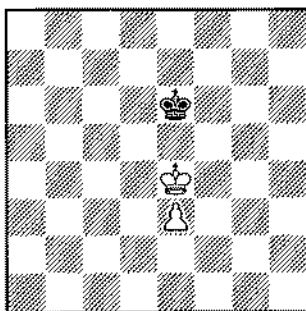


Diagram 31

A key position: With Black to move, White has the opposition and wins with all non-rook pawns. On move, White only draws.

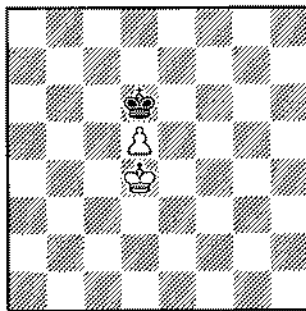


Diagram 32

White or Black to move
The king is not in front of his pawn—draw!

2. With your king in front (either directly or diagonally) of your pawn, you'll always win, except when the defender has the opposition. One king has the opposition when he stands in the path of his counterpart with one square between them on a file (most commonly), rank or diagonal—and his counterpart must move. This is frequently called the "direct" or "close opposition." It's important to keep in mind that the opposition is a tool to advance or to stop a pawn; opposition is not a goal in itself.

3. With your king on the sixth rank in front of your pawn, you'll always win, regardless of whose move it is. Memorize this next position. If you have the extra pawn, know that if you reach it there is no stopping you from winning. If you're the defender, you want to avoid this "and wins" position! It also illustrates the basic process of supporting the pawn while forcing the defender from the queening square.

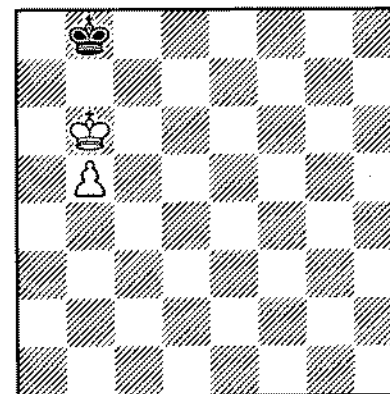


Diagram 33

Here, White wins regardless of who's on move.

1. **Ka6!**

Because the extra pawn is a knight's pawn (b- or g-pawn), White needs to be careful not to box Black into a stalemate. In the case of 1. Kc6 Ka7 2. Kc7 (2. b6+ Ka8 leads only to a draw) 2. ... Ka8 3. b6?, it's a stalemate, but White wins repeating the position with 3. Kb6, then going to the right plan. This stalemate trap works only with knight-pawns, but with these, it works often. Remember it—especially when defending!

1. ... **Ka8**

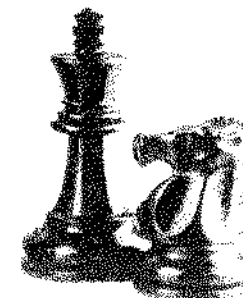
Or 1. ... Kc8 2. Ka7.

2. **b6 Kb8 3. b7**

Hitting the seventh *without check*—a bad omen for the defender!

3. ... **Kc7 4. Ka7**

Put your king in front of your pawn, and you'll win. If your opponent has the opposition, with your king on its sixth rank in front of your pawn, you'll always win!



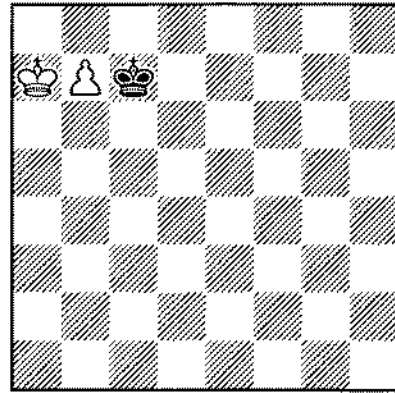


Diagram 34

And the pawn queens.



Memorizing a few key, "matrix" positions is a tremendous help in calculating the result of trade-down combinations. Here's a classic illustration, the finale of a speed-game between Jose Capablanca and Emmanuel Lasker. Because Capa knew that he would win with his king on the sixth ahead of his pawn, that's as far as he needed to look. See Diagram 38 on page 42.

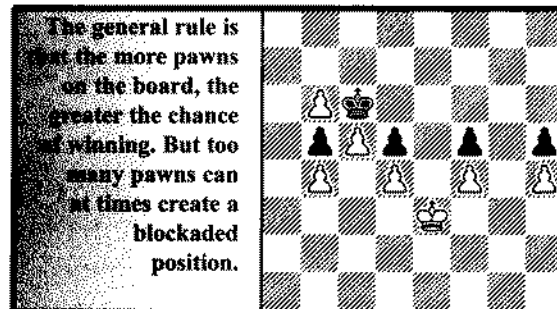


Diagram 35

The general rule is that the more pawns on the board, the greater the chance of winning. But too many pawns can at times create a blocked position.

Winnable Endgames— More pawns, the more winnable!

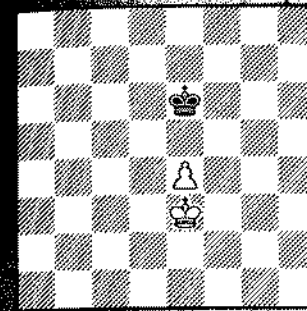


Diagram 36

No matter who moves,
it's an easy draw.

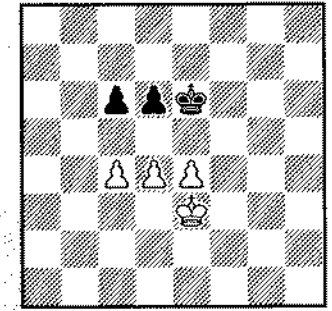


Diagram 37

White creates an outside
passed pawn and wins.

Next-easiest win: Knight and pawn

PAWN ENDINGS—THE MORE PAWNS, THE GREATER THE WINNING CHANCES

K+1 vs. K about 50% chance of winning

K+2 vs. K+1 about 90% chance of winning

K+3 vs. K+2 about 95% chance of winning

The more pawns, the greater the winning chances!

However, with many pawns, beware of blocked positions—see Diagram 35 at left.

COMPARISONS BETWEEN ENDGAMES

King vs. king of same color, bishop vs. knight, and queen vs. queen.

THE MOST WINNABLE ENDGAMES

King vs. king of opposite color—with an extra pawn, only about 10% are

draws—even with two extra pawns, about 30-40% are still a draw.

The least winnable endings are rook endings.

ENDGAME PRINCIPLES ARE DIFFERENT!

IN THE OPENING AND MIDDLEGAME, WE WOULD NEARLY ALWAYS WANT AN EXTRA MOVE. IN THE ENDGAME, AS WE'VE SEEN, LOSING A MOVE IS SOMETIMES THE KEY TO WINNING! LIKewise, IN THE ENDGAME RUSHING TO ADVANCE A PAWN CAN BE A SERIOUS MISTAKE.

KEEP YOUR ELECTIVE PAWN MOVES IN RESERVE. IN MANY CASES, THESE OPTIONAL MOVES WILL ALLOW YOU TO TAKE THE OPPOSITION AND PUT YOUR OPPONENT IN ZUGZWANG.

CAPABLANCA—EM. LASKER

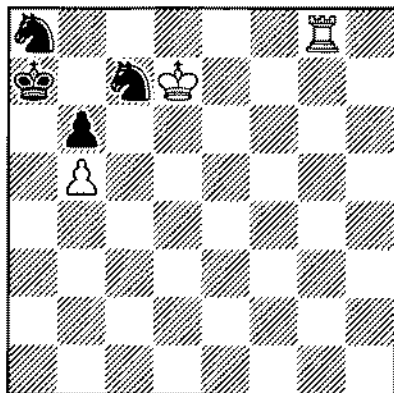


Diagram 38

White to move

After 1. Kc6 Nxb5, a draw seems inevitable. But Capablanca finds a way to win, with one of those sudden reductions to an atomic chess position.

1. Rxa8+! Kxa8

(If 1. ... Nxa8, then 2. Kc8 Nc7 3. Kxc7, winning. And after 1. ... Kb7, 2. Ra7+ is decisive.)

2. Kxc7 Ka7 3. Kc6

Winning the pawn—and reaching number 3 of “How to Win a Pawn Up,” above.



Let's look at a position where the king and pawn are both on the sixth rank.



IF THE PAWN HITS ITS SEVENTH WITH CHECK—IT'S A DRAW. IF IT ISN'T CHECK—IT'S A WIN.

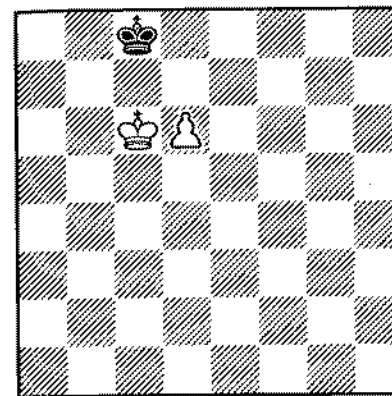


Diagram 39

White to move

1. d7+

When the pawn hits the beachhead of the seventh rank with check, it portends the draw.

1. ... Kd8 2. Kd6

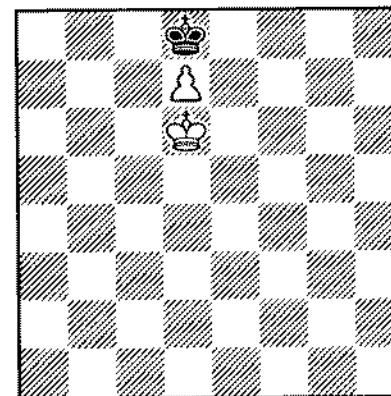


Diagram 40

It's a stalemate. But what if, in the starting position, it were Black's move?

Fact: Jose Capablanca was never checkmated in tournament play.

ANALYSIS

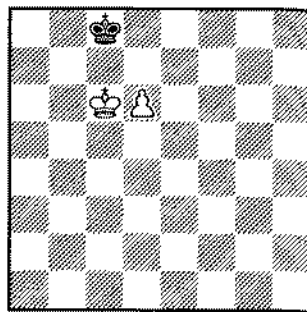


Diagram 41
Black to move

If it's Black's move, the pawn will advance without check, and White wins:

1. ... Kd8 2. d7 Ke7 3. Kc7.



With the White king unable to get ahead of his pawn, it's a draw—but the defender has to play accurately.

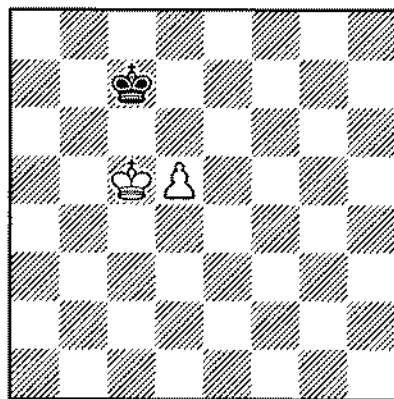


Diagram 42

1. d6+ Kd7 2. Kd5

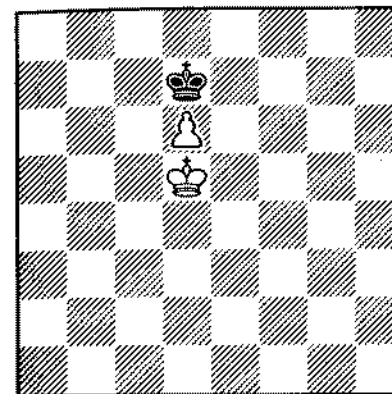


Diagram 43

If Black's king falls back to c8 or e8, he's doomed, because he invites a pawn advance that doesn't give check. For example, after 2. ... Kc8 3. Kc6 Kd8 4. d7, the pawn advances without checking, Black's king is chased off the queening square, and White promotes and wins. And after 2. ... Ke8, 3. Ke6 (or 3. Kc6) wins in the same manner. Black must drop straight back to keep the draw.

2. ... Kd8

Now Black can, after 3. Ke6, respond with 3. ... Ke8, and on 3. Kc6, play ... Kc8. He thus keeps the opposition, not giving White's pawn a chance to advance without check, and draws. And, of course, Black meets the tricky 3. Ke5 with 3. ... Kd7, returning to his safest square.

KEEP THE KING, NOT WITH



ROOK PAWNS — WHEN LIVING ON THE EDGE CAN BE SAFE

When the extra pawn is a rook pawn, the odds of a win plummet, since the possibility of stalemate protects the defender from normal winning techniques. If the defender's king can simply get to the queening square, he can't be forced out regardless of who has the opposition.

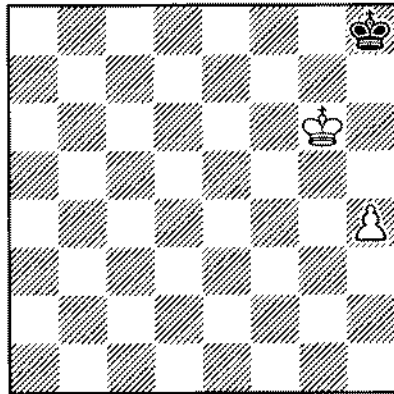


Diagram 44
Black to move

This is a draw because White can't budge the opponent's king from the corner. Pushing the pawn to h7 leads to stalemate.

DEFENDING BY JAILING THE OPPOSING KING ON THE ROOK'S FILE

Even if the opposing king is in the otherwise ideal position—on the sixth rank ahead of his pawn, the game can often be drawn.

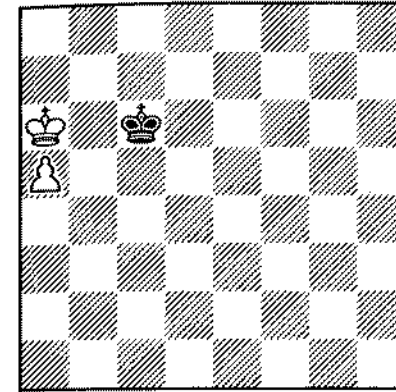


Diagram 45
White to move

This is a draw, regardless of who is on move. A blockade is successful thanks to Black's access to the c7 and c8 squares.

For example:

1. Ka7 Kc7 2. a6 Kc8 3. Kb6 Kb8

Or with Black on move:

1. ... Kc7 2. Ka7

If 2. Kb5, 2. ... Kb7.

2. ... Kc8 3. a6 Kc7 4. Ka8 Kc8 5. a7 Kc7 stalemate.

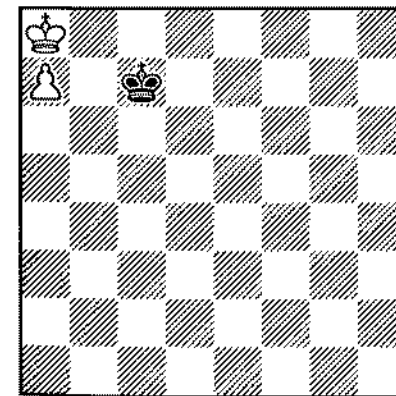


Diagram 46

You can see that even if the superior side's king actually occupies the queening square, as long as the defender can get to the seventh or eighth rank of the bishop's file, it's a dead draw.

Even extra rook pawns don't help the superior side.

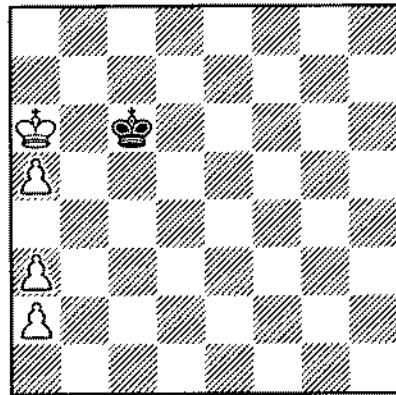


Diagram 47
White or Black to move

Black draws easily. He keeps White's king a prisoner on the rook's file or, if the White king escapes, Black heads for the corner, from which he can't be pried.



Once again, knowing this simple rule makes it possible to stop calculations upon arriving at similar positions. In one of his



WHEN THE SUPERIOR SIDE'S PAWN IS A ROOK-PAWN (AN A- OR H-PAWN), THE WIN IS IMPOSSIBLE IF THE WEAKER SIDE'S KING TAKES POSSESSION OF THE CORNER QUEENING SQUARE, OR BARRICADES THE OPPONENT'S KING IN THAT CORNER.

games, Mikhail Tal shows us how to use the rule to find the right way to a draw in a difficult and complicated position.

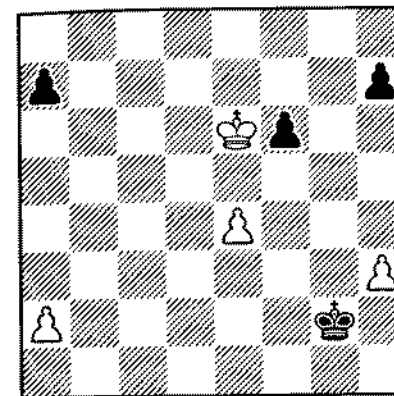


Diagram 48
Black to move

1. ... Kf3 2. Kxf6 Kxe4 3. h4 Kd5 4. h5 Kd6

Black is organizing a defense by trying to incarcerate his opponent's king on the edge of the board.

5. Kg7 Ke7 6. Kxh7 Kf7 7. h6 a5!

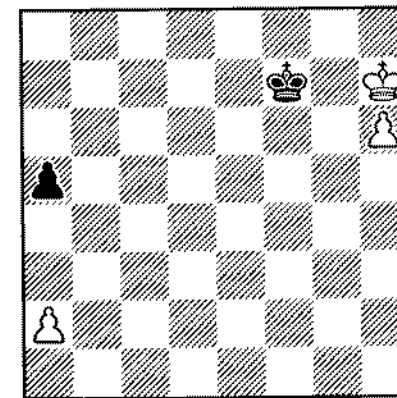


Diagram 49

8. a4 Kf8 9. Kg6 Kg8 10. Kf6 Kh7 11. Ke5 Kxh6
12. Kd5 Kg6 13. Kc5 Kf6 14. Kb5 Ke6 15. Kxa5 Kd7

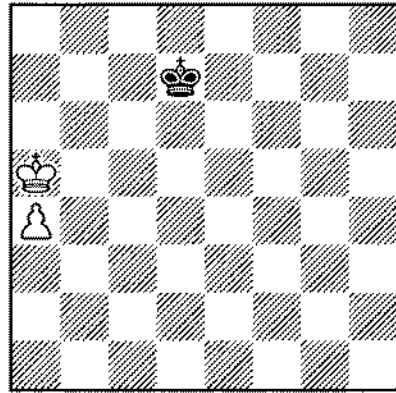


Diagram 50

16. Kb6 Kc8

Black's king is just in time (17. Ka7 Kc7) to block his adversary. Moving the pawn to a5 was necessary to distract White's king from the key square of b7. If the pawn remained at home, or even moved only to a6, Black would lose: 7. ... a6 8. a4 Kf8? (8. ... a5! =) 9. Kg6 Kg8 10. a5 Kh8 11. Kf6 Kh7 12. Ke6 Kxh6 13. Kd6 Kg6 14. Kc6 Kf6 15. Kb7 Ke6 16. Kxa6 Kd7 17. Kb7.

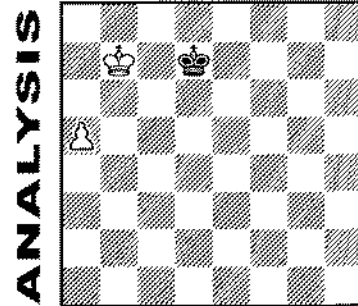


Diagram 51
After 17. Kb7

Black loses because he wasn't able to get to the corner or limit White's king to the side of the board. Now that we've looked at the special case of the rook-pawn, let's move on to other principles.

SAFE SQUARES

When the defender can stand on a square and draw, that square is a "safe square." Take a careful look at the next diagram, which so far has no defending king. Where could we put the Black king so that it can draw? How many such *safe squares* are there?

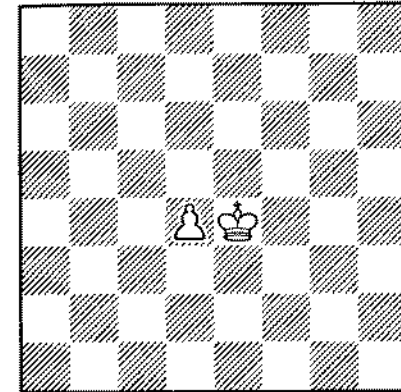


Diagram 52

White to move after Black places his king

Well, e6 and d6 should be pretty obvious to you by now. If on e6, the Black King has only one good square to move to—d6. And, conversely, if he's on d6, then e6 is the only safe square.

Reminder—never move to the side! Here 1. ... Kc6? and 1. ... Kf6? both lose miserably. And never, ever voluntarily move backward: 1. ... Ke7? loses to 2. Ke5, grabbing the opposition after 2. ... Kd7 3. Kd5. *Taking the opposition when ahead of the pawn diagonally inevitably leads to having the opposition in front of the pawn.* With the White king on d5 and Black's king on d7, Black must move over and let White's king gain more space and secure the queening of the pawn. Similarly, 2. ... Kd7 loses to 2. Kd5.

So two other safe squares are d8 and e8. Here, Black is never in zugzwang, as he goes back and forth between these two squares. He meets 1. Kd5 with 1. ... Kd7, or 1. Ke5 with

1. ... Ke7, taking the opposition—thus preventing White's king from making any progress.

So Black draws with his king on (or moving to) any of *four* safe squares:

1. ... Ke6, 1. ... Kd6, 1. ... Ke8, or 1. ... Kd8.

PASSING THE MOVE (TRIANGULATION)

In order to take the opposition and force the opposing king to move from a key square, you will often need to find a way to effectively "pass" the move to your opponent. But how can you "pass"?

NEDELKOVICH

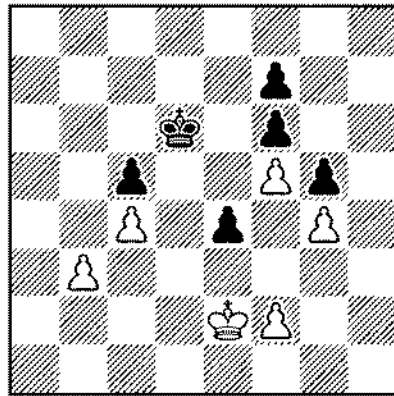


Diagram 53
White to move

The immediate fight is for the e4 pawn. White can't win it immediately after 1. Ke3 Ke5, but he can triangulate on the e2-d2-e3 squares to "lose" a move, forcing Black into a zugzwang.

1. Kd2 Ke5 2. Ke3, winning.

The e-pawn is lost. White would then create a passed pawn on the queenside by moving his king to c3 and playing b3-b4.

CALLING IN THE RESERVES

In the fight for opposition, extra moves available to the pawns can be crucial. Such moves can be used to force the opponent into zugzwang.

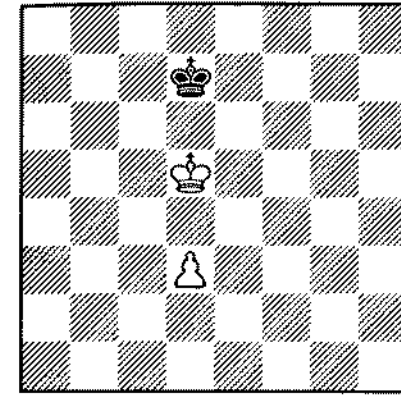


Diagram 54
White to move

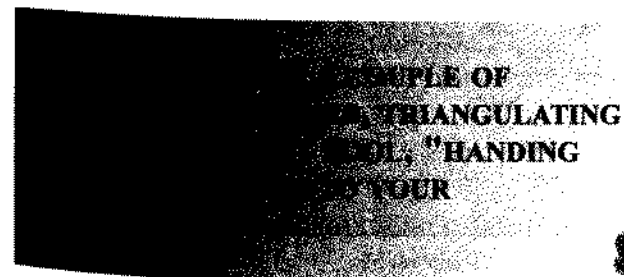
If White's pawn were already on d4, White, to move, wouldn't be able to win because Black would keep the opposition.

1. d4

This move forces Black to give way for the opposing monarch.

1. ... Kc7 2. Ke6, winning.

Similarly, 1. ... Ke7 2. Kc6, leads to a win for White.



FILIP—BARCZA
SOFIA, 1957

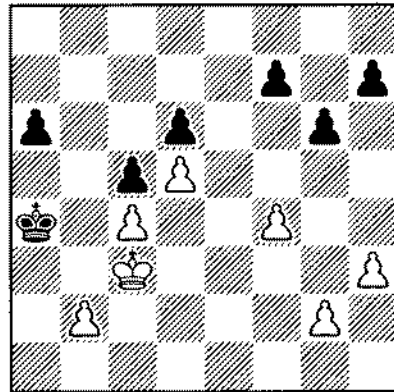


Diagram 55
White to move

In this complex position, Black plans to provoke b2-b3+, which would allow his king to penetrate into the opponent's camp. It is important that after both sides exhaust the pawn moves on the king side, Black will have a reserve pawn move, ... a6-a5, on the opposite side of the board.

1. g3

If 1. g4 h5 2. gxh5 gxh5 3. f5 f6 4. h4 a5!, and 5. b3+ is forced.

1. ... f5 2. g4 h5 3. gxh5 gxh5 4. h4 a5.

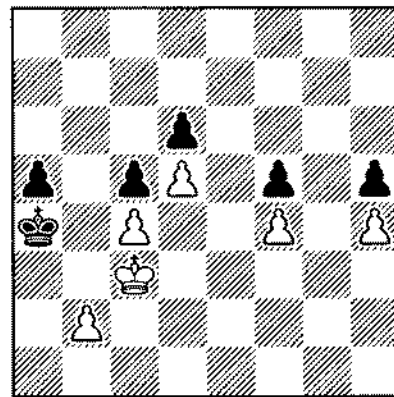


Diagram 56

5. b3+

If 5. Kc2, then 5. ... Kb4 6. b3 a4 7. bxa4.

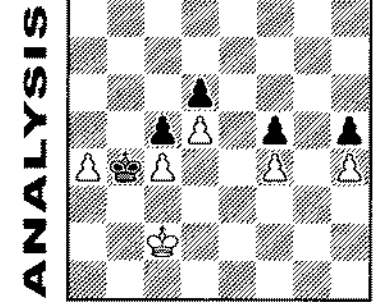


Diagram 57
After 7. bxa4

7. ... Kxa4 (7. ... Kxc4 also wins) 8. Kc3 Ka3 9. Kc2 Kb4 10. Kd3 Kb3, with the win.

5. ... Ka3 6. Kc2 Ka2

Black also wins with 6. ... a4, as in Diagram 57.

7. Kc3

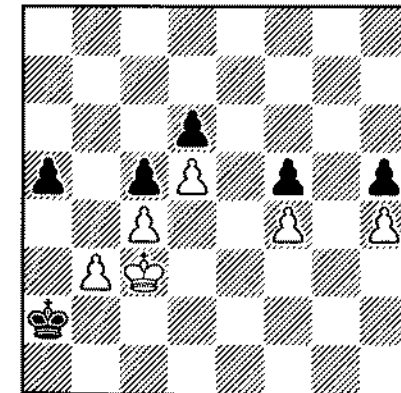


Diagram 58
Black to move

7. ... Kb1

This important maneuver from behind wins.

8. Kd3 Kb2 9. Kd2 Kxb3, White resigns.

THE MOVING SCREEN

The next technique we'll take a look at is the chess king's equivalent of the "moving screen," sometimes called a "moving pick"—a tactic illegal in basketball but permitted in chess. Trainers in Russia call this "shoulder-pushing." This most effective tool yields several advantages at once. One king moves across the board in a way that gives him the shortest route to a pawn or pawns while simultaneously preventing the rival king from following the shortest route to his objective.

SHADE—AHUES
BERLIN, 1921

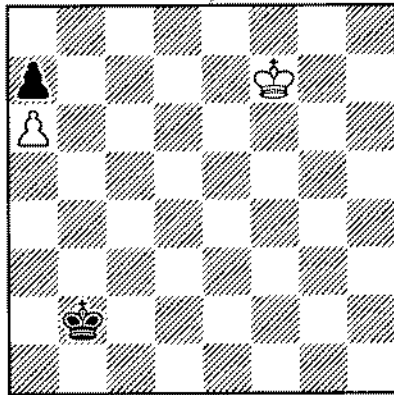


Diagram 59
White to move

1. Ke6 Kc3

Now White blundered with 2. Kd6? Kd4 3. Kc6 Ke5 4. Kb7 Kd6 5. Kxa7 Kc7, allowing a draw. By screening (or "shoulder-pushing," if you prefer) on move two, White could have won.

2. Kd5

White's goal is Black's pawn on a7; Black's goal is the safe haven of the c7-square.

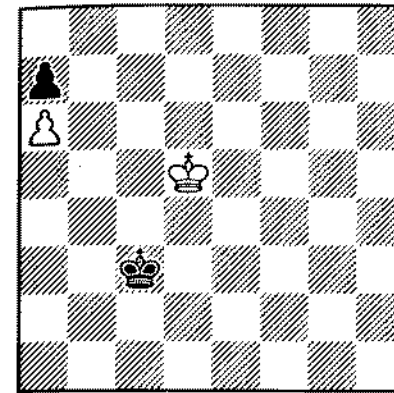


Diagram 60

White's king approaches the a7-pawn while at the same time shouldering his opponent's king away from c7. Now 2. ... Kb4 is as hopeless as the text move.

2. ... Kd3 3. Kc6 Kd4 4. Kb7 Kc5 5. Kxa7 Kc6 6. Kb8, winning.

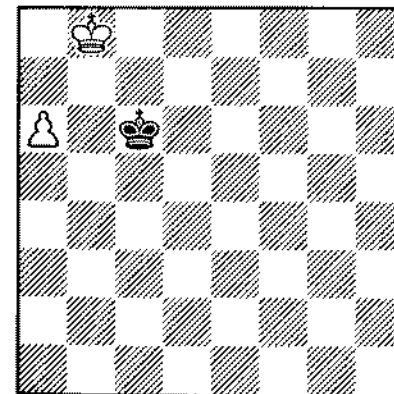


Diagram 61

... ACCOMPLISHES
... USING THE
... GOAL
... ENEMY KING



THE DISTANT OPPOSITION

You've seen how important the *direct* or close opposition can be, often making the difference between a win and a draw. When the kings are distant from each other, it's crucial to recognize how you can wind up with the direct opposition.

CAPABLANCA

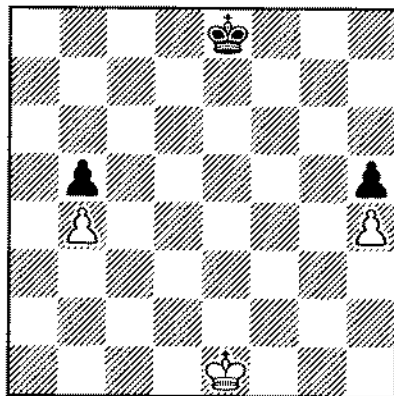


Diagram 62
White to move

1. Ke2!

Taking the *distant* opposition, since there are now an odd number (5) of squares between the kings, and it's Black to move. If both kings advanced straight ahead, White would wind up with the close opposition.

1. ... Ke7

On 1. ... Kd8, White sidesteps with 2. Kf3. After 2. ... Ke7, White continues 3. Ke3! (another distant opposition, with three squares between the kings) 3. ... Kf7 4. Kd4 (sidestepping again to gain the opposition) 4. ... Kf6 5. Kc5, winning. After 1. ... Kf8, Black also loses: 2. Kd3 Ke7 3. Ke3! Kd7 4. Kf4. If 1. ... Kf7, then 2. Kf3 Ke7 3. Ke3! +-.

2. Ke3! Ke6

If 2. ... Kf6, then 3. Kf4.

3. Ke4

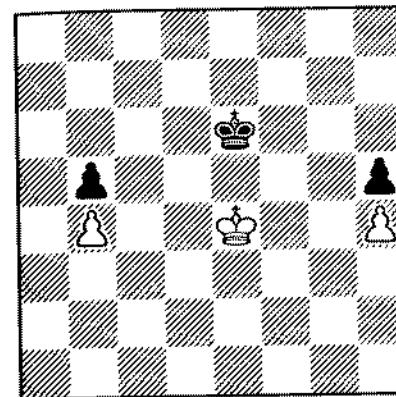


Diagram 63

3. ... Kf6

Now some calculations are needed. If 3. ... Kd6 4. Kd4! Kc6 (4. ... Ke6 5. Kc5, and White queens well ahead of Black.) 5. Ke5 Kc6 6. Kd6 Kb7 7. Kc5 Ka6 8. Kc6 Ka7 9. Kxb5 Kb7 10. Kc5 Kc7 11. Kd5 Kb6 12. Ke5 Kb5 13. Kf5 Kxb4 14. Kg5 +-.

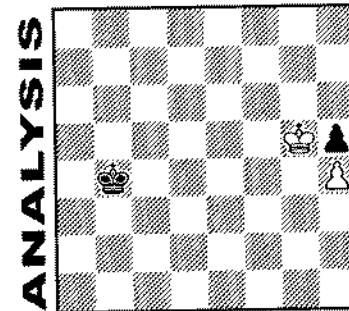


Diagram 64
After 14. Kg5

4. Kf4

Turning immediately for the b-pawn with 4. Kd5? would be a mistake, leading to a draw after 4. ... Kf5.

4. ... Kg6

4. ... Ke6, White wins with 5. Kg5.

5. Ke5 Kf7 6. Kf5 Kg7 7. Kg5 Kf7 8. Kxh5 Kf6 9. Kg4 Kg6 10. Kf4, winning.



Here's a beautiful and practical illustration of both safe squares and the power of the opposition. Of course, if it's Black's move, he wins easily with 1. ... Kd4. But, with the move, can White save the draw? Remember, you definitely don't want Black to win the White pawn in a way that leaves his king in front of his own pawn with either the opposition or a reserve pawn move.

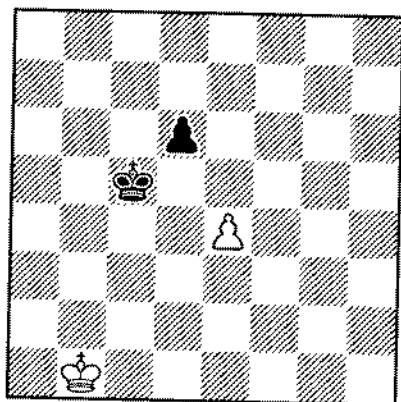


Diagram 65
White to move

With all this in mind, you can find ...

1. e5! dxe5 2. Kc1!

Not 2. Kc2? Kc4! -+.

2. ... Kd5

If 2. ... Kd4, then 3. Kd2; if 2. ... Kc4, then 3. Kc2.

3. Kd1

White draws because he reaches his safe squares, d1 and e1.



UNLIKE REAL LIFE, STEPPING ASIDE
DIAGONALLY IS AS "SHORT" A PATH
AS TRAVELING STRAIGHT AHEAD
ON THE RANK OR FILE.



NEISHTADT

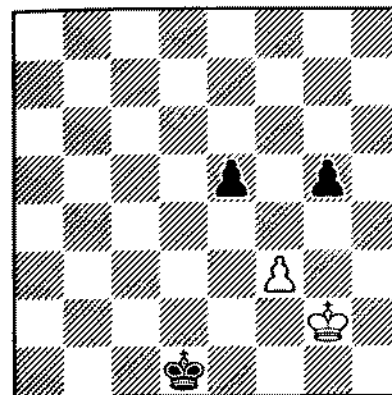


Diagram 66
White to move

White achieves a draw in this seemingly hopeless position by using the distant opposition.

1. Kh1!!

With this position in mind, William Blake could have written "What immortal hand or eye/ Could frame thy *drawful* symmetry?" 1. Kf1 is bad because of 1. ... Kd2 2. Kf2 g4! (the "waiting" move 2. ... Kd3 also wins) 3. fxg4 e4 4. g5 e3+. Also losing is 1. Kg3 Ke1 2. Kg2 Ke2 3. Kg3 Kf1! 4. Kg4 Kf2 -+.

1. ... Ke2

If 1. ... g4, then 2. Kg2!, with a draw.

2. Kg2 Ke3 3. Kg3 Kd4 4. Kg4 Ke3 5. Kg3 Ke2 6. Kg2 Kd2 7. Kh2!

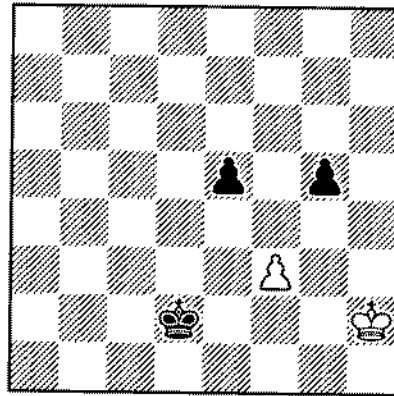


Diagram 67

Maintaining the balance, thanks to the distant opposition.

7. ... Kd3 8. Kh3!, draw.

THE CLASSIC TRIANGULATION

Now it pays to take a look back at passing the move in close quarters. You'll want to memorize this example.

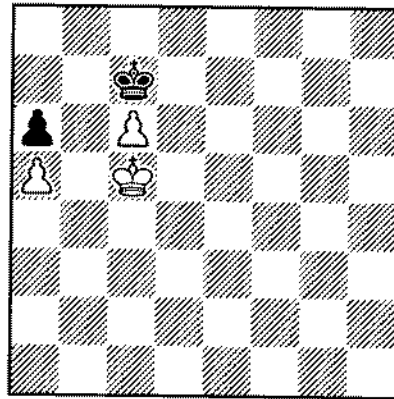


Diagram 68
White to move

1. Kd5 Kc8!

Now the straightforward 2. Kd6 doesn't work because 2. ... Kd8

3. c7+ leads only to stalemate. But if, in the position after 1. ... Kc8, Black had to move, he would lose. Time for White to pass! He moves his king back to the squares c4 and d4 in order to lose a tempo. Black's king, being on the edge, doesn't enjoy such an option.

2. Kc4 Kd8

Or 2. ... Kb8 brings us to the same end.

3. Kd4 Kc8

If 3. ... Kc7 4. Kc5.

4. Kd5

The move's been passed! We're back to the position after Black's 1. ... Kc8, only now it's Black's turn.

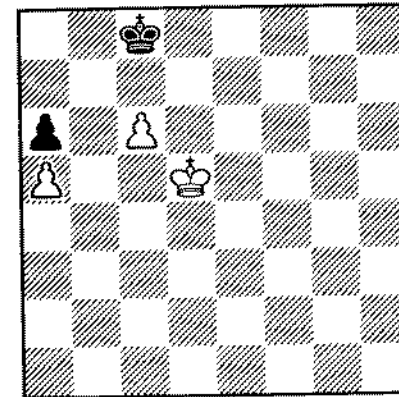


Diagram 69

Now Black loses after 4. ... Kc7 5. Kc5 Kc8 6. Kb6, or 4. ... Kd8 5. Kd6 Kc8 6. c7 Kb7 7. Kd7.

PART II: PASSED PAWNS

Let's now focus on those positions, with several pawns on the board, where the passed pawns are a decisive factor. A passed pawn is one that isn't blocked by another pawn and doesn't have enemy pawns on adjoining files. In other words, no pawns can stop it on its march to promotion. In a king-and-pawn ending, a passed pawn can be stopped only by the opponent's king. Since the opposing king must be at all times able to prevent a passed pawn from queening, it's important to be able to tell how close to the pawn he must stay.

THE ADVANTAGE OF THE OUTSIDE PASSED PAWNS

CHEKHOVER

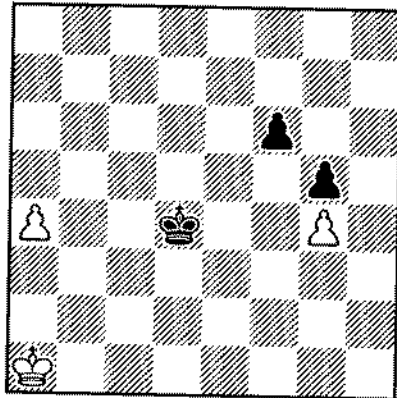


Diagram 70
White to move

Black's king has to catch White's passed a-pawn. For his part, White plans to take his opponent's pawns on the kingside and then to win the game by promoting his g-pawn. Black's attempt to create counterplay fails.

1. a5 Kc5

If Black tries 1. ... Kd5, play continues 2. Kb2 f5 3. gxf5 g4 4. a6 Kc6 5. f6 g3 6. a7 Kb7 7. f7 g2.

ANALYSIS

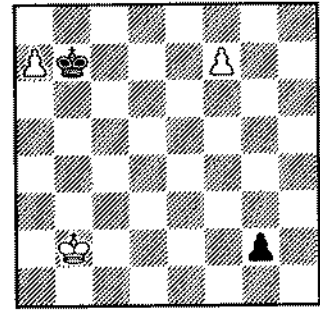


Diagram 71
After 7. ... g2

8. a8(Q+)!—an important, tempo-winning technique—8. ... Kxa8 9. f8(Q+), winning. Back to the main line.

2. Kb2 f5

White only try for counterplay. In the case of 2. ... Kb5 3. Kc3 Ka5 4. Kd4 Kb6 5. Ke4 (5. Kd5? f5 6. gxf5 g4 7. Ke4 Kc6=) ... Kc7 6. Kf5 Kd7 7. Kxf6 Ke8 8. Kxg5 Kf7 9. Kh6, White is winning.

3. gxf5 g4 4. f6 Kd6 5. a6 g3 6. f7 Ke7 7. a7 g2 8. f8(Q)+, winning.

It is important to note the distracting roles played by the a- and g-pawns.

THE DISTANT PASSED
PAWN ON THE OPPOSITE
SIDE OF THE BOARD
IS A MAJOR ATTACK
WEAPON IN THE
HANDS OF THEIR



Here's a position with much more than kings and pawns, so it looks a little out of place in this chapter. But it again illustrates how such a complex position can reduce itself to the chess "atom" we began this chapter by discussing. And it shows the distracting power of a distant passed pawn.

LOMBARDY—FISCHER
NEW YORK, 1960

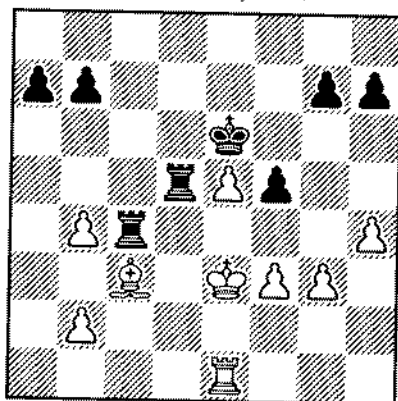


Diagram 72
Black to move

Black sacrifices the Exchange in order to segue into a favorable pawn ending, where he can count on a distant, outside passed pawn.

1. ... Rxc3+ 2. bxc3 Rxe5+ 3. Kd2 Rxe1 4. Kxe1 Kd5
5. Kd2 Kc4 6. h5 b6!

Black prepares ... a7-a5.



**PASSED PAWNS ARE MEANT TO
DISTRACT! AND THE FARTHER
THE OPPONENT'S KING IS
FROM THE PASSED PAWN, THE
STRONGER ITS POWER TO DISTRACT.**

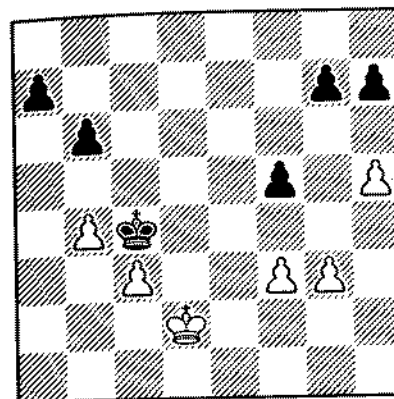


Diagram 73

7. Kc2 g5 8. h6 f4!

This is an important moment. Black advances his kingside-passed pawns as far he can. After the upcoming exchanges on the queenside, he wants his f-pawn as close to its promotion square as possible.

9. g4 a5 10. bxa5 bxa5 11. Kb2 a4 12. Ka3 Kxc3

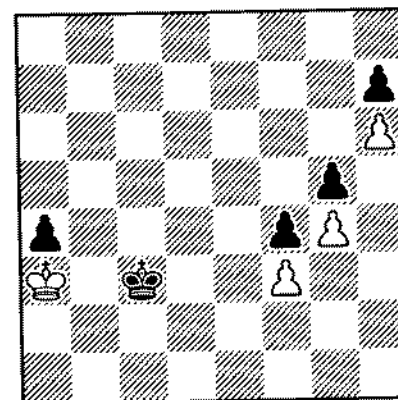


Diagram 74

13. Kxa4 Kd4 14. Kb4 Ke3, and White resigns.



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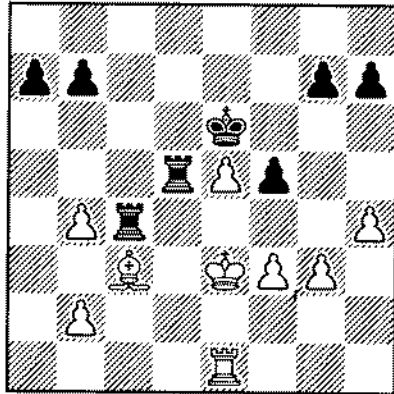


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Black prepares ... a7-a5.



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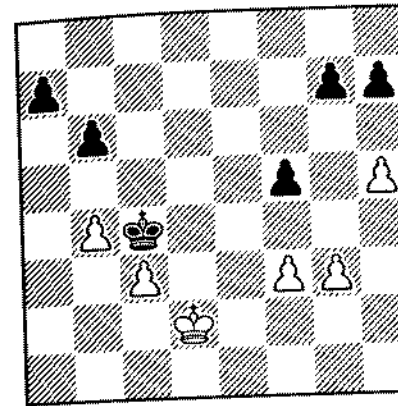


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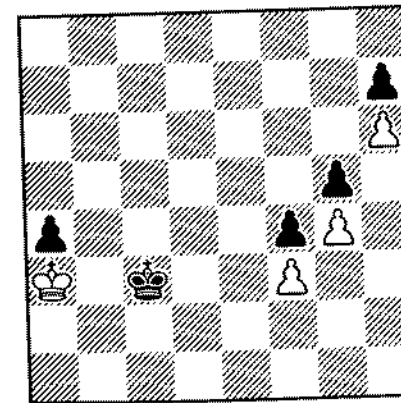


Diagram 74

13. Kxa4 Kd4 14. Kb4 Ke3, and White resigns.



Although important, a distant passed pawn does not always guarantee advantage. A lot depends on the overall pawn structure and position of the kings.

EUWE—SPIELMAN
AMSTERDAM, 1930

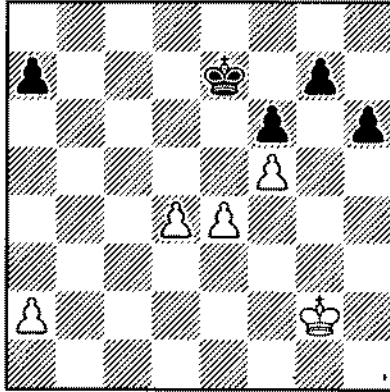


Diagram 75
White to move

Black's kingside pawns are not favorably placed. Here Black's distant passed h-pawn is no match for White's far-advanced, powerful central passers.

1. Kg3 Kf7 2. Kh4 Ke7

Or 2. ... g6 3. fxg6+ Kxg6 4. d5 Kg7 5. Kh5 +.

3. Kh5 Kf7 4. e5 fxe5 5. dxe5 a6 6. a3 a5 7. a4 Kf8 8. Kg6 h5

If Black tries 8. ... Kg8, there follows 9. e6 Kf8 10. e7+, winning.

9. Kxh5 Kf7 10. Kg5, Black resigns.

MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATIES BETWEEN PAWNS

Two distant passed pawns, either of which by themselves would be vulnerable to capture by the enemy king, in effect often defend each other. Capturing one would put the king out of reach to capture the other from running to its promotion square.

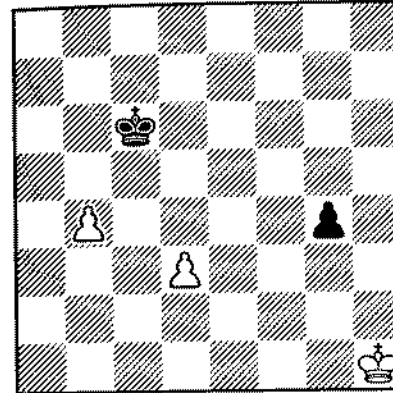


Diagram 76
White to move

Because there are two White pawns, one file apart. They "protect" each other because if Black's king stops to capture one, its partner pawns escape velocity toward the queening square.

1. d4! Kd5 2. b5 Kd6

Other pawn endings, as well as openings, can have "poison" pawns!

3. Kg2 Kc7

The threat is 4. ... Kb6.

4. d5! Kb6 5. d6 Kb7 6. Kg3 Kb6 7. Kxg4, winning.



The idea of pawns supporting each other is well expressed in the following position.

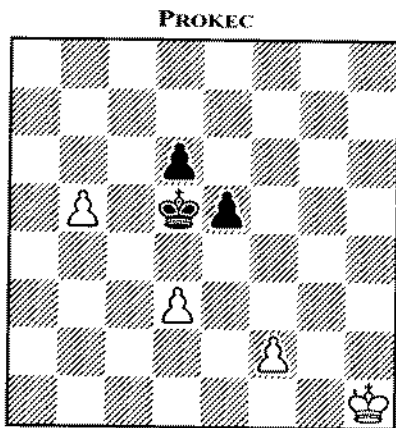


Diagram 77
White to move

1. f4 exf4

If Black tries 1. ... Kc5, White plays 2. f5, winning.

2. d4

Ingenious—and perfectly logical, based on what you've already seen. Black can't capture the pawn on d4 because he would put himself outside of the Berger Square of the b-pawn and be unable to stop it from queening. And the d4-pawn keeps the Black king from using c5. He has to try a long walk through a side door, giving White's king the time he needs to win the Black pawns.

2. ... Ke6 3. Kg2 Kd7 4. Kf3 Kc7 5. Kxf4 Kb6 6. Ke4 Kxb5 7. Kd5, winning.



Isolated passed pawns can protect each other in much the same way.

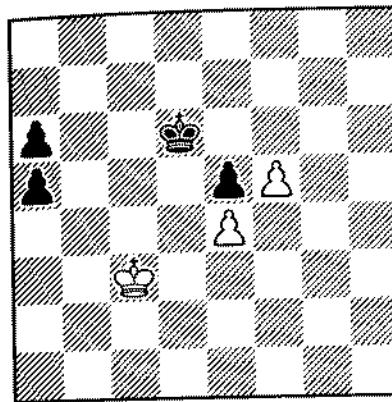


Diagram 78
White to move

White's pawns are unapproachable, while Black's pawns, separated and weak, are easy prey. White wins easily by capturing the f4-pawn, and then coming back for the e5-pawn.



Max Euwe (1901-1981), the fifth official world champion, and the only "amateur" champion since Paul Morphy.



Courtesy USCF

PROKEC

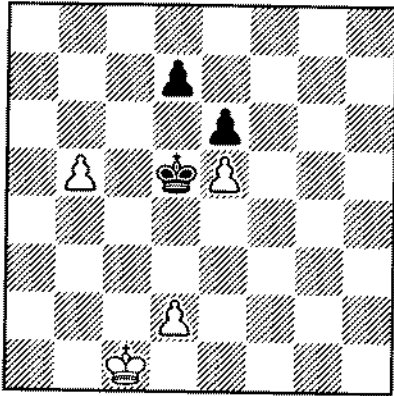


Diagram 79
White to move

Watch how White uses various techniques allowing the pawns to protect each other.

1. d4 d6 2. b6

If 2. ... exd6?, then ... Kxd6 3. Kc2 e5 4. dxe5+ Kxe5 5. Kb3 Kd6, draw.

2. ... Kc6

Now an unexpected breakthrough proves decisive.

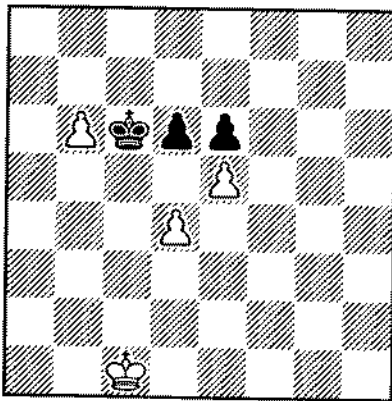


Diagram 80

15+!

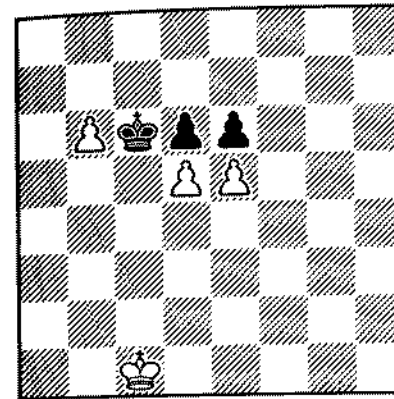


Diagram 81

3. ... Kxb6

4. ... exd5, White wins with 4. e6.

4. dxe6 Kc7 5. e7 Kd7 6. exd6, winning.

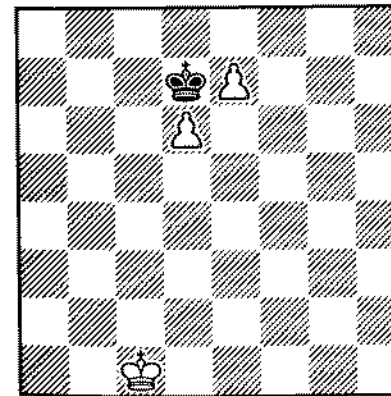


Diagram 82

CREATING PASSED PAWNS—RADICAL BREAKTHROUGHS

The most radical technique in the pawn ending is the breakthrough. Breakthroughs create passed pawns almost out of thin air. But one side's pawns have to be far enough advanced so he can throw them at their blocking opponents in a kamikaze fashion that forces a passed pawn near a promotion square. In all cases, the breakthrough requires the sacrifice of one or even a couple of pawns, as well as the absence of the enemy king from the resulting Berger Square. The following example is classic.

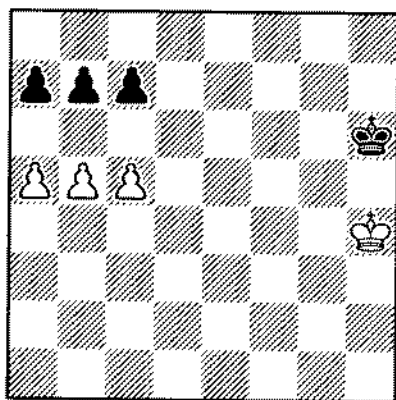


Diagram 83
White to move

1. b6!

Here the breakthrough works because White's pawns are far more advanced than Black's. White takes a Black pawn off either the a- or c-file.

1. ... cxb6

There is a symmetrical line after 1. ... axb6 2. c6 bxc6 3. a6.

2. a6

This move dislodges the b7 pawn.

2. ... bxa6 3. c6

The c-pawn has a clear path to promotion because the Black king is so far away to stop it. With the move, Black could have tried with 1. ... b6! (not 1. ... a6 2. c6!, or 1. ... c6 2. a6!; after 1. ... Kg6, the king is still too distant, and 2. b6 wins), but the breakthrough. Were Black's king on g6, then he would actually have won with 1. ... Kf5.



WEINSTEIN—ROHDE
LONE PINE, 1977

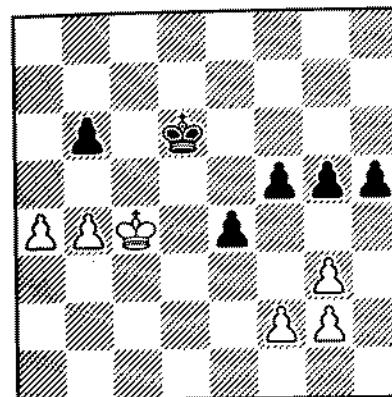


Diagram 84
Black to move

In this position, Black played 1. ... h4? and lost. But Black can create a passed pawn on the kingside and win with ...

1. ... f4! 2. gxf4

3. ... h4, then 2. ... bxa5 3. bxa5 h4, with the threat of ... f4-f3 and promotion of the h-pawn.

2. ... gxf4 3. Kd4 e3 4. fxe3

5. ... h4, Black uncorks 4. ... f3!. There follows 5. gxf3 h4 6. ... f3 7. Kf1 e2+.

4. ... f3!!

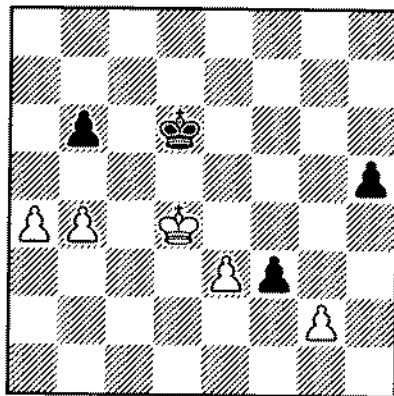


Diagram 85

5. gxf3 h4, winning.

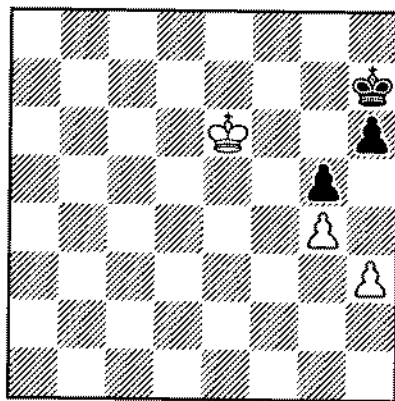


Diagram 86

White to move

Here the dominant position of the White king forces Black to push his h-pawn—otherwise, he loses both pawns!

1. Kf7 h5

Now if 2. Kf6, then 2. ... hxg4 3. hxg4 Kh6 4. Kf5 Kh7 5. Kxg5 Kg7, with a draw.

2. h4!

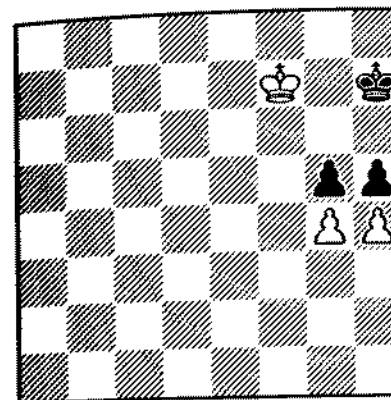


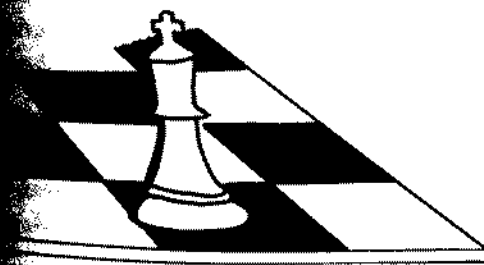
Diagram 87

2. ... Kh6

3. g4 3.g5.

4. Kf6 gxh4 4. g5+ Kh7 5. Kf7 h3 6. g6+ Kh6 7. g7 h2

8(Q) h1(Q) 9. Qg6 mate.



ED LASKER—MOLL
CHICAGO, 1912

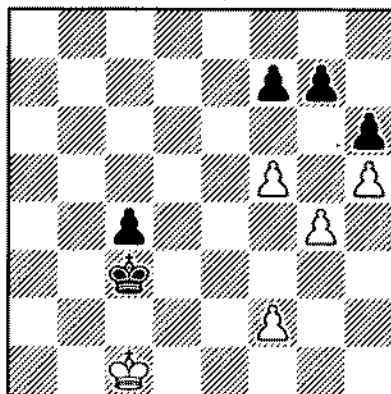


Diagram 88
White to move

At first glance, Black seems to have an "obvious" win. The c-pawn will distract White's king, while all of the White pawns on the other side will be taken. But there is a surprising opportunity for a winning White breakthrough.

1. f6!

White's 1. f4 loses to 1. ... f6!, which closes the kingside gate! Then if 2. g5, Black doesn't capture—and White can't create a passed pawn.

1. ... gxf6 2. f4 Kd4

Black rushes to catch up with White's potential passed pawn.

3. g5 fxg5 4. fxg5 Ke5 5. gxh6 Kf6 6. Kc2

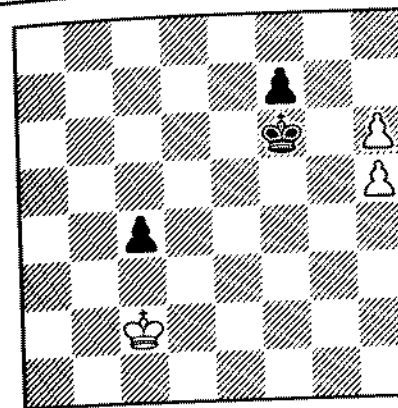


Diagram 89

6. ... c3 7. Kxc3, Black resigns.

How White's doubled rook pawns created a zugzwang, and how Black is blocked by his own f7 pawn. Without it, he could retreat to h8 and draw easily.



Warning: You should be constantly alert to sudden transitions in the endgame, and what that would mean to your prospects. King position and the presence of passed pawns are the two most important features of pawn endings. As a defender, try to get in front (block) a passer with your king. If you have the extra pawn, advance your king ahead of your pawn. The Rule of the Square will help you tell quickly if an unsupported pawn can be queen. Memorizing a few key "matrix" positions will give you a shortcut to evaluating positions. The chances of winning are high when the sole extra pawn is a rook-pawn.

Concepts of safe squares, triangulation, reserve pawn moves, "playing screen," and opposition are important to playing pawn endings well.

The outside passed pawn frequently wins because it can be used to attack the defense. Passed pawns and connected passed pawns can protect each other. Passed pawns can be created by breakthrough technique.

Pawn Endings Learning Exercises

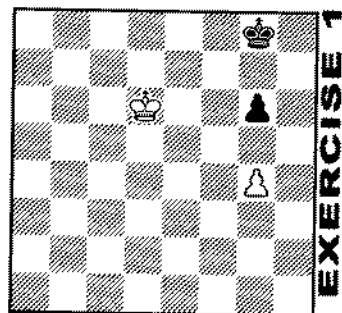


Diagram 90
White to move

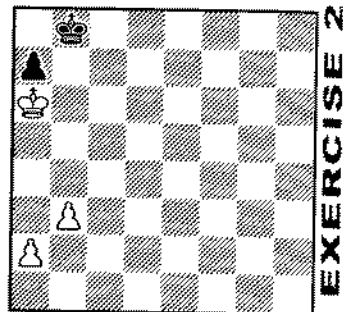


Diagram 91
White to move

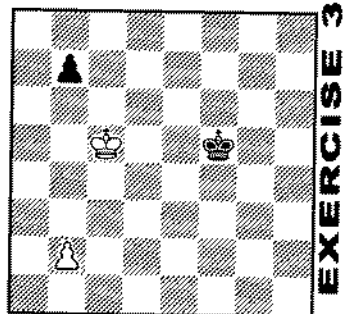


Diagram 92
White to move

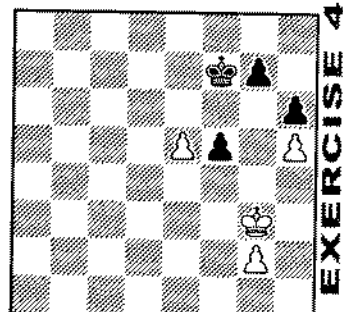


Diagram 93
White to move

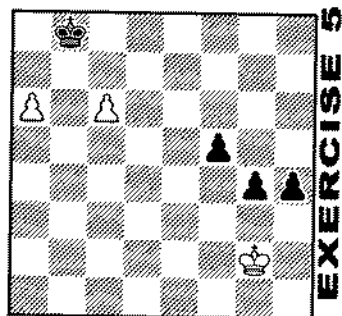


Diagram 94
White to move

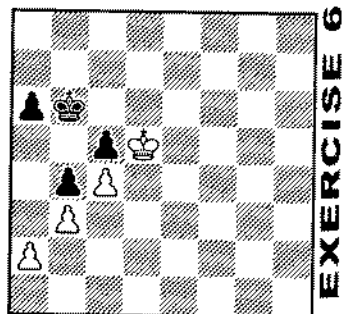


Diagram 95
Black to move

Pawn Endings Solutions



Diagram 96
White to move

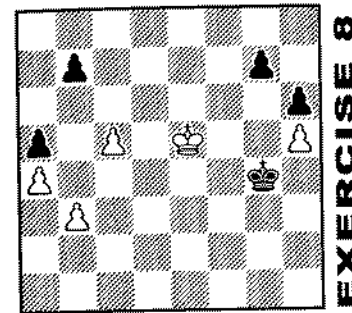


Diagram 97
White to move

1. Kf3! Kf7 2. Kd7 Kf8 3. Ke6 Kg7 4. Ke7 Kg8 5. Kf6 Kh7 6. Kf7
Kf8 7. Kxg6 Kg8 8. Kh6 Kh8 9. g6 Kg8 10. g7 Kf7 11. Kh7 +-.
1. Kf4 Ka8 2. b5 Kb8 3. a3! Ka8 4. a4 Kb8 5. a5 Ka8 6. b6 axb6
Kxb6 7. b7 +-. (With Black to move, White wins by
playing a2-a4 in one move!)

1. Kd5! (1. Kb6 Ke5 2. b4 Kd5 3. b5 Kc4=; 1. b4 Ke6
Kb6 Kd5=) 1. ... Kf6 2. Kd6 Kf5 3. b4 Ke4 4. b5 Kd4 5. b6
Ke7 6. Kc7 Kb5 7. Kxb7 +-.
1. Kf3! (1. Kf4? g6 2. hxg6+ Kxg6 3. g3 h5 4. e6 Kf6 5. e7 Kxe7
Kxf5 h4=) 1. ... g6 (1. ... Ke7 2. Kf4 Ke6 3. g3 +-)
hxg6+ Kxg6 3. Kf4 h5 4. g3 +- (zugzwang).

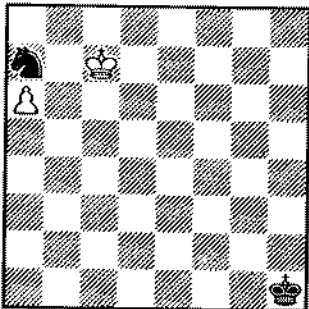
1. Kh2 f4 (1. ... g3+ 2. Kh3 f4 3. Kg2 +-) 2. Kg1! h3 (2. ... g3 3.
g2 +-) 3. Kh2 f3 4. Kg3 h2 5. Kxh2 f2 6. Kg2 g3
Kf1 +- (zugzwang).

1. ... Ka5 2. Kxc5 stalemate.
1. b5 Kg4 2. c5 Kf5 3. b6 cxb6 4. c6 bxc6 5. axb6+- or
1. ... dxc5 3. b6 cxb6 4. d6 +-, or 2. ... axb5 3. c6 bxc6 4. a6 +-.
1. e6! bxc6 2. b4 axb4 3. Kd4 +-.
1. ... Ka5 2. Kxc5 stalemate.

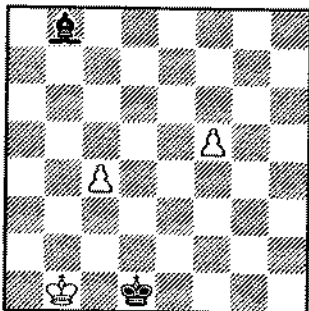
1. b5 Kg4 2. c5 Kf5 3. b6 cxb6 4. c6 bxc6 5. axb6+- or
1. ... dxc5 3. b6 cxb6 4. d6 +-, or 2. ... axb5 3. c6 bxc6 4. a6 +-.
1. e6! bxc6 2. b4 axb4 3. Kd4 +-.
1. ... Ka5 2. Kxc5 stalemate.

Chapter 3: Pawns against Pieces

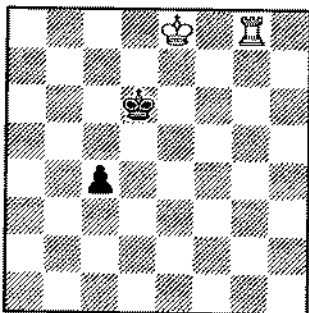
Some Important Ideas to Look For



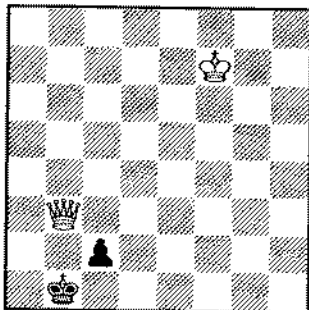
- ◆ When a knight on the rim isn't dim
Whoever moves, Black's lone knight prevents the pawn from promoting.
See Diagram 101.



- ◆ Restraining two pawns at once
Black plays 1. ... Bd6.
See Diagram 132.



- ◆ The cut-off play
White plays 1. Rg5, winning easily.
See Diagram 141.



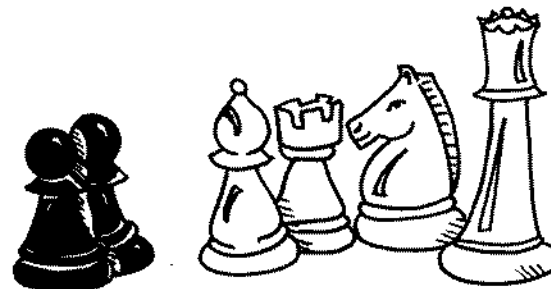
- ◆ Refuge in the corner
Black plays 4. ... Ka1.
See Diagram 162.

Chapter 3

Pawns against Pieces:

Running the Gauntlet

meek can
erit the earth.
dgames are
en won or lost
a pawn, the
foot soldier, has
d the earlier
of battle and
the dangerous
arding march to



end of the board. If he reaches his goal, he's promot-
status of his commander's choice. Of course, whatever
forces his enemy has left are concentrated on stopping
social climber.

apter, to emphasize the pattern of thinking you'll want
e in your own, real games, we'll organize around a
d-play" approach.

VERSUS KNIGHT

with the "lust to expand" create the most troubles for the
oving knight. The a- and h- passed pawns are particu-

larly dangerous for the knight because the horseman's moves are restricted at the edge of the board. Let's look at the positions where the knight is opposed by a single pawn.

ZEPLER

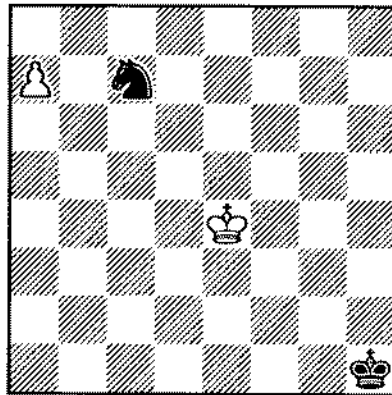


Diagram 98
White or Black to move

Here it's obvious that White must preserve his pawn if he hopes to win. Conversely, if Black has a chance to capture the ambitious pawn, he does so immediately, with disregard for the fate of his knight, since the game is then instantly drawn.

THE PLAN

White will advance his king to c6. The knight will have to retreat to the corner. Then White's king captures the horseman by moving to b7. If Black is not able to bring his king to c7 in time to stalemate the White king, Black loses.

THE PLAY

The first question for the White king is how to get to c6. Black's knight creates roadblocks in two ways. Of course, the squares it covers are off limits to the White king. But in addition, the king must be careful not to step on those special, landmine-squares that trigger a knight check which forks king and pawn! These mined squares are d4 and d6, because of the knight check on b5. The invading king can choose between only two circuitous but

paths. One is through d3, c4 and c5 and the other—
f6, e7, d7.

... is one move too slow:

2. Kf6 Kf3 3. Ke7 Ke4 4. Kd7 Na8 5. Kc6 Ke5 6.
7. Kxa8 Kc7.

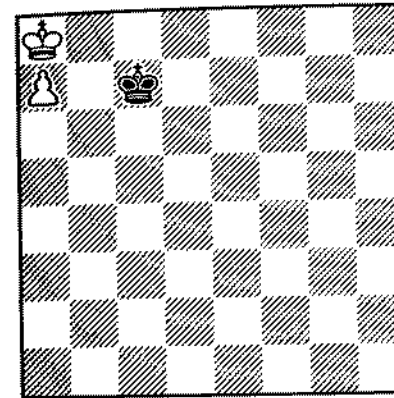


Diagram 99
White to move

... king reaches his key square in time, stalemating.

... the "low road," in this case, gives White a win. From
98:

1. Kd3! Kg2 2. Kc4 Kf3 3. Kc5 Ke4 4. Kc6 Na8 5.
6. Kd5 6. Kxa8 Kc6 7. Kb8

*The move is there,
but you must see it!*

—Tartakover

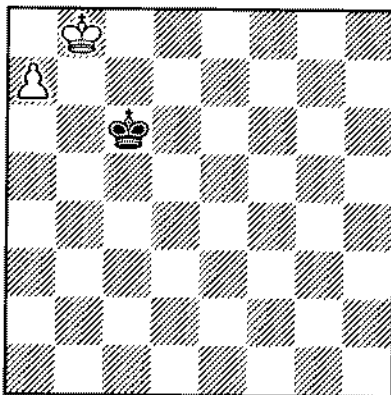


Diagram 100

And the White pawn queens.

WHEN THE LONE HORSEMAN HOLDS OFF BOTH KING AND ROOK PAWN

Now we come to an example of a very interesting and useful rule.

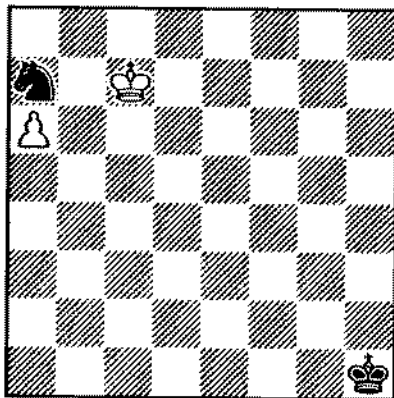
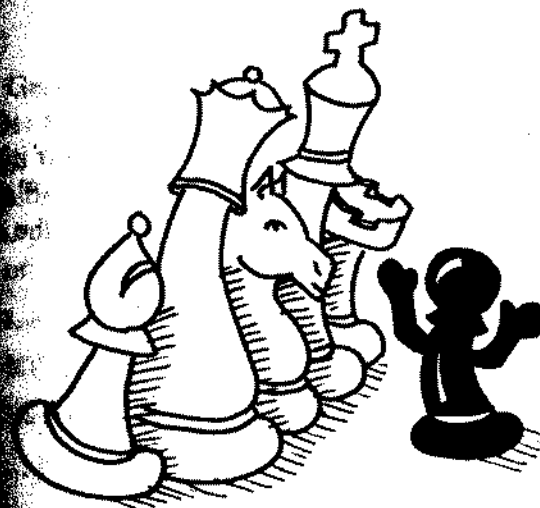


Diagram 101
White to move

way for White's king to drive away the knight. It makes no difference whose move it is. If it's Black to move, Black advances his king, or for that matter, simply shuffles it forth, since the knight holds on its own—but you can't do that with the technique. With White to move ...

1. Kb6 Nc8+ 2. Kb7 Nd6+ 3. Kc7 Nb5+ 4. Kb6 Nd6!, and Black holds.

Answer 5. a7 with 5. ... Nc8+, forking king and pawn.



... KING KNIGHT OCCUPIES
... CTLY IN FRONT
... ROOK PAWN THAT IS
... KING, THEN THE GAME IS
... TER HOW FAVORABLY
... MY KING OR HOW
... ENDER'S KING.



SOZIN

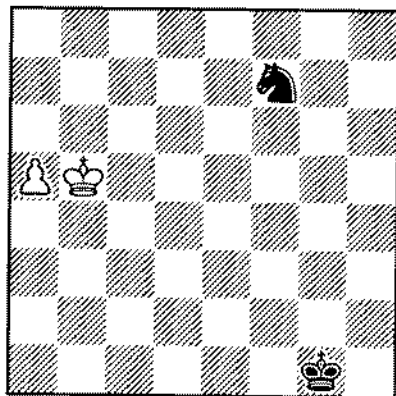


Diagram 102
White to move

THE PLAN

Knowing the knight's ability to be the sole savior if it's allowed to occupy the key spot on a7, White tries to cut off the knight from the pawn's path to glory, while advancing the would-be queen.

THE PLAY

1. Kc5!

Restricting the knight. If 1. a6, then 1. ... Nd6+ 2. Kb6 Kf2 would lead to a draw.

1. ... Ne5

If 1. ... Nd8, then 2. a6 Ne6+ 3. Kb6 +-.

2. a6 Nd7+ 3. Kb5 Nf8 4. a7 Ne6 5. Kb6, winning.

**YOU CAN'T ALWAYS WIN**

Even with best play, it's not always possible to execute the winning plan, to push a knight away and prevent the approach of the opponent's king.

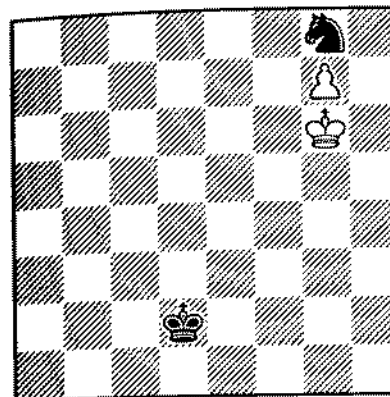


Diagram 103
White or Black to play

German grandmaster and teacher Siegbert Tarrasch, "Der Springer am Rande ist immer Schande!" A knight on the edge (of the board) is always a shame. To follow his spirit, we often translate his remark to "A knight on the rim is dim." The knight can't stop a *rook*-pawn on its seventh, and often stop other pawns.

THE PLAY

1. Kf7

1. ... Ne7!; or even 1. ... Nf6+.

1. ... Nh6+ 2. Kf6 Ke3 3. Kg6 Ng8 4. Kh7 Ne7, draw.



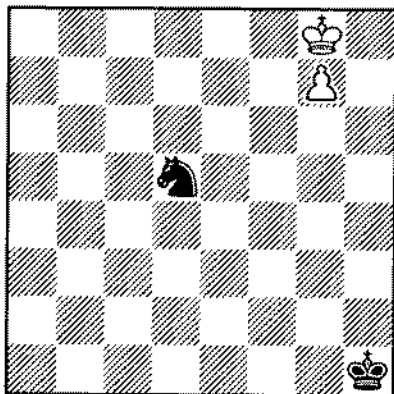


Diagram 104
Black to move

Even with Black to move, White is winning.

1. ... Ne7+

Or 1. ... Nf6+ 2. Kf7 Ng4 3. Kg6 Ne5+ 4. Kg5 Nf7+ 5. Kh5.

2. Kf8! Ng6+ 3. Ke8, Black resigns.



WHEN THE KNIGHT IS *NOT* IN FRONT OF THE PAWNS ON THE SEVENTH RANK, THE DEFENSE IS MORE DIFFICULT. IN THE CASE OF THE KNIGHT PAWN THE DEFENSE IS ESPECIALLY DIFFICULT BECAUSE IT FORCES THE KNIGHT TO BE "DIM ON THE RIM." BISHOP AND CENTER PAWNS ARE EASIER TO DEFEND AGAINST BECAUSE THE KNIGHT CAN PLAY ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BOARD.



**Executive Editor
Al Lawrence**

Al Lawrence was born in Blue Island, Illinois on February 5, 1947. He is the editor and co-author of eight books on chess. In a variety of subjects, Al Lawrence has written and designed *Just the Facts!* with the goal of making it a pleasure to read and the most out of the uniquely creative ideas of GMs Alburt and Alport—and to help you and your friends to win more games!

Al Lawrence was Executive Director of the Chess Federation during a decade of rapid and record-breaking growth. A public school and college teacher, he earned degrees in instructional technology. He is especially interested in applying modern teaching theory to chess.

Al is President of OutExcel! Corporation (OutExcel@aol.com), a marketing consulting firm. He is also Chief Marketing Officer of StarFinder, Inc. (StarFinder@aol.com), which develops and markets products that make it easy for amateur players to learn and enjoy the night game. StarFinder's "Night Navigator" has been featured internationally in magazines and on television.

Al Lawrence was selected as "Chess Player of the Year" for 2001 by the Chess Federation of America.



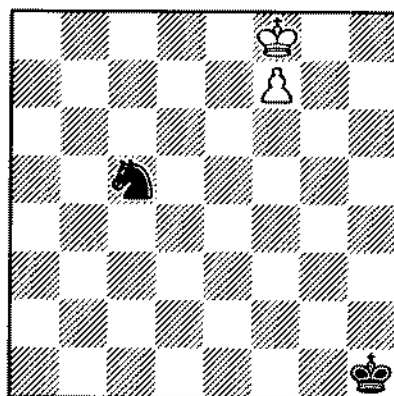


Diagram 105
Black to move

Black draws with ...

1. ... Nd7+!

If Black tries 1. ... Ne6+?, there follows 2. Ke7 Nf4 3. Kf6 Nd5+ 4. Kf5 Ne7+ 5. Kg5 +/-.

2. Ke8

Or 2. Ke7 Ne5 3. f8(Q) Ng6+.

2. ... Nf6+ 3. Ke7 Nh7, draw.



In many positions, a knight survives the joust against a passed pawn, thanks to checks that allow the horseman to get to squares nearest the foot soldier.

GRIGORIEV

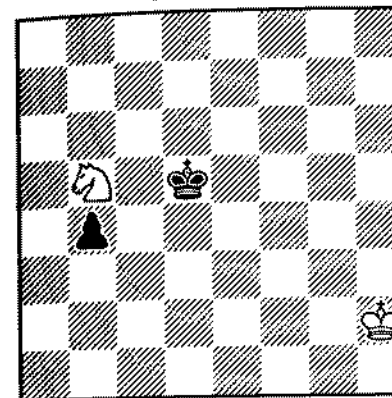


Diagram 106
White to move

PLAN

The king is far away, so only the knight can stop the pawn. Since the pawn is on b2, the knight must be able to hold the cavalryman must get to one of three squares: a3, c3, and d4 then, happily, to a safe haven—b1. At first this task is impossible. But White hops backward to go forward!

PLAY

1. Nc7+ Kc4

is best. If 1. ... Kd4, then 2. Kg2 b3 3. Nb5+ and 4. Na3 Kc6 2. Ne6 Kb5 3. Nd4+ Kc4 4. Nc6 b3 5. Na5+.

2. Ne8!

is a bit paradoxical, but best. The knight is moving away from the pawn in order to start a pawn chase from d6 or f6 (the knight is on the White king's position). Now after 2. ... b3, Black must follow 3. Nd6+ Kb4 4. Ne4 b2 5. Nd2. That's why the knight next takes the d6-square under control.

3. ... Kc5 3. Nf6! Kd4 4. Ne8 Ke5

5. Nd6 Kc3 6. Ne4+ Kc2 7. Nd6 b2 8. Nc4 Na3+, draw.

4. ... Nc7 Kd6 6. Ne8+

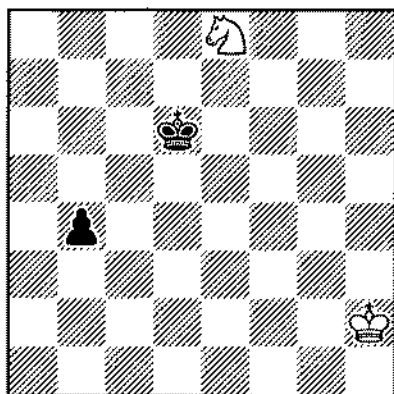


Diagram 107

This is the only move: 6. Nb5+ Kc5 7. Nc7 b3 8. Ne6+ Kc4, and White loses.

6. ... Kc5 7. Nf6 Kd4 8. Ne8 b3 9. Nd6 Kc3 10. Ne4+ Kc2 11. Nd6 b2 12. Nc4 b1(Q) 13. Na3+, draw.

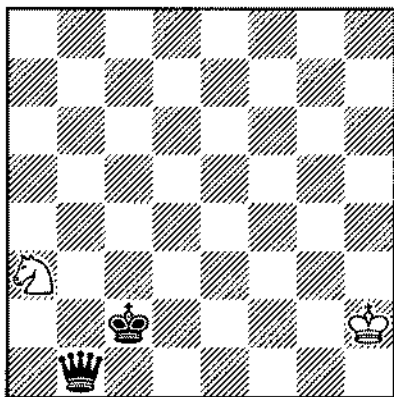


Diagram 108
White to move

A good illustration of the defending capabilities of the knight complete with checks and fork threats.



... However, that checks are not always helpful and not reliable! Look at the position below.

STUDY BY MARWITZ

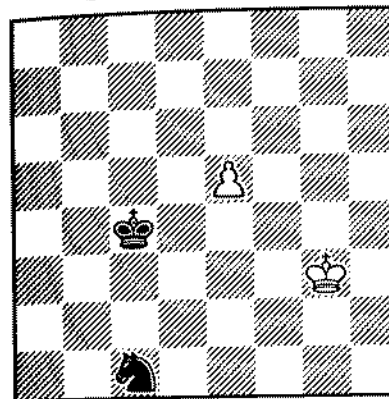


Diagram 109
White to move

... 1. ... Ne2+ 2. Kh2!
The pawn strolls away from the pesky checks to its coronation square that 2. Kg4, taking the direct opposition on the square. This does not win due to 2. ... Nc3 3. e7 Nd5 4. e8(Q)



... Pawns, the
... ally.
... Three
... pawn
... remaining

... passed pawn is;
...
... of its king support.



It is not always necessary to *defend* with the knight against the pawn. Let's look at a position that has been known for about nine centuries.

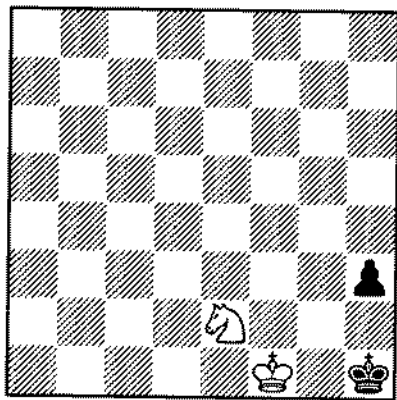


Diagram 110
White to move

Keep in mind that it's possible to mate a king with one knight only if the king is trapped in the corner by his own pawn.

1. Ng3+ Kh2
2. Nf5 Kh1
3. Kf2 Kh2
4. Ne3 Kh1
5. Nf1 h2
6. Ng3, mate.

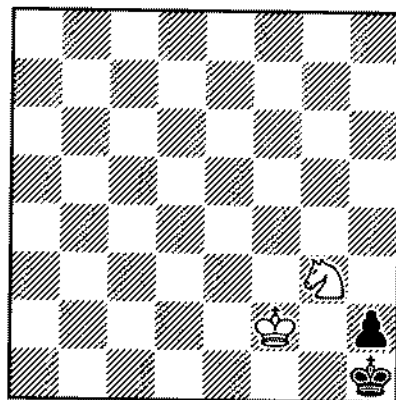


Diagram 111



KORENSKY—SUETIN
RUSSIA, 1973

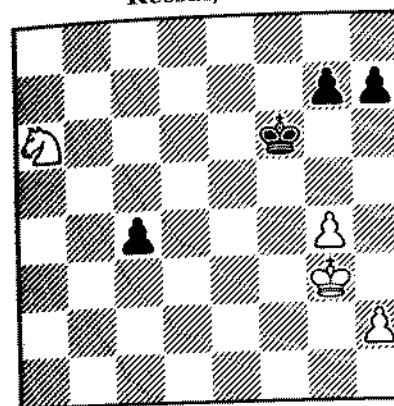


Diagram 112
Black to move

AN
ender has a distant passed pawn, exchanges on the
of the board are usually helpful to him because they
for his king to penetrate. Furthermore, these
may lead to the superior side retaining insufficient
material.

PLAY
... h5! 2. h3
... e2. Nb4 allows 2. ... hxc4 3. Kxc4 Kg6, with a
... because the knight must guard the c-pawn, and White's
... cannot leave the kingside.
... hxc4 3. hxc4 c3 4. Nb4 Kg5 5. Nc2 Kf6 6. Ne3
... 6 7. Kf4 Kh6 8. Kf5 Kh7 9. Kg5 Kg8
... Kg6 Kh8.

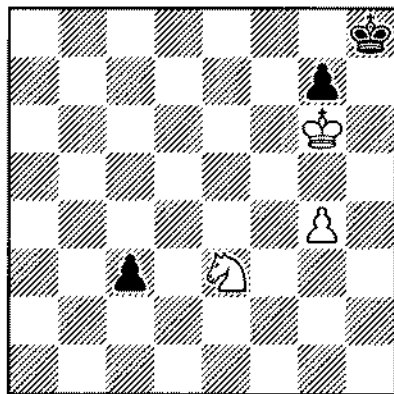


Diagram 113

11. Kg5

The approach White chooses doesn't promise much. But if 11. g5, then 11. ... Kg8 12. Nc2 Kh8 13. Kf7 Kh7 14. g6+ Kh8 =.

11. ... Kg8 12. Kf4 Kh7 13. Kf5 Kh6 14. Nc2 Kh7 15. Kg5 Kh8 16. Kg6 Kg8 17. Ne3 Kh8 18. Kf5 Kh7 19. Ke4 Kg6 20. Kd3 Kg5 21. Kxc3 Kf4, draw agreed.

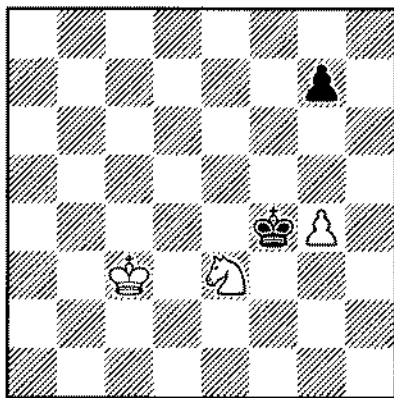


Diagram 114

An important position. White can't free his knight and defend his pawn at the same time.



FROLOV—A. PETROSIAN
BALATON, 1990

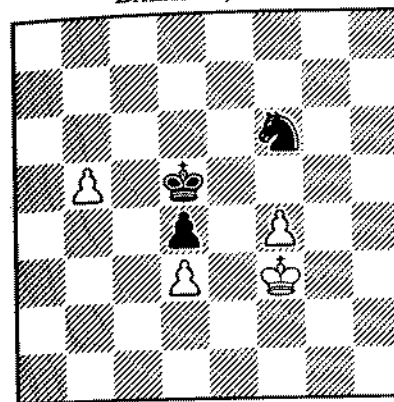


Diagram 115

White to move

passed b-pawn is his hoped-for salvation.

15 Ke5 2. b6 Kxf5 3. b7 Nd7 4. Kg3 Nb8 5. Kf3 Nc6 6. Kg3 Ke5 7. Kf3 Kd6 8. Ke4 Kc7 9. Kd5 Kxb7 10. Ke5.

ANALYSIS

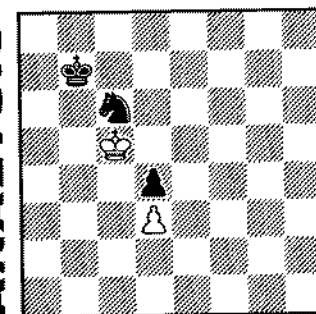


Diagram 116
After 10. Ke5

leads to a drawish position similar to the Suetin game.

... Nb8

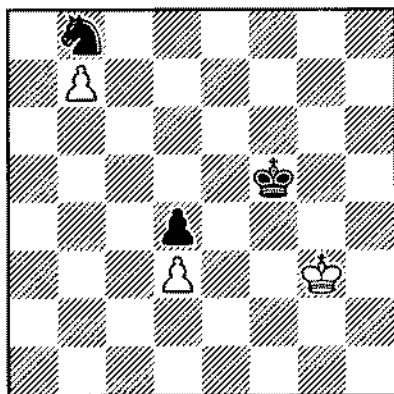


Diagram 117

7. Kf3 Nd7 8. Kg3 Ke5 9. Kf3 Kd6 10. Ke4 Kc5 11. Kf5 Kd6 12. Ke4 Kc5 13. Kf5, draw.

If 13. ... Kb4, then 14. Ke6, alternating attacks on both pawn and knight.

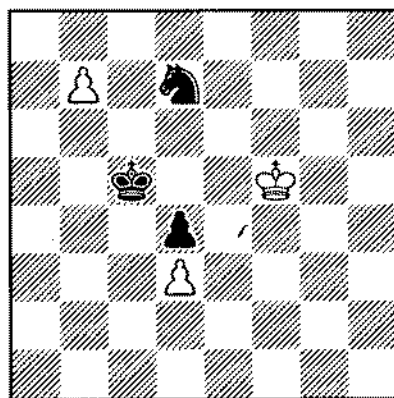


Diagram 118



MNATSAKANIAN—MOISEEV
MOSCOW, 1967

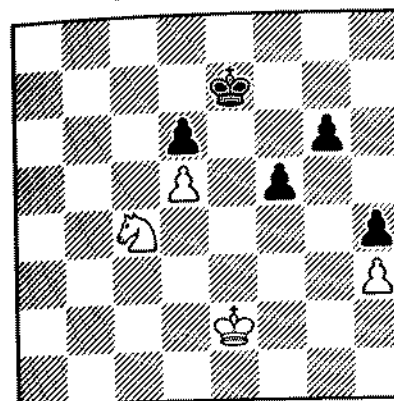


Diagram 119
White to move

... tied to the defense of his d6-pawn, and his passed pawns on the kingside become a target for White's pieces.

1. Ke3 g5

... important not to let White's king get to f4, and then g5.

2. Kf3 Kf6

... g. If 2. ... Kd7, then 3. Ne3 f4 4. Nc4, followed by 5. ... planning to reap the pawn harvest.

3. Nxd6 g4+

4. Nf7+ Kf6 5. Nh6 Ke5 6. d6 g4+ 7. Kf2 Ke6

8. hxg4 fxg4+ 5. Kf4 g3 6. Ne4+ Ke7 7. Ng5 Kd6

9. Ke4, Black resigns.

Diagram 120, next page.

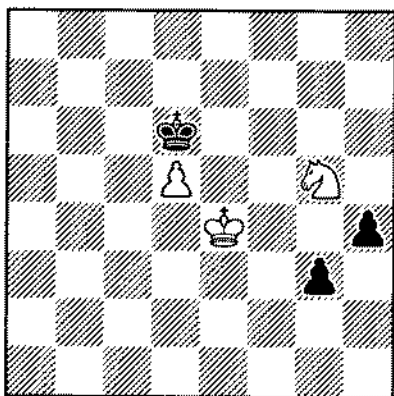


Diagram 120

Black is in zugzwang as soon as he runs out of king moves: 8. ... g2 9. Nh3 Kd7 10. Ke5 Ke7 11. d6+ Kd7 12. Kd5 Kd8 13. Ke6 Ke8 14. d7+ Kd8 15. Ng1!!.

In this example, the king was tied to the defense of his d6-pawn and could not support his passed pawns.



A "passer" is often created by means of a breakthrough.

ALBURT—LERNER
UKRAINE, 1978

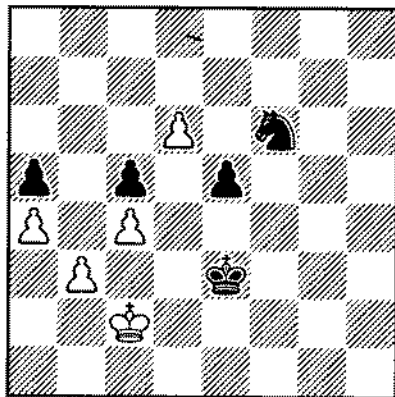


Diagram 121
White to move

of the position of Black's king and knight, the breakthroughs. (Were Black on move, he would win easily with 2.)

1. ... b4! axb4
2. c5 b3+ 3. Kxb3 Ne4 4. Kc4+-. In case of 2. bxc5 Kf2 3. c6 e3 4. d7 e2 5. d8(Q) e1(Q) 6. ... decisive. If 1. ... Nd7, White plays 2. bxa5 Kf2 3. a6 4. e3 5. a8(Q) e2 6. Qe4 e1(Q) 7. Qxe1+ Kxe1 8. a5 Nb8 with the mortal threat of 10. a6. (But not the hasty 9. ... because of 9. ... Nxa6 10. d7

ANALYSIS

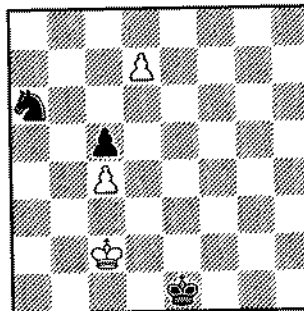


Diagram 122
After 10. d7

4+ and 11. ... Nc6.)
1. a5 e4 3. a6 Kf2 4. a7 e3 5. a8(Q) e2

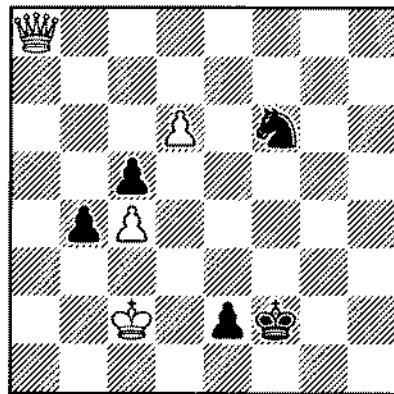


Diagram 123

After complications, the game morphs into a winning queen ending for White.

6. Qf8 e1(Q) 7. Qxf6+ Kg3 8. Qg5+ Kh3 9. Qd2! Qa1
10. d7 Qa4+ 11. Kb1 Qb3+ 12. Kc1 Qa3+

12. ... Qxc4+ 13. Kb2+.

13. Kd1 Qb3+ 14. Ke2 Kg4

14. ... Qxc4+ 15. Qd3+.

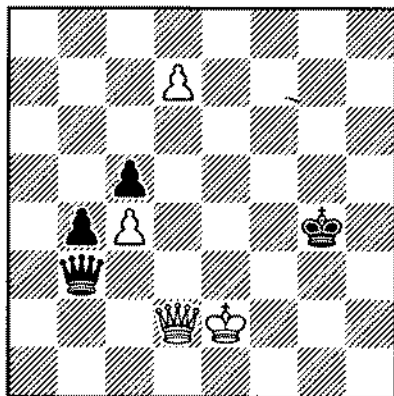


Diagram 124

15. Qd1!

forces the win, while the impatient 15. d8(Q) leads to perpetual check after 15. ... Qf3+ 16. Ke1 Qh1+ 17. Kf2 Qg2+ 18. Ke3 Qe5+ 19. Kd3 Qf5+.

15. Qxc4+ 16. Ke3+, Black resigns.

VERSUS PAWNS

The knight is usually more successful against the pawn (or the bishop) than the knight is. It is seldom possible to limit the bishop. The following example is a rare exception.



OTTEN

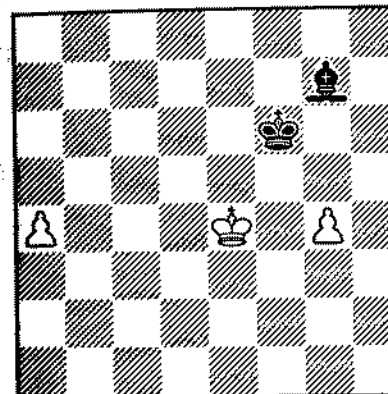


Diagram 125
White to move

White wins thanks to exceptionally bad positioning of the black king, which blocks its own bishop.

1. Bf8 2. Kd5 Bh6 3. g5+! Bxg5

4. Kxg5 4. a6, the pawn is unstoppable.

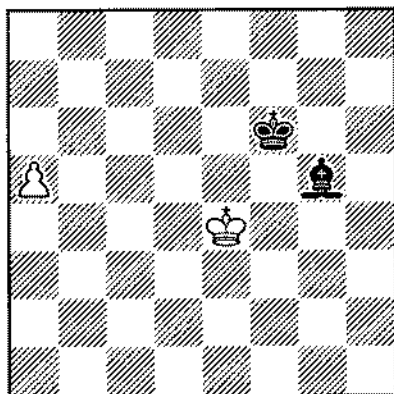


Diagram 126

4. ... Bh4 5. Kf3

The bishop can't get on the g1-a7 diagonal. Black is lost.



GAVRIKOV—CHIKOVANI
USSR, 1979

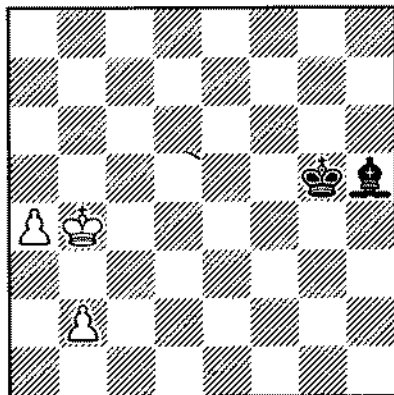


Diagram 127
White to move

1. Ka5

If 1. Kc5, then 1. ... Kf6 2. b4 (or 2. Kd6 Bd1 3. a5 Be2 =. The bishop alone holds both pawns.) 2. ... Ke7 3. b5 Kd7 4. Kb6 Bd1!—otherwise, 5. Ka7, winning—now if 5. a5, then

targeting the pawns, and Black holds.

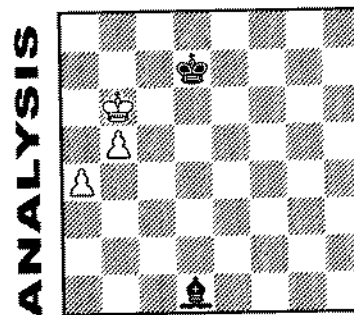


Diagram 128
After 4. ... Bd1!

... Kf6 2. b4 Ke5!

... Kd7, then 3. b5 Kd8 4. Ka6 Bd1 5. b6, with a win.

... Kd4!

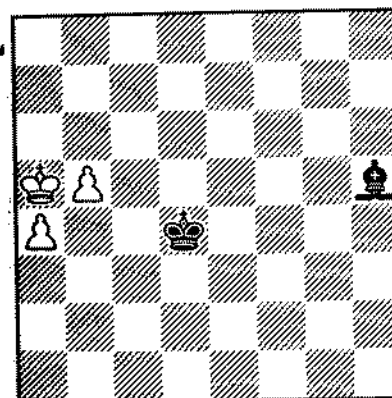


Diagram 129

... King from behind achieves a draw here.

... Kb6 Bf3 5. a5 Kc4 6. a6 Kb4 7. a7 Ba8, draw.



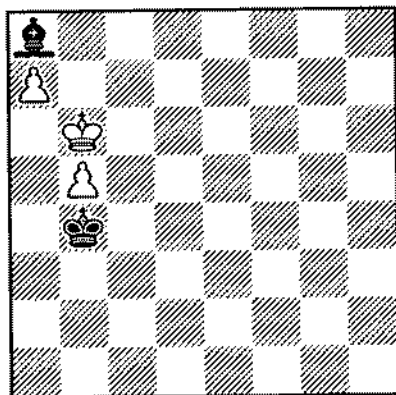


Diagram 130



It can be difficult for a bishop alone to stop two isolated passed pawns.

SALVIOLI

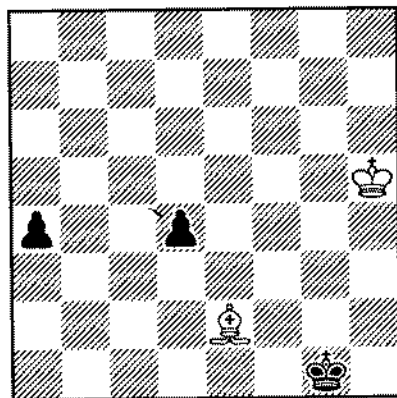


Diagram 131

White to move

Here the bishop has to work on two fronts, guarding both Black's pawns—and on different diagonals.

1. Bc4

If 1. Kg4, then 1. ... a3 2. Bc4 Kf2.

2. Kg4 Kf2!

3. Bb3, because of 3. Kf3.

4. Ke4 d3 5. Bb3 a2 6. Bxa2 d1(Q), winning.

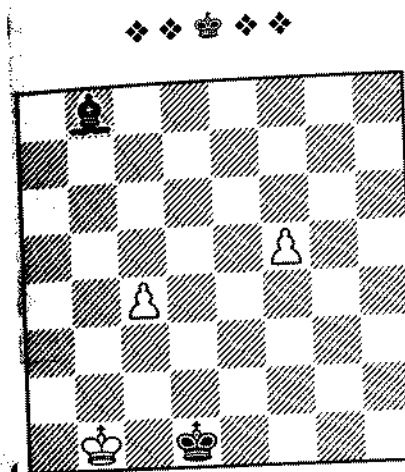


Diagram 132

White or Black to move

on move, Black is losing: 1. c5 Be5 2. c6 Kd2 3. f6 Bg6 5. c7. But if it's Black to move, it's an easy draw, as the bishop has time to create a defensive line guarding on one diagonal (a3-f8):

1. Bb6! 2. Kb2 Kd2 3. Kb3 Kd3 4. f6 Bc5 5. f7 Bf8 a draw.



PASSED PAWNS ON THE



The match between bishop and three pawns often ends in favor of the pawns, although even here there are many examples of successful defense.

HORWITZ

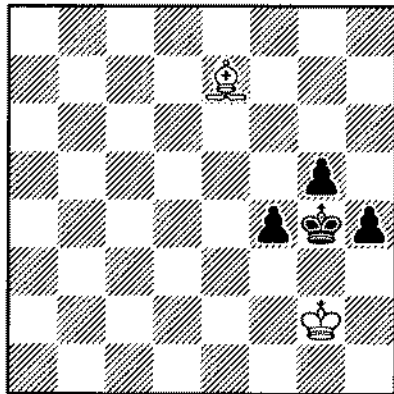


Diagram 133
Black to move

Another useful defensive technique: the bishop attacks pawns from the rear.

White reaches a drawn position whichever pawn check Black tries. King moves don't win either: on 1. ... Kf5, White waits with 2. Bd8; and on 1. ... Kh5, 2. Bd6 stops the pawn advance.

1. ... f3+

Or, 1. ... h3+ 2. Kh2 f3 3. Bc5 Kf4 (3. ... Kh4 4. Bf2+ Kg4 5. Bg3=) 4. Kxh3 g4+ 5. Kh4 g3 6. Bd6+ Ke3 7. Bxg3, draw.

2. Kf2 Kf4 3. Bxg5+

Also possible is 3. Bd8, leading to ... h3 4. Bc7+ Ke4 5. Bb8=

3. ... Kxg5 4. Kxf3, draw.



Let some bishop-versus-pawn endgames from tournament practice see how these principles are put to use.

MARIC—SILADY
NOVI SAD, 1973

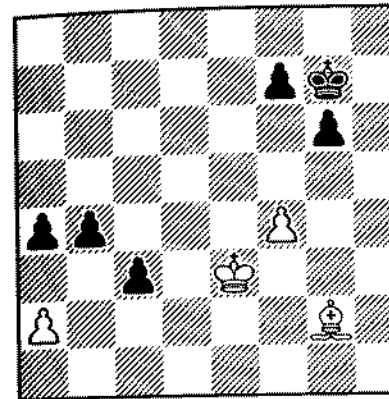


Diagram 134
White to Move

In the active position of his king, White can successfully defend and capture the ominous-looking mass of Black pawns.

1. Bc6 b3

2. Bg3, then 2. Ba4 Kf6 3. Bc2 g5 4. fxg5+ Kxg5 5. Bg3= and White has enough time to take all Black's queen-side pawns, and to neutralize his opponent's f-pawn with his bishop.

3. Bg3! b2 3. Be4 f5 4. Bc2 Kh6 5. Kd4

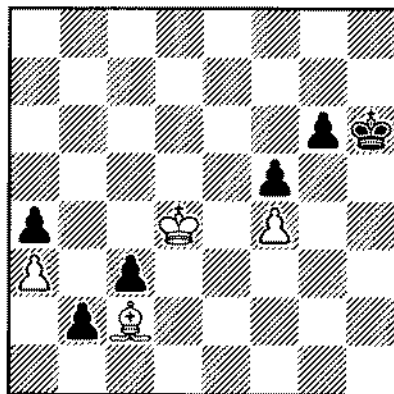


Diagram 135

5. ... Kh5

5. ... g5 6. fxg5+ Kxg5 7. Kxc3 f4 8. Kxb2 f3 9. Kc3 f2 10. Bd3 +.

6. Kxc3 Kg4 7. Kxb2 Kxf4 8. Bxa4 g5 9. Bc6 g4 10. a4 Ke5.

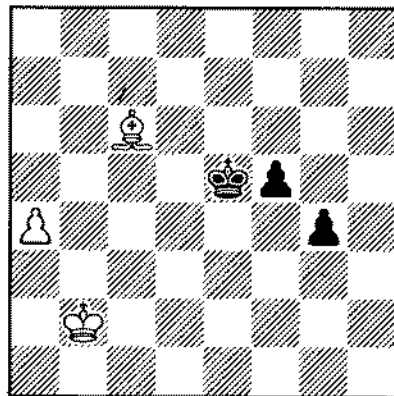


Diagram 136

11. Kc3!

It is important to limit the actions of Black's king.

11. ... Kd6 12. Bb7 Kc7 13. Bg2, winning.

an easy win—for example, 13. ... f4 14. Be4 Kb6 15. 16. Kb5 f3 17. a5 f2 18. Bg2 g3 19. a6 Kb8 20. Kb6.



CAPABLANCA—EM. LASKER
NEW YORK, 1924

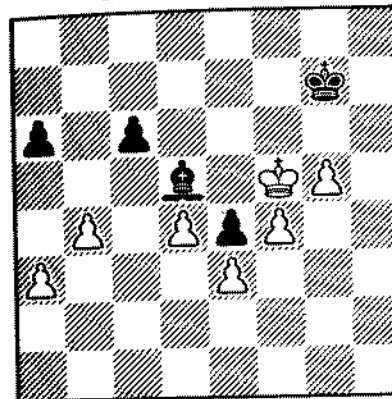


Diagram 137
White to move

big advantage, thanks to the kingside pawns supporting his king.

... Kg4!

... precise. If 1. Ke5?, then 1. ... Kg6.

... Bc4 2. f5 Bb3 3. Kf4 Bc2 4. Ke5 Kf7 5. a4!

... create a third passed pawn.

... Kg7 6. d5

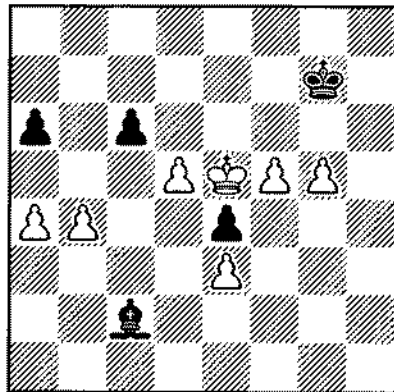


Diagram 138

6. ... Bxa4

Or 6. ... cxd5 7. Kxd5 Bxa4 8. Kxe4.

7. d6 c5 8. bxc5 Bc6 9. Ke6 a5 10. f6+, Black resigns.

ROOK AGAINST PAWN

In endings with rook against pawn, the pawn's distance from its promotion square and position of both kings are key factors.

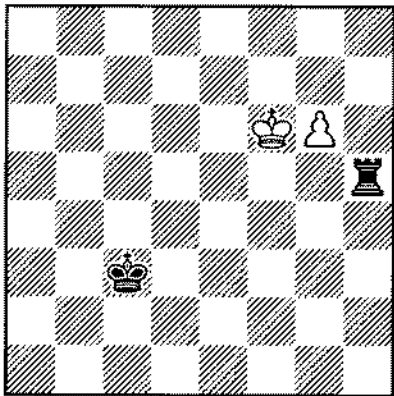


Diagram 139

White to move

1. g7 Rh6+ 2. Kf5

2. Kf7 Rh7 = ; or 2. Kg5 Rh1 =.

... Rh5+ 3. Kf4 Rh4+ 4. Kf3 Rh3+ 5. Kg2, and White wins.

CUTTING OFF THE KING ON HIS THIRD

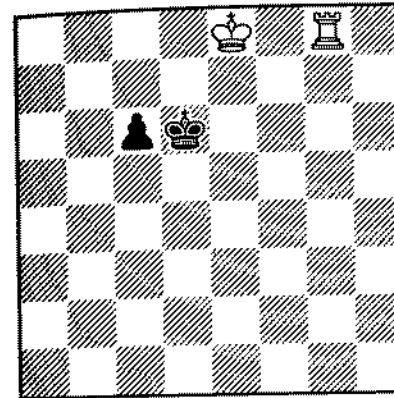


Diagram 140

White to move

... and pawn are almost at the starting position. This is White to use an important technique—putting his king on Black's fourth rank to keep the enemy king limited to the third rank.

... Rg5

... king is cut off.

... king the pawn makes no sense because, if it reached the fourth rank, it would be attacked by the rook from g3 and would be lost after ... c2 and Rc3. (See Diagram 141.) That's why the Black king should choose the long way around, but this is no time.

... c5 2. Kd8 Kc6 3. Ke7 Kb5 4. Kd6, winning.



While we're on this subject, here's another very important position.

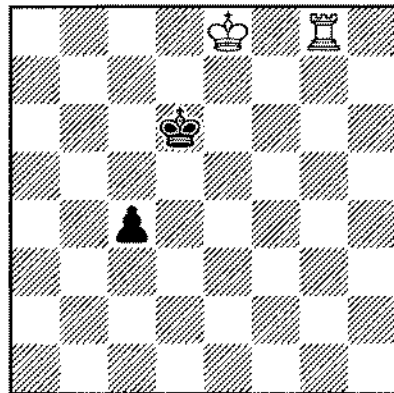
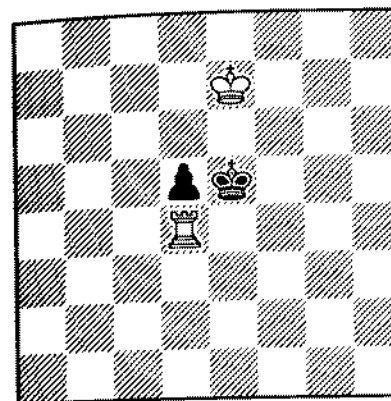


Diagram 141

Here the obvious difference with Diagram 140 is that Black's pawn has already advanced to his fifth rank. With the move, Black draws by playing 1. ... Kd5, crossing his vital fourth rank. White to move plays, without the need for any calculation, 1. Rg5—cutting off the king and winning.



If you can't cut off the opponent's king on its fourth rank, the outcome of the game depends on the effectiveness of the cooperation among the pieces of each army. There are even rules of opposition in these endings—similar to those in pawn endings. The techniques of "passing the move" and "the running screen," which we saw in king and pawn endings, are important here as well.

Diagram 142
White to move

White wins if he can bring his king to attack the pawn, but Black's king is in the way, using vertical opposition. The natural 1. Rd1 d4 2. Kd7 Kd5, White does not gain. For example, 3. Rd2 Kc4 4. Ke6 Kc3 (winning a tempo) 5. Rd1 d3 6. Ke5 Kc2 7. Rh1 d2, with a draw.

Rd2!

White finds, tempo-losing but game-winning move that Black to relinquish the opposition, allowing White's king to advance.

... d4 2. Rd1! Ke4

Kd5 3. Kd7!, then moving to the opposite side of that of Black's king, for example—3. ... Ke4 4. Kc6, etc.

Kd6 d3 4. Kc5 Ke3 5. Kc4 d2 6. Kc3, winning.



Here's another example where the opposition rules.

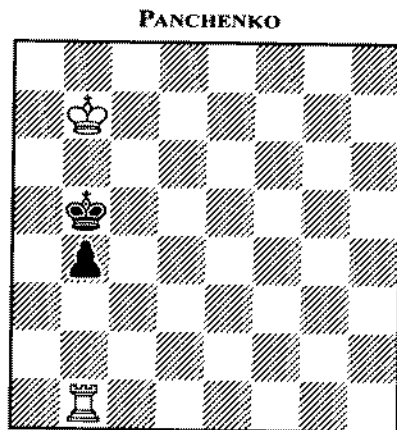


Diagram 143
White or Black to move

With White to move, the game's a draw: 1. Kc7 Kc5 or 1. Rb2 (too close for comfort!) 1. ... Kc4 2. Kb6 Kc3 3. Rh2 b3 4. Kb5 b2. But if it's Black's move, he has to give up the opposition and let White's king in.

1. ... Kc4

Or 1. ... Ka4 2. Kb6 +.

2. Kb6 b3 3. Ka5 Kc3 4. Ka4 b2 5. Ka3, winning.

**THE RUNNING SCREEN
IN ROOK-VERSUS-PAWN ENDINGS**

Here the running screen—when one king "shoulders" out another king from key squares—familiar to us from Chapter 2, prevents the enemy king from getting to a pawn. This technique is doubly advantageous because you can advance to the important squares while blocking your opponent from doing so.

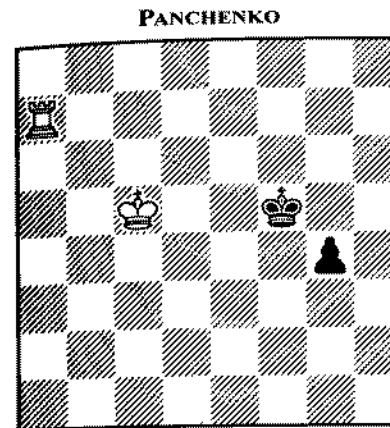


Diagram 144
Black to move

... Ke4

move that leads to a draw. 1. ... Kf4 loses to 2. Kd4 g3 4. Rf7+ Kg2 5. Ke2 Kh2 6. Rg7 g2 7. Kf2.

Rg7 Kf3 3. Kd4 g3 4. Kd3 g2, draw.



**THE SEVENTH RANK
BY JOINT
KING,
ED
AME**



Let's look at one important exception to the rule at the bottom of page 119.

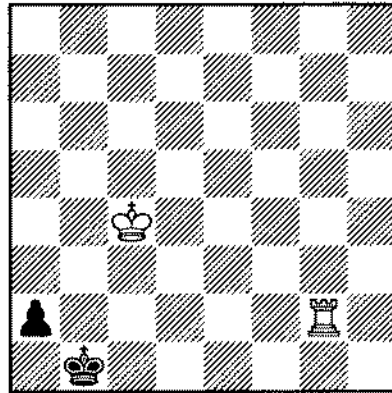


Diagram 145

White to move

1. Kb3 a1(N)+

Under-promotion of the pawn to a knight is forced because of the threat of mate.

2. Kc3

Black is in zugzwang. White wins. But move all the pieces in Diagram 145 one square to the right, and underpromotion draws.

**TWO CONNECTED PAWNS
VERSUS THE ROOK**

Two connected and far-advanced pawns often successfully challenge an unsupported rook. But first note that if the side with the rook gets his king in front of the pawns, he usually wins.



IN CASES LIKE THIS, THE
PROMOTION OF THE PAWN TO
KNIGHT ON A1 IS THE ONLY
WINNING MOVE FOR THE P

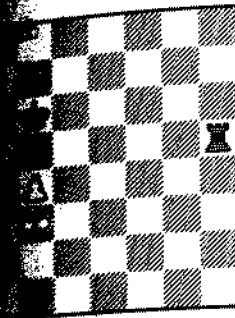


Diagram 146

Black wins easily in both cases—even when the pawns are advanced all the way to the sixth rank.

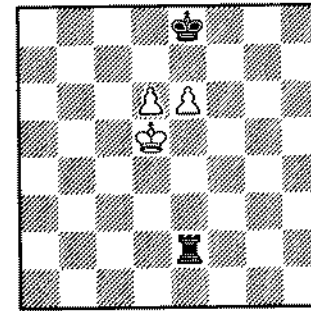


Diagram 147

For example, the position of the White king makes all the difference.

**TARRASCH—JANOWSKI
OSTENDE, 1907**

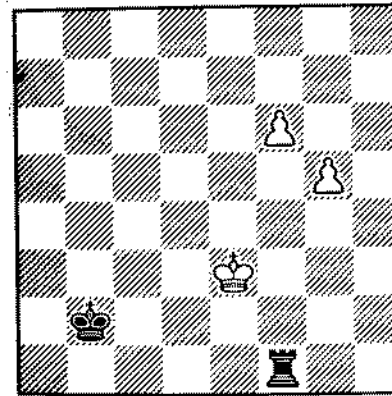


Diagram 148

White to move

1. Kd4 Kb3

2. Ke4 Rxc3 3. f7 Rg4+ 4. Ke3+-

5. Kc4 3. g6 Re1+ 4. Kd6 Rd1+ 5. Ke7 Re1+ 6. Kf7, winning.



The king must be placed correctly to fight such dangerous advanced pawns to a draw.

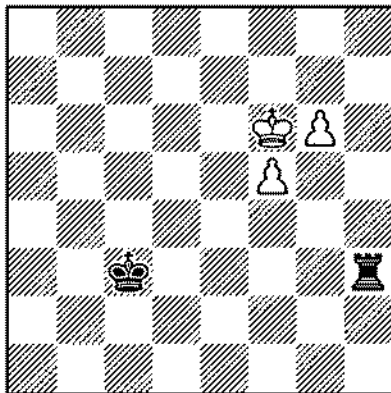


Diagram 149
Black to move

Although the Black king is on his way to the pawns, a straightforward approach is a mistake—for example, if 1. ... Kd4 2. Kg7 Ke5 3. f6 Ke6 4. f7 +/- . From the start, it is important to prevent White's king from getting to g7, and then pushing the f-pawn to f7, as the closer f-pawn and not the farther-away g-pawn is the easier target for Black's king.

1. ... Rf3! 2. Ke5

Or 2. g7 Rg3 3. Kf7 Kd4 4. f6 Ke5 5. Ke7 Rg6, with a draw.

2. ... Rg3! 3. f6



THE ROOK ALONE CAN'T STOP TWO CONNECTED PAWNS IF BOTH REACH THE SIXTH RANK.

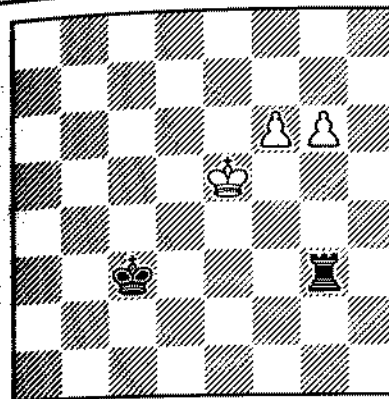


Diagram 150
Black to move

Rg5+

...ing move—and on some occasions missed even by 4. Ke6 Rxf6 or 4. Ke4 Rxf6, it's a draw.



ARULAI—GURGENIDZE
UKRAINE, 1956

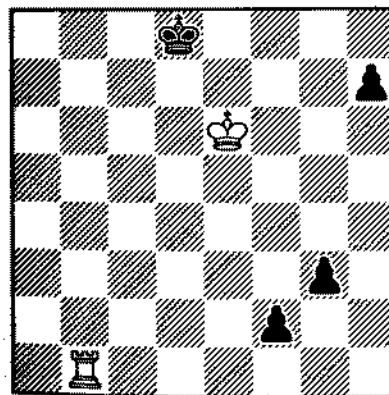


Diagram 151

...menacing pawns, White's only defense is attack!

1. Ke6 Kc8 2. Rc1+ Kb7 3. Rb1+ Ka6 4. Kc6 Ka5 5. Kc5 Ka4 6. Kc4 Ka3 7. Kc3 Ka2 8. Rf1

...g is "shadowing" Black's king. Now 8. ... g2 is 9. Rxf2+; White can reach the pawns on time.



IN POSITIONS WITH ROOK AGAINST CONNECTED PAWNS, THE TECHNIQUE OF "SHADOWING" THE OPPONENT'S KING ON THE EDGE OF THE BOARD CAN BE A LIFE-SAVING, LAST RESORT.

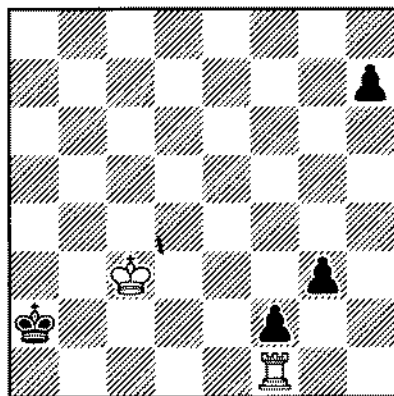


Diagram 152

8. ... h5 9. Kd3 h4 10. Ke3 h3 11. Kf3

Or 11. Rxf2+.

11. ... g2 12. Rxf2+, draw.



In positions with rook against three pawns, the rook usually wins if the king is in the way of the pawns and if those pawns are not too far advanced. Otherwise, the pawns can draw or even win. The following position, analyzed more than 100 years ago, is important to know.

LAZA

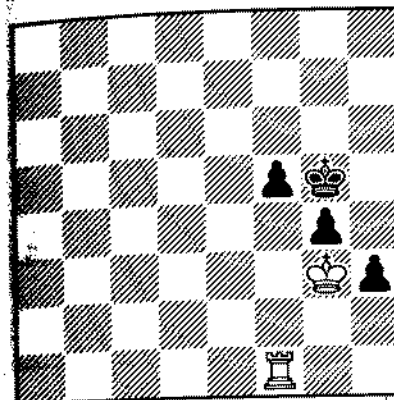


Diagram 153
White to move

1. Kf6

White who enjoys winning chances. Black must hold.

2. Kf6 3. Re2 Kf7

White here to abandon the f5-pawn: 4. Kxf5? g3!

5. Kf6 5. Re6+

6. Kf5 h2 6. Rg5+ Kh6.

The ...
White ...
Black ...

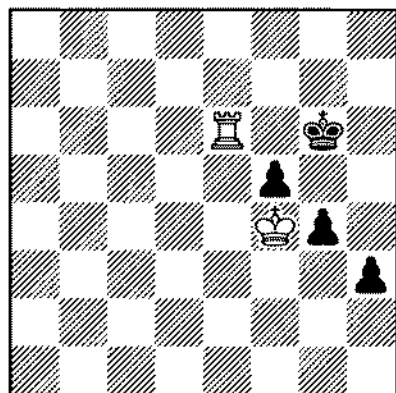


Diagram 154
Black to move

5. ... Kg7

Here 5. ... Kh5? loses because of 6. Rd6 (zugzwang) 6. ... h2 Rd8, and 5. ... Kh7? loses to 6. Kg5 g3 7. Rh6+.

6. Rd6 Kf7 7. Rh6 Kg7 8. Rh5

If 8. Kg5, then 8. ... f4!

8. ... Kg6 9. Rg5+ Kh6 10. Rg8

The f5 pawn is untouchable because of ... h2.

10. ... Kh7 11. Rd8 Kg6 12. Rd6+ Kf7

Draw by repetition. But notice that if we move all of the pieces in Diagram 154 one row "up," White wins easily. If we move them one row "down," White loses (see Exercise 6, Diagram 169).

QUEEN VERSUS PAWNS

The queen is so powerful that it normally handles even multiple pawns with ease. But there are positions when even a single pawn can draw.

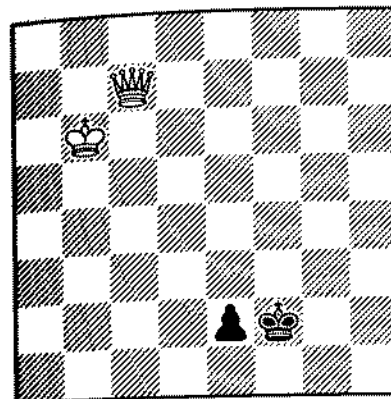


Diagram 155
White to move

White forces his opponent's king to take a square pawn. This technique gains White time to approach the king.

1. Qd4+ Kg2 2. Qe3 Kf1 3. Qf3+ Ke1 4. Kc5 Kd2 5. Qd4+ Kd1 6. Qd4+ Kc2 7. Qe3

... CARE
... SPECIALLY
... PAWN—
... A BOOK- OR
... THE



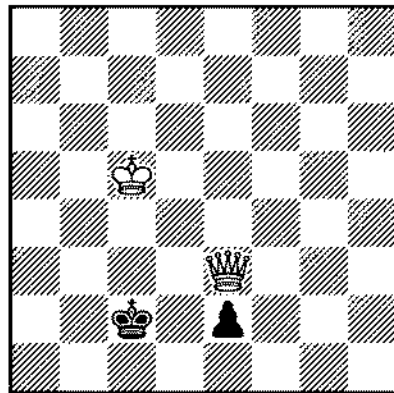


Diagram 156

7. ... Kd1 8. Qd3+ Ke1 9. Kd4 Kf2 10. Qe3+ Kf1
Qf3+ Ke1 12. Kd3, winning.

This is a winning technique that always works against pawns located on the b-, d-, e- and g-files.



**THIS METHOD OF WINNING A TIE
BY DRIVING THE WEAKER KING
FRONT OF HIS OWN PAWN DOES
WORK WITH ROOK- AND BISHOP
PAWNS (A-, C-, F-, AND H-FILES)
BECAUSE OF STALEMATE
OPPORTUNITIES.**

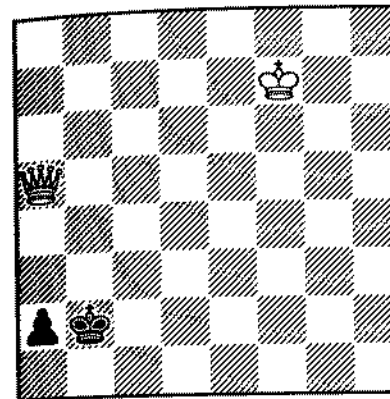


Diagram 157
White to move

1. Qb4+ Kc2 2. Qa3 Kb1 3. Qb3+

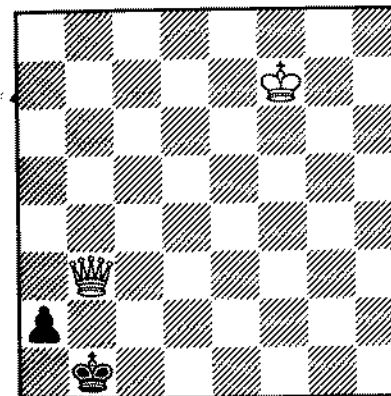


Diagram 158

... Ka1, draw.

If the king takes the opportunity to approach, it's a stalemate. White can't improve his position.



But an extra pawn can doom this defense. Let's add a pawn to Diagram 157:

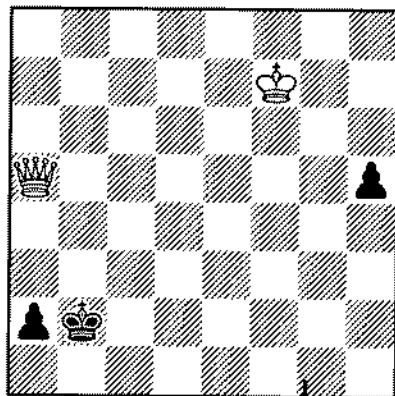


Diagram 159
White to move

1. Qb4+ Kc2 2. Qa3 Kb1 3. Qb3+ Ka1

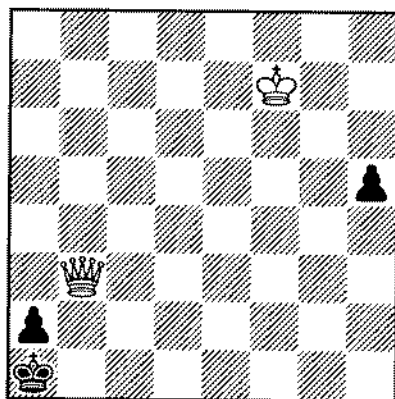


Diagram 160

4. Qc2! h4 5. Qc1 mate.

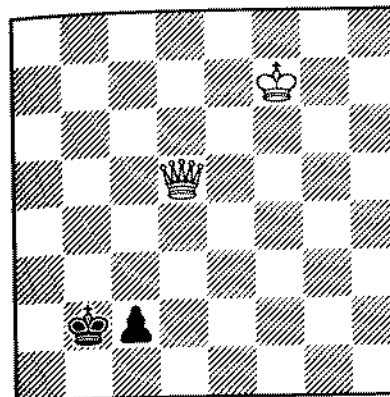


Diagram 161
White to move

position where the stalemate defense makes it impossible for White to win time to bring his king closer.

1. Qd2 Kb1 2. Qb4+ Ka2 3. Qc3 Kb1 4. Qb3+

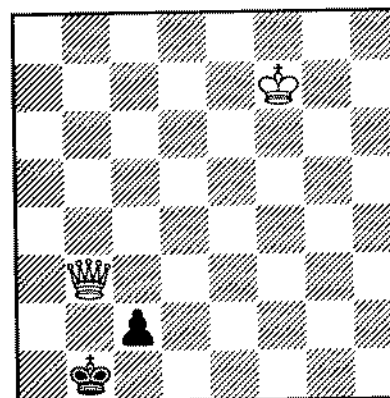


Diagram 162

... Ka1 5. Qxc2 stalemate.



When the king is close enough to attack with mate threats, the superior side can win.

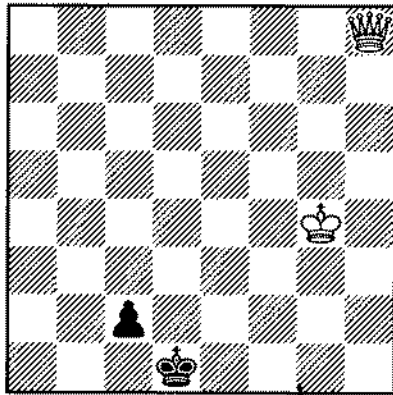


Diagram 163
White to move

1. Qd4+ Kc1 2. Qb4!

White prevents the Black king from getting to the a1 square, stalemate haven.

2. ... Kd1 3. Qb3 Kd2 4. Qb2 Kd1 5. Kf3! Kd2

If 5. ... c1(Q), 6. Qe2 mate.

6. Ke4 Kd1 7. Kd3 c1(Q) 8. Qe2 mate.

Endgames are most often decided because a piece reaches its promotion square. The slow-moving king has a tougher time against a pawn than do other pieces. Passed a- and h-pawns are particularly difficult for the king. (However, a lone knight on the seventh rank in front of an enemy rook-pawn on the sixth can hold off both the pawn and the enemy king. Bishop- and center-pawns are also difficult for the knight because it's off the "rim" and not in the center. When both sides have pawns, passed pawns are particularly important. Three factors determine their potential—how far advanced they are, how movable they are, and the position of the kings, especially the kings.

A rook is usually more successful against a pawn or knight than a bishop. Whenever possible, pawns should be kept on one diagonal. With some help from its king, a rook can usually reach a draw against two connected pawns. But it is more difficult for the bishop alone to handle two isolated pawns, working on two fronts on opposite diagonals. Three pawns often beat the bishop, but there are still successful defensive techniques.

Against a pawn, the pawn's distance from its promotion square and the position of the two kings are crucial factors. Moving the king by putting the rook on its fifth rank is often the winning technique. If a pawn is on the seventh rank, it can be blocked by the enemy king, or stopped by the pawn itself. If the king and rook are on the same side of the pawn, the game is usually drawn. Against two connected, far-advanced pawns, the rook often wins if the king helps. If the side with the rook gets his king in front of the pawns, he generally wins. Likewise, against three pawns, the rook most often wins if its king helps. Against a rook and pawns, as long as the pawns are not too far advanced, the rook normally handles pawns easily. But even a single pawn on the seventh rank can sometimes win because of stalemating possibilities.

Pawns against Pieces

Learning Exercises

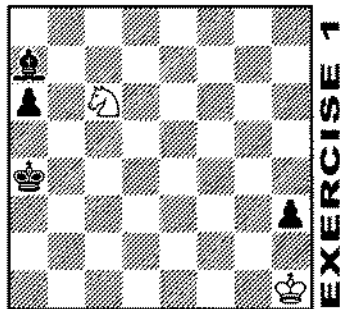


Diagram 164
Black to move

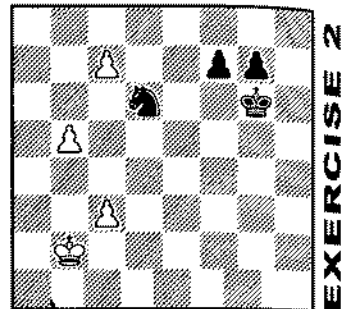


Diagram 165
White to move

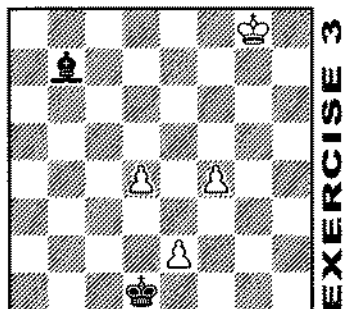


Diagram 166
White to move

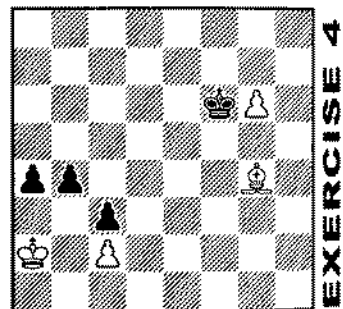


Diagram 167
White to move

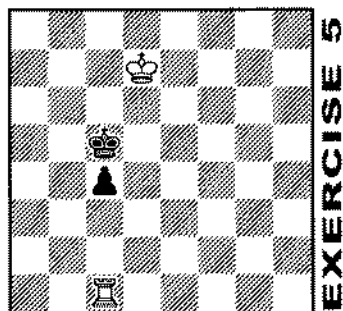


Diagram 168
Black to move

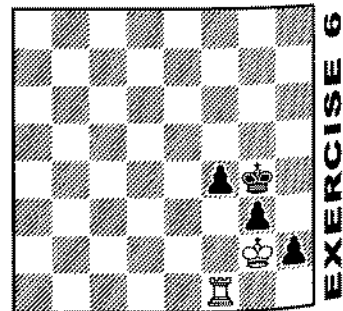


Diagram 169
Black to move



Diagram 170
White to move

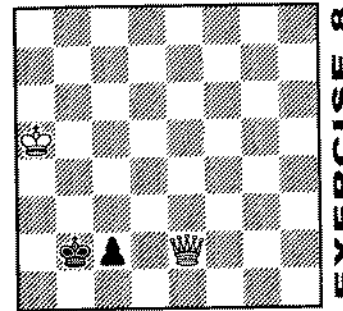


Diagram 171
Black to move

Pawns against Pieces

Solutions

1. ... Bc5 2. Nb8 a5 3. Nc6 and 4. Nxa5 =

1. b7+ Kc5 3. Nc8 a5 4. Ne7 a4 5. Nf5 a3

1. a2 7. Nc2 Kc4 +-.

1. Nxc4+ 2. Kc3 Nd6 (2. ... Nb6 3. Kd4) 3. b6 Kf6 4. b7 +.

1. Bxe4 2. Kf7 Ke2 3. Ke6 Ke3 4. Ke5

(promotion and zugzwang) 4. ... Kd3 5. d5 +- or

1. Kf3 5. f5 +-.

1. Kg7 2. Be6 Kxg6 3. Bb3! axb3+

1. a3 4. Bc4 Kf5 5. Kb3 Ke5 6. Kxb4 +-)

1. a3 Kf6 5. Kxb4 Ke6 6. Kxc3 Kd5 7. Kb4 +-.

1. Kd5! 2. Kc7 Kc5 3. Kb7 Kb5 4. Rb1+ Kc5 5. Ka6 c3 =.

1. Bf3+ 2. Rxf3 (2. Kh1 g2+ 3. Kxh2 gxf1(N)+

3. g2+ gxf1(B)) 2. ... h1(Q)+ 3. Kxh1 Kxf3 4. Kg1 g2 +-.

1. Qf6 2. Kc5+ Kc2 3. Qg2+ Kb1 4. Kb4 a1(Q)

1. Qf6 6. Qc2+ (or 6. Qg1+) +-.

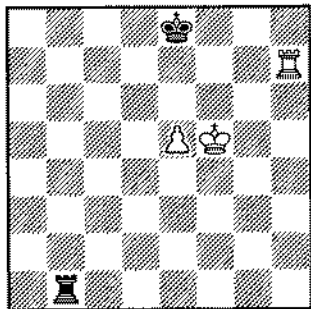
1. Ka1 (1. ... Kb1? 2. Kb4 c1(Q) 3. Kb3 +-)

1. Kb1 3. Qd3 (3. Kb4 c1[Q])

1. Kb2 4. Qe2 Ka1! =.

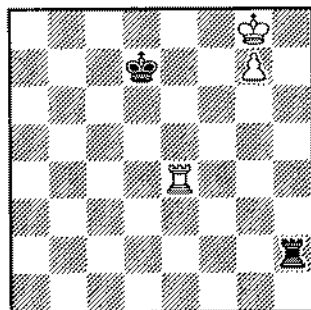
Chapter 4: Rook Endings

Some Important Ideas to Look For



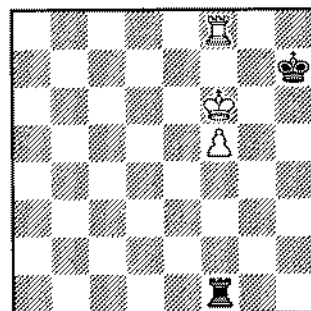
- ◆ Philidor's position

Black plays 1. ... Rb6 to draw equal.
See Diagram 175.



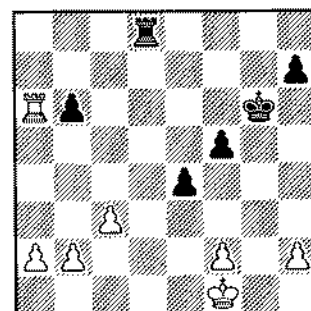
- ◆ Building a Lucena bridge to win

White has just played 5. Re4!
See Diagram 179.



- ◆ The long-side defense

Black plays 3. ... Ra1!
See Diagram 183.



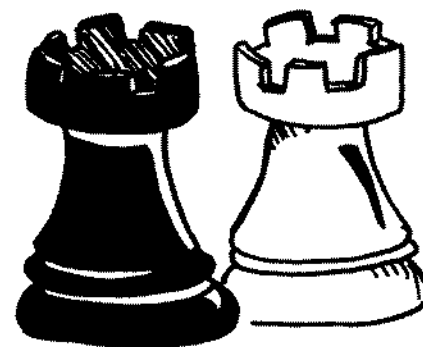
- ◆ Greater piece activity can overcome material disadvantage.

Black plays 1. ... Rd2!
See Diagram 222.

Chapter 4

Rook Endings: Long-Range Artillery

remote and push
This chapter will
important to half of the
you play, because
make up 50%
played in tour-
es! In Chapter 3
learned the impor-
es in endgames
vs. one or more
you need to know
a few key posi-
are crucial when



rook with pawns on the board. Staying sharp in
endings (Chapter 2) and rook endings is one of the
valuable investments you can make to better your
endgame chess. So, when you finish the first four
chapters of this book, you will have already made a significant
investment in your knowledge—and your increased understanding
will lead to more victories!

ROOK AND PAWN VS. ROOK, WITH THE DEFENDING KING BLOCKING THE PAWN

Let's look first at rook and single pawn against the lone rook. As in king and pawn endings, the defending king's first choice should be to get in front of the enemy pawn to block its path.

PAWN IS ON THE SIXTH RANK

In positions where the stronger side's pawn has reached the sixth (or Black's third) rank, and the opponent's king is blocking its way, the following ideas and techniques are important:

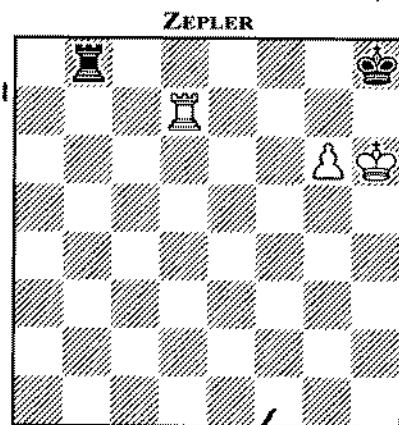


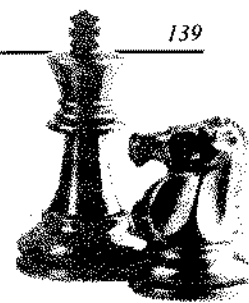
Diagram 172
White to move

Even here, when White has many advantages—including a passive Black rook, and a tremendous spatial advantage, the game is drawn because White can't strengthen his position.



ROOK ENDGAMES, WITHOUT OTHER PIECES, ARE THE SECOND-MOST DRAWISH ENDINGS. BISHOPS OF OPPOSITE COLOR ARE THE MOST DRAWISH. AS USUALLY, THE MORE PAWNS ON THE BOARD, THE GREATER THE CHANCES OF WINNING.

BUILDING UP THE ROOK WITHIN THE NIGHT



1. Rf7+ Kg8 2. Rg7+ Kh8!

3. Rf7+ Kh7 4. Rf7+ Kf8, loses after 3. Kh7 and 4. Rf7+. (See position, Diagram 178.)



These positions are different if you move the entire position over to the other corner.

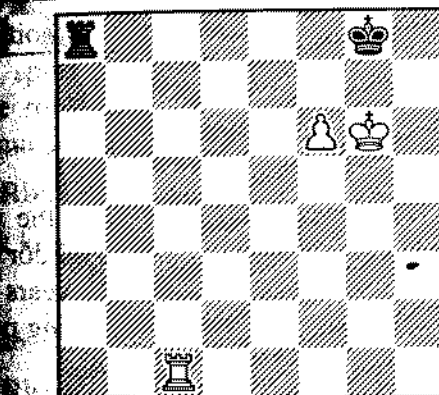


Diagram 173
White to move

1. Rb7 Rb8 2. Rg7+ Kf8

3. Rh7+ Kg8 4. f7+ Kf8 5. Rh8+.

6. Rf7 Kg8 4. f7+, winning.

DIFFERENT WITH PAWNS—THESE DON'T WORK!



White could conduct the winning maneuver because Black's rook had to remain passive on the back rank to protect his king from checkmate. Passive defense—where the defender's king is lifeless on the back rank—doesn't work here.

If we change the position slightly, putting White's king on the sixth rank, the position is a draw because Black can activate his rook.

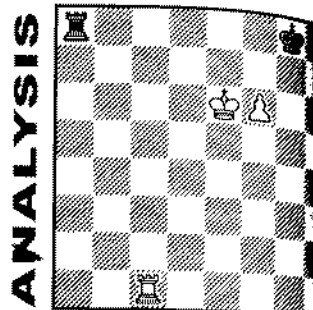


Diagram 174
White to move

PAWN IS NOT YET ON THE SIXTH RANK —

PHILIDOR'S POSITION

If the pawn has not reached the sixth rank, the weaker side should aim for what chess masters call "Philidor's Position," guaranteeing an easy draw. More than 200 years ago, André Philidor realized the importance of the following position.

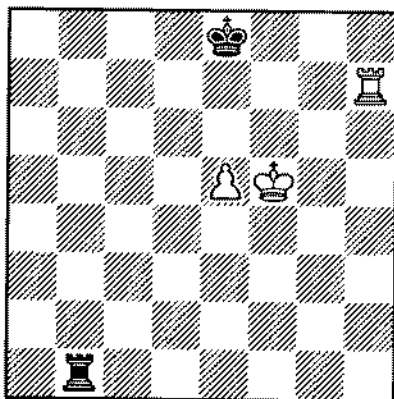


Diagram 175
Black to move

represents one of those "generic" or matrix positions that can be moved to the left or right, up or down the board. This method even works with rook-pawns, although then it's not as simple as a simpler, passive defense we've already seen.

White has moved a lot. His king and pawn are advanced to the sixth rank, and his rook limits Black's king to his back rank. Black's king has to bring his king (remember, generally you move your king first) to the sixth rank, where it can create threats to Black's problems, eventually chasing the king from his guard of the queening square.

Because of all of these advantages, the position is a basic, easy-to-remember draw! (Rook endings are drawish!) Remember to study this position and practice with it! Philidor worked out a variation that splits the point easily, illustrating the drawing technique with the rook. This three-part technique is now part of every chess master's knowledge:

1. Rg6

2. Rf6 keeps White's king off the sixth rank.

3. Rg6 Rxf6 4. Kxf6 Ke7=.

1. b1!

White pushes his pawn to the sixth rank, Black's king immediately drops all the way "back" to harass the White king in the rear.

2. Rf1+ 4. Ke5 Re1+

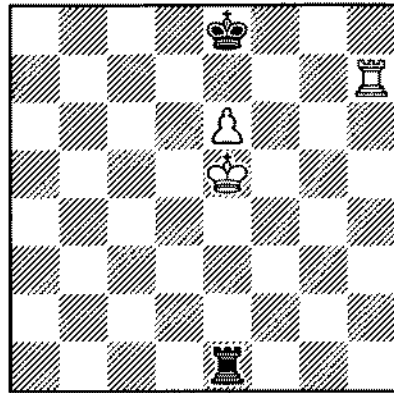


Diagram 176

5. Kd6 Rd1+, draw.

FRILIDOR'S METHOD

1. THE DEFENDER PREVENTS HIS OPPONENT'S KING FROM ADVANCING TO THE SIXTH RANK. SO THE SUPERIOR SIDE IS FORCED TO PUSH HIS PAWN TO USE IT AS SHELTER TO CROSS THE SIXTH.
2. AT THAT POINT THE DEFENDER SHIFTS HIS ROOK TO THE REAR—USUALLY ALL THE WAY TO THE FIRST RANK—IN ORDER TO GIVE CHECKS.
3. WITH THE PAWN ON THE SIXTH, THE ATTACKER'S KING CAN'T ESCAPE THE CHECKS FROM BEHIND, SO HE ISN'T ABLE TO CREATE THE MATING THREATS NEEDED TO CHASE THE DEFENDING KING OFF THE QUEENING SQUARE.



LUCENA'S POSITION

Now let's look at rook vs. rook-and-pawn positions where the Black king is pushed out of the pawn's way. Here the White king has already managed to reach the seventh rank.

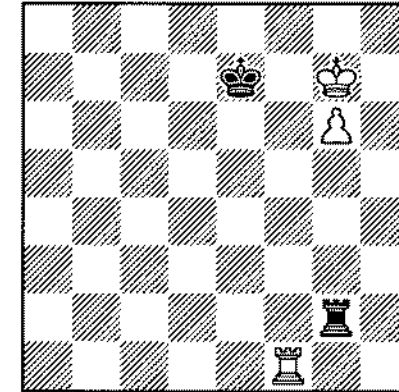


Diagram 177
White to move

Nothing can stop White from winning. But he has to know the only proper technique. This is another position that you should know very well—a position which can lead by force to "Lucena's position," also hundreds of years old and named after the author of the oldest existing chess book, published in 1497. Interestingly, the manuscript doesn't include this position! White can win by a technique Aaron Nimzovitch later dubbed "building a bridge." White configures a straight line of rook, king and pawn on the file, escaping checks and ensuring that the pawn can "cross" to its queening square.

First, White advances his pawn as far as possible.

1. Kh7 Rh2+ 2. Kg8 Rg2 3. g7

LUCENA'S POSITION

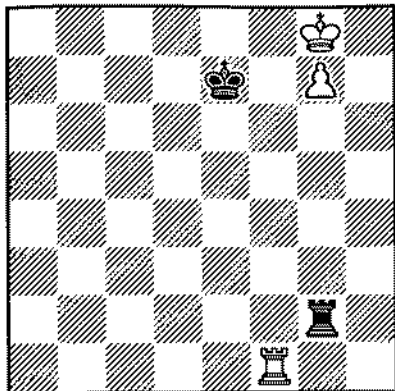
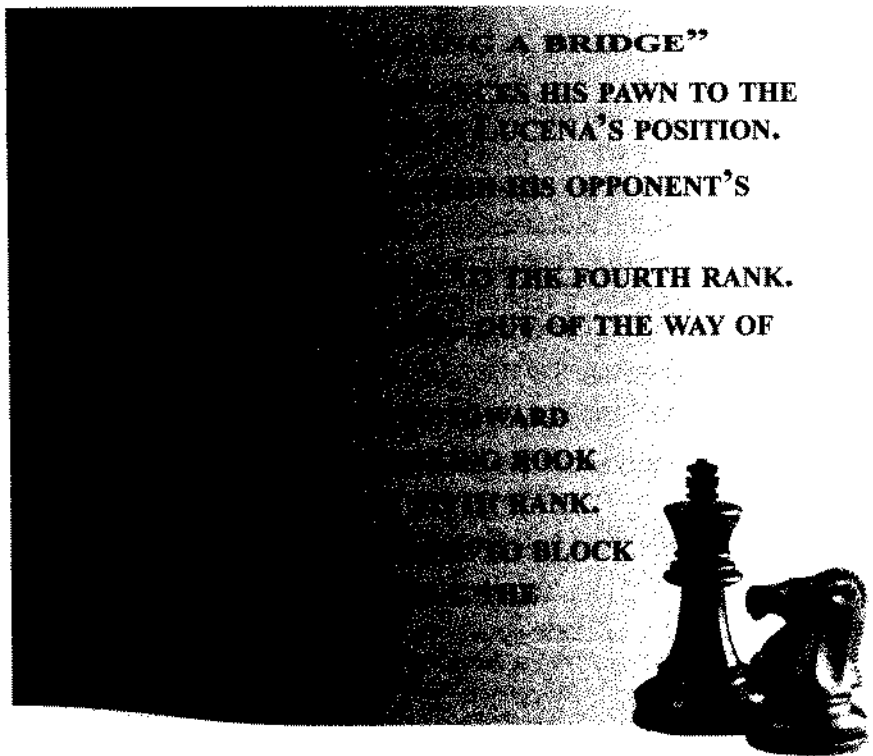


Diagram 178

3. ... Rh2

Or 3. ... Rg3 4. Rh1 Kf6 5. Kh8 Rxc7 6. Rf1+ Kg6 7. Rg1+ with the win.



4. Re1+ Kd7

To make progress, White needs to move his king out of the way of his pawn. Moving the king immediately accomplishes nothing: 5. Kf7 Rf2+ 6. Kg6 Rg2+ 7. Kf6 Rf2+ 8. Ke5 Rg2, and the king has to come back. However ...

5. Re4!

Played to be able to provide a future shelter for the king.

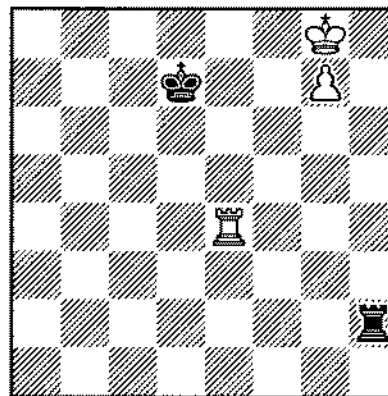


Diagram 179

5. ... Rh1 6. Kf7 Rf1+ 7. Kg6 Rg1+ 8. Kh6

The threat is 9. Re5 and 10. Rg5, building a bridge, or 9. Rh4 and 10. Kh7. That's why Black couldn't wait to check again.

8. ... Rh1+ 9. Kg5 Rg1+ 10. Rg4

The "bridge," which is really a block against checks, has been completed and White wins easily. (See diagram, next page.)

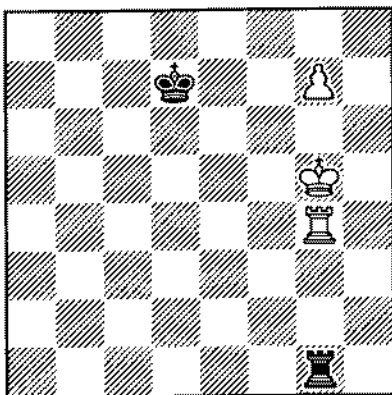


Diagram 180

COUNTERATTACKING FROM THE SIDE— THE LONG-SIDE DEFENSE

Even when Philidor's defense is no longer available, the weaker side shouldn't give up. Other drawing techniques are often successful.

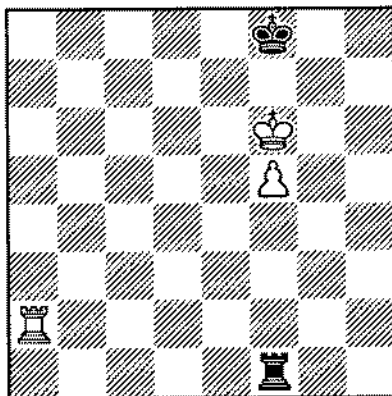


Diagram 181
Black to move

As we've seen in Chapter 2, without the rooks on the board this is a basic and simple win. But the rooks, as usual, add drawing potential!

White threatens mate. Black's king has to leave the queening square, but which way should it go? The move 1. ... Ke8 loses after 2. Ra8+ Kd7. (See Diagram 182 on page 148.)



Master of the Endgame Andre Philidor

Place of Birth: Paris

Date of Birth: September 7, 1726

Andre Philidor was a man equally brilliant in two fields, music and chess. In fact, some of his contemporaries, aware of his chess exploits, incorrectly doubted that he was the true composer of some of his operas!

Philidor was certainly the 18th Century's best player. For half that century he was the unofficial world champion, successfully giving odds to the next-strongest players in the world. Nevertheless, he remained a chess amateur, turning to chess full time only after 20 years as France's leading operatic composer. Along the way, he wrote his famous *Analysis of Chess*.

In his last years, he was a victim of the paranoia resulting from the French Revolution. Because his name was placed on the "enemies list," he could not safely return to France. Philidor died August 31, 1795 in England, where he is buried in Piccadilly. The letter he had been anxiously awaiting for years, clearance to come home to his family, arrived too late.

Philidor was at least 200 years ahead of his time in his understanding of chess. At a time when flashy, foolhardy play dominated, he coined the term "Pawns are the soul of chess."



Strongest player of the 18th Century

In Analysis of the Game of Chess, he was first to write about the key principles of winning chess middlegame play and to analyze a basic endgame.

- ◆ Leading operatic composer of his day
- ◆ Amazed European audiences with blind-fold displays
- ◆ Remembered with "Philidor's Legacy," "Philidor's Defense," and "Philidor's Position"

ANALYSIS

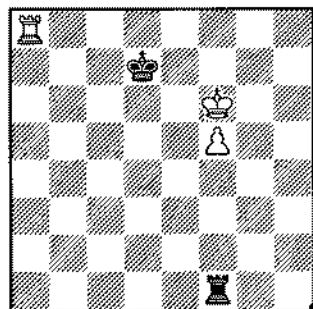


Diagram 182
After 2. ... Kd7

3. Rf8 (not 3. Kg6 Ke7!, preventing f6, and White has nothing better than going back to the original position: 4. Ra7+ Kf8 5. Kf6) 3. ... Rf2 (or 3. ... Rh1 4. Kg7! and Black's rook doesn't have enough room for the last resort, a successful attack from the side.) 4. Kg7!—White is going to reach the Lucena position.

From Diagram 181, Black can draw by employing an important defensive technique—the long-side defense.

1. ... Kg8! 2. Ra8+ Kh7 3. Rf8

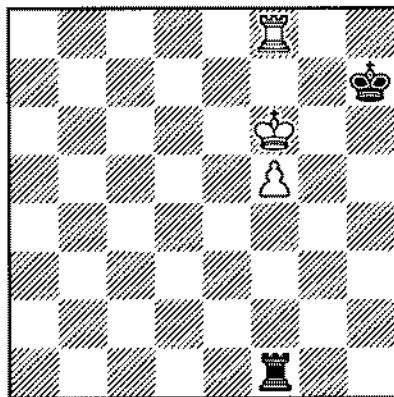


Diagram 183

The only way White can start to advance his pawn—but now Black's rook heads decisively for the "long side."

3. ... Ra1! 4. Re8

If 4. Ke6, 4. ... Kg7!.

4. ... Rf1

Once White's rook leaves the f-file, the Black rook occupies it, preventing the pawn advance.

5. Re7+ Kg8 6. Ra7 Rf2 7. Ra8+ Kh7 8. Ke6 Kg7!, drawing.

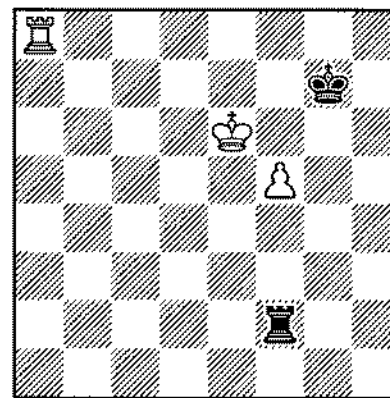


Diagram 184



THE LONG-SIDE DEFENSE
 ... BY RETREATING HIS
 ... OTHER SIDE
 ... (FROM A PERSPECTIVE)
 ... MOVING
 ... LONGER SIDE TO
 ... CHECKS.



A successful long-side defense depends on controlling the eighth rank at the right time.

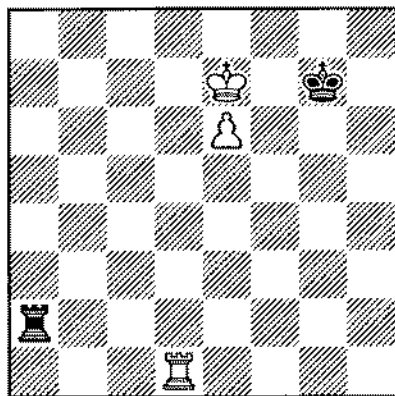


Diagram 185
Black to move

1. ... Ra7+ 2. Rd7

If 2. Ke8, 2. ... Kf6, draw.

2. ... Ra8!

All other "normal" moves draw as well, except that 2. ... Ra6 loses to 3. Ke8+ and 4. e7.

3. Rc7

Or 3. Rd8 Ra7+ 4. Ke8 Kf6, draw.

3. ... Kg6

Black holds, although not without some difficulty.

WHEN THE LONG SIDE IS TOO SHORT

GRIGORIEV

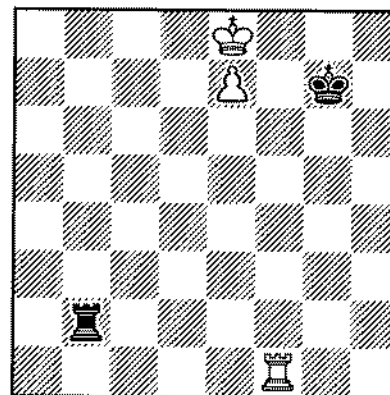


Diagram 186
Black to move

Here the Black rook doesn't have enough room to successfully use a long-side defense. The distance between it and the pawn is only two squares. Even on move, Black loses.

1. ... Rb8+

On 1. ... Ra2, 2. Rg1+ Kf6 (or 2. ... Kh7 Rg4, building the bridge and winning) 3. Kf8 wins.

2. Kd7 Rb7+ 3. Kd6 Rb8

Or 3. ... Rb6+ 4. Kc7 Re6 5. Kd7.

4. Kc7 Ra8

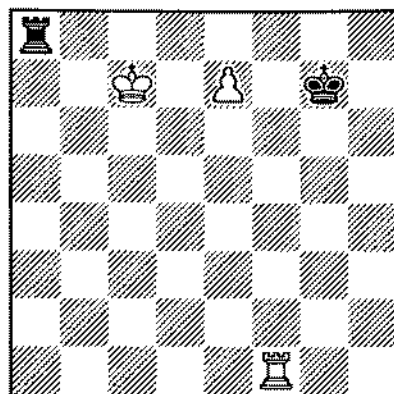


Diagram 187

5. Ra1!

If White did not have this last move, or if Black were on move, the game would be a draw because there are now three squares between the rook and pawn—the normal maneuvering room required for a successful "long-side" defense.

5. ... Re8 6. Kd7, winning.

**THE DEFENDING KING IS CUT
OFF FROM THE PAWN**

If the weaker side's king is cut off from the pawn, the frontal attack is the most effective—and often the only—method of defense.

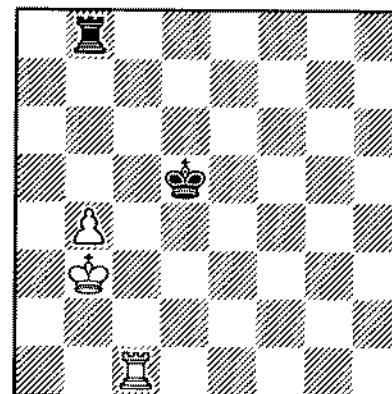


Diagram 188

White to move

With the rook in front, it is also important to have a three-square interval between the rook and pawn. A smaller interval usually leads to a loss.

1. Ka4 Ra8+ 2. Kb5 Rb8+ 3. Ka5 Ra8+!

There should not be any pause between the checks.

4. Kb6 Rb8+ 5. Ka5 Ra8+ 6. Kb5 Rb8+ 7. Ka4 Ra8+

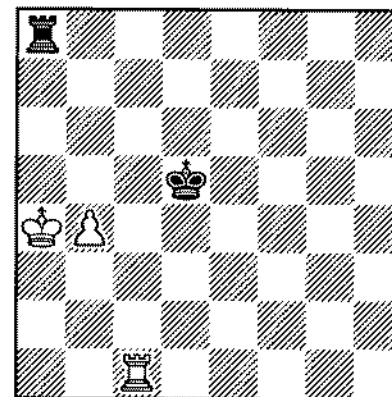


Diagram 189

To escape the checks, White's king has to drop back to b3.

From Diagram 188, rook moves do not help White either. For

example: 1. Rc5+ Kd6 2. Ka4 (2. Kc4 Rh8) 2. ... Ra8+ 3. Kb5 (3. Ra5 Rb8 4. b5 Kc5 =) 3. ... Rb8+ 4. Kc4 Rh8.

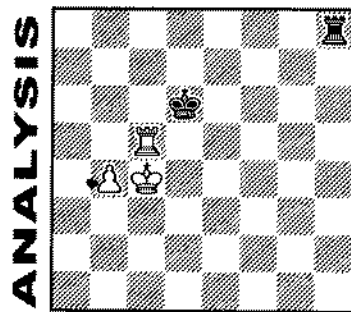


Diagram 190
After 4. ... Rh8

Back to Diagram 188, after 1. Rc4, the threat is that White's king can move forward without worrying about his pawn. But after 1. ... Kd6 2. Ka4 Kd5 3. Rc5+ (or 3. Rc7 Kd6 4. Ra7 Kc6=) 3. ... Kd6 4. Ka5 Ra8+ 5. Kb5 Rb8+, we reach the same drawn position we saw earlier.



If the stronger side is able to protect his pawn with the rook, he usually wins.

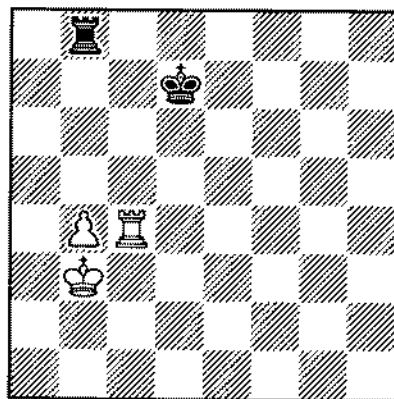


Diagram 191
White to move

1. Ka4 Ra8+

If 1. ... Rc8 2. Rxc8 Kxc8 3. Ka5 +-,

2. Kb5 Rb8+ 3. Ka6 Ra8+ 4. Kb7 Ra4 5. Rc7+, White wins.

WHEN THE EXTRA PAWN IS A ROOK-PAWN
As is in pawn endgames, the rook-pawn is the most drawish in rook endgames, so the defense is easiest with this pawn. The following are key positions.

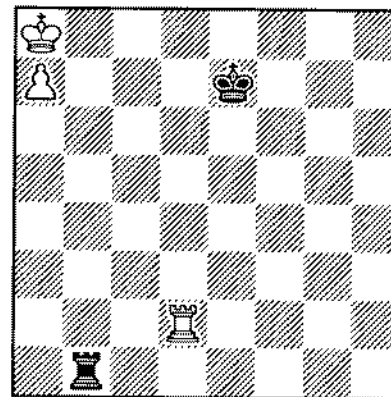


Diagram 192
White to move

This is a draw, because White's rook can't help his king get out of the corner to make way for the pawn.

1. Rh2 Kd7 2. Rh8 Kc7 3. Rb8 Rc1 4. Rb7+ Kc8, draw.



*Chess is a game of understanding,
not of memory.*

—Znosko-Borovsky

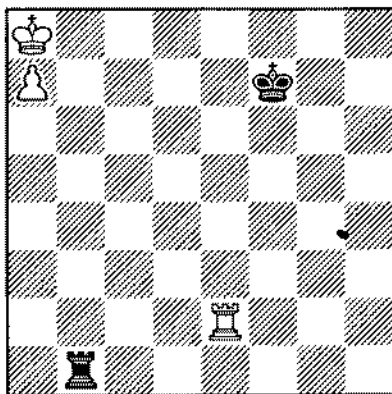


Diagram 193
White to move

The horizontal interval of four squares between the king and the pawn allows White's rook time to help his king out from the corner.

1. Rc2 Ke7 2. Rc8 Kd6

Or 2. ... Kd7 3. Rb8 Ra1 4. Kb7 Rb1+ 5. Ka6 Ra1+ 6. Kb6 Rb1+ 7. Kc5+-.

3. Rb8 Ra1 4. Kb7 Rb1+ 5. Kc8 Rc1+ 6. Kd8 Rh1

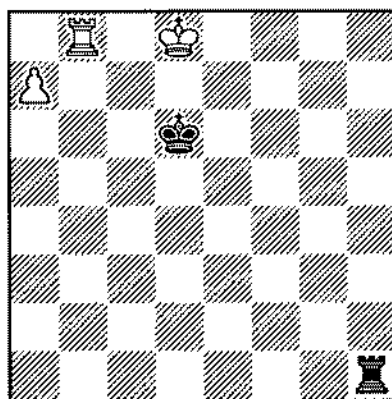


Diagram 194

7. Rb6+! Kc5 8. Rc6+!

White wins—for example, if 8. ... Kxc6 then 9. a8(Q)+; or 8. ... Kd5 9. Ra6; finally, if 8. ... Kb5 9. Rc8.



Let's take a look at the following important position, where the king can't aid in the defense—and the superior side's rook is in front of his pawn, which has been advanced to the seventh.

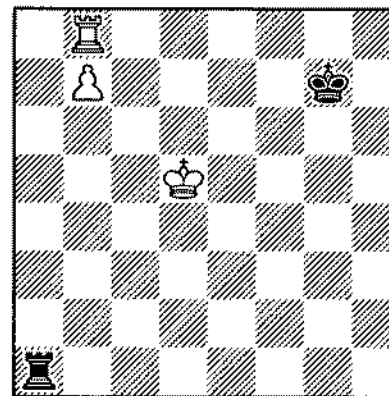


Diagram 195
Black to move

Here, Black draws easily with 1. ... Rb1, putting his rook behind the pawn. As White's king approaches the b7-pawn to free up his rook, Black checks with his rook from the "bottom" of the board, and then returns to the b-file. With White's king away from his pawn, Black can also kill time by shuffling back and forth on the h7-g7 squares. (But he can't approach any closer. If 1. ... Rb1 2. Kd6 Kf7? 3. Rh8 Rxb7 4. Rh7+.) This method of defense also works with the pawns on the other files.



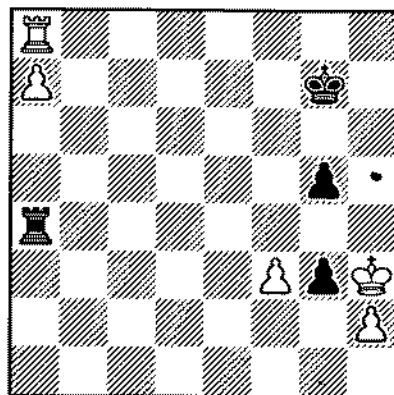


Diagram 196
White to move

In this position White played 1. $hxg3?$, and after 1. ... $g4+$ 2. $fxg4$, the two additional pawns (g3 and g4) do not win. White's pawn can reach g6, but Black's rook moves along the a-file or gives checks (if White's king threatens to support his pawn on a7), and thus does not allow the opponent's rook to leave the a8-square. But White has a better move.

1. $Kxg3!$ $Kh7$ 2. $h4!$ $gxh4+$ 3. $Kh3$ $Kg7$ 4. $f4$

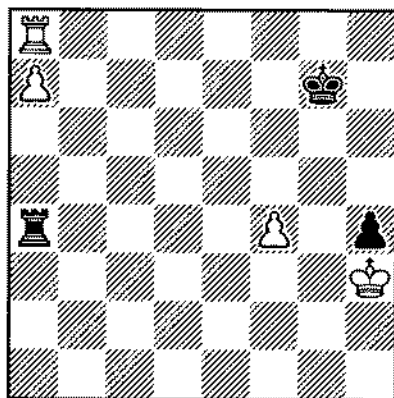


Diagram 197

4. ... $Kh7$

If 4. ... $Rxf4?$, then 5. $Rb8$.

5. $f5$ $Kg7$ 6. $f6+$ $Kxf6$ 7. $Rf8+$, winning.

Or 6. ... $Kf7$ 7. $Rh8$ $Rxa7$ 8. $Rh7+$, wins. With the a-, b-, or c-pawn on the seventh, the only safe kingside squares for Black's king are g7 and h7. Therefore, an extra h- or g-pawn would not win for White, since he can't deny Black both safe squares. On the other hand, an extra pawn on any other file would win.

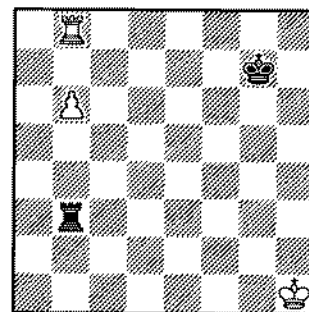


Diagram 198

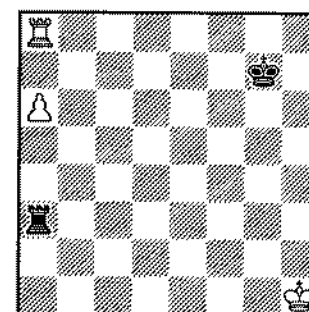


Diagram 199

The great Tarrasch, one of the original grandmasters, taught that positions like 198 are drawn and those like 199 are a win. Later players discovered *both* were drawn.

Diagram 198 has long been known to be a draw because Black's king can simply advance on the pawn—for example, 1. ... $Kf7$ 2. $b7$ $Kg7!$, or 2. $Kg2$ $Ke7!$ 3. $b7$ $Kd7$ —just in time.

But until the early 20th Century, the position in Diagram 199 was thought to be won for White. His king marches to hide on a7, while Black's king cannot help because it cannot cross the mined e-file—for example, 1. ... $Kf7$ 2. $Kg2$ $Ke7?$ 3. $a7$ and White wins.

But Vanchura discovered a drawing technique that even today some GMs have failed to employ to save games! From Diagram 199, with White to move, the game may continue 1. $Kg2$ $Ra5$ 2. $Kf3$ $Rf5+$ 3. $Ke4$ $Rf6$, leading to the following Vanchura position.

VANCHURA

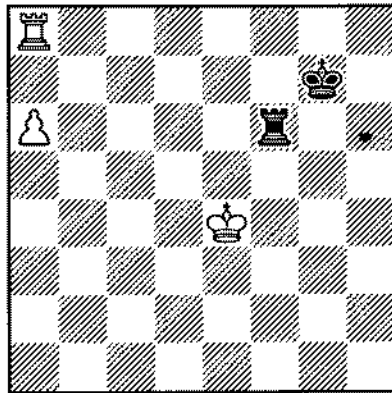


Diagram 200
White to move

White's rook is tied to defending his pawn. His king would like to hide on a7, but is prevented by checks from the side.

1. Kd5 Rf5+ 2. Kc4 Rf6 3. Kb5
3. a7 Ra6 =.
3. ... Rf5+ 4. Kb6 Rf6+ 5. Ka7 Rf7+
6. Kb6 Rf6+, draw.



Courtesy www.chesscafe.com

Aron Nimzovitch (1886-1935), the self-described "crown prince of chess," was the most eccentric of the small group of those who, under a bit different circumstances, may have become world champion.

A very difficult personality, he couldn't attract a backer and so lost his opportunity to play Capablanca. (What a conflict of personalities and ideas that would have proven!) Later Alekhine preferred to beat up on Bogolubov several times rather than oppose the "prince."

ROOK VERSUS ROOK AND TWO PAWNS

A rook and two pawns usually—but not always—win against the rook.

KLING AND HORWITZ

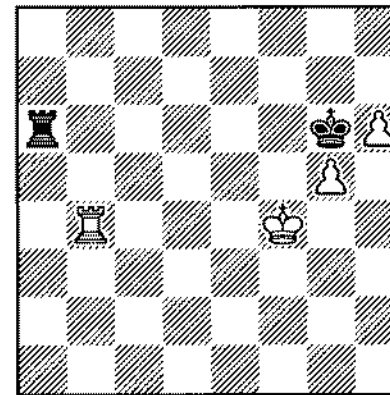


Diagram 201
White to move

Here, even though White has two connected, passed pawns, they're blocked. Black manages to draw.

1. Rd4 Rb6

Black has to control the sixth rank.

2. Rd8 Rb4+ 3. Ke5 Rb7!

Black threatens to capture the g5-pawn.

4. Rg8+ Kh7 5. Rd8 Kg6, draw.

SPECIAL CASE OF THE ROOK- AND BISHOP-PAWNS

The weaker side often reaches a draw against a pair of isolated pawns on the f- and h-files or the a- and c-files. The main techniques employed in the defense are the long-side defense and the rook attack from the bottom of the board.

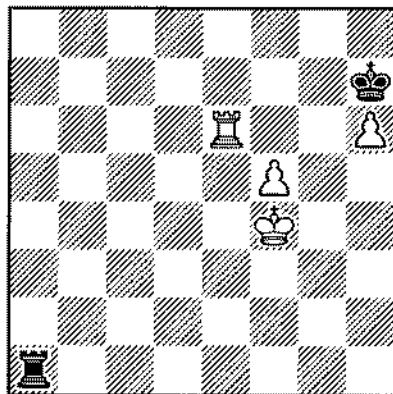


Diagram 202
White to move

1. Kg5

Or 1. Ke5 Re1+ 2. Kf6 Rf1.

1. ... Rg1+ 2. Kf6 Rf1!

Black must prevent 3. Kf7. Capturing with 2. ... Kxh6 is bad because of 3. Ke7+ Kh7 4. f6 Ra1 5. f7.

3. Re3

If 3. Re5, then 3. ... Kxh6 4. Kf7 Ra1 5. f6 Ra7+ 6. Re7 Ra8 7. Re8 Ra7+ 8. Ke6 Ra6+ 9. Kf5 Ra5+ 10. Re5 Ra7 11. Ke6 Ra6+, with the draw.

3. ... Ra1 4. Re6

If 4. Kf7, 4. ... Kxh6.

4. ... Rf1, draw.

ROOK AND PAWNS VS. ROOK AND PAWNS

In this next case, Black's rook is in front of the opponent's passed pawn, blocking it. This arrangement significantly restricts the rook's mobility, sometimes leading to zugzwang. If Black's king moves to assist his rook, then his pawns on the other side of the board become vulnerable. Still, in most cases, the weaker side's king should try to block the passed pawn, freeing up his rook for action.

ALEKHINE—CAPABLANCA
BUENOS AIRES, 1927

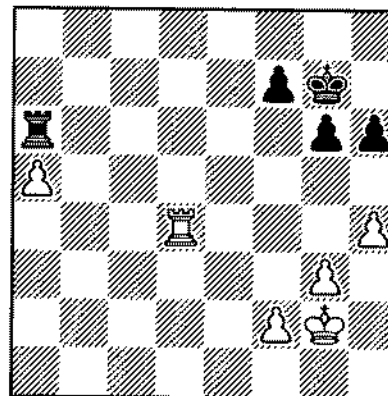


Diagram 203
White to move

1. Ra4

Now White wants to bring his king to attack the Black rook. That's why the Black king should travel to the scene to help.

1. ... Kf6 2. Kf3 Ke5 3. Ke3 h5

This typical move, which tries to prevent g3-g4 and h4-h5, has its negatives here, as it will allow White's king to penetrate via g5.

4. Kd3 Kd5 5. Kc3 Kc5 6. Ra2

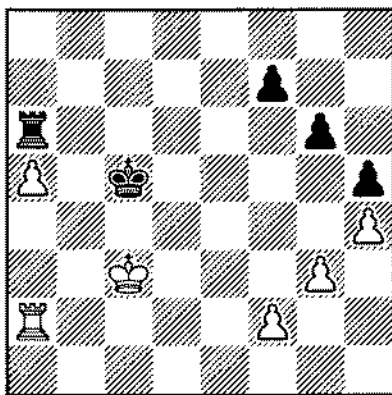


Diagram 204

White waits for his opponent to use up all of his useful moves. Black can't win the a-pawn because it would lead to a losing pawn ending, since his king would be left too far away from the kingside. After 6. ... Ra8, White would play 7. a6, limiting the mobility of the Black rook even more. That's why Black regroups so that his king can block the pawn, freeing his rook for other actions.

6. ... Kb5 7. Kd4!

In the actual game, the two legendary champions played 7. Kb3 Kc5 8. Kc3 Kb5, repeating the position. Then Alekhine went for the win with Kd4!. While Black's king is distracted, White heads to the kingside pawns.

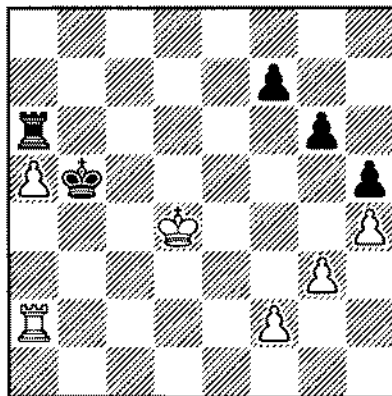


Diagram 205

7. ... Rd6+ 8. Ke5 Re6+ 9. Kf4 Ka6 10. Kg5 Re5+
11. Kh6 Rf5

Now Alekhine played 12. f4 and eventually won. But the fastest way to win is ...

12. Kg7 Rf3 13. Rd2!

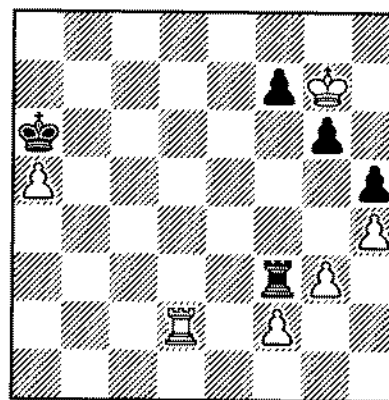
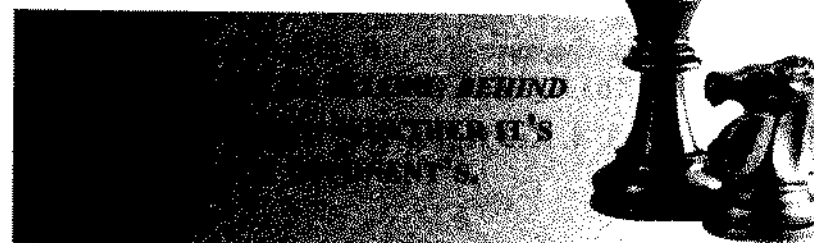


Diagram 206

This is an important moment. White's rook abandons his own passed pawn in favor of attacking the Black pawns, because it's then two-against-one on the kingside. This sets up unstoppable, winning threats: 14. Rd6+ and 15. Rf6. If 13. ... Kxa5, then 14. Rd5+! Kb6 15. Rd6+ and 16. Rf6. Or if 14. ... Kb4, then 15. Rd4+ and 16. Rf4, with the win.



ILIVITSKY—KROGIUS
RUSSIA, 1956

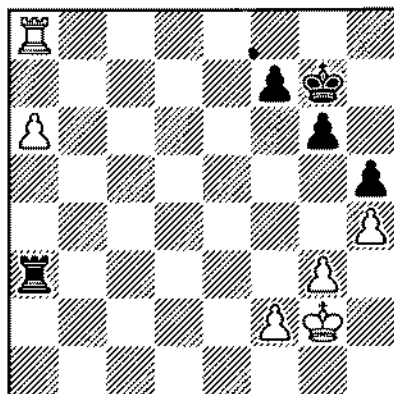


Diagram 207
White to move

Again, White has an extra, distant passed pawn.

However, there is a significant difference between this and the previous example. The rooks have switched places. Here, the Black rook not only guards the passed pawn from the rear, but can also attack White's kingside. White can't count on 1. a7 to win, since then if White's king tries to approach his passed pawn to give support, Black's rook checks from the bottom of the board, driving the enemy king away.

So all of White's hopes reside in temporarily keeping his pawn on a6. By resisting the urge to push the pawn, White leaves the a7-square available to shelter his king from checks. But while White follows this plan, Black's rook can take the White pawns on the other side of the board!

1. Kf1 Ra2 2. Ke1 Kf6 3. f3

3. Kd1 is too risky because of 3. ... Rxf2 4. Kc1 Ra2 5. Kb1 Ra5 6. Kb2 Kf5 7. Kb3 Kg4 8. Kb4 Ra1 9. Kb5 Kxg3.

3. ... Ra3! 4. Ke2 Kg7 5. Kd2 Rxf3

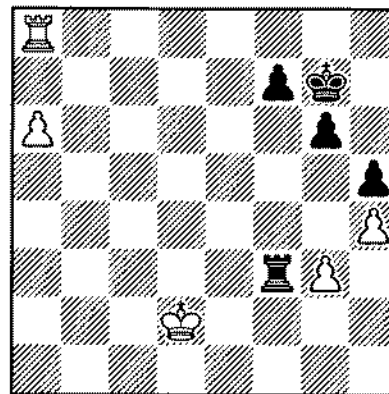


Diagram 208

6. Kc2 Rxc3 7. Kb2 Rg2+ 8. Kb3 Rg1 9. Kb2 Rg2+
10. Kb3 Rg1

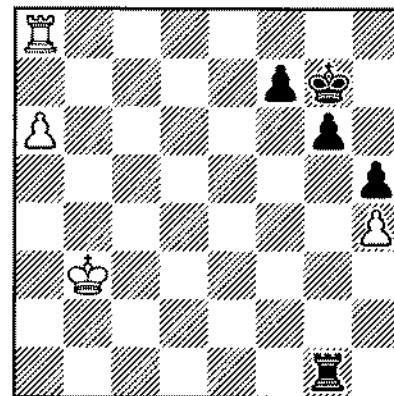


Diagram 209

11. Kb2, draw.

In the case of 11. Kb4, Black can play 11. ... Ra1 12. Kb5 g5! 13. hxg5 h4 14. Rc8 h3 15. Rc2 Kg6 16. Rh2 Ra3, with advantage for Black.



ELISKASES—LEVENFISH
MOSCOW, 1936

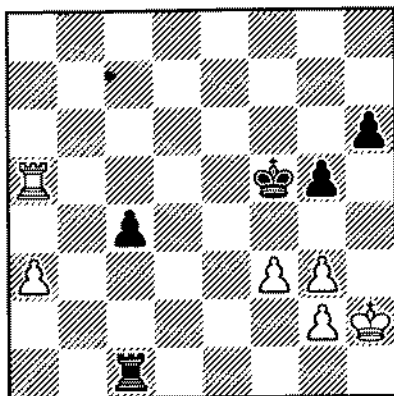


Diagram 210
Black to move

Black, although down a pawn, enjoys two important circumstances in his favor.

- ♣ Black's king is more active;
- ♣ Black's passed pawn is closer to the center, allowing its king to support it. (In this particular position, it is better for Black that his pawn is not so distant. This fact is not typical for most endings, where you normally want the most distant passed pawn.)

1. ... Ke6! 2. Ra6+ Kd5 3. Rxh6 c3 4. Rh8 Ra1 5. Rc8 Rxa3 6. Kh3?

White should play 6. f4, with good chances of drawing.

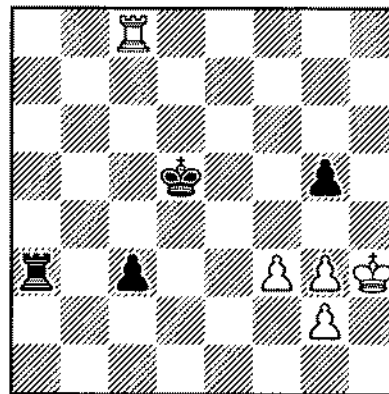


Diagram 211

6. ... Kd4 7. Kg4

Now if 7. f4, then 7. ... gxf4 8. gxf4 c2+ 9. Kh4 Rc3.

7. ... Ra5 8. f4 Rc5 9. Rd8+ Ke3 10. Rd1 c2 11. Rc1 gxf4 12. gxf4 Kd2 13. Ra1 c1(Q) 14. Rxc1 Rxc1!

The king has to stay close to the pawns.

15. Kg5 Ke3 16. f5 Ke4

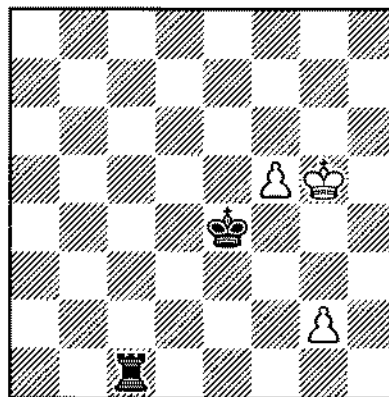


Diagram 212

17. g4 Ke5 18. Kg6 Rc6+ 19. Kg7 Ra6! 20. Kf7 Kf4 21. Kg7

If 21. f6, then 21. ... Kg5.

21. ... Kg5, White resigns.



As we've seen, a rook in these endings is usually better off behind, rather than in front of, passed pawns, no matter whose pawns they are. When a rook is guarding a pawn from the side, it can be active on the other side of the board. This freedom for the rook is good. On the other hand, this pawn can't move forward without help from its king.

KROGIUS—GIBBS
OSLO, 1954

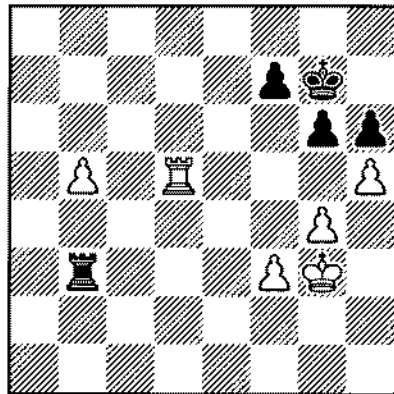


Diagram 213
Black to move

White's winning plan is to transfer his king to the queenside. Black's next move makes White's task easier.

1. ... g5?

Now White gets a comfortable station for his rook and an easy win. But even after the best move, 1. ... Rb4, White has a good chance to win after 2. Kf2 Rb3 3. Ke2 Kf6 4. f4, followed by the further advance of the White king.

2. Kf2

On the premature 2. Rf5?, Black draws with 2. ... Rb2!.

2. ... Kf6 3. Ke2 Ke6 4. Rf5 f6 5. Kd2 Ke7 6. Kc2 Rb4

7. Kc3 Rb1 8. Kc4 Rc1+ 9. Kd5, winning.



Connected passed pawns can develop into an unstoppable juggernaut if they cannot be blocked.

BOTVINNIK—KOPILOV
MOSCOW, 1951

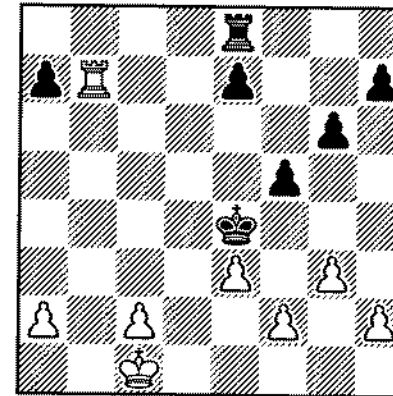


Diagram 214
White to move

1. Rxa7?

The coming connected passed pawns provide Black with more than adequate compensation for the material discrepancy. White had to play 1. Kd2, to meet 1. ... Kf3 with 2. Ke1, and White should hold; for example—2. ... Rc8 3. Rxe7 Rxc2 4. Rxa7 Rxf2 5. Rxh7 Rxa2 6. h4 Kxe3 7. Re7+ Kf3 8. Re6 =.

**1. ... Kf3 2. a4 Kxf2 3. a5 g5 4. a6 Kxe3 5. Rb7 e5
6. a7 Ra8**

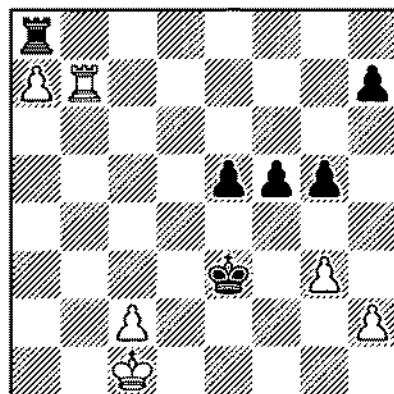


Diagram 215

7. Rxh7

A better try was 7. Rb5 e4 8. Rxf5 Rxa7 9. Rxc5.

7. ... f4 8. gxf4 gxf4 9. Kd1 f3

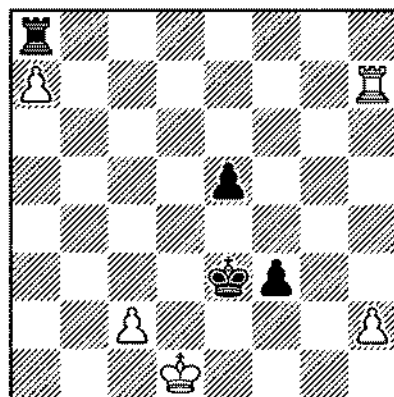


Diagram 216

10. c4

Or 10. Ke1 Rg8 11. Kf1 Rd8 -+.

10. ... Rd8+ 11. Kc2 f2 12. Rf7 Ra8, White resigns.

The threat is 13. ... Rxa7.

BEWARE OF PASSIVE DEFENSE

In these rook endings, passive play is often self-defeating.

ILIVITSKY—TAIMANOV
MOSCOW, 1954

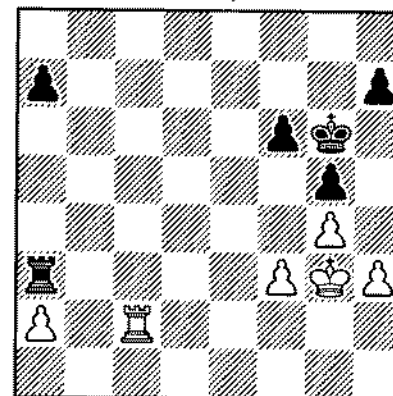


Diagram 217

White to move

1. Rh2?

White ~~had~~ to play 1. Rc6!, activating his rook with a pawn sacrifice; for example— 1. ... Rxa2 2. h4 gxh4+ 3. Kxh4 Ra3 4. Kg3 a5 5. Ra6, with good chances for a draw. This is a typical defensive technique in such endings.

1. ... h5 2. Rc2?

Worth a try 2. h4!?, to get as many pawns off the board as possible, and avoid the terribly passive position White now gets.

2. ... h4+ 3. Kf2 a6 4. Rb2 Rc3 5. Kg2 a5

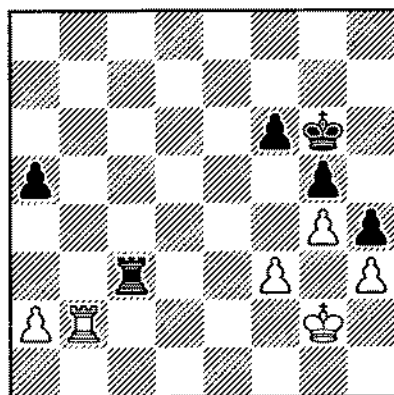


Diagram 218

Now White achieved a draw by cutting of the Black king:
6. Rb7! Rc2+ 7. Kg1 Rxa2 8. Ra7 and White's king shuffles
from g1 to f1 (or h1) and back.

6. Rf2?

The final mistake.

6. ... Ra3 7. Kf1 Kf7

The king is heading to f4.

8. f4 gxf4 9. Rxf4 Kg6 10. Rf2 Rxh3, White resigns.

Let's look at another example where having an active rook trumps material advantage.



**IN ROOK ENDINGS
A PAWN ADVANTAGE
IS WORTH LESS THAN
A ROOK THAN IN OTHER
ENDINGS. BUT IN
EQUALITY DRAW POSITIONS**

**SCHLECHTER—EM. LASKER
VIENNA, MATCH GAME #1, 1910**

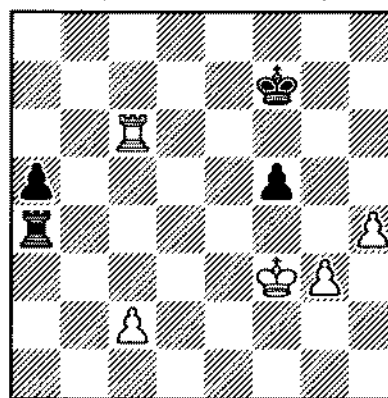


Diagram 219
Black to move

1. ... Re4!

The best road to a draw.

2. Rc5 Kf6 3. Rxa5 Rc4

In the actual game, Schlechter repeated the position by checking Lasker's king back and forth a few times with Ra6 and Ra5. Then he decided to hold his c-pawn.

4. Ra2 Rc3+ 5. Kg2 Ke5

**EVEN TWO EXTRA PAWNS MAY
NOT BE ENOUGH FOR A WIN!**



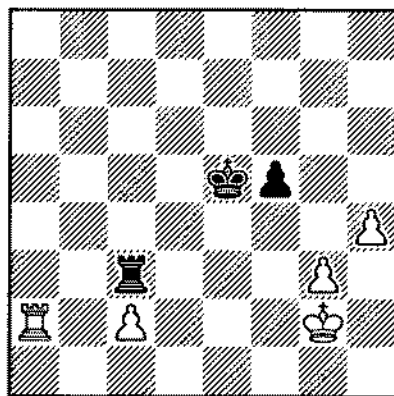


Diagram 220

White has two extra pawns, but his pieces are tied up.

6. Rb2 Kf6 7. Kh3 Rc6 8. Rb8

Giving away a pawn, but there is nothing better.

8. ... Rxc2

As is most often the case, this ending with the two pawns against one on the same side is a draw.

9. Rb6+ Kg7 10. h5 Rc4

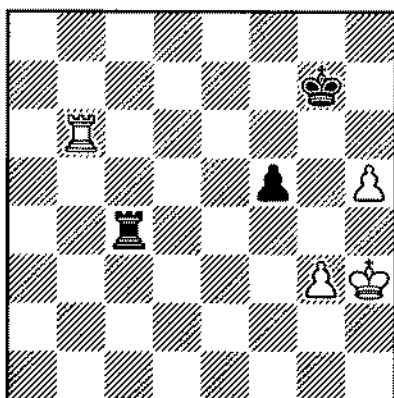


Diagram 221

11. h6+ Kh7 12. Rf6 Ra4, draw.



TARRASCH—RUBINSTEIN
SAN SEBASTIAN, 1911

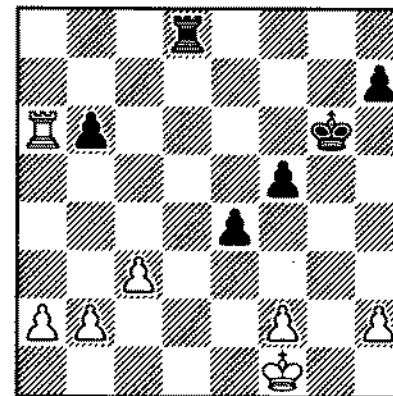


Diagram 222

Black to move

By activating his pieces, Black can reach a draw in a position that at first glance seems hopeless.

1. ... Rd2!

1. ... Rd6? 2. Ke1 and 3. a4.

2. Rxb6+ Kg5 3. Ke1

Or 3. a4 f4 4. a5 f3 5. Ke1 Re2+ =. A rook on the seventh rank is a force to contend with in most positions, endgame or not.

3. ... Rc2 4. Rb5 Kg4



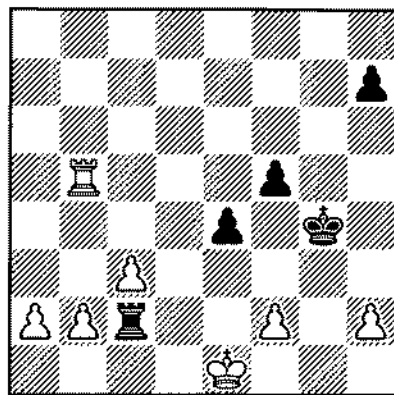


Diagram 223

With the idea of 5. ... f4 and 6. ... f3 or 6. ... Kf3.

5. h3+ Kxh3 6. Rxf5 Rxb2 7. Rf4

Or 7. a4 Ra2 8. a5 Kg4 9. Re5 Kf3 10. Rf5+ Kg4 =.

7. ... Rxa2 8. Rxe4 h5 9. c4 Kg2 10. Rf4 Rc2 11. Rh4 Kf3! 12. Kd1 Rxf2 13. c5 Ke3 14. Rxh5 Kd4, draw.



SAVON—ZELIANDINOV
RIGA, 1964

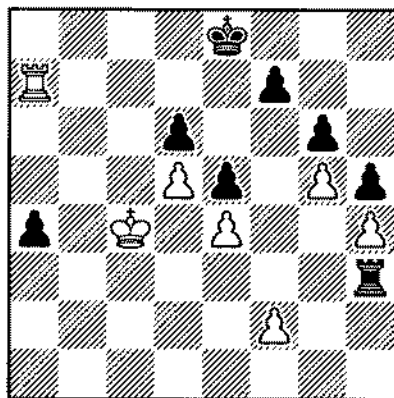


Diagram 224
White to move

His king's active position fully compensates White for his missing pawn.

1. Kb5 Rxh4?

Black had to think draw, not win. After 1. ... Rc3! (cutting off White's king) 2. Rxa4 Rc2 3. Ra7 Rc1 4. Kb6 Rc2 5. Rc7 Ra2! 6. Kc6 Ra6+ 7. Kb5 Ra2, Black would draw.

2. Kc6 Rxe4 3. Kxd6 Kf8 4. Ra8+ Kg7 5. Ke7

Black's pawns protect the White king against checks from the bottom of the board.

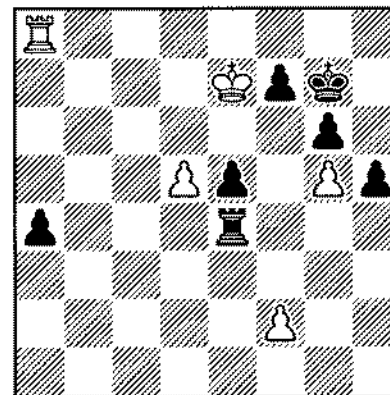


Diagram 225

5. ... Rd4 6. d6 e4

Or 6. ... h4 7. d7 h3 8. d8Q Rxd8 9. Rxd8 h2 10. Rd1 a3 11. Rh1 a2 12. Ra1 e4 13. Rh1 Kg8 14. Kf6 Kf8 15. Ke5, with a win.

7. d7 e3 8. fxe3 Re4+ 9. Kd6 Rxe3 10. d8(Q),
Black resigns.



We've seen that in rook endings an extra pawn doesn't guarantee a win. These endings are especially drawish when the pawns are on the same side of the board. Thus, positions with two pawns versus one, three versus two, or even four pawns versus

three—all on one side of the board—are drawn in most cases. As in pawn endings, the more pawns, the more chances the superior side has to create a passed pawn and win. For his part, the defending side should trade off as many pawns as he can.

RAZUVAEV—BELIAVSKY
MOSCOW, 1978

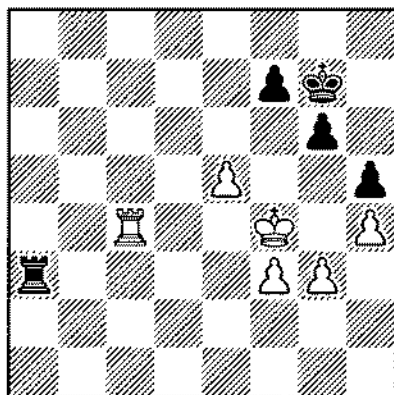


Diagram 226
White to move

1. g4

Or 1. Ke4 Rb3 2. Rd4 Ra3 3. Rd3 Ra4+ 4. Ke3 Ra5.

1. ... hxg4 2. Kxg4

If 2. fxg4 Black easily holds with 2. ... Ra1!, but not 2. ... Rh3 3. e6! fxe6 4. Rc7+ Kf8 5. Kg5 Rg3 6. Kf6 +.

2. ... Ra1 3. Rc7 Rg1+ 4. Kf4 Re1! 5. Ra7 Re2 6. Ra1 Rg2 7. Re1 Kf8 8. h5 gxh5 9. Rh1 f6 10. Rxb5

10. e6 Rg5.

10. ... fxe5+ 11. Rxe5 Ra2 12. Kf5, draw agreed.



THE WEAKER SIDE SHOULD TRY TO
ACHIEVE A POSITION WITH PAWNS
ON ONLY ONE SIDE OF THE BOARD.

Summary: Rook endings account for half the endgames you're likely to reach. Reviewing this chapter regularly, along with the first three chapters, will lead to more and more endgame wins. (Remember, opening variations come and go, but winning endgame technique is always in fashion!) Next to bishop-of-opposite-color endings, rook endings are the most drawish. As in most other endings, the defending king should try to get in front of the passed pawn(s). Rooks generally belong behind passed pawns, whether the pawn is yours or your opponent's.

When rook and one pawn opposes rook, the rook pawn is, as usual, the most likely to lead to a draw. Passive defense, where the defender's rook stays on the back rank, holding down the fortress, succeeds against knight- and rook-pawns. Philidor's position is an important one to remember, and once reached, leads to an easy draw. When Philidor's position is unreachable, the defender still has effective techniques to fight for a draw. The long-side defense can lead to a draw, if the rook has enough lateral room to operate. When the defending side's king is cut off from the queening path of the pawn, using his rook to attack frontally is often the only successful defense. On the other hand, the Lucena position is a basic winning technique in which the superior side "builds a bridge" to shelter his king from checks and promote his pawn. Rook and two pawns usually win against the lone rook, except for the special case of rook- and bishop-pawns.

When both sides have pawns, remember that it's better to be down a pawn and have an active rook, than to be even materially and suffer the disadvantage of a passive position. When one side is up a pawn, the more pawns on the board, the more likely the win. In such cases the stronger side should try to keep pawns on the board in order to maximize chances of creating a passed pawn, while the defender should try to exchange as many pawns as possible. After all, if a game boils down to a one-pawn advantage, with all pawns on the same side of the board, it's usually a draw.

Rook Endings Learning Exercises

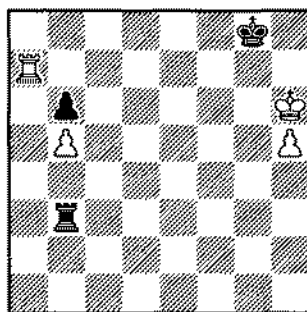


Diagram 227
White to move

EXERCISE 1

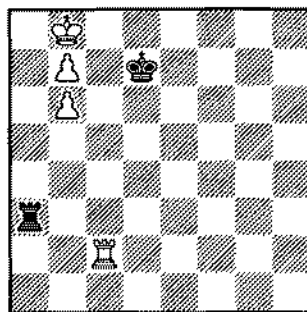


Diagram 228
White to move

EXERCISE 2

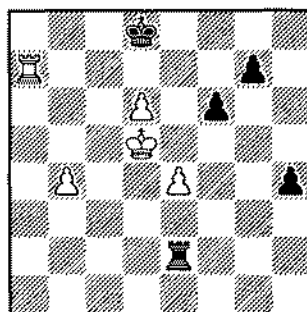


Diagram 229
White to move

EXERCISE 3

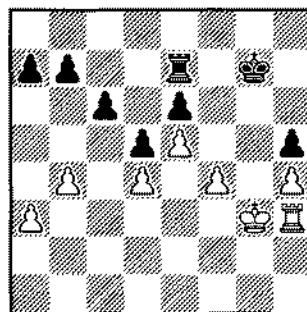


Diagram 230
White to move

EXERCISE 4

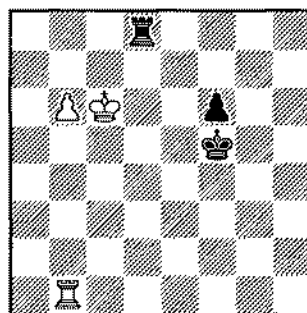


Diagram 231
Black to move

EXERCISE 5

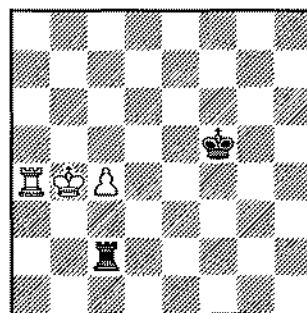


Diagram 232
White to move

EXERCISE 6

Rook Endings Solutions

- No. 1** 1. Rb7 Rxb5 2. Kg6 Kf8 3. h6 Re5 4. Rb8+ +-.
No. 2 1. Rd2+ Ke7 2. Rd6 Rc3 (2. ... Kxd6 3. Kc8 Rc3+ 4. Kd8) 3. Rc6 Rxc6 4. Ka7 +-.
No. 3 1. e5 fxe5 (1. ... Rxe5+ 2. Kc6 or 1. ... Rd2+ 2. Ke6) 2. Ke6 Rc2 3. Ra8+ Rc8 4. Rxc8+ Kxc8 5. Ke7 +-.
No. 4 1. f5 exf5 2. Kf4 Re6 3. Kxf5 Rg6 (3. ... Kf7 4. Rg3 Rh6 5. Rg5 Rh7 6. Rg6 +-) 4. e6 Rg4 5. Ke5 Re4+ 6. Kd6 Rxd4 (6. ... Kf8 7. Kd7) 7. Re3 +-.
No. 5 1. ... Ke4! 2. b7 f5 3. b8(Q) Rxb8 4. Rxb8 f4 5. Rb1 f3 6. Kc5 f2 = (not 1. ... Kg4? 2. b7 f5 3. b8(Q) Rxb8 4. Rxb8 f4 5. Kd5 f3 6. Ke4 f2 7. Rf8 Kg3 8. Ke3 +-).
No. 6 1. Ra1 Ke6 (1. ... Rb2+ 2. Kc5 Rb3 3. Kd6 +-)
 2. Rd1 Rb2+ 3. Ka5! (3. Kc5 Rb8) 3. ... Rb8 4. c5 Ke7 5. c6 Rd8 6. Rxd8 Kxd8 7. Kb6 +-.

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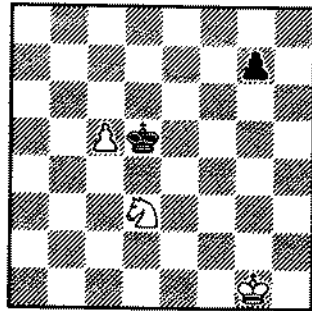
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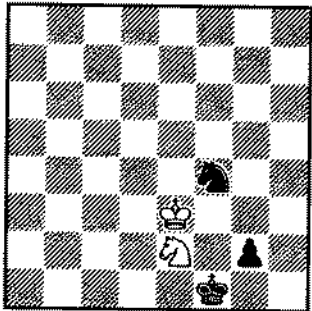
Chapter 5: Knight Endings

Some Important Ideas to Look For



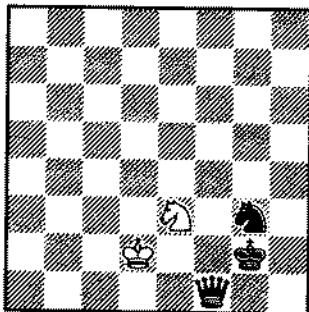
- ◆ The knight and pawn protect each other.

See Diagram 235.



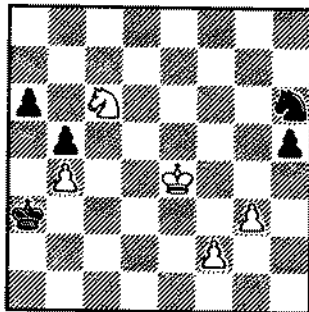
- ◆ The knight deflects the enemy cavalry to queen the pawn.

Black has just played 10. ... Nf4.
See Diagram 239.



- ◆ The White knight spears the new queen with a fork.

White has just played 15. Ne3+.
See Diagram 245.



- ◆ Knight and pawn stop two pawns.

White has just played 15. Nc6.
See Diagram 256.

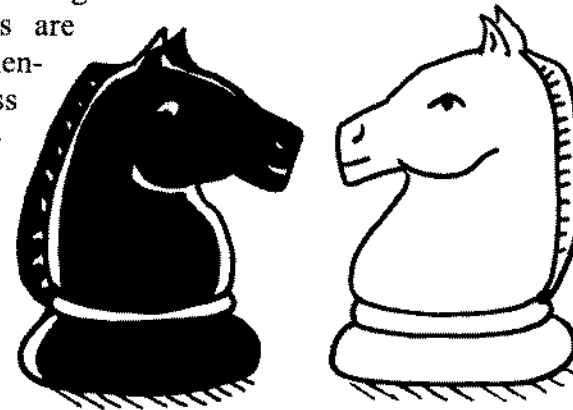
Chapter 5 Knight Endings: Springer of Surprises

Many of the "magical" moments created on the chessboard involve the game's only jumpers. Indeed, German players call the knight a

"Springer." Knights are the obvious odd-men-out of the chess board, with a short-hopping, non-linear way of moving all their own—a far cry from the straight-line, ground-hugging travel of the other pieces.

Naturally, this difference leads to positions and principles unique to the knight.

To get ourselves oriented, let's look at several famous positions.



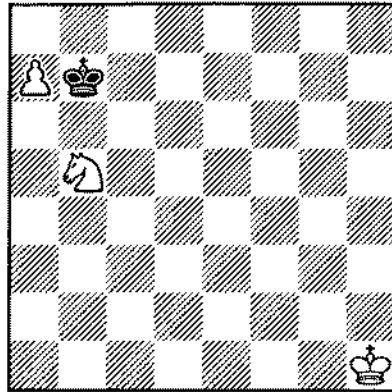


Diagram 233
White to move

Despite his significant material advantage, White can't win. If he sends his king to support the pawn, when his monarch reaches a6 or b6 he achieves only stalemate, with Black's king tucked, tortoise-like, into the corner.

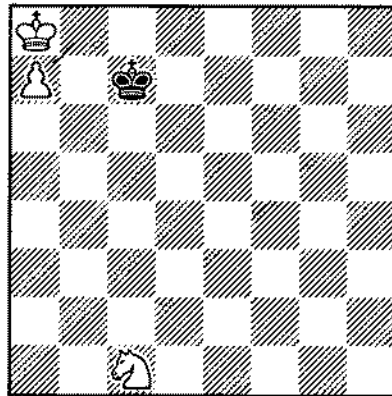


Diagram 234
White to move

The play in this position is even more paradoxical than in the last. If it's White's move, his knight is not able to force the release of his blockaded king.

1. Nd3 Kc8 2. Nc5 Kc7 3. Ne6+

A check here is a good omen for the defender.

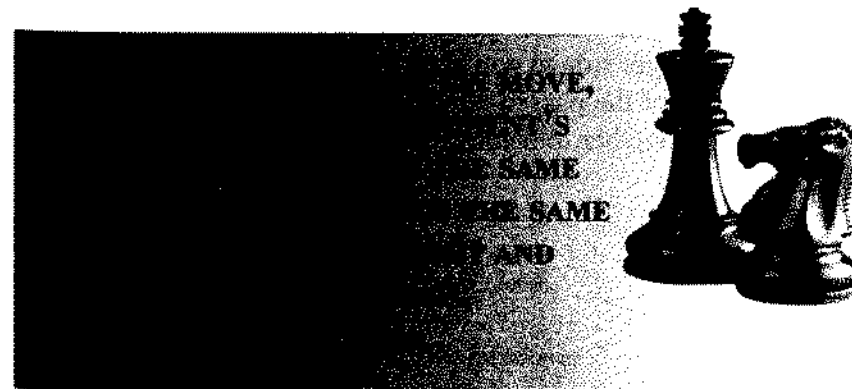
3. ... Kc8 4. Nd4 Kc7 5. Nb5+

It's a draw in all variations. But with Black on move, the result is quite different.

1. ... Kc8 2. Nd3 Kc7 3. Nc5 Kc8 4. Ne6 Kd7 5. Kb7

White is winning.

Analyzing Diagram 234 shows us a unique limitation of the knight, caused by its singular way of moving. In such a position, the knight can't lose or "pass" the move in the way other pieces often can. For example, in Chapter 2, we've seen how the king can triangulate to "hand back a position" in the pawn endings.



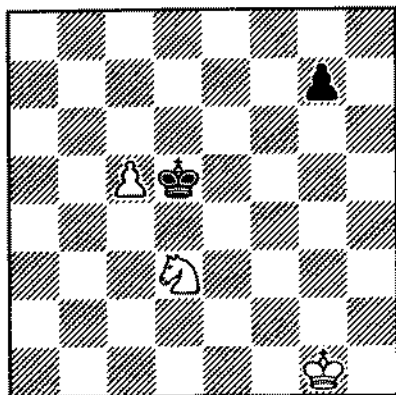


Diagram 235
White or Black to move

Here we see a typical example of a “mutual defense pact” between knight and passed pawn. This deployment of a knight and pawn is often the result of a successful endgame strategy. In this example, White has an easy win. First of all, he uses his king to capture the Black pawn on g7. Then he forces the promotion of his own passed pawn. Were the knight ahead of the pawn—say, on a6 or b7—the game would quickly end in a draw.

KNIGHT AND PAWN AGAINST KNIGHT

Let’s look at two masters plying their craft in the most basic knight ending. In positions with knight and pawn against knight, with the weaker side’s king far away, all that’s required for the stronger side to win is pushing the opponent’s knight out of the way of the passed pawn. The king and knight must usually work together to achieve this goal.

PETROV—ARONIN RUSSIA, 1950

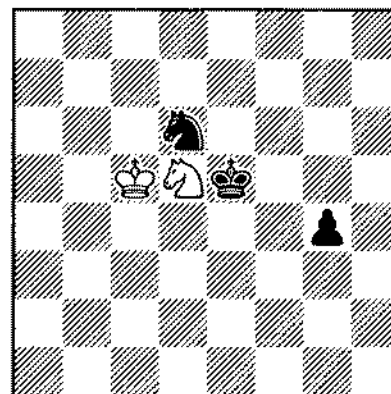


Diagram 236
White to move

White’s defense is difficult because of his king’s bad position, cut off from the path of his opponent’s pawn.

1. Ne3 g3 2. Ng2 Nf5

Black limits the movement of White’s knight and prepares to relocate his king to f3.

3. Kc4 Ke4 4. Kc3 Kf3 5. Ne1+ Ke2

*Some knights don’t leap,
they limp.*

—Tartakover

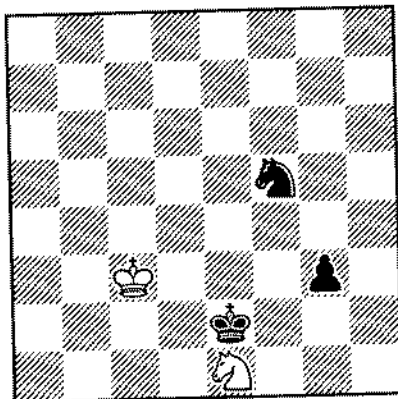


Diagram 237

6. Ng2

White's 6. Nd3 loses because of ... Ke3 7. Ne1 Nh4 8. Kc2 Ke2 9. Nd3 Ng6 10. Nc1+ Ke3.

6. ... Kf1 7. Nf4 Ne7!

Black threatens 8. ... Ng6.

8. Kd2 Ng6

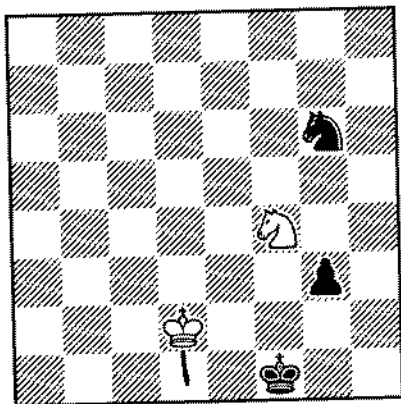


Diagram 238

9. Nh3

White can't be decoyed by capturing Black's Trojan horse, because the pawn would then march to his final goal unopposed. If White plays 9. Ne2, then 9. ... g2 10. Ke3 Nf4!, and we would get the following position.

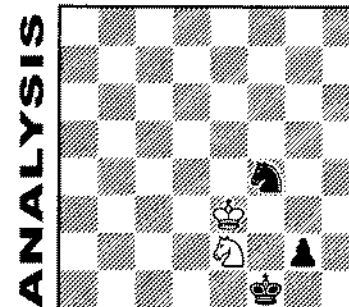


Diagram 239
After 10. ... Nf4!

Once again, Black would be delighted to sacrifice his knight in order to distract the opponent's forces from the pawn. This kind of tactical punch is typical of positions with a knight and pawn against a lone knight. Back to the game.

9. ... g2

10. Ke3 Ne5!

*It is not a move, even the best move, that you seek,
but a realizable plan.*

—Znosko-Borovsky

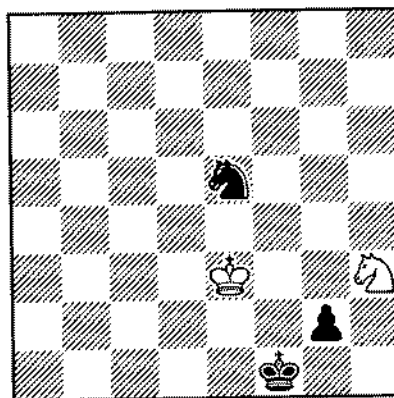
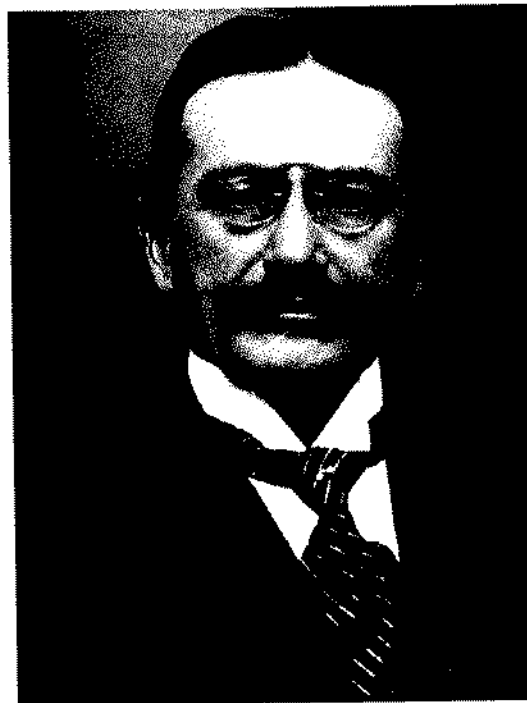


Diagram 240
White to move

White resigns because there is no defense to Black's knight reaching f2—for example, 11. Kf4 Nd3+ 12. Kg3 Nf2.



Siegbert Tarrasch (1862-1934) was perhaps the strongest player never to be world champion. Brilliant, arrogant, dogmatic and caustically witty, he was the first great chess writer-teacher.

He valued mobility above all other positional considerations. A physician, he wrote memorably: "Cramped positions bear the germs of defeat."

Courtesy www.chesscafe.com

THE KING TAKES PART IN THE DEFENSE

BENKO—BRONSTEIN
BUDAPEST, 1949

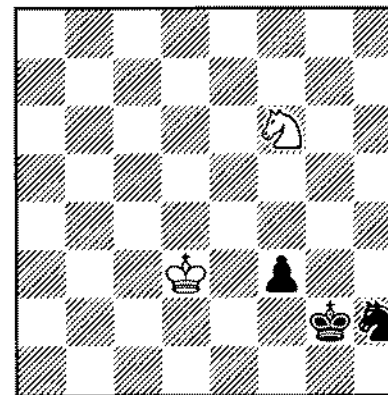


Diagram 241
White to move

Here the defender's king is playing an active role in the defense, allowing White to reach a draw. In fact, in the actual game, the players agreed to a draw in this position. Let's see why.

1. Ne4 Ng4

There's an instant draw after 1. ... Nf1 2. Ng5 f2 3. Ne4 and 4. Nxf2.

2. Kd2 Ne5

If 2. ... Nf6, then 3. Nxf6 f2 4. Ng4 f1(Q) 5. Ne3+, with a draw.

3. Ke3 Nc4+ 4. Kd4

When you don't know what to do, wait for your opponent to get an idea, it's sure to be wrong!

—Siegbert Tarrasch

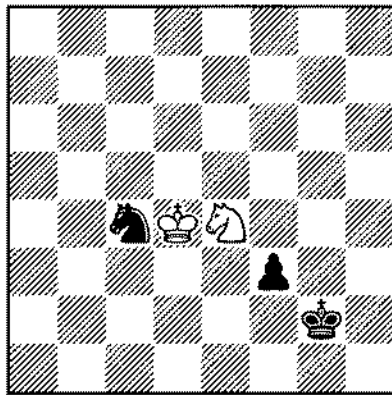


Diagram 242

4. ... Na3

Or 4. ... Nd6 5. Nxd6! f2 6. Nf5 and 7. Ne3+.

5. Kd3 Nb5 6. Kd2 Nd4 7. Kd3 Ne6

With the threat 8. ... Nc5+.

8. Ke3

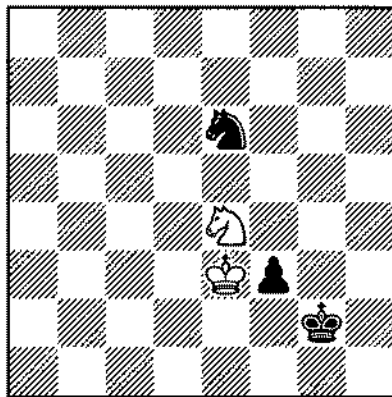


Diagram 243

8. ... Nc7

If 8. ... Nc5, then 9. Nf2!

9. Kd3 Nd5 10. Kc2 Ne3+ 11. Kc3 Nf5 12. Kd2 Ng3



Three-time World Champion

*First of the long line
of Soviet World
Champions*

- ◆ Popularizer of the "scientific approach"
- ◆ Pioneer in computer chess research
- ◆ Endgame wizard who studied the game's final stage throughout his career
- ◆ By his own description, "First among equals."

Master of the Endgame Mikhail Botvinnik

Place of Birth: St. Petersburg

Date of Birth: August 17, 1911

Mikhail Botvinnik was world champion three different times. After Alexander Alekhine died while still champion, Botvinnik won the special FIDE tournament that pitted the world's top five players—Botvinnik, Keres, Reshevsky, Smyslov, and Furze—against one another for the title.

Botvinnik dominated the event, thus becoming the sixth to hold the world title—and first in the long line of Soviet world champions.

Like Lasker, Botvinnik was both a great defender and an unsurpassed endgame player. He was well known for his disciplined training procedures, which included a devotion to studying the endgame.

Although Botvinnik did not have the impressive tournament results of some reigning world champions, he did have an iron will and an ability to regroup. In 1957 he lost to Smyslov and then won a rematch in 1958. He followed the same pattern with Mikhail Tal in 1960 and 1961.

Finally, in 1963 he lost his title to Boris Petrosian. Since by tradition Botvinnik did not have the right to an automatic rematch, he declined to go for a fourth title. He died in 1995.



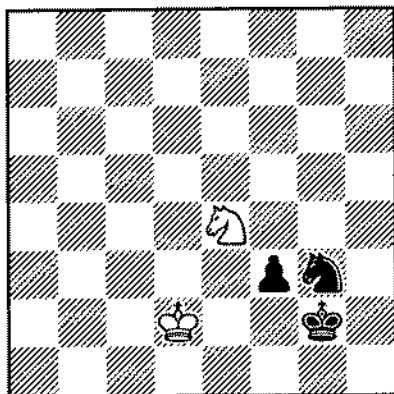


Diagram 244

All Black's attempts to push his opponent's pieces out of the way have failed.

13. Nf6 f2 14. Ng4 f1(Q) 15. Ne3+, draw.

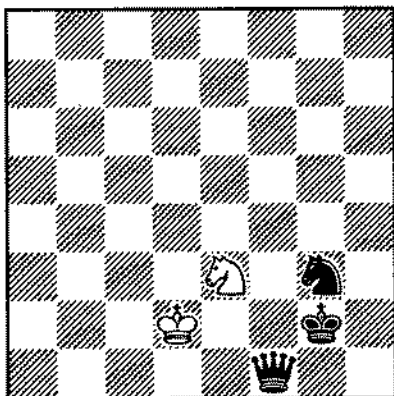
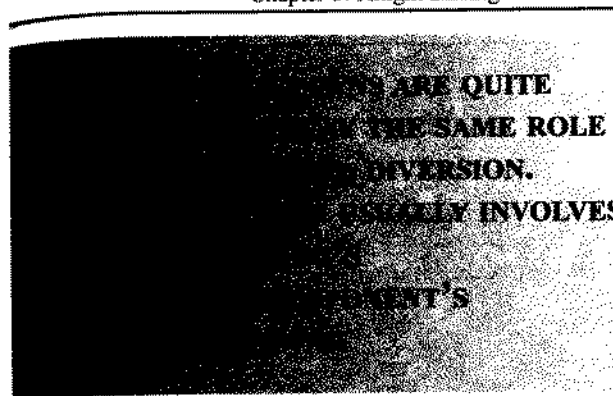


Diagram 245



**BOTH SIDES HAVE PAWNS,
AND ONE IS PASSED**

In knight endings with passed pawns, the principles of play are very similar to those in pawn endings.

SCHMIDT—KASPAROV
DUBAI, 1986

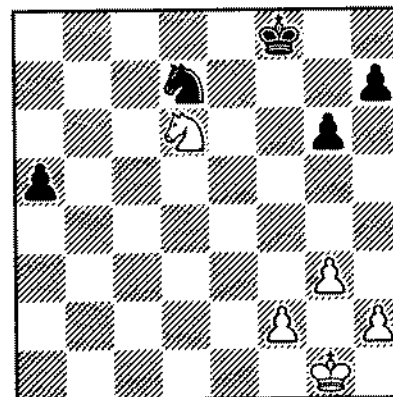


Diagram 246

Black to move

Besides his distant passed pawn, Black has another advantage—the better placed king.

1. ... Ke7 2. Nc4 a4 3. Kf1 Ke6 4. Ke2 Kd5

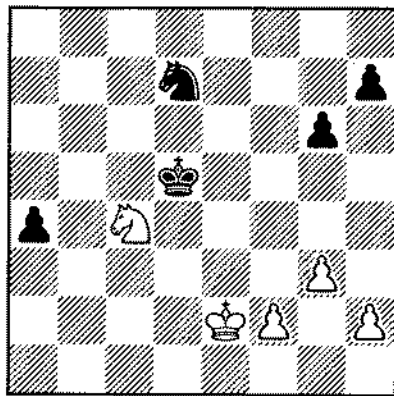


Diagram 247

5. Ne3+

If 5. Na3, then 5. ... Ne5 (with the threat of 6. ... Nc4); 5. Kd3 loses because of 5. ... Ne5+, when Black makes the transition to a winning pawn ending.

5. ... Kd4 6. Kd2 Ne5 7. Kc2 Nd3 8. Nd1 Ne1+ 9. Kb2 Nf3 10. h4

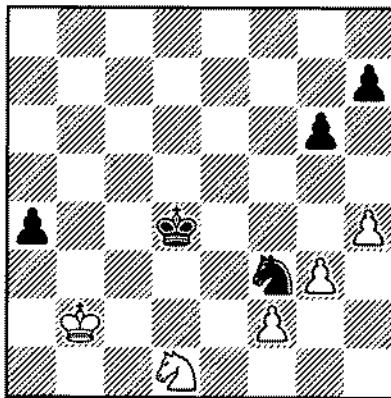


Diagram 248

10. ... Ne5!

This is more accurate than 10. ... Kd3, because then White could try 11. Ne3 Ke2 12. h5 gxh5 13. Nd5, when he would

have some slight tactical counter chances with 14. Nf6. Kasparov obviously prefers not to give any such opportunities to his opponent.

11. Ka3 Ke4 12. h5

Otherwise, Black would have played h7-h5, Kf3 and Ng4. But White can't head off the ultimate outcome.

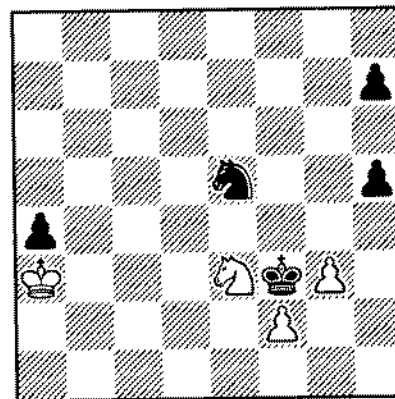
12. ... gxh5 13. Ne3 Kf3

Diagram 249

Black's strategy triumphs.

14. Nd5 Ng4!

Illuminating the "no vacancy" sign on f6 for the White knight.

15. Ne7

If 15. Nf4, then 15. ... Nf6 16. Nd3 Ke2.

15. ... Nxf2 16. Nf5 Ne4 17. Kxa4 Nxg3 18. Nh4+ Ke4 19. Kb4 Nf5, White resigns.