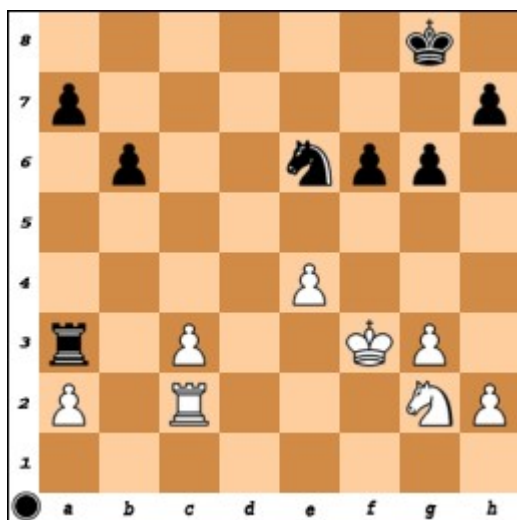


Pins can hurt

Pins are powerful and often allow you to gain a winning advantage. Here are eight puzzles that all involve pins.

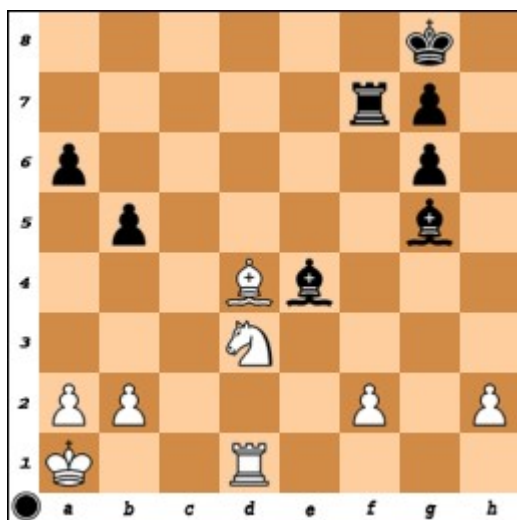
1 Black to play

The white pawn on c3 cannot move because if it did the white king would be in check. The white pawn is pinned. How did black use this to win a rook?



2 Black to play

The rook, pawn and king in the previous example could be other pieces. The important thing for a pin is that a piece cannot move because it is protecting a more valuable piece behind it. How can black set up a pin here?



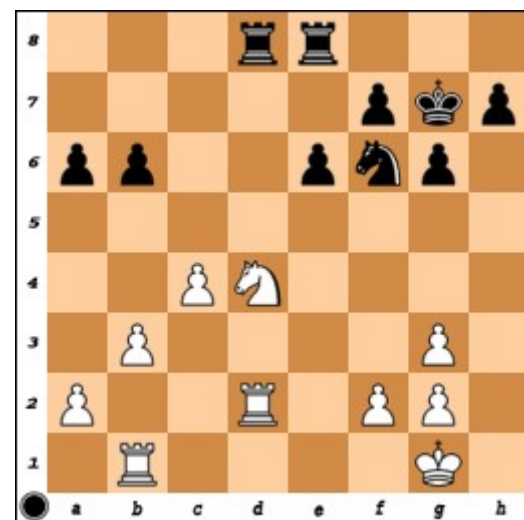
3 Black to play

Black can win a piece by threatening a pin. Can you see how?



4 Black to play

The white knight is pinned against the rook. However 1 ... e5 2 Nf3 allows white to escape. How can black make the pin more painful for white?



5 White to play

Look for a pawn that is pinned.



7 Black to play

Look for a pawn that is pinned.



6 Black to play.

Black can set up a lethal pin here.



8 Black to play and win. The white knight is pinned. How can black win a piece?



Solutions

1 1 ... Nd4+ 2 Kf2 Nxc2

2 1 ... Bxd3 2 Rxd3 Rd7 The white bishop is pinned and white cannot stop 3 ... Bf6 and 4 ... Rxd4

3 1 ... Qh4 threatens ... Bg4 pinning the queen. If 2 h3 Qxe4 wins a piece.

4 1 ... Ne4 2 Rd3 (2 Rdd1 Nc3 forks the rooks) e5 wins a piece because the knight is pinned against the rook. If 3 Nf3 Rxd3

5 1 Rxf7 Qxf7 2 Nxg6+ Qxg6 3 Qxg6 wins. The black h pawn is pinned. If 1 ... Rxf7 2 Nxg6+ wins.

6 1 ... Bg4 2 Re1 Re8 wins the knight on e2 which is pinned. If 2 f3 d3+ also wins the knight.

7 1 ... Ne5 is possible because the d pawn is pinned. If 2 Qe3 Nxg4 3 fxg4 Bxe4 wins. If the queen moves somewhere else 2 ... Nxf3+ wins

8 1 ... Nb4 2 Rg3 Be5 3 Re3 Bf4 4 Re2 Bxd2 5 Rxd2 Rxc3 wins a piece. If 2 Rf3 Na2 wins the knight.

Put rooks on open files

Files are the eight squares going up the board. It is a good idea to put rooks on open files because it increases the number of squares they can move to. We have looked at this before but here are another eight examples of the power of rooks on open files.

1 Black to play

White can play on after 1 ... Qg5+ 2 Ng3 Re1+ 3 Qxe1 Bxe1 4 Rxe1 Be6. Does black have a stronger move?



2 Black to play

The black rook on g7 is attacked so black needs to act quickly.



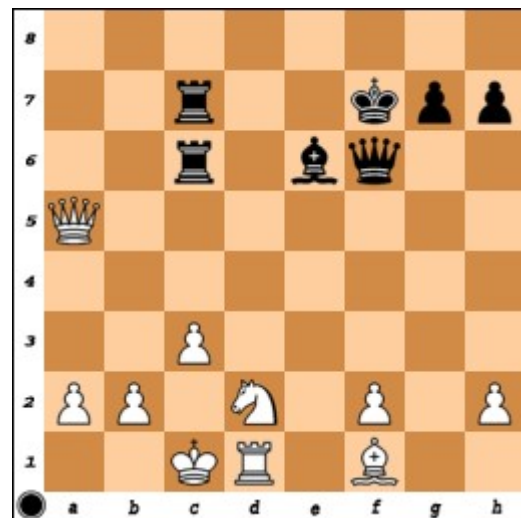
3 Black to play

Black has no queen but the rooks are very powerful. How did black win?



4 Black to play

The first move is obvious but the follow-up is harder to find. Can you follow black's attack through to the end?



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5 White to play

Can white take advantage of the awkward rook on e6?



6 Black to play

Black needs to respond to the attacked knight



Answers

1 1 ... Rxe2 2 Qxe2 Qg5+ 3 Kh2 Qg2 checkmate

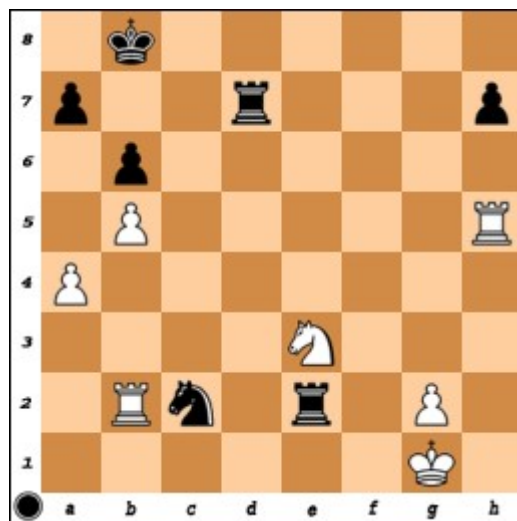
2 1 ... Qxh2+ 2 Kxh2 Rh7 checkmate

3 1 ... Rg1+ 2 Bxg1 Bxf3+ 3 Kh2 Rg2+ 4 Kh1 Re2 checkmate. If 2 Kh2 R8g2 checkmate

4 1 ... Rxc3+ 2 bxc3 Rxc3+ 3 Kb1 Bf4+ 4 Kb2 Rc2+ and white will soon be checkmated. If 3 Kb2 Rb3+ forcing 4 Kc1 Qb2 checkmate

7 Black to play

Black can win a piece. Can you see how?



8 White to play

This one is tough. Well done if you solve it.



5 1 Rxc7 Nxc7 2 Qxe6 Nxe6 3 e8(Q) wins for white. If 1 ... Qxc7 2 Qxe6 wins

6 1 ... Rc2 2 Qb5 Ne3+ 3 Kg1 Be1 wins because if the f2 knight moves Rg2 is checkmate. 2 Qxc2 loses to 2 ... Ne3+ and Nxc2

7 1 ... Re1+ 2 Kf2 Rd2+ 3 Kf3 Rxe3+ If 2 Nf1 Rf7 3 Rxc2 Rxf1+ 4 Kh2 Rh1+ 5 Kg3 Rxh5

8 1 Rb1 Nxc4 (if 1 ... Rb8 2 c5 wins the knight or the rook) 2 Rb7 Qxb7 (2 ... Nc7 3 Rxc7 Qxc7 4 Qe6 checkmate) 3 Qe6 checkmate

Puzzles from HMP Leeds

Thanks to Stephen who runs the chess club at Leeds for these puzzles. When you start a game the weakest squares are f2 for white and f7 for black because they are only protected by the kings. Even after castling they can still prove to be serious weakness, especially if the rook moves away from f1 (f8 for black).

1 White to play

How does white set up and deliver checkmate? This pattern is called Anastasia's Mate



5 White to play

Both queens are attacked, but crucially White is able to react first. How can white profit from this fact?



2 White to play

How did White conclude here?



6 White to play

White has a powerful pin along the a1-h8 diagonal, which renders the black knight on e5 very vulnerable. How did White increase the pressure and then finish off with a tactic?

3 White to play

This finish is so good that the checkmating pattern has been given a name. How did white conclude?



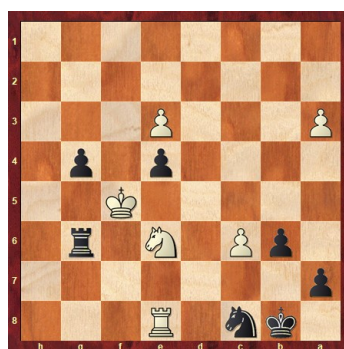
7 Black to play

Black has a beautiful centralised position but must now deal with the threat to the rook on c8. What is black's best move?



8 Black to play

Both sides have advanced a pawn (white to g6 and black to b3) to pin down the enemy king. These pawns also control key squares and enable combinational ideas. For example, if White could get a major piece to the back rank it would be mate. However, Black gets in first. How?



4 Black to play

Black's rook is attacked. What is the most effective way to deal with this threat?



1

1 Ne7+ Kh8 sets up the Anastasia Mate with 2 Qxh7+ Kxh7 3 Rh4+ Qh5 4 Rxh5 checkmate.

Anastasia's Mate is an aesthetic conclusion where the enemy king is corralled by a rook and knight. The name derives from the novel *Anastasia and the Game of Chess* (Anastasia und das Schachspiel) by German author Wilhelm Heinse, originally published in 1803.

2

1.Rxh5+ Nxh5 2.Rh7 checkmate

Continuing the series on classic mating configurations, this is an example of the so-called Arabian Mate. The Arabian Mate is a demonstration of the powerful co-operation of rook and knight. The name derives from the fact that this mating idea was mentioned in ancient Arabic manuscripts.

3

1 Qd8+ Kxd8 2 Bg5+ Kc7 3 Bd8 checkmate (or 2...Ke8 3 Rd8 checkmate). This is an example of Mayet's Mate

This position is from Réti-Tartakower, Vienna 1910. Richard Réti was one of the leading players in the world in the early part of the 20th century. He is known mainly for being a member of the hypermodern school. However, he started out with a very classical style and, thanks to this brilliant finish, has a beautiful mating configuration named after him.

4

1 ... g3 2 Nf4 g2 3 Nxg2 Rxg2 and black emerges a piece ahead.

5

1.Rg6+ Ke7 (if 1...Rxg6 Qxh8+ winning the queen) 2.Rxd4 Rxh5 3.Rxg7+ winning the exchange.

6

1 Rd5 Qf6 sets up 2 Rxe5 Rxe5 3 Qxe5 Qxe5 4 Ng6+ and 5 Nxe5 with an extra piece.

7

1...Rg8 (and if 2.Rxg8 Rd1 checkmate) 2.Re1 Rgg2 with a winning position.

8

1...Nd2+ 2.Ka1 Qxa3+ 3.bxa3 b2+ 4.Ka2 b1Q checkmate.

The London System: A solid opening for white

All strong players learn opening systems. This saves them time and enables them to make stronger moves because they can get used to the typical positions that arise. The London system is a good opening for white. White plays d4, Nf3, Bf4 and e3 against virtually anything black does.

1 Black plays ... d5 and ... Be7

If black plays ...Be7 attack on the kingside.

Here is an example of when it all goes right.

1 d4	d5
2 Nf3	Nf6
3 Bf4	e6
4 e3	Be7
5 Bd3	O-O
6 c3	c5
7 Nbd2	Nc6
8 Ne5	

Play this before castling if black plays Be7.

Then you can play h4 and attack the king

8	Bd7
9 h4	Nxe4

Play g4 and g5 if black plays quietly.

10 dxe4	Ne8
11 Bxh7+	

This makes chess worth playing.



12	Kxh7
13 Qh5+	Kg8

14 Nf3	f6
15 Ng5	fxg5

White is happy to give up the knight to open the h file for the queen and the rook.

16 hxg5

Threatens g6 and Qh8 mate. Black will not survive for long.

2 Black plays ... d5 and ... Bd6

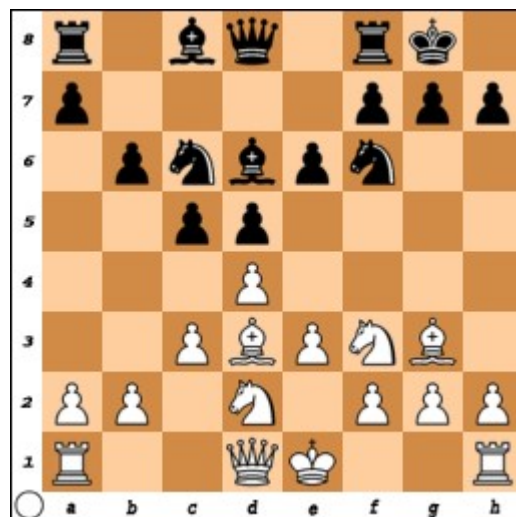
Attack in the centre with e4 against this set up

1 d4	d5
2 Nf3	Nf6
3 Bf4	e6
4 e3	Bd6
5 Bg3	

If 5 ... Bxg3 6 hxg3, 7 Bd3 and attack the black king on the h file.

5	O-O
6 Bd3	c5
7 c3	Nc6
8 Nbd2	b6

Now play O-O, Qe2 and e4.



3 Black plays ... Nf6, ... g6 and ... e5

White's best plan here is to attack on the queenside.

1 d4	Nf6
2 Nf3	g6
3 Bf4	Bg7
4 e3	d6
5 Be2	

There is not much point in putting the bishop on d3 with the black pawn on g6.

5	O-O
6 O-O	Nbd7
7 h3	

It is a good idea to tuck the bishop away on h2.

7	Re8
8 c4	c6

Black cannot play 8 ... e5 because 9 dxe5 dxe5 10 Nxe5 Nxe5 11 Qxd8 Rxd8 12 Bxe5 wins a pawn.

9 Nc3	Qc7
10 Bh2	e5
11 b4	e4
12 Nd2	



White can grab space on the queenside with moves like Qb3, Rfc1, a4, b5, a5 and the

bishop on h2 will support this attack.

Black could try to attack the king with moves like ... h5, ... Nf8-h7-g5 and ... Bf5 but this will take time.

4 Black plays ... Nf6, ... g6 and ... c5

White's best plan is to attack in the centre with e4.

1 d4	Nf6
2 Nf3	g6
3 Bf4	Bg7
4 e3	d6
5 Be2	O-O
6 O-O	c5
7 c3	Nbd7
8 h3	b6
9 Nbd2	Bb7
10 a4	a6
11 Bh2	Qc7
12 Bd3	

This looks like a waste of time but Black has also been playing slowly.

11	Rfe8
12 e4	



One plan is to build up in the centre with Qe2, Rad1 and Rfe1. White has more space and the pieces are in the centre. This position is easier to play for white.

Trapping pieces

Most of the puzzles we show you end in checkmate but these ones are different. They result in the win of a piece. Look for a piece that does not have many squares to move to and see how you can trap it.

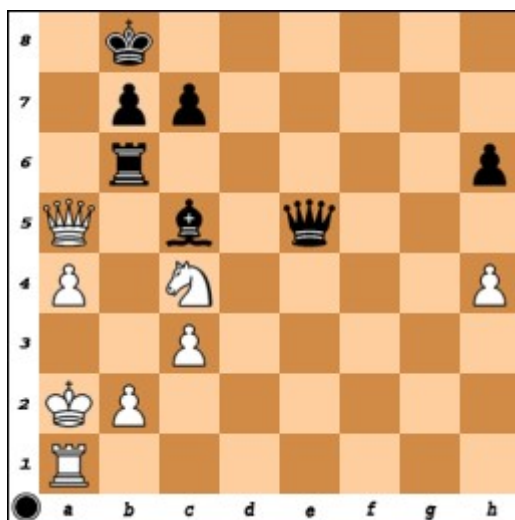
1 Black to play

Look for a white piece that black can attack.



2 Black to play

The black queen is attacked but can you see how black can go onto the attack?



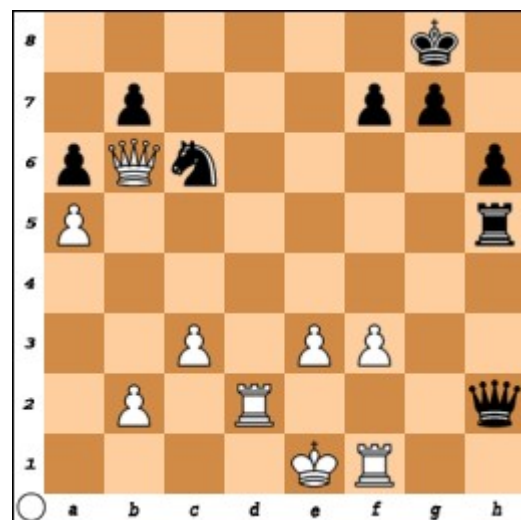
3 Black to play

The white knight has pushed forward. How can black take advantage of this?



4 Black to play

This one surprised me. How can black trap a white piece?



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5 Black to play



6 Black to play

This one is a bit harder.



Answers

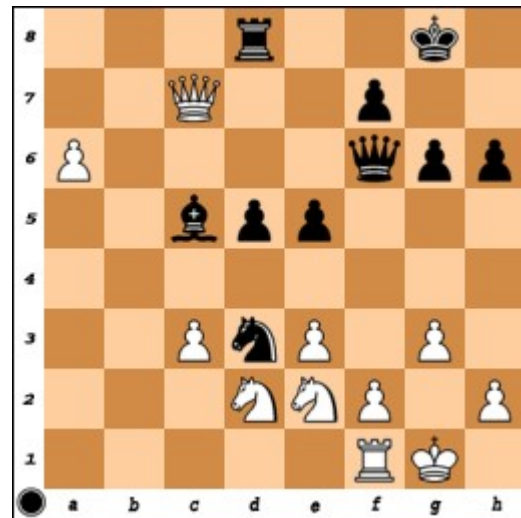
1 1 ... Bf8 2 Qd2 Nf3+ 3 Bxf3 Rxd2 4 Bxd2 Qd6+ 5 K moves Qxd2

2 1 ... Qd5 attacks the knight 2 b3 Ra6 traps the white queen

3 1 ... Nxh5 2 Bxh5 g4 traps the white bishop because ... Qh4 threatening checkmate is too strong. If 3 h3 Qh4 4 Bxg4 Bxg4 wins a piece

4 1 ... Qg3+ 2 Kd1 Rb5 traps the white queen

7 Black to play



8 Black to play

Remember that the theme is to trap a piece.



5 1 ... Rb8 2 Qa7 Ra6 traps the white queen

6 1 ... Rxc1 2 Rxc1 Bd2 and if the rook moves 3 ... Bg5 traps the white queen

7 1 ... Bb6 2 Qb7 Nc5 traps the white queen. 2 Ne4 dxe4 would also lose

8 1 ... Qg6 2 Re2 (2 Bf1 Nf3+ and Nxe1) Nxd3 3 Qxd3 Be4 traps the queen and forces 4 Rxe4

Puzzles from HMP Leeds

Thanks to Stephen who runs the chess club at Leeds for these puzzles. Well done if you get puzzle number 6

1 White to play

In this position there are two ways to give checkmate in four moves can you see them?



5 White to play

There is a saying in chess that when you are attacking you want to invite every piece to the party. This position is an excellent example, as every single one of the white pieces is engaged in the destruction of the black kingside. Can you spot the winning combination?



2 White to play

The key strategic theme in this position is that White has tremendous play along the a2-g8 and a1-h8 diagonals, leading directly to the black king. The breakthrough idea is reasonably obvious but it is necessary to spot an ingenious follow-up. Can you find the initial thrust and the eventual coup?



6 White to play

Checkmate in two moves against any Black defence

3 White to play

This position could be billed as a battle of kingside weaknesses. Both sides have a bishop menacing the opposing king and both have advanced their g pawns creating weaknesses on the kingside. How did White get in first?



7 White to play

Material is equal but white's pieces are more centralised. How can white take advantage of this?



4 Black to play

Checkmate in four moves. What is Black's path to victory?



8 White to play

White is a pawn ahead in this endgame and has a rook on an open file. Can white do better than Nxd7?

1

1.g4+ Kh4 2.Bxg5 fxg5 3.Qxh7+ Bh5 4.Qxh5 checkmate

After 1 Bxg5 black can try four replies but they all end in checkmate for white

1 ... Qb1+ 2.Rxb1 Rc1+ 3.Rxc1 fxg5 4.Qxh7 checkmate

1 ... Qf1+ 2.Rxf1 fxg5 3.Qxh7 checkmate

1 ... Rc1+ 2.Rxc1 Qf1+ 3.Rxf1 fxg5 4.Qh7 checkmate

1 ... fxg5 2.Qxh7 checkmate

2

1 Nxf6+ gxf6 2 Qxf6 Bf8 (to prevent 3 Qg7 mate; if 2 ... Rc7 3 Qd8+) and now White has the pleasing finish
3 Qe6+ Bxe6 4 Bxe6 checkmate

3

1 Rxe7 Qxe7 2 Rc7 Qe6 (the main point is 2 ... Qxc7 3 Qf6 forcing checkmate) 3 Rxb7 with an extra piece.

4

1...Qc1+ 2.Kd3 Rd2+ 3.Ke3 Rc2+ 4.Kd3 Qd2 checkmate

5

1.Rh8+ Kxh8 2.Qh4+ Kg8 3.Nf6+ Bxf6 4.Qh7 checkmate 1 Nf6+ Bxf6 2 Rh8+ Kxh8 3 Qh3+ Kg8 4 Qh7 checkmate also works

6

1.f4 Qxb5 2.Ng3 checkmate (or 1...Bxb5 2.Ng3 checkmate or 1...Qxc7 2.Nd4 checkmate or 1...Bxc7 2.Nd4 checkmate or 1...Qxe7 2.fxe5 checkmate or 1...Qg1 2.Qxe5 checkmate)

7

1.Nxe6 + fxe6 Creates a Crushing pin along the e-file. After 2 Bxd5 Bxd5 3.Rxd5 Rxd5 4.Qxd5 Rd8 5.Qe5+ white wins easily.

8

1.Nxh7 Kg8 2.Nfg5 Na6 3.Re7 Nb6 4.h6 (if ...g6 Nf6+ Kf8 6.Rf7 checkmate) ...gxh6 5.Nf6+ Kf8 6.Nf6 checkmate

Wales compete in the online Chess Olympics

The Chess Olympics, just like the Olympic Games, involves countries from all over the World and is an incredibly strong event. Wales played this week and won three matches but did not finish in the top three in their group which would have seen them progress to the next round. Next week we will follow England and Romania and the week after it is Poland's turn. Here are some of the interesting moments from the Welsh games.

Control the centre

This is probably the thing we say most often. Kimberly Chong, playing white, won a nice game for Wales when her opponent from Belgium ignored this advice.

1 e4 c5 2 c3 Nf6 3 e5 Nd5 4 d4 e6 5 Nf3 this has all been played before and **5 ... cxd4** should be OK for black but black played **5 ... Nc6** and allowed white control of the centre. **6 c4 Nb6 7 d5 exd5 8 cxd5 Nb4 9 d6 f6** this weakens the king. Ideas like **Nh4, Qh5+** and **Ng6** are tempting but Kimberly found a simpler way to win. **10 Nc3 Nc6 11 Nb5** resigns **Nc7+** and **Nxa8** will be decisive with moves like **Bc4, Bf4** and **Qb3** to follow.



The lesson from this game is: do not neglect the centre.

Don't be too greedy when grabbing pawns

The most successful Welsh player was Olivia Smith with four wins and a draw out of six games. She is playing white in this position

and is attacking with more space. She has just played **Ng5** tempting her opponent from Thailand to take the a pawn. If you were playing black would you play **Bxa2**?



Olivia's opponent took the pawn and discovered why it was a mistake. **1 ... Bxa2 2 Nxa2 Nxa2 3 Qb3** This threatens **Qxf2+** and attacks the knight on a2 **3 ... e6 4 Qxa2** leaves white well on top. Play continued **4 ... h6 5 Ne4 Nd5 6 Nf6+ Nxf6 7 exf6 Bxf6 8 Bxb8 Qxb8** and Olivia was a rook up.

Look out for pins and forks

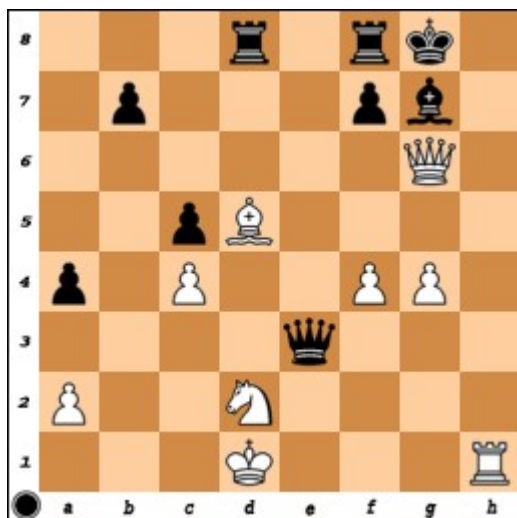
Tim Kett playing white against a player from Malta has a very strong move here. Can you see it?



White's bishop is attacked and 1 Be2 is probably good enough for an advantage but 1 Nd5 is a very strong move. There are pins and forks all over the place. Black's c pawn is pinned against the king so 1 ... cxd5 is not possible. White threatens Nf6+ winning the rook on g4 or Nc7+ winning the rook on a8. 1 ... Nxd5 fails to 2 Bxc6+ and 3 Bxa8. Black played 1 ... cxb5 but 2 Nf6+ Kf7 3 Nxg4 leaves white well on top.

A Great Escape

Welsh player Ifan Rathbone-Jones was attacking here as white in the match against Belgium and looks to have a very strong position.

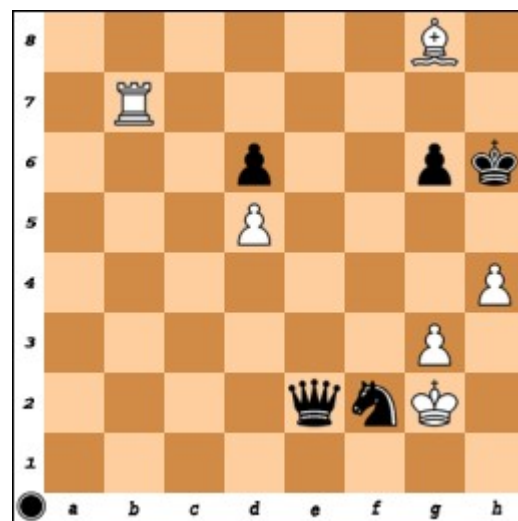


1 ... fxg6 is impossible, 1 ... Rxd5 is too slow because of 2 Qh7 checkmate and if black gives the king room with 1 ... Rfe8 then 2 Qxf7 is checkmate. Black actually has two ways of defending. Can you see them?

Black found the best move which is 1 ... Qxd2+ 2 Kxd2 Rxd5+ the queen sacrifice is crucial because this move is now check so white does not have time for 3 Qh7 checkmate. After 3 cxd5 the f pawn is not pinned so black can win back the queen with 3 ... fxg6. Ifan tried 3 Qd3 but soon lost after 3 ... Rxd3+. The computer engine points out that 1 ... Qf3+ 2 Nxf3 Rxd5+ 3 cxd5 fxg6 also wins for black.

Checkmate

We end with a checkmate. White is a queen down but is threatening Rh7 checkmate. Can Jason Garcia, playing black for Wales in the match against Iraq, get in first?



Jason played 1 ... Ng4+ 2 Kh3 Qf1+ 3 Kxg4 Qf5 checkmate. 2 Kg1 is no better after 2 ... Qf2+ 3 Kh1 Qh2 checkmate.

Bad luck to Wales but they did play some interesting games. We often talk about controlling the centre, forks, pins and checkmating patterns. We can learn a lot by seeing how the top players apply these ideas in their games.

Checkmate

Here are eight puzzles that all involve the threat of checkmate. The more you play the more you will develop an eye for these patterns.

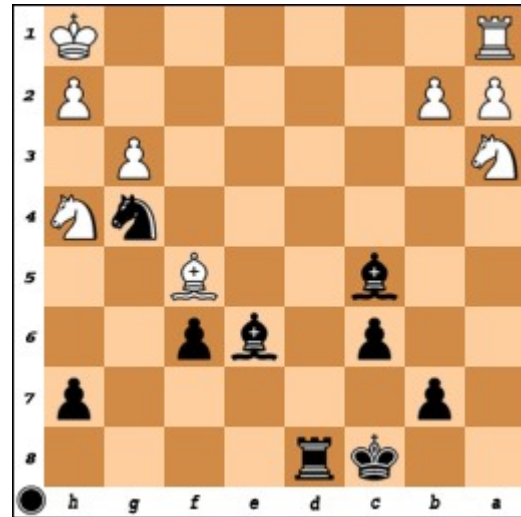
1 Black to play

Black's knight on c5 is attacked but it is black to move. Can black strike first?



3 Black to play

Black can win a piece here by threatening checkmate. Can you see how?



2 Black to play

Black has an attack but 1 ... Qh1+ allows white to run away with 2 Kd2. What did black play?



4 White to play

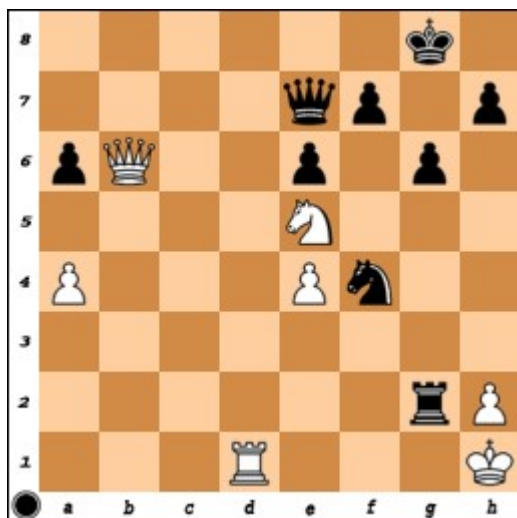
White's knights are very strong and restrict the black king. How did white win?



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5 Black to play

Both sides are attacking but it is black to move first? How did black win?



6 Black to play. This is clever. Black can win a piece by threatening checkmate. How?



Solutions

1 1 ... Qf3 threatens checkmate. 2 Bxd3 Nxd3+ 3 Qxd3 Rxd3 loses the queen and 2 Kf1 Ne4 Be1 d2 loses material.

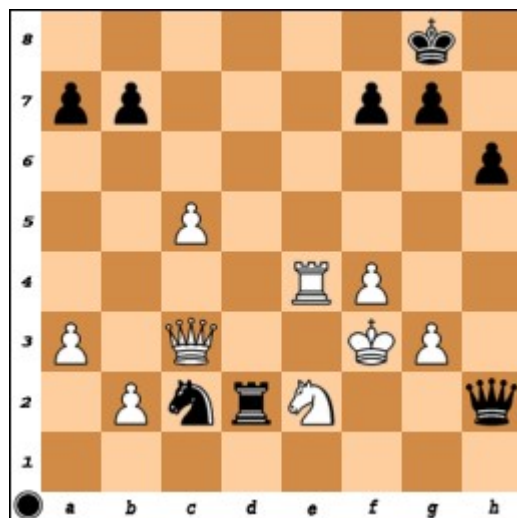
2 1 ... Nxf4 threatens checkmate on g2 and if 2 gxf4 Rf3 checkmate

3 1 ... Bxf5 and if 2 Nxf5 Rd2 and white cannot stop Rxh2 checkmate

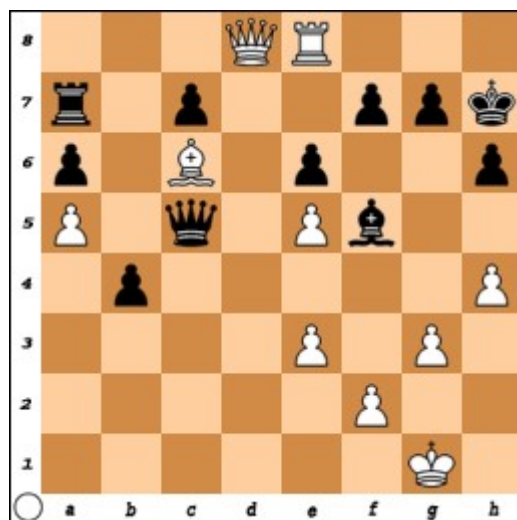
4 1 Rh1 and if 1 ... Bxf6 2 Ne8+ Kf8 3 Nxf6 and black cannot stop 4 Rh8+ and Re8 checkmate. 4 Be4+ Nxe4 only delays the checkmate

7 Black to play

A long forced sequence leads to checkmate. Can you see it?



8 White to play and win. This is spectacular. White checkmates in 3 moves.



5 1 ... Rxh2+ and if 2 Kxh2 Qh4+ 3 Kg1 Qg3+ 4 Kf1 5 Qg2 Ke1 6 Qe2 checkmate

6 1 ... Qxf1+ 2 Qxf1 Bxf1 3 Kxf1 Rd7 and if 4 Nf6 the only move to save the knight 4 ... Rg7 and Rg1 checkmate cannot be stopped.

7 1 ... Ne1+ 2 Kg4 (Ke3 Qxe2 checkmate) f5+ 3 Kxf5 Qh5+ 4 Ke6 Qf7+ 5 Ke5 Qf6 checkmate

8 1 Rh8+ Kg6 2 Qg5+ hxg5 3 h5 checkmate

Puzzles from HMP Leeds

Thanks to Stephen who runs the chess club at Leeds for these puzzles. Puzzle 5 is spectacular and 3 is very intricate. Well done if you get either one.

1 Black to play

How did Black close the net around the White king with a lethal quiet move?



5 Black to play

Black has a useful concentration of force on the kingside but it requires an ingenious and unexpected thrust to complete the demolition. Can you see it?



2 White to play

Sometimes the winning idea in a position has to be set up. Today's position is a good example. White has tremendous pressure along the h-file and a1-h8 diagonal but needs a clever move to create the conditions for a winning tactic. Can you spot the tactical idea and also how to set it up?



6 White to play

Can you find White's most efficient path to victory?



3 White to play

1 Kxc7 is stalemate and a draw. How did White win?



7 White to play

Which calm move is White's sole path to victory?



4 White to play

The opening has clearly been a complete disaster for Black who has lost a pawn as well as having to move the king, which is now badly hemmed in by the white knights. The restricted situation of the king gives White the opportunity for a clever winning coup. Can you see it?



8 White to play

This puzzle concludes with a classic finish. What is its name and how does White engineer the finale?



1

1 ... Rd8 threatens 2 ... Rh8 checkmate. If 2 Qc3+ e5 3 Qxe5 Rxe5 4.Rxe5 winning for black. 3 Qc2 Rh8+ 4 Qh2 Rxh2+ also loses for white

2

1 Qh6 (eyeing up the g7-square but also setting up the following tactic) 1 ... Rf8 (there is no way to defend) 2 Qxg6+ hxg6 3 Rh8 checkmate

3

1.Ra8+ Kxa8 2.Kxc7 Ka7 3.Kc6 Kb8 4.Kxb6 Kc8 5.Ka7 (and white wins because there is no way of stopping the pawn). If 3 ... Ka8 4 Kxb6 Kb8 5 Ka6 Kc8 (5 ... Ka8 6 b6 Kb8 7 b7 Kc7 8 Ka7 and the pawn queens) 6 Ka7 and the pawn queens.

The really clever line here is 1 Ra8+ Nxa8 2 Kc8 now black has only one move 2 ... Nc7 3 Kxc7 reaching the same position we have already looked at.

4

1.Qg4 deflects the Black queen... (and if Qxg4 2.Ne7 checkmate) 1...Qf6 2.Nxf6 winning the queen. 1 g3 has the same idea but allows 1 ... Qxe4+

5

1 ... Qg3 threatens checkmate on h2 and after 2 fxg3 (2 hxg4 allows a switchback with 2 Qh4 checkmate) 2 ... Nxg3 is checkmate. 2 Bxg7+ Kxg7 only delays things.

6

1.Rh8+ leads to checkmate 1 ... Kxh8 2 Qxf8+ Kh7 3 Rh1+ Qh6 4 Qxg7 checkmate

7

1.Rf4 Rd3 (if 1 ... Rxc4 2 Bf3 checkmate) 2 Qe4 and the only way to stop checkmate is to give up the queen with 2 ... Qc1+ 3 Kg2 Qxf4 4 Qxf4 and white wins. 2 Qxd3 loses to 2 ... Qc1+ 3 Kg2 Qxf4

8

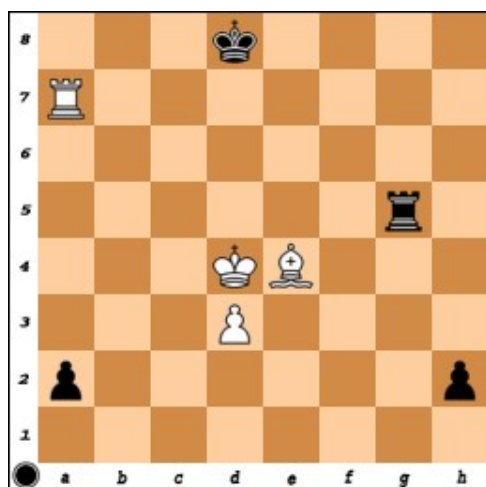
1.Rf8 Rcx f8 (1...Rgx f8 2.Qg8+ Rxg8 3 Nf7 checkmate) 2.Qxg8+ Rxg8 3.Nf7 checkmate. This is an example of a smothered mate.

English success at online Chess Olympics

England came through the first group stage in second place. If they succeed in second group stage next week they move into the quarter finals. We have looked at pins, checkmate patterns and rooks on open files. Here are examples of how the top English players use these ideas to win games.

The power of pins

We looked at pins last week. Gawain Jones playing black against Montenegro was a bishop down but had two dangerous pawns. How did a pin help him to win?



1 ... Rg4 wins. The point is that this pins the bishop and threatens h1Q. The game went **2 Rxa2 h1Q 3 resigns 2 Kd5 Rxe4 3 dxe4 h1Q** offers more fight but black should still win.

Sustained aggression

This is not one of our themes but I thought you would enjoy this win by Jovanka Houska playing white against Argentina. It was more like a mugging than a chess game.

1 d4 Nf6 2 Nf3 e6 3 Bf4 c5 4 e3 b6 5 Nc3 cxd4 6 Nb5 aggression from the start threatening Nc7+ **6 ... d6 7 Qxd4 e5** this forks the queen and the bishop but is already a fatal mistake **8 Nxe5** a crushing reply. If **8 ... dxe5 9 Qxe5+** and Nc7+ **8 ... a6 9 Qc4 Be6 10 Nc7+ Ke7 11 Nxe6 fxe6 12 0-0-0** pinning the d pawn **12 ... d5 13 Qa4 Rg8 14 Bb5** more aggression **14 ... Ne4 15 Qxe4** a lovely move. What would you play if black played **15 ... dxe4**?

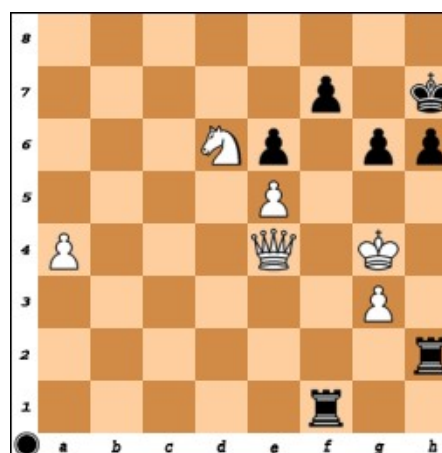


The answer is **16 Bg5** checkmate. **15 ... g5 16 Qxh7+ Rg7 17 Bxg5+ Kd6 18 Qxg7 Bxg7 19 Nf7+ Kc5 20 Bxd8 axb6** and white soon won. Sustained aggression can work very well in a game with a fast time limit because it forces your opponent to find the right defence quickly. Each player starts these games with only 15 minutes on the clock.

Checkmate patterns

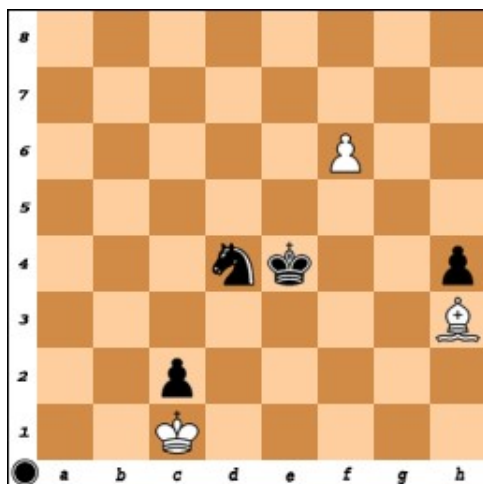
We look at checkmate patterns every week. Here are two examples where the players won by spotting checkmate threats.

The English Board 1 Micky Adams playing black against Columbia reached this position.



He played **1 ... Rf5** which is a crushing move. One point is that **2 Nxf5 gxf5+** wins the queen and leaves black a rook up. Any other move such as **2 a5** allows **2 ... h5** checkmate. White resigned. Micky took only 17 seconds to find this move. Were you faster?

Harriet Hunt reached this position playing black against Mexico.



The white f pawn looks dangerous because **1 ... Ne6** loses to **2 Bxe6** and the f pawn queens. However Harriet found a very strong move. **1 ... Kd3** which forces checkmate. White played **2 Kb2 Kd2 3 f7 c1Q+** black queens first **4 Ka2 Qc2+ 5 Ka3 Qb3** checkmate. The prettiest line is **2 f7 Kc3 3 f8Q Ne2** checkmate. **2 Bf5+** also loses but it takes a bit longer. **2 ... Nxf5 3 f7 Nd4 4 f8Q Ne2+ 5 Kb2 c1Q+** white queens first but Harriet queens with check. Now black cannot avoid checkmate. For example **6 Ka2 Nc3+ 7 Kb3 Qa2+ 8 Kb4 Qc4+ 9 Ka3 Qa4+ 10 Kb2 Qa2+ 11 Kc1 Qc2** checkmate. To give you an idea of how quickly top players think, Harriet had only 17 seconds left on her clock when she played **1 ... Kd3**.

Put rooks on open files

Here is another theme we regularly look at. There looks to be plenty of play in this game but Harriet Hunt, playing white against Montenegro, doubled rooks on the b file and black's position soon fell apart.



1 Rcb2 Nb8 2 Rb6 now black has no good move. **2 ... Qe8 3 Rxe6 Rxe6 4 Qxd5** left white well on top. **2 ... Qc7 3 Rxe6 Rxe6 4 Qxd5** is similar and **2 ... Qd7 3 Rd6 Rxd6 4 cxd6+** is even worse for black.

David Howell is already a legend at HMP Wandsworth after he played 25 men all at the same time the week before lockdown achieving 24 wins and only one draw. Here he showed the power of rooks on open files playing white against Scotland.



There is no good reply to **1 Rb7** black played **1 ... Bd7 2 Rxd7** when **2 ... Qxd7** loses the queen to **3 Nf6+ Bxf6 4 Rxd7**. **1 ... Qxb7** also loses the queen to **2 Nf6+ Bxf6 3 Bxb7**. **1 ... Kh8** is better but black is struggling after **2 Ne7 Qe6 3 Qxc5**. **1 ... Rd8** sets a trap but **2 Ne7+ Kh1 3 Rxd8** (not **3 Nxc8 Rxd1+ 4 Bf1 Bh3** and **5 ... Rxf1** mate) **Qxd8 4 Nxf5 Qd1+ 5 Bf1 gxf5 5 Qxc5** also leaves white better.