



THE PUZZLING SIDE OF CHESS

Jeff Coakley

PROOF GAMES 200 Proof

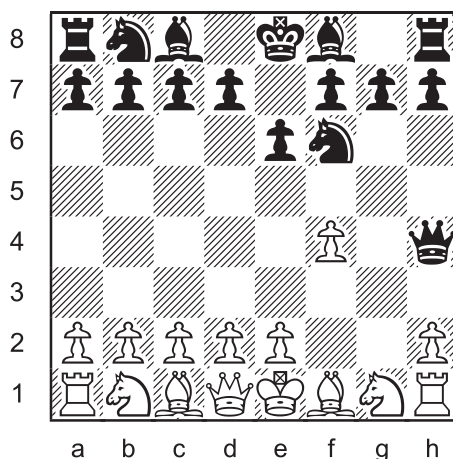
number 214

August 25, 2022

The most numerous type of problem on the *Puzzling Side of Chess* is the proof game. This column brings the count to an even two hundred. Lengthwise, 97 are a short 4.0 moves. The other 103 are “longer”.



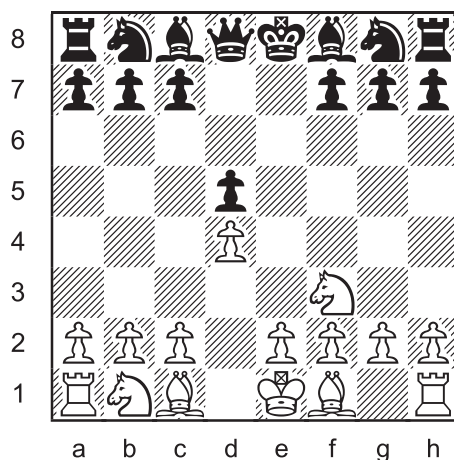
Proof Game 96



This position, with White to play, was reached in a game after each player made exactly four moves. What were the moves?

The general aim of a proof game is to *prove* that a position is legal by showing that it could happen in an actual game. In most puzzles of this type, the goal is to reach the given position in a precise number of moves. No sooner, no later. The positions may be daffy, and the strategy baffling, but the moves are legal.

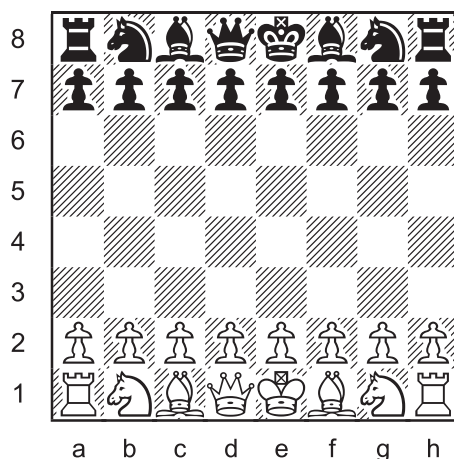
Proof Game 97



This position was reached after Black's fourth turn. What were the moves?

The next puzzle is a *synthetic game*. Similar to a proof game, but instead of finding the move sequence that leads to a given position, the task is to compose a game that ends with a particular move.

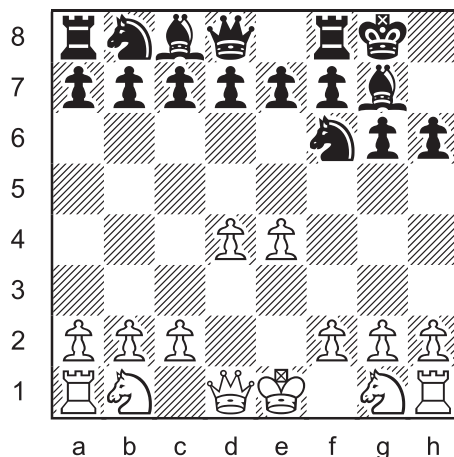
Synthetic Game 49



Compose a game that ends with the move 5...Nxf2#.

In the next diagram, Black has established a typical King's Indian formation against White's pawn centre. But the moves leading to this position are anything but typical.

Longer Proof Game 101 (5.5 moves)



This position was reached after White's sixth turn. What were the moves?

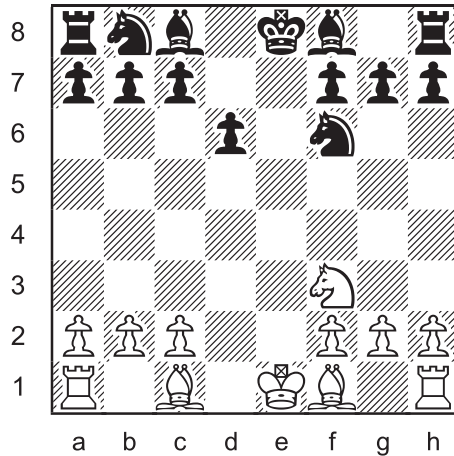


PROOF

In the booze business, "proof" is a measure of alcoholic content. It is indicated by a number that is twice the per cent of alcohol by volume. For example, 100 proof whisky is 50% alcohol.

White has lost four pieces in the following six-mover. As most solvers know, that means that only two black moves were non-captures. And of course, one of those was move 1.

Longer Proof Game 102 (6.0 moves)



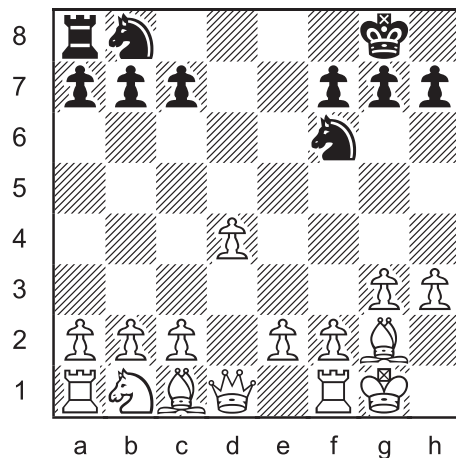
This position was reached after Black's sixth turn. What were the moves?



200 proof is pure alcohol. Like a poison pawn, it is not for consumption.

In our final puzzle, White has apparently played a rather normal Catalan Opening. On the other side of things, it seems that Black was enjoying a game of give-away! I usually consider problems of this type and length to be too hard for humans. But Andrey Frolkin solved it in 10 minutes. Will you give it a go?

Longer Proof Game 103 (9.5 moves)



This position was reached after White's tenth turn. What were the moves?



Prove this.

SOLUTIONS

All proof games by J. Coakley. Number 96 is from *Winning Chess Puzzles For Kids* (2006). Others are *Puzzling Side of Chess* (2022).

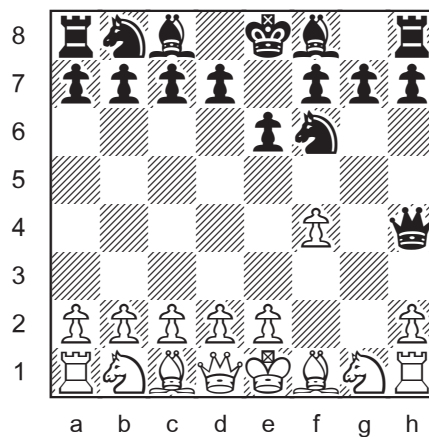
PDF hyperlinks. You can advance to the solution of any puzzle by clicking on the underlined title above the diagram. To return to the puzzle, click on the title above the solution diagram.

Archives. Past columns are available in the *Puzzling Side* archives.

Proof Game 96

J. Coakley 2006

Winning Chess Puzzles For kids



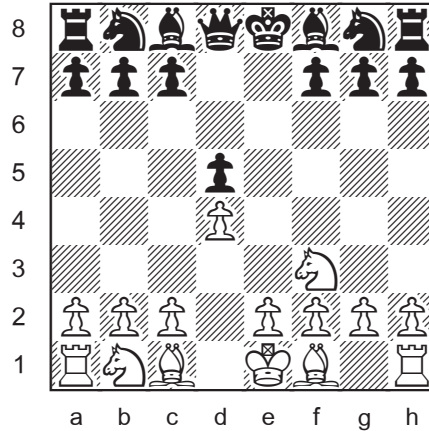
1.g4 e6 2.g5 Qxg5 3.f3 Nf6 4.f4 Qh4#

F-pawn tempo.



90 Proof

Proof Game 97

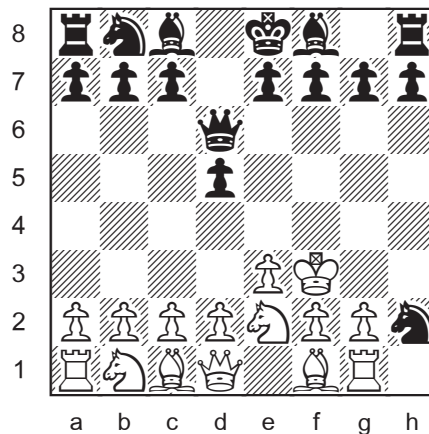


1.d4 e5 2.Qd3 e4 3.Qf3 exf3 4.Nxf3 d5
 White queen and black e-pawn both vanish on f3.



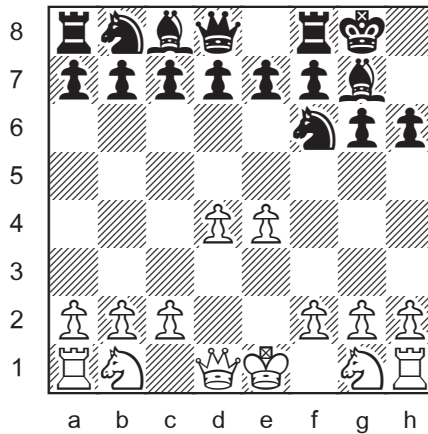
Synthetic Game 49

George Jelliss 1998
Synthetic Games



1.e3 d5 2.Ke2 Qd6 3.Kf3 Nf6 4.Ne2 Ng4 5.Rg1 Nxh2#
 Black's moves can be played in various orders. 3...Nh6 also works.
 Mating the white king on f1 would take six moves. For example,
 1.g3 Nc6 2.Bg2 Nb8 3.Kf1 Nc6 4.Qe1 Ne5 5.Nh3 Nf3 6.Rg1 Nxh2#
 [April 2023: Yakov Konoval kindly points out two other solutions with
 1.e3 e5 2.Ke2 Qh4 and 1.e4 e6 2.Ke2 Qg5.]

Longer Proof Game 101 (5.5 moves)

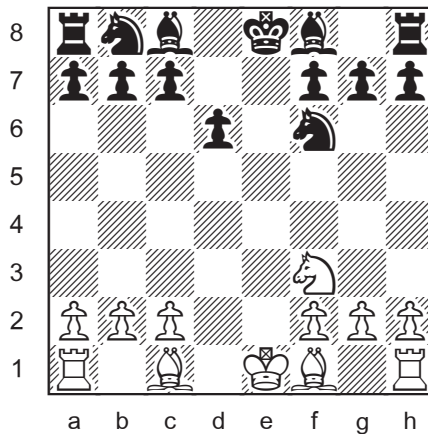


1.d4 Nf6 2.Bh6 gxh6 3.e3 Bg7 4.Bd3 0-0 5.Bg6 hxg6 6.e4
Hypermodern defence.

Cross-captures on g6 h6. White e-pawn tempo.

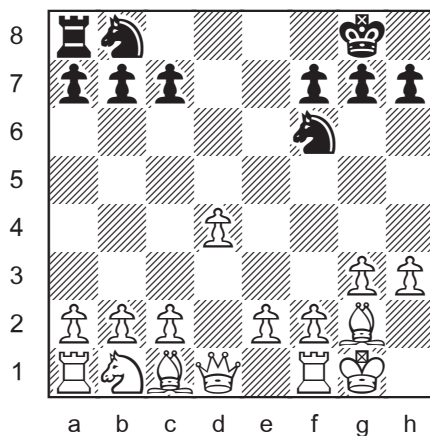


Longer Proof Game 102 (6.0 moves)



1.e3 d5 2.e4 dxe4 3.Nf3 Qxd2+
4.Nbxd2 exf3 5.Nxf3 Nf6 6.Qd6 exd6
Strangely sacrificial queens. White e-pawn tempo.

Longer Proof Game 103 (9.5 moves)



1.Nf3 e5 2.Nxe5 Bd6 3.Nxd7 Bg3 4.Nf6+ Nxf6 5.hxg3 Bh3
6.gxh3 0-0 7.Bg2 Re8 8.0-0 Re3 9.dxe3 Qd4 10.exd4

Deceptive white pawns.



Until next time.

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