

THE PUZZLING SIDE OF CHESS

Jeff Coakley

REBUS UPLOAD 06

number 225

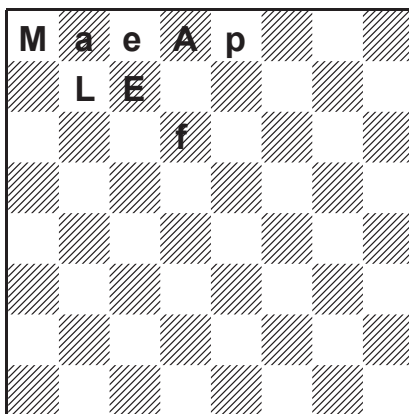
July 24, 2023

As the sign says, welcome to Rebusland! Here are five new puzzles and a picture riddle to amuse or confuse your deductive skills.



Rebus 95

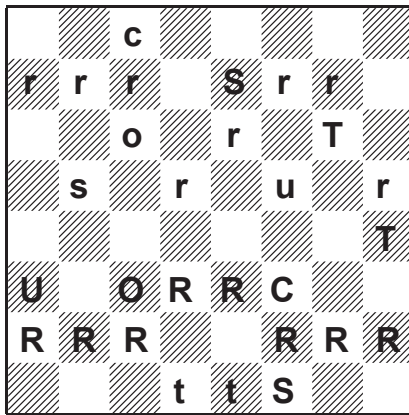
"maple leaf"



Each letter represents a different type of piece.
Uppercase is one colour, lowercase is the other.
Determine the position and, if possible, the last move.

Rebus 96

"cross out"



Each letter represents a different type of piece.
Uppercase is one colour, lowercase is the other.
Determine the position and the last move.

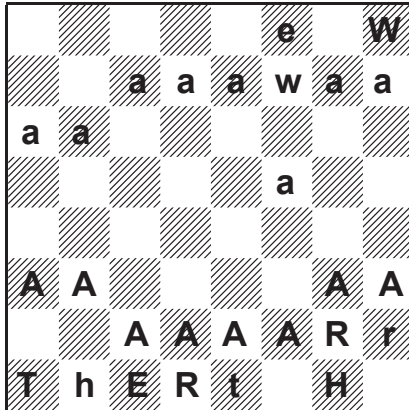
Chess rebuses have only been around for 40 years, originating in a dream of Ukrainian composer Andrey Frolikin. Picture rebuses have a much longer history, dating back over five centuries.

Riddle: *"What did the guy with a split personality say on the day before his big date?"*



Rebus 97

"weather"

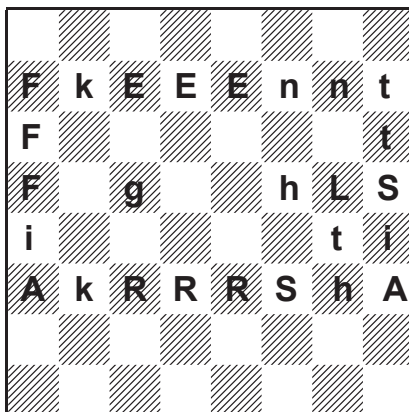


Each letter represents a different type of piece.
Uppercase is one colour, lowercase is the other.
Determine the position.

The next problem is a *split-alphabet* rebus. In this format, there is one set of letters for the white pieces and a separate set for the black pieces. Up to 12 total. (See rebuses 28 and 29 in column 188.)

Rebus 98

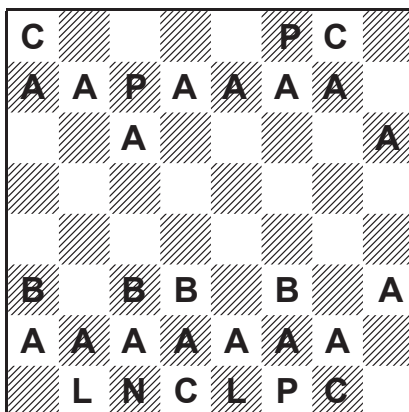
"fearless knight"



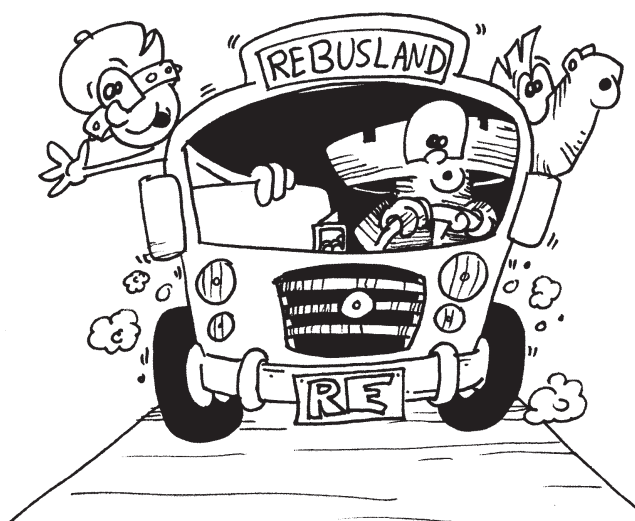
Each letter represents a different type of piece of a specific colour.
Uppercase is one colour, lowercase is the other.
For example, maybe 't' is a white rook and 'R' is a black rook.
Determine the position and the last move.

Our final puzzle is a *colour-free* rebus, dedicated to the great José Capablanca, world chess champion from 1921 to 1927. In this format, each type of piece is represented by one letter. No indication is given for which instances of a letter are white and which are black. Usually, most letters represent pieces of both colours. But some letters may be all white, or others all black. (See rebuses 32 and 33 in column 188.)

Rebus 99
 “Capablanca”



Each letter represents a different type of piece.
 No indication is given for colour.
 Some instances of a letter can be white,
 other instances of the same letter can be black.
 Determine the position.



If you are looking for more chess rebuses, check out the *rebus index* in the appendix to column 188. It lists over 200 problems, most of which are readily available online.

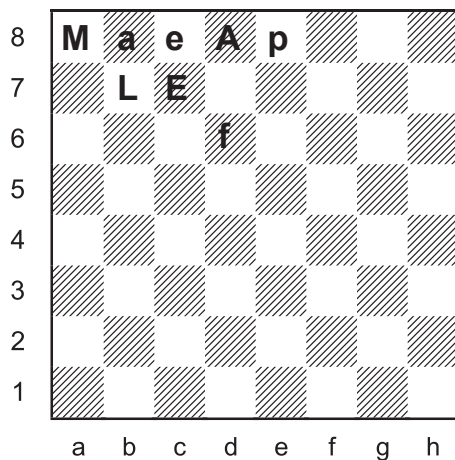
SOLUTIONS

All chess rebuses are joint compositions by Andrey Frokin and Jeff Coakley, *Puzzling Side of Chess* (2023).

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.

Rebus 95

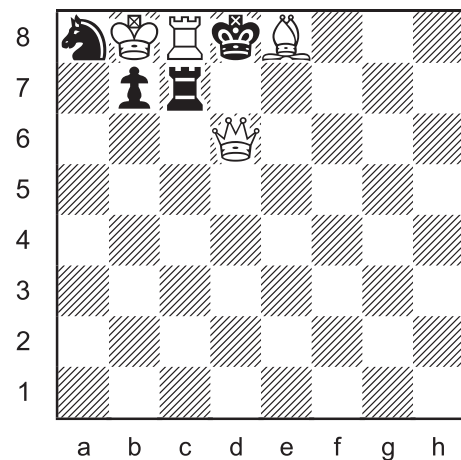


“maple leaf”

M = knight
A = king
P = bishop
L = pawn
E = rook
F = queen

caps = black

last move:
1.d7xc8=R++



(4 + 4)

A = ♔

Only letter with one uppercase, one lowercase that are not adjacent.

F ≠ ♑

If F = ♑

ELMP all attack a king along a rank or file. So regardless of piece assignment, there are checks by a queen and by a rook. No legal double check is possible.

L = ♙

Only other letter not on 8th rank.

E ≠ ♖

Both kings in check (c7 c8).

Regardless of piece assignment, there are checks by a queen and a rook. There is only one possibility for a legal double check.

F = ♑

E = ♖

Last move: 1.d7xc8=R++. The type of piece captured on c8 is unknown.

caps = black

Lowercase promotion on 8th rank.

P = ♗

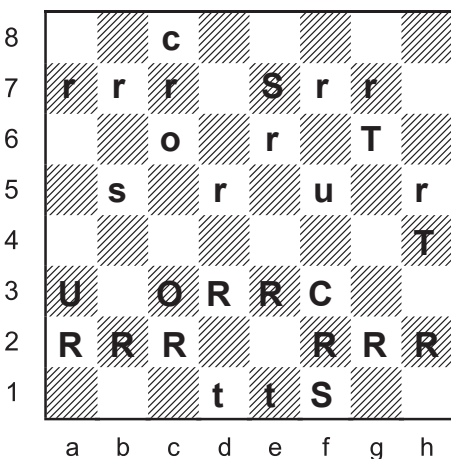
M ≠ ♗

A black bishop cannot be on a8 with a black pawn on b7.

M = ♞

Rebus 96

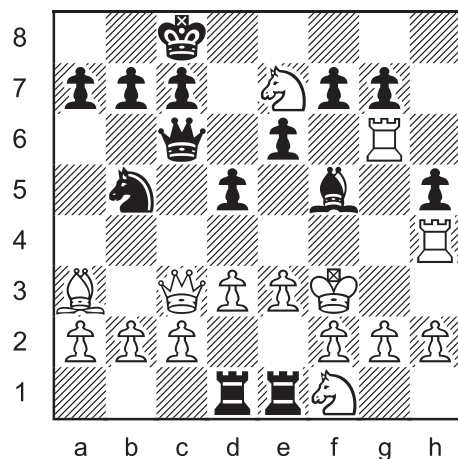
"cross out"



C = king
 R = pawn
 S = knight
 O = queen
 U = bishop
 T = rook

caps = white

last move:
 1.Ng8-e7+



(15 + 14)

R = ♖ caps = white

Obviously since there 16 R's and only 3 missing pieces.

ST ≠ ♔ There are no promoted pieces. (4 T's, 3 S's)

Regardless of piece assignment, a white rook is outside of the white pawn formation. This could only happen by a cross-capture of pawns on d3 e3. This accounts for both missing black pieces. No other captures were made by White.

♔ = (COU) Letters with one uppercase, one lowercase.

O ≠ ♔ If O = ♔

T = ♖ T ≠ ♘ Impossible check (d1). No promotion.

T ≠ ♗ Impossible check (e1). No promotion.

S ≠ ♘ Both kings in check (b5 e7).

S ≠ ♗ Both white rooks are outside the white pawn formation. This is only possible if one of the white bishops was captured on their original square. There are two uppercase S's.

S = ∅? No piece can be assigned to letter S.

U ≠ ♔ If U = ♔

T = ♖ T ≠ ♘ Impossible check (h4).

T ≠ ♗ Impossible check (g6). No capture.

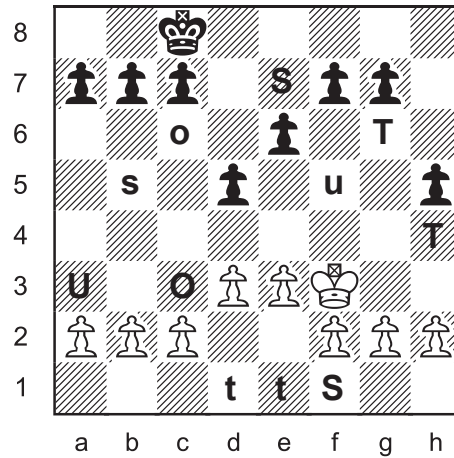
S ≠ ♘ Both kings in check (b5 e7).

S ≠ ♗ Both white rooks are outside the white pawn formation. This is only possible if one of the white bishops was captured on their original square. There are two uppercase S's.

S = ∅? No piece can be assigned to letter S.

C = ♔

Rebus 96 *continued*



C = ♔

caps = white

T = ♖

T ≠ ♘ Impossible check (e1).
No promotions.

T ≠ ♙ Impossible check (d1).

Both white rooks are outside the white wall of pawns. This is only possible if one white bishop was captured on its original square.

S = ♘

S ≠ ♙ Two uppercase S's.

The black king is in check. Last move: 1.Ng8-e7+.
This move was not a capture.

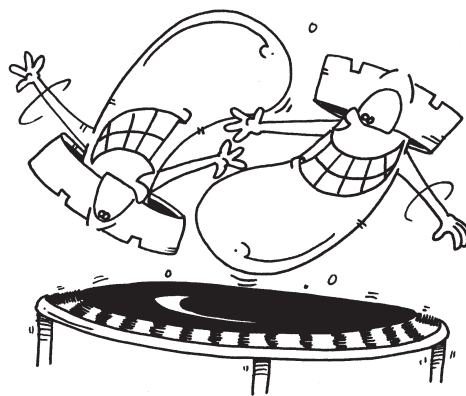
U = ♙

W ≠ ♔ Both kings in check (f5).

O = ♔

REBUS page 2

“What did the guy with a split personality say on the day before his big date?”

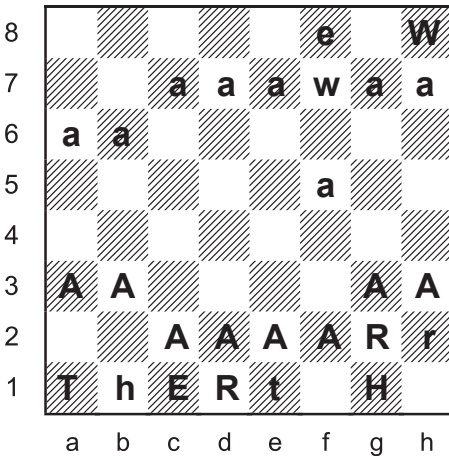


“I hope I'll be myself tomorrow.”

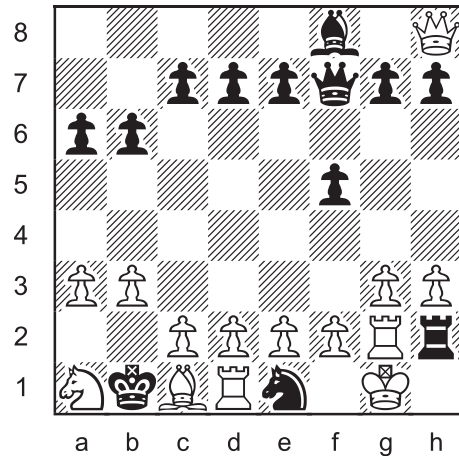
eye-hoe-pile-bee-mice-elf-tomb-R-row

Rebus 97

"weather"



W = queen
 E = bishop
 A = pawn
 T = knight
 H = king
 R = rook
 caps = white
 last move: ?



(14 + 13)

A = ♙

Only letter not on 1st or 8th rank.

Each side has 8 pawns. There are no promoted pieces.

caps = white

The pawn formation with 'caps = black' would require 8 captures. There are only 5 missing pieces.

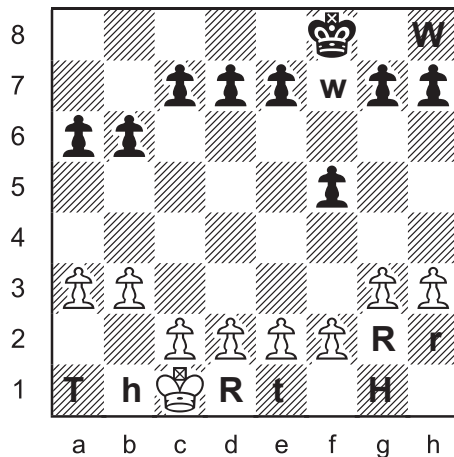
♔ = (EHTW)

Letters with one uppercase, one lowercase.

E ≠ ♔

If E = ♔

Diagram.



caps = white try E = king

H = ♖

T ≠ ♖

Black's dark bishop was taken on f8.

W ≠ ♖

Impossible bishop on h8.

R ≠ ♖

Impossible bishop on d1.

W = ♘

W ≠ ♔ ♖

Impossible check (h8).

R = ♖

R ≠ ♔

Two uppercase R's. No promotions.

T = ♔

This position is illegal. Diagram next page.

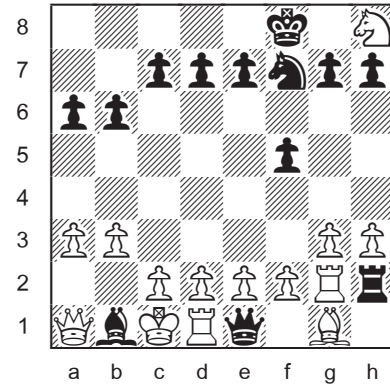
Rebus 97 *continued*

A black rook is inside the white pawns. This would require a cross-capture of pawns on a3 b3 or on g3 h3. But that is impossible.

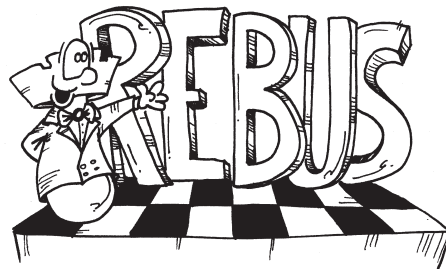
There was no cross-capture on a3 b3 because then a bishop cannot be on b1.

There was no cross-capture on g3 h3 because then a bishop cannot be on g1.

So E ≠ ♔



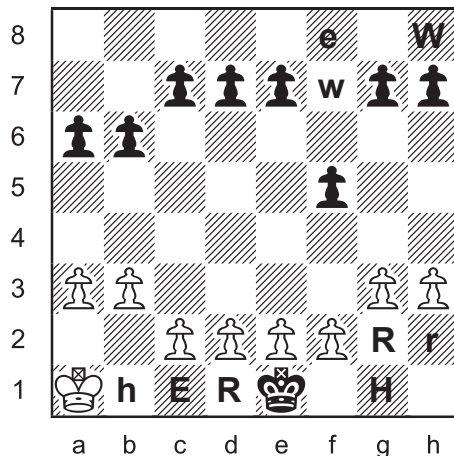
try E = king



T ≠ ♔

If T = ♔

Diagram.



caps = white try T = king

R = ♞

R ≠ ♔ ♖ Impossible check (d1).

R ≠ ♗ Impossible bishop on d1.

The black king is in check by the knight on g2.

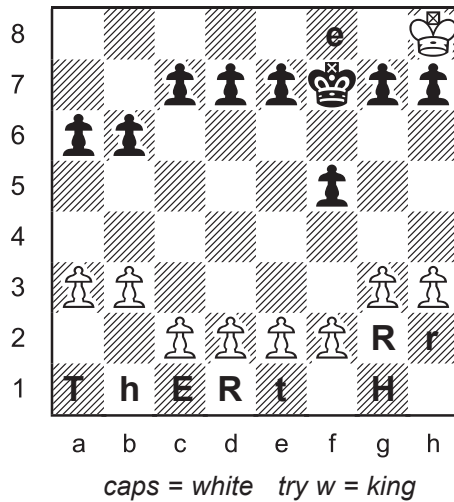
H ≠ ♔ ♖ Three checks (b1 g1).

H ≠ ♗ The black king is inside the white pawns. This would require entry either through b2 before White played a3 or through g2 before White played h3. But both ways are impossible because then there could not be a bishop on b1 or g1.

H = ∅? No piece can be assigned to letter H.

So T ≠ ♔

Rebus 97 *continued*



W ≠

If W =

H =

Diagram.

R ≠

Impossible bishop on d1.

T ≠

Impossible bishop on e1.

E ≠

If E = , Black has a bishop on f8 and there had to be a cross-capture of black pawns on a6 b6 to allow a black rook to escape. But then it is impossible for the white king to be on h8. No entry.

E =

If R or T =

A black rook is inside the white pawns. That requires a cross-capture of white pawns on a3 b3 or on g3 h3. But both are impossible because then there could not be a bishop on b1 or g1.

R =

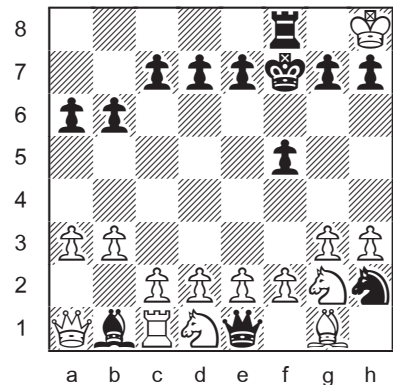
R ≠

Two uppercase R's. No promotions.

T =

Diagram. This position is illegal.

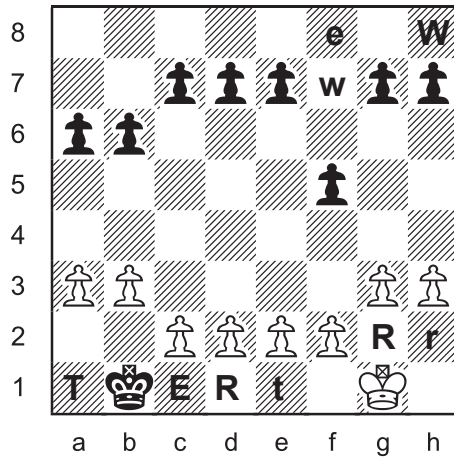
White is in an impossible check by the rook on f8. The move would have to be the capture 1.Rxf8+. White is missing a light-square bishop and a rook. The bishop could not be captured on the dark square f8. The rook could not be captured on f8 because that would require a cross-capture of white pawns which is impossible because of the bishops on b1 and g1.



H =

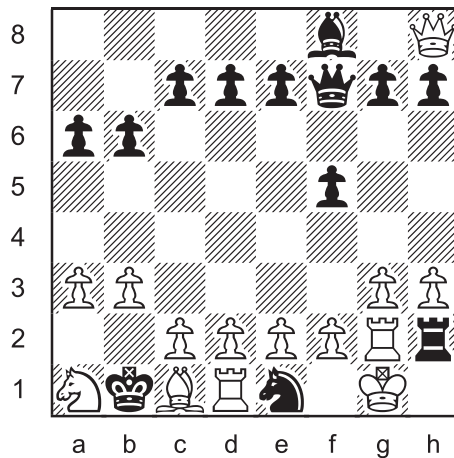
So W ≠

Rebus 97 *continued*



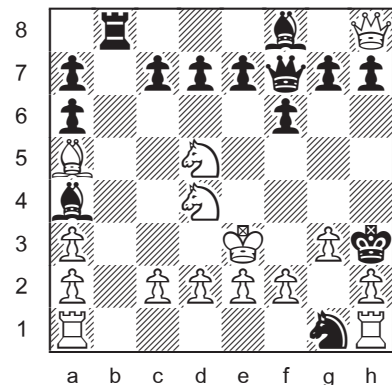
- H =
- T = Diagram.
- R = Diagram.
- E = Diagram.
- W = Diagram.

T ≠ Impossible bishop on e1.
 T ≠ Both kings in check (a1 e1).
 T ≠ Impossible check (h2).
 E ≠ Impossible check (c1).

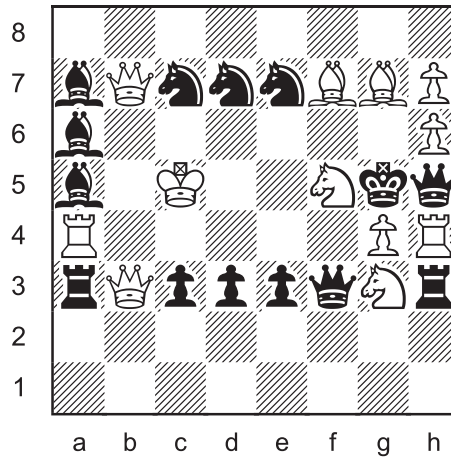
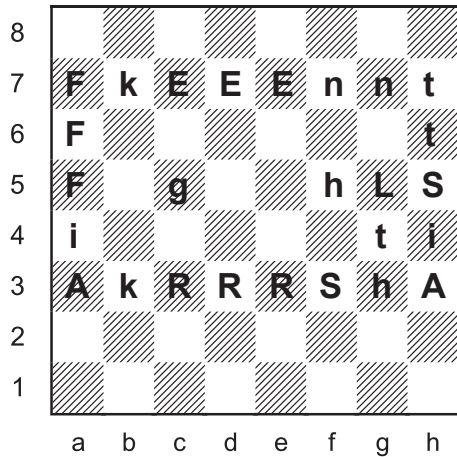


The position is legal. There was a cross-capture of black pawns on a6 b6 and of white pawns on a3 b3. The black king entered inside the white wall of pawns through g2. Surprisingly, the kings and rooks can manoeuvre around each other.

For example, from the diagram at right:
 1...Rb1 2.Nb6 Kg2 3.Bb4 Kf1 4.Ba5 Ke1
 5.Bb4 Kd1 6.Ba5 Kc1 7.Bb4 Kb2 8.Nb3 Nh3
 9.Kf3 Nf4 10.h3 Nd3 11.Rh2 Rh1 12.Rg2 axb6
 13.Rgg1 f5 14.Kg2 Rh2+ 15.Kf1 Ne1 16.Rd1 Nd3
 17.Na1 Bb3 18.axb3 Ne1 19.Bc3+ Ka2
 20.Bb2 Nd3 21.Bc1 Ne1 22.Rg2 Kb1 23.Kg1



Rebus 98



(12 + 14)

“fearless knight”

- white
- k = queen
- n = bishop
- i = rook
- g = king
- h = knight
- t = pawn
- black
- F = bishop
- E = knight
- A = rook
- R = pawn
- L = king
- S = queen

last move:
1...Nb6-d7++

♔ = Lg Only letters with a single instance.

Regardless of piece assignment, the king on c5 is in double check by two of the letters FER. The third of these letters must be pawns. The only legal double check is the following:

F = ♗ E = ♘ R = ♖ Last move: Nb6>d7++. Colours still unknown.

T = ♖ Otherwise the king on g5 is in check by letter T.

caps = black If caps = white, both kings are in check (pawn h6).

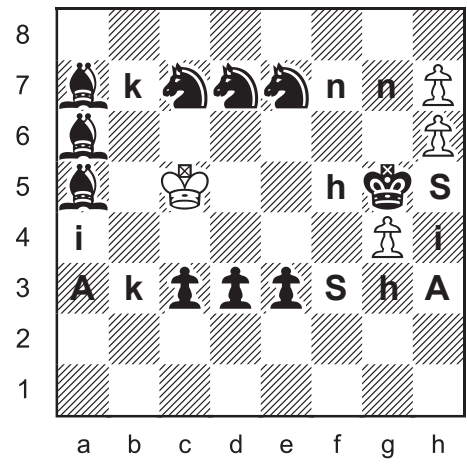
Diagram.

- A = ♖ A ≠ ♔ Triple check.
- S = ♔
- N = ♗ N ≠ ♔ ♖ ♘ Both kings in check.
- H = ♘ H ≠ ♔ ♖ Both kings in check.
- i = ♖ i ≠ ♔ Both kings in check.
- K = ♔

Last move: 1...Nb6-d7++.

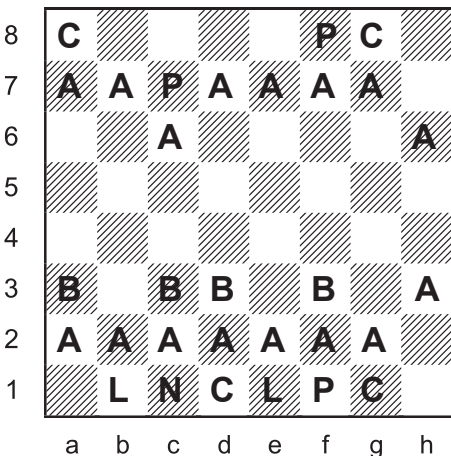
This move was not a capture. The missing pieces are all pawns (4 white, 2 black).

The two black pawns were captured on the gh-files. One white pawn was captured on the ab-files to allow three pawns to promote (1w, 2b). The other three white pawns were captured to account for the three black passers.

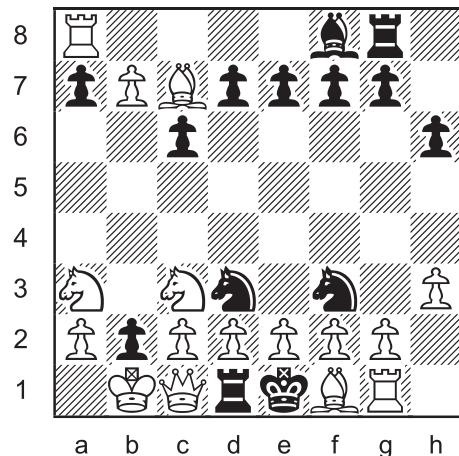


Rebus 99

"Capablanca"



C = rook
A = pawn
P = bishop
B = knight
L = king
N = queen



(16+ 14)

- A = There are 16 A's and only two missing pieces.
- L = Only letter with two instances.
- N = Only letter with one instance. All pawns are on the board, so there are no promoted pieces.

BCP = ()

The black king is on the 1st rank. In order to explain the king's entry, at least one of the pawns on the 2nd rank must be black. Since there are two pawns on each file, there were necessarily two captures by pawns, which accounts for both missing pieces. In general, there are three possibilities for the two captures.

- Inverted pawns on a single file. For example, white a7 and black a2. In this case, both captures are made by the same side.
- Inverted pawns on two adjacent files. For example, white a7 b7 and black a2 b2. Again, both captures by the same side.
- Two pawns of the same colour on one file, and two pawns of the opposite colour on an adjacent file. For example, white a2 a7 and black b2 b7. In this case, each side makes one capture.

Now consider the bishops. The only way that all 4 bishops could have moved is if the pawn captures occurred on the d-files with white d7 e7 and black d2 e2. However, that would not allow the black king to reach the 1st rank. So two bishops must still be on their original squares.

P = The bishops on f1 and c7 are white. The bishop on f8 is black. Black is missing their light-square bishop. Thus, there must be a white pawn on b7 or d7 and a black pawn on b2 or d2. If the pawns are inverted on the d-file, then there is no entry for the black king. So the pawns are necessarily inverted on the b-file (white b7 black b2).

Rebus 99 *continued*

Since there are no inverted pawns on the kingside, the rooks never escaped the h1 and h8 corners.

C = ♖ The rook on g8 is black.
The rook on g1 is white.

Diagram.

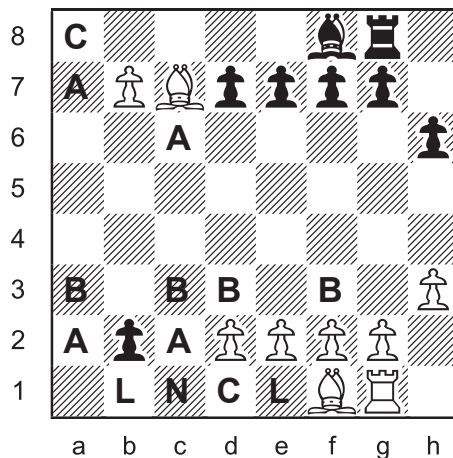
B = ♞ All that remains is to determine colours for the remaining pieces.

Because there are inverted pawns on the b-file, both captures were made by the same side. Black is missing a bishop, so the other missing piece (queen) must also be black. Therefore the queen on c1 is white.

The king on b1 is white, otherwise there is an impossible check by the queen. The king on e1 black. The rook on d1 is black, otherwise there is an impossible check on the black king. The rook on a8 is white.

The A's on a2 and c2 must be white. If either pawn is black, there is an impossible check on the white king. The last move could not be ...bxc2+ or ...bxa2+ because both missing pieces are black. So the pawns on a7 and c6 are black.

If any knight is giving check, then at least one other knight is also checking. Therefore the knights on a3 c3 are white and those on d3 f3 are black.



Until next time!

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