



THE PUZZLING SIDE OF CHESS

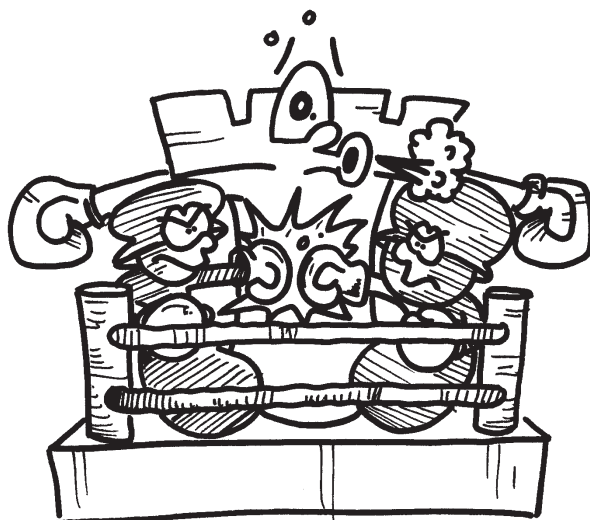
Jeff Coakley

SERIES-MATES: Serious Problems

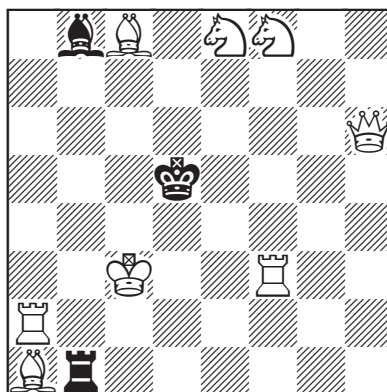
number 241

November 26, 2024

Unlike many of the serious problems overwhelming our world, the six “serious” puzzles in this column actually have solutions.



Double Whammy 74

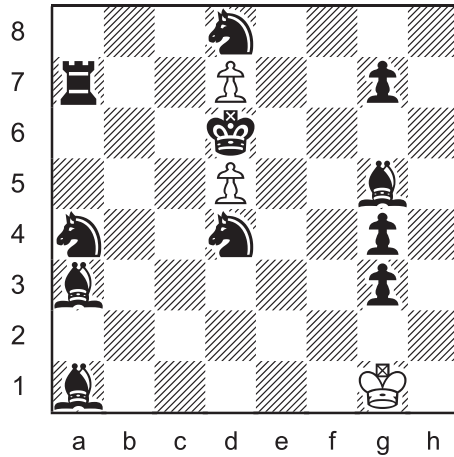


White plays two moves in a row to mate Black.

The first move may not be check. Either move may be a capture. Both moves may be with the same piece. Black does not get a turn.

The next whammy is quite straightforward in a roundabout sort of way.

Multi-Wham 91



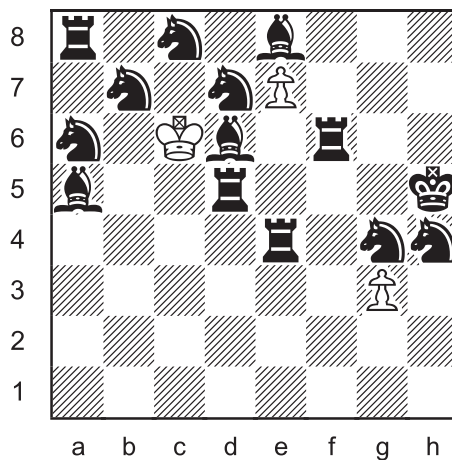
series-mate in 22

White plays twenty-two moves
in a row to mate Black.

*Only the final move may give check. Captures are allowed.
Black does not get a turn. White may not place their own king in check,
even if they get out of check on a subsequent turn.*

As usual, things get trickier as we proceed through the column. The white king needs some fancy footwork in the following problem.

Multi-Wham 92

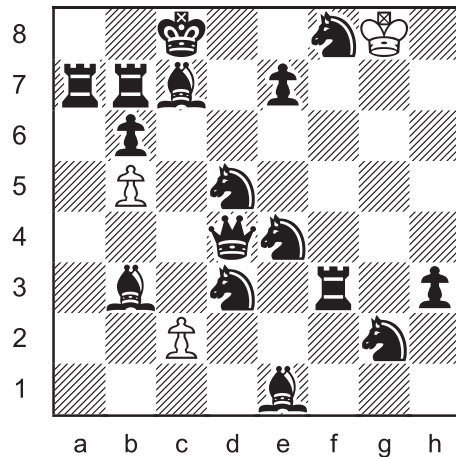


series-mate in 21

White plays twenty-one moves in a row to mate Black.

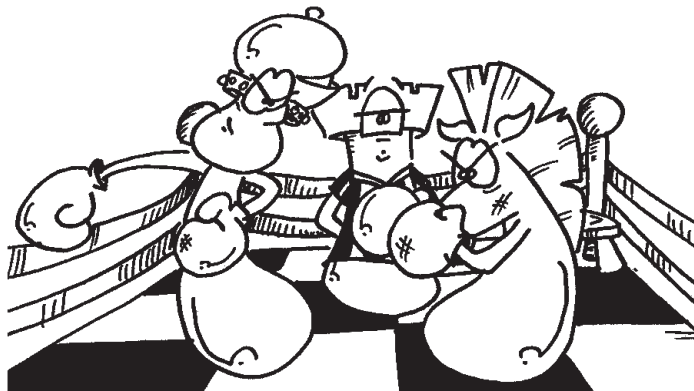
The remaining three puzzles are significantly harder. Black has a full 16 piece army in the next two positions. The real challenge in this one is deciding on the first move!

Multi-Wham 93

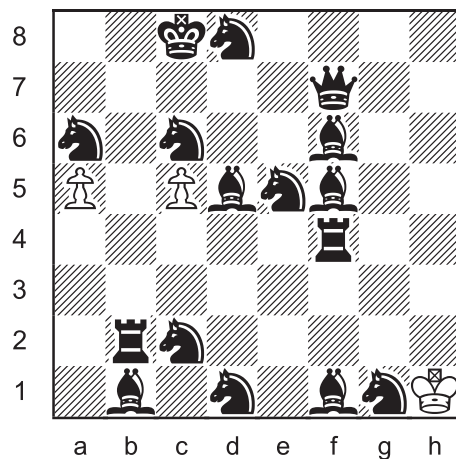


series-mate in 33

White plays thirty-three moves in a row to mate Black.



Multi-Wham 94

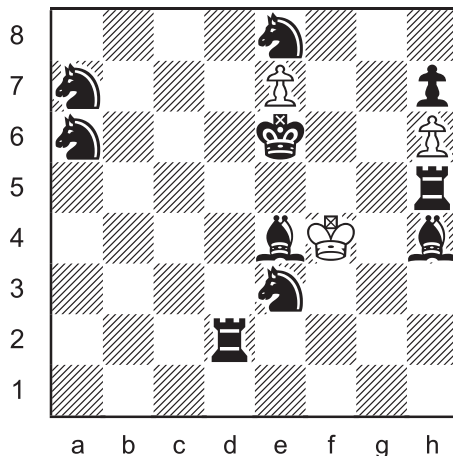


series-mate in 33

White plays thirty-three moves in a row to mate Black.

Our final problem is tough from start to finish. The obvious moves are not always the fastest way to mate. Sorry for the unsolicited hint, not that it's much help.

Multi-Wham 95



series-mate in 27

White plays twenty-seven moves in a row to mate Black.



*Sometimes serious problems are surmountable.
If we make the right moves together.*

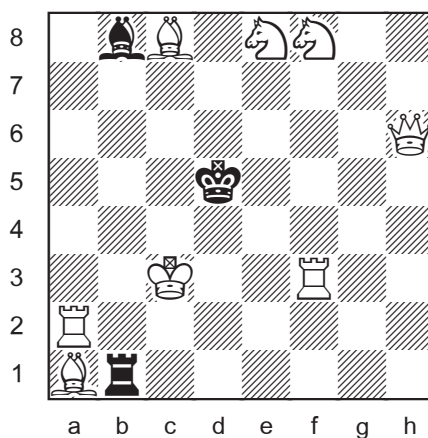
SOLUTIONS

All problems are by J. Coakley, *Puzzling Side of Chess* (2024).

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.

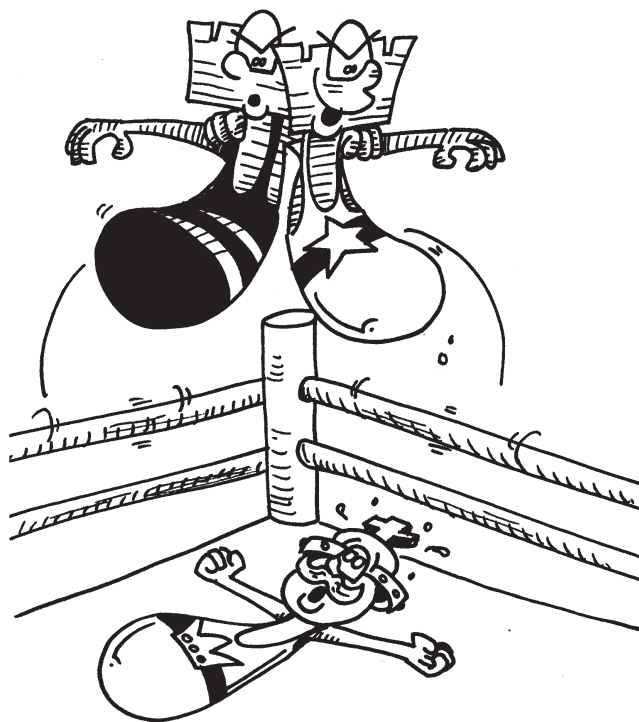
Archives. Past columns are available in the *Puzzling Side* archives.

Double Whammy 74

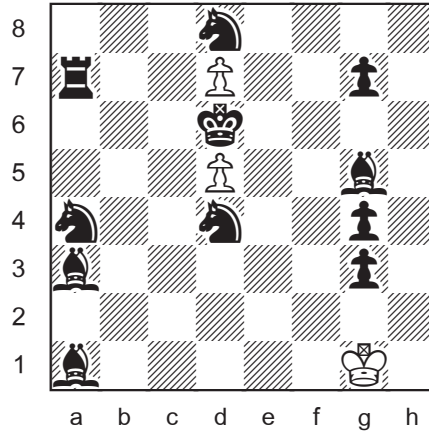


1.Qh1 2.Rf5#

Even with greatly superior forces, White needs a double check for mate.



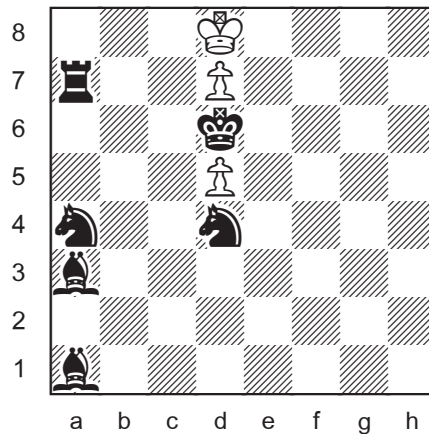
Multi-Wham 91



series-mate in 22

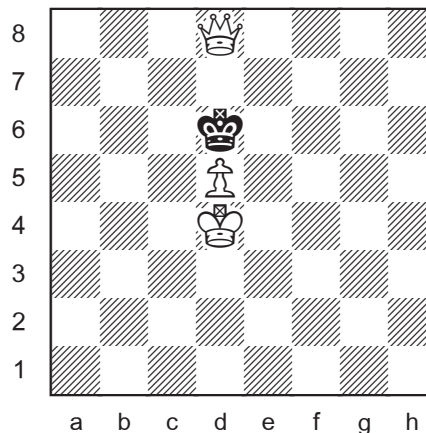
Obviously the white king needs to free the pawn on d7 by capturing the black knight on d8. There is only one path there.

1.Kg2 2.Kxg3 3.Kxg4 4.Kxg5 5.Kg6 6.Kxg7 7.Kf8 8.Ke8 9.Kxd8

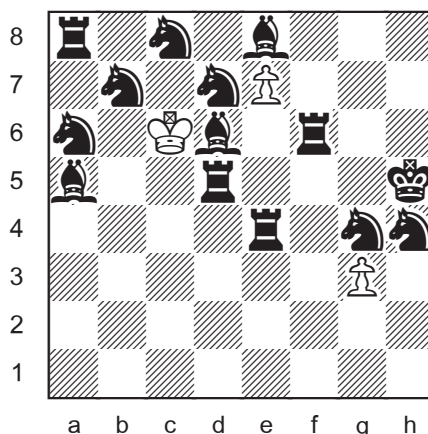


Now the king continues his symmetrical journey around the board to take the knight on d4, setting up mate by queening.

10.Kc8 11.Kb8 12.Kxa7 13.Ka6 14.Ka5 15.Kxa4 16.Kxa3 17.Ka2
18.Kxa1 19.Kb2 20.Kc3 21.Kxd4 22.d8=Q#



Multi-Wham 92



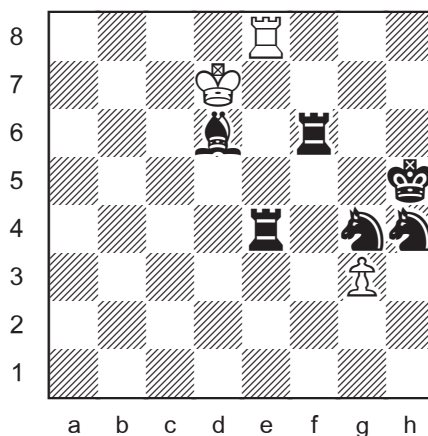
series-mate in 21

1.Kxd5

In order to take the bishop on e8, the white king will have to cross d8, which means that the bishop on a5 must be captured first. That bishop is guarded by the rook on d5, so it is eliminated right away. Starting with *1.Kxb7?* would require an extra move.

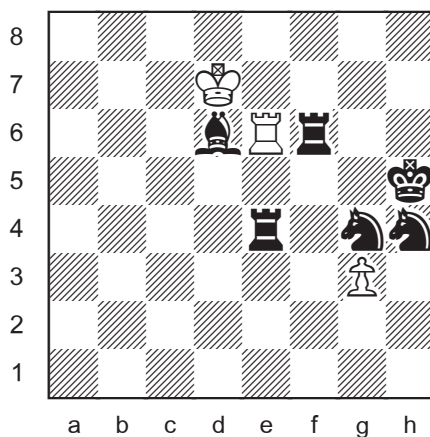
2.Kc6 3.Kxb7 4.Kxa8 5.Kb7 6.Kxa6 7.Kxa5 8.Ka6 9.Kb7 10.Kxc8
11.Kd8 12.Kxe8 13.Kxd7 14.e8=R

Promoting to queen or bishop would check. Mate is impossible with a knight promotion.



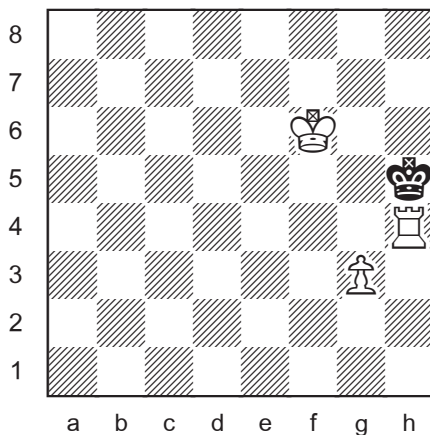
15.Re6!

The trickiest move, obstructing the defence of the black bishop by the rook on f6.

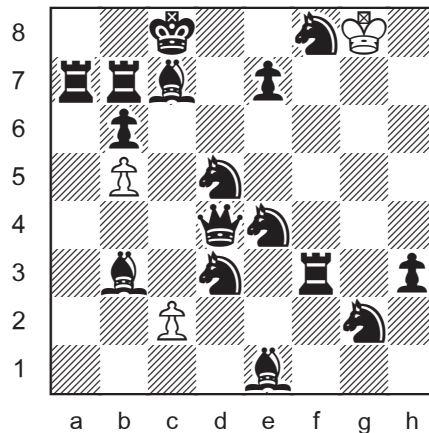


By now, the mating pattern is probably clear. The white king must stand on f6 (or f5). A few precise moves achieve the desired end.

16.Kxd6 17.Ke7 18.Rxe4 19.Rxg4 20.Kxf6 21.Rxh4#



Multi-Wham 93



series-mate in 33

The white king is stalemated so the first moves must be made by the pawn on c2. There are several choices.

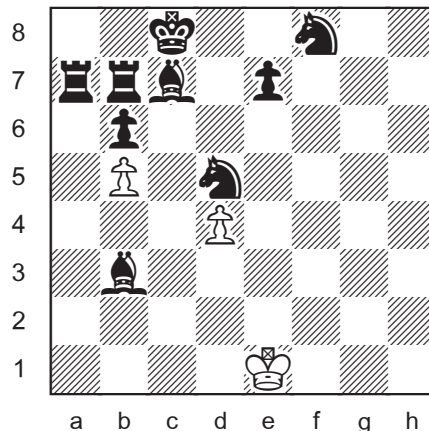
1.cxb3? is a deadend.

After *1.c4?* *2.c5* *3.cxb6* *4.bxa7* *5.a8=N*, mate is impossible.

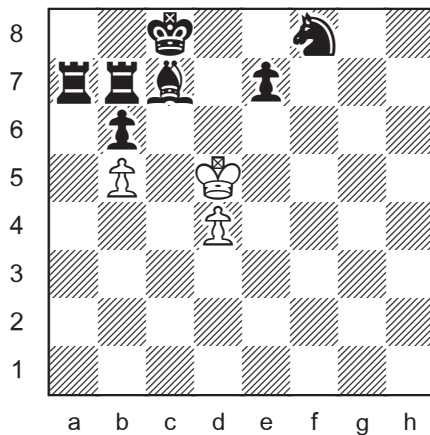
Following *1.c4?* *2.cxd5* or *1.cxd3?* *2.dxe4* *3.exd5*, the pawn on d5 is pinned to the king by the black bishop on b3.

1.c3 *2.cxd4* Freeing the white king, who now proceeds to capture the black knight on d5, mopping up a host of black defenders along the way.

3.Kg7 *4.Kh6* *5.Kh5* *6.Kg4* *7.Kxf3* *8.Kg4* *9.Kxh3* *10.Kxg2* *11.Kf3*
12.Kxe4 *13.Kxd3* *14.Ke2* *15.Kxe1*



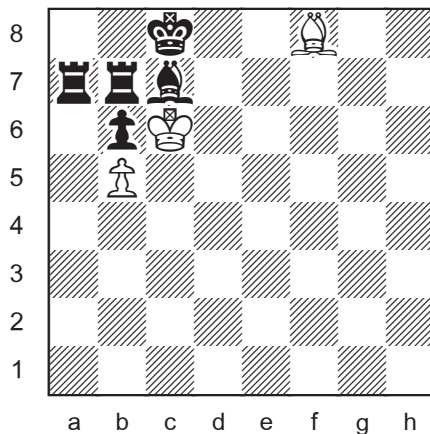
16.Kd2 *17.Kc1* *18.Kb2* *19.Kxb3* *20.Kc4* *21.Kxd5*



Mate in 12 from here.

22.Kc6 23.d5 24.d6 25.dxe7 26.exf8=B

Mate is impossible after 26.e8=B?, 26.e8=N?, or 26.exf8=N?.



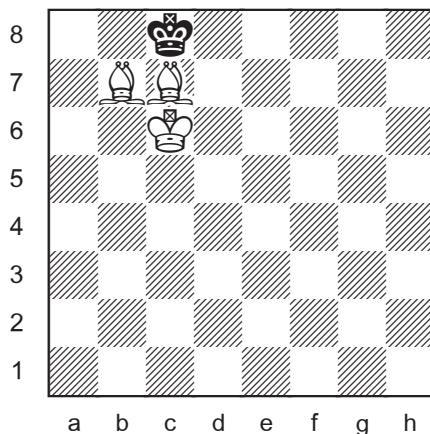
27.Bc5 28.Bxb6 29.Bxc7

The bishop frees the white b-pawn and then takes its place for the coming mate.

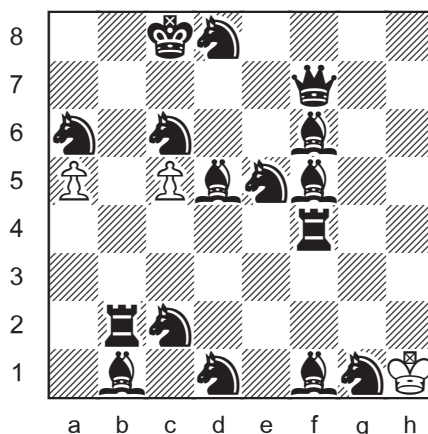
30.b6 31.bxa7 32.a8=B

A second bishop does the trick!

33.Bxb7#



Multi-Wham 94



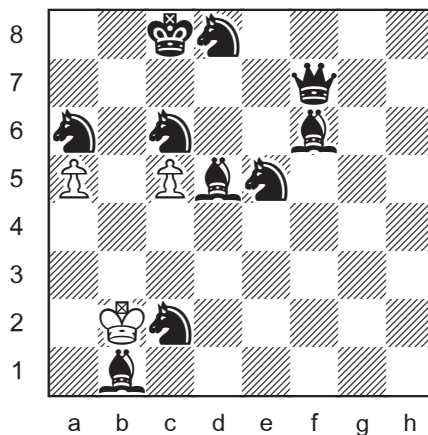
series-mate in 33

The white king cannot free the pawn on c5 because it is blocked by the knight on c6 which is guarded by the bishop on d5 which is guarded by the queen on f7. A king cannot approach a queen to capture it.

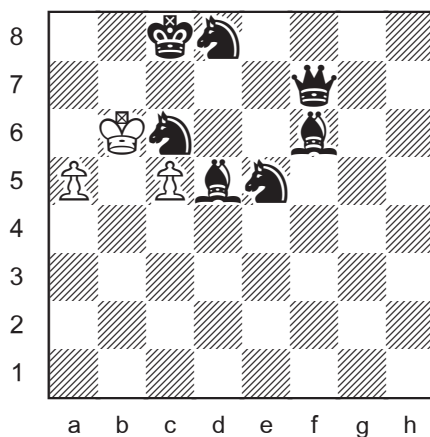
So the king must take the knight on a6 to free the a-pawn. Getting there requires a lot of captures, most notably the rook on b2.

1.Kh2 Surprisingly, immediately capturing the knight on g1 with *1.Kxg1?* adds an extra move to the mate because the king must later go through g1 anyhow.

2.Kg3 3.Kxf4 4.Kxf5 5.Kf4 6.Kg3 7.Kh2 8.Kxg1 9.Kxf1 10.Ke2
11.Kxd1 12.Kc1 13.Kxb2



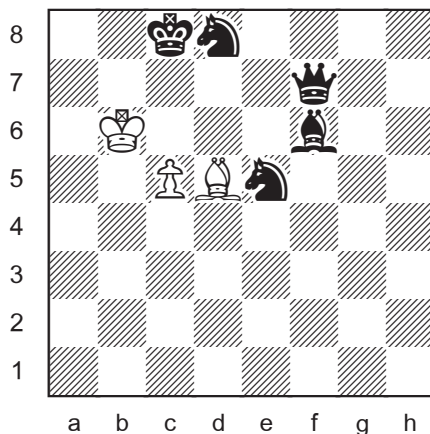
14.Kxb1 15.Kxc2 This knight must be taken to clear a path to a4.
16.Kb2 17.Ka3 18.Ka4 19.Kb5 20.Kxa6 21.Kb6



22.a6 23.a7 24.a8=B

Making a knight takes two moves too many. For example,
 24.a8=N? 25.Nc7 26.Nxd5 27.Nxf6 28.Ng4 29.Nxe5 30.Nxc6
 31.Ne5 32.Nxf7 33.c6 34.c7 35.cxd8=R#.

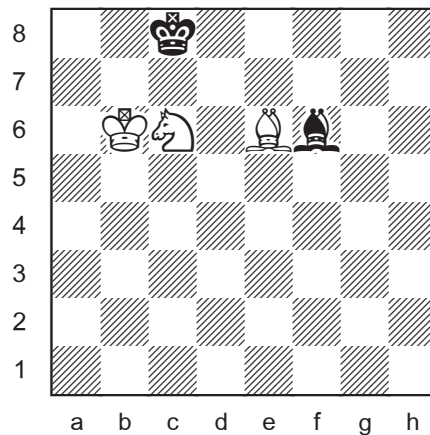
25.Bxc6 26.Bxd5



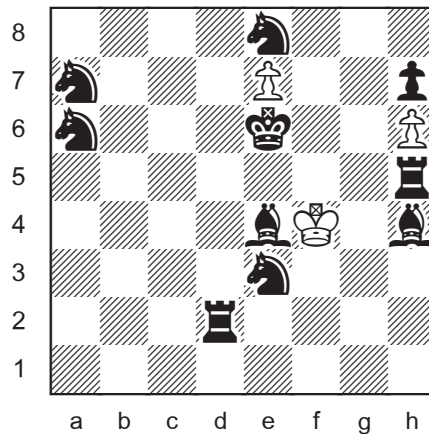
27.c6 28.c7 29.cxd8=N

A bishop is one move slow. 29.cxd8=B?
 30.Bxf6 31.Bxe5 32.Bc7 33.Bxf7 34.Be6#

30.Nxf7 31.Nxe5 32.Nc6 33.Be6#



Multi-Wham 95



series-mate in 27

It's easy to see that the white king must free the e-pawn by capturing on e8. That requires capturing both black rooks and all four black knights. Oddly enough, there is no hurry to take the black bishops! They will be captured later by promoted pieces.

1.Kxe3

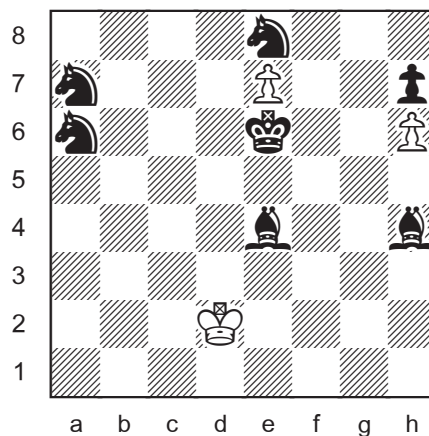
1.Kxe4? is one move too slow.

2.Kf4 3.Kg4 4.Kxh5 5.Kg4

5.Kxh4? also adds an extra move.

6.Kf4 7.Ke3 8.Kxd2

Now the path to e8 is relatively clear.

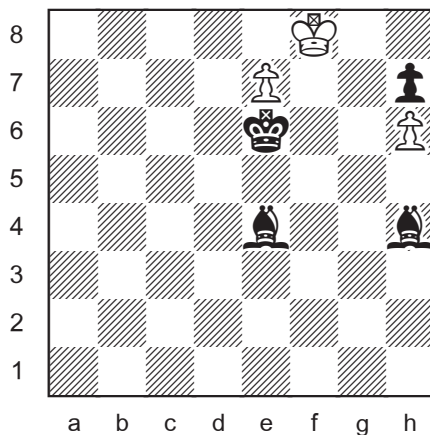


9.Kc3 10.Kb3 11.Ka4 12.Ka5 13.Kxa6 14.Kxa7 15.Kb8 16.Kc8

17.Kd8 18.Kxe8 19.Kf8

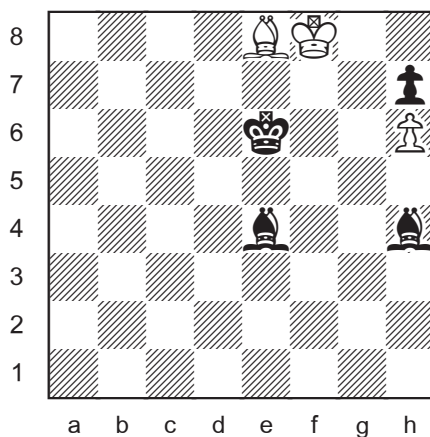
After 19.Kd8? the e-pawn is pinned.

Mate in 8 from here.

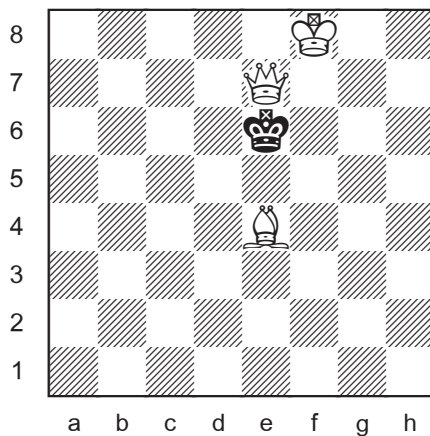


20.e8=B

Promoting to knight takes one move longer. For example, after 20.e8=N? 21.Nf6 22.Nxh7 23.Nf6 24.h7 25.h8=Q, either 26.Ng4 27.Ke8 28.Qe5# or 26.Nh5 27.Qd4 28.Ng7#.



21.Bg6 22.Bxh7 23.Bxe4 24.h7 25.h8=Q 26.Qxh4 27.Qe7#



Until next time!

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