

THE PUZZLING SIDE OF CHESS

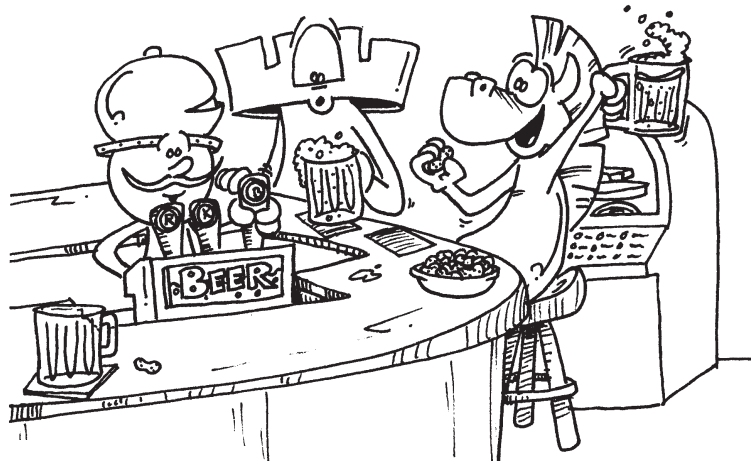
Jeff Coakley

SMORGASBORD XLI

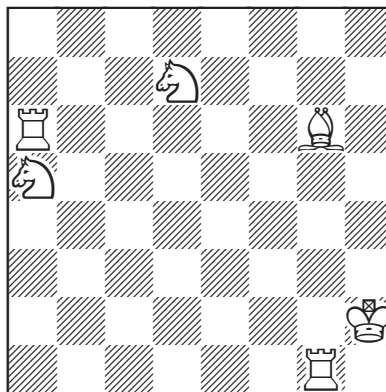
number 250

August 26, 2025

Two hundred and fifty columns. Such a big number almost seems like something worth celebrating. But the usual sort of smorgasbord selections will have to suffice. With a friendly toast. “Cheers!”



Triple Loyd 95

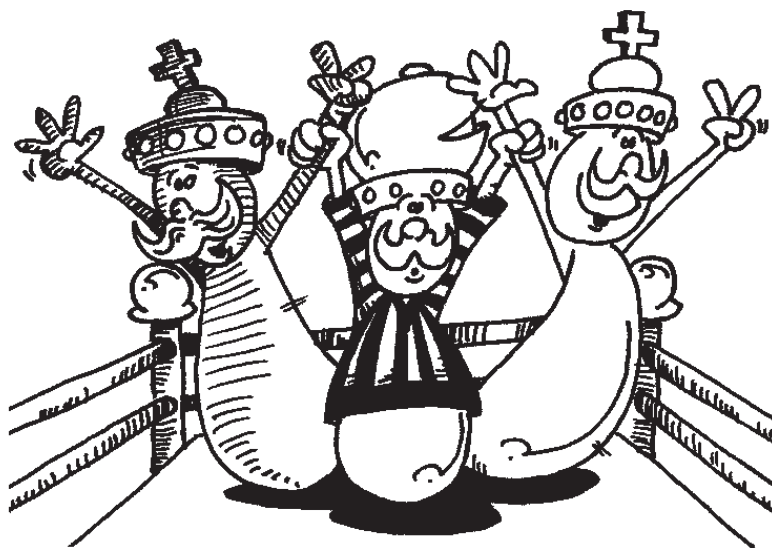


Place the black king on the board so that:

- A. Black is in checkmate.
B. Black is in stalemate.
C. White has mate in 1.

The next puzzle continues an unusual task from column 244.

Win-Win Situation



Construct a position with neither king in check so that one move by White checkmates both kings.

White's move will necessarily be illegal because it puts their own king in check but otherwise the position and mates should be legal.

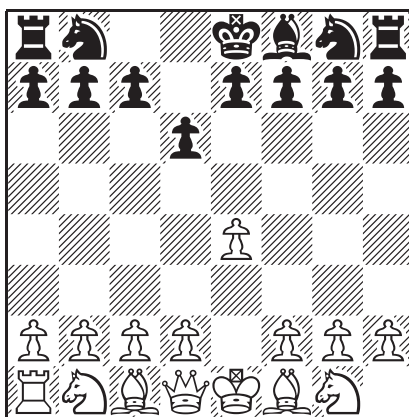
What is the minimum number of pieces necessary?

D. for a bishop move.

E. for a rook move.

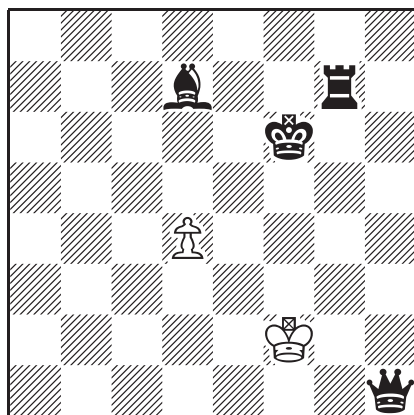
Things look quite normal in the following proof game, until you notice that a white rook is missing.

Longer Proof Game 152 (5.5 moves)

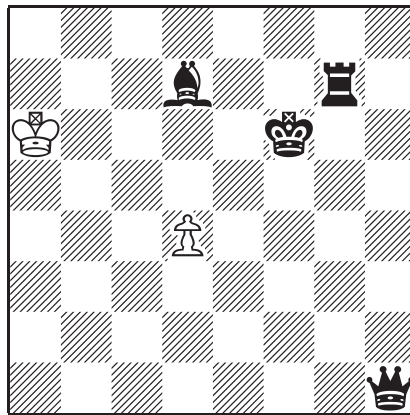


This position was reached after White's sixth turn.
What were the moves?

Inverted Loyd 71

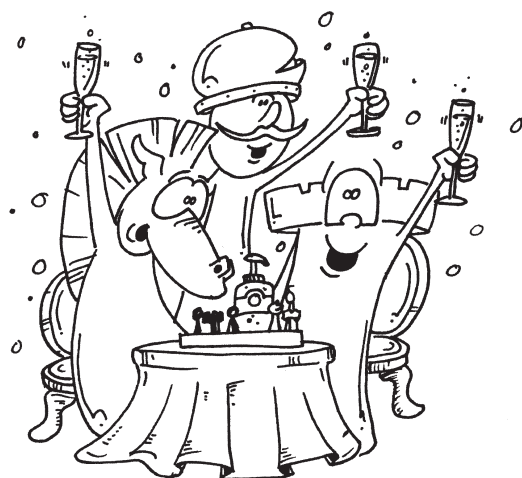
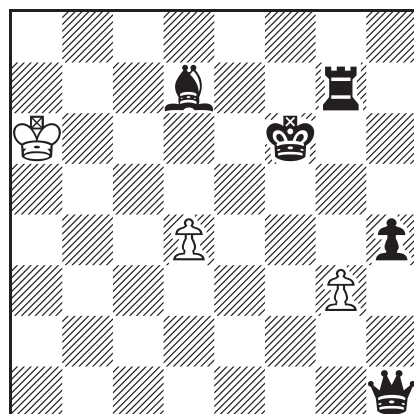


Inverted Loyd 72



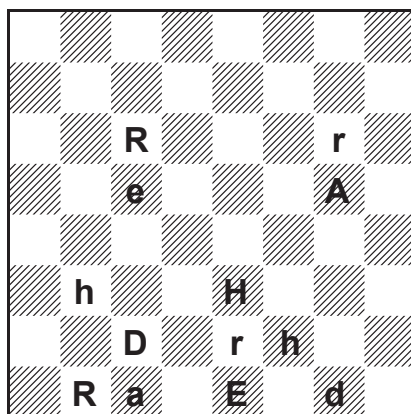
Add a white rook, bishop, and knight so that White has mate in 1.

Inverted Loyd 73



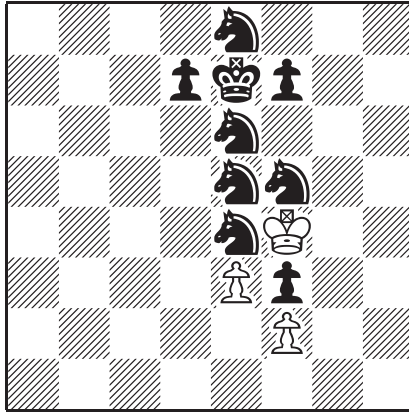
Rebus 141

"red head"



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.

Multi-Wham 108



series-mate in 14

White plays fourteen moves in a row to mate Black.

Captures are allowed. Only the last move may give check. Black does not get a turn.

250

There's not a lot to say about the number 250. But here's some trivia.

area code for British Columbia outside of Vancouver city

bus line in Vancouver from Horseshoe Bay to downtown

$$2 \times 5^3 = 250 = 1000/4$$

engine size in cubic centimetres for many motorcycles

one metric cup = 250 millilitres

Single Variable Formulaic Progression



2, 16, 54, 128, 250, ...

What is the next number in the sequence after 250?

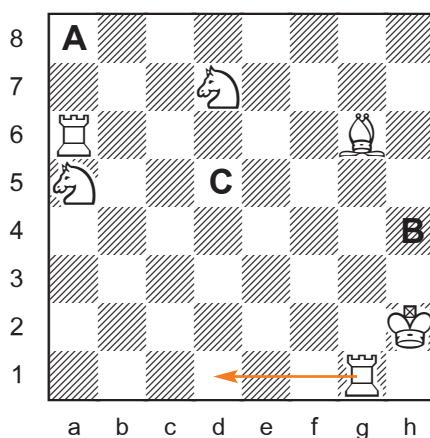
SOLUTIONS

All problems by J. Coakley, *Puzzling Side of Chess* (2025). Rebus 141 is a joint composition with Andriy Frolkin.

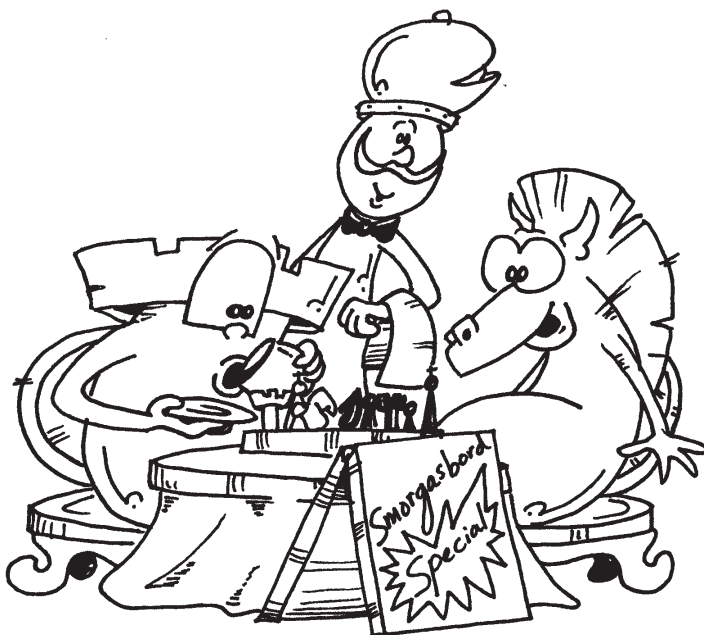
PDF hyperlinks. You can advance to the solution of any puzzle by clicking on the underlined title above the diagram. To return to the puzzle, click on the title above the solution diagram.

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

Triple Loyd 95



- A. Ka8#
- B. Kh4=
- C. Kd5 (Rd1#)

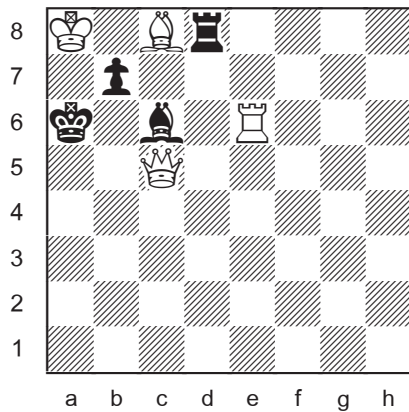


"You may need more than a cup of coffee to solve this puzzle."

Win-Win Situation

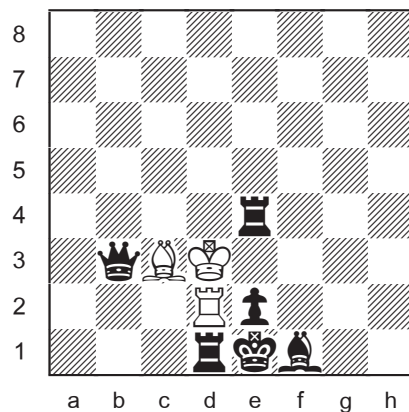
Both kings are mated after White's move.
Can anyone break these records for fewest pieces?

D. bishop move



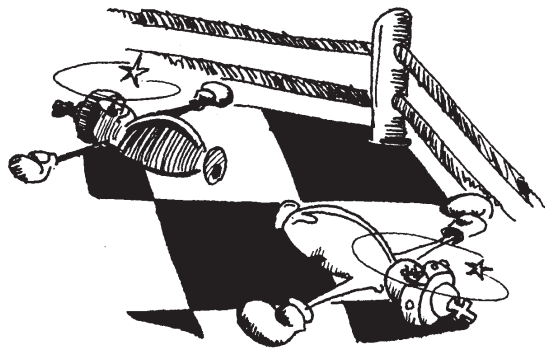
1.Bxb7## (8 pieces)

E. rook move

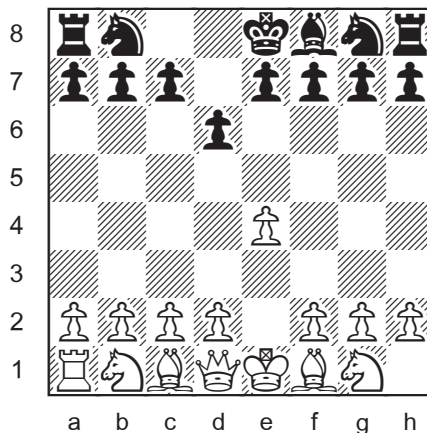


1.Rxe2## (9 pieces)

Records for minimum pieces with moves by pawn (6), king (6), and queen (8) were given in column 244. The task is impossible with a knight move.

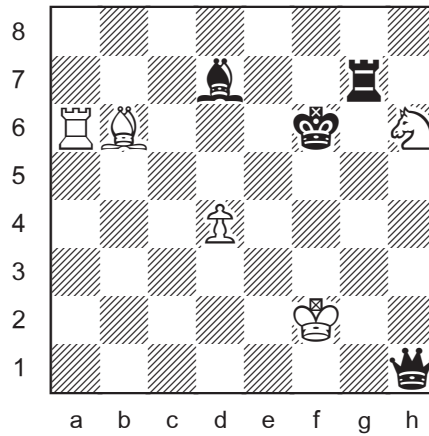


Longer Proof Game 152 (5.5 moves)



1.e4 d6 2.Ba6 Bh3 3.Nxh3 Qd7 4.Rf1 Qb5 5.Ng1 Qxf1+ 6.Bxf1
Switchbacks by white bishop and knight.

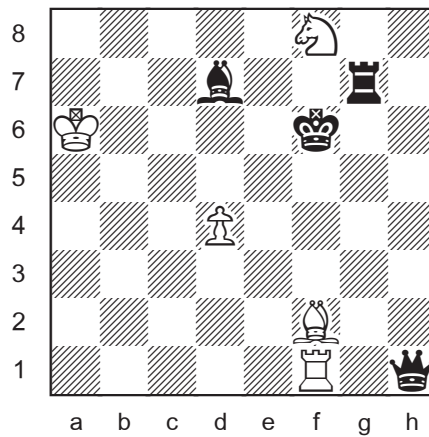
Inverted Loyd 71



Add Ra6 Bb6 Nh6

1.Bd8#

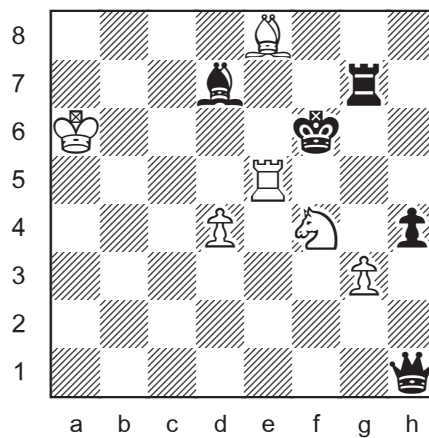
Inverted Loyd 72



Add Rf1 Bf2 Nf8.

1.Bh4#

Inverted Loyd 73



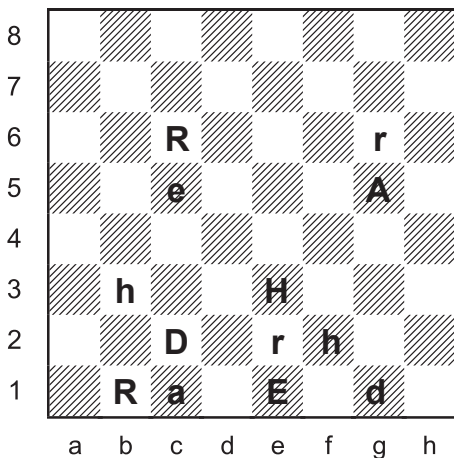
Add Re5 Be8 Nf4.

1.Nh5#

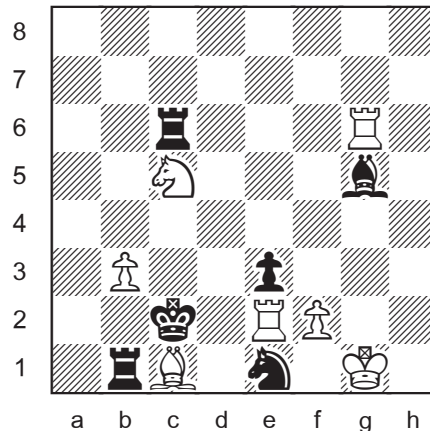
Rebus 141

Andriy Frolkin & Jeff Coakley

"red head"



R = rook
E = knight
D = king
H = pawn
A = bishop
caps = black
last move
1.Bd2>c1+



(7 + 6)

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

♙ ≠ (ADER) On 1st rank.

E ≠ ♖

If E = ♖

A ≠ ♔ ♙

Both kings in check (c1 g5).

D ≠ ♔ ♙

Both kings in check (c2 g1).

R ≠ ♔ ♙

Both kings in check (c6 e2).

H ≠ ♔ ♙

Both kings in check (f2 e3).

♔ = ∅

No letter can be queen.

H = ♙

With no queens, one letter must be pawn.

♖ = ∅?

No letter can be rook.

So E ≠ ♖

A ≠ ♔

If A = ♔

E ≠ ♔ ♙

Both kings in check (c5 e1).

D ≠ ♔ ♙

Both kings in check (c2 g1).

R ≠ ♔ ♙

Both kings in check (b1 g6).

H ≠ ♔

If H = ♔

♙ = ∅ No letter can be pawn.

♖ = ∅? No letter can be rook.

♔ = ∅

No letter can be queen.

H = ♙

With no queens, one letter must be pawn.

♖ = ∅?

No letter can be rook.

So A ≠ ♔

D = ♔

Rebus 141 *continued*

D = ♔

A ≠ ♔ ♖

E ≠ ♔ ♖

R ≠ ♔

H ≠ ♔

Both kings in check (c1 g5).

Both kings in check (c5 e1).

Impossible double check (e2 g6).

If H = ♔ Check (b3).

♙ = ∅ No letter can be pawn.

R ≠ ♖ Impossible double check (e2 g6).

♖ = ∅? No letter can be rook.

♑ = ∅

No letter can be queen.

H = ♙

With no queens, one letter must be pawn.

AER = (♖ ♙ ♘)

R = ♖

A ≠ ♖

Both kings in check (c1 g5).

E ≠ ♖

Both kings in check (c5 e1).

Check (e2).

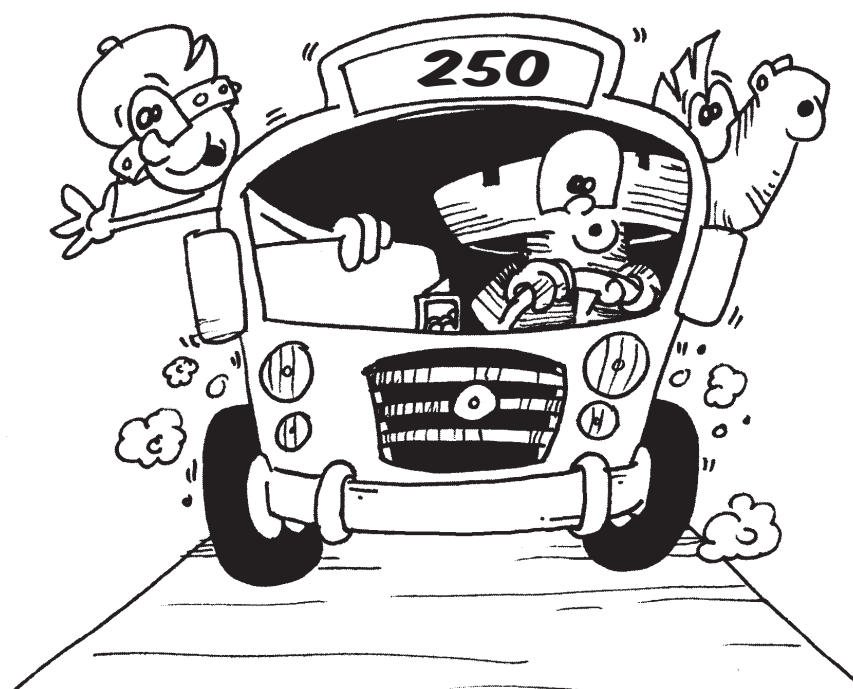
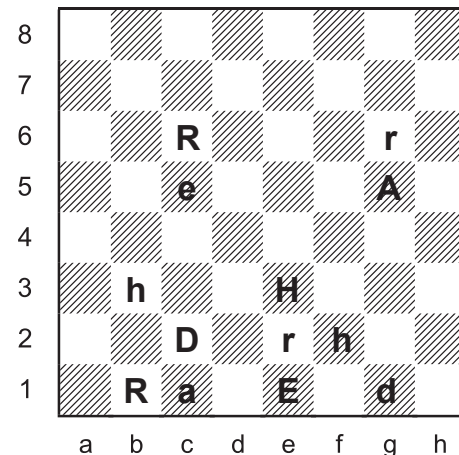
caps = black

If caps = white Impossible double check (pawn b3).

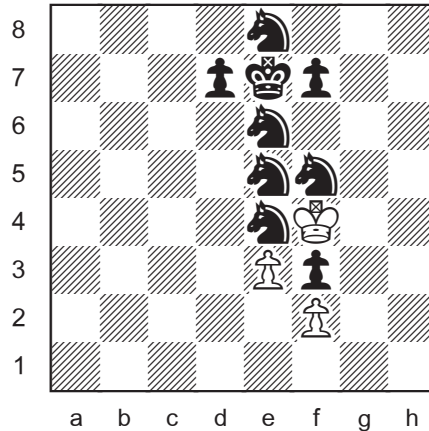
A = ♙

The only way to explain the check by the rook on e2 is the discovery **1.Bd2>c1+♯**. This move may or may not have been a capture.

E = ♘



Multi-Wham 108

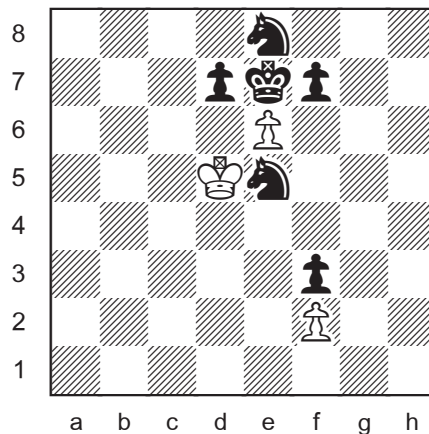


series-mate in 14

A very tricky wham to calculate. Both white pawns will need to promote, one after e6xd7 and the other after e6xf7. So the pawn on f2 will have to capture one of the black knights on the e-file.

Surprisingly, the white king only takes one knight. The white pawns will capture the others on their way to promoting.

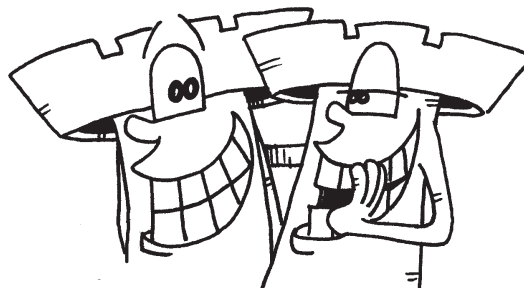
1.Kxe4 2.Kd5 3.e4 4.exf5 5.fxe6

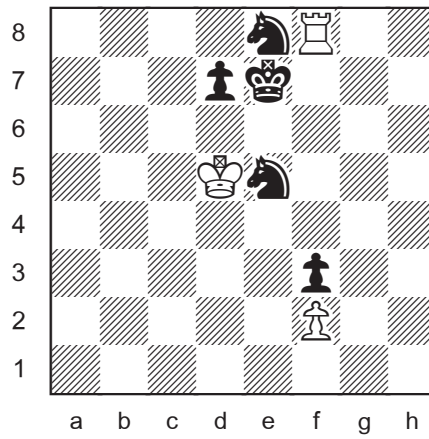


6.exf7

The pawn will promote to rook on f8 so that it can capture the black pawn on f3.

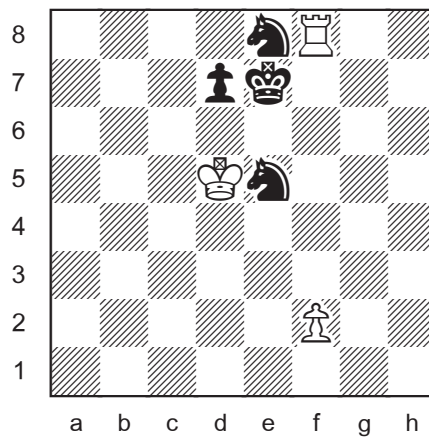
7.f8=R



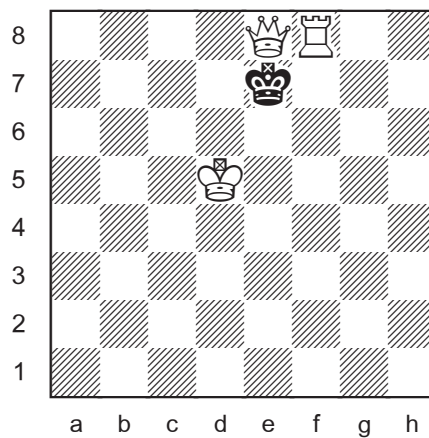


8.Rxf3 9.Rf8

Back to the 8th rank for the coming mate.



10.f4 11.fxe5 12.e6 13.exd7 14.dxe8=Q#



Single Variable Formulaic Progression

2, 16, 54, 128, 250, ...

Numbers in the sequence are generated by the formula $x^2(x+x)$.

For example, $2^2(2+2) = 16$ and $5^2(5+5) = 250$.

Next is 432.

$6^2(6+6)$



Until next time!

© Jeff Coakley 2025. Illustrations by Antoine Duff. All rights reserved.