

# THE PUZZLING SIDE OF CHESS

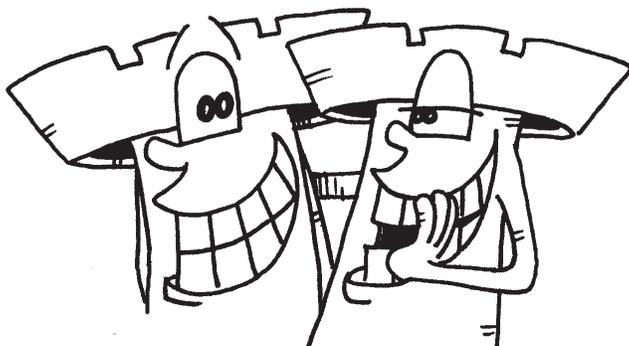
**Jeff Coakley**

## **SERIES-MATES: Serious Situations**

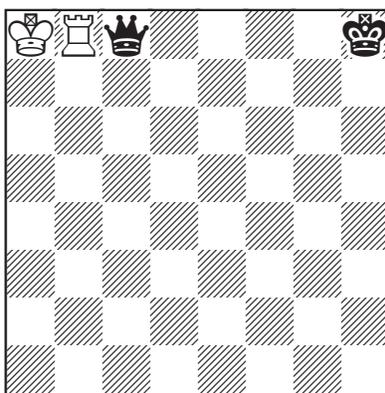
number 256

February 26, 2026

Series-mate columns on the *Puzzling Side* usually start with a double whammy. We will save that for page 2 this time as it's a quintuplet problem that requires a full page. To get you warmed up, here's a little gem in nine moves by Finnish composer Simo Ylikarjula. Sorry, ladies, but the source of this problem is given as "four men only".



### Multi-Wham 110



series-mate in 9

White plays nine moves in a row to mate Black.

*Only the final move may give check.*

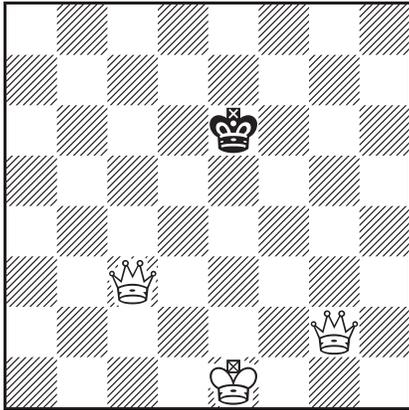
*Captures are allowed. Black does not get a turn.*

*White may not place their own king in check.*

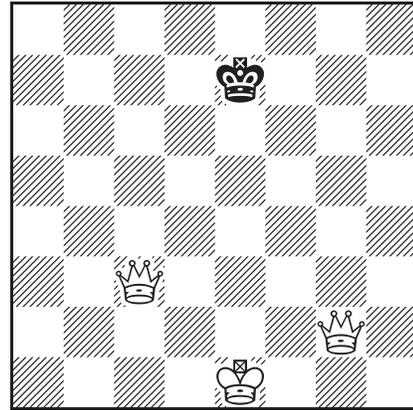
**TWO QUEENS, FIVE TIMES**  
**series-mate in 2**

White plays two moves in a row to mate Black.  
The first move may not be check.

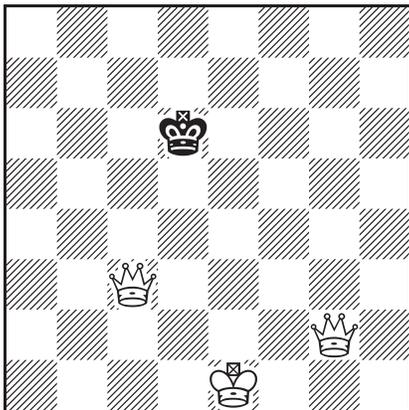
**Double Whammy 77**



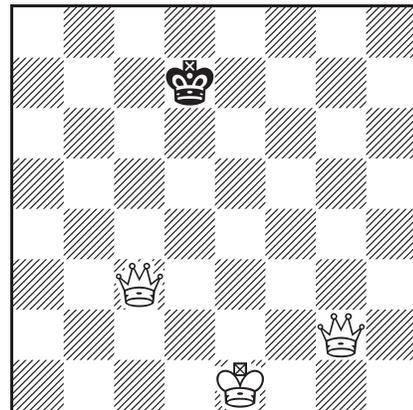
**Double Whammy 78**



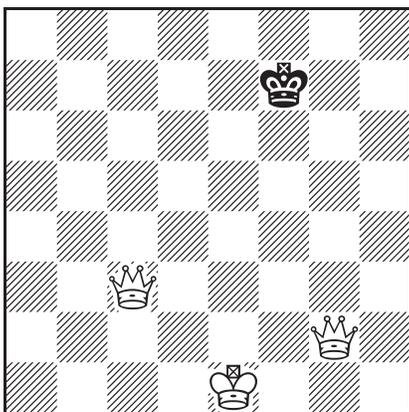
**Double Whammy 79**



**Double Whammy 80**

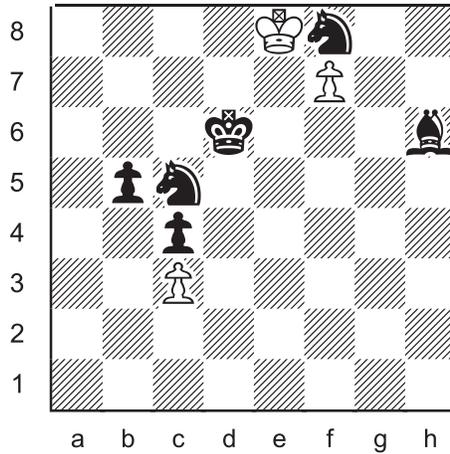


**Double Whammy 81**



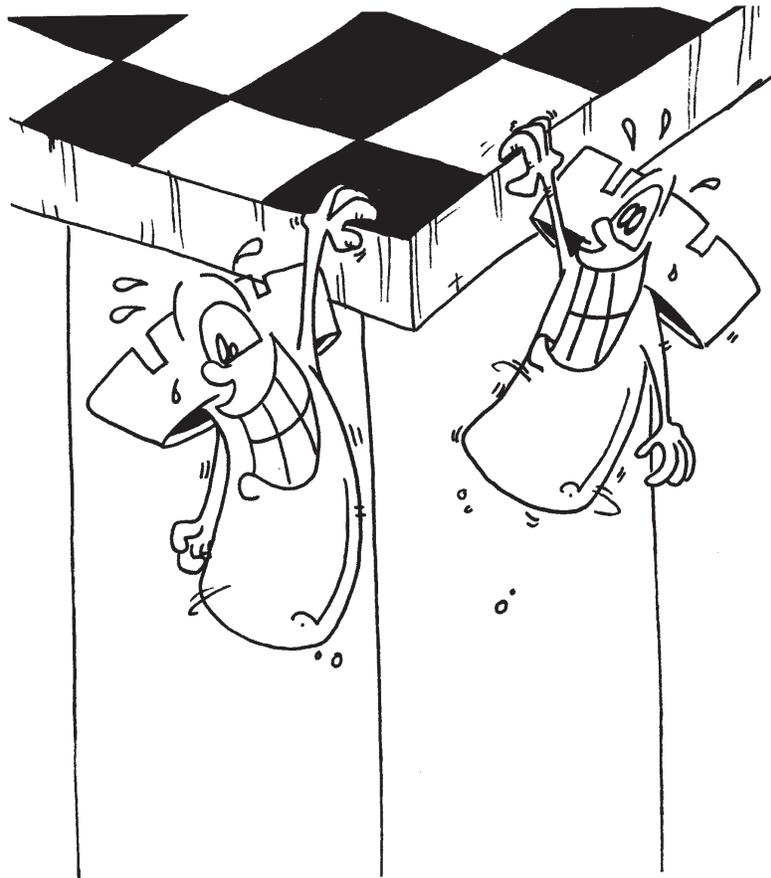
Now and then, we all find ourselves in serious situations. Sometimes that's a bad thing, sometimes a good. Hopefully these serious series problems are in the latter category.

### Multi-Wham 111



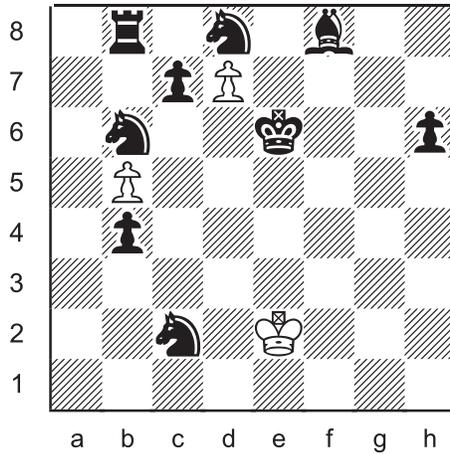
series-mate in 30

White plays thirty moves in a row to mate Black.



*A series of unexpected events left the rooks in a serious situation.*

### Multi-Wham 112

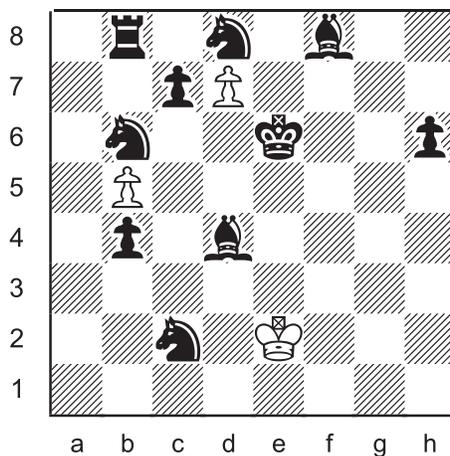


series-mate in 29

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



### Multi-Wham 113



series-mate in 31

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

## SOLUTIONS

All problems except multi-wham 110 are by J. Coakley, *Puzzling Side of Chess* (2026).

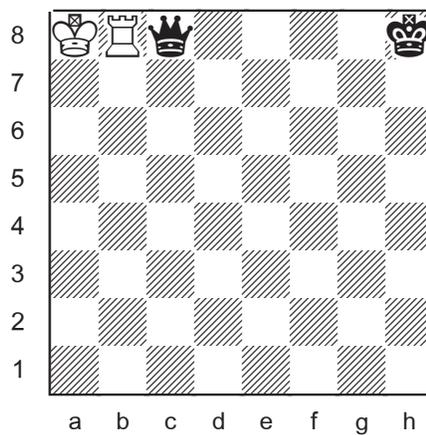
**PDF hyperlinks.** You can advance to the solution of any puzzle by clicking on the underlined title above the diagram. To return to the puzzle, click on the title above the solution diagram.

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

### Multi-Wham 110

Simo Vlikarjula 1982

*Four Men Only*

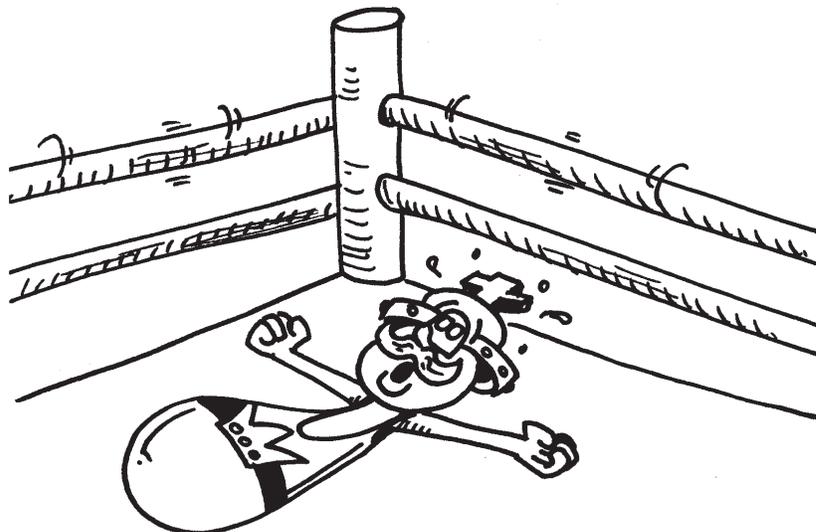


1.Ka6 2.Rb6 3.Rc6

Building a bridge across the c-file for the king.

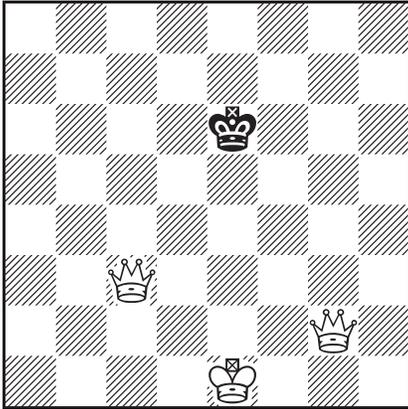
4.Kb6 5.Kc5 6.Kd6 7.Ke7 8.Kf7 9.Rh6#

Knocked out in a corner is the fate of many chess kings.



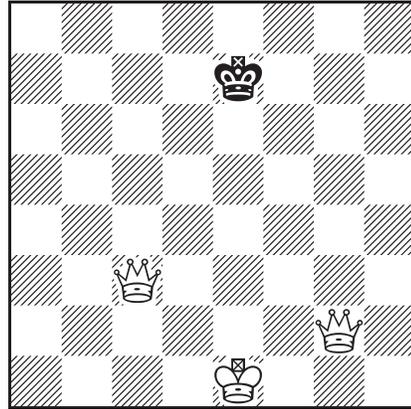
## TWO QUEENS, FIVE TIMES

### Double Whammy 77



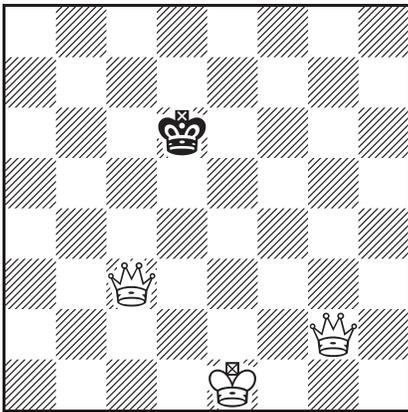
1.Qgg7 2.Qce5#

### Double Whammy 78



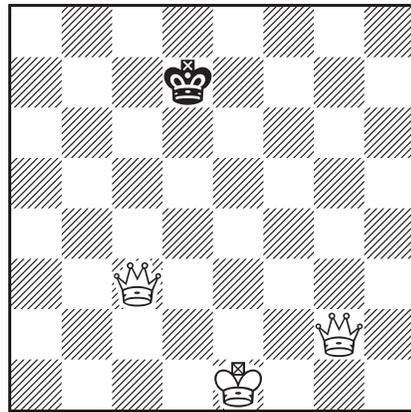
1.Qgc6 2.Qcf6#

### Double Whammy 79



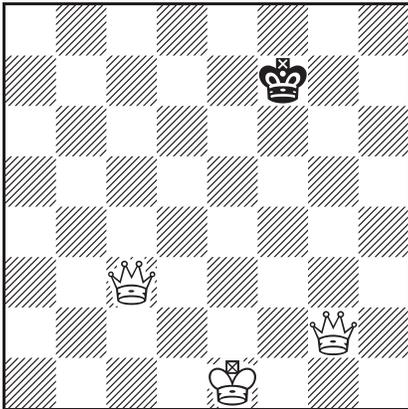
1.Qe4 2.Qcc6#

### Double Whammy 80



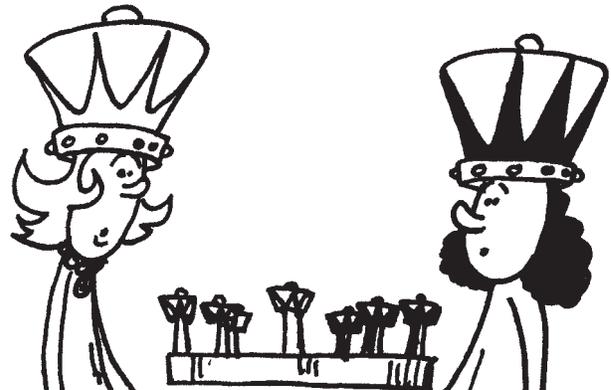
1.Qf6 2.Qgc6#

### Double Whammy 81

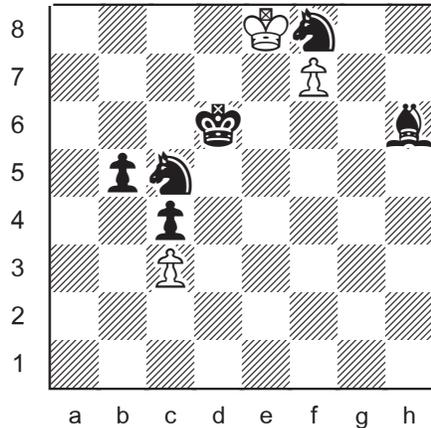


1.Qe5 2.Qgg7#

The two basic patterns of 2 queen mates seen from different angles.



## Multi-Wham 111



series-mate in 30

The white pawn on f7 is blocked by the knight on f8 which is guarded by the bishop on h6. So the white king's only choice is to go to the queenside.

1.Kd8 2.Kc8 3.Kb8 4.Ka7 5.Kb6 6.Ka5

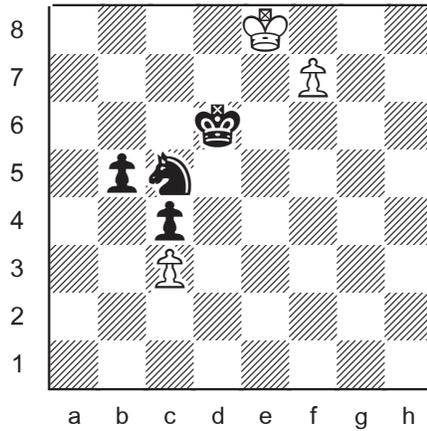
Taking the pawn on b5 would be a mistake. After 6.Kxb5? 7.Kxc4, the white c-pawn is unable to reach the 8th rank. It cannot advance on the c-file past the black king even if the black knight is captured. The c-pawn will have to capture on b5 and promote on b8.

So the white king continues his journey around the board to capture the knight on f8 and free the f-pawn. The shortest route is obvious.

7.Kb4 8.Ka3 9.Kb2 10.Kc2 11.Kd1 12.Ke2 13.Kf3 14.Kg4 15.Kh5 16.Kxh6 17.Kg7 18.Kxf8 19.Ke8

The king returns to where he started, completing his round trip!





20.f8=R

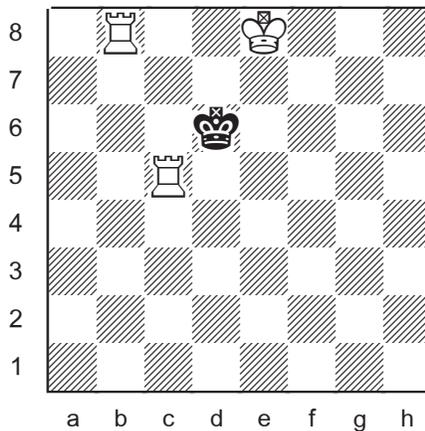
A queen would check and a bishop or knight would not be able to capture the black pawn on c4.

21.Rf4

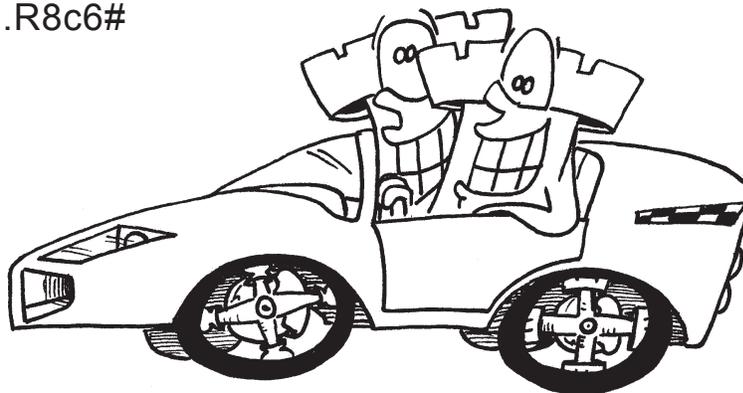
Going for the knight first with 21.Rf5? 22.Rxc5 23.Rxc4 takes two moves longer in the end. Besides 24.Rc5, reverting to the solution, another mate in 32 is 25.Rc7 26.c4 27.cxb5 28.b6 29.b7 30.b8=Q 31.Qb5 32.Rc7#

22.Rxc4 23.Rxc5 24.c4 25.cxb5 26.b6 27.b7 28.b8=R

A second rook to finish things off. Mate in 2.



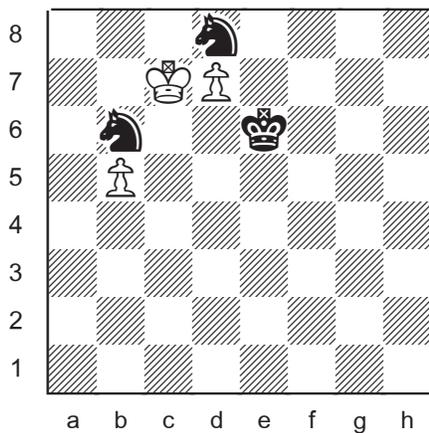
29.Rbc8 30.R8c6#



*"Which series do you drive?"*



This is the moment of truth. Which pawn should White free first?  
 To decide, the eventual mate must already be envisioned.



22.Kxb6

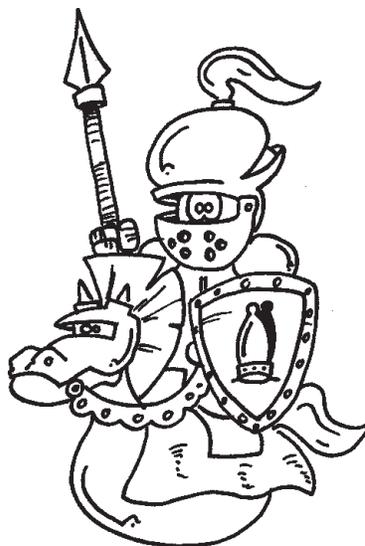
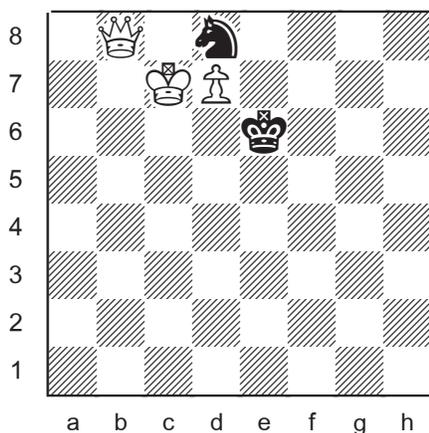
The alternative 22.Kxd8? takes an extra move.

23.Kc7

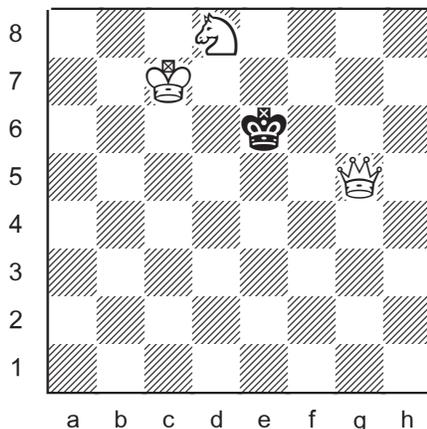
The king must guard d6 and d7.

24.b6 25.b7 26.b8=Q

Mate in 3 from here.

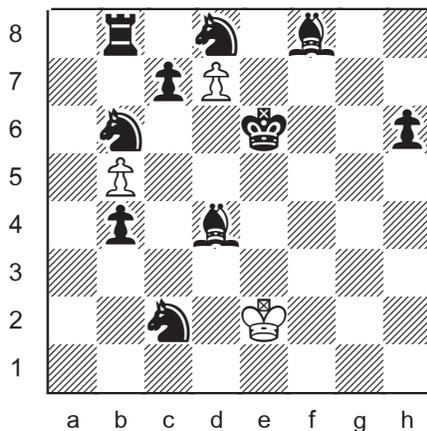


27.Qxd8 28.Qg5 29.d8=N#



A pure and ideal mate by king, queen, and knight.

### Multi-Wham 113



series-mate in 31

This problem is a twin to multi-wham 112. The only difference is that a black bishop has been added on d4. This has no major affect on the solution until after the white king captures on c7.

1.Kf3 This time 1.Kd2? 2.Kxc2 takes two moves longer.

2.Kg4 3.Kh5 4.Kg6 5.Kh7 6.Kg8 7.Kxf8 8.Kg8

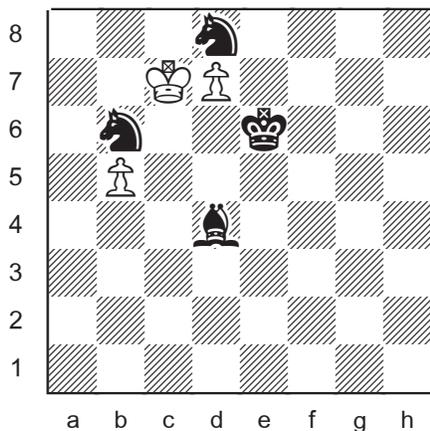
The bishop on d4 attacks g7 delaying the white king one move.

9.Kh7 10.Kxh6 11.Kg5 12.Kf4 13.Ke4 14.Kd3 15.Kxc2

16.Kb3 Going for the bishop with 16.Kd3? 17.Kxd4 is way too slow.

17.Kxb4 18.Ka5 19.Ka6 20.Ka7 21.Kxb8 22.Kxc7

This position without a black bishop on d4 was reached one move sooner in the earlier twin problem.



23.Kxd8

The knight on b6 is protected by the bishop, so the choice of which pawn to free first is easy.

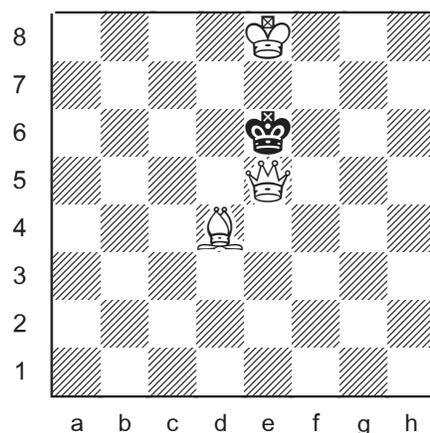
24.Ke8

The king guards d7 and f7. Do you see the mate yet?

25.d8=B

A knight would check and a queen or rook could not capture the pawn on b6. Mate in 6 from here.

26.Bxb6 27.Bxd4 28.b6 29.b7 30.b8=Q 31.Qe5#



Until next time!

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