



THE PUZZLING SIDE OF CHESS

Jeff Coakley

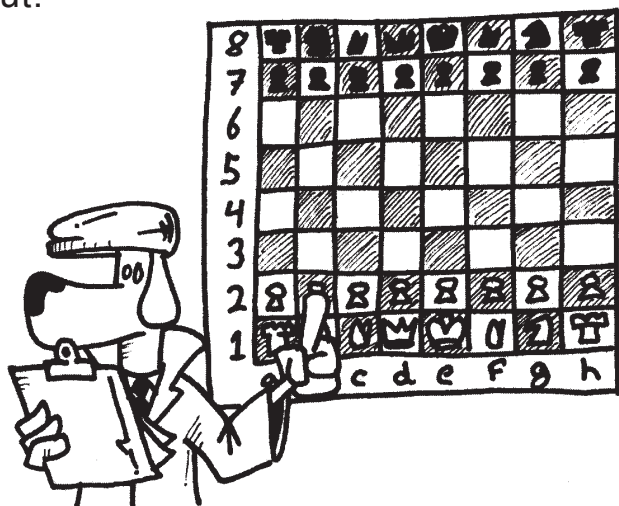
PROOF GAMES

number 262

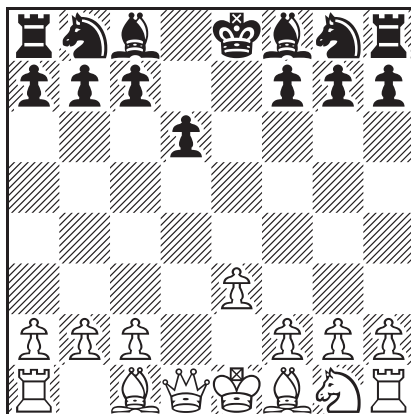
Rewind Button

August 31, 2026

Did you ever tune in late to watch a chess game and wonder what the opening moves had been? No problem, just hit the rewind button. But maybe it's more fun to just deduce what happened. That's what proof games are about.



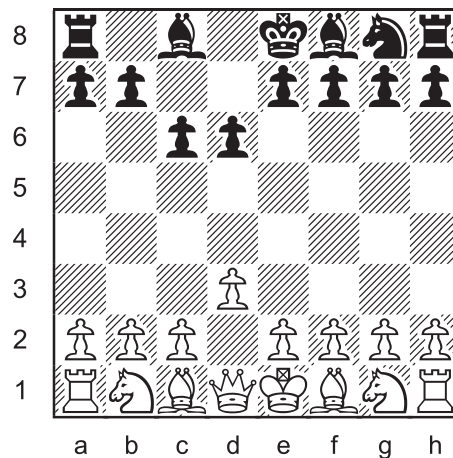
Longer Proof Game 170 (4.5 moves)



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

For the benefit of anyone new to this kind of puzzle, proof games have a *move stipulation*. The given position has to be reached in a precise number of turns, no more and no less. The games may be loony, and the strategy screwy, but the moves are legal.

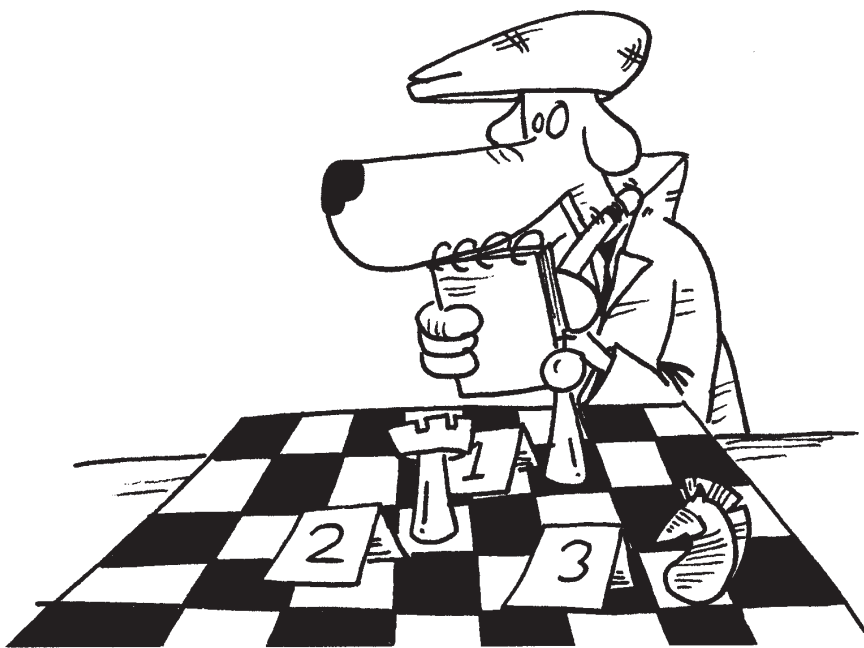
Longer Proof Game 171 (5.0 moves)



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

The Chess Detective's Handbook

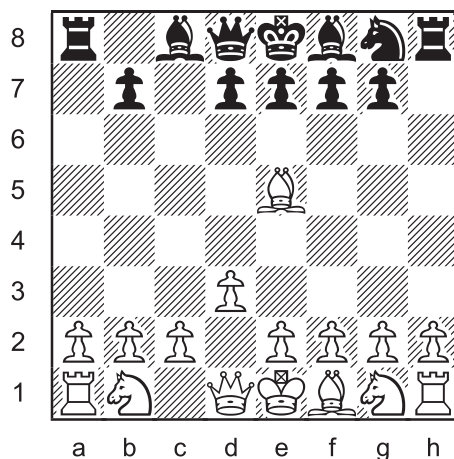
by Harmonius Hound



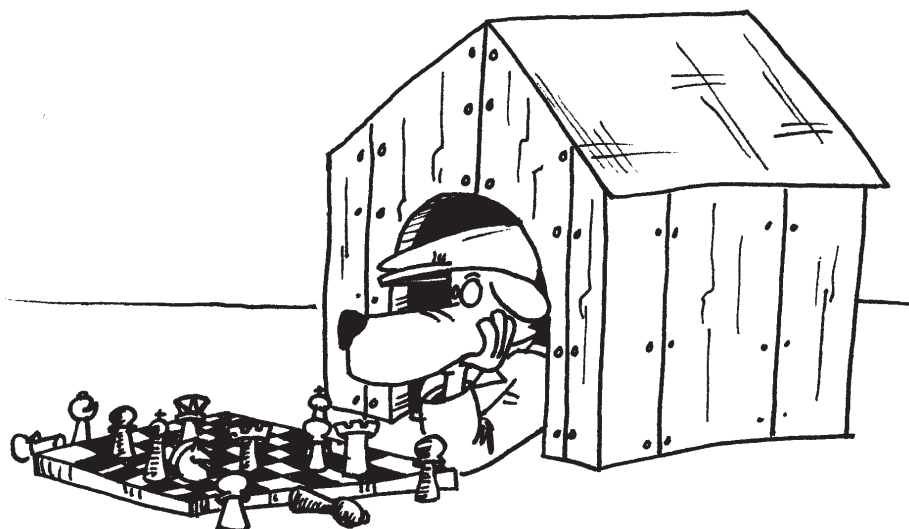
Chapter 3: Crime Scene Procedures

Proper documentation of chessboard evidence is essential.

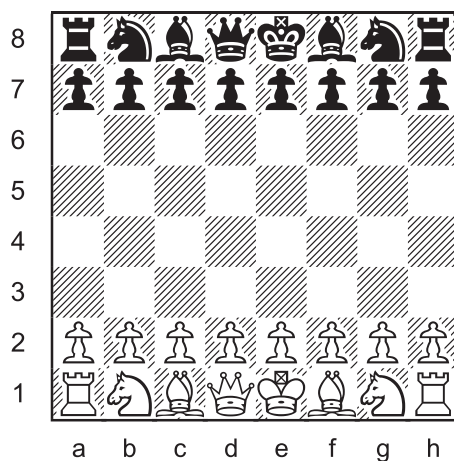
Longer Proof Game 172 (5.5 moves)



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

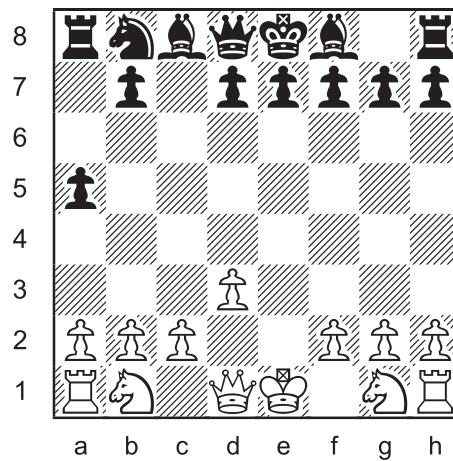


Synthetic Game 64

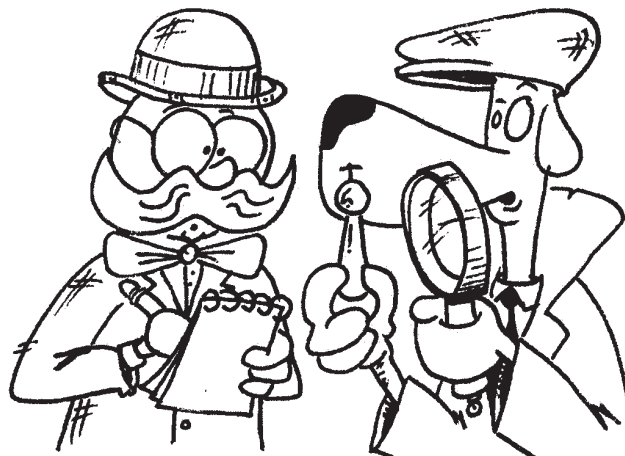


Compose a game that ends with 5...Kf7#.

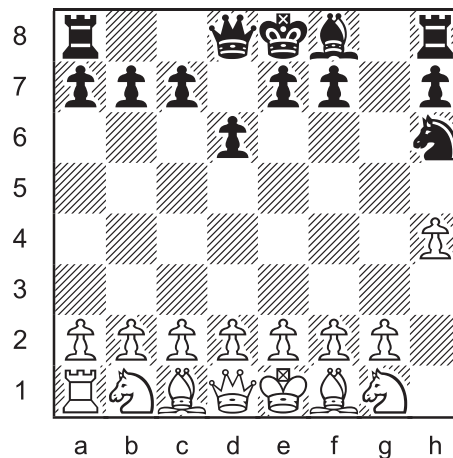
Longer Proof Game 173 (6.0 moves)



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



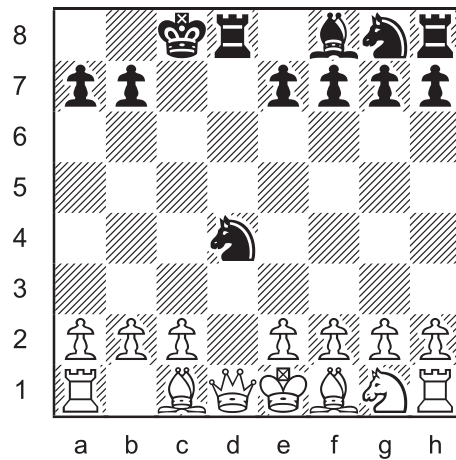
Longer Proof Game 174 (6.5 moves)



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

The games get longer, the solving gets tougher. Two more puzzles to go. Are you up to the task? Or should we call in Harmonius Hound?

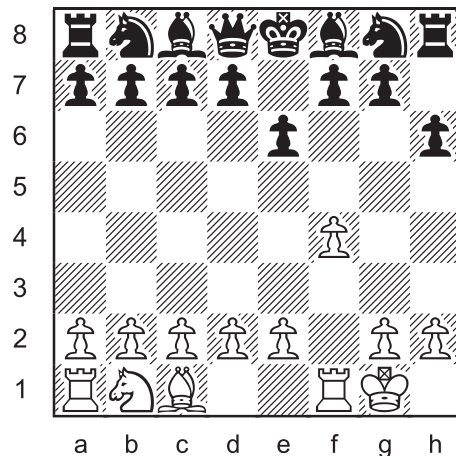
Longer Proof Game 175 (7.0 moves)



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



Longer Proof Game 176 (8.5 moves)



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

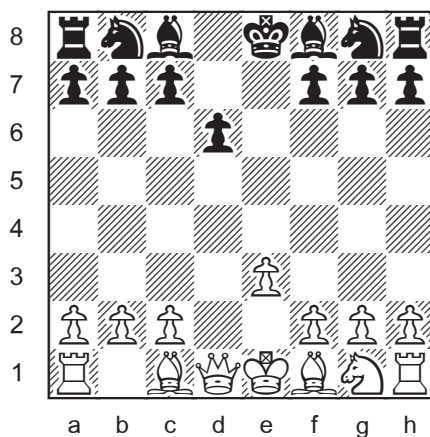
SOLUTIONS

All problems are by J. Coakley, *Puzzling Side of Chess* (2026). Proof game 176 was published previously in 2025.

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.

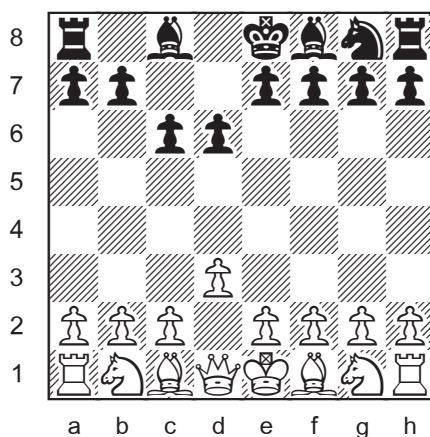
Archives. Past columns are available in the *Puzzling Side* archives.

Longer Proof Game 170 (4.5 moves)



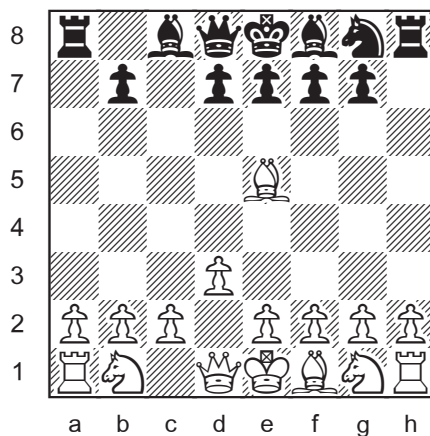
1.Nc3 d6 2.Nd5 Qd7 3.Nxe7 Qxe7 4.e3 Qxe3+ 5.dxe3
Black queen tempo.

Longer Proof Game 171 (5.0 moves)

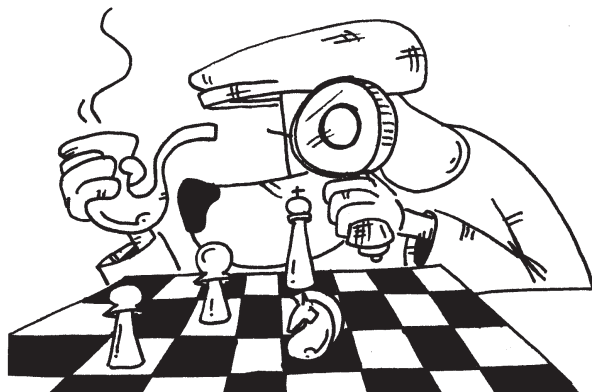


1.d3 c6 2.Bf4 Qb6 3.Bxb8 Qe3 4.Bf4 Qc1 5.Bxc1 d6
White bishop switchback with *Orbán effect*.

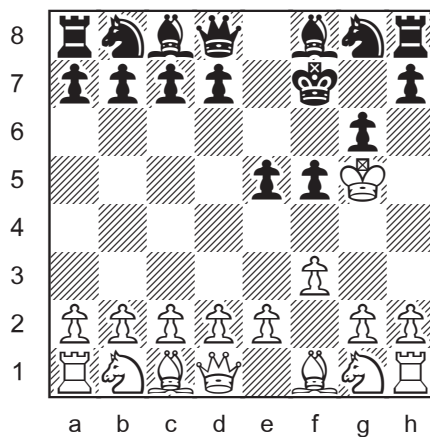
Longer Proof Game 172 (5.5 moves)



1.d3 h6 2.Bxh6 a6 3.Bd2 a5 4.Bxa5 Nc6 5.Bxc7 Ne5 6.Bxe5
Black a-pawn tempo.



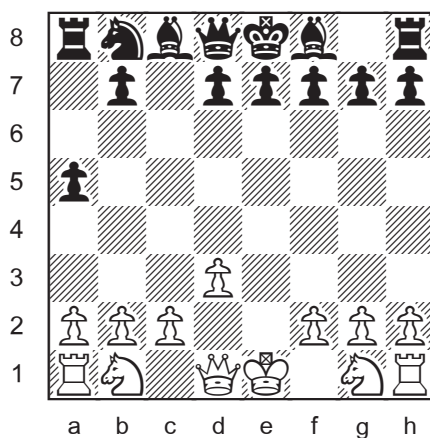
Synthetic Game 64



1.f3 e5 2.Kf2 f5 3.Kg3 Ke7 4.Kh4 g6 5.Kg5 Kf7#

The moves can be played in different orders. Another similar game is 1.f4 e6 2.Kf2 f5 3.Kg3 Ke7 4.Kh4 h5 5.Kg5 Kf7#.

Longer Proof Game 173 (6.0 moves)

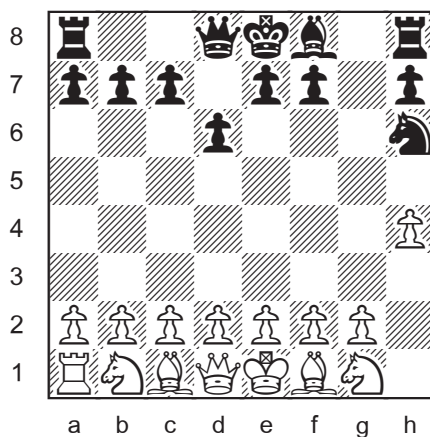


1.e4 a5 2.Ba6 Nf6 3.d3 Nxe4 4.Bf4 Nc5
5.Bxc7 Ncxa6 6.Bxb8 Nxb8

Impostor black knight and strange sequence of moves.



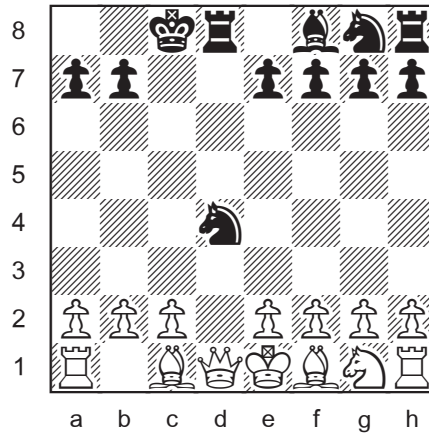
Longer Proof Game 174 (6.5 moves)



1.h4 d6 2.Rh3 Nd7 3.Rg3 Ndf6 4.Rxg7 Bh3
5.Rxg8 Nxg8 6.Nxh3 Nh6 7.Ng1

Switchback white knight and pseudo-impostor black knight.

Longer Proof Game 175 (7.0 moves)



1.Nc3 d5 2.Nxd5 Be6 3.Nxc7+ Kd7 4.Nxe6 Nc6
5.Nxd8 Rxd8 6.d3 Kc8 7.d4 Nxd4

White pawn tempo and artificial black castling.

A similar proof game in 7.0 (175b) ends with 6.Nf3 Kc8 7.Nd4 Nxd4.



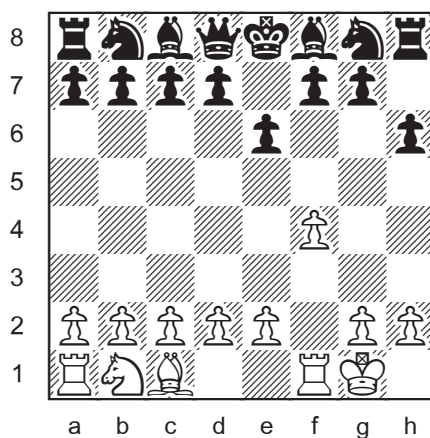
Scholarly Mates is a free online magazine for kids published every two months by *Mooserider Productions*. It features the same kind of content and artwork as the *Winning Chess For Kids* books by Jeff Coakley.

Scholarly Mates is available in pdf format at:

www.mooserider.ca

Longer Proof Game 176 (8.5 moves)

J.Coakley 2025
The Hopper issue9



1.f4 e6 2.Kf2 Qh4+ 3.Ke3 Qe1 4.Nf3 Qxf1 5.Qe1 Qxe1
6.Nh4 Qxh4 7.Rf1 Qd8 8.Kf2 h6 9.Kg1

Switchback black queen and artificial white castling.



Until next time!

© Jeff Coakley 2026. Drawings by Antoine Duff. All rights reserved.