

NEW ENGLANDER

Chess Club Update – February 2009

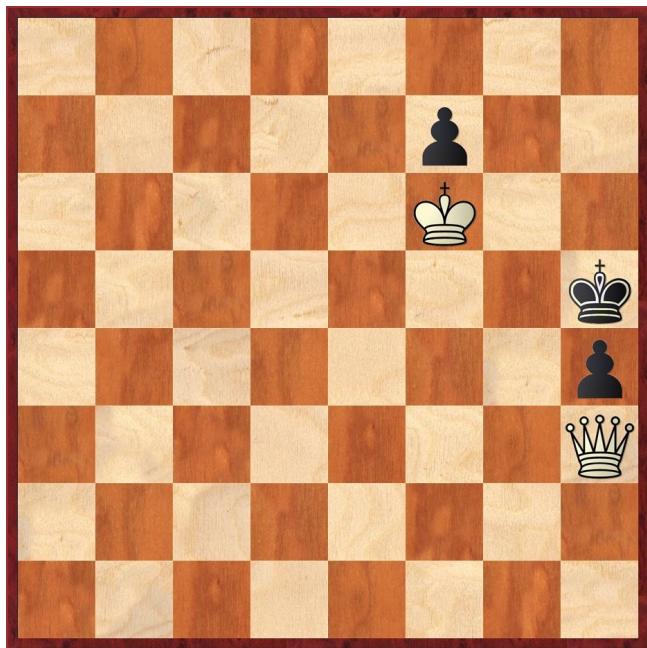
Chairman's Chatter

If Christmas already seems like a distant memory, you obviously did not struggle to solve the problems in that issue of "NEW ENGLANDER". Here, you will find the solutions to check against your own efforts. I hope 2009 has started well!

Paul Hanks

Puzzle Problem

White to play and mate in 2.



Last Month's solution

In Forsyth notation : 3K4/8/8/4B3/nk6/3Q4/2P5/R7
1 Kc7 Kc5/Nc3/Nb2/Nb6 2 Bd6#; 1 ... Ka5/Nc5 2 Bc3#

Christmas solutions

- 1) 4r2b/1Q6/8/8/p3R3/K7/8/k7
1 Re5 Bxe5 2 Qh1#; 1 ... Rxe5 2 Qb2#
- 2) 8/R7/8/8/2k5/K3Q2B/8/8
1 Ra6 Kb5 2 Bf1#; 1 ... Kd5 2 Be6#
- 3) 8/8/8/2n5/1N6/6R1/3N1k1B/3K4
1 Rg4 any 2 Bg1#
- 4) 5Q2/7p/2Np3p/3p3K/P3kp2/8/3Pp3/4B3
1 Qc8 d4 2 Qe6+ Kd3 (2 ... Kf3 3 Qd5#) 3 Nb4#; 1 ... Kd3 2 Qf5+ Kc4 3 Qc2#; 1 ... Kf3 2.Qh3+ Ke4 3.d3#; 1 ... f3 2 Qg4+ Kd3 3 Nb4#
- 5) 8/6p1/5p2/5K1k/r7/3n4/5N2/R1Q5
1 Qh6+ gxf6 2 Rh1+ Rh4 3 Nh3 Rf4+ (3 ... Rxh3 4 Rxh3#) 4 Nxf4#; 1 ... Kxh6 2 Rh1+ Rh4 3 Rxh4#
- 6) 2q3k1/p1Br1pp1/2Q4p/3p4/8/2P5/PP3PKP/4R3
Ghaem Maghami v Kuparadze, Iran 2008

1 Qb5 Qxc7 (1 ... Rxc7 2 Re8+ winning) 2 Re8+ Kh7
3 Qd3+ g6 4 Qd4 f6 5 Qf6 Rg7 6 Qf8 g5 7 Qf5 Rg6 8
Re6 Qg7 9 Rd6 with the winning threat 10 Rd7

Diary Dates

In February, there is only one scheduled round of the club championship. It is the point in the season when we either clear the backlog of postponed games or are overwhelmed by them. Please do your bit to clear up any outstanding games and in particular, use the spare evening on 25th February when it is the only event at our venue.

The club handicap tournament will take place on 18th February.

Website to Watch

February sees the postponed world championship "semi-final" between Topalov and Kamsky in Sofia from 16th to 28th. Topalov withdrew from the strong Linares tournament (18th February to 8th March) where Anand heads the participants list. No websites seem to have been announced yet.

The lucrative Aeroflot Open tournament can be followed on www.aeroflotchess.com from 17th to 25th.

Result Round-up

Peterborough B	1	New England A	4
R Ilett	½	C Ross	½
G Ward	0	F Bowers	1
G Evans (sub)	0	P Turp	1
D Brown	½	P Hanks	½
J Verdegem	0	S Caraway	1

Warboys A	2½	New England A	2½
C Pickard	½	C Ross	½
M Misson	1	F Bowers	0
C Watkins	0	P Turp	1
R Mann	0	P Hanks	1
J Beck	1	S Caraway	0

Club Championship

Division One	S C	F B	C R	R J	P H	P T	K T	Total
S Caraway	X	½	0		½	½		1½ / 4
F Bowers	½	X	0	1	1	½		3 / 5
C Ross	1	1	X		½		1	3½ / 4
R Jones		0		X			P	0 / 1
P Hanks	½	0	½		X	1		2 / 4
P Turp	½	½			0	X		1 / 3
K Talnikar			0	P			X	0 / 1

Division Two	H C	N W	C C	C R	A B	D L	S W	M T	Total
H Currie	X			0	0	0	0	1	1 / 5
N Wedley		X	0		P	?	1	1	2 / 3
C Collins		1	X	0	1	0	1		3 / 5
C Russell	1		1	X	1	0		P	3 / 4
A Brookbanks	1	P	0	0	X		1		2 / 4
D Lane	1	?	1	1		X		1	4 / 4
S Walker	1	0	0		0		X	1	2 / 5
M Tarabad	0	0		P		0	0	X	0 / 4

Match of the Month

At the start of the season, our club played its part in the opening event of the season, the challenge match between the Peterborough and Cambridge leagues. My game presented me with series of decisions and I thought I should let you suffer as I did. Here is the game with key positions preceded by the questions I had to contemplate. I have added my comments after the game text.

C Davison v P Hanks

Cambridge v Hunts & Pboro, 25.09.2008

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nd2 c5 4 Ngf3

This appears less often at the top level than 4 exd5.

Q1 How would you continue - a6, c4, cxd4, Nc6?

4 ... Nc6
5 c3

Psakhis comments "Frankly, this move would have much more point if Black had chosen 4 ... a6"

5 ... cxd4
6 cxd4 Nge7

6 ... dxe4 was played in Plaskett v Short, British Team Championship 2000. Now we have run out of standard book moves but Black has a simple plan - to put pressure on d4.

7 Bd3 Bd7
8 e5 Qb6
9 Nb3 Nf5
10 Be3

Current score for d4 : Defenders 3 Attackers 3

10 ... Bb4+
11 Nfd2

The defence has been reduced.

Q2 So would you capture on d4?

11 ... Rc8
12 0-0

Q3 Can Black gain the pawn now?

12 ... Nxe3
13 fxe3 Nxe5

So far, this should have been visible at move 12.

Q4 Which move are you expecting now?

14 Qh5

Q5 Would you accept the offered piece?

14 ... Ng6
15 Nf3 Be7

I wanted to play 15 ... 0-0 but 16 Ng5 h6 17 Nxf7

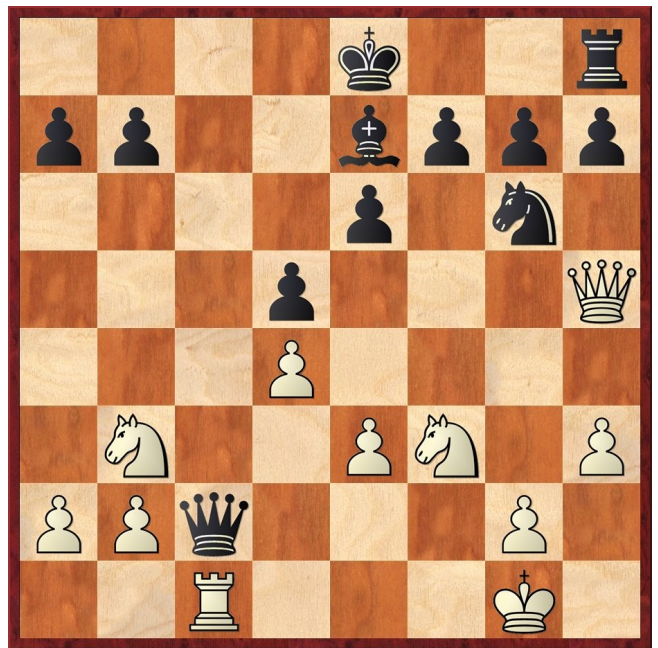
16 h3

This surprised me. It looks so passive and allows me to simplify with exchanges.

16 ... Bb5
17 Bxb5+ Qxb5
18 Rf2 Qd3
19 Re1 Rc2
20 Rxc2 Qxc2
21 Rc1

I have successfully prevented doubled rooks on the f file and instead, allowed White a last hope with an active rook on the c file.

Q6 Can I afford to capture on b2?



21 ... Qd3
22 Rc8+

Q7 It's 50-50! Bd1 or Kd7?

22 ... Kd7
23 Rxb8

Q8 Do you play Nxb8 or go for an attack?

23 ... Qd1+
24 Kf2 Qc2+
25 Kf1 Qd1+

Now, the clock plays its part.

26 Kf2 Qc2+
27 Kf1 Qd1+ 1/2-1/2

A1 All the quoted moves are playable and have appeared in grandmaster practice.

4 ... c4 is favoured by Korchnoi and is often followed by 5 g3. However, 5 Be2 Nc6 6 0-0 Bb4 7 c3 Ba5 8 Qc2 Nge7 9 b3 cxb3 10 axb3 0-0 11 Bd3 Ng6 12 Ba3 Re8 13 e5 was better for White in Tseitlin v Korchnoi, St Petersburg 1997

4 ... cxd4 5 Nxd4 (5 exd5 transposes back into the main line) and then there are further choices 5 ... Nc6,

5 ... Nf6 and 5 ... a6. The last option may lead you into a tactical minefield such as 6 Bd3 dxe4 7 Nxe4 Be7 8 0-0 Nf6 9 b3 Nbd7 10 Bb2 Nxe4 11 Nxe6 fxe6 12 Bxg7 Yakovich v Tolnai, Kecskemet 1991

4 ... a6 5 c3 gives White an initiative in many lines. For instance, 5 ... Nc6 6 Bd3 cxd4 7 cxd4 dxe4 8 Nxe4 Be7 9 0-0 Nf6 10 a3 0-0 11 Be3 Nd5 12 Rc1 e5 13 Nxe5 Nxe3 14 fxe3 Nxd4 15 Qh5 g6 16 Rxf7 Rxf7 (16 ... gxh5 17 Nf6+ mating) 17 Nxf7

A2 No points for 11 ... Ncxd4 12 Bxf5. Instead, 11 ... Nfxd4 12 Nxd4 Nxd4 13 0-0 (Black has to attend to the threat of 14 Nb3) 13 ... Qa5 (13 ... Bc5 14 Rc1 maintains the pin and adds the threat 15 Qg4) 14 Nb3 Nxb3 15 axb3 Qc7 16 Qg4 Bf8 with plenty of positional compensation for the pawn

A3 The previous tactics seem to be intact i.e. 12 ... Nfxd4 13 Nxd4 Nxd4 14 Nb3. The text move is Fritz's recommendation and does win a pawn. The alternatives are headed by 12 ... 0-0 but these are ranked as clearly inferior.

A4 14 dxe5 Qxe3+ 15 Rf2 Qxd3 16 Qg4 Bf8 17 Qf4 Qg6 and Black is ahead having stifled the temporary initiative. After 14 Bc2 or Be2, 14 ... Ng6 when I cannot see any compensation. The move played looked the most dangerous and was the subject of my analysis.

A5 14 ... Nxd3 is regarded as best but it changes the character of the position. White has a strong attack but Black's resources are sufficient if your nerves are strong enough e.g. 15 Qxf7+ Kd8 16 Qxg7 Re8 17 Rf7 Rc7 18 Nf3 Bb5 19 Qxh7. The text move is second best but safer. Sorry!

A6 21 ... Qxb2 is playable e.g. 22 Rc8+ Bd8 23 Ne5 0-0. If 22 ... Kd7 23 Rxh8 Nxh8 24 Qxh7 - it was the vulnerability of h7 that prompted me to keep the queen on the b1-h7 diagonal.

21 ... Qe2 is preferred by Fritz as amongst other things, it excludes 22 Kf2 to defend the e pawn.

A7 22 ... Bd8 is the computer's choice. 23 Qg5 (23 Kf2 Qb1) 23 ... Qb1+ (23 ... Kd7 24 Rxd8+ Rxd8 25 Nc5+ shows another drawback of 21 ... Qd3) 24 Kh2 Kd7 holds

A8 It obviously has to be a combination of the two because 23 ... Nxh8 25 Ne5+ and even after, 23 ... Qd1+ 24 Kf2 Nxh8 25 Ne5+.

So, 23 ... Qd1+ 24 Kh2 gives Black excellent chances e.g. Bd6+ 25 g3 Qe2+ 26 Kh1 Qf1+ 27 Ng1 Nxh8 28 Qxh7 Qf2

23 ... Qd1+ 24 Kf2 Bh4+ is tempting but unfortunately, this does not quite work. 25 g3 (25 Qxh4 Nxh4 26 Nxh4 Qc2+ 27 Kg3 Qc7+ 28 Kg4 Qc2 leads to a draw either by perpetual check or repetition) 25 ... Qc2+ 26 Nbd2

23 ... Qd1+ 24 Kf2 Qc2+ 25 Kf1 (following the game) or 25 Nbd2 and then 25 ... Nxh8 guards the pawns and keeps the advantage.

The all-out attack is not decisive and it is more a matter of timing the recapture on h8 when the position is stable.

Eye Opener

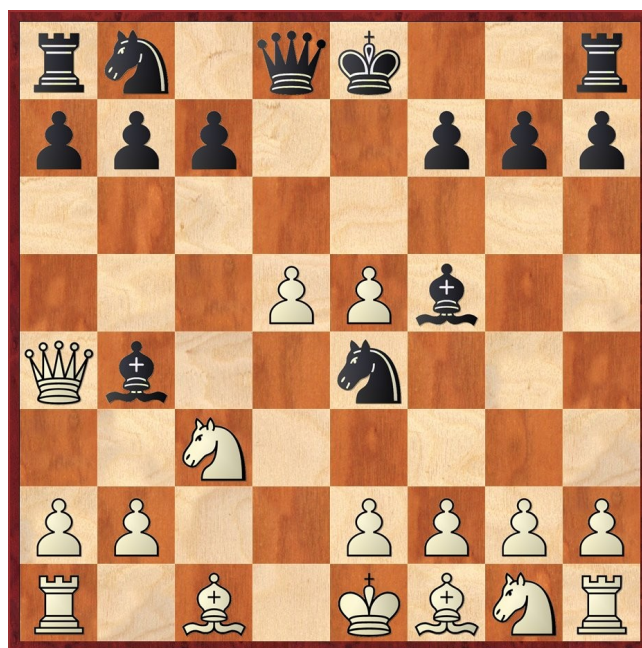
An old book of mine rightly describes the Budapest Gambit as "pesky". It occurs in less than 2% of games starting 1 d4 but you need to know how to react. "The Fabulous Budapest Gambit" written by Ukrainian grandmaster Viktor Moskalenko may mean you may have to face it more often.

The Budapest Gambit is principally a tactical opening and in this article, we shall concentrate on the sharp Fajarowicz Variation (1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e5 3 dxe5 Ne4). Many players have doubts about its strategic soundness but it is extremely dangerous with many surprises you definitely do not want to meet for the first time over the board. Black's hopes rest on the following simple motifs to exploit his initial lead in development and White has to play with great care.

1 Checks or pins on the b4-e1 diagonal

H Soderstrom v Olsson, 1981

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e5 3 dxe5 Ne4 4 Nc3 Bb4 5 Qc2 d5 6 cd5 Bf4 7 Qa4



7 ... Nc6 8 dc6 Nc3 9 Qb3 Bc2 10 Qc2 Ne4 11 Bd2 Bd2 12 Kd1 Nf2#

As a result, I have seen 4 a3 mooted as a refutation but...

2 Sacrifices on f2

A J Whiteley v A Dunn, London 1989

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e5 3 dxe5 Ne4 4 a3 Qh4 5 Be3 Bc4 6 Qd3 Nf2 0-1

3 Discovered attacks down the open d file

Warren v Selman, Correspondence 1930

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e5 3 dxe5 Ne4 4 a3 d6 5 ed6 Bd6 6 g3 Nf2 0-1

4 Possibilities of smothered mates

K Lagha v E Contedini, Leipzig Olympiad 1960

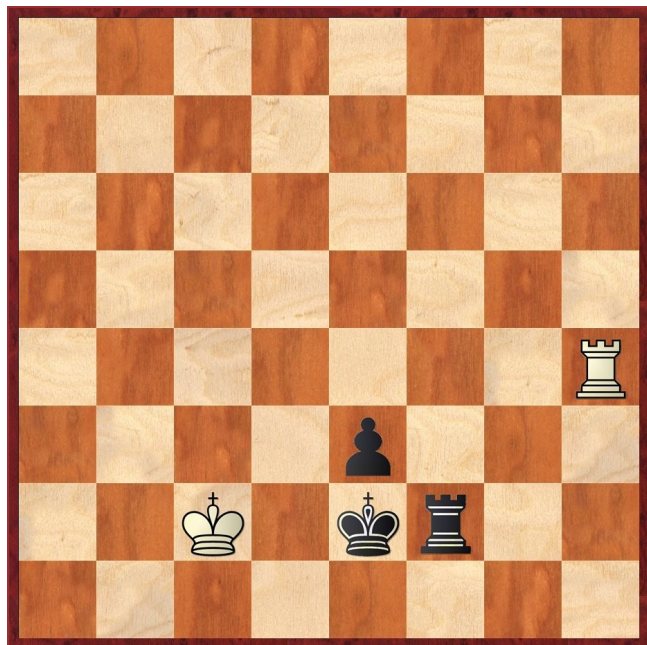
1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e5 3 dxe5 Ne4 4 Qc2 Bb4 5 Nd2 d5 6 ed6 Bf5 7 Qa4 Nc6 8 a3 Nc5 9 dc7 Qe7 10 Qd1 Nd3#

Serious Study

The theme of this month's article is endgame play. Wow! You have read on. Most people think the lack of complexity removes interest from the play and there is no the proper, intensive study. Yet, in this phase, positions are on a knife-edge and incorrect play can rob you of valuable half points.

Here is an embarrassing example from yesteryear :

D Rooke v P Hanks



These days, computer software can evaluate a position. Fritz 11 says that Black has a lead equivalent to 6.6 pawns i.e. imminent promotion of Black's pawn has brought White to the point of resignation. I played,

66 ... Ke1+

Suddenly, the evaluation drops to 0.00 – it is now a certain draw. I've blown my chance! The correct sequence is 66 ... Kf3+ 67 Kd3 Rd2+ 68 Kc3 Rd1 69 Rh3+ Kf2 70 Rh2+ Kg3 71 Ra2 Kf3 72 Ra8 e2 and the black king can march to f7 to avoid the checks. Alternatives for White are no better e.g. 67 Kd1 Rf1+ 68 Kc2 e2 69 Rh3+ Kg4. Fortunately, ignorance is bliss and I continued full of confidence.

67 Kd3 e2
68 Rh1+

Poor old Fritz, interacting with woefully fallible humans. The evaluation leaps back to 6.6 in favour of Black. The correct move was 68 Ke3 when the threats of 69 Rh1# and 68 ... Rf1 69 Rh2 ensure the draw. Black can try 68 ... Kd1 but 69 Rd4+ Ke1 70 Rh4 is a draw by repetition.

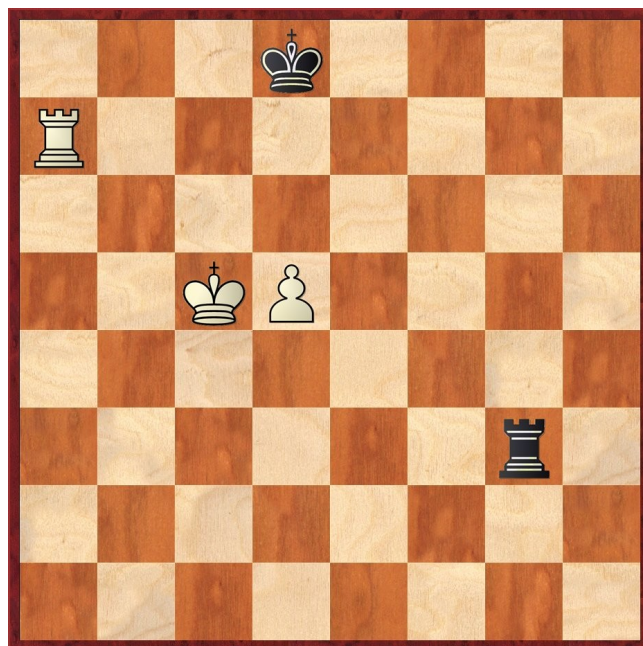
68 ... Rf1
69 Rh2 Kd1

The evaluation shoots back to 0.00! The check was necessary i.e. 69 ... Rf3+ 70 Kc2 (70 Ke4 Ra3 and the lone rook is powerless) 70 ... Kf1 71 Rh1+ Kg2 72 Ra1 Rf1. It is a now a draw and trivially so after 70 Rxe2 Rf3+ 71 Re3 but...

70 Resigns??

I hope my blushes get the message across. The material balance here is the most common primitive endgame with 54% practical chances of a draw. So what theory should I have known?

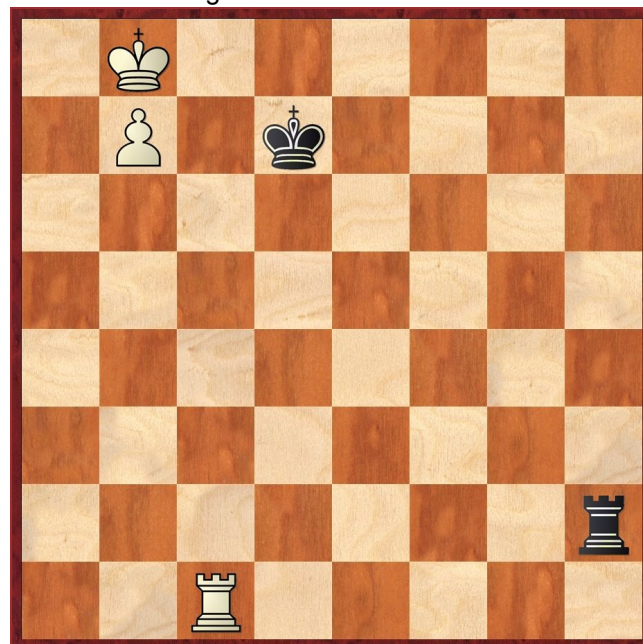
1 The third rank defence



I have also seen this called the Philidor position and is the most solid defence if the defending king can block the pawn's path. The technique is to keep the defending rook on the third rank so that the only way to cross is to advance the pawn. Then the king of the stronger side will have no shelter from checks from the rear.

1...Rg6 2 d6 Rg1 3 Kc6 Rc1+ 4 Kd5 Rd1+ 5 Ke5 Re1+ 1/2- 1/2

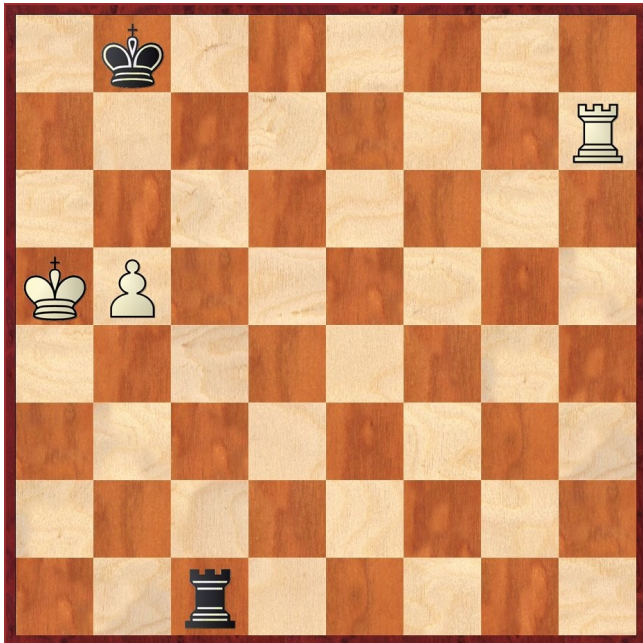
2 The Bridge



This Lucena position arises when the king of the stronger side prevents the blockade of the advancing pawn and drawing chances depend on bottling the king behind the pawn.

1 ... Ra2 2 Rd1+ Ke7 [2 ... Kc6 3 Kc8] 3 Rd4 Ra1 4 Kc7 Rc1+ 5 Kb6 Rb1+ 6 Kc6 Rc1+ 7 Kb5 Rb1+ 8 Rb4 1-0

3 The first rank defence



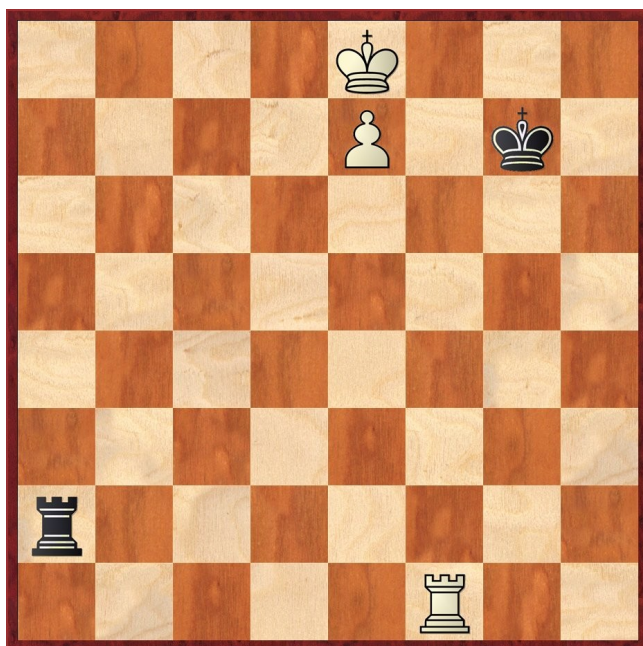
The geometry here precludes the third rank defence (c6 is not available). Black has to prevent the Lucena position from developing e.g. 1 Ka6 Ra1+ 2 Kb6 Kc8 (2 ... Rc1 3 Rh8+ Rc8 4 Rxc8+ Kxc8 5 Ka7) 3 Rh8+ Kd7 4 Kb7 Ra2 5 b6 Rb2 6 Ka7 Ra2+ 7 Kb8 etc

If the first rank is reinforced, the rook displaces the king on the queening square by blocking the pawn.

1 Ka6 Rc8 2 b6 Rf8 3 Rb7+ Ka8 [3 ... Kc8?? 4 Ka7 Rf1 5 Rc7+ Kd8 6 Rc4 leads to the Lucena position] 4 Ra7+ Kb8 5 Rh7 Rg8 1/2-1/2

Please note that this defence is only relevant to knight's pawns. You may like to treat it as an exercise to discover why this is so.

4 The long side



The most reliable drawing technique is to remember the rule that the rook should operate on the long side. This refers to how the passed pawn divides the board. One side must have four or more free files and rook checks from the edge are too distant for the king to escape without leaving the pawn unprotected.

With White to play, there are several winning procedures e.g. 1 Rf7+ Kg8 [1 ... Kg6 2 Kf8] 2 Rf8+ Kg7 3 Kd7 Ra7+ 4 Kd6 Ra6+ 5 Kc5 Ra5+ 6 Kb6 but Black can draw by

1 ... Ra8+ 2 Kd7 Ra7+ 3 Kd8 Ra8+ 4 Kc7 Ra7+ 5 Kd6 Ra6+ 6 Kc5 Re6 1/2-1/2

Please play the endgame again with a) the pawn on the d file or b) the black rook on the b file. In Rooke v Hanks, White should lose because his position is the wrong way round – the rook is on the short side.

Exercises

Time to practise. With White to move, what is best play by both sides in the following positions?

