

THE PUZZLING SIDE OF CHESS

Jeff Coakley

SWITCHEROOS: FLICK THE SWITCH

number 16

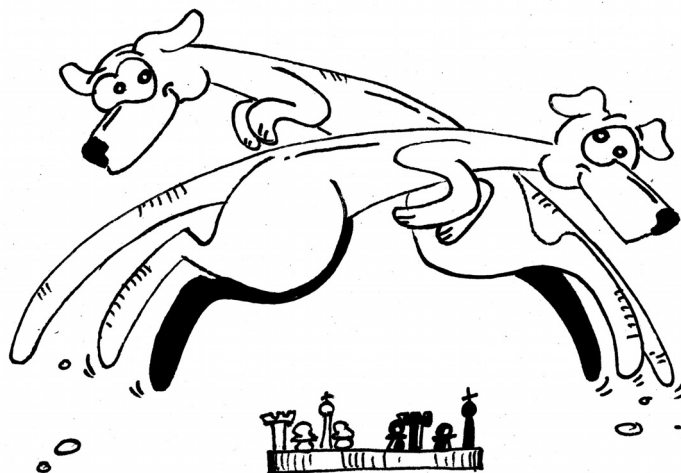
November 17, 2012

Switcheroos are a fun and sometimes challenging puzzle. The goal is to put the black king in checkmate by switching the position of two pieces. No actual chess moves are made. The pieces simply swap squares.

Any two pieces can switch places. Colours do not matter. You can trade white with white, black with black, or white with black. Switching the black king is a common trick.

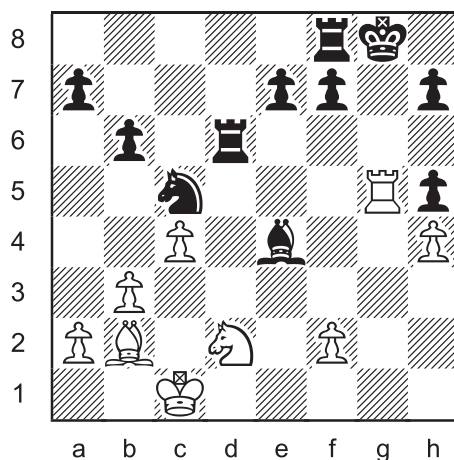
One important rule is that *the position after the switch must be legal*. A position is legal if it could occur in an actual game. This rule implies several things.

- a) A pawn cannot be put on the 1st or 8th rank.
- b) Both kings cannot be in check.
- c) There must be a way to reach the resulting position with a legal white move. Impossible checks, especially double checks, are a frequent “violation”.
- d) In some cases, *retrograde analysis* may be required to decide if the position after a switch is legal.



As usual, the puzzles become progressively tougher as the column goes on. At least that is the intention.

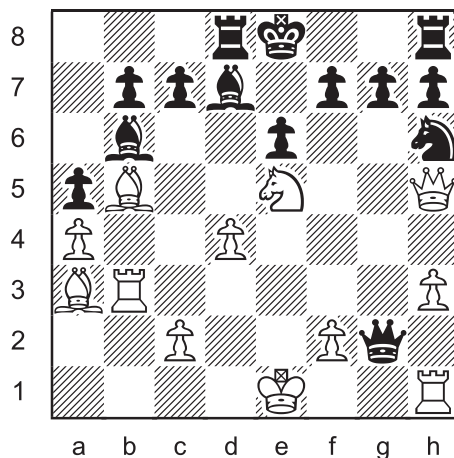
Switcheroo 14



Switch two pieces so that
Black is in checkmate.

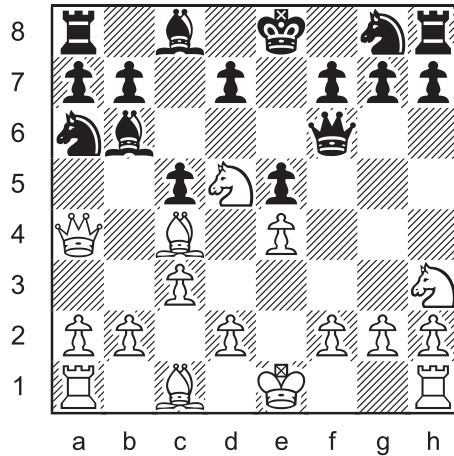
For problems 1-13 and more information on switcheroos, see columns 4 and 10 in the archives.

Switcheroo 15



Switch two pieces so that
Black is in checkmate.

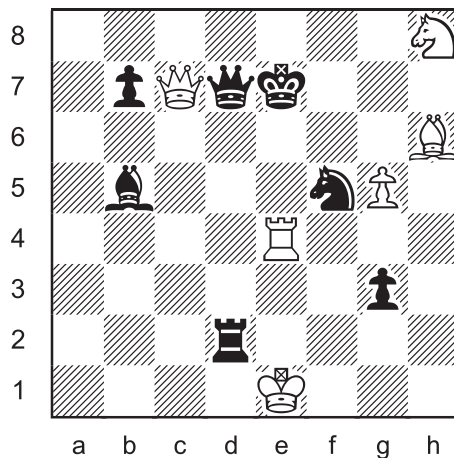
Switcheroo 16



Switch two pieces so that
Black is in checkmate.

In the following diagram, the black king already stands in mate. But a switch must be made. Can you find the switch that keeps Black mated?

Switcheroo 17

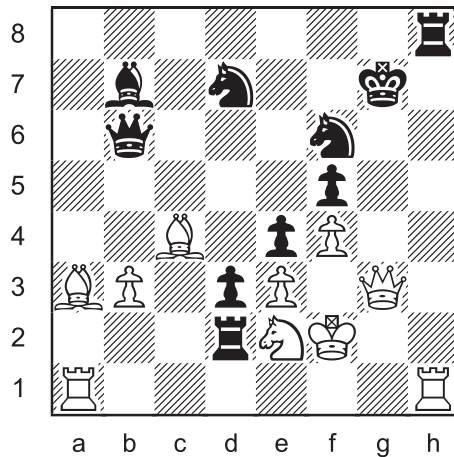


Switch two pieces so that
Black is in checkmate.

The final puzzle is a revision of a switcheroo from column 4. Thanks to Max Illingworth from Australia for pointing out a dual solution.

I always try to repair any *cooks* that are discovered in my problems. It doesn't happen too often because there are computer programs for verifying most types of chess puzzles. Luckily for me, Adrian Storisteanu recently wrote a program to test switcheroos. I'll have more to say about Adrian and computers in next week's column.

Switcheroo 02 (revised)



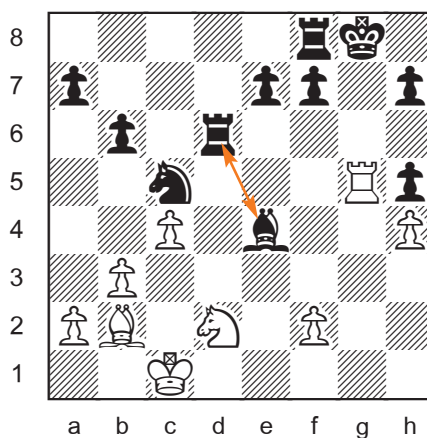
Switch two pieces so that
Black is in checkmate.

SOLUTIONS

All switcheroos by J. Coakley. 14 is from *Winning Chess Puzzles For Kids* (2006); 15 from *WCPFK Volume 2* (2010); 17 from *Scholar's Mate 112* (2012). 16 is a *ChessCafe.com* original (2012).

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.

Switcheroo 14

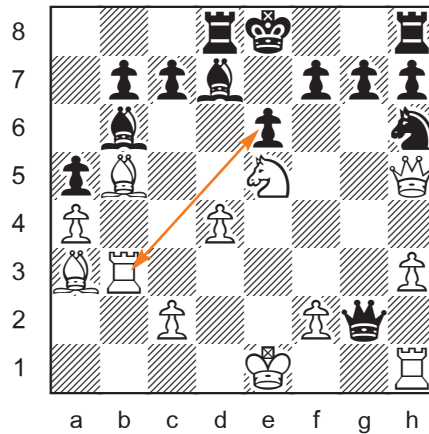


Rd6↔Be4

Before the switch, the black rook and bishop could each move to g6 to block the check.

(Nd2↔e7? puts both kings in check.)

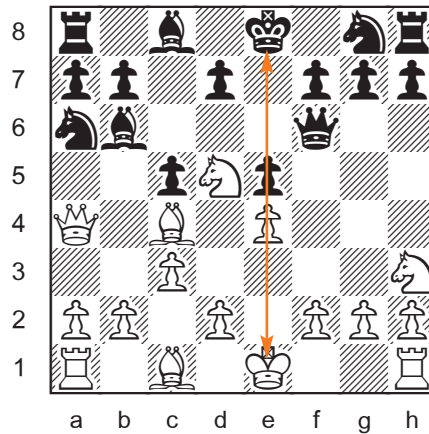
Switcheroo 15



Rb3↔e6

The bishop on d7 and pawn on f7 are both pinned.

Switcheroo 16



Ke1↔Ke8

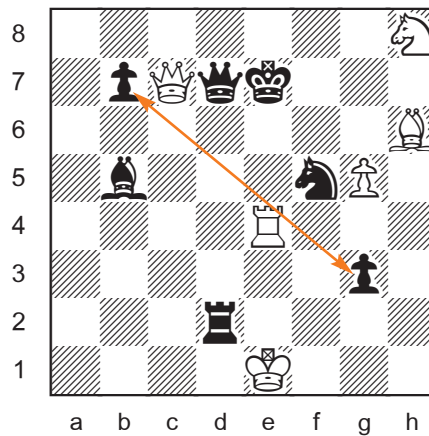
The kings trade kingdoms. A great trick if not used too often.

The position after the switch is totally weird, but legal. It would require a lot of strange manoeuvres by the other pieces, but both kings could have reached their opponent's rear rank through gaps in the pawn formation. The last move was discovered check by either Ng1-h3# or Bf1-c4#.

(Na6↔Ke8? is an impossible double check.)

(Bb6↔Ke8? puts both black bishops on light squares. A promotion was impossible because Black still has eight pawns. A promoted bishop could not have reached e8 anyhow, because of the unmoved pawns on d7 and f7.)

Switcheroo 17

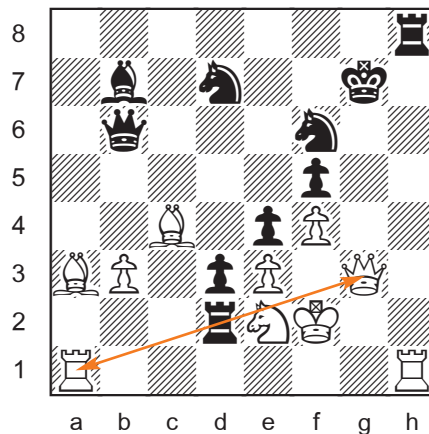


b7↔g3

Two black pawns trade places and nothing changes. Any other legal switch “unmates” the black king.

Thirteen pieces is the maximum for a switcheroo in which identical pieces are switched.

Switcheroo 02 (revised)



Ra1↔Qg3

The rook takes over the checking duties while the queen pins the knight on f6.

(Ne2↔f5? is an impossible double check.)

(f4↔Kg7? is triple check!?)

The original puzzle, with a black pawn on f7 and the d3 square vacant, had two alternate solutions: Kf2↔Kg7 and Ra1↔Bc4.

I used the new program to check all the switcheroos in my books, and found several positions with dual solutions. If you own either volume of *Winning Chess Puzzles For Kids*, you can find a list of errata at www.coakleychess.com. Future editions of the books will have revised versions of those switcheroos.

Until next time!

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