



THE PUZZLING SIDE OF CHESS

Jeff Coakley

CHESSE CAFE PUZZLERS CUP: The Big Day

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Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the awards ceremony of the *2014 Puzzlers Cup*. Tonight we are pleased to present the five winning problems from our second annual puzzle composing competition.

Special thanks to our generous sponsor *ChessCafe.com* for hosting the event. Each winner will receive a “shop coupon” which can be applied to any purchase from their extensive selection of chess products. The value of the coupons is as follows:

First prize \$150

Second prize \$100

Third prize \$75

Honourable Mentions 2 x \$50



Like last year, we received many interesting puzzles. The difficult task of selecting the five winners was performed by the same distinguished panel of judges: Steven Dowd, Dan Heisman, and Elizabeth Spiegel. Their involvement is greatly appreciated.

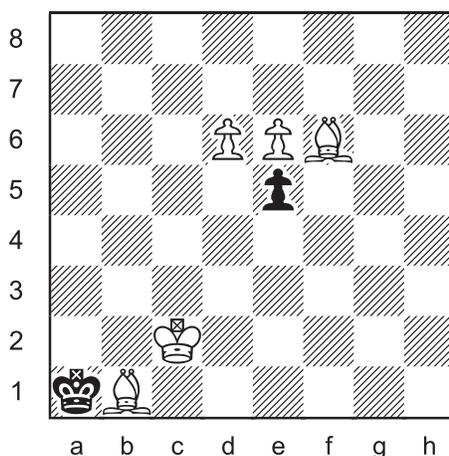
The criteria for evaluating the entries were *creativity*, *cleverness*, and *popular appeal*. The judges viewed the problems without knowing the names of the composers and assigned each one a numerical score. The scores were then combined to determine the final ranking.

Thanks to everybody who took part in the contest. I enjoyed all the puzzles. Some of them will be featured in future columns.

Now that we have the introduction out of the way, let's get on with the awards. The problems will be presented in reverse order.

Second honourable mention goes to **Noel Junio** of the Philippines. He is back in the winners' circle with another imaginative *half-mover*.

Second Honourable Mention



Add a white piece to the board so that
White can checkmate Black
by completing the second half of a move.

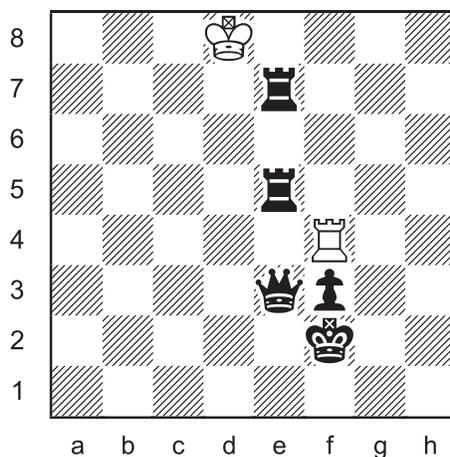
How many solutions are there?

Finding all the solutions is the main point of the puzzle. The number is quite large. As Noel advises, "Be patient in solving and counting."

Not sure what a half-move is? Well, that's part of the puzzle!?

First Honourable Mention is a very clever helpmate by **Wilfried Neef** of Germany.

First Honourable Mention



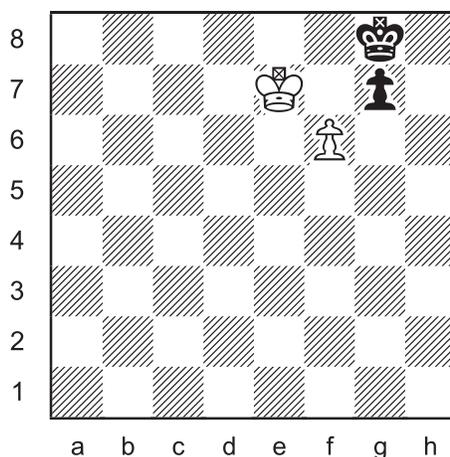
Helpmate in 5

Black moves first and helps
White checkmate the black king
on White's fifth move.



Moving right along, it's time now for our top three winners. Third prize is awarded to **Adrian Storisteanu** from Toronto, Canada. His two part retractor should keep you busy for a while.

Third Prize

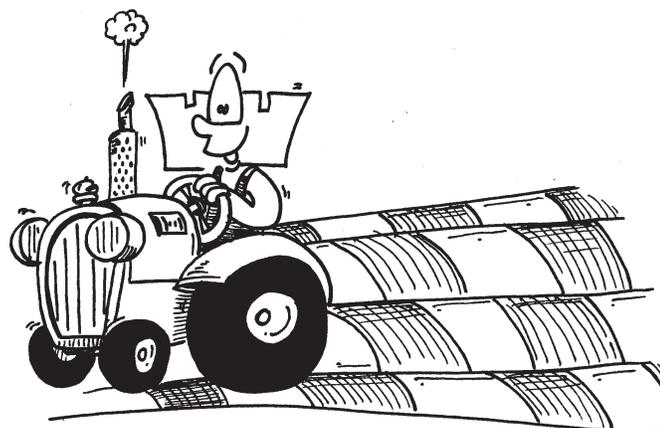


Retractor Stalemate

- A. White retracts three moves and then makes one move to stalemate the black king
- B. Black retracts three moves and then White makes one move to stalemate the black king

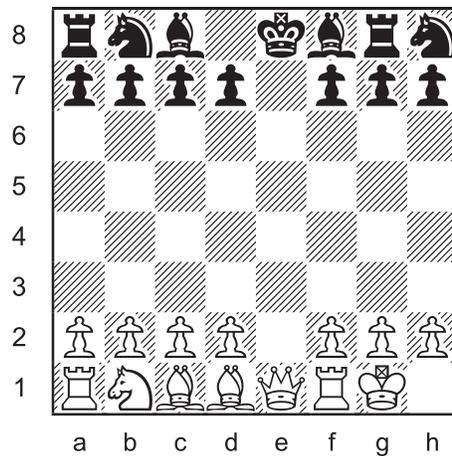
As usual in retractor problems, the moves taken back may be “uncaptures”.

No black moves are retracted in part A, and no white moves are retracted in part B. In both parts of the puzzle, after the retractions, White plays a move to stalemate the black king.



Next up on our “hit parade of puzzles” is an outstanding proof game by a well known composer. Our second prize winner is **Per Olin** of Finland.

Second Prize



Proof Game in 7.5

This position, with Black to play, was reached in a legal game after White's 8th turn. What were the moves?

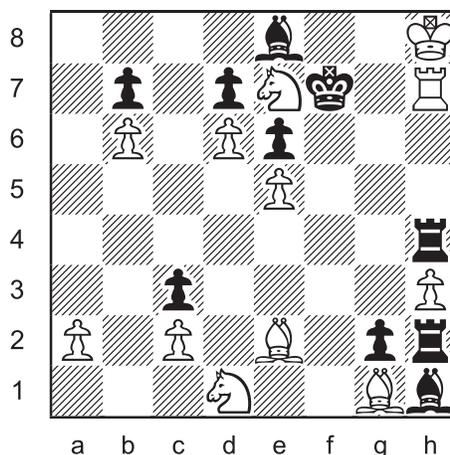


Well, chess friends, the grand moment is here. It is our great pleasure to present the *2014 Chess Cafe Puzzlers Cup* to ...

Geir Sune Tallaksen Østmoe

Congratulations to the Norwegian international master. His winning puzzle has four parts. We hope you enjoy it.

First Prize



- A. Add a piece so that White is not mated, and the only possible result of the game is a win by Black.
- B. In addition to the piece added in part A, add a piece so that Black is not mated, and the only possible result is a win by White.
- C. In addition to the pieces added in parts A and B, add a piece so that the only possible result is a draw.
- D. In addition to the pieces added in parts A, B, and C, add a piece so that Black is mated.

The position after a piece is added must be legal. This is especially important in part D.



SOLUTIONS

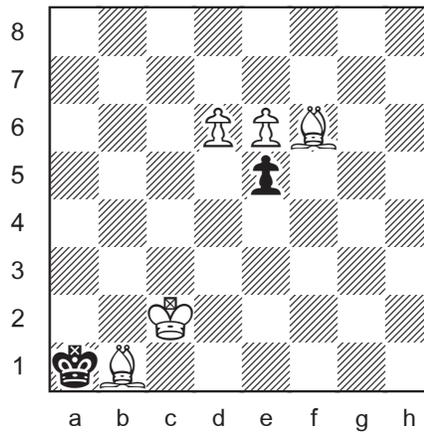
PDF hyperlinks. You can advance to the solution of any puzzle by clicking on the underlined title above the diagram. To return to the puzzle, click on the title above the solution diagram.

Add a white piece / Mate in a half move

Second Honourable Mention

Noel Junio 2014

ChessCafe.com



696 solutions!

They can be divided into four basic ideas.

There are 236 solutions in which White completes the second half of an *en passant* capture on e6 (from d5 or f5) by removing the black pawn from e5. For example, **add a white pawn on h2**, then **1.d5xe6 e.p.#**. Or add a white rook on h2, or add a white pawn on h3, et cetera.

There are 450 solutions in which White completes the second half of a capture on a8 by a pawn from b7, promoting to a rook or queen. Presumably, a black piece on a8 has already been removed from the board and the white pawn which left b7 has not yet been replaced on a8 by a promoted piece. For example, **add a white pawn on h2**, then **1.b7xa8=Q#**.

There are 8 solutions in which White completes the second half of a capture on b8 by a pawn from a7, with a discovered check from a white rook or queen on a8. For example, **add a white queen on a8**, then **1.a7xb8=Q#**. White can promote on b8 to a Q, R, B, or N.

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There are 2 solutions in which White completes the second half of a promotion and capture on a8 by replacing a white pawn on a8 with a queen or rook. For example, **add a white pawn on a8**, then **1.b7xa8=Q#**.

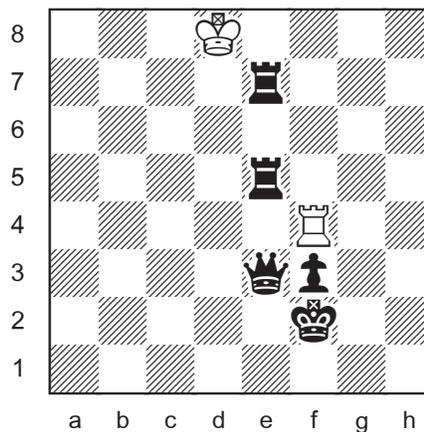
$$236 + 450 + 8 + 2 = 696$$

Helpmate in 5

First Honourable Mention

Wilfried Neef 2014

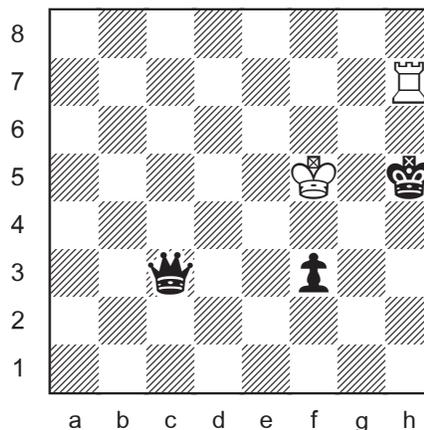
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In helpmate notation, the black moves are listed first.

Black	White
1. Qc3	Rf7
2. Rf5	Kxe7
3. Kg3	Ke6
4. Kh4	Kxf5
5. Kh5	Rh7#

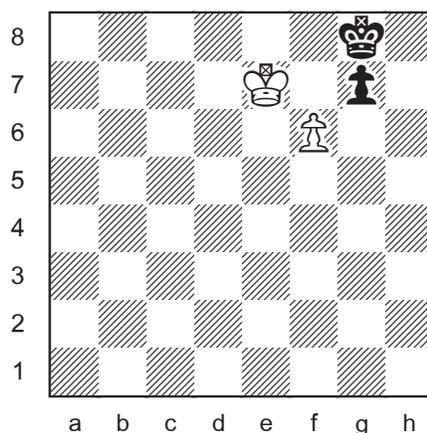
Everything goes swimmingly after 1.Qc3! But finding that first move is no easy feat.



For more information on helpmates, see column 48.

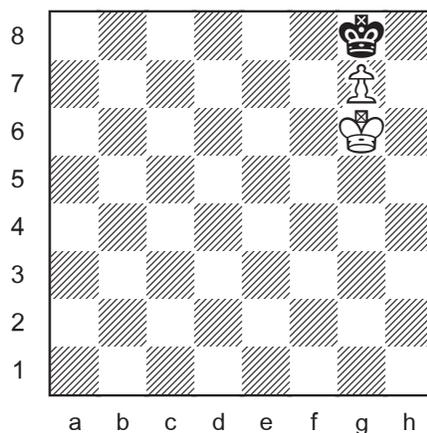
Retractor Stalemate
(-three moves +stalemate)

Third Prize
Adrian Storisteanu 2014
ChessCafe.com



All comments are by the composer.

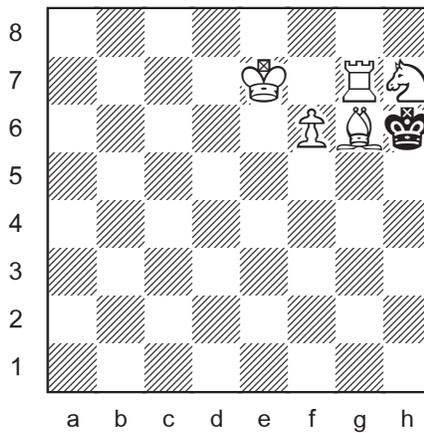
- A.** White retracts three moves then stalemates in one.
– 1.Ke6-e7 2.Kf5-e6 3.Kg6-f5
+ 1.fxg7 stalemate



The lack of uncaptures makes White's retro play look like regular forward play. However, the problem does not work as a series-stalemate in four: e.g., cook 1.fxg7 2.Kf6 3.Kg6=.

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- B.** Black retracts three moves then White stalemates in one
 – 1.Kh7xRg8 2.Kg6xNh7 3.Kh6xBg6
 + 1.Rg8xg7 stalemate

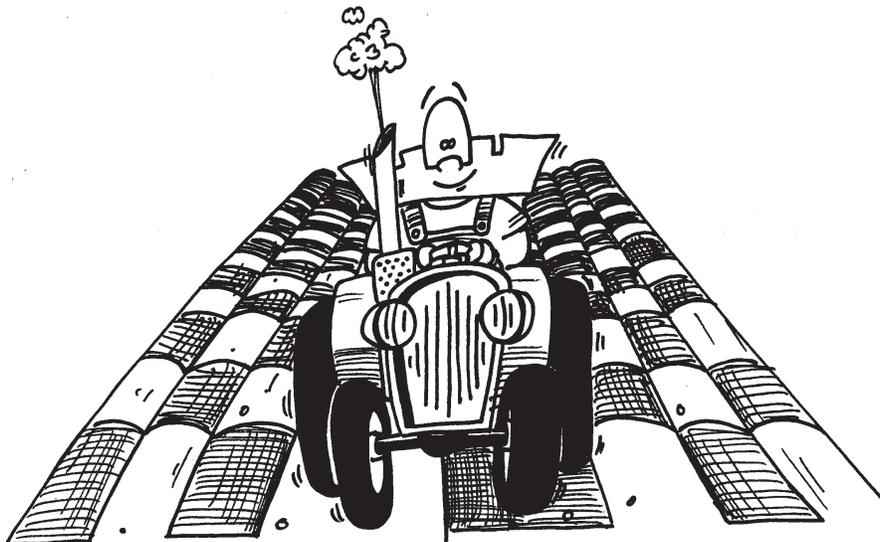


Three different white pieces are uncaptured consecutively. Whereas the white king and black pawn do not participate in the final stalemate picture, both play a role in the problem. The former prevents cooks (e.g., without the white king: 1.Kf7-g8 2.Kg8xRf7 3.Kh8-g8 and 1.Rf7xg7=). The latter shuts off the newly resurrected white rook on g8 during the retro phase.

[Concerning the problem as a whole]

The duplex-like backward play plus common forward goal stipulation necessitates contrasting retro-play strategies in setting up a stalemate-in-one position: White avoids uncaptures, Black maximizes them. (For consistency, the black pawn on g7 is doomed in both cases.)

For more information on retractors, see column 33.

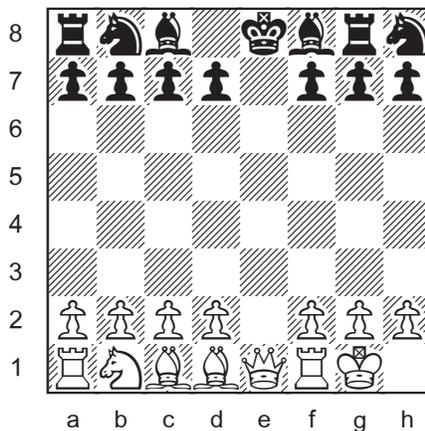


Proof Game in 7.5

Second Prize

Per Olin 2014

ChessCafe.com



1.Nf3 e5 2.Nxe5 Qe7 3.Ng6 Qxe2+ 4.Bxe2 Ne7
5.O-O Rg8 6.Nh8 Ng6 7.Qe1 Nxh8 8.Bd1+

An unusual realignment of pieces along the 1st and 8th ranks.

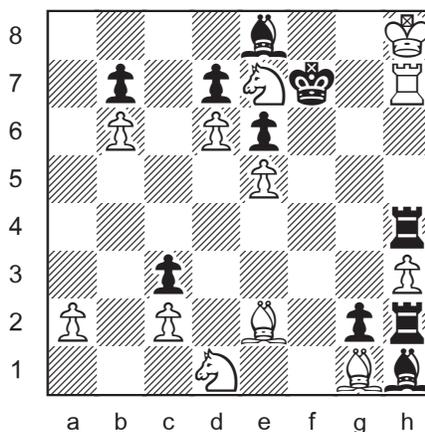
For more information on proof games, see column 03.

Add Pieces

First Prize

Geir Sune Tallaksen Østmoe 2014

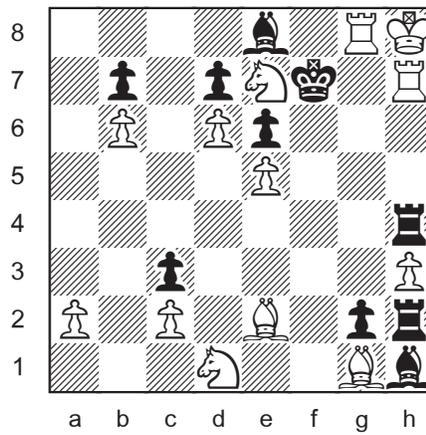
ChessCafe.com



A new diagram will be given for each piece added.



A

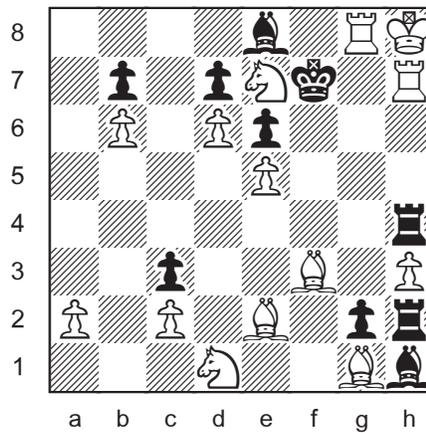


Add white rook on g8.

The only possible continuation is:

1...Rhx7+ 2.Kxh7 Rxh3+ 3.Bh5+ Rxh5#

B

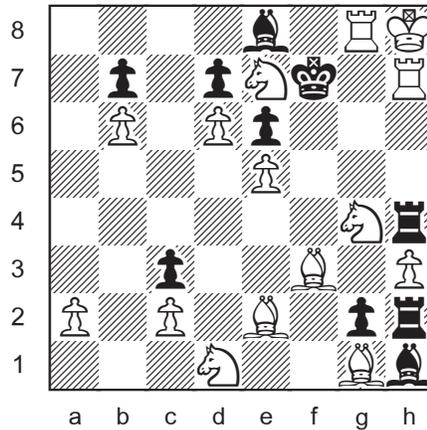


Add white bishop on f3.

The only possible continuation is:

1...Rhx7+ 2.Kxh7 Rxh3+ 3.Bh5+ Rxh5+ 4.Bxh5#

C

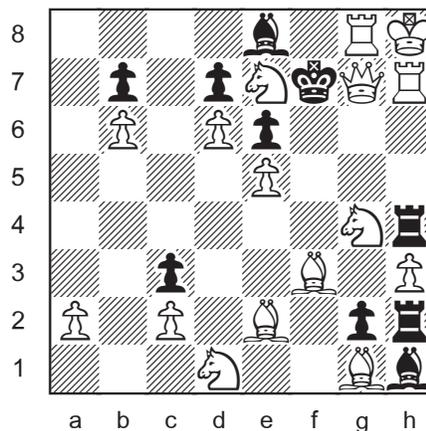


Add white knight on g4.

The only possible continuation is:

1...Rxh7+ 2.Kxh7 Rxh3+ 3.Nh6+ Rxh6+ 4.Kxh6 stalemate

D



Add white queen on g7.

Black is mated.

This is the only correct solution. A white piece can be added on other squares so that Black is mated, but the positions are illegal. Below is a detailed explanation by the composer. Thanks, Geir Sune. Great puzzle!

Part D

It could seem like a piece on h5 or h6, or a queen or rook on g7 or f8, would do the job. However, a queen on g7 is the only way to keep the position legal.

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White has six pawns and two promoted pieces, so if the added piece is white, it can not be a pawn or a promoted piece. Therefore, it must be a queen.

The bishop starting on c8 has not made any moves, so both of Black's bishops must have been promoted. Black's a-pawn may have captured the missing white queen and promoted on b1, but then it can not have promoted to a bishop, since it would have no way out of b1. Therefore, the f- and h-pawn must have promoted to bishops. Black has five pawns and two promoted bishops, and the pawn not accounted for is the a-pawn. If the added piece is black, it can not be a pawn or a white-squared bishop.

A white rook, knight or pawn on h5 would have been checkmate, but as we have seen, the added piece can not have been any of those. A black bishop or pawn on h5 would also have been checkmate, but the added piece can not have been any of those.

A white queen or a black knight on h6 would have been checkmate, but then White's last move must have been g8=R. However, that is not possible, since White's missing pawns must have promoted to a bishop and a knight. For the same reason, White's last move can not have been gxf8, so a white queen on f8 is impossible.

The only remaining possibility is a white queen on g7. Then White's last move must have been a capture. White has sixteen pieces on the board, while Black has ten. The light-squared bishop must have been captured on c8, and the a-pawn must have been captured on the a-file. White's kingside pawns must have made three captures: the f- and h-pawns captured a piece on the g-file, and the g-pawn captured a piece on h3 after Black's h-pawn had moved to h2. Now fifteen black pieces have been accounted for, leaving one piece which was captured on g7. So a queen on g7 is legal, and Black is checkmated.

Well, folks, that wraps up our awards ceremony. We hope you liked the show!

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