



THE PUZZLING SIDE OF CHESS

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PROOF GAMES: BRING ON THE HOUND

number 103

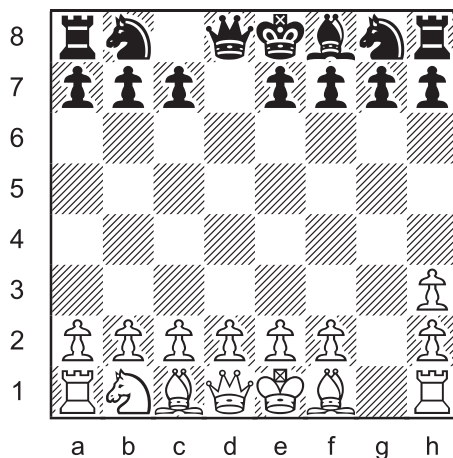
April 9, 2016

As you might have heard before, the task in a *proof game* is to show how a given position can be reached in a legal game.

The puzzles in this column have a *move stipulation*. The position must be reached in a precise number of moves, no more and no less. The first two problems are proof games in 4.0 which means four moves by each side.

Don't be concerned with piece development or central control. There is no strategy involved. But the moves are legal.

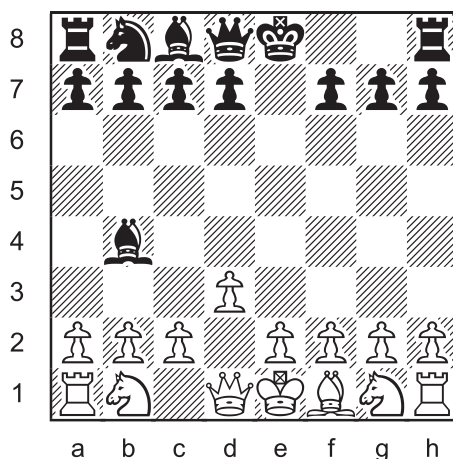
Proof Game 50



This position, with White to play, was reached in a game after each player made exactly four moves. What were the moves?



Proof Game 51

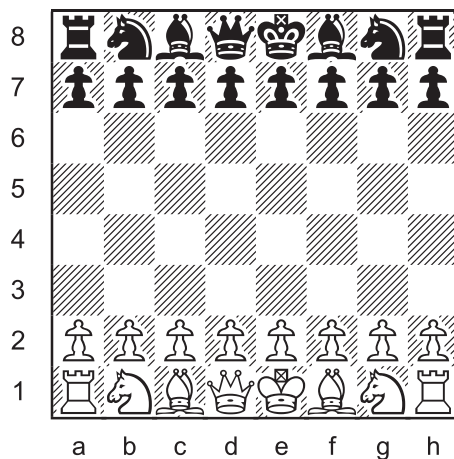


This position was reached after Black's fourth turn. What were the moves?

Proof game columns will be a monthly occurrence this year on the *Puzzling Side of Chess*. The regular menu will feature two "4.0 PG's", a synthetic game, and one or two longer proof games.

For anyone out there who doesn't know, a *synthetic game* is similar to a proof game. But instead of finding the move sequence that leads to a given position, the task is to compose a game that ends with a particular move.

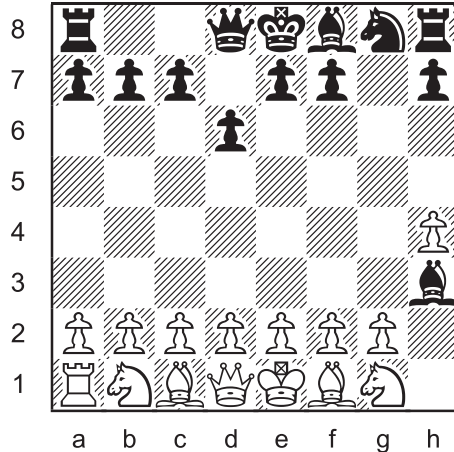
Synthetic Game 20



Compose a game that ends with the move **4...Ne4#**.

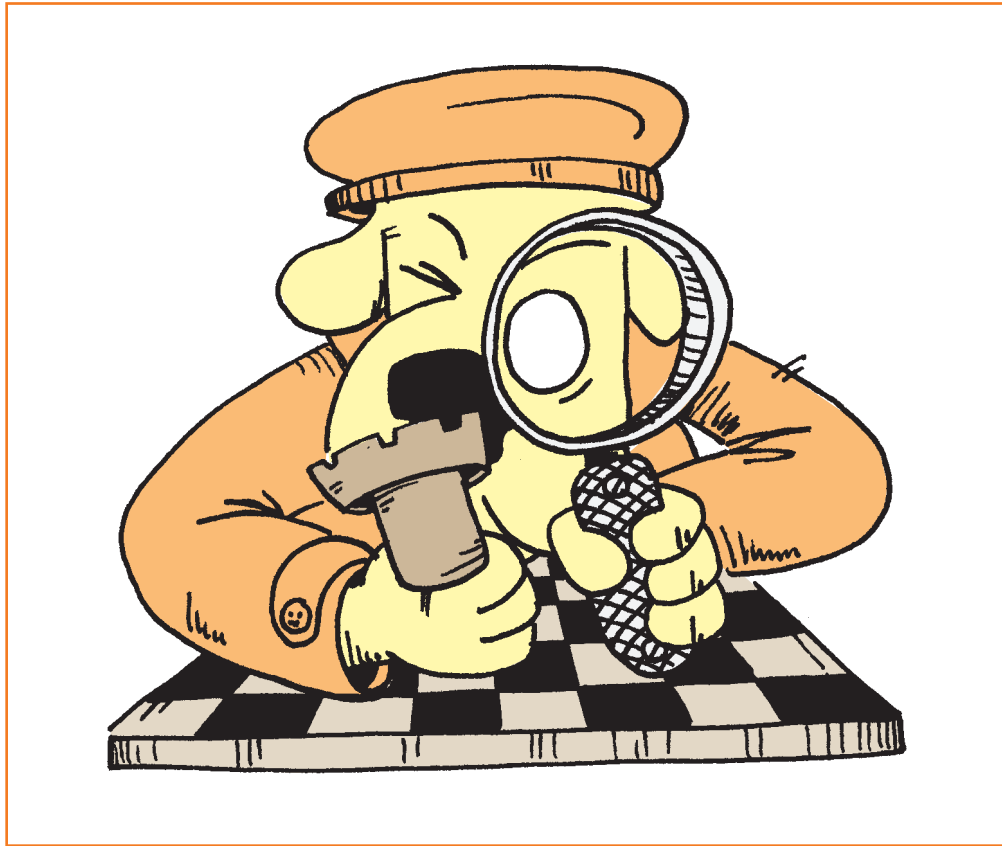
Moving on to the longer category, we have games of length 5.0 and 5.5. Tougher to solve of course, but hopefully the unusual settings will entice you into trying.

Longer Proof Game 14 (5.0 moves)



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

Perhaps we've saved the best for last. Perhaps not. In any case, it's time again for some people's favourite detective, Harmonius Hound.



The Forgettable Case of the Run Amok Rook

There was a bit of a ruckus at the City Club last week. Two excitable fellows were engaged in a heated debate over the chess problem shown below.

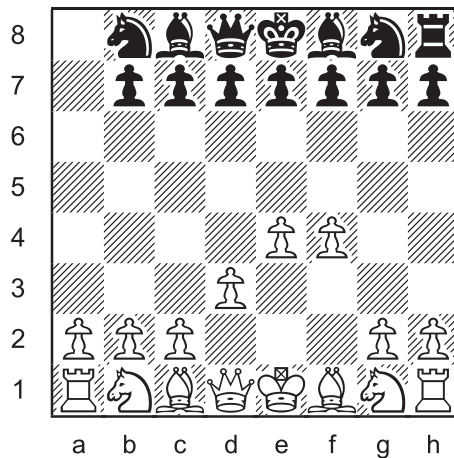
One insisted that the position could not be reached by White's sixth move. "I've analyzed for hours. It is impossible!"

The other countered loudly and repeatedly, "Then why does the puzzle ask for a solution in six moves?"

Before things got out of hand, the club manager stepped in. "Guys, please. Hold on a second." Then he shouted, in a somewhat quiet voice, to somebody in the back of the room. "Bring on the hound!"

It was moments like these that Harmonius Hound lived for. The celebrated sleuth strutted in like the king of beasts. "Gentlemen, stand aside. Let me have a gander at this poser."

Longer Proof Game 15 (5.5 moves)

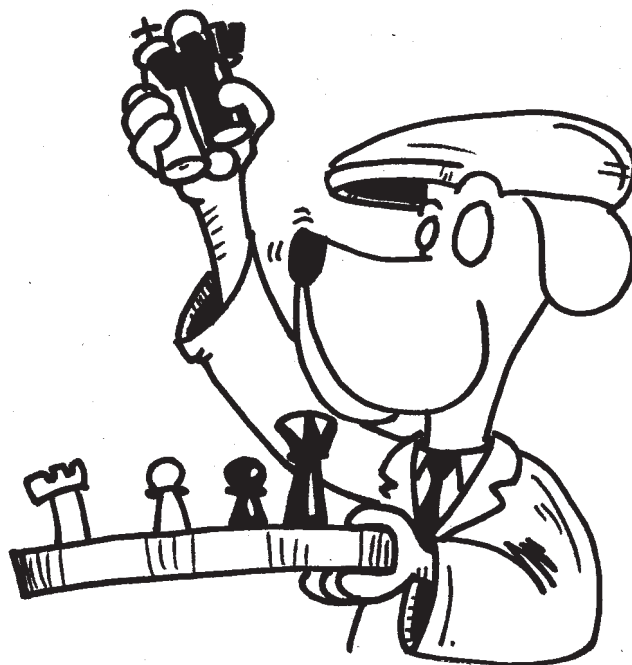


This position was reached after White's sixth turn. What were the moves?

After a few minutes thought, Harmonius stepped back and grinned the way that clever dogs do. He then reset the board and played out the surprising sequence of moves.

Excitable fellow number 1 was none too happy. He was about to say something nasty when excitable fellow number 2 started to laugh.

We will spare you the details of what happened next. Suffice it to say that Harmonius Hound exited the scene calmly and unperturbed. Unlike the club manager, who was left to pick up the pieces.

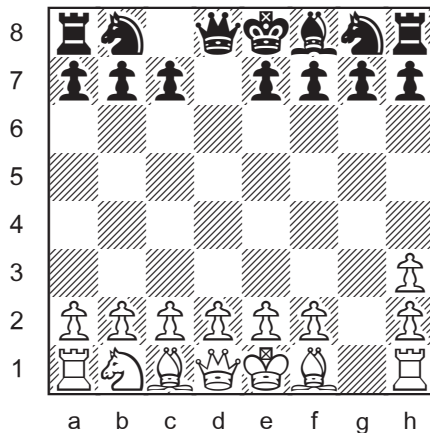


SOLUTIONS

All problems by J. Coakley, *Puzzling Side of Chess* (2016).

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.

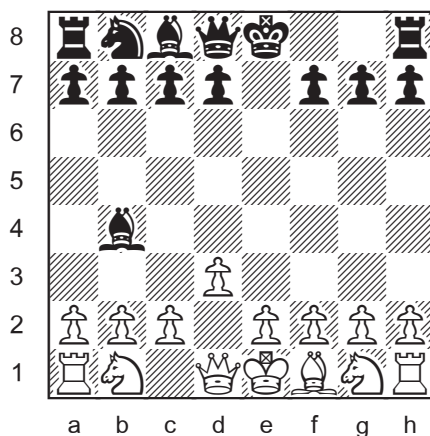
Proof Game 50



1.Nh3 d5 2.Nf4 Bh3 3.Nxd5 Qxd5 4.gxh3 Qd8

Switchback by the queen to d8 plus a puzzling non-capture by the black bishop on h3.

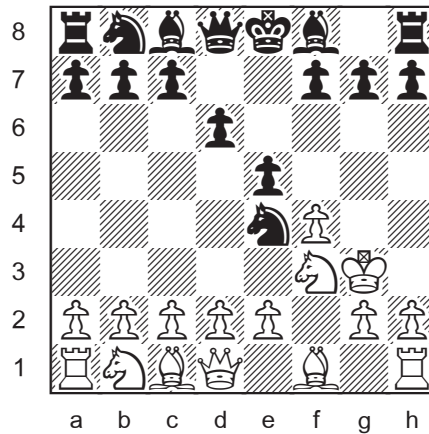
Proof Game 51



1.d3 Nf6 2.Bg5 Nd5 3.Bxe7 Nb4 4.Bxb4 Bxb4+

Two captures on b4. A long fatal journey for the black knight.

Synthetic Game 20

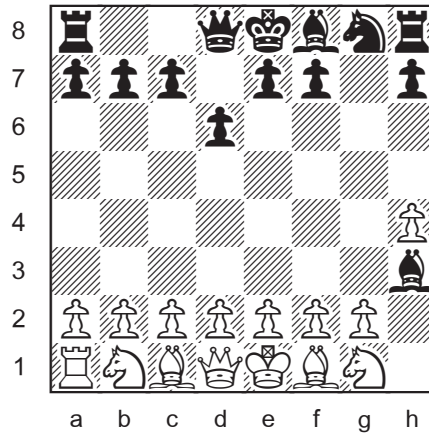


1.f4 e5 2.Nf3 d6 3.Kf2 Nf6 4.Kg3 **Ne4#**

From Gambit Declined - Absurd Variation

The solution is not unique. The moves can be played in various orders. Black can substitute ...g5 for ...e5, and/or ...d5 for ...d6.

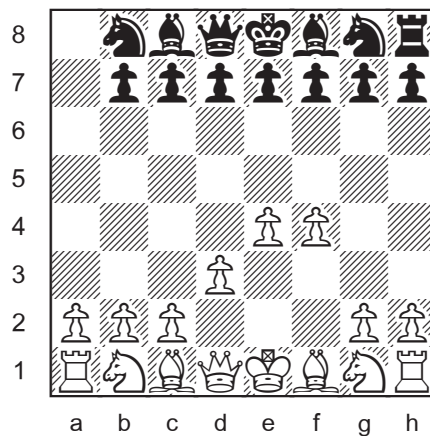
Longer Proof Game 14 (5.0 moves)



1.h4 d6 2.Rh3 Nd7 3.Rg3 Ndf6 4.Rxg7 Bh3 5.Rxg8 Nxg8

An *impostor* knight on g8 and another puzzling non-capture by a black bishop on h3.

Longer Proof Game 15 (5.5 moves)



1.e4 a6 2.Bxa6 Ra7 3.Be2 Ra3 4.f4 Rf3 5.d3 Rf1+ 6.Bxf1

A duo of intermediate steps (Ra8-a7-a3 and Ba6-e2xf1) and a great example of the ever popular *Orbán effect*, a switchback capture by the bishop on its original square.



Until next time!

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