



# THE PUZZLING SIDE OF CHESS

Jeff Coakley

## PROOF GAMES Wandering Kings

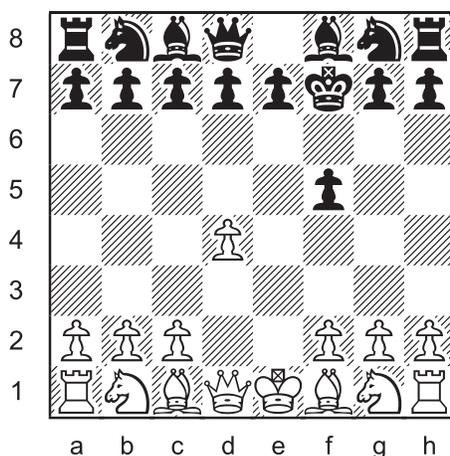
number 175

February 27, 2019

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.

The positions may be convoluted, and the strategy refuted, but the moves are legal.

### Proof Game 84



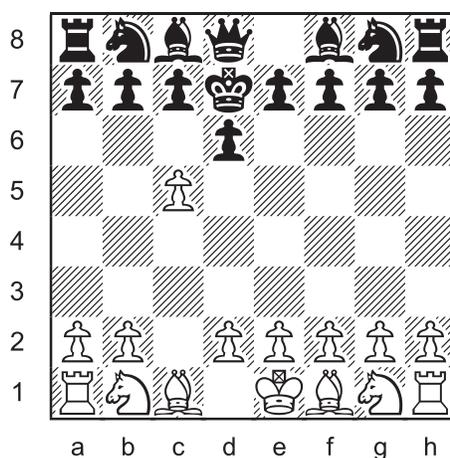
This position, with White to play, was reached in a game after each player made exactly four moves. What were the moves?

Harmonius Hound was enjoying a lazy afternoon at the Chess Cafe. A few tasty beverages had him in good spirits. To keep his brain engaged, the ace detective ordered the daily special, a new series of problems selected by his friend Maurice the waiter. Their theme, as you may have guessed already, was unusual king moves.



*Did you notice who's sitting at the corner table?*

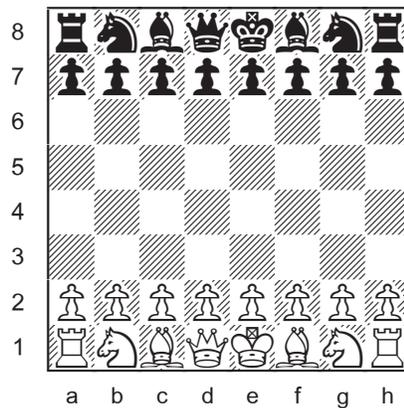
### Proof Game 85



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

The next puzzle is a *synthetic game*. 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 43



Compose a game that ends with the move **5.a5#**

Harmonius was not the only person of note visiting the cafe that day. His arch-nemesis, Moriarty the Fox, had also decided to show his face. The criminal mastermind has eluded the hound for years. There could be little doubt, he was up to no good once again.

After perusing the menu for several minutes, the devilish fox began laughing and walked over to where Harmonius was sitting.

“These puzzles are too easy! Why waste your time? For a real challenge, I have three proof games more suitable for testing your famous powers of deduction. And let us make a wager, sir. If you fail to solve them, then you buy drinks for everyone at the cafe.”

“Very well, Moriarty, and if I do find the solutions?”

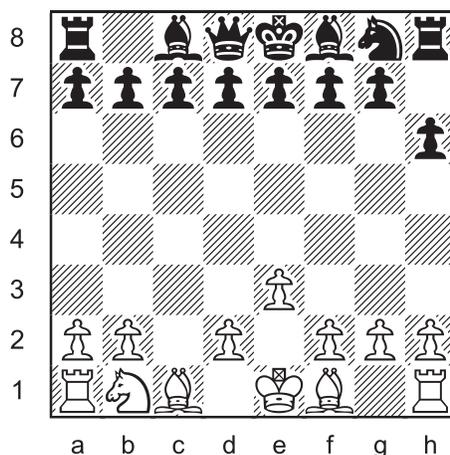
“Well, then the next round is on me.”

With the terms of the contest agreed, Moriarty proceeded to set up the pieces.



Slyly smiling, the villain of our tale stated his stipulation. “The position must arise after White’s sixth move. No sooner, no later.”

**Longer Proof Game 69** (5.5 moves)

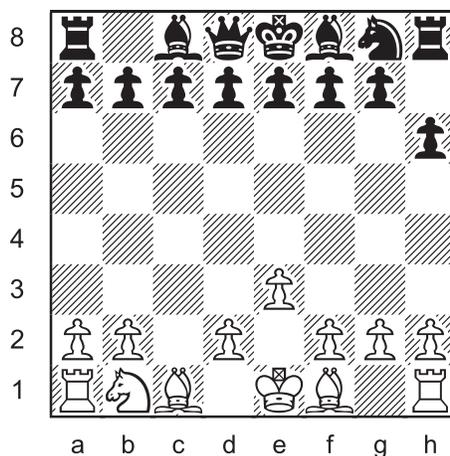


This position was reached after White’s sixth turn. What were the moves?

While Harmonius sat pondering, Maurice fetched his friend a cup of coffee. He wasn’t gone long, but when he returned, the hound had already solved the problem. “Quite ingenious, sir. However, it’s the sort of thing I’ve seen many times before. What’s next?”

By now, a small crowd had gathered around the board. To their surprise, the fox set up exactly the same position. “Perhaps your reputation as a clever dog is deserved, but can you prove that the position can also be achieved after Black’s sixth move?”

**Longer Proof Game 70** (6.0 moves)



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

The hound was in his groove. His mind on the move. In a flash of inspiration, the answer to the mystery was revealed. As he played out the game, the disappointment on his rival's face could not be concealed.



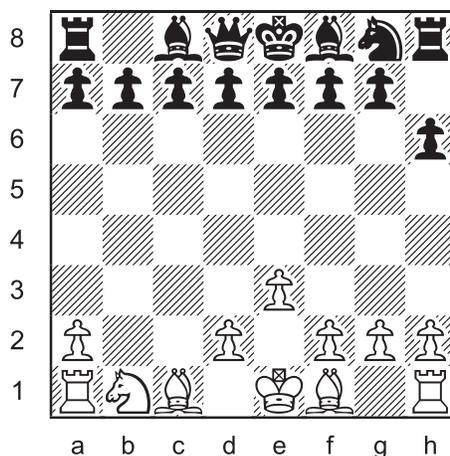
“Okay, Moriarty, that’s two down, one to go.”

“Well done, Harmonius. I don’t think you’ll be so lucky with this one.”

It may be hard to believe, but “*The Final Problem*” was the same position again, except there was no pawn on b2 and another half-move was added.

Intrigued by the battle of wits, the spectators pushed ever closer, eagerly anticipating their free drinks. Maurice stepped in to hold the crowd back. “Please, give the hound some space!”

### Longer Proof Game 71 (6.5 moves)



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

The minutes passed. The tension grew. And then it happened, like it always does. The hound dog grinned. A sure sign that he had sniffed out the essential clues in the position.



Much to Moriarty's chagrin, the problem was solved, his evil plan thwarted. The intention had been to stump the master detective, to embarrass him in front of his friends and admiring public. But that was not to be. He had underestimated his distinguished adversary. A common mistake by the criminally insane.

Harmonius stood and embraced the moment. "The wager is mine, sir. Time to pay up."

But Moriarty just laughed. "I'm afraid you are mistaken. I never said that I would buy a round of drinks. I only said the next round is on me. And here it is ... See you 'round!"

With that said, the fox bolted for the door. Harmonius Hound hot on his tail.

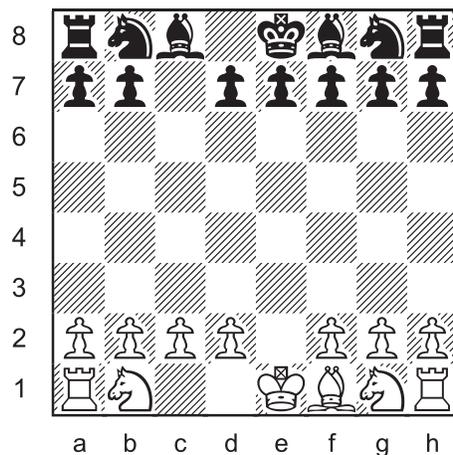


The customers at the cafe were left speechless. Luckily, Maurice knew how to keep them happy. Before the thirsty crowd could say anything, he made an announcement. "Not to worry, folks. The next round of drinks is on the house!"

To sweeten the deal, he generously set up another position. "And the first person who solves this puzzle drinks for free the rest of the day!"

It's a gem by German solver and occasional composer Mario Richter.

### Longer Proof Game 72 (7.5 moves)



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



[Thanks to Mario for pointing out an error in last month's *Who's the Goof?*. The position was in fact legal! A corrected version has now been posted.]

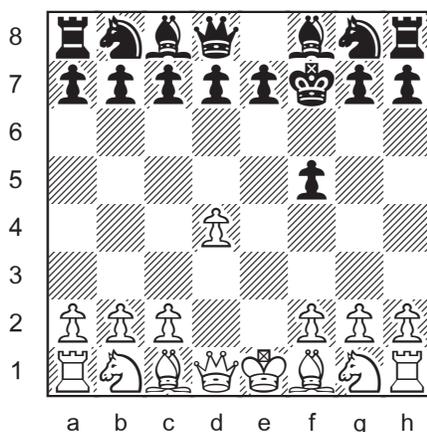
## SOLUTIONS

All proof games, except longer game 72, by J. Coakley, *Puzzling Side of Chess* (2019). Proof game 85 is from *Scholar's Mate 110* (2011).

**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.

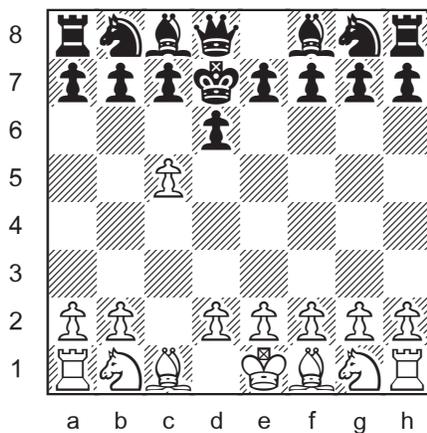
**Archives.** Past columns and a detailed index of problem-types and composers are available in the *Puzzling Side of Chess* archives.

### Proof Game 84



1.e4 f5 2.e5 Kf7 3.e6+ Kxe6 4.d4 Kf7  
Zwervende koning.

### Proof Game 85



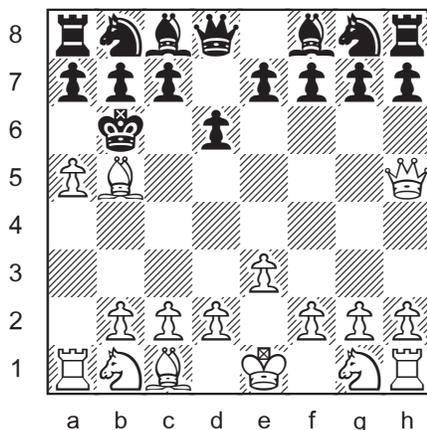
1.c4 d6 2.c5 Kd7 3.Qa4+ Ke6 4.Qd7+ Kxd7  
Daft or daring king?

## Synthetic Game 43

George Jelliss 1981

*En Passant*

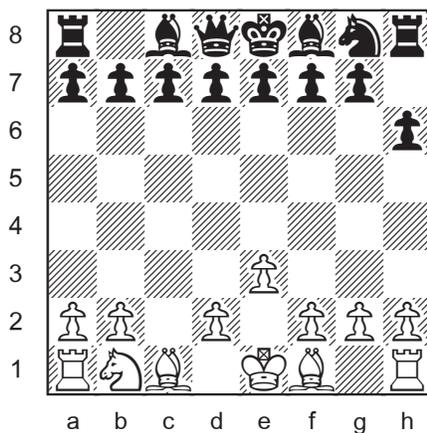
(National Correspondence Chess Club)



1.e3 d6 2.Qh5 Kd7 3.a4 Kc6 4.Bb5+ Kb6 5.a5#

1.e3 can be replaced by 1.e4. White's first three moves can be played in different orders.

## Longer Proof Game 69 (5.5 moves)

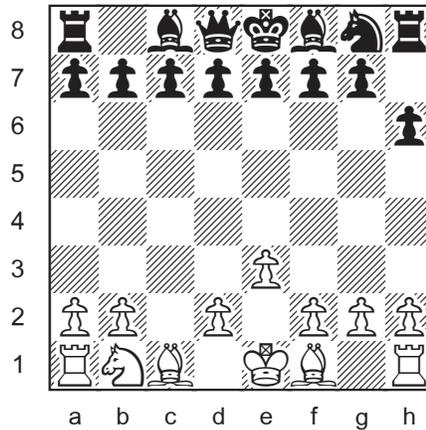


1.Nf3 Nc6 2.Nd4 Nxd4 3.e3 Nxc2+  
4.Ke2 h6 5.Qe1 Nxe1 6.Kxe1

Switchbacking king, with Orbán effect.

*(For more on Tibor Orbán and his effect, see column 3.)*

**Longer Proof Game 70** (6.0 moves)

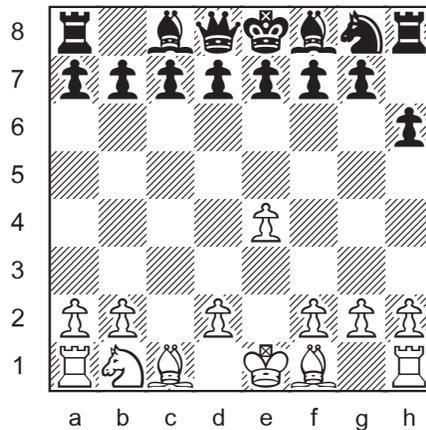


1.Nf3 Nc6 2.Nd4 Nxd4 3.e3 Nxc2+  
4.Qxc2 h6 5.Qh7 Nf6 6.Qg8 Nxc8

No king moves here. Tempo play is provided by the black knight on g8, with Orbán effect!

*BONUS PG.* The same position except the white pawn is on e4.

**Longer Proof Game 70b** (6.0 moves)

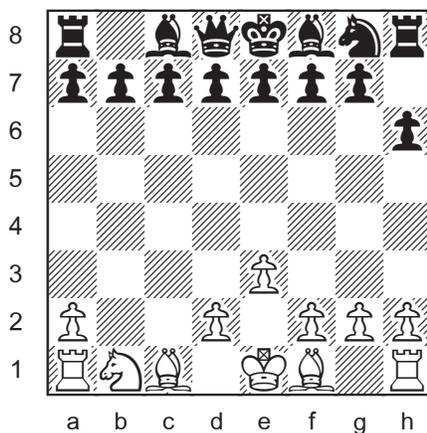


1.Nf3 Nc6 2.Nd4 Nxd4 3.e3 Nxc2+  
4.Qxc2 h6 5.Qh7 Rxh7 6.e4 Rh8

Switchbacking rook.



## Longer Proof Game 71 (6.5 moves)



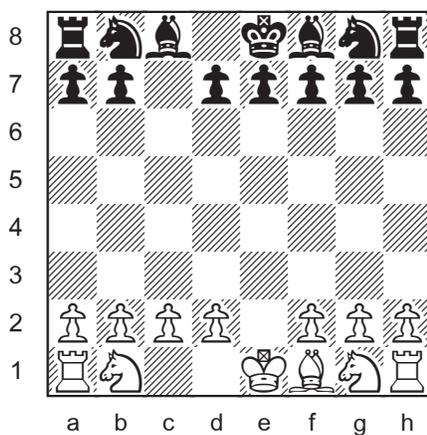
1.Nf3 Nc6 2.Ne5 Nxe5 3.c4 Nxc4 4.e3 Nxb2  
5.Ke2 Nxd1 6.Kxd1 h6 7.Ke1

Three moves by the switchbacking swashbuckling king.

## Longer Proof Game 72 (7.5 moves)

Mario Richter 2004

*Retro Mailing List*



1.e3 c5 2.Ke2 Qb6 3.Kd3 c4+ 4.Kxc4 Qxe3  
5.Qe1 Qxe1 6.Kd3 Qxc1 7.Ke2 Qe1+ 8.Kxe1

The king of wandering kings.

Until next time!

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