

Rook and pawn endings

Rook and pawn endings

At the end of the game you might find yourself in a situation of $K+R+P$ versus $K+R$. So how should you best either convert this into a win (or best defend if you have just the $K+R$)? In such endings the two Kings play a vital role. The best scenario is to either cut off the enemy King from supporting (or attacking) the pawn or to make sure that your rook either supports (or attacks) the pawn from behind.

In position (a) with White to move (i) what is the best move to play?

(ii) If it were Black's move and he played $Kd6$ what is the best reply from White?

(a)



(b)



Look at position (b) White has achieved the perfect position - the white rook is behind the pawn and the White king is nearer to the pawn than the black king.

If it is White's move, the win is by playing $Kf6$, then $Kg7$ and will either win the black rook (or if that moves then the pawn will queen and black will have to give up his rook leaving White with $K+R$ versus K , an easy win).

(i) Now if it is Black to move first can he draw?

Now go to position (c) Black has managed to achieve the best defensive position for the rook behind White's pawn.

What moves should Black play?

What happens if White marches his King to b6 or b7

What moves should Black play if the white King marches to b2 to attack the black rook?

(c)



See all answers [HERE](#)

Now try the Novice and Intermediate problems below. These are all on the same theme of rook and pawn endgames.

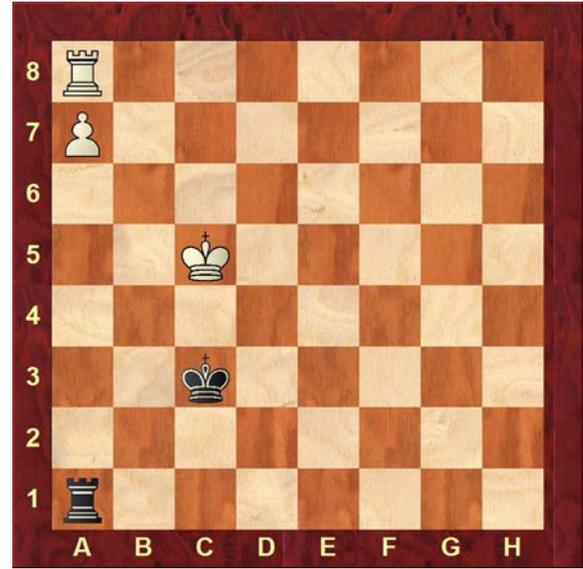
This month's problems - Novice

Problem N49

Problem N50



N49. What is the correct move (and plan) for White?



N50. White to play and win (hint ends up with K+R versus K).

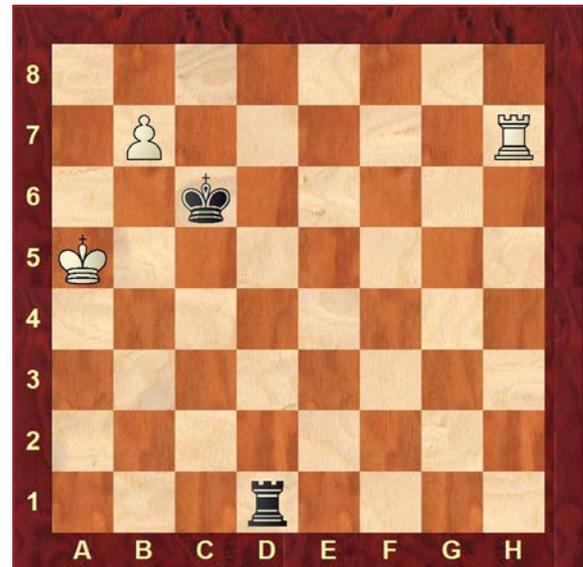
This month's problems - Intermediate

Problem I49



I49. White to play and win

Problem I50



I50. Can White (to move) win from this position?

Solutions to last month's problems - Novice

Problem N47

Problem N48



N47. Black to play and win a piece and a pawn

This combination involves a Queen sacrifice!

Black plays

1. Qxd2+
2. Kxd2 Nxe4+
3. K moves Nxd6

and White is winning



N48. White to play and win Black's Queen

Look at the position and obviously White can win the exchange by playing Nxe6 to which Black replies Qxe6. There is a much better move however

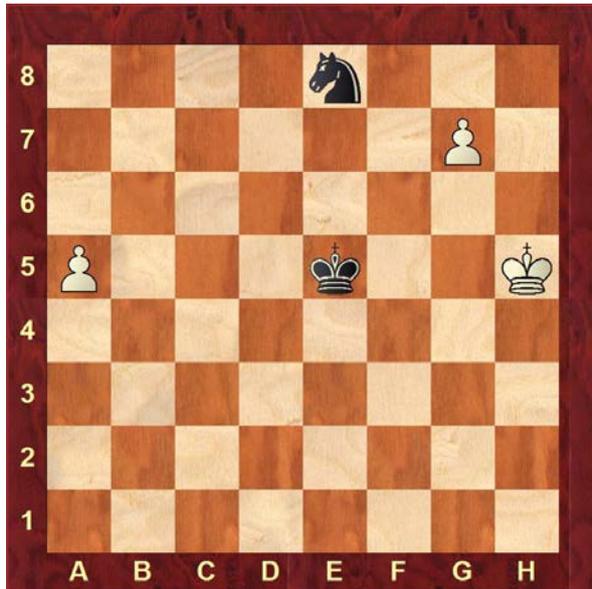
1. Rd8+ ! Qxd8
2. Nxe6+ Ke8
3. Nxd8

So this involved a rook sacrifice, a knight fork (it is actually a royal fork as it involves the king and queen) and a pin (the f7 pawn cannot take the knight as the Black king would be in check from the White queen)

Solutions to last month's problems - Intermediate

Problem 147

Problem 148



147. White to play and win

This is a straightforward calculation - sacrifice a pawn to queen the other

1. g8(=Q) Nf6+
2. Kg5 Nxg8
3. a6 and the pawn cannot be stopped from queening.



148. Black to find a winning attack

Black plays

1. Ne1
2. Qxc4+ Kh8
3. Qf1 Qxf1
4. Bxf1 Rxf1#

Answers to Rook and pawn (return to Problems [HERE](#))

(a)

(i) White plays

1. Rd8 this simply cuts the King off from attacking the pawn that can then march to e* and become a queen or rook with a simple mate to follow..

(ii) White plays

1. Re1 the best place for the rook is behind the advancing pawn. If Black replies

1..... Ke7

Then White brings his King over to force Black to stop the blockade of the pawn.

(b)

(i) it is still a win for White e.g

1. Ke7
2. Kg6 Kf8
3. Kf6! Ke8
4. Kg7 and wins

(c)

(i) Black just moves the King between h7 and g7. This prevents the white rook attacking the king from h7 and draws the game. If Black makes a mistake and plays

1..... Kf7

2. Rh8 Rxa7 (else White queens the pawn on a8)

3. Rh7+ which wins the black rook by a skewer and White will then win the game.

(ii) If White King reaches b6 or b7 then Black plays

1. Rb1+

and then if whiteK plays to a-file or c-file

2. Ra1 to keep control of the pawn. This will draw the game

(iii) If White attacks the rook by moving the King to b2 then Black

(c)

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and then if whiteK plays to a-file or c-file

2. Ra1 to keep control of the pawn. This will draw the game

(iii) If White attacks the rook by moving the King to b2 then Black replies

1. Ra6 and continues with just moving the King between h7 and g7 and if White attacks the rook by Kb5 the Black returns the rook to a1 and draws.

replies

1. Ra6 and continues with just moving the King between h7 and g7 and if White attacks the rook by Kb5 the Black returns the rook to a1 and draws.

So did you find the correct answer to all these problems? If you did then look for these type of positions in your end-games and use these skills to win if a pawn ahead (or draw if a pawn down). Now try the Novice and Intermediate puzzles.