

Christmas puzzles

BEGINNERS

Each of the 4 Beginners' problems here has 2 solutions.

One is with White to play and win
The other is with Black to play and win

Beginner Problem 1



Beginner Problem 2



Beginner Problem 3



Beginner Problem 4



If you enjoyed these then try
 Novice problems below. These only
 have one solution but are more
 difficult. If you are feeling really
 ambitious then attempt the
 Intermediate puzzles as well - these
 are even more difficult!

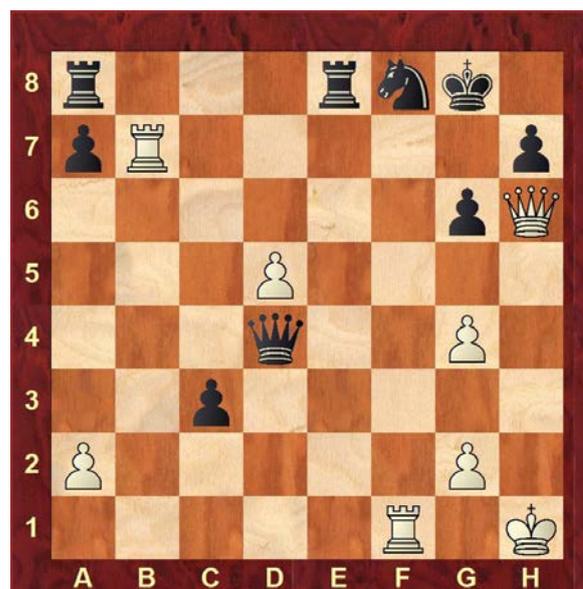
This month's problems - Novice

Problem N53



N53. Black to play and win a piece in 3 moves

Problem N54



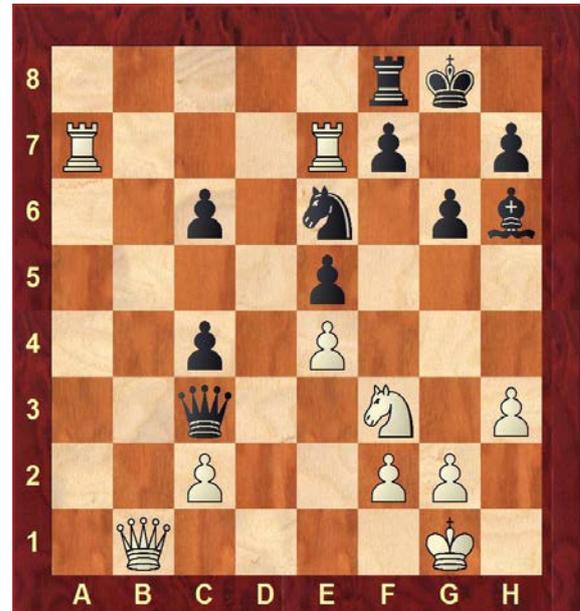
N54. White to play and mate in 2 moves

Problem N55

Problem N56



N55. Black to play and win a piece in 3 moves



N56. White to play and win a piece or create unstoppable mate

This month's problems - Intermediate

Problem 153



153. White to play - what is the best move (this one is subtle)?

Problem 154



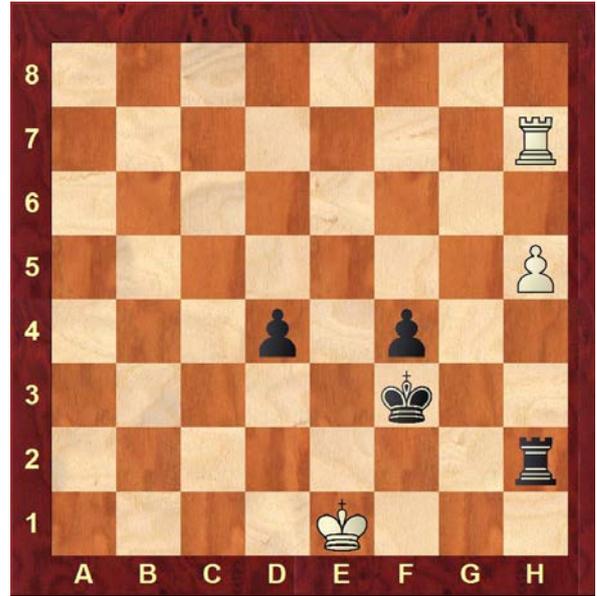
153. Black to play, what is the quickest way to win?

Problem 155

Problem 156



155. White to play - find the winning line



156. Can Black win this - if so what is the correct sequence of moves?

Last month's problems - Novice

Problem N51



N51. White to play and mate in just 2 moves

White avoids the obvious Rd1+ as after the forced reply Kh2 there are

Problem N52



N52. (i) Black to play and also mate in 2 moves

(ii) If White to play what is the best move and what should be the result?

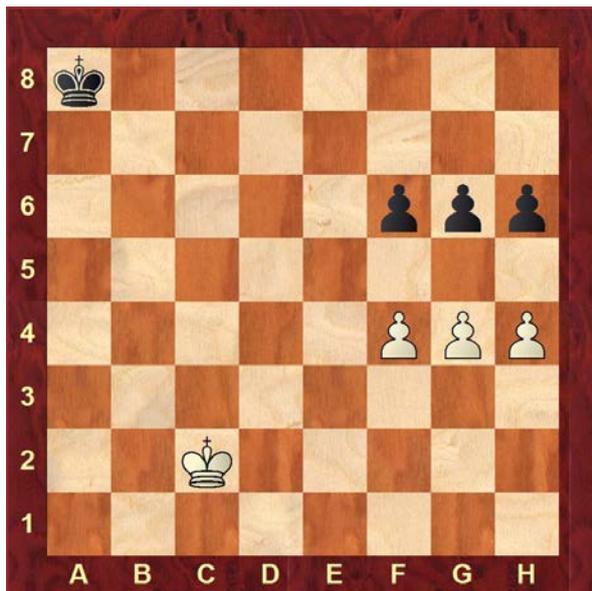
(i) Black plays
1. d1+

stalemate chances for Black.
 Instead White plays
 1. Kg3
 When Black has only 2 moves
 Either
 1. Kg1 then
 2. Rd1#
 Or
 1. h2 then again
 2. Rd1#

If White replies either
 2. Re1 then
 2. Qh5#
 Or
 2. Kh2 then again
 2. Qh5#
 (ii)
 For White to move then plays
 1. Rd6 to attack the pawn
 1. Ke2 to protect pawn and threaten queening.
 2. Rxd2 Kxd2 and game is drawn!
 Note if White tries
 2 Re6+ then
 2. Ke3 keeps the draw as does Kf2 (repeats starting position)
 Note that
 2. Kd1 blocks the queening square and allows White to play Kg2 and if the White K can reach e2 then has chances to win.

Last month's problems - Intermediate

Problem I51



I51. (i) This is famous test example. How does White to play win?
 (ii) If it were Black to play what is the best move?

(i) White has to do a double sacrifice to obtain an unstoppable passed pawn
 1. g5! if then fxg5
 2. h5 if then gxh5

Problem I52



I52. Black has just played a5 and offered the draw which White accepts. Was this the correct decision by White - what would you have done?

(i) White should not accept the draw and not try the solution as in I51 because the Black king is too close to the pawns. Black also has

3. f5 and this pawn queens before the Black pawns

If

1. g5! hxg5
2. f5 gxf5
3. h5 and queens first

(ii) If Black to play then

1. g5 leads to pawn exchanges and a drawn position

chances to create a passed pawn with b5 (sacrifice) and then run the c or a pawn towards the end rank and this will deflect White's King and allow Black drawing chances. White has a strong passed pawn on d5 and this stops the Black King attacking the other pawns.

So best is

1. Ke3 - this puts the K in a position to help the kingside or queenside pawns and support the pawn on d5 depending on what Black plays.

For example,

1. Ke3 b5
2. axb5 Kc7
3. Kd3 a4
4. Kc3 Kb8

5. Kb7 and White will win the a pawn and the can create passed pawns on both sides of the board using the trick in I51

Alternatively

1. Ke3 f5
2. h5! gxh5
3. g5! hxg5
4. fxg5 b5
5. g6 bxc4
6. g7 Kxd5
7. g8=Q and wins