

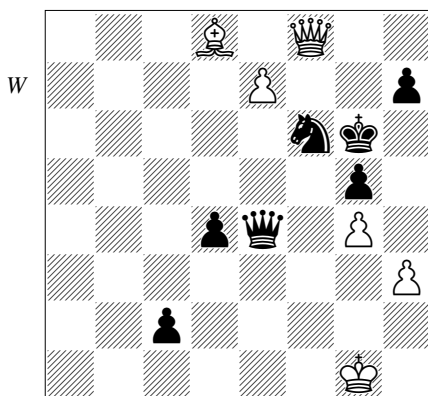
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2 Battery Play

A battery is a setting of two pieces of the same colour targeting an enemy piece or a certain square. Moving the front piece exposes the target to the threat of the rear piece. The rear piece may be any line-mover (queen, rook or bishop) while the front piece may be any piece but the queen. Operating the battery generates a discovered attack by the rear piece of the battery while the front ('firing') piece may create a second threat simultaneously.

Just as with the fork, if the discovered attack is made against the enemy king, the defending options are limited, and the firing piece has *carte blanche* to wreak havoc. If both rear and firing pieces attack the enemy king simultaneously it's a *double check*, which forces a king move – provided that there is still one available.



Euwe – Denker
Groningen 1946

This highly charged position calls for urgent measures. Can you suggest one for White?

There is just one way out:

49 ♖xf6+!

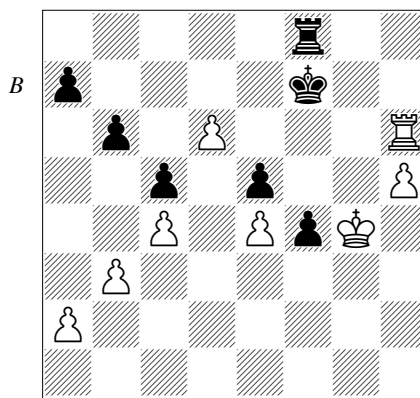
After 49 e8♖+? ♗xe8 50 ♖g8+ ♗g7 +- White runs out of checks.

49...♗xf6

Black's king has entered into the white bishop-and-pawn battery and now comes under a discovered check that leaves him a piece behind with a lost ending.

50 e8♖+ ♗g7 51 ♖xe4 c1♖+ 52 ♗f2 +-

A battery may be unleashed so that either the front piece or the rear one checks – a *discovered attack* or a *discovered check*, respectively. In either case, as getting out of check takes priority, the other target is often lost.



Petrosian – Korchnoi
USSR Spartakiad, Moscow 1963

Is Black doing as badly as it appears?

Not at all! Quite the contrary. A tactical blow turns the tables in just a single move:

35...f3! 36 ♗g5

36 ♗xf3 ♗g7+ is a discovered check, winning the white rook.

36...♗e8!

Not 36...f2? 37 ♖f6+ ♗g8 (37...♗e8?? 38 d7+! +-) 38 ♖g6+ ♗h7 39 ♖h6+ ♗g7 40 ♖g6+ ♗f7 41 ♖f6+ with perpetual check.

0-1

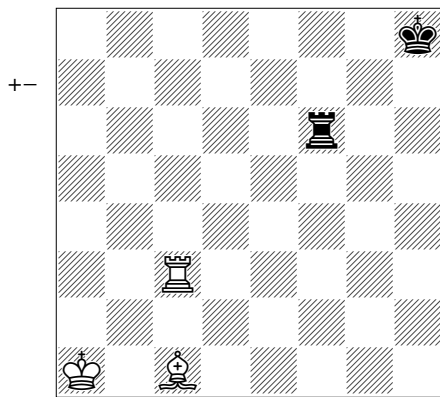
The black pawn is no longer stoppable.

The main types of battery are:

1) In a *direct battery* the rear piece is unleashed directly against the enemy king or another target.

2) An *indirect battery* is aimed at a square around the king or another piece to hinder that piece from moving to this square.

3) In a *masked battery*, a piece of either colour is standing between the front piece and the target and moving it sets the battery ready to fire.



R. Bianchetti
L'Italia Scacchistica, 1924

The ending of ♖+♙ vs ♜ is usually drawn, though far from easy to defend in practice owing to a number of winning positions with this material. In this classical study, White wins thanks to the powerful masked battery:

1 ♙b2! ♜h6

A symmetrical echo variation is 1...♜f8 2 ♜c7+ ♙g8 3 ♜g7+ ♙h8 4 ♙a2! with zugzwang followed by a discovered attack depending on the move of the black rook: 4...♜a8+ 5 ♜a7+.

There is another pair of symmetrical echo variations with a double check followed by mate: 1...♜f7 2 ♜h3++ ♙g8 3 ♜h8# and 1...♜g6 2 ♜c8++ ♙h7 3 ♜h8#.

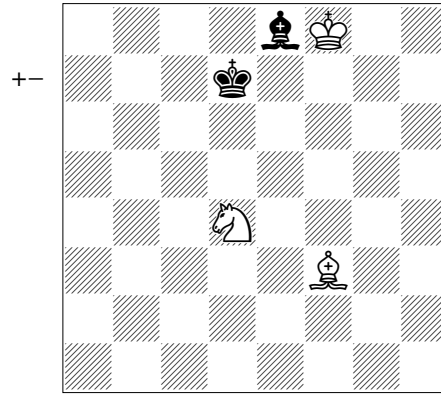
2 ♜g3+ ♙h7 3 ♜g7+ ♙h8 4 ♙b1!

Zugzwang! Not 4 ♙a2? ♜a6+ 5 ♙b1 ♜a1+ 6 ♙c2 ♜c1+ 7 ♙b3 ♜c3+ 8 ♙xc3.

4...♜h1+ 5 ♜g1+ +-

Operating a battery may be even more effective if combined with another tactical or

positional element. Zugzwang, for example, as in the next example:



C. Bent
EG, 1968

1 ♙g4+ ♙d8 2 ♞e6+ ♙d7

Now the temptation to win the bishop right away by using the battery immediately would prove premature: 3 ♞g7+? ♙d8! 4 ♞xe8 stalemate.

3 ♙h3!

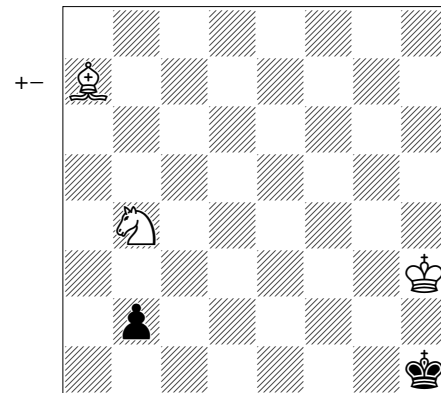
Patience pays off! Black is in zugzwang. Any bishop move is met by a discovered check.

3 ♙f5? allows Black to slip away by 3...♙g6!

3...♙g6

Or 3...♙h5 – the bishop is lost in either case.

4 ♞f4+ +-



E. Pogosiants
Problemista, 1964

The pawn is beyond reach. What is to be done?

The cornered king should lead you to the right idea.

1 ♖d3! b1♗!

The best try. After 1...b1♗ 2 ♗f2+ ♔g1 3 ♗e4+ ♕f1 (3...♔h1 4 ♗g3#) 4 ♗d2+ the queen is lost.

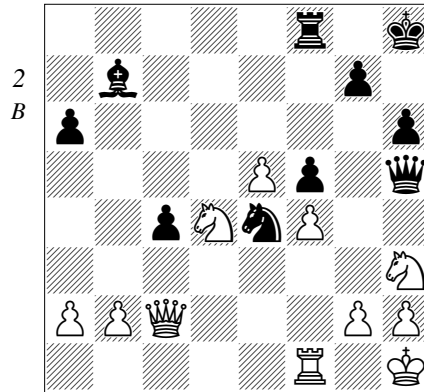
2 ♙c5!!

This is the only effective waiting move, preventing the enemy knight from fleeing to freedom via a3. For example, after 2 ♙b6? ♗a3 3 ♗f4 ♗c4 4 ♙d4 ♗d2 5 ♗h5 ♗e4! White has reached a dead end.

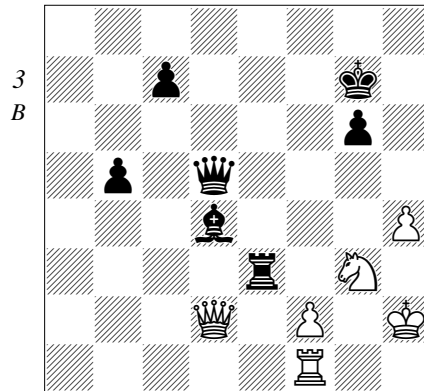
2...♗c3 3 ♗f2+ ♔g1 4 ♗e4+ ♕h1

Hoping for stalemate; however...

5 ♗g3#

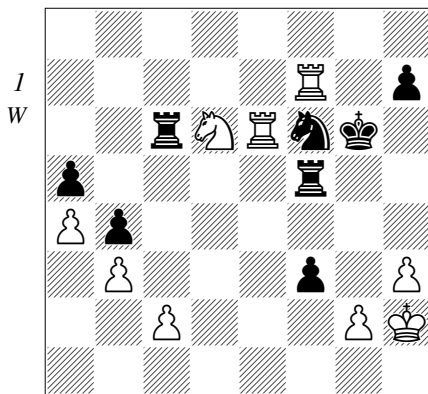


How did Black turn a beautiful diagonal into a deadly battery?

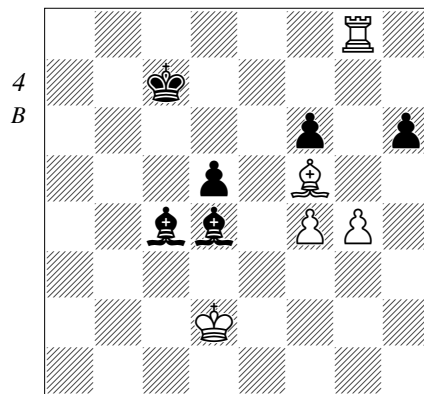


What is the fastest way for Black to finish White off in this winning ending?

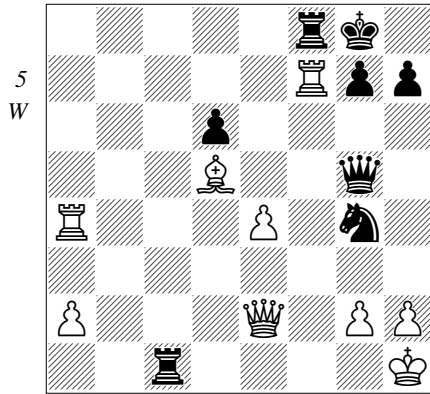
Battery Play Exercises



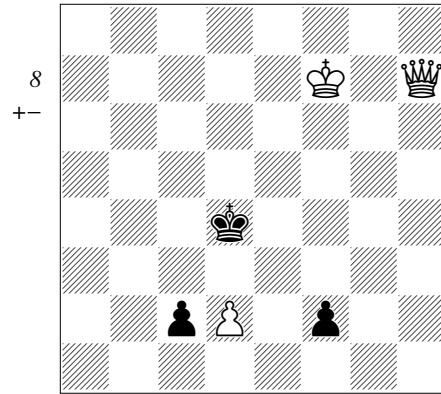
Is the mutual dependence of the white pieces so uncomfortable for him?



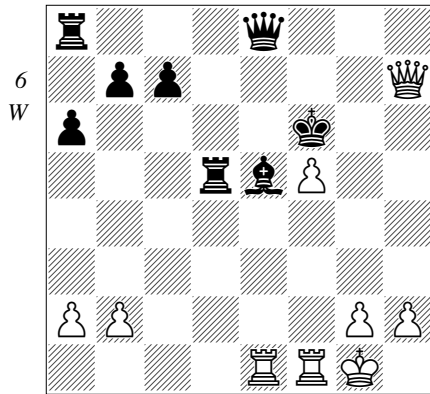
Is there any hope for Black in this difficult ending?



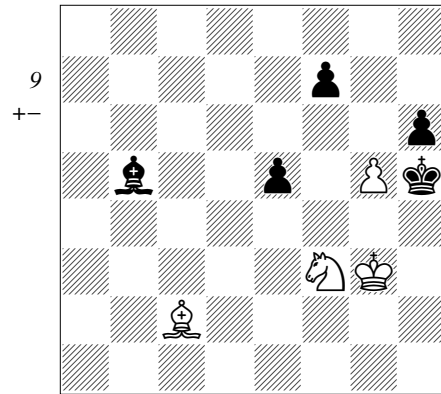
Whose back rank is more vulnerable?



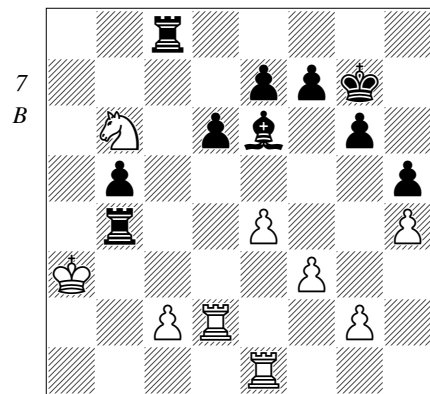
Can White stop Black promoting?



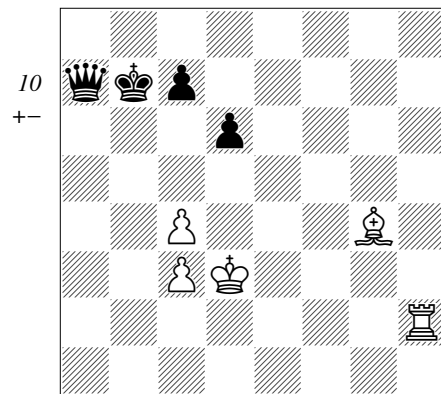
A piece behind, should White go for a perpetual check?



With White's last pawn about to be traded, what else can he still hope for?



Is there a way for Black to save both his attacked rooks?



How could the queen be trapped on a relatively open board?