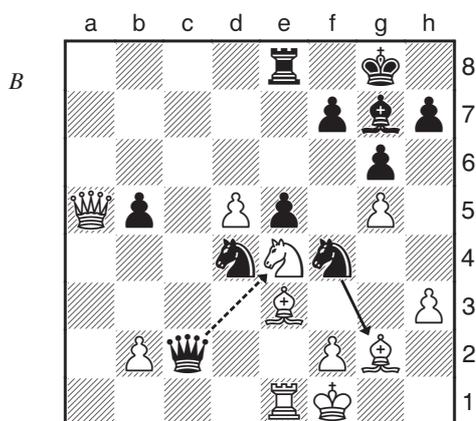


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## 7 Removing the Guard

This idea is best explained by means of an example.

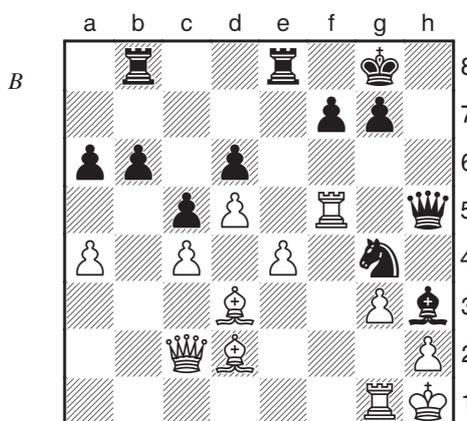


**Socko – Nakamura**  
*Bermuda 2002*

Here White's g2-bishop has the function of defending the knight on e4. If the bishop is eliminated by an exchange, the knight will be undefended. Black therefore continued **27...♖xg2**, so that if White plays **28 ♖xg2**, then **28...♜xe4+** wins a piece. White tried **28 ♙xd4**, but after **28...♞xe1 29 ♜xe1 ♜c4+** he resigned since **30...♜xd4** will leave him a rook down.

The basic situation is that one piece is defending a second one; when the first is eliminated by capture, the second can be taken for nothing. We shall call this **removing the guard**. However, there is no completely standard definition of this term in chess literature. In this book we extend the term to cover cases in which the first piece's vital duty may be something other than defending a second

piece. In the following position the vital duty is defending against a mate threat.



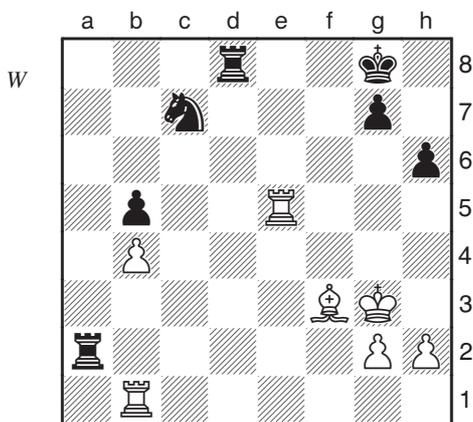
**Chabanon – Bauer**  
*French Ch, Narbonne 1997*

White's f5-rook has the vital duty of preventing **...♞f2#**. Black exploited this to play **32...♜xf5**, winning a rook for nothing. White resigned immediately.

Removing the guard is really a very general concept, since pieces take on and give up various duties all the time. However, we only apply the term when the removal of a piece has a specific short-term consequence, such as loss of material or mate. There are three common ways in which a piece can be compelled to give up an important duty. The first is deflection (see Chapter 5), when the piece is forcibly dragged away by a violent action elsewhere. The second is capture, as in the two examples above. The third is by a direct attack on the piece concerned, as in the following position. We also use the term

removing the guard to cover this type of action.

unexpectedly unpins the knight by 36...♞e8!  
36...♞f8 37 ♜d7 ♞g8 38 ♞h4 ♞h8 39 ♞h5  
♞g8 40 ♞g6 and Black's position collapses.

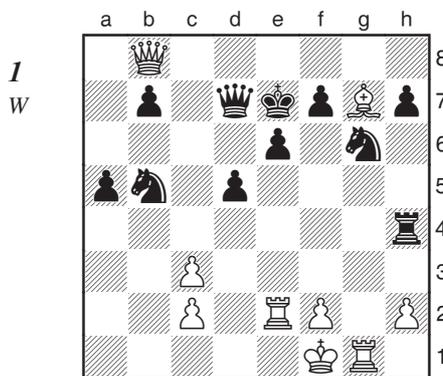


**Tsesarsky – Berkovich**  
*Israeli Team Ch 1997*

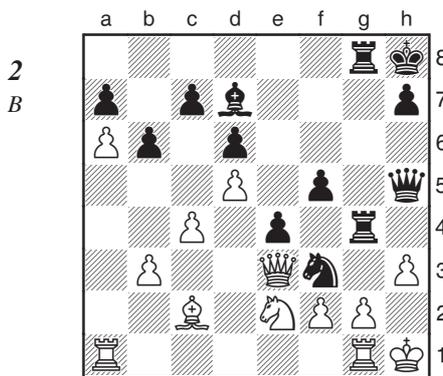
Here the black knight has the duty of defending d5 so as to prevent the fork ♞d5+. White can attack this knight with one of his rooks, trying to force it to move. 34 ♜c5 is inferior as Black replies 34...♞a7, defending the knight and removing the rook from the vulnerable a2-square. The correct choice is **34 ♜c1!**, as played in the game. Black replied 34...♞a6, just allowing the fork; after **35 ♞d5+ ♜xd5 36 ♜xd5 ♞xb4 37 ♜xb5** White was a clear exchange ahead and won using the extra material. Why did Black not defend the knight with one of his rooks? After 34...♞d7 (34...♞c8 is even worse as 35 ♞d5+ wins a whole rook) White eliminates the knight by capture, as in the first two positions: 35 ♜xc7 ♜xc7 36 ♞d5+ and 37 ♞xa2, with an extra piece for White. The final possibility for Black is 34...♞a7, but after 35 ♜e7 the knight is pinned and Black can only avoid losing it immediately by 35...♞c8. Then there is a comical situation in which Black's entire army is paralysed by the need to defend the doubly pinned knight. The simplest win is by marching White's king up the board; for example, 36 ♜c6 (not 36 ♞g4?, when Black

## Removing the Guard Exercises

Solutions start on page 134.



How did White win quickly by removing the guard?



How did Black press home his kingside attack?