

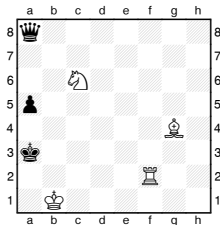
Michael Adams



A world of mysteries

Congratulations to John Nunn, who became the World Problem Solving Champion for the third time. The British team, supported by Winton Capital, ended up fourth.

Here is a dastardly puzzle from the event, which stumped many of the expert solvers.



Yuri Bazlov, 5th Prize

Gusev Jubilee Tourney 1994

White to play and win

1.Rf2-a2+ Ka3-b3
2.Bg4-d1+ Kb3-c3

After 2...Kb3-c4 3.Bd1-e2+ leaves the king with no safe haven 3...Kc4-c5 (3...Kc4-b3 4.Ra2-b2+ Kb3-a3 5.Be2-d1 Qa8xc6 6.Rb2-b3+ Ka3-a4 7.Rb3-b6+) 4.Ra2xa5+.

3.Bd1-e2

A tricky to spot, quiet move.

3... Qa8-b7+

If 3...Qa8-f8 White carries out his mating plan: 4.Ra2-c2+ Kc3-b3 5.Be2-c4+ Kb3-a4 6.Rc2-a2+, if 3...Qa8-g8 4.Ra2-c2+ Kc3-b3 5.Be2-c4+ Qg8xc4 6.Nc6xa5+ picks up the queen.

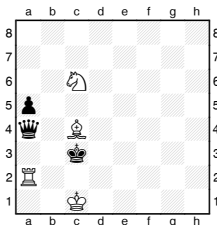
4.Kb1-c1 Qb7-b3

Not 4...Qb7-h7 5.Ra2-a3 mate, following

4...Qb7-f7 5.Ra2-c2+ Kc3-b3 6.Be2-c4+ Qf7xc4 7.Nc6xa5+ White wins the queen whilst maintaining mating material.

5.Be2-c4 Qb3-a4

5...Qb3xc4 6.Ra2-c2+ Kc3-d3 7.Nc6-e5+ is a decisive fork.



6.Nc6-e5

Black's idea is that 6.Ra2xa4 is stalemate. However, this sensational knight-move calmly defending the White bishop snares Black's queen.

6... Qa4-e8

Or 6...Qa4-b4 7.Ra2-c2+ Kc3-d4 8.Ne5-c6+.

7.Ra2-c2+ Kc3-d4

Forced as 7...Kc3-b4 8.Ne5-d3+ Kb4-a3 9.Rc2-a2 is mate.

8.Ne5-f3+ Kd4-e4

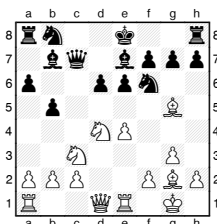
8...Kd4-c5 9.Bc4-f7+ also wins.

9.Rc2-e2+ Ke4xf3

with an easy win.

The 4NCL season has also kicked off again.

This brutal attack from the varsity match pairing shows the dangers of your king getting stuck in the centre.



Rose, M - Dearing, E

4NCL 2010

11.Bg5xf6 g7xf6

It looks very hazardous to play 11...Be7xf6, but Black has some defensive resources. 12.Nc3xb5 (12.e4-e5 Bf6xe5 13.Nd4xb5 a6xb5 14.Nc3xb5 Qc7-b6 15.Bg2xb7 Ra8-a7 (Not 15...Qb6xb7 16.Re1xe5) 16.Nb5xa7 Qb6xb7 allows Black to survive unscathed.) 12...a6xb5 13.Nd4xb5 Qc7-b6 14.Nb5xd6+ Ke8-e7 15.e4-e5 (15.Nd6xb7 Bf6-e5 this important bishop-move takes the sting out of White's initiative.) 15...Bb7xg2 and White can't seem to land a killer blow e.g 16.e5xf6+ g7xf6 17.Nd6-f5+ Ke7-f8 18.Qd1-h5 h7-h6 19.Nf5xh6 Rh8-h7 20.Kg1xg2 Ra8-a5 21.Qh5-h4 Kf8-g7 picking up the knight.

12.Qd1-h5 Bb7-c8

12...Ke8-f8 13.Qh5-h6+ Kf8-e8 leaves the king stranded in the centre forever, but prevents immediate calamity.

13.Nd4-f5 e6xf5

Ignoring the knight is also dire: 13...Nb8-c6 14.Nf5-g7+ Ke8-f8 (14...Ke8-d8 15.Qh5xf7) 15.Qh5-h6 but now all avenues into the Black position are open.

14.Nc3-d5 Qc7-c5

14...Qc7-a7 15.e4xf5 Nb8-c6 16.Re1xe7+ Nc6xe7 17.Ra1-e1 Ra8-b8 18.Qh5-h6 Bc8xf5 19.Qh6xf6 mops up.

15.Nd5xe7 Ke8xe7

16.e4xf5+ Ke7-d8

17.Qh5xf7 Ra8-a7

After 17...Nb8-d7 18.Bg2xa8 White has the material and the attack.

18.Qf7xf6+ Kd8-c7

19.Qf6xh8 Bc8xf5

20.Ra1-d1 Nb8-d7

21.Re1-e3 b5-b4

22-c2-c3

1-0