

Chess Movies[®] 2

The Means and Ends

by
Bruce Pandolfini

The Pandolfini Chess Library



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Russell Enterprises, Inc.
Milford, CT USA

Chess Movies® 2

The Means and Ends

by Bruce Pandolfini

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Introduction: *Chess Movies*[®] 2

In the first book of the *Chess Movies*[®] series, the opening was featured. The material consisted of games finishing in nine moves or fewer. The games hinged on traps or surprising ways to exploit blunders and inexact moves. In this second offering of the series, the focus is on the endgame. Like in *Chess Movies*[®] 1: *Quick Tricks*, all the examples in *Chess Movies*[®] 2: *The Means and Ends* are drawn from actual play. But there's more to it.

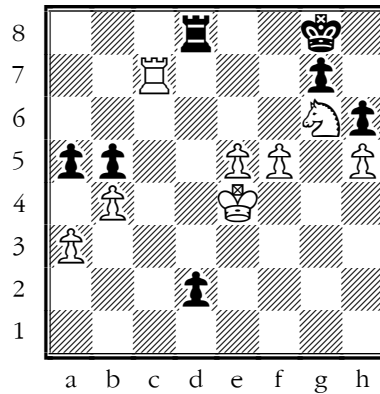
Arranged in chronological order from 1789 to 2007, the endings contained herein are not merely the conclusions of real games. Each illustration terminates in a position that is checkmate or on the verge of checkmate. Additionally intriguing are the players responsible for the victories. For the most part the games have been played by the best players in the world, often against each other. Here we can relive the final moves of some of the most exciting battles of all time. Indeed, among the inclusions are positions drawn from classic world championship matches. They underscore a great truth: that even the very best players can fall for checkmate. We can watch, for instance, how Alekhine cornered Capablanca in a hopeless pin (example 18) or the way Smyslov set up Botvinnik, luring him into a devilish snare where checkmate could not be averted (example 27).

Although such examples, some drawn from rapid contests, often revolve around tactical play, we still get to see strategic endgame principles put to good use. Whether the win is achieved by a rook on the seventh rank, the better positioned king, the advance of a dangerous passed pawn, or the constrictive power of a more centralized queen, most of the wins accomplished herein are brought about by the timely interplay of strategy and tactics. But judge for yourself, and while you're at it, sit back and enjoy the show.

Bruce Pandolfini
New York, NY
April 2011

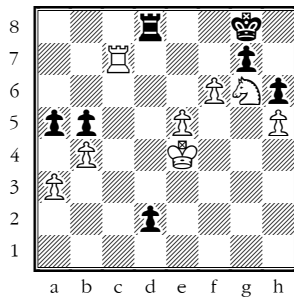
(1) Philidor vs. Wilson, 1789

White is up a knight

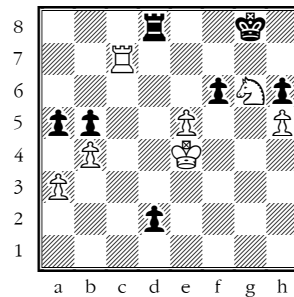


When up a piece, normally the winning strategy would be to simplify. This is easy enough, assuming White can stop the lusting d-pawn. Let's assume that White can't stop the advancing pawn. What then? Well, if you can't stop them, or join them, maybe you can mate them. Yes, having reached the above position, that's apparently what Philidor had in mind, either that or an opera score he was working on.

1.f6!



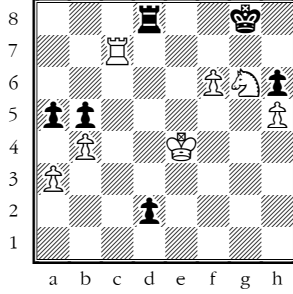
1...gxf6



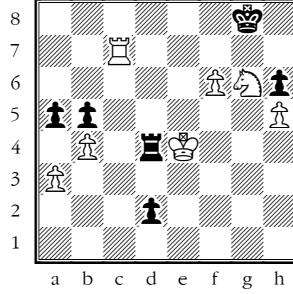
So, Philidor *was* thinking about chess. This capture temporarily stops the mate. The biggest threat is mate at g7.

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2.exf6



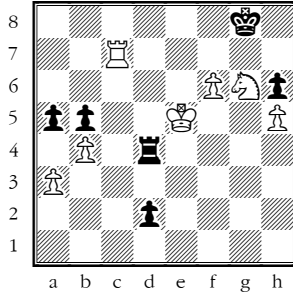
2...Rd4+



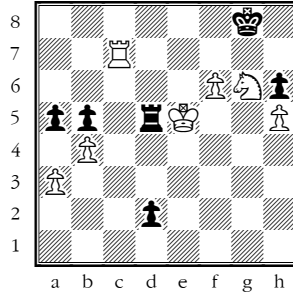
Once again there's a mate threat at g7. White's rook dominates the seventh rank.

If 3.Kxd4??., then the pawn promotes with check, 3...d1/Q+.

3.Ke5



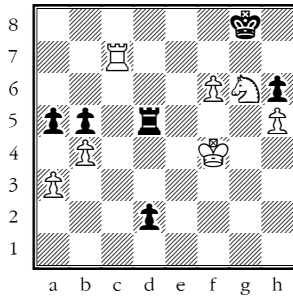
3...Rd5+



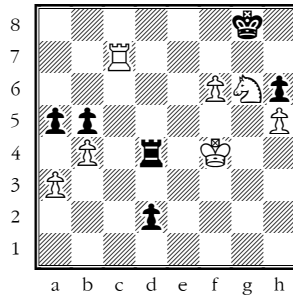
White is looking for a way to escape the checks.

Again, the rook shouldn't be captured.

4.Kf4



4...Rd4+

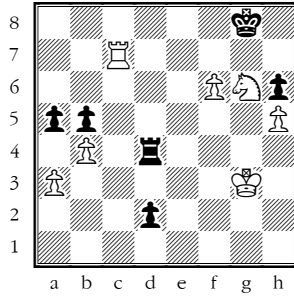


White sees an end to these annoying checks. The king will hide at g2 or h2.

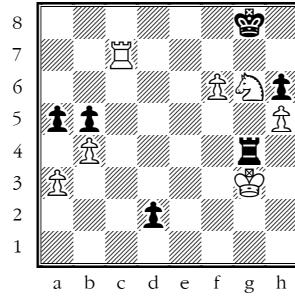
Black is still hoping.

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5.Kg3



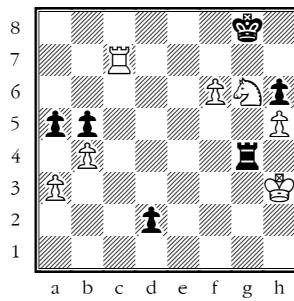
5...Rg4+!



But not 5.Kf3??, when the pawn queens with check.

A last ditch try: taking the rook allows Black to queen with check.

6.Kh3

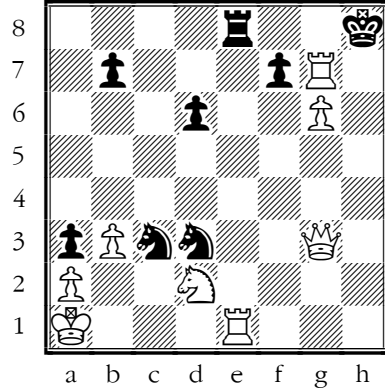


Any check leads to the rook's capture. Otherwise, White's rook soon mates. (1-0)

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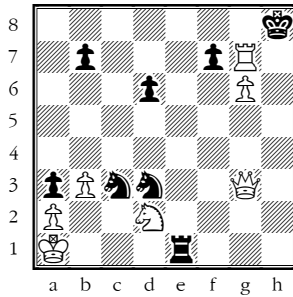
(2) LaBourdonnais vs. McDonnell, 1834

Black is down the Exchange for a pawn



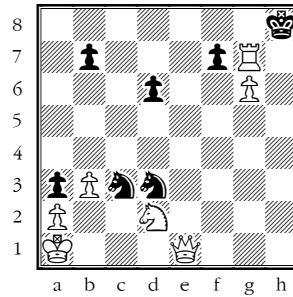
In this wild transitional position, before endgame features have become clear, having the move could be practically everything. Here, Black is down a queen, but not for long. And after winning it back, a new threat emerges, and this time it centers on the white king. In the end, White's position can't be saved. Black's knights are simply too murderous.

1...Rxe1+



This forces White to cede his own queen.

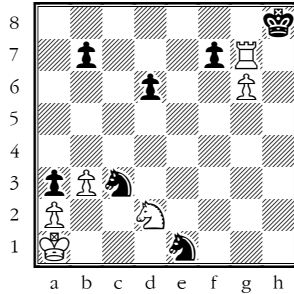
2.Qxe1



With the queens gone, perhaps White thought he would now be okay.

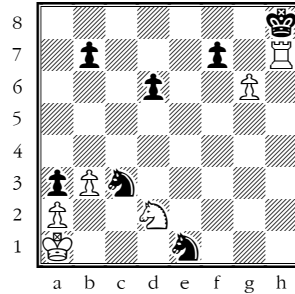
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2...Nxe1



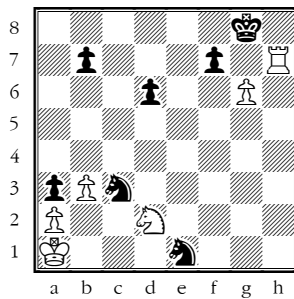
Not so fast. The lowly knight at e1 is menacing mate at c2.

3.Rh7+



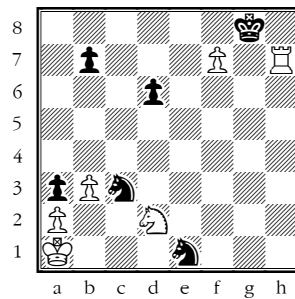
This saves the rook, for now.

3...Kg8



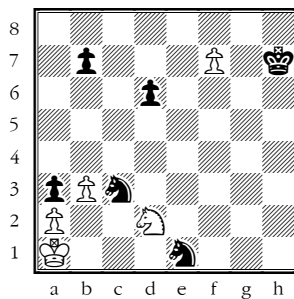
Quite frustratingly, White's knight prevents the rook from defending at h2.

4.gxf7+



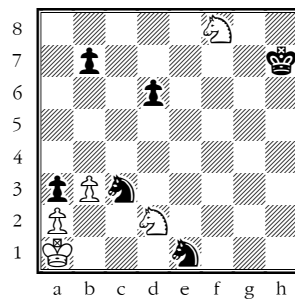
So White keeps the checks going.

4...Kxh7



It's a free rook, since 5.f8/Q loses to 5...Nc2 mate.

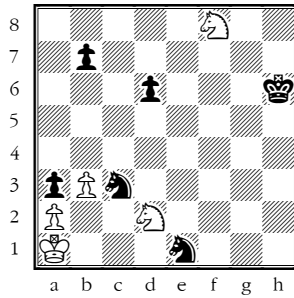
5.f8N+



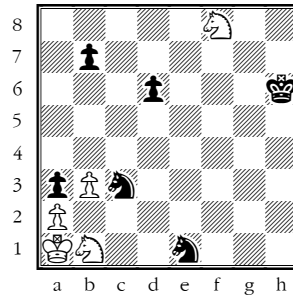
White hopes that Caissa fatefully permits 5...Kg7? 6.Ne6+ and 7.Nd4.

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5...Kh6



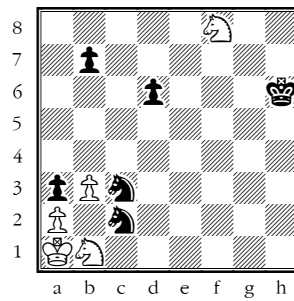
6.Nb1



This puts an end to such hopes.

One last hope — that Black plays anything but 6...Nc2 mate.

6...Nc2 mate



The final position is rather comical, even for these two stalwarts. **(0-1)**