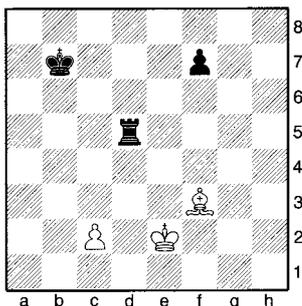


Pin

White to move

Solutions on page 129

When a piece is on the same line of attack as its king, it cannot move. It is 'pinned'. In the following position the black rook is pinned by the white bishop and cannot avoid capture.

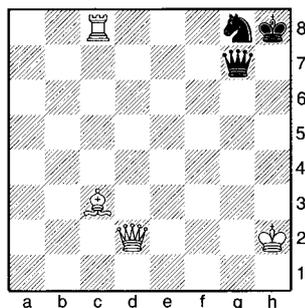


Black can try to limit the loss of material by playing 1... ♖c6, after which White should not be hasty: if he contents himself with winning the exchange with 2. ♗xd5+? ♔xd5 he will achieve no more than a draw; whereas if he piles on the pressure with 2. c4!, he will win the rook for nothing on the following move. The rook cannot escape because of the paralyzing pin.

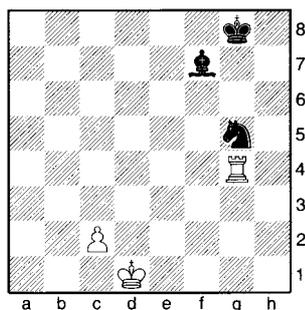
The pin is a very common tactical motif that can often lead to a gain in material or mate itself.

In the following position the 'protection' of the king by Black's

pieces is an optical illusion.



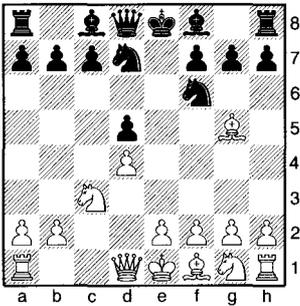
However, their presence makes seeing the mating move 1. ♔h6# much more difficult to see.



As with all tactical ideas it is always necessary to anticipate your opponent's reply. In the example above, White has just played 1. ♖g4, taking advantage of the pin to win the knight, but after 1. ♗h5, White's smile will become a frown as he

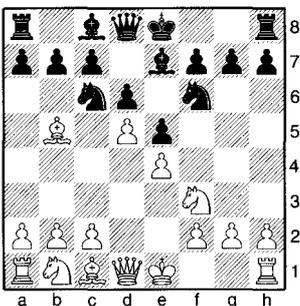
realises his rook is now itself pinned, with a won game for Black!

When a piece is pinned to the king, we have an absolute pin. If the piece is pinned to any other piece, this is called a relative pin, as it is always possible that it may be opportune for the pinned piece to move and leave the formerly shielded piece to its fate.



In this well known opening variation, it would appear that White can win the d pawn, exploiting the fact that the knight on f6 is pinned to the queen. In fact, 1. Nxd5? is a blunder, as Black can reply 1... Nxd5! ; and after 2. Qxd8 Bb4+! 3. Wd2 Qxd2+ 4. Kxd2 Kxd8 , White finds himself down a piece.

Even with an absolute pin, there are times when the defender can free himself from what appears to be a devastating pin.



In the above position the knight on c6 is pinned to the king by the white bishop and at the same time it is attacked by the pawn on d5.

At first glance the knight looks doomed. However, Black has a typical unpinning manoeuvre at this disposal: 1... a6! 2. Qa4 (the only move that maintains White's threat; the alternatives 2. Qxc6+ bxc6 and 2. dxc6 axb5 gain nothing) 2... b5! .

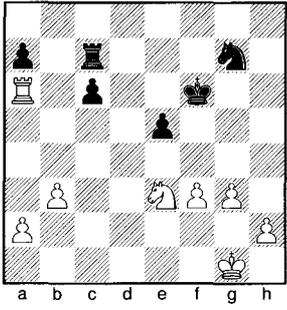
By continuing to harass the white bishop, Black has neutralised the pin; after 3. dxc6 bxa4 or 3. Bb3 Na5 etc, the position remains balanced.

This example teaches us that in the opening a pinned knight on c6 or f6 (c3 or f3 for White) is not something to be overly afraid of. It is only in some cases that it is advisable to prevent the pin with h6 or a6 ; in many others the prophylactic pawn move is a useless waste of time that creates a potential target.

Often, Black can safely respond to the pinning move Qg5 by playing Qe7 ; otherwise, but only after the arrival of the bishop, Black may choose to 'put the question' to White's bishop with h6 .

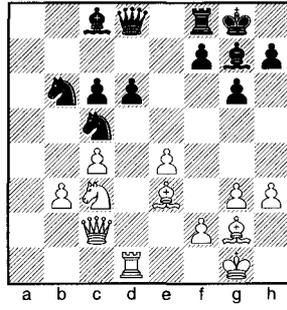
Pin

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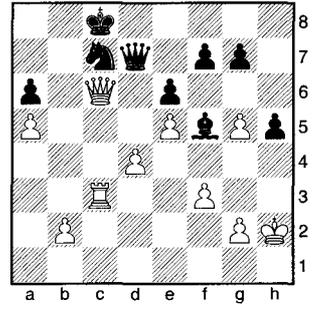
Let's get started

326



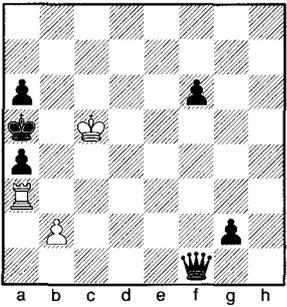
This won't take you long

327



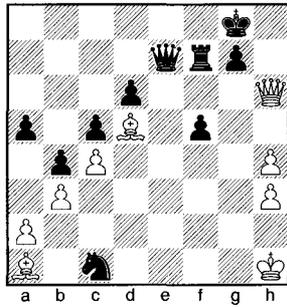
In one

328



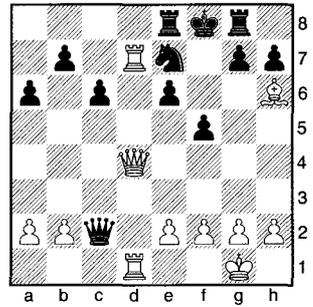
Forget about en passant!

329



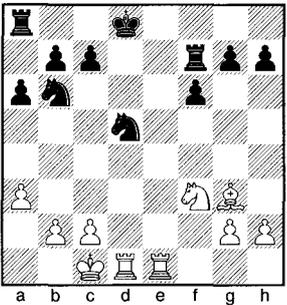
Apparent defence

330



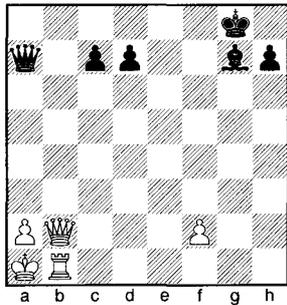
Time to get close

331



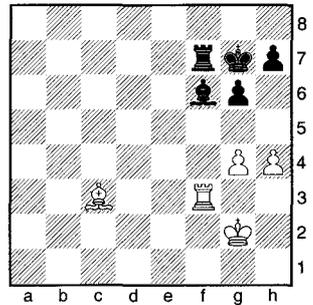
A pawn for a piece

332



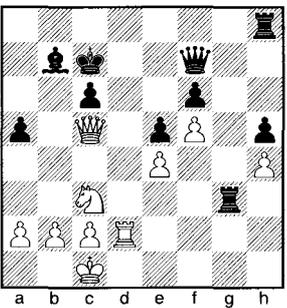
White's pinned queen looks a goner

333



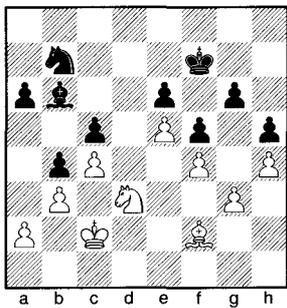
A piece up for grabs

334



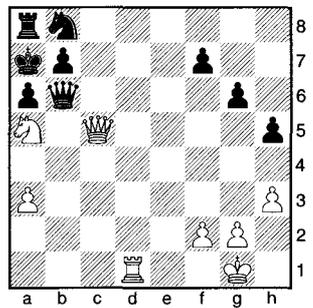
The pin provides a fork

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Loose pieces...

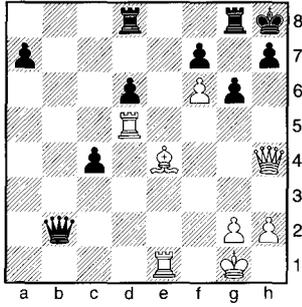
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Absolute and relative

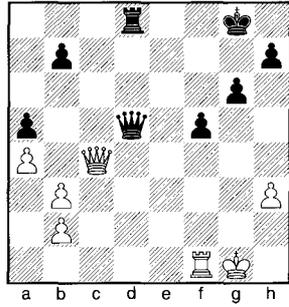
Pin

337



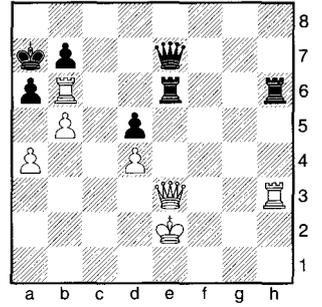
This is a classic

338



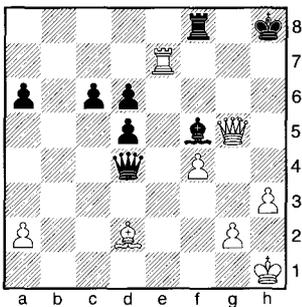
A pin and something in between

339



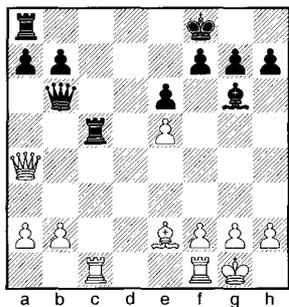
He who pins last...

340



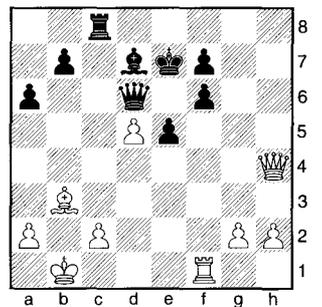
Let's go back a little

341



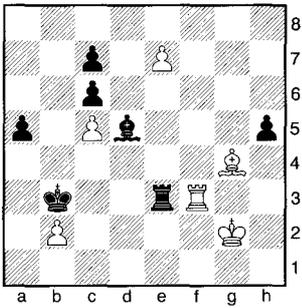
We've seen this one before

342



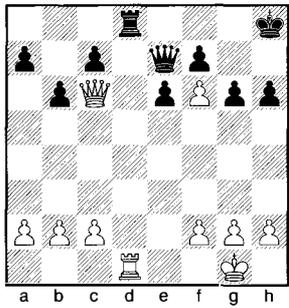
Opening lines

343



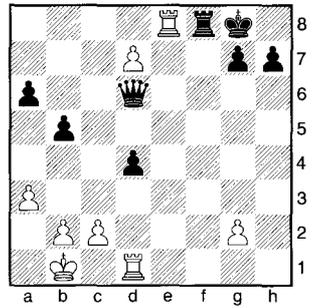
Who's pinning whom?

344



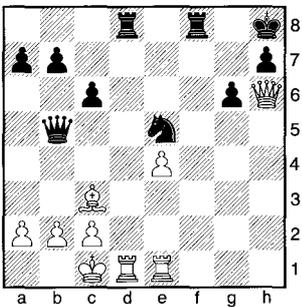
A pin and deflection

345



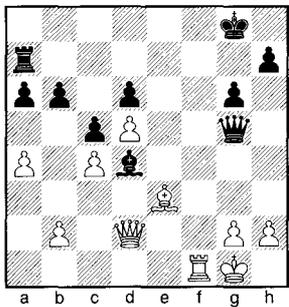
Immediate victory

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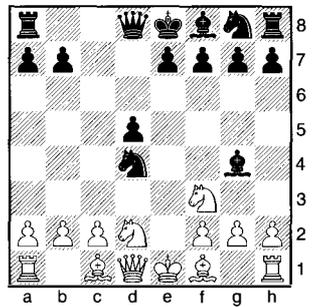
Pinned protector

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No more pin

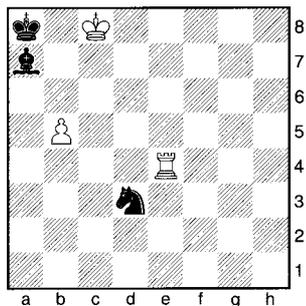
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Did you read the intro?

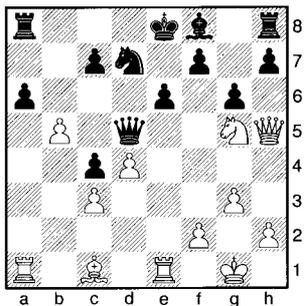
Pin

349



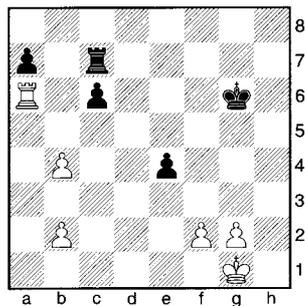
This is pretty

350



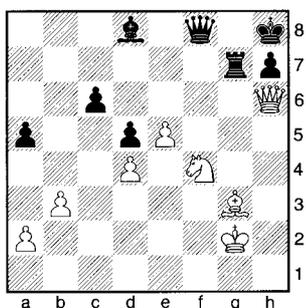
The e-file is the key

351



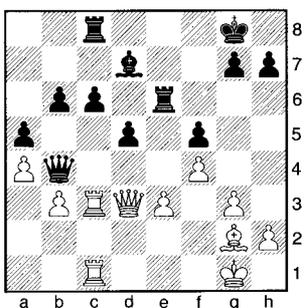
Winning endgame

352



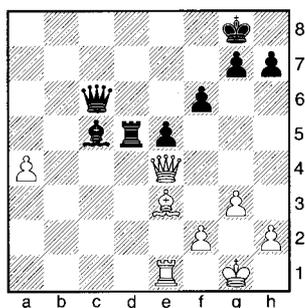
Two pins

353



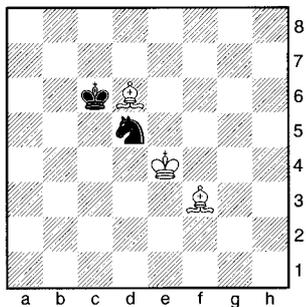
A pinned pawn

354



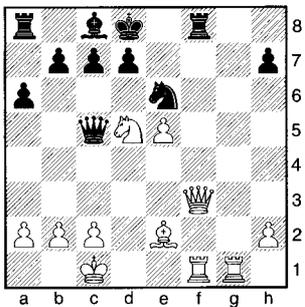
A paralysing move

355



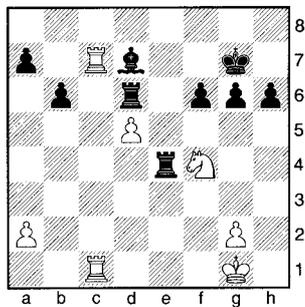
Two ♔'s will mate a lone king

356



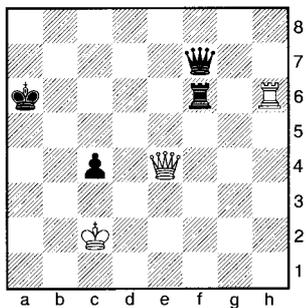
A pin and deflection

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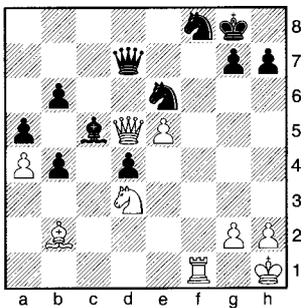
A poisonous pin

358



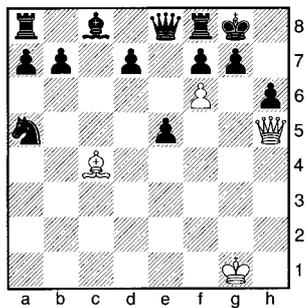
Killer cross pin

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An undefended queen

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A composed pin