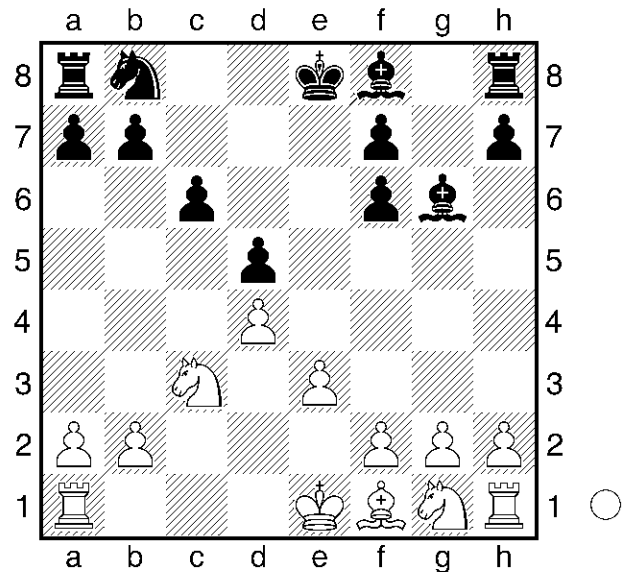


INTRO

The section on pawn structure first appeared in 'The Chess Reports' and is published with the kind permission of Bob Long.

□ Ivanchuk, Vassily
 ■ Short, Nigel D
 Linares 10th (12)

D35
 2720
 2685
 1992



We learn very early that damaging our pawn structure is a bad idea. Doubled pawns, isolated pawns, tripled pawns are to be avoided lest a bad endgame lurks in the wings. That may be true, but there are certain circumstances when we can make a poor pawn structure work for us.

There are a few observations worth noting:

1) If your pawn structure is worse don't routinely swap the pieces off. Stay in the middlegame and aim for the initiative.

2) Isolated or doubled pawns generally mean OPEN LINES next to those pawns. Get your pieces on those open lines.

3) If you must swap pieces, keep your active pieces on the board at all cost. If you can tie the opponent down, you might be able to stop him from realising his strategical advantage.

Thus the matter is not clearcut. **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 d5 4.cxd5 exd5 5.Bg5 Bf5 6.e3 c6 7.Qf3 Bg6 8.Bxf6 Qxf6 9.Qxf6 gxf6**

On his road to the World Championship final against Kasparov

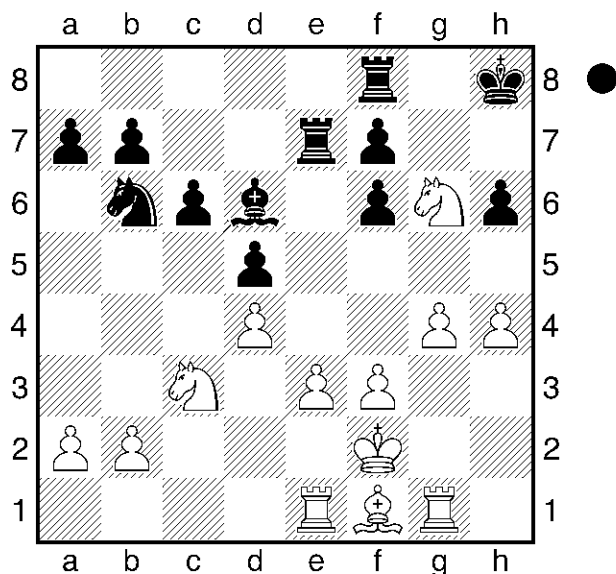
back in the early 1990's, Nigel Short seemed willing to play all sorts of openings where doubled pawns were involved. This is one such case in the Queen's Gambit. Black's position looks ghastly, but he has two Bishops and he may be able to tie White down on the dark squares.

I wouldn't like to be playing Petrosian with Black or a player of immense patience, but it is very tough for White to increase his advantage. **10.Kd2** Just supporting Bd3. Of course Black will not exchange on this square.

[10.Nge2 is another steady move, but in the following recent game Black easily held the balance: Nd7 11.Nf4 Nb6 12.f3 Bd6 It is very important White cannot contest the dark squares. This forms the larger part of Black's 'compensation' for the pawn weakness. 13.Kf2 0-0 14.h4 h6 15.g4 Rae8 16.Re1 Re7 17.Rg1 Kh8

A) 18.h5 Bh7 19.Ng2 Rfe8 20.Nh4 (20.Rd1 f5! Dissolving the doubled pawns!) 20...Bh2 21.Rh1 Bf4! With a serious hit on the dark squares. ;

B) 18.Nxg6+



Paradoxical, but he did not like:
fxg6 19.Bd3 Kg7 20.h5 g5
21.Re2 a6 22.Rd1 ½-½ Grischuk,
A (2710)-Bruzon Bautista,L (2652)/
Wijk aan Zee 2005

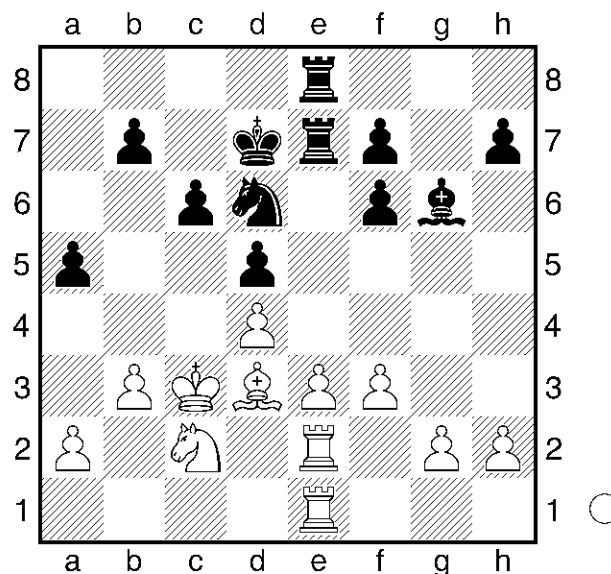
At this level, the opposite coloured
Bishops mitigate in favour of a
draw]

10...Nd7 11.Bd3 a5 12.Nf3 Nb6
13.b3 Kd7 14.Ne1 Bb4 15.Nc2
Bxc3+ Unstereotyped. Short
supposedly gives up his main trump
card.

In reality Black is looking deeply into
the position. White cannot open up the
game without preparing and carrying
out the e3-e4 advance, so Black takes
away a defender of that square and
piles up on the e file. 16.Kxc3 Nc8!
17.Rae1 Nd6 18.f3 Rhe8 19.Re2
Re7 20.Rhe1 Rae8

(Diagram)

The strategy is complete. Black's active
pieces dissuade White from his pawn
break. The doubled pawns on f7 and f6
cannot be considered a weakness if
White cannot get to them. 21.Na3 b6
22.Kd2 Bxd3 23.Kxd3 f5 24.Nb1



c5! Reminding Ivanchuk that Black has
a queenside pawn majority. 25.Nc3
Kc6 26.a4 Re6 27.Rc1 h5 28.Rcc2
h4 29.Rc1 Rg6 30.Rcc2 Reg8

Note the switch to another half-open
file next to the doubled pawns. 31.Nb1
Ne8 32.Nc3 Nc7 33.e4 Finally, to get
active, but now the doubled pawns
disappear. fxe4+ 34.fxe4 Rg5

35.exd5+ This was a very instructive
game, which could easily be bypassed,
as in my experience many players
completely ignore games which are
drawn; they simply don't play them
through!

Short showed how to juggle with
doubled pawns and come out the other
side intact.

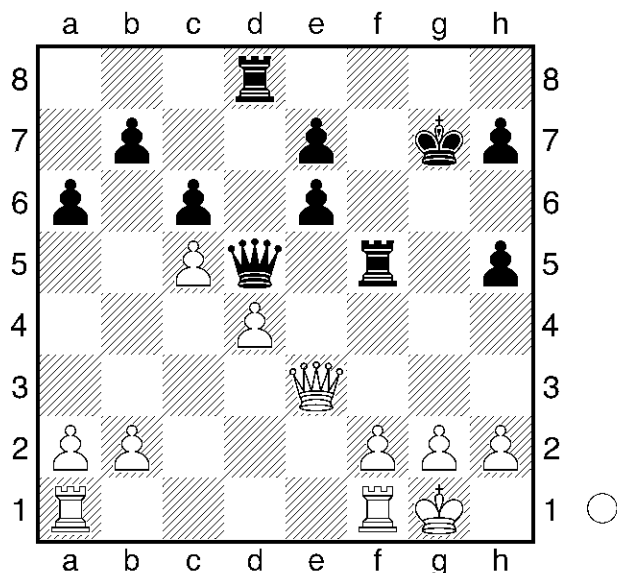
½-½

D15

□ Czerwonski, Aleksander 2379
■ Vysochin, Spartak 2562
Warsaw Najdorf Memorial op23.07.2010

Possibly this next game teaches us
even more. Black seems to inherit
one of the worst pawn structures ever
seen in the history of chess, yet wins

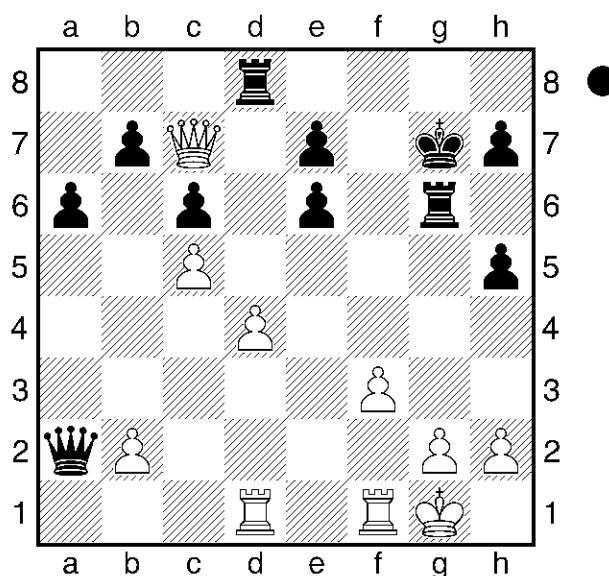
quite comfortably! **1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 a6** Not a bad line at all. This flexible variation of the Slav commits Black to nothing, yet at the same time ...a7-a6 can prove very useful. **5.c5 Nbd7 6.Bf4 Nh5 7.Bd2 g6 8.e4 dxe4 9.Nxe4 Ndf6 10.Nc3 Be6 11.Be2 Bg7 12.0-0 0-0 13.Qc1 Nd5 14.Ng5 Qd7!?** It takes some courage and a lot of self-confidence to play such a move. Black allows White to completely mess up his pawns. **15.Bxh5 gxh5 16.Nxe6 fxe6 17.Bh6 Rf5 18.Bxg7 Kxg7 19.Nxd5 Qxd5 20.Qe3 Rd8**



Using any conventional yardstick you would expect White to find a way to pick Black off at his leisure. Vysochin has two sets of doubled pawns and four isolated pawns to deal with. Why then, does White not win? The answer is very simple. Black's activity stops him. Remaining on the board we see three very aggressively posted Black major pieces fighting three passive pieces by White. Keep active, stay active, avoid exchanges. Vysochin understands the principles of these positions very well. **21.Rae1 Rf6**

22.b3

[22.Rd1 Rg6 23.f3 Qxa2 24.Qe5+ Kh6 25.Qf4+ Kg7 26.Qc7



is more like it for White. Cserwonski fails to understand he must fight for the initiative himself. Going passive with White here is losing chess.]

22...Kf7 23.Rd1 Rg8 24.f3 h4

25.Rf2 h3 26.g3 h5! The doubled pawns show some teeth, acting as a battering ram against the White King.

27.Re1 Rd8 28.Qd3 Kg7 29.Qf1?

[29.Qd2 Rf5 30.Re4 e5∞]

29...Qxd4 30.Qxh3 Rxf3! 31.Ref1

Rxf2 32.Rxf2 Rf8 33.Qf1 Qxc5

34.b4 Qxf2+ 35.Qxf2 Rxf2 36.Kxf2

Kf6 It is ironic that Black swaps off into a winning King and Pawn endgame!

37.Ke3 Kf5 38.h3 b6 39.Kd4 e5+

40.Ke3 c5 41.bxc5 bxc5 42.Kd3

e4+ It is important to be able to differentiate between static and dynamic weaknesses in chess. A poor pawn structure which offers no prospect of dynamic compensation in terms of open lines or which cannot be dissolved, is obviously something to be avoided.

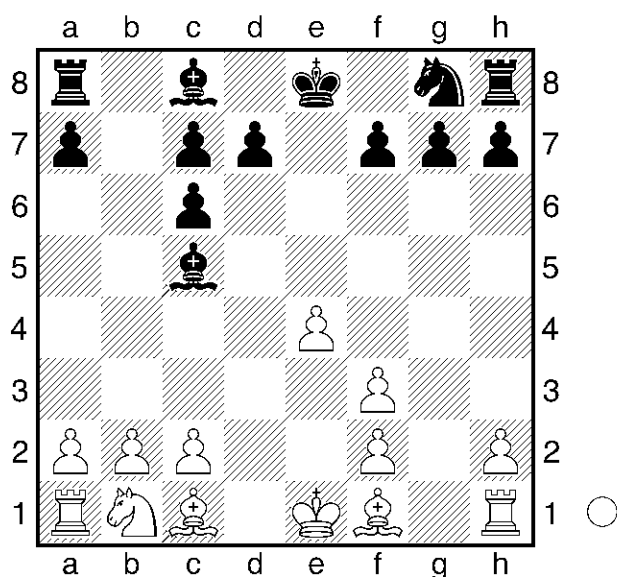
But that is not what we are seeing in

these games.

0-1

C45
2577
2758
 □ Tseshkovsky, Vitaly
 ■ Morozevich, Alexander
 RUS-ch 57th Moscow (3) 17.11.2004

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4
 4.Nxd4 Bc5 5.Nxc6 Qf6 6.Qf3!?
 Qxf3 7.gxf3 bxc6



A classic situation where both sides have inherited a set of doubled pawns right out of the opening. Black must be more careful though! White can create a passed pawn using his kingside pawns whereas Black cannot. Thus White's strategic idea is revealed.

8.Rg1! Ne7 9.Be3

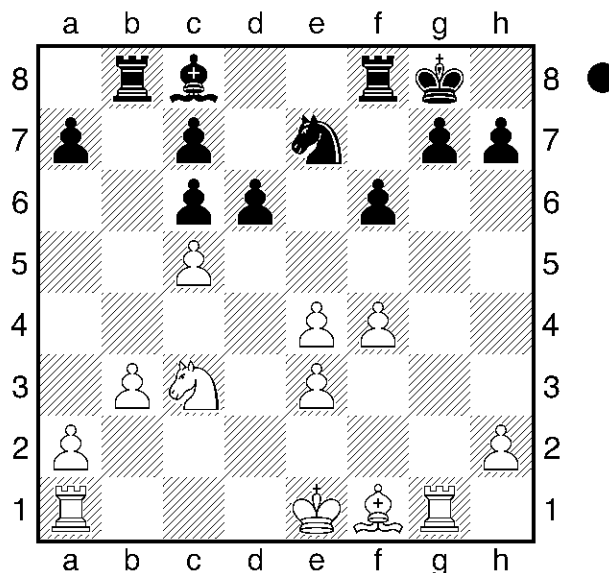
[After 9.Rxg7 Ng6 Black wins the exchange.]

9...Bb6?! A waste of a move as after 10.c4 Black is forced to trade bishops anyhow, while c2-c4 is very useful for White.

[9...Bxe3 10.fxe3± White has long-term stable edge in this ending.]

10.c4 Bxe3 11.fxe3 0-0 12.f4 Rb8 13.b3 d6 14.Nc3 f6 15.c5!

An excellent move, freezing Black's pawn structure on the queenside. Now Morozevitch has static weaknesses on c6 and c7 which he cannot get rid of. Meanwhile, White gradually makes progress on the other flank.



Be6

[15...dxc5 16.Na4±]

16.0-0-0 Rfd8 17.Rd4 a5 hoping for Rb4, but white just ignores it. **18.Be2 f5**

[18...Rb4 19.Rgd1±]

19.cxd6 cxd6 20.Rgd1! A different type of weakness has appeared on the d file. Tseshkovsky in completely unstereotyped in his decision-making, which is a very important weapon in the armoury of the strong player. **fxe4**

[20...d5 21.exd5 cxd5 22.Bf3 Rbc8 23.Kb2 Rc5 This Black defends temporarily, but will suffer with all the weaknesses on a5, d5 and f5.]

21.Rxd6 Bd5

[21...Rxd6 22.Rxd6 Bd5 23.Bg4 with the same scenario.]

22.Rxd8+ Rxd8 23.Bg4

[23.Bc4 was possibly more precise.]

23...Rd6

[23...Rb8 24.Na4 keeps some

edge.]

24.Nxe4 Rg6 25.Nf2+- h5 26.Bh3±

There is no reason to panic now. White wants a nice, easy stroll to the win, avoiding all tactics. The doubled pawns have gone and Tseschkovsky treats us to a master class in technique. **Bf3**

27.Rd8+ Kh7

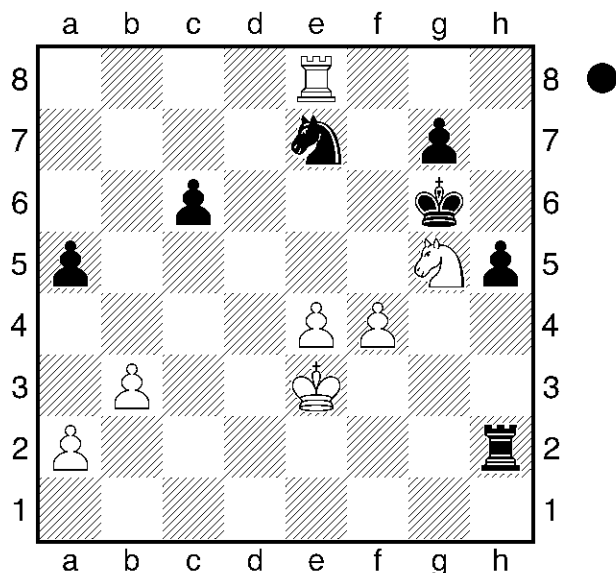
[27...Kf7 28.Nd3 Rg1+ 29.Kd2 Ng6 30.Bf5+-]

28.e4

[28.Ra8 would probably steal one more pawn for free.]

28...Rg1+ 29.Kd2 Bg4 30.Rd3

[30.Ra8 Bxh3 31.Nxh3 Rg2+ 32.Ke3 Rxh2 (32...Rxa2 33.Ng5+ Kg6 34.Re8 and white wins the black knight due to mating threats.) 33.Ng5+ Kh6 34.Rh8+ Kg6 35.Re8+- is possibly tactically more precise, but White wants none of it.



]

30...Ng6 31.Rg3 Ra1 32.Nxg4 hxg4

33.Bxg4 Rxa2+

[33...Nxf4 34.Ke3 g5 35.h4 gxh4 36.Bf5+ Kh6 37.Rg4+-]

34.Ke3 Nf8 35.e5 Rb2

[35...Rxh2 36.e6]

36.Kd4! Kg8 37.h4 a4 38.bxa4

Rb4+ 39.Ke3 Rxa4 Even in this 3 vs

2 ending black is quite hopeless due to immobility of the black knight. **40.h5**

Ra3+ 41.Kf2 Ra2+

[41...Rxg3 42.Kxg3 g6 43.e6 gxh5 44.e7+-]

42.Kf3 Ra3+ 43.Kg2 Ra4

[43...Ra2+ 44.Kh3]

44.f5 Ra5 45.Re3

[45.e6 Nh7 46.Re3 Nf6 47.e7 leads to the same position as the game.]

45...Nd7 46.e6 Nf6 47.e7 Ra8

[47...Kf7 48.h6! gxh6 49.Bh5+ Kg7 50.Rg3+ Kh7 (50...Kh8 51.Rg6+-) 51.Rg6 Ne8 52.f6!]

48.Bf3 Rc8 49.Re6 c5 50.h6! c4

51.Rd6 Re8

[51...Kh7 52.Rd8 Rc5 53.e8Q Nxe8 54.Rxe8 Kxh6 unfortunately for Black, he can't eliminate the f5 pawn. 55.Be4 c3 56.Bc2 and the pawn on f5 will win the game.]

52.Rd8 Kh7 53.Rxe8 Nxe8 54.Bh5

Nf6 55.e8Q Nxe8 56.Bxe8 Kxh6

[56...c3 57.Ba4 Kxh6 58.Bc2 Kg5 59.Kg3+-]

57.Ba4 g6 58.f6 Kh7 59.Kg3 g5

60.Bc2+ Kh6 61.Kg4 c3 62.Kf5 g4

63.Kf4 Experience and understanding counts for a great deal in positions where the pawn structure has been damaged. The worse pawn structure does not necessarily mean the worse game!

1-0

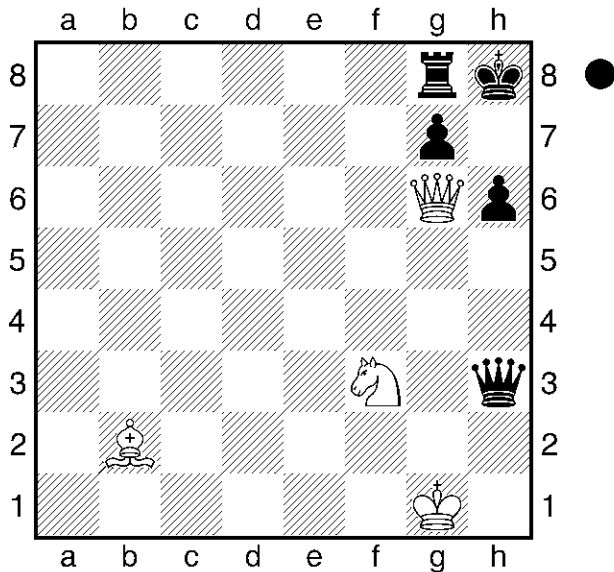
BOB LONG

Bob Long is a very genuine person and chess businessman and if you would like more information about him or his various publications, including the

original 'Chess Reports' you may
contact him direct by email :
bob@thinkerspressinc.com

□ ROSSOLIMO
■ ANSWER

N Rossolimo



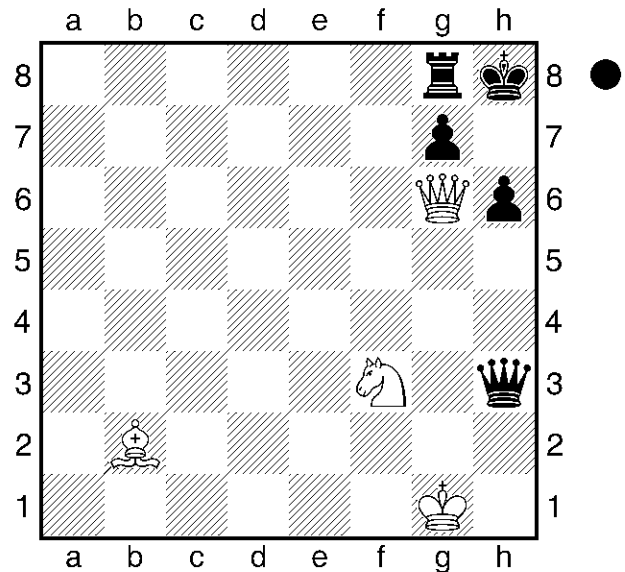
White to play and win.

Now to the problem from the last column, which will reward those who try to study it . It's a classic, game-like situation where White ties Black up with some excellent play. **1.Qd7! Rg8** The only move. Note the helplessness of Black's Queen. **2.Qf5+ Kh8 3.Qg6** With Qxh6 as a threat. Black's Queen must defend. **Qf4 4.Kf2!** Forcing Zugzwang in a few moves. **Qc1 5.Bd4** Prevents ...Qc5+ **Qh1** [5...Qf4 6.Bb2! is zugzwang.] **6.Bb2 Qh3 7.Kg1**⊙

(Diagram)

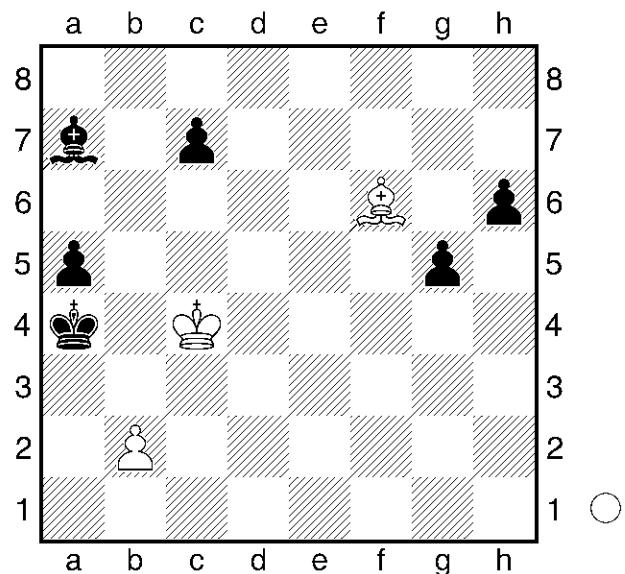
I find this solution elegant and convincing.

1-0



KUBBEL 1926

KUBBEL 1926



White to play and win.

I'd urge you to try these puzzles and post the answer if you like on the forum. You are also welcome to provide feedback of any kind and discuss any matter related to chess itself (not chess politics and certainly NOT junior chess) here.