

About MACA

The Massachusetts Chess Association is an educational non-profit organization whose purpose is to promote chess in Massachusetts and represent the interest of chess players within the state to the governing body of chess in the United States, **The United States Chess Federation (USCF)**.

As part of its role as a state organization, MACA has programs in place to support the existing chess community as well as promote chess among schools and the general public. Highlights of these programs are:



Providing at least five major tournaments each year:

Massachusetts Open (State Championship)
Massachusetts Game/60 Championship
Greater Boston Open
Danvers 30/30 (William J. Comeau Memorial)
Pillsbury Memorial



Running a scholastic program, which consists of a series of tournaments to determine the state's scholastic champions as well as "warm up" tournaments throughout the year. Free boards and sets are provided to schools and clubs through MACA's **Comeau and Living Memorial Chess Fund (LMCF)**.

Quarterly publication of the award winning *Chess Horizons*, a journal of regional, national and international chess news and features.

Promotion and development of chess in correctional institutions through our Prison Chess program.

We hope you will chose to join MACA and enjoy the benefits of membership while knowing that you are helping to promote chess throughout Massachusetts.

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The Beauty of the Endgame

**World Champion
GM Susan Polgar**
with FM Paul Truong

This is my first time writing for *Chess Horizons*. I have always been impressed with the quality of the magazine and when I was approached by Mark Donlan recently to contribute to *Chess Horizons*, I gladly accepted.

In this column, I will share with you some of my endgame knowledge, accumulated through out the years. The endgame is a critical part of a chess game. Often enough, the game is decided by the endgame. It is also one of the things that separate the pros from the novice.

In this issue, I would like to show you one part of the endgame that is often overlooked and one of my favorite topics: STALEMATE! When the word stalemate is men-

tioned, most of us think that stalemate is just something to avoid when you are winning and pray that it would happen when you are losing. You are right. However, it is a little more than that.

I composed the following problem when I was 4 years old.

How to checkmate in 2?



In this position, White is up a Queen and is completely winning.

However, White needs to be careful because Black has no legal move and will be stalemated next move if White is careless. The first instinct for many novices is to move the d4 Pawn up for promotion. Of course after 1. d4 Black is stalemated.

White has the opportunity to checkmate Black in 2 moves. Have you found it? Let's take a look at the solution, shall we?

1. Kd1 Kf1 2. Qe1#

It is not so hard, is it? We just have to be careful not give away a won game.

In the next example (see next page), White is one square away from promotion. Once again, the first instinct is to Queen the Pawn. However, that would lead into a stalemate. So what should we do? In fact, White also has a mate in 2.

1. f8 (R) Black is in zugzwang. The only legal move is **1... Kh6** and then **2. Rh8#**

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The next example is a famous problem composed by **Ponziani** (who was a priest and law lecturer from Modena, Italy) in 1792.

White is down by 3 pawns and seems to be completely lost. However, there is a surprising brilliant escape.



1. Bf2 e3 2. Bxe3! Qxe3 3. Qf2!! Qxf2 4. a5+!

Now whether if Black captures the Pawn or not, White is stalemated. This is a real Houdini job by White!

This next example, at the top of the next column, is another puzzle that I have composed. I'm quite proud of it, as it won the third prize in a composing competition of *Chess Life*.

Black threatens mate on h1. White has only two ways to prevent it. There is a significant difference between them: one leads to a draw, and the other leads to a loss.

1. Ne1!

Let's look at 1. Rb1? It is not good because after 1...Rxb1 2. Qxb1 Nxb1 3. Ne3 Nc3 Black protects the g3 pawn in time and wins the game. **1...Rxe1 2. Rb1!**



If Black plays 2...Rxb1 there would be a forced stalemate after 3. Qxb1 Nxb1.

2...Nxe4!

Now Black threatens mate on g5 and on f2 simultaneously.

3. Qxe4!

If White plays 3. Rxe1 Black can mate White with either Nf2# or Ng5#

3...Rxe4 4. Rb4!

A brilliant move! This is the whole point of forcing a stalemate! Obviously if Black takes the Rook now or at any time in the next few moves, White is stalemated again.

4...Re1 5. Rb1

The White Rook is trying to sacrifice itself.

5...Re4

If 5...Re2 6.Re1 "traps" the Rook already.

6. Rb4

Here 6. Re1 is not possible, because of the mate on h4.

6...Bd4 7. Rb5+

White could not take the g3 pawn, because White would lose the Rook after the discovered check 6...Be5+.

7...Re5 8. Rxe5+ Bxe5 Stalemate.

If Black chooses to retreat the King to g6 or h6, White simply takes the Pawn on g3 and that would lead to a draw as well. If Black plays 7...Be5 then White repeats with 8. Rb4.

In the next game by **Murey – Pavlenko** (Moscow, 1961), White seems to be completely lost. Black is attacking the Rook on g3 in addition to the checkmate threat with Qd2#.

White found a brilliant way to

force a stalemate and save the game.



1. Qxb7+!! Kxb7 2. Rg7+ Kc8 3. Rc7+

Here the two players agreed to a draw. If Black plays 3...Kxc7, White is stalemated. 3...Kd8 4. Rd7+ Ke8 5. Re7+ Kf8 6. Rf7+ Kg8 7. Rg7+ Kh8 8. Rg8+ (8. Rh7+?? Qxh7 and there is no longer a stalemate) Kh7 9. Rh8+ Kxh8 stalemate.

Let's go back to the original position. If White would play 1. Qe1 to protect both threats (instead of 1. Qxb7+), Black would have a clear advantage after 1...Nb2+ 2. Kd3 Qc2 and Black will win the White Pawns on the Queenside.

The next game was played by two of my students at the Polgar Chess Center. Black is an 11-year-old boy.

Paul Ehlers – David Kalita

G/30, 1998 Queens, NY



He played well to reach this position. Here, Black's position seems to be very strong, having a 2 Knight material advantage. However, White can force a draw by either stalemate or perpetual checks. Unfortunately, White misplayed it and



lost. Let's see how can White draw this.

The right continuation would have been 1. Rfe7+! Rxe7 2. Rxe7+ Kd8 3. Rd7+ Kc8 4. Rc7+ Kb8 5. Rb7+ Ka8 6. Rb8+ Ka7 7. Ra8+ Kxa8 stalemate!

1. Rbe7+? Kd8!

and not 1...Rxe7?? 2. Rxe7+ and it would lead to the same draw as illustrated above.

2. Rd7+ Kc8 3. Rc7+ Kb8 4. Rb7+ Ka8 5. Rb8+ Kxb8 6. Rb7+ Ka8 7. Rb8+ Ka7 8. Ra8+ Kb6 9. Rb8+ Kc5 White resigns.

If 10. Rc8+ Nc6 and there is no longer a stalemate since the King can capture the Knight on f3. The difference between a draw and a loss came down to just one move on the first move. 1. Rfe7+ instead of 1. Rbe7+ would have given White a draw.

This next example in my opinion is one of the most spectacular stalemates! White looks to be completely lost! Wrong! White has a shocking draw by stalemate or perpetual check and there is not much Black can do about it. Let's examine this beauty.

Leonid Kubbel

Listok Shakhmatnovo Kruzhdka
Petrogubkom, 1921



1. Nd4!!

If White had played 1. Re6? then 1...Qxe6 pins the Knight!

1...Qxd4

If Black plays 1...Qd8 2. Ra3+ Kb7 3. Rb3+ Kc8 4. Rb8+! Kxb8 5. Nc6+ draw. If Black plays 1...Bxd4 2. Ra3+ Kb7 3. Rb3 pins the Queen thus leading to a draw.

2. Ra3+ Kb5 3. Rb3+ Kc4 4. Rc3+ Kd5 5. Rd3! Qxd3 stalemate!

No matter where Black moves the King between the a- to c-file, the Rook will continue to check on a3, b3 or c3. The moment when the Black King cross over to the d-file, White has Rd3, which would result in an automatic draw. What an incredible use of stalemate to save the game!

In this following example, the Black Pawn on b2 is ready to Queen. It does not seem that White can stop this process. Therefore, it looks that White's position is hopeless. However, there is an amusing way to achieve stalemate.



H. Kremer

1930

1. Ka8!

Why not 1. c7? Black would have replied with 1...Bh2 pinning the Pawn and therefore stopping it from Queening.

1...Bh2

If Black decides to Queen the Pawn with 1...b1(Q) right away, White will promote his own Pawn with 2. b8(Q)+ creating a skewer and winning the Black Queen.

2. g3!

With this move, White commences the first of a series of artistic sacrifices, giving up all his Pawns to create a forced stalemate.

2...Bxg3

Black has no choice but to capture the Pawn. Otherwise, White would just Queen his b7 Pawn.

3. f4! Bxf4 4. e5! Bxe5 5. d6! Bxd6 6. b8 (Q)+!!

This is a must move. If 6. c7 Bxc7 7. b8(Q)+ Bxb8 and White does not have a stalemate.

6...Bxb8 7. c7! Bxc7 stalemate!

7...Kxc7 is also stalemate!

The next game was part of the yearly legendary Ladies vs. Veterans tournament/match sponsored by the famous Dutch chess enthusiast Mr. Joop Van Oosterom, one of the nicest people you can ever meet. The conditions of all of Mr. Oosterom's tournaments have always been among the best in all of chess.

**GM Susan Polgar – GM
Vlastimil Hort**

Prague, 1995



1. Nf6

Attacking the Rook. However, the main threat is 2. Re7 and then 3. Rh7 mate.

1...Rg6 2. Rc1

If White plays 2. Re7 Black would respond with 2...Rxb6 stopping the Rh7 mate threat. Then Black would march his a-Pawn to a1 to Queen.

2...a3 3. Rxc2 Rxb6

I was a little disappointed (for the public) that Vlastimil hasn't tried to play for stalemate with: 3...a2 4. Rxa2 Rxb6 5. Rxb6 Ra1+. It is true that I can escape the checks, but in tournament games it is quite a rarity to see such an end. 6. Kf2 Rf1+ (6...Ra2+ 7. Ke3 Re2+ 8. Kd4 Rd2+ 9. Kc5+-) 7. Ke3 Rf3+ (7...Re1+ 8. Kd4 Rd1+ 9. Kc5) 8. Kd4 Rf4+ 9. Ne4+-

4. Ra2

At this point, White has a simple win being up a Knight and Pawn.

4...Ra7 5. Rc6 Black resigns