

Vladimir Barsky

A Modern Guide to Checkmating Patterns

Improve Your Ability to Spot Typical Mates

New In Chess 2020

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FOREWORD

In the footsteps of *The Last Check*

This book is dedicated to the fond memory of Viktor Lvovich Khenkin.

The idea for this book first arose about ten years ago, when I edited Viktor Lvovich Khenkin's classic textbook *The Last Check*. I was surprised that his original methodology for finding mating combinations did not generally receive serious attention. Maybe this was because Viktor Lvovich's past training achievements had been forgotten? After all, he taught chess at the now rebuilt and renamed young pioneer stadium, and was trainer of the Moscow junior team, which was victorious in All-Union championships. In addition, Khenkin the theoretician was one of the founders of the Sozin Attack and wrote a whole chapter in Yuri Averbakh's famous five-volume endgame course.

In the great majority of books devoted to chess tactics, combinations are categorized by theme: double attack, deflection, attraction, overload, discovered attack, line-opening, etc. But how are you supposed to know, when sitting at the board with the clock ticking, what you should be looking for, whether a fork, a deflection, a line-opening, etc.? In practice, everything usually happens the other way round: first the player finds a combinational motif, using his experience and the associations thereof, and then works out how to effect it correctly. Only after the idea has been realized does the happy victor think about which tactical device he used.

Viktor Khenkin tried to make his method as close as possible to practical play. Here is an extract from Mikhail Tal's preface to *The Last Check*: 'When I examine a concrete position, I notice first of all its particular characteristic, the mutual piece placements, and their connections. And suddenly (in the majority of cases this happens intuitively) the outlines of some new position will flash up, tantalizing and attractive. It is not yet on the board, of course, but all the signs are that it could arise. Then the chase for the bird begins. Often, calculating the variations is a Sisyphean task. The position in the mind's eye is almost impossible to reach, even if the opponent enters into "cooperation" with you. Some piece is on the wrong square, some pawn gets in the way... but sometimes a tedious search of variations brings real results. Move by move, one approaches the desired final position, which one saw from afar. And if the circle of variations is closed, then... then you can start a combination.'

The remarkable trainer and Soviet Master of Sport, Viktor Lvovich Khenkin (1923-2010), proposed systematizing mating schemes or 'pictures' by reference to the piece or pawn which brought the mate to its conclusion. It turned out that there were not so many of these schemes – about a hundred basic ones – and only about 20-30 which occur in the great majority of mating combinations. These can be remembered even by an inexperienced player: 'it's not rocket science', as the popular saying runs.

Luck brought me a long acquaintance with Viktor Lvovich Khenkin. At the start of the millennium, he was the mentor and senior comrade of various young journalists: Oleg Pervakov, Maxim Notkin, Ilya Odessky, Andrey Paneyakh and the present author. We tried to learn from the Maestro all the best. A workaholic, he did not tolerate hack-work or routine stuff, and he perfectly mastered the literary Russian language. And the non-literary too: oh, how he cursed, when I wrote 'pieces of iron' instead of 'piece of iron' in one title he proposed! He constantly repeated to us: 'Do not dismiss small things, trifles are the most important, they create an image!' The children of Twitter and Instagram are unlikely to appreciate it, but how many hours we spent on coming up with a sharp headline even for articles of second-rate importance, not to mention really top-class ones. They were great hours of creative search!

I am proud of the fact that I wrote my first book, dedicated to the Frenchman François Philidor, in co-authorship with Viktor Lvovich. Then I helped re-issue *1000 Checkmate Combinations* as the special editor. In checking every example with the computer, I once again saw the integrity of Viktor Lvovich: only a very small number needing correcting and then, usually only cosmetically, tidying up illustrative variations. As every day went by, I came to like the book more and more and I resolved to write a follow-up, using games played in the 21st century. But the classification remains much the same as that used in the classic.

In the words of Viktor Lvovich: 'Since all the pieces differ among themselves according to their range and rules of movement, each of them has its favorite "profession". In this sense, chess can be compared with an ice hockey team, where each player has worked out shots on goal from different points of the ice rink. The same can be said about the distribution of roles in the joint attack on the king. Some pieces prefer a "passing" role, while others "hit the puck" by themselves.'

This book *A Modern Guide to Checkmating Patterns* is divided into ten chapters: first, we present schemes and examples with explanations, and then positions for independent solving. These number 851. A good source was the online magazine *Chess Today* (chief editor Alexander Baburin),

where I worked from 2000-2008. At first, I had 1,000 or so examples, but some fell by the wayside. I have spent some ten years working on the book, on and off, and I should like to thank my former colleague Andrey Paneyakh for his great help, without which this manuscript would still be gathering (virtual) dust on the computer.

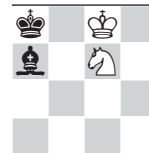
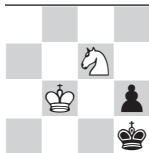
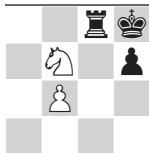
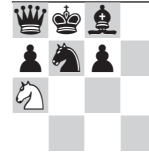
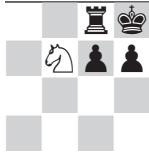
We will conclude this Foreword with a further quote from Mikhail Tal: 'Of course, chess creativity is not limited to what is set out here. Each player creates further, according to his talent and imagination. But as for that which can be known, there is no need to reinvent the wheel.'

Vladimir Barsky
Moscow, April 2020

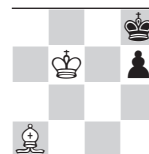
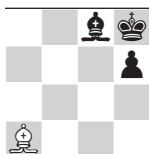
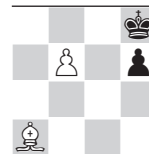
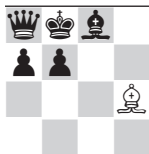
CHAPTER 3

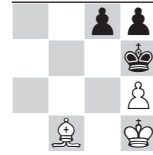
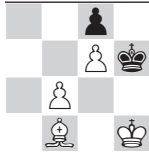
The minor pieces and pawns

The **knight** on its own can only give mate when the enemy king's escape paths are blocked by his own pieces. The most common form of this is the so-called 'smothered mate'.

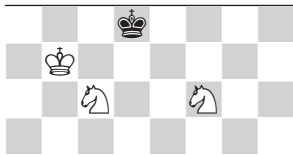
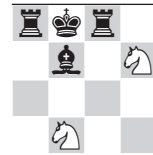
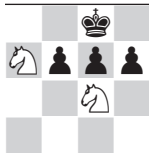
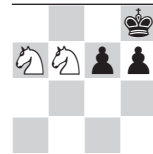
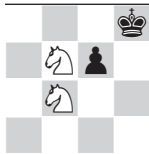


The **bishop** also needs the help of his own or enemy units to give mate. The most common constructions are the following:

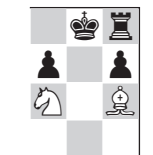
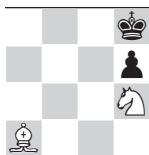
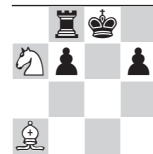
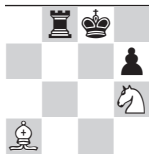


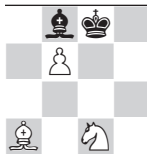
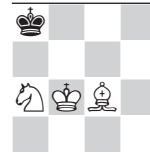
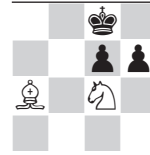
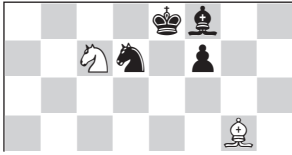


Two knights cannot mate a lone king on an empty board, but in a position full of life, they often constitute a powerful weapon. The most popular mating set-ups are as follows:

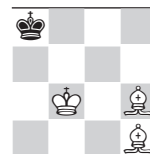
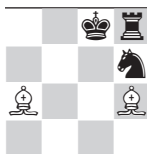
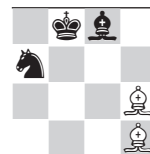
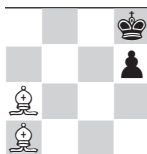


Knight and bishop, as a rule, usually do most damage to a king when it is in the corner or adjacent to it: b1 (b8) or g1 (g8). Consider the following diagrams:



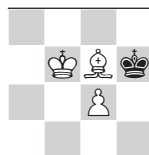
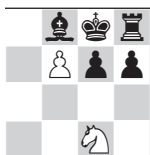
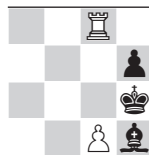
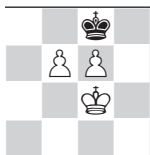


Two bishops are especially strong in the hands of the attacking side. Often, after delaying castling, the king is nailed to its initial position by their joint efforts, but he frequently has trouble in the corner as well.



The **pawn**, in order to give mate, needs the active assistance of his own and often the enemy units as well. This is because, in checking the king, it does not control a single escape square.

(see next page)



The main heroes of this chapter usually succeed when the enemy king is on or near the edge of the board – either the rank or file. The exception is the pawn, as it can often catch the king in the centre of the board, although here too, the main role is played by those forces which cut off the king's retreat.

Piotr Bobras

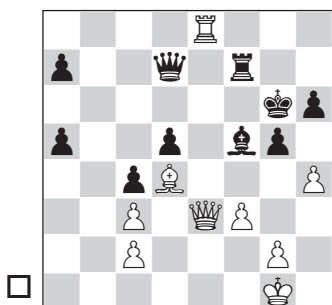
2535

Tatiana Kononenko

2387

Port Erin 2013 (4)

position, in which White is a whole queen down.



41. ♖g8+ ♔h7

41... ♕h5 42. ♖xg5+ ♔xh4 43. ♖f4+.

42. ♖h8+ ♔g6

What has White achieved? After all, the queen does not have a single square in the king's field. But...

43. ♖xg5+!

And Black resigned: 43... hxg5

44. h5# – an elegant mating

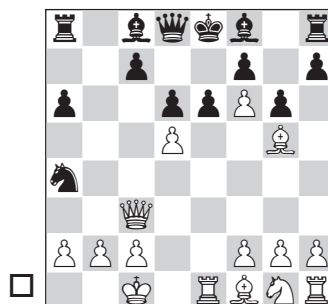
Igor Kurnosov

2577

Marat Dzhumaev

2527

Tashkent 2008 (8)



A painfully familiar picture: Black is behind in development and his opponent finds an elegant decision, where the main role is played by the smallest unit, the brave footsoldiers.

12. ♖c6+! ♕d7 13. ♜xe6+! fxe6
 13... ♖e7 14. ♜xe7+ ♖xe7 15. ♖xa8+.
14.dxe6!!

White does not hesitate to sacrifice even the queen: he threatens mate in one (14... ♖xc6 15.f7#).

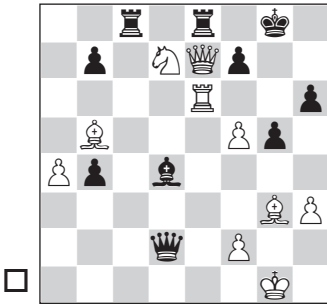
14... ♖g7 15.exd7+

Black resigned: huge material losses are inevitable.

White wins both rooks and a bishop by force – 31. ♖xe8+ ♔g7 32. ♖xg6+ ♔f8 33. ♖xf6+ ♔e8 34. ♖e6+ and 35. ♖xc4, keeping an extra piece.

Ian Nepomniachtchi 2706
Krishnan Sasikiran 2681
 Khanty-Mansiysk ol 2010 (4)

Djurabek Khamrakulov 2548
Saidali Iuldachev 2501
 Tashkent ch-UZB 2008 (4)



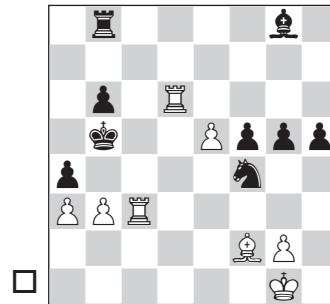
White has a material advantage, and would seem to be winning after the prosaic 28. ♖xe8+. However, in this case, he would have to reckon with the passed pawn on b4 and analysis shows that White can count only on perpetual check. But he has a combinative path to victory, which was demonstrated in the game:

28. ♜g6+! fxg6 29. ♘f6+!

Enticing the bishop to the fatal square.

29... ♖xf6 30. ♖c4+

Black resigned, seeing the mate after 30... ♔h8 31. ♖xf6+ ♔h7 32.fxg6. And if instead 30... ♜xc4



The black king is not yet on the edge, but White is able to force it to make the fatal step.

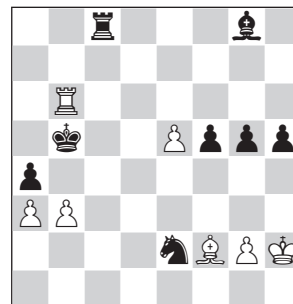
52. ♜c8! ♔e2+

A so-called ‘spite check’.

53. ♔h2 ♜xc8

The Greek Gift must be accepted, else Black faces an endgame a rook down (53... ♜b7 54. ♜xg8).

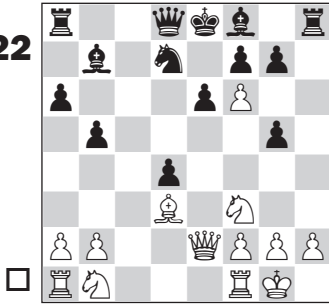
54. ♜xb6+



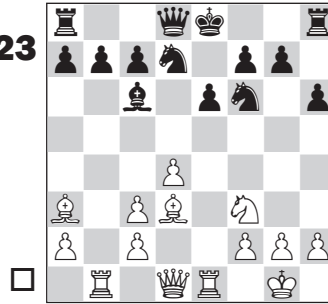
Black resigned: 54... ♔a5 55.b4#.

EXERCISES

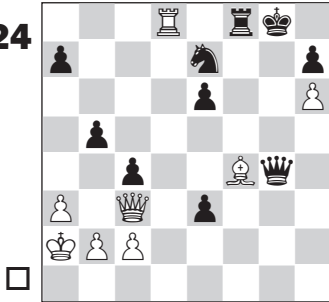
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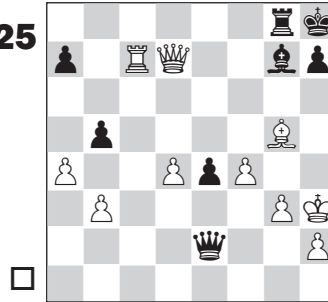
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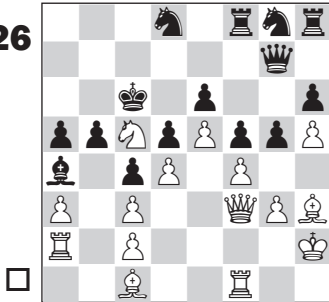
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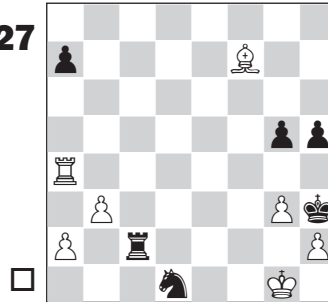
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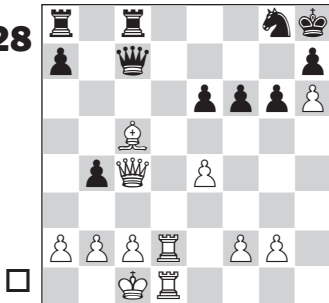
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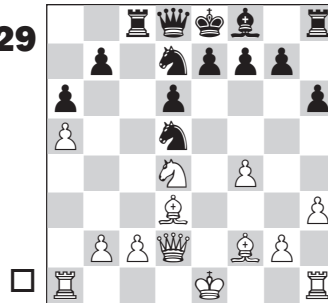
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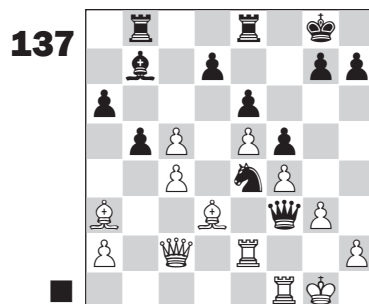
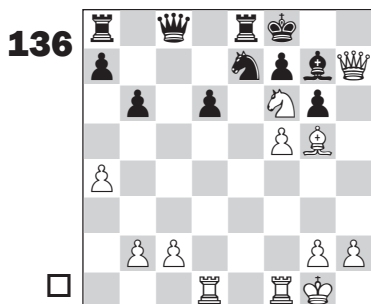
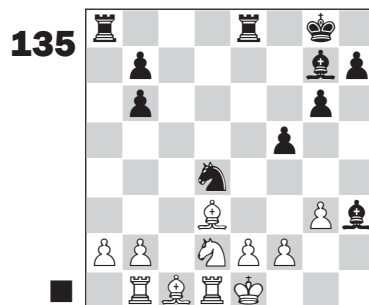
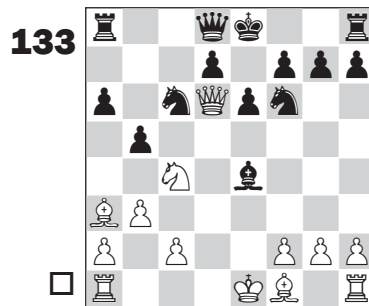
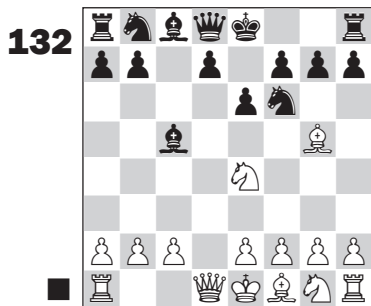
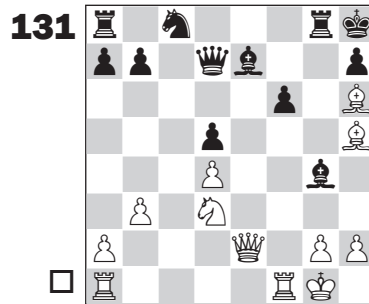
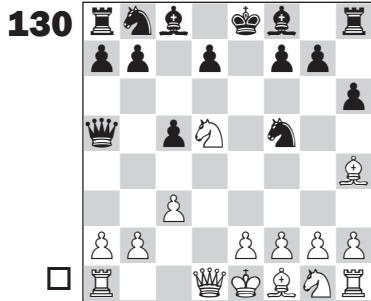


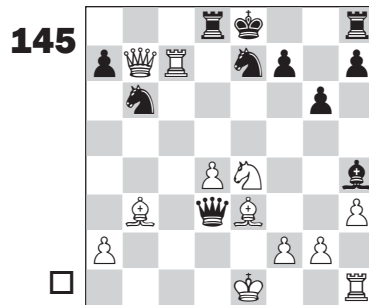
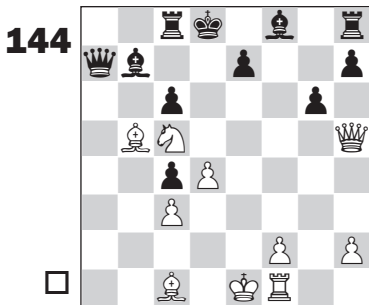
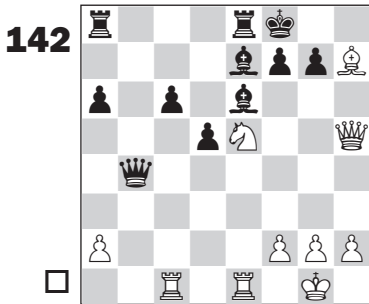
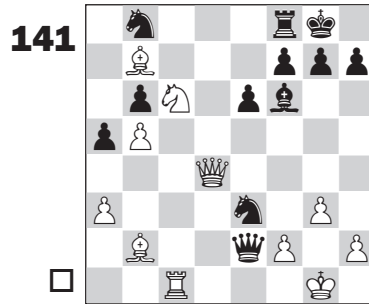
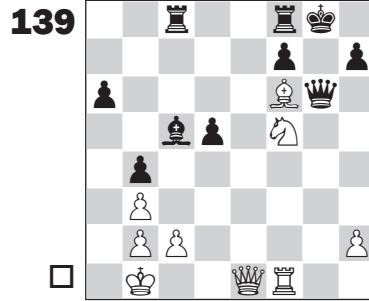
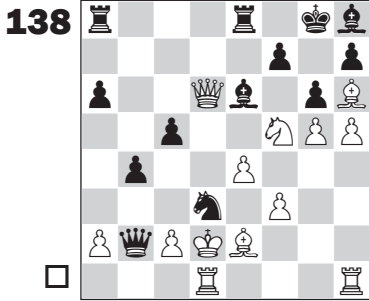
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129







113 31.♖xd8 ♖xd8 32.♖f6! As well as attacking the pawn, this also covers the long diagonal a1-h8, insuring White against checks on g1 followed by d4, when the black rook would have to leave the back rank. 32...♖f8 33.♖xg7 1-0 Nijboer-Naumkin, Hoogeveen 2008.

114 42...♗e1! 43.♖d2 Not better are either 43.♖xe1 ♖f4+ 44.♖h3 ♖h4#, or 43.♖d4 ♗e4 44.♖d2 ♖e5+ 45.♖f3 g4#. **43...♗e2!** Insisting: 0-1 Lobzhanidze-Kacheishvili, Dresden Ech 2007.

115 34...♖g1+ 35.♗g2 ♖xh3+! Ferguson-Williams, London 2012; White resigned because of 36.♖xh3 ♖h1+ 37.♖g3 ♖h4# or 37.♗h2 ♖xf3#.

116 White is a piece down, but happily parts with another rook: **24.♗xg7!** 24.♖xg7+! ♗xg7 25.♗xg7 transposes. **24...♗xg7 25.♖xg7+ ♖xg7 26.♖g5+! ♗g6** Nothing changes after 26...♖h7 27.f6. **27.f6+** P.H.Nielsen-Van Wely, Wolvega 2010; Black resigned because of 27...♖h7 28.♖h5+ ♖g8 29.♖h6. The queen alone is stronger than the whole force (although not without the help of the powerful footsoldier on f6).

117 30.♖c1!! 1-0 Marholev-Rotstein, Livigno 2011; this is hardly the move that leaps first

to one's eye, but it immediately dots the i's and crosses the t's. The h6-square is defenceless.

118 24.♗f6+! gxf6 25.♖g4! There is no time to retreat the queen, because mate in two is threatened. **25...♖h8 26.♖xe5 fxe5 27.f6 ♗g8 28.♖g2** 1-0 Moiseenko-Külaots, Warsaw Ech rapid 2013.

119 Here the first move of the combination is definitely very attractive: **13...♗g3+! 14.hxg3 hxg3+ 15.♖g1 ♖f4!** Padeiro-Galego, Canecas 2002 ch-POR playoff rapid; White resigned because of 16.♗xa7 ♗h1+! 17.♖xh1 ♖h4+.

120 White is a piece down and has a rook attacked, but he offers the sacrifice of a bishop. **43.♗f4!** The only way to win, in fact. **43...♗xf4 44.♗e8+! ♖xe8 45.♖g7#** Jones-Hawkins, North Shields ch-GBR 2012.

121 17.♗c6! bxc6 18.dxc6 1-0 Mulet-Korcz, Zabrze 2011; such an unpretentious quiet move. Black has lots of pieces, but there is nothing to be done against the queen and pawn mate. Usually such a catastrophe occurs on the kingside, but it seems that one must keep one's eyes open on the other wing too.

Chapter 3 – The minor pieces and pawns

122 14.♖xe6+! 1-0 Tunik-J.Geller, Togliatti 2001; 14...fxe6 15.♗g6#.

123 12.♖xe6+! fxe6 13.♗g6# Kornev-Soloviov, Tula 2002.

124 28.♖h8+!! Morozevich-Bologan, Russia tt 2004; Black resigned because of 28...♖xh8 29.♖xf8+ ♗g8 30.♗e5+.

125 36.♖xg7+! 1-0 B.Socko-Khmelniker, Pardubice 2004; the end is easy to calculate: 36...♗xg7 37.♖c8+ ♗g8 38.♙f6#.

126 27.♘xe6! 1-0 Firman-Gdanski, Capelle-la-Grande 2006; if 27...♘xe6 (what else?), then 28.♖xd5+! ♘xd5 29.♙g2#.

127 43.♗h4+! 1-0 Goloshchapov-Deviatkin, Moscow 2004; 43...gxh4 44.♙e6#.

128 25.♙f8! ♖xc4 26.♙g7#
D.Mastrovasilis-Short, Porto Carras Ech-tt 2011.

129 21.♘e6! 1-0 Johansen-P.H.Nielsen, Helsingor 2012; the queen has no retreat and on 21...fxe6 it is mate after 22.♙g6.

130 8.♖a4!! ♖xa4 Nothing would have been changed by 8...♘c6 9.♖xa5. **9.♘c7#** Yermolinsky-E.Tate, USA 2001.

131 23.♘e5! 1-0 Fernando-Giaccio, Santa Clara 2005; he cannot play either 23...fxe5 24.♖xe5+, or 23...♙xe2 24.♘f7#, whilst 23...♙xh5 24.♖xh5 only delays defeat by one move.

132 5...♘xe4! 0-1 Hoang Thanh Trang-Franchini, Budapest 2005; 6.♙xd8 ♙xf2#.

133 12.♖f8+! Kotrotsos-Stiri, Heraklio 2005; Black resigned, because of the forced 12...♗xf8 13.♘d6+ ♘e7 14.♘f5+ ♘e8 15.♘g7#.

134 26.f6+! 1-0 Ansell-Jonkman, England 4NCL 2005/06; 26...♘xf6 27.♙d4#.

135 20...♗xe2+! Gabriel-Zhelesny, Arvier Wch sr 2006; White resigned because of 21.♙xe2 ♘c2#.

136 25.♖g8+! 1-0 Bodnaruk-Gunina, Gorodets ch-RUS W 2006; 25...♘xg8 26.♘h7#.

137 25...♖h1+! 0-1 Caspi-Kaplan, Herzliya 2006; 26.♘xh1 ♘f2+ 27.♘g1 ♘h3#. Mate is one move quicker by 25...♘f2! 26.♗exf2 (26.♙e4 ♘h3#) 26...♖h1#.

138 21.♖f8+! ♗xf8 22.♘e7#
Arakhamia-Grant-Robertson, Grangemouth 2001.

139 31.♗g1! 1-0 Stets-Oleksienko, Lviv 2009; whichever way Black takes the rook, the knight mates: 31...♙xg1 32.♘e7# or 31...♖xg1 32.♘h6#.

140 19.♖h6! 1-0 Semcesen-Grandelius, Kungsoor ch-SWE 2009; Black is mated on g7 or h6.

141 22.♘e7+! ♘h8 23.♖xf6! ♖xb2 24.♖xb2 1-0 Kraai-Kavutskiy, San Diego 2009.

142 25.♖xf7+! 1-0 Iakymov-Vysochin, Yuzhny 2009; 25...♙xf7 26.♘d7#.

143 14.♘c4! Arngrimsson-Omarsson, Reykjavik 2010; Black resigned, in view of 14...♖xb5 (14...♖a7 15.♙xc6) 15.♖xb5 axb5 16.♘b6#.

144 21.♖d5+! Rapport-Huschenbeth, Chur tt 2010; Black resigned because of 21...cxd5 22.♘e6#. And if instead 21...♘c7 22.♙f4+ e5 23.♙xe5+ ♘b6 24.♘d7+ ♘a5 25.♖xc4 or 21...♘e8 22.♖d7+ ♘f7 23.♙xc4+ ♘g7 24.♖e6 and again the black king does not survive long.

145 20.♗xe7+! ♙xe7 21.♘f6+ 1-0 Vajda-Abrahamyan, Khanty-Mansiysk ol W 2010; equally bad