

THE PUZZLING SIDE OF CHESS

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APRIL IN APE CITY

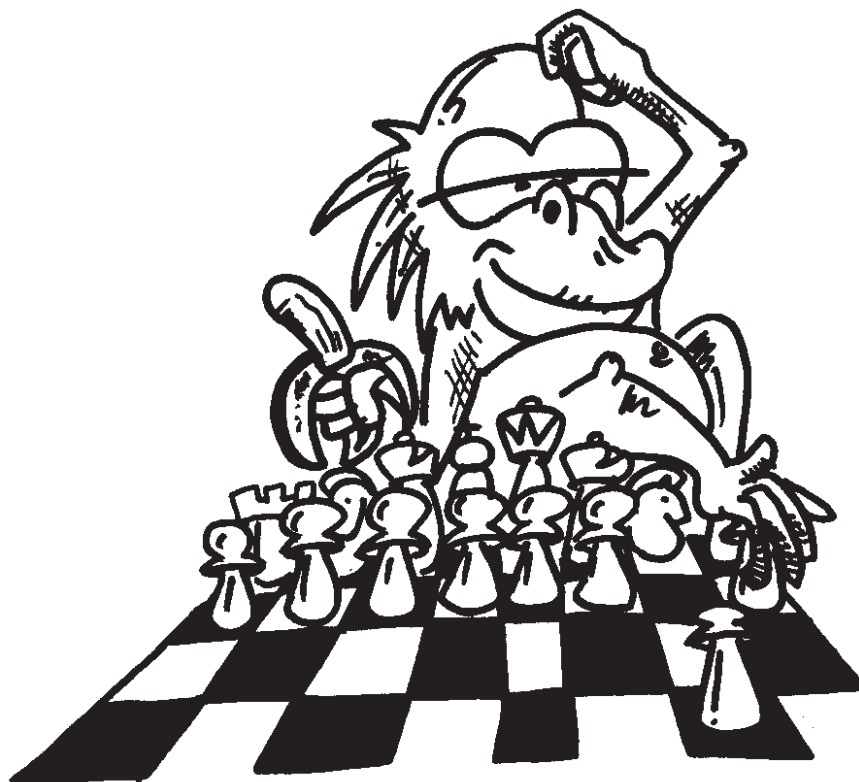
Smorgasbord XI

number 102

April 2, 2016

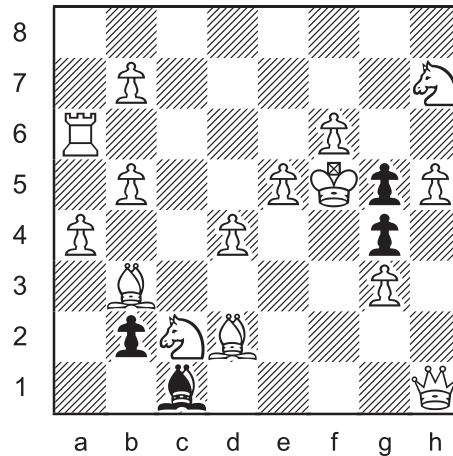
Another month, another smorgasbord.

We're off to Ape City in this column. The featured puzzles are a triple loyd, a longer proof game, and two synthetic tasks of "monkey chess". No fooling.



As usual, we begin the smorgasbord with the mandatory *triple loyd*. If you like them, you can find lots more in the *Puzzling Side* archives. The number of old columns in the archives is growing slowly but steadily. It now contains 37 of the 102.

Triple Loyd 49



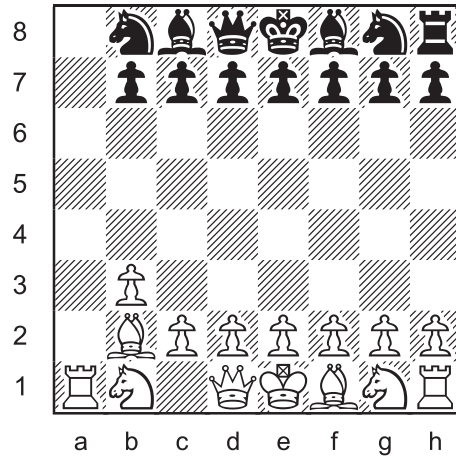
Place the black king on the board so that:

- A. Black is in checkmate.
- B. Black is in stalemate.
- C. White has a mate in 1.

Like all months, April gets its name from the Roman calendar. In Latin, it was called *Aprilis*. But the origin of this word is uncertain. Some linguists say it is derived from the verb 'aperire', which means "to open", like flowers blooming in the spring. Others claim it is related to the goddess Venus and her Greek equivalent Aphrodite. But one thing is clear. April was not named for apes!?



Longer Proof Game 13 (4.5 moves)



This position was reached after White's fifth turn. What were the moves?

In the grand scientific scheme of things, there are four animals in the category known as “great apes”. Gorillas, orangutans, chimpanzees, and humans. It’s good to be great.

All four species of great apes share over 96% of the same DNA.



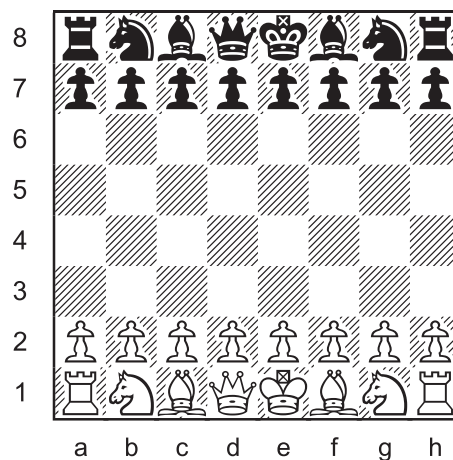
Some international organizations advocate giving the basic legal rights of “life and liberty” to all apes. A very humane concept.

Our final two puzzles deal with a game variant known as *symmetrical chess* or, in keeping with our theme, “monkey chess”. Whatever move White plays, Black must play the corresponding move. For example, if White plays 1.b4, Black has to play 1...b5. Then 2.Bb2 must be answered by 2...Bb7, etc. The name of the variant is based on the idea that Black “apes” White. Obviously, Black will never win!

The task in the following problem originated with Sam Loyd in 1866. There are three solutions, with two different opening moves. Can you find all three? They each have the same mating pattern.

Synthetic Game 18

monkey chess



Compose a game of monkey chess
in which White mates Black on move 4.
See explanation above.

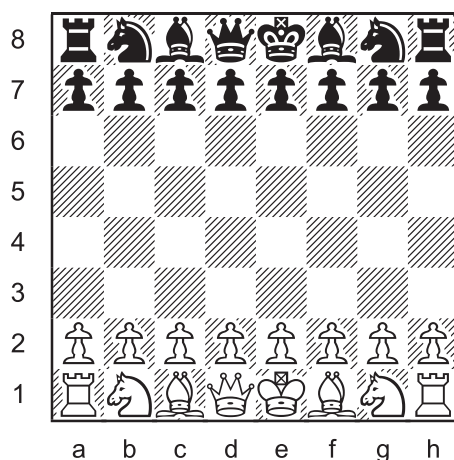


Quebec composer François Labelle wrote a computer program last year to find all *monkey checkmates* to a depth of 17 plies (8.5 moves). He also identified the shortest solutions for mates with different pieces.

The stipulation here is “quickest monkey mate with a knight”!

Synthetic Game 19

monkey chess



Compose a game of monkey chess
in which White mates Black on move 6
with a knight move.

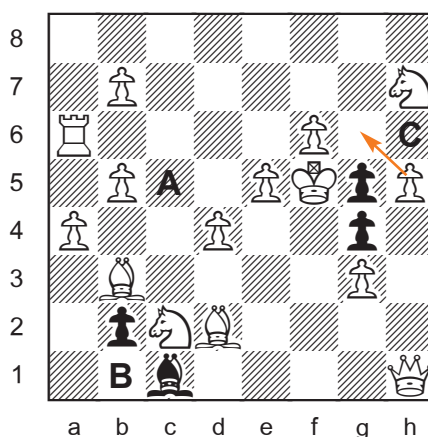


SOLUTIONS

Triple Loyd 49 and longer proof game 13 by J. Coakley. *Puzzling Side of Chess* (2016). The orangutan drawing on the first page is from *Winning Chess Puzzles For Kids* (2006).

PDF hyperlinks. You can advance to the solution of any puzzle by clicking on the underlined title above the diagram. To return to the puzzle, click on the title above the solution diagram.

Triple Loyd 49



A. Kc5#

B. Kb1=

C. Kh6 (hxg6 e.p.#)

Perhaps this is a bit of April Fools.

In part C, with the black king on h6, the last move by Black could only have been ...g7-g5, which allows the *en passant* capture.

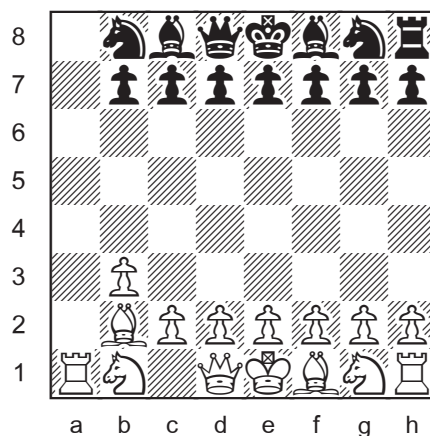
The last move was not the capture ...axb2 or ...cxb2 because White is only missing one piece and it must have been taken by one of the black g-pawns.

The last move was not ...g6-g5+ because White would have been in check from the pawn on g6, so it could not have been Black's turn.

The last move was not ...Kg7-h6 because the king would have been in an impossible check from the pawn on f6, which had nowhere to move from.

Retro-loyd.

Longer Proof Game 13 (4.5 moves)



1.b4 a5 2.bxa5 Rxa5 3.Ba3 Rb5 4.Bb2 Rb3 5.axb3

The Orangutan, of course.

The Orangutan Opening, 1.b4, was given its unusual name by Polish grandmaster Saveilly Tartakower (1887-1956). He first played it at the famous New York tournament of 1924. On the previous day he had visited the zoo and been inspired by the impressive red-haired apes.

Ever wonder why many people pronounce this word “orangu-TANG”? There’s no ‘g’ at the end, yet that’s how most of us in North America say it. I don’t know the reason, but the name of this animal is nearly the same in all languages, many of which spell it ‘-tang’. My favourite is the Portuguese *orangotango*!

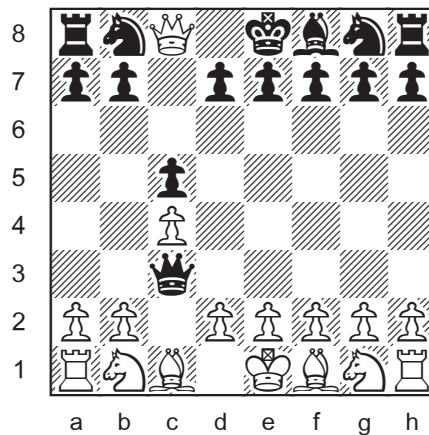


Synthetic Game 18

monkey chess

Sam Loyd 1866

Le Sphinx



1.c4 c5 2.Qa4 Qa5 3.Qc6 Qc3 4.Qxc8#

The other two solutions are:

1.d4 d5 2.Qd3 Qd6 3.Qh3 Qh6 4.Qxc8#

1.d4 d5 2.Qd3 Qd6 3.Qf5 Qf4 4.Qxc8#

In common everyday English, we often refer to apes as “monkeys”. But zoologists make a distinction between the two kinds of animals. The most observable difference is that monkeys have tails and apes don’t. Gibbons and baboons are monkeys. Chimps are not.

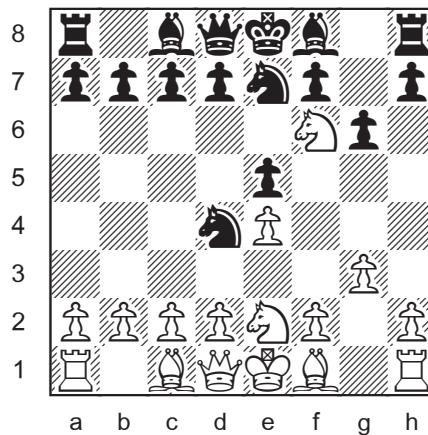


Synthetic Game 19

monkey chess

François Labelle 2015

retro mailing list



1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.Nd5 Nd4 4.Ne2 Ne7 5.g3 g6 6.Nf6#

Vienna Game, Monkey Variation

The solution is not unique. The moves can be played in various orders. 1.e3 combined with 3.Ne4 also works, and 5.g3 can be replaced by 5.g4. [*Lines with 6.Nd6# are possible too.*]

Gorillas, orangutans, and chimpanzees still live in the wild in their natural habitats in Africa and southeast Asia. But their numbers are decreasing. The list below gives the estimated world population of great apes.



Population of Great Apes Living in the Wild

Orangutans	70,000
Chimpanzees	110,000
Gorillas	200,000
Humans	7,400,000,000

The first three are officially designated *endangered species*. The main danger is number 4, us.



Until next time!

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Final photo: Nokia X Wallpapers.