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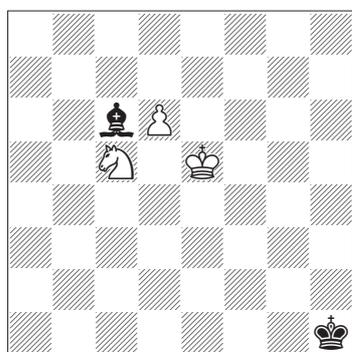
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9 Knight vs Bishop Endings

Basic Endings with Knight vs Bishop • Bishop or Knight?

Knight and Pawn vs Bishop



9.1 W

Averbakh

Lehrbuch der Schachendspiele, 1979

Here the bishop can stop the pawn without the support of its king:

1 ♖e6 ♗b5

Of course Black could also approach with his king, but we want to demonstrate how to draw independently of the black king position.

2 ♗e7 ♗c6 3 ♖d8 ♗b5 4 ♖c7

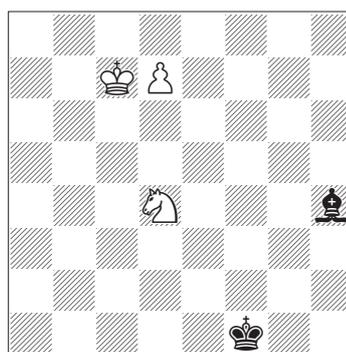
Now the king is in the right place to lock out the bishop with a knight on c6.

4... ♗g1 5 ♗d3 ♖h1 6 ♗e5 ♗e8

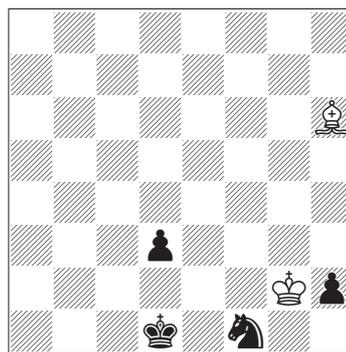
6... ♗g1?? 7 ♗c6 +-.

7 ♗d7 ♖g1 8 ♖d8 ♗g6 9 ♖e7 ♗f5
10 ♗c5 ♗c8

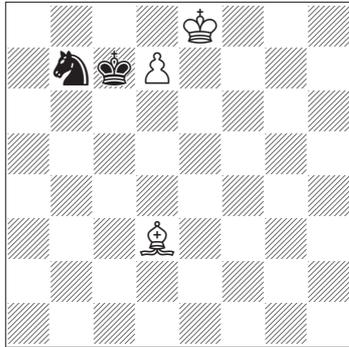
10... ♗g4?? 11 ♗e6 +-.
11 ♗d7 ♖h1 12 ♖d8 ♗a6 13 ♖c7
♗b5 14 ♗e5 ♗e8 =



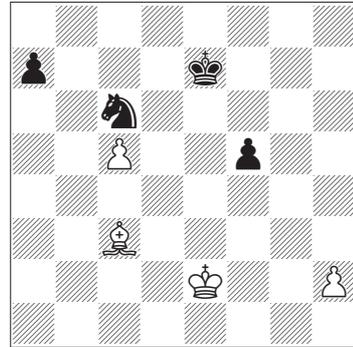
9.2 W/B



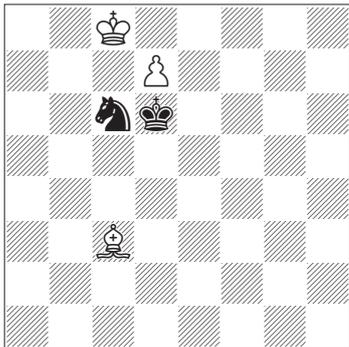
9.3 W



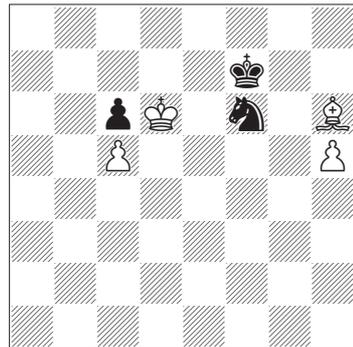
9.4 B/W



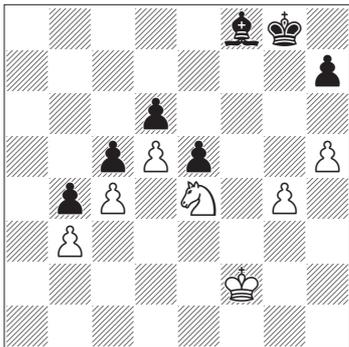
9.7 W



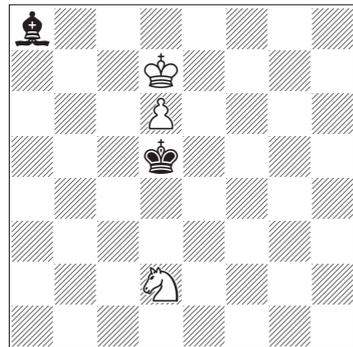
9.5 B/W



9.8 W



9.6 W



9.9 W

2 ♖e7 ♜c8+! 3 ♖e6 ♜b6 =

If White is to move, he can prevent the active ...♜d6+:

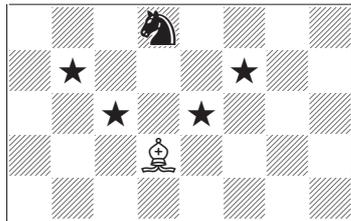
1 ♖e7!

This forces the knight to d8, where White can take away all its squares by playing his bishop to d5:

1...♜d8 2 ♖e4 ♜f7! 3 ♖f3! ♜d8 4 ♖d5! +-

With a far-advanced pawn on the seventh rank a win is possible if the knight can be immobilized and the defender brought into zugzwang.

Ideal case: the imprisonment of the knight by the bishop at the edge of the board:



The bishop controls all the knight's squares so that it is practically stalemated. This is a case when the cliché 'a knight on the rim is dim' is certainly true.

9.5

Averbakh

Lehrbuch der Schachendspiele, 1979

In this position, the bishop controls the promotion square. If Black is to move, he holds the draw: 1...♜e7+ 2 ♖d8 ♜c6+ 3 ♖e8 ♖e6 =.

In contrast, if it is White's turn to move, he can force his opponent into

zugzwang: 1 ♖b4+! ♖e6 2 ♖c7 ♖d5 3 ♖a3 +-.

Knight or Bishop?

Inexperienced chess-players often ask: which piece is the stronger, bishop or knight? Many players develop a clear preference for one of them even though from an objective point of view they are more or less equally strong. It all depends on the circumstances. The following two examples show the pros and the cons of the two pieces.

9.6

Averbakh – Panov

Moscow Ch 1950

A typical situation in which the knight feels really happy. It occupies the blockading square e4, from which it cannot be driven away. With regard to its own pawns, the black bishop bites on granite and has to safeguard the d6-pawn. It is no compensation that Black has a protected passed pawn.

1 g5 ♖g7 2 ♖f3 ♖f7 3 ♖g4 ♖e7 4 ♖f5 ♖f8 5 ♜f6 h6 6 gxh6 ♖xh6 (D)

