

The Knight-Pronkin in Proof Games

by Silvio Baier

One of the most prominent themes in orthodox proof games is the Pronkin theme, i.e. a piece is captured and a Pawn promotes into this kind of piece and moves to the original square of the captured piece afterwards. This is paradoxical at first glance (why don't capture the pawn?) but it can be arranged relatively easy by the capture by a pawn, so that a pawn has to be promoted. In the past 25 years several multiple Pronkins and combinations with other themes were shown. Pronkins with Knight(s) are most difficult to realize compared to other pieces, since the Knight needs at least 4 moves back from the promotion line and the way back has to be unique (the way of the original Knight to its capture square is unique too).

In this article, I focus on Knight-Pronkins. To my mind, the following criteria of economy (sorted by relevance) should receive attention. These are:

1. The number of unthematic captures should be as small as possible (zero in ideal case).
2. The number of total moves should be as small as possible.
3. The number of pieces on their original squares should be as large as possible.

They are arbitrary in some sense but also give some aesthetics to the problem. But don't consider these criteria as dogmas, please.

In the first part, I show examples of double (and one triple) settings of Pronkins with knight(s) without additional captures. Please note, that all settings (except ss) in which the Pronkins are performed by one side, there is a homebase-like position of the Pronkin side. In detail, there is one example each for the combinations 1 QS, 2 RS, 3 BS, 4 SS, 5 qs, 6 rs, 7 bs, 8 ss, 9 Qs, 10 Rs, 11 Bs, 12 Sq, 13 Sr, 14 Sb, 15 Ss and 16 QRS.

The remaining examples show different combinations including at least one Knight Pronkin or additional themes, but all have unthematic captures. The combination ss with homebase-like position shows 17 with only one technical capture. Triple combinations are 18 QSS, 19 RBS, 20 RSS, 21 rrs(*), 22 Qss and 28 QBS.

In 23 Ph7 captures QsBR. Besides there is the Ceriani-Frolkin theme of a black Bishop and the sibling wSg1. In 24, the original pieces were captured on their original squares (here additional captures are necessary) and there are switchbacks of wRa1 and wKe1, 25 and 27 are two earlier examples of combinations already shown and 26 include a tempo move of one of the promoted pawns.

Note by editor: 21 was cooked by Aubrey Ingleton, The Problemist march 1994, p.305.

28-32 added by P. Răican.

1: Dmitrij Pronkin - *Rex Multiplex 1985 (v)* C+

1.Sf3 Sc6 2.Sd4 Se5 3.Sc6 dc 4.d4 Qd5 5.Qd3 Qf3 6.Qg6 hg 7.d5 Rh4 8.d6 Ra4 9.h4 Bg4 10.h5 e6 11.h6 Be7 12.h7 Bh4 13.h8S g5 14.Sg6 Sf6 15.Sf4 Kf8 16.d7 Kg8 17.d8Q+ Kh7 18.Qd1 Rd8 19.Sh3 Rdd4 20.Sg1. The original has the additional move 20....Q:f2# [QS]

2: Silvio Baier *Original* C+

1.a4 h5 2.Ra3 h4 3.Rg3 hg 4.Sc3 Rh4 5.Sd5 Rc4 6.Sb6 ab 7.h4 Ra5 8.h5 Rg5 9.h6 d5 10.h7 Bf5 11.h8S Bh7 12.Sg6 Sc6 13.Sf4 g6 14.a5 Bg7 15.a6 Bd4 16.a7 Bc5 17.a8R d4 18.Ra1 Qa8 19.Sd5 Qa6 20.Sc3 Sa7 21.Sb1 [RS]

3: Silvio Baier *Original* C+

1.Sa3 d5 2.Sc4 dc 3.g4 Qd3 4.g5 Qb3 5.d4 h5 6.d5 Rh6 7.d6 Rf6 8.g6 Rf5 9.Bh6 gh 10.g7 Sf6 11.g8S Bg7 12.d7+ Kf8 13.d8B Se4 14.Sf6 Be6 15.Sd5 Sd7 16.Sc3 Bd5 17.Sb1 e6 18.Bg5 Sb6 19.Bc1 [BS]

4: Ulrich Ring - Feenschach 1986

1.Sf3 a5 2.Sd4 a4 3.Sb3 ab 4.Sc3 Ra4 5.Sd5 Rh4 6.Sf6+ gf 7.a4 Bh6 8.a5 Be3 9.a6 Sh6 10.a7 Rg8
11.a8S Ba7 12.Sb6 Rg3 13.Sc4 Rc3 14.g4 b6 15.g5 Bb7 16.g6 Bf3 17.g7 Bh5 18.g8S Sg4 19.Sh6 Sc6
20.Sf5 Qa8 21.Sd4 Kd8 22.Sf3 Sd4 23.Sg1 Qf3 24.Sa3 c6 25.Sb1 Kc7 [SS]

5: Silvio Baier Original C+

1.d4 Sa6 2.Be3 Sc5 3.dc d5 4.Qd4 Qd6 5.Qf6 Qg3 6.hg d4 7.Rh5 d3 8.Rg5 h5 9.Sh3 h4 10.Sf4 h3
11.Sh5 h2 12.f4 d2+ 13.Kf2 d1Q 14.Kf3 Qd8 15.Bd4 h1S 16.e3 Sf2 17.Bd3 Sg4 18.Bf5 Se5+ 19.Ke4
Sd7 20.Kd5 Sb8+ [qs]

6: Silvio Baier Original C+

1.a4 Sf6 2.a5 Sd5 3.Ra4 Sb6 4.ab a5 5.Rb4 a4 6.d4 a3 7.d5 a2 8.d6 Ra3 9.Qd5 Rg3 10.hg a1R
11.Rh6 Ra8 12.Rg6 h5 13.Bh6 h4 14.f4 h3 15.Kf2 h2 16.Sh3 h1S+17.Kg1 Sf2 18.Kh2 Se4 19.Sf2 Sf6
20.Sh1 Sg8 [rs]

7: Dmitrij Pronkin - 443 Europe Echecs 3131/1985

1.h4 g5 2.h5 Bg7 3.Rh4 Bc3 4.bc Sf6 5.Ba3 Sd5 6.Bd6 Sf4 7.Sa3 Sh3 8.gh g4 9.Bg2 g3 10.Bd5 g2
11.Sf3 g1B 12.Kf1 Bh2 14.Kg2 Be5 14.Qg1 Bg7 15.Kg3 b5 16.Kf4 b4 17.Qg6 b3 18.Kg5 b2 19.Bb3 b1S
20.c4 Sc3 21.Rb1 Sd5 22.Rb2 Sf6 23.Sb1 Sg8 24.Qf6 Bf8 [bs]

8: Silvio Baier Original

1.d4 e6 2.d5 Qf6 3.d6 Se7 4.de d5 5.a4 Sd7 6.a5 Sb6 7.ab a5 8.Bg5 a4 9.e3 a3 10.Se2 a2 11.Sa3 d4
12.Rb1 a1S 13.Sc3 Sb3 14.Sa4 Sa5 15.Bb5+ Sc6 16.c4 d3 17.Qb3 d2+ 18.Ke2 d1S 19.f3 Sf2 20.Rhd1
Sg4 21.Rd7 Sb8 22.Bc6 Sh6 23.Qb5 Sg8 [ss]

9: Silvio Baier Original C+

1.d4 e5 2.d5 Qf6 3.Qd4 Se7 4.Qb6 ab 5.d6 Ra4 6.de Rg4 7.e4 d5 8.Bc4 d4 9.Se2 d3 10.Sg3 d2+
11.Ke2 d1S 12.a4 Se3 13.a5 Sf5 14.a6 Sh6 15.a7 Bf5 16.a8Q Kd7 17.Ra7 Sa6 18.Qd8+ Kc6 19.Qd1
Sg8 [Qs]

10: Silvio Baier Original C+

1.h4 d6 2.Rh3 Sd7 3.Rg3 Sb6 4.Rg6 hg 5.a4 Rh5 6.a5 Rc5 7.ab a5 8.h5 a4 9.h6 a3 10.h7 a2 11.h8R
Ra3 12.Rh1 Rh3 13.Sa3 Kd7 14.Rb1 a1S 15.Sf3 Sb3 16.Sd4 Sa5 17.Sb3 Sc6 18.Sa1 Sb8 [Rs]

11: Silvio Baier Original C+

1.e4 e6 2.Bc4 Bd6 3.Bd5 Bg3 4.e5 ed 5.e6 d6 6.e7 Kd7 7.e8B+ Ke7 8.Bb5 Sf6 9.Bf1 b5 10.d3 b4
11.Kd2 b3 12.Kc3 Se4+ 13.Kb4 Sc3 14.bc b2 15.Sa3 b1S 16.h3 Sd2 17.Rb1 Se4 18.Rb2 Sf6 19.Sb1
Sg8 [Bs]

12: Silvio Baier Original C+

1.Sf3 c6 2.Se5 Qb6 3.Sg4 Qb3 4.ab h5 5.Ra5 hg 6.Rb5 a5 7.h4 a4 8.h5 a3 9.h6 a2 10.h7 Sh6 11.f3
Rg8 12.h8S a1Q 13.Sg6 Qa5 14.Sf4 Qd8 15.Sh3 b6 16.Sg1 [Sq]

13: Silvio Baier Original

1.d3 h5 2.Sd2 Rh6 3.Sb3 Rg6 4.Kd2 Rg3 5.hg a5 6.Rh4 a4 7.Rb4 ab 8.a4 h4 9.a5 h3 10.a6 h2 11.a7
h1R 12.Ra6 Rh8 13.Rh6 Sa6 14.Qe1 Rb8 15.a8S Sf6 16.Sb6 Sd5 17.Sc4 Sc3 18.Sa3 Sa2 19.Sb1 [Sr]
Symmetry with [10]

14: Silvio Baier Original

1.f4 d5 2.f5 Be6 3.fe f5 4.e3 f4 5.Bd3 f3 6.Be4 f2+ 7.Ke2 f1B+ 8.Kf3 Ba6 9.Se2 d4 10.Rf1 d3 11.Rf2
de 12.d4 c5 13.d5 Qa5 14.d6 Kd8 15.d7 Kc7 16.d8S c4 17.Sf7 Qd5 18.Sg5 b5 19.Sh3 Bc8 20.Sg1
[Sb]

15: Silvio Baier Original

1.d4 a5 2.Sd2 a4 3.Sb3 ab 4.a4 e6 5.a5 Ke7 6.a6 Kf6 7.a7 Sa6 8.d5 Rb8 9.a8S Kg6 10.Sb6 Qf6
11.Sa4 Bb4+ 12.Sc3 Se7 13.d6 Rf8 14.de d5 15.e3 d4 16.Bb5 d3 17.Bd7 d2+ 18.Ke2 c6 19.Qf1 d1S
20.f3 Sf2 21.Bd2 Sg4 22.Rc1 Sh6 23.Sb1 Sg8 [Ss]

16: Unto Heinonen 2 Prize, R090 Problemlad 5-6/2000

1.e4 h5 2.Qg4 hg 3.Sa3 Rh3 4.Sc4 Rf3 5.h4 Sh6 6.h5 Sf5 7.h6 d5 8.h7 dc 9.Rh6 Qd4 10.Rf6 ef 11.e5
Bd6 12.e6 Bg3 13.e7 Qf4 14.d4 Be6 15.d5 Kd7 16.d6 Kc6 17.h8R Sd7 18.Rh1 Rh8 19.e8S Sf8 20.d7
Rh3 21.Sd6 Bh4 22.Se4 Sd6 23.d8Q Se8 24.Qd1 Rhg3 25.Sd2 Kd6 26.Sb1+ [QRS]

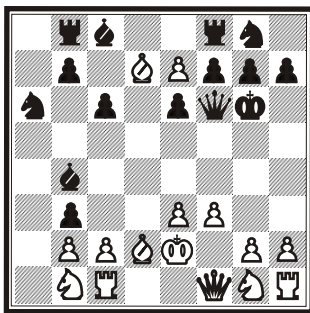
17: Gianni Donati - R036 Problem Paradise 17/2000

1.d4 Sa6 2.Be3 Sc5 3.dc Sf6 4.Qd6 Sd5 5.Qe6 Sb6 6.cb f5 7.Bc5 f4 8.e3 f3 9.Bb5 fg 10.Sf3 g1S 11.c4
Se2 12.Sc3 Sd4 13.Rd1 Sc6 14.Rd6 Sb8 15.Rc6 d5 16.o-o d4 17.Kg2 d3 18.Sd4 d2 19.f4 d1S 20.f5
Sf2 21.f6 Sg4 22.Rf4 Sh6 23.Re4 Sg8 24.f7# [ss]

18: Nicolas Dupont - Problemlad 2005

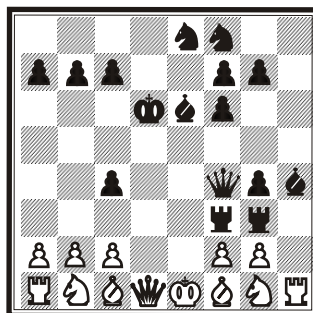
1.e4 h5 2.Qg4 hg 3.f4 Rh3 4.f5 Rb3 5.f6 g3 6.fe f5 7.a4 Kf7 8.e8Q+ Kf6 9.Qh5 f4 10.Qd1 f3 11.a5
f2+ 12.Ke2 fgB 13.a6 Be3 14.ab Bh6 15.e5+ Kg5 16.e6 a5 17.e7 a4 18.e8S a3 19.S:c7 a2 20.Sb5 abS
21.Sa3 Sc3+ 22.Ke3 Ra4 23.Sb1 Sa6 24.b8S Ba3 25.Sc6 Se7 26.Sd4 Qh8 27.Se2 Rd4 28.Sg1
[QSS]

15 Silvio Baier
Original



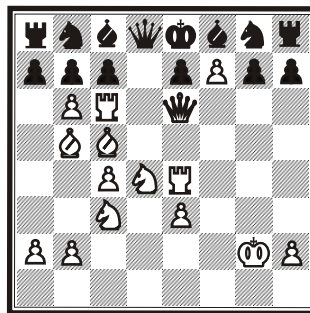
(15+15) PJ 23

16 Unto Heinonen
2 Prize - Problemlad 2000



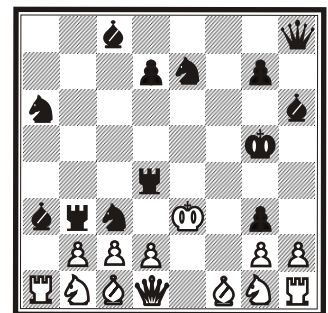
(13+16) PJ 25.5

17 Gianni Donati
Problem Paradise 17/2000



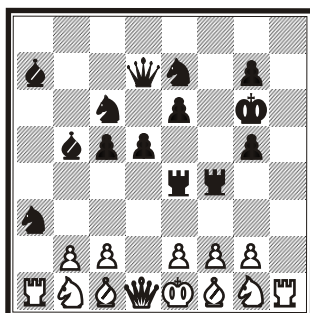
(15+14) PJ 23.5

18 Nicolas Dupont
Problemlad 2005



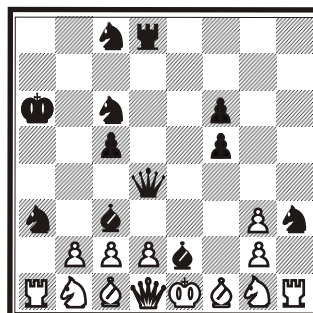
(14+13) PJ 27.5

19 Nicolas Dupont
3 Prize - Quartz 25/2004



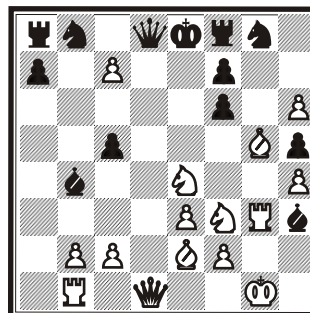
(13+14) PJ 24.5

20 Nicolas Dupont
Quartz 29/2006



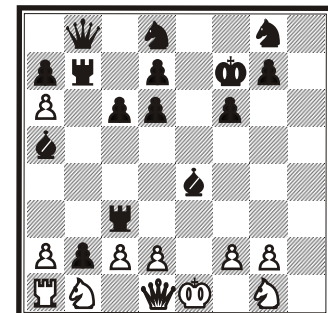
(13+12) PJ 28.5

22 Unto Heinonen
3 Prize, The Problemist 2001-02



(15+13) PJ 26.5

23 Michel Caillaud
3MH, Problemlad 1999



(11+15) PJ 27.5

19: Nicolas Dupont - 3 Prize - Quartz 25/2004

1.d4 h6 2.Bg5 hg 3.d5 Rh4 4.d6 Re4 5.de d5 6.a4 Bd7 7.a5 Bb5 8.a6 Qd7 9.ab a5 10.h4 a4 11.h5 a3
12.h6 a2 13.h7 abS 14.Rh6 Sa3 15.Re6 fe 16.h8R Kf7 17.e8S Bc5 18.Sd6+ Kg6 19.Sc4 Ba7 20.Sd2
c5 21.Sb1 Sc6 22.b8B Sge7 23.Bf4 Rf8 24.Bc1 Rff4 25.Rh1 [RBS]