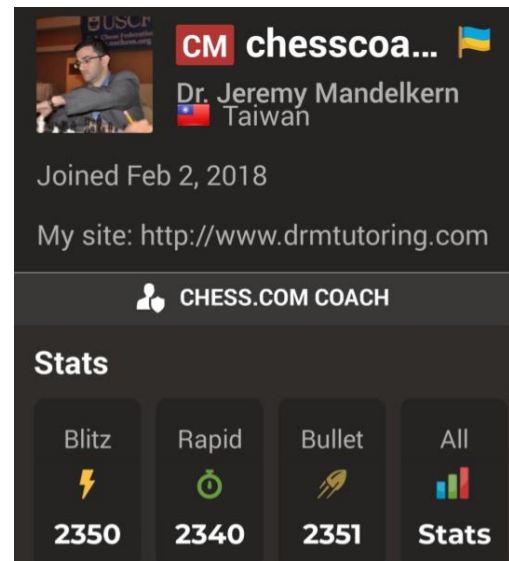


Coach M's Fall 2024 Puzzle Sheet

by Dr. Jeremy Mandelkern,
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USAT Champion Member, 2011,
“chesscoachtaipei” on chess.com



After attempting this activity, let me know how you do!

I'm so much looking forward to continuing working with you in 2024 and seeing you all continue to climb the ranks, grow stronger, and achieve your chess goals!

All the best! Sincerely, Coach M

P.S. (*) Visit my website:

http://drmtutoring.com/en_US/chess-tutoring/

for more Chess Worksheets or find me on Facebook at “Dr. M's Chess and Math page”,

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61552597786293>,

LIKE and FOLLOW, to enjoy more content from Coach M.

Thanks! -Coach M

Coach M's Tip: If a puzzle position is proving too difficult, then set this position up on a physical chess board. After you've formulated your solutions for each position, you can check your work with the answers given in the back of the worksheet and/or by loading up the PGN file in an analysis board and switching on the chess engine (if applicable). For each position, the object is to give the best move/line of play. Below is a scoring rubric. Each of the below positions are from unrated rapid G10 games played by Coach M on chess.com during the Fall 2024.

Note: Some positions may have multiple solutions. The positions are sorted by difficulty with the easiest puzzles given first. Good Luck and Do Your Best!

10/10	Super Grandmaster	Elo: 2700+
9/10	Grandmaster	Elo: 2500-2700
8/10	Master	Elo: 2200-2500
7/10	Expert	Elo: 2000-2200
6/10	Class A	Elo: 1800-2000
5/10	Class B	Elo: 1600-1800
4/10	Class C	Elo: 1400-1600
3/10	Class D	Elo: 1200-1400
2/10	Class E	Elo: 1000-1200
0-1/10	Beginner	Elo: Under 1000

1. White to play and win. (Difficulty Level: Easy)



The winning sequence is _____.

2. Black to play and win. (Difficulty Level: Easy)



The winning sequence is _____.

3. In response to white's f4 pawn push, Black can retain some edge after either a6! or just Nc6 which is simple and strong. However, black blundered here with Nc4? Why is Nc4? here a mistake?

(Difficulty Level: Easy)



White exploits Nc4? with the sequence _____.

4. Black to play. In this Alapin Sicilian game, black has gotten the better of the opening phase and now enjoys an edge of $\sim -.5$. How would you continue here to maintain this edge?

(Difficulty Level: Medium)



The best move is _____. (Justify your response).

5. Black to play. (Difficulty Level: Medium)

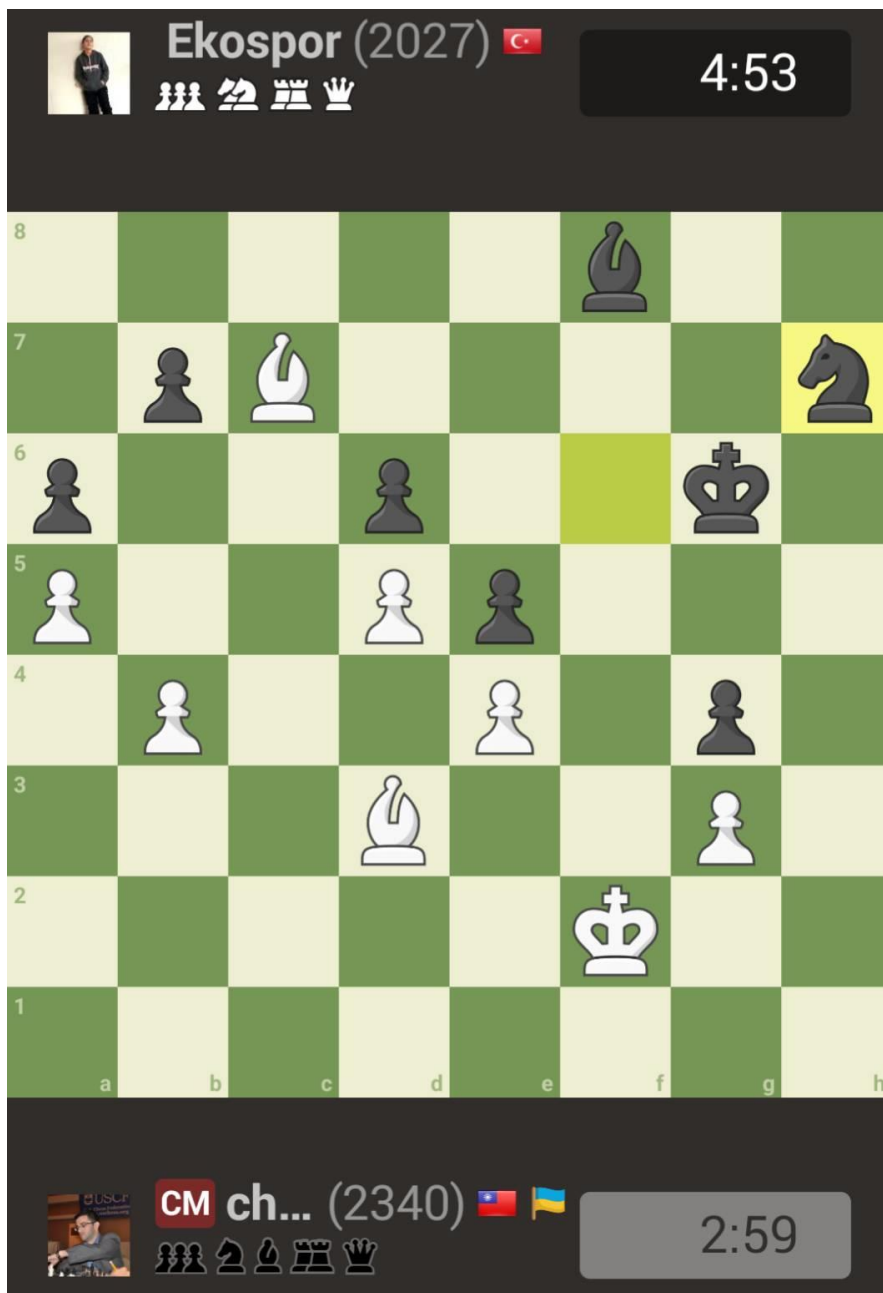
The screenshot shows a chess game in progress. The board is oriented with White on top and Black on bottom. The files are labeled h-a from left to right, and the ranks are labeled 1-8 from top to bottom. The pieces are as follows:

Rank	h	g	f	e	d	c	b	a
1			R					
2	B		N		K	N	P	
3					P			
4			P		N	P		
5	P		P	N			N	
6	N	P	N					N
7	N		K			B		
8					R			

The game header shows "Tras... (1978)" with a US flag and a timer of 0:29. The opponent header shows "CM ch... (2340)" with flags of Taiwan and Ukraine and a timer of 2:39. The board is in a complex position with White to move.

The best move here is _____. (Justify your response).

6. White to play and win. We are often told that bishops are superior to knights. This endgame position will certainly reinforce this assertion... (Difficulty Level: Medium)



The winning sequence is _____.

7. Black to play and get an edge in this rare Sicilian position.
 (Difficulty Level: Hard)



The best line of play is _____.

8. Black responded to Qb3+ too hastily with Kf8?? Why should this lose? Note: Coach M actually survived and won this game though it should really have been a swift end after white exploits the blunder...

(Difficulty Level: Hard)



Kf8?? loses to the sequence _____.

9. White to play and maintain an edge in this rare theoretical Kings Indian opening position. (Difficulty Level: Hard)



The best move here is _____. (Justify your response).

10. White to play and win. (Difficulty Level: Very Hard)



The winning sequence is _____

_____ (Justify your response).

Select Full game links/Solutions/PGN/Image Files

1. QxR! BxQ Rxg7+ Kh8 Rg6! wins the house.

Game link: <https://www.chess.com/game/live/121539066627>

2. Qd3! wins easily. For instance, Qd3! Qa4+ (defending mate on c2), b5! and white's best is to give up the queen for the b-pawn. Black is winning.

3. Nc4? BxB KxB BxN BxB Qd4+ wins the bishop on c4..

4. Rhd8! with the idea to respond to RxR with RxR! The a-pawn is poisoned on account of Bxa? c5! White tried Nd4 after black's excellent Rhd8! but black remained better and then went onto win from this favorable position.

Game link: <https://www.chess.com/game/live/121585830465>

5. Rd3! is a penetrating and strong move. The rooks can swing over to the kingside via g3 and coordinate with the N against white's weak c-pawn. White is struggling to maintain a defense after Rd3!

Game link: <https://www.chess.com/game/live/121450283093>

6. Kudos if you spotted the bolt from the blue, Bxa!! If bxB, b5! and white will be queening very soon. Note: Coach M did not spot this beautiful continuation in the game which ended in a draw after mutual mistakes by both players.

7. d5! is very strong here. For instance, after d5! exd NxN! QxN Bc5! ..., white will be up a pawn however black is getting to 0-0 safely whereas white's king will be experiencing some trouble on the opening e-file. Black is better.

8. Kf8?? Loses to Rh4!! as was spotted by Coach M during the game but only after the hasty Kf8?? blunder was played. Lucky for Coach M, his opponent did not spot this decisive continuation.
9. You must be an opening theoretician or a past master calculator if you know of or can find the move Qe1! here. This move retains a sizeable edge of ~+.5 for white. The main idea of this surprising move is to free the d1 square for a R's effective deployment there but in some instances the white Q may also pop-out on the kingside to join a ferocious attack that can build there. White's position is preferable (according to a strong engine) after Qe1!
10. A decisive blow for the brave... Bxf+!! and white is crushing black. One illustrative and thematic variation is QxB RdxR QxQ Rxg7+ leading to mate. Other variations give black a minus 3 evaluation at best. White is winning.

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