

INTRODUCTION TO CONSTITUTIONAL DRAUGHTS

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INTRODUCTION

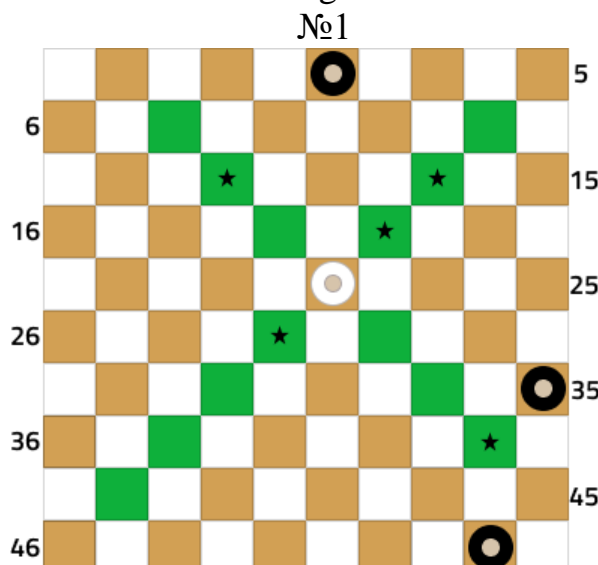
This article briefly discusses the idea of “constitutional” kings, a small change to the rules of Draughts that increases the percentage of wins. These changes will affect the kings-endings and can be applied not only to International, but also to Russian and Brazilian Checkers. In this article, we will only talk about modifying International Draughts, and the name “Constitutional Draughts” means adding “constitutional” kings to International Draughts.

The percentage of draws in international draughts is so large because it takes four kings to capture one. It is rare to have such an advantage in the endgame between two opponents approximately equal in strength. Achieving a draw despite a large advantage, like 4:2 or 3:1, can often feel disappointing both to the players and the fans.

Many ways of increasing the sharpness of Draughts were proposed. The idea discussed below allows you to win even with a very small advantage of material or initiative, but it keeps the spirit of Draughts and much of the rules intact. Therefore, we believe it is a valuable and noteworthy addition to the world of Draughts.

RULES

In Constitutional Draughts, men move, capture, and promote like in International Draughts, and kings capture like in International Draughts. The only difference is in the movement of kings:



Any king has capture possibilities. For king 23 in diagram 1, this ability is shown in green fields. If the opponent's king stands on these fields, it is captured by the white king 23.

Key rule: if a king moves to either capture or offer itself for capture, it moves unobstructed like in international draughts. Otherwise, it cannot move over a square where it would be captured by an opponent's king.

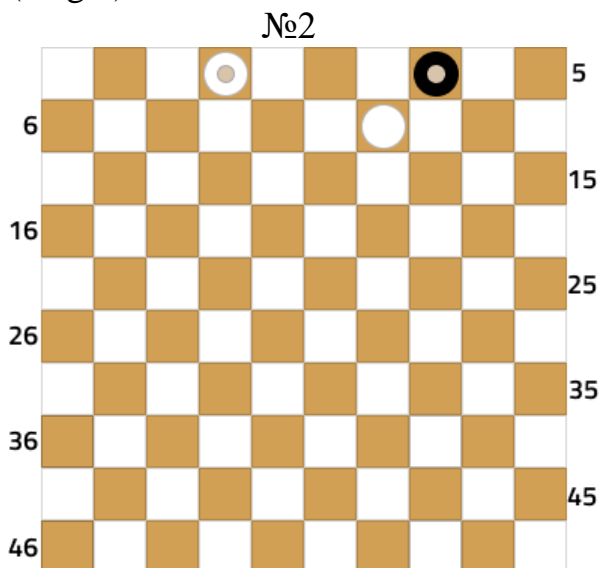
For the purposes of this rule, any possible track of capture counts, even if it is not maximal – but on your move, you still must capture maximally. “Constitutional” kings are a novelty that greatly changes and complements the game. Let's look at all the features in detail to understand how this will affect the game.

In the diagram above, the king 3 cannot move to fields 25 or 26, because it is a simple movement without capture (non-capturing move), and therefore the black king 3 reaches only the fields 12 and 14 (★). The king 3 is forced to stop on these fields and the king 23 captures it (23:1, 23:7, 23:10 or 23:5).

The king 35 cannot move to fields 2 or 49, because it is a non-capturing move. The king 35 is forced to stop on fields 19 and 40, after that the king 23 captures it (23:14, 23:10, 23:5 or 23:45).

The king 50 cannot move to fields 6, 11, 17, 22 because it is also a non-capturing move. The king 50 is forced to stop on field 28 and the king 23 captures it (23:32, 23:37, 23:41 or 23:46).

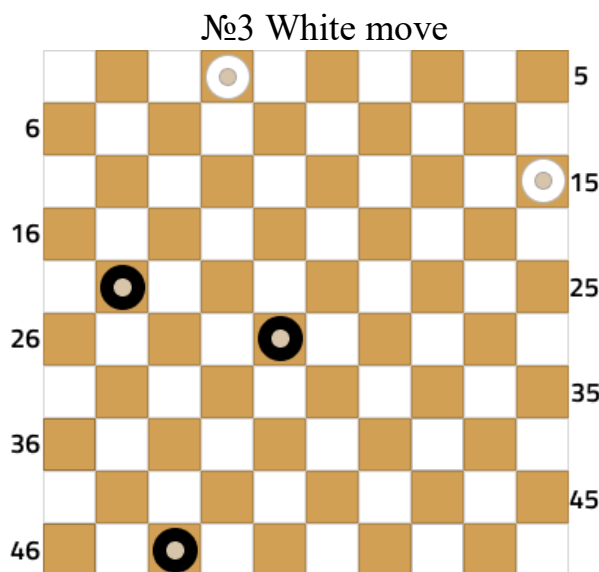
As for the first part of the rule, everything remains as in international draughts (diag.2):



The black king 4, capturing the white simple checker 9, passes through the field 13. This field is located in the capture zone of the white king 2. But as the black king makes a capturing move, it calmly passes through the field 13:

1... 4:18 (22, 27, 31 or 36)

If a king offers itself for capture, then also everything remains as in international draughts (diag.3):



1.2-24 ...

Although fields 8 and 19 are in the black king's capture zone, the white king 2 moves freely to field 24 and sacrifices itself.

Everything as usual.

1... 47:20

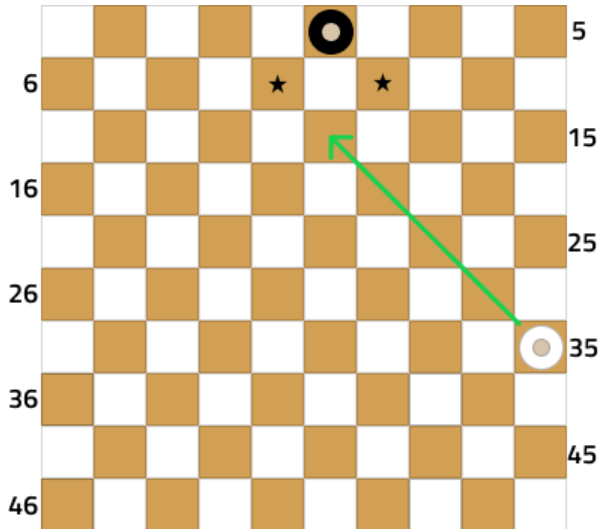
2.15:26, 2-0.

As we can see, there are no differences from the usual rules in this case.

The only difference is in non-capturing move. This is enough to give us a win in the kings endings 3x1, 2x1 and a great chance in 1x1!

KINGS ENDINGS 1x1. OPPOSITION

№4 White moves



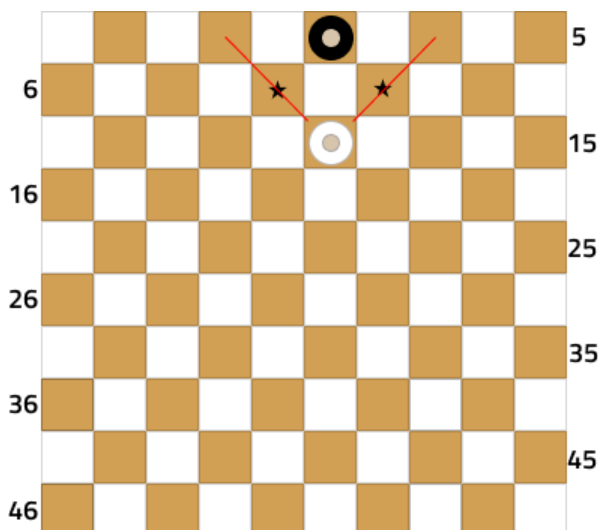
Consider the ending 1x1 (diag.4).

When White moves, we see that the black king 3 is standing on the edge of the Board. This is the most unfavorable position, since the king 3 is very limited in mobility. Using this circumstance, the white king 35 moves to the field 13:

1.35-13! ...

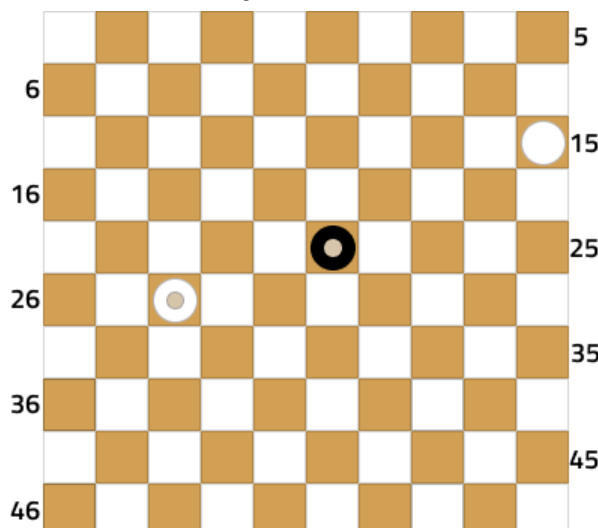
The white king stood in strong opposition to the black king and used capture possibilities to cut all communications (diag.5):

№5 Black moves



Fields 8 and 9 are the capture zone of the white king, so the black king cannot move past them. He must instead expose himself to capture. Black loses, 2-0.

№6 White moves



The position on diagram 6 clearly shows that even a corner on a large diagonal is not a shelter, but a mousetrap (dig. 6).

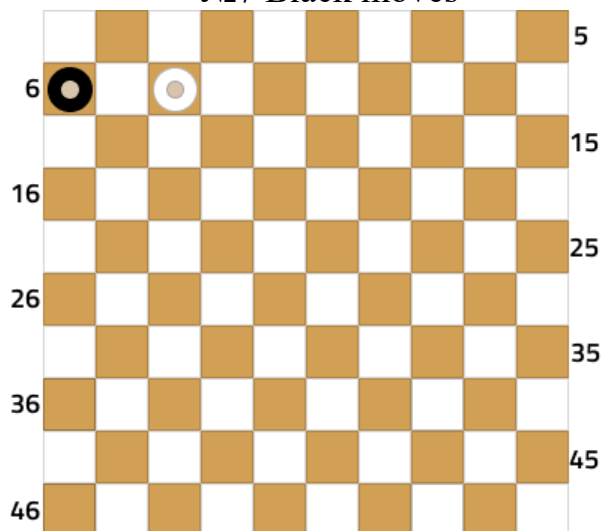
Under normal rules, there is an obvious draw. However, constitutional draughts allow you to win in 2 moves!

1.15-10! **23:5**

2.27-4, 2-0. The black king cannot escape from corner 5, since field 10 is in the capture zone of the white king 4.

In total, the 10x10 Board has 18 fields on the edge. And only 4 fields give a draw to the defending side! These are fields 1, 6, 45, and 50. Only after reaching these fields, the defending side is saved. This is due to the geometry of the Board, since these fields on the edge are not single and detached, but complement each other (diag.7):

№7 Black moves

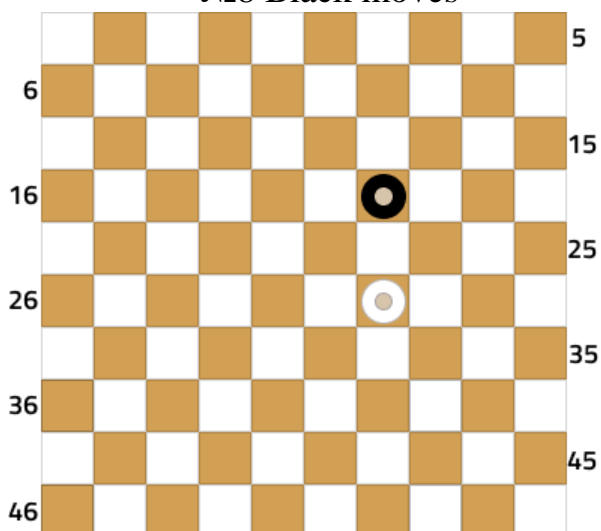


Wherever the white king stands (fields 2, 7 or 16), the black king easily moves away from the unfavorable confrontation to the neighboring field 1. White cannot win, 1-1.

But if we can push the opponent's king to any other 14 fields on the edge, then we win.

Let's look further and show the winning mechanism, even if the defending side is not on the edge (diag.8).

№8 Black moves



White just put a king on the field 29 and got the winning position. Why is this possible in Constitutional Draughts?

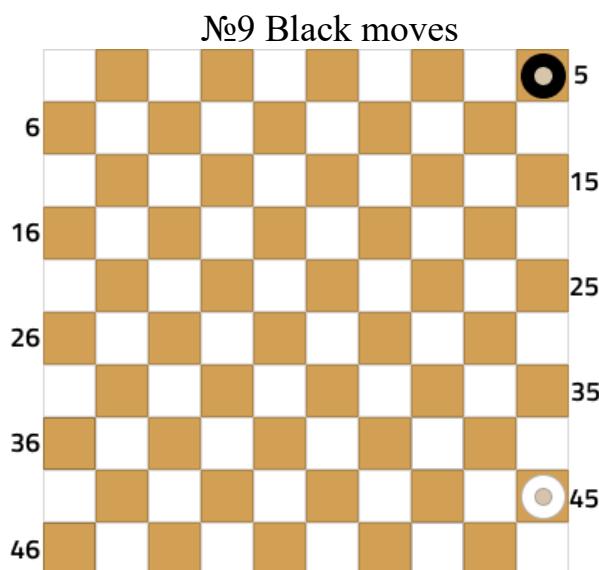
White cut off the black king from the saving fields 1,6,45 and 50. To do this, the white king must occupy the double line (1-45&6-50). And now the black king is forced to gradually retreat to the edge and take a bad field.

As you can see, fields 23 and 24 are not available for Black. This is the capture zone for white king.

Next, the mechanism is simple. Wherever black retreats, the white king stands in opposition and wins.

- A) ... 19-2
29-12;
- B)... 19-8
29-18 and Black is forced to retreat to the edge, losing;
- C) ... 19-13
29-23 and the black king is gradually pushed to the edge;
- D)... 19-14
29-24 and there is no escape for Black, make sure yourself.

So, to win the king-ending 1x1, you need to cut off the opponent from the saving fields 1, 6, 45, 50, and also their last move to take the opposition to the opponent's king. There can be from 1 to 7 vertical cells between two kings. (diag.9):



White fulfilled all the conditions for victory: blocked access for Black to the saving fields and just occupied the key field 45. There are 7 vertical cells between two kings.

No matter how Black plays, the white king constantly approaches and holds the opposition. In the end, the black king is forced to retreat to the edge and dies.

A) ... 5-19
45-29, 2-0;

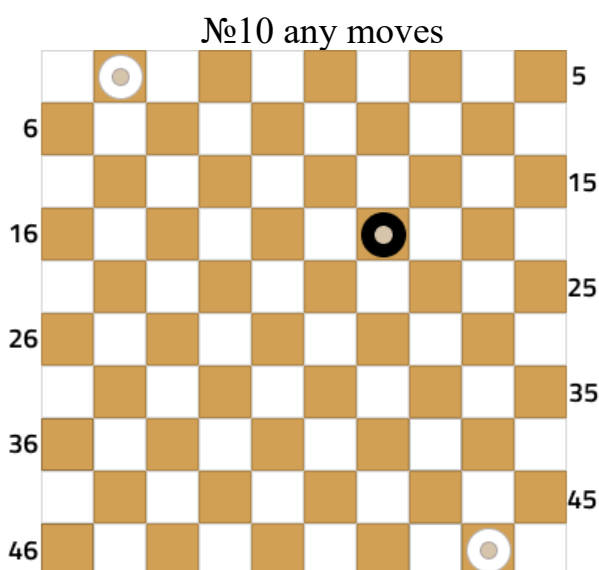
B) ... 5-10
45-40, etc., 2-0.

The question arises: what if White moves in the position on diagram 9? Can White win in this case?

No! White doesn't win, it's a draw. Now Black must hold the opposition and makes sure that the move is always White's:

A) 45-29 5-19!
B) 45-40 5-10! etc., 1-1.

KINGS ENDINGS 2x1, 3x1



In the kings-endings 2x1 the weakest side has no chance. Two kings always win. The easiest way (but not the fastest!) is to occupy the double line and key fields 1, 6, 45, 50 (diag.10).

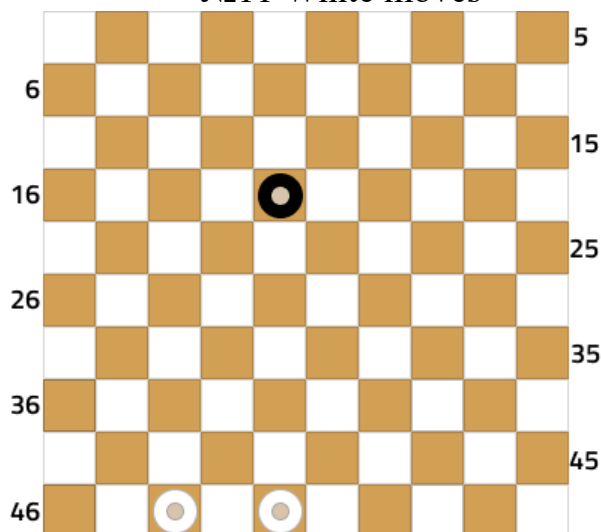
Again, the stronger side fulfilled all the conditions for victory. Now, in any move, one of the white kings takes the won opposition.

This is, of course, a 100% way to win. But often you don't need to build such a position. Usually, the victory is achieved

during the construction process.

Most often, you can sacrifice one king, luring the opponent to the edge. And then the second king takes the winning opposition.

№11 White moves



Black controls a double line with saving fields and plans to resist for a long time. But White quickly wins by sacrificing one of kings:

1.48-31 18:36
2.47-38, 2-0, opposition in favor of Whites.

There are many similar examples, but the general idea is clear. Two kings always win against one.

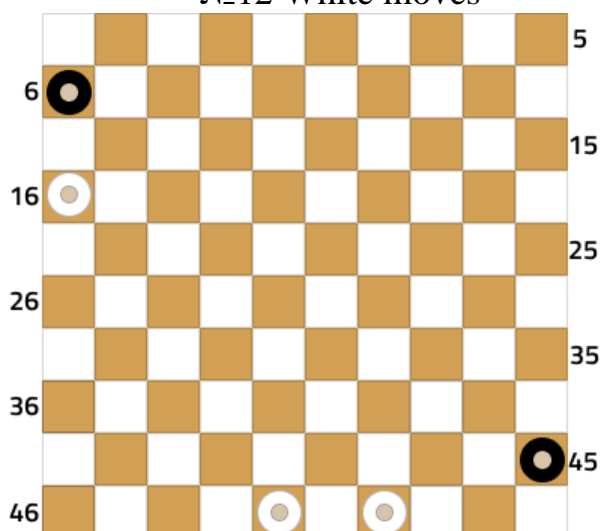
Obviously, kings-endings 3x1 are also won in any of the above ways.

KINGS ENDINGS 3x2

In the general case, the stronger side goes to the ending 2x1 by exchanging one pair of kings. In some cases, you can sacrifice a checker and win by opposition, as shown on diagram 11. This is usually not a problem.

However, there are some of the best defensive positions for the weakest side, in which winning is not easy. How can we hack them?

№12 White moves



The black kings occupied the double line and placed themselves on the saving fields.

Since Black stubbornly holds on to the fields 1, 6, 45 and 50, White restricts the opponent's mobility with their kings 16 and 49. Now black kings can only move one square.

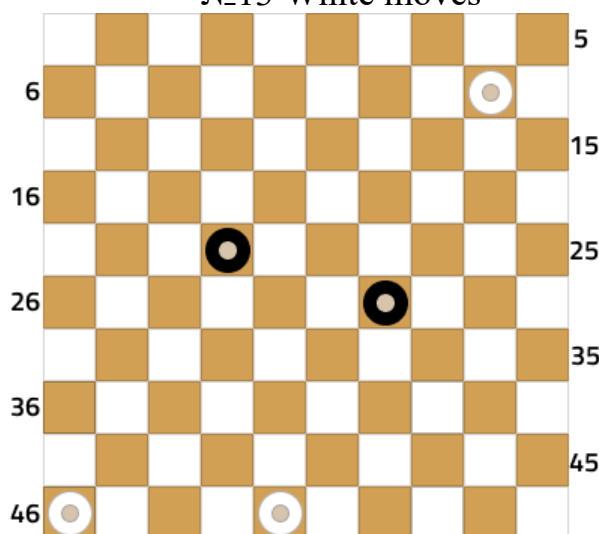
White's task is to exchange one pair of kings.

1.48-26! ...
Now, in the case of 1...45-50 2.26-17 follows, and the ending 2x1 occurs, 2-

0.
1... 6-1
2.26-12 45:7
3.16:2, the ending 2x1 arises, 2-0.

Now let's consider the case when the weaker side does not press on the edge, controls the double line and the triple line (4-15-47-36).

№13 White moves



Black kings are firmly standing far from the edge in the best positions. White's task is to expel the black kings from the double line and then change one pair of kings.

But to do this, White must also correctly place kings and to clamp one of the black kings in a pincer. The diagram 13 shows one of the possible winning methods.

1.10-15! ...

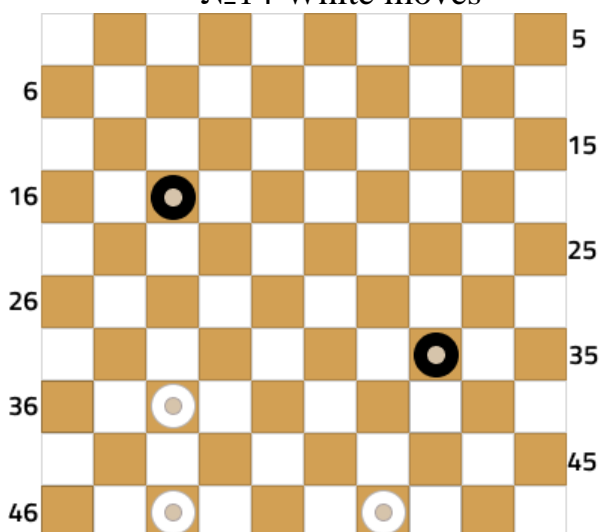
King 29 has nowhere to retreat, except field 47.

1... 29-47

2.48-42, now one pair of kings is exchanged

and there is a won ending 2x1.

№14 White moves



Here is the same principle as in the previous example.

1.37-48 34-25 (there is no other move)

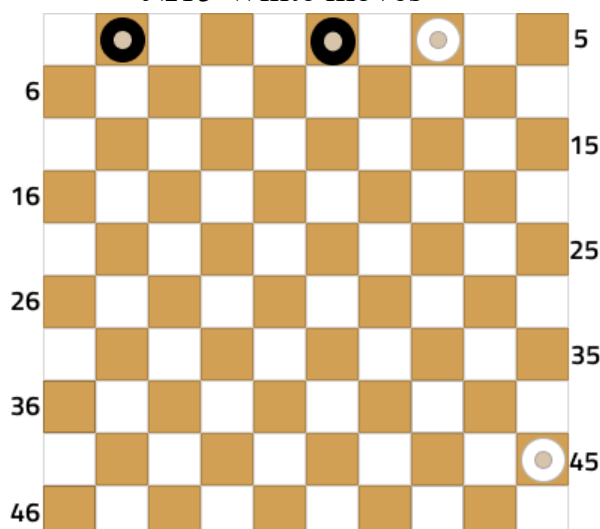
2.49-43 ... and the black king 25 can't avoid the exchange after 43-30, for example.

Attention! You cannot make a change on the field 39, since in this case Black has a choice of two captures and plays 17:50.

KINGS ENDINGS 2x2, 3x3

Kings endings 2x2 and 3x3 in general are draw, but this is only under perfect play on both sides. These endings contain opportunities to win, so it is not surprising that one player will often win against another. The key to winning is a profitable exchange of kings and winning with the help of the opposition. Let's look at some examples.

№15 White moves

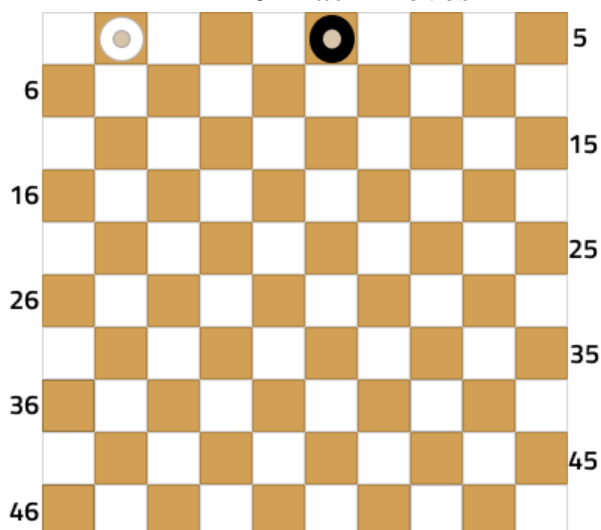


White moves to the winning end 1x1 with the help of the exchange:

1.4-18! 2:23
2.45:1! ...

There is a 1x1 ending, see diagram 16.

№16 Black moves



The white king 1 cuts off the black king 3 from the double line and saving fields.

It is clear that the opposition is in favor of the whites, the blacks are losing.

2... 3-8

3.1-7, 2-0

or

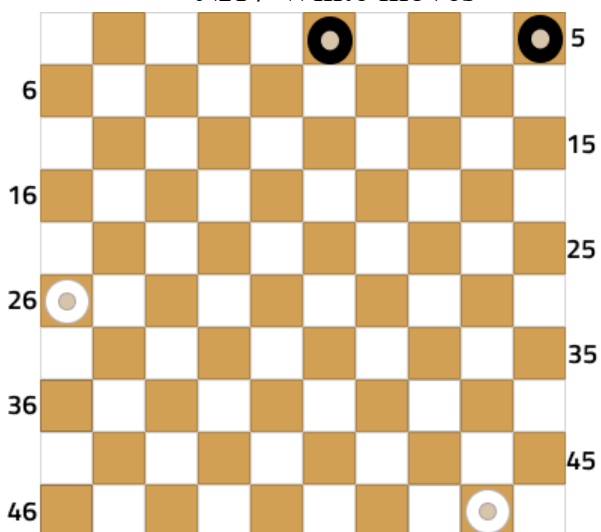
2... 3-25

3.1-23, 2-0.

Note that it would be a mistake to capture 2.45:7, since after 2...3-8! Black holds the opposition when white moves, this leads to

a draw. Keep this in mind and be careful!

№17 White moves



Under normal rules, this position is a draw, but constitutional draughts allow White to win immediately:

1.50-17 3:21

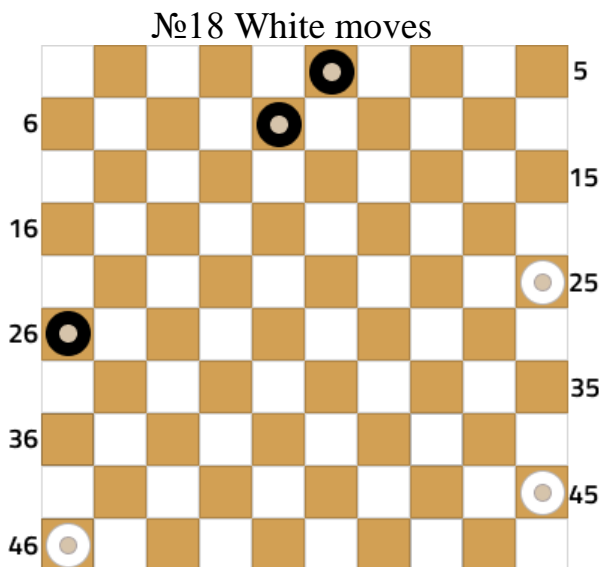
2.26:3, 2-0.

In principle, an experienced player should not lose such endings. And for a novice player, this is a good lesson.

It is much more difficult endings 3x3, which also generally are draw, but the fight can turn out bright.

To win the end of 3x3, you need to make a profitable exchange of two pairs of kings and win the opposition.

Let's look at the example in diagram 18:



Obviously, there is a draw in standard International Draughts. But in this version White wins quickly:

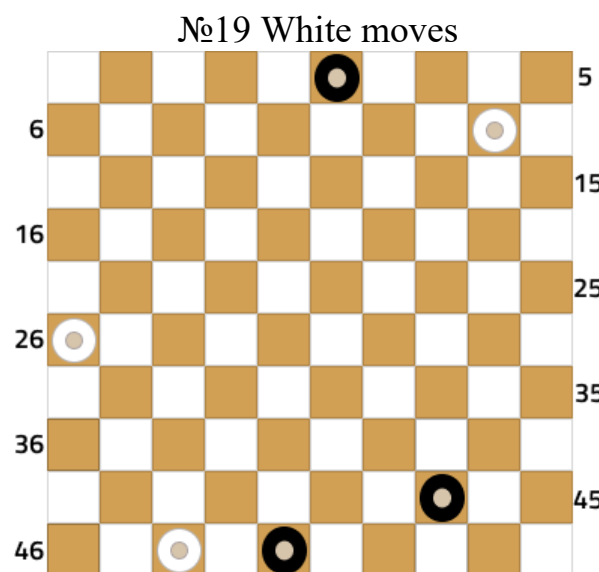
1.46-14! 3:20
2.25:12 ...

With any capture Black loses:

2... 26:8
3.45-18, 2-0

or

2... 26:3
3.45-23!, 2-0, again the opposition is in favor of White.



1.26-21! 3:26
2.10-37 26:42
3.47:50 ...

Again, White gets the winning position, as the white king owns the double line and has the opposition in its favor.
2-0.

CONCLUSION

Of course, draughts endings can also contain simple checkers. These checkers can sacrifice themselves, and at some point they can become a king themselves. But a simple checker doesn't cut king's mobility to move. All this makes the fight very interesting and difficult.

Well, that's probably the end of it. All of the main ideas in kings endgames were shown. International Draughts (as well as Brazilian and Russian draughts) attract many players with their beauty and simplicity of rules. This brochure offers a small addition to the standard rules, which should sharpen and beautify the fight. We especially

emphasize that all other standard rules remain unchanged. In Constitutional Draughts, players will not agree to a draw ahead of time, but will be able to fight for victory until resources are completely depleted.

Constitutional Draughts are just beginning to develop, so we are still waiting for a lot of discoveries. We invite the fans of checkers to test all the above ideas in practice. As of today, Constitutional Draughts can be played of MindSports.nl; we commit ourselves to further improving their accessibility and popularity.

Sincerely,

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