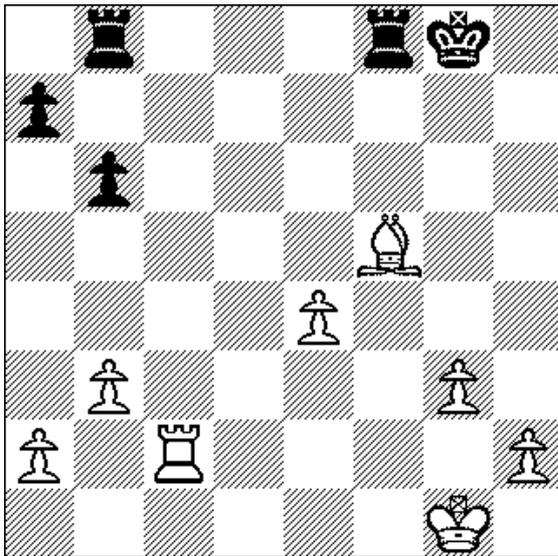


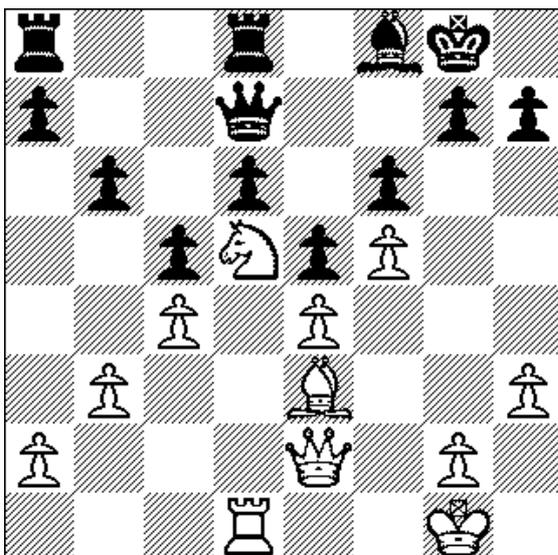
Permanent minor piece outposts

Definition: minor piece outpost, with no enemy minor pieces able to attack them

Note: that will basically mean the lack of a knight, as knights are generally able to attack all board squares, independent of their colour, or, the lack of a bishop the colour of the square the minor piece is outposted on



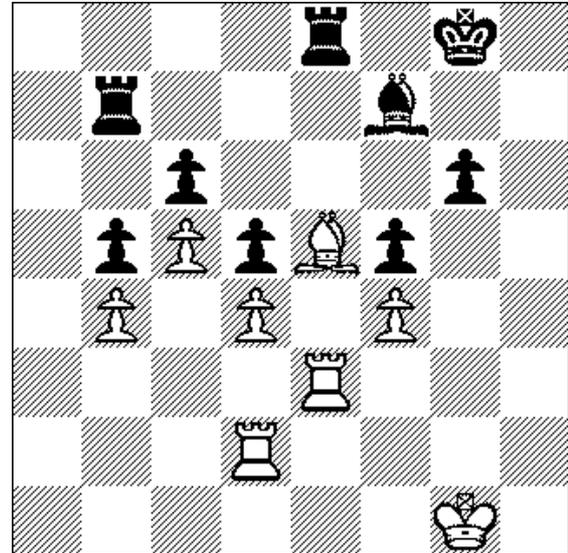
the bishop on f5 is a permanent minor piece outpost, no enemy minor pieces on the board, that would be able to attack it



another permanent minor piece outpost, the knight on d5. As easily seen, no enemy

minor pieces present, able to attack the d5 square, aiming at destroying the strong knight.

If any side, and despite being a pawn and the exchange down, only white could have advantage above.



and one more, the bishop on e5

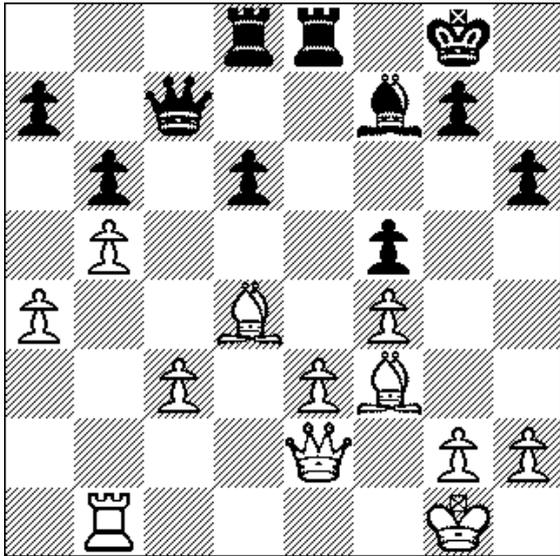
Value: sufficiently large bonus, over the already dispensed one for a general outpost, in terms of rank

5th or 6th rank: 50cps for the mg, 15cps for the eg

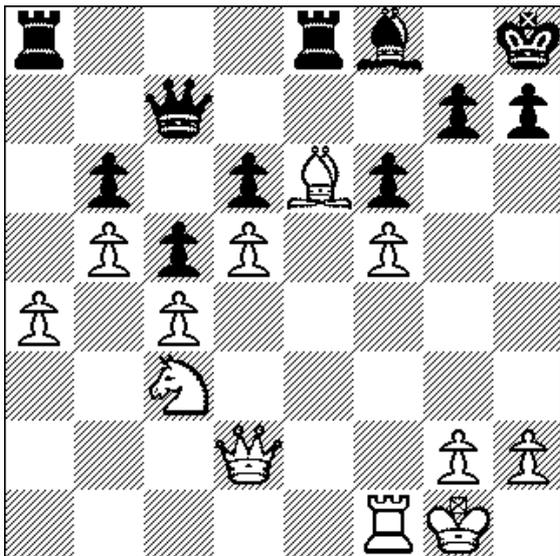
4th rank: 15cps for the mg, 5cps for the eg

Additional information: the very-well deserved bonus is obviously due for the following weighty reasons:

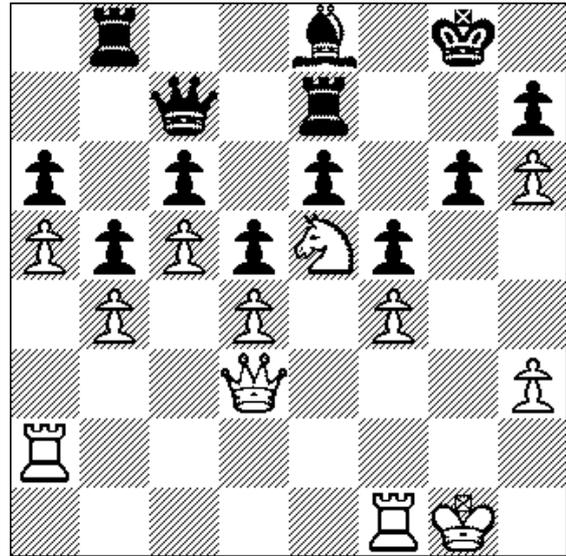
- as such an outpost will be unattackable by enemy minors, that will mean it will be undestroyable
- being undestroyable in turn means durability, and durability is always an asset, especially with strong features
- on occasion, due to the closed character of the position, such an outpost will be unattackable even by enemy rooks, so this will further boost its value



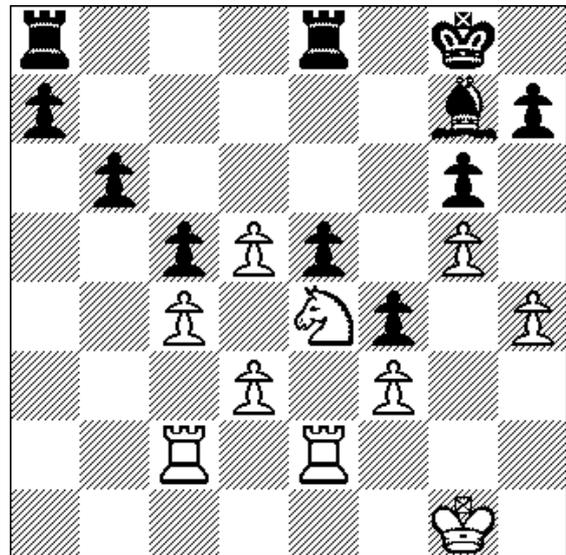
the strongly-defended permanent bishop outpost on d4, plus a bit more favourable imbalance, fully compensate the material deficit. White has clear advantage.



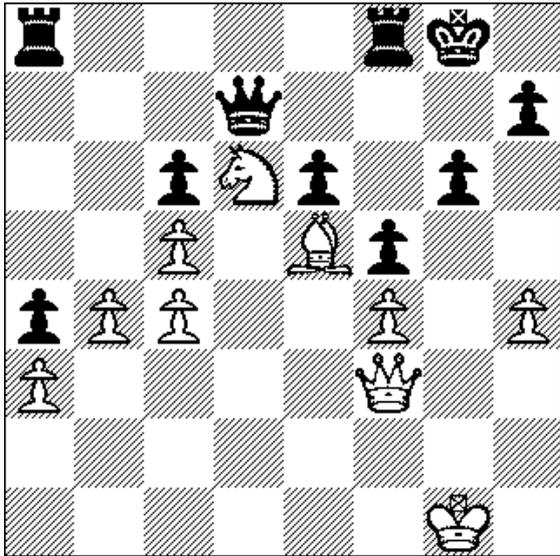
what a powerful outpost, the bishop on e6! Advanced, twice defended, and unattackable by enemy minors. White certainly has a winning advantage. About the best black could do is to sacrifice an exchange on e6, but that will hardly help too.



eternal knight on e5. The knight is sheltered by an enemy pawn, with the position being closed, so no enemy rook can ever attack it, trying to destroy it. This only highlights white's advantage, and white will certainly win after the h3-h4-h5 break.



even in the eg, and even on the 4th rank, such outposts are undoubtedly very useful. If any side, only white can win the position above.



of course, it is even better to have 2 of those. The all-powerful knight on d6 and bishop on e5, unchallenged by enemy pieces, certainly more than compensate for the big material deficit.

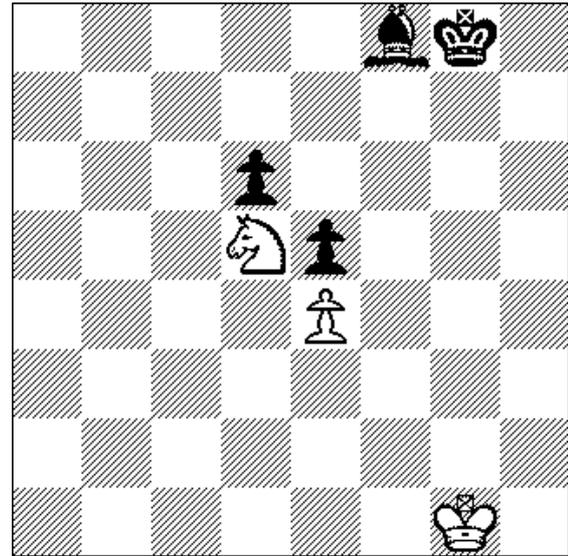
The mg value is significantly larger, as outposts in general are much more relevant in the mg.

Overall, this is one feature, whose importance can hardly be overestimated.

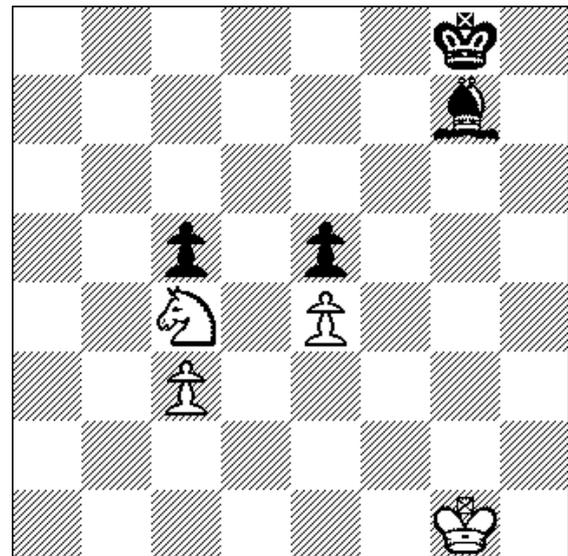
Frequency: frequent

Outposts blocking enemy pawns

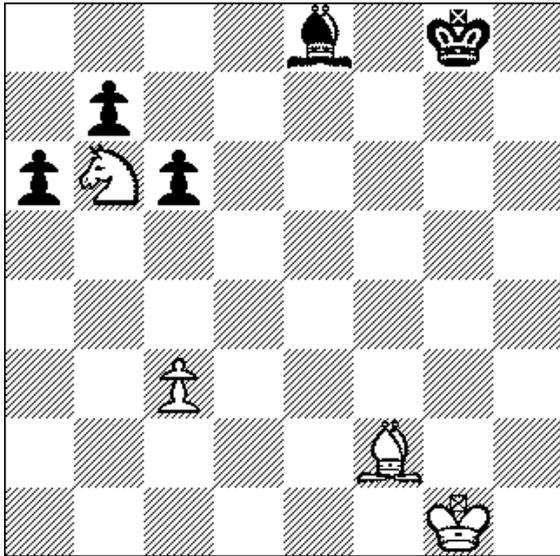
Definition: minor outposts on their 4th, 5th or 6th ranks, blocking enemy pawns



the knight on d5 is such an outpost on the 5th rank. It blocks the enemy d6 pawn.



one more similar outpost, this time on the 4th rank, the knight on c4 blocks the enemy c5 pawn

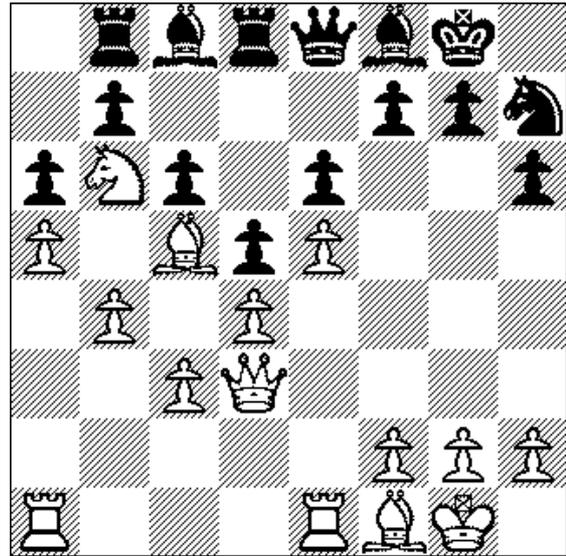


and one on the 6th rank. The knight on b6 blocks the enemy b7 pawn.

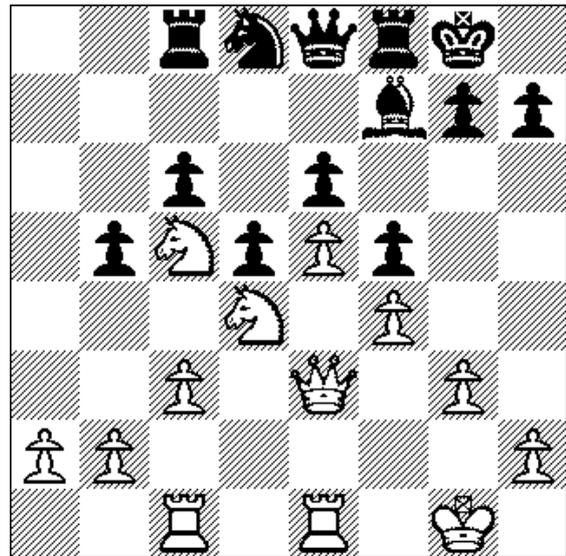
Value: bonus, 10cps, both for the mg and eg

Additional information: the very-well deserved bonus is due for the following reasons:

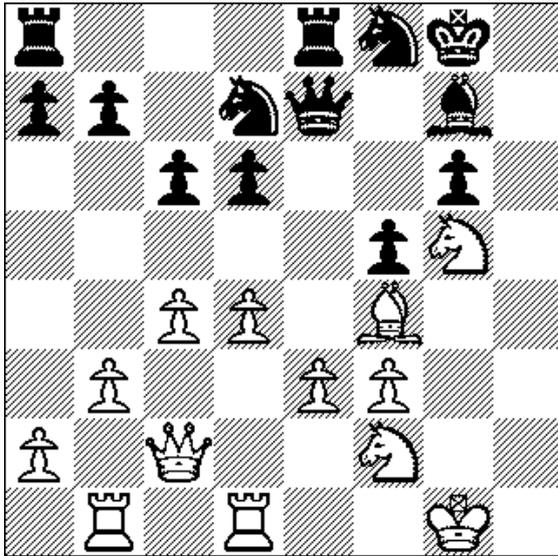
- the enemy pawn is immobilised, which is especially of an asset, when it is closer to its home rank
- frequently, primarily in the mg, but also in the eg, this has a cramping effect upon the enemy pieces
- the outposted minor is unattackable by enemy heavy pieces along the file where it sits, as the enemy pawn shelters it
- when blocking an enemy pawn, part of the king shelter, the shelter as a whole becomes less flexible



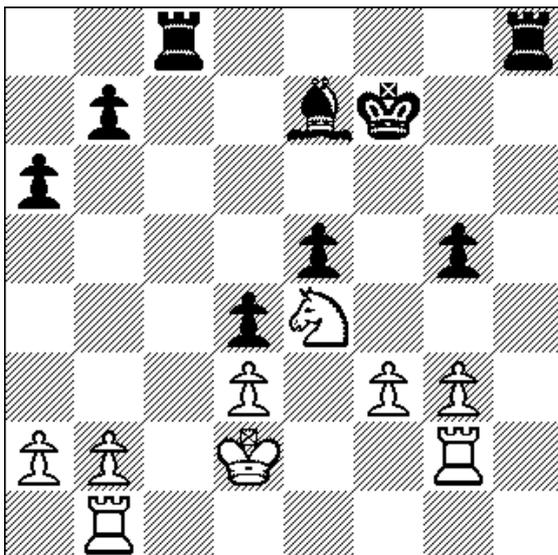
the knight on b6 immobilises the black b7 pawn, and this has a cramping effect upon the whole black position



the knight on c5 is unattackable by the black rook on c8. Breathing space for the black pieces is also quite limited.



when blocking a shelter pawn, g6 above, such outpost additionally makes the shelter less flexible



even on the 4th rank, and even in the eg, such immobilisation definitely has its advantages

Frequency: very frequent

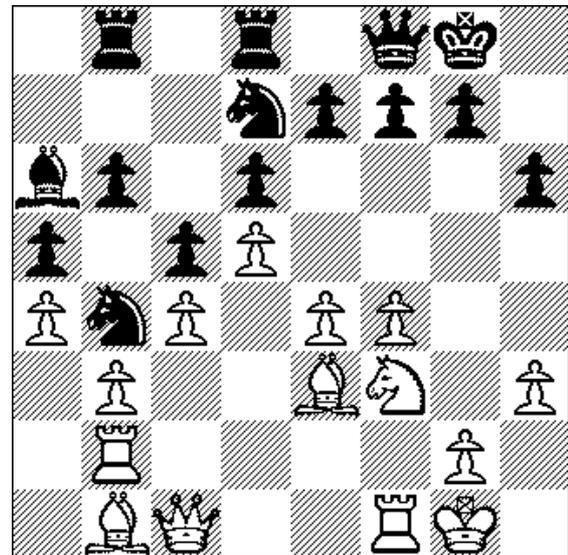
Useless outposts

Definition: minor piece outpost on the 5th or 6th ranks on files a or b, or h or g, on the side of the board, opposite to where the enemy king is, with all squares attacked by

the outpost on more advanced ranks, not attacked by any other own pawn or piece, and attacked by at least one enemy piece

Value: sufficient penalty, -30cps in the mg, -10cps in the eg

Additional information: the penalty is because of the largely useless nature of such outposts. As the outpost will be placed far from the enemy king, it will not be able to attack it. What is even worse, because all squares on more advanced ranks the outpost can access are controlled by enemy pieces, the outpost will not be able to transfer from them to different sections of the board, including the center or king side. So, the most it can actually do, is stay where it is, doing nothing, or possibly go back on less advanced ranks in the own camp, but that is something no outpost would like to do. In this way, the outpost is completely dysfunctional.

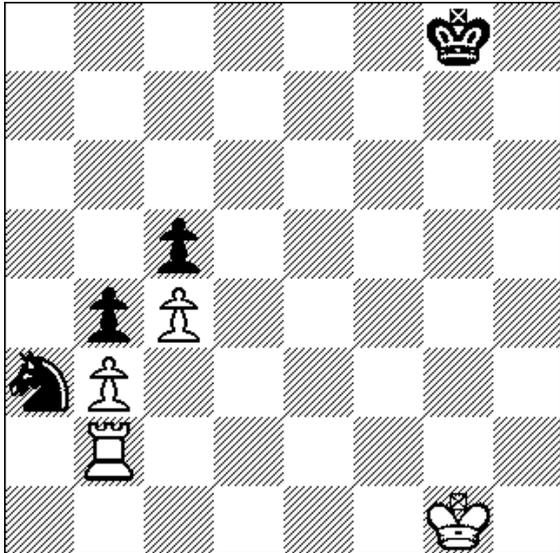


the knight on b4 is such an outpost. All squares on more advanced ranks, a2,c2 and d3, are controlled by white pieces, even if only the bishop on b1, and not supported by any own piece. So, the most the outpost could do is stay where it is, and white has winning advantage.

Frequency: infrequent

Unretreatable knight outposts

Definition: knight outpost on its 5th or 6th rank, on files a,h,b or g, with all its mobility squares on less advanced ranks controlled by enemy pawns

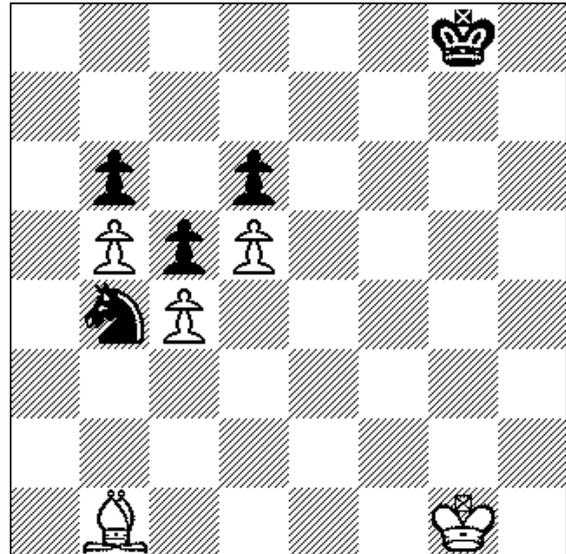


the knight on a3 is an unretreatable knight outpost on the edge a file.

All the mobility squares of the knight on less advanced ranks than the knight itself, b5 and c4, are controlled by white pawns, c4 and b3 respectively.

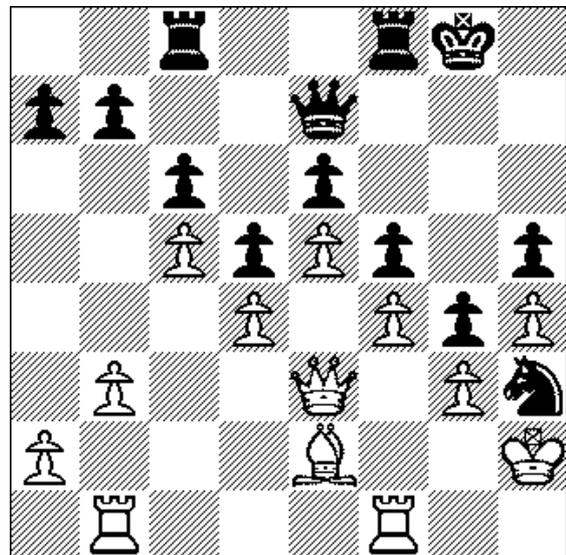
Value: penalty, -15cps, both for the mg and eg

Additional information: the penalty is given because of the obvious mobility limitations of such outposts. Although otherwise excellently placed, they can not possibly retreat, as enemy pawns will prevent that, while more advanced mobility squares will usually be attacked by enemy pieces, as is the case with the white rook on b2 on the diagrammed position, attacking the b1 and c2 squares, so their functioning is pretty much limited to a very small section of the board, and sometimes, because of that, they are even trappable.



one more example, this time with a knight on its 5th rank.

All the knight's mobility squares on less advanced ranks, a6,c6 and d5, are under the control of enemy pawns, while its mobility squares on more advanced ranks, a2,c2 and d3, are restricted by the white bishop on b1.



this condition is very negative, also when the outposted knight directly attacks squares of the enemy king shelter. Although one might think the black knight on h3 is very strong, in actual fact it is quite fragile, as it can not retreat, and after the white rook moves from f1 and its place is taken by the white bishop, the easily trappable knight comes under attack and

perishes together with the pawn defending it.

Frequency: infrequent

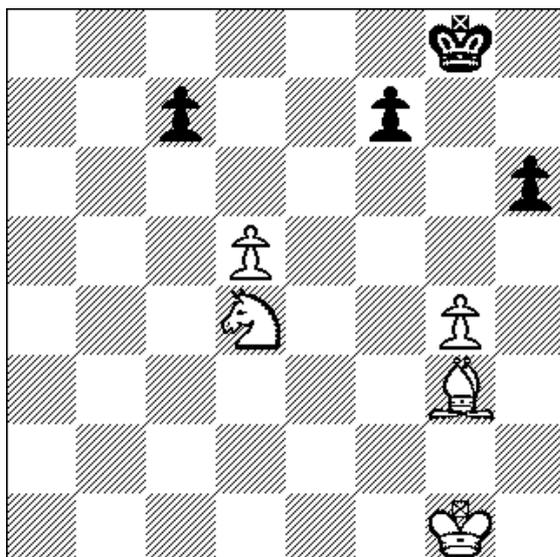
Semi-outposts

Definition: semi-outposts are outpost-related features, a knight or bishop on ranks 3 through 5, that are not pure outposts proper, in the sense that there are enemy pawns on more advanced ranks on one of the adjacent files, but those pawns do not represent immediate threat to the outpost, because they are either unable to move forward as being blocked by opponent pawns or pieces, or a possible pawn push is thwarted by an opponent pawn guarding the square in front of them

Such features are extremely different and wide-ranging. Below, we will briefly look at the most salient ones.

Minor piece behind an own pawn

Definition: a minor piece on the 3rd, 4th or 5th ranks with an own pawn placed immediately in front of it on the same file one rank above



Nd4 behind d5 pawn and Bg3 behind g4 pawn

Value: small bonus, different for the knight and bishop

- 15cps in the mg, 5cps in the eg for the knight

- 12cps in the mg, 4cps in the eg for the bishop

Additional information: the bonus is given for the following reasons:

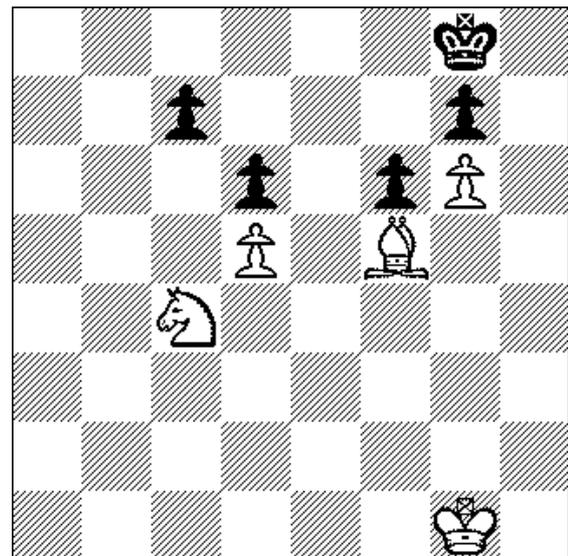
- the own pawn in front of the minor piece prevents any possible attack by an enemy pawn (on the diagrammed position, c7-c5 would be met by d5-c6, f7-f5 and h6-h5 thrusts also do not represent a danger to the bishop, as g4 pawn could capture both sides)

- the minor pieces are also protected from file attacks of enemy heavy pieces, with the pawn in front shielding them

Frequency: frequent

Minor piece with an own pawn diagonally in front of it

Definition: a minor piece on the 3rd, 4th or 5th ranks with an own pawn one rank upper on adjacent file



Nc4 and Bf5 represent such semi-outposts

Value: small bonus, different for the knight and bishop

- 10cps in the mg, 3cps in the eg for the knight
- 8cps in the mg, 2cps in the eg for the bishop

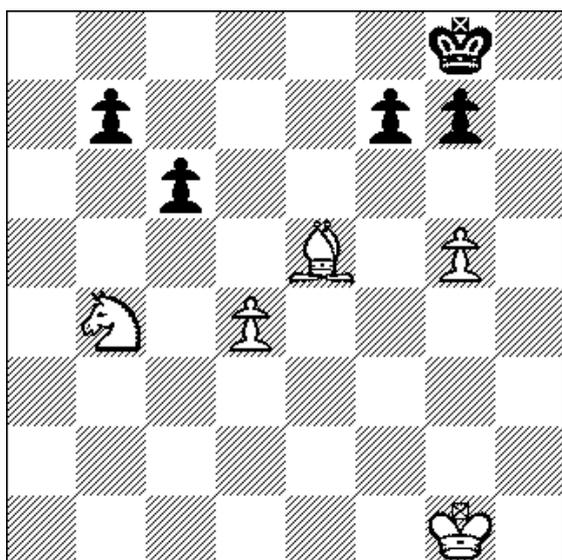
Additional information: bonus is dispensed as:

- an enemy pawn on the adjacent file where the friendly pawn is could not possibly attack the minor, as the friendly pawn blocks its further push(see the diagrammed position; d6-d5 push to threaten the knight is currently impossible because d5 pawn blocks d6, g7-g6 push threat to attack the white bishop on f5 is thwarted too, as g6 pawn blocks g7)
- even if enemy pawns are not present, the knight will support the own pawn push, while the bishop will defend the own pawn, which is particularly important, if the own pawns are passers

Frequency: frequent

Minor piece with an own pawn on the same rank across a file

Definition: a minor piece on the 3rd, 4th or 5th ranks with an own pawn on the same rank 2 files apart



Nb4 and Be5 are such semi-outposts above

Value: small bonus, different for the knight and bishop

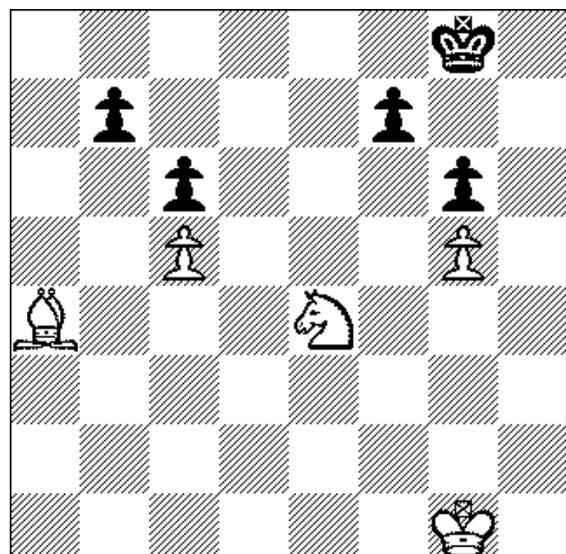
- 10cps in the mg, 3cps in the eg for the knight
- 8cps in the mg, 2cps in the eg for the bishop

Additional information: the bonus is given due to the following considerations:

- the friendly pawn on the same rank across a file prevents an enemy pawn push to threaten the minor piece, as the enemy pawn could be captured(see diagrammed position; on c6-c5 push, there is a d4-c5 capture, while on f7-f6 push, a g5-f6 capture)
- if the minor is a knight, it will control on occasion the square in front of the friendly pawn, rendering a pawn push easier, while, in the case of a bishop, the bishop will additionally control the square for the enemy pawn push(on the diagrammed position, even though f7 black pawn is aligned/connected, and g7 supports the possible f7-f6 push, this push is thwarted, because of the double Be5-pawn g5 control of the f6 square)

Frequency: frequent

Minor piece on the 4th rank with an enemy pawn on its second rank on adjacent file that is backward



where the other own outposted minor piece is. As you can see on the diagrammed position, Na6 outpost thwarts the possible a7-a5 push with threat upon the Bb4, while Bg6 effectively blocks the black g7-g5 thrust, with a threat upon Nf4.

Frequency: infrequent