

Draughts Logic Puzzle – Solution

1. a3 is E

We are told that the play is on white squares, and on a chessboard a1 is black, so

2. a1, b2, c1, c3, d2, e1, e3, f2 are all E

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E _ E _ E ○  
○ E ○ E _ E  
E _ E _ E ○
```

We are told there are 4 pieces at the places marked “o”, including at least 3 kings. White has two moves which don’t lose a piece (“safe” moves), while Red would have 4 safe moves.

First note that whatever f1 and f3 are, they provide Red and White with an even number of safe moves. c2 has an even number of safe moves unless it can’t move to b3 safely.

Consider the piece on c2:

- It cannot be a WK, or White would have at least 3 safe moves.
- If c2 were a WM, then a2 would have to be a king. But a WK on a2 would give White 4 safe moves, whereas a RK on a2 would mean both Red and White had an odd number of moves. So c2 is not a WM either.
- If c2 were a RK, then if a2 were red, Red would have too many safe moves, whereas if a2 were white, then Red would have an odd number of safe moves. Thus c2 is not a RK either, and so

3. c2 is a RM

The other 3 pieces must be kings. We learn there are at least two white pieces. If both f1 & f3 were white, White would have at least 6 safe moves. So a2 is white, and

4. a2 is a WK

This provides the two white safe moves, so

5. f3 is a RK, f1 is a WK.

Now we know the position, we have to analyse the possibilities. This isn’t trivial, the position being:

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_   E   _   E   _   E   _
E   _   E   _   E   RK  E
WK  E   RM  E   _   E   _
E   _   E   _   E   WK  E

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At first glance, the position looks drawn. Apparently White can't stop Red promoting to a king next move, and with two kings apiece nothing much is happening. But the title of the quiz suggests White can win somehow.

Eventually, if only by looking at all legal moves, we hit upon the following tactic: We sacrifice one of our kings with f1e2!! Red must capture f3d1 and we play a2b1! The position is now

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_   E   _   E   _   E   _
E   _   E   _   E   _   E
_   E   RM  E   _   E   _
E  WK  E   RK  E   _   E

```

Red has only one move d1e2, and then we have the double capture b1d3g1! We are told to write f1e2 as far as we can from f1, and then a2b1 as far as we can from a2. This means

6 . b3 is f1e2 and e2 is a2b1. Then b1, d1, d3 should be entered as X.

Well done you indeed!