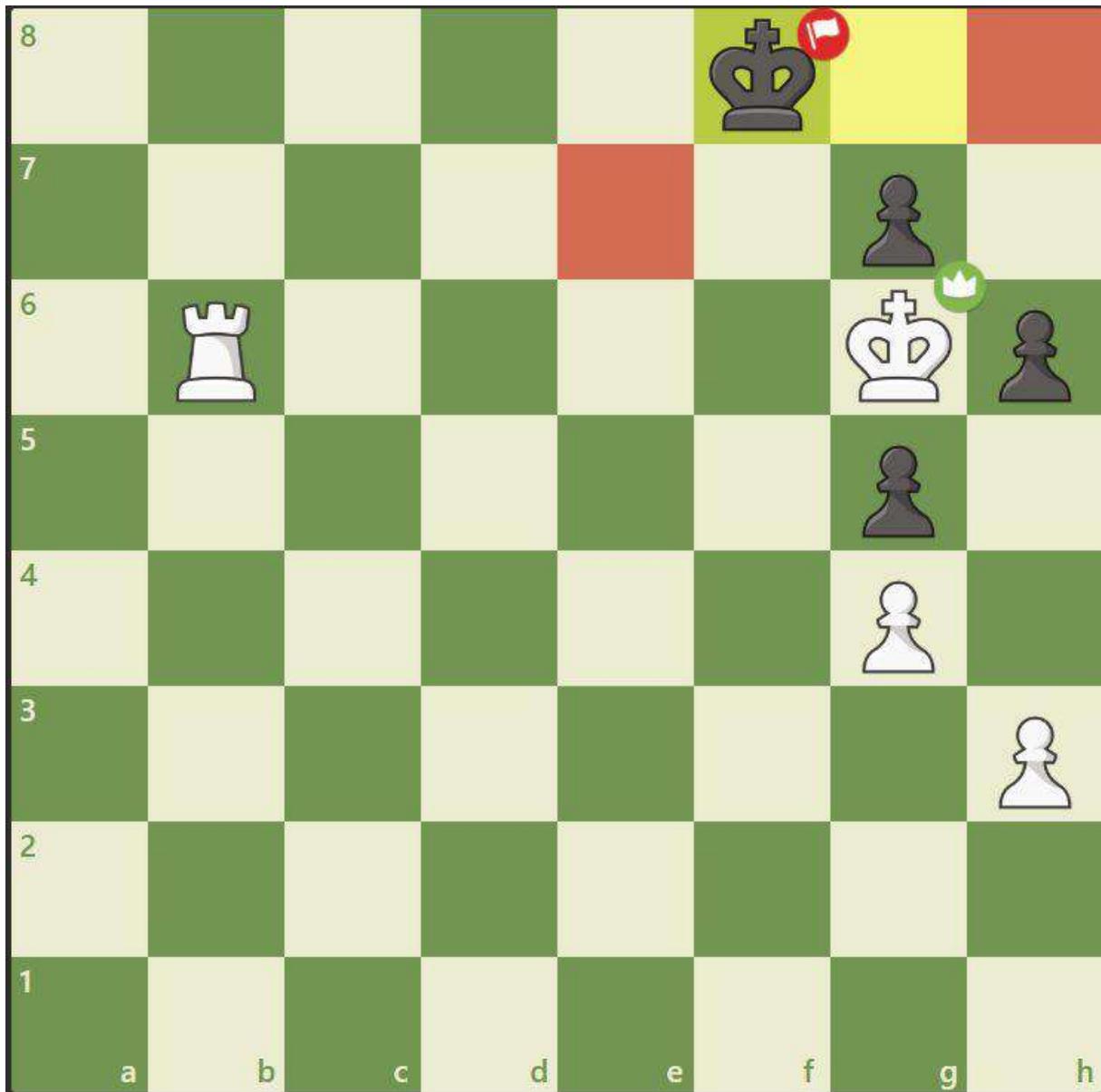


February 4, 2026



Final position

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| 1. P-K4 | P-K4 |
| 2. N-KB3 | P-Q3 |
| 3. P-Q4 | PxP |
| 4. QxP | N-QB3 |
| 5. B-QN5 | B-Q2 |
| 6. BxN | BxB |

I might have played this guy before; I've faced this opening or similar from the Ruy Lopez. So far we are still in the book; not sure I've ever seen my next move before. Normally, white will castle queenside. We are now in a Maroczy Bind type position.

- | | |
|------------------|--------------|
| 7. P-B4 | N-B3 |
| 8. N-B3 | B-K2 |
| 9. O-O | Q-Q2 |
| 10. B-K3 | O-O |
| 11. QR-Q1 | Q-N5 |
| 12. N-Q5 | BxN |
| 13. PxB | Q-N3 |
| 14. KR-K1 | N-N5 |
| 15. B-B4 | B-B3 |
| 16. Q-Q2 | QR-K1 |
| 17. B-N3 | N-K4 |
| 18. NxN | PxN |
| 19. P-N3 | B-N4 |

20. Q-Q3 P-K5

The Philidor isn't a great opening; I played it once in a match for Crystal Palace and won with it, but it requires very precise play. The modern line is – or was when I was playing – to surrender the centre then fianchetto the king's bishop. I didn't think this guy was very good but by move 20, I was having second thoughts.

21. Q-Q4 P-K6

22. PxP R-K5

23. Q-Q3 KR-K1

24. K-R1 BxP

25. R-K2 P-KR3

26. P-Q6

Desperation, but what else could I do?

26. PxP

27. QxP B-N3

28. QxQ PxQ

29. RxR RxR

30. P-R3 R-K7

31. P-QR4 R-K6

32. B-B2 RxP

33. BxB RxB

34. R-Q7 R-N5

35. P-B5

My position is now totally lost but amazingly he manages to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory.

35. P-N3??

36. P-B6 R-QB5

37. P-B7 P-R3

38. R-Q8ch K-R2

39. P-B8=Q RxQ

40. RxR P-QN4

41. PxP PxP

42. R-QN8 P-N4

43. RxP K-N3

44. P-N4 K-R2

45. K-N2 K-N3

46. K-B3 K-B3

47. K-K4 K-N3

48. R-N6ch K-B2

49. K-B5 K-N1

50. K-N6 K-B1

And without waiting for my next move, he resigned.

He had 6 minutes 10 seconds on his clock; I had 55 seconds but it is mate in 4. It's always nice to come from behind but I really felt sorry for him.