

HIKARU WINS!

WEDNESDAY WORKOUT ■ DECEMBER 21, 2022

BY JJ LANG

PUZZLE 1.



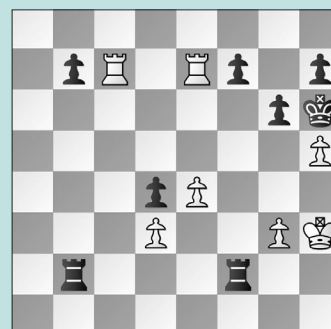
BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 2.



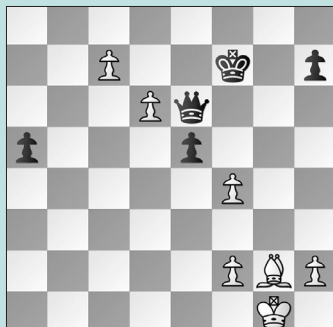
BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 3.



BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 4.



WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 5.



WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 6.



WHITE TO MOVE

SOLUTIONS

PUZZLE 1. 20. ... b3 The White bishop is trapped, as Aronian neglected the reason that Black's previous move was ... Ra8-b8, perhaps only looking at 'forcing' variations beginning with a capture of White's c3-pawn. White resigned. (Aronian – Nakamura, *Chess.com* Speed Championship, 2022). **PUZZLE 2. 15. ... Qxb2!** White had just blocked Black's check with 15. Nf3-d2, rather than 15. Ne2-c3. This nuance proves relevant, as now White's light-squared bishop does not guard the d3-square. **16. Qxb2 Nd3+ 17. Kd1 Nxb2+**, and **White resigned** on move 29. (Carlsen – Nakamura, *Chess.com* Speed Championship, 2022). **PUZZLE 3. 36. ... f5!!** The fastest mate. Alternatives (a) 36. ...

gxf5! also forces mate, as White lacks anything but two 'spite' checks with the rooks, while (b) in the game Black chose to simplify into a winning rook endgame with **36. ... Kxh5 37. g4+ Kg5 38. Rxf7 Rxf7 39. Rxf7 Rd2**. After **37. exf5 Kg5** Black dodges all potential checks on the way to tightening the mating net. (Aronian – Nakamura, *Chess.com* Speed Championship, 2022). **PUZZLE 4:** White could have forced a simplification into a drawn ending with **46. Bd5 Qxd5 47. c8=Q Qxd6** with an equal position. In the game (Sarin – Nakamura, *Chess.com* Speed Championship, 2022), White erred by playing a 'slower' move preparing the promotion **46. Bb7?? Qg6+** and White resigned. **PUZZLE 5: 28. Rxf6!** The logical 28. Bxd4?? would actually lose

the game: 28. ... Qxd4! 29. exd4 Rxf1+ 30. Kb2 Rxh1 Black has more than enough material for the sacrificed queen. **28. ... Kxf6 29. Bxd4+ Kf7 30. Qh7+ Ke8 31. Bxc6+**, and Black resigned. (Nakamura – Paravyan, *Chess.com* Speed Championship, 2022) **PUZZLE 6: 7. Nxd5! Nxd5** If 7. ... Nxe5 8. dxe5 Nxd5 9. Qxd5+ 8. Qh5+ g6 8. ... Ke7 leads to mate **9. Nxe6** Not 9. Nxc6?? bxc6 10. Qe5+ Kf7 11. Qxh8 Bb4+! **9. ... hxg6 10. Qxg6+!** 10. Qxh8? Bf5 11. Bh6 Qf6!= **10. ... Kd7 11. Bxd5!** Not **11. Qf7+??=** (Paravyan – Nakamura, *Chess.com* Speed Championship, 2022) **11. ... Qe8 12. Bf7!** The point is Black's queen cannot continue to guard the key squares on e6 and e8. **12. ... Qe7 13. Bg5!** and White should win.