

SPICE CUP

WEDNESDAY WORKOUT ■ DECEMBER 28, 2022

BY JJ LANG

PUZZLE 1.



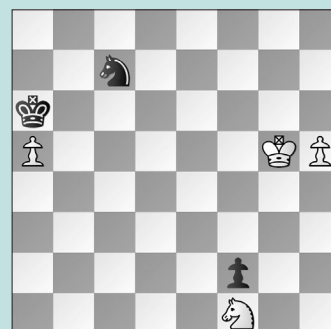
WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 2.



WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 3.



WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 4.



BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 5.



WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 6.



BLACK TO MOVE

SOLUTIONS

PUZZLE 1. 22. Ra1 White could have used the same motif after 22. Rxd8 Rxd8 23. Ra1, and it would have no effect on the result. **22. ... Rb8 23. b4** White has won a piece. **23. ... Nxe4 24. Rxa4, Black resigned.** (Williams – Espinosa, SPICE Cup 2022) **PUZZLE 2.** Black's king must be checked by a rook. But, as many a wise chess player has asked before: which rook should we move? **21. Rfe1+** Very important: the b-rook has a job already. **21. Rbe1+??** Be6 Black consolidates. **21. ... Be6 22. Rxb7+ Kd6** Or 22. ... Kd8 23. Rxe6 fxe6 and now 24. Qg7 Much stronger than taking on f6! We must remember that we are down material when deciding how to play on. **23. Qf4+ Ne5 24. dxe5+ fxe5 25. Rxe5 Qxe5 26. Qb4+,**

Black resigned. (Hakobyan – Sethuraman, SPICE Cup 2022) **PUZZLE 3: 59. Kf5!** Alternatives: (a) 59. h6?? Ne6+ The key point is understanding why this position is drawn: Black's knight can reach the h7-square via both f8 and g5. The result is the knight runs a "circuit" from e6-f8-h7-g5 and White's king cannot simultaneously prevent the knight from accessing all four squares. (b) 59. Kf6 also wins, but nothing else! **59. ... Nb5 60. h6 Nd6+ 61. Kg6, Black resigned.** Black's knight cannot reach the circuit in time. (Hakobyan – Balakrishnan, SPICE Cup 2022) **PUZZLE 4: 32. ... Rad8** 32. ... Ra2 is also winning: 33. Rf3 Bf5!! 34. Rxf5 (34. Bxf5 Rdx2+) 34. ... Rxd3 35. Rf2 Bc3 **33. Ke2 Rxd3.** Here **White resigned**, rather than face the impending skewer on the b1-h7 diagonal. (Abrahamyan –

Mishra, SPICE Cup 2022) **PUZZLE 5: 14. Nxf5 exf5** 14. ... Rxf5 15. Qxe6+ Rf7 is also winning, and the best continuation is the same as in the actual game: 16. Rb5! **15. Rb5!! Qxb5** Here 15. ... cxb5 loses the rook, with interest! 16. Bxd5+ Kh8 17. Bxa8 Nd7 18. Bf3. **16. Bxb5 cxb5 17. Qe6+, Black resigned.** (Reiss – Proleiko, SPICE Cup 2022) **PUZZLE 6: 26. ... Qf3** A number of other moves are winning for White, including 26. ... Qxh4. But it speaks to the beauty of this position that this sacrifice is not even the prettiest. After 27. gxh4 Rxe4 White has no way out of the "windmill," i.e., 28. f3 Re2. **27. Rxb3 Rxe4** White has avoided mate on g2, but not on the back rank. **28. Qd1** and now... **28. ... Nf4!!** "Take my queen, please!" White resigned in Ladan – Abrahamyan, SPICE Cup 2022.