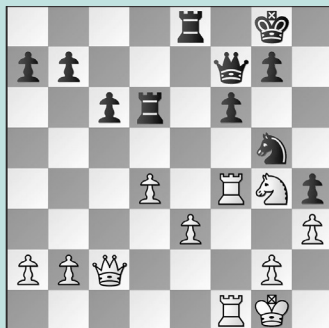


# AMERICAN CUP HIGHLIGHTS, PT. 1

## WEDNESDAY WORKOUT ■ APRIL 03, 2024

BY JJ LANG

### PUZZLE 1.



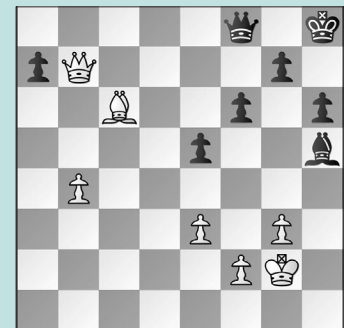
WHITE TO MOVE

### PUZZLE 2.



BLACK TO MOVE

### PUZZLE 3.



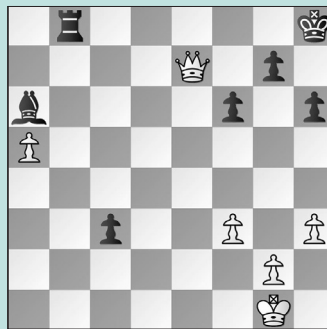
WHITE TO MOVE

### PUZZLE 4.



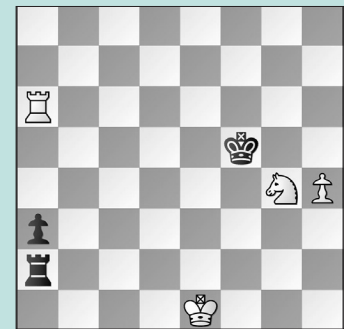
WHITE TO MOVE

### PUZZLE 5.



WHITE TO MOVE

### PUZZLE 6.



WHITE TO MOVE

## SOLUTIONS

**PUZZLE 1.** 27. **Rxf6!** Walking into triple coverage, but threats of Ng4-h6+ restrict Black's options. 27. ... **Rxf6** Not 27. ... **gxf6** 28. **Nh6+** winning the queen. 28. **Rxf6 Qe7** 29. **Qg6 Ne4** 30. **Rf7!** and **Black resigned.** (Tang – Zatonskih, St. Louis, 2024) **PUZZLE 2.** 33. ... **Rxf4!** Instead, Black played 33. ... **Rf8?**, and after 34. **Nd6 Rd8** 35. **Qb5 e3** 36. **Re1 Bd5** 37. **Qxa5 Ra8** 38. **Qxb4**, White was winning, even before Black blundered with 38. ... **g5** 39. **Nf5+** and **resigned.** 34. **gxf4 Qxh4+** 35. **Kg1 e3!** 36. **Rd7+** Not 36. **Qxe3?? Qg4+** winning for Black; Note that 36. **Nxe3 Qh1+** 37. **Kf2 Qh4+** 38. **Kg1** is also only a draw. 36. ... **Kh6** 37. **Rxb7** If 37. **Qxe3 Qh1+** 38. **Kf2 Qg2+** 39. **Ke1 Bf3!**, Black can again

force a draw. 37. ... **Qg3+** 38. **Qg2 Qe1+** 39. **Kh2 Qh4+** 40. **Kg1 Qe1+** 41. **Qf1 Qg3+** with a draw. (Krush – Lee, St. Louis, 2024, analysis) **PUZZLE 3.** 39. **Qxa7!** In the game, after 39. **b5 Qf7!**, Black should hold, although Black lost after instead playing 39. ... **f5?** 40. **Qxa7 Qb4** 41. **Qb8+ Kh7** 42. **Qxe5** and **Black resigned** 16 moves later. 39. ... **Qxb4** 40. **Qa8+ Kh7** 41. **Bd5!** The key intermezzo that White missed. There is no way to avoid the king coming to g6, after which the bishop falls: 41. ... **Kg6** 42. **Qe8+ Kg5** 43. **f4+** with mate coming. (Lee – Krush, St. Louis, 2024, analysis) **PUZZLE 4.** 30. **Nxf5+!** **Rxf5** 31. **Qxh7+ Kf8** 32. **Qh8+ Qg8** was an immediate victory, but only after 33. **e6!** There is no answer to **Bf4-d6+**, as 33. ... **Rxf4** 34. **Qh6+**

wins. (So – Robson, St. Louis, 2024, analysis) **PUZZLE 5.** 47. **Qd6!** White's only way to hold was to let Black promote! In the game, 47. **Kf2??** was hopeless, as the pawn breaks free: **White resigned** after 47. ... **c2** 48. **Qe3 Rc8** 49. **Qc1 Bd3** 50. **Ke3 Bg6** 51. **a6 Ra8** 52. **g4 Rxa6** 53. **h4 Rd6** with the rook coming to d1. 47. ... **Rb1+** 48. **Kf2 c2** 49. **Qxa6 c1=Q** 50. **Qa8+ Kh7** 51. **Qe4+** when the perpetual check is left to readers to prove. (Caruana – So, St. Louis, 2024, analysis) **PUZZLE 6.** After a hard-fought game, White had to find one more resource: 46. **Ra4!** Cutting off Black's king. Instead, after 46. **Nf2?** allowing 46. ... **Kf4** 47. **h5** Black held with 47. ... **Ke3!**. Instead, after 47. ... **Ra1+??** White eventually won. (Paikidze – Yu, St. Louis, 2024, analysis)