

AMERICAN CUP HIGHLIGHTS, PT. 2

WEDNESDAY WORKOUT ■ APRIL 10, 2024

BY JJ LANG

PUZZLE 1.



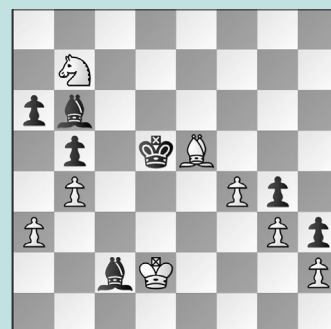
BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 2.



WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 3.



BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 4.



BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 5.



WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 6.



BLACK TO MOVE

SOLUTIONS

PUZZLE 1. 21. ... Rb3! 22. Qd2 The only other way to defend the c1-rook was 22. Qa1 but, after 22. ... Qb4+ 23. Kf1 Ra3!, White's queen is trapped! **22. ... Rd3 23. Bxd7** If, 23. Qc2 Rxe3+ was Lee's point. **23. ... Rxd2 24. Kxd2 Qb2+** when White had seen enough. (Krush – Lee, St. Louis, 2024) **PUZZLE 2. 22. Bg5!** White's bishop is playing with an invincibility star. **22. ... Qe8** If 22. ... Qc7, then 23. Bxh6 gxh6 24. Qxh6 Ng6 25. Bxe6! is similar. **23. Bxh6 Ng6** Not 23. ... gxh6 24. Nf6+ winning the queen. **24. Bg5 f6** To see the threat, if 24. ... a5??, then 25. Qh7+ Kf8 26. Qh8+ Nxh8 27. Rxh8 mate. **25. Re1** Activating his last piece, and **Black resigned** five moves later. (Robson – So, St. Louis,

2024) **PUZZLE 3. 45. ... Bf2!** Instead, White went with **45. ... Bg1??** which is so obvious, but does not win! White blundered with **46. Kxc2??**, missing that 46. Ke2! Bb3 (not 46. ... Bxh2??, which actually loses) 47. Kf1! Be3 holds. **46. Ke2** If 46. Kxc2, then 46. ... Bxg3! wins as well. **46. ... Bxg3** and, unlike in the game, Black wins a second pawn by force. (Robson – So, St. Louis, 2024, analysis) **PUZZLE 4. 24. ... c3!** was necessary, shutting out White's bishop. Instead, Black lost with **24. ... f5?? 25. Re6** when White threatens Re6xg6+. **25. Bc1 Rfe8 26. Rxe8+ Rxe8** and even though she is up a pawn, this is a strategically lost position. (Yu – Paikidze, St. Louis, 2024, analysis) **PUZZLE 5. 64. Rg7!** was the only way to preserve a draw. Instead,

White lost after **64. Ke2?? f3+ 65. Ke1 Rb1+ 66. Kd2 Rb2+ 67. Ke1 Re2+ 68. Kf1 Ra2** winning the f-pawn. **64. ... Ke5** The point is that White can continue chasing White's king, who will never find shelter in front of her pawns. For instance: **65. Re7+ Kd4 66. Rd7+ Kc3 67. Rc7+ Rc4 68. Rf7** is one example of why Black cannot make progress. (Paikidze – Yu, St. Louis, 2024, analysis) **PUZZLE 6. 40. ... Rxb3!** Instead, Black lost after **40. ... Qa5?? 41. e6**, when White wins. **41. axb3 Qxb3** Black has strong queenside pawns, and White has no way to continue her attack, so the position is equal. **42. e6 fxe6 43. fxe6 Rxe6 44. Rxe6 Bxe6 45. Qf2 Bf5!** is one way Black can maintain counterplay. (Tokhirjonova – Lee, St. Louis, 2024, analysis)