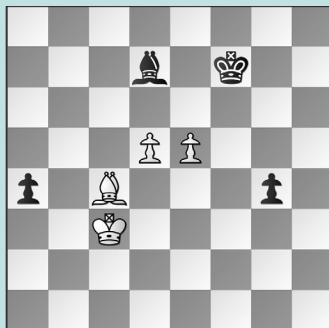


SAINT LOUIS RAPID & BLITZ, PT. 3

WEDNESDAY WORKOUT ■ SEPTEMBER 25, 2024

BY JJ LANG

PUZZLE 1.



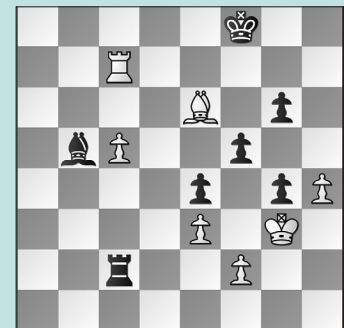
WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 2.



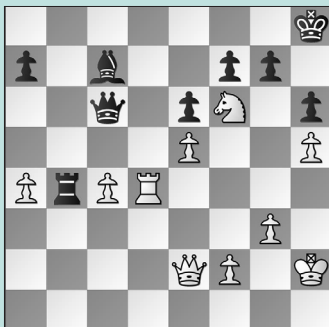
WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 3.



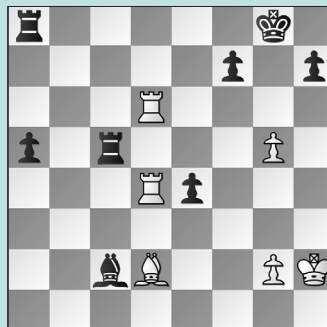
WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 4.



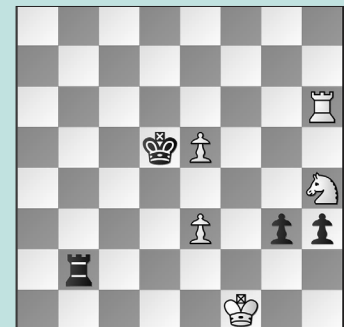
WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 5.



BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 6.



WHITE TO MOVE

SOLUTIONS

PUZZLE 1. 54. e6+ Don't overthink it, as White did with 54. d6+? Ke8 55. e6 g3! 56. exd7+ Kxd7 57. Bd5 Kxd6 securing the draw. 54. ... Bxe6 55. dxe6+ Ke7 56. Kd4 g3 57. Ke3 White's king catches the g-pawn, while White's bishop defends the e-pawn while guarding the a2-square. (Nakamura – Vachier-Lagrave, St. Louis, 2024, analysis) **PUZZLE 2.** 42. Rf6 White goes after the clearest weakness. 42. ... Re3 43. Rxf7 Qb6 44. Rf6 White has a serious advantage. (Dominguez – Firouzja, St. Louis, 2024) **PUZZLE 3.** 70. h5! White's play was too slow with 70. Kf4? Rxf2+ 71. Ke5 and Black could have tried 71. ... g3! when 72. c6 is only a draw. Instead, Black played 71. ... f4? and

lost. 70. ... gxh5 71. Bxf5 Bd3 72. Bg6 h4+ 73. Kxh4 Rxf2 74. Kxg4 with a won endgame. (Nepomniachtchi – Firouzja, St. Louis, 2024, analysis) **PUZZLE 4.** 36. Qd2 Not 36. Qe4? Qxe4 37. Nxe4 Bxe5 38. Rd8+ Kh7 with an equal game that Black later won. 36. ... Rb8 Not 36. ... gxf6? 37. Qxh6+ Kg8 38. Rg4 mate. 37. Rd7 Bb6 Taking with 37. ... gxf6 allows 38. Qxh6+ Kg8 39. Rxc7 removing any ... Bc7xg3+ ideas before 39. ... Qxc7 40. exf6 creates a mating net. 38. Rxf7 Winning. (Vachier-Lagrave – Aronian, St. Louis, 2024, analysis) **PUZZLE 5.** 48. ... Rcc8!! Defense can be the best offense. Instead, 48. ... a4? let White in: 49. Rd8+ Rxd8 50. Rxd8+ Kg7 51. Be3 Rc4 52. Ra8 Bd1 53. Kg3 and a draw 49. Be3 What else?

49. ... a4 50. Rh6 a3 51. Rd7 a2 52. Bd4 a1=Q 53. Bxa1 Rxa1 Black nets a piece. (Aronian – Praggnanandhaa, St. Louis, 2024, analysis) **PUZZLE 6.** 71. Nf3 Worse was 71. e6?? because of 71. ... h2 with the idea of 72. Ng2 Kd6! covering the e-pawn. But Black returned the favor with 71. ... Rb1+?? 72. Ke2 h2 73. Ng2 h1=Q 74. Rxh1 Rxh1 75. Kf3 allowing a draw. 71. ... Rb1+ 72. Ke2 h2 73. e4+! Not 73. Nxe2?? gxh2 74. Rxh2 Rb2+ with a skewer. 73. ... Kc5 Or 73. ... Kxe4 74. Nd2+ Kd5 75. Kf3!! (not 75. Nxb1?? g2 76. Rxh2 g1=Q wins) 75. ... h1=Q+ 76. Rxh1 Rxh1 77. Kxg3 draw. 74. e6 Kd6 75. e5+ Kc7 76. Rh7+ Kd8 77. Nd4! h1=Q 78. Rxh1 Rxh1 79. Kf3 Rg1 80. Ne2 White draws! (Caruana – Vachier-Lagrave, St. Louis, 2024, analysis)