

PARIS SPEED CHAMPS, PT. 2

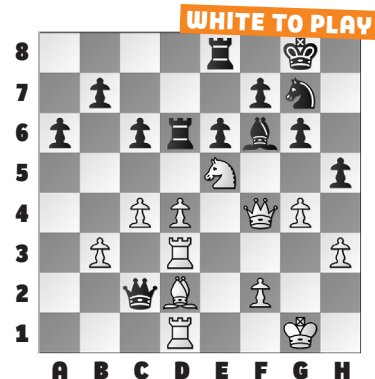
This week's puzzles come once again from the *Chess.com 2024 Speed Chess Championship* "Main Event" held last month in Paris,

France. Like last week, a lot of these moves were found with only seconds remaining on the clock!

In our **example**, White's d1-rook is hanging with check. So Black can be excused for leaving his f6-bishop *en prise*. And yet, White played **28. Qxf6!** allowing **28. ... Qxd1+ 29. Kg2** when, after this calm response, Black realized there is no good way to stop Qf6xf7+.

If, for instance **29. ... Rf8** then **30. Bh6** both threatens mate on g7 and

the hanging queen on d1, so **Black resigned** in Nakamura – Niemann!



1. WHITE TO PLAY

2. WHITE TO PLAY

3. WHITE TO PLAY

4. WHITE TO PLAY

5. WHITE TO PLAY

6. BLACK TO PLAY

SOLUTIONS

1) 43. Rxf7+ Black's rook is terribly placed! **Black resigned**, as **43. ... Kxf7 44. Nd6+** regains the piece with interest! (Carlsen – Firouzja, Paris, 2024) **2) 28. Rxe4!** White uses Black's back-rank weakness to overload the e8-rook. Black regained the pawn with **28. ... Bxf2+**, avoiding **28. ... Qxe4?? 29. Qxe4 Rxe4 30. Rd8+ Re8 31. Rxe8+ Nf8 32. Rxf8** mate, but after **29. Kh2**, Black's position is in shambles. (Niemann – Nakamura,

Paris, 2024) **3) 37. exf5+** Black must recapture, in order to escape the fork. **37. ... Bxf5** But kings make bad defenders! **38. Re7+ Kd6 39. Kxf5** White snags a piece! (Carlsen – Firouzja, Paris, 2024) **4) 48. Nf5** White saves the hanging knight, attacks Black's rook, and after **48. ... Rb6 49. Ke2**, the f1-knight is trapped. **Black resigned**, realizing that the f5-knight also took away the f1-knight's only escape squares! (Nakamura – Firouzja, Paris, 2024)

5) 48. h4! This is enough to give White a second passed pawn. **48. ... Ke6 49. hxg5 Kxe5** This won back a pawn, but after **50. Kf3 Ne6 51. Bb2+ Kd5 52. g6** The g-pawn is a goner! (Nakamura – Niemann, Paris, 2024) **6) In the game, Black missed 26. ... Qe1+!!** Instead, after 26. ... Kb8 27. Qxc4 White was up an Exchange and a pawn. **27. Rxe1 Bxd5** The two bishops give good chances against the redundant rook. (Niemann – Carlsen, Paris, 2024, analysis)