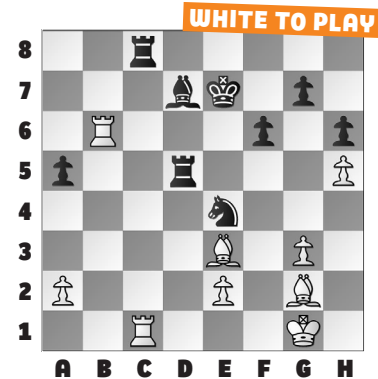


loose, or under-defended. Each exercise follows the adage of **Loose Pieces Drop Off** (LPDO).

In our **example**, we see the importance of protecting your pieces. First, White won a piece with **36. Rxc8 Bxc8 37. Bxe4** but Black had been counting on **37. ... Re5** to skewer White's two hanging bishops when Rb6-b4 is unplayable. But Black still has a loose piece of his own, so White escapes with tempo after **38. Bb7 Rxe3 39. Bxc8**

and then White went on to win later in Sarana – Juarez Flores.



### LOOSE PIECES AT THE OLYMPIAD

This week's puzzles continue our series from the **45th FIDE Olympiad**. Under enough pressure, even top players leave their pieces hanging,

**# 1. BLACK TO PLAY**

**# 2. WHITE TO PLAY**

**# 3. BLACK TO PLAY**

**# 4. WHITE TO PLAY**

**# 5. WHITE TO PLAY**

**# 6. BLACK TO PLAY**

### SOLUTIONS

**1) A double attack! 39. ... Nd4 40. Qd5 Nxc6** Since Black's queen is defended, this wins the bishop. (Ivanchuk – Cheng, Budapest, 2024)  
**2) 34. gxf5+** Removing the guard!  
**34. ... Kxf5 35. R3xe4** Black's e8-rook is not able to defend. (Albornoz Cabrera – Shirov, Budapest, 2024)  
**3) 19. ... d3** Interference! White's knight goes from "loose" to "hanging." **20. cxd3 Qxb5** and Black wins. (Prudente – Fluvia Poyatos,

Budapest, 2024) **4) 24. Rxd4!** The key here is that Black's d8-rook is under-protected. Note that 24. Bxd4? fails, as 24. ... hxg4 25. Bxe5 Rxd2! is the key "tempo move" 26. Rxd2 Bxe5 and Black is equal. **24. ... Rxd4** If 24. ... Nxg4?, then 25. Rxd8 wins. **25. Be6+** The point! We escape the attackers on the g4-square with tempo, then regain the rook. **25. ... Nf7 26. Bxd4 Bxd4 27. Rxd4** White is up a full bishop. (Nabaty – Sindarov, Budapest, 2024) **5) 18.**

**Rxe4** White removes the guard of the c5-bishop. **18. ... Bxf2+** While 18. ... dxe4 comes with tempo on the f3-knight, 19. Nxc5 comes with tempo on Black's queen, so 19. ... Qb6 20. Nxe4 and White wins. **19. Kxf2 dxe4 20. Qxb4 exf3 21. Be3** The two pieces are better than the rook. (Vokhidov – Cupid, Budapest, 2024) **6) 34. ... Qb2!** Black "forks" the hanging rook with the threat of mate. **35. Rc2 Bc3+! 36. Ke2 Qxb5** mate. (Hapala – Kairbekova, 2024)