

adventurous, aggressive play mixed with active, resourceful defense, as today's puzzles will highlight.

In our **example**, White has already lost castling rights and has a hanging d4-knight. Yip found the only move **20. N2b3!**, covering everything. The d4-knight is pinned to the f2-square as **20. Nc2?? Nxf2+** nabs the h3-rook. Instead, Black was worse after **20. ... Nxf2+** although **20. ... Bxd4** **21. Rxd3** led to a more level game. Now, **21. Qxf2 e5**

tries to get the piece back, but see **Puzzle 4** for White's response.



CARISSA YIP: 2024 U.S. CHAMP
IM Carissa Yip won the **2024 U.S. Women's Championship** thanks to her spectacular 8/8 start. Most of her victories were due to her

1. WHITE TO PLAY

2. BLACK TO PLAY

3. WHITE TO PLAY

4. WHITE TO PLAY

5. WHITE TO PLAY

6. BLACK TO PLAY

SOLUTIONS

1) 34. Qc4+ Yip scoops the f4-bishop. **34. ... Kd7 35. Qxf4** (Yip – Yu, St. Louis, 2024) **2) 22. ... Nd5** The b6-rook was trapped! **23. Bxd4** White tries to minimize her material losses. **23. ... Nxb6 24. Bxb6 Nc4!** The d3-pawn is pinned! (Atwell – Yip, St. Louis, 2024) **3) 32. Qe6+** White defends the b3-knight with check! **32. ... Kh8 33. bxc3** Now the bishop is truly hanging. (Yip – Paikidze, St. Louis, 2024) **4) 22. Qf5**

White breaks the pin with tempo on Black's hanging c8-rook. **22. ... 0-0 23. Nc2** Everything is defended. (Yip – Paikidze, St. Louis, 2024) **5) 57. Qf6!** White maintains her defense of the a6-pawn while stopping Black's only threat of ... **Qc4-f1+** with a perpetual. **57. ... Qa2** Black eyes a6-a7 while maintaining her connection to the f7-pawn. **58. Qf5+** Yip zigzags her queen to the e4-square to play **Qe4-b7** and escort the a-pawn home. **58. ... Kg7 59. Qe5+**

Kh7 60. Qe4+ Kg8 61. Qb7 (Yip – Tokhirjonova, St. Louis, 2024) **6) 48. ... Qg3+** The only win. **49. Kb2** Now Black can construct a mating net. The interposition with **49. Rb3** lost to the subtle **49. ... Qe1!** **50. Rxb3** (not **50. Qxa6 Qa1** mate) **50. ... Qc1+** **51. Ka2 Bxc4+** **52. Rb3 Qc2+** when the rook hangs. **49. ... Qe5+** **50. Kc2** The game ended: **50. ... Qe2+** **51. Kc3 Qxc4+** **52. Kb2 Qd4+** **53. Kc1 Qc3+** **54. Kd1 h2** and **White resigned.** (Krush – Yip, St. Louis, 2024)