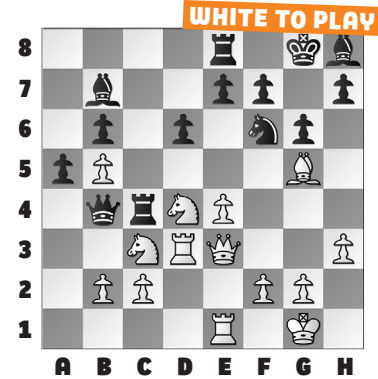


### U.S. CHAMPIONSHIPS, PT. 3

This week's puzzles conclude our series from the **2024 U.S. Championships**, with a focus on attacking combinations.

To kick things off, in our **example**, White goes on a fantastic king hunt beginning with **22. Nf5** when **22. ... gxf5** **23. Bh6** threatens Qe3-g5 mate! Black responded with **23. ... Nxe4** **24. Nxe4 Be5** to clear the h8-square for the king, but **25. Nxd6** threatens Nd6xf7 with mate after Qe3-g5+. To defend this, Black lost material with **25. ... f6** **26. Nxc4 Qxc4** **27. f4** when the threat of Qe3-g3+ forced Black to part with the bishop. After **27. ... Kh8** **28. fxe5 Rg8** **29. Rd2** White

defended Black's threat and is up a full rook in Aronian – Shankland.



**# 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) 41. Qe4** Never forget to look for your opponent's threats. **41. ... Qxe4** **42. Rxe4 Rf8** **43. Kh3!** More precise than pushing the pawn. White plans Re4-c4-c7. (Caruana – Mishra, St. Louis, 2024) **2) 29. ... Rd2+** Black makes a fork to set up the next fork! **30. Qxd2 Ne4+** **31. Ke3 Nxd2** There's a bonus fork if White captures the knight, too. (Zatonskih – Atwell, St. Louis, 2024) **3) 28. Rh1** Black's queen is short on squares. **28. ... Qg3**

Even worse is **28. ... Qf2??** **29. Nf5+** winning the queen via discovered attack. **29. Ne2 Qxf3** **30. Nxf4 Qxf4** White is up an Exchange. (Sevian – Robson, St. Louis, 2024) **4) 62. Rxf8** White removes the defenders of the g7-square! **62. ... Ra1** Taking the rook gave White's pawn two paths to promotion. **63. Rf7** The connected passers proved decisive. (Krush – M. Lee, St. Louis, 2024) **5) 47. Kd4** Use all your pieces! **47. ... Nxh5** **48. Kxd5 Kg6** **49. Rd7** There's no stopping

Kd5-d6 and Rd7-d8. (Abrahamyan – Paikidze, St. Louis 2024) **6) 31. ... Qe7** A wonderful move, threatening both ... Qe7-e1+ and ... Nh3xg5. Note that **31. ... Re8?** **32. Rh4** is a much harder threat to stop when **32. ... Nxc5** is met by **33. Qxg5**. **32. Rg3** Now, **32. Rh4 Nxc5!** covers the h7-pawn and prepares ... Bb7-xf3+. **32. ... Qe1+** White's king goes on a forced march. **33. Kg2 Qe2+** **34. Kxh3 Bc8!** The queen is pinned. (Sevian – Dominguez, St. Louis, 2024)