

NATIONAL K-12 GRADE CHAMPS, PT. 1

WEDNESDAY WORKOUT ■ JANUARY 08, 2025

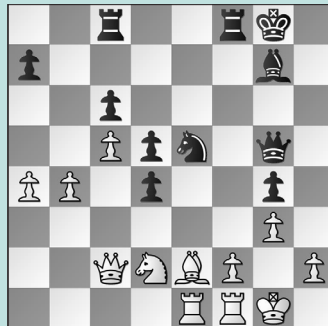
BY JJ LANG

PUZZLE 1.



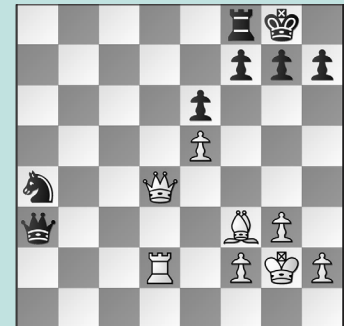
BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 2.



BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 3.



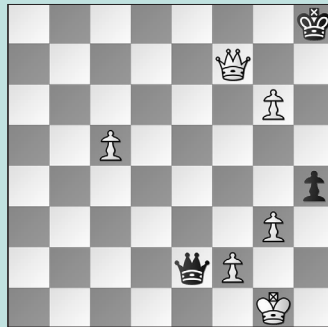
WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 4.



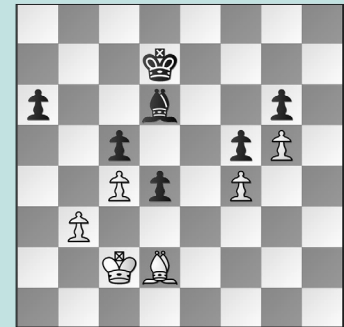
WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 5.



BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 6.



BLACK TO MOVE

SOLUTIONS

PUZZLE 1. 25. ... Rc3! Down material, Black could get back in the game. Instead, after **25. ... Bxd4 26. Bxd4 Qa8 27. Qe1** White went on to win! **26. Rxc3** Better is **26. Nc2!** when **26. ... Qxe3!** **27. Nxe3 Rxa3 28. Bd3 Ba4** gives Black compensation. **26. ... Rxc3 27. Re2 Rxe3 28. Rxe3 Bxd4** Now Black has the edge. (Jiang – Yue, Maryland, 2024) **PUZZLE 2. 28. ... d3!** Black uncorks a nice tactic. **29. Bxd3** In the game, Black won **29. f4 Qg6 30. f5 Rxf5 31. Qb1 Rxf1+ 32. Bxf1 Qg5 33. Rd1 Rf8 34. Bg2 Qe3+ 35. Kh1 Rf2** with a crushing edge. **29. ... Qxd2!** The point! **30. Qxd2 Nf3+ 31. Kg2 Nxd2** Black is piece-up. (Anandh – Fang, Maryland, 2024) **PUZZLE 3. 34. Rd3** Black's pieces are short on

squares. **34. ... Qa2 35. Bd1!** Only now, as the knight will be pinned to the queen on the b2-square. White played **35. Qb4 Qc2 36. Ra3 Nb2 37. Be4 Qc4 38. Bxh7+ Kxh7 39. Qxf8 Qe4+** when Black still had a narrow path to a draw. **35. ... Nb2 36. Rd2** The knight drops off, as **36. ... Rb8 37. Qd8+** wins! (Lu – Wright, Maryland, 2024) **PUZZLE 4. 27. b4** White wants the d6- and e5-squares! **27. ... Be7** The game variation required deep calculation. Or **27. ... Ba7 28. Bb3** with ideas of **Nc4-d6**, winning. **28. Nxe5 Bxg5 29. Nxe6+ Kg8 30. Bb3+** The key move! **30. ... Rf7 31. Qxg5** With a material plus. (Zhao – Merida Ceballos, Maryland, 2024) **PUZZLE 5. 83. ... Qd1+** Black flagged here, debating between the d1- and e1-square. Tragic, since there is a

forced draw now: **84. Kh2** If **84. Kg2** the key line runs **84. ... h3+! 85. Kh2 Qg1+! 86. Kxg1 h2+ 87. Kg2 h1=Q+ 88. Kxh1** with stalemate. **84. ... hxg3+ 85. Kg2** If **85. Kxg3 Qg4+ 86. Kh2 Qg2+** draws; or **85. fxg3 Qh1+** is quick. But now **85. ... Qh1+! 86. Kxh1 g2+** Black still holds! **87. Kh2 g1=Q+** With stalemate to follow. (Shah – Radhakrishnan, Maryland, 2024, analysis) **PUZZLE 6. 44. ... a5!** Remarkably, this win by force. Black played **44. ... Kc6** and they drew shortly. **45. Kb2** Or **45. Bxa5 Bxf4 46. Bd2 Bxd2 47. Kxd2 f4** wins. **45. ... a4! 46. bxa4 Kc6 47. Ka3** If White plays passively with **47. Ka2** then **47. ... Kb6 48. Kb2 Ka6 49. Ka2 Bc7 50. Kb2 Ba5 51. Bc1 d3** wins. **47. ... Kb6 48. a5+ Ka6 49. Ka4 Bc7 Zugzwang.** (Anand – Jani, Maryland, 2024, analysis)