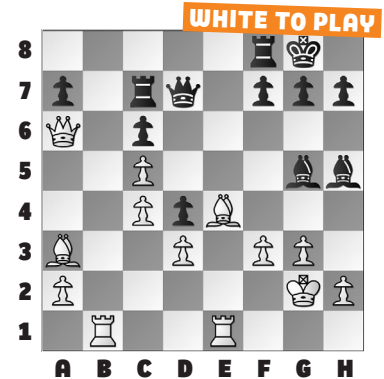# TACTICS TUESDAY
CHESS LIFE KIDS ONLINE

NATIONAL K-12 GRADES, PT. 2

This week's puzzles again come from the **2024 National K-12 Grade Championships**. Even on the top boards, overlooking one forcing move can be the difference between a win and a loss.

In our **example**, we see an instance of this when White decided to overcomplicate things in their rush to win the c6-pawn with **27. Rb7?? Rxb7 28. Bxc6** intending to regain the full rook. But White had overlooked **28. … Rb6!** when Black remains Exchange-up after **29. cxb6 Qxc6** with an attack to boot. White resigned just six moves later. Instead, something patient like 27. f4 kept level chances, as the c6-pawn was a long-term weakness.

WHITE TO PLAY

 # 1. BLACK TO PLAY

 # 2. WHITE TO PLAY

 # 3. WHITE TO PLAY

#4. WHITE TO PLAY

 # 5. BLACK TO PLAY

 # 6. WHITE TO PLAY

SOLUTIONS

1) 67. … Nf1+ Black forces mate-in-two! **68. Kh3 Rh2** mate. (Xia – Karthi, Maryland, 2024) **2) 38. Nb6+** The discovered attack threatens nothing… .except a fork after Nb6-d5! **38. … Kxd3 39. Nd5 Bd8 40. Nxe7 Bxe7 41. Rc7** The rook is ready with Rc7-d7 to keep the passed pawn in check. (Kaplan – Oh, Maryland, 2024) **3) 22. Qh5** White threatens mate on f7 as well as forking the king with the hanging e4-knight.

22. … Ne2+ Or 22. … Qe8 23. Rf7 repeats the question. **23. Qxe2** White must take, since 23. Kh1?? N4xg3+ 24. hxg3 Nxg3+ wins the queen! But now White is piece-up. (Vinod – Cortez, Maryland, 2024) **4) 23. Bxa6** The b-pawn is overloaded! **23. … Re4** White had to be precise after 23. … bxa6 24. Qxa6+ Kd7 and find 25. Rxc6!! Qxc6 26. Qa7+! when the d4-rook hangs. **24. Bxb7+** Not the only win, but the most precise. **24. … Kd8 25. Qd3+** The

engine says mate-in-nine, so **Black resigned** after **25. … Ke8**. (Liu – Lee, Maryland, 2024) **5) 35. … Rd1** The f1-knight is short on squares! **36. Ne3** The X-ray defense with 36. Bb5 lost immediately to 36. … Rxf1 mate. **36. … Rd2+** Kings are poor defenders. (Mukherjee – Wang, Maryland, 2024) **6) 22. Nxd5** Tactics with equal trades are tricky! **22. … cxd5 23. Bb3** The b2-rook is trapped. **23. … Ba3 24. Bc1** White won shortly. (Underwood – Bhandari, Maryland, 2024)

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