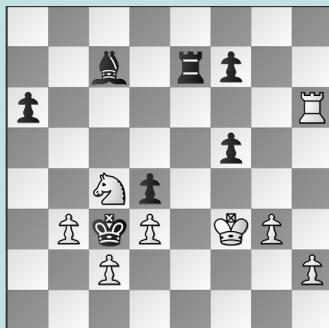


NATIONAL K-12 GRADES, PT. 2

WEDNESDAY WORKOUT ■ JANUARY 15, 2025

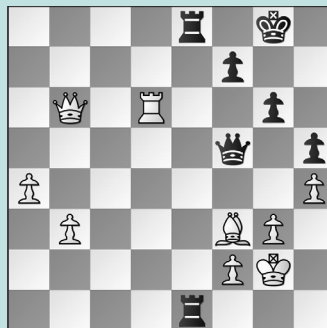
BY JJ LANG

PUZZLE 1.



WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 2.



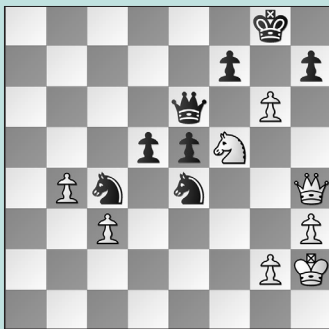
BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 3.



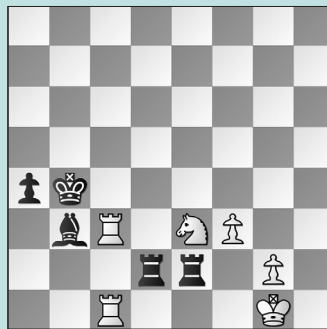
BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 4.



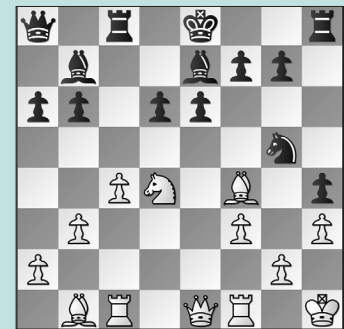
BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 5.



WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 6.



WHITE TO MOVE

SOLUTIONS

PUZZLE 1. 37. Rc6! Not 37. Rxa6? Kxc2 with equal chances. **37. ... Kxc2** After 37. ... Kb4 38. Rxa6 is winning, as Black cannot take the c2-pawn anymore. **38. Nb6+ Kxd3 39. Nd5** (Kaplan – Oh, Maryland, 2024) **PUZZLE 2. 37. ... Rh1!** Black missed a shot for a huge upset! Instead, after **37. ... Qb1 38. Rd8** the game was balanced and White later won. **38. Bd5** The rook is untouchable: 38. Kxh1 Qh3+ 39. Kg1 Re1 mate. **38. ... Ree1 39. Rxc6+ Kh7! 40. Rh6+ Kg7 41. Qd4+ f6** The checks run out. (Feng – Yadawad, Maryland, 2024, analysis) **PUZZLE 3. 24. ... Qg7!** Accurate defense! White over-pressed with: **25. Bh6?** Best was 25. Qd1 Qg6 26. Qd4 Qg7 allowing White a repetition.

25. ... Qxh6 26. Rxf5+ Kg8 27. Rg5+ Ng7 Black is winning. (Murgescu – Underwood, Maryland, 2024) **PUZZLE 4. 34. ... fxg6!** The winning recapture. Black allowed **34. ... hxg6 35. Qd8+ Kh7 36. Qh4+ Kg8 37. Qd8+ Kh7 38. Qh4+ Kg8 39. Qd8+** draw. **35. Qd8+ Kf7 36. Qc7+ Kf6! 37. Qg7+ Kxf5** The critical point is that White has no lasting attack here. (Ramnath – Liu, Maryland, 2024, analysis) **PUZZLE 5. 59. Kh2!!** White steps out of tricky ... Re2-e1+ ideas. White lost after **59. g4 a3 60. g5 a2 61. Rc8 Rxe3 62. g6 Rxf3** when the g-pawn is stuck. **59. ... a3** If 59. ... Rd8 then White keeps activating the king with 60. Kg3 and Kg3-f4 followed by g2-g4. Again, 60. ... a3 61. Rc7 is still a motif. **60. Rc8** Note 60. Rc7 is equivalent.

60. ... a2 If 60. ... Rxe3 61. Rb8+ Ka5 62. Ra8+ Kb6 (or 62. ... Kb4 63. Rb8+ repeats) 63. Rxa3, the two pawns give White enough play. **61. Rb8+ Ka3 62. Nc4+ Bxc4 63. Rc3+ Ka4 64. Rxc4+** White draws. (Wu – Gao, Maryland, 2024, analysis) **PUZZLE 6. 21. Bxg5** White launches a committal attack. **21. ... Bxg5 22. Nxe6 fxe6 23. Qxe6+ Kf8 24. Bg6 Rc7 25. Qxd6+!** White dodged a bullet after playing **25. Rfe1** when Black missed 25. ... Re7! Instead, Black played **25. ... Bc6 26. Qxd6+ Re7 27. Re6** and White won shortly. But now 26. Qf5+ Bf6 is okay. **25. ... Re7 26. Rcd1!** Ignoring Rc1-e1 to instead go for the back rank! **26. ... Bc6 27. Rfe1** Using both rooks. **27. ... Be8! 28. Rd5!** Lateral mobility proves decisive! (Yin – Roberts, Maryland, 2024, analysis)