

### WORLD RAPID & BLITZ, PT. 10

This week's puzzles highlight the **American Cup** finalists' best victories in the **FIDE World Rapid & Blitz Championships** last December.

In our **example**, White correctly assesses that Black's vulnerable king justifies keeping queens on the board. So White played **21. Qa3** to prepare dark-squared infiltration with Nb3-a5 or Nb3-c5 next, baiting Black into **21. ... Bxb3** when Nakamura uncorked the fantastic *intermezzo* of **22. Nc3!** rather than the immediate **22. Qxe7 Qa5** with tempo on the hanging e1-rook. Now, **22. ... Qb6 23. Qxe7 Bc4** gave White a big initiative after **24. b3 Ba6 25.**

**Kb2 Rg8 26. Na4 Qb5 27. Rd1** White won in Nakamura – Lenderman.



**# 1. BLACK TO PLAY**

**# 2. WHITE TO PLAY**

**# 3. WHITE TO PLAY**

**# 4. BLACK TO PLAY**

**# 5. WHITE TO PLAY**

**# 6. BLACK TO PLAY**

### SOLUTIONS

**1) 28. ... f5+** An unusual mating net! **29. Kd4 Qf4** mate. (Firouzja – Caruana, New York, 2024) **2)** In a time scramble, Caruana allowed a shot with **49. Rxe5+** But White missed it, losing after **49. Ra4?** **49. ... Kxe5 50. Bg3+** White should hold, as Black's king has no way to infiltrate. (Cheparinov – Caruana, New York, 2024) **3) 38. Qe6** The right attack, using both pins. Note: **38. Qd7 d4** would give Black another

defensive resource. **38. ... Kh6 39. Qxf7** White went on to win. (Caruana – Durarbayli, New York, 2024) **4) 41. ... Nxd4** The e-pawn is overloaded! **42. f3** White likely relied on **42. exd4** overlooking **42. ... Rxe1!** (since **42. ... Qxf4+?? 43. Qxf4 Rxf4 44. Rxe8+** wins for White) but **43. Rxe1 Rxe1 44. Qxe1 Qxf4+** gives Black a won endgame. **42. ... Rxe3** Black went on to win. (Nesterov – Nakamura, New York, 2024) **5) 32. Qf3** Black has too many loose

pieces! **32. ... Kh7** If **32. ... Rxc5 33. Rxc5! Qxc5 34. Qxf6** wins. **33. Bg5 Qxc5 34. Qxf6** and **Black resigned.** (Caruana – Brodsky, New York, 2024) **6) 49. ... Be5 50. Qf3** Nothing else defends the knight. **50. ... Nxd5 51. cxd5** Black played **51. ... Qd6**, but better was: **51. ... Qh7** threatening ... **Qh7-h4+** and winning the f4-knight. Neither **52. Kf2** nor **52. Kg2 Nh4+** work, as **52. ... Qh2+ 53. Ng2 Nh4!** wins the g2-knight. (Andriasan – Nakamura, New York, 2024)