

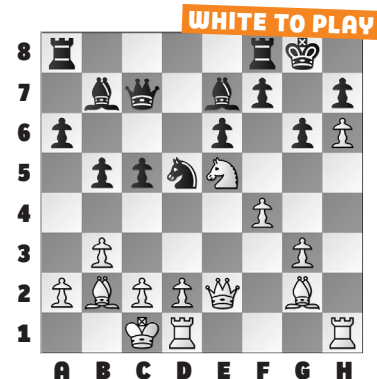
20TH KCF ALL-GIRLS CHAMPS

This week's exercises come from the **2025 Kasparov Chess Foundation (KCF) All-Girls National Championship**, held in Chicago

April 4-6, organized in partnership with Renaissance Knights Chess Foundation and US Chess. These puzzles feature U18 co-champs WFM Megan Paragua and WIM Iris Mou, and U14 Champion Audrey Zhou.

In our **example**, White crashed through with **17. Nxg6! fxxg6** since 17. ... h7xg6 meets 18. h7 mate. Play continued: **18. Qxe6+ Rf7 19. Bxd5** when White regained her piece, and after **19. ... Bxd5 20. Qxd5 Rd8 21. Qe5**, she forced a queen trade while

already ahead by two pawns, going on to win in Mou – Wang.



1. BLACK TO PLAY

2. WHITE TO PLAY

3. BLACK TO PLAY

4. BLACK TO PLAY

5. WHITE TO PLAY

6. WHITE TO PLAY

SOLUTIONS

1) 32. ... Re2+ The fastest mate. **33. Kh1 Bd5!** Covering the a8-square! Not 33. ... Qxg3?? 34. Qa8+ Re8 35. Qxe8 mate. **34. Rf1 Qxg3** and **White resigned.** (Xin – Paragua, Chicago, 2024) **2) 13. e5!** Black’s “tactics antenna” was not tuned to the lack of squares for her dark-squared bishop. (Paragua – Porat, Chicago, 2024) **3) 21. ... Rxc2+** Black picks up the queen by force. **22. Kxc2 Qa2+ 23. Kd3 Bc4+** and **White resigned.**

(Stark – Mou, Chicago, 2024) **4) 30. ... Qg2** It’s hard to defend the e2-bishop when White’s queen is tied to the h3-rook’s defense! **31. Qxh5** Or 31. Qf1 Qe4+ 32. Kc1 g2 when the queen cannot both cover the e2-bishop and the g1-square. **31. ... Ng6! 32. Kd2 Rd8+** Breaking the pin. Black won the Exchange next, and **White resigned** shortly. (Fei – Mou, Chicago, 2024) **5) 39. Nxb5!** The further away from White’s king, the more of a threat it is. Instead, 39.

Nxe4+?? botches the win: 39. ... Ke5 40. Kf3 Kd4 secures at least a draw. (Loh – Zhou, Chicago, 2024) **6)** From a variation, White has a lovely mating net. **35. Nf5+ Kg6 36. Ne7+!** The key move. The king is stuck on the g- and h-files. Not 36. g4 h5! clearing the h7-square. **36. ... Kh5** Or 36. ... Kg7 (other moves are similar) 37. Rg8+ Kh6 38. Nf5+ Kh5 39. g4 mate. **37. Rg8 b4 38. g4+** Or 38. Kg2 first works. **38. ... Kh4 39. Kg2!** Mate with Ne7-f5 is next. (Loh – Zhou, Chicago, 2024, analysis)