

CAIRNS CUP, RD. 1 FIREWORKS

WEDNESDAY WORKOUT ■ JUNE 11, 2025

BY JJ LANG

PUZZLE 1.



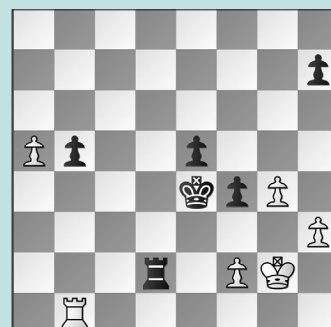
WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 2.



BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 3.



WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 4.



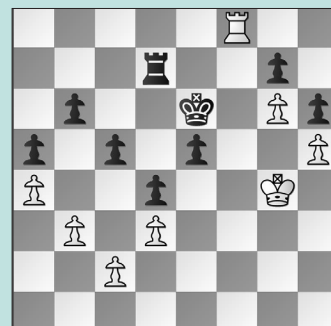
BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 5.



WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 6.



BLACK TO MOVE

SOLUTIONS

PUZZLE 1. 29. Qd6+ Kf7 30. Ne5+! Black might have expected 30. Nxg5+, when 30. ... Kg8! leaves White better, but without a knockout blow. 30. ... Bxe5 31. Qxe5 Black cannot adequately defend the knight. **Black resigned** after playing 31. ... Kg6 since 32. Qxg5+ forces mate. (Humpy – Dzagnidze, St. Louis, 2025) **PUZZLE 2.** 21. ... b5! White's position crumbles. 22. d5 Or 22. Bxa5 bxc4 23. Rc3 Rdb8! is strong, with ... Rb8-b5 attacking the a5-bishop. 22. ... bxc4 23. Re3 exd5 White does not have compensation. (Tan – Kashlinskaya, St. Louis, 2025) **PUZZLE 3.** 33. Rb4+ Precision! Not 33. a6? Ra2 34. Rb4+ when Black now has 34. ... Kd3

35. Rxb5 e4 and the a-pawn cannot be defended as 36. Rb6?? e3 wins for Black! 33. ... Kd5 Too slow is 33. ... Kd3 34. Rxb5 e4 thanks to 35. Rd5+ trading rooks. 34. Rxb5+ Kd6 If Black tries 34. ... Kd4 to keep the ... e5-e4 idea alive, 35. Rb4+ Kd5 36. Ra4 wins. 35. Kf3 Black wins. (Lee – Batsiashvili, St. Louis, 2025) **PUZZLE 4.** 28. ... Ne4 Prophylaxis, over-protecting the d6-square. The immediate 28. ... Qxc4? was punished in our first puzzle. 29. Bxg5+ If 29. Ne5 Rxf1+! holds serve, as now White has no mating net with Be3-c5+ after the queen trade. 29. ... Rf6!! The key resource. We can't let Black move the bishop off the g-file with tempo to play Qg3-g7+. 30. Qf4 What else? 30. ... Qc5+ 31. Kh1 Nxg5 32. Qxg5 Qxg5 33. Nxg5 Rg8

Black enjoys pressure on the g-file. (Humpy – Dzagnidze, St. Louis, 2025, analysis) **PUZZLE 5.** 14. Nxf7! Even stronger than White's 14. Qa4. 14. ... Kxf7 15. Nxe6! The key. 15. ... Kxe6 16. Qb3+ Winning. **PUZZLE 6.** 95. ... Rd5 Black can play for ... e5-e4 now. Insetad, 95. ... e4? lost after 96. dxe4 d3 97. Re8+!, forcing 97. ... Kd6 Note that 97. ... Kf6 98. e5 is mate. 98. cxd3 and White won. 96. Rb8 Other lines do not fit here. 96. ... e4! 97. dxe4 If 97. Rxb6+ Ke5 98. Ra6 e3 yields counterplay. 97. ... Rg5+ 98. Kh4 Or 98. Kf4 Rxh5 99. Rxb6+ Ke7 holds. 98. ... Ke5 99. Rb7 Kxe4 100. Rxb7 Rg1 Black holds thanks to a combination of mate threats on the h-file while staying behind White's passed g-pawn. (Harika – Yip, St. Louis, 2025, analysis)