

WOMEN'S WORLD CUP, PT. 1

Today's puzzles begin a series from the **Women's World Cup**, with puzzles selected by WGM Sabina Foisor, who annotated games for

all seven rounds of the knockout tournament.

In our **example**, Black erred with **28. ... Be6??** allowing **29. Ne7+ Kg7** reaching today's second puzzle. Instead, after **29. Nd4?? Qxe3+**, White resigned in Tsolakidou – Dronavalli. But, it turns out that Black had an equalizer with **28. ... Bd3!**, removing the knight before it could do any more damage. If **29. Ne7+ Kg7** the knight would have a hard time getting out, although

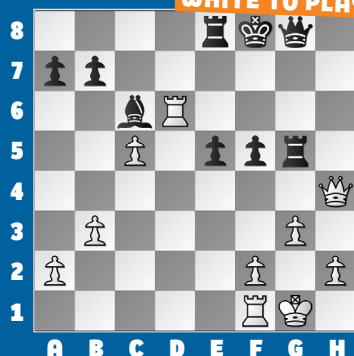
apparently **30. e4!**, sacrificing a rook, is equal according to the engine!

BLACK TO PLAY



1.

WHITE TO PLAY



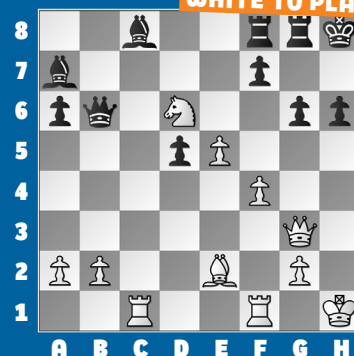
2.

WHITE TO PLAY



3.

WHITE TO PLAY



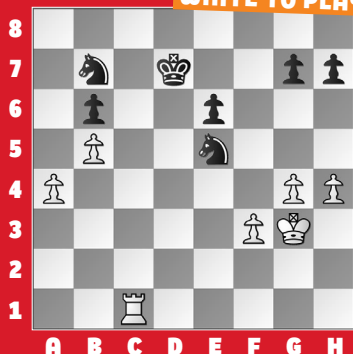
4.

BLACK TO PLAY



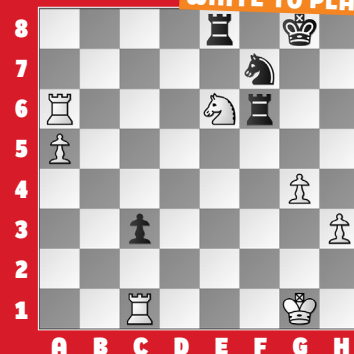
5.

WHITE TO PLAY



6.

WHITE TO PLAY



SOLUTIONS

1) 36. Rf6+! Ke7 Or **36. ... Kg7 37. Qh6** mate **37. Rxf5 Qd5** The rook was a goner, and, in what follows, Black's last-gasp mate threat is easily rebuffed. **38. Qxg5+ Kd7 39. f3** and **Black resigned** shortly. (Yip – Krush, Batumi, 2025) **2) 30. Rbf1** A powerful quiet move, preparing **Rf4-f6**, when a sacrifice on the g6-square would be fatal. For instance, if **30. ... Rfe8** then **31. Rf6 Rxe7 32. Rxg6+ fxg6 33. Qxe7+** regains

material with a winning attack, to boot! (Tsolakidou – Harika, Batumi, 2025, analysis) **3) 29. Nxc8!** Clearing the path to the h3-square for a clever fork. **29. ... Rxc8 30. Qh3** A double attack on the loose c8-rook and the h6 mating square. (Cervantes – Mungunzul, Batumi, 2025) **4) 20. ... Bc4!** A subtle removal of the guard. **21. Qd1** The queen is safe here, and the d2-bishop is defended, but... **21. ... Bxf2** wins material, as **22. Rh1 Qd6** wins the

knight. (Lei – Humpy, Batumi, 2025, analysis) **5) 41. f4** Another removal of the guard! **41. ... Nf7 42. Rc6 Nfd8** Or **42. ... Nfd6 43. Rxb6 Nc5 44. a5** wins. **43. Rxb6 Nc5 44. a5** and White went on to win. (Mungunzul – Cervantes, Batumi, 2025) **6) 44. Nc7!** A simplification tactic! **44. ... Rxa6 45. Nxa6 Re3** Or **45. ... Re5 46. Rxc3 Rxa5 47. Nc5** wins. **46. Nb4** The a-pawn is a runner, whereas Black's frozen c-pawn most certainly is not. (Wang – Cori, Batumi, 2025)