

### WOMEN'S WORLD CUP, PT. 3

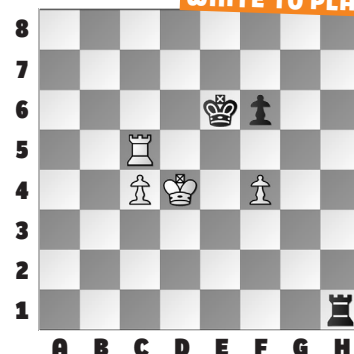
This week, we finish our series on last month's **FIDE Women's World Cup** with a final batch of puzzles curated by WGM Sabina Foisor.

In our **example**, we see how hard it is even for the best players in the world to play rook-and-pawn endgames under time pressure.

**64. Rd5!** The best move is the most principled. White cuts Black's king off by a file, preparing Kd4-c5 to get the king in front of the pawn. Instead, 64. f5+?? Kd6 65. Rd5+ Kc6 66. Ra5 Rd1+ and White's king can't get in front of her pawn, settling for a draw in Koneru – Lei. See how we can distill a complex position into

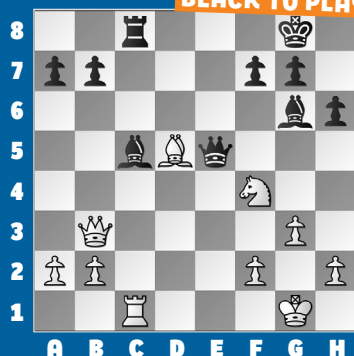
simple principles? For **homework**, try to prove the win after 64. Rd5.

WHITE TO PLAY



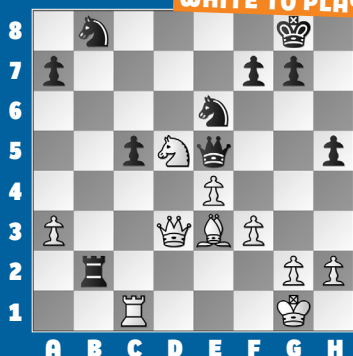
# 1.

BLACK TO PLAY



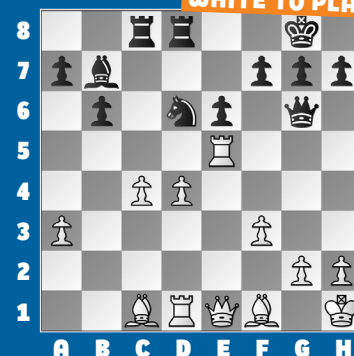
# 2.

WHITE TO PLAY



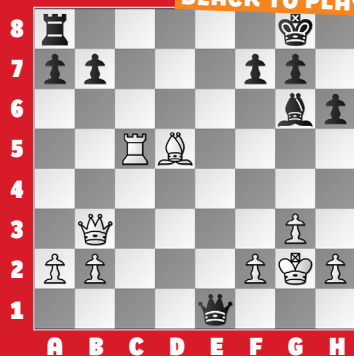
# 3.

WHITE TO PLAY



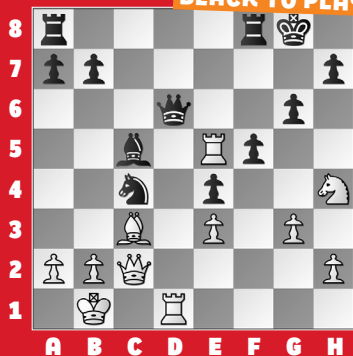
# 4.

BLACK TO PLAY



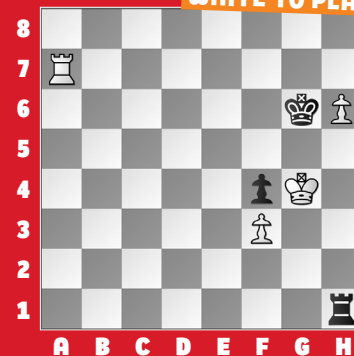
# 5.

BLACK TO PLAY



# 6.

WHITE TO PLAY



### SOLUTIONS

**1) 23. ... Bxf2+** A discovered attack!  
**24. Kxf2 Rxc1 25. Nxc6** Exploiting the pin. But... **25. ... Qe1+** went on to win, as would 25. ... Qf6+ 26. Nf4 g5, pinning. (Canino – Shukhman, Batumi, 2025) **2) 27. f4!** A surprising queen trap! **27. ... Qd6** Black played 27. ... Nxf4 28. Bxf4 and White won. **28. Nf6+ gxf6 29. Qxd6** White wins the queen. (Tan – Kirtadze, Batumi, 2025) **3) 28. Bd3** Another queen trap! **28. ... Nf5 29. d5!** Closing the

bishop to prep g2-g4! Maybe Black only counted on 29. g4?? Bxf3+ winning. But now, Black can't stop g2-g4 and d5xe6 threats combined. (Charochkina – Guichard, Batumi, 2025) **4) 24. ... Rd8** And now White is in *zugzwang*! **25. Bf3** Or 25. h4 b6 26. Rb5 a6 when Black plays ... Rd8xd5 and ... Bg6-e4+. **25. ... Rd2** There's no defense of the f2-square, as White's queen is hanging on the e3-square due to the pin on the f2-pawn. (Canino – Shukhman,

Batumi, 2025) **5) 25. ... Qb6** With ... Nc4-a3+ being threatened and the e5-rook hanging, White had no defense. (Khotenashvili – Muzychuk, M., Batumi, 2025) **6) 88. h7** This is why we study pawn endgames! **88. ... Rxh7** Or 88. ... Kf6 89. Kxf4 wins slowly, with Black's rook unable to stop both passed pawns. **89. Rxh7 Kxh7 90. Kxf4** White will achieve king in front of pawn with opposition, a theoretical win. (Divya – Tan, Batumi, 2025)