

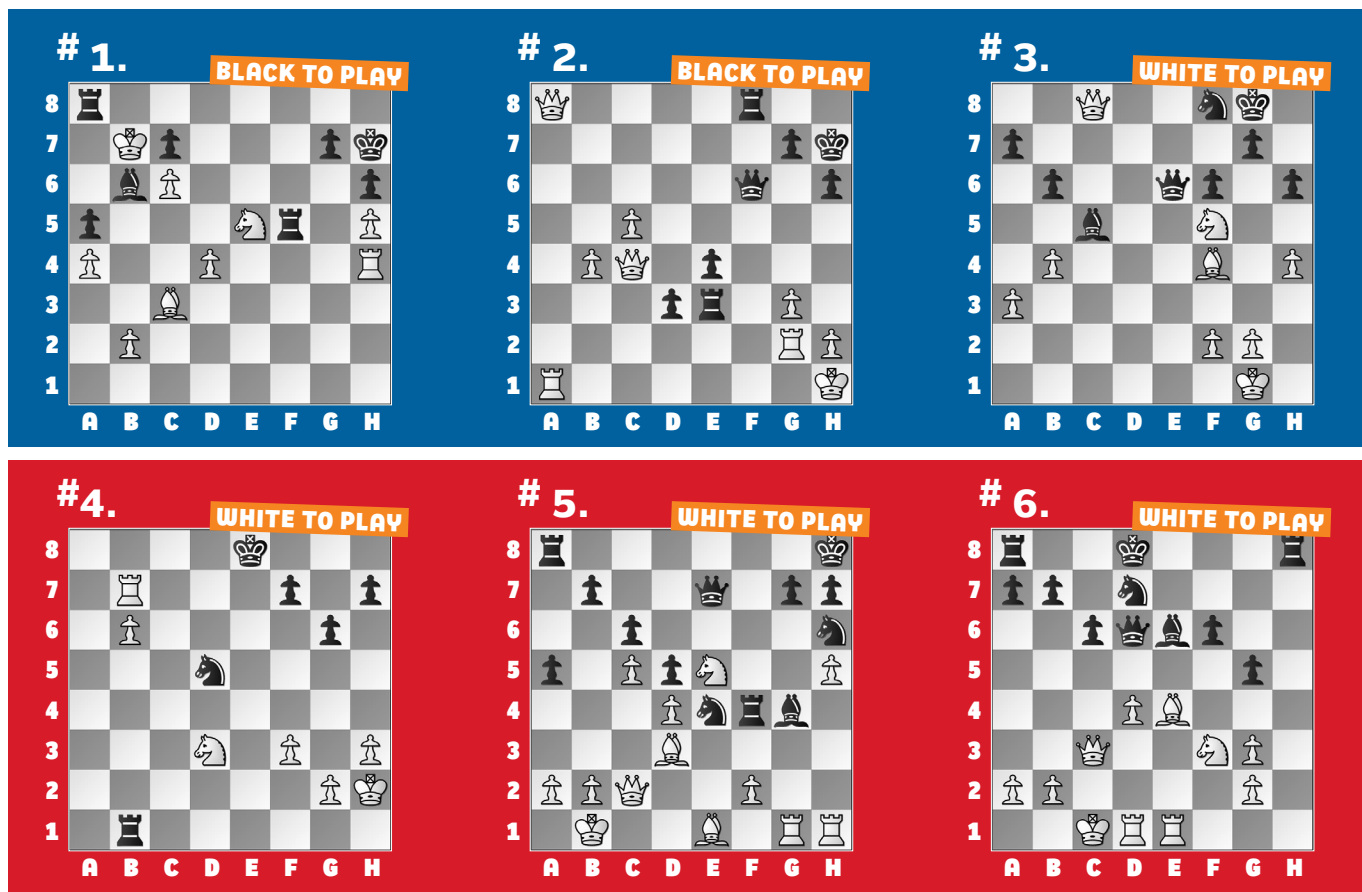
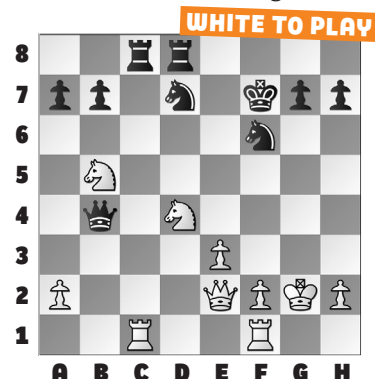
WASHINGTON INTERNATIONAL

Today's puzzles come from the **12th Washington International**, held earlier this month just outside of Washington, D.C. GM Rahul Peddi

won the event, which was full of fighting chess on the top boards.

In our **example**, White played an interesting game of squares. Right now, Black's queen is short of squares, and with **21. a3!**, not only does White exploit this, but after **21. ... Qf8 22. Qa2+** White also gained a critical square for his own queen! Now, **22. ... Kg6** or **22. ... Ke8 23. Qe6+ Qe7 24. Nd6+** wins, too, and **23. Ne6** would win material and keep the attack raging. As a **bonus**,

how should White meet **21. ... Qe7**, which Black tried in the game?



SOLUTIONS

1) 40. ... Rff8 Surprise! Mate with ... Rf8-b8 is inevitable. (McConnell – Baron, Rockville, 2025, variation) **2) 50. ... Rxa8** Promoting was no concern, as Black wins after: **51. Rxa8 Re1+ 52. Rg1 Qf3** mate. (Cherukuri – Peddi, Rockville, 2025, variation) **3) 28. bxc5** Here, **Black resigned**, as **28. ... Qxc8 29. Ne7+** would regain the queen. (Matviishen – Ghaem Maghami, Rockville, 2025) **4) 44. Rb8+** Make

way for the b-pawn! **44. ... Kd7 45. Nc5+** Defending the b7-square, so the rook can get out of the pawn's way. **45. ... Kd6 46. b7 Kxc5 47. Rc8+** and White went on to win. (Putnam – Ghaem Maghami, Rockville, 2025) **5) 23. Nxg4** White sets up a fatal fork. **23. ... Rxg4** Note: **23. ... Nxg4 24. f3** still wins, as **24. ... Rxf3 25. Rxg4** grabs the knight anyways. **24. Rxg4 Nxg4 25. f3** Finally, now that Black is out of tempo-gaining moves. **25. ... Ne3** The last attempt.

26. Qe2 and **Black resigned** two moves later. (Steingrimsen – Wang, Rockville, 2025) **6) 20. Nxg5** White blasts open the long diagonal. **20. ... fxe5 21. d5** White hits the rook and threatens d5xe6 regaining material and pressuring Black's queen and king. Black can resign. (Mishra – Stermann, Rockville, 2025) **Bonus) 22. Nf5!** Now, a knight is coming to d6. After **22. ... Rxc1 23. Nxe7** White went on to win. (Tang – Stearman, Rockville, 2025)