

SAINT LOUIS RAPID & BLITZ, PT. 1

WEDNESDAY WORKOUT ■ SEPTEMBER 3, 2025

BY JJ LANG

PUZZLE 1.



WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 2.



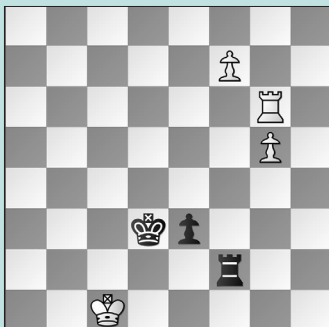
WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 3.



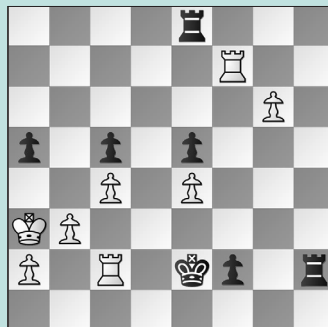
WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 4.



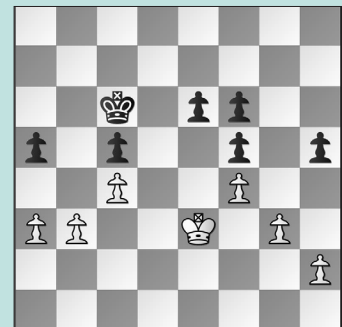
WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 5.



BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 6.



BLACK TO MOVE

SOLUTIONS

PUZZLE 1. 34. g5 and Black resigned! White avoided 34. Rh3?? Qf4 when the queen escapes. But now 34. ... Nxc5 35. Nxc5 fxc5 36. Rh3 traps the queen. (So – Oparin, St. Louis, 2025) **PUZZLE 2.** 21. Rxe4 The tactics work out! 21. ... Rxe4 Or 21. ... Kxb6 22. Rxd6+ wins the queen. 22. Nxd6+ Kxb6 23. Qxd7 Nxd7 24. Nxe4 Black can't save both pieces, so White emerges up three pawns. (Caruana – Vachier-Lagrave, St. Louis, 2025, variation) **PUZZLE 3.** 23. Nf5! The queen is immune due to Nf5xe7+ winning back the queen with a fork. 23. ... h6 24. Be3 Bring all your toys to the party! White could have also tried 24. Qh4!?! Rxd1 25. Qg4!!

but only if they saw this *intermezzo*! 24. ... Rxd1 25. Rxd1 Bc6 26. Rf1 Threats of Nf5xh6+ are too great. (Abdusattorov – Oparin, St. Louis, 2025) **PUZZLE 4.** 48. Rd6+! Eye on the prize! The mechanical 48. Rf6? allows 48. ... e2! (or 48. ... Rxf6 49. gxf6 e2 also draws) drawing. 48. ... Kc3 49. Rc6+! Not 49. Rf6?? Rxf6 50. gxf6 e2 when Black now wins! 49. ... Kd3 50. g6 The point revealed! With the rook off the g6-square (and no tempi lost in the process), the pawns finally protect each other, so White can sac the rook for the e-pawn and still win. (So – Abdusattorov, St. Louis, 2025) **PUZZLE 5.** 45. ... Ke3! Instead, after 45. ... Ke1?? 46. Ka4! 46. ... Rg8?! 47. g7!, White went on to win. 46. g7 Rg2 47. Rf8 Rxc7! The key. With Black's king on e1, White

could have played Rc2-c1+ to win Black's new queen and salvage the draw. But, without Black's king on the back rank, White has nothing better than capturing the f-pawn, since 48. Rxe8?? f1=Q now wins for Black without White's Rc2-c1+ resource. (Aronian – Abdusattorov, St. Louis, 2025, analysis) **PUZZLE 6.** 47. ... a4! The first domino! 48. bxa4 e5 Other tries transpose. 49. fxe5 fxe5 50. Kf3 Kb6 51. h3 Ka5 White's last trick: 52. g4 hxg4+ 53. hxg4 fxg4+! Instead, 53. ... e4+?? allowed 54. Kg3! equalizing, but 54. Kf4?? allowed 54. ... e3! winning, and then 54. ... fxg4?? allowed 55. Kxg4 Kxa4 56. Kf4 Kxa3 57. Kxe4 Kb3 58. Kd3 Kb4 when 59. Kd2! clinched the draw for White. (Gukesh – Oparin, St. Louis, 2025, analysis)