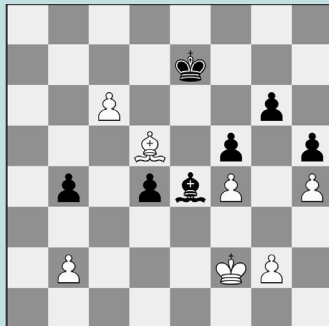


CLUTCH CHESS CHAMPIONS: DAY 1

WEDNESDAY WORKOUT ■ OCTOBER 29, 2025

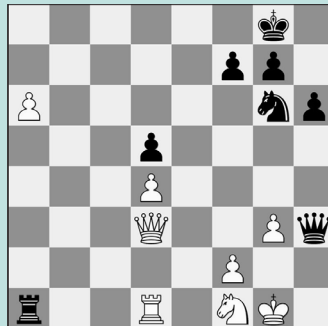
BY JJ LANG

PUZZLE 1.



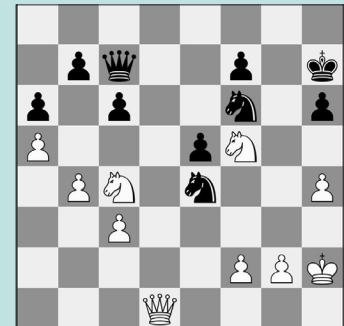
WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 2.



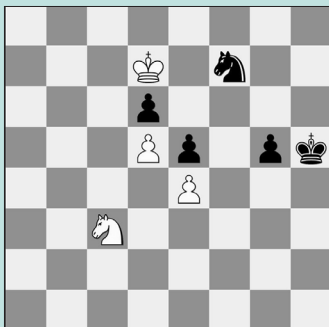
BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 3.



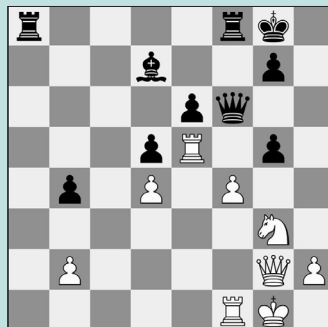
WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 4.



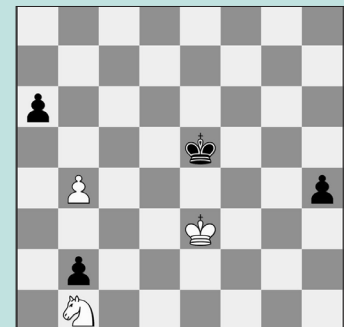
BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 5.



BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 6.



WHITE TO MOVE

SOLUTIONS

PUZZLE 1. 37. c7 A fine illustration of good-bishop-versus-bad-bishop, and why same-colored bishop endgames are so different than their notoriously drawish opposite-colored counterparts. **37. ... Kd7 38. Bf7 Kxc7 39. Bxg6 Kd6 40. Bxh5** With an extra pawn and same-colored bishops, White won shortly. (Caruana – Nakamura, St. Louis, 2025) **PUZZLE 2. 34. ... Nh4!** The right direction! In the game, White flagged after **34. ... Nf4** but had a way to hold with: **35. Ne3! Nxd3 36. Rxa1 Qc8** when **37. Nxd5 Qa8 38. Nc7 Qf3 39. a7 Qxf2+** leaves Black as the one forced to bail out with a perpetual check. **35. gxf4** Not **35. Ne3 Nf3** mate. **35. ... Qg4+** Winning material. (Gukesh – Carlsen,

St. Louis, 2025, analysis) **PUZZLE 3. 33. f3!** The knight is almost trapped! In the game, White went with **33. Qc2?** letting Black off the hook with **33. ... Qd7** when White was better but Black came back to win. **33. ... Nxc3** Or **33. ... Nf2 34. Qd2** is similar. **34. Qd2** In the game, White fixated on the wrong diagonal! (Caruana – Carlsen, St. Louis, 2025, analysis) **PUZZLE 4. 55. ... Kg4!** Winning by bringing the king in front of the pawn. Instead, **55. ... g4?? 56. Ne2 Kg6 57. Ke6 Ng5+ 58. Kxd6 Nxe4+ 59. Kxe5 Nf6** was drawn. **56. Nb5 Kf4** Not **56. ... Kf3?** **57. Nxd6 Nxd6 58. Kxd6 g4 59. Kxe5** and White is the one playing for a win after promotions. **57. Nxd6 Nxd6 58. Kxd6 g4 59. Ke6 g3 60. d6 g2 61. d7 g1=Q 62. d8=Q Qg4+ 63. Kf7 Kxe4**

White has no checks and the Tablebase confirms Black is winning. (Carlsen – Caruana, St. Louis, 2025, analysis) **PUZZLE 5. 29. ... Bb5 30. Rd1** If **30. Rf2 Ra1+ 31. Nf1** Black wins material with: **31. ... Bxf1 32. Rxf1 Qxf4! 33. Rxa1 Qxd4+** regaining the rook! **30. ... gxf4 31. Nh5 Qh6** Anticipating the threat of **Re5xe6** to overload the queen by hitting the knight. **32. Qf3 Be8** Black intends ... **Be8-g6** and ... **Rf8-f5**, trapping the knight. (Carlsen – Nakamura, St. Louis, 2025) **PUZZLE 6. 50. Na3! h3 51. Kf3 Kd4** Or **51. ... h2 52. Kg2 Kd4 53. b5** is similar. **52. b5!** Not **52. Kg3?? Kc3** when the b-pawn drops, and **53. b5 axb5 54. Nxb5+ Kb4** boxes out the knight. **52. ... axb5 53. Nxb5+ Kd3 54. Na3** Holding. (Caruana – Gukesh, St. Louis, 2025, variation)