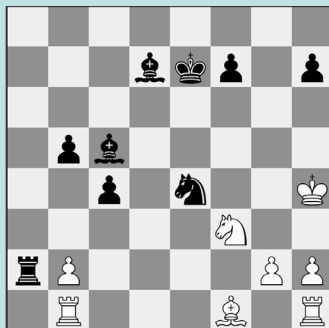


CLUTCH CHESS CHAMPIONS: DAY 2

WEDNESDAY WORKOUT ■ NOVEMBER 05, 2025

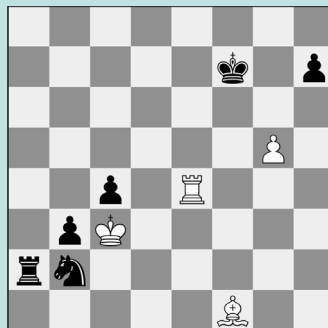
BY JJ LANG

PUZZLE 1.



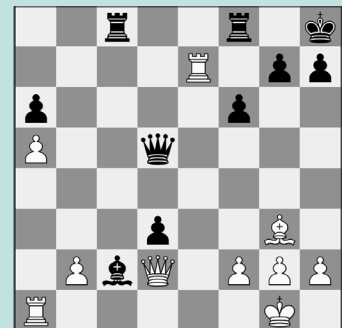
BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 2.



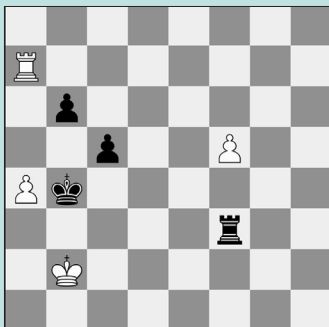
BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 3.



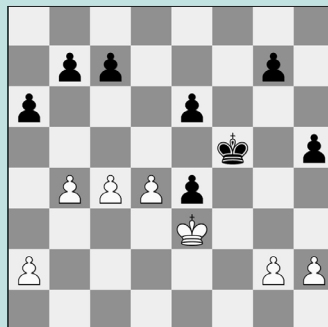
BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 4.



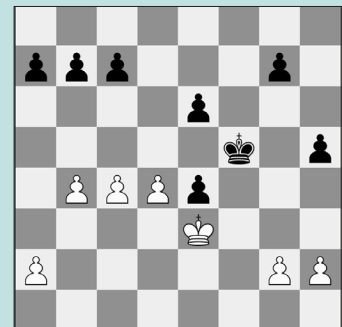
WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 5.



WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 6.



BLACK TO MOVE

SOLUTIONS

PUZZLE 1. 25. ... Ra6! The quiet move that sets up forced mate. Black played 25. ... Bf5 and won later. 26. Kh5 Covering the h6-square. 26. ... Be3 But not for long! (Carlsen – Caruana, St. Louis, 2025, analysis) **PUZZLE 2.** 42. ... Nd1+ 43. Kb4 Rc2! But not 43. ... b2?? 44. Bxc4+ when White is winning. 44. Re1 b2 45. Rxd1 Rc1 and White resigned shortly. (Carlsen – Caruana, St. Louis, 2025) **PUZZLE 3.** 24. ... Bb3 Preparing a fatal rook infiltration on the c2-square. 25. Rc7 Rxc7 26. Bxc7 Re8! The key finesse. After 26. ... Rc8? 27. Bf4 Rc2 28. Rc1! White uses back-rank tricks to survive. 27. Kf1 Now, 27. Bf4 Re2 28. Re1 runs into 28. ... Qe4! winning. 27. ... Re2 28.

Qb4 Bc4 and White resigned. (Nakamura – Caruana, St. Louis, 2025) **PUZZLE 4.** 46. Ra6! After White's 46. Rb7??, 46. ... Rb3+ would win, guarding the b-pawn after ... Kb4xa4. Instead, Black returned the favor with 46. ... Rf2+?? allowing 47. Kb1 Rxf5 48. Rxb6+ with a draw. 46. ... Rf2+ 47. Kb1 Black has no attack, as the a4-pawn is defended and White threatens Ra6xb6+, stopping ... Kb4-b3 and ideas of playing for mate. (Nakamura – Gukesh, St. Louis, 2025, analysis) **PUZZLE 5.** 30. a4 The only move to hold, preventing Black's intended ... b7-b5 break. After 30. h4?? b5! 31. c5 c6 32. g3 e5 Black went on to win. 30. ... c6 Black prepares the b-pawn's intended thrust. 31. g3! Again, an only move. Other

moves, such as 31. a5 allow 31. ... h4! when White's king must move first after, e.g. 32. h3 g6 33. c5 g5 and Black wins. But 31. h4 runs into the same 31. ... e5! idea that won in the game. 31. ... g5 32. h3 g4 33. h4 e5! 34. c5 Or 34. a5 also holds. 34. ... exd4+ 35. Kxd4 e3 36. Kxe3 Ke5 Black draws. (Gukesh – Carlsen, St. Louis, 2025, analysis) **PUZZLE 6.** 29. ... c6!! The precursor to the previous puzzle. Now, Black is winning. After 29. ... a6?? we reach the previous puzzle. Note that 30. a4 g5 31. b5 e5 loses to 32. d5, with b5-b6 winning. 30. a4 Now, this move runs into: 30. ... g5! 31. b5 e5! 32. d5 cxd5 33. c5 d4+ Black's king will mop up the queenside, while White's king is stuck. (Gukesh – Carlsen, St. Louis, 2025, analysis))