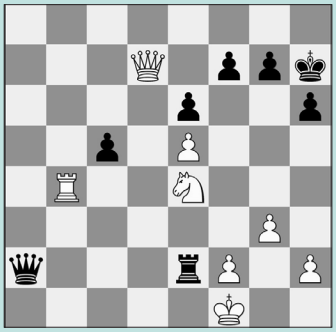
CLUTCH CHAMPIONS SHOWDOWN

WEDNESDAY WORKOUT ■ NOVEMBER 11, 2026

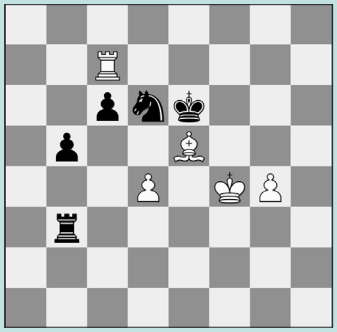
BY **JJ LANG**

PUZZLE 1.



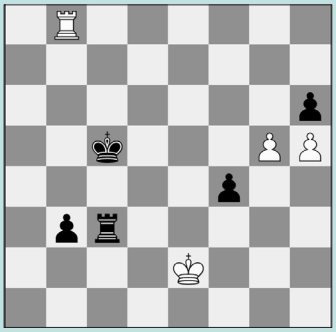
WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 2.



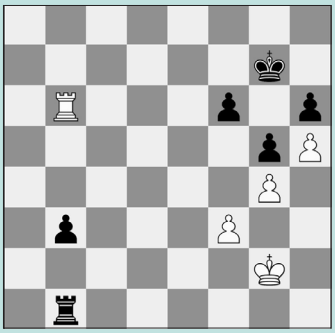
BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 3.



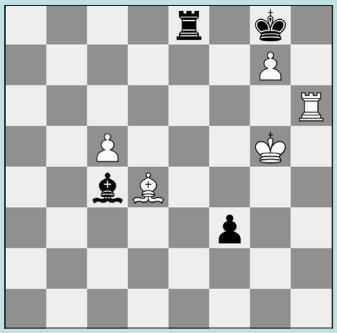
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PUZZLE 4.



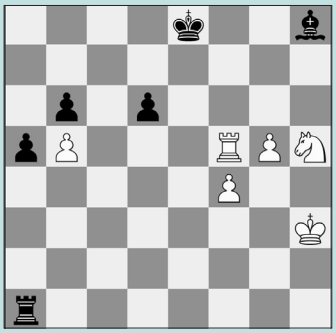
BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 5.



BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 6.



WHITE TO MOVE

SOLUTIONS

PUZZLE 1. 38. Nf6+ White missed this force mate but **38. Qxf7** still forced resignation. **38. ... Kg6** Or 38. ... gxf6 39. Qxf7+ Kh8 40. Rb8 mate. **39. Qd3+ Kg5 40. h4** mate. (Praggnanandhaa – Nakamura, St. Louis, 2026, analysis) **PUZZLE 2. 44. ... Nc4** The only way to create enough counterplay. Instead, **44. ... Nf7?? 45. Rxc6+ Kd7 46. Rc7+ Ke8** Or 46. ... Ke6 47. d5+! wins the knight. **47. g5 Nxe5 48. dxe5 b4** Too little, too late. **49. g6 Kf8 50. e6 Rb1 51. Rc8+** and Black resigned. **45. Rxc6+ Kd7 46. Rc7+ Ke6** There is no d4-d5+ threat without a loose knight on f7. **47. g5 Nxe5 48. dxe5 Rb4+** Thanks to the more active king, Black holds. (Nakamura – Caruana, analysis) **PUZZLE 3. 58. ... Re3+** A necessary *intermezzo*. Instead, **58. ... hxg5??** allowed **59. Rc8+ Kb4 60. Rxc3 Kxc3 61. h6 b2 62. h7 b1=Q 63. h8=Q+** when Black's king was too exposed. **59. Kf2** It doesn't matter where White moves. **59. ... hxg5** Black can maneuver the king to g4. **60. h6 Rh3** Black catches the pawn and will win. (Caruana – Nakamura, analysis)**PUZZLE 4. 48. ... Rb2+** Instead, **48. ... Kf7?** 49. Kf2 would activate just in time: But after **49. Kh2?? Ke7 50. Kg2 Kd7 51. Rxf6 Kc7 52. Rf7+ Kc6 53. Rf8 Rd1 54. Rb8 Rd3**, Black improves the position of the rook, retaining winning chances. 49. ... Ke7 50. Ke3 b2 51. Kd2 and Black does not have a trick with ... Rb1-h1-h2+ as the king is close enough to its rook. **49. Kg3 Kf7** Only now. (Caruana – Nakamura, analysis) **PUZZLE 5. 63. ... f2!** The game continued **63. ... Kf7?? 64. c6 f2 65. Rf6+ Kxg7** when 66. c7 could have won, **but 66. Rxf2+? Kg8 67. c7** allowed **67. ... Ba6!** and Black drew 50 moves later. **64. Rh8+ Kf7 65. Rxe8 Kxe8 66. Bxf2 Kd7 67. Kg6 Bg8!** The key point. (Sindarov – Nakamura, analysis) **PUZZLE 6. 54. g6** The right move order. Instead, **54. Nf6+? Ke7 55. Kg4 Rg1+ 56. Kh5 a4** generated enough counterplay to hold. **54. ... a4** If 54. ... Ke7 55. Rf7+! (not *55. g7?? Bxg7 56. Nxg7 a4* holding) 55. ... Ke8 56. Ra7 wins. **55. Rf7! a3 56. Ra7 a2 57. Kh2! Kf8 58. Ng3! Ke8 59. Nf5** Black cannot return to f8, and now g6-g7 wins. (Sindarov – Caruana, analysis)

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