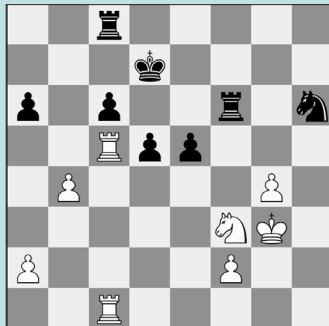


FIDE WORLD RAPID & BLITZ, PT. 1

WEDNESDAY WORKOUT ■ JANUARY 07, 2026

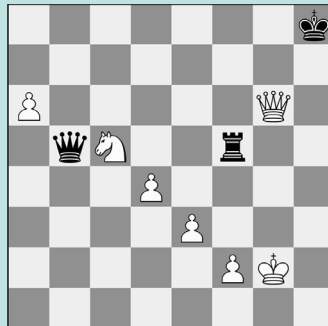
BY **WGM SABINA FOISOR**

PUZZLE 1.



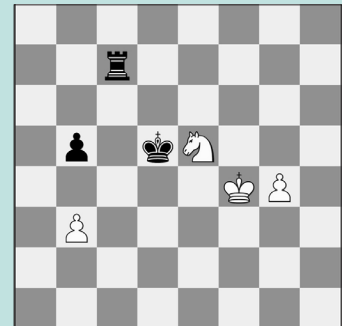
BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 2.



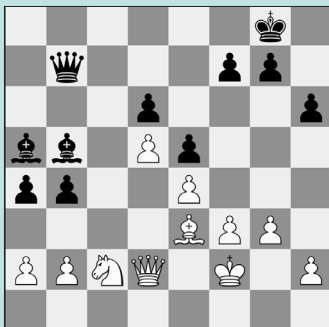
BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 3.



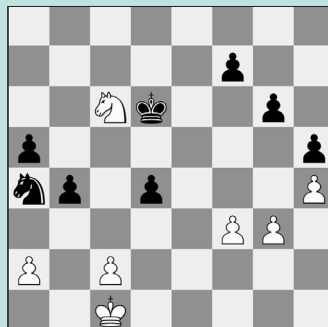
BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 4.



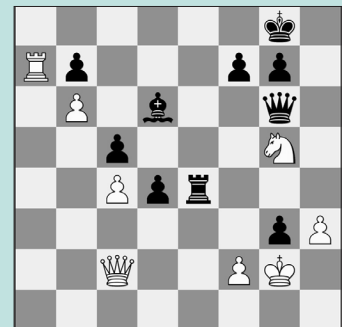
BLACK TO MOVE

PUZZLE 5.



WHITE TO MOVE

PUZZLE 6.



BLACK TO MOVE

SOLUTIONS

PUZZLE 1. 35. ... Nxf4! Black went with 35. ... Nf7?? and later drew. 36. Kxg4 Rf4+! 37. Kg3 Or 37. Kh3 Rxf3+ wins. 37. ... Rg8+ 38. Kh2 Rxf3 39. Rxc6 Rxf2+ 40. Kh3 e4 Black is up a pawn, and the connected passers are decisive. (Caruana – Vakhidov, Doha, 2025, analysis) **PUZZLE 2.** 53. ... Rxf2+! Black missed a stalemate swindle! After 53. ... Rxc5?? 54. Qf6+ Kh7 55. Qe7+ White was winning. 54. Kxf2 If 54. Kg3 Rg2+ wins the queen or stalemates, while 54. Kh3?? Qf1+ wins for Black! 54. ... Qf1+ 55. Kxf1 Stalemate. And 55. Kg3 Qg2+ is no better! (Akobian – Morris, Doha, 2025, analysis) **PUZZLE 3.** 46. ... Re7! For once, the rook's best defense is from the front. Levon

saved the game after 46. ... Rc3?? 47. g5 Ke6 48. Nf3 b4 49. Ke4 Kf7 with a draw. 47. Ng6 Rg7 48. Ne5 Rg8! With g4-g5 met by a check on the f-file, White's knight must decentralize. 49. Nd7 Rd8! 50. Nf6+ Ke6 And now ... Rd8-d4+ is coming, with White's knight unable to box out Black's king. (Aronian – Mendonca, Doha, 2025, analysis) **PUZZLE 4.** 30. ... Qc8 Threatening the h3-square. 31. g4?! A better try was 31. b3 axb3 32. axb3 Qh3 though now White can't save both f1 and h2. 31. ... b3! 32. Qxa5 Qxc2+ 33. Kg3 bxa2 and White resigned. (Alexakis – Niemann, Doha, 2025) **PUZZLE 5.** 33. Nxa5! Knight endgames can be as cruel as rook endgames! After 33. Nxd4?? Nc3 34. Kb2 Kd5 35. Nb3 a4 36. Nd2 Nb5 Black was winning,

and 37. g4 Nd4?! allowed for 38. a3! but after 38. gxf5?? a3+ Black won. And 38. ... bxa3+ 39. Kxa3 Nxc2+ 40. Kxa4 Ke5 Black should still win. 33. ... Kd5 If 33. ... Nc3 the point was 34. Kd2 Nxa2 35. Nb3 Kd5 36. Kd3 coordinates. 34. Kd2 Nb2 35. Nb3 Nc4+ 36. Ke2 and White should hold. (Ammar – So, Doha, 2025, analysis) **PUZZLE 6.** 38. ... Re6! The only move! Robson managed to come back after 38. ... Qxg5?? 39. Qxe4 gxf2+ 40. Kxf2 Qg3+ 41. Ke2 with an advantage. 39. Qxg6 Rxg6 40. Ne4 d3 41. Rxb7 The most testing. 41. ... f5! 42. Nxd6 d2! 43. Rb8+ Kh7 44. Nf7 gxf2+ 45. Kxf2 Rg2+! White was threatening mate on h8! 46. Kxg2 d1=Q Black should be able to win. (Robson – Isanzhulov, Doha, 2025, analysis)