

# FAGERNES CHESS INTERNATIONAL 2021

## THE LAHLUM ROUND REPORT

# 4



### GM Group

In the very late end around midnight this evening Norwegian GM Frode Urkedal lost his 100 % score, but still looked very well satisfied to draw his difficult black game against top rated GM Vahap Sanal of Turkey.

The Swedes had a great evening as GM Tiger Hillarp and GM Stellan Brynell following nice attacking finishes won against IM Tor Fredrik Kaasen and GM Alon Greenfeld, while IM Jung Min Seo as black against GM Vitaly Kunin gradually increased the pressure and won.

First place at 3,5/4 following this is shared between Urkedal, Hillarp, Brynell and Seo, and top board pairings for round five will be Urkedal–Seo and Hillarp–Brynell. Seo is ahead of schedule for a GM-norm, while several young players are hot candidates for IM-norms. Norwegian FM Trygve Dahl joined this group as he today defeated GM Normunds Miezis in a tactical battle – for the second year in a row.

First board game between **GM Vahap Sanal (2585)** and **GM Frode Urkedal (2564)** became by far the last game to finish this round, but after six and a half hour after all ended with a long expected draw.

Sanal played for a win with white, but did it his way with a rare Vienna game line with 1.e4 2.Nc3 3.Lc4 4.d3 and 5.Sge2. After the light-squared bishops were exchanged on e6 at move 11, black played with a slightly inferior pawn structure due to his two e-pawns. White obviously hoped for this to count for something in the endgame.

Black however succeeded in compensating the structural weakness by active pieces, and reached a position with rook, bishop, knight and three pawns on each side after 40 moves.



Seo and Urkedal

It looked very drawish with all the pawns on the kingside, but white still had the slightly better structure and stubbornly continued even with rook, bishop and three pawns left on each side. The players in the fifth hour cooperated exchanging blacks bishop for all the three pawns. First it was unclear to the spectators which of the players was trying to win with rook and dark-squared bishop for white against rook and three kingside pawns for black. After white won the e6-pawn a few moves later on, he was obviously the only one with any practical chances.

Urkedal later also gave up the h-pawn, and then play continued for some 30 moves with rook and bishop against rook and g-pawn. In the end after 121 moves Urkedal advanced his pawn to g4 and then sacrificed his rook on the white bishop, reaching a well known and safe draw with king and advanced pawn against rook and distant king.

**GM Vitaly Kunin (2547)** as white against **IM Jung Min Seo (2456)** made a very modest start with 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Be2?! and some kind of inverted Hungarian opening. A dry and fairly balanced struggle followed, but the initiative slowly turned in favour of black during the next three hours. Black definitely was better when intervening on the c3 outpost with his knight at move 21, but exchanging it with 32.Bxc3? still was too desperate. Black within three moves picked up the d3 pawn with decisive threats against white's badly coordinated pieces, and white after 40 moves stopped the clock as black was a rook up with a totally won position.

Third board meeting between **IM Tor Fredrik Kaasen (2432)** and **GM Tiger Hillarp (2521)** started as a complex Sicilian battle, in which white got a promising space advantage plus the pair of bishops after black exchanged his bishop for a knight at d5. The middle game later pitted white's c-file against black's chances for a kingside attack. The position reportedly was still very unclear when black sacrificed a piece with 27... Ng3!?, but turned winning for black in the moment white accepted the offer and opened the h-file. Hillarp instructively demonstrated why, sacrificing his other knight on e2 with the idea of sacrificing his rook on h1 with a mate to follow.



Kaasen

**IM Mads Vestby-Ellingsen (2375)** and **GM Erik Blomqvist (2518)** on board 4 made a slow and closed start with a 3.Bb5+-line in the Sicilian opening, but the position later opened and reached some kind of Maroczy set up. White played it safe, realizing the e5-break to exchange his e4-pawn against black's d6 pawn. The players later dutifully exchanged some more pieces in a sensible way before agreeing a draw after 42 moves.



Vestby-Ellingsen vs Blomqvist



Brynell vs Greenfeld

The veteran duel between **GM Stellan Brynell (2431)** and **GM Alon Greenfeld (2509)** started up with a Sicilian Alapin line, leading to a well known and fairly balanced isolated queen's pawn position. Something went wrong for black during tactical exchanges afterwards, as white with queen, rook, knight and six pawns versus queen, rook, bishop and six pawns kept a lasting edge. This because he had a passed pawn at a4, while black had a backward pawn weakness at e6. As both players were running short of time for 40 moves the rooks were exchanged, leaving a queen and minor piece endgame which was still scary from the black king's point of view. As Greenfeld blundered with 31.--- Qc2? white in turn missed a direct attacking win with 32.Qa7!, threatening 33.Qf7+. As Greenfeld blundered again with 34.--- Qxb2? Brynell however found the grandmaster plan to place his queen on e8 and the knight on g6. Greenfeld immediately resigned when the knight reached g6, as the mating net surrounding his king could only be temporarily removed by a major material loss.

**GM Kaido Kulaots (2511)** as white against the young sensation man **Shazil Shehzad (2249)** took a patient positional approach with an English Four Knights line. He was rewarded as white was allowed to pseudo-sacrifice his knight on e5 and keep a slight initiative with equal material. White's initiative grew as black helpfully exchanged queens, as white had all the more active pieces and the more advanced pawn majority in the remaining rook and bishop endgame. Shehzad succeeded getting some counterplay by advancing his queenside pawn majority, but white probably had the race all under control and after 40 moves landed safely in a totally won equally coloured bishop endgame.

**GM Titas Stremavicius (2487)** as white against **FM Theodor Kenneskog (2309)** tonight started up with 1.c4, but transposed into a Tarrasch isolated pawn position in which white had a slight edge. White's initiative grew into a decisive advantage following a tactical queen's exchange, as black's hanging pawns on c5 and d5 collapsed within a few moves. 1-0 after 35 moves – as black a pawn up also created a mating net around black's king with his rook and knight.



Stremavicius vs Kenneskog

**FM Trygve Dahl (2249)** as white against **GM Normunds Miezis (2467)** played 1.e4 and bravely entered a positionally complex Sicilian battle. White kept an initiative after two sets of minor pieces were exchanged, and it suddenly developed into a real attack as black after castling short was helpful in opening the g-file with 18...hxg3 e.p.?. Dahl again demonstrated himself as a gifted attacking man and increased the pressure until a tactical 33.Qxe8! won an exchange and forced a completely won endgame with rook and five pawns against knight and three pawns. The outcome of course was a big surprise and the rather one way driven game was an even bigger surprise. Dahl however defeated Miezis by tactical means last year too. It will be exciting to see whether he can now reach the IM norm he just missed later in that tournament.

The double round of **IM Frode Elsness (2465)** ended up like a double set back for his GM-norm chances, as he after losing to GM Erik Blomqvist as black in the third round had to accept a draw as white against **FM Øystein Bøyum Fossum (2302)** in the fourth. White first got a pair of bishops from this Queen's Gambit Tarrasch opening, and then sacrificed a testimony pawn at b2 to go for a direct attack against the black king. Fossum however stayed cool by giving back his extra pawn at f7 to force an exchange of queens, and later white had only a very slight initiative. The rook and bishop endgame due to opposite coloured bishops was a more or less given draw, and as black had succeeded exchanging the last queenside pawn of white, Elsness offered a draw after 42 moves.

**GM Gudmundur Kjartansson (2433)** versus **FM Volker Seifert (2246)** started up with 1.Nf3, then transposed into an English opening and then settled in some kind of Queen's pawn opening after black played d4. White got a space advantage on the queenside and some initiative, although black realized f5 with some kingside counterplay. Lasting complications followed as white bravely sacrificed a piece for only one pawn, to open attacking lines on the kingside and establish a passed pawn on d6.



Kjartansson vs Seifert

From a computer point of view 31.--- Kg8! was the last chance for Seifert to make this game exciting, as Kjartansson had an overwhelming attack after hitting in with a tactical 32.Bxg7+!. The situation during mutual time pressure with an extra knight for black still was exciting to follow. The outcome was not obvious until white at move 41 could win back the piece with a tactical Rxg8+, reaching a safely won endgame with three extra pawns.



Lindh vs Murphy

**FM Fredrik Lindh (2296)** and **FM Conor Murphy (2428)** meanwhile tested a lively Ruy Lopez line, in which white for some moves had a strong initiative after temporarily sacrificing a piece. As white failed to test the most critical lines black however escaped into a fairly balanced endgame with queen, knight and six pawns for white against queen, bishop and six pawns for black. Draw by repetition of checks after the first time control means that both players are still unbeaten and Lindh still in the run for an IM-norm.

**FM Mathias Unneland (2228)** as white against **IM Julian Martin (2396)** entered a modern Queen's Gambit line (Ragozin) with Bb4. White got the much better side of it as he proved able to get two bishops against two knights while keeping an extra c-pawn. The double rook endgame with an extra passed pawn for white on c6 should be winning, but Unneland strangely decided to exchange off all the queenside pawns and ended up with a dead drawn endgame after 40 moves.

**Sergey Eliseev (2041)** versus **FM Elham Abdrlauf (2334)** was an exciting duel between two teenagers having done very well so far. Something however went seriously wrong for white in this rare Caro-Kann opening, as black after 12 moves had just taken white's key pawn at e5 with a big advantage. Abdrlauf continued playing fast and confident, increasing his advantage until winning a piece in the endgame. At 3,0/4 the 16 year old looks like a strong IM norm candidate so far.

Non-teenagers **IM Marsel Efroimsky (2417)** and **FM Ward Altarbosh (2177)** meanwhile discussed a Classical French line in which got a pair of bishops and a lasting initiative, after the queens were exchanged by tactical means just after the opening. Black succeeded exchanging one of the bishops for a knight, but then white got an even stronger initiative in the remaining rooks and knight endgame.

Sacrificing an exchange on c6 probably was not necessary from a white point of view in this situation. It still worked out very well, as white's kingside pawns escorted by the king and knight soon gave her a mating attack against black's king on h8.

**IM Robert Baskin (2398)** and **Vladan Nikolic (2216)** started up with a rather slow closed Ruy Lopez, but as it opened white got a strong initiative. Black succeeded keeping his position together until he after the first time control had reached an apparently drawish endgame with queen, knight and three pawns on each side. This however also was close to winning as black had to worry about both his king and his scattered pawns. The queen endgame with two pawns for white and one for black needed full attention and many moves, but white was rather safely winning as he had a passed c-pawn and could hide his king from the black checks.

**FM Karolis Juksta (2397)** and **Gustav Törngren (2197)** started up with a Queen's Gambit Accepted, but then transposed into a Semi-Slav like position in which white's pawn at e5 first gave him some advantage. After 20 moves white had a dangerous attack running, which black partially succeeded to mess up. Playing with queen, two rooks and five pawns against queen, rook, knight and five pawns, white still was better after 28 moves. Black's active knight and queen however was disturbing. Running seriously short of time, Juksta stumbled into tactical threats and was about to lose heavy material when he resigned after 37 moves. Curiously white in the final position still was an exchange up, but all his three heavy pieces were under attack and he was doomed to lose at least a rook.



Carlsson and Törngren

**Morten Andersen (2182)** and **Ludvig Carlsson (2374)** played another Queen's Gambit Tarrasch line, leading to a isolated pawn position with a strong initiative for white. After the pawn structure was repaired white kept the initiative and looked close to winning in the middle game. Black however succeeded exchanging the worst dangers, and although the rook and minor piece endgame still was much better for white, black reportedly had the draw under reasonable control in the rook endgame.

**Laurin Perkampus (2076)** as white in a German generation duel against **IM Christian Köpke (2346)** tested out a modern line with 4.Qc2!? against a Benkö Gambit. Black apparently was fine all until the minor piece endgame, where he had to sacrifice his knight on white's running b-pawn. The following endgame with bishop and three pawns against five pawns reportedly first was fine for black, as he had the more active king and two passed pawns. As black chose the wrong plan in this endgame, white in the sixth hour was able to active his king and reach a won position.

Having only two minutes left on the clock Perkampus however returned the favour. Black following this could park his king on g4 and set up an original kind of fortress with two passed queenside pawns for black against bishop at g5 and pawn at h4 for white. Fairly illustrating for the strong midfield in this GM group, 18 year old Perkampus after four rounds has performance well above 2300 without having won (or lost) any game.

**FM Noam Vitenberg (2305)** following loss in the third round struck back with a nice positional win as white against NTG classmate **Sondre Melaa (2117)** in the fourth. The start was some kind of King's Indian fianchetto relative, in which white's d5-pawn combined with the c-file control soon gave white a clear plus. White increased the pressure by intervening on the seventh rank to pick up black's pawn at a7, and after 40 moves had reached a won rook endgame with four against two kingside pawns.



Melaa vs Vitenberg



Ingebretsen

**FM Jens Evang Ingebretsen (2274)** was another young Norwegian IM norm candidate also hitting back with a win tonight, but his road to the full point was far more shaky than Vitenberg's.

As white against **Andreas Tenold (1995)**, Ingebretsen true enough first got a promising edge from the Queen's Gambit opening, as he successfully hung on to an extra pawn at c5. Black however soon recovered after winning back the pawn at c4, and as white for mysterious reasons sacrificed his d6- and e5-pawns as

well, black suddenly was two pawns up with a much better position. Inviting a queen exchange with 23... Qg4?? however turned out to be a blunder, as white after 24.Re1! won a piece due to his e-file pin. The rest was not too exciting, as white's extra bishop obviously outnumbered black's two extra pawns in this position.

**Afras Mansoor (1931)** versus **Tobias Lang Nilsen (2271)** was another teenager duel and a Benoni opening duel, in which white's center advantage first gave him a pleasant plus. Black tried to counter on the kingside, but white coolly cashed in a piece when given the chance and was totally winning with a sound piece up after 31 moves. Mansoor however again ran seriously short of time and this time lost his tactical sight. As Nilsen made efficient use of his chances, black after 40 moves suddenly was a decisive exchange up in the endgame instead of a depressing piece down in the middlegame.



**Nilsen vs Mansoor**

**IM Erlend Mikalsen (2373)** gave his Italian opening another try as white against **Pijus Greicius (2080)**, with success as white after opening the center files could mobilize his forces much faster than black. Exchanging off his lame bishop at c8 was positionally a natural choice for black, but it backfired tactically as he already lagged too far behind in development. White efficiently cashed in two pawns and was about to win more material in the queen and knight endgame when blacked stopped the clock after 30 moves.



**Greicius vs Mikalsen**

**Simen Sørensen (1975)** versus **Aksel Bu Kvaløy (2275)** was a Nimzo-Indian opening in which something went seriously wrong for black, as white was given the chance to establish a space advantage by playing d5 and then win a pawn at b5 more or less for free. Afterwards something however went more seriously wrong for white as he parked his queen in an offside position at a7, giving black all the time needed to open the kingside with a powerful attack against white's king on d1. It remains to see whether the sudden change in this game also will be a big lift for Kvaløy in the tournament.

**Jacob Templen Grave (2202)** and **Emils Mierins (2057)** meanwhile investigated a Benkő Gambit. The conclusion became that black has more or less no compensation for white's extra pawn in this line. As Mierins failed to find the best moves in the middlegame, Grave in the fourth hour raised a decisive kingside attack.



**Ileysaa Bin-Suhayl (2168)** as white against **Terje Lund (2024)** played some kind of Meran Semi-Slav opening in advance. It worked out very well, since black after helping white to get a dominating pawn on e5 also wasted time with a strange Qd8–Qh4–Qe7 maneuver. Black resigned instead of making his move 17, as white's rook and bishops after 17 moves had introduced heavy threats against black's king on g8.



**Bin-Suhayl**

Sicilian Maroczy positions have been fashion again this tournament, and occurred again in the teenager duel between **Sverre Lye (1858)** and **Mathias Lind Schouten (2166)**. Both players spent much time from the opening, but Lye made the best use of it as white first got a strong initiative and then won an exchange by a tactical Ne7+ followed by Nxc8. Schouten however defended actively and got the help needed to get real counterplay with his queen and knights on the kingside. Although still an exchange and a pawn up, white probably made a good decision when sacrificing a knight on e6 to force a draw by perpetual check.

**Andreas Skotheim (2146)** versus **Jonas Hodneland Rasmussen (1995)** was fairly balanced and very closed Italian duel, in which all 16 pawns still were on the board after 30 moves. The half open f-file gave white some initiative, but black apparently still had a solid position after 32 moves. Again running short of time, Rasmussen however made some inaccuracies during the next six moves, and then just blundered with 40... Nf6?. White made efficient use of his chance and after 41.Rxf6 fxe6 42.Qxe6 soon found his way to a won rook endgame.

**Brede Andre Hagen (1973)** defeating **Alexander Øye-Strømberg (2111)** was a surprise following the Elo list and the results so far this tournament, but still it was a well deserved win. White due to black's backward pawn at e6 came better from this French Tarrasch opening duel, and won an exchange by tactical means around move 20. Black first had enough activity to force a draw by repetition. As he missed that chance, white however soon could mobilize his forces and exchange down to a won endgame with rook and four pawns against knight and four pawns.

**Christian Grundekjøn (2102)** as white against **Kim Roger Hansen Westrum (1945)** made an unusual start with 1.b3, but he did not appear to be well prepared and black had no problems from the opening. The endgame with two rooks, one knight and seven pawns on each side after 20 moves was about balanced. Although black later came closer to something white efficiently exchanged down to a draw in the endgame – confirming the draw by sacrificing his knight on white's last pawn after 48 moves. Grundekjøn felt tired after the double round and following this five-hour game requested a walk over draw for the next round.

**Andre Gjestemoen von-Hirsch (2192)** as white against **Håkon Bentsen (2088)** won a pawn on e5 just after the Ruy Lopez opening. Black had fair drawing chances in the minor pieces ending due to opposite coloured bishops, but the position jumped back and forth between draw and win for white for some 50 moves. At least for most players below 2300 it is easier trying to win such positions than to defend them, and in the end after 80 moves white succeeded winning a second pawn to play with bishop, knight and two connected passed pawns against bishop and knight. Predictably it soon ended up with a classical endgame technique test, but it turned out that 17 year old von Hirsch had no problems mating with king, bishop and knight against a lone king.

**Valentina Verbin (2023)** and **Bennet Hagner (2133)** investigated a Caro-Kann line leading to a lot of early exchanges. After 20 moves the players already had reached a double rook endgame which was slightly better to black.

Verbin however made steady moves later on and was reported better in the rook endgame for a few moves, before it all ended with a dead drawn pawn endgame.



Verbin

**Emerik Roulet-Dubonnet (2084)** gave his English fianchetto another try as white against **Andreas Skrede Hausken (1936)**. It did not work out too well as black first took over the initiative with a d5-break and then won a pawn. As Hausken efficiently increased the pressure, black reached a won endgame with two extra pawns well before 40.



Roulet-Dubonnet

Finally **Max Dahl (2041)** versus **Christian Tunge (2044)** was a positional Sicilian duel in which white demonstrated the better understanding during the middle game, while black failed to find any safe haven for his long. White instructively opened the c-file for his rooks and then intervened on the seventh rank while black still had his king stuck on e8. Running short of time and moves Tunge sacrificed his knight to castle, but resigned a few moves later on as white had an extra piece and was about to get decisive kingside attack.

**Sigurd Grøver (2105)** and **FM Richard Bjerke (2102)** had requested a walk over draw for the second half of the double round, but will both play the sixth round tomorrow.

## Open Group

On first board in the Open, 45 year old attacking man **Torbjørn Dahl (1876)** had promising pressure against 12 year old **Martin Holten Fiskaaen (1829)** in the middle game. As Dahl became too eager to exploit the pin of black's knight at f5, black however could (and immediately did) hit back with a tactical Ne5, forcing mass exchanges leading to a sudden draw outcome.



Krivenko vs Eriksen with Fiskaaen in the back

Second rated and 15 year old **Dion Krivenko (2045)** meanwhile played very mature chess with black, increasing the positional pressure all until a totally won rook endgame against also 15 year old **Olai Dyrhaug Eriksen (1809)**.

Somewhat the same happened in another English opening game on the third board, as **Sigurd Kittilsen (1881)** gradually improved his position as black until talented young **Nicolai Østensen (1768)** blundered his bishop in a lost rook and bishop endgame.

Fourth board was a Semi-Slav Meran and another youth duel, in which 15 year old **Eivind Grunt Kreken (1838)** got a space advantage from the opening. He later increased the pressure until winning heavy material after 31 moves against eleven year old star talent **Evsuld Myagmarsuren (1650)**.

Fifth board meeting between **David Hellesøy (1500)** and **Ask Amundsen (1816)** was another junior duel, in which black raised an initiative and won a pawn in the middle game. 16 year old Amundsen efficiently decided the games by advancing his passed pawns combined with a kingside pressure, finishing off the game with a nice tactical 34.--- Qxf2+!

Following this Dahl, Fiskaaen, Krivenko, Kittilsen, Kreken and Amundsen are now sharing the lead at 3,5/4. First rated **Egmond-Gabriel Dulman (2065)** from Romania is in the big group at 3,0 and no way should be counted out after he today won convincingly in a firework game as white against his countryman **Tiberiu Orban (1731)**.

Fifth rated **Bjørn Robert Unhjem (1924)** on the other hand has a long way to reach top three, after he wasted a won position and lost as white against 13 year old **Kristoffer Wang Strømhaug (1718)**.

Still ten year old and unrated **David Mindestrømmen Simonsen** tonight made a draw against **Lars Thormod Haugen (1756)** after being a pawn up in the rook endgame. Simonsen so far seems to be not only a remarkable talent but also already a strong player.



Simonsen vs Haugen

After concluding that this round had surprisingly few surprising results on the lower boards, we now look forward to an exciting round five in the Open. Top board pairings then will be Krivenko–Kreken, Kittilsen–Fiskaaen and Amundsen–Dahl.



Photos by Tom Eriksen