

FAGERNES CHESS INTERNATIONAL 2022

THE LAHLUM ROUND REPORT

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GM Group

This round was a bit mixed as the top three boards all ended up with a draw, two of them true enough following long and hard-fought games, while the next eight boards all got a winner. The only real sensation among them was 16 year old FM Semen Mitusov winning a chaotic attacking battle against GM Sethuraman Sethuraman.

As the four players at 3,5/4 made draws against each other, the lead at 4.0/5 following this is shared between seven GMs and one FM – with seven more players following at 3.5/5.

With 15 players within half a point at the top of the list, we can definitely expect a very tight and unpredictable run for the top prizes during the next four days.



Kulaots vs Erigaisi

First board meeting between Estonian **GM Kaido Kulaots (2529)** and Indian **GM Arjun Erigaisi (2675)** was another Ruy Lopez duel, and probably a very strong and creative game from both players.

An early queen exchange left a positional mess in which white had a loose pawn at e5 and black one at d3. White appeared to be in trouble as he first lost his pawn. Within a few moves Kulaots still won back the pawn at d3. Following a tactical piece exchange the players before 30 moves reached an endgame with rook, bishop and six

pawns against rook, knight and six pawns. White first held a slight advantage due to black's two c-pawns, but the position became double-edged as white allowed black to play b5 followed by bxc4 – leaving black one pawn up with three isolated c-pawns.

Erigaisi at move 34 left a repetition to play on for a win. The young lion did so with the risk of losing, as the game continuation saw a passed pawn race between white's f-pawn and black's first c-pawn. Both players after move 40 spent a lot of time, balancing on the wire, as white's pawn had reached f7 and black's c2. Black eventually won white's bishop by promoting at c1, but with his knight far away he afterwards had a hard time stopping white's f7-pawn and running h-pawn.

Black's knight was stranded at a2, but his second c-pawn was at c3 and also a threat. At move 56 Kaido with one minute left on the clock pulled the brake and promoted his passed pawn at f8. Erigaisi with five minutes left on the clock played 56... Rxf8 after which a draw immediately was agreed. White would take the black knight and reach a dead drawn rook endgame with one pawn on each side



Hakobyan vs Can

GM Aram Hakobyan (2612) and **GM Emre Can (2578)** have been playing exciting chess so far, but their internal meeting on the second board today was a relatively quiet two-hour draw. White's Sicilian with 3.Bb5+ gave no advantage, and if anyone black with his pair of bishops and c-file was slightly better in the final position after 20 moves. White still had a very sound position and both sides would have had to run many risks if trying to win this.



Abdlauf vs Sasikiran

Third board duel between **FM Elham Abdlauf (2427)** of Norway and **GM Krishnan Sasikiran (2650)** of India on the other hand was a chess drama lasting six hours and 136 moves before a draw was agreed.

The starting point was a rather closed and positional Italian duel, in which only the dark-squared bishops were exchanged before 20 moves.

Black then had a promising position, as his knight stronghold at f4 was more important than white's space advantage from the pawn at d5.

Abdlauf plan to defend this was to

exchange off queens and the remaining bishops for the cost of a pawn, and then trying to defend with rook, knight and four pawns against rook, knight and five pawns.

Black had a hard time winning this as all queenside pawns were eliminated and his extra pawn was a backward pawn at d6. Still white obviously had a long and thorny road ahead. To make any progress black had to accept two pawn exchanges, and so after 60 moves white instead defended a borderline position with rook, knight, g- and h-pawns against rook, knight, e-, g- and h-pawns. Black had activated his king and was close to winning in that situation. White again was in grave danger around move 80, when black for a few moves had two pawns more with scattered pawns at e5 and h5. Balancing on the edge Abdlauf in the sixth hour succeeded first to win the pawn at e5 and then to sacrifice his knight on the h-pawn.

Hence after 101 moves the player had a classical pawnless endgame with rook and knight against rook on the board. Abdlauf continued defending very well, and having made no progress Sasikiran offered a draw at move 136. Saving this long uphill battle brought Abdlauf a long step closer to his final IM-norm and the title. Sasikiran handled the disappointment like a great sportman, jokingly trying to convince the organizer that although it was impossible for him to win game as black at Fagernes, he had still done everything he could to achieve it today.



Carlsson vs Donchenko

GM Alexander Donchenko (2619) as white in a Queen's Gambit against **CM Ludvig Carlsson (2411)** went for an exchange line. As black went for active counterplay with c5, the battlefield from move 10 was an isolated queen's pawn position. White had a slight edge due to his strong knight on the key square d4. This advantage increased as black felt forced first to exchange queens and then give up his dark-squared bishop for the knight at d4. Probably black still should be able to hold the double minor piece endgame together after 40 moves,

but it was practically very difficult at that stage. The bishop pair gave white new possibilities, and Donchenko in the fifth hour activated the bishops for a decisive attack against the black pawn at d5. Black resigned after 58 moves in a still materially balanced position, as the key pawn at d5 was about to fall with the black knight more or less stranded at a5.

FM Semen Mitusov (2274) versus **GM Sethuraman Sethuraman (2610)** was another Italian duel and another long chess drama. Black against a much younger and lower rated opponent, Sethuraman played aggressive on the queenside with h6-g5-g4-h5 before ten moves. Black first had an initiative and some attacking possibilities in the half-open f-file, although his weakened kingside made the position double-edged. During mutual time pressure before 40 moves black appeared close to winning, as he continued his pawn storm on the kingside and eventually captured the white bishop at g3. White however got two pawns for the piece and had a disturbing passed a-pawn. The position became a mess as black in the final moves before the time control played inaccurately, allowing white's all the more creepy a-pawn to reach a7. Both players understandably spent much time for the first moves after the time control. While Mitusov played almost perfect from move 45, Sethuraman in the fifth hour lost touch with the very sensible position. After 49 moves black still was a piece up on the board, but he was about to lose decisive material as white was ready to promote the passed pawn. Black in desperation gave up first a knight and then a rook, hoping to get a perpetual check against the white king. As Mitusov after cashing in the knight just coolly answered 54.--- Rf1+ with 55.Kh2!, black's king was mate in three moves when the GM at move 57 stopped the clock seconds before losing on time.

16 year old Mitusov despite his first round draw now is at an amazing 4,0/5 and around schedule for a GM norm, after defeating GMs in firework games two rounds in a row. His performance close to 2600 is all the more amazing as he is playing this tournament while living as a refugee in Norway, with his home country in war. For sure this is a player with extraordinary capacity.



Injac vs Urkedal

GM Frode Urkedal (2539) as white against **WGM Teodora Injac (2406)** started up with 1.c4, but then castled long to go for a direct kingside attack. Black after 10-15 moves apparently did fine, but then was way too helpful opening the position for white's attacking pieces. Sacrificing her queen for rook and knight was a good practical try from Injac in this situation, and for some moves just before the time control black took over the initiative. Black's main problem was that she was also a pawn down, as so the remaining minor piece

endgame would be winning for white if he could sacrifice back his queen for rook and one of the black knights. That was what happened, by an elegant tactical trick from white, just before the time control. Injac creatively sacrificed a pawn to create a passed pawn on the kingside. The GM still had the endgame with bishop versus knight under control, as he was one pawn up with two connected passed pawns on the queenside.



Hillarp vs Ingebretsen

GM Tiger Hillarp Persson (2511) as white against **FM Jens Ingebretsen (2315)** went for some kind of Reti opening line, in which black snatched the pawn at c4. White had an initiative after winning back the pawn and increased the pressure in the middle game, although it was a complex position which the GM spent a lot of time studying. White in fact had only five minutes left on the clock after 20 moves, but made a good decision as he gave up his own pawn at b5 to win black's key pawn at e5. As Persson had only two minutes left with a won

position after 28 moves, Ingebretsen understandably went for dubious tactics. The GM despite the time pressure avoided blunders, and black resigned immediately as white still was a rook up after making his move 40.

GM Nihal Sarin (2648) as white against **IM Mads Vestby-Ellingsen (2370)** went for 1.Nf3, but later transposed into a Queen's Gambit Tarrasch line. The isolated pawn position here was in favour of white. It turned out white made a good decision when he accelerated on the kingside with 19.f4!, as his chances for a kingside attack far outweighed the disadvantages from the backward pawn at e3. Sarin spent a lot of time during the following tactical complications, but probably had the critical lines under control. Both players had less than a minute left on the clock after 28 moves. White however then had a crushing attack on the dark kingside squares, and black after giving up his queen resigned four moves later on.

GM Aryan Chopra (2592) versus **Dusan Schwarz (2295)** was a Sicilian Dragon duel in which white took a positional approach, keeping a sound pressure from the opening into an endgame with rook, knight and six pawns against rook, bishop and six pawns. Allowing white to force a rook exchange probably was black's decisive mistake in this game, as the following minor piece endgame was just lost. Playing with knight and six pawns against bishop and six pawns, white instructively tricked forward his queenside pawn majority to win the game before 40 moves.



Chopra vs Schwarz

IM Prantik Roy (2368) made an original start with 1.d4 2.Bf4 3.Nc3 4.e3 and 5.h4 as white against **GM Zhansaya Abdumalik (2496)**. Black hit back by sound means and due to her pair of bishops she was probably better from move 10. Castling long was the only consequent thing to do for white's king, but it still backfired as black got the much more powerful attack and won a full piece with a decisive advantage before 20 moves.



Abdumalik vs Roy

Norwegian **IM Tor Fredrik Kaasen (2465)** had one more Italian duel, this round as black against German **FM Frank Buchenau (2269)**. Black got the better of it from the opening and white's plan with 13.Nxe5? and 14.Nxg4? backfired in his face, as black sacrificed his queen with 14... Nxg4! 15.Bxd8 Nxf2. White saved his queen after 16.Qf3, but black within five moves had got one rook and two bishops for the queen. Not to forget, he still had a decisive attack against the white king at h1.



Buchenau vs Kaasen



Schneider vs Brynell

GM Stellan Brynell (2406) and **WGM Jana Schneider (2263)** today investigated a Queen's Gambit exchange line which probably transposed into a Nimzo-Indian, as black placed her bishop at b4. Black following a stream of exchanges paid a price for having weakened her kingside with h6 and g5, as white due to his strong knight at f5 and d-file possession was close to winning with queen, rook, knight and five pawns on each side after 28 moves.

Schneider due to her open king felt forced to sacrifice a pawn to exchange off the queens. The endgame with rook, knight and four pawns versus rook, knight and three pawns just before move 40 looked close to winning for white. Schneider however fought on very well in the fifth hour. Unexpectedly she got the help needed first to disrupt the white kingside pawn structure, and then to exchange it all down to a drawn position with knight and f-pawn versus knight.

Schneider due to her open king



Roulet-Dubonnet vs Hobber

The 18 year old sensation man **Emerik Roulet-Dubonnet (2050)** bravely entered a King's Indian fianchetto duel as white against **FM Anders Hobber (2379)**. White's position probably was fairly sound after ten moves, but 11.a3? was a strange weakening of the queenside. it was brutally punished as black within a few moves won an exchange by Nb3 and Nxa1. Hobber following a somewhat slow start on the tournament demonstrated his tactical capacity in this game, sacrificing back the exchange to

come up with new threats that won decisive material after only 25 moves.

Although Hobber at 3,5/5 has a good score he following draws against much lower rated opponents in the first two rounds needs to score against some high rated titleholders in the upcoming rounds to fight for his final IM-norm this week.

A draw in the game between **GM Vahap Sanal (2593)** and **Alexander Øye-Strømberg (2157)** probably qualifies as the most surprising result this round, although it was somewhat less surprising for Norwegians having seen Øye-Strømberg's progress in recent tournaments. For those following the game live, the outcome no way was a sensation. Sanal true enough first had an edge from his Reti double fianchetto, but the tide soon turned as black by instructive means hit back in the center when white went for an overambitious kingside attack. While white failed to come up with anything on the kingside, black snatched a pawn at a2, and was a clean pawn up when a draw was agreed by repetition after 33 moves. If Øye-Strømberg should be criticized for anything today, he accepted a draw in a position in which he was a pawn up with very little risk of losing and 20 minutes ahead on clock. But a draw as black against a GM around 2600 of course is a great experience for a 16 year old player with a 2100-rating – and this one is in the run for an IM-norm.



Skotheim vs Blomqvist

Andreas Skotheim (2206) as white against **GM Erik Blomqvist (2550)** went for his solid but rather unambitious 3.b3 in a Sicilian. Black following this had no problems equalizing, and around move 25 was ahead on the clock with an initiative due to his strong knight at d4. White was still well inside the game until he blundered with 29.Re4??, overlooking a tactical Nxb3! which won a pawn with an overwhelming position for black. Inspired by the extra pawn, the GM later accelerated his pieces and raised a decisive kingside attack before 40 moves.



Galinsky vs Machlik

Monika Machlik (2122) versus **IM Timofey Galinsky (2358)** was a Dutch Stonewall in which black failed to come up with something on the kingside, while white after exchanging the dark-squared bishop instructively opened the queenside with a clear advantage. 23.--- Bxf1? was an tactical blunder from black, as white could win an exchange and reach a winning position with a straightforward 24.Nxd7! > Qxd7 25.Nb6! Rxb6 26.Rxa8+. White still was slightly better after instead taking back on f1,

but the wind had started to turn in favour of the IM. With Machlik predictably running short of time for move 40, black gradually took over the initiative and started a kingside attack.

In an already bad position 35.Re6? was a blunder, which black immediately pointed out with 35... Ne3! 36.Nxe3 Qe1+. Following this Machlik just before 40 moves had to give up her queen to avoid mate. Although white's active knights and rook later gave her some counterplay, black some 50 minutes ahead on the clock had the full point under control with queen, knight and five pawns against rook, two knights and three pawns.

The Swedish duel between **Edvin Trost (2342)** and **Kumar Rahul (2204)** started with a Grünfeld fianchetto line, in which white's pair of bishops gave him a small plus following an early queen exchange. Black however got tactical counterplay after intervening on d3 with his rook, and a very drawish endgame with rook, opposite coloured bishops and five pawns on each side was coming up when white after 24 moves accepted the black draw offer.



Kvaløy vs Grønnestad

WFM Anita Grønnestad (1941) and **FM Aksel Bu Kvaløy (2330)** meanwhile discussed another Nimzo-Indian-like Queen's Gambit with the bishop at b4. Black's active pair of bishops soon proved more important than his weakened kingside pawns in this dynamic position, and white resigned after she just before 40 moves was forced to give up material.



Le Goff vs Altarbosh

FM Damien Le Goff (2290) again demonstrated good understanding of Semi-Slav positions, this time as white against **FM Ward Altarbosh (2200)**. White got a winning initiative from the opening, and after cashing in a black rook at a8 he after 20 moves was one exchange and two pawns up. Often having 40-50 minutes more than his opponent left on the clock, Altarbosh this round run short of time for 40 moves himself. So however did Le Goff. Although white according to the

computers still was winning after 26 moves, black had succeeded to come up with some counterplay against the white king at e2.

Sacrificing the queen for one rook and one bishop in this situation should have been sufficient for white. Still it was a very unpractical decision as the mixed material gave black many more possibilities, with both players running short of time. Rather predictably the position within a few more moves became a true mess, as black started an attack against the white king by marching his own king up to g2. As both players passed 40 moves and got the 40 minutes extra on the clock, the material was two rooks, knight and three pawns against queen, knight and two pawns. White had a passed pawn at b5 and according to the computer programs still was clearly better, but practically he due to his open king had the much more difficult position to play. This was demonstrated as white within a few moves blundered a knight and drifted into a decisive attack. White had every reason to be dissatisfied about losing this game, but hopefully learned a lecture about the attacking potential of queen and knight in endgames.



Sørensen vs Welling

63 year old **IM Gerard Welling (2261)** as white in another generation duel against **Simen Sørensen (2070)** made another modest start with a Colle system. Again he soon accelerated and following a well timed e4 break started to hunt the black queen around in the middle of the board. 14.Rd1! with the threat of 15.Bxh7+ in reality decided the game, as black had nowhere to evacuate his queen at d5 out of the d-file. With queen and pawn for rook and bishop, white reached a winning position

before 20 moves. Although the game lasted until 40 moves the rest was just cramps, as the veteran IM some three quarters of an hour ahead on the clock steadily increased his material advantage.

FM Mathias Unneland (2254) versus **Andreas Skrede Hausken (1991)** was a draw between two teammates from Ålesund, but still the outcome was no way given from the start. Much to the contrary Unneland as the higher rated played hard for a win with white, and before ten moves sacrificed a pawn in the air at d5 to open this Queen's Indian position. After black had succeeded in exchanging off the queens, he in turn played for a win with his extra queenside pawn in the rooks and minor pieces endgame. White's active rooks however gave him enough counterplay and made it difficult for black to use his extra pawn, hence the game was drawn by a sound repetition just before 40 moves.



Elmi vs Zadruzny

FM Nikolaj Zadruzny (2258) versus Saad Elmi (2092) was a Reti opening which at first backfired badly, as white helpfully opened up the position for the black pieces. Black and his pair of bishops had a close to winning initiative around move 15. As black later played much too slow white however succeeded first to stabilize his kingside position and then to exchange one of

the bishops. Following a tense and fairly balanced middle game, black under mutual time pressure blundered with 33.--- Ne7? – overlooking that white could trap the rook at b4 with 34.Nd3!. Following this white after 40 moves had a totally won position with queen, two rooks and six pawns against queen, rook, knight and five pawns. While Elmi fought on well Zadruzny cramped, giving up his passed pawn at a4 to exchange queens. White still should be winning first with an exchange up, and then with two extra pawns in the endgame, but it was far from easy as black had a lot of activity with his remaining pieces.

At move 66 white still had a won rook endgame with three scattered pawns against one, but the position on the board switched to a clear draw as white blundered his pawn at g4. Frustrated and probably wondering about what went wrong earlier in the game, Zadruzny in this situation forgot that he had been thinking way too long. Consequently, he lost on time in a drawn rook endgame with two pawns against one. 15 year old Elmi although of course feeling great relief to win his first game behaved like a great sportman and declared he did not deserve to win the game in this way. The outcome with a win for black was very strange following the final position on the board, but still of course fully in accordance with the rules: Not to forget the clock still is a basic obligation for every tournament chessplayer. That said, Zadruzny truly has had a pole-out tournament so far and played much better than his score and performance following this loss.

FM Trygve Dahl (2252) and Håkon Bentsen (2078) started up with a Four Knights opening, but transposed into a rather closed Italian line. Black first had an initiative after exchanging his light squared bishop at e6, opening the f-file for his rook and creating a strong square at d4 for his knight. 17.Kh1? then was a strange blunder, giving black a decisive attack after the very natural 17.--- Raf8!. Bentsen afterwards found the tactically winning 18.--- Nxc2!, but failed to find the best attacking continuations against the misplaced white king. White following this got the help needed to keep the material balance, and within a few moves he was fully back in the game again. The position later remained tense and double-edged until black blundered it all away with 31.--- Qe6?!, overlooking a tactical 32.Nxb4! which won a piece and forced a won endgame.

The young German duel between **Laurin Perkampus (2061)** and **WIM Fiona Sieber (2248)** made a somewhat unconventional start with 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 b6, but black following an early queen exchange came better due to white's scattered queenside pawns. As black became too eager to win the white pawn at a3, white could win back the black b-pawn and nearly balance the chances. Black playing with two rooks, one bishop, one knight and four pawns on each side still had a pleasant initiative after 30 moves. At move 35 black blundered a piece by overlooking a tactical 36.d5+!. White was also short of time and neither noted this new golden opportunity. Later black's more active pieces combined with the running a-pawn soon gave her a decisive advantage.



Nikolic vs Dahl

Vladan Nikolic (2247) as white against **Max Dahl (2054)** went for a Catalan opening, but black after disrupting white's pawn structure and winning the pair of bishops with Nh5-Nxf4 had no problems whatsoever. White still got an advantage later on, as black for somewhat unclear reasons gave up a pawn on the queenside. As usual Dahl was seriously short of time before move 30. Although very natural according to basic chess instincts, his decision to give up the queen for two rooks with 32.--- Qxc1? here was a blunder. Nikolic also short of time

however failed to find the best continuation afterwards, and following this a highly unclear position with queen, bishop and three pawns against two rooks, bishop and two pawns was on the board after the time control. White at this stage had two connected passed pawns on the queenside, but the much more exposed king. As black played 47.--- Rbc8 with the threat of winning a piece with 48.--- Rc3, 49.Bc4! would have left the position interesting and complicated. After 49.Be2?? the position on the other hand was neither interesting or complicated, as black just pinned the bishop with 49.--- Rd2! and won decisive material within three more moves.

Valentina Verbin (2037) and **Shazil Shehzad (2195)** tested out a double-edged Benoni fianchetto line, in which black with an octopus knight at d3 first came better. Although both classical and flashy, 25.--- Rxe3?! was a game changing mistake: Black true enough won back the exchange and balanced the material within three more moves, but he later struggled with a backward pawn at d6. White's great knight at e4 gave her a clear advantage. Interestingly, black still was the one to leave a repetition after 35 moves, in a position considered more or less lost for him by the computer programs. 19 year old Verbin made the better decisions during mutual time pressure, and having marched her pawn forward to f6 she was winning in the rook and minor pieces endgame after 45 moves. Young Valentina Verbin has been playing far above her Elo so far in this tournament, but again spoiled much of the gain she could have had by accepting a draw by repetition in a won position.



Westrum vs Ravi

WIM Rakshitta Ravi (2240) versus **Kim Roger Westrum (2046)** was an Hyper-accelerated Sicilian Dragon duel in which black before ten moves sacrificed a pawn at d5. White within a few moves stabilized the position with a sound extra pawn, locking out black's dragon bishop at g7 by playing e5. Black had less than no compensation with the queens on the board. Exchanging them still was a serious mistake as the remaining rook and bishop, with an extra pawn for white and the black king stuck at f8, was hopeless.

To tell the truth, the game between **Yoann Le Montagner (2035)** and **Nathanael Poysti (2190)** was a not too exciting 20 moves draw. The opening was a Scotch Gambit line in which black refused to take the pawn, in the footprints of Montagner's white game from yesterday.

Later a steam of fairly sound exchanges led to a position with two rooks, bishop and six pawns against two rooks, knight and six pawns. White accepted a draw although he was white and better, but black was the higher rated

player and should not have any problems saving this endgame. What I found most interesting in this game was the clock, as white had only two minutes less in the final position than he had at the start of the game – while black in the meantime had spent more than 50 minutes.



Poysti vs Le Montagner

Sondre Melaa (2120) versus **Afras Mansoor (2033)** was a Norwegian junior duel which was agreed draw by a fairly sound repetition after 25 moves. White had spent some 30 minutes and black some 75 minutes. In between was a intensive Ruy Lopez Marshall Gambit duel, which for 18 moves was well-known theory. As the players went out in unknown territory white bravely snatched a second pawn, but a few moves later was unable to escape a repetition of moves.



Kvendseth vs Andersen

The game between **Morten Andersen (2190)** and **Thyra Kvendseth (1941)** first was a rather slow Semi-Slav duel, in which black came slightly better after playing 16.--- c5 followed by 18.--- cxd4. White's decision to sacrifice a bishop at h7 might not have been the objectively best move according to the computers in this situation, but it still was the most interesting and

practically best choice. Anyway it worked out very well, as black failed to find the most critical answers. White following this got one rook and two pawns for two minor pieces, and kept a powerful attack which well before 40 moves gave him a won endgame.

Stig K. Martinsen (2155) as white against **Vetle Bjørge Strand (2018)** came much better from a rare line in the Caro-Kann, and got promising pressure against black's backward pawn at e6 and the kingside in general. White appeared close to winning as he after 36 moves was a pawn up with a strong pair of bishops. During mutual time pressure Strand however caused some confusion in the white camp with the break 36.--- e5!?. White invited black into the game again, as he at move 40 exchanged his light-squared bishop at d5. The end apparently was close as white at move 43 intervened on d7 with his rook. 14 year old Strand however had prepared a clever defence as he sacrificed his queen for rook and bishop. The remaining position with queen, rook and three pawns versus two rooks, one knight and two pawns obviously was much better for white, but black was close to a fortress defence on the kingside as all the remaining pawns were g- or h-pawns. Running short of time again, Martinsen after exchanging his rook found nothing better than exchanging his queen for the rook and knight. That winning plan however turned out to be a dead end as the remaining pawn endgame with one h-pawn and two g-pawns against one h-pawn and one g-pawn was an easy draw. Strand elegantly demonstrated that by forcing an absolutely safe fortress with pawn at h6 against white pawns at h5 and g6.

Ola Liabøtrø (2101) versus **Bennet Hagner (2151)** was a Scotch opening duel for which the young German appeared to have the superior preparation. Black already had taken over the initiative after his 13.--- d5 break. The advantage became more or less winning as white chickened out from the critical 14.cxd5, instead allowing black to win a very sound pawn at c4. Having won the above mentioned pawn at c4, black within ten more moves decided the game by pushing forward his passed c- and d-pawns. 13 year old Hagner has been well under his usual strength so far in this tournament, but repaired much by winning a great game as black today.

Eivind Grunt Kreken (2088) and **WGM Olga Dolzhikova (2131)** discussed an unusual Modern opening, in which black first had a fairly sound position after kicking the white knight back from c3 to b1. Black was well alive as she later exchanged her b4-pawn for the white pawn at d4, although the undeveloped queenside caused her some problems. As white's knight at move 25 intervened on b6, black however missed the only try with 25... a4!. Instead 25... Ra6?? just blundered a piece, as white could just play 26.Nc8 (threatening black's queen at e7) followed by 27.Qxb8. Kreken used his chances very efficiently after the opening, and well deserved won before 30 moves.



Røyset vs Lye

Sverre Lye (1994) versus **Pål Røyset (2133)** was a Sicilian Maroczy duel in which white first got a sound space advantage. Although creative, 19... Nxe4? was a misunderstood pseudo-sacrifice from black, as white in the resulting rook and minor pieces endgame had a decisive passed pawn at b6. White within a few moves

won a piece due to the passed pawn, and later won the minor piece endgame due to his extra piece.

Jeroen van den Bersselaar (2173) as white against **Thomas Sekkingstad (1979)** against started up with 1.c4, but the opening transposed into a Semi-Slav Meran line as he later played d4. Black first did fine from the opening, although leaving his king at e8 for too long. Still not castling at move 16 was a grave mistake, allowing white to play 17.d5! with a strong attack.

To get out of the open e-file, black afterwards had to play an awkward Kf8. As white missed the critical continuations, black however somehow succeeded in saving his king and keep the material in balance. The endgame with rook, bishop, knight and four pawns against rook, two knights and six pawns after 40 moves was drawish. So was the endgame with rook, bishop and four pawns against rook, knight and four pawns after 50 moves. Black however now had taken over the initiative.

White made the decisive final double mistake as he at move 54-55 decided first to sacrifice a pawn to exchange off the minor pieces, and then put his king in a passive position on the first rank from the start of the rook endgame. Sekkingstad later played very accurately, forcing a two against one pawn endgame which was an easy win since black had connected passed pawns on the kingside.

Open Group



H. Johannessen vs Østensen

In the Open, 12 year old **Nicolai Østensen (1875)** today gave away his first half point following a balanced three-hour battle as black against **Heine N. Johannessen (1907)**.

Østensen at 4,5/5 is still in the lead, but now shared with two other great talents: 16 year old **Ask Amundsen (1838)** as black on the second board more or less crushed so far solid **Terje Lund (2032)** in an inspired Benoni attacking game, while 13 year old **Martin Holten Fiskaaen (1895)** on the third board

outplayed **Kristoffer Wang Strømshaug (1767)** positionally. Østensen, Fiskaaen and Amundsen following this are sharing the lead before round 6.



Vangen vs Myagmarsuren

Noteworthy the group at 4,0/5 apart from Heine N. Johannessen includes only one player, but that on the other hand is an all the more remarkable young player: Still only eleven year old, **Evsuld Myagmarsuren (1888)** today efficiently hit doors open on the queenside and smashed through in only 21 moves as white against **David Luangtep Vangen (1648)**. In short, the top boards in this group currently is a fight between young teenagers and players not yet having reached that age.

Talking about underrated juniors, 14 year old **Lukas Dominik Gåsland (1474)** produced another game surprise as he scraped a draw from a lost double rook endgame against the German top three candidate **Johannes Reinhardt (1893)**.

Martin K. Andersen (1565) definitely is underrated despite his age 39, and today efficiently used his chance when opponent **Ole Martin Wiig (1789)** blundered a piece.

The 17 year old Ukrainian refugee **Mihail Tiupenko (1621)** also is doing very well after he today won a crushing attacking game as white against **Pascal Paulien (1815)**.

Today's happy sensation man in this group still was 19 year old **Tormod Carlin (1620)**, suddenly defeating top rated **Irina Donchenko (2057)** as the German veteran short of time blundered her rook in an approximately balanced rook and minor pieces endgame. Donchenko has been very rusty so far in this comeback and at 2,0/5 she is definitely out of the fight for the top four prizes.

Best among the female participants now is 16 year old Norwegian **Ariza Hina (1524)**, after she today efficiently demonstrated how a pin can win a piece as white against veteran **Karim Ali (1769)**.



Photos by Tom Eriksen