

FAGERNES CHESS INTERNATIONAL 2022

THE LAHLUM ROUND REPORT

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GM Group

Believe it or not: All the top four boards with players at 4,0/5 were drawn this round, and as three players at 3,5/5 won we now have a record 11 players sharing the lead at 4,5/6!

Notably this group includes ten GMs and one FM: 16 year old Ukrainian refugee Semen Mitusov was close to taking the lead alone, as had some pressure as white against GM Alexander Donchenko. Following that draw Mitusov remains on schedule for a GM-norm and far ahead of schedule for an IM-norm.

Several other players also are well in the run for title norms as we look forward to three very exciting final rounds in this tournament.



Erigaisi vs Urkedal

GM Arjun Erigaisi (2675) and **GM Frode Urkedal (2539)** discussed a Sämisch line of a Nimzo-Indian opening, in which black instead of exchanging the bishop at c3 returned it to d6. White had some problems deciding what to do about his king, and as he left it at e1 black around move 20 was about to open the position with promising attacking chances. While Urkedal failed to find the some of the

most critical moves afterwards, white defended very well and after some tactical exchanges came a pawn up in the double-rook endgame after 40 moves. Being a pawn down against creative young Erigaisi is a risky business, but experienced Urkedal stayed calm and apparently never had problems saving the draw with two against three kingside pawns.



Mitusov vs Donchenko

FM Semen Mitusov (2274) versus **GM Alexander Donchenko (2619)** was a Caro-Kann duel in which white first had a small space advantage. Snatching the pawn at d4 before castling was brave but risky from a black point of view. White first got a strong initiative and then won back the pawn at b6 with an obvious advantage. Black later succeeded in keeping the material balance, although white's d-file control gave him a clear advantage with

queen, two rooks, bishop and six pawns against queen, two rooks, knight and six pawns after 30 moves. Donchenko however defended sound and Mitusov gave up most of his advantage as he for no good reason exchanged his fianchetto bishop for the knight at f6. A few moves later Donchenko left a repetition to play on with queen, rook and four pawns on each side, but within a few more moves the players exchanged down to a dead drawn rook endgame with three pawns for each player. Mitusov following this is on schedule for a GM-norm and probably he needs «only» 1,0/3 from now for an IM-norm.



Hillarp vs Hakobyan

The third board game between **GM Tiger Hillarp Persson (2511)** and **GM Aram Hakobyan (2612)** was a Classical Nimzo-Indian. Two sets of minor pieces were exchanged early, leaving a fairly balanced position which was agreed a draw after 14 moves. For Hakobyan as black a short draw this round for sure was rational. For Hillarp Persson as white I guess it was rational if his goal is to make a solid plus result, but not if he has ambitions to repeat his first prize from last year's tournament.



Kulaots vs Can

GM Emre Can (2578) and **GM Kaido Kulaots (2529)** played 23 moves and then agreed what Kulaots called «a very professional draw». Can as white made a modest start with 3.Bb5+ in a Sicilian, and although he kept a very slight initiative after exchanging three sets of minor pieces, black had a sound and safe position. The position finally became a little more exciting as black played 21.--- h5!? and 22.--- h4, but then he accepted a draw instead of continuing with 23.--- hxg3.



Sasikiran vs Kaasen

GM Krishnan Sasikiran (2650) versus **IM Tor Fredrik Kaasen (2465)** was another closed Ruy Lopez duel. As this one finally was opened, white's strong bishop at b2 and knight stronghold at f5 gave him a promising advantage after 25 moves. Sasikiran however again spent much time and at this point had only eight minutes left on the clock. After 29 moves black could have an approximately equal position if simply exchanging queens at g3, but true to his

creative style Kaasen instead went for tactical complications with 29.--- Bxe4?!.

Sasikiran at this stage had only one minute left on the clock, but still found the best continuation. When the smoke left this game some six moves later white was an exchange up with two rooks and five pawns against rook, knight and five pawns. Black still had counterplay due to his passed pawn at b2, and both players spent a lot of time after the time control as well. Sasikiran demonstrated good technique as well as good nerves as he kept the black pawn at b2 just under control, while picking up the remaining black kingside pawns. A new time trouble duel appeared to be coming up as white had four and black three minutes left on the clock after 54 moves. But then Kaasen stopped the clock – as white was about to sacrifice back an exchange to eliminate the b2 pawn, making the win too trivial.



Sarin vs Abdumalik

GM Zhansaya Abdumalik (2496) versus **GM Nihal Sarin (2648)** was a very strange Sicilian leaving theory in move 5. White spent a lot of time and black even more. After 22 moves Sarin following this only had three minutes left on the clock. In a tense position 22.a4? however was a positional blunder from white, allowing black to play Nf6! with a powerful initiative. To stop the knight from reaching e4 white had to exchange it at f6 for his dark squared bishop, but then black's so far rather humble dark-squared bishop in turn became a monster. Sarin accelerated at this

stage, pseudo-sacrificing an exchange at white's remaining bishop. Within a few moves black due to his dark-square dominance won back the exchange at f2 with an ongoing attack. Abdumalik surprised the onlookers in the playing venue by stopping the clock with queen, rook and four pawns against queen, rook and five pawns after 33 moves. The internet crowd was much less surprised as computers gave black some +7. Four isolated pawns and an open king made white's position hopeless with a 2600-player sitting on the black side.



Chopra vs Abdrlauf

The young lions duel between **GM Aryan Chopra (2592)** and **FM Elham Abdrlauf (2427)** was an open Sicilian, in which white had a slight initiative following an early queen exchange. White castled long while black left his king at d7. White played for a win as he greedily snatched a pawn at h7 with his bishop, but black got compensation as he replied with f5 and for many moves locked in the bishop. The heat intensified as white won a second pawn by a tactical Nxb4. White following this had five against three pawns in the rooks and bishop endgame, although black still had fair

drawing chances as bishops were opposite-coloured and white had several weak pawns. For the second round in a row Abdrlauf had a marathon run trying to save an endgame with a pawn less against a very strong GM. This time he failed: In a difficult position black chose the wrong plan after the time control, and white by an accurate maneuver succeeded winning the black d5-pawn. Although black had disturbingly active pieces white later had the situation fairly under control, with three against one pawn on the queenside. Towards the end of the fifth hour white solved the opposite-coloured problem by sacrificing an exchange, and so he in the sixth hour won safely with bishop and three connected pawns against rook. Chopra also is in the eleven men group sharing first place following this win. Abdrlauf following this loss is behind schedule, but still not out of the run for his third IM-norm.

Finally getting the chance to meet a higher rated player, Norwegian **FM Anders Hobber (2379)** as black against Indian **GM Sethuraman Sethuraman (2610)** went for a rare French Advance line in which black plays Ne7-Nc6 and then Ba6 to exchange off his bad light-squared bishop. Having exchanged two sets of minor pieces plus the c- and d-pawns, black reportedly had a sound position after 14 moves. Snatching the e5-pawn with 15.--- Qxe5 however was much too greedy with the king on e8 and the bishop at f8, as white pinned the knight on c6 and went on to win it within four more moves.



Blomqvist vs Kvaløy

GM Erik Blomqvist (2550) versus **FM Aksel Bu Kvaløy (2330)** was a closed Ruy Lopez, soon opening in favour of white after two sets of minor pieces were exchanged. As his position on the queenside was crumbling, black had to go for counterplay on the kingside. Although natural 18.--- Qg6? however was a blunder black could not afford, as white after an alert 19.Nxe5! soon was two pawns up with a winning advantage. The black just collapsed, blundering a piece more and then allowing a mate after only 28 moves.



Carlsson vs Schneider

WGM Jana Schneider (2263) as white against **CM Ludvig Carlsson (2411)** in a Modern opening took a fairly solid path, exchanging at e5 to reach a symmetric and fairly drawish pawn structure. Following some natural exchanges, the position with queen, bishop, knight and seven pawns on each side after 22 moves appeared drawish. So did the endgame with queen, knight and four pawns on each side ten moves later on. Although computer programs gave the position as 0,00 the pressure now definitely was on white, as she had much less time and the more

exposed king. 34.Qxe5? was a blunder allowing black immediately to create a mating net around the white king. Carlsson accurately used his chance – mating the white king at h3 in move 41. Schneider is definitely out of the IM-norm run following this loss. Carlsson on the other hand can very well reach a performance above 2450, but firstly he already has got all the IM-norms needed and secondly he following his walk-over draw in the first round will only play eight games this tournament.

Alexander Øye-Strømberg (2157) versus **GM Stellan Brynell (2406)** was a Semi Tarrasch line in which white had a strong center with d4 and e4 against e6, while black hope for counterplay against white's pawns at d4 and a2. Brynell here reached fairly balanced chances after exchanging off all the rooks and two sets of minor pieces. Although natural, 21.--- Qa3?, attacking both the pawn at a2 and the bishop at d3, was overambitious. White could have got a strong initiative if just moving the bishop and sacrificing the pawn. These variations were complex as well as risky from a white point of view, and Øye-Strømberg instead went for a counterattack on black's bishop on c8. After both bishops disappeared the remaining queen and knight endgame was drawn within a few moves. 16 year old Øye-Strømberg following this hangs on around the IM-norm schedule after six rounds, although he will probably need 2.0/3 from now on to make it.



Ingebretsen vs Injac

WGM Teodora Injac (2406) versus **FM Jens E. Ingebretsen (2315)** was a key game for the IM norm chances of both players (keeping aside the possible revenge motif as Ingebretsen had defeated Injac's boyfriend Vahap Sanal two rounds ago). White started up with a Reti opening, but transposed into a position very close to a Grünfeld fianchetto.

With an open c-file and pawn symmetry in the center, Black first was perfectly healthy after the queens were exchanged at b6. White however succeeded in opening the queenside. Following tactical exchanges the players after 20 moves had reached a materially balanced position considered equal by the computer programs, but in which two bishops against two knights gave white better long term prospects. Again demonstrating good endgame technique, Injac patiently opened the position for her bishops by a temporary pawn sacrifice. Just before 40 moves white won back the pawn on the kingside, after which her new possibility to create a passed h-pawn soon won decisive material. Ingebretsen had a much better Elo performance than Injac before the round, hence both players following this result now have a performance just below 2400.



Galinsky vs Welling

IM Timofey Galinsky (2358) and **IM Gerard Welling (2261)** had a rare duel for IMs above 40.

Via the original move order 1.Nf3 g6 2.e4 Bg7 3.g3 c5, the players ended up in some rare Sicilian fianchetto line. Complications followed as both players tried to open the kingside for an attack. Black obviously made the better decisions here as white's king at g3 after 21 moves proved much more exposed than black's king at e8. Although Galinsky later moved further ahead on the clock he lagged further behind on the board, as black

could repair his pawn structure by forcing a queen exchange at f4 and then win a pawn at a2. The rook and minor pieces endgame later was much better for black, and Welling fairly convincingly won it within four hours and 55 moves.



Roy vs Altabosh

FM Ward Altabosh (2200) versus **IM Prantik Roy (2368)** was a surprisingly open Caro-Kann position. Something went wrong for black after the opening, as white around 24-27 moves had a powerful bishop at f5 and strong pressure on the light squares. Exchanging off the rooks however made the defence easier for black. Before 40 moves the players reached an approximately balanced position with queen, bishop, knight and four pawns against queen, two bishops and four pawns.

White apparently minimized risks of a loss by exchanging the dark-squared bishop for black's knight, although the queen and bishop endgame with many different pawns still gave some chances for both players. Ward again spent way more time than he usually does, and just before 60 moves Roy succeeded in opening up the kingside with some counterplay. White still should have been able to save this, but 62.e4? weakened the dark kingside squares as well as the pawns too much. Roy again used his chances efficiently in a long endgame, this time first picking up a pawn and then forcing a queen exchange to land in a won bishop endgame before 80 moves. Altabosh probably should have saved this endgame really to be in the run for an IM-norm, but still has a strong performance just below 2350.



Rahul vs Sanal

Kumar Rahul (2204) as white against **GM Vahap Sanal (2593)** went for some London system relative without a pawn on c3. Instead playing c4 later on, white around move 25 had promising pressure due to his passed c-pawn. Sanal however succeeded to block the pawn at c6 by parking his queen at c7, and later got some counterplay by creating an outpost at d3 for his knight. Sacrificing an exchange on the octopus knight probably was to overdo in the first place. As white later took the new black pawn at d3 with his queen,

he entered a d-file pin which soon lost further material. The GM with an extra piece later had few problems winning the endgame.



Dahl vs Vestby-Ellingsen

IM Mads Vestby-Ellingsen (2370) as white against **FM Trygve Dahl (2252)** started up with a rather unambitious Torre «Attack», and a balanced queen and rooks struggle followed as all the minor pieces were exchanged within the first 17 moves. The position later was very solid as both players had seven pawns with a sound structure. No one looked very surprised when the position was drawn by a sound repetition after 36 moves.

The Scandinavian junior duel between Norwegian **Saad Elmi (2092)** and Swedish **Edvin Trost (2342)** was another Caro-Kann Fantasy line with 3.f3, resulting in a fairly balanced position following an early queen exchange. White castled long, but failed to come up with any attack on the kingside. Black later took over the initiative with a queenside pawn storm and opened the a-file, but white still was in the game until he blundered with 32.Nxb3? – allowing 32.--- Ra2! with a winning attack. A short comedy of errors followed as both players missed that white after 33.Nd2? could get a winning advantage with 33.--- Ra1+!, although black soon improved and used the chance on the second attempt a few moves earlier on. About to lose the pinned knight at b1 for nothing, white resigned after 37 moves.



Ravi vs Schwarz

Dusan Schwarz (2295) and **WIM Rakshitta Ravi (2240)** started up with a fairly balanced English fianchetto line, but black suddenly found herself in problems after allowing a tactical 17.c5! followed by 18.cxd6. Ravi appeared disillusioned following this, first giving up the pawn at b7 and then blundering an exchange. Up an exchange and a pawn in the rooks and minor pieces endgame, white anyway was winning when black blundered another exchange and resigned after 38 moves.

Our new Slovakian chessfriend Dusan Schwarz passed 2300 following this win, but anyway is qualified for the FM-title from earlier lists.

Andreas Skrede Hausken (1991) versus **FM Frank Buchenau (2269)** not unexpectedly was a Classical French duel. Again demonstrating a good understanding of this opening, Buchenau got a sound initiative after transposing his light-squared bishop around to an active position at c6. Hausken was under positional pressure, but still well alive, until he blundered with 27.Bd4?? – resulting in a painful d-file pin which within a few moves won a piece and the game for Buchenau.



Unneland (front) and Buchenau vs Hausken (back)

Max Dahl (2054) as white against **FM Mathias Unneland (2254)** went for a positional English line with 1.c4, and due to his pair of bishops got a slight pressure from the opening. Black however defended by sound positional means, and with Dahl running short of time black solved his problems by forcing an exchange of the light squared bishops. As white in turn invited to a queen exchange, the game after 30 moves

had reached a drawish endgame with rook, bishop and five pawns against rook, knight and five pawns. Both players had an inspiration to exchange pieces this round, as they within six more moves cooperated to exchange it all down to a pawn endgame. This was soon agreed a draw, as there were no more pieces left to exchange.



Sieber vs Roulet-Dubonnet

WIM Fiona Sieber (2248) versus **Emerik Roulet-Dubonnet (2050)** was a French Advance duel in which white came better after black wasted time with a weakening 6... h6?!

White later got a strong positional grip due to her outposts at c5 and e5 and a kingside space advantage. Black on the other hand failed to come up with any real counterplay. 25... Rf7? was a tactical blunder as white after 26.Ne5! already was winning an exchange, but the cockpit around black's pieces anyway was crumbling then.

The remaining moves were not too

exciting as white had an extra piece and more activity as well. 18 year old Roulet-Dubonnet still has a score very well above expected but is out of the IM-norm run and safely back on earth at this stage. Sieber following this instructive win might still have a chance to fight for her third WGM-norm.

Eivind Grunt Kreken (2088) versus **FM Damien Le Goff (2290)** was a Caro-Kann exchange line in which black's pair of bishops approximately compensated for his isolated pawn at d5. As white later found no active plans, black in the fourth hour could start a promising attack by a kingside pawn storm. With the players running short of time for 40 moves, both overlooked a strong exchange sacrifice with 38... Qh3!. As black instead exchanged off the queens, the remaining endgame with one rook, one bishop, one knight and five pawns against one rook, two bishops and five pawns was drawish. True to his pair of bishops, Le Goff played on for a win into the sixth hour, but without coming close to any real winning chances following sound play from Kreken.

Defending with three against three pawns with 2-3 minutes left on the clock for both players, Kreken after 66 moves efficiently saw his chance to sacrifice a pawn – exchanging his knight for black's dark-squared bishop. The remainings were a dead drawn opposite-colour bishop endgame, and after studying it for 4-5 seconds Le Goff took the hint and offered a draw.

Afras Mansoor (2033) versus **Andreas Skotheim (2206)** was a rare Bogo-Indian opening, looking more and more like some kind of Queen's Gambit exchange line. First a positional struggle, the game suddenly turned tactical as black around move 20 went for a hardball kingside attack. Following a tactical pseudo-sacrifice at g2 white inserted a pawn exchange at c6. The position would have been approximately balanced if black had made the routine decision and taken back with 23... bxc6, but for mysterious reasons he instead allowed white to hit in at b7. Later the endgame was just lost for black, as white was able to keep the extra passed pawn at b7 – and then to win a piece by promoting it. Black finally resigned at move 48, finally realizing that only white had a knight in this knight endgame.



Melaa vs Shehzad

The rising juniors **Shazil Shehzad (2195)** and **Sondre Melaa (2120)** tested out a very rare Ruy Lopez with 4.d3 Nce7 5.d4. White made the much better evaluation of this original position as his better development soon proved much more important than black's pair of bishops.

White had a more or less winning attack after 15 moves, as black had too much air for his king at c8 and too little air for his kingside pieces. Shazil is very gifted in such attacking positions, and efficiently smashed through by sacrificing an exchange on e7 to win the black queen after 27 moves.



Sørensen vs Andersen

The Scandinavian master player duel between **Simen Sørensen (2070)** and **Morten Andersen (2190)** was a Dutch Leningrad, turning into a nightmare for black following creative play from white. White first established a sound pressure, and then increased it by a thematic pseudo-sacrifice with Nd5. Sørensen probably should have been able to decide this in the middle game. Never giving up the advantage he still came a pawn up in the rook and minor piece endgame, and went on to win this after picking up a second pawn.

The German-French duel between **Bennet Hagner (2151)** and **Yoann Le Montagner (2035)** was a Sicilian Dragon duel, leading to a classical attacking race as white castled long and black short. White started a bayonet attack on the kingside with h4-h5, but then he instead of opening the h-file with hxg6 chose to play h6 – forcing black's bishop back to h8. Exchanging off the queens reportedly later was fine for black. Afterwards Le Montagner however made the decisive mistake as he allowed white to play Ng3 followed by Ne4 – locking in black's bishop at h8 more or less forever behind his own e5-pawn. As the bishop was permanently offside, white later could instructively sacrifice an exchange to win by advancing his passed b- and c-pawns on the queenside. Black's Dragon bishop had a sad story in this game: When it finally came in play after the time control, white was a piece up and it was too late to stop the c-pawn from promoting.



Verbin vs Poysti

Nathanael Poysti (2190) as white in an English opening against **Valentina Verbin (2037)** kept a pleasant initiative after exchanging two sets of minor pieces. White's advantage later grew following a c5-advance, and the pawn at c5 became a dangerous passed pawn after black lost his pawn at c7. White following this had a won position, and he went on to win heavy material following an eight rank intervention just before 40 moves.

Monika Machlik (2122) versus **Sverre Lye (1994)** was a Benkö Gambit with 4.Qc2, meaning white went for a positional plus instead of taking the pawn at b5. Lye handled this challenge very well, first forcing a queen exchange at b6 and then pseudo-sacrificing a pawn at d5 to regain it at a2. Black had a slight initiative and was a few minutes ahead on the clock in the fourth hour. Machlik had it under control as she exchanged down to a dead drawn rook endgame, but probably should have won this game to stay in the run for a WIM-norm.

WFM Anita Grønnestad (1941) is scoring very well above expectations so far, and improved her performance further following a long and very turbulent draw as white against **FM Nikolaj Zadruzny (2258)** today. White safely avoided the traps and consequently came a little better from the Cambridge Springs line of the Queen's Gambit. Black however took over the initiative after temporary sacrificing a pawn with a c5-break. Trying to hang on the c-pawn white blundered a knight following an elegant 17... b5! – overloading the white knight pair at c4 and d6. Getting only two pawns for a piece Anita ran for counterplay with a kingside pawn storm. She successfully created an attacking mess in which white got four scattered pawns for one bishop, while white's king at d3 and black's king at h8 both were in danger. Although having only two minutes left on the clock around move 33, Anita played this chaotic position better than her opponent.

After forcing a queen exchange, white and her pawn armada had the upper hand in the endgame. Black following the queen exchange however also had a dangerous passed f-pawn, making the position even more messy (if possible). As white had to give up her rook for the f-pawn, she after 45 moves had one knight and six pawns against one rook, one bishop, one knight and one pawn (!). White due to her active king and myriad of passed pawns were winning most of the time in this very mixed endgame, and also towards the end with knight and three scattered pawns against bishop and knight. Fighting on well, Zadruzny in the sixth hour (with both players running short of time again), got the help needed to reach a drawn endgame with knight and a-pawn versus knight. This definitely was the most entertaining game of this round, and Grønnestad as the lowest rated player in the group following the draw is still in the run for a WIM-norm.



Nikolic vs Westrum

Kim Roger Westrum (2046) first got a slight initiative from his English opening against **Vladan Nikolic (2247)**, although black was perfectly fine after exchanging three sets of minor pieces.

The development first was very promising for black as he could snatch a pawn at a2 with his queen. White had some compensation for the pawn, but then blundered with 23.d5?, overlooking a tactical Qe2 which would have given black a strong attack if he had continued with Ne4.

Although black instead placed his queen at e4 he kept an extra pawn with an ongoing initiative.

The tide suddenly turned during mutual time trouble as black somehow missed an attack on his key defence pawn at h6. As move 39 was another blunder white with his queen at h6 suddenly had decisive threats against the black king.

Håkon Bentsen (2078) versus **Stig K. Martinsen (2155)** was a Modern opening duel in which white somewhat strangely took back on d4 with his knight instead of the pawn at move 7. Black following this had a promising pressure against the white center. 11.f5 following this asked too much from the white position. Hitting back in the center black within a few moves won a pawn and took over the center. The remaining position with queen, two rooks, bishop and six pawns against queen, two rooks, bishop and five pawns was more or less lost for white from the start, as black in addition to the extra pawn also had the more active pieces and a clearcut plan of advancing his center pawns. Martinsen again ran short of time, but this time kept control over the pieces and after the time control smashed through with his attack against the white king.



Perkampus vs Strand

Highly talented 14 year old **Vetle Bjørge Strand (2018)** was very happy finally to get his first won game in the GM group today, following a four-hour win against **Laurin Perkampus (2061)**.

The German junior probably was well prepared for Strand's opening system with 1.d4 2.Nc3 3.Bf4, and due to his center pawns and counterplay in the f-file came better after exchanging two sets of minor pieces. Exchanging off the queens however was a misunderstanding from a black

point of view, as white later got a promising pressure against the black center pawns.

As Perkampus was about to run seriously short of time, Strand refused two draw offers and for some moves was a pawn up. As Perkampus succeeded winning back white's passed e-pawn, the remaining rook endgame with four pawns in each side after all appeared drawish after 36 moves.

Black's position however still was painful as white had both the better pawn structure and the more active king. Demonstrating good endgame technique after the time control, Strand instructively decided the game by winning black's weak c-pawn, then advance the passed b-pawn on the queenside without losing control over the kingside pawns.



Liabøtrø vs Dolzhikova

WGM Olga Dolzhikova (2131) gave her Modern opening another try as black against **Ola Liabøtrø (2101)**. Black again was worse after ten moves, but this time succeeded to hit back and got a lot of counterplay after white castled long. White's castling choice here backfired badly as he failed to find any attack on the kingside, while black methodically advanced on the queenside. Having sacrificed a knight on e5 to open the long diagonal h8-a1 for her bishop, black first won back the piece

and then picked up an exchange by playing 36.... Bb2 and 37.... Bxc1. Giving up that fianchetto bishop for a rook often is not a good idea in such positions. In this case it worked out perfectly fine as black kept a decisive attack with an exchange more after 40 moves.



Kvendseth vs Sekkingstad

The junior duel **Thomas Sekkingstad (1979)** versus **Thyra Kvendseth (1941)** was a Slav duel in which white was half asleep for some moves after the time control. Black on the other hand was very alert, and suddenly introduced a strong double threat on c4 and f3 after 14.--- g5! 15.Ng2?! Ne5! (the knight could not be taken by white's d4 pawn due to a d-file pin). Black following this won both an exchange and a pawn, and later had few problems winning the game well before 40 moves.



Røyset vs Van den Bersselaar

Pål Røyset (2133) and **Jeroen Van den Bersselaar (2173)** discussed a Caro-Kann opening in which black had no problems to develop and had a slight advantage due to his better pawn structure after 20 moves. 21.Ne1? still was a grave error, as white after 21.--- f5! suddenly had problems saving his bishop at g3. White more or less in desperation sacrificed an exchange in

the air on c6, but then just resigned as he was about to lose the bishop as well.

Open Group

In the Open, the first board duel between 12 year old **Nicolai Østensen (1875)** and 13 year old **Martin Holten Fiskaaen (1895)** was a tight, dynamic and fair 47-move draw. This strengthened both players chances for a top three prize, without offering any big answers about the first prize.



Myagmarsuren vs Amundsen

The important second board meeting between **Ask Amundsen (1838)** and **Evsuld Myagmarsuren (1888)** on the other was a tough Sicilian attack battle. 11 year old Myagmarsuren soon demonstrated the better understanding and kept an overwhelming initiative after exchanging off the queens. As white had got a passed b-pawn, 34... d5? was a mistake suddenly giving white the chance to save himself with a clever 36.b7 Be5 37.Re1!. As white from a rather squeezed piece situation

did not find the rook maneuver idea, he still lost a rather one way driven game.

Myagmarsuren following this win now shares the lead with Østensen and Fiskaaen at 5,0/6; remarkably the average age of this leading trio is 12!

The four persons group at 4,5/6 also includes only junior players, although with a less sensational average age. Apart from 16 year old Amundsen this group includes 15 year old **Heine N. Johannessen (1907)**, today drawing a balanced double rook endgame as black against **Terje Lund (2023)**.

14 year old **Kristoffer Wang Strømhaug (1767)**, also a young teenager in rapid progress, hit back after yesterday's set back as he today went from a balanced middle game to a won rook and bishop endgame against 11 year old **David Mindestrømmen Simonsen (1648)**.

18 year old **Ulrikke Langvik (1563)** also can be found at 4,5/6, and really has accelerated following her (expected) first round loss. Ulrikke also accelerated fast in the game against **Sondre Stai (1685)** today – winning the queen due to a kingside attack within 22 moves, although black was a pawn up and probably better after 10 moves.

Finally to mention some grown up players, second rated **Terje Lund (2032)** is lurking in the crowd at 4.0/6. So is fourth rated **Hallvard Haug Flatebø (1917)** and seventh rated **Johannes Reinhardt (1893)** after both won four hour games today. Flatebø won fairly convincingly, while Reinhardt was worse in the rook endgame before the opponent allowed his rook to be trapped. Reinhardt clearly now is the German hope for a top three prize in this tournament: First rated **Irina Donchenko (2057)** remains under 50 % as she today made a balanced four-hour draw as black against 11 year old and strongly underrated **Jiabao Eivind Ji (1425)**.

Photos by Tom Eriksen