

# FAGERNES CHESS INTERATIONAL 2023

## THE LAHLUM ROUND REPORT

# 3



### GM Group

Fourth rated GM Abhimanyu Puranik of India and fifth rated GM Vahap Sanal of Turkey had two confident wins against young IM opponents on the top boards today, while sixth rated GM Frode Urkedal had to accept a solid draw as black against the young Armenian IM Emin Ohanyan on the third board. The 13 year old Austrian FM Lukas Dotzer pushed too hard for a win as white, allowing 19 year old Indian IM Koustav Chatterjee to turn the board and win the endgame in the sixth hour. The fourth player at 3/3 sensationally is the 16 year old WIM Savitha Shri Baskar, today counting out Norwegian IM Elham Abdulrauf with the black pieces.

Third round overall was a very good round for the young Indian chess armada and another remarkably hard fought round: Only 9 out of 46 games in the GM group ended with a draw and a number of lower rated players had the winning side of their board. The top rated 2600 GMs Sethuraman Sethurman, Samvel Ter-Sahakyan and Bartoscz Socko all hit back by winning convincingly in the third round, but top board pairings for round four still will be Puranik–Baskar and Chatterjee–Sanal.

The first board meeting between **IM Hampus Sörensen (2448)** and **GM Abhimanyu Puranik (2599)** started up like a rather slow and closed Catalan, in which black took over the initiative following a not well timed 11.Ne5?! from white. Puranik instructively opened the f-file for a kingside attack, smashed in at f2 and won material before 20 moves. Black following the very good start probably should have been able to win this game within three hours, but Sörensen fought on creatively before and after the queen exchange. White's passed pawn at b6 demanded some attention in the rook versus knight endgame, but Puranik succeeded to eliminate the pawn before 40 moves. Soon afterwards he sacrificed back an exchange to force a won pawn endgame.



Sörensen vs Puranik

**GM Vahap Sanal (2582)** versus **IM Semen Mitusov (2412)** was a positional Italian duel, in which chances were about equal after the players exchanged the light-squared bishops at e6 and the dark-squared bishops at a7. White in the fourth hour had a growing initiative with queen, rook, knight and seven pawns left in each camp, and just before move 40 he snatched black's loose pawn at b7. After 40 moves the remaining queen and rook position with an extra pawn was practically winning for white, as he had both the safer king and the better pawn structure. Mitusov still fought on well, but experienced Sanal completed the attack against the black king at g8 after 55 moves.

**IM Emin Ohanyan (2434)** versus **GM Frode Urkedal (2527)** was a modern Queen's Gambit line with Bb4, in which white kept a very slight initiative after exchanging the c- and d-pawns plus the dark-squared bishops and one set of knights. The GM probably never was in real danger and in the fourth hour he creatively activated his remaining pieces by sacrificing a pawn at b5. When the smoke disappeared after some tactical exchanges, the remainings after 35 moves was an endgame with rook, bishop and four kingside pawns on each side.



**Ohanyan vs Urkedal**

The GM forced an exchange of the bishops and offered a draw, which the IM immediately accepted.

The young lions **FM Lukas Dotzer (2416)** and **IM Koustav Chatterjee (2520)** meanwhile discussed a rare French Winawer line with 4... b6 and 5... Bf8, in which white due to his space advantage came better after castling short. White's chances for a kingside attack first was more important than black's counterplay in the c-file. Although black reduced the dangers by exchanges, white's pair of bishops gave him some advantage in the fourth hour. White had a double h-pawn, but his king at h1 still was safer than the black one at f8.



**Dotzer vs Chatterjee**

With both players short of time before 40 moves white took over the c-file and briefly had a winning advantage, but black succeeded in neutralizing this and bring the position closer to a draw by exchanging the queenside pawns. White at this stage was a pawn up, although this did not count for much due to his double h-pawns.

Black's king in the fifth hour still was under attack, but as Dotzer spent much time without finding the critical attack plans, Chatterjee intervened with his queen on the seventh rank with some counterplay. The game was expected to end up a draw by repetition after 57 moves. Although having less than a minute left on the clock, the young fighter Dotzer decided to play on and invited a queen exchange. This turned out to be a blunder as Chatterjee after taking the queen could win an exchange. As black afterwards could force an exchange of his knight for one of the white bishops, the remaining endgame towards the end of the sixth hour was a trival win for black.

Norwegian **IM Elham Abdulrauf (2519)** as white against Indian **WIM Savitha Shri Baskar (2411)** tested out some kind of delayed Sicilian Alapin with 1.e4 2.Nf3 and 3.c3. It first did not work out too well, as black came better after disrupting white's kingside pawn structure with an exchange at f3. Black lagged some 15–20 minutes behind on the clock, but on the board she played hard for a win by castling long and then snatching a pawn at a2 with her queen. White had an open a-file and used it to play Ra8+ followed by Rg8, winning back the pawn at g7. This plan however backfired badly as black creatively trapped the white rook at g7. The remaining position with an extra rook of course was winning for black, and Baskar soon demonstrated the better attack as well. 16 year old Baskar before arriving Fagernes had an ambition to make her third WGM-norm and possibly her first IM norm here. After starting up with 3/3 and defeating two players above 2500, she is after the first third of the tournament well ahead of schedule for a sensational GM norm.



**Abdulrauf vs Baskar**

**GM Eduardas Rozentalis (2504)** gave his Bogo-Indian another try as black against **WGM Vantika Agrawal (2407)**, but after 13 moves offered a draw in a position which was about equal if still far from a dead draw. Agrawal looking for an IM norm could be happy of course to draw a GM above 2500, while Rozentalis following his close to disastrous first round was happy with a short draw against a young lioness in the third round.



**Agrawal vs Rozentalis**

**IM Tor Fredrik Kaasen (2462)** and **FM Tanmay Chopra (2351)** entered a sharp Sicilian Najdorf line, in which white castled long and went for a kingside pawn storm with f4–g4–h3. Chopra spent some time on the clock, but after exchanging two sets of minor pieces he apparently did fine with his king undeclared at e8. White's try to open the position with a thematic e5-break here did not work out too well, as black could take the pawn and at the same time force an exchange of the queens. Black's extra pawn was not worth much as he played with two isolated e-pawns, and taking into account opposite-coloured bishops the players after 25 moves agreed a draw.



**Sanket Chakravarty (2327)** versus **IM Jonas Hacker (2455)** was an English fianchetto in which all the knights were exchanged within the first ten moves. White had some space advantage due to his pawn at d5, but black had a pawn at e5 and was able to play f5 with enough kingside counterplay.

Exchanging off the queens later however proved too helpful from a black point of view. Chakravarty could later exchange the remaining bishop and reach a materially balanced rook endgame in which white had the more active rook and king. Black for a long time defended well and reached some

drawing chances, but white had all the active possibilities. As the position finally opened, white in the sixth hour succeeded in making a decisive queenside intervention with his king.



**Chakravarty vs Hacker**

**GM Monika Socko (2440)** and **GM Samvel Ter-Sahakyan (2613)** discussed some rare kind of Benoni fianchetto, in which white did not play e4. Black after exchanging two sets of minor pieces had a two versus one pawn majority on the queenside, and did well despite white's pair of bishops.

Black after 19 moves creatively sacrificed an exchange to get rid of the key dark-squared bishop at e3, and came better as white felt forced to sacrifice back an exchange for black's knight at c5.

Black later had the better pawn structure, a queenside pawn majority and the safer king.

He went on to win before 40 moves by instructively demonstrating the attacking potential in an endgame with queens and opposite-coloured bishops.



**Socko vs Ter-Sahakyan**

**GM Erik Blomqvist (2523)** and **IM Zhen Yu Cyrus Low (2425)** on the other hand tested out a Caro-Kann in which white never played d4, but instead kept a slight piece initiative after an early queen exchange. Low however defended soundly and in the third hour demonstrated some counterplay against the scattered white pawns. Both players later took the safe path, leading after 36 moves to a dead drawn rook endgame with one pawn at each side.

The game between **IM Aditya Mittal (2505)** and **IM John-Paul Wallace (2384)** saw a positional King's Indian duel, in which white decided to exchange the d-pawns at e5 and the queens at d8 before move 10. White later got the pair of bishops and played hard for an attack without queens, first on the kingside and then on the queenside. Black reportedly still was fine on the board but lagged some 50 minutes behind on the board, and after 20 moves had less than 15 minutes left. Wallace for a long time defended well and after 29 moves had exchanged it down to a drawish endgame with two rooks, opposite-coloured bishops and five pawns on each side. White however still had the more active rooks. 30.--- f5? fatally weakened black's kingside pawns, after which Mittal instructively won a pawn, sacrificed an exchange and forced a won pawn endgame.



**Mittal vs Wallace**

**IM Jung Min Seo (2500)** versus **WGM Teodora Injac (2391)** was another English fianchetto, in which chances were about balanced following an early queen exchange. Black afterwards a bit provocative moved her bishop from c8 to g4 at move 14, and then immediately returned it to c8 as white replied with the weakening f3. Although still not having developed her queenside pieces, black after 16 moves was fine on the board although lagging somewhat behind of the clock. After the queens were exchanged black had the slightly better pawn structure and slightly more active pieces, although the game was agreed a draw by repetition after 25 moves.



**Seo vs Injac**

**GM Raja Rithvik Rajavaram (2472)** as white against **FM Aksel Bu Kvaløy (2266)** in another Queen's Gambit with Bb4 played relatively slow and lagged behind on the clock. On the board some funny tactical exchanges after 24 moves had resulted in a rather drawish endgame with rook, knight and five pawns against rook, bishop and five pawns. White first had some small hopes based upon his passed d-pawn, but as this also was exchanged the game after 40 moves was agreed a draw by a natural repetition of moves.



**Rajavaram vs Kvaløy**

**GM Sethuraman Sethuraman (2639)** as white against **WGM Pallathur Nandhidhaa (2362)** entered a Sicilian Sveshnikov discussion. White transported his bishop around via b6 to snatch a pawn at a5, and kept an edge although black later won back the pawn at a2. Nandhidhaa with her bishop stuck at a2 however succeeded in activating her remaining pieces and after 30 moves had balanced the chances with queen, two rooks, bishop and five pawns against queen, two rooks, knight and five pawns. Black however was about to run seriously short of time. 32.--- Raa8?? was a time trouble blunder immediately losing the game as white could (and did) hit with 33.Rxa2! Rxa2 34.Qb3+ and 35.Qxa2.

**GM Bartosz Socko (2601)** as white against **FM Saad Elmi (2321)** went for a slow fianchetto set up and got the better half of an isolated queen's pawn position. After queens were exchanged, black's isolated d5 pawn was promoted to a not isolated e4 pawn. White still had the more active pieces and a pressure against the pawn in the endgame with rook, knight and six pawns in each side. The GM instructively marched forward his three versus two pawn majority on the queenside, and won the game safely before 40 moves.

**CM Sauat Nurgaliev (2286)** versus **GM Tiger Hillarp (2513)** was a long Sicilian Najdorf duel, turning tactical as white went for complications with 15.Bxa6!?. It gave a jackpot as the GM spent a lot of time without finding the best answer. The combination of an extra exchange plus a big queenside majority after 20 moves gave white a won position. White at that stage was a full hour ahead on the clock, strengthening the suspicion that this from the start was some kind of preparation. Black after 25 moves anyway had a very hard time to defend an exchange down, with a passed white pawn at a6 and one minute against one hour on the clock. Nurgaliev forced a further simplification with a tricky 27.Nd4. The GM ten moves later stopped the clock as his young opponent was about to force a rook endgame and leave the way open for white's a6 pawn.

The game between **IM David Cummings (2318)** and **GM Kaido Kulaots (2494)** made an unconventional start with 1.c4 g6 2.e4 e5 3.d4 Sf6. Black later snatched a pawn, while white got compensation first due to his pair of bishops and then due to his rooks in the center files. Both player spent a lot of time from the opening, and white after 22 moves had just above 20 minutes left. Black however later spent more time without coming up with anything but exchanges. Black still was a pawn up when a draw was agreed after 32 moves, but the extra pawn now was an isolated pawn at d6 and black could not leave a repetition without losing it.



**Cummings vs Kulaots**

62 year old Cummings as the oldest IM in this tournament has been playing very well and remarkably is undefeated after facing three GMs with an average ELO close to 2550.



**Arhan Chethan Anand (2285)** versus **IM Linus Johansson (2463)** was a Benoni duel, in which white consequently first came somewhat better according to the computers. White however somehow underestimated a tactical Nxe4, and so black after 22 moves had queen, two rooks and seven pawns against queen, rook, bishop, knight and five pawns.

Black's big majority with three versus one queenside pawns together with white's scattered pawns made this a very good deal from a black point of view. After 40 moves the remaining endgame was a long but pleasant walk in the park for black, as he now had one rook and four connected passed pawns for the knight and bishop.



**Anand vs Johansson**

**IM Shete Sammed (2454)** as white against **Shelev Oberoi (2226)** made a slow start with 1.c4 and 2.b3, but the game soon became complicated as white picked up a pawn at g7 with his bishop. In a very modern and complex chess game, white later was 1–2 pawns up and objectively better despite some worries for his king at h1. Forcing off the queens with 28.Qf4 more or less was the winning move, as white's two extra pawns and pair of bishops later had everything under control.

**FM Magnus Ermitsch (2277)** versus **FM Sambit Panda (2452)** was a tactical Caro-Kann, in which white with 8.Ne5 left his queen hanging at e4. Black very understandably avoided 8... Nxe4?? due to 9.Bxf7 mate. Later black sacrificed a pawn and had some compensation due to his active pieces and kingside pawn storm, although black's king at e7 also was a bit exposed. Ermitsch for a long time played very well and reached a won position as he after 25 moves had picked up another pawn as well as an exchange at g5. Ermitsch ran seriously short of time in a still complex position and allowed some unnecessary counterplay. Making his move 40 with a margin of two seconds, white was about to force a won rook versus knight endgame – which soon became a won pawn endgame.

**FM Sourath Biswas (2265)** and **IM Praneeth Vuppala (2437)** today discussed a London-system. After 26 moves white had advanced his pawn to h6 without getting any real kingside attack, but on the other hand black's c-file possession did not give him much as white controlled the squares c1, c2, c3, c4 and c5. 27.b3? however was a remarkably positional blunder more or less deciding the game, as black could reply with an instant 27... Qc3! and later use the golden c3 square as a springboard for an attack against the white kingside. Biswas was seriously short of time and so his defence soon collapsed, allowing black to decide by a mating attack after 33 moves.



**Biswas vs Vuppala**

**GM Stellan Brynell (2402)** as white against 46 year younger **CM Juan Gomez Aguirre (2206)** in Queen's Gambit took a safe positional approach, and got a sound pressure due to his pair of bishops. Black gave up a pawn at e5 to exchange one of the bishops, hoping obviously for an endgame draw due to the opposite coloured bishops. The GM however made sure to pick up a second pawn before exchanging off the queens, and due to his passed a-pawn later had a rather safe win in the endgame.

16 year old **Shazil Shehzad (2212)** as white against **IM Kushagra Mohan (2400)** today tested out the Veresov system with 1.d4 2.Nc3 3.Bf4, but then originally played 5.Nb5 Na6 6.Nc3 with the idea of 7.Bxa6. Later castling long, white first had a promising kingside attack coming up. Mohan following inaccurate play from Shehzad however could take the sting out of white's kingside attack by some tactical exchanges. Although black later had an extra pawn and a pair of bishops, the position remained complicated and double-edged until white short of time blundered with 40.Rf1? – losing the key pawn at d4 with a winning position for black.

The rising young Swedish chess star **FM Edvin Trost (2398)** is back on track after his first round loss, today winning in only 30 moves as white against Indian **WIM Rucha Pujari (2195)**. The opening was a relatively slow Ruy Lopez, but after exchanging three sets of minor pieces white here creatively got a kingside attack by doubling his rook on the fourth rank. Trost in an inspired mood sacrificed an exchange at e4 and within a few moves demonstrated a far from obvious attack against the black king.

Mongolian **CM Chinguun Bayaraa (2203)** as white against **IM Moksh Amit Doshi (2397)** got a positional edge from an apparently tame Queen's pawn fianchetto.

Although black used the chance to play b5, play transposed into some Catalan relative following a tactical 7.c4!?. Black came up with sufficient counterplay as he was able to exchange his light squared bishop at f1. White's kingside attack backfired as black could intervene at e2 with his queen and get a lot of counterplay against the white king. The position remained tactical even without queens, and the outcome remained open until black blundered when inviting for a rook exchange with 48.--- Re6? White immediately used his chance to win the black knight h5 with 49.R6g5! and won by a mate attack a few moves later on.



**Bayaraa vs Doshi**



**IM Mohammad Fahad Rahman (2396)** as white against **FM Mahitosh Dey (2154)** made a positional start with 5.Bf4 in a Queen's Gambit, but soon developed a strong initiative and went on to win a nice attacking game in 39 moves. Although Dey fought on bravely, this was among the more one way driven games of this GM group today.

**IM Mads Vestby-Ellingsen (2387)** against **Shadi Sian (2137)** was a bit more jumpy as black first was a pawn up and missed some chances after this Catalan opening. White's pieces later soon dominated the board, and he was about to mate black's king at h7 by a doubling on the eight rank when black stopped the clock after 31 moves.



**Vestby-Ellingsen vs Sian**

**FM Benny Aizenberg (2367)** versus **Valentina Verbin (2071)** was another tense and positional Ruy Lopez duel, in which black had fair chances all into the rook and knight endgame after 40 moves. Then black however made the decisive mistake as she allowed white to exchange the rooks under favourable circumstances. White immediately could pick up black's key pawn at b5 in the knight endgame, and Aizenberg later had no problems to win by advancing his passed a-pawn.



**Aizenberg vs Verbin (Foto: Anniken Vestby)**

**Morten Andersen (2156)** versus **FM Bennet Hagner (2361)** saw an English fianchetto in which black snatched the pawn at c4 and tried to protect it with a greedy Be6. White eventually won back the pawn at c4, but spent so much time that black later had a strong initiative. Black around move 30 was two pawns up with the safer king. 14 year old Hagner however lost control on the board as he ran seriously short of time, and Andersen by an e6 break came up with some counterplay against black's king at g8. Taking the pawn on e6 at move 39 was a blunder, after which white could pick up both the pawn at e6 and the black bishop at c3. Untitled Andersen is the oldest player of this GM group, but after this miraculous turn around he sensationally was at 2.0/3 with a performance well above 2500. Still not trusting his own capacity for an IM norm, the Danish player stayed true to his plan about requesting a walk over draw for round four.

**FM Jens Evang Ingebretsen (2345)** as white against **Peder Marcus Aamodt (2022)** started up with 1.c4 and later got a promising pressure against black's isolated pawn at d5. White came ahead as he after 22 moves had won black's isolated pawn. Black still had some chances for a draw with five pawns against six pawns in the queen endgame around move 35. Aamodt short of time however made some inaccuracies, allowing white to realize the long intended e6-break and force a won pawn endgame.

12 year old **Evsuld Myagmarsuren (2139)** as white against 17 year old **FM Alexander Øye-Strømberg (2329)** went for an exchange line in the Caro-Kann, but the classical bishop sacrifice at h7 here was dubious as black could move his king out to g6. Black after 16 moves had retreated his king to f7 and was a full piece up with a winning position. Øye-Strømberg probably could have won this game faster, but took the safe path as he sacrificed back the piece to get off the queens and reach a won endgame with two extra pawns.



**Myagmarsuren vs Øye-Strømberg**

**Jonas Hodneland Rasmussen (1976)** as white in a King's Indian against **IM Erik Hedman (2323)** went for a solid fianchetto line with some early piece exchange. The position still soon turned in favour of black, as white strangely offered his h3-pawn in exchange for the black pawn at b7. Hedman in turn became a bit too eager to snatch a white pawn at a2 instead of continuing his kingside attack. White following this escaped into an apparently drawish position with queen, two rooks, bishop and four kingside pawns against queen, two rooks, bishop and three kingside pawns. White however still had a difficult position to defend against an IM. Hedman was careful to avoid a queen exchange, and getting the chance to double the rooks at the seventh rank he won a second pawn at e2. White following this anyway was lost when he at move 40 stumbled into a d-file pin and lost the bishop as well.



**Rasmussen vs Hedman**

The Norwegian WIM-candidate **Monika Machlik (2136)** as white against German IM-candidate **Johannes von Mettenheim (2317)** made an interesting start with a tactical Catalan line. White sacrificed a knight at b5 to hit the rook at a8 with her queen – winning one rook and one pawn for two knights. Reportedly white first was much better, but failed to find the best moves and keep up the initiative afterwards. Black sacrificed a second pawn to activate all his minor pieces and had a strong initiative in the fourth hour.



**Machlik vs von Mettenheim**

The position for sure was winning for the 14 year old German as he after 45 moves had picked up both the white queenside pawns, leaving him with queen, rook, bishop, two knights and four kingside pawns against queen, two rooks, bishop and four kingside pawns. Machlik more or less desperately sacrificed another pawn to get some play against black's king at g7. She was rewarded as black blundered with 49... Sc6? – allowing white to play 50.Rb7! and win back two minor pieces for a pawn at e7. This left after 55 moves a rook endgame with rook and two kingside pawns against rook and three kingside pawns. This version was a dead draw as white had already played g3 and h4, fixing the black pawns at f5, g6 and h5. Mettenheim had an extra pawn and stubbornly played on for 55 moves, but Machlik had no problems defending this.

**Håkon Bentsen (2088)** and **CM Adithya Chullikkad (2259)** tested out a positional Sicilian Dragon variation with many early exchanges, leading after only 17 moves to a drawish position with two rooks, knight and six pawns against two rooks, bishop and six pawns. The minor piece endgame after 30 moves still was in material balance, although still a little risk for white as black had the bishop and the better pawn structure. 32.b4?, although natural, reportedly was a more or less decisive mistake as black later could activate his king and his kingside pawn majority. The final endgame with knight and advanced b-pawn against bishop, two f-pawns and one h-pawn was a little tricky, but still of course winning for black.



**Bentsen vs Chullikkad**

**CM Andreas Skotheim (2228)** versus **Eivind Grunt Kreken (2144)** was a Ruy Lopez exchange duel, in which black pushed hard for a direct attack against the black king. As white could save his king by a tactical queen exchange, this resulted only in a drawish endgame with two rooks and seven pawns on each side. Kreken however underestimated the danger to his kingside pawns when exchanging one set of rooks, and the game was decided within a few more moves as white by a tactical 27.Rxg5 Rxg5 28.f4+ could force his way to a won pawn endgame.



The Norwegian teenagers **Martin Øksendal (2060)** and **CM Sverre Lye (2212)** this afternoon discussed a positional line of a Sicilian Sveshnikov, in which white's knight stronghold at d5 just about balanced black's pair of bishops. As white failed to find any active plan, black however could exchange his light-squared bishop for the knight under favourable circumstances. The remaining position with queen, two rooks, one bishop and six pawns soon proved much better for black, as white had the more open king and the weaker pawns. Opposite-coloured bishops here increased the advantage of the attacking player, and Lye before 40 moves had assured a decisive material gain.



**Øksendal vs Lye**

Norwegian junior **Vetle Bjørge Strand (2026)** as white in a Sicilian against German veteran **Johannes Hentrich (2166)** went for 3.Bb5+, but later transposed into a Maroczy pin under fair circumstances for black. Much due to his knight outpost at d5 white later came better in the middle game. As black succeeded in exchanging the knights and as well as the queens, the double rook endgame after 36 moves appeared drawish. White had the better pawn structure as well as the more active king, and black's decision to exchange one set of rooks made his position more difficult from a practical point of view. The rook endgame with three pawns on each side reportedly still was a draw after 60 moves, but white got the help needed to put his rook behind the passed a-pawn and force a won endgame with rook against two scattered pawns.

**Max Dahl (2152)** as white against **Linus Sandstad (1912)** started up with a Retian double fianchetto, but transposed into some kind of closed Catalan as white later played d4. After a steam of exchanges the players after 25 moves had reached an approximately balanced position with queen, rook, bishop and six pawns against queen, rook, knight and six pawns. While Dahl as usual ran short of time for 40 moves, he kept a slight minority attack pressure against the black queenside. Black to counter this had some counterplay with his pieces on the kingside. A critical moment came as white at move 34 bravely snatched the black pawn at b7 with his queen. Sandstad had interesting kingside possibilities with Ne4, Ng4 or a direct exchange sacrifice with 34... Rxf3. Disappearing into the myriad of interesting variations, Sandstad forgot the clock and lost on time in an unclear and probably balanced position.

The Norwegian junior duel between **Sigurd Lye (1980)** and **FM Emerik Roulet-Dubonnet (2215)** made a drama start as white first started a risky pawn storm on the kingside and then blundered his pawn at g4. Black following this after 18 moves was a pawn up with a more or less winning attack against white's king at f1. The black player apparently became paralyzed by this unexpected opening success, hence he gave white the time needed to save his king and win back the pawn at d4. After the first time control white had reached a queen endgame with four pawns on each side. This still was more easy to play for black due to his better pawn structure and kingside pawn majority. Roulet-Dubonnet played on for a win and was rewarded as Sigurd Lye blundered a pawn. Later black's two connected passed pawns and more active king soon gave him a mating attack against white's king.



**FM Mathias Unneland (2188)** as white in a Sicilian against **Michael Ermitsch (2047)** went for a double-edged set up with long castling. It worked out fairly well as black failed to get any real counterattack against the white king at b1, while black's king remained stranded in a risky position at e8. 37.--- Be3? was a time trouble blunder from black: Since black no longer had the defence move Bf8, white now could play 38. Qg8+! Ke7 39.Ng5 with a decisive attack. 45.Bxe6? in turn was a serious mistake from white, as black now could exchange down to a rook endgame in which he had excellent drawing chances despite white's extra pawn. The rook endgame probably still was a draw with four against three pawns after 55 moves, as black had an active rook on the seventh rank and two connected pawns on the kingside. White however still was a pawn up with a three against one majority on the queenside, and white after five hours got the extra tempo needed to win this passed pawn race.

Teenagers **Manmay Chopra (2113)** and **Martin Fiskaaen (2040)** investigated an Open Sicilian with 4.Qxd4, in which white after castling long first had promising attacking chances on the kingside. The tide suddenly turned as black hit back in the center with a tactical e4. Later black demonstrated the better understanding of this dynamic position, and before 30 moves had a winning attack plus a decisive material advantage.

**Ben Samuel Groth Skaar (2103)** and **Philip Rosol (2010)** discussed a Sicilian line in which white had the better arguments. White kept a strong kingside attack after all the knight were exchanged. Although black avoided a direct mate he escaped only into an endgame in which white with one extra exchange and two extra pawns had a pleasant journey to a full point.

Norwegian **Sindre Ytrestøyl (1987)** as white in a French against Indian **Pankit Mota (2101)** went for the unambitious exchange variation with 3.exd5, but still got a promising e-file attack as black instead of castling long or short decided to put his king at f7. White in turn became so eager to exchange rooks that he allowed black very disturbing counterplay against the white king with Nh3-Nf2+-Nh3. Black suddenly had got a perpetual check, but despite his own airy king he bravely decided to play on for a full point during mutual time shortage. This nearly backfired as white after the time control was a pawn up with the more dangerous attack, in a very complicated position with queen and two knights left on each side. White failed to find the critical continuations, after which an entertaining and double-edged attacking battle dried out with a draw by repetition of checks from black.

**Jiahao Eric Ji (1959)** versus **Alexander Rosol (2076)** was a Philidor's opening in which tactical exchanges left white a pawn up, with a dominating pair of bishops and an active rook on the seventh rank. Ji in an inspired mood needed only a few moves to sacrifice his queen at f7 and mate black's king (with the untouchable queen) at h7.

**Saket Pedgandham (2074)** versus **Ask Amundsen (1937)** was a tactical Sicilian in which white after 14 moves had placed his king a bit airy at f2, but still was clearly better due to his pair of bishops combined with black's development problems. White then chose the wrong plan, allowing black the time play h5-h4 with dangerous counterplay against the white king. Black in turn made a very strange decision to play f6 and Kf7 instead of just castling long. This backfired badly as white within a few moves could sacrifice an exchange at e6 with a crushing attack against the black king.

Finally the talented junior duel between **Amadeus Hestvik Evenshaug (1930)** and **CM Jack Mizzi (2049)** saw a long Caro-Kann mainline duel, in which white sacrificed his pawn at d4 to get attacking chances against the black king at e8. The sacrifice reportedly first was dubious, but white got a strong initiative for the pawn after the queens were exchanged at d5. As black felt forced to return the pawn at e6, white won back the pawn and reached a knight endgame in which white's kingside pawn majority combined with his more active king and better pawn structure gave him a decisive advantage.



# Open Group



In the Open, the first board battle between **Erlend Reigstad (1594)** and **Sigurd Kittilsen (1822)** was a duel between two teammates from the Elverum chess club. Following an early queen exchange white first had the better chances, but black gradually took over and realized his extra pawn in the rooks and minor pieces endgame.

Second board meeting between 15 year old **Lukas Gåsland (1813)** and 60 year old **Karim Ali (1773)** balanced all the way into a drawn rook endgame, leaving Kittilsen alone at 4/4.

Second place at 3.5/4 is shared between Gåsland, Ali and four other players all winning their games in the third round. 60 year old **Dag Arild Andersen (1776)** joined this group by winning a patient initiative game as white against 11 year old **Jiabao Eivind Ji (1704)**. Ji passed 40 moves under strong pressure on the board and clock, but white had a winning attack and a few moves later he neatly sacrificed a rook to mate black's king at h5.

**Rafe Rehman (1824)** on the fourth board left a repetition and won an exciting attacking battle in a young teenager duel against **Daniel Vollheim (1475)**.

Attack with queen and rooks was today's fashion in the Open, and this also decided in favour of white in a tight fifth board battle between **Sondre Stai (1722)** and **Bayaraa Bilguun (1267)**. White due to his pair of bishops first had a pressure in the sixth board generation duel between **Henrik Nome (1073)** and **Erlend Entner (1571)**, but black had no problems to win the endgame after white blundered one of the bishops.

Top rated **Jon Arne Stokhaug (1843)** as black against **Emilie Lazareva (1483)** was a pawn down in endgame, and lucky to get a draw. White's queenside majority despite the opposite coloured bishops still could have given her good winning chances from the final position after 38 moves.

Surprisingly enough none of the lower board games in the Open had a surprising result today. Top board pairings for round 4 following this will be Kittilsen against Gåsland, Entner against Rehman and Ali against Andersen.



1 photo by Anniken Vesty (credited) and the rest by Tom Eriksen