

FAGERNES INTERNATIONAL AUTUMN 2022

THE LAHLUM ROUND REPORT

6



GM Group

We saw more action on the top boards again this round. The first board meeting between GM Abhimanyu Puranik and GM Pragnanandhaa Rameshbabu true enough was a relatively short draw, but it was still a highly entertaining game, and the next four boards all had a winner in the end. Second rated GM S. L. Naryananan looked truly impressive when winning well deserved as white against GM Krishnan Sasikiran, and so did GM Anton Demchenko when winning as black against IM Elham Abdulrauf.

Round 6 in general was a very good round for the GMs and a much less good round for the GM-norm candidates: IM/WGM Vaishali Rameshbabu lost from a drawish endgame as black against GM Mads Andersen, while IM Tor Fredrik Kaasen lost from a winning position as white against GM Kaido Kulaots in another very exciting game. Still some GM norm chances and many more chances for IM norms coming up, as we look much forward to the three final rounds. In the top we have a shared first place and seven players within half a point: Narayanan, Demchenko and Andersen now are sharing the lead at 5.0/6, half a point ahead of Pragnanandhaa, Puranik and Alan Stig Rasmussen.

The Indian first board duel between seventh rated **GM Abhimanyu Puranik (2603)** and first rated **GM Pragnanandhaa Rameshbabu (2687)** was a three-hour draw, but in no way a careful one. The start was a positional Rossolimo Sicilian, well played and rather balanced from both sides.

The position became more loaded and then suddenly lit up as white at move 18 sacrificed a rook on black's bishop at b4. Black had available a counterstrike with 19... dxe4, threatening both the bishop at d3 and the knight at f3, but then white had 20.Ng5 threatening mate at h7. After 20... h6 white could take back on e4 with the bishop, but after exchanging the light-squared bishops at e4 black could play Ne7 (saving the rook at f8) without risking a mate. Now 23.Qc5 appeared strong for white, but black had 23... f5 – threatening the knight at e4 and opening a square at f7 for the rook. White then had to take the knight at e7, allowing the queens to be exchanged. White now had two minor pieces and one pawn for a rook. Pragg still of course had it under control, as black in the end had 25... -- Rf7 – threatening both the bishop at e7 and the knight at e4.

Following excellent play from both sides, it all ended in a drawn endgame with rook, bishop and four pawns against two rooks and two pawns. It was a fairly obvious draw at this level, and the players respected each other too much to test it out.



Puranik vs Praggnanandhaa

GM S. L. Narayanan (2663) as white against **GM Krishnan Sasikiran (2636)** played for a full point with 3.e4 against an Accepted Queen's Gambit, and kept some space advantage after exchanging two sets of minor pieces. As black had exchanged his dark-squared bishop, white had no big worries about protecting his vital pawn at e4 with 23.f3.



Narayanan vs Sasikiran

Later white got a sound d-file pressure while black's rooks in the e-file had no real target. As Sasikiran ran seriously short of time, white snatched first one black pawn at a7 with his bishop and then another one at h5 with his queen. Sasikiran had some counterplay by playing f5 and g5, but Narayanan apparently had it under control. White more or less decided the game as he after 45 moves could force a queen exchange with a tricky Qb7-Qc8-Qh3-Qd3 maneuver. White was two pawns up in the remaining endgame with rook and bishop versus rook and knight, and his passed a-pawn decided within a few more moves. This was Sasikiran's first loss at Fagernes, and Narayanan following this had a great start on his Fagernes career.

IM Elham Abdulrauf (2495) versus **GM Aleksander Demchenko (2645)** was a Queen's Gambit Exchange line. White had some problems deciding whether to play for a queenside minority attack with b4 or for a center push with e4, and consequently played both at the same time.

Black reportedly made a mistake when allowing white to play Bxf6, disrupting the black kingside as black had to take back with the g-pawn. White however immediately afterwards made a mistake when exchanging his strong e4-knight for a bishop at d6, after which black got a promising pressure against white's pawns at b4 and d4. Black came a pawn up by simply taking the white b-pawn. As white later found nothing better than helpful exchanges, black after the first time control was a pawn up in the rook and bishop endgame – totally winning due to black's passed pawn at d4.

Abdulrauf despite this setback is on schedule for a GM-norm. Demchenko has won five games in a row following his sensational first round loss, and is shared first three rounds before the end.



Abdulrauf vs Demchenko

GM Mads Andersen (2604) as white in a Sicilian against **IM/WGM Vaishali Rameshbabu (2451)** went for a rare positional line with 3.c3. Black castled long and played for activity, temporarily sacrificing a pawn at c4 to intervene at d3 with her queen. Andersen exchanged the queens and then freed his position by sacrificing back the pawn at d4. The remaining double-rook endgame with five pawns on each side after 23 moves for sure was drawish, but black's double isolated f-pawns still gave white a nagging edge. Playing f4 to exchange one of the

pawns was a natural reaction from black, but still it might have been a mistake, as white with three against three pawns had a pleasant pressure against black's f7-pawn and a two against one kingside majority. The tide first was in favour of Vaishali, and a draw seems close as she after 40 moves had exchanged one more set of pawns. Black still however had a much smaller margin than white, and suddenly found herself in deep trouble as she allowed white to activate his king and double the rooks in the h-file. Andersen following this could mobilize his rooks for an attack against the remaining black pawns, winning first the a5-pawn and then the f7-pawn.

Vaisali is not out the GM norm run, but this loss from a drawish position obviously was a hard setback for her. Chess truck driver Andersen is rock solid and very stubborn so far, now sharing the lead at an outstanding 5.0/6.



Andersen vs Rameshbabu



Rasmussen vs Johansson

GM Allan Stig Rasmussen (2531) and **IM Linus Johansson (2461)** started up with an Alapin Sicilian, but later transposed into a main line from the French Advance. White got some pressure after successfully placing his knight at c5. White took a big decision to exchange his important light-squared bishop for a knight at f5, with success as white a few moves later on could play e6 and and so open the e-file and the e6-square for his pieces. Before 30 moves white could win an exchange by an unusual knight fork at d8. Rasmussen in his so far best game at Fagernes held the position in an iron grip

later on. Black immediately resigned after the time control – as the extra 40 minutes only helped him realize that he was about to end up a full rook short.



Urkedal vs Ghazarian

GM Frode Urkedal (2523) versus **IM Kirk Ghazarian (2446)** made an interesting start with a «new» and rather unbalanced Queen's Gambit Tarrach line advocated by Wesley So and other world top players. Then a draw was agreed upon white's suggestion after 9 well known theory moves. 16 year old Ghazarian could be well satisfied with another GM-draw as black and hangs on the GM norm schedule, while Urkedal should try a bit harder to win his white games if he has ambitions for top three in this tournament.

IM Tor Fredrik Kaasen (2445) apparently first had a safe edge as white in a positional Italian opening against **GM Kaido Kulaots (2515)**. 17.Nf4? however was a blunder, as black was happy to exchange his light-squared bishop for a knight on f3. White had to ruin his kingside pawn shelter by taking back with the g-pawn, as he would otherwise lose his key pawn at d4 for free. Kaido in an inspired mood immediately mobilized his heavy pieces for a direct kingside attack, allowing white to take the knight at e4. As white later found all the best defensive moves, it was not easy for black to find the very complicated attacking line given as a win by the computers.



Kaasen vs Kulaots

Kaido considered a draw by repetition after 28 moves, but decided to play on for a full point by winning back white's knight at g2. This however soon turned out to be a dubious decision as white won a key pawn at d5 and occupied the g-file for his rook, with a promising attack coming up. Kaido under pressure defended creatively, exchanging one of his rooks at h4 to play with two h-pawns. White just before 40 moves picked up the pawn at h4, and some tactical exchanges later reached an endgame with queen, bishop and four pawns against queen, bishop and three pawns. The computers gave this endgame as winning for white due to his connected passed pawns at e5 and f4. Margin still was one tiny tempo in many lines, hence white could not afford his idea of first playing a3 to get a safe square for his king. Kaido following this after all got paid for his h-pawn strategy, as the remaining black h-pawn soon moved forward from h6 to h5 and h4. As the pawn reached h3, while white's passed pawns still were at e5 and f4, Kaido again left a repetition of checks to play for a full point after 57 moves. As black gave a queen check at c4 move 58, computer programs still gave the position as a draw if white had withdrawn his king to a1. As Kaasen short of time released the king at b1 instead, the position suddenly was lost – as black now could check his queen around to h1 and then play h2. White had no more checks available and following this had to push his own passed pawn forward. Four queens were observed on the board after white's move 66, but they did stay there for long as black had the first queen check – and then a mate in the very next move.



Sethuraman vs Stokke

GM Sethuraman P. Sethuraman (1645) versus **IM Kjetil Stokke (2307)** was a Sicilian opening duel which via 3.Nc3 and 4.Bb5+ transposed into a Rossolimo line. Although black's king was a little awkward at f8, he could be well satisfied with the start after exchanging two sets of minor pieces – having exchanged his pawn at c6 for the more important white e5-pawn. Black's

center after 20 moves gave him an edge with two rooks, knight, dark-squared bishops and seven pawns on each side.

Exchanging off the knight at c3 however was a mistake, as white afterwards had an open b-file and could place his knight in a disturbingly active position at b7. Chances reportedly still were approximately balanced, but in the fourth hour white had taken over the initiative. As black continued much too passively, white won a pawn at a5. Later white was much better and after also picking up black's c-pawn his own passed c-pawn soon decided.

The teenager duel between **FM Semen Mitusov (2415)** and **Shazil Shehzad (2224)** was a heavyweight French Winawer line in which all the pawns and all but two of the pieces still were on board after 20 moves. Black first placed his king at f8 instead of castling short, but then moved the king back via e8 to c7. Then black creatively sacrificed a pawn to open the a- and b-files for his queen and rook. White's extra pawn was a rather lame extra c-pawn and true enough computers tend to underestimate black's position in these



Mitusov vs Shehzad

kind of positions. Still the overall feeling is that white with his safer king, extra pawn and pair of bishops later was clearly better all the time. Mitusov took his time on the board and clock, but found many strong moves. Opening the kingside while making sound exchanges, he reached a won queen endgame with two extra pawns after five hours and 64 moves. Mitusov following this win is a hot candidate for another IM-norm, but that is not too important as he has already got three of them.

FM Viktor Haarmark Nielsen (2384) and **GM Keith Arkell (2413)** had a long and rather slow, but still tense discussion about a very closed Czech Benoni position today. White first had a slight space advantage and a very light pressure against black's backward pawn at d6, but found nothing better than exchanges. Following this the endgame with rook, knight and five pawns on each side after 35 moves appeared drawish. Black's plan to leave the queenside with his rook to snatch a pawn at h2 turned out to be more risky



Nielsen vs Arkell

for him than for his opponent, as white in the meantime won first the black pawn at d6 and following this also the e5 pawn. Black kept the material balance by taking white's pawn at f2. White had the better possibilities to leave the repetition and play on for a win from the final position, but winning attempts still would be risky also for him. The computer programs had interesting difficulties to understand this endgame. Arkell probably needed a win here to save chances for top five, while Nielsen is well in the IM-norm run following this draw.

Tykhon Cherniaiev (2239) versus FM Jens Evang Ingebretsen (2363)

was an IM norm candidate duel which became the last game of this round. That was not expected from the opening, as a positional Sicilian Alapin line resulted in many exchanges and a fairly balanced position. After 35 moves the endgame with two rooks, one knight and six pawns on each side appeared very likely to be drawn soon. Ingebretsen however needed a win to save chances for an IM-norm and played stubbornly on after getting a small initiative. As white played a little carelessly after the time control, black had a threatening initiative for some moves after doubling his rooks in the h-file. After one set of rooks was exchanged black also appeared to have promising chances, as white's backward b2-pawn was a bit weak. In retrospect it seems however that Cherniaiev was over the worst by then: White proved able first to protect the b2-pawn and then exchange it. Although black in the sixth hour finally won a pawn, the remainings were just a dead drawn endgame with rook, knight and f-pawn against rook and knight. 12 year old Cherniaiev remains undefeated and is around schedule for an IM-norm, while Ingebretsen now needs a very strong spurt.



Cherniaiev vs Ingebretsen

Tobias Lang Nilsen (2280) versus IM/WGM Padmini Rout (2390) was a rather slow Hungarian opening, in which white after exchanging his bishop for a knight at f6 came slightly better due to his strong knight on d5. After queens were exchanged at d8, the position locked down and a draw was agreed after 26 moves – still with all 16 pawns on the board. Due to the closed nature of the position the computer programs overestimates white's practical possibilities when giving the final position as close to +2.



Nilsen vs Rout

White still was the one who could play on for a win here, as his knight in such a closed position was superior to black's rather bad dark-squared bishop.



Kvaløy vs Carlsson

The teenage lions **FM Aksel Bu Kvaløy (2278)** and **IM Ludvig Carlsson (2379)** meanwhile discussed a Four Knights opening in which white got a rather sound space advantage as he could play e5 and f4 after the opening. Although the b-file gave black some counterplay, white in total had the better pawn structure and the better pieces. This first thanks to a nice knight on d4, then thanks to the pair of bishops after black gave up his dark-squared bishop for the above mentioned knight. White however found no way to use his bishops in a

rather closed position, and at move 40 in turn gave up his light-squared bishop for a knight at d5. This left a very balanced queen and opposite-colored endgame which was agreed a draw immediately after the time control. Kvaløy probably should have won this game really to be in the IM-norm run, while Carlsson fortunately already is an IM.



Unneland vs Thvandiran

FM Mathias Unneland (2185) challenged **IM Shiyam Thvandiran (2353)** in a Classical French duel, in which white due to his space advantage and knight at d4 first was slightly better.

White after 20 moves apparently was ahead in an attack race, after castling long. While white had the fastest attack, black however had the more dangerous one, as white's queenside was seriously weakened by an early a3 and b4. While black could keep his king fairly safe at h7, white's king at c1 soon was doomed after black got in a5 followed by axb4–bxa3–a2.



Sarkar vs Kistrup

IM Justin Sarkar (2350) and **FM Nicolai Kistrup (2274)** discussed a Queen’s Gambit with the black bishop at b4, rather similar to a Classical Nimzo-indian. Black had a relatively solid position after the queens and two sets of minor pieces were exchanged early. White due to his c-file control and better pawn structure still kept an edge in the endgame with rook, knight and six pawns on each side. As Kistrup again ran short of time for 40 moves, Sarkar efficiently used his chance to win black’s isolated d-pawn and exchange off the knights. The computer programs

later gave the rook endgame as totally winning for white, typically with a wide +7 or +8. The margin still was only one tempo in critical lines, as white tried to escort his h-pawn forward with his king and rook without losing his remaining queenside pawns. In the moment of truth after five and a half hours, black with his king at b3 played 55... b4 to confront the white pawn at a3. Sarkar considered the position for many minutes and had only a few seconds left himself when he replied with 56.a4! Kxa4 57.Rh3! – which was the only way to win this endgame. Sarkar again demonstrated good technique and defends his IM title very well this tournament, while Kistrup following this loss is out as an IM-norm candidate.

Frenchman **Clément Frederic (2234)** as white in a Sicilian against the young Norwegian **Emerik Våpenstad Roulet-Dubonnet (2343)** went for a positional King’s Indian Advance set up with g3 and d3. White established a kingside space advantage based upon his e5-pawn. Black had a pawn armada moving forward on the queenside, in a heavyweight position as no piece or pawn were exchanged after 20 moves. As black then had a breakthrough coming up at the queenside while white still had not demonstrated any real attack on the kingside, black got a clear advantage.



Frederic vs Roulet-Dubonnet

White was inside the ring until he at move 30 gave up his fianchetto bishop for the knight at d5, fatally weakening the long diagonal a8–h1. White by exchanging queens succeeded in avoiding a direct mate, but the remaining endgame with an extra pawn and a pair of bishop was very promising from a black point of view. Black later picked up more pawns, and Roulet-Dubonnet neatly finished off the game as he after 59 moves sacrificed one of his bishops to promote one of his passed pawns.



Gjestemoen-Vonhirsch vs Al-Tarboush

The international Norwegians **FM Andre Gjestemoen-Vonhirsch (2329)** and **FM Ward Al-Tarboush (2161)** today investigated a relatively interesting variation of the Russian opening, in which white castles long and black short. White first went for a pawn storm on the kingside, but then accepted an invitation to a queen exchange at c4. A creative stream of tactical exchanges finally ended after 25 moves, leaving a fairly balanced endgame with rook, bishop and five pawns on each side. Opposite-coloured bishops voted for a draw, but white was closer to winning chances,

despite his inferior pawn structure. White got and saw the chance just before the first time control, as black became too careless and after 39.c3! suddenly had few squares for his bishop at d4. The bishop survived, as white failed to find the most dangerous continuation, although white still won a pawn and could play on for a win. Black's play for the next moves was a bit disillusioned, and so white could pick up another pawn at a5 with a close to winning position. White however efficiently tricked himself while trying to trick black with 53.Rg2?: As demonstrated by Al-Tarboush, white could just take the rook and then return it to reach a draw fortress in the opposite-coloured bishop endgame.

IM Gerard Welling (2272) as white in a Sicilian against **Joel P. Ganta (2031)** went for a slow positional set up with 3.Be2 and 4.c3, but still succeeded in sacrificing a pawn for a strong initiative in the opening. Black's king at f7 soon came under fire, and white had an obvious advantage as he after 24 moves won back the pawn at f6. As black in desperation tried to snatch a pawn at c4 with his bishop, this game should have ended up like a classical attacking win following a bishop sacrifice at g6. Welling actually found the bishop sacrifice, but then repeated checks and accepted a draw with some six minutes left on his clock. Somehow the IM tired too early after his strong attacking play, not noting that white if playing 30.Nh7+! instead of 30.Qf6+ would win the black rook at e8 for free within four more moves.



Welling vs Ganta

Matan Prilleltensky (2222) and **Vetle Bjørge Strand (2053)** started up with a Slav opening today, but ended up in the neighbourhood of a closed Catalan. Material was balanced, after white won back at b5 the pawn he had sacrificed at c4. Chances later were approximately balanced, as white had a pair of bishops and black a two against one queenside pawn majority. As white was able to exchange the black pawn at c4 he came better due to his active pair of bishops, although black after forcing an exchange of queens was rather solid in the endgame. The double minor piece endgame with four pawns on each side was testing for black, as white had both a pair of bishops and the more active king. Strand however kept his concentration well today. Helped by Prilleltensky's obligatory time shortage, the 14 year old succeeded in exchanging all the remaining pawns and pieces before 60 moves.



Prilleltensky vs Strand

The talented junior duel between **Eivind Grunt Kreken (2107)** vs **Jacob Templen Grave (2221)** saw a rare Caro-Kann Panno line, leading first to a fairly balanced isolated pawn position and then to a fairly balanced hanging pawns position. Advancing the d5-pawn to d6 here favoured black, as he could block the pawn safely and then start a counterattack on the kingside with his e- and f-pawn. Black following this had a promising position. Sacrificing a knight for some air at g5 still was to overdo it from a white point of view. Black of course cashed in the knight, and although his king at was a bit open for some moves, black soon could hide it at f7 and exchange it all down to a won endgame with an extra piece.



Kreken vs Grave



Westrum vs Austad

The also talented juniors **Kim Roger Hansen Westrum (2156)** and **Eirik Strøm Austad (1985)** instead discussed a Trompovsky opening in which white first offered his testimony pawn at b2 some six moves in a row, and then (as black's queen at b6 still ignored the pawn) castled long. White later for some moves kept a loose extra pawn at g6, with some chances for an

advantage. As black picked up the pawn at g6 after 24 moves, chances again were balanced. Three moves later on white attacked the black center with 27.f4!? and at the same time offered a draw, which was accepted in a roughly balanced but still fairly interesting position.

Per Fredrik Holand (2024) and **Mathias Lind Schouten (2128)** started up with a Sicilian Taimanov line, in which white actually succeeded in winning black's backward pawn at d6. Black first had some structural compensation due to white's two isolated e-pawns. As white a few moves later on could play 19.Nd5+, forcing black to exchange the knight and so repair white's structure, it was really just a sound pawn up. The position with two rooks, bishop and seven pawns against two rooks, knight and six pawns following this was much better for white after 22 moves. White's rook at b6 was not ideal, but neither in any danger. Sacrificing the rook for a knight and a pawn following this was completely unnecessary, and beside also a misunderstanding of the upcoming endgame, as black's active pair of rooks here soon dominated the board. Black picked up a few pawns and then exchanged one of his rooks to reach a totally won endgame with rook and two pawns against bishop and one pawn.

Gunnar Stray (2015) as white against **Laurin Perkampus (2123)** once more went for one of his Queen's Pawn openings with d4-Nf3-g3-c3-Nbd2. It again worked out remarkably well, as white after three sets of minor pieces were exchanged had a promising pressure against the backward black pawn at d5. Modest Stray again was well satisfied with a draw against a younger and higher rated opponent, and after 21 moves accepted a draw although he was better on the board and some 40 minutes ahead on the clock.

Shadi Sian (2108) versus **Ask Amundsen (1869)** was a teenager duel in which black played too carelessly after the opening: The pawn structure true enough was symmetrical after the c-, d- and e-pawns all were exchanged, but white had all the more active pieces and soon got a strong pressure.

21.Qe5 was a strong move, threatening a mate at g7 and so forcing tactics which ten moves later left white two pawns up in the minor piece endgame. Black first had a more active king here. Sian before 40 moves however found a good plan as he returned one of the pawns to exchange his knight against black's bishop – after which the pawn endgame was an easy win.



Sian vs Amundsen



Verbin vs Fiskaaen

Valentina Verbin (2075) and **Martin Holten Fiskaaen (2118)** had even another Sicilian opening test. This one was in the 3.Bb5+-line, leading after some exchanges to a roughly balanced isolated pawn position. Black was able to establish and protect a passed pawn at d4, but unable to advance it further or find any other inroads. The queen and rook endgame which came on board after 27 moves following this was rather static. The players still moved back, forth and in cycle for some 20 more moves before agreeing to share the point.

The talented junior duel between **Dion Krivenko (2107)** and **Andreas Skrede Hausken (2050)** made a somewhat mysterious start, with a Scotch opening in which white gave away the key pawn at e4 and placed his bishops at e1 and f1. White still had potential in his pair of bishops, and suddenly came much better as he around move 15 directed them against black's queen at g5. Black succeeded in saving his queen, but due to black's very bad development and weak first rank, white still decided by a direct attack against the black king before 25 moves.

Evsuld Myagmarsuren (1952) and **Sondre Melaa (2223)**

unexpectedly started up with a Scandinavian opening.

White played too slowly here, first giving black the pair of bishops and then delaying castling until black could open the center with a powerful 11... e5!.

White finally castled, but lost a pawn and after 25 moves found himself in a rather miserable endgame with two rooks, knight and five pawns against two rooks, bishop and six pawns. This was

close to winning as black had both the better pieces and the better structure. Myagmarsuren understandably looked disillusioned at this stage, and Melaa efficiently forced off the remaining pieces to reach a won pawn endgame before 40 moves.



Myagmarsuren vs Melaa

Nicolai Østensen (2136) and **WFM Anita Grønnestad (1970)** first had a fairly balanced Caro-Kann opening, as black's pair of bishops roughly compensated her isolated pawn at d5. White first got a favourable hanging pawn position after he was allowed to exchange off black's light-squared bishop for a knight at e6, and then white by a strong tactical 23.b4! could open the position with a very strong initiative. Black following this anyway was in deep trouble when she blundered two pieces for a rook and stumbled into a decisive attack against her king.

Heine N. Johannessen (2033) versus **Sindre Lyngsaunet Ytrestøyl (2045)** was a Queen's Gambit with Bf4, in which all the knights were exchanged within the first 10 moves. White later had space advantage due to his pawn at c5, and also the more active pieces. From this starting point it was not unexpected that white soon made progress with his queenside attack, while black's counterattack on the kingside only gave away some more pawns. White following this anyway had an overwhelming position in the rooks and bishop endgame, when black after 36 moves blundered his bishop and resigned.

FM Richard Bjerke (2096) versus **FM Pål-Ole Liabøtrø (2145)** was a veteran's meeting between two rusty but still very capable master players. The start was a Bogo-Indian, in which the pair of bishops gave white a small plus as the position opened. Giving up his dark-squared bishop for a knight on f6 probably was not the best from a white point of view. Bjerke actually won the black pawn at f6 a few moves later, but then he immediately offered a draw since black was about to take over the initiative.

Open Group



Aroven vs Hammari

First rated **FM Joachim Solberg (2167)** in the Open tonight lost his second half point by not playing, while second rated **Mikael Aroven (1997)** lost his first half point by playing. Aroven had an extra pawn in the endgame and played for a win until his last minute on the clock, but his young opponent **Vinjar Hammari (1853)** still defended very well and saved the draw with one against two pawns in the pawn endgame. Solberg and Aroven finally will face each other in the seventh round with an exciting starting point: Aroven at 5.5/6 will be half a point ahead before the game, while Solberg will get the advantage of playing white.

Both the top rated players should be prepared for some hungry and underrated young opponents in the two final rounds.

16 year old Bergen player **Olai Dyrhaug Eriksen (1767)** on the second board today soon took over the initiative and won by a crushing counterattack as black against **Lars Tormod Haugen (1861)**.



Haugen vs Eriksen

15 year old **Ben Samuel Groth Skaar (1704)** needed only 19 moves to defeat **Karim Ali (1696)**, true enough as the unpredictable veteran blundered gravely in a messy position. Eriksen and Skaar following this are sharing the second place with Solberg at 5.0/6, only half a point behind Aroven.

Overall we had many attacking games and many young winners in the Open today.

18 year old **Max Moe Pedersen (1881)** hit back from yesterday's loss as he suddenly came up with a crushing attack in the endgame against **Lukas Dominik Gåsland (1604)**.

Fifth board saw **Rune Kleiven Rynning (1667)** defeating **Theo N. Johannessen (1756)** with a powerful h-file attack, while 18 year old **Simen Nikolai Storlid (1666)** on the sixth board made a new surprising result in a rather shocking way, outplaying **Kristoffer Wang Størmhaug (1893)** in only 17 moves.



Photos by Tom Eriksen