

## THE LAHLUM ROUND REPORT

# 1



### GM Group

Troublesome times in parts of Asia combined with numerous visa issues in India unfortunately cost this tournament quite a few players in the final two weeks before the first round, leaving 60 players in the GM group and 32 players in the Open. Including 10 players with a GM title and 14 players with an IM title, and a median ELO just around 2250, the GM group still offers excellent title norm chances.

Unfortunately all the registered female players from India in the end were unable to reach Fagernes in time for this tournament, leaving a total of two female players in the GM group. 24 year old WGM Fiona Sieber (2264) of Germany won her first round game with a nice attack and is favourite for the best woman prize, although 18 year old WIM Trisha Kanyamarala (2160) of Ireland might be an underrated challenger.

First round saw an Elo difference around 300–350 points on all boards, and not unexpectedly most of today's 28 games got the expected winner in the end. No player from the lower half succeeded in winning their first-round game in the GM group, although they had quite a few winning positions and reached no less than eight drawn games. Four of these notably came in games involving Grandmasters, with second rated GM Krishnan Sasikiran (2571) and fifth rated GM Elham Amar (2540) both failing to win.

Top boards in the first round were a little bit reduced, as four out of the top fifteen players had requested a walk-over draw due to team league matches taking place in other countries earlier today. This applies to fourth rated GM Titas Stremavicius (2541), eleventh rated GM Erik Blomqvist (2483), fourteenth rated GM Tiger Hillarp (2455) and fifteenth rated IM Hampus Sörensen (2423), all entering the tournament at 0,5/1 from the second round.

The first board meeting between **FM Dion Krivenko (2244)** and **GM Rinat Jumabayev (2577)** started up with a positional Sicilian Rossolimo duel, later transposing into a Maroczy Bind. Exchanging the queens at move 11 was a fairly safe decision from a white point of view, but the GM later had the slightly better pieces and soon won an exchange after white weakened his kingside with 13.g3? White's pair of bishops offered him some compensation, and Jumabayev after 30 moves still had much work left with two rooks, one bishop and four pawns against one rook, two bishops and four pawns. The FM however made a very dubious decision when inviting a rook exchange, and later the GM had it all under fair control.



**Krivenko vs Jumabayev**

Second board duel between **GM Krishnan Sasikiran (2571)** and **CM Andreas Skotheim (2234)** saw a rather closed Ruy Lopez duel, in which no piece (or pawn) had left the board after 20 moves. White early established a space advantage with d4 followed by d5 and reportedly was slightly better, although black found thematic counterplay with 13...f5 followed by 15...Nf4. Sasikiran made a sound positional decision when giving up his light-squared bishop for a knight with 22.Bxd7, but spent much time without finding any good plan afterwards. After 26 moves black had exchanged one of the dangerous white knights and balanced the chances. Sasikiran unexpectedly pulled the brake and offered a draw only two moves later on, with four minutes against fifteen minutes in a double-edged and about balanced position. 25 year old 2200-player Skotheim of course was still happy to accept as black against a GM just below 2600.



**Sasikiran vs Skotheim**

Norwegian **GM Frode Urkedal (2559)** is the third rated player of this tournament following his strong result in the chess Olympiad, and won his first game very convincingly as black against Dutch veteran **IM Gerard Welling (2206)**. Black got a center advantage following a too slow Four Knights opening from white, and Urkedal's initiative developed into a decisive kingside attack before 25 moves. The best thing to say about white's situation in the final position here, is that he was only 45 minutes behind on the clock.



**Amar vs Krishnan**

19 year old Norwegian **GM Elham Amar (2540)** as white against 17 year old Indian **FM Ritvik Krishnan (2206)** started up with a positional Italian opening, in which white got the pair of bishops after 7.Na4 followed by 11.Nxb6. Black was able to force an exchange of the light-squared bishops and following this had no serious problems. Queens were exchanged at move 24, leaving a fairly balanced endgame with two rooks, one knight and six pawns on each side. The position soon deadlocked, and a draw was agreed in a more or less bankbox position after 42 moves.



**Westrum vs Rithvik**

**Kim Roger Hansen Westrum (2205)** as white against **GM Raja Rithvik R (2514)** went for an English queenside fianchetto with 1.c4 followed by b3 and Bb2, but black had no problems after white closed his own bishop diagonal with 7.cxd5 exd5 8.d4. The GM soon went for a kingside attack with 12.--- Ne4 followed by 13.--- f5 and took over the initiative on the board – while both players spent much time on the clock. Around move 28 black had reached a strategically won position, as he was about to activate his bad bishop from b7 and create a direct light-square attack. Raja had only five seconds left on the clock when

completing his move 37, but anyway had a won position even before Westrum lost material and resigned two moves later on.

English **IM Ameet Ghasi (2503)** as white against Norwegian veteran **FM Gustav Gudbrandsen (2197)** went for a positional King's Indian Advance, and due to his pair of bishops had a pleasant edge after 15 moves. White's positional pressure soon became a winning initiative, as black around move 20 was helpful to open the b- and d-file for the white rooks. Ghasi following this anyway was a pawn up with a winning position, when Gudbrandsen overlooked a tactical shot which decided the game:



26.--- Rxa5? 27.Bxc4! Rxd5 28.Bxd5 Na5 29.Bb6! 1-0

**CM Soham Datar (2188)** played hardball as white against **IM Semen Mitusov (2486)**, first entering a Sicilian Grand Prix attack and then sacrificing a pawn with 8.f5!?. White had the longer preparation, but failed to keep up the pressure as he was out on his own some three moves later. Both players spent much time and a tense struggle followed as white's more active pieces approximately compensated for the extra black pawn. Patient Mitusov gradually succeeded in activating his pieces, and anyway had a winning position when Datar went for a tricky but dubious exchange sacrifice:



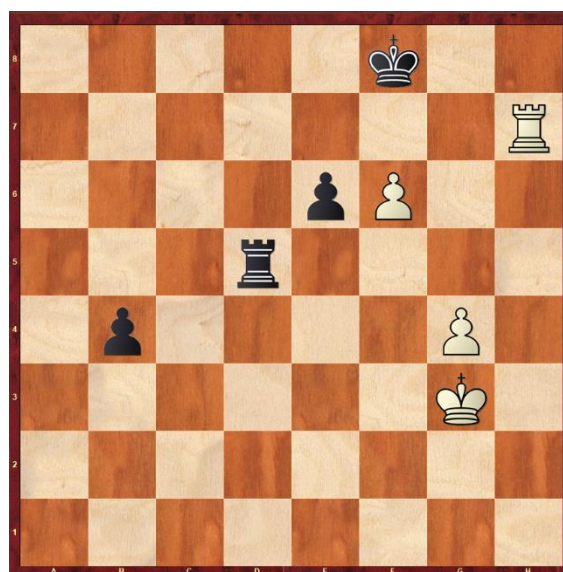
23.Rf5? exf5 24.Qxg6 Be6! 25.Bxe6 fxe6 26.exf5 Tcxf5 and black soon won.



**Kvaløy vs Sian**

The talented Norwegian teenager duel between **IM Aksel Bu Kvaløy (2484)** and **Shadi Sian (2182)** on the other hand was a tense Catalan gambit game, in which black hung on an extra pawn at c4 for a while. White finally won back the pawn at move 14, after which chances were about balanced. The game was reported a possible sensation around move 28–32, as Sian was a pawn up with the more active pieces and two connected passed pawns on the queenside. With both players running short of time in a complicated position, black kept an extra pawn and a clear advantage into an endgame with rook, knight and six pawns against rook, bishop and five pawns. Following a dubious move 40 from black, white's active pieces gave him the better chances despite a pawn less. Kvaløy during the fifth hour built a winning initiative, but in turn became too eager to win back the pawn. This was the last game in the playing venue when the decision came during mutual time pressure after almost five and a half hours:

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**Position after 61.Rh7**

Now 61.--- b3! 62.Rb7 b2 63.Kh4 b1Q 64.Rxb1 Kf7 should have been a draw. The tempting 61.---- Rb5? was too slow, as Kvaløy accurately demonstrated a one tempo win in the passed pawn race after 62.Kh4! Kg8 63.Rg7+ Kh8 64.g5! b3 65.g6 b2 66.Rh7+ Kg8 67.f7+ 1-0

The very young lions **Rishi Vijayakumar (2172)** and **IM Svyatoslav Bazakutsa (2483)** started up with a Sämisch King's Indian, reaching first a Benoni-like position and then a Benkö gambit after black sacrificed a pawn at b5. White after 22 moves had kept the extra pawn and exchanged two sets of minor pieces, but black still had the better position due to his b-file pressure and strong fianchetto bishop at g7. Black gave up most of his advantage by mysteriously accepting a queen exchange, but due to his passed d-pawn and more active pieces still kept a promising pressure with rook, knight and five pawns against rook, knight and six pawns. Vijayakumar should have defended actively with 33.Rxa7! and fair chances for a draw, as the passive defence after 33.Rd1? d2 soon collapsed.



**Das vs Myagmarsuren**

**GM Sayantan Das (2471)** and **CM Evsuld Myagmarsuren (2171)** discussed a Hyperaccelerated Sicilian Dragon, accelerating further as black creatively opened the kingside with 8.--- g5!? and 9.--- g4. White later had a kingside space advantage due to his pawn at e5, while black came up with about enough counterplay in the b-file. White reportedly played very well for a while afterwards and after 30 moves had reached a won position with queen, rook, bishop and five pawns against queen, rook, knight and five pawns. Black' passed pawn at a5 however gave white something to worry about. Running short of time the GM

found nothing better than exchanging the rooks, leading to a materially balanced queen and minor piece endgame which was soon declared a draw by repetition of checks.



**Aizenberg vs Koduri**

Indian **Advaitt Srikant Koduri (2162)** today went for a London System with 1.d4 2.Nf3 3.Bf4, while Israeli **IM Benny Aizenberg (2423)** went for a King's Indian.

Black had no sorrows following an early queen exchange, and due to his pair of bishops had the slightly better long term perspectives after 25 moves.

17 year old Aizenberg instructively increased the pressure and within seven more moves won two minor pieces for a rook with a decisive endgame advantage.

**IM Jonah B. Willow (2420)** versus **WIM Trisha Kanyamarala (2160)** saw a Classical and double-edged Sicilian duel, in which white castled long and started a pawn storm on the kingside. Castling long here was the safe choice but still somewhat an emergency exit from a black point of view, as white later kept a promising initiative. Willow lagged half an hour behind on the clock, but kept a pressure on the board. 18 year old Trisha following this anyway had an uphill struggle when she just before the time control blundered the key pawn at e6. Later white's passed pawn at e5 combined with his more safe king made the win trivial.



**Willow vs Kanyamarala**

**CM Indy Soutcott-Moyers (2143)** as white against rusty but capable **GM Torbjørn Ringdal Hansen (2415)** took a positional approach in a King's Indian fianchetto duel. White established a space advantage with 9.d5 and later castled long to start a pawn storm on the kingside. The attack halted, but white still kept a positional edge around move 20–25. Southcott-Moyers still had a long and thorny road to win this game, and the talented 16 year old was well satisfied to get a draw by repetition shortly before the time control.



**Hansen vs Soutcott-Moyers**

**FM Raem Sherman (2390)** and **IM Stephen Mannion (2142)** started up with a Zukertort Opening, transposing first into an English opening and then into a Queen's Gambit Tarrasch-like position with an isolated black pawn at d5. White first had the better chances due to his control over the key square at d4, although veteran Mannion came up with enough queenside counterplay to balance the chances around move 22. Unwilling to accept a draw, 19 year old Sherman suddenly had allowed too much counterplay:



**Mannion vs Sherman**



Position after 38.Qh4

The powerful 38.--- e3! 39.fxe3 Rxe3 now would have created serious headache for the white king. The sound 38.--- Qd6? 39.Rh5 Kf8 40.Nf5 Bxf5 instead slowed down to a drawn within a few more moves.

**Peder Marcus Aamodt (2126)** versus **IM Moksh Doshi (2377)** saw a rare positional Ruy Lopez line with an isolated white pawn at d5. Chances remained about balanced before and after a queen exchange at move 19. White's bayonet attack with h4-h5-h6 here was overambitious, hence black came slightly better before it all exchanged down to a draw after the first time control.



Gaikwad vs Wallace

Australian-Norwegian **IM John-Paul Wallace (2373)** got the upper hand as white in a rare Queen's Pawn position against Indian **FM Siddhant Gaikwad (2039)**, as white's bishop at e5 combined with his rook at g1 gave him some kingside pressure. Gaikwad failed to find disturbing counterplay or a good defensive plan, and stopped the clock as he after 21 moves was about to lose material.





**Harish vs Kanyamarala**

**CM Neeraj Harish (2024)** and **IM Tarun Kanyamarala (2369)** tonight had a tense attacking duel in a French Sicilian line. White bravely castled long and around move 16–19 apparently had the better attacking chances. 14 year old Harish however failed to find the best continuation, allowing black to force off the queens and reach a balanced endgame with two rooks and six pawns on each side. White held a pressure in the single rook endgame before 40 moves. As the junior was unwilling to run any risks, the IM despite time pressure proved able to scrape a draw.

Indian **IM Sidhant Mohapatra (2369)** as white in a Sicilian against the Norwegian junior champion **Pantham Kaewpitakkun (2023)** first had only a slight plus, due to his light squared fianchetto bishop. Careless play from black gave white a promising kingside pressure, but 15 year old Pantham for a while defended well. Although having lost a pawn he was well inside the ring until suddenly blundering a rook:



27.--- Rxe1 leaves the IM with a long road to the full point. 27.--- Qxd5? 28.Rxe8+ on the other hand was a short and hard fall ...

**Olav Bjørkan (2022)** versus **FM Namitbir Singh Walia (2351)** saw a rather modern and dynamic Gruenfeld Exchange line, in which white's extra c-pawn after 20 moves approximately balanced his weakened kingside. White took the safe road as he gave back the extra pawn to exchange queens, leaving after 27 moves a balanced (although far from dead) rook endgame with five pawns for each player. 14 year old Bjørkan handled the rook endgame convincingly against a much higher rated and more experienced opponent, hence the game was agreed a draw as the players just before 40 moves were about to reach a dead drawn rook endgame with two pawns on each side.



**Carlsson vs Kittilsen**

**IM Ludvig Carlsson (2334)** and **Sigurd Kittilsen (1981)** meanwhile discussed an accelerated Sicilian Dragon, this time leading to a Maroczy Bind under favourable conditions seen from the white side. As white had already started up a kingside attack with 14.f4!?, black fatally underestimated the dangers with 15.--- Nd7? – allowing a thematic 16.f5! with a dangerous kingside attack. Within five more moves, white won two bishops for a rook with a safely won position.

The talented teenager duel between Norwegian **Even Huneide Hetland (1970)** and American **FM Shubh Jayesh Laddha (2308)** started up with some Gruenfeld fianchetto relative, reportedly known as a King’s Indian Attack. Black bravely and greedily tried to hang on a loose extra pawn at c4, and got the help needed to keep it all the way into a won double rook endgame.



**Sørgerd vs Eliseev**

The Norwegian generation duel between 17 year old **FM Sergey Eliseev (2276)** and 61 year old **Jan Sørgerd (1966)** saw a tight Sicilian Najdorf battle in which both players eventually castled long. White apparently first had a promising kingside attack, but black came up with disturbing queenside counterplay and after 25 moves had reached an approximately balanced position with two rooks, one bishop, one knight and six pawns against two rooks, two bishops and six pawns. White later succeeded in getting pressure against the backward black pawn at f7 and eventually won it. He later had a dangerous passed pawn at f6. The remaining

rook endgame after 40 moves still was no way an easy win, due to black’s much more active king. Sørgerd finally made a decisive mistake as he at move 44 gave up his key pawn at h6 for white’s less important pawn at e5. Still awake after five hours, ambitious Eliseev efficiently used his chance to get a pole-in win.

The game between **Kristoffer Wang Strømhaug (1960)** and **CM Martin Øksendal (2271)** on the other hand was a talented teenager duel between two players from the Hell chess club in the Trøndelag region. The game saw another Sicilian Najdorf duel, lightening up immediately after the opening as black pseudo-sacrificed a piece with 11.--- Nxe4!? White should have tested the critical 12.Nxe4 with a messy position, as instead 12.axb5? Qh4+ soon gave black a won position with two extra pawns.



**Sieber vs Rustan**

German **WGM Fiona Sieber (2264)** and Norwegian junior **Elias B. Rustan (1941)** investigated the provocative old Caro-Kann Advance line with 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5?! It first did not work out too well from a white point of view, as black due to his pair of bishops and center pawns was objectively better after 15 moves. Black's weakened kingside however gave white some attacking chances, and around move 20–25 white had a promising attack. After Sieber made a strong exchange sacrifice to open all doors on the kingside, the game was decided by a nice attack under mutual time pressure:



33.g4+! Kxg4 34.Qg3+ Kh5 35.Qh3+! Kg5 34.Bh6+ 1-0 The black queen is hanging, yes, but even worse (for him) 34.--- Kf6 35.Qe6 is mate!

The Stavanger talented teenager duel between **David Mindestrømmen Simonsen (1930)** and **Martin Holten Fiskaaen (2259)** saw a rather closed and tight French Advance duel, in which black after castling long soon had a promising kingside attack coming up. Black won following an instructive mistake from white:



Position after 20.--- h6?!

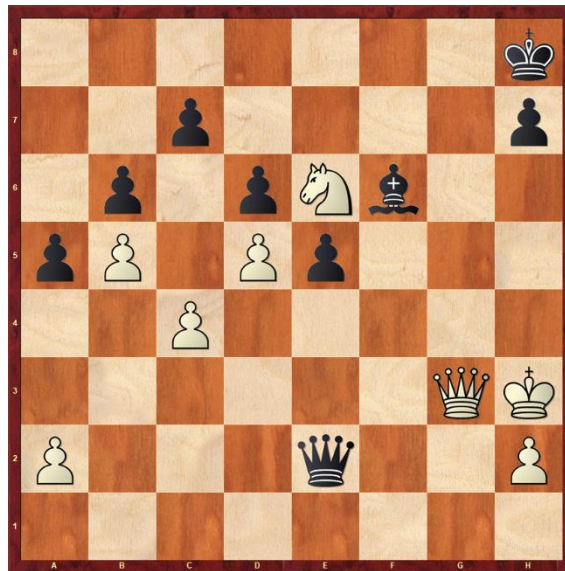
Now 21.g6! would have kept the kingside closed and the outcome open, while instead 21.Na3? hxg5 22.Nb5? Bf3! instructively opened the kingside and closed the game ... 0-1



Juodziukynas vs Øye-Strømberg

**FM Alexander Øye-Strømberg (2248)** versus **Aidas Juodziukynas (1917)** was another Norwegian junior duel and another unbalanced Najdorf Sicilian duel. This one following too careless play from black soon tipped in favour of white with a tactical 13.Qh5! e5 14.Ne6!? Black woke up in time and succeeded in avoiding a direct knock out, but white still won a very sound pawn and later had an easy win in the rook and minor pieces endgame.

**Sebastian Lien (1911)** and **FM Kush Bhagat (2245)** instead discussed a heavyweight closed King's Indian position, in which white established a space advantage but later found no active plan. Black was happy to exchange three sets of minor pieces, as white's weakened light squares on the kingside gave black a close to winning attack after 25 moves. Lien however fought on very well under time pressure and after move 40 he had reached a drawish position with queen, knight and five pawns against queen, bishop and six pawns. White still had a pawn less with the more open king, and the game was decided within only two more moves:



Now 41.Qg4! could have given enough counterplay against the black king, but Lien much too fast went for 41.Nxc7? Qxc4 42.Ne8? Qc8+ 0-1

Finally, **CM Akhilesh Nagare (2245)** as white against **Lukas Dominik Gåsland (1905)** went for a Zukertort opening, reaching a good old Nimzo-Larsen variation. White was a bit too patient from the opening and black following this could establish a promising space advantage. Gåsland however made a serious positional misunderstanding when exchanging both his knights at d4 at move 22–23, as white within five more moves could establish a strong knight on the e4 square and pick up black’s loose a-pawn with a much better position. The game remained exciting, but white later was in command and within a few moves after the first time control reached a won queen and bishop endgame with two extra pawns. Opposite-coloured bishops in the end did not save black here, as white could win the last black pawn and establish three connected passed pawns.



**Nagare vs Gåsland**

# Open Group

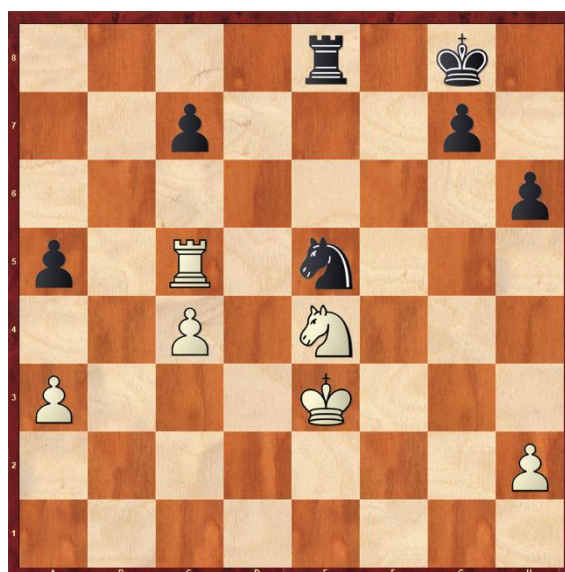
The **Open** following the FIDE Elo reform earlier this year at least appears to be more tight than it used to be, now including 32 players within 500 points from just below 2000 to just below 1500. The first game to finish was a rather sound and balanced, if still surprising, 25 moves draw between Indian **Vishwanathan Krishan (1550)** and Norwegian **Vidar Kopperud (1774)**. Notably this became the only draw in this group tonight, since all the remaining 15 games in the end got a winner.



Nesheim vs Gjersvik

Today's big surprise obviously came on the first board, as 12 year old Søråshøgda talent **Aksel Elias Gjersvik (1693)** recovered from an inferior middle game position to defeat top rated **Mathias Nesheim (1981)**. Understandably rusty almost three years after his last classical game, Nesheim still improved a lot during this endgame. Defending with one against two pawns in a rook endgame, he had a draw well within reach when losing on time after 35 moves. The clock of course still is an important part of the game and Gjersvik won fully in accordance with the rules, also having had a won position on the board some minutes earlier on.

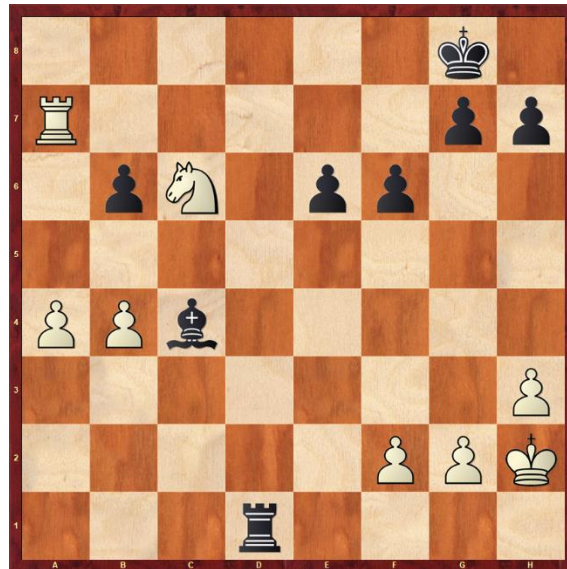
Second rated **Håvard Eriksen Bech (1939)** and third rated **Nikolai Olsen Wernberg (1906)** both are well trimmed and won very convincingly, while the fourth board also got a very surprising winner tonight. 17 year old **David Kristiansen (1639)** here instructively won material by a pin against the capable but still unpredictable 16 year old **Daniel Vollheim (1858)**.



34.--- Nd7! 35.Rd5 Nf6 36.Rd4 c5! and black won a full piece.

Fifth board saw an exciting generation duel, but in the end got the expected outcome, as 72 year old **Ole Smeby** succeeded to win a better rook endgame as black against the talented 12 year old **Jørgen Edelsteen (1635)**.

Smeby's club Kongsvinger got a surprise win on a middle board, as 11 year old **Terje Kevin Lysen (1590)** efficiently used his chance to punish a far from obvious blunder from slightly older and much more experienced **Sophie Damiano (1806)**:



26.--- Rd6? was a natural move, but still lost a key pawn after 27.Ne7+! Kf8 28.Nc8 Rc6 29.Ra8! Kf7 30.b5 Rc5 31.Nxb6. White's two passed pawn later soon won a piece.



**Sigvaldsen vs Eriksen**

Another young and happy surprise man today was 14 year old Gjøvik player **Sebastian Sigvaldsen (1507)**, creating an unstoppable armada of passed pawns as black against **Tom Eriksen (1741)**. 58 year old Eriksen is playing at Fagernes for the first time, but still has a very well known face since he has been our arbiter for many years. Thanks a lot to Tom for taking the time to help us with pictures for the webpage in between his games – and congratulations to Sebastian as well as the other young surprise men from a hard-fought first round in the Open!

**Photos by IA Monica Lauvik Fjeldstad**