

THE LAHLUM ROUND REPORT

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GM Group

The obvious winner on the top boards in this second half of the double round was top rated and 35 year old GM Rinat Jumabayev of Kazakhstan, leading the tournament alone with an outstanding 4,5/5 after winning in only 28 moves as white against IM Semen Mitusov. Young Mitusov following this is behind schedule for his decisive GM-norm, while the even younger IM Aksel Bu Kvaløy is ahead of schedule at 4,0/5 after winning by a crushing attack following a blunder from IM Moksh Doshi. Second board duel between IM Ameet Ghasi and IM Jonah Willow was a short draw, leaving the English candidates respectively just ahead of and just behind schedule for a GM norm. 16 year old Ukrainian Svyatoslav Bazakutsa remains well behind schedule in that run, although still not out of it, following a nice attacking win as black this round.

GM Raja Ritvik R hit back by winning a long and turbulent battle against GM Tiger Hillarp, and fourth rated Lithuanian GM Titas Stremavicus also joined the 4,0/5-club after winning a long endgame against IM Benny Aizenberg. Finally the group of six players sharing the second place also includes 27 year old Indian GM Sayantan Das, tonight winning by a crushing attack against unpredictable young CM Martin Øksendal.

Øksendal despite tonight's set back is still in the run for an IM-norm. The frontrunner here however still is 17 year old Indian FM Ritvik Krishnan, undefeated at 3,0/5 with a performance of 2568 after drawing another GM today. 15 year old Norwegian Martin Holten Fiskaaen very well deserved qualified for the FM title and joined the IM-norm run as he tonight won a creative attacking game against Swede IM Hampus Sörensen. 18 year old Estonian FM Dion Krivenko also is on schedule for an IM-norm following a fighting draw against GM Frode Urkedal. So is sensationally 14 year old Norwegian CM Evsuld Myagmarsuren, this round scoring a balanced draw as black against Indian IM Sidhant Mohapatra. 14 year old American CM Neeraj Harish is down at a 50 % score after losing against Bazakutsa today, although remarkably still with a performance of 2435 after playing four IMs and one GM.

Round 6 following all this now is coming up with top board pairings Stremavicius– Jumabayev, Willow–Rithvik and Kvaløy–Ghasi, third board obviously being a key game for the Norwegian and English GM norm chances.

The first board duel between **GM Rinat Jumabayev (2577)** and **IM Semen Mitusov (2486)** started up with an Italian opening, in which white kept a slight space advantage after exchanging the dark-squared bishop. 18.--- Ng6? was natural from a positional point of view, but still it turned out to be an expensive mistake:



19.Nxe5! Bxd1 20.Nxg6 Bg4 21.Nh4 Nf4?! 22.gxf4 Qxh4 23.Rg3 with an extra pawn and a big advantage for white. Mitusov for once appeared a little disillusioned and resigned early five moves later on, although white's position for sure was winning.

The second board duel between **IM Ahmeed Ghasi (2503)** and **IM Jonah Willow (2420)** was drawn by a repetition within «ten minutes and ten minutes». The outcome was very understandable as the players are travelling together to this tournament, as both had a won another game earlier this day – and as both at 4,0/5 are still fully in the run for a GM norm.



Aizenberg

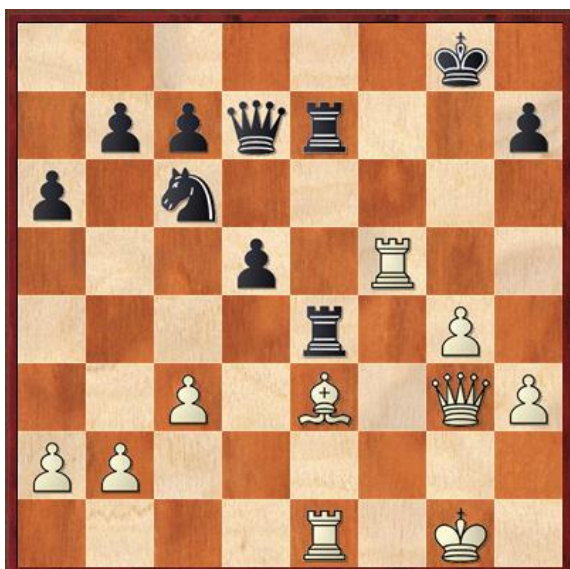
Israeli **IM Benny Aizenberg (2423)** and Lithuanian **GM Titas Stremavicius (2541)** on the third board discussed a Sicilian Rossolimo position, in which white's center first appeared more important than black's pair of bishops. Later white however gave up his pawn at c4 much too cheaply. Both players later made some mistakes, but black's extra pawn always gave him an advantage. White made the decisive mistake when he short of time offered a queen exchange at move 38: Stremavicius was happy to accept, and soon demonstrated the remaining rook and bishop endgame to be winning.

20 year old **GM Raja Rithvik R (2514)** immediately hit back after his loss in round four, winning another inspired attacking game as white against 53 year old **GM Tiger Hillarp (2455)**. The starting point here was a Queen's Gambit in which white castled long, while black kept his king undeclared at e8. White all the time had the more active pieces, and got the chance for a creative tactical hit:



27.--- Qb6? turned out to be a crucial step in the wrong direction, as white suddenly had a decisive attack following 28.Nxh6! Rxh6 29.Rxh6 gxh6 30.Qf5! Be7 31.Qxf7+ with a dangerous attack. The Tiger fought on well and got the help needed to reach a drawish endgame with rook and five pawns against two bishops and three pawns, but white still had the easier position and went on to win this.

IM Aksel Bu Kvaløy (2484) and **IM Moksh Doshi (2377)** discussed a rare Ruy Lopez line in which chances appeared fairly balanced after exchanging three sets of minor pieces. Kvaløy however immediately used his chance when Doshi became too much of an optimist:



26.--- d4?? 27.Qf3! and black suddenly had no answer to the double treat of 28.Rf8+ and 28.Rg5+. Black more or less in desperation tried 27.--- Qxf5 28.Qxf5 Rxe3, but then stopped the clock after 29.Rf1 Re8 30.Qg5+ Kh8 31.Rf7. Kvaløy at 4,0/5 following this moved a big step closer to the GM title.

GM Sayantan Das (2471) and **CM Martin Øksendal (2271)** discussed the nowadays rare 6.Be2-line in a French Advance. Black apparently first did fine after snatching a pawn at c3, although white soon got too much attack coming up against the black king at e8. Castling long did not improve the situation much from a black point of view:



22.--- 0-0-0 23.Rxb7! Qxd4 24.Ba6! Qxe3 25.Rxe3 d4 26.Reb3 1-0

The sixth board meeting between **GM Krishnan Sasikiran (2571)** and **FM Kush Bhagat (2245)** first was not expected to last long, as the GM came much better from this King's Indian Fianchetto opening. Bhagat however realized the danger in time and succeeded in exchanging the worst dangers, although white still had a notable advantage in the endgame with three minor pieces on each side after 30 moves. Always solid Sasikiran however still is struggling to win games in this tournament. Allowing too many exchanges, he after five hours today had to accept a draw in the final knight endgame. Bhagat following this survival hangs on as a possible IM norm candidate.



Krivenko vs Urkedal

Estonian **FM Dion Krivenko (2244)** as white against **GM Frode Urkedal (2559)** went for the very rare 1.Nc3, and then transposed into the highly modern Rapport-Jobava system after 1.--- d5 2.d4 Nf6 3.Bf4 e6 4.Nb5. Chances later were roughly balanced for a while. although black's pair of bishops gave him somewhat better long term perspectives. White's decision to sacrifice an exchange upon the light-squared bishop with 27.Rxc6?! was objectively dubious, but still worked out fairly well as black soon decided to sacrifice an exchange back at g2. The remaining position with queen, bishop and three pawns on each side was not better for black, hence

Urkedal at move 35 forced a queen exchange and offered a draw. Krivenko is scoring well above expected so far and is on schedule for an IM norm, while Urkedal following a depressive double round must speed up to rejoin the run for top three prizes.

Young American **CM Neeraj Harish (2024)** and young Ukrainian **IM Svyataslav Bazakutsa (2483)** meanwhile discussed a provocative Caro-Kann Advance line on which black plays 1...c6 and 3...c5?!. 12.Qa4? here turned out to be a serious misunderstanding, as black after castling short could start a direct queenside attack with 13...b5! White's decision to castle long here was risky at best, and Harish anyway was in trouble when he entered dubious tactical complications:



17.Bxb5? axb5 18.Nxb5 Qc4 19.Nxd6 Nd3+ 20.Kd2 Nxe1 and black came an exchange up with an ongoing attack. Bazakutsa in an attacking mood completed the game with a massive mate after 31 moves.



Hansen

FM Ritvik Krishnan (2206) as white against **GM Torbjørn Ringdal Hansen (2415)** entered a Nimzo-Indian Rubinstein duel, in which chances were about balanced. None of the players made any serious mistakes and both apparently were well satisfied with sound exchanges, hence the game without many exciting moments ended up in a dead drawn opposite-coloured bishop endgame after 31 moves. Krishnan of course could be well satisfied with this draw, as he following one win and four draws against five GMs (!) is a full point ahead of schedule for an IM-norm.



Myagmarsuren

IM Sidhant Mohapatra (2369) as white against **CM Evsuld Myagmarsuren (2171)** went for a patient English double fianchetto, landing close to a slow Catalan as white at move 8 put the pawn at d4. Myagmarsuren in the meantime got the time needed to equalize.

White in the middle game had a slight edge, although black defended well and again equalized after 20 moves. Draw was suddenly agreed four moves later in an apparently rather dramatic situation:



Now after 24.--- Bxf2+!, 25.Kxf2? Qd4+ 26.Kf3 Qd3+ is better for black, and so obviously is 25.Kf1? Qd3+. White consequently has to play 25.Kh1! after which 25.--- Qc8 26.Qxc8 Rxc8 27.e5 Bd4 is a drawish (although not dead) endgame.

GM Elham Amar (2540) versus FM Shubh Laddha (2308) was a Classical Ruy Lopez duel, in which white had slightly the better pawn structure after exchanging the dark-squared bishop at c5. 10.h3?! followed by 11.g4 was a bit weakening, and black due to his pressure against the backward white pawn at d3 had a slight initiative after exchanging three sets of minor pieces. White defended well and so the game following sensible moves from players remained balanced all the way out. The queen endgame after the first time control was the most interesting part of this game, but still not unexpectedly ended without a winner:



Laddha vs Amar



45.g5 f5! 46.Kh3 fxe4 47.gxh6 gxh6 48.f4 e3 49.f5 e2 50.Qe5+ Kg8 51.Qe6+ Khe8 52.Qe5+ Kg8 53.Qxe2 Qf6 54.Qe6+! Kg7! 55.Qd7+ and draw by repetition of checks.

Erik Blomqvist (2483) versus CM Andreas Skotheim (2234) was another Ruy Lopez duel. This one was a delayed exchange line from the good old Steinitz days. Black had a pair of bishops approximately balancing white's better pawn structure. The thematic pawn break with 20.--- d5?! here reportedly was dubious, but still lead to an equal position since white did not test the critical and principal reply with 21.e5!. Black however became too eager to exchange pieces when giving up his dark-squared bishop for a knight at e5. Following this white held an edge in the rook and minor pieces and eventually won a pawn. Black obviously hoped that the opposite-coloured bishops would save a draw in the rook and bishop endgame, but this still was very difficult as white was a pawn up with two connected passed pawns on the queenside. Black following this anyway was lost when he instructively trapped his own bishop:



46.--- Ba4? 47.b5 Re6 48.Kb4 1-0

The young surprise man **Martin Holten Fiskaaen (2259)** as white against **IM Hampus Sörensen (2423)** started up with a Catalan opening. Black chose a solid closed set up, after which white established a space advantage with 14.c5. Black exchanged all the knights and started up a counterattack on the kingside. White had a solid grip on the center and cleverly turned the kingside against black. Then suddenly the position went from tense to winning for white following a brilliant queen sacrifice idea.



The natural 40.--- Rg7? actually was a blunder as white had 41.gxf5!! Qxg2 42.Rxg2+ Kf8 43.Rh1 – forcing black to give back the queen with a wrecked position. Instead 41.--- exf5 42.Qh2 Rh7 43.Rg2+ Kf8 44.Qg3 left black’s king under fire. Fiskaaen within a few moves accepted a queen exchange to win some of the black pawns, and during mutual time pressure in the sixth hour realized his two extra pawns in the rook and bishop endgame. Fiskaaen following this win is fully in the run for an IM norm, and qualified for the FM title as he passed 2300 for the first time!



The game between **IM John Paul Wallace (2373)** and **FM Gustav Gudbrandsen (2197)** saw a Classical French duel from the Steinitz era. White happily exchanged his key pawn at e5 to open files for an attack against the black king at e8. Black's decision to castle long at move 18 was understandable, but still a bit dubious, as white could take the pawn at f7 with a clear advantage. White's new passed f-pawn following this soon gave him a decisive advantage, and black anyway was in trouble when overlooking a promotion:

Wallace vs Gudbrandsen



Black should have tried to save a difficult endgame after 22.--- Qxe3, as 23.--- d4? 24.Qxd4 Qxb2? 25.f7 Rd8 26.f8Q! intending 26.--- Rxf8 27.Qc5+ won a full rook and the game for white.

Rishi Vijayakumar (2172) versus **IM Tarun Kanyamarala (2369)** started up like a positional Semi-Slav Anti-Meran duel, but suddenly turned violent as white bravely went for the Shabalov attack with 7.g4!? followed by 9.Rg1 and 10.g5. Black apparently was not fully prepared for this, hence white after 13 moves was ahead on the board and clock. With both players out of preparation, black however found the better moves and soon took over the initiative. White found his own king more in trouble than black's after exchanging three sets of minor pieces, and opposite-coloured bishops here favoured the attacking player. White following this anyway was in deep trouble when he blundered a piece:



28.Qb3? Be6! 29.Qc3 Rxb4! and black soon won as 30.Qxb4 Qc1+ is crushing.

Norwegian **FM Alexander Øye-Strømberg (2248)** and Indian **FM Namitbir Singh Walia (2351)** a few hours earlier on entered an apparently closed Ruy Lopez which soon became rather open and tactical:



12.--- Nxe4 13.d5 Bxe3 14.dxc6 Nxf2 15.Qe2 Nxh3++ 16.Kh1 Nf2+ 17.Rxf2 Bxf2 18.cxb7 however all was known from theory and both players before the start of the game. The position despite the mixed material is approximately balanced, and the game was drawn by an also well-known repetition well within the first hour.



Carlsson

Swede **IM Ludvig Carlsson (2334)** as white against Indian **Siddhant Gaikwad (2039)** today tested out a classical King's Indian exchange line – meaning that the queens were exchanged at d8 before move 10. This is not considered critical, but white obviously had the better preparation and first came better on the board with one hour more on the clock. 19.Ng1? however was a misunderstood invitation to exchange the light-squared bishops, after which black for some moves took over the initiative. Black in turn failed to find the critical plans, and around move 35–40 the endgame with rook, bishop and five pawns on each side was reported drawish.

With one extra hour on the clock white still continued to play, and was rewarded as black before move 60 mysteriously decided to give up his h-pawn. White's h-pawn following this became a passed pawn which anyway was decisive when black short of time blundered a tactical exchange – leading him to a dead lost pawn endgame.

Israeli **FM Raem Sherman (2390)** and Norwegian **Pantham Kaewpitakkun (2023)** discussed a Sicilian Rossolimo leading to a Maroczy Bind with a pleasant advantage for white. 17.--- Qc5? followed by 18.--- Bf8? here was a mistaken plan, and a few mistakes later this was efficiently illustrated as white captured the black queen at c5.

WGM Fiona Sieber (2264) versus **Sigurd Kittilsen (1981)** started up with a positional Sicilian duel, in which white advanced her pawn to e5 and castled long to play for a kingside attack. Black's position first was fine, but the game turned suddenly in favour of white, as black after 14.Kb1 missed the well-known threat of 15.Nxd5! – winning a center pawn with a winning advantage for white. Sieber in an inspired mood soon started a kingside attack and well before move 40 reached a won endgame with one exchange and two pawns more.

FM Sergey Eliseev (2276) versus **IM Stephen Mannion (2142)** was a Russian opening duel in which black's knight was exchanged at c3 in move 5, leaving white with a slight initiative and black with the slightly better pawn structure. 15.g4?! reportedly was a dubious attacking plan. It still gave white an advantage, since black made a serious mistake by taking back with the d-pawn following a piece exchange at c5 two moves later on. Taking back with the pawn weakened the pawn structure and temporarily left the queen at a5 out of play. Mannion realized the the mistake and reactivated his queen within a few moves, but in the meantime white had moved ahead with his kingside pawn storm. 22.g5? however was a too loose pawn sacrifice: Black could safely exchange queens and return the pawn, as his pair of bishops later gave him a clear advantage. Black now decided the play hardball for a win with a counterattack on the queenside:



29.--- b3?! 30.axb3 Rxb3 and now the cool 31.Kc1! would have been fine for white, while the panic 31.Rb5? Rxb5 32.cxb5 g5 reached a double minor piece endgame in which black's pair of bishops combined with the kingside pawn majority gave him a close to winning advantage. Strangely Mannion after the time control soon exchanged one of the bishops to win a pawn, forcing a two versus one pawn bishop endgame in which the extra pawn made no difference.

Peder Marcus Aamodt (2126) versus **CM Akhilesh Nagare (2245)** was a Sicilian Rossolimo line in which white suddenly got two very active bishops, hence black gave up an exchange to get a strong bishop pair himself. Aamodt found a good plan to exchange one of the bishops, and after 23 moves had a promising position with queen, two rooks, one knight and five pawns against queen, one rook, one bishop, one knight and six pawns. White was eager to exchange the queens as well, and consequently accepted to repair the black pawn structure a few moves later on. This worked out fairly well following inaccurate play from black, although white gave up almost all his advantage as he at move 32 decided not to force an exchange of black's remaining rook. Black following this succeeded in exchanging the remaining queenside pawns and reach an endgame with one rook, one knight and three kingside pawns against two rooks and three kingside pawns. This still was winning for white, although no way easy. Aamodt first made progress but then helped black to build a fortress – hence the game was finally drawn after 91 moves and five and a half hours.

Veteran Dutch **IM Gerard Welling (2206)** as white against Norwegian junior **Lukas Dominik Gåsland (1905)** made a clever start with the apparently slow Colle system, and then following 12.g4!? accelerated on the kingside. It worked out fairly well as white after hiding his own king at h1 got a dangerous attack in the g-file, and after 23 moves had won an exchange. Black's pair of bishops gave him some counterplay. As black accepted a bishop exchange, white after 40 moves head reached a close to winning endgame with rook and two pawns versus bishop and three pawns. Gåsland however fought on stubbornly while Welling is still struggling to win from better positions – hence this game as well ended up like a long fortress draw.



Southcott-Moyers

CM Indy Southcott-Moyers (2143) and **Shadi Sian (2182)** discussed a fairly balanced Queen's Gambit Declined, in which the queens were exchanged before move 10. A draw was suddenly agreed upon white's suggestion after 17 moves, in a balanced position which still could offer some possibilities for both players. White had a pair of bishops, but at least in the short run this gave no advantage as black had a nice knight at e4 and the slightly better pawn structure.

CM Soham Datar (2188) versus **Even Huneide Hetland (1970)** saw a positional Zukertort opening duel leading to a sound white pressure against black's hanging pawns at c5 and d5. Black equalized as white allowed a well timed 21...c4! advance, as black's passed c-pawn later was disturbing. The double rook endgame after 30 moves should have been a draw, as black's passed pawn at c3 compensated for white's extra pawn. Exchanging the queenside pawns here was perfectly fine from a black point of view. Hetland later defended soundly with three against four kingside pawns in the single rook endgame, and finally got his well-deserved half point in accordance with the well known sixth rank defence some two hours later on:



White's king cannot cross the sixth rank unless playing e6 – and after 87.e6 Rh1! he cannot escape checks from behind. Consequently the game was drawn after 88.Rb8+ Ke7 89.Rb7+ Ke8 90.Rb8+ etc.



Koduri

Indian **Advait Srikant Koduri (2162)** as white against Norwegian **Aidas Juodziukynas (1917)** went for a positional London system, and kept a promising queenside pressure after exchanging the queens plus two sets of minor pieces. This was a classical situation with a half-open a-file, in which black struggled to defend his scattered pawns at a7 and c6. White methodically increased the pressure until winning one of the pawns with 23.Rxc6, and well before the first time control reached an easily winning rook endgame.



Lien

Meanwhile Norwegian **Sebastian Lien (1911)** and Irish **WIM Trisha Kanyamarala (2160)** discussed a Queen's Gambit exchange line with the black bishop slightly awkward at b4. White and his pair of bishops came better after black gave up the bishop for a knight at c3. The following isolated queen's pawn position was pleasant for white and Lien had a close to winning position as he after 21 moves picked up a black pawn at a7. While Lien somehow cramped, Trisha however fought on well, activating her pieces with enough queenside counterplay to save a draw after 45 minutes. White played very well in the first half and black very well in the

second half of this game, hence I guess draw was somehow a fair result.

The generation duel between 14 year old **Olav Bjørkan (2022)** and 61 year old **Jan Sørgerd (1966)** saw a positional Benoni duel, in which black sacrificed a queenside pawn and first got sufficient compensation due to his dark-square dominance. Black however here should have taken back the first pawn instead of sacrificing a second one, as white's passed pawn at b5 soon gave him a clear advantage:



Now 29.--- Bxh3? was black's plan, but it still backfired as white could just ignore the bishop and continue his own rather straightforward plan on the queenside: 30.b6 Bc8 31.b7! Bxb7 32.Qc7 and white won a piece with a safely won position.

Finally, the Norwegian teenager duel between **Kristoffer Wang Strømhaug (1960)** and **David Mindestrømmen Simonsen (1930)** was another Sicilian Najdorf, although both players here spent much time from around move 11–12. White demonstrated the better understanding during exchanges around move 14–16, and afterwards came much better as his remaining bishop at g2 and knight at c6 were superior to their black counterparts at e7 and g8. Strømhaug in an inspired mood demonstrated a winning queenside attack before 20 moves, while black on the kingside had no real attack against the white king at h1. White after 26 moves promoted in a new queen at b8, while black still had only a «one check attack» on the kingside.

CM Kim Roger Hansen Westrum (2205) had requested a walk over draw, hence **Elias B. Rustan (1941)** had to take a walk over draw. Both players are in good shape and will be back on track for round 6.

Open Group

The **Open** reached a big conclusion when the two best players so far clashed against each other on the first board. 17 year old **Håvard Eriksen Bech (1939)** from Harstad came much better from the opening as white against **Nikolai Olsen Wernberg (1906)** from Tromsø, and won this North Norway battle following a powerful attack:



21.--- Nde6? 22.Be4! g6 23.Qxe5+ Bg7 24.Rxg7 Nxg7 25.Qxc7 Qd8 26.Qxd8 with a safe material advantage in the endgame.

The junior dominance in this group was further strengthened following a sudden change in a turbulent second board battle between 15 year old **Edvard Reinertsen (1783)** and top rated **Mathias Nesheim (1981)**:



28.gxh5?? Nb4 29.Qc3 Nxd3 30.Qxd3 and now black was an exchange up with a winning position – but only until he became too greedy and took a pawn too ... 30.--- Qxb2?? 31.h6+! Kxh6 32.Qd6+ Kg7 33.Qxc7 and white won due to his extra bishop.

31 year old Frenchman **Benjamin Spagnoli (1851)** however is in the run for top three prizes, today winning a tactical battle as black against 15 year old **Øyvind B. Træen (1711)**:



19.Ng6+? was tempting but still too loose, and so black was winning after 19.--- fxg6 20.Bxg6 Qa5! 21.Qe2. White reportedly was winning after 21.--- Rb5?, but as he missed the chance to get a strong attack after 22.d5! Rxd5 23.Rxd5 Qxd5 24.Rd1 Qb5 25.cxb4 Bxb4 26.f4, black soon had both an extra piece and the more dangerous attack.

Fourth board generation duel between 68 year old **Mykhailo Kuzmenko (1806)** and 12 year old **Aksel Elias Gjersvik (1693)** was a tense and fairly good game, leading to a drawn minor piece endgame despite some pressure for white.

Fifth board duel between local 14 year old **Mikael Ruud (1597)** and also 14 year old Alta player **Mikkel Damtoft Solbakken (1817)** saw a patient positional squeeze from black, leading to a safe win in the rook endgame. Solbakken originally had registered only to play the first six rounds due to another very attractive tournament, but after this game decided to play this Open group to the end.

Many hard-fought and exciting games were seen on the lower boards, although none of them in the end had a very surprising result. Eleven year old **Terje Kevin Lysen (1590)** is still playing far better than his ELO and today defeated **David Kristiansen (1639)**. White won a queen for a rook and a bishop following a powerful attack in the early middle game, and a few hours later safely realized his material advantage in the endgame.

Bech following all this was well deserved leading alone at 4,5/5, half a point ahead of Wernberg, Spagnoli, Solbakken and Reinertsen. Reinertsen white against Bech and Wernberg white against Solbakken then came up as the top board pairings for an important round 6.

Photos by IA Monica Lauvik Fjeldstad