

FAGERNES CHESS INTERNATIONAL 2025

THE LAHLUM ROUND REPORT

1



GM Group

The 2025 edition of our GM group ended up a bit smaller than the 2024 edition, although this was not unexpected following a late Easter holiday with very hard competition from big and strong title tournaments in Reykjavik and Grenke. 13 GMs and 15 IMs among 68 players, with a median ELO close to 2300, still offers a hard fight for the top prizes and excellent title norm chances.

The first round saw players from the first half of the ELO list against players from the second half, with a difference around 270–250 points in most games. No players from the second half succeeded in winning their game tonight, as the conclusion after six hours was 11 drawn games and 23 games with a win for the higher rated player. The GMs all taken together made a convincing plus score, but still no less than five players from the second half made a score against a GM tonight!

GM Gergely Kántor (2578) versus **IM Erik Hedman (2276)** was the first duel between a GM and an IM in this tournament. It illustrates the median strength of this group that Hedman, a merited Swedish IM with a current ELO just below 2300, failed to qualify for the first half. Tonight's top board duel started up with a Philidor Defence, but soon accelerated as white went for a Modern set up with 5.Rg1!? followed by 6.g4.



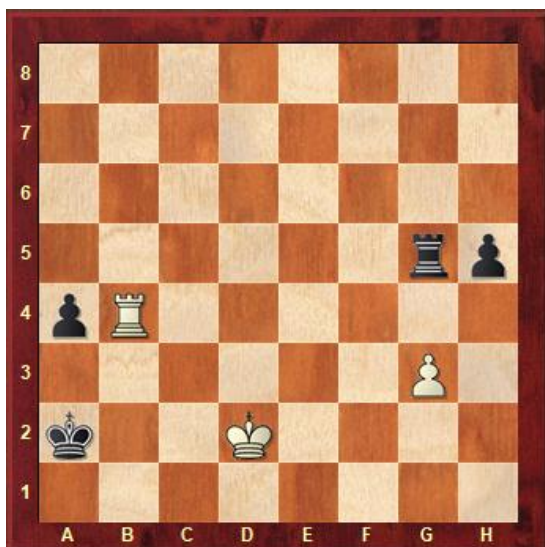
Kantor vs Hedman

Kántor spent some time, but kept a space advantage and some initiative after castling long. Hedman during the early middle game believed his position was fairly sound, but in retrospect realized that white all of the time had a pressure without much of a risk. Black was able to castle short at move 21, but it did not help much as white used the g-file to create tactical threats within a few more moves. White following this anyway was two pawns up with a winning position, when black at move 33 blundered a piece and stopped the clock.

The board two duel between Norwegian **FM Vegar Koi Gandrud (2273)** and Indian **GM Diptayan Ghosh (2573)** was a rather slow and positional Catalan opening. White was a bit too careful here, hence black after 12 moves had equalized on the board with half an hour more on the clock. Black later held a pressure in the middle game but wasted his chances, leading after 40 moves to a rather balanced endgame with rook, bishop and four pawns on each side. Bishops were the same colour, and black still had slightly the more active pieces. White at move 41 went for a risky emergency exit, giving up his pawn at a5 to exchange off the bishops. The remaining rook endgame with an extra black pawn at a5 in fact was close to winning, and after five hours black had reached a won position. Ghosh was not at his most accurate today, and made an instructive mistake as he advanced his passed a-pawn too soon:



Gandrud vs Ghosh



Now 67.--- Ka3! > 68.Rf4 Kb3! 69.Rf3+ Kb2 70.Kd3 Rg4! reportedly was winning.

Instead (and after only a few seconds) 67.--- a3? 68.Kc2 Rxc3 gave black two extra pawns, but only half a point. Gandrud finally got his instructive draw after 69.Rh4 Rg5 70.Kc3 Rg3+ 71.Kc2 Rg2+ 72.Kc3 Rg1 73.Rxh5 Kb1 74.Rb5+ Ka1 75.Kc2 Rg2+ 76.Kc1 Rb2 77.Rc5 Rb8 78.Rc7 a2 79.Kc2 Ra8.



Gopal vs Østensen

GM Gopal Narayanan (2556) and **FM Nicolai Østensen (2260)** started up with closed Ruy Lopez in which no piece (or pawn) was exchanged for the first 20 moves. Black apparently had the longer preparation and came well ahead on the clock, although white following a well timed 15.d4 and 16.d5 got a space advantage on the board. Curiously Gopal was playing his first game in Norway since 2009, when Østensen had not yet been born. Probably not reflecting

too much about that, the GM first picked up a loose black pawn at c4 and then turned his cannons against the black kingside – winning decisive material with an ongoing attack well before move 40.



Pang vs Urkedal

Ten year old English **FM Ethan Pang (2257)** in his first game at Fagernes got the white pieces against 31 year old **GM Frode Urkedal (2550)**. The game made a speedy start with a Scotch Gambit, in which white won back first a piece at e4 and then a pawn at d6. The clocks after 15 moves were approximately balanced, and so was the position on the board. Black however kept a nagging edge, and after exchanging the queens he proved able to pick up the white

pawn at a3 while defending his last queenside pawn at b5. After 30 moves the remaining endgame with rook, knight and three pawns against rook, bishop and four pawns was difficult at best from a white point of view. The GM soon picked up a second pawn and won the game in a rather convincing style – as black against an extremely gifted young player.

GM Rinat Jumabayev (2549) as white against **FM Martin Øksendal (2250)** started up with a King's Indian Attack, soon transposing into a half-open position with many similarities to an English fianchetto.

Øksendal after 11 moves by sound means had reached approximately balanced chances on the clock as well as on the board. The game entered tactical complications soon afterwards. Following many strong moves from both players,

white hung on an extra pawn into a borderline endgame with rook, two knights and five pawns against rook, bishop, knight and four pawns. With both players having one minute left on the clock after 30 moves, black came up with an exciting counterattack:



Jumabayev vs Øksendal



32.--- Bxg3? Øksendal had only 36 seconds for this difficult decision, but 32.--- Ra7!
 33.Rxb4 Bxg3 should have been enough for a draw. 33.Nf6+ Kh8 and now in turn
 34.Rxf7? (instead of 34.e5!) was a time trouble mistake from white. Black escaped the
 mating net by sacrificing an exchange with 34.--- Rf2+ 35.Kg1 Rxf6 36.Rxf6 Bxh4 –
 although white a few mistakes later succeeded in squeezing a full point out of his last
 pawn.



Aamodt vs Raja

Norwegian junior **Peder Marcus Aamodt (2242)** as white again Indian **GM Raja Rithvik R (2538)** entered an open Catalan duel. Black handled this rather greedily, and remained a pawn up as he could exchange his c4-pawn for the white b-pawn. White however got excellent compensation due to his center pawns combined with active knights at c5 and e5. Raja very gradually succeeded in freeing his pieces and exchanging off the white compensation.

The endgame with rook, bishop, knight and five pawns against rook, bishop, knight and four pawns after 27 moves was close to winning, as black could force an exchange of the active white rook. The GM here demonstrated clean technique as he before move 40 picked up a decisive second pawn.



Makhnev vs Skotheim

GM Denis Makhnev (2537) started up with 1.c4 as white against **CM Andreas Skotheim (2229)**, but the game transposed into a Sicilian Maroczy Bind as white a few moves later pushed his pawn to e4. White slightly originally exchanged the queens at a5, as he afterwards could play Nc7 and exchange black's light-squared bishop at e6. The position after 17 moves somehow should have been better for white due to his pair of bishops and slightly better pawn structure,

although black demonstrated enough counterplay to balance the chances.

Makhnev interestingly sacrificed a pawn in the middle game, and had promising compensation due to his pair of bishops and better pawn structure. Skotheim again demonstrated himself to be a stubborn defender, and remained laidback in his chair as white threatened to establish a passed pawn at c7:



49.--- Bd4 50.Be1 Be3 51.Bb4 g5 52.Bxe7 gxh4 53.Bxh4 h5 54.c7 Kd7 55.Ka5 Kc8 56.Kb5 Kd7 57.Ka5 Kc8 and the GM had to admit this was a safe fortress endgame draw.



Southcott-Moyers vs Kulaots

CM Indy Southcott-Moyers (2227) and **GM Kaido Kulaots (2510)** in the meantime discussed a Bogó-Indian opening, in which the dark-squared bishops were exchanged within the first five moves. As white exchanged with 11.cxd5 exd5, players reached a position known from a Queen's Gambit Exchange line. White in this version came slightly better on the board as well as on the clock, although black's position was solid.

The GM offered a draw as he after 29 moves exchanged his bishop for white's knight, leaving a rather static rook endgame with five pawns for each player.



Ghasi vs Eliseev

English **GM Ameet Ghasi (2502)** completed his title by scoring the third GM-norm in our autumn tournament last year, and was happy to return now. As white against Norwegian **FM Sergey Eliseev (2226)** he entered a Catalan-like Zukertort opening, in which white got the pair of bishops and a slight initiative following a queen exchange at b3. Eliseev however succeeded in balancing the chances, and the GM suddenly was reported man

overboard as he blundered positionally with 24.Bd1? – underestimating 24.--- Ne4! followed by 25.--- d3. Ghasi and his bishops woke up just in time and fought on bravely against the dangerous passed pawn at d2. Following some mistakes from both players, white after five hours had escaped into a should-be-draw-endgame with one rook for each player and opposite-coloured bishops. Black's extra pawn at d2 however still made life painful for white with one minute left on the clock.

Ghasi eventually made a time trouble blunder and so Eliseev after five and a half hour had three pawns against one. This endgame remained a borderline case until black was helpful to accept a rook exchange, leading to a well known opposite-coloured bishop draw with two against zero pawns. The GM instructively demonstrated how for the remaining spectators:



71.Bh5 c4
72.Be8 b4
73.Bf7 c3
74.Bb3
½-½

Isak Vinh Brattgjerd (2202) versus GM Eduardas Rozentalis (2481)

saw black playing for a win with a rather unbalanced Alekhine opening. White after 17 moves lagged some half an hour behind on the clock, but the Norwegian teenager was solid if not even better on the board. Following fairly sound moves from both sides, a draw was agreed after 48 moves with queen, knight and five pawns against queen, bishop and five pawns. White if anyone was better, although the road to winning chances would have been long and thorny.



Brattgjerd

CM Kim Roger Hansen Westrum (2193) versus GM Erik Blomqvist (2475) saw a Classical French Burn variation. White soon exchanged his bishop for a knight at f6, leaving a position in which black's pair of bishops just about balanced his inferior kingside pawn structure. As the light-squared bishops were exchanged, black still kept a light-square initiative and after 15 moves had some 20 minutes extra on the clock. Black definitely came better as he after 23 moves could pick up a sound extra pawn, and the GM soon got his chance to decide by a nice exchange sacrifice:



30.--- Rxd4! 31.Nxd4?! Qxd4+ 32.Qe3 Qb4! 33.Qe1 Bxc5+ and white resigned due to 34.Kf1 Qxe1+ 35.Kxe1 Bb4+ and 36.--- Bxa5 0-1

The young Norwegian **IM Aksel Bu Kvaløy (2481)** as white against the Danish veteran **Morten Andersen (2200)** made a positional stat with a Torre attack. After 20 moves the players had exchanged one set of knights and the light-squared bishops, leaving a symmetrical King's Pawn center in which white held a slight initiative. Exchanging the queens here did not help much from a black point of view, as he had all the less active pieces in the remaining endgame with two rooks, one bishop and seven pawns on each side. Black respectfully resigned as white after 38 moves won black's key defence pawn at b6.



Bazakutsa vs Olsen

was wide open until black after 35 moves blundered a piece.

The talented teenager duel between Ukrainian **IM Svyatoslav Bazakutsa (2474)** and Norwegian **William Alexander Olsen (2188)** started up with a Nimzo-Indian Rubinstein opening, in which white came better after establishing a center advantage with 7.e5 and 10.e4. A tight struggle followed for the next three hours, as black creatively came up with a lot of counterplay. Although white had an extra exchange, the outcome still



Hebbar vs Kaasen

first used his chances very efficiently, but then allowed much too much counterplay against his own king. Computers still gave black a notable advantage when he forced a draw by repetition of checks after 49 moves, although the variations definitely were difficult to work out for any human being:

The game between 13 year old **IM Eshaan Hebbar (2175)** and 22 year old **IM Tor Fredrik Kaasen (2472)** was our first IM duel. White took it a bit carefully from a positional Anti-Meran line of a Semi-Slav opening, hence black after 20 moves was half an hour ahead on the clock and had taken over initiative on the board. Hebbar under pressure on the board spent much time, and suddenly lost the thread around move 30. Kaasen



Instead of 48.--- Qd1+ with a threefold repetition the computers now give 48.--- Bc4!! with winning chances for black, although the mainline 49.Ng6! Qxf5+ 50.Kg1 Bd4+ 51.Kh2! Bxd3 52.Nf8+ Kg8 53.Ne6+ Kf7 54.Nxd4 is difficult to find AND leaves much still to be decided.



Willow vs Skaar

English **IM Jonah B. Willow (2471)** scored his first GM norm in our autumn tournament six months ago, and was happy to return for a second try now. As white against the young Norwegian **Ben Samuel Groth Skaar (2167)**, Willow opted out of the Sicilian main lines with a positional Rossolimo line. Black and his pair of bishops apparently first did fine, although white suddenly had a space advantage with promising attacking chances after he was

allowed to play 12.e5! Black later fought on fairly well, but white gradually opened the kingside and after 40 moves had found his way to a totally won endgame.



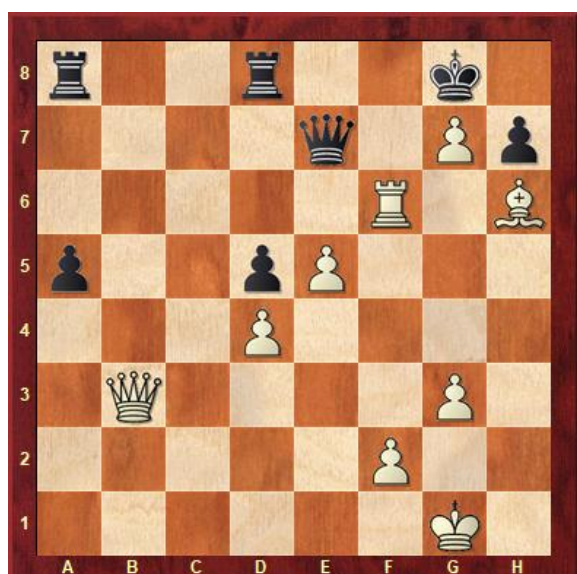
Tørfoss vs Urazayev

Sivert Schanche Tørfoss (2141) versus **IM Arystanbek Urazayev (2467)** was among today's most creative openings. Black invited to a King's Indian, leading to unknown territory as white instead of c4 went for 6.b3 and 8.Ba3. Black now creatively continued his center attack with 8... e4!, and following 9.Bxf8 Qxf8 got excellent compensation for the exchange. Within a few moves white offered to return the exchange at a1.

Taking back the exchange might

have been inaccurate from black, but still was a good practical choice leaving him with a sound initiative. White failed to come up with any disturbing counterplay. Consequently black's active pieces soon decided in an interesting endgame with rook, bishop, knight and seven pawns in each side.

The game between Swede senior **GM Tiger Hillarp (2462)** and Norwegian junior **Louis Khoo-Thwe (2118)** also saw an interesting positional exchange sacrifice, as the Tiger after 8 moves in a Zukertort had already offered his rook at a1 for a knight. It was known to theory, although apparently better known for white than black. White had only one pawn for the exchange after 20 moves, but due to his center advantage plus the pair of bishops he was still objectively better. The GM instructively developed his advantage into a dangerous kingside attack. The position after 33 moves first appeared exciting, but a close examination soon revealed it to be just winning for white. Tiger neatly demonstrated how by an instructive queen maneuver:



34.Qf3! a4
35.Qf5! a3
36.Qg5! Qxf6
37.Qxf6 Re8
38.e6 Ra7
39.Qf8+ Rxf8
30.gxf8Q mate
1-0



Verbin vs Csonka

Moldovian **WFM Valentina Verbin (2113)** and Hungarian **IM Balázs Csonka (2459)** meanwhile discussed a very different Zukertort line, in which black had no problems following an unambitious queen exchange from white. Verbin later made an interesting decision to give up her light-squared bishop for a knight at e4. Computers reported the position in balance after 15 moves, although black's pair of bishops still gave him slightly the better

long-term perspectives. After 40 moves the position with rook, bishop, knight and five pawns against rook, two bishops and five pawns still was rather closed and appeared drawish. Black however still had the much more easy position to play, and white was under pressure on the board as well as on the clock when she at move 52 blundered her key pawn at g4.



Mitusov vs Arvola

The Norwegian teenager duel between **IM Semen Mitusov (2459)** and **Daniel Arvola (2088)** was a positional Sicilian Najdorf, in which white used his chance to exchange black's light-squared bishop for a knight with 8.Ng5 and 9.Nxe6. Black demonstrated sufficient counterplay and came slightly better after transporting his knight around to the strong c4 square. Later the tide however gradually turned in favour of the IM, and white's much more active rooks

decided the rooks and minor piece endgame after 39 moves.

Norwegian attacking man **Per Fredrik Holand (2070)** as white against the new Austrian **IM Lukas Dotzer (2453)** tested out the Rapport-Jobava-system with 1.d4 2.Nc3 and 3.Bf4. Both players castled long. The IM later made the better positional decisions and gradually came better.

18.e4?! from white here was dubious, as black following 18...d4! soon took over the initiative. Having elegantly succeeded in trapping his own queen in the middle of the board, white stopped the clock only five moves later on.

15 year old Dotzer played his first game as an IM today, and won it fairly convincingly.



Holand vs Dotzer



Final position of Holand - Dotzer

IM Yang-Fan Zhou (2418) and **Eirik Berget (2041)** entered a tense French Advance position, in which black made a mistake when allowing white to weaken his kingside pawn structure with 11...f6?! 12.Bxf5. The IM within ten more moves reached a position which was in material balance, but still close to winning for white due to his superior minor piece combined with scattered black pawns. The rook endgame with an extra pawn here was probably winning for white, and Zhou before move 40 had picked up a second pawn.



Simonsen vs Miezis

The generation duel between **David M. Simonsen (2034)** and **GM Normunds Miezis (2409)** tested out a rather closed and positional Sicilian line, in which black did fine despite wasting a tempo with 2... e6 followed by 5... e5!? 14 year old Simonsen however made the better decisions related to the following exchanges, leaving white with a pair of bishops and promising initiative after 20 moves. White had castled long, while black had some worries

about his king at e8. The GM however was 15 minutes ahead on the clock. The wind here turned rather suddenly as he succeeded in castling short and then open the center with the thematic pawn sacrifice 23... e4! The thematic reply 24.d4? here was a serious misunderstanding, and so black within a few more moves captured the white queen:



24... Rc8 25.Qa6 Bf6 26.dxc5 Nxc5 27.Qxa7 Bxb2 28.Ra2?! Ra8 and black soon won.

IM Mads Vestby-Ellingsen (2398) versus **Pantham Kaewpitakkun (2026)** saw another closed and positional Sicilian duel, this one starting up with a delayed Alapin variation. White around move 14–18 opened the center with some chances for a kingside attack, although black demonstrated enough counterplay in the c-file. Chances were in tense balance until black suddenly became too careless:



20.--- Nc4? 21.Ng4! Nxc4 22.Qh7+ Kf8 and now 23.Nh5! would have been a winning attack. Instead 23.Nf5? was too tricky, leading to a balanced position after 23.--- Bh2+ 24.Kf1 Nge3+! 25.Nxe3 Nxe3+ 26.Bxe3 Bf4.

Later running seriously short of time for 40 moves, the IM suddenly found himself short of moves as well in the rook and bishop endgame. White offered a draw after making his move 40, but was lucky to get the offer accepted:



White is a pawn up, but still in deep trouble due to the d-file pin and his almost paralyzed pieces. 40.--- Rd5! > 41.--- Rc5 looks close to winning for black. Draw as black against an IM of course still was a very good result for 16 year old Pantham, and all the more tempting as he had been lost after 20 moves.



Strømhaug vs Johansson

Kristoffer Wang Strømhaug (2020) as white in a French Tarrasch against **IM Linus Johansson (2392)** went for a well-known and rather unambitious queen exchange at move 11. Four moves later the players had reached a balanced position with two rooks, one bishop, one knight and six pawns on each side. Johansson however had taken over the initiative and soon increased it, reaching a won rooks and knight endgame before 30 moves.

The game between **IM Aradyha Garg (2387)** and **Sigurd Kittilsen (2010)** saw an Accepted Queen's Gambit in which computers reported black healthy after 12 moves. The pair of bishops still gave white the better long term perspectives, and as black stumbled into a misunderstood queen exchange he after 20 moves suddenly had a hard time saving his pieces. The IM in turn strangely became too eager to keep his bishop with 21.Bd2?, allowing black sufficient counterplay with 21.--- Nxb2 followed by 22.--- Nc4. Chances later were approximately balanced until black with a few minutes left on the clock overlooked a tactical blow:



26.--- Rdd8! 27.Bxd5 Bxd5 28.Nxb6 Bxa2 could have been drawish, but instead white soon came an exchange up with a winning position after 26.--- Rc6? 27.Nxb6! Rxb6 28.Bxd5 Bxd5 29.Rxb6.

CM Nikolay Den Roover (2004) and **IM Moksh Doshi (2369)** discussed some English-Reti relative, in which white temporarily sacrificed a pawn at c5 to open the position for his pieces and weaken black's queenside pawn structure. Within a few moves white won back the pawn at a7. Black's active rooks later compensated for his inferior pawn structure. For a while black had a pressure here, but 14 year old Nikolay just in time came up with sufficient counterplay on the kingside:



31.Rf2!? Bxb3 32.f4 Qd6 33.Nxb3 Rxb3 34.Qc4 Qb4 35.Qxa6 Qxe1+ and a draw was agreed due to 36.Kg2 exf4 37.Qc8+ Kh7 38.Qf5+ Kg8 39.Qc8+ with a perpetual check.



Melaa vs Hausken

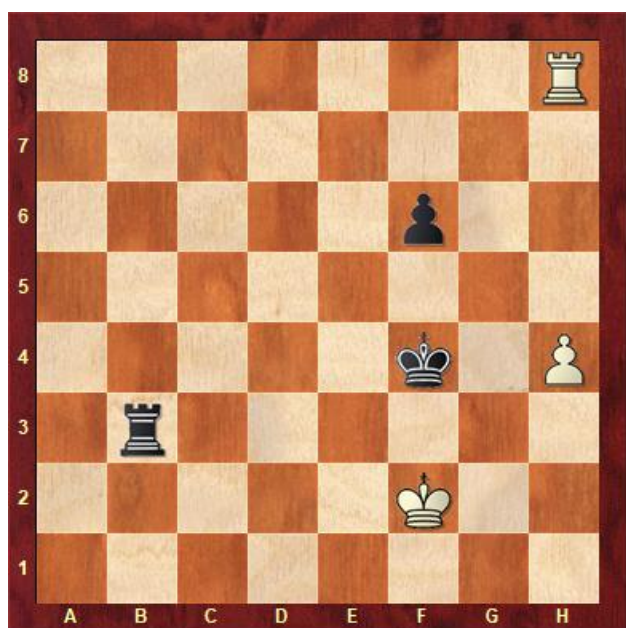
The young Norwegian duel between **FM Sondre Melaa (2344)** and **Andreas Skrede Hausken (2002)** started up with a symmetrical English, in which white kept an initiative after breaking up the symmetry with 6.d4. Black here spent much time, although the position was known to theory around move 13. Black went astray with 17.--- Qb6?! 18.Nd5 Qc5?, although he got an interesting position out of it as white missed the critical and

strong 19.f4!. Black in turn overlooked the critical continuation after sacrificing a piece, hence white in the final position after 31 moves had an extra piece with an easily won endgame.

Lukas Dominik Gåsland (1994) and **FM Gunnar Lund (2341)** started up with a Zukertort opening, but later transposed into an approximately balanced Queen's Gambit Exchange line. A tense struggle followed, and white kept the position in rough balance into an endgame with rook, bishop, knight and five pawns against rook, two knights and five pawns. Gåsland defended fairly well here, and despite his offside king instructively demonstrated the draw with rook versus rook and f-pawn well into the sixth hour.

FM Jakob Tempelen Grave (2337) and **Victor Lilliehöök (1993)** made an interesting start with a Catalan opening, in which first had had just about enough positional compensation for a pawn. Advancing the queenside pawn majority was a natural idea, but 15... b4? still asked too much and was too weakening. Black following this anyway had to give back the pawn with a wrecked position when he blundered a piece and (soon) resigned. Finishing within 22 moves, this was the first decided game of this GM group.

Lars Tormod Haugen (1988) versus **FM Eivind Grunt Kreken (2326)** saw a double-edged Sicilian Taimanov position on the board, although white after 15 moves lagged more than one hour behind on the clock. White's decision to sacrifice a pawn at c2 here was brave and worked out fairly well, as he following a queen exchange had about enough compensation for the pawn. Kreken hung on his extra pawn for a long time, but after the first time control white had compensation due to his passed a-pawn in the rook and minor piece endgame. The final rook endgame with one kingside pawn on each side actually appeared exciting for a few moves, but still was of course a fairly safe draw:



59.h5 f5
 60.h6 Rb2+
 61.Kg1 Kf3
 62.Rf8 Rg2+
 63.Kh1 Rg5
 64.h7 Rh5+
 65.Kg1 Rxb7
 1/2-1/2

FM Adarsh K (2317) and **Benjamin Halvorsen (1966)** discussed a classical and rather closed Italian duel, in which the dark-squared bishops were exchanged at a7. Black later had a rook stranded on a7 and the king still at e8, with some chances for an attack on the kingside. The game suddenly opened in the third hour, although chances remained approximately balanced. Black blundered a pawn at move 26, but still was in the game until he somehow overlooked or underestimated nasty diagonal dangers:



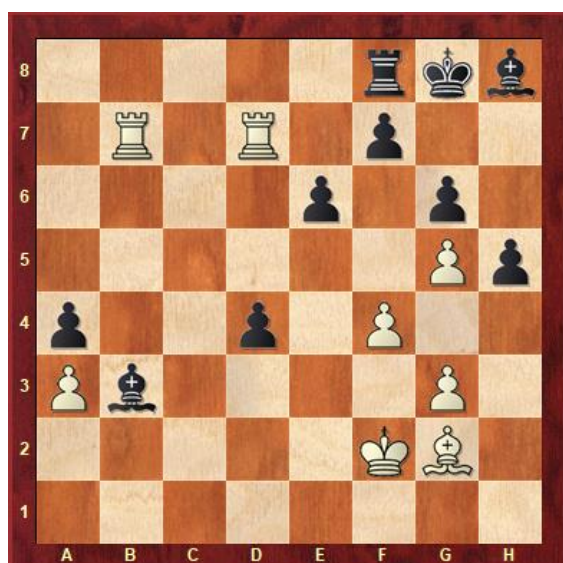
29.--- Nd3? 30.Bc2 Nxe1 31.Bxf5 Bxf5 32.Qe5+ 1-0

9 year old **CM Ashwath Kaushik (1958)** of Singapore is the youngest player in this GM group, and obviously a great talent. Today he had white against 13 year old **FM Rishi Vijayakumar (2317)** of Scotland. Chances were approximately balanced from a positional Queen's Pawn opening, although black in the middle game got the help needed to gain the pair of bishops and open the position in his favour. White's search for counterplay here turned out to be overambitious:



24.c5? e5! 25.cxb6 Qd6 and black soon came a piece up with a winning position.

Although still rated well below 2000, 21 year old **Amund Pihl Strand (1914)** had convincingly qualified for this GM group with a very strong first place from last year's Open group. Black against **FM Evsuld Myagmarsuren (2305)** not unexpectedly turned out to be a critical test: White following this Sicilian opening was happy to exchange all the knights, as he afterwards had a direct queen and bishop attack against the black king. Black's decision to sacrifice an exchange at f8 here was dubious according to the computer programs, but still worked out fairly well as black's pair of bishops later gradually gave him enough counterplay. With an exchange for two pawns, white had a long way to a win when black made an instructive time trouble mistake – allowing white to exchange one of the key bishops:



33.--- e5?
 34.Bd5! Bxd5
 35.Rxd5 exf4?
 36.gxf4 f6
 37.Rd6 Rf7?!
 38.Rd8+ Rf8
 39.Rxf8+ Kxf8
 40.Rb8+
 1-0

Norwegian teenagers **Nikolai Olsen Wernberg (1893)** and **FM Martin Holten Fiskaaen (2283)** both had a very successful stay at Fagernes in October last year: Wernberg qualified for this GM group by finishing third in the Open, while Fiskaaen already was in the GM group and achieved a surprising IM norm. Their game today took an unexpected turn from the King's Indian Attack opening, as white following an early queen exchange got the pair of bishops and a promising initiative. Wernberg continued his inspired play in the third and fourth hour, opening the position for his bishops. Fiskaaen under pressure on the board ran seriously short of time, and after 40 moves was objectively lost with rook, bishop, knight and three pawns against rook, two bishops and four pawns. The underrated 1900-junior in the fourth hour became a bit too careful, and so the 2300-player still scraped a draw in the end. Board 34 truly came close to a win for the lower rated player: Even the final position with rook, bishop and two pawns on each side in fact was close to winning for white.

Open Group

The top rated players had an even better start in the **Open group**, as the top seven boards all gave a full point for the higher rated player.

First rated Swede **Mikael Aroven (2145)** first probably had insufficient compensation in a Scotch Gambit, but still reached a won position before 18 moves as his opponent **Benjamin Lien (1733)** went for a highly dubious exchange sacrifice.

Second rated and 14 year old **Tomas Engkvist (1969)** had an uphill start on his first Fagernes game, and still was worse in a double-edged position when his opponent **Henrik Johansson (1730)** lost on time at move 22. Johansson overlooking the clock was a pity as it would otherwise have been interesting to follow this tense game on the board.



Final position from Johansson - Engkvist

Third rated and 13 year old **Isai Sivaparan (1944)** despite a few mistakes from both players won by a fairly confident attack as white against his 48 year older opponent **Gusztav Lang (1729)**.

Fourth board duel between veterans **Jan Ove Odden (1720)** and **Roaul Abrahamsson (1920)** on the other hand saw a long endgame, in which 70 year old Abrahamsson gradually succeeded in realizing his extra pawn.

The first surprising result in the Open tonight came at board 8 as 11 year old **Terje Kevin Lysen (1667)** won by a nice attack against 13 year old **August Minh Brattgjerd (1845)**:



White anyway is much better here, but 16.--- f6? made everything much worse following white's hardball reply: 17.Nxe6! and now 17.--- Kxe6 18.Nc7+ wins the black queen. Black instead tried 17.--- Rc8 18.Nxf8+ Rcx8 19.Qg4+ f5 20.Qxg7+, but lost in a few more moves.

Another surprise win was seen on board 13, as the unpredictable chess dad **Leiv Ole Bollestad (1585)** efficiently hit back from a dubious black opening against talented **Mikael Digernes (1781)**:



White now anyway was in trouble, but the outcome still would not have been given after 27.Rg3! Instead 27.g3? soon gave black a decisive attack on the light squares: 27.--- Re2 28.Rh4 Qe6 29.Rh6 Qe8 30.Rxb6 Rg2+ 31.Qxg2 Bxg2 32.Kxg2 Qe2+ 33.Kh3 Qxd2 0-1

No complaints whatsoever about the fighting spirit in the Open, as all 19 games in the end had a winner. Board 18 and 19 got the expected winner, but that outcome was no way given. **Hege Ibsen Jullum (1484)** despite a pawn less had a draw within short reach in an interesting queen and opposite-coloured bishop endgame against the Ukrainian veteran **Mykhailo Kuzmenko (1747)**, while ten year old **Liana Wen (1404)** several times had a won position in a truly turbulent King's Indian battle as black against 31 year old **Sara Gilsdottir (1738)**.



Some pictures from the Open

Photos by Tom Eriksen