

Fagernes Chess International 2019

THE LAHLUM ROUND REPORT

8



GM-A

As second board Alekseev-Vovk and third board Urkedal-Romanov both were four-hour draws today, first rated GM Anton Demchenko probably decided the struggle for first prize as he won in three hours on the first board against IM Lars Oskar Hauge. On the fourth and fifth board GM Evgeny Postny won a patient five-hour win as black against IM Eirik T. Gullaksen, while GM Maxim Turov crushed surprise man Pål Røyset within two hours. Demchenko at 6.5/8 is now leading a full point ahead of Alekseev, Postny, Turov, Urkedal and Vovk, and for round nine he “only” needs a draw as black against Turov to secure an unshared first prize.

Hauge is also out as a GM norm candidate following his second lost game, and overall the remaining title norm candidates were neither lucky with the results in round eight or the pairings for round nine. Remaining IM-norm candidates are FM Mads Vestby-Ellingsen (needing a win as white against Alekseev) and WGM Marsel Efroimsky (needing a win as white against Noam Aviv Vitenberg). Worth to mention, Finn player Olli Sisättö is still scoring very well above expected and can complete his FM-title with a draw against IM Erik Santarius in round 9.



GM Anton Demchenko vs IM Lars Oskar Hauge

First rated GM Anton Demchenko (2661) today strengthened his lead by a convincing 36-move win against IM Lars Oskar Hauge (2472).

Still the perfectionist Russian was not entirely satisfied with his own performance, as he forgot parts of his opening preparation and following this invited black into the game again.

White first got a space advantage in this Italian game, which suddenly opened up and turned tactical as black snatched the key pawn on e4 with his knight.

White got an initiative and an e-file pin for the pawn, but 19.Bd3! or 19.Nd4! probably would have been more accurate as black after 19.Nh4?! Qf7! could leave the pin and consolidate his kingside position without giving back the pawn.

20.--- Bd7? in turn was a more serious mistake for black, as white afterwards could kick away the knight from e4 with 21.f3! and then intervene with a threatening rook on e7.

Hauge creatively defended by giving up his queen for rook and knight, but it was just desperation as white kept an ongoing attack and won further material well before 40 moves.



GM Evgeny Alekseev vs GM Andriy Vovk

GM Evgeny Alekseev (2649) as white against GM Andriy Vovk (2616) castled long in a Sicilian Richter-Rauzer opening to play for a win.

After exchanging the bishop for a knight on f6 white came better due to his pawn structure and pressure against the d6-pawn.

As black tried to counter in the center with 22.--- e5?!, the f-file was opened for white and the f6-pawn too became a target.

24.Rxf6!? reportedly would have been an interesting piece sacrifice, but as white

instead retreated his knight black could castle long and stabilize the position.

White still appeared to be slightly better when he offered a draw after 32 moves, but black had got some counter play in the g-file and the position was both complex and double-edged.

GM Frode Urkedal (2513) versus GM Evgeny Romanov (2576) was a Queen's Gambit Exchange line in which white put his dark-squared bishop at f4, while black put his on b4. For some moves the middle game was an interesting isolated pawn position, but then the pawn structure became symmetric as black too accepted an isolated d-pawn. White had a slight initiative with queen, rook, bishop, knight and six pawns on each side from move 21.

Something suddenly happened as white creatively sacrificed his d-pawn to play for an attack with rook and bishop against rook and knight. Romanov felt forced to sacrifice back his d-pawn and for some moves lived in the danger zone afterwards, but succeeded in activating his pieces and reach a draw after the first time control.



GM Frode Urkedal vs GM Evgeny Romanov



IM Eirik T. Gullaksen vs GM Evgeny Postny

IM Eirik T. Gullaksen (2324) as white against GM Evgeny Postny (2612) went for a delayed exchange on c6 in a Ruy Lopez opening, leading to a standard position in which black for good had two bishops and for bad two c-pawns.

White was ahead in development and got some attacking chances after opening the position with f4.

As he failed to find the most critical continuations afterwards, black could castle long and balance the chances after 17 moves. Black now went for a

kingside attack and came better, but got off the track as he too greedily snatched a pawn on a2. The idea turned out be sacrificing a piece for three pawns and a pin, but the situation still would have been rather unclear if white had taken the bishop at c3 after 29 moves.

As white turned down the piece sacrifice, black came two pawns up. Although black was short of time with an airy position he after the first time control soon reached a won endgame with queen and three queenside pawns against two rooks and one kingside pawn.

Gullaksen succeeded making an exciting passed pawn race out of it, but Postny still had it under control due to his much safer king, and in the end after 61 moves gave mate with two queens and two pawns versus queen and two rooks.

Pål Røyset (2167) as white against GM Maxim Turov (2584) entered a slow Caro-Kann line, but then suddenly accelerated on the kingside with g4, f3 and h4. It was a bit overambitious, as white's only developed piece was a knight on a3.

Black hit back with h5 and anyway was better when white played 15.g5?, further weakening his kingside and inviting black in for a direct king attack with 14.--- Qg3+.

Turov within a handful of moves had dangerous pressure against white's king on e2, and after winning two pawns he pragmatically exchanged queens to reach a totally won rooks and minor piece endgame well before 30 moves.

This game was a sad goodbye for now to Røyset's IM norm chances, but still he has a very good tournament result and is unofficially back above 2200.



Pål Røyset vs GM Maxim Turov

Olli Sisättö (2276) definitely got the better part of a Grünfeld with the white pieces against FM Mads Vestby-Ellingsen (2333), as the passed d-pawn combined with the more active pieces gave white a critical advantage around move 13-17.

Vestby-Ellingsen however defended well in a difficult position, and got a lot of help as Sisättö decided to exchange his white-squared bishop. After queens were exchanged too, an about balanced but still tense position with two rooks, one bishop, one knight and six pawns on each side came

on board after 21 moves. Following some tactical exchanges the players after 32 moves had reached a very drawish endgame with rook, knight and four pawns against rook, bishop and four same pawns. With pawns on both wings black and his bishop later were closer to winning chances than white and his knight. Exchanging rooks in this situation was risky at best from a white point of view, as black could run against the white kingside pawns with his king. Sisättö was in serious danger of losing for some moves, but in the sixth hour got the necessary help to reach a dead drawn endgame with knight and a-pawn versus bishop and h-pawn.

Sisättö is now without chances for an IM-norm. The tournament still might produce a new titleholder tomorrow, as our new Finn chess friend will pass 2300 and get the FM-title in case of a draw or win against IM Erik Santarius then. Good news for Vestby-Ellingsen following this draw is that he can still make an IM-norm if winning as white in the last round. Bad news is that he is playing against second rated GM Evgeny Alekseev then. 16 year old Vestby-Ellingsen was as unlucky as he could possibly be about the pairings, as a win against any other available player with 4.5 or 5 points would also make a norm. Anyway it will be exciting to see what he can do as white against Alekseev, following his strong play so far this tournament.



Olli Sisättö vs FM Mads Vestby-Ellingsen



GM Evgeny Vorobiov vs FM André Nielsen

GM Evgeny Vorobiov (2565) and FM André Nielsen (2201) discussed a Queen's Gambit Exchange line in which white due to his better bishop and the half-open b-file got an initiative after two sets of minor pieces were exchanged.

Black's try to complicate with a tactical Nc5 later did not work out too well, as white within a few moves won a pawn on b6. The position with queen, rook and five pawns versus queen, rook and four pawns later was winning for white due to his passed pawn and active pieces.

During mutual time pressure, Vorobiov efficiently switched to a direct attack on the black king. Following his second pole out against a GM, Nielsen is out as an IM-norm candidate - but still in for a very good tournament result.

IM Timofey Galinsky (2378) as black against GM Erik Blomqvist (2496) gave his modest French opening with 3... dxe4 another try. It was a bit too modest today, as a pair of bishops and a center advantage in total gave white a pleasant pressure before and after queens were exchanged. Around move 35-40 black's position appeared to be in fairly good shape as he found useful squares for his knights on d5, d6 and f5. White's pair of bishops still was a long-term resource which proved decisive in this game, as they dominated the board when white after 70 moves finally succeeded opening the kingside.

True to his tactical playing style Galinsky tried to create counter play by sacrificing a bishop on b4. It did not work out this time, as white some moves later could exchange off the rooks and take the bishop. The remaining endgame with two bishops and two pawns against knight and four pawns was a simple win on this level, even with less than five minutes left on each clock.

IM Sebastian Mihajlov (2361) as white against IM Erik Santarius (2411) went hard for a win with a Scotch Gambit line which proved doubtful, as white following some tactical exchanges came out ahead in development and with the much better pawn structure. To avoid dangers of a sudden death, white after 16 moves had to give up a pawn to exchange off the queens.

Mihajlov however fought on creatively, and although the pawn sacrifice 18.b4?! hardly was objectively correct, it worked out very well as Santarius took the pawn in the wrong way and soon had an armada of weak pawns. White following this won back both pawns and for a few moves even was better in the rooks and minor piece endgame, before it all petered out with a draw by repetition after 30 moves.



IM Erlend Mikalsen vs WGM Marsel Efroimsky

IM Erlend Mikalsen (2397) and WGM Marsel Efroimsky (2287) meanwhile discussed a Caro-Kann main line, in which two sets of minor pieces were exchanged, leaving white with a small space advantage. The game soon turned tactical as white invited black to snatch a pawn at g2 with her queen.

Following a tactical queen exchange white won back the pawn at g7, leaving a tense kingside on which black had her king stuck on h7 while white had a bishop at g7 and a pawn at h6. Black was fine if not better from the start of this endgame, but white believed he

was better. As black defended inaccurately white got it right, as he came a pawn up in a rook and bishop endgame. After the first time control black still had some chances with rook, bishop and two pawns versus rook, bishop and three pawns, but white's passed pawn and more active king made the endgame very difficult for black, and Mikalsen decided by an instructive mating attack after 55 moves.

No GM norm chances but still another very good result for Mikalsen, who will be well above 2400 again with a draw or win in the last round. Efroimsky is well above 2300 again, and can still make an IM-norm if winning as white against Noam Aviv Vitenberg in the last round. Elo however is much more important than IM-norms in Efroimsky's case, as she already has got confirmed three norms and will get the title if/when reaching 2400.



Isha Sharma vs FM Anders Hobber

Isha Sharma (1989) and FM Anders Hobber (2295) first had a fairly balanced Scandinavian opening, but white suddenly got a strong queenside initiative after black played a too ambitious 18... e4? (instead of the natural exd4).

Sharma in turn wasted much of her advantage as she waited too long with the critical 19.d5-break, and although she after 30 moves had established a protected passed pawn on d6, black due to his great knight on e5 had about equal chances.

40... Re8?? however was a tactical blunder,

which Sharma immediately punished with 41.Bxf5!. Black later was a pawn down in a wrecked position, but was invited back into the boat as Sharma gently exchanged off the queens.

Black's more active king now suddenly became an asset and not a problem in the rook and knight endgame, which was drawn by a repetition after 50 moves.

Hobber is leaking Elo, but still limits the damage by saving difficult endgames. Paradoxically it turned out than Isha Sharma following this draw assured herself a tournament performance above 2250, but at the same time lost her chance for a WIM-norm. This as she needed another non-Norwegian titleholder in the last round, but at 4.0/8 got Norwegian GM Benjamin Arvola Notkevich.

Noam Aviv Vitenberg (2203) versus Elham Abdrlauf (2123) was a round eight game between two roommates and friends both having played a very long game yesterday and both looking forward to the blitz tournament tonight. Not very surprisingly it was agreed drawn after 10 moves. The opening by the way was a Classical Nimzo-Indian in which white's two isolated c-pawns probably was more of a drawback than his pair of bishops was a plus.



Noam Aviv Vitenberg vs Elham Abdrlauf

Frustrated GM Benjamin Arvola Notkevich (2495) as black against Abyl Kizatbay (2108) started up with a Modern opening, but then transposed into some strange kind of King's Indian with b6 and Bb7. Due to a d-file pin white could win a pawn with 11.Bxc5, but black had a lot of counter play and following inaccurate play from white he soon won back the pawn at f4 with a strong initiative. Still tactical alert, Notkevich before 30 moves won two pieces for a rook, and following this the endgame was hopeless from a white point of view.

WGM Olga Dolzhikova (2231) today gave her somewhat unusual Modern opening another try as black against Jens Evang Ingebretsen (2300). Playing c6, b5 and a5 before eight moves probably was to overdo it, and white won a more or less sound pawn with a tactical 10.Nxb5 – the c6-pawn was pinned due to the rook on a8.

The tide however turned rapidly as white hesitated withdrawing the knight from b5, and black after castling short could and did take it. White true enough won an exchange on a8, but the queen was left stranded on that square. White very understandably saw no reason to continue the game after the queen was captured with 17.--- Nb6.



Monika Machlik vs FM Trygve Dahl

Monika Machlik (2059) following the earlier success gave her Classical line another try as white against a Nimzo-Indian opening, and probably she also had an edge from the opening against FM Trygve Dahl (2275).

The middle game was a closed and heavyweight one, in which 30 pieces were still on board until white at move 24 took a pawn at c7 with her knight.

Objectively speaking white later was a sound pawn up, as black's attack on the kingside was not really dangerous. That was however no way obvious to the players during

the game, and as white helpfully exchanged the white-squared bishops black suddenly got a real attack. White for sure should have been more skeptical as black played 32.--- R6g5! instead of taking back a bishop on c5. 33.Rf3! still would have given white an advantage due to her extra pawn, while 33.Be3?? stumbled straight into an elegant mate in four after 33.--- Ng3+! 34.Kg1 Qxh2+! 35.Kxh2 Rh5+ 36.Kg1 Rh1 mate.



Morten Andersen

Sigve Hølleland (2024) as white against Morten Andersen (2223) went for some strange London and/or Veresov system relative with 1.d4 2.Bf4 3.e3 4.Nf3 5.Nc3. White did not find the best punishment when black took a pawn on b3 with his queen, and later white's somewhat primitive try for a kingside attack with Rc5-Rh5 backfired badly as the rook ended offside while black's king still was safe.

White succeeded balancing the chances after hitting back in the center with e4-e5, but the

position was complex as both players later tried to attack the opponent's king on the kingside. Following some tactical exchanges black after 37 moves was a pawn up with the better attack. That was however before black, with six minutes left for three moves, suddenly lost sight completely with 38.--- Qxd4??. Afterwards white could just play 39.e7! Re8 40.Qc6, and then there was nothing more to write about in this game.

Sigurd Loe Grøver (2020) versus FM Richard Bjerke (2156) for the first 20 moves was a closed and complex English opening without many winning chances for anyone. As the queenside finally opened white first came better. After 36 moves material still was balanced with queen, rook, knight and five pawns on each side, but white's dark square control combined with a passed b-pawn gave him a more or less winning advantage. At move 39, white could just exchange the queens on g7 and then take black's pawn on d5 with a more or less won rook endgame to follow. White instead took the pawn on d5 with his queen, threatening black's knight on c4 – but overlooking that black could reply 39... Qf6! with an extremely unpleasant counter threat to f2.

Three moves later white stopped the clock, as the only other option to avoid mate was to give up the queen. Grøver had 22 minutes left for two moves when he made the fatal blunder, hence the time limits no way was to blame in this case (either).

Håkon Bentsen (2155) not for a change was observed investigating some mysterious Sicilian Sveshnikov line, today as white against Aleksander Lindbøl (2139). White after 24 moves apparently had a pleasant advantage as black's f5-f4-f3 had not given any real attack on the kingside, while white controlling the d5 square had a promising queenside attack. Then black just blundered the pawn on d6, hence white was a pawn up and close to winning before he (in a very un-Bentsensk way) decided to sacrifice an exchange at d5.

The position later was completely unclear for some moves, and although white had three pawns for the exchange the endgame with queen, bishop, knight and five pawns versus queen, rook, bishop and two pawns still was no easy win. The next endgame with bishop and four pawns against rook and two pawns first was a relatively easy draw. But as black went after the wrong white pawn, white in the end could force black to sacrifice the rook upon his passed c-pawn while saving his last vital kingside pawn. 1-0 after 59 moves – as the final endgame with bishop and f-pawn versus g-pawn now was a very easy win for white.

WFM Anita Grønnestad (1954) as the lowest rated player of this field has succeeded making a plus result out of a terrible start, after she today surprisingly won as black against FM Daniel Nordquelle (2264). True enough white got a space advantage from this Alekhine opening duel, and after exchanging two sets of minor pieces he had a strong initiative in the middle game.

Grønnestad searched for counterattack against the white king with a tactical 29... Bxh3!?, but although the sacrifice obviously could not be accepted, white still would be clearly better if continuing his own attack with 30.e6 or 30.Nh4.

Instead 30.exf6+? was tempting, but the acrobatic 30... Kh6! then gave black a lot of counter play. Nordquelle spent way too much time on the next move, but then blundered with 31.Qc1!?, and after Bxg2+ 32.Kg1 Qg4 black soon had killing threats against the white king.

Grønnestad completed the attack efficiently, and very well deserved she won due to mate after 35 moves.



Edit Machlik vs Andreas Skotheim

Edit Machlik (2109) and Andreas Skotheim (2182) today tested out a rare line of a Queen's Gambit Exchanged, in which white after all the bishops were exchanged got a pleasant c-file pressure against the backward black pawn at c6.

Edit Machlik's time spending for 40 moves this time was controlled, but on the board she lost most of her advantage as she exchanged off her pawn at e5 for black's anyway weak c6-pawn. Although white after the time

control came a pawn up in the rook endgame, reduced material made this very drawish, and Skotheim at least for the last 30 moves had no problems defending.

Machlik played on with rook and f-pawn versus rook until having less than ten seconds left on the clock, but Skotheim immediately accepted the draw offer (and otherwise of course the arbiter would have accepted a draw demand).

Walk-over draws cannot be requested for the two final rounds in this tournament.

Sander Fuglestein (2000) instead requested a walk-over loss for round eight, as he for short term medical reasons felt unfit to play today.

Frode Lillevold (2076) following this had to take a walk-over win.

Both these two players and all the rest will be back for a very exciting round 9 tomorrow morning.

GM-B (ROUND ROBIN)

The very last chance for a title norm in the GM B group died after some 15 minutes of round eight, as FM Andreas Garberg Tryggestad offered and got a draw against IM Oskar von Bahr. For title norms the closed GM group obviously became a disappointment.

In the final round we now instead will have an exciting run for the top three prizes. Norwegian IMs Kristian Stuvik Holm continued his strong spurt by an inspired win against GM Eduardas Rozentalis in round eight, while IM Tor Fredrik Kaasen had a working day win as black against FM Alexander Betaneli.

Holm and Kaasen following this are sharing second place as 5.5/8, but still lags half a point behind GM Aron Greenfeld as he succeeded to squeeze a win out of a drawn rook endgame against Gunnar Lund. Belarus IM Valeriy Kazakovskiy had a long uphill game as white against GM Felix Levin, but saving another lost endgame he remains the only undefeated player and at 5.0/8 also candidates for top three.

Last round pairings are Rozentalis-Greenfeld, Levin-Holm, von Bahr-Kazakovskiy, Kaasen-Tryggestad and Lund-Betaneli; decide yourself whom is now the main favourite for the first prize.



GM Alon Greenfeld vs Gunnar Lund

Gunnar Lund (2271) as black against GM Alon Greenfeld (2514) gave his Old Indian Defense another try. White first had a space advantage and started a promising pawn storm on the kingside, but this suddenly backfired as he allowed black to play d5-d4 with a lot of counter play against white's king. As black in turn failed to find the most critical continuations, the players around move 30 landed in a drawish rook and knight endgame.

Black for some moves had an extra pawn, but returning it probably was fine as white had good compensation due to his more active pieces.

For the second round in a row Lund ran short of time and then blundered at move 39.

This time his 39... Ke7? stumbled into 40.g6! – the passed pawn could not be exchanged due to a pin on the seventh rank, and consequently decided the rook endgame within five moves after the time control.



IM Kristian Stuvik Holm vs GM Eduardas Rozentalis

IM Kristian Stuvik Holm (2467) as white today again was a confident GM candidate, sacrificing the d-pawn to get a strong initiative in a well-known Queen's Indian Fianchetto position against GM Eduardas Rozentalis (2568).

Black reached about equal chances by returning the pawn at d5, but snatching another pawn at b2 with the bishop soon proved overambitious as white had all the more active pieces and developed a strong initiative. Placing the queen in

an offside position beside the bishop at a3 definitely was not the answer to black's problems, and Holm instructively pseudo-sacrificed a rook on e6 to win decisive material before 30 moves.

It is a pity that Holm first was a too slow starter and then got a black-out game as white in round six, as he following this win is at 5.5/8 and will only be half a point away from the norm if winning last round as well.

Top rated Rozentalis for mysterious reasons was Dr. Jekyll for the first two rounds and then Mr. Hyde for about all the rest and at 3.5/8 will finish 2-3 points below his expected score.



FM Alexander Betaneli vs IM Tor Fredrik Kaasen

IM Tor Fredrik Kaasen (2385) also had made a great tournament out of a troublesome start, and is shared second at 5.5/8 after he today won as black against FM Alexander Betaneli (2235).

From a Reti opening play transposed into a position well known from Semi Slav, as black successfully hung on to an extra queenside pawn and white's center pawns did not fully compensate. True to his greedy strategy black soon picked up

another pawn, and despite some inaccuracies he before 40 moves reached a totally won endgame.

Kaasen too is half a point short of norm chances, but still well above expected score and back above 2400. Betaneli has cramped totally after his promising start and today lost his fourth game in a row.

IM Valeriy Kazakovskiy (2440) versus GM Felix Levin (2476) was a Catalan in which white won back the pawn at c4, but then immediately sacrificed another one at d4. The idea was not too convincing, as black after exchanging three sets of minor pieces kept his extra pawn and upheld an active knight on d4. White still had some compensation due to black's double f-pawn. Black came just a sound center pawn up after white later felt forced to exchange rooks on e5,



IM Valeriy Kazakovskiy vs GM Felix Levin

helping black to repair his pawn structure. Later white however got some counter play in the b-file. Having only seconds left black should have played 40.--- Rc7! instead of 40.--- Rb6?, as white after winning back a pawn at b6 was close to a draw in the endgame with queen, bishop and three pawns against queen, knight and three pawns.

White's king however still was in some danger, and as white gave preference to some ghosts on the kingside black could win a queenside pawn with a decisive advantage.

Levin at this stage played very well until reaching a minor piece endgame with knight and three pawns against bishop and two pawns, in which black's passed c-pawn gave him a decisive advantage. The endgame however still had some traps, and with the "shorter" time limits of the GM B both players soon ran short of time again.

Following a comedy of errors, in which the game several times jumped back and forth between draw and win for black, white in the end after 66 moves could scrape a draw by winning the c-pawn and sacrificing his bishop on the last black kingside pawn.

This just is not the tournament for hard-working Felix Levin, while Kazakovskiy miraculously remains unbeaten and has a solid plus result before the last round.



FM Andreas Garberg Tryggestad vs IM Oskar von Bahr

FM Andreas Garberg Tryggestad (2305) needed a win as white against IM Oskar von Bahr (2404) today to preserve his last chance for an IM-norm this Easter.

He instead entered a safe Bogó-Indian line with 4.Bd2 and after ten moves offered a draw which was accepted.

No norm but still a good tournament result for Tryggestad, while von Bahr has been slightly below expected all the way since round 2.

OPEN GROUP (SWISS)

Alf W. Lundberg today did the work and got the help to retake his lost lead: He himself won another inspired attacking game, while co-leader Jo Kristian Løberg lost an endgame marathon against Gunnar Brandshaug Dale. Still Lundberg's new lead is only half a point, and six players are within one point before the very unpredictable round nine.



Jo Kristian Løberg vs Gunnar Brandshaug Dale

The first board took another dramatic turn today, as second-rated Jo Kristian Løberg (2045) after 107 moves went mate against 13 year old Gunnar Brandshaug Dale (1903).

Dale won a pawn following a tactical 9... Nxe4! in this Sicilian Richer-Rauzer opening, and after 30 moves had reached a won endgame with two bishops and four pawns versus rook and five pawns.

Dale has had some problems winning won endgames against strong opponents earlier this week, but although taking his time he today probably had control.

The finish after five and a half hours was a truly elegant one, as Dale completed a mate attack against white's king in the a1 corner immediately after his opponent's passed pawn promoted into a new queen at d8.

On second board Alf W. Lundberg (1932) as white against Haakon Wright (1849) stayed true to his 2.Qf3?! against the Sicilian, and although black was fine from the opening white built up a strong kingside attack in the fourth hour. Lundberg this time kept his concentration also in the fifth hour, and had no problems winning the minor piece endgame with two extra pawns.

Third board became far more turbulent, as the upcoming Bodø junior Per Fredrik Holand (1849) with the black pieces had a winning initiative in the middle game against Jonas Hodneland Rasmussen (1993). Although Rasmussen just before 40 moves succeeded exchanging most of the pieces and win a pawn, he was still totally lost from the start of the knight endgame due to black's two connected pawns on the kingside. Black however lost the thread completely on the board after getting an extra hour on the clock. As white got the few tempos needed to block black's queenside pawns, Rasmussen later had an easy win due to his kingside pawns majority.



Jonas Hodneland Rasmussen vs Per Fredrik Holand

No draws on the top boards today as the still sprinting 15 year old Elias Hulleberg Sidali (1944) succeeded realizing his extra pawn in the rook endgame against Omer Amir Akdag (1901) on the fourth, while Sondre Lillestøl Melaa (1991) won a tense time-trouble duel against Afras Mansoor (1965) on the fifth.

The first draw on the list today was a surprising and highly entertaining one on board seven, as Rune Kleiven Rynning (1581) sacrificed various material to get a very dangerous kingside attack against Øyvind Ukkelberg (1939), but in the end found nothing better than a perpetual check.

Following this the tournament troubadour Alf W. Lundberg still is undrawn and again is leading alone, now at 7.0/8. Jonas Hodneland Rasmussen, Gunnar Brandshaug Dale and Elias Hulleberg Sidali can be found at 6.5, while Jo Kristian Løberg and Sondre Lillestøl Melaa are lurking at 6.0. The top three prize winners will be found within these six players, but within that group many things can still change. Top boards pairings for round 9 are Dale-Lundberg, Sidali-Rasmussen and Melaa-Løberg. It will be a very exciting finish to follow here at Fagernes, and all three games of course will be transmitted live for chess friends elsewhere.