

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Caruana - Vachier-Lagrave	2
Anand - Giri	4
Nepomniachtchi - Liren	5
Nakamura - Carlsen	6
Karjakin - Aronian	7
Mamedyarov - So	8
Current Standings	11
Round 7 Pairings	11
Schedule of Events	12

ROUND 6 RESULTS

 GM F. Caruana	½
 GM M. Vachier-Lagrave	½
 GM V. Anand	½
 GM A. Giri	½
 GM I. Nepomniachtchi	½
 GM D. Liren	½
 GM H. Nakamura	½
 GM M. Carlsen	½
 GM S. Karjakin	½
 GM L. Aronian	½
 GM S. Mamedyarov	½
 GM W. So	½

CURRENT STANDINGS

1. GM V. Anand	3 ½
2. GM F. Caruana	3 ½
3. GM D. Liren	3 ½
4. GM W. So	3
5. GM S. Mamedyarov	3
6. GM I. Nepomniachtchi	3
7. GM M. Carlsen	3
8. GM S. Karjakin	3
9. GM M. Vachier-Lagrave	3
10. GM H. Nakamura	2 ½
11. GM L. Aronian	2 ½
12. GM A. Giri	2 ½

CUP★CHRONICLE

SATURDAY, AUGUST 24, 2019 | ISSUE 6

ROUND 6 HIGHLIGHTS

BY WGM TATEV ABRAHAMYAN



GM MAXIME VACHIER-LAGRAVE, ROUND 6
PHOTO BY LENNART OOTES

The players returned to action today but the rest day did not seem to impact the player standings in the tournament, as all of the round 6 games ended in a draw. Each player is unique in how they choose to spend their day off; Sergey Karjakin played in an online Fischer Random qualifier, Anish Giri went to the Saint Louis Zoo, and Magnus Carlsen was invited to throw the first pitch for the Cardinals in their game against the Colorado Rockies. The World Champion discussed his experience with Maurice Ashley, explaining how uncomfortable and nervous he felt in an unfamiliar territory. Unfortunately, these fun-filled activities did not influence their play over the board as the games unfolded slowly. For a good part of the round, it seemed as though Viswanathan Anand would emerge as the sole leader. Unfortunately, the former World Champion was not able to convert his material advantage. Unsurprisingly, Anand was seemingly disappointed about the result of the game, as this marks his second big miss of the tournament. Tomorrow, the two co-leaders, Ding Liren and Viswanathan Anand, will be facing off.



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FABIANO CARUANA - MAXIME VACHIER-LAGRAVE

BY WGM TATEV ABRAHAMYAN, ANALYSIS BY WGM JENNIFER SHAHADE



CARUANA VS. VACHIER-LAGRAVE // LENNART OOTES

The wildest game of the round captivated the attention of both commentators and viewers. The players blitzed out the first 20 moves of the game, which included a double-exchange sacrifice by Vachier-Lagrave. He went into a deep think the following move, explaining that he had the resulting position on his computer half an hour before the game, but wanted to analyze it over the board. Caruana returned the favor by spending 30 minutes on the following move. After the queens were exchanged, the American gave up his rook for a knight and a pawn, entering an exchange up endgame. Caruana called the position borderline winning, while his opponent described it as "95% a fortress." Vachier-Lagrave had a fortress with his dark squared bishop on the kingside, putting all his pawns on the dark squares while creating a passed pawn on the queenside. Ultimately, Caruana collected enough of his opponent's pawns to give up his rook for the passed pawn, entering a theoretically drawn position where his opponent had the wrong-colored bishop to win with his h pawn.

1.e4 c5
2.Nf3 d6
3.d4 cxd4
4.Nxd4 Nf6

5.Nc3 a6

[Maxime's faithful Najdorf is always a welcome site for fans and spectators.]

6.h3

[One of the hardest things for amateurs or semi-professionals who attempt the Najdorf is the sheer volume of viable options for white on move 6. From straightforward moves like Be3 and Bg5 to quirky ones like Rg1, pretty much everything has been tried. h3 seems unassuming but has some serious bite and flexibility as it could lead to super sharp ideas like g4, but White still retains the option of castling.]

6. e5

[As with many variations in the Najdorf, Black faces a key crossroads between ...e6 and ...e5. The nice thing about this fork in the road is if you're a Najdorf player struggling against a particular sixth move, you can investigate switching it up.]

7.Nb3 Be6
8.f4 g6
9.Be2 Nbd7

10.g4 Rc8
11.f5

[Usually this would be a huge victory for White, removing the all-important light squared bishop which guards the d5 square. But fortunately for Vachier-Lagrave, Black has a very specific tactical sequence prepared.]

11. Bxb3
12.axb3 Rxc3!

[This positional sacrifice is fun to play. Black immediately picks up the e-pawn for compensation. It's good for White that his pawns have been doubled a move prior. Otherwise the compensation would be too powerful.]

13.bxc3 Nxe4
14.0-0 Qh4

[14...Nxc3 15.Qe1 Nxe2+ 16.Qxe2 Although Black now has two pawns for the exchange, his position is very perilous. He is two moves away from castling and white has a lot of strong ideas like Qf3, menacing b7 and f7.]

15.Bf3!

[A very visual move that attacks the knight on e4 while also defending against the idea of ...Qg3, which is now met by Bg2.]

15. gxf5
16.Bxe4 fxe4
17.Kh2 Rg8
18.Ra4 Nf6
19.g5 Rxc3!

[19...Nd7 20.Qd5 Qh5 21.Rxe4, And White has full control of the position with Black having negative compensation for the exchange.]

20.Bxg5 Qxg5

[A double exchange sacrifice! This amusing material imbalance was the highlight of the first part of the round. How often do you see TWO exchange sacrifices so early in the game? Both players were blitzing out the moves and still in preparation.]

21.c4

[This was Fabiano's novelty. He thought that the position was optically so powerful for Black, that MVL might underestimate the danger in White's position in prep. The idea of c4 is to create the blunt but effective idea of Rb4, when ...b5 is no longer possible.]

21. Qh4
22.Qe1 Qxe1

[Tough decision for Black to defend in the endgame. White's pull here is that Black has to constantly be vigilant for exchange sacrifices. White is up TWO, so if he finds a good way to sack one and break through, Black could be in trouble.]

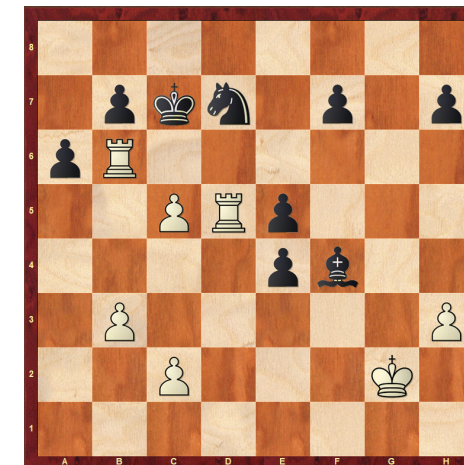
23.Rxe1 Bh6
24.Rd1 Kd7

[24...e3 25.Rxd6 Bf4+ 26.Kg2 Ne4 27.Rd5]

25.c5 d5
26.Rb4 Kc7
27.Rb6 Bf4+
28.Kg2 Nd7

[Forced in between move to avoid devastating material loss.]

29.Rxd5



[Maxime revealed after the game that he was relieved to see this move. He was more worried about Rd6. After the text, he thought his chances of saving the game were a fat 95%. It is interesting to see how elite players think in percentages, as engines like Alpha Zero and Leela have also used the AI version of this process. In this type of endgame, traditional engines may say white is up some fraction of a pawn, i.e. 2/3 a pawn, but in reality, white is either totally winning or the game is drawn. Probabilistic assessments make more sense in evaluating, especially in endgames.]

29. Nxb6
30.cxb6+ Kxb6
31.Rd7 a5
32.Rxf7 h6
33.Kf2 Kc6
34.Ke2 b5
35.Rf6+ Kc5
36.c3 a4
37.bxa4 bxa4
38.Ra6

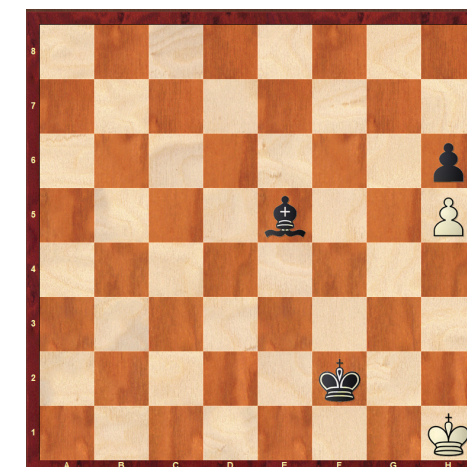
[It is now clear that all the pawns and pieces will be hoovered off the board.]

38. Kb5
39.Ra7 Bg5
40.Ra8 Be7
41.Kd2 a3
42.Ke3 Kc4
43.Kxe4 Kxc3
44.Kxe5 Kb3

45.Ke4 a2
46.Rxa2 Kxa2
47.Kf3 Kb3
48.h4

[...Bxh4 is an immediate draw. Although Black is up a whole bishop and pawn, it is impossible to construct a winning position because the queening square is the "wrong color".]

48. Kc4
49.h5 Kd3
50.Kg2 Ke2
51.Kh1 Kf2
52.Kh2 Bd6+
53.Kh1 Be5



[A really well-played draw. After the game, Fabiano explained that he felt satisfied with his effort, as he was pressing and posed MVL problems. "White is not winning by force in the starting position, so you have to make an educated guess on where he may go wrong and after (my novelty) c4, Black's task is not easy."]

1/2-1/2

VISWANATHAN ANAND - ANISH GIRI

BY WGM TATEV ABRAHAMYAN



Several of the players predicted a win for Anand but the conversion was more difficult practically. Giri joked that he did a good thing by playing the Sicilian but then the structure changed to a French, which he called a disaster. As a matter of fact, the structural change marked the beginning of trouble for the Dutch grandmaster. His knight landed on e8, while White had well placed pieces and could start an attack. Giri was actually relieved when Anand chose to exchange two sets of minor pieces in order to grab a pawn. He explained that "it's better to be a pawn down with coordinated pieces than have uncoordinated pieces". In fact, Giri feared that if Anand didn't force the position, he would run out of moves. The Dutch Champion defended fiercely, making the conversion more difficult with each piece exchange. Once he forced an exchange for a rook pair, it became clear that Anand's extra pawn would fall short.

- 1.e4 c5
- 2.Nf3 e6
- 3.d4 cxd4
- 4.Nxd4 Nf6
- 5.Nc3 Nc6
- 6.a3 Be7

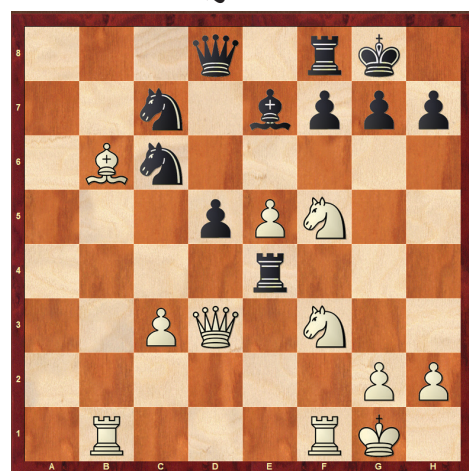
GM A. GIRI // LENNART OOTES

- 7.f4 d6
- 8.Nf3 0-0
- 9.Bd3 a6
- 10.0-0 b5
- 11.b4 a5
- 12.Rb1 axb4
- 13.axb4 d5
- 14.e5 Ne8



- 15.Nxb5 Ba6
- 16.Nbd4 Nxb4
- 17.Bxa6 Rxa6
- 18.f5 exf5
- 19.Nxf5 Nc7
- 20.c3 Nc6
- 21.Qd3 Ra4
- 22.Be3 Re4

23.Bb6 Qd7



- 24.Bxc7 Qxc7
- 25.Qxd5 Rf4
- 26.N5d4 Nxd4
- 27.cxd4 Rd8
- 28.Qb7 Qxb7
- 29.Rxb7 Kf8
- 30.g3 Rf5
- 31.Kg2 f6
- 32.Re1 fxe5
- 33.dxe5 h5
- 34.e6 g5
- 35.Re2 Rd6
- 36.h3 g4
- 37.hxg4 hxg4
- 38.Nh4 Rg5
- 39.Ra7 Ke8
- 40.Ra4 Rd3
- 41.Ra8+ Rd8
- 42.Ra1 Rdd5
- 43.Rf2 Bd8
- 44.Ra8 Ke7
- 45.Re2 Rc5
- 46.Ra6 Ra5
- 47.Rc6 Rad5
- 48.Rf2 Rd6
- 49.Rxd6 Kxd6
- 50.Rd2+ Rd5
- 51.Rxd5+ Kxd5
- 52.Nf5 Kxe6
- 53.Ne3 Bc7
- 54.Nxg4 Bxg3

1/2-1/2

IAN NEPOMNIACHTCHI - DING LIREN

BY WGM TATEV ABRAHAMYAN



Ding put his opponent in an uncomfortable position with his superior preparation in the opening. In a closed Giuoco Piano after transferring the queen to a7, the Chinese player started resolving the tension in the center tactically, taking advantage of the fact that the f2 pawn was vulnerable. After all the central pawns were traded off, Nepomniachtchi decided to give up his queenside pawns in order to push his f pawn, destroying his opponent's kingside. With limited material on the board, the Russian player never had any real attack and was looking for active counterplay as his opponent's queenside pawns could become dangerous. On move 31, Ding could have defended the f7 pawn by centralizing his queen but instead chose a different line missing his opponent's idea of simply not allowing him to make progress by exploiting the weakened Black king. After the rooks were exchanged, the resulting queen endgame quickly ended in a draw.

- 1.e4 e5
- 2.Nf3 Nc6
- 3.Bc4 Bc5
- 4.0-0 Nf6
- 5.d3 d6
- 6.c3 0-0

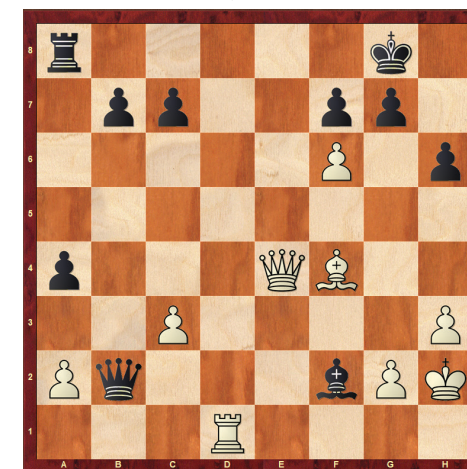
GM D. LIREN // LENNART OOTES

- 7.h3 a5
- 8.Re1 h6
- 9.Nbd2 Be6
- 10.Bb5 Qb8
- 11.Nh4 a4
- 12.Nf5 Re8
- 13.Nc4 Bxf5
- 14.exf5 Qa7
- 15.Qf3 e4



- 16.dxe4 Ne5
- 17.Nxe5 Rxe5
- 18.Bd3 d5
- 19.Bf4 dxe4
- 20.Bxe4 Rxe4
- 21.Rxe4 Nxe4
- 22.Qxe4 Bxf2+

23.Kh2 Qb6
24.Rd1 Qxb2
25.f6 Qxc3



- 26.fxg7 Qc6
- 27.Qf5 Re8
- 28.Bxh6 Qxh6
- 29.Qxf2 Qg5
- 30.Kh1 Re4
- 31.Rf1 Qe7
- 32.Qd2 Kxg7
- 33.Qb2+ Qe5
- 34.Qxb7 Re1
- 35.Qf3 Rxf1+
- 36.Qxf1 c5
- 37.Qc4 Qe1+
- 38.Kh2 Qb4
- 39.Qd3 a3
- 40.Qg3+ Kh7
- 41.Qd3+ Kg7
- 42.Qg3+ Kh7
- 43.Qd3+ Kg7

1/2-1/2

HIKARU NAKAMURA - MAGNUS CARLSEN

BY WGM TATEV ABRAHAMYAN

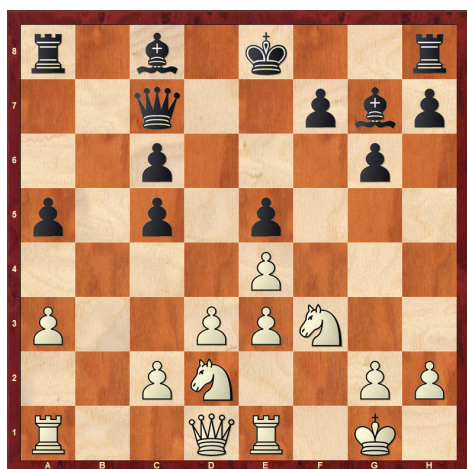


GM H. NAKAMURA // LENNART OOTES

“It’s not the sort of position you dream of getting from the opening, obviously, since there is so little excitement”, Magnus Carlsen told Maurice Ashley in the postgame interview. Nakamura essayed the Rossolimo Variation avoiding Carlsen’s Sveshnikov. By move 13, they reached a position where Black’s pawn structure was compromised and White had a nice blockade of the pawns with his knights against Black’s bishop pair. Carlsen was worried about this line before and during the World Championship, as the computer doesn’t see the danger of the position and evaluates it as equal. The World Champion was concerned that he was completely stuck and White can slowly improve but in fact, Black is just very solid and it’s hard to get to his weaknesses. Neither player was able to find a way to make progress, ending the game with a repetition in 30 moves. Carlsen will have the white pieces in the next two rounds and told Ashley that “it’s time to make a move.”

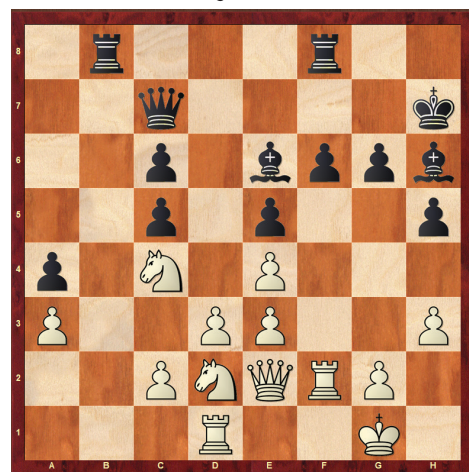
- 1.e4 c5
- 2.Nf3 Nc6
- 3.Bb5 g6
- 4.0-0 Bg7
- 5.Re1 e5
- 6.Bxc6 dxc6

- 7.d3 Qc7
- 8.Be3 b6
- 9.a3 a5
- 10.Nbd2 Nf6
- 11.b4 Ng4
- 12.bxc5 Nxe3
- 13.fxe3 bxc5



- 14.Nc4 Be6
- 15.Nfd2 0-0
- 16.Rf1 Rab8
- 17.Qe2 a4
- 18.Rf2 Rb7
- 19.Raf1 Qd8
- 20.Qe1 h5
- 21.Qa1 f6
- 22.h3 Bh6
- 23.Qd1 Kh7

- 24.Qe2 Rb8
- 25.Rd1 Qc7



- 26.Rff1 Kg7
- 27.Rb1 Rb5
- 28.Rbd1 Rbb8
- 29.Rb1 Rb5
- 30.Rbd1 Rbb8

1/2-1/2

SERGEY KARJAKIN - LEVON ARONIAN

BY WGM TATEV ABRAHAMYAN

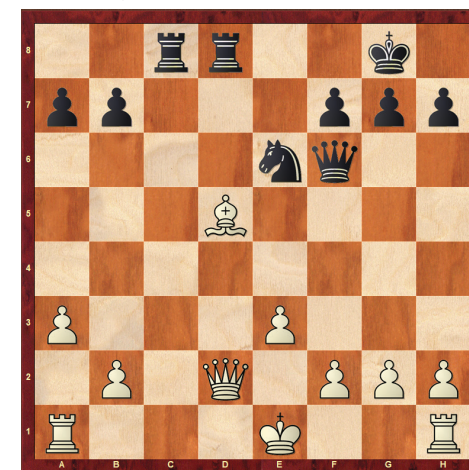


GM S. KARJAKIN // LENNART OOTES

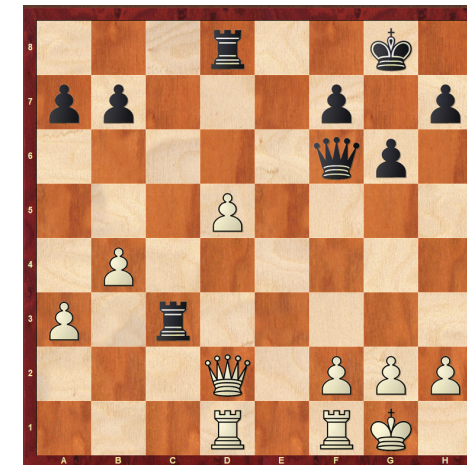
In the 5.Bf4 variation of the Queen’s Gambit Declined, Aronian deviated on move 11 from his game against Wesley So from the 2017 Norway Chess tournament. Instead, Aronian played a line exchanging three sets of minor pieces and sacrificing his d5 pawn, following the game between grandmasters Baramidze and Fridman from 2011. Karjakin deviated on move 17 with a different queen retreat as to avoid forced repetition, but Black always had enough compensation for the pawn due to being ahead in the development. There was one point in the game on move 23 when Karjakin could have given up his a3 pawn in order to push his passed d5 pawn. After he chose to maintain his material advantage, Aronian managed to form a blockade and pick up the extra pawn, entering a drawn queen ending.

- 1.d4 Nf6
- 2.c4 e6
- 3.Nf3 d5
- 4.Nc3 Be7
- 5.Bf4 0-0
- 6.e3 Nbd7
- 7.a3 c5

- 8.cxd5 Nxd5
- 9.Nxd5 exd5
- 10.dxc5 Nxc5
- 11.Be5 Bg4
- 12.Be2 Bxf3
- 13.Bxf3 Bf6
- 14.Bxf6 Qxf6
- 15.Qc2 Ne6
- 16.Bxd5 Rac8
- 17.Qd2 Rfd8



- 18.0-0 Nc7
- 19.e4 Nxd5
- 20.exd5 Rc5
- 21.Rad1 g6
- 22.b4 Rc3



- 23.a4 Rc4
- 24.d6 Rd7
- 25.g3 Kg7
- 26.b5 Re4
- 27.Rfe1 Rxe1+
- 28.Qxe1 Rxd6
- 29.Rxd6 Qxd6
- 30.Qc3+ Qf6
- 31.Qc7 Qa1+
- 32.Kg2 Qxa4
- 33.Qxb7 Qc4
- 34.Qxa7 Qd5+
- 35.Kg1 Qd1+
- 36.Kg2 Qd5+
- 37.Kg1 Qd1+
- 38.Kg2 Qd5+

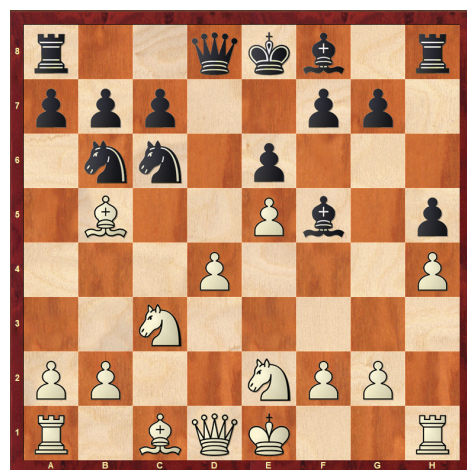
1/2-1/2

SHAKHRIYAR MAMEDYAROV - WESLEY SO

BY WGM TATEV ABRAHAMYAN



This 14-move draw with repetition was an anticlimactic way of ending the game. Mamedyarov explained that he normally doesn't make quick draws and likes to keep the game going, but was tired today and needed the break, even though yesterday was the tournament rest day. He also did not seem to mind the fact that he wasted his white pieces. Tomorrow, he will have black against Maxime Vachier-Lagrave, while So will be facing Sergey Karjakin with the white pieces.



GM S. MAMEDYAROV // LENNART OOTES

- 1.d4 d5
- 2.c4 dxc4
- 3.e4 Nf6
- 4.e5 Nd5
- 5.Bxc4 Bf5
- 6.Ne2 e6
- 7.Nbc3 Nb6
- 8.Bb5+ Nc6
- 9.Ng3 Bg6
- 10.h4 h5
- 11.Nge2 Bf5

- 12.Ng3 Bg6
 - 13.Nge2 Bf5
 - 14.Ng3 Bg6
- 1/2-1/2



GM MAGNUS CARLSEN & GM MAURICE ASHLEY // LENNART OOTES



WGM JENNIFER SHAHADE & GM YASSER SEIRAWAN // LENNART OOTES



A SPECTATOR DURING ROUND 6 // LENNART OOTES

CURRENT STANDINGS

#GrandChessTour

AFTER ROUND 6

POS.	PLAYER	ROUND 6 RESULT	SCORE
T-1	GM VISWANATHAN ANAND (IND)	1/2	3 1/2 PTS
T-1	GM FABIANO CARUANA (USA)	1/2	3 1/2 PTS
T-1	GM DING LIREN (CHN)	1/2	3 1/2 PTS
T-4	GM WESLEY SO (USA)	1/2	3 PTS
T-4	GM S. MAMEDYAROV (AZE)	1/2	3 PTS
T-4	GM IAN NEPOMNIACHTCHI (RUS)	1/2	3 PTS
T-4	GM MAGNUS CARLSEN (NOR)	1/2	3 PTS
T-4	GM SERGEY KARJAKIN (RUS)	1/2	3 PTS
T-4	GM M. VACHIER-LAGRAVE (FRA)	1/2	3 PTS
T-10	GM HIKARU NAKAMURA (USA)	1/2	2 1/2 PTS
T-10	GM LEVON ARONIAN (ARM)	1/2	2 1/2 PTS
T-10	GM ANISH GIRI (NLD)	1/2	2 1/2 PTS

PLAYER MATCHUPS

#GrandChessTour

ROUND 7

WHITE	PLAYER	VS	PLAYER	BLACK
	GM DING LIREN (CHN)		GM VISWANATHAN ANAND (IND)	
	GM ANISH GIRI (NLD)		GM FABIANO CARUANA (USA)	
	GM MAXIME VACHIER-LAGRAVE (FRA)		GM SHAKHRIYAR MAMEDYAROV (AZE)	
	GM WESLEY SO (USA)		GM SERGEY KARJAKIN (RUS)	
	GM LEVON ARONIAN (ARM)		GM HIKARU NAKAMURA (USA)	
	GM MAGNUS CARLSEN (NOR)		GM IAN NEPOMNIACHTCHI (RUS)	

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ULTIMATE MOVES

AUGUST 29

Following the conclusion of the Sinquefield Cup, the Saint Louis Chess Club will host an Ultimate Moves Exhibition with all players on August 29 at 2pm. The event will include Saint Louis Chess Club founder Rex Sinquefield, President of Spectrum Studios Randy Sinquefield, legendary World Champion Garry Kasparov, and the Sinquefield Cup players in a team vs. team matchup. All tournament players will compete in this fun-spirited event where players swap out after every fifth move and are encouraged to talk amongst each other and their opponents throughout the match. Free admission!



2018 ULTIMATE MOVES // AUSTIN FULLER

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Thursday, August 15

5-6 PM Autograph Session, Kingside Diner

Thursday, August 15

6 PM Opening Ceremony, World Chess Hall of Fame*

Saturday, August 17

1 PM Round 1

Sunday, August 18

1 PM Round 2

Monday, August 19

1 PM Round 3

Tuesday, August 20

1 PM Round 4

Wednesday, August 21

1 PM Round 5

Thursday, August 22

Rest Day

Friday, August 23

1 PM Round 6

Saturday, August 24

1 PM Round 7

Sunday, August 25

1 PM Round 8

Monday, August 26

1 PM Round 9

Tuesday, August 27

1 PM Round 10

Wednesday, August 28

1 PM Round 11

Thursday, August 29

10 AM Playoff (If Necessary)

Thursday, August 29

2 PM Ultimate Moves

Thursday, August 29

6-7 PM Closing Ceremony, World Chess Hall of Fame*

*Private Event

SIDE EVENT HIGHLIGHT

Sinquefield Action Quads

FRIDAY, AUGUST 30

3 Rounds | Game in 20; 3 second delay

Entry Fee

\$10

Registration

6-6:50 PM

Space is limited to the first 50 players.

Round 1

7:00 PM

Winner of each quad receives \$36.

Quick Ratings will be used for Pairings and Prize purposes.

Free Entry for GMs and IMs. USCF membership required.
Arbiter has the discretion to appoint ratings.