

MELTWATER CHAMPIONS CHESS TOUR FINALS IN SAN FRANCISCO BY CHRIS TORRES

Chess fans around the globe were excited to watch some of our games biggest stars competing in the Meltwater Champions Chess Tour Finals in San Francisco. The prestigious event took place on November 14-20, 2022. The tournament was structured as a round-robin featuring eight elite chess competitors (GM Magnus Carlsen, GM Jan-Krzysztof Duda, GM Arjun Erigaisi, GM Anish Giri, GM Liem Quang Le, GM Shakhriyar Mamedyarov, GM Rameshbabu "Pragg" Praggnanandhaa and GM Wesley So). Each of the seven rounds consisted of four-game rapid (15 minutes with a 10-second increment) matches.

The San Francisco Bay Area is no stranger to top level chess. FM James Eade organized a famous super tournament in San Francisco in 1995 and the "City by the Bay" has several active chess clubs including one that is the oldest continuously running chess club in the United States. However, Meltwater Champions Chess Tour brings a different kind of energy by treating chess as an e-sport and its rapid paced structure captured the interest of a new generation of chess fans who enjoy watching chess streamers. Because of this

e-sport approach, players in the Meltwater Champions Chess Tour compete online while seated in state-of-the-art gaming chairs. Carlsen, Giri, Praggnanandhaa, and So played their games live from the San Francisco Ferry Building, while Duda, Erigaisi, Le, and Mamedyarov played remotely from their homes.

Day 1 started with a much-anticipated clash between Magnus Carlsen and Wesley So. After two draws, Magnus scored a win in their third game. In the other opening matches, Duda defeated Erigaisi, Mamedyarov won against Pragg and Giri defeated Le Quang in their blitz tiebreaker. It's worth noting that a win after a tiebreak yields just two points, with one going to the loser.

Standings After Day 1

#	Name	Rtg	Score
1-3.	Jan-Krzysztof Duda	2798	3
1-3.	Magnus Carlsen	2848	3
1-3.	Shakhriyar Mamedyarov	2756	3
4	Anish Giri	2732	2
5	Liem Quang Liem	2775	1
6-8.	Arjun Erigaisi	2733	0
6-8.	Wesley So	2774	0
6-8.	Praggnanandhaa R.	2750	0

Day 2 saw Magnus Carlsen and Jan-Krzysztof Duda again win their matches over Erigaisi and Mamedyarov without needing tiebreaks. Anish Giri won his match over Pragg but again needed the blitz playoff to complete the task. Liem Quang Le dominated Wesley So. Afterwards, So stated, "He's just very strong. He played some very good moves. I probably should have won game one, but other than

that, I think Liem played a near-perfect match."

Standings After Day 2

#	Name	Rtg	Score
1-2.	Jan-Krzysztof Duda	2798	6
1-2.	Magnus Carlsen	2848	6
3-4.	Anish Giri	2732	4
3-4.	Le Quang Liem	2775	4
5	Shakhriyar Mamedyarov	2756	3
6	Praggnanandhaa R.	2750	1
7-8.	Wesley So	2774	0
7-8.	Arjun Erigaisi	2733	0

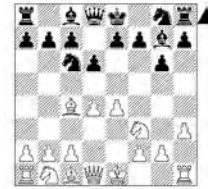
PIRC-ROBATSCH def.
Arjun E. - Magnus C.
0:1, 11/15/2022.

1. ♖f3 g6 2. d4 ♗g7 3. e4 d6 The players opt for a clash between classical and hypermodern styles in the Zukertort Opening. 4. ♗c4 ♖c6 5. h3 Stopping Bg4 is important to preserve white's d4 pawn. Other options are castling or supporting the d4 pawn with pawn to c3.

[5. O-O ♖f6 6. ♗e2 ♗g4 7. c3 e5 8. ♗b5 ♖d7 9. ♖d1 O-O 10. ♗xc6 bxc6 11. h3 ♗xf3 12. ♗xf3 exd4 13. cxd4 c5 14. ♗e3 ♖b8 15. ♗e2 cxd4 16. ♗xd4 ♗xd4 17. ♖xd4 ♗f6 18. ♖d2 ♖c5 19. ♖c3 ♖fe8 20. ♖ad1 a5 21. ♖d5 ♗g7 22. f3 f5 23. ♗c4 ♖h8 24. exf5 gxf5 25. ♗c3 ♗xc3 26. ♖xc3 a4 27. ♖f1 ♖g7 28. ♖e1 ♖xe1 29. ♖xe1 f4 30. ♖d5 ♖e6 31. ♖c3 ♖b4 32. ♖e2 ♖g6 33. a3 ♖c4 34. ♖d3 ♖d4 35. ♖e2 ♖c4 36. ♖d3 ♖d4 37. ♖e2 ♖c4 1/2-1/2, Saurabh Anand (IND) 2303 - Maghsoodloo Parham (IRI) 2685 , Mumbai 1/ 2/2018 It "IIFL Wealth Mumbai Open";

5. c3 ♖f6 6. ♗e2 ♗g4 7. ♖bd2 O-O 8. h3 ♗c8 9. O-O ♖h5 10. ♖d1 ♖f4 11. ♗e1 e5 12. dxe5 dxe5 13. ♖f1 ♗f6 14. ♖1h2 h5 15. b4 a6 16. a4 g5 17. ♗xf4 exf4 18. ♖d5 g4 19. e5 ♗e7 20. ♗e4 gxf4 21. ♖xf3 ♗e6 22. ♗d3 ♖fd8 23. ♖c5 a5 24. ♗b5 axb4 25. cxb4 ♗d7 26. ♗xf4 ♗e7 27. ♖ac1 ♖h7 28. ♗e4 ♖g8 29. ♗f4 ♖h7 30. ♗e4 ♖g8 31. a5 ♖ab8 32. a6 ♖xb4 33. ♖xc7 ♗f8 34.

♖g5 f5 35. exf6 ♗xf6 36. ♗h7 ♖f8 37. ♖xe6 1-0, Kovalenko Igor (LAT) 2684 - Shoker Samy (EGY) 2492 , Alma-Ata 6/18/2016 It "Eurasian Blitz Chess Cup"]



5... ♖f6 6. ♗e2 e5 7. dxe5 ♖xe5 8. ♖xe5 dxe5 9. O-O O-O 10. ♖d1 ♗e7 11. ♖h2 Erigaisi gets Magnus out of his prep with a unique innovation. More common approaches for white are 11. Nc3, 11. Bg5 or 11. b3.

[11. ♖c3 c6 12. ♗g5 h6 13. ♗h4 g5 14. ♗g3 h5 15. ♗e3 h4 16. ♗h2 ♖h5 17. ♖d2 ♖f4 18. ♖ad1 b5 19. ♗b3 a5 20. a4 b4 21. ♖e2 ♗a6 22. ♗xf4 exf4 23. ♗f3 ♖ad8 24. ♖d4 ♗xd4 25. ♖xd4 ♖xd4 26. ♖xd4 c5 27. ♖d5 c4 28. ♗a2 ♗c8 29. ♗h5 f6 30. ♗g6 ♗g7 31. ♗xg7 ♖xg7 32. ♗xc4 ♗e6 33. ♖c5 ♗xc4 34. ♖xc4 ♖d8 35. ♖f1 b3 36. cxb3 ♖d2 37. b4 ♖xb2 38. bxa5 ♖g6 39. a6 ♖b6 40. a5 ♖xa6 41. ♖a4 ♖f7 42. ♖e2 ♖e6 43. ♖f3 f5 44. exf5 ♖xf5 45. ♖e2 ♖e5 46. ♖d3 ♖d5 47. ♖c3 g4 48. ♖xf4 g3 49. fvg3 hxg3 50. ♖g4 ♖e5 ...1-0, Szpar Milosz (POL) 2449 -



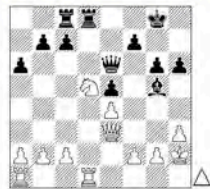
Behind the scenes viewpoint of Tania Sachdev interviewing Magnus Carlsen in San Francisco on November 18, 2022.

Anton Guijarro David (ESP) 2675 , Internet 12/15/2020 It "Titled Tuesday";
 11. ♖g5 ♗e6 12. ♘c3 c6 13. ♗d2 ♗fd8 14. ♗xe6 ♞xe6 15. ♗ad1 ♗xd2 16. ♞xd2 ♗f8 17. a3 ♗c5 18. ♗e3 ♗b6 19. ♗xb6 axb6 20. ♞d6 ♞xd6 21. ♗xd6 ♗g7 22. f3 ♗f8 23. ♗xf6 ♗e7 24. ♘d5 cxd5 25. ♗xb6 dxe4 26. ♗xb7 ♗e6 27. fxe4 ♗d8 28. ♗b6 ♗e7 29. a4 ♗d4 30. a5 ♗xe4 31. b4 ♗e1 32. ♗f2 ♗a1 33. a6 1-0, Souleidis Georgios (GRE) 2436 - Karaokcu Erkin (TUR) 2256 , Neustadt a.d. Weinstrasse 2/13/2018 It "Pfalz Open";

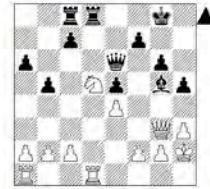
11. b3 ♗d8 12. ♗a3 ♗xd1 13. ♞xd1 ♞d7 14. ♞f3 b5 15. ♗f1 ♗b7 16. ♘c3 a6 17. ♗d1 ♞c6 18. ♘d5 ♘xd5 19. exd5 ♞d7 20. c4 ♗d8 21. ♞e3 c6 22. d6 f5 23. ♞a7 ♗c8 24. ♞b6 e4 25. ♗c5 ♗f6 26. a4 bxa4 27. bxa4 ♞b7 28. ♞xb7 ♗xb7 29. ♗b1 ♗d7 30. ♗b4 ♗d4 31. c5 e3 32. fxe3 ♗xe3 33. ♗h1 f4 34. ♗c4 ♗g7 35. ♗a3 h5 36. ♗e6 ♗c8 37. ♗xd7 ♗xd7 38. ♗b7 ♗f6 39. ♗xd7 g5 40. ♗a7 ♗e6 41. ♗xa6 g4 42. hxg4 hxg4 43. ♗a8 ♗d7 44. ♗g8 g3 45. ♗f8 ♗e6 46. ♗b4 ♗d7 47. a5 f3 48. ♗xf3 ♗xc5 49. ♗xc5 ♗e6 50. ♗d3 ♗d7 ...1-0, Robles Aguilar Enrique Alfonso - Starozhilov Leonid (UKR) 2318 , Internet 5/26/2020 It "Titled Tuesday"]



11... ♗e6 12. ♘c3 ♗fd8 13. ♗e3 a6 14. ♗xe6 ♞xe6 15. ♗g5 h6 16. ♗xf6 ♗xf6 17. ♘d5 ♗ac8 18. ♞e3 ♗g5 Starting a series of threats and counter threats.



19. ♞b3 b5 20. ♘b4 ♞b6 21. ♞f3 h5 22. ♘d5 ♞e6 23. ♞g3 Erigaisi's knight is guarding against black pinning the queen to the king with Bf4.

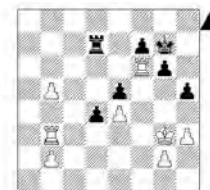


23... c6 So Magnus asks the knight to move. 24. ♞xg5 Capturing it is an obvious approach to dealing with the threatening bishop. 24... cxd5 Regains the material while fighting for control of the center.



25. c3 d4 26. ♗d3 ♗d7 27. a4 b4 28. cxb4 ♗c2 29. b5 ♗xf2 30. ♗c1 axb5 31. axb5 ♗g7 32. ♗c6 ♞e7 33. ♞xe7 ♗xe7 34. ♗b3 ♗f6 35. ♗g3 ♗d7 36. ♗xf6? Erigaisi makes a mistake. 36. h4 was correct here.

[36. h4 d3 37. ♗c1 d2 38. ♗d1 ♗d8 39. b6 ♗fd6 40. b7 ♗b8 41. ♗f2 ♗d7 42. ♗e2 ♗xb7 43. ♗xb7 ♗xb7 44. ♗xd2 ♗f6 45. ♗c2 ♗e6 With a slight advantage to black but still well within the territory of a likely draw.]

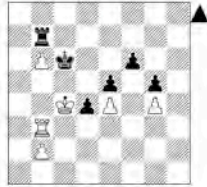


36... ♗xf6 37. ♗f2 ♗e6 38. ♗a3 ♗b7 39. ♗a5 ♗d6 40. ♗e2 ♗c5 41. b6 ♗d6 42. ♗d5 ♗e6 43. ♗b5 f6 44. g4 hxg4 44... h4 seems to steer toward a draw.

[44... h4!? 45. ♖d3 g5 (45... ♖d6 46. ♖c4 g5) 46. ♖c4 ♖d6 Should result in a draw.]

45. hxg4 g5 46. ♖d3 ♖d6 47. ♖c4 ♖c6
48. ♖b3? Erigaisi makes an inaccuracy. Correct was 48. b4.

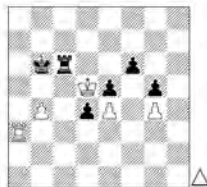
[48. b4 ♖xb6 49. ♖a5 ♖b7 50. b5 ♖d6 51. ♖a3 ♖d7 52. ♖f3 ♖a7 53. ♖a3 ♖b8 54. ♖f3 ♖b7 55. ♖a3 ♖d6 56. ♖d3 ♖b6 57. ♖c4 d3 Will result in a draw.]



48... ♖xb6 49. ♖f3 ♖c7 50. b4?! Better was 50. Kc5.

[50. ♖c5!? ♖a6 But black still has a decisive advantage.]

50... ♖c6 51. ♖b5 ♖d6 52. ♖a3 ♖b7 53. ♖c4 ♖c6 54. ♖d5 ♖b6!? Magnus sets a trap!



55. ♖a6?? Erigaisi steps into it. Correct was 55. Ra1.

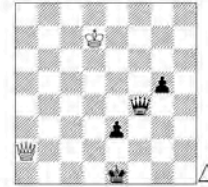
[55. ♖a1 ♖b7 Would have been a draw.]

55... ♖xa6 56. ♖xc6 ♖a7 57. ♖c7 ♖a6 58. ♖c6 d3 59. b5 ♖a5 60. b6 d2 61. b7 d1=♖ 62. b8=♖ ♖a4?? Magnus Carlsen makes a rare blunder that causes his advantage to evaporate. With 62... Qd3, black would still have been winning.

[62... ♖d3 63. ♖b6 ♖a4 64. ♖b2 ♖c4 65. ♖d6 ♖d4 66. ♖xd4 exd4 67. ♖e7 ♖b5 68. ♖xf6 d3 69. e5 d2 70. e6 d1=♖ 71. e7 ♖d7 72. ♖f7 was obviously crushing.]

63. ♖b5 Just like that, Erigaisi is right back in the game! 63... ♖a3 64. ♖d5?? And back to losing again after this blunder. With 64. Qc5 Erigaisi would have had a draw.

64... ♖xg4 Magnus will make his opponent pay this time. 65. ♖d3 ♖b2 66. ♖d2 ♖b1 67. ♖d3 ♖c1 68. ♖f1 ♖d2 69. ♖xf6 ♖xe4 70. ♖d6 ♖b4 71. ♖d7 ♖f4 72. ♖a6 e4 73. ♖e6 e3 74. ♖a2 ♖e1 Erigaisi resigns because:



[...]

[75. ♖g2 e2 76. ♖c6 g4 77. ♖d7 ♖f7 78. ♖d8 ♖g8 79. ♖c7 ♖c4 80. ♖b8 ♖f4 81. ♖c8 ♖f5 82. ♖c7 ♖d1 83. ♖g3 e1=♖ 84. ♖d6 ♖e2 85. ♖a6 ♖f2 86. ♖a2 ♖f1 87. ♖a6 ♖g2 88. ♖a2 ♖ef2 89. ♖a8 ♖5f3 90. ♖c6 ♖b2 91. ♖d7 ♖g7 92. ♖d8 ♖h3 93. ♖xf3 gxf3 94. ♖c8 f2 95. ♖b8 f1=♖ 96. ♖c8 ♖ff8#]

[0:1]



Day 3: Magnus Carlsen continued his winning ways by making easy work of Shakhriyar Mamedyarov. However, it was Jan-Krzysztof Duda who stole the spotlight on the third day of competition by also maintaining his perfect 9/9 score by way of defeating Anish Giri with a breathtaking brilliancy. Duda spoke of his modern brilliance in the post game interview stating that “I’m very happy, of course. It’s not every day you get to checkmate your opponent. I mean, not really checkmate. In a way, I am disappointed that there was no

checkmate on the board, but the combination was so beautiful, so atypical, but also with checks. It's something extraordinary to me. I always could appreciate the beauty in chess, and it's very nice to be on the good side of things!"

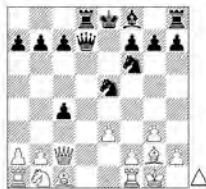
Praggnanandhaa bounced back to form by defeating Liem Quang Le with three straight victories. Finally, Wesley So defeated Arjun Erigaisi.

Standings After Day 3

#	Name	Rtg	Score
1-2.	Jan-Krzysztof Duda	2798	9
1-2.	Magnus Carlsen	2848	9
3-5.	Anish Giri	2732	4
3-5.	Liem Quang Liem	2775	4
3-5.	Praggnanandhaa R.	2750	4
6-7.	Shakhriyar Mamedyarov	2756	3
6-7.	Wesley So	2774	3
8	Arjun Erigaisi	2733	0

CATALAN SYSTEM Le Quang L. - R. P. 0:1, 11/16/2022.

1. d4 ♘f6 2. c4 e6 3. ♘f3 d5 4. g3 dxc4
5. ♙g2 This move is the most popular.
5... ♙d7 could be met by 6. ♘e5 ♙c6 7.
♘xc6 ♘xc6 8. O-O ♖d7 9. e3 ♜d8 10.
♞c2 e5 11. dxe5 ♘xe5

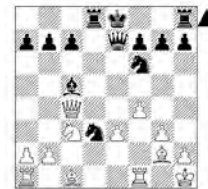


12. f4? 12. Nd2 is better.

[12. ♘d2 c6 (12... b5 13. a4 ♙b4 Interesting with a slight edge to white.)
13. ♘xc4 ♘xc4 14. ♞xc4 ♙e7 15. b3 ♞e6 16. ♞c2 O-O 17. ♙b2 ♙d6 18. ♜ad1 ♙e5 19. ♙a3 ♙d6 20. ♙c1 ♜fe8 21. ♜d3 ♙c7 22. ♜fd1 h5 23. ♜xd8 ♜xd8 24. ♜xd8 ♙xd8 25. ♙b2 h4 26. ♞d3 ♙c7 27. ♞d4 hxg3 28. hxg3 ♙b6 29. ♞e5 ♞d7 30. ♙f3 ♙d8 31. ♞b8 a6 32. ♙xf6 gxf6 33. ♞f4 ♙e7 34. ♙e4 ♞e6 35. ♙f5 ♞e5 36. ♞g4 ♙f8 37. ♙h7 ♙c5 38. ♞c8 ♙g7 39. ♞g8 ♙h6 40. ♙c2 ♞h5 41. ♞h8 ♙g5

42. ♞g7 1-0, Gelfand Boris (ISR) 2676 - Kryakvin Dmitry (RUS) 2594 , Internet 8/22/2020 It "PNWCC Online Blitz";
12. b3 ♙e7 13. ♘d2 ♞d3 14. ♞xd3 ♘xd3 15. ♘xc4 b6 16. ♙c6 ♙f8 17. ♙d2 ♙b4 18. ♙xb4 ♘xb4 19. ♘e5 g6
20. a3 ♘xc6 21. ♘xc6 ♜d3 22. b4 ♙g7 23. ♜fd1 ♜xd1 24. ♜xd1 a6 25. f3 ♜e8 26. e4 ♜e6 27. ♘b8 a5 28. b5 ♘e8 29. ♜d8 ♘d6 30. a4 ♘b7 31. ♜c8 ♘c5 32. ♘a6 ♘xa4 33. ♘xc7 ♜e5 34. ♘d5 f5 35. ♜c7 ♙f8 36. ♜c4 fxe4 37. fxe4 ♘b2 38. ♜c8 ♙f7 39. ♜c7 ♙e6 40. ♜c6 ♙f7 41. ♜f6 ♙g7 42. ♜xb6 ♜xe4 43. ♜b7 ♙h6 44. b6 ♜e1 45. ♙g2 ♘d3 46. ♜a7 ♜b1 47. ♜xa5 ♜b2 48. ♙f1 ♘e5 49. ♘e3 ♘c6 50. ♘g4 ♙g7 51. ♜a6 h5 ...1/2-1/2, Rodshtein Maxim (ISR) 2699 - Hovhannisyan Robert (ARM) 2595 , Tbilisi 9/4/2017 Cup World FIDE]

12... ♘d3 13. ♞xc4 ♙c5 14. ♘c3 ♞e7 15. ♙h1



15... O-O?! Castling here is reasonable but 15... c6 is slightly stronger.

[15... c6!? 16. ♙e4 ♘xe4 17. ♞xe4 ♙b6 Black has a significant edge.]

16. ♙xb7 ♙xe3 17. ♘d5 ♘xd5 18. ♞xd3 ♙xc1 19. ♙xd5 ♙xb2 20. ♜ad1 ♜d6 21. ♜fe1 ♞d7 22. ♞f3 ♙f6?! Slightly inaccurate.

[22... g6!? 23. ♙g2 With black's bishop having more maneuverability.]

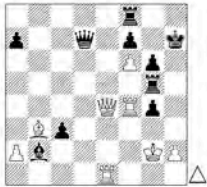


38. ♔g2? A costly mistake.

[38. gxh5 gxf5 39. ♖g1 ♕h7 40. ♜xf5 ♞xf5 41. ♞xf5 ♜xf5 42. ♙c2 ♕h6 43. ♙xf5 ♕xh5 44. ♙c2 ♜e8 45. ♜g7 f5 46. ♕g3 ♜e2 47. ♙xf5 c2 48. ♙xc2 ♜xc2 49. ♜xa7 Was a tricky path to a draw.]

38... hxg4 39. f6 ♕h7 40. ♜f4 ♜g5??
Black misses the game winning 40... Rf5.

[40... ♜f5 41. ♜xg4 ♜xf6 42. ♜d1 ♞b5 43. ♞c4 ♞xc4 44. ♜xc4 ♜e8 45. ♜d7 ♜e2 46. ♕g3 ♕h6 47. ♜xa7 ♜f1 48. ♜h4 ♕g7 Is easily winning for black.]

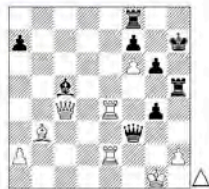


41. ♜e2?? A mistake which loses the game.

[41. ♞e7 ♞c6 42. ♕g3 ♜h5 43. ♞xf8 ♜h3 44. ♕f2 ♜xh2 45. ♕e3 ♜h3 46.

♕f2 Was the proper path to a draw.]

41... ♙a3 42. ♞e3 ♙d6 43. ♜e4 ♜h5
44. ♞xc3 ♞f5 45. ♞c4 ♞f3 46. ♕g1
♙c5 White resigns as...



[...]

[47. ♞xc5 ♜xc5 48. ♜e1 g3 49. ♜h4 ♕g8 50. ♙xf7 ♕xf7 51. ♜e7 ♕xf6 52. ♜f4 ♞xf4 53. hxg3 ♞xg3 54. ♕f1 ♕xe7 55. ♕e2 ♜f2 56. ♕e1 ♞g1#]

[0:1]

QUEEN'S gam. RAGOZIN SYSTEM

Jan-Krzysztof D. - Anish G.

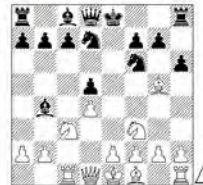
f.o. 11/16/2022.

1. d4 ♘f6 2. c4 e6 3. ♘f3 d5 4. ♘c3 ♙b4

The famous Queen's Gambit Declined, Ragozin Variation.



5. cxd5 exd5 6. ♙g5 A useful pin made possible by the fact that black's bishop is on b4 instead of e7. 6... ♘bd7 7. ♜c1 h6
Giri puts the question to white's annoying bishop.



8. ♙h4 Duda chooses to keep the pin. 8. Bxf6 and Bf4 were also possible.

[8. ♙xf6 ♞xf6 9. e3 c6 10. ♙d3 ♘b6 11. O-O ♙g4 12. h3 ♙xf3 13. ♞xf3 ♞xf3 14. gxf3 O-O-O 15. ♕g2 ♕b8 16. f4 ♙e7 17. ♘e2 ♘c8 18. f5 g6 19. fxg6 fxg6 20. ♘f4 ♜hg8 21. ♘xg6 ♜d6 22. ♕f3 ♜xg6 23. ♙xg6 ♜xg6 24. ♜g1



Chris Torres with GM Anish Giri

♖f6 25. ♗e2 ♘d6 26. ♖g8 ♗c7 27. ♖cg1 ♘f5 28. ♖1g4 ♗d6 29. ♖h8 ♖f7 30. ♖gg8 a5 31. a4 ♗b6 32. ♖d8 c5 33. ♖xh6 ♗c7 34. ♖hh8 cxd4 35. ♖c8 ♗b6 36. h4 dxe3 37. fxe3 ♗e5 38. ♖he8 ♗g3 39. h5 ♘d6 40. ♖e6 ♖f2 41. ♗d1 ♖h2 42. ♖g8 ♖h3 43. h6 ♗c5 44. ♗e2 ♗h2 45. ♗f1 ♗b4 46. ♗g2 ♖h5 47. ♖g7 b6 ...1-0, Berkes Ferenc (HUN) 2647 - Eljanov Pavel (UKR) 2716 , Germany 2/28/2009 Bundesliga 2008/09;

8. ♗f4 c6 9. a3 ♗xc3 10. bxc3 O-O 11. e3 ♗e7 12. a4 ♘h5 13. ♗e5 ♘xe5 14. ♘xe5 ♘f6 15. ♗d3 ♘d7 16. ♘f3 ♘f6 17. ♗c2 c5 18. ♗b2 ♘e4 19. O-O ♗f5 20. dxc5 ♗d7 21. ♗xe4 dxe4 22. ♘d4 ♗xa4 23. ♖a1 ♗c6 24. ♖a5 ♖ac8 25. ♖xa7 ♗xc5 26. ♖fa1 ♖fd8 27. ♖7a5 ♗e7 28. h3 ♖d5 29. ♖xd5 ♗xd5 30. ♖a5 ♗c4 31. ♘f5 ♗c7 32. ♗a3 ♖d8 33. ♖a8 ♗h7 34. ♖xd8 ♗xd8 35. ♘d6 ♗e6 36. ♗b4 b6 37. ♗xe4 ♗g8 38. ♗d4 ♗g5 39. h4 ♗e7 40. ♗h2 ♗c7 41. f4 ♗e7 42. ♗g3 ♗d8 43. e4 ♗b8 44. f5 ♗b3 45. e5 ♗c7 46. ♗h2 ♗c6 47. f6 ♗e6 ...1-0, Short Nigel D (ENG) 2698 - Kosintseva Nadezhda (RUS) 2546 , Caleta 1/29/2011 It (open) "Tradewise Gibraltar Masters"]

8... g5 Breaks the pin but also weakens black's kingside. **9. ♗g3 ♘e4** Giri knight adds pressure to the pin on c3 as well as threatens to eliminate white's bishop pair with Nxc3. **10. ♗b3** Handles black's threats on c3 nicely. **10... ♗xc3 11. bxc3 ♘b6** The knight on b6 supports d5 and is eyeing c4.

[11... c6 12. ♘e5 (12. e3 h5 13. ♘d2 ♘xd2 14. ♗xd2 h4 15. ♗d6 ♗f6 16. ♗a3 ♗xf2 17. ♗e2 ♘f6 18. ♖cf1 ♘e4 19. ♗d3 ♗xg2 20. ♗b4 c5 21. dxc5 ♗g4 22. ♗b5 ♗d8 23. ♖e1 ♗xe2 24. ♖xe2 ♗xe2 0-1, Ipatov Alexander (TUR) 2644 - Sjugirov Sanan (RUS) 2675 , Internet 9/27/2020 Tournament "US Collegiate Blitz") 12... h5 13. ♘xd7 ♗xd7 14. f3 ♘xg3 15. hxg3 ♗d6 16. ♗f2 h4 17. gxh4 gxh4 18. e3 ♗g3 19. ♗e2 b6 20. ♗a4 ♖h6 21. ♗d2 b5 22. ♗xb5 cxb5 23. ♗xb5 ♗f8 24. ♖hg1 ♖b8 25. ♗xd5 ♖b2 26. ♗d3 ♗a6 27. c4 ♖e6 28. ♗c5 ♗g7 29. d5 ♖eb6 30. ♗d4 ♗f8 31. ♗g4 ♗f2 32. ♗d4 ♖d2 33. ♗e4 ♖b4 34. ♗g5 ♖b8 35. ♗h6

♗e7 36. ♗xa6 ♖xa2 37. ♗c6 ♖b3 38. d6 ♗f8 39. ♗c5 ♖xe3 40. ♗xe3 ♖e2 41. ♗xe2 ♗xe2 42. ♗d4 ♗b2 43. ♗d5 ♗b7 44. ♗e5 ♗d7 45. c5 ♗e6 46. ♗d4 ♗f6 47. ♗c4 ♗e6 48. ♗b4 ♗d5 49. ♖gd1 ♗b7 50. ♗c4 ♗e8 51. ♖e1 ...1-0, Pivonka Michael (CZE) 1612 - Kalvach Ladislav (CZE) 1924 , Ricany 8/27/2014 It (open)]

12. e3 h5 Giri is threatening to trap White's bishop by playing h4 next and then, after white plays Be5, pawn to f6! **13. c4** Duda is unfazed and strikes back at the center threatening to open lines of attack against his opponent's dangerously placed king.

13... h4 Threatening the bishop which, again, will get trapped on e5 after pawn f7-f6. **14. ♗e5** Duda plays Be5 anyways.

14... f6 15. cxd5 fxe5 16. ♗b5 ♗f8?! Giri steps out of check to keep his light bishop on the board to support further pawn advances on the kingside. 16... Bd7 was definitely playable and perhaps even preferable.

[16... ♗d7!? 17. ♘xe5 ♘d6 18. ♗xd7 ♘xd7 19. e4 h3 20. gxh3 ♘f6 21. O-O ♘fxe4 22. ♗c2 g4 23. hxg4 ♗g5 24. ♖fe1 O-O 25. f3 ♘d2 26. h4 ♗f4 27. ♗g6 ♗h8 28. ♗h5 ♗g8 29. ♗g6 Is a draw by repetition.]



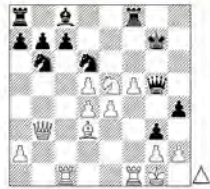
17. ♘xe5 Duda is down in material but has nice advantages in king safety, central space, and force. **17... ♗g7?** Giri plays inaccurately by trying to hard to hang onto his material advantage. Better is playing an immediate Qxd5 allowing white to trade his dangerous knight for black's rook on h8.

[17... ♗xd5 18. ♘g6 ♗g7 19. ♘xh8 ♗xh8 20. ♖xc7 ♗e6 21. ♗xd5 ♘xd5 Is a key continuation which needs close

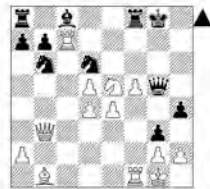
inspection.]



18. ♔d3 ♕d6 19. O-O White has given black a laundry list of problems for the cost of a little material. 19... g4 Giri continues on with pawn to g4 which, as you recall, is why he did not block check with his light bishop back on move 16. 20. f4 Threatening f5. 20... ♖f8 This stops white's pawn from advancing to f5. En Passant was not playable as it would allow white's rooks access down the f-file to attack black's king. 21. e4 To support pawn to f5. 21... g3 Giri does not have enough force with access to the quadrant containing white's king for this kind of flank attack to work. 22. f5 ♗g5 The best attacking move that Giri could play but his attack just isn't strong enough.

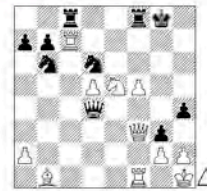


23. ♖xc7 ♕g8 24. ♔b1 An incredible move which gives Duda's Queen access to f3.



24... ♗d2 25. ♗f3 ♕xf5 Giri gives his extra piece back to allow the rook on a8 to finally enter the game. 26. exf5 ♗xd4 27. ♕h1 ♖ac8 Giri gets his rook into play but it leads to a mate in 11! Still better than 27... Qxe5 which would have black checkmated on move 30.

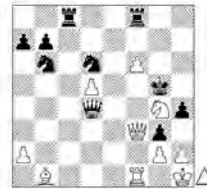
[27... ♗xe5 28. ♗g4 ♕h8 29. ♗h5 ♕g8 30. ♗h7\#]



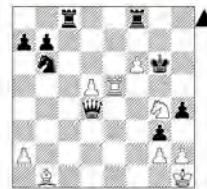
28. ♖g7 Hats off to Duda for spotting this in the heat of battle. 28... ♕xg7 29. f6



29... ♕h6 30. ♕g4 ♕g5



31. ♗f5 Amazing mastery on display here. 31... ♕xf5 32. ♖xf5 ♕g6 33. ♖e5 Giri resigns which sadly deprives Duda of the opportunity to finish one of the greatest mating combinations ever.



[...]

[33... ♖c2 34. ♕xc2 ♗e4 35. ♕xe4 ♕f7 36. ♖e7 ♕g8 37. ♕h6 ♕h8 38. ♖h7\#]

[1:0]

Day 4 of the Meltwater Champions Chess Tour Finals Magnus Carlsen distanced himself from the field. After defeating Anish Giri 3-0 Carlsen sported an impressive perfect 12 out of a possible 12 score. Jan-Krzysztof Duda was unable to keep up, losing his first tour finals match to Le Quang Liem. In the other matches, Arjun Erigaisi won for the first time over Shakhriyar Mamedyarov and Wesley So came out victorious over Pragg.

Standings After Day 4

#	Name	Rtg	Score
1	Magnus Carlsen	2848	12
2	Jan-Krzysztof Duda	2798	9
3	Le Quang Liem	2775	7
4	Wesley So	2774	6
5-6	Anish Giri	2732	4
5-6	Praggnanandhaa R.	2750	4
7-8	Shakhriyar Mamedyarov	2756	3
7-8	Arjun Erigaisi	2733	3

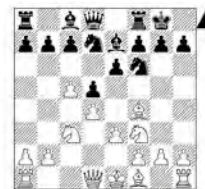
QUEEN'S gam. var. WITH
5.VF4
R. P. - Wesley S.
0:1, 11/17/2022.

1. d4 ♘f6 2. c4 e6 3. ♘f3 d5 4. ♘c3 Fans of a certain Netflix series were probably happy to see this game transpose into the Queen's Gambit Declined.



4... ♗e7 5. ♗f4 This is the QGD: Harrwitz Attack. 5... O-O 6. e3 ♘bd7 7. c5 And we have reached the Queen's Gambit Declined: Harrwitz Attack, Two Knights Blockade Line. The less committal 7. Qc2 is another option.

[7. ♗c2 c5 8. cxd5 ♘xd5 9. ♘xd5 exd5 10. ♗d3 ♗a5 11. ♗c3 ♗b6 12. a3 cxd4 13. ♗xd4 ♘c5 14. ♗c2 ♗b5 15. ♗e5 f6 16. ♗g3 ♗c4 17. ♗c1 ♗xd4 18. ♘xd4 a5 19. ♘b5 ♗d8 20. ♘c7 ♗a7 21. ♗d1 ♗f7 22. ♘xd5 b5 23. O-O ♗f8 24. ♗xh7 g5 25. h4 ♗e6 26. e4 gxh4 27. ♗xh4 ♗xd5 28. ♗xd5 ♗xd5 29. exd5 ♘a4 30. ♗c1 ♗d7 31. ♗c6 ♗xd5 32. ♗xf6 ♗g7 33. ♗c2 ♘xb2 34. ♗g6 ♗f7 35. ♗f6 ♗g7 36. ♗b6 ♗c5 37. ♗b7 ♗f8 38. ♗g6 ♗d4 39. ♗e7 ♗g8 40. ♗f6 1-0, Svidler Peter (RUS) 2760 - Adams Michael (ENG) 2727 , Geneva 7/ 9/2017 It "FIDE Grand Prix"]



7... c6 The players in this game must have been aware of the 7... Nh5 line as seen in Anand-Nakamura.

[7... ♘h5 8. ♗e5 c6 9. g4 ♘hf6 10. ♗g1 ♘xe5 11. ♘xe5 ♘d7 12. ♘xd7 ♗xd7 13. f4 b6 14. b4 a5 15. a3 axb4 16. axb4 ♗b8 17. g5 bxc5 18. bxc5 ♗b4 19. ♗c1 ♗a3 20. ♗d2 ♗d8 21. ♘d1 ♗xd2 22. ♗xd2 ♗a5 23. ♗e2 ♗b8 24. ♗f3 e5 25. fxe5 ♗f5 26. ♗g2 ♗e4 27. ♗f4 ♗xg2 28. ♗xg2 ♗a2 29. ♗f3 ♗d2 0-1, Anand Viswanathan (IND) 2803 - Nakamura Hikaru (USA) 2816 , Zuerich 2/19/2015 It (cat.22) (tie-break)]

8. h3 b6 9. b4 a5 10. a3 ♗a6 11. ♗xa6 ♗xa6 12. O-O ♗a8 13. ♗b1 axb4 14. axb4 ♗b7 15. ♗c2 ♗fa8 16. ♗fc1 b5 17. ♘d2 ♗d8 18. ♘b3 ♗c7 19. ♗xc7 ♗xc7 White has more space while blacks rooks control the a-file for now.

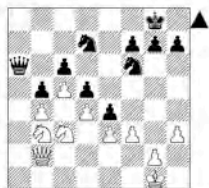


20. ♖a1 Pragg opts to challenge black in the a-file rather than start advancing on the kingside.

[20. f4 h6 21. ♖f1 ♖8a7 22. ♘a5 ♖a8 23. g4 ♘e4 24. ♘d1 ♖xa5 25. bxa5 ♗xa5 26. ♘b2 ♘df6 27. ♙g2 ♗a2 28. ♖fc1 ♖a3 29. ♖a1 ♗xa1 30. ♖xa1 ♖xa1 31. ♘d3 ♖a3 32. ♘b4 ♖xe3 33. ♗a2 ♘c3 34. ♗a8 ♙h7 35. ♘xc6 ♘fe4 36. ♘e7 ♖e2 37. ♙g1 ♖e1 38. ♙g2 ♖e2 1/2-1/2, Peng Zhaoqin (NED) 2402 - Mkrtchian Lilit (ARM) 2429 , Chisinau 6/23/2005 Ch Europe (w)]

20... e5 And Wesley responds by challenging white's advantage in space.
21. ♗b2 e4 22. ♖xa6 ♖xa6 23. ♖a1 ♗a7 24. ♖xa6 ♗xa6 25. f3 Pragg injects some life into the position. Trading queens in the a-file would undoubtedly result in a draw.

[25. ♗a1 ♗xa1 26. ♘xa1]

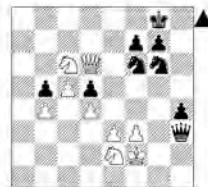


25... h5?! Wesley trades accuracy for complexity. The natural 25... exf3 was the more precise option.

[25... exf3!? 26. gxf3 ♗c8 27. ♗g2 ♘b8 28. ♘c1 ♗f5 29. e4 ♗d7 30. e5 ♘h5 31. ♘3e2 g6 32. ♗g4 ♗e8 33. f4 ♘g7 34. ♘g3 h5 35. ♗g5 With black maintaining a slight edge.]

26. ♘a5 Knights on the rim are usually grim but not here. White's knight blocks the black queen while threatening black's weak pawn on c6. 26... exf3 27. gxf3 ♗c8 28. ♗h2 ♘f8 29. ♙f2 ♘g6 30. ♗d6 ♗xh3 31. ♘xc6 h4 32. ♘e2?? A mistake which costs the game. 32. Nxd5 should result in a draw.

[32. ♘xd5 ♘xd5 33. ♗d8 ♙h7 34. ♗xd5 f5 35. f4 ♗g3 36. ♙e2 h3 37. ♗f3 ♗h4 38. ♙f1 h2 39. ♗h1 ♗g3 40. ♘e5 ♘xe5 41. dxe5 g5 42. fxe5 f4 43. exf4 ♙g6 44. e6 ♗xf4 45. ♙g2 ♗xg5 46. ♙xh2 ♗h4 47. ♙g1 ♗e1 48. ♙h2 ♗h4 Draw by repetition.]



32... ♘h5! Wesley spots the punishment.
33. ♘g1 ♗h1 34. ♘e2 ♘g3 Forcing white to play Nxg3 to allow Qh2+.



35. ♘xg3 ♗h2 36. ♙e1 hxg3 Wesley So final combination is beautifully played out.
37. ♙d1 ♗h1 38. ♙c2 g2 In a now hopeless situation, Pragg resigns.



[0:1]



Pragg took a break from his chess games to hang out with Chris Torres and James Eade at Shack15 in San Francisco.

PIRC-ROBATSCH def.
Arjun E. - Shakhriyar M.
1-0, 11/17/2022.

1. e4 g6 2. d4 g7 3. f3 d6 4. c4 f6
5. e2 c6 6. h3 White takes control of
g4. An alternative plan is supporting the d4
pawn with c3.

[6. c3 g4 7. bd2 O-O 8. h3 c8 9.
O-O h5 10. d1 f4 11. e1 e5 12.
dxe5 dxe5 13. f1 f6 14. h2 h5
15. b4 a6 16. a4 g5 17. xf4 exf4 18.
d5 g4 19. e5 e7 20. e4 gxf3 21.
xf3 e6 22. d3 fd8 23. c5 a5
24. b5 axb4 25. cxb4 d7 26. xf4
e7 27. ac1 h7 28. e4 g8 29.
f4 h7 30. e4 g8 31. a5 ab8
32. a6 xb4 33. xc7 f8 34. g5 f5
35. exf6 xf6 36. h7 f8 37. xe6
1-0, Kovalenko Igor (LAT) 2684 -
Shoker Samy (EGY) 2492 , Alma-Ata
6/18/2016 It "Eurasian Blitz Chess
Cup"]



6... e5 7. dxe5 dxe5 8. O-O O-O 9. d1
e7 10. c3 h6 White had been scoring
well against this move recently. Another
choice for black worth looking into is 10...
Na5.

[10... a5 11. d3 h6 12. b3 b6 13. a4
b7 14. b5 d6 15. c6 b8 16.
a3 d8 17. d2 a6 18. ad1 h7
19. d3 e6 20. d2 f8 21. xe5
b5 22. axb5 axb5 23. xb5 xb5 24.
xb5 fxe4 25. f4 f5 26. c6
d7 27. xd8 xb5 28. xf7 g7 29.
xd6 cxd6 30. xd6 c3 31. xc3
xc3 32. c4 xc4 33. bxc4 g7 34.
c5 e4 35. f3 xc2 36. c6 f5 37. c7
f7 38. g3 1-0, Kobalia Mikhail
(RUS) 2415 - Khropov Boris (RUS)
2288 , St. Petersburg 1994 Memorial
M.Chigorin]



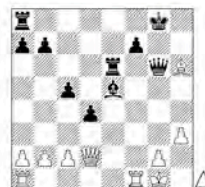
11. d5 xd5 12. xd5 d4 13. xd4
exd4 14. f4 e8 15. e5 c6 16. b3 c5
17. d2?! Erigaisi targets h6 but it is an
inaccuracy. A better plan for white would
be striking at black's center with 17. c3.

[17. c3!? dxc3 18. bxc3 e6 19. a4
ed8 20. b3 with equal chances for
both sides.]



17... g5 18. g3 e6 19. xe6 xe6
20. f4 gxf4 21. xf4 g6 22. f1 e5
23. xh6 h6 falls but black gets more than
enough compensation with his control of
the center. 23... e6 Black can create a
dangerous passed pawn with either 23...
c4 or 23... d3. However, it would be quite
difficult/impossible to convert this passer
into a win.

[23... c4 24. ae1 g3 25. xe8
xe8 26. f4 d3 27. cxd3 cxd3 28.
xg3 xg3 Is a draw for titles players.;
23... d3 24. cxd3 ad8 25. ad1 c4
26. g5 h7 27. xg6 xg6 28. f4
cxd3 29. xe5 xe5 Will be drawn.]



24. f4 ae8 25. f3 g7 26. g3
h7 27. f1 e2? At first and even
second glance this looks very strong but

Mamedyarov has fallen into a trap. A
better move would have been Rg6.

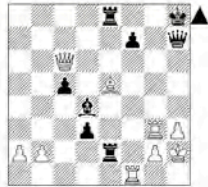
[27... g6 28. g5 f6 Is roughly
equal.]



28. ♖a5! Erigaisi jumps on his opponent's mistake. 28... ♜xc2? This makes matters worse. Retreating the rook back to e6 was black's best hope.

[28... ♜2e6 29. ♖xc5 ♖e4 30. ♔d2 ♜g6 31. ♜e1 ♖c6 White needs to be accurate here. 32. ♖xc6 ♜xe1 33. ♕f2 ♜xc6 34. ♕xe1 And with accurate play white maintains the advantage.]

29. ♖xa7 ♕h8 30. ♖xb7 d3 The black pawn on d3 is getting dangerously close to its goal. 31. ♕h2 ♔d4 32. ♖c6 ♜ce2 33. ♔e5 The first move of a mate in 3. Mamedyarov recognises this and resigns.



[...]
[33... ♖g7 34. ♖h6 ♕g8 35. ♖xg7#]
[1:0]

Day 5: GM Magnus Carlsen won his fifth match in a row at the Meltwater Champions Chess Tour Finals. However, his hopes for a perfect score were shattered when defeating GM Le Quang Liem required a blitz playoff and an Armageddon tiebreak game. GM Le Quang Liem thus took one match point away from Carlsen, who still maintained a commanding lead over the rest of the field.

In fact, Magnus Carlsen's lead over Duda grew by another point as the Polish GM lost an exciting match against Pragg who only clinched victory by holding a draw as black in the Armageddon tiebreak game. Wesley So jumped to third in the standings by beating Shakhriyar Mamedyarov while Arjun Erigaisi defeated Anish Giri.

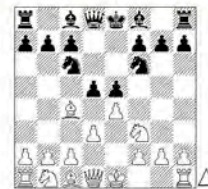
Standings After Day 5

#	Name	Rtg	Score
1	Magnus Carlsen	2848	14
2	Jan-Krzysztof Duda	2798	10
3	Wesley So	2774	9
4	Le Quang Liem	2775	8
5-6.	Praggnanandhaa R.	2750	6
5-6.	Arjun Erigaisi	2733	6
7	Anish Giri	2732	4
8	Shakhriyar Mamedyarov	2756	3

BISHOP'S OPENING Wesley S. - Shakhriyar M. 1.0, 11/18/2022.

1. e4 e5 2. ♖f3 ♖c6 3. ♔c4 ♖f6 4. d3 d5!? An uncommon idea that this scholastic chess coach has looked at in class. The main line continues 4... Bc5.

[4... ♔c5 5. c3 O-O 6. ♖bd2 d5 7. ♔b5 dxe4 8. dxe4 a5 9. O-O ♖e7 10. h3 ♜d8 11. ♖c2 ♖b8 12. ♜d1 ♖bd7 13. ♔f1 b6 14. ♖c4 ♔b7 15. ♜e1 a4 16. ♔g5 h6 17. ♔h4 b5 18. ♖cd2 g5 19. ♔g3 ♖h5 20. ♕h2 ♔c6 21. b4 axb3 22. axb3 g4 23. ♖h4 ♜xa1 24. ♜xa1 ♖g5 25. ♖f5 ♖xg3 26. fxg3 ♖f6 27. ♜d1 gxh3 28. ♖f3 ♖g4 29. ♕h1 ♜xd1 30. ♖xd1 ♖f2 31. ♕h2 ♖xd1 32. ♖xg5 hxg5 33. b4 hxg2 34. ♔xg2 ♔f8 0-1, Maghsoodloo Parham (IRI) 2676 - Carlsen Magnus (NOR) 2862 , Internet 11/ 2/2020 It "chess.com Speed"]



5. exd5 ♖xd5 6. O-O ♖b6 6... Be7 and 6... Bg4 have also been tried.

[6... ♔e7 7. ♜e1 ♔g4 8. h3 ♔xf3 9. ♖xf3 ♖f6 10. ♔b5 ♖d6 11. ♖d2 O-O 12. ♔xc6 ♖xc6 13. ♖xc6 bxc6 14. ♜xe5 ♔d6 15. ♜e1 ♜fe8 16. ♜xe8 ♜xe8 17. ♕f1 ♖d5 18. a3 ♔e5 19. ♖c4 ♔f6 20. c3 ♜b8 21. ♔d2 h6 22. d4 ♔e7 23. b4 ♔d6 24. ♖a5 ♜e8 25. ♖xc6 a6 26. c4 ♖f6 27. ♜e1 ♜e4 28. ♜xe4 ♖xe4 29. ♕e2 ♖xd2 30. ♕xd2 ♔f4 31. ♕d3 ♔c1 32. a4 ♔a3 33. a5 ♕f8 34. b5 axb5 35. a6 bxc4 36. ♕xc4

1-0, Kramnik Vladimir (RUS) 2809 - Heshammarei, Internet 2001 Simultan; 6... g4 7. h3 h5 8. Ee1 e7 9. Qb2 O-O 10. Qe4 Qb6 11. b3 Qd4 12. g4 Qxf3 13. Pxf3 g6 14. Qg3 d6 15. Pxb7 e4 16. Qxe4 Ph4 17. Qxd6 Pxb3 18. Pg2 Pxc2 19. Qxc2 cxd6 20. Qf4 Rfd8 21. Ee7 a5 22. a4 Qc8 23. Rc7 d5 24. Ee1 Ra6 25. Qxd5 Rb6 26. Rb7 Rxb7 1-0, Matlakov Maxim (RUS) 2700 - Smirnov Mikhail (RUS) 2176 , St. Petersburg 12/22/2013 Tournament (blitz) (prelim)]

7. b5 d6 8. Qxe5 White had a number of other good options here:

[8. Ee1 f6 9. d4 O-O 10. Qxc6 bxc6 11. dxe5 fxe5 12. h3 Pf6 13. Qb2 Qd5 14. Qe4 Pg6 15. Qh4 Pf7 16. e3 h6 17. c4 Qxe3 18. Rxe3 Pxc4 19. Ph5 Pf7 20. Pxf7 Rxf7 21. Rd1 e6 22. Qxd6 Rd7 23. Rxe5 Qxa2 24. Qhf5 Rad8 25. Qe7 Qh7 26. Qxc6 Rxd6 27. Rxd6 Rxd6 28. Qxa7 Rd1 29. Qh2 Rd2 30. Qb5 Rxb2 31. Qxc7 Rxf2 32. Qd5 Rd2 33. Qf4 b1 34. Ee7 f5 35. Qh5 g6 36. Qxc7 d7 37. Qe8 Qf5 38. Qc7 e6 39. Rg7 Qf6 40. Rg3 Ra2 41. Rg8 Ra7 42. Qe8 Qe5 43. Qg7 Ra2 44. Qh5 f3 45. Rg3 Qxh5 46. Rb3 Qf6 47. Rb5 f7 ...0-1, Vlassov Nikolai (RUS) 2352 - Jumabayev Rinat (KAZ) 2654 , Internet 9/29/2020 It "Titled Tuesday";

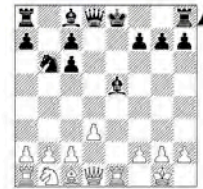
8. Qc3 O-O 9. Qxc6 bxc6 10. Ee1 g4 11. h3 h5 12. Qe4 Qd7 13. b3 f5 14. Qg3 g6 15. b2 Re8 16. Qd2 Ph4 17. Qf3 Pf6 18. Pd2 Pf8 19. Qh4 b4 20. Qxc6 hxc6 21. Qc3 d6 22. b2 Rad8 23. Pc3 c5 24. Pc4 Pf7 25. Pxf7 Qxf7 26. Qf1 Qb6 27. Qd2 e4 28. dxe4 Qh2 29. Qxh2 Rxd2 30. exf5 Rxe1 31. fxg6 Qxc6 32. Rxe1 Rxc2 33. Qc1 Rxf2 34. Re6 Rf6 35. Re5 Rc6 36. Rg5 Qf7 37. Qe3 c4 38. bxc4 Qxc4 39. Qxa7 Qb6 40. Rb5 Rc2 41. Qxb6 1/2-1/2, Drozdowski Konrad (POL) 2132 - Slonimskij Arkadij (RUS) 2138 , Pardubice 7/29/2017 It "Czech Open" (b);

8. d4 Qd7 9. Ee1 O-O 10. Qc3 Qxd4 11. Qxd4 exd4 12. Pxd4 Qc5 13. Qe3 Qf5 14. Rac1 g6 15. Rd1 Pc8 16. Pd5 Qe6 17. Qe4 Qxh2 18. Qxh2 c6 19. Qd6 Pc7 20. Pe5 cxb5 21. Pg3 Pc6 22. c4 bxc4 23. Rxc4 Pa6 24. Rdc1 Rad8 25. Qe4 Pxa2 26. f4 Pxb2 27. R1c2 Pb5 28. Rc1 Rd3 29.

Pf2 Ph5 30. Qg1 b5 0-1, Fernandez Ignacio (ARG) 2265 - Benedetti Julio (ARG) 2335 , Mar del Plata 4/11/2017 It (open);

8. Qxc6 bxc6 9. Ee1 O-O 10. Qxe5 Pf6 11. Qf3 g4 12. Qbd2 Rfe8 13. Qe4 Pg6 14. Qd2 Qd7 15. Qxd6 cxd6 16. Re3 f5 17. Pf1 f4 18. Rxe8 Rxe8 19. Ee1 Rxe1 20. Qxe1 f3 21. d4 Qb6 22. Pd3 Pxd3 23. Qxd3 fxg2 24. Qxcg2 Qd1 25. Qb4 c5 26. dxc5 dxc5 27. Qc6 Qxc2 28. Qxa7 Qc4 29. Qc3 Qd6 1/2-1/2, Karetnikova Yulia (RUS) 1982 - Sakhina Marina (RUS) 1879 , Tomsk 11/ 9/2006 Ch UralFO (juniors) (under 16) (g)]

8... Qxe5 9. Qxc6 bxc6 10. Ee1 This pin is particularly unpleasant for black.



10... Pe7

[10... f6 11. d4 O-O 12. dxe5 Pxd1 13. Rxd1 fxe5 Was another possibility.]

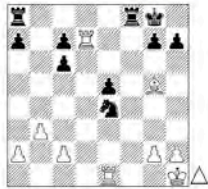
11. Qh1 Wesley avoids allowing black to unpin the dark bishop with a check. 11... O-O 12. f4 f6 13. fxe5 fxe5 14. Qc3 14. Be3 was another good choice.

[14. Qe3 ? Qd5 15. Pd2 Qf5 16. Qc3 Rf7 17. Qg1 g6 18. Qe4 a6 19. b3 Ph4 20. h3 h6 21. Re2 Qf4 22. Re3 Raf8 23. Pe1 Pd8 Where strong players would prefer white because of black longterm pawn weaknesses.]

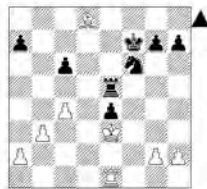


14... Qd5 15. Qe4 Qf5 16. Qg5 Pb4 17. b3 Pd4 18. Rc1 Qxe4 19. dxe4 Pxd1 20. Rcxd1 Qc3 21. Rd7 Qxe4 ?! Mamedyarov makes a costly inaccuracy. Much better was 21... Rf7 .

[21... Rf7 ?! 22. Rxf7 Qxf7 23. a4 c5 24. Qg1 Qa2 25. Qf1 h6 26. Qe3 c4 27. bxc4 Qc3 28. a5 Qe6 29. Qf2 Rf8 30. a6 c5 31. h4 Where white can not make use of his extra pawn.]

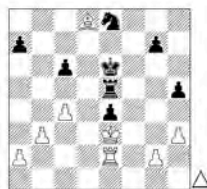


22. ♖e7 ♜f7 23. ♜xc7 ♘f6 24. ♗d6 ♜xc7 25. ♗xc7 e4 26. ♖g1 ♜e8 27. c4 ♖f7 28. ♖f2 ♜e7 29. ♗d8 ♜e5 30. ♖e3 Wesley So's wonderful technique is worthy of appreciation.



30... ♖e6 31. h3 h5 32. ♜e2 ♘e8 32... c5 also seems bad for black.

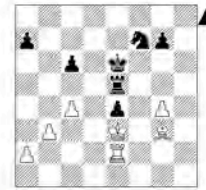
[32... c5 33. ♗xf6 ♖xf6 34. ♜f2 ♜f5 35. ♜d2 ♜g5 36. ♖f4 e3 37. ♖xe3 h4 38. ♖f2 ♜f5 39. ♖g1 g5 40. ♜d6 ♖e5 41. ♜a6 ♖f4 42. ♜xa7 is resignable for black.]



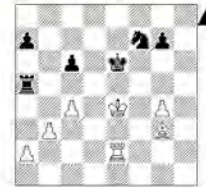
33. ♗h4 ♘d6 34. g4 hxg4 35. hxg4 ♘f7 36. ♗g3 36. Be1 was an alternate path to victory.

[36. ♗e1!? ♘h6 37. ♜g2 ♖d7 38. ♗c3 ♜e7 39. ♗d4 a5 40. ♜g3 ♖c7 41. ♖f4 ♖d6 42. ♗b6 c5 43. ♗xa5 e3 44. ♜xe3 g5 45. ♖f3 ♜xe3 46. ♖xe3 ♘xg4 47. ♖f3 ♘e5 48. ♖e4 g4 49. ♗e1 ♘f3 50. ♗f2 ♖c6 51. ♖f4 ♘d2 52. ♖xg4 ♘e4 53. ♗e1 From here an easy win for white. However, not nearly as pretty as

the actual game.]



36... ♜a5 37. ♖xe4 Wesley So orchestrates a beautiful finale.



37... ♘g5 38. ♖f4



38... ♖f7 39. ♗e1



39... ♘e6 40. ♜xe6 Mamedyarov resigns after being outplayed in artistic fashion.



[1:0]

Day 6: Magnus Carlsen won his sixth straight match of the event over Praggnanandhaa, and, in doing so, clinched the the Meltwater Champions Chess Tour Finals a full day before the end of the event. Wesley So continued his ascent in the standings by beating Duda and claiming second place for himself. Also climbing the standings was Arjun Erigaisi who defeated Le Quang Liem to move into fourth place. Shakhriyar Mamedyarov ended his losing streak by defeating the struggling but always amicable Anish Giri.

Standings After Day 6

#	Name	Rtg	Score
1	Magnus Carlsen	2848	17
2	Wesley So	2774	12
3	Jan-Krzysztof Duda	2798	10
4	Arjun Erigaisi	2733	9
5	Le Quang Liem	2775	8
6-7	Praggnanandhaa R.	2750	6
6-7	Shakhriyar Mamedyarov	2756	6
8	Anish Giri	2732	4

1.g3, 1.b4...
Arjun E. - R. P.
1:0, 11/20/2022.

1. d4 c3 e5 2. d4 f3 d4 c6 3. d4 exd4 4. d4xd4 d4f6 5. e4g5 e4c5 6. e3 h6 7. e4h4 O-O 8. d4f5 d5 9. f3f3



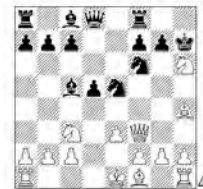
9... e4e5? Not taking the knight on f5 is asking for trouble.

[9... e4xf5 10. f3xf5 e4b4 11. e4d3 f3d7 12. O-O-O f3xf5 13. e4xf5 e4xc3 14. bxc3 d4e7 15. e4d3 c6 16. f3 f3fe8 17. g4 d4d7 18. e4g3 d4g6 19. f3he1 d4ge5 20. e4e2 d4b6 21. f3d4 f3e7 22. f3b4 f3ae8 23. e4h4 g5 24. e4f2 d4ec4 25. e4 f3e6 26. h4 d4d6 27. h4xg5 h4xg5 28. f3h1 d4xe4 29. e4d4 f6 30. f3b1 d4d5 31. f3xe4 f3xe4 32. e4d3 f3e1 33. e4b2 f3xb1 34. e4xb1 d4e4 35. c4 d4dc3 36. e4b2 d4a4 37. e4a3 d4ac5 38. f3e1 f3d8

1-0, Conquest Stuart (ENG) 2505 - Smejkal Jan (CZE) 2510 , Ostrava 1994 It (cat.11) "Radegast"]

10. d4xh6! e4h7 The alternatives here are quite tactical and worthy of attention.

[10... g4xh6? 11. f3xf6 f3xf6 12. e4xf6 d4d7 13. d4xd5 d4xf6 14. d4xf6; 10... e4h8 11. f3g3 f3d6 12. e4xf6 f3xf6 13. d4xd5 f3d6 14. O-O-O]



11. f3f4 e4d6 12. f3g5 f3d7 13. h3 d4e4? 13... Ng6 was correct.

[13... d4g6 14. e4d3 d4e4 15. e4xe4 dxe4 16. d4g4 e4b4 17. e4g3 e4xc3 18. bxc3 b6 19. O-O f3f5 20. f3xf5 e4xf5]



14. d4xe4 dxe4 15. d4g4 d4g6 16. f3h5 e4g8 17. e4f6 f3a4?? A fatal mistake.

[17... f3f5 18. f3xf5 e4xf5 19. e4c3]

18. d4h6 The start of a long mating sequence but Praggnanandhaa resigned so it's only in the notes.



[...]

[18... e4h7 19. d4xf7 e4g8 20. d4h6 e4h7 21. d4f5 e4g8 22. f3xg6 e4b4 23. c3 e4xc3 24. bxc3 f3d1 25. f3xd1 f3f7 26. f3d8 f3f8 27. f3xg7#]

[1:0]

Day 7: Magnus Carlsen finished the Meltwater Champions Chess Tour Finals by winning his seventh straight and final match of the event over Jan-Krzysztof Duda. Wesley So lost his match against Anish Giri which came down to an exciting Armageddon tie breaking game. In a match featuring two of the brightest Indian chess stars, Praggnanadhaa R. beat Arjun Erigasi after Erigasi fell into an opening trap in their fourth game. Finally, Le Quang Liem defeated Shakhriyar Mamedyarov.

When the dust settled, Magnus Carlsen won the Meltwater Champions Chess Tour Finals and the \$50,000 "bonus" first prize in San Francisco, which added to his tour totals and meant the World Champion took home \$242,400 in total Tour earnings. If the Champions Chess Tour had been rated like traditional classical over the board chess tournaments, Carlsen's incredible 20/21 San Francisco display would have been categorized as a 2900 performance rating. However, as this hybrid format gains greater acceptance with the old guard, his achievement in San Francisco will go down in history as one of his best showings in his illustrious career.

Standings After Day 7 - Final

#	Name	Rtg	Score	Earnings
1	Magnus Carlsen	2848	20	\$50,000
2	Wesley So	2774	13	\$32,500
3	Le Quang Liem	2798	11	\$27,500
4	Jan-Krzysztof Duda	2775	10	\$25,000
5-6.	Arjun Erigasi	2733	9	\$22,500
5-6.	Praggnanandhaa R.	2750	9	\$22,500
7-8.	Shakhriyar Mamedyarov	2756	6	\$15,000
7-8.	Anish Giri	2732	6	\$15,000



Coach Tortoise was live in San Francisco for the chess event of the year.



Everyone was all smiles at the 2022 Meltwater Champions Chess Tour Finals in San Francisco, California.