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## ROUND 9 RESULTS:

<input type="checkbox"/> GM Veselin Topalov	1/2
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GM Levon Aronian	1/2
<input type="checkbox"/> GM Peter Svidler	1/2
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GM Viswanathan Anand	1/2
<input type="checkbox"/> GM Fabiano Caruana	1
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GM Anish Giri	0
<input type="checkbox"/> GM M.Vachier-Lagrave	1/2
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GM Wesley So	1/2
<input type="checkbox"/> GM Hikaru Nakamura	1
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GM Ding Liren	0

## CURRENT STANDINGS:

1 GM Wesley So	5 1/2
2 GM Fabiano Caruana	5
3 GM Viswanathan Anand	5
4 GM Levon Aronian	4 1/2
5 GM Hikaru Nakamura	4 1/2
6 GM Veselin Topalov	4 1/2
7 GM M.Vachier-Lagrave	4 1/2
8 GM Ding Liren	4
9 GM Peter Svidler	3 1/2
10 GM Anish Giri	3

## ROUND 9 HIGHLIGHTS

By WGM Tatev Abrahamyan



GM So with Rex Sinquefield after winning the 2016 Sinquefield Cup // Spectrum Studios

After a very dramatic round, America's #3 rated player, Wesley So, won the 2016 Sinquefield Cup. His road to victory was not easy, as today there were several different scenarios in which someone could have tied with him, sending them to the playoffs tomorrow; in the case he lost, someone could have passed him! Wesley was very solid throughout the tournament, not losing any games and making draws when he needed to, a strategy that he felt worked very well for him. His opponent, Maxime Vachier-Lagrave, needed to beat So in order to get as many points as him, but he had no real chances in the game and it was drawn quickly. The quick draw meant that either Topalov or Aronian, who were facing off, could catch him with a win. For a very long time, it seemed as if Topalov was going to win, but Aronian defended ferociously and Topalov ended up giving away his advantage and turning the game into a drawn rook endgame. Wesley waited at the Saint Louis Chess Club and Scholastic center with his family surrounded by fans watching the final moments of the game unfold, as the handshake after 81 moves ensured his win of the tournament. So earned 13 Grand Chess Tour points and \$75,000 for his efforts and is now the sole lead of the tour!



GRAND CHESS TOUR™  
2016

## GM VESELIN TOPALOV - GM LEVON ARONIAN 1/2 - 1/2

By WGM Tatev Abrahamyan

This was the last game of the round and lasted for 81 moves and seven hours! Topalov played brilliantly putting Aronian under an enormous amount of pressure and creating a lot of practical chances. Eventually, Topalov got a winning rook ending, which are known for being extremely tricky even when one side is winning. As some grandmasters jokingly put it, all rook endgames are drawn. This definitely proved to be the case in this game, as Topalov didn't choose the most precise continuation, allowing Aronian go into a rook vs. pawn endgame, which is completely drawn. Even from their body language, it became obvious that Topalov had given away the win for he sat there looking disappointed while Aronian walked around confidently. A well-earned draw for the Armenian.

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nf6 4.d3 Bc5 5.c3 d5** [sideline, that Aronian has played against Giri before] **6.exd5** [6.Nbd2 0-0 7.0-0 dxe4 8.dxe4 Qe7 9.b4 Bd6 10.a3 Nd8 11.Re1 c6 12.Bf1 Bc7 13.g3 a5 14.Rb1 axb4 15.cxb4 Ne6 16.Bb2 Rd8 17.Qc2 h6 18.Rbd1 Ng5 19.Nxg5 hxg5 20.Nc4 Bg4 21.Be2 Bh3 22.Bf1 Bg4 23.Be2 Bh3 24.Bf1 Bg4 25.Be2 ½-½ (25) Giri,A (2782)-Aronian,L (2792) Paris 2016] **6...Qxd5 7.Bc4 Qd6 8.Qe2 0-0 9.Nbd2 a5 10.Ng5 Bf5 11.Nde4 Nxe4 12.Nxe4 Bxe4 13.dxe4** [symmetrical

structure, with white having the bishop pair. Right now, the c1 bishop's main job is to cover the d2 square and make sure Rd8 and Qd2 doesn't happen] **13...Nd8 14.Bd2 c6 15.a4 Ne6 16.Rd1 Qe7 17.g3 Rad8 18.0-0 Rd7 19.Bc1 Rfd8 20.Rxd7 Rxd7 21.Kg2 g6 22.Bh6 Qf6 23.Qg4 Rd8 24.Bxe6** [Aronian was worried about this line 24.f4 Rd2+ 25.Kh1 exf4 26.gxf4 Rxb2 but he missed this key move 27.f5 Qe5! 28.Be2 Bd6 and white is in trouble] **24...Qxe6 25.Qxe6 fxe6 26.Kf3 Kf7 27.Ke2 Rd7 28.h4** [this position is quite unpleasant for black, but the key moments are in the rook ending] **28... Bf8 29.Be3 Be7 30.Rb1 c5 31.g4 h5 32.gxh5 gxh5 33.Rh1 Rd8 34.Rh3 Rg8 35.Rf3+ Ke8 36.Rg3 Kf7 37.Kd3 b6 38.Kc4** [giving up a pawn to get the queen side pawns] **38...Bxh4 39.Rh3 Bg5 40.Bxg5 Rxg5 41.Kb5 Rg2 42.Rf3+ Ke7 43.Kxb6 Rg8 44.Rh3 c4** [trying to create counterplay. Black is in a lot of trouble and is trying to create some chances] **45.Rxh5 Rb8+** [45...Kd6 46.Rh7 this position would be a stalemate if it weren't for the rook on g8!] **46.Kc6 Rxb2 47.Rxe5 Rc2 48.Rxa5** [48.f4 Kf6 49.Kd6 Rd2+ 50.Kc5 Rf2 51.Kd4 Rxf4 52.Rxa5+ -] **48...Rxc3 49.Rc5 Rc2 50.Kb5 c3 51.Kb4 Rxf2 52.Rxc3 Kd6 53.Rc4 Rf8 54.a5 Rb8+ 55.Ka3 Ra8 56.Ka4 Ra7 57.Rd4+**? [Diagram 1 giving away the win] [57.Kb4 Rb7+ 58.Kc3 Ra7 59.Ra4 putting the rook

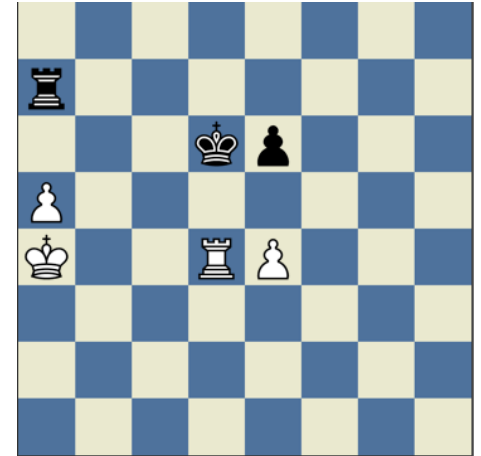


Diagram 1

behind the passed pawn 59... Kc5 60.a6 Kb5 61.Ra1 e5 (61... Rxa6 62.Rxa6 Kxa6 63.Kd4 the pawn ending is completely lost) 62.Kd3 and the king will come around to get the e5 pawn] **57... Kc5 58.Rd8 Rb7 59.Rc8+ Kd4 60.a6 Re7 61.Kb5 Kxe4 62.Rc4+ Kd3 63.Ra4 e5 64.Ra3+** [64.Kc5 Aronian thought that this move wins! 64...e4 (64...Ra7 saves the position! 65.Kb6 Ra8 66.a7 e4 67.Kb7 Rh8 68.a8Q Rxa8 69.Rxa8 e3 and the white king is too far away) 65.Ra3+ Kc2 66.Kd4 Ra7 67.Kxe4 Kb2 68.Ra5 Kc3 69.Kd5 Kb4 70.Ra1 Kb5 71.Rb1+ Kxa6 72.Kc6 is what he had calculated] **64...Kd4!** [there is a lot of room to err in a rook ending] [64...Kd2?? 65.a7 Rxa7 66.Rxa7 e4 67.Kc4 e3 68.Ra2+ Kd1 69.Kd3] **65.a7 Rb7+!** [65... Rxa7?? 66.Rxa7 e4 67.Kb4 Kd3 68.Kb3] **66.Kc6 Rxa7 67.Rxa7 e4 68.Ra4+ Kd3** [this endgame is an easy draw] **69.Kd5 e3 70.Ra3+ Kd2 71.Kd4 e2 72.Ra2+ Kd1 73.Kd3 e1N+ 74.Kc3 Nf3 75.Rf2 Ne1 76.Rd2+ Kc1 77.Rh2 Kd1 78.Rf2 Kc1 79.Rd2 Nf3 80.Rd5 Ne1 81.Rd8 Nf3**

½ - ½

## GM PETER SVIDLER - GM VISWANATHAN ANAND 1/2 - 1/2

By WGM Tatev Abrahamyan

Anand had some mathematical chances of tying for first place in case So lost and he won. After a marathon 7 hour win against Giri in Round 8, Svidler was not looking for another long day in the office. He explained that Anand's opening repertoire is so solid, that when he decides to make a draw it is hard to do anything. The pieces came off the board quickly and the game ended with a threefold repetition before move 30.



Diagram 1



Diagram 2

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nf6 4.d3 Bc5 5.Bxc6 [committal move. Black wants to play Nd4 here] [5.c3 a6 6.Bxc6 dxc6 since the pawn on c3, this is a better version for black as the d3 pawn is now weak] 5...dxc6 6.Nbd2 Be6 7.0-0 Bd6 8.b3 Nd7 9.Nc4 0-0 [9...Bxc4 10.bxc4 0-0 11.Rb1 b6 12.g3 f5 13.exf5 Rxf5 14.Qe2 Nc5 15.Be3 Ne6 16.Nd2 Qf6 17.Qg4 Rf8 18.Ne4 Qf7 19.a4 h5 20.Qe2 Be7 21.a5 Qg6 22.axb6 axb6 23.Kh1 Rf3 24.Rbe1 Bb4 25.Ra1 Qg4 26.Qd1 Qh3 27.Bf4 Bc3 28.Qxf3 Bxa1 29.Qg2 Qf5 30.Bd2 Bd4 31.h3 Bc5 32.Bc3 Be7 33.Re1 b5 34.Kg1 b4 35.Bb2 Bd6 36.h4 Be7 37.Kh2 Ra8 38.Ra1 Rxa1 39.Bxa1 Nc5 40.Nd2 Bf6 41.Bb2 b3 42.Nxb3 Nxb3 43.cxb3 Qxd3 44.Qxc6 Qc2 45.Qe8+ Kh7 46.Qxh5+ Kg8 47.Qe8+ Kh7 48.Qh5+ ½-½ (48) Carlsen,M (2843)-Aronian,L (2816) Sao Paulo/Bilbao 2012] 10.h3 [10.Ne3 Re8 11.Bb2 f6 12.Nd2 Nf8 13.Nf5 Qd7 14.Qf3 has been played before, resulting in a more closed position]

10...Qe7 11.Nxd6 cxd6 12.d4 [opening up the center, otherwise white's dark square bishop will be bad] 12...f5 [looking for active counterplay] 13.dxe5 dxe5 14.Ng5 f4 15.Nxe6 Qxe6 16.Ba3 [Diagram 1 interesting bishop vs knight middle game. Black needs to play actively, as the structure favors white] 16...Rfd8 17.Qe2 Nf6 18.Rfd1 g5 [this move looks aggressive but is very accurate. If black does nothing, white will exchange the rooks and penetrate on the d file] 19.f3 Kf7 20.Rd3 Rxd3 21.Qxd3 h5 22.Rd1 g4 23.hxg4 hxg4 [Diagram 2 the attack can become dangerous for white, but he can always trade queens] 24.Qd6 Qxd6 25.Rxd6 Rg8 26.Kf1 Rh8 27.Kg1 Rg8 28.Kf1 Rh8 29.Kg1 Rg8 [without the queen there isn't much life in the position, so the players draw by repetition] 30.Kf1

½ - ½



GM FABIANO CARUANA - GM ANISH GIRI 1 - 0

By WGM Tatev Abrahamyan

Going into the round, Caruana had eight draws and was looking for a win to finish his tournament on a high note. Amusingly, Giri is known for his very solid style of play and making too many draws, so fans were speculating whether Caruana was becoming the new Giri. The U.S. Champion played an excellent game, giving up two rooks for a queen and then dominating the game with his queen. His first interesting decision came in the opening when he captured a piece with the “c” pawn instead of “a” pawn, breaking one of the main principles of chess. Giri made just one inaccurate move, allowing the queen vs. two rooks imbalance. Caruana’s queen and bishop proved to be too powerful, as he collected all of his opponent’s pawns, leaving him with no hope.

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Nxe4 6.d4 b5 7.Bb3 d5 8.dxe5 Be6 9.Qe2 Nc5 10.Rd1 Nxb3 11.cxb3!?** [Diagram 1 Caruana felt that this move is more natural, as white gets to use the c file.] [11.axb3 is the more common move as it follows the principles of chess of taking towards the center and opening up the a1 rook] **11... Be7 12.Nc3 0-0 13.Be3 Qd7 14.h3** [Caruana thought his position is great, as he can simply double his rooks on the d file and take on d5] **14...Rad8** [14...f6 15.exf6 Rxf6



Diagram 1

trying to build up an attack on the king side 16.Ng5 and the game is complicated (16.Rd2? Rg6 and suddenly the white king is being attacked) ] **15.Rd2 f6 16.Rad1** [now white is on time and doesn’t have to take on f6] **16...Nxe5 17.Nxe5 fxe5 18.Nxd5 Bxd5 19.Rxd5 Qxd5 20.Rxd5 Rxd5** [Diagram 2 interesting ending. We have seen the Queen vs 2 rooks imbalance in an earlier round. Usually, the two rooks are stronger, but here the rooks cannot penetrate and white has the better minor

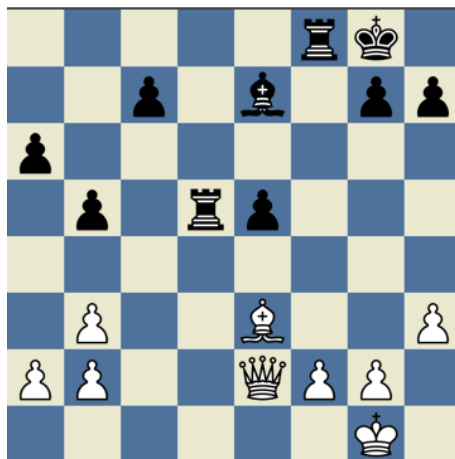


Diagram 2

piece] **21.Qc2 c5 22.g3 Kh8 23.h4 Rfd8 24.Qe4 h6 25.Kg2 Bf6 26.Kh3** [white has a long term edge and can take his time in improving the position] **26... h5** [creates an additional weakness on the king side] [26...a5 waiting for white to find a way to penetrate] **27.a4 Rd3 28.axb5 axb5 29.Qg6 e4** [29...Rxb3 30.Qxh5+ Kg8 31.g4 Rbd3



**32.g5 Be7 33.Kg2** getting the king out of the way. Since there is a queen on the board, white can create an attack] **30.Qxh5+** [now we see why black’s 26...h5 was bad] **30...Kg8 31.Qf5 Bxb2 32.Qxe4** [black is losing all his pawns] **32...c4 33.bxc4 bxc4 34.Qxc4+ R3d5 35.g4** [the rest is a matter of good technique] **35...Kh8 36.g5 Bd4 37.Bxd4 Rxd4 38.Qf7 R8d7?** [loses the game right away, but black doesn’t have any good defensive ideas to stop the inevitable] **39.Qe8+ Kh7 40.Qh5+ Kg8 41.g6 Re4 42.Qh7+ Kf8 43.Qh8+ Ke7 44.Qxg7+ Ke6 45.Qh8 Rd3+ 46.Kh2**

1 - 0

## GM M.VACHIER-LAGRAVE - GM WESLEY SO 1/2 - 1/2

By WGM Tatev Abrahamyan

All eyes were on this game, as So needed at least a draw to ensure a tie for first and Vachier-Lagrave was in a must win situation. Everyone was surprised to see the Berlin Defense on the board, as the Frenchman desperately needed the win. Even former World Champion Garry Kasparov criticized Vachier-Lagrave, saying that he wasn't sure what opening he would recommend but he definitely would not want to play against the Berlin in this situation. Right out of the opening, the French grandmaster went into the confessional booth to share that he felt he got So out of his comfort zone, but even that was not enough to bring the full point home.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nf6 4.0-0 Nxe4 [being in a must win position, Vachier-Lagrave could not have been thrilled to see this on the board] 5.d4 Nd6 6.Bxc6 dxc6 7.dxe5 Nf5 8.Qxd8+ Kxd8 9.h3 Ke8 10.Nc3 h5 11.Bg5 [11. Bf4 Be7 12.Rad1 Be6 13.Ng5 Rh6 has been played more times before, both by Carlsen and Caruana] 11...Be6 [this position hasn't been played since 2014!] 12.Rad1 Be7 [12...Bb4 13.a3 Bxc3 14.bxc3 Bd5 15.Nd4 Nxd4 16.Rxd4 b5 17.Rfd1 Kf8 18.a4 a6 19.Ra1 Re8 20.axb5 axb5 21.f4 Kg8 22.Ra7 Kh7 23.Rxc7 ½-½ (23) Karjakin,S (2772)-Bacrot,E (2705) Poikovsky 2011] 13.b3 a5 14.Rd3 Rd8 15.Rxd8+N Bxd8 16.Rd1 Bxg5 17.Nxg5 Ke7

18.Ne2 Nh4 19.g3 Ng6 20.Nxe6 fxe6 [most pieces have come off the board, but due to the double pawn it's as if white is up a pawn. There is still a lot to play for] 21.f4 Rf8 22.Rd4?! [22.h4 fixing the pawn structure and not allowing black to play h4] 22...c5 23.Re4?! [this whole idea was very strange. There is no reason to give up the d file] [23.Rd3 staying on the d file] 23...Rd8 24.Kf2 Rd1 25.g4 hxg4 26.hxg4 b5 27.f5 Nh4 28.Ng3 Ra1 [at this point Vachier-Lagrave went into the confessional booth and shared that he gave black way too much active play by allowing the rook to get on a1] 29.a4 Ra2 30.axb5 Rxc2+ 31.Re2 Rxe2+ 32.Kxe2 c4 33.bxc4 [Diagram 1 even with few pieces, the position needs to be handled with care] 33... a4 34.Kd3 Nf3 35.f6+ Kf7 [35... gxf6 36.exf6+ Kxf6 37.Ne4+ Ke5 38.Nd2 is also possible, but black wanted to win the e5 pawn] 36.fxg7 Nxe5+ 37.Kc3 a3 38.c5

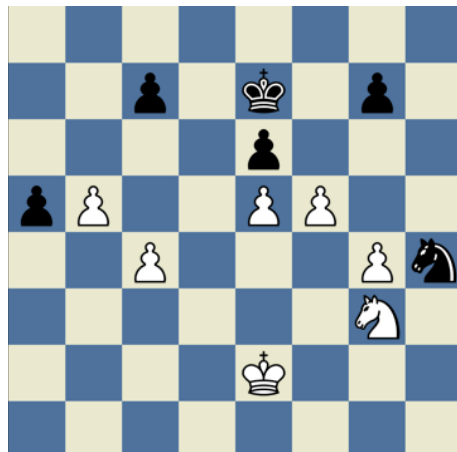


Diagram 1

Nd3! [Diagram 2 the knight is of course untouchable] 39.Kb3 [39.Kxd3?? a2 40.Kc2 a1Q] 39... Nxc5+ 40.Kxa3 Kxg7 [now all the pawns get traded] 41.Kb4 Nd3+ 42.Kc4 Ne5+ 43.Kc5 Kh6 44.Ne2 c6 [exchanging the remaining pawns as the black king will capture on g4] 45.bxc6 [45. b6 Nd7+ 46.Kxc6 Nxb6 47.Kxb6 Kg5] 45...Nxc6 46.Kxc6 Kg5 47.Kd6 Kxg4 48.Kxe6

½ - ½

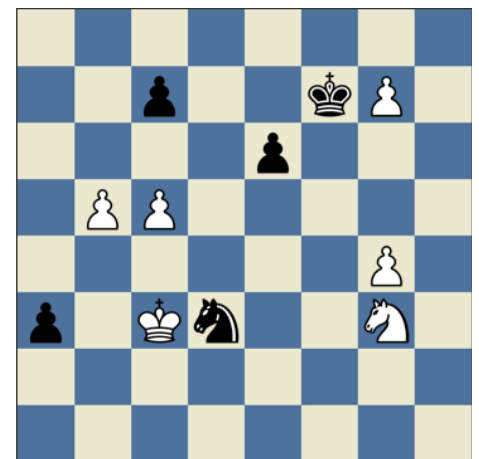


Diagram 2



GM HIKARU NAKAMURA - GM DING LIREN 1 - 0

By WGM Tatev Abrahamyan

One of the sharpest theoretical lines of the Semi Slav was played, when black started spending a lot of time in the opening on obvious moves. Ding was up a pawn but had a king in the center and no development. His fatal mistake came when he captured a pawn on the kingside with his queen, leaving his king unattended in the center. Nakamura played brilliant attacking moves, forcing his opponent to resign just 10 moves after his greedy pawn grab.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 e6 5.Bg5 h6 6.Bh4 dxc4 7.e4 [one of the sharpest lines of the Semi Slav] 7...g5 8.Bg3 b5 9.Be2 Bb7 10.h4 g4 11.Ne5 Nbd7 12.Nxd7 Qxd7 [for some reason, Ding spent 20 minutes on this move] 13.Be5 Qe7 14.b3 [this move hasn't been played a lot, but after a few moves it will transpose] 14...cxb3 15.axb3 a6 16.Qc1 Rg8 17.0-0 Nh5 [risky move] [17...Nd7 18.Bg3 Bg7 19.Rd1 c5 20.d5 Be5 is still dangerous for black, but is far more solid than what happened in the game] 18.d5 Qxh4?? [reckless move. Black's king is in the center, white is trying to open the center with d5, so black cannot afford to take the h4 pawn] [18...exd5 19.exd5 Qxe5 20.Re1 Be7 21.Bxb5 Qc7 22.dxc6 axb5 23.Nd5 Black's king won't survive for too long in the center with white's pieces coming in; 18...Rc8] 19.g3 Qg5 20.dxc6 Qxe5 21.cxb7 Rb8 22.Nd5!! [Diagram 1 the point of the variation] 22...exd5 23.Qc8+ Ke7 24.Rxa6

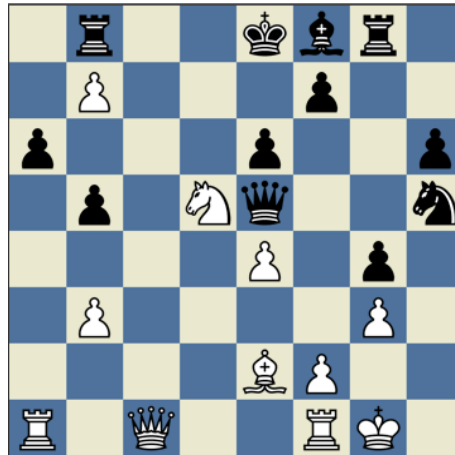


Diagram 1

Nxg3 [desperate attempt. Black doesn't have many moves] [24... Bg7 25.Qc5+ Kd7 26.Bxb5+ Kd8 27.Rd6+ Ke7 28.Qc7+ Kf8 29.Rd8+ Rxd8 30.Qxd8+ Qe8 31.Qxe8#] 25.Bxb5 [simply ignoring the knight] [25.fxg3?? with a draw 25... Qxg3+ 26.Kh1 Qh3+] 25...Ne2+ 26.Bxe2 [the material is equal, black's king is still in the center and there is a white pawn on b7. Black is completely lost] 26...f6 27.Re6+ [Diagram 2] 27...Qxe6 28.Qxb8 [and white will get another queen after the queen moves from b8]

1-0

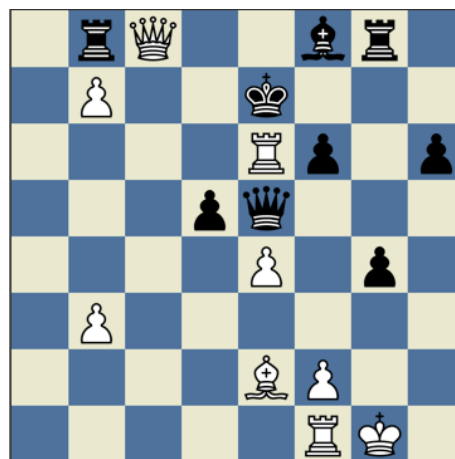


Diagram 2



## DAILY PUZZLE

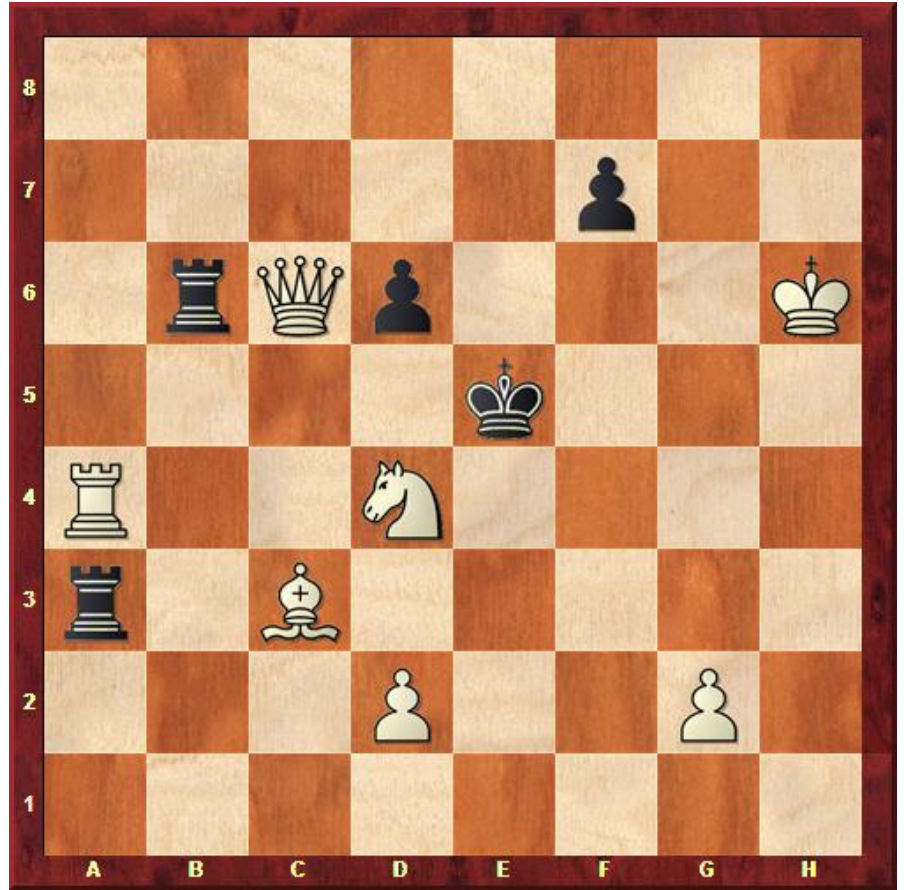
By FIDE Master Aviv Friedman

Each day, the Club provides a daily puzzle for all visitors to solve. Two \$25 gift cards to our store will be drawn daily among those who submit a correct solution.

Objective: White to move.  
Checkmate in two.

Yesterday's winners: Vikram Oberai and Renato Kabigtine

Solution: 1. Nd6



## CROSSTABLE AFTER ROUND NINE

Rank	Player	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	R	P
1	GM So, Wesley (2771)	X	½	½	½	1	1	½	½	½	½	9	5½
2	GM Caruana, Fabiano (2807)	½	X	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	9	5
3	GM Anand, Viswanathan (2770)	½	½	X	½	½	½	1	½	½	½	9	5
4	GM Aronian, Levon (2792)	½	½	½	X	1		0	½	1	½	8	4½
5	GM Nakamura, Hikaru (2791)	0	½	½	0	X	½	½	1	½	1	9	4½
6	GM Topalov, Veselin (2761)	0	½	½		½	X	½	1	1	½	8	4½
7	GM Vachier-Lagrave, Maxime (2819)	½	½	0	1	½	½	X	½	½	½	9	4½
8	GM Ding, Liren (2755)	½	½	½	½	0	0	½	X	1	½	9	4
9	GM Svidler, Peter (2751)	½	½	½	0	½	0	½	0	X	1	9	3½
10	GM Giri, Anish (2769)	½	0	½	½	0	½	½	½	0	X	9	3



Cup Chronicle Photo Credit: Austin Fuller | Lennart Ootes | Spectrum Studios



# SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 4**

4:00 PM - 5:30 PM

Autographs, Kingside Diner

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 4**

6:00 PM | Opening Ceremony\*

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 5**

1:00 PM | Round 1

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 6**

1:00 PM | Round 2

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 7**

1:00 PM | Round 3

**MONDAY, AUGUST 8**

1:00 PM | Round 4

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 9**

1:00 PM | Round 5

**WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 10**

Rest Day

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 11**

1:00 PM | Round 6

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 12**

1:00 PM | Round 7

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 13**

1:00 PM | Round 8

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 14**

1:00 PM | Round 9

**MONDAY, AUGUST 15**

12:00 PM | Playoff

**MONDAY, AUGUST 15**

6:00 PM | Closing Ceremony\*

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 16**

1:00 PM | Ultimate Moves

\*Private Event,  
World Chess Hall of Fame



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