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# CUP★CHRONICLE

THURSDAY, AUGUST 3, 2017 | ISSUE 1

## ROUND 1 HIGHLIGHTS

BY WGM TATEV ABRAHAMYAN



ROUND 1 // LENNART OOTES

## ROUND 1 RESULTS

♔ GM L. Aronian	1
♚ GM I. Nepomniachtchi	∅
♔ GM F. Caruana	½
♚ GM M. Carlsen	½
♔ GM S. Karjakin	1
♚ GM P. Svidler	∅
♔ GM V. Anand	½
♚ GM H. Nakamura	½
♔ GM M. Vachier-LaGrave	1
♚ GM W. So	∅

## CURRENT STANDINGS

1. GM L. Aronian	1
2. GM S. Karjakin	1
3. GM M. Vachier-LaGrave	1
4. GM M. Carlsen	½
5. GM F. Caruana	½
6. GM H. Nakamura	½
7. GM V. Anand	½
8. GM W. So	∅
9. GM P. Svidler	∅
10. GM I. Nepomniachtchi	∅

Day one of the first classical event of the Grand Chess Tour was full of fighting chess and decisive results. Even with slower time controls, it is clear that the players came to play. Levon Aronian, Maxime Vachier-Lagrave and Sergey Karjakin started the tournament off well as they defeated their opponents in a fine manner. Levon Aronian, who has already won two top level events this year, was particularly impressive as he completely annihilated Ian Nepomniachtchi right out of the opening. If the rest of the tournament is even half as exciting as round one, then there is a lot of great chess to look forward to for the fans!



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# GM LEVON ARONIAN - GM IAN NEPOMNIACHTCHI

BY WGM TATEV ABRAHAMYAN



ARONIAN VS. NEPOMNIACHTCHI // LENNART OOTES

The Armenian came to the game well prepared and played a novelty on move 9. Finding a new idea so early in the opening takes the opponent out of their comfort zone and puts the pressure on them to start thinking from early on in the game. Nepomniachtchi, relying on his memory, reacted quickly and even sacrificed a pawn but then went into a deep think trying to find compensation for it. Unable to do so, he found himself in a completely lost position quickly and was forced to resign as his opponent did not let the advantage slip away.

**1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.Nc3 d5 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.e3 Nxc3 6.bxc3 g6 7.h4 Bg7 8.h5 Nc6 9.Ba3** [Novelty, which was instantly played by Aronian who is extremely well prepared]

[9.Rb1 Qc7 10.d4 Bd7 11.Bd3 Rd8 12.Qc2 Bg4 13.Ng5 was played in Svidler-Nepomniachtchi in 2003 and white eventually won the game]

**9...Qa5 10.Rh4 Bd7** [Nepomniachtchi thought this has to be the correct move but could not remember the follow up]

[Now capturing the piece is impossible 10...Qxa3?? 11.Ra4 Qb2 12.Rb1 traps the queen!]



**11.Qb3 0-0** [sacrificing the pawn]

[11...Rb8 simply defending the pawn would have better for Black]

**12.hxg6 hxg6 13.Qxb7** [Nepomniachtchi went into a deep think leaving everyone wondering what he had up his sleeve]

**13...Rfd8** [13...Qxa3 the complications don't favor Black 14.Qxd7 Nb4 15.Bc4 Nc2+ (15...Bxc3 16.Qg4 with a strong attack) 16.Ke2 Nxa1 17.Ng5 Bf6 18.Rh8+ Bxh8 19.Qh3 Kg7 20.Qh7+ Kf6 21.Ne4+ Kf5 22.Qh3+ Kxe4 23.Qf3+ Ke5 24.Qf4#]

**14.Qa6 Bxc3?** [winning the pawn back but only temporarily]

[better was 14...Bf6 chasing the annoying rook away 15.Qxa5 Nxa5 16.Rh1 Rac8 black is still down a pawn, but with more pieces on the board, White still has as long way to go to win the game]

**15.Qxa5** [15.dxc3?? this, of course, is a big blunder 15...Qxc3+ and the rook on a1 hangs]

**15...Bxa5 16.Bxc5 Be6 17.Bb5!** [winning another pawn]

**17...Ne5** [setting up a little trap]

[17...Rac8 18.Bxc6 Rxc6 19.Bxe7]

**18.Nd4** [18.Nxe5? Bxd2+ 19.Kf1 Bc3 with a double attack 20.Nxf7 Bxf7 21.Rc1 Bf6]

**18...Rd5 19.Bxe7 Kg7 20.f4 Nd7 21.f5!** [21.Bc6 Rxd4 22.exd4 (22.Bxa8 Rxd2) 22...Re8 with some counterplay on the e file]

**21...Bxf5** [21...gxf5 22.Bc6 Rxd4 23.Rxd4 the point is that the rook can take now]



**22.Bc6 Re5 23.Nxf5+ gxf5 24.Bg5** [Black resigned as in the final position three of his pieces are under attack]

1-0

# GM MAXIME VACHIER-LAGRAVE - GM WESLEY SO

BY WGM TATEV ABRAHAMYAN



VACHIER-LAGRAVE VS. SO // LENNART OOTES

White got an advantage out of the opening as Black did not handle the position very well. The Frenchman had a nice grip on the queenside and gave his opponent a chronic weakness, the b7 pawn which eventually caused the downfall of Black. Wesley So's major mistake was opening up the center, which allowed his opponent's pieces into his camp and weakened his own king. Vachier-Lagrave used his light square bishop to capture the b7 pawn, forcing his opponent to resign.

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.0-0 Nf6 5.d3 0-0 6.a4** [this has become the latest trend in the top levels]

**6...d6 7.c3 a6 8.h3 h6 9.Nbd2 Ba7 10.Re1 Ne7 11.Bb3 Ng6 12.d4 Re8 13.Bc2 Bd7** [Novelty]

[13...c6 was played in the Sinquefield Cup last year 14.Nf1 d5 15.Nxe5 Nxe5 16.dxe5 Nxe4 17.Bxe4 dxe4 18.Qxd8 Rxd8 19.Ng3 Bb8 20.Be3 Bxe5 21.Nxe4 Bc7 22.a5 Bf5 23.Nc5 Rab8 24.g4 Bc2 25.Rac1 Bg6 26.b4 Bd6 27.Na4 f6 28.Ba7 Ra8 29.Bc5 Be5 30.Nb6 Rab8 31.Nc4 Bf4 32.Be3 Bxe3 33.Rxe3 b5 34.axb6 Bf7 1/2-1/2 (34) Anand, V (2770) -Aronian, L (2792) Saint Louis 2016; 13...b5 14.b4]

**14.a5** [White gets a grip on the queen side]

**14...c6?!** [14...Nh5 15.Nf1 Nh4 Just like in the Svidler game, Nh5 with the idea of transferring the knight to f4 and leaving the center alone was better]

**15.dxe5** [15.Nf1 Qc7 16.Ng3 is another typical way of playing this position, but Vachier-Lagrave takes advantage of his opponent's sloppy move]

**15...dxe5 16.Nc4 Qe7** [better was 16...Qc7 17.Qd6 Qc8 and now the queen can be kicked out once the Black bishop moves to b8]

**17.Qd6** [forcing the trade of queens and planting a knight on d6]

**17...Qxd6 18.Nxd6 Re6 19.Rd1** [now we see just how annoying the a5 pawn and the knight on d6 are for Black, as he cannot easily push the b pawn]

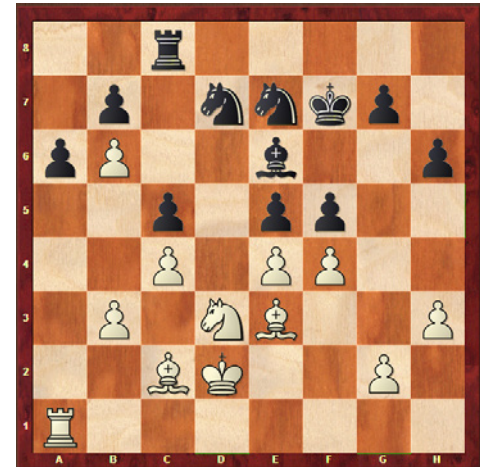


**19...Rb8 20.Kf1** [20.b4 with the idea of pushing the queen side pawns and opening up the b file was quite strong]

**20...Re7 21.Nc4 Rbe8 22.b3 Be6 23.Nb6 Bxb6 24.axb6** [white's idea is to transfer a knight to either a5 or c5 and still put pressure on the b7 pawn]

**24...Rd7 25.Be3 Rc8 26.c4 Rxd1+ 27.Rxd1 c5 28.Ne1 Nd7 29.Nd3 f6 30.Ra1 Ne7 31.Ke2 Kf7 32.Kd2 f5?** [White has the bishop pair and opening up the center will only help him]

[32...g5 keeps control of the dark squares and prepares the f5 break]



**33.f4!** [not missing the opportunity to let his bishops into play]

**33...exf4 34.Nxf4 g5 35.Nxe6 Kxe6 36.exf5+ Nxf5 37.Bg1** [the bishop are monstrous now as the center is wide open and the black king is unsafe]

**37...Nd4 38.Re1+ Kf6 39.Rf1+ Ke7 40.Re1+ Kd8 41.Be4** [White finally can capture on b7]

**41...Nxb3+** [41...Nxb6 42.Bxd4 cxd4 43.Bxb7 Rc7 44.Bxa6 the pawn on d4 will fall and white will end up with two extra connected passed pawns]

**42.Kc3 Nd4 43.Bh2** [Black resigned since after]

**43...Nxb6 44.Bxb7** [White will win the exchange]

1-0

# GM SERGEY KARJAKIN - GM PETER SVIDLER

BY WGM TATEV ABRAHAMYAN



KARJAKIN VS. SVIDLER // LENNART OOTES

Up until move 13, this all Russian match was following the game between Vachier-Lagrave and So until Svidler decided to deviate. Just as in the aforementioned game, Black made the mistake of opening up the center instead of letting it be. This allowed white to win a clear pawn while Black's attack never took off. After enough pieces were traded off, Svidler was forced to resign even though he was up the exchange, as Karjakin queenside pawns were set to promote.

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.c3 Nf6 5.d3 d6 6.0-0 a6 7.a4 Ba7 8.Re1 0-0 9.h3 Ne7 10.d4 Ng6 11.Nbd2 h6 12.Bb3 Re8 13.Bc2** [so far, they are following Vachier-Lagrave-So being played right next to them!]

**13...b5 14.b4** [Novelty.]

[this position has appeared one time before in the following game: 14.Nf1 Bd7 15.Ng3 c5 16.Be3 exd4 17.cxd4 c4 18.Qd2 Bb6 19.a5 Bc7 20.Bxh6 gxh6 21.Qxh6 Qe7 22.e5 dxe5 23.dxe5 Nh7 24.e6 Bxe6 25.Bxg6 fxe6 26.Qxg6+ Kh8 27.Nh5 Qd7 28.Ng5 Bg8 29.Nxh7 Bxh7 30.Qf6+ Kg8 31.Qg5+ Kh8 32.Qf6+ Kg8 33.Qg5+ Kh8 34.Qf6+ 1/2-1/2 (34) Grandelius,N (2642)-Hansen,E (2603) Wijk aan Zee 2017]

**14...Bb7 15.Bb2 Qd7 16.c4** [critical moment of the game]



**16...exd4?** [opening up the position only helps White as his pieces are perfectly positioned for it and Black attack isn't quite there]

[16...Nh5 was much stronger, leaving the center as it is and quickly putting a knight on f4 17.axb5 axb5]

**17.cxb5 d3?** [after the first mistake, it is easy to follow down the wrong path]

[17...axb5 18.Nxd4 and white's position is still much better. For example: 18...bxa4 19.Bxa4 c6 20.Nf5 and white attack is much stronger with the bishop on b2, the knight on f5 and the queen which will be on f3 on the next move]

**18.Bxd3 Nf4** [this gives Black a tempo, but it costs him a pawn while his attack doesn't really go anywhere]

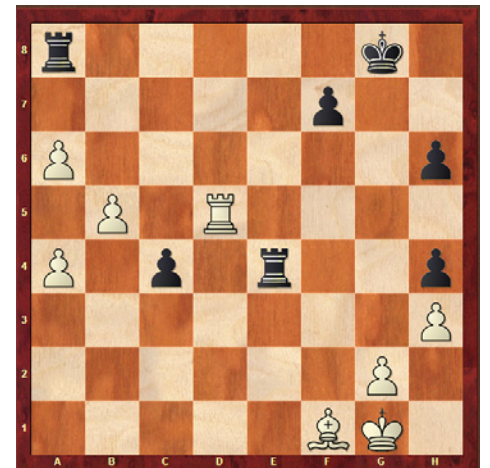
**19.Bf1 Nxe4 20.Nxe4 Bxe4 21.bxa6 Qf5 22.Ra3!** [the rook defends everything on the third rank. Now it's just a matter of conversion]

**22...c5** [a little desperate but hard to suggest anything better for Black]

**23.Nh4 Qe6 24.b5 c4 25.Bd4** [25.Rg3 would have been even stronger 25...g5 26.Qd2 and now Black has his king to worry about. The following is a forced computer line 26...Kh7 27.Qxf4 gxf4 28.Rg7+ Kh8 29.Rxf7+ Kg8 30.Rg7+ Kf8 31.Rxe4 Qxe4 32.Ng6+ Qxg6 33.Rxg6+- of course, this is extremely unnecessary]

**25...Bxd4 26.Qxd4 d5 27.Rg3 g5 28.f3** [the exchanges favor White, as his queen side pawn with the assistance of the f1 bishop will queen]

**28...Nh5 29.Rg4 Nf6 30.Rgxe4 Nxe4 31.fxe4 gxh4 32.Rd1 Qxe4 33.Qxe4 Rxe4 34.Rxd5** [now that most of the pieces came off, the pawns are unstoppable]



**34...c3 35.Rc5 Rxa4 36.b6 Kg7 37.b7 Re8 38.Rxc3 Ra1 39.a7** [precise move that ends the game]

[There is still time to make a mistake. For example: 39.Rc8?? Ree1 40.Kf2 (40.b8Q Rxf1+ 41.Kh2 Rh1#) 40...Rxf1+ 41.Ke2 Rfb1 42.b8Q Rxb8 43.Rxb8 Rxa6 and the endgame is drawn]

1-0

# GM FABIANO CARUANA - GM MAGNUS CARLSEN

BY GM CRISTIAN CHIRILA



CARUANA VS. CARLSEN // LENNART OOTES

This match was set to be the most exciting one as Carlsen had defeated Caruana in a previous year's Sinquefeld Cup with the Black pieces. This time around, the game was much more balanced and neither side had any real winning chances. Being the fighter that he is, Carlsen declined a perpetual and tried to play for more. Correctly sensing the danger, Caruana gave up a pawn and forced a perpetual himself to end the game in a draw

[Arguably the biggest clash of the round was between Fabiano Caruana and Magnus Carlsen. In the past these two players have played amazing fighting chess, let's see how the players fared today!]

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6** [No surprise here, Magnus is obviously still basking the fruits of the labor he went through before and during last year's world championship battle with Karjakin. The Ruy Lopez has been his only weapon against Karjakin's 1.e4, and we will surely see a lot more ideas and novelties in the future from the world champion.]

**5.0-0 Be7 6.d3** [6.Re1 is the main line 6...b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.c3 0-0 9.h3 Nb8 The Breyer was one of Carlsen's main weapons in previous years, recently he has switched to a more combative approach]

**6...b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.a4 b4** [a new approach by Magnus who decides to keep the lights square bishop's position flexible. In a previous encounter he tried]

[8...Bd7 9.c3 0-0 10.Bc2 b4 11.Re1 Re8 12.a5 Rb8 13.Nbd2 Bf8 14.Bb3 bxc3 15.bxc3 h6 16.h3 Be6 17.Ba4 Bd7 18.Nc4<sup>2</sup> 1/2-1/2 (79) Caruana,F (2808)-Carlsen,M (2832) Paris 2017]

**9.a5 0-0 10.Nbd2 Rb8 11.Re1 Be6 12.Bxe6 fxe6 13.Nb3 Qc8 14.Qe2 Nd8 15.d4 exd4 16.Nbxd4 c5 17.Nb3 e5N** [And finally we have the novelty!]

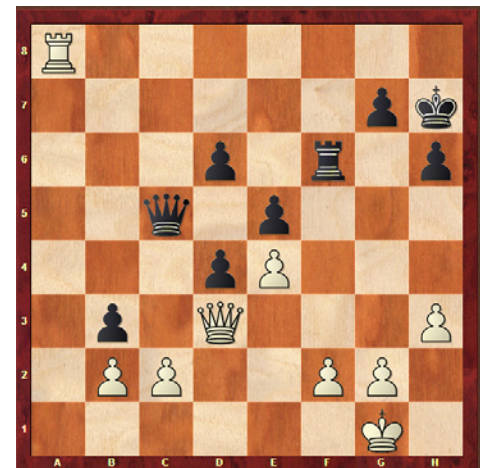
[17...Nd7 18.Bg5 Bxg5 19.Nxg5 Ne5 20.Red1 h6 21.Nh3 c4<sup>3</sup> 1/2-1/2 (60) Salomon, J (2115)-Urkedal,F (2470) Fagernes 2013]

**18.Nbd2 Ne6 19.Nc4 Nd4 20.Nxd4 cxd4 21.Nb6 Qc6 22.Bg5** [22.Qxa6 The following pawn exchange could have yielded better results. Despite the upcoming pressure, black should still be very close to equality with precise play 22...Nxe4 23.f3 Nf6 24.Qc4+ Qxc4 25.Nxc4 b3÷ White has a dangerous passed "a" pawn but the solid structure in the center should give black enough counterplay]

**22...Bd8** [now the pieces come off the board and the draw will be agreed soon]



**23.Bxf6 Bxb6 24.axb6** [24.Bxg7?? would have been a huge blunder after 24...d3! 25.Qg4 (25.Qxd3 Bxf2+ 26.Kh1 Kxg7-+) 25...Bxf2+ 26.Kh1 Rf4! 27.Qg5 Bh4-+ the queen is forced off the g file, and the result will be brutal for white]



**24...Rxf6 25.Rxa6 h6 26.Qd3 Rxb6 27.Rea1 Rxa6 28.Rxa6 Qc5 29.Ra8+ Kh7 30.h3 b3** [black decides to force matters and finds the perpetual with ease]

**31.Qxb3 d3 32.cxd3 Qxf2+ 33.Kh2 Qf4+ 34.Kh1 Qc1+ 35.Kh2 Qf4+ 36.Kh1 Qg3 37.Qg8+ Kg6 38.Rf8 Qxd3 39.Rxf6+ Kxf6 40.Qf8+ Ke6 41.Qe8+ Kf6 42.Qf8+ Ke6 43.Qe8+**

1/2-1/2

# GM VISWANATHAN ANAND - GM HIKARU NAKAMURA

BY GM CRISTIAN CHIRILA



GM VISWANATHAN ANAND // AUSTIN FULLER

Historically, Nakamura is a problematic opponent for Anand. The former World Champion played quite conservatively today, not giving his opponent any real problems to solve with the Black pieces. The game ended in a three-fold repetition as neither player wanted to create complications, though it was Nakamura who could have played on and tried to win.

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nf6 4.d3 Bc5 5.c3 0-0 6.Bg5!?** [An interesting approach, popularized by the infamous game 10 from last year's world championship match between Carlsen & Karjakin]

**6...h6 7.Bh4 Re8** [7...g5 8.Bg3 d6 Is another way to combat the early B sortie, nevertheless this is quite dangerous for black and not to everyone's taste 9.Nbd2 Nh5 10.Bxc6 bxc6 11.d4÷ 0-1 (25) Svidler,P (2738)-Ivanchuk,V (2781) Sochi 2008; 7...Be7 is considered to be the main line 8.0-0 d6 9.Nbd2 Nh5 10.Bxe7 Qxe7 11.Nc4 Nf4 12.Ne3 Qf6= 1-0 (75) Carlsen,M (2853)-Karjakin,S (2772) New York 2016]

**8.Nbd2 Be7 9.Bg3 d6 10.h3** [compared to 7...e7, white gets an extra move to try and salvage his dark square B 0.00/0]

**10...a6 11.Ba4 b5 12.Bc2 Bb7 13.0-0 Bf8 14.Nh2** [I don't like Anand's decision to release the pressure from the e5 pawn and allow black to break the center, more flexible would have been]

[14.Re1 g6 15.a4 b4 16.a5 Bg7 17.Nc4?]

**14...d5! 15.exd5 Qxd5** [15...Nxd5 looks more logical, preparing to solidify the center with f6 at the right moment 16.a3 (16.Ng4 f5 17.Ne3 Nce7 (17...f4? 18.Nxd5 fxg3 19.fxg3?) 18.Nxd5 Nxd5÷) 16...Nf4 17.d4 Bd6÷]



**16.Nhf3 Qd7 17.Re1 Bd6 18.Re2?!** [Too slow, now black manages to harmonize his pieces]

[18.a4 would have created more problems for black due to the looseness in his position and the perpetual attacks against his structure 18...Nh5 19.axb5 axb5 20.Rxa8 Bxa8 21.Bh2 Nf4 22.Ne4?]

**18...Rad8 19.Qf1 Nh5 20.Bh2 Re7 21.Rae1 Rde8 22.g4?!** [Quite a dubious decision by the former World Champion. This allows black to take control of the game and pressure white for the rest of the game]

[22.a4?]

**22...Nf6** [22...Nf4 was interesting 23.Bxf4 exf4 24.d4 Rxe2 25.Rxe2 Ne7÷]

**23.Ne4?!** [23.Bg3 Nd5 24.Ne4 Nf4 25.Bxf4 exf4 26.d4 Na5÷]

**23...Nxe4 24.dxe4** [24.Rxe4 Nd8 25.R4e3 Ne6?]



**24...Qe6 25.Bb3 Qf6 26.Qg2 Na5 27.Bc2 Nc4 28.Bb3 Na5** [28...Bc5 Nakamura could have continued the game. His pieces are more active and his coordination is clearly superior. Despite his clear pressure, he decides to take no unnecessary risks given the early stage of the tournament. 29.Bxc4 (29.h4 Bc8 30.g5 hxg5 31.hxg5 Qg6μ) 29...bxc4 30.Nd2 Qe6μ]

**29.Bc2 Nc4 30.Bb3 Na5**

1/2-1/2



SINQUEFIELD CUP

# CURRENT STANDINGS

#GrandChessTour

AFTER ROUND



POS.	PLAYER	ROUND 1 RESULT	CURRENT SCORE
T-1	GM LEVON ARONIAN 2787 (URS)	1	1 PT
T-1	GM SERGEY KARJAKIN 2770 (URS)	1	1 PT
T-1	GM M. VACHIER-LAGRAVE 2789 (URS)	1	1 PT
T-4	GM MAGNUS CARLSEN 2850 (URS)	.5	.5 PT
T-4	GM FABIANO CARUANA 2774 (URS)	.5	.5 PT
T-4	GM HIKARU NAKAMURA 2798 (URS)	.5	.5 PT
T-4	GM VISHY ANAND 2771 (URS)	.5	.5 PT
T-8	GM WESLEY SO 2781 (URS)	0	0 PTS
T-8	GM PETER SVIDLER 2744 (URS)	0	0 PTS
T-8	GM IAN NEPOMNIACHTCHI 2767 (URS)	0	0 PTS



SINQUEFIELD CUP

# PLAYER MATCHUPS

#GrandChessTour

ROUND 2



WHITE	PLAYER	VS	PLAYER	BLACK
	GM I. NEPOMNIACHTCHI 2767 (URS)	—	GM WESLEY SO 2781 (URS)	
	GM HIKARU NAKAMURA 2798 (URS)	—	GM M. VACHIER-LAGRAVE 2789 (URS)	
	GM PETER SVIDLER 2744 (URS)	—	GM VISWANATHAN ANAND 2771 (URS)	
	GM MAGNUS CARLSEN 2850 (URS)	—	GM SERGEY KARJAKIN 2770 (URS)	
	GM LEVON ARONIAN 2787 (URS)	—	GM FABIANO CARUANA 2774 (URS)	

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# DAILY CHESS PUZZLE

BY DANNY MACHUCA

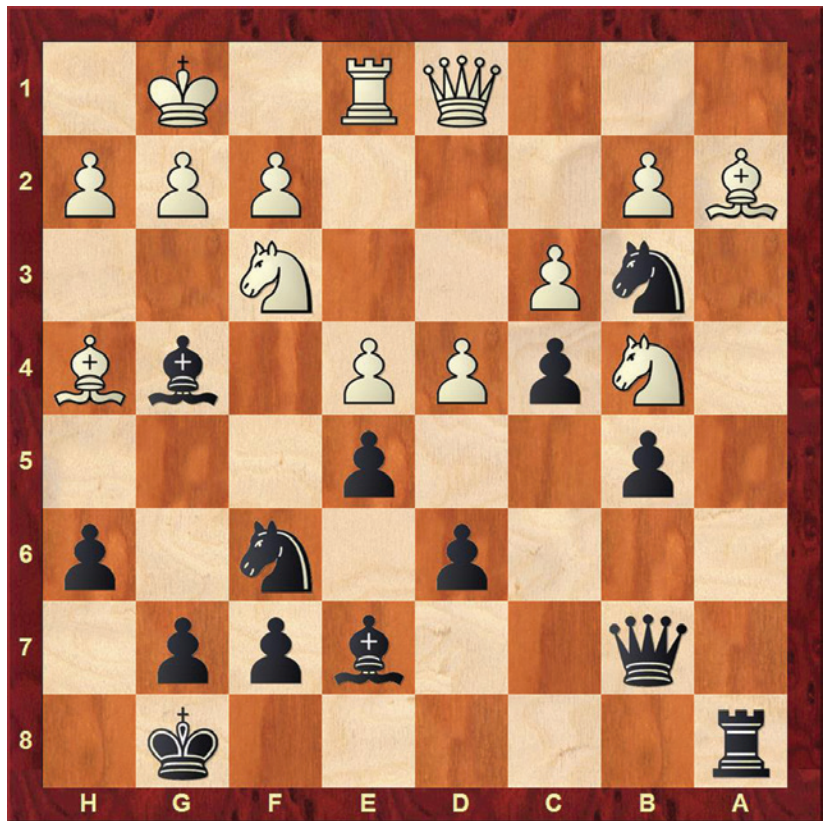
Submit your solution to our front desk staff for a chance to win a gift card to the store at the Chess Club and Scholastic Center of Saint Louis!

Each day, two \$25 gift cards will be drawn among those who submit a correct solution.

**Objective:** Black to move.

White: Caruana, Fabiano  
Black: Topalov, Veselin

2016 Sinquefield Cup



## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### TUESDAY, AUGUST 1

4-5:30 PM Autograph Session, Kingside Diner

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 1**  
6 PM Opening Ceremony & *PINNED! A Designer Chess Challenge* Unveiling, Windows on Washington

**MONDAY, AUGUST 7**  
Rest Day

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 8**  
1 PM Round 6

**WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 2**  
1 PM Round 1

**WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 9**  
1 PM Round 7

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 3**  
1 PM Round 2

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 10**  
1 PM Round 8

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 4**  
1 PM Round 3

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 11**  
1 PM Round 9

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 5**  
1 PM Round 4

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 12**  
1 PM Playoff *(If Necessary)*

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 6**  
1 PM Round 5

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 12**  
6 PM Closing Ceremony\*

\*Private Event, World Chess Hall of Fame

## SIDE EVENT HIGHLIGHT

### Sinquefield Action Quads

#### FRIDAY, AUGUST 4

3 Rounds | Game in 20; 3 second delay

**Entry Fee**  
\$10

**Registration**  
6-6:45 PM

Space is limited to the first 40 registrants.

**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.