

13th December 2016

LONDON CHESS CLASSIC DAY 5 ROUND-UP

Going into Wednesday's rest day, Mickey Adams gave the home fans plenty to celebrate as he scored the only win of the day. Elsewhere we saw excellent preparation and tenacious defence, which left us on the edge of our seats until 10pm. Game 3 of the British KO Championship Final was a topsy-turvy affair, the FIDE Open standings remained largely unchanged and John Nunn took on 22 opponents in a simultaneous display. On Wednesday there will be a prestigious event at the House of Lords, as in a revival of an old tradition they take on the House of Commons in a chess match.

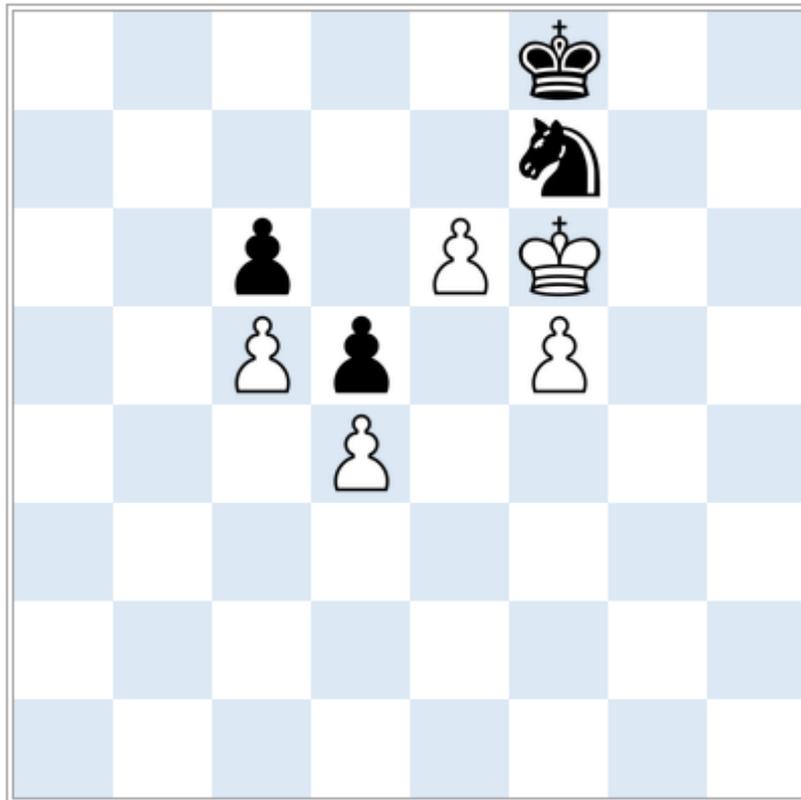


Adams beat Topalov in the only decisive game of the round (Photo: Lennart Ootes)

The game of the day was undoubtedly Adams-Topalov, which started out as a Berlin, but as his fans will know all too well, the Bulgarian is not a man to play any opening in search of a solid draw, or to stop the bleeding when things aren't going his way. Adams reeled off some opening preparation and true to his style, Topalov faced the challenge head on and offered Adams a pawn straight out of the opening to create complications. Mickey accepted the invitation and went on to play a near flawless game to come back to 2/5. It will be a welcome rest day for Topalov, who sits on a dismal 0.5/5. Earlier in the afternoon, Aronian-Giri and So-Anand finished quickly. In both games we saw the players with the black pieces arrive excellently prepared and there was soon not much left to play for. When asked about his drawing streak (a perfect 5/5 so far), Anish commented: 'For me to make five draws in a row is business as usual and I know the danger is to get annoyed with that and make it affect your judgement'. Wesley So meanwhile took today's White mishap with a smile: 'I studied a lot today. I wanted to make sure I'm not out-prepared but he played a novelty on move 10.'

That left us with two games, Nakamura-Kramnik and Maxime Vachier Lagrave-Caruana. In the latter, MVL's opening woes continued, as he was out-prepared for a fifth game in a row, but just like yesterday he put up stiff defence to salvage a draw.

Long after everyone else had vacated the stage, Hikaru Nakamura tried for nearly 6 hours to make it a third consecutive win against a former World Champion in a thrilling game, but Kramnik held on and even produced a sweet stalemate trick to secure the half point.



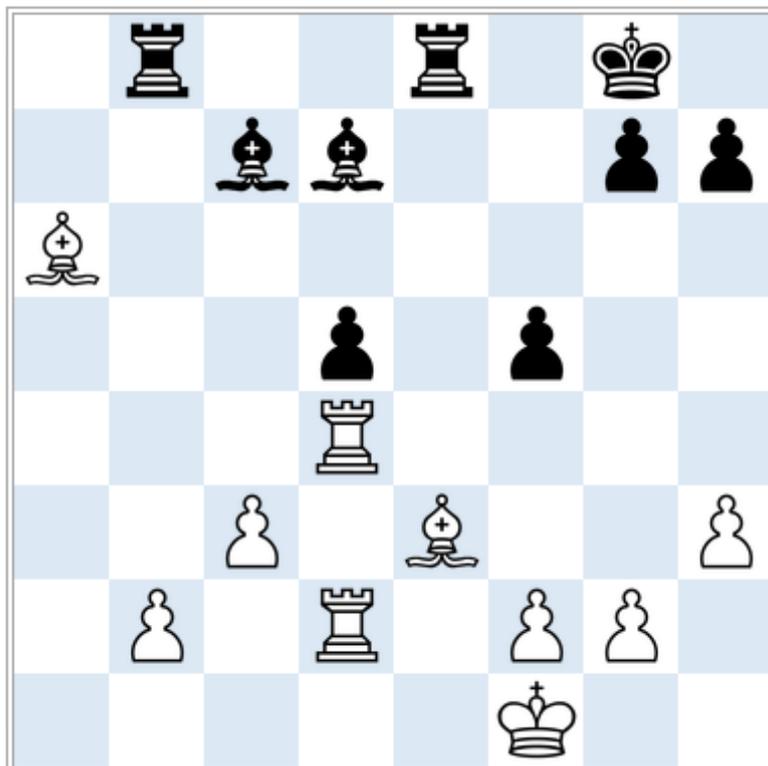
Position after 60...Nf7. The players shook hands after 61.exf7.

There is no play in the Classic on Wednesday, but action will continue at Olympia with Game 4 of the British Knockout Championship and round 7 of the FIDE Open.



A look into the Auditorium from behind the scenes (Photo: Lennart Ootes)

Speaking of which, Nigel Short decided to play the French in Game 3 of the British KO Championship Final. Howell gradually got the better of things, won a pawn but then blundered. In the position below 28.Ra4-d4? (28.Ra4-b4!) allowed 28...f4! winning a piece because of White's back rank weakness. There followed 29.Bxf4 Bxf4 30.Rxf4 Ra8 and the bishop on a6 is lost. But Howell readjusted to the new situation, defended a position with three pawns for a piece perfectly and a draw was agreed on move 63.



Position after 28.Ra4

In the FIDE Open we had draws on the first 4 boards, meaning the standings remain largely unchanged, apart from the fact there are now 10 players in the chasing pack on 5/6. One of them is London based GM Tamas Fodor (2494) who scored the upset of the day as he beat Fressinet (2672).



Hungarian GM Tamas Fodor (Photo: Lennart Ootes)

The first simultaneous display of the week took place in the foyer of Olympia Conference Centre as GM John Nunn took on 22 opponents, scoring an impressive 21 wins and conceding only one draw. John is a famed author, problem-solving World Champion and former top-ten player. The next simul will take place on Thursday 15 December at 6pm with GM Jon Speelman and you can still [book your place](#) online, with all proceeds once again going to Chess in Schools and Communities.



John Nunn's simul in full swing (Photo: Lennart Ootes)

You can find all the photos from the festival, taken by Lennart Ootes, on the [following page](#). The results and tournament details are all on the [LCC website](#) and you can also download the PGN files of the games by clicking on the following links:

- London Chess Classic: <http://live.londonchessclassic.com/pgn/lcc2016/lcc05/games.pgn>
- British KO Ch'ship: <http://live.londonchessclassic.com/pgn/bco2016/round11/games.pgn>
- FIDE Open: <http://live.londonchessclassic.com/pgn/fide/round6/games.pgn>

All the live games will be broadcast at: <http://live.londonchessclassic.com/>

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