

GCT Final: Nakamura & MVL draw Game 2, setting up Rapid & Blitz showdown

Accurate defensive play and good endgame technique once again featured in the second Classical Game of the London Chess Classic Final, with Hikaru Nakamura and Maxime Vachier-Lagrave drawing after 53 moves of an evenly-contested Ruy Lopez Berlin Wall variation.

As in Game 1, Black demonstrated full equality in a well-trodden main line of the queenless middlegame, leaving the players to dispute the merits of an ultimately level endgame that had elements of asymmetry, but not enough imbalance to create a serious advantage for either side. MVL's 22 e6!? effectively led to simplification and further accurate play by both players ensured the draw.

As in the recent World Championship match, draws in Classical play now mean that the London Chess Classic, the concluding event in the Grand Chess Tour 2018, will be decided fully in the Rapid and Blitz portion of the match.

On Monday, there will be 2 Rapid and 4 Blitz games, and if required there will be a playoff of 2 more rapid games and ultimately an Armageddon game. The total prize money for the Final is \$200,000.

The Third Place Playoff match between Fabiano Caruana and Levon Aronian, which has a prize fund of \$100,000, also saw a draw in Game 2, with a draw by repetition after 21 moves as Caruana equalised comfortably with his trademark Petroff Defence.

Each Classical game counts for 6 points, while the Rapid games are worth 4 points and the Blitz games 2 points.

[Live coverage of the London Chess Classic matches](#) resumes at 14:00 UTC on Monday, December 17.