



# GRAND CHESS TOUR™

## 2016

11<sup>th</sup> December 2016

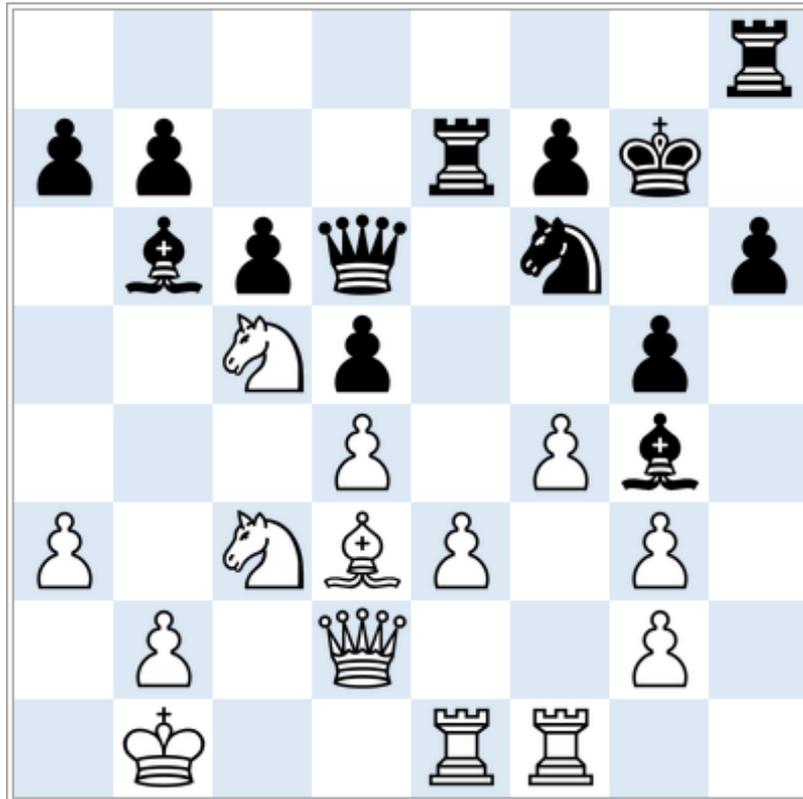
### LONDON CHESS CLASSIC DAY 3 ROUND-UP

After two dramatic rounds in the Classic we only got one decisive result today, but that doesn't mean other players didn't come close – quite the opposite in fact! Meanwhile the first game of the British Knockout Final was a draw, the leading pack of the FIDE Open was reduced to only three players and we had our first winners as the various Weekenders were concluded in the evening.



Aronian-So takes centre stage as round 3 gets under way (Photo: Fiona Steil-Antoni)

After being beaten on his own birthday, Hikaru Nakamura inflicted the same fate on Vishy Anand, after the latter played the incomprehensible 26...Rxe4?. The most plausible explanation is that both players were distracted by the realisation that Vishy could simply have won a pawn with 22...Bxc5 a few moments earlier because if 23.dxc5 Qxc5 24.e4 dxe4 the queen defends g5 and Black is fine.



Position after 22.Qd2

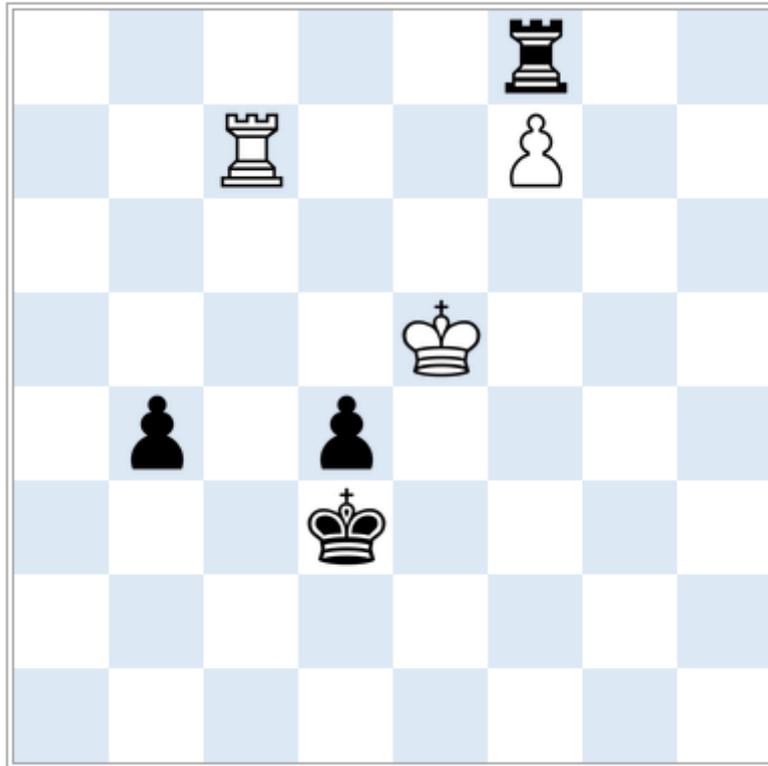
This win takes Nakamura's classical score against Anand to an impressive 8-1, draws excluded. The first games of the day to finish had been Aronian-So and MVL-Topalov, where draws were agreed pretty much simultaneously. They were far from being flawless games though, as Vachier-Lagrave and Wesley So pulled off miracle saves after finding themselves in dire straits. While there was no clear-cut win for Levon Aronian, Veselin Topalov came very close to the full point on a few instances. Instead he threw away all the advantage on move 30 and a draw was agreed shortly afterwards. Aronian remained in high spirits despite his missed chance as he remarked while talking to Maurice Ashley 'The points will come if you continue producing good moves'. Fabiano Caruana meanwhile was of the opinion that he had been better for the whole game against Vladimir Kramnik, but that that it was never enough. The same applied to Anish Giri, who was trying to grind down Michael Adams in a rook ending where he was a pawn up. The Englishman had a tough start to the event, but he defended perfectly today and Anish Giri gave up on his winning attempts when a draw was agreed after 62 moves and six hours of play.

The standings remain largely unchanged, with Wesley So still in the sole lead before he takes on Giri with the black pieces tomorrow, while his closest pursuers Caruana and Aronian face each other.



Hikaru Nakamura scored the only win of the day (Photo: Lennart Ootes)

The first game of the British Knockout Championship Final looked fairly unspectacular in the early stages as the players were manoeuvring their pieces around in a Giuoco Piano; incidentally the same opening that appeared on the board in Caruana-Kramnik earlier in the day. David Howell eventually found himself pressing in a double rook and knight ending, but it might have been a typical case of over-pressing, as he suddenly found himself dead lost on move 60. However, after Nigel Short failed to find the most precise continuation the game seemed headed for a draw once again. With time ticking down, Howell blundered with 74.f7? and had Short found 75...b3 he would certainly have taken home the full point, but instead 75...Ke3? was the last mistake and the players agreed a draw on move 84. A thrilling start to what promises to be an exciting Final!



Position after 75.Rc7

In the FIDE Open Alexander Shabalov (2563) was responsible for the upset of the day as he beat top seed Eltaj Safarli (2691) from Azerbaijan. Only two other players successfully maintained their perfect score, Chithambaram Aravind from India and Sebastian Bogner from Switzerland.



Game 1 of the British KO Championship Final (Photo: Lennart Ootes)

Let's conclude this round-up by announcing the first prize winners of this year's festival, as the Weekend events came to an end in the evening. The Weekend Open was won outright by Michael Healey with 4.5/5, while the Weekend U2050 saw Nicole-Alexandru Mircov and Michele Donati share first place with the same score of 4.5 points. In the U1825 section three players shared first with 4.5/5 - Vikram Kamath, Anshu Ramaiya and Oliver Finnegan - and finally the U1600 saw Oren Levene win with the only perfect score of the weekend! Many congratulations to all the winners! Last but not least, we would also like to extend our congratulations to Natasha Regan and Matthew Sadler who were awarded ECF Book of the Year for 'Chess for Life' at Olympia this afternoon.



Natasha Regan and Matthew Sadler being awarded ECF Book of the Year (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/lcc03/games.pgn>
- British KO Ch'ship: <http://live.londonchessclassic.com/pgn/bco2016/round9/games.pgn>
- FIDE Open: <http://live.londonchessclassic.com/pgn/fide/round4/games.pgn>

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

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