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## ECU E-Magazine January 2025



### ECU Board Meeting

The first quarterly meeting of the ECU Executive Board for 2025 took place on 11th January in Monte Carlo, Monaco, during the European Women's Rapid and Blitz Chess Championship. The Monaco federation, known for its great hospitality, organised the tournament and the board meeting in excellent conditions.



*In this edition of the ECU E-Magazine you may read about ECU Board Meeting in Monaco, Tata Steel Chess 2025, activities of the ECU Commissions and more.*

**Praggnanandhaa wins  
Tata Steel Chess Masters**



*Chess Makes You Smarter.*

## In January 2025 edition of the ECU E-Magazine you may read about

- ECU Board Meeting in Monte-Carlo, Monaco
- Tata Steel Chess 2025
- European Individual Chess Championship 2025 in Eforie Nord, Romania
- Activities of the ECU Commissions

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### In brief...

- The first quarterly meeting of the **ECU Executive Board for 2025** took place on 11th January in Monte Carlo, Monaco, during the European Women's Rapid and Blitz Chess Championship. The Monaco federation, known for its great hospitality, organised the tournament and the board meeting in excellent conditions. Main decisions and information from the ECU Board Meeting are published on the ECU Website.

- **European Individual Chess Championship 2025** will be held from 14-27 March in Eforie Nord, Romania. The event will be played in 11 rounds, swiss system, with the total prize fund of 100.000 EUR and 20 qualification spots for the next FIDE World Chess Cup. More than 350 players coming from 37 European federations registered for the event, and the registration deadline is 15th of February.

European Chess Union has its seat in Switzerland.  
European Chess Union is an independent association founded in 1985 in Graz, Austria. European Chess Union has 54 National federations members, and each year organises more than 20 prestigious events.  
Website: [europechess.org](http://europechess.org)

# Celebrating 40 Years of Excellence: The Founding of the European Chess Union



Pr. Kurt Jungwirth from Austria played a crucial role in establishing the ECU.

As we embark on the 40th anniversary of the European Chess Union (ECU), we reflect on the remarkable journey that began in 1985. Founded with a vision to unify and elevate European chess, the ECU has grown into a pivotal organization, representing 54 National Federation Members and orchestrating over 20 prestigious events annually.

**The Visionary Founding:** In the mid-1980s, a group of visionary chess enthusiasts recognized the need for a unified body to represent European chess federations. Among these pioneers were Rolf Littorin from Sweden and Pr. Kurt Jungwirth from Austria who played a crucial role in establishing the ECU. The founding meeting took place in the Kongresshalle, Graz, Austria, on August 30, 1985, during the FIDE Congress. The vision was to create an organization within FIDE that included all of Europe, without imposing new financial obligations on member federations.



Rolf Littorin from Sweden was one of visionary chess enthusiasts who recognized the need for a unified body to represent European chess federations.

**Overcoming Early Challenges:** The early years were marked by challenges, including establishing a cohesive structure and gaining recognition from national federations. However, the dedication and passion of the founding members laid a strong foundation. Despite the political climate of the Cold War, which initially limited participation from the Soviet bloc, the ECU persevered in its mission to represent European interests in chess.

**Milestones and Achievements:** Since its inception, the ECU has achieved numerous milestones. The introduction of the European Championships provided a prestigious stage for players to showcase their talents.

The ECU's commitment to education is evident in programs like 'Chess in Primary Education,, nurturing young minds and promoting strategic thinking.

The ECU's legacy is one of unity and excellence. By bringing together diverse federations, the ECU has fostered a sense of community and shared purpose. This unity has been instrumental in elevating the standard of chess competitions and promoting the game to new audiences.

As we celebrate this significant milestone, we also look to the future. The ECU remains committed to innovation and growth, with

exciting projects like the ECU Streaming TV and plans for international broadcasting rights. The upcoming 40th anniversary gala in Batumi will be a testament to the ECU's enduring impact and its bright future.

The founding of the European Chess Union was a pivotal moment in the history of chess. As we celebrate 40 years of excellence, we honor the visionaries like Rolf Littorin and Pr. Kurt Jungwirth who laid the groundwork for a thriving chess community. Their legacy continues to inspire and guide us as we look forward to the next chapter in the ECU's journey.

## Communique of the ECU Board Meeting

The first quarterly meeting of the ECU Executive Board for 2025 took place on 11th January in Monte Carlo, Monaco, during the European Women's Rapid and Blitz Chess Championship. The Monaco federation, organised the tournament and the board meeting in excellent conditions.

### Main information and decisions

- The annual ECU General Assembly will take place, on Saturday 11 October 2025 in Batumi, Georgia parallel to the European Team Chess Championship. At the same evening will take place the

celebration Gala for the ECU 40years anniversary. The representatives (delegates) of each European Chess Federation will be invited and hosted in Batumi for 3 days to participate in the General assembly and all festivities.

- By proposal of ECU President Mr. Zurab Azmaiparashvili the ECU Board appointed Mrs. Antoaneta Stefanova as new Chairperson of ECU Commission's for Women's Chess. WGM Regina, Theissl Pokorna, who has done a remarkable job for 2.5 years, remains in the Commission as a Councilor due to new and demanding professional

commitments. The ECU Board thanks Regina for her work and commitment and continues to count on her enrolment and inspiration.

- By proposal of the ECU President the ECU Board appointed Mr. Panagiotis Nikolopoulos as new Chairperson of ECU Arbiters Council. Mr. Geert Bailleul will continue to offer his valuable services as Secretary of the Council.

- The ECU Executive Board takes note of the draft financial statements for 2024 and confirms the good condition of the organisation.



## European Chess Championships & Tournaments

- The European Corporate Chess Championship, set to take place in the city of #Paris, France from November 7th to 8th, 2025. Due to the big success of the 2024 event, the Organising Committee has secured a playing hall that can accommodate up to 100 teams and 500 players.

- The European Rapid and Blitz Chess Championship 2025 will take place in Pristina, Kosovo from November 27th to 1st December 2025. The Prize fund will be increased about 50% and will be a minimum of 65,000 euros.

- Georgian Chess Federation got the option to organize the European Individual Chess Championship 2027 combined with the European Youth Chess Championship 2028.

- The special tournament "Futures" of Prague Chess Festival 2025 will be under ECU aegis and part of ECU 40 years celebrations.



## Sponsorship and Partnership



- The official "ECU Telecom Provider" "GLOBALCELL" shareholders Tamaz Somkhishvili and Georgi Zviadadze and the Marketing Director Levani Shalolashvili attended the ECU Board meeting and the tournament and expressed their willingness to continue and expand their support for the European Chess Union and the game of chess.

- The Chief Executive Officer Tommy Tang, of the Chinese company "SenseRobot", gave a presentation on the new "AI Chess Robot" and its special capabilities during the ECU Board meeting.

Detailed information can be found on the [ECU Website](#).

# Top Events

## Praggnanandhaa wins Tata Steel Masters 2025

The 87th edition of the prestigious Tata Steel Chess Tournament took place from 18th of January to 2nd of February in Wijk aan Zee, Netherlands.

The event was played with Masters and Challengers fields, including some of the world's best players. Each section featured 14 players who competed over 13 round-robin rounds.

The Winner of the Masters event was determined after playoffs, since Gukesh and Praggnanandhaa tied for the top scoring 8.5/13 points each. Gukesh suffered a loss in the final round against Arjun Erigaisi, leaving Praggnanandhaa to play against Vincent Keymer for the sole first place. However, Praggnanandhaa lost his game too, and the playoff match was scheduled to determine the Winner of this edition of the Wimbledon of Chess.

The blitz playoffs opened with Praggnanandhaa losing the first game against Gukesh, but the former bounced back in the second game to equalize the score. Having White pieces in the sudden death game, Praggnanandhaa took a win and clinched the title.



Thai Dai Van Nguyen and Aydin Suleymanli tied for first in the Challengers event, scoring 9.5/13 points each. Thai Dai Van Nguyen had better tiebreaks to clinch gold and qualified for the next edition of the Tata Steel Masters, and Aydin Suleymanli finished second. Erwin L'Ami scored 8.5 points and won bronze.

Detailed information can be found on the [official website](#).

*Photo by Tata Steel Chess 2025/ Lennart Ootes*

*Photos below from Maria Emelianova/chess.com*



# Upcoming Events

## European Individual Chess Championship 2025

The European Individual Chess Championship 2025 will take place from 14-27 March in Eforie Nord, Romania.

The event will be played in 11 rounds, swiss system, with the time control of 90 minutes for 40 moves, plus 30 minutes until the end of the game, with 30-second increment for each move starting from the move one.

The total prize fund of the event is 100.000 EUR, with 20.000 EUR reserved for the Winner. The European Individual Chess Championship 2025 is a qualifying event for the FIDE World Cup.

According to the FIDE regulations for World Cup and the ECU Board decision, 20 players\* will qualify. (*\*Under the current FIDE World Cup regulations, FIDE is the only body responsible for the qualification spots*)

The event is open for all players from National Chess Federations members of the European Chess Union (ECU) without rating or title limitations and the registration deadline is 15th of February.

Detailed information, regulations, and registration info can be found on the [ECU Website](#).

More than 350 players from 37 European federations already registered for the event and the top seeds are: Bogdan-Daniel Deac (ROU, 2692), David Navara (CZE, 2677), Alexey Sarana (SRB, 2672), David Anton Guijarro (ESP, 2668), Ivan Saric (CRO, 2661), Shant Sargsyan (ARM, 2660), Benjamin Gledura (HUN, 2659), Pavel Eljanov (UKR, 2658), Radoslaw Wojtaszek (POL, 2658), and Daniil Yuffa (ESP, 2654).

List of registered players can be found [here](#).



## Prague Chess Festival 2025

The 7th edition of the Prague Chess Festival will take place from 27 February to 7 March in Prague, Czech Republic.

The Festival features Masters, Challengers and Futures round-robin events that are simultaneously played in the same venue Hotel Don Giovanni, and includes Open tournaments, Rapid events and side chess tournaments.

The Masters event features: Wei Yi (CHN, 2755), Praggnanandhaa R (IND, 2741), Le Quang Liem (VIE, 2739), Keymer Vincent (GER, 2731), Aravindh Chithambaram VR. (IND, 2729), Navara David (CZE, 2677), Shankland Sam (USA, 2670), Nguyen Thai Dai Van (CZE, 2668), and Gurel Ediz (TUR, 2624).

Yakubboev Nodirbek (UZB, 2659), Ma Qun (CHN, 2645), Bjerre Jonas Buhl (DEN, 2640), Salgado Lopez Ivan (ESP, 2599), Maurizzi Marc`Andria (FRA, 2581), Kourkoulos-Arditis Stamatis (GRE, 2580), Divya Deshmukh (IND, 2490), Finek, Vaclav (CZE, 2478), Stalmach Richard



(CZE, 2449) and Nemeč Jachym (CZE, 2433) participate in the Challengers tournament and the Winner of the event qualifies for the next Masters Championship .

Detailed information about the event, schedule, regulations, can be found on the [Official website](#).

## Futures Tournament



The Futures Tournament of the Prague Chess Festival is organised with the support of the European Chess Union.

Young chess talents will participate in the exclusive playing conditions, same as for the participants of the Masters and Challengers event. The system and the time control of the competition also follows the Masters and Challengers events.

The players in the field of the Futures tournament are: Viti Greta (ITA, 1971), Stara Zuzana (CZE, 1919), Markina Sofia (CZE, 1891), Sunea Sara Maria (ROU, 1854), Tolmaceva, Alona (LAT, 1839), Anistoroaei Maria (ROU, 1820), Jakubse Tamae Severina (CZE, 1815), Rzakowska Kaja (POL, 1798), Schirmbeck Lilian (GER, 1754), Rzakowska Lila (POL, 1743).



# Upcoming Events

## PlusCity Grand Prix Chess Tournament 2025

PlusCity Grand Prix tournament is set to take place from 29 May to 1 June in Linz, Austria, with the total prize fund of 75.000 EUR!

The event features four different tournaments: Blitz, Rapid, Team Blitz and Team Rapid that will be played at the PlusCity Linz mall.

Detailed information, regulations and registrations can be found on the Official website: <https://grandprix-chess.com/>

The first event on the schedule will be the Blitz competition, which will take place on 29th May, with 13-swiss rounds played with the time control of 3 minutes + 2 seconds. The Rapid tournament will be played on 30th of May, with 9-swiss rounds, time control of 10 minutes + 5 seconds. The Austrian Open Blitz Team is scheduled for 31st May in format of 13 swiss rounds and time control of 3 minutes + 2 seconds, while the Austrian Rapid Team Championship will be held on 1st of June, with 9-swiss rounds and the time control of 10 minutes + 5 seconds. Teams shall consist of four players.

**PLUS CITY**  
**€ 75.000,-**  
**PRIZEFUND**

29.05. Blitz  
30.05. Rapid  
31.05. Team Blitz  
01.06. Team Rapid



## Empowering Women's Chess Tournaments Across Europe



## Support for Women's tournaments 2024

ECU Commission for Women's Chess announces the open call for financial support of the organisers of Women's Closed tournaments in 2025.

You can use the chance and apply for financial support for the tournaments being organized between January and March 2025 (Q1) till March 20, 2025.

This year we can offer a financial support to 4 organisers, as following:

- WIM norm tournament => support of 800 EUR/tournament
- IM or WGM norm tournament => support of 1100 EUR/tournament

Criteria for application:

- The organizing federation must be an ECU member.
- We may support only one ECU organizer – country per year.
- The closed tournament must be at least a WIM norm tournament.
- Majority of the female players must come from ECU member federations.

## European Women's Chess Trophy

**ECU Commission For Women's Chess announced 2 years ago "European Women's Chess Trophy", an initiative that aimed to financially reward women and girls actively take part in the solely women's tournaments in Europe.**

It was great to see the growing number of female tournaments in Europe last year (also thanks to our ECU WOM commission's financial support that we offer to organizers), as well as number of female players that had been considered for trophy.

You can find all details (tournaments included, criteria, prizes, etc.) related to this initiative on our website: [European Women's Chess Trophy | Women's commission ECU \(europechess.org\)](http://europechess.org)

Players, who won financial prizes in the respected categories were announced and they can be seen in the table shown below.

Congratulations to all winners and we do hope to inspire more women to participate at female events also this year.

The program is "Supported by the FIDE Development fund"



Category	Ranking	Name of the players
Juniors	1	Toncheva Nadya
U20	2	Van Foreest Machteld
	3	Gaal Zsoka
Category	Ranking	Name of the players
Up to 2200	1	Cosman Andreea-Marioara
	2	Manakova Maria
	3	Manko Mariia
Category	Ranking	Name of the players
Up to 2201-2400	1	Fataliyeva Ulviyya
	2	Buksa Nataliya
	3	Mkrtchian Lilit
Category	Ranking	Name of the players
Above 2400	1	Batsiashvili Nino
	2	Dzagnidze Nana
	3	Javakhisvili Iela

# The Dress Code Dilemma: A Fine Line Between Rules and Expression

### Introduction

If you ask me to come up with regulations about dress codes, I simply cannot write one, but I can think of how to break wrong dress code regulations! Dress is more than just clothing—it is a form of self-expression, because the way a person dresses very often reflects their views and values, which can be a part of their culture and identity. Knowing this fact, it's no surprise players resist a strict and inflexible dress code.

### The Unique Nature of Chess: Does It Even Need a Dress Code?

Chess is a sport of the brain, and this factor alone distinguishes chess from all other physical sports. However, one question still remains: does chess need a dress code?

I believe this comparison with other sports can be fairer in team events, and we still may need a dress code in chess events for the sake of professionalism.

### Diversity and Inclusion: The Core of Dress Code Reform

The keywords that need to guide us are: "diversity" and "inclusion."

- Diversity is about recognising, respecting and celebrating each other's differences. A diverse environment brings together people from different backgrounds and mindset, which helps creating an innovative and creative culture.
- Inclusion is about making sure that everyone feels welcome and valued. This can only be achieved when we are more conscious of our unconscious biases and learn to manage them.

My friend, Grandmaster Pontus Carlsson, once brought this to my attention: choosing a single colour such as "dark blue" is not suitable for the FIDE dress code, because it has not been designed for diverse skin tones.

### Why Dress Codes Are Controversial in the Chess Community?

The first step in writing dress code regulations is to understand our community.

The game of chess is an international one, where players belong to different cultures and backgrounds, all with their different sets of expectations and norms. This simply means that something which is highly valued in one culture might be viewed differently in another.



Text by:  
IA Shohreh Bayat

Sometimes, even a minor change can represent someone wrongly, and it counts as a "limitation to freedom of expression." As someone who was forced to wear a mandatory headscarf for years, I can tell you how deeply sad this issue can be, because sometimes being misrepresented feels like you are losing a part of your identity.

# Arbiter's Corner

## Team Events and Dress Codes

In team events, where players represent their country or club, a unified dress code can very often contribute towards their team-bonding. A uniform not only increases team spirit but also improves the overall image of the event. However, these uniforms should allow for some flexibility to respect cultural differences and personal preferences, ensuring that players feel both united and valued.

## Learning From Recent Cases

### The Anna-Maja Kazarian Sneakers: A Call for Fairness

During the 2023 FIDE Women's World Rapid and Blitz Chess Championship in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, Anna-Maja Kazarian, a very well-respected Woman International Master from the Netherlands, appeared in sneakers. Apparently, she was not expecting to be fined €100 for wearing "Burberry sneakers." Therefore, she challenged FIDE's decision on social media. The next day, Anna-Maja appeared in high heels! Whether as a deliberate statement or simply a forced move, her choice was thought-provoking. Are high heels somehow more appropriate for a chess tournament? This suggests a need for clearer and fairer dress code guidelines. One does not expect to be fined for wearing sports shoes in a sports competition—unless you argue that chess is not a sport!



*Serbian team that won gold at the European Team Chess Championship 2023*

### The Magnus Carlsen Jeans: A Stand Against Overregulation

During the 2024 World Rapid & Blitz Chess Championship in New York, Magnus Carlsen appeared in jeans. The event's dress code banned jeans, therefore he was fined. "I got a fine which is fine, and then I got a warning that I would not be paired if I didn't go change my clothes." He withdrew from the event after FIDE barred him from participating in a round. He explains: "I said I'll change tomorrow if that's OK, I didn't even realise it today", but they said, 'Well you have to change now'. At that point it became a bit of a matter of principle for me."

### Zhu Jiner's Dress Code Case: When Regulations Disrupt Play

During the 2024 Women's World Blitz Chess Championship in New York, Grandmaster Zhu Jiner, last year's bronze medallist, faced an unexpected dress code issue. Apparently, in the semi-final stage against Grandmaster R. Vaishali, a FIDE official told her that her white laceless winter boots violated regulations, and she would be fined \$200 per game! She argued on social media that such an incident massively distracted her. It is even more surprising when you know that she had worn the same boots throughout the Rapid section without being approached by anyone. Zhu argued that she followed the official dress code policy, and that "arbitrary decisions based on personal discretion" disrupted her performance and affected the outcome of the tournament for her. At the end of the tournament, Zhu appealed the fine, and the Appeals Committee accepted her appeal, replacing the fine with a warning.

### The Olympiads: A Showcase of Unity and Tradition

Olympiad is a great example of team events, in which many players proudly wear their uniforms. The flexibility applied in such events allowed a smooth run of the tournament. Especially, during the 2024 World Chess Olympiad in Budapest, Hungary, where some newly joined federations, such as Vanuatu, appeared in their unique costume, and took positive public attention.

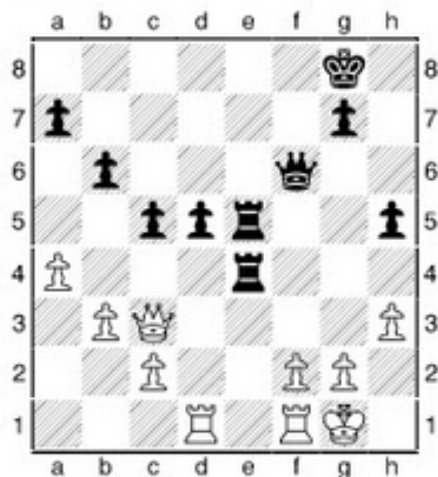
## The Path Forward: Toward Inclusive and Practical Guidelines

If we agree that dress codes are necessary to show a professional image for our sport, it is hugely vital to consult with players about it and develop regulations that have global acceptance. Officials who are going to deal with the dress code need to go through training in order to avoid applying their unconscious bias when enforcing such regulations. A lot of factors must be considered, such as cleanliness, comfort, functionality, room for self-expression, inclusive sizing, and many more. What is clear is that a one-size-fits-all approach is not the answer!

# EFSTRATIOS GRIVAS

## DISTRACTION - PART 2

Example 8 ◦



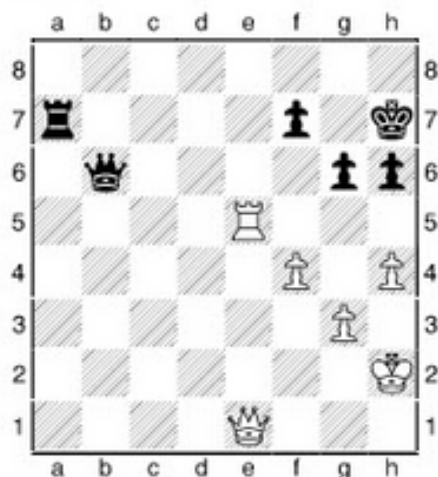
Black's pressure on the e-file is tremendous, so White thought that he must deal with it, by offering exchanges...

1.Rfe1? Rxe1+ 2.Rxe1 Re2!

And by this well-known method, Black cashed the point!

0-1

Example 9 ●



White's king is rather exposed and Black can take advantage of it.

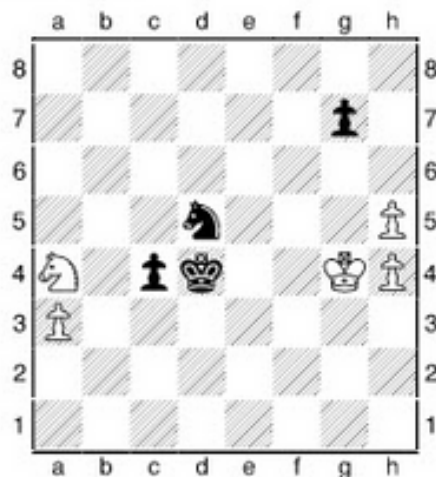
1...Ra2+ 2.Re2

The text can be considered a mistake, but anyway White would not hold after 2.Kh3 Qb2 3.Qg1 h5 -, when a check on the h3-c8 diagonal will end the game...

2...Qe3!

0-1

Example 10 ●



White is ready to sacrifice his knight for the passed black c-pawn, thus achieving the draw after exchanging the last black pawn.

1...Nb6! 2.Nxb6

There is no hope for White even after 2.Nb2 c3 3.Nd1 c2 -+.

2...c3

0-1



### Queening

□ Vachier Lagrave Maxime

■ Nihal Sarin

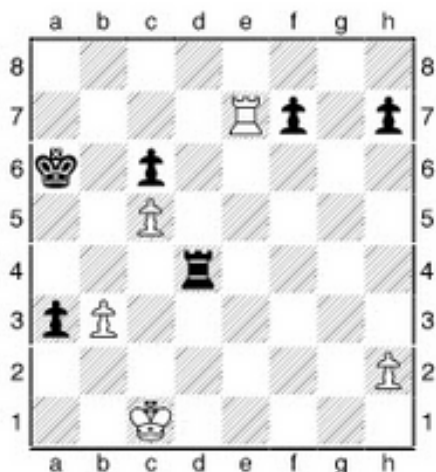
B11 Internet 2020

1.e4 c6 2.Nf3 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nf6  
5.Qe2 Na6 6.Nxf6+ gxf6 7.d4 Bf5 8.c3 Qd5  
9.Qc4 Nc7 10.Qxd5 Nxd5 11.Be2 Rg8 12.g3  
e6 13.Nh4 Bh3 14.Bd2 Bd6 15.0-0-0 0-0-0  
16.Rhe1 Rd7 17.f4 Ne7 18.Bh5 Nf5 19.Nxf5  
Bxf5 20.Re2 Kc7 21.Rde1 a5 22.Be3 a4  
23.Bf2 b5 24.Bf3 b4 25.c4 Bd3 26.c5 Be7  
27.Rd2 Bc4 28.Kb1 Bd5 29.Bh5 Rf8 30.f5  
exf5 31.Be3 Be4+ 32.Kc1 Kb7 33.Bd1 Ra8  
34.g4 fxg4 35.Bxg4 f5 36.Bh5 Bf6 37.Bd1  
a3 38.Bb3 Rad8 39.bxa3 bxa3 40.Red1 f4  
41.Bxf4 Bxd4 42.Rxd4 Rxd4 43.Re1 Bd5  
44.Re7+ Ka6 45.Be5 Bxb3 46.Bxd4 Rxd4  
47.axb3 (D)

# EFSTRATIOS GRIVAS

## DISTRACTION - PART 2

TRAINERS'  
COMMISSION



47...Rd1+!

White resigned, as Black is queening his pawn after 48.Kxd1 a2.

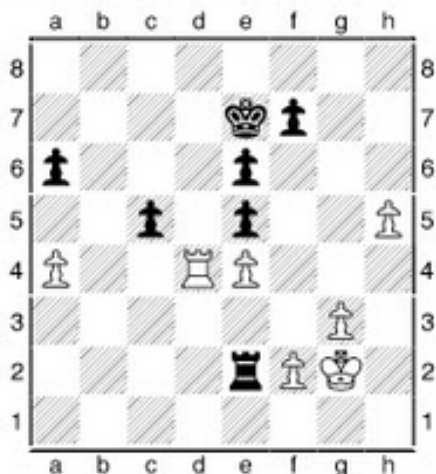
0-1

□ Papasimakopoulos Alexandros

■ Atalik Suat

A07 Arandjelovac 2023

1.Nf3 d5 2.g3 b6 3.Bg2 Bb7 4.d4 e6 5.0-0 Nd7 6.a4 a6 7.b3 Ngf6 8.Bb2 Bd6 9.Nbd2 0-0 10.Ne5 c5 11.e3 Qc7 12.Nxd7 Nxd7 13.c4 dxc4 14.Nxc4 Bxg2 15.Kxg2 Be7 16.Qf3 Rab8 17.dxc5 bxc5 18.e4 Bf6 19.Bxf6 gxf6 20.Rfd1 Rfd8 21.Racl Kg7 22.Qg4+ Kf8 23.Qh4 Ke7 24.Rd6 Ne5 25.Rxd8 Rxd8 26.Qxh7 Ng6 27.Qh5 Rd4 28.Re1 Qc6 29.Kgl Rd3 30.Qe2 Qd7 31.h4 Qd4 32.Kg2 Ne5 33.Nxe5 fxe5 34.h5 Rxb3 35.Rd1 Rb2 36.Rxd4 Rxe2 (D)



37.Rd8!

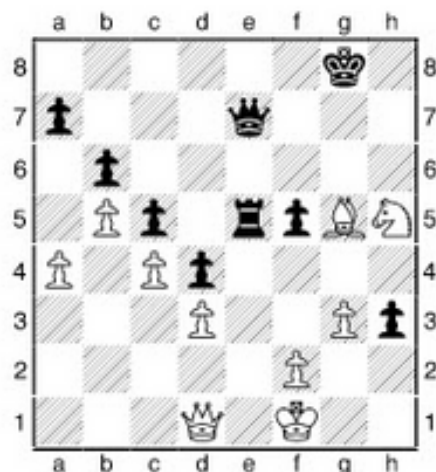
The same case here! Black resigned due to 37...Kxd8 (37...Kf6 38.Rg8 +-) 38.h6+ -.

1-0

□ Bilek Istvan

■ Matanovic Aleksandar

Belgrade 1957 ●



1...Re1+! 2.Qxel Qxel+ 3.Kxel h2

0-1

# IN MEMORIAM: Stewart Reuben

**Stewart Reuben**, a distinguished figure in the world of chess, passed away. Born in 1939, Reuben was a British chess player, organizer, arbiter, and author. He was renowned for his significant contributions to high-level chess events, including the World Chess Championship, and served as the chief organizer of the British Chess Championship Congresses for many years.

His leadership extended to his role as chairman of the FIDE Rules Commission, Chairman of the British Chess Federation from 1996 to 1999, and he was actively involved with the English Chess Federation as Manager of Senior Chess. He served also with dedication and enormous contribution to FIDE Organisers and FIDE Qualification Commissions.

Reuben's influence was not limited to chess; he was also a professional poker player, recognized as one of Britain's foremost poker players.

His legacy in the chess community is marked by his dedication to the sport, his strategic insights, and his commitment to fostering the growth of chess. Stewart Reuben will be remembered for his passion, expertise, and the indelible mark he left on the chess world.

European Chess Union express its deepest condolences to his family, English Chess Federation and the British chess community.

Photo by David Llada





## Mikhail Botvinnik: The Patriarch of Soviet Chess

In the cold winter of 1911, as chess clubs across Europe buzzed with tactical discussions, a future chess patriarch was born in Moscow. Mikhail Botvinnik would go on to revolutionize the game, not just as a player but as a pioneer of systematic training.

Mikhail Botvinnik, often hailed as the "Patriarch of the Soviet Chess School," was a trailblazer in the world of chess. Born into a Jewish family in Saint Petersburg, Botvinnik's early exposure to chess came at the age of 12. His analytical mind and disciplined approach quickly set him apart from his peers.

Botvinnik's career was marked by his three-time reign as World Chess Champion, a testament to his strategic brilliance and resilience. His victories in 1948, 1958, and 1961 were not just personal triumphs but also milestones in the Soviet Union's dominance in international chess.

Beyond his achievements on the board, Botvinnik's legacy lies in his contribution to chess education. He was the first to advocate for a scientific approach to chess training, emphasizing the importance of preparation and study. His methods laid the foundation for future generations of Soviet players, including legends like Anatoly Karpov and Garry Kasparov.

Botvinnik's influence extends beyond his lifetime, resonating with the European Chess Union's commitment to education and development. His systematic approach to training aligns with ECU's educational programs, inspiring a new generation of players to pursue excellence with discipline and dedication.

His legacy lives on in every strategic move.



# FUN ZONE

Back in time...

## About 6<sup>th</sup> World Chess Champion - **Mikhail Botvinnik**

### Mikhail Botvinnik said about chess:

- Chess cannot be taught. Chess can only be learned.
- Chess is the art which expresses the science of logic.
- If you are weak in the endgame, you must spend more time analysing studies; in your training games you must aim at transposing to endgames, which will help you to acquire the requisite experience.
- When my opponent's clock is going I discuss general considerations in an internal dialogue with myself. When my own clock is going I analyse concrete variations.
- Chess, like any creative activity, can exist only through the combined efforts of those who have creative talent, and those who have the ability to organize their creative work.
- If you are going to make your mark among masters, you have to work far harder and more intensively, or, to put it more exactly, the work is far more complex than that needed to gain the title of Master.
- Every great master will find it useful to have his own theory on the openings, which only he himself knows, a theory which is closely linked with plans for the middle game.



In this edition of the ECU E-Magazine we prepared three positions where white mates in two. Solutions will be published in the next edition.

Solutions from ECU E-Magazine November 2024

#Puzzle 1: 1.Qd6+!! Rxd6 2.Rf7#

#Puzzle 2: 1.Nxd6+! Ke7 2.Nf5#

#Puzzle 3: 1.Qc8+!! Nxc8 2.d6#



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At GLOBALCELL, we understand that staying connected is just as important as staying a move ahead. That's why our partnership with the European Chess Union marks an exciting chapter, providing unparalleled benefits to chess enthusiasts, players, and professionals worldwide. We had the great pleasure of attending the first quarterly meeting of the ECU Executive Board for 2025 in Monte Carlo, Monaco, during the European Women's Rapid and Blitz Chess Championship. We are very happy to be part of the mission of pushing chess forward.

We have also published a new commercial to commemorate our partnership, which can be viewed on the ECU YouTube channel.

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