



PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release

LONDON CLASSIC DAY 2: FAB FOUR BECALMED, GAWAIN JONES STRIKES

- Both Semi-Final matches in the London Chess Classic see draws on Day 2, leaving Fabiano Caruana & Hikaru Nakamura, and Maxime Vachier-Lagrave & Levon Aronian, all tied with two draws each.
- The Semi-Finals go into a third and final day on Thursday, consisting of 2 rapid and 4 blitz games, with a total of 15 points required to secure qualification to the Final. Each Classical game in the match counts for 6 points, each Rapid game counts for 4 points and each Blitz game for 2 points.
- Should matches still be tied, rapid playoffs and then an Armageddon game will decide.
- In the British Knockout Championship, Gawain Jones defeats David Howell with a daring bishop sacrifice. Meanwhile, Mickey Adams is thwarted by dogged defence from Luke McShane, who holds a fortress to draw.
- Live coverage of all matches can be viewed here from 14:00 UTC: [London Chess Classic](#) & [British Knockout Championship](#).

LONDON (December 13, 2018) – After the high drama of Fabiano Caruana narrowly failing to take the World No. 1 ratings spot on Day 1 of the London Classic, the final leg of the Grand Chess Tour 2018, on Wednesday the World Championship challenger comfortably held Hikaru Nakamura to a draw with his trademark super-solid Petroff Defence.

Nakamura, an acknowledged rapid and blitz specialist, steered the game towards early exchanges and a draw, meaning that the two players go level into a final day of 2 Rapid and 4 Blitz games on Thursday.

In the other Classic game, Levon Aronian tried an enterprising central pawn thrust (9 d4!?) and later pressed in the endgame due to Maxime Vachier-Lagrave's doubled e-pawns, but MVL held on to draw.

All four Classic games have so far ended in draws, although three of them have been extremely hard-fought.



Hikaru Nakamura shakes hands with Alex, who was invited to play the ceremonial first move for the US Grandmaster by Chess in Schools and Communities, before the start of Classical Game 2. Nakamura accepted Alex's move, 1 e4.

The Grand Chess Tour format this year specifies that Classical games are worth 6 points each, Rapid games 4 points and Blitz 2 points. The winning line is reached when one player gets 15 points.

If the players are still tied, Thursday will also see a 2-game match of rapid chess, with 10 minutes plus 5 seconds delay per move, followed by an Armageddon blitz game to decide the Semi-Finals if required.

[Full regulations governing the London Chess Classic Semi-Finals, Final and Third Place Playoff matches can be viewed here.](#)

In the British Knockout Championship, which is played with the same format and time limits as the London Chess Classic, Gawain Jones beat David Howell in an Italian Game with an interesting piece sacrifice (17 Bxh6!?) to go 9-3 ahead in their match.

This means a win and a draw in the Rapid games on Thursday would be enough to see Jones into the Final.

In the other British KO game, Mickey Adams looked to be on course to secure victory after gaining the advantage in a French Tarrasch and winning Luke McShane's queen for rook and bishop. But he was denied by rearguard defence as McShane managed to set up a fortress.

London Chess Classic, Grand Chess Tour Finals

Semi Final 1, Game 2
Nakamura 3 - 3 Caruana
Score: Caruana 6 - 6 Nakamura

Semi Final 2, Game 2
Aronian 3 - 3 Vachier-Lagrave
Score: Aronian 6 - 6 Vachier-Lagrave

British Knockout Championship

Semi Final 1, Game 2
Adams 3 - 3 McShane
Score: Adams 6 - 6 McShane

Semi Final 2, Game 2
Jones 6 - 0 Howell
Score: Jones 9 - 3 Howell

(The alternation of colours now switches, so each player will have the **same** colour in Game 3 - Rapid Game 1 - as they had in Game 2.)

For **media enquiries** related to the London Chess Classic and the British Knockout Championship, please contact: Tim Wall – press@londonchessclassic.com

Media editors may use photos online from the [London Chess Classic website's Flickr account](#) as long as they are credited to the LCC and the photographer. For permission to use the photos in print publications, editors should contact the photographer.

The London Chess Classic is the final leg of the 2018 Grand Chess Tour. It is the flagship event of [Chess in Schools and Communities](#) and includes a range of amateur and age-grade competitions for 1,000s of children from the charity initiative nationwide.