

Menchik Memorial 2024 Round 4

Round 3 had something you rarely see in any tournament; we had five decisive results in one round. There were no draws whatsoever.

This game can be very competitive and it seems here they're playing for the win, well last round they were. What happens now is anyone's guess.

Rank		Name	Rtg	FED	Pts.
1	IM	Hunt Harriet V	2307	ENG	3
	IM	Garcia Martin Marta	2356	ESP	3
3	GM	Arakhamia-Grant Ketevan E	2290	SCO	2½
4	WFM	Cosman Andreea-Marioara	2115	ROU	2
5	WCM	Subramanian Anusha	1997	ENG	1½
6	WCM	Sivanandan Bodhana	2088	ENG	1
	WGM	Navrotescu Andreea-Cristiana	2200	FRA	1
8	WIM	Steil-Antoni Fiona	2154	LUX	½
		Hryshchenko Kamila	2186	ENG	½
10	WFM	Smith Olivia	2054	WLS	0

With six rounds still left to go in the competition im afraid Fiona's norm chances are now gone. She is already a WIM so was going for the WGM norm available with 7 points. Unfortunately, since she can only get to 6.5 now, there is no chance of a WGM norm but there are still plenty of rating points up for grabs.

Bodhana and Andreea-Cristiana still have chances at a WGM norm but they have to win all their games 6/6. Which is a hard ask. Its possible that the WGM norms for this tournament may go during this round or be kept alive by one strong soul winning the rest of their games. Even if the WGM norms become unachievable, the WIM norms are still a possibility. For those a player only needs to get to 5.5/9 in this tournament.

Let's find out how todays action goes.

Im selecting for this round the last player I haven't had chance to talk about yet Andreea-Cristiana Navrotescu vs Kamila Hryshchenko

And just to confuse matters even further the second Andreea

Bodhana Sivanandan vs Andreea-Marioara Cosman

Let's get right in to it

Game 1: Kamila Hryshchenko vs Andreea-Cristiana Navrotescu

Who is Andreea-Cristiana? Well, she's from France and with a rating of 2200 makes her the 4th strongest player in our line up at the Menchik memorial. She has been a regular at the European women's team tournament and FIDE women's world team tournament. Recently

she started playing in the 4NCL for White Rose and won both her games in the most recent weekend. She is on form and will be a hard player to beat for anyone trying to get that norm. We never said we were going to make it easy for any of our norm seekers.

But then of course its Kamila she's up against this round, who put up a tough fight last round against the strongest and it was only through one bad miscalculation that she had to take the loss.

We started out with a Reti, Andreea-Christina responding by pushing her d pawn into the centre and both players developing by fianchettoing their bishops to the kingside and Kamila grabbing hold of the centre with the two knights. Andreea-Christina is relying on the queenside knight, the pawn in the centre backed up by a bishop and the queen with a lot of squares available to put on the pressure. No raising of the pirate flags here though for quick pushes of pawns as both players castle kingside and prepare for a long game.



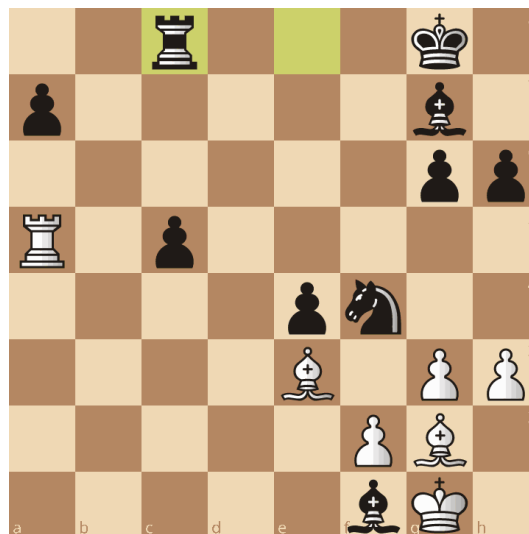
One other rule I like to go by in my chess is don't put pieces where they can be forced away in one move and that f pawn of Andreea-Christinas looks mighty tempted to come up to f5, kicking the knight and securing the centre.

Which is what happened, the knight went back and Andreea-Christina made good use of her space advantage, bringing the rest of her pieces out and towards the centre to take control of the game. The rooks made their way into the centre of the board, the e pawn got one square forward, not most of the pieces are on good squares ready for the next stage of this attack.



Andreea-Cristiana made the move to take the knight on b4. Instead of recapturing Kamila went for the centre but this allowed Andreea to bring that bishop on f7 into the game and threaten the queen. When it moves the knight can extract itself and threaten the queen again. It works as all the squares to take the knight are pinned. Pick up the knight, lose the queen. That is evil, I like it.

But just as Andreea-Cristiana starts to get on with her attack, she overlooks a counterpunch. Allowing Kamila to simplify and stop the attacks in their tracks, trading off to an equal endgame.



But time pressure must have gotten to Kamila. The above position is drawn if she takes the bishop. Instead, she took the e-pawn which allowed Andreea-Cristiana to come back and claim the win. So close.

Not been Kamila's day today, better luck tomorrow, well done Andreea-Cristiana.

Puzzle time:



This is where the computer thinks Andreea-Cristiana went wrong. What would you play?

Game 2 Bodhana Sivanandan vs Andreea-Marioara Cosman

We have one of my favourite openings (no using this against me if you play me please) the Grand Prix attack.

Its white's response to the Sicilian, white develops the knight on c3 and pushes the f pawn to come in for a devastating attack on the black kingside. Played right this gives white a strong attack and black has lots to think about quickly. It was first made popular by Mark Hebden and Dave Rumens on the congress circuit I believe.

So, we have a grand prix attack on the board, white has chosen to use their bishop to take away the queenside knight, stop any intrusion into the centre with that and go with the standard developing lines of a grand prix, knights out, castle kingside and bring the queen into e1 ready to jump in on to the kingside. Watch out in these games for the f pawn to be sacrificed to open lines to black's king.



The attack came just as predicted, the f4 pawn pushed on, sacrificing itself to open lines to the black king. Andreea-Marioara needs to be able to hold off this attack, if you can survive whites thrust to break open the kingside, you'll be able to counterattack when white runs out of steam. Choosing in this case to take back the pawn on f5 it may have opened the kingside to an attack but bringing in the pieces like the bishop and queen she took away whites attacking kingside pieces, bringing that attack to a halt.

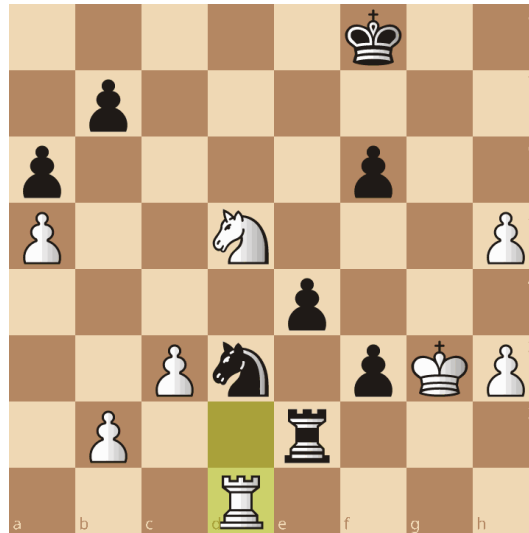
But its not over yet. Bodhana has some more dastardly ideas, like doubling the rooks on the e file and coming in against the weakened king that way.

Andreea-Marioara not happy to let that happen, takes one of Bodhana's rooks with her own then closes the file with the knight. Where will the next attack come from?



Well Bodhana started to manoeuvre around her central knight, coming into f5 and trying to cause trouble in the enemy position. But in the process overlooked that the knight gets stuck there, and it allows Andreea-Marioara to bring her pieces right up to Bodhana's king. Now Andreea-Marioara has the bishop, knight and rook all lurking round the king.

To try to simplify Bodhana trades one of the knights for the bishop but that allows the d-pawn to recapture and now Bodhana has two passed pawns coming right down at her. She moves her pieces around to try to hold them off but Andreea-Marioara get in the way and Bodhana can stop pieces but she can't stop those pawns.



F2 came and Bodhana could get a pawn and the knight but the e-pawn queens.

Bodhana played on valiantly, right to the end. She's definitely been listening to her coaches, don't give up until the last moves played. Good game Bodhana, definitely one to watch if you have the chance. Well done Andreea-Marioara

Results from that round are as follows:

BNo.		Name	Rtg	Res.		Name	Rtg
1	GM	Arakhamia-Grant Ketevan E	2290	1 - 0	WIM	Steil-Antoni Fiona	2154
2		Hryshchenko Kamila	2186	0 - 1	WGM	Navrotescu Andreea-Cristiana	2200
3	WFM	Smith Olivia	2054	0 - 1	IM	Garcia Martin Marta	2356
4	WCM	Sivanandan Bodhana	2088	0 - 1	WFM	Cosman Andreea-Marioara	2115
5	WCM	Subramanian Anusha	1997	0 - 1	IM	Hunt Harriet V	2307

Answer to the problem: c4, reinforce the knight!