

# Menchik Memorial 2024 Round 5

Once we complete this were halfway through the tournament. The schedule is a little hard with no rest day but my main goal is for the players to have fun and believe me they are appreciated.

As a treat for the tournament the organiser took all the players and arbiters out to dinner last night and from my perspective it was really good. This writer is a particularly picky eater but it seems Polish food agrees with him.

Now on to the matter of the chess. After four rounds, here is how it stands:

Rank		Name	Rtg	FED	Pts.
1	IM	Hunt Harriet V	2307	ENG	4
	IM	Garcia Martin Marta	2356	ESP	4
3	GM	Arakhamia-Grant Ketevan E	2290	SCO	3½
4	WFM	Cosman Andreea-Marioara	2115	ROU	3
5	WGM	Navrotescu Andreea-Cristiana	2200	FRA	2
6	WCM	Subramanian Anusha	1997	ENG	1½
7	WCM	Sivanandan Bodhana	2088	ENG	1
8	WIM	Steil-Antoni Fiona	2154	LUX	½
		Hryshchenko Kamila	2186	ENG	½
10	WFM	Smith Olivia	2054	WLS	0

The players that can't get norms have risen all the way to the top with Harriet Hunt and Marta Garcia Martin on maximum points. When these two titans play each other who knows what will happen. Will we get an epic game where they both try to take the crown or will it be a quick 15 move draw? I don't know, but I look forward to finding out.

WGM norm chances are still alive for Andreea-Marioara Cosman. Four points from the last remaining games would see her to the WGM norm. However, our other title norm seeker Anusha stands in her way this round and also seeking a norm. That battle will be one where they're both going to go for it if they want their norms so I think I will make that one of today's games.

Also, today we do have a clash of the titans at the top, Harriet Hunt vs Ketevan Arakhamia-Grant. Let's see how this one goes.

Game 1: Harriet Hunt vs Ketevan Arakhamia-Grant

Now this is an opening variation to the Sicilian I've never seen before. I've seen the open Sicilian, anti-Sicilian, closed Sicilian but playing 3.b3 as an answer to it is one I've never come across before. But then maybe that's Harriet's plan, throw something new and innovative at the solid player and see if it makes a dent in that so far almost perfect armour.

Ketevan developer her pieces in the solid way she has done throughout this tournament, Harriet preferring the bishops to cement her control over the centre and now we just wait and see where the fireworks will come from.



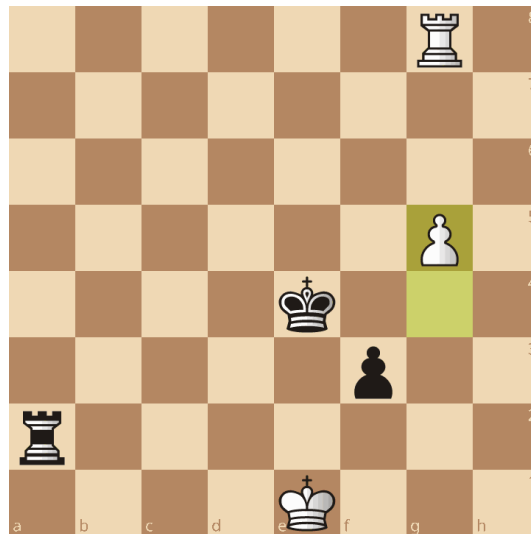
Sicilian Defense: French Variation, Westerinen Attack

Well we don't have to wait long to find out what happened here. Ketevan played her bishop to d7 and Harriet her knight out to d2, solidifying the position and completing development. It was at this point one of them offered the other a draw and it was accepted. So my apologies it wasn't a 15 move draw, it was a 9 move draw and not unexpected given neither of them can get norms here and at the halfway point players want the breaks where they can get them, save the energy for the next opponent. But I'd have been interested to see where this one went. According to the lichess database there have only ever been three games that made it to this point all by strong players and white either seems to draw this line or win it. One of the games between two great players of English Chess

Littlewood, John Eric (2375) 1-0 Miles, Anthony J (2560)

Certainly, one I need to investigate for my own games and an answer to the Sicilian.

Puzzle time!



Black to play and win.

Game 2: Andreea-Marioara Cosman vs Anusha Subramanian

Well in this one we have a queen's pawn opening. The players have between them gone for an Indian Defense: Normal Variation

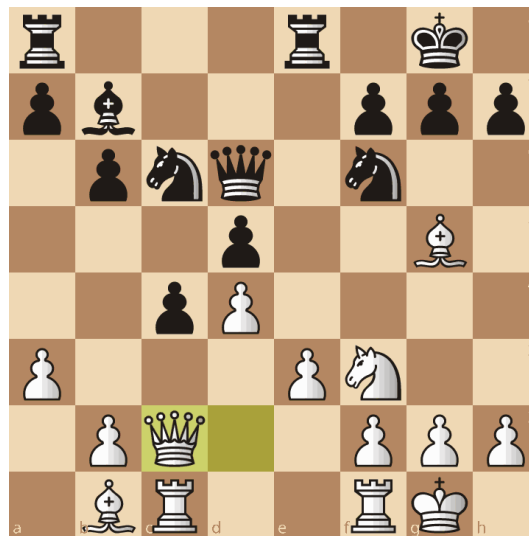
Personally, to me it looks like a London System with white having had to give up the queen's knight and black has developed a space advantage on the queenside and developed pieces there. Black has castled to maintain king safety but white has not done this yet. They have however developed the rook to c1 putting it on a semi-open file. If Andreea-Marioara decides she's going to castle the only way is kingside now.

Were still in the opening and the players are bringing out their pieces to their best squares, just trying to find the right way to break their opponents' defences.



Well, Andreea-Marioara decided to develop her bishop out into the centre. Anusha took her chance to hit it with the pawn so it had to retreat back to b1. This is a trick I've used a few times in the London system, develop the rook out, slip the bishop in beside it and then use the bishop in combination with the queen as a battering ram to open up the enemy king.

So, Anusha developed her knight from here and brought more pieces pointing into the centre. Andreea-Marioara castled and brought the queen over to c2 with that battering ram idea. Then someone offered a draw which was accepted!



Goodness. We go two rounds without any draws and then the two games I pick finish in them.

Results:

BNo.		Name	Rtg	Res.		Name	Rtg
1	IM	Hunt Harriet V	2307	½ - ½	GM	Arakhamia-Grant Ketevan E	2290
2	WFM	Cosman Andreea-Marioara	2115	½ - ½	WCM	Subramanian Anusha	1997
3	IM	Garcia Martin Marta	2356	½ - ½	WCM	Sivanandan Bodhana	2088
4	WGM	Navrotescu Andreea-Cristiana	2200	1 - 0	WFM	Smith Olivia	2054
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Answer to Puzzle: f2