



LONDON CHESS  
CONFERENCE



EUROPEAN  
RAPID & BLITZ  
CHAMPIONSHIP  
2016



EUROPEAN  
YOUTH RAPID &  
BLITZ  
CHAMPIONSHIP



WORLD RAPID &  
BLITZ  
CHAMPIONSHIP  
DOHA 2016

# EUROPEAN CHESS UNION NEWSLETTER



On the road to success, the rule is to always look ahead. May you reach your destination, and may your journey be wonderful!

**ECU WISHES YOU A HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

## Riazantsev and Andreikin win European Rapid & Blitz Championship 2016

Grandmasters Alexander Riazantsev and Dmitry Andreikin became the winners of the European Rapid & Blitz Chess Championship 2016, which was held from 14-18 December, in Park Inn by Radisson Meriton Conference & Spa Hotel in Tallinn/Estonia.



GM Alexander Riazantsev from Russia became the winner of the Rapid competition with 9.5 points after 11 rounds. His compatriot GM Maxim Matlakov made the same score, but his tie-break was worse and he eventually finished second. GMs Rauf Mamedov (AZE), Vladimir Onischuk (UKR) and Radoslaw Wojtaszek (POL) tied for the third place with 9 points, but thanks to the best tie-break, Mamedov took the bronze.

The best ranked women player was the former World Champion GM Alexandra Kosteniuk who finished on 37th place (tied 18th) with 8 points.

The best Junior player was IM Valeriy Kazakovskiy who also scored 8 points and shared 18th place.

### Final Standings Rapid



The Blitz event followed after, which was played in 13 paired rounds. Russian Grandmaster Dmitry Andreikin triumphed with 22 points, after making 2 draws with GM Sergei Zhigalko from Belarus, who eventually came third.



The silver medal went to Rauf Mamedov, who finished sole second, scoring 20.5 points.

WGM Olga Girya (RUS) became the best woman player after scoring 16.5 points.

The best ranked Junior player were Sergei Lobanov and IM Valeriy Kazakovskiy who both scored 17 points and shared 30th place.

### Final Standings Blitz

At the closing ceremony, the European Chess Union was represented by Mr. Petr Pisk, the ECU Tournament Director, who awarded the winners.

The Chief Arbiter of the event was IA Stephane Escafre, and the Tournament Director was IO Hendrik Olde.



The event was organized by the Estonian Chess federation, under the auspices of the ECU.

The Championship was the main event of the Paul Keres 100 Festival, dedicated to the 100th birth anniversary of Paul Keres, Estonian Sportsman of the 20th century and often referred as “The Eternal Second” in the chess world, one of the greatest players of all time.

Photos by Oleg Harchenko

More photos from the event can be found [here](#).

[Official Website of the Championship](#)

## Winners of European Youth Rapid & Blitz Chess Championship 2016 in Novi Sad

The 16th European Youth Rapid Chess Championship 2016 finished in Novi Sad/Serbia, with participation of around 300 young chess players.

On December 27th and 28th the Rapid event took place, followed by the Rapid Superfinal. The winners are shown below:

[Open U8](#) - Bialiauski Artsiom (Belarus) 7.5 points

[Open U10](#) - Aslanov Umid (Azerbaijan) 8.5 points

[Open U12](#) - Subelj Jan (Slovenia) 7.5 points

[Open U14](#) - Aliyev Ravan (Azerbaijan) 8 points

[Open U16](#) - Livaic Leon (Croatia) 8 points

[Open U18](#) - Plenca Jadranko (Croatia) 7.5 points

[Girls U8](#) - Shvedova Alexandra (Russia) 7.5 points

[Girls U10](#) - Gaal Zsoka (Hungary) 8 points

[Girls U12](#) - Marcinczyk Monika (Poland) 7.5 points

[Girls U14](#) - Badelka Olga (Belarus) 8.5 points

[Girls U16](#) - Balajayeva Khamim (Azerbaijan) 8.5 points

[Girls U18](#) - Ilyuchyuk Yana (Belarus) 7.5 points

In Rapid competitions the best federations were Azerbaijan and Belarus, with 3 gold medals, 1 silver and 1 bronze, 5 medals in total. Third was Croatia with 2 gold medals, followed by Russia with total 7 medals, of which 1 gold, 3 silver and 3 bronze, and Hungary with total 4 medals: 1 gold, 1 silver and 2 bronze medals.



IM Dragnev Valentin (Austria) became the winner of the Rapid Superfinal, Open category, while Diakonova Ekaterina (Russia) triumphed in the Girl's category.

### [European Youth Rapid SuperFinal](#)

The 15th European Youth Championship in Solving Chess Problems was held on 29th December, in six sections: Boys U10, Girls U10, Boys U14, Girls U14, Boys U18 and Girls U18. Here are the winners:



#### Open U10:

1. Sinauski Artisom (BLR) 40 points 23 min,
2. Nedela Teodor Gozmin (ROU) 40 points 35 min,
3. Sergej Maranin (RUS) 40 points 56 min.

#### Girls U10:

1. Nasibovor Narmin (AZE), 35 points 86 min,
2. Shaban Aliaksandra (BLR) 30 points 41 min,
3. Aleksandrova Angelina (HUN) 58 min.

#### Open U14:

1. Radoslav Psyk (POL) 45 points 51 min,
2. Felix Blahbrger (AUT) 45 points 55 min,
3. Moiseev Danila (RUS) 45 points 58 min.

#### Girls U14:

1. Muzika Arama (RUS) 39 points 105 min,
2. Aciu Malina Andrea (ROU) 38 points 88 min
3. Olde Grete (EST) 34 points 118 min.

#### Open U18:

1. Costachi Mihnea (ROU) 45 points 63 min,
2. Novikov Konstantin (RUS) , 44 points, 75 min,
3. Nikitenko Mihail (BLR) 42 points 47 min.

#### Girls U18:

1. Tishova Svetlana (RUS) 40 points 90 min,
2. Schnegg, Anna Lene (AUT) 40 points 96 min.
3. Afonasiyeva Anna (RUS) 37 points 101 min.

#### [Final Standings U10](#) [Final Standings U14](#) [Final Standings U18](#)

European Youth Rapid Team Championship also took place on Thursday 29th December and was organized in 3 categories – U10, U14, and U18, Boys and Girls played together in the Swiss tournament in 7 rounds.



The winner in Under 10 category became the team of Russia, with the maximum score: 14 points and won all 7 matches. Second place went to Belarus with 10 points, and the third place went to the Garabagh team with 9 points.

In the U14 category three teams tied for the first place with 11 points, but thanks to the best tie-break Belarus triumphed, Land Of Fires came second while Slovenia came third.

The top seed Austria won the competition in the U18 group with 11 points, the same as Romania 2 (with worse tie-break) who took the silver medal, while Croatian-Polish team CRO-POL took bronze scoring 9 points.



207 players participated in the Rapid team event. Belarus was the best federation with 1 gold and 1 silver medal, followed by Russia and Austria with 1 silver medal each.

[European Youth Rapid Team Final Standings](#)

The Blitz tournament was held on 30th December, and after 9 rounds here are the winners:

Open U10:

1. Murzin Volodar (Russia) 8 points
2. Siniauski Artsiom (Belarus) 7 points
3. Girshgorn Leonid (Russia) 7 points

Open U14:

1. Psyk Radoslaw (Poland) 7.5 points
2. Gavrilescu David (Romania) 7 points
3. Aliyev Ravan (Azerbaijan) 7 points

Open U18:

1. IM Costachi Mihnea (Romania) 8 points
2. IM Dragnev Valentin (Austria) 6.5 points
3. FM Livaic Leon (Croatia) 6.5 points

Girls U10:

1. Krupnova Anna (Russia) 7.5 points
2. Shaban Aliaksandra (Belarus) 7 points
3. Denic Hana (Serbia) 7 points

Girls U14:

1. Badelka Olga (Belarus) 8 points
2. Aciu Malina-Andreea (Romania) 7 points
3. Srdanovic Jovana (Serbia) 6.5 points

Girls U18:

1. WIM Unuk Laura (Slovenia) 7 points
2. WFM Balajayeva Khanim (Azerbaijan) 6.5 points
3. WFM Gajcin Marina (Serbia) 6.5 points

223 players took part in the Blitz competition, among whom 57 from the host federation – Serbia, 43 from Russia, 18 from Belarus and 14 from Slovenia.



### [European Youth Blitz Final Standings](#)

[Official Website](#)

## World Rapid & Blitz Chess Championship in Doha

The 2016 FIDE World Rapid & Blitz Championships were held in Doha/Qatar, from 26-30 December, 2016.

Vassily Ivanchuk and Anna Muzychuk from Ukraine won the gold medals at the FIDE World Rapid Championship in Doha/Qatar.



Ivanchuk was the tournament leader after the second day but started badly on the third with a loss to Nepomniachtchi and two draws. Vassily, however, won the last two rounds to conclude the event with 11 points and claim the trophy on best additional criteria - average rating of the opponents.

After taking a short break from chess to try himself in different mind sport, Ivanchuk made a brilliant return with great results in the European Club Cup and here in Doha.

In a dramatic finish where five players entered the last round with 10 points each, the two speed-play champions from Berlin 2015 - Alexander Grischuk (Blitz) and Magnus Carlsen (Rapid) also emerged with 11 points. Grischuk took the silver medal, while Carlsen took bronze.

Anna Muzychuk dominated in the Women's Championship having secured the title with one round to spare, finally completing the event with 9.5/12 points.

Alexandra Kosteniuk came second with 8.5 points, while Nana Dzagnidze took the bronze medal with 8 points.



In a dramatic race of two players who recently contended the World Championship Match in New York, Magnus Carlsen and Sergey Karjakin, the Russian triumphed at the Blitz Championship thanks to better tie-break score.

The two players both finished on 16.5 points. Carlsen entered the final round half a point ahead of the rival, but he drew against Peter Leko, while Karjakin defeated Baadur Jobava.

The extent of their domination in the event is shown by the fact that the nearest followers, Daniil Dubov, Hikaru Nakamura and Alexander Grischuk (2015 World Blitz Champion), were full two points behind. Eventually, Dubov claimed the bronze medal on tiebreak.



Ukrainian Anna Muzychuk left Doha with two gold medals, as she won the Blitz event as well, and retained the World Blitz title she won two years ago in Khanty-Mansiysk.

Despite the slow start with three draws and a loss to Lagno, the strong finish of five consecutive wins helped Anna Muzychuk to take a clear first place with 13 points.

On the shared second place with 12.5 points each are Russian speed-chess specialists Valentina Gunina and Kateryna Lagno, who won the silver and bronze respectively.



The ECU President Zurab Azmaiparashvili gave the speech at the opening ceremony of the Championship and opened the event on 26th December.

Photos courtesy of Qatar Chess

[Official Website](#)

## London Chess Conference 2016

The 4th edition of the London Chess and Education Conference took place from 10th to 12th December 2016 at the Hilton Kensington Olympia, under the theme name “The Didactics of Chess”.

The conference was supported by Chess in Schools and Communities as part of its educational mission. This year the European Chess Union sponsored the event which has enabled the conference to be extended to a third day.





On the last day of the Conference, a design competition for the best original classroom chess exercise involving collaborative problem solving was held, with €1,000 prize fund, sponsored by the ECU.



The jury in the competition decided to award a shared first prize.

The winners shared equally the cumulative prize fund for places 1-2, receiving EUR 400 each.



Full results and winning entries:

Shared 1st-2nd: Alison Bexfield ([“Partner chess”](#)) and Tim & Sarah Kett ([“Knight’s tour snooker”](#))

3rd: Jerry Nash ([“A safe journey home”](#))

Special commendation: Jerome Maufras ([“My kingdom for a horse”](#))

Special mention for an excellent entry but outside the scope of the competition rules: Mahwish Khan ([“A scientific enquiry using chess”](#))

Congratulations to the winners!



[Official Website](#)

# FUN ZONE

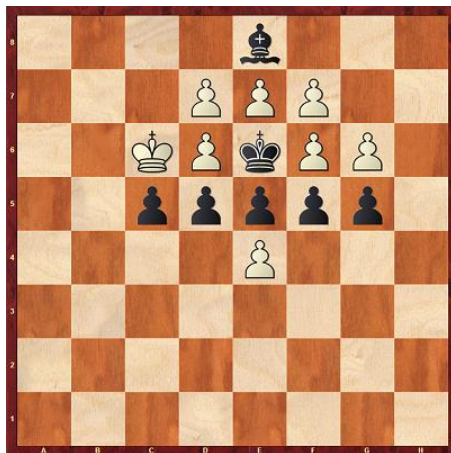
In December edition we prepared 4 Mate in 2 positions with the Christmas tree theme, suitable for the holiday season. In all 4 positions White to play. Enjoy!



Pal Benko, Chess Life 1975



Don French, First Christmas Tree 1996



Don French, Another Christmas Tree



T.R. Dawson Falkirk Herald 1914

## Solutions from NL November 2016:

Aronian, Levon (2795) vs. Rapport, Richard (2729)

32nd European Club Cup | Round 3 | 8 Nov 2016 | 0-1

27... Rh1+!! Instead of taking the rook, Black decides to sacrifice one!

(if 27... Ng4 28. Re4; 27... Bxd4?? 28. exd4)

28. Kxh1 (28. Nxh1 Nf3+ 29. Qxf3 Rxf3)

28... Bxd4 29. f3 White must decline the bishop taking, so Black maintains the attack.

(29. exd4 Qh4+ the key tempo move. This is the whole point of the rook sacrifice. 30. Kg1 Ng4 31. Re1 Qh2+ 32. Kf1 Qxg3)

29... Bb6 30. Ne4 Qh5+ 31. Kg1 Bc7 32. Kf2 Qh2 33. Ke1 Rd8 34. Bd2 Nd3+ 35. Kd1 Qe5 The queen simply switches flanks. The attack is crushing. 36. g4 Qb5 37. Qg2 Nb2+ 38. Kc2 Nc4 39. Bc1 Rd5 40. g5 Na5 41. Bd2 Qd3+ and White resigns

Hou, Yifan (2649) vs. Dzagnidze, Nana (2507)

Women's European Club Cup | Novi Sad | Round 3.1 | 8 Nov 2016 | 1-0

44. Rd8+ Kh7 45. Qh5!! fxe5 46. Qf7 h5 47. Qg8+ Kh6 48. h4 and Black resigns

Lupulescu, Constantin (2609) vs. Papp, Gabor (2587)

European Club Cup 2016 | Round 7.49 | 12 Nov 2016 | ECO: A61 | 0-1

35... Qh3+! and White resigned as 36.Nxh3 Ng4++ 27.Kh1 Rh2#

Mikhalevski, Victor (2508) vs. Faizrakhmanov, Ramil (2422)

European Club Cup 2016 | Round 7.47 | 12 Nov 2016 | ECO: A05 | 0-1

27... Rxc5 28. Rxc5 Nf4!! White resigns because of 29.Qxf4 Rd1#

## They told about chess...

“The only way to get smarter is by playing a smarter opponent!”

Fundamentals of chess, 1885.

## They told about New Year...

“For last year's words belong to last year's language

And next year's words await another voice.

And to make an end is to make a beginning.”

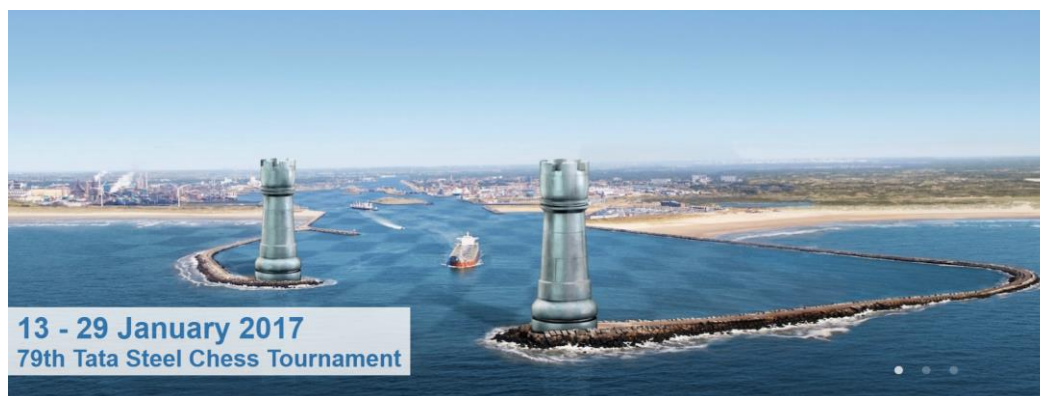
T.S. Eliot, British essayist, publisher, playwright, literary and social critic, and one of the twentieth century's major poets

# UPCOMING EVENTS IN JANUARY

## TATA STEEL CHESS TOURNAMENT 2017

The Tata Steel Chess Tournament is one of the most prestigious events in the international chess calendar. The "Wimbledon of Chess" attracts the very best chess grandmasters in the world, along with thousands of amateur players, live event visitors and online visitors from around the world.

The tournament has two main player groups, each with 14 players. They are known as the Tata Steel Masters and the Tata Steel Challengers. The chess moves of both can be followed live online. In addition to Grandmaster events, the Tata Steel Chess Tournament also organizes amateur events that are open to players of all levels.



During its 78 year history, the Tata Steel Chess Tournament has attracted some of the biggest names in chess history. Visitors to the tournament have witnessed the rise and domination of players like Norway's Magnus Carlsen, India's Viswanathan Anand, and Russia's Gary Kasparov.

Carlsen first played at the tournament in 2004, the same year as he became a chess grandmaster. The reigning World Chess Champion has since returned ten times to play in the Tata Steel Chess Tournament.

Meanwhile the tournament continues to support the next generation of world class players such as Anish Giri from Holland, and America's talent Wesley So.

The Tata Steel Chess Tournament traditionally takes place in the coastal village of Wijk aan Zee, North Holland. Since 2014 there are also two Tata Steel Chess On Tour events at other exciting locations in the Netherlands.

This year's edition will be held from 13th to 29th January, 2017.

Masters tournament 2017 is of 21st category, with average rating 2753. The tournament features five players from top 10 (December 2016 list): World Champion and World #1 Magnus Carlsen (Norway), World #5 Wesley So (USA), World #Sergey Karjakin (Russia), World #7 Levon Aronian (Armenia) and World #10 Anish Giri (Netherlands).

Additionally, World #11 Harikrishna Pentala (India), World #13 Ian Nepomniachtchi (Russia), World #14 Pavel Eljanov (Ukraine), World #18 Radoslaw Wojtaszek (Poland), World #22 Dmitry Andreikin (Russia), World #30 Richard Rapport (Hungary), World #38 Wei Yi (China), World #44 Loek Van Welly (Netherlands) and World #86 Adhiban Baskaran will participate in the 2017 edition of Tata Steel Chess.

[Official Website](#)

## **TRADEWISE GIBRALTAR CHESS FESTIVAL 2017**

This traditional event takes place from 23rd January to 2nd February 2017 at Caleta Hotel in Gibraltar.



This year, the festival marks the 15th anniversary, and will have the same format, with five main events, as well as a variety of evening activities.

The organizers of the 15th Tradewise Gibraltar Chess Festival announced that this will be the strongest Open ever held, with players of all standards and from an estimated 50+ countries competing for a total prize fund of £190,000.

The top players who will be competing in Gibraltar Festival are World #2 Fabiano Caruana (USA), World #4 Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (France), World #9 Hikaru Nakamura (USA), World #15 and former World Champion Veselin Topalov (Bulgaria), World #17 Peter Svidler (Russia), World #19 Mickey Adams (England), World #20 Vassily Ivanchuk (Ukraine), World Women's Champion Hou Yifan (China), etc.

[Official Website](#)

## **MOSCOW OPEN 2017**

The International RSSU Chess Cup Moscow Open 2016 will be held in Moscow from January 26 to February 6, 2017.

The Cup hosts are Russian State Social University (RSSU), a non-profit organization Moscow Chess Federation (MCF), the Management of Sport and Entertainment Activities of Moscow Department for Physical Culture and Sport with the support of the Russian Chess Federation and World Chess Federation.



The Cup comprises eight separate tournaments:

A Tournament - RSSU Cup, Men's Cup of Russia Stage

B Tournament - RSSU Cup, Women's Cup of Russia Stage

C Tournament - RSSU Amateur Cup

D Tournament - RSSU Men Veteran Cup

E Tournament - RSSU Women Veteran Cup

F Tournament - National Student Chess League Championship

G Tournament - RSSU Blind and Visually Impaired Fast Chess Cup

H Tournament - RSSU School Winner Cup

[Official Website](#)