

## NAO defeated in round four!

Quite surprisingly, the central match of the day was decided rather quickly in favour of the Russian team Tomsk-400. After a bit more than three hours of play they were already leading 3-1 thanks to the victories of Jakovenko and Smirnov against Grischuk and Vallejo. In the remaining two games Kramnik and Bacrot tried to squeeze at least one team point, but there was nothing to do and the final result was 4-2. On table number two Ural and I&A drew after a big fight, so Ladya Kazan took profit and join the top with a 3,5-2,5 victory against the Macedonian team Alkaloid. This means that we have two teams leading with perfect score and they will meet today in a match which might turn out to be already a decisive one for the title. My tip for the hero of the day is Jakovenko since his opponent was rated 100 points higher.

It seems that the Italian team lost its ambitions after the unexpected defeat from yesterday. Today they put on the bench Arlandi, their most successful player until now, and didn't manage to win against another much lower rated opponent. The good news is that three teenagers scored 2,5 points.

We have new (old) leaders by women. Platina lost to AVS, but only after a heroic resistance, while NTN Tbilisi won rather easily against MTK. Since these two winners which are now in lead already played each other, they will start to pick opponents from below. NTN has more individual points at this moment, but tomorrow they must play Platina, while AVS will pick Southern Ural, the winner of the other Russian derby in this round. It is already pretty clear that we should look for the name of the winner among these four teams.

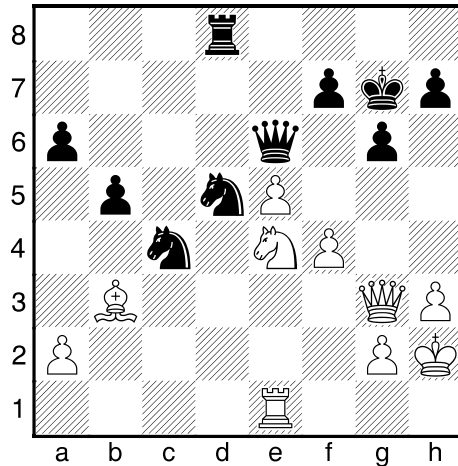
(M.Cebalo)

### (4) Jakovenko,Dmitry (2627) – Grischuk,Alexander (2720)

21st European Club Cup (4.1), Saint Vincent 2005

**1.e4** Atlas,V: 'Hecht' **1...e5 2.♖f3 ♗c6 3.♘b5 a6 4.♙a4 ♗f6 5.0-0 ♙e7 6.♞e1 b5 7.♘b3 0-0 8.d4** One of the ways to avoid the Marshall gambit, one of the most deeply analyzed variations in Spanish game. The funny thing is that lately White tries to avoid it, while Black when allowed doesn't play it, so it is not clear who is actually more afraid! Other anti-Marshall moves are : [8.h3; 8.d3; and 8.a4 ] **8...d6** [There is a possibility for Black to "kill the game" with 8...♗xd4 the last example being: 9.♗xd4 exd4 10.e5 ♗e8 11.♞xd4 ♘b7 12.♞g4 c5 13.c3 d6 14.exd6 ♙xd6 15.♙g5 ♗f6 16.♞h4 h6 17.♙xf6 ♞xf6 18.♞xf6 gxf6 19.♗d2 ♞fe8 20.♙c2 ♞ad8 21.♗e4 ½-½ Svidler,P–Naiditsch,A/Dortmund GER 2005] **9.c3 ♙g4 10.♙e3 exd4** This is the main line, but [10...d5 is interesting 11.exd5 (11.dxe5 ♗xe5 12.exd5 ♞e8 13.♙d4 ♙xf3 14.gxf3 ♙d6 15.♗d2 ♗h5 16.♗e4 ♞h4 17.♗g3 ♗f4 18.♙h1 ♗ed3 19.♞e4 f5 20.♞xe8+ ♞xe8 21.♞g1 g6 22.♙c2 ♞h3 23.♙xd3 ♗xd3 24.♞d1 ♗f4 25.b3 ♗xd5 26.c4 bxc4 27.bxc4 ♗f4 Black outplayed his opponent and had excellent winning chances in Smirnov–Jenni,EU–ch, Istanbul 2003.) while 11...exd4 12.♙xd4 ♗xd4 13.cxd4 ♘b4 14.♗c3 ♙xc3 15.bxc3 ♗xd5 16.♞d3 ♙e6 17.g3 ♗b6 18.♙xe6 fxe6 19.♗e5 ♞d5 20.♞e4 ♞f5 21.♗g4 ♗c4 22.♞ae1 ♞e8 23.♗e3 ♗xe3 24.♞4xe3 ♞ef8 25.♞1e2 ♞f3 26.♞e4 ♞xe4 27.♞xe4 ♞xc3 28.♞xe6 ♞f6 29.♞e8+ ♞f8 30.♞8e6 ♞f6 31.♞e8+ ♞f8 32.♞8e6 was ½-½ in Jakovenko,D–Miralles,G/Izmir (Turkey) 2004 .] **11.cxd4 ♗a5 12.♙c2 c5 13.h3 ♙xf3** [13...cxd4 14.♙xd4 ♙h5 15.g4 ♙g6 16.♗c3 ♞c8 17.♞c1 ♗c6 18.♙e3 ♗b4 (18...♞e8 19.♗d5 ♗xd5 20.exd5 ♗b8 21.♙f4 ♙f8 22.♞xe8 ♞xe8 23.♗d4 ♙xc2 24.♞xc2 ♞xc2 25.♞xc2 ♞e1+ 26.♙g2 ♗d7 27.♗f5 ♞b4 28.♙g3 g6= was equal in Timofeev,A–Bacrot,E/Silivri 2003) while 19.♙b1 d5 20.e5 ♗e4 21.♗e2 ♗c5 22.♙xc5 ♞xc5 23.♞xc5 ♙xc5 24.♗f4 ♞b6 25.♞f1 was unclear in Kasimdzhanov,R–Adams,M/Tripoli LBA 2004] **14.♞xf3 ♗c4 15.dxc5 dxc5 16.♗c3 ♗d7** The most interesting is that Grischuk had already twice this position in front of him...but as White! **17.♞ad1** It seems that White was better prepared for this game and now faces his opponent with a new move. [17.♗d5 ♙g5 18.♙xg5 ♞xg5 19.b3 ♗a3 20.♙d3 c4 21.bxc4 bxc4 22.♙b1 ♞e5 23.♞c3 ♞ab8 and Black was already better and eventually won (0-1,84 moves) in Grischuk,A–Golod,Dos Hermanas 2003; 17.♙f4 ♗de5 (17...♗xb2!? 18.e5→) 18.♙xe5 ♗xe5 19.♞g3 ♗c6 20.♞ad1 ♗d4 21.e5± and White had slightly better chances due to his domination in the centre and the possibility to

attack the black ♔ in Grischuk–Soko, Istanbul 2003 (1-0, 50 moves.)] 17...♞xb2 Accepting the challenge. 18.♞d5 ♚e8 [18...♚c7 was another way to eliminate the pin.] 19.e5 ♜b6 20.♞xc5 ♝xc5 21.♞xc5 ♞2c4 22.♞xf8 ♚xf8 23.♚d3 g6 24.♞e4 ♚e7 25.f4 ♞d8 After a couple of very accurate moves Black managed to equalize. 26.♚g3 ♞d5 27.♔h2 ♔g7 28.♞b3 ♚e6? Diagram



[28...♞db6 and the position remains balanced] 29.♞d6! ♞e7 [29...♞xd6 30.exd6 ♚xd6 31.♞d1 and Black is losing material] 30.♞d1 ♞f8 31.♚c3 ♞f5 [31...♞d5 was more resistant .] 32.♞xc4 ♞c8 33.♞d6! White finishes the game in a great style. 33...♞xd6 34.exd6+ f6 [Or 34...♔g8 35.♞e5! ♞xc3 36.♞xe6 winning] 35.♞b6 ♚xd6 36.♞xc8 1-0

## Interview with Vladimir Kramnik



(Photo by Gianluca Mircoli)

*Is it Your first visit to Italy ?*

Yes, it is. I arrived directly to Saint-Vincent, a nice little town which reminds me a lot of Brissago in Switzerland, where I played that match with Leko.

*What are Your impressions about this edition of ECC and what are the expectations of Your team?*

There are a lot of strong teams here which can count on final victory. I like the fact that there are also a lot of strong players on the first board since I prefer to meet strong opponents.

This is my third appearance in NAO team which is composed of young people. We have very good relations and a nice atmosphere, which is very important in team competitions.

The fact that we won all the titles in the last two years - ECC, French championship and French Cup - confirms that we feel well together.

*Do You intend to participate in russian team next year for the Olympiade in Torino?*

Yes, I will play for sure since I already made an agreement with the Russian Chess Federation which would like this time to come with the strongest possible team.

*Probably because in Olympiade in Calvia 1994 Russia took "only" silver, while the last European championship in Goeteborg was a real catastrophe (14th place)?*

Such things do happen. In Goeteborg a couple of players were out of form, and as far as for Olympiade, well we

won all the previous editions (playing for Russia - NdR) and always winning is not an easy task.

*In a couple of days in Argentina begins that tournament for FIDE title. What do You think about?*

This will be a good tournament for sure. Just to mention that two of NAO players, Adams and Svidler, are not here just because it starts only two days after ECC.

*What about rumors that You are willing to play a match against the winner from San Luis, which would mean a definite unification of the title?*

Sure, why not, but it depends on lot of things and conditions, of course. I remain open to eventual proposals.

*What do you think about FIDE?*

I don't have anything against FIDE, I'm saying just that there are a lot of things which could be improved. One of the positive signs is the recent improvement of relations with ACP.

However, there is one thing I don't understand. With so many problems to solve and so many things to change, they choose to considerably accelerate the rate of play. I must say that I clearly prefer the classical one, six or seven hours, doesn't matter. The explanation was to attract the attention of TV media but 4 hours of play are still far too long .

*Let us talk a little bit about Your play. It seems that lately You changed Your stile considerably. You introduced a lot of new openings in Your repertoire and You started to play much more aggressively?*

It's a kind of evolution I considered to be necessary if I want to stay on the top. At the beginning I had some problems, maybe because I made too many experiments, especially when I started to play e4, but I think that I managed to solve them all.

*How many hours per day You dedicate to the chess training?*

It depends, I don't have a fixed schedule. Sometimes it's 5-6 hours, but sometimes I can spend a day without chess at all.

*Do You practice some sports? Do You like music? What kind of books do You read?*

I like to swim, to play tennis and football. As far as for the music I don't have special preferences, I can listen everything from rock to classics. The same goes for books, with one exception only. I don't like science fiction.

*When did You start and where did You learn to play chess?*

My father taught me when I was 5 years old and at the age of 6 I already participated in my first tournament.

*Your best results in junior competition?*

In 1991 I won the Junior World Championship and Russian championship for young masters. I was 15 at the time and in the latter the age limit was 27!

*Which one of former world champions You met in Your career?*

Botvinnik, Tal (with him I even played two rapid games), Spassky and obviously Karpov and Kasparov. With the last two of them I played a lot of games, my score with Karpov is even, I think, while with Kasparov I am plus one.

*From a lot of emerging young talents, which one is the most promising?*

It's difficult to say because it depends on many factors. Sometimes they seem not very promising and then suddenly explode, sometimes on the contrary they start with great result very early and then disappear. However, if I have to give some name I would say Karjakin.

*(A. Capece, M. Cebalo, A. Malfagia)*