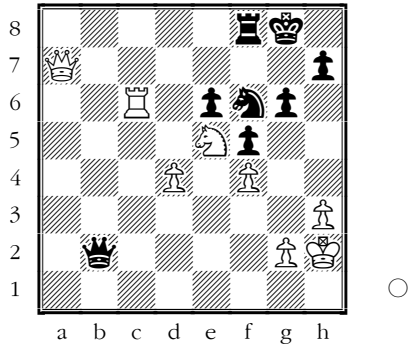
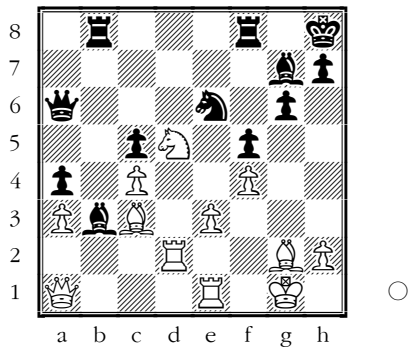


**Test Yourself!**

**E. Agrest (2541) – Couso (2358)**  
Taby, Sweden (6), 07.08.2007



**D'Costa (2384) – Ikonnikov (2558)**  
HZ Open Vlissingen (9), 11.08.2007



**On This Day...**

*By GM Alex Baburin*

The current U.S. Chess Champion, Grandmaster **Alexander Shabalov** celebrates his 40<sup>th</sup> birthday today – he was born on the 12<sup>th</sup> of September 1967 in Riga, Latvia. With his current [rating](#) of 2637, Shabalov is No. 4 in USA and No. 81 in the world. His best rating so far has been 2645, achieved in 1998. [Shabalov](#) is famed for his inventive and uncompromising chess style.



**World Chess News**

**Czech Coal, Carlsbad**

**Round 4 results:**

Akopian – Navara ½–½  
Timman – Laznicka ½–½  
Movsesian – Shirov ½–½  
Korchnoi – Ponomariov 0–1

**Standings after 4 rounds:**

**1–4.** Ponomariov, Akopian, Movsesian and Timman – 2½  
**5–6.** Laznicka and Navara – 2  
**7–8.** Korchnoi and Shirov – 1

**Pairings of round 5 (13<sup>th</sup> Sept):**

Ponomariov – Akopian  
Navara – Timman  
Laznicka – Movsesian  
Shirov – Korchnoi

[Official website](#)

**Russian Ch, Higher League**

In the 8<sup>th</sup> round among 7 top boards only one game was decisive – Sakaev defeated Malakhov and thus caught up with the leaders.

**Standings after 8 rounds:**

**1–4.** Sakaev, Dreev, Vitiugov and Rychagov – 5½  
**5–16.** Rublevsky, Bareev, Zvjaginsev, Motylev, Kobalia, Timofeev, I. Popov, Tomashevsky, Amonatov, Zakhartsov, Korotylev and Grigoriants – 5, etc.

**Top pairings of round 9:**

Vitiugov – Sakaev  
Zvjaginsev – Dreev  
Tomashevsky – Rychagov  
Rublevsky – Grigoriants  
Bareev – Kobalia  
I. Popov – Timofeev  
Motylev – Amonatov  
Korotylev – Zakhartsov

[Official website](#) (in Russian)

*This issue is prepared by IM Max Notkin; technical editor: Ralph Marconi*

*Subscription is 15 euro for 3 months. For further details please refer to <http://www.chesstoday.net>*

## 2<sup>nd</sup> International Women's Tournament, Baku

### *Standings before the final round:*

- 1-2. Stefanova and M.Socko – 6
3. Javakhishvili – 5½
4. Cramling – 5
- 5-6. Lahno and Velikhanli – 4
- 7-8. Cmiyte and Millet – 3½
9. Umudova – 1½
10. Kadimova – 1

[Official website](#)

### **Chess Today on Mexico 2007**

*by GM Alex Baburin*

The World Chess Championship will start in Mexico very soon, so I asked my colleagues in *Chess Today* about their opinions on the tournament and their predictions. The results are below:

#### **IM Andrei Deviatkin:**

This will be one of the strongest closed tournaments in the history of chess, even stronger than San Luis. By the way, it's a pity that Ivanchuk, with his current Elo of 2787 is not playing there.

I think that we can expect a pleasant surprise from the lowest-rated participant, Alexander Grischuk. My prognosis is that he will be within the top three. Also I think Kramnik and Anand will be there. So, Kramnik, Grischuk, Anand – in any order.

Despite the fact that the status of the Mexico winner isn't still completely clear to me, I expect exciting struggles and also many games of great theoretical importance. Also I expect half-a-month of hard, but interesting work, as I'll be one of the online annotators of this tournament at [www.chesspro.ru](http://www.chesspro.ru)

#### **IM Maxim Notkin:**

The most likely winners are Kramnik, Anand and Leko. As I will be annotating games live [online](#) (when it will be night in Moscow), I hope to

see exciting games, which will keep me awake – and also wish that they won't be too long! ☺

#### **GM Mikhail Golubev**

I hope that the player demonstrating the best play will also become the champion. And, most importantly, that there will be no scandals this time – we had enough of those in recent years...

This is how I would rate the players' chances of winning the tournament:

- 1-2. Anand and Kramnik
- 3-4. Aronian and Svidler
- 5-6. Leko and Grischuk
- 7-8. Morozevich and Gelfand

Not that I can be unhappy with any possible outcome.

#### **IM Vladimir Barsky:**

I expect tense struggles from the start till the last round and fighting chess in every game. At the same time, I won't rule out the "Curasao" scenario – the pressure will be high and some participants might be tempted to play it safe.

I think that a match is the best format for the World Chess Championship – both for determining the challenger and for the final stage. As proof, I'd like to mention the Candidate matches in Elista this year – those were very interesting!

As for the tournament in Mexico, here is my list of who has the best chances of winning it:

1. Morozevich
2. Anand
3. Grischuk

#### **GM Alex Baburin**

Most of all I hope to see interesting chess – who will win in the end, is of less interest to me. I believe that **every player** has a chance to win that tournament, though with a different likelihood. A lot will depend on their general form, which should be evident

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after the first 3-4 rounds. In my opinion the most likely winners are:

1. Anand
2. Leko
- 3-4. Kramnik and Aronian

## Annotated Game

by IM Max Notkin

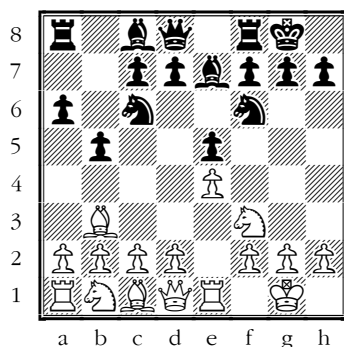
**White: GM Stellwagen (2631)**

**Black: GM Khalifman (2632)**

NH Tournament 2007, Amsterdam (6)

Ruy Lopez – [C88]

**1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 a6**  
**4.♙a4 ♗f6 5.0-0 ♙e7 6.♞e1 b5**  
**7.♙b3 0-0 (D)**



**8.a4 b4 9.d3 d6 10.a5 ♙e6 11.♗bd2**  
**♞c8 12.♗c4 ♞b8 13.h3 h6 14.♙e3**  
**♞e8**

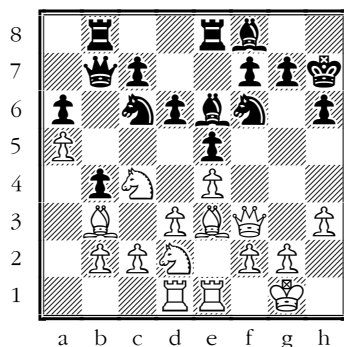
The move 14...♗h7 was played in Hou Yifan – Harikrishna Paks 2007, which was annotated by yours truly in CT-2474. The main line goes 14...♞d8 15.♞e2 ♙f8 16.♗fd2 or 16.♗cd2.

**15.♗fd2 ♙f8** The tempting 15...d5 hits on 16.♙a4! with White's edge as the e5 pawn is in trouble.

**16.♞f3 ♞h7**

Defending against ♙xh6.

**17.♞ad1 ♞b7 (D)**



This position is almost identical to the game Svidler–Aronian, Morelia/Linares

2006. They differ in two details only: Black's rook was on d8 instead of e8 while White's rook was on a1 instead of d1 as Svidler played 15.♞e2 and then 17.♞f3. Apparently dissatisfied with his uncertainty Peter offered a draw shortly after.

**18.♞g3**

White's choice of active plans is far from rich. To prepare the advance of the d-pawn is what comes to mind but the immediate 18.c3 would be met by 18...d5 19.exd5 ♙xd5 and Black gets a free game.

**18...♗h5**

Here 18...d5 enables White to establish the knight on e4 e.g. 19.exd5 ♙xd5 20.♗e4 ♗xe4 21.dxe4 ♙xe4?! (♟21...♙e6) 22.♙xh6. In contrast to the previous note the ♙b3 isn't hanging.

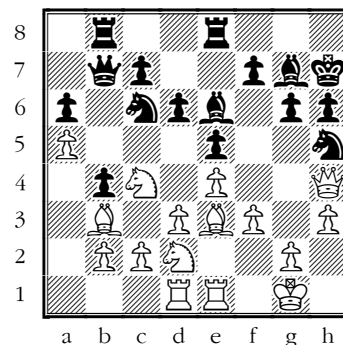
**19.♞h4?!**

At this point the Dutch youngster was still in a fighting mood therefore he rejected the repetition after 19.♞f3 ♗f6.

**19...g6**

Together (Black's last move is virtually forced by White's attack on his knight) the opponents have created a dangerous threat to the white queen – 20...♙e7.

**20.f3 ♙g7 (D)**



There's no big point in chasing the queen by 20...♙e7 as on f2 it would be placed better. If White wants to improve its position let him spend a tempo on it...

**21.♙a4**

Moreover it transpires that in case of 21.♞f2 f5 22.exf5 gxf5 Black seizes the initiative on the kingside and stands significantly better. Therefore the queen stays on h4 in order to hinder this advance. Note that with the bishop on e7 Black's idea would have failed to the tactical shot 23.♗xe5!

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winning a pawn due to unprotected position of the ♔e6.

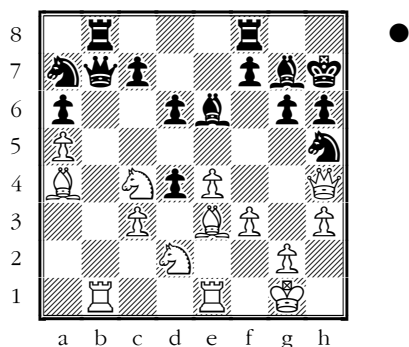
**21...♖f8 22.c3** See the next note to learn the merits of 22.♖h1.

**22...♘a7!?** Setting a trap which Stellwagen failed to see. 22...f5 was possible as well, when 23.exf5 ♖xf5 24.g4? is refuted by 24...g5 25.♙xg5 (25.♖xh5? just loses the queen after 25...♙f7; while in case of 25.♖f2 ♘f4 Black saves both of his forked pieces obtaining a huge advantage; in this line White would have been glad to have his king on h1) 25...♖xg5 26.♙e4 and here Black has the stunning 26...♙f6! with idea 27.♙xg5+ hxg5 28.♖xh5+ ♖g7 and White has no satisfactory defence against ...♙f7.

**23.d4?**

White's position is inferior in case of 23.♖f2 bxc3 (23...♙b5 24.cxb4 ♘d4) 24.bxc3 ♙b5 or 23.cxb4 ♘f4 24.♙xf4 exf4, but the cherished central advance loses on the spot.

**23...bxc3 24.bxc3 exd4 25.♖b1 (D)**



Perhaps White pinned his hopes on this intermediate move. After 25.cxd4 ♙xc4 26.♙xc4 ♖b4 Black wins a piece.

**25...♙f6!** Eventually the clumsy position of White's queen let him down.

**26.♖xb7**

26.♖f2 dxe3 is totally hopeless. Comparatively better was 26.♖xf6 ♘xf6 (26...♖xb1 27.♖xb1 ♖xb1+ 28.♙xb1 ♘xf6 29.♙xd4) 27.♖xb7 ♖xb7 28.♙xd4, but of course White would be lost anyway.

**26...♙xh4 27.♖xb8**

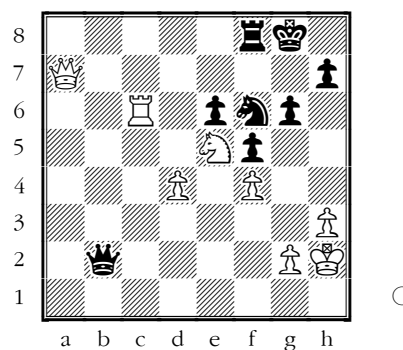
After 27.♖xa7 ♙xe1 28.♙xd4 Black continues to gain material by 28...♙xc4 29.♙xc4 ♖b1!.

**27...♖xb8 28.♙xd4 ♙xe1 29.♙xa7 ♙xc4 30.♙xc4 ♖b1 31.g4 ♙xc3+ 32.♖f2 ♖b4 0-1.**

## Solutions to our quiz:

### E. Agrest (2541) – Couso (2358)

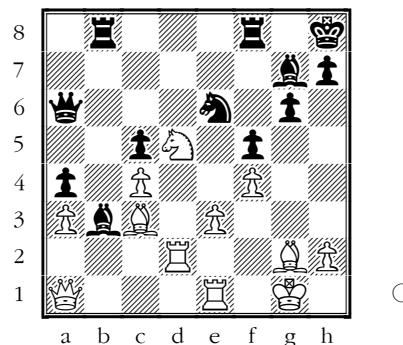
Taby, Sweden (6), 07.08.2007



**40.♖c8! 1-0.** (40.♖c8 ♖xc8 41.♖f7+ ♖h8 42.♖xf6+ ♖g8 43.♖xe6+)

### D'Costa (2384) – Ikonnikov (2558)

HZ Open Vlissingen (9), 11.08.2007



**28.♙c7! ♖xc4** (28...♙xc7 29.♙xg7+)

**29.♙xg7+ ♘xg7 30.♙d5! 1-0**

The black queen is trapped.

**Contact information.** Have some comments about Chess Today? [E-mail us](mailto:ababurin@iol.ie) – we appreciate your feedback! **Chess Today** is published by Alexander Baburin, 3 Eagle Hill, Blackrock, Co. Dublin, Ireland. Tel: (353-1) 278-2276. Fax: (353-1) 283-6839. E-mail: [ababurin@iol.ie](mailto:ababurin@iol.ie) Website: <http://www.chesstoday.net>

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