

*Carlsen triumphs and Firouzja,
2nd, jumps to 9th in the world*



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Havana, September 20 (EL País/RHC)-- Magnus Carlsen faced an important day in the concluded Norway Chess tournament with the most professional approach against his challenger for the world chess title in November, Ian Nepómnichi.

After making a draw with the black pieces without much history in the slow game, he waited until the Russian had to take a risk to prevail in the tiebreaker. And so he won the Norway Chess, one of the most important tournaments of the year, although Alireza Firouzja won his fourth consecutive victory, over the Hungarian Richard Rapport, whom he ousted from 2nd place. In addition, the French-Iranian jumps to 9th in the world at 18. Carlsen was 4th at the same age.

Firouzja's win, with white, was said to be brilliant, delivering a rook from the opening to go for the Magyar's jugular. It is also true that Rapport, leader of the tournament from the 1st day until his defeat in the 8th against Carlsen, was brave and played to win to aspire to the first place even when the risk was very high, instead of releasing ballast and looking for a draw, which would have kept him in 2nd place.

This result confirms what was already known about the young Asian: he has the talent and potential to be world champion in a few years. But he is still very green (at that level) on several essential fronts; above all, in preparation for openings and endgames. Overall, he gives the impression that he is not working systematically and rigorously with a world-class coach, which results in erratic performance.

Norway Chess has produced hardly any new information about Nepómnichi, who has not given the impression of being very motivated to fight for first place. Everything indicates that he has jealously hidden all his weapons for the duel with Carlsen, while the latter, with a more universal style, has performed better without showing either what his team is preparing for the duel in Dubai (United Arab Emirates), which will begin on November 26 at the World Expo site.

The tournament has also served to consolidate Rapport, 25, in the top tier of the elite; he climbs to 10th place, behind Firouzja. He is no longer just a very creative artist but a very solid player, who held the lead until Carlsen, using his best efforts, managed to break him in a grueling five-hour battle.

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