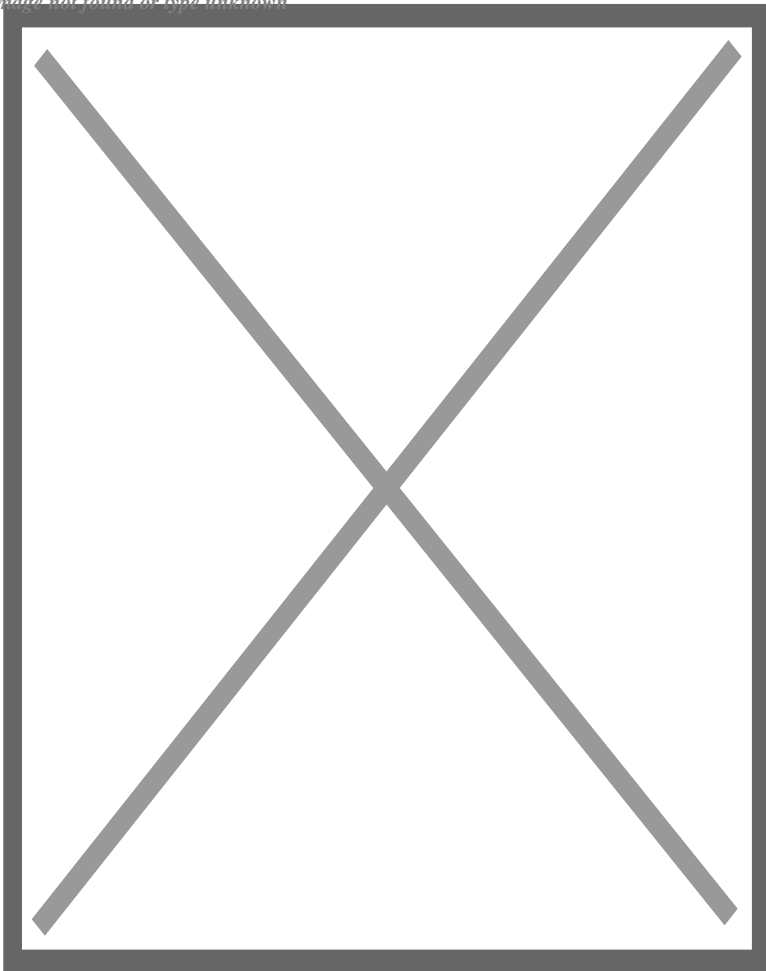


Quesada stalks the prizes in Capablanca Chess Championship

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Havana, May 11 (JIT) - Cuban Luis Ernesto Quesada agreed a draw with German Rasmus Svane and boosted his chances of reaching the podium of the elite group of the 56th International Chess Tournament Capablanca in Memoriam 2023, with only two rounds to go.

The handling of the black pieces was the most significant detail of this division of honors, signed in 30 moves of an English Opening. The outcome lived at the Habana Libre hotel allowed the player from Avileño to complete four points out of a possible seven and now shares third to fifth place.

"He played well and the best thing about today's result was that he did it with black pieces. He entered the top group and can finish better", said coach Rodney Perez to JIT, although at the time of offering his opinion he had not analyzed in detail everything that happened on the board.

Svane also reached four points, a figure that India's Raunak Sadhwani did not budge from after losing to Brazil's Alexander Fier, one of the tenants at the top of the leaderboard.

The South American imposed his superiority by leading dark figures after 38 moves of a Queen's Gambit. That was not enough for him to break the embrace he maintains with the Danish Jonas Bjerre.

The European also brought out his mastery to defeat the Cuban Carlos Daniel Albornoz in a game that many experts envisioned as a possible draw. However, after 42 moves of a Sicilian Defense, he brought to a successful conclusion the strategy he started with white pieces.

Both leaders have 5.5 units and in each round the possibilities of their occupying the first places in the tournament grow.

To complete the program, the hosts Omar Almeida and Elier Miranda signed a quick parity, while the Venezuelan-born Spaniard Eduardo Iturrizaga took a breather with his victory over the Cuban Lelys Martinez.

On Thursday, the focus will be on key duels such as Luis Ernesto-Sadhwani, Elier-Fier and Svane-Bjerre. In addition, Sadhwani-Iturrizaga and Lelys-Albornoz are scheduled to face each other.

After seven rounds, Fier and Bjerre have 5.5 units, Sadhwani, Svane and Luis Ernesto four, Iturrizaga 3.5, Albornoz three, Elier and Omar two and Lelys 1.5.

MORE CUBANS AT THE TOP OF THE OPEN

In the open segment of the Capablanca the Cuban vanguard grew, as Ermes Espinosa and Cristian Vitier were joined by Michel Alejandro Diaz thanks to his victory over the also host Isan Ortiz.

Ermes agreed a draw with Cuba's Camilo Gomez and Cristian sealed his battle with Spain's Jose Fernando Cuenca with a similar finish. The three leaders have 6.5 points, with only two of the ten rounds of the program remaining.

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