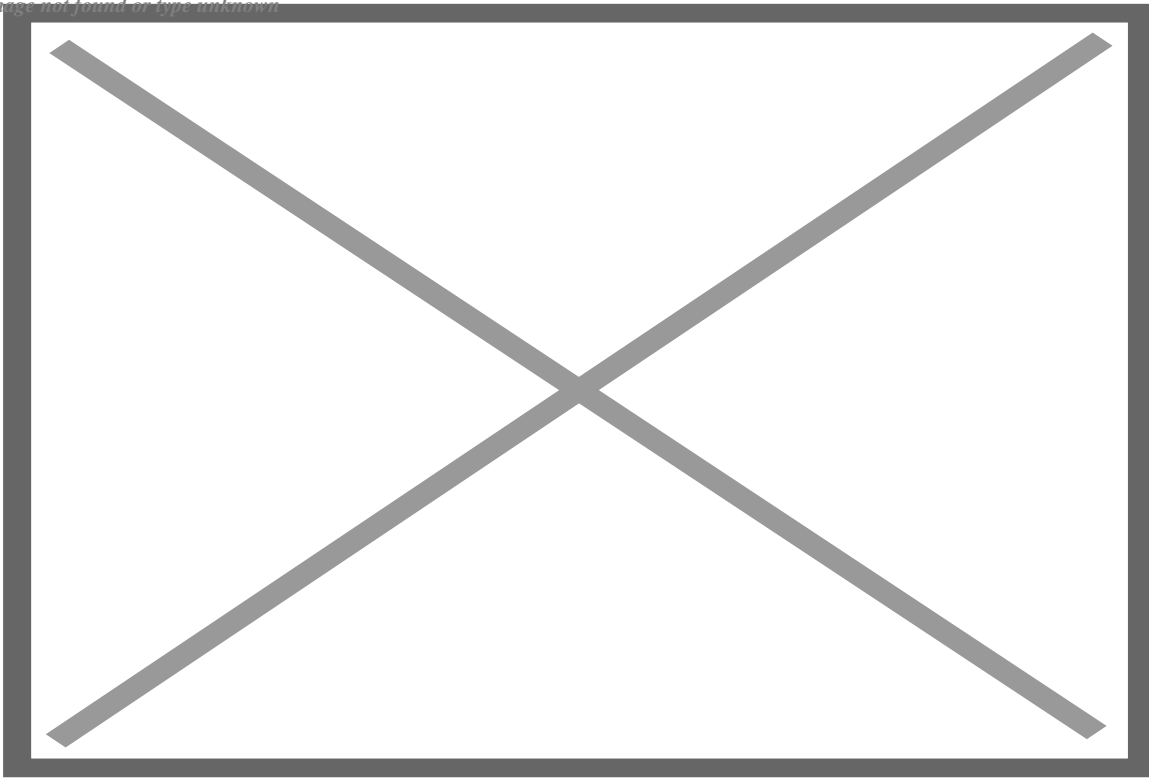


# *Champion stumbles at the beginning of the National Absolute Chess Championship*

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**Photo: Calixto N. Llanes.**

Havana, February 6 (JIT) --The Holguin 2024 National Absolute Chess Championship began this Monday with the surprising defeat of defending champion Elier Miranda (2,485 Elo points).

The villaclareño's slip occurred in his duel with Cesar Alejandro Perez (2 thousand 331), one of the 26 candidates to the throne.

"They played a very good game, but in reality they were all interesting. Even in the draws that were agreed there was a lot of combativeness," Rodney Perez, coach of the men's Olympic team, commented to JIT from the headquarters.

Seven contestants emerged victorious from the initial round, in which tense games that lasted more than four hours were played. In the group that took the lead were several favorites, such as Carlos Daniel Albornoz from Camagüey (2,603), Luis Ernesto Quesada (2,560) and Omar Almeida (2,506) from Havana.

Albornoz, winner of the 2019 and 2020 editions, defeated Luis Daniel Rodríguez from Matanzas (2,386), while Quesada beat Juan Borges from Guantánamo (2,371) and Almeida beat Jerzy Jesús Pérez from Villaclare (2,369).

Local Rider Díaz (2,440), Villaclarean Diasmany Otero (2,394) and Cristian Vitier (2,393) were also among those who got off to a good start.

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