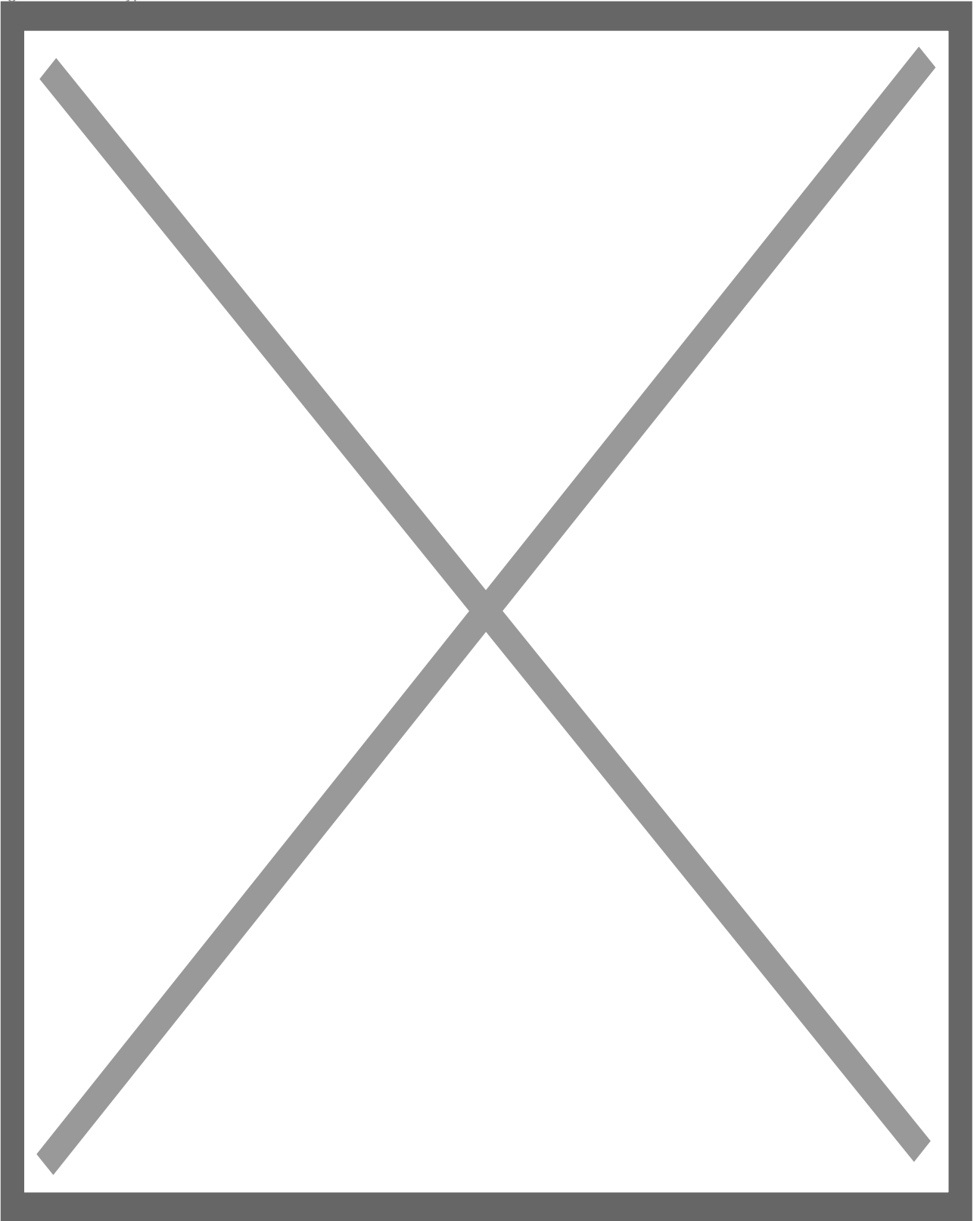


Carlsen clings to the world chess throne

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Havana, December 6 (RHC)-- The World Chess Championship has already passed its first half in Dubai and, barring a catastrophe, the crown will change hands, as Norway's Magnus Carlsen is showing his best side. Meanwhile, the Russian challenger Ian Nepomniachtchi has not yet awakened the "predator" inside him.

White pieces in the eighth game for Carlsen, repeated Petrov defense by Nepomniachtchi, and as a result another victory for the defending champion. That sums up in a few words what was experienced this Sunday at the Universal Expo that hosts the match in the capital of the United Arab Emirates.

The definition in favor of the Nordic player came in 46 moves, but from move 21 he already had a clear advantage, when he took advantage of the erroneous move of his opponent, who took one of his pawns to the square b5.

In the chronicles generated from the headquarters it is said that Carlsen played "in computer mode"... which was all the precision he needed to win his second success in the series.

The truth is that with eight of the 14 classical games played, the reigning monarch has a 5-3 superiority and the difference seems insurmountable. "The world championship is still going on and instead of one win I need two. Let's see what happens," the challenger commented to journalists.

Carlsen declared himself tired. "But it's better to be having the initiative," joked the man who has been the world champion since 2013 and it seems he will continue with that privilege, at least for two more years.

The first victory of the match came with the sixth game, in a marathon encounter of 136 moves and almost eight hours seated at the table. Incidentally, this became the longest duel in the framework of the world championships.

The previous record was 124 moves and dated back to 1978, when the then Soviets Anatoly Karpov and Viktor Korchnoi faced each other in the Philippines.

The ninth round of the current pulse is scheduled for next Tuesday, after the break scheduled for today. Nepomniachtchi will lead the white figures and his fans long to see him in his classic aggressive style, something that has not happened so far.

Game 8: Carlsen-Nepomniachtchi

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.d4 Nxe4 4.Ad3 d5 5.Nxe5 Nd7 6.Nxd7 Axd7 7.Nd2 Nxd2 8.Axd2 Ad6 9.0-0 h5 (New; the known and more logical is 9...0-0) 10. De1+ Rf8 11.Bb4 De7 12.Axd6 Dxd6 13.Dd2 Te8 14.Tae1 Th6 15.Dg5 c6 16.Txe8+ Axe8 17.Te1 Df6 18.De3 Ad7 19.h3 h4 20.c4 dxc4 21.Axc4 b5 (It was almost unique 21.... Rg8, although very difficult for a human player to find; from here on, Carlsen will play in computer mode and give his opponent no choice) 22.Da3+ Rg8 23.Dxa7 Dd8 24.Bb3 Td6 (The best defense was 24...Th5, although the situation is also almost losing, but again very difficult to consider at the board. After 24...Td6, Nepo's position falls apart] 25.Te4 Ae6 26.Axe6 Txe6 27.Txe6 fxe6 28.Dc5 (And the rest is a matter of technique for the world champion) 28...Da5 29.Dxc6 De1+ 30. Rh2 Dxf2 31.Dxe6+ Rh7 32.De4+ Rg8 33.b3 Dxa2 34.De8+ Rh7 35.Dxb5 Df2 36.De5 Db2 37.De4+ Rg8 38.Dd3 Df2 39.Dc3 Df4+ 40.Rg1 Rh7 41.Dd3+ g6 42.Dd1 De3+ 43.Rh1 g5 44.d5 g4 45.hxg4 h3 46.Df3, yield. (1-0).

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