

XXI Voronezh-2017 International Chess Festival

The 21st Voronezh chess festival took place from June 10 to June 21. More than 400 chessplayers from 10 countries participated in six tournaments. Total prize fund of the main festival tournament Master Open was about EUR 18,000 and the first prize was about EUR 3,000. These are the brief figures and some details are following.

GM Sergey Volkov (RUS, Saransk), Russia champion-2000, participated in Voronezh chess festivals many times but only now he has managed to win its main tournament for the first time. Sergey lost the first-round game to the 13-year-old Dmitry Tsoi but then he won seven games in a row and a draw in the last round gave him the first place without tie-break.



GMs from Saint Petersburg (RUS) Maksim Chigaev and Daniil Lintchevski scored 7 points in 9 games each, Chigaev is the second on tie-break. Lintchevski (Master Open-2015 winner) is the third, he also won the 2nd prize in the Rapid tournament.



Eight players finished with 6.5 points each, Master Open-2014 winner GM Pavel Ponkratov and Master Open-2004 winner GM Evgeny Shaposhnikov among them. Twelve players stopped half a point behind, including Master Open-2012 winner Artur Gabrielian. There were 38 prize winners in different categories (main prizes, juniors, ladies, seniors, foreign players, local players, some Elo categories) out of 137 participants. Note that Voronezh festival has special prizes for foreign participants (4 prizes in Master Open, the first is EUR 500). Another interesting tradition is a special prize for the place equal to the festival number (21st place this year).

GM Boris Grachev (RUS, Moscow) had the highest Elo 2648 from all Master Open participants. Immediately after 11-round Europe Championship distance where Boris qualified for World Cup 2017 it was difficult for him to fight for the first place, but the sixth prize without losses is not too bad.



GM Dmitry Kryakvin (RUS, Moscow) is not only a strong chess professional player but also an editor of Russian Chess Federation website. His articles on the site about Voronezh Chess Festivals in year 2014 and this year really create a sense of presence in the tournament hall. Some sentences and facts here are borrowed from these articles.



Indian prodigies IM Praggnanandhaa and FM Nihal Sarin are trying now to beat Sergey Karjakin's the youngest grandmaster record. They had real chances to achieve GM norms this time unless the computer pairing that gave them opponents with relatively low ratings in some rounds (Nihal Sarin achieved performance 2588, Praggnanandhaa – 2563). Their games in Voronezh always attracted a lot of spectators.



After a very tight fight in the women category the first women prize was won by Russian High League-2016 winner IM Evgenia Ovod. Friends WIM Margarita Schepetkova and WGM Elena Tomilova that shared the second place were totally identical on tie-break.



The main referee of the Master Open IA Vladimir Staratorzhsky provided the strong control over tournament conduction without any accidents. Strict anti-cheating measures included muffling mobile communications. Staratorzhsky left for a flight to Moscow immediately after delivering title norm certificates. 10 international title norms were achieved, but only one was GM norm achieved by IM Tran Tuan Minh (VIE), who also won the blitz tournament.



The second classical chess tournament FIDE Open was successful for Voronezh players. A big tie-break of seven players with 7 points in 9 games gave the first place to Vladimir Provkin (in the center) and the second place to Michael Peschansky (FIDE Open-2006 winner, the left), while Ildar Khajrutdinov (Moscow) took the third prize. There was one woman in this tie-break, WIM Svetlana Bezgodova (Moscow), and she was the only person who participated both in Master Open and in FIDE Open. Svetlana also published interesting comments about the festival and Voronezh city in the Russian social network VKontakte.



Yury Kondaurov (Ertel, Voronezh region) manages the Avantgarde team on the Russian online chess server ChessPlanet, but now he also proved himself to be a strong onboard player, taking regional prizes in Chess960 and Rapid tournaments and the 8th prize in FIDE Open (the left photo). FM Timur Ponomariov (FIDE Open-2009 winner) is a well-known supermarathon runner. This year he had a good start in FIDE Open, but the finish was not successful for him. (The right photo: TD Alexander Raetsky and FM Timur Ponomariov after Voronezh city running event).



Sail of Hope tournament for chess players with disabilities was conducted in a special place convenient for participants where they could live and play. Sergey Denisov (Moscow region, the right on the center photo) took the first place with 6 points of 7, Andrey Skorobogatykh (Voronezh) is the second on tie-break.



The festival success became possible thanks to supporters and sponsors: Voronezh region governor and regional government, Russian Chess Federation, Association of Chess Professionals, regional association "Leader" and some others. You can see their logos on the festival banner.

10 - 21 июня
Мемориал Алехина
21-й международный шахматный фестиваль «Воронеж-2017»
 Официальное открытие фестиваля 11 июня в 19.00
 Программа фестиваля

- 10 июня – турнир по «шахматам Фишера»
- 11 июня – турнир по «быстрым шахматам»
- 17 июня – блицтурнир
- 12-21 июня – «Master open» Этап Кубка России 2017 года и Кубка Мира АШП 2017
- 12-20 июня – FIDE open
- 13-19 июня – турнир "Парус надежды"

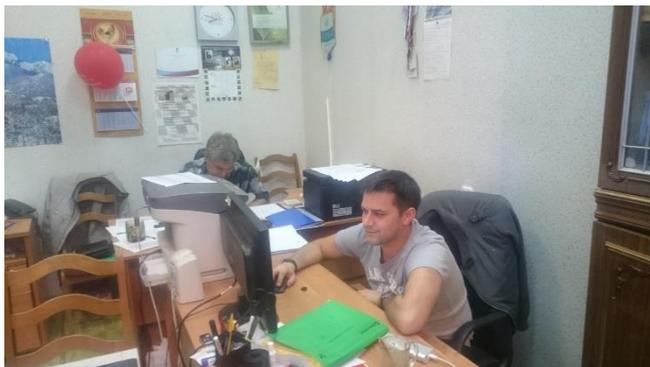
Организатор фестиваля ВРОО «Воронежская областная шахматная федерация»
 ПРИ ПОДДЕРЖКЕ ГУБЕРНАТОРА А. В. ГОРДЕЕВА
 Директор фестиваля - Александр Раецкий

Logos of sponsors: ACP, PSHF, ФосАгро, АШП, Antormag.

The festival, like all the previous ones, was organized by a solid team headed by the Tournament Director Alexander Raetsky. There are some members of the team on the following photo.



The main secretary Sergey Fomin (on the left photo) registered all game results, made all round pairings, organized the festival bulletin publishing, controlled online games broadcasting. Pavel Sirotin organized participants' accommodation, he also was a main referee of FIDE Open tournament.



IM Maxim Chetverik (on the left photo) registered tournament participants, controlled the awarding order and delivered consolation prizes to participants who were unsuccessful on tie-break or were remarkable in some respect. He also commented selected Master Open games (in Russian) for the festival website. Alexander Shushenkov shoot videos about festival events that were loaded to Youtube channel. Elena Ponomareva, the festival press officer, interviewed several festival participants and took photos of the festival events.



A big group of Indian players (18 persons!) went to Voronezh this year, their participation was a special feature of the 21st festival. We hope to see them again in Voronezh next year, as well as players from Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Mongolia and other countries that have smaller or no representation this time because of simultaneous tournaments. You can see Indian players below with their family members and the Tournament Director.



Of course, there were many other heroes of the tournament battles, I hope they accept my apologies that I didn't mention them. And some more festival photos without comments... See you again in Voronezh in June 2018!

Dmitry Borisenkov, the festival website administrator

