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Chess on the "island of dreams"

by Diana Mihajlova

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3/11/2020 – A successful tourist company in Tunisia has organized, for a second year, an impressive tournament promoting both chess and tourism in the country. The winner of the Master tournament, scoring 7½/9, was GM Maxime Lagarde (pictured receiving the prize of €2,500 euro and a medal from Anatoly Karpov). DIANA MAHAJLOVA has the details.



Master Class Vol.6: Anatoly Karpov

On this DVD a team of experts looks closely at the secrets of Karpov's games. In more than 7 hours of video, the authors examine four essential aspects of Karpov's superb play.

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Djerba, North Africa's largest island

The tour operator **GO-Makkah** has set up a well worth goal of putting Tunisia firmly on the chess map, while at the same time bringing up to the shore significant tourist spots that this beautiful country abounds with. Last year, the 1st GO-Makkah tournament was held in Sousse, the Tunisian pearl on the Mediterranean Coast, also famous in connection to chess for the 1967 Interzonal, which was a first FIDE tournament to take place in Africa.

The second edition, from February 15th to 24th 2020, took place at yet another attractive tourist spot, the small island of Djerba, in the south of Tunisia. Rich with natural wonders and legends, it's known as "the Island of Dreams". It is where Homer's Odysseus stopped over on his odyssey and met its inhabitants, [the lotus-eaters](#).

The organizers pride themselves for creating [the biggest chess festival in Africa](#) and aim for it to become a regular yearly event. Judging by the success of the second edition, GO-Makkah's Director, Mr Chokri Saidi has proven that he is well-placed as a dedicated organizer, sponsor and promoter.

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The largest island of North Africa, located in the Gulf of Gabès, off the coast of Tunisia



(L-R) The Tunisian Minister of Tourism Mr. René Trabelsi, Judit Polgar and the organizer, Chokri Saidi

This passionately organized tournament paid attention to every detail and was marked by a professional, aesthetic touch: arbiters and assistants clad in matching uniforms.



Arbiters and assistants

Four main tournaments were played: A Master tournament and three Opens: Open A (>2000), Open B (1500–2000) and Open C (<1500), a blitz tournament and several side events including two simultaneous exhibitions by two leading chess personalities, Anatoly Karpov and Judit Polgar.



Karpov and Polgar at their simultaneous exhibitions

A local artist, Karina Gassem, made paintings while the simulms were taking place. The paintings were composed of a figurative style and a calligraphy and were presented to Karpov and Polgar.





Karina Gassem at work and Judit Polgar with her painting | Photo: Patricia Claros Aguilar

On rare occasions, some participants in the simul managed to 'steal' a draw or even a win. It is considered a great feat and not surprisingly, the Tunisian player who made a draw with Judit Polgar, splashed his scoresheet on the social media.



Abdelaziz Bouhamed (2064) and the scoresheet of his game signed by Polgar

The support and cooperation by a French contingency was evident, led by the President of the French Chess Federation, Bachar Kouatly, who attended several happenings at the festival and addressed the participants praising the organization.



(L-R) Bachar Kouatly, French IA arbiter Nadir Bounzou and his Tunisian counterpart IA Mohamed Ali Baktach

As it turned out, the winner of the Masters was also a French player, the young GM Maxime Lagarde, the 2019 French champion.

The Masters tournament was composed of ten players hailing from ten different countries: (in the order of the final standings) GM Lagarde Maxime (FRA), GM Tiviakov Sergei (NED), GM Pichot Alan (ARG), Gagunashvili Merab (GEO), GM Cuenca Jimenez Jose Fernando (ESP), GM Heberla Bartlomiej (POL), GM Sumets Andrey (UKR), GM Kotronias Vasilios (GRE), IM Zaibi Amir (TUN), IM Oussedik Mahfoud (ALG).

Final standings

Rk.	SNo		Name	Rtg	Pts.	TB1	TB2	TB3
1	7		GM Lagarde Maxime	2659	7,5	0,0	6	29,75
2	3		GM Tiviakov Sergei	2593	7,0	0,0	6	26,00
3	6		GM Pichot Alan	2606	6,0	0,0	4	21,75
4	1		GM Gagunashvili Merab	2580	5,0	0,5	3	15,50
5	4		GM Cuenca Jimenez Jose Fernando	2528	5,0	0,5	2	18,75
6	2		GM Heberla Bartlomiej	2575	4,5	1,0	3	15,50
7	5		GM Sumets Andrey	2543	4,5	0,0	2	16,25
8	8		GM Kotronias Vasilios	2526	3,0	0,0	2	10,75
9	10		IM Zaibi Amir	2402	1,5	0,0	1	3,50
10	9		IM Oussedik Mahfoud	2423	1,0	0,0	0	3,25

All available games

Gagunashvili, Merab
2580

GM

1-0

Zaibi, Amir
2402

IM

Festival International Go-Makkah de Djerba-Master

SUN CONNECT Djerba, Tunisie 16.02.2020

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 Be7 5.Bf4 0-0 6.e3 c5 7.dxc5 Bxc5 8.a3 Nc6 9.Qc2 Qa5 10.Nd2 Be7 11.Bg3 Bd7 12.Be2 Rfc8 13.0-0 Qd8 14.cxd5 exd5 15.Nf3 Qb6 16.Rfd1 Na5 17.Nd4 Qd8 18.Bh4 Ne4 19.Bxe7 Qxe7

ZU.BT3 Nxc3 Z1.Bxc3 Rc5 Z2.Ne2 Qe5 Z3.Rd4 Bd5 Z4.Nf4 Bc4 Z5.Ng3 Bxd3 26.Qxd3 Rac8 27.Bxd5 Rxc3 28.Qd1 g6 29.g3 R8c7 30.Re4 Qf6 31.Rf4 Qa6 32.Bxf7+

1-0

White	EloW	Black	EloB	Res	ECO	Rnd
Gagunashvili,M	2580	Zaibi,A	2402	1-0	D37	1
Heberla,B	2575	Oussedik,M	2423	1-0	D55	1
Cuenca Jimenez,J	2528	Lagarde,M	2659	½-½	A16	1
Sumets,A	2543	Pichot,A	2606	0-1	D27	1
Zaibi,A	2402	Pichot,A	2606	0-1	E04	2
Lagarde,M	2659	Sumets,A	2543	½-½	C02	2
Oussedik M	2423	Tivjakov S	2593	0-1	F43	2

Move N Result Elo Players

Photo gallery



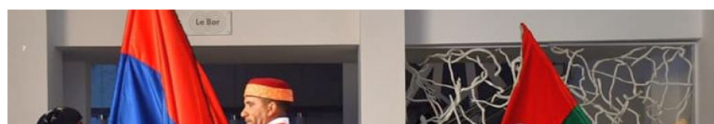
Neighbourly friends: the local IM Zaibi Amir, representing Tunisia and IM Oussedik Mahfoud from the neighbouring country of Algeria



The organizer is presenting the prize (2000 euro) and a medal to the winner of the Open A, another French player, GM Jean-Marc Degraeve (Elo 2526)



Tunisian young hopes greatly benefit from the opportunity to play at such a class international tournament on their doorstep





The guests were entertained throughout the tournament by performers presenting typical folklore of the island



An accomplished local musician, Khalil Chahbani, performed on 'kanun', a traditional Arabic string instrument

A full day was dedicated to a sight-seeing. Museums, a crocodile farm, a synagogue and other beauty spots were visited for which participants were provided with buggies.



An original way to explore the beautiful island



The synagogue La Ghriba ('Wonderworking') supposed to be the oldest synagogue in the world dating from the time of the second temple in Jerusalem



**Master Class Vol.6:
Anatoly Karpov**

On this DVD a team of experts looks closely at the secrets of Karpov's





Karpov and Judit Polgar soaking the light and sun of Djerba | Photo: [Judit Polgar Facebook](#)

The two distinguished chess personalities contributed to another worthy cause while in Djerba: They opened the first school chess club on the island named after the 12th World Champion.



Karpov and Judit Polgar surrounded by enthusiastic school kids on the occasion of the opening of the school chess club on Djerba | Photo: [Judit Polgar Facebook](#)

Links

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Diana Mihajlova

A former university lecturer in Romance philology, she is currently a [painter](#) as well as a chess journalist, and reports regularly from the international tournament scene.

games. In more than 7 hours of video, the authors examine four essential aspects of Karpov's superb play.



Endgames of the World Champions from Fischer to Carlsen

Let endgame expert Dr Karsten Müller show and explain the finesse of the world champions. Although they had different styles each and every one of them played the endgame exceptionally well, so take the opportunity to enjoy and learn from some of the best endgames in the history of chess.

