

M-TEL MASTERS



SOFIA, BULGARIA  
10.05 - 21.05.2006 MASTERS

Super-tournament with six players in a double round robin, organised between 2005 and 2009 in Sofia, Bulgaria, sponsored by the national telecom company M-TEL.

A particularity of the rules was that the players should not offer draws directly to their opponents. Draw-offers will be allowed only through the Chief-Arbitrer in three cases: in a triple-repetition of the position, in a perpetual check and in theoretically drawn positions.

**The winners were:** 2005 Veselin Topalov, 2006 Veselin Topalov, 2007 Veselin Topalov, 2008 Vassily Ivanchuk, and 2009 Alexey Shirov.



Source: CNC

Photo: The participants to the M-Tel Masters 2009 with Magnus Carlsen, Wang Yue, Alexey Shirov, Carmen Kass in the middle, Vassily Ivanchuk, Leinier Perez-Dominguez and Veselin Topalov

## M-Tel Masters, Sofia

Mtel Masters was an annual [super-GM chess](#) tournament held between 2005 and 2009 in [Sofia, Bulgaria](#), sponsored and organized by the Bulgarian mobile network operator, [M-Tel](#). The event was always held as a double round-robin of six players at the [Grand Hotel Sofia](#).

The edition of 2007 was especially close, all six participants finished within one point!

**Record winner is Topalov** (three wins in a row, he played in all five editions at M-Tel in Sofia).

**Winners:** [Veselin Topalov](#) (3x), [Vassily Ivanchuk](#) (1x), [Alexei Shirov](#) (1x), all winning outright.

Further participants amongst others: [Viswanathan Anand](#), [Vladimir Kramnik](#), [Magnus Carlsen](#) (all three past, present or future World Chess Champion, never winning at Sofia M-Tel tournament!), as well as [Peter Svidler](#), [Gata Kamsky](#), [Michael Adams](#), [Étienne Bacrot](#), [Levon Aronian](#), [Shakhriyar Mamedyarov](#), [Teimour Radjabov](#), [Ruslan Ponomariov](#), [Bu Xiangzhi](#), [Wang Yue](#), or [Judit Polgár](#).

*Kasparov (retired in spring 2005), Karpov, and Korchnoi never did take part. Neither Kiril Georgiev.*

# The five Sofia M-Tel Masters from 2005 – 2009

## 2005

The first edition of the tournament took place between 11 and 22 May 2005 as part of M-Tel's tenth anniversary celebrations and with the participation of top chess players such as [Viswanathan Anand](#), [Veselin Topalov](#), [Vladimir Kramnik](#), [Michael Adams](#), [Judit Polgár](#) and [Ruslan Ponomariov](#). M-Tel Masters 2005 was classified in [FIDE's](#) Category 20 and was named the strongest tournament of 2005 according to the average [Elo rating](#) of the participants of 2744. The winner of the tournament was the Bulgarian Veselin Topalov, with the award being conferred by Bulgarian President [Georgi Parvanov](#).

Position	Participant	Points
<b>1</b>	 <a href="#">Veselin Topalov (BUL)</a>	<b>6½</b>
2	 <a href="#">Viswanathan Anand (IND)</a>	5½
3	 <a href="#">Ruslan Ponomariov (UKR)</a>	5
3	 <a href="#">Judit Polgár (HUN)</a>	5
5	 <a href="#">Vladimir Kramnik (RUS)</a>	4
5	 <a href="#">Michael Adams (UK)</a>	4

## 2006







The 2006 tournament took place between 10 May and 21 May and was attended by reigning FIDE World Chess Champion Veselin Topalov, Viswanathan Anand, Ruslan Ponomariov, [Peter Svidler](#), [Étienne Bacrot](#) and [Gata Kamsky](#). [Brazilian](#) writer [Paulo Coelho](#) played the token initial move of the 2006 tournament, which was officially opened by the [President of Bulgaria](#), Georgi Parvanov.

Topalov won the tournament for the second time after a decisive comeback from a somewhat hesitant start. He recorded four consecutive wins in the final rounds to clinch the M-Tel Masters 2006 first place with 6½ points, also defeating his main rival Kamsky in the penultimate round.

Position	Participant	Points
<b>1</b>	 <a href="#">Veselin Topalov (BUL)</a>	<b>6½</b>
2	 <a href="#">Gata Kamsky (USA)</a>	6
3	 <a href="#">Viswanathan Anand (IND)</a>	5½
4	 <a href="#">Peter Svidler (RUS)</a>	5
5	 <a href="#">Étienne Bacrot (FRA)</a>	3½
5	 <a href="#">Ruslan Ponomariov (UKR)</a>	3½







## 2007

M-Tel Masters' 2007 edition was held between 9 May and 20 May and featured Veselin Topalov, [Liviu-Dieter Nisipeanu](#), [Shakhriyar Mamedyarov](#), Gata Kamsky, [Michael Adams](#) and [Krishnan Sasikiran](#). Topalov won the tournament for a third consecutive time in a dramatic fashion, defeating the then-current leader Sasikiran in the final round. **Only the winner is beyond the notorious 50%!**

	Participant	1	2	3	4	5	6	Points
1	 <a href="#">Veselin Topalov</a> (BUL)	* *	1 1	0 ½	½ ½	0 1	½ ½	5½
2-5	 <a href="#">Krishnan Sasikiran</a> (IND)	0 0	* *	½ 1	1 0	½ ½	½ 1	5
2-5	 <a href="#">Shakhriyar Mamedyarov</a> (AZE)	1 ½	½ 0	* *	1 0	½ ½	½ ½	5
2-5	 <a href="#">Gata Kamsky</a> (USA)	½ ½	0 1	0 1	* *	½ ½	½ ½	5
2-5	 <a href="#">Liviu-Dieter Nisipeanu</a> (ROM)	1 0	½ ½	½ ½	½ ½	* *	0 1	5
6	 <a href="#">Michael Adams</a> (UK)	½ ½	½ ½	½ 0	½ ½	1 0	* *	4½







## 2008

The 2008 M-Tel Masters was held 8–18 May. [Vassily Ivanchuk](#) won by a wide margin. Ivanchuk won his first five games, lost no games, and had a positive score against every other player. [Veselin Topalov](#), who had won the tournament the three previous years, finished second.

	Participant	1	2	3	4	5	6	Points
1	 <a href="#">Vassily Ivanchuk</a> (UKR)	* *	1 ½	1 ½	1 1	1 ½	1 ½	8
2	 <a href="#">Veselin Topalov</a> (BUL)	0 ½	* *	½ ½	1 1	1 0	1 1	6½
3	 <a href="#">Teimour Radjabov</a> (AZE)	0 ½	½ ½	* *	½ ½	½ 1	½ 1	5½
4	 <a href="#">Ivan Cheparinov</a> (BUL)	0 0	0 0	½ ½	* *	1 1	½ ½	4
5	 <a href="#">Bu Xiangzhi</a> (CHN)	0 ½	0 1	½ 0	0 0	* *	½ ½	3
5	 <a href="#">Levon Aronian</a> (ARM)	0 ½	0 0	½ 0	½ ½	½ ½	* *	3

## 2009

The 2009 edition of the tournament took place from 12 to 23 May. Besides regular feature Veselin Topalov, the invited grandmasters were young [Magnus Carlsen](#), [Vassily Ivanchuk](#), [Alexei Shirov](#), [Wang Yue](#) and [Leinier Domínguez](#). Big win for Alexei Shirov who took the last event outright and unbeaten ahead of joint runners-up Carlsen and Topalov.

	Participant	1	2	3	4	5	6	Points
1	 <a href="#">Alexei Shirov</a> (ESP)	* *	1 ½	½ ½	½ ½	½ ½	1 1	6½
2-3	 <a href="#">Magnus Carlsen</a> (NOR)	0 ½	* *	1 ½	½ 1	½ 1	½ ½	6
2-3	 <a href="#">Veselin Topalov</a> (BUL)	½ ½	0 ½	* *	1 ½	½ ½	1 1	6
4	 <a href="#">Wang Yue</a> (CHN)	½ ½	½ 0	0 ½	* *	½ ½	1 ½	4½
5	 <a href="#">Leinier Domínguez</a> (CUB)	½ ½	½ 0	½ ½	½ ½	* *	½ 0	4
6	 <a href="#">Vassily Ivanchuk</a> (UKR)	0 0	½ ½	0 0	0 ½	½ 1	* *	3

## 2010

The tournament was **cancelled** because of the [World Chess Championship 2010](#) match in Sofia.



Veselin Topalov, FIDE World Chess Champion 2005/06. Cartoon by **Oliver Schopf**, Germany:  
[http://www.oliverschopf.com/html/d\\_archiv/schach/schach\\_allgemein/schach\\_topalow\\_01.html](http://www.oliverschopf.com/html/d_archiv/schach/schach_allgemein/schach_topalow_01.html)



Topalov resigns against Anand in Sofia (WCC 2010) –  
a last handshake after all (Photo: CNC)

Sources: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M-Tel\\_Masters](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M-Tel_Masters) (Wikipedia)  
<http://www.thechesspedia.com/blog-post/mtel-masters/> (Chesspedia, former CNC)  
<http://veselin-topalov.com/> (Topalov Homepage)

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