

REGGIO EMILIA series

A City in northern Italy which has hosted a traditional chess festival annually since 1958 to 2012. The town is also referred to by its more official name of **Reggio nell'Emilia**. The inhabitants of Reggio nell'Emilia (called *Reggiani*) usually call their town by the simple name of **Reggio**.

One of the ideas of **Enrico Paoli** (GM Hon.), the **Torneo di Capodanno** had been during decades, the strongest tournament in the country, held annually for 54 editions without any interruption! **Karpov** won in January 1991. The peak was in 1991/92 when for the thirty-fourth tournament, the organisers managed to reach category 18 (average of Elo 2676), the strongest chess event at that time won by **Anand** ahead of joint second Gelfand and Kasparov. In total, five World Champions played at Reggio, *three World Chess Champions, Kasparov, Spassky, Smyslov, all did not win !*

No.	Year	Winner	Points
1	1958/1959	 Otto Marthaler	8 (9)
2	1959/1960	 Cveto Trampuz	6½ (8)
3	1960/1961	 Péter Dely	6½ (9)
4	1961/1962	 Alberto Giustolisi	8 (11)
5	1962/1963	 Győző Forintos	10 (11)
6	1963/1964	 Rudolf Teschner ,  Erno Gereben  Gedeon Barcza ,  Janos Flesch	8½ (11)
7	1964/1965	 Mario Bertok ,  István Bilek  Rudolf Teschner ,  Dragoljub Minić	8½ (11)
8	1965/1966	 Bruno Parma	9 (11)
9	1966/1967	 Victor Ciocâltea ,  Dragoljub Čirić	8 (11)
10	1967/1968	 Milan Matulović	10½ (13)
11	1968/1969	 Ladislav Mista ,  Iwan Radułow  Enrico Paoli ,  Victor Ciocâltea	7 (11)
12	1969/1970	 Sergio Mariotti	7½ (11)
13	1970/1971	 Bruno Parma	11½ (15)
14	1971/1972	 Andrew Soltis	8½ (11)
15	1972/1973	 Levente Lengyel ,  Ljuben Popow ,  Eugenio Torre	7 (11)
16	1973/1974	 Ljuben Popow ,  Gyula Sax ,  Jürgen Dueball	8 (11)
17	1974/1975	 Orestes Rodriguez ,  Alvise Zichichi	8 (11)
18	1975/1976	 Luděk Pachman	6 (9)
19	1976/1977	 Giennadij Kuźmin	8 (11)
20	1977/1978	 László Kovács	8½ (11)
21	1978/1979	 Ralf Hess	8 (11)
22	1979/1980	 Aleksander Koczijew	9½ (13)
23	1980/1981	 Nils-Gustaf Renman	10 (13)
24	1981/1982	 Arne Dür	10½ (13)
25	1982/1983	 Nona Gaprindaszwili	8 (11)
26	1983/1984	 Karel Mokřý	8 (11)
27	1984/1985	 Lajos Portisch	7½ (11)
28	1985/1986	 Ulf Andersson ,  Ljubomir Ljubojević ,  Oleg Romaniszyn	7 (11)
29	1986/1987	 Zoltán Ribli	6½ (11)
30	1987/1988	 Władimir Tukmakow	6 (9)

31	1988/1989	 Michał Gurewicz	6½ (9)
32	1989/1990	 Jaan Ehvest	7½ (10)
33a	1990/1991	 Anatolij Karpow	7½ (12)
33b	1999/1991	 Ljubomir Ljubojević	7 (12)
34	1991/1992	 Viswanathan Anand	6 (9)
35	1992/1993	 Rafael Waganian	9 (11)
36	1993/1994	 Lajos Portisch	8½ (11)
37	1994/1995	 Rafael Waganian	8½ (11)
38	1995/1996	 Jurij Razuwajew ,  Aleksiej Driejew ,  Władimir Jepsizyn	5½ (9)
39	1996/1997	 Michał Krasenkow	7 (9)
40	1997/1998	 Dmitrij Komarow ,  Leonid Judasin	7½ (11)
41	1998/1999	 Jewgienij Sołozhenkin	7 (9)
42	1999/2000	 Leonid Judasin	7 (9)
43	2000/2001	 Oleg Romaniszyn	7½ (9)
44	2001/2002	 Władimir Georgijew ,  Aleksander Delczew  Borys Czatałbaszew ,  Mišo Cebalo	6 (9)
45	2002/2003	 Jean-Luc Chabanon ,  Mladen Palac	7 (9)
46	2003/2004	 Igor Miladinović	7 (9)
47	2004/2005	 Aleksander Delczew	6½ (9)
48	2005/2006	 Konstantin Landa	7 (9)
49	2006/2007	 Viorel Iordăchescu	7 (9)
50	2007/2008	 Zoltán Almási	6 (9)
51	2008/2009	 Ni Hua	6½ (9)
52	2009/2010	 Gata Kamski ,  Zoltán Almási	6½ (9)
53	2010/2011	 Vüqar Həşimov ,  Francisco Vallejo Pons	6 (9)
54	2011/2012	 Anisz Giri	6 (10)

Source: [https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reggio_Emilia_\(turniej_szachowy\)](https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reggio_Emilia_(turniej_szachowy)) (Polish Wikipedia)

Summary in english

Winners (if shared, only best on tie-break is listed): **Prequel 1947 Canal**, **Prequel 1951 Czerniak**, 1958-59 (first edition of the series) **Otto Marthaler, Switzerland**, 1959-60 Cveto Trampuz, 1960-61 Peter Dely, 1961-62 Alberto Giustolisi, 1962-63 Győző Forintos, 1963-64 Rudolf Teschner, 1964-65 Mario Bertok, 1965-66 Bruno Parma, 1966-67 Victor Ciocaltea, 1967-68 Milan Matulovic, 1968-69 Ladislav Mista, 1969-70 Sergio Mariotti, 1970-71 Bruno Parma, 1971-72 Andrew Soltis, 1972-73 Levente Lengyel, 1973-74 Ljuben Popov, 1974-75 Orestes Rodriguez, 1975-76 Ludek Pachman, 1976-77 Gennadi Kuzmin, 1977-78 Laszlo Kovacs, 1978-79 Ralf Hess, 1979-80, 1980-81 Nils Renman, 1981-82 Arne Duer, **1982-83 Nona Gaprindashvili**, 1983-84 Karel Mokry, 1984-85 Lajos Portisch, 1985-86 Ulf Andersson, 1986-87 Zoltan Ribli, 1987-88 Vladimir Tukmakov, 1988-89 Mikhail Gurevich, 1989-90 Jan Ehvest, 1991 A-edition **Anatoly Karpov**, 1991 equal B-edition Ljubomir Ljubojevic, **1991-92 Viswanathan Anand** (*above second shared Kasparov*), 1992-93 Rafael Vaganian, 1993-94 Lajos Portisch, 1994-95 Rafael Vaganian, 1995-96 Yuri Razuvaev, 1996-97 Michal Krasenkov, 1997-98 Dimitri Komarov, 1998-99 Evgeniy Solozhenkin, 1999-2000 Leonid Yudasin, 2000-01 Oleg Romanishin, 2001-02 Vladimir Georgiev, 2002-03 Jean-Luc Chabanon, 2003-04 Igor Miladinovic, 2004-05 Aleksander Delchev, 2005-06 Konstantin Landa, 2006-07 Viorel Iordachescu, 2007-08 Zoltan Almasi, 2008-09 Ni Hua, 2009-10 Gata Kamsky, 2010-11 Vugar Gashimov, 2011-12 Anish Giri (54th and last edition of the series).



Photo: Wikipedia

The man who made Reggio Emilia possible: Enrico Paoli in 2004

Viktor Korchnoi, 6th out of ten players scoring 4/9 p. in the jubilee edition (50th) in 2007/08 at age of 77:



Viktor vs Hari, round seven, draw. Chess legend Korchnoi, had been a candidate for the World Chess Championship ten times, and played for the title against Karpov three times, all before Harikrishna was born (1986). The Indian GM is 21, Korchnoi (1931) will turn 77! **R.I.P., Viktor**
Photo: ChessBase



GM Mišo Cebalo of Croatia, Senior World Chess Champion 2009, doing commentary for the public at Reggio Emilia..

<https://en.chessbase.com/post/almasi-and-gashimov-lead-in-reggio-emilia>



..assisted by Viktor Korchnoi, analyzing his game versus Vugar Gashimov Photos: ChessBase

Replay two games in memory of Gashimov and Korchnoi:

<http://www.chessgames.com/perl/chessgame?gid=1481693> (2008, Reggio Emilia)

<http://www.chessgames.com/perl/chessgame?gid=1489390> (2008, Russian Team-ch)



The players, Caruana, Short, Onischuk, Gashimov, Vallejo Pons (standing behind WGM Martha Fierro), and Ivanchuk with the tournament staff below.

CNC

The players at Reggio Emilia in 2010/2011, won by Vugar Gashimov (R.I.P.)

Sources:

http://www.ippogrifoscacchi.it/tdc_storia.asp (Albo d'Oro and year-by-year standings ed. 1° to 51°)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reggio_Emilias_chess_tournament (Wikipedia in English)

<http://www.endgame.nl/paoli.html> (historical survey by **Jan van Reek** (R.I.P.), inactive)

http://www.italiascacchistica.com/a_reggio_emilia_1.htm (Albo d'Oro 1958-1985, inactive)

→ Year-by-Year survey (in Italian language):

http://www.torneionline.com/foto_albi.php?path=albi/06_Grandi_Tornei_e_Festival/&link=80_Reggio_Emilias.htm

→ Good survey of all winners (in French language):

https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tournoi_d%27%C3%A9checs_de_Reggio_Emilias

50th jubilee edition in 2007/08: Almasi

<http://en.chessbase.com/post/almasi-and-gashimov-lead-in-reggio-emilia> (by **Adolivio Capece**)

<https://en.chessbase.com/post/almasi-leads-in-reggio-emilia>

<http://en.chessbase.com/post/almasi-wins-reggio-emilia-2008>

51st edition in 2008/09: Ni Hua

<https://en.chessbase.com/post/ni-hua-wins-reggio-emilia-2008-2009-with-1-points>

52nd edition in 2009/10: Kamsky on tie-break, joint with Almasi

<https://en.chessbase.com/post/kamsky-catches-almasi-wins-reggio-emilia-2010>

53rd edition in 2010/11: Gashimov on tie-break, joint with Vallejo Pons

<http://en.chessbase.com/post/reggio-emilia-gashimov-takes-top-honors-on-tiebreak/296>

54th and last edition in 2011/12: Giri

<http://www.chessdom.com/54th-reggio-emilia-tournament/> (Gashimov had to withdraw)

<https://en.chessbase.com/post/54th-reggio-emilia-the-stars-align-for-anish-giri-as-he-takes-first->

http://anishgiri.nl/pict/news/re_joseb.jpg (Giri clear first and youngest winner ever at Reggio Emilia)

Reggio Emilia

By Adolivio Capece

Reggio Emilia is a little town in the center of Italy. Little, but for many reasons very important. For example in the neighbourhood of the town, in a village named Scandiano, the well-known Prime Minister of the Italian Government, Romano Prodi, was born. And it was in Reggio Emilia, at the end of 1700, that the Italian national flag, the "tricolore" (so called for its three colours: green, white and red), was created ☺.

Moreover, in Reggio Emilia, in 1474, the famous writer and poet Ludovico Ariosto was born – the author of the epic novel "Orlando Furioso". Maybe some of you will remember the famous starting words: "Le donne, i cavallier, l'arme, gli amori, le cortesie, le audaci imprese io canto" (Of wives and ladies, knights and arms, I sing, of courtesies and many a daring feat).



Source of this Map and for the following Photos: ChessBase

At that time the town was the property of an important family, the Este. Almost all the members of this family were fond of chess, especially Isabella, Duchess of Mantova (Mantua), who is said to have hosted in her court many important chess players of the time, in particular from Spain. We can say that the tradition of chess in Reggio Emilia is older than five centuries!



The Teatro Municipale Valli in Reggio Emilia

Fifty-four editions annually in a row for a closed invitation tournament is amazing, all in the little town of **Reggio Emilia**.

After two Reggio Prequels, the "Torneo di Capodanno" was created in 1958, and built on the enthusiasm of **Enrico Paoli** (1908-2005), GM honoris causa.

The name was due to the fact that **it starts immediately after Christmas to end in the day of Epiphany** (January 6th).

It was conducted thanks the sponsorship of the local Tourist Office and (in the latest years) of the company "Motori Slanzi Novellara".



The Piazza Prampolini in the heart of the town

Canal and **Czerniak** won a Prequel. The first edition of the series was won by **Otto Marthaler** from Switzerland. Dutchman **Anish Giri** won the last edition.

Among the (co-)winners of following editions were Forintos, Teschner, Flesch, Bertok, Parma, Ciocaltea, Matulovic, Soltys, Lengyel, Torre, Sax, Pachman, or the Italians [Alberto Giustolisi](#), [Enrico Paoli](#), [Alvise Zichichi](#), and [Sergio Mariotti](#).

In 1976/77, edition number 19, for the first time a player from the USSR, **Gennadi Kuzmin**, participated and won outright.

For edition number 25, 1982/83, the tournament found a new important sponsor, the "Banco di San Geminiano e San Prospero". In that year the winner was the reigning women's world champion **Nona Gaprindashvili** (URSS, Georgia), she won as clear first, ahead of 2./3. Mokry and Danner.

Among the (co-)winners of the following editions we find then Mokry, Portisch, Andersson, Ljubojevic, Romanishin, Ribli, Tukmakov, M. Gurevich, or Ehlvest.



The Crostolo statue in Reggio Emilia's Piazza del Duomo

In the 33rd edition, as an exception fully played in January (1991), there were **two equal strong groups (A/B)**: **Karpov** and **Ljubojevic** respectively, won.

Anand won the 34th edition (December 27 1991 – January 6 1992), the very first cat. 18 tournament, **ahead of Kasparov** and Gelfand (joint), and Karpov.

Afterwards followed amongst other (co-)winners in the A-group tournaments: Vaganian, Portisch, Dreev, Epishin, Yudasin, Romanishin, or Cebalo, who acted as a regular commentator at Reggio Emila, too.











The last winners were Almasi (50th edition), Ni Hua (51st edition), Kamsky on tie-break, and Almasi (52nd edition), Gashimov on tie-break, and Vallejo Pons (53rd edition), and young Giri in the 54th and last edition, played in 2011-12.

The World Champions **Kasparov**, **Spassky**, **Smyslov** all did play, but not win! Neither did *Korchnoi*, *Timman*, *Hort*, *Navara*, *Short*, *Averbakh*, *Polugaevsky*, *Beliavsky*, *Salov*, *Gelfand*, *Ivanchuk*, *Morozevich*, *Caruana*, or *Nakamura*.

Reggio Emilia – The navel of the chess world

But the high point was the 34th edition (December 27 1991 – January 6 1992): among the players in the main group played the world champions Kasparov and Karpov. **It was then the strongest tournament ever played, the first in the world to reach category XVIII.**

Please note at that time Category 18 was considered an "abstract" goal, because it seemed almost impossible to gather together all the best players at the same time. But it became possible thanks to the great love for chess of **Nicola Palladino** – at that time President of the Italian Chess Federation – and obviously of **Enrico Paoli**, very well known and valued by all the most important players in the world, among them Kasparov himself.

Reggio Emilia-A 9192 34th 1991				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0		
1		Anand, Viswanathan	2650 +149	*	½	1	½	½	½	1	1	0	1	6.0 / 9	
2		Gelfand, Boris	2665 +90	½	*	½	½	½	½	1	½	½	1	5.5 / 9	22.75
3		Kasparov, Garry	2770 -25	0	½	*	½	1	½	½	½	1	1	5.5 / 9	21.75
4		Karpov, Anatoly	2730 -21	½	½	½	*	½	0	½	½	1	1	5.0 / 9	
5		Ivanchuk, Vassily	2735 -65	½	½	0	½	*	1	½	½	½	½	4.5 / 9	19.75
6		Khalifman, Alexander	2630 +51	½	½	½	1	0	*	½	0	½	1	4.5 / 9	19.25
7		Polugaevsky, Lev	2630 +51	0	0	½	½	½	½	*	1	½	1	4.5 / 9	17.25
8		Salov, Valery	2665 -26	0	½	½	½	½	1	0	*	1	0	4.0 / 9	18.75
9		Gurevich, Mikhail	2630 +12	1	½	0	0	½	½	½	0	*	1	4.0 / 9	17.00
10		Beliaevsky, Alexander G	2655 -256	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	1	0	*	1.5 / 9	

Kasparov was only second / third with the same number of points as Gelfand (ChessBase)

Lajos Portisch won the B-group, including the most eminent Italian players, ahead of Viktor Gavrikov, and 3. IM Arlandi.

There was also a tournament for blind players, **an unofficial 'braille chess' world championship.**

And, last but not least, **a meeting of all the living world chess champions** was organized: for this the following legends travelled to Italian Reggio Emilia: **Mikhail Botvinnik, Mikhail Tal, Vasily Smyslov and Boris Spassky**, joining **Kasparov** and **Karpov**. The only living world champion who was absent was Fischer. For some days Reggio Emilia was really the 'navel' of the chess world!

Report 34th REGGIO EMILIA 1991 / 92

The Reggio Emilia Tournament was considered to be one of the strongest tournaments in the world. The Indian Grandmaster Viswanathan Anand showed a great performance by winning the highest-rated tournament in the history of chess, the thirty-fourth Reggio Emilia. Among the also-rans were Kasparov and Karpov, as well as the young stars Ivanchuk and Gelfand. Anand did what no one since Bobby Fischer's victory could do: playing with his usual elegance, the Asian phenomenon beat the very best players that the Soviet chess culture had to offer that time, and, just like Fischer, Anand did it all by himself.

Anand started attacking right from the beginning of the tournament by beating Valery Salov in round one and World Champion Garry Kasparov in round two. Then he retreated for a while: after four rounds, Boris Gelfand from Belorussia had taken the lead. A sprinting Kasparov and the easygoing Anand caught up with Gelfand in round six. Until the ninth and final round, Anand, Gelfand and Garry held jointly first place. The fact that Gelfand only drew Karpov was more or less expected, but Garry Kasparov's defeat against Alexander Khalifman was not. The World Champion had to draw, and that gave way to Viswanathan Anand, who had the luck to face the unfortunate Alexander Belyavsky. The Indian easily won, first the game, then the set and then the tournament.

Garry Kasparov shared second with Boris Gelfand. Kasparov only missed his expected score by a fraction (about 0.25 points), but it was a serious disappointment for the World Champion.

A year before, Garry could state with pride that he had won or shared first in every tournament he participated in during last ten years. But at Linares, Amsterdam and Reggio Emilia, he only shared second or third. For Boris Gelfand, the result was a good follow-up to his recent victory in Belgrade. Anatoly Karpov failed to recover the form he displayed at the Reykjavik World the previous year, but he displayed a professional performance and took fourth place. (CNC)



Anand 1991 ChessBase

The final standing of the tournament was a surprise: the winner was an 'outsider', a young Indian lad, just 22 years old. His name was Vishy Anand!

We can say that the wonderful career of Anand started from this event! Anand was so happy at his victory that as soon as it became clear he sent a fax (at the time there was no Internet or mobile phones!) to his family and to a journalist friend in Germany:

"I won the tournament! I won the tournament! I won the tournament!" the fax read. It was signed "Anand".

Unfortunately after this edition the main chief of the sponsor changed and the Reggio Emilia tournament went back to "normal" standard, then the bank "Banco di S. Geminiano" was sold to another group.

But the event went on and thanks to some local supporters it made it to an important **50th Jubilee edition** in 2007/08, showing ten fine players: *Gashimov*, *Almasi* (winner), *Harikrishna*, *Ni Hua*, *Tiviakov*, *Navara*, *Marin*, *Landa*, *Italian Godena*, and legendary *Viktor Korchnoi* at age of 77.

Another really strong editions followed, when Italy's oldest and most renowned chess tournament finally was cancelled due to economic reasons.

Trivia: Unintended tournament split generates the arguably strongest B-group after WWII

Tournament split / Two Top Tournaments (Cat. 15 and Cat. 16) at 33th edition of Reggio Emilia, **played in January 1991** (initially, there was as always one main tournament planned with twelve participants – but then 14 players arrived and it was decided ad hoc to split the whole shebang into two groups of plus / minus (near but not exactly) equal strength with seven players each):

Reggio Emilia91 «cat.16» (A)

🇮🇹 Reggio Emilia 1991

Date	Type	Elo Average	Games	Rounds
January, 1991	Tourn	2644	42	14

Name	ELO	Points
 GM Karpov, Anatoly	2725	7.5
 GM Polugaevsky, Lev	2610	7.0
 GM Ehlvest, Jaan	2650	6.5
 GM Gurevich, Mikhail	2650	5.5
 GM Ribli, Zoltan	2595	5.5
 GM Kamsky, Gata	2640	5.0
 GM Andersson, Ulf	2640	5.0

Source: www.365Chess.com

Reggio Emilia91 «cat.15» (B)

🇮🇹 Reggio Emilia 1991

Date	Type	Elo Average	Games	Rounds
January, 1991	Tourn	2601	42	14

Name	ELO	Points
 GM Liubojevic, Ljubomir	2590	7.0
 GM Vaganian, Rafael A	2585	6.5
 GM Gulko, Boris F	2575	6.5
 GM Beliavsky, Alexander G	2640	6.0
 GM Epishin, Vladimir	2620	6.0
 GM Romanishin, Oleg M	2610	6.0
 GM Portisch, Lajos	2590	4.0

Source: www.365Chess.com

Reggio Emilia91 (C)

Won by **GM Cebalo**, also longtime official commentator of the games (daily in the analysis room and every other day for a local TV station, Telereggio).

Reggio Emilia - Torneo B



Photo: Wikipedia

[Ljubomir Ljubojević](#), il vincitore del Reggio Emilia torneo-B nel 1991,

Tabellone: http://www.ippogrifoscacchi.it/tdc_storia/data/1990-91.htm

Edizione	Elo medio	
1983-84	2295	Antonio Martorelli
1984-85	2306	Vladimir Bukal
1985-86	2338	Antonio Antunes
1986-87	2280	Zdenek Beil
1987-88	2307	Bruno Belotti
1988-89	2293	Vladimir Bukal
1989-90	2305	Vladimir Bukal
January 1991	2601	Ljubomir Ljubojević
	2401	Mišo Cebalo (*C*)
1991-92	2445	Lajos Portisch
2008-09	2351	Björn Thorfinnsson

Compare: At **London in 1946 (Victory Tournament**, sponsored by the **Sunday Chronicle**), the players were divided into two supposedly equally strong sections (sometimes also referred as A and B) of 12 players each!

- 1946 **London I** **Hermann Steiner**, 2. Bernstein, 3. Tartakower, 4. Opočenský, 5. Golombek, 6./7. Pomar, Prins, etc. (www.chessgames.com/perl/chess.pl?tid=81949)
- 1946 **London II** **Max Euwe**, 2. Christoffel (Switzerland), 3. Denker, 4.-6. Thomas, Abrahams, Koenig, etc. (www.chessgames.com/perl/chess.pl?tid=81950)

Compare: Arguably the strongest B-group ever: The **Masters' Tournament of Ostende** (Belgium), held **from 16 May to 25 June 1907**: A thirty-player round-robin (all-play-all). **Ossip Bernstein** and **Akiba Rubinstein** were the equal Ostende II winners, in a fabulous field including such luminaries as Blackburne, Duras, Mieses, Nimzowitsch, Spielmann, Tartakower, or Teichmann; in total 30 players (P. Johner had to withdraw early) in a round robin.

Ostende II (1907) is also the largest all-play-all top-level chess competition ever!

Note: Ostende I in 1907 saw **Siegbert Tarrasch** winning ahead of Schlechter, six players. In that Ostend chess tournament of 1907, the term "Grandmaster" (actually *Großmeister* in German language) was used, so the six players were described as Grandmasters for the purposes of the event. After winning the tournament, Siegbert Tarrasch was crowned as "World Champion Tournament Player" by the tournament organizers. Emanuel Lasker finally agreed to a world title match in 1908, and beat Tarrasch convincingly (+8-3=5).



Anish Giri wins the last Reggio Emilia in 2011/12

<https://ajedrez.chess.com/article/view/chess-verdict>

<http://www.chessvibes.com/?q=reports/introducing-jos%C3%A9-diaz-cartoonist>



Reggio Emilia series: 54 annual chess tournaments in a row!

(Photo: CNC - http://www.chessnc.com/p_tournaments/item-139.html)

2016, published in: <http://www.chessdiagonals.ch/>