

DUBAI



Emirate of UAE with more than thirty years of chess organizational experience. Many regional, continental and worldwide tournaments have been organized since the year 1985: The **World Junior Chess Championship in Sharjah, UAE won by Max Dlugy in 1985**, then the **1986 Chess Olympiad in Dubai won by USSR**, the Asian Team Chess Championship won by the Philippines. Dubai hosted also the Asian Cities Championships in 1990, 1992 and 1996, the FIDE Grand Prix (Rapid, knock out) in 2002, the Arab Individual Championship in 1984, 1992 and 2004, and the **World Blitz & Rapid Chess Championship 2014**.



Dubai Chess & Culture Club is established in 1979, as a member of the UAE Chess Federation and was proclaimed on 3/7/1981 by the Higher Council for Sports & Youth. It was first located in its previous premises in Deira–Dubai as a temporarily location for the new building to be over. Since its launching, the Dubai Chess & Culture Club has played a leading role in the chess activity in UAE, achieving for the country many successes on the international, continental and Arab levels. The Club has also played an imminent role through its administrative members who contributed in promoting chess and leading the chess activity along with their chess colleagues throughout UAE.

“Sheikh Rashid Bin Hamdan Al Maktoum Cup”



The Dubai Open championship, the SHEIKH RASHID BIN HAMDAN BIN RASHID AL MAKTOUM CUP, the strongest tournament in Arabic countries for many years, has been organized annually as an **Open Festival since 1999**, it attracts every year over 200 participants. Among the winners are Shakhriyar Mamedyarov (in the edition when *Magnus Carlsen* made his third and final GM norm at the Dubai Open of 2004), Wang Hao, Wesley So, or Gawain Jones.

The Dubai Champions:

1999 (1st) Vladimir Akopian, 2000 Alexander Nenashev, 2001 Karen Asrian, 2002 Alexander Goloshchapov, 2003 Baadur Jobava, 2004 Shakhriyar Mamedyarov, 2005 Wang Hao (clear first as titleless player!), 2006 Sergey Fedorchuk, 2007 Levan Pantsulaia, 2008 Wesley So, 2009 Tigran Kotanjian, 2010 Eduardo Iturrizaga Bonelli, 2011 Abhijeet Gupta, 2012 Ni Hua, 2013 Aleksandr Rakhmanov, 2014 Edouard Romain, 2015 Dragan Solak, 2016 & 2017 Gawain Jones, 2018 (20th), April 1 – April 12: <http://www.dubaichess.ae/do18-form/>.

Note:

Sometimes shared winners! **This listing always and only indicates the first on tie-break rule.** For instance in 2001, eight players shared the victory – Asrian, Ehlvest, Aleksandrov, Minasian, Motylev, Vladimirov, Kotsur, Ermenkov, with GM Karen Asrian winning with better tiebreak.



Grandmaster Gawain Jones, double winner at Dubai, defending his tournament title successfully: <http://m.gulfnews.com/sport/more-sport/british-grandmaster-gawain-jones-returns-to-defend-dubai-open-chess-tournament-title-1.2003367>

The tournament is also known to have attracted many young talented players, including world champion [Magnus Carlsen](#), who earned his final GM norm with a round to spare in the 2004, making him the world's youngest GM at the time and the third-youngest GM in history at the age of 13 years, four months and 27 days. Other notable teenagers who have graced the tournament include Azerbaijan's [Shakhriyar Mamedyarov](#), who won the tournament in 2004 just two weeks after celebrating his 19th birthday, ahead of 138 players, including 39 grandmasters and 23 international masters. China's [Wang Hao](#) celebrated his 16th birth during the seventh edition of the tournament in 2005 and went on to claim the championship **as an untitled player** ahead of 53 grandmasters and 30 international masters. [Wesley So](#) won his first major international tournament when he topped the Dubai Open in April 2008, just a few months before he turned 15 (taking first place on tie-break from Merab Gagunashvili, Ehsan Ghaem Maghami and Li Chao). Wesley So was the youngest grandmaster in the world when he won the event and he is the tournament's youngest champion at Dubai Open.

The Dubai Open Tournament became known for its aggressive stance against [cheating in chess](#).

In 2015, [Gaioz Nigalidze](#) from Georgia was expelled from the tournament after tournament officials caught him cheating using a chess app on a smartphone hidden in a toilet cubicle. Nigalidze's opponent, Armenian Grandmaster [Tigran Petrosian](#), complained to the officials about the Georgian's suspicious behaviour and upon inspection Chief Arbiter Mahdi Abdul Rahim found Nigalidze had stored a mobile phone in a cubicle, behind the pan and covered in toilet paper. The device was logged into Nigalidze's social networking account and had one of his games being analysed by a smartphone chess app. Upon confirmation, Yahya Mohammed, the tournament director, passed down the sanction to ban Nigalidze from the tournament.

The case is significant as it resulted to the first judgement on cheating since the Fide's Anti-Cheating Commission was created. Nigalidze, who was the Georgian champion in 2013 and 2014, was banned by Fide for three years from any rated chess competition or any chess activity as an arbiter, organizer or representative of a chess federation, and was also stripped of his Grandmaster (GM) title, although his International Master (IM) title, obtained in 2009, was left intact.

Sources: <http://www.dubaichess.ae/> (Official Site)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dubai_Open_Chess_Tournament (Wikipedia)

https://ca.wikipedia.org/wiki/Obert_internacional_d%27escacs_de_Dubai (Wikipedia)

<http://www.thechesspedia.com/blog-post/dubai/> (Chesspedia)

<http://theweekinchess.com/html/twic495.html#3> (2004, Carlsen becomes Grandmaster)

<http://en.chessbase.com/post/sensation-dubai-open-won-by-wang-hao> (2005)

<http://reports.chessdom.com/news-2009/dubai-chess-open> (2009 with some historical footage)

<http://www.chessdom.com/gm-gawain-jones-is-double-champion-at-the-18th-dubai-open-chess-tournament-sheikh-rashid-bin-hamdan-cup/> (2016)

<http://en.chessbase.com/post/dubai-open-2017-gawain-jones-wins> (2017)

<https://twitter.com/gmgawain?lang=de> (Twitter, Gawain Jones)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dubai_Chess_and_Culture_Club (Wikipedia)

<http://www.chessdiagonals.ch/402840527> (Chessdiagonals)

→ Résumé of some selected years:

6th Dubai chess championship in 2004 – final GM norm for Magnus Carlsen

World Junior Champion 19-year-old Shakhriyar Mamedyarov, GM of Azerbaijan, clinched the Dubai Cup with seven points after defeating overnight leader Pavel Eljanov in the last round.

Twelve players, GMs Liviu-Dieter Nisipeanu of Romania, Viorel Iordachescu of Moldova, Evgeny Vladimirov of Kazakhstan, Artashes Minasian of Armenia, Mohamad Al-Modiahki of Qatar, Ukrainian trio of Evgenij Miroshnichenko, Pavel Eljanov and Alexander Goloshchapov, International Master **Magnus Carlsen** of Norway, IM Rauf Mamedov of Azerbaijan, Indian Krishnan Sasikiran and Pentala Harikrishna, shared the second spot with 6.5 points each.

1990 born Norwegian kid Magnus Carlsen made his third and final Grandmaster norm and became the (then) second youngest ever to make the Grandmaster title, just a little behind Ukraine's wonder boy Sergei Karjakin (GM since 2003), both born the same year in 1990.

7th Dubai chess championship in 2005 – Wang Hao wins as titleless player

With more than 50 grandmasters playing, one expected the invited GMs to stamp their class.

To everybody's surprise, the winner of the tournament did not have any international title! It was the Chinese player Wang Hao who finished clear first with 7,0/9, defeating GM Solak, GM Riazantsev, and GM Kacheishvili in the process, and finishing without a lost game. Second place was shared by seven GMs.

10th Dubai chess championship in 2008 – Wesley So youngest winner ever

The Dubai Open celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2008 with 131 players from 25 countries in the tournament with 29 GM/WGM, 21 IM/WIM and 22 FM/WGM seeing action at the Dubai Chess Club in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The Sheikh Rashed Bin Hamdan Al Maktoum Cup was awarded to the winner of the 9-round Swiss.

The world's youngest Grandmaster at the time, 14-year-old Wesley So of the Philippines, won the Dubai Open with 7 points out of 9 rounds. The Filipino tied with GMs Merab Gagunashvili of Georgia, Ehsan Ghaem Maghami of Iran and Li Chao of China but prevailed in the tie break of higher average opponent rating. Eight other players tied with 6.5 points each.

Wesley received a congratulatory telephone call from National Chess Federation of the Philippines President Prospero Pichay. Local hero FIDE Master Salem Abdulrahman Saleh, Asian under-14 champion, clinched his first GM norm with one round to spare. Salem Abdulrahman from UAE and Zhou Weiqi from China make Grandmaster norm and also Soozankar Mohamad from Iran and Wu Xibin from China made International Master norms.

18th & 19th Dubai chess championship in 2016 & 2017 – Gawain Jones as first double winner (picture see above)

Dubai Chess and Culture Club, UAE

The **Dubai Chess and Culture Club**, United Arab Emirates is established in 1979 as a part of the **UAE Chess Federation**, the governing body of chess in the UAE, and was officially recognized as an independent entity on May 16, 1981. The club's headquarters was originally located in Burj Nahar in Deira District before it was moved permanently to its current location in Al Mamzar, Dubai.

The club's current headquarters was built on May 2, 1999 and was widely acknowledged as the most modern and biggest dedicated chess club in the world when it was completed. The building is designed in the shape of a rook.

Sheikh Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai and Minister of Finance, is the honorary president of the Club. Sheikh Hamdan has played a major role in supporting the chess movement in the region.

The club played a major role in organizing the **27th World Chess Olympiad** in 1986, which was hosted by the UAE Chess Federation at the **Dubai World Trade Centre**, and has organized other international chess events such as the 2014 World Rapid and Blitz Championships, Asian Cities Championships, Arab Championships and since 1999 the annual **Dubai Open** where current world champion Magnus Carlsen earned his third and final requested grandmaster norm in April 2004.

The club organizes several international and local tournaments each year

- Dubai Open Chess Tournament – An annual tournament organized and hosted by the club since 1999 that has become one of the strongest open tournaments in the world. It is also notable for attracting young players who would later become among the best in the world. Current world champion [Magnus Carlsen](#) of Norway earned his final grandmaster norm in the tournament in 2004. [Wesley So](#), one of the world's top ten players as of the August 2015 [FIDE World Rankings](#), won his first major international open tournament title when he topped the Dubai Open in April 2008, just a few months before he turned 15. The 2015 edition of the championship in 2014 was won by Turkish grandmaster Dragan Solak.
- Allegiance to Zayed Chess Tournament – A rapid chess tournament held during the month of Ramadan.
- Dubai Juniors Chess Championship – An annual tournament open to players 14 years old and below.
- UAE National Day Chess Tournament – The club hosts various tournaments to commemorate the UAE's founding anniversary on December 2 of each year.

Other international tournaments that have been hosted by Dubai Chess and Culture Club

- World Rapid and Blitz Championship in 2014
- FIDE Active (Rapid) Chess Grand Prix in 2002
- Asian Cities Teams Chess Championships, also called the Dubai Cup, in 1996
- [27th Chess Olympiad](#) in 1986, which was considered at the time as the biggest sporting event hosted by the UAE.
- Youth Blitz World Chess championship in 1985

Members

The club has produced the UAE's first Chess Grandmaster, [Taleb Moussa](#), who earned the title in 2004. The UAE's first chess world champion was also from the club, **Saeed Saeed Ahmed, who won the Under-14 Championship in the 1981 World Youth Championship in Xalapa, Mexico.** Members of the club who have earned the FIDE International Master title are Saeed Saeed Ahmed in 1982 as first player from the UAE, Nasser Ahmed Saeed and Mansoor Abdullah Mohammed.

Achievements

The club has won a total of 96 medals – including 30 gold medals – in pan-Arab, Asian, World and Olympic competitions. The club maintains a list on its website of members who have won medals in various international competitions. GM Taleb Moussa and FM Saeed Ishaq hold the distinction of having won the most number of medals while representing the UAE in international competitions, each with nine, followed by IM Saeed Ahmad Saeed with eight medals.

Contribution to chess world

The adoption of the rapid chess format was attributed to the club's former chairman and former UAE Chess Federation president Mohamed Ghobash during his tenure as [FIDE](#) vice-president. Rapid chess is now one of the official events in the FIDE annual calendar and has its own international rating list. (Sources: Wikipedia, Official Site: <http://www.dubaichess.ae/>).

2017, published in: <http://www.chessdiagonals.ch/>