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The Greatest Tournaments 2001-2009 Part Two

Zdenko Krnic

Our latest book, *The Greatest Tournaments 2001-2009*, will be available in March 2010. As a follow-up to last month's [column](#), we would like to present more information on its contents.

The tournaments are presented in chronological order. Along with a crosstable of the event, each tournament is represented by the best game of the tournament winner, the best game played at the tournament, and the game with the most important theoretical novelty. There is also a selection of game fragments, the most beautiful combinations and endings.

The following symbols are used to identify each category:

- King – the best game of the tournament winner
- Queen – the best game of the tournament
- Rook – the most important theoretical game
- Bishop – Exceptional fragment (initiative, attack, defense, etc.)
- Knight – Combination
- Pawn – Ending

There are three tables of statistics given at the end of the book. The first, the tournament category statistics, shows that Dortmund 2001 had an average rating of 2756, while seven years later, the organizers of the tournament in Bilbao managed an average rating of 2769. This means that Bilbao 2008 tops the list of strongest tournaments.

The second table is the tournament winner statistics. The most successful player was Veselin Topalov, with an impressive collection of twelve victories.

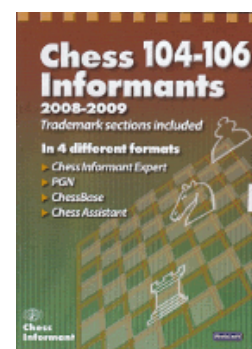
Winner Statistics: Topalov – 12



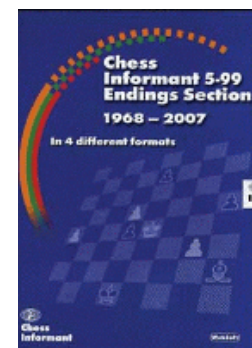
- 2001 DORTMUND
- 2002 CANNES
- 2005 LINARES
- 2005 SOFIA
- 2005 SAN LUIS



The Best of the Best



Informants 104-106



*Chess Informant
5-99 Endings Section*

- 2006 WIJK AAN ZEE
- 2006 SOFIA
- 2007 WIJK AAN ZEE
- 2007 SOFIA
- 2007 VITORIA-GASTEIZ
- 2008 BILBAO
- 2008 NANJING

Garry Kasparov, Levon Aronian, and, of course, Magnus Carlsen also achieved brilliant results. Even though he retired from chess in 2005, Kasparov had six top results. Meanwhile, Aronian only made his debut in the top tournaments in 2005, yet won seven first place victories in a very short time. Carlsen, to his credit, achieved that many first place triumphs in an even shorter time span.

Winner Statistics: Kramnik – 8



- 2001 DORTMUND
- 2003 LINARES
- 2004 LINARES
- 2006 DORTMUND
- 2007 DORTMUND
- 2007 MOSCOW
- 2009 DORTMUND
- 2009 MOSCOW

The third table provides statistics on all the tournament participants: 134 of them! Peter Leko was the most frequent participant. Out of the eighty-six tournaments, he took part in thirty-four of them. Ivanchuk follows with twenty-eight, with Svidler and Topalov at twenty-six, etc.

Participant Statistics: Leko

year	tournament	place	played	+	=	-	points	%
2001	WIJK AAN ZEE	8	13	1	11	1	6½	50%
2001	LINARES	2-6	10	0	9	1	4½	45%
2001	DORTMUND	3	10	1	9	0	5½	55%
2002	WIJK AAN ZEE	6	13	2	10	1	7	54%
2002	CANNES	3-7	9	2	5	2	4½	50%
2002	DORTMUND	1	13	6	5	2	8½	65%
2003	LINARES	1-2	12	4	6	2	7	58%
2003	BUDAPEST	3	9	2	6	1	5	56%
2003	DORTMUND	5	10	0	8	2	4	40%
2004	WIJK AAN ZEE	2-3	13	3	10	0	8	62%
2004	LINARES	2-3	12	2	9	1	6½	54%
2004	DORTMUND	4	22	1	18	3	10	45%
2005	WIJK AAN ZEE	1	13	4	9	0	8½	65%
2005	LINARES	4	12	0	12	0	6	50%
2005	DORTMUND	8	9	2	4	3	4	44%
2005	SAN LUIS	5	14	3	7	4	6½	46%
2006	WIJK AAN ZEE	7-9	13	2	9	2	6½	50%
2006	MORELIA/LINARES	4	14	3	9	2	7½	54%
2006	DORTMUND	3-5	7	2	4	1	4	57%
2006	MOSCOW	1-3	9	2	7	0	5½	61%
2007	MORELIA/LINARES	7-8	14	1	10	3	6	43%
2007	DORTMUND	2-4	7	1	6	0	4	57%
2007	MEXICO CITY	4	14	2	10	2	7	50%
2007	MOSCOW	3-6	9	1	7	1	4½	50%
2008	WIJK AAN ZEE	5-6	13	2	10	1	7	54%
2008	MORELIA/LINARES	7-8	14	2	7	5	5½	39%
2008	DORTMUND	1	7	2	5	0	4½	64%
2008	MOSCOW	6	9	2	5	2	4½	50%
2008	ELISTA	5-9	13	2	9	2	6½	50%
2009	NALCHIK	2-3	13	3	9	1	7½	58%
2009	DORTMUND	2-4	10	1	9	0	5½	55%
2009	JERMUK	4-6	13	3	9	1	7½	58%
2009	NANJING	4-6	10	0	8	2	4	40%
2009	MOSCOW	9-10	9	0	6	3	3	33%
Total			392	64	277	51	202½	52%

Another interesting fact is that during the period 2001-2004, only twenty Category 17 (or higher) tournaments were organized. In the following four-year period, 2005-2008, there were forty-nine of them. An increase of almost 150%. The most fruitful year was 2009, with seventeen tournaments of the highest category!

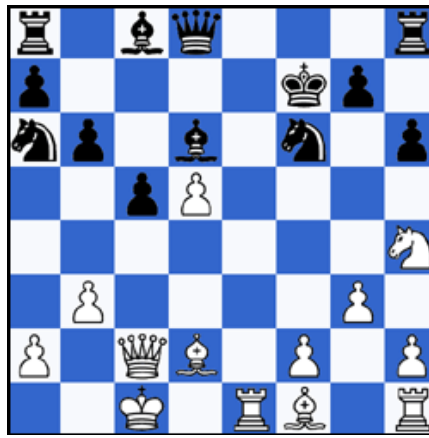
These facts justify our hope that chess will continue to grow as a sport and that future tournaments will provide further magnificent duels between the best players. In the end, dear readers, we hope that you will enjoy this book for years to come.

Since Topalov won twelve tournaments in this time span, we have chosen just a few of his numerous chess pearls to bring to your attention this month.

Topalov – Anand [E15]

Sofia 2005 – 93/439

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.g3 Ba6 5.b3 Bb4 6.Bd2 Be7 7.Nc3 c6 8.e4 d5 9.Qc2 de4 10.Ne4 Bb7 11.Neg5! [a novelty; 11.Bg2 see 32/602] **c5** [11...h6 12.Nf7 Kf7 13.Ne5 Kg8 (13...Kf8 14.Bh3 Qd4 15.Ng6 Ke8 16.0-0 Qe4 17.Qe4 Ne4 18.Rfe1! c5 19.Bg2 Bf6 20.Re4!! Kd7 21.Re6 Bg2 22.Rf6 gf6 23.Nh8 and White is superior) 14.Bh3 Qd4 15.Be6 Kf8 16.Ng6 Ke8 17.0-0-0! Qa1 18.Qb1 Ba3 19.Kc2 Qb1 20.Kb1 and White is superior] **12.d5** (only move) **ed5 13.cd5 h6** [13...Bd5 14.0-0-0 h6 15.Bc3 hg5 16.Bf6 gf6 17.Bc4 and White is superior] **14.Nf7 Kf7 15.0-0-0 Bd6 16.Nh4 Bc8** [16...Na6 17.Bc3!?, 17.Bh3 with attack] **17.Re1 Na6** [17...Re8 18.Bb5 Re7 19.Bc3!]



18.Re6! Nb4 [18...Nc7 19.Bc4 b5 20.Bc3! with attack] **19.Bb4 cb4**
20.Bc4 b5 [20...Kg8 21.Nf5! Be6 22.de6 Be7 23.Rd1 Qf8 (23...Qc7 24.Rd7 and White is winning) 24.Rd7 Re8 25.Nh4 Nh7 26.Qg6 Ng5 27.f4 (27.Nf5 Nf3) b5 28.Nf5 bc4 (28...Rh7 29.Bd3! and White is winning) 29.Ng7 Rh7 30.Ne8 Kh8 31.Nc7 and White is slightly better; 28.Bd5!? and White is winning; 28.Bb5 and White is winning] **21.Bb5 Be7?** [21...Kg8! 22.Bc4! Be6 23.de6 Be7 24.Rd1 Qe8 25.Rd7! and White is superior] **22.Ng6** (and White is winning) **Nd5 23.Re7?** [23.Re5 Bb7 24.Nh8 Qh8 25.Qf5 Bf6 26.Qe6 Kf8 27.Qe8! Re8 28.Re8 Kf7 29.Rh8 and White is winning] **Ne7 24.Bc4 Kf6! 25.Nh8 Qd4 26.Rd1 Qa1 27.Kd2 Qd4 28.Ke1 Qe5 29.Qe2 Qe2 30.Ke2** (and White is superior) **Nf5 31.Nf7 a5** [31...Be6 32.Be6 Ke6 33.Nd8! and White is superior] **32.g4 Nh4 33.h3 Ra7 34.Rd6 Ke7 35.Rb6** (and White is winning) **Rc7 36.Ne5 Ng2 37.Ng6 Kd8 38.Kf1 Bb7 39.Rb7 Rb7 40.Kg2 Rd7 41.Nf8 Rd2 42.Ne6 Ke7 43.Ng7 Ra2 44.Nf5 Kf6 45.Nh6 Rc2 46.Bf7 Rc3 47.f4 a4 48.ba4 b3 49.g5 Kg7 50.f5 b2 51.f6 Kh7 52.Nf5 1-0** [Anand]

Topalov – I.Sokolov [D15]
Wijk aan Zee 2004 — 89/349

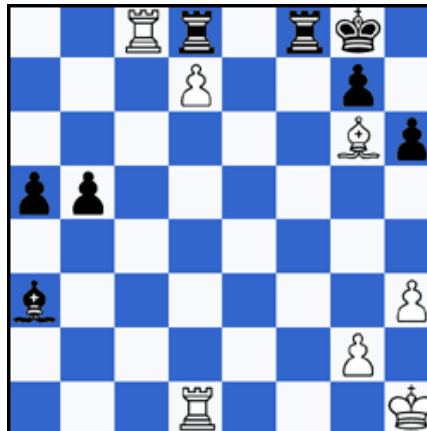
1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 a6 5.c5 Bg4 6.Ne5 Bh5 7.Qb3 Ra7



8.e4!! and White is superior [a novelty; 8.Bf4 see 66/(320)] **e6** [8...Ne4?? 9.Ne4 de4 10.Qh3 Bg6 11.Bc4 and White is winning; 8...de4 9.Be2! (9.Bg5 e6 10.g4 Qd4 unclear; 9.Bc4 e6 10.Be3 with compensation) e6 (9...Bg6 10.h4! and White is superior, with the idea 10...Qd4 11.Ng6 hg6 12.Qb6 and White is winning) 10.g4 (10.Bh5 Nh5 11.Nc4 and White is superior with the idea 11...Nf6 12.Bg5) Bg6 (10...Qd4 11.Bf4 Bc5 12.0-0 and White is superior) 11.Bf4 (11.h4 Qd4) Nd5 12.Nd5 ed5 13.h4 f6 14.Ng6 hg6 15.f3 and White is superior] **9.ed5 ed5 10.Bd3 Nbd7** [10...Nfd7 11.Bf4 and White is superior, with the idea 11...Qh4? 12.g4! Bg4 13.Ng4 Qg4 14.Bb8 Nb8 15.Qb6 Qf3 16.Kd2 and White is winning] **11.Bf4 Ne5**

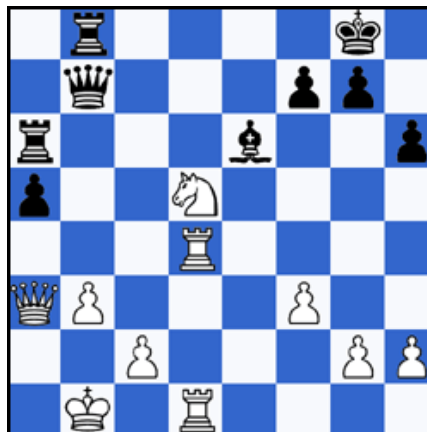
**12.Be5 Be7 [12...Nd7 13.0-0 Ne5 14.Rae1] 13.0-0 0-0 14.Rfe1 Bg6
15.Bg6 hg6 16.Re2 Ng4 17.Qb6!** and White is winning [I.Sokolov]

Topalov – Ivanchuk
Bilbao 2008



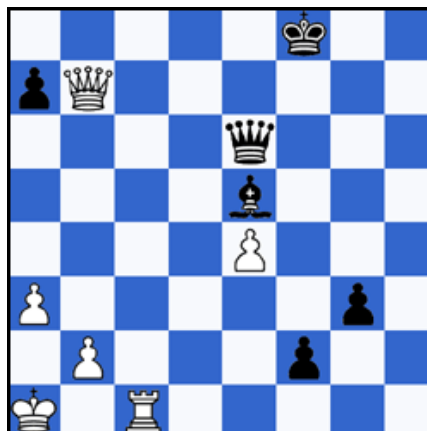
1.Be8! Be7 2.Re1 Bg5 3.g3! a4 4.h4 Bf6 5.Re6 1-0

Topalov – Lutz
Dortmund 2002 – 85/164



1.Nf6! (and White is winning) **gf6 2.Rd8 Rd8 3.Rd8 Kh7 4.Qf8 Kg6** [4...h5 5.Qh8 (5.g4!? hg4 6.fg4 Kg6 7.Qg8 Kh6 8.Qh8 Kg5 9.Qg7 and White is winning; Topalov) Kg6 6.Rg8 Kf5 7.Rb8 and White is winning] **5.Qg8 Kh5 6.Qg7!** [with the idea 7.g4, 7.Rh8] **f5 7.Rd4 Bc8 8.g3 1-0** [Lutz]

Timman – Topalov
Wijk aan Zee 2003 – 86/190



1...Qc4!! (and Black is winning) **2.Qa8 Ke7 3.Qa7 Bc7 0-1**

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