

GREEK CHESS FEDERATION

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The Israeli grandmaster Ilia Smirin caught up with Romanian GM Mircea Parligras at the top of the "Acropolis 2008" international tournament, after his laborious win against GM Oleg Romanishin. Parligras had to be content with an early draw against Ivan Salgado Lopez. The games Zubarev-Banikas and Danielian-Maric also ended undecided, while Dzagnidze lost to Svetushkin. As a result, the two leaders are now a whole point ahead of their pursuers. It has become obvious that tournament victory will be decided by their efficiency in the last two rounds.

There were some additions to the group following the leaders with 5 points: GM Kolev, GM Kotanjian and also WGM Natalia Zhukova, who beat Danish IM Allan Rasmussen from a suspect position. The situation in this score-group may clarify tomorrow, as eight of the ten players are paired with each other, while Graf and Kotanjian will try to catch up with leaders Smirin and Parligras respectively, armed with the white pieces.

Today was a good day for several female players: IM Salome Melia drew with Greek GM Thanos Mastrovasilis, Yelena Dembo beat FM Kostas Nikolaidis, Katerina Fakhiridou drew with IM Alexandros Grigoriadis, as did Alexandra Stiri with FM Orestis Stefanopoulos, while Ioulia Makka beat Giorgos Kanakaris. Things didn't work out so well for Anna Rudolf, who lost to Kotanjian, while the other norm contestant, Aggelos Sandalakis, also lost, to French IM Hugo Tirard. Notwithstanding, both retain decent chances of achieving their aim.

The top battle Smirin-Romanishin was the last game to finish and captivated the spectators. Rasmussen-Zhukova was another highly interesting and complex fight, while Antonis Pavlidis played another spectacular game, this time against WIM Vera Papadopoulou. After a lousy start, with only half a point out of four games, Pavlidis has recovered with three straight victories and faces Sandalakis tomorrow.

"Acropolis 2008" is organized by the Greek Chess Federation and the Prefecture of Athens, which actively supports the event for the second consecutive year. The Hellenic Post Bank is the sponsor of the tournament.

The event is held at President Hotel (43 Kifissias Avenue, "Europa" Hall) and will last until August 17th. Starting time everyday is 17.00' (14.00' at 17/8). Admittance for spectators is free. The event is covered by the GCF website (www.chessfed.gr/acropolis2008) with results, standings, games, photos as well as live transmission of the most important games of each round.