

YOUNG TALENTS AGAINST THE FIVE TIMES CHAMPION OF THE WORLD

A consolidated format and four very attractive players for different reasons ensure the success of the 29th edition of the Magistral Ciudad de León , from the 9th to the 13th of June in the Auditorium. A five-time world winner (Viswanathan Anand , India, 46 years old) ; the youthful player whom many see as future champion (Yi Wei, China, 16 years old); the most promising Spaniard (David Anton, 20 years old) and the best player in the history of León (Jaime Santos, 19 years old) will dispute the semifinals on Friday the 10th and Saturday the 11th to the culmination of the final on Sunday. Parallel activities also contribute to the international fame of the tournament.

These are the four stars that will play in Leon in 2016:

GM Viswanathan Anand (India):

Five-time world champion in three different formats (duel to many games, short qualifying rounds and league system tournament). Current runner-up, won the Candidates Tournament in 2014, at age 44, just months after losing the title to Magnus Carlsen. He has won eight times the Magistral Ciudad de León.

Known as the Fast from Madras (his hometown, now called Chennai) due to the speed of his game, a phrase made him famous when he was a rookie in the elite: "If I think I get it wrong." The world chess quiet man has a great personality and spends as much time preparing himself physically as technically. He is also very friendly with everyone and always ready to meet the fans and the press. Viswanathan Anand and

Veselin Topalov are the only ones, of the top 15 world players, who are over 40 years. His affection for this tournament is patent: "In Leon I feel at home and, on top of that, I usually win".

M.I SANTOS JAIME -MI LATASA (Spain):

From his childhood he was the great hope of Leon, and today he is one of the most promising Spanish players. He learned to play with his father at age 5, and soon stood out in the ranks, winning regional and national titles. He has been champion of Spain sub 10, sub 12, sub 14 and sub 16, and has been part of the Spanish young talent team of on numerous occasions.

He has played European and world championships, getting very close to medals several times. The last one was the European sub 18 in 2014, where he finished 4th place after leading the competition. He has been International Master for the last two years and has achieved a Grandmaster norm at the International Tournament of Granada, where he shared the first place. He is the second player from León playing the Magistral, 18 years after Marcelino Sión did it. In recent editions he shone in his first steps as a commentator, with Leontxo Garcia and now he will go from the microphone to the stage.

GM WEI YI (China):

His record at age 16 is as bright as that of the current world champion, Magnus Carlsen, at the same age, including being the youngest grandmaster in the world, at age 15. Most experts point to him as the most likely successor to the Norwegian, with whom he managed a draw in January this year, in the 3rd round of the Tata Steel tournament in Wijk aan Zee (Netherlands). It was the first match between the two, it was outstanding, and many people think there will be many more.

Among the most convinced are the fans of Leon, where he has achieved the feat of winning the last two editions of the Magistral, at age 14 and 15, an amazing thing, that only a genius can accomplish. Furthermore he did it exhibiting a coolness unusual of their age, even in moments of maximum tension, which inspired the writer Arturo Perez-Reverte to refer him as “The ice floe from Jiangsu”. As was the case with Carlsen, Sergey Karjakin and others, León contributes to promote worldwide the star of the near future. And this time against five-time champion Anand.

GM DAVID ANTÓN (Spain):

Runner-up of Europe in 2014, runner-up in 2013 world youth championship, winner of Spain’s youth championship, bronze medal in the European sub 16, 2011. Several times champion of Spain in school category. University champion of Spain. With this track record, Anton is now the Spanish player with the best prospects. Last year he made a debut in the Magistral with a more than worthy performance against Wei Yi, who beat him by the minimum (2.5-1.5) in the semifinals.

This resident of Madrid, whose roots are in Murcia, impresses with its ability to fight, and also for his serenity, even when the threatening chess timer and fatigue take their toll and the pressure increases . Two years ago he tried to combine his career with university studies (Math) . But, because of his good results in tournaments, he decided to become a full-time professional player and try to find out how high he can go. In 2016, in Leon he will undergo another crucial test.

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The mix of accomplished stars with others in the making was always

one of the hallmarks of the Magistral Ciudad de León. But this issue is a mixture of special interest: one of the best players ever , a foreseeable world champion in the medium term, the main hope of the Spanish chess and brightest product of the job undertaken in Leon, for many years, with our young promises.

Whatever the pairings, to be decided by draw, for the semifinals on Friday the 10th and Saturday June the 11th at the Auditorium of León, it will be proved , once again, that chess can be a vibrant show , especially in its fast modes , with giant electronic boards , live commentary and interviews with the four players, who will also answer questions from the public.

But the Magistral is not just a gathering of elite stars, its parallel activities are carefully chosen and cover other aspects of great interest: chess as an educational tool (teacher training course) and as art (film series) as well as a careful and thorough handling of the young promises (master class and youth tournament talents) . And another important development this year, which many fans will enjoy : an international open tournament.