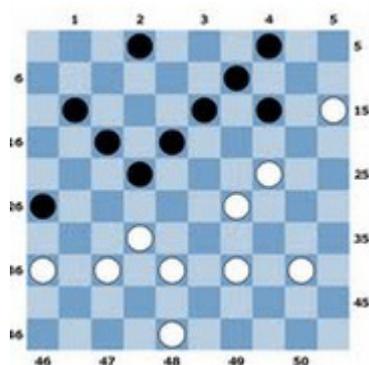


## Schwarzman raises from ashes. Nogovitsyna undisputable queen

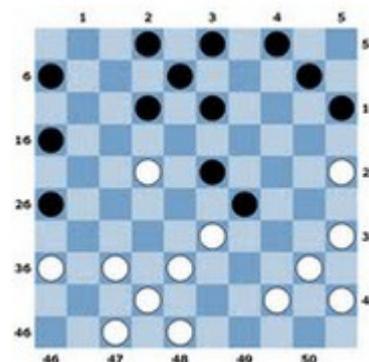
The draughts blitz tournament on the opening day of the SportAccord World Mind Games produced two worthy winners. With the men it was Alexander Schwarzman from Russia who fought himself back from a negative score and beat opponent after opponent to reach the top of the Olympus. In the women tournament, Matrena Nogovitsyna, also from Russia, was a class of her own. From the start of the tournament she took the lead and never gave it away. Manyfold worldchampion Golubeva (Latvia) followed her on a safe distance. The battle for the bronze medal was won by Olga Balthazi (Ukraine). In the men tournament, Alexander Baliakin from The Netherlands made a strong impression and won silver whereas Alexander Georgiev (Russia) took bronze.

The draughts grand masters on the first day showed the best of themselves. Besides his extreme mental strength, Schwarzmans win was in some part also a bit indebted to the sportsmanship of opponent Pim Meurs. In an absolute draw position, Schwarzman exhausted the final seconds of his thinking time and a flag appeared on the display of his clock. Normally, this is a death sentence for the flagged player. Bystanding referee Andriy Shcherbatyuk from Ukraine already moved in to announce a regulatory loss for Schwarzman, but opponent Pim Meurs graciously indicated that he had already accepted Schwarzmans draw offer before his thinking time expired. As this interpretation of sportive reality was shared by both Schwarzman and Meurs, the referee wisely accepted the conclusion of both players.



Although Meurs himself thought to have played an inferior tournament, in the twelfth round he was able to execute a nice combination against Dul Erdenebileg from Mongolia. After 41. 45-40? of the Mongolian player the position of diagram 1 was reached and Meurs surprised his opponent with:

**41. .. 13-19 42. 24x13 2-8 43. 13x2 17-21 44. 2x27** and Meurs decapitated the freshly crowned white King and obliterated the Mongolian hordes with ... **22x35!** Maybe this combination can be called the 'Flying Dutchman'.



Champion Schwarzman showed his might in the position of diagram 2. Opponent Andrei Tolchikau from Belarus thought to win Schwarzmans intruder on 29 by playing **25. 39-33?** and was heavily punished for such audacity. The Moscow mastermind completely surprised the young Belarusian gun with a silent move and a poisonous combination leading to the crowning of a Russian king and the demise of the Belarusian position.

With the silent **29...10-14**, Tolchikau was forced to take Schwarzmans piece on 29 with **30. 33x24** and in doing so he was forced to fall into his own sword. With **30... 23-29 31. 24x33** Schwarzman already prepared his deadly 'flyover'. With **31... 14-20** he continued to execute a shrewd and hidden combination: **32. 25x14 3-9!** Timeo Danaos et donas ferentes.... A king is nice, but this king would prove to be as a puppet to puppetmaster Schwarzman. **33. 14x3 12-17.** Here Schwarzman nonchalantly makes effective use of the majority capture rule in draughts. Tolchikau is forced to take **34. 3x21** with his king. And now the deadly 'flyover' followed by coronation: **26x50!**