

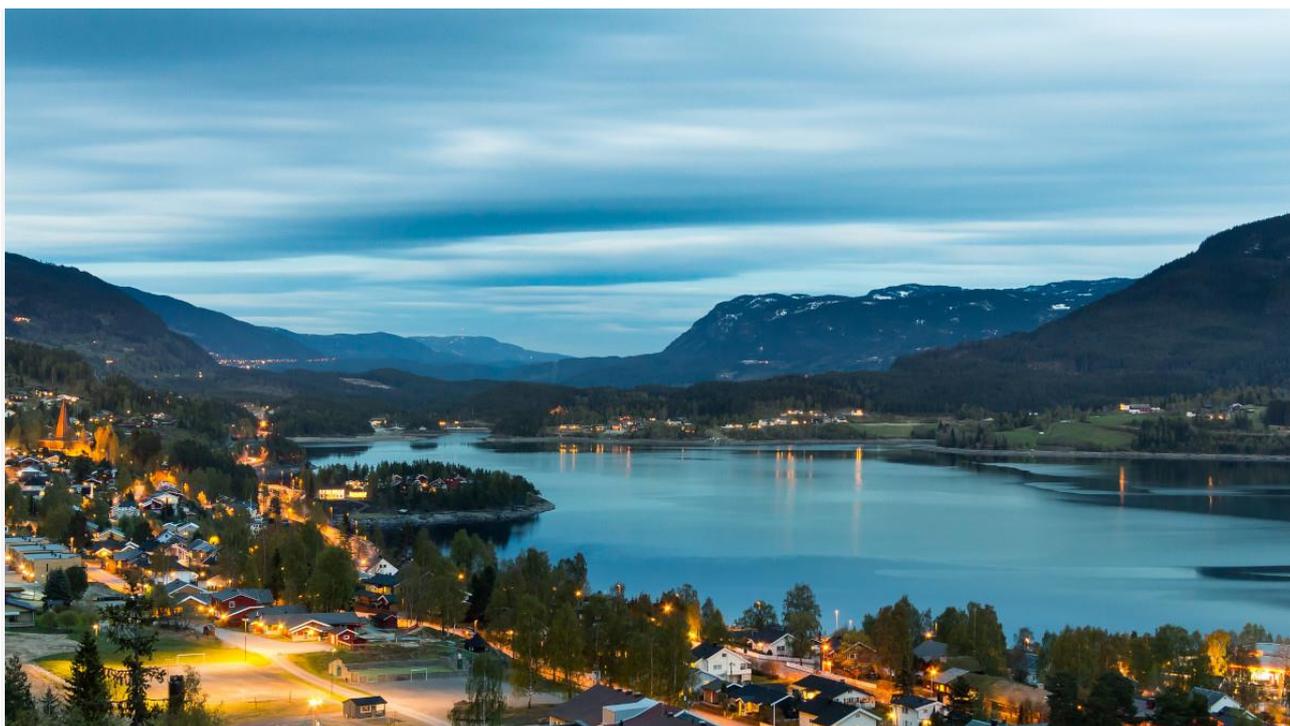
## Fagernes Chess International (Open), since 2011

A so-called **GM group** (played in a nine round swiss system), plus an Amateur **Open group**, yearly in Fagernes, Norway. Side events are especially **Slow Blitz** and **TeamTalkingChess**. Organised today by renowned IO **Hans Olav Lahlum**.

To celebrate the Norwegian Federation's 100th anniversary, **Øystein Brekke**, launched the first Fagernes International Chess Festival in April 2011, attracting several Grandmasters (top seeded Sergei Tiviakov won at 7/9, above five other GMs including Gawain Jones, the second highest entry, in total 68 players), and starting a new traditional series.

The Festival has become a fixture of the chess calendar since 2011, labelled in the first three years from 2011 up to 2013 as **The Open Norwegian Championship** (not to mix with the National Championship), and since 2014 as **Fagernes International Chess**, always organised as an Open, played in swiss system.

**Playing venue:** The tournament is held at the major Norwegian Hotel «Scandic Valdres» at **Fagernes**, 187 km north of Oslo, the capital of Norway. **Scandic Valdres** is a large hotel and conference centre in the small town of Fagernes. The hotel offers excellent playing facilities.



*The valley of Valdres | Photo: [Sigve Kjønnøy](#) via ChessBase*

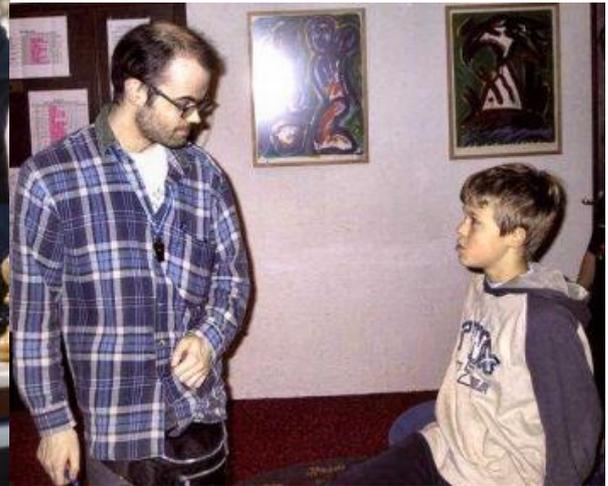
**Fagernes** is the largest settlement in the valley of **Valdres**, with a population of around 2,000 inhabitants.

Valdres is a traditional district in central, southern Norway, located midway between **Oslo** and **Bergen**. The valley is protected to the west and north by the Jotunheimen mountains (*Valdresflye*) and to the south by the Gol mountain ridge (*Golsfjellet*). Historically, Valdres has had an agricultural economy, but tourism has grown in prominence in later years. Nord-Aurdal is one of eight municipalities in Valdres, the village of **Fagernes** is its administrative centre.



The Playing Hall at Fagernes, and the starting round of the edition in 2022. Photos by Tom Eriksen, Official Site

In front in the middle, with the white pieces, you can spot **Tiger Hillarp Persson**, and at the front board on the right, superstar **Arjun Erigaisi** from India, facing Woman International Master **Fiona Sieber** from Germany, at first round in 2022.



Organiser of the **Fagernes series**, Hans Olav Lahlum had done a lot for young Magnus Carlsen (pictured right), especially the **Gausdal Classics Invitation series 2001-08**, and the **Drammen Smartfish Invitation Masters 2004/05** (Portrait photo: Tarjei J. Svensen; photo below at Fagernes 2022: Tom Eriksen)



**TeamTalkingChess**, another innovation by Hans Olav Lahlum

As mentioned, winner of the inaugural **Fagernes** edition in 2011 was well-known chess globetrotter **Sergei Tiviakov** as clear first (Fagernes Open (1<sup>st</sup>) 2011, also the 40<sup>th</sup> Open Norwegian Championship, Norsk Sjakkfestival). Other prominent Open winners include **Jon Ludwig Hammer** outright in 2015, **Sam Shankland** outright in 2016, **Tiger Hillarp Persson** (on tie-break) joint with Erik Blomqvist in 2021, **Krishnan Sasikiran** (on tie-break) joint with Aryan Chopra in 2022.

In 2022, a total of 71 players registered to participate in the main event, dubbed the GM Swiss Group, including 15 grandmasters. The line-up is headed by three Indian players: **Arjun Erigaisi** (rated Elo 2675), **Krishnan Sasikiran** (Elo 2650) and **Nihal Sarin** (Elo 2648). They are closely followed by **Alexander Donchenko** from Germany, **Aram Hakobyan** from Armenia and **S.P. Sethuraman**, also from India. The strongest woman player in the field is **Zhansaya Abdumalik**, prodigy and absolute GM from Kazakhstan. Highest ranked Scandinavian contestants are **Erik Blomqvist** from Sweden, **Frode Urkedal** from the hosting nation Norway, and legendary **Tiger Hillarp Persson**, also from Sweden.

Krishnan Sasikiran from India won the GM-group at Fagernes Open in 2022 on superior tie-break above his compatriot Aryan Chopra. Both scored 7/9 points.

Norwegian GM Frode Urkedal took third place with 6.5 points, the same number of points as Armenian GM Aram Hakobyan in fourth place.

Top seeded GM Arjun Erigaisi of India who had beaten countryman Aryan Chopra, finished fifth, with the best tie-break of nine players with 6 points.

Krishnan Sasikiran scored a ninth-round victory to tie for the title with Aryan Chopra, his countryman also reached 7 points, but had a worse tiebreak, thus routinier Sasikiran who remained undefeated, clinched first tournament place.

Sole leader after eight rounds, Aryan Chopra drew with Frode Olav Olsen Ukdedal (Norway) in 37 moves to finish with seven points. On the second board, Sasikiran played black against Alexander Donchenko (Germany) and won in 55 moves to match compatriot Chopra. In two other interesting battles, Nihal Sarin held Arjun Erigaisi and S. P. Sethuraman settled for a draw against Estonia's Kaido Kulaots.

Official Site and Standings:

[Fagerneschess2022.blogspot.com](http://Fagerneschess2022.blogspot.com)

[Resultatlistet \(tournamentservice.com\)](http://Resultatlistet(tournamentservice.com))

Reports:

[First Fagernes Chess Festival – Chess in the fjords | ChessBase](#)

(First edition in 2011, with pictures by the winner IGM **Sergei Tiviakov**)

[Bericht aus Fagernes | ChessBase](#)

(What is **TeamTalkingChess**? By WIM **Fiona Sieber**, in german)

[Fagernes Open: Crowded at the top | ChessBase](#) (2022)

[Sasikiran beats Donchenko to clinch Fagernes Open | ChessBase](#) (2022)

Organisers:

[Øystein Brekke - Wikipedia](#) (in Norwegian)

[Hans Olav Lahlum – Wikipedia](#) (in Norwegian), [Hans Olav Lahlum - Wikipedia](#)