

GMA – Open (1988 – 1989, 1990)

(Qualification series for the planned 2nd GMA World Cup cycle to be held in 1991/92; there were no such pre-qualification tournaments for the 1st GMA World Cup 1988/89)

Belgrade // Moscow // Palma de Mallorca # Moscow World Cup Open

First GMA-Open:

GMA-JAT Open in Belgrade, December 1988: 258 players, including a new record of incredible **100 GM** (some sources say **98 GM**, a record at that time) and 78 IM

Prize money: 100'000 Dollars with 20'000 Dollars for the winner ☺

Main Sponsor: GMA and JAT (Airline, paying the flight, food and location of all participants!)

Winner: 1.-6. (1. on tie-break) GM Krunoslav Hulak (Yugoslavia, 2490 ELO), 7/9 points

alongside with M. Gurevich, Psakhis, Pigusov, Polugaevsky, and Igor Naumkin (then titleless)

Best woman (extra prize): Tatjana Lematschko (Switzerland)

> ELO Top-seed player: Mikhail Gurevich (USSR, 2630) as runner-up on tie-break

16.-46. (20. on tie break) **Anand** (2555) at 6/9, alongside with amongst others Geller and Taimanov

Second GMA-Open:

GMA Open in Moscow, May 1989: 128 players, including **85 GM**

Prize money: 100'000 Dollars with 20'000 Dollars for the winner ☺

Main Sponsor: GMA, Tabani, Mitsubishi, Mephisto

Winner: 1. (outright) GM Sergey Dolmatov (USSR, 2580 ELO) 7/9 points

Best woman (extra prize): Alisa Galliamova (USSR)

> ELO Top-seed player: Smbat Lputian (USSR, 2610) on position 78.-97.; Hulak did not play 51.-77. young **Kramnik (no rating!)**, 98.-117. **Anand** (former World Junior Champion, 2525), (amongst others) alongside with the veterans Geller and Gligoric, 122.-125. Samuel Reshevsky, 126.-127. Lodewijk Prins (ELO 2205), 128. Maia Chiburdanidze who withdrew after a bad start

Third GMA-Open:

GMA Open in Palma de Mallorca, December 1989: 182 players, including **164 GM** (new record!)

Prize money: 100'000 Dollars with 20'000 Dollars for the winner ☺

Main Sponsor: GMA, Palma de Mallorca local tourism

Winner: 1. (outright) GM Boris Gelfand (USSR, 2590 ELO) 7.5/9 points

2./3. young and titleless Kamsky and Miles, both playing under the USA flag, with 7/9 points

Best woman (extra prize): Maia Chiburdanidze (USSR)

> ELO Top-seed player: Mikhail Gurevich (USSR, 2645) on position 4.-15. (5. on tie-break) 4.-15 (10.) **Anand** (2555), 27.-49 (37.) **Smyslov** (2565). The winner of the first Open at Belgrad, Hulak on position 41, the winner of the second Open at Moscow, Dolmatov on position 82

The GMA *ratio legis* behind these three Open: Top elite players do not participate to let all other GMs / IMs a better chance for some prize money, and a qualification spot for the next WC cycle. All players who were competing in the first GMA World Cup cycle, did not participate in the three Preliminary GMA Open events. The players from the preceding first GMA World Cup cycle who were not directly nominated for the planned second cycle (either based on their final point standings or on their ELO rating average), were directly seeded into the final GMA World Cup qualification Open at Moscow in 1990 (eg. Tal, Beliavsky, Portisch, Seirawan or Speelman, see further below).

Strength versus Status

From a technical point of view, these GMA swiss system tournaments revealed an incredible *strength* (number of grandmasters participating), but lacked somehow of real *status / prestige*. Big names of that time (Kasparov, Karpov, Korchnoi, Ljubojevic, Timman, Hübner, Andersson, Short, Nunn, as well as today rather forgotten players as eg. Salov or Ehlvest, in no particular order) all did not play at all in the (three plus a final one) GMA Open because they got a spot for the next closed GMA tournaments due to their rating or their previous results in the first World Cup cycle.

Final GMA Open (now labelled GMA World Cup Open):

GMA World Cup Open in Moscow (GMA qual-f), May / June 1990: **42 players (38 GM & 4 IM)** competing for 12 entry spots in the 2nd GMA World Cup closed tournament cycle (the other twelve players would be determined in the following way: six places for the next best rated players on average in the ELO rating lists of 1989 and 1990 and the six best finishers in the 1st GMA World Cup cycle, for that inaugural series of six round robin tournaments, the players were nominated primarily on rating, no pre-qualifications whatsoever).

Participants at **Moscow** Open include 11 players from the first GMA World Cup cycle in 1988/89: Tal, Beliavsky, Vaganian, A. Sokolov, Portisch, Sax, Nikolic, Speelman, Seirawan, Hjartarson, and Nogueiras. Then the qualified players from the previous three (Preliminary) GMA Open held in **Belgrade, Moscow, and Palma de Mallorca**, plus some wildcards by the Moscowite organizer (thus 25 out of 42 players were coming from the hosting nation USSR, facing 17 foreign players, note: Anand, who played in all three GMA Open tournaments before, was *not* given a wildcard).

Jussupow could not take part after being attacked and severely injured on May, 14, briefly before this tournament started. Legendary Vasily Smyslov was the nominated substitute player, to avoid an odd number of participants, he finally could not play in this nine round swiss system.

Winner: 1.-5. (1. on tie-break) GM Jonathan Speelman (England, 2610 ELO) at 7/9, alongside with M. Gurevich, then IM Khalifman, Azmaiparashvili, and Bareev (all from the USSR), further players to qualify: 6. Beliavsky, 7. Portisch, 10. De Firmian, 11. Chandler all at 6.5/9 points, plus 13. Seirawan, 14. Nikolic, 15. Georgiev all at 6/9.

Not qualified due to 'country clause': 8. Gelfand, 9. Ivanchuk, 12. Polugaevsky (all USSR) at 6.5/9.

There was no woman playing/qualified. Dolmatov finished 19.-23.; Hulak finished 38.-39. out of 42. Oldest player in Moscow: Polugaevsky (born in 1934, died in 1995), followed by Portisch (* 1937). > ELO Top-seed player: Vassily Ivanchuk (then USSR, 2655), finally on position 6.-11. (9.)

Note: There was a restriction regarding the number of participants from the same country in effect: **At maximum 8 players (plus the World Chess Champion Kasparov) of the same chess federation!** The Soviet players Karpov, Ehlvest, and Salov were qualified due to their rating / prior standing in the first GMA World Cup, meaning that the USSR had now only five slots left. Ivanchuk, Gelfand and Polugaevsky got all victim of this questionable rule then in force which limited the participants from any country, only the USSR to be affected. FIDE had such regulations in the Candidate's, too (think of the fate of Leonid Stein, twice!, and David Bronstein).

The number of participants at the **Final GMA World Cup Open in Moscow** was (only) 42, no fodder players, strictly **no player below ELO 2500**, the relatively weakest rated players were Genadij Timoshchenko, Malaniuk, Hjartarson (who had suffered a loss of 50 points compared with the previous FIDE ELO list) all at 2505, and Arnason, rated then at exact 2500, ranked as 185=.

Staggering 26 players of the Top 50 (January – July 1990, half yearly published FIDE lists) competed at that **GMA World Cup Open in Moscow 1990**, including three Top ten players.

Arguably the strongest Open aka swiss system tournament ever held, certainly in terms of median ELO world ranking (ranking never has any inflation / deflation) of the players in a swiss system!

The median player (fortunately, both Miles and Gavrikov are at exact same rating) in the field of 42 players, were rated at ELO 2580, **ranked as (virtual) no. 38–39 of all players of the world!**

... quite **stratospheric figures for a swiss system** event ... only rivalled by the two Interzonals, which were held in a swiss system:

The mentioned other contenders are the official **FIDE Interzonal tournament at Manila in 1990** (including 27 players of Top 50, using the not yet officially published July 1990 rating list as it was done for first round pairings and published in the bulletins, < 39 players from the Top 100 >, in total 64 players) plus the - next and last - official **FIDE Interzonal tournament at Biel in 1993** (including 28 players of Top 50 (Speelman and Hjartarson ex-aequo ranked on position 50/51 with same rating & numbers of game in July 1993, thus one counted), < 48 players from the Top 100 >, in total 74 players qualified / nominated for Biel). Both, Manila and Biel, had 7 Top ten players. Two players at Manila (during the tournament, among them Salov), and one player at Biel (just before starting) withdrew, they are included in the stats here.

Median player rating at 1990 Manila IZ (swiss system): 2560 ELO, ranked no. 66–67 of the world.
Median player rating at 1993 Biel IZ (swiss system): 2585 ELO, ranked no. 71–72 of the world.

These two Interzonals at Manila in 1990 and at Biel in 1993 have also been organized in a swiss system, contrary to all previous Interzonal tournaments by FIDE, always held as single round robin all-play-all. Biel in 1993 turned out to be the last ever Interzonal because of the **FIDE schism** that same year forced by Short and Kasparov (Garry later admitted, it was a misjudgement), splitting the chess world into two *parallel chaotic Candidate Cycles* for many years.

Back to the GMA World Cup Open.

Full list of the Top 50 players at Moscow GMA Open in May / June 1990:

Ivanchuk (no.4), M. Gurevich (no.5), Beliavsky (no.7) from the Top Ten, and Dolmatov (no. 13) Gelfand (no. 15), Azmaiparashvili (no. 17), Gulko (no. 18), Polugaevsky (no. 19), Speelman (no. 20), Georgiev (no. 22), Portisch (no. 24), Sax (no. 26), Chernin (no. 27), Nikolic (no. 29), Seirawan (no. 31), Dorfman (no. 32), Bareev (no. 34), Chandler (no. 35), **Tal** (no. 36), A. Sokolov (no. 37), Miles (no. 38), Gavrikov (no. 39), Tukmakov (no. 43), Psakhis (no.45), Eingorn (no. 46), and De Firmian (no. 49/50 ex aequo). *Not counting* Evgeny Vladimirov, as De Firmian ranked 49 to 54, but with the lesser number of played games on tie-break position 51 (FIDE list of Jan. – July 1990).

Initiator and Sponsor:

GMA (President: Garry Kasparov, Chairman: Bessel Kok, Board: Jan Timman, Lajos Portisch, Ljubomir Ljubojevic, and others). Main sponsor of the previous / planned closed GMA tournaments was **S.W.I.F.T.** (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication).

Modus:

Three big GMA Open (swiss system) as a qualification possibility for a **final World Cup-Open**: The first eight players of each of these three GMA-Open, plus some promising players (Wildcards) on rating got a spot then in a final World Cup Open to determine qualifier players in the planned second **GMA World Cup**. The reputed best players were all nominated directly for the GMA World Cup on previous ELO average rating.

History:

The GMA World Cup was a **Grand Prix format** (a strong series of six closed elite tournaments of **24 defined elite players**, with in each tournament 16 (15 plus one local wildcard by the organizer) participating in a round robin tournament (making in total four out of six tournaments per player), **the player with the most points then emerges as winner of the GMA World Cup series.**

The first GMA World Cup cycle (six elite round robin tournaments, the same 25 players competing each in four out of the six tournaments, meaning actually a tournament had normally 16 participants (including one wildcard from the hosting nation) had been played in 1988/89. Garry Kasparov was the overall winner of the first GMA World Cup cycle, Karpov second, Salov third, Ehlvest surprising fourth, Ljubojevic fifth, Nunn sixth. There were no previous qualification events held (nomination of the players for the first GMA World Cup cycle mostly but not strictly according to rating).

The planned second GMA World Cup 1991/92 collapsed already after the first tournament (played in Reykjavik), meaning actually that all these Pre-Open finally turned out to be ‘useless’ apart from the prize money earned there and the ELO rating, of course. There was no further GMA closed or open tournament.

Oldest player in both GMA World Cup cycles: Viktor Korchnoi (born in 1931, died in 2016), remember, in the 1989 July – December list at age of 58, he was still ranked sole no. 5 of the world, only five points close to then joint no. 3 and no. 4 (Short and Ivanchuk).

It was possible to play in two or all three of the GMA Open, even as winner of a previous edition!

There was some co-operation between the **three GMA Open** and the annually recurring **Lugano** and **New York Open** (these two series were at that time certainly the strongest annual recurring international Open Festivals, both did no longer exist today), and it was planned that these Open Festivals should determine qualifiers for future GMA World Cup cycles.

The GMA (Grandmasters Association) was founded in 1987 by Garry Kasparov and Bessel Kok to give a voice to grandmasters that were dissatisfied with FIDE. The GMA was succeeded in 1993 by the PCA (Professional Chessplayers Association). The PCA was then somehow succeeded in 2003 by the ACP (Association of Chess Professionals).

Source: DIE SCHACHWOCHE, Switzerland (no. 50/1988, no. 22/1989, no. 1/1990, no. 23/1990)

For the closed round robin tournaments (no reference to the qualification GMA Open), see under:
https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coupe_du_monde_GMA (GMA World Cup, in german)
https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schach-Weltcup_1988/89 (GMA World Cup, in french)