

Palma de Mallorca (1965-1972)

Botvinnik, Smyslov, Petrosian, Spassky **not winning** !

YEAR	WINNER	COUNTRY	POINTS
1965	Arturo Pomar Salamanca * Albéric O'Kelly Klaus Darga	Spain Belgium Germany	6'5/9
1966	Mikhail Tal	USSR	12/15
1967	Bent Larsen	Denmark	13/17
1968	Viktor Korchnoi	USSR	14/17
1969	Bent Larsen	Denmark	12/17
1970 (IZT)	Bobby Fischer	USA	18'5/23
1971	Ljubomir Ljubojevic * Oscar Panno	Yugoslavia Argentina	11/15
1972	Oscar Panno * Jan Smejkal Viktor Korchnoi	Argentina Czechoslovakia USSR	10/15

Eight editions of Palma, annually from 1965 to 1972 (including the Interzonal from 1970). Twice winners at Palma de Mallorca are Bent Larsen, Viktor Korchnoi, and Oscar Panno.

All of the then six post-war World Chess Champions did participate at Palma de Mallorca series: Botvinnik, Smyslov, Tal (winner in 1966), Petrosian, Spassky, and Fischer (winner IZT in 1970), meaning *no less than four World Chess Champions did play but not win* at Palma de Mallorca.



Legendary Oscar Panno, the first Argentine-born grandmaster, winner at Palma 1971 & 1972

Palma de Mallorca – survey by [Jan van Reek, endgame.nl](http://endgame.nl)

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An annual international chess tournament happened in Palma de Mallorca, the birthplace of Arturo Pomar. The first installment lasted from 15 until 23 xi 1965. Ten men participated in a modest field. Pomar Salamanca (participating six times in 1965, 1966, 1968, 1969, 1971, 1972) won on tie-break.

The second Palma de Mallorca tournament had a much larger budget. Sponsors were Hotel Jaime I, Palma tourist industry, Spanish chess federation and Asociacion de la Prensa. **Director was Jorge Puig Laborda** and the arbiter Harry de Graaf. Sixteen strong players participated from 27 xi until 16 xii 1966. A race between Tal and Pomar Salamanca developed. Tal won.

The third Palma de Mallorca tournament was played at Palma and Ciutadella de Menorca from 27 xi until 17 xii 1967. 18 great players took part. Larsen won ahead of Botvinnik and Smyslov after an exciting competition.

The fourth Palma de Mallorca tournament was played in Hotel Jaime I from 24 xi until 14 xii 1968. Stars among the 18 participants were: **Petrosian the world champion, Spassky his challenger, Korchnoi runner-up of the Candidates' final and Larsen the previous winner.** It was the strongest tournament of the year. Sponsors were the Council of Palma, the tourist office and the Spanish chess federation. Viktor Korchnoi who also won Wijk aan Zee in January the same year, won outright after an impressive race at his first entry.

The fifth Palma de Mallorca tournament was opened in the town hall of Palma on 21 xi and played in Hotel Jaime I from 22 xi until 13 xii 1969. Stars among the 18 participants were: Spassky new world champion, Petrosian former champ, Korchnoi last winner and Larsen winner in 1967.

Sponsors were the city of Palma and the Spanish press. Larsen started with two losses. Later he passed by Petrosian and Bent Larsen triumphed in the Palma tournament for the second time.



Arturo Pomar
Salamanca



Label of Hotel Jaime I



Diez del Corral and Botvinnik in 1967

They have made fifteen moves now, Botvinnik won

The seventh Palma de Mallorca tournament was played in Hotel Jaime I from 29 xi until 18 xii 1971. The number of participants was reduced to 16 and the Soviet stars preferred a Moscow event. Sponsor was the city of Palma. Larsen was the star, but he failed. Ljubojevic and Panno ended at the first place after a long race. Ljubojevic won on tie-break.

The eight Palma de Mallorca tournament was played in Hotel Jaime I from 27 xi until 16 xii 1972. The number of participants remained 16. Soviet stars were Korchnoi, Polugaevsky and Averbakh. It would become the last great invitation chess tournament in Palma de Mallorca. Panno, Smejkal and Korchnoi ended at the first place. Panno won on tie-break.

Virtual number nine in the series of tournaments became the one-off event at Madrid in 1973. Karpov won ahead of sole second Tukmakov, third Furman, fourth Hort, and fifth Uhlmann.

1973 was a significant year for young Karpov. After placing second in Budapest Tunggram and tying for first with Korchnoi at the Leningrad Interzonal he added this tournament win, and his first Chess Oscar at year's end despite never to have won the USSR national championship.



Smyslov, Larsen, Botvinnik and two main organizers of Palma in 1967 // Larsen in 1969

PALMA de MALLORCA

The main town in the Balearic Island, in which Candidates' Matches and international tournaments were organised annually in the town of Palma on the Majorca Island during the period of 1965-72.

The most successful were Larsen, who was first in 1967 and in 1969, plus second-third in 1968, Korchnoi who took first place in 1968 and first-third in 1972, plus third-fourth in 1969 (ahead of new World Champion Spassky), and Panno who shared first place in 1971 and in 1972.

The winners of the international tournament: 1965 Arturo Pomar (best tie-break); Klaus Darga, Albéric O'Kelly, 1966 Mikhail Tal; 1967 Bent Larsen; 1968 Viktor Korchnoi; 1969 Bent Larsen; 1970 (IZT) Bobby Fischer, 1971 Ljubomir Ljubojevic (best tie-break), Oscar Panno; 1972 Oscar Panno (best tie-break), Jan Smejkal, Viktor Korchnoi.

As pointed out, in 1970, the city hosted the Interzonal tournament which saw the victory of Fischer.

Followed by a Candidate's quarterfinal match in 1974 between Petrosian and Portisch (7.0-6.0).

Later, two strong Qualification Open (swiss system) have been organized at Palma de Mallorca:

→ GMA (third and last Qualification Open) at Palma de Mallorca in December 1989

182 players, including **164 GM (new world 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. 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).

→ FIDE Grand Prix 2017 (fourth and last stage) at Palma de Mallorca in November 2017

The World Chess FIDE Grand Prix 2017 is a series of four chess tournaments with in total 24 players participating in the whole cycle, that form part of the qualification for the World Chess Championship: The top two finishers (point scoring overall) will qualify for the 2018 Candidates Tournament (eight players). Each Grand Prix features 18 players in a swiss system of nine rounds. **Jakovenko, first on tie-break, and Aronian tied for the win in FIDE GP at Palma de Mallorca.**

→ Open series:

'Ciudad de Palma' Open series from 1991 on: first winner in 1991 GM Miguel Illescas, clear first (87 participants, including GM Razuvaev, GM Flear, GM Renet, GM Bellon, and WGM Cramling), 1992 GM Tukmakov and IM Guillermo Garcia (Columbia), as joint first, ahead of =3. IM Veselin Topalov; 66 players, 7 GM); followed by regularly played Open tournaments at Palma de Mallorca.

In 2004, the **Chess Olympiad** was held at **Calvià** with the success of Ukraine and China at the women's competition.

Calvià (Catalan pronunciation: [kəlvi'a]) is a municipality on the island of [Majorca](#), part of the Spanish [autonomous community](#) of the [Balearic Islands](#). It is located in the southwestern part of the island of Majorca. The municipal seat is the town of [Vila Calvia](#).

Calvià has an approx. area of 145 km². The municipality had a population of 50,000 inhabitants, of whom 18,000 were foreigners. Today, it is the second most populated area of the entire archipelago Balearic after Palma, and as well as an area that has the largest number of tourists in the islands. Its population is scattered around the different urban centers created as a result of tourism development and twentieth century urbanization.

Majorca or **Mallorca** ([/məˈjɔːrkə/](#) or [/-ˈdʒɔːr-/](#); [Catalan](#): *Mallorca* [məˈʎorkə], Spanish: *Mallorca* [maˈʎorka]) is the largest island in the [Balearic Islands archipelago](#), which are part of Spain and located in the [Mediterranean Sea](#) area. (Wikipedia)

Sources:

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Photo: CNC

The crazy ones: Viktor Korchnoi and Bent Larsen in play 1968



Photo: CNC

Jorge Puig (left), Fridrik Olafsson, Joan Segura, Jaume Mora

Jorge Puig Laborda, (born in 1928, died in 1989), Spanish journalist, organizer, and tournament director.

The maker of the world elite chess tournament series at [Palma de Mallorca](#) and [Las Palmas](#), as well as the inventor of the [Chess Oscar](#).

Jorge Puig was an important personality on international chess circuit in the 1960 to the 1980s, and forever a great name in chess history. His merits were not on the sporting side but in the organizational side.

He succeeded in raising the international invitation elite tournament series at Palma de Mallorca (1965-1972, including an IZT) and at Las Palmas (1972-1982, including an IZT), and some further events with a more local coloring, ie. the Olot series.

The tournament that he founded in Palma de Mallorca up to be the probably best chess tournament *series* in the world at that time, and on occasion the strongest chess event of the year, eg. in 1968, including then reigning World Champion Petrosian, then reigning Vice World Champion and coming Challenger Spassky, plus Korchnoi, Candidate's finalist in 1968, Danish Larsen as title defender (tournament winner in 1967), or Gligoric and Ivkov from Yugoslavia: [Palma de Mallorca \(1968\)](#). Korchnoi, who already had triumphed at Wijk aan Zee in January 1968, also took Palma de Mallorca in December 1968, both won at his first participation!

Within just eight annual editions between 1965 and 1972, all, really all post WWII World Chess Champions (from Botvinnik, Smyslov, Tal, Petrosian, Spassky to Fischer) made their attendance in Palma de Mallorca. A truly unique feat to achieve for an organizer in those days! Note: World Champions Botvinnik, Smyslov, Petrosian, and Spassky all failed to win at closed Palma de Mallorca series).

Puig also launched the Las Palmas series (initial years from 1972 to 1982, later irregularly played, culminating and ending in 1996, Kasparov won a double round robin with six out of the seven Elo best ranked players of the world).

==> Albo d'Oro at Las Palmas (note: *Larsen as well as the World Champions Tal, Smyslov, Kramnik, and Anand failed to win at Las Palmas invitation tournaments*).

In retrospective, [Palma de Mallorca](#) and [Las Palmas](#) can be regarded as legitimate predecessors of the [Linares](#) series by [Luis Rentero Lechuga](#)



Photo: ChessBase

Ljubomir Ljubojevic is the only chess player to win all the three supertournaments of **Palma de Mallorca** (tie-break), **Las Palmas** (twice outright) and **Linares** (tie-break)

By the way, there is only one player in the world who could win at all **<the big three Spanish international invitations series>** in the late second half of the 20th century: it is NOT a World Champion, it is not Korchnoi (he is in fact one of only two players to win at both, Palma de Mallorca, and Las Palmas, but twice missed a (co-)win at the later Linares by half a point), it is not Larsen (he never won at Las Palmas or Linares), it is not Portisch (he won the inaugural edition at Las Palmas, but never at Palma de Mallorca or Linares), ... it is (somehow forgotten) Ljubomir Ljubojevic. Chapeau, Ljubo! 😊

Puig was not only devoted to "his" tournament series, he also promoted other important chess competitions such as Madrid 1973 (rapidly rising Karpov won and earned his first Chess Oscar at the end of the year: [Game Collection: Madrid 1973](#)) or various national and regional events. Palma de Mallorca and Las Palmas hosted many pretty strong Open Chess Festivals, sometimes additionally to an invitation tournament, sometimes independently.

His collaboration with the Spanish Chess Federation and the FIDE under Rogard, Euwe and Olafsson was also very strong (under Campomanes, Puig lost influence).

In the media, Puig remains famous for inventing the **<Chess Oscar>**. He was the driving force behind the International Association of Chess Press (AIPE) which also created the famous Chess Oscar in 1967 (donated to great Bent Larsen), an international award given annually to the best chess player.

The winner is selected by votes that are cast by chess journalists from all across the world. Though the formal leader of AIPE was Mr. Sven Novrup from Denmark, Jorge Puig Laborda delivered the prize Oscar by himself!

Unfortunately, the history of the Oscar was interrupted after the Awards of 1988 by a sudden death of the founder (then, after a pause, the Chess Oscar was resumed in 1995 and have been organized by the Russian chess magazine 64).

In 1989, the whole chess family mourned the passing of one of its greatest organizers and founder figures, Jorge Puig Laborda. Rest in peace.