

Vinkovci, Croatia (Yugoslavia), unregular (with earlier and minor later tournaments)

The first two editions of the Vinkovci invitational series in September 1968 and in October 1970 can be regarded as world elite tournaments, the 1970 event had two top ten, six top twenty players.

1968 (1st) **Fischer** (2./3. Matulovic, Hort, 4./5. Ivkov, Gheorghiu, 6. Donald Byrne, 7. Matanovic, 8./9. Robatsch, Bertok, 10. Minic, 11. Wade, etc., 14 players). Fischer won by 2 points on 11/13. Tournament report and games: <http://www.chessgames.com/perl/chess.pl?tid=79986> (1968)

*According to the unofficial Fide Elo rating list 1968 (April), Fischer then was no.1 of the world, Hort as next best was no. 26=. **That means, Fischer was the only Top Ten / Top Twenty player in the field**, and, contrary to 1970, there was no player at all from the then dominating Soviet Union.*

Vinkovci 1968 may best known, but Vinkovci 1970 was the strongest edition of the series! Watch:

1970 (2nd) **Larsen** (2.-4. Gligoric, Hort, Bronstein, 5. Velimirovic, 6.-9. Szabo, **Petrosian**, Taimanov, Minic, 10. Maric, 11. Quinteros, 12. Parma, 13. Bertok, etc. 16 players)
Brilliance prize: IM (later GM hon. posthumously) Rudolf Maric vs. Tigran Petrosian 1-0:
<http://www.chessgames.com/perl/chessgame?gid=1106872>

*According to the unofficial Fide Elo rating list 1970 (July), there were two prominent top ten players in the field, namely Larsen and former World Champion Petrosian, both ranked as no. 5-6, plus Hort as clear no. 12, Taimanov as no. 13=, Gligoric as no. 18=, and Bronstein as no. 20=. **That means, no less than six players from the Elo top twenty, including two from the top ten.** Chessmetrics by Sonas gives even three top ten players, namely Larsen, Petrosian, and Taimanov.*

The event of 1974 was pure national (as well as some later editions):

1974 (3rd) IM **Minic** (2. Vukic, 3. Janosevic, 4.-6. Simic, *Kovacevic*, Hulak, 7.-9. Damjanovic, Ledic, Bertok, etc., 14 pl.). Janosevic and Damjanovic were then grandmasters, Hulak and Simic got the gm title later. The winner, Dragoljub Minic, IM 1964, got the honorary GM title in 1990.

With the exception of 1976, the following tournament editions were clearly less strong:

1976 (4th) **Hort** and **Sax** on 10½/15 (3./4. Polugaevsky and Tringov (10/15), 5. Balashov (9.5), 6.-8. Ivkov, *Kovacevic*, Sosonko (9), 9. Kurajica (8.5), 10. Hulak (8), Bertok, Minic, Maric, etc., 16 pl.)

1977 (5th) IM **Plachetka** (GM in 1978), (2. Suba, 3.-5. Ledic, Bertok, Hulak, 6./7. Lengyel, Vukic, 8. Minic, 9. Nement, etc., 11 pl.)

1978 (6th) **Klaric** (IM 1980, GM in 1983) (2. Simic, 3.-5. Maslesa, Ledic, Paniagua, etc., 10 pl.)

1982 (7th) **Kovacevic** (2. Matulovic, 3.-5. Velimirovic, Ivanovic, Gufeld, 6. Uhlmann, 7./8. Bilek, **Chiburdanidze**, 9./10. Klaric, Plachetka, 11. Cebalo, etc., 14 pl.). Kovacevic with 1.5 points lead!

1989 (8th) **Kovacevic** (2. Kozul, Strikovic, 4. Palac, 5./6. Klaric, Grivas, 7. Apicella, etc., 11 pl.)

1993 (9th) **Farago** (2.-6. Cvitan, Hulak, Sax, Muse, *Kovacevic*, 7./8. Kozul, Lisenko, etc. 12 pl.)

1995 (10th) **Stohl** (2.-4. Ftacnik, Kurajica, *Kovacevic*, 5./6. Palac, Keitlinghaus, 7./8. Hulak, Stevic, 9./10. Zelic, Rogic, etc., 12 pl.)

Kovacevic played many times and won twice, namely in 1982 and 1989 (portrait see further below). Several **Prequels**, i.e. Vinkovci 1965: Minic, Janosevic, Bertok, Vladimir Kozomara, all ex æquo

Portrait of a winner at the Vinkovci series:

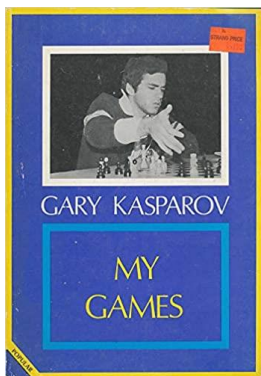
 Klarić, Zlatko (24.10.1956)



Croatian Grandmaster (GM 1983, IM 1980). Tournament director of the [GCT Croatia \(2019\)](#).

His major tournament victories includes: Montpellier 1977, **Vinkovci 1978**, **Linz Open 1980** (Jubilee tournament of ASV-Linz (60 years), Klarić clear first at 8/9 pts., ahead of 2. Csom at 7.5/9, and 3.-6. with Smyslov at 7/9), Timisoara 1982, Caorle Open 1982, **Thessaloniki Open 1984**, Angouleme 1986, **Pula Open 1987**, again **Montpellier 1988** (co-winner with Dragutin Šahović and Radoslav Simić), or Geneva Open 1989. Best ELO: 2480 in 1985 (January-June list).

Klarić was a member of the Croatian Deaf chess national team which won the gold medal at the ICSC Deaf Olympiad in 2010: <http://web.tiscalinet.it/estoril2010/EST098.html> (picture)

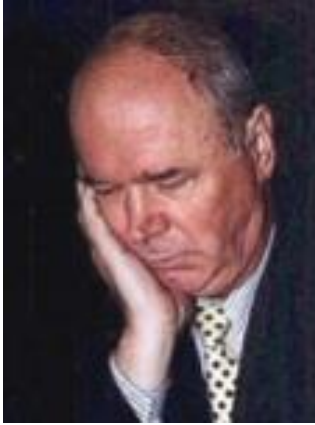


Editor of *My Games - Kasparov* in 1983 with Drazen Marović (also as editor) and Garry Kasparov (as author).

Notable game: **Bricard, Emmanuel (2365) vs. Klarić, Zlatko (2430) 0-1**, Montpellier, 1987
Replay: <http://www.chessgames.com/perl/chessgame?gid=1078038> (Chessgames)

Portrait of a winner at the Vinkovci series:

 **Kovačević, Vladimir** (26.03.1942)



Croatian Grandmaster (1976). Engineer and journalist.

Vladimir (also **Vlatko, Vlado**) **Kovačević** (born 26 March 1942 in [Dubrovnik](#)) is a [Croatian](#) and [Yugoslavian grandmaster](#) of chess. **Not to mix with Aleksandar Kovacevic, Serbian Grandmaster!**

In 1970, Vlatko Kovačević tied for 9th - 11th in Rovinj–Zagreb ([Robert James Fischer](#) won), but *beat Fischer in their individual game.*

From 1967 to 1970, GM **Bobby Fischer was unbeaten in 53 consecutive tournament games.** Fischer was undefeated in the last 5 games at Skopje 1967. He was undefeated in 10 games at Sousse IZT 1967, undefeated in 13 games at Netanya 1968, undefeated in 13 games at Vinkovci 1968, 1 win at the New York Metropolitan League, undefeated in 4 games at Belgrade in the 1970 USSR vs Rest of the World match, and won the first 7 rounds **at Rovinj/Zagreb before losing to Vlatko Kovacevic in round 8** (Fischer later <won> 20 straight games from 1970 to 1971 against absolute top players). For the notation of the game, see next page.

Highlights: V. Kovačević won in Oslo 1973, *tied for 2nd - 4th in Rovinj–Zagreb 1975 (Sax won).* **In 1976, he won in Sombor, 7th Ivan Parcetic Memorial** (joint with Jansa and Benko), and was 1st - 3rd in Virovitica. He was 1st - 3rd in Karlovac In 1977. He won in Zagreb 1979 (ahead of joint Cebalo and Haik), and won again in Virovitica 1979. *He tied for 2nd - 3rd in Virovitica 1980.*

He won in Maribor 1980 (ahead of 2. Speelmann, 3.-4. Ree, and Velimirovic; 14 players), and **took Tuzla 1981** (ahead of 2. Kurajica; 16 players including also Suba, Farago, or Robatsch).

In 1982, he was clear 2nd in Sarajevo, Bosna (only half a point behind winner Beliavsky, ahead of Nikolic, Sax, Smejkal, etc., 16 players). **In 1982 and again in 1989, he won twice in Vinkovci.**

In 1982/83, he was clear 2nd at the traditional Hastings (Vaganian won, round robin in a field of 14 players ahead of Ftacnik, Murey, Tukmakov, D. Gurevich, Henley, Farago, Lein, young Short and a bunch of Brits). Standings see below. 1982 and 1983 were arguably his best years.

In 1986, he tied for 2nd - 3rd in Zenica (Sunye Neto won). In 1986, he won then in Zagreb again. **In 1987 he became the first GM to lose a game to Judit Polgár, then 11 years young.**

Vladimir Kovacevic played in six [Chess Olympiads](#). They were: for Yugoslavia at [Lucerne 1982](#), [Thessaloniki 1984](#), and [Thessaloniki 1988](#), for Yugoslavia "B" at [Novi Sad 1990](#), for Croatia at [Manila 1992](#) and [Elista 1998](#). He won the individual bronze medal at fourth board in Novi Sad.

Co-authored *Win with the London System* with Sverre Johnsen. In the first chapter, Kovacevic includes one of his infamous games of 1980 against Hans Ree. This game has inspired many Londoners! Compare: <http://londonsystem.blogspot.ch/>

Highest rating: 2560 Elo (July 1982). Highest ranking: sole **no. 32** (January 1984 FIDE), according to Sonas, he was even **no. 18 of the world** (1982 after Sarajevo), and **no. 20** (1983 after Hastings).

Fischer, Robert James - Kovacevic, Vlatko
Rovinj/Zagreb Zagreb (8), 1970.04.21

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.a3 Bxc3+ 5.bxc3 dxe4 6.Qg4 Nf6 7.Qxg7 Rg8 8.Qh6 Nbd7 9.Ne2 b6 10.Bg5 Qe7 11.Qh4 Bb7 12.Ng3 h6 13.Bd2 O-O-O 14.Be2 Nf8 15.O-O Ng6 16.Qxh6 Rh8 17.Qg5 Rdg8 18.f3 e3 19.Bxe3 Nf8 20.Qb5 Nd5 21.Kf2 a6 22.Qd3 Rxh2 23.Rh1 Qh4 24.Rxh2 Qxh2 25.Nf1 Rxg2+ 26.Ke1 Qh4+ 27.Kd2 Ng6 28.Re1 Ngf4 29.Bxf4 Nxf4 30.Qe3 Rf2 **0-1**
 Replay: <http://www.chessgames.com/perl/chessgame?gid=1044313> (Chessgames)



Photo: CNC

Karpov and Kovacevic in Croatia, 2010

Source: <http://www.chessnc.com/biography/person-882.html>
<http://www.chessgames.com/perl/chessplayer?pid=42463> (Chessgames)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vlatko_Kovacevic (Wikipedia)

As said, Vlatko Kovacevic clear runner-up at the traditional Hastings Christmas Congress:1982/83:

Date	Type	Elo	Average	Games	Rounds
Dec, 1982	Tourn	2503	91	13	

Name	ELO	Points
 GM Vaganian, Rafael A	2550	11.0
 GM Kovacevic, Vlatko	2560	8.5
 GM Ftacnik, Lubomir	2535	8.0
 GM Murey, Jacob	2500	8.0
 GM Tukmakov, Vladimir B	2555	7.5
 GM Mestel, A Jonathan	2540	7.0
 GM Hebden, Mark L	2415	6.5
 GM Gurevich, Dmitry	2510	6.0
 GM Short, Nigel D	2485	6.0
 GM Henley, Ron W	2525	5.0
 GM Farago, Ivan	2490	5.0
 IM Littlewood, Paul E	2465	4.5
 GM Plaskett, H James	2430	4.5
 GM Lein, Anatoly	2480	3.5

Portrait of a winner at the Vinkovci series:

Igor Stohl



Photo: ChessBase

Born 1964, GM since 1992, is one of the strongest Slovakian chess players and has taken part in numerous Olympiads. His book "Instructive Modern Chess Masterpieces" was nominated the best chess book of 2001 by the USCF, with an expanded second edition being published in 2009. His subsequent works on Kasparov's games have also met with high acclaim in the specialist press and were translated into several languages. Grandmaster Igor Stohl has worked for ChessBase Magazine since 1990. He lives in Bratislava and is active as an author and a FIDE trainer.

Most notable tournament achievements:

1982 – Sub-Champion – CHAMPIONSHIP OF THE WORLD, YOUTHFUL at Copenhagen (behind Andrei Sokolov, ahead of Joel Benjamin)

His biggest success:

Dortmund 19th 1991 (on tie-break, co-winner Chernin, ahead of Razuvaev, Georgiev, Kindermann, Knaak, Nunn, Uhlmann, a.o.) <http://www.teleschach.de/schachtage/dtmd1991.htm>, but *not invited* at next year 1992, a super-tournament: <http://www.chessgames.com/perl/chesscollection?cid=1007258>

Vancouver, Keres Memorial 18th 1993 (at 6.5/7 points, swiss system, 37 players, Stohl top-seeded)

Vinkovci 10th 1995 (ahead of Ftacnik, Kurajica, Palac, Hulak, Stevic, Zelcic, etc.). Note: First winner at Vinkovci series in 1968 was Bobby Fischer <http://www.chessgames.com/perl/chess.pl?tid=79986>

and **Hradec Kralove 1988** (ahead of Palatnik, ten players, among them Stefan Loeffler, chess journalist), and **Vrnjacka Banja 1989** (ahead of Marinkovic, Abramovic, Hebden, Ilincic, Skembris, amongst others)

Peak Elo = 2600 (July 1999), ranked FIDE no. 82= of the world

Quite a modest GM and author of good books:

+ Instructive Modern Chess Masterpieces (2009)

+ Garry Kasparov's Greatest Chess Games Vol. 1 (2005)

+ Garry Kasparov's Greatest Chess Games Vol. 2 (2006)

+ Author of Manila izt 1990 (together with **Lubomir Ftacnik**, Prager Schachagentur 1990)

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