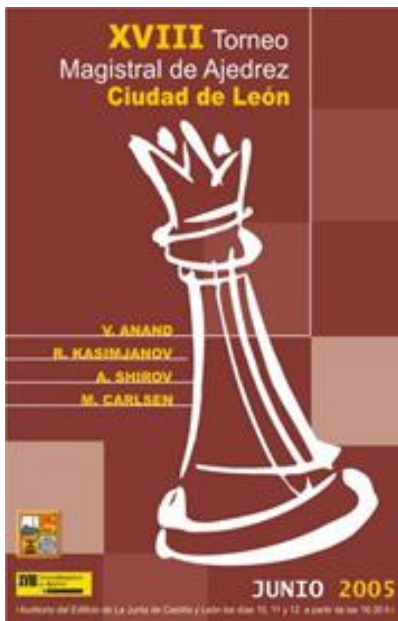


León



A city in Spain which has hosted chess tournaments and matches since 1988. For some time, the players could play with the help of computers (Advanced Chess)!

Garry Kasparov said in 1998: "*León is a symbol of the chess avant-garde*". The central strand of this tournament has always been the innovation, in order to make it attractive to the general public: electronic boards, live Internet broadcast with high quality commentators.

In the past the tournament was **played in different modes** – including a phase, *from 1998 to 2002*, when it was held as an "*Advanced Chess*" event with the players using computers during the games.

More recently, the traditional Leon tournament has become a **week-end type event**. Four players, among them mostly a Junior and a Spanish competitor, the title defender plus one (new) superstar are invited in a rapid knock-out. The two strongest players can only meet in the final. Four games will be played in every mini-match, with 20 minutes per player plus 10 additional seconds after each move. Tie-breaks will be immediately solved by five minute games.

The 33rd Masters "Ciudad de Leon" in 2020, and also the 34th edition in 2021, due to Coronavirus, have been held **online**, on www.Chess.com (again in a **rapid knock-out of four players format**).



Kramnik and Anand playing with the help of a computer 😊

The winners were: 1988 according to the official website: Javier Campos Moreno, Chile, other sources say, he did not play, maybe mixed up with IM Mario Campos Lopez, Mexico (ten players, no big names), 1989 Josef Pinter (together with Zsuzsa Polgar, who had the better tie-break score, but the official website shows Pinter as (sole) first in a retrospective survey!), 1990 Julio Granda Zuniga, 1991 Evgeny Vladimirov, 1992 Boris Gulko, 1993 Leonid Yudasin, a fine win at 7/9 (*clear second was surprising Alexei Vyzmanavin, thereby restricting Karpov, Topalov, and IM Leko who made his second gm norm, to a shared 3rd to 5th place, ten players*), 1994 Alexander Beljavsky (ahead of 2. Ljubojevic, incl. Korchnoi and young Leko, now a grandmaster, ten players), 1995 Alexei Shirov, 1996 Veselin Topalov (note: the official website wrongly stipulates Anand as winner), 1997 Julio Granda Zuniga (ahead of 2. Nunn, ten players; note: the official website wrongly stipulates Topalov as winner), 1998 **Gary Kasparov**, 1999 **Viswanathan Anand**, 2000 **Viswanathan Anand**, 2001 **Viswanathan Anand**, 2002 **Vladimir Kramnik**, 2003 Ruslan Ponomariov, 2004 Alexei Shirov, 2005 **Viswanathan Anand**, 2006 **Viswanathan Anand**, 2007 **Viswanathan Anand**, 2008 Vassily Ivanchuk, 2009 **Magnus Carlsen**, 2010 Boris Gelfand, 2011 **Viswanathan Anand**, 2012 Francisco Vallejo Pons, 2013 Anish Giri, 2014 Wei, Yi (born in 1999, youngest winner at León at age of 15), 2015 Wei, Yi, 2016 **Viswanathan Anand**, 2017 Wesley So, 2018 Wesley So, 2019 Parham Maghsoodloo, 2020 (**online**) Leinier Dominguez Perez, 2021 (**online**) Boris Gelfand (series is ongoing). Note: **The format at León changed several times:** Invitation in classical chess, Advanced Chess, in recent years: Rapid knock-out of four players

The list of winners is a bit of name-dropping, because since long time only four players are invited, among them a Junior and a Spanish entry. Thus many strong players very rarely got a chance..

All winners (official homepage):

<http://www.advancedchessleon.com/webing/palmares/> (up to 2014)

<http://www.advancedchessleon.com/palmares.html> (all)

Record winner: **Anand has won the event eight times!**

Compare:

[https://pl.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=León_\(turniej_szachowy\)&oldid=43726294](https://pl.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=León_(turniej_szachowy)&oldid=43726294)

Some selected editions

1998 (Internet in its eralier years)

- [Advanced Chess Match Leon 1998 \(ang.\)](#)
- [Advanced Chess – general info \(ang.\)](#)

2007

Anand won the 20th edition of the Ciudad de León tournament in 2007!

XX Ciudad de Leon 2007

Anand,V	1 2 3 4	3.0	}	Anand,V	1 2 3 4	3.0
Ponomariov,R	1 1 ½ ½	1.0			½ 1 ½ 1	1.0
Topalov,V	1 2 3 4	2.5	}	Topalov,V	1 2 3 4	1.0
Kasimdzhanov,R	1 1 0 ½	1.5			½ 0 ½ 0	1.0

2016

Anand continues to win "Ciudad de Leon", his eight win

ChessBase by André Schulz

6/13/2016 – Last weekend the Spanish town Leon invited to its traditional chess event, the "29th Ciudad de Leon", a four-player k.o.tournament in rapid format. The favorite was Vishy Anand who had won the previous eight events. The former World Champion continued this series though he needed some luck to beat Chinese prodigy Wei Yi in the finals.



Two young Spanish talents had the chance to test their skills against Vishy Anand and Wei Yi: David Anton, who is part of the Spanish national team, and Jaime Santos, a young player from the region of Leon.

Both semifinals and the final were four-game matches. In the first semifinal Anand played against Anton and had some trouble. After a draw in the first game, Anand won the second game but in third game the Spaniard won and managed to equalize the match. However, in the fourth game Anand, who has an enormous experience in rapid matches, scored his second win and qualified for the final.

In the second semifinal Jaime Santos Latasa played against Wei Yi. Of course, the Chinese prodigy was clear favorite but the match was everything but one-sided. Three of the four games were drawn but Wei Yi won the match because he could win the second game.

The final between Anand and Wei Yi followed on Sunday, the second day of the event. Anand took an early lead by winning the first game - maybe it was his huge experience that made fortune help him. With draws in games three and four, Viswanathan Anand secured the match and could enjoy his **eight victory** in Leon!

Anand is the record winner, of course, most of his wins were achieved in Mini Rapid tournaments of four players in a week-end type event.

<https://en.chessbase.com/post/anand-continues-to-win-ciudad-de-leon>

2017 - 30th edition in 2017 of the *Torneo Magistral de Ajedrez Ciudad de León*

Despite **Wesley So** committed one of the most bizarre blunders of recent years (against Duda in the semifinals), he ended up winning the Leon rapid event by beating **Viswanathan Anand** in the final after a blitz play-off.

<https://www.chess.com/news/view/so-beats-anand-in-final-clinches-leon-5860>
<http://en.chessbase.com/post/wesley-so-beats-vishy-anand-and-wins-leon-masters-2017>

Note: **The Leon event was and is apparently unrated** - no FIDE records for previous editions, and also in the year 2017, only the accompanying open was [registered](#) with FIDE. Not much info on the open even at the tournament site, only time control (15 minutes plus 10 seconds increment) and prize fund (first prize 600 Euro), no participants, no results.

2020 – The 33rd Leon tournament took place **online** due to the coronavirus crisis

The event started with a three day four player rapid tournament in the same format as has been held in recent years.

Jaime Santos Latasa beat **Alexei Shirov** in the first semi-final on Friday, **Leinier Dominguez Perez** beat **Parham Maghsoodloo** in the second on Saturday and in the final on Sunday Dominguez dominated play although he in fact only won the third game which was enough to take the tournament title.

Source: <https://theweekinchess.com/chessnews/events/33rd-leon-chess-2020> (TWIC)

34th Leon Chess 2021 **online**

A four player rapid knockout with **Leinier Dominguez Perez**, **Boris Gelfand**, **Ju Wenjun** and Spaniard **Jaime Santos Latasa**.

The two favourites met in the final where after trading wins in the four game rapid match Boris Gelfand won a second tie-break game against Leinier Dominguez Perez to win the event. Following these events there was **also an Open with a final knockout phase** to decide the winner and also a **Young Talents tournament**, all again on **Chess.com**.

The event again took place online on Chess.com rather than in Leon over the board.

<https://theweekinchess.com/html/twic1392.html#3> (The Week in Chess by Mark Crowther)



Boris Gelfand, born 1968, winner in 2021, pictured at the Candidates in London 2013
(series is ongoing)