

ANTHONY MILES

(born Apr-23-1955, died Nov-12-2001, 46 years old) United Kingdom.

Miles won more than ten supertournaments (twice at IBM-Amsterdam, twice at Tilburg, twice at Biel, at London Phillips & Drew Kings, Las Palmas, Vrbas, Baden-Baden, Vidmar Memorial and four times the Capablanca Memorial in the 1990s). He was Junior World Chess Champion in 1974, and the first ever English native Grandmaster otb. Miles played in an extraordinary number of chess events during his career, including many arduous weekend tournaments.

Text www.chessgames.com (with own additions); Portrait photo Wikipedia (Anefo in 1976).

Anthony "Tony" Miles was born in Birmingham, England. At the age of five, Miles was taught chess by his father.⁽¹⁾ He was educated at King Edward's school in Birmingham, and went on to study Mathematics at Sheffield University, declining an offered place at Oxford.⁽¹⁾ He never finished his university education, opting to become a professional chess player instead.⁽¹⁾

Early Chess Career

In 1968, Miles won the British U-14 Championship,⁽²⁾ and the British U-21 Championship in 1971.⁽³⁾ He debuted in the British Championships (1972), scoring 50%.⁽³⁾ The next year, Miles went on to share 4th at [Lone Pine \(1973\)](#), won the **Silver medal at the Junior World Championship in Teesside (1973)** and beat the tournament winner [Alexander Beliavsky](#) in their individual encounter, [Beliavsky vs Miles, 1973](#).⁽²⁾ He also won at **Birmingham (1973)** International tournament ahead of [Andras Adorjan](#) and [Arthur Bisguier](#) and lost not a single game in 11 rounds.⁽¹⁾⁽³⁾ and again at **Birmingham (1974)** ahead of Tringov.

Junior World Champion: **Anthony Miles won the Gold medal at the World Junior Chess Championship in Manila (1974)** with a 1.5 point margin, securing the IM title with this win [A Kochyev vs Miles, 1974](#).⁽³⁾ Miles shared second place at [British Championship \(1975\)](#) (and won the national title in 1982, see below).

Britain's First Chess Grandmaster

Miles achieved his first GM norm by winning [London \(1975\)](#), ahead of Timman, Adorjan and Sax.⁽³⁾ and later **Tony Miles became Britain's first home-grown over-the-board Chess Grandmaster**,⁽⁴⁾ after finishing shared third at Dubna in the USSR in February 1976.⁽³⁾ in an event won by Tsheskovsky, including also Suetin, Savon or Kholmov. Miles received a £5,000 award for this feat from James Slater, a wealthy businessman and chess backer.^{(1),(2),(3)}

Note:

The naturalised, German-born [Jacques Mieses](#) was awarded the GM title in 1950, while Keith Richardson had been awarded the GM title for correspondence chess earlier in the 1970s.

One of the World's Best Chessplayers

His first great tournament win was **IBM-Amsterdam (1976)**, where he shared first place with [Viktor Korchnoi](#).^{(2),(3)} He shared 2nd place at [Lone Pine \(1976\)](#), and won again at **IBM-Amsterdam (1977)** and **Biel GM (1977)**.⁽³⁾ Miles came in 2nd at [Tilburg Interpolis \(1977\)](#), shared 4th at [Buenos Aires \(Konex\) \(1979\)](#), shared 2nd at [Buenos Aires \(Clarín\) \(1979\)](#) and sole 2nd at [Lone Pine \(1980\)](#).

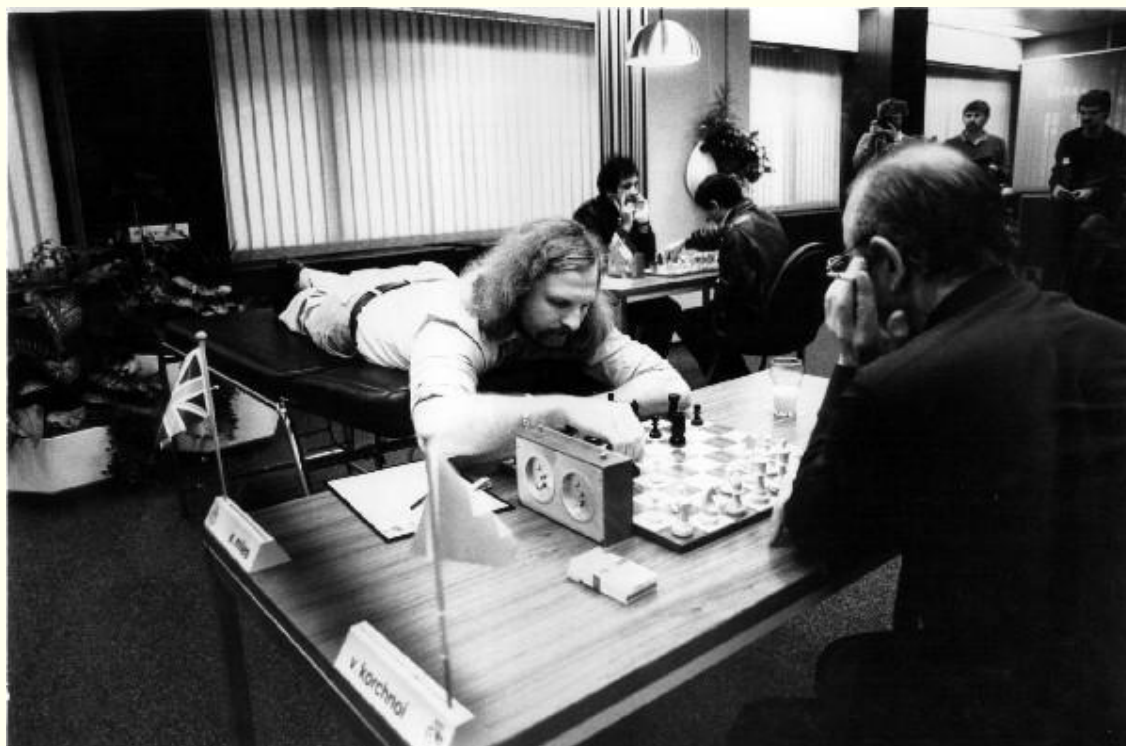
The European Team Championship 1980 in Skara, Sweden saw England paired against the USSR.⁽²⁾ Most crucial for England's 4.0-4.0 draw in the match, was Miles' spectacular win over the World Champion, [Karpov vs Miles, 1980](#), replying to 1.e4 with 1...a6.⁽²⁾

In 1980 in **London (Phillips & Drew Kings) 1980**, he tied for the first place with Andersson and Korchnoi. Miles also had good results at **Las Palmas (1980)**, sharing 1st with [Tigran Vartanovich Petrosian](#) and [Efim Geller](#), and scored +4 -1 =6 at **Vrbas (1980)**, ahead of Petrosian.⁽³⁾ He finished **Baden-Baden (1981)** unbeaten and equal 1st together with [Zoltan Ribli](#), ahead of Korchnoi.⁽³⁾

Miles won his first and only British Championship title in 1982.⁽³⁾ He won the event which took place in Torquay with a score of 9/11 a point clear of Speelman. For a player who was England's top player for a decade it seems strange that Miles only won the title once.

He shared 1st with [John Nunn](#) at **Biel GM (1983)**.⁽³⁾ In 1984, he finished 2nd behind Karpov at Oslo (1984),⁽³⁾ before **winning Tilburg Interpolis (1984) as clear first by 1.5 points, which was called his "best result" by Barden**.⁽²⁾

In addition, Miles scored $+1 -0 =3$ at [USSR vs. Rest of the World \(1984\)](#) played at London. He had three draws with Yusupov and beat Romanishin in the fourth round, thus winning individually his board. A remarkable event was his 22-board Blindfold Simul in Roetgen, Germany on 20 May 1984.⁽⁵⁾ Miles scored $+10 -2 =10$ during the 11.5 hours lasting Simul, while in a sound proofed booth and without access to score sheets.⁽⁵⁾



Miles at Tilburg 1985: due to back pain taking a more horizontal approach to chess, achieving his first two game wins in his career versus Viktor Korchnoi, against whom Tony Miles had suffered about nine losses in earlier tournaments

At **Tilburg Interpolis (1985)**, Miles shared 1st with [Robert Huebner](#) and Korchnoi, beating the latter in both games, [Korchnoi vs Miles, 1985](#) and [Miles vs Korchnoi, 1985](#).⁽³⁾ After a bad start, Miles injured his back and started a winning streak when playing on a hospital massage table.⁽²⁾ At **Vidmar Memorial, Ljubljana Portoroz (1985)**, Miles shared the first place with Portisch and Ribli in a pretty strong field including Smyslov.

In 1986, Miles came in shared 2nd at Dortmund (1986),⁽³⁾ but **lost a match in Basel against World Champion [Garry Kasparov](#) by the brutal score of $+0 -5 =1$** , remarking afterwards: "I thought that he was 'only' the World Champion. When I came to Basel, I met some kind of monster with one hundred eyes, which do not miss anything at all."⁽⁶⁾

Despite his many excellent results, he never became a World Champion Candidate, although he participated in four Interzonals: He played in Riga 1979 scoring 9/17, Tunis 1985 around 50%, Zagreb 1987 6.5/16 and Manilla 1990 6.5/13 (swiss system); plus once in the new format FIDE knockout event in 1999 when Miles was eliminated by Krasenkow in the second round after a speed play-off.⁽³⁾ [Leonard William Barden](#) explained: "The problem was that he (Miles) globetrotted too much, travelling from one tournament to another with hardly a break, leaving insufficient time for preparation and rest."⁽²⁾

Beaten World Champions and rating / ranking peak

Miles beat six WC in classical chess: Smyslov, Tal, Spassky, Karpov, Kramnik, and Anand.

His highest ranking was **no. 9=** of the world **in 1986**, Jan-June. **Best ELO 2635** in 1996.

Later Chess Career

A new generation of British chessplayers, among them [Nigel Short](#) began to overtake him.⁽²⁾ Short had already reached a higher rating than Miles, yet only played on board 3 at the Dubai Olympiad (1986), where England won the Silver medal.⁽⁷⁾ Short explained in his obituary for Miles: "I obtained a measure of revenge not only by eclipsing Tony in terms of chess performance but also by sleeping with his girlfriend, which was definitely satisfying but perhaps not entirely gentlemanly."⁽⁸⁾ Later, Short explained: "Tony was insanely jealous of my success, and his inability to accept that he was no longer Britain's number one was an indication of, if not a trigger for, his descent into madness. His first psychiatric internment came in 1987, and he was in and (usually) out of institutions for the remainder of his days. Thankfully, there was much more to him than that."⁽⁹⁾

The year 1987 became most crucial for Miles' career and life, when he made public what had happened two years before, at the Interzonal in Tunisia (1985). Back then, [Raymond Keene](#) had approached Miles and wanted to become his second. It was known that Miles didn't want a second and he declined again, so Keene offered him the opportunity to make money. English chess supporters had established a fund to finance the expenses and fees of seconds for those English chessplayers, who had reached the Interzonals. All Miles had to do, was to claim that Keene had been his second, and then Keene would split the profits with him. Miles said that he should go ahead, and if he was asked about it, wouldn't contradict Keene, but answer that seconds were underpaid. Since Keene didn't act as his second, Miles forgot about the issue. At the British Championship in Edinburgh, three months later, Keene handed Miles a cheque for £589. Miles photo-copied the cheque and two years later, after failed private investigations, he confronted [David W Anderton](#) who said that Keene had acted as Miles' second and had been paid as such. Miles explained to him what had happened and handed him a cheque for £589 in favour of Keene, in case Keene returned the whole money to the British Chess Federation (BCF). After a preliminary inquiry by David Jarrett and Mohammed Amin, the BCF decided to hold a formal inquiry into the accusations in October 1987.

Obsessed with bringing Keene to justice, Miles became more and more irrational and when the inquiry was postponed due to the death of Keene's wife's grandmother, Miles believed that he had caused her death. Miles was arrested in Downing Street when trying to talk to the Prime-Minister,⁽¹⁰⁾ later writing: "Perhaps I should mention that I spent several months in hospital from the end of September 87 – a result of banging my head against a bureaucratic brick wall – and am especially ill-informed for that period."⁽¹¹⁾ Keene let the BCF know that he wouldn't attend the inquiry at the new or any future date and that he resigned from the BCF.

In *The Times*, Keene said that his resignation had nothing to do with the accusations, but to establish the English Chess Association. While Miles underwent treatment in a mental hospital in Birmingham, the BCF dropped the inquiry. Keene said that he had been Miles' second, spending much time with him at Tunis. He also said that he expected to be Short's second, which was turned down. When Miles declined, Keene believed that offering him money would change his mind. According to Keene, Miles agreed by telephone. [Larry Christiansen](#), also present at Tunis: "I don't believe Ray was Tony's second," he says. "Tony spent most of his time with me and another American grandmaster. Ray seemed to spend his time politicking and sitting by the hotel pool with his wife."⁽¹⁰⁾

After he was hospitalised because of a mental breakdown in late 1987, when he was no longer top board of the English Olympiad team, Miles moved to the [United States](#) and also settled in Germany⁽²⁾. He finished last in the 1988 U.S. Championship, but continued to play there and had good results in open tournaments all over the planet (eg. clear first at the strong **Rome Open 1990**, edging out among others Oll who was second, Bareev, Chernin, rising Anand, and the veterans Smyslov and Bronstein).

In 1991, he played in the Championship of Australia, but eventually moved back to England and began to represent his native country again. Miles' chess suffered after the scandal, but when he was back in Birmingham, his results improved again.⁽²⁾ He shared 3rd behind Karpov

and [Ulf Andersson](#) at Biel (1990) and 3rd in Biel (1992) and also played for England team again.⁽³⁾ At Malmö, Sigeman & Co.(1996), Miles was clear runner-up behind Korchnoi.

Miles won the Capablanca Memorial four times, in 1994, 1995, 1996 and 1999⁽³⁾.

Miles was equal first at the very strong [Cappelle-la-Grande Open](#) in 1994, 1995, and 1997. He had another great moment at the PCA Intel Rapid Chess Grand Prix (1995) in London, where he knocked out [Vladimir Kramnik](#) in round 1, and was only stopped by [Michael Adams](#) in the semi-final.⁽³⁾ Miles went on to participate in tournaments, but his interest in chess waned: "I am playing more bridge than chess these days (bit bored!)."⁽¹²⁾ His last tournament victory was the 2001 [Canadian Open Chess Championship](#) (joint with [Larry M Christiansen](#)).

Miles and his followers

Miles' achievement seemed to aid others in British chess as in the next five years Keene, Stean, Nunn, Mestel and Speelman were to follow him to the GM title. During the 1980s, there was considerable rivalry with Nunn over who was the United Kingdom's best player. [Nigel Short](#) and Speelman would soon add to the competition, as the English national squad entered its strongest period.

Chess Author

Miles wrote a chess column for the *Sunday Telegraph*, before he was fired by [Dominic Lawson](#).⁽⁵⁾ Miles wrote chess book reviews for *Kingpin*.⁽¹³⁾ He also had a famous chess column, *The Miles Report* at *Chess Café*, after [Edward Winter](#) had suggested that to him in agreement with [Hanon W Russell](#).⁽⁵⁾ The column, which ran from July 1999 to October 2001, is still available online.⁽¹⁴⁾

Theoretical Contributions

A line of the Queen's Indian Defence (E12, <http://www.chessgames.com/perl/ches...>, 1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 e6 3. ♗f3 b6 4. ♙f4) is called the *Miles Variation*.

Famous game

In 1980 Miles beat reigning World Chess Champion Anatoly Karpov in the first round of the European Team Chess Championships played in Skara, Sweden with black using an incredibly provocative opening (1.e4 a6?! 2. d4 b5) which he dubbed the **Birmingham Defence** after his home town.



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THE VII th EUROPEAN TEAM
CHAMPIONSHIP IN CHESS

SKARA 1980

<p>SKARA 9 VII LAG-EM I SCHACK</p>		White: <u>A. Karpov</u> Points <u>0</u> Nation: _____ ELO _____ Black: <u>A. J. Miles</u> Points <u>1</u> Nation: _____ ELO _____ Round _____			
	WHITE	BLACK		WHITE	BLACK
1	e2 e4	a7-a6	26	Qd3xd7(100)	Bc7b4(101)
2	d2 d4	b7-b5	27	Re1e3(124)	Qc5d5(119)
3	Nf3(12)	Bc8-b7(4)	28	Qd7xd5(100)	Bb7d5(100)
4	Bb1-d3(6)	Nf6(12)	29	Nc4xc3(100)	Rf8e8(101)
5	Qd1-e2(4)	e7-e6(6)	30	Nc3e2(100)	Qc5d5(100)
6	a2-a4(9)	c7-c5(12)	31	h2h4(100)	Kh8g7(100)
7	d4xc5(15)	Bb8xc5(12)	32	h4xg5(100)	h6g5(100)
8	Nbd2(14)	b5-b4(2)	33	Bb1d3(100)	a5-a5(100)
9	e4-e5(36)	Nf8-d5(100)	34	Re3g3(100)	Ka7f6(100)
10	Nd2c4(100)	Bc5-e7(38)	35	Ra3b4(100)	Bc6b(100)
11	O-O(40)	Bc6 (45)	36	Ke1f1(100)	Bb6e5(100)
12	Bd1d2(54)	Qd8e7(2)	37	Ke1d1(100)	Rc8h8(100)
13	c2-c4(66)	b4xc3(2)	38	f4f4(100)	a5c4(100)
14	Nc4xc3(60)	Nd5xc3(57)	39	Nc2xf4(100)	Bd5c6(100)
15	Bd2xc3(62)	Nc6b4(50)	40	Nc4e2(100)	Rh1h1(100)
16	Bc3xb4(70)	Be7xd4(50)	41	Ke1d2(100)	Rh1h2(100)
17	Rac1d1(73)	Qd7b6(100)	42	g3-g3(100)	Bc6f3(100)
18	Bd3e4(74)	O-O(100)	43	Qd1g8(100)	Rh2g2(100)
19	Nf3g5(100)	h7h6(100)	44	Ke1d1(100)	Bf3e2(100)
20	Be4h7+(100)	Kg8h8(100)	45	Bd3e2(100)	Rg2g3(100)
21	Bb7b1(110)	Bb7b1 (100)	46	kg8-e8(100)	Bc5-c7
22	Ng5e4(112)	Ra8b8(100)	47		
23	Qd2-d3(115)	Qd2-d3 (100)	48	2.30	2.34
24	Rf1e1(115)	Qd2-d3 (100)	49		
25	Rd1e1(120)	Qb1c5(100)	50		

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Karpov, Anatoly (2725) - Miles, Anthony (2545)
7th EU-chT (Men), Skara (final, round 1), 1980

1.e4 a6 2.d4 b5 3.Nf3 Bb7 4.Bd3 Nf6 5.Qe2 e6 6.a4 c5 7.dxc5 Bxc5 8.Nbd2 b4 9.e5 Nd5 10.Ne4 Be7 11.O-O Nc6 12.Bd2 Qc7 13.c4 bxc3 14.Nxc3 Nxc3 15.Bxc3 Nb4 16.Bxb4 Bxb4 17.Rac1 Qb6 18.Be4 O-O 19.Ng5 h6 20.Bh7+ Kh8 21.Bb1 Be7 22.Ne4 Rac8 23.Qd3 Rxc1 24.Rxc1 Qxb2 25.Re1 Qxe5 26.Qxd7 Bb4 27.Re3 Qd5 28.Qxd5 Bxd5 29.Nc3 Rc8 30.Ne2 g5 31.h4 Kg7 32.hxg5 hxg5 33.Bd3 a5 34.Rg3 Kf6 35.Rg4 Bd6 36.Kf1 Be5 37.Ke1 Rh8 38.f4 gxf4 39.Nxf4 Bc6 40.Ne2 Rh1+ 41.Kd2 Rh2 42.g3 Bf3 43.Rg8 Rg2 44.Ke1 Bxe2 45.Bxe2 Rg3 46.Ra8 Bc7 0-1

→ replay the game and enjoy: <http://www.chessgames.com/perl/chessgame?gid=1068157>

Private Life

Miles was divorced twice. One of his wives was [Jana Malypetrova Hartston Miles Bellin](#). He had no children.⁽²⁾ Suffering from diabetes, Miles died of a heart failure in his sleep, in Harborne, Birmingham.^{(2),(3)}

Death

Anthony Miles suffered from [diabetes](#) and a post mortem found that this contributed to his death by heart failure on 12 November 2001. His body was found at his home in [Harborne, Birmingham](#), after a friend called on him to take him to a [bridge](#) club. He was cremated at [Lodge Hill Crematorium](#) in [Selly Oak](#) on 23 November.

Sources

(1) *The Telegraph*, 14 November 2001, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obi...>

(2) [Leonard William Barden](#), *The Guardian*, 14 November 2001, <http://www.theguardian.com/news/200...>

(3) Mark Crowther, *The Week in Chess* 367, 19 November 2001, <http://www.theweekinchess.com/html/...>

(4) [Jacques Mieses](#) (GM title in 1950) was a naturalized Brit originally from Germany. [Keith Bevan Richardson](#) held the Correspondence GM title.

(5) [Edward Winter](#), *Tony Miles (1955-2001)*, <http://www.chesshistory.com/winter/...>

(6) Interview with Heinz Weber, *Basler Zeitung*, 23 May 1986, p. 3. Reprinted in [Edward Winter](#), *Kasparov v Miles*, Basle, 1986, <http://www.chesshistory.com/winter/...>. Translated by [User: Karpova](#), original: "Ich glaubte, er sei 'bloss' der Weltmeister. Als ich dann nach Basel kam, traf ich eine Art **Monster mit hundert Augen**, denen auch nicht das Geringste entgeht."

(7) Wojciech Bartelski, *OlimpBase :: the online encyclopaedia of international team chess events*, <http://www.olimpbase.org/1986/1986i...> and <http://www.olimpbase.org/1986/1986e...>

(8) Nigel Short, *Sunday Telegraph*, 18 November 2001. Reproduced in [Justin Horton](#), *Ten years ago this week*, 16 November 2011, <http://streathambrixonchess.blogspot...>

(9) Nigel Short, *The Sunday chess column*, *The Telegraph*, 30 November 2003, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/...>

(10) Nick Pitt, *Sunday Times Colour Supplement*, *Keene's Gambit*, 13 January 1991, pp. 16-26. Reproduced in <http://streathambrixonchess.blogspot...> Anthony Miles, *Generous to a Fault*, *Kingpin*, issue 15, Summer 1989. Published online on 10 November 2011, <http://www.kingpinchess.net/2011/11...>

(11) Anthony Miles in a letter to Edward Winter, 24 July 1989. Reprinted in [Edward Winter](#), *Tony Miles (1955-2001)*, <http://www.chesshistory.com/winter/...>

(12) Anthony Miles in an e-mail to Edward Winter, 10 January 2001. Reproduced in [Edward Winter](#), *Tony Miles (1955-2001)*, <http://www.chesshistory.com/winter/...>

(13) Review of [Eric Schiller](#)'s *Unorthodox Chess Openings*: <http://www.kingpinchess.net/2009/02...>
Review of [Keene's](#) and [Michael Gelb's](#) *Samurai Chess: Mastering the Martial Art of the Mind*: <http://www.kingpinchess.net/2009/02...>

(14) Zip-file for download, <http://www.chesscafe.com/archives/p...>

Source: <http://www.chessgames.com/perl/chessplayer?pid=15843> (plus own additions)

Victoires de Tony Miles dans les tournois internationaux (sélection)



Miles disputa le tournoi de Tilburg 1985, allongé

- Birmingham en 1973 et 1974,
- Londres 1975, 1981, 1982, 1984,
- [Amsterdam \(IBM\)](#) en 1976 (*ex æquo* avec [Kortchnoi](#)) et en 1977,
- Stockholm 1976,
- Lanzerote 1977,
- [Bienne](#) (tournoi GM) 1977, 1983,
- Las Palmas 1980 (*ex æquo* avec [Petrosian](#) et [Geller](#)),
- Londres 1980 (*Phillips and Drew*) (*ex æquo* avec [Kortchnoi](#) et [Andersson](#))
- Philadelphie (*World Open*) 1980 et 1987,
- Gausdal 1980,
- Baerum 1980,
- Puerto Makryn 1980,
- Vrbas 1980,
- Baden-Baden 1981.
- Vancouver 1981,
- Manchester 1981, 1982,
- Metz 1983, 1985, 1989,
- New York 1983,
- Bath 1983,
- [Tournoi de Tilburg](#) en 1984 et en 1985 (*ex æquo* avec [Kortchnoi](#) et [Hübner](#)),
- Portoroz-Ljubljana 1985 ([méorial Milan Vidmar](#), *ex æquo* avec [Portisch](#) et [Ribli](#)),
- Griesbah 1984,
- Ostende 1985, 1986, 1991,
- Mendrisio 1985,
- Rome Open 1990, Miles termine seul vainqueur (avec [Anand](#), [Smyslov](#), Bronstein et Bareïev parmi les participants)
- Auckland 1992,
- Melbourne 1992,
- Séville 1993,
- quatre fois le [méorial Capablanca](#):
 - à Matanzas en 1994 et en 1995, à Ciengfuegos en 1996, à La Havane en 1999,
- [Open de Cappelle-la-Grande](#)
 - premier *ex æquo* en 1994 et 1997, vainqueur au départage en 1995,
- Andorra Open 1994,
- Benasque 1995,
- Sakthi 1996,
- [Merida](#) Open 1999 ([méorial Carlos Torre](#))
- Canadian Open Chess Championship 2001 (*ex æquo* avec [Christiansen](#))

Source: https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tony_Miles