

PRESS RELEASE 1  
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## OPENING CEREMONY 2019

As ever the first two days of the Gibraltar International Chess Festival are extremely hectic. There's the arrival, registration and catching up with old friends and making new. But most importantly everyone wants to know who they are playing in the opening round and so the first of the pairings on Monday night were drawn – with the help of last year's winner Levon Aronian and Miss Gibraltar 2018 Star Farrugia– determining who would play the top seed in this year's tournament.



*CAPTION: Organiser and Hotel Manager Franco Ostuni, tournament director Stuart Conquest, Miss Gibraltar 2018 Star Farrugia, Gibraltar's Sport and Culture Minister Steven Linares and festival founder Brian Callaghan. Pic: David Llada.*

The official opening was carried out by Gibraltar's Sport, Culture and Youth Minister Steven Linares who gave his government's full support to the event. The Government, he told all those present, thought very highly of this tournament.

"This is why we invest in this tournament and we are now its biggest sponsor and will continue for many years to come. The value of this tournament to us is immense," he said.

Everyone in Gibraltar he added was proud to be celebrating 17 years of chess on the Rock.

"This is the best open tournament in the world. For little Gibraltar where we only have 32, 0000 people we are very, very proud of this tournament."



*CAPTION: Stuart Conquest, last year's winner Levon Aronian (in the background), Miss Gibraltar 2018 Star Farrugia and festival Chief Arbitrer Laurent Freyd.*



CAPTION: Aronian drawing of lots with Laurent Freyd. Pic: David Llada.

**BELOW THE PAIRINGS FOR THE FIRST 10 BOARDS IN TODAY'S FIRST ROUND**

Round 1 on 2019/01/22 at 15.00

Bo.	No.		Name	Rtg	Pts.	Result	Pts.		Name	Rtg	No.
1	125	IM	Kiik Kalle	2410	0		0	GM	Vachier-Lagrave Maxime	2780	1
2	2	GM	Aronian Levon	2767	0		0	IM	Sukandar Irine Kharisma	2397	129
3	133	IM	Pigott John C	2387	0		0	GM	So Wesley	2765	3
4	4	GM	Yu Yangyi	2764	0		0	IM	Erenberg Ariel	2409	126
5	132	FM	Blesic Vaso	2390	0		0	GM	Nakamura Hikaru	2749	5
6	6	GM	Navara David	2738	0		0	IM	Shachar Ehud	2391	130
7	131	IM	Vega Gutierrez Sabrina	2390	0		0	GM	Naiditsch Arkadij	2734	7
8	8	GM	Vitiugov Nikita	2720	0		0	IM	Shvayger Yuliya	2387	134
9	135	IM	Seeman Tarvo	2386	0		0	GM	Le Quang Liem	2714	9
10	10	GM	Ivanchuk Vassily	2713	0		0	WGM	Guichard Pauline	2378	136

ENDS -

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You can find video interviews and other source material from the days round available to embed from YouTube Channel :[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCa1RTZ95\\_wMc5dbzl8ugTEQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCa1RTZ95_wMc5dbzl8ugTEQ)

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