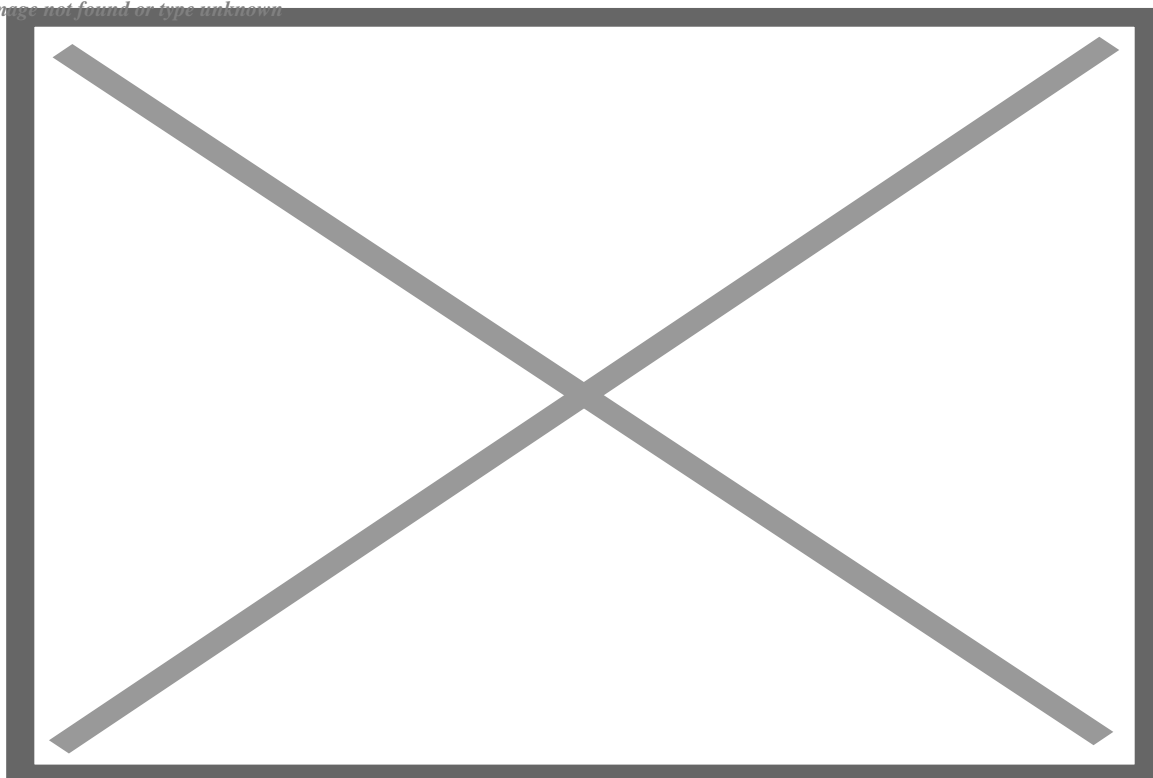


Ermes Espinosa sets the pace in Panama Chess Open

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Havana, November 9 (JIT) -- Cuban Ermes Espinosa kept the lead in the Panama Chess Open 2023, with only four rounds left to define its champion.

A victory over local Jorge Luis Baules and a draw against Peruvian Renato Terry marked his most recent performances in the Isthmian capital. His accumulated points reached 4.5 out of a possible five, a benchmark in the standings thanks to a better coefficient than his two companions in the lead.

The success against Baules was achieved in 26 moves of a French Defense in which he led the black pieces, taking better advantage of a queen sacrifice. The equality signed with Terry could be considered almost "parlor", since it was sealed in only 16 moves with a similar strategy.

Terry himself, winner before of the Cuban Maritza Arribas, and the Norwegian Johan-Sebastian Christiansen, equal Ermes' harvest and will be rivals this Thursday during the sixth date.

On the other side of the table of the Villaclareño will be the Serbian Aleksa Strikovic, one of the seven players who have four units and are advancing behind the leaders.

After losing in her fourth game, Maritza divided honors with her compatriot Henry Soto, who completed the day with another draw against Cristian Cruz from Peru.

After these results, Maritza and Henry were at 3.5 points, a figure that also appears in the scoreboard of the West Indian Omar Almeida, victim of Christiansen, but executioner of the Argentinean Carolina Lujan.

Halfway through the nine-round Swiss System tournament, the four chess players from the island are performing well, as they are in the top 20 positions of a ranking that includes 75 players from 12 countries.

Almeida will reach the next round in 11th place, Maritza is two places below, while Henry is in 17th place.

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