

24-Hour Marathon Report

After organizing and directing 150+ tournaments from 1982 to 1991, I called it quits to pursue an accounting career and moved to Hong Kong for 6 years. I got interested in the idea again recently but I wanted to do something that is totally different from what I have done before. Just before the Keres, I finally hit upon the idea of combining a 24-hour marathon with the possibility of playing simultaneously in several events. I was even prepared to lose \$100-\$200 to see it happen.

The first ever 24-hour marathon in Canada started at 10am on August 26. Altogether 54 players played in the 5 events. There were a total of 103 entries: 32 in Marathon, 24 in the rated daytime Mad Active, 18 in Mad Blitz, 15 in Midnight Blitz and 14 in non-rated Midnight Active. There were 5 players from Alberta and 1 from Nanaimo. FM Nigel Fullbrook, Steven Sadoway, Kaleim Nathani and Guy Turgeon entered all 5 events and played 45 tournament games in total! FM Gary Basanta, Jason Feng and Mark Barnes entered 4 events. An amusing incident happened at 4:30am, four policemen came in to check out a security alarm that went off next door. One of them referred to the Marathon and asked, "Does this happen all the time?" I was tempted to answer "Yes, every weekend!" Thank you once again to all the players who made this report possible. Watch out for a possible sequel on Dec. 30! Thank you also to my assistants: Mark Barnes, Jason Williamson, Jason Feng and Tris McPherson.

The Mad Active had 3 masters and 4 experts. A total of 10 players played simultaneously in the Marathon. To make it easier for the simul players, we put games of the same player side by side. When simul players played each other, 3 boards were lined up together. Basanta swept this event with 5/5 by defeating his roommate Dale Haukenfrers, 4/5, in the process. Nathani took the <1800 prize with 3.5/5. Yamei Wang (1767), a 13-year-old girl, upset 2 simul players, Fullbrook (2323) and David Ottosen (2107)!!

There were 2 masters and an expert in the Mad Blitz. Seven Marathon players took 2 byes to play in the event. Basanta decided to forgo the \$60 first prize in this event to secure his hold on the Marathon. The surprise winner was fourth-ranked junior, Sadoway, with his 11/14 score. He scored 4/6 against the top 3 players.

Three former BC champs and 3 experts played in the Midnight Blitz that ended at 12:45am. Basanta took the guaranteed prize of \$100 easily with 14/14, five points ahead of second place Alex Kononov! Nine players took byes in the Marathon to play in this event.

I was most surprised by the Midnight Active, which started at 1am. Although there was a \$100 guaranteed first prize, I only expected about 6 players. The 4 masters and three 2100+ players made it the strongest event!! Eight players played simultaneously in the Marathon. Roman Jiganchine and senior, Dragoljub Milicevic, tied for first with 4/5. Fatigue finally took its toll on Basanta who withdrew after 4 rounds to concentrate on the Marathon. Fullbrook, who had not slept for the second night, blundered against Milicevic in the crucial last round encounter at 6am. An amusing spectacle was that of "B" and "A" players giving simuls to experts and masters!

Out of the 32 players in the Marathon, only 23 were still in the tournament at 8am for round 10. The initial field included 2 masters and 6 experts. Basanta took the guaranteed first prize of \$200 with 7.5/10. Ottosen came second with 6.5. Ottosen, Micah Hughey, Peter LaCroix and Dawn Rock apparently made it back for the Edmonton CC Monday night active despite a 16-hour car ride!! James Kerry and Sadoway took the <2000 prize with 6. Desmond Stephens and Denis Belangeer took the <1800 prize also with 6. The following 7 players played all 10 games in the Marathon: Ottosen, Hughey, Stephens, Belangeer, Neil Hamanishi, John Wilson and Wade German! Four other players played 9 games: Basanta, LaCroix, Rock and Don Monteith. Fatigue took its toll on 3 experts who were only half-point off the lead when they withdrew. Not surprisingly, there were several lightning speed draws in round 10. Three of the final 23 players apparently played in the 11-player Sunday 1pm non-rated active tournament held across town! In particular, hats off to junior James Chan who was apparently the only one who played in the first and last round of both events!

TD, Organizer and Report: NTD Henry Chiu