

 So Wesley (09.10.1993)



Born in Las Piñas (Philippines) in 1993, after switching Federation in 2014 playing for the United States. Grandmaster (2007), one of the youngest in chess history ever.

Philippine U-20 Champion at 13. ASEAN U-12 Champion in 2005. A Chess Olympian at age of 12 and a half year (first participation in the Chess Olympiads in May / June 2006 at Turin, Italy).

So surpassed the current world champion, Carlsen, by being at 14 years of age the youngest chess player to reach the level of 2,600 ELO points, a benchmark later surpassed by Chinese Wei, Yi.

On the 2013 November 1st FIDE rankings Chinese GM Wei Yi will officially appear with 2604 rating points. The amazing thing about this is that Yi achieved his ELO 2600+ rating at the tender age of 14 years 5 months.



Ganguly vs. So, Wijk aan Zee – B 2011

Photo: Organiser; compare and scroll down: http://chesswindows.blogspot.ch/2011_01_01_archive.html

Wesley So won his first major international open tournament when he topped the **Dubai Open in April 2008**, just a few months before he turned 15 (taking first place on tie-break from Merab Gagunashvili, Ehsan Ghaem Maghami and Li Chao). So won **Corus-C at Wijk aan Zee 2009** (ahead of runners-up Tiger Hillarp Persson and Anish Giri).

Footnote:

Wijk aan Zee (former Hoogovens, then Corus, today Tata Steel) in 2009 was a typical teenage rampage as Group A was won by Sergey Karjakin, Ukraine (now Russia), Group B by Fabiano Caruana, Italy (now USA) and Group C by Wesley So of the Philippines (now USA).

So tied for first in **Malmö at Sigeman & Co 2011** with Anish Giri and Hans Tikkanen (no play-off decision and no tie-break rule in effect). So was co-winner at **Reykjavik Open 2013** (Pavel Eljanov edged out Wesley So and the Egyptian Grandmaster Bassem Amin on tie-break), So was clear first at the **Calgary Chess Classic 2013** (organised then as an Open), and also triumphed in **Hoogeveen (Univé) 2013** (Crown Group, four players).

He won the traditional **Capablanca Memorial in Havana 2014**, the 2° **ACP Golden Classic in Bergamo 2014**, the inaugural edition of the **Millionaire Chess Open, played 2014 in Las Vegas**; as well as convincing clear first at the **24th Annual North American Open**, held also at Las Vegas the same year 2014.

So captured **Bilbao 2015** (Mini tournament of four players), beating Anish Giri in a two game blitz match 1.5-0.5 after both tied for first. He won the **Cez Trophy 2015: So - Navara Match (2015)** by 3-1 (+2=2), and took the traditional **Bunratty Masters 2015** (Open) in Ireland.

He was *joint second at Wijk aan Zee (Tata Steel) 2015* behind Magnus Carlsen and *joint second at Dortmund 2015* behind Fabiano Caruana.

The next year, So wins the **Sinquefield Cup 2016 at St. Louis** as clear first (ahead of 2nd-5th Levon Aronian, Viswanathan Anand, Fabiano Caruana, and Veselin Topalov), and the **London Chess Classic 2016** as clear first again (ahead of 2nd Fabiano Caruana, followed then by 3rd-5th Vladimir Kramnik, Viswanathan Anand, and Hikaru Nakamura), and So has been crowned as the **winner of the GCT 2016** (without Carlsen), the **Grand Chess Tour**, consisting that year of two prestigious supertournaments in classical chess (Sinquefield Cup & LCC), plus two new rapid & blitz chess events at Paris and Leuven, Belgium, in a combined points scoring.

Wesley So surpassed the 2800 Elo rating after his achievement in London in December 2016, ranked subsequently as no. 4 of the world in the official FIDE Elo rating list of January 2017.

In January 2017, So won the traditional Tata Steel (above Carlsen who finished sole second, 14 participants). **Tata Steel in Wijk aan Zee 2017** is the third straight supertournament victory for So, after winning the Sinquefield Cup and London Chess Classic in 2016. So stretches his career-best unbeaten streak to 56 games in classical chess while showing that winning a strong tournament and staying unscathed can be compatible; to climb on position no. 3 of the official FIDE Elo ranking in February 2017, behind Carlsen and Caruana. Wesley So was the first time # 2 in the World for the official FIDE March 2017 Elo ratings. After the U.S. Championship, **So had a streak of going 67 classical games unbeaten**. His streak without a loss ended in the opening round of Shamkir Chess (Vugar Gashimov Memorial) 2017, when he lost to Azeri grandmaster Shakhriyar Mamedyarov.

He won at **30th León 2017**, Rapid, after beating Anand in a blitz playoff in the finals (four players).

So qualified for the first time for the biannual Candidate's tournament to determine the Challenger of the Champion at Berlin in 2018, but finished 7th out of 8 players, a rather disappointing result.

In the Elo rating list, Wesley So subsequently dropped and is ranked as no. 8 of the world (2018/5).

National Filipino Chess Championship in 2009, 2010, and 2011. U.S. Champion in 2017.

So holds the record for the youngest National Champion of the Philippines, first winning the title in 2009 at the age of 15 years, 6 months. He also won the Philippines Championship in 2010 and 2011 after coming second in 2008 and first in the "Battle of the Grandmasters" tournament in 2008. Starting from 2009, the "Battle of the Grandmasters", previously a separate event, also became the national championship.

Wesley So helped the U.S. Olympiad team (Nakamura, Caruana, So, Shankland, Robson) in 2016 to its first team gold medal since the year 1976; winning an individual gold medal on board three.

Gold medalist at the Asian Team Championship for the best individual performance at board 3, and for the best result at board 1 at the 2007 U16 Olympiad.

So partners with veteran player and FIDE Senior trainer, Vladimir Tukmakov (71) from Ukraine, who acts as his personal coach: <https://en.chessbase.com/post/wesley-so-partners-with-tukmakov>.

(Statistics as of May 2018. Upcoming events: <http://wesleyso.com/calendar/>)

So, Wesley (2531) - Howell, David (2527)

Wch U20 Yerevan (5), 2007.10.07

→ Replay: <http://www.chessgames.com/perl/chessgame?gid=1475498>

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.d4 exd4 5.Nxd4 Bb4 6.Nxc6 bxc6 7.Bd3 d5 8.exd5 cxd5 9.O-O O-O 10.Bg5 c6 11.Qf3 Be7 12.Rfe1 Re8 13.h3 h6 14.Bf4 Nh7 15.Bxh6 Ng5 16.Bxg5 Bxg5 17.Rxe8+ Qxe8 18.Nxd5 Bd8 19.Ne3 Rb8 20.b3 Qe5 21.Rd1 Bc7 22.Bc4 Be6 23.Bxe6 Qxe6 24.Qf5 Qe8 25.Rd4 g6 26.Qe4 Qf8 27.Qxc6 Bb6 28.Rd3 Rc8 29.Qf3 Bxe3 30.Qxe3 Rxc2 31.Qxa7 Qe8 32.Qe3 Qc8 33.Qe7 Qf5 34.Rd8+ Kg7 35.Qf8+ Kf6 36.Qd6+ Kg5 37.h4+ **1-0**



Photo: ChessHive

Wesley So, the winner of the Sinquefeld Cup in 2016



So with sunglasses playing Anand at Leon (Rapid event) on July 9, 2017. Photo: J. Casares EPA

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2018, published in: <http://www.chessdiagonals.ch/>