

Carlsen Wins 2023 World Cup, but Pragg Shocks the World

By George Webb, CSCA FIDE Events Reporter



GM Magnus Carlsen facing 18 year-old GM Rameshbabu "Pragg" Praggnanandhaa of India at 2023 World Cup in Baku, Azerbaijan. Photo courtesy of Tofik Babayev/AFP via Getty Images

The 2023 Chess World Cup finals in Baku, Azerbaijan, held July 30-August 24, was one for the ages! It featured some of the best Chess players in the world - Hikaru Nakamura, Fabiano Caruana, Ian Nepomniachtchi, Teimour Radjabov, Anish Giri, Magnus Carlsen etc.

However, one player stood out from the rest at this year's World Cup finals. This young giant's name is Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa. In this year's World Cup final, at 18 years old, Praggnanandhaa passed Vishy Anand to become India's #1 Chess player!

Pragg made a huge splash at the 2023 World Cup. On his way to a tie break final against World No. 1 Magnus Carlsen, he defeated World No. 2 Hikaru Nakamura and No. 3 Fabiano Caruana.

In a thrilling tiebreak that followed two classical game draws in the final to crown this year's World Cup champion, Praggnanandhaa finally resigned to Magnus Carlsen to finish first runner-up, becoming the third youngest player ever—behind Bobby Fischer and Magnus Carlsen—to qualify for the Candidates Tournament.

Meanwhile, Magnus celebrated the first World Cup crown of his career.