

Women's World Chess **Championships Fought** 1927 Women's World Chess Championship

(12-player Round-robin Tournament)

Location: London Opponents: Katarina Beskow, Martha Daunke, Marie Jeanne Frigard, Paula Kalmar-Wolf, Gisela Harum, Edith Holloway, Florence Hutchison-Stirling, Sofie Synnevåg Result: Won the title

Edith Michell, Edith Charlotte Price, Agnes Stevenson, 1930 Women's World Chess Championship (5-player Double Round-robin Tournament) Location: Hamburg, Germany Opponents: Katarina Beskow, Wally Henschel,

Paula Kalmar-Wolf, Agnes Stevenson Result: Retained the title 1931 Women's World Chess Championship (5-player Double Round-robin Tournament)

Location: Prague Opponent: Paula Kalmar-Wolf Result: Retained the title

1937 Women's World Chess Championship (Match held in July) Location: Semmering, Austria Opponent: Sonja Graf Result: Retained the title

August)

Location: Stockholm, Sweden

RUDENKO

1956 Women's World Chess Championship (3-player Octuple Round-robin Tournament)

Opponents: Elizaveta Bykova, Olga Rubtsova

BYKOVA

Moscow Women's Chess Championship in 1938.

RUBTSOVA

(1909-1994)

(B. 1941)

(1913-1989)

1958-1962

Location: Moscow

Result: Lost

Result: Retained the title

(1904-1996)

Photographer Unknown/Public Domain Women's World Chess

Championships Fought 1950 Women's World Chess Championship (16-player Round-robin Tournament) Location: Moscow Opponent: Olga Rubtsova Result: Won the title 1953 Women's World Chess Championship

(Match) **Location: Moscow** Opponent: Elizaveta Bykova Result: Lost the title

Photographer Unknown/Public Domain Women's World Chess Championships Fought 1953 Women's World Chess Championship (Match)

Location: Moscow Opponent: Lyudmila Rudenko Result: Won the title 1956 Women's World Chess Championship (3-player Octuple Round-robin Tournament) **Location: Moscow** Opponents: Olga Rubtsova, Lyudmila Rudenko

Location: Moscow Opponent: Olga Rubtsova Result: Won the title 1959 Women's World Chess Championship (Match) **Location: Moscow** Opponent: Kira Zvorykina Result: Retained the title

1958 Women's World Chess Championship

Result: Lost the title

(Match)

Wim Van Rossem/Dutch National Archive Women's World Chess Championships Fought 1956 Women's World Chess Championship

(3-player Octuple Round-robin Tournament)

Opponents: Olga Rubtsova, Lyudmila Rudenko

1958 Women's World Chess Championship

Location: Moscow

Result: Won the title

Location: Moscow

Result: Lost the title

Opponent: Elizaveta Bykova

(Match)

1962 Women's World Chess Championship (Match) Location: Moscow Opponent: Elizaveta Bykova Result: Won the title 1965 Women's World Chess Championship (Match) Location: Riga, Latvia Opponent: Alla Kushnir Result: Retained the title 1969 Women's World Chess Championship

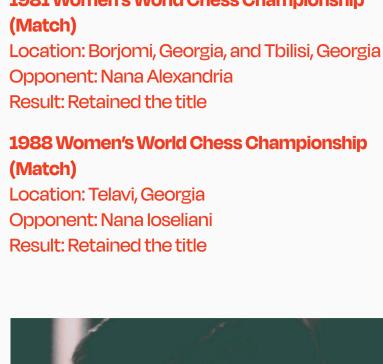
Location: Riga, Latvia Opponent: Alla Kushnir Result: Retained the title

1972 Women's World Chess Championship

Women's World Chess Championships Fought 1978 Women's World Chess Championship (Match) Location: Tbilisi, Georgia

Opponent: Maya Chiburdanidze

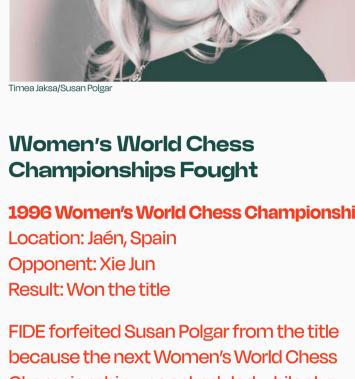
Result: Won the title



Bill Hook/World Chess Hall of Fame Women's World Chess Championships Fought

1991 Women's World Chess Championship









Mark Gluhovsky/Public Domain Women's World Chess Championships Fought 2006 Women's World Chess Championship (64-player Knockout Tournament) Location: Yekaterinburg, Russia Opponent: Alisa Galliamova Result: Won the title Xu Yuhua also participated in the 2000,

Location: Nalchik, Russia Opponent: Hou Yifan Result: Won the title Alexandra Kosteniuk also competed in the 2001, held as knockout tournaments.

2011 Women's World Chess Championship (Match) Location: Tirana, Albania Opponent: Humpy Koneru Result: Retained the title 2013 Women's World Chess Championship (Match) Location: Taizhou, China Opponent: Anna Ushenina Result: Won the title

Opponent: Alexandra Kosteniuk

Result: Lost

Result: Won the title 2013 Women's World Chess Championship (Match) Location: Taizhou, China Opponent: Hou Yifan Result: Lost the title Anna Ushenina also participated in the 2006, 2008, 2015, and November 2018 Women's World Chess Championships, which were staged as knockout tournaments.

Location: Sochi, Russia Opponent: Natalia Pogonina Result: Won the title (Match) Location: Lviv, Ukraine Opponent: Hou Yifan Result: Lost the title Mariya Muzychuk also competed in the 2012 and November 2018 Women's World Chess

Championships, which were staged as

knockout tournaments.

Stefan64/Public Domain

2017 Women's World Chess Championship (64-player Knockout Tournament) Location: Tehran, Iran Opponent: Anna Muzychuk Result: Won the title May 2018 Women's World Chess Championship Locations: Shanghai and Chongqing, China Opponent: Ju Wenjun Result: Lost the title Tan Zhongyi also competed in the 2004, 2008, and November 2018 Women's World Chess Championships, which were staged as

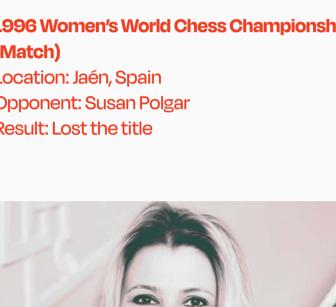
Women's World Chess Championships Fought (64-player Knockout Tournament) **Location: Moscow** Opponent in final: Xu Yuhua Result: Lost 2008 Women's World Chess Championship (64-player Knockout Tournament):

(64-player Knockout Tournament) Location: Hatay, Turkey Opponent: Ruan Lufei Result: Won the title

2010 Women's World Chess Championship

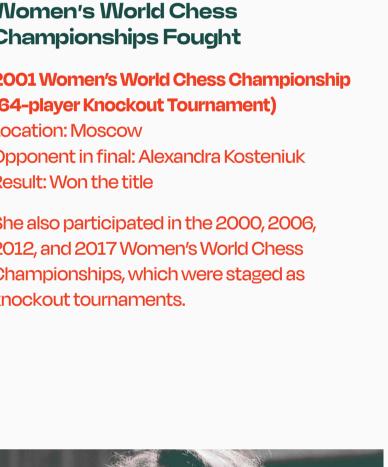
2012 Women's World Chess Championship (64-player Knockout Tournament) Location: Khanty-Mansiysk, Russia Opponent: Antoaneta Stefanova

2004 Women's World Chess Championship (64-player Knockout Tournament): Location: Elista, Russia Opponent in Finals: Ekaterina Kovalevskaya Result: Won the title 2012 Women's World Chess Championship (64-player Knockout Tournament): Location: Khanty-Mansiysk, Russia Opponent: Antoaneta Stefanova Result: Lost in the finals









Women's World Chess Championships, which were held as knockout tournaments.

2001 Women's World Chess Championship

2004, 2006, 2012, 2015, 2017, and November 2018 Women's World Chess Championships, which were Austin Fuller/Saint Louis Chess Club Women's World Chess

Women's World Chess Championships Fought 2015 Women's World Chess Championship (64-player Knockout Tournament)

Championships Fought

Women's World Chess

knockout tournaments.

Women's World Chess Championships Fought (Match) Locations: Tbilisi, Georgia, and Moscow Opponent: Alla Kushnir

Result: Retained the title

(Match)

1981 Women's World Chess Championship

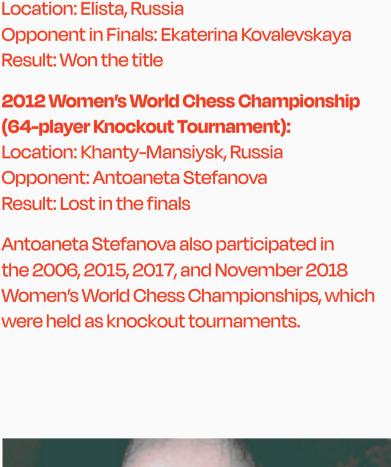
(Match) Location: Manila, Philippines 1993 Women's World Chess Championship













Championships Fought 2008 Women's World Chess Championship (64-player Knockout Tournament) Location: Nalchik, Russia

Women's World Chess Championships Fought

2016 Women's World Chess Championship

Women's World Chess **Championships Fought** May 2018 Women's World Chess Championship (Match) Locations: Shanghai and Chongqing, China Opponent: Tan Zhongyi Result: Won the title **November 2018 Womens' World Chess** Championship (64-player Knockout Match) Location: Khanty-Mansiysk, Russia Opponent in finals: Kateryna Lagno Result: Retained the title 2020 Women's World Chess Championship (Match)

Locations: Shanghai, China, and Vladivostok, Russia

Opponent: Aleksandra Goryachkina

Result: Retained the title

VERA (1906-1944)

MENCHIK

Women's World Chess Champion, 1927–1944 The world's first women's chess champion, Vera Menchik was born in Moscow in 1906 to a Czech father and English mother. She learned chess at age nine and moved to England as a teenager in 1921. During

her career, she competed for Russia, Czechoslovakia, and England. She became the first women's world champion in 1927 and successfully defended her title seven times over the next 17 years. She would lose only one game throughout these seven championship tournaments. Menchik defeated many men in tournament play, including Max Euwe and Samuel Reshevsky. They and other notable players she beat became members of what was known as the "Vera Menchik Club." From 1929 onward, she was a fixture at Hastings Congress tournaments, as well as at other international competitions. One of her greatest successes was at Ramsgate 1929, when she tied for second with Akiba Rubinstein just a half-point behind José Raúl Capablanca and ahead of her teacher Géza Maróczy. She won matches against Jacques Mieses in 1942 and Sonja Graf in 1934 and 1937. Menchik's career was cut

tragically short when she, her sister, and their mother were killed in a V-1 rocket bombing raid at their South London home in June 1944. The Women's Olympiad trophy is known as the Vera Menchik Cup in her honor. 1935 Women's World Chess Championship 1933 Women's World Chess Championship (8-player Double Round-robin Tournament) (8-player Double Round-robin Tournament) Folkestone, UK **Location: Warsaw** Opponent: Jeanne D'Autremont, Mary Gilchrist, Opponent: Regina Gerlecka Result: Retained the title Gisela Harum, Edith Michell, Edith Charlotte Price, Alice Tonini, Paulette Schwartzmann Result: Retained the title

1937 Women's World Chess Championship 1939 Women's World Chess Championship (26-player Swiss-system Tournament held in (20-player Round-robin Tournament)

Buenos Aires, Argentina Opponent: Soia Graf Vera Menchik retained the Women's

World Chess Championship title until she died in 1944.

LYUDMILA Women's World Chess Champion, 1950–1953

Born in Lubny, Ukraine, Lyudmila Rudenko started playing chess at age ten but did not seriously study the game until she moved to Moscow in 1925. Her first major competition was the 1927 U.S.S.R. Women's Chess Championship, in which she placed fifth. The following year, she won the Moscow Women's Championship ahead of the reigning U.S.S.R. Women's Champion, Olga Rubtsova. In 1950, Rudenko won the first Women's

Chess Championship held following World War II, becoming only the second Women's World Chess Champion after Vera Menchik. Two years later, Rudenko won the U.S.S.R. Women's Championship. In 1950, she earned the title of international master and in 1976 became a woman grandmaster. ELIZAVETA

her title from a challenge by Kira Zvorykina in 1960, but two years later, Nona Gaprindashvili defeated her. Passionate about women's chess, Bykova also wrote three books about Vera Menchik, Soviet women chess players, and the Women's World Championship. She also promoted chess through lectures and the organization of tournaments. 1962 Women's World Chess Championship (Match) Location: Moscow Opponent: Nona Gaprindashvili Result: Lost the title **OLGA**

Women's World Chess Champion, 1953–1956,

Elizaveta Bykova's strong play not only led her to become one of the first FIDE woman international

masters in 1953, but it also later earned her the title of woman grandmaster in 1976. Born in the Russian

competitively at age fourteen. She began winning tournaments in the 1930s, earning first place in the

village of Bogolyubovo, Bykova moved to Moscow when she was twelve years old and began to play chess

Bykova won the Soviet Women's Chess Championship title in 1946, 1947, and 1950. Over the next decade,

the Women's World Championship match in 1953. She lost her title to another Soviet player, Olga Rubtsova,

she gained renown on the world stage through her victory over fellow Soviet player Lyudmila Rudenko in

in 1956, but became the first woman to regain the title after a loss in 1958. She successfully defended

board for the Soviet team that won the first Women's Chess Olympiad in 1957. The only player to become a world champion in both over-the-board and correspondence chess, Rubtsova won the first Women's Correspondence Chess Championship in 1972, which earned her the title of correspondence chess international master. Her daughter Elena Fatalibekova is a woman grandmaster. **NONA** GAPRINDASHVILI

Women's World Chess Champion, 1962–1978

Women's World Championship and easily won 9–2. A new era in women's chess was born.

yet another Georgian player, Maya Chiburdanidze.

MAYA

(B. 1961)

Opponent: Irina Levitina

Result: Retained the title

Location: Manila, Philippines

Opponent: Xie Jun

Result: Lost the title

1991-2001

game collections on a female player.

POLGAR

World Championship made her the first triple crown winner.

(2012–2022) as the #1 ranked collegiate chess team in the nation.

(B. 1969)

serves as the treasurer of FIDE.

the rapid and blitz events.

XU

YUHUA

(Match)

1991 Women's World Chess Championship

Born in Zugdidi, Georgia, Nona Gaprindashvili began playing chess at the age of five. Seven years later, she

she won the Women's Candidates Tournament. The following year she challenged Elizaveta Bykova in the

Gaprindashvili's victory in this tournament brought her fame and made her a symbol of pride in Georgia.

She went on to win the Women's World Championship four more times. Three of these were in matches

against Alla Kushnir and the last was versus fellow Georgian Nana Alexandria. In 1978 Nona lost her title to

Gaprindashvili is a pioneer in women's chess—in 1978 she was the first woman to be awarded the title of

International Tournament, where she shared first place and defeated four grandmasters. Gaprindashvili's

grandmaster by FIDE. She earned this distinction for her impressive performance in the 1977 Lone Pine

dominance of women's chess can also be seen in her record in the Soviet Women's Championship,

moved to Tbilisi, where she trained with Vakhtang Karseladze. Their work together bore fruit and in 1961

Women's World Chess Champion, 1956–1958

Born in Moscow, Olga Rubtsova learned to play chess at the age of 15. Only three years later, she won her

Rubtsova the titles of woman international master (1950), international master (1956), and woman

first U.S.S.R. Women's Chess Championship, a feat she would repeat in 1931, 1937, and 1949. FIDE awarded

grandmaster (1976). She reigned as women's world chess champion from 1956 to 1958 and played first

winning in 1964, 1973, 1981, 1983, and 1985. Additionally, she was a member of the Soviet Women's Chess Olympiad team eleven times, finishing first in every event from 1963 to 1986. In 1992 she was a member of the gold medal-winning Georgian Women's Chess Olympiad team. 1975 Women's World Chess Championship 1978 Women's World Chess Championship (Match) (Match) Locations: Pitsunda, Georgia; Tbilisi, Georgia Location: Tbilisi, Georgia Opponent: Nana Alexandria Opponent: Maya Chiburdanidze Result: Lost the title Result: Tie, retained the title Nona Gaprindashvili also participated in the 2000 and 2001 Women's World Chess Cham-

tournaments.

pionships, which were staged as knockout

Maya Chiburdanidze started to play at the relatively late age of 8, but she became the women's world champion by 17. She was aided in her early development by her longtime coach Eduard Gufeld who helped Maya successfully defend her title four times. A pioneer in women's chess, in 1984 Chiburdanidze became only the second woman to earn the title of grandmaster. Four years later she was rated 43rd in the world. Chiburdanidze was a member of the Soviet and later Georgian women's teams that dominated the Women's Chess Olympiads throughout the 1980s and 1990s, winning nine team gold medals and four individual gold medals on Board 1. 1984 Women's World Chess Championship 1986 Women's World Chess Championship (Match) (Match) Location: Sofia, Bulgaria Location: Volgograd, Russia

Opponent: Elena Akhmilovskaya

Maya Chiburdanidze also participated in the 2000, 2001, 2004, and 2008 Women's World

Chess Championships, which were staged as

Result: Retained the title

knockout tournaments.

CHIBURDANIDZE

Women's World Chess Champion, 1978–1991

XIE JUN (B. 1970)

Women's World Chess Champion, 1991–1996,

A trailblazer and national hero in China, Xie Jun was the first Asian player to become women's world chess

champion (1991-1996 and 1999-2001), ending a 41-year Soviet stranglehold on the title. As a four-time

women's world chess champion, she was the very first player to win the title under both the classical and

knock-out systems. Xie Jun represented China in eight Women's Chess Olympiads, winning seven team

medals (three gold, one silver, and three bronze) and five individual medals (two silver and three bronze).

She is the author of Chess Champion from China: The Life and Games of Xie Jun (1998), one of the first

1999 Women's World Chess Championship 2000 Women's World Chess Championship (Match) (Match) Locations: Kazan, Russia; Shenyang, China Location: New Delhi, India Opponent: Alisa Galliamova Opponent in finals: Qin Kanying Result: Won the title Result: Retained the title Xie Jun declined to participate in the 2003 Women's World Chess Championship tournament, SUSAN ending her reign.

Women's World Chess Champion, 1996–1999

Born in Budapest, Hungary, and later representing the United States, Susan Polgar is the eldest of three

famous sisters. A trailblazer for women's chess from her earliest years, Polgar was the top-ranked woman

in the world at 15 and in 1991 the first female to earn the grandmaster title by norms and rating. Polgar won

the Women's World Rapid and Blitz Championships in 1992. Her subsequent victory in the 1996 Women's

Susan Polgar won 12 Olympiad medals (five gold, four silver, three bronze). This includes leading the U.S. to

University (2012–2018) to a record seven consecutive national championships and 10 consecutive years

a second-place finish in 2004. She was undefeated in 56 games played on board one in the Olympiads.

Polgar coached men's college division I teams at Texas Tech University (2011–2012) and Webster

ZHU CHEN (B. 1976) Women's World Chess Champion, 2001–2004

Born in 1976, Zhu Chen showed great potential early. This promise was confirmed when she won the

under-twelve category in the World Girls Championships in 1988, the first Chinese player to win such a

competition. This result earned her a spot on China's national training team. Zhu was the world junior girls

chess champion in 1994 and 1996 and during this period graduated to playing for the Chinese Women's

Olympiad team. From 1994 to 2002 she represented her country in five Olympiads winning five team

medals (three gold, one silver, and one bronze) and five individual medals (four gold and one silver). She

In 1999 Zhu Chen became the second Chinese woman to earn the grandmaster title and in 2001 became

married Qatari grandmaster Mohamad al-Modiahki in the early 2000s and in 2006 took Qatari citizenship.

turned in the best overall individual performance in the 1996 and 2000 Women's Chess Olympiad.

the women's world chess champion when she defeated Alexandra Kosteniuk 5-3 in the finals held in

Moscow. Zhu held the title until 2004 when she chose not to defend her title due to her pregnancy. She

She represented her new homeland in the 2006, 2010, and 2014 Open Olympiads. Zhu Chen currently

ANTOANETA

STEFANOVA

(B. 1979) Women's World Chess Champion, 2004–2006 Bulgarian grandmaster Antoaneta Stefanova started learning chess at four years old. She won the Girls U10 section of the World Youth Chess Festival in 1989. In 1992 she competed in her first Chess Olympiad at just 13 years old, became the European Under 14 Girls Champion at the European Youth Championship that same year, and won the Bulgarian Women's Championship in 1995. Over the next several years, Stefanova competed in many international tournaments and was awarded

the grandmaster title in 2002. In 2004, she conquered the 64-player knockout tournament and became

the tenth women's world chess champion. After this, she continued to play at an elite level, winning both

the North Urals Cup and the Women's International Rapid Tournament at the World Mind Sports Games in

2008. In 2012 Stefanova became the women's world rapid chess champion, as well as the women's world

chess championship vice-champion. At the 2017 IMSA Elite Mind Games, she achieved two gold medals in

Most recently, in 2023, Stefanova played first board for the winning Bulgarian Women's chess team at

the European Championships. In an interview on the FIDE chess YouTube channel, she says, "What I really

liked about [chess] is that it was different every time, so it's what keeps me playing chess so many years

because it is never the same." Though according to that same interview, she no longer considers herself a

professional chess player, she says that "chess will always be a part of my life."

(B. 1976) Women's World Chess Champion, 2006–2008 From Jinhua, China, Xu Yuhua entered the international chess scene when she won the 1993 Zonal Tournament held in China. Over the next several years she won the 1996 Asian Junior Girls' Championship and the 1998 Asian Women's Chess Championship, and was a part of the winning Chinese women's team in the 2000, 2002, and 2005 Chess Olympiads. Xu competed in the 2000, 2002, and 2004 Women's World Chess Championship knockout tournaments, before finally winning in 2006, receiving the title of grandmaster that year as well. In an interview with ChessBase in 2008, she said of winning the tournament, "It was one of the best moments in my life. At that time I was going to become a mother, and the victory at the championship made me twice happier. But the time is passing by. And the sky is the limit. I should move only forward." After this, she won the Nanjing, China leg of the 2009–2011 Women's Grand Prix.

Alexandra Kosteniuk has continued to be a fierce competitor after becoming women's world chess champion, winning several national and international titles in both classical and speed chess. In 2013 she won both the Women's and Open sections of the Swiss Chess Championship. Most recently, Kosteniuk won the inaugural Women's Chess World Cup in 2021, and in 2023 won a Women's Grand Prix tournament in Munich. She has also been an advocate for women's chess, stating in an interview with World Chess on YouTube, "We see fewer women, not only in chess but in other intellectual activities, not because women are not smart enough, but it's just because [it's] harder for them in many situations to overcome those obstacles. [...] But I do hope that one day a woman will be able to become overall world champion." HOU

Sports Games.

YIFAN

2013-2015, 2016-2017

(B. 1994)

ALEXANDRA

(Match) Location: Lviv, Ukraine Opponent: Mariya Muzychuk Result: Won the title

USHENINA

ANNA

(B.1985)

MARIYA MUZYCHUK (B.1992)Women's World Chess Champion, 2015–2016 Nicknamed "Miss Tactics" by the press during the 2015 Women's World Chess Championship tournament due to her tactical skills over the board, Mariya Muzychuk was the 15th women's world chess champion. Born in Lviv, Ukraine, in 1992, she began learning chess at just two years old from her parents, both of

Tan Zhongyi is currently the seventh highest-rated woman in the world at 2521 FIDE (March 2024 rating list). Tan started playing chess at the age of 6 and showed remarkable progress early on winning the World Girls Championship Under 10 and Under 12 Championships three times in 2000-2002. A long period of consolidation followed during which time she made slow but steady progress. Tan Zhongyi crossed over the 2400 FIDE rating threshold in 2009 and 2500 in 2013, the latter indicating entry into the elite (top 10 to 15) of female chess players. In the past decade, Tan Zhongyi has played at a consistently high level winning the Chinese Women's

ZHONGYI

good friends."

TAN

(B. 1991)

JU

(Match)

Opponent: Lei Tingjie

WENJUN (B. 1991) Women's World Chess Champion, 2018–Present Ju Wenjun, born in Shanghai, China, began playing chess at seven years old. She has played with the

Locations: Shanghai and Chongqing, China

2023 Women's World Chess Championship Ju Wenjun also participated in the 2006, 2008,

2012, 2015, and 2017 Women's World Chess

Championships, which were staged as

Though Xu appears to have retired from playing since 2011, she has become an arbiter and organizer for several FIDE-rated events over the years.

KOSTENIUK (B. 1984) Women's World Chess Champion, 2008–2010 Alexandra Kosteniuk grew up in Moscow but now plays for Switzerland. She began learning chess at age five, and shortly after began racking up major wins, beginning in 1994 with the girls under 10 division of the European Youth Chess Championship. By 2004 she had become the tenth woman to receive the title of grandmaster. In 2006 she became the first Chess960 women's champion, and in 2008 Kosteniuk became the 12th women's world chess champion. In an interview with US Chess Trust she said, "Even though it was the goal of my life, I needed to find new goals and more motivation for the game I love so much." That

same year, she defended her Chess960 title and won the women's individual blitz event of the World Mind

also the youngest-ever women's world chess champion at 16 years old. Since that first win in 2010, she won the title three more times in 2011, 2013, and 2016. In a 2014 interview with Dominic Lawson on BBC Radio 4, she said that when she plays "the result is not the most important thing, that was just to enjoy this process." Hou has had many incredible successes on and off the board, competing in and winning many women's and open events over the years. In 2012 she enrolled at Peking University, later graduating with a degree in international relations. In 2018 she was awarded a Rhodes Scholarship and began studying for a Master of Public Policy at St. Hilda's College, Oxford. Two years later Hou became the youngest-ever professor at the Shenzhen University School of Physical Education, which includes chess among its programs, stating at the time that she hoped to "improve students' comprehensive abilities and creative thinking through chess." 2016 Women's World Chess Championship Hou Yifan also competed in the 2006 and 2012 Women's World Chess Championships, which were staged as knockout tournaments.

Women's World Chess Champion, 2012–2013

Anna Ushenina was born and grew up in Kharkiv, Ukraine. She started playing chess at the age of seven

when her mother introduced her to the game. In an interview with Evening Kharkov, she states "At first,

it was a hobby, and then it turned out that I couldn't live without chess." Ushenina began winning major

national championships at a young age, and became the Ukrainian girls' champion at 15 years old, then

Ukrainian team at the 2006 Women's Olympiad, winning both individual and team medals. Ushenina

became the Ukrainian women's champion just five years later in 2005. She was a member of the winning

competed in the Women's World Chess Championship knockout tournament in 2006, 2008, and 2010,

eventually winning in 2012 to become the first Ukrainian women's world chess champion. Since then,

she has remained a strong player. Beyond regular appearances with the Ukrainian women's team, she

Women's Speed Chess Championship and the 2022 Tata Steel India Women's Rapid Tournament. In a

over, you just want to continue to win more games, to play nice chess."

also plays in major events in classical as well as rapid and blitz chess, having most recently won the 2020

podcast interview in 2022 she said, "I just like to play chess, and if you win some title or something it's not

Women's World Chess Champion, 2010–2012,

As of February 1, 2024, Hou Yifan is the number 1 woman chess player in the world by rating. Born in

Xinghua, China, Hou began playing chess at five years old, though her fascination with the game goes

back further. The youngest woman to become grandmaster at 14 years, six months, and 16 days, she was

whom are professional chess coaches. She took part in her first tournament at six years old, and by 2010 was the fifth highest-ranked woman under 20 in the world. After collecting three youth titles, she won the Ukrainian Women's Chess Championship in 2012 and 2013. In 2014 Muzychuk competed in the Gibraltar chess festival, taking home the Best Woman prize. Since winning the women's world chess championship in 2015, Muzychuk has remained among the top-ten rated women in the world. In an interview after her women's world championship win, she said "I was playing for my country. I wanted to show that we have strong chess players and that we can achieve success."

Muzychuk has been a member of the Ukrainian Women's team at the Women's Olympiad since 2010,

winning the individual gold medal as a reserve player that year. Her sister Anna Muzychuk is also on the

team, and in an interview with Susan Polgar at the 2016 Women's Olympiad she stated, "In any case, it's

much better playing along Anna, rather than alone! [...] We are not only colleagues in chess but also very

Women's World Chess Champion, 2017–2018

Championship four times (2015, 2020, 2021, and 2022). She won both team and individual gold in the 2016 Women's Chess Olympiad and the following year won the Women's World Chess Championship, defeating Anna Muzychuk of Ukraine in the final match of the 64-player knockout competition. Her reign was short. In 2018 she lost the title in a close match against country woman Ju Wenjun by the score of $5\frac{1}{2}-4\frac{1}{2}$.

Chinese national women's team since 2008, winning multiple gold medals with them. In 2014 Ju was awarded the grandmaster title. She was the fifth woman to reach a rating of 2600. Ju became the 17th Women's World Chess Champion in May 2018, later stating in an interview on the FIDE chess YouTube channel, "Winning the 2018 women's match against Tan Zhongyi was the most unforgettable and proudest moment in my life." She defended the title in November of that year and twice more in matches in 2020 and 2023. In a post-match press conference, the now four-time winner said, "Each time is very special for me. It's really good and both players played well this time, so it's even more special."

knockout tournaments. Result: Retained the title