CHESS SA

ROUND 8 REPORT

Wednesday, 20 May 2026

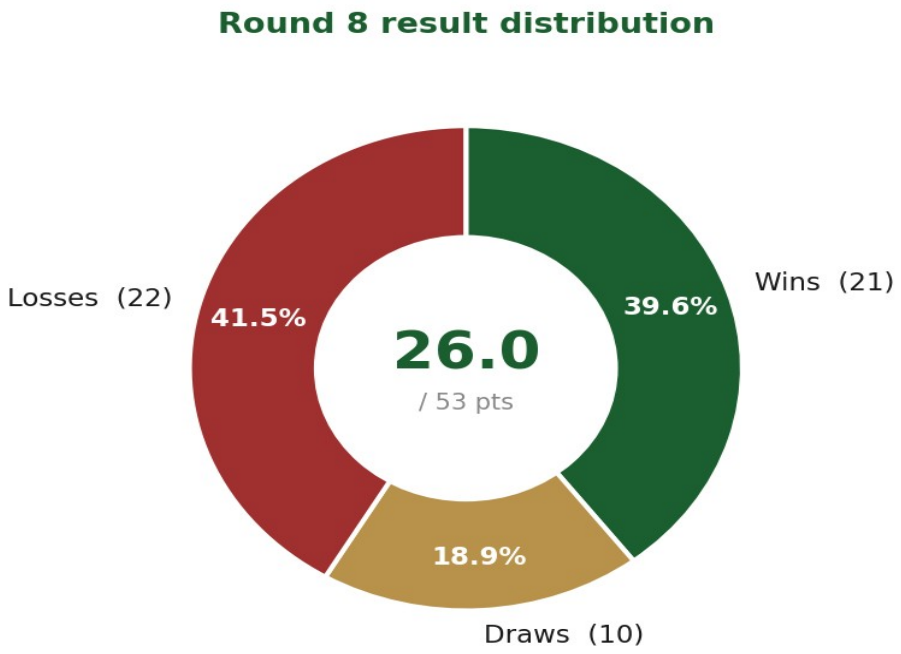
South African Delegation • 17th African Youth Chess Championships • Entebbe, Uganda

DELEGATION RESULT — ROUND 8

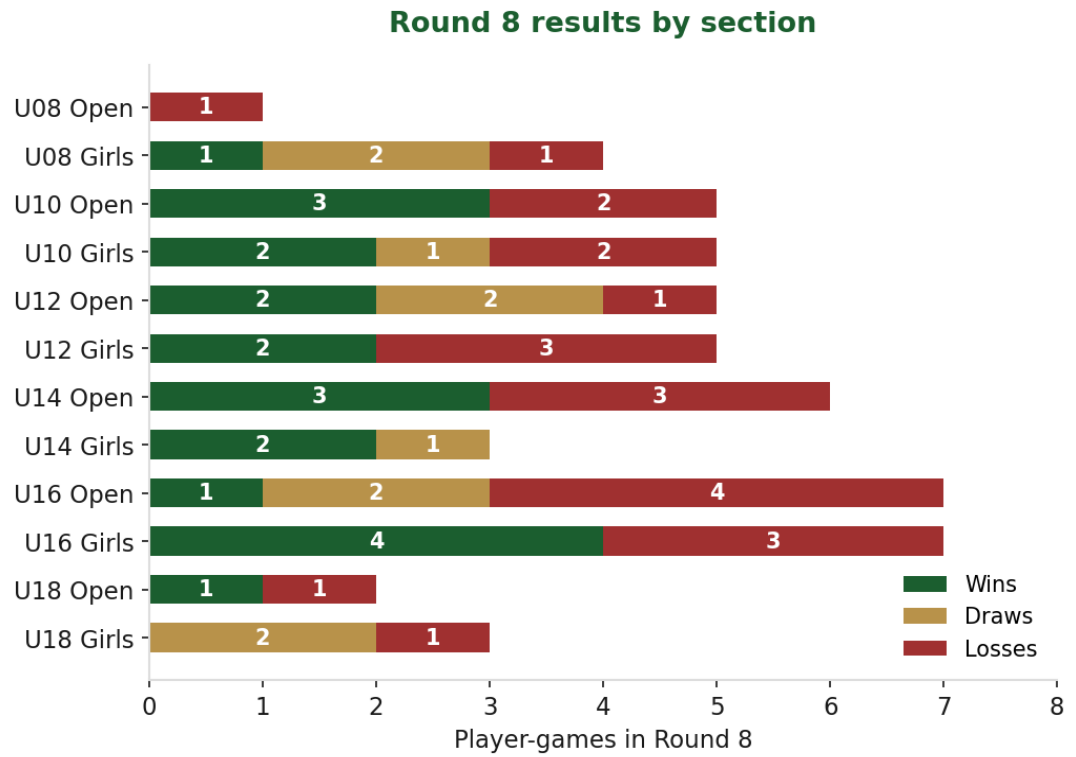
WINS	DRAWS	LOSSES	POINTS
21	10	22	26 / 53

Round 8 was the toughest round of the tournament so far: 21 wins, 10 draws and 22 losses across 53 RSA games — a 49.1% score, down from 64.2% in Round 7. The medal-defining round delivered both a leadership change and the first new top-3 RSA finishers of the event. Puran Madhav beat Adams Chezhaan Ethan in an internal U14 Open derby to move to 7 / 8 and Rank 2 in section. Hagen Gina Sophia won as Black to reach 7 / 8 and Rank 3 in U14 Girls. Singh Shaurya lost outright Rank 1 in U14 Open after a loss to top-seed Ahmed Mustafa Faris (2037) but remains at 6.5 / 8 in Rank 4. Two genuine upsets stood out: Van Meersbergen (AFM, 1719) beat Geourge Youssef Mario (EGY, 1859) for a +140 upset in U16 Open, and Maharaj Arya (1530) beat Namukobe Suzan (UGA, 1692) for a +162 upset in U16 Girls — the Game of the Round. Four RSA-vs-RSA derbies were unavoidable as the field thinned. Cumulative score stands at 294 of 431 across 54 RSA players (68.2%). With one round left, six players are in strong medal contention.

ROUND 8 AT A GLANCE



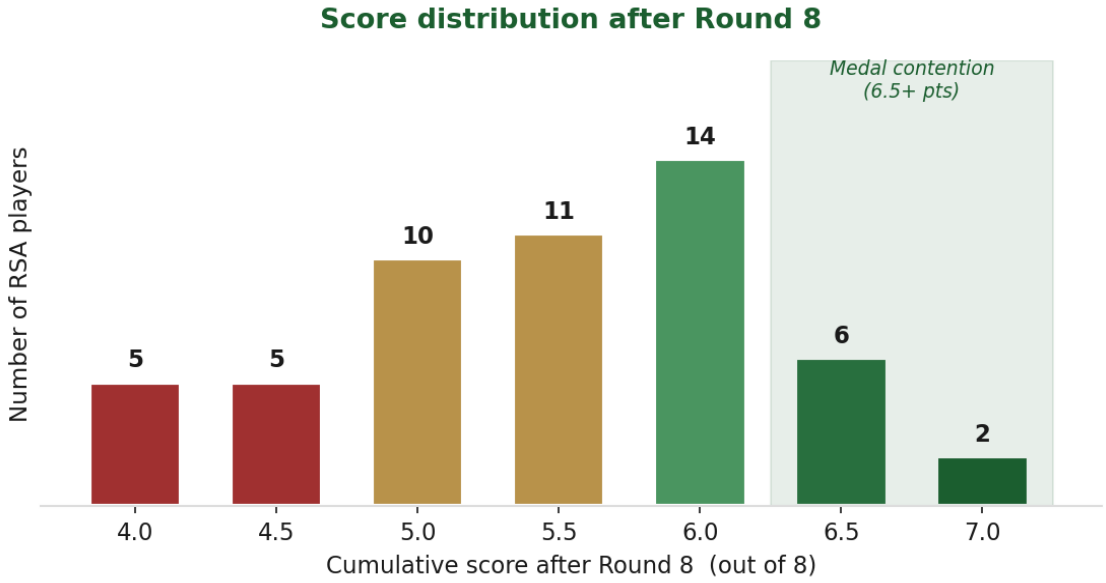
26 of 53 player-game points — 49.1% score across the round, the lowest of the tournament.



U16 Girls and U14 Open delivered the most wins (4 and 3 respectively). U16 Open collapsed at 1W/2D/4L. U18 Girls posted no wins.

CUMULATIVE POSITION AFTER ROUND 8

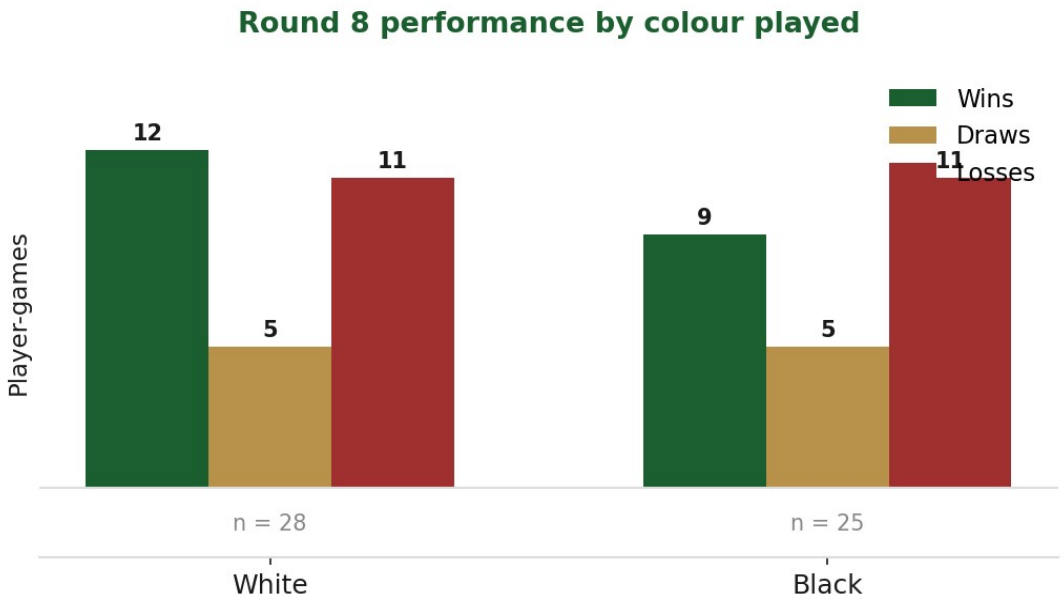
294 of 431 cumulative points (68.2%) across the 54-player delegation — a 2.7-point drop from 70.9% after Round 7. Two RSA players hold 7 / 8 (Puran in U14 Open, Hagen in U14 Girls), six players are on 6.5 / 8 (Singh, Naidoo Shivam, Viriah, Ntshakala, Brits, Resnekov), and a 14-player cluster sits at 6.0. The medal cut-line will be drawn around the 6.5+ band in most sections.



Distribution of 53 RSA scores after Round 8. Two players on 7/8 represent RSA's highest cumulative position of the tournament.

ROUND 8 — PERFORMANCE BY COLOUR PLAYED

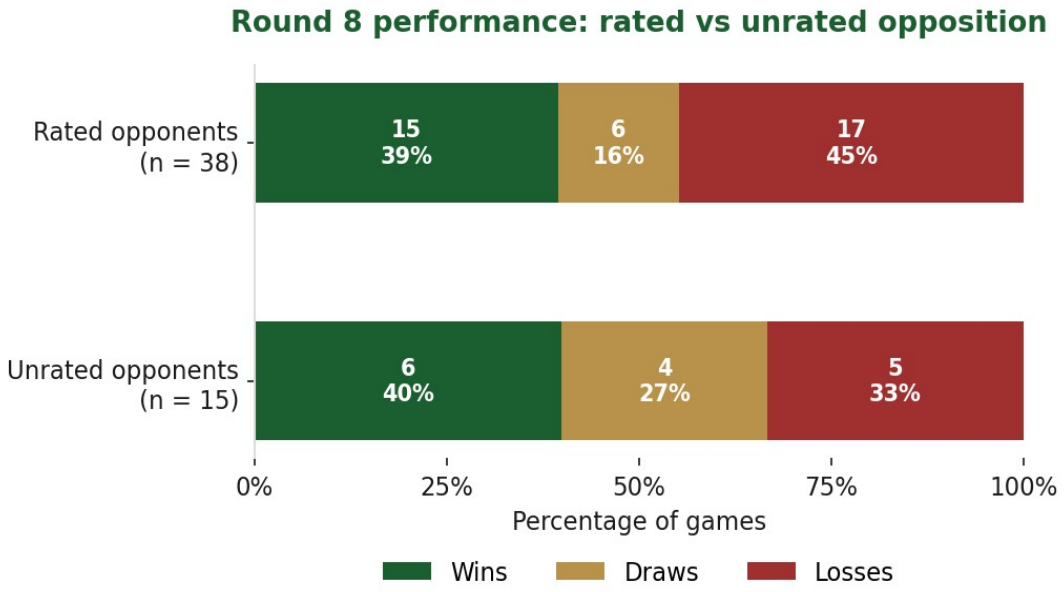
White and Black both underperformed compared with Round 7. As White, RSA went 12W / 5D / 11L (42.9%, down from 69.2%). As Black, 9W / 5D / 11L (36.0%, essentially flat from R7's 37.0%). The White advantage compressed sharply — late-round top-board pairings against equal or stronger opposition cancelled out most of the first-move benefit.



White: 12W / 5D / 11L (42.9%). Black: 9W / 5D / 11L (36.0%). White edge much smaller than Round 7.

ROUND 8 — OPPOSITION QUALITY

Against rated opposition (38 games, the most all tournament), RSA scored 15W / 6D / 17L — a 47.4% rate. Losses outnumbered wins for the first time in the tournament against rated opponents. Against unrated opposition (15 games), the record was 6W / 4D / 5L for 53.3% — also down sharply from Round 7. Round 8 was the round where the rated field caught up.



15W / 6D / 17L against rated, 6W / 4D / 5L against unrated. First round in the event where rated losses exceeded rated wins.

SECTIONAL LEADERS — TOP RSA AFTER ROUND 8

Section	Leading player	Score	Section rank	Notes
U08 Open	Conradie, David	5 / 8	Rank 13	Lost R8; final round tomorrow
U08 Girls	Gabriels, Amrienta	6 / 8	Rank 6	Section lead held
U10 Open	Viriah, Matthew	6.5 /	Rank 6	Tied with Ntshakala on 6.5

Section	Leading player	Score	Section rank	Notes
		8		
U10 Girls	3 RSA tied — Ramonyaluoe, Morgan, Conradie M.	6 / 8	~5–9	Strong section depth
U12 Open	Brits, Etienne & Resnekov, Oliver	6.5 / 8	~9–10	Both medal contenders
U12 Girls	Temmers, Isabella	6 / 8	Rank 10	Won RSA derby vs Loots
U14 Open	Puran, Madhav — RANK 2	7 / 8	Rank 2	Beat Adams in RSA derby; medal favourite
U14 Girls	Hagen, Gina Sophia — RANK 3	7 / 8	Rank 3	Strong Black win; on the podium
U16 Open	Van Meersbergen (AFM)	6 / 8	Rank 8	+140 upset vs Geourge Youssef
U16 Girls	Naidoo, Dhiya	6 / 8	Rank 5	Won RSA derby vs Dikolomela
U18 Open	Levitan, Judah Nathan (FM)	4.5 / 8	Rank 10	Lost to Kandil (EGY 2294)
U18 Girls	3 RSA tied at 4 / 8	4 / 8	Ranks 9–13	No section medal route

GAME OF THE ROUND

Arya Maharaj (RSA, 1530) vs **Suzan Namukobe** (UGA, 1692)

U16 Girls • Colour: White • Result: 1–0 • Rating differential: 162 points

Maharaj came into Round 8 on 4.5/8 in U16 Girls and was paired up against a higher-rated Ugandan opponent on the White side. She converted the win to move to 5.5/8 and Rank 11, capping a strong personal arc through the tournament. This is the largest verified rating-differential upset by an RSA player in Round 8 against a rated, non-RSA opponent — narrowly ahead of Van Meersbergen's +140 win in U16 Open.

NOTABLE PERFORMANCES

- U14 Open — Puran Madhav takes Rank 2. Beat teammate Adams Chezhaan Ethan in an RSA derby as Black to reach 7/8. One round from a medal.
- U14 Girls — Hagen Gina Sophia at Rank 3. Won as Black to move to 7/8. Top RSA medal contender in the Girls sections.
- U16 Open — Van Meersbergen's +140 upset. AFM Van Meersbergen (1719) beat Geourge Youssef Mario (EGY 1859) as White. Now 6/8 at Rank 8.
- U14 Open — Naidoo Shivam's +77 upset. Beat Edel Edwin (UGA 1772) as Black, moving to 6.5/8 at Rank 7.
- U10 Open — Three RSA on 6.5+ entering the final round. Viriah and Ntshakala on 6.5, Akemdien on 6, Radha and Arries also at 6/8 despite Round 8 losses.

- U10 Girls — Conradie Minka's comeback win. Won as Black after the Round 7 RSA derby loss; back to 6/8 at Rank 9.
- U12 Open — Resnekov holds +155-rated opponent. Drew Priyanshu Dinodia (ZAM 1749) on White; remains on 6.5/8 at Rank 10.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

U08 Open. Conradie lost Round 8 and falls to Rank 13 on 5/8. Klopper Liam did not play Round 8 (likely bye or absence). Final round closes the section.

U08 Girls. Gabriels leads RSA at 6/8 Rank 6. Two draws (Naidoo Nadeema, Coetzee) keep the section in striking distance. Mlaba dropped a round and is now at 5/8.

U10 Open. Three RSA at 6+ pts after the round (Viriah, Ntshakala both 6.5; Akemdien, Radha, Arries on 6). Section is tightly packed; one win in R9 against a fellow 6.5 is the path to bronze for the top two.

U10 Girls. Strong section depth — three RSA on 6/8 (Ramonyaluoe Rank 5, Morgan Rank 7, Conradie Minka Rank 9), Kapp on 5.5. Round 8 hit the top RSA player (Ramonyaluoe lost) but the section position holds.

U12 Open. Brits and Resnekov both at 6.5/8 — RSA's strongest section-pair after U14 Open. Brits beat a 1619 UGA opponent; Resnekov held a +155-rated opponent. Round 9 will determine medals.

U12 Girls. Tough round (2W / 3L). Temmers won the internal RSA derby vs Loots; she leads RSA at 6/8 Rank 10. Grobbelaar, Lambrechts and Loots all dropped points.

U14 Open. The most consequential section. Puran Madhav at Rank 2 on 7/8 is now the favourite for at least bronze. Singh fell to Rank 4 on 6.5/8 after losing to the section top seed. Naidoo Shivam on 6.5/8 Rank 7. Three RSA in genuine medal range with one round to play.

U14 Girls. Hagen at Rank 3 on 7/8 is RSA's strongest Girls position. Maharaj Aditi continues the unrated-bracket climb to 6/8 Rank 9. Bisram remains in lower-half at 4/8.

U16 Open. Section collapsed in Round 8 (1W / 2D / 4L). Van Meersbergen's upset win is the bright spot — now at Rank 8 on 6/8. Dharampall, Combrink and Salimu all on 5.5/8 — still mathematically alive but needs perfect finishes.

U16 Girls. Four wins from seven RSA games (best section output). Two internal derbies meant 2W + 2L came from inside RSA. Naidoo Dhiya leads at Rank 5 on 6/8. Maharaj Arya posted Game of the Round.

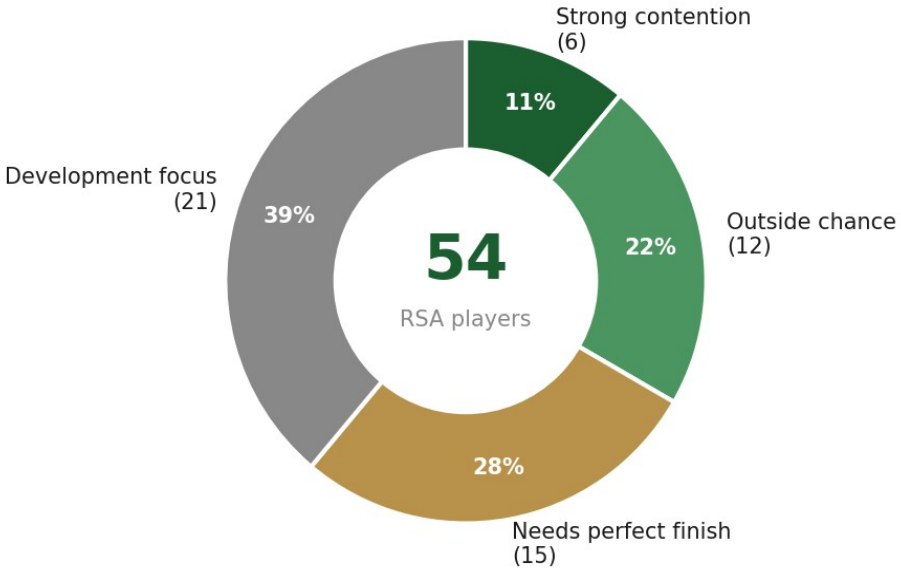
U18 Open. Levitan lost to Kandil (EGY 2294). Difotso won as Black for the first win of the section in several rounds. Medal contention closed; focus on rating points in R9.

U18 Girls. Zero wins (Meeran D, Mojaki D, Monchosi L). All three RSA at 4/8. Section's medal route is closed.

MEDAL CONTENTION WATCH — DELEGATION SNAPSHOT

With one round left, the medal field has narrowed sharply. Six South African players are in strong contention (down from 16 after Round 7), 12 sit on outside chances, 15 need a perfect Round 9 finish plus help from above, and 21 are in development mode.

Medal contention status (after Round 8)



Only six players remain in strong medal contention going into Round 9. The win-or-go-home moment.

STRONG & OUTSIDE-CHANCE BOARDS ENTERING ROUND 9

Player	Section	Score	Section rank	Round 9 requirement
Puran, Madhav	U14 Open	7 / 8	Rank 2	Win for guaranteed medal; draw needs tiebreak help
Hagen, Gina Sophia	U14 Girls	7 / 8	Rank 3	Win for guaranteed bronze; draw may suffice
Singh, Shaurya	U14 Open	6.5 / 8	Rank 4	Win + leaders stumble
Viriah, Matthew	U10 Open	6.5 / 8	Rank 6	Win + help from above
Ntshakala, Hlelolwenkosi	U10 Open	6.5 / 8	Rank 7	Win + help from above
Naidoo, Shivam	U14 Open	6.5 / 8	Rank 7	Win + help from above
Brits, Etienne	U12 Open	6.5 / 8	Rank 9	Win + favourable tiebreaks
Resnekov, Oliver	U12 Open	6.5 / 8	Rank 10	Win + favourable tiebreaks
Naidoo, Dhiya	U16 Girls	6 / 8	Rank 5	Win + help from above
Gabriels, Amrienta	U08 Girls	6 / 8	Rank 6	Win + favourable tiebreaks
Maharaj, Aditi	U14 Girls	6 / 8	Rank 9	Win + significant help
Adams, Chezhaan Ethan	U14 Open	6 / 8	Rank 8	Win + significant help
Van Meersbergen (AFM)	U16 Open	6 / 8	Rank 8	Win + significant help
Temmers, Isabella	U12 Girls	6 / 8	Rank 10	Win + significant help

FINAL ROUND FOCUS — ROUND 9, THURSDAY 21 MAY

- U14 Open — Puran Madhav (7/8, Rank 2). RSA's strongest medal chance of the tournament. A win guarantees a medal. Will be paired against the section leader.
- U14 Girls — Hagen Gina Sophia (7/8, Rank 3). On the podium going into R9. A win secures bronze outright; a draw may suffice on tiebreaks.
- U14 Open — Singh Shaurya (6.5/8, Rank 4) and Naidoo Shivam (6.5/8, Rank 7). Both still in bronze contention. Section produces three RSA in the top eight — best collective position of the tournament.
- U10 Open — Viriah Matthew and Ntshakala Hlelolwenkosi (both 6.5/8, Ranks 6–7). Internal RSA pairing risk is real given proximity. Both need wins.
- U12 Open — Brits Etienne and Resnekov Oliver (both 6.5/8, Ranks 9–10). Both need wins. Final-round pairings will determine medal eligibility.
- U16 Girls — Naidoo Dhiya (6/8, Rank 5). Outside medal shot. Will likely be paired against another 6-point player; the result decides.
- U08 Girls — Gabriels Amrienta (6/8, Rank 6). Mathematically still alive; needs win plus tiebreak help.
- U16 Open — Van Meersbergen (6/8, Rank 8). Outside chance; needs win and significant help from above boards.

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