

ECF Secondary School Chess News, September 2021

I hope that you have had a good summer holiday and are ready for the new school year, with whatever challenges it might bring. We hope that school life will be getting back to being more normal this year, and we will be circulating details of inter-school chess events as and when we have details.

Click on any of the underlined blue hyperlinks below to go to [websites](#) or send [emails](#).

Online School Chess Clubs

Those who can make the time to set up an online school chess club find that running a weekly chess club online is easier than one in a classroom. There are no missing pieces to search for, no chess clocks to set, no arranging of games, no sets to put away at the end of the session. There is also free advice from computer analysis of players games. Please email me if you would like a copy of my notes on setting up a school chess club.

Inter-school lichess Battles

Fortnightly online "Battles" will continue on Fridays from 6 to 7pm on [lichess secondary school chess](#) Please let me know if your school would like to take part. The next one is soon - on [Friday 10th September](#).

Unlike normal matches the number of players is not limited in Lichess battles which therefore allow you to invite as many pupils as you want to take part. Events run last academic year can be seen at [here](#) where over 30 schools and 500 players took part with players varied in rating from over 2400 to below 700.

Lorin D'Costa runs similar events but just for girls – for more information about his 'She Plays To Win Secondary Girls League' email lorinchess@gmail.com.

Ivan Gromov Online Schools Chess League

This is a new fortnightly inter-school league to be played on Thursday evenings, starting 23rd September. Matches start at 7.30pm (with students playing at home for most schools).

This will be a slow play, online, league with 6 players per team. Each player plays one game of 45mins +15sec played on lichess, per match.

Team managers to be added to a WhatsApp group for communication. Only team managers to contact their players, so they, or a nominated other contact, needs to be around at the start of each match to see it has started correctly.

The structure of league will be decided once the number of teams is known.

For more information please contact Justin Moston J.Moston@etoncollege.org.uk

ECF Rating

There has been a change from 'Grading' to 'Rating' and there is a [new ECF rating website](#) for this. If you search for your school name (or for pupils names) you will find that players can have up to five active ratings – two 'Over The Board' (OTB) and three Online. What is more ratings are now updated monthly.

I have been rating some internal games played at Wilson's School where I teach. These do need to be played in suitable conditions (with chess clocks, in silence etc) - if you would like advice on how to do this please email me.

Inter-School Over the Board Chess

Plans are being made to also run some over the board chess events, similar to those run pre-Covid as listed in the [NSCC Archive](#)

Already planned is the Girls National Schools Chess Championships – [Details here](#)

Also there are already planned Regional finals for Team Chess Challenge and Junior TCC in East Essex, South London and Bristol.

If you would be willing to host an event for your local chess playing schools then please let me know.

Russell Jamboree

RGS Guildford are hosting the Russell Jamboree on Friday 1st October from 5pm to 8pm. The event is for teams of 6 players and there will be 2 rounds (each round: all moves in 30 minutes + 10 sec/move). If you are interested in taking part please contact Alexander Jessett at RGS Guildford AWJJ@rgsg.co.uk

Hybrid Chess

A new way of playing chess matches is developing where teams do not physically meet but instead each team gathers together in one place, and then play their games over the internet with suitable supervision that they are not cheating. This is obviously ideally suited to schools where a team can meet in a computer room after school and have a member of staff invigilating. What is more it reduces travel, and thereby also means there is a much wider pool of schools you can play against, not just those within a suitable distance. I am considering running a lichess battle this way one afternoon – do email me if you would be interested in that.

National School Chess Championships 2021/22

Planning of the prestigious U19 National School Chess Championships is underway and we hope to circulate draft arrangements soon. There will be a chance to give your comments on the draft either by email or at a zoom on Tuesday, 21st September at 8pm.

Stay safe!

Neill Cooper

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