

### **British Championships**

The 99th British Championships took place at the Parks Leisure Centre in North Shields between 22 July and 7 August. The British Championship itself was won by Gawain Jones after a two-game Rapidplay playoff against Stephen Gordon with whom he had tied on 9/11. Gawain and Stephen shared the English Championship prize, while Jovanka Houska took both the British and the English Women's titles.

Congratulations to the team who organised this year's Championships. I look forward to next year's 100th Championships in Torquay.

### **Grading**

The number of standard grades went up from 10,105 to 10,331. The number of rapidplay grades went up from 4,134 to 4,684.

I am proud to say that the introduction of twice-yearly lists went smoothly, and I have to congratulate the grading team on their hard work making this happen. We are also grateful for Mike Bennett's fantastic and long overdue improvements to the grading website, which makes monitoring grading performance throughout the season easy and interactive.

### **County Chess**

In the County Championship, Middlesex won their first Open title since 1989. 58 qualified for the national stages, with 6 defaulted matches. For the first time, games from the Final were broadcast live over the Internet. All the games from the Finals appear on the ECF website, and are available for download.

### **National Club Championships 2011/12**

Thanks to all who competed in this year's events and to those who organised the finals days.

The full results can be found at the following page:  
[http://www.englishchess.org.uk/?page\\_id=21299](http://www.englishchess.org.uk/?page_id=21299)

### **Correspondence Chess**

Regrettably, the Counties & District Correspondence Championship did not take place in the 2011-12 season. The British Federation for Correspondence Chess has agreed to organise this event in future.

## **Signing at the London Chess Classic**

This ground breaking initiative arose from a conversation between myself and Barry David (Chairman of the English Deaf Chess Association) at Hendon Chess Club in London where it became clear that deaf people using BSL (British Sign Language) could not access the commentary at elite chess tournaments. Indeed, it was thought that there had never been anything like a BSL-interpreted chess commentary anywhere. It was immediately agreed to do something to change this, by organising signing at the 2011 London Chess Classic with co-funding from the ECF and International Master Malcolm Pein, organiser of the Classic. It was a great success, and we shall be repeating the exercise this year

Adam Raouf

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