

GRANDMASTER @ THE LOCAL in HULL

This year Hull is the UK City of Culture. Appropriate, then, that England's top player, GM Michael Adams, paid a visit to the City at the end of June to appear in the latest in the series of the ECF's Chess(Grand)Master@The Local events. This took place at Furley&Co on Hull's busy Princes Dock Street, also the venue for Hull's last event in this series when local IM James Adair performed, which itself had led to a series of Thursday evening chess socials and even a Furley&Co sponsored Chess Blitz@The Local in January with a special City of Culture trophy for the winner. Promoted by our own poster, plus use of the Furley&Co's Facebook and Twitter sites we were not disappointed with the Mickey Adams' popularity and the events success.

There was naturally a good turn out of local chess players willing to take the chance to defeat England's best over a pint of the Yorkshire Brewery's specially brewed Grandmaster Ale (and some no doubt honing their preparation for the formal simultaneous taking place the following day). Despite 36 sponsored 'free' pints Mickey clearly didn't down enough as all that could be mustered by the opposition were two draws. Despite this the bottom of the barrel was just about reached. Unfortunately it didn't influence the results of the simultaneous the next day which resulted in 24 wins and 6 draws for Mickey Adams. At the Grandmaster@The Local event, Mickey performed a three hour 'rolling simultaneous' of 14 boards. The location for the event was ideal and, helped by great weather, there was lots of interest from the public and many took a seat to take him on, with limited success! There were also very many interested locals, reluctant to play, but well informed by local players present as to what was going on, pleased that Hull could attract one of the worlds best. Maybe not an official City of culture event, but nevertheless a successful one which helped our



efforts to raise the profile of chess in Hull amongst the general public on a sunny Saturday afternoon.

The previous event with James Adair had taken place in the early evening, but had also attracted big chess playing interest, encouraged by a spot on BBC Humberside's popular 'Burnsy show' earlier in the day. Around 60 people turned up to play chess; James only allowing to a single draw. The three 'best game' prizes of £10 each from the ECF also managed to find their way into Grandmaster Ale consumption. Inside Furley&Co people took advantage of the opportunity to play chess in warmer conditions, including a fair number of people who had just turned up for a drink not knowing about the Chess!



A huge thanks to the ECF for sponsoring Mickey and James. Both events were enjoyed by local chess players, and non regular chess players alike. Well over 120 people were able to enjoy open air chess against England's best, with a drink to wash it all down. Huge thanks for free facilities and organising the Grandmaster Ale to Furley&Co. Over 140 pints of Grandmaster Ale drunk in 360 minutes of playing chess. That's one every 150 seconds (or thereabouts) and not a single Hull GM as a result. There must be an easier way of becoming a Grandmaster! Just as well that two locals, fresh from Beverley races, provided our own champagne moment.....

