

English Chess Federation



Official Chess Yearbook 2019



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Preface / Welcome

Where has all the archived information gone?

Until its final edition in the old format in January 2018, the BCF/ECF Yearbook was an attempt to publish a one-stop resource for chess players, chess organisers and interested parties alike to turn to to find the people, the achievements, the organisation details and the year's reports and results for chess events in Britain, and latterly in England. The yearbook was first published sometime between 1904 and 1913, and a new edition came out every year as close to the start of the year as possible.



A website (above) has now been set up that takes elements of the first and last thirds of the yearbook and brings them together in one resource, which should make the information contained available to more people than ever before, and increase the accuracy of this information, as corrections and additions need only happen once – on the site – and can be accomplished at any time of the year, rather than just the beginning.

The material that was covered in the Yearbook and has now moved to the website (<http://www.ecfresource.co.uk>) comprises **Presidents, Chairmen, Chief Executives, HLVPs and HLMs of the BCF/ECF; FIDE Titles and Honours (Administrative, Team and Individual); British Champions, Junior Champions, Junior Girl Champions and Grand Prix Winners; ECF Awards; Results (including County Champions, U18 and U13 County Champions and National Club Champions); and basic contact details for Constituent Units, English Counties, Leagues and Other Associations, Other Organisations, Junior Organisations**

The material that was covered in the Yearbook and duplicated on the main ECF website, and that now defaults to the main ECF website (<http://englishchess.org.uk>), comprises **Board and Officers; Chess Service Providers (Arbiters, Coaches, Chess Journalists)**

Whilst the ECF understands what a departure this is from previous practice, we sincerely hope that the improvements in accuracy, the avoidance of duplications and the ease of access that the new, constantly updated resource website provides represents a substantial improvement.

Finally, you're holding in your hands the new, slimline, full-colour ECF Yearbook for 2019, where the news and events of 2018 have been freed of the clutter of the ages and can thus be represented in an attractive and worthwhile publication, containing articles and photography not seen before, written by those who were there and saw it happen ...

Board Report

Report of the Board to Council October 2018

Approved by the Board September 2018

Introduction



CEO Mike Truran

This report has, as last year, been prepared in accordance with the recommendation of the Independent Constitutional and Governance Review Commission that “instead of individual Directors reporting to Council, there should be a single report of the Board, approved by it beforehand”. The report focuses on what has been achieved during 2017/2018. The Board has reviewed the Strategy and Business Plan document, also included in the papers to Council, and has made a few relatively minor changes. The Board is happy that the document sets out the Board’s proposed direction of travel over the coming years and the objectives that the Board has set itself for 2018/2019 and beyond.

2017/2018 Achievements

The Board has -

- Continued to work hard to establish a cohesive and stable Board
- Presided over a very successful British Championships in Hull, with the new regulations working as intended. Our thanks are due to the volunteers of the Hull and District Chess Association for working so hard to provide a very comprehensive and enjoyable social programme. The Board has also been able to confirm the Riviera Centre, Torquay as the venue for next year’s event
- Launched the new UK Open Blitz Championships, which achieved a total of 333 entrants in its first year including 33 female players in total, about one in ten of the total field - an excellent ratio compared with most weekend tournaments or Rapidplays
- Held a successful County Championship Finals Day, and started the process of securing a new venue for next year’s Finals Day
- Held the most successful English Women’s Championships to date, with an increased prize fund and no fewer than 30 entrants, the highest by far of the three Championships run so far
- Implemented a new membership system (Azolve) to improve the service and options (including direct debit) available to members. The initial options have been implemented for the 2018/19 membership year. User reaction suggests that the majority of members feel that the system is a great improvement on its predecessor. The system includes modules for administering events and qualifications for such as coaches and arbiters, which we are not utilising at present, but which will provide significant benefits to the ECF and to members once implemented
- Continued to roll out the League Management System, which has been used with great success in 2017-18 by a number of leagues
- In partnership with the 4NCL, set up a national repository of digital clocks and live transmission boards and sets that can be accessed by non-ECF/4NCL event organisers as well as by ECF and 4NCL events
- Completed a comprehensive review of the County Championship structure and format, with recommendations for change made to Council. Although Council rejected the substantive recommendations, that does not invalidate the value of the exercise
- Supported our international efforts in what has been an exceptionally good year for English international chess, with plenty of success for our leading players, as well as a number of norms and titles for our younger players. Highlights include –
 - We are currently ranked twelfth in the world by FIDE, and six players in the world’s top 100, something we have not had for some time
 - The England over-50 team came second at the World Senior Championship in Radebeul, with Keith Arkell winning individual gold for his performance on board 5. We should also mention Nigel Povah’s superb 7/8 for the over-65 side, as well as the

bronze and silver individual medals won by Sheila Jackson and Petra Fink-Nunn respectively for the women's over-60 team

- Luke McShane and Gawain Jones both played at the European Individual, both qualifying for the World Cup. Gawain also made a strong impression at his first ever elite event as he played in the Wijk aan Zee A tournament and had Magnus Carlsen on the ropes. David Howell also enjoyed tournament success and went above 2700 briefly
- Luke McShane claimed the silver medal in the European Blitz Championship in Katowice

- Continued the development and expansion of the International Programme at the ECF Chess Academy. 25-35% of attendees on the study weekends are female. The Elite programmes were removed in August, but the success of the participants supported in gaining FIDE titles this year is worthy of note
- Continued the expansion of the National Schools Chess Championships, and increased the number of girls entering the individual and team competitions
- Supported the Chess Trust in setting up the new Accelerator Programme for our elite junior players
- Worked with organisations such as UKCC to roll out free first year Junior Silver membership. The interface between this process and the implementation of the new membership system has unfortunately not been without its problems, although these should be resolved in the near future
- Brought the accounts for the ECF and BCF up to date. The past six years' tax affairs, which were outstanding for all entities, have also been brought up to date
- In accordance with Council's approval, worked with the trustees of the Permanent Invested Fund to donate the PIF No 2 Fund (John Robinson) to the Chess Trust. This fund provides a yearly contribution along with the John Robinson Youth Chess Trust to support the British Chess Championships in accordance with John Robinson's wishes. The transfer will allow the fund to be more tax efficient and avoids any future capital gains liability
- With the approval of Council, implemented the changes from charging game fee for leagues and club chess to a new membership arrangement in line with the original plan when the membership scheme was established in 2012
- Implemented the process of issuing bi-monthly management accounts to the Executive Directors
- Addressed the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and also provided advice and recommendations to chess organisers on how to address GDPR requirements for their own organisations
- Put proposals to Council in April clarifying and simplifying the provisions in the articles of association relating to the voting register

Conclusion

The pace of change has continued to be rapid, and a lot has been achieved, although much remains to be done. The Board would like to take this opportunity to thank the many unsung volunteers of the ECF who do so much for English chess, at times with precious little recognition. In particular, we would like to thank Traci Whitfield, who is not seeking re-election as Junior Director, and to Alex Holowczak, who is standing down as Director of Home Chess, for their sterling efforts in the service of English chess over the last few years.

The Strategy and Business document continues to give a good idea both of where we hope the ECF is heading and of what is needed to take us towards that aspiration ...

Addendum - Chess in Prisons 2019 by Carl Portman, Manager of Chess in Prisons

Background

The job specification is 'to foster the pursuit of chess in prisons'. It is a broad church of a job with plenty of scope, undertaken as a voluntary position. This allows the post holder to be flexible in the approach to prison chess work. Prisons I have visited in 2018 are --- HMP Hewell and the Grange (twice); HMP Stanford Hill; HMP Bedford; HMP Coldingley; HMP Grendon

I am also the chess correspondent for the prison newspaper INSIDE TIME. I do this independently of the ECF and it potentially reaches some 80,000 prisoners in the UK and indeed abroad. I continue to receive a healthy volume of correspondence from inmates telling me about their love of chess and the way it changes their lives for the better on the inside.

This included one from a prisoner who said that chess also helps on the outside because chess clubs open at the same time that some people go out to commit crime – now they go to play chess instead. That's a nice thought and is another benefit to have real chess clubs as opposed to online games – the social benefits should not be underestimated.

I continue to use a well-trodden programme when I visit prisons. That is to say, I donate some chess equipment, meet the governor or his/her representative, hold a chess Q&A and coaching session for the prisoners and then give a simultaneous exhibition, which is almost always the most eagerly anticipated aspect of any visit. There are some good players in prisons, some I would say would play perfectly well at county standard.

On a personal note I am heartened to see how many prisons are stocking my book 'Chess Behind Bars' (published by Quality Chess) in their libraries and feedback from inmates has been very encouraging indeed. The main message people seem to take on board is to think before acting.

I was delighted to be asked to attend the London Chess Conference last December at which I attended a workshop on prisons chess. This included people undertaking chess in prisons work in Norway, Sweden, Spain, Germany Australia and other countries and it was a very productive meeting indeed. The general consensus was to gather and share data to show the effects that playing chess can have on the prison population. Such data might be used when putting forward arguments (for want of a better word) to Ministers for more support in each country. Ministers do after all like hard data, but it is a very tricky subject to measure.

This work is in its genesis, but it is a very exciting challenge and we shall see what develops. I also had



Donating chess clocks to HMP Coldingley

a meeting with Malcolm Pein, Chief Executive of Chess in Schools and Communities who are also developing their programme of work for chess in prisons. We agreed that it is a natural, progressive (and efficient) step to share information between organisations so that we do not overlap on prison work, but to share information where we can for the good of the initiative which will suit both the CSC and ECF. This is a very important link-up going forward. Such work (prisons chess) should not be done in isolation.

Going forward I want to bring the issue of chess in prisons deeper onto the media radar. I am grateful to Malcolm Pein for sharing our initiatives in the Guardian newspaper which certainly set people thinking about the subject. I also want to do more work with government – especially post Brexit (I know, I had to mention it) when things might begin to settle down one way or another and Ministers can start to concentrate on home issues once again. There is lots to do but it

is all rewarding work and has a positive effect on people – which surely is what chess is all about.

I want to thank the English Chess Federation for continuing to support the chess in prisons initiative and in this regard, Mike Truran has been a great support to me throughout. Thanks also to Alex Holowczak who left the Director of Home Chess position replaced by Adrian Elwin who I am now working with on the chess in prisons role. Many thanks also to Chess & Bridge of London for donating magazines for prisons. Finally, I want to thank members of the chess community for donating books and equipment. I promise you that they are not only well utilised but treasured when donated to prisons. You all make a tangible difference.

Accelerator Programme Summary

- Grandmaster Peter Wells was engaged by the Chess Trust as Manager of the Accelerator Programme as at 1 March 2018, and a formal consultancy agreement has been put in place.
- The Chess Trust has approved a first-year budget of £40,000. Projected spend for the first year is on track to come in at or just below this number.
- A Selection Committee has been put in place with Peter in the chair. The other members of the Committee are Sarah Longson, Alex Holowczak, Malcolm Pein and David Howell. The Committee's principal task is to select juniors for the Accelerator Programme. So far eight of the envisaged twelve participants have been selected, five boys and three girls. There is recognition now among a significant group of strong young players that being on the Accelerator Programme has a beneficial status to which they can aspire.
- Peter's support for the participants includes –
 - Establishing what help the participants are receiving and what they require;
 - Working with parents;
 - Advising on what tournaments to attend;
 - Working with the ECF Academy as appropriate to identify potential new candidates for the Programme;
 - Developing and monitoring key performance indicators for the participants;
 - Representing the Programme and mentoring/coaching participants at national and international events where they are playing;
 - Holding discussions with the participants on a regular basis to assist them and monitor their progress;
 - Maintaining close contact with the participants' own coaches where applicable;
 - Preparing juniors for specific games and tournaments as required
- Participants have attended the following international events so far –
 - European Youth Championships (Riga);
 - World Youth Championships (Halkidiki);
 - World Cadets Championships (Santiago de Compostela)
- Plans for the coming months include the following –
 - Developing ways of working more closely with the Academy on a range of topics;
 - Working towards creating a set of key performance indicators that can be used to monitor the success both of individual participants and of the Programme itself;
 - Preparation for and attendance at the World Cadets Championships and World Youth Championships;
 - Researching the progress of players identified as 'candidates' for the programme with a view to making additional selections;
 - Reviewing options for the organisation and administration of international trips in conjunction with the Junior Director;
 - Organising collaborative events such as coaching weekends which all the participants can attend, in the hope of developing a stronger group spirit amongst those on the programme

In the trustees' view the Accelerator Programme is off to an excellent start under Peter's guidance and holds out much promise for the future. The trustees will be regularly reviewing progress and results

The Chess Trust

The Chess Trust has been established with the support of the English Chess Federation for the furtherance of chess. The Trust has the capacity to support a wide range of activities in its furtherance of the game. Its objectives are -

- The advancement of amateur sport by promoting the study and practice of chess in all its forms, principally, but not exclusively, for the benefit of the residents of England; and
- The advancement of education by promoting the development of young people through the teaching and practice of chess

Activities

The Trust was established in 2015 and is currently seeks funding to start its activities. Funds can be received through donations and bequests. The Trust intends to utilise any funds received to meet its objectives in the immediate future and for the long term.

Under particular circumstances donations and bequests may receive particular reliefs from taxation which can be of advantage to the charity and to the donor. For further information please see below. From its objectives the Trust may support a wide range of chess related activities except those of a professional nature and any organisation or individual may apply for support from the Trust when it has established adequate funding. For further information please see below.

Management

Management of the Trust is performed by the trustees. The current trustees are - Ray Edwards, David Eustace, Stephen Greep, Isabel Keen, Chris Mattos, Mike Truran

Donations and Bequests

For any large donations or bequests the trustees will take into consideration specific requests by donors / bequeathers as to how their gift should be applied subject to it being consistent with the objectives of the trust.

Bequests made to a charity may reduce inheritance taxes that may be due on an estate. Estates over the inheritance allowance are subject to taxation at 40%. If you donate 10% of your estate to a charity (which will be free of tax) the remainder of your estate may only incur a 36% charge. The Trust can offer general advice on this, but you should always seek legal advice for wills.

Donations made by an individual who is a UK tax payer will enable the Trust to reclaim basic rate tax on the value of a donation through the government's Gift Aid scheme. Thus a donation of £100 will enable the Trust to reclaim £25 making the total donation worth £125 to the Trust.

A donation made by an individual who pay UK tax at the higher rate of 40% or 45% will be able to reclaim the difference between the basic and higher rates through their tax return.

The Trust will be establishing a regular donations scheme so that donors will be able to make small regular payments to the Trust which will have the benefits of the Gift Aid Scheme. Donations should be sent to The Chess Trust at the English Chess Federation Office.

Applications for Support from the Trust

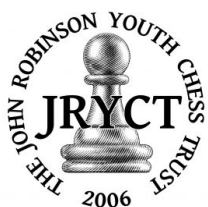
Any organisation or individual may apply for support for a chess related activity. The Trust will place priority on activities supporting chess within England, though activities in other parts of the United Kingdom may be considered. Applications will need to be supported by a detailed explanation of the request and how it will improve the development of chess. All applications will be considered but priority will be given to those with the greatest benefits to meeting the Trust's objectives.

Applications in writing should be made to the trustees of The Chess Trust at the English Chess Federation Office.

Address and email contact

The Chess Trust, c/o English Chess Federation, The Watch Oak, Chain Lane, Battle, East Sussex TN330YD Contact email: david.eustace01@btinternet.com

The John Robinson Youth Chess Trust



The John Robinson Youth Chess Trust, founded in 2006
Charity registration number 1116981

Applications for financial support by The John Robinson Youth Chess Trust are invited. They should be emailed to the Chairman (see address below) and must meet the criteria of the Trust – ‘to advance education by providing or assisting in the provision of facilities for the teaching development and supervision of the playing of chess amongst persons under the age of twenty one years resident in England or eligible to represent England at chess who are, or may be, interested in chess and by students attending schools universities and other educational establishments in England.’

The Trust was created following the death of Mr. John Robinson on 1st February 2006. In his Will, dated 14th February 1996, he left substantial bequests to the British Chess Federation.

Each year the Trust awards a total of approximately £24,000 in grants.

Grants made in 2018 ---

UK Chess Challenge Megafinal Bursary Fund, ECF Junior Academy, 94th Hastings International Chess Congress (for junior entries into the masters), ECF Juniors Bursary Fund, ECF Junior Grand Prix, British Chess Championship, Northumbria FIDE Masters (for junior entries), 1st Peter Poobalasingam Celebration Competition, Hull & District Chess Association and funding for individual junior players (FM & IM level) to play in international events at home and overseas.

If you wish to enquire about the work of the Trust, please contact the Chairman by email — john.higgs@englishchess.org.uk



John Robinson

British Chess Championships 2018

Heavenly Hull ... a report from Tim Wall



'Welcome to Hull – I'm the devil, but you can call me Toby if you like'

We've all been at infernal British Championships over the years. Who can forget the delicate delights of the outside toilets in Sunderland in '66, the broom cupboard analysis room in Clacton in '74 or the embarrassing spectacle of chess players letting it all hang out on Brighton's nudist beach in 1980? As Rowan Atkinson might have said in his 'Devil' standup sketch, "Mobile phone offenders, time-trouble addicts, crisp packet rustlers, J'adoubé artists, blitz flaggers – over there, please. Next to the arbiters and the Berlin Defence players."

Oldies and Younglings

Hull, unlike the Other Place, was actually a Heavenly place to spend nine days – particularly if you were a real ale drinker and pub gastronome. In contrast to the all-too-samey pub/restaurant chain experience of most English cities, the olde-worlde pubs of the Old Town were a way-too-tempting sin to avoid, at least for many of the players I observed quaffing pints of Old Peculier in Ye Olde White Harte's courtyard, scoffing fish 'n' chips and Atomic Power ale in the Lion & Key and wolfing down pork pies 'n' Old Rosie cider in the unacceptably-named Ye Olde Black Boy. I don't know if you noticed Hull's certain 'old' theme, but the city's a kind of 'Westworld' theme park to the demographically-challenged chess community (all we need now is to cater for young families, and we've cracked it ...)

The city centre nightlife was also a sight to behold, with hundreds of younglings out in force both weekends, and some nights it appeared half of Yorkshire was staggering around the cobbled streets on a Stag/Hen night out.

It's all about the holiday experience, of course, and this is something that the British seem to be rediscovering. Thanks to the sterling efforts of Stephen Greep and the Hull & District Chess Association, the week was chock full of social activities: a Ghost Walk, local history tour (Fun Hull Fact No. 37: The English Civil War started in this pub at last orders ...), Grandmaster Ale, chess and casino nights, a Live Chess game on the square outside the City Hall, and pizza-making for the kids at a local Italian restaurant – all great steps in the right direction. A family-friendly holiday with top-class chess and fun blitz events, plus a real chess festival atmosphere, is definitely the way forward, and I'm happy to say the ECF has plans afoot to develop these fun social events even more over the next couple of years.

Sartorial style and a quick dash

On to the chess itself, which was impressively run by indefatigable tournament director Kevin Staveley and his professional team of arbiters. The City Hall was grand in that northern civic pride way, even if the cavernous commentary room wasn't quite suited to its purpose. The main playing hall was majestic but rather hot and playing was 'damnation without relief' if you had less than 10 minutes on your clock, due to the long walk (mad dash?) to the toilets at the other end of the building.

My personal playing experience was brightened by the colourful appearance of International Master Jack Rudd on the board next to me. He was wearing a rather fetching, summery dress on several days. The beach attire even gave way to a stylish evening gown on cooler days, prompting IM Lawrence Trent to speculate on his chances of following suit next year (his musing, 'If I self-identify as a woman, can I win the Women's Championship?' only seemed to be partly in jest.)

'Strongest British ever'

Thanks to generous financial support from sponsor Capital Developments Waterloo Ltd and the City of Hull, the Battle for the British itself was intense, with top GMs Mickey Adams, David Howell, Gawain Jones and Luke McShane duking it out royally over the 9 rounds (I can't recall a single short draw in the entire tournament, except for when IM David Eggleston halved out in the last round v Keith Arkell to bag a third GM norm). The last round especially was full of high drama, with Luke McShane's brilliant queen sac finish to force mate v David Howell taking him into a playoff with Mickey Adams.

After his coolly-played playoff victory, I was pleased to see Mickey's comment, made in his speech of thanks at the prizegiving, where he graciously complimented the other players on the 'strongest British Championships ever' (even the curmudgeonly Twitter account of the still-dead 19th century English 'World Champion' @HowardStaunton would be forced to agree, I feel, notwithstanding his own Simpson's in the Strand exploits and Amos Burn's victories in the 1880s).

As a North-Easterner I was particularly proud of 'Eggy's' GM norm performance and Danny Gormally's last-round draw with Mickey Adams. I should also mention the amazing performance by my Forest Hall clubmate, 10-year-old Yichen Han, who won two British junior titles (Under 11 and Under 12). For good measure, he also finished 2nd= in the U2050 and 5th= in the Rapidplay, notching up an impressive total of 21 points from 24 games in 9 days.

Gingering it up

For those of us who had to leave before the playoff, the live online commentary provided independently by GM Simon Williams on Twitch was fantastic (you can subscribe at <https://www.twitch.tv/gingergm>), particularly when he hooked up with a room full of Fiona Steil-Antoni, Keith Arkell, Danny Gormally and David Eggleston for some on-the-spot hilarity from Hull). Hint to future British Championships' organisers - I would heartily recommend the Ginger GM commentary, bursting as it is with down-to-earth analysis for the average player and a wonderful sense of fun.

So, another British is over, and we of course look forward to next year, when it may be back to Brighton, according to the whispers I hear. Probably without the nudist beach, but hopefully with all the usual fun and frolics of the British Championships, some great chess – and a real festival atmosphere.



BCC 2018 - final ranking crosstable after nine rounds

| Rank | Title | Name | Rating | FED | Rd 1 | Rd 2 | Rd 3 | Rd 4 | Rd 5 | Rd 6 | Rd 7 | Rd 8 | Rd 9 | Points |
|------|-------|----------------------|--------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--------|
| 1 | GM | Adams Michael | 2706 | ENG | 33b1 | 10w1 | 6b1 | 3w½ | 2b½ | 7w1 | 4b1 | 5w½ | 8b½ | 7,0 |
| 2 | GM | McShane Luke J | 2669 | ENG | 26w1 | 11b0 | 48w1 | 10b1 | 1w½ | 15b1 | 21w½ | 6w1 | 3b1 | 7,0 |
| 3 | GM | Howell David WL | 2687 | ENG | 49w1 | 17b1 | 19w1 | 1b½ | 4w½ | 5b½ | 11w1 | 9b1 | 2w0 | 6,5 |
| 4 | GM | Jones Gawain CB | 2670 | ENG | 25b1 | 16w1 | 9b1 | 12w1 | 3b½ | 6w½ | 1w0 | 21b1 | 7b½ | 6,5 |
| 5 | GM | Pert Nicholas | 2544 | ENG | 41w1 | 24b½ | 11w½ | 22b½ | 32w1 | 3w½ | 20b1 | 1b½ | 12w½ | 6,0 |
| 6 | GM | Fodor Tamas Jr | 2506 | HUN | 57b1 | 28w1 | 1w0 | 16b1 | 9w1 | 4b½ | 19w½ | 2b0 | 21w1 | 6,0 |
| 7 | IM | Ghasi Ameet K | 2494 | ENG | 42w0 | 52b1 | 26w1 | 18b1 | 14w1 | 1b0 | 36w1 | 13b½ | 4w½ | 6,0 |
| 8 | GM | Gormally Daniel W | 2478 | ENG | 35w1 | 30b½ | 32w½ | 34b1 | 15w½ | 21b0 | 14w1 | 22b1 | 1w½ | 6,0 |
| 9 | GM | Fernandez Daniel H | 2477 | ENG | 51b1 | 48w1 | 4w0 | 30b1 | 6b0 | 28w1 | 40b1 | 3w0 | 26w1 | 6,0 |
| 10 | GM | Arkeell Keith C | 2406 | ENG | 45w1 | 1b0 | 40w1 | 2w0 | 33b1 | 24b1 | 13w½ | 19b1 | 11w½ | 6,0 |
| 11 | IM | Eggleston David J | 2397 | ENG | 54b1 | 2w1 | 5b½ | 14b½ | 13w½ | 27w1 | 3b0 | 20w1 | 10b½ | 6,0 |
| 12 | GM | Hawkins Jonathan | 2590 | ENG | 40b1 | 18w1 | 21b½ | 4b0 | 24w½ | 23w½ | 25b½ | 31w1 | 5b½ | 5,5 |
| 13 | IM | Tan Justin HY | 2481 | AUS | 43b1 | 31w½ | 39b1 | 21w½ | 11b½ | 20w½ | 10b½ | 7w½ | 17b½ | 5,5 |
| 14 | GM | Wells Peter K | 2426 | ENG | 58b1 | 60w½ | 31b1 | 11w½ | 7b0 | 25w½ | 8b0 | 34w1 | 29b1 | 5,5 |
| 15 | IM | Palliser Richard JD | 2418 | ENG | 59b½ | 64w1 | 60b1 | 27w½ | 8b½ | 2w0 | 23b½ | 25w½ | 38b1 | 5,5 |
| 16 | IM | Trent Lawrence | 2406 | ENG | 65w1 | 4b0 | 42w1 | 6w0 | 40b0 | 35b1 | 32w½ | 50b1 | 30w1 | 5,5 |
| 17 | FM | McPhillips Joseph | 2402 | ENG | 53b1 | 3w0 | 34b0 | 38w1 | 25w0 | 59b1 | 44b1 | 40w1 | 13w½ | 5,5 |
| 18 | IM | Roberson Peter T | 2401 | ENG | 61w1 | 12b0 | 50w1 | 7w0 | 47b1 | 36b0 | 33w½ | 41b1 | 32w1 | 5,5 |
| 19 | IM | Adair James R | 2492 | ENG | 34b1 | 29w1 | 3b0 | 28w½ | 31b½ | 39w1 | 6b½ | 10w0 | 23b½ | 5,0 |
| 20 | GM | Ward Chris G | 2434 | ENG | 36w½ | 37b1 | 30w½ | 32b½ | 49w1 | 13b½ | 5w0 | 11b0 | 42w1 | 5,0 |
| 21 | GM | Hebden Mark L | 2423 | ENG | 52w1 | 42b1 | 12w½ | 13b½ | 27b½ | 8w1 | 2b½ | 4w0 | 6b0 | 5,0 |
| 22 | IM | Houska Jovanka | 2406 | ENG | 60b0 | 58w1 | 57b1 | 5w½ | 28b½ | 31w1 | 27b½ | 8w0 | 25b½ | 5,0 |
| 23 | FM | Macklin Paul | 2363 | ENG | 37w½ | 50b½ | 35w½ | 25b½ | 42w1 | 12b½ | 15w½ | 36b½ | 19w½ | 5,0 |
| 24 | FM | Zakarian David | 2354 | ARM | 46b1 | 5w½ | 27b0 | 43w1 | 12b½ | 10w0 | 34b0 | 51b1 | 36w1 | 5,0 |
| 25 | | Kalavannan Koby | 2277 | ENG | 4w0 | 45b½ | 53w1 | 23w½ | 17b1 | 14b½ | 12w½ | 15b½ | 22w½ | 5,0 |
| 26 | IM | Pritchett Craig W | 2274 | SCO | 2b0 | 54w1 | 7b0 | 59w½ | 60b1 | 29w½ | 28b1 | 27w1 | 9b0 | 5,0 |
| 27 | GM | Emms John M | 2488 | ENG | 50w½ | 36b1 | 24w1 | 15b½ | 21w½ | 11b0 | 22w½ | 26b0 | 31w½ | 4,5 |
| 28 | IM | Bradbury Neil H | 2348 | ENG | 62w1 | 6b0 | 51w1 | 19b½ | 22w½ | 9b0 | 26w0 | 46b1 | 34b½ | 4,5 |
| 29 | FM | Fitzsimons David | 2328 | IRL | 55w1 | 19b0 | 44w½ | 36b½ | 35w½ | 26b½ | 50b½ | 49w1 | 14w0 | 4,5 |
| 30 | FM | Derakhshani Borna | 2315 | ENG | 47b1 | 8w½ | 20b½ | 9w0 | 50b½ | 40w0 | 58b1 | 43w1 | 16b0 | 4,5 |
| 31 | FM | Webb Laurence E | 2306 | ENG | 56w1 | 13b½ | 14w0 | 44b1 | 19w½ | 22b0 | 51w1 | 12b0 | 27b½ | 4,5 |
| 32 | IM | Kolbus Dietmar | 2303 | GER | 38b½ | 59w1 | 8b½ | 20w½ | 5b0 | 50w½ | 16b½ | 44w1 | 18b0 | 4,5 |
| 33 | IM | Zapolskis Antanas | 2283 | LTU | 1w0 | 44b0 | 62w1 | 51b1 | 10w0 | 45b1 | 18b½ | 38w0 | 40b1 | 4,5 |
| 34 | FM | Wall Tim P | 2234 | ENG | 19w0 | 55b1 | 17w1 | 8w0 | 39b0 | 56b1 | 24w1 | 14b0 | 28w½ | 4,5 |
| 35 | FM | Kalaiyalahan Akshaya | 2138 | ENG | 8b0 | 47w1 | 23b½ | 39w½ | 29b½ | 16w0 | 43b0 | 55w1 | 49b1 | 4,5 |
| 36 | | Payne Matthew J | 2113 | ENG | 20b½ | 27w0 | 64b1 | 29w½ | 57b1 | 18w1 | 7b0 | 23w½ | 24b0 | 4,5 |
| 37 | | Pollack Oscar | 2064 | ENG | 23b½ | 20w0 | 43b0 | 58w0 | 62b1 | 57w1 | 38b0 | 48b1 | 50w1 | 4,5 |
| 38 | | Young Daniel J | 1962 | ENG | 32w½ | 39b0 | 45w1 | 17b0 | 44w0 | 48b1 | 37w1 | 33b1 | 15w0 | 4,5 |

| Rank | Title | Name | Rating | FED | Rd 1 | Rd 2 | Rd 3 | Rd 4 | Rd 5 | Rd 6 | Rd 7 | Rd 8 | Rd 9 | Points |
|------|-------|---------------------|--------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--------|
| 39 | FM | Murphy Conor E | 2336 | IRL | 64b½ | 38w1 | 13w0 | 35b½ | 34w1 | 19b0 | 42w1 | 0 | 0 | 4,0 |
| 40 | WGM | Toma Katarzyna | 2274 | POL | 12w0 | 61b1 | 10b0 | 46w1 | 16w1 | 30b1 | 9w0 | 17b0 | 33w0 | 4,0 |
| 41 | FM | Britton Richard | 2249 | ENG | 5b0 | 46w0 | 54b1 | 47w0 | 64b1 | 58w½ | 59b1 | 18w0 | 44b½ | 4,0 |
| 42 | IM | Rudd Jack | 2244 | ENG | 7b1 | 21w0 | 16b0 | 63w1 | 23b0 | 61w1 | 39b0 | 47w1 | 20b0 | 4,0 |
| 43 | | Tozer Philip Aa | 2142 | ENG | 13w0 | 56b½ | 37w1 | 24b0 | 59w½ | 55b½ | 35w1 | 30b0 | 45w½ | 4,0 |
| 44 | WIM | Maroroa Sue Y | 2104 | ENG | 0 | 33w1 | 29b½ | 31w0 | 38b1 | 49b1 | 17w0 | 32b0 | 41w½ | 4,0 |
| 45 | | Krzyzanowski Patryk | 2087 | POL | 10b0 | 25w½ | 38b0 | 64w½ | 63b1 | 33w0 | 54b½ | 58w1 | 43b½ | 4,0 |
| 46 | | Mcdougall William M | 2056 | SCO | 24w0 | 41b1 | 49w0 | 40b0 | 51w0 | 63w1 | 61b1 | 28w0 | 57b1 | 4,0 |
| 47 | | Miller Dominic | 2017 | ENG | 30w0 | 35b0 | 52w1 | 41b1 | 18w0 | 51b0 | 53w1 | 42b0 | 56w1 | 4,0 |
| 48 | IM | Muir Andrew J | 2291 | SCO | 63w1 | 9b0 | 2b0 | 50w0 | 55b½ | 38w0 | 57b1 | 37w0 | 60b1 | 3,5 |
| 49 | FM | Abdulla Murad | 2281 | SCO | 3b0 | 53w½ | 46b1 | 60w1 | 20b0 | 44w0 | 55w1 | 29b0 | 35w0 | 3,5 |
| 50 | | Moore Graham J | 2218 | ENG | 27b½ | 23w½ | 18b0 | 48b1 | 30w½ | 32b½ | 29w½ | 16w0 | 37b0 | 3,5 |
| 51 | WFM | Longson Sarah N | 2123 | ENG | 9w0 | 63b1 | 28b0 | 33w0 | 46b1 | 47w1 | 31b0 | 24w0 | 54b½ | 3,5 |
| 52 | | Jarman John | 2110 | ENG | 21b0 | 7w0 | 47b0 | 54w½ | 61w0 | 62b½ | 64w1 | 53b½ | 63w1 | 3,5 |
| 53 | | Verma Aditya | 2084 | ENG | 17w0 | 49b½ | 25b0 | 55w0 | 54b½ | 60w1 | 47b0 | 52w½ | 58b1 | 3,5 |
| 54 | WGM | Jackson Sheila | 2072 | ENG | 11w0 | 26b0 | 41w0 | 52b½ | 53w½ | 64b1 | 45w½ | 56b½ | 51w½ | 3,5 |
| 55 | | Iyengar Ilya | 2017 | ENG | 29b0 | 34w0 | 58b½ | 53b1 | 48w½ | 43w½ | 49b0 | 35b0 | 61w1 | 3,5 |
| 56 | | Burke Mitchell R | 1988 | ENG | 31b0 | 43w½ | 59b½ | 57w½ | 58b½ | 34w0 | 60b½ | 54w½ | 47b0 | 3,0 |
| 57 | CM | Mcmichael Richard J | 2245 | ENG | 6w0 | 62b1 | 22w0 | 56b½ | 36w0 | 37b0 | 48w0 | 64b1 | 46w0 | 2,5 |
| 58 | FM | Waddington Mike P | 2110 | ENG | 14w0 | 22b0 | 55w½ | 37b1 | 56w½ | 41b½ | 30w0 | 45b0 | 53w0 | 2,5 |
| 59 | | Sugden John N | 2090 | ENG | 15w½ | 32b0 | 56w½ | 26b½ | 43b½ | 17w0 | 41w0 | 63b0 | 62b½ | 2,5 |
| 60 | | Price Gwilym T | 2085 | ENG | 22w1 | 14b½ | 15w0 | 49b0 | 26w0 | 53b0 | 56w½ | 61b½ | 48w0 | 2,5 |
| 61 | | Ratnesan Ranesh | 2073 | ENG | 18b0 | 40w0 | 63b0 | 62w1 | 52b1 | 42b0 | 46w0 | 60w½ | 55b0 | 2,5 |
| 62 | CM | Thurlo Kevin J | 2030 | ENG | 28b0 | 57w0 | 33b0 | 61b0 | 37w0 | 52w½ | 63b½ | -1 | 59w½ | 2,5 |
| 63 | | De Coverly Roger D | 1920 | ENG | 48b0 | 51w0 | 61w1 | 42b0 | 45w0 | 46b0 | 62w½ | 59w1 | 52b0 | 2,5 |
| 64 | | Jamroz Krzysztof | 2026 | POL | 39w½ | 15b0 | 36w0 | 45b½ | 41w0 | 54w0 | 52b0 | 57w0 | 66b1 | 2,0 |
| 65 | CM | Anderton David W | 2084 | ENG | 16b0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0,0 |
| 66 | | Stephenson David W | 1817 | ENG | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 64w0 | 0,0 |

Prizewinners 2018

British Championships

1st – Michael Adams (Baden Baden)

2nd – Luke McShane (Wood Green)

3rd – Gawain Jones (4NCL Guildford), David Howell (4NCL Cheddleton)

5th – Ameet Ghasi (4NCL Grantham Sharks), Nicholas Pert (4NCL Guildford), Daniel Gormally (4NCL Blackthorne Russia), Daniel Fernandez (4NCL Guildford), Keith Arkell (4NCL Cheddleton)

— also, David Eggleston (4NCL Cheddleton), Tamas Fodor (4NCL Cheddleton) awarded rating prizes of greater value

Joint English Champions – Michael Adams (Baden Baden), Luke McShane (Wood Green)

Women's Prizes

1st – Jovanka Houska (4NCL Wood Green)

2nd – Akshaya Kalaiyalahan

3rd – Katarzyna Toma (4NCL West is Best), Sue Maroroa (Hillsborough CC)

Under 21 Prizes

1st – Justin Tan (4NCL Oxford), Joseph McPhillips (Bolton)

3rd – Koby Kalavannan (Surbiton)

Under 18 Champion – Koby Kalavannan (Surbiton)

Over 50 Prizes

1st – Keith Arkell (4NCL Cheddleton)

2nd – Peter Wells (4NCL White Rose)

3rd – Chris Ward (4NCL KJCA Kings), Mark Hebden (4NCL Guildford), Paul Macklin (Chorlton), Craig Pritchett (Dunbar)

Rating Prizes 2451 – 2550

1st – Tamas Fodor (4NCL Cheddleton)

2nd – Justin Tan (4NCL Oxford)

3rd – James Adair (4NCL White Rose)

Rating Prizes 2351 – 2450

1st – David Eggleston (4NCL Cheddleton)

2nd – Mark Hebden (4NCL Guildford)

3rd – David Zakarian (4NCL Oxford)

Rating Prize 2201 – 2350 – Koby Kalavannan (Surbiton)

Rating Prize 2051 – 2200 – Matthew Payne (Worthing)

Best Game – Luke McShane (Round 9 vs David Howell)

Major Open

1st – Thomas Villiers (Muswell Hill)

2nd – Victor Stoyanov (Battersea), Andrew P Smith (Bourne End)

4th – Jonah Willow (West Nottingham), Ben Ogunshola (4NCL The Pitstop)

Rating Prize (>1900) – Shreyas Royal

Rating Prize (<1900) – Victor Jamroz

Seniors (65+)

1st – Geoffrey James (Brighton & Hove), Kevin Bowmer (Hackney), Oliver Jackson

Seniors (50+)

1st – Andrew Lewis (Manningtree)

2nd – Terry Chapman (Cavendish), Paul Townsend (York), Jonathan Nelson (Sheffield Nomads)

Under 16

1st – Federico Rocco (Hendon), Borna Derakshani

3rd – Dominic Miller (Worthing)

Joint Girls Champions – Shayanna Sivarajasingam (Cardiff), Laura Davidson (Wellington College)

Under 14

1st – Ranesh Ratnesan (Surbiton)

2nd – Jacob Yoon (City of London School)

3rd – Arman Gogia (West Nottingham)

Joint Girls Champions – Venetia Sivarajasingam (Cardiff), Polina Shchepinova (Sussex Juniors), Susanna Fraser (North Cardiff)

Under 12

1st – Yichen Han (Forest Hall)

2nd – Arnav Srivastava (Cambridge City), Arjun Kolani (Sussex Juniors)

Joint Girls Champion – Hiya Ray (Wales), Julia Volovich

Under 11

1st – Yichen Han (Netherlands)

2nd – Nadhmi Auchy, Manvith Sandhu (Hallfield)

Joint Girls Champions – Tarini Jayawarna (Tameside Juniors), Radha Ratnesan (Surbiton)

Under 10

1st – Nischal Thatte

2nd – Louis Khoo Thwe (Olso), Dimitrios Zakarian, George Clarkson (Arnold House)

Girls Champion – Eugenia Karas

Under 9

1st – Rohan Pal (Warkwickshire)

2nd – Shlok Verma (Orpington), Sohumi Lohia, Harry Z Zheng (Chelmsford Juniors), Ethan Bingxuan Li (WUS), Jamie Charters (Westminster Under)

Joint Girls Champions – Thisumi Jayawarna (Tameside Juniors), Amelie Rees (Sussex Juniors), Elis Denele Diden (Coventry Chess Academy)

Under 8

1st – Harry Z Zheng (Chelmsford Juniors)

2nd – Max Pert (Essex Juniors), Kavin Thooran

Girls Champion – Elis Denele Diden (Coventry Chess Academy)

AM Open

1st – Thomas Villiers (Muswell Hill), James P Holland (Surbiton)

3rd – Mike Surtees (Great Lever), Philip Orgler (Hendon)

Rating Prize – Tristan See (Cambridge City)

Under 2050

1st – Nicholas Clanchy (Cambridge University) 2nd – Yichen Han (Forest Hall), Willie Rutherford (Edinburgh), Jonathan Wells (Norwich Dons)

Rating Prize – Oliver Stubbs (Downend & Fishponds)

Under 1900

1st – Tom Brown (Braunstone)

2nd – Robert Stern (Pimlico), Daniel Jazdzewski (Newark)

Grading Prize – Timothy Crouch (Kings Head)

Under 1750

1st – Devan Patel (Rushall)

2nd – Jonathan McKay (Glasgow Montrose)

3rd – Arnav Srivastava (Cambridge City), Nial Troughton (Derry), Polina Shchepinova (Sussex Juniors), Richard Livermore (Downend & Fishponds)

Rating Prize (1551 – 1750) – Stephen Pride (Cambridge)

Rating Prize (up to 1550) – David Lambton (Southampton Uni)

Under 120

1st – Ashir Valjee (Metropolitan), Alun Smith (North Cardiff)

3rd – John Grasham (Scunthorpe), John Scotter (Hull), Malcolm Hara (Beverley)

Grading Prize – Paul Munro

Under 100

1st – Daniel Hill (Hull)

2nd – Pal Rohan (Warwickshire), John Sugden (Surbiton), Christopher Willoughby (Essex Juniors),

Tashika Arora

Grading Prize – Laurence Bienvenu (France)

Atkins (Weekend Open)

1st – James Holland (Surbiton)

2nd – Philip Crocker (Chester), Michael Ashworth (Wootton Hall)

Rating Prize – Tom Shepherd (Bicester)

Soanes (Weekend Under 1825)

1st – Robert Clegg (Huddersfield)

2nd – Aarnavh Trivedi (Linton), Arushi Ramaiya, Andrew Zigmond (Harrogate)

Rating Prize – Stephen Pride (Cambridge)

Yates (Weekend Under 120)

1st – Emma Bienvenu (France)

2nd – Jason Lv (Leicestershire Juniors), Barry Miles (South Norwood), Joe Hirst (Newcastle-under-Lyme), Raj Mohindra

Rapidplay

1st – Matthew Sadler (4NCL Guildford)

2nd – Andrew Ledger (Sheffield)

3rd – Tim Chesters (Staines), Jonathan Pein (Hendon)

Rating Prize (Under 2000) – Matthew Forster (Worthing)

Rating Prize (Under 1750) – David Phillips (Coventry Chess Academy)

Rating Prize (Under 1500) – Adam Jorna

Rating prize (Under 1250) – Sanjit Kumar (Richmond)



Three for three --- CEO Mike Truran with Women's Champion Jovanka Houska, with British Champion Mickey Adams ... then the joint English Champions (Adams and McShane) together ... [pictures above, below and in the preceding article by Roger Noble]



GM Gawain Jones



WIM Sarah Longson



The playing hall in Hull



Keen spectators watch the top boards



GM Mark Hebden in a ruminative mood ...



Inception ... Roger Noble captures Arnold Lutton captures Mickey



Stewart Reuben, the ECF Manager of Senior Chess



Inside the hall ...



GM Chris Ward at the board



IM vs GM in the BCC

For more pictures, posts and reports, and for news of the next BCC (Torquay 2019) visit www.britishchesschampionships.co.uk ...

ECF Awards 2018

President's Awards 2018 – Phil Adams; Mike Denison; Howard Grist; Ken Neat

Phil Adams from the Three Cs Club in Oldham

Phil himself a very strong player and is the head coach at the Club, where he has worked with the youngsters for nearly 40 years. The result? 3Cs is recognised as one of the strongest junior clubs in the country and has produced many outstanding players.

Mike Denison from Wakefield

Mike, now approaching his 81st birthday, has been a stalwart of Yorkshire Chess for many years. For the past 50 years, 'Mr D, the Chess Master', as he is known to his pupils, has coached chess at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, one of West Yorkshire's leading chess schools.

Howard Grist from Southend

Howard recently retired from the grading committee after two decades of crucial support for the grading system. Grading is a valued service to ECF members and has been delivered in an efficient manner for many years now. This is due to the largely-unrecognised services of many volunteers. Howard has been at the pinnacle of this team and fully deserves this award, not only for the long period of service but in particular for the high technical standard of the work he delivered.

Dr Ken Neat from Durham

For more than 40 years, Ken has provided an invaluable service for English chess with his superb, professional work in translating and editing great works of chess literature from Russian into English. This includes several classics by Bronstein, Kasparov, Polugaevsky, Averbakh, Dvoretzky and Korchnoi, to name but a few. At the same time, he has served chess in the NE in many capacities for County Durham and the Durham City Club.

Club of the Year 2018 – Broadland Chess Club

[full citation at <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/awards-committee-report/>]

Small Club of the Year 2018 – Manchester Social Chess Club

Congress of the Year 2018 – Thanet Chess Congress

[full citation at <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/awards-committee-report/>]

Website of the Year 2018

Broadstairs Chess Club - <http://www.broadstairschessclub.co.uk/>

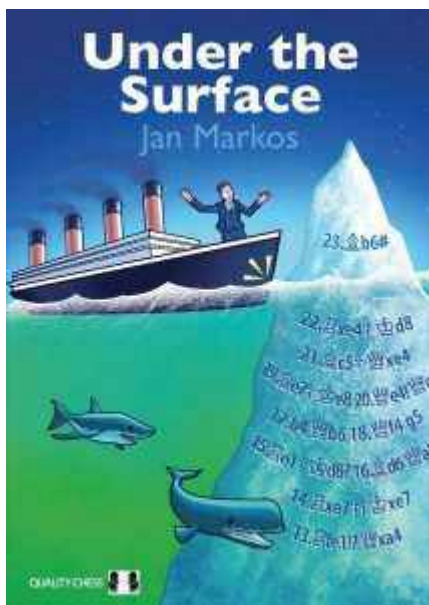
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Book of the Year 2018

Under the Surface - Jan Markos

Quality Chess pp285 Hardback £23.99

The author, GM Jan Markos, is a distinguished Slovakian academic working in the field of critical decision making and brings to his chess book the influence of his background. This is shown in the chapter titles of Part 1 – About the Laws of the Chess Board: Three Faces of a Piece; Hierarchy on the Board; Infection; Policemen of the Chess Board. Under the Surface is not a traditional chess text book, but rather a travelogue covering a wide variety of chess subjects, with insightful references and analogies to life away from the chess board. One example – the famous Mischel marshmallow experiment with children (read the book to find out what it was) is shown to be applicable to chess playing! Markos is also a GM, so the chess examples from his own and contemporary master play are



serious and relevant to the narration. 'The Secret Life of Rooks' is an exemplary explanation of their characteristics and the best way to use them. Chapter 10 features 'Anatoly Karpov's Billiard Balls', where Markos is stimulated to find a feature of bishop play not previously mentioned in text books.

Apart from chess positions and playing, other subjects are covered including 'Quality and Style' and 'Searching for Beauty', the latter discussing a survey he undertook on a Czech chess web site.

One of the most interesting sections is Part 6 'About Computers'. A chapter shows computer limitations, another shows how computers can create original strategies, a third the potentially misleading effects of computer-based statistics. An extremely stimulating chapter is titled 'The Magician from Brno', who turns out to be the world No.1 in the International Correspondence Chess Federation. And how does he win correspondence games when all players use powerful computers? By using human

judgement and intuition in conjunction with his computers – an encouraging conclusion!

Quality Chess deserve recognition for persuading Markos to write 'Under the Surface' and producing the resulting book to a very high standard. All in all, an original, fascinating and very worthy winner of the 2018 Book of the Year.

— Ray Edwards, Julian Farrand & Sean Marsh, 8th October 2018

BCET 2018

With funds provided by the generosity of the late Sir George Thomas (now administered by the British Chess Educational Trust) the English Chess Federation annually awards shields to schools which have shown outstanding achievements or enthusiasm in chess. Commencing 1982 inscribed chess boards have been substituted for shields.

Forest Hall Junior Chess Club; Goldstone Primary School; King Edward VI Grammar School, Chelmsford; Twickenham Prep School

Citations can be found online here ---

<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/BCET-Awards-2018.docx>

Grand Prix 2017/18 Final Leader Boards

12 August 2018 (Top 10s)

| Open 180+ | | | | | | |
|-----------|---------|------------------|------------------|-------|---------|-----|
| | Ref | Name | Club/Area | Grade | Mem No | Pts |
| 1 | 258768D | Merry, Alan B | 4NCL Barbican | 239 | G17393 | 690 |
| 2 | 101997B | Bates, Richard A | Hackney | 230 | G17106 | 666 |
| 3 | 112455K | Hebden, Mark L | 4NCL Guildford | 236 | G4157 | 639 |
| 4 | 105817E | Arkell, Keith C | Halesowen | 237 | G15972 | 630 |
| 5 | 283303H | Willow, Jonah B | West Nottingham | 209 | G21061 | 624 |
| 6 | 224790C | Villiers, Thomas | Barnet Elizabeth | 204 | G34785 | 620 |
| 7 | 119904D | Surtees, Mike J | Great Lever | 197 | G31143 | 614 |
| 8 | 267990F | Landau, Jonathan | Chislehurst | 185 | G22677 | 607 |
| 9 | 294993D | Yoon, Jacob D | City of London S | 181 | JG24229 | 600 |
| 10 | 306442G | Han, Yichen | Forest Hall | 183 | JG31056 | 598 |

| Women 180+ | | | | | | |
|------------|---------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-------|--------|-----|
| | Ref | Name | Club/Area | Grade | Mem No | Pts |
| 1 | 185204J | Longson, Sarah N | Wood Green, Hilsmark Kingfisher | 199 | G3108 | 259 |
| 2 | 264085F | Head, Louise | Warwick University | 196 | G31098 | 245 |
| 3 | 283344L | Grattage, Sarah | Isle of Wight * | 200 | G34872 | 209 |
| 4 = | 117791G | Regan, Natasha K | 4NCL Barbican | 181 | G23698 | 208 |
| 4 = | 277113F | Maroroa, Sue Y | 4NCL White Rose | 196 | G20434 | 208 |
| 6 | 123515B | Houska, Jovanka | Wood Green, Hilsmark Kingfisher | 232 | G4245 | 193 |
| 7 | 240315J | Grigoryan, Meri | Wood Green, Hilsmark Kingfisher | 188 | G2304 | 183 |
| 8 | 142397G | Bhatia, Kanwal K | 4NCL Barbican | 193 | G1303 | 159 |
| 9 = | 111099J | Richmond, Jane | 4NCL Brown Jack | 199 | S18291 | 157 |
| 9 = | 280020C | Kalaiyalahan, Akshaya | 4NCL Guildford | 191 | JG6425 | 157 |

| Open 160-179 | | | | | | |
|--------------|---------|-------------------|------------|-------|--------|-----|
| | Ref | Name | Club/Area | Grade | Mem No | Pts |
| 1 | 302092H | Brown, Geoffrey M | Folkestone | 178 | G28530 | 605 |
| 2 | 181426G | Burns, Martin J | Stockport | 164 | G6185 | 581 |

| | | | | | | |
|----|---------|-------------------------|----------------------|-----|--------|-----|
| 3 | 104852B | Whitehead, Mark A | Rochdale | 168 | G15489 | 572 |
| 4 | 245834C | Paul, Nathanael | Newport (Shropshire) | 174 | G6494 | 547 |
| 5 | 113301K | Hutchings, Roger M | Woodpushers (Sussex) | 176 | G29001 | 533 |
| 6 | 109494E | de Coverly, Roger D | Bourne End | 179 | G1489 | 530 |
| 7 | 247156F | Rubeck, Jonathan | Hendon | 171 | G25948 | 528 |
| 8 | 162291C | Jackson, Paul G | Coulsdon CF | 160 | G4609 | 525 |
| 9 | 283075K | Bovtramovics, Vladimirs | Woking | 163 | S18255 | 525 |
| 10 | 152545B | Ashcroft, Graham J | Preston | 166 | G25273 | 522 |

Women 160-179

| | Ref | Name | Club/Area | Grade | Mem No | Pts |
|---|---------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------|--------|-----|
| 1 | 263196K | Shepherd, Katherine M | Ashtead | 166 | G4441 | 294 |
| 2 | 281559L | Smith, Lynda | Thornbury Bristol | 168 | S17779 | 168 |
| 3 | 222273F | Norinkeviciute, Rasa | Hastings & St Leonards | 177 | S19204 | 155 |
| 4 | 285525C | O'Brien, Megan E | Plymouth | 160 | S21545 | 115 |
| 5 | 152328E | Nunn, Petra | Guildford | 162 | G27823 | 111 |
| 6 | 275563E | Lampard, Alice | Bristol University | 169 | G30515 | 95 |
| 7 | 284845E | Charpidou, Anna | Brighton & Hove | 172 | S31784 | 45 |

Open 140-159

| | Ref | Name | Club/Area | Grade | Mem No | Pts |
|----|---------|-------------------|---------------------|-------|--------|-----|
| 1 | 116382G | O'Gorman, Brendan | DHSS | 155 | G4320 | 637 |
| 2 | 230106E | Clegg, Robert | Huddersfield | 159 | G3088 | 630 |
| 3 | 144928L | Pepe, Salvatore | Hendon | 146 | G6894 | 606 |
| 4 | 122453A | Finnegan, Oliver | Loughton * | 156 | G17636 | 589 |
| 5 | 300350E | Wiltshir, Rich | Rushall | 143 | G28232 | 585 |
| 6 | 108722J | Connor, Michael I | Widnes | 145 | S15540 | 565 |
| 7 | 116801A | Patrick, David A | Courier Halifax | 159 | G5137 | 565 |
| 8 | 104806F | Cawston, M John | Lady Anne Middleton | 152 | G9196 | 559 |
| 9 | 170919H | Williams, Stephen | Cwmbran | 143 | S25816 | 555 |
| 10 | 109533L | Dean, Robert A | Pudsey | 153 | G9164 | 523 |

Women 140-159

| | Ref | Name | Club/Area | Grade | Mem No | Pts |
|---|---------|----------------|-------------------|-------|--------|-----|
| 1 | 281105E | Heffer, Judith | Bishops Stortford | 144 | S19372 | 160 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---------|---------------------|--------------------|-----|---------|-----|
| 2 | 240374C | Moore, Gillian A | Southampton | 145 | G4997 | 148 |
| 3 | 290364H | Gamal, Alaa | Basildon | 152 | B21771 | 85 |
| 4 | 268136F | Selley, Susan A | Exmouth | 151 | G34795 | 69 |
| 5 | 275645G | Sit, Victoria | Warwick University | 157 | JG6719 | 36 |
| 6 | 118627K | Howell, Susan C | Redhill | 142 | G17214 | 32 |
| 7 | 262213A | Keen, Cosima C | Millfield School | 158 | JG23290 | 28 |
| 8 | 290173A | Milewska, Agnieszka | Ealing | 149 | G22605 | 15 |
| 9 | 100035E | Barber, Jill | Stockport | 147 | S32330 | 12 |

| Open 120-139 | | | | | | |
|--------------|---------|-----------------------|----------------|-------|--------|-----|
| | Ref | Name | Club/Area | Grade | Mem No | Pts |
| 1 | 274725L | Fraser, Chris A | West Bridgford | 124 | S19796 | 619 |
| 2 | 302953A | Doherty, Paul D | Bolton | 133 | G29809 | 613 |
| 3 | 264336E | Crouch, Timothy J | Kings Head | 123 | P5843 | 591 |
| 4 | 305128G | Dehghan-Afifi, Sajjad | Northenden | 131 | S30642 | 585 |
| 5 | 268139A | Abedian, Mohsen | London W * | 136 | G30205 | 582 |
| 6 | 114423G | Lim, Yu-Chin (Peter) | Harrow | 139 | G23561 | 573 |
| 7 | 293495E | Fisher, Neal | Peterborough | 132 | S23435 | 563 |
| 8 | 283350F | Bullock, Lee | Hackney | 135 | G18801 | 558 |
| 9 | 231804A | Morris, Nigel W | Coventry Chess | 123 | G29263 | 543 |
| 10 | 107586L | Buckell, David J | Clitheroe | 130 | S31225 | 532 |

| Women 120-139 | | | | | | |
|---------------|---------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------|--------|-----|
| | Ref | Name | Club/Area | Grade | Mem No | Pts |
| 1 | 275780B | Fernando, Manel | 4NCL The Pitstop | 126 | G24622 | 444 |
| 2 | 284548K | Willow, Hambel M | West Nottingham | 131 | G21060 | 361 |
| 3 | 116277K | Norman, Dinah M | 4NCL Icen | 128 | G17233 | 346 |
| 4 | 108565H | Headlong, Fenella | 4NCL Brown Jack | 131 | G6024 | 236 |
| 5 | 110994H | Fursman, Lynne J | Tewkesbury | 122 | S31280 | 191 |
| 6 | 120714D | Camp, Syringa Lyn | Colwyn Bay | 137 | G6100 | 144 |
| 7 | 253266K | Mountford, Corinne | Hertford | 136 | G5771 | 100 |
| 8 | 115894G | Mosse, Denise M | Gateshead | 138 | S8579 | 70 |
| 9 | 306960G | Casti, Cristina | Norfolk & Norwich | 138 | S31502 | 66 |
| 10 | 290768K | Mountford, Caroline L | Cheddleton & Leek | 120 | S20650 | 54 |

| Open U120 | | | | | | |
|-----------|---------|---------------------|------------------------|-------|--------|-----|
| | Ref | Name | Club/Area | Grade | Mem No | Pts |
| 1 | 292592J | Hawthorne, Julian N | Kidsgrove | 116 | S18820 | 595 |
| 2 | 145151A | Upton, W E (Bill) | South Norwood | 108 | G6857 | 593 |
| 3 | 258940A | Allen, Timothy S | Battersea | 113 | G4415 | 588 |
| 4 | 188252B | Madden, Jason D | Leamington | 112 | G18156 | 570 |
| 5 | 142748K | Coleman, Patrick N | Lytham St Annes | 105 | S21332 | 553 |
| 6 | 103658A | Stock, William | Hastings & St Leonards | 116 | G28786 | 539 |
| 7 | 163954H | Miles, Barry S | Coulsdon CF | 117 | G4976 | 537 |
| 8 | 111052E | Gardiner, Colin J | Barnstaple | 100 | S1469 | 535 |
| 9 | 120998L | Walker, Roger W | Belper | 113 | P2845 | 527 |
| 10 | 249525K | Pope, Michael R | Salisbury | 118 | S17831 | 516 |

| Women U120 | | | | | | |
|------------|---------|------------------------|-------------------|-------|--------|-----|
| | Ref | Name | Club/Area | Grade | Mem No | Pts |
| 1 | 111361G | Goldsmith, Jennifer | Harrow | 107 | G6876 | 512 |
| 2 | 186045J | Constable, Christine F | Bude | 105 | S6207 | 421 |
| 3 | 176063E | Chadwick, Susan E | Brighton & Hove | 114 | G2429 | 383 |
| 4 | 104846G | Welch, Hazel | Seaton | 88 | S2831 | 354 |
| 5 | 286763B | Hastilow, Sarah | Coulsdon CF | 68 | G25687 | 351 |
| 6 | 178127D | Blackburn, Sandra G | Cheddleton & Leek | 118 | G15026 | 339 |
| 7 | 105540K | Ainscow, Faye | Kings Head | 112 | G18122 | 284 |
| 8 | 287646C | Woollard, Josephine | Sheffield Nomads | 99 | S17016 | 282 |
| 9 | 152293A | Fursman, Joy P | Clevedon | 99 | S31281 | 184 |
| 10 | 309807C | Jones, Amanda | Salisbury | 119 | S32840 | 176 |

| Junior Prix | | | | | | |
|-------------|---------|------------------------|------------------------|-------|---------|-----|
| | Ref | Name | Club/Area | Grade | Mem No | Pts |
| 1 | 302472G | Hirst, Joe | Newcastle-under-Lyme | 111 | JG29462 | 649 |
| 2 | 297597L | Merriman, James | Kent Junior Congresses | 149 | JG28833 | 632 |
| 3 | 283303H | Willow, Jonah B | West Nottingham | 209 | G21061 | 624 |
| 4 | 301310J | Zheng, Harry Z | Northumberland Juniors | 107 | G30227 | 619 |
| 5 | 300121A | Royal, Shreyas | Kent Junior Congresses | 161 | G28166 | 612 |
| 6 | 300010C | Saidmurodov, Shahjahon | Newham | 152 | JG28149 | 612 |
| 7 | 294993D | Yoon, Jacob D | City of London S | 181 | JG24229 | 600 |
| 8 | 306442G | Han, Yichen | Forest Hall | 183 | JG31056 | 598 |

| | | | | | | |
|----|---------|---------------------|------------------|-----|--------|-----|
| 9 | 295496F | Weersing, Abigail R | RA Butler School | 142 | G27222 | 595 |
| 10 | 299313C | Stoyanov, Viktor | Sandhurst | 190 | G27852 | 593 |

| Junior Prix - Women | | | | | | |
|---------------------|---------|---------------------|-------------------|-------|---------|-----|
| | Ref | Name | Club/Area | Grade | Mem No | Pts |
| 1 | 295496F | Weersing, Abigail R | RA Butler School | 142 | G27222 | 595 |
| 2 | 297586F | Jaufarally, Nadia | 4NCL D&D United | 158 | G26513 | 558 |
| 3 | 304535D | Mellor, Jessica | Surrey Juniors | 101 | JG30492 | 557 |
| 4 | 289789B | Headlong, Georgia | Brown Jack | 118 | JG23332 | 536 |
| 5 | 306378B | Sreeram, Yashasvini | Berkshire Junior | 98 | JG31009 | 528 |
| 6 | 296411K | Maladkar, Lavanya | West Nottingham | 126 | JG26109 | 521 |
| 7 | 294266F | Sheikh, Anum | Middlesex Juniors | 140 | JG24565 | 519 |
| 8 | 299186L | Ashraf, Zoha | Wiltshire Juniors | 97 | JG27719 | 515 |
| 9 | 295712H | Maladkar, Ritika | West Nottingham | 116 | JG26108 | 515 |
| 10 | 307103A | Arora, Tashika | Wiltshire Juniors | 83 | G31558 | 511 |

National Club Championships 2018

Major Trophy – **Solihull A** | Major Plate – **Telepost A**

Intermediate Trophy – **Telford** | Intermediate Plate – **Redditch**

Minor Trophy – **Telepost B** | Minor Plate – **Forest of Dean**

The event was played at the Park Inn by Radisson Telford Hotel, Forgeate, Telford Centre, Telford, Shropshire TF3 4NA from the 7th April 12.30pm to the 8th April 6.00pm. Controllers were Guy Greenland and ECF Arbiter John Shaw

| Major | Played | Won | Drawn | Lost | Game Pts | Points |
|------------|--------|-----|-------|------|----------|----------|
| Solihull A | 4 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 10 | 6 |
| Telepost A | 4 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 7.5 | 3 |
| GLCC A | 4 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 6.5 | 3 |

| Inter | Played | Won | Drawn | Lost | Game Pts | Points |
|----------------------|--------|-----|-------|------|----------|----------|
| Telford * | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 5 |
| Redditch | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 5 |
| DHSS A | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 9 | 4 |
| Wanstead & Woodford | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 7.5 | 4 |
| Newcastle-under-Lyme | 4 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 6.5 | 3 |
| Priorslee Lions | 4 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 3 |

* wins on tiebreak – won head-to-head match

| Minor | Played | Won | Drawn | Lost | Game Pts | Points |
|---------------|--------|-----|-------|------|----------|----------|
| Telepost B ** | 4 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 10 | 6 |
| Newport | 4 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 9.5 | 6 |
| Solihull B | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 5 |
| DHSS B | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 8.5 | 5 |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|-----|----------|
| Forest of Dean | 4 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 7 | 2 |
| GLCC B | 4 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 6.5 | 2 |
| Wanstead & Woodford B | 4 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 5.5 | 2 |

** wins on tiebreak – won on sum of opponents' matchpoints



[images top to bottom, left to right - Matthew Clark of Telepost 'A' accepts the Minor section Championship Trophy for winners Telepost 'B'; Redditch win the Intermediate section Plate; Telford win the Intermediate section Championship Trophy; Telepost 'A' win the Major section Plate; Solihull 'A' win the Major section Championship Trophy; The Park Inn at Telford; Forest of Dean who won the Minor section Plate]

County Championships 2018

OPEN

Lancashire *8.0 – 8.0 Yorkshire (*win on tie break)

| Colour | Board | Lancashire | Rating | | Yorkshire | Rating |
|--------|-------|--------------------|--------|-------|--------------------|--------|
| W | 1 | Horton, Andrew P | 2407 | 0 - 1 | Chow, Sam | 2313 |
| B | 2 | Horner, Jeff | 2345 | 1 - 0 | Ledger, Andrew J | 2358 |
| W | 3 | Macklin, Paul | 2363 | 1 - 0 | Lang, Adam R | |
| B | 4 | Morrison, Graham | 2294 | 1 - 0 | Walton, Alan J | 2154 |
| W | 5 | Lund, D Brett | 2230 | ½ - ½ | Nelson, Jonathan P | 2178 |
| B | 6 | Ivell, Nicholas W | 2224 | ½ - ½ | Adams, David M | 2211 |
| W | 7 | Mitchell, Martin | 2217 | 1 - 0 | Shephard, Chris CW | 2193 |
| B | 8 | Hughes, Howard R | 2204 | 0 - 1 | Gayson, Peter M | 2138 |
| W | 9 | Timson, Paul F | 2027 | 0 - 1 | Hackner, Oskar A | 2153 |
| B | 10 | Peacock, Malcolm R | 2042 | 0 - 1 | Watson, Phil R | 2121 |
| W | 11 | Hamer, Martyn | 2050 | ½ - ½ | Shaw, Peter | 2096 |
| B | 12 | Flores, Marciel T | 2027 | 0 - 1 | Burnett, Jim | 2088 |
| W | 13 | Clarkson, Andrew A | | 1 - 0 | Starley, Robert | 2111 |
| B | 14 | Newton, Robert A | 1977 | 0 - 1 | Parsons, Matthew | |
| W | 15 | Phillips, David A | 2029 | ½ - ½ | Li, Harry | |
| B | 16 | Lyth, John D | 1957 | 1 - 0 | Latham, David | |

MINOR

Surrey 9.0 – 7.0 Lincolnshire

| Colour | Board | Surrey | Grade | | Lincolnshire | Grade |
|--------|-------|--------------------|-------|-------|--------------------|-------|
| W | 1 | Briscoe, Chris | 208 | ½ - ½ | Birtwistle, Nigel | 196 |
| B | 2 | Granat, Russell G | 198 | ½ - ½ | Milson, Samuel A | 193 |
| W | 3 | Price, Gwilym T | 198 | ½ - ½ | Cumbers, Paul | 196 |
| B | 4 | Haldane, Robin W | 192 | 0 - 1 | Stead, Nick P | 187 |
| W | 5 | Shepley, Julien M | 183 | 1 - 0 | Dilley, Jason M | 189 |
| B | 6 | Way, Julian M | 172 | 0 - 1 | Smith, Murray D | 197 |
| W | 7 | Sedgwick, David R | 173 | 1 - 0 | Williams, J Stuart | 182 |
| B | 8 | Stimpson, Philip M | 167 | 0 - 1 | Kilshaw, Joe | 183 |
| W | 9 | Faulks, Nick W | 166 | 1 - 0 | David, Ivan | 169 |
| B | 10 | Phillips, Owen S | 162 | ½ - ½ | Palmer, Keith J | 163 |
| W | 11 | Alcock, Graham P | 155 | 1 - 0 | Georgiou, Denis | 159 |
| B | 12 | Eckert, Jonathan M | 152 | ½ - ½ | Cusick, Peter W | 169 |
| W | 13 | Jones, H Trevor | 154 | 1 - 0 | Hebert, R Andrew | 161 |
| B | 14 | Fox, James | 152 | ½ - ½ | Holt, Chris M | 160 |
| W | 15 | Collins, Anthony S | 142 | 1 - 0 | McCarthy, Kevin C | 161 |
| B | 16 | Grey, Nicholas D | 142 | 0 - 1 | Parnian, Arya | 147 |

U180

Yorkshire 8.5 – 7.5 Warwickshire

| Colour | Board | Yorkshire | Grade | | Warwickshire | Grade |
|--------|-------|---------------------|-------|-------|------------------------|-------|
| W | 1 | Sullivan, Daniel JS | 180 | ½ - ½ | Cundy, Mark A | 177 |
| B | 2 | Hodge, Steve R | 179 | ½ - ½ | Chowdhury, Mohammed NA | 170 |
| W | 3 | Bak, Christopher | 177 | ½ - ½ | Hurtado, Philip | 174 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|----|-----------------------|-----|-------------------------------|-------------------|-----|
| B | 4 | Hunter, Ian P | 175 | 0 - 1 | Escott, Keith L | 172 |
| W | 5 | Wedge, David C | 174 | 0 - 1 | Ali, Golam S | 174 |
| B | 6 | Bak, Andrew | 174 | $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ | Owen, Neil J | 179 |
| W | 7 | Kendall, Paul SN | 171 | $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ | Green, Anthony J | 169 |
| B | 8 | Birkin, Mark H | 171 | 1 - 0 | Smith, Simon C | 161 |
| W | 9 | Hempson, Peter W | 166 | $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ | Singh, Amrik J | 157 |
| B | 10 | Hamm, Jeremy A | 174 | 1 - 0 | Hickey, AJ (Tony) | 159 |
| W | 11 | Vleeshhouwer, Douglas | 162 | 1 - 0 | Hope, Gary | 158 |
| B | 12 | Slinger, AJ (Tony) | 165 | $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ | Wallman, Robert J | 154 |
| W | 13 | Johnson, Paul A | 166 | $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ | Reynolds, Robert | 158 |
| B | 14 | Coop, Brian H | 155 | $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ | Bull, Phil | 157 |
| W | 15 | Mann, Steve J | 161 | $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ | Thomas, Keith | 155 |
| B | 16 | Stewart, T Noel | 151 | $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ | Byrne, Nigel | 145 |

U160

Yorkshire 5.0 – 11.0 Lancashire

| Colour | Board | Yorkshire | Grade | | Lancashire | Grade |
|--------|-------|---------------------|-------|-------------------------------|-------------------|-------|
| B | 1 | Procter, Colin S | 159 | 0 - 1 | Owen, Dennis | 156 |
| W | 2 | Patrick, David A | 159 | $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ | Taylor, Phil M | 157 |
| B | 3 | Stephenson, David W | 161 | 0 - 1 | Potter, Steven | 152 |
| W | 4 | Donahue, Randolph E | 161 | $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ | Seery, Phillip T | 163 |
| B | 5 | Watson, Simon | 158 | 0 - 1 | Gavin, Richard A | 154 |
| W | 6 | Quereshi, M Younis | 157 | 0 - 1 | Giles, Alan | 158 |
| B | 7 | Braham, Peter | 159 | $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ | Addison, John | 147 |
| W | 8 | Dean, Robert A | 153 | 0 - 1 | Fisher, Colin | 144 |
| B | 9 | Westmoreland, Steve | 156 | $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ | Tokeley, Rob | 153 |
| W | 10 | Solomons, Paul | 156 | $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ | Ellis, Gareth | 146 |
| B | 11 | Mason, Peter F | 154 | 0 - 1 | Tillotson, Carl A | 152 |
| W | 12 | Bowman, Richard L | 148 | 1 - 0 | Fawcett, Andrew E | 145 |
| B | 13 | Clarke, Paul RH | 155 | 1 - 0 | Aspinall, David E | 139 |
| W | 14 | Day, Paul G | 153 | 0 - 1 | O'Rourke, William | 142 |
| B | 15 | Browne, Robin F | 144 | 0 - 1 | Raynor, Philip N | 133 |
| W | 16 | Boylan, Richard S | 139 | $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ | Almond, Dave S | 133 |

U140

Yorkshire 6.0 – 10.0 Nottinghamshire

| Colour | Board | Yorkshire | Grade | | Nottinghamshire | Grade |
|--------|-------|--------------------|-------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-------|
| W | 1 | Khan, Karim | 146 | 0 - 1 | Robinson, Alan S | 145 |
| B | 2 | Allison, Paul A | 140 | $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ | Taylor, Marcel V | 142 |
| W | 3 | Tangirala, Aditya | 145 | 0 - 1 | Thomson, James L | 136 |
| B | 4 | Tinker, Chris R | 132 | 1 - 0 | Dabner, Tom | 133 |
| W | 5 | Mills, David G | 134 | $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ | Roper, Keith W | 131 |
| B | 6 | Webster, Vivien | 135 | 0 - 1 | Luland, Steve | 131 |
| W | 7 | Grice, Alec | 132 | $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ | Neil, Graham | 131 |
| B | 8 | Pearce, Neville R | 134 | 0 - 1 | Willow, Hambel M | 131 |
| W | 9 | Strickland, Ian D | 131 | $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ | Sargeant, Christopher | 129 |
| B | 10 | Andrews, Norman G | 128 | 0 - 1 | Gorecka-Marshall, Peter W | 128 |
| W | 11 | Matthews, Graham W | 121 | 1 - 0 | Wright, Nigel | 128 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|----|----------------|-----|-----------------------------|---------------------|-----|
| B | 12 | Gelder, Paul | 128 | $\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{2}$ | Murfet, George J | 126 |
| W | 13 | Cullum, Dale H | 117 | 1 - 0 | Budd, Chris | 126 |
| B | 14 | White, Richard | 121 | $\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{2}$ | Pincheira, Bernardo | 125 |
| W | 15 | Varley, Joe | 120 | 0 - 1 | Harper, Michael J | 120 |
| B | 16 | Masiak, Paul | 088 | 0 - 1 | Nailard, Michael J | 119 |

U120

Warwickshire 5.0 – 7.0 Norfolk

| Colour | Board | Warwickshire | Grade | | Norfolk | Grade |
|--------|-------|-------------------|-------|-----------------------------|----------------------|-------|
| B | 1 | Dicen, Imogen | 125 | $\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{2}$ | Kalista, Agnieszka | 121 |
| W | 2 | Green, John | 128 | 0 - 1 | Duffell, Andrew | 114 |
| B | 3 | Weaver, Simon | 125 | $\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{2}$ | Cunningham, Brian J | 114 |
| W | 4 | Archibald, Warren | 120 | $\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{2}$ | Cotterell, Stephen J | 112 |
| B | 5 | Johnson, Mike J | 118 | 0 - 1 | Sadler, Ben | 111 |
| W | 6 | Anderton, Robin A | 113 | $\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{2}$ | King, Edward T | 110 |
| B | 7 | Madden, Jason D | 112 | 0 - 1 | Rissmann, Bodo U | 109 |
| W | 8 | Oliver, Peter JR | 112 | 1 - 0 | Robertson, Craig | 105 |
| B | 9 | Davies, Paul | 110 | 0 - 1 | Grindrod, Bob | 113 |
| W | 10 | Kelly, Paul | 110 | $\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{2}$ | Elsey, David B | 106 |
| B | 11 | Horsley, Dennis M | 102 | $\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{2}$ | Neil, Charlie M | 102 |
| W | 12 | Silverman, Paul | 98 | 1 - 0 | Goodchild, Colin | 94 |

U100

Leicestershire 7.0 – 5.0 Lancashire

| Colour | Board | Leicestershire | Grade | | Lancashire | Grade |
|--------|-------|-------------------------------|-------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| B | 1 | Corlett, Les | 118 | 1 - 0 | Lysons, Chris | 102 |
| W | 2 | Wilson, Andrew B | 117 | 0 - 1 | Thorp, David | 94 |
| B | 3 | Woods, Trevor | 111 | 0 - 1 | Pelling, Kyle | 120 |
| W | 4 | Khare, Anika M | 109 | 1 - 0 | Bennett, Gary | 84 |
| B | 5 | Oliver, John A | 105 | 1 - 0 | Verden, Jonathan | 89 |
| W | 6 | Adams, Michael David (Mick) M | 97 | 1 - 0 | Crompton, T John | 87 |
| B | 7 | Kershaw, Harry | 92 | 0 - 1 | Ndou, Goodchild | 79 |
| W | 8 | Carter, Andy S | 91 | 1 - 0 | Melvin, Louis | 81 |
| B | 9 | McDonald, Sean | 90 | 1 - 0 | Tumelty, Shaun | 84 |
| W | 10 | Rowbotham, Mark | 95 | 1 - 0 | Chapman, Jason | 80 |
| B | 11 | Meynell, Austin | 78 | 0 - 1 | Benhamida, Aisha | 77 |
| W | 12 | Haywood, Rory | 66 | 0 - 1 | Benhamida, Mohammed | 88 |

English Women's Championship 2018



Many congratulations to ECF English Women's Joint Champions 2018 – Kanwal Bhatia and Ingrid Lauterbach, who tied for 1st place, and were presented with the trophy by ECF Director Julie Denning. They are pictured with Julie and Helen Frostick, ECF Manager of Female Social Media.

| Final Ranking crosstable after 5 Rounds | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|------------------------|------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------|
| Rank | | Name | Rtg | 1.Rd | 2.Rd | 3.Rd | 4.Rd | 5.Rd | Pts. |
| 1 | WFM | Bhatia Kanwal K | 2042 | 23w1 | 19b1 | 5w $\frac{1}{2}$ | 10b1 | 6w1 | 4,5 |
| 2 | WIM | Lauterbach Ingrid | 2010 | 24w1 | 11b1 | 7w1 | 6b $\frac{1}{2}$ | 12w1 | 4,5 |
| 3 | WFM | Longson Sarah N | 2120 | 22w1 | 8b $\frac{1}{2}$ | 4w $\frac{1}{2}$ | 5b1 | 7w1 | 4,0 |
| 4 | WFM | Head Louise | 2161 | 14b1 | 5w0 | 3b $\frac{1}{2}$ | 21w1 | 16b1 | 3,5 |
| 5 | WIM | Regan Natasha K | 1942 | 25w1 | 4b1 | 1b $\frac{1}{2}$ | 3w0 | 11w1 | 3,5 |
| 6 | | Wei Naomi | 1781 | 28w1 | 18b1 | 8w1 | 2w $\frac{1}{2}$ | 1b0 | 3,5 |
| 7 | WGM | Jackson Sheila | 2068 | 12b1 | 9w1 | 2b0 | 14w1 | 3b0 | 3,0 |
| 8 | | Varney Zoe | 1986 | 16b1 | 3w $\frac{1}{2}$ | 6b0 | 18w1 | 10w $\frac{1}{2}$ | 3,0 |
| 9 | | Zhu Yaoyao | 1836 | 30w1 | 7b0 | 23w1 | 11b0 | 24w1 | 3,0 |
| 10 | | Rahulan Thivyaa | 1829 | - $\frac{1}{2}$ | 17w1 | 21b1 | 1w0 | 8b $\frac{1}{2}$ | 3,0 |
| 11 | | Jaufarally Nadia | 1828 | 27b1 | 2w0 | 17b1 | 9w1 | 5b0 | 3,0 |
| 12 | WCM | Sheikh Anum | 1686 | 7w0 | 30b1 | 18w1 | 19b1 | 2b0 | 3,0 |
| 13 | | Denning Julie L | 1658 | 18w0 | 28b1 | 19w0 | 25b1 | 20w1 | 3,0 |
| 14 | | Sheremetyeva Elizaveta | 1717 | 4w0 | 25b1 | 24w1 | 7b0 | 15w $\frac{1}{2}$ | 2,5 |
| 15 | | Maladkar Lavanya | 1671 | - $\frac{1}{2}$ | 21w0 | 29b1 | 16w $\frac{1}{2}$ | 14b $\frac{1}{2}$ | 2,5 |
| 16 | | Wang Susie | 1490 | 8w0 | 22b1 | 20w1 | 15b $\frac{1}{2}$ | 4w0 | 2,5 |
| 17 | | Posadas Rayelynn | 0 | 20w1 | 10b0 | 11w0 | 23b1 | 21b $\frac{1}{2}$ | 2,5 |
| 18 | | Frostick Helen M | 2037 | 13b1 | 6w0 | 12b0 | 8b0 | 27w1 | 2,0 |
| 19 | | Gamal Alaa | 1862 | 26b1 | 1w0 | 13b1 | 12w0 | 0 | 2,0 |
| 20 | | Chowdhury Feroza | 1742 | 17b0 | 29w1 | 16b0 | 26w1 | 13b0 | 2,0 |
| 21 | | Volovich Julia | 1731 | - $\frac{1}{2}$ | 15b1 | 10w0 | 4b0 | 17w $\frac{1}{2}$ | 2,0 |
| 22 | | Milewska Agnieszka | 1687 | 3b0 | 16w0 | 30b+ | 24b0 | 28w1 | 2,0 |
| 23 | | Walker Kate | 1667 | 1b0 | 26w1 | 9b0 | 17w0 | 29b1 | 2,0 |
| 24 | | Dicen Imogen | 1513 | 2b0 | 27w1 | 14b0 | 22w1 | 9b0 | 2,0 |
| 25 | | Dicen Elis Denele | 1390 | 5b0 | 14w0 | 27b1 | 13w0 | 26b1 | 2,0 |
| 26 | | Eccleston Bryony | 1225 | 19w0 | 23b0 | 28w1 | 20b0 | 25w0 | 1,0 |
| 27 | | Meng Hanzhi | 0 | 11w0 | 24b0 | 25w0 | -1 | 18b0 | 1,0 |
| 28 | | Naudé Nanette | 0 | 6b0 | 13w0 | 26b0 | 29w1 | 22b0 | 1,0 |
| 29 | | Kluckova Alzbeta | 1281 | - $\frac{1}{2}$ | 20b0 | 15w0 | 28b0 | 23w0 | 0,5 |
| 30 | | Jafarinejad Shohreh | 0 | 9b0 | 12w0 | 22w- | 0 | 0 | 0,0 |

Tournaments 2018

Batumi Olympiad 2018

Seeded ninth, England could be delighted to finish fifth at the Batumi Olympiad. A crushing 3½-½ defeat of Kazakhstan in the final round enabled England to catch up Poland on 17/22. Only the three sides who tied for first (China, the USA and Russia in order of tie-break and medals) scored a match point more, with Armenia, France, India and Ukraine four of the sides who finished on 16.

England's performance was all the more remarkable considering that the whole team and captain John Nunn were suffering from heavy colds. Nunn's decision to largely trust the top four, only bringing in Nick Pert when one of the others needed a day off, most certainly paid off, as John Saunders pointed out last month.

The star performer was David Howell who scored an impressive 7½/10 on board 3 for a 2760 performance. David ground well against lower-rated opposition, comfortably held Arkady Naiditsch as Black when England went down to a determined Azerbaijan in round 4 (only Russia also defeated England, while France were the only other opponents to escape with a draw). We enjoyed David's final round victory in last month's Editorial and you'll have to see if you can find his concluding blow against Italy in this month's Find the Winning Moves.

On board two Luke McShane began a little slowly, but chipped in with important victories over Argentina, as we also saw last month, and Israel. Apart from when outplayed by the in-form Shakhriyar Mamedyarov, Mickey Adams was typically solid and professional as he amassed '+2' on top board, whilst on board 4 Gawain Jones saved a couple of tough endgames and also only lost to Azeri opposition, in the shape of Rauf Mamedov, while finishing on 6½/10.

Of the three medalists, perhaps the most relieved to be one was Russia, for whom only Ian Nepomniachtchi avoided losing rating points as he racked up 7½/10 on board two. Both the U.S. and China had an out-of-form player in the shape of Hikaru Nakamura and Wei Yi respectively, but the Americans also had Fabiano Caruana putting up an undefeated 7/10 for a 2859 performance on top board. Overall, though, they probably didn't win quite enough individual games. In contrast, Bu Xiangzhi racked up '+5' on board four for China, whilst at the top end of the team Ding Liren chipped in with 5½/8, winning on of the games of the Olympiad in the process.

Ding Liren-J.K.Duda | China vs Poland | Queen's Gambit Accepted

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 d5 4 ♘c3 dxc4 5 e4 b5 6 e5 ♘d5 7 ♘xb5 ♘b6 8 ♙e2 ♘c6 9 0-0 ♙e7 10 ♙d2!?

A recent idea, deploying the queen to the kingside ahead of developing the queenside.

10...0-0 11 ♙f4 ♜b8

A month earlier Black has also failed to equalise with 11...♘b4 12 ♙g4 ♜e8 13 ♜d1 ♙b7 14 h4 ♙d7 15 ♘c3 ♜ad8 in Dreev-Grachev, Moscow (blitz) 2018.

12 ♘c3 f5 13 ♙g3 ♙h8 14 ♜d1 ♘b4

Duda has sensibly aimed to restrict White on the kingside and now plans to take over on the queenside. Ding realises that he must counter on that flank.

15 b3! cxb3 16 axb3 a6 17 ♙c4 ♘c2 18 ♜a2 ♘b4 19 ♜a1 ♘c2 20 ♜a2 ♘b4 21 ♜e2!



Centralising and intending to roll Black over in the centre in the event of 21...♖xc4?! 22 bxc4.

21...a5!

Black in turn prepares to meet 22 ♗g5 with 22...♖xc4 23 ♖h4 ♜e8 24 bxc4 ♗a6. It appears that he has control of the position thanks to his grip on d5, but Ding's powerful next changes all that.

22 d5!

A bold and unexpected idea. Thanks to an even more remarkable follow-up Ding soon obtains a monstrous initiative. As such, Duda should likely now have opted for 22...♖4xd5 23 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 24 ♖d4 ♜b6, holding everything together and keeping matters rather unclear.

22...exd5?! 23 e6 ♗d6 24 ♖h3!?

White relies on his attacking chances and mighty passed pawn, but he did also have the simple 24 ♗f4 with a plus, and if 24...dxc4? 25 e7.

24...♖f6 25 ♖b5!



The aforementioned stunning idea. Ding might be extraordinarily hard to beat, but he also possesses Tal-like vision and creativity at times.

25...dxc4

25...♖xc4 26 ♖g5 ♖g6 27 bxc4 is also far from clear, although here, like in the game, the initiative most certainly belongs to White.

26 ♖xd6 cxd6?

Now the e-pawn gets out of control. As such, the intermezzo 26...♗xe6! was indicated, and if 27 ♖xc4 ♖xc4 28 bxc4 ♖c6 when Black might well have been able to beat off the attack.

27 e7 ♜e8 28 ♖g5 ♖g6

This runs into a powerful blow, but Black couldn't allow 28...h6? 29 ♖h5.

29 ♜xd6! f4! 30 ♖h4!



Ding has worked out that his attack is too strong, so spurns the pretty repetition which was on offer with 30 ♜xg6 ♗xh3 31 ♖f7+ ♗g8 32 ♖h6+.

30...♖b1 31 ♜e1

Simple and strong, although the computer prefers the remarkable 31 ♖xf4 ♗d7 32 ♜f6!!, and if 32...♗g8 33 ♜xb6! ♜xb6 34 ♖f7+ ♗h8 35 ♖f8+ or 32...gxf6 33 ♖xf6+ ♗g8 34 ♖f7+ ♗h8 35 ♜c2! ♖xc2 (35...♗f5 36 ♖f6+ ♗g8 37 ♖f7 also wins, in almost slow-motion fashion with 37...h5 38 ♖h6+ ♗h7 39 ♖xf5) 36 ♗b2+

c3 37 ♖xc3+ ♜xc3 38 ♜xh7# – a gorgeous line.

31...♙f5?

31...♙d7 was necessary, although even in this case White has a strong initiative, as shown by 32 f3 ♘d5 33 ♙xf4 ♜c2 34 bxc4 ♘xf4 35 ♜xf4, continuing to dominate the board thanks to the mighty passed pawn. Here 32 ♙d2!? ♜f5 33 ♜h5 might be even stronger, intending 33...h6 34 ♜xh6+! gxf6 35 ♙c3+ and 33...♙g8 34 ♜e5! ♜b1+ 35 ♙e1 followed by the obstructing ♜e4, as discovered by our Executive Editor.

32 ♜d8!

Now Black is undone along his back rank.

32...♙g6

Likewise, if 32...♘c6 33 ♜xf4 ♜bxd8 34 ♘f7+ ♙g8 35 exd8 ♜xd8 36 ♘xd8 ♘xd8 37 ♜b8 ♘c8 38 ♜c7 and wins.

33 ♜xb8 ♜xb8 34 ♜xf4 ♜g8 35 ♘f7+ ♙xf7 36 ♜xf7 ♘d7 37 e8 ♜ ♘f6 38 ♙g5! 1-0

By no means the only way to exploit the extra queen, but the most aesthetic, finally developing the dark-squared bishop.

Before switching our focus from the Open to the Women's Olympiad, it would be wrong not to feature another great scrap, between the ever-creative Baadur Jobava and the Lithuanian top board, whom too one could hardly ever label as dull and classical, Sarunas Sulskis.

B.Jobava-S.Sulskis | Georgia vs Lithuania | Nimzo-Larsen Attack

1 b3 a5!?

The first sign that an entertaining battle might lie in store. Jobava now elects not to allow Black too much fun.

2 a4 e5 3 ♙b2 d6 4 e3 g6 5 d4 ♙g7 6 dxe5 ♘d7 7 ♘c3 ♘xe5 8 ♜d2 ♘f6 9 0-0-0!?

A brave move with the a-pawns having already advanced, but Jobava was no doubt salivating at the prospect of advancing his unimpeded kingside pawns.

9...0-0 10 h3 ♘ed7!

A thematic enough move in this King's Indian structure and already a sign of intent against the white king.

11 g4 ♘c5 12 ♙g2 ♙e6 13 ♙b1?!

Too blasé. White needed to halt Black's next, then develop with 13 ♜e2 c6 14 ♘f3. 13...b5!!



A stunning pawn sacrifice. White has three things he might take, yet none of them are especially promising:

a) 14 axb5? a4 is just a big attack, and if 15 b4 a3.

b) 14 ♘xb5?! ♘fe4 15 ♜e1 ♙xb2 16 ♙xb2 ♜f6+ will regain with interest the pawn on f2.

c) 14 ♙xa8? ♜xa8 15 f3 bxa4 is another line White simply could not allow.

14 g5 ♘fd7

Natural, but Sulskis must have looked long and hard too at 14...bxa4!! – and should really have played it: for example, 15 gxf6 ♙xf6 16 ♙xa8 (or 16 ♘d5 ♙xb2 17 ♙xb2 c6 18 ♘f4 axb3 19 ♘xe6 fxe6 20 cxb3 ♜b6) 16...♜xa8 17 ♘d5 ♙xb2 18 ♙xb2 axb3 19 ♘f6+! ♙h8 (19...♙g7 20 ♜d4 is White's point) 20 e4 ♜c6 and Black's attack more than compensates for the rook investment according to the engines.

15 ♘xb5 ♙xb2 16 ♙xb2 ♜b8 17 ♘e2?!

Jobava too would like to attack, not just see Black sacrifice on a4 after ...♘b6. Nevertheless, he should have played 17 h4 ♘b6 and then the calm 18 ♜b1! ♘cxa4+ 19 ♙c1 ♘c5 20 ♘e2, according to the silicon monster, which would have maintained a rough balance.

17...♖xg5 18 ♜f4?! ♜b6 19 ♔d4 ♜cxa4+!

Of course. This was why Sulskis arranged his knights so.

20 bxa4

20...♜xa4+?

However, this asks too much of the attack. 20...c5! was much better, beginning to deflect the white queen away from the defence of a4, and if 21 ♜xe6 fxe6 22 ♖e4 ♖f6+ 23 ♜a2 d5 24 ♖f4 ♖xf4 25 exf4 ♜xa4 26 ♜a3 ♖xf4 when Black has three good pawns and an ongoing initiative for the piece.

21 ♖xa4 ♖xb5+ 22 ♜c1 ♖b4 23 ♖c6

Now Black has only two pawns for the piece and finds himself coming up short after 23...♖f6 24 ♜d5!, so Sulskis elects to throw more wood upon the fire.

23...♖xf4!? 24 exf4 ♖xf4+ 25 ♖d2 ♖b8 26 ♖c3?

After this Black has enough compensation, whereas 26 ♜d5! ♖e5 27 c3 ♜xd5 28 ♖xd5 ♖xc3+ 29 ♖c2 ♖a3+ 30 ♜d2 c5 31 ♜e2 surely wouldn't have given him quite enough for a rook.

26...♜a2! 27 ♜d1 ♜c4 28 ♖a1?

Typically Jobava can't resist striving for the maximum, but he should really have preferred to repeat.

28...♖g5 29 f4

It's actually not at all easy to find a move for White, in view of 29 ♜f3? ♖f6! and 29 ♖g1 ♖e5!, with the same idea of 30 ♖xe5? ♖b1#.

29...♖f6 30 c3 ♖f5 31 ♜c1 ♜d3

31...♖xf4! 32 ♜c2 a4 would have been even stronger according to the engines. As played, Black obtains a fourth pawn for the rook while continuing to attack.

32 ♖b2 ♖xf4+ 33 ♜d1 ♜b5! 34 ♖d2



34...♖f5

34...♜c4 35 ♖e1 d5 leaves Black dominating, but this cannot have been an easy position whatsoever for either player to handle in a time scramble.

35 ♖e1 ♜d3? 36 ♖b2 ♜b5 37 ♜e4 ♖xh3 38 ♖xa5 ♖g4+ 39 ♜c2 ♖g5 40 ♖a2 d5 41 ♖xc7 ♖e8 42 ♖a7

The time control reached and Jobava finally has a threat, although his own king remains badly exposed.

42...♖f6 43 ♖c5 ♜c4 44 ♖c7?

An unfortunate end to a great scrap. 44 ♜d3 was necessary when a draw might well have occurred after 44...♜xd3+ 45 ♜xd3 ♖f3+ 46 ♜d2 ♖g2+ 47 ♜d1 ♖f3+.

44...♖h4! 45 ♜xd5

Hopeless, but 45 ♖g1 ♖xe4 46 ♖xe4 ♖xe4+ would leave White too many pawns in arrears.

45...♖h2+!

The blow Jobava may have initially missed, as he no doubt dreamt about 45...♖xe1? 46 ♖xc4 when Black comes up short.

46 ♜d1 0-1

It's going to be mate on e2.

Seeded 25th, England landed up 29th on tie-break in the Women's Olympiad, finishing with +6 =2 -3. The team found only Azerbaijan and, perhaps slightly more surprisingly, Argentina and Colombia too strong. Akshaya Kalaiyalahan justified her selection on board two by scoring 5½/9, but the real hero was Jovanka Houska with a huge '+6' on top board. Jovanka displayed immaculate technique to win a

rook endgame in the final round, but also showed that she could sacrifice and handle unbalanced positions pretty well.

C.Lujan-J.Houska | Argentina vs England | Caro-Kann Defence

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 Nf3 dxex4 4 Nxe4 Nf6 5 Nxf6+ exf6 6 d4 Qd6 7 Qd3 0-0 8 Qe3 Na6!

A good development, since if 9 Qxa6 Qa5+ and meanwhile the knight is heading for the centre.

9 a3 Nc7 10 c4 Qe8 11 Qc2

Beginning an overly ambitious plan. 11 0-0 Qg4 12 Qe1 would have been logical and about equal.

11...g6 12 h4?! b5! 13 c5

Not ideal and Lujan now finds herself having to gambit a pawn, but 13 cxb5 Nd5!? must have looked quite nasty too, not least 14 bxc6? Qa5+ when White lacks a good move in view of 15 Nd2 Qxe3+! 16 fxe3 Qg3+.

13...Qf4 14 0-0-0! Qxe3+ 15 fxe3 Qxe3?!

15...Nd5! would have hit e3 with tempo, and left Black doing well.

16 h5 Qg7?

Preventing any notion of Qxg6, but 16...Qxd3! 17 Qxd3 Qf5 was indicated, after which ...Qd5 or ...Nd5 will leave Black with full compensation for the exchange.

17 hxg6 fxg6 18 Qf2?

18 Qd2! was strong, heading for h6 and intending 18...Nd5 19 Qe4!, and if 19...Qe7 (19...Qxe4? 20 Qh6+ Qf7 21 Qxh7+ Qf8 22 Qxg6 is crushing) 20 Qxd5 cxd5 21 Ne5! Qe4 22 Nxc6! hxg6 23 Qh6+ Qf7 24 Qh7+ Qe6 25 Qxg6 Qf7 26 Qg3, with some initiative and an improved version of the game for White.

18...Qxd3!

A well-judged exchange sacrifice.

19 Qxd3 Qf5 20 Qe3 Nd5



Houska has realised her bishop is a monster and 21 Qe1 Nf4 strong, since even after 22 Qe3 g5! 23 Qe7+ Qg8 24 Qxd8+ Qxd8 only Black can be better. As such, Lujan once again elects to take the fight to her higher-rated opponent.

21 Nh4! Nxe3 22 Qxe3 Qg4 23 Nxc6?

There isn't a perpetual after this, whereas one would likely have occurred after 23 Nf5+! Qxf5 24 Qh6+ Qf7 25 Qxh7+ Qf8 26 Qh8+ Qe7 27 Qh7+ Qf8, unless Black really wanted to risk 27...Qe6!? 28 Qe1+ Qd5.

23...hxg6 24 Qh6+ Qf7 25 Qh7+ Qe6! 26 Qe1+ Qf5

Exploiting the difference with the previous note. In view of 27 Qf1+ Qg5 and 27 Qh6 Qxd4 28 Qf1+ Qe6 29 Qe1+ Qd5, Black is just a piece up.

27 Qb7 Qc8 28 Qe7 Qxd4 29 Qb1 Qd8 30 Qe1 Qf2 31 Qe7 Qxe1+ 0-1

The most human-like way to conclude, forcing simplification, although 31...Qd2 32 Qe4+ Qg5 would also have won.

Bronze medalists Georgia finished on 17/22, just a point behind Ukraine (silver) and China (gold). Nana Dzagnidze led the way for the hosts with 7½/10 on top board, whilst the Muzychuk sisters did very well for Ukraine. The elder, Anna, was undefeated with '+4' on top board and former women's world champion, Mariya, amassed a mighty '+6' on board two. China's top board also did pretty well, Ju Wenjun helping herself to individual as well as team gold with 7/9. How different overall, though,

things might have been had China not fought back from 1½-½ down against Russia in the final round. Board four was certainly not looking promising ...

Lei Tingjie-O.Girya | China vs Russia 2018



53...gxf6?

The cold-blooded 53...c5! was indicated when 54 fxg7 cxd4 55 g8♖ b2 56 ♖a2 ♖xd3! 57 ♖xb2 ♖e7 should spell the end for the white king.

54 ♖f5!

Now if 54...b2 55 ♖xb5 cxb5 56 ♖d6+ and Black is unable to escape the checks.

54...♖b6 55 ♖c4+! ♔b7 56 ♖xf6

56 ♖f7+ ♔a8 57 ♖e8+ would have been a simpler way to force a draw.

56...a2

Now it's definitely a draw. Black might have tried 56...♖b5!? 57 ♖d4 ♖d5 58 ♖b4+ ♔c7 59 ♖f4+ ♔b6, although possibly even here. White has sufficient resources to maintain the balance, as shown by 60 ♖b4+ ♖b5 61 ♖d4+ ♖c5 62 ♖d8+ ♔b5 63 ♖b8+ ♖b6 64 ♖e5+ ♔a6 65 ♖e4!.

57 ♖f7+ ♔a8 58 ♖f8+ ♔b7 59 ♖f7+ ♔a8 60 ♖f8+ ♔b7 61 ♖f7+ 0-0

China's great escape and subsequent gold medals were secured, perfectly fittingly, by a Carlsenesque grind on board one.

A.Kosteniuk-Ju Wenjun | Russia vs China



42...g5!

Black's only hope is to undermine the defence of d4.

43 hxg5 hxg5 44 ♔h2 ♔g6 45 ♖d3+ ♖f5 46 ♖c3 ♖e4 47 ♖c8 ♔f6 48 ♖h8+ ♔e7 49 ♖h5 ♖f5 50 ♔g1 ♖b1+ 51 ♔h2 ♖e4 52 ♔g1 f6 53 ♖h8 g4 54 ♔h2 f5

White's active queen ensures that she regains the pawn in the event of 54...♖xd4 55 ♖h7+ ♔d8 56 ♖g8+ ♔e7 57 ♔xg4.

55 ♖h7+ ♔d8 56 ♔f1 ♔xd4

The pawn has fallen, but will Black be able to escape the checks?

57 ♖e3 ♘c8 58 ♗g8+ ♔d7 59 ♗f7+ ♗e7 60 ♗d5 ♗e5 61 ♗b7+ ♘e6 62 ♗c8+ ♘f7 63 ♗c4+ ♖e6 64 g3 ♘g6 65 ♗c8 ♖d4 66 ♗g8+ ♗g7 67 ♗e8+ ♗f7 68 ♗c8 ♖f3+ 69 ♘g2 ♖g5 70 ♘f1 ♗e6 71 ♗d8 ♖f3



72 ♗b8?

Now the extra pawn races down the board. 72 ♗a8! would have kept it under control and after 72...♖e5 73 ♘g2 ♖d3 74 ♘g1 White should be able to hold, in view of 74...f4 75 ♖xg4!.

72...d5! 73 ♘g2

And not 73 ♗b3?? ♖d2+.

73...d4 74 ♖c2 d3 75 ♖e3 d2 76 ♗d8 ♘f7 77 ♗c7+

The checks run out in the event of 77 ♖d1? ♗e1 78 ♗d5+ ♘f6 79 ♗d6+ ♘g7 80 ♗c7+ ♘g6 81 ♗c6+ ♘g5. 77...♘f6 78 ♗d8+ ♘f7 79 ♗c7+ ♘e8 80 ♗b8+ ♔d7 81 ♗b7+ ♔d6 82 ♗b6+ ♘e7 83 ♗c7+ ♘f6 84 ♗d8+ ♘g6 85 ♖d5?

This might have lost immediately, although staying calm with 85 ♘f1 was not at all easy with both players long largely playing on just the 30-second increment.

85...♗f7?

85...♖e1+ 86 ♘g1 ♖d3! was the way to go, and if 87 ♖c3 ♗e1+ or 87 ♖e3 ♗xe3.

86 ♗d6+ ♘g7 87 ♖f4?

Losing. 87 ♖e3 would have kept an eye on the queening square and likely drawn.

87...♘h7 88 ♖e6

Now Black wins a piece, but if 88 ♘f1 ♗f6! 89 ♗xf6 (or 89 ♗d7+ ♘h6 90 ♗a4 ♗d6 91 ♗d1 ♘g5! when Black will infiltrate down the h-file or with 92 ♘e2 ♗e5+ 93 ♘d3 ♗d4+ 94 ♘c2 ♗a4+) 89...d1♗+ 90 ♘g2 ♗g1#.

88...d1♗! 89 ♖f8+ ♘g8 90 ♗xd1 ♘xf8 91 ♗a1 ♘g8 92 ♗a8+ ♔h7 93 ♗a5 ♖g5 94 ♗b5 ♘g6 95 ♗c6+ ♗e6 0-1



[pictures --- Ding Liren by David Llada; Baadur Jobava by Goga Chanadin; Alexandra Kosteniuk by Lana Afandiyeva]

The Open and Women's Olympiads came down to the wire, but China won both ...

China bagged the rare achievement of double gold at the Batumi Olympiad, which saw both the Open and Women's sections packed with drama, not least in the final round. In the Open, China finished with a draw against top seeds and defending champions, the USA. They were both joined on 18/22 by Russia, but once almost all the matches had finished (the complex tie-break method is based on both individual match results and the sum of opponents' scores, minus the weakest team faced, e.g. a 4-0 win against a side finishing on 8 points is worth 32 in the tie-break), it became clear that China had won gold, the USA taking silver and the largely below-par Russians, bronze.

Ding Liren bagged a double gold, his 2873 the best performance on board 1, as with 5½/8 he moved to a staggering 88 consecutive classical games without defeat. Fabiano Caruana, by contrast, performed at a mere 2859, as he headed back to the States with a double silver. The USA weren't helped by Hikaru Nakamura being out of form on board 3, where he could only post 4½/9, but then again Wei Yi was also far from his best and played in only one of the final five rounds for the Chinese.

Seeded ninth, England finished a highly creditable fifth. Despite most of the team suffering from heavy colds, for once England didn't drop points against lower-rated opposition, only finding Azerbaijan and Russia too strong. In that latter match, down on board 3(!) Vladimir Kramnik defeated David Howell, but otherwise David had an excellent Olympiad, finishing on 7½/10, which took him back to the cusp of 2700. Over in the Women's Olympiad, Jovanka Houska also had a fine result, leading England extremely well on top board where she racked up 7½/9. Houska's only defeat was at the hands of Ketevan Arakhamia-Grant, whose victory couldn't prevent England from defeating Scotland 3-1, but who did go on to amass a whopping 10½/11.

Ukraine looked set for the gold medals as they defeated early pacesetters, the USA, 3-1 in the final round of the Women's Olympiad, especially as leaders China were in all sorts of trouble against Russia. The Chinese trailed 1½-½ and with Lei Tingjie two connected passed pawns in arrears in a queen and rook endgame on bottom board. However, faced with spirited counterplay, Olga Girya slipped up and allowed Lei to force a draw. That still left the Chinese in trouble, but in Carlsenesque fashion women's world champion Ju Wenjun overcame Alexandra Kosteniuk no less, winning an endgame of queen, knight and four symmetrical pawns each, in some 95 moves.

We'll have the best of the chess next month, but for now here are the concluding stages to the best game prize-winner from the Open event.

T.Hillarp Persson-T.Laurusas | Sweden vs Lithuania



White has swung his rooks over with ♖c4-h4 and ♜d3-e3, but by now you might be wondering, who's attacking who? Hillarp Persson, however, had little doubt as to the answer.

30 ♕f4! ♜xf2+?

Now White is winning, with definite shades of Short-Timman. 30...♚a1 was essential, when after 31 ♕g5 ♖c1 32 ♕d5 ♜g7 Black is a pawn down, but defending.

31 ♕g5! ♕g7

This won't help, but if 31...♖c1 32 ♜f4 ♚c5+ 33 ♖h6, threatening the black queen and mate via 34 ♜xf8+!.
32 ♜f4 ♜xh2 33 ♜f6+ ♖h7 34 ♜xg6+!
 Olé! Now 34...fxg6 35 ♜e7+ ♔g8 36 ♙d5+ ♜f7 37 ♜e8+ ♔g7 38 ♜xf7# would be a neat finish, as is the game.
34...♖h8 35 ♖h6 1-0

4NCL - 2017/18

| Division 1a | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|----------------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-----|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | GP | Pts |
| 1 | Guildford 1 | | 7-1 | 7-1 | 7½-½ | 7½-½ | 8--½ | 7-1 | 8-0 | 52 | 14 |
| 2 | White Rose 1 | 1-7 | | 5-3 | 5½-2½ | 5½-2½ | 7½-½ | 6-2 | 5½-2½ | 36 | 12 |
| 3 | Oxford 1 | 1-7 | 3-5 | | 3½-4½ | 4½-3½ | 5-3 | 5½-2½ | 6½-1½ | 29 | 8 |
| 4 | Grantham Sharks 1 | ½-7½ | 2½-5½ | 4½-3½ | | 4-4 | 5½-2½ | 4½-3½ | 4-4 | 25½ | 8 |
| 5 | 3Cs 1 | ½-7½ | 2½-5½ | 3½-4½ | 4-4 | | 6½-1½ | 6-2 | 6½-1½ | 29½ | 7 |
| 6 | Spirit of Atticus A | -½-8 | ½-7½ | 3-5 | 2½-5½ | 1½-6½ | | 4½-3½ | 4-4 | 15½ | 3 |
| 7 | Barbican 4NCL 2 | 1-7 | 2-6 | 2½-5½ | 3½-4½ | 2-6 | 3½-4½ | | 5½-2½ | 20 | 2 |

| Division 1b | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|-------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-----|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | GP | Pts |
| 1 | Cheddleton 1 | | 5-3 | 4-4 | 5½-2½ | 5½-2½ | 6½-1½ | 6½-1½ | 6½-1½ | 39½ | 13 |
| 2 | Guildford 2 | 3-5 | | 6-2 | 5-3 | 5½-2½ | 5½-2½ | 6-2 | 4½-3½ | 35½ | 12 |
| 3 | Wood Green HK | 4-4 | 2-6 | | 4½-3½ | 5-3 | 4½-3½ | 5½-2½ | 7-1 | 32½ | 11 |
| 4 | Barbican 4NCL 1 | 2½-5½ | 3-5 | 3½-4½ | | 4½-3½ | 4½-3½ | 5½-2½ | 7-1 | 30½ | 8 |
| 5 | Blackthorne Russia | 2½-5½ | 2½-5½ | 3-5 | 3½-4½ | | 6-2 | 5-3 | 5½-2½ | 28 | 6 |
| 6 | West is Best 1 | 1½-6½ | 2½-5½ | 3½-4½ | 3½-4½ | 2-6 | | 5-3 | 5-3 | 23 | 4 |
| 7 | Alba | 1½-6½ | 2-6 | 2½-5½ | 2½-5½ | 3-5 | 3-5 | | 5-3 | 19½ | 2 |
| 8 | Cambridge University 1 | 1½-6½ | 3½-4½ | 1-7 | 1-7 | 2½-5½ | 3-5 | 3-5 | | 15½ | 0 |

| Division 1c | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|--------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-----|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | GP | Pts |
| 1 | Guildford 1 | | 5½-2½ | 7-1 | 5½-2½ | 6½-1½ | 6½-1½ | 7½-½ | 7-1 | 45½ | 14 |
| 2 | Cheddleton 1 | 2½-5½ | | 4-4 | 5-3 | 4-4 | 5½-2½ | 7-1 | 8-0 | 36 | 10 |
| 3 | White Rose 1 | 1-7 | 4-4 | | 4½-3½ | 4-4 | 5½-2½ | 5½-2½ | 5-3 | 29½ | 10 |
| 4 | Guildford 2 | 2½-5½ | 3-5 | 3½-4½ | | 6-2 | 5-3 | 6½-1½ | 5-3 | 31½ | 8 |
| 5 | Wood Green HK | 1½-6½ | 4-4 | 4-4 | 2-6 | | 4½-3½ | 6-2 | 6½-1½ | 28½ | 8 |
| 6 | Barbican 4NCL 1 | 1½-6½ | 2½-5½ | 2½-5½ | 3-5 | 3½-4½ | | 5-3 | 7-1 | 25 | 4 |
| 7 | Grantham Sharks 1 | ½-7½ | 1-7 | 2½-5½ | 1½-6½ | 2-6 | 3-5 | | 4½-3½ | 15 | 2 |
| 8 | Oxford 1 | 1-7 | 0-8 | 3-5 | 3-5 | 1½-6½ | 1-7 | 3½-4½ | | 13 | 0 |

| Division 1d | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-----|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | GP | Pts |
| 1 | 3Cs 1 | | 4½-3½ | 3½-4½ | 6-2 | 6-2 | 6½-1½ | 6½-1½ | 5-3 | 38 | 12 |
| 2 | Blackthorne Russia | 3½-4½ | | 6-2 | 5-3 | 5½-2½ | 5½-2½ | 4-4 | 5½-2½ | 35 | 11 |
| 3 | West is Best 1 | 4½-3½ | 2-6 | | 5-3 | 3½-4½ | 4½-3½ | 5½-2½ | 5-3 | 30 | 10 |
| 4 | Alba | 2-6 | 3-5 | 3-5 | | 4½-3½ | 5-3 | 5-3 | 5-3 | 27½ | 8 |
| 5 | Barbican 4NCL 2 | 2-6 | 2½-5½ | 4½-3½ | 3½-4½ | | 3½-4½ | 5½-2½ | 4½-2½ | 26 | 6 |
| 6 | Spirit of Atticus A | 1½-6½ | 2½-5½ | 3½-4½ | 3-5 | 4½-3½ | | 4-4 | 5-3 | 24 | 5 |
| 7 | The ADs | 1½-6½ | 4-4 | 2½-5½ | 3-5 | 2½-5½ | 4-4 | | 5½-2½ | 23 | 4 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------|-----|-------|-----|-----|-------|-----|-------|--|-----|---|
| 8 | Cambridge University 1 | 3-5 | 2½-5½ | 3-5 | 3-5 | 2½-4½ | 3-5 | 2½-5½ | | 19½ | 0 |
|---|------------------------|-----|-------|-----|-----|-------|-----|-------|--|-----|---|

| Division 2a | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|---------------------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-----|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | GP | Pts |
| 1 | Manx Liberty | | 5½-2½ | 4½-3½ | 6-2 | 6½-1½ | 7½-½ | 5½-2½ | 7-1 | 42½ | 14 |
| 2 | Wood Green Monarchs | 2½-5½ | | 4-4 | 5-3 | 4½-3½ | 4½-3½ | 5½-2½ | 6½-1½ | 32½ | 11 |
| 3 | Celtic Tigers | 3½-4½ | 4-4 | | 5-3 | 2½-5½ | 4½-3½ | 5-3 | 6½-1½ | 31 | 9 |
| 4 | Grantham Sharks 2 | 2-6 | 3-5 | 3-5 | | 4-4 | 5-2 | 5-3 | 5-3 | 27 | 7 |
| 5 | White Rose 2 | 1½-6½ | 3½-4½ | 5½-2½ | 4-4 | | 3-5 | 3½-4½ | 6-2 | 27 | 5 |
| 6 | Kings Head | ½-7½ | 3½-4½ | 3½-4½ | 2-5 | 5-3 | | 5½-2½ | 4-4 | 24 | 5 |
| 7 | Sussex Martlets 1 | 2½-5½ | 2½-5½ | 3-5 | 3-5 | 4½-3½ | 2½-5½ | | 5-3 | 23 | 4 |
| 8 | Barbican Youth | 1-7 | 1½-6½ | 1½-6½ | 3-5 | 2-6 | 4-4 | 3-5 | | 16 | 1 |

| Division 2b | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|-------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-----|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | GP | Pts |
| 1 | North East England | | 4½-3½ | 5½-2½ | 5-3 | 5-3 | 4-4 | 4½-3½ | 5½-2½ | 34 | 13 |
| 2 | Manchester Manticores 1 | 3½-4½ | | 3-5 | 5-2½ | 7-1 | 5½-2½ | 6-2 | 2½-5½ | 32½ | 8 |
| 3 | Guildford 3 | 2½-5½ | 5-3 | | 4½-3½ | 3-5 | 4½-3½ | 3½-4½ | 6½-1½ | 29½ | 8 |
| 4 | Anglian Avengers 1 | 3-5 | 2½-5 | 3½-4½ | | 5½-2½ | 6½-1½ | 5-3 | 4-4 | 30 | 7 |
| 5 | KJCA Kings | 3-5 | 1-7 | 5-3 | 2½-5½ | | 3½-4½ | 6-1 | 5-3 | 26 | 6 |
| 6 | Warwickshire Select 1 | 4-4 | 2½-5½ | 3½-4½ | 1½-6½ | 4½-3½ | | 5-3 | 4-4 | 25 | 6 |
| 7 | West is Best 2 | 3½-4½ | 2-6 | 4½-3½ | 3-5 | 1-6 | 3-5 | | 6-2 | 23 | 4 |
| 8 | Poisoned Pawns 1 | 2½-5½ | 5½-2½ | 1½-6½ | 4-4 | 3-5 | 4-4 | 2-6 | | 22½ | 4 |

| Division 2c | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|-------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-----|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | GP | Pts |
| 1 | Manx Liberty | | 4½-3½ | 5½-2½ | 6½-1½ | 5-3 | 7-1 | 6-2 | 7½-½ | 42 | 14 |
| 2 | Celtic Tigers | 3½-4½ | | 4-4 | 5½-2½ | 2½-5½ | 5½-2½ | 5-3 | 4½-3½ | 30½ | 9 |
| 3 | Wood Green Monarchs | 2½-5½ | 4-4 | | 4½-3½ | 2½-5½ | 5-2 | 5-3 | 5-3 | 28½ | 9 |
| 4 | North East England | 1½-6½ | 2½-5½ | 3½-4½ | | 5-3 | 5½-2½ | 5½-2½ | 4½-3½ | 28 | 8 |
| 5 | Anglian Avengers 1 | 3-5 | 5½-2½ | 5½-2½ | 3-5 | | 3½-4½ | 5-3 | 2½-5 | 28 | 6 |
| 6 | Guildford 3 | 1-7 | 2½-5½ | 2-5 | 2½-5½ | 4½-3½ | | 4-4 | 5-3 | 21½ | 5 |
| 7 | Grantham Sharks 2 | 2-6 | 3-5 | 3-5 | 2½-5½ | 3-5 | 4-4 | | 4½-3½ | 22 | 3 |
| 8 | Manchester Manticores 1 | ½-7½ | 3½-4½ | 3-5 | 3½-4½ | 5-2½ | 3-5 | 3½-4½ | | 22 | 2 |

| Division 2d | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-----|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | GP | Pts |
| 1 | Sussex Martlets 1 | | 5-3 | 4½-3½ | 4½-3½ | 4½-3½ | 2½-5½ | 4½-3½ | 5-3 | 30½ | 12 |
| 2 | Warwickshire Select 1 | 3-5 | | 4½-3½ | 5-3 | 4-4 | 4½-3½ | 6½-1½ | 5-3 | 32½ | 11 |
| 3 | KJCA Kings | 3½-4½ | 3½-4½ | | 6-1 | 5-3 | 5½-2½ | 4½-3½ | 3½-4½ | 31½ | 8 |
| 4 | West is Best 2 | 3½-4½ | 3-5 | 1-6 | | 6-2 | 4½-3½ | 4-4 | 6-2 | 28 | 7 |
| 5 | Poisoned Pawns 1 | 3½-4½ | 4-4 | 3-5 | 2-6 | | 4-4 | 5-3 | 6½-1 | 28 | 6 |
| 6 | Kings Head | 5½-2½ | 3½-4½ | 2½-5½ | 3½-4½ | 4-4 | | 5-3 | 4-4 | 28 | 6 |
| 7 | White Rose 2 | 3½-4½ | 1½-6½ | 3½-4½ | 4-4 | 3-5 | 3-5 | | 6-2 | 24½ | 3 |
| 8 | Barbican Youth | 3-5 | 3-5 | 4½-3½ | 2-6 | 1-6½ | 4-4 | 2-6 | | 19½ | 3 |

Poisoned Pawns 1 are placed ahead of Kings Head on second tie break: total match points during season (9 v 6)

| Division 3S Pool A | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-----|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | GP | Pts |
| 1 | Barnet Knights 1 | | 4½-1½ | 3½-2½ | 4-2 | 6-0 | 2½-3½ | 4-2 | 5½--½ | 30 | 12 |
| 2 | Wessex A | 1½-4½ | | 4-2 | 4½-1½ | 2½-3½ | 4-2 | 4½-½ | 3½-2½ | 24½ | 10 |
| 3 | Rhyfelwyr Essyllwg | 2½-3½ | 2-4 | | 3-3 | 3-3 | 3½-2½ | 4-2 | 3-3 | 21 | 7 |
| 4 | Cambridge University 2 | 2-4 | 1½-4½ | 3-3 | | 3½-2½ | 2½-3½ | 3½-2½ | 4½-½ | 20½ | 7 |
| 5 | Anglian Avengers 2 | 0-6 | 3½-2½ | 3-3 | 2½-3½ | | 3½-2½ | 1½-4½ | 5-1 | 19 | 7 |
| 6 | Hackney | 3½-2½ | 2-4 | 2½-3½ | 3½-2½ | 2½-3½ | | 3-3 | 3-3 | 20 | 6 |
| 7 | Leeds University Old Boys | 2-4 | ½-4½ | 2-4 | 2½-3½ | 4½-1½ | 3-3 | | 4½-1½ | 19 | 5 |
| 8 | The Full Ponty | -½-5½ | 2½-3½ | 3-3 | ½-4½ | 1-5 | 3-3 | 1½-4½ | | 11 | 2 |

| Division 3S Pool B | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-----|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | GP | Pts |
| 1 | CSC 1 | | 3-3 | 2½-3½ | 5-1 | 4½-1½ | 3½-2½ | 4-2 | 6-0 | 28½ | 11 |
| 2 | Brown Jack 1 | 3-3 | | 4-2 | 3-3 | 2½-3½ | 5-1 | 4-2 | 4-2 | 25½ | 10 |
| 3 | MK Phoenix 1 | 3½-2½ | 2-4 | | 4-2 | 4-2 | 3-3 | 3-3 | 4-2 | 23½ | 10 |
| 4 | Oxford 2 | 1-5 | 3-3 | 2-4 | | 3½-2½ | 2-4 | 4½-1½ | 4½-1½ | 20½ | 7 |
| 5 | Fermented Sharks | 1½-4½ | 3½-2½ | 2-4 | 2½-3½ | | 2½-3½ | 4-2 | 5½-½ | 21½ | 6 |
| 6 | The Rookies | 2½-3½ | 1-5 | 3-3 | 4-2 | 3½-2½ | | 2½-3½ | 3-3 | 19½ | 6 |
| 7 | Sussex Martlets 2 | 2-4 | 2-4 | 3-3 | 1½-4½ | 2-4 | 3½-2½ | | 4½-1½ | 18½ | 5 |
| 8 | West is Best 3 | 0-6 | 2-4 | 2-4 | 1½-4½ | ½-5½ | 3-3 | 1½-4½ | | 10½ | 1 |

| Division 3S Pool C | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-----|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | GP | Pts |
| 1 | Barnet Knights 1 | | 4½-1½ | 4-2 | 3-3 | 5½-½ | 3½-2½ | 4-2 | 4-2 | 28½ | 13 |
| 2 | Wessex A | 1½-4½ | | 3-3 | 3-3 | 5-1 | 4-2 | 3½-2½ | 4½-1½ | 24½ | 10 |
| 3 | Brown Jack 1 | 2-4 | 3-3 | | 3-3 | 4-2 | 4-2 | 3-3 | 5½-½ | 24½ | 9 |
| 4 | CSC 1 | 3-3 | 3-3 | 3-3 | | 2½-3½ | 2-4 | 5-1 | 3-3 | 21½ | 6 |
| 5 | MK Phoenix 1 | ½-5½ | 1-5 | 2-4 | 3½-2½ | | 2-4 | 4-2 | 4-2 | 17 | 6 |
| 6 | Rhyfelwyr Essyllwg | 2½-3½ | 2-4 | 2-4 | 4-2 | 4-2 | | 2½-3½ | 3-3 | 20 | 5 |
| 7 | Oxford 2 | 2-4 | 2½-3½ | 3-3 | 1-5 | 2-4 | 3½-2½ | | 3½-2½ | 17½ | 5 |
| 8 | Cambridge University 2 | 2-4 | 1½-4½ | ½-5½ | 3-3 | 2-4 | 3-3 | 2½-3½ | | 14½ | 2 |

| Division 3S Pool D | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-----|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | GP | Pts |
| 1 | Leeds University Old Boys | | ½-5½ | 4½-1½ | 3½-2½ | 4½-1½ | 4½-1½ | 3-3 | 5-1 | 25½ | 11 |
| 2 | The Rookies | 5½-½ | | 2½-3½ | 3½-2½ | 3½-2½ | 5½-½ | 3-3 | 3-3 | 26½ | 10 |
| 3 | Sussex Martlets 2 | 1½-4½ | 3½-2½ | | 2-4 | 3½-2½ | 3-3 | 3½-2½ | 4½-1½ | 21½ | 9 |
| 4 | Fermented Sharks | 2½-3½ | 2½-3½ | 4-2 | | 5½-½ | 2-4 | 3½-2½ | 5½-½ | 25½ | 8 |
| 5 | Anglian Avengers 2 | 1½-4½ | 2½-3½ | 2½-3½ | ½-5½ | | 5-1 | 3½-2½ | 4½-1½ | 20 | 6 |
| 6 | The Full Ponty | 1½-4½ | ½-5½ | 3-3 | 4-2 | 1-5 | | 3-3 | 3-3 | 16 | 5 |
| 7 | Hackney | 3-3 | 3-3 | 2½-3½ | 2½-3½ | 2½-3½ | 3-3 | | 3-3 | 19½ | 4 |
| 8 | West is Best 3 | 1-5 | 3-3 | 1½-4½ | ½-5½ | 1½-4½ | 3-3 | 3-3 | | 13½ | 3 |

| Division 3 North | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---------|----|----|---|---|----|-----|
| | | P | W | D | L | GP | Pts |
| 1 | Gonzaga | 11 | 10 | 1 | 0 | 48 | 21 |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|--------------------------------|----|---|---|---|-----|----|
| 2 | Bradford DCA Knights A | 11 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 40 | 16 |
| 3 | Shropshire 1 | 11 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 38 | 16 |
| 4 | 3Cs 2 | 11 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 40½ | 15 |
| 5 | Cheddleton 2 | 11 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 38 | 15 |
| 6 | Ashfield-Breadsall 1 | 11 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 38½ | 13 |
| 7 | Warwickshire Select 2 | 11 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 34½ | 12 |
| 8 | Holmes Chapel | 11 | 6 | 0 | 5 | 33½ | 12 |
| 9 | Manchester Manticores 2 | 11 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 34 | 11 |
| 10 | Bradford DCA Knights B | 11 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 31 | 11 |
| 11 | Jorvik | 11 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 30½ | 11 |
| 12 | Bradford DCA Knights C | 10 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 26 | 9 |
| 13 | Spirit of Atticus B | 11 | 4 | 0 | 7 | 31 | 8 |
| 14 | Manchester Manticores 3 | 11 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 30 | 8 |
| 15 | 3Cs 3 | 11 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 27 | 8 |
| 16 | Shropshire 2 | 11 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 27½ | 7 |
| 17 | Ashfield-Breadsall 2 | 11 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 23½ | 7 |
| 18 | Enniscorthy | 8 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 17 | 5 |
| 19 | Castleford Roses | 8 | 2 | 0 | 6 | 15½ | 4 |
| 20 | Manchester Manticores 4 | 8 | 0 | 1 | 7 | 14 | 1 |

| Division 4 South | | | | | | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|------------|
| | | P | W | D | L | GP | Pts |
| 1 | Surbiton | 11 | 8 | 1 | 2 | 43 | 17 |
| 2 | CSC 2 | 11 | 7 | 3 | 1 | 39½ | 17 |
| 3 | Iceni 1 | 11 | 8 | 0 | 3 | 40½ | 16 |
| 4 | Iceni 2 | 11 | 8 | 0 | 3 | 38½ | 16 |
| 5 | Crowthorne | 11 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 38 | 15 |
| 6 | All Anands on Deck | 11 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 37½ | 15 |
| 7 | Kent KJCA Kestrels | 11 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 36½ | 14 |
| 8 | MK Phoenix 2 | 11 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 37½ | 13 |
| 9 | Wessex B | 11 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 37 | 13 |
| 10 | Oxford 3 | 11 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 36 | 13 |
| 11 | Throw in the Tal | 11 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 35 | 13 |
| 12 | Brown Jack 2 | 11 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 36 | 12 |
| 13 | Poisoned Pawns 2 | 11 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 35 | 12 |
| 14 | Watford | 11 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 33½ | 11 |
| 15 | West is Best 4 | 9 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 31 | 11 |
| 16 | K Kings 2 | 11 | 4 | 2½ | 4½ | 32½ | 10½ |
| 17 | Cambridge University 3 | 9 | 5 | ½ | 3½ | 28 | 10½ |
| 18 | CSC 3 | 11 | 5 | 0 | 6 | 33½ | 10 |
| 19 | Fischer's Catch | 11 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 32½ | 10 |
| 20 | D&D United | 9 | 5 | 0 | 4 | 31 | 10 |
| 21 | Camberley Juniors | 11 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 30 | 9 |
| 22 | Sussex Martlets 3 | 11 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 28 | 9 |
| 23 | The Pitstop | 11 | 4 | 0 | 7 | 31½ | 8 |
| 24 | Brown Jack 3 | 11 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 27 | 8 |
| 25 | Iceni 3 | 11 | 4 | 0 | 7 | 27 | 8 |
| 26 | Barnet Knights 2 | 11 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 28½ | 7 |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-------------------------|----|---|---|----|-----|---|
| 27 | Invicta Chess | 11 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 21 | 4 |
| 28 | Oxford 4 | 8 | 2 | 0 | 6 | 16 | 4 |
| 29 | Barnet Knights 3 | 11 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 18 | 3 |
| 30 | Barnet Knights 4 | 11 | 1 | 0 | 10 | 11½ | 2 |



Report on 4NCL Divisions 1 and 2, Weekend 5 (May 2018)

by Rhys Cumming

Division 1C

Guildford 1 wrapped up the title with a round to spare and finished with their expected 11 wins from 11. After beating Barbican 1 and Wood Green HK 6½-1½, the title was all but sealed for Guildford over 8 hours into the Sunday match when Cheddleton, who would play Guildford in the final round, were held to a 4-4 draw by White Rose 1. Cheddleton and White Rose were level at 3½-3½ with only the top board remaining, in which David Howell was trying to grind down the Spanish GM Daniel Alsina Leal. Howell missed his chances in the endgame and was only able to get into a rook and king vs knight and king ending which he was unsurprisingly unable to win. That drawn match, their second of the season, meant they would have to beat Guildford 1 7½-1½ in the last round to claim the title, which given they were the underdogs for anyway meant the title was already decided. Guildford 1 won that final round match comfortably 5½-2½ anyway thanks to 3 wins with the white pieces and 5 draws. That wrapped up one of Guildford's most dominant seasons in recent years, but perhaps next year will be more of a challenge with a new challenger in Manx Liberty joining the division.

Cheddleton did manage to get 2nd place for the 3rd year in a row however, narrowly finishing ahead of White Rose, who they pushed out into 3rd place on points difference. 3rd place matched White Rose's highest finish thanks to beating their biggest challengers for a top 3 spot, Guildford 2, on the Saturday. There may be a touch of disappointment for White Rose however as if they had beaten Wood Green HK in the final round, they would have overtaken Cheddleton into 2nd place. The two teams were evenly managed, so the drawn match shouldn't be too surprising, but it may have been a lost opportunity for White Rose, especially since there was a major turnaround on board 2 where James Adair had a dominant position with white against Neil McDonald but seemed to miss a tactical shot and was immediately lost. Wood Green HK ended up finishing 5th despite finishing on 8 points, but they did have the bonus of 2 of their players achieving norms: both David Fitzsimons and Adam C Taylor completed IM norms.

At the bottom end of the pool there weren't too many shocks. Barbican 1 beat both Grantham Sharks 1 and Oxford to secure 6th place, while both Grantham and Oxford lost all 3 matches over the weekend against sides that out-rated them.

Division 1D

With only Cambridge University set to go down before the weekend started, there was a lot to play for in the Demotion Pool. Both 3Cs and Blackthorne Russia were close to securing their survival and were safe by Saturday evening with wins over Alba and Barbican 2 respectively. The ADs had only 2 points going into the weekend and so would probably need 5 points to stay up and never really got close. They lost to West is Best 1 on the Saturday which mean they were almost certainly relegated and confirmed that with a loss to Alba on the Sunday. They did achieve a consolation victory on the Monday however against Cambridge University 1 who became the first team in 4 years to go the whole season without getting a point. West is Best 1 went into the weekend on 4 points so needed to win 2 out of their 3 matches to be safe. Their win against The ADs put them in touching distance, but they had their biggest result of the season in beating 3Cs in Round 10 to ensure survival. They made it 3/3 by beating Spirit of Atticus in the final round to finish in a comfortable 3rd place in the pool. Spirit of Atticus started the weekend off well by beating Cambridge University but came up against Blackthorne Russia on the Sunday which saw off their chances of staying up. They were heavily out-rated across their team and it showed in the match as they lost 5½-2½. That result meant that even though they

were not mathematically down, they would need to beat West is Best 1 6½- 1½ and have other results go their way. None of that was close to realising itself as they went down 4½-3½.

This all left just 1 remaining spot up for grabs going into the final round and it came down to just one of Alba and Barbican 2 who played each other in the final round. Both teams had won 1 and lost 1 over the previous 2 days and sat on 6 points heading into their match-up. Alba had the better points difference and would therefore go through if the match was drawn. It was a well toughly fought match with almost all the matches reaching the time control, but Alba always seemed in the better position thanks to better positions on the higher boards and Alba eventually won 4½-3½ to narrowly keep themselves up, the only newly promoted side to do so. That mean that Barbican 2, Spirit of Atticus, The ADs and Cambridge University were relegated. Barbican 2 have been a fixture in Division 1 for many years now despite occasionally flirting with relegation, but they will presumably be one of the favourites to return to the top division next year.

Division 2C

The four promotion spots in the Promotion Pool were all wrapped up barring miraculous comebacks before the weekend had even started and so it proved with Manx Liberty, Celtic Tigers, Wood Green Monarchs and North East England all to be plying their trade in Division 1 next year. Manx Liberty had already guaranteed their place but went all out for the title, producing their strongest team of the season for the final weekend. That team which featured only 1 player below 2450, ensured Manx a clean sweep of the division at their first attempt. Each of their matches in the final weekend were comfortable victories with their 6½-1½ victory over North East England their closest match of the weekend. This is presumably the last Division 2 will see of Manx Liberty in the years to come and they will likely enter Division 1 next year as Guildford 1s biggest title contenders.

North East England went into the weekend on the same points as Manx Liberty with 8 wins out of 8 and promotion already confirmed but had a very different weekend from the Manx team. It should be said that their weekend featured 3 matches against the best 3 teams in the division, but their 3 losses will still have been somewhat disappointing. Nonetheless, they will be in Division 1 next year and have a chance to get revenge on all those teams next year. Celtic Tigers and Wood Green Monarchs had not completely secured their place but were well clear with an easier set of fixtures in the way. Their closest challengers going into the weekend were Manchester Manticores, who were 3 points behind but still had to play Manx Liberty. In the end the Manchester Manticores lost every match they played this weekend so didn't mount much of a challenge to the promotion places. In fact, both the Celtic Tigers and Wood Green Monarchs ensured their promotion by beating North East England: Celtic Tigers on the Saturday and Wood Green on the Sunday.

The team of the weekend however were a team who didn't have a single point after 4 games played in the Promotion Pool: Anglian Avengers. They won all their matches over the weekend including against two of the sides that went on to earn promotion: Celtic Tigers and Wood Green Monarchs. Despite their wins, they were never in a position to get promoted but did end up finishing in a very creditable 5th place.

Guildford 3 had a tough weekend losing to both Celtic Tigers and Manx Liberty and drawing with Grantham Sharks 2. Due to there being 2 Guildford sides in the first division, Guildford 3 are ineligible for promotion and so never really had anything on the line in the final weekend. Grantham Sharks also were never in the running for a promotion spot although in their case that was due to being on 0 points entering the weekend. The finished with a win, a draw and a loss but they had already achieved their primary goal of making it into the Promotion Pool.

Division 2D

Of all the pools in the top 2 divisions this certainly involved the most drama. Barbican Youth had given themselves hope in the 4th weekend by beating KJCA Kings, but needed a big showing in the final weekend to stay up and when they arrived with a very weakened side, it became clear fairly quickly that this would be their last year in Division 2. They went on to lose all 3 games and finished bottom on 3 points. Despite having the strongest teams in the Division, Pool A also ended up producing the

weakest. White Rose 2 had only 3 points going into the weekend and needed at least 2 wins. They drew a tight match with West is Best 2 on the Saturday but they lost badly to Warwickshire Select 1 which gave them no chance of staying up going into the last round. The Sussex Martlets didn't need much to be safe but won every match $4\frac{1}{2}$ - $3\frac{1}{2}$ to finish top of the demotion pool, while Warwickshire Select 1 also ensured their safety with ease. Poisoned Pawns 1 struggled early in the season but had made somewhat of a comeback. They drew with King's Head but were essentially relegated after a $4\frac{1}{2}$ - $3\frac{1}{2}$ loss in round 10 to the Sussex Martlets which featured 7 draws and the solitary loss. This left 3 teams fighting for 2 spots heading into the final day. West is Best 2 were in pole position on 7 points but probably had the hardest match, against the Sussex Martlets with KJCA Kings and King's Head narrowly behind on 6 points facing White Rose 2 and Warwickshire Select 1 respectively.

KJCA Kings had strengthened significantly and brought in John Emms and Chris Ward to steer them over the line. In the final round they narrowly beat White Rose 2 $4\frac{1}{2}$ - $3\frac{1}{2}$, but as it turned out a draw would have been enough to see them through anyway. This left West is Best 2 and King's Head battling it out. West is Best's match against the Sussex Martlets was always close, but West is Best never looked like they would have quite enough to scrape a match point and so it turned out going down $4\frac{1}{2}$ - $3\frac{1}{2}$. This left West is Best's fate in the hands of Warwickshire Select. King's Head needed a 4-4 draw to survive after a roller coaster season.

King's Head had racked up 5 points after 2 weekends in Pool A and looked to be shoe-ins to make the Promotion Pool, but then they fell away completely and in rounds 5-10 only picked up one more draw. With just 2 games left in the match, King's Head took a $3\frac{1}{2}$ - $2\frac{1}{2}$ lead and needed just another draw in order to survive. It all came down to board 1 where Evgeny Tukpetov was trying to hold an ending a piece for 2 pawns down against Warwickshire's John Pitcher, but ultimately went down to see West is Best 2 survive at the expense of King's Head.

There is little doubt that this has been the strongest Division 2 has been since the change of format 10 years ago, evidence of which can be seen in looking at the relegated teams. 3 of the 4 teams to go down in particular: King's Head, White Rose 2 and Barbican Youth have been in the top 2 divisions for many years, but with newer teams coming up from the 3rd Divisions, some of the more established teams have been pushed to the bottom of the pile.



Report on 4NCL Divisions 3 and 4 Weekend 5

by Steve Burke

As the season reached its climax, the race for promotion from Division 3 South was always going to be a fight between the top five teams. With several of them playing each other, the top three stretched away on the Saturday as Barnet, Wessex and Brown Jack all won. On the Sunday, leaders Barnet clinched their promotion by beating Brown Jack, while their other challengers Wessex could only draw with CSC.

So, on the Monday, while Barnet played out a six-draw match with CSC, Wessex and Brown Jack went head to head for the second spot. Not being there, I can't be sure, but it seems that Wessex got off to a terrible start with two spectacular losses. However, they fought back to level the match and, as Brown Jack had to win it, Wessex secured promotion.

Moving on to the relegation group, this was obviously all about avoiding the bottom two relegation places. It all came down to the last round where West is Best needed a big win over the Full Ponty to overtake them but could only manage a draw. That meant that Hackney could save themselves with a win against the Rookies, but despite a good effort they could only draw, so that they join West is Best in the drop zone.

Moving on to Division 4 South, and who will replace the above in the new season, there was much more movement than in Division 3. Both Iceni 2 and Oxford 3 blew their leads scoring only 2 points and 0 points respectively from their three matches.

This opened the door for the following teams, and Surbiton surged to the top spot, beating the two former leaders on their way. Having already played the leading teams, CSC 2 had a relatively easy route to claim second spot after picking up another 5 points.

With the variability of team locations, there was still some hope of promotion for teams finishing third to sixth, and in the end the most likely third and fourth places were both occupied by the Iceni teams, 1 and 2.

After the teams relegated from Division 2 elected where they would play next season, Iceni 1 were the beneficiaries of three teams (King's head, Barbican Youth and Poisoned Pawns) choosing to play in the South.

In the North, to the surprise of few, Gonzaga clinched the top spot with a round to spare, allowing us to give them a round of applause before the last matches started.

Going into these matches three teams were in contention, but none were playing each other. Shropshire 1 were favourites on 16 points, followed by 3Cs 2 on 15 points and Bradford Knights A on 14. As the afternoon wore on this contest was looking closer and closer and, if I recall correctly, 3Cs were the first to crack, losing to Cheddleton 2. I had finished my game for Ashfield-Breadsall 2 and was chatting with players from Bradford, who had also finished. They were getting excited as Shropshire seemed to be losing to our first team. This would set up an unlikely promotion for them – if they could beat their B team!

At the time that was not looking at all a certainty to me. However, in the end it worked out for them, as Shropshire could not save their match and their A team pulled through.

London Chess Classic



Nakamura wins Grand Chess Tour final with dramatic last-round blitz victory

LONDON (December 17, 2018) - American Grandmaster Hikaru Nakamura defeated Frenchman Maxime Vachier-Lagrave in the London Chess Classic and Grand Chess Tour Final by the super-slim margin of 15-13 - the win of a single blitz game - after a nail-biting sequence of seven draws.

After several rapid and blitz games where the difference between the two players hardly ever threatened to become of decisive proportions, in Blitz Game 4 Nakamura repeated a line of a hybrid Grunfeld-English they had played earlier in the match. Vachier-Lagrave began to suffer after he unwisely moved his queen to the kingside with 15...Qf5, when its lack of safety became a decisive factor. Thereafter Nakamura took control of the centre and allowed MVL's queen no respite, with the death-knell for MVL coming with 24 Ng5, when the queen is cornered. The picturesque final blow was delivered by 29 Bg4!, forcing the win of the queen due to a killer knight fork. Both players' match strategy appeared to be aimed at surviving with Black and waiting for the Blitz portion of the match. Nakamura's adoption of the super-solid Berlin Wall defence in London marked a departure from his usual counter-attacking style, but it paid off in the end.

Nakamura takes home \$120,000 for winning the Grand Chess Tour, while MVL pockets \$80,000 as runner-up. In the Third Place Playoff match, US World Championship challenger Fabiano Caruana managed to salvage some pride, coming out on top in the Rapid and Blitz games against Armenia's Levon Aronian, winning the second Rapid game and the final two Blitz games to secure victory by the score of 16-12. (The scoring system awarded 6 points for each Classical game, while the Rapid games are worth 4 points and the Blitz games 2 points.)

Caruana's payday was \$60,000, while Aronian had to be satisfied with \$40,000. Caruana's third place guarantees him a place in the 2019 Grand Chess Tour, the GCT announced today.

European Club Cup

Andrew Ledger reports from the European Club Cup held in Porto Carras, Greece

Some 73 teams turned up to play at the 2018 European Club Cup, 61 in the Open section and 12 in the Women's event. The venue was the luxury resort of Porto Carras in Greece, which boasts two huge hotels, conference facilities and a marina, hosting numerous extremely large and expensive yachts. The Open section in particular tends to be quite polarised, split between the teams of highly rated professionals and the keen amateurs.

Six British teams took part in the Open section, five from England, with one Welsh team. The British teams are usually in the amateur category, even if some of our top players occasionally crop up playing for other teams. This year was no exception, with just two GMs and a scattering of IMs across these six teams, although 3Cs were unfortunate to lose their grandmaster the day before the event, resulting in a heroic dash across Europe from Rhys Cumming to take some impromptu leave from work and become an honorary 3C for the event.

For my team, currently called Blackthorne Russia, but also in our previous incarnations, there is an annual pattern: see where the event is and whether we would like to go; play the 4NCL and hope to do well enough; hope that some of the (many) teams finishing above us don't want to go; see how we get on trying to raise a team. This last part isn't easy for nonprofessional players either, and involves trying to get provisional and eventually final leave booked from work; make sure you can afford what tends to be an expensive event for those of us with no sponsorship; and in some cases, get agreement from the family. This year we were fortunate to be beneficiaries of an extra discretionary place awarded to the 4NCL thanks to the efforts of Malcolm Pein.

The first round of the Open tends to be a bit of a massacre and in the case of Blackthorne, consistently just below half way in the seedings, the excitement builds as we wait to see who we will be massacred by. In four first rounds at the ECC, I have played opposition averaging well over 2700, which tells you all you need to know about our chances of an upset.

This year we were up against 'Mednyi Vsadnik St Petersburg', who figured that they would probably be safe resting their board one (Peter Svidler), and relying on a team averaging a mere 2670 or so. Our best chance of staving off our first ever whitewash seemed to lie with Richard Bates on top board. Having been outplayed by Vitiugov, Richard saw a chance to complicate matters by sacrificing a piece to open things up and win some pawns. It didn't appear to be working when they reached the following position.

Flashed out quickly and no doubt Richard, short of time, trusted his 2700+ opponent to have worked things out. But this is a good illustration that you should never trust your opponent.

32 ♔xg4 is the move they both missed when matters are far from clear. The computer reckons it is level, but obviously it is certainly not a dead draw.

Now, though, it is pretty much over.

With many lopsided matches and with some of the top players in the Open being rested, there was perhaps extra focus on the Women's event and one of the most dramatic games of the whole event took place in the first round where one of the top-rated women certainly had more fun on the black side of an Advanced Caro-Kann than I was having against Fedoseev at the same time, though she had to settle for a draw and was completely lost for much of the time.

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 e5 ♖f5 4 h4

4...a6

5 h5 h6 6 g4 ♖d7 7 f4

7...c5 8 c3 e6 9 f3 b6

10 ♔f2 ♘c6 11 ♔g3 0-0-0



At the moment it is hard for Black to lever open the kingside without leaving weaknesses, but it is hard to maintain these sorts of positions for White. I suspect both players had more or less what they wanted from the opening.

12 ♖h2 g6 13 hxg6 fxg6 14 ♜d3 cxd4 15 cxd4 g5?!

15...h5 is a much more natural way to play, fighting for control of g4 and in particular f5, an inviting square for a knight. Black was perhaps worried that this would leave things too blocked and decided to take a risk instead.

16 ♗xg5 ♜ge7 17 ♗f7 ♜g8 18 ♔h3

Stepping away from the g-file and figuring that the rook isn't going to escape, as .. ♜e8 is met by ♗d6+.

18...♗xd4?! 19 ♙e3 ♗ef5?

The game explodes, but this is completely unsound.

20 gxf5 ♙b5 21 ♜c2+

21 ♜c3+ seems simpler, although the text should be winning too.

21...♗xc2 22 ♜xc2+ ♙c5 23 ♙xb5 d4 24 ♗xd8 ♔xd8 25 ♙a4 ♜c7



Black is running out of material and the computer will tell you White is winning easily, but things are never so simple when you are at the board.

26 f6 ♜f7 27 ♔h4!

White had to see this before playing 26 f6, or else it could have been embarrassing.

27...dxe3 28 ♜xc5 ♜g1 29 ♜d6+ ♔c8 30 ♜c5+ ♔b8 31 ♜d6+

31 ♗c3 is the computer's preference, trying to keep the rook out of the game after 31...♜xa1 32 ♜d6+ ♔a7 33 ♜d4+ ♔b8 34 ♙d1.

31...♔a7 32 ♜d4+ ♔a8 33 ♜d8+ ♔a7 34 ♜d4+ ♔a8 35 ♜d8+ ♔a7 36 ♜e8



37 f7

Too late. Maybe White missed Black's next, but it had slipped by now anyway.



24 ♖e1

Defending the queen, and maybe preparing to re-route the knight to d3.

24... ♗e4??

Oh dear. Despite it being the top match in the final round, there is a slight flaw in Black's plan.

25 ♕xb4 1-0

At this point, I can confidently predict what most of you are thinking: 'Why don't 2600s do that against me?'

AVE Novy Bor caught up the Russians with wins from Navara and Laznicka, leaving top spot to be decided on tie-break. We did have visions of loads of 2700s gathering around the Blackthorne match because of the tiebreak system, but decided it probably didn't matter in the end – St Petersburg duly won on tie-break. This was despite Peter Svidler having a torrid time on board 1, scoring just 1½/6, albeit pressing against Carlsen in the final round. Another Russian team, Molodezhka finished in third place on tiebreak ahead of others including Valerenga.

So, what of the British teams while all this was going on? Well, the outstanding performance was from Wood Green, led by an unbeaten Jon Speelman reminding us what he can do. They could even have finished in the top 10 if they had won a winnable-looking fixture in the last round, but 21st was still comfortably ahead of their ranking.

Grantham Sharks and Blackthorne finished on half marks, having drawn when we played earlier in the tournament. This was courtesy of Chris Duncan drawing a position for Blackthorne which, at one stage was deemed by the computer to be an unfathomable '-54' evaluation. Chris though was redeeming himself from the previous round when having clarified that White had made his 40th move, Chris forgot that he had to make one too and lost on time. Fortunately, it didn't affect the match result, but it was a rather sheepish Chris who appeared at dinner that day.

Blackthorne also played, and defeated, White Rose in the final round to leave them with 5 points while 3Cs will have been disappointed to finish with 4. White Knights from Llanelli finished on 3 points, including the one-point bye in the final round, but had a net gain of rating points. I feel obliged to finish coverage of the Open with a win from a British player and although David Howell was mixing in the rarefied atmosphere of the top boards, it seems fitting that it should be Jon Speelman. Here he is beating a GM very comfortably in the last round.

J.Speelman-G.Arnaudov | Wood Green vs Gambit Asseco | Catalan Opening

1 d4 ♗f6 2 ♗f3 e6 3 c4 d5 4 g3 ♕e7 5 ♕g2 0-0 6 0-0 dxc4 7 ♖c2 b5!?

This is still a relatively rare line, but one that has grown in popularity recently. It looks odd to me as White wins the-c4 pawn back easily and can usually combine pressure down the c-file with the powerful g2-bishop. However, modern theory has moved well beyond lines being rejected for looking odd.

8 a4 b4 9 ♗fd2!

And this is the approved response, rather than 9 ♗e5 ♗xd4 when Black obtains play for the exchange.

9...b3

9...c6 is more common when 10 ðxc4 ðd4 11 ðd1 gives White lots of play and good squares for his pieces in return for the pawn.

10 ðxc4 ða6 11 ðxb3 c6 12 ðc3

12 ðe4 is Avrukh's suggestion here, again leading to positions where White gains plenty of positional compensation if Black ends up taking both the e- and d-pawns, his main line being 12...ðxe2 13 ðxf6+ ðxf6 14 ðe1 ða6 15 ðc3 ðxd4 16 ðb5 ðb6 17 ðe3.

12...ðxd4 13 ðf3 ðb6 14 ðxb6 axb6 15 ðd1 ðd5 16 ðd4



This must be close to equal, though I would still prefer White as it seems slightly harder for Black to complete development.

16...ðb7 17 e4 ðb4 18 ðf4 ð8a6 19 ðf5!?

Aiming for the bishop-pair by exploiting the loose black bishops.

19...ðc5?!

He needed to go in for 19...exf5 20 ðd7 when 20...ðd8 21 ðxb7 ðd3, as the computer suggests, seems fine for Black.

20 ðd6 ðxd6 21 ðxd6 ðfd8 22 e5

Cementing the bishop on d6 while the power of its brother on g2 is now revealed. Jon is not worried about giving up control of the d5-square, as we shall see.

22...ðd5 23 ðxd5 cxd5 24 b4!



Suddenly it's not so easy to find sensible moves for Black and the combination of the bishop-pair and the potential queenside passed pawn is likely to be decisive.

24...ðdc8 25 ðdc1 ðb8?!

It's hard to offer too much advice, but this doesn't look like the toughest test of White's technique. Black should probably do something about the back rank, as this soon becomes a problem.

26 ðxc8+ ðxc8 27 ðc1 ðd7 28 ðc7 ðe8

28...ðxa4 29 ðb7 is also easily winning.

29 ðc8 1-0

A nice game from one of England's all-time greats.

In the Women's event, life was more complicated with just 12 teams over seven rounds and consequently a pool approach which would be familiar to those who play in the top divisions of the 4NCL. The 12 teams of four were split into two pools to play an all-play-all over the first five days with the remaining two days to sort out the placings.

The top two teams in the two groups, 'Cercle d'Echecs de Monte-Carlo' and 'Nona' from Georgia were indeed the top two seeded teams and ended up meeting in the final round, though with Nona needing to win as they had dropped a point along the way.

Monte Carlo stayed ahead with a drawn match, their win coming from their top performer and highest-rated player in the event, Anna Muzychuk. Interestingly, the second highest-rated player in the women's event was Anna's sister Mariya, but she played on top board for a different team (Kiev) and the two managed to avoid playing.

A.Muzychuk-N.Dzagnidze | Monte Carlo vs Nona



20...e4?!

This certainly works out OK if White takes on e6 straight away, but she has extra options.

21 ♖e5 ♜gxe5 22 dxe6 ♜d6 23 ♜e3

But now White is just a pawn up with a very useful bishop-pair. Black's remaining play gets increasingly desperate, but White never lets go.

23...♜ae8 24 ♜fd1 ♜d4 25 ♜g3 ♜xb2 26 ♜b1 ♜a2 27 ♜xb7 g6 28 ♜c3 ♜xe6 29 ♜xh6 ♜f7 30 ♜xf7 ♜xf7 31 ♜xa6 g5 32 ♜xg5 ♜g4 33 ♜b3+ ♜g7 34 ♜e3 ♜b8 35 ♜c2 ♜f3+ 36 ♜h1 ♜h8 37 gxf3 ♜xf3+ 38 ♜g1 ♜g4+ 39 ♜f1 ♜xh2 40 ♜e1 ♜h1+ 41 ♜d2 ♜d7+ 42 ♜c1 1-0

All in all, the ECC was a very enjoyable event and it just remains, from the point of view of the teams, to thank the 4NCL and Malcolm for sorting out the entries, as well as, from the point of view of the players, to thank their captains.

UK Open Blitz Championships

The finals of the UK Open Blitz Championship took place on Saturday 1st December from 12:00 onwards at St Johns Hotel in Solihull. All the participants had previously qualified from 8 regional competitions held at the beginning of September.



With Svetlana Sucikova electing to play in the Open event, 15 men and 17 women competed for the right to claim the titles of UK Open Blitz Champion and UK Open Blitz Women's Champion.

The Open competition included 3 Grandmasters and 5 International Masters and the winner was expected to be one of these. Indeed, the favourite, David Howell took an early lead as the only player with 2 out of 2 and continued on his winning way until round 7, when he came up against Marcus Harvey. Marcus had started relatively quietly with draws against Thomas Rendle and James Adair, and had then started his own winning streak by beating Nick Pert. The streak was eventually broken at 8, but included wins against all 3 Grandmasters with that against David Howell being the highlight. Marcus's win against David enabled him to level their scores and gave him the lead on tie-break. His loss in round 11 restored David's lead and that was enough to decide the winner.

GMs Nick Pert and Daniel Gormally had both suffered early reverses, Nick Pert not only losing to Marcus, but also drawing with Gediminas Sarakas. Daniel Gormally had drawn with Lawrence Cooper before losing to Nick Pert. Both kept up a hot pursuit but were unable to close the gap. By the time they played David Howell, in rounds 13 and 14, the gap was already too big.

The final standings of the leaders were —

- 1 GM David Howell 13 (out of 15)
- 2 FM Marcus Harvey 12½
- 3 GM Daniel Gormally 11
- 4 IM James Adair 10
- 5 GM Nick Pert 10

The women's competition took a little longer to produce a clear leader, Natasha Regan taking the lead with 3 out of 3. She maintained her 100% record in round 4 but a loss to Madara Orlovska in round 5 allowed her opponent to take sole lead. Round 6 saw another change of lead when Madara lost to Agnieszka Milewska. Sophie Milliet had suffered a round 2 loss to Natasha Regan but had been justifying her rating with a series of wins that took her to 5 out of 6.

The leadership situation did not change again until round 13, Sophie Milliet holding a lead of half a point over Madara Orlovska and a 2 point lead over Rasa Norinkeviciute. Round 13 saw the clash of Madara and Rasa with Rasa emerging the victor. With Sophie Milliet winning again, she extended her lead to 1½ points. Round 14 saw the clash of the leaders and Sophie's win confirmed her title.

The final standings of the leaders were —

- 1 IM Sophie Milliet 13½ (out of 15)
- 2 Madara Orlovska 11½
- 3 WFM Rasa Norinkeviciute 11
- 4 WFM Sarah Longson 11
- 5 WFM Fiona Steil-Antoni 10

Many thanks to Lara Barnes and Alex McFarlane, who did their usual excellent job of arbiting, Matthew Carr who provided technical assistance, and to Alex Holowczak, who organised the whole thing!

--- article and photography by Adrian Elwin



CEO Mike Truran presents the winners' trophies to Sophie Milliet [1] and David Howell

Hastings Masters

Final Ranking crosstable after 10 Rounds

| | | Name | Rtg | FED | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | |
|----|-----|--------------------------|------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|
| 1 | GM | KORNEEV Oleg | 2560 | ESP | 22b1 | 21w1 | 3b½ | 17w½ | 9b½ | 7w½ | 10b½ | 14w1 | 5b½ | 16w1 | 7,0 |
| 2 | GM | SULSKIS Sarunas | 2525 | LTU | 33w1 | 16b½ | 6w0 | 37b½ | 38w1 | 22b1 | 13w1 | 4b½ | 3w½ | 12b1 | 7,0 |
| 3 | GM | GORMALLY Daniel W | 2478 | ENG | 18b1 | 10w1 | 1w½ | 6b1 | 4w½ | 5b½ | 11b1 | 7w½ | 2b½ | 8w½ | 7,0 |
| 4 | IM | PETROV Martin | 2472 | BUL | 23b1 | 31w½ | 14b1 | 7w½ | 3b½ | 17w1 | 5b½ | 2w½ | 8b½ | 20w1 | 7,0 |
| 5 | GM | CHERNIAEV Alexander | 2393 | RUS | 35b1 | 28w1 | 7b0 | 31w1 | 39b1 | 3w½ | 4w½ | 6b½ | 1w½ | 21b1 | 7,0 |
| 6 | FM | MURPHY Conor E | 2331 | IRL | 38b½ | 27w1 | 2b1 | 3w0 | 25b1 | 8w1 | 7b½ | 5w½ | 16b½ | 11w1 | 7,0 |
| 7 | GM | HAWKINS Jonathan | 2583 | ENG | 83w+ | 57b½ | 5w1 | 4b½ | 13w1 | 1b½ | 6w½ | 3b½ | 12w½ | 10w½ | 6,5 |
| 8 | IM | KJARTANSSON Gudmundur | 2415 | ISL | 34w1 | 17b½ | 15w0 | 19b1 | 24w1 | 6b0 | 27w1 | 56b1 | 4w½ | 3b½ | 6,5 |
| 9 | IM | PETROV Vladimir Sergeev | 2365 | BUL | 37w½ | 24b½ | 36w1 | 15b1 | 1w½ | 12b½ | -½ | 16w0 | 49b1 | 25w1 | 6,5 |
| 10 | FM | TAYLOR Adam C | 2331 | ENG | 39w1 | 3b0 | 40w1 | 12b0 | 28w1 | 42b1 | 1w½ | 34b½ | 30w1 | 7b½ | 6,5 |
| 11 | IM | LEENHOUTS Koen | 2470 | NED | 24w½ | 37b0 | 48w1 | 16w1 | 32b1 | 34b1 | 3w0 | 15b½ | 18w1 | 6b0 | 6,0 |
| 12 | GM | LALIC Bogdan | 2420 | CRO | 25b½ | 26w1 | 31b½ | 10w1 | 17b½ | 9w½ | 16b½ | 21w1 | 7b½ | 2w0 | 6,0 |
| 13 | GM | DJURIC Stefan | 2371 | SRB | 26b½ | 25w1 | 16b½ | 20w1 | 7b0 | 18w1 | 2b0 | 45w½ | 34w1 | 15b½ | 6,0 |
| 14 | FM | KALAVANNAN Koby | 2328 | ENG | 51b½ | 19w1 | 4w0 | 41b1 | 34w0 | 49b1 | 40w1 | 1b0 | 38w½ | 42b1 | 6,0 |
| 15 | FM | LYELL Mark | 2317 | ENG | 19b½ | 38w1 | 8b1 | 9w0 | 26b½ | 20w1 | 57b½ | 11w½ | 21b½ | 13w½ | 6,0 |
| 16 | FM | STEFANSSON Vignir Vatnar | 2271 | ISL | 41b1 | 2w½ | 13w½ | 11b0 | 47w1 | 67b1 | 12w½ | 9b1 | 6w½ | 1b0 | 6,0 |
| 17 | FM | WILLOW Jonah B | 2218 | ENG | 77b1 | 8w½ | 57w1 | 1b½ | 12w½ | 4b0 | 48w½ | 30b0 | 56w1 | 38b1 | 6,0 |
| 18 | | ROYSET Pal | 2185 | NOR | 3w0 | 60b1 | 41w½ | 47b½ | 43w1 | 13b0 | 67w1 | 87w1 | 11b0 | 40b1 | 6,0 |
| 19 | | ROLVAG Mikael | 2107 | NOR | 15w½ | 14b0 | 33w1 | 8w0 | 60b1 | 47b½ | 55w½ | 54b½ | 53w1 | 34b1 | 6,0 |
| 20 | | MIDHUN P U | 2010 | IND | 65w1 | 33b½ | 44w1 | 13b0 | 35w½ | 15b0 | 37w1 | 24b1 | 31w1 | 4b0 | 6,0 |
| 21 | IM | BATES Richard A | 2372 | ENG | 36w1 | 1b0 | 35w½ | 28b½ | 48w1 | 37b1 | 31w1 | 12b0 | 15w½ | 5w0 | 5,5 |
| 22 | | MOORE Graham J | 2235 | ENG | 1w0 | 43b½ | 49w1 | 59b1 | 57w½ | 2w0 | 58b1 | 48b½ | 44w1 | 0 | 5,5 |
| 23 | | GRAHAM David B | 2208 | ENG | 4w0 | 46b1 | 39w0 | 58b½ | 61w1 | 43b0 | 47w1 | 44b0 | 68w1 | 56b1 | 5,5 |
| 24 | CM | VILLIERS Thomas | 2205 | ENG | 11b½ | 9w½ | 28b½ | 60w1 | 8b0 | 59w1 | 26b½ | 20w0 | 54b½ | 49w1 | 5,5 |
| 25 | | STOYANOV Viktor | 2205 | ENG | 12w½ | 13b0 | 58w1 | 50b1 | 6w0 | 55b½ | 44w½ | 60b1 | 48w1 | 9b0 | 5,5 |
| 26 | | ANDERSON John | 2163 | ENG | 13w½ | 12b0 | 67w1 | 56b1 | 15w½ | 57b½ | 24w½ | 31b0 | 55w1 | 30b½ | 5,5 |
| 27 | | BYRON Alan M | 2157 | ENG | -½ | 6b0 | 30w1 | 54w½ | 67b½ | 68w1 | 8b0 | 43w1 | 45b1 | 0 | 5,5 |
| 28 | | WHITE Stuart A | 2096 | SCO | 32b1 | 5b0 | 24w½ | 21w½ | 10b0 | 52w½ | 51b½ | 69w½ | 62b1 | 54w1 | 5,5 |
| 29 | | SUGDEN John N | 2072 | ENG | 42w0 | 52b1 | 34w½ | 57b0 | 64w1 | 56b0 | 63w1 | 55b½ | 33w1 | 62b½ | 5,5 |
| 30 | AIM | RICE Chris B | 1963 | ENG | 70b½ | 64w1 | 27b0 | 38w0 | 69b½ | 71w1 | 39b1 | 17w1 | 10b0 | 26w½ | 5,5 |
| 31 | FM | DERAKHSHANI Borna | 2325 | ENG | 40w1 | 4b½ | 12w½ | 5b0 | 49b1 | 39w1 | 21b0 | 26w1 | 20b0 | 0 | 5,0 |
| 32 | IM | PEEK Marcel | 2293 | NED | 28w0 | 49b½ | 43w1 | 42b1 | 11w0 | 44b½ | 41w1 | 38b½ | 40w½ | 0 | 5,0 |
| 33 | FM | PITSCHKA Claus | 2241 | GER | 2b0 | 20w½ | 19b0 | 53w1 | 54b1 | 58w½ | 45b0 | 62w1 | 29b0 | 64w1 | 5,0 |
| 34 | | PAYNE Matthew J | 2182 | ENG | 8b0 | 62w1 | 29b½ | 68w1 | 14b1 | 11w0 | 43b1 | 10w½ | 13b0 | 19w0 | 5,0 |
| 35 | | SUMIT Kumar | 2179 | IND | 5w0 | 61b1 | 21b½ | 63w½ | 20b½ | 62w1 | 56w0 | 68b1 | 42w0 | 44b½ | 5,0 |
| 36 | FM | EAMES Robert S | 2167 | ENG | 21b0 | 68w1 | 9b0 | 67w0 | 51b½ | 70b1 | 50w1 | 49w0 | 52b1 | 43w½ | 5,0 |
| 37 | | SPIEGEL Stefan Dr. | 2124 | GER | 9b½ | 11w1 | 77b0 | 2w½ | 63b1 | 21w0 | 20b0 | 51w½ | 69b1 | 45w½ | 5,0 |
| 38 | | TAYLOR Adam A | 2122 | ENG | 6w½ | 15b0 | 47w½ | 30b1 | 2b0 | 65w1 | 64b1 | 32w½ | 14b½ | 17w0 | 5,0 |
| 39 | | GROFFEN Hans | 2120 | NED | 10b0 | 63w1 | 23b1 | 82w1 | 5w0 | 31b0 | 30w0 | 61b½ | 50w1 | 47b½ | 5,0 |
| 40 | | SNAPE Ian L | 2112 | ENG | 31b0 | 69w1 | 10b0 | -½ | 50w1 | 63w1 | 14b0 | 46w1 | 32b½ | 18w0 | 5,0 |
| 41 | | WILLSON Ollie | 2081 | ENG | 16w0 | 50b1 | 18b½ | 14w0 | 68b½ | 69w1 | 32b0 | 64w1 | 47w½ | 46b½ | 5,0 |
| 42 | | MILLER Dominic | 2061 | ENG | 29b1 | 77w0 | 69b1 | 32w0 | 52b1 | 10w0 | -½ | -½ | 35b1 | 14w0 | 5,0 |
| 43 | | COMELLAS BLANCHART Jordi | 2055 | ESP | 54b1 | 22w½ | 32b0 | 51w1 | 18b0 | 23w1 | 34w0 | 27b0 | 61w1 | 36b½ | 5,0 |
| 44 | | RATNESAN Ranesh | 2055 | ENG | -½ | -½ | 20b0 | 72w1 | 55b½ | 32w½ | 25b½ | 23w1 | 22b0 | 35w½ | 5,0 |
| 45 | | ARMSTRONG Malcolm J | 2052 | ENG | 55w½ | 47b0 | 70w0 | 75b1 | 71w½ | 53b1 | 33w1 | 13b½ | 27w0 | 37b½ | 5,0 |
| 46 | WFM | NORINKEVICIUTE Rasa | 2028 | LTU | 85b+ | 23w0 | 54b0 | 65b0 | 73w½ | 76b1 | 72w1 | 40b0 | 63w1 | 41w½ | 5,0 |
| 47 | | BOSWELL Jacob Connor | 1858 | ENG | 59b½ | 45w1 | 38b½ | 18w½ | 16b0 | 19w½ | 23b0 | 67w1 | 41b½ | 39w½ | 5,0 |
| 48 | | BROWN Thomas | 2068 | WLS | -½ | 66w1 | 11b0 | 62w1 | 21b0 | 54w1 | 17b½ | 22w½ | 25b0 | 0 | 4,5 |
| 49 | | NETTLETON Charlie B | 2059 | ENG | 53w1 | 32w½ | 22b0 | 70b1 | 31w0 | 14w0 | 52b1 | 36b1 | 9w0 | 24b0 | 4,5 |
| 50 | AIM | FRYER David W | 1932 | ENG | 73b1 | 41w0 | 66b1 | 25w0 | 40b0 | 72w½ | 36b0 | 70w1 | 39b0 | 69w1 | 4,5 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|---------------------|------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|
| 51 | CM | ROYAL Shreyas | 1930 | ENG | 14w½ | 58b0 | 71w1 | 43b0 | 36w½ | 73b½ | 28w½ | 37b½ | 60w½ | 53b½ | 4,5 |
| 52 | CM | FAULKS Nick | 1917 | BER | 75b1 | 29w0 | 59b0 | 80w1 | 42w0 | 28b½ | 49w0 | 73b1 | 36w0 | 68b1 | 4,5 |
| 53 | | SALMONS Calum | 1905 | ENG | 49b0 | 73w0 | 74b1 | 33b0 | 66w1 | 45w0 | 79b1 | 58w1 | 19b0 | 51w½ | 4,5 |
| 54 | | CHAPMAN Matt | 1902 | ENG | 43w0 | 76b1 | 46w1 | 27b½ | 33w0 | 48b0 | 59b1 | 19w½ | 24w½ | 28b0 | 4,5 |
| 55 | | GRAHAM Cassie M | 1889 | ENG | 45b½ | 59w½ | 62b½ | -½ | 44w½ | 25w½ | 19b½ | 29w½ | 26b0 | 61b½ | 4,5 |
| 56 | | GU In Jung | 1794 | KOR | 68b0 | 84b+ | 61w1 | 26w0 | 58b½ | 29w1 | 35b1 | 8w0 | 17b0 | 23w0 | 4,5 |
| 57 | IM | SARKAR Justin | 2332 | USA | 80b1 | 7w½ | 17b0 | 29w1 | 22b½ | 26w½ | 15w½ | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4,0 |
| 58 | | RAYNER Francis | 2048 | WLS | 64b½ | 51w1 | 25b0 | 23w½ | 56w½ | 33b½ | 22w0 | 53b0 | 71w½ | 63b½ | 4,0 |
| 59 | | BARTON R Alan | 2037 | ENG | 47w½ | 55b½ | 52w1 | 22w0 | 65b½ | 24b0 | 54w0 | 72b½ | 64b0 | 79w1 | 4,0 |
| 60 | | HEINSOHN Michael | 1961 | GER | 71w1 | 18w0 | 72b1 | 24b0 | 19w0 | -½ | 65b1 | 25w0 | 51b½ | 0 | 4,0 |
| 61 | | BYRN Carsten | 1959 | DEN | 72b1 | 35w0 | 56b0 | 66w1 | 23b0 | 64w0 | 71b1 | 39w½ | 43b0 | 55w½ | 4,0 |
| 62 | | SPANTON Tim R | 1954 | ENG | 74w1 | 34b0 | 55w½ | 48b0 | 70w1 | 35b0 | 73w1 | 33b0 | 28w0 | 29w½ | 4,0 |
| 63 | | FOWLER David | 1929 | SCO | 76w1 | 39b0 | 73w1 | 35b½ | 37w0 | 40b0 | 29b0 | 65w1 | 46b0 | 58w½ | 4,0 |
| 64 | | RUANE Brendan J | 1870 | ENG | 58w½ | 30b0 | 75w1 | -½ | 29b0 | 61b1 | 38w0 | 41b0 | 59w1 | 33b0 | 4,0 |
| 65 | | WILSON Matthew R | 1807 | ENG | 20b0 | 80w1 | 68b0 | 46w1 | 59w½ | 38b0 | 60w0 | 63b0 | 79b½ | 73w1 | 4,0 |
| 66 | | KEARSLEY Raymond J | 1579 | ENG | 84w1 | 48b0 | 50w0 | 61b0 | 53b0 | 79w1 | 69b0 | 74w½ | 76b½ | 80w1 | 4,0 |
| 67 | | TREVELYAN John | 1996 | WLS | -½ | 70w1 | 26b0 | 36b1 | 27w½ | 16w0 | 18b0 | 47b0 | 72w½ | 0 | 3,5 |
| 68 | AIM | LARSEN Andreas | 1933 | NOR | 56w1 | 36b0 | 65w1 | 34b0 | 41w½ | 27b0 | 75b1 | 35w0 | 23b0 | 52w0 | 3,5 |
| 69 | FM | SONG Jinwoo | 1907 | KOR | 79w1 | 40b0 | 42w0 | 73b½ | 30w½ | 41b0 | 66w1 | 28b½ | 37w0 | 50b0 | 3,5 |
| 70 | | RAHULAN Thivyaa | 1814 | ENG | 30w½ | 67b0 | 45b1 | 49w0 | 62b0 | 36w0 | 76w1 | 50b0 | 80w1 | 0 | 3,5 |
| 71 | | CARULLA PONS Carlos | 1811 | ESP | 60b0 | 75w½ | 51b0 | 76w1 | 45b½ | 30b0 | 61w0 | 79w1 | 58b½ | 0 | 3,5 |
| 72 | | METCALFE Charlie P | 1797 | ENG | 61w0 | 74b1 | 60w0 | 44b0 | 80w1 | 50b½ | 46b0 | 59w½ | 67b½ | 0 | 3,5 |
| 73 | | BUTT Laurence | 1635 | ENG | 50w0 | 53b1 | 63b0 | 69w½ | 46b½ | 51w½ | 62b0 | 52w0 | 74b1 | 65b0 | 3,5 |
| 74 | | WITT Holger | 1567 | GER | 62b0 | 72w0 | 53w0 | 79b½ | 75w0 | 82b½ | 80w1 | 66b½ | 73w0 | 76b1 | 3,5 |
| 75 | | KOLANI Arjun | 1533 | ENG | 52w0 | 71b½ | 64b0 | 45w0 | 74b1 | 80b1 | 68w0 | -½ | -½ | 0 | 3,5 |
| 76 | | STOYANOV Boris | 1594 | ENG | 63b0 | 54w0 | 81b½ | 71b0 | 79w1 | 46w0 | 70b0 | 80b1 | 66w½ | 74w0 | 3,0 |
| 77 | GM | WILLIAMS Simon K | 2472 | ENG | 17w0 | 42b1 | 37w1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2,0 |
| 78 | | BOARDMAN Jeffrey | 2005 | NZL | 0 | 79b1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,0 |
| 79 | | PARK Sijoon | 1203 | KOR | 69b0 | 78w0 | 80b0 | 74w½ | 76b0 | 66b0 | 53w0 | 71b0 | 65w½ | 59b0 | 1,0 |
| 80 | | CHOI Shinwoo | 0 | KOR | 57w0 | 65b0 | 79w1 | 52b0 | 72b0 | 75w0 | 74b0 | 76w0 | 70b0 | 66b0 | 1,0 |
| 81 | | CLOAD Adrian | 0 | ENG | 0 | 0 | 76w½ | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0,5 |
| 82 | | RATNESAN Rajeiv | 1629 | ENG | 0 | 0 | 0 | 39b0 | 0 | 74w½ | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0,5 |
| 83 | FM | BATERDENE Tsogbayar | 2247 | MGL | 7b- | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0,0 |
| 84 | | ROGACEWICZ Mikolaj | 1925 | POL | 66b0 | 56w- | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0,0 |
| 85 | | MAFANYA Kulasande | 1829 | RSA | 46w- | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0,0 |
| 86 | | RUSH Steven J | 1456 | ENG | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 18b0 | 0 | 0 | 0,0 |

1= GM Oleg KORNEEV (ESP); GM Sarunas SULSKIS (LTU); GM Daniel GORMALLY (ENG); IM Martin PETROV (BUL); GM Alexander CHERNIAEV (RUS) 7/9

7= GM Jonathan HAWKINS (ENG); IM Gudmundur (KJARTANSSON (ISL); IM Vladimir PETROV (BUL); FM Adam TAYLOR (ENG) 6.5

The highest placed female player prize went to WFM Rasa Norinkeviciute (LTU) with 5/9

Prize for highest placed non-GM or IM went to Conor Murphy with 7 points

Rating performance prizes went to —

Over 65 Raymond Kearsley 0.440; Under 18 Jacob Boswell 3.08; Best Performance PU Midhun 3.26

Conor Murphy achieved an IM Norm and won £100

The Best Game Prize, presented by Trustees of Hornty Park Sports Complex, went to Jonah Willow for his Round 1 game against Simon Williams. The Prize for Best Performance by a local player, presented by Maureen Charlesworth, Hastings Committee member, was won by Mason Woodhams of Hastings Chess Club.

The prizegiving was preceded by an informal reception hosted by Horntye Park Trustees, and attended by Cllr. Nigel Sinden, Mayor of Hastings, and Mr. Wayne Bradshaw, Marketing Manager of Tradewise Insurance Company.

Our thanks go to the sponsors – Tradewise Insurance Company and Hastings Borough Council – and the John Robinson Youth Chess Trust and the Friends of Chess, as well as support from White Rock and Lansdowne Hotels and KC Computers.

Numbers overall were the same as last year and the numbers of juniors in the Masters was up on last year.



[pictures top to bottom, left to right --- The Horntye Sports Centre; the playing hall; Alex Chernaiev; Martin Petrov; Sarunas Sulskis; Oleg Korneev; Danny Gormally; Conor Murphy]

World Federation of Chess Composition

Brian Stephenson reports from Macedonia

I was pleased, at the beginning of September, to fly to Ohrid in North Macedonia for the annual meeting of the World Federation of Chess Composition, this year as the British delegate.

Ohrid is a lakeside resort, and, at that time of year, near the end of its tourist season. The hotel was good, the food was OK and so was the weather. The only downside was the tedious nature of the travelling there and back, as is normal these days with air-travel.

The Macedonian organisation was competent and just about everything went very well, including the World Chess Solving Championship, well-directed by local man Ivan Denkovski. The British team was John Nunn, Jonathan Mestel (both veterans of the British team), and newcomer to the event David Hodge, a last-minute replacement for Colin McNab, who had had to withdraw because of illness. Our travelling reserve was Michael McDowell, another of our most experienced international solvers. John Nunn promptly won the Open Solving event that precedes the main championship, scoring 46.5/60, a full point ahead of the runner-up, Arno Zude of Germany. Other British scores in this were Mestel 35.25, Hodge 26.5 and McDowell 25.75. You can tell from the lowish scores that Denkovski had set a difficult set of problems.

The World Championship itself was run over the next couple of days. The team championship was won by Poland (151.5/180), just ahead of Russia (151.25), with Great Britain coming in third place with 144.75. Piotr Murdzia of Poland once again won the individual championship (76.5/90), with Kaspar Piorun (also Poland) second with 75 and Tomas Peitl (Slovakia) third with 74.5. Again, Denkovski had selected a difficult set of problems.

Of the British solvers, Nunn came 6th with 71.5, Mestel 11th with 68.75, Hodge 23rd with 61 and McDowell 49th on 51. The Seniors' title was won by John Nunn, ahead of Tadashi Wakashima (Japan) and Jonathan Mestel.

So, all-in-all, it was a very good week for British solvers, especially noteworthy being the fine performance turned in by first-timer David Hodge. The British team solvers all scored full marks in the studies round. Here is one of those studies, jointly composed by a well-known composing partnership from late last century.

Georgy Afanasiev & Evgeny Dvizov | Problem, 1969



White to play and draw

Material down and with his rook under threat, White has no choice.

1 c4+ ♖xa4 2 cxd5 ♜b6+

If 2...♙g4 or 2...♙h3 White can reach a drawn position after 3 ♜d8 ♜c5 4 c8♞ ♙xc8 5 ♜xc8 ♜b5 6 ♜c7. 3 ♜b7 ♜xd5 4 f5!

Part of the plan to decoy the black bishop to the long diagonal.

4...♙xf5 This allows the fork and then the promotion, but 4...♙d7 leads to a draw after 5 e4 ♜c3 (5...♜xc7? 6 ♜xc7 even wins for White) 6 ♜xa6 ♜xe4 7 f6 ♜d6 8 ♙a7 ♜b4 9 ♜b8 ♜c5 10 f7.

5 e4 ♙xe4 6 c8♞! ♜e7+ What else?

7 ♜xa6 ♜xc8

Again, what else? But this is stalemate.

A well-constructed study. All the pieces in the diagram position, except the black pawn on a6, have moved and the final position is an ideal stalemate in which every piece on the board plays a part and each square around the white king is guarded only once.

Junior Tournaments 2018

World Schools 2018 – Durres, Albania



The England team in Albania

Our 8 strong England team together with 3 coaches have arrived safely in Durrës, Albania for the World School Chess Championship 2018. The team consists of Max Miller, Adam Hussein, Georgia Headlong, Denis Dupuis and Nadhmi Auchy (pictured below), Kavin Thooran, Siena Gurjar and Sohum Lohia. The next hurdle was the arrival of luggage – some of which had an extra unaccompanied journey in Vienna – but it finally arrived at 2.00am (phew)!

Our coaches GM Glenn Flear, GM Jonathan Hawkins and FM Adam Taylor presented the players with their official England shirts, hoodies and silver badges in time for the team photo!

Round 1

Morning coaching sessions took place with our team of coaches. All the players wore their England attire for the team meeting. Following the opening ceremony, the players, coaches and parents set off for the first round. Luckily, David Miller came well prepared with some playing cards and kept the parents entertained with magic tricks and card games.

The first player to come out was Denis Dupuis who won very quickly due to his opponent's unorthodox antics failing against him. Well done Denis! Denis was closely followed by wins from Nadhmi Auchy and Adam Hussain. Siena Gurjar also won a long game, followed by a draw from Sohum Lohia. What seemed like hours later, Georgia Headlong finished her game with yet another win. What stamina Georgia – well done!

The England Team of 8 achieved 5 wins, 1 draw and 2 losses – excellent playing from everyone and a great start for England. Every single player went away feeling proud of their game and rightly so. The evening finished with an impromptu team dinner under the stars!

Round 2

Before setting off today, Adam and Nadhmi had a training game using the large outdoor chess set! The

team all left the hotel together providing each other with last minute encouragement.

The players left the playing hall in high spirits today after a great performance from all – with a team score of 5/8! Wins from Gavin, Denis, Sohum, Max and Nadhmi – well done to everyone for their efforts today.

As usual, the parents played rummy whilst waiting for the children – parents can be competitive too!

Round 3

Round 3 was a tough day for the England Junior Team. Nevertheless, each and every game was hard fought – most of the games lasted in excess of 3 hours. Wins for Sohum and Georgia today and a draw for Adam. Parents were completely banned from the playing hall today so no photos sadly – apart from, of course, our travelling magician David Miller who kept us parents and coaches occupied during the long wait for the players to finish. The evening finished with a team dinner at a local restaurant – it was unanimously agreed to stick to the tried and tested hotel buffet in future!

Round 4

Another tough day for the England Junior Team – some very long games from the whole contingent and some hard-fought battles. Wins from Denis, Max and Adam and a draw from Nadhmi. The parents and coaches kept themselves occupied with magic tricks and card games – much to the envy of the other delegations! Fingers crossed for tomorrow!

Round 5

A day of drawing for the England Junior Team today! A quick win for Gavin followed by 4 draws from Denis, Georgia, Sohum and Nadhmi – against tough opposition! Sohum and Georgia's game lasted near 3 hours while Nadhmi and Denis were in for 4 hours. Nadhmi had the chance to promote a passed pawn in the end game but so did his opponent, leading to a draw with no mating options. Denis mostly outplayed his opponent and was up in material, but a complicated end game ensued and eventually a draw was agreed. The evening was spent relaxing and playing games (not chess!) against delegations from across the globe.

Round 6

An incredibly tough day for England – only another quick win for Gavin! Nonetheless, each and every game was strongly-fought and no one left the battle ground without a full and proper fight. The team are in good spirits and fully aware that they are playing some of the strongest players around the world. Keeping fingers crossed for tomorrow!

Round 7

A successful day for the England Junior Team today – 5/8! Siena had a good game and fought off any untoward threats, leading to a victory. Georgia thought that she was claiming three-fold repetition the correct way, but the arbiter didn't agree – Georgia went on to win the game! Gavin played his longest game so far and went on to be successful. Coach Adam C Taylor was all smiles! Nadhmi and Adam played another great game against strong opposition leading to a couple more points for England!

Round 8

Round 8 saw some good results for the England team – wins from Gavin, Sohum and Max and draws from Denis and Georgia. Gavin followed through his preparation well leading to victory. Sohum won quickly and Denis and Georgia fought long and hard leading to draws for them. Max played a great game resulting in another success for him – well done Max!

Round 9

Round 9 was the final round of the tournament. Nadhmi traded pieces to an equal endgame with each having a Bishop, a Knight and 6 pawns. Ultimately it came down to Nadhmi's superior pawn structure, enabling him to trade off the remaining pieces and queening. Denis played his longest ever game of over 6 hours and after a rollercoaster game, he settled for a draw. Max and Siena played well and won their games. The final scores for the England Players are as follows: Gavin Thooran 5/9 (U9 Boys), Nadhmi Auchu 5/9 (U11 Boys), Denis Dupuis 4.5/9 (U9 Boys), Siena Gurjar 4/9 (U9 Girls), Adam Hussein 4/9 (U13 Boys), Georgia Headlong 4/9 (U13 Girls), Max Miller 4/9 (U15 Boys) and Sohum Lohia 4/9 (U9 Boys). Well done to all for excellent scores against top players from across the globe!

The day finished with water games and pedal-boating and to close the evening off, a blindfold simul by Coach Adam C Taylor.

Thanks, on behalf of all the parents, to our fantastic coaches GM Glenn Flear, GM Jonathan Hawkins and FM Adam C Taylor and also to our Head of Delegation, Rejean Dupuis, and all the staff at the ECF who supported the team so well both before and during the event.

[Meet the Team - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/Juniors/world-schools-chess-championships-2018-albania/>]

--- Rejean Dupuis

European Schools 2018 – Krakow, Poland



Day 1 / Round 1 / 30th June

The England delegation arrived at the ESCC 2018 in Krakow full of enthusiasm and after a few initial teething issues, settled quickly at the venue and the surroundings. We were greeted by an enjoyable cultural performance at the opening ceremony which was held at the Krakow Opera House.

The playing hall is within the Hotel itself and, whilst a little cosy, is

adequate to accommodate the approximately 300 players. England has representatives in nearly all of the sections and is one of the larger delegations here. The first round is usually full of nerves for players and it was evident, mostly for the young players who are playing an international event for first time.

For England, the first round brought 12.5 points from 18 (69%). Most of the results looked as expected based on the ratings of the player. There were some quick exits in round 1 as a couple of our players won by default. Based on the feedback given by the coaches there was some good quality chess played and as the tournament progresses, we might expect even higher quality chess.

Coaches were seen busy in our dedicated coaching room in the morning as the pairings were drawn late. Post-game analysis continued till late with some animated examination of some games, as there was a lot to be said about the moves played and not played. There were some live boards too for England players and the parents and coaches alike were seen glued to this live broadcast

Day 2 / Round 2 / 1st July

The second round found nine England players on Live boards, which meant tough matches against players standing amongst the first ten in the standings. Games were therefore longer today, the fastest exits were 1hr into the round and some players were late to dinner due to long games. Overall today, was a tough day, as the majority of games were played against players of relatively higher strengths. Today had wins for Nadhmi, Henry, Lukas, Armaan, Edward, Daniel V and Lavanya and draws for Aarnavh and Laura. Therefore, we have three players on 2/2- Lavanya, Nadhmi and Armaan. This meant our score in round two was 8/18.

Day 3 / Round 3 / 2nd July

Round 3 had the calmest atmosphere so far. While the players were settling into their chairs and straightening their pieces, the hall looked in order and there was a certain calmness that could be felt. Once the games, started our live boards became a source of interest for most of the parents and coaches, but for some parents, the ordeal of having to watch each move was too much, although it's not easy to stay away even if it is painful – watching the mistakes and then thinking about the pain that their child is going to go through is a huge torment. However, this is the occupational hazard of an accompanying parent, and our sympathies are with them.

While the players were figuring out the optimum placement of their pieces in the hall, parents were

seen busy arranging activities for the free day on Wednesday.

Back to chess – the games on the top boards were hard fought. The pendulum swung both ways at times, but in the end, the results were not wholly in our favour.

We had four wins from players on the white side of board — Kian Dharmasena; Oliver Howell; Jessica Mellor; Anum Sheikh

There were four draws split on each colour — Benjamin Aubury; Lukas Orgler; Daniel Varney; Laura Davidson

A bye for Ethan Gardiner made the overall score 7/18. Tomorrow is a double rounder and therefore there will be a change in coaching schedule – participants will be doing late and early morning sessions, if not taking a rest for the tough day ahead. Let us hope tomorrow is a better day!

Day 4 / Rounds 4 & 5 / 3rd July

Tuesday was a busy day at the Galaxy Hotel, Krakow. There were some early breakfasts and coaching sessions as the round was starting at 09:30 local time. There will be similar early rounds on Friday and Sunday. In the Girls U15 section however, our player Laura was content to have only one round for the day. There are only 12 players in this section, and hence only 7 rounds will be played (other sections play 9 rounds).

Round 4 started at the designated hour, and players went about their business as usual. By now the leaders and the top half of the results table has begun to become apparent. There were some interesting games today for England players, and the live boards looked quite promising at the start. In one of the games there was a beautiful Queen lift (I had seen Rook lifts earlier) on the Black side of a Dragon and the opponent was taken completely by surprise. However, after stiff resistance by the opponent and a very long game the points were split. This game was the last to end in the hall.

Overall, we had wins from Sohum Lohia; Ethan Gardiner; Aarnavh Trivedi; Benjamin Aubury; Gavith Dharmasena; Edward Gray; Daniel Varney; and draws from Nadhmi Auchy; Henry Huang; Armaan Gogia; Jessica Mellor; Lavanya Maladkar; Laura Davidson; and the Round 4 score was 10/18.

Round 5 started soon after, and once again there was not much preparation time. There were some long games played and the last ones to come out were Lavanya and Nadhmi.

The wins were — Sohum Lohia; Nadhmi Auchy; Kian Dharmasena; Aarnavh Trivedi; Gavith Dharmasena; Jessica Mellor; Lavanya Maladkar; and the draws were — Daniel Chen; Henry Huang; Lukas Orgler; Edward Gray; Oliver Howell; Anum Sheikh.

The overall score – 10/17 (Laura played Round 4 while others played Round 5)

Day 6 / Round 6 / 5th July

The rest day was well spent by the entire delegation – while some did a nice tour of the old city by coach (arranged by the organisers in the morning), others had an outing for dinner. The tour of the old city was mesmerising. Krakow is the second largest and one of the oldest cities in Poland. The young players were entranced by the historic sites. Some of the delegation sat indoors, conserving their energy for the final sprint in the tournament. There is a river running past the venue, the Vistula, and some parents enjoyed walks on its banks.

Round six started in the afternoon at 15:30 local time. A Polish chess shop set up outside the tournament hall this time, showcasing some nice sets, books and stationery. Coming back from the rest day, the players had ample time to regain some composure, do some preparation and recharge their batteries.

Games were again long fought. By the middle of the tournament, players of similar strengths tend to face each other across the board. There were some beautiful games played on live boards – this included our Under 11 girl player Jessica, who is now on top board (along with Lavanya) for the next round. Another nice win came from Ethan in the Open U11 section.

Overall, we had six wins – Daniel Chen; Ethan Gardiner; Henry Huang; Oliver Howell; Jessica Mellor; Lavanya Maladkar – and four draws – Sohum Lohia; Lukas Orgler; Armaan Gogia; Edward Gray.

Current leaders (scores) are Jessica Mellor and Lavanya Maladkar on 4.5/6. Round six score was 8/17 (Laura plays R6 today)

Round seven is a morning round, and will pose a challenge to players, coaches and parents. There will be further rescheduling of sessions. There is a Blitz tournament in evening after R7 and a number of players have already signed up.

Day 7 / Round 7 / 6th July



Jessica Mellor

Round 7 was an early start day – 09:30 am – and our players started their games after coaching sessions early in the morning. It is not an easy thing to adjust to the early starts as you get less time to rest and even less time to prepare. However, the same can be said about our opponents, so it is just a test of who adjusts to the change quickest.

As the rounds go by, generally, the draw rates go up – this is because of the tiredness factor. Long chess games use all the players' energy. Any nine round tournament not only tests your chess skills but also your stamina. Chess is about out-thinking your opponent over 64 squares, but this means the brain

must have optimum conditions to do that. At this stage, several factors become decisive – stamina, diet, preparation, patience, creativity and imagination, emotional strength, how best to react to changing emotions of the game, the painful defeats, the misses, the ever-changing initiative.

It is said that chess is at its best when the brain and body are in perfect sync with each other. That means that physical fitness also plays a big role. Some great chess players have been known to go to great lengths to raise their physical fitness before important tournaments.

Coming back to our team, parents have been given excellent guidelines by the ECF Chess Academy touching on these aspects of the game.

In round 7, we had four nice wins from — Daniel Chen; Armaan Gogia; Edward Gray; Jessica Mellor — and seven draws from — Nadhmi Auchy; Kian Dharmasena; Aarnavh Trivedi; Benjamin Aubury; Henry Huang; Oliver Howell; Anum Sheikh. So round 7 came in as 7.5/17.

After round seven finished, organisers had scheduled a blitz at 16:30 local time, comprising 11 rounds with 3 minutes each + 2 seconds per move. It was an all-play-all event, and some of our players enjoyed playing in a lighter environment, while others were advised not to tire themselves by their coaches. In the first 6 rounds, a couple of our players played top boards with top seeds, but that could not last ...

Overall it was a busy and a long day at Krakow, with two more rounds remaining to be fought. We have a sole leader in the form of Jessica Mellor (above) who is now on 5.5/7. Let us hope all our players will work hard in the final sprint and keep focus ...

Day 8 / Round 8 / 7th July

Round eight started at the usual 15:30 local time at the Galaxy Hotel, Krakow. The players settled down in the hall for their penultimate games while parents and coaches were getting ready for the football game which was starting soon after, and the scene was set. Some parents and coaches chose to go shopping at the chess stall that has been set up just outside the hall. The word is that the Polish chess sets and clocks are cheaper, while at the same time better quality, than those at home.

Once the games started, the live boards generated a lot of interest for our delegation. Our lead scorer Jessica, in the Girls U11 section, played a splendid attacking game against the Sicilian. The pressure was on her higher-rated opponent from the opening, as the pawns lunged menacingly towards her King. Defending a position is always harder in chess than attacking, as the margin of error is small. With a couple of inaccurate defensive moves by her opponent, Jessica was on the verge of winning by the twelfth move. However, in chess you must win even a won-looking game – things can turn fast if a player misses an opportunity. Jessica was able to bring home the whole point in 67 moves, although there were some anxious moments for the audience looking at her live game, not least for her parents. Jessica is now on 6.5/8 and is playing the top board in the last round.

The rest of our England team also performed well today with 9 wins — Nadhmi Auchy; Daniel Chen; Kian Dharmasena; Ethan Gardiner; Benjamin Aubury; Gavith Dharmasena; Lukas Orgler; Jessica Mellor; Anum Sheikh — and 5 draws — Sohumi Lohia; Aarnavh Trivedi; Armaan Gogia; Edward Gray; Oliver Howell — and the overall score for round 8 was 11.5/17

Blitz

There was an all-play-all 11 round blitz tournament held after Round 7, with results grouped under 4 sections, which some of the English players played in. Out of 149 players, we had 8 children taking part. Highest placed in the Open section was Daniel Varney (7/11), finishing 10th and 19th overall; in

the U11 section Aarnavh (6/11) finishing 19th and 57th overall; our highest placed girl was Lavanya (6/11), who finished 15th in the open girls' section and 58th overall.

Day 9 / Round 9 / 8th July – and a Gold Medal for Jessica Mellor!

The final round was an early starter, and for our lead scorer, Jessica, in the U11 Girls section, the tournament has gone very well. After a bit of a slow start, she has increased in strength during the tournament, and her last couple of games have been splendid. She has completely outplayed higher rated players. Today she kept her good form and after a solid middlegame, transitioned into a completely winning endgame. The transition was abrupt as her opponent offered an exchange of minor pieces into a winning pawn and King endgame. Jess played it perfectly from there and made sure she got the full point needed for a Gold medal! She was undefeated for the last seven rounds of this tournament – a great achievement! SO — we have a Gold medallist in Jessica Mellor, our first since Sheila Dines in the U12s in 2004. A fantastic achievement – congratulations Jessica!

Other results were 7 more wins — Nadhmi Auchy; Aarnavh Trivedi; Gavith Dharmasena; Lukas Orgler; Daniel Varney; Lavanya Maladkar; Anum Sheikh — and 6 draws — Sohum Lohia; Kian Dharmasena; Ethan Gardiner; Benjamin Aubury; Henry Huang; Armaan Gogia – 11/17

We must congratulate all the players, who fought hard through the ups and downs of this nine-round tournament. Also, a big thank you should go to the parents and coaches, who supported the players throughout. This England Delegation had a harmonious time in Krakow – see you all back in England ... [Meet the Team - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/Juniors/european-schools-chess-championships-2018/>]

--- Riki Trivedi



Armaan Gogia prepares for his game in round 1 of the U15 boys v Piotr Kowal



Sohum Lohia v Philipp Klaska (GER) in round 3 of the U9 boys

Glorney Gilbert Cup 2018 - Glasgow, Scotland

Round 1 vs Wales

A great round 1 for England in Glasgow, Scotland where we won 16.5 out of a possible 20 points against Wales. There were some great debut games, and many thanks to Mike Forster for providing the technical analysis on the games. England won all 4 matches against Wales – including ---

- 6 – 0 win in the U12 Stokes
- 4.5 – 1.5 in the U14 Robinson
- 2.5 – 0.5 in the U18 women's Gilbert
- 3.5 – 1.5 in the U18 Glorney

Stokes summary

Edison Xu as black played well to get a strong attack going, and his opponent did well to survive. In the end he took advantage of a mistake in the endgame to achieve the win.

Abigail Weersing as white wore down her opponent in a closely contested game, eventually winning a piece for a pass pawn to seal the win.

Samuel Gilmore as black won a pawn early on and then faced a committal attack. Eventually white played a very risky sacrifice that proved to be insufficient and allowed Samuel to win

Henry Huang gradually built up positional pressure and found a winning tactical breakthrough on the queenside after his opponent defended passively.

Niamh Bridgeman played a careful defensive game as black facing an attack from her opponent.

Repulsing it to win material after an inaccuracy from white gave her a great opportunity.

Shivam Agrawal, in his debut performance for England, set up a powerful double fianchetto, won the exchange, consolidated his advantage via complete control of the centre before launching a winning attack against the black king.

Robinson summary

Ranesh Ratnesan accumulated a nice edge as black, and manoeuvred carefully keeping up the pressure until his opponent made a fatal error and had to resign.

Mikey Watson played solid chess to achieve an edge – cautiously reaching a draw after a long game.

Tristian See won in an epic performance.

Rajeiv Ratnesan played a superb positional game keeping a grip from start to finish with a convincing victory.

Alex Leslie as black developed a significant attack where white eventually crumbled under pressure.

Teddy Onslow used up a lot of time to establish a winning position, but was unfortunate to blunder in time pressure and lose.

Gilbert summary

Nadia Jaufarally did very well as black to resist an all or nothing kingside attack and was left with a winning position after the attack fell short.

Lucy Bennet-Stevens gradually constricted her opponent who became desperately short of moves with a king in the middle against a strong centre. Eventually, she broke through for a great victory.

Sarah Weersing neutralised her opponent's opening pressure setting up good diagonals for her bishop pair. Under increasing difficulties, white managed to hang on for a draw.

Glorney summary

Alfie Onslow won a nice game as black after entering a double rook and bishop endgame where he was able to collect a number of weak white pawns to reach a won position.

Matt Forster as white managed to evade some opening difficulties and emerged a pawn up in a rook and pawn ending, with all pawns on the same side.

George Harman did very well to draw after a long tactical exchange in the opening left him with Rook and Bishop for a Queen.

Avi Gogna as white had a nice space advantage out of the opening, but black managed to swap off to a safe endgame and drew.

Max Miller managed to win an interesting game with Queen versus two rooks, where he managed to get two passed pawns moving and converted the win.

Round 2 vs Netherlands

2018 saw the Dutch team return to the Glorney after a 20+ year absence. Having failed to reach the World Cup, Dutch leadership have apparently poured all their resources into fielding a strong chess team. They are the highest graded country in three of the four Glorney competitions. England knew we were in for four very tough matches. Our teams did well under the circumstances. Specifically ---

Our U18 women's Gilbert team drew 1.5 – 1.5 despite averaging 128 FIDE points less per player to maintain joint first with the Netherlands and the French.

Our U14 Robinson team drew 3-3 despite averaging 141 FIDE points less per player to be 1.5 points out of first place having played the top seed.

Our U12 Stokes team lost 2 – 4, and could have easily drawn the match, despite only being the favorite on 1 out of 6 boards. We are in third in this group, 1 point out of first.

Our Glorney team fought hard and played a number of close games, but eventually succumbed 0.5 – 4.5, which is understandable given our average FIDE grade was over 300 points less than

the Dutch. This team continues to lead Ireland and Wales in the competition, who have similar FIDE grades.

Rajeiv Ratnesan and Lucy Bennet-Stevens are still on 100% with several others still undefeated. Tomorrow we play a Scottish team much stronger than in recent years in the morning followed by a resurgent Irish team in the afternoon. There should be some interesting games.

In the Gilbert

Nadia Jaufarally achieved a balanced position from the opening, but then played for some risky complications which were unclear and eventually left her with a lost position.

Lucy Bennet-Stevens won cleanly over a much higher graded player after a nice tactical material gain in the middle game.

Sarah Weersing joined Lucy in defying the Fide rankings by fighting back from a tricky position and managing to draw via tactical means.

In the Robinson

Ranesh Ratnesan drew against a 2150 after his opponent played a very solid defensive line

Mikey Watson made an inaccuracy to end up material down out of the middle game, and his opponent played very well to stop any counterplay.

Tristian See as white faced a solid defence and after multiple exchanges a draw was the result. Great result as he was a 200+ point FIDE underdog.

Rajeiv Ratnesan as black managed to get to Rook and knight vs Rook and bishop in a position where the knight had a great outpost and with great endgame play won a pawn and eventually the game. The Ratnesan family is on 3.5 out of 4!

Alex Leslie lost in a complicated tactical melee.

Teddy Onslow played well to win a pawn out of the opening and went on to win carefully. Excellent win as an underdog!

In the Stokes

Edison Xu as white achieved an equal major piece ending, but an exchange that improved black's pawn structure was significant in allowing black to break through with a passed pawn.

Abigail Weersing was black and managed to generate some counterplay on an open file with some back-rank threats. Eventually she managed to draw a knight and pawn endgame. 1.5 from 2 for Abbey.

Samuel Gilmore was unfortunate to lose a pawn in the opening. He did manage to fight back to achieve some counterplay, but then over-pressed with a sacrifice that didn't quite work – eventually losing.

Henry Huang as black managed to turn around the position in the middlegame to reach an endgame 3 pawns up. The time pressure, however, was a deciding factor and the final result was a draw. 1.5 from 2 for Henry.

Niamh Bridgeman played well, pushing for a win most of the game – though an error towards the end allowed her opponent back in with a draw. 1.5 from 2 for Niamh.

Shivam Agrawal did well to recover from a position the exchange down and managed to pick up enough of his opponent's pawns to draw the game. Charlie Storey and Nate were sure this was going to be a loss. Well done Shivam! Also on 1.5 from 2.

In the Glorney

Alfie Onslow's opening transformed into an opposite coloured bishop endgame via a mass series of exchanges, and although a pawn down, he held it comfortably. Alfie remains undefeated on 1.5 from 2.

Matt Forster achieved equality from a complicated opening line but overpressed with a king side pawn advance and lost in the subsequent complications.

George Harman also succumbed after an accident in the opening involving a loose piece and a pin.

Avi Gogna was under pressure out of the opening, and eventually lost out to a king side attack against the weak white squares along the b1-h7 diagonal.

Max Miller achieved a promising position as white, but transformations in the pawn structure resulted in a winning kingside attack for black.

Round 3 vs Scotland

After a pleasant evening with most of the team going to the Delegates' buffet meal at the Ralston Golf Club, where we bonded as a team and chatted with some of the Scottish players, Tuesday morning was time to get down to some serious chess business as our young juniors took on their Scottish friends in round three. On paper, most of our teams were stronger going into the round, and many of the games went to form with a few surprises and interesting challenges thrown in. The overall results were to England's advantage with a match win for both the Stokes and the Robinson team, a draw for the Gilbert and a loss for the Glorney. The Robinson match was particularly impressive, as virtually every game was closely contested, with the English team pulling match after match out of the fire. England now leads the Robinson event by 0.5 with the Stokes (0.5) and Gilbert (1.0) teams running close seconds. Total round scores were ---

Robinson 5.5 – 0.5

Stokes 4.5 – 1.5

Gilbert 1.5 – 1.5

Glorney 1 – 4

In the Stokes

A good win for Edison with the black pieces. He was faced with an unexpected opening but managed to gain the advantage and his opponent struggled in the middle game to allow Edison to strengthen his position and win the game.

An eventful morning for Abbey (Weersing) who had an entire cup of coffee spilled down her neck and chest in a mishap at the cafeteria. Event staff were excellent, with no blistering occurring after some efficient first aid treatment. Abbey was allowed to start late 15 minutes late and briefly led, but as the adrenaline wore off, a few costly mistakes cost her the game.

Samuel was the very first game out of the tournament hall when his opponent unfortunately blundered two pieces to give him a quick, comfortable win.

A win for Henry after his opponent missed a tactic in the opening, which allowed him to go a rook up and calculate a clear win. Henry is on an impressive 2.5 out of 3.

A good win for Niamh. Playing black it was fairly equal out of the opening, however a tactical attack on the King allowed Niamh to win a pawn and set up a strong position to gain another pawn and find the winning endgame. Niamh is also on a fantastic 2.5 out of 3 highlighting the strength and depth of the English team.

A draw for Shivam. He had a slight advantage in the opening but spotted a complicated playing strategy from his opponent and decided to simplify the position to secure a certain draw. Shivam remains undefeated with a win and two draws.

In the Robinson

Ranesh won his game moving to 2.5 out of 3. The Scottish player had gained an advantage out of the opening and he was playing a consistent game to achieve a draw. However, Ranesh used his strength and experience to disrupt this plan and found a technical endgame to get the checkmate and win the point.

A win for Mikey who played a tactical game and got a positional advantage winning the exchange. His opponent played a good ongoing defensive strategy, but Mikey was able to convert his advantage into a full point.

Tristian played well out of the opening and won the exchange. He was then able to build on his position to get a piece advantage and eventually checkmate his opponent. Tristian is playing very well on 2.5 out of 3.

Rajeiv played a strong game throughout. He gained an advantage from the opening and then progressed to a comfortable win. Rajeiv remains on full points with 3/3.

Alex Leslie played a tactical game with a cautious opponent that lead to a closed in position and a drawn result.

Teddy had a positional advantage out of the opening and played very well under time pressure to grind out a well-deserved win. Teddy has bounced back from an early disappointment with two wins on the trot. Both Onslows are doing well with 2 out of 3.

In the Gilbert

Nadia played long and complicated game in this round. It remained in a fairly equal position from the opening and long into the middlegame. However, Nadia got into some difficult time pressures and her opponent was able to capitalise and win the game.

A draw for Lucy. Her position was better out of the opening, but then she lost positional advantage and the opponent defended tenaciously leading to a drawn position. Lucy is on a fantastic 2.5 out of 3
Sarah had finished her game in just under an hour. She played a strong opening and then gained a pawn and a piece through clear tactics to win the game in 19 moves. Sarah remains undefeated on 2 out of 3

In the Glorney

Alfie took on the newly-crowned Scottish open champion and played a very strong game to achieve a draw. He had a slightly better position in the middle game, as his opponent delayed castling, and he then exchanged into a rook endgame. Alfie had a pass A pawn and the opponent had an extra pawn on the king side which resulted in drawn game.

Matt played well throughout the game and calculated his moves to achieve a reasonably strong position in the middle game. However, increasing time trouble meant that his opponent was able to gain an advantage and win the point.

A draw for George. It was equal out of the opening and a stronger position in the middle game, going a pawn up. However, he then lost positional advantage and struggled with time pressure which meant that the players agreed a draw.

A challenging game for Avi who was equal out of the opening and was level until the 16th He then sacrificed a bishop for a knight, which resulted in being exposed to a strong King-side attack and the result going against him.

A challenging game for Max against an opponent with a Fide rating over 250 points higher. Max was equal out of the opening, but then struggled with the position to give his opponent an advantage that allowed him to take the point.

Overall a solid round of results for the England juniors with 12.5 out of a possible 20 points against an improved Scottish side. Well done to every one of the young players, they are all representing their country well and are enjoying the tournament. All is still to play for in the tournament ... after round three our teams are in good standings in the competition, with the Robinson, Gilbert and Stokes teams either leading or within one point of first place. Good luck to all in rounds 4 and 5, where we have strong opponents in Ireland and France to play against.

Round 4 vs Ireland

England fared very well against Ireland in round 4, capturing 12.5 of the 20 possible points. In particular, the Robinson and Gilbert teams did well winning 83% of the available points.

After round 4 ---

England are leading the U14 Robinson Cup with 18 points out of a possible 24 with the Netherlands 1 point behind

England are in second in the U18 Gilbert Cup with 8 points out of a possible 12. We trail the Netherlands by 1.5 points and lead France (our round 5 opponent) by a single point

England are a solid second in the U12 Stokes Cup with 16 points out of a possible 24. We trail the Netherlands by 2 points, and lead Ireland by 2.5 points. The Dutch own the tie break advantage, so we'll need maximum points in round 5 to have a chance

England are fifth in the Glorney, trailing Ireland by 4 and leading Wales by 3. The French team has been telling us and everyone who will listen that England don't stand a chance against them in round 5. Our team of underdogs begs to differ, and we are determined to continue exceeding expectations and to fight for every point in the final round

Total round 4 scores v Ireland were ---

Robinson – England won 5 – 1

Gilbert – England won 2.5 – 0.5

Stokes – England won 3.5 – 2.5
Glorney – Ireland won 1.5 – 3.5

In the Robinson

Ranesh Ratnesan won a good position out of the opening, which he maintained before his opponent blundered near the end to make the win easier. Ranesh moves to 3.5 out of 4 for the tournament.

Mikey Watson seized a small positional advantage through his Catalan opening, which he maintained throughout the game and converted into an excellent win to reach 2.5 from 4.

Tristian See was quoted as saying, “The opening was a mess, but after precise play, I was able to scrape a draw” from a complicated end-game where he was down at least one passed pawn. Team leadership had chalked this down as a loss, but Tristian rose to the challenge to secure a draw to reach 3 out of 4.

Rajeiv (rhymes with machine) Ratnesan moved to 4 out of 4 with another win. I didn’t catch up with Rajeiv regarding his game, but whatever he is doing has been working.

Alex had a positional game taking advantage of the doubled isolated pawns to win. Alex moves to 2.5 out of 4 with this win.

Teddy Onslow had a positional advantage in the opening, but he wasn’t sure how to best take advantage of the advantage. After exchanging a number of pieces, it was a drawn end-game

In the Gilbert

Nadia Jaufarally remained level with a slight positional advantage for much of her match, which she successfully converted into a win. It is the mark of a true champion to rebound with a win after a disappointing loss.

Lucy Bennet-Stevens jumped out to an early one pawn advantage, and was overheard saying, “She made a mistake on the opening, and I crushed her.” English women are tough! 3.5 from 4 games. Fantastic!

Sarah Weersing gifted her opponent a piece for a pawn on move 14, and had the team convinced it was all down to Lucy and Nadia to beat Ireland. However, she buckled down and fought back to earn a draw, thus preserving her undefeated record. (2.5 from 4)

In the Stokes

Edison Xu played solidly early before his opponent blundered a piece in the middlegame. From there Edison improved his record to 3 out of 4 with a convincing win.

Abigail Weersing’s long day concluded with a disappointing loss after gaining an early positional advantage. She is determined to follow her teammates examples and bounce back with a strong performance against the French.

Samuel Gilmore was outplayed in the opening and therefore couldn’t recover. Like Abigail, Samuel can’t wait for round 5 to bounce back.

Henry Huang drew his game from a leading position. With time running out, he opted for the draw, and secured the match for England with the final half point.

Niamh Bridgeman moved to 3.5 out of 4 with another drama-free win. After a level opening, Niamh won a pawn, and this tournament has proven that if you lose a pawn to Niamh ... you lose.

Shivam Agrawal defied his coach’s mid-game prediction that it was going to be a draw. His opponent did ask for the draw, but Shivam battled on for England and found the winning moves

In the Glorney

Alfie Onslow drew again on board one, as he didn’t have enough time to convert the stronger position. Alfie remains undefeated and joins his brother on 2.5 out of 4.

Matthew Forster won a tight game. Says Matt, “I was crushing, then was getting crushed, then swindled my way to a win.” Well done for earning the lone win for the Glorney team against Ireland and extending our lead against the Welsh.

George Harman fell behind, eventually losing on time as he tried to fight his way out of a dubious position.

Avi Gogna dominated the opening, but unfortunately lost his queen, leading to a loss.

Max Miller didn’t follow his intended line in the opening, putting him in an early hole, from which he couldn’t recover.

Overall a solid round of results for the England juniors and fantastic effort. Andrew Martin perhaps said it best when he addressed the team to say —

“I have been very impressed by our teams. The overall attitude is first-class, really good, stylish games are being played and we can aim to finish in a high position in the rankings. This strong showing is being backed up by our parents, coaches and our trusty head of delegation. We are a powerful squad. We now come to the last round and a big set of matches against the French. My advice is not to change a thing. Get stuck in, give 100% and cede nothing to the opponent. Don't back down from the challenge. If everyone goes in with that attitude, I am convinced we can win.”

Good luck to all in round 5, which starts at 9:30am on Wednesday, July 18th. Go England!

Round 5 vs France and summary – Nate Weersing (HOD)

England fought tremendously hard against the French, capturing 9 of the 20 possible points, but fell just short of knocking off our rival, and just short of two major trophies for the entire competition. Specifically, the U14 Robinson team finished joint first with the Netherlands on 21 out of 30, but lost on a tie break. The U12 Stokes team also finished with 21 out of 30, but fell a half point short of the Dutch for the title. The U-18 Women's Gilbert team finished in third place behind the Dutch and the French, and the U-18 Glorney team finished above the Welsh. The Glorney team had an undefeated player (Alfie Onslow) and everyone on the team contributed to our score. It was an honour to be part of our fine delegation.

Total round 5 scores v France were ---

Stokes: England dominated 5 – 1

Robinson: England drew with France 3 – 3

Gilbert: France won 3 – 0

Glorney: France won 4 – 1

Those interested in playing for England in 2019 when Ireland host the tournament should express their interest via the ECF website in late 2018.

In the Stokes

Edison Xu as white played against the Sicilian. It was a very tight and tough game, and the end it transferred into opposite coloured bishops, but with more active pieces, Edison managed to squeeze in a pawn and get the win, finishing with an excellent 4 out of 5 on board 1, which was the highest point total of our board 1s.

Abigail Weersing lost two pawns early on and fought back well to draw within one pawn, but couldn't complete the comeback, eventually losing.

Samuel got up an exchange relatively early and calmly avoided a number of swindles and traps to claim the win. This moved Samuel to 3 out of 5.

Henry Huang anticipated his opponents opening, with some excellent prep work done with Charlie Storey. Under pressure his opponent blundered, and Henry quickly finished her off to end the tournament on a fantastic 4 out of 5

Niamh Bridgeman finished with an incredible 4.5 out of 5. After analysing the game, Andrew Martin said, “If I didn't know the player, I would have wondered if Niamh somehow had access to a chess engine, as she played almost a perfect game. You deserve to wear the England shirt!” concluded Andrew to Niamh.

Shivam Agrawal won a piece for a pawn very early on, fought off the attempted swindles, and laid a sneaky trap for the checkmate. Shivam finished with a fantastic 4 out of 5

In the Robinson

Ranesh Ratnesan made a mistake in the opening, losing a pawn, which at that level is fatal. Ranesh finished with an impressive 3.5 out of 5.

Mikey Watson struggled in the opening, managed to equalise into a blitz ending under time pressure, and was able to secure the draw to finish on 3 out of 5.

Tristian See pulled out the game after a balanced opening. Tristian launched a king side attack, which

proved decisive. Tristian finished with a very impressive 4 out of 5.

Rajeiv Ratnesan's opponent played the game of his life and won. This loss left Rajeiv on a very impressive 4 out of 5.

Alex Leslie had a great attack, sacked an exchange on purpose for an attack, which ultimately didn't work. Alex found a perpetual check to pull out the draw. Well done to finish with 3 out of 5.

Teddy Onslow jumped out to an early lead, which he ultimately converted to a win. It is worth noting that he was the last English game playing, and about 20 Dutch players and coaches were hovering around his board, hoping he would falter. Well done Teddy finishing with 3.5 from 5.

In the Glorney

Alfie Onslow played the Tarrasch defense with an opposite coloured bishop middle game. Both sides had chances, but neither took full advantage and the game was ultimately a draw. Amazing achievement for Alfie to finish undefeated with 3 out of 5.

Matthew Forster's game was a Queen's gambit accepted. Matt had an attack and a chance for a win, but the winning move was missed, and his opponent subsequently managed to defend for a win.

George Harman was slightly better for much of the game, but lost a piece under time pressure leading to a loss.

Avi Gogna played a good sophisticated defensive system, but attacked a bit too early, resulting in a poor position and ultimately a loss.

Max Miller had the advantage at the start, but made a blunder under time pressure to go behind by an exchange. Max did very well to fight back and secure a draw

In the Gilbert

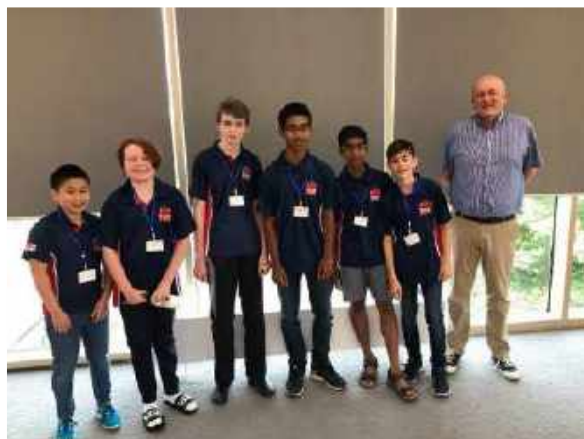
Nadia Jaufarally made a mistake in the middle game, losing the exchange, which ultimately proved decisive.

Lucy Bennet-Stevens had a very complicated middle game, which her opponent managed to break through and win material, and ultimately the game.

Sarah Weersing was slightly better out of the opening, but lost a pawn later, resulting in a lost endgame.

Overall a decent round of results for the England juniors and a fantastic effort. Many thanks to the parents, coaches, ECF support team and most importantly the players for outstanding effort and spirit. Let's hope to build on this successful year in 2019 in Ireland.

[pictures below and overleaf, top to bottom, left to right --- IM Andrew Martin and part of the England contingent; Sarah, Lucy and Nadia; the Stokes team ready for action; the girls shake hands with the Ireland team; Round 5 Stokes and Robinson; the team just prior to the last round; Robinsons top scorers from each country; Gilbert top scorers from each country; Glorney top scorers feat. Alfie Onslow; Niamh amongst the high scorers] [Meet the Team - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/Juniors/glorney-gilbert-cup-2018/>]





European Youth 2018 – Riga, Latvia

Round 1 report

It's always difficult to start Round 1 as pairings appears very late in the day with little time for preparation. With lunches being served at the venue, players are having to leave the hotel earlier for their games. England performance reasonably well scoring 12 points out of a possible 26 with Team Wells in the lead with 100% scoring points. Individually, we had some good performances and lots of determination from the England players. In the U10 Girls Section, Roxolana Chaban played a solid

active game against Iana Luca of Moldova on board 20 and mated her opponent's after 44 moves. The icing on the cake for Roxolana was to be broadcast live on the Europe Chess TV Channel when she was about to checkmate her opponent [below] ...



Elizaveta sadly lost her game after an intense 5 hours of head to head battle and missing a promising pawn sacrifice in the opening.

Denis Dupuis had a good draw against one of the top seeds (1838) from Serbia.

Alisha had a long 4.5 hours of tough play and was leading in the middle game. However, her opponent used a tactic to win a minor piece and outplayed her in the endgame. However, she is now more determined for the next round.

Round 2

England managed an overall score of 14.5 out of 27 (54%). We tried to take our first team photo, which as not an easy task at all, as we still managed to miss three players. We'll try for another one in the coming days. The missing ones were – Ruwan Dias, Savin Dias and Joseph Dalton.

Our highest scorers so far on 2 wins out of 2 are Akshaya Kalaiyalahan, Aditya Munshi, Nishchal Thatte and Roxolana Chaban.

In the Girls U10 section Roxolana, playing white, was facing Alexandra Sofieva from Finland on Board 17. She will now face Russian WCM Sofia Svergina in Round 3.

Team England is very fortunate to have the players in this delegation. Their attitude and determination are exemplary, and the future look really promising.

Jude had a great game showing very good tactical awareness and is one to watch for the future. Max also had a great game against an 1800 rated player.

Round 3

England managed an overall score of 13.5 out of 27 (50%) ... and second time lucky, we managed to get our 27 players together for a team photo ...



Nishchal is maintaining his top form and is now our only player on 3 out of 3. Today Akshaya had a hard-fought struggle on board one against the second seed in her tournament, the Russian Woman Grandmaster Alexandra Obolentseva. Playing some tough positional chess, she got her opponent in a bind. Of course, Obolentseva wasn't going to go down without a fight and broke free at the cost of a pawn. The situation was very tense as Akshaya had a winning move, which was very difficult to see. Short of time she settled for a draw by

perpetual check. A near miss but nonetheless an impressive game which keeps Akshaya near the top of the table.

Savin confidentially sacrificed a pawn and his opponent was unable to cope with his big lead in development. Savin soon got at the king! On the other hand, Denis sacrificed a pawn, but perhaps a little prematurely. He still had a chance to obtain enough compensation before losing his way while seeking an attack.

Nilomi obtained a good-looking middlegame where there were plenty of options to seek the initiative. Unfortunately, she chose one which weakened her own king and was punished with a timely piece sacrifice.

Aditya played a solid game with Black but was unable to obtain any real winning chances despite all his efforts.

Ruwan won his opponent's knight early on and later played a lovely combination which led to checkmate. Bobby created a deadly pin to win a knight, and he skilfully converted his advantage. Koby was involved in a long hard-fought and exciting battle with his opponent, with Koby finally coming out on top in the endgame.

Roxolana faced a tough challenge from last year's European U8 Champion Sofya Svergina of Russia. Roxolana, playing black, was in a fairly even position after the first 11 moves but then some imprecise moves allowed the Russian opponent to dominate the game and mate on move 43.

After a slow start, Alisha made a strong comeback in Round 3 against her Portuguese opponent. She managed to squeeze an advantage in the endgame to secure a win.

Round 4

It was a bad day at the office for the England delegation – we only managed to score 6 out of 26 (23%). However, I would have to give credit to all our players who are trying extremely hard. Most of the games lasted a very long time.

In terms of individual performances ... Aditya had difficulty handling a surprising opening choice and struggled to find a route to a comfortable game. His temporary pawn sacrifice turned out to be a permanent one and he couldn't save the endgame; Denis tried to catch his opponent's uncastled king out with a piece sacrifice, but it only led to a perpetual check; Despite trying very hard, Nilomi was unable to breakthrough her opponent's defences as the position was just too blocked and she had to accept that it was just drawn; Curiously there are two players called Jekaterina Smirnova, one from Estonia, the other from Latvia, playing in the Girls' Under 12 tournament. This made preparation a tad difficult. Nandinee exploited the Latvian Smirnova's imprecise opening play by grabbing a pawn at the expense of leaving her king in the centre. She seemed to be close to a win but the game fizzled out to a draw after her opponent succeeded in liquidating too many pawns.

Round 5

Today England were back with a vengeance, scoring a magnificent 17.5 out of 27 (65%). Some comments from our coaches.

Elizaveta outplayed Asif Zach of Israel step by step and won a model game in Botvinnik style. Her opponent became more helpless with every move after she lost control of the dark squares. Meanwhile Akshaya moved back into contention by steadily increasing the pressure on Anna Stashis. Her iron grip never relented and all the Belorussian's wriggling was in vain. Dmitrijs Jonins representing Latvia was content to set up a solid position as White, but this was expertly dismantled by Adam. In the end it was the aesthetically pleasing advance of the black king that clinched it for the England player. Luna Morote played an off-beat opening, but after overcoming her surprise it was Nandinee who took control with some bold and impressive moves. Having established her initiative, she then set a cunning trap and tried to look innocent until her Belgium opponent fell into it.

Aditya found it hard to make any early progress against a well-prepared opponent. However, when his adversary started making inroads on the queenside he created enough play on the other wing to earn a draw by perpetual check.

Nilomi was pressing strongly and even invaded her opponent's camp which perhaps brought her close to victory. However, her opponent's fine defensive play meant she had to be satisfied with a draw.

After a quiet opening, Savin's opponent rather optimistically sacrificed a piece for two pawns to open his king. There then followed a careful defensive display, where he gradually nullified his opponent's

initiative to obtain a winning endgame.

Denis took advantage of his opponent's oversight in the opening and won a piece. Then despite having a slightly passive game he gradually freed his position after which the extra material gave him a decisive advantage.

Round 6

After a well-deserved and much needed rest day, all our players were excited to tackle the remaining rounds. England score 13 points out of possible 25 as we had two England clashes. Overall, after Round 6, England has gained 48% of possible points.

U8 Open - Harry Zheng 3.5 | Ruwan Dias 2 | Max Bird 3.5 | Jude Shearsby 3.5

U8 Girls - Yashasvini Sreeram 4.0

U10 Open - Nishchal Thatte 4.0 | Dimitrios Levon Zakarian 4.0 | Denis Dupuis 2.0

Denis was poorly during the game and this led to a controversial decision. He was obliged by the officials to go to the medical room, but his clock was still running and when he returned he had lost on time (in a favourable position). A strange situation and quite a grey area in the rules. An appeal received a sympathetic hearing, but it's very rare that an arbiter is over-ruled in such situations. Dimitrios got a very comfortable position out of the opening, put pressure on the opponent's position until the latter cracked and blundered to a nice tactical blow.

U10 Girls - Keerthana Easwar 3.5 | Roxolana Chaban 3.0 | Tanvi Gatne 2.0

U12 Open - Savin Dias 3.0 | Adam Hussain 3.0

Adam scored his third win of the tournament in a hard-fought battle with Karl Mattias Kokk. The England player had fallen under a strong attack but keeping his cool he noticed a hidden tactical trick. The Estonian evaded the trap for a couple of moves, but then let down his guard, allowing Adam to strike a deadly blow. Savin had a complex position where he picked the wrong moment to play the thematic liberating move, which enabled his opponent to pounce.

U12 Girls - Nandinee Thatte 3.0 | Alisha Vyas 2.0

After a good opening from Alisha, in which her opponent had a slightly passive position, she managed to create a strong battery with the queen and the bishop, targeting the h7 square. This was followed up by the launch of the h-pawn, and Alisha managed to gain control of the h-file and won the game. Nandinee outplayed Lucie Fizerova with some elegant middlegame strategy to reach a promising bishop and pawn endgame, but the Czech player somehow survived.

U14 Open - Aditya Munshi 4.0 | Dhruv Easwar 2.5 | Robert Akeya-Price 1.0

Aditya had a complicated opening where his higher-rated opponent went on a unwise 'adventure course' with his queen, got it trapped, and had to shed material to put up any resistance. Aditya took his time but had no problems converting his advantage.

U14 Girls - Nadia Jaufarally 3.0 | Nilomi Desai 2.0 | Lavanya Maladkar 3.0

In the all-England battle, Nilomi was faced with a tricky gambit line, but coped well and emerged into the middlegame with both a material and positional advantage. Unfortunately, she allowed her opponent to bring her reserves into the fray a shade too easily and Nilomi was punished for her more vulnerable king.

U16 Open - Koby Kalavannan 3.5

U16 Girls - Ritika Maladkar 2.0

U18 Open - Joseph Dalton 1.5 | Elliot Cocks 2.0

U18 Girls - Akshaya Kalaiyalahan 4.0 | Elizaveta Sheremetyeva 1.5

Elizaveta likes to try offbeat openings. In this round she confused Elsa Hanten Blond (Luxembourg) with her original play. Both players had winning chances before a draw was finally agreed.

Akshaya had a tough Russian WFM opponent as Black. She gained the initiative after a neat sacrifice which couldn't be accepted. Unfortunately, Mariya Nosachenko was able to simplify and hold the endgame.

Round 7

Team England scored 11 points out of possible 27. We have got four players on 5 out of 7 with chances

of a podium finish and prizes going to the final rounds, namely — Yashasvini Sreeram (U8 Girls), Nischal Thatte (U10 Open), Aditya Munshi (U14 Open) and Akshaya Kalaiyalahan (U18 Girls).

U8 Open - Harry Zheng 3.5 | Ruwan Dias 3.0 | Max Bird 4.5 | Jude Shearsby 4.0

According to GM Peter Wells, Harry's game was one of the most sophisticated positional battles ever seen in the U8s. He defended very well for a time, but his opponent did very well to sustain the pressure and sadly this ultimately proved enough to net the full point.

Ruwan used a clever discovered attack tactic to win his opponent's rook early on, and finished the game by checkmating with his queen and two rooks.

Max continued his lead of Team D'Costa with a great finish to reach 4.5.

Jude Shearsby continued to impress with some great opening dynamism.

U8 Girls - Yashasvini Sreeram 5.0

A great win for Yashasvini by outplaying her opponent in the opening with great central space control. She then used a Pawn Storm to create a winning tactic and bring home a great point for England.

U10 Open - Nishchal Thatte 5.0 | Dimitrios Levon Zakarian 4.0 | Denis Dupuis 2.5

Nishchal neatly transposed into his preparation, but his Russian opponent played quickly and was clearly ready for the variation, which meant they reached an interesting balanced position with slight weaknesses on both sides. Nishchal then handled the manoeuvring phase with more purpose, and once he found the opportunity to attack directly, he broke through surprisingly quickly for an excellent win.

Denis ambitiously sacrificed a piece for long-term pressure and this led to his opponent having to go completely on the defensive throughout. It was a well-played game as his opponent carefully constructed a fortress, and despite Denis's best efforts a draw was all his could obtain.

U10 Girls - Keerthana Easwar 3.5 | Roxolana Chaban 3.5 | Tanvi Gatne 2.0

U12 Open - Savin Dias 4.0 | Adam Hussain 3.0

Savin kept control and nurtured a small positional edge into the endgame. Nevertheless, a draw felt like the most likely result, but an error from his opponent enabled Savin to decisively take the opposition in the king and pawn endgame.

Adam fought extremely hard but was unable to overcome his Georgian opponent.

U12 Girls - Nandinee Thatte 3.0 | Alisha Vyas 2.0

Alisha had a very tough game where key decisions at crucial moments cost her. Lesson learnt, she is now looking forward to Round 8.

Nandinee outplayed Lucie Fizerova with some elegant middlegame strategy to reach a promising bishop and pawn endgame, but the Czech player somehow survived.

U14 Open - Aditya Munshi 5.0 | Dhruv Easwar 2.5 | Robert Akeya-Price 1.0

Aditya understood the opening and middlegame better than his higher-rated opponent and was able to obtain good pressure without allowing any counterplay. It led to a surprisingly one-sided win for the high-flying Englishman.

Bobby is having a really unfortunate spell. He is working so hard but finding the fruit of his labours very hard to come by.

U14 Girls - Nadia Jaufarally 4.0 | Nilomi Desai 2.0 | Lavanya Maladkar 3.0

Nadia gave a glimpse of what she is capable of with a very precise display, in which, according to GM Peter Wells, even some grandmasters would have struggled to improve on any of her moves. She netted a pawn coming out of the opening and showed excellent technique in an ending with rooks and opposite coloured bishops, which simply afforded her opponent no chance to fight back at any stage. Nilomi's opponent handled the opening well and obtained good play. Although Nilomi carefully avoided any immediate problems she gradually slipped into a passive endgame, which proved to be too difficult to hold.

U16 Open - Koby Kalavannan 4.0

Koby was the final player to finish. He experienced an epic 95-move battle with his Lithuanian

opponent, and the players finally agreed to a draw in a position with kings and just one pawn remaining.

U16 Girls - Ritika Maladkar 2.0

U18 Open - Joseph Dalton 2.5 | Elliot Cocks 2.0

Joseph scored his first win with black in this tournament with another nice tactical end.

U18 Girls - Akshaya Kalaiyalahan 5.0 | Elizaveta Sheremetyeva 2.5

Elizaveta outplayed her Greek opponent with paradoxical moves such as Nh1! In the style of Nimzowitsch. She should have clinched the win with a general pawn advance, but instead loosened her grip by attacking only with her pieces. Still all's well that ends well as the attack was too much for Magdalini Louka to handle in time pressure.

Akshaya moved to 4th in her tournament by beating Elizabeta Limanoska. She gradually wore down the Latvian's resistance until facing mate or heavy loss of material she had no choice but to resign. A classy positional win.

Round 8

Team England scored 12 points out of possible 27. Going to the last rounds, we only have three players who are possible prize winners, namely Yashasvini Sreeram (U8 Girls), Nischal Thatte (U10 Open) and Akshaya Kalaiyalahan (U18 Girls). They will play on live boards in Round 9 and can be followed via the Chess24 website from 9.15 am

U8 Open - Harry Zheng 4.5 | Ruwan Dias 3.0 | Max Bird 4.5 | Jude Shearsby 4.0

U8 Girls - Yashasvini Sreeram 5.5

Yashasvini showed great determination in her game. After going a piece down early in the game, she never gave up and fought right till the end and manage to secure a draw. A great score for her first participation for England, she is definitely going to be one to watch for the future.

U10 Open - Nishchal Thatte 6.0 | Dimitrios Levon Zakarian 5.0 | Denis Dupuis 3.0

Nishchal has made this competition look quite easy at times as he always has a smile on his face. He works really hard both before and after his games.

Dimitrios is also a very nice lad with a great attitude and a willingness to work hard.

Having been unwell during the tournament, Denis has showed a brave character and determination. I have no doubt that great things will happen from these boys in the future.

U10 Girls - Keerthana Easwar 3.5 | Roxolana Chaban 3.5 | Tanvi Gatne 2.5

U12 Open - Savin Dias 4.0 | Adam Hussain 4.0

Adam had another fierce battle against Bartolo Filipe Diogo Correia of Portugal. Both players thought that they were winning, but the England player had calculated further and finished the game with a mating attack.

U12 Girls - Nandinee Thatte 3.0 | Alisha Vyas 2.5

U14 Open - Aditya Munshi 5.0 | Dhruv Easwar 2.5 | Robert Akeya-Price 2.0

Aditya is potentially a future England Grandmaster. He was unlucky in his game and has narrowly missed out on a prize.

Bobby seized the initiative early on, opened up the position with pawn exchanges and overwhelmed his opponent's king.

U14 Girls - Nadia Jaufarally 4.0 | Nilomi Desai 3.0 | Lavanya Maladkar 3.0

Being among the youngest her category, Lavanya showed great spirits in her games and will certainly be rewarded for her efforts one day.

U16 Open - Koby Kalavannan 5.0

Koby exploited a tactical mistake to win a rook for a knight and smoothly converted his advantage.

U16 Girls - Ritika Maladkar 3.0

Ritika started her game with a clear opening plan and implemented the sharp Grünfeld line against her higher rated player. In less than 20 moves her opponent resigned after she was incarcerated in a tactical net.

U18 Open - Joseph Dalton 2.5 | Elliot Cocks 2.0

Both Joseph and Elliot epitomise the 'never give up' attitude. Together with Koby, they've been very good role models for the younger players.

U18 Girls - Akshaya Kalaiyalahan 6.0 | Elizaveta Sheremetyeva 2.5

Akshaya faced WFM Maria Palma on one of the top boards. She resisted her opponent's pressure and then exploited a serious oversight by the Italian to move further up the rankings.

Round 9

Team England scored 12 points out of possible 27.

U8 Open - Harry Zheng 5.5 | Ruwan Dias 3.0 | Max Bird 5.5 | Jude Shearsby 4.0**U8 Girls** - Yashasvini Sreeram 5.5**U10 Open** - Nishchal Thatte 6.0 | Dimitrios Levon Zakarian 5.5 | Denis Dupuis 4.0

Denis improved on one of his earlier games, after which his opponent reacted badly seeking to grab a hot pawn. Denis calculated a sharp line, quickly won material and then mated his opponent in an elegant fashion.

U10 Girls - Keerthana Easwar 4.5 | Roxolana Chaban 3.5 | Tanvi Gatne 3.0**U12 Open** - Savin Dias 4.5 | Adam Hussain 5.0

Savin drew after making a positional exchange sacrifice for a bind. He kept the grip, but couldn't use it to make any progress, so a draw resulted.

Adam again showed he is tactically alert and cool-headed in even the wildest positions. He seemed to be on the back foot against Lazar Davidov (Serbia) but found the tactical flaw in his opponent's play. He finished the tournament strongly to end above 50%.

U12 Girls - Nandinee Thatte 4.0 | Alisha Vyas 3.0

Nandinee played an enterprising opening which involved advancing her kingside pawns whilst leaving her king in the centre – for one move too long as it turned out. She had to defend resolutely after dropping a pawn, but this was enough to outwit Evelina Tokranova (Latvia) who blundered a piece. Slowly but surely Nandinee wrapped things up.

U14 Open - Aditya Munshi 5.5 | Dhruv Easwar 3.0 | Robert Akeya-Price 3.0

Aditya equalized comfortably and then tried to grind away against his higher-rated opponent, but the position was too solid, and he had to accept a draw.

Dhruv and Bobby had some tough opponents and tried their best until the very last handshake.

U14 Girls - Nadia Jaufarally 5.0 | Nilomi Desai 3.5 | Lavanya Maladkar 3.5

Nadia had a mixed tournament where she expected a better performance. She has refused to enter the playing area for the top board players until she earned the right to enter and also will not hold Akshaya's trophy until she holds her own one day. She has worked really hard and the experience has been invaluable.

Nilomi had a pleasant advantage, but she was frustrated by her opponent who was able to exchange off most of the pieces and batten down the hatches to save the game.

U16 Open - Koby Kalavannan 5.0**U16 Girls** - Ritika Maladkar 3.0**U18 Open** - Joseph Dalton 3.5 | Elliot Cocks 2.0**U18 Girls** - Akshaya Kalaiyalahan 7.0 | Elizaveta Sheremetyeva 3.5

Looking for a place in the top three, Akshaya maintained a slight but enduring advantage from the opening against Maria Palma – the perfect strategy for a decisive last round game. The Italian wilted under the pressure allowing the England player to break through and win material. Akshaya thus finished on 7/9, equal second with one other player, and gained the Bronze Medal. A convincing end to a fine tournament performance.

Elizaveta finished with a flourish against a much higher rated opponent. Noela-Joyce Lomandong launched an unsound attack which was refuted in precise style. The Monaco player had no choice but to resign when facing colossal material losses. Elizaveta had a good second half to the tournament.



[pictures above, top to bottom, left to right --- Ruwan, Savin, Bobby, Aditya, Roxolana, Alisha, Lavanya, Ritika, Koby, Nadia, Joseph, Elliot]
 [Meet the Team - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/Juniors/european-youth-chess-championships-2018/>]

World Youth 2018 – Porto Carras, Greece

Round One

All the matches are set in a large, nearby conference building called the Olympic Centre. Round 1 started a little late at 3.08pm and after the start of the round those watching friends and loved ones on live boards had to wait 30 mins for the games to show on Chess 24. Apparently, a necessary evil as an anti-cheating measure.

It is a testament to our English chess players that not one of them had finished their games prior to 6pm and many were not done by 8pm. That's 5 hours of solid concentration in a highly pressured environment.



Nilomi Desai [all photography for the World Youth 2018 by Steph French]

The first to emerge was Nilomi Desai. Nilomi is a highly talented young chess player who exudes confidence and never seems ruffled. She lost today against an opponent who was rated 300 points higher. Analysis with Glenn showed that sacking a pawn was a good practical decision and made for entertaining play creating a 'messy fighting position' where both players had chances and all 3 results were possible. With this kind of enterprising play, it

won't be long before the points come.

Ilya Misyura lost as black to an FM rated over 2400. I believe he was doing fine until his opponent managed to get the upper hand in a complex middlegame. The thing that I found interesting, and that perhaps some might find quite off-putting, is that his opponent didn't look at the board whilst thinking about the position and considering his move. That is the power of many of these players – their ability to visualise the board.

Christopher Tombolis also lost today against his American opponent rated 2310. Christopher made him work hard for the win though with the game lasting 5 nerve wrenching hours for me. Rather you than me, son! Proud of you though! Christopher was out-manoeuvred in an unusual position and did well to create counter play, whilst his opponent did well to keep calm and convert the win.

Leif Hafstad



These 3 players are old hands from the World Cadets in Georgia 2 years ago. They are too strong to be kept down for long. A good night's sleep required as well as focus and concentration to come back strong in round 2 tomorrow. Christopher is certainly snoring soundly beside me as I write this report this evening.

Leif Hafstad also lost today as Black again against an FM rated over 2300. The air is truly thin at these dizzy heights. I look forward to looking at some high-quality fighting chess from Leif.

Our highest rated player, Koby Kalavannan, had a difficult day today against a very under-rated Greek boy. Koby is a multiple junior British Champion and recently won the Terafinal at the Delancey Chess Challenge. He is a FIDE Master and is pushing on the door of 2370 in terms of rating. I write this having never spoken to Koby, in case he needs reminding how good he is. Koby is an excellent player capable of high-quality chess and though he shouldn't take it for granted against this standard of opposition, he can put a long string of wins together that will give him a result he is happy with by the end of this tournament. Go for it Koby. As my good friend Rocky Balboa said (please imagine slightly deranged slurred American speech), 'But it ain't about how hard ya hit. It's about how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward' – sorry guys that's what you get when you make me report writer.

Another marathon match came from Callum Brewer who, I have learned, is as much of a lover of sport as I am. Really a great guy and a talented chess player. Callum lost today as Black against an FM 'On the way up to' 2400. By the sounds of it there were similar circumstance to Christopher's game. Outplayed in the opening taking a little too long on moving, a good fightback in the middlegame only to end up with a slightly inferior position in the endgame that the FM did well to execute the win. Don't worry Callum, at least you made him earn it. Speeding up against these FM's is easier said than done as they are bound to punish inferior moves.



Max French

There was a draw today for Max French against his FM opponent – a truly impressive result and a great start to the tournament. I look forward to reviewing some of your games soon Max. It looks as if Max is in good form and so fingers crossed for the games to come.

Anita Somton drew with her opponent today – a result which I know she was slightly disappointed with. Anita – she was definitely not that rating! That or your opponent was just having the best day of her chess life to date and there's not much you can do about that! Half a point is a solid result

for Anita and a good stepping stone.

Now to the wins! Oh, how sweet is victory! 'Success is counted sweetest, by those who ne'er succeed. To comprehend a nectar requires sorest need' ... sorry just seemed appropriate to google a poem about victory at this point!

Having just been inspired by the poetry of Emily Dickinson it is never easy to beat another England player and hopefully I won't have to report on too many more of these. Aditya Munshi beat Teddy Onslow today. Teddy tried to avoid theory and ended up in a bad position and giving Aditya a very powerful bishop. Aditya put the game to bed with a tactic that won Teddy's queen. Aditya is a really nice chap but really needs to stop growing as he is now almost twice my height! An exaggeration perhaps but it wouldn't be to say that he is a much more complete and powerful player than he was 2 years ago at the World Cadet's in Georgia.

Nadia Jaufarally also won today as black against her lower rated opponent. At one point during the post-match analysis her Dad quipped about her getting lucky. She politely pointed out to her Dad that there was no luck involved only skill! She then went on to explain how she paralysed her opponents' position and won all her pawns! Seriously, don't mess with Nadia!

The game of the day came from Gautam Jain who basically hacked his FM opponent to pieces as Black – I know Gautam would not describe it in this way, but I'm sure there was no bigger shot of adrenaline after victory! Both Peter Wells and Neil McDonald were having a good chuckle when analysing this game. They were enjoying the power, artistry and tactical prowess exhibited in this game. At one-point Tony said he wished he could win some of his games this way! Today was the first time I had a conversation with Gautam. He comes across as highly intelligent, understated, considered and modest.

Sorry to embarrass you Gautam. Also, I don't think it's an unkind thing to say, but Gautam sounds exactly like Fabiano Caruana when he is analysing his games. Today he played like Fabiano too.

So, a tough day for the England team with 6 losses, 2 draws and 3 wins- 1 of which was totally spectacular. Wow, that was just the first round and there's 2 more rounds tomorrow- I can hardly breathe. I can't wait, and I'm dreaming of more exciting chess and wins for England tomorrow.

Round Two

The second round was at 10am. The pairings came out late last night- so a little time for prep but that had to be balanced with getting enough sleep. Coaching this morning was about 20 minutes per player starting at 8.00am. I'm afraid due to the fact that game 2 was running into and through the lunch hour, and because of the quick turnaround time, finding a moment for post-game analysis, never mind prep for the 3rd round starting at 5.00pm, was always going to be a challenge.

Still, our hard-working coaches, Neil McDonald, Peter Wells and Glenn Flear, who definitely deserve a mention, were up for the task and gave their respective players as much help as they needed. Internet access was atrocious as usual, because the service was inundated with everyone in the hotel doing their prep, so this morning was a challenge.



Aditya Munshi

This morning, Aditya Munshi was playing a Georgian FM. Aditya truly believes now that he can win these games. His performance at the European Championships was staggering and he should certainly go into these games on an equal footing – and so it proved. Aditya had great chances in this game, and unfortunately missed mate in 4 under time pressure, but his ability to get into that position was perhaps not there a year or two ago. Another day another result. Unfortunately, this one didn't go Aditya's way.

Nilomi Desai lost to a Bulgarian WCM rated 2002. Her opening prep went well. In my view Nilomi is doing the right things. She is creating confusion on the chess board. Today she sacrificed a piece for 2 pawns and according to Glenn Flear this was objectively the right thing to do. Her opponent however was able to see her way through the confusion a little easier than Nilomi this time. This kind of game is invaluable to a chess player's progression. Fortune favours the brave Nilomi. Continue and you will reap the rewards.

Leif Hafstad lost to a Polish FM rated over 2300. Leif has had a difficult draw so far playing two FM's but actually having watched the analysis with Neil this

morning, I think he is playing well, and I'm sure this will bear fruit in round 3.

After his solid draw in round 1 against a much higher rated opponent, Max French had another tough one against a Greek FM. Max was black this time and went down to his higher rated opponent. Max should have high hopes for round 3 and is playing well.

Following his amazing day yesterday it was always going to be tough for Gautam Jain. It's difficult to measure up to those standards every day and today Gautam's opponent proved a step too far. They did however have a game which lasted 5 hours, so it must have been close. I saw Gautam coming out of the playing hall whilst I was waiting for my son. He was discussing the game with his opponent and he didn't look phased or tired at all. A good sign for the tournament to come.

Nadia Jaufarally suffered defeat this morning following her convincing win yesterday. She was matched up with a Polish girl rated over 2000. Nadia's in a strong position though, let's see what happens this afternoon. This girl has an iron will. It wouldn't surprise me if she bounces back quickly. She was certainly in good spirits before the 3rd game.

Anita Somton, Ilya Misyura and Callum Brewer drew their games. I didn't get a chance to speak to them as they were prepping for game 3 and I didn't want to disturb them but no doubt they now have something to build on going into this afternoon's game. I watched the analysis of Ilya's game and it seems Ilya's opponent was desperate for a draw sacking several pieces for a perpetual in a position that still had play for both sides.

Christopher Tombolis won his game against his much lower rated Greek opponent. Though there is no rest from these talented players and the home player made Christopher work hard for the win after a 5-hour epic battle. I fear for Christopher this afternoon if he has another tough one. Nevertheless, a good win and the first point on the board.

Koby Kalavannan beat his 2000 rated opponent as black today. Koby might have been worried about playing another underrated Greek player but it didn't show as he summarily dispatched the player. Koby's back on track which is what we like to see.

Round Three

Round 3 started at 5.00pm. Following round 2 there were some tired players going in to the second game of the day. Amongst them Christopher Tombolis who did well to convert a long drawn out win, perhaps paid his debt this afternoon. Christopher unusually for him chose a fairly passive plan and perhaps this was influenced by his lack of energy. He lost to his higher rated Spanish opponent fairly quickly and emerged from his match a little deflated. Nothing a good night's sleep won't sort out and ready for action tomorrow afternoon. 1/3 for Christopher ...

Also, in the U14 Open section Ilya Misyura managed a draw as black against his opponent. 1/3 and ready for round 4 tomorrow. Go for it, Ilya- keep fighting hard – the rounds before the rest day will be important in determining the success of your tournament.

Aditya Munshi is currently on 2 out of 3 after an excellent win this afternoon. Aditya outplayed his slightly lower-rated Ukrainian opponent, who showed no real ambition and chose a rather passive approach. In contrast Aditya played actively and there was altogether more energy in his play. Consequently, Aditya was rewarded with a positional advantage which eventually allowed him to make a breakthrough.



Callum Brewer

Callum Brewer drew both of his games today. This afternoon's game was a highly entertaining one and is worthy of 'game of the day'. In the end Callum took a draw by perpetual after achieving the time control but was left wondering if he could have done better? I believe Callum's description was that, 'The game got a bit hairy' – told you I'd quote you Callum. You can feel Callum's love for the game and his enthusiasm is infectious. A real leader and character in this England team.

Gautam suffered another loss this afternoon as black against an FM but that is the nature of sport. One day they are showering you with plaudits, the next you are snatching defeat from the jaws of victory. Gautam has had 3 very tough and mentally gruelling games. In hindsight it was inevitable that he would suffer a bit of a come down after that great first day and you don't need to come down very far, in order to suffer defeat, when you are consistently playing FMs and quality players of this sort, especially after being sapped by that long difficult game in the morning. He needs

to hit the reset button and put the disappointment behind him. Again, a good night's sleep and a lie-in will help with that.

It was the battle of the FM's in Koby's game. This was a quick draw after 21 moves. Pieces were swapped off and parity meant a draw was agreed. This was a day of consolidation after a difficult day 1. Koby is on 1.5 out of 3. You just get a feeling with Koby that the cream always rises to the top, and that he is bound to hit top form sooner rather than later. I'm sure when he relaxes into the tournament he will hit his stride. I spoke to him a couple of times on day 2 and he seems pretty relaxed to me.

Leif Hafstad got his first win this afternoon with the black pieces and he'll feel a lot happier for it. The fact that his preparation bore fruit will build confidence, but not only that, he was able to build on his advantage, maintain a positional edge and create the weakness' in his opponents' structure that would allow him to win the game. Super play Leif. Now that you've done it once we are all pulling for you to do it again.

Max French drew his game this afternoon against a slightly lower rated Greek player. I just feel that Max is a win away from giving him the confidence that he needs to do very well in this tournament. When that happens, it is likely it will take him by surprise, but it will be no surprise to any of us because we can already see how strong a player he already is. A solid start for Max with 1/3 but he will feel the need to push on from here.

Nadia Jaufarally won her game today. Nadia faced the Yugoslav attack to her hyper-accelerated dragon. A race position ensued, and Nadia was the first to break through taking advantage of her opponent's weak pawn structure. As is so often in these race positions the slightest weakness can be critical and Nadia took full advantage. Back to winning ways for Nadia and 2/3.

Nilomi Desai had what must have been a difficult loss this afternoon. Nilomi is capable of lighting up this tournament. She's like Messi, having a quiet game for Barcelona – but before long it will be score after score after score. I look forward to reporting a win very soon for Nilomi and when it comes I reckon it'll be a good one.



Anita Somton

Anita Somton drew as black this afternoon. She must be known as the draw queen for now having drawn her 1st 3 games but its early days yet and there are so many points to fight for. Go for it, Anita let's see some exciting winning chess in the rounds to come.

An encouraging result for England this afternoon with only 3 losses, 5 draws and 3 wins in round 3. Our best round of the tournament so far. Thank goodness the double round day is done. We all look forward a bit of Rand R before commencing battle once more for round four.

Round Four

Our second highest rated player, Aditya Munshi was playing Bierre Jonas Buhl who is the highest rated play in the U14 section – an IM, no less. At lunch prior to the game I quipped with Aditya that his opponent had been feeling unwell and that he stood a good chance as a result. Aditya took me at my word initially and we then had a chuckle when he realised I was teasing him. We weren't laughing 5 minutes later when we got a WhatsApp message from Christelle to avoid the skewered chicken since it was uncooked and noticed three skewers on Aditya's empty plate. I'm sure he will be fine, but I wonder if their will be any skewers (literal or metaphorical) in Aditya's game?

Aditya was playing a highly talented and powerful chess player today who has a great record with the White pieces. By his own admission Aditya was not at his best and was ultimately outplayed. He has

faced two of the best players in the tournament so far and if he can string some wins together he will be back playing some more. Aditya will be pushing hard tomorrow to find his best chess.

Max French was playing black against his lower-rated Greek opponent. In a highly entertaining game that could have gone either way, a draw was agreed after a complex endgame full of tactical opportunities. Max was seemingly on top, but a slip allowed his opponent back into the game and the mess that ensued was entertaining for the cheering crowds but murder at the chess board for the respective players. The game ended with the point shared.

Ilya Misyura was playing white against his lower-rated opponent. He went up a pawn and managed to get his heavy pieces into better positions. Finally, his opponent resigned when losing more material became inevitable. Well done Ilya. I asked Ilya to describe the game. Ilya's answer was succinct – 'He lost' – thanks for the detailed analysis Ilya! Ilya is now on 2/4 and going strong

Nadia Jaufarally was white against a 2000 rated Spanish girl. Nadia made a mistake in the opening and a complex middle game continued. Nadia went on to lose her game but has 7 more games to show her mettle.

Anita Somton was playing white against an American girl. The position was balanced for some time but ultimately a couple of inaccuracies meant that Anita had to do something proactive to gain counterplay. According to Peter Wells, her coach, it became increasingly risky to sit on the position and altering the structure became a critical requirement. Anita went on to lose the game and we cannot say that she is the draw queen any longer. There will be better days to come for this formidable chess player no doubt, and we look forward to seeing Anita's best chess in the games to come.

Nilomi Desai was also white against Isabelle Wang from Canada. After misplaying the opening Nilomi played very well in a game full of tactics. Though she gained a slight edge the game fizzled to an opposite coloured bishop endgame that was drawn by any one's objective assessment. A draw for Nilomi, a well-played game and now off the mark. Well done Nilomi.

Callum Brewer had no rest after his game of the day performance yesterday and played a Swedish FM as white. In the post-match analysis, he was critical of himself in that he got obsessed with the minutia of the position when perhaps there was a more straightforward path. In fact, as Glenn Flear pointed out, the position was incredibly complicated and required a great deal of analysis. In the end Callum was disappointed with his loss but will not allow himself to be down for too long. He will return with a vengeance in round 5.

Though Gautam Jain had a lower rating than his opponent, who was 2123, this was always going to be a tussle. In a complicated middle game, Gautam's opponent managed to gain the advantage, but after a long struggle the game was lost. It's so hard to wrestle control away from these higher-rated players. At one-point Gautam's opponent was frustratingly close to having his Bishop trapped but it soon became clear that this was all part of the plan.

Our titled player Koby Kalavannan was playing black against a player that he should be able to deal with most days of the week – but there are no easy chess chumps to beat here at the World Championships, and this player managed to hold Koby to a draw.

Leif Hafstad was playing black against his Swiss opponent (2155). This was always going to be a test, but Leif managed to draw after a six-and-a-half-hour struggle. Great battling qualities Leif. Maybe the football helped?

Finally, another all England match between Christopher Tombolis, playing black, and Teddy Onslow, had been pulled out of the hat. It's never nice to come all the way to Greece to play a compatriot who you play regularly at county, club and school level. Christopher went up two pawns in a rook endgame, but with an active rook Teddy was able to hold the draw.

Round Five

Callum Brewer was playing black today against a lower-rated opponent. Callum has rightly felt that the quality of his play should have merited greater reward. Today he bucked the trend and converted a

good position into victory. The truth is he is not the only one of the England team having this kind of issue. I have seen several games where the pressure applied by England players would be enough to make most other players crumble. However, the strength of competitor is high enough here that, to use a metaphor, a foot on the throat is required from start to finish to ensure the desired result. If there is any carelessness, lack of concentration or weakness in technique it will be exposed. So well done to Callum, you can be proud of a well-earned victory.

Gautam Jain was also playing black against a Greek player rated above 2000. Gautam emerged from his game suggesting that he drew a game that he should have won and that in general drawing won positions and losing drawn positions was a common feature within his chess. I said nothing at the time but on reflection I just don't buy that. Maybe we just remember the ones that slipped away more than the ones that were easily won? These players have continued with chess this long partly because they love it but partly too because they have achieved great success and any 'failure' is felt more keenly. Well done Gautam for getting a draw. I think it was important to consolidate in order to get your tournament back on track.



Koby Kalavannan

FM Koby Kalavannan had another tough one playing white against a +2150 player. Yesterday he drew his game against a lower-rated player and was looking for a win in this one – a feat which he achieved with aplomb in this game. The game was quite even up till move 17 but started moving away from his opponent after this. Koby continued to build the pressure and finished the game with excellent endgame technique. Now if I were you Koby, I would have under-promoted to a Bishop in that final position but that's because I'm a nasty horrible person and Koby is a nice boy who has respect for his opponent!

Max French was white against a similarly rated player, Leif Hafstad was playing white against a higher-rated Norwegian player, Aditya Munshi was playing white against a lower rated Greek player and Nilomi Desai was black in her game. All four drew with their opponents. Particular credit must go to Leif who started feeling unwell during his game and managed to tough out a draw. Unfortunately, a tummy bug of some sort has affected a few of our England players to varying degrees over the last few days. Well done Leif for keeping it together and not blowing the position completely.

Ilya Misyura was playing black against a lower rated Japanese player who has an AIM title. I love watching Ilya during his analysis. He is so confident in himself and in his ability to understand a chess position. He slams down the pieces on to the squares like it is obvious to one and all that they belong there. It is not a question of analysis but a matter of fact! Obviously, there would be no way I could prove him wrong but when he is proven wrong by one of the Coach GM's he shrugs it off with grace and wit and it's just very funny. Ilya won his game today. He turned to me and said, 'Glaftos, in 3 moves he's just going to blunder a piece'

Anyway, we get to the decisive moment, '...and this is what he did' – Ilya shows me the capture that led to his opponent's resignation. At this point Ilya looks at me wide-eyed and open-mouthed – like, how could anyone in a thousand years who wasn't a total imbecile ever make a move like that, and I'm left having to share a look of agreement with him because I don't want to look like an idiot and admit I didn't actually understand the position myself. Honestly, I have to say that in this company that tends to happen rather a lot. I end up just nodding in agreement much of the time without fathoming the facts fully (I believe that's alliteration, Steph), just because it's easier.

Christopher Tombolis was playing white against his slightly lower-rated opponent this afternoon. I must say it has been tough to watch my son whilst writing these reports. The results have not gone his way so far in this tournament and it is hard to suffer defeat with him. Today, very much like yesterday was an almost won position which he built up playing excellent chess. Unfortunately, the advantage

whittled away and went in favour of his opponent all too quickly, and Christopher eventually lost the game. The day did not start well when Christopher came down with an unpleasant tummy bug. We had to reschedule his coaching and he literally had bread and water all day. As I write this report he sleeps soundly, feeling better, beside me and I look on proudly anyway. It is in adversity, son, that we find our true character. Better days for Christopher hopefully not too far away.

Nadia Jaufarally had a good win as black in round 5. This was a controlled game where she just played consistently better moves, and this eventually built into a decisive advantage. Peter Wells rates Nadia very highly.

Anita Somton also won her game as black today to get her first win of the tournament and though a tactic was missed at one-point Anita eventually took full advantage of her opponent's mistakes. Well done Anita – some more games like this please.

Round 6

Today Callum Brewer on 2/5 was playing black against a Greek opponent approaching 2300 Fide. This was always going to be a tough one. Callum ultimately transitioned into an end game in a worse position dropping a pawn. Resistance was ultimately futile from then on and Callum will be glad for the rest before a final push in the last 5 games

Gautam Jain on 1/5 faces a battle with the white pieces against a similarly rated opponent from Kyrgyzstan. Gautam drew today in a game that showed off all the things we love about chess. The game became messy and ultimately Gautam won his draw through a perpetual.

Koby Kalavannan, currently on 3/5 was black against an FM from Turkey. This proved to be a battle of attrition, and the players agreed to a draw relatively early on.

Leif Hafstad on 2/5 was also black facing a tough higher-rated Bulgarian opponent. What an interesting finish this was. A King pawn end game with equal material. You could tell this was the kind of thing that Neil and Glenn get up in the morning for. A position just out of reach of human calculation teasing you with its complexity. Only one drawing move – h4 and if you can't find it, you're history. Well maybe next time Leif will find it but inevitably the position will be subtly different. Leif continues like many of our England players with a lot to play for.

Max French on 2/5 was also black against a lower rated opponent. Max won his game and I would love to show you this but this one's on the hush-hush. Superb preparation by Max and his coach Glenn Flear but also Max did well to take advantage of his opponent's mistakes and get the win.

Ilya Misyura, currently on 3/5 was white against an FM – this was always going to be a tough encounter. These 2 players were equally matched and though Ilya's opponents gained equality quite quickly, he never got much further than that.

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Round 7

Gautam Jain had another tough challenge on paper against his higher-rated Spanish opponent. The Spanish team are always well prepared. Gautam was unable to defend a powerful attack and the Spanish player's push was ultimately decisive. Gautam – as I sit here writing this report I'm listening to John Williams' 'Star Wars' theme being broadcast from the Royal Albert Hall on Classic FM – there is no advice I can give you better than your coach but if all else fails, it wouldn't hurt to use the Force ...

Callum Brewer was playing white today against his lower-rated opponent from Chile. The opening went well, a sideline of the Grandprix attack, and Callum took advantage of the weak dark squares of his opponent and was able to attack a backward pawn, bring his warhorse into the game, and eventually the pressure was insurmountable, and the Chilean blundered in a losing position.

There was a battle of the FM's when Koby Kavalannan, who usually plays like some kind of superman with the white pieces, faced a Slovakian opponent who beat another Norwegian FM rated over 2400 in a previous round, so this was always going to be a dangerous match. In the end Koby was on the better side of a draw but his advantage was never enough to give him a full point. Still, Koby is in a strong position going into the final 4 rounds.

Max French faced a stern challenge in this round with the white pieces against a Hungarian IM who had so far under-performed in the tournament. This was always going to be a close encounter and Max held his own for some time in this match – and equality was retained for more or less 30 moves. Thereafter the IM showed the quality of his play and was able to grow his initially small advantage into a decisive one.

Leif Hafstad was playing white against a Kyrgyzstani opponent rated below him but who had beaten two opponents rated above him. This was never going to be easy against such an unpredictable player, and indeed Leif lost his game in round 7. Leif has been unlucky in the last couple of rounds and the subtle nuances of the game have conspired against him. Leif is due a change of luck or better still – Leif make your own with the best play you can – go for it! 4 more rounds to go, let's get that winning feeling back.

Ilya Misyura had another tough one with the black pieces against a Russian FM who had under-performed. Ilya played a good game but as he ran low on time made a decisive mistake which allowed his opponent to take control, and it was curtains from there. It's far from curtains though in this tournament for Ilya, and this very talented chess player has 4 more opportunities to show what he's made of, so we should be in for a treat. It's not time to phone home yet ...

Aditya Munshi played a lower-rated Irish player with the white pieces. Aditya didn't let us down and did what he was supposed to do. Well played Aditya. I didn't watch the analysis, but you weren't in there for too long, so I can only suppose your opponent's defences had as many holes as a Jurassic Park theme park fence. Regardless of what actually happened it's in black and white now, so it must be true – I wouldn't deliver fake news!

Christopher Tombolis played white against a dangerous Welsh opponent. As it transpired, it was Christopher who was the dangerous one, and every move that went by signalled impending and inevitable doom for a player who needed a bigger boat at least in this game. Well done Christopher, this is your springboard!

Aditya and Ilya are playing catch me if you can in the U14 Open section but Christopher is hot on their tails.



Nadia Jaufarally

Nadia Jaufarally played black against her Uzbekistan challenger. This would be a tough challenge with her opponent having lost only one game in the tournament so far. Solid is probably the right description for Nadia's opponent and so it proved. Nadia's opponent posed problem after problem and the time trouble that resulted for Nadia led to a blunder that ended the game immediately. Nadia won't need to use artificial intelligence to analyse this game.

Anita Somton played black against a Swiss challenger. The Swiss player was not to be taken lightly having beaten a WFM in a

previous round. Anita was worse after the opening but took advantage of errors by her opponent to create play in the middle game. Anita went down the exchange though after getting her rook trapped and from there it was a matter of time before the game was won. Keep fighting Anita there is no time for negative reflection. This loss won't be terminal. 4 more chances at the World Championships to do something amazing at the chess board. Just give me the slightest chance to report it and I'll be ready!

Nilomi Desai, having just come off a confidence-boosting victory in round 6, faced a Latvian opponent as black. Nilomi had chances in this one but came unstuck in a complicated King Pawn endgame. Nilomi, we'll be keeping our fingers crossed for better things in round 8.

To all our England players good luck in round 8 and may the force be with you. Sorry to all those expecting serious chess journalism. This has turned out to be a bit of a minority report...

Round Eight



Gautam Jain

Today Gautam Jain on 1.5 points had a bye. Gautam loves his chess and will be hungry for success and to get back into the swing in round 9 after the enforced extra day break.

Callum Brewer was playing a Swiss FM today as black in a long but fruitless struggle lasting more than 4.5 hrs. Callum was never able to wrestle the advantage from the Swiss player in a positional game where white's king activity and strong knight proved to be the deciding factors. Callum fought hard but lost unfortunately and starts round 9 on 3/8.

Koby Kalavannan was black against a Russian FM. After reaching an equal position in the opening the game swung in the Russian's favour and he had quite an advantage however after some sloppy play and excellent chess by Koby the England player reached time control in a dominant position, despite being under severe time pressure at one stage. Koby came away deflated after not being able to convert the objectively won position and ultimately drew the game. Koby in post-match analysis found it difficult to comprehend why he made the mistake that he did. The mistake amounted to a mental slip rather than a lack of knowing the route to victory. However, as Peter Wells suggested it would be pointless to overthink things at this stage. With 3 games to go, maximising results is key and wasting time on negative emotions would just interfere with the objective. A good night's sleep and the strength of character that Koby already possesses is all that is required to achieve more successes in this tournament. Koby starts round 9 on 4.5/8

Max French had a fantastic victory with the black pieces against his Kazakhstani opponent in a game of over 100 moves. Max eventually won a Knight and Bishop vs King endgame. It might be that Max gets

another chance to play out this endgame in another 5 years. Every chess player knows the frustration of not knowing how to finish a particular ending, but this is one Max would expect to convert comfortably at his level. Max is 4/8 going into round 9.

Leif Hafstad had the black pieces against his lower rated Greek opponent and completed a crushing victory. Leif offered a piece for a huge attack and a King hunt followed and Leif eventually offered the death blow and checkmate to put his opponent out of his misery. Leif is now on 3/8.

Aditya Munshi was facing a 2000-rated Croatian player as black. According to Aditya and his coach Glenn Flear Aditya handled the complications of this tangled position in a superior way which eventually won him the game. Aditya is on 4.5/8 and will face a challenging game in round 9. This is the first time though that Aditya has put back to back victories together and he should be confident with the quality of his play.



Ilya Misyura

Ilya Misyura lost today with the white pieces against his higher rated Polish opponent. Ilya faced a rare side-line in an opening which led to a forced sequence of moves. Ilya followed the variation through to its conclusion and found computer moves at each turn, but the time taken to find the correct path was his down fall. As the time control neared the quality of his moves deteriorated and Ilya blundered into a lost position. By his own admission Ilya underestimated the complexity of the perfect refutation when perhaps a more practical, though slightly inferior approach was the order of the day. Ilya will start

round 9 on a healthy 3.5/8 with much to fight for in the last 3 rounds.

Christopher Tombolis also put back to back wins together in the U14 section by beating another Greek opponent with the black pieces. Christopher transitioned into a winning Rook endgame and finished the game with a tactical flourish. Christopher is now on 4/8 and will be on a live board for the next game.

Nilomi Desai also won today with the black pieces against her opponent from Montenegro outplaying her in a well-controlled game. Nilomi is currently on 3/8

Nadia Jaufarally played a long game against a Canadian WFM but could have won the game much sooner after failing to take advantage of a blunder. Nadia showed her determination and eventually emerged victorious in an interesting Queen vs Rooks endgame. Nadia is on 4/8

Anita Somton playing with the white pieces convinced her American opponent to give her a draw in a losing position. Anita has used her poker face a couple of times this tournament to good effect. Anita is on 3.5/8 and will be looking to put together some games to be proud of in the rounds to come.

Round Nine

Callum Brewer was playing white in round 9, against a Brazilian player not to be underestimated having beaten a Greek 2000+ player in round 7. Since writing these reports they have clearly become known for their arguably overly-descriptive style. That being said after each match Callum clearly tries to feed me as many adjectives as possible in an effort to get them in. At the risk of damaging international relations between England and Brazil, especially with Brexit fast approaching, I am happy on this occasion to oblige. Callum 'shredded' his opponent to pieces. He kept good control on the queenside and his attack on the kingside was decisive. Let's hope Callum keeps his appetite for destruction for round 10. Callum is currently 4/9

Gautam Jain returns after a bye to play another 2000-rated player from Serbia with the white pieces. We were not disappointed. This was an insanely complicated affair and in the words of Gautam the reason he won is that he made one less mistake than his opponent. Never mind Gautam, not every game can be a well-controlled obliteration and one fewer mistake is often the way battles are won in any sporting contest. Gautam is on 3.5/9.

FM Koby Kalavannan returned also as white against another FM from Belgium. Compared to yesterday's, and indeed the 5-hour opuses played out previously, this game must have come as a welcome relief to Koby, winning in just 22 moves. You can't win this kind of game without a decisive blunder or two from your opponent. You just have to be ready to pounce when they are offered. Koby was, and he finished the game in a beautiful way. Well worth a watch. Koby is on 5.5/9.

After his nice win in round 8, Max French played with white against an FM from Poland who was perhaps not in the best form. Whenever one of our players is up against a higher-rated opponent, our hearts skip a little more, since the hope of a famous win fills us with anticipation. It was not meant to be though in round 9 for Max as he was bested by the Pole on this occasion. Max is on 4/9.

Leif Hafstad had white this time after his aggressive win in round 8 and this time played a lower-rated Scottish player. In this home nations struggle, Leif emerged as the victor and has back-to-back victories. Leif will now have an opportunity against a higher rated opponent in round 10. We hope that he can take it. There's no point in holding anything back with 2 rounds to go. Leif is on 4/9.

Aditya Munshi, coming off back-to-back wins, had a tough proposition as white against an FM from Azerbaijan. So it proved to be, as Aditya was unable to deal with the complications in a very dangerous position. Though the computer line had Aditya better, perhaps there was only one path in a ridiculously complex maze. Aditya will want to bounce back in the next round after losing this one. 4.5/9



Christopher Tombolis, also with 2 wins in a row, was playing a 2000 rated Greek player with the white pieces. This was a 5-hour rollercoaster. Christopher was slightly worse out of the opening, but this left his opponent with a more comfortable position to play. Christopher sacrificed a pawn in order to give him some play, a decision not liked by the computer, but one that that gave him practical chances later in the game. As the time control neared Christopher was left with 10 more moves to make in 2 minutes. The computer 'swingometer'

was fluctuating more than in an election campaign involving Donald Trump. As the air cleared, Christopher was left in a worse position after the time control. At this point it was his opponent who found himself in time trouble with the last 20 minutes of the game at least played on the increment. In the end the game was drawn with Christopher holding a position that seemingly couldn't be held. With the 30-minute delay I thought Christopher was joking when he came in saying he had drawn. An important half point for his competition. 3 of our U14's are on 4.5 points now and who takes most out of the next two games will have the bragging rights.

Ilya Misyura was black in round 9 and had a difficult proposition playing against an Armenian player who has played games against opposition all over 2000 rating in previous rounds. This was a complex game in which Ilya was unfamiliar with the opening. Ilya went a pawn up in a knight vs bishop endgame. His opponent became too active in a position that he overestimated, and Ilya made him pay and took the win. Rather than adjectives Ilya tries to feed me quotes for the reports. These are quite hilarious, but I can never remember them- I'll have to write them down rather than rely on my memory. Ilya is back on track with a 50% score. Ilya is on 4.5/9.

Nadia Jaufarally played black against a lower rated Spanish opponent. This was a game that gave Nadia palpitations – but if there's anything this girl has got, it's heart. With her opponent playing in the style of Simon Williams, playing h4 on move 7 this was always going to be a messy game that could go one way or the other. Her opponent sacrificed 2 pieces for an attack but the sacrifices were unsound and Nadia saw her way through to win the game. Enjoy this one! Nadia is on 5/9

Anita Somton also played black against a lower-rated Norwegian player. This game remained level for most of it but a few misplayed moves by her opponent left Anita with an advantage. A nice tactic at the end of the game to deliver the win. Anita is now on 4.5/9. Great result. Fingers crossed for Anita-this could be a great tournament for her with 2 games to go.

Finally, Nilomi Desai had the white pieces against a player from Macedonia. This was a drawn game and with 2 games to go Nilomi has to fight to reach a 50% score. Nilomi is on 3.5/9.

Well done to all our England players. An excellent day with 7 wins, 2 draws and 2 losses.

Round Ten

After his confidence boosting win in round 9, Callum Brewer was playing an FM from Slovenia with the black pieces. We had no idea he would go to infinity and beyond with this amazing victory. This must be the highlight of his tournament, but you never know, he still has round 11 to look forward to. Callum always had the advantage in a well-controlled game and when his opponent made a blunder Callum made him pay the ultimate price a few moves later. Callum is on 5/10.

Gautam Jain faced a tough one as black against a Spanish player rated over 2000. The Spanish players are always well prepared. So, it proved in this one. As usual Gautam offered as much resistance as he could but was unable to ward off the Spanish players attack. Gautam is on 3.5/10.

FM Koby Kalavannan faced another FM from France also as black. This one was always likely to produce a decisive result with the French player losing 3 as well as winning 5 of the last 9 games. However, curiouser and curiouser, this one belied the stats despite the fact that Koby was in a better position throughout the match. He was unable to find a way through the complications that his opponent created, and the game was drawn with only 2 kings left on the board. Koby is on 6/10.

Leif Hafstad had the white pieces against his higher-rated Norwegian FM opponent. This went to the form book unfortunately and Leif will be on 4/10 going into the final round.

Max French was playing black against a Hungarian FM. Max feels like he is suffering the consequences of hard contests in previous rounds and felt tired today. He didn't play his best by his own admission and lost against his titled opponent. Max needs to put this behind him quickly in order to get a confidence boosting victory in the final round. Max is on 4/10.

A battle of the ages took place on board 31 with Ilya Misyura as white playing Aditya Munshi. A clash of English titans but who would have bragging rights? The truth is a draw was inevitable. They sat down in post-game analysis to discuss the match. Each player had their own version of events. Ilya's version was that he did 20 minutes of prep for 1 line about 20 moves deep. Aditya claimed that he had it all under control. Well, they can say whatever they like, after all it's all Greek to me. You be the judge. Both players are on 5 points with some work to do to get a 50% score tomorrow.

Christopher Tombolis was playing black against his 2000+ graded Israeli opponent. Christopher was taken by surprise in the opening and emerged worse and a pawn down. A strategic mistake in the middle game compounded problems and the position that arose meant the tactics were always going to be in the Israeli player's favour. Christopher went on to lose the game but needs to fight hard tomorrow to get 50% score. Christopher is on 4.5/10

Nadia Jaufarally had a tough one with the white pieces against a WCM rated over 2000. The truth is Nadia doesn't want the tournament to come to a close. She's hit top form now and had a beautiful win today with a blazing king side attack. This was a crazy game and there were several moments where to follow the computer's continuation she would have to do something off the wall and crazy. A phrase that has served me well is 'What would Nanny do' and ultimately Nadia followed this mantra. In

essence to follow the safest and most efficient path to victory and the path that would give her coach Peter Wells the least number of heart palpitations before the end of the game. Nadia is on 6/10.

Anita Somton also had white against a slightly lower-rated Slovenian player- Pia-Marie Kuzic. The story of this game started out very much like 'Mary had a little lamb'. In the nursery rhyme the lamb follows Mary around everywhere because she loves her so much. Well in this game Pia-Marie trustingly followed the pawn Anita was offering only to realise far too late that that she was not Anita's little lamb but a lamb to the slaughter. That's what you get for pawn grabbing and leaving the protection of your king' I'm afraid. Poor Pia- Marie, having bought the carrots she received the stick only a move later. A well-played game by Anita. Anita is on 5.5/10

Nilomi Desai had the black pieces against a lower-rated Kosovan player. Another drawn game for Nilomi taking her to 4/10. Nilomi will fight hard in the last game.

Round Eleven

One last chance to make an impression in the most significant youth chess tournament in the world. Every member of the England team will want to go out with a bang but so will their opponents. Let's see what happens.

Callum Brewer was playing with the white pieces against a very strong FM from Argentina. The Argentinian player has had a series of strong results in the last 4 rounds. The opening went generally well for Callum but the transition to the middle game was misplayed and allowed the Argentine to take the advantage. Black never relinquished the advantage and though Callum did what he could to create counterplay the game eventually transitioned into a lost rook and pawn endgame. Callum finishes on 5/11

Gautam Jain also with white was playing a plus 2000 rated player from Greece. The Greek player though had not put together the best run of results. This was a well-played game by Gautam and he had the winning chances in this one. This one became blocked and Marilyn Munroe could have drawn this one quite probably whilst buffing her impeccable nails. Gautam finishes on 4/11

FM Koby Kalavannan with white was playing another FM from Peru. The Peruvian's results would have warned Koby that he is dangerous when given the opportunity. Koby got himself into a bad position in a tense and complex middlegame and as it transitioned into an endgame it became very difficult to hold. The pressure eventually told as Koby blundered. Koby finishes the tournament on 6/11

Max French also had white against a lower rated player from Russia. Though the Russian player started the tournament poorly. He has put a good run of results together and this was going to be a challenge for Max. The game became messy and in a tense position Max was afraid of his opponent sacking a piece, but it turns out he was seeing ghosts. His fear caused him to move somewhere which lost immediately. Max finishes on 4/11

Leif Hafstad had the black pieces against a strong 2104 AIM from Hungary. This player had underperformed in the tournament. This was a close contest with a rook and 3 vs a rook and 3. The position was drawn but Leif overstretched, and this caused him to lose the game. Leif finishes on 4/11

Ilya Miyura had the white pieces against a Norwegian player who's rating was approaching 2200. Ilya played A Catalan and his opponent sacked the exchange which is apparently a common theme in this opening. If at that point black can manoeuvre his pieces to get his pawns moving on the queenside, he gets a winning game and so it proved. Ilya finishes on 5/11

Aditya Munshi had white against a lower rated Swedish player. Aditya played a really nice game here. He eventually took on h6 though he had an earlier opportunity to do so. Excellent preparation and skill by Aditya. Aditya finishes on 6/11

Christopher Tombolis also had white against a lower rated Slovakian player. Christopher got a Benoni in this one. His opponents Knight was on the edge of the board. Christopher attacked it with his pawn and the Slovakian player kindly moved it to a square where it could be taken by Christopher's Queen.

Having said that Christopher played the opening well and was always better. Thank you very much and we'll take that for a 50% score of 5.5/11.

Nadia Jaufarally had the black pieces against another strong WFM rated over 2000 from Russia. Until the last round the Russian girl had been difficult to beat scoring draws or wins in each of her rounds. Nadia played a good game making a couple of mistakes which proved decisive but fought valiantly. This was a good tournament for her with a tremendous win in round 10. Nadia finishes on 6/9

Anita Somton was playing an even stronger WFM on paper than Nadia with the black pieces from Spain. This one didn't go Anita's way leaving her with 5.5/9

Nilomi Desai had the white pieces against a lower rated Irish player. This didn't go Nilomi's way and she ends up with 4/11 in the tournament.

And as the player setting a trap pondered snidely over his pieces and another fretted sulkily in a worse position the tournament is over now and we forget the battles we have lost and won on the chess board for now and become friends once more. It has been a privilege to write these reports for the England team. It's time to let whatever hair we have down, perhaps drink some champagne and yes indeed, why not send pizza to a friend?! That's what I'll be doing to celebrate.

To those who met or exceeded their expectations, hearty congratulations. To those that did not remember the words of Luna Lovegood —

'The things we lose have a way of coming back to us in the end. If not always in the way we expect.'

— Glafcos Tombolis

World Cadets 2018 – Santiago de Compostela, Spain

Round One

Most of the England delegation arrived in Santiago on Saturday evening, before the first round on Sunday afternoon. There were a few families who had arrived a couple of days earlier to get used to the weather and conditions. The head of delegation, Nas, successfully navigated the team through the normal teething issues around administration and settled the group into the relaxed surroundings of the team hotel. One thing has to be said, the hotel is stunning, and all rooms are actually two-storeyed apartments with a garage! I am missing my car

The playing hall is set in the Gaias City of Culture, which is a stunning piece of modern architecture with an art gallery, library and museum. The venue and hotel are both just outside the city.

This delegation is a nice mix of talented, young and experienced players, both girls and boys equal numbers. We are all looking forward to seeing them in action, and we are sure you are too.

There are three age groups in the tournament U8, U10 and U12 and the team has representatives in the U10/U12 Girls and Open sections. Before the first round the team had a motivational team presentation, which concluded with distributing the ECF and WCCC badges and goodies. The Organisers had some goody bags for parents and coaches as well. The Delegation travelled the ten minutes to the playing hall in the buses arranged by the organisers, and everything went smoothly. The players finally settled down on the board.

Parents were seen sitting outside in a tent, some late into the first day rainy evening. It is early days, but the start looked good, the players could be seen working hard on the board. They will have to do it 11 times during this tournament, up to 4-5 hours if it comes to that. Chess really is hard work and mental torture at this level, but as long as our kids enjoy it there is a big learning benefit to it.

For England, the first round brought 9.5/14 points. The highlight was the performances for the U12 Girls, where this group scored 4/5 points with Anum and Abigail both battling for 4+ hours, to win their games which lasted until 9 in the evening having started at 4.30. Sorry parents, you will have to do this time and again – at this level kids do play long games. Please get used to long waits outside. It

needs to be said, that It was quite cold out there yesterday, hats off to parents for supporting their kids.

The one surprise was a loss by team talisman Shreyas Royal to a talented player from Kazakhstan who was significantly better than his rating suggested. No doubt Shreyas will bounce back soon.

There were some quick wins in U10 Boys section, Nishchal and George came out of the hall with broad smiles. It is great to see these kids play so well at this level.

There was a long game for Adam Hussain, who was battling it out with a 2000+ rated player, till late in the evening. Adam and Abbey were the last two kids to finish their games. Abbey had a nice win, however for Adam the result was not in our favour – but it is early days and there is a lot to happen in next 10 rounds which I am looking forward to seeing ...

We had nice wins from Roxolana, Jess, Giulio, Julia and Jacob while Keerthana settled for peace with a draw. James was playing a 2200+ rated player and enjoyed a nice position for some time. I think at some point he overlooked a tactic. It was not a good scene to see this boy lose, but he is a talented kid. Another round James – you can do it.



Abigail, George and Roxolana

Niamh in the U12 Girls was playing Board 6, against a 1800+ player. She had a good start and looked impressive, but somewhere in the opening she could have done better.

In general feedback from the coaches is that the team played well, with the majority of the games going as expected based on ratings. The Chess24 website broadcasts the top 20 games live in each section on 30-minute delay with the games starting at 4.30 local time 3.30pm UK time.

The team is looking forward to round 2 and hoping that the weather picks up after a day of almost continuous rain! Rain rain don't go to Spain!

— John Merriman

Round Two

Day two was a much better day due to various reasons, and the sun shone on beautiful Santiago city after a long downpour that lasted the whole night. It appeared to lift the mood of one and all – even the modern buildings at venue seemed to come to life.

The participants, organisers, parents and other associated staff were seen to be lot calmer today, as the first day is always full of nerves for everyone.

There was a team meeting held to organise the stay at venue for parents and the transfers – I think we are now much clearer and settled on this.

The players in the hall also settled calmly at 16:30 local time. The parents were allowed in only on the 2nd day. All the sections are playing in a big hall. There is a gallery next to the main hall which can be accessed via some stairs, and the officials and delegates are allowed to look at the players from there. Outside the hall, there is always a crowd of parents, either watching through the glass walls or waiting and praying for their kids. At the gate we can see security allowing only players to go out when there is a parent or known person there to accompany them.

The players shook hands at official starting time, and after that it looked like just another chess tournament. However, the kids are playing at the highest level for their respective age groups. There are some big talents in the hall – the future of chess for I don't know how many generations. While I was looking at the players making their first moves, I wondered – could there be some future world champion sitting right in this hall? What do you think?

Our team scored 6.5/14 in a solid second round. There were some surprises while playing lower-rated players, and some players mentioned about opponents changing their openings to nullify the preparation. These are the things we have to deal at the highest level. We cannot take the ratings as the sole factor of strength of a player, and we have to be prepared for all major lines.

Summarising the performances by group —

U12 Girls – This group had slightly tougher day today after strong first round. The girls were seen fighting hard on the boards, it was a sight to be seen – hats off to all our players!

Julia played a very smooth game, taking some clear opportunities that her opponent gave her in the opening, and converting them into an excellent to move to 2/2.

Anum fought well to hold a draw with black against a well-prepared opponent, to remain unbeaten on 1.5/2. At the end the position looked in our favour, but after 4+ hours the players were so tired that they agreed a draw.

Jessica had worked out some excellent preparation with her coach, but made a minor misjudgement, which meant she fell into a difficult position and lost.

Abigail and Niamh both had long battles, both of which were narrowly lost after a great effort. These girls fought the longest and were the last ones to leave the battlefield.

U12 Open – Jacob confidently won his second round game against a lower-rated player, to move on 2/2.

James and Adam battled hard, and both were held to a draw in positions they could not lose but could not quite convert to a win. These boys are so talented, it is only a matter of time before they bring in their first points for the team. You can do it – go, boys!

Giulio lost a game against a higher-rated Chinese player in a tough challenge. There are 9 more rounds to go, so there is lot to fight for, Giulio.



Jacob, Giulio and Adam

U10 Girls – Keerthana won her game against a player from Kazakhstan to move on to an unbeaten 1.5/2.

After an excellent win on the first day, Roxolana was disappointed to lose a game in some tricky complications against an American player in round 2, but bounced back quickly after the game to baffle the coaches with some highly complicated maths problems!

U10 Open – As expected, Shreyas returned to form with a very quick win – normal service resumed!

George played confident game to beat a higher-rated opponent from France to move to 2/2.

Nishchal lost a tight battle to an under-rated Ukranian opponent. There was a surprise in opening here – d4 was played instead of e4!

The team has settled into a nice routine, and is looking forward to round 3. Feedback from the coaches is that the group is improving, which bodes well for the rest of the tournament. Don't stop reading – there are nine more rounds of exciting chess to come!

— *John Merriman*

Round 3

Day three was all gloomy and rainy. A call at 14:00 hours told us the third round, on November 6, of the World Cadets Chess Championship has been suspended by Civil Protection due to the orange alert raised today in Santiago de Compostela. 86 federations, 827 players and more than 2000 accompanying people were probably surprised about it – the rain did not look so bad – but the weather man was worried about the strong winds. Word has it that some local schools were asked to send students back home as well. The England delegation arranged some simul with coaches later in the day. Adam Taylor and Peter Wells were seen struggling in some games, but overall the kids had some good chess lessons on the board. It is time to recharge our batteries, even though a little earlier than expected. There will always be time to recover this day by either a double-rounder or skipping the scheduled free day. We shall see ...

Round 3 continued

The prayers of all the players were answered on day 4 – it was a beautiful day, with the sun shining till late afternoon, a welcome relief from the doom and gloom of the day before. I think the parents and organisers were both relieved as this round started. There were many questions in the air about the suspended round, and there was a meeting between the organisers and delegates to answer those questions. It was decided to cancel the free day and change the round timings to 16:00. Also there was a problem for accompanying people as the tent provided is cold in evening, so a warm building has been provided now.

Back to the white and black squares — round 3 commenced at the normal time on Tuesday. The early rest day on Monday certainly helped the England team, who scored a magnificent 11/14 points. Lots of good things happened across the team. Going into the second round, Julia Volovich, George Clarkson and Jacob Yoon were all jointly leading their respective sections.

Julia – **Girls U12** – turned what looked like a quiet opening into a tactical battle. She won very impressively with pieces marauding over the board in an unconventional formation, which gradually overran her higher-rated opponent. A very strong effort for Julia, who has looked comfortable in all her games. Julia moves to 3/3 and will again be on the live boards today

George – **U10 Open** – was a little nervous before his match but overcame his nerves to secure a nice position from the opening – his middlegame resulted in the most dynamic, chaotic opening in the tournament to date. After securing a won position, George's opponent (rated hundreds of point higher than him) found incredible resources to swing the game back, only for George to once again take control with a lovely Queen sacrifice and a won position, determined to give his father and coach a heart attack – he proceeded to hand over his winning position to his seeded opponent until once again, somehow, attaining a drawn position. His opponent declined George's draw offer, but this time George took complete control and brought home the full point, to leave his father and coach Charlie 'Sniper' Storey amazed at the rollercoaster that was witnessed on the live boards at Chess24.com. George is now on 100% despite being a massive underdog in the seedings – a truly remarkable start to this World tournament and more live board action tomorrow! Game of the Tournament so far!

Jacob was on top board in in the **U12 Open** – a real achievement. He played a good game against a highly-rated Indian IM who has some notable victories to his name. The opening was broadly level, but his opponent developed a nagging edge which then became a decisive central advantage. Jacob can take a lot from the loss and looks well placed in round 4 ... [below – James, Shreyas and Nishchal]



Girls U12

Anum Sheikh lost a tough, well-played game. Her opponent headed for an unfamiliar position with a new system which led to a balanced situation where Anum had more experience in the middlegame. The pressure from the middlegame resulted in a complicated endgame, which her opponent played without error. Anum missed some better plans – I am sure she will learn from this game.

Niamh Bridgeman's preparation was sidestepped, but good understanding of the opening principles ensured her middlegame had excellent attacking chances, and she delivered a brutal attack to set her tournament on fire! A great win for Niamh.

Abigail and Jessica were the last two to finish on the day – Abigail beat a talented WCM from America to progress to 2/3. Jessica bounced back well to win a long game against a player from Azerbaijan

Boys U12

Giulio Sahinoz' preparation was sidestepped by his opponent, but this meant his opponent was in slightly unfamiliar territory. Giulio used his positional skill in his middlegame to transform into a very good endgame, which he converted very well.

James Merriman played a nice combination to win and move on to 1.5/3.

Adam Hussain played a strong game to overwhelm his opponent, and he also moves to 1.5/3

Girls U10

Roxolana beat the Austrian Girls Champion to move on to 2/3, bouncing back well from tough round 2.

Keerthana was narrowly beaten by a talented player from Bulgaria and remains well positioned on 1.5/3.

Boys U10

Shreyas and Nishchal won their games relatively quickly against lower-rated opponents, and both move to a promising 2/3.

Come on England team – 14/14 is the next target!

Round 4

It was back to rain in Spain on 5th day, Thursday. The Rain God is busy here in Santiago – the weather is one of the most talked about things after may be e4 or d4 or c4 or Nf3. The England team was put to a severe test here at the WCCC – most of the players were playing stronger opposition. Overall it was not such a bad score, and fights over the board did not reflect the final score. Most of the players spent a lot of energy on their matches – a scene I will never forget, so hats off to all the players, one can only admire their commitment and will.

England 5.5/14. The team still achieved some fantastic individual performances, with the majority of the team still playing after four hours.

Highlights include — Julia U12 Open

On 3/3, Julia continued her excellent run to hold a difficult draw with black against a strong Russian opponent. The game lasted over five hours, and Julia showed great determination to defend a position where her opponent was creating many tactical threats. Julia remains amongst the leaders in her section on 3.5/4 and takes great confidence in remaining unbeaten.

George U10 Open – on 3/3 and facing a very strong opponent some 500 points higher-rated, this was always going to be a tough game! Coach, parent and player decided playing for a draw was a very wise approach and preparation went very well as the game was played out live on Chess24.com. George faced some early problems but handled them very well to achieve equality before securing a small edge as the middlegame surfaced. A timely draw offer, with an equal position, saw his opponent happy with the draw and leaving George with a great half-point with Black. More live board action to come tomorrow!

James U12 Open – facing an opponent rated 2100 from Spain, James produced a strong attacking performance with Black, seizing the initiative from the outset, which he gradually translated into victory after four and half hours. This was an excellent win.

Shreyas U10 Open – after a difficult opening, Shreyas recovered fantastically to outplay his opponent in a very instructive endgame. Shreyas moves on to 3/4 and has great momentum, getting closer to the leaders after a loss in round one. Watch out leaders – Shreyas is coming ...

U12 Girls

Anum – her preparation saw her apply direct pressure with Black, not an easy feat at this level. Her middlegame saw her secure a Bishop Pair, but she swapped this advantage a bit too early. Even that was a comfortable plus in the end. It was all going fine, but in the 5th hour of the game there was an endgame blunder which allowed her opponent to draw. She was the last warrior on the battlefield yesterday from England.

Niamh – her preparation secured a small advantage, which translated to a very secure Super Knight. Could she then improve her remaining pieces? Yes, excellent technique ensured she brought home another full point for England. After a tough start she has bounced back with 2/2. Can she make it 3? Abigail showed remarkable strength and resilience to play her fourth game lasting longer than four hours. She made a brave decision to look for win when a draw was possible. Unfortunately, the plan did not work out and she was narrowly beaten. It is so impressive to see the kids work hard on the board for more than 4 hours. Abbey – way to go!

Jessica faced a tough game against a WFM from America, and she was narrowly beaten in some middle game combinations which became favourable for her opponent. Another great effort from Jessica on the live boards

U12 Boys

Adam had a good game drawing against a higher-rated Spanish opponent with white. Jacob was unfortunate to lose a tight tactical game against a strong Canadian player, making an unexpected error in a complex position. Giulio's preparation went okay, and Giulio then chose a slightly different path, which resulted in a cramped situation for his own pieces. His opponent turned the screw and found a very ingenious Bishop sacrifice which led to a devastating attack, which meant more ways to keep Giulio's pieces bottled up, and even Houdini himself could not have escaped. Suddenly Giulio did what Houdini could not and got back to full equality – but sadly the efforts took its toll and the opponent found another way and bagged the win.

U10 Boys

Nischal battled for long time against a strong Indian player with the black pieces and emerged with a positive draw.

U10 Girls

Roxolana faced a higher-rated Spanish opponent and lost a close game with the black pieces. She is now on 2/2 and remains very positive moving into round 5. Keerthana played a very under-rated opponent from China and lost a complex game after a hard battle.

Kudos to all the players for trying hard – you are doing the right thing, so keep going!

Round 5

Friday the 9th of November saw another orange weather alert at Santiago. WCCC2018 will be remembered by the weather, along with the good chess our players are playing in the hall. We could hear the hiss of the wind all day long in the venue. Most of the players were drenched with rain while coming to the venue and had to dry themselves up before they could start the game. The round started at normal time though, and this time the organisers did not suspend play. It was largely a tough day for the England team who scored 4.5/14.

One feature of the event so far has been the large number of long games for the English in the Girls U12 event, where most of the girls have been regularly going into the last hour of play while the majority of competitors have finished. Great credit is due to Abigail, Anum, Jessica, Julia and Niamh for battling so hard, and to their parents for braving the waiting areas in gale force winds with limited refreshments!

Highlights - Julia's excellent run continued as she secured a strong draw with black. The match became very complicated in the middlegame, and Julia successfully navigated the complications, which at one point looked challenging, to draw with the 7th seed from Albania. Julia remains amongst the leaders on 4/5.

A great day in the **U10 Girls** – Roxolana and Keerthana bounced back from round four defeats to beat players from Canada and Italy respectively. Keerthana played a fantastic game, her best game so far of the tournament. I heard one of the coaches say that it was almost a perfect game with only a very

minor mistake, and they would have been proud to play a game like that! What a compliment and what a time to play such a game!

George - **U10 Open** - played an incredibly complicated game against the number one Russian player. The early middlegame featured some tremendous complications where there were chances for both sides. The complications resolved in his opponent's favour, but George again showed great ingenuity on the live boards, keeping spectators interested. We are looking forward to the next round, George ...

U12 Girls

Abigail showed fantastic resilience to draw another very long game after five hours – her fifth game beyond four hours, and she was the last England player to finish. Jessica fought very hard in a complex position but was narrowly beaten in a tight ending. Anum, against a strong Chinese player, worked hard to obtain a position where an advantage seemed likely, but she made a small miscalculation, which gave her opponent a decisive advantage. This was so far her shortest game, and hopefully the things will improve after a good night's sleep. Niamh had a back-and-forth battle, where the advantage changed hands several times, and unfortunately her opponent eventually took final advantage – Niamh lost after five hours. In the endgame, even the England spectators were trying to find a draw, but it seemed to be a difficult position to hold.

U12 Open

Jacob launched a strong attack in the middle game, which gave him a strong material advantage, which he converted into a positive win. This was a welcome relief on a tough day. Keep it up, Jacob! James made a positional mistake in the opening and chose to enter complications instead of accepting a long-term disadvantage. The complications did not work out and he lost to a higher-rated opponent in the middlegame. Giulio lost a complicated game against an underrated player from China with white. He had a promising position in the middlegame, but a lapse in concentration meant he suddenly lost the advantage. Unlucky I would say – the next day will be better. Adam lost a difficult game against a higher-rated Spanish opponent with black.

U10 Boys

Shreyas got into trouble in the early middlegame but fought valiantly to stay in the game. A number of exchanges were made in the middlegame, and at one point it looked like there may be an opportunity for perpetual check. Unfortunately, the checks ran out and Shreyas lost to a late tactical exchange. Nishchal continued a solid run in the tournament, achieving another draw with a strong player from Poland. Nischal enjoyed the middlegame, with two nice Bishops, and was calling the shots for most of the game. In the end, an opposing passed pawn made things equal.

That is all from Santiago for now – hopefully we will bring more chess and better weather ...

Round 6

10th November was relatively pleasant while coming to the venue. There was no rain (at least when we arrived at the hall). In the evening however, the rain gods again got busy. We almost felt like we had a shower while we walked from hall to the buses outside, while going back. During this time in Spain, when it rains it pours ...

In general the parents have fallen into a mundane routine by now, rain or no rain. Coming to the venue, waiting for hours together outside and tuning into the Whatsapp group has become a kind of schedule. It seems within no time at all we are half way through, even with such a bad weather. The routine has made time fly. The England delegation is enjoying the time here – the group is wonderful, irrespective of some issues here and there.

Coming to the results, a much stronger round today with the team scoring 9/14 to bounce back well after a tough round five.

Highlights - Julia, **U12 girls**, maintained her unbeaten run with a great draw against the top seed from France on the live boards, and moved to 4.5/6, remaining amongst the leaders. It was a very long game, longest for any English player so far ... and for the second day running both **U10 girls** won their games - Keerthana played a strong attack, sacrificing a rook and bishop to achieve checkmate. Roxolana beat a French opponent with black and is well positioned on 4/6.

U12 Girls

Abbey played strong game, maybe the best for her in the event to achieve a nice win. Jessica launched a fine kingside attack to achieve an excellent victory. Niamh was unlucky to lose a difficult game and is ready to bounce back after a tough set of games. Anum played well with black to beat a determined opponent from Spain. It was a quick win.

U12 Open

Jacob showed great inventiveness in the opening to reach a strong position, from where he moved on to win and should be back on live boards in round 7 with 4/6. James played aggressively in the opening to fall into a well-known opening trap, which has caught out many good players – he was not able to recover against a higher-rated opponent. Adam played a strong game before a small misjudgement in the middlegame cost him the initiative, and he went to lose to a higher-rated Spanish opponent. Giulio won a quick, confident game against an opponent from Thailand.

U10 Boys

Shreyas got back in his winning groove to beat a talented candidate master from Mongolia. George played a very long, exciting game where he was narrowly beaten in the closing stages by a strong American opponent. Nishchal maintained a very solid run to draw with a German candidate master. It looked scary in the end, but the draw was the correct result.

The team is looking forward to carrying the momentum into round 7. Everything is possible, even 14/14 maybe (who knows)?

Round 7

First thing we need to talk about in Santiago is the weather. Today the weather improved – it only rained for part of the day (a relief in itself)! While you are enjoying your weekend, dear readers, there is no such thing here. Chess rounds are held and played every day, even through the weekend. Players will have some respite only at end of this week – till that time we have to go through these 4-5 hour battles.

Santiago de Compostela is a UNESCO World Heritage City, but our hotel is perched on a hillside outside of town, and the funky modern venue is perched on another hillside, also outside town, with buses shuttling us between the two. So, for the dedicated England kids and parents, all of the historic city centre remains unseen. Your reporter today, though, exploited the break in the weather and found a beautiful stone city, full of hikers with backpacks, waterproofs, staffs and scallop shells undertaking a watery pilgrimage along the Camino.

Back to the chess, pilgrims! After yesterday's strong showing, the pairings were tough. We scored 7/14, not bad. Today was the shortest day for England team in the playing hall. All rounds were wrapped up in roughly 4 hours. Are we tired – coaches, please check the players out ...

In the **U12 boys**, we had 2 wins and 2 losses. James won quickly to cheer his grandfather Peter, who is taking over parental duties from John. Giulio continued his strong bounce back with his second win on the trot. Sadly, though, Jacob and Adam lost tough encounters.

In the **U10 boys**, Shreyas drew a long game against a Ukrainian who leads the event in FIDE points gained. Today also a dreaded England – England pairing occurred in the U10s. Nishchal and George fought to a gentlemanly draw after flexing their French theory, and the game balanced overall.

Yesterday the girls scored 6.5/7, so today was going to be a lot harder. However, Keerthana in the U10 girls continues strongly with another win, this time from a nice kingside attack. Tomorrow she faces her strongest opponent yet as she closes in on the live boards. Roxolana sadly lost to a higher-rated opponent.

In the **U12 girls**, Julia continues her fine form – undefeated in the tournament so far – winning this time against a higher-rated Women Candidate Master (WCM) and she is third equal overall now, facing another WCM tomorrow. Jessica also won again in a complex rook endgame, exhibiting very good technique. Abbey and Anum, however, unfortunately lost this round. Niamh had a very long game which ended in a draw.

We also had a very special guest visit today. Andrew Horton, who becomes an IM on Monday, and who played in U14 and U16 Worlds not so many years ago, is on a gap year in Spain from Durham University. He dropped in to the parents' area and took on our coaches at blitz today! I'm confident we've got the talent participating in this event to bring on the next generation of titled players like Andrew!

We are now moving to the business end of the tournament – a final push and we can get good scores. Players, please keep going. We are almost there, and you can see the finishing line now ...



Round 8

What a welcome break to be able to enjoy a leisurely walk to breakfast this morning – a pleasant change to the usual dressing-up in ponchos just to brave the 10-metre dash to the dining room in the main hotel building. Due to this change in the weather, some of the parents made the most of the blue skies and headed into the historic town. Having the rest day cancelled because of the severe weather warning meant there is a danger of many of us never seeing anything of Santiago (other than the hotel and venue). Your reporter today managed to get his kid away from a chess board for 3 hours and took him reluctantly to see the cathedral. Certainly not a highlight of his trip, but it was a welcome break. The tennis court is also getting some good use now, with the girls playing together to enjoy some fresh air and exercise.

James is managing to combine his talent for both football and chess by taking on the Canadian delegation in the morning football game. Quite a few of us are also having a break from the hotel food. I'd like to say that the local Spanish cuisine is on the menu, but the children are opting for the more popular pizza option.

Back to the black and white jungle, where the kids are playing at highest level they can. The England team scored 5.5/14, but the score you are reading here, dear reader, does not tell you the level of fight, the depth of emotions and the amount of energy these kids spend on the board. It needs to be seen here on the battlefield, first hand, to be able to comprehend.

Highlights - U10 Girls – Keerthana had a great opening but missed a critical pawn break and unfortunately got her Queen trapped. She is sure to make a successful come back in the next round. Roxolana tried hard to play against the slow 1.c4 and got a good game. Somewhere in the middle she lost control of the position and the result was not in her favour. Another game, another day and you can come back.

U10 Open

Shreyas battled on from a losing position and wore his opponent down to force the draw. His opponent fell into time trouble and although still in a winning position, couldn't act on the advantage. Well done Shreyas for keeping up the fight.

George was clearly better from opening but then he rushed his advantage and allowed a Sniper Bishop counter attack! It proved to be deciding factor in the game. George – still three more rounds to go, so keep trying.

U12 Girls

Abbey had a tough game, which went both ways from time to time. The pendulum swung many times, but Abbey was the one who ended up making the last mistake. Another day, Abbey, you can make a new start and I wouldn't like to be your opponent in the next round! Abbey will be determined to get the win.

Jess had her best result ever – she sent a clear message to the U12 European Champion and Russian Number 3 that she means business. Jess played better the whole game and has only just turned 11 – great job, Jess!

Julia was psychologically prepared for her opponent's highly aggressive instincts and she indeed managed to engineer a reasonably scary piece sacrifice. However, Julia defended well and an error for the opponent clarified Black's advantage, after which Julia mopped up very efficiently to move to an excellent 6.5/8.

Niamh started well and could actually see an early advantage. However, after some moves the advantage disappeared due to some natural, but maybe not precise enough, moves. After that she fought like a tiger to secure a nice draw!

Anum has not been able to play as well so far as she might have liked. Today she was on Black side of a Sicilian and found herself against a well-prepared opponent. The game went into a sharp English attack and both players found themselves in a position where the kings were castled on opposite sides. There was a time scramble to complete the first 40 moves. In the time trouble Anum was the first one to go wrong and it was decisive.

U12 Open

Adam got a great position out of the opening, but the game soon slipped to an equal position. Adam wasn't going to let it finish there, however. He then played very well to win – well done Adam!

Jacob played an opening that his opponent just wasn't prepared for. The Spanish player made a blunder early on and was completely lost after 10 minutes. He continued to play an unknown position and Jacob didn't give him a chance for a comeback. Jacob's quickest game of the tournament, finishing in just 90 minutes.

Nishchal had the better of a complicated game but missed the chance to break through a few moves from the end. White was then able to block the break with his queen, which curiously could never be dislodged, and a rather frustrating fifth draw in a row became inevitable.

James was better after the opening but chose a plan which lost him control above the important d4 central square. He later lost material and the game too, but James is not one take this lying down and will be focused on the win in the next round.

Giulio missed his chance for a lethal middlegame attack and his opponent capitalised with his own lethal attack. After a good night's sleep, we will surely see a refreshed Giulio back on the table, ready to go for it.

Just three more rounds to go – come on England, let's have a strong finish!

Round 9

The rain is now just a distant memory, and everyone is enjoying the sunshine and warmer temperatures. The dreaded tent, where organisers expected the guardians of 850 players to wait in hurricane weather conditions, has now become a pleasant place to hang out. The team are making good use of the clothing stand, with most of our children wearing their World Cadets team hoodies when relaxing around the hotel. Fluorescent orange seems to be the colour of choice so far. Parents are finding creative ways to pass the time – one group of parents were participating in a crossword challenge (not University Challenge standards but still difficult none the less!) Fortunately, the WiFi

connection is working well at the venue so that any unknown answers could be Googled. It just shows that us parents don't quite have the stamina and determination to succeed like our England players! Today was also the day to thank the Head of Delegation for the fantastic job he has been doing to make sure everything continues to run smoothly for the team. That included a lot of administration with the organisers immediately after landing in Santiago airport. The HoD stayed behind at the airport well into the early hours of the morning, organising players' passes while the rest of the team were tucked up in bed. The HoD has also been the first person in and last person out of the playing hall, staying until every one of the England Team's players have finished their games, making sure that the children are met by their guardians and that they all get back to the buses safely. We showed our appreciation by presenting the Head of Delegation with a Santiago de Compostela cup displaying a picture of an umbrella and rain clouds and a souvenir jumper. So look out for him at chess tournaments wearing his jumper with pride!

Back to the chess news for WCCC2018. The England team scored an impressive 10/14 in Round 9.

Highlights - **U10 Girls** – Keerthana won a nice game in about 3 hours time. She was all smiles and enjoyed her win to reach 5/9. Roxolana looked a little disappointed with a draw and wanted to bring the whole point home. Still a couple of rounds left – better luck next time.

U10 Open

George met a powerful Kingside attack with some good defence then found another good defence idea to make his position even better. Sadly, a slight flaw was found in the idea and George could not recover from the attack – he's looking to bounce back tomorrow. Shreyas played very well for most parts of the game until he made a blunder. Having said that, he still managed to hold onto the game and win. Amazing fight back!

U12 Girls

Niamh's home preparation enabled a favourable middle game and she was able to build a strong attack from this. She then huffed and puffed at her opponents King and blew his house down!

Anum's game was an incredible feat of hard work and memory. The game was 100% preparation on her part and an amazing attacking masterpiece win for a very mature performance. The preparation ran deep into 18th move when the game was actually over for the opponent.

Jess won after getting her preparation reaching a pawn up ending where white has compensation. Jess



played very accurately, and the game only ever looked like there would be one result.

Abbey played a very aggressive opening today, going for the kill from move 1. Her tactical prowess was far too much for her opponent to deal with – it was a fantastic game!

Julia [left] was playing the leader on board one today, there was a certain buzz about it. The arbiter came over to congratulate me when he saw the English flag on board one.

Congratulations, Julia, we are proud of you, no matter what the results are. When the clocks were pressed Julia started well and the game looked balanced till the 15th move, when probably she overlooked a move to create an annoying passed pawn. After further moves the game worsened and ultimately ended in a loss.

This was the first loss in the tournament for Julia, so far. Two more rounds and lot to play for, we are looking forward to some brilliant chess again.

U12 Open

Giulio played a smooth opening and gradually increased his advantage before building up so much pressure that his opponent had nothing left, giving Giulio the nice win.

Jacob's opening didn't go as planned and it slowly developed into a massive attack for his opponent.

However, the player missed a six-move checkmate and Jacob was able to obtain a draw by perpetual check.

Nishchal played another marathon game today, another draw. He has now drawn six games in a row! So near to bring the other half point too. Keep working Nischal, you will get it soon.

James had the longest game today of the England team – he kept fighting till the 4th hour. The game ended equal in the end.

Adam played a steady game today, and his opponent at one point missed tactics which Adam took advantage of to bring the whole point home.

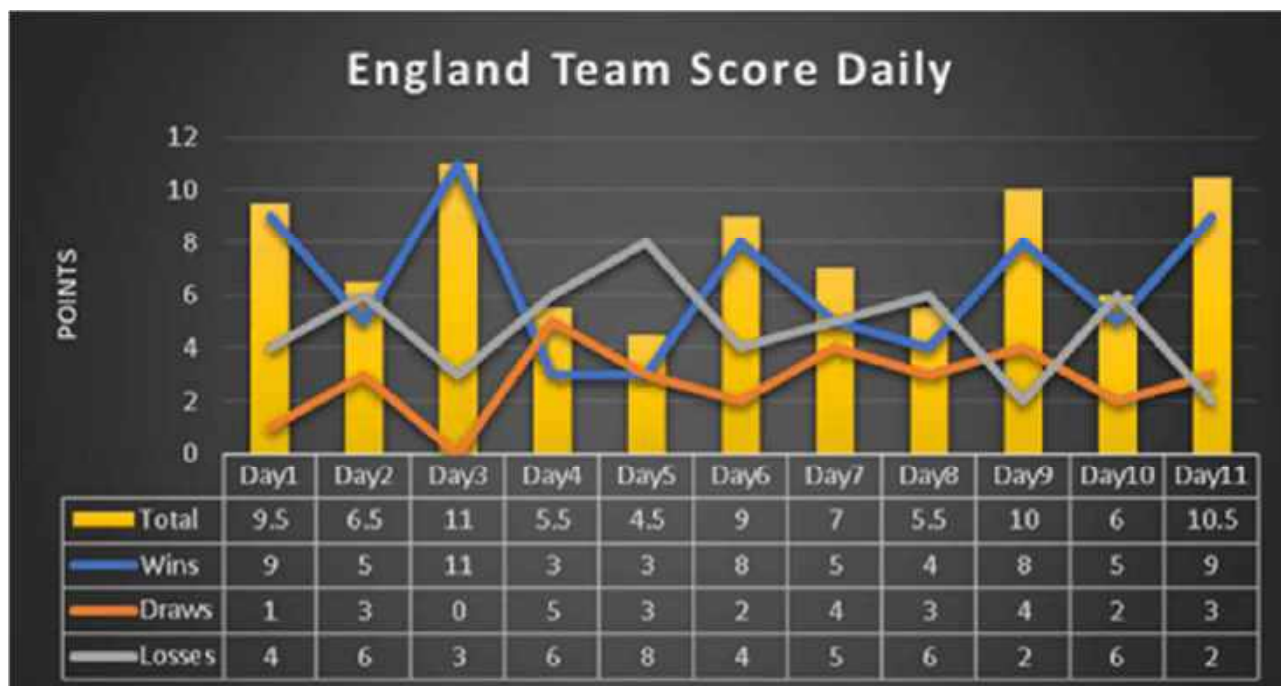
Tomorrow is going to be the last day to have a round start at 16:00 local time. The day after, the rounds start at 14:00 local time. The players need a final push to play with same energy and focus if not more. The parents and coaches are doing their best to make sure the final rounds go as smoothly as possible. We will bring you more chess and news for the last two rounds soon ...

Rounds 10 & 11

The last two round days were the best in terms of weather at Santiago. There was even a time during these days that people sweated in the tents that are provided for parents – the last day in particular was nice and warm. The photographers were training their cameras at top boards on the last day, but there were no England players on the top boards, unfortunately. However, the England juniors have been improving fast, based on last few years results. If there is good supporting environment for kids, we may soon find some promising players and results. What do you think?

Some parents were seen busy basking in the sun of the last couple of days, and some were seen checking the airport transfer times as published. It was difficult to conclude whether the parents and coaches were more relieved because the tournament was coming to an end or that the weather was turning better. Overall the trip was a mix of bad weather and good chess. The parents and coaches had a good time and the players enjoyed their games. A normal free day would have been lot better, but who can control the weather?

In terms of results I am summarising both individual performance and overall team performance in the graph and the table below —



| Players | Section | R1 | R2 | R3 | R4 | R5 | R6 | R7 | R8 | R9 | R10 | R11 | Total |
|------------------|-----------|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------|
| Keerthana Easwar | U10 Girls | 0.5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 6.5 |
| Roxolana Chaban | U10 Girls | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 1 | 6 |
| George Clarkson | U10 Open | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 6 |
| Nishchal Thatte | U10 Open | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 6 |
| Shreyas Royal | U10 Open | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 7 |
| Anum Sheikh | U12 Girls | 1 | 0.5 | 0 | 0.5 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 5 |
| Jessica Mellor | U12 Girls | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Abigail Weersing | U12 Girls | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0.5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0.5 | 6 |
| Niamh Bridgeman | U12 Girls | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 1 | 1 | 0.5 | 5.5 |
| Julia Volovich | U12 Girls | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6.5 |
| Jacob Yoon | U12 Open | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0.5 | 1 | 0.5 | 7 |
| James Merriman | U12 Open | 0 | 0.5 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0.5 | 1 | 1 | 6 |
| Giulio Sahinoz | U12 Open | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 6 |
| Adam Hussain | U12 Open | 0 | 0.5 | 1 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 5 |

That is all from Santiago – we shall see you soon in England. I wish all the players, parents and coaches of England and rest of the delegations a safe journey and good times. Good bye and good luck from me

--- Nasarullah Sheikh, HOD WCCC2018, Santiago, Spain

Senior Tournaments 2018

European Senior Teams

Round 1

We are seeded 6 of just 12 teams. This had the advantage that we met the bottom seed, Finland, in round 1. Roger was first to finish, having won a pawn with the Black pieces on move 7. I was next to finish with a very convincing victory. It took some time as I had to work out the ramifications of my combination. Kevin then agreed a fairly quick draw, and it was left to Andrew to grind out a relatively long endgame. So, 3.5-0.5. These events are decided first on match points, so winning by a big margin is not so important. Still, we are placed 1-2= after 1 round. The red-hot favourites, Italy could only win 3-1. There are 15 teams in the 65+ section. By comparison, England are sending 44 players in 9 teams to the World Senior Team Chess Championship. It is not too late to join in, yet very few non-European teams enter the WSTCC.

Round 2

Somewhat surprisingly we found ourselves playing the number 2 seeds in Round 2. This was because our expected opponents, the third seeds, lost to the Polish team, so it was Russia Women with 3 WGMs and a WIM.

Roger, having won in round 1, was gung-ho to play round 2, so I stepped down. This was probably a

mistake. Roger found himself swept aside. Gareth, making his debut for the team, gained a slight advantage, but then offered a draw, a bit overawed by the reputation of his opponent. Kevin, again, had the Black pieces, was reasonably satisfied with his opening, but then went downhill. His opponent played a neat combination at the end to queen a pawn. It was left to Andrew to make things more even. He had a hair-raising game and got very short of time, basically playing on the increment. He made a serious error, which the Russian WGM failed to capitalise on. It turns out he would still have had enough for a draw. Then he played a snazzy way to reach a winning endgame. So we lost 1.5-2.5. Our game points are 5/8.



Round 3

The match of the day in the 50+ was Russia Women v German Women. They are the only two women's teams in this event. The Russians won 3-1 on board 1.

Finland Culture Chess lost 1-3 against the red-hot favourites to win, Italy.

On board 4 Spain lost 1.5-2.5 against England. Andrew Lewis, Kevin Bowmer and I all drew. Hero of the day was Gareth Jones who won a game that nearly gave me a heart attack. I tried to with rook against knight, the theory of which has been understood since the 11th Century.

Round 4

Italy beat Russian Women 2.5-1.5, more-or-less ending the fight for gold less than halfway through. The local team Walbrzych, which I still haven't learnt to pronounce, drew with us. Again, Gareth was one of the heroes and again almost gave me a heart attack. I lost quite convincingly, Andrew Lewis again was the winner of The Game of the Day.

Round 5

Came the hour and came the man, I was the man. We played Italy. Andrew, Kevin and Gareth all lost. Andre took a long time, but the result was seldom in doubt. I played IM Fabio Bellia rated 2440 with White (I'm 2024) and offered an early draw, which was spurned. Very shortly afterwards I played badly and deservedly got a bad position. Eventually Fabio made a serious error and should have taken a draw by repetition. But you could see he intended to gamble and ended up a knight down for two pawn. I managed to convert this into a win in 80 moves. I am certainly getting my money's worth regarding the time played. My administrative associate at these events, Roger Scowen, bought me a celebratory drink.

Round 6

Italy beat the German Women 3-1 and now have 12 points from 6 matches. The Russian women are second with 10/12. Belgium and Walbrzych have 7/12. England are 8th with 5/12.

We played Finland Culture Chess (we speculated whether they were smitten with British pop culture, because of Culture Club)

Although I won in round 5, I decided to take a rest day, by agreement with the other team members. I'd had three very long games. Moreover, there was a tour to a local castle in the morning that I wanted to go on. That is the downside of playing in the afternoon. I was impressed by Andrew Lewis's was spirit. Although he had lost in round 5, he very much wanted to play today.

Unfortunately disaster struck for three of our players. Kevin Bowmer secured a big plus with White. Indeed, the computer said he was +7 at one point. But it was difficult, and Black had queen and knight against queen and rook. That is often a difficult imbalance. He could later probably have taken a draw by perpetual check but went on to lose. Next up was Roger Scowen. He had bishop and two pawns for rook. His opponent thought Roger stood better, but we have our doubts. But then he lost to a simple combination. Gareth Jones was last to finish, and he also lost a difficult game.

The bright spot was Andrew Lewis. He again won. It seems that he and Gareth are both in danger of winning board prizes.

Round 7

Italy finally won a match 4-0 against the local team, Walbrzych. One of the disadvantages of Swiss is that the leader may have to delve deeper and deeper into the pack.

England won 3.5 to 0.5 against Switzerland. They have lost all their matches but put up considerable resistance. Roger Scowen drew quite rapidly on board 4. Kevin Bowmer won quite painlessly. I went quite mad and played a variation against the Benk Gambit that I have known yields nothing for 20 years. I then blundered, and my opponent pointed out after the game how he could have won a pawn. Then he went wrong and eventually lost.

Andrew Lewis had a very long game. It lasted over 80 moves and we were all delayed going to dinner for over an hour. He had a good knight against a bad bishop. I hadn't understood his winning strategy, but it all came out right in the end.

PLACES AFTER SEVEN ROUNDS

1. Italy 14 – 21/28 game points
2. Russian Women 12 – 19
3. Belgium 9 – 18
4. German Women 8 – 16.5
5. England 7 – 15 – we were ranked 6 at the start
6. Walbrzych 7 – 12.5
7. Wsbawa 7 – 13.5
8. Finland CC 6 – 15
9. Spain 6 – 14
10. Scotland 5 10.5
11. Finland Cone 4 – 7.5
12. Switzerland 0 – 5.5

The ranking after match points is not game points, as shown here. It is Bucholz for which I have no regard.

Round 8

Italy duly won 3.5-0.5 against Spain as did the Russian women against Walbrzych. So the Italians have 16 points and Russian Women 14. From the noise and alcohol consumption of their celebrations, it seems they think they have won the competition.

Scotland 2 – 2 England

Kevin Bowmer had a rather boring draw with Rosie Giulian, following his previous game with White for quite a long way. He felt he stood somewhat worse when Rosie offered a draw.

I made a grotesque blunder and lost a whole piece for nothing in an approximately equal position. Gareth Jones had a good win. Andrew Lewis tried for many, many moves to win a drawn rook and

pawn endgame, where he stood very slightly better. Interestingly enough, he was under the impression that we had lost the match when he drew.

Round 9

65+ Final Results

Russia – 18; Germany – 16; Sweden 1 – 12; Finland 1 – 11; Scotland – 9; Germany D-BAG – 9
Denmark – 9; Sweden 2 – 8; Finland 2 – 7; Finland Turku – 6; Sweden 3 – 5
Finland RM – 5 (RM means Royal Musketeers); Finland Karhut – 3

As there were only 15 teams in this event, there had to be a bye each round. It seems a great pity that Poland couldn't raise a 65+ team. 5 of the teams were from Finland. Moreover, they had 2 teams in the 50+. Sweden had 3 teams. As there was no English entry to this event, I didn't find time to give it much attention.

50+ Final Results

Italy – 18, 28/36 game points; Russia Women – 16, 26; Belgium – 13, 24
German Women – 11, 21; Wschowa – 10, 18.5; Walbrzych – 9, 15.5; Finland CC – 8, 19.5
England – 8, 18.5 (thus we came 8th – at the start of the event we were 6th)
Spain – 6, 15.5; Scotland – 5, 13.0; Finland Cove – 4, 9.0; Switzerland – 0, 7.5

I had my second consecutive disaster, this time against the German women. I blundered a piece, succumbing to a very neat combination. The other German women were prepared to offer draws once that happened. Andrew and Gareth both said they stood worse at that stage of the game. Roger certainly didn't stand better.

Both Andrew Lewis and Gareth Jones won the Bronze medal for best Tournament Performance Rating – Andrew on board 1 and Gareth on the reserve board.

Next stop Radebeul, where we will probably be fielding 42 players in 9 teams.

— Stewart Reuben

World Senior Teams

Radebeul, Germany 7-15 July ... we have 40 players spread over nine teams, five in the 50+ age group and four in the 65+. They are spread between 4- and 5-players teams, with only 4 playing in any given match. The teams were finally set on Saturday morning at the captains' meeting – after that the order cannot be changed, nor substitutions be made.

England 2 report – Chris Fegan

England 2 have won two of their first three games at the 2018 World Senior Championships in Germany. The team, in board order, is Andrew Lewis, Mark Page, Clive Frostick and Chris Fegan, and the team have beaten Suomi Konisbaeur of Finland in Round 1 and Liechtenstein in Round 3 by the scores of 3.5-0.5 and 3-1 respectively. The team lost to England 1 in Round 2 by 3-1, which included draws for Andrew Lewis against Jon Speelman and Clive Frostick against Mark Hebden. Andrew's game is shown below. England 2 play Post SV Ulm from Germany in Round 4.

Round 2

50+

England 2 **1 – 3** England 1; England 4 **1 – 3** SV Horst-Emsar; England Women **1 – 3** SC Grobenzoll Semreverde **0 – 4** England 3

In case you didn't realise, the first named team has white on odd. One of our GMs didn't know this tonight

65+

USV TV Dresden **1 – 3** England 1

England 2 **1 – 3** Sweden 1 – this was revenge for that match Saturday (but that was football); England 4 **2 – 2** SK 2012; England 3 **1 – 3** SK 1968

Electrifying news from Round 4!



50+ England 1 beat the favourites USA **2.5-1.5**! They now have **8/8**. All 8 players are GMs. Only Joel Benjamin was not originally USSR. Shabalov drew with Jon Speelman; Benjamin lost to John Emms; Ehlvest drew with James Plaskett; Kudrin drew with Keith Arkell.

Keith had an early draw, possibly exhausted by his feat in winning the Blitz Tournament the previous evening. Jon Speelman stood somewhat better, but there wasn't enough to win. James Plaskett held on grimly against Jaan Ehlvest. So, it was left to team captain, John Emms [above], to win a queen and pawn endgame where he had an extra pawn.

Of course, there are 5 more rounds and England are only seeded fourth.

— Stewart Reuben [picture – John Emms at the British 2017]

Round 3

50+

England 1 **3 – 1** SC Grobenzell; Liechtenstein **1 – 3** England 2; England 3 **3.5 – 1.5** SG Priestewitz; SK Kaltenkirchen **1 – 3** England Women; Suomi Konigsbae **3 – 1** England 4

65+

England 1 **3 – 1** Norway 1; Grand-Munster **1 – 3** England 2; TuR Dresden **1.5 – 2.5** England 4; Mongolian Women **1.5 – 2.5** England 3

That both English first teams had 6/6 after 3 rounds was the big news. Later the pairings were published, showing that they were both playing the top seeds in each event, USA (playing for the first time) in the 50+ and Russia in the 65+.

The big news of the day though was that Keith Emerton won on board 4 for England 4, thus enabling him to win the match. England 3 played the most exotic team in the whole event, the Mongolian Women. They are the only women's team in the 65+ and it was suggested they move to the 50+. This would have done away with the byes in both events, but they decided to stay put. Our only winner in that match was our lone woman player in the 65+, Julie Denning. Her win enabled England 3 to win and thus escape the dreaded bye – at least for the moment. Both these wins demonstrate that rating isn't everything and that it is possible to enjoy these events, even though a somewhat weaker player.

Round 4

50+ (did I mention that England 1 beat the USA?)

England 2 **2 – 2** Post SV; TU Magdeburg **2 – 2** England 3; England Women **1.5 – 2.5** Rheinland Platz; sadly England 4 had the bye

65+

Russia **2.5 – 1.5** England 1; England 2 **2 – 2** Switzerland; England 4 **1 – 3** Sachsen-Anhalt; England 3 **1.5 – 2.5** Wales Dehoubarth

Round 5 / interim Round 6

England 1 beat Thüringen **2.5 – 1.5** today. They now have 11/12, having drawn earlier with Lasker Schachsfitt. Endes GM drew with Jon Speelman; Brueggeman drew with John Emms; Casper IM drew with Mark Hebden; Ruether lost to Keith Arkell

Keith has the exciting score of **4.5/5** and none of our players has lost a game.

Lasker are 2 – 1 against Germany 2. They look like winning the last game. Then they will also have 11/12 and one more game point than us ... BUT they still have to play the USA, the highest rated team, who we beat earlier. A fuller report of all our 9 teams and 40 players will appear later. It is very hard to keep track and also play

50+

England (seeded 4) played Lasker-Schachstiff (seeded 3). All 4 games were drawn. We are joined in round 6 by Thüringen who have the same score, 4 wins and 1 draw, but have met weaker opposition – we play them Wednesday. On the other hand, they have scored more game points.

England 3 **1 – 3** Russian Women; Germany Women 2 **1 – 3** England 2; Leichtenstein **1.5 – 2.5** England Women

Sheila Jackson lost, but our two ex-German players won.

England 4 **0.5 – 3.5** Nieder Osterreich

65+

England 1 **2.5 – 1.5** Veteranen-Grez; Schachfreunde **2.5 – 1.5** England 2; Sturtebeker **3 – 1** England 4; BSV Chemi Rade **1.5 – 2.5** England 3

Brian Ewart won in 19 moves. It was only during the round that I noticed how low-rated that team is. In a way, it is like a second bye. Still, England 3 had problems but have overtaken England 4. I play for that team on board 1. I didn't have a good position but had equalised at the point where my opponent offered me a draw. I went to look at the other game still continuing, and Keith Emerton was totally lost. So, I continued, got the better of it and then lost trying to win!

England 2 report 2 – Chris Fegan

England 2 have drawn two and won one of their three 'middle round matches' at the 2018 World Senior Championships in Germany. The team have beaten Germany Women 2 and drawn with Post SV Ulm and SC Empor Potsdam 1952eV. England 2 will now play Chess Friends Leipzig 1 in Round 7.

Round 6

I resolved that, when all four home countries were represented in the WSTCC, there would be a special additional prize. This year, for the first time England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales are fielding teams in both the 50+ and the 65+. The prize, consisting of medals for each player and a trophy for the federation or captain, is as follows — The Best Improvement in Ranking in the Competition

After 6 rounds, England 3 65+ are 21 places ahead of their initial ranking and Ireland 50+ 14 ahead.

England 2 50+ are also doing well at +9. Of course, this is a type of rating prize. England 1 50+ may win the World 50+ Championship, but they can only go up 3 places. I could have made the prize solely for the English, but I suppose my memory goes back to the BCF, the objects of which were to develop chess in the Commonwealth.

Round 7 – tension mounts

I had an early draw, and thus have been able to kibitz other games. John Emms, captain of England 1 50+, had a very early win on board 1. David Cummings (Canada) made a beginner's blunder. Of course, David was originally English ...

Round 7 was very tense indeed in the 50+. John Emms, the English captain had a very easy win against David Cummings of Canada, due to an elementary blunder on his part in a difficult position. Mark Hebden and Keith Arkell won handily enough. Keith won a rook and pawn endgame that I thought was quite difficult, but he said was easy. He now has 5.5/6. But James Plaskett had rook and f and h pawn against rook. That is a notoriously difficult endgame for both players. Eventually James won in 88 moves.

Thus, England have 13/14. Unfortunately, Lasker also won 4-0, so they remain one game point ahead of us with two rounds to go. We still have Germany 1 to plan; Lasker have the USA, the top seeds who we beat earlier.

England 2 won **3 – 1** against Eppingen; England Women lost **0.5 – 3.5** against Oranje 1; England 3 lost **1.5 – 2.5** against Sweden South; England 4 finally managed a result, drawing **2 – 2**

65+

England 1 **3 – 1** Eppingen – Nigel Povah was again last to finish, grinding out a win; Stiftung **3 – 1** England 2; England 3 **1.5 – 2.5** Oranje 1; England 4 **2.5 – 1.5** Sweden 2

Round 9

England move into the sole lead with one round to go on Sunday. We again won 4-0 this time against a Leipzig team. Lasker lost to the USA, who now move into second position. In the last round we will play Germany 1 and, if we win will win the World 50 team championship. If we draw, then the USA can still overtake us by winning more individual games. The worst we can now do is get the bronze medals.

England 1 2444 – Schachfreunde Leipzig 1 2219

1. GM Jon S Speelman 2493 – CM Steffen Weitzer 2288 **1-0**
2. GM H James Plaskett 2455 – Andreas Schultz 2211 **1-0**
3. GM Mark L Hebden 2423 – FM Manfred Schoeneberg 2199 **1-0**
4. GM Keith C Arkell 2406 – FM Thomas Gempe 2178 **1-0**

Surely the main news of the day is that in the 65+ England 4 beat England 3 2.5-1.5. That's my team and we now have 8/16 and in the British Isles Improvement in Ranking are +13. Ireland in the 50+ are +30. Going into the last round, both England and the USA had 25 game points. We knew that the USA were heavy favourites to win against Canada, and that a draw against Germany 1 would be insufficient. We needed to win the match to secure gold, despite beating the USA in our individual match. Jon Speelman and John Emms drew quite quickly. Mark Hebden stood much worse but managed to wriggle out to draw a queen and pawn endgame where he was two pawns down. James Plaskett had much the worst of it throughout and eventually lost. He was very upset because he didn't understand that a draw would still have left us with the silver medals 'only'. That was the only game we lost in the whole event.

Thus, there was some disappointment at the end, but we had only ever achieved bronze before and the opposition was stronger than previous years. It was generally agreed that the first team gelled better together than previously. I wrote earlier that the most exotic team in the competition is the Mongolian Women, but the team that England 3 50+ played in Round 8 runs it close. This is the USA 4 Brothers. Their name is Jhunjhnuwala and they came originally from Hong Kong, where five brothers once represented Hong Kong in the Chess Olympiad. Presumably they now live stateside.

Results and medals

| 50+ | Match points | Game points | Medal |
|-----------|--------------|--------------|--------------------|
| USA | 16 | 28 | Gold |
| England 1 | 15 | 26.5 | Silver |
| Lasker | 15 | 26 | Bronze |
| Board | Medal | Name | Rating performance |
| 2 | Silver | John Emms | 2549 |
| 4 | Bronze | Mark Hebden | 2420 |
| 5 | Gold | Keith Arkell | 2585 |
| W50+ | Match points | Game points | Medal |
| Russia | 11 | 19 | Gold |
| Germany | 10 | 18 | Silver |
| England | 9 | 18 | Bronze |

| Board | Medal | Name | Rating performance |
|-------|--------|----------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Bronze | Sheila Jackson | 2068 |
| 4 | Silver | Petra Nunn | 2078 |

This was the first time we had managed to field a women's team. The women played in open competition against the other teams. Some women, like Julie Denning, played for an open team. We must hope that, in due course, this event will become more like the Olympiad where there are nearly as many women's teams as open.

| 65+ | Match points | Game points | Medal |
|---------------|--------------|-------------|--------|
| Russia | 18 | 27 | Gold |
| St Petersburg | 14 | 23.5 | Silver |
| Germany 2 | 14 | 22 | Bronze |
| Germany 1 | 13 | 22 | Fourth |
| England 1 | 13 | 21.5 | Fifth |

There are cash prizes down to fifth place. We played St Petersburg in the last round and drew 2-2. Had we won 2.5-1.5, we would have finished second. All the games were drawn. Had Tony Stebbings managed to win his game, the last of ours to finish, we would have secured silver!

Nigel Povah, playing on board 3 and team captain, won the gold medal with a rating performance of 2572. Was that his best-ever performance?

Ireland 50+ won the new trophy for Best Improvement by a British Isles Team, gaining 18 places over their original seeding. A fuller report on all the teams and players will appear later.

— Stewart Reuben

Women's Team report – Radebeul 2018



England Women's 50+ Team, left to right - Helen Frostick, Ingrid Lauterbach, Petra Nunn, Sheila Jackson

For the first time, England sent a women's team to the World Senior Team Championship which this year took place in Radebeul, Germany. In a very efficiently organised competition, the English 50+ team, consisting of Sheila Jackson 4½/9, Ingrid Lauterbach 4½/9, Helen Frostick 2½/9 and Petra Nunn 6½/9, won the bronze medal in the women's section with 9/18 match points behind the strong Russian and German teams. Individual board prizes were won by Sheila Jackson (Bronze) and Petra Nunn (Silver). The team spirit was excellent, and

everybody felt that sending a women's team was a really positive development. Overall it was a great event and we all agreed that we should play again in 2019, hopefully with a reserve player ...

— Petra Nunn

European Seniors Individual Championships

The English had a good tournament. In the over 50s, Peter Gayson excelled to take third place with 6pts with +31 to FIDE rating and, I believe, got an IM norm. Gary Clark came 9th on tie break with 5½pts. In the Over 65 category, Tony Stebbings had a superb tournament, scoring 6pts and half point behind four joint winners. He drew with the top two seeds, both GMs, but finished 8th on tie break, just outside the prizes, with +15 to FIDE rating. Tony Ashby scored 5pts, +11 to rating. I scored 4.5pts, +4 to rating (I lost Round 2 from +17 on computer on move 49 to +0 on move 50 to lost on move 51 > 50.a7 would have won; I also failed to convert the 6th and 7th round games too and drew). Bill Ingham had a good tournament scoring 4 pts, +30 to rating to bring him more in line with his ECF grade equivalent

--- Brian Hewson

Results 2018

LCL 2017-2018 League Tables

| Division 1 | Played | Won | Drawn | Lost | Pen | Pen MP | Games | Points |
|-------------------------|--------|-----|-------|------|-----|--------|-------|--------|
| Wood Green 1 | 11 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 99 | 11 |
| Richmond & Twickenham 1 | 11 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 63 | 7 |
| Cavendish 1 | 11 | 6 | 2 | 3 | -2 | 0 | 59 | 7 |
| Battersea 1 | 11 | 6 | 2 | 3 | -4 | 0 | 57.5 | 7 |
| Wimbledon 1 | 11 | 6 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 57.5 | 6 |
| Kings Head 1 | 11 | 5 | 2 | 4 | -1 | 0 | 48.5 | 6 |
| Streatham & Brixton 1 | 11 | 4 | 3 | 4 | -2 | 0 | 55 | 5.5 |
| Hackney 1 | 11 | 5 | 1 | 5 | -2 | 0 | 52.5 | 5.5 |
| Athenaeum 1 | 11 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 50 | 4.5 |
| Drunken Knights 1 | 11 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 44.5 | 3.5 |
| Wanstead & Woodford 1 | 11 | 2 | 0 | 9 | -4 | 0 | 34.5 | 2 |
| Cavendish 2 | 11 | 1 | 0 | 10 | -1 | 0 | 32 | 1 |

| Division 2 | Played | Won | Drawn | Lost | Pen | Pen MP | Games | Points |
|------------------------|--------|-----|-------|------|-----|--------|-------|--------|
| Drunken Knights 2 | 12 | 11 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 84 | 11 |
| Mushrooms 1 | 12 | 8 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 72 | 9 |
| Imperial College 1 | 12 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 71.5 | 8.5 |
| Hackney 2 | 12 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 59.5 | 7 |
| Lewisham 1 | 12 | 5 | 2 | 5 | -2 | 0 | 59.5 | 6 |
| Metropolitan 1 | 12 | 5 | 2 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 58 | 6 |
| East Ham 1 | 12 | 5 | 0 | 7 | -2 | 0 | 57.5 | 5 |
| Ilford 1 | 12 | 5 | 1 | 6 | -6 | -0.5 | 50 | 5 |
| Dulwich 1 | 12 | 4 | 1 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 54 | 4.5 |
| Drunken Knights 3 | 12 | 4 | 1 | 7 | -3 | 0 | 48 | 4.5 |
| Streatham & Brixton 2 | 12 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 60.5 | 4 |
| Beckenham & Charlton 1 | 12 | 4 | 0 | 8 | -1 | 0 | 51 | 4 |
| Mushrooms 2 | 12 | 3 | 0 | 9 | -2 | 0 | 52.5 | 3 |

| Division 3 | Played | Won | Drawn | Lost | Pen | Pen MP | Games | Points |
|------------------|--------|-----|-------|------|-----|--------|-------|--------|
| Hammersmith 1 | 12 | 10 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 78.5 | 10 |
| Kings Head 2 | 12 | 9 | 2 | 1 | -2 | 0 | 67.5 | 10 |
| Albany 1 | 12 | 7 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 64 | 7.5 |
| Greater London 1 | 12 | 7 | 1 | 4 | -6 | -0.5 | 61 | 7 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|----|---|---|---|----|---|------|-----|
| Hackney 3 | 12 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 61 | 6.5 |
| Battersea 2 | 12 | 6 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 61 | 6 |
| Wimbledon 2 | 12 | 5 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 61 | 5.5 |
| Wanstead & Woodford 2 | 12 | 5 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 56.5 | 5 |
| Cavendish 3 | 12 | 5 | 0 | 7 | -2 | 0 | 51 | 5 |
| Athenaeum 2 | 12 | 4 | 1 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 63 | 4.5 |
| Metropolitan 2 | 12 | 4 | 0 | 8 | -4 | 0 | 56.5 | 4 |
| Battersea 3 | 12 | 3 | 1 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 48 | 3.5 |
| DHSS 1 | 12 | 3 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 51 | 3 |

| Division 4 | Played | Won | Drawn | Lost | Pen | Pen MP | Games | Points |
|---|---------------|------------|--------------|-------------|------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| British Bangla Chess Association 1 | 12 | 10 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 73 | 10.5 |
| Newham 1 | 12 | 9 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 68 | 10 |
| Metropolitan 3 | 12 | 7 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 59.5 | 8 |
| Athenaeum 3 | 12 | 7 | 2 | 3 | -2 | 0 | 56 | 8 |
| Streatham & Brixton 3 | 12 | 7 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 55.5 | 8 |
| Hammersmith 2 | 12 | 7 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 56.5 | 7.5 |
| Lewisham 2 | 12 | 6 | 3 | 3 | -3 | 0 | 56.5 | 7.5 |
| Wanstead & Woodford 3 | 12 | 5 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 43.5 | 5 |
| Greater London 2 | 12 | 4 | 1 | 7 | -8 | 0 | 39 | 4.5 |
| Morley College 1 | 12 | 4 | 0 | 8 | -4 | 0 | 33 | 4 |
| Kings Head 3 | 12 | 3 | 0 | 9 | -2 | 0 | 37 | 3 |
| Metropolitan 4 | 12 | 2 | 0 | 10 | -14 | -1 | 27 | 1 |
| Alfil 1 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 12 | -10 | -0.5 | 16.5 | -0.5 |

| Major | Played | Won | Drawn | Lost | Pen | Pen MP | Games | Points |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|------------|--------------|-------------|------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| Hackney MA | 9 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 23 | 7.5 |
| Cavendish MA | 9 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 22 | 5.5 |
| Kings Head MA | 9 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 18.5 | 5.5 |
| Lewisham MA | 9 | 5 | 0 | 4 | -4 | 0 | 20.5 | 5 |
| Pimlico MA | 9 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 19.5 | 5 |
| Streatham & Brixton MA | 9 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 19.5 | 5 |
| Smartacus MA | 9 | 2 | 3 | 4 | -4 | 0 | 17 | 3.5 |
| Greater London MA | 9 | 2 | 2 | 5 | -1 | 0 | 15 | 3 |
| Hammersmith MA | 9 | 2 | 2 | 5 | -8 | -0.5 | 13.5 | 2.5 |
| Battersea MA | 9 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 11.5 | 2 |

| Minor | Played | Won | Drawn | Lost | Pen | Pen MP | Games | Points |
|------------------------|--------|-----|-------|------|-----|--------|-------|--------|
| Morley College MI | 10 | 9 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 28 | 9 |
| Battersea MI | 10 | 6 | 3 | 1 | -2 | 0 | 26 | 7.5 |
| Athenaeum MI | 10 | 6 | 1 | 3 | -2 | 0 | 21.5 | 6.5 |
| Hackney GORKI | 10 | 5 | 2 | 3 | -4 | 0 | 23 | 6 |
| Wanstead & Woodford MI | 10 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 20.5 | 6 |
| Hammersmith HEDGER | 10 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 19.5 | 5.5 |
| DHSS MI | 10 | 4 | 1 | 5 | -3 | 0 | 18 | 4.5 |
| Hackney MI | 10 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 18.5 | 3.5 |
| Hammersmith MI | 10 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 18 | 3.5 |
| Metropolitan GNOMES | 10 | 2 | 1 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 15 | 2.5 |
| Greater London MI | 10 | 0 | 1 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 0.5 |

Devon County Chess Association 2017-2018

Team & Individual Awards

| County Leagues | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Division 1 (Bremridge Cup) | Exeter |
| Division 2 (Mamhead Cup) | Plymouth |
| Division 3 (Schofield Cup) | Newton Abbot |
| Division 4 (Moyle Cup) | Newton Abbot |
| Knock-Out (Rooke Cup) | Newton Abbot |
| Rapidplay (Newman Cup) | Seaton |
| Junior (Bloodworth Shield) | Colyton GS |
| Team Quick-Play (Thomas Cup) | Exeter A |
| Team Quick-Play U600 | Plymouth A |
| Team Quick-Play U450 | Sidmouth |
| Team Quick-Play Individual | Tom Thorpe, Exeter A / Graham Bolt, Exeter B |
| Inter-Area Team Jamboree | South (Torbay) |
| Individual Tournaments | |
| County Championship | John Stephens, Exmouth |
| Intermediate Championship | Charles Howard, Newton Abbot |
| Minor Championship | Sarah-Ann Ang, Exeter University |
| Ladies' Championship | Nandaja Narayanan, Newton Abbot |
| Individual Awards | |
| County Team Performance | Paul Hampton, Seaton |
| Junior Merit (Reg Thynne Shield) | James Gibbs / Evan McMullan, Torquay Boys' Grammar School / Newton Abbot |

Oxfordshire Chess Association 2017-2018

Team & Individual Awards

| Team | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Division 1 | University 1 |
| Division 2 | Witney 2 |
| Division 3 | Cowley 4 |
| Division 4 | Cowley 5 |
| Frank Wood Shield | Cumnor Six Horsemen of the Apocalypse |
| Individual | |
| Division 1 Individual | Joris Gerlagh (University 1) 10.5/13 = 80.97% |
| Division 2 Individual | Daniel O'Byrne (Witney 2) 7.5/9 = 83.33% |

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Division 3 Individual | Hari Selvaraj (MCS/B) 12.5/13 = 96.15% |
| Division 4 Individual | John Courouble (Cowley 5) 10.5/12 = 87.50% |
| Lester Millin Trophy | Hari Selvaraj (MCS/B) 12.5/13 = 96.15% |
| Oxon Individual Championship | James Jackson (Banbury) |

EACU 2017-2018 County Match Results

| OPEN (16 boards) | | | | | | |
|------------------|------------|---------|-----------|----------|------------|-----------|
| | | | | | | |
| | Suffolk | Norfolk | Cambs | Beds | Match Pts. | Game Pts. |
| Suffolk | | 7 + 9 | 5.5 + 8.5 | 14 + 8.5 | 8 | 52.5 |
| Norfolk | 9 + 7 | | 3 + 10 | 11 + 8.5 | 8 | 48.5 |
| Cambridgeshire | 10.5 + 7.5 | 13 + 6 | | 11 + 7.5 | 6 | 55.5 |
| Bedfordshire | 2 + 7.5 | 5 + 7.5 | 5 + 8.5 | | 2 | 35.5 |

| UNDER 160 (16 boards) | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|----------|----------|-------------|------------|-----------|
| | | | | | | |
| | Suffolk | Cambs | Herts | Norfolk | Match Pts. | Game Pts. |
| Suffolk | | 7.5 + 10 | 11 + 9.5 | 10.5 + 11.5 | 10 | 60 |
| Cambridgeshire | 8.5 + 6 | | 10.5 + 7 | 9 + 9.5 | 8 | 50.5 |
| Hertfordshire | 5 + 6.5 | 5.5 + 9 | | 7.5 + 8 | 3 | 41.5 |
| Norfolk | 5.5 + 4.5 | 7 + 6.5 | 8.5 + 8 | | 3 | 40 |

| EACU Champions 2017-18 |
|-------------------------------------|
| Open Champion - Alan Merry |
| U-170 Champion - David Payne |
| U-130 Champion - Polina Shchepinova |

| EACU Team Tournament Winners 2018 |
|---|
| Open Section - Broadland |
| 600 Section - Bedford |
| 500 Section - Bury Dons |
| 400 Section - Broadland & Bedford (jointly) |

| EACU Grand Prix 2017/18 - top ten players | |
|---|-----------|
| Name | GP points |
| Alan Merry | 22.75 |
| David Payne | 19.25 |
| John Daugman | 17.50 |
| Steve Moore | 17.25 |
| Patrick Ribbands | 15.50 |
| Paul Walton | 14.75 |
| Peter Housden | 14.50 |
| Gerald Moore | 13.25 |
| Greg Tebble | 12.75 |
| Antony Hall | 12.50 |

Chess News from 2018 ...



6th February 2018 - IA David Sedgwick has been reappointed as the GCT Chief Arbiter for 2018! Congratulations, David ... *[picture by Ray Morris-Hill]*



July 2018 - 8th IBCA Championships for Blind and Visually Impaired Chess Players

A final report from Chris Ross ...

GB won their final play-off match against Bulgaria 2 – 2.5 to 1.5 – and so finished in 13th position overall. Our team did very well to win 4 out of the last 5 matches. The only one they lost in that phase was against Russia – the eventual Gold medallists! Poland finished with the Silver Medal and Ukraine the Bronze, with Germany 4th, Serbia 5th, Venezuela 6th, Romania 7th, India 8th, Spain 9th, Macedonia 10th, Bulgaria 1 11th, Turkey 12th, GB, then Bulgaria 2 14th, Slovenia 15th and Italy 16th.

The event reports in full can be found here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/8th-ibca-championships-for-blind-and-visually-impaired-chess-players/>



12th September 2018 - GB successes at the World Problem Solving Championships

I am pleased to report that Great Britain finished an excellent third, behind perennial gold medallists Poland and Russia in silver medal position, in the team event at the World Problem Solving Championships in Ohrid this week. The individual performances saw John Nunn in 6th place, Jonathan Mestel in 11th place and David Hodge 23rd ...

In addition, John Nunn won the Open solving individual event on the first day, whilst Jonathan Mestel took first in the 'Machine Gun' event, which involves solving 30 problems with just one minute for each!

Full solving results can be found here - <https://wccc2018.com.mk/solving/>
[with thanks to Steve Giddins]

ECF Academy – Study Weekend November 2018



The ECF's Chess Academy weekend in Coventry on 10th -11th November was the last one of the current year. It was also a momentous occasion, celebrating the graduation of those students who have been with the National Chess Academy for the full three years of study since it began in January 2016. Twenty-three such students put on gowns and hats to be presented with their diplomas by Traci Whitfield, the outgoing ECF Director of Junior Chess & Education and the founder of the Academy. To graduate was

truly an achievement for them (and their parents), travelling all over England for the weekend training sessions. The formal graduation ceremony on Saturday evening was attended by all the students, parents and coaches. There was an air of excitement in preparation for the event, with parents helping their offspring dress up in their graduation gowns, red hoods and caps. After receiving their diplomas, photos were taken of them all individually and as a group. Remarkably, none of the mortar boards were mislaid during this process, though everyone threw theirs up in the air for the final photo.

The ceremony was followed by a buffet dinner and a celebratory party in the hotel. There was even an excellent magic performance by David Miller, who is not only one of the chess parents but also a remarkably accomplished magician. He did tricks with cards, soft drinks and mind reading. His tour de force was his final Knights Tour trick, an ingenious slapstick combination of puzzles involving a chess board and the children shooting Nerf guns at the squares. The audience fell about laughing and you could understand how David had earned his title of Grand Prix Magician in Northampton. Presents of thanks were awarded to Traci Whitfield and Christelle Hafstad for all their hard and successful work in setting up and supporting the Academy for the past three years. This was then followed by a disco, in which many of the children participated (even the boys!)

The study weekend itself followed the established format of ten hours of intensive training in small groups. Topics came from the FIDE syllabus as taught at an advanced level and included tactical mastery and queens and pawn endings. There was also analysis of the best games of Magnus Carlsen, especially appropriate as he embarks on the World Championship in London this month. The coaches for the weekend were – Andrew Martin (Head of the Academy), Glenn Flear, Neil McDonald, Nigel Davies, Dan Fernandez, Vaidyanathan Ravikumar, Richard Pert, Tim Wall and David Zakarian.

During the Coventry weekend, parents had the opportunity to attend a session given by John Hicks about helpful advice on grants, bursaries and sponsorship for chess events. He also gave recommendations on planning for children's chess careers and insights on the work of the different junior chess associations. Then there was a very positive and helpful presentation by Traci Whitfield about the concept of a new Alumni Programme designed to support students after graduation up to when they are 21 years old.

The whole occasion was a lovely coming together at the last of the four successful training weekends during 2018. We said goodbye and congratulations to our departing students. We could also reflect on the great range of tournaments that all the Academy's students have participated in all over England and internationally. When we meet again in the first week of January 2019, we will give a warm welcome to the incoming cohort of new Academy students. They will be attending induction sessions and receiving their welcome packs, special Academy chess boards and pieces.

Finally, in saying goodbye to Traci Whitfield, our outgoing Director of Junior Chess, we thank her greatly for her commitment in setting up and running the National Chess Academy. Thank you, Traci!

— *Mimi Khan & David Gray*

National Schools Individual and Team Blitz 2018



Individual Blitz - the event was won by second seed Armaan Gogia (172) of Nottingham High School who won all of his games, ahead of second-placed Aditya Munshi (181) also of NHS on 5/6. George Smith (117) of Chepstow School and Susie Wang (139) of NHS were joint third on 4.5/6; Zayan Baig (85) and Alexander El Khoury (114) both of NHS, together with Sam Goodfellow (98) and Madeleine Smith (123) both of Chepstow, all scored 4/6 to finish joint fifth. All of these players received plaques.

The **Team Blitz** in the afternoon proved to be a titanic battle between Chepstow School and defending champions Nottingham High School. Amazingly, both teams defeated all the other teams 4-0, although the NHS 'A' v 'B' was anything but a foregone conclusion in the penultimate round. The showdown between Chepstow and NHS occurred in round 5 when the latter won a very close match 2.5-1.5 and therefore Nottingham HS (*pictured above*) won the tournament with 26.5/28, just a point ahead of Chepstow, who took home silver medals, in contrast to the bronze ones in 2017. NHS 'B' came third with 17/28 and therefore collected bronze medals, as did King's 'A' on 13.5/28 as the third-placed school.

In summary: NHS 'A' 26.5; Chepstow 25.5; NHS 'B' 17; NHS 'C' 14; King's 'A' 13.5; King's 'B' 11.5. Reserves rotated in an 'All Stars' team which contained two players from Chepstow, and one each from Hymers, King's and NHS.

NSCC U19 Final 2018



U19 School Champions – Reading School (*pictured above*)

Runners up (winning the Richard Haddrell Trophy) – RGS Guildford

3rd = City of London School, Hampton School, Nottingham High School

Plate winners (best performance by a first round loser) – Brighton College

6th = Brighton College, QE Barnet, QE Hospital (Bristol), St Olaves, University College School, Wilson's School; 12th = KEGS (Chelmsford), RGS Newcastle, St John's College (Cardiff), The Skinners School; 16th Wirral GS

Full report --- <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/NSCC/u19-final-2018/>

ECF Secondary Schools Rapidplay Chess Tournament 2018



Sunday 23rd September 2018 at Eton College, Berkshire ...

Winners – RGS Guildford A (*pictured above*)

2nd – Gonzaga College, Dublin A

3rd – Hampton School A

Plate winners – Heathside Prep School

English Youth Grand Prix Champions 2018



[L-R - Harry; Koby; Lucy; Nadia; Christopher; Nilomi; Jacob; Julia; Jessica; Nishchal; Zoha; Shreyas; Clemence; Yashasvini; Harry; Jan; Emily]

18-year-old Champion **Gwilym Price**; 17-year-old Champion **Harry Grieve**; 17-year-old Girls' Champion **Akshaya Kalaiyalahan**; 16-year-old Champion **Koby Kalavannan**; 16-year-old Girls' Champion **Lucy Bennet-Stevens**; 15-year-old Champion **Alex Golding**; 15-year-old Joint Girls' Champions **Laura J Davidson / Mahima G Raghavendra**; 14-year-old Champion **Chirag Hosdurga**; 14-year-old Girls' Champion **Nadia Jaufarally**; 13-year-old Champion **Christopher Tombolis**; 13-year-old Girls' Champion **Nilomi Desai**; 12-year-old Champion **Jacob D Yoon**; 12-year-old Girls' Champion **Julia Volovich**; 11-year-old Champion **Savin Dias**; 11-year-old Girls' Champion **Jessica Mellor**; 10-year-old Champion **Nishchal Thatte**; 10-year-old Girls' Champion **Zoha Ashraf**; 9-year-old Champion **Shreyas Royal**; 9-year-old Girls' Champion **Clemence Pham**; 8-year-old Champion **Yashasvini Sreeram**; 8-year-old Boys' Champion **Harry Z Zheng** (on tie break); 7-year-old Champion **Jan Murawski**; 7-year-old Girls' Champion **Emily Ashcroft**

2018 RIPs

Stuart Charlton; Graham Humphreys; Les Whittle; Rod McShane; Michael John Haygarth; Peggy Clarke; Derek Perks; Eric Schiller; Nicholas Grant

Shock as Home Secretary resigns ... to Shreyas!



Rising chess star Shreyas Royal has enjoyed a sharp turnaround of fortune. After facing the prospect of deportation just a few months ago; to being invited to the Palace of Westminster to meet Sajid Javid, the Home Secretary, whose intervention ensured he will continue to live here and represent the ECF in international competition.

Shreyas was accompanied by his father, Jitendra, ECF President Dominic Lawson and Chess in

Schools and Communities' Tereza Pribanova. It was a wonderful occasion for Shreyas to play chess in such a prestigious building, the Home Secretary's Office no less. Sajid Javid put up a good fight, but Shreyas isn't the country's most up-and-coming chess player for nothing. Jitendra Singh thanked the ECF and Chess in Schools and Communities, who launched the successful publicity campaign to keep the family in the country in August after all other avenues were exhausted. Sajid Javid commented —

'After carefully reviewing the evidence, I have taken the personal decision to allow Shreyas and his family to stay in the UK. The UK is a country that fosters world-class talent and Shreyas is one of the most gifted chess players of his generation. We have always been clear we want a world-class immigration system that welcomes highly-talented individuals from across the globe'

(photograph by Patryk Stanis)

Under 18 County Championships 2018



In the Open, Kent were jointly in the lead with Sussex after the first round, with 8.5 points out of a possible 12, followed by Surrey on 6.5. Encouragingly, the other three counties did well in Round 1, despite being heavily outgraded — Leicestershire scored 4.5 and both Herts and Suffolk 4 apiece. In the second round, the star performers were Surrey who notched up 8.5 points but still had to settle for third place since Kent did just enough with 8 points to win the title outright, ahead of Sussex.

The final scores in the Open, with average grades in brackets, were —

16.5/24 Kent (151); 16 Sussex (161); 15 Surrey (154); 9.5 Hertfordshire (131); 7.5 Leicestershire (118) and Suffolk (122)

Kent received the impressive wooden board, which dates back to 1950, together with a cup and each team member received engraved plaques. Sussex received engraved "silver" medals.

In the Minor (under 130 grade) competition, the event was not surprisingly contested strongly by the two counties with full teams: Norfolk and Yorkshire, who both scored very heavily in round 1 with 5/6. Kent pushed them close, scoring 4 points from their five boards in round 1 and a further 3/5 in round 2, finishing third on 7 points. Norfolk edged it in Round 2, with 4/6, whereas Yorkshire could only manage 3.5 and therefore finished in second position. The Norfolk players each received an engraved plaque whilst the Yorkshire team had to be content with medals.

Scores in the Under 130 Minor —

9/12 Norfolk; 8.5 Yorkshire; 7 Kent; 5 Nottinghamshire; 2 Surrey; 1.5 Hertfordshire

Thanks are due to The King's School Grantham for providing the venue and to Sue Drulia and Fran Ball, staff of King's and Sixth Form assistants who manned Reception and guided folks to team bases etc. King's also provided an excellent range of food – the pizzas and paninis were especially popular! Thanks are also due to the players who displayed good sportsmanship throughout and who made the jobs of arbiters Phill Beckett and John Swain very straightforward, together with the team managers and parents who accompanied them. The Controller Neill Cooper masterminded the whole event and deservedly received many compliments for its smooth running.

Report in full --- <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/Juniors/under-18-county-championships-2018/>

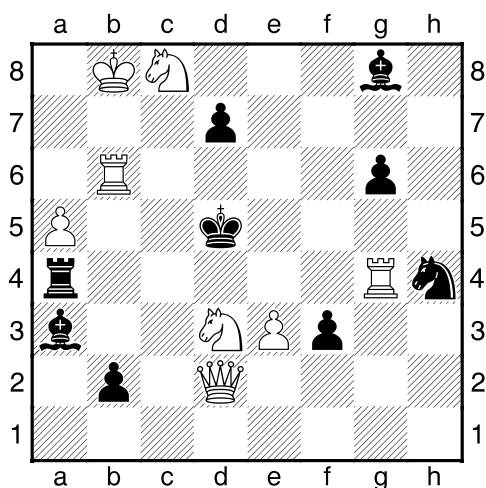
Chess Problem News 2018

... from Ian Watson

The major news of 2018? I could cite the Bronze Medal that the UK team obtained in the World Chess Solving Championship in September; our team was the two former individual solving World Champions John Nunn and Jonathan Mestel, together with new star David Hodge. We are stronger at chess solving than at over-the-board chess, although our OTB team did manage a creditable 5th place in the OTB Olympiad held at almost the same time as the WCSC. I could cite other solving achievements of 2018 too, but for 2018 I should give precedence to our composers, particularly in the two-mover arena where the UK has an outstanding tradition. So:

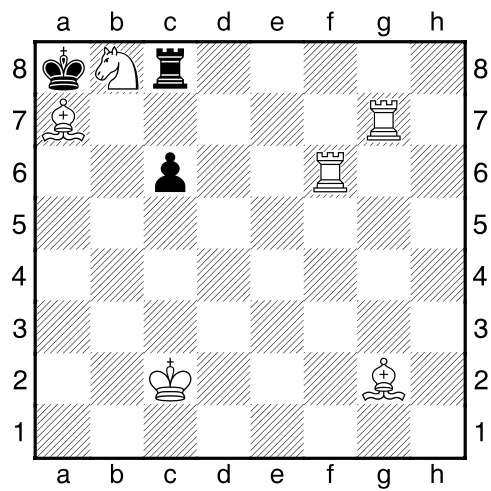
What's the recipe for a long life? Maybe composing chess problems?! During 2017, four British chess composers reached the 80th birthday landmark, and a composing tourney was held in 2018 to celebrate. The tourney was the BMJC Tourney because the four are Barry Barnes, Michael Lipton, John Rice and Colin Sydenham, all of whom are well-known in the chess problem community. They remain active composers, and so here are three examples of their work published in 2018, plus one from 1978 – half a lifetime ago! Several of these problems have 'tries', moves which nearly solve, but fail to a single Black reply – so be careful!

B Barnes – The Problemist 2018



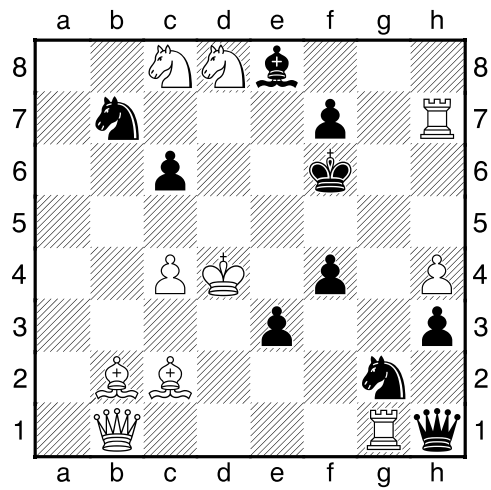
Mate in two

M Lipton – The Problemist 2018



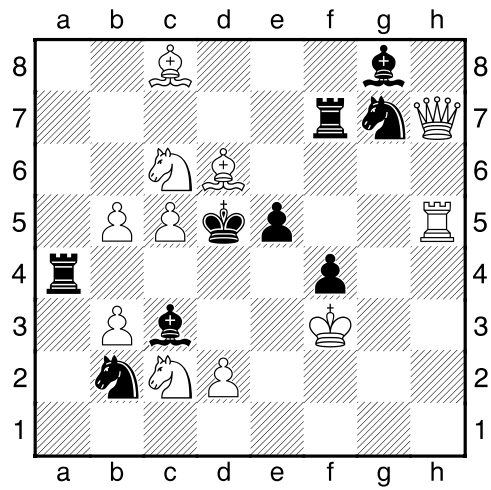
Mate in two

J Rice – The Problemist 2018



Mate in two

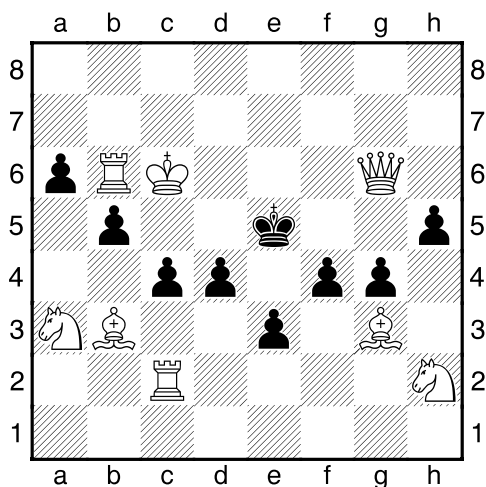
C Sydenham – Die Schwalbe 1978



Mate in two

Our next problem is by a relative youngster, Michael McDowell, who is known both for his composing skills and for his solving skills – he’s a frequent member of the UK team in international chess solving competitions. The position is pleasing to the eye, White having all his pieces and no pawns, and Black having all his pawns and no pieces.

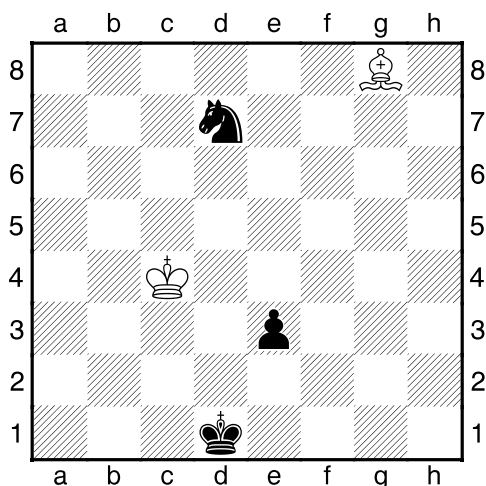
M McDowell – Correspondence 2018



Mate in two

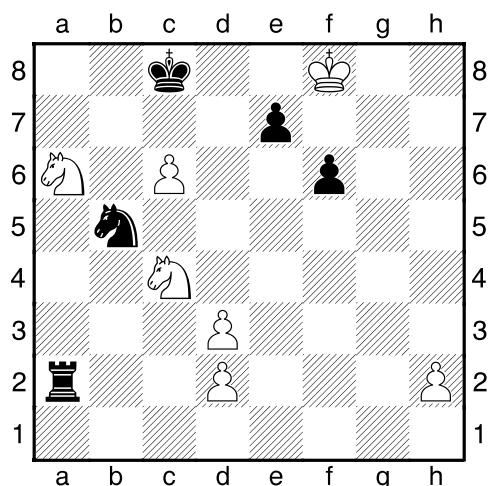
In the UK, we have active composers in all fields of chess composition, including endgame studies. Solving studies is an excellent way to improve one’s over-the-board play, so try your skills on these two studies which appeared in 2018. The first was composed by Paul Byway, Britain’s ‘master of the miniature’ – a ‘miniature’ study is one which has seven pieces or less. The second is by Paul Michelet who is an ‘all-rounder’ composing many types of problem in addition to studies. I suggest you set up the positions, rather than try to solve them from the diagram; there’s no shame in that - in solving competitions, the solvers are given sets and are allowed to move the pieces as they wish to help them solve.

P Byway – BCM 2018



Draw

P Michelet – BCM 2018



Win

To see more chess problems, visit the British Chess Problem Society website at www.theproblemist.org

Solutions

(Barnes) 1.Qb4

To a seasoned solver, moving a piece to b4 is a clear candidate solution; the aim is to create 'interference' between the Black rook and bishop. White, however, has several possible moves to the b4 square, so even if you see the idea, you still have to analyse. This type of interference is named a Nowotny, after Antonin Nowotny who composed the first such problem in the mid-19th century. The 2018 composing tournament in honour of the four 80-year olds, was a theme tourney and the requirement was to find new ideas in the two-mover Nowotny field. This problem was not an entrant, but was dedicated to the competitors.

(Lipton) 1.Rxc6

Not 1.Nxc6? Rc7! Michael set this problem as a challenge to other composers; he invited composers to improve the problem, while keeping the same positions of the Black pieces.

(Rice) 1.Bg6

How to solve this? You could try lots of candidate moves, but a better method is often to ask what an apparently irrelevant piece is there for; when I saw this, I asked myself how the White queen could be necessary, and that led me to the key move immediately. Hopefully you didn't fall for any tries: 1.Kc3? Nxd8! 1.Bf5? Nxh4! This isn't a Nowotny problem, although John has composed many of those too.

(Sydenham) 1.N6d4

The tries are 1.d4? Nf5! and 1.N2d4? Rf5!. Multiple Nowotnys: the key and both the tries induce 'interference' on d4 between the Black rook and bishop. This is matched by Black's defences to the tries which induce interference between the White pieces on the f5 square.

(McDowell) 1.Be1 with 9 mates, all different. The position is an 'incomplete block', meaning that if it were Black's move in the diagram, most, but not all, of his moves would enable White to mate, and the solution move preserves most of those mates and adds the missing ones. In this case, the key move also leads to a 'switchback' of the White bishop to its original square if Black responds with 1...f3. A splendid problem.

(Byway) 1.Kd3 e2 2.Bb3+ Ke1 3.Ke3 Ne5 4.Be6 Kf1 5.Bh3+ Ke1 6.Be6 Kd1 7.Bb3+ Ke1 8.Be6 draw

1.Bf7? Nf6 2.Kd3 e2 3.Bb3+ Ke1 4.Ke3 Ng4+ or 1.Be6/d5? e2 2. Bg4/f3 Ne5+. 3.Ke3 is necessary to prevent 3...Kf2. 3...Nb6 4.Be6 Kd/f1 5.Bg4/h3+. The position after 4.Be6 is mutual zugzwang, and if 4...Nf3/d3, then 5.Bc4/g4; the symmetry of this position is very pleasing.

(Michelet) 1.Nb6+ Kd8 2.c7+ Nxc7 3.Nc5 Ra7 4.h4 f5 5.h5 f4 6.h6 f3 7.h7 f2 8.h8N f1Q+ 9.Nf7+ Qxf7+ 10.Kxf7 e6 11.Kf8 e5 12.d4 exd4 13.d3 and mates as Black is in zugzwang

This has underpromotion, and also has 'Excelsiors' by both White and Black. 'Excelsior' is the problemists' word for a pawn which goes all the way from its starting square to promotion (the word is Latin and means, roughly, 'onward and upward').

Endgame ...

Winner of the Best Game prize at the 2018 British Chess Championships – **Luke McShane**

Howell, David W1 (2687) - McShane, Luke J (2669)

105th British Championships (Hull City Hall, Hull), 05.08.2018

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 d6 5.O-O Bd7 6.d4 exd4 7.Nxd4 Nxd4 8.Bxd7+ Qxd7 9.Qxd4 Nf6
10.Nc3 Be7 11.Bf4 O-O 12.Rad1 Qc6 13.Nd5 Nxd5 14.exd5 Qxc2 15.Rc1 Qf5 16.Rxc7 Bf6 17.Qd2 Rfc8
18.Rfc1 Rxc7 19.Rxc7 Re8 20.h3 h5 21.b3 g5 22.Be3 Re5 23.Rxb7 Rxd5 24.Qc1 Be5 25.Rb4 Qd3 26.f4
Qe2 27.Kh2 gxf4 28.Bxf4 Rd2 29.Qc6 Kg7 30.a3 h4 31.Rc4 Qe3 32.Qe4 Qg3+

0-1

