

Obituaries

Patrick Ribbands

Paul Kemp writes: Patrick Ribbands, who died suddenly at the end of January, was a stalwart of Cambridgeshire chess for as long as anyone can remember. He played and captained teams for Linton in the Bury League for the past decade, and played a similar role for Royston in the Cambs and Herts Leagues. Before that he played for Cambridge City and was club president. He was a regular at local Congresses and also in the supporting events at the British Championships.

It will be as an indefatigable administrator that he will be best remembered and most missed. Among many other roles he captained the Cambridgeshire county second team for 30 years and was grading officer for 22 years. For the East Anglian Chess Union he was County Match Controller for 22 years and grading officer for 15 years. He initiated and ran the East Anglian Club Championship from 2008. At the time of his death he had just completed this year's event online and had planned an East Anglian online League for this spring. He had been Match Secretary in the Bury League.

Patrick was a kindly and gentle soul, who always made sure that there were plenty of opportunities for the lower-graded and junior players in events that he organised. He had a long history of coaching juniors, who have themselves paid tribute to the influence he had on them when they were starting out. He was always full of ideas, as evidenced by the Ribbands pairing system which he devised as an alternative to Swiss pairings, organising rapidplay tournaments to try it out! He will be greatly missed: as a club member always willing to fill a gap in the team sheet, as an organiser prepared to take most things on, and as a friend.

Alan Watts

Mark Rivlin writes: Alan Watts, who died in November 2020 aged eighty-one, was secretary of Morley College Chess Club for many years. He captained the second team and was very popular on the circuit. Aside from chess, Alan had a passion for football and I had the pleasure of joining him on Mondays in a 'veterans' five-a-side group that had played Mondays at the Sobell Centre in Holloway, north London for many years. Playing well into his seventies, Alan never lost his touch, showboating his skills around the court like a twenty-year-old.