



A word from Chessable, sponsors of the ECF eNewsletter ...

Game Changer, the highly-anticipated investigation into AI insights, is now available to train on Chessable with MoveTrainer™. Learn AlphaZero's opening and middlegame strategies for an edge at the board ...

[Check it out here](#)

Dear Member

Welcome to the February Newsletter. In this edition we have a report on the latest 4NCL weekend along with an introductory statement from the ECF on revised gradings. Please take a few minutes to fill in the consultation form, because your opinion really does matter on this one --- <https://britchess.wufoo.com/forms/ecf-monthly-grading-consultation/> (more below on this topic from Director of Membership Dave Thomas) and please note that the consultation period ends on 15th March 2019. I'd be pleased to publish an op-ed piece on this, so please send contributions to publicity.manager@englishchess.org.uk and I will make sure as many voices are heard as possible. We also have reports from the Director of Home Chess on the revamped Over 65s Championships and an update from the Director of Women's Chess. There is news from the Academy Weekend and a roundup of another excellent tournament from the hardworking British Bangla Chess Association.

--- Mark Rivlin

Team England

ECF Director of International Chess IM Malcolm Pein opens with some terrific breaking news. As a result of our fine performance at the 2018 Chess Olympiad, England have been invited to the World Team Championships. Thanks to support from the Scheinberg family, a team will be sent to the competition which begins on March 4th in Astana, Kazakhstan.

England Women's Championships 2019

The ECF has announced that the 2019 English Women's Championships will take place in Hull on Friday 30th August to Sunday 1st September 2019. More here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/2019-english-womens-championship/>

Rock around the clocks

The Gibraltar Chess Festival Masters was won by Russian GM Vladislav Artemiev with 8.5/12. GM David Howell finished on a creditable 7.5. More here - <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2019/feb/01/gibraltar-open-vladislav-artemiev-shock-rock-chess> - and here - <https://www.gibchess.com/>

From younger ... ECF Academy weekend

Mimi Khan and David Gray report on another highly successful training weekend - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/Juniors/ecf-academy-study-weekend-january-2019/>

... to older - Director of Home Chess Adrian Elwin on the English Seniors Championship

The ECF is relaunching the annual English Seniors Championship with a four day FIDE-rated and ECF graded congress at the St Johns Hotel, Solihull in April 2019. The event will run for four days from 4th to 7th April, with a total of six rounds. There will be two sections - Over 50s and Over 65s - with the two winners becoming English Seniors Champions for 2019/2020. English players aged 50 or over by the end of 2019 will be eligible to enter the Championships, with an early bird discount available on entries received before 15th February. Full details of the congress can be found here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/english-seniors-championships/> - and we hope to see as many of you as possible at this exciting event to re-establish the Seniors Championship on the chess calendar. For further details please contact Ed Goodwin at edhgoodwin@gmail.com

Brought to book

ECF webmaster Andrew Walker reports on the ECF Yearbook 2019. The yearbook is currently with the printers, and once it lands at the Watch Oak, you'll be able to order it online or over the telephone at £13.50 for members, £15.50 for everyone else. Keep an eye on the ECF website. Platinum members as always will get a free copy as part of their membership ... and this year it's in full colour!

Don't miss the coach

An Expression of Interest form for coaches for various England team events is available here - <https://britchess.wufoo.com/forms/coaches-expression-of-interest-2019/>

Director of Women's Chess Chris Fegan's latest update

The major news in recent weeks has been the announcement that the English Women's Chess Championships 2019 will be held in Hull over the weekend of Friday 30 August to Sunday 1 September. I am delighted that the ECF is working in partnership with the Hull and District Chess Association in arranging and delivering this flagship event. I am also very grateful for their solid and significant support for English Women's chess. The 2018 EWC broke all previous records of attendance and prize funds and I am hoping that 2019 will be even better (we aim to have some special events taking place). We are rolling out the new Grant scheme aimed at supporting women in playing chess in England in competitive and social settings. Yes, there is much to do in this area of ECF work but we are starting to make progress. Grants are available to any organisations that can demonstrate plans and outcomes to benefit women of all ages playing chess in England. I am willing to consider applications not only from existing chess organisers and organisations but also from those who are willing to begin chess playing opportunities for women. I am delighted to inform ECF colleagues that Christelle Jager-Hafstad has been appointed to the FIDE Women's Commission. We had a meeting to discuss how we can work together to pursue common objectives for women in the ECF and FIDE and I am sure that her appointment to the FIDE Women's Commission is a great boost to women's chess worldwide.

Book review

IM Gary Lane reviews *Endgame Virtuoso, Magnus Carlsen* by Tibor Karolyi - <https://chess.business/blog/> (scroll down the page to find the review)

4NCL second weekend

Tim Wall reports - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Wall-4NCL-report.pdf>

4NCL Easter congress

The 4NCL Easter Congress takes place from Friday 19th to Monday 22nd April in Stevenage. There are four categories. More here - http://www.4ncl.co.uk/fide/information_easter19.htm

Up or down?

The new ECF January grades are out - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/the-new-grades-are-out-2/>

Weighting the ratings

ECF Director of Membership Dave Thomas on the ECF Board's response to the new grading system --- The ECF Board is responding to changes in the expectations of both members and potential members by working to move grading from a six monthly to a monthly update. The intention is to introduce the change with effect from the January 2020 grading list update.

This has also focussed the Board on whether we should continue with the traditional three-digit grade used in English chess since the 1960s or move to a four-digit, Elo style system. This has been discussed within the Board who are minded to use this opportunity to move to a four digit system.

This has several advantages ---

- It would bring English chess in line with FIDE ratings and the rating systems in most of the rest of the world, including - the other countries in the UK, most other National Federations, correspondence chess, online rating systems
- It would help comparability between English grades and other ratings
- It would make the grades more meaningful for younger players who are accustomed to four digit ratings from playing online
- It is likely to reduce substantially the cost of introducing the monthly grading system (as it will be easier to replicate existing software using four digit calculations)

The Board recognises that this will be a significant change. We have therefore set up an online consultation form at <https://britchess.wufoo.com/forms/ecf-monthly-grading-consultation/> which all players are invited to complete. The consultation period will end on 15th March 2019.

Organisers' area

The Federation has set up a password protected area of its website for data of use to organisers which data protection regulations only permit us to distribute to users with an identified requirement for access. At present this is the membership spreadsheet, which is updated at least weekly and more often when practical, and the member finder, which is a real-time view of the membership database. Additional material will be made available as time goes on, either as we complete the work necessary to make it available, or the demand becomes apparent. Any organiser who requires access to this data for the purpose of running events should email organisers@englishchess.org.uk, listing the events they run and stating why they feel they need access.

BBCA Rapidplay

Abu Hasan reports on British Bangla Chess Association latest monthly rapidplay ...

The British Bangla Chess Association (BBCA) launched its monthly ECF graded Rapidplay tournament on 27 January. Held at the newly built Hason Raja Centre of Spitalfields Housing Association, London E1, the tournament was arranged in two sections - Open and Major (ECF 120 and below). International arbiter Alan Atkinson oversaw the event. The Open attracted 26 players, with Adam Bukojemski (220) on the top of the starting rank followed by FM Jovica Radovanovich (218). After a nail-biting six-round battle, Jovica snatched first prize securing 5.5 points while Thomas Quilter, Andrew McGettigan and Vikram Kamath shared second prize, scoring 4.5 points. Nasrullah Sheikh, Mohammed Alahi and Mostaque Choudhury won the three grading prizes. In the Major section. Chris J Soltysiak, Gerry Geron and Dorbesh Choudhury shared the top prize scoring 5 points, while Masud Hoque, Mahmud Mazed and Abu Hasan shared U100 grading prize. The second BBCA monthly Rapidplay will be held on Sunday 24 February at the same venue, which is close to Whitechapel and Bethnal Green stations. [Full details of the event](#) are to be found on the ECF calendar together with a link to register online.

Magnus insights

World champion Magnus Carlsen started the year in top form with victory at Wijk an Zee followed by a revealing interview with GM Jan Gustafsson on chess24.com - well worth listening to

World Physical Disability Chess Championships

This tournament is being held in Ruzomberok, Slovakia 27th June to 7th July 2019 [[PDF](#)]

British Chess Educational Trust

Details regarding applications for BCET awards for schools here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/bcet-awards-2019/>

Junior clarification

ECF Director of Junior Chess and Education Alex Holowczak on a grading issue ...

The ECF has been made aware that the London Junior Championship Under 8s has been submitted as a standardplay tournament rather than a rapidplay tournament. The ECF's grading team is aware of the issue, and it is being resolved as quickly as practicable. This has knock-on consequences with regard to the Junior Selection Policy. Parents should not make assumptions about their children's qualification status based on these initially published grades until a revised grading list is published in due course; and until they have received a communication from the ECF Office informing them that their children have qualified. Please note that due to the calculation method of grades for juniors, it is not unlikely that this will affect the grades of children even if they were born before 2011.

Lately at Yateley

The South of England Junior Championships at Yateley Manor School took place at the end of January. Results here - <https://www.southofenglandjunior.com/>

CHESS magazine taster

<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/CHESS-Feb-2019.pdf>

Obituaries

Sir Peter Swinnerton-Dyer - <https://www.ecforum.org.uk/viewtopic.php?f=46&t=10039>

Khosrow Sheikh Harandi - <https://www.ecforum.org.uk/viewtopic.php?f=46&t=10036>



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