



A word from Chessable, sponsors of the ECF eNewsletter

GM Jacob Aagaard's **Grandmaster Preparation: Calculation** is now an interactive online course and on special offer for a limited time only!

Check it out [here](#)

Dear ECF Member

Happy New Year and welcome to the January newsletter. The pre-Christmas jamboree of the World Championship and the London Chess Classic was followed by a closely-fought Hastings Masters, and with Gibraltar round the corner there will be plenty to watch this month. We start the year on a sad note with the untimely death of Stephen Berry, one of the country's stalwart players (obituary by Andrew Stone below).

We feature an interesting article by John Foley around the definition of chess as a sport, and Tim Wall has been busy for us this month with a report on the London Chess Classic and an excellent homage to iconic chess players in his blog.

--- Mark Rivlin

Be a sport?

John Foley, secretary of ECU Education Commission on why chess should be classed as sport - [click here](#)

Hastings 2018-19 - a fair share of the spoils

Pam Thomas reports on a six-way tie for first place and four-way tie for second place in the Masters at the 34th Tradewise International Chess Congress. More here - <http://www.hastingschess.com/final-round-up-pam-thomas/>

Classic rocks

Tim Wall reports on the 10th London Chess Classic - <https://www.londonchessclassic.com/> - [click here](#)

Conference decides

John Foley on the London Chess Conference - <https://chessplus.net/london-chess-conference-2018/>

FIDE and ECU Commissions

Appointments and nominations include John Foley - Secretary, ECU Educational Commission; John Higgs - Member, ECU Events Commission; Christelle Jager-Hafstad - ECU Nomination to the FIDE Women's Commission. More here - <http://www.europechess.org/ecu-commissions-2019-2022-and-nominations-to-fide-commissions/>

The following people who are ECF members/people are on FIDE Commissions until 2022 ---

Arbiters Member - Alex McFarlane (Scotland)

Events Member - Lara Barnes

Global Strategy Member - Ali Mortazavi

Qualification Chairman - Nick Faulks (Bermuda), Secretary - Alex Holowczak, Member - Thomas Thorpe (Wales)

Women Member - Christelle Jager-Hafstad

Says Alex Holowczak, ECF Director of Junior Chess, "We are wondering if Tom is the youngest person ever to be on a FIDE Commission; he is 22."

[Full list here](#)

Arbiter-ly cold

Alex Holowczak was a pairings arbiter at the world Rapidplay and Blitz championships in St Petersburg - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/alex-goes-to-st-petersburg/>

Off the Wall

Tim Wall on departed chess icons [here](#)

South of England Junior Congress

This takes place on January 26/7 at Yateley Manor. More here - <https://www.southofenglandjunior.com/>

Approaches to coaches

The ECF's announcement on an accredited coaches scheme - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/ecf-accredited-coaches-scheme-announcement/>

Banging the drum for chess

Abu Hasan reports on the British Bangla Chess Association FIDE Rapidplay and the [continuing success of the association](#) ...



Players at the BBCA FIDE Rapidplay

Your country needs you

The ECF has published the selection criteria for 2019 international junior events - more here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/juniors/junior-selection-policy/>

Just the Minutes

The minutes of the ECF AGM held in Birmingham in October are [here](#)

Organisational skills

ECF Director of Membership Dave Thomas on new arrangements for an Organisers Area of the ECF website --- 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.

Inside view

Carl Portman takes his chess roadshow to [Hewell, The Grange](#) and [Grendon](#) prisons (PDF attachments)

Rilton Cup

The strong Swedish tournament was won by Israeli GM Tamir Nabaty with 8/9. English participants were Lorin D'Costa (5/9) David Egglestone (5/9), Ravi Haria (4/9) and Aditya Munshi (3.5). Results [here](#)

Remember to be a member

However much chess you play, from a game on the beach to the British Championships, we have a category to suit you. See here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/membership/membership-benefits/> and here for the new Supporter (casual player) category - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/federation-announces-new-ecf-supporter-arrangements/>

English Seniors Championships 2019

The ECF is relaunching the annual English Seniors championship with a four-day FIDE and ECF rated congress in Solihull in April of 2019. Details of the event, which will run from 4th - 7th April at St Johns Hotel in Solihull are here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/english-seniors-championships/>

There will be two sections - over 50s and over 65s - with the two winners becoming English Seniors Champions for 2019/2020.

... and the rest of the year's senior events? ECF Director of Senior Chess Stewart Reuben outlines [what's on in 2019](#) for senior players.

Gawain's electric surge

Hardly having time to reflect on winning the British Knockout, Gawain Jones played in the World Rapidplay and Blitz tournaments in St Petersburg. After a disappointing rapidplay, Gawain had a brilliant 10.5/12 surge in the blitz ending with 12.5/21 and 36th position out of 150 - <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2019/jan/04/chess-magnus-carlsen-retains-world-blitz-title>

Stuck in the middle with you

Gary Lane reviews Thomas Willemze's middle game instructive book *The Chess Toolbox* - <https://chess.business/blog/>

Respect for the French

16-year-old junior Max French finished a quality packed-field Sunway Sitges tournament this morning with 5/10 (+2=6-2) with a TPR of 2290 and a hefty 113-point enhancement of his FIDE rating. Max's TPR was 2290 and he gains 113 Fide points from the Sitges tournament.

Rock around the clock

The prestigious Gibraltar Chess Festival starts on January 22 with a raft of top GMs in the Open and a range of categories to suit all levels. More here - <https://www.gibchess.com/>

4NCL Harrogate Congress

The 21st 4NCL FIDE rated Congress (with three categories) takes place in Harrogate at the Old Swan Hotel over the weekend of 18-20 January. More here - http://www.4ncl.co.uk/fide/information_21.htm

CHESSE magazine taster

December's edition of [CHESSE magazine here](#)

Obituary

Stephen Berry, a great stalwart of English chess has died aged 67. [Andrew Stone reflects](#) on Stephen's life and contribution to chess ...



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