

Welsh Chess Union

North Cardiff Junior Chess Club

North Cardiff Chess Club is an adult club with a thriving junior section in which the adults (led by Alun Smith for several years, now assisted by Tim Kett, Kam Chooyin and others), take an active part in coaching. In fact, the juniors outnumber the adults. During Covid lockdown the club maintained a weekly junior tournament to keep the juniors interested and playing when nothing could be done over the board. This active coaching has borne fruit.

The club now holds a weekly training session for Juniors (attended by up to 30 children on a regular basis) which includes both carefully prepared lessons and autumn and spring league competitions. The standard of play on display always astounds adult visitors with most of the players more than capable of holding their own in Open tournaments (at least at Minor section level)

In the summer term we commence our Club Championship which takes place over several weeks for all our members (Adult and Junior in the same section) - and weekly 'upsets' are very much the order of the day !

The club enters five junior teams and two adult teams in the East Glamorgan League, where opposition is almost entirely adult. In recent years one of the junior teams, N.C. Panthers, rose from Division Four to Division One of the League and last year they were Division Two Champions.

North Cardiff already run 7 teams in the East Glamorgan league (nationally, this is second only to Cardiff Club in number) giving ample opportunity for the juniors to improve even further by playing rated 'Adult Chess' on a regular basis. Next season we plan to create even more teams to expand those opportunities further.

One of the Junior teams has won two online Welsh Under 1850 tournaments and one o.t.b. Welsh U1850 tournament.

The Welsh Dragons recently won a junior 4NCL online competition. Three of the four players were members of the club.

Put simply, we believe that no other chess club in Wales is running any kind of similar Junior program - and the results speak for themselves, with North Cardiff members regularly dominating the prizelists at Junior events, and in 2023 the club provided seven of the 20 members of the Welsh Glorney Gilbert teams. In 2022 it provided ten of the 20, including four out of five of the U18 Glorney team.

I think that you will agree that this is a formidable achievement.

Ian Eustis

Director for Junior Chess, Welsh Chess Union