

Notts News

Newsletter of the Nottinghamshire Chess Association

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Jamboree

Forty people squeezed into Navigation's club room for the pre-season jamboree tournament on 11 September. In an extremely close contest, which had the leading five of the ten teams separated by just two points going into the final round, West Bridgford emerged as the winners with 14½ points. Will Place and Brian Thompson were the stars, both scoring a perfect 5/5. Mansfield's late run saw them leap from 5th to second (14 points), with Ashfield A and Gambit finishing a further half point back in joint 3rd.

Kevin Harvey was responsible for organising things at the Navigation end; Ian Kingston handled the technical stuff.

Place	Team	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	Total
1	West Bridgford	2	3	4	3	2½	14½
2	Mansfield	3	3	2	2	4	14
3=	Gambit	4	2½	1½	3½	2	13½
3=	Ashfield A	2½	2½	3	3	2½	13½
5	West Nottingham	2	4	3	2½	1	12½
6	Navigation 1	1	1	3	1½	4	10½
7	Radcliffe & Bingham	2	1½	1	½	1	6
8	Ashfield C	½	1½	1	2	½	5½
9	Ashfield B	2	1	½	1	½	5
10	Navigation 2	0	0	0	0	0	0

Handicap Knockout

All clubs are reminded that entries for this year's Handicap Knockout need to be in by Friday 21 September. Club Secretaries were emailed details on 4 September, so if you want to play, please make sure that your club gets its entry in on time.

Club Championships

Neil Graham writes with details of the Ashfield club championship. Twelve members competed for the championship on Sunday 9 September, with Glenn Halfpenny retaining his title with 4½/5. Phil Morgan was 2nd with 3½/5 and Nigel Wright, Phil Richards, Neil Graham and Bob Taylor were 3rd= with 3/5, the first two of these sharing the slow starters prize.

West Nottingham's championship was won by Ian Kingston, who beat Jonathan Day in the final following a rapidplay qualifying tournament. Jonathan took the Under 16 title, while Andrew Garside won the Under 13 championship. Details are on the West Nottingham web site at http://www.westnottinghamchess.org/2006_07/clubchamp.htm.

Lincoln Rapidplay

Neil Graham updates Pete Mercs' excellent performance at the Lincoln Rapidplay: IMs Andrew Ledger and Mike Basman were leading with 4½/5 going into the last round, a point clear

of the field. Ledger beat Nigel Birtwhistle, but Pete scored an upset victory over Basman to join him in second place.

U125 Date Change

The U125 match against Leicestershire has a change of date because Leicestershire's venue is unavailable on 6 October. The provisional new date is 13 October.

Mike Basman – Simultaneous Display and Talk

The Lincoln Rapidplay organisers, Pandora's Box Chess Club, have arranged a simultaneous display to be given by IM Mike Basman on 13 October. After that, he will give a couple of talks. Full details at <http://www.pandorasboxchessclub.org.uk/>, or call 07727 270503.

Paignton Congress

Richard Webster (Ashfield) and Steve Thacker (West Nottingham) played in the Paignton Congress from 2–8 September. Richard scored 3½/7 in the Premier, while Steve scored 4½/7 in the U130 section, also winning the prize for best disabled player.

Awards Evening

This has had to be cancelled due to the underwhelming demand – surprising after some successful events in the past.

Plea from the President

David Levens

At the AGM I let it be known that the Awards Night would be held on 15 September. No one raised any objections to this and no one even said it was a bad choice of evening. Subsequently the event was announced, in detail, in *Notts News* No. 5, published on 28 August. Ian then sent out (twice!) emails to all secretaries, and I followed up with a third mailing to several and ended up phoning many. The response was *apathetic* in the extreme, including a nil response from one club that had a trophy to collect! Some members of some

Forthcoming events

Leicester Congress: 21–23 September

Wyggeston College, University Road, Leicester LE1 7RJ.
Five sections – something for everyone! For more details, visit <http://www.leicesterchess.co.uk/Atkins/congressdetails.htm>

English Seniors Championship: 28 January–1 February 2008

Izaak Walton Hotel, Dovedale, Derbyshire. Five-round FIDE-rated event for players aged 60 and over. Details and entry form: <http://www.englishchess.org.uk/events/ecf-senior08/index.htm>

clubs I had met in the meantime said they knew nothing about the planned event!

To add to this, several members, and at least one club, couldn't even be bothered to return their trophies on time. This means that I will have to make several journeys to the engravers, instead of one; a quite unnecessary call on my time and energy as well as costing me more money on petrol.

I do not mind that a lot of players obviously didn't want to attend, though those who have been before have since told me what a great night out it was last time we had a special event of this kind. Everybody clearly has the right to choose what they wish to do on any given evening. However, it is a simple courtesy to let organisers know – an email from each secretary whose members did not want to attend would have saved me a lot of hard work and much time.

So, my plea is this. **Please**, club secretaries especially, do respond in some way when an event like this is put on for your benefit. If you keep officers properly informed we can all put more time into the jobs you have called us to do, or maybe have a little more spare time to ourselves. Remember, we all have families and other interests outside of chess.

Derbyshire Rapidplay

Geoff Gibson sends details of a new event: the Derbyshire Rapidplay.

- ♦ **Date:** Sunday 2 December 2007
- ♦ **Venue:** Celanese (formerly Accordis/Courtaulds, Spondon, Derby)
- ♦ **Four sections:** U200, U155, U120 and U90 – 6 rounds per section
- ♦ **Four prizes per section guaranteed:** 1st £100, 2nd £50, 3rd £30, Grading prize £20
- ♦ **Entry fees:** £12 Adults, £9 Juniors, Seniors, Unwaged; £1 discount for ECF direct members
- ♦ **Start time:** 10.00 a.m., last round ends at 6.30 p.m. (30 minutes per player per game)

For more information, email chessman81@lycos.co.uk or visit <http://mysite.orange.co.uk/derbyrapidplay2007>.

Leamington Rapidplay

Kishan Lakhani (Long Eaton) scored 3½/6 to win the Best Junior prize in the U200 section of the Leamington Rapidplay, held on 9 September. Oliver Exton scored 2½ in the U160 section.

Leicester FIDE-Rated Events

Anyone puzzled by the failure to report the second weekend of the B Group (which has the NCA participants) of the Leicester FIDE-rated tournaments (<http://www.leicesterchess.co.uk/FIDE/congressdetails.htm>) will be interested to know that the games will be played on the weekend of 6–7 October. The A group was completed on 18–19 August, as scheduled, and resulted in six players gaining a FIDE rating. Thanks to Sean Hewitt for the update.

Robin Hood Marathon

David Levens

Anyone travelling around Nottingham at this time of year cannot have failed to have seen various notices announcing the Robin Hood Marathon. It struck me, as an ex marathon runner, that the NCA could enter a team in the half-marathon next year.

Apart from myself, I know of at least two other chess players playing in the league who have run at least one half-marathon, as well as the mother of one of our juniors, who has competed in the Robin Hood at least once! Obviously we wouldn't win anything, but it could give us good publicity and we could run a sponsor-type competition based on our respective times, which could raise some revenue.

Sponsors would have to guess all of the runners' finish times or places. The nearest to the correct answer would win a percentage of the money raised.

If there is anyone willing to have a go, even if you haven't run before, contact me and I'll organise a training schedule (I'm a fully qualified marathon coach).

Missing Trophy

We're trying to track down the location of the Best Game Prize trophy. None of the last three winners (David Levens, Rob Richmond and Ian Kingston) has been presented with it, but it is believed to exist. If you know where it is, or have an idea who might have it, please contact either *Notts News* or a member of the Executive Committee.

World Championship

The World Championship got off to a very slow start in Round 1, with all four games being drawn in under 30 moves. However, things brightened up considerably in Round 2, with a brilliant win by Kramnik against Morozevich and a nicely judged effort by Anand to win with black against Aronian.

Vladimir Kramnik – Alexander Morozevich

World Championship, Mexico City, 14.09.2007

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.d4 Kramnik's speciality – the Catalan Opening. Many of his best games feature delicate positional wins from this opening, gradually converting an apparently insignificant advantage into a win. This game takes a different course. **4...dxc4 5.Bg2 a6 6.Ne5 Bb4+** Unusual: 6...c5 is more common, but there have been a handful of recent games with 6... Bb4+. Morozevich probably has something prepared to surprise Kramnik. **7.Nc3 Nd5 8.0-0!** A novelty. White normally plays 8.Bd2 **8...0-0** Morozevich takes things cautiously – it looks as though Kramnik's preparation has borne fruit sooner than Black's. White must have been prepared for something like 8...Nxc3 9.bxc3 Bxc3 10.Rb1 Qxd4 11.Qxd4 Bxd4 12.Nxc4, when his lead in development and the open lines may compensate for the sacrificed pawns. **9.Qc2 b5 10.Nxd5 exd5 11.b3 c6 12.e4!**



A very deep idea, which Kramnik must have prepared in advance. Now 12...dxe4 13.Bxe4 Qxd4 14.Bxh7+ Kh8 15.Bf4 gives a sharp game with roughly equal chances, but Black's choice appears to prevent this. 12...f6 13.exd5! 13.bxc4 fxe5 14.exd5 exd4 transposes. White's sacrifice sets Black all sorts of problems and Morozevich starts to fall a long way behind on the clock. 13...fxe5 14.bxc4 exd4 15.dxc6 Be6 16.cxb5 d3?! 16...Ra7 may be better. 17.c7! Qd4 Black also has to consider 17...Qd6 and 17...dxc2. A lot of analysis will be needed to figure out which is best, but there seems to be a consensus that 17... Qd4 is a mistake. 18.Qa4!



Pieces are hanging all over the board. Kramnik is playing in Morozevich's style, and the latter is getting into serious time trouble. 18...Nd7 19.Be3 Qd6 20.Bxa8 Rxa8 21.Bf4 This may be an error, as we shall see shortly. Instead, 21.Rac1 looks winning. 21...Qf8 21...Qd5! may save the game, since 22.Qxb4? (22.Rac1 keeps White on top, but the position is very unclear) 22...Qf3 23.Qd4 Bd5 forces 24.Qxd5+ Qxd5, winning for Black. But finding an idea like this with only a few minutes left isn't easy – even my computer takes a while to see it. 22.b6 White is winning now, and the rest is just a mopping up operation. 22...Ne5 23.Bxe5 Qf3 24.Qd1 Qe4 25.b7 Rf8 25...Qxb7 26.Qxd3 is the last chance to stay on the board, but being the exchange and two pawns down against Kramnik is no fun at all. 26.c8Q Bd5 Kramnik has been known to overlook a mate in one, but not this time. 27.f3 1-0

Games can be viewed live at <http://partidas.chessmexico.com/>, which coped admirably with the thousands of visitors – none of the teething troubles typically seen at major events. Lots of other sites are providing coverage and analysis: Susan Polgar has a list at <http://susanpolgar.blogspot.com/2007/09/world-championship-coverage-information.html>.

The Gentlemanly World of Nottingham Chess Club

Robert Richmond

A treasure in the Nottinghamshire Archives is the minute book of Nottingham Chess Club 1872–1897, the source for most of this piece. The club was established 16 October 1829, so it must be the first chess organisation in the county. Membership was rather exclusive and by election only – recorded membership varied between 30 and 55. There were no women or juniors. The members were a classy bunch. Those I've tracked down on the census include lace

manufacturers (3), a soap manufacturer, lace merchants (2), a silk merchant, the manager of a lace factory, solicitors (2), a banker, an accountant, a clergyman, a master tailor and a town Alderman. The number of Germans is striking – I've found four, including Sigismund Hamel, long time President, and Carl Sipman, Treasurer in the 1880s, and there may be others, as well as Albert Heymann, whose parents were German. The death of William G Ward "the esteemed club vice president and Mayor of Nottingham" (from injuries sustained by falling from his horse) is recorded in 1878 and in 1891 the Sheriff was the principal guest and an entertaining speaker at the annual dinner. This is the Nottingham elite at play.

The club was keen on its annual "supper" or "soiree". Sometimes this was combined with "an exhibition of simultaneous play". So in 1873 the date was fixed "as soon as Mr. Blackburne can make it convenient to pay Nottingham the intended visit". The following evening he gave a "grand seance of blindfold chess". Gunsberg came in 1888 (fee £3 3s) and 1889 and Blackburne again in 1894 (fee only £2 2s).

In 1873 the club was turfed out of Bromley House and moved to a room offered by Mrs Bowman, 52 Long Row, just off the Market Square, it they remained for most of the period covered by the minute book. This mutated into Bingham's restaurant and after it went bust in 1890 to the Eagle restaurant. The ground floor is now a branch of Boots. There was a brief period at the Albert Hotel, Derby Road, while the mess from the bankruptcy was sorted out. It met on Tuesday and Friday evenings from October to March – chess as a winter sport goes back a long way.

The club had the exclusive use of the room for £15 p.a., rather expensive but "with the privilege of a piano standing in the room". An inventory was taken of club assets prior to the move in 1873, which were – 1 sofa, 3 screens, 8 tables, 10 cushioned chairs, 5 mesh bottomed chairs, 1 cushioned armchair, 1 cupboard, 1 clock (a proper one not a chess clock), 1 fender iron, 1 coal bucket, 1 coffee pot, cups, saucers & spoons, 4 chess boards, 7 folding boards, 3 boxes of chessmen, chessmen in the drawers of tables (club rules in 1891 were exhorting members to put the pieces back in the drawer) and various magazines going back to 1841. There was also an oil painting of Samuel Newham Esq, one of the club founders and for many years club president. I wonder what became of it?

As was fit and proper for a club of gentlemen there was a pretty casual attitude towards money. The usual deficit was made up by prior guarantees from leading members. In 1886 it was agreed that "the subscription in future years should be 10/6 instead of the optional amount in vogue during the last few years". This was put forward by the match captain and star player and might have had something to do with the next resolution "railway fares of the match playing teams should be met by the funds of the club". But old attitudes die hard. Here's a report in the press from 1894, the sort of journalism it is impossible to imagine today – "A financial statement was read, showing that in spite of some exceptional charges the income of the club had exceeded the expenditure. The treasurer was out of pocket to the extent of £6 odd, but this was perfectly satisfactory to the members insasmuch as they always expected a balance on the wrong side and the amount was less than it had been for many years".

Turning (reluctantly) to the actual chess. From 1880 the club played four or five matches per year against near neighbours. Leicester home and away was a regular fixture, with a predictable series of losses to the young H. E. Atkins

(subsequently 9 times British Champion) on Board 1. Other opponents included Hull, Manchester (reckoned to be unsportingly good), Derby, Birmingham and Northampton. The only recorded playing session was just under 3 hours against Hull in 1892 when “at 6.30 we adjourned play for [what else?] high tea, at the close of which the Rev J. A. Mitchell (club president) made a very appropriate speech”. Games were played without chess clocks and when they finished early a second game was played, which happened about half the time. This doesn't exactly suggest a very high standard.

The only recorded local match was against Nottingham Mechanics in 1873. It all sounded very jolly, but the experiment was not repeated – the plebs had the effrontery to win 7.5–6.5. There was usually some sort of internal club competition. In 1873 there were a planned series of matches for a 5/- stake for the benefit of club funds. So S. Hamel vs. Gilpin at odds of a rook, 5 games. The minutes lament on the 1887/88 season – “A handicap tournament, with an entrance fee of 2/6 was played at the club during the season. Only 8 members took part in it, the interest taken in the matter being of a milk & water character... An unusually slow season” – followed by complaints about the absence of a dinner that year.

The club seemed to have a positive attitude to the outside world. An SGM in 1885 unanimously decided to join the newly formed British Chess Association (not to be confused with the BCF, founded 1904). The occasion of the visit by the Counties' Chess Association in 1886 led to the International tournament in Nottingham, the subject of a separate piece [to be published in a future issue]. The club was invited to join and have two members on the committee of the newly formed MCCU in 1897, though whether this was taken up is not recorded, and there was a Nottinghamshire (not Nottingham) team in the first year of competition. Noticeably absent though is any reference to the formation of the NCA in 1896. A little puzzle for someone to sort out...

Best Game Prize – Entertainment Value

Robert Richmond

I seem to have invented a new category of ‘most entertaining game’ with this year's Best Game competition. I'm sure there's an eager public thirsting to know more...

Graham, Neil – Basey, Matthew

Ashfield 2 - West Nottingham 1, 05.12.2006

Notes by Robert Richmond. **1.d4 d5 2.e4 c6 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.f3 exf3** Neil tells me this is a Blackmar–Diemer Gambit and not a Caro-Kann. Fat lot I know. **5.Nxf3 Nf6 6.Bc4 Bf5 7.0–0 e6 8.Ne5 Bxc2 9.Nxf7 Kxf7 10.Bxe6+** Neil Graham notes that Steve Burke played 10.Qxc2 here (Burke–Gallagher, 4NCL Rd 10, 2007) and went on to lose after a long battle **10... Kxe6 11.Qxc2**



You're not seeing things – the black king really is on e6. Apparently this is a book, or at any rate it's in a book. The piece sac should be inadequate. **11...Qd7?** Black is presumably guarding against Qb3+ and Qxb7... which isn't actually a threat: e.g. 11...Bd6 12.Qb3+ Kd7 13.Qxb7+ Qc7 14.Qxa8 Rc8 and now Na6 traps the queen. The move blocks in the QN and removes an important flight square for the king. Now White is winning. **12.Re1+?** Too slow. Paradoxically 12.Qb3+ is the best move. Some possible continuations: 12.Qb3+ Ke7 13.Bg5 Kd8 14.Rxf6 Be7 15.Rf7 Qxd4+ (15...Re8 16.Rxe7) 16.Kh1 Bxg5 17.Rd1 Bd2 18.Qxb7; 12.Qb3+ Kd6 13.Bf4+ Ke7 14.d5 and I don't think black survives; 12.Qb3+ Nd5 13.Bg5 Kd6 14.Nxd5 cxd5 15.Bf4+ Ke7 16.Rae1+ Kd8 17.Re5 **12...Kf7 13.Qb3+ Kg6 14.Ne2 Bd6 15.Bf4 Bxf4??** Urrrrgghh. Far too compliant. 15...Rd8 to defend against Qg3+ and Bxd6 and black wins. Against a queen check there is Kf7 and safety on f8. Otherwise there is time for h6 and Kh7. Now the attack steamrollers through in fine style. **16.Nxf4+ Kh6 17.Ne6 Qd5 18.Qe3+ g5 19.Qh3+ Kg6 20.Re5 Qd7 21.Qf5+ Kf7 22.Rf1 Re8 23.Qxf6+ Kg8 24.Rxg5+ 1–0**