

SUSSEX CHESS NEWS

2024

It's a 'Minor' miracle as county triumphs



**Double delight:
Club bounces
back after covid**

**Grading:
Do the
sums
add up?**

CLUBS

Bognor & Arun 17
 Brighton18-19
 Chichester 20-22
 Crowborough 23-24
 East Grinstead ... 25-26
 Haywards Heath 27
 Horsham.....28-29
 Uckfield 30-31

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COUNTY

Open Team 6-8
 Results 9-13



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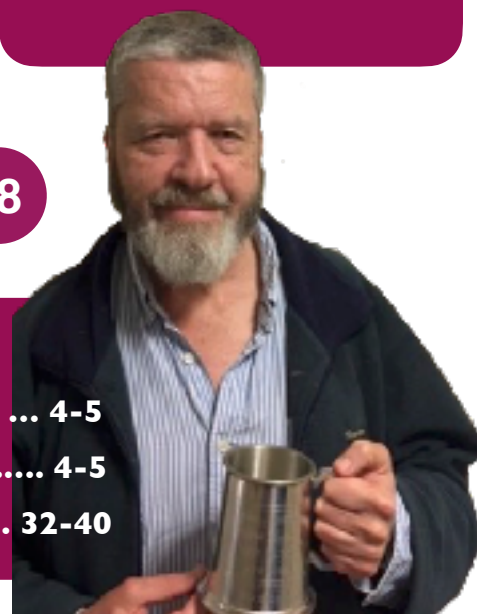


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REPORTS

ECF delegate ... 4-5
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WILSON CUP - INDIVIDUAL CHAMPIONSHIP

THERE were five entries for this event. In the opening round, Andrew Briggs won against Hooman Honarvarmahalati. The two semi-finals pitted Andrew Briggs v Luke Rutherford and Russell Granat v Feliks Kwiatkowski.

Luke was to win the first semi-final and Russell the second. In the final, Russell was to face Luke. This was a minimum of two games.

The first encounter was a draw, with Luke having the white pieces. In the second encounter, Russell having

white, defeated his opponent, thereby winning the final and the competition.

Congratulations to Russell. For results see ecfllms.org.uk/lms/league_comp/212971/rounds

Paul Batchelor

PAUL WATSON TROPHY

THERE was a very good participation level of ten teams in this year's competition, from clubs drawn all across the county from Bognor to Hastings, and East Grinstead to Shoreham. The rating-limited format also tends to encourage exciting and closely contested matches.

In the semi-finals, Bognor & Arun beat East Grinstead 2.5-1.5 and Lewes beat Bexhill by 3.5-0.5. The final couldn't have been closer, with Bognor & Arun defeating Lewes on board count, after a 2-2 draw, with all the games being decisive.

Peter Farr

McARTHUR CUP

THERE were six participants in this year's McArthur Cup. In the absence of historically strong teams Brighton and Worthing, the competition was won decisively by East Grinstead, boosted by an influx of strong new players.

East Grinstead beat Sussex University 5-0 in the semi-final (plus a double default), and went on to beat Lewes 4.5-1.5 in the final, in

a match that was perhaps closer than the score suggests (from a rather biased perspective, admittedly).

Congratulations to East Grinstead, and also a word for Sussex University, who produced a first round shock in defeating a theoretically much stronger Horsham team by 3.5 to 2.5.

Peter Farr



PETER FARR, our ECF delegate, says goodbye to silver status

Gold-plated support should help to put chess on the map

I attended the ECF annual meeting in October, 2023, and also the ECF finance meeting in April, 2024

The AGM minutes are available on the ECF website for those interested in more detail. I summarise a few of the key points from both meetings here.

Much of the discussion at both meetings revolved around the Board proposals to streamline the membership categories from three to two, with the rationale of simplification, and also that there was not a clear enough distinction between categories.

It was decided to merge the silver and gold categories, so there will, in future, be just bronze and gold. At the finance meeting, a price increase was agreed from £18 to £20 for bronze membership, while the new combined membership for silver/gold will be £35 compared to the previous £27 for silver and £39 for gold.

The finance director pointed out the old rates

had not risen since 2019, in spite of significant price inflation since then. Thus the new merged gold/silver price effectively splits the difference between the prices of the two old categories and then adds on £2 for inflation.

The change does mean that for open congresses, players will now need to have gold membership (but will still need only bronze membership for rating of leagues and internal club competitions).

There was discussion at both meetings of the £500k over two years that the ECF has secured from the Government. It is clear the bulk of this will go towards either the higher end of the

game – supporting our international efforts, or in developing a pipeline of strong juniors. The strength of the England teams selected for the Olympiad already suggests an impact from the new cash.

Also, however, a new initiative to support grassroots initiatives has now been announced, with around £100k of potential funding, split across the country. Details of the scheme may be found on the ECF website here; <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/>

The old rates have
not risen since
2019



as ECF looks to streamline membership and grading scheme



OPENING GAMBIT:
New Chancellor Rachel Reeves is former British girls under-14 champion

[wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Grassroots-Prospectus.pdf](#)

Local clubs, leagues and congresses may like to consider what new growth ideas they could put forward that might qualify for this ECF support.

With a new chess-playing Chancellor of the Exchequer, it is to be hoped government support for chess will continue, although of course this can hardly be guaranteed, and one imagines the ECF will be redirecting their influencing efforts towards the new Government.

On a personnel level, ECF finance director Adam Ashton unexpectedly resigned, and there was not time to elect a replacement at the annual meeting.

Alex Longson was subsequently appointed to the post by the Board, and appears to have done an extremely good job so far.

In general, one has the impression the ECF finances are in a decent state, and are also managed reasonably well from a control perspective.

SOUTHERN COUNTIES CHESS UNION DELEGATE'S REPORT

Jamboree? Maybe next year...

SUSSEX participation in SCCU events is covered elsewhere; the SCCU did also introduce a new jamboree-style competition in the spring,

but at rather short notice and at a busy time of year for Sussex players, so we did not take part this year. Nevertheless, it is encouraging that the

SCCU continues to try new things, as well as running the traditional inter-county competitions.

Peter Farr



We've all got that

Proud Sussex skipper PAUL BATCHELOR reports on a long but successful season as Sussex win the Minor Counties Cup

FIRST up, Sussex faced Surrey away. Surrey had been runners up in the ECF Open section last season. They proved formidable opposition and triumphed by 12-4. No Sussex wins were recorded in this one.

Next, Sussex faced Middlesex at home. Middlesex were the current ECF Open section



THE CUP THAT CHEERS : ECF controller for the counties championships,



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champion feeling



Mark Murrell, presents the trophy to Paul Batchelor and his team. Below right, Mikolaj Rogacewicz.



champions. What could Sussex do? Sussex fielded a very strong side, while Middlesex were below par. Sussex ran out winners by $9\frac{1}{2}$ - $6\frac{1}{2}$. A tremendous result. Wins were recorded for Sussex by Mikolaj Rogacewicz, Mark Broom, Geoffrey James, James Mansson, Stephen Newman and Rasa Norinkeviciute.

Sussex v Kent was the next fixture. Sussex were able to muster a strong side for this encounter. In a very close

match, with both sides having their chances to take the match, Kent eventually emerged victorious by $8\frac{1}{2}$ - $7\frac{1}{2}$. Sussex winners were Matthew Payne, Geoffrey James, Rasa Norinkeviciute and James Wheeler.

Sussex played Surrey again for the second encounter of the season. This time, Sussex were the home side. Surrey proved very strong in the second encounter. This time, they won by $10\frac{1}{2}$ - $5\frac{1}{2}$. Wins were recorded for Sussex by Callum Brewer, Mark Broom and Alan Palmer.

Sussex played Middlesex away for the next one. Middlesex at home were a far different proposition than they had been away. A much strengthened Middlesex side triumphed by $11\frac{1}{2}$ - $4\frac{1}{2}$. Two players for Sussex

did win their respective games in this encounter. They were Mikolaj Rogacewicz and Stephen Newman.

The last game in the Union stage (SCCU) was against Kent. Kent were the home side and won by 10-6, Luke Rutherford and Paul Edwards being the only Sussex players to win their games.

Sussex took up the chance to play in the ECF Minor Counties

competition and we entered another challenge for the season.

Our first fixture was played at Appleford, where we faced Worcestershire. This was a close match. Despite heavily out rating Worcestershire on most boards, Sussex recorded a narrow $8\frac{1}{2}$ - $7\frac{1}{2}$ victory.

In the semi-final, Sussex faced Norfolk. Last season, Sussex had lost against this side in the very same event. What would happen this time round? Sussex were two down with two to play. Two Sussex wins tied the scores.

The score was 8-8. Tie breaks would now have to be applied. Sussex had a board count of 46, Norfolk had one of 60. The lower figure is superior. So, Sussex went through to face Lincolnshire in the final.

The final was played at Whittlesford village, Cambridgeshire. Another close and incredibly tense match followed. After the last game had finished, the scores were tied 8-8.

Tie breaks were to feature a second time in the event for Sussex. The board count figures were Lincolnshire 41, Sussex 27. So, for a second time Sussex won a tie on board count tie breaks.

Sussex became ECF Minor Counties champions for 2024.

CLOSER INSPECTION: Feliks Kwiatkowski studies the trophy



SUSSEX CHESS 2024/OPEN TEAM, CHAMPIONSHIP/RESULTS

SURREY 12 SUSSEX 4, OCTOBER 21, 2023					
1	Buckley, Graeme N	2389	1 - 0	Kwiatkowski, Feliks J	2260
2	Price, Gwilym T	2273	1 - 0	Wilson, Jaimie	2169
3	Povah, Nigel E	2263	1 - 0	Rogacewicz, Mikolaj	2154
4	Lalic, Susan	2263	½ - ½	Farr, Peter G	2128
5	Lalic, Peter D	2251	1 - 0	Broom, Mark	2124
6	Osborne, Marcus E	2216	1 - 0	James, Geoffrey H	2065
7	Stewart, Ashley	2209	1 - 0	Mansson, James C	2059
8	Lee, Peter	2200	½ - ½	Newman, Stephen J	2053
9	Brooks, Phil J	2184	½ - ½	Batchelor, Paul A	2039
10	Oozeerally, Tariq	2171	½ - ½	Cove, Henry	1964
11	Noyce, Robert	2117	½ - ½	Pickersgill, Adrian O	1924
12	Hasson, Peter	2073	½ - ½	Wheeler, James M	1857
13	Hodgson, John H	2065	½ - ½	Honarvarmahalati, Hooman	1826
14	Foley, John P	2047	1 - 0	Lake, Chris	1808
15	Scrimmour, Alan	1999	½ - ½	Edwards, Paul	1767
16	Shah, Meet	1888	1 - 0	Selby, Paul R	1755

SUSSEX 9.5 MIDDLESEX 6.5, NOVEMBER 4, 2023					
1	Kwiatkowski, Feliks J	2260	0 - 1	Bates, Richard A	2364
2	Rutherford, Luke E	2245	0 - 1	Gallana, Marco	2340
3	Brewer, Callum D	2237	½ - ½	Stone, Andrew M	2197
4	Wilson, Jaimie	2169	½ - ½	Pedersen, Carsten	2192
5	Lowe, Daniel	2170	½ - ½	Makepeace, Philip J	2176
6	Rogacewicz, Mikolaj	2154	1 - 0	Dydak, Mateusz	2076
7	Rayner, Francis	2137	½ - ½	Mackenzie, Colin	2045
8	Farr, Peter G	2128	½ - ½	Calvert, D Ian	2025
9	Broom, Mark	2124	1 - 0	Coles, Steven F	2016
10	James, Geoffrey H	2065	1 - 0	Sivanandan, Bodhana	2000
11	Mansson, James C	2059	1 - 0	Rubeck, Jonathan	1965
12	Newman, Stephen J	2053	1 - 0	Breed, Greg J	1893
13	Batchelor, Paul A	2039	0 - 1	Billenness, Greg	1862
14	Froom, Oliver	2030	½ - ½	McGuinness, Andrew	1853
15	Norinkeviciute, Rasa	2023	1 - 0	Hayali, Laith	1796
16	Cove, Henry	1964	½ - ½	Fincham, Leon HJ	1788



SUSSEX CHESS 2024/OPEN TEAM, CHAMPIONSHIP/RESULTS

SUSSEX 7.5 KENT 8.5, DECEMBER 2, 2023					
1	Kwiatkowski, Feliks J	2260	0 - 1	McDonald, Neil R	2484
2	Rutherford, Luke E	2245	0 - 1	Taylor, Martin R	2363
3	Brewer, Callum D	2237	½ - ½	Chandler, Cliff R	2262
4	Rogacewicz, Mikolaj	2154	½ - ½	Stebbins, Anthony J	2239
5	Payne, Matthew J	2143	1 - 0	Starley, Robert	2210
6	Rayner, Francis	2137	½ - ½	Hanreck, Alan E	2176
7	Farr, Peter G	2128	½ - ½	Snape, Ian L	2183
8	Broom, Mark	2124	0 - 1	Roberts, Mike	2110
9	James, Geoffrey H	2065	1 - 0	O'Donovan, Paul J	2125
10	Mansson, James C	2059	0 - 1	Sugden, John N	2092
11	Newman, Stephen J	2053	½ - ½	Verbytski, Oleg	2003
12	Batchelor, Paul A	2039	½ - ½	Stock, Tobias W	2069
13	Froom, Oliver	2030	0 - 1	Robertson, Mark M	2037
14	Norinkeviciute, Rasa	2023	1 - 0	Tucker, David S	1979
15	Pickersgill, Adrian O	1924	½ - ½	Allen, John P	1935
16	Wheeler, James M	1857	1 - 0	Gluckman, Tim	1917

SUSSEX 5.5 SURREY 10.5, JANUARY 20, 2024					
1	Kwiatkowski, Feliks J	2260	½ - ½	Buckley, Graeme N	2389
2	Rutherford, Luke E	2245	0 - 1	Large, Peter	2314
3	Brewer, Callum D	2237	1 - 0	Lalic, Susan	2263
4	Wilson, Jaimie	2169	0 - 1	Baker, Chris W	2257
5	Payne, Matthew J	2143	½ - ½	Lalic, Peter D	2251
6	Farr, Peter G	2128	0 - 1	Price, Gwilym T	2273
7	Broom, Mark	2124	1 - 0	Osborne, Marcus E	2216
8	Mansson, James C	2059	0 - 1	Stewart, Ashley	2209
9	Newman, Stephen J	2053	½ - ½	Lee, Peter	2200
10	Batchelor, Paul A	2039	0 - 1	Frostick, Clive A	2125
11	Cove, Henry	1964	0 - 1	Rosen, Daniel B	2099
12	Pickersgill, Adrian O	1924	½ - ½	Noyce, Robert	2117
13	Wheeler, James M	1857	½ - ½	Andrews, B Peter A	2070
14	Lake, Chris	1808	0 - 1	Young, Daniel J	1994
15	Selby, Paul R	1755	0 - 1	Davis, Timothy J	1962
16	Palmer, Alan H	1736	1 - 0	Frostick, Helen M	1712



SUSSEX CHESS 2024/OPEN TEAM, CHAMPIONSHIP/RESULTS

MIDDLESEX 11.5 SUSSEX 4.5, FEBRUARY 3, 2024					
1	Bates, Richard A	2364	1 - 0	Kwiatkowski, Feliks J	2260
2	Gallana, Marco	2340	½ - ½	Rutherford, Luke E	2245
3	Tiruchirapalli, Venkataramanan	2320	1 - 0	Wilson, Jaimie	2169
4	McMichael, Richard J	2256	0 - 1	Rogacewicz, Mikolaj	2154
5	Eames, Robert S	2246	1 - 0	Farr, Peter G	2128
6	Badacsonyi, Stanley	2206	1 - 0	Broom, Mark	2124
7	Sagall, Roy	2203	1 - 0	James, Geoffrey H	2065
8	Stone, Andrew M	2197	0 - 1	Newman, Stephen J	2053
9	Pedersen, Carsten	2192	½ - ½	Batchelor, Paul A	2039
10	Quinn, John M	2172	1 - 0	Froom, Oliver	2030
11	Mogilarov, Dimitar	2171	½ - ½	Cove, Henry	1964
12	Goldberg, Jeff A	2133	½ - ½	Pickersgill, Adrian O	1924
13	Senior, Gary	2128	1 - 0	Wheeler, James M	1857
14	Fleming, Nigel D	2106	½ - ½	Lake, Chris	1808
15	Dydak, Mateusz	2076	1 - 0	Edwards, Paul	1767
16	Coles, Steven F	2016	1 - 0	Selby, Paul R	1755

KENT 10 SUSSEX 6, FEBRUARY 24, 2024					
1	Murphy, Conor E	2550	½ - ½	Kwiatkowski, Feliks J	2260
2	McDonald, Neil R	2484	0 - 1	Rutherford, Luke E	2245
3	Taylor, Martin R	2363	½ - ½	Wilson, Jaimie	2169
4	Starley, Robert	2210	½ - ½	Broom, Mark	2124
5	Talsma, Paul A	2178	½ - ½	James, Geoffrey H	2065
6	Snape, Ian L	2183	½ - ½	Newman, Stephen J	2053
7	Verbytski, Oleg	2003	1 - 0	Batchelor, Paul A	2039
8	Sugden, John N	2092	½ - ½	Froom, Oliver	2030
9	O'Donovan, Paul J	2125	1 - 0	Boardman, Jeffrey	2001
10	Robertson, Mark M	2037	1 - 0	Cove, Henry	1964
11	Dakin, Adam	2015	½ - ½	Pickersgill, Adrian O	1924
12	Sands, Alan VH	1965	½ - ½	Wheeler, James M	1857
13	Tucker, David S	1979	0 - 1	Edwards, Paul	1767
14	Clear, David E	1958	1 - 0	Selby, Paul R	1755
15	Allen, John P	1935	1 - 0	Woods, Timothy J	1680
16	Stanchev, Stoyko	1917	1 - 0 (def)	Default	



SUSSEX CHESS 2024/OPEN TEAM, MINOR COUNTIES/RESULTS

SUSSEX 8.5 WORCESTERSHIRE, 7.5, MAY 11, 2024					
1	Rutherford, Luke E	2245	1 - 0	Lambourne, Daniel M	2087
2	Kwiatkowski, Feliks J	2260	½ - ½	Friar, Joseph D	2033
3	Payne, Matthew J	2143	1 - 0	Hurney, Kevin	2041
4	Broom, Mark	2124	0 - 1	Davis, Lee	2063
5	Wilson, Jaimie	2169	½ - ½	Edge, John A	2095
6	Farr, Peter G	2128	1 - 0	Clarke, Ian J	1960
7	Newman, Stephen J	2053	½ - ½	Evans, Harry G	1947
8	Mansson, James C	2059	0 - 1	Rastall, Joe	1859
9	Boardman, Jeffrey	2001	1 - 0	Cartwright, Gavin	1849
10	Norinkeviciute, Rasa	2023	1 - 0	Smith, David	1797
11	Batchelor, Paul A	2039	1 - 0	Towers, Nigel S	1807
12	Cove, Henry	1964	0 - 1	Attwell, Ben	1796
13	Pickersgill, Adrian O	1924	½ - ½	Woodhouse, Stephen V	1847
14	Wheeler, James M	1857	0 - 1	Collett, Ray A	1851
15	Edwards, Paul	1767	0 - 1	Luca, Dorin	1750
16	Selby, Paul R	1755	½ - ½	Waud, David	1731

SUSSEX 8 NORFOLK 8, JUNE 8, 2024 (Sussex win on board count)					
1	Rutherford, Luke E	2245	0 - 1	Walker, Martin G	2212
2	Kwiatkowski, Feliks J	2260	1 - 0	Samarakoon, Vivash	2108
3	Payne, Matthew J	2143	0 - 1	Moore, Gerald	2150
4	Wilson, Jaimie	2169	½ - ½	McEwan, Ken B	2125
5	Farr, Peter G	2128	½ - ½	Moore, Geoffrey R	2120
6	Blades, Kit	1880	1 - 0	Gomez, Daniel	2098
7	Newman, Stephen J	2053	½ - ½	Orton, Stephen LA	2139
8	Mansson, James C	2059	1 - 0	Hughes, Roy	2008
9	James, Geoffrey H	2065	1 - 0	Pullinger, Steve J	2007
10	Norinkeviciute, Rasa	2023	1 - 0	Hall, David E	1943
11	Batchelor, Paul A	2039	1 - 0	Moore, Steve N	1859
12	Wheeler, James M	1857	0 - 1	Dawson, Jeff R	1919
13	Lake, Chris	1808	0 - 1	Lim, Mark	1918
14	Edwards, Paul	1767	½ - ½	Hughes, Mervyn J	1860
15	Selby, Paul R	1755	0 - 1	Hartland, Andrew D	1869
16	Blewitt, Stephen D	1763	0 - 1	Payne, David J	1757



SUSSEX CHESS 2024/OPEN TEAM, MINOR COUNTIES/RESULTS

SUSSEX 8 LINCOLNSHIRE 8, JULY 6, 2024 (Sussex win on board count)					
1	Rutherford, Luke E	2245	0 - 1	Milson, Samuel A	2166
2	Kwiatkowski, Feliks J	2260	½ - ½	Cumbers, Paul	1979
3	Payne, Matthew J	2143	1 - 0	Prior, Stephen CV	2231
4	Rogacewicz, Mikolaj	2154	1 - 0	Dilley, Jason M	2194
5	Broom, Mark	2124	1 - 0	Stead, Nick P	2128
6	Wilson, Jaimie	2169	½ - ½	Birtwistle, Nigel	2197
7	Farr, Peter G	2128	½ - ½	McCarthy, Kevin C	2001
8	Blades, Kit	1880	½ - ½	Coates, David H	2048
9	Newman, Stephen J	2053	½ - ½	Kilshaw, Joe	2056
10	Mansson, James C	2059	0 - 1	Royle, Alex	1999
11	James, Geoffrey H	2065	½ - ½	Ladds, Graham I	1891
12	Batchelor, Paul A	2039	½ - ½	Hebert, R Andrew	1848
13	Pickersgill, Adrian O	1924	½ - ½	Georgiou, Denis	1838
14	Wheeler, James M	1857	0 - 1	Thompson, Daniel	1862
15	Edwards, Paul	1767	1 - 0	MacDonald, Stuart	1829
16	Selby, Paul R	1755	0 - 1	Gibbon, Eric	1865

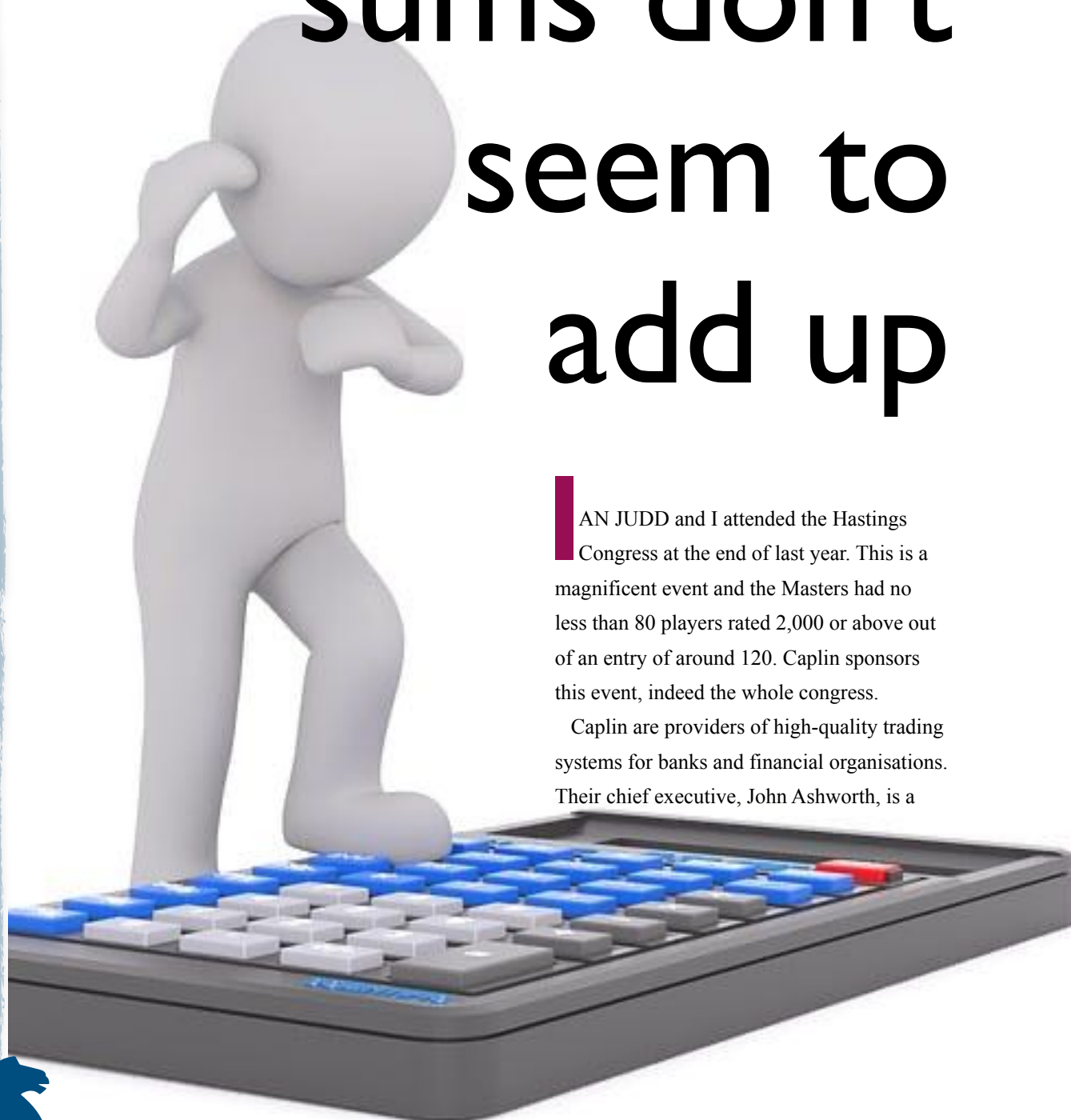
CHAMPIONSHIP - FINAL TABLE						
	Team	Played	Won	Draw	Lost	POINTS
1	Surrey	6	6	0	0	12
2	Kent	6	4	0	2	8
3	Middlesex	6	1	0	5	2
4	Sussex	6	1	0	5	2

MINOR COUNTIES					
Sussex	8½	Sussex	8	Sussex	8
Worcestershire	7½				
Norfolk	11½	Norfolk	8		
Devon	4½				
Lincolnshire	13	Lincolnshire	10½	Lincolnshire	8
Bedfordshire	3				
Somerset		Somerset	5½		
Bye					



STEVE SMITH questions whether the rating system

Sometimes, the sums don't seem to add up



AN JUDD and I attended the Hastings Congress at the end of last year. This is a magnificent event and the Masters had no less than 80 players rated 2,000 or above out of an entry of around 120. Caplin sponsors this event, indeed the whole congress.

Caplin are providers of high-quality trading systems for banks and financial organisations. Their chief executive, John Ashworth, is a



calculates players' performances entirely fairly

great guy and it was good to see him in attendance at the Horntye venue. Chatting with John is always a pleasant and worthwhile experience and we shared an observation that perhaps the Masters, and indeed lower rate events, would have benefited from stronger women players.

If there was a shortage of women participants then there was no shortage of juniors, both home-grown talent and a delegation from South Korea, as well as players from the continent.

I was drawn against a young Korean player, in fact two of them, in my five rounds. I won one game and lost the other, which set me thinking. These juniors are well drilled, openings well prepared, part of a training squad, ultra enthusiastic and massively underrated.

If, playing off a rating of 1,750, I back myself to score 70 per cent against each of these 1,250 rated players then I am on a hiding to nothing. Generically, if I win, then my rating improvement will be minimal, draws represent a drift downwards and losses are catastrophic to my rating.

Let me illustrate with an example.

Let us model this as Played 10 won 5, drawn 4, lost 1, then, given a few rounding errors, I get +10 for each win, -40 for each draw and -140 for each loss. Thus, in spite of scoring 70 per cent, I end up with a ratings movement of $+50-160-140 = -250$. Divide this by 10 across the 10 games and my rating drops by 25. Surely not; for just a single loss in 10 games.

Worse yet, these visitors take our ratings points elsewhere so there is no chance of recouping them in a closed loop system. The UK must be leaking ratings points in the tens of thousands per annum.

My rating improvement will be minimal

So what should I do? I have long since cared more about playing chess than protecting my rating. My grading, as it was then, peaked in 1,979 when I won the Bognor Regis Championship with a score of 13/14. I would hate to think that the single loss of this campaign would have cost me as dear as the worked current example above.

It does seem, however, that there is a dilemma; either play congress chess or protect one's rating. I will play more chess. Others, cognisant of this tension, may choose not to do so – and that is a serious problem for the ECF organisers of the game here.



GRADING - A BROKEN CALCULUS?:
Steve Smith, chairman of Chichester Chess Club



SCCA Patrons 2024-25

PLEASE help the work of the association by renewing your subscription for 2024-25. If you have not been a patron, please consider taking out a subscription. Patrons are exempt from board fees in county matches.

County fees: Adults £15 (ECF members)/£25 (non-ECF members) and Juniors (U-18) £9.

Please complete the form below and return to the treasurer: Jim Wheeler, 12 High Wickham, Hastings, East Sussex TN35 5PB.

Alternatively, you can pay direct into the Sussex County Chess Association's Lloyds Bank account: Sort code: 30-99-50; Account number: 19544060. For anyone paying direct, could they please email me a confirmation. Thank you in anticipation of your support for Sussex chess.

Jim Wheeler, treasurer, james.wheeler9@btinternet.com

To SCCA treasurer Jim Wheeler

From: Name (Block capitals).....

Address.....

.....

.....

I enclose my Patron's fee for 2024-25 of £.....

Signature.....

Email address (for confirmation of receipt)

Cheques should be payable to "Sussex County Chess Association".

Receipts will be issued by email or by post on receipt of a SAE



Club's young at heart

HIGH
FIVES:
Jaimie
Wilson



THE Club Championship was once again won by Jaimie Wilson - for the fifth season running. But there are signs of tougher challenges on the horizon.

Jaimie won the title in convincing style, with an unbeaten run that took him to 13.5/14. Peter Christmas - who rejoined the club after an absence of several years - was second, with 11 points, and Mick Plumb third, with 10.5 points.

But it was the performance of newcomer Sidhanth Pai which stole the headlines - his start-of-the-season grade of 1,378 shooting up to 1,780 by the season's end. His Championship record was an highly impressive 8/9 and, like Jaimie, he remained unbeaten.

The tournament was split into three grading sections, with Sidhanth winning the second section and Warwick Turner heading the third section.

The Knockout tournament was reaching its final stages at the time of going to press - Luigi Caste has made it through to the final to play either Jaimie or Sidhanth.

The tournaments were ably run by Jaimie, who also organised a summer tournament to help sustain members' interest while other competitions were reaching their conclusion.

Players were rewarded points relating to the calibre of their opponent and, remarkably, ended up with a tie for first place - Peter Christmas and Keith Davies both clocking up a tally of 57 points. Third was Norbert Gyorke, with 23 points. A blitz tournament was run by Jamie Wood in January.

The club has been encouraged by an influx of new, younger, players, who have all contributed to a more vibrant atmosphere on club evenings and bodes well for the future.

Bognor have continued to enjoy an excellent relationship with neighbours Chichester Chess Club, contributing a number of players to four teams participating in the Portsmouth Chess League.

Two of the teams won their respective divisions and overall participation opened up inter-club chess competition for a wide range of players.

Mick Plumb





CHEERS: Luke Rutherford, with Sussex League Division 1 Best Performance Tankard. Luke was Brighton and Hove Club Champion 2023-24

It's been a busy and successful year for Brighton, as ROB COUNSELL reports

Cool hand Luke's Magnificent seven

IN October, 2023, honorary Brighton and Hove member GM Raymond Keene gave a Saturday afternoon simul for 20 of us at the Queens Hotel, our seafront venue.

Ray arrived smartly dressed in cream pinstripe jacket and bow-tie. (In 1966 he faced former world champion Botvinnik at Hastings, with Ray wearing a dinner jacket and bow-tie so that he would 'perish in style' according to his game annotation

on the chess games website. He won that game).

He signed one of his books for every participant but appeared a little bemused when one, a younger club member, asked: "Did you write these?"

Ray showed us on a demo board one of his favourite wins: Keene-Kovacevic, Amsterdam 1973 (25 moves), and answered questions from the audience.

My recollection is that simul entrants were permitted to try one or two test moves before Ray's



return to their board, provided of course that the original position was restored, but this led to one entrant misplacing his king. He disputed it, but the game ended there. A GM's decision is final in these situations.

Ray won 18 and drew two. Photos are on our club website homepage. He was guest of honour at the post-simul evening dinner.

Sue Chadwick (women's 50+team) and Geoff James (men's 65+ 2nd team) represented England at the European Senior Team Championships (May, 2024) in the spa resort of Terme Catez, Slovenia.

In the Sussex League, Luke Rutherford (8.5/11) won the 1st division best performance tankard. Our 3rd team, captained by Paul Edwards, won division 3 with 10 wins from 10. Paul also captained the 2nd team to 2nd in the 2nd division. Rob Counsell won the division 3 tankard (9.5/10) and overall league tankard (10.5/11), but concedes there were many stumbles along the way. Luke Rutherford is club champion 2023-24 (7/7).

In July, Brighton

Brighton formed half of the Sussex team



SIMUL STYLE: Raymond Keene, with a virtuoso display

and Hove formed half of the Sussex team that won the Minor Counties Championship 2024 on board count tie break against Lincolnshire at Whittlesford Memorial Hall, Cambridgeshire. Paul Batchelor was presented with the trophy. (Photos and games

on the ECF website under 'Counties Championship 2024').

Callum Brewer, Geoff James and others from the club were in Hull for the British Championships (July/August, 2024). The BBC website reported that the City Hall venue was in lockdown with the riots outside.

In July, 2017, I lost to a youngster at the Weald Congress in Copthorne who left a piece en prise. I thought it was a crafty sacrifice so, regrettably, I didn't accept, but the engine says it was unsound. At the recent British Championships

that junior became, at 15, the youngest British grandmaster in history: Shreyas Royal.

Photos on the Weald Congress website show me (in maroon check shirt) facing Shreyas (in green) when I let slip my chance for chess immortality.

July, 2024, marked one year for us in the Queens Hotel. We are downstairs in the Sandringham Suite (through the doors on the right after entering the main lobby).

Our playing area is effectively one large space, so analysis and conversation is quiet if rated games are being played.

We have 48 members and full membership is £75/year.



Expectations are Chi-high

CHICHESTER Chess Club has had a good year. Membership is well into the mid-30s and there is a very healthy cohort of active juniors.

The club has had a full programme of internal events as well as having FOUR teams in the Portsmouth and District Chess League (PDCL). A typical evening at Fishbourne Centre would see attendance in the mid-20s, excluding visiting teams.

Furthermore, several members have actively participated in local congresses.

On a more prosaic level, the club has completed the transition to digital clocks and increments are now *de rigueur* for all timed games. The club, and league, have settled upon a 70mins + 10seconds regime with game-scoring mandatory until a five minutes-remaining threshold.

League teams

In the PDCL, the A team were runners-up in division 1, the champions being a very strong Fareham team.

In division 2 Chichester B won the division by the narrowest of margins, finishing level on match points and winning by a positive game count of a single game over Fareham B.

In division 3, we had the C and the D teams. The philosophy here was to provide as much

inter-club match experience and opportunity to play different chess players. The C team won this division by a significant margin and the D team finished bottom. A good time was had by all.

In the Cole Cup, the A team beat the B team in the opening round and then lost to Cosham in the semi-final. The B team played in the Plate and were well beaten in the final by a very strong Emsworth side on top form.

My thanks to Bill McDougall, Mike Spence, Allan Reed and Lloyd Jolley as captains of the league teams and to Jaimie Wilson and Mike Spence for captaining the Cole Cup teams.

The club has enjoyed a very full programme of internal events and competitions.

The Championship

The club ran a six-round Swiss tournament controlled by Steve Smith. Round 1 was seeded but beyond that there was the usual share of unexpected results. This tournament began with no less than eight former champions in the mix.

Andrew McDougall is club champion for his fourth time since 2010. Well done, Andrew, on your impressive score of 5½/6. The juniors fared well, most notably Vinuda Gunatilake, who was runner-up with 5/6 ahead of the rapidly improving Mike Eason, also 5/6, on tie break.



Steve Smith takes us through his club's eventful season, with many more highs than lows

It is noteworthy that four juniors finished in the top 10 positions. My thanks to John Hargreaves, who maintains a watching brief over the junior scene.

There were 34 championship entries, which is the highest number for many years and promises well. The club is flourishing with this format with the overwhelming number of games being played on specific round dates. This has generated a fantastic *esprit de corps* and undoubtedly contributed to membership growth. A popular feature has been the "game of the round" posted on the club website.

This is made possible by scoring on self-duplicating score sheets and all games subject to (engine-assisted) analysis by the controller allowing light notes to be generated for additional interest.

The Handicap

This tournament allows ongoing rated games in a tournament context right up to the end of July deadline. In all, 26 members played games in this tournament and while the number of games played was slightly down on previous years, around 70 games this season, the standard of competition was not. The winner is Mike Eason. Well done, Mike, on your win - by a meaningful margin it should be noted. Thanks to Bill McDougall for his work as tournament controller.

The Box Tournament

A new prototype tournament, the Box Tournament, was introduced this year. Players who entered were those looking for more rated chess in an experimental setting within a dynamic format.

The players were divided into three boxes and sorted in ratings order. A bonus calculation gave the weaker players a small advantage and playing all your games helped your score. Games played were converted into a percentage and this all melded into scores. Before round two there were two promotions and two relegations from each group. This must have worked well because everyone who entered won at least a single game and lost at least a single game. The final scores were exceedingly close, with the result in doubt close to the deadline date.

Congratulations to Mike Webber on his win in this year's tournament. Also, a special mention to Alan

Reed in a very close second place with Ryan Kinzett third. The tournament was deemed a success, and we have entries for next season already! Sincerest thanks to Steve Coe as controller of this tournament.

The club organised a Christmas Mayhem Buzzer Tournament –

controller Bill McDougall – and a great time was had by all; winner was Jaimie Wilson.

A six-round Swiss Blitz Tournament, 3mins + 2seconds increment, was won by Bill McDougall amidst the usual carnage of blitz play. Juniors Laurence Ellett and Vinuda Gunatilake completed the podium. Well done all.

During the winter months and in best erudite tradition, a series of mini tutorials was held before start of play to look at various end game motifs. This was well received by club members demonstrating that even in settings with minimal board material there is need for careful analysis to achieve an optimised result.

Club members have participated in many congresses

The club members have actively participated in many congresses, attending such diverse venues as Fareham, Frome, Caplin Hastings, Worthing, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight.

In January, Steve Smith and Ian Judd played in the Major of the Caplin Hastings sponsored by local man John Ashworth. Both found under-rated overseas juniors tough to handle and ended scoring around 50 per cent across the week.

In May, Bill McDougall scored 50 per cent in the Frome Open.

Top junior Vinuda Gunatilake came third in the Isle of Wight Open with a magnificent score of 3½/5, thereby becoming the U16 champion.

This was a particularly



COLE FACES: Jaimie Wilson, top, and Mike Spence, who helped steer the club's Cole Cup teams

noteworthy performance finishing behind only IM Harry Grieve and GM Kieth Arkell. In his wake, behind Vinuda, were WIM Natasha Reagan, FM Neil Dickenson (probably IoW's strongest player) and FM Roland Bezuidenhout among many other exceedingly strong players.

A truly outstanding performance from Vinuda, a player

delivering great results and promising yet better.

The Leo Thomas brothers did well at the Worthing Grand Prix in May. Rahul won first prize and the cup in the U11 Major with 4½/6 and Vishal scored 4/6 in the U18 Minor!

In the Dupree, based in Portsmouth, Rahul won the U12 section with a perfect 6/6.

Vishal scored a creditable 4/6 in U14. Well done both.

The club looks to build on these achievements in the upcoming seasons.





NUMBERS UP: Crowborough Chess Club has enjoyed a boost in membership

All players are getting a pizza the action

THE 2023-24 season has been a busy time with multiple events taking place as well as a growth in membership.

The season started with the 38th Crowborough Congress in September, attracting 58 players from across Sussex and beyond. Calum Salmons picked

up the Joe Berberich Cup on tie break just ahead of past and future winners Rasa Norinkeviute and Callum Brewer.

The Albany Cup for best performance by a Crowborough player was won by Ben Crosby.

October heralded in the commencement of the Sussex League matches in both division 1 and 2.



October also saw Gary McCulloch organising his ever-popular Blitz event, this time a 960 Chess Blitz won jointly by David Fryer and Jon Lawrance.

December saw the conclusion of our weekly Autumn Rapidplay tournament, won again jointly by David and Jon but with Luke Freeman also joining the party. An innovation this year inspired by Brighton & Hove Chess Club and their offering of pizza at our league match we held our 1st Pizza Blitz tournament just before Christmas which Charlie Wannasin-Bell won with a score of $4\frac{1}{2}/5$.

2024 saw our team results in the Sussex League and KO Cup best forgotten with what turned out to be a 10-match losing streak. So we quickly move onto February and the 39th Crowborough Congress where both the Championship and Challenger sections saw joint winners in David Graham and Callum Brewer in the Championship and Sidhanth Pai, Daniel Walvin and Raina Jithendra in the Challengers. The best Crowborough player this time was won by Gary McCulloch.

March saw the final round of our Club Championship that was completely dominated by our younger members with Luke Freeman finally coming out victorious after a play-off against Suriya Velayudham.

We have not mentioned yet all the junior competitions that have taken place at the club that included our UK Chess Challenge preliminary event. We present the Regency Chess Board three times a season for performances in these events and Andrew Lozovau, Luke Freeman and Arthur Cox were added to the winners plaque this year.

The season ended with more rapid play events and 960 Blitzes as well as two more Pizza Blitz nights that have now become a popular and regular event.

So mentions go to the various winners including Daniel Donaghy, Liam Finlay, Luke Freeman, David Fryer and Jon Lawrance.

The season was rounded off with a strong finish in the Sussex League by our teams that ended the season with the 1st team winning four, drawing two losing five, 2nd team winning two, drawing one, losing six and the Junior team scoring two wins, one draw and three losses.

Finally, the season concluded in June with our trip to West Hampstead to play in the London and SCCU team championships. I can highly recommend this tournament to other Sussex clubs. It

is well run and at an easy venue to reach from Sussex by train, being on the Thameslink line.

It was a very exciting day and once we recovered from our last round loss I think we came to realise how well the team had done coming second in our section of 18 teams.

Luke Freeman led from the front, scoring $3\frac{1}{2}/5$ on board 1, and played the move of the day in round 4 risking all to put his opponent in a very difficult position to play in practice.

Elena Currah scored a remarkable $5/6$ with no losses and if there had been a board 2 prize the Gold Medal would have been easily won.

Liam Finlay scored $\frac{1}{2}/6$ last year on board 4. What a difference a year makes this time it was $5/6$! Arjun Prasanna, $2/6$, had the toughest job of all playing anchor man like Liam did last year with most of his opponents being 200+ rating points higher than him.

I had the easiest job filling in the team sheet and drinking coffee. Luke let me play one game after his very long successful round four game.

David Fryer

I can recommend
this tournament to
other clubs



FOLLOWING a sharp decline in membership, mainly caused by Covid, I am pleased to say that East Grinstead Chess Club has now recovered strongly and 2023 - 2024 was one of our best seasons ever.

It was proposed at last year's AGM we consider running a special competition open to both new and existing members of grades over 1,800.

From this idea The Patrick Moore Trophy was launched. Sir Patrick Moore, the well-known TV astronomer, was one of the original founders of the club and his memory lives on with the new trophy.

Eight players signed up, four of whom were new to the club. The new players have subsequently joined the club and allowed us to enter two teams in the Sussex League. Martells department store and a donation from the town council covered the cost of the trophy, which was won by Dan Rosen against strong opposition.

The cup was presented at our AGM by the new Mayor of East Grinstead, Steve Ody, which was one of his first official duties.

Both our teams performed well in the Sussex League, with our 1st team winning division two and promotion to division one.

We also entered two cup competitions and won the McArthur Cup by beating Lewes in the final 4.5 games to 1.5.

For a small club like East Grinstead this is a notable achievement. Well done to everyone involved, especially Peter

Moore the merrier

**Robert
Dyke
reports
how club
has
bounced
back
strongly
after covid**

Kemp, who won the best player in division 2.

In addition, we run a very popular rapid play completion which was won by Carlos Cambon. As you can see, quite a busy season which has helped attract several new members to the club.

In December, I unfortunately suffered a stroke which kept me away from the club for three to four months and I appreciate the support of everyone who pulled together to keep the club running smoothly.

I especially want to mention Robert Wall who somehow managed to run both teams in the Sussex League and two cup competitions. In addition, Robert also undertook the duties of treasurer.

Eric Granzelius runs the internal competitions efficiently and stepped up to take over temporary control as





PLAYING STRENGTH: Club members with the Mayor of East Grinstead, Steve Ody

treasurer when I could not sign cheques.

A special mention for Suzanne Marshall, our patient club secretary, who is always there with a smile and ensures tea and biscuits are always available.

A big thank-you also for the members who turn up regularly to support the club and have made it so successful this year.

We are a small, friendly club which meets every Monday - September to May. Our premises at Glen Vue Community Centre offers an ideal space to play chess in a comfortable and quiet location. Anyone thinking of joining us please see our website <https://sites.google.com/site/egchessclub/> for further details.



CUP THAT CHEERS: The Mayor, Steve Ody, presenting the Sir Patrick Moore trophy to Dan Rosen



David was a marvellous club servant

*David Everitt:
August 14, 1935
– May 19, 2023*

DURING the season we received the sad news that David Everitt, one of our long-standing past members, had died in 2023.

He had retired from active club play some years ago, and had been elected a life member in recognition of his long association with the club - possibly throughout three decades - in recognition of the affection which we had held for him.

David was one of those players who, if sheer enthusiasm could be translated directly into rating points, would have been a grandmaster.

I witnessed a tremendous game of his in 2004 which I wrote up for Sussex Chess News at the time, but it deserves to be seen again.

[Game - Page 35](#)

Ale's well as we are settled in our home

THIS was a satisfactory year for the club, despite the lack of external trophies, whether for the teams or for individuals.

We are very settled at the St Francis Social Club (cheap

Harveys!), we are financially stable (thanks to Viv Cole's good stewardship) and membership is buoyant.

Due to the foregoing, we extended our normal playing season by a month.

Membership enquiries at, and after, the close of the season

promise good things for the coming year.

Our 1st team survived in the top division of the new-minted

Sussex League, after our

previous promotion from division 2, while our 2nd and 3rd teams stayed at a

comfortable distance above the bottom of division 3.

Jeff Boardman distinguished himself by becoming the 1st team's most effective player.

Philip Morris won our main internal competition, the Challenge trophy.

Feliks Kwiatkowski

Membership enquiries promise good things



ANTHONY HIGGS reports on how historic club

Strength in depth

HORSHAM entered its 145th season with plenty of optimism, having several new members, plenty of up and coming junior players and with the usual variety of rated games and special events in the calendar.

Our league presence expanded once again to five teams - not far off our all time high of six which we may be able to match next season!

This year, in league division 1, both Horsham teams excelled themselves, with the first team taking the title by one point from Hastings & St Leonards 1.

Every player bar this correspondent scored 70 per cent or more and performed at over 2,000 rating, with Gavin Lock's 7/10 at 2,264 on board 1 particularly key to our success.

Horsham 2 had probably their best ever season, finishing comfortably mid-table, including taking a crucial drawn match from the runners-up to help the first team to the title. Captain Robert McDonald led from the front with 5.5/9, playing about 170 points above his rating. In division 2, Horsham 3 finished a comfortable 4th with lots of players chipping in with decent results.

Thanks in particular go to Daniel Miller and Jordy Savill who shared the captaincy duties and did an excellent job.

In division 3 there were similarly good results with Horsham 4 taking 3rd place and Horsham 5 coming 5th. Ben Toth scored a total of 9/11 from his games



AT the end of the season we held some more relaxed events including some chess variants.

These proved popular and we intend to run something similar next year.

James McGrath won the Chess960 evening, Anthony Higgs won the Blitz, and the pairing of James McGrath and Nick Warren won the Exchange chess evening.

We held an analysis evening of club members' games, plus some lighthearted chess down at the Malt Shovel has entertained us over the summer break!

Summer's
here: you
can relax!



continues to flourish as five teams saw league action

propels title push

for the third and fourth teams, making him the winner of our club trophy for the best league performance this season.

In the league Knockout cup we edged out Worthing and Crowborough in close matches to reach the final - a repeat of last year's battle with Lewes - unfortunately this year we were roundly thrashed 4-0! Maybe next year...

In both the McArthur Cup (as defending champions) and the Paul Watson Trophy we were knocked out in the first round - clearly cup chess was our Achilles heel this year!

Thanks to all of our captains across the league and cup competitions who enable us to spread the workload around and give players of all standards a chance to represent Horsham in competitive chess.

In congress chess there were some notable scores this year. Daniel Miller and Robert McDonald scored 4/6 in the Hampshire Major (Daniel winning a grading prize). In the Minor section of the same event Ben Hermanns won a grading prize with 4/6. Robert tied for 2nd place in the Kent FIDE U1900 section with 3.5/5, while James Ratcliffe scored 3.5/5 in the Guildford Major.

In the club internal competitions we merged our all-play-all sections together for a large Swiss format competition playing one game per month.

The winner would hold the Rook club championship trophy, with grading qualification bands for the intermediate Bishop and Knight trophies.

Mark Broom retained the Rook with a score of 7.5/9 on tie break from James Mansson. Robert McDonald won the Bishop trophy (also on tie break) with 5/9 and Ben Toth won the Knight with 5.5/9.

In our club cup competitions James Mansson won the Knockout, with Daniel Miller winning the Plate competition for those knocked out in round 1.

The Quickplay Knockout was won by Mark Broom, while the Plate competition was won by Peter Harbott. Mike Forster won the Lightning tankard and Pete Rankin won the Rapidplay competition.

The 2024 winner of the Peter Alford Cup for best junior performance goes to James Ratcliffe for a superb season, including 5/7 at the Southern Gigafinal and 3.5/7 in the U14 section of the British Championships. He also scored well against adult opposition in our club Lightning and Blitz events.

Mike Forster and Andy Collins deserve our thanks for their excellent stewardship of the junior club which continues to be very popular on a Tuesday night before the adult session.

We will soon meet for our AGM in September and look forward to another busy season. Please check our website horshamchessclub.org.uk for news, club details and match reports.


Clearly cup chess
was our Achilles
heel this year





TROPHY HAUL: Club Arran Airlie with the Grand Prix trophy, Alex Howarth, top junior, and Brian Stockham, who won the Knockout Cup, Standard Play (60 min), Rapid Play (30 mins), Blitz (5 mins) and Handicap Split

The global game



THE last season was one of contraction and consolidation. The decision of the Sussex League (formerly Mid-Sussex League) to contract to just three divisions, combined with a raise in our venue rental, led to some real soul-searching at our own AGM.

This would have meant an increase in the number of home fixtures to host, with, from experience, a consequent drop in income for those weeks, plus increased travel commitments, and with only two drivers each with family health-related difficulties we felt we could not commit to the

league programme.

Therefore, with agreement, we loaned our top player, Arran Airlie, to Crowborough for the season, but retained him to enable us

to enter the Sussex League Knockout Cup and the SCCA Paul Watson Trophy. As many will know, the estimable Mr Watson was my chess mentor as a junior, as well as a teacher of so much else and I always harbour the notion to honour his memory (though I, too, regularly can hear the Latin expletives thundering down from above when I move other than to his standard !).



In the Sussex League Knockout we beat Haywards Heath in the quarter-final 3.5-0.5, with Arran drawing with Feliks Kwiatkowski on the top board (acknowledged by both that without time pressure Arran should have won); ceding home advantage to save a club session we narrowly lost to Lewes in the semi-final 1.5-3 (our matches with our Lewes neighbours are always thrilling) and they went on to win the cup; in the Sussex County Chess Association Paul Watson Trophy, we beat Hastings & St Leonard's 3.5-0.5 in the first round and lost 1-3 to Bexhill in the quarter-final, though that, too, was close.

We have been online as a club at Chess.com for many years now and in the last year we registered a 57 per cent win total, with six wins, two draws and three losses and on the club leaderboard are in the top 0.7 per cent of the hundreds of thousands of clubs on there; we played teams from Michigan USA and Greenland plus county teams from Lincolnshire, Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire, as well as many with exotic names.

Club strength online has, however, dwindled, and it is appreciated that many do not favour the three days per move approach, but faster chess is available each week in our club sessions over the board and this longer correspondence-style play enables analysis and longer considered activity for those with busy lives.

We have attracted some new players and will shortly embark on a bigger recruitment plan, so would be pleased to welcome players of any age to our weekly Wednesday sessions at the Luxford Centre, where we start from 7.30pm and the ultimate finish is for 10.30pm but attendees can obviously within that choose however long they want to play.

We are a friendly, welcoming club with several of the more experienced comfortable in coaching those less so. We would be particularly pleased to welcome a few stronger experienced players (drivers would be useful, too).

Brian Stockham



**CLUB
STALWART:
Ken
Swanton**

Ken helped put us on the map

WE are in mourning, as our life president and founder, Ken Swanton, passed away after a long illness. Ken and I joined together many years ago coaching at the school club at Holy Cross Church of England Primary in Uckfield, when his grandsons, Neil and Mark Carter, were involved.

The school (now disastrously closed) won Sussex trophies and many youngsters represented the county successfully. It was our desire to start a town club so that they had somewhere locally to progress into adult chess. My career prevented my involvement at that time, but Ken, supported by his family, took on the launch of the Uckfield Chess Club and we entered the Mid-Sussex League in competition for the first time in 2006, since when we have won division 3 once, and the Knockout Cup twice. We will remember him – rest in peace, old friend.



MARK BROOM says one game can change a season

A SEASON can turn on a single game. Over the last few years, I have had long hours at work in a demanding job; the last time this happened my form plummeted (dropping 34 ECF points in old grades in three years) before recovering after the pressure came off.

This time, I have managed it better, though often feeling somewhat tired. Around Christmas, a run of games came to make me feel that a similar collapse was about to occur.

It started with a loss on time from a winning position in a county game, then Adam Ursell fooled me in the opening and turned me over. Oliver Froom outplayed me in the next league game and Paul Kington nicely held a draw in a club championship game. This added up to make me feel that all was going wrong.

My confidence was pretty low going into the following game against Jon Lawrance of Crowborough. Chances were missed by both players, but this was a fun game with both of us finding interesting moves, which I managed to win.

Crowborough v Horsham, January 19, 2024.

White: Mark Broom, Black: Jon Lawrance

1.c4 c6 2.Nf3 d5 3.b3 Nf6 4.g3 e6 5.Bg2 Nbd7
6.Bb2 Be7 7.O-O O-O 8.d3 Re8 9.Nbd2 Bf8 10.e4
dxe4 11.dxe4 e5 12.Qc2 Qc7 13.Rad1 a5 14.a3 b6
15.Rfe1 Bb7 16.Qc3 g6 17.Nf1 Rad8 18.h3 Nh5
19.Ne3 f6 20.b4 Ng7 21.Qb3 Ne6 22.h4 Kf7 23.Bh3
Bh6 24.Nd5 Qc8 25.Nc3 Qc7 26.Qa2 Be8 27.Rd3
Ndf8 28.Red1 Rxd3 29.Rxd3 Nf4 30.gxf4 Bxh3
31.Ng5+ Bxg5 32.fxg5 Be6 33.Nd5 Qb8 34.Rf3
Bxd5 35.cxd5 f5 36.exf5 gxf5 37.Rxf5+ Kg6

38.Qb1 e4 39.Rf6+ Kh5 40.Rh6+ Kg4 41.Qd1+
Kh3 42.Qf1+ Kg4 43.Qg2+ Kf5 44.Rf6# 1-0

The opening left white with a small edge, but nothing more than the usual advantage of being white.

19 ... f6 this feels weakening. Black then drifts into a dangerous position in the next few moves.

24 Nd5 (this should be winning with the right follow up - note that my knight is en prise to a pawn, first occasion)

25 Nc3? (this position is still quite nice, but 25 Nf6 should win - I simply chickened out - as I said, my confidence was low). Black then improves his position while white dithers.

29 ... Nf4 an interesting move, trying to take advantage of White's loose pieces, but unfortunately it is probably not sound.

31 Ng5 (knight en prise to a pawn for the second time)

33 Nd5 (knight en prise to a pawn for the third time)

34 Rf3 (knight still en prise to the pawn, but not good)

34 ... Bd5 (now Black is losing, but 34 ... cd was now fine for Black, when he is perhaps better)

After this Black loses quickly, but with a nice King hunt.

This left me much more upbeat for a tough county game against Marcus Osborne of Surrey the day after.

Surrey v Sussex, January 20, 2024. White:

Marcus Osborne, Black: Mark Broom

1.c4 c6 2.Nf3 d5 3.g3 Nf6 4.Bg2 Bf5 5.Qb3 Qb6
6.d3 e6 7.Be3 Qa6 8.cxd5 exd5 9.Nd4 Bg6 10.f4 h6
11.Nd2 Nbd7 12.N2f3 Bh7 13.O-O Be7 14.Bh3 O-



O 15.Ne5 Rad8 16.Rac1 Rfe8 17.g4 Bf8 18.Ndf3 Bd6 19.Bd4 c5 20.Bc3 Nb6 21.g5 Nh5 22.Bd2 c4 23.dxc4 dxc4 24.Nxc4 Nxf4 25.Nxd6 Nxh3+ 26.Kg2 Rxd6 27.Kxh3 Bf5+ 28.Kg3 Rxe2 29.Rf2 Be6 30.Qb4 Nd5 31.Qh4 Rxf2 32.Kxf2 hxg5 33.Nxg5 Nf6 34.Bc3 Qb6+ 35.Kf1 Bg4 0-1

The game starts with an unusual strategic exchange, with each side trying to bamboozle the other.

10 f4 is perhaps a bit overambitious, but not too bad.

17 g4 is definitely overambitious, going from a levelish position to being clearly worse! Black's co-ordinated pieces are ready to spring out.

20 ... Nb6 not the only good move, but I was confident in the plan I had developed.

23 dc (23 Qd1 was better), now White's position opens up against Black's better placed pieces.

There are various ways to play over the coming moves, but all the tactics work for Black. My opponent became very short of time.

35 ... Bg4 a horrible move to face, quite unexpected, and there is no time to work anything out. White overstepped the time control in a lost position.

From then on, while work did not ease up, the season went much better and I had quite a few nice games. If you are playing badly, it can turn round very quickly, so try not to get depressed and keep at it!



PLAY THROUGH THE GAMES ONLINE

Sussex League Division 1, April 16, 2024. White: Rogacewicz, Mikolaj, Black: Mansson, James C 0-1, Annotator Mansson, James. Brighton v Horsham. Time control: 65 minutes plus 30 second increment.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.e3 e6 5.Bd3 White tries to profit from delaying Nc3. **5...dxc4 6.Bxc4 Bd6** Black avoids ...b5 until White plays Nc3. [6...Nbd7 7.0-0 Bd6 8.Nc3 b5 9.Bd3 0-0 is perhaps the most accurate move order.] **7.0-0 0-0 8.Nc3 b5 9.Bd3 Nbd7** We have reached a standard line by a roundabout move order. **10.e4 e5 11.d5?!** This seems a little dubious. **11...cxd5! 12.Nxd5** [12.Nxb5 Nc5 was my intention.] **12...Nxd5 13.exd5 f5!?** [13...Rb8 was a simple alternative. I was a little worried about the "Greek Gift" sacrifice,

but it fails in straightforward fashion after 14.Bxh7+ Kxh7 15.Ng5+ Kg8 16.Qh5 Nf6-+] **14.Bxb5 Rb8 15.Bc6?** This is what Black hoped for: the white bishop is out of play, while the black rook is activated. **15...e4! 16.Nd4** [16.Ng5 Ne5! is similarly strong.; 16.Bxd7 Bxd7 does not really help White.] **16...Qh4** This does not seem the most effective way to attack. [16...Bxh2+? 17.Kxh2 Qh4+ 18.Kg1 Ne5 19.f3! was why I correctly rejected this sacrifice; 16...Ne5! 17.Bf4! (17.Qh5? was the reason I rejected the immediate knight move to e5, thinking it obstructed my attack with ...Qh4. However 17...f4!-+ intending ...Bg4 looks very strong.) 17...Qh4 18.g3 (18.Bg3 Qh6-+ intending ...f4 looks very strong.) 18...Qh3 19.Bxe5 Bxe5-+ and Black has a strong attack.] **17.f4!** [17.g3? Qh3 18.Ne6 Ne5! (18...Rf6? 19.Ng5+-)



19.Nf4 I calculated this far but did not see that after 19...Nf3+! 20.Qxf3 (20.Kh1 Qxh2#) 20...Qxf1+! was a strong inbetween move. 21.Kxf1 exf3±] **17...Nf6** [17...exf3? 18.Nxf3±] **18.g3?** This creates an unnecessary weakness around the king. [18.a3 was necessary, preventing ...Rb4.] **18...Qh3**—+ Now Black seems to have a winning attack. Now both sides started to gradually run short of time. **19.Rf2 Ng4 20.Rc2** White intends Qf1, so Black needs to take that into account in his response. [20.Qf1 Qxf1+! (20...Nxf2 was my intention, when White should reply with 21.Qxf2 and Black is better, but not clearly winning.(21.Qxh3? Nxh3+—)) 21.Rxf1 (21.Kxf1 Nxf2 22.Kxf2 Bc5 23.Be3 Rxb2+—) 21...Bc5 22.Rd1 Rb4—+] **20...Ba6** [20...Bc5 was an interesting alternative, intending ...Rb4 to win the knight on d4. 21.a3 (21.Qf1? is not possible because of 21...Bxd4+—+; 21.Rxc5? Qxh2+ 22.Kf1 Qf2#; 21.b3 Rb4 22.Bb2 Ne3—) 21...Rb3—+ intending ...Rxd3] **21.Ne6 Rf6 22.Ng5** This seems obvious, but White has a strong response. **22...Bc5+! 23.Kh1** [23.Rxc5 Qxh2#] **23...Qh5** This seems natural, but there is a surprising alternative. [23...Qxg3! would have been more forcing, as White cannot take the queen, while the threat of ...Nf2+ is otherwise decisive. 24.hxg3? Rh6+ 25.Nh3 Rxh3+ 26.Kg2 (26.Rh2 Rxh2#) 26...Rh2#] **24.Qe1** [24.Rxc5 Qxh2#] **24...Bd3 25.Rg2 Rh6** Black missed a simpler win. [25...h6! and the knight is lost as it cannot retreat. I did not look at this move seriously as I thought I needed to keep the h6 square free for my rook. 26.Ne6 Nxh2! 27.Rxh2 Qf3+ 28.Rg2 Bf1—+] **26.h4** This was necessary to stop ...Qxh2+, forcing mate. **26...e3** Both players had by now run really short of time. Black was trying hard to find a way to improve his position. **27.Bd2!?** White tries to complicate

things. **27...Rxb2?** Black had several good moves here, but this was not one of them! Fortunately, White did not find the correct follow up. [27...exd2 This is simple and good, although it did seem a bit messy to me, which is why I rejected it. However, Black seems to be winning comfortably. 28.Qxd2 (28.Rxd2 Bb4—+) 28...Be4 29.Nxe4 fxe4—+; 27...Nf2+ This looks even stronger than the simple capture on d2.. 28.Rxf2 (28.Kh2 Qg4—+ intending ...f6xh4+ 29.Bxe3 fails to 29...Rxh4+! 30.gxh4 Qxh4+ 31.Kg1 Qh1+ 32.Kxf2 Rxb2+—+; 28.Kg1 exd2—+) 28...exf2 29.Qe5 Bd6 30.Qe3 f1Q+—+] **28.Bc3?** I suspect my opponent was just trying to mix things up with his last move and so perhaps did not expect there to be an opportunity for him here to turn the tables. In any case, both players were very short on time now. [28.Bxe3! I did not consider this forcing move sufficiently deeply, but fortunately neither did my opponent! 28...Rxg2 29.Bxc5 Re2 was what I planned, but now 30.Qxe2! is very strong, e.g. 30...Bxe2 31.Rb1+— and White crashes through on the queenside. This initially might seem unlikely, as White currently only has a bishop and pawn for the queen, but closer examination shows that the black pieces are too badly placed to oppose the white forces on the queenside.] **28...Nf2+ 29.Kh2** [29.Rxf2 Rxf2—+ was what I planned. (29...exf2 is also possible, e.g. 30.Qe8+ Qxe8 31.Bxe8 Rxa2!—+) ; 29.Kg1 Re2! was what I planned.] **29...Re2** I planned this against both king moves. Here this is fine, but I could have played what I played next move at once. [29...Qg4 Black could have played this at once, but there is no real harm in the move played. The idea is, as in the game, to play ...Rxh4+, forcing mate.] **30.Qg1 Qg4 31.Qf1 Rxh4+! 32.gxh4 Qxh4+ 33.Nh3 Qxh3+ 34.Kg1 Qh1# 0-1**



White: David Everitt, Haywards Heath 1. Black: Mark Rich, Hastings 1. Mid- Sussex League 2004-5, Division 1, November 25, 2004, Board 5. Played at The Cock public house, Wivelsfield Green. Najdorf Sicilian, 6.Bc4. Commentary by Feliks Kwiatkowski (updated from the original).

This game represents a delightful achievement by David Everitt, who overcame an 89-BCF point grading difference to secure this glorious victory. The irony is that the team had to pull out of the league later, although this game still counts for gradings.

1.e4 c5; 2.Nf3 d6; 3.d4 cd; 4.Nxd4 Nf6; 5.Nc3 a6; 6.Bc4 e6; 7.Bb3 Nbd7; 8.0-0 ... [Here 8.f4 is the critical move, but the move chosen can't be bad.] 8. ... Nc5; 9.Re1 b5?!

[The Sicilian is notable for the way in which a natural-looking move by either White or Black can lead to major trouble. This is one of those cases. Grandmaster Golubev, writing in *The Sicilian Sozin*, (pub. Gambit, 2001), prefers 9.... Be7 to get the king safe, after which he sees no difficulties for Black. The move actually chosen looks 'normal' but, after another innocent-seeming move, it leads to a line known as deadly for White, as particularly demonstrated by Fischer and Tal half a century ago.]

10.Bg5 Bb7; [Another natural-seeming move, and the end of the line for Black. I suspect Black is forced to play 10. ... Nxb3; 11.ab Bb7; After 12.f4 ... I find the game hard to assess. Now see what happens next!] 11.Bd5!!

[Hurra! Had a master played this move, it would not have deserved any exclamation marks, for the sacrifice has been known for nearly two generations. However, David is not of master quality, save in terms of his passion for our game. He knew of the principle of the sacrifice, but it must have taken

considerable moral courage to whip it out against somebody 89 BCF points above him. For comparison, consider the game Fischer-Rubinetti, Palma de Mallorca, 1970. That had gone 7. ... b5; 8.0-0 Bb7; 9.Re1 Nbd7; 10.Bg5 h6; 11.Bh4 Nc5; 12.Bd5 ed; 13. ed+ Kd7; 14.b4 Na4; 15.Nxa4 ba; 16.c4 Kc8; 17.Qxa4 Qd7; 18.Qb3 g5; 19.Bg3 Nh5; 20.c5 dc; 21.bc Qxd5; 22.Re8+ Kd7; 23.Qa4+ Bc6; 24.Nxc6 Resigns; 1-0.]

11. ... ed; [11. ... b4; 12.Bxb7 Nxb7; 13.Nd5 ed; 14.ed+ Kd7; 15.c3+/- is Tal-Mukhin 1973.] 12.ed+ Kd7; 13.b4 Na4; 14.Nxa4 ba; 15.c4 ...

[With overwhelming positional compensation. At higher levels the story is so well known these days that Golubev simply tags the position +/- and does not trouble to analyse it.]

15. ... h6 16.Qxa4+ Kc7; 17.Bxf6 gf; [a bitter choice - Black wants to keep the queen close to the action. after 17. ... Qxf6; White has multiple threats with a mix of Qa5+, Qb6, Re8 and Nc6 depending on how Black defends.]

18.Re2!

[Simply threatening Ra-e1 and Re8. The move improves on White's thinking in the game Belyavsky-Marjanovic, 1971, where in an analogous position Belyavsky went for an unclear plan involving Nc6. That game had gone 7. ... b5; 8.00 Nbd7; 9.Re1 Nc5; 10.Bd5 ed; 11.ed+ Kd7; 12. b4 Na4; 13.Nxa4 ba; 14.c4 Bb7; 15.Qxa4+ Kc7; 16. Bg5 Qd7; 17. Qa5+ Kc8; 18.Bxf6 gf; 19. Nc6!? White still won after complications, but D.N.L. Levy, writing in *Sacrifices in the Sicilian*, (pub. Batsford, 1974), suggests the simple 19.Re2]

18. ... Qd7; 19.Qa5+ Kb8; 20.Ra-e1 Bg7; 21.Re7 Qc8; 22.Qb6 Resigns. 1-0. The idea of Nc6 has no answer.



White: Russell Granat. Black: F. J. Kwiatkowski.
Sussex County Championship 2023-24, 1st round,
March 9, 2024. Played at Rustington. Reti,
transposing to the English opening.

The winner of this game went on to take the title. The time control was the traditional 40 moves in 2 hours.

1. Nf3 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. Nc3 d5 4. cxd5 Nxd5 5. g3 Bg7 6. Bg2 O-O 7. O-O c5 8. d4 Nc6;
 (Here is where I lost the game, yes, seriously. I just froze and took 21 minutes over this move. There are choices, and I dithered. My choice is not objectively bad, but 8... Nxc3 9. bxc3 cxd4 10. Nxd4 Nc6 is approved at high level, with a dullish, equal, game.)
 9. Nxd5 Qxd5 10. Ne5 ... (10. Be3 cxd4 11. Nxd4 Qc4 is dullish and level. Granat's chosen move puts him in trouble.)
 10... Qxd4 11. Nxc6 bxc6 12. Bxc6 Rb8 (Black must be more comfortable here.) 13. Qc2 Bf5! 14. e4 Bg4!
 15. a4 Rfc8 (15. ... Rfd8! or ... Rb4!. I was already falling into time pressure.) 16. Bb5 Bf3 17. Re1 c4

18. Ra3 Bg4 (Black has no more advantage left.) 19. Rc3 Be6 20. Be3 Qd8 21. Bxa7 Bxc3 22. bxc3 Rb7 23. Bd4 ... (White permits an exchange win, doubtless gambling on a dangerous bishop, weaknesses around my King and my time trouble.)
 23. ... Qa5 (... Qd6 may be safer.)
 24. f4? Bd7 (Now the computer likes my game. 24. Qd2 or Qc1 would have been preferable, but this is a practical game, not a computer analysis.) 25. f5 Bxb5 26. axb5 Rd8 27. Rf1 Qxb5 28. Qd2 Qb2? (I froze again, taking an insane 8 minutes here. The computer prefers ... Qc6 or ... f6.)
 29. Qe3? (Better is 29. Qf4 Rxd4 30. fxc6! ... when Black has no meaningful advantage.) 29 ... Qc2 30. fxc6 hxg6 31. Qf4 f6 32. Qg4 Kf7 33. e5 Rb2? (33... Rb1 was easy.) 34. Rf2 Rb1+? (The computer gives sequences with Qc1+ or Qb1+ as wins, but I had no time left.) 35. Kg2 Qd1?! (35 ... Qb3! Threat ... Qb7+) 36. Qh4 Rxd4 (The computer prefers 36 ... Ke6.) 37. Qh7+! Ke6 38. Qg8+ Kd7. 1-0 Black lost on time, in an approximately equal position.

White: "Gr8twin" Black : F. J. Kwiatkowski.
Blitz game on the Lichess site, March 15, 2024.
Sicilian Defence, Sveshnikov Variation. This
game is not offered for the quality, but for the
insanity.

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 e5 6. Nf5 d5 7. Ng3 d4 8. Nb5 a6 9. Na3 Bb4+ 10.

Bd2 Qa5 11. Nc4 Bxd2+ 12. Qxd2 Qc5 13. Bd3 Be6 14. Nf5 Bxf5 15. exf5 e4 16. Be2 b5 17. Na5 Nxa5 18. Qxa5 Qxc2 19. Bxb5+ Kf8 20. O-O Kg8 21. b4 h5 22. Bxa6 h4 23. h3 d3 24. b5 Rh5 25. Rac1 Qe2 26. Rc8+ Rxc8 27. Bxc8 Rg5 28. b6 e3 29. b7 d2 30. b8=Q Qxf1+ 31. Kxf1 d1=Q+ 32. Qe1 e2+ 33. Kg1 Qxe1+ 34. Kh2 Qxf2 35. Bb7+ Kh7 36. Qd6 e1=Q 37. Bf3 Qeg1# 0-1

White: Joe Friar (Worcs). Black: F. J. Kwiatkowski (Sussex). Minor Counties
Championship 2023-24, quarter-final, May 11,
2024. Board 2/16. Played at Appleford on
Thames. Sicilian Defence, Sveshnikov Variation.

Not fancying the expedition as a day trip, I stayed over at a questionable hotel the night before, one

village along up the railway line. I took the chance to have dinner with a friend from school, now living in Abingdon.

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 e5 6. Ndb5 d6 7. Nd5 Nxd5 8. exd5 Nb8 [This variation has become fashionable again, giving a totally different game from the usual 7.Bg5] 9. c4 Be7 10. Be2 a6 11. Nc3 O-O 12. O-O f5 13. f4



Nd7 14. Kh1 Bf6 15. Qc2 exf4 16. Bxf4 Ne5 [All this is theory. Black can also play 16. ... Be5.] 17. b4?! a5 18. c5 axb4 19. Nb5 b3? [A misguided idea. Just 19. ... dxc5, when White's threats are illusory.] 20. Qxb3 dxc5 21. Rac1! b6? [Now White could just have played 22. d6+ c4 23. Bxc4+ ... , with advantage.] 22. Bxe5 ... [At this point I realised I had blundered and thought about resigning immediately. I instead took seven minutes to find the following sequence, which I saw down to, and including, my move 29. I suspected it might draw. More to the point, it was the only alternative to resignation.]

22. ... Bxe5 23. d6+ Kh8 24. Qd5 Re8 [Forced, but effective.] 25. Qxa8 Qh4! 26. g3 Bxg3 27. Qg2 Rxe2! 28. Qxe2 Bb7+! 29. Kg1 Bxh2+! 30. Qxh2 Qg5+ [30... Qg4+ is also a draw, but I saw that the move chosen set up some possibilities.] 31. Kf2 Qd2+ 32. Kg1 Qe3+ 33. Qf2 Qg5+ 34. Kh2 Qh5+ 35. Kg3 Qg4+ 36. Kh2 Qh5+ [I had a good look-round for a win. However, if 36 ... f4?, to take away the g3 square as a refuge, then 37. Rc3 ... wins for White.] 37. Kg3 Qg4+.

Here we agreed a draw $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$.

White: F. J. Kwiatkowski (Sussex) Black: Vivash Samarakoon (Norfolk). Minor Counties Championship 2023-24, semi-final, June 8, 2024. Board 2/16. Played at Great Baddow, Essex. Ruy Lopez.

This time, I went for the expedition as a day trip. Arriving tired and hungry, I found the locale bereft of meaningful food. I then discovered that the only shop anywhere near was the only Indian grocery store in the country that does NOT sell packeted sandwiches. I found myself facing a junior maybe one quarter of my age.

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 a6 4. Ba4 Nf6 5. O-O b5 6. Bb3 Bc5 7. c3 d6 8. a4 [This variation has become fashionable as an active defence.] 8. ... Bg4?! [Perhaps Black wrongly thought that I knew the main line, which starts with 8... Rb8. The chosen move is known to be playable, but a little inferior.]

9. h3 Bh5!? [It is usual to swap the bishop at once.] 10. Re1 O-O 11. d3 Rb8 12. Nbd2 b4 13. Bc4 ... [It was better to fix the a-pawn with 13. a5 Now Black is fine, and could just have played ... a5 himself.] 13. ... Qc8 14. Nb3 Ba7 15. Bg5 Nd7 16. Bd5 Bxf3? [This is wrong. Black could

just play ... h6 and keep the bishop.] 17. Qxf3 bxc3 18. bxc3 Kh8 19. Rab1? ...

[A failure of resolve. 19. Bxc6 Rxb3 20. Be7 Rg8 21. Qxf7... is better for White. Even after my move, White keeps a grip which did not slacken for the next 50 moves.]

19. ... f6 20. Be3 Bxe3 21. Qxe3 Nd8 22. a5! ... [Better late than never.] 22. ... c6 23. Bc4 c5 24. Rec1 Qc6 25. d4 Nb7 26. Qd3 Qc7 27. Ra1 Rfc8 28. d5 Ra8 [Not 28. Bxa6 c4! with a Black plus.] 29. Ra3 Ra7 30. Rca1 Rca8 31. Nd2 Nf8 32. Bb3 Ng6 33. g3 Ne7 34. Nc4 Nc8 35. Ba4 Ne7

[Time remaining – W: 21 mins. B: 7 mins. In other words, about 40% of the game was played in a time scramble or ‘on the increment’. Black’s job is to juggle the pieces and hope that White cannot find a winning plan and self-destructs instead, which is what I normally do, The winning principle here is what Nimzovich called ‘lavieren’, tacking about, making threats on each side of the board until Black cracks.]

36. Kg2 Rf8 37. Bc2 g6 38. Rb1 Nc8 39. Qd2 Rf7 40. f4 Qd8 41. Rf1 Kg7 42. Qc1 Qc7 43. Bd1 Nd8 44. Bg4 Nb7 45. Be6 Rf8 46. Ra2 Ne7 47. Qb1 Nd8 48. Qb6 Nxe6 49. dxe6 exf4 50. Rd2! ... [For once, a move of mine that the computer also likes.]



50 ... Rd8 51. Rxd6 Rxd6 52. Nxd6 Qc6? [Black is lost anyway, but cracks.] 53. Qxa7 Qxd6 54. Qd7 Qxd7 55. exd7 Nc6 56. Rd1 Nd8 57. Rd6 ...

That was the last move I felt I had the time to record. I had previously taken my last time-note at move 48, when I had 3 minutes left and Black had 90 seconds. A large crowd had by this point gathered. I realised only later that this was the last game to finish and that we needed a win from me to secure the match.

Despite objectively having a winning position, I am quite capable of disintegrating and losing in such situations, so I am glad I did not know the match situation while in actual play. Black toughed it out for another 10-15 moves before resigning. The final position, where I had just played Kd4, was – White : Kd4; Rd5; pawns c3, e5 and h3 ; Black: Kc6; Na4; pawn on c4; Black to play. Black resigns. 1-0.

White : P. Cumbers (Lincolnshire). Black: F. J. Kwiatkowski (Sussex). Minor Counties Championship 2023-24, Final, July 6, 2024. Board 2/16. Played at Whittlesford. Sicilian Defence, Rossolimo Variation.

For this long-distance match, I decided it was prudent to stay over the night before. I had also seen that the venue was very close to the branch of the Imperial War Museum sited at Duxford Airfield. I stayed for two days after the match, visited Duxford's magnificent exhibits and saw some of their vintage planes in the air. The game was an anti-climax.

I suspect neither of us was up to risk-taking and a neurotic draw resulted, offered here just for the record. Fortunately, the other current Sussex 1st team Pole, Rogacewicz, secured the match win by running his opponent out of time in a drawn position in the decisive game.

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 g6 4. Bxc6 bxc6 5. O-O Bg7 6. Re1 Nh6 7. d3 O-O 8. Nbd2 e5 9. Nc4 d6 10. h3 f5 11. c3 Nf7 12. exf5 Bxf5 13. Ne3 Be6 14. Qa4 Qc7 15. Bd2 Rab8 16. Rab1 Rb7 17. b3 Bd7 18. Qh4 Qd8 19. Qg3 Nh6 20. Ng5 Nf5 21. Nxf5 Bxf5 22. Ne4 Bxe4 23. Rxe4 d5. Agreed drawn. ½ - ½ .

White : Anh Nguyen (Bexhill 1). Black: F. J. Kwiatkowski (Haywards Heath 1). Sussex League Division 1, 2023-24, October 12, 2023. Sicilian Defence, Sveshnikov Variation.

The winner of this game was aged 12 at the time.

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 e5 6. Ndb5 d6 7. Bg5 a6 8. Na3 b5 9. Nd5 Be7 10. Bxf6 Bxf6 11. c3 Bg5 12. Be2 Rb8 13. Nc2 O-O 14. Bf3 Be6 15. O-O a5 16. Qd3 Ne7.

[White's set-up is perfectly solid, but not cutting-edge theory, and Black has a sound position. The

problem is that these positions are drawish, and I pushed too hard for the win.]

17. Nde3 Qb6 18. Rfd1 Rfd8 19. g3 Kh8 20. h4 Bh6 21. Bg4! ...

[I had played here to construct a cheap trap. If 21.Ng4? ... to attack the bishop, then 21. ... Bc4 wins material, but White played the sober move. There were more sensible ideas than ... 19. ... Kh8.]

21. ... Bxe3 22. Nxe3 Qc5 23. Bxe6 fxe6 [White is now a little better.] 24. Nc2?! ... [24.Rd2! ...] 24. .. Rbc8 25. Rac1 d5 [25. ... Ng8!, and Nf6 to come.] 26. Qe3 Qxe3 27. Nxe3 Kg8 28. Rc2 Rd6 [The



computer likes 28. ... dxe4, which is dead drawn apparently, but I had delusions of “doing something” with my centre.] 29. Rcd2 Rcd8? [End of game! 29. ... Rc5 minimises White’s plus. While waiting for the next move, I saw the problem. I kept a stone face, hoping he wouldn’t notice, but he noticed. After all, at age 12, you know everything, right?] 30. c4! +- d4 The rest is just mopping-up.

31. Ng4 bxc4 32. Nxe5 d3 33. Nxc4 Rd4 34. Ne5 Rxe4 35. Rxd3 Rxd3 36. Nxd3 Nd5 37. Ne5 Re2 38. Nxe6 Nb4 39. Ng5 g6 40. Rd8+ Kg7 41. Rd7+ Kg8 42. a3! Na2 43. Rd8+ Kg7 44. Rd7+ Kg8 45. Rxb7 Rxb2 46. Ra7 Rb5 47. Ne6 Kh8 48. Nf4 g5 49. Ng6+ Kg8 50. h5 ...

Black resigns. 1-0. The herald of a wretched season, when hardly anything went right.

White: F. J. Kwiatkowski (Sussex 1). Black: Richard Bates, IM (Middlesex 1). Southern Counties competition, 2023-24. November 4, 2023. Board 1/16. Played at Hassocks. Sicilian Defence.

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 e6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 Nc6 6. Ndb5 Bc5!? [There is no immediate refutation of this abnormal move.] 7. Nd6+ Ke7 8.

Nxc8+? Rxc8 [Apparently 8.Bf4 e5 9.Nf5+ Kf8 10.Bg5 ... is the way to go, but even that’s nothing special for White. I was confused, but fortunately, my confusion did not last long.] 9. Bd3 Qc7 10. O-O a6 11. Kh1 h5 12. f3? h4 13. Qe1 Nh5 14. Be3 Ng3+ 15. hxg3 hxg3+ 16. Kg1 Qe5.

White resigns. 0-1. Oh dear, how singularly unfortunate. My ‘idea’ had been 17.f4 ... , but of course 17... Rh1+! delivers mate.

White: G. Buckley IM (Surrey). Black: F. J. Kwiatkowski (Sussex). Southern Counties Competition 2023-24, January 20, 2024. Board 1/16. Played at Hassocks. Sicilian Defence, Rossolimo Variation.

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 g6 4. Bxc6 bxc6 5. d4 Ba6 6. dxc5 Qa5+ 7. Nbd2 Bg7 8. Rb1 Qxa2 9. b4 Bc4 10. e5 Nh6 [The game is theory up to here, unknown to the players. After this, the advantage changes hands as if neither one of us really wanted it.] 11. h4 O-O 12. h5 Ng4 13. Bb2

Bd5 14. Rh4 Nh6 15. Nd4 a5 16. Qc1 Qa4 17. c4 Be6 18. hxg6 hxg6 19. Ne4 Nf5 20. Nxf5 Bxf5 21. Ra1 Qxb4+ 22. Bc3 Qb8 23. Ng3 Be6 24. f4 f5 25. Nf1 a4 26. Rh3 ...

Agreed drawn, through mutual terror, with 2 minutes each on the clock, as we had eaten so much time during just these few moves. Obviously Black is much better. Here is the sting in the tail: I had mismanaged my transport, and had arrived 15 minutes after the start. If I had had 17 minutes at the end, not 2 minutes, I would have played for the win. $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$.



White: F. J. Kwiatkowski (Sussex). Black: Conor Murphy IM (Kent). Southern Counties Competition 2023-24, February 24, 2024. Board 1/16. Played at St. Mary Cray. English Opening.

1. c4 e5 2. Nc3 d6 3. g3 f5 4. d4 Be7! [I was making it up from scratch after here, but it's theory to move 11. If I had had some confidence about the position, I might have made more of this. Just enjoy the ride.] 5. Bg2 Nf6 6. dxe5 dxe5 7. Qxd8+ Bxd8 8. b3 O-O 9. Bb2 c6 10. Nf3 e4 11. Nd4 Na6 12. h3 e3!? [A wilful provocation.] 13. f4 Nh5 14. Bf3 Nxc3 15. Rg1 Bh4 [15. ... h5! is more of a test.] 16. O-O-O Nc7 17. Rg2

g6 18. Rdg1 Bf6 19. Nxc6 bxc6 20. Rxc3 Bd7 21. Rd1 Rad8 22. Na4 Ne6 23. Bh1 Nxf4 24. Rxe3 Bg5 25. Kb1 Rfe8 26. Rf3 Be6 27. Rff1 Nxe2 28. Bxc6 Ng3 29. Rg1 Rxd1+ 30. Rxd1 Rf8 31. Ne5 Bf7 32. Rd7 Rc8 33. Bd5 Bxd5 34. Rxd5 Be7 35. Ne6 Kf7 36. Nd4 Ne4 37. Nf3 Rd8 38. Ra5 Bc5 39. b4 Bb6 40. Ra6 Rd1+ 41. Kc2 Rf1 42. Ne5+ Ke8 [Had I now tried 43.Nd3 ... , I would have generated strong winning chances, but I played 'the obvious move' instead, each of us now being in severe time trouble, and riding 'the increment'.] 43. c5 Rf2+ 44. Kb1 Rf1+ 45. Kc2 Rf2+ . Agreed drawn, ½ - ½ . Note that 46. Kb3 is met by ... Bxc5, with a Knight fork to come if the Bishop is taken.

White: F. J. Kwiatkowski (Haywards Heath 1). Black: David Fryer (Crowborough 1). Sussex League, Division 1, 2023-24, April 26, 2024. Board 1/4. Played at Crowborough. English Opening.

1. c4 e6 2. g3 Nf6 3. Bg2 d5 4. Nf3 dxc4 5. Qa4+ c6 6. Qxc4 b5 7. Qc2 Bb7 8. d4 Qb6 9. O-O Nbd7 10. a4 a5 11. Nbd2 Nd5 12. b3 Be7 13. Bb2 Ba6 14. Rfe1 Rb8 15. Bf1 O-O 16. Rec1 Rfc8 [I had deliberately played a quiet game, to try and get Black to over-reach, but Fryer was perfectly comfortable here.]

17. Qb1?! h6 18. Qa2 Bb4?! [18 ... Nb4] 19. e4 Nc7?! 20. Bc3 ... [23.axb5 ... says the computer.] 20. ... Bb7?! 21. Bxb4 axb4 22. a5! Qa7 [I now set about probing the King-side.] 23. Qc2 Na6 24. Qd3 Rd8 25. Qe2 Nf6 26. Qe3 Ba8 27. Bd3? ... [27.Ra2 ...] 27. ... Nd7? [27. ... c5!] 28. Qe2 Nf6 29. e5 Nd5 30. Qe4 c5? [A rush of blood to the head, which should have lost. White is just a little better after 30. ... g6.] 31. Qh7+ Kf8 32. Qh8+ Ke7 33. Qxc7 Rg8 34. Qxh6 Rh8 35. Qg5+ Kd7 36. Ne4 Rbg8 37. Bxb5+ Kc8 38. Qd2 Nc3 39. Nxc3 Bxf3 [Here, the trivial 40. Qd3 ... crushes Black, but this just wasn't my season.] 40. Na4?? Rxh2! Mate is unstoppable. White resigned. 0-1.



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