

# Notts News

## Newsletter of the Nottinghamshire Chess Association

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### 2006 County Championship Special Issue

Fifty-six players (the most for many a long year) competed in the 2006 County Championships, held on 21-22 October at Beeston Youth and Community Centre. Alex Posazhennikov claimed the title with a perfect 5/5.

The venue proved to be as good as expected, with plenty of space available for everyone. Noise was rarely a problem, with the juniors having freedom to run around outside when their games were over. We were startled to discover that a rock band had been booked in to another part of the centre for a practice session on Sunday afternoon, but not a single drumbeat could be heard in the playing hall.

Three local residents who found out about the competition from this web site came along to play in their first ever tournament. I think they found over the board chess to be a different proposition from Internet chess, but all three enjoyed themselves.

There were some surprising 'firsts': Mike Falgate delightedly revealed that his share of the slow starter prize was the first prize he had ever won at the chessboard – at the age of 80. Equally surprising was the discovery that John Crawley, after so many years of coaching juniors and working for chess in Nottinghamshire, was playing in a congress for the first time in his life.

David Levens provided a couple of extras not announced on the entry form. On Saturday and Sunday he posted a (difficult) puzzle for competitors to solve. Sunday's puzzle proved too tough for everybody, so David demonstrated the solution just before the prizegiving. The puzzles will appear soon on the web site. Between Rounds 2 and 3 David demonstrated how, with a laptop computer, a projector and a copy of ChessBase, he coaches groups of people. ChessBase can highlight open lines, attacked pieces, weak squares and so on, making it easy to explain the ideas in a position.

I made a big goof in assuming that I'd have time to look through all of the games in time to award the Game of the Day prizes at the end of the competition. The prizes will be awarded – I have all of the games and will start playing through them after I've finished this report. (In case you're wondering – we used duplicate scoresheets, specially printed for us by Ric Dawson of Nomads.)

Our sponsors kindly provided new trophies for their events. The company names disguise the fact that the people donating the money are active members of the local chess community: the Keetleys (U150), the Lakhani (U125), Dave Griffiths (U100) and the Parmars (Junior Championship) all deserve credit for supporting not just this competition, but the next two years as well.

As the sole controller/arbitrator I had nightmares before the event about trying to keep track of multiple simultaneous time scrambles, or of having to resolve a dispute at a critical moment. Instead, I'm delighted to say that everyone conducted themselves magnificently and I had a very easy ride.

Thanks to everyone who came along, including Len Darby and Barry Redburn, who weren't able to play but still showed up to lend their support. Thanks are also due to the various members of West Nottingham Chess Club who helped with the organising; to the NCA Executive Committee for backing us when we told them how much we wanted to spend; to West Nottingham Chess Club and the NPSCA for lending the equipment; to the Youth Centre staff for their friendly and efficient help; and once again to our sponsors. The organisers greatly enjoyed putting on the show and look forward to a bigger and better repeat next year.

### Championship

Alex Posazhennikov was coolness personified as he swept to victory. Tony Wright pushed him hard in Round 1, but cracked late in the game. In fact, none of his opponents rolled over and died, but Alex was clearly on top form and clinched the title with a round to spare. The highest graded player, Gavin Nguyen, dropped a point in Round 1 to a delighted David Levens, and although he came back strongly and looked as though he might take a draw from Alex in the final round, he wasn't able to cope with Alex's endgame technique.

Since players were allowed to win only one prize, Kishan Lakhani's victory in the Junior Championship took precedence over his second place in the main event. The second prize was therefore shared by Gavin and Pete.

- ♦ **County Champion: Alex Posazhennikov (University)**
- ♦ **2nd prize:** Gavin Nguyen (West Nottingham) and Pete Merces (Gambit)
- ♦ **Slow starter:** Zdenek Soki (Gambit) and Matthew Basey (West Nottingham)

	Name	Grade	Total
1	Posazhennikov Alex	185	5
2	Lakhani Kishan	166	3½
3	Nguyen Minh Ngoc (Gavin)	186	3
4	Merces Peter	176	3
5	Levens David	166	2½
6	Webster Richard	155	2
7	Basey Matthew	148*	2
8	Wright Tony	154	2
9	Soki Zdenek	151	2
10	Thompson Brian	150	1

\*Last published grade

### Under 150

Sponsored by Kirk Hallam and Grangewood Dental Practices

With just 11 grading points separating the top eight players, this was always likely to be an open contest. Oliver Exton and Janos Wagenbach set the pace, sharing the lead at the end of the first day. Jonathan Day was in clear third at that stage, just

half a point behind, but the Round 4 results contrived to leave Oliver a point ahead of the field and assured of the title. Steve Hunter fought hard to try to catch Oliver in the last round, but a draw sealed a clear win for the latter. Neil Graham emerged from the pack to snatch second prize.

♦ **County U150 Champion: Oliver Exton (Nomads)**

♦ *2nd prize:* Neil Graham (Ashfield)

♦ *Slow starter:* Stan Cranmer (Ashfield)

	Name		Grade	Total
1	Exton	Oliver	128	4
2	Graham	Neil	133	3½
3	Hill	Maurice	132	3
4	Hunter	Steve	139	3
5	Wagenbach	Janos	132	2½
6	Day	Jonathan	119	2½
7	Cranmer	Stan	139	2½
8	Morgan	Phil	134	2
9	Williamson	Eric	114	1½
10	Collins	John	130	1

### Under 125

*Sponsored by Jaysons Pharmacy (Wollaton and Long Eaton)*

This was the tightest of the four competitions, with over half the field in contention for first place going into the last round. The Radcliffe & Bingham trio (Mike Nailard, George Murfet and Marcel Taylor) all stayed close to the lead throughout the contest, while Anjali Lakhani, Lateefah Messam-Sparks, Dave Dunne and Robert Willoughby also kept pace. Anjali was first to 4 points in the last round, while Mike and George fought a tense battle to see which (if either) would join her. George's extra pawn led to an easily won position with an extra queen and knight, but he was very short of time. Mike hung on until mate was inevitable, then sportingly resigned when there was still some doubt as to whether mate would arrive before the flag fell. George's superior tie-break won him the title; Anjali took second prize.

♦ **County U125 Champion: George Murfet (Radcliffe & Bingham)**

♦ *2nd prize:* Anjali Lakhani (Long Eaton)

♦ *Slow starter:* Steve Thacker (West Nottingham)

	Name		Grade	Total
1	Murfet	George	113	4
2	Lakhani	Anjali	117	4
3	Marcel	Taylor	120	3
4	Nailard	Michael	106	3
5	Messam-Sparks	Lateefah	120	3
6	Dunne	David	100	3
7	Thacker	Stephen	105	3
8	Willoughby	Robert	114	2½
9	Hamby	Stephen	–	2½
10	Brown	Allan	87	2
11	Hopkinson	Gary	101	1½
12	Walker	Roger	104	1½
13	Lin	Daniel	118	0

### Under 100

*Sponsored by Sterling Financial Services Ltd*

Nigel Wright and Len Morrell sprinted away from the field on Saturday, with only Michael Zhang managing to stay in touch. Sunday saw the unfortunate Nigel suffering from a cold, and

his chances disappeared with it. Len and Michael both won to set up a last round decider that ended in a draw, allowing Sally McIntosh and Eamonn Lim to draw level with Michael in a share of second place. John Crawley was left rueing a missed opportunity in his first round game against Nigel, but had the consolation of picking up the senior prize for the highest score by anyone aged 60 or over, regardless of which section they were playing in. (George Murfet and Len Morrell had higher scores, but had also won other prizes.)

♦ **County U100 Champion: Len Morrell (Radcliffe & Bingham)**

♦ *2nd prize:* Sally McIntosh (Ashfield), Michael Zhang (West Nottingham) and Eamonn Lim (West Nottingham)

♦ *Slow starter:* Tracey Clegg (West Nottingham), Mike Falgate (Radcliffe & Bingham) and Tim Ash (None)

	Name		Grade	Total
1	Morrell	Len	88	4½
2	Zhang	Michael	82	4
3	McIntosh	Sally	91	4
4	Lim	Eamonn	75	4
5	Gupta-Kaistha	Aarav	44	3½
6	Crawley	John	68	3½
7	Wright	Nigel	98	3
8	Yilmaz	Mesut	–	3
9	Milford	Michael	69	2½
10	Ali	Hamzah	77	2½
11	Gupta	Yash	10	2½
12	Buttery	John	84	2½
13	Vijayadurai	Vidhoshan	–	2½
14	Fillingham	Ian	94	2½
15	Falgate	Mike	74	2
16	Todd	Paul	81	2
17	Clegg	Tracey	60	2
18	Ash	Tim	–	2
19	Whitehouse	Guy	82	1½
20	Maini	Arun	0	1½
21	Gathercole	Michael	–	1½
22	Ash	David	–	1
23	Mehan	Saaras	–	½

### Junior Championship

*Sponsored by Specsavers (Long Eaton and Ilkeston)*

Since the Junior Championship is awarded to the highest placed junior in the Championship event, Kishan Lakhani, as the only junior in that competition, was assured of the title without moving a pawn. Nevertheless, he fully justified his status by finishing in clear second place. To find the second prize winner, we had to look to the Under 150 competition, where Oliver Exton was the leading junior. However, as he won the Under 150 title, the prize went to Jonathan Day.

♦ **County Junior Champion: Kishan Lakhani (Long Eaton)**

♦ *2nd prize:* Jonathan Day (West Nottingham)

### Other prizes

♦ *Senior:* John Crawley (West Nottingham)

♦ *Game of the day:* two prizes; TBA as soon as I've played through all the games.

♦ *Puzzles:* Saturday – Daniel Lin; Sunday – no winner