

Notts News

Newsletter of the Nottinghamshire Chess Association

2006–07 No. 43 10 June 2007

<http://www.nottschess.org/> nottsnews@nottschess.org

Copyright © Nottinghamshire Chess Association 2007

County U150 semi-final: Hertfordshire–Nottinghamshire

Neil Graham

Nottinghamshire Under 150 won the Midlands Championship for the fourth time in five years and progressed to the National semi-finals for the fifth successive year. However, once again the win that would have seen us through to the finals eluded the team and an 8–8 draw with Hertfordshire meant we were eliminated on board count.

I would like to thank all the players who have once again supported the team in a successful campaign and especially the 20 players who have formed the squad on a regular basis, all of whom have played in at least 50% of the matches. A special thank you to those who have played 100% of the games, those who have provided transport and to Bob Taylor who has stood in as captain in my absence.

Our continued success means that our Midlands rivals will be keen to deprive us of our title next year and I look forward to welcoming back most of our squad for the 2007/8.

Fortunately (?) it's likely that my grading will keep me in the relevant section for next year and I intend to offer myself for re-election though if anyone wishes to take over as captain I'm more than happy to step aside. Finally I know that some team members will have moved on to higher things (i.e. being graded over 150) whilst equally others may have dropped to below 125.

To the former I hope that you can maintain your grading for the future and to the latter please hurry back to rejoin the team.

I will be in touch with everyone graded 125–149 as soon as the new gradings are announced. In the meantime enjoy your summer and let's hope that next year we can again qualify and take that final step into the national finals.

[*Editor's note:* A match report and full details will appear in due course.]

AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the NCA will be held on Monday 2 July at West Nottingham CC, starting at 7:30 p.m. The main purpose of the meeting is to receive and discuss reports from officers and committees, and to elect those for next season.

There will be a special issue of *Notts News* containing the reports. Officers of the Association are asked to submit their reports, if possible, to the Editor no later than 21 June, preferably by email to Ian Kingston (nottsnews@nottschess.org). Any other items for the agenda should be submitted to me no later than 18th June, preferably by email to Andy Walker (secretary@nottschess.org).

[*Editor's note:* I intend to distribute any documents in support of agenda items (including those already received) at the same time as the officers' reports.]

Trophies

There are still a few trophies to be returned for engraving. If you're in possession of one, please hand it to a member of the Executive Committee as soon as you can – or we'll make you play the whole of next season with a piece handicap. Or something.

Best game

A reminder that this year's best game prize is still open for entries. I think we have a few more candidates this year than last, but the more the merrier. Any game that you've played in the last 12 months can be entered, whether in Nottinghamshire or elsewhere.

Send your entries to David Levens (david@chesscoach.co.uk) by the end of June.

Handicap Knockout

As reported in Issue No. 41, there was some doubt about the result of one game in the Mansfield–West Nottingham Daydream. That's now been cleared up, with the result that the score changes from 5–4 to 5½–3½ in Mansfield's favour.

The final (between Mansfield and West Nottingham Nightmare) will take place at Gambit on Tuesday 26 June.

4NCL final weekend

Nottinghamshire I

David Levens

Although I hate losing, I doubt if anyone would call me a bad loser. Indeed, after the most recent 4NCL weekend I think I could call myself a very good loser! I certainly had plenty of practice, managing to lose all three of my games in Rounds 9, 10 and 11. My first loss I can fairly put down to arriving with 35 minutes on my clock, due to bad traffic hold-ups on all routes. My second loss was probably due to tiredness that seemed to affect the whole team, and we crashed 1–5 to Cambridge University, one of our main rivals for promotion. We now had to win our last match to have any chance of promotion. On the Monday I sat down determined to redeem myself. But it was not to be. Facing a variation of the Trompovsky, which I knew little about, I was mated in 16 moves!

Feeling as guilty as hell I now had to endure for several hours more, as my colleagues battled to secure the much-needed victory. Richard Webster soon agreed a draw in a position with seemingly a lot of play remaining. That left Rob Richmond with slightly the worst of it on Board 1; Pete Mercs struggling to survive on Board 2 – his lone rook seemed to have little chance against his opponent's two bishops; Richard Truman looked much better on Board 5; and Steve Burke looked to be heading for a certain draw.

Chess, however, is never as straightforward as it looks. Steve's opponent, playing optimistically for a win that wasn't

there, dropped a pawn and, in due time, Steve collected an invaluable point. Robert's opponent contrived to find the only way to lose, exchanging off bishops to find himself in a lost king and pawn ending. Now we appeared to be heading for victory after all! Richard Truman still looked safe and Pete's heroic defending garnered another important half point. All we needed now was Richard to draw his rook and pawn ending – a certainty we thought – and promotion was ours. Unfortunately, Richard went wrong after several hours of tiring play and we remain in Division 4 for another season.

Rob Richmond, on Board 1, has been outstanding. He scored 6 wins and 5 draws and is now unbeaten in his last 16 4NCL games! Our fullest thanks go to Tony Wright's excellent captaincy.

Though very disappointed with my own lack-lustre performance, this remains an enjoyable event and the trips away allow us all to socialise happily at the end of the day – I'd recommend it to all.

Nottinghamshire 2

Ian Kingston

After a run of poor results, Nottinghamshire 2 faced a tricky first match against Conquistadors 2, a team with several juniors whose ratings might not tell the whole truth about them. First to finish was Maurice Hill, whose queenside pawn roller swept him to victory on the two-hour mark. Neil Graham finished shortly afterwards, his opponent's Vienna Game leading to rather dull equality and a safe draw.

Brian Thompson was having a hard time on Board 2 after losing a piece for a couple of pawns and no real compensation. He fought hard, but was never able to create the sort of complications that might have turned things round.

The remaining three games looked very promising. Anjali Lakhani won the exchange, Tony Wright was nursing a space advantage into the endgame, and my early pawn sacrifice had given me a big positional clamp. In the event, I was next to finish after a complex tactical interlude ending with my opponent resigning in the face of inevitable mate. However, Anjali's advantage had gone, and her game was drawn moments later.

With the score at 3–2, it was left for the captain to bring home the win. A draw would have sufficed, but his position was such that he was able to play for a win without risking defeat. He duly converted his advantage by squeezing his opponent off the board.

Sunday dawned grey, cold and wet. Our opponents were Pontypridd, and the average ratings of the teams suggested that we were favourites. However, a very weak bottom board for the Welsh team disguised the fact that the other five boards were fairly well matched.

Things went wrong early on for Bob Taylor (replacing Anjali) when he picked up a rook and suddenly realised that his intended move was a blunder. Unfortunately, all the alternatives were also bad, and he resigned a move later. Neil soon brought the scores level. Despite a poor start, once he levelled the game his opponent collapsed quickly.

Elsewhere, I won a pawn with an opening trap, but Maurice was struggling to hold things together and was forced to bail out into an endgame the exchange down. Tony and Brian had impenetrable but roughly level positions, although time was running a little short for both them and their opponents.

My game was next to finish. I'd been slowly exchanging material and advancing my extra pawn, and found a way to

force the last pair of rooks off by means of a mate threat. My opponent was kind enough to miss the latter (particularly kind, since my clever idea actually had a flaw in it that might have thrown away a large chunk of my advantage), cutting short a possibly lengthy endgame.

Brian drew shortly afterwards, while Maurice proved unable to hold his position. Again the result hung on Tony's game, but sadly he went wrong near the time control and lost. Final score: 3½–2½ to Pontypridd.

Our final opponents (on an even greyer, colder and wetter Monday) were Weald Collective 1. Given our dismal showing against Weald Collective 2 in Round 7 this might have seemed an ominous pairing, but there appears to be little pattern to the Weald Collective teams, and on this occasion the WC1 average rating was lower than the WC2 rating in the earlier match. Neil got us off to a good start by establishing a winning position, whereupon his opponent blundered away his queen. Not long afterwards, I received a similar (if less generous) gift. With an absolutely drawn opposite-coloured bishops endgame only a couple of moves away, my opponent hastened to exchange off the last pair of rooks, overlooking that his bishop was en prise – 2–0. And then, on the three-hour mark, Maurice wrapped up a comfortable win to take us to the verge of victory.

In the other three games, Tony looked level and Brian and Bob both had the advantage. Brian seemed to over-reach and appeared to be about to lose at least a pawn, but at that point it also looked to me as though Bob might soon pick up an exchange, and I wandered off to check on the first team. When I came back, some 20 minutes later, everything had changed. Now Bob was two pawns down, but Brian had reached a winning endgame. Tony had lost the exchange.

I don't know the details of how the games finished, since Maurice and I decided to make an early getaway, but Brian obviously converted his position to win the match (4–2) while the other two were unable to defend successfully.

Overall, the second team performed much better than the 22nd place finish suggests. A score of 35 points from a maximum of 66 might easily have earned more match points and a higher finish. Nevertheless, it was a satisfactory collective performance. Tony Wright deserves our thanks for running the whole show so efficiently, not least for his efforts to field full teams for the whole of the final weekend – more than one team failed to do that.

Round 9

Nottinghamshire 1 – Conquistadors 1

1	Richmond, Robert J	2229	1 – 0	Prizant, Michael	2159
2	Mercs, Peter J	2078	1 – 0	Atako, Chino	2174
3	Levens, David	2085	0 – 1	Turner, Caius	2110
4	Truman, Richard G	2030	½ – ½	Ynojosa, Felix J	2100
5	Webster, Richard J	1984	½ – ½	Archer-Lock, C	2065
6	Lakhani, Kishan	1970	0 – 1	Foster, James C	1950

3–3

Nottinghamshire 2 – Conquistadors 2

1	Wright, Antony J	2020	1 – 0	Cork, David J	1960
2	Thompson, Brian	2000	0 – 1	Auckland, Elliott	1879
3	Kingston, Ian	1965	1 – 0	Winchcombe, Andrew	1895
4	Graham, Neil	1915	½ – ½	Ynojosa, Angelica M	1825
5	Hill, Maurice J	1910	1 – 0	Archer-Lock, Adrian	1760
6	Lakhani, Anjali (F)	1830	½ – ½	Sathiraju, Vijay	1750

4–2

Round 10

Cambridge University 2 – Nottinghamshire 1

1	Pickard, Charles	2160	½ – ½	Richmond, Robert J	2229
2	Churm, Rohan M	2185	1 – 0	Mercs, Peter J	2078
3	Cooley, Oliver	2090	1 – 0	Levens, David	2085
4	Spencer, Carl	2030	1 – 0	Truman, Richard G	2030
5	Gooding, Ian	1994	½ – ½	Webster, Richard J	1984
6	Gallagher, Ian G	2005	1 – 0	Burke, Steven J	2055

5–1

Nottinghamshire 2 – Pontypridd

1	Wright, Antony J	2020	0 – 1	Perrett, David	2072
2	Thompson, Brian	2000	½ – ½	Davies, Peter L	1993
3	Kingston, Ian	1965	1 – 0	James, Dai	1994
4	Taylor, Robert P	2003	0 – 1	Robinson, David	1973
5	Hill, Maurice J	1910	0 – 1	StClair, Allan	1826
6	Graham, Neil	1915	1 – 0	Davis, Ashley	1535

2½–3½

Round 11

Anglian Avengers – Nottinghamshire 1

1	Player, Edmund C	2150	0 – 1	Richmond, Robert J	2229
2	Talsma, Paul A	2180	½ – ½	Mercs, Peter J	2078
3	Munson, Shaun D	2196	1 – 0	Levens, David	2085
4	Gregory, Stephen J	2139	1 – 0	Truman, Richard G	2030
5	Wallis, Ian	2075	½ – ½	Webster, Richard J	1984
6	Gray, Mark S	2095	0 – 1	Burke, Steven J	2055

3–3

Weald Collective 1 – Nottinghamshire 2

1	Fryer, David W	2076	1 – 0	Wright, Antony J	2020
2	Grant, David	1914	0 – 1	Thompson, Brian	2000
3	Fisher, Robert	1855	0 – 1	Kingston, Ian	1965
4	Salimbeni, George	1890	1 – 0	Taylor, Robert P	2003
5	Squibbs, Adam	1635	0 – 1	Hill, Maurice J	1910
6	Fryer, Keiran	1465	0 – 1	Graham, Neil	1915

2–4

NCA Blitz Championship

David Levens

Thanks to the tremendous amount of hard work and preparation put in by Ian Kingston, the annual Blitz Championship was a big success despite the disappointingly low turnout.

For a mere £3.00 entry fee the contestants had an enjoyable night of chess, which included free coffee, tea, and biscuits, whilst a third of the entrants went away with a prize each!

Mike Barnes was most impressive in winning this event for the fourth year in a row. His score of 6/6 included wins against Alex Posazhennikov, Pete Mercs and Richard Webster. He never seemed to be in any trouble and his endgame finish against Richard Webster was sublime (see below).

The other winners were as follows:

- ♦ **U150:** Phil Morgan (Ashfield)
- ♦ **U125:** Derek Padvis (Gambit)
- ♦ **U100:** Tracey Clegg (West Nottingham)
- ♦ **Junior:** Jonathan Day (West Nottingham)
- ♦ **Senior:** Len Darby (Nomads)

All of these players shared the remaining prize money and each went home £10.00 richer. The team event was won by Gambit, which benefited by gaining a new clock.

	Name	Club	Grade	Score
1	Michael Barnes	Gambit	204	6
2	Alex Posazhennikov	University	185	5
3	Len Darby	Nomads	107	4½
4	Pete Mercs	Gambit	176	4
5	Richard Webster	Ashfield	159	4
6	David Levens	West Nottingham	167	4
7	Phil Morgan	Ashfield	134	4
8	Derek Padvis	Gambit	100	3½
9	Tracey Clegg	West Nottingham	60	3
10	Jonathan Day	West Nottingham	119	3
11	Nikolai Berdunov	West Nottingham	100e	3
12	Janos Wagenbach	Mansfield	132	3
13	Robert Taylor	Ashfield	127	3
14	Daniel Lin	West Nottingham	118	3
15	John Collins	West Nottingham	132	2
16	Ross Mackay	West Nottingham	43	2
17	Gary Hopkinson	Gambit	101	2
18	Tony Wright	Gambit	154	2
19	Michael Zhang	West Nottingham	82	2
20	Marcel Taylor	Radcliffe & Bingham	120	1½
21	Robert Willoughby	West Nottingham	113	1
22	John Crawley	West Nottingham	68	½

Ties were broken by sum of progressive scores.

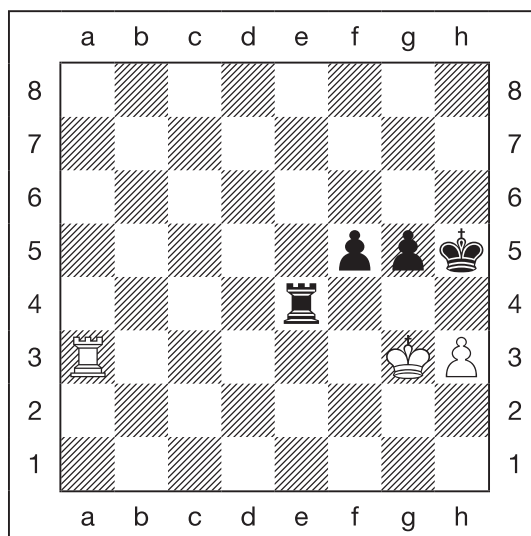
The grades given are the higher of each player's standard or rapidplay grades.

Ian Kingston adds:

I'm very grateful to all who helped out on the night – not just the West Nottingham crew, but also some of the competitors, especially Derek Padvis and Tony Wright.

At the risk of embarrassing the NCA President, I'd also like to highlight the surprise performance of his pupil Tracey Clegg in the first three rounds. Despite being the lowest-graded competitor but one, she despatched Bob Taylor, Tony Wright and David Levens to share first place at the halfway stage with Mike Barnes and Alex Posazhennikov – you'd have got pretty long odds against that beforehand.

Finally, here's the endgame David referred to above. Take the time to look at it – it's a brilliant tactic to see at any time, let alone in a blitz game.



Webster–Barnes
Black to play

This was played in Round 3 and is reconstructed from memory – the white rook might have been on b3 rather than a3, but it makes no difference. I was fairly sure that Black could win, but what I wasn't expecting was Mike's exceptional finish.

1...Re3+! [1...f4+ also wins, but it's less clear cut because Richard could keep the rooks on and try for a swindle. Mike's idea removes all doubt.] **2.Rxe3 f4+ 3.Kf3 fxe3 4.Kxe3 Kh4**
Black takes the h-pawn and wins the elementary endgame.
0-1

The young American

Alan Morrey

I cannot be certain of the year but it would be at least 20 years ago when I was running Rainworth Chess Club. We had entered a team into a summer competition and were playing away at Bulwell. I was team captain and first board for our team and on our arrival, Des Barsby, Bulwell captain, asked if I would mind him playing a young American visitor who was

staying with his aunt in Bulwell, and also the player would probably arrive late. I agreed and watched the other boards play for 15 minutes, when my opponent duly arrived and battle commenced. At the time, my grade was a fair bit better than my present 104, but at move 53 I resigned, for my opponent was a young Yasser Seirawan shortly before he attained IM status, and who subsequently went on to be a GM. We lost the match but I was well pleased with my own performance.

[Thanks to Alan for sending this story. Dating it as 'at least 20 years ago' is a little cautious – Seirawan gained his GM title in 1980 by winning the 1979 World Junior Championship, so his IM title must have been gained about 30 years ago. According to our archives, Rainworth entered the league in either 1975 or 1976, which puts an earliest date on the occasion. The local connection makes sense – Seirawan's mother was a nurse from Nottingham according to Wikipedia. Does anyone else have any recollections of playing against the future super GM? Ed.]