

Check it out



Newsletter of the Plymouth Chess Club

August 2019 – British Championships Special Edition

The 2019 British Chess Championships were held at the Riviera International Centre in Torquay from the 26th July to the 4th August. As expected, the championship title was fought out between Michael Adams and David Howell who outgraded the rest of the field by a large margin. Mickey took the title with 7.5 points from the 9 rounds, half a point ahead of David.



Michael Adams, winner of the British Chess Championship for the 7th time and Jovanka Houska, winner of the Women's Championship for the 9th time with the crown jewels of British chess. (Photo by Chris Stratford)

As well as the championship itself there were 21 other events open to chess players of all ages and abilities. Having the event in Devon gave Plymouth chess players the opportunity to take part in this festival of chess and 11 of us participated in one or more event achieving the following scores:

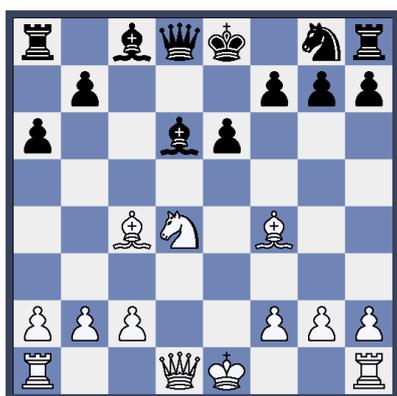
Section	Plymouth player	Finishing position	Score	Grading Performance
Championship	Neil Crickmore	=32nd	4 from 9	2179
Atkins - Open	Megan O'Brien	=13th	2.5 from 5	1967
Soanes – u 1825	Rob Wilby	=12th	3 from 5	1710
Yates – u 120	John Dean	=6th	3.5 from 5	
Under 14	Ben Bracey	35th	1.5 from 7	1116
U 2050	Rob Wilby	=26th	2 from 5	1536
U 1900	Paul Brooks	=6th	3.5 from 5	1843
U 1900	Megan O'Brien	=42nd	2 from 5	1626
U 100	Klaus Tekniepe	=8th	3.5 from 5	
U 100	Tony Tatam	=25th	2.5 from 5	
Rapidplay	Rob Wilby	=38th	4.5 from 9	1448
Rapidplay	Martin Quinn	=38th	4.5 from 9	1631
Rapidplay	Nick Butland	=46th	4 from 9	1424
Rapidplay	David Twine	=46th	4 from 9	1537

I think there are three performances particularly worthy of note. To score 4 out of 9 in the Championship would be a good performance under any circumstances. However Neil hadn't played an over-the-board game for over a year and only found he had a place a week before the event. He was probably the least prepared competitor! Which I think makes his score an excellent achievement.

For a 156 graded player to enter an Open is very brave but Megan's 2.5 from 5 in the weekend Open showed she wasn't out of her depth. She scored wins against opponents graded 179 and 174 and drew with an FM – fantastic results.

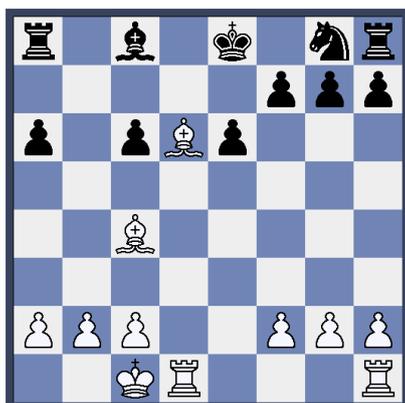
Finally, despite being relatively new to competitive chess Ben Bracey took on the best in his age group by entering the under 14 championship and his 1.5 from 7 was a very respectable result. Well done.

Below you will find the personal reflections on Torquay 2019 of Neil and Tony. However I thought I would leave you with a nice tactic by Michael Adams which I enjoyed. On the second day of the championship I was flicking through the games on-line when I came upon this game between Mickey and John Pigott.



Here Mickey played 11.Nc6! My immediate reaction was to assume there was a glitch in the reception on my PC and that there was actually a knight on c6 being taken. Of course I then spotted the hanging bishop. The game continued.

11.... Qc7 12.Qxd6 Qxd6 13.Bxd6 bxc6 14.0–0–0



Black's queenside pawns are isolated, White has the bishop pair and a massive lead in development and won 12 moves later.

Martin Quinn

My British Championship experience – report by Neil Crickmore

A week before the Championships, I received an offer of a Wildcard entry. Having not played in a tournament for two years and almost a decade before that, I was a bit reluctant. But then I remembered from a few years ago that there are always about 30 players below 2100 (ECF 187). Even rusty, I'd pick up a few points hopefully...

Having accepted the offer, I scrolled down the entrants to see just 7 players below FIDE 2100! Eh? What's going on? Ignoring the bottom seed, the other six had an average ECF of 191 and an average age of just 18. To have even bothered calculating that, showed the level of panic I was in. I looked back over recent years to see if anyone had ever got zero. They hadn't.

So, to prepare. I was boosted by the fact I only had 6 games on the internet and Chessbase since 2008, making preparation against me tricky. I didn't even know what I was going to play so they had no hope of knowing. Rather than learning a complete repertoire in 5 days, I decided to find my opponent's opening lines each morning, pick one and learn it. What could go wrong?

So I arrive in Torquay a week later, having "prepared" with 200 games of internet blitz and raring to go. The **1st round** draw went live Friday night and its Richard Pert IM graded 238. Do I spend the evening preparing or have another pint, play the French, and see how it goes? I opted for the latter.

To everyone's surprise (me, most of all) I drew. $\frac{1}{2}$ /1

Hey, this chess thing's easy. **Round two** and it's Malcolm Pein IM. He's "only" 217, perhaps I've got a chance. I prepare an in vogue line against his Grunfeld, he reacts in a non-standard manner, I don't know what I'm doing and after being outplayed and then fighting back a few times, his technical superiority eventually tells and it's $\frac{1}{2}$ /2.

Round 3 and it's an 18 year old, Callum Brewer graded 200. I play the most toothless accelerated dragon ever seen and then decided to drum up some play with 14...Na5?



To which he slams down 15. Bc7! and I drop the d-pawn because of my errant horse on a5. But I do have the two bishops. I get a bit of play and he offers me a draw in time trouble, which I gratefully accept. **1/3**.

So it's to **Round four** and I'm drawn against S. Modi, graded 207 and born in the year when Ronaldo joined Man Utd. But has he ever faced the super-aggressive Four Pawns Attack against his King's Indian? It turned out he had. My position was a bit worse and I didn't help matters which I serve by way of a chess problem.

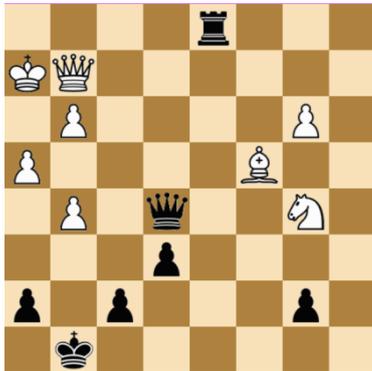
White to play and lose:



Did you spot it?

29. Rc1 allowing 29...Nb3. Dear oh dear. I might've contacted the arbiters stating that my opponent looked at me as if I were in the wrong tournament and forked my queen and rook **before** writing my move down thereby breaking FIDE rule 27/8cii or something but that would have been grabbing at straws. **1/4**.

Oh dear, this isn't going quite so well. At least I'll get an easy draw now...I look in the evening... Thomas Villiers graded 206! Dear Lord, give me a break. I'm beginning to wish I'd played in the Over 50s. After a complicated (more fiery) accelerated dragon we reach this position where I am clearly a bit worse:



I'd earlier sacrificed a pawn on g5 for a checkmate (which didn't work) and clearly thinking I'd let another pawn drop by accident, he played 34. Qxb7?? .To my great surprise when I checked it again around 4 times, this one actually worked and after 34...Rd2ch 35. Kh3 (both 35. Kh1 Qe1ch and 35. Kg1 Qe3ch get mated) Qf5ch 36. g4 Qf4 it's curtains. **2/5**.

Round 6 and I'm white against Patryk Krzyzanowski graded 196. I played well. Black is clearly in trouble but how to convert the win?



I was pleased to find the manoeuvre N-e2-g3-h5 and Rf4-g4ch whilst black was busy getting his pieces out. **3/6**.

There was an incident in this round when Lorin D'Costa IM forgetfully picked up his bag (with his money inside) to get a cup of tea. The bag was later found to also have his phone inside it– a warning to us all – the poor chap was defaulted, in a better position.

So off to **Round 7** and I'm black against William Claridge-Hansen graded 222. To my good fortune, we went straight down the theory I'd learnt from scratch in the morning and after a bit of shuffling about (which not even I couldn't mess up), a draw was agreed. **3½/7**.

Round 8 and it's Adam Ashton FM graded 224. A Catalan was coming, something I kind of understand so no need to prepare too much...But we reach this position after 5...a6!?



So on 3½/7, playing in the British Championships, after 5 moves with white in my favourite opening, I don't know what to do! I decide that if you're worried about never getting the c4 pawn back, don't play the Catalan and I played 6. 0-0. It turns out that everybody plays 6.Ne5. Whoops. Indeed, I never got the pawn back...**3½/8**.

So we enter **Round 9** and I need a win for 50%. I'm playing Steven Jones graded 205 and in an opening I've never been in before.



Who in this position wouldn't play the obvious 10...Re8? Instead, I decided to unleash the theoretical novelty 10...exd4? thinking 11.cxd4 d5! equalising immediately. That bit is true. Only as I got up from the board did I see 11.Bf4! forcing the grubby 11...Ne8. Thinking "At least I'll be home for the Charity Shield", a few moves later I respond to 21. e5 with 21...Nc7?



We both thought this was clever as after 22. exd6, Nd5 gets the pawn back. Both of us however missed 23.e6! - the temporary exchange sack leaving white on top. After a few more inaccuracies on both sides, a long game petered out to a draw and I missed the start of the football. **4/9**.

All in all, a tremendous experience which I'll never forget. A lot of cobwebs have gone, but most clearly, not all. My 4 games with white averaged ECF 186 and my 5 unbeaten with black ECF 224 giving an overall ECF of 207. So it's fairly obvious where work needs to be done.

Michael Adams is again British Champion with 7½/9 with a lovely exchange sacrifice in the final round. The conditions of play at the Riviera Centre, Torquay were outstanding and the arbiters were brilliant, but very strict. It's all so serious nowadays!

Would I play again, given the opportunity? Most certainly yes. Will I get another chance? I can't imagine the organisers rushing to offer to pay my hotel expenses...

The best of both worlds at the British – report by Tony Tatam

It was great to be asked back on to the Control Team following my absence due to illness. I started by controlling the weekend event which had an excellent turnout of nearly 170 players spread over three sections, The Atkins, Soanes and Yates. This was the second time I had controlled the weekenders, the first being back in 2013 in Torquay. Now, déjà vu, here I was again, six years later at the same venue. I was given full control over the event and did the pairings, published results online, allocated the prize money to each section and compiled the winner's prize list at the end. Igor Doklestich, an arbiter based in Bristol, assisted me over the weekend. The event went very smoothly, despite us moving around and using three different playing rooms. Unlike the Championship, there were no mobile phone incidents as announcing the mobile phone rule before each round always pays off. Overall it was a most enjoyable weekend and the only arbiting issues that Igor and I had to deal with were illegal moves.

Now I was playing in the 5 round U100 tournament. In the first four rounds I played four children all aged eight years. Unfortunately, there were disturbances throughout each round from the youngsters and even with my playing experience I was unable to adapt and did not play any decent chess. I struggled, but somehow managed two wins, a draw and a loss. Round 5 at last brought an adult and I settled down looking forward to a long game. My opponent was Klaus, who had moved to Plymouth from Cheshire and will be joining our Club this coming season. I played a fairly steady game until I blundered on move 21 having totally overlooked his knight was threatening my Queen! So my attempt to take the British by storm failed quite miserably! I guess I'll only become a Grandmaster in my dreams.

Here is my Round 2 draw in which I missed a clear win on move 30.

Tatam, A - Grose, Kameron

British Championships - U100 Round 2, 30.07.2019

1.d4 d5 2.e3 Nf6 3.Bd3 Bd7 4.Nd2 e6 5.Ngf3 c5 6.c3 Nc6 7.O-O Bd6 8.h3 Qc7 9.Re1 h6 10.c4 O-O 11.b3 Rae8 12.Bb2 Qd8 13.Qc2 Nb4 14.Qb1 Qe7 15.Be2 b6 16.a3 Nc6 17.Bd3 Rc8 18.e4 dxe4 19.Nxe4 Nxe4 20.Bxe4 cxd4 21.Nxd4 Nxd4 22.Bxd4 Bxa3 23.Qa2 Bb4 24.Red1 Ba5 25.Qb2 f6 26.Rab1 Qb4 27.Bxf6 Rxf6 28.Rxd7 Rcf8 29.Rxa7± Qc3 30.Qxc3 (overlooked b4 here) Bxc3 31.Rf1 Bd4 32.Ra2 e5 33.Bd5 Kh8 34.g3 g5 35.Kg2 Kg7 36.Ra7 Kh8 37.Ra2 Kg7 38.Ra7Kh8 39.Ra2 ½-½

Despite my poor play I thoroughly enjoyed the British immensely. Although it's not yet confirmed its most likely that the Championships will be in Llandudno next year.

Upcoming events

DCCA Paignton Congress, **Aug 31 – Sep 7** Livermead House Hotel, Torquay

UK Open Blitz Championships 2019 15-round qualifying Swiss tournament, **8th September**, Bristol Grammar School, University Road, Bristol BS8 1SR

Peter & Peggy Clarke Memorial Rapidplay **14th September** @ Rooms 2/3, The Parkhouse Centre, Ergue-Gaberic Way, Bude

54th Dorset Open Chess Congress **11 - 13 October** @ The Elstead Hotel 12-14 Knyveton Road Bournemouth

53rd Torbay Congress, **8th, 9th, and 10th November** at Livermead House Hotel, Torquay