

President's Report, Cambridge City Chess Club AGM, 3 June 2015

The 2014-15 season has been a happy and successful one for the Club. Our membership increased; our venue benefitted from refurbishments and critical increase in our storage space for equipment; we enjoyed notable successes in the Leagues; and, most importantly, the atmosphere throughout the season at our Club was harmonious and fraternal, with no disputes.

Highlights of the season: in the Bury Area Chess League (BACL), for a second year running, our Club won both Div 1 (the Examiners, captained again by David Redman) and Div 2 (the OddFellows, again captained by Ole Bay-Petersen), by wide margins. In the RG League, Div 2 was won by the Students, captained by young Austin See (his first captaining experience). Remarkably, among all 26 matches played by these three teams, only a single match was lost! In individual BACL results, Richard Tozer and David Redman did not lose a single game. Player-of-the-Year for our Club was Richard Newman, who scored a remarkable 83% in the BACL, with Ole B-P and John Cooper not far behind on 78%.

The Club Championship has been a mixed success, logistically speaking, because of its Swiss format. Swiss Systems are perfect for tournaments in which everyone plays a given round at the same time; and also only one person can end up with a perfect score after N rounds provided there are no more than 2^N participants (for example, 5 rounds for 32 participants). But with scheduling of games being decided by the players, the rounds are not synchronous, so pairings can't be based on results so far. We had hoped to crown the new Champion at this AGM (and even the Coronation music was ready), but the number of rounds completed so far ranges from 4 to 6, and the top two contenders haven't yet had a chance to play their match. So, for next season, I would like to propose a different system; perhaps Round Robins in several sections, so the schedule of playing the games doesn't matter, and using Grading Performance (which is more informative than final score) to determine the Champion.

Suggestions and views of Members will be solicited at the AGM concerning our Summer Programme. There remain 16 weeks before the Leagues resume at the end of September. Some members will be away in August (including some playing in the British Chess Championship), but we should consider activities for at least 12 weeks. In addition to games (whether casual or graded, rapidplay or slow), we might have a series of talks about (for example) chess history, styles, computer chess algorithms, chess in literature, plus analysis of games and positions. Towards this end I would like to propose that we appoint a "Chess Scholar in Residence", as a regular Club Officer (and Committee member), but the nominee I have in mind is currently back in Denmark and so he can't confirm at the AGM!

I would like to thank all of the Officers and Captains who make the Club and its functions possible. On behalf of them all, we hope you have enjoyed your membership in Cambridge City Chess Club. We look forward to seeing you over the summer, and of course as the season starts in September.

John Daugman