

Summer Programme 2015: Cambridge City Chess Club Activities

17 June	24 June	1 July	8 July	15 July	22 July	29 July
Finish Club Championship (Swiss system) competition; casual chess	Finish Club Championship (Swiss system) competition; casual chess	<p style="text-align: center;">"Tactics in chess: Find the best move" Tutorial by Philip Fallon</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Synopsis:</i> At club level, many games are decided by players spotting a combination or tactical opportunity that their opponent has missed. Philip Fallon offers an evening of exercises drawn primarily from his own games, in the firm belief that to improve one's game, one should embrace tactics and become familiar with common tactical themes. Working through real positions (and hopefully ones that players will not have seen before!) participants will be invited to analyse and find the best move. The positions will vary in difficulty and are intended to be suitable for players of all standards. A great way to prevent those chess neurons going rusty over the summer months...</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">"Club and Pub with Stephen Pride"</p> <p>Meet at the Maypole Pub <u>20A Portugal St. CB5 8AF</u> (between St Johns College and Jesus Green) at 7:30, or else go first to the Club for some casual chess before repairing to the Maypole, where our Secretary will hold court on the merits of real ales.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Summer Rapidplay</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Rounds 1 & 2</p> <p>30 minutes for each player, for all moves. Swiss system. (Not graded.)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">"Bent Larsen Revisited"</p> <p>The first Western player to pose a serious challenge to Soviet domination in chess, the Dane Bent Larsen was a Candidate for the World Chess Championship on four occasions, reaching the semi-final on three of them. He had multiple wins over all seven World Champions who held the title from 1948 to 1985: Botvinnik, Smyslov, Tal, Petrosian, Spassky, Fischer, and Karpov. His Danish countryman Ole, our Club's inaugural Chess Scholar in Residence, will explore Larsen's fascinating personality and his imaginative and unorthodox style of play,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Special talk by Ole Bay-Petersen <i>(full Abstract appended)</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Summer Rapidplay</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Rounds 3 & 4</p> <p>30 minutes for each player, for all moves. Swiss system. (Not graded.)</p>

5 August	12 August	19 August	26 August	2 September	9 September	16 September	23 September	30 September
Handicap, or other casual chess	Handicap, or other casual chess	<p style="text-align: center;">"Revenge in Chess"</p> <p>Settling scores while keeping score: chess is not entirely an intellectual pursuit. Focus on the great Russian-French Grandmaster Ossip Bernstein, illustrating one or two of his games in which the thirst for revenge resulted in brilliant victories.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Special talk by Ole Bay-Petersen <i>(full Abstract appended)</i></p> <p>Best served cold.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Summer Rapidplay</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Rounds 5 & 6</p> <p>30 minutes for each player, for all moves. Swiss system. (Not graded.)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Beginning of the 2015-2016 Championship</p> <p>Round Robins in three groups; Club Champion determined by highest grading performance</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2015-2016 Championship Round Robins</p> <p>(Players in each group make their own scheduling arrangements)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">"Computer Chess Algorithms"</p> <p>How they work; their strengths and limitations compared with human approaches to the game.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Special talk by John Daugman</p>	Possible BACL fixtures; continuation of 2015-2016 Championship Round Robins	Start of BACL and other league fixtures

Full Abstracts of talks by Ole Bay-Petersen

(22 July) **Bent Larsen Revisited**

Kasparov has described Larsen--"the Danish Prince"--as "one of the most colourful players of the 20th century" but also called him "a tragic figure . . . historically doomed in matches with the chess kings." After Larsen's death in 2010, GM John Nunn referred to him as "surely one of the most underrated players of the second half of the 20th century. These days people merely think of his 6-0 drubbing by Fischer and his brilliant 17-move loss to Spassky. . . . I will always remember him as one of the greatest players of his generation."

Five years ago I talked about Larsen at the Club (sadly, he died the following day). Now I would like to reconsider his reputation and his contributions to chess. Was he really "a tragic figure"? Is he being "underrated"? Apart from his legacy of marvellous games, did he have any lasting impact on the way chess has been developing?

A few examples from Larsen's games will, I trust, illustrate why his contemporaries--including Fischer--had such great respect for Larsen's originality and creativity, and why both Karpov and Kasparov consider him "one of the great fighters in chess history."

(19 August) **Revenge in Chess**

Chess is a highly competitive game, and it's only natural for a player to cherish the hope of defeating an opponent to whom he/she has previously lost. But the term "revenge" can also refer to the desire to retaliate for wrongs or injuries received. In chess these two meanings sometimes blend when, for instance, a player has been subjected to slights or slurs by an opponent. This is likely to arouse the competitive and creative energy of the player and stimulate his motivation to defeat the opponent who humiliated him.

Obviously, revenge in chess can take many forms. In this talk I'm not concerned about its cruder manifestations, e.g. verbal or physical aggression. Instead I'm going to present a few classic examples (involving Yates, Tarrasch, Capablanca, Ossip Bernstein, and Najdorf) where the slighted player strove mightily to inflict a crushing defeat on the offending adversary (two of these games were awarded the first prize for beauty).

It may be true, as Francis Bacon wrote in his essay "Of Revenge" (1625) that: "In taking revenge, a man is but even with his enemy, but in passing it over, he is superior." But Bacon wasn't a chess player.