



4 Nations Chess League Junior Championship Report

My first experience of 4NCL Junior Chess, by Kyle Reed

When I found out about the Junior League I was interested but couldn't decide about going because I've only just started playing in tournaments. I didn't know any teams and had never been to a weekend competition and had only played some Rapid play games. Luckily for me, Claire said I would be fine and promised to find a team to put me in. I felt a lot better and began looking forward to my first chess weekend away.

On Saturday 15th November we traveled down from the Midlands. The hotel wasn't far from the Motorway and the journey didn't seem too long. The hotel was great, it was new and there was plenty of room to play football. We checked into our rooms and I went into the playing hall, where Claire soon started handing out name badges. She even remembered me and told me which team I was playing in: Chess Heroes!

Everyone was very friendly and Neville helped us find our playing positions for the first game, but before it started we went off for coaching. Rosalind Kieran taught us how to defend against some openings and everyone was enthusiastic putting their hands up to answer questions.

I then went to find my team and sat down with them ready to start our first round. It was a tough match, but we all won 4/4 so we were pleased. After the game, I went back to Rosalind and she went through my game giving me lots of tips and advice for next time. I was quickly getting to know my team and as we had time before the next game we went off to play football outside. There was plenty of grass to play on and we had a brilliant time!

After our second match finished, we had a break before the evening activity: Exchange Chess. I had played this before and I knew it was great fun. My team had gone home, so I found a partner and we got started. Not sure how, but in one of our games, we even managed to beat a very strong chess player, an International Master!

Next morning I got up and everyone was in the breakfast area eating lots of delicious food. After this, we had another chess lesson and we then played our final round of the weekend. It was a very tough match, but I managed to get a draw so I was quite pleased with my first weekend. After going through my game with the coaches, I then went and watched some of the exciting games in the main hall. Claire gave out certificates, medals and prizes and we said goodbye and headed home, but now I can't wait for the second weekend when we can be the Chess Heroes again! ☺

If you're like me and haven't really been to tournaments or you've never played a weekend event, just come along and try! Everyone is really friendly and it's all great fun. Come and play, learn and have an amazing weekend. You're guaranteed to have a great time even if you are new to chess!

