



FOUR NATIONS CHESS LEAGUE

Division 2 Round 1 report by Jack Rudd

Division 2 is using the same “Cricket World Cup” system as Division 1 this year. This format should really prove itself in this division, because there are likely to be fewer mismatches of the Guildford v Bristol variety. Time will tell, but the results from the first weekend (eleven of the sixteen matches were 5-3 or closer) look promising in this regard.

Pool A

Oxford 1 vs. Brown Jack (5.0-3.0)

A match where one side out-rates the other by 142 points per board is usually going to go in favour of the stronger side, and so it proved in this instance. Oxford, whose promotion attempts in the previous two seasons were ultimately unsuccessful, started off with a 5-3 victory, one which might have been more emphatic had their captain not walked into a skewer just after the time control!

Among their wins was the game Savage-Richmond, which you can see with annotations from Kieran Smallbone here: <http://oxford4ncl.org/articles/43.htm>

RD 1		OXFORD 1	2219	v	BROWN JACK	2077
1	w	Savage, Ben D	2308	1 - 0	Richmond, Peter A	2244
2	b	White, Michael J R	2242	½ - ½	Headlong, Timothy	2198
3	w	Shaw, David A	2250	½ - ½	Girdlestone, Paul	2100
4	b	Rawlinson, Aidan	2243	½ - ½	Cabero, Pablo Padilla	2163
5	w	Eckersley-Waites, Tom	2222	1 - 0	Richmond, Jane (F)	2145
6	b	Smallbone, Kieran	2235	0 - 1	Rabbitt, Michael	2025
7	w	Tidman, Sophie (F)	2095	½ - ½	Streeter, Harry *	1924
8	b	Dickinson, Timothy R	2158	1 - 0	Coats, Robbie J	1820
				5 - 3		

Anglia Avengers vs. Barbican 4NCL Youth (3.5-4.5)

Just looking at the ratings would say these two sides were very evenly matched. I've seen enough of the play of Sam Franklin, Felix Ynojosa and Rhys Cumming, however, to know that Barbican Youth are a team of rising stars. They proceeded to win 4½-3½ with wins from Ynojosa and Cumming; the latter's was an excellent example of how to play with an isolated queen's pawn.

Felix is currently representing England at the World Youth Chess Championships.

You can follow his progress on the official tournament website here: <http://wycc2008.vietnamchess.com/index.php>



RD 1		ANGLIAN AVENGERS	2097	v	BARBICAN 4NCL YOUTH	2091
1	w	Munson, Shaun D	2168	½ - ½	Hodgson, John H	2194
2	b	Spence, David	2214	½ - ½	Franklin, Samuel	2156
3	w	Talsma, Paul A	2237	1 - 0	Coleman, David	2209
4	b	Gregory, Stephen J	2187	0 - 1	Ynojosa, Felix J	2145
5	w	Player, Edmund C	2125	½ - ½	Moore, John C	2063
6	b	Cook, Michael	2056	½ - ½	Wells, Daniel	2012
7	w	Wallis, Ian	1951	½ - ½	O'Toole, George E	2054
8	b	Egorova, Anna (F)	1840	0 - 1	Cumming, Rhys (J)	1894
				3½-4½		

Jutes of Kent vs. Pandora's Box Grantham (3.5-4.5)



Pandora's Box's new signing Thomas Civin made an instant impact: he got a draw with black against Simon Williams, in a game that ended with an unusual perpetual check. This result, together with wins from Nigel Birtwhistle and Paul Cumbers, helped the Grantham team to a 4½-3½ win.

Alexandra Wilson (left) drew on board eight for the Jutes of Kent.

RD 1		JUTES OF KENT	2185	v	PANDORA'S BOX GRANTHAM	2150
1	w	Williams, Simon K	2494	½ - ½	Civin, Tomas	2419
2	b	Harakis, Alexis	2252	½ - ½	Ashton, Adam G	2325
3	w	Mack, Andy	2235	1 - 0	Walton, Alan J	2193
4	b	Rich, Mark	2170	0 - 1	Cumbers, Paul	2165
5	w	Rice, Chris	2107	½ - ½	Dilley, Jason M	2156
6	b	Donovan, Nigel	2093	0 - 1	Birtwhistle, Nigel	2106
7	w	Howell, Christopher	2101	½ - ½	Coates, David	2012
8	b	Wilson, Alexandra (F)	2026	½ - ½	Gallagher, Marie (F)	1825
				3½-4½		

Wessex 2 v Poisoned Pawns 1 (3.5-4.5)

Wessex 2 are only in this division as a result of two withdrawals: Wood Green Hilsmark Kingfisher decided not to enter a third team (which would have been entitled to a place in this division as a result of Hilsmark Kingfisher 2's being in it in the 2007-08 season), and Slough Sharks 2, who finished 7th in last season's third division, have also folded. Thus the place was passed on to 8th-placed Wessex 2.

With this in mind, they were always likely to open their account with a loss (albeit a closely fought match), and so it proved, as Poisoned Pawns exploited their greater strength at the top. Endgame aficionados should check out the games from the top board - a rook and opposite-coloured bishop ending and the bottom board, Jessica Thilaganthan's win against Emma Bentley - a same-coloured bishop ending.



RD 1		WESSEX 2	2033	v	POISONED PAWNS 1	2115
1	w	Pleasants, Allan J	2100	0 - 1	Swanson, Stephen	2225
2	b	Clark, Ian C	2106	0 - 1	Dargan, Paul	2207
3	w	Gregory, Keith D	2067	1 - 0	Goodger, Martyn	2164
4	b	Marsh, Roger	2088	0 - 1	Byway, Paul	2154
5	w	Taylor-Bowd, Phil	2025	½ - ½	Richter, Hans	2144
6	b	Krawczuk, Michael J	2045	0 - 1	Rosen, Daniel B	2150
7	w	Tunks, Dominic	1945	1 - 0	Winfridsson, Ola	2133
8	b	Thilaganathan, Jessica (F)	1891	1 - 0	Bentley, Emma (F)	1740
				3½-4½		

Pool B

Wessex 1 vs. South Wales Dragons 2 (5.0-3.0)

Wessex started this match 1-0 up, as the Dragons' board four was travelling in Ben Hague's ill-fated car. And just like in the Northwest Eagles' match, the defaulter would have had white had he turned up. (For those who are interested, the probability that three randomly selected people in one team and one in another will all have white in any given round is 1/28.)

The rest of the match, fortunately, was the kind of exciting fare we tend to expect from these teams. This, one of the Dragons' two wins in a 5-3 defeat, was perhaps the pick of the games:

Jenks, Bruce (2145) - Miles, Richard (2050) [D00]

4NCL/Div2/WES1-SWD2 Sunningdale (1.255), 04.10.2008

[Rudd, Jack]

1.d4 d5 2.Bf4 Nf6 3.e3 g6 4.Bd3 [4.h4 Bg7 5.Nd2 c5 6.c3 Qb6 7.Qb3 Nc6 8.Ngf3 0-0 9.Ne5 c4 10.Qxb6 axb6 11.Be2 h5 12.e4 b5 13.f3 dxe4 14.fxe4 Nxe5 15.Bxe5 Bh6 16.Rf1 Bxd2+ 17.Kxd2 Nxe4+ 18.Ke3 Nd6 Klaric,Z (2445)-Balashov,Y (2530)/Moscow 1989/TD/0-1 (32); 4.h3 Bg7 5.c4 c6 6.Qb3 e6 7.Nf3 Nbd7 8.Nc3 0-0 9.Be2 dxc4 10.Bxc4 Nb6 11.Be2 Nbd5 12.Be5 Bh6 13.0-0 Nxc3 14.Qxc3 Nd5 15.Qa3 f6 16.Bh2 Rf7 17.Rac1 Bf8 18.Qb3 Bd6 Heyman,J (1948)-Turboust,R (1790)/Metz 2006/EXT 2007/1-0 (69)] **4...Bg7 5.Nc3?!** White is mixing systems here. This move signals the Barry attack, but in that opening the bishop is usually developed on e2, for two reasons. One is to support an h4-h5 advance, the other is to avoid ...Nc6-b4 hitting it. [5.Nd2 0-0 (5...Nh5 6.Ne2 Nxf4 7.Nxf4 c6 8.0-0 e5 9.dxe5 Bxe5 10.c3 0-0 11.Nf3 Bg7 1/2-1/2 Feige,D (1740)-Gellmann,T (1875)/Mecklenburg VP 2003) 6.c3 c6 7.f3 Nh5 8.Bg3 Nd7 9.f4 Qb6 10.Qc2 e5 11.fxe5 Nxc3 12.hxc3 Bxe5 13.dxe5 Qxe3+ 14.Be2 Qxc3+ 15.Kf1 Nxe5 16.Ngf3 Ng4 0-1 Lento,P-Sammalvuori,T/Helsinki 1989; 5.Ne2 0-0 6.c3 Nbd7 7.0-0 Re8 8.Nd2 e5 9.dxe5 Nxe5 10.Bxe5 Rxe5 11.Nf3 Re8 12.Ned4 c6 13.h3 Qb6 14.Rb1 Bd7 15.Nh2 c5 16.Ndf3 Bc6 17.Nh4 Rad8 18.Qc2 Bb5 19.c4 dxc4 MJ-Podobnik,M (2244)/Dos Hermanas 2004/0-1 (36)] **5...0-0 6.h4 h5 7.Qd2 c5 8.Nf3 cxd4 9.exd4 Nc6 10.Ne5**



10...Nb4 Black chooses the aforementioned plan of kicking the bishop. [Our beloved pawn-snatching silicon monster likes 10...Qb6 11.0-0 Qxd4 ; for once, I think I agree with it.] **11.f3 Nxd3+ 12.Qxd3 Bf5 13.Qd2 Rc8 14.0-0-0?** A clear case of "castling into it". The king had to go on the other side, but even then, I much prefer the black position. The knight on e5 looks imposing, but it will soon be kicked back with ...f6, and there's then a nice spot for the black knight on c4. **14...b5 15.Nd3 Qa5 16.Nc5?** [16.a3 Bxd3 17.Qxd3 Rc4 may be a better try for white, but still looks like the sort of position black dreams about in the Dragon: the white attack has stalled, whereas he can hammer away at c3.]

16...b4 17.N3a4 Nd7 18.a3? [18.Kb1 Nb6 19.g4 is white's last chance to put up a defence, although 19...Nxa4 20.gxf5 Nxb2! is still winning for black.] **18...Nxc5 19.Nxc5**



19...Rxc5! A nice double sacrifice to rip the white king's defences open. **20.dxc5 Bxb2+ 21.Kxb2 Qxa3+ 22.Kb1 b3 23.Be5 bxc2+ 24.Qxc2 Qb3+ 0-1**

RD 1		WESSEX 1	2142	v	SOUTH WALES DRAGONS 2	2020
1	w	Lock, Gavin R	2252	0 - 1	Spice, Alan	2173
2	b	Neil, David R	2165	½ - ½	Roberts, David L	2144
3	w	Rutter, Nicholas	2177	1 - 0	Brown, Alan M	2121
4	b	Simons, Martin J	2237	1 - 0	Burton, Graham P (def)	2087
5	w	Jenks, Bruce	2145	0 - 1	Miles, Richard	2050
6	b	Yeo, Michael J	2103	½ - ½	van Kemenade, Rudy	1989
7	w	de Coverly, Roger	2062	1 - 0	Wilson, Julie (F)	1935
8	b	Khoo, Selina (F)	1991	1 - 0	van Kemenade, Julie (F)	1661
				5 - 3		

Warwickshire Select 1 vs. Cheddleton-Pointon (4.0-4.0)



Cheddleton-Pointon had the most eye-catching signing of this year's division two teams: joint English champion Keith Arkell joined a team that already included former British champion Robert Bellin, and his seemingly effortless win against Nick Thomas in a Caro-Kann was in many ways classic Arkell.

The rest of his team, however, did not fare so well. John Sharp, in particular, will be kicking himself at losing an exchange-up position against John Pitcher, a result which proved pivotal as the match finished 4-4.

RD 1		WARWICKSHIRE SELECT 1	2185	v	CHEDDLETON-POINTON	2157
1	w	Thomas, Nicholas	2309	0 - 1	Arkell, Keith	2521
2	b	Mason, Don	2245	½ - ½	Bellin, Robert	2405
3	w	Hynes, Anthony	2250	½ - ½	Wallace, Paul A	2259
4	b	Shephard, Chris C W	2220	½ - ½	McKenna, Jason P	2142
5	w	Pitcher, John	2183	1 - 0	Sharp, John R	2130
6	b	Galloway, Iain	2139	0 - 1	Bennett, Patrick	2101
7	w	Baruch, Andrew J D	2085	½ - ½	Edwards, Simon	2034
8	b	James, Ann-Marie (F)	2050	1 - 0	Adams, Thomas J (J) *	1665
				4 - 4		

Kings Head vs. FCA Solutions 1 (7.0-1.0)

A match that should on paper have been very close became a massacre; most of the games seemed to involve the Kings Head player getting an early material advantage and then converting it. The game Borrowdale-Forbes provided one of the “oops” moments of the round, as white played Bf4 to set up a discovered check, and then failed to realize that this blocked the escape squares of his rook on f5, which was trapped a couple of moves later.

RD 1		KINGS HEAD	2129	v	FCA SOLUTIONS 1	2063
1	w	Kwiatkowski, Feliks J	2219	½ - ½	Tippleston, Charles	2177
2	b	Okike, David C	2205	1 - 0	Almond, Richard	2138
3	w	McMichael, Richard	2262	1 - 0	Habershon, Paul	2120
4	b	Wittmann, Jochen	2190	1 - 0	Macdonald-Ross, Michael	2169
5	w	Thomas, Richard H	2189	½ - ½	Majer, Chris E	2091
6	b	Forbes, Cathy (F)	2098	1 - 0	Borrowdale, Graham	2035
7	w	Stevenson, James A B	2073	1 - 0	Williamson, Kevin J	2026
8	b	Haria, Ravi	1794	1 - 0	Evans, Helen (F)	1745
				7 - 1		

Celtic Tigers 1 vs. Guildford-A&DC 3

Guildford 3 missed out on promotion on tie-break last year, and must this season be considered one of the favourites to go up. This win against one of the division's weaker teams was pretty much by the form-book. Fans of unorthodox openings should check out the game Mueller-Granat, in which black essayed the notoriously risky Baltic Defence against the Queen's Gambit; this time, it paid off.

RD 1		CELTIC TIGERS 1	2064	v	GUILDFORD-A&DC 3	2202
1	w	Maciol, Ryszard	2237	1 - 0	Tymrakiewicz, Rafal	2268
2	b	Kemp, Peter D	2177	0 - 1	Povah, Nigel E	2311
3	w	Pedersen, Carsten	2157	½ - ½	Thompson, Ian D	2272
4	b	French, Angus	2131	0 - 1	Sharpe, Ian	2290
5	w	Mueller, Jan	2081	0 - 1	Granat, Russell G	2264
6	b	Josse, Mark	2010	1 - 0	Hopper, Paul	2173
7	w	O'Grady, Gary	1932	½ - ½	Shepley, Julien M	2115
8	b	Owens, Megan (F)	1783	0 - 1	Hunt, Daniel (J)	1919
				3 - 5		

You can find all of the games from this round here:

PGN http://www.4ncl.co.uk/0809_div2-01.pgn

Game viewer http://www.4ncl.co.uk/0809_div2-01viewer.htm

And view results and information about the 4ncl here: <http://www.4ncl.co.uk/>