

CHESS in the CASTLE

Played, courtesy of ENGLISH HERITAGE at Aydon Castle on May 28th

The Northumbria Junior Chess Association was allowed once again to hold its annual 'Chess in the Castle' event at Aydon Castle near Corbridge. We were, as always, very grateful to English Heritage and its staff at Aydon for their helpful welcome. As has become traditional we were greeted with bright sunshine and though it became overcast later at least the rain held off for us. The weather is more important here than at our other venues; the tournaments take place in the great hall, stone walls without heating and with swallows and bats twittering and nesting in the rafters above. On the bank holiday weekend numbers were down on last year, but the 30 children who did take part clearly enjoyed both the chess and the castle – football in the bailey and various war games other than chess all over the place. (The EH shop sold bows and arrows and did good business) Older and more sedate parents were able to picnic peaceably under the apple trees in the castle orchard.

On to the chess. The Under-9 tournament produced its usual mixture of blunders and brilliancies. The winner, Matthew Harding, a local from St Joseph's, Hexham, played most steadily and, losing only once, finished a full point ahead of his nearest rivals. Ruben Tadmor and Jack McHugh shared second place. Both are from RGS, Newcastle, and Jack robbed Ruben of his chance of sharing top place by beating him in the final round. .

RGS, taking the top three places, dominated at Under-11 where three-quarters of the entries were from that one school. Gavin Minty, still an U-10, won all 7 of his games and had won the tournament with a round to spare. Thomas Gholkar, who had beaten Gavin to win last month's Megafinal, and Jeremy Charlton, playing more sensibly than usual, shared second place on 5/7.

At Under-13 Jonathan Harding (St Joseph's) and Andrew Douglas (RGS) are old rivals and were pre-tournament favourites. Jonathan completed a Harding family triumph by beating Andrew in the final round when they shared the lead. This allowed Alex Nott (RGS) to leapfrog into second place – his best ever tournament result.

There was no under-18 tournament as such, but nine-year Thomas Mavin (grade 99; Yarm) played a four game match against 17-year old Steven Aitchison (grade 100; Tynemouth) for the trophy. Thomas worked hard to win a close and exciting first game, but Steven came back to take the next three as the younger boy tired.

The prizes at the end (And everybody got a prize of some sort) were presented by Miss Sophie Seeber, who, together with Chris Wardle and Peter Beardwood were controllers. Organiser, Paul Bielby, is grateful to all three.

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Under-9 Section

1. Matthew HARDING (St Joseph's)	W+3 B+9 W+7 W+5 B+4 B-2 W+6	6
2. Ruben TADMOR (RGS)	W-4 bye B+8 W+6 B+5 W+1 B-3	5
3. Jack McHUGH (RGS)	B-1 W+11 B+10 W-4 B+8 W+5 W+2	5
4. Joseph HICKS (RGS)	B+2 W+6 B-5 B+3 W-1 B+9 W-8	4
5. Jamie NAIK (RGS)	W+8 B+& W+4 B-1 W-2 B-3 B+11	4
6. William ATKINSON (RGS)	bye B-4 W+9 B-2 W+7 W+10 B-1	4
7. Lewis PRICE (Tynemouth)	B+10 W-5 B-1 W+9 B-8 W+11 bye	4
8. Peter CAMPBELL (Tynemouth)	B-5 W+10 W-2 B+11 W-3 bye B+4	4
9. Anna SHURUKOVA (Tynemouth)	B+11 W-1 B-8 B-7 bye W-4 W+10	3
10. Harry WEARMOUTH (Whinfield)	W-7 B-8 W-3 bye W+11 B-6 W-5	2
11. Kathryn BUCHANAN (Central HS)	W-9 B-3 bye W-8 B-10 B-7 W-8	1

Under-11 Section

1. Gavin MINTY (RGS)	W+9 B+8 W+10 W+2 B+4 B+3 W+5	7
2. Thomas GHOLKAR (RGS)	W+4 B+10 W+6 B-1 W+7 B-5 W+8	5
3. Jeremy CHARLTON (RGS)	W+5 B-6 W+8 B+7 B+9 W-1 B+12	5
4. Connor LISHMAN (Whinfield)	B-2 W+11 B+12 W+6 W-1 B+9 B-7	4
5. Martin DONOHUE (RGS)	B-9 W-7 B+11 W+8 B+6 W+2 B-1	4
6. Oliver BENNETT (RGS)	B+7 W+3 B-2 B-4 W-5 W+12 B-10	3
7. Alastair CAMPBELL (Tynemouth)	W-6 B+5 W+9 W-3 B-2 B-11 W+4	3
8. Alan NG (RGS)	B+12 W-1 B-3 B-5 W+11 W+10 B-2	3
9. Nathaniel GRAHAM (RGS)	B-1 W+12 B-7 B+10 W-3 W-4 B+11	3
10. Allisdair BOWMAN (RGS)	B+11 W-2 B-1 W-9 W+12 B-8 W+6	3
11. Oliver BROOKS (RGS)	W-10 B-4 W-5 B+12 B-8 W+7 W-9	2
12. Michael PROFFITT (Whinfield)	W-8 B-9 W-4 W-11 B-10 B-6 W-3	0

Under-13 Section

Played as an All-Play-All followed by two Swiss rounds

	JH	AN	AD	AM	JG	byes	total
1. Jonathan HARDING (St Joseph's)	***	1	½ 1	0 1	1	1	5½
2. Alex NOTT (RGS)	0	***	0 1	1	1 1	1	5
3. Andrew DOUGLAS (RGS)	½ 0	1 0	***	1	1	1	4½
4. Anton MINTY (RGS)	1 0	0	0	***	1	2	4
5. James GOODMAN (McMillan)	0	0 0	0	0	***	2	2

Under-18 Section

Played as a straight match of four games

1. Steven AITCHISON (Tynemouth)	0	1	1	1	3
2. Thomas MAVIN (Yarm)	1	0	0	0	1