

GIGAFINAL 2006  
Manchester

The biggest chess tournament in the world, and it continues to grow. This year some 74,000 children from more than 2000 schools took part in the first stage which started in January. By late April about 20% of these had qualified to play in 38 Megafinals across the country. Following these the number of children was reduced to some 2000 who had qualified for the third stage, the Gigafinals. There are two of these, one in the South, and one in the North at Manchester. From these only the first player in each section (the "Ultimo") qualify for the final stage, the Terafinal, to be held in Sheffield in late August. Those coming second or third in each section are also invited to play in Sheffield in the Challengers section.

Some 40 children from the North-East were at the Manchester Gigafinal last weekend. Three of them won 'Ultimo' titles. David Eggleston (Hetton) won the Boys u-18 section with 5/6; brother Thomas Eggleston shared second place on 4/6 and will play in the Challengers. Sophie Seeber (Tynemouth) narrowly won the Girls u-17 section with 3½/6. Tom Gholkar (RGS) managed 5/6 in the u-12 Boys, but this was only good enough for second (and a Challengers place at Sheffield). 5½/6 was enough to win Thomas Maven (Yarm) his u-10 Boys section

Everybody who played in Manchester had already won through two difficult stages to get there. Organiser, Mike Basman pointed this out and there were extra prizes for everybody scoring more than 50%. Everybody got a Certificate. Here - as far as I can ascertain - are rest of the NJCA scores:

u-18 Boys: Steven Aitchison (Tynemouth) 3  
u-17 Boys: Mark Regan (Astley) 3  
u-15 Boys: Thomas Glover (RGS) 3½; Sam Beldon (Tynemouth) 3; Simon Love (Astley) 2  
u-14 Boys: Martin Ho (Belmont) 4; David griffin (Hetton) 2; Austin Spinks (Belmont) 2  
u-13 Boys: Andrew Douglas (RGS) 3; Jack Taylor (Hetton) 2; Michael Elliott (Hermitage) 1  
u-12 Girls : Aine Beldon (Tynemouth) 3½  
u-12 Boys : Daniel White (Framwellgate) 4; Christopher Johnston (Belmont) 3  
u-11 Boys : Aaron Bate (Hetton) 3½; Gavin Minty (RGS) 3½; Thomas Wilson (Abbey) 2; Dominic Byrne (St Teresa's) 1½  
u-10 Boys : James Lau (RGS) 4½; Ben Cull (RGS) 4; James Schofield (RGS) 3½; Will Atkinson (RGS) 2½; Jack McHugh (RGS) 2  
u-9 Boys : John Abraham (RGS) 4½; George Wyatt (RGS) 4½  
u-8 Girls : Zaima Hussain (St Teresa's) 2½  
u-8 Boys : Mark Rowden (Tynemouth) 3; Andrew Thompson (Collingwood) 2½; Liam Turner (Collingwood) 2  
u-7 Boys : Jack Hughes (St Teresa's) 3