

## Prestatyn (2010)

### EPSCA Semi-finals 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> June

Beautiful weather and a smooth journey to the venue could not prepare us for the surprise that awaited at the Team Managers' meeting on late Friday evening. Unfortunately, one of the teams in the main competition had failed to appear, which meant the highest scoring non-qualified team from the first round in the country was to be placed in the main section. We don't need to tell you which school it turned out to be! Of course it is a compliment really, and indicates how strong this region is for junior chess.

When the players were told on Saturday morning just before the start of the first round, there were some visible signs of shoulder slumping and traces of trepidation, quite understandably, as they had prepared for weeks knowing they would be in the Plate. The first round reverse of 5-0 against Newcastle Prep A (15 points and 13<sup>th</sup>) seemed to confirm the nervousness, and Will and Darina commented on the intimidating scale of the venue and the sea of clocks, sets and people.

In the second round another team we knew well were drawn, this time RGS B and with relaxation came performance: a good draw 2.5 each, with Will winning on board six. Round three saw the end of play for Saturday and a score of 3.5 against Grimoldby. Kieran lost on board five while Mark drew a hard fought game on board two. Sunday morning witnessed our best match of the weekend, beating Lisle Marsden (who finished with 14.5 overall and 14<sup>th</sup>) a comprehensive 4-1, only Aidan losing a tough encounter. The second round of the day was against Eccleshall (7<sup>th</sup> and silver) and perhaps swimming just before the games began was not the best preparation for playing such a strong team! Short games and a 5-0, although Will again won on board six.

Before the last round a re-focussing was in order, and to their credit a win of 4-1 against Chadvale was well deserved.

<b>Name</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Aidan Byrne</b>	0	1	1	0	0	1
<b>Mark Broughton</b>	0	1	0.5	1	0	1
<b>Darina Andriychenko</b>	0	0	1	1	0	1
<b>Rory Bell</b>	0	0.5	1	1	0	0.5
<b>Kieran Bell</b>	0	0	0	1	0	0
<b>Will Gilmour</b>	0 (board 5)	1 (board 6)	1 (board6)	1 (board 6)	1 (board 6)	0.5 (board 5)

Boards one to four scored very well: any score of 3 or better is a good performance. It was always going to be challenging for the two youngest players and their combined score on board five of 1.5 was satisfactory considering. Will received a small prize for the best individual score.

The team finished with 14 points to come 15<sup>th</sup> out of 24, gaining a bronze award, no mean achievement, and Will and Kieran have gained valuable experience.

Every one of the children enjoyed themselves and as a bonus Daniel Bell played as a reserve for one of the U11 teams and scored a faultless 6/6. He was one of only two who stood up in the prize giving with a 100%.

Thank you to all the parents who brought their children and supported the team throughout, and thank you to Head Teacher Janet Purdy and the school for encouraging the playing of chess.

Abi & Tim Adams