

## The RGS CHESS CONGRESS, 2009

The 2009 RGS Chess Congress took place on Saturday, 10<sup>th</sup> October in the Fenwick and Lilburne Halls. 72 players took part, their ages ranging from 7-17! No fewer than 53 of the players came from RGS, 42 from the Junior School.

The Under-18 and Under-15 competitions were grouped together because of small numbers. In this Section there was a clear winner. 15-year old Amarvansh Singh Wadhwa arrived in Newcastle a year ago from India. He attends Heaton Manor School and plays in Jesmond Chess Club. Ungraded in England, he has an International Rating of 1818 and proved far too strong for the opposition winning all 6 of his games. Tom Cleminson (RGS) came second and won the trophy for Under-15s. Fatheha Essa took a gold medal as the top girl.

The Under-13 Section was virtually decided in round 1, when the computer unkindly drew Zheming Zhang (Cragside) against Adam Clark(RGS). Zheming, still only 7, was playing 'up' as he had been winning all the tournaments in lower age-groups with ease. Both he and Adam play at Jesmond Chess Club. Adam won this game and went on winning for the rest of the day – again 6/6. Zheming ran him as close as he could, winning his remaining 5 games. Third place went to Ibrahim Nasser (RGS) with 4/6.

The Under-11 tournament had a very exciting finish. Hugo Meecham (King's, Tynemouth) had clearly never learnt the rule the King's boys always lose to RGS! Still a 9-year old he scored 5 wins in his first 5 games, beating 3 of the top RGS players on the way. He led the competition by half a point at the start of the final round. However, Thomas Posner, an RGS B-team player, was his nearest challenger and in the last round Tom played the game of his life to take the trophy with 5½/6. Hugo had to share second place with Naman Garg and Daksh Sharma (Both RGS 'A' team players in their respective age-groups) In an equally exciting finish Tabitha Burnett and Laura Smith (both RGS) shared top place in the girls competition on 3/6, having been running neck and neck with each other throughout.

Anthony Lai had his ninth birthday on Saturday. I knew he was good, but had not really expected him to finish ahead of Manav Gupta and William Wilkinson both of whom have higher gradings. However Anthony won all 6 of his games, beating William in round 5 and avoiding playing Manav who dropped a point to William early on. William and Manav shared second place on 5/6. Amongst several players scoring 4/6 was diminutive 8-year old, Aaranya Nodiyal of NPS. She took the trophy as the highest scoring girl in all the competitions. Her two losses were to Anthony and William, the top two boys. No fewer than eight of RGS' year 3 children took part in their first competition after only about 4 weeks of chess club. Best of these was Keshav Krishnan who went on to win a bronze medal with 3/6, but I was delighted with all eight for a very brave effort!

RGS Junior School Headmaster, Mr Roly Craig had a big job handing out all the prizes at the end. All the children won a prize of some sort, be it badge, medal or trophy. Detailed results of all the games will be on the chess notice board at school and on the Northumbria Junior Chess Association website, [www.njca.org.uk](http://www.njca.org.uk).