

Jesmond's Ultimi at the Terafinal

Three members of the Jesmond Junior Chess Club had won the 'Ultimo' title in their age-groups from the Northern Gigafinal of the 2011 UK Chess Challenge. How would they fare in the Terafinal to find the overall National Champion, played at Loughborough in late August?

The Terafinal is a different sort of tournament from the earlier Megafinal and Gigafinal rounds. All 52 Ultimi play in the one tournament, no longer in their age-groups. It is played (and graded) standard play with 6 rounds over two days. To discourage agreed draws, 3 points are scored for a win and only 1 for a draw. Obviously the older children stand a better chance of winning and in the end **Yang Fan Zhou** (Surrey), at 16 England's youngest IM, won the £2000 top prize, on 16 points, conceding only one draw.

Far from being overawed 8-year old **James Moreby** (RGS) played his first ever long-play games – he won one and finished with 3 points and a standard play grade of 30 for his 6 games. As his (rapid play) grade last season was 23 – the lowest grade of all the Terafinalists - he should very pleased with his results, both in reaching the Terafinal and in coming 48th/52. He will have learnt a lot.

10 year old, **Joseph Dalton** (RGS), had played just one standard game before for Jesmond Pawns. He managed 2 wins, 6 points, played at an average grade of 82. Several of his opponents were teenagers, so again this was a very promising performance.

Zheming Zhang, still only 9 and starting at RGS in September, is a veteran by comparison, having played last year and with two British Championships under his belt. He won 3 games and drew one finishing on 10 points. He won £300 as the best Under-9. I was particularly pleased to see that he drew his last round game against namesake, 14-year old Roy Zhang who had beaten me at Canterbury a year ago. Zheming played his six games at the frightening grade of 166. He finished level on points with another old friend of ours, 16-year old Jean-Luc Weller of York.

One more RGS boy played at Loughborough in the Challengers Tournament, a sort of second division. **William Wilkinson** (age10) won 2 games, drew 2 and lost 2 for 8 points coming 21st out of 38 players in that section

Paul Bielby.