

The NCCU Junior Team Championship, 2008

Played at Darlington on St David's Day, 1st March

Once again this supposedly Jamboree event degenerated into a straight match between the two teams who turned up on the day. Organiser, Bill Metcalfe, had been taken ill shortly before the event; Lancashire who had been expected to play failed to appear; so it was left to the two team managers to sort out how the event would take place. It was decided to play two rounds, each game being of two hours (1 hour each on the clock).

N.J.C.A

Cheshire & N.Wales

1. Jonathan Lai (RGS + Jesmond)	½ - ½	Sam Cloake
	0 - 1	Martin Brown
2. Thomas Glover (RGS + Durham City)	0 - 1	Martin Brown
	0 - 1	Sam Cloake
3. Daniel Lai (RGS + Jesmond)	½ - ½	George Cloake
	1 - 0	Mitchell Burke
4. Jack Bradshaw (QEHS + Tynedale)	0 - 1	Mitchell Burke
	½ - ½	George Cloake
5. Matthew Taylor (QEHS + Tynedale)	1 - 0	James Lobo
	0 - 1	Sam Towse
6. Yueyang Chao (RGS + Jesmond)	0 - 1	Sam Towse
	0 - 1	James Lobo
7. Max Jones (RGS + Jesmond)	½ - ½	Steven Jones
	½ - ½	David Menon
8. Tom Gholkar (RGS + Jesmond)	½ - ½	David Menon
	0 - 1	Steven Jones
9. Daniel White (Framwellgate Moor + Durham City)	0 - 1	James Fidel
	0 - 1	Peter Gerlagh
10. Andrew Douglas (RGS + Jesmond)	½ - ½	Peter Gerlagh
	0 - 1	James Fidel
11. Chris Johnston (Belmont + Durham City)	0 - 1	Charles Gilman
	1 - 0	Oliver Manley
12. Michael Taggart (Astley)	½ - ½	Oliver Manley
	0 - 1	Charles Gilman

Altogether a massive 17-7 win for Cheshire & North Wales who thoroughly deserved it, if only for their willingness to face a 6-hour return journey to take part in the event. They retain the trophy that they won last year. We were well outgraded (by an average 11 points per board), but despite this result our boys put up a good fight in many cases and should have learnt a lot from the event. And we came second and can claim to have done better than Yorkshire, Lancashire, Cleveland, etc.!

If this is to continue as a worthwhile event more counties must be prepared to take part and a more central venue found.

A brisk game from the Match in which Danny Lai beats a 144 graded opponent.

White: Mitchell Burke Black: Danny Lai

SCOTCH GAME

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. d4 exd4
4. Bc4 d6
5. Nxd4 Bd7
6. O-O Nf6
7. Nc3 Be7
8. f4 O-O
9. f5

(9. Nf3 or 9. Be3 or even 9. Kh1 may be stronger here; the text allows Black the strong e5 square for his N.)

- 9... Ne5
10. Bb3 a6
11. a4 c5
12. Nf3 Nfg4
13. h3 Nxf3
14. Qxf3 Ne5
15. Qg3 Bh4
16. Qe3 Bc6
17. g3 Bf6
18. Bd5 Re8
19. g4??

(Obviously hoping to pawn-storm the Black K-side -but this move is an outright blunder and his next is even worse!)

- 19... Nxc4!
20. hxg4?? Bd4
21. White resigns