

Leicestershire and Rutland Chess Association Junior Chess Committee Report 2017-18

The committee has been expanded this year to include two parent representatives, Manjiri Khare and Gowri Muthusamy, and, more recently, Head Coach , David Levens. It may seem ironic that two years ago David was seen as the nemesis of Leicestershire Juniors in his role as Head Coach for Nottinghamshire Juniors and the loss of one or two of our promising juniors to that county.

I am pleased to say that situation has been reversed and David has shown to be a committed Head Coach at the Saturday training sessions at Westleigh and also the junior events. Neil Roberts meanwhile has stepped down from the committee but is still involved on a coaching basis at Westleigh, Ashby and nearby schools.

There is however still a vacancy on the committee for any LRCA member interested in schools liaison, and always for coaches and helpers at Westleigh and junior events, and expenses will be paid accordingly for that attendance. Please just approach myself or Paul Mottram if interested.

The Rockingham (Northants and Leicestershire) Delancey Megafinal has just taken place with considerable success as usual for several of our juniors to progress to the regional Gigafinal at Birmingham . We have in fact been approached by Delancey with a view to running our own independently, but, while both Paul and I believe that we could run it more efficiently (especially after I assisted at Wellingborough this year !) the two counties may not have enough numbers to run two viable competitions. Also many Leicestershire juniors elected to play in the Nottingham or Derbyshire Megafinals instead, or even as well as, Rockingham in an attempt to make it to the Gigafinal.

Inter-schools matches and a potential league remain a thing of the past currently, though Fairfield (as well as Westleigh beginners) are making great use of the internet website Chesskid.com. This is the junior version of the better known Chess.com which so widely used by all chess players across the world.

One of the issues that was thrown at me last year was that there is a paucity of juniors progressing to play at LRCA clubs. There are a number of reasons behind this, not least because there is a national phenomenon of very few secondary schools offering chess tuition- even at Loughborough, which has housed the National Terafinal for Delancey on several occasions, and ironically has two of the finest juniors in the Modi brothers. Primarily, however, there is a need for facilities at the clubs and LRCA players who are willing to get involved. Ashby has shown what can be done with Daniel Chen and

George Worrow-Goodin both faring well for their club and county. Also, Braunstone has seen Tom Brown rise to top board and new player Julian Tang has two children attending at Westleigh, and a cause for enthusiasm at Loughborough may be new player Manfred Kufleitner with similar.

Matthew Lo was voted as Most Improved Player receiving the John Robinson trophy and a new trophy of Best Team Player was awarded to George for his efforts with the county teams

The junior teams have achieved outstanding results this year thanks in no small part to Paul's boundless energy and organisation, and he details those in his report.

Thanks as usual go to coaches used – Richard Vann, Neil Roberts, John Mitchell, Jim Bingham, Shaun Cope, Ben Pourmozafari, Brian Foreman and Paul Mottram and also to Paul's wife, Marjorie, for handling finances and assisting at the congress as did Andy Morley and John Pattinson.

Bob Wallace

Chairman

May 2018