

Junior Chess 2025-26

Another superb year for junior chess in Shropshire as our young players reach new highs and more players try chess than ever before.

Shropshire Junior Chess Club

The Junior Club runs every Saturday at Meole Brace Peace Memorial Hall. We now have a very stable venue and from that stability we can continue to build. 46 junior members attended the club at least once throughout the year, slightly down on last year.



2 stalwart volunteers have helped me keep the club going this year. Rob Green and Sanjeev Punj are both vital to the club's success, supporting me each week and covering for me when unavailable.

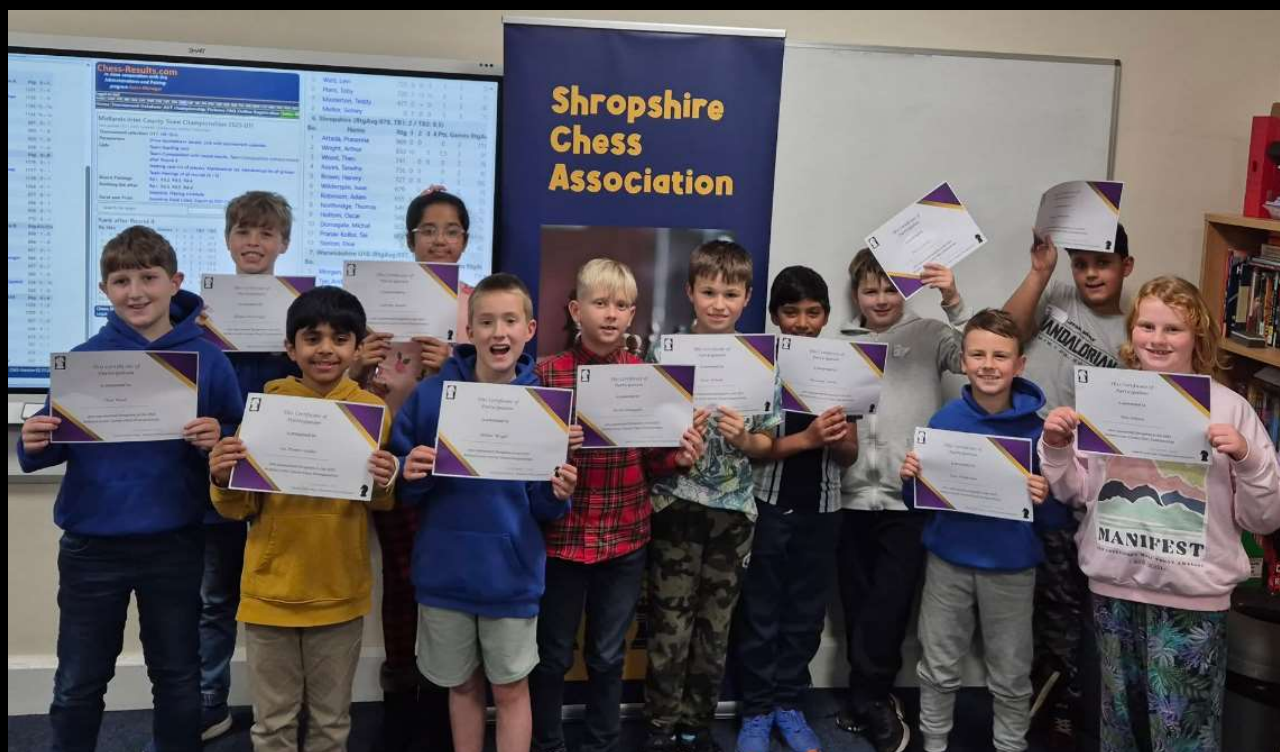
County Teams

Last year we were represented at 4 different county competitions.

In the Junior 4NCL we competed in only one weekend where the team can be proud of finishing 6th out of 17 teams.

We once again entered a team in the Midlands Junior Championships although the flooding that weekend resulted in the girl's team pulling out. Our goal was to defeat our main rivals – Staffordshire. Unfortunately the pairings weren't kind and we never did get to play against them. The team finished 7th out of 8 teams.

For the first time we were able to field a Shropshire-only team at EPSCA (English Primary Schools Chess Association) County Championships. This time we did face Staffordshire in the 2nd round. The match went right down to the final board but Prasanna kept his cool in a rook endgame to clinch the win for Shropshire! We finished 5th out of 6 teams.





Lastly we arranged a counties friendly tournament against Staffordshire and Wales held at Newport. Unfortunately we weren't able to replicate our earlier success, finishing last but gaining yet more valuable experience.



Junior Championships

The Junior Championships was held in the magnificent Alington Hall at Shrewsbury School.

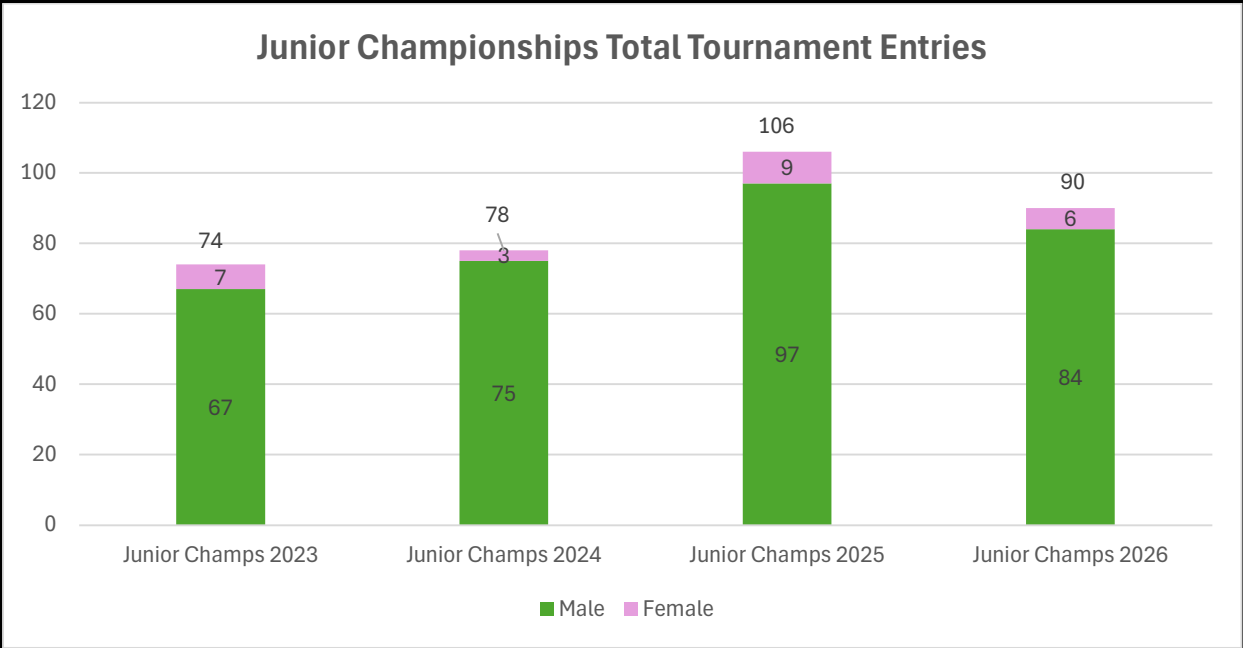


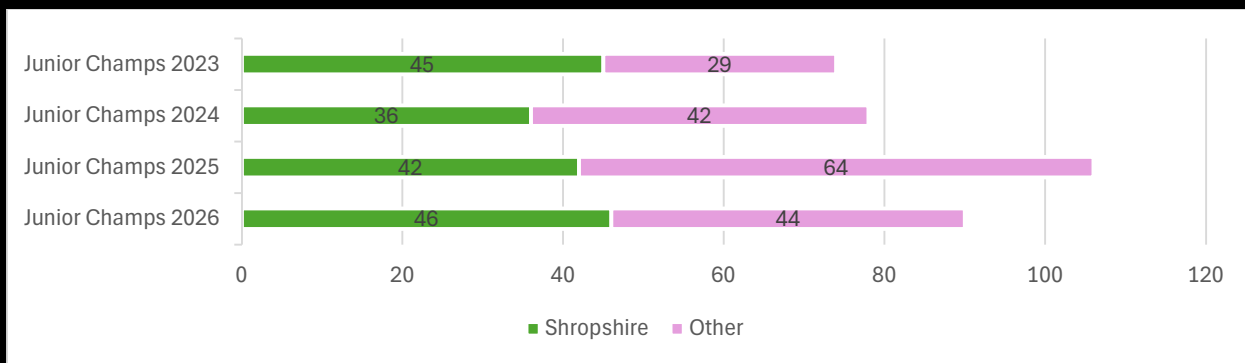
Congratulations to the 2026 Shropshire Champions!



Boys Champions					
	U8	U10	U12	U14	U18
2023	Zac Taylor	Rudi Bedford	Merry Curtis	Rhys Macmillan	Ryan Barton
2024	Zac Taylor	Theo Wood, Leon Szymala, Fred Peach	Dyfan Steele	Rudi Bedford	Krish Thimmegowda
2025	Bagrat Tumanyan	Theo Wood	Rudi Bedford	Muhammad Qadri	Alex Loe, Daniel Tumanyan
2026	Aryan Punj	Isaac Wilderspin, Aryav Singhal	Prasanna Attada	Aditya Poluru	Waylon Chan, Rhys Macmillan

Girls Champions					
	U8	U10	U12	U14	U18
2023	None	None	None	Jessica Colton	None
2024	Tanviha Rayini	None	None	None	None
2025	Ada Etchells	Tanviha Rayini	None	None	Izzy Heys
2026	Ada Etchells	Tanviha Rayini	Lakshana Manojanand Vinni	Kate Ivanova	None





Shropshire Megafinal

The Megafinal was held at Haberdashers' Adams Grammar School. Congratulations to Ada Etchells who was U8 Suprema, Ellis Sharp who was top U13, Muhammad Qadri who was U14 Supremo, Harrison Whitehouse who finished top U16 and Waylon Chan who was U18 Supremo.





Thalia provided the commentary



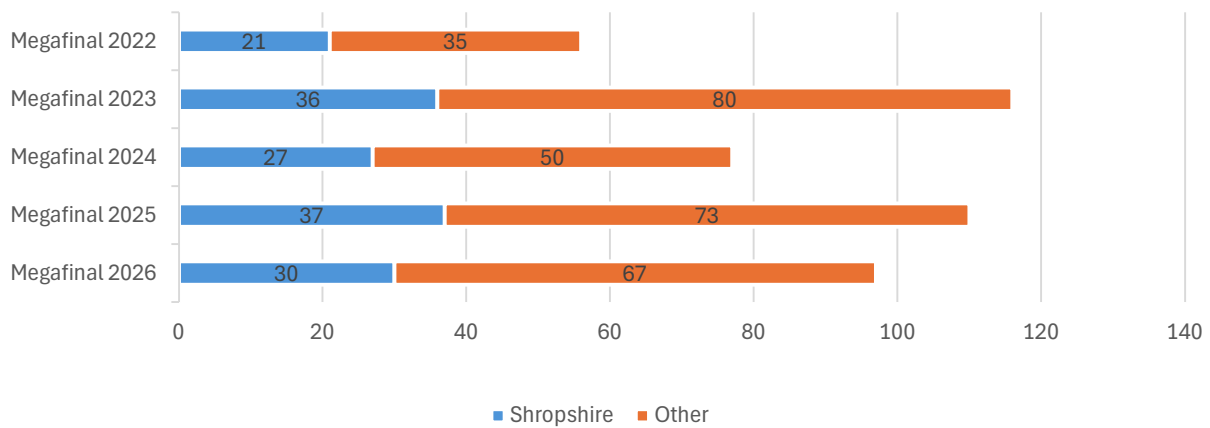
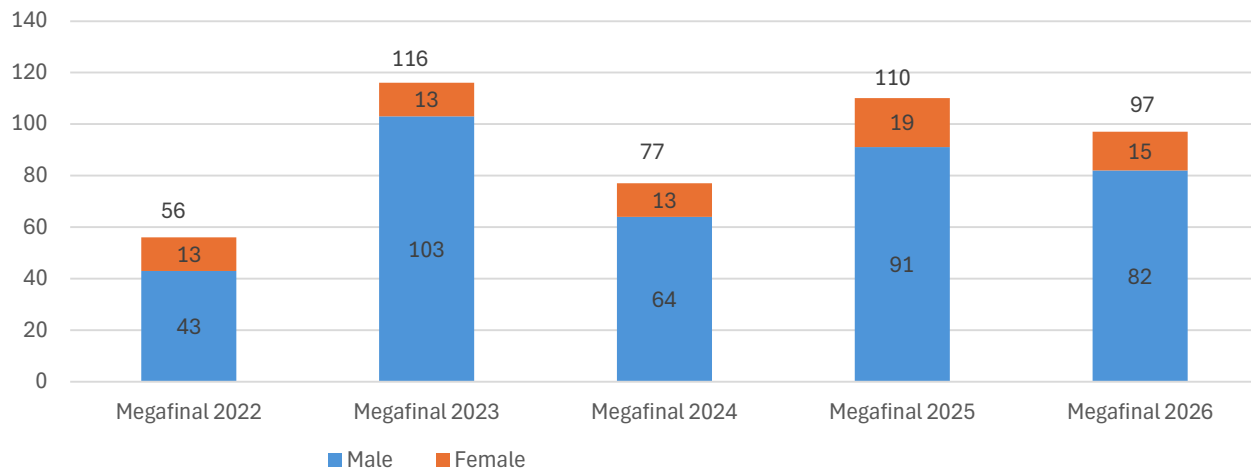
And Fred ran the challenge board..



None of these tournaments would be possible without the hard-working team of volunteers who work tirelessly on the day to keep things running smoothly.



Megafinal Total Tournament Entries



We had a record number of players who qualified for the Gigafinals this year. Most of our players opted for the Northern Gigafinals and there we had our best ever performances with 3 of our players (Prasanna, Aditya and Muhammad) scoring 5/7 to qualify for the highly prestigious Challengers in September!



Shropshire Online Junior Grand Prix

The 2025 Shropshire Online Junior Grand Prix was a dog fight between Muhammad and Krish. It was winner takes all in the final event where Muhammad put in a statement performance, doubling Krish's score over the 12-hour arena to claim top prize.



Other Tournaments

Shropshire's juniors continued their run of success across different tournaments.

To name but a few:

- Muhammad Qadri - U14 Supremo in Liverpool Megafinal
- Arthur Wright and Rudi Bedford – 3rd place in Wrexham Junior Rapidplay
- Muhammad Qadri – 1st place in the Newport Open Blitz
- Connor Oswin – 1st place in the Secondary School Challengers Individual (6/6)
- Krish Thimmegowda, Waylon Chan and Muhammad Qadri – 1st place in the Staffordshire EJCOA Qualifier
- Aditya Poluru – 1st place Birmingham Rapidplay (7/7)
- Ryan Acton – 2nd place Birmingham Junior Open
- Aryan Punj – 1st place Birmingham Junior Open (5/5)
- Joey Green – Shropshire Minor Blitz Championship
- Muhammad Qadri – Shropshire Open Rapidplay Champion

Shropshire Congress

The estate of Ray Cox donated a new trophy for the top performing junior at the Shropshire Congress. Krish, Malcolm and Aditya were all joint winners in their sections with 4.5/5pts. The trophy was won by Aditya on tiebreak.



League Chess

Congratulations to Darwinian Juniors who were the Shropshire Division 3 Champions!



5 junior teams competed in the leagues this year with Newport Junior A now a force to be reckoned with in division 1.

Rating

All the top juniors have seen stratospheric rating rises in the past year. Krish became the first every Shropshire junior to breach 2000 rating in standardplay whilst Muhammad achieved the same feat in rapidplay. The challenge now as every player knows is to maintain that rating.

Top 10 Shropshire Juniors July 2027

STANDARDPLAY			RAPIDPLAY			Blitz		
#	PLAYER	RATING	#	PLAYER	RATING	#	PLAYER	RATING
1	Krish Thimmegowda	1987	1	Muhammad Qadri	1985	1	Malcolm Fletcher	1939
2	Muhammad Qadri	1892	2	Waylon Chan	1914	2	Krish Thimmegowda	1875
3	Waylon Chan	1887	3	Krish Thimmegowda	1865	3	Waylon Chan	1834
4	Rudi Bedford	1787	4	Aditya Poluru	1755	4	Muhammad Qadri	1815
5	Malcolm Fletcher	1768	5	Rudi Bedford	1693	5	Rudi Bedford	1758
6	Aditya Poluru	1657	6	Rhys Macmillan	1582	6	Daniel Tumanyan	1634
7	Rhys Macmillan	1577	7	Alex Loe	1533	7	Aditya Poluru	1563
8	Daniel Tumanyan	1547	8	Ellis Sharp	1489	8	Gabriel Tumanyan	1563
9	Ellis Sharp	1531	9	Daniel Tumanyan	1487	9	Alex Loe	1527
10	Alex Loe	1483	10	Malcolm Fletcher	1443	10	Ellick Spiers	1462

* active players only

School Engagements

The Association continues to supply sets into local schools with sets and clocks supplied to Birchfield, Shrewsbury College and Ellesmere College this year.

We also have more CSC tutors than ever. Glyn has been tutoring classes at St Mary's whilst Steve Rooney is tutoring at St Georges. Paul Billington will hopefully join them soon when we can find him a school.





International Chess

6 of our juniors were invited to represent the England Midlands team against Wales. Prasanna, Rudi and Rhys all scored maximum points.

Primary School Championships

The Primary School Championships were held throughout the year where schools competed in teams of 4. We ran 4 zonals across the county followed by a final on Live Boards. Congratulations to St Mary's who, with an assist from Glyn's coaching, consistently showed they were the strongest team to sweep the competition. They get to keep the Alan Shaw Trophy for a year.





For the first time we also held an U9 Championship and a Girls Championships. Broseley U9's came out on top in the U9's winning every match.



In the girls championships St Laurence (Ludlow) were a very strong team and also won every match.



Secondary School Championships

Haberdasher's Adams are the unrivalled champions of Shropshire Secondary Schools Chess, with their top team undefeated within Shropshire. They once again achieved a perfect score at the Shropshire secondary school championships.



To encourage other schools we also ran an U1100 Secondary School Challengers event. This ended up as a 2-way match between Telford College and Shrewsbury College with Telford (captained by Connor) triumphing in a very close and enjoyable event.



ECF School Events

Shropshire hosted numerous ECF school qualifiers this year which give schools the opportunity to qualify for the national school finals.

The Primary School qualifier was won by St Mary's school although Broseley who finished 2nd were also invited to Nottingham.



A whopping 20 teams competed in the Shropshire Junior and Senior Team Chess Challenge Qualifiers (Rapidplay). Adams finished first in both sections to qualify for the national finals.



Haberdashers' Adams and Ellesmere College both qualified for the regional knockout stage of the English Schools Chess Championships (Standardplay) at the qualifiers held at Ellesmere.



Ellesmere were knocked out by Calday Grange who then played against Adams in the regional finals in one of the tensest matches I've ever been involved with. After playing some of their worst ever chess the Adams team clung on to win the match 5-1 and qualify for the 2-day finals in Nottingham.



In the English School Championships National Finals the competition was unbelievably fierce with more 2000+ rated players represented their schools than you would find in almost any other open tournament I can think of. The team performed well to finish as the 15th top school in the country.



In the team chess challenge the school did even better, finishing 3rd in the whole country! They will be even stronger next year and will be looking to compete for a national title.

Conclusion

It was another exciting year for Shropshire Junior Chess. We are hosting more events than ever before, especially in schools, and our junior players are getting stronger and stronger. The one thing we are short of is one-to-one coaches in the county and so if you are interested please make yourselves know.

Next year we will be looking to top this year with hopefully more county teams fielded and another push to win the National Schools Competition and the Shropshire Leagues.

Thank you to everyone who continues to support Junior Chess in the county.

Report prepared by:

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Head of Shropshire Junior Chess