

Shropshire Chess Association

2026 Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 29th July 2026 – Telford Chess Club, Dawley, Telford



Minutes

Present — Matthew Clark, Tony Preece, Chris Lewis, Paul Billington, Paula Sharp, Richard Szwajkun, Steve Szwajkun, Phil Zabrocki, Dan Hilditch-Love, Toby Neal, Roger Brown, Glyn Pugh, Munroe Morrison, Richard Thompson, Connor Oswin

Agenda

- 1. Apologies** – Adrian Bailey, Nick Rutter, Gary White, Kate Walker, Phil Love
- 2. Minutes of the 2025 AGM** – Agreed as true record of that meeting.
- 3. Presidents Report** – Matthew Clark. Report to follow.

President's Report 2026

Welcome again everyone and I want to congratulate you all on another very successful year for Shropshire Chess. Dan will do the main report on the Leagues, but I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the League Winners. Newport A were well ahead in Division 1, but the rest of the League was very competitive. I also congratulate Newport Juniors for an impressive result of 3rd place. Church

Stretton were clear winners in Division 2. The most competitive division was Division 3 and the Champions in this Division were Darwinian Knights Juniors by the narrowest of margins. Well done to the champions and to everyone who played in the Classical Leagues.

Rapid Play Division 1 was very competitive. Many congratulations to Newport A for winning this competition and to Telepost A for a strong second place. Many Thanks to Dan and Chris for all their hard work organising these competitions so efficiently.

Last year I was delighted to report that Paul Billington had been nominated for the national ECF Award for his contribution to Accessible Chess. I am delighted to report that Paul won this award and that his work with Quiet Chess clubs goes from strength to strength. At least 70 players have benefited from the Quiet Chess programme and it is regarded as a model of excellence to develop Chess inclusion at national level.

The Shropshire Chess Congress was very successful again despite challenging weather conditions. Phil and Chris will report on this in detail. Many thanks to them and their team for all their hard work.

One innovation this year was the Rapid and Blitz Championships. Chris will report on these events in detail. Many Thanks to him for organising these events and congratulations to Muhammed and Dan for their achievement in becoming our first Rapid and Blitz Champions.

2025/2026 was another busy year for Shropshire Juniors. Chris will report on all the Juniors successes later in the evening. I do want to thank him and his team for all the hard work that makes these events possible.

I also want to congratulate Nick Rutter for his achievement in regaining his title as County Champion and to thank him for all his hard work as grading officer. I am sure that we all enjoy checking our ratings month by month and that we are all grateful to Nick for his meticulous work that makes this possible.

I want to finish by thanking all our volunteers and officials. Our programme continues to grow from strength to strength and we are recognized as one of the most successful county associations. I look forward to another successful season for the Shropshire Chess Association in 2026/2007.

Matthew Clark
Shropshire Chess Association President

4. Other Officers Reports – including trophy presentation

a. League Controller – Dan Hilditch-Love. Trophies were presented.

Division 1 – Newport A

Division 2 – Church Stretton A

Division 3 – Darwinian Knights Juniors

b. Rapidplay League Controller – Chris Lewis. (Full report – see **appendix A**).

Division 1 – Newport A

Division 2 – Telford B

Special round of applause to Glyn who played all 21 games.

c. County Individual – 1st Nick Rutter, 2nd Chris Lewis & Rudy van Kemenade

d. Minor County Individual – Dan Hilditch-Love – competition still going on.

e. Cox & Minor Trophies – Dan Hilditch-Love – competition still ongoing

f. Summer Quickplay – Connor Oswin (Acting) – Will be held on the 13th Sept at the Maddocks Club.

g. Congress Organiser – Chris Lewis & Phil Love – (Full report – see **appendix B**). Next years competition will be held on 1st-3rd Jan.

h. Rapid & Blitz Championship – Chris Lewis (Acting) – (Full report – see **appendix C**).

i. Head Of Junior Chess – Chris Lewis – link to full report [here](#). Round of applause for Rob Green and Sanjeev Punj and everyone else who supports Junior Chess. Round of applause for Chris for all the hard work he puts in.

j. Inclusion – Paul Billington. Quiet Chess allows people lacking social skills to access standard chess. Numbers fluctuated over the year but averaged 40 people over 12 months. Inclusive chess improves socialisation. The ECF has donated new electronic chess boards which help people learn how to play and other areas of the country are reaching out for help in setting up inclusive chess. Congratulations to Paul for winning the ECF Accessible Chess Award. Read Paul's full awards citation [here](#).

k. Head of Women's Chess – Kate Walker & Paula Sharp. Recently supported with the Primary School girl's championships and they will continue to seek opportunities to promote women's chess.

l. Community Events Officer – Nicole Heys. Telford & Wrekin Councillors Pride Fund have provided funding which was used to purchase a gazebo, table and chairs.

m. Best Game Prize – Toby Neal. Closing date the 31st July. Judging in process.

n. Live Boards Controller – Phil Love

o. Treasurer Report – Chris Lewis. (Full report - see **Appendix D**). Proposal passed to increase team fees from £18 to £20 proposed by Chris and seconded by Tony Preece. Link to financial statements [here](#).

p. Auditor – accounts have been signed off by Richard Thompson. Deputy Luke Bedford. Agreed by trustees. Accounts agreed by attendees and a round applause given to Chris for all his hard work.

- q. **Safeguarding Officer** – Steve Sz wajkun – nothing to report and safeguarding policy has been recently reviewed
- r. **Publicity Officer** – Peter Kitchen
- s. **Rating Officer** – Nick Rutter
- t. **Website Editor** – Nico Picchio. Vinnie has been doing good work behind the scenes, successfully migrating us to a new server.
- u. **MCCU Delegates** – nothing to report
- v. **ECF Delegate** – Chris Lewis. Reports previously made available on website

5. **Election of Officers** – current incumbents proposed by Richard Sz wajkun and seconded by Munroe Morrison. Ray Sayers was appointed minor and cox knockout controller. Connor Oswin was appointed to controller of summer quickplay.

Outstanding vacancies:

- Rapidplay & Blitz Tournament Organiser
- Head of Senior Chess –
- Head of Beginners Chess –
- Outreach Committee Chair -
- County Team Captains – U1450, U1650, U1850 and Open
- Publicity Officer –
- Sponsorship Officer -
- 2nd Live Board Controller -

6. Proposals

A) Amend Rule 9c to change defined Junior Age – proposed by Glyn Pugh

Although letting juniors play at home is a nice idea - I propose that the rule is amended to junior team with under 14's.

9c. A Junior is anyone under the age of 14 on September 1st of the new season.

Below are the reasons

- Many clubs cannot field a complete junior side (maybe one or two players) and are being punished into playing extra away matches.
- New members we get are discouraged from playing as we get the 'not another away fixture syndrome'.
- The initial set of fixtures had clubs playing 3 or more fixtures away in a row
- Players availability is a lot better for home matches so it could be argued that there is a bias towards the juniors.

Discussion regarding how this would affect juniors e.g late nights on school days, distance to travel, whether a venue could be chosen halfway, safeguarding issues of providing lifts to juniors

For 1, Against 11, Abstentions 7 – proposal defeated.

B) Amendment of Rule 6 (unrated players) – proposed by Richard Szwajkun

Rule 6 currently states that:

6. For the purposes of rule 8 (reserves) and 12 (board orders) if a player is currently unrated but had a rating in the previous 10 years, that last known rating is to be used provisionally until a new rating is obtained. If the player has no rating history or only a provisional “P” rating they have maximum flexibility subject to the league controller’s approval. Once an unrated player obtains a “K” or “A” rating then that player must use either the latest rating list published on the ECF rating database as at the date of the match or, if/when that player obtains an August “K” or “A” rating, the published August rating at the start of the season. The rules as currently written discourage the return of new players and should be loosened.

Option A

Introduce an option to use a players P rating for board order. Once an unrated player obtains a “P”, “K” or “A” rating then that player must use either the latest rating list published on the ECF rating database as at the date of the match or, if/when that player obtains an August “K” or “A” rating, the published August rating at the start of the season.

Option B

Reduce 10 years to 5 years. For the purposes of rule 8 (reserves) and 12 (board orders) if a player is currently unrated but had a rating in the previous 5 years, for their first game that last known rating is to be used provisionally.

Amendment – proposed by Roger – if a player is currently unrated but had a rating in the previous 5 years, that last known rating is to be used provisionally until a new rating is obtained. If between 5 and 10 years the rating must be reduced by 75 points.

For 12, Against 2, Abstentions 5 – amended proposal passed.

C) Clarification to Rule 6 (unrated players) – proposed by Christopher Lewis

Clarification proposed following a query during the season regarding eligibility. This amendment makes clear that the requirement to use K or A rating once obtained only applies to board order. It doesn’t apply to reserve status which rule 8 states are based on August ratings at the start of the season.

6. For the purposes of rule 8 and 12 if a player is currently unrated but had a rating in the previous 10 years, that last known rating is to be used provisionally until a new rating is obtained. If the player has no rating history or only a provisional “P” rating they have maximum flexibility subject to the league controller’s approval. Once an unrated player obtains a “K” or “A” rating then for rule 12 that player must use either the latest rating list published on the ECF rating database as at the date of the match or, if/when that player obtains an August “K” or “A” rating, the published August rating at the start of the season. That player will still maintain maximum flexibility under rule 8 subject to the league controller’s approval.

Proposal was withdrawn.

D) Remove Rule 17 (winter breaks) – proposed by Christopher Lewis

This rule was experimented with in its first season but the fixtures were too congested to implement it.

17. Any team may elect at the start of the season to have a 'winter break'. Elections must be notified to the league controller prior to the release of the fixtures. The nature and duration of the winter break will be at the discretion of the league controller.

For – unanimous.

E) Amend Rule 2 (rules and disputes committee) – proposed by Christopher Lewis

The league rules strictly define a Rules and Disputes Committee to adjudicate disputes when in practise this committee is formed of various impartial players.

Appeals against the league controller's decisions will be referred to "a Rules and Disputes Committee, consisting of the President, the General Secretary, the Treasurer and one other."

Replace with:

Appeals against the league controllers' decisions will be referred to a "Rules and Disputes Committee" formed by the general secretary.

For – unanimous.

F) Remove Rule 23 (Draw claims under 2 minutes) – proposed by Christopher Lewis

23. Where games are played as in Article 10, a player may claim a draw when he has less than two minutes left on his clock and before his flag falls. This concludes the game. He may claim on the basis a) that his opponent cannot win by normal means, and/or b) that his opponent has been making no effort to win by normal means.

In (a) the player must write down the final position and his opponent verify it.

In (b) the player must write down the final position and submit an up – to – date scoresheet, which must be completed before play has ceased.

The opponent shall verify both the scoresheet and the final position.

The claim shall be referred to an arbiter whose decision shall be the final one.

A player cannot claim a draw if incremental time controls are being used.

This rule is archaic and unnecessary. All matches are played with increments and even if not, this rule forms part of the official FIDE rules anyway and so there is no requirement for it to form part of Shropshire's rules.

For – unanimous.

G) Amend Rule 3 to remove reference to Council – Proposed by Christopher Lewis

Remove reference to Council from rule 3 to reflect current practise where the league controller has the power to balance divisions. Any player can petition for a council meeting for controversial changes.

3. It is the responsibility of the League Controller to decide which and how many teams shall play in each division (subject to the agreement of the Council), and to publish a fixture list before the start of each season.

For – unanimous.

H) Define Council – proposed by Christopher Lewis

In the General Rules governing all Shropshire Competitions I propose adding a new rule 8:

8) Council

Meetings of Council may be convened by the President as required. The Council shall comprise the Association's officers and the General Secretaries (or nominated representatives) of all affiliated clubs. The purpose of Council shall be to provide a forum for consultation and discussion between the Association and its affiliated clubs on relevant matters. The Council shall have no authority to amend the league rules or the rules of the Association.

Discussion regarding the history and tradition of the council. It has been used and can be very valuable.

For – 14, Against - 1

10. Update on County Individual 100-year Anniversary

Invites have been sent to previous winners.

Need to make sure that getting to the venue is not a barrier to attending.

Games will be videoed complete with commentary.

An arbiter is needed so Chris can play as one of the previous winners.

Vote of thanks for Chris for his work in putting this together.

11. AOB

Drake Prison (women's prison near Eccleshall) looking for a chess tutor.

Congratulations to Carl Portman on MBE.

It was suggested use of AI to produce fixture list to reduce Dan's workload.

Meeting closed at 9.59pm.

Appendix A – Report of Rapidplay League Controller

Rapidplay League 2025/26

The 2025/26 season again ran exceptionally smoothly with no disputes requiring intervention from the League Controller. There were a disappointing number of defaults, especially when Division 1 teams were away at Oswestry. My hope is that this does not become a pattern.

Division 2:

TEAMS	PLAYED	WON	DRAWN	LOST	FOR	AGAINST	POINTS
Telford B	15	9	1	5	37.5	22.5	19
Darwinian Knights B	15	9	1	5	33	27	19
Newport B	15	9	1	5	33	27	19
Darwinian Knights C	15	7	2	6	34	26	16
Shrewsbury B	15	6	1	8	30.5	29.5	13
Telford C	15	1	2	12	12	48	4

Division 2 produced one of the closest finishes in recent memory, with three teams ending the season level on 19 match points.

Darwinian Knights B entered the final round in pole position, but their title hopes took an unexpected blow in the very first match as they suffered a shock 4-0 defeat to their own junior team, throwing the championship race wide open. They then stumbled again against fellow challengers Newport B, opening the door for both Newport and Telford B.

Newport B kept themselves firmly in contention by defeating both Darwinian Knights B and Telford B, only to see their own challenge unravel with a heavy 4-0 defeat to Shrewsbury B. Telford B, meanwhile, bounced back from their loss to Newport by overcoming Shrewsbury B.

When the dust settled, Telford B, Darwinian Knights B and Newport B all finished level on 19 points. The title therefore came down to game points, where Telford B emerged as convincing winners, successfully defending the Division 2 championship they won last season.

Telford B's driving force was Board 1 Richard Szwajkun, who scored 10½ points from 12 games (88%).

Division 1:

Division 1 was equally entertaining throughout the season.

TEAMS	PLAYED	WON	DRAWN	LOST	FOR	AGAINST	POINTS
Newport A	21	16	3	2	64	20	35
Telepost A	21	13	5	3	58	26	31
Oswestry A	21	13	1	7	47	37	27
Maddocks A	21	11	3	7	49.5	34.5	25
Shrewsbury A	21	7	6	8	41	43	20
Telford A	21	5	4	12	29	55	11
Darwinian Knights A	21	4	3	14	26.5	53.5	8
Maddocks B	21	0	5	16	17	63	2

We were delighted to welcome Oswestry A to the league for the first time. Their arrival increased the division to eight teams, meaning seven fixture nights. While the additional club is a very positive sign for the league, the increased number of fixtures perhaps suggests it is time to consider introducing a Division 3 to keep the season at a more manageable length.

Newport A set the early pace and ultimately lost only two matches all season—both to Telepost. Telepost arguably fielded the strongest team in the division but proved vulnerable whenever one of their leading players was unavailable. Meanwhile Newport has deep reserves of talented juniors who can step up whenever called upon. These juniors all had phenomenal performances with Muhammad scoring 13/15 (87%), Waylon scoring 8/9 (90%) and Aditya scoring 5.5/6 (92%) with their performances instrumental in Newport securing the title. Newport adults performed far less well.

Telepost finished as comfortable runners-up (special shout-out to Nigel who scored 19/20), with Oswestry A rounding off their debut season by finishing third.

Finally, a statistic that deserves special recognition: only one player appeared in all 21 league matches this season. Any guesses who?

Glyn Pugh. A fantastic commitment to league chess. (Nigel and Chris played 20 games)

Congratulations to our 2025/26 league champions:

- **Division 1:** Newport A
- **Division 2:** Telford B

Appendix B – Report of Shropshire Chess Congress Directors

Shropshire Chess Congress 2026

For the second year in a row the weather loomed large over the Shropshire Chess Congress. This year it was Storm Goretti which hit with a deluge of snow ❄️ on the Thursday evening. Luckily there was no further snow forecast and so once this snow was cleared by the wonderful Wrekin grounds team, an email was sent to all entrants informing them that the roads were clear enough to arrive. The organisers would have loved to focus on the chess but alas they instead spent the whole weekend performing dynamic risk assessments of the car park which became progressively more dangerous throughout the event as the snow melted during the day and then froze in the evening turning into sheets of ice, ready to catch that unsuspecting chess player who is concentrating more on their latest loss rather than the treacherous ground. We did have a number of players pull out and so at 159 entrants we couldn't quite match our record entries from last year. An enormous shout-out must go to the Tumanyan family 🙏 at this point. On both Saturday and Sunday, Georgi, Daniel and Gabriel assisted Chris in gritting the paths at 7am so that players could safely arrive. The tournament simply would not have happened without them and so thank you so much!

You would have thought the main complaint from players in icy weather conditions is that they are too cold. Not so at Wrekin! The complaint was that the top floor was like a sauna. When the building manager came to adjust the temperature he confirmed the mad way the building works meant it was 27 degrees upstairs 🥵! Luckily through some skillful tweaking of the air con (turning it strategically off and on again throughout the weekend) we were able to create some more pleasant playing conditions.

Now onto the chess ♟️! Most sections were absolutely dominated by Shropshire's juniors. The Minor (U1500) section was jointly won by 🏆 Aditya Poluru aged 11 (Newport) who scored 4.5pts. Daniel Tumanyan (Darwinian) finished 3rd on 4 points, also picking up the U1440 rating prize.

The Inter (U1700) was won by another Shropshire Junior. 🏆 Malcolm Fletcher (Newport) shared 1st place with 3 others including 🏆 Paul Sadler (Oswestry), both finishing undefeated on 4pts.

There was a fierce rivalry in the major (U1900) section between Shropshire's 2 top juniors - Krishnaswaroop Thimmegowda and Muhammad Qadri. Both met in the 3rd round and drew with each in a truly explosive 💣 match that is a contender for game of the season.

<https://lichess.org/.../2026.../round-3/zu6LKY6Y/J3QTms5h>

Muhammad then dropped another half point leaving the field clear for 🏆 Krish to win all his remaining rounds and score 4.5pts, tying for first place with 🏆 Ethan Parker (Darwinian). Ethan picked up the U1815 rating prize whilst another junior playing in a major section for the first time, Rudi Bedford (Darwinian), scored 3/5 and shared the U1755 prize.

Shropshire was not so well represented in the open which was won by 🏆 John Potter (Derbyshire) who scored a perfect 5/5. Bob Clark (Oswestry) was our strongest performing player in the open scoring 3/5 and picking up the U2005 rating prize.

New this year was the introduction of the Ray Cox Trophy. Ray was a Shropshire and Junior Chess Champion on several occasions in the 50's and his will recently left Shropshire Chess funding to purchase a trophy which the trustees decided would be awarded to the highest scoring junior in the Shropshire Congress. With 3 juniors scoring 4.5/5 🧑 it went to bucholz tiebreak and so congratulation 🏆 Aditya for winning it in its inaugural year.

One further prize was the best performing female prize which went to Scarlett Rozman (Leeds Uni) who outperformed her rating by 158 points.

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The full list of prizewinners are:

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OPEN

1st= John Potter 5/5

2nd Tomasz Sygnowski 4/5

3rd= Shabir Okhai, Patrick Joseph 3.5/5

U2070 Rating prize Patrick Joseph 3.5/5

U2005 Rating prize Alexander Iskauskas, Robert Clark, Sam Jukes, Obi Okwose 3/5

U1920 Rating prize Arjun Pyda 2.5/5

Top Shropshire League player in Open – Robert Clark 3/5

MAJOR

1st Ethan Parker, Krishnaswaroop Thimmegowda 4.5/5

3rd= Muhamamd Qadri, Ben Graff 4/5

U1815 Rating prize Ethan Parker 4.5/5

U1755 Rating prize Ved Sudeep Boganadham, Rudi Bedford 3/5

U1690 Rating prize Filippo Montanelli 3.5/5

INTERMEDIATE

1st= John Roche, Mohammed Andeel, Malcolm Fletcher, Paul Sadler 4/5

U1630 Rating prize Scarlett Rozman 3.5/5

U1580 Rating prize Alexander Ursu 3.5/5

U1530 Rating prize Daniel Jones 3.5/5

MINOR

1st Mohanaditya Poluru, Ben Plimley 4.5/5

3rd= Daniel Tumanyan, Carlos Williams 4/5

U1440 Rating prize Daniel Tumanyan 4/5

U1370 Rating prize Simon Humphries 3.5/5

U1290 Rating prize Blessings Chalemba 3.5/5

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BEST PERFORMING FEMALE

Scarlett Rozman $((1685+1635+1635+1580)+(400*(2-1)))/5 - 1576 = 158$ performance rating

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BEST PERFORMING SHROPSHIRE JUNIOR (winner of Ray Cox Trophy)

Aditya Poluru 4.5/5

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ALL RESULTS

<https://s3.chess-results.com/tnr1326740.aspx?lan=1&art=1...>

The congress was also a financial success earning a surplus of £1,038. It would have been higher if the snow warning weren't quite so apocalyptic.

Thank you to the team who helped make the event possible. The arbiters Dan Hilditch-Love and Peter Purland, Howard from Chess Essentials and his friend Michael, Laura Hilditch on the door, and the setup team that included Paul Billington, Nicole, Henry and Izzy Heys, Paula & Ellis Sharp, and the Tumanyan's. Lastly thank you to The Wrekin Housing Group for hosting us once again and their amazing catering team who kept us well fed throughout the weekend. Apologies if we missed anyone! Thanks also to Rudy for annotating all the games.

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We're really pleased to confirm the refurbishment threat that has loomed over the venue for a number of years has finally been removed. The top floor has been refurbished... into a perfect playing venue complete with ideal tables and chairs. We can therefore announce the dates of the 2027 congress which will be held Friday 1st – Sunday 3rd January.

Appendix C – Report from Rapid & Blitz Championship

Shropshire Rapid & Blitz Championships 2025-26

The inaugural Shropshire Rapid & Blitz Championships couldn't have been more exciting. It was very much a clash of generations as Shropshire's most experienced players faced stiff competition from our ever-expanding pool of talented juniors.

We didn't get the entry numbers we were hoping for with only 32 entries in the rapid and 26 in the blitz. The event made a loss as a result but this really didn't matter. It was one of the most awesome events I've ran.

In the rapidplay championships the tournament was so close that we were treated to 4 tiebreak games and 2 armageddons as we attempted to break the deadlock.

After 6 gruelling rounds Nick, Krish and Muhammad pulled away from the chasing pack to play a series of tiebreaks. Nick was knocked out in the semi's leaving the final between Krish and Muhammad. Both juniors took 1 game each forcing an Armageddon tiebreak. Krish bid below 3 minutes to take the black pieces. Muhammad as white got a pleasant position with lots of space and open lines. He then sacrificed his d pawn to open up his bishop. Without thinking Krish took it and then nearly fell out of his chair when Muhammad's queen swooped in to take g7 and checkmated Krish's king 🤖 .

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In the minor rapidplay it was close throughout going down to the final round. Nico Picchio of Newport Chess Club pounced on a blunder by his opponent to win a whole queen. On top board Harrison Whitehouse needed a win to tie with Nico's score but he fell short against fellow junior Henry Bedford.

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Sunday was the chaos of 11 rounds of blitz. With heads already scrambled from the day before there was still some impressive games. In the open the crucial match took place in round 8 when Dan Hilditch-Love faced Muhammad on board 1. Muhammad took a poisoned pawn on b2 and this allowed Dan to treble on the B file and crash through to win an extremely well-played and dominant game. Once in the lead, he never relinquished it although he nearly up slipped in the last round, blundering his queen but winning on time.

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In the minor it was an emotional roller coaster for some. Building up a 1.5pt cushion 11-year old Joey Green looked set for victory. However after 2 defeats in rounds 9 and 10 he fell half a point behind Harrison. In the final game Harrison completely outplayed Steve but disastrously lost on time potentially costing him the title. Chess can be so cruel. Joey then had to defeat Paula to take the honours which he did with a sneaky discovered attack and a clean conversion. This

result meant Joey was crowned Minor Blitz Champion. Harrison came 2nd and Arthur (age 9) finished 3rd.

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The final results were:

OPEN – RAPIDPLAY

1st Muhammad Qadri

2nd Krishnaswaroop Thimmegowda

3rd Nick Rutter

OPEN – BLITZ

1st Dan Hilditch-Love

2nd Ethan Parker

3rd Muhamamd Qadri

MINOR – RAPIDPLAY

1st Nico Picchio

2nd Henry Bedford

3rd Henry Heys

MINOR – BLITZ

1st Joey Green

2nd Harrison Whitehouse

3rd Arthur Wright

I am planning a championship for 2026/27 but with Connor resurrecting the summer team blitz I'm looking at moving this event later in the calendar.

Appendix D - Treasurer's Report 2025-26

Profit and Loss

Despite some challengers and missed opportunities we finished the year with a surplus of £1,062.50, more than double last year's surplus although there was some financial trickery behind this with large write-down of stock last year. If we break our activities down into the different revenue streams:

- The league administration made a surplus of £77. The league fees were increased from £13 to £18 and although we had 2 less teams our income grew from £455 to £666. This increase was necessary to meet the growing overhead costs of the association.
- Individual entries were down by 3 last year but the individuals still broke even.
- Paul's quiet chess club held a number of open days and incurred some expenses. At the start of the year Paul was awarded the ECF contribution to Accessible Chess award and as part of this the association received £250 from the ECF.
- Women's chess has been very quiet this year but that's because one of female leads was busy getting married!
- Activity in Community Events have also been disappointing with the lead having to take a step back. We incurred some expenses at the Telford Balloon Fiesta. Nicole did do a fantastic job of securing the Association £2,290 in Telford and Wrekin Councillors Pride Grant funding. This grant allowed us to purchase a branded gazebo and outdoor table and chairs so we can better represent ourselves at future events.
- Junior chess activities (excluding the tournaments) made a small loss of £261. Most of the income is from our Junior Chess Club subs and this funds both the running costs and our junior county teams.
- The junior tournaments reported in the accounts are the 2025 megafinal, the 2026 megafinal (both just falling within the same financial year) and the 2026 junior chess championships. The Megafinals are very difficult to break-even but we had some sponsorship in 2025 and overall they made a small surplus of £100
- The Junior Championships is our flagship junior event. This year we received sponsorship of £500 from the Housing Plus Group which meant overall the championships made a surplus of £912. This surplus was used to fund the school competitions.
- Last year's school events were wholly funded by donations. This year the treasurer has been so busy at work that he couldn't find time to seek any. As a result the school tournaments were unfunded and £682 was spent on medals and trophies. The treasurer hopes that is work has settled down now freeing up some evenings to seek sponsorship again next year.
- Despite entries taking a hit from the snow The Shropshire Congress generated a surplus of £1,038, down from the £1,589 we made last year.
- The Shropshire Rapid & Blitz Championships was a new tournament this year. Mistakes were made when budgeting it with half the prize fund not budgeted, and entries numbers were much lower than anticipated. Nonetheless venue costs were extremely low and the championships only made a small loss of £209.
- The association continues to provide subsidised equipment to local schools and community groups. The equipment was purchased at a 20% discount and then is sold at half price or in certain cases donated for free. ECF grassroots grant funding of £1,569 has also been received for this project. To date the association has supplied 126 sets and 24 clocks to local schools and clubs. Our supplies to local schools have noticeably slowed down this year suggesting we have saturated the market, and so the trustees have recently offered some of

the equipment to clubs at a discount. As all the equipment was written down in the prior year the sales income shows as a profit in the accounts of £225.

- The association has a few other sources of income including the hire of its live boards to the British Championships for £182, along with £74 of new funding raised from the Twinkl lottery (another of Nicole's initiatives). The Association received a donation of £200 from the Ray Cox Estate to purchase the Congress Junior Trophy.
- Our overheads fell this year driven by a fall in the cost of our insurance and reduction in printing costs.

Balance Sheet

- The accounting value of our fixed assets increased from £1,350 to £2,943, a 7-fold increase in just 2 years. Purchases in the year included £1,634 on the new gazebo, and £200 on a new trophy for the congress (funded by Ray Cox's estate) and £223 on the secondary school championships trophy.
- The Association continues to hold substantial stock including the school equipment and medals and trophies to be given as prizes in future junior events.
- At the end of the season the association was owed £89 in contributions from other countries for the recent junior championships and £22 owed by the treasurer. All of these debts are now cleared.
- The prepayment figure reflects costs paid in advance for website and insurance.
- At the end of the year the association owed £588 to various creditors including prizes for the individuals and some small expenses.
- The Association has a liability of £2,290 for deferred government grant. This grant must be spent in the next 6 months otherwise is repayable. £1,634 has now been spend on the Gazebo with further purchases planned over the summer.
- Our bank balance at the end of the year was £5,360 although £1,050 is committed to spend on community equipment. Our minimum reserves are £3,000 and the trustees have recently agreed the excess of £1,311 would fund the replacement division 3 trophy, trophies for next years rapid & blitz championship, a trophy for the girls primary school championships and £200 prize for the champion of champions tournament to be held in October.

Budget

Earlier this month the trustees met and agreed the annual budget for the association. The minutes of that meeting and the budget will be available to view online.

Key changes to the budget this year include:

- New equipment insurance taking advantage of the ECF insurance package for clubs and associations
- A budget for the champion of champions tournament
- Increase budget for the junior country teams
- New budgets for additional school tournaments, funded by sponsorship
- Reduction in the congress venue hire budget as Wrekin is now a secure venue
- Reduced Rapid & Blitz Championship prize funds and higher entry fees to ensure the event breaks even
- New income budgets for hire of Shropshire equipment and donation of arbiter fees.
- Increased depreciation budgets reflecting the recent purchase of community events equipment and junior trophies

Overall the budget has been set to break even with £15,000 of income projected next year. With the venue for the congress secure next year it is anticipated we will again make a

strong surplus (prudently budgeted) which can cover other activities if sponsorship is not obtained. The hope is that more sponsorship will be secured this year.

League Fees

The trustees are proposing an increase in league fees to raise an additional £100 which is required to purchase equipment insurance. If the number of teams stay the same the fee per team would rise to £20.

Proposal – Set team fees to raise £750 in income