

## YCA Secretary for Junior Chess

### Report for AGM 2019

One of the responsibilities of Junior Secretary is to enter an U16 team to represent Yorkshire in the Pennine Cup. This was duly done, and we came second to Northumberland, which sounds like a great result until you realise that there were only two teams competing. Thanks to Tim Wall who organised this tournament, but even if we'd won, we wouldn't have received the trophy because, funnily enough, he'd forgotten to bring it along.

In my capacity as Junior Secretary I was asked at last year's AGM to decide which junior player got the £100 prize for the best performance by a Yorkshire based junior player at the British Championships in Hull 2018.

I awarded this to Rumethma Thennakoon (from Alwoodley) in the U12 category. Her grade was 1023 at the time, and although we have many juniors who are stronger than her, I made my decision based on performance *relative to one's grade*, rather than what position was achieved or trophies won. According to grade she was 38<sup>th</sup> out of 38 in her section, with the next lowest grade being almost 100 points above her. In the final cross-table she got 3 points out of 7, came 27<sup>th</sup>, and achieved a performance rating score of 1461. That ability to 'punch above her weight' impressed me enough to award her the prize.

In my report at last year's AGM I thought it might be a good idea to contact other junior organisers throughout Yorkshire to gauge interest in a meeting to share good practice and discuss future plans for junior chess in Yorkshire. I've since decided that this may not be the best way to go.

#### REASONS:

- i) Crowded calendar/hard to fit in.
- ii) How to finance it.
- iii) Each (GRAND PRIX, CSC, WRJJA, YJCL) already seems to work well in their own area.
- iv) I'm sceptical of the benefit of unifying links between them, apart from advertising their existence and events to juniors unaware of what's 'on'.
- v) Promotion of junior chess may profit more from the revival of inter-schools (primary and/or secondary) team competitions. This would improve ties between otherwise isolated pockets of junior players who are confined to playing chess within their own school, and not in a team. And it would also give YCA an opportunity to advertise to schools the wide range of junior events happening throughout the year in Yorkshire in all these organisations.

I would like to trial an inter-school competition for York Primary Schools. A one-day competition for teams of four (for example). If this is a success, then perhaps we could broaden it to become the Yorkshire Primary Schools Chess Championship event.

Noel Stewart