



EDINBURGH CHESS CLUB - JUNIORS



17th February 2012

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We thought it would be useful to give you an update on the activities the children have been working on since the juniors' evenings started in October and also give you news of the developments we are planning moving forward.

Thanks to the coaches

At the outset, thanks are due to Mark Sanderson who, with the support of Edinburgh Chess Club, had the imagination to establish the group in the first place and who has been tireless in his enthusiasm and support for the children and parents alike.

Thanks are also due to ECC members – David Robertson, Stephen Balmer, Clement Sreeves, Sebastian Gattenloehner, Neil Berry, Bill Platts, John Smith and Andrew Green who, like Mark, have given up their free time to coach and support the children.

The sessions so far

There have been 14 sessions, which have all been well attended. Indeed, our group has grown to the stage where we are now at full capacity. Sessions have involved a mixture of formal training, puzzles and problem solving as well as playing games and a mini-tournament just before Christmas. For the chess players amongst you the technical training has covered opening moves and strategy, forks, pins, discovered attacks, the end game and notation.

The juniors' evening currently has ages ranging from 5 to 12 with children's experience ranging from beginner to those who have been playing for over a year. This age range and diversity in experience has meant pitching the classes at the right level has been challenging – more on that below.

Support from and for parents

Thank you to all the parents who have volunteered to be trained up by Mark to support our young players. For those of you who are being regularly beaten at chess by your children, the evening sessions are invaluable. Again these are at capacity but please let us know if you would like to be put on the waiting list.

New training programme!

Based on our experiences over the past few months, the structure of the sessions and the training materials has been reviewed. Starting from the 21st of February class, we will be following a proven structured training programme, pitched at three distinct levels, which will accommodate the current skills and experience of all our juniors.

The children will each receive a folder with hand-outs relating to all the topics at the next class. Please ensure that this folder is brought to all subsequent classes as the children will be working from it. Taking the folders home means that, if you choose, you can support and encourage your children on the techniques they are learning between classes!



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The outline programme for the six weeks starting on 21st February is below:-

Date	Subject	ECC Volunteer Coaches
21st February	Movers and Shakers	Mark Sanderson, Stephen Balmer
28 th February	Attack and Capture	Mark Sanderson, David Robertson
6 th March	Powerful Pawns	Mark Sanderson, Stephen Balmer
13 th March	Surviving an Attack	Mark Sanderson, David Robertson
20 th March	Threatening the King	Mark Sanderson, Stephen Balmer
27 th March	No Way Out	Mark Sanderson, David Robertson

To ensure the children are not too tired during the school week, **sessions will now run from 6.15pm to 7.15pm**. The Club will be open from 6pm to allow a prompt 6.15pm start so **please help minimise disruption to the class by ensuring your children arrive promptly** and are also collected on time.

Term dates and fees

We are proposing that the coaching sessions mirror the school term calendar, so for the remainder of 2012 are currently planning to run sessions on the following dates:

Spring Term: 10th January to 7th February and 21st February to 27th March

Summer Term: 17th April to 26th June

Autumn / Winter Term: 28th August to 9th October and 23rd October to 18th December.

The current fees – paid via annual membership of £18 per child - work out at an hourly cost of 47p for a 38 week year. It is proposed that termly fees, payable in advance, will be applied on top of this to cover the costs of opening the Club, the training materials and supplies for the children and a small donation to the Club.

The fees will be modest at £20 per child per term (£60.00 per year) **commencing from the Summer Term**. Including the child's membership, the total annual costs of £78.00 will equate to an hourly cost of £2.05. Please note all of the tutors are giving their time voluntarily. There will be discounts available to families on low income.

Finally

Chess brings huge benefits to children and adults alike. Players gain confidence, learn how to solve problems, improve concentration, develop thinking skills, improve memory, learn how to evaluate, and most importantly meet new people and have fun. Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Liz Sams and Jenny Wilson
Admin Support to the ECC Junior Coaches