



BULLETIN

Issue 236

July 1997

Price £1

The News Bulletin of the
SOUTHERN COUNTIES CHESS UNION

Published September, November, January, March, May and July

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Subscriptions: Annual subscriptions run from September, price £6. Part-year subscriptions pro rata. Single issues are sold at the cover price. Back numbers are usually available.

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Facts we try to get right. Opinions, unless otherwise attributed, are the Editor's.

SHE WON'T TAKE MUCH MORE OF THIS, ZAPHOD

Do you remember the *Hitchhikers Guide* episode about hairdressers and telephone sanitisers? Anyway, it's the season for meetings. An informal meeting recently, at a venue I won't divulge, made its own private plans for Reorganisation of BCF Management Board. All the people who talk most at MB meetings were elevated to the Permanent Supreme Council for Owning the Vision for the Federation, and everyone else was left behind to run the chess. The Supreme Council will be in permanent session. To mark the Rump's lower status the statutes don't allow it to make personal remarks, or to use hard words and Managementspeak. Papers at meetings will be limited to 150 words and will meet the statutes. They will not be tabled. They will be circulated in advance, and the Rump will read them in advance. They will be circulated once, because Rumps get confused if you circulate things twice, even if they do turn out to be the same both times on inspection. Written proposals will be clearly recognisable as such, even to a Rump, and will be set out in simple Rumpspeak with the paragraphs in the right order. Rumppersons will never say anything at meetings which should have been said by post or telephone, or other efficient means of long-distance communication. They will never say anything at meetings which can just as well be said in the coffee break. They will say things once. They will never say anything which another Rumperson has already said. Speeches will be limited to two minutes (or less, if the chairman gets bored). Meetings will be limited to two and a half hours (or less, if the chairman gets bored). The chairman will be instantly replaced if he fails to get through an agenda.

These are harsh measures, but it was felt that those who aren't prepared to contribute fully to meetings shouldn't be *allowed* to have long meetings.

There are one or two people on the Supreme Council who arguably aren't worthy of it because they *do* run a lot of chess. The Rump can beam them down if it wants, improbability factor permitting, but they'd have to abide the statutes.

ORDERS FOR NEXT YEAR

All Bulletin subscriptions expire with this issue, unless you're the oddball who's just renewed in advance by accident. There's a renewal form in the envelope somewhere. Return it straight away if you want to renew. You know you'll forget otherwise. County Secretaries get a free copy automatically courtesy of the SCCU, so long as I know who they are. Other county officers receiving free copies, match captains for example, do so because their counties have subscribed on their behalf. I don't automatically know who match captains are and I don't send them free copies anyway. I'm not allowed to, unless their counties pay. Prod your county treasurer or secretary if you think it prudent. Some people get free copies for odd reasons, and they need not renew unless I forget.

There is also an order form for Grading Lists. It goes to a different address. Don't try to combine the two in one order. (We're only human. At best you'll get what you ordered, at worst we'll shred half of it.) County Secretaries are being sent lots of GL order forms, with a request to distribute them to clubs when convenient.

The Bulletin form says Don't Staple your Cheque to Anything. To be fair, Bulletin subscribers never do. They're buggers in the Kent Schools League. If you emulate them, expect a shrapnel response. You can decline to go in the circulation database if you want (see form) and you'll probably only get the Bulletin a week or two late.

SCCU ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

at the Fountains Abbey (near Paddington Station), 5th July 1997

23 attended, and your Editor believes that every county was represented except Cambridgeshire. Before proceedings began, the meeting stood in silence as a mark of respect to Alan Cox, the County Match Grader and perhaps the most active of all our graders, who had died very recently. He had died in the saddle more or less, leaving everything so clearly labelled you couldn't go wrong, and Jonathan Melsom spoke of his selfless and unexampled services to Southern Counties chess. Martin Cath spoke of his unique attention to detail.

(1) **Minutes** of last year's Council Meeting. John Philpott, Minute Secretary by default, said that the (proper) Secretary had disappeared leaving neither minutes nor notes. The minutes before Council were thus a makeshift

effort, constructed from such notes and recollections as were available. No one thought them the least bit inadequate, barring the omission of one delegate from the attendance list, and with that amendment they were accepted.

(2) Officers' Reports (selective)

Deputy President, with a Game Fee hat on, said he was a member of the BCF Game Fee Committee but the retiring Game Fee Director had managed to complete his stint without holding any meetings of it. All SCCU leagues and congresses had paid as required, with the exception of one league which we won't name in case we got it wrong but we've a feeling they came up in a similar connection a year or two ago.

Grading Secretary said he'd just received a New Player list but he gathered there was another version which superseded it. The Kent grader, who'd sent all his results in, decided to ignore the New Player list if ever it came his way. Chris Howell mentioned the new system under development and said it "runs your league for you", but he did conclude with "That's the idea".

Individual Tournament Controller. Well, that's where it came up. It's about the Sutton BCQ places really. The organisers had much difficulty in determining which players were pre-qualified, and it was suggested that the BCF should always provide a list in advance. No good asking the players, *they* often won't know. By the time the BCF provided information, AR Corkett (who would have qualified) had made other arrangements for the August period. ACTION: BCF. In the end, the paid nomination went to Karl Mah.

Equipment. FCM said we had 40 boards and sets and at least 42 clocks. One or two duff clocks, chosen from the more respectable among them, had been sent for repair.

(3) Money. The Accounts for 1996-7, showing a surplus of £585, were adopted subject to audit. The budget was approved.

(4) SCCU Fixtures 1997-8. The Open fixture list, only just circulated, had already drawn fire from at least two counties. It was a revamped set, designed to alleviate the imbalance of travelling which people had complained of last year. Inevitably, many fixtures (in fact 19 out of 36) were at the same venue as last time. Essex and Sussex said the imbalance was largely still there, and in the same direction as last year. Someone suggested reversing all the venues in the new list, and they said that would satisfy them, and it was done (vote 8-2). Your Editor is puzzled.

(5) SCCU county matches: rule changes. Don't worry, it was only a tidying-up exercise to reflect current realities. The next paragraph goes beyond that, but you can ignore it if you want. (1) County matches are now officially over 16 boards in the Open. (2) some references to non-existent trophies were deleted. And (3) a reference to the BCF Quick-play finish rules was deleted, since they ceased to exist when the new FIDE Laws came into force on the 1st July. (Wondered what was happening to them, but who *says*? Who does say, when the BCF changes its playing rules? BCF please tell us.)

(1) occasioned debate. Changing the rule made obvious sense, but one or two counties were concerned that some of their 175+ players were getting crowded out of county chess. It was suggested that an obvious remedy was to introduce a new U200 competition. On an unofficial basis to start with, of course. So Kent went away and had an AGM (24 hours later, how's that for quick work?) at which they decided to do exactly that if they can find some opponents. Can't say this really, because it wasn't the SCCU Council Meeting. They've got a match captain, though. Counties may expect to hear from them proposing an U200 league in the coming season. Realistically, they're not expecting to get more than one or two matches. But these things mushroom. It's not long since the U100 was a twinkle in someone's eye.

(6) Minor Counties nominations. It was agreed that our Minor Counties, in the coming year, were Berks, Bucks, Herts and Surrey. Basically our policy is, nominate whatever counties you think the BCF'll wear. Someone said it always seemed odd to think of Surrey as a Minor County, but there's no denying their results justify it. (Remember when Middx were a Minor County? Come to that...)

It was felt that the BCF needed some rules dammit, saying what a Minor County *is*. They used to have some, admittedly not very satisfactory. We had a vote on it, and the SCCU will propose to the BCF that it get itself some proper rules.

(7) Elections. Chris Howell stepped down as President at the end of his two-year stint, and John Philpott duly took over. Chris is the new Grading Secretary. Martin Cath, his extremely efficient predecessor, was elected a Life Vice-President of the Union. As far as anyone knew, he was only the second person to have received this honour. Only other thing you want to know is, have we got a Secretary now. We have, and he's still Bulletin Editor as well. Someone's got to do it. (Unofficial reports are in circulation that he agreed to be Minute Secretary. He didn't. He *probably* will, but he hasn't yet.)

(8) Re-structuring of BCF Management Board. We didn't spend much more than half an hour on it, and we topped up first. How should our delegates vote, assuming they can stay awake long enough to get to the vote? For starters we decided that the Unions should still be represented. Here's a few figures the meeting arrived at.

How many people here are entitled to attend the BCF Special Council Meeting? - Lots.

How many actually expect to be there? - About 3.

How many would: (a) Throw out the minority element on the BCF working group, and accept a report from the

majority? 0. (b) accept two reports? 11. (c) Ask an individual to produce a report? 1. (d) Start all over again? 0. (e) Call the whole thing off? 2.

(9) Wood Green v Slough. We weren't allowed to discuss this at the Management Board meeting on the 21st July (see below). It may even have been Confidential. But the SCCU AGM talked about it, and half the world will know about it anyway. If you're in the other half: they had to play in the semi-final of the National Club. This is Slough's version, and we hope we've got it right. Wood Green offered three weekend dates very early, in a three-week period when they knew half of Slough's regular team would be unavailable. You have to accept one of the three. Slough complained, and the controller declined to take action even though one of the dates was a bank holiday Monday. So Slough imported three irregulars, and won. Wood Green contested the eligibility of all three irregulars, and the controller upheld their claim in respect of one of them. This reversed the match result. Slough appealed to the BCF, protesting that the player was clearly eligible. The Bulletin doesn't know the details, but there are people outside the Slough club who agree with them. The MB (see below, again) didn't discuss it, on the ground that the controller's decision is final. Your Editor (SCCU delegate) wanted to discuss it but was overruled by the Chair.

¹ The records confirm that he is.

SCCU EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive had its usual get-together immediately (well, almost) after the Council Meeting. Routine things. **Representatives to BCF Management Board:** JA Philpott; plus RJ Haddrell for the 12th July, and for other meetings we could decide as we went along.

Representatives to BCF Council: JAP, RJH, CI Howell, C Lean.

Representative on Game Fee Committee: JAP, should it ever meet.

Representative to London Chess League: DR Sedgwick.

Rules & Appeals sub-committee: JAP, RJH, CIH, JT Melsom, NC Mackett.

Next meeting: Friday 12th September. Other dates to be fixed then.

BCF MANAGEMENT BOARD

The Management Board met on Saturday 21st June 1997 at the Hotel Ibis near Euston Station. That's the London Hotel Ibis. 16 attended. They talked from 11 am to 6 pm as is their wont, with a 45-minute lunch break. Your Editor, who was there with an SCCU hat on, was occasionally infuriated by the slowness of proceedings. So what's new. But an NCCU delegate said before we started that personally he'd be through that agenda by four o'clock, and we're not about to disagree with him.

(1) Grading: current year. Grading was in a state of crisis, and we never knew till a few days before the meeting. (This meant we had a Management Problem, as someone didn't fail to point out.) The national Grading Officer, Roger Edwards, had been doing everything single-handed at the BCF end. You knew that. What you didn't know, and neither did anyone else, is that he'd been spending something like 35 hours a week on it and expected to go on doing so until the end of August. Mostly it's work of mind-numbing tedium, typing other graders' results into a computer. A lot of material *does* come in on floppy disk and you just poke it in, but there's still people out there doing their sums by hand and sending the results on paper, and you type it out. You know, "137754D 16 2164". Hundreds of times over. He had just called for help, realising that without it the new list could be several weeks late. In the last couple of days two helpers had been found. One's getting paid and the other isn't. Roger isn't, of course. This worries the Bulletin a bit. It's thought we *should* make the deadline now. More help would be nice, though. One MB member offered, but said if someone was getting paid he'd want to be as well.

The MB was determined to have the list out on the 1st August, and will keep an eye on the situation. It was recognised that a job of this size and importance should not be dependent on the time and goodwill of one person.

(2) Grading: the future. The 1997 list had to be our first priority. But the MB also spent a good while - and quite rightly - discussing progress on the new programs. We'll come to the progress in a couple of paragraphs. But the new programs, when fully in place, will do away with the mind-numbing job we mentioned above. There's actually a mistake in the example we gave. Never mind what, but wouldn't *you* make mistakes with mindless entries like that? In due course the BCF computer will reject the entry, and then you spend more time finding out what it should have been in the first place. If you've *got* the time. The mistake could just as well arrive on a floppy; even the graders with computers, or lots of them anyway, are doing the sums by hand. Then they type "137754D 16 216" into their computer - whoops, there's another mistake - and the antiquated program they're using won't notice anything wrong. (Should have done, even by the standards of 1980-whatever-it-was, but there you are.) This is a ridiculous way of working. When we get the new system running, graders will be supplied with new software which will not only eliminate the mind-numbing bit, it will also entirely eliminate the need for

calculations at their end. It will eliminate local graders, if you like. There is existing software which does that for congresses, but not for leagues as far as we know. Well, there's one or two private jobs around and we've got first-hand knowledge of one of them. You tell them "Smith beat Robinson" and the computer does the rest. *All* the rest, and it can't make mistakes. You'll have told it in advance who Smith and Robinson were. If you've done that correctly you'll find it difficult to make mistakes yourself, short of typing the result the wrong way round. This is, or should be, pretty much how the new BCF software will work.

That's the "outer face" of the new programs. At the BCF end they're making the old ones jump through hoops to do things they were never designed to do, and the new software will change that. It is estimated that the software might cost £45,000 if done commercially. It's maybe four man-months of work for a professional.

We were supposed to be talking about progress. The development team consists of three or four programmers, speaking in a fluid sort of way and sorry if that sounds vague but it's how we heard it, plus a co-ordinator who allocates jobs to them. And a liaison officer (Chris Howell, *him* we can name) who apart from other things reports to the Management Board. He did that, and confessed himself disappointed with the rate of progress. The Specification had been written, partly by him. What? Oh, the specification of what the software is required to do. Its functionality, we think he said. He had not seen a recent version of the Project Plan. The project plan is - or would be - a plan prepared by the co-ordinator indicating which programmer is doing what and by when. There is no particular reason to think that an up-to-date project plan doesn't exist, but the co-ordinator had been under a lot of pressure lately and was difficult to contact. Chris's e-mail had gone worryingly quiet. He knew that some programming had been done, because he'd seen it. He still expected the "grader's" software to be ready in time for 1998-9 (though it would remain possible to submit results in the old way).

The MB was understandably concerned. Considering our immediate priorities it was agreed to leave the future till the British Championship Congress, where some of the team members were expecting to get together. Then progress really would have to be reviewed.

(3) **Money.** A relatively brief topic, this time. It was on the routine technical side and didn't concern your Editor directly, and he went into sleep mode. Sleep mode, at least in theory, is a mode in which he instantly wakes up if something interesting happens.

(4) **Bumf and the DNH.** The minutes of the meeting have a different slant, but here's one or two reflections that came up. Do the civil servants actually read any of the stuff they make us write? Does *anyone* read it? Do they overburden voluntary organisations with paperwork on purpose, hoping they'll go away and raise their money somewhere else? Just idle speculation. But a civil servant has told the Federation, honest to God, that Corporate Plans and Business Plans are designed to help *us*. We've heard that one before, and we're cynic enough to think that one or two MB members might have been capable of saying it.

(5) **The Special General Meeting.** We managed to dispatch Restructuring of Management Board in 45 minutes with no more than the odd flurry of raised voices. Some feared that the SGM would achieve nothing. The MB agreed its own position on the National Club proposals.

(6) **Isle of Man CA.** It was agreed to support the IOM's application for FIDE membership.

(7) **Women.** The Womens Director said a proposal about the U18 "Boys" Team Championship would be coming up at the autumn Council Meeting. We've called it "Boys" in quotes because Open without means something else, but we won't be able to if the proposal goes through. Each team would be required to include at least a specified number of females. If the number was mentioned we didn't note it [but see next meeting down]. Expect the proposal will be suitably non-sexist: "at least x males and at least x females" maybe. [Afraid not. See next meeting down.] The 4NCL rule (not more than x players may be of the same sex) is even better because it doesn't name one sex before the other. There may also be a proposal to abolish the Girls U18 events; watch this space. The DNH bumfophages have remarked that the BCF has no equal opportunities policy. If it had one, it couldn't run Girls events and the Bulletin doesn't see how it could impose sex requirements in any events at all.

(8) **Succession Planning.** Bryan Fewell had done an unprovoked paper. Noting that several BCF offices were vacant, he thought we should have a structured plan for identifying, encouraging and training future officers. Potential officers would be introduced to jobs gently by giving them part of an existing officer's work. A data base would be set up holding not only names and chess CVs but also skills possessed outside chess. There would also be provision for evaluation of performance.

One or two parts of the paper were felt to be a bit over the top, in a voluntary organisation. Someone said he'd probably resign if expected to undergo appraisal. In addition the time was wrong. You could hardly ask an officer to nurture someone for his particular job when there were several other jobs vacant already. Even if he could find someone to nurture. But it was recognised that there was good sense in the paper, and it was agreed to start the ball rolling by having each MB member identify his or her own particular skills and relevant interests.

(9) **Juniors.** Rotary International have set up a chess initiative called "It's your Move", designed to promote junior chess. Local Rotary Clubs will be participating, and providing the money, and the intention is to work with the local chess infrastructure already in place.

(10) **Vacant posts.** The following jobs are vacant, or coming vacant by the next Council Meeting. There are no obvious takers for any of them. Director of Women's Chess. Director of Junior chess. (You could split it in two, home and international.) Director for Congress Chess. Officer i/c Direct Membership Scheme. Minute Secretary. Officer i/c School-Club links. Director of Game Fee. Editor, *ChessMoves*. The last two were announced at the

meeting. The Hodgsons have been at *ChessMoves* for a year and have found the work load much heavier than anticipated. The Bulletin regrets this.

There was another item, not reported here because it wasn't discussed. It was discussed later at the SCCU Council Meeting 5.7.97 (see above), and readers are referred thereto.

BCF MANAGEMENT BOARD

meeting 12.7.97 in preparation for the following (mostly)

One or two things.

(1) **Grading officer** was now much happier about getting everything done on time. [Postscript: he spent the (long) weekend of 18-20 July at the BCF office putting everything to bed, and actually accepted a last-minute grading amendment telephoned to him there by your Editor on the Friday evening, and as far as we know everything's on schedule.]

(2) **Juniors**. The proposals under (7) above were reviewed. Seems they really are coming up in September, and the draft says "at least 2 girls" (wrong). There was opposition on the ground that it's wrong to select your team on grounds of sex, and we look forward to the September meeting.

(3) **European Team Championships 1999**. This is important. David Sedgwick, International Director, was absent but had submitted a paper on our application to host the European Team Championships in 1999. The MB appreciated the obvious hard work which had gone into his paper and (more importantly) his preliminary negotiations. The application had the support of Duncan Lawrie. We are obviously not yet committed to anything, our application will not be considered until the FIDE Congress in Moldova in September. However, it was felt unofficially that no one would be likely to oppose us. If it went ahead, we'd want to do it right. Where? London was not thought to be a popular venue. It all depended on what sort of event we wanted. We could go for a Mega event spilling over with sideshows in a major conurbation, or we could just try to run a damn good European Championships. The MB, pretty well unanimously we think, favoured the less grandiose end of the spectrum. Venues were discussed, in an abstract sort of way, but it would be premature to say more here. We wanted the best venue possible. Refreshingly, no one talked Union-partisanese and the MB seemed agreed that the best venue was the best venue wherever it was.

BCF SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

at the Ibis Hotel near Euston Station, 12th July 1997

God, how am I going to report this? I know, I'll tell the truth. An inconclusive meeting was predictable. The shambles it turned out to be was not, unless you're even more jaundiced about BCF meetings than I was. Note the tense. It was rambling, undirected and confused, and marred by numerous ill-mannered interruptions. Largely from one delegate, whose approach to MB and Council meetings is generally boorish and obstructive and I don't know why the body he represents goes on electing him. Half way through a difficult meeting someone else took three minutes and 22 seconds to say how important it was that we shouldn't go away feeling we'd wasted our time.

The papers of the meeting had in some cases been circulated in two or more versions. Proposals appeared in differing forms on different pages, and sometimes in differing forms on different versions of the same page. The appalling layout of some of them, and the vaguest of guidance when we got there, didn't help; though admittedly your Editor was the only one who *said* he'd got lost. When we came to the National Club rules it emerged, gradually and to general bewilderment, that the circulated version we were trying to amend was inconsistent with two other versions they had at the top table. Which were, of course, inconsistent with each other. Your Editor has never been closer to agreeing with Bryan Fewell about Management Skills.

No harm was done, time and expense and boredom and frustration aside, and we made some decisions, and the SCCU has no reason to be dissatisfied with any of them. You could be forgiven for thinking that the decisions under (1) and (2) were as close to "let's forget it" as possible and politic, and the Management Skills lobby didn't like them.

(1) **Management Board** to remain a delegate body. Unions to have only one delegate; two new delegate places to be created for the two largest game-fee contributors interested and not already entitled. A proposal to restrict this to leagues was lost, or to be precise a proposal not to was carried, and a league delegate (only two to guess from) called for a card vote and there wasn't time. Do it in September. MB structure to be reviewed in (say) two or three years, but that may not have been actually agreed. It was hard to tell.

(2) **Development Unit** (which hasn't done a lot so far) to be reconstituted as a Policy Unit answerable to Council. It would (probably?) be able to co-opt from outside the Federation. Draft for September.

(3) **Objects of the BCF**. No time, do it in September.

(4) **European Club**. This was important, and close, and there were strong feelings on both sides. Decision: both English nominees will be selected via the 4NCL, rather than one via the 4NCL and one via the National Club. Card vote, 92-86. We've heard on the grapevine that the Bulletin's speech may have significantly influenced

floating voters in the right direction. The Bulletin doesn't remember saying anything at all on the subject and it had only had a pint and a bit. But its single vote, which won't have affected the outcome, *was* cast in the right direction.

(5) **National Club** eligibility. In the Open (but not its Plate) you must have played for the club at least twice in the preceding 12 months, in a local or regional standard-play event in the UK. No idea what the old rule was.

ESSEX Leagues 1996-7

Div 1 1-2 Southend, Wanstead 17/20. They weren't equal on game points but they had a play-off anyway, which is presumably what the rules dictate, and last we heard Southend were ahead 4-3 with three games to finish. Div 2 Newham 19/22; Div 3 Wanstead IV 16/18; Div 5 Eastbrook V 16/18

North Essex League overlaps hardly at all with the Essex League; offhand we can only spot one club that plays in both. Div I Colchester A 20/20; Div 2 Colchester B 17/20; Div 3 Colchester E 17/18. Andreas Plüg has gone back to Germany. Colchester (and Essex) will miss him next year.

Southend & District League: Div 1 Rayleigh; Div 2 Wickford; Div 3 Southend IV.

KENT Champions 1996-7: Major Steve James; Intermediate Terry Sandon; Minor Terry Matthews. The Championship itself should be decided by now but last we heard it was still between Ian Watson and David Moskovic.

LONDON LEAGUE 1996-7

Division 1 1 Barbican 10/11 (with a game-point score bettered only once, by Kings Head); 2 Charlton 8½; 3 Wood Green 8... Relegated Wimbledon ½, Mitcham 1½.

Division 2 1 Mushrooms 9/10; 2 Beckenham & Bromley 8 (both promoted); 3 Richmond 7½... Relegated Kings Head II -1½, Streatham II 0; also Wimbledon II ½ as a consequence of their first team's relegation, because a club can't have two teams in any division except the lowest.

Division 3 1 Gravesend 8/9; 2 Wood Green II 7; 3 Hackney II 6½ (all promoted)... Relegated Philippine 0

Division 4 1 Kings Head III 8/10 (but cannot be promoted because Kings Head II blocked them by getting relegated into Division 3: obviously this rule works top down); 2 Hammersmith 7½; 3 International Students 7 (both promoted)... Relegated Islington -1.

Division 5 1 Ilford II 10/10; 2 Ateneo Monarchs 6½ (both promoted); 3 DHSS 6 (by half a game point ahead of West London)... Relegated nobody, because a team's dropping out.

Division 6 1 Beckenham & Bromley II 6/6; 2 GLCC I 4 (both promoted); 3 Morley College II 2½... No one has to apply for re-election, and they're expecting three new teams to make it eight next year.

EASTMAN CUP (London League KO) was won by Wood Green who beat Barbican 6½-3½ in the final.

Results Bob Turnham

OXON

Blackwells Oxfordshire Champion 1996-7 is Matthew Rose of Oxford City CC. He took three half-hour games to beat club-mate Jochen Wittmann after their 2-game final was drawn. **Plate** competition (don't know exactly what this means) was won by Peter Ball, also of Oxford.

Cowley Blitz 23rd June 1997 raised £130 to assist Harriet Hunt with her expenses in the World U20 in Poland.

1 K Arkell GM (Long Eaton) 9/10; 2-3 S Hartlieb (Germany), J Wittmann (Oxford) 8; 4 T Headlong (Witney).

Results Lester Millin

INSURANCE CC

Individual Championship was a three-way tie (play-off coming) between PR Barclay, AGC Paish and MR Wiltshire. Major: 1 E Lovegrove, after a play-off with KS Parrott.

Inter-office leagues: Div 1 Ombudsmen; Div 2 Eagle Star/ABI. You played twice against the teams in your own division, and once against the teams in the other division. Ian Hunnable remarks that, if you count only the inter-division matches, all the Div 2 teams finished ahead of all the Div 1 ones. (This could have something to do with the fact that the Div 2 teams got four inter-division matches and the Div 1 teams only got three.)

CONGRESS RESULTS

CHESHUNT 8-9 March 1997

Premier U182 (18 pl) 1 DG Flower 169 (Barbican) 4½/5; 2-3 R Bryant 178 (Guildford), M Mashayekh 174 (Ealing) 4... **GRADING U151** SC Pride 132 (Cambridge) 2

Intermediate U122 (19 pl) 1-2 J Bradley 120 (Dunmow), B Culverhouse 95 (Chingford) 4/5; 3-6 B Alexandrou 110 (Powdermill), J Gorman 94 (Pin Green), L Trent 87 (junior: Ilford), C Turner 83 (junior: Powdermill) 3½...

Results Gary Kenworthy

21st KINGS HEAD RAPIDPLAY 8th June 1997

135 played. 1 M Adams GM (Slough) 6/6; 2-7 S Lalic IM (Slough), A Summerscale IM (Slough), RH Thomas (Kings Head), C Tipplestone (Northampton), C White (Cavendish), J Xie GM 5; 8-16 J Anderson (Grays), S Berry (Kings Head), J Burnett (Chelmsford), D Cutmore, K Dan (?both Kings Head), H Hunt (Cowley), D Kumaran, G Moore (?both Hounslow), I Timmermanns (Kings Head) 4½... GRADING 204-190 RH Thomas; 189-175 C Tipplestone; 174-160 DE Mayers (Marshall) 4; 159-145 K Dan; 144-130 R McSharry (West London) 4; 129-115 A Joelson (Hendon) 3½; 114-100 F Fields (Crystal Palace) 4; U100 D Muter 3. JUNIOR 16-17 SK Williams 4; 14-15 M Roberts (Dartford) 4; 12-13 M Lewsey (Colchester) 3; U12 T Pettit (Richmond Juniors) 1. BEST GAME D Muter Results WA Suttill

RICHMOND CHESS INITIATIVE 22nd June 1997

Open (28 pl) 1-2 Gerald Moore (Hounslow), Gavin Wall (London) 5/6; 3-4 Susan Lalic (Sutton), Alan Perkins (Hanwell) 4½... GRADING U200 1-2 Tom Hinks-Edwards (London), Steve Ledger (Bedford) 4; U175 1-2 Chris Clegg (Kingston), Russell Manning (Richmond) 3½

U150 (37 pl) 1-3 Sarfaraz Chaudry (Hounslow), Gerald Jacobs (Stanmore), Simon Randall (Hanwell) 5/6... GRADING U125 1 Nigel Knott (London); 2 Michael Henley (London) 3½

U100 (29 pl) 1 Ricky Alboni (Twickenham) 5½/6; 2 Jonathan Somekh (London) 5; 3 Christopher Dixon (Sutton) 4½... U175/NEVER GRADED 1-3 Christopher Manders (Ashted), Jamie Manfield (London), Jack Seaman (Hounslow) 3

This was the last of six events in the **Latoka Engineering Grand Prix**, with seven prizes of £75 in seven grading categories. Unfortunately they don't say what the categories were, but here's the winners. Category A (top section) Alan Perkins (Hanwell); B Abimbola Adelaja (London); C Alan Punnett (Woking); D Daniel White (London); E Timothy Woodward (London); F Luke Pettit (Hounslow); G Ricky Alboni (Twickenham).

Results Richard James

JUNIOR NEWS**BASMANIC KASPAROV COMPUTERS MEGAFINAL: WESSEX ZONE 3rd (or 4th) May 1997**

This one got missed out somehow last time round. Either it wasn't in the list we received, or we just never thought "Wessex" would mean SCCU. Well, you wouldn't. It meant Hants, Wilts, Glos, Berks and Oxon and it was held at Swindon. 192 boys and 44 girls played. Supremos first. U18 None. U15 Alister Smith, Joe Senior; Jennifer Smith. U12 Kenneth Hunt; Catherine David. U11 Joseph Mela; Alpa Jobanputra. U10 Philip Hayward; Emily Constance. U9 William Foster; Claire Morris. U8 Richard Grantham-Reynolds; Emma Wilkinson. U7 Peter Mennear; Naomi Miller.

AND THE GIGAFINAL 13th July 1997

They promised us Ultimi from this event. We wondered what the feminine of Ultimi was, and got an unexpected answer. Results (Ultimos first, Ultimas second): U18 Richard Cleveland (Wales); Lucy Broomfield (Surrey).

U15 Richard Jones (Wales); Rachael Wilkinson (Somerset). U12 Nicholas Timms (Somerset), Catherine David (Oxford). U11 David Ho (Kent); Teresa Khoo (Surrey). U10 Robert Payne (Essex); Jessie Gilbert (Surrey). U9 Lee Gold (Middx); Margaret Donald (Cambridge). U8 Robert Heaton (Surrey); Sarah Hegarty (Surrey). U7 David Howell (Sussex); Naomi Miller (Oxford).

Terafinal (RFH 23 August) will be a one-day KO sponsored by Rotary Clubs of Great Britain.

KENT Schools League: Barming Primary retained their Under 11 title, winning the Congress 7.6.97 with a record score of 24/25. Barming's the only school we know that has chess on the curriculum. Their "A" squad seems to have been their "A" squad for two years now, but it's moving on in September. Bad news for everyone else is that their "B" squad qualified for the Congress as well and didn't disgrace itself. Should be more open next year, though.

"TIMES" NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Final stage took place at the Charing Cross Hotel 3rd and 4th July 1997. Semi-finals: Manchester Grammar 4 2 Methodist College Belfast; Oakham School* 3 3 (bd count) Hampton School. Final Manchester Grammar 3½ 2½ Oakham School. Steve Davis ("indeed he is personality but with no side or affectation") spoke at the prize-giving dinner and presented Fred Manning with his newly gained Presidents Award. We cannot say who the other recipients are because their names have not been released.

Results Mitchell Taylor

ENGLAND v WALES at Chepstow (no date). No one's sent these results and we don't know who organised it - details picked up from *Chessex*. England won at all age levels, rather comfortably: U14 11½-4½; U11 24½-7½; U11 Girls 16½-3½; U10 20½-3½.

**COUNTY MATCHES: BCF STAGE
OPEN**

Semi-finals

Lancs	6.7.97	Kent*	Gtr Manchester	7.6.97	Essex*
1 JE Littlewood 202 (W)	½ ½	Neil McDonald 236	MJ Surtees 203 (B)	0 1	A Plüg
2 B Lund 213	½ ½	John M Emms 239	AA Smith 198	0 1	J Rogers 225
3 N Ivell 212	½ ½	Philip J Morris 223	M Firth 196	½ ½	AP Lewis 212
4 H Hughes 194	½ ½	Ian R Watson 212	P Adams 195	0 1	M Twyble 205
5 B Hague 197	1 0	Cliff R Chandler 206	H Kampmann -	1 0	JP Manley 205
6 P Jowett 183	0 1	Chris M Cooley 205	RA Beach 196	½ ½	D Sands 201
7 D Lees 182	0 1	John Naylor 202	DI Hulmes 183	1 0	G Moore 197
8 B Dabulawicus 191	½ ½	Andrew Mack 202	JL Powell 181	1 0	G Kenworthy 195
9 L Kay 182	½ ½	Alan E Hanreck 199	JP McKenna 80	½ ½	J Hodgson 194
10 S Barnes	0 1	Neil F Dickenson 193	JL Burgess 175	½ ½	J Goldberg 190
11 D Newhouse	½ ½	Alexis M Harakis 191	AK Reeve 173	0 1	J Burnett 190
12 CV Murray 167	½ ½	RMR O'Kelly 191	GP Burton 173	0 1	A Dunn 185
13 S Appleby 158	½ ½	John N Sugden 189	RA Doney 161	1 0	JC Moore 183
14 K Hoadley 161	½ ½	David Farndon 190	A Tyton 154	1 0	W Saunders 181
15 P Fallon	1 0	David J Horton 188	D Sander -	0 1	RP White 178
16 S Riley 165	0 1	Gordon Botley 180	A Longson 141 j	½ ½	R Parker 177
(Nuneaton)	7 9		(Nuneaton)	7½ 8½	

Lancs grades supplied by the Bulletin. No guarantees.

Final

Essex	28.6.97	Kent*
1 AP Lewis 212	½ ½	Neil McDonald (W) 236
2 KCC Mah 213	½ ½	DW Gormally 213
3 M Twyble 205	½ ½	PJ Morris 223
4 J Manley 205	½ ½	IR Watson 212
5 D Sands 201	½ ½	SW Giddins 207
6 E Dearing 195	½ ½	SD Brown 207
7 G Moore 197	0 1	CM Cooley 205
8 G Kenworthy 195	1 0	Richard Eales
9 J Burnett 190	½ ½	Andrew Mack 202
10 J Goldberg 190	0 1	DM Moskovic 196
11 S Dunn 185	½ ½	AE Hanreck 199
12 IJ Myall 184	0 1	NF Dickenson 193
13 JC Moore 183	0 1	AM Harakis 191
14 W Saunders 181	½ ½	RMR O'Kelly 191
15 R White 178	0 1	PP Taylor 190
16 R Parker 177	½ ½	JN Sugden 189
(Birmingham)	6 10	

All Essex grades except one supplied by the Bulletin. Kent grades supplied by the Bulletin as well, then Kent's version arrived and we didn't check too carefully.

MINOR COUNTIES

Semi-finals

Beds	7.6.97	Herts*	Dorset	7.6.97	Oxon*
1 A Ledger 223 (B)	1 0	Paul V Byway 199	MJ Simons 194 (W)	0 1	S Ansell 217
2 D Ledger 202	0 1	Stève Swanson 212	GA White 186	0 1	H Hunt 217
3 S Ledger 199	0 1	Neil Bradbury 205	B Hirsch 177	0 1	I Upton 199
4 P Habershon 186	½ ½	Jerry F Rudge 194	MJ Freeman 180	½ ½	M Devereaux 188
5 R Richmond 184	½ ½	Paul T Georghiou 195	IC Clark 175	½ ½	A Lewis 190
6 J Koponen 181	0 1	Chiedu Maduekwe 193	A Pleasant -	½ ½	N Jakubovics ¹ 187
7 B Valentine 175	½ ½	Phil G Maguire 189	MP Waddington 173	1 0	R Starkie 180
8 M Smith 174	½ ½	Kevin R Clark 185	J Tyrer -	½ ½	G Chapman 174
9 P Kendall 171	0 1	Simon J Roe 181	CB Jenks 163	½ ½	J Stayt 175
10 R Freeman 170	0 1	Alex N Ethelontis 180	T Lines 162	0 1	L Millin 176
11 R Mahoney 168	½ ½	Howard L Tebbs 179	M Clancy 154	0 1	J Wittman 172
12 K Williamson 166	1 0	Chris E Majer 179	SC Crisp 153	0 1	D Hackett 175
13 A Elwin 164	1 0	John R Denton 176	KA Sarahs 153	½ ½	D Bruce 158
14 K Bush 155	1 0	Andrew Gilfillan 176	TE Simms 152	0 1	N Jones 167 ²
15 I Bacon 152	½ ½	Stephen J Tovey 171	FC Kingdon 152	0 1	P Ball 150
16 C Bullock 149	0 1	Steve Law 169	LJ Laker 149	0 1	S Terry Isquigglesquiggle ³
(Bedford)	7 9		(Winchester)	4 12	

¹ Match captain has Jakubovics again, but we've been assured the c is wrong. ² Well, it looks like a seven. There's a lot of N Joneses and one of them's graded 167. ³ You look it up.

Minor Counties Final

Herts*		28.6.97	Oxon
1	Simon JB Knott 218	½ ½	S Ansell 217 (B)
2	Paul V Byway 199	0 1	H Hunt 217
3	Steve Swanson 212	0 1	A Hunt 203
4	Neil H Bradbury 205	0 1	J Hastings 197
5	Jerry F Rudge 194	1 0	M Rose 194
6	Chiedu Maduekwe 193	½ ½	M Devereaux 188
7	Phil G Maguire 189	0 1	A Lewis 190
8	Kevin R Clark 185	1 0	N Jakubovics 187
9	Ben D Savage 186	½ ½	T Dickinson 184
10	Alistair M Simpson 189	½ ½	R Starkie 180
11	Simon J Roe 181	1 0	G Chapman 174
12	Alex N Ethelontis 180	½ ½	J Stayt 175
13	Howard L Tebbs 178	½ ½	J Wittman 172
14	Nicholas S Lee 180	½ ½	D Hackett 175
15	John R Denton 176	½ ½	D Bruce 158
16	Chris E Majer 177	0 1	N Jones 167
(Birmingham)		7	9

UNDER 175

Semi-final			Final		
Essex*	7.6.97	Warwicks	Essex*	28.6.97	Lancs
1 Paul L Williamson 173	1 0	Keith L Escott 170 (W)	Paul L Williamson 173	½ ½	Stephen Mulligan 170 (B)
2 Roy Heppinstall 174	½ ½	G Davies 166	Roy Heppinstall 174	½ ½	R Taylor 162
3 Larry E Marden 173	½ ½	Martin D Smyth 165	Larry E Marden 173	1 0	A Catz (r) 142
4 David J Millward 172	½ ½	RT Farley 163	Ivor BN Smith 173	0 1	C Timmins 166
5 Peter C Doye 166	½ ½	D Price 162	David J Millward 172	0 1	S Appleby 158
6 Sid Kalinsky 165	½ ½	Colin Searle 162	Peter C Doye 166	0 1	Mark Whitehead 158
7 Terry Whitton 165	1 0	Colin Green 161	Sid Kalinsky 165	0 1	P Mulleady 166
8 Colin R Ramage 163	1 0	Wiatt Ropp 160	Terry Whitton 165	1 0	J Lyth 154
9 Neville H Twitchell 162	1 0	Karl L Foreman 157	Colin R Ramage 163	½ ½	S Riley 165
10 Andy King 159	1 0	J Broadmore 155	Neville H Twitchell 162	1 0	S Woodcock 161
11 Ken W Clow 158	½ ½	Joseph M Soesan 155	Ian D Hunnable 161	1 0	S Foulkes 165
12 Andrew D Hartland 155	0 1	Geoffrey N Stokes 153	Andy King 159	1 0	Paul Isherwood 158
13 Ray Purse 154	1 0	R Greatrex 150	Ken W Clow 158	½ ½	Joanne Alston 155
14 Richard Weeber 154	0 1	Ian P Fisher 145	Andrew D Hartland 155	½ ½	Jim Tennant-Smith 152
15 Roberto E Waldteufel 152	½ ½	Arthur F Kent 144	Ray Purse 154	½ ½	P Furlong 151
16 Mark Weighell 151	1 0	B Briscoe 134	Mark Weighell 151	½ ½	AA Clarkson 145
(Bedford)	10½ 5½		(Birmingham)	8½ 7½	

UNDER 150

Semi-final		
Warwicks	7.6.97	Essex*
1 Rob Reynolds 149 (B)	½ ½	PR Barclay 148
2 RJ Wallman 147	0 1	J White 148
3 SC Smith 146	0 1	TG Winter 145
4 K Thomas 146	1 0	David Smith 145
5 W Archibald 143	1 0	G Gooding 142
6 D Reeves 146	½ ½	AJ Parsons 141
7 MA Drugan 141	1 0	P Zammit 139
8 K Jones 143	½ ½	J Thompson 139
9 WJ Harwood 140	1 0	D Cannan 137
10 AM Russell 139	0 1	MRA Murrell 136
11 LE Collier 139	½ ½	RD Sharman 134
12 TW Walker 136	1 0	JA Speigel 134
13 G Bates 136	0 1	CA Bates 132
14 M Soszynski 141	½ ½	I Maclachlan 132
15 PD Hufton 120	½ ½	D Bird 126
16 H Hughes 107	1 0	W Paterson 122
(Bedford)	9 7	

Can't discover that we've had the other semi-final, but Herts lost to Notts. Notts beat Warwicks 9-7 in the Final.

We thank Jeff Douglas for sending all results from the Finals; also such SCCU match captains as bothered. Afraid we're missing the odd semi-final result.

Congratulations to Kent on retaining their title, Oxon on picking up the Minor Counties, and Essex on winning the Under 175. Bit better than last year. We even managed one finalist lower down - which, again, is more than we did last year.

UNDER 125

No news, except that Herts must have lost to Shropshire in their semi-final. The Final was Shropshire 4½ 11½ Lancashire.

UNDER 100

Semi-final		Surrey*		Final		Notts	
Notts		Essex		Essex		Notts	
				28.6.97			
1 Graham Gibson 99 (B)	1 0	Edward Radford 99	1 R Pickett (?) 99?	0 1	G Gibson 99		
2 Mick Clark 98	1 0	Bill Upton 95	2 B Mehanjedad 99	0 1	A Flint		
3 Dean Eggleston 97	0 1	Chetan Deva 97	3 C Wiggins 99	0 1	M Clark 98		
4 Alan Freeman 96	½ ½	Oliver Wilson 96	4 E Lutton 95	1 0	D Eggleston 97		
5 Richard Dyce 94	1 0	Chris Dixon 93	5 A O'Neil(?) 94?	0 1	E Middleton		
6 Steve Turner 94	1 0	Lana Boztas 93	6 C Turner 83	1 0	A Freeman 96		
7 Dorothy Blampied 94	½ ½	Alistair Oaks 92	7 D Allen 87	0 1	S Turner 94		
8 Ric Dawson 87	0 1	Tim Chase 90	8 A Trent 80	0 1	O Graham		
9 Tim England 86	0 1	Laila Tillet 89	9 J Sneesby 84	½ ½	D Blampied 94		
10 Alf Kowalkowski 73	1 0	Philip Cable 89	10 S Trent 82	1 0	R Dawson 87		
11 Ian Kwasny -	0 1	Richard Jones 84	11 J Lutton 81	1 0	T England 86		
12 Daniel Isterling -	0 1	Richard Davey 84	12 H Walker 69	1 0	A Kowalkowski 73		
(Kirkby in Ashfield)	6 6		(Birmingham)	5½ 6½			

Notts won on board count.

In the other semi-final, Essex played Suffolk and presumably beat them.

Result from AJ Douglas; grades copied from the match on the left and from previous Bulletins.

SCCU COUNTY MATCHES 1997-8: OPEN FIXTURES

Oct 11	HBr KBu SyE	Jan 17	EBr SxC KH SyO
18		24	(4NCL)
25	(4NCL)	31	BrBu CE HSy OSx
Nov 1	CH BrK BuSy ESx	Feb 7	
8	OC	14	BuC SxH SyK EO
15	SyBr SxBu KC HO	21	(4NCL)
22	(4NCL)	28	OBu HE KSx CBr
29	BuE OK Csy BrSx	Mar 7	(SCCU U18 qualifier)
Dec 6		14	BuH EK BrO SxSy
13			

These dates should be regarded as final barring agreement by match captains. Don't re-arrange anything for the 7th March, that's the date of the SCCU U18 team qualifier. And do tell the Controller and Bulletin about re-arranged dates.

All Open matches are over 16 boards.

4NCL dates include the Sunday as well, and the one that wouldn't fit is May 23-25.

Other SCCU divisions: entry deadline 15 August.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Richard (and Stewart),

4.6.97

Re: Jack Hawson's letter about ungraded Congress entrants, I suggest calculating their grades after 3 rounds (or 3 graded opponents) and then transferring them, with their scores, to more appropriate sections if necessary. I realise this could disturb the maintenance of even numbers within sections but (a) some players will have withdrawn by the end of rd 3 and (b) any "left-overs" could be cross-paired between sections, as already occurs sometimes. The only problem would be getting the grading computer to understand what has happened, but that is *its* problem: it must do what we want it to.

Grading lists once a year are sufficient. More frequently would create difficulties for local graders and everybody would be uncertain how up to date a list was, i.e. whether handfuls of additional results were simply not yet included. Result: confusion.

Yours sincerely,

JA SPEIGEL

Southend

PS After all these years Jack Hawson is suddenly calling himself John again?!

JACK (definitely not John) SPEIGEL

Copy to SW Reuben

CONGRESS DIARY

- Aug 3-16 BRITISH CHAMPIONSHIP CONGRESS at Hove. Congress Secretary, BCF, 9a Grand Parade, St Leonards, E Sussex TN38 0DD
 8 GOLDERS GREEN Rapidplay. Adam Raoof, PO Box 1962 NW4 4NF 0181 202 0982
 9 WESTMINSTER Rapid. JM Sargent, 903 Longbridge Rd, Dagenham, Essex RM8 2BU
 23-25 BERKS & BUCKS at Maidenhead.
 31-6 PAIGNTON (unhelpfully named the Holiday Congress, sideways on). 7 rds except U150. Open; U170, 125; U150 5 rds; plus small graded sections U160. EA Crickmore, 5 Hereford Close, Exmouth, Devon EX8 5QT
- Sep 5 GOLDERS GREEN Rapidplay. Adam Raoof, PO Box 1962 NW4 4NF 0181 202 0982
 28 LIVERPOOL Stars Barred Rapidplay. U130, 100. First Prize, both events, £500 (no misprint). I Lever, 34 Rushlake Drive, Netherley, Merseyside L27 7BN
- Oct 3 GOLDERS GREEN Rapidplay. Adam Raoof, PO Box 1962 NW4 4NF 0181 202 0982
 4-5 SPECTRUM WORCESTER. Norman Went, 53 New Zealand Way, Rainham, Essex RM18JT 01708 551617
 17-19 MAIDSTONE BCQ. Open; U160, 130, 105; Open Rapidplay Sunday, under BCF rules it says. You get a surprise when you open the congress leaflet. NC Mackett, 74 Peel St, Maidstone, Kent ME14 2SD

Correction

● CCU U180 Jamboree 12.4.97: Result board 1 should be Horton 0 1 Sedgwick; 8 should be Ratcliffe 0 1 Hepworth. Sorry. *Think* the scores add up now. (I didn't check them. For matches, I check. Jamborees, no.) Surrey appear twice in the list of mean grades; the one on the end should be Essex.

Quotes

"Isle of Man CA." - Bulletin, page 4.

"Gender-specific expression. Consider replacing with 'Person'." - Bulletin's grammar-check. (For those who care about such things, the word it was looking for is "sex".)

"Beginners, children and weak chessplayers." - Congress leaflet.

"Do you mind if I stand up? My hearing's not very good." - Someone at a meeting recently, on rising to speak.

Apologists' Corner

"Excuse me, before we all die of boredom." Not the politest person at the BCF Council Meeting 12.7.97

"Excuse me!" - But this one had him beaten all ends up. Same meeting, lost count of the number of times.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: *Chessex* for May/June and July; *ChessIns* for July.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
vs.
[Illegible Name]

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