



Dorset Junior Chess Newsletter

No. 9



Welcome to Newsletter No 9.

This year has been challenging in many ways for so many people but it has been encouraging to see the enthusiasm for the game of chess continues. Online chess continues and many new initiatives are being developed some of which are covered in this newsletter.

Christmas is nearly here and we will be compiling a special Christmas chess quiz for juniors (and their families) during December.

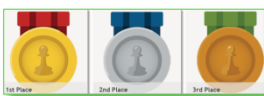
Dorset Junior Chess – Friday evening online Chess events

Friday 13th (but definitely not unlucky) November saw Dorset Junior Chess run the first junior tournament since the summer break. The highly successful and enjoyable **online chess tournament** was followed by **an interactive chess lesson**. This momentum was continued on Friday 20th and 27th November with further exciting **online chess coaching sessions and tournaments**. It has been great to see up to 13 keen junior players at one session and more are always welcome.



Tournaments are run on **Chesskid.com**, which is a great platform for junior chess. It's very safe as all the children have an anonymous **Chesskid** 'name'.

The first week's lesson covered important opening rules and was illustrated by a position from a well-known past game. It was fantastic to see the junior players offering suggestions as to the next best move! This was followed in subsequent weeks, firstly with a very enjoyable interactive chess lesson led by Martin Simons on the topic of **'Pins'** where collectively the young players solved a fantastic nine sets of puzzles centred around the concept of 'pins' before the tournament started and then in the following week, Andy introduced the concept of **Counting the attacking and defensive pieces**. Well done everyone, great work! And thanks to Martin and Andy for preparing these.



The tournaments are run over 3 or 5 rounds with everyone taking part. There have been some interesting battles across the virtual board, including brother vs sister competition, and a few losses on time such was the close competitiveness.

For full details of the weekly sessions and winners, have a look at [Junior Chess | Dorset Chess](#). Coaches on hand are Andy Baskett, Martin Simons, and Martin Clancy with support from Nikki Forster.

These evenings are proving to be very popular and great fun. Any interested juniors should please contact nikkiforster2015@gmail.com. We welcome **all** junior chess players from across the Dorset and Bournemouth & District chess league catchment areas (and some who are just over the border in Hampshire!) irrespective of your school or chess club affiliation.

Chesskid.com

For those juniors who have not yet used [Chesskid.com](https://www.chesskid.com/), there are lessons, videos and puzzles aimed at beginners through to more experienced junior chess players. Lessons and videos use friendly cartoon characters and it's very interactive. Check out <https://www.chesskid.com/>.

Dorset Chess Website

Lots more information on chess in Dorset can be found on the Dorset Chess website [Dorset Chess | Dorset Chess League](#), including weekly bulletins, the latest of which is focussed on the highly successful Ringwood Lockdown Online Tournaments, plus puzzles and quizzes and plenty of news.



Other Dorset Junior chess players in action

✚ The Ringwood Lockdown Online Team Battle

Larissa Cuthbert, **Jamie Doyle** and, more recently, **Jack Baskett**, have been taking part in the highly popular fortnightly **Ringwood Lockdown Online** Team Battle and Ringwood Chess Tournaments - Blitz. **Jack**, playing for Ringwood, came equal 5th out of 29 with 14 points at the last Team Battle which is a fantastic achievement! **Jamie** (for Southbourne) has also come equal 6th out of 32 with 14 points and equal 3rd out of 24 with 18. Well done! This fortnightly tournament is the highlight in the local chess calendar and has had **over 50 players** participating in the past. Please contact Martin Clancy mjclancy999@gmail.com if you are interested in playing.

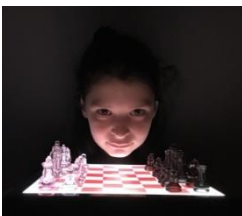
✚ 4NCL

Both **Larissa** and **Jamie** have also been playing in the 4NCL team, Wessex Some Stars E team. Well done to both of you for taking part and continuing your chess journeys.

✚ London Junior Chess Championships.

Jack and **Larissa** both also played in the qualifying events of the London Junior Chess Championship (open to junior players from across the UK) and have qualified for the finals in December. Many congratulations as this is a competitive tournament, and good luck to both of you in the finals.

✚ Larissa plays in Brentwood School Invitational Chess Tournament



Larissa was recently invited to play in the Brentwood School Invitational Chess Tournament. The online tournament consisted of one section of mixed age groups and genders. Well done to Larissa for qualifying for the last 16 and being praised by International Master Richard Pert on her play. Overall the tournament consisted of a mammoth total of 6.25 hours of playing time.

Chess Facts : Magnus Carlsen played 10 chess games simultaneously with his back turned and won 7 of them!

'The Queen's Gambit'

Showing on Netflix, receiving tremendous reviews from viewers and critics, *The Queen's Gambit* is currently the most watched TV show globally. For those who have not yet seen it, *The Queen's Gambit* is a fictional story that follows the life of an orphan chess prodigy, Beth Harmon, during her quest to become the world's greatest chess player while struggling with emotional problems. The chess moves in *The Queen's Gambit* are authentic, thanks to work by Garry Kasparov and Bruce Pandolfini (actual chess coach to Josh Waitzkin whose real life story as a chess prodigy is told in the movie *Searching for Bobby Fisher*) who consulted for the show.

While the TV show is anticipated to encourage more girls and women to play chess, sadly the series has a **15+ age** rating and so not suitable for our younger junior chess players.

The show has received great feedback from many well-known chess players: from **Jovanka Houska**, International Master and Women's Grandmaster, and Britain's reigning women's champion, and **Sarah Longson**, 32, former British women's champion, who says, "It's great for girls, and it's great for chess". Longson runs the **UK Schools Chess Challenge**, which she won herself aged seven. Longson believes that, like the fictional Beth, studying past master games is crucial to learning and success.

Chess in Schools and Communities tweeted, '... the series *Queen's Gambit* breaks the stereotype that chess is not for girls. We are passionate about encouraging girls to play and have taught more than 100,000 girls since 2010 in UK inner city classrooms'.

Delancey UK Chess Challenge 2021

It has been confirmed that the UK Chess Challenge will be going ahead in 2021 for its 26th consecutive year, again sponsored by Delancey and will take place online. For 2021 there will be a team competition in addition to the traditional individual competition. Entries for the schools and team competition are now open. Entry for individuals to the Megafinals is anticipated to open early in 2021; for 2021 pre-qualification for the Megafinals will no longer be required which is new this year.



As soon as more information and entry details are available, we will communicate this.

Chess Facts : There is a term in chess called 'zugzwang' which describes a situation where a player would prefer to not move at when it's their turn as moving any piece makes their position worse than the current position.

Get to know famous chess players: Jovanka Houska

The famous chess player featured in this newsletter is **Jovanka Houska**, England's Number One female player.



What advice would you give a budding chess player?

Don't be afraid to fail! Even if you lose a game in the most painful way, try and learn to use it as inspiration.

Jovanka Houska was born in South London in 1980. She is a Women's International Master, a Woman's Grandmaster and became an International Master in 2005. She has won the British Women's Chess Championship an amazing nine times.

Her peak rating was 2443 in July 2010 at the age of 30.

She is currently the **UK number 1 women's** player with a rating of 2381.

Jovanka is one of the most active English professional players on the circuit. She has long been a regular member of the English Women's Chess Team. In addition to playing chess, she is the author of chess books on the Caro-Kann opening, a regular commentator on international chess tournaments, and has been a special visiting player and coach at the Tradewise Gibraltar Junior International Chess Festival on many occasions.

Jovanka is very supportive in promoting girls and women to play chess.

She is married to a Norwegian chess player and lives in Norway.



We hope you enjoyed this newsletter. We always welcome new juniors of all levels and volunteers, so please contact the B&DCL and DCCA junior chess coordinator, Nikki Forster at nikkiforster2015@gmail.com if you wish to find out more on any junior chess matters or check out the Dorset Junior chess webpage <https://www.dorsetchess.co.uk/junior-chess/>