

Junior Chess Report 2025

Glorney Gilbert International Tournament 2025

The tournament was held in Wales and was very nearly a disaster, on the scale of 2023.

We were originally due to host in 2026, but changed years with Ireland on the expectation of sponsorship, which in the end, did not materialise.

We were looking at Cardiff University as a venue, but unfortunately at the point of signing the contract we book it had already been booked for the dates we wanted. We were due to hold the event in July and I discovered in May that we did not have a venue! Kevin brought off a deal with the plush Celtic Manor Resort in Newport and, fortunately, we had financial support from the Welsh Chess Education Trust. (This trust was set up in the 1970s with the specific aim of raising funds to help finance the Glorney Gilbert Tournament when it is held in Wales, so the trustees could hardly refuse.)

Everyone thought the venue to be superb and we received a number of compliments, one of which praised the friendly, polite and helpful attitude of the Welsh players and officials. Of course, no one noticed the smooth organisation, mainly because of the huge amount of work done by the arbiters, Adrian Elwin and Matthew Carr before the tournament began. Hannah Richmond also officiated in her usual efficient manner and Alexis Harakis was at hand to offer support, sympathy, advice and post match analysis to our players.

In addition to the above difficulties, I was suddenly burdened with the task of organising the International team at very short notice, when I had no contact with their players. The International Glorney and Stokes teams were thus made up of Irish players and the Gilbert and Robinson teams of a mixture of Welsh and English players.

The weak International team enabled our results to be actually better than last year's high water mark. The Gilbert team came third, the Glorney and Robinson teams fourth and the Stokes team fifth, out of six (five in the case of the Gilbert team.)

The Glorney team drew with Ireland and beat the International team. The Gilbert team beat Scotland and drew with the International team. The Robinson team beat Scotland and the International team and The Stokes team beat the International team and lost narrowly to Scotland and Ireland.. All the other matches were lost.

Ethan McGrath and Emma Kong were our highest scorers, with 3.5 points each.

England overwhelmingly dominated the tournament, with only Ireland able to offer any kind of a challenge. Ireland did not field a Gilbert team and three Welsh players (Kristan Encoch, David. Belochkin and Bob Hurn) volunteered to give their opponents a gradeable game in each round.

The final results were as follows:

Glorney	England 18, Scotland 14.5, Ireland 13, Wales 11, England B 10.5, Inter. 8.
Gilbert	England 13, England B 12.5, Wales 8, Internat. 7.5, Scotland 4, Ireland 0.
Robinson	England 21.5, Ireland 20.5, England B 20.5, Wales 12, Scotland 9.5, Inter. 6.
Stokes	England 22, Ireland 18.5, England B 17, Scotland 16.5, Wales 9.5, Inter. 6.5.

The final scores of our players were:

Glorney	B. Szakmany 2.5, Y. Wu 2, V. Prabhu 1.5, E. McGrath 3.5, Y. Sharhorodsky 1.5
Gilbert	E. Kong 3.5, B. Tusa 0, A. Tagg 1.5.
Robinson	F. Nasir 0, A. Murthy 1, D. Shevchenko 2.5, J. Roberts 2.5, O. Bartlett-Davis 3
	K. Herath 3.
Stokes	L. Zheng 1.5, J. Choung 2, T. Reckless 0.5, T. Blankley 2, A. Sarwar 1.5,
	H. Burton 2.

Welsh Junior Champons

U. 18 Champion –	Bence Szakmany
U. !6 Champion-	Kristan Enoch, Ethan McGrath, Daylo Shevchenko.
U. 14 Champion-	Farouq Nasir
U. 13 Champion -	Otto Bartlett-Davis, James Choung, Toby Reckless.
U. 12 Champion -	Toby Blankley, Rohan Powell, and Toby Reckless.
U. 11 Champion –	Constanrine Popov
U. 10 Champion –	Lucas cZheng
U.9.Champion-	Dimitri Zografos-
U. 8 Champion-	Jai Are

N.Y.C.A. Tournaments

This English county championship for teams of six players, was due to take place in Oxford on 2-11-24, but was cancelled at the last minute. The school where it was to take place renewed its floors and the builders did not finish in time(!)

Matches v. Regions

As well as the Glorney Gilbert, we also play against three English regions on an annual basis. We play the South East and the South West of England in Gwent in May/June. and, following the collapse of the Liverpool Quadrangular tournament, the Midland counties. This year we played then in January, but we hope to return to November for this fixture.

Against the Midlands the U.12 team won an exciting match by 9 points to 8, but the U.14 team lost by 3.5 to 12.5.

The U.16 team was missing two players out of six, but still managed to win the match by 7.5 to 4.5.

In Usk we faced the South East and South West, on May 31st and June 1st, 2025. The U.14 team lost by 13.5 to 6.5 against the South West and by 15.5 to 4.5 against the South East. The U.12 team lost against the South West by 14.5 to 5.5 and by 13 to 7 against the South East.

South West and South Wales County Championship

This tournament began life as an inter-county Under 11 competition in the South West of England over 30 years ago. Various Welsh county teams have played in this competition over the years. Since emerging from Covid 19 we have played as "Glamorgan." In effect, it is a South Wales team.

This year the tournament was held in Bristol on 11-1-25. Five counties took part, Glamorgan, Devon, Wiltshire, Somerset and Gloucestershire.. The final team results were as follows:

- Under 18 Gloucestershire 16, Glamrgan12, Somerset 9.5, Devon A 9.5, Devon B 5.
- Under 14 Gloucestershire 19, Glamorgan 17, Devon 13, Somerset 10, Wiltshire 1.
- Under 11 Gloucestershire 21, Glamorgan A 19.5, Devon 14, Glamorgan B 9.5, Somerset 5, Wiltshire 3.
- Under 9 Somerset 18.5, Gloucestershire 12, Wiltshire 5.5.

Andrei Zhuravlev played in the World Schools Championship in Vrnjacka Banja, Serbia in March 2025. He scored three points out of nine against a diverse and challenging lineup, including players from Serbia, India, Sri Lanka, Ghana and Mongolia.

We continue to recover from the malign effects of Covid 19. The youngest age group (U. 12) has been our weakest in recent years. However, they have begun to improve on previous performances and I see green shoots of promise among them. Russell Dodington and Owen Dutfield continue to coach in various schools and the North Cardiff Chess Club continues its sterling work, introducing juniors to league chess, raising standards and greatly encouraging them. The Castell Nedd club has gone in the same direction this season, with its introduction of the Dragon League for beginners below West Wales League standard. The Llanelli club has just started an initiative, which I hope, will grow into something similar.

I sincerely thank all the people who freely gave their time to support, encourage and organize junior Chess, both during the present season and previously. I would also like to thank all the junior players and their parents for their support.

Ian Eustis