

Round 6

Today was a good day for the Welsh contingent.

Both boys practised together before setting off for the round in determined mood. Ifan was white against a player from Luxembourg rated 1201. Although his rating was low, all games can be challenging at this level of tournament and nothing can be taken for granted. There was also nothing online to help preparation. Ifan played aggressively from the opening and soon gained the upper hand. They had barely reached the middle game before Ifan, a little after the hour mark, claimed the win.

Ifan is now on 2/6 with 2 wins under his belt. A positive way to finish before the rest day and with plenty of encouragement from his quality of play and progress.

Hugo, with black, yet again faced a much higher rated player, a 2144 from the Czech Republic. Once more this turned into a marathon match. The advantage shifted slightly one way or the other throughout much of the game and both players missed an opportunity for a draw based on repetition at one point. Finally, after over 5 hours, with both players short of time, the Czech player launched an attack which threatened checkmate. Hugo, realising drastic action was required, seized the initiative, sacrificing his Queen and Rook in rapid succession to force stalemate and secure the draw.

Hugo now ends the first part of the tournament with 2 draws and a win out of 6 games played. As one of the lowest graded players, and having had a tough draw, he is encouraged by his progress thus far.

The rest day eve saw players from many countries congregate in the hotel foyer. The Welsh players joined a 30 strong international football game and a table tennis tournament, before playing fun doubles and blitz chess with Scottish, English and Spanish players until the early hours.