

## Round 8 report

Today dawned a glorious hot sunny day and both boys had regained their enthusiasm and fighting spirit.

Ifan faced an ungraded boy from Kosovo. Although this obviously presented an opportunity to put some points on the board, there was also a risk as the opponent's true strength was difficult to assess and there were no games to analyse. In the event, Ifan quickly seized the advantage. His opponent made 4 increasingly desperate draw offers, but Ifan, undeterred, pushed ahead for the win. A great confidence boost going forward into the last 3 rounds.

Hugo, for the second day in a row, faced a 1952; this time from Bosnia Herzegovina. As is now becoming usual for Hugo in these Championships, he endured another marathon 5 + hour game. His opponent, as white, seized the initiative early on and Hugo found himself playing an unfamiliar opening which resulted in him losing a pawn. Hugo gathered himself for the middle game and began the fight back. Finding virtually all the best/good moves, he achieved parity and then moved a pawn ahead. In the end game he was pressing for the win, on analysis well ahead, but as the 5 hour mark passed, the desire to finish led him to rush a move which gave his opponent the lifeline of a stalemate opportunity which he seized. So, a rather frustrating draw ensued (albeit against a player rated 153 FIDE points above him)

Both boys are very encouraged by the improvement and development of their games. The opportunity to compete at this level is one they are relishing. The evenings are also full of fun blitz matches against the Scottish and some of the English players.

Tomorrow Ifan faces a US 1774, whereas Hugo, with no respite after his mammoth matches, is drawn against a Namibian FM graded over 350 points above him.

It is all tough at this level!