

# **Correspondence Chess Conductor's Report for HCA AGM**

## **19:30 03/08/2021**

Sadly, as most of you know, we lost Ross Brennan in June and I have attended his funeral today. Ross played many CC games for us over the years. He recently scored 1.5 / 2 points for the 'Eight of Hearts' team in the BCCL Championship 2021 and has drawn a game for the Hertfordshire 'A' team in the C&DCCC Division 1 Ward-Higgs. His remaining game, in a strong position, has been kindly taken over by Graham Williams to finish. Ross also played for the Herts and Minds team in the 6<sup>th</sup> British Webserver Tournament, Division 2, making our highest individual score of 4.5/6.

We congratulate Ed Holland on his achievement in obtaining the Correspondence Chess Master title (CCM) this year.

I would like to make a plea to the various Hertfordshire chess clubs as we need more correspondence players to be able to support two teams in both the C&DCCC and BCCL Championships. We need a larger pool of players, if only to cover as reserve players. Without more players we will only be able to run one team in the C&DCCC and BCCL which will disappoint many who have supported us for many years.

Correspondence chess (CC) is easy to play nowadays as we use a chess server to make moves, no more posting cards or sending emails! You can play at your own pace and have as many or few games as you wish. Many OTB players have taken up CC to test out their opening variations. I recently played Clive Frostick, a strong OTB player, who has recently returned to CC after many years away. Many players do use computer assistance, but this is allowed, and it is up to you the level of assistance you need to play a reasonable game as the programs are certainly not infallible especially in certain kinds of position. You can download at least one top chess program free of charge. The only disadvantages of CC are players who take a long time to move and the high rate of draws.

### **Last Season Final Results: -**

#### **Counties and District Correspondence Chess Championships (C&DCCC)** **(31/01/2020 to 30/11/2020)**

##### **Division 1 Ward-Higgs**

Hertfordshire 'A' team scored 7/16 in 6<sup>th</sup> place out of 9 teams. Board 1 SIM K.Kitson (Draw 2); 2 SIM J.Rhodes (Win 1, Draw 1); 3 CCM P.Rice (Draw 2); 4 R.Brennan (Draw 2); 5 E.Holland (Draw 2); 6 CCE A.Reed (Draw 2); 7 M.Dyer (Loss 2); 8 P.Dunks (Loss 1, Draw 1). Winners were Essex 'A' team with 11/16, second were West Wales 'A' with 9.5/16 and third Lancashire with 9/16. We were lucky to stay just above the relegation level with the single win.

##### **Division 3 Butler-Thomas**

Hertfordshire 'B' team scored 8/16 in 4<sup>th</sup> place out of 5 teams. Board 1 D.Edney (Win 2); 2 S.Law (Win 2); 3 J.Tymms (Loss 2); 4 I.Brooks (Draw 1, Loss 1); 5 A.Prince (Loss 2); 6 S.Cage/S.Johnson (Win 2); 7 T.Walsh (Loss 2) 8 T.Thurstan (Win 1,

Draw 1). Rather unusual to have so many decisive games, some going our way and some not. Winners were Worcestershire 'A' with 12.5/16, second were Durham with 10/16 and third Surrey 'C' with 8.5/16.

### **British Correspondence Chess League (BCCL) (21/12/2019 to 21/11/2020)**

#### Championship Division

Eight of Hearts team scored 9.5/16 in 2<sup>nd</sup> place out of 7 teams. Board 1 SIM K.Kitson (Win 2); 2 SIM J.Rhodes (Draw 2); 3 CCM P.Rice (Draw 2); 4 CCE A.Reed (Win 2); 5 R.Brennan (Win 1, Draw 1); 6 M.Dyer (Win 2); 7 S.Law (Loss 2); 8 S.Cage (Loss 2). Winners were CS Administration with 10/16, second were Eight of Hearts with 9.5/16 and third Friends Chess with 8.5/16. Being our first season in the Championship Division this was an excellent result and we were very close to the winners.

#### Division 1

Eight of Hearts 'B' team scored 2.5/16 in 7<sup>th</sup> place out of 7 teams. Board 1 P.Dunks (Loss 2); 2 J.Tymms (Win 1, Draw 1); 3 I.Brooks (Loss 2); 4 K.Woodhouse/E.Holland (Draw 1, Loss 1); 5 A.Prince (Loss 2); 6 G.Williams (Loss 2); 7 S.Johnson (Loss 1, Draw 1); 8 M.Duggin (Loss 2). We lost rather badly. At school our headmaster would always read out our football results at morning assembly and one day, instead of giving out the score, he just said the second team had "lost rather badly" referring to our 27-0 loss! What he did not say was that most of our opponent's team were, reportedly, from their first team. This reminds me of that occasion! Pete Dunks was up against LGM Dawn Williamson rated several hundred points above himself and others too were taking on stronger opponents. This was also our 'B' team's first season in Division 1 and I think they will be happier being back in Division 2.

#### **Latest Match News: -**

### **C&DCCC 07/02/2021 to 07/01/2022**

#### Division 1 Ward-Higgs

Hertfordshire 'A' team have so far scored 5.5/13. Board 1 SIM K.Kitson (Draw 1); 2 SIM J.Rhodes (Draw 2); 3 CCM P.Rice (Draw 2); 4 CCE E.Holland (Draw 2); 5 R.Brennan/G.Williams (Draw 1); 6 CCE A.Reed (Win 1, Draw 1); 7 M.Dyer (Loss 1); 8 P.Dunks (Loss 2). Although we stand in the mid-field I only expect to get another 1.5 points from our remaining 3 games at best, and it is too early to say how near the bottom we will end. We are up against some tough opponents this season.

#### Division 3 Butler-Thomas

Hertfordshire 'B' team have so far scored 8.5/12. Board 1 D.Edney (Loss 1, Draw 1); 2 S.Law; 3 J.Tymms (Win 2); 4 I.Brooks; 5 S.Johnson (Loss 2); 6 T.Walsh (Win 2); 7 M.Duggin (Win 2); 8 T.Thurstan (Win 2). So, a good start, although I only expect another point from the 4 remaining games. Whatever happens, it is already a better result than last season.

### **BCCL 01/02/2021 to 01/01/2022**

#### Championship Division

Eight of Hearts have a final score of 9/16, which is half a point down from last season. Board 1 SIM K.Kitson (Draw 2); 2 SIM J.Rhodes (Draw 2); 3 CCM P.Rice (Draw 2); 4 CCE E.Holland (Draw 2); 5 R.Brennan (Win 1, Draw 1); 6 CCE A.Reed (Win 2); 7 M.Dyer (Draw 1, Loss 1); 8 P.Dunks (Draw 2). It will not be enough to win but will certainly keep us from relegation. Well done to Arthur for his double wins and to Ross for his win and draw.

### Division 2

Eight of Hearts 'B' have so far scored 9.5/15. Board 1 S.Law (Win 1, Loss 1); 2 J.Tymms (Win 1); 3 I.Brooks (Loss 2); 4 S.Johnson (Loss 1, Draw 1); 5 T.Walsh (Win 2); 6 M.Duggin (Wins 2); 7 G.Williams (Draw 2); 8 T.Thurstan (Wins 2). Having been relegated from Division 1 the team have done really well and are likely to be in the top two finishers. We have 1 game to finish which is looking promising.

**6<sup>th</sup> British Webserver Tournament, Division 2 Board 4, Team, (08/05/2020 to 17/02/2022, possible 650 days event).** Sponsored by myself the Herts and Minds team has finished with a score of 15.5/24 (team result 10) in second place to the winners Schach Dragons (15.5/24, Team result 11) with BCCA Griffins in third place with 12.5/24. Board 1 SIM K.Kitson 3.5/6; 2 CCM P.Rice 4/6; 3 CCE A.Reed 3.5/6; 4 R.Brennan 4.5/6.

This is a very good result and we were so close to the winning team. Hopefully, we might get promotion, but that is uncertain at this stage as we will find it hard to replace Ross.

**John Rhodes 30/07/2021**