
CHESS CHATTER



BALLARAT CHESS CLUB NEWSLETTER

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WELCOME BACK TO THE B.C.C. NEWSLETTER!

Cassandra Barnett Ed.

Hi to all our chess fans and welcome back to our newsletter! As with every year, our annual Begonia Open has come and gone... this time reaching a nearly, record breaking 139 participants! Well done once again to our committee for putting in such a good effort. The top prize was shared between IM James Morris and Australia's new GM, young Anton Smirnov, both finishing on an unbeaten 6/7.

Some more news of note... our club recently arranged a yearly match (like the Fletcher Morrow, our annual match against Geelong) with the Bendigo Chess Club. The inaugural match was played over nine boards at the Bendigo Clubrooms on May the 20th; the two clubs vying for the Barrow - van Riel shield. Bendigo found themselves a point ahead of Ballarat with only one game left to go... appropriately between the two club captains; Leigh Healey for Bendigo and Rodney Jacobs for Ballarat. Rodney's interesting middle game scare tactics resulted in a double rook vs rook and two pawns endgame. Taking advantage of the extra piece, Rodney managed to haul in the point to level the score between the clubs. So, the Barrow - van Riel shield is yet to be won.



Rodney triumphs for Ballarat.

The Club Championship, our club's top tournament, was interesting this year. The C grade was contended closely by: Dan Wang, Sasha Jacobs, Justin Goodison and Peter Wang, requiring a double round robin playoff to determine the winner. Justin and Peter, both on 4 points, met in the final game and Justin happily came out on top. Well done to Justin on his first, hard-earned, club title.

The winner of the reserves title was a lot clearer: Caitlin Barnett, who ran away with the tournament quite early, finished on an unbeaten score of 9.5/11! Congrats to Caitlin!

Seven time champion, Bas van Riel, and Heath Gooch were the top contenders for the A grade. With Heath being half a point up, the two met in the final round. Needing only a draw to secure the title, Heath played solidly into a fairly drawn endgame. His patience was rewarded when Bas strayed in a technical matter, handing Heath the win and his first club title.

The Ballarat Juniors

By the Editor

One thing that is great about our club is that it gives FREE membership for juniors! The result is that more than half of our club's members are juniors; many who play regularly. Even our current top ranked player is a junior! I hope to publish some interviews that I plan to have with some of our juniors to give an idea about what they like best about being part of the Ballarat chess community.

