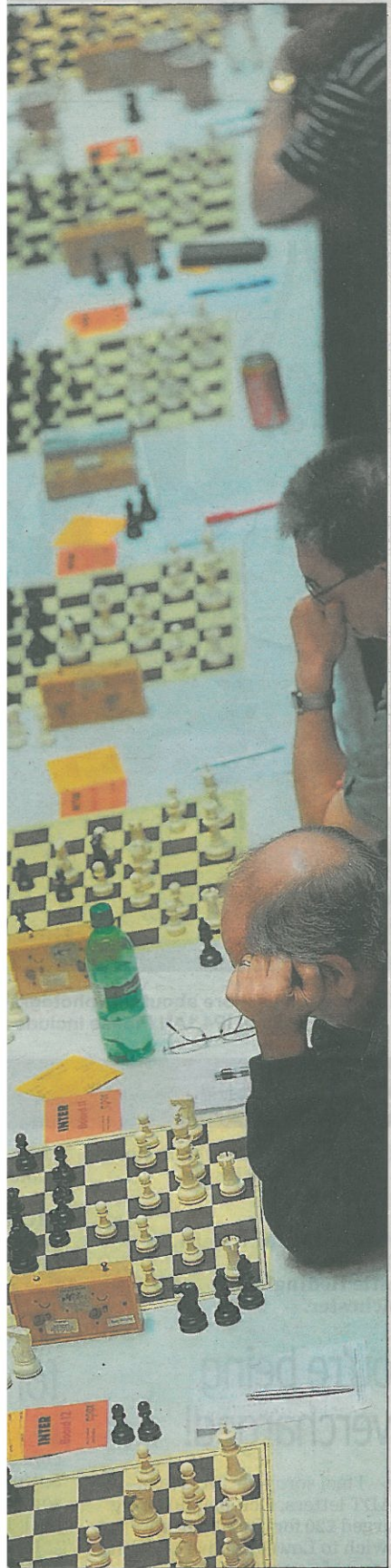


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CHECKS AND BALANCES: Participants in the 29th Bury St Edmunds Chess Congress get down to action at The Apex. Above, Edmund Player, from Bury (left) playing against David Spence from Ipswich

Photographs: PHIL MORL

# Kings and queens seen at The Apex

CHESS enthusiasts were hoping to make all the right moves when a major tournament came to town.

The Apex centre was awash with rooks, bishops, knights and pawns as players from as far away as Falmouth and Sheffield competed in the annual Bury St Edmunds Chess Congress.

More than 150 chess-buffs including one grandmaster and five international masters took part in the

tournament, which ran over Saturday and Sunday.

Each player completed five games during the two days - some lasting for up to 3½ hours - in a bid to secure part of the £2,500 prize fund.

There were four graded sections and players could compete at their own level. The youngest competitor was just 10 years old, while the oldest was a seasoned veteran at 88 years old.

Congress organiser Bob Jones said although computer games were gaining in popularity, the humble game of chess still had a lot to offer.

"Chess is a much more sociable game to play because you are competing with real people," he said. "From a personal point of view, it's the mental stimulation that attracts me really. I think if I can keep my brain ticking along it might make me live longer."

He added: "Chess is something you can play at any age and still have a level playing field. Also, the variety is amazing - with millions of potential combinations, you will hardly ever play the same game twice."

With 11 of the competitors this year aged less than 18 years old, it seems that future generations are set to keep the game and the congress going for a good few years yet.

## RESULTS

This year's Bury St Edmunds Chess Congress attracted 151 players across four graded sections - the open, major, intermediate and minor.

The open event featured a number of titled players - a Grandmaster (GM) and five International Masters (IM).

### OPEN (42 entrants)

- 1 GM Stephen Gordon (Woodbridge)
- 2= M Dagne Ciuksyte (Martlesham)
- IM Richard Tozer (Cambridge)
- Paul Talsma (Maidstone)

### MAJOR (31)

- 1 Richard Lamont (Stowmarket)

- 2= David Brady (Chingford)
- Dean Hartley (Chesterfield)
- Sam Brennan (Ipswich)

### INTERMEDIATE (38)

- 1= Matthew Wilson (Leicester)
- John Lambert (Liverpool)
- Marcus Connolly (Peterborough)

### MINOR (40)

- 1= James Briginshaw (Cambridge)
- Eugene Husband (Newmarket)
- 3= Trevor McCrae (Dunmow)
- James Hall (East Grinstead)
- Harunobu Oyama (Cambridge)

A total prize fund of £2,450 was awarded to 38 competitors. The top prize of £500 went to GM Stephen Gordon