

Scottish Girls Championship 2017

Lathallan School, 11th March



Brotherton Castle. Home of Lathallan School

The North-East was selected to organise the Scottish Girls Championships for a fourth successive year on Saturday March 11th 2017. The Championships were organised and run by the team at the North-East Junior Chess Association (NEJCA) in conjunction with Chess Scotland.

Brotherton Castle, home of Lathallan School was again the host venue. The Castle provides a superb backdrop to this prestigious event, with its stunning coastal views from the playing halls, over the gardens to the sea. As in previous years, the facilities were excellent and the free lunches provided by the school were greatly appreciated by players, parents and guardians alike. On this occasion the chess coincided with a major inter-school cross country event but the cerebral exertions inside the hall were a good match to the physical activities outside!

This year, both WFM Joy Durno and the U12 National Coach Richard Jennings coached entrants between rounds. As usual the coaching was keenly attended. Support was also provided by John Shovlin.

The event also provided the opportunity for presentation of the Cherie Booth award, for the Scottish girl chess player of the year during the 2015-16 season, to **Monica Espinosa**. David Congalton summarised Monica's achievements and presented the award on behalf of Chess Scotland.

The three sections of the Championships (P5 and under, P7 and under and Open) were each played as an all-play-all and were keenly contested by the girls throughout the day. Such was the closeness of the competitions that some results in all three competitions had to be determined by tie-breaks. Exciting stuff!

In the P5 and under, **Sophie Heron**, from Holy Cross Primary secured the title on a tie-break with a score of 6 out of 7.

The P7 and under section was won by a clear margin by Sorcha Shepherd, with a score of 4.5 out of 5. Second and third positions were taken by **Carolina Espinosa Cancino** and **Jessica Freeman** respectively, again determined by a tie-break.

First place in the Open section was keenly contested. Two players scored 4 out of 5 and the eventual winner and Scottish Girls Champion was decided on a tie-break in favour of **Rachel Lorna Smith** pushing last year's winner, **Monica Espinosa Cancino** into a worthy second place.

A hugely enjoyable day of chess, ended with the presentation of trophies and the crowning of three new champions, who all received their awards from WFM Joy Durno.

Thanks to all who participated and to the various helpers. Thanks to all involved with NEJCA on the successful organisation of the event for the fourth consecutive year. A huge thanks also to Lathallan School and Duncan Lyall for their generosity, hosting the event and providing the free coffee, tea, home-bakes and lunches.

P5 and Under	Primary	Championship
1st Sophie Heron (Holy Cross Primary) 6/7	1st Sorcha Shepherd (St. Peter's Primary) 4.5/5	1st Rachel Lorna Smith (Belmont Academy) 4/5
2nd Orlaith Shepherd (St. Peter's Primary) 6/7	2nd Carolina Espinosa 3/5	2nd Monica Espinosa 4/5
3rd Emma Heron (Holy Cross Primary) 5.5/7	3rd Jessica Freeman (Albyn School) 3/5	3rd Oishani Dutta (St Margaret's) 3/5