

Glorney-Gilbert International 2013

Park Inn, Cardiff, Wales

This year's event was always going to be tough, with all of our teams facing tough opposition and all of our teams fielding players inexperienced at the level they were pitched against. With four teams and only two recognised coaches, Alex Gillies and David Deary stepped up to help the players, where possible and all of the parents contributed to assisting the squad where they could. It was a gigantic team effort.

GM Matthew Turner and Heather Lang both worked tirelessly with the players on the Sunday, before Matthew had to leave for work the following day. Heather continued with the good work on the Monday and Tuesday, with Matthew returning on the Monday evening to help out. The contribution these two made, along with Alex, David, other adults and the players themselves ensured that our teams improved throughout the tournament, recording some excellent individual results, as well as some good match results.

Huge thanks to the four coaches, the accompanying adults and the players themselves. Scotland may not have won anything this time round but the event was a massive success for so many other reasons.

Glorney Team

Outgraded by our opponents on almost every board in every round and with two players from the Under 14 Robinson team accepting the challenge to play up, the Scotland team should have come home with one point from the thirty games played. The haul of six points from the six rounds was above expectations and showed the battling quality of our players.

Ali Roy – led the team by example and assisted others throughout the squad with her experience. Scored the expected point against her Welsh opponent Tom Thorpe and gave the team some hope and inspiration in a tough round 1 match against England by drawing with Daniel Hunt, graded 175 points above her.

Daniel Deary – finished as the high scorer in the team. His round 3 win against Ireland would have been the highlight had he not taken such delight in the method of his round five draw against England, which caused his opponent to sag in his chair when he realised what was happening.

Lennart Koehn – was unlucky not to get more, especially on the final day. Fought and scrapped all the way. His round 2 win against Wales, combined with Ali's draw showed the others that points could be won.

Declan Shafi – originally selected for the under 14's, Declan answered the call to move up to the Glorney team, allowing lesser experienced squad members to play at a more competitive level. This selflessness made the event tough for him but he made every opponent fight for the game and got his reward with a draw against Wales in round 4. The moment his opponent realised Declan was capable of holding the draw

and both players had a chuckle at the board was one of the memorable moments from the event.

Alexander Bond – the second under 14 who sacrificed the possibility of scoring high for the greater good of the squad. Alexander fought hard in every match and didn't make it easy for his opponents. Although graded at least 268 points below all of his opponents, this gap was not reflected on the board. He deserved to take something more than experience from the tournament.

Jessica Gilbert Team

For a team that had no experience at this level these three girls performed way above what was expected of them. It wasn't just that they scored points when on paper they shouldn't have but they worked hard and they worked well together.

Caitlin Reid – On the newly published CS list with a grade of 1076, her round 3 win against Diana Mirza graded 1683 was possibly the best Scottish result of all. To follow up with a draw against another very experienced opponent in Megan Owens (graded 1852) showed that the talent is there. Worked hard with the coaches and showed a desire to improve.

Morven Petrie – Only recently returned to playing the game seriously and was perhaps a little tough on herself in the early round. Persevered, dug deep and got her reward with a draw against Alyssa Wang of Wales (1590). Also worked hard with the coaches and played way above her CS grading of 876.

Lauren Bond – CS grade 784. This level of event was a massive step for Lauren whose previous longest games were around the two hour mark and who has only just started dipping her toes in weekend congress chess. Although Lauren didn't quite manage to score she made life difficult for her opponents in games that lasted way longer than she had played before. Despite the long games and a long journey down taking their toll on her around the end of round 3, Lauren was another who worked well with the coaches. Another tough young lady with chess talent.

Robinson Cup Team

The Robinson team improved throughout the tournament and scored better against all of the teams in the second set of matches. The first match against England wasn't the start they were looking for but the team recovered well and gave a good account of themselves in the rest of the matches.

Kai Pannwitz – top scorer for the team but he was disappointed with 4 out of 6. No one else was. No opponent got the better of him overall. Demonstrated why he is one of Scotland's top juniors with his play.

Leonardo Sani – three points out of six, Leonardo was also disappointed not to score more. Again, no one else was disappointed with his performance. Learned a valuable

lesson against his Welsh opponent and like Kai he didn't let any opponent get the better of him over the two games.

Colin Howie – battled quietly away and was unlucky not to get a greater reward for the effort he put in to his games. Bounced back from defeat in a long round 3 game to score his first win in round 4 and chalked up another good win in round six.

Jack Stewart – two out of six in his international debut at this level was a good start. Inexperience and possibly nerves made the first day difficult but he managed a draw in the afternoon against Wales. A win in the final round against Ireland showed Jack has the ability and talent to play at this level and get results.

Leston D'Costa – got off to a flyer with two wins on the first day. Keen to learn and improve, Leston acquitted himself well in his Scotland debut. Finishing with 50% was a great performance for someone with no previous experience at this level.

Craig Gillies – worked extremely hard over the three days and can count himself unlucky not to have converted some of his excellent play into points. Again inexperience and nerves may have had an adverse effect but gaining experience at this level will help for the future.

Stokes Cup Team

Like the other teams, the Stokes team fought back from a disappointing start against England and produced some fine individual performances. They got the better of the Welsh and improved significantly against the Irish. The English were maybe a step too far at this stage.

Euan Gray – Individually excellent. Inspirational as a team leader. Mature beyond his age.

Ben Volland – Another under 12 star who performed well at this level. Three wins over the three days.

Michael Doyle – Worked hard when things weren't going his way and deserved his win in round 4 for the hard work he put in. Another under 12 with talent.

Euan Dawson – Talent number 4 in this team. Took his time at the board and was clearly analysing deeply. Three draws was the least he deserved from the toil and effort he put in. Learned and took on board some valuable lessons from the coaching team.

Sam Harper – J9 on the CS grading list, so has a few years at this level. I hope Sam continues to play the game, as he showed he has the ability and enthusiasm to do something special in future international events. His draw in round 4 secured the teams first match win and the reaction of Sam and the squad was a delight to behold.

Callum Smith – Prior to the event Callum had played mostly junior events, only recently entering into the weekend congress scene. Overcame his debut nerves and finished the tournament on a high with a win in the final round.