

Old Mancunians' Association Chess Section

Report 2010

The Chess Section's activities resumed after a break of two-and-a-half years with another tournament pitting teams of Old Mancs from different eras against each other and the School. After three successes for the School from 2001-2003 in this format, the "Oldest" (1970s entry) Mancs (Goodger, Richman, Webster) won in 2004, followed by successes in 2005 and 2006 for the "Old" (1990s entry) Mancs (Shaw, Fish, Izod), and in 2007 for an "all-age" team (Goodger, Webster, Izod, Harthan). The 2010 event took place in the School Archive Room on Monday 22nd March.

These were the results:

Round 1

School "A"	3½-½	School "B"
Josh Oxley	1-0	Daniel Lea
Tom Clements	1-0	Jake Manton
Jamie Horton	1-0	Andrew Horton
Scott Waring	½-½	Rafi Adler
Old Mancs	2-2	Oldest Mancs
Jonathan Fish	0-1	Martyn Goodger
David Boyle	1-0	David Latham
Chris Izod	½-½	Saul Richman
Pete Harthan	½-½	Peter Webster

Round 2

Oldest Mancs	3-1	School "A"
Martyn Goodger	1-0	Josh Oxley
David Latham	0-1	Tom Clements
Saul Richman	1-0	Jamie Horton
Peter Webster	1-0 (d)	Scott Waring
School "B"	0-4	Old Mancs
Daniel Lea	0-1	Jonathan Fish
Jake Manton	0-1	David Boyle
Andrew Horton	0-1	Chris Izod
Rafi Adler	0-1	Pete Harthan

Round 3

Oldest Mancs	4-0	School "B"
Martyn Goodger	1-0	Daniel Lea
David Latham	1-0	Jake Manton
Saul Richman	1-0	Andrew Horton
Peter Webster	1-0	Rafi Adler
Old Mancs	3-1	School "A"
Jonathan Fish	1-0	Josh Oxley
David Boyle	½-½	Tom Clements
Chris Izod	½-½	Jamie Horton
Pete Harthan	1-0 (d)	Scott Waring

Final Standings

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	Brd Count
Oldest Mancs	3	2	1	0	9	3	5	12½
Old Mancs	3	2	1	0	9	3	5	13
School "A"	3	1	0	2	5½	6½	2	
School "B"	3	0	0	3	½	11½	0	

There was some debate at the end of the event as to whether there was a clear winner. It had been agreed at the start that if two or more teams ended up with the same number of match points and game points, "board count" would also be used to break the tie. This works by adding up the numbers of the boards on which each tied team won, with the lowest total (reflecting wins on higher boards on average) indicating the winner. Normally, this method is applied only to matches between the teams in the tie, in which case the board count would have been 1-2 in favour of the Oldest Mancs. The Old Mancs (with two barristers on their team) sought to argue that it should be applied to all the matches in the event, and suggested that this would break the tie in their favour. Having reserved judgment on these submissions, it still seems to me that the tie-break is in favour of the Oldest Mancs. The board count that I have given in the table above excludes the matches against the School "B" (where both teams won 4-0 and so had identical board counts on any analysis), and includes half the number of the board in the other matches where there was a draw.

What was not in any doubt was that the Old Boys continued their ascendancy over the School – although the School put up a fight, and Tom Clements in particular picked up a creditable 2½/3 score. The last game to finish was Chris Izod against Jamie Horton: Chris needed to win to edge his team ahead of the Oldest Mancs on game points and thus retain the Clements Cup; Jamie's flag fell but to the consternation of his team-mates, Chris did not notice until his own flag had also fallen, and therefore the game ended in a draw despite Chris having an excellent position.

And here are some of the games:

- Martyn Goodger (Oldest Manics)
- Josh Oxley (School "A")

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 c3 e5 4 Bc4 h6 5 0-0 Nf6 6 Re1 Qb6 7 d4 cxd4 8 cxd4 Bb4 9 Nc3 exd4 10 Nd5 Nxd5 11 exd5+ Ne7 (Black could, of course, play 11...Bxe1, and if 12 Qxe1+ only now ...Ne7. But 12 dxc6 Bb4 13 Ne5 is also possible for White. Black was starting to fall behind on time at this point.) 12 Bd2 0-0 13 Bxb4 Qxb4 14 Qxd4 Nf5 15 Qd3 Nd6 16 Bb3 Qb5 17 Qc3 a5 18 a3 b6 19 Rad1 (19 Nh4 Qc5 20 Qg3 looks better, e.g. 20...b5 21 Rac1 Qb6 22 Bc2 intending 23 Qd3.) ...Qc5 20 Qd2 Ba6 21 Ne5 Qb5 22 Ba2 Rac8 (Black has succeeded in completing his development without allowing White to put his queen and bishop on the vulnerable b1-h7 diagonal – but at the cost of time on the clock.) 23 Re3 Rfe8 24 Rde1 f6 25 Ng4 Rxe3 26 Nxe3 Re8 27 h3 Qd3 28 Qxd3 Bxd3 29 Rc1 Bb5 30 Rc7 Rc8 31 Rxc8+ Nxc8 32 d6+ Kf8 33 Nf5 (Here Black lost on time. White was hoping for 33...Bd3 34 Be6 dxe6?? 35 d7 and the pawn queens. But simply 34...Nxd6 would win a pawn for Black. The final position is worse for White, as he cannot defend the d6 pawn. Black was unhappy that his draw offer in the time scramble had not been accepted, as the players had been encouraged before the match not to play for wins on time in drawn positions. This provoked some discussion: White's view was that he had played to win throughout, and that it just so happened that Black had resources when his time ran out. Readers are invited to form their own view from the moves above.)

- David Latham (Oldest Manics)
- David Boyle (Old Manics)

1 e4 Nf6 2 e5 Ng8 3 d4 d6 4 Nf3 Bg4 5 Bf4 dxe5 6 Bxe5 Nd7 (6...Nc6!?) 7 Bc4 e6 (not 7...Nxe5? 8 Nxe5! Be6 [...Bxd1 9 Bxf7mate] 9 Bxe6 fxe6 and now both 10 Qh5+ g6 11 Nxc6 and 10 Qf3 Nf6 11 Qxb7 are good for White) 8 Bg3 Ngf6 9 h3 Bh5 10 d5? (This game was reduced to 15 minutes for each player, as David B had to take part in a telephone hearing just before the scheduled start time. David L has the first rush of blood to the head. Simply 10 0-0 was better, and if 10...Ne4, then 11 d5.) 10...exd5 11 Bxd5 Qe7+ 12 Kf1 0-0-0 (White's king has been caught in the centre and Black quickly closes in.) 13 Bb3 Ne5 14 Qe2 Nxf3 15 gxf3 Qxe2+ 16 Kxe2 Bb4 17 Nc3 Rhe8+ 18 Kf1 Bxc3 19 bxc3 Bxf3 20 Rg1 Ne4 21 Bxf7?? (21 Bf4 Rd2! 22 Rxc7 Rxf2+ 23 Kg1 Bh5 looks winning for Black [24 Bxf7 Bxf7 25 Rxf7 Rg8+ 26 Kh1 Ng3+ 27 Kg1 Rxf4 28 Rxf4 Ne2+], but he would have more chances to go wrong than in the game...) 21...Nd2mate.

- Peter Webster (Oldest Manics)
- Peter Harthan (Old Manics)

1 e4 c5 2 c3 Nc6 3 d4 cxd4 4 cxd4 e6 5 Nc3 Bb4 6 Nf3 Nf6 7 d5?! (Daring Black to take on e4. Unfortunately he called my bluff. 7 Bd3 was more sensible, transposing into a position that can also be reached via the Caro-Kann Defence and the Queen's Gambit Declined after 7...d5 8 exd5 Nxd5.) 7...Nxe4 8 dxc6 Nxc3 9 Qd4?! (9 bxc3 Bxc3+ 10 Bd2 Bxa1 11 Qxa1 0-0 12 Bc3 f6 looks better for Black, but would have been more unbalanced than the game continuation where White is a pawn down.)

9...Nd5+ 10 Bd2 Bxd2+ 11 Nxd2 Qf6 12 Qxf6 Nxf6 13 cxb7 Bxb7 14 Nc4 0-0?! (14...Ke7 followed by 15...d5 is better, keeping control of the centre.) 15 Nd6 Bc6 16 0-0-0 Rfd8 17 f3 Nd5 18 a3 Ne3 19 Rd3 Nxf1 20 Rxf1 a6 21 b4 Bb5 22 Nxb5 axb5 23 Kb2 Rac8 (Black seems to have done well: he has exchanged all the minor pieces, and now claims the only open file for his rook. But his king is far from the Q-side, where White will quickly create a passed pawn supported by his king.) 24 Rd6 Kf8 25 Rb6 Rb8 26 Rxb8 Rxb8 27 Rc1 Rb6 28 Rc8+ Ke7 29 Kb3 d5!?! (29...Rb7 first may have been better – the black king needs to move to the Q-side.) 30 Rc7+ Kf6 31 a4 bxa4+ 32 Kxa4 (I offered a draw, although I felt that I was better now. 32...e5 33 Ka5 Re6 34 b5 e4 35 b6 Rxb6 36 Kxb6 e3 37 Rc1 d4 38 Re1 Ke5 39 Kc5 is one try that comes up short for Black. 32...Rd6 33 b5 d4 34 Ka5 d3 35 Rc1 Ke5 36 b6 d2 37 Rd1 Rd5+ 38 Ka6 Kd6 39 Kb7 Kd7 40 Kb8 Kc6 41 b7 Rd8+ 42 Ka7 Rd7 43 Ka8 Rxb7 44 Rxd2 Re7 should win for Black however.) Draw Agreed.

Three days after the event, the Chess Section held a private dinner at the Oxford & Cambridge Club, at which Oldest Mancs captain Martyn Goodger was formally presented with the Clements Cup by its sponsor, Duncan Clements.

Six of the seven Old Mancs who came were 1970s starters, and the seventh started in 1980, so there were memories of playing chess in the chemistry labs amid Bunsen burners and concentrated nitric acid, and near misses in the Sunday Times Schools Chess Championships after knocking out Nigel Short's team along the way.

We hope to organise another event in London, and to arrange to meet in Manchester on Sunday afternoon for a social ahead of the next match against the School on a Monday.

The Old Mancunians Association Chess Section has a Facebook group where photos from our recent events are posted: do join and keep in touch.

Peter Webster
Secretary