

N.C.C.U. PENNINE CUP COMPETITION

Played at Ponteland Middle School on 12th December 2009

NORTHUMBERLAND	v.	CUMBRIA	
	<u>Round 1</u>	<u>Round 2</u>	<u>Round 3</u>
Amarvansh Singh Wadhwa	1-0 Sam McStay	1-0 James Leitch	½- ½ Camas Millar
Zheming Zhang	1-0 Camas Millar	1-0 Sam McStay	½- ½ James Leitch
Daniel White	1-0 James Leitch	0-1 Camas Millar	1-0 Sam McStay
Ben Cull	1-0 Alistair Ridley	0-1 Daniel Tzabar	0-1 Jason Maxwell
Callum Ballard	½-½ Jason Maxwell	0-1 Alistair Ridley	1-0 Daniel Tzabar
Thomas Aldridge	0-1 Daniel Tzabar	0-1 Jason Maxwell	1-0 Alistair Ridley
Christopher Wilson	0-1 Jonathan Leung	1-0 Connor McGurk	1-0 Jonathan Turnbull
Dominic Byrne	1-0 Jonathan Turnbull	0-1 Jonathan Leung	1-0 Connor McGurk
Fatheha Essa	1-0 Connor McGurk	1-0 Jonathan Turnbull	0-1 Jonathan Leung
Nicholas Byrne	0-1 Daniel Bullens	1-0 Joseph Graham-Jones	0-1 Martin Wright
Naman Garg	1-0 Martin Wright	1-0 Daniel Bullens	0-1 Joseph Graham-Jones
Joseph Dalton	1-0 Joseph Graham-Jones	0-1 Martin Wright	0-1 Daniel Bullens
Round scores	8½ - 3½	6-6	6-6
FINAL TOTALS	NORTHUMBERLAND 20 ½	CUMBRIA 15 ½	

This is the first time since it was inaugurated in 1998 that the Northern Counties Chess Union ventured as far North as Northumberland to hold their Pennine Cup Competition for Under-16s. Disappointingly none of the "Southern" Northern Counties was able to bring a team so that the competition became a straight match between Northumberland and Cumbria. In the presence of John Turnock, NCCU President, the team managers, Paul Bielby (Northumberland) and Syd Cassidy (Cumbria) agreed a format such that each of the 12 players played three rapidplay rounds against three different opponents.

After the first round it looked as if Northumberland were going to walk away with things, establishing a 5 point lead. Cumbria fought back however and held their own in the two subsequent rounds. Perhaps the main difference between the sides, neither of which was at full strength, lay on the top three boards where the Northumberland trio of Amarvansh Singh, Zheming Zhang (still only 7 years old!!) and Daniel White beat their opposite numbers by 7-2. For the rest the teams were very well matched. There were the usual alarms and excursions that occur when junior teams meet each other, some inexplicable blunders and much very keen and enjoyable chess. Only three games were left to finish when Tom Aldridge clinched the match for Northumberland pushing the score up to the necessary 18½. The whole was played in an excellent spirit and many new friends were made. Congratulations to Jonathan Leung of Cumbria, the only player to win three games out of three

Looking in detail at the Northumberland side, it was noticeable that nobody managed to score three points out of three, but none of them failed to win at least one game. Amarvansh, clearly the strongest player there, had to struggle to save an endgame a pawn down in R3. Zheming is a phenomenon for 7 years old; he didn't make any mistakes and, in his first two games, outplayed his opponents with his speed and accuracy in the endgame. His third game too went right to the end when both players queened their final pawns and then swapped off the queens. Two of the Northumberland team, Daniel White and Fatheha Essa (the only girl on either side) had already been awarded County Colours in the past. Colours this time will be awarded to all the players scoring half marks or more. Colours ties will go to Amarvansh Singh, Zheming Zhang, Callum Ballard, Chris Wilson, Dominic Byrne and Naman Garg.