

PENNINE CUP 2011

The Northern Counties Chess Union's annual Pennine Cup competition for teams of twelve Under-16s was held on December 3rd at the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Royal Grammar School. This year only three of the Northern Counties entered teams. They were Northumberland as holders of the cup, Cumbria and, quite remarkably, Merseyside. I am full of admiration for Merseyside organisers, Cathy Rothwell and Karl Nadin, who got their youngsters up for a 6.30am start, for the long journey to Newcastle in time for an 11 o'clock start. It was their first appearance in the Pennine Cup. I am grateful too, to Kevin Southernwood and his team from Cumbria – not quite so far, perhaps, but still a long journey for some of them. Cumbria is a scattered county spreading between Barrow and Carlisle and with the Lake District mountains in the middle.

We held the event in the Fenwick Hall at RGS in conjunction with one of our regular NJCA junior congresses and whilst it was pleasing to see nearly 100 enthusiastic Under-11s in the same hall, it did mean that the conditions for the Pennine Cup were a bit less than ideal. However nobody grumbled and we were set for a very exciting day's chess. The event was organised as a three round rapidplay jamboree with all the players having 40 minutes for each game,

Last time the Pennine Cup was played, Cumbria had had a very young team and Northumberland had had a relatively easy win. With much the same team, but now battle hardened and experienced, Cumbria took the lead in Round 1. This time it was Northumberland that had a very young side, with only three of the earlier team still available. There seemed very little to choose between the other two counties at this stage. Cumbria 7½. Northumberland 5½, Merseyside 5.

In Round 2 Merseyside and Northumberland fought back and by the end of that round only a single point separated all three counties – Cumbria 12½, Northumberland 12 and Merseyside 11½. Everything was still to play for and an exciting finish in prospect.

I think that their early start to the day and tiredness can be the only reason for Merseyside's relative collapse in the third and final round. The competition developed into a two-horse race between the two more northerly counties. Northumberland won a game and took the lead. Cumbria won a game and took it back. The lead changed hands six times in the final round and in the end everything was decided by the last game to finish. This was board 1 where 9-year old Zheming Zhang needed to beat Jason Maxwell to retain the Cup for Northumberland – a draw would not do. He tried too hard and lost and Jason took the Cup for Cumbria – the first time they have won it. Well done indeed to them.

Special congratulations to Avran Millar (Cumbria) and Anthony Lai (Northumberland), the two boys who managed to win three games out of three. And, indeed, congratulations to all the 36 players who played their games in a competitive, yet entirely sporting fashion. It was a good day's chess!

FINAL TOTALS - CUMBRIA 20½, NORTHUMBERLAND 19, MERSEYSIDE 14½.

Paul Bielby, Arbiter

2011 PENNINE CUP ROUND 1

	<u>A CUMBRIA</u>		<u>B MERSEYSIDE</u>		<u>C NORTHUMBERLAND</u>	
1	Jason Maxwell (w)	½	Fergal Wright	½		
2			Gerard Varney (w)	0	Zheming Zhang	1
3	Alistair Ridley	0			Joseph Dalton (w)	1
4	Camas Millar	1			Akhil Gupta (w)	0
5			Louis Rothwell (w)	1	Daksh Sharma	0
6	Chris Royle (w)	1	Will Scott	0		
7	Niall Burns (w)	½	Jacob Howard	½		
8			Patrick Varney (w)	1	Mark Rowden	0
9	Jake Kirkpatrick	0			Anthony Lai (w)	1
10	Holden Davis	1			James Schofield (w)	0
11			Owen Giles (w)	1	Sam Trevelyan	0
12	Dan Bullens (w)	1	Nathan Power	0		
13	Harry Martindale (w)	0	Mark Power	1		
14			Emma Rothwell (w)	0	Nicholas Byrne	1
15	Avran Millar	1			Angus Clarke (w)	0
16	Dominic Greenup	½			Daniel Bell (w)	½
17			Nathan Giles (w)	0	Nicholas Fajardo	1
18	Nathan McStay (w)	1	Christopher Winward	0		
R1 SCORES	CUMBRIA	7½	MERSEYSIDE	5	NORTHUMBERLAND	5½

2011 PENNINE CUP ROUND 2

	<u>A CUMBRIA</u>		<u>B MERSEYSIDE</u>		<u>C NORTHUMBERLAND</u>	
1			Fergal Wright (w)	0	Zheming Zhang	1
2	Jason Maxwell	0			Joseph Dalton (w)	1
3	Alistair Ridley (w)	1	Gerard Varney	0		
4	Camas Millar (w)	0	Louis Rothwell	1		
5	Chris Royle	1			Akhil Gupta (w)	0
6			Will Scott (w)	1	Daksh Sharma	0
7			Jacob Howard (w)	1	Mark Rowden	0
8	Niall Burns	0			Anthony Lai (w)	1
9	Jake Kirkpatrick (w)	1	Patrick Varney	0		
10	Holden Davis (w)	1	Owen Giles	0		
11	Dan Bullens	0			James Schofield (w)	1
12			Nathan Power (w)	1	Sam Trevelyan	0
13			Mark Power (w)	½	Nicholas Byrne	½
14	Harry Martindale	0			Angus Clarke (w)	1
15	Avran Millar (w)	1	Emma Rothwell	0		
16	Dominic Greenup (w)	0	Nathan Giles	1		
17	Nathan McStay	0			Daniel Bell (w)	1
18			Chris Winward (w)	1	Nicholas Fajardo	0
R2 SCORES	CUMBRIA	5	MERSEYSIDE	6½	NORTHUMBERLAND	6½
TOTALS after R2						
	CUMBRIA	12½	MERSEYSIDE	11½	NORTHUMBERLAND	12

2011 PENNINE CUP ROUND 3

	<u>A CUMBRIA</u>		<u>B MERSEYSIDE</u>		<u>C NORTHUMBERLAND</u>	
1	Jason Maxwell	1			Zheming Zhang (w)	0
2	Alistair Ridley (w)	1	Fergal Wright	0		
3			Gerard Varney (w)	1	Joseph Dalton	0
4			Louis Rothwell (w)	0	Akhil Gupta	1
5	Camas Millar (w)	1	Will Scott	0		
6	Chris Royle	0			Daksh Sharma (w)	1
7	Niall Burns	1			Mark Rowden (w)	0
8	Jake Kirkpatrick (w)	0	Jacob Howard	1		
9			Patrick Varney (w)	0	Anthony Lai	1
10			Owen Giles (w)	0	James Schofield	1
11	Holden Davis (w)	0	Nathan Power	1		
12	Dan Bullens	0			Sam Trevelyan (w)	1
13	Harry Martindale	1			Nicholas Byrne (w)	0
14	Avran Millar (w)	1	Mark Power	0		
15			Emma Rothwell (w)	0	Angus Clarke	1
16			Nathan Giles (w)	0	Daniel Bell	1
17	Dominic Greenup (w)	1	Christopher Winward	0		
18	Nathan McStay	1			Nicholas Fajardo (w)	0
R3 SCORES	CUMBRIA	8	MERSEYSIDE	3	NORTHUMBERLAND	7

<u>FINAL TOTALS</u>	Champions	CUMBRIA	20½
	2nd Place	NORTHUMBERLAND	19
	3rd Place	MERSEYSIDE	14½