

Saturday November 7th saw the second Hull Grandmaster Challenge. Following a successful inaugural GM simultaneous in 2014 against Gawain Jones, GM and joint 2014 British champion David Howell took on some of Hull's best at the prestigious Edwardian suite in the Mecure Royal Hull hotel. Just a few days before joining the England team in Reykjavik for the European Team Championship, David sharpened his game up with a day of challenging chess!

The format followed last year's event. In the morning David took on seven players in a blitz game, where David had just 60 seconds on the clock and the home team (supplemented by Ryan Burgin of Sheffield) had five minutes. Last year Gawain Jones had managed a 6-0 whitewash of Hull.... this year locals fared a little better with a win for Chris Mathews (147) of Willows club and a draw for Ryan Burgin (186) of Sheffield.

The afternoon simultaneous was formally opened by the High Sherriff of the East Riding, Mr Jim Dick. The first player 'fell' just 75 minutes after the start and then there was a steady stream of victories for the GM. Last year Hull managed a single win, this year not even that as David Howell strolled to 25 wins and just three draws. The first draw was obtained by David Lord (150) of Willows club which won him a copy of Fritz, kindly donated by Chess Direct. Further draws were won by Steve Hodge (Beverley; 179) and the last game to conclude, after three hours and 10 minutes, Graham Chesters (St Andrews; 181). 94.6% success rate for David Howell, in just over three hours. Gawain Jones trounced us with a 91.6% success rate, in three hours 40 minutes.

Overall assessment – a really good day's chess; Hull has another year to improve!

More pictures will appear on www.hullchess.com and David Howell has agreed to annotate two of the games one of which will appear here in due course.

Stephen Greep
Hon General Secretary
Hull and District Chess Association.



