

THE COUNTDOWN IS ON FOR THE GRAND FINALE OF THE DELANCEY UK SCHOOLS' CHESS CHALLENGE 2019

4 SEPTEMBER 2019



This September, 150 of the UK's strongest junior chess players will be going head to head for the Championship title and £11,000 worth of prize money, at a tantalising two-day Terafinal.

Over the last nine months over 40,000 children have competed over three rounds of competition and the top achieving players will be battling for the win at Daventry Court Hotel on 21st and 22nd September 2019. The prestigious event will host ten rounds in order to find out who will become this year's champion. Tension and emotion is expected to fill the room as the children compete for the five winning titles for each respective age group. This year's winners' will also win a place to play for England at an international youth event of their choice.

The Delancey UK Schools' Chess Challenge has grown again this year with more megafinals (second stage of competition) at fantastic venues including the V&A Museum of Childhood and Wetherby School. A fourth gigafinal (third stage of competition) was held at a new venue, Sandown Racecourse.

This year's Challenge follows hot on the heels of the World Chess Championship which took place in London last November. The popular champion Magnus Carlsen retained his title which he first won in Chennai 2013 against the Indian great Viswanathan Anand. Time will tell whether any of the champions from the Terafinal will go on to become Grandmasters competing on the world stage – the one thing that is for sure is that each and every player have truly earned their spot in this year's event.

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Some big names to look out for include England's young prodigy Shreyas Royal, who has taken part in the competition for the first time. Shreyas was recently ranked as the number one junior in the world in his U12 category. He cruised his way to the Terafinal and at just 10 years old will be ready to beat any opponent. Northumbrian champion Yichan Han will once again take part having won the younger sections for two consecutive years. Other returning champions include Harry Grieve (2017 U18 champion), Koby Kalavanan (2018 U18 champion), Jude Shearsby (2018 U8 Champion), Amaya MacDonald (2018 U10 girls Champion) and Nadia Jaufarally (2018 U14 girls Champion).



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2017 U18 Champion Harry Grieve



2018 U10 Champion Yichen Han

This year all 40,000 children taking part received their own "Chess Battle Manual", containing advice, puzzles and chess trivia. This is part of UK Schools' Chess Challenge plan to help educate teachers and children about the cultural history of the game and provide top tips on how to improve their skill.

Sarah Longson, Tournament Director of the Delancey UK Schools' Chess Challenge said:

"2019 has been a very encouraging year for the Delancey UK Schools' Chess Challenge which has seen us expand the number of our events and improve the quality of the venues we use to host them. We're excited to continue to grow the profile of chess in 2020 and introduce the many cultural, educational and recreational benefits of this great game to 1000s more children across the UK. We are looking forward to the upcoming Terafinal and crowning the 2019 champions."

Sponsored by Delancey, the UK Schools' Chess Challenge has been running for over 24 years now and this year saw 40,000 players from 1,100 schools take part. The challenge provides an opportunity for complete beginners to become involved in a fun event, whilst providing a spring-board to national and international titles for the strongest player.

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Sarah Longson,
Tournament Director,
Delancey UK Schools' Chess Challenge



Delancey’s Founder and Chairman, Jamie Ritblat commented:

“On behalf of Delancey, we are delighted to be supporting this exciting Terafinal and look forward to seeing who takes (or retains) the crown at the 24th Delancey UK Schools’ Chess Challenge! We wish all those taking part in the event the very best of luck, and well done to all involved in making this fantastic event happen.”

In February the first Online Delancey UK Schools’ Chess Challenge took place. Over 1,000 children took part in various puzzles and ‘blitz competitions’ with partner ChessKid.com, this outreach is encouraging more children to play chess.

This year the chess world has been expanding through the buzz of Artificial Intelligence (AI), with programmers exploring new ways of developing the game. Google owned Deep Mind recently hit the news by creating a ‘self learning’ algorithm (Alpha Zero) which learned chess from scratch by playing against itself millions of times. Within a few days it was able to beat the strongest existing chess programs. The brains behind Deep Mind, Demis Hassabis, was an extremely strong chess player as a junior. Chess helps develop critical thinking skills which are useful in STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) and the UK School’s Chess Challenge team believes many of their current players will go on to achieve great feats in the scientific and technological fields.

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Jamie Ritblat,
Founder and Chairman,
Delancey

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Notes to Editors

Delancey UK Schools' Chess Challenge'

The Delancey UK Schools' Chess Challenge has run every year since 1996 and is now considered the world's largest junior chess competition with over 1,000 schools and 40,000 children taking part every year. The ethos of the competition allows every child to enjoy playing and learning in the early stages yet testing the mettle of the finest players towards the end. The top English players from the Terafinal will be selected to represent England in an international event.

Chess is a fantastic tool for children to develop their problem solving skills, creativity and imagination, as well as the ability to plan ahead and emotional resilience. It also teaches us that hard work and perseverance pay off and to have respect for the ideas of other people. Teachers and parents comment on the enormous enthusiasm amongst the children for their badges, gold spots and mascots. Junior chess clubs are springing up all over the country, both in schools and outside; numbers in existing clubs have mushroomed. All this shows that chess is one of the most enjoyable and exciting ways for children to learn how to think critically and to plan ahead.

www.delanceyukschoolschesschallenge.com

Delancey

Delancey is a specialist real estate investment, development and advisory company whose activities encompass retail, residential and commercial real estate across London and the UK. Collaborating on a wide range of assets, partners and clients, Delancey is recognised for its innovative and diverse approach to creating long term value from real estate. Delancey also advises clients on appropriate capital structures, financing and provides asset management and development services. Delancey has a diverse portfolio of retail, residential, office and corporate assets across London and the UK, including the Alpha Plus schools group and the Elephant & Castle Shopping Centre in Southwark. Delancey is also a pioneer in the private rented sector and has spent much of the last few years bringing the legacy of the London 2012 Olympics to life; it is delivering over 3,000 homes for rent at the multi-award winning neighbourhood East Village, the former London 2012 Athletes Village in Newham.

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