

2015 Junior Club Report

The junior club has grown beyond all expectations this year. With large numbers in a confined space the club can seem a little chaotic at times, but overall the kids have fun and keep coming back. The facts:

1. In 2014, Croydon Chess Club had 54 financial members, 29 of whom were juniors (54%). 8 of those juniors participated only in Senior Club events.
2. Currently, Croydon Chess Club has 91 financial members, 67 of whom are juniors (74%). 8 of our juniors participate only in Senior club events.
3. Of the 59 junior club members, 51 regularly turn up to participate in the coaching program and tournaments. The other 8 have not been turning up this term for various reasons (moved, other activities, lost interest)
4. Of the 59 junior club members, 22 are girls (37%).
5. We now run a coaching program of at least 3 levels:
 - A-Division (10 juniors - consisting of the older juniors and the stronger juniors who have progressed from B- div) usually taken by Cameron Yung. This group is supported by Garry Lycett who takes over when Cam is not available.
 - B-Division (34 juniors - who have progressed beyond beginners and are capable of independent tournament play) taken by Ian Birchall.
 - C-Division (7 juniors - beginners) from the beginning of term 4 this has been taken by David Lacey. This group is supported by Garry Lycett and Chris Najim. Any newcomers or absolute beginners start with them.
6. Regular help setting up the junior club: Garry Lycett, Lindsay Newsome, John Vergunst
7. Regular help setting up for senior events after junior club: Greg Dingfelder
8. We've held 7 formal junior tournaments this year – usually with 2 divisions, A-Division and B-Division – plus a few fun novelty events.
9. We are developing a library of books and DVDs for juniors to borrow and coaches to use.
10. Northern Star Chess is offering Step books and chess sets for sale to our juniors at discount prices.
11. Bendigo Bank provides 5 x \$50 bank accounts as prizes for outstanding juniors.

There were many outstanding performances by our juniors this year. I won't detail them here for fear of missing out someone, but please peruse the 2015 Prize-winners' list in the tournament section of the website. More importantly, it has been terrific to see the enthusiasm and interest displayed by all our young members. Chess is a fantastic game for developing analytical thinking in children, but it also encourages creativity, planning, resilience and patience. We believe that all our juniors gain a lot just by playing the game.

Ian Birchall
Junior Club Organiser
3/12/15