

2010 Eastern Ontario Open

The end of the school year is the traditional time of year for the Eastern Ontario Open, the final event in the EOCA GP (Eastern Ontario Chess Association Grand Prix). Heading into this final event, many of the GP rating divisions had not yet been decided, thus adding another level of intensity for key players.

In these event reports, I usually proceed by announcing the winners, and go on from there. However, for a change this time, I would like to first describe a few funny little stories that unfolded even before play had started. The background to this is that for this tournament, we experimented with offering some larger early discounts. For example, an RA member who registered and paid in the weeks after my last Ottawa event, could take advantage of as much as \$65 in discounts. The intent of this was to have higher registration numbers earlier, which would attract more players, and so on. Well, as of April, this plan seemed to be working, so I contacted management at the RA Centre to indicate that I would like to open up the playing room to include the smaller room next door. This smaller room had served as the skittles room, so now we also needed a new small room for skittles, and I was assured that would be no problem. I suspect at this point that any Organizer/TD reading this is now thinking something like "sure, no problem, there's nothing to worry about, LOL"!

Not wanting to leave anything to chance, both Dave Gordon and I showed up at the playing site 2 hours before the first round, just to make sure there was "no problem". As we walked in the front door, we had our first chuckle. As the RA Centre is a big place, we had asked for RA Centre signs pointing players to the playing room. However, "Eastern Ontario Open" had somehow been translated into "Chess National Open"! We figured everyone would figure it out, and pressed on, looking for our new skittles room. I had been told the day before that this would be a special room that we had never used before, which could be accessed from the other side of the gym. I already had my concerns about players walking around the edge of the gym to get to this room, but especially some of the junior players, who would find it hard to resist playing loudly with whatever they found in the gym. It turns out this was the least of our challenges! Picture this, Dave and I find the new skittles room, with tables and chairs perfectly set up. However, it was also easy to notice that this room must have been the headquarters of the RA Fencing Club. We did not mind the mirrors and the uniforms, but our jaws dropped open when it dawned on us that this little room must have been filled with hundreds of swords! There were swords in racks, swords on shelves, heck, swords just lying there on side tables! As we look around the room, we cannot help but think of the risk of having chess players, especially some of our more active juniors, playing with swords! The concept was so comical that Dave and I laughed about our mental images all weekend! But now the players know why we had to squeeze into the Bytowne rooms the way we did this weekend. It was either that or the swords, and we are quite comfortable that we made the right decision. :)

Now let us get to the actual tournament. As advertised, we had 4 sections: Top-U2000-U1800-U1600, dividing up a juicy prize fund of \$3300! With a total of 71 players spread out remarkably evenly across these 4 sections, pairings worked out quite well. As per our recent events, in order to avoid any forced byes, there was some floating of Amateur players between sections. As a result, if you played any games as a floater, or against a floater, please note that the resulting CFC crosstables might include you in more than 1 section. In addition, all games between players in the Top Section will also be rated FIDE.

The Top Section was headlined by GM Bator Sambuev, IM Artiom Samsonkin, and IM Tom O'Donnell. There were also 2 more players rated over 2400, in the gracious Victor Plotkin and the enthusiastic Roman Sapozhnikov. In many of my previous event reports, I have sometimes felt that I was running out of ways to describe the dominance of our regular GM, but this weekend presented a new way for me! Not only did Bator score a clear 4.5-0.5 to win \$700 for 1st place, but did so while playing every single other player rated over 2400! Talk about a performance rating! Only the very sharp Victor, in the 2nd round, was able to nick Bator for a half-point. Of note however, Bator and Tom waged a tremendous battle in the 4th round, with Tom having an extra minor piece heading into the endgame, but eventually reducing into a bishop trying to hold off a bunch of weakside pawns. This game raged for 4 hours, after almost all of the other games had finished. The atmosphere was fantastic, with dozens of players and spectators watching in fascination. As it became more clear that Bator's pawn front could not be stopped, Tom got the best laugh of the weekend by turning his hand into a gun and shooting at the massed pawns! When Tom resigned, the surrounding crowd erupted into applause for both players, who were both very classy in answering questions about their game.

After Bator, Art scored a clear 4-1 to win \$400 for 2nd place. But after that, it was no longer clear. Amazingly, of the remaining 8 regular players rated over 2200, 7 of them scored 3-2, thus sharing the \$300 for 3rd place, plus the \$300 for the U2400 class prize. The cheques will be between \$85 and \$86. Please note that given these results, that we are considering restructuring the Top Section for future events. If you would like to provide your feedback, please feel free to do so at ChessTalk, where I will be initiating a new thread after this event report has been posted. Thanks in advance for comments.

Rounding out the Top Section, for the \$300 U2200 Class prize, Christian Pepin also scored 3-2 to win it, and did so even being paired up for all 5 rounds!

Moving on to the U2000 Section, \$500 was up for grabs for the first 2 players, \$300 and \$200 respectively. This section was actually dominated by Claude Carrier with a score of 4-1. However, as he was playing as an Amateur, the prizes went to 2nd and 3rd place, which was a tie at 3.5-1.5 between regular entrant David Forget and junior Zhiyuan Zhang, both from Quebec. It was a great pleasure for me to see these

personable gentlemen win their prizes.

The U1800 section also had \$500 for the first 2 players, again \$300 and \$200 respectively. Interestingly, 2 players followed practically the identical undefeated path, including a draw with each other in the 4th round, to share 1st and 2nd place with scores of 4-1. Co-winners Mark Plotkin and Jayson Huang are both wonderful young men who I am sure we will hear more about in the coming years, as they gobble up more and more of our rating points!

Finishing off with the U1600 Section, these were the results that I most surprised by, and indicate a tremendous recent improvement by the winners. The section was inarguably dominated by little Chang Yun. The young lady from Quebec won every single game she played, en route to a score of 4.5-0.5 and the \$200 1st place prize. Then winning the \$100 2nd place prize was Billy Carroll, a relatively late adult newcomer to rated chess. Billy lost his first game, but then strongly demonstrated his apparent recent improvement by winning his next 4 games in a row, to finish with a very respectable score of 4-1.

As usual, I would like to conclude this event report by thanking everyone who helped us all weekend. There are many people who I am missing from the following list, but I really appreciate all of the nice little things that many people did, which made the weekend more enjoyable for all of us. Assistant TD Dave Gordon, in addition to doing a slew of things while I was busy, saved me literally hours by completely owning the skittles room setup, maintenance, and takedown. After the tournament, Dave is also the man who is ensuring that all of our CFC and FIDE ratings are done most effectively. During the tournament, I found myself repeatedly appreciative of Marc D'Aoust, who was so flexible, actually playing in 4 of the 5 rounds, enabling me to compensate for uneven numbers of players, thus helping ensure that no one ever got hit with a forced bye. Finally, thanks to Billy Carroll for the Timmies gift card! :)

Please visit the weblink below for a PDF of the wall chart. It should be up a day or so after the event, and will eventually also link to the CFC crosstables.

P.S. John Upper was collecting scoresheets left for him at the playing site, in order to write a game analysis article for the CFC email newsletter. Please feel free to let me know if you have another game that you would like John to consider for inclusion in his next article. Thanks again John for those articles!

Yours in chess,

FIDE Arbiter Aris Marghetis

Organizer/TD, EOCA President

http://www.eoca.org/htm/tournaments_2009-2010.html

My next event is the RA Fall Open, being scheduled for late September. Stay tuned for event details, including multiple early registration discounts!

If you would like to receive details about that event directly via email, please email arismarghetis@rogers.com to be added to my private email list.