

2011 Eastern Ontario Open

The Eastern Ontario Open is traditionally the championship final event in the EOCA (Eastern Ontario Chess Association) Grand Prix. With the 2011 edition, we tried a few different things than have been usual the last few years. First we moved the dates from mid-June to the Canada Day long weekend. Some local players thought this was a suspect idea, but many travelling players expressed that they thought this would be a great idea, so we tried it! An early concern was finding affordable lodging for the same time that the newlywed royal couple was visiting, but we had affordable Carleton University next door.

Moving to the Canada Day long weekend also invited adding a 6th round, which we added to the eve of Canada Day. In turn, that 1st round happened to be on a Thursday evening, which is when the RA chess club generally meets. Therefore, we also hatched up the idea of having all RA chess club members play in the 1st round of the Eastern Ontario Open, regardless of whether they were registered to play the rest of the weekend. That led to local players who do not normally play in weekenders, to be paired against incoming travelling players, and such variety in opponents seemed to appeal to most folk.

As the dust was settling on onsite registrations, it became apparent that we had misread what players were looking for in the EOCA championship event! My leading suspicion is that the new date of the Canada Day long weekend, whereas very appealing to many of the participants, was a show-stopper for almost 2 dozen players. We had over 70 players in 2010, and whereas the crosstables this year include almost 70 players, when the RA-only players from the 1st round were deducted, that left us with just over 50 players. I am eager for any opinions about this, and I will run a poll before scheduling for 2012.

Don't get me wrong, it seems virtually everyone had a great long weekend playing chess in the nation's capital! But, receiving almost 20 less players than had been expected, necessitated some structural modifications, unfortunately at the last minute. Especially with 6 rounds, we just could not stay with 4 smallish sections, so we combined the 2 CFC&FIDE sections, and also the 2 CFC-only sections. This made pairing much easier than we had feared. We also spread more class prizes than usual, as we expected more tied results, which seems to happen as class leaders meet higher players in late rounds.

And now on to the results! As the 4th round wound down on the Saturday evening, the top players, GM Bator Sambuev and IM Tom O'Donnell, were finally matched together on Board 1. They battled late into the evening, actually being the very last game to finish. As Bator won that game though, it seemed quite obvious that he was going to run away with the tournament. Hold on just a minute, no one told Michael Humphreys! In a wonderful upset in Round 5, Michael defeated GM Bator, thus injecting some great drama into

the top boards in the final round. When the smoke had cleared, GM Sambuev and Joey Qin, both with just a single loss, finished clear ahead of everyone, finishing 5-1. They shared 1st and 2nd prizes, which worked out to a decent \$400 each.

In testament to how tight this section was, 5 players followed with scores of 4-1. However, with 2 of those 5 qualifying for larger U2200 class prizes, that left 3 players to share 3rd and 4th place. IM Tom, Michael, and Mate Marinkovic, thus each won \$100, rounding out the \$1100 up for grabs for top players.

Also impressively scoring 4-1, despite being lower-rated, Zhiyuan Zhang and American Randel Eng, shared 1st and 2nd in the U2200 class prizes, which worked out to a nice \$250 each. There was also a \$100 U2200 3rd place class prize, which 3.5-2.5 should have been enough to win. However, 2 players who scored that much, Serge Gagnon and Claude Carrier, were both playing as Amateurs! Therefore, congratulations to Bill Doubleday and Quebec teenager ZhaoYang Luo, who won \$50 each for scoring 50% in a section with very many higher-rated players. And they both won their last game to do it!

Moving on to the CFC-only section, it was reserved for players with all their Regular CFC/FIDE/FQE/USCF ratings under 1900. Despite the section not being all that large, and especially with 6 rounds to determine clear winners, it was quite surprising to find 4 players tied with 4.5-1.5 at the top! As there was \$600 set aside for the first 3 places in this section, the following 4 players have won \$150 each: Kevin Zhang, Shafkat Ali, Kevin Wan, and Benjamin Yang.

Finishing off with the U1600 class, this was the only prize all weekend that was clearly won outright by just a single player. David Zhang, and yes, he is the brother of U1900 co-winner Kevin Zhang, scored 50% to win the \$200 U1600 class prize. Note that even though the crosstables include 19 players in the U1600 class, only 3 of them were playing for money prizes! A local chess figurehead recently complained to me that the prizes for the U1600 sections had been too low, and I had countered that almost all of the U1600 players would register as Amateurs. We had a bit of a spirited chicken-and-egg discussion, so I decided to make the prize, at \$200, clearly large for only 3 non-Amateur U1600 players! If more players upgrade from Amateur, I will gladly increase it!

Finally, I would like to thank some people. Peter Arseneau and Marc D'Aoust served as our floaters so that no one ever had to sit with a forced bye! IA (International Arbiter) Serge Archambault and his sweetheart Marina dropped by almost the whole weekend, covering for me innumerable times when I needed to zip out to the rest room, or to ask building administration for something. They also provided a tremendous amount of valuable feedback on how to run events, even on how to simplify event announcements, which I really appreciate. Thanks also to Sanjiv Kalra for hosting them at his family

home in nearby Nepean. It might not be obvious to many people, but our prize fund was quite bigger than usual for only 50 or so players. That was partly due to the RA club providing some assistance for rating costs, and veteran local player Roger Hubley, even though he could not attend, made a donation!
Thanks!

Please visit the weblink below for a PDF of the wall chart. It should be up there in a day or so, followed by links to the CFC crosstables later this week.

Yours in chess,

Aris Marghetis, FIDE Arbiter
Organizer/TD, EOCA President
http://www.eoca.org/htm/tournaments_2010-11.html

My next event will be the Ottawa Autumn Open, which will probably be scheduled for late September, but the exact dates will be booked in a few weeks.

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