

# TORONTO CHESS CENTRE NEWSLETTER



## EVENT HIGHLIGHTS:



It's setting up time for Mark Plotkin and Alex Ferreira!

## Tournament Report for First TCC OCC Qualifier February 25th, 2024

On the last Sunday of February, the newly established Toronto Chess Centre (TCC) proudly hosted its inaugural junior tournament, an Ontario Chess Challenge & Canadian Youth Chess Championship qualifier. Spearheaded by three experienced professionals and close friends, Alex Ferreira (Tournament Director), Mark Plotkin (General Floor Arbiter), and Panagiotis Tsialas (Junior Events Coordinator), the TCC ran a delightful competition for young chess players.

The tournament, which was held at the Elgin Barrow Arena, a large community center in Richmond Hill, unfolded as a platform for both aspiring young talents and seasoned players to showcase their strategic prowess.

Distinctively, the qualifiers embraced a harmonious mix of girls and boys, fostering a dynamic atmosphere where gender took a backseat to age divisions. The battlegrounds were divided into five sections, ranging from Open Section Under 8 to Open Section Under 16, with each game being played by a time control of 20+5. To ensure the well-being and comfort of the participants during the intense battles of the chessboard, players were treated to snacks, with cookies aplenty, and bottled water.

In terms of attendance, the organizers were pleasantly surprised to see that TCC's inaugural tournament welcomed a staggering 120 participants, hitting its capacity a day before the event. This enthusiastic response underscored the large interest in chess within the community, demonstrating the great work that is being done by chess educators and organizers particularly in the northern suburbs to infect our youth with love for the royal game.

During the closing ceremony, a Yun (Adele) Liu, the Nomination Candidate of Aurora – Oak Ridge – Richmond Hill took the opportunity to address the aspiring young chess enthusiasts. After a brief speech, in which she shared words of encouragement, Adele took delight in awarding small prizes to the winners, as a gesture of appreciation and a reward for distinction. It is worth celebrating the winners of each section:



**Spectating is welcome but always in silent mode!**



**The last round is about to begin and it's a full house!**



### **U8 Medalists**

**Gold: Maximus Liang**

**Silver: Aaron Zhang**

**Bronze: Harold Zhang**

**Top Girl: Cecilia Gu**

In the U8 section, Maximus Liang emerged as the triumphant champion, showcasing his exceptional chess skills with a remarkable score of 4.5/5. The competition in this age category was fierce, evidenced by an exciting three-way tie for second place. Aaron Zhang, Mason Zhang, and Harold Zhang, each concluded the tournament with an impressive score of 4/5. Cecilia Gu earned the top girl distinction. The U8 section, bustling with youthful energy and enthusiasm, boasted a total of 22 participants. Congratulations to all the young contenders for their remarkable performances in this contested age division.





### **U10 Winners**

**Gold: Neill Chen, Silver: Allen Cao, Bronze: Jasper Yunjie Jia, Top Girl: Arianna Yuan**

The U12 section witnessed a standout performance from Shuang Chen, who not only claimed the top spot but also earned the distinction of being the top female player, showcasing her exceptional talent with a flawless score of 5/5. The battle for second place unfolded in a thrilling four-way tie, with Gabriel Bai, Ganeshanathan Sayan, Andy Zhang, and Samuel Zhuang all delivering commendable performances, each securing a score of 4/5. The U12 section boasted a total of 33 participants. Congratulations to all participants for their remarkable achievements in this challenging and diverse field.



### **U12 Winners**

**Gold: Shuang Chen, Silver: Andy Zhang, Bronze: Sayan Ganeshanathan, Top Girl: Shuang Chen**



### **U14 Winners**

**Gold: Vincent Chen, Silver: Larry Zhou Chen  
Bronze: Chen Chen, Top Girl: Isabelle Guan**

The U10 section culminated in a thrilling two-way tie for first place. Neill Chen and Allen Cao emerged as co-champions, each navigating their way through the competition with an outstanding score of 4.5/5. The intensity of the matches was further highlighted by a tightly contested four-way tie for third place. Neo Zhang, Theo Chan, Jasper Jia, and Harrison Ni all finished the tournament with an impressive 4/5, whereas Arianna Yuan ranked first among girls. Congratulations to all 35 participants for their performances.

In the U14 section Vincent Chen emerged as the undisputed champion with a stellar score of 4.5/5. Larry Zhou Chen secured a commendable 4/5 and clinched a solid second place only losing to Vincent. The fight for third place intensified with a compelling tie between Chen Chen and Isabelle Guan, both concluding the tournament with a well-earned 3.5/5. Isabelle also won the top girl distinction. The U14 section boasted a total of 19 participants.



**U16 Winners**  
**Gold: Ryan Zhuang**  
**Silver: Adam Li, Bronze: Leo Tan**

The U16 section unfolded with a fascinating three-way deadlock for the top position, showcasing the intense competition among the skilled contenders. Leo Tan, Ryan Zhuang, and Adam Li each secured identical scores of 4/5. Each of the players defeated one of their rivals but fell to another. Adam Li's triumph over Leo Tan, Leo's victory against Ryan Zhuang, and Ryan's success against Adam formed a captivating trio of results, reflecting the unpredictable nature of high-level chess competitions. The U16 section had 10 participants.

In the realm of event logistics, the organizers were bent on delivering a seamless experience. Alas, the start turned out a bit bumpier than anticipated. The day was scheduled to kick off with the first round at 10 am, a plan that unfortunately faced a slight delay, starting instead at 10:20 am. However, thanks to the players' patience and to a generous helping hand by the volunteers, the subsequent rounds proceeded with remarkable efficiency, and the tournament maintained its overall schedule, concluding right on time.

Behind the scenes, the event witnessed the tireless efforts of a dedicated team of very creative and supportive volunteers. In the face of a printer hiccup and other unanticipated challenges, their swift intervention ensured that the tournament's machinery ran smoothly. Among the volunteers, some took on the crucial responsibility of collecting results, contributing to the seamless execution of the event.

As the last moves were made and the final checkmates declared, participants gathered for a closing ceremony that added a touch of prestige to their endeavors. Certificates and cute souvenirs were presented to each participant, symbolizing not just the competition but the spirit of camaraderie and sportsmanship that permeated the event. The culmination of the tournament saw the top three boys and the top girl in each section being honored with well-deserved medals, a recognition of their exceptional chess skills.



**"Let me see who I'm playing against!"**



**A small appreciation gift was handed to each participant**



Besides the medals, players in the top 50% across all age categories earned the coveted qualification for the CYCC and the top 10% of participants in each grade secured their spot in the OCC. The TCC, dedicated to transparency and accuracy, will diligently compile and verify the qualifying information. Within a few days from now, players and parents can expect to receive precise details on who has earned the right to qualify to CYCC and OCC.

A heartfelt thank you resonates from the Toronto Chess Centre to all the parents who entrusted us with the opportunity to share the joy of chess with their children during our inaugural tournament. Your support and commitment to fostering your child's passion for the game have been integral to the success of this event.

A special expression of gratitude extends to our invaluable volunteers, whose dedication and tireless efforts played a pivotal role in shaping the success of the tournament. From resolving technical glitches, like the timely provision of a printer, to ensuring the smooth collection of results for our participants, their selfless contributions did not go unnoticed. Their quick thinking in settling disputes on the fly and maintaining a serene playing hall, free of distractions created a fantastic environment for chess to be played. We are immensely grateful to Jennifer (administrative assistance) William, Tony, Dorian, Max, Lily and Jasper (floor arbiters), Yunhui (general floor coordinator), Suen and Christina (photographers) for their commitment to the chess community and for turning this inaugural event into a seamless and memorable experience for all involved.



**Volunteering Arbiters Dorian Kang and Max Chen always keeping a sharp eye!**



**Volunteering Arbiters William Gu setting up a Hart House Chess Club Clock**



# Our Next Event

As we reflect on the valuable feedback received from parents, we are already planning, in fact promising, to elevate the experience for our next tournament. Mark your calendars, as we invite you to join us once again on March 17, 2024, at the same location for another exciting chess showdown. This upcoming event will also serve as an OCC & CYCC qualifier, promising more intense battles and opportunities for young talents to shine.

**Register for our next event here: <https://rb.gy/efey59>**



## **Organizers and Volunteers together as a dream team!**

Your continued support and constructive feedback are essential as we strive to make each event better than the last. We look forward to welcoming you and we hope to see you all soon!