Unbeatable UCL Storm to Victory



2020 Chess First London Qualifier 3rd December 2017-18 Season

The first London qualifier of the season was full of surprising ups and downs, on a day enjoyed by all sixteen teams who entered. Going into the last round, there were eight teams who could have qualified!

University College of London have set a joint record by entering four teams, all performing extremely well: UCL A recorded five wins out of five, only dropping a handful of individual game points in the process.

UCL C deservedly made it through to the Grand Final on 4th February 2018, convincingly beating LSE B in the final round; they also did their A team a massive favour in the first round by defeating LSE A (one of the favourites) with a shocking 2.5-1.5, leaving LSE A in second place.

As the tournament went on, it looked increasingly likely that Imperial College would win overall, having won their first three games and narrowing prevailing over a strong Sussex University outfit with 2.5-1.5 in the third round. However, they became unstuck in their next match against LSE A, who regained some form with a comfortable 3-1 victory. This meant that, to win the title, Imperial would need to defeat UCL A by at least two game points in the concluding round.

Determined not to slip up, UCL A were nonetheless forced to battle extremely hard across all four boards, eventually coming through against Imperial with 3.5-0.5, bringing home the prestigious NUCC Shield!

Only one qualifying spot remained by this stage, and Imperial were in real danger of missing out on the Grand Final: both Sussex and UCL B were vying for the final place as well. In a tense and epic exchange, Sussex quickly gained an advantage at 1-0 up, before UCL B hit back and pulled forward with a 2-1 lead. Just a draw on the remaining board would have sent UCL B through at Imperial’s expense, but Sussex took their revenge with a dramatic victory at the last minute, beating UCL B to the delight of the Imperial team!

Individuals winning all matches (gold), four and a draw (silver), or four (bronze) are listed below – well done to all of them!

Bronze – Aaron (Imperial), Benjamin (Barbarians), Ferran (UCL A), Robert (Sussex), Tom (Queen Mary B)

Silver – Denis (LSE A), Ven (UCL A)

Gold –Diana (UCL A), Harry (LSE A), James (UCL D), Julian (UCL B), Omer (UCL C)

We would like to thank our sponsors Chess and Bridge who provided the equipment, along with Chess Openings Wizard and ICC who handed out copies of their software/online programs as prizes for those who scored 4/5, 4.5/5 or 5/5 (see below) in their individual games.

In particular we are most grateful to Alex Taylor and Francis Kirk for arbitrating and organising the pairings. Thanks also go to Paul Wilson from the University College of Law for kindly booking the venue.

Round Results

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| Round 1 |
| Kent A | 0-4 | Imperial |
| UCL A | 4-0 | LSE C |
| UCL C  | 2.5-1.5 | LSE A |
| Sussex  | 4-0 | Kent B |
| UCL D | 1-3 | Queen Mary’s A |
| UCL B | 4-0 | Barbarians |
| Queen Mary’s C | 0-4  | LSE B |
| Queen Mary’s B | 3-1 | Kingston |
|  |
| Round 2 |
| Imperial | 3-1 | UCL B |
| LSE B | 1.5-2.5 | UCL A |
| Queen Mary’s B | 1-3 | Sussex |
| Queen Mary’s A | 1.5-2.5 | UCL C |
| LSE A | 3-1 | UCL D |
| Barbarians | 2.5-1.5 | Kent A |
| LSE C | 2.5-1.5 | Queen Mary’s C |
| Kent B | 1-3 | Kingston |
|  |
| Round 3 |
| Sussex | 1.5-2.5 | Imperial |
| UCL A | 3.5-1.5 | UCL C |
| UCL B | 4-0 | LSE C |
| LSE A | 3-1 | Queen Mary’s B |
| Barbarians | 2-2 | Queen Mary’s A |
| Kingston | 1.5-2.5 | LSE B |
| Kent A | 2-2 | UCL D |
| Queen Mary’s C | 1.5-2.5 | Kent B |
|  |
| Round 4 |
| Imperial | 1-3 | LSE A |
| Sussex | 0.5-3.5 | UCL A |
| LSE B | 2-2 | UCL B |
| UCL C | 3-1 | Barbarians |
| Queen Mary’s A | 3-1 | Queen Mary’s B |
| LSE C | 2.5-1.5 | Kent B |
| Kingston | 2-2 | Kent A |
| UCL D | 3-1 | Queen Mary’s C |
|  |
| Round 5 |
| UCL A | 3.5-0.5 | Imperial |
| UCL C | 4-0 | LSE B |
| LSE A | 4-0 | Queen Mary’s A |
| UCL B | 2-2 | Sussex |
| UCL D | 3-1 | LSE C |
| Barbarians | 2.5-1.5 | Kingston |
| Kent B | 1-3 | Kent A |
| Queen Mary’s B | 4-0 | Queen Mary’s C |

Final Tables













