**Congress 2025**

We were delighted to be able to host a Rapid play and a classical chess Congress during 2024. Both events were held at Cedars Academy in Birstall, and with its convenient location, close to the A6, the A46 (and consequently the M1 and also the east of the country), it was hoped that loads of people would enter. Unfortunately, the rapid play took place on the Saturday that the schools broke up for the traditional summer break, and entries were still good but not as many as I was hoping for personally.

In total, there were 103 entries, according to the Congress website, which might not include any last-minute entries. We had enough room for up to 200 entries, so to achieve just over half of that was disappointing. Approximately 51 of these entries were from Leicestershire – literally just under half the entries! – so that as a percentage is encouraging.

The classical event was held between 27-29th September last year, and we received 98 entries which again, doesn’t count any last-minute entries. Once again, there was enough room for 20 entries, so we need to try and get more entries in by word of mouth and promoting the congress to other counties/players. 41 of these entries were Leicestershire players. A disappointing number on the face of it.

For the first time, we trialled a time control of 90 minutes with 30 second increments as the time control, making notation mandatory throughout and this seemed to work well.

Thanks must go to Andy Morley and Paul Mottram for their assistance and availability to help run the events.

Plans are afoot for 2025 congresses with more details to follow on the LRCA website – keep your eyes peeled! We will be looking to make both events FIDE rated to see of this boosts the numbers at all. At the time of writing, it looks like the events will be at Cedars Academy again with the comfortable playing conditions and spacious surroundings.

Ben Vaughan

Congress Secretary

16th May 2025