

## **SPRING CHESS TOURNAMENTS 2026**

I've summarized the reasonably local chess tournaments that you may wish to consider this spring, together with some dates for your diary in the early autumn.

Full details including online entry can be found on the ECF's Calendar page. I would advise entering the section appropriate to your rating unless you are at the top end of the rating band and are keen to meet stronger opposition. I have also indicated the minimum rating you should be to enter the lowest tournament, unless you feel that you are significantly under-rated. ECF gold membership is required for all tournaments.

### **British Rapidplay Championships, Peterborough, 14+15 March**

Eleven rounds of rapidplay from midday on Saturday to mid-afternoon on Sunday. Time limit 15+10. Just one section, so you can rub shoulders with grandmasters as well as meeting average club players. You probably need to be around 1500 or better to avoid being outclassed, but enthusiasm and stamina are the main qualities required. It's not often Cambridgeshire hosts a British Championship so you may wish to enter for the experience and the atmosphere.

### **Spring Congresses**

Northampton 28+29 March

Milton Keynes 28+29 March

St Albans 11+12 April

Nottingham 18+19 April

Great Yarmouth 25+26 April  
Northampton 2+3 May

This is just a selection of weekend congresses that are particularly popular at this time of year. They are grouped together because they are very similar: five rounds (3 Saturday, 2 Sunday) with an opportunity to take a half point bye. Standard play time controls (60+30 or 90+10). Four or five sections catering for all standards of player from around 1300 rating up (though they vary a bit, so check).

All of these are excellent opportunities to experience a typical weekend congress and play standard play games. Depending on where you live some will be accessible without an overnight stay, particularly if you take a half point bye on the Saturday evening.

The weekend congress season extends into the early summer so look at the ECF Calendar page for later options or additions.

### **Cambridge Megafinal, Perse School Sunday 7 June**

This is the East Anglian stage of the Delancy Schools Challenge. Six rapidplay games from 10am through to late afternoon. The leading players in each age range qualify for regional, then national knockout stages before a national final in the autumn. I would thoroughly recommend players of 1000 strength or better to take part. Last year we had players who came second in the Under 8s and third in the Under 10s in the national finals. Details and entry from the ECF Calendar page.

### **British Championships, University of Warwick, 1-9 August**

The premier event in the British chess calendar offers nine days of chess for all players from the very young to seasoned veterans, from beginners to grandmasters. You can play in multiple tournaments from blitz to standard play, lasting from one or two days to the full nine days. Prestigious junior titles are there to be won, opening up international selection opportunities. As always, full details on the ECF's events calendar page.

### **Autumn dates for your diary**

Not yet registered on the calendar page are two first-rate local events, the Cambridgeshire rapidplay on Sunday 27 September and the Bury St Edmunds Chess Congress on 17+18 October. Make sure they are in your diary.

PS The East Anglian Chess Union is planning a FIDE-rated tournament this spring at Newmarket, possibly around the Whit bank holiday at the end of May, so keep your eye on the Calendar page.

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