

The City of Dublin tournament was held in the Gresham Hotel in Dublin over the weekend of 9 to 11 September 2016. In all 141 players competed in four sections, very comparable to the 146 of last year. The Masters section, often the trickiest for pairings, jumped in numbers from 13 to 20.

The FIDE-rated Masters event was won by Henry Li with 4.5 points out of 5. He raced to a 100% record of 4/4 thanks to wins over Mustakim Ul-Haque, Eoghan Casey, Belgian visitor Emile Boucquet and Ioana Gelip and then survived a dodgy position in the last round against Marin Vlaicevic to emerge with a draw and undivided first place. Of these opponents, Boucquet finished fourth, Vlaicevic third and Gelip second, so it was certainly a deserved victory. The Gonzaga pupil scored 8/10 on their Armstrong Cup winning team last season, and also 4/5 on Ireland's winning Glorney Cup team earlier in the summer.

Grading prizes went to Dario Melotti and Rudolf Tirziman.

The Major section for players rated 1600 to 2000 finished in a three way tie for first place on 5/6 among Gavin Melaugh, Shane Melaugh and Vjekoslav Novak. Grading prizes went to Tristan Sheridan and Robert Murtagh.

The Challengers section for players rated 1200 to 1600 was won by Dermot Nolan on 5.5 points out of 6, with Robert McLoughlin, Gavin Doyle and Tom Fitzpatrick in joint second to fourth places on 4.5 points. Grading prizes were awarded to Dayna Ferguson, Oisin Tong and Peter Carroll. Special mention to Martin Kelly whose run of 20 games undefeated was ended in round 4, but he has started a new run (2 and counting!).

The Junior section was won by Hugh Byrne on 5.5 out of 6, second was Liam O'Laoide on 5, then a traffic jam on 4.5 points with Con Kirby (third place trophy on tiebreak), Desmond Martin, Leo Phelan, Cian Bergin and Hugo Moran. Grading prizes went to Cian Bergin, Jonathan Unsworth, Sean Bray and Conor Mag Ruairc, the last two being the best unrated players.

Each section was exceptionally hard fought, for instance the average length of the Masters games was 38 moves. All in all, the contestants can feel that they have got a proper warm-up for the league season about to start.