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International Chess Tournament Brings Hundreds of Visitors to Ryde

More than 450 visitors travelled to the Isle of Wight in February as the Isle of Wight Chess Tournament 2026 returned to Ryde, welcoming over 300 players from around the world for one of the strongest chess events in the country.

The week-long festival, staged at Ryde School during half term, featured competitors representing over 30 international federations, ranging from elite Grandmasters to young rising talents and local players competing on home soil.

The headline Masters tournament was won jointly by GM Matthew J Wadsworth (England), IM Tobias Koelle (Germany) and GM Matthew J Turner (Scotland), all finishing on an impressive 7 points from 9 games.

The tournament was featured in a segment on BBC News and also with an article on the **BBC News homepage.**

Streamers at the event had over 500,000 live views across Youtube, Twitch and Facebook.

Tournament related posts reach over 250,00 views across social media.

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BBC NEWS

The Guardian









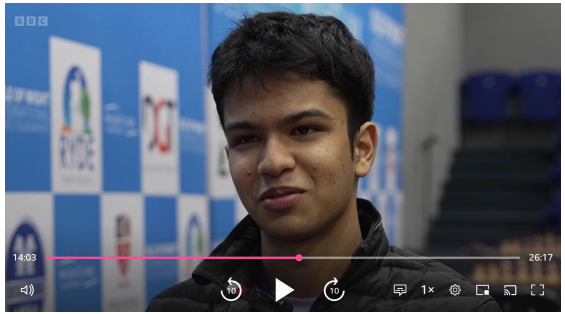

42

#	Player	Rating	Pts.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	GM Matthew J Wadsworth	2508	7	1b	1w	1b	1w	½b	½w	1w	½b	½b
2	IM Tobias Koelle	2487	7	1w	1b	1w	0b	1w	1b	1b	½w	½b
3	GM Matthew J Turner	2448	7	1b	1w	1b	0w	½b	1w	1b	½w	1b
4	GM Boris Chatalbashev	2529	6.5	1w	½b	1w	1b	½w	½b	1w	½b	½w
5	IM Tarun Kanyamarala	2397	6.5	1b	½w	½b	1w	0w	1b	1w	1b	½b
6	GM Thomas Beerdsen	2525	6.5	1b	1w	½b	1w	1b	½w	0b	½w	1b
7	GM Gawain Maroroa Jones	2645	6.5	1b	1w	½b	1w	½w	½b	0w	1b	1w
8	IM Edvin Trost	2458	6.5	1w	1b	½w	0b	1w	½b	1w	1b	½w
9	WIM Trisha Kanyamarala	2223	6.5	½w	0b	1w	1b	½w	½b	1w	1b	1w
10	GM Vojtech Plat	2463	6	1b	1w	1b	½w	½b		1w	½b	½w
11	GM Shreyas Royal	2519	6	1w	1b	1w	½b	1w	½b	0w	½w	½b

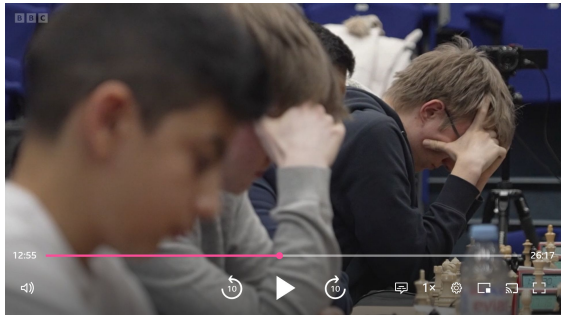
The tournament was also featured in a BBC South News report highlighting the rise of junior chess participation, including England's youngest ever Grandmaster Shreyas Royal and several young competitors taking part in the event.

The 5 minute segment went out on the evening BBC South news and was watched by large regional audience.









Chess was once for nerds - now everybody wants in



Shreyas became Britain's youngest Chess Grandmaster at the age of 15

Stuart Rust
South of England

22 February 2026

In a silent school hall on the Isle of Wight the air is thick with tension.

Faces twitch nervously, feet shake vigorously under tables, and several heads are clasped in hands.

Every so often a chess piece is moved from one square to another, a hand strikes a clock and the action is recorded in a notepad.

This is the Isle of Wight Chess Tournament, which welcomes hundreds of players from around the world to Ryde.


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While we did not operate an in-house live commentary team this year, we partnered with a number of independent streamers who attended the event and covered games across multiple platforms. Their combined reach across streaming channels and social media exceeded **1.5 million views**, significantly amplifying the tournament's digital footprint.

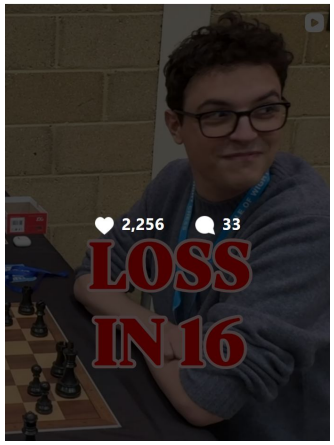
Although full top-board broadcast coverage remains an ambition for future editions, the event nevertheless achieved substantial online visibility and successfully engaged a wide international audience, further building momentum and interest for future tournaments.

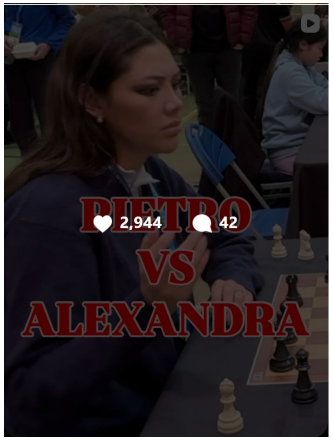


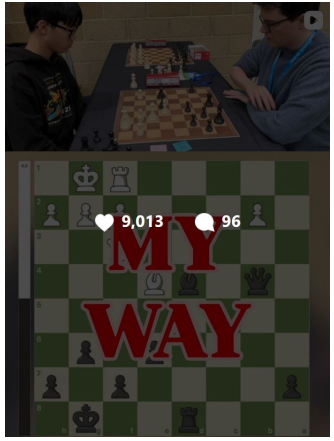


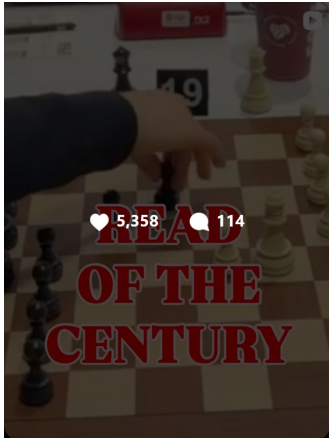













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The tournament also received significant national coverage in *The Guardian*, with reporting from renowned chess journalist Leonard Barden. This feature, alongside coverage in local press and international chess media, further strengthens the growing reputation and prestige of the Isle of Wight Chess Tournament within both the UK and global chess communities.



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Leonard Barden on chess
Chess

Chess: British players win Isle of Wight Masters as Scots achieve rare double

GM Matthew Wadsworth won in Ryde on tiebreak, Scottish GM Matthew Turner also shared first, while in Graz Scotland's Freddy Waldhausen Gordon, 15, qualified for the IM title

Leonard Barden
Fri 27 Feb 2026 08.00 GMT
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Prefer the Guardian on Google

Matthew Wadsworth's victory at the Isle of Wight Masters could help boost his chances of selection for the Olympiad in September. Photograph: Dennis Dicen

In just two years, the Isle of Wight Masters at Ryde school has become established as one of Britain's most popular events. Its scenic ambience, impressive organisation and competitive spirit have combined to attract a strong international entry.

Last weekend GM Matthew Wadsworth emerged first on tie-break ahead of IM Tobias Koelle (Germany) and GM Matthew Turner (Scotland) after the trio all scored 7/9. Wadsworth also won in 2025.

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"In just two years, the Isle of Wight Masters at Ryde school has become established as one of Britain's most popular events. Its scenic ambience, impressive organisation and competitive spirit have combined to attract a strong international entry."


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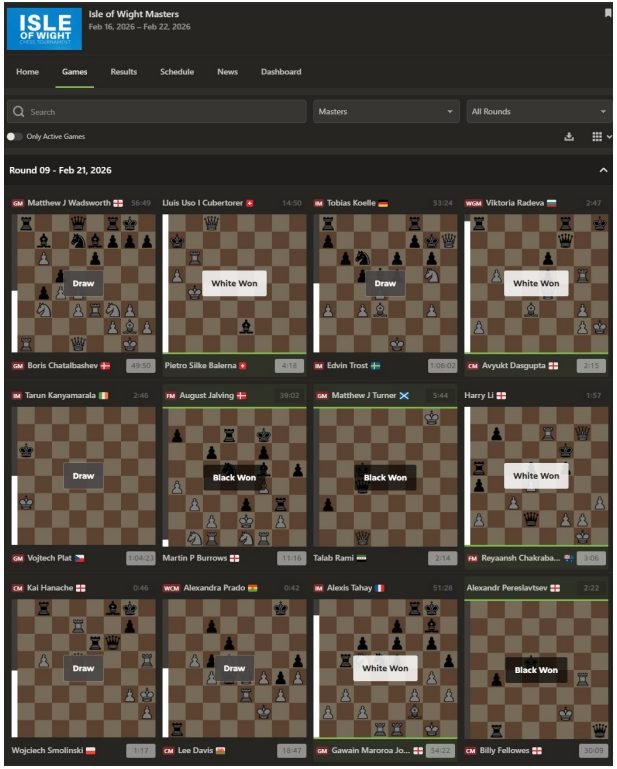

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All Masters games were broadcast on Chess.com and Lichess. Reaching tens of thousand of engaged chess fans daily.

Fans could follow the games live on their devices thank to the majority of the Masters section being played on electronic DGT boards.












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The event was once again covered extensively by local news media. The *County Press* ran a full-page photo spread highlighting the tournament, with particular focus on visitor numbers and the positive boost to the local area and economy.

This continued local media support reinforces the tournament's value not only as a sporting event, but as a significant contributor to the Island's wider community and business landscape.

islandecho

RYDE FOR MAJOR INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

by Warren Whitmore - Digital News Reporter — 26th February 2026 in Chess Sport



Photos: Paul Blackley

Isle of Wight Observer News

Chess tournament gives Ryde a boost

Grandmaster Matthew Wadsworth won the Isle of Wight Masters Chess Tournament, after a dramatic and closely-contested nine-round tournament...

1 day ago



Yahoo News UK

Major chess tournament sees top players descend on the Island

A major chess tournament brought elite players, rising stars, and enthusiasts to the Isle of Wight.



31 December 2025

One of Britain's leading chess players confirmed for Island tournament

One of the leading British chess players has confirmed his place at the Isle of Wight Chess Tournament.









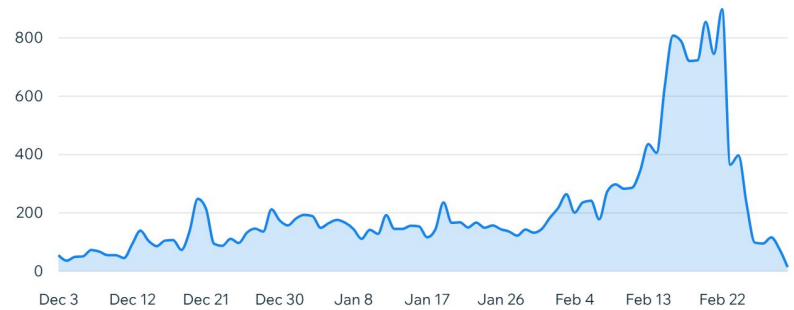
90 Day Direct Web Traffic to IOWCHESS.COM

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Site sessions
19,358 ↑ 288%

Unique visitors
7,915 ↑ 169%

Sessions over time



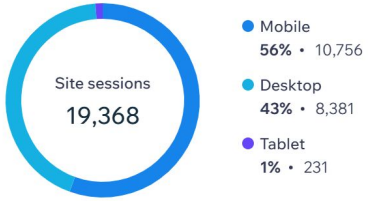
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New vs returning visitors



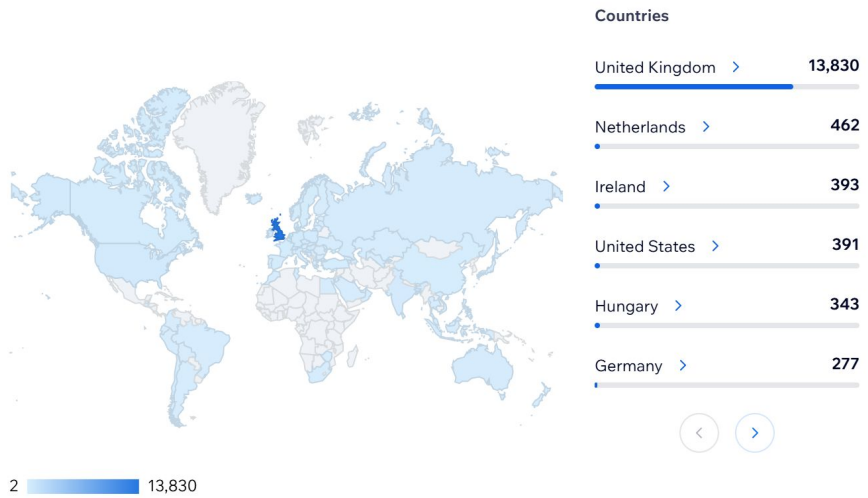
View Report

Sessions by device



View Report

Sessions by country



Tournament sponsors are prominently and proudly displayed on the website homepage, ensuring strong brand visibility to this highly targeted and actively engaged chess audience.

These figures do not include additional exposure generated through secondary platforms such as Chess.com, the FIDE calendar, streaming coverage, social media, and international chess listings, which further amplify the tournament's digital reach.


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Community Engagement

In the build-up to the event, we hosted a series of community engagement sessions, giving local residents the opportunity to drop in and learn chess alongside Island players in a relaxed and welcoming environment.

These sessions continued throughout the tournament at The Yelf's Hotel, creating a lively social hub that connected visiting players with the local community. The programme culminated in a free six-master simultaneous exhibition on the Friday afternoon, offering local participants the rare chance to test their skills against elite international players.

Local hospitality also got involved with chess sessions and boards being available at the Star & Coffee Ale House and also at Pickle and Dill.

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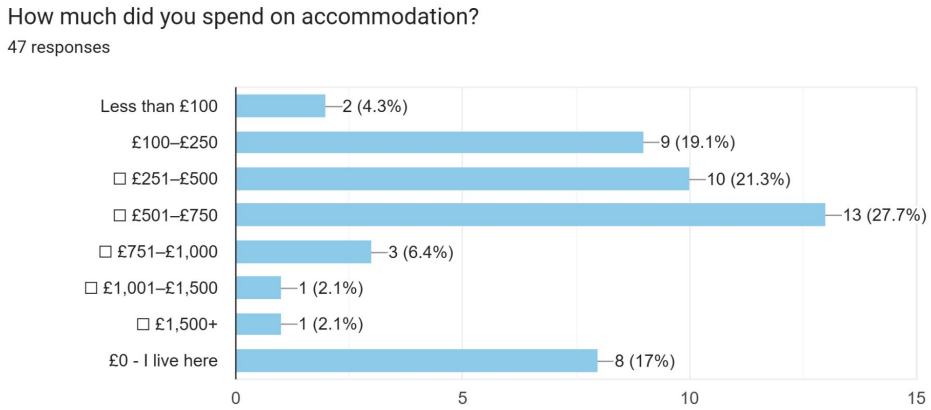








Local Hotel & Accommodation Spend



💸 ~£116,000 accommodation spend

Based on survey responses, and excluding local residents who did not require accommodation, the estimated average spend on accommodation was approximately **£467 per visiting player**.

Extrapolated across total visiting players this suggests a direct accommodation impact of approximately **£116,000** generated by players alone.

When accounting for accompanying family members and additional visitors, this figure is likely to be significantly higher, reinforcing the tournament's meaningful contribution to the Island's local hospitality sector.





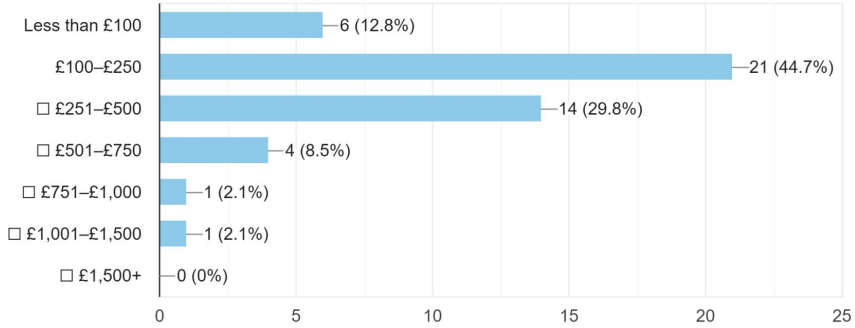
Images from side events held in local hotels


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Boost to local food and Drink Sector

Not counting accommodation, How much do you estimate you spent on the island during the event? (Excluding the entry fee.)

47 responses



💸 ~£63,000 spent locally

Based on 47 survey responses, the estimated **average non-accommodation spend per visitor** (covering food, transport, entertainment and general local purchases, excluding entry fees) was approximately **£256 per person** during the event.

Extrapolated across an estimated **visiting players** this represents an additional **£63,000 in direct local spending** generated during the tournament week. This figure again reflects player spending only and does not include accompanying family members, spectators, or wider visitor activity, meaning the overall economic impact on local businesses is likely substantially higher.



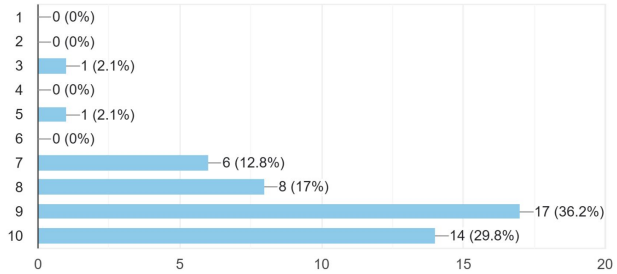

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Player Feedback

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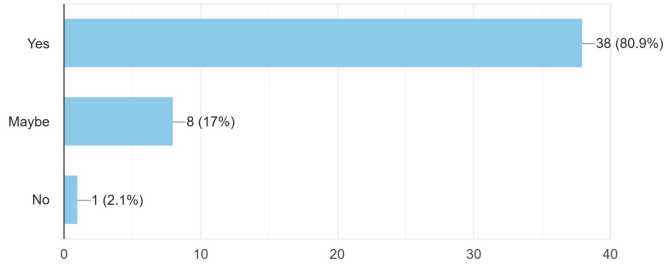
How would you rate the event out of 10?

47 responses



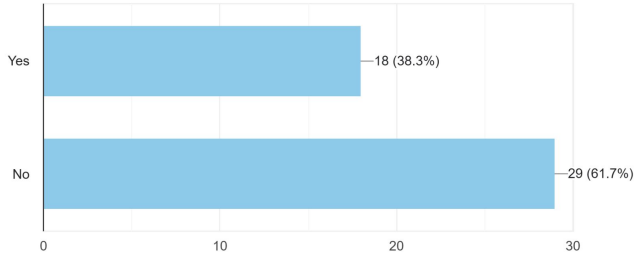
Would you (or your child) play the Isle of Wight tournament again?

47 responses



Was this your first visit to the Isle of Wight?

47 responses



Would you visit the island again, not for chess?

47 responses

