

04/04/2022 Obituary - David Anderton OBE

A Walsall Perspective

David joined the Walsall Kipping (K.) chess club in 1982, having played previously for the Wolverhampton Kipping chess club, and then the Rock Kipping chess club*. He brought a national reputation with him.

He had been honoured in 1977, 'for services to chess'. These had included the (non-playing) Captaincy of the English men's team at International Chess Olympiads; and also the provision of much legal advice to the British Chess Federation (BCF). Together these had brought him into contact with the cream of British chess players and this served him well later on. He was also a strong player himself and his presence no doubt assisted in attracting other strong players to the club.

He only gradually took to participating in the club's internal competitions though, but when he did so he regularly became Club Champion. However, after he had won it 7 times in succession, he very generously, and voluntarily, withdrew from entering, so as to give others the opportunity to shine. Nevertheless he was a very competitive player and prepared for his league fixtures with meticulous care.

Since David's arrival, Walsall K. consistently maintained strong positions in both Divisions 1 of the BDCL and the WDCL; winning the Birmingham League Championship 5 times and the Wolverhampton Championship 3 times. However it was a measure of the man's willingness to take a back seat, that it was only in 2002 that he finally became Captain of the Div 1 team in the Birmingham League, and even later, in 2008, that he became Captain of the Div 1 team in the WDCL team. He was always particularly keen though on the club fighting for the title of Staffordshire Champion, via its Hickman Cup tournament; and in this he was very successful, the club winning it no less than 18 times between 1982 and 2019. As a Captain he was determined to make the most of the club's talents. Consequently he never failed to ensure, before agreeing fixture dates, that he knew exactly who would be available; and he expected a full commitment from his teams. In return, he consistently provided lifts to team members to matches; although this became an increasingly demanding task for him. David was also a great organizer, and his skills in this area were highlighted when the club decided to celebrate its 1992 Jubilee with a tournament. He willingly took on the task of organizer and managed to attract sufficient sponsorship locally so as to enable a major Chess Tournament to be played, at the Walsall Campus. The WALSALL KIPPING JUBILEE CHESS TOURNAMENT 1992 was played over the three days of the Easter weekend, and attracted entries from more than nine countries. The players included Alexei Suetin of Moscow, a leading Russian grandmaster (GM), six other GMs, and eleven international masters (IM). The winner was GM Murray Chandler from New Zealand.

It was regarded as a great success. The national magazine CHESS described it at the time as 'the strongest ever weekend tournament on British soil' and recognized that the 'enticing conditions' provided by David Anderton, chief organiser from the club, played a major part in this achievement. Bernard Cafferty (Birmingham Post) claimed that it 'brought a collection of national chess talent to the West Midlands'. It also attracted the

attention of the BCF and it was at their request that David produced a leaflet (Note on the Organisation of the Walsall Kipping Jubilee Tournament) for use by the BCF.

David followed this up later by jointly organizing, along with Lawrence Cooper of Stafford, the STAFFORDSHIRE CENTENARY INTERNATIONAL CHESS TOURNAMENT 1997. It was hosted by the Walsall Kipping Chess Club at its premises, and was arranged as A Nine-Round Scheveningen Tournament in which the players are divided into two teams; and all the players in Team A play all those in Team B. It was the first International Chess tournament to be held in Staffordshire and recognized for international title purposes. It attracted an entry that included 3 GMs; 1 WGM (Jana Bellin); 6 IMs and 1 WM. The two leading scorers were GM Bogdan Lalic and IM Jonathan Rowson.

David was further involved in instigating and setting up a training scheme for juniors at The Joseph Leckie Community School in 1993. Professional help, in the shape of Robert Bellin, was provided through sponsorship and it attracted a substantial number of local children. Much progress and enthusiasm was generated, and it ran for three years. In turn this encouraged Ray Dolan, another club member, to eventually set up the currently very successful Bloxwich Junior Chess Academy, to carry on the good work.

In the meantime the Walsall K. club was involved in organizing an annual one day Rapidplay Congress. Again David became instrumental in attracting sponsorship for it, and this enabled it to offer larger prizes and become a very attractive event. He became the organizer for it in 1999, and ran it till it finished in 2008. It regularly attracted players from all over the Midlands and sometimes further afield.

In the meantime David pursued his personal chess with much commitment. This might be exemplified by the following:-in 1959 he became the WDCL individual Champion by winning its premier individual tournament, the Rock Cup; and in 2009 he successfully repeated this achievement, 50 years later! Also, apart from his club and Staffs County matches he took part annually in National events too. He organized teams in the 4NCL league and participated in British events, achieving regular success- latterly in the Senior Championships.

His achievements were too complex to cover in detail here; but they may be elsewhere. Here though is a brief list of some of them:-

David Anderton, CM; O.B.E.:-

- WDCL Rock Cup winner 1959, 1960, 1962, 2009.
- WDCL President 1967-9 (while at Wolverhampton Kipping)
- Non-playing captain of the English men's team Skopje Olympiad 1972 until Novi Sad Olympiad 1990 during which time the team won 3 silver and 2 bronze Olympiad medals.
- Midland Champion 1979;
- BCF President 1979-82;
- BCF International Director 1982-1990; 2000-2002
- BDCL President 1983-84
- Administrator of World Championship in London in 1986

- FIDE Executive Board member 1989-93.
- Captain and Organizer of up to 3AD♣s teams in 4NCL, from 1999 onwards
- Correspondence IM (2000)
- British Senior Champion 2005 and 2011; Joint British Senior Champion 2003, 2007, 2009
- Former Staffordshire Chess Association President

He became Chairman of Walsall K. in 2010, and President in 2012, until he retired from OTB chess in 2020.

David sprinkled stardust on the club, and we shall long remember him.

- Mike Groombridge (Walsall Kipping)

[*Note: These clubs had their origins in the formation of 'The Kipping' Club in 1942, named after its first President-C.S.Kipping, well known as the editor of the 'Problemist']