
CHESS

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Chess Club's inception in 2005, Madsen said, it grew to eclipse the Charleston community, becoming the largest, most active concentration of chess players in the state, at about 30 members.

Whoever wins the tournament will get a cash prize of \$250, a trophy to keep and a traveling trophy, which will remain with them until next year's tournament, Madsen said.

The tournament winner had not yet been determined Sunday, he said, but the event had already revealed a few surprises.

Two of the club's younger members, Srikanth Raghavan, of Morgantown, and Caleb Aites, of Fairmont, both defeated five-time former state champion, Marvin Barker Jr.

Aites, a student at East Fairmont High School, said he is only in his first year of serious chess-playing.

He prepared for the tournament by reading chess strategy books, he said.

"They help you understand the game better than just taking pieces, which most people think chess is all about, just taking pieces," Aites said. "Really, it's just moving to block your opponent's attack, but at the same time, you're attacking their king."

The game appeals to a variety of people, Jensen said, because each player tries to outwit the other.

"A lot of people like that kind of classical confrontation," he said.

Jensen said the tournament has gone well, and praised his club members' willingness to greet new players.

"If someone new walks in, there's always someone willing to play," he said.