



# CHESS NUTS

Lakeridge Chess Club ♦ Volume 9 ♦ Issue 2 ♦ January 2006  
Building critical thinking and creative problem solving skills

## Lakeridge Chess Club - Welcome to 2006!

### 6TH ANNUAL LAKERIDGE TOURNAMENT A HUGE SUCCESS!

The sixth annual Lakeridge Tournament took place on December 10th 2005, and was hailed a great success.

Huge thanks to Aninda Mattoo for organizing this year's tournament, and to all our great volunteers who supported the event. As well as providing a focus for celebrating elementary level chess on Mercer Island, the Tournament also acts as our major fundraising event. 322 chess loving students from all over the region attended, including 58 Lakeridge students (over half of our club!). Our students had a fabulous day, with many winning



individual trophies. The 1 – 3 grade team finished 5<sup>th</sup> overall, and the 4 – 6 team placed 7<sup>th</sup>, against a very strong and competitive field.

This year we have a very 'young' club, with over half our players in Kindergarten or 1st Grade. The great interest in chess in younger children was also seen in tournament this year. In previous years we have seen around 15 students compete in our K section. In 2005 we had 30 students registered in this section with more on waitlist!

Didn't manage to make it this

### Tournament Statistics By Grade

- . Kindergarten 30!
- . 1st Grade 50
- . 2nd Grade 50
- . 3rd Grade 73
- . 4th Grade 56
- . 5th Grade 33
- . 6th Grade 24

year? See inside for parents Hilary and David Benson's thoughts on their family's first Tournament experience!

### Tournament Statistics Overall

322 Attendees - over 35%  
Mercer Island Students

- . 58 Lakeridge
- . 12 Island Park
- . 34 West Mercer
- . 11 IMS

Chess Nuts is the Lakeridge Elementary Chess Club Newsletter. If you have any announcements, questions, or comments for Chess Nuts, please call Carolyn Hassall at 275-0519 or send an e-mail to carolynhassall@comcast.net.

Feel free to submit any questions for the "Ask Dr. Leo" column.



# ASK DR. LEO

**Q: What are chess ratings? Are they important to student players?**

A: Chess players who participate in official tournaments are initially given a numerical rating that reflects their estimated strength relative to other players. This rating then fluctuates based on the outcome of **every game that a player plays in a rated tournament**. In the Northwest two rating systems are currently in use for student players, which produces two separate ratings for each player: a WSRS rating (Washington State Rating System) and a USCF rating (United States Chess Federation). The WSRS provides students with ratings that are used only in scholastic tournaments and reflect current student performance against other students. Student players with a USCF rating can compare their ratings on a continuous and nationwide scale against rated adults for purposes of open tournament competition.!

Typically, student ratings range from a value of 0 to 2200. A rating of 2200 signifies mastery of the game and anyone rated 2200 or above is considered a chess master—a “chess black belt.” The average rating of adults is about 1550. The rating scale is divided up into 200 point categories for recognition and ‘class award’ purposes.!

The purposes of a rating system are many-fold: ratings make “swiss” pairings possible in open tournaments, allow players of similar strength to compete

against one another in “class” tournaments, allow players to gauge their improvement over time, and provide the basis for chess titles and awards. Typically, ratings change by +16 points for a win and by -16 points for a loss and 0 for a draw. However, this 16 point difference is ‘adjusted’ to take into account the rated strength of your opponent. **This ‘adjustment’ is 4% of the difference between your ratings!**

**Example: A 1000 rated player (as expected) defeats a 700 rated player -- the 1000 rated player gains 16 points minus 4% of the difference between their ratings (300 points X 4% = 12 points). So the 1000 rated player only gains 4 points because a 1000 rated player is expected to defeat a 700 rated player! The 700 rated player loses 16 points minus the 4% difference or 16-12 = 4 points lost by the 700 rated player. Please note that for each game the two players will always gain and lose the same amounts (i.e., if one player wins 10 points the rating system dictates that the other player will lose 10 points—the mathematical procedures guarantee this result). A draw results in each player gaining or losing 4% of the difference between their ratings (as expected): a draw between a 1200 rated player and a 1000 rated player will give the 1000 rated player 8 points (4% of 200) and the 1200 player will lose 8 points (because a win was expected of the higher rated player and only a draw resulted)!**

Note that really big point gains (and losses) occur when a lower-rated player defeats a higher-rated player! For example, a 900

rated player who defeats a 1200 player will gain 16 points adjusted upward by an additional 12 points (4% of the difference between their ratings) for a total gain of 28 points! The 1200 rated player likewise loses 28 points—ouch! **The rating system permits a maximum gain or loss for each game of 32 points.**

One word of advice to student players. Chess ratings for developing and improving players change rapidly over time. Your current strength is no doubt greater than your current published rating. Do not be intimidated by any player based on rating! Your actual strength could be greater than the rated strength of your seemingly higher-rated opponent! Student players should not base their expectation for the result of any game they play on the respective ratings of player and opponent.!

**Chess players need to focus on playing the game, have confidence on their growing chess skill, and play each game with the full intention and confidence of winning! Student chess players should disregard ratings when it comes to playing their game! Play your best and have fun! That is what is important!**

— Dr. Leo

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# “Blocked, Captured... and Hooked!”

## Journal from our first Chess Tournament!

In the chess movie, Searching for Bobby Fischer, parents behave so badly at one tournament, they are caged off in an area far away from their player-children.

Luckily, our own experience at the Lakeridge Scholastic Tournament in December was nothing like the movie. Chalk it up to another case where Hollywood and real life don't match up.

Our son is a first-grader, brand-new to chess, so our eyes were wide open and ready for anything. We had been to ski and toy-swaps at Islander Middle School and occasionally found ourselves bruised from the sharp elbows of competitive parents. Instead, what we experienced at this chess tournament was a highly organized, well-oiled machine, with helpful volunteers that made it easy for newcomers to navigate.

The tournament rules were straightforward; each of the 322 child participants played five games throughout the day. As kids won or lost at each round, a computer then paired them with another player at a more similar ability level. By the third round, competitors were closely matched.

Teams came from all over the state, some wearing embroidered shirts advertising their school chess club from places like Olympia. Older, experienced players may have felt the pressure of rivalries, but it did not seem to affect the atmosphere for everyone else cooped up in that cafeteria room.

While parents are not generally allowed into the gym, or competition room, a casual stroll through found the players packed closely together, but very rarely distracted by those right next to them. Nearly all the children focused intently on their own games, the older ones tended to employ timers and every so often, a judge was called over to rule on a disputed move. Impressively, every match ended with a prompt, polite handshake between players. If only all adults could behave so well.

*Parents remarked on how exciting it was to see our kids fired up by this classic game of strategy rather than an Xbox.*

That said, these kids did have some pent up energy that was well-channeled onto the playing fields outside.

Because parents and siblings are generally not allowed into the players' room, the IMS cafeteria was a place for socializing and grazing at the well-stocked concession stand.

The day was long, having started at 8:30am and ending at about 5pm. But, surprisingly, even our six year old had lasted without a meltdown. He was not one of those taking home a trophy or a spot at the state tournament (players needed 3 wins or “points” for that). He did, however, leave encouraged by the energy of the other kids at the tournament.

*Kids love doing what their friends do, and in this healthy environment, we cannot think of a more positive way for our family to spend a Saturday.*

In fact, we're looking at our calendars to see if we can make a day of this again sometime soon!

**By Hilary and David Benson**

*(See page 5 for Coach Leo's recommended Winter and Spring Tournament list!)*



Find and circle all of the Chess words that are hidden in the grid. Note: QUEEN and QUEENING are separately hidden and do not overlap.

I F C H E S S B O A R D Y R R O U C  
 S A E T A M K C E H C E C E I P T N  
 A T V O R A P S A K Q B T H E A O T  
 C D I A G O N A L U Y S O C U R U G  
 R T C C S T A L E M A T E S E E R A  
 I O N W A P L E M M P P U I U L N M  
 F K T A F P N O D E I R B F L I A B  
 I A I O S I T N S B H T L N B F M I  
 C M R B N S A U L E S C U O P A E T  
 E K I G I R A I R O N H N I E T N P  
 M G E D G T T P W E O C D T E T T O  
 A S N S D Z Z T N T I E E O D A J H  
 G N T A C L N I H E P N R M R C U S  
 D Y E H H I E G N K M T K O I K M I  
 N N E E E C I G O G A E C R K B P B  
 E S I T U N X O A O H R X P K I N G  
 S I A W K Q R E N M C G N I N E P O  
 G M C A S T L I N G E D E K C O L B

ATTACK  
 BISHOP  
 BLITZ CHESS  
 BLOCKED  
 BLUNDER  
 CAPTURE  
 CASTLING  
 CENTER  
 CHECKMATE  
 CHESSBOARD

CHAMPIONSHIP  
 DEEP BLUE  
 DIAGONAL  
 EN PASSANT  
 ENDGAME  
 EXCHANGE  
 FILE  
 FISCHER  
 FORK  
 GAMBIT

GRANDMASTER  
 JUMP  
 KASPAROV  
 KIBITZING  
 KING  
 KNIGHT  
 LOSE  
 MATE IN TWO  
 MIDDLEGAME  
 OPENING

PAWN  
 PIECE  
 PROMOTION  
 QUEEN  
 QUEENING  
 ROOK  
 SACRIFICE  
 STALEMATE  
 TOURNAMENT  
 WIN



## Coach Leo's Spring and Winter Tournament Recommended List!

Choosing the right Chess Tournaments can be a daunting process, especially when you are first starting out. Some of you got your first taste of tournament play at our excellent Lakeridge event this year. Coach Leo has put together his list of tournaments recommended for Lakeridge students in the New Year. Many of these are great local tournaments and they all fill up fast, **so don't forget to sign up early!**

### Open to ALL STUDENTS

- ♦ **Jan 28 Bryant Grade Level Championships** (now includes 7-8 section), Bryant Elementary, Seattle WA. Direct sign-up link:  
<http://signup4chess.com/NWBryant/index.asp>.  
Students compete within their own grade.
- ♦ **Feb 4 UCDS Tournament**, K, 1-3, 4-6, G/25  
<http://signup4chess.com/ucds/> or  
ucdschess06@hotmail.com Seattle, WA
- ♦ **Feb 19 NSC Scholastic Open Sections** (K, K-3, 4-6),  
Five Rounds,  
[http://www.chessplayer.com/NSC\\_REG.htm](http://www.chessplayer.com/NSC_REG.htm),  
Shoreline WA.
- ♦ **May 12-14 National Elementary (K-6)  
Championship**. Denver, CO.  
<http://www.uschess.org>. *You do not need to  
qualify for Nationals!*

### Open to ALL GIRL STUDENTS

- ♦ **Mar 18 Queens Quest (K-8 girls)** NWSRS rated  
G/30, Olympia, WA, Jon Licht, see below.
- ♦ **Mar 18 Susan Polgar Tournament**, qualifying event,  
St. Michaels School, Olympia,  
<http://whsca.org/Polgar2006.doc> WA Washington  
Girls Open/Susan Polgar Qualifier (4SS G/60 K-12  
USCF), Olympia, WA, Jon Licht, 360-754-6472,  
jonjerrie@comcast.net.

### You need to QUALIFY for these Tournaments

- ♦ **Apr 1 Tournament of Champions**,  
<http://www.chessplayer.com/stars.htm>, *you need  
to have scored five points in a qualifying event*,  
contact chess64@comcast.net.
- ♦ **Apr 8 Washington Elementary Championships**  
(K,1,2,3,4,5,6), Kennewick, WA, see  
[www.chesschampions.org](http://www.chesschampions.org). Kennewick Conv.  
Center, Want to see if you qualified? Here's the  
latest list of state qualifiers...  
<http://www.whsca.org/qualifiers.html>. *You need  
to have three points from a qualifying event.*

FIND ALL THESE LINKS AND MORE ON  
OUR OWN WEBSITE,

[www.lakeridgechess.com](http://www.lakeridgechess.com)

### Useful Websites and Links

To check out your WSRS rating, visit the Ratings  
tab on our website and use the password 'thelion'

WA High School Chess Associations  
[www.whsca.org](http://www.whsca.org)

US Chess Organization  
[www.uschess.org](http://www.uschess.org)

Additional tournaments are being added daily on  
<http://www.nwchess.com/calendar/index.htm>

**Remember to register EARLY!**



## The Lakeridge Chess Season

January 6  
 January 13  
 January 20  
 January 27  
 February 3  
 February 10  
 February 17  
 February 24 - no club meeting (Mid-Winter Break)  
 March 3  
 March 10  
 March 17  
 March 24  
 March 31 - last meeting of the year!  
 April 8 - Washington State Chess Tournament

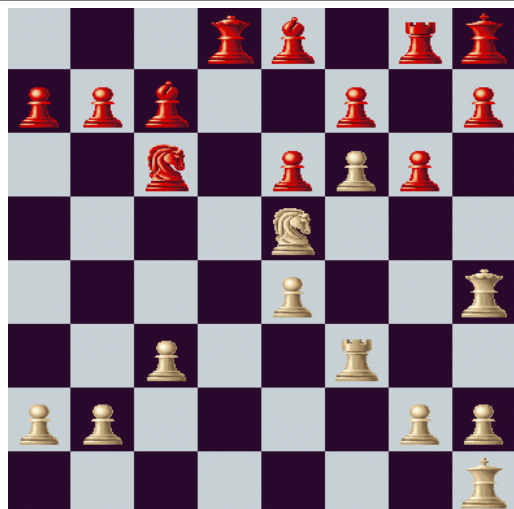
\*WA State Chess Tournament will be in Kennewick, Washington this year (Saturday, April 8th, 2006).

In order to qualify to play at State, a child must play in a tournament during the 2005-2006 school year and receive 3 out of 5 points in single tournament. LKD Chess Club hopes to have a strong showing at State again this year.

For the latest chess info, check our Website:

[www.lakeridgechess.com](http://www.lakeridgechess.com)

## Challenger Puzzle



**White to play and win in 2 moves.**

## Lakeridge Chess Club Board

### Club Coordinator

Carolyn Hassall (275-0519) — [carolynhassall@comcast.net](mailto:carolynhassall@comcast.net)

### Treasurer

Mihyung Kim — [mihyung@hotmail.com](mailto:mihyung@hotmail.com)

### Communications/WebMaster

Carol Petrucci (230-8851), [petrcarol@comcast.net](mailto:petrcarol@comcast.net)

### ChessNuts

OPEN—please contact Carolyn Hassall if you can help!

### Tournament Reports/Newspaper Liaison

Hilary Benson

### Special Events Chair

Deborah Hendrickson (425 785-4877) - [deborah\\_hendrickson@hotmail.com](mailto:deborah_hendrickson@hotmail.com)

### Lakeridge Tournament Chair

Aninda Mattoo - (236 9917), [anindamattoo@yahoo.com](mailto:anindamattoo@yahoo.com)

### Past Club Coordinators

Carol Petrucci (230-8851), [petrcarol@comcast.net](mailto:petrcarol@comcast.net)  
 Mitch and Lisa Eggers (232-9661) [leggers@comcast.net](mailto:leggers@comcast.net)  
 Buffi Guffi (Founder. Now living in West Virginia)

### Head Coach

Leo Stefurak (Lions) — [leolion@seanet.com](mailto:leolion@seanet.com)

## Lakeridge Chess Club Coaches

William Schill (Bears) — [williamschill@hotmail.com](mailto:williamschill@hotmail.com)

Coach Chouchan (Cougars) — [chornyAA@msn.com](mailto:chornyAA@msn.com)

Mike Miller (Tigers) — [jocemike@seanet.com](mailto:jocemike@seanet.com)

Al Walker (Pups) — [buckluckly@hotmail.com](mailto:buckluckly@hotmail.com)

