



AMANDA COWAN/Emerald

Chess club founder David Hall counters a move by Tim Counts in a game Wednesday night at the EMU.

## UO students organize chess club

*The club offers students a chance to get together, play a few games and improve their skills*

By Kristina Rudinkas  
Student Activities Reporter

The game has no boundaries. It transcends language, borders, class and age. Its timeless essence entices young and old to intellectually challenge each other over a board of simple black and white squares. Chess, the game of logic, is returning via the University Chess Club.

Chess originated in sixth century India in the form of a similar game with four players called Chaturanga. The game had four groups of pieces for players to use as their army: elephants, horses, chariots and foot soldiers.

Legend has it the Indian Maharajah introduced chess to the Persians through a challenge. The Persians were given eight days to learn how to play the game in order to avoid paying tribute taxes to their Indian conquerors. The Persian chief minister finally figured it out at the last minute and proved they were intellectual equals to the Indians. The game was eventually brought into Europe and slowly evolved into the chess played today.

The chess club has registered as

a student group and is awaiting ASUO recognition so it can receive funding and reserve University rooms for meetings. Currently they meet on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. in the EMU Skylight, but that schedule may be changing soon.

"Chess is the most complex, mentally challenging game man has ever created," said sophomore David Hall, the club's founder.

Hall learned to play chess when he was 3 years old. He played in grade school and was the Oregon state champion for grades K-5 in 1988. His interest in the game waned in high school, but it was renewed during his freshman year in college.

"I came to the UO surprised there wasn't a chess club," he said. "I wanted to find competition and improve my game."

The chess club offers students the opportunity to play recreationally and expand their interests, Hall said. It's an informal atmosphere for the players, there are no clocks to time players and you don't need to know every intricacy of the strategy. Players can just go with the flow, he said.

"There's a stigma to chess; it was never really cool in high school," Hall said. "You could get harped on for playing chess."

But today Hall emphasizes the wealth of diversity among chess players. Stereotypes are breaking

down and the game is opening up to everyone, Hall said. People are surprised Hall is a chess player.

"Chess is blind to the perceptions about it," Hall said. "You can't recognize someone as a chess player." The club offers students from different backgrounds an opportunity to get together and meet each other to play a couple of games.

Tim Counts started playing chess when he was 5 or 6 years old. He has enjoyed playing the game over the years but never really thought about why the University didn't already have a chess club.

"There is no luck involved; it is pure skill," Counts said. "You can meet interesting people, and it makes me think strategically."

Counts is enthusiastic about the chess club and wants to see the club expand.

Practice makes a better player, according to Hall. He is amazed at the number of talented players at the University without a forum to play, he said.

"Every move is crucial." Hall can be reached at [dhall@gladstone.uoregon.edu](mailto:dhall@gladstone.uoregon.edu) for more information about the club and meeting times.

"A lot of people are intimidated and frustrated by losing, but losing is the best way to learn and get better," Hall said.

## CAMPUS BRIEFS

### Send-off celebration will honor seniors

The annual Senior Send-off will be held today from 5 to 7 p.m. in the EMU Ballroom. The event, sponsored by the Student Alumni Association and Kaplan, will be open to all seniors over 21 years of age and requires that seniors bring their invitations or student IDs and \$2 for admission.

Seniors will have a chance to eat complimentary snacks and purchase food and drinks while boogying down to the sounds of local retro groove band Satin Love Orchestra.

"Each year the event is unique to each group," said Kathie Bedbury, associate executive director of the alumni association. "It's our creation; we

developed the program as a simple congratulations."

All seniors can stop by and pick up a grad pack filled with University mementos, coupons for local businesses and other items to help them leave town and launch new jobs.

Several door prizes will be given away to some lucky seniors, including: a lifetime membership to the alumni association valued at \$750, University merchandise, gift certificates to local businesses and a pair of season football tickets valued at \$300.

Bedbury said the association expects around 500 to 700 students, and they have 800 grad packs to give out.

"We like to keep people connected to the campus. We're their link," Bedbury said. "After

they've forgotten the tests and daily grind, we want them to remember the good stuff, and maybe this can be one of them."

### Fraternity sponsors beach cleanup Sun.

Delta Sigma Phi fraternity is sponsoring a beach cleanup Sunday.

Participants will meet at 11 a.m. in the PLC parking lot, and bus rides to Florence will cost \$5. The cleanup is open to the public.

The cleanup will focus on the North Jetty in Florence. The day will also include football and volleyball. Mo's restaurant will serve free clam chowder to the first 200 participants.

Gloves and bags for the cleanup will be provided.

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