

University student appears on Jeopardy!

She participated in the trivia game show's college tournament

By Victor Runyan
Oregon Daily Emerald

Almost everyone has played along at home with Jeopardy! and said "I could do that."

Veronica Lee, a University junior double majoring in computer and information science and fine arts, took this dream one step further. Jeopardy! officials said Lee is the first University of Oregon student they remember to play in the college tournament.

Viewers will see Lee on Jeopardy! in its upcoming college tournament. Lee's first appearance will air on May 6. Students will have to watch the show to see how she did because she is contractually prevented from talking about the results. She did admit that she didn't win the tournament overall but is pleased with her performance.

"I know so much useless information that it seems like Jeopardy! is the only place I can apply that knowledge," Lee said.

She said she was attracted to the college tournament because it seemed more fun and offered better prizes and a better chance to play in more than one game. The competition for the college tournament is stiffer than for the standard show because there are only 15 spots per year in the tournament and about 400 spots for the standard show, said Elaine Sutton, Jeopardy! promotions director.

Lee made it from one of the thousands who apply and hundreds who test to one of the 15

tournament contestants. Her appearance on the show is considered a success by at least one Jeopardy! staff member.

"She's pretty, smart and she played with energy," said Susan Thurber, senior contestant coordinator.

Thurber said Lee played the game well and was everything she likes in a contestant —



LEE

someone whom people want to cheer for. She said Jeopardy! has been so lucky finding good contestants for the tournament that the show often encourages some of the ones who don't make it onto the show to try out for standard Jeopardy!

"We find so many great kids — more than we can use," she said.

Unlike many hopeful contestants, Lee said she didn't cram before her tryout. She feels that one of the most important skills needed for Jeopardy! is being able to use the buzzer well and recall information instantaneously.

"Everyone up there pretty much knows all the answers to the questions," Lee said.

The prizes in the tournament range from \$2,500 for being one of the 15 students selected to appear to \$25,000 and a convertible Volvo for the tournament winner. Additionally, the finalist's schools get cash prizes matching the student's cash prizes.

Club event offers mix of games

GameX participants played card, board and role-playing games

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The fate of the world rests on the roll of the dice. The result comes up and armies advance across the Risk board to conquest.

The second annual Gaming Extravaganza held Saturday, also known as GameX, showcased various games that members of the University Gaming Club play. This event is the only time during the year when the group comes together to play its favorite games. Traditionally, students meet other players through an e-mail list and come together only once a term for club business meetings.

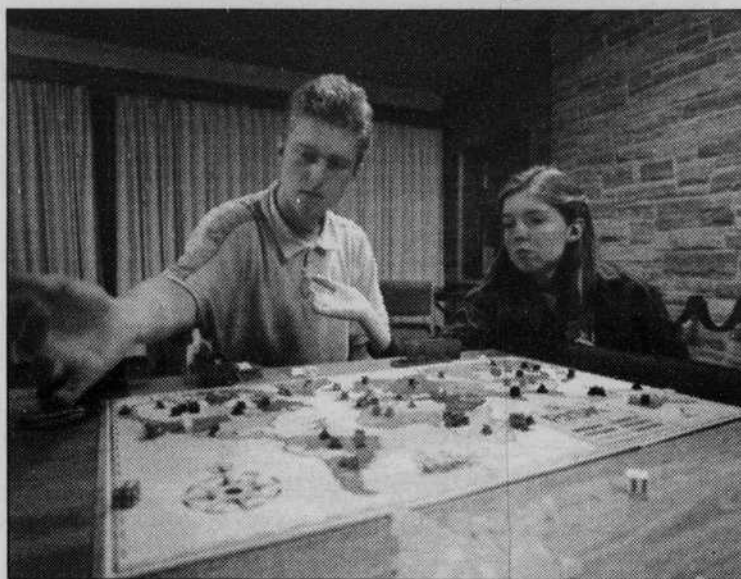
"It forces a lot of people to get out of the room and be social," said Dynée Putnam, event coordinator and a sophomore majoring in Italian.

GameX is intended to introduce students to the club and encourage those interested in games of all type to join, Putnam said. The club is very open to new games. It plays an eclectic selection of games including several role playing, board and card games. The club and its yearly extravaganzas are free. Each game is overseen by a volunteer game master.

"You name the game; we like to play it, as long as it's legal," Putnam said. "We're always open to trying something new."

At the extravaganza members played games such as Advanced Dungeons and Dragons, Toon, a cartoon-based role-playing game and the group's two most popular games, Risk and Claydonia. About 15 students gathered in Walton Complex to engage in various games that began in the early evening and ran well into the morning.

The interest in diverse games introduced one of the club's most



Scott Barnett/Emerald

Community member Matt Parrish and freshman biology and psychology double major Sarah Parrish play Risk, one of several games offered at the second annual Gaming Extravaganza held Saturday night in the Walton complex.

popular games. In Claydonia, players form characters out of Play-Doh. The players decide on how quick and powerful a creature is based on its looks and its creator selects a special ability for it. During the game, based on dice roles, the creatures get flattened by shoes, hit by fists, bitten by players and mutilated in various ways until only one survives. The winner gains another special ability it carries into the next game. Putnam said that because of the mess involved in the popular game, the club is restricted to playing it in the basements of residence halls.

Risk is another game with a loyal following. The club plays a variation called Inter-Dimensional Risk, which it decided against playing at GameX because it can take more than seven hours to resolve. The high level of challenge is one of the features that draws some of its members.

"I've decided not to try to win now; I just find creative ways to lose," said Sarah Parrish, a fresh-

man double majoring in psychology and biology.

She said the club is an excellent place to improve game skills and meet a wide variety of students. She said it has helped her grades because instead of watching television she interacts with students who are often highly motivated and encourage finishing homework before playing.

The club is in its first year as an official University club. It formed last year when its current president, David Johnston, a senior double majoring in computer science and fine arts, transferred to the University from Lewis and Clark College, which has a robust gaming club. He found that the University didn't have a gaming club and decided to form one. Although it started small, it has grown to a mailing list of more than 30 people.

For more information, see the club's Web page at gladstone.uoregon.edu/~dputnam/gaming

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