

MetroWest Chess Club

Summer Scholastic Chess Program

Frequently Asked Questions

My child has never played Rated chess or Tournament Chess before, can he/she participate?

Yes, this program is a wonderful opportunity if your child would like to play organized, tournament chess. Many scholastic players have been introduced to tournament chess through our Summer Scholastic Program, and it has been a good experience for them and their parents.

We won't be able to make it every week, won't this be a problem or put us at a disadvantage?

There's no problem and no real disadvantage. Our program is designed to take into account that families will be away on summer vacations. We simply match together those who are present each week. We have awards based on performance as well as on attendance and most of our participants come away with some kind of prize.

How did the club's Scholastic program come about?

In the spring of 2000, the club's board of directors recognized that there were a large number of scholastic players in the area and very few opportunities for them to play chess during their summer break. The board initiated discussion with area scholastic coaches and formulated a program that was felt would appeal to young players and their parents. An additional requirement of the program was that it would have to take into strong consideration the impact on the club and its resources. Chess clubs are generally small and go inactive for many years at a time. The MCC has grown to be New England's largest weeknight chess club and we must be careful to preserve its viability.

By the end of the day, kids are too worn out. Why doesn't the club run the program during the day when most kids will be available?

The club, including its scholastic program, is run by volunteers who, because of their own jobs, have only their evenings and weekends free to give to the club. Moreover our facility, the Kennedy Senior Center in Natick, is actively used for other purposes during the day. For these reasons, the scholastic program is run on during the evening.

Why does the program start play so late in the evening?

We at the club are very sensitive of the demands that an evening program puts on kids and their parents. Late evenings are part of the equation, but we have also heard from parents about the difficulty of getting to the club earlier than 7:30, and 7:30 proved to be the most popular starting time among the parents surveyed. Working within our limited options, we have tried to structure a program that provides the kids with as much chess as possible while not making it an unduly late evening for them. By starting games at 7:30 we expect most of the kids to be finished before 8:30. Moreover, players will not be permitted to start a new game after 8:30 pm without the approval of their parents. We regret that our limited options necessarily means that some kids cannot participate, but we are doing as much as we can to include as many kids as we can.

How is the club's regular event different from the scholastic program?

The games in club's regular event give each player up to two hours to play a complete game. This means the game could last up to four hours, ending at about 11:30 PM.

We noticed that there are other young players in the club's regular event. Why are they playing there and not in the scholastics event?

Most of the young players in the regular event are very seasoned players who are rated far higher than most scholastic players. In fact, several of them are on the top 50 list in the country for their age bracket. They are also accustomed to playing the four hours late into the night.

My child has been playing for a while and would like some tougher competition. Should we enter the club's regular event?

Even children who have been playing for a while, are likely to be rated well below the typical rating of the players they will encounter in the regular event. This means that they are not likely to do well. In addition, the games may go much longer than they are accustomed to. Moreover, when they play adults, as will often happen, the adults are likely to use all or most of their two hours of playing time to carefully consider their moves, which will result in a very slow-paced game that could be boring or difficult for your child. These are things that are likely to discourage your child.

For more information or clarification, please email us at
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