

42nd Missoula Turkey Open hosts GM Akobian

The nonprofit Missoula Chess Club hosted their annual Turkey Open the weekend of November 10-12 at the Missoula Holiday Inn Downtown and Loyola Sacred Heart High School. This event drew a record number of players for the State of Montana with 60 Open division players and 18 Scholastic players. Attendance was boosted by the attendance of Grandmaster Varuzhan Akobian of the St. Louis Chess Club.



13 time Missoula Turkey Open Champion Greg "The Octopus" Novak analyzes the fifth round deciding match between Cambareri (left) and Nero (right)

For the third straight year, Michael Cambareri (2041) of Idaho finished atop the standings. Michael's final round victory over the rapidly rising Matteo Nero (1765) of Bozeman sealed the outright clean sweep of the tournament.

The tournament featured many major upsets with Daniel Carlino of Missoula taking home the largest upset (non-provisional). Provisional upsets included multiple scholastic players taking home huge rating points with Brook Swoop pulling of a major upset over the former state co-champion Wilton Strickland, Timothy Cline pulling off an upset over Daltri Freitas, Chase Rands upsetting the wily Sherwood Moore, and young Eliel Bodonyi-Kovacs holding John Julian to a draw.



The 18-player scholastic tournament on Saturday morning gave many of our younger players their first chance at an official USCF tournament and needed tiebreaks atop the leaderboard. Chase Rands, Timothy Cline, and Dean Atkinson all finished the morning with 3.5 points and Chase took the trophy home on tiebreaks.



GM Akobian and his 30 opponents

On Friday, Grandmaster Akobian gave a lecture on some of his favorite personal matches to over 70 chess players. Following a question and answer period, GM Akobian went 29-1 in a simul with John Julian of Billings being the sole winner on the evening. Pretty impressive considering Var had driven in from Jackson Hole 30 minutes prior to the start of the lecture and simul.



John Julian holds on for the single victory against GM Akobian

The 43rd Missoula Turkey Open will be held in November 2024. Thank you to all who attended this year, we hope next year is just as successful.