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Moraga Chess Champ Wins Again



Joshua Cao smiles with his trophy at recent CalChess Championship. Photo Linhai Cao

"He's always played against adults at national competitions."

Cao won first place at the CalChess Championship, playing in the highest graded section normally reserved for high school age players.

J. Wake

Joaquin Moraga Intermediate eighth-grader Joshua Cao took another win at the 37th Annual CalChess Super State Scholastic Championship April 20, but for Cao it was just another trophy. The 14-year-old has been playing chess for the past five years and has amassed a room full of trophies. With a chess rating of over 2,000, Cao has the title of "expert" and has spent the past three years winning thousands of dollars at chess tournaments across the country.

Cao began playing chess at age nine as part of the Berkeley Chess School and began to compete at age 10. "He has won a lot of prizes and a lot of money," said Cao's mother Linhai. "Every week he has a one-hour chess session online with a grand master from Serbia and he goes to monthly tournaments."

In January, Cao won more than \$700 at the Golden State Open at the Concord Hilton, and he won more than \$3,000 when he took second place at a 2010 tournament in Las Vegas. During his spring break, Cao traveled to Philadelphia to compete.

"Normally, he doesn't go to kids' tournaments because they don't give him money," his mother said, laughing.

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