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REPORTING

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## ***Chess prodigy competes for Idaho's Best***

**Boise, Idaho** -- Idaho's top chess players have been battling it out this weekend, in a three-day tournament.

Each contestant faced six opponents for the chance at being named the best in the state -- a coveted title that's likely to make it's way to younger players, as the tournament grows old.

"We want to know who the best player in Idaho is," said Jeff Roland, President of Idaho Chess Association.

According to Roland, whoever wins will get those bragging rites for the next year.

It's the 61st annual Idaho State Chess Championship.

"We have a list of state championships since 1947, and everybody wants to get on that list. And that's why we have so many high quality players at this event," Roland explained.

The tournament has been going on all weekend -- Monday was the final chapter.

Current co-champion, Garrett Reynolds is hoping for repeat victory, but he's also facing the best the state has to offer, in fact one of the men here won the title 13 times.

"I have a joke with some of the other players -- it's such an addicting game, and it takes so much time, that we just hate to play it. But of course I'm here, and I'm enjoying myself playing," said Reynolds.

Another challenge he's facing this year, more than any year before, is the chance of losing -- not to a seasoned veteran -- but to a kid.

"A lot of the young players have gotten a lot more serious about the game recently than they used to. It used to be that they'd just play other kids," said Roland.

One of those kids, an eight-year-old chess prodigy named Luke Harmon.



Luke intently studies the position at he challenges Larry Parsons, a 15-time Idaho State Chess Champion. Luke is playing on board 1.

"Well sometimes you can win money, and it's fun," said Harmon.

He began playing chess at just four years old.

Now he's not only one of the best his age, he's a strong competitor even among those many years his senior.

"I'll predict right now that he'll be state champion, perhaps multiple state champion some day. He's quite advanced for where an eight year old would be, especially in this state where you don't have a lot of chess resources," said Reynolds.

"We all think he's going to be state champion in the next couple years," added Roland.

That wouldn't be a bad thing, considering he's been working toward that goal most of his life.

"Cause that'd mean I'd be the best player in the whole state," said Harmon.

But of course he still has to prove it.

"Yea, cause I am in the middle of a chess game."

In the end, the winner, and new champion was 71-year-old Hans Murrow.

Luke Harmon took second place in his division.

As for what happens now, unfortunately there really is no national championship for the winner.

Although many of the players have been known to travel from state to state, which allows them to play with other competitors from around the world.