

Hawken 6th Graders Crowned Kings of the Chess Board

By Desia Joseph,
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Three local sixth grade students represented Hawken School on Saturday, November 20 in Akron at the 2004 Ohio K-12 Grade Scholastic Chess Championships and returned as the reigning sixth grade kings. Roman Kowalysko of Novelty, Stephen Hopkins of Bainbridge, and Jilon Li of Mayfield were among the 450 student and 93 schools who participated in the thirteen section event.

In addition to attending Hawken's Middle School, all three boys are pupils of Aleksandr Kitsis, founder of Vivacity Chess School. Mr. Kitsis, a National Chess Master, quoted Benjamin Franklin, "The game of chess is not merely an idle amusement. Several very valuable qualities of the mind, useful in the course of human life, are to be acquired and strengthened by chess, so as to become habits, ready on all occasions." Mr. Kitsis believes that the real point of playing chess is to unleash the mind's hidden potential and make children successful in life by facilitating the development of their logic skills, creativity, imagination, self-confidence, focus, strategic thinking, and speed and clarity of the mind.

The boys prove his theory. All three are excellent students, musicians, and athletes. They were recently recognized for this achievement during an all-school gathering on Monday, November 29, 2004.