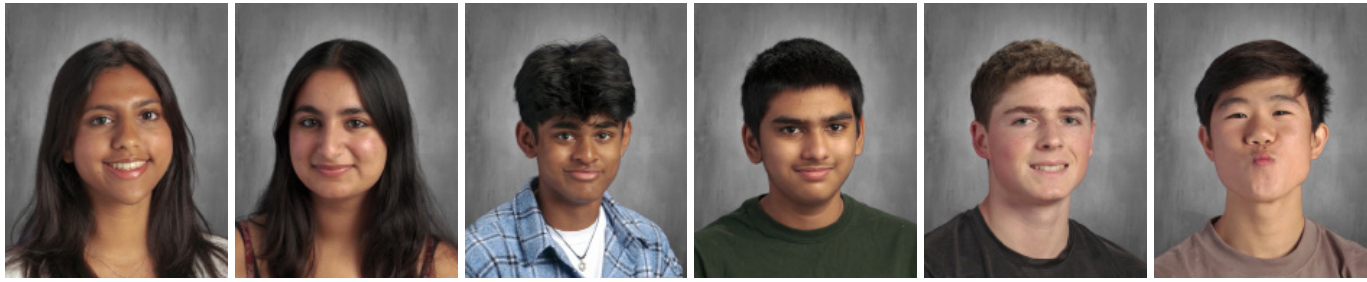


Katelyn Morales  
Grant Morgenfeld  
Ezekiel Morrison  
Kendall Moya  
Alexander Mushinski  
Roshan Nadhani



Ishvaria Nadkarni  
Saachi Nagar  
Alaap Nair  
Krish Nalekar  
Tyler Nemcik-Krippendorf  
Alex Ng



Hahn Ng  
Isabella Nguyen  
Gali Nirpaz  
Christopher Nucamendi-Balderrama  
Haley Oba  
Richard Ogawa



Isaac Oh  
Ekaterina Oks  
Laird Olsen  
Cindy Ortiz Valencia  
Christopher Owens  
Declan Packer



Sheel Pant  
Jacob Papp  
Athy Paramesh  
Elsie Parigi  
Shruthi Paulmurugan  
Benjamin Pegg



Tatum Pelczarski  
Yamzel Penaloza  
Lucianna Peralta  
Clara Persson  
Thomas Pham  
Gautam Pilapakam



Alexa Pineda  
Juan Pinto Saldana  
Emily Preising  
Dominic Profit  
Miriam Pulido  
Nicholas Quiroz



# CHECK mate

Austin Mei details the challenges and triumphs as a chess player.



(left) HEAD IN THE GAME, Austin Mei focuses on the chess game at hand. "Chess is a very difficult game; mathematically, it's difficult to see more than four to five half moves ahead accurately," Mei said. Photo courtesy of Austin Mei.

Armed with a "Chess for Dummies" book and his enthusiasm, Austin Mei began his chess journey at the ripe age of 10. From his school's chess club to working with dedicated coaches, Mei has evolved from a young novice to the experienced player he is today.

Mei loves chess because it is a very strategy-oriented, combative game that is adaptive and dynamic as methods and strategies change with time.

"Chess is probably what can be considered the original war game," Mei said. "The reason why I enjoy chess is that it is operationally simple but has strategic depth...In chess, you can learn it in 10 minutes, but no one has the ability to completely master the game. There's always more to learn, and the top strategies have always been changing."

With such a dynamic and complex game, Mei needs to be diligent when it comes to practice and preparation. Aside from practicing his skills with online chess players, racking up 50 to 100 games played a week, he dedicates most of his training to calculation and positional

exercises.

Chess extends from a hobby to a competitive sport. Mei regularly competes in tournaments, both open and invitational, every couple months. One memorable accomplishment for Mei was his first win against a grandmaster in February, 2022.

"Grandmaster is the highest rank someone can get, so that was a great feeling when I was able to cruise to victory in that game," Mei said.

What especially captivates Mei is how timeless chess remains, even with its 1400-year history. Chess has certainly cemented itself as a game that will stand the test of time, and Mei adamantly believes that its timelessness makes it a game worth learning.

"Chess endures," Mei said. "Chess is a game that has been consistently popular worldwide for thousands of years. It's not like Fortnite or Wordle or among us which rise and fall in the span of six months. If you choose chess as your game and stick with it, it will never be wasted."

Story & design by Aanika Valliani.

*"If you choose chess as your game and stick with it, it will never be wasted."*

AUSTIN MEI



Bennett Quo  
Maximilian Rabbitt-Tomita  
Raghav Ranga  
Jeremie Rault-Wang  
Audrey Raymundo  
Jack Reed



Roxanna Reid  
Avery Reller  
Kali Resi di Cervia  
Beau Revenaugh  
Brody Rice  
Nathaniel Richards



Ethan Riley  
Carlo Rivera  
Sophie Robinson  
Sierra Rock  
Luisa Rodriguez Cabanas  
Hannah Rofman