

The 3rd Annual San Diego Regional High School Team Championship

By Irina Nizmutdinova



In the photo above: NM Sepehr Golsefidy (Canyon Crest Academy) vs Warren Zhang (San Marino High School). Photo credit: Irina Nizmutdinova



*In the photo above: Round 1. Front: Gompers Preparatory Academy vs Redlands High School
Photo credit: Irina Nizmutdinova*

The San Diego Chess Club buzzed with energy on Sunday, January 11, 2026, as 15 teams from across Southern California gathered for the 3rd Annual Regional High School Team Championship. What began as a local initiative has blossomed into a premier regional event, drawing talent from Riverside, Los Angeles, and Orange Counties.



In the photo above: Ethan Huynh (Fountain Valley High School) vs Anish Narang (Redlands High School). Photo credit: Irina Nizmutdinova.

For the 2026 championship, organizers replaced the previous "hyper-accelerated" pairings with a standard system, ensuring all teams—including debutants like Bonita Vista HS, Redlands HS, and Eleanor Roosevelt HS — began Round 1 with a random pairing. Final standings were determined by match results, with ties decided by tie breakers based on total individual points. This format emphasized consistent performance across the entire roster, as a win on Board 4 carried the same weight as a win on Board 1 for the team's final rank.



In the photo above: Lorenzo Antonio (Mission Hills High School) vs Alfonso Sanchez (South Bay Independent Study). Photo credit: Irina Nizmutdinova

The tournament featured six rounds of G25;d5 games, an increase from the five rounds played in previous years to ensure a clear winner emerged from the competitive field. Leading the talent-heavy lineup were IM Isaac Wang (Cathedral Catholic HS) and FM Benjamin Tang (Del Norte HS), joined at the top boards by NM Sepehr Golsefidy and NM Roger Shi (Canyon Crest Academy), NM Vedant Maheshwari (Westview HS), NM Andrew Wang, and CM Ruhan Vichare (Rancho Bernardo HS). While these titled players raised the level of competition, the event remained inclusive. Many unrated students made their tournament debuts alongside these experts, creating a unique environment where new players and seasoned veterans competed together in a shared team spirit.



In the photo above: Canyon Crest Academy Team (front left: NM Roger Shi) vs (Rancho Bernardo High School (front right: CM Ruhan Vichare). Photo credit: Irina Nizmutdinova

As the final round commenced, the atmosphere was electric. Canyon Crest Academy and San Marino High School were locked in a dead heat, both finishing the day with near-perfect match scores of 5.5/6.0. The championship was ultimately decided by the volume of individual board wins across all six rounds. Canyon Crest Academy secured first place and the perpetual trophy by winning the tie breakers, followed closely by San Marino High School in second. Westview High School took third place with a match score of 4.0/6.0, having also edged ahead on tie breakers, while Fountain Valley High School rounded out the top four.



In the photo above: FM Benjamin Tang (Del Norte High School) vs Anthony Mokhov (Patrick Henry High School). Photo credit: Irina Nizmutdinova

Evan Jet Lew (San Marino) and Harshith Bandi (Westview HS) were the top individual performers, both finishing the day with 5.5/6. Several other players finished with 5/6, including NM Sepehr Golsefidy, NM Roger Shi, and David Liu (Canyon Crest Academy); IM Isaac Wang (Cathedral Catholic HS); Charmaine Kwan (San Marino HS); Fausto Borquez and Joseph Swaykos (Patrick Henry HS); Oliver Quintanar (Redlands HS); and Daniel An (Eleanor Roosevelt HS).



In the photo above: Westview High School chess team (front left: NM Vedant Maheshwari) vs Cathedral Catholic High School (front right: IM Isaac Wang). Photo credit: Irina Nizmutdinova

The event was executed by SDCC Scholastic Lead Irina Nizmutdinova and board member Jonathan Frye, supported by a dedicated staff including Kathryn Mokhov, Edwin Antonio, Navid Bajoghli, and James Harrell. As the players departed, the takeaway was clear: the San Diego High School Chess Team Regional is a cornerstone of the SoCal chess calendar.

Winning Teams



In the photo above, not in order: First Place Team - Canyon Crest Academy (NM Sepehr Golsefidy, NM Roger Shi, David Liu, Smaran Mukkavilli, Iniya Mathivanan). Photo Credit: Shailesh Maheshwari



In the photo above, not in order: Second Place Team - San Marino High School (Warren Zhang, Evan Lew, Andersen Yang, Chasen Chwang, Charmaine Kwan. Alt: Adelynne Yang).

Photo Credit: Irina Nizmutdinova



In the photo above, not in order: Third Place Team - Westview High School (NM Vedant Maheshwari, Leon Chen, Rohan Mudrageda, Harshith Bandi, Lucas Ding. Alt: David He).

Photo Credit: Shailesh Maheshwari



In the photo above, not in order: Fourth Place Team - Fountain Valley High School (Ethan Huynh, Khang Nguyen, Patrick Wicks, Alex Huynh, Remy Phan. Alt: Cayden Nguyen).

Photo Credit: Shailesh Maheshwari

2026 Tournament Roster

- Canyon Crest Academy: NM Sepehr Golsefidy, NM Roger Shi, David Liu, Smaran Mukkavilli, Iniya Mathivanan. Alts: Shane Sitaram, Wesley Lai.
- San Marino High School: Warren Zhang, Evan Lew, Andersen Yang, Chasen Chwang, Charmaine Kwan. Alt: Adelynne Yang.
- Westview High School: NM Vedant Maheshwari, Leon Chen, Rohan Mudrageda, Harshith Bandi, Lucas Ding. Alt: David He.
- Fountain Valley High School: Ethan Huynh, Khang Nguyen, Patrick Wicks, Alex Huynh, Remy Phan. Alt: Cayden Nguyen.
- Del Norte High School: FM Benjamin Tang, Manasvi Macha, David Ma, Jacob Gelle, Nathan Trieu. Alts: Michael Xu, Jerry Ling.
- Patrick Henry High School: Anthony Mokhov, Jonathan An, Fausto Borquez, Joseph Swaykos, Dylan Gomaity. Alt: Dylan Truong.
- Cathedral Catholic High School: IM Isaac Wang, Liam Brunton, Colin Holt, Wyatt Williams, Finn Brentnall.

- Rancho Bernardo High School: NM Andrew Wang, CM Ruhan Vichare, Vishnu Nath, Evan Ha, Doyun Lee. Alt: Shriman Naineni.
 - Redlands High School: Anish Narang, Matthew Li, Oliver Quintanar, Mani Momeni, Richard Ramirez.
 - Gompers Preparatory Academy: Adalberto Martinez, Ismael Martinez, Ivan Martinez, Armando Martinez, Aliana Martinez.
 - South Bay Independent: Alfonso Sanchez, Abiathar Kubilis, Alphachrist Trinh, Ammanuel Trinh, Esther Sanchez.
 - Eleanor Roosevelt High School: Tanush Komatineni, Jaydn Su, Jarrett Brown, Daniel An, Vaishnavi Komatineni. Alt: Haoyu Ye.
 - Mission Hills High School: Lorenzo Antonio, Triston Tran, Angel Bautista, Luke Tsay, Joshua Chang.
 - Eastlake High School: Vinson Nguyen, Richard Cobian, Isabella Averone, Mateo Rioja, Wilson Hydes.
 - Bonita Vista High School: Juan Ramirez, Armando Zuniga, Ethan Yang, Rocco Drossi, Charlie Finch. Alt: Kensington Almodovar.
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