



Marshall Patterson (left) and Brock Lewis pay attention as the instructor goes over strategies at the chess camp taught by members of the champion chess team at the University of Texas at Dallas. More than 100 children are enrolled.

ARIANE KADOCH SWISA/Staff Photographer

## Kids learn not to get rooked

'We want to help them develop their minds,' school official says

By WENDY HUNDLEY

Staff Writer

It took Dennis Rylander only seconds to assess the situation and make his move.

He repositioned his bishop on the checkered surface and moved to the next chessboard lined up in front of him.

He quickly felled his opponents as he moved from board to board, but this wasn't a competition.

### UTD CHESS CAMP

**What:** Chess camp for children ages 7 to 15

**Where:** University of Texas at Dallas, 2601 N. Floyd Road, Richardson

**When:** Another camp will be held Monday to June 18

**Cost:** \$290 for all-day sessions; \$195 for half-day sessions

**For information:** Call 972-883-2898

It was an advanced class in the chess camp at the University of Texas at Dallas, where Mr. Rylander was teaching aspiring Bobby Fischers the fine points of

the game.

The weeklong camps, being held this week and next week at the Richardson campus, are taught by members of UTD's three-time Pan American champion chess team.

This is the first time the university has offered the chess camp, and officials hope to make it an annual event, said James Stallings, UTD's associate director for chess and education. More than 100 students are enrolled.

"The idea of a chess camp is to help them academically," said Mr. Stallings, who was the Texas high school chess champion in

1963. "We're not trying to turn them into chess masters. We want to help them develop their minds."

He said studies show that playing chess can enhance memory, increase problem-solving skills, boost self-confidence, and develop verbal and math skills.

"When you see a kid sitting there quietly studying a chessboard," Mr. Stallings said, "you know something is going on in their minds."

Mr. Rylander began playing chess when he was 8 in his na-



ARIANE KADOCH SWISA/Staff Photographer

Instructor Susan Breeding goes over the chess pieces in a beginner class.

## Chess camp teaches thinking

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tive Sweden and is now attending UTD on a chess scholarship. "It helped my logical thinking, and that's something I'm using today," he said. "Being a business major [requires] a lot of logical thinking. I feel like I have a lot of advantages."

Boys outnumber girls 10-to-1 when it comes to playing chess, said Susan Breeding, a camp instructor and competitive chess player.

Why is there such a gender imbalance?

"Because when girls play chess, their goal is socialization. Boys want to fight it out," she said. "When ... [girls] get older, they don't like to do things that are different."

Ms. Breeding said that chess

can calm hyperactive youngsters, and is one of the games that adults and children can play together. "Kids often have an advantage," said Ms. Breeding, a United States Chess Federation Tournament director. "A child can often beat an adult."

Jimmy Durham, 13, learned to play chess when he was 8 years old. Math wasn't always his strong suit, and he said chess has helped him become a straight-A math student at Wilson Middle School in Plano.

"Thinking through chess moves, it helps you think of all the ways to solve a math problem," said Jimmy, who lives in Richardson.

But Carrollton resident Spencer Sylo, 14, said he likes chess because "it's the only game I win. I just do it because it's fun."

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