

Yes Ma'am, Girls PWN in Cal and Mexico

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by Michael Aigner

The recent [Chess Life Online video](#) "*Women Talk Chess: Beating the Boys*" has stirred emotions on both sides of the gender gap in chess. The cold hard facts reveal that only 3% of adult players are women. On the bright side, many young girls join their elementary school clubs, and often they outperform the boys.

The Bay Area girls are no exception. A dozen kids now populate the Girls U-13 and U-16 rankings on the [CalChess Top 100 lists](#), more than double from just two years ago. Many attended the [CalChess Girls Championship](#) in January, with **Sophia Li** earning a hard fought victory in the top section. As these young women grow older, may they continue to inspire the next bunch a few years younger.



Team USA winners. L to R: Pranav, Chenyi, Joaquin Perkins, Aksithi and Ashritha



CalChess Girls Champion Sophia Li

Indeed, **three local girls won medals** for their age at the [North American Youth Chess Championships](#) last weekend in Mexico City! Kudos to **Ashritha Eswaran** (*silver in Girls-U12*), her sister **Aksithi Eswaran** (*bronze in Girls-U8*) and **Chenyi Zhao** (*silver in Girls-U10*). Actually, the girls didn't take everything--here's a big cheer for **Pranav Senthilkumar** for earning the **gold medal in Boys-U10!**

Closer to home, the girls scored a collective hat trick at the [Best of the West Championship](#) on Memorial Day weekend. Out of six sections in this adult tournament, **half ended with a middle school age lady on top!** Congratulations to **Audrey Zhao** (*Class B*), reigning state girls champion Sophia Li (*Class C*) and **Emily Zhu** (*U1400 section*) for capturing clear first place, *each a half point ahead of the boys!*