

Calling all foosers



ABOVE:A foosball table reflects in the glasses of a player at the 2017 Wisconsin State Foosball Championships, held at The Veranda in Medford.

RIGHT: Teddy Krueger (left to right), Little Chute, and Mike Phillips, Watertown, S.D., face off against Erich Pechmann, Madison, and Ira Kaplan, Trempeleau, in a doubles match on Saturday at the 2017 Wisconsin State Foosball Championships.



The Veranda hosts Wisconsin's best for the 2017 State Foosball Championships

STORY AND PHOTOS BY BRYAN WEGTER
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From Friday night through Sunday afternoon, Medford was the foosball capital of Wisconsin.

That's foosball, with an 's.'

The Veranda was the host as Wisconsin's best foosers converged for the 2017 Wisconsin State Foosball Championships.

Brett Nooyen, board president of Wisconsin Foosball, the organization that coordinates the sport statewide, said this was the first year the championships have been held away from Madison.

"As foosball players, we're kind of a small community, so we like to support

our own," he said. "The owner of the venue, Casey Johnson, he's been a foosser for a long time.

"Instead of putting more money into a bar we don't really have control of, we decided to take a chance and come here."

Johnson, owner of The Veranda, said attracting and hosting an event like the State Foosball Championships is unique for Medford and could help kickstart the local foosball scene that once thrived in Marshfield, Medford and Dorchester.

"When I originally bought this place part of my pitch to the bank was that I was going to try to get this tournament here, just to bring some outside people to

Medford," he said.

While most competitors at this weekend's tournament hail from Wisconsin, there were some from Minnesota, Illinois and even South Dakota that made the trip to Medford.

They represented a variety of skill levels, from beginner to professional. At the higher levels, Nooyen said the sport involves complex strategy and the ability to think steps ahead of your opponent.

"If you watch some of these intense games, it's a chess match," Nooyen said. "Everybody can kinda do at the base level, pass and shoot a shot, but now you start getting goalies and patterns and

reading defenses and reading offenses.

"It's kinda like video games meets chess as far as the hand-eye coordination and the thought process at the speed you've gotta react at."

Johnson, who characterizes himself as an amateur player, said the top players master an array of shots and play with patience.

"They're very methodical in the way they play. They don't just try to shoot points, they play defense, they know how to pass the ball," he said. "You can do mind games with people. It's kinda fun."

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Brett Nooyen
Board President,
Wisconsin Foosball



ABOVE: Two players face off in a singles match.

LEFT: Wisconsin Foosball board president Brett Nooyen (far right) and several others take part in a doubles match as part of the 2017 Wisconsin State Foosball Championships, held at The Veranda in Medford.