



What's Going On Here?

There is a Scrabble[®] tournament being played.

Wow! People actually play Scrabble competitively?

Yes, and they are quite serious about it. Any given weekend there are generally a couple of Scrabble tournaments being held somewhere in the United States. Today there happens to be one in Auburn, Alabama.

Cool! Can I compete in it?

This tournament has been sanctioned by NASPA, a national word-game-playing organization. To compete in today's tournament, players needed to be a member of NASPA. **To learn more about competitive Scrabble play, visit the NASPA website at www.scrabbleplayers.org.** Tournament Scrabble players are always eager to welcome new players!

You are also encouraged to speak with the director of this tournament, Eric Harshbarger. If he is not actively involved in a game, he is likely at the computer entering game results.

May I watch the games being played?

Yes... but with some serious caveats. **The Number One Rule is DO NOT DISTURB players involved in a game.** You are welcome to quietly stand at the periphery of the room and watch games in progress, but please adhere to the following rules:

- DO NOT whisper, talk, or make any unnecessary noise,
- DO NOT loiter around any tables where games are in progress (if you are not sure, assume that a game *is* in progress),
- DO NOT touch any of the boards, tiles, clocks, or any other equipment on the tables (whether being used in an active game or sitting idle),

- DO NOT point or make any gestures which might give away any information about a game in progress,
- DO NOT look up any words on your smart phones to check their validity,
- if any players involved in a game request that you leave the area around their game, please acquiesce.

The best advice is probably just to look into the room from the lobby area and quietly direct any questions you may have toward players once they exit the competition room (even the players themselves are expected to be quiet in the play-room and to take any conversations out to the lobby). Many players take pictures of the final boards when a game is over, so they might be happy to show you how a game turned out.

There will be a lunch break after Game 3 (around noon) and the tournament should be over around 5:00pm or so. You are certainly welcome to enter the room during a break and look over the boards (but DO NOT touch any equipment) and talk with any players.

In general competitive Scrabble players are a very friendly and welcoming bunch; we are always eager to invite new people to the competitive Scrabble circuit. However, most players take tournament games very seriously (their are rating points at stake, and they have spent a lot of time studying and preparing for games), so please be respectful of their time and interests and do not disrupt the tournament in any way.

Again, if you have any questions or further interest, track down the director, Eric Harshbarger; he will be happy to provide more information.