



Senior Christopher Zempel hones his StarCraft II skills in preparation for Truman State's next battle in the Hyperion Division. Bethany Coury/Index

Local gamers compete nationally

BY BETHANY COURY
Staff Reporter

He stares intently at the computer screen, leaning forward, his fingers aggressively work the keyboard. Senior Christopher Zempel isn't rushing a paper deadline, he's fighting a Milky Way galactic battle for the Collegiate StarLeague, a Starcraft II tournament between 240 North American universities. Zempel and five other like-minded students have just taken their war national.

StarCraft is a fast-paced, real-time strategy computer game, the participation in which, though traditionally viewed as an unconstructive hobby, might be improving their cognitive development, Zempel said.

He said Electronic Sports as a whole have been marginalized. However, he said a study done by Simon Fraser University regarding cognitive skills development found that some video games are much more engaging and beneficial than originally given credit for.

"[Video games are] this thing that we all grew up with and everybody does, but nobody quite understands it yet," Zempel said.

Recent efforts have legitimized video games. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of more extensive free speech rights for video games this summer, and

universities are offering 343 programs in game design, development and programming this school year, according to new research from the Entertainment Software Association.

Zempel, who grew up playing physical sports such as floor hockey, soccer and tennis, said traditional sports performance is determined by physical ability while E-Sports players need to be quick-minded, alert and have mental fortitude. Zempel said many StarCraft players transfer their necessary skills to become poker players.

"You're thrown into this game and the game goes on, but really it's your mind versus the other player's mind, and the game is just the medium," Zempel said.

Senior Johnny Tanner, who originally found out about the league, said the game is much like the game "Risk," except it isn't turn-based, but rather intensely fast-paced, making it much more difficult.

Not only do players need to strategize rapidly, they also need to be dexterous on the keyboard. Their actions per min-

ute (APM) usually ranges from 200 to 400, he said.

"Imagine if you had the knowledge of a chess grandmaster," Tanner said. "You'd have to know five times more than that, to be able to play StarCraft at a professional level. There's so much that can happen."

In South Korea, where the game originated, people play StarCraft professionally and it almost has attained national sport status, like football in the U.S., he said.

Truman's team, which lost to the University of Chicago last Sunday, will be competing against the University of Missouri-Columbia on Sunday. Truman is in the Hyperion Division, where they'll compete for a few months. Next are the playoffs, then a single elimination tournament, followed by the semi-finals and finals, which will be broadcast and commented. Last season's first place prize was \$1,000 and gaming equipment, Tanner said.

"We're a school of 5,000 [students] playing against schools of 20,000, with already established communities," Zempel said. "Hopefully we'll do well."

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— Christopher Zempel
senior

A Brief History of **STARCRRAFT**

- March 31, 1998**
Blizzard releases the original version of StarCraft to critical acclaim and becomes the best selling PC game of the year, selling 1.5 million copies
- November 30, 1998**
Blizzard releases StarCraft: Brood War, the only "official" expansion pack to the game
- June 13, 2000**
A Nintendo 64 version of StarCraft is released to poor critical and sales response
- December 2000**
The first StarCraft novel, Uprising, is released. It is the first in a long series of prose novels based on the game
- May 19, 2007**
After months of speculation, Blizzard announces that StarCraft II is in development
- February 17, 2010**
After months of delays, Blizzard finally starts the multiplayer beta test of StarCraft II
- July 27, 2010**
Blizzard releases StarCraft II

according to blizzplanet.com

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Bacon festival sizzles

Students and residents gear up for first Bacon Fest in Kirksville

BY ALEX CARLSON
Staff Reporter

From the minute it hits the frying pan and begins sizzling to the moment it's served on a warm plate, bacon has become a staple in American cuisine, breakfast or otherwise. Americans have made bacon a household necessity, with unique dishes including chocolate-covered bacon on a stick and chicken-fried bacon appearing on plates of hungry people across the nation. Bacon now will be showcased in Kirksville with its own festival.

In cooperation with Kraft Foods and the Kirksville Area Chamber of Commerce, the first Kirksville Bacon Fest will be Sept. 24. The Square will celebrate the taste of bacon, while increasing awareness to the looming issue of hunger in the Kirksville area.

Shawn Gadley, Kirksville Area Chamber of Commerce project manager, is the chairperson for Bacon Fest and helped gather support from local organizations and businesses.

"The Bacon Fest has taken place in other cities in the past, but this is the first time it's in Kirksville," Gadley said. "We want it to help raise awareness of the hunger issue in Kirksville, while also showing the appeal of a food like bacon."

The festival will begin with the bacon recipe contest. Avid bacon chefs can make their own bacon culinary creation. The winner's recipe will be featured on the Steve's Garden Deli menu. The midday events will continue with 2,000 free BLT sandwiches distributed to visitors, along with performances by musical acts including True Men and University Swingers. The Oscar Mayer Weinermobile also will make an appearance. The Miss Bacon Bits beauty pageant for young ladies will occur during the day with three age divisions: 4 through 8, 9 through 14, and 15 through 22.

Attendees can help fight hunger in Kirksville by donating non-perishable food items to the mobile food bank as admission for the event.

Senior Josiah Moore said he plans to try the bacon-related cuisine at the Bacon Fest this year.

"Bacon is a pretty universal food," Moore said. "I think that by using bacon you're targeting a wide demographic in Kirksville. It's a smart move."

Pickler's Famous owner Todd Kuhns was approached by the festival's planning committee and has been planning events for the festival. Pickler's Famous will participate in the festival by showing classic cartoons in the business' nickelodeon theater. They also plan to make and serve a celebratory twist on a classic dessert menu favorite: bacon-flavored ice cream.

Based on an ice cream sample given at an ice cream retailers and producers convention, the meaty treat quickly caught Kuhns' attention, he said.

"When we first tasted it, we didn't know it was bacon ice cream," Kuhns said. "We thought it was very good, but we couldn't place the flavor. Once someone said it was bacon, we thought that we had to do that."

The Bacon Fest is an all-ages event that utilizes many recipes that feature bacon and entertainment to grab the attention and the taste buds of those who attend. The Kirksville Bacon Fest begins 10 a.m. Sept. 24 on The Square. Food donations will be available at the Bacon Fest.