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## NEW YORK WINS NATIONAL TELEPHONE CHESS LEAGUE

The National Telephone Chess League ended its 1977 season with the New York Threats winning by a 34-14 score and a 6-game margin over second-place Los Angeles. Last year the season ended with a last match cliffhanger which saw the Washington Plumbers edge out New York for first place. New York was involved in a cliffhanger of another kind this year. The last round of the League was played on May 18, but the final team scores and order of finish were held up until an appeal resulting from the match between New York and Westfield was resolved.

In a telephone chess match the teams do not sit down facing one another. Instead, each team gathers in its own city and is connected only by a telephone line to the opponents in another city. Each player sits at his board and moves his own pieces. "Runners" watch the games and, when a move is made, "run" them to the person handling the open telephone line to the other team. The runner on the other end then makes the move for the missing opponent and waits for the reply, which is then transmitted back in the same way. This procedure continues, sometimes until the wee hours of the morning, until all games are completed or sixty moves are made, at which time the game is stopped and the result is adjudicated.

For the second straight year the New York Threats did not lose a match, but did allow two ties. In 1976 they had tie matches with the first place Washington Plumbers and the Cleveland Kinghunters, while this year they tied the Boston 64s and the Los Angeles Stauntons.

Overcoming a horrible start which saw them lose their first and second matches to expansion teams, the Los Angeles Stauntons climaxed the late season drive with a 4-2 result against Washington in the last round to take second place. The Cleveland Kinghunters also finished strong, beating the San Francisco Dragons 4-2 to overtake the Dragons and finish third place for the second year in a row. Tied for fourth-place money were two expansion teams, the Westfield (NJ) Colonials and the San Francisco Dragons. The prize money will be split, but Westfield placed fourth on tie-break points.

International Master Andy Soltis of New York scored the most points of any League player with 7-1 (6 wins, 2 draws) while Tom Wozney of Cleveland had the best winning percentage with 6½-1 (6 wins, 1 draw). Other outstanding performers included Bruce Rind of Philadelphia (6½-1½), Dennis Fritzingler of San Francisco (6-2), Edmar Mednis of New York (5½-1½), Mike Valvo of Westfield (5½-2½), Eugene Meyer of Washington (5½-2½), Alan Pollard of Los Angeles (5½-2½), and Jim Rousselle of New Orleans (5½-2½).

With the novelty of playing chess by telephone and the participation of some of the country's top Grandmasters on both Coasts, the League was made an even more notable chess event this year with the addition of teams from cities like Berwick Bay, Louisiana, and Hartford, Connecticut. Their good results against the stronger teams proved that the National Chess League is not limited to large metropolitan area.

Any community can have a major league (chess) team. Each team has six players. Most of the teams find local funding to help defray the entry fee of approximately \$800, which covers the expense of the telephone, directors' fees, and the prize fund. Teams which can obtain access to a playing site with the use of a WATS line are refunded a part of the entry fee. Any group interested in entering the 1978 National Chess League is urged to contact the U.S. Chess Federation, 186 Rt. 9W, New Windsor, NY 12550. The deadline for

team entries is November 1, 1977, and play begins in January 1978.

The results of the last round of the League and the standings of the teams follows:

ROUND 8 RESULTS

<u>NEW YORK 5</u>	<u>HARTFORD 1</u>	<u>WESTFIELD 6</u>	<u>LINCOLN 0</u>
Shamkovich, Leonid 1	Tobin, Hugh 0	Valvo, Mike 1	Schmidt, Loren 0
Soltis, Andy 1	Sweeney, Tom 0	Evans, Larry D. 1	Malpert, Rod 0
Mednis, Edmar 1	Plesset, Ken 0	Fedorowicz, John 1	Moore, Rich 0
Regan, Ken 1	Platz, Joseph 0	Kaimo, Roberto 1	Blankenau, Mike 0
Tamargo, Joe 0	Bolton, James 1	Stoyko, Steve 1	Chess, Rich 0
Benjamin, Joel 1	Ipacs, Ed 0	Shapiro, Eugene 1	Chess, Mike 0
<u>SAN FRANCISCO 2</u>	<u>CLEVELAND 4</u>	<u>ATLANTA 1</u>	<u>CHICAGO 5</u>
Tarjan, Jim ½	Ghizdavu, Dumitru ½	Shocron, Rubin 0	Martz, William 1
Biyiasas, Peter 0	Blocker, Calvin 1	Scott, Bill 0	Verber, Richard 1
Cornelius, Paul 1	Sprague, Ross 0	Radin, Jared ½	Formanek, Ed ½
Watson, John 0	Wozney, Tom 1	Rundlett, Stuart ½	Martinovsky, Gene ½
Fritzinger, Dennis ½	Shapiro, Danny ½	Underwood, Ervin 0	Winslow Elliott 1
Whitehead, Paul 0	Burns, Robert 1	Hunt, Steve 0	Mihajlovic, Jova 1
<u>WASHINGTON 2</u>	<u>LOS ANGELES 4</u>	<u>PHOENIX-RAMADA 4½</u>	<u>NEW ORLEANS 1½</u>
Diesen, Mark ½	Commings, Kim ½	Rowley, Robert 1	Katz, Joe 0
Meyer, Eugene ½	Peters, John ½	Anderson, Alan ½	Trosclair, Wayne ½
Powell, Charles 0	DeFirmian, Nick 1	Mann, Richard 0	Rouselle, Jim 1
Meyer, John 1	Ervin, Roy 0	Johnson, Paul 1	Williams, Ed 0
Hook, Bill 0	Loftsson, Julius 1	Abbott, William 1	Grant, Newton 0
Odendahl, Steve 0	Pollard, Alan 1	Hestenes, David 1	Parsons, John 0
<u>BOSTON 2½</u>	<u>PHILADELPHIA 3½</u>	<u>SAN DIEGO 4½</u>	<u>BERWICK BAY 1½</u>
Weinstein, Norman ½	Taylor, Tim ½	Mondragon, Jose 1	Defize, Alain 0
Bono, Gerome 1	Costigan, Tom 0	Wagner, Carl ½	Brieger, Robert ½
Lonoff, Marc ½	Baczynskyj, Boris ½	Gomez, Juan 1	Hobart, Steve 0
Savage, Allan 0	Costigan, Rich 1	Taylor, Dave 1	Goodman, Jess 0
Tapper, Larry 0	Shahade, Mike 1	Jellison, Dave 1	Renshaw, Don 0
Rizzitano, James ½	Rind, Bruce ½	Fisher, Ray 0	Goshen, Matt 1

FINAL TEAM STANDINGS

1. New York Threats	34	9. Chicago Prairie Dogs	25½
2. Los Angeles Stauntons	28	10. Phoenix-Ramada Rooks	24
3. Cleveland Kinghunters	27½	11. San Diego	23
4. Westfield Colonials	27	12. Hartford No-Faults	22
5. San Francisco Dragons	27	13. Lincoln Mid-Americans	21
6. Philadelphia Quakers	26½	14. Berwick Bay Browns	16
7. Washington Plumbers	26½	15. New Orleans Maple Leafs	15½
8. Boston 64s	25½	16. Atlanta Kings	15

The top eight named teams receive a free entry into the 1978 League, and the prize money was distributed to the top four teams (with fourth-place money divided between the two teams which tied for fourth and fifth). New York, \$40 per game played, \$1920; Los Angeles, \$30 per game played; Cleveland, \$20 per game played, \$960; and Westfield and San Francisco, \$5 per game played, \$240 each.

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