

Central NM Team Chess League Rio Grande Valley Regional

Albuquerque, Indian Pueblo Cultural Center,
December 3rd, 2016, 9:00am - 12:30pm

Write up by Learners Chess Academy Staff

Leaders Section

On a cool New Mexico winter Saturday morning, 55 chess players representing schools from the Rio Grande Valley region of Central New Mexico gathered to compete for the regional team chess championship.

After 4 rounds of hard fought chess, it was again **Escuela del Sol** who was able to capture the regional championship for Fall of 2016. Escuela del Sol won all four of their matches by holding off the Griegos Mustangs (4th place) in round 1, the Chamiza Conejos (2nd place) in round 2, the Alvarado All Stars (3rd place) in round 3, and the Marie Hughes Huskies (6th place) in round 4. Escuela was led by 1st place, 1st board player, Marcelo Tohen who scored 4 of 4 game points. Marcelo has quite a few years of chess learning experience with Learners Chess since first joining his school's chess club. Also contributing to the team's success was third place medalist on 2nd board, Riley Collins (2 game points), 2nd place on 3rd board, Ian Merewether (3 game points), 3rd place on 4th board, Miles Bellmore (2 game points), and 1st place on 5th board Adan Mulkey (4 game points).

The **Chamiza Conejos** matched their best ever regional finish this year by placing 2nd, having won 3 out of 4 matches. They narrowly lost to Escuela del Sol in round 2 by a score of (2-3). Other than that the Conejos were able to defeat the Pajarito Eagles (7th place) in round 1, the Marie Hughes Huskies (6th place) in round 3, and the Griegos Mustangs (4th place) in round 4. The Conejos were led by their very experienced and wise 1st board, Cisco Sisneros (3 game points), who tied for 2nd place among all 1st boards. Also medaling for Chamiza, was 3rd board, Mateo Lujan (4 game points), who won 1st place among 3rd boards and Ulises Oaxaca (2.5 game points) who tied for 2nd place among 5th boards.

The **Alvarado All Stars**, in their first year in the Rio Grande Valley regional tournament placed 3rd, having won 2 and a half of their four matches. The All Stars were led by a trio of players with a combined 8 years experience with Learners Chess. The trio of: 1st board, Ashadu Ball, 2nd board, Jackson Tomingas, and 3rd board Izak Benevidez all won 3 out of 4 games to each tie for a 2nd place medal among their respective boards. Alvarado defeated Escuela del Sol Team 2, tied with Marie Hughes, lost to Escuela del Sol, and defeated Pajarito.

The **Griegos Mustangs** placed 4th in the region with 2 out of four match points and 10.5 game points. Griegos defeated Escuela del Sol Team 2, The Montessori

School, and narrowly lost to 2nd place Chamiza, (2-3). Medaling for Griegos was 3rd place 3rd board Mason Nims, 2nd place 4th board, Matias Cordova-Romero, and 2nd place 5th board, Waylon Dumm.

The **Montessori School Butterflies** (also in their first ever Rio Grande Valley regional) placed 5th, also with 2 match points, but only achieving 9.5 game points. TMS defeated Escuela del Sol Team 2 and the Pajarito Eagles. Medaling for the Butterflies was Benjamin Griffith who placed 3rd of all the 1st boards, Makhi Molina placed 2nd among 2nd boards, and Malcom Molina placed 2nd among 5th boards.

The **Marie Hughes Huskies** placed 6th on the day, scoring 1.5 match points. Marie Hughes tied with 3rd place Alvarado, narrowly lost to 1st place Escuela del Sol (2-3) and narrowly lost to 2nd place Alvarado (2-3). Medaling for Marie Hughes was first place, 2nd Board, Aidan Rosette and 1st place 4th board Novena Vallone, both very experienced and hard working chess Learners.

In their second year participating, the **Pajarito Eagles** placed 7th. Having defeated Escuela del Sol Team 2 in round 3. Medaling for Pajarito was Ruben Montelongo, who tied for 1st place among the 4th board players.

Rounding out the Leaders section was **Escuela del Sol Two**. This was a team of five players who were supposed to play in the Reserve section but got bumped up onto an Escuela del Sol 2nd team, when they were needed to make even numbers in the Leaders section. All players on this team fought hard, learned a lot and are better prepared for when it is their time to be on the Leaders team for their school!

Reserve Section

In our Reserve section, where players represent their school's future of chess success, we had 15 players competing in one large individual section for their school. The scores of the top 3 finishing players from each school were added up to determine team trophies.

The top finishing teams were the the **Montessori of the Rio Grande Dragonflies** and the Pajarito Eagles both whose players amassed 7 points for their team. The Dragonflies were given the tie breaker, as they only used two players to score their 7 points, while Pajarito used three. The Dragonflies were led by 1st place overall finisher, Luca Kalishman, who scored a perfect 4 out of 4. Also, Jack Fredine pitched in with 3 out of 4 and tying for 2nd place over all.

For the **Pajarito Eagles** it was Kelier Evans who scored 3 points and tied for 2nd overall, while Kevin Flores and Angel Montelongo each scored 2 points to help the team get the second place trophy.

The **Griegos Mustangs** placed 3rd, with Estevan Cordova-Romero leading the way with 3 points and tying for 2nd place overall.

Escuela del Sol, missing what would've been five more players who played up in the Leaders section, finished in 4th place with Gael Zeller and Elisio Arifia each scoring 2.5 points and tying for 3rd place overall.

Silas Posich was the lone representative of **Mountain Mahogany** and he scored 2.5 points to tie for third overall place and score a 5th place trophy for his school.

Rounding out the Reserve section was the **Chamiza Conejos**, who scored 2 game points between their two participating players.

Congrats to all of the participating players and teams! Many of you will be seeing each other again on April 2nd at UNM at the Central NM Team Chess League Finals!