

New Met League

Newsletter #1 August 11, 2007

Blog: <http://correspondence-chess-in-cyberspace.blogspot.com/>

Introduction

Long ago, it was common to have OTB clubs compete via road trips, "met leagues" and similar venues. The format was simple – several club members pile into a car, go somewhere, play face-to-face against members of another club, a winner was declared – and some "met area" TD announced the results. Weekend chess and other innovations decreased the need for this type of competition, for the purpose of getting more games, and this type of Club vs. Club competition has all but died off.

Fast forward to today, and we see a rich mix of playing opportunities including Club, online, weekend, team, and correspondence. In addition we see the very fast expansion of the US Chess League (USCL) which uses Internet Chess Club (ICC) as the playing hall. But there is still no widely organized Club vs. Club competition.

New Met League is about to change that!

What is New Met League?

New Met League is a collection of OTB Clubs organized to play each other in team competition. Each OTB Club forms a team of four players organized as Board 1-4, Board 1 being highest rating. OTB Clubs play matches with each other, where the players on each Board play two games, one with each color.

The matches are played via webserver correspondence chess which allows players the flexibility to make moves when they can, within clock limits, nominally 30 days for each 10 moves. Membership in New Met League is per OTB Club, giving the OTB Clubs the flexibility to adjust rosters before each match to suit the needs of their players. Players are required to have a USCF rating.

The preferred webserver host organization is CCLA who partners with ICCF (the world correspondence chess federation) to offer a professional webserver correspondence chess environment with no advertising, and a exposure to country and world correspondence chess activities.

Where Are We Now?

The President of CCLA has agreed to host the first match (Punxsutawney CC vs. MetroWest CC). The President of CCLA will be making a proposal to the CCLA Board for a longer term commitment where joining requirements, fees, etc. are nailed down. The ideal is where the OTB Club is the entity that joins (small fee) as a New Met League Affiliate, and pays per match (small fee). This liberates the OTB Club player from the details of administration.

What Are The Next Steps?

We have a need to start the first match, learn the lessons we need to learn, and get ready for September, where I am anticipating a spike in interest, with people coming off of vacation. The original start date for the first match was 06 August 2007, but CCLA asked for a few more days to prepare the ICCF webserver templates.

We also need a good way to communicate. First, there is a blog for breaking news (<http://correspondence-chess-in-cyberspace.blogspot.com/>). Second, we need a webpage. MetroWest CC offered me space to run the page (in process), but long term hopefully we can move it into CCLA once they get past the Board meeting. We also have this newsletter which will be emailed out periodically to keep everyone up to date.

Please watch the blog (URL above at top) for breaking news.

NOTE: If you use a subscription you will be notified of new blog entries in your "reader". Use the 'atom' subscription at the bottom of the blog site.

Interested Parties

The following lists are interested parties. They have either agreed to participate, are in the process of determining interest with members, or will have an interest in standings at a state or regional level.

Punxsutawney CC (PA)
MetroWest CC (MA)
Greater Worcester CC (MA)
Sven Brask CC (MA)
Univ of CT (CT)
PA Chess Federation (PA)
MA Chess Association (MA)

Rosters

Punxsutawney CC John Caliguire 1754
Punxsutawney CC Blaise Hodgson ??
Punxsutawney CC Jason Smith 1410
Punxsutawney CC Daniel Lines 1270
Punxsutawney CC Nathan Buganza ??

MetroWest CC Michael Barry 1748
MetroWest CC George Duval 1632
MetroWest CC Joseph Murphy 771
MetroWest CC Steve Wollkind 1408
MetroWest CC James Jaillet 1086

Greater Worcester CC (Donna assembling roster) two teams
Greater Worcester CC (Donna assembling roster) two teams
Greater Worcester CC (Donna assembling roster) two teams
Greater Worcester CC (Donna assembling roster) two teams

Greater Worcester CC (Donna assembling roster) two teams
Greater Worcester CC (Donna assembling roster) two teams
Greater Worcester CC (Donna assembling roster) two teams
Greater Worcester CC (Donna assembling roster) two teams

Sven Brask CC Eric Berkey 1824
Sven Brask CC Jim Aspinall 1757
Sven Brask CC Jim Sfougaris 1700
Sven Brask CC Gerry Fortier 1542

Univ of CT CC (Tom assembling roster)
Univ of CT CC (Tom assembling roster)
Univ of CT CC (Tom assembling roster)
Univ of CT CC (Tom assembling roster)

FAQ

What is webserver correspondence chess?

Webserver correspondence chess uses an internet browser to make moves. Each move sends an email to your opponent reminding them it is their turn. Players can make their move whenever they want, at their convenience, within the clock limits. It is fun, fast, and easy to follow with crosstables and completed games available online.

Why use webserver correspondence chess for Club vs. Club Matches?

Webserver correspondence chess is uniquely suited for this type of play. Unlike the USCL where high

rated chess celebrities schedule the same block of time to play simultaneously in the same playing hall (ICC via internet); Club vs. Club play happens over time where players make their moves when they have time. The typical clock time is 30 days for each 10 moves, left over time accumulated. This allows them to think deeply about their games, play better chess, and compete without rearranging their regular schedule. You can even continue play during vacation. In addition, the webserver correspondence chess ratings are separate from regular USCF ratings so there is no "rating risk". This makes Club vs. Club via webserver correspondence chess an ideal venue for the OTB Club player.

Have OTB Clubs done this before?

Yes, but typically via email, and in a "casual" mode (such as IYT - "It's Your Turn") or via team email correspondence matches such as those organized by Conrad Goodman of IECC (International Email Chess Club). In the IECC Team Match page you can see games from OTB Clubs such as MetroWest CC and Sven Brask CC, as well as traditional correspondence groups. The MetroWest CC matches can also be seen from the MetroWest CC home page under "Compete" on the right hand side.