

CHESS STUDIO ON THE HILL AT HEBREW COLLEGE FIELDS FIRST NATIONAL TEAM

We flew into Nashville on the pre dawn Redeye geared up and ready to Rock N' Roll. We were confident, but not over confident. After all, weren't we from Boston? And wasn't Valery Frenklakh, our coach--the very best!? We were the first team selected by the newly formed Foundation--Chess Corps.--selected from several area schools to compete in the SuperNationals III. Who were we really?

We had studied together for almost a year now, but we still hadn't been battle tested. So we were a little apprehensive. "Well" Eric the team Manager said as he passed out the team Uniforms, "If we don't win anything at least we can lay claim to being the Best Dressed at this shin dig of shin digs"! A sigh of relief passed through our ranks and our team huddled a little closer. The big minute of the first play action was going to start in less than an hour! We scrambled to the hotel and split up into our preplanned groups' one running to information Central and one taking care of the hotel and our bags. Soon we were all at the postings and signed in, last goodbyes and our kids --Alone-- to play the best in the country. How'd you do Matt (15 years old going on 20 with a 2050 rating)? Lost??!! Oh Boy! Han Ping--How about you? First tournament ever at 6 years old. Lost??!! O.K. let's go over the game with Valery. Parents and kids to Info-Central! We have work to do!

Alex and Michelle--two wins! Whew!. Well the tournament rolled on and on. Fast Forward Sunday--Day 3. Final Round. Matt's playing. He's 5 out of 7 and if he wins, stands to tie for first place. Do we stay overnight and miss our plane, or should we leave on time and with that, our hopes on the table? "Please Eric?", "Please Valery?". "Stay". "Stay". Stay so Matt has a chance to win! Pleeaaaasee.....!!! Valery and I looked at each other. Perhaps this was our greatest accomplishment after all. We came to this tournament as individuals but **we** were leaving as a TEAM. A real team! A Team whose players were "team Mates" a team whose members really cared for each other, who would go to bat for each other. We decided to stay for Matt. Just then, he emerged from the K-12 Championship final game--Victorious!!! We ran for the shuttle, hopped the plane in the nick of time and we came home filled with the glory of it all and winners in so many ways more than we ever imagined when we set off for this great journey-- the SuperNationals-- that happens only once in 4 years.

Final Tally: When the smoke cleared from the "OK Corral" we had one of the best overall scores you could hope for: Matt K, Buckingham Brown and Nichols, Cambridge Mass: tied for first (#8). Alex S, Rashi Day School, Newton MA. K3 Under 800--5 out of 7 #56; Michelle C, Alcott School, Concord, MA., K3 Championship, 4.5 out of 7 #63, Han P, a.k.a. H.P. "*Technologies*" C-- Montessori Educare, K1 championship:4 out of 7 #116 in the country. Not bad for a bunch of well dressed kids, 6 years old, 7, 8, and 15. Now wait till next year. We're coming!

Founded September 8, 2004 by Eric Cushing, President, and Valery Frenklakh, Director of Education, Chess Corps. is a non profit Foundation dedicated to creating, supporting and developing chess programs in education, rehabilitation, and recreational therapy. We were proud and appreciative to participate in this great event sponsored by the USCF and to meet our fellow chess lovers at so great a convocation.