**Century Student Repeats As State Chess Co-Champion**

                                                                                 By Chuck Handlon

            There is no celebration like a “Golden Anniversary” and this year’s 50th annual Minnesota State Chess Association K-12 Scholastic Chess Tournament was certainly celebrated by the Century High School Chess Team. Century junior Maor Leker – Locker repeated his 2014 co-championship achievement. His success helped buoy the Century Chess Team to 15.0 points good for fifth place which also repeated last year’s finish.

This United States Chess Federation (USCF) sanctioned tournament was held at St. Catherine’s University in St. Paul the weekend of March 28th & 29th. There were over 200 entrants in K -12 half of them for the K -12 senior high school division. Over fifteen high schools were represented and Wayzata High School was the K-12 champion with 17 points.

The six rounds of games were spread over two days. Time controls allowed from 60 to 90 minutes total for each player to make their moves. Saturday’s four rounds stretched for 12 hours with some breaks in between.

A player receives one point for a win and one half points for a draw or stalemate. The team score is based on the total points of the four top scores of team members. Maor went undefeated to finish with 4 wins and two draws attaining a similar 5.0 score to last.

About 20 students from the Rochester Area Scholastic Chess League participated in the tournament. A team from Kellogg Middle School comprised of ESLL newcomers placed 7th overall in the K-9 division.

In the senior K-12 division Justin Ricker an 8th grader from Schaeffer Academy was the only other Rochester student to place in the top ten (9th ). The Century High School team of Maor Locker (11th), Ethan Kub (12th), Jack Moran (10th) and ninth graders Jeremy Waldner & Richard Huang combined their scores for 15.0 points slightly higher (14.5) to last year’s fifth place finish.

Although Maor and the three other players who finished with 5.0 points are technical co-champions, there will be another round of chess April 19th to determine each player’s final position. The champion of the MSCA State Chess Tournament K-12 division is given the honor and financial support to represent Minnesota in the National USCF Open.