

## Carlo Three-Peats in Ste Sophie Takes Big Lead at Mid-Season

Ste Sophie, Quebec, December 3, 2016



Great Turnout at Ste Sophie -- Adults, Youths, and Kids

A season-high 53 players faced off in Ste Sophie, and once again Carlo Bossio was the last man standing. After missing the NTHL season opener in Toronto, the King has rattled off three tournament wins in a row: New York, Ste Adele, and now Ste Sophie. With the NTHL at mid-season, Carlo takes a commanding lead into the second half.

Carlo's road to the Ste Sophie title was not entirely smooth. Fighting his way from #3 seed, trailing Andre and Pat, the King mowed me down in straight games in our quarter-final, more than avenging his loss to me in the round-robin.



A-Division winners: Andre Pigeon (2nd), Carlo Bossio (1st), Pat Cote (3rd)  
flanked by organizers Marc Bénard, Caroline Boutet

Meanwhile Burt Brassard upset Sam Anoussis in their quarter final, in a thrilling 5-game series, earning the right to meet Andre Pigeon in the semi-finals. Burt ran out of gas against the indomitable Pigeon, who then awaited the victor in the other semi-final, featuring Carlo versus Pat.

The Carlo-Pat series was the season's best thus far, as Paco stretched the King to a 5th game overtime. Both players are lethal in OT, more often than not scoring on their first possession. But this contest went on for much longer: each player blasting deadly shots in turn, only to be rebuffed by impenetrable defenses.

Finally, Pat launched a high-tip labeled for the short side, but Carlo somehow kicked it out. The rebound landed on the King's left defense, and he banked it into Pat's net to end the series.



**Sam refs finals action: Andre versus Carlo**

Following yet another Houdini-like escape from defeat at Pat's hands, Carlo took down Andre in four games to claim the title. Pat overcame Burt to take bronze.

As usual, the competition was spirited at every table, adults and children alike. The new ranking system, which awards 5 bonus points per top 8 player in attendance, (to a maximum of 25 bonus points), has made the standings more competitive, and volatile, for most players.

With potentially more points to gain, and also to lose, we are seeing more players popping in and out of the top-10. It makes the competition that much more exciting, and head-to-head contests more meaningful, as players jockey for positioning.

The B-pool illustrated this well. It was won by Angelo Follano, a highly talented player making his comeback after an absence from the game, and rapidly adjusting to the power and speed of the SoHo boards. Expect Angelo to climb in the rankings. He defeated

Vinny Catania in the B-final, while Thierry Douville took third. Both Vinny and Thierry deserve special mention as well.



**B-Division Winners: Thierry Douville (3rd), Vinny Catania (2nd), Angelo Follano (1st)**

Congratulations to Vinny Catania, whose consistently improved play and regular attendance have elevated him into 10th place overall: the first time the NTHL has seen two Americans -- both New Yorkers -- in the top 10. And he did it with a torn rotator! We wish Vinny a speedy recovery from his recent surgery.

Congratulations as well to Thierry Douville, and not only for placing 3rd in B. In the process he eliminated his dad Martin in the round of 16. Thierry also placed 2nd in the Young Adults section, behind Tommy Leclerc (1st) and ahead of Simon Decarie (3rd). Overall, Thierry leads the Youth Division. These youths represent the future champions of table hockey, and they are growing stronger year by year.



**Youth Division Winners: Simon Decarie (3rd), Tommy Leclerc (1st), Thierry Douville (2nd)**



Ste Sophie itself remains the model for organized table hockey in schools. Their number of players -- girls and boys alike -- is growing, and so are their abilities. Congratulations to the winners in the children's A division: Sheldon Boivin Grenier (1st), Maxime Neault (2nd) and Justin Baril (3rd).



**Children's A-Division winners:  
Maxime Neault (2nd), Sheldon Boivin Grenier (1st), Justin Baril (3rd)**

Congrats also to the winners in the children's B-division: David Bergeron (1st), Louis Philippe Fr chet te (2nd), and Mathys Beudet (3rd). The future of table hockey is here!



**Children's B-Division Winners:  
Mathys Beudet (3rd), David Bergeron (1st) Louis Philippe Fr chet te (2nd)**



**Ste Sophie students enjoying the game, the sport, and the day**

Finally, a large thanks to the organizers in Ste Sophie, Caroline and Marie-Hélène Boutet, along with Marc Bénéard. It is always a pleasure to attend their events. They have done a tremendous job introducing classic table hockey into their school and into the lives of their students, who are obviously benefiting from the experience. And so is our sport!



**Ste Sophie de Lévrard, Quebec: Table Hockey Hotbed**

The NTHL wishes everyone a happy holiday season. The action resumes in Rosemont on January 28th, 2017. Expect it to be fast, and furious.

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