

## Mid-Coastal League Has Best Season

Perhaps it was only fitting that Mid-Coastal Basketball Association pioneers Tom Nelson and Emery Kurts met in the finals--and then proceeded to wage the all-time classic game in the league's four-year history.

Tom, 27 and a math instructor for Opportunities Industrialization Centers in New York, and Kurts, who's moved his dice-rolling homestead from Santa Maria, CA, to Scottsdale, AZ, recently, are close friends [as close as being separated by 2,500 miles ellows]. The two, in fact, have visisted each other on vacations.

The duo also teamed up to form the MCBA, a draft league which played a 44-game season and playoffs in its most recent endeavor. "The MCBA had its best season ever," enthused Kurts. "We played a 44-game schedule and everyone finished. This doesn't sound all that great, but when you take into account we had 10 new coaches and only six vets it was quite an accomplishment."

### CHIEFS BLUNT BLADES

Nelson's New York Blades easily captured the Atlantic Division of the four-division MCBA, winning a phenomenal 41 of 44 games. Kurts, meanwhile, attempted to match him by running off a 35-9 record with the Santa Maria Chiefs.



EMERY KURTS

The two eventually hooked up in the final playoff series. And, as per custom, the two managed to win at home and lose on the road. So, with the series tied 3-3, and the final game scheduled for New York, it looked like sharpen-up time again for the Blades.

Adding to Kurts' concerns was the fact also that New York had a 48-game, two-year win skein going at home.



TOM NELSON

Santa Maria, surprisingly, carved out a 51-47 halftime lead, despite New York's Billy Knight pouring in 32 points. Paul Westphal saved the Blades in regulation time by producing a three-point play as time ran out, knotting the score at 92-all and sending the game into overtime.

Nate Thurmond, backup center for the Chiefs who was taking fouled-out Dave Cowens' place, scored six points in the first overtime--only to have Knight counter with a pair of free throws, forging a 103-stalemate and another overtime.

After the second it was 120-120 and then, in the third extra session, Santa Maria pulled out a 139-137 triumph as Thurmond scored a pair of goals in the final minute.



BRIAN MCCUSTER

### SHARING THE WEALTH

Brian McCuster's Saskatoon Huskies (28-16) and Mike Cummins' Pana Nighthawks (22-22) also won division titles. McCuster, whose teams had always finished below .500 until the recent breakthrough, is also a charter member of the MCBA. Kurts directs many plaudits toward McCuster, whose insight and overall knowledge have helped the league

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through some of its more difficult times.

Santa Maria featured such players as Dave Cowens (26.1 scoring, 15.2 rebounds--second in the league), Jamaal Wilkes (19.5) and Paul Westphal (18.7), while New York was led by led by the big three of Knight (26.0), Bob McAdoo (25.3) and Bob Lanier (22.9). Top names for Saskatoon in the draft league replay of the 1975-76 season were George Gervin (23.0), Artis Gilmore (22.6) and Paul Silas (21.8), who led the league in rebounding with a 16.6 retrieve average.

Buffalo's Randy Smith was the top triggerman for Cummins' Pana club, averaging 26.7 points. In addition, a draft was held of ABA players and Julius Erving--surprise!, surprise!-- was selected first by Jim Werschler's Regina Royals. Gilmore was No. 2, Alvan Adams (Saskatoon Blues), Knight and Bobby Jones (Santa Maria) were in the top five of the draft, which also included rookies as well as defensive cards.

Other members of the league and their teams were: Joe Altman (Hollis Hills), Bob Spellerberg (Fear City), Stuart Milet (Valley Stream), John Pecnik (Cleveland), Dave Pecnik (Northeast Ohio), Larry Selay (Williamsbridge), Willis Ringen (Beattie Beetles), Bart Ewing (Kansas City Habachi Cookers), Terry Ringen (Ringen's Roadrunners), Dave Hill (Saskatoon Blues), Robert Martin (Nome Nuggets). Russell Vensk later took over for Martin and guided the Nuggets.

Terry Ringen is a familiar name, as he won the Review's latest Most Valuable Player contest, while his dad, Willis, was the MCBA's elder statesman at 46 years young.

Standings, leaders and playoff results:

#### Eastern Conference

##### Atlantic Division

	Won-Lost	GB
New York Blades	41 3	-
Hollis Hills	28 16	13
Valley Stream	21 23	20
Fear City	10 34	31

##### Capital Division

Pana Nighthawks	22 22	-
Cleveland Cougars	21 23	1
Northeast Ohio	18 26	4
Williamsbridge	10 34	12

#### Western Conference

##### Artic Division

	Won-Lost	GB
Saskatoon Huskies	28 16	-
Regina Royals	24 20	4
Saskatoon Blues	20 24	8
New York Nuggetts	17 27	11

##### Century Division

Santa Maria	35 9	-
Ringen's Roadrunner	27 17	8
Kansas City	27 17	8
Beattie Beetles	3 41	32

#### Playoffs

Qualifying round: Valley Stream and Regina advanced.

East: Hollis Hills d. Pana, 4-1; New York d. Valley Stream, 4-0; New York d. Hollis Hills, 4-1 (championship).

West: Sask. Huskies d. Ringen's Roadrunners, 4-1; Santa Maria d. Regina, 4-0; Santa Maria d. Huskies, 4-2 (championship).

#### Scoring

Jabbar MH	36.0
Walton CLE	31.0
Dandridge KC	28.9
Erving REG	28.6
Barnes ROAD	27.0
R. Smith PA	26.7
Cowens SM	26.1
Knight NYB	26.0
TomjanovichBLU	25.5
McAdoo NY	25.3
Meravich NEO	24.8
Thompson ROAD	23.0
Gervin HUSK	22.9
Lanier NYB	22.8
McMillian VS	22.8
M. Green WB	22.7

#### Field Goal %

Ph. Jackson SM	.646
Shumate ROAD	.627
Haskins ROAD	.599
B. Jones SM	.581
Lanier NYB	.580

#### Rebounding

P. Silas CLE	16.6
Cowens SM	15.2
Jabbar MH	14.9
M. Lucas VS	13.6
Walton CLE	13.4

#### Free Throw %

J. Walker FC	.886
Silas (J) HUSK	.881
B. Smith NEO	.881
Westphal SM	.879
McMillian VS	.871

#### Assists

Westphal SM	7.0
White REG	6.2
Frazier MH	5.9
Bing BLU	5.8
Newlin SM	5.8

All-Star game: West 119 (Julius Erving 26), East 109 (Billy Knight 18, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar 17, Maurice Lucas 16).