

ROUND FIVE REPORT

A THING OF BEAUTY - JAMAICAN WOMEN OUTCLASS ZAMBIA

In my respectful view, one of the immortal lines in Literature is - “**A thing of beauty is a joy forever**” from the magnificent poem “**Endymion**” by John Keats. Written in the early nineteenth century, this is one of my all-time favourites.

This is what came to me when, working in the Press centre, I checked the official website for the 5th round games in the Women’s section of the 42nd World Chess Olympiad in Baku, Azerbaijan and saw the final position (*an irrepressible queen and bishop checkmating attack by the Jamaican*) in the top board clash between Jamaica’s **WIM Deborah Richards-Porter** and Zambia’s WFM Lorita Mwango!!

Women are generally regarded as the “*fairer*” sex, elegant, graceful etc. WIM Richards-Porter’s performance on board 1 and **WCM Melisha Smith’s** victory on board 4 (*against Mulwale Bwalya Lubuuto*) showed their bellicose side and the mayhem that can result on the chess battlefield when dainty princesses are transformed into amazons in Jekyll-Hyde fashion.



Jamaica getting ready to face Zambia in round 5 action.

On board 2 **CM Rachel Miller** essayed her pet Italian game against WCM Linda Banti Hamoonga, found herself in time trouble again and lost to the Zambian on move 39.

On board 3 **WCM Annesha Smith** handled the black pieces well against WCM Constance Mbatha and after a hard-fought game drew a bishop-pawn ending comfortably in 49 moves.

This meant that the Jamaican women won their match **2 ½ - 1 ½** and will greet tomorrow's rest day in good spirits.

In the **6th** round set to pawn off on Thursday, September 8 Jamaica faces another tough challenge, being drawn against the higher rated **Belgium** (ranked 62) in **match 37**. The Jamaicans will have the white pieces on boards 1 and 3 and Black on boards 2 and 4, respectively.

At roughly the half-way stage Jamaica has won two matches, lost two and drawn one to be on an even keel. With a starting rank of 75 out of 140 registered countries, "**the land of wood and water**" is in **76th** position – the best-placed English-speaking Caribbean country.

Perennial Caribbean rivals **Trinidad & Tobago** (ranked 94) is in 99th and **Barbados** (ranked 119) is in 128th position. **Guyana** (ranked 126) is in 112th.

THE RUSSIAN WOMEN ARE LEADING

The Women's event is being led by the defending Champion **Russia** (ranked 3) and **Ukraine** (ranked 2) who are tied at the top with a perfect five wins from five outings. Romania, China and Azerbaijan 1 come next (3rd to 5th) each with four wins and a loss. Russia and Ukraine meet in a pivotal round six encounter with Ukraine having White on boards 1 and 3, respectively. This match could very well determine the Women's Olympiad winner.

BRILLIANT REARGUARD ACTION BY ELLIOTT!

Jamaica's men came under serious pressure today against Uruguay, ranked 42 places higher, and eventually succumbed **3 ½ - ½**. On the top board (*the last game to finish*) FM Warren Elliott faced the Pirc

Defence and obtained a very auspicious position. Resourceful play by his experienced opponent, Grandmaster Andres Rodriguez, snatched the initiative from the Jamaican. At move 54 Elliott was two pawns down in a rook ending but the Jamaican refused to capitulate to the man from Montevideo and defended stupendously to secure a draw on move 81 in the 5th hour of play.



Jamaica faced Uruguay in round 5 and only FM Elliott survived.

On board two **FM Damion Davy** fought hard but the Boa Constrictor grip of IM Bernardo Roselli was too strong and the Jamaican called it a day on move 58.

FM Malaku Lorne returned to board 3 from his brief “vacation” and had a promising position with the white pieces but went astray and was beaten by FM Manuel Larrea.

On board 4 **CM Brandon Wilson** repeated the Benko (*Volga*) gambit seeking the success he enjoyed against Nigeria yesterday but this time it was brutally busted by IM Claudio Coppola.

In the **6th** round on Thursday, September 8 in **match 62** Jamaica faces Scotland, another tough European team ranked 63, a full fifty-

two (52) places ahead of the West Indians. The Jamaicans will have the black pieces on boards 1 and 3 and White on boards 2 and 4, respectively.

At roughly the half-way stage Jamaica has won two matches and lost three. With a starting rank of 115 out of 180 registered countries the men are in **119th** position, “*punching below their weight*”.

The best-placed English-speaking Caribbean country is Trinidad & Tobago (*ranked 113*) on **107th** after some good performances, especially from FM Kevin Cupid (2166) who defeated Serbian GM Nikola Sedlak (2537) in the first round; and FM Adrian Atwell (2158) who cooled Ecuador’s IM Bryan Murillo (2276) in the third round and drew with Bosnian GM Dalibor Stojanovic (2505) in the fifth round.

Barbados (*ranked 103*) is in 114th position (**NB**: FM Orlando Husbands – 2257- drew with Australian GM Zong-Yuan Zhao – 2550- in the 3^d round); **Guyana** (*ranked 157*) is in 138^h and **Bahamas** (*ranked 151*) is in 139th.

TENSION AT THE TOP OF THE OPEN SECTION

An intriguing battle for top honours is in prospect in the Open section as the Netherlands (*ranked 11*), Ukraine (*ranked 5*) and India (*ranked 9*) have won their five matches to be the only countries with a perfect score. The Czech Republic (*ranked 17*), USA (*ranked 2*) and Georgia (*ranked 20*) complete the top six places having each won four matches and drawn one. In crucial 6th round clashes India meet The Netherlands, the USA face Ukraine and the Czech Republic will meet Georgia. The teams with the White pieces on board 1 are named first.

RULES OF PLAY

Each player has 90 minutes for the first 40 moves, an additional 30 minutes thereafter, plus 30 seconds per move from move 1. A point is awarded for a win; a half point for a draw and zero for a loss on each board. When the points are tabulated the team with more will be declared the winner and awarded match points. No player is allowed to offer a draw until after 30 moves have been completed.

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All photographs courtesy of the Jamaica Chess Federation unless indicated otherwise.