

ROUND SIX REPORT

“BRAVE HEART” BY JAMAICA!

One of the all-time great movies is “**Brave Heart**” which was released in 1995 starring Mel Gibson who also won an Oscar Academy award as “*Best Director*”. Indeed, the film won several other Oscars including the coveted “*Best Picture*”. The enigmatic Gibson portrayed William Wallace who led the Scots in the first War of Independence against the English, then ruled by King Edward I (“*Longshanks*!”). Who can forget the goose-pimpling cry “**FFREEEDDDOOMMMMM**” by the shackled Gibson/Wallace before the axe fell?

After yesterday’s rest day, action resumed today in **round 6** of the 42nd World Chess Olympiad being held in Baku, Azerbaijan. In match 62 Jamaica clashed with the **Scots**, undoubtedly descendants of those “*liberated*” by Robert the Bruce at Bannockburn in 1314 after Wallace had paved the way. Although **FM Warren Elliott** was outclassed on board 1 losing to **IM Andrew Greet**, Jamaica’s men mounted stern resistance against Scotland.



Jamaica’s men faced Scotland in round 6 action and fought bravely.

On board two **FM Damion Davy** displayed dexterity and determination with the white pieces and had the experienced **Grandmaster John Shaw**, rated almost **350** points higher, in difficulty. The Jamaican man-handled his opponent's Sicilian Dragon set-up with enterprising play and won a pawn but the Scotsman managed to hold the ensuing double rook ending, the truce being sealed on move 48. Davy later rued his missed chances stating that he overlooked a defensive riposte by his opponent.

FM Malaku Lorne has been one of Jamaica's most reliable players for many years but has had a tough Olympiad to date. Against the well-travelled **Grandmaster John McNab** on board 3 he battened down the hatches with the black pieces and defended tenaciously. A draw beckoned with material equal in an ending with a rook and bishops of opposite colour, but the Rastaman blundered and gifted the persistent Scot the full point.

On board 4 **NM Shreyas Smith** was returned to the battlefield by the "Field Marshall" Jomo Pitterson. Smith, Jamaica's three-time reigning Junior Champion, essayed the King's pawn opening (*1.e4 – the favourite move of the 11th World Champion, the American Robert James "Bobby" Fischer*) and was confronted by the French Defence. His opponent, **FM Neil Berry**, played the opening energetically and had the Jamaican in a perilous position. Undaunted, the debutant Smith displayed "**brave heart**" and defended as if his life depended on it. He managed to steer the game into an ending with bishops of opposite colour and salvaged a draw on move 41. This was his first positive result in three games and he heaved a sigh of relief, the Albatross falling from his neck.

In tomorrow's **7th** round in **match 61** Jamaica faces **Sudan**, the Northeastern Africans ranked five places above the West Indians who will have the black pieces on boards 1 and 3 and White on boards 2 and 4, respectively.

MEETING THE "WATERLOO" !

As a student of history I have read extensively on events involving Belgium. I recall from my High School days that this country was regarded as "*the battleground of Europe*" from the time of the Roman

Empire. Indeed, one of the most famous battles of all time was on Belgian soil at Waterloo in 1815 when **French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte** (“*the little Corporal*”!) was defeated by a coalition of troops led by England’s Duke of Wellington, effectively ending the reign of one of history’s celebrated generals and most colourful figures.

Jamaica’s women (*rated 75*) met their “*Waterloo*” against the Belgian women (*rated 62*) in **match 34**. The games by the **Smith** sisters, **Annesha** and **Melisha**, were the first to finish as they were both defeated by two other sisters **Wiebke Barbier** and **Astrid Barbier**, on boards 3 and 4, respectively!! How often have sisters clashed against each other at an Olympiad ? One for the historians.



Jamaica’s women battling Belgium in round 6 (match 34).

On board 1 **WIM Deborah Richards** commenced with the English opening (1.c4) against WFM Hanne Goossens who proved to be a resolute adversary, compelling the Jamaican chess queen to resign in 58 moves. This meant that Jamaica went **0-3** down in the match.

In the final game to end after close to five hours, **CM Rachel Miller**

fought well on board 2 against her higher rated opponent, **WFM Iuliia Morozova**, and emerged a pawn up after the middle-game skirmish. She battled tenaciously in the resulting double bishop-pawn ending and with at least a draw within her grasp went astray and was checkmated on move 65.

In the **7th** round Jamaica will battle Malta (*rated 106*) in **match 47**. The Jamaicans will have the white pieces on boards 1 and 3 and Black on boards 2 and 4, respectively.

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.

Jamaica's participation was made possible chiefly by sponsorship from the Government of Jamaica (*via the Sports Development Foundation*), the Jamaica Chess Federation and the Kasparov Chess Foundation.

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