

ROUND THREE REPORT

DEBORAH SAVES FACE FOR JAMAICA!

The World Chess Olympiad is arguably the most fascinating of sporting contests where the maxim “***the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat***” is consistently witnessed. This tournament is often a veritable roller-coaster ride with fortunes swaying from one round to the next. Victories for teams such as Jamaica usually result in much tougher opponents the next round. Indeed, I had a brief discussion in the Press centre in Baku with the celebrated Spanish journalist **Leontxo Garcia** and mentioned the expression - “***hoy por mi manana por ti – today for you tomorrow for me***”!

Both Jamaican teams experienced this fully in the third round of the 42nd Baku Chess Olympiad, being brought back down to earth with a clatter after their impressive victories in the previous round.

VIENNA CALLING!

Mozart’s men (*ranked 40*) were just too strong for Bob Marley’s men (*ranked 75*) in the Open Section and, aided and abetted by dithering play from the Jamaicans, reeled off overwhelming victories on all four boards. Grandmasters Markus Ragger and David Shengelia and International Masters Robert Kreisl and Andreas Diermair defeated FMs Warren Elliott, Damion Davy, Malaku Lorne and CM Brandon Wilson, respectively.

The intrepid Davy mounted the stiffest resistance for Jamaica but when he dropped a pawn late in the contest his position crumbled and he had no choice but to stop his clock and shake Shengelia’s hand. His disappointment was palpable.

Jamaica’s task does not get any easier as in the 4th round set for

Monday, September 5 (*starting 3:00 pm Baku time*), they will face the **Nigerians** ranked 87, twenty-eight places above Jamaica and stronger at least on paper! The men from Lagos defeated the Jamaicans when they last met at the 2008 Olympiad in Dresden, Germany. Jamaica will have the white pieces on boards 1 and 3 and Black on boards 2 and 4, respectively.



Jamaica (L) found the men from Vienna too tough to handle.

DANGEROUS, DEFIANT DEBORAH!

In the Women's section Jamaica's team (*ranked 75*) fought hard but ultimately fell to a very strong Mongolia team (*ranked 15*). Playing on board 4, WCM Melisha Smith blundered early in her game, lost a piece and soon resigned to WIM Uuganbayar Lkhamsuren. On board 3 WCM Ariel Barrett was giving as good as she got against Woman GrandMaster ("WGM") Altan-Ulzii Enkhtuul but, in serious time pressure, played poorly and was checkmated.

On board 2, Candidate Master (“CM”) Rachel Miller also played well against Woman International Master (“WIM”) Uurtsaikh Uuriintuya but she too fell into serious time pressure. In rushing to make the time control (*40 moves in 90 minutes*) she blundered, lost material and was also checkmated.



Jamaica's Women (L) faced Mongolia, opponents 60 places higher in the rankings and did not survive! Photo courtesy of Paul Truong.

The top board clash was a mouth-watering, spine-tingling affair. WIM Deborah Richards-Porter, record ten-time Jamaica Women's Champion, faced a confident opponent rated a massive **four hundred (400!!!)** points higher than the Jamaican. Mongolia's top player (***Davaademberel Nomin-Erdene***) is a full-blooded International Master (“IM”) rated **2422!**

Undaunted, Deborah (*rated 2023*) was like a lioness on the prowl and deployed the Sicilian Defence with deadly effect, outplaying her opponent in the sharp, tactical complications that arose in the middlegame. The Jamaican's audacious play earned her a

winning position and with the Mongolian mercilessly against the ropes, the *coup de grace* and a huge upset beckoning and the proverbial "fat lady" clearing her throat to sing to the high heavens, she went astray and missed two possible winning continuations. The culprit was the dreaded time trouble. She had just seconds left on her clock to reach the time control. Her error allowed the Mongolian a lifeline which she grabbed and a draw was agreed after the Mongolian's queen invaded the Jamaican's territory in vigorous pursuit of perpetual check.

After the players had shaken hands and signed the score-sheets, the lady from ***Ulaanbaatar*** was undoubtedly relieved to have escaped. She was also shocked by the unexpected pounding she had faced. The Jamaican warrior had earned tremendous respect from the East Asians.

In the fourth round Jamaica will have a chance for redemption when they face Chinese Taipei. The Jamaicans will have the white pieces on boards 1 and 3 and Black on boards 2 and 4, respectively.

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.

Ian G. Wilkinson QC

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