

Reflections by Dr Lyndon Bouah – South African chess queen now Dr Denise Frick

24 April 2017 was a momentous day for WIM Denise Frick. She graduated with her doctorate in Human Movement Science at the University of Pretoria. The name of the thesis is Habit (us), values and mindfulness among elite athletes. The emphasis is on sport psychology. Dr. Denise was also awarded academic honorary colours at the graduation ceremony. So who is Dr Denise?



In 2004 Denise Frick received the Vice Chancellors and Principals Award from the University of Pretoria for the best combined academic and sport results. When one looks at the size of the student population then this sought after award is a real feather in her cap as there are thousands of students competing for this annual award. Denise and her brother Jacques were the founder members of the Tuks Chess club in the early 2000's. She won the SA university championships more than once.



WIM Denise Frick has won the South Africa Closed Championship three times. She won in 2005 and in 2013 and 2015. She has represented South Africa at six Olympiads over the last seventeen years and has been playing on board one at the last three Olympiads she has participated in.



WIM Denise Frick has won seven medals at the All African Games having represented South Africa in 2003 in Nigeria, 2007 in Algeria and 2011 in Mozambique. In 2005 she ended joint second at the African individuals in Zambia and in 2011 she secured a spot at the Women's World Cup. She then travelled to Siberia, Russia when she had held her own against GM Humpy Koneru. In 2014 she won the Zone 4.3 Individual Championships in Namibia ending undefeated.



Denise comes from a chess family. Her dad has been doing some chess development in Brandvlei in the Northern Cape whilst her mom does some coaching of grade ones and grade R's. Her elder brother Jacques is a professional chess coach whilst her younger brother represented Northern Transvaal at eight December nationals being a top ten finisher in the A section of the age group individuals.

Denise is a counselling psychologist who specialises in sport psychology. She runs three psychology practices in Vredenburg, Piketberg and Cape Town. She is also an active chess coach.



Dr WIM Denise Frick is an avid supporter of the South African Boerboel association. She was a registered Boerboel breeder and most of the chess public that have visited her will have fond memories of the giant breed dogs that roamed the property and in particular Jad, Xena and Chika.

So well done Dr Denise Frick. We are proud of you!!! You have continued to compete at the highest level despite your heavy study and work schedule. This is a good lesson for all aspiring chess players both male and female.

Regards

Dr Lyndon Bouah