

Zambian Reflections (2) by Dr Lyndon Bouah

I am sitting here on Kenya Airways Flight KQ 783 to Livingstone, Zambia. I am about to play my first ever Zone 4.3 individual championship. Already in Zambia is the South African Closed Champion International Master Daniel Cawdery. He has decided to participate in this zonal event because the first prize besides cash is a ticket to the FIDE World Cup in Georgia in September. He is rated about 2420 and is one the favourites for this event.



*IM Daniel Cawdery*

Sitting a few seats away is WIM Anzel Laubscher. She is travelling this year playing lots of chess and wishes to win this event. Last year she ended second on tiebreak with WIM Jesse February taking the title.



*WIM Anzel Laubscher*



*WIM Jesse February*

With her is WCM Michelle Fisher. Michelle has been making steady progress and has at a very young age of 19 already competed in two Olympiads. She has done well at the recent SA Women's Closed and is hoping to do well at the zonals.



*WCM Michelle Fisher*

With them is WFM Dantelle Joubert. Dantelle has been playing for some time now and has since 2014 been a recipient of the Ministerial bursary for chess. The fact that she now obtains her senior colours at the age of seventeen bears testimony to her dedication. Dantelle attended the National Ministers Budget speech on 26 May 2017 with her principal Mr. Vermeulen.



*WFM Dantelle Joubert with Dr Lyndon Bouah and Mr Vermeulen*

Flying out of Johannesburg having just arrived from Italy is Grandmaster Kenny Solomon from Mitchell's Plain. Grandmaster Solomon who has more than 100 caps for South Africa at Olympiads having played ten consecutive Olympiads is also a favourite for this event. He won the African Championship in Namibia in 2014 and he has decided to compete to try to get the World Cup spot.



*GM Kenny Solomon*

I haven't played in the many events as Kenny for a long time as he competes in Europe mostly. We played against one another at the SA Open in Cape Town in 2015 where he crushed me. I shall have to prepare well this time. I take solace in the fact that my last victory against him was in fact in Zambia in 2005 when I beat him at the African Individual Championship. We shall thus see if Caissa again smiles upon me.

In Johannesburg Aleida de Bruyn and her mother has also just boarded the plane. They will later be joined by Matt Pon and Roland Bezuidenhout. Both Roland and Matt are writing an examination today 9 June and literally fly in about two hours before round one. Let's hope and pray that their flight is on time and that they arrive in time for round one.



*Aleida de Bruyn*



*Matt Pon*



*Roland Bezuidenhout*

So a nice mix of players. Making their senior colours for the first time is Roland and Matt. Well done to them. This event will spark their enthusiasm as I am sure that they will do well. Dantelle and Aleida also make their senior Protea Colours and I hope that this spurs them on to study hard and play for the Olympiad team one day. Matt is also the first player of Asian descent to obtain his Senior Protea Colours. It is a nice achievement for him, his family and the country.

I do not know much about Livingstone except what I have researched and hope to explore the town and waterfalls on the free day. I shall be reporting after every second day so watch out for the reports.

Regards

Dr Lyndon Bouah

Reporting live from somewhere over Africa.