

Reflections on the WP League 2017 by Dr Lyndon Bouah



Minister Anroux Marais with MRL Chess Club at R4 of the Premier Division

Premier Section

Ranking crosstable

Rk.	Team	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	TB1	TB2	TB3	TB4
1	MRL	*	4½	5	5½	4½	5	7½	7	5½	5½	6½	7	22	63,5	0	464,50
2	African Chess Lounge	3½	*	3	5½	6½	3	5	6	5½	5	6	7½	16	56,5	0	314,50
3	Steinitz	3	5	*	4½	3½	4	5	6	8	3	6½	6	15	54,5	0	295,00
4	Manyanani	2½	2½	3½	*	5	8	6½	3	6	4½	7½	7½	14	56,5	0	258,50
5	Stellenbosch	3½	1½	4½	3	*	8	5½	7	3½	5	6	8	14	55,5	0	259,00
6	University of Cape Town	3	5	4	0	0	*	2½	4	3	5	5	7½	10	39,0	0	189,50
7	University of the Western Cape	½	3	3	1½	2½	5½	*	4½	5	4	3½	7½	9	40,5	0	147,50
8	Cape Town	1	2	2	5	1	4	3½	*	4	6½	4	5½	9	38,5	0	164,25
9	Grassy Park	2½	2½	0	2	4½	5	3	4	*	4	4	5½	9	37,0	0	163,50
10	Bellville	2½	3	5	3½	3	3	4	1½	4	*	4	6½	7	40,0	0	123,00
11	Mitchells Plain	1½	2	1½	½	2	3	4½	4	4	4	*	6½	7	33,5	0	111,25
12	Uitsig	1	½	2	½	0	½	½	2½	2½	1½	1½	*	0	13,0	0	0,00

The chess community in Western Province has a new champion chess club. MRL Chess Club won the Premier division of the Chess Western Province league in Saturday 16 September at the Western Cape Sport School in Kuilsriver. The team was in sublime form and if we look at their results one can only applaud their magnificent performance. They won every match they played in the league and the results against the top clubs say it all. Let's have a quick look at their results:

4.5/8 against runners- up African Chess Lounge

5 / 8 against Steinitz

5/8 against Manyani and then the emphatic victories of 7.5/8 against UWC , 7/8 against Cape Town and seven against Uitsig. MRL did not lose a single match in the league.

Congratulations and well done to them for the astounding victory. Let's have a quick look at their team. Spearheaded by FM Calvin Klaasen Calvin (Olympian debutant 2016) shows he meant business when he defeated the higher ranked IM Watu Kobese and FM Daniel Barrish and held board one with aplomb. He was never in trouble and even one loss he suffered was not enough to dent the enthusiasm he had for board one. Board two was that old war horse CM Maxwell Solomon (Olympian 1992, 1994 and 2000). He held his own on board two and could always be counted on to play hard with his passionate embrace of the chess struggle on the board. Board three Graham Solomon showed that he reserves his best for the league and was a rock on board three. The two brothers are of course brothers to GM Kenny Solomon so the talent runs deep!(I wonder who is the best at the family blitz!) Dietrich Laurie was a revelation on board four. He scored a host of points 9.5 to easily be the go to guy for points! Playing with his normal Andy Capp cap, this affable chap showed that true belief in one's ability can do wonders! Lorenzo Van Niekerk the founder of MRL played as many games as he could in between his duties internationally. He never shirked his obligation to creative play because what I enjoy jousting with Lorenzo about is whether chess is a sport, art or science. He thrives on concepts and plays unorthodox chess. His chess has however brought him results and his solid performance will have pleased himself and he now is a WP League champion to boot. The other players all did duty including FM Lauren Van Niekerk, Justin Lynch, Christopher Londt, George Loverlot, Robyn Van Niekerk and Megan Van Niekerk. (Manager was Chantal Van Niekerk)! MRL - The league salutes you and congrats to all of you. So what does MRL stand for? Here are the pictures. You figure it out! Congrats to captain Robyn Van Niekerk!

African Chess Lounge assembled a mighty team but will have been disappointed that the assembled big guns did not play all the rounds. Barrish made a cameo appearance but lost about 54 rating points after going down to Klaasen and another. Charles did his best on board one but the three losses the club suffered to MRL, Steinitz and Cape Town was its undoing.

Steinitz probably only has its self to blame for not launching a bigger challenge, the early loss to Bellville (the first time ever having contested the league with them since 1992) dented their chances immensely. The draw against UCT and the losses to MRL and Stellenbosch put paid to their chances.

On the other end of the spectrum Uitsig didn't win a single match in the league and will be relegated. Mitchell's Plain also makes the drop after winning one match against UWC but then drawing three others. They need another star player as Seth Riley cannot do it on his own.

Kudos to Grassy Park for staying in the Premiership as they played with no real stars apart from SA Under 16 champ Jordan Verster but held their own in the Premier. I am reminded that in order to beat a grandmaster one must learn to draw with a Grandmaster. In this case they drew three times and won twice.

B Section

Ranking crosstable

Rk.	Team	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	TB1	TB2	TB3	TB4
1	Blackjacks A	*	3½	4½	3	4½	4½	4	5	5½	5	5½	6	21	51,0	0	324,75
2	CPUT A	2½	*	4	5½	5	4	5	5	3	6	5	6	19	51,0	0	280,75
3	Steinitz B	1½	2	*	4½	4½	6	4	4	3½	6	3	5	17	44,0	0	237,75
4	Belhar Knights A	3	½	1½	*	5	5½	4	4	3½	3	5	5½	16	40,5	0	225,25
5	Elsies River A	1½	1	1½	1	*	3½	1	3	5½	5	3½	5	11	31,5	0	129,25
6	Mitchells Plain B	1½	2	0	½	2½	*	4	3½	3	3½	3½	4½	11	28,5	0	136,25
7	Stellenbosch B	2	1	2	2	5	2	*	4½	5½	3	2½	4	9	33,5	0	113,25
8	Capablanca A	1	1	2	2	3	2½	1½	*	3½	5	4	5	9	30,5	0	101,25
9	UCT B	½	3	2½	2½	½	3	½	2½	*	5	3	3½	7	26,5	0	86,50
10	Bellville B	1	0	0	3	1	2½	3	1	1	*	3½	3½	6	19,5	0	76,50
11	Sanlam A	½	1	3	1	2½	2½	3½	2	3	2½	*	3	5	24,5	0	76,25
12	Goodwood A	0	0	1	½	1	1½	2	1	2½	2½	3	*	1	15,0	0	12,25

In the B section Blackjacks makes a nice return to the Premier. This team spearheaded by Dr Simphiwe Baloyi showed their class by going through the league undefeated. They played strong chess and what I like about them is that they are normal guys from Matroosfontein, Elsie's River and surrounding areas who just enjoy their chess. Llewellyn Louw take a bow for your leadership.



Dr Simphiwe Baloyi

CPUT well done for your second place. You now join UWC and UCT in the Premier. The universities are always infused with players from different areas and it makes things difficult to build continuity but they have been playing consistent chess.

Steinitz B matched their A section counterparts by ending third in the league as well. Well done Roland and colleague. The team is led on board one by 13 year old Andreas De Jager who held down the top board!

On the bottom end of the scale Goodwood and Sanlam gets relegated to the C section after both teams failed to win a match. Sanlam consists of employees from the giant Insurance company and I am sure they will recover. Goodwood is a proud club based at the Goodwood library and will bounce back I am sure.

C Section

Ranking crosstable

Rk.	Team	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	TB1	TB2	TB3
1	Grassy Park B	*	3	5	6	5	5	5	6	4½	5½	6	4½	21	55,5	0
2	Steinitz C	3	*	2	5	5	4	5½	4	5	6	6	6	19	51,5	0
3	Aurecon A	1	4	*	1	4½	3½	4½	4½	6	3	6	3	16	41,0	0
4	En Passant A	0	1	5	*	3	3	5½	4	3	3½	6	4½	15	38,5	0
5	Manyanani B	1	1	1½	3	*	3	6	4	6	4½	6	4	14	40,0	0
6	Grassy Park C	1	2	2½	3	3	*	3½	4	3	0	6	6	11	34,0	0
7	Steinitz D	1	½	1½	½	0	2½	*	2½	4	5	6	5	8	28,5	0
8	Stellenbosch C	0	2	1½	2	2	2	3½	*	2	5½	3½	3	7	27,0	0
9	African Chess Lounge B	1½	1	0	3	0	3	2	4	*	3	3	1½	6	22,0	0
10	Capablanca B	½	0	3	2½	1½	6	1	½	3	*	2	5	5	25,0	0
11	University of Cape Town C	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2½	3	3	*	5	5	13,5	0
12	Simonstown A	1½	0	3	1½	2	0	1	3	4½	1	1	*	4	18,5	0

In the C division Grassy Park outpaced the opposition and jumped into the B section of the WP league. This team has grit and is tough competitors. I like the fact that Charne Woolf plays for them and they have some boys from the hood finishing the complement. But can they play chess. Of course! Well done Ricardo Minnaar for gaining promotion!



Minister Anroux Marais with Grassy Park Chess Club at R4 of the C Division

Steinitz C joins Steinitz B in the B division after ending with a silver medal in this division. The team consists mostly of juniors showed their mettle by only one game. In bronze position was Aurecon who will I am sure contest the top positions next year and aim for promotion.

Simonstown and UCT C bow out from this division. I am sure the students will regroup next year and Simonstown now goes to the D Division.

D Section

Final Ranking crosstable after 7 Rounds

Rk.	Mannschaft	1.Rd	2.Rd	3.Rd	4.Rd	5.Rd	6.Rd	7.Rd	TB1	TB2	TB3	TB4
1	Crossroads C	7b2	35w3	34b5	26b5	9w3	15b5	2w5	12	28,0	2	94,00
2	Blackjacks B	30b5	31w5	33b5	16w5	3b3	13w5	1b0	12	28,0	0	87,00
3	Maties A	17w4½	13b4	4w3	12b5	2w2	5b3	16w5	12	26,5	0	119,00
4	Table View A	41b5	7w5	3b2	11w2½	23b3½	17w4	13b5	11	27,0	0	78,50
5	Crossroads A	12b2	18w4	37b5	23w4	16b4	3w2	11b4	10	25,0	0	70,00
6	Observatory A	16b2	28w5	31b5	7w3	17b2	9b3½	15w4	10	24,5	0	84,00
7	Kraaifontein A	1w3	4b0	10w4½	6b2	32w5	8b3½	17w3	10	21,0	0	96,50
8	Grassy Park D	38b5	23w2	27b4	13w2	20b5	7w1½	24b4	8	23,5	0	53,00
9	Drakenstein Dragons A	36b4½	25w4	11b2	20w5	1b2	6w1½	23b4	8	23,0	0	49,00
10	Capablanca C	33b1	24w5	7b½	31w3	14w2	21b4	22w3	8	18,5	0	56,50
11	CPUT B	21w4	17b2½	9w3	4b2½	15w2	12b3	5w1	8	18,0	0	79,75
12	UWC B	5w3	37b5	23b4	3w0	13b½	11w1	20w4	8	17,5	0	60,00
13	Elsies River B	27w4	3w1	25b4	8b3	12w4½	2b0	4w0	8	16,5	0	69,00
14	ACL C	29w4	15b1	20w0	24w3½	10b3	16w0	32b5	8	16,5	0	57,00
15	Steinitz E	35b3	14w4	16b1½	30w4	11b3	1w0	6b1	8	16,5	0	51,00
16	Blackjacks C	6w3	19b3	15w3½	2b0	5w1	14b5	3b0	8	15,5	0	76,00
17	Bellville C	3b½	11w2½	35b4	22w4½	6w3	4b1	7b2	7	17,5	0	55,00
18	Crossroads B	37w1½	5b1	29w4	19b2	21w1	36b5	31b5	6	19,5	0	30,00
19	Stellenbosch E	28b4	16w2	30b1½	18w3	25b1	24w2	33b5	6	18,5	0	41,00
20	Kraaifontein B	23b2	38w5	14b5	9b0	8w0	31w5	12b1	6	18,0	0	31,50
21	Mitchells Plain C	11b1	27w2	24b2	28w4	18b4	10w1	30b3	6	17,0	0	43,50
22	Cape Town B	0w0	0w0	28b5	17b½	35w5	30w3	10b2	6	15,5	0	30,00
23	Stellenbosch D	20w3	8b3	12w1	5b1	4w1½	32b4	9w1	6	14,5	0	50,50
24	Crossroads D	26w1	10b0	21w3	14b1½	38w4½	19b3	8w1	6	14,0	0	40,50
25	Steinitz G	34w3	9b1	13w1	27b3	19w4	0w0	0w0	6	12,0	0	44,00
26	Steinitz F	24b4	33w1	36b3	1w0	30b3	0w0	0w0	6	11,0	0	29,00
27	Table View B	13b1	21b3	8w1	25w2	31b2	--2½	29w4½	5	16,0	0	32,50
28	Table View C	19w1	6b0	22w0	21b1	--2½	39b5	34w4	5	13,5	0	13,00
29	Crossroads E	14b1	36w1	18b1	35w2	39b5	37b5	27b½	4	15,5	0	6,00
30	Grassy Park E	2w0	32b4	19w3½	15b1	26w2	22b0	21w0	4	10,5	0	27,50
31	Mitchells Plain D	32w5	2b0	6w0	10b2	27w3	20b0	18w0	4	10,0	0	25,00
32	Capablanca D	31b0	30w1	38b3	39w4	7b0	23w1	14w0	4	9,0	0	8,50
33	UCT D	10w4	26b4	2w0	0w0	0w0	0w0	19w0	4	8,0	0	29,50
34	Sibanye Projects A	25b2	--2½	1w0	0w0	0w0	38w4	28b1	3	9,5	0	5,00
35	Bellville D	15w1	1b2	17w0	29b3	22b0	0w0	0w0	2	6,0	0	15,50
36	CPUT C	9w½	29b4	26w0	0w0	0w0	18w0	0w0	2	4,5	0	15,50
37	UWC C	18b2½	12w0	5w0	0w0	0w0	29w0	0w0	2	2,5	0	19,50
38	Crossroads F	8w0	20b0	32w2	--2½	24b½	34b0	0w0	1	5,0	0	0,00
39	Crossroads G	0w0	0w0	--2½	32b1	29w0	28w0	0w0	1	3,5	0	0,00

In the D Division 39 teams competed for honours and the winners were Crossroads C and Blackjacks B. The Crossroads C team was a revelation and only the third tiebreak separated them from Blackjacks B. Well done to Crossroads. You are a young club from difficult circumstances. It also represents a triumph for the club development programme of CWP and the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport. Crossroads entered seven teams in the league. They were superb.

Blackjacks B ensured promotion to the C division. The guys contested hard and I recognised the players had the conviction to want to play up. Well done Blackjacks. Maties ended joint first but third on tiebreak. They were led by WFM Michelle Fisher.

The section had 39 teams and was well contested. This is our development league and it is very active. Table View tried to win the league with 2000 rated Amini Daud and Observatory was led by Taurique Jenkins. Clubs from Paarl also contested and I noted the Drakenstein Dragons march.



Players from Crossroads in R4 of D Division

A fantastic league. I shall in my next article look at the individual players in the league. 818 individual players played in the league. This year the league celebrated 110 years. It started in 1907 and was won by Cape Town chess club.

Regards.

Dr Advocate Lyndon Bouah