

Reflections by Dr Lyndon Bouah - Short interview with GM Kenny Solomon

On 30 November 2017 I met grandmaster Kenny Solomon who was on his way back to Italy after attending the funeral of his older brother Graham Solomon last week. Kenny agreed to a short interview with me.

1. GM tell me a bit about the championship in Georgia in September? You played against GM Caruana? He chose a sideline in order to shift the emphasis of the struggle to the middle game to outplay me. It was a good experience. You can feel the difference between a 2500 and a 2700 rated player!

2. Were you happy with your play? I did a lot of opening preparation. I was not happy with my practical play. It can be clearly seen in both games.

3. You played superbly in Zambia. What was your secret? Experience assisted me in Zambia. I had a long term approach. I play all out and the five wins in the first five rounds did me wonders! I have become accustomed to play the double round weekend events in Italy. The double rounds in Zambia were thus not unfamiliar to me and this assisted me.



*GM Kenny Solomon wins the African Zone 4.3 in Zambia*

4. What is the name of your local club in Italy? Capablanca chess club

5. Did you play in the Italian national league? Yes. I played in the Second Division for Venice chess club to try to qualify for the Masters and we came second so we missed out although I won the Board prize. I lost to Gm Horvath from Budapest and won the other four games,

6. How can players improve their chess in South Africa? This a tough question because every player

is different. The type of event and time limit is a factor to consider. Generally we should analyse our games together because we don't do it enough. We can be competitive but we must analyse together. Watu and I were opponents but we could still work together! This is the spirit that the Europeans have. We are one family and the competition is there for all of to grow.

7. How often should players train? At least five days a week even if just two hours a week. Something every day.

8. What were your recent tournaments? I played the World Cup in September 2017, then Venice (first with 7/7!), Vignolo ended joint first but fourth on tiebreak with 4/5 (two draws)

9. What is your favourite movie? I like comedies and action! So I like different movies!

10. Which game is your favourite game that we can refer readers to? Solomon versus GM Sugiurov played in Budapest in 2008 in First Saturday (May edition)! It was a brilliant game although I was exhausted after adventures at the airport. My opponent is a top grandmaster and won the tournament.

Thank you for your time and well done on your performances. I have noted that this year you have played close to 33 competitive games and lost only four times (twice to GM Caruana , GM Horvath and GM Petkov) You also coached in East Africa in particular in Rwanda, Kenya and Tanzania. Thank you for sharing your experiences with the whole of Africa!

Regards

Lyndon Bouah