

### Reflections 3 : 2018 - Mauritius by Dr Advocate Lyndon Bouah

I recently had occasion to visit Mauritius. I stayed for eleven days and during that sojourn I also met up with my friend Patrick Li Ying from the Mauritius National chess team. He came to fetch my wife, Denise and I, from the hotel and took us on a brief tour of the Island.

It was most enjoyable and we, of course, had to stop at a coffee shop to play some blitz games. Exciting blitz they were and also allowed us to reflect on our relationship. I was part of the 1992 and 1994 Olympiad teams. It was in the Philippines that I first made the acquaintance of the Mauritian team.

Patrick remembers with fondness the assistance he gave Mark Levitt who was the 1992 Olympiad team captain when it came to the captains meeting. South Africa had last participated in the 1974 Olympiad so everything was new to us. Because of my friendliness I of course soon introduced myself. I was about 19 and also many kilograms lighter than today.

In 1994 we all stayed at the Cosmos hotel in Moscow. The Cosmos Hotel was huge and hosted the athletes during the 1980 Olympic Games and also had huge halls where we could participate. I remember many evenings where we went out to buy beers and play blitz in our rooms. The Olympiad in those days lasted 14 rounds so we were there for quite some time.

In 1996 I attended the Olympiad as a journalist covering the Olympiad and stayed with Mr. Bhowany the president of the Mauritius chess federation. We spent many a night chatting about chess and how to improve chess in Africa.

After meeting up with our Mauritian friends at the 2002 Bled Olympiad they agreed to come to South Africa and in 2003 Mr. Bhowany led a delegation of chessplayers to Cape Town. They competed against various teams in Cape Town and stayed with chessplayers around Cape Town. It was a fantastic ten days as we showed them Cape Town and played many blitz games and long matches.

Patrick took Denise and me to a nice Chinese restaurant in Mauritius where he regaled us with stories about his chess career. He once beat IM Watu Kobese in a zonal in Botswana and remembers fondly that in the 1997 African Team Championship Mauritius and South Africa drew 2-2. Patrick lost to GM Kenny while Chinasamy beat a young Daniel Cawdery. Patric has also drawn with Nicholas Van Der Nat and Charles De Villiers in competitive play.



His famous victory against Kobese at Mokolodi Reserve (Botswana) 1995

Kobese W-Li Ying P

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Nc6 6.Be3 g6 7.f3 Bg7 8.Qd2 0-0 9.Bc4 Bd7 10.0-0-0 Ne5  
 11.Bb3 Rc8 12.h4 Nc4 13.Bxc4 Rxc4 14.h5 Qb8 15.hxg6 fxg6 16.Nde2 b5 17.Bh6 Rfc8 18.Bxg7 Kxg7  
 19.Qh6 + Kf7 20.Rd2 Be6 21.f4 b4 22.Nd5 Bxd5 23.exd5 Qc7 24.c3 bxc3 25.Nxc3 Rxc3+ 26.bxc3 Qxc3 +  
 27.Kd1 Qc1+ 28.Ke2 Qc4+ 29.Kd1 Rb8 30.Rc2 Rb1+ 31.Kd2 Qxd5 + 0-1



*Gaborone zonal 2010, Botswana (Oasis Motel)*

Patric himself has played in ten Olympiads and over 100 times in individual games for Mauritius. He scored 43 wins and 45 losses with 29 draws. His best game was in the 1992 Manila Olympiad where he

beat IM Nascimento from Angola. Look it up in the database. I quite enjoyed it.

He has also won the Mauritius championship seven times and thoroughly enjoys his chess. He first won the national championship in 1989 and his last one was 2016. The gap of 27 years must be a record and it speaks to his strength and longevity. A special gift that he presented me with was 25 copies of the green South African chess player from 1978 to 1981. He explained that an uncle of his worked in South Africa during that time and sent him the magazines to study as books were in short supply. The magazines are priceless and contain gems of information that I didn't know about before. Thank you Patric.

Mauritius and South Africa are very similar with its cosmopolitan population and its history of colonisation. Port Louis is similar to Cape Town and has a mountain called Signal Mountain which reminds me of Table Mountain.

I of course bought some nicely crafted chess sets in Mauritius for my collection.



Regards

Dr Adv Lyndon Bouah