

GRAHAM SOLOMON MEMORIAL (2018)

*Chess elite of South Africa to honour memory
of philosopher and chess player Graham Solomon*

by Maxwell Solomon

One of the things a chess player – particularly a top chess player – dislikes doing is resigning. Etched in the memory, however, is how on occasion my beloved brother Graham meekly and humbly accepted defeat and resigned.

On **24 and 25 November 2018** a star-studded list of chess players will do battle at the inaugural **Graham Solomon Memorial**, which is organised in honour of the memory of the philosopher and longstanding top South African chess player Graham Solomon. The tournament is the brainchild of Graham's second family, the **Van Niekerk family**, the famed organisers of the innovative and prestigious MRL Paradigm tournaments.

Whilst recuperating from a successful operation, and a day after having been discharged from Groote Schuur Hospital, Graham Solomon shockingly passed away on 16 November 2017. In my eulogy delivered at his funeral on 25 November 2017 I paid tribute to my beloved brother Graham describing him as a wonderful chess player, a philosopher *par excellence* and a beautiful soul. (<http://loosesketchings.co.za/blog/>) As mentioned therein, Graham had mainly participated in team events, and it is fair to say that he was an integral and vital component of the victorious Mitchells Plain Chess Club and MRL Chess Club teams which won the Chess Western Province League (Premier Division) titles over the years. What is not known is that *a la* the great Bobby Fischer, Graham generally eschewed participating in individual tournaments because conditions for chess players in South Africa have generally not been as favourable as it ought to have been.

In his earlier years, Graham's style of play was in the mould of the robust attacking style of Alekhine and Kasparov. A staunch Kasparov adherent throughout his chess career, in later years he also embraced the prevalent positional style of play. As for his successful exploits over the chessboard, I shall leave that for another occasion. Suffice to say (for now) that in recognition of his excellence and dedication in chess, Chess Western Province awarded

Graham posthumously the 2017 Lifetime Achievement Award as well as the 2017 Roll of Honour Award.



Graham Solomon with Watu Kobese, Kenny Solomon and Wilfred Nelson

In honouring Graham's memory, the **MRL Chess Club** has fittingly invited and assembled a horde of battle-hardened combatants who will play uncompromising chess to win the inaugural Graham Solomon Memorial tournament. Amongst the combatants are ten South African Olympiad players, nine former SA Champions, a current SA Champion, six Fide Masters (FM), four International Masters (IM), and one Grandmaster (GM). With such a star-studded list of players there is no telling who will emerge as the winner, but the odds are in favour of **GM Kenny Solomon** (SA's first and only grandmaster, a former SA Champion, and Olympiad player), **IM Henry Steel**, **IM Daniel Cawdrey**, **IM Watu Kobese** (all three are former SA Champions and Olympiad players) and **FM Calvin Klaasen** (current SA Champion and Olympiad player).

The complete list of players is as follows:

1. **GM Kenny Solomon**
2. **IM Daniel Cawdrey**
3. **IM Henry Steel**
4. **IM Watu Kobese**
5. **FM Calvin Klaasen**
6. **IM Donovan van den Heever** (former SA Champion and Olympiad player)
7. **FM Daniel Barrish** (former SA Junior Champion and SA international)
8. **NM Stephan Wagner** (Austrian international)
9. **FM Mohamed Bhawoodien** (former SA Junior Champion and SA international)
10. **FM Charles De Villiers** (former SA Champion and Olympiad player)
11. **CM Lyndon Bouah** (former SA Junior Champion and Olympiad player)
12. **FM Deon Solomons** (former SA Champion and Olympiad player)
13. **CM Maxwell Solomon** (former SA Champion and Olympiad player)
14. **Daud Amini** (Zimbabwean international)
15. **John Laurie**
16. **FM Shabier Bhawoodien** (former SA Champion and SA international)
17. **Bryan Aquirre**
18. **Craig Willenberg** (former SA Junior Champion and SA international)
19. **Bernand Klein**
20. **Warrick Erlank** (SA international)
21. **Michael James**
22. **Reuben Salimu** (Zimbabwean international)
23. **Luan de Jager** (SA international)
24. **Kenny Willenberg** (former SA Junior Champion and SA international).

The Graham Solomon Memorial will be held at the **Cape Pillars Boutique Hotel, Durbanville** in **Cape Town**. The tournament incorporates a **6 round Swiss Rapid** tournament as well as a **12 round Swiss Blitz** tournament. The time control for the Swiss Rapid is 20/20 mins with 10 seconds Bronstein delay. The time control for the Swiss Blitz is 5/5 mins with 3 seconds Bronstein delay. A win in the Rapid counts 2 points and a draw 1 point. A win in the Blitz counts 1 point and a draw a ½ point. There is a firm rule of no agreed draws. The player with

the **best combined score** in both the Rapid and the Blitz will be declared the winner. In the event of a tie-break the player with the most wins will be declared the winner; and if necessary a 2 round play-off of 3/3 mins with 5 seconds delay; and, if applicable, a sudden death play-off will decide the winner. The arbiters for the tournament are **FA Ricardo Minnaar** and **Leon de Jager**.

The full schedule and details for the Graham Solomon Memorial are set out below as per the official tournament brochure:

Graham Solomon Memorial 2018

Venue: Cape Pillars Boutique Hotel - Durbanville	General																																								
<p style="text-align: center;">24 & 25 Nov 2018</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Organised by MRL Chess Club By invitation only (26 players max)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">09:00 Opening and registration</p> <p>RAPID 20/20min 10sec delay (6 Rounds) Saturday 24th</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr><td style="width: 15%;"></td><td>1. 09:30 - 10:30</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>2. 10:45 - 11:45</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>3. 12:00 - 13:00</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">Lunch</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>4. 14:00 - 15:00</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>5. 15:15 - 16:15</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>6. 16:30 - 17:30</td></tr> </table> <p>BLITZ 5/5min 3sec delay (12 Rounds) Sunday 25th</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr><td style="width: 15%;"></td><td>1. 10:00 - 10:20</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>2. 10:30 - 10:50</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>3. 11:00 - 11:20</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>4. 11:30 - 11:50</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>5. 12:00 - 12:20</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>6. 12:30 - 12:50</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">Lunch</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>7. 14:00 - 14:20</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>8. 14:30 - 14:50</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>9. 15:00 - 15:20</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>10. 15:30 - 15:50</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>11. 16:00 - 16:20</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>12. 16:30 - 16:50</td></tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">Tie-breaks ; Play-offs Prize giving: 18:00</p>		1. 09:30 - 10:30		2. 10:45 - 11:45		3. 12:00 - 13:00	Lunch			4. 14:00 - 15:00		5. 15:15 - 16:15		6. 16:30 - 17:30		1. 10:00 - 10:20		2. 10:30 - 10:50		3. 11:00 - 11:20		4. 11:30 - 11:50		5. 12:00 - 12:20		6. 12:30 - 12:50	Lunch			7. 14:00 - 14:20		8. 14:30 - 14:50		9. 15:00 - 15:20		10. 15:30 - 15:50		11. 16:00 - 16:20		12. 16:30 - 16:50	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prizes: 1. R8000,00 2. R6000,00 3. R4000,00 4. R2000,00. 2. Format – Normal Chess Rapid 6 Rounds Swiss combined with 12 Rounds Blitz Swiss. 3. Rapid win 2 points, draw 1point & Blitz win 1point, draw 0.5 point. Winner highest combined score. 4. Tie-breaks (i) Most combined wins (ii) Play-off 2 Rounds: 3/3 5sec & sudden death, if applicable 5. No agreed draws, Rapid and Blitz rules apply. 6. Entry Fee: R300 7. Arbiters: Ricardo Minnaar & Leon de Jager 8. The latest CHESSA rating will be used. 9. All players must be CHESSA registered. 10. Appeals committee TBA. The findings of the appeals committee will be final. 11. Contact Details L Van Niekerk :0827871566 Email: lorenzovanniekerk@gmail.com
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I end with an excerpt of a poem dedicated to Graham Solomon:

“The real measure of Graham Solomon

The man

Is not his towering philosophical genius

But his humility.”