

## SA Closed Reflections 1 by Dr Lyndon Bouah

Mr. Dalpat , members of the Chessa exco, Mr. Mark Lewis, Dr. Deon Solomons, ladies and gentleman on behalf of the department of Cultural Affairs and Sport I welcome you to the Western Cape.

We are proud to be associated with this prestigious event as we hold chess in high regard in this province. We are particularly proud of the legacy that chess has brought to the Western Cape over the last 130 years. Cape Town chess club was established in 1885 and is the oldest chess club in South Africa.

The first SA Closed was played in 1892 and was jointly won by AJ Rivett from Graaf Reinet, and E. Roberts from Cape Town with 9.5/11. The second event was held in 1895 with the winner being Roberts from Cape Town also with 9.5/13. The event was held in 1899 and was won by A. Micheal from Johannesburg who scored 11/14. So this event has a long history of which all of us should be proud. And one can see that even the first one also had 12 players!

The term congress originally according to the Oxford companion to chess by Hooper and Whyld (1984) states that the term originally referred to a gathering of the members of a chess body. It has however increasingly become common to hold a tournament concurrently and now the name is often used to describe more than more tournament.

This event is the first time we have attempted a Close Congress and from the enthusiasm we have seen it may be the first of many. We will have the Premier Sections, followed by the B sections and then the Seniors and Junior sections. There will be many matches to follow and I am looking forward to seeing all the pulsating games on offer.

A number of players will also be playing to participate in the Olympiad in Georgia next year from 18 September to 6 October. 2018 will be the celebration of sixty years of Olympiad chess. Our first chess Olympiad that South Africa participated in was in Munich in 1958 and I am sure that they will be relishing the historical event for our national team. Of course having the opportunity to see Grandmaster Baadur Jobava in action in his home country will be awesome.



*GM Baadur Jobava*

For the Women's team 2018 also represents a special year as it will be twenty years since the first women players participated in the Olympiad in 1998 in Kalmykia. Participating in the Olympiad in Georgia will be extra special as Georgian women's chess dominated women's chess for a long time.



*Nona Gaprindashvili*



*Maia Chiburdanidze*

From 1962 until 1978 Nona Gaprindashvili was champion until she was defeated by her countrywomen Maia Chiburdanidze who reigned until 1991. I am sure our women's team will play well in this milestone year in the 100th anniversary year of the birth Nelson Mandela.

For the Seniors there is also a lot to look forward to. I note from the FIDE website that that the Fide seniors individual will be held Italy in November and the the Team event will be held in Greece in April. The Commonwealth in India also sponsors a room for players above fifty.

To the junior warriors and the B section section warriors there are spots up for grabs. Seize the opportunity. Show the country that the noble game of chess is played and loved from Venda to Vredendal , from Kwamashu to Khayalitsha, from Boston to Bloemfontein, from Nelson Mandela Bay to Nelspruit

So there are many incentives to look forward to. I wish all the players well. You have made tremendous sacrifices to be here. Make the most of your time here. Enjoy the Cape. May you only make good moves and remember what Lasker said in 1925 in the Manual of Chess, " on the chessboard lies and hypocrisy do not survive long. The creative combination lays bare the presumption of lies; the merciless fact, culmination in checkmate, contradicts the hypocrites" (page ix and 235 of the 1960 Dover edition; page 183 in the 2008 edition.)

Thank you.

Dr Lyndon Bouah