

Mozambique Reflections 2 by Dr Lyndon Bouah

Mozambique has hosted a number of top events in the last decade. My two fondest memories are the Zone 4.3 team Championships which was held in 2008. In this event South Africa won the team championship on game points after Burundi took one point off against Angola. We played in a bank, yes literally in a bank, and we had a solid team of David Gluckman, Nicholas Van Der Nat, Johan Steenkamp, Calvin Klaasen and Kgaugelo Mosehle. In the last round of the event we needed only a draw to clinch the tournament. David Gluckman then secured the draw on board one with this wonderful final position Kg1, Rf1, Rb2 and pawns on a4,b5, c4, d5,e4,f5,g4,h3 and black Kc7 and rooks on b8 and h8 and black pawns on a5, b6,c5,d6,e5,f6,g5 and h4. Wonderful picture don't you think!

In 2011 Mozambique hosted the All African Games and the African Individuals. South Africa fared well and WIM Denise Frick now Bouah qualified for the Women's World Cup.

According to Wikipedia the earliest inhabitants of Mozambique were small groups of hunters and gathers such as the Khoi and the San. These groups later intermarried with other tribes that came to the area around 3 AD. In the eighth century, Arab Traders began establishing trading posts along the coast. By the 14th century these settlements had become independent city states and were the main political and commercial centres in the area.

The Portuguese explorer Vasco Da Gama was reputedly the first European to reach current day Mozambique. When he arrived in 1488, the Maravich Kingdom of the Mwene Matapa was in control of the Central Zambezi Basin. By 1510 the Portuguese controlled trading trading from Sofala in present day Mozambique to Mogadishu in present day Somalia. In 1515 they began to expand their explorations into the interior with the intention of further controlling trade and taking control of gold mines. They subdued the inhabitants and over the next century claimed rights to vast areas of land and to the people who lived there, whom they forced to work on farms and in the gold mines. The Mwene Matapa recognised Portuguese rule in 1629.

Portugal continued with the slave trade which had started centuries before but introduced a new element when they started exporting slaves. The young and healthy men from the area were shipped out and by 1790; nine thousand people were being shipped per year. The VOC in Cape Town sent out approximately 974 ships to purchase slaves in Mozambique and East Africa between 1750 and 1795.

At the Berlin Conference held in 1885-1886 the European nations attempted to divide the African continent and Portugal laid claim to areas from Angola to Mozambique. Britain opposed some of the claims and fought some boundary wars with the Portuguese until they relinquished Mashonaland the latter day Zimbabwe. Now on to chess!

FM Charles De Villiers caused the first upset of the event when he defeated IM David Silva. Silva has two grandmaster norms and is the current African Junior Champion. Charles competed in the 1974 Olympiad, 24 years before Silva was born! I am sure the other players will now be weary of the seven times SA Champion.



FM Charles De Villiers at SA Closed in 2017

Mohammed Bhawoodien lost the first round to second seed Zambian Douglas Munenga 2288 whilst Roland Bezuidenhout secured a good draw against Catarino Domingos who is an experienced Angolan player. Calvin Klaasen drew with Manuel while IM Aderito Pedro, the top seed, beat his opponent.

In the Women's section everything went on rating. Megan van Niekerk was finished first in a quick win. Rebecca Selkirk won her first game as well. Top seed Lorita Mwangi from Zambia won on board one to secure her point. Jesse February secured her first win also while Robyn Van Niekerk lost to third seed WIM Francis Onkemetse who is an experienced campaigner from Botswana.

The players play a double round tomorrow so an early night is called for as tomorrow will set the scene for the rest of the event.

Regards

Dr Lyndon Bouah