

JAMCHESS

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WOMAN CANDIDATE MASTER (WCM) RAEHANNA BROWN

“WINNING WITH SCHOOLWORK AND CHESS”



WCM RAEHANNA BROWN

The year 2023 has been an outstanding year for her so far, having compiled the following accolades:

- RJR/Gleaner Sports Awards 2023 Player of the Year for Chess (Mind Games) (Female Nominee)
- Winner of the prestigious 2023 Jamaica National Women's Chess Championship
- First place in the NM Dr. Harold Chan Memorial Open Tournament
- First place, National Age Group Chess Championship, U18 Absolute & Female
- Winner of the gold trophy in the U18 section of the Central American & Caribbean Youth Chess Championship in Port of Spain, Trinidad
- First Place Team Award for Jamaica in the Central American & Caribbean Youth Chess Championship in Port of Spain, Trinidad
- Chess debuted in the Central American & Caribbean Games in July 2023, in San Salvador, El Salvador. WCM Brown played board 1 for the Female team and helped Jamaica finish a credible 12th place in both the Rapid and Blitz competitions.

INTRODUCTION

Eighteen-year-old Chess phenom, Woman Candidate Master (WCM) Raehanna Brown, is considered by many to be one of the top players in Jamaica today, male or female.

EARLY DEVELOPMENT

In her early years, Raehanna developed an early affinity to music and quickly learned how to play the keyboard and guitar. She was so engaged in music that she played the keyboard in a Christmas concert at the Immaculate Conception Preparatory School (ICPS). She also got involved in sports and academic competitive events, such as Swimming, Taekwondo, Track and Field, Netball, Mathematics Olympiad, Girl Guides (Brownies), most of which was done at ICPS and the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) headquarters.



THE EARLY DAYS- a star in the making, Raehanna Brown

At six years old, Raehanna was introduced to chess by her sister who, at the time, was a student at Immaculate Conception High School (ICHS). After a few sneak visits to her sister's high school chess club, which was located on the same premises as ICPS, she liked the game, became eager to learn more about it and began formally playing chess at ICPS chess club, which was headed by her current coach, Woman International Master (WIM) Deborah Richards-Porter.

She quickly expressed to her mom the passion she had for chess and her mom encouraged Raehanna to learn the game and practice with her sister. She started to test her tactical skills at home, where she started winning games played against her sister and when she was confident enough, started playing in tournaments.

At the age of ten years old, Raehanna became one of the strongest players at ICPS. It was routine to see

her on the platform almost every Monday morning during the ICPS Assembly, where the Principal and ICPS community recognized and applauded her achievements in winning tournaments.

BALANCING SCHOOL AND CHESS

Raehanna is currently an Upper Sixth Form student at Champion College and enjoys attending the school due to the diversity of the environment. She has really grown to care for the Champion College community over the past six years, and though the schoolwork is rigorous, the support system that exists amongst peers is excellent. She has gained numerous academic accomplishments, while doing very well in chess.



WCM RAEHANNA BROWN

Raehanna is very active within the school community. She has several leadership positions, including being President of the Champion College Chess Club, which has over 160 students, made up of boys and girls, enrolled as members. She enjoys interacting and sharing her knowledge of chess with these students, especially female players, and is hopeful that she will be able to be a positive influence on their lives and by extension on the lives of other female chess players outside of the Champion College community.

As with other teenagers, playing chess and balancing schoolwork is a big challenge. While chess does teach skills to help manage schoolwork, balancing the two is a herculean task at times. One of the main skills learnt from chess is time management, which does come in useful when studying and managing the accomplishment of schoolwork tasks.

Raehanna has worked hard throughout her preparation for CSEC and CAPE examinations and continued to play competitive chess successfully both online and over the board, during this time. She was very successful in gaining 9 CSEC passes with a Grade 1-A profile and 4 CAPE passes with a Grade 1-A profile.

WINNING PHILOSOPHY

Raehanna has a clear view on what it takes to be successful as a teenager in developing her chess game. Her opinion is that improving tactical ability is key in improving rapidly. Understanding the fundamentals of chess, such as opening and endgame theory, together with chess strategy will establish the foundation on which to build chess skills to become a strong player. She believes in hard work, and the work is needed to be able to overcome natural challenges in learning the game.

INSPIRATION



WCM Raehanna Brown flanked by her coach WIM Deborah Richards-Porter, tournament organizer-IM Jomo Pitterson and sponsor

Raehanna's coach, WIM Deborah Richards-Porter is the most decorated and accomplished Jamaican female chess player and Raehanna's aspiration is to follow in the shoes of her longtime coach. However, she is also aiming to surpass Richards-Porter's mark, with a view to take Women's Chess in Jamaica to

a new high, aiming towards achieving the Woman Grandmaster, International Master and subsequently Grandmaster titles.

GOING FORWARD

Raehanna is very grateful for the opportunities that have been afforded her and thankful for her experiences and successes. She continues to excel academically and in chess and the sky is the limit for this outstanding 18 year old.

She is very humble and recognizes the importance of support. She expressed, " I would like to thank God, who has blessed me with the ability, knowledge, talent and of course, the golden opportunity to carry out these tasks. Thanks to my family for being there with me on my journey, and especially my mom, who is my biggest cheerleader and supporter. To my adorable coach, WIM Deborah Richards-Porter, I say a big thank you for being there with me every step of the way to provide life lessons about chess, to guide and motivate me to PUSH (Push Until Something Happens - Checkmate)!"

Raehanna intends to balance chess and academia as she moves forward. She is also grateful to sponsors and the JCF, who have provided support and endorsement in participation in numerous chess events internationally.

Raehanna ended a recent conversation as follows," I would like to say a big thank you to all my friends, media and well wishers!"

- WCM Raehanna Brown & CM Mark Cameron -

ALL ISLAND HIGH SCHOOL CHESS MOVES INTO HIGH GEAR



Defending champions Wolmer's Boys A, lead twelve (12) automatic qualifiers into the Grand Finals of the 2023/2024 National Schools Chess Championships, slated for March 2024. The other eleven (11) automatic finalists by virtue of winning their respective zones are, Titchfield High school A, Glenmuir High School A, deCarteret College A, St Jago High School A & B teams, Campion College A, Ardenne A, Green Island A & B teams, York Castle A and St Georges College B.

In January, twenty (20) teams who were unsuccessful in automatic qualification, will battle in a playoff for eight (8) additional places in the Grand Finals. These teams include Campion College B & C teams, St Catherine A & B teams, Kingston College A, B & D teams, Jamaica College A & B teams, Cornwall College A team, Calabar High School A team, Manning's School A & B teams, Belair High School A team, St Jago High School C team, Morant Bay High School A team, deCarteret College C & D teams, Denbigh High School A team, Wolmer's Boys B team, Glenmuir High School B team, Jonathan Grant High A team, Titchfield High School B team, Clarendon College A team alongside the all-female teams of Hampton High School A & Green Island High girls.

Tournament director and Jamaica Chess Federation head of Collegiate and Junior Chess, Clifton Pryce, shared that despite the logistical challenges presented with the recent flood rains, he was happy that all the schools island-wide that entered, got the opportunity to compete. While he expected the Kingston & St Catherine zones to be competitive, he was very impressed with the vastly improved playing standard of the rural teams, and the number of female-only teams that entered overall.

Eighty teams entered island wide with over 450 young adults competing for top honors.

- Richard O. Shaw -







ABOUT THE JAMAICA CHESS FEDERATION

The Jamaica Chess Federation (JCF) was founded in 1969 and has been affiliated with FIDE, the world governing body for chess, since 1972. In its capacity as the governing body for chess in Jamaica, the JCF is devoted to extending the role of chess in the Jamaican society.

JAMAICA CHESS FEDERATION



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