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JAMAICAN SQUAD EXCELS IN 17TH CAC YOUTH CHESS FESTIVAL



AMY STEPHENSON, EMILIA-ROSE LEAKE & (CM) JADEN SHAW

Kingston, Jamaica - The Jamaica Chess Federation participated in the 17th Central American and Caribbean (CAC) Youth Chess Festival in Tegucigalpa, Honduras from November 19 - 25, 2022. In a highly competitive event, our players performed outstandingly well, with Jamaica being the top performing English speaking country, with three players medalling.

In the U-16 Absolute section, Candidate Master (CM) Jaden Shaw won the gold medal on tie-break with 7.5 points and earned the distinction of FIDE Master

(FM) Elect title (subject to meeting rating requirements). Emilia-Rose Leake finished with 7.0 points in the U-8 Absolute/ Female section, gaining a silver medal and Candidate Master Elect title (also subject to meeting rating requirements). Amy Stephenson won the bronze in the U-16 Female section with 4.5 points, earning the Woman Candidate Master title (subject to meeting rating requirements).

Team Coach and Jamaica Chess Federation (JCF) Treasurer, International Master (IM) Jomo Pitterson said, "This was an outstanding performance by a brilliant

team. Apart from the medallists, many players finished in the top 10 in their sections. This could have been Jamaica's best overall performance in the CAC Youth Chess Festival."

Coach and JCF Tournament Chair Warren Elliott added, "The players' performance augurs well for Jamaica's performance in the 2023 event, which will be held in Trinidad and Tobago. The state of Jamaican Youth Chess is very good, and we will work with the squad to get them to an increased state of readiness."

Despite the challenges posed by limited over the board play due to the COVID pandemic, the players gave strong performances, buoyed by analysis of games, preparation for future games, and encouragement by Coach IM Pitterson, player coaches, and parents. The Jamaican contingent was led by Head of Delegation, Secretary of the Jamaica Chess Federation (JCF), Maxine Brown. The Team Coach and Official Delegate was JCF Treasurer and National Coach, International Master (IM) Jomo Pitterson, who has vast experience coaching Jamaican teams on the junior and senior levels. JCF Council Members FM Warren Elliott and Mr. Richard Shaw also traveled to Honduras with the team.

The event featured leading junior players from eleven (11) Central American and Caribbean countries contested in the nine-round event. Jamaica has historically done well in this prestigious annual

championship, which offers local players the opportunity to develop their chess skills and attain FIDE (World Chess Governing Body) titles.

Approximately 150 young players from across the island competed in the 2022 National Age Group Chess Championships held over the weekend of October 1–2, 2022. The event took place at the University of the West Indies in the Rex Nettleford Multipurpose Room. In the end, twelve sections were decided, and National Champions were crowned for each age category. The sections ranged from Under 8 up to Under 18, and the winners earned the right to represent Jamaica at international tournaments. The participants showed tremendous fighting spirit, and three sections went all the way to playoffs to determine a winner.

FINAL TEAM RESULTS

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	TITLE	CATEGORY	SCORE
Mckennis	Darren		U-18 Absolute Official	5.5
Brown	Raehanna	WCM	U-18 Female Official	W/D
Jain	Aayush		U-16 Absolute Official	4.0
Shaw	Jaden	CM	U-16 Absolute Extra	7.5
Stephenson	John		U-16 Absolute Extra	5.0
Stephenson	Amy		U-16 Female Official	5.5
Gayle	Kaity		U-16 Female Extra	2.0
Watson	Gabriella		U-16 Female Extra	5.5
Chin	J'Loy		U-14 Absolute Official	5.0
Gayle	Kaia		U-14 Female Official	4.5
Yankana	Danielle		U-12 Female Official	5.0
Logan	Liam		U-10 Absolute Official	4.5
Leake	Emilia- Rose		U-8 Female/Absolute Official	7.0

WINNERS CROWNED AT THE 2022 NATIONAL AGE GROUP CHESS CHAMPIONSHIPS



UNDER 8

Under 8 favourite Emilia-Rose Leake from Creative Kids Learning Academy lived up to her billing by producing a perfect 6/6 score to top the Under 8 Absolute section (usually only for boys) and also the Under 8 Female section. Emilia-Rose is one of only three females ever to win both the boys' and girls' sections combined in the history of the local Age Group Championships. Finishing second in Absolute was Porter Center student Rajvir Shergill with 5/6 points, the same as Pranav Sunkara, who finished third on tiebreaks. The Under 8 Female section second place went to Immaculate Prep's Dayna-Simone Swasey with 4/6 points, and Samakya Singh from Creative Kids Learning Academy finished third with 2/6 points.

UNDER 10

St. Andrew Preparatory student Liam Logan shone in the Under 10 Absolute Section, winning with an amazing 6/6 score. Second with 5/6 was Vaishnav Gali, who attends Creative Kids Learning Academy. Victoria Aung rounded off the Absolute section with 4.5/6 points. Victoria also emerged National Under 10 Female champion, with a close second going to Esther Mullings of Dunrobin Primary with 3/6 points. Third was Saanvi Paladugu on a similar 3/6.

UNDER 12

The Under 12 Absolute section had to be determined by a thrilling playoff towards the end of the event, as three players tied for first place. Zahmir Smikle, Aaron Mckoy and Ronak Shergill all battled it out in a three-way speed playoff after accumulating 5/6 points each. In the end, Zahmir Smikle of Campion College emerged victorious by winning both games. Harrison's Prep student Aaron Mckoy was second by regular tiebreaks, while the former Under 10 Champion Ronak Shergill, who attends Porter Center for Knowledge, was third.

It also took a playoff to break the deadlock in the Under 12 Female section. Online Champion Danielle Yankana from Stella Marris Preparatory faced off with Dedipiya Sunkara after they both finished with 5/6 points in their section. After two exciting speed chess victories, Danielle emerged the winner. Dedipiya Sunkara from Campion College, therefore, finished second. Third place went to Victoria Salazar of Hillel Academy with 4.5/6.

UNDER 14

Exciting playoffs were in store when J-Loy Chin from St. Jago High and Corbin Harvey from Wolmer's Boys both tied with 5/6 points in the Under 14 Absolute section. J-Loy won the playoffs and was crowned Under 14 Absolute Champion. Corbin Harvey came in second and Jaheim Smart of Campion College finished third with 4.5/6 points.

The Under 14 Female section had a clear winner in Kaia Gayle, who recently represented Jamaica in the Olympiad. The St. Andrew High School girl finished with 3.5/6 points. Zaina O'Connor of Meadowbrook High, a Woman Candidate Master, finished with 3/6 to take second place and Jessica Chang of Immaculate High finished third with 0.5/6.

UNDER 16

Aayush Jain of Ardenne High put on a strong performance in the Under 16 Absolute section, finishing with a perfect 6/6 points to be crowned the Absolute champion. Candidate Master Jaden Shaw of Wolmer's Boys finished second with 4.5/6, while John Stephenson, also of Wolmer's Boys, finished third with the same 4.5/6 points. In the Under 16 Female section, Amy Stephenson from Wolmer's Girls won with 4/6 points. Gabriella Watson of Immaculate High finished second with 3/6 points, and Hillel Academy's Suraiya Matandara-Clarke rounded off the top 3 with 3/6 points as well.

UNDER 18

Despite a tough start on day 1, Under 18 Absolute favourite Darren McKennis came back strong to win clearly with a 4.5/6 score. Nathan Walsh from Campion College finished second in that section with 4/6 points, while Kamari Stephens of Wolmer's Boys finished third with 3.5/6 points. The lone Under 18 Female entrant, Candidate Master Raehanna Brown, finished with 3/6 points, adding to her Online championship win earlier in the year. The annual Jamaica Chess Federation event was sponsored by Grace Kennedy through its product Grace Vienna Sausages. Co-Event organizer for the Jamaica Chess Federation, Warren Elliott, believes that each category winner showed incredible potential. "They will be a force to reckon with in the region in the months and years to come," he shared.

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FM RAHEEM GLAVES TAKES THE CROWN AT 2022 JAMAICA OPEN CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP



FM RAHEEM GLAVES

FIDE Master (FM) Raheem Glaves dominated the 2022 Jamaica Open Chess Championship, securing a perfect score of 6 points and clinching the coveted title of champion. The two-day, six-round tournament, held from November 26th to 27th, saw Glaves, one of Jamaica's top chess players, outmaneuver his opponents with a masterful display of skill and strategy. His impressive win against a field of strong competitors cements his status as a leading force in the sport.

In second place was the two-time Jamaica Chess Champion Candidate Master (CM) Andrew Mellace, who finished with an impressive 4.5 points, followed by Odane Lodge from UTech, who took third place with 4.0 points.

But the excitement didn't stop there! The U-1600 Intermediate section was a thrilling battle of wits, with Andrew Smart

from UWI emerging as the champion with a perfect score of 5 points from 5 games. Aaron McKoy from Harrison's Prep. School and Sajay McIntosh tied for second place with 4.5 points each, while Samuel Smith from UTech and Antonic Chung from Kingston College finished fifth and sixth, respectively, with 4 points each.

"This annual national championship is a prestigious event that draws both local and international players," said Richard Shaw, the Jamaica Chess Federation Chair of Publications. "Congratulations to all the winners for their outstanding performances." This tournament is one of the most prestigious open events on the Jamaica Chess Federation's (JCF) calendar, and attracted a total of 64 participants.

WIM RACHEL MILLER SHINES IN WOMEN'S CONTINENTAL CHESS TOURNAMENT



WIM RACHEL MILLER

Woman International Master (WIM) Rachel Miller performed exceptionally well at the recent Women's Continental Championship of the Americas held in

Ecuador from December 5th to 10th, 2022. The invitation-only event was open to zone members from North, South, and Central America, and the Caribbean, and WIM Miller represented the English-speaking Caribbean.

Miller finished with 4/9 points, with her standout game being a win against Woman Grandmaster (WGM) Irene Beatriz Valencia Franco from Colombia, who had a much higher rating. The tournament featured 28 players, including several WGMs and WIMs. WIM Jennifer Rodriguez Perez from Paraguay and IM Teresa Lisandra Valdes Ordaz from Cuba tied with 7/9 points, with Perez taking the title by tiebreak and winning the gold medal and the WGM title. WIM Miller is Jamaica's highest-rated female chess player and a member of the national team. She has received several accolades in her distinguished chess career and was the first Jamaican female player to receive an International Master (IM) norm, which is the second-highest title in chess.

Over the past three months, the Jamaica Chess Federation (JCF) has sponsored several players in international tournaments in its quest to develop our players, and take them to the next level in this sport.

Playing internationally provides exposure to different playing styles, strategies and techniques that can be incorporated into one's own game. This can help players exponentially improve their skills and become more well-rounded players. Secondly, playing internationally allows players more opportunities to compete against stronger opponents, which can be a great way to challenge oneself and improve overall performance. Playing internationally can also help players gain experience and build confidence, which can be useful in future competitions. Finally, the experiences provided in international tournaments can provide opportunities for networking and meeting other players and coaches, which can lead to future collaborations and opportunities.

Mark Cameron, Public Relations Chairman of the JCF, said, "Jamaica's participation in international events is a crucial part of our players' development. We have many talented juniors between the ages of 8 and 18 who aspire to perform well in chess. The Jamaica Chess Federation and our sponsors do a terrific job in helping to facilitate this opportunity."



FM RAHEEM GLAVES

On the heels of his impressive performance at the 2022 Jamaica Open Chess Championship, FIDE Master (FM) Raheem Glaves dominated the Frederick Cameron Open Chess Tournament 2022, which was held on December 17th and 18th, 2022.

FM Glaves achieved a perfect score of 6 points in the Open section, winning all 6 of his games. Second place went to two-time National Champion Candidate Master (CM) Duane Rowe, who earned an impressive 5 points. Rowe's only loss was

to the winner FM Glaves. John Stephenson from Wolmer's Boys' School and Jjustice-Dimonte McDonald from St. Catherine High School tied for third place, both finishing with 4.5 points. Woman Candidate Master (WCM) Raehanna Brown from Campion College was the top female player in the Open section, finishing with 4 points.

In the U-1600 Absolute section, Samuel Smith from Utech achieved a perfect score of 5 points in 5 games, earning the top spot. Aaron McKoy from Harrison's Prep School finished second on tie-break with 4 points, while Ronak Shergil from Porter's Center for Knowledge placed third, also with 4 points. Glory Murphy won the U-1300 Female section, finishing with a perfect score of 5 points in 5 games. Anya Tyme from Hampton High School placed second on tie-break with 3.5 points, while Janiya Atkins from St. Catherine Primary School finished third, also with 3.5 points.

The tournament, held at Calabar High School, had 96 participants, and featured three sections: the Open section, U-1600 Absolute, and U-1300 Female. It marked the last event on the Jamaica Chess Federation's calendar for 2022, and this year marked the 20th anniversary of the tournament, named in honor of Jamaica's Hall of Fame recipient, former Jamaican International and Jamaica Chess Federation President, Frederick Cameron.

Frederick Cameron was a Jamaican chess player who was awarded the title of National Master in 1977. He was also the President of the Jamaica Chess Federation for a number of years and was inducted into the Jamaica Chess Federation's Hall of Fame in 1998. The annual Frederick Cameron Open Chess Tournament is named in his honor as a tribute to his contributions to Jamaican chess.

FIDE MASTER RAHEEM GLAVES DOMINATES FREDERICK CAMERON OPEN CHESS

FM SMITH, BATTLING IN CUBA, EMERGES VICTORIOUS



FM SHREYAS SMITH

Jamaican FM Shreyas Smith has once again proven his skills on the international chess stage, winning the Premier Category of the XVIII Andres Clemente Vazquez

International Chess Tournament held in Mayabeque, Cuba from October 22nd through October 28th, 2022.

The victory comes after Smith's commendable performance in the 44th Chess Olympiad held in Chennai, India, where he scored 6.5/10 points.

Facing stiff competition from players hailing from Cuba, Dominican Republic, Mexico, and Guatemala, Smith's outstanding performance in Cuba saw him clinch the title with 6 points from 9 games, edging out Cuban FM Jesus Jerzy Leiva Perez and International Master Alejandro Michel Perez Diaz, who placed second and third, respectively. Smith's impressive win came after he defeated two International Masters he played, including the second and third seeds in the tournament, showcasing his skills and aggressive style of play.

Smith's victory marks one of the best performances by a Jamaican player in international competition, and he hopes that it will open doors for more Jamaican

recognition and increased invitations for players to international tournaments in Cuba and beyond. This tournament has a long-standing history of chess exchange programs between Jamaica and Cuba since 1975, and Smith's win continues to strengthen this relationship.

The event was a round-robin tournament, where all 10 invited chess masters played against each other, and it was named after Andres Clemente Vazquez, an outstanding Cuban chess player, author, and attorney. The win has earned Smith and another Jamaican representative an invitation to the tournament for 2023.

Smith's victory has undoubtedly been a source of pride for Jamaica and the chess community, showcasing the country's prowess in the game. With his exceptional skills and outstanding performance, he has undoubtedly cemented his position as one of Jamaica's top chess players and one to watch in international tournaments.

PRILIMINARY ROUND NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOLS CHESS CHAMPIONSHIPS RETURNS TO OVER THE BOARD

The over the board National High Schools Chess Championships 2022/23 returned in November 2022 with the Zonal Preliminaries. A total of 67 high school chess teams are participating in this exciting battle of the minds that will take place in venues across Jamaica over a 3-4 month period. Teams compete in regional zones, to qualify for a place straight to the finals, or to the playoffs to qualify for the finals. A total of 20 of the highest performing teams will compete in the finals.

On November 14th, 2022 Zone 4ab was played at St. Catherine High School in St Catherine. Six teams participated in this Zone. The St. Jago High School A-team won

the zone, beating the St Catherine High School A-team, and qualified for the Finals by winning all their other matches. The St. Jago High School B-team, St. Catherine High School B-team, St. Catherine High School C-team, and the McGrath High School A-team, in 3rd to 6th place, all qualified for the playoffs.

On November 16th and 17th, Zones 1a, Zone 1b, Zone 2a, Zone 2b, and Zone 5ab were played at Campion College. These were the Kingston & St. Andrew Zones, which were joined by the North East Zone 5ab. Zone 5ab was contested by York Castle High School A-Team, which beat Morant Bay High School A-team. Both rural teams,

however, qualified for the finals to represent their region. Titchfield High School A-team & B-team and Port Antonio High School A-Team & B-Team, late entrants to this Zone 5ab, will participate in the playoffs. Zone 1a was won by Wolmer's Boy's School A-team, which beat out the Wolmer's Boy's School C-team and Kingston College A-team to proceed straight to the finals. Zone 1b was won by Kingston College B-team, which beat out the Wolmer's Boy's School B-team and Kingston College C-team. The latter two teams qualified for the playoffs.

Zone 2a was won by Ardenne High School A-team, which beat out the Campion College D-team and Campion College

B-team to proceed straight to the finals. The latter two qualified for the playoffs. Zone 2b was won by Champion College A-team, which beat out the Jamaica College A-team and Champion College C-team to proceed straight to the finals. The latter two qualified for the playoffs.

The next set of preliminaries were held in Western Jamaica at Green Island High School in Hanover, on November 22nd and 23rd. Eighteen teams were split into the two Zones 3a (8 teams) and Zone 3b (10). They played in a Swiss System, similar to the Zone 2a and 2b. Green Island High School A-team topped the field in Zone

3a to proceed straight to the finals, with Cornwall College A-team & Manning's School B-team in 2nd and 3rd, respectively, qualifying for the playoffs. Zone 3b was won by Manning's School A-team, after a surprising first day lead by newcomers Rusea's High School A-team. They, along with Cornwall College B-team, secured 2nd and 3rd spots, respectively, as Manning's managed to seize first place to proceed straight to the finals.

The excitement continued in the last week of preliminaries in the Middlesex Zones 6ab, held on November 29th and 30th at Glenmuir High School in May Pen

Clarendon. With only 10 teams, a big Swiss was played. Glenmuir High School A-team won all their matches, only losing one game and drawing 2. This meant that Glenmuir A will go straight to the finals. Glenmuir High School B-team was second, joining them in the Finals. Making the playoffs were DeCarteret College A-team and Denbigh High School A-team.

Sixty-seven high school teams contested the preliminaries island-wide, and the Playoffs will be held at DeCarteret College in Mandeville, Manchester, on January 27th, 2023.

JAMAICA'S FIDE MASTERS CROWNED CHAMPIONS IN ANNUAL NATIONAL SPEED CHESS TOURNAMENTS



FM SHREYAS SMITH

FIDE Masters (FM) Shreyas Smith and Joshua Christie emerged victorious in the NM Thomas Figueroa Memorial Blitz Chess Championship and the CM Neil Fairclough Rapid Chess Championship, respectively. These two tournaments, which were held on December 10th and 11th, 2022, are the two premier speed chess events on the Jamaica Chess Federation's calendar, and they honor two of Jamaica's most outstanding players.

NM Thomas Figueroa was a former National Chess Champion and Jamaica Open Chess Champion. He became the first local player to have a local ELO rating (chess rating) over 2300. He was the most outstanding player in 1975 before his untimely death

in the same year. CM Neil Fairclough is a two-time National Chess Champion and a former English-speaking Caribbean Chess Champion. He represented Jamaica five times at Chess Olympiads.

FM Christie won the CM Neil Fairclough Rapid Chess Championship with an excellent 5.5 points from 6 games. John Stephenson from Wolmer's Boys High School finished second on tie-break with 5 points, while Candidate Master (CM) Jaden Shaw, also from Wolmer's Boys' High School, finished third with 5 points. As the competition had the juniors (U20) competing within the Open field, the top 3 (Absolute) were John Stephenson (National Junior Rapid Champion), CM Jaden Shaw &

Shaheem Richards, while Emilia-Rose Leake (National Junior Female Rapid Champion) was the top female, followed by Amy Stephenson of Wolmers Girls.

In the NM Thomas Figueroa Memorial Blitz Chess Championship, National Champion FM Shreyas Smith emerged as the winner with an outstanding 10.5 points from 11 games. FM Joshua Christie finished second with 10 points, and David Bailey was third with 7 points. Again, the Juniors contested the Open field, and J-Loy Chin of St Jago High School emerged as the National Junior Blitz Champion (Absolute), followed by John Stephenson and Alexander Bloomfield, both of Wolmer's Boys School. Meanwhile, WCM Raehanna Brown of Champion College emerged as the female junior Blitz champion, followed by Amy Stephenson of Wolmers Girls and Danielle YanKana.

Speed chess is fast chess, and has seen increased popularity worldwide. It uses shorter time controls than Classical chess, normally defined by Bullet, Blitz, and Rapid time controls. The rise in popularity of speed chess can be attributed to various factors, including the increasing availability of online chess platforms and the growing number of international tournaments and events. Speed chess is also known to be more fast-paced and exciting, making it appealing to both players and spectators. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to more people spending time at home, which has contributed to the surge in online chess and subsequently, speed chess.

FIDE MASTER RAHEEM GLAVES WINS NM DR. HAROLD CHAN CHESS OPEN 2022



(FM) RAHEEM GLAVES

Kingston, Jamaica - FIDE Master (FM) Raheem Glaves, one of Jamaica's leading chess players, won the NM Dr. Harold Chan Open Chess Tournament this past weekend with an outstanding 5.5 points out of six. The six-round tournament was played from October 29th to 30th, 2022. In the Open section, FM Glaves' only setback was a draw with Woman Candidate Master (WCM) Raehanna Brown from Campion College who finished second with an impressive 4.5 points, and claimed the top female award with this second-place finish. John Stephenson from Wolmer's Boys' School came in third on tie-break with 4 points, while Orion Isaacs, also from Wolmer's Boys' School, secured fourth place with 4 points, and Jared Lewis finished fifth with 3.5 points.

The exciting U1600 Intermediate Absolute Section was won on tie-break by Bryan Smart from Ardenne High School, with Cameron Coe from Campion College finishing in second place with 5 points.

Corbin Harvey from Wolmer's Boys' School and Amy Stephenson from Wolmer's Girls' School both finished with 4.5 points, but Harvey secured third place on tie-break, while Stephenson finished fourth. Khatray Cato from St. Jago High School came in fifth with 4 points.

In the U1600 section, the top female prize went to Wolmer's Girls' Amy Stephenson with 4.5 points, followed by National Senior Female Champion Gabriella Watson from Immaculate Conception High School, who had 4 points. Ksenia Spaulding from Campion College finished as the third leading female player in the section with 2.5 points.

The U1300 Absolute section was highly competitive, with Javaughn Haynes from Utech emerging victorious with 5 points. Samuel Lin from Jamaica College finished second with 4.5 points, while Suraiya Matandara-Clarke from Hillel Academy came in third on tie-break with 4 points. Aundre Chang Jr. from Elle Academy and Victoria Salazar from Hillel Academy both finished with 4 points, but Chang secured fourth place on tie-break, while Salazar finished fifth.

The female winners in the mixed U1300 section were determined by tie-break, and the prizes were awarded as follows: Suraiya Matandara-Clarke (Hillel Academy) took first place with 4 points, followed by Victoria Salazar (Hillel Academy) in second place also with 4 points, and Elisha Patel (Hopefield School) in third place with 4 points.

FM Warren Elliott, the Jamaica Chess Federation Chair of the Tournament Committee, commented, "It was a great event. Congratulations to the winners. Special thanks to the Tournament Committee, Arbiters, and other JCF Executive members who offered support and assistance in different ways to ensure a successful tournament."

This tournament, with approximately 87 participants, is named in honor of a Jamaican chess pioneer and one of our greatest champions, Dr. Harold Chan. A five-time Jamaica Chess Champion, Dr. Chan was one of Jamaica's first National Masters and one of the founders of Jamaican Chess. Originally from Guyana, he settled in Jamaica and studied to become a pathologist.

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