



### Kim Bhari The man behind the league.

After a decade long hiatus from chess event organisation, Kim Bhari is back to what he does best. Kenya's most experienced tournament organiser is the brains behind the 2009 Nairobi Chess Club League.



Kim receiving his league prize in 1989 from then chairman Miheso. Looking on is the legendary Larry Kagambi

### The good, the bad, the ugly and the organizer.

The very strong team that was Nairobi Chess Club proudly holding their third place trophy from the 1989 National Chess League. Standing left to right late V Hegde, Raymond Colaco (Canada), Kim Bhari and Fred Kasumba (Uganda) holding his trophy for best on board 2.



### this issue

Week 1 Reports

Discover Kim Bhari

Top Teams in Battle Royale

Learn about the League Sponsors

### A solution for the Kenyan chess scene

In general, Kenyan chess tournaments tend to be an unfortunate mixture of many bad ingredients from severely delayed starting times to complete mystery about prize funds. Furthermore, playing opportunities in competitive chess events are far and few between in this country.

The Nairobi Chess League has been set up to primarily provide an attractive alternative to the above scenario and create a consistent competitive playing platform for the players, especially the seniors.

The winning team will collect a cash prize of KShs 15,000 and the runner's up KShs 8,000

It is hoped that the successful organisation of this league will lead not only to another league event but perhaps even more exciting things in the future.

A Kenya Open from the Nairobi Chess Club?

### .Smooth start to NCL 2009 by Mehul Gohil

The event started only 7 minutes late, it was a full house, all players were on their very best behavior, no controversies erupted over the board, the venue was laid out nicely, the second round started as scheduled, results were inputted into the computer as they arrived. All score sheets checked in at the arbiter's desk...it was the most peaceful of Saturday chess afternoons.

For a player like me who has grown up and lived in a Kenyan chess world that inspires war, revenge, name calling, corruption, intrigue and scandal, politics and controversy on and off the board, this peaceful league procession came as a culture shock.

Maybe Kenyan chess needs to be more like this?

But chess has always been a game of action and that will not be denied. The first league weekend seemed to have been a process of separating the boys from the men and next weekend is nicely set up for a bloody battle between the three main contenders – Sicilian Simbas, KCB and Nairobi Gambit.

These three teams have garnered more or less maximum points and it looks like the battles between them are going to be critical in deciding who wins the league.

For the other teams, the league process is turning out to be a valuable learning experience. The 'weaker' players in Kenyan chess do not get enough opportunity to test out their skills against the 'stronger' ones. In a normal tournament situation, the pairing system will give only a precious few this opportunity. But in a league the inevitable pairing of 'strong' against 'weak' teams ensures that the learning experience is guaranteed. This makes league action invaluable to the developing player.

Overall, it is nice to see Kenyan chess returning back to the board rather than confusing itself in the never ending mire that exists off it. Hopefully the national body Chess Kenya will see the benefits such independent chess organizational ventures can bring to players at large and realize that it is in their interests to support them.

## The Teams

### KENYA COMMERCIAL BANK

Ben Magana  
Ben Nguku  
Githinji Hinga  
Philip Singe

### TEAM TARPO

Sam Kilonji  
Silas Karani  
Justus Maendi  
Cecil Omondi

### THIKA LOST BOYS

(Top Boards to be confirmed)

### CHECKMATES

Purity Maina  
Rehema Maria  
Liz Minyao  
Nancy Mogire

### KABETE CARES

Peter Muriithi  
Boniface Mwangi  
Moses Kwereba  
Patrick Mwangi

### HEXASIX

Aggrey Amadi  
Kennedy M'ganga  
Mike Rotich  
Frederick Kaviti

### NAIROBI GAMBIT

Martin Oyamo  
Ricky Sang  
Wangombe Mugo  
Akello Atwoli

### SICILIAN SIMBAS

Mehul Gohil  
George Mwangi  
Samuel Makumi  
Peter Gilruth



## Storm clouds brewing as top teams prepare for head on collision next week.

The rhetoric amongst the heavyweights within the 'Big Three' has reached a whole new level of psychological warfare. The games have yet to begin but the 'top dogs' of the NCL have already taken off their gloves and tough talk is punching through the stormy air.

Nairobi Gambit, Sicilian Simbas and KCB teams have already gone into high preparation mode. Next week, the Sicilian Simbas and KCB trajectories are set to make them meet head on. Not only will it be a match up of chess strength over the board but also a fierce battle of personalities off it. The players are psyching themselves up for the mother of all league battles.

The first weekend has merely proved to be a warm up routine for the players of these teams as they easily brushed aside the opposition.

***"It's about time somebody consigned Ben Magana to the dustbins of Kenyan Chess history. He has remained perched onto the Kenya No.1 & 2 spots for far too long. It's becoming stale at the top and I am the one to provide the fresh air." – Mehul Gohil***

***"Next weekend no more Mehulian sneaking on susceptible starters. Next weekend the Sicilian Simbas become the SICILIAN SANDWICHES!" – Ben Magana***

The Gohil-Magana tussle is likely to be a showstopper. The respective Board 1's for Sicilian Simbas and KCB have equally enterprising styles of chess. Neither likes to defend; both love dashing attacking play. Sparks are bound to fly.

The other must watch clash will be on board two between Wycliffe Obutu and Ben Nauku.

Over at the Nairobi Gambit side, Akello Atwoli is lurking like a hungry lion and Martin Oyamo is currently showing ominous form.

Nairobi Gambit will be carefully watching over the Sicilian Simbas vs KCB clash, making notes as to what they will be expecting.

Exciting stuff ahead!



## Results and standings after Week One.

### RESULTS OF ROUND ONE

Sicilian Simbas (3) vs Checkmates (1)

Team Tarpo (2) vs Hexasix (2)

Nairobi Gambit (4) vs Kabete Cares (0)

KCB & Thika Lost Boys had byes in Round 1.

### RESULTS OF ROUND TWO

KCB (4) vs Kabete Cares(0)

Hexasix (0) vs Nairobi Gambit(4)

Checkmates (3) vs Tarpo (1)

Sicilian Simbas & Thika Lost Boys had byes.

### STANDINGS WEEK ONE

1<sup>st</sup> Nairobi Gambit 8pts

2<sup>nd</sup> KCB 4pts

2<sup>nd</sup> Checkmates 4pts

4<sup>th</sup> Sicilian Simbas 3pts

4<sup>th</sup> Team Tarpo 3pts

6<sup>th</sup> Hexasix 2pts

7<sup>th</sup> Kabete Cares 0pts

## LEAGUE SPONSORS

### Tarpo Industries

Back in the early 1990's. Asim Shah was a budding player. Whilst he did not make it into top flight Kenyan chess he did return from his studies in the UK to become a director of Tarpo Industries.

His passion and love for the game remain strong and when Kim Bhari approached him with his league proposal, Asim did not think twice about coming on board as a sponsor and even sent a team called Team Tarpo for the event.

## BRILLIANCY PRIZE

### Are you playing at your best?

Mehul Gohil popularly known as the "Asian Assassin" has sponsored Kshs 5000/= for the best two games played in the league. To quote him "The league is not only about winning the top prize, it is also about doing your best on the board and that's why I have created this prize."

## LEAGUE VENUE

### Goan Gymkhana

The Goan Gymkhana has provided excellent facilities for the hosting of the event. They are a welcome and strong partner in improving Kenyan chess.

## The players review

***"This league should be used as a model by Chess Kenya" – Wang'ombe Mugo***

***"Well Done! Let me know when you will hold the next one!" – Lisa Ameyia***

***"Checkmates ladies team is most grateful for the Initiative! Kudos!" – Purity***

***"I admired the professionalism in the organization. Thanks so much for reviving chess activity in Kenya" – Ricky Sang***

***"This is the shot in the arm the senior scene needed" – George Mwangi.***

