Tonga Team Returns from Successful World Chess Tounament in Uzbekistan



A Report from Gary Bekker, Tonga's coach.

Tonga finished the **2026 Chess Olympiad on a high**, defeating **Saint Kitts and Nevis 2.5-1.5** in the final round to record their **third match victory of the tournament**.

On **Board 1, Donald Tonutonu** was defeated by Carl Victor Adams, but the team responded strongly on the middle boards. **Tau Satini** defeated Nohar Anganoo on Board 2, while **Tevita So'otanga** scored an excellent win over Kaeden Fyfield-Jones on Board 3. On Board 4, **Tevita Fau** secured a crucial half-point with a draw against David Jeetall, completing a well-deserved team victory.

Looking back over the Olympiad, there is a great deal for Tonga to be proud of. After arriving in Samarkand only hours before Round 1 following difficult travel delays, the team steadily improved and produced a number of historic results. **Tevita Fau and Sosefo Mailangi scored Tonga's first individual Olympiad points against Aruba**, Tevita later recorded our first individual victory against Seychelles, and the team went on to score match victories over the **Marshall Islands (4-0), Vanuatu (3-1), and Saint Kitts and Nevis (2.5-1.5)**. We also came extremely close in narrow **2.5-1.5 losses to Seychelles and Bhutan**.

The outstanding individual achievement was **Sosefo Mailangi earning the Candidate Master title**, a tremendous reward for his strong and consistent performances. Donald, Tau, Tevita So‘otanga and Tevita Fau also produced some excellent fighting games and gained invaluable experience against much stronger and titled opposition.

Overall, this has been a very successful Olympiad for Tonga - **three team victories, several historic individual results, a new Candidate Master, and clear improvement across the tournament**. Most importantly, the players represented Tonga with great spirit, resilience and sportsmanship throughout the event.

Congratulations to the whole team, and malo ‘aupito to everyone who supported us throughout the Olympiad including our sponsors, Ministry of Interior, O.G. Sanft & Sons Ltd., Tonga Development Bank, E.M. Jones, Tonga Cold Store, and Billfish Bar & Restaurant./