

**11th individual world chess Championships for the Blind**  
**8<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup> October 2006**  
**Goa India**

We arrived in the Radisson, White Sands resort, Goa in India on the 8<sup>th</sup> of October. To a friendly and welcoming arrival on the first day. With a band, playing music singing “welcome to the Radisson.” We had quite an eventful trip, as we had been upgraded between London and Mumbai to first-class. The only setback was when we arrived in Mumbai. We only had a little bit less than an hour or so, to make the next flight. We just made our flight to Goa, as the doors were virtually closing.

On the second day there was the opening ceremony and presentations to the organisers and sponsors. Chief Minister of Goa Shri Pratapsinh Rane inaugurated the 11th world chess championships for the Blind. By making the first move and proudly stating that this was the first time that the world chess Championships for the Blind have been played in India. Also Indian grandmaster Sandeepan Chanda, especially flew in from Kolkata. The tournament arbiter was Mr Kameshwaran who became India's first international arbiter. Also, there was the technical meeting for all the teams in regarding the escorting of players for a break by neutral team members.

As well, as this Michael had his first game playing white, against Norlis Yera Tamayo a player rated at 2211 from Cuba. This was quite an eventful game. Michael had chances to put his stronger opponent under pressure, unfortunately it was Norlis who took the advantage. Michael kept playing and eventually his opponent made a blunder giving him a piece. Sadly due to time trouble Michael blundered his queen and in so doing lost the game.

In Michael's second game with the black pieces, he was playing a Spanish player called Oscar Saes rated at 2006. Michael felt in this game that he was just outplayed by the better player.

In his third game Michael was playing white against Patrick Beggren of Sweden rated at 1913. The position in this game at the start was quite interesting for white. Unfortunately Michael again found himself in time trouble and Patrick's experience and knowledge of his opening in these types of positions, gave him a good advantage. That said probably with the best possible play Michael could have made a draw out of quite a complicated position.

Game number four was a very good game for Michael. From the very start Michael had his opponent a Wikman Bengt of Finland rated at 1986 on the back foot. He was winning going into the endgame, like so many of his earlier games, Michael got into time trouble with two pawns up, was forced into a change of pieces which left the game a draw.

The fifth game saw Michael up against Vasant Patant of India rated at 1900. This was a hardfought battle which ended up a draw.

Michael's six round game was against a Brazilian player Crisolon Vilas Boas rated over 2000 in Brazil. This was a particularly frustrating game for Michael as his opponent forced him to swap off, otherwise Michael would have been better. This game was a draw after 34 moves. So after six rounds of Michael is on 1 ½ points.

The seventh game was full of drama. His opponent was Jose Lucena Vas of Brazil rated approximately over 2000 in Brazil. The game was looking like it was heading for a draw But Michael blundered in time trouble and lost.

In the eighth round Michael's opponent was Elisabeth Fries of Germany rated at 1831, Michael decided to play a new opening and this was a very enjoyable game to watch. In a very complicated position with a pawn up Michael agreed a draw.

Receiving a bye in round nine left Michael on 3.5/9 and in 69<sup>th</sup> position out of 73. It was a strong tournament with 45 of the players rated over 2000. Most of Michael's games went the full 6 hours playing time.

The tournament was won by  
1<sup>st</sup> Vladimir Berlinskiy of Russia on 7.5/9 rated 2301  
= 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> were Despaigne of Cuba  
and Zsiltzova-Lisenko of Ukraine on 7/9

Report by Justin Mulrooney who acted as guide to Michael in India.