

Namibia Today Sport

Can an African team win the 2010 World Cup?

By David Ornstein

Close your eyes and try to imagine the scenes of jubilation across Africa if a team from the continent were to win the 2010 World Cup.

A celebration like no other, one billion people reveling in one of the greatest sporting and cultural achievements.

For the first time in its 80-year history, football's blue riband competition is coming to the world's poorest and most underdeveloped land. How better to mark the occasion than with a first African champion?

"Winning the World Cup would be one of the proudest moments in the history of that country and our continent as a whole," former South Africa striker Shaun Bartlett told BBC Sport.

"Every African nation has its internal problems but football can



Clockwise from top left: Steven Pienaar, Michael Essien, Samuel Eto'o, the FIFA World Cup trophy, Yakubu, Didier Drogba and Nadir Belhadj

do wonders for people and nations, which is a huge incentive."

Nobody is saying it is going to happen but the groundswell of

opinion suggests South Africa 2010 is the best opportunity yet.

Unperturbed by his 1977 prediction that an African side would

triumph by the end of the 20th century, Brazil legend Pele genuinely believes it can occur next year.

His namesake Abedi Pele, a

former Ghana international, and Liberian George Weah, two of the greatest players to emerge from Africa and still highly influential figures within the game, are equally convinced.

Not only are the six African rep-

resentatives competing on home soil but they will benefit from an advantage that the likes of Brazil, Argentina, Italy, France, Spain, Germany and England will never have - the support of an entire continent.

Leo/NFA Cup N\$100 000 richer

By Kayele M Kambombo

WINDHOEK - Notwithstanding the widespread global downturn, or simply put world economic crises that has hit all and sundry Leo took more strides to make the NFA Cup bigger and better attraction in its facets.

Leo /NFA Cup was formerly known as Cell One NFA Cup. The two entities signed a sponsorship deal in 2007 after the Consortium (MTC, Namibia Breweries Ltd and First National Bank) parted ways.

Cell One/ NFA Cup made its maiden appearance with a whooping half a million Namibian dollars. This week a 'born again' cup will now be known as Leo/NFA Cup.

The winner of 2010 Leo/NFA Cup will snatch N\$600 000, an increase of N\$100 000 from last year. The runners-up will pocket

N\$250 000 while the semifinal losers will walk away with N\$100 000.

This competition involves teams from all leagues in Namibia. January 24 will see 200 teams in the starting lineups countrywide annihilating them in a knockout competition. Each of the 200 teams will take home N\$1 000.

The second round will commence on February 24 with the final penciled for the end of May. That will give room to everyone to settle down to business of the World Cup that will start in June 11 till July 11.

The only awards in the tournament will be that of Top Goal Scorer and a Player of the Series with a grand prize of N\$25 000 for each.

The total sponsorship amounts to N\$3 million to cover for teams' paying attires, administration, stadiums, broadcasting, advertising, and so on.

BA squashes SKW

By Kayele M. Kambombo

WINDHOEK - Black Africa (BA) fought like real hungry lions to crush Sport Klub Windhoek (SKW) by 4-2 at the Sam Nujoma Stadium last night.

SKW were the first to register a goal on the scoreboard. Gustav 'Image' Isaak scored for SKW in the 11th minute of the first stanza.

Jerome Luis equalized in the 25th minute. But just a couple of minutes before half time Guti Edwin Korukuve of SKW found the back of the net to make it 2-1.

By the look of things BA seemed to have been overconfident and have underestimated their opponents.

BA's technical department gave



Adebayo Katjiteo and Jerome Luis scored one goal apiece for Black Africa against SKW.

a thorough pep talk to players in the cloakroom as they came back



spitting fire in the second canto. The Ranga Haikali magic gave

the impression that enchantments do not only happen in Istanbul but also in the Land of the Braves (Namibia).

In the second half Adebayo Katjiteo with the combination of Louis was a marvel to watch. Whenever there was a goalmouth scuffle the duo were always at the right time and space. Katjiteo wasted no time to put BA on equal terms (2-2).

One of the BA's attacking midfielder Clarence Foroma added the tally to 3-2, with Bantam sealing the SKW's coffin with a cruising 35 yard distance missile to make it 4-2. Louis could have produced the fifth goal with his well calculated move that made his supporters oozing the aahs and oohs as his chip went few inches over the crossbar.

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Stars lined up for World Cup draw

South Africa's Oscar-winning actress Charlize Theron will bring a touch of Hollywood to today's World Cup draw.



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Theron will be joined in Cape Town by England football star David Beckham and Ethiopian athletics legend Haile Gebrselassie.

Theron, who won an Oscar for her role in the 2003 movie 'Monster', will be a guest presenter.

She will assist Fifa secretary general Jerome Valcke during the eagerly-anticipated 2010 draw.

Also on stage will be Beckham, who has scored in three consecutive World Cups, multiple world champion Gebrselassie and Makhaya Ntini, the first black cricketer to play for South Africa.

South African rugby captain John Smit will also take part, while the country's president Jacob Zuma will kick off proceedings alongside Fifa president Sepp

Blatter.

Nobel Peace Prize winners F.W. de Klerk and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, as well as former football icons Franz Beckenbauer, Michel Platini, Eusebio and Roger Milla will also be on hand.

Ageing former South African president and Nobel Peace Prize winner Nelson Mandela, one of the architects of the first African World Cup, will address the audience by video message.

"This is a very important event for football and Africa as the Final Draw comes to Cape Town where an unprecedented six teams from the host continent will be represented," said Valcke.

"We expect a record global audience which I hope will be glued to their screens for the duration of the show."

An estimated 250 million people are expected to watch the draw on television, where the 32 teams who have qualified will find out who they play and where.

Fifa announces World Cup seeds

Hosts South Africa will play the opening game of the 2010 World Cup on 11 June after being seeded in Group A.

But France, World Cup winners in 1998, missed out on a place in the eight top seeds announced by Fifa on Friday.

The other seven seeds are holders Italy, Argentina, Brazil, England, Germany, the Netherlands and Spain.

This means France are left as the most dangerous floating team who could be drawn in the same group as any one of the top eight seeds.

The draw for the finals will be made in a 90-minute television spectacular starting at 1700 GMT on Friday.

The 32 teams will be drawn into eight groups of four.

Apart from the seeds, teams will be placed in pots which will largely avoid teams from the same continent meeting each other.

Pot 1 will comprise the eight top

seeds with South Africa already sure to play in Group A and in the opening match at Johannesburg's Soccer City stadium on 11 June.

The second pot will comprise eight teams from Asia, North and Central America and Oceania - Australia, Honduras, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, North Korea, South Korea and United States.

The third pot will be the five other African countries and three remaining South American nations - Algeria, Cameroon, Chile, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Paraguay and Uruguay.

The final pot is made up of the eight remaining teams from Europe - Denmark, France, Greece, Portugal, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Switzerland.

The decision on how the seedings and pot grouping work

means that the seeded teams would most fear being drawn into a group which included the United States from pot two, Ivory Coast from pot three and France from pot four.

Pots for Friday's draw: eight groups of four countries to be drawn, each group containing one country from each pot.

Pot 1 (seeds) : South Africa, Brazil, Spain, Netherlands, Italy, Germany, Argentina, England

Pot 2 (Asia, Oceania and North/Central America) : Japan, South Korea, North Korea, Australia, New Zealand, United States, Mexico, Honduras

Pot 3 (Africa and South America) : Ivory Coast, Ghana, Cameroon, Nigeria, Algeria, Paraguay, Chile, Uruguay

Pot 4 (Europe) : France, Portugal, Slovenia, Switzerland, Greece, Serbia, Denmark, Slovakia