

Namibia Today Sport

Princess of Africa joins 2010 bandwagon

By Kayele M. Kambombo

DUBAI, UNITED EMIRATES - She sang her way into the hearts of every African with her new and refreshing voice and brand of music which captivated the entire world of music in the 80's and 90's.

Tracks like "Thank you Mr. DJ", "I'm burning up", "I'm in live with a D.J" and "Umqombothi" still dominate the airwaves of most African countries over 20 years after they topped the musical charts and got everyone dancing from Cape to Cairo.

Yvonne Chaka Chaka, the Princess of Africa, is back! This time she sings to rally support for African teams at the 2010 World Cup.

The first-ever African Anthem, commissioned by the Coalition of Supporters Unions of Africa (COSUA), and composed by the 29-year old Ghanaian songwriter, Richgold Kwaku Odishie Godson, hits the screens and the airwaves with the face and voice of the celebrated Yvonne to rally African support for 2010.

The legendary Yvonne has been busying herself with humanitarian work for the past few years through her Princess of Africa Foundation.

She has been actively involved in the UNICEF's fight against malaria in Africa through which she has been touring several African countries as a Goodwill Ambassador, earning her the affectionate accolade of the "Princess of Africa".

With the hosting of the 2010 Soccer World Cup in her native South Africa however, Yvonne has found a much bigger platform to serve her continent and promote the Pan African ideals she so powerfully espouses even in her music.

She is already involved in the 'Football for Malaria' campaign called 'Unite against Malaria'. The admirable and celebrated Yvonne is also an active member of the 2010 TASK TEAM of the Ministry of Arts and Culture



Bonding time, Yvonne Chaka Chaka and COSUA President Sarfo Abebrese seal their partnership with the symbolic clasp of hands.

in South Africa.

However, it is her recent appointment to the Board of Directors of the Coalition of Supporters Unions of Africa that brings her directly in

touch with the fans of football and puts a feminine touch to the mobilization of men for the men's game.

According to the President of

COSUA, Advocate Sarfo Abebrese, Yvonne's decision to join the 2010 Supporters mobilization effort comes as a big booster to the organization. He said the 2010 operations of COSUA is virtually going to be run and managed by the Princess who has already agreed to come on board officially as the Head of the Events Directorate of COSUA. The Anthem is due to be launched at a COSUA Inaugural Gala Dinner at the Gallagher Convention Centre in Johannesburg in December this year. That day will symbolize a truly African celebration of all times.

That will be the moment to show

the diversity, unity and richness of Africa. Another renowned singer Angelique Kidjo once said that "when we are playing football we sing".

This is the very first time that the World cup comes to South Africa and Africa at large. The world will get to see, feel, experience and celebrate the excellence, beauty and the expertise of mother Africa.

Africa, united under the umbrella body of COSUA will welcome the world and show them peace, love and how wonderful the people of Africa are. This is about the world returning to where it all began – the original home, to the first place.

Figo tips Spain, Brazil and Argentina

Luis Figo has admitted he does not believe Fabio Capello's England are one of the favourites to claim next summer's World Cup in South Africa.

After a near flawless qualifying performance, the Three Lions will head to South Africa in good spirits, yet the Portugal legend believes Spain, Brazil and Argentina are the teams that need to be feared in 2010.

The former Real Madrid man also tipped one of the African nations to do well as he believes home advantage will be a huge help.

"Spain, Brazil and Argentina are the teams who have the experience at this level and perhaps there will be a surprise from Africa, because they're competing at home," he told The Mail on Sunday.

"I don't think the Spain team are missing much. There's never a perfect team but they're playing so well."

Figo retired from football in May 2009, after more than 20 years playing on the top stage of European football. Whilst England have been handed a kind draw in the group stages of the competition, Figo's Portugal have been handed a far tougher test and will face Brazil, Ivory Coast and North Korea in a difficult group.

Despite this Figo admitted that he believed his country had just as good a chance as England as doing well, adding: "England are not among the favourites as they weren't at the Euros in 2008. I would put them on the same level as Portugal."

10 Unforgettable World Cup bits

We look at 10 World Cup moments from the naughtiest that will always stick in the memory banks.

10) Senegal Shock France

Just like at Italia '90, the 2002 World Cup began with a shock victory for an African nation over the holders. France, who were also the European champions, and contained the top scorers from the English, Italian and French leagues were stunned by Senegal.

Papa Bouba Diop scored the winner on the half-hour mark, before Senegalese players joined together for a choreographed dance celebration. France would be eliminated first round without scoring a goal.

9) Rivaldo's Play-Acting

At the turn of the century Rivaldo was one of top three players in the world, and although he was on the slide by 2002 he would offer one final hurrah at that year's World Cup by scoring five goals and playing an influential role in the Selecao's triumph.

However, his tournament was somewhat marred by a playacting incident in the first group match against Turkey. Hakan Unsal kicked a ball that struck Rivaldo's thigh, but the Brazilian went down clutching his face. The Galatasaray defender was sent off for a second yellow card, while Rivaldo was branded a cheat after the game. His punishment was a fine of 11,670 Swiss Francs.

8) Graham Poll's Three Yellow Cards

Former English referee Graham Poll already didn't have the best record in international tournaments going into the 2006 World Cup. He had been involved in controversial games at both Euro 2000 and World Cup 2002, in the latter competition he wrongly disallowed two valid Italy goals during a 2-1 defeat to Croatia.

In 2006 he took charge of the decisive Group F clash between Australia and Croatia. The Europeans had to win to go through at the expense of the Socceroos. Croatia defender Josip Simunic was booked three times before Poll eventually

sent him off, meaning a nervous finish for the Australians who held on for a 2-2 draw which booked their place in the knockouts. FIFA President Sepp Blatter said after the game that it is likely a replay would have been ordered had Croatia had won because of Poll's error. Did Blatter say the same about the 'Hand of Henry in 2009'? - scroll down to find out.

7) The Good, Bad & The Ugly Of Argentina

In the 2006 World Cup Argentina offered us a bit of everything. During the group stages they were absolutely sublime, putting on an exhibition of irrepressible football during their 6-0 dismantling of Serbia & Montenegro.

Argentina were the hot favourites for the World Cup as they moved into the knockouts, but then in their quarter final against hosts Germany they got nervous. Coach Jose Pekerman made the fateful decision of substituting star man Juan Riquelme and leaving Lionel Messi on the bench, and Germany grabbed a late equaliser to force extra time and then penalties. The ice-cool Germans converted all their spot-kicks, which led to a riot after the game. There were flying-kicks and punches thrown as Argentina exited with their customary bang.

6) Fabio Grosso's Scream

The most famous World Cup celebration of all time has to be Marco Tardelli's scream after scoring Italy's second goal in their 1982 World Cup final victory over West Germany.

This iconic moment was copied by Azzurri full back Fabio Grosso in the epic semi final of Germany 2006 when he whipped home a dramatic winner against the hosts in the penultimate minute of extra time. Every Italian will tell you that they were overcome with tears of joy during this unforgettable moment.

5) Diego Maradona's Belly Slide

When Peru's Hernan Rengifo scored an unlikely equaliser in the final minute of the penultimate 2010 World Cup qualifier against Argentina at the Monumental stadium, it seemed that Diego Maradona's and the Albicelestes' World Cup dream had come to an abrupt end.

So close, but now so far, coach Maradona's face said it all. Argentina's World Cup chances were practically over. The torrential rainfall didn't help one bit, it actually made things all the more depressing. To lose it to Peru was one thing, but to lose in this manner was nothing less than heart-breaking.

But wait...all of a sudden, and pretty much out of nowhere, appeared Martin Palermo to hand Argentina a dramatic victory in the 93rd minute! The veteran fired the ball home at the back post after a deflection went into his path.

Maradona's celebration said it all. 'El Pibe de Oro' dived along the touchline despite the storm to celebrate one of the most important goals in Argentine football history, one that paved the way for the nation to qualify for South Africa after they beat Uruguay in their final qualifier.

4) Ronaldinho's Lob

With the Top 3 dominated by depressing moments, Ronaldinho provides the most positive flash from the last 10 years – that is if you are not an England fan or David Seaman.

The Brazilian magician settled the 2002 World Cup quarter final against England in Fukuroi with an outrageous 40-yard free kick that looped over veteran goalkeeper Seaman. To this day the debate still rages as to whether Ronnie attempted the lob or he was just crossing the ball.

Either way, Brazil won the game 2-1 and although Ronaldinho would later be sent off in chaotic

circumstances the Selecao went on to win their fifth World Cup trophy.

3) Hand Of Henry

Without doubt the most controversial moment of 2009, and the most infamous World Cup handball of all time after Diego Maradona's 'Hand of God' in 1986. Ireland's World Cup play-off against France was delicately balanced as the tie moved into extra time in Paris, with the score 1-1 on aggregate.

Then, France striker Thierry Henry clearly handled the ball in the run-up to William Gallas's decisive equaliser on the night, but it was not seen by the referee or his assistants.

The goal stood and the Irish went out, causing a furore after the game. The FAI later made a request to FIFA that the game be replayed, but FIFA turned them down. Henry was lambasted, and even unsuccessfully offered a replay himself after FIFA had made their decision. The FAI even asked to be admitted as the 33rd nation in South Africa. Unsurprisingly this was turned down too.

2) Byron Moreno

Italy were eliminated from the 2002 World Cup in the last 16 by co-hosts South Korea following former Perugia star Ahn Jung-Hwan's extra time golden goal. However, this all happened after one of the most infamous matches in World Cup history. Giovanni Trapattoni's men had a perfectly good golden goal disallowed by Ecuadorian referee Byron Moreno, had Francesco Totti sent-off for diving when replays showed that he had only lost his footing, while South Korea were awarded a dubious penalty and continually went unpunished for foul play.

After the match Italy declared that there had been a conspiracy against them, claims that were

given strength by the fact that not only had they had four perfectly fair goals disallowed in their two previous matches against Croatia and Mexico, but by the refereeing errors that saw Korea eliminate Spain in the next round.

Moreno would be the villainous symbol of 2002. Later that year he received a 20 match ban, after he played an extra 13 minutes of stoppage time during a match between Deportiva Universita de Quito and Barcelona Sporting Club. During this time Deportiva scored twice to turn a 3-2 deficit into a 4-3 victory. After returning from his suspension, Moreno was suspended again after controversially sending off three players in one match. He retired from officiating shortly after.

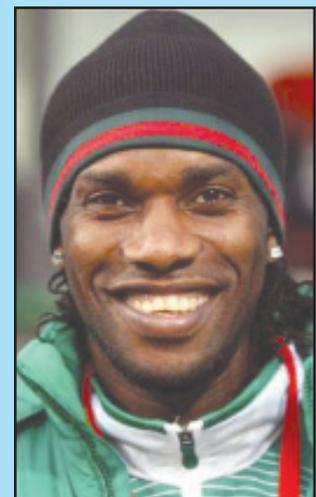
'Anything can happen with Nigeria'

Former Nigeria international Austin 'Jay-Jay' Okocha tells *Brila FM* that the Super Eagles can spring a surprise at the World Cup where they have been placed in Group B with Argentina, Greece and South Korea.

The former Bolton man told the sports radio station that the Argentineans might be up for a surprise when they face Nigeria on June 12 in South Africa.

"Anything can happen. So, we know that when the going gets tough, the tough get going.

"I still believe that is the good thing about Nigerian players. We can always spring up so



Austin 'Jay-Jay' Okocha

many surprises," Okocha concludes.

1) Zinedine Zidane's Headbutt

At No.1 it could only be France legend Zinedine Zidane's headbutt on Italy's Marco Materazzi during the 2006 World Cup final. With the score tied at 1-1 in extra time in Berlin, Zidane was infamously sent off after he head-butted the Inter hardman in the chest in extra time.

This would be Zidane's last act of his career as he retired after the game, while Italy would go on to win their fourth World Cup on penalties. There was much speculation over what Materazzi said to prompt this violent reaction, but it was eventually revealed that the stopper had insulted Zizou's sister. The Matrix even successfully sued a number of English newspapers for libel. *Goal.com*