

Namibia Today Sport

Shidjuu vies for Commonwealth title

By Kayele M. Kambombo

WINDHOEK – The national flyweight champion Abmerk Shidjuu of Namibia kicks off 2010 in search for the Commonwealth title in the United Kingdom.

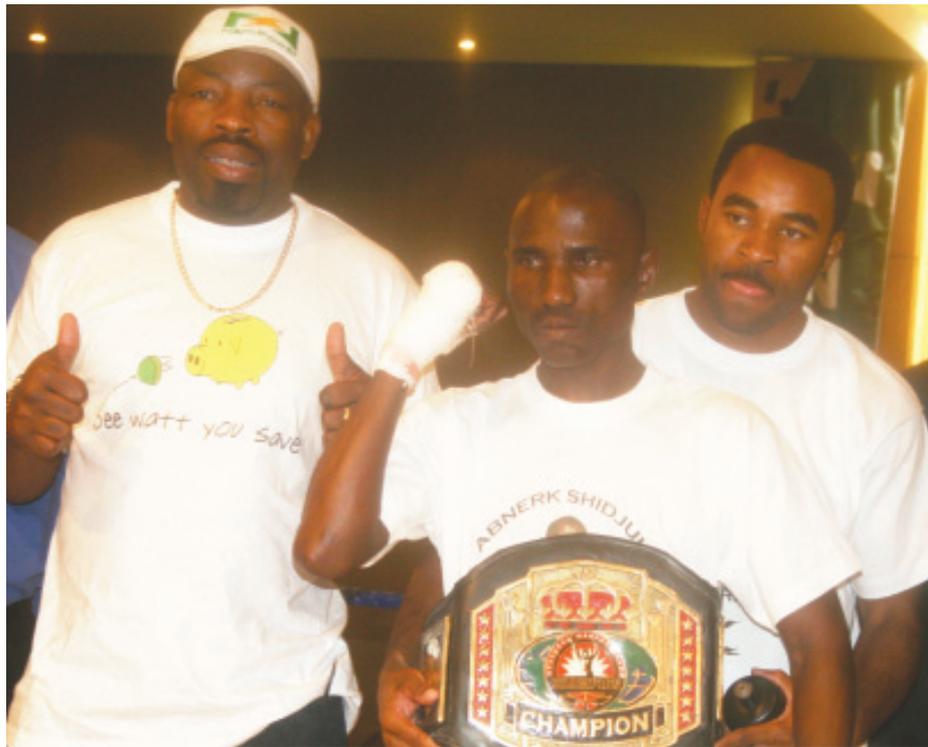
The fight is slated on February 19. Promoter-cum-trainer and manager of Shidjuu, Nestor Tobias told *Namibia Today Sport* yesterday that his boxer is ready for the fight and determined to bring the belt to Namibia.

Shidjuu will exchange leather with Chris Edwards in Manchester, United Kingdom. Edwards is a 33 year-old British pugilist with a record of 30 fights 13 wins 14 losses and three draws.

Edwards has knocked out four of his opponents and he was knocked out three by his adversaries.

The Windhoek-based Shidjuu has been beaten twice on the trot and won seven out of his 11 fights with two draws. He has knocked out two of his antagonists.

Shidjuu has shown impressive



Promoter Nestor Sunshine Tobias, Abmerk Shidjuu, candidate of the Commonwealth title on February 19 and Nicky Natangwe, trainer of Shidjuu (Photo by Levi Upula).

progress in his 11 fights to date and is keen to show further im-

provement against Edwards. According to Tobias this fight

will take place under the Ricky Hatton Promotion.

Bafana challenge Warriors

By Kayele M. Kambombo

WINDHOEK – The hosts of the first ever World Cup in Africa, South Africa, remembers its good neighbour, Namibia, for an international friendly-cum-inauguration match for the superlative Moses Mabhida Stadium in Durban.

The Moses Mabhida Stadium is one of the 10 stadiums that will be used for the 2010 World Cup.

This match will be a morale

booster for the Namibian players and most memorable since it will go down into their curriculum vitae. A win for them will be a cherry on the cake.

The match is penciled for next month (March 3).

Just in January, Bafana Bafana annihilated Swaziland 6-2 in what was termed training match before crashing the Zimbabwean Warriors by 3-0 in an international friendly at the same

venue in Durban.

The Brave Warriors have been idle for over three months now after they narrowly lost 0-1 against Zambia in their last year COSAFA campaign hosted by Zimbabwe.

The NFA Secretariat proclaimed that Namibia's coach Tom Saintfiet will announce the name of the Brave Warriors training teams for the International Friendly Match against South Africa on March 3, at the Press Conference scheduled for Monday (8 February) at 11hoo at the NFA Soccer House.

Meanwhile, in the latest FIFA rankings released on Wednesday, Namibia occupy the 28th place in Africa and 109th in world, up with two places in Africa and five glo-

bally. South Africa are 16 and 81 respectively.

It has been reported in the South African press that Bafana Bafana coach Carlos Alberto Parreira and team manager Siphon Nkumane will be jetting off to Europe this month to try to persuade clubs to release bench-warming South African players.

According to a report in *Daily Dispatch* (January 22), Parreira wants the fringe players to attend the training camp in Brazil between March 4 and April 5. The Brazil camp will be followed by one in Germany later in April.

Independence night full of prospects

By Kayele M. Kambombo

WINDHOEK - Nestor "Sunshine" Tobias Promotions kick off the New Year with an explosive bill of boxing at the Windhoek Country Club Casino and Resort on March 20.

"March 20th of each year is an Annual Day of the Nestor "Sunshine" Boxing & Fitness Academy. It's the eve of our hard won and glorious Independence Day", says Nestor Tobias.

"As we celebrate our freedom and independence, so too do our boxers see themselves as heroes of this country in the ring".

The Friday Night Fight bill, headlined "Independence Celebration and Night of Rematches" will feature Namibia's high profiled pugilists for title defence and rematches.

Nestor "Sunshine" Tobias Promotions promised to put up a boxing calendar that will include some of the most exciting prospects in the country.

A hugely promising year ahead for five of the country's brightest talents and an important Friday night of fights to kick-start that journey on an excellent bill in Windhoek.

Amongst the big five lined up in the calendar is the likes of Ali "Si-

lent Assassin" Nuumbembe the current WBO Africa Welterweight title holder who will defend his title and go on as challenger for the Commonwealth Welterweight title in Manchester, United Kingdom this year.

Ali will fight under the Ricky Hatton Promotion. "Hatton promised to help Namibian boxers to climb the ladder of success in international boxing", says Tobias.

Other Namibian champions to showcase their panache and flamboyance are Bethuel 'Tyson' Uushona the two title holder of WBA/WBO Africa welterweight who is challenged by his fellow countryman Tommy Hango. This will be a rematch over 12 rounds.

Sacky "Izinyoka" Shikukutu in the junior welterweight will take on Norman Tshisakhawe from South Africa in another rematch. Shikukutu was knocked out by Tshisakhawe in the first round in Walvis Bay last year.

The third rematch will see two Namibians, Abraham Ndaendapo versus Gottlieb Ndokosho in the junior light-weight national title over 10

rounds.

Paulus "The Rock" Ambunda will enter the ring for his first title defence against the South Africa's Ntobeko Duma in the Bantamweight WBO Africa title over 12 rounds.

Vikapita "The Beast Master" Merero will vie for the vacant WBO

Africa light heavyweight against Wesley Macdade of Zimbabwe.

In other undercards, Samuel Kapapu vs Peter Malakia; Julius Indongo vs Festus Nghidinwa (twice lightweight national champion) and Immanuel "Prince" Naidjala vs Mathew Toli from South Africa.

Don King sets Hitman's fight in USA

By Kayele M. Kambombo

WINDHOEK - The WBA Lightweight world champion Paulus "Hitman" Moses will face an unknown mandatory challenger after all others have chickened out subsequent to the perusal of his undefeated record.

This will be Moses' second title defence. Moses has an insurmountable record, winning all his 25 fights. That certainly scares his challengers.

Don King is promoting Moses' fight. He is working 24/7 to find a credible challenger that could pull the crowd to the fight, as it will be televised live worldwide.

The fight is billed for March 19 in the United States of America. Nestor Tobias, promoter, trainer and manager of Moses told *Namibia Today Sport* that "Don King is looking for a quality American or British opponent for Moses", adding that the fight will not be postponed any longer.

"Hitman is ready for any opponent. He has been hard at training since September last year until now".

However, Tobias said that Hitman is now on a one week brake to bury his grandmother who has passed on last weekend in the far north. May her soul rest in eternal peace!

As I see it

By Kayele M. Kambombo

Africa on the rise

The main international attracting football competition in Africa, the 2010 African Cup of Nations (AFCON), sanctioned by the Confederation of African Football (CAF) has reached its logical conclusion in Angola.

The African football fiesta was first held in 1959. Since 1968, it has been held every two years in even numbered years.

In 1957 there were only three participating nations: Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia. South Africa was to compete but was disqualified due to the apartheid policies of the Government then in power. Since then, the field has grown to include almost every African nation, making it necessary to hold a qualifying tournament.

The number of participants in the tournament reached 16 in 1998 and since then, the format has been unchanged, with the 16 teams being drawn into four groups of four teams each, with the top two teams of each group advancing to a knockout stage.

At the end of its 27th edition for 2010 in Angola, the nation with most cup wins was Egypt, with seven, followed by Ghana and Cameroon, who have won four titles each. Three different trophies have been awarded during the tournament's history, with Ghana and Cameroon winning the two versions to keep after each of them won a tournament three times. The current trophy was first awarded in 2002.

The 2006 tournament was won by the hosts, Egypt, who reached a continental record fifth title and repeated the same feat in 2008 and 2010 to win the cup thrice consecutively and seventh in a row.

Congratulations to the Pharaohs of Egypt and their coach Hassan Shehata. Equally my hat off to Milovan Rajevac's young lads who have raised to the occasion, regardless of being plagued by injuries, absences, and a foiled start against the Ivory Coast, the Black Stars have swum back ashore and were about to dine at the lord's table.

The depleted Ghanaian side made the semifinal alongside Nigerian team that could best be described as super. Most of Ghana's experienced and star players such as Michael Essien, Stephen Appiah, John Mensah, John Paintsil and Laryea Kingston were ruled out of the Africa Cup of Nations owing to injuries and Sule Muntari on disciplinary grounds. Ghana had no option but for its coach, Rajevac, to bravely parade several Under-20 World Cup winners to fill the vacuum created. With the exception of Dede Ayew and Samuel Inkoom, none of them had played in the national team prior to Angola 2010.

The 1-0 win over Ghana in the 2010 final in Luanda on Sunday makes this Egyptian team the most formidable and successful of all time, but they toiled in vain for much of the match at the November 11th stadium before scoring a winner five minutes from the end of the game.

Indeed, Egypt have proven to be the king of African football, even though they are not going to be part of the World Cup in South Africa after the Algerians had qualified for the 2010 world football fiesta at their expense two months ago.

Nigeria regained their acquaintance with bronze at the Africa Nations Cup finals on Saturday as striker Obinna Nsofor's second-half goal ensured third place in Angola. The consolation victory over the north Africans, who are also headed to the World Cup finals in South Africa later this year, means that the Super Eagles have finished bronze medalists at four of the last five Nations Cup tournaments.

Three of the five African teams that made it to the World Cup in South Africa also made it to the semifinal of the tournament. Embarrassingly enough, with regard to the performance of the continent's 2010 World Cup representatives the team that failed dismally to make it past the quarterfinal is Cameroon.

The biggest surprise of the tournament is that Cote d'Ivoire, the most favoured team to not only win the Nations Cup but also put up an excellent performance at the World Cup, crashed out at the quarterfinal stage to, though, another World Cup team, Algeria. The host country, South Africa, which is the sixth African country at the mundial, however, failed to qualify for the Nations Cup.

The success of CAF competition in Angola should prove to the rest of the world the rapidly improving organizational abilities, skills and vibrant spirit of Africa. Angola has invested so much in preparation for the competition and it is time we have to show the rest of the world what we are also capable of achieving.

The competition should serve as a unique opportunity not just to showcase the best of teams and talents but also strengthen the bond of unity of the continent.

Football is a promising industry that must be supported by investors to provide additional opportunities for football talents, contribute significantly to the social and economic development of the continent as well as lift its image – a duty owed to Africa's child. Yes, Africa is on the rise.

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