

Namibia Today Sport

Boxers pay courtesy call to Dr Nujoma

By Kayele M. Kambombo

An entourage of professional boxers and world champions in different weight categories was led by Nestor 'Sunshine' Tobias for a courtesy call to the office of the Founding Father, Dr Sam Nujoma on Wednesday.

The visit was As the Father of the Nation, Dr Sam Nujoma is also the patron of Nestor "Sunshine" Tobias Boxing and Fitness Academy.

Traditionally it is assumed that when the warriors are about to go to war or the battle field, they need to seek for blessings and good luck from the elderly person before undertaking the mission.

Dr Nujoma was delighted to entertain the boxers. He took the bull by its horns: "I wish you all renewed strength as we are approaching the 21st Anniversary of the independence of Namibia as everyone is looking up to Namibia. Boxing is the only



The Founding Father Dr Sam Nujoma (left) encouraged the Namibian boxers to do their utmost best in the ring as he blesses Paulus The Hitman Moses while Nestor Tobias is looking on.

sport that never failed Namibia. You have put Namibia and Africa

on the world map as you have brought medals and belts from all

over the world to Namibia". Dr Nujoma encouraged the

boxers to their utmost best in the ring. With merriment he concluded: "Aluta continua, a Vitoria e certa". This is was indeed a jovial moment and the boxers were encouraged.

The Hitman confidently assured that he is ready, fit and will not disappoint the nation, particularly on "our independence day". He eulogized the Founding Father for all he has done in his power to bring independence and freedom to Namibia.

The main fight will feature the former WBA world lightweight champion Paulus "The Hitman" Moses taking on Miguel Dario Lombardo from Argentina. Moses fought and knocked out Sergio Omar Priotti also from Argentina in the fourth round last November in Windhoek at his comeback fight.

Moses sports a record of 27 fights 26 wins with only one loss as compared to Lombardo who pride himself on a boxing record of 25 fights 15 wins and nine losses with a draw.

The Moses/Lombardo's non-title international lightweight fight over 12 rounds will be held tomorrow, a day before Namibia's 21st Independence celebration. This fight will be a stepping stone for

adding that "he played a mini football of four a side called 'okadumeu' and mastered the game perfectly".

Nashilongo got some sponsorship in terms of boxing equipment from who sponsored Virgin Active sponsored some weightlifting, PG glass (huge mirrors), Flordek (carpet), Plascon (paint for the

better things in boxing circles for Moses. It is a must win for Hitman as it will serve as groundwork for the World Boxing Council (WBC) lightweight title eliminator to be held in the USA this winter.

Nestor "Sunshine" Tobias, promoter of tomorrow's fight and trainer of The Hitman promise to donate 10% of the proceeds from the Independence Boxing Bonanza to the nine year old Aligno Bertolini.

Bertolini was diagnosed with an atypical liver illness that requires his parents to fork out N\$1.2 million for a liver transplant in Germany or N\$700 000 in South Africa.

The gloves of the main fight between Hitman and Lombardo will be auctioned and the proceeds will go to Bertolini. Similarly, two tables of 10 people will be arranged at the amount of N\$10 000 to go to Bertolini.

Tobias called on Namibians from all works of life to join hands to save the life of Bertolini.

Tickets cost N\$200 per head.

UNDERCARDS: Nine undercards are set to take place on the night. The former African lightweight champion Jatoorora "The Sting" Tjingaveta will fight against his compatriot Gottlieb Ndokosho over six rounds. The fast, livid and hard punching Namibian pugilist Wilberforce "Force" Shihepo (20f 15w 5L) takes on a Zambian national Donald Kampamba (10f 8w 2L) in a WBO Africa Interim super middleweight bout for 12 rounds.

Other undercards feature the following boxers: Immanuel "The Prince" Naindjala versus Zimbabwean Ronald Tawani; Anthony Jaarman vs pro debutant Phillemon Kanime (both Namibians); Abraham "Energy" Ndaendapo and Peter "The Butcher" Malakia (both Namibians); Manfred Haimbanga vs Costa Nilo Frans (Namibians); Julius Indongo and Samuel Kapapu to tango in the ring for a national lightweight title scheduled for 10 rounds. Namibia's Martin Haikali, the current WBO African lightweight champion will take on Zimbabwean Misheck Kondwane in the six rounds non-title bout. Kondwane have been gracing the boxing ring for sometimes.

gym), businessman Frans Mushimba sponsored some pairs of gloves and one punching bag. Another local businessman, Killian "Triple K" Kamanja also added his weight in sponsorship.

The Warrant Officer-cum-trainer eulogized all these sponsors who contributed to the success of SBCFA and the development of his pugilists.

Nashilongo: resolute boxing trainer

Since becoming a professional boxing coach nearly five years ago, following some couple of years as an amateur trainer, **TOBIAS NASHILONGO**, also known as Cubalele or Shaya has produced two world champions in Bethuel "Tyson" Uushona (WBO, WBA Africa welterweight), Martin Haikali (WBO Africa lightweight) and Gottlieb Ndokosho (Lightweight national champion). He (Nashilongo) boasts with 30 boxers in his stable, 16 professionals and 14 amateurs. **Namibia Today Sport's KAYELE M. KAMBOMBO** paid a visit to SBFA to get the lowdown on the gym and what it takes to run such a successful facility.

Nashilongo's name is synonymous with the gym called **Soweto Boxing Club and Fitness Academy** (SBCFA) which, for the last couple of years, has been located in the heart of Katutura at the Multipurpose Youth Centre football stadium.

Nashilongo, a Warrant Officer in the Namibian Police Force is a disciplinarian in his own right. He has the characteristics that instill principles and order in his boxers, while he displays determination and purposefulness in his job as a trainer.

"I was originally turned into a perfect boxer while I was studying in Cuba. I have in boxing for about 20 years as an amateur and professional boxer and trainer. Six years of that I spent in Cuba. I have been a pro trainer now for the best part of four years in Namibia", explains Nashilongo.

Along with Warrant Officer Elifas Namundjebo who deputizes Nashilongo as a trainer is Awala Nestor, a trainer for amateur boxers.

Nashilongo's Soweto Boxing Club and Fitness Academy exploits the expertise of Danny Groves as a technical coach who is responsible for endurance exercises and conditioning, particularly plyometrics training, explosive power and lots of jumping exercises, footwork, hand speed and lots of other fitness exercises.

Groves is from the United Kingdom, has a work permit and assists with amateur boxers at Okondjima lodge in the vicinity of Otjiwarongo.



Tobias "Cubalele" Nashilongo (centre) coach of the two WBO champions Martin "Black Poison" Haikali and Bethuel "Tyson" Uushona

"The day to day running of the gym is a headache. It is not just training them though, but getting them fights, making sure they're the right fights, making sure their medicals are all in order, making sure that their families are well; it goes a lot deeper than just being a trainer. All my fighters no matter what colour or creed become my sons", Nashilongo quips.

It keeps the gym upbeat. I am very passionate for my fighters and I would fall out with the Queen for them.

He concisely spoke about how he got involved in the bloody sport discipline called boxing, the history and the establishment of SBCFA that is flourishing, though his academy is experiencing a lack of proper funding.

Nashilongo who will turn 41 in July was born in Ombalantu at Omuthiueelo village, only six kilometers from Outapi in Omusati Region. He was only 18 years old when he went to Cuba to pursue his secondary level at Hosea Kutako School at Isla de Juventudes (Island of Youth).

He joined the Boxing Academy of Cuba and reached the national championship level after he out-classed all foreigner nationals that came as far as Algeria, Angola,

Congo Brazzaville, Ghana, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Sudan and many others. He sported a record of 53 fights with losses all inflicted by Cubans.

He turned to Namibia from exile in 1994. In 1995 he joined Kuisebmond Boxing Club and won his first fight by knockout in the first round. He lost against Frans Mumbuu on points at the national championship for 60kg category. Nashilongo joined the Namibia Police Force in 1996 and was introduced by Ambrosius "AK 47" Kandjii the following year. He dethroned the then national welterweight champion Joseph Hantindi in 1997. For two consecutive years thereafter, Nashilongo defended his belt twice against Hantindi and a certain Amakali, only to relinquish his belt to Gottlieb Shileka.

Nashilongo also highly acknowledged the enormous contribution made by his colleagueship Nestor Tobias in terms of promoting his boxers and finding them credible fights.

"I always ask other trainers for advice. I think the problem in this game is that there is too many egotistical trainers out there who think they know it all and aren't willing to ask anybody for help

in case they are embarrassing themselves but fortunately I am not one of those guys. I'm always willing to ask, I even let the fighters have an input - we sit down and talk - and I think this is what makes a successful stable. You cannot rule by an iron fist, and although you have to have discipline in a gym, everybody got to have their input too", Nashilongo speaks his mind out.

Nashilongo thanked Inspector General of Police Sebastian Ndeitunga who was also trained in Cuba. "He loves and has a passion for sport", says Nashilongo,



THE BIG SIX: Tobias Nashilongo, Martin Haikali, Danny Groves, Tyson Uushona, Elifas Namundjebo and Samuel Kapapu at the gym preparing for the Independence Day Boxing Bonanza.