



SIGWACA FORTNIGHTLY

"Nurturing nation's maturity and unison through football spirit"

NATIONAL FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION OF SWAZILAND

INGWENYAMA SMVAF COMPETITION GAINS MOMENTUM



Majestic Kick: His Majesty King Mswati III kicking a soccer ball

The closer the bone; the sweeter the meat. This is the current situation in as far as the Ingwenyama SMVAF Competition is concerned. This is the 3rd edition of this unique competition that perfectly blends football and culture. It started

at the regional phase and it is now at the national phase.

This competition has a carrot of E1.2 Million for the national champions which qualifies this tournament as the richest competition on the land. In as far as the 2017/2018 Ingwenyama SMVAF Competition is concerned; it has created more opportunities for the regional football clubs to be part of the national championships as 2 more football clubs qualified for the

THE SO-CALLED SMALL FOOTBALL CLUBS PLAYED VERY WELL AS THOSE THAT QUALIFIED TO THE NEXT ROUND DIDN'T DO SO EASILY. EVEN THOSE WHO MANAGED TO SCORE A LOT OF GOALS AGAINST THE SO-CALLED SMALL FOOTBALL CLUBS DID SO IN THE SECOND HALF WHICH IS AN INDICATION OF THE HIGH COMPETITIVENESS OF THE TOURNAMENT". -TD OF THE NFAS

The last 32 draw was done at the spacious Gigi's Restaurant in Ezulwini an event that was filled with a lot of humor as there draw and speeches were made. For some of the football clubs those smiles are still visible whilst for others it is the opposite as football is also an emotional sport. After the last 32 matches; the biggest shock was the elimination of Matsapha United FC from this competition by Milling Hot Spurs FC which is campaigning under the National First Division. Two traditional big football

national slots via play-offs which made the regional football clubs who participated in the current edition of the competition to be 6. These football clubs who joined the Premier League of Swaziland's (PLS) football clubs for the last 32 were; Stumbo XI, City Warriors, Sikhalo Se-Africa, Rail United, Billy Ocean and Boyane Aces.

THE NFAS PRESIDENT PRAISES HIS MAJESTY THE KING MSWATI III ABOUT THE INGWENYAMA SMVAF CUP



The NFAS President; Senator Adam Mthethwa

Football is twitterpated with fanaticism and aspiration as the gazes to the continuing matches of the current episode, characterized with a good organization and reverence by all.

Football is grossly indebted to His Majesty The King Mswati III, through this majestic vision of the Cup, which also encapsulates our culture. Further gratitude is due to the Motor Vehicle Accident (MVA) Fund for the continued implementation of His Majesty's vision.

The amalgamation of football and culture is a good signpost of football's patriotism to the country, its traditions, ingrained values and customs. Through the complimentary cultural competition of the Ingwenyama Cup, more cultural activities will be born, thereby assuring a sustained cultural heritage to imminent generations.

Best wishes are extended to all football clubs and cultural groupings as they rival one another to the crowning day of the Ingwenyama Cup.

clubs in the country also got a scare from their opponent during the last 32 matches. These were Manzini Wanderers FC and Mbabane Swallows FC who had qualified to the next round past hard working Sikhhalo Se-Africa and Stumbo XI respectively.



Mfanzile Ndzimandze negotiating his way against a City Warriors FC player

The competition is very high which is an indication that all participating football clubs are aiming for the first prize. According to the Technical Director (TD) of the National Football Association of Swaziland (NFAS), Bhekisisa Mkhonta; this is a highly competitive tournament as those football clubs that made it to the last 16 had to dig deeper in order to do so. "The so called small football clubs played very well as the football clubs who qualified to the next round didn't do so easily. Even those who managed to win by a bigger score margin, scored those goals in the second half of the match which is an indication of high competitiveness of the tournament"; he said.



All the way: Lihle Shabangu of Manzini Wanderers FC dashing towards goal

In his observation and analysis; the adverse factor that costed the so-called small football clubs' progress in the competition



Shot: A Stumbo XI player taking a shot against Mbabane Swallows FC

was mainly fatigue. On the marketing perspective of the competition; he praised the PLS for the decentralization strategy of these matches as they were played in different venues across the country which made it easier for the fans to attend this matches in large numbers.



In control: Mbabane Swallows FC skipper, Tony Tsabedze in control of the ball against Sumbo XI

The last 16 matches are scheduled to kick-off on the 3rd weekend of December with the last 4 on the last weekend of the year 2017.



Towering: Mbabane Swallows FC defender, Ndumiso Ndaba trying to go past a Stumbo XI FC player



THE KING WILL ADVISE US-SMVAF CEO



SMVAF CEO, Mr. Helmon Vilakati

This is the third year of the E9 Million sponsorship from Sincephetelo Motor Vehicle Accident Fund (SMVAF) which marks the final edition of the 3-year contract between the Premier League of Swaziland (PLS) and SMVAF. Indeed, it is a hat trick as since the inception of the Ingwenyama SMVAF Cup football as a family and the country at large has benefited in one way or the other through this competition. This tournament is the brain child of His Majesty King Mswati III as it is one of the vehicles towards vision 2022.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the SMVAF, Mr. Helmon Vilakati stated that as this is the last edition of the 3-year sponsorship contract for this unique competition, His Majesty The King Mswati III is in a better position to give advice in as far as the future of this tournament is concerned. "I can't tell what the future holds in terms of the sponsorship; but since this competition belongs to His Majesty The King Mswati III; he is the right person to advise us on that issue"; he said.

In addition to this; he also highlighted that as an organization, they have achieved a lot from sponsoring this competition as the SMVAF is now a well-known brand countrywide and internationally through the power of football. "As a brand; we are now a well-known brand in the country and beyond the borders through the Ingwenyama SMVAF Cup which indicates that football was and is still a perfect vehicle for us since the inception of this competition"; he said.

"Buckle it up the game is on"

FOCUS ON THE U20 MEN'S NATIONAL TEAM

Football development is one of the mandates of the National Football Association of Swaziland (NFAS). It is for this mandate that the NFAS saw the necessity to have active junior national teams who will act as feeders to the senior national teams of which the U20 Men's National Team is one of them. The other junior national teams are the U17 Men's, and women's national teams. The U20 Men's National Team is fresh from Kitwe, Zambia where it competed in the Maponi Copper Mines COSAFA U20 Youth Championship.



U20 Men's National Team

Before they left for this competition; the U20 national team had several training sessions which were held during school holidays. As the competition drew closer; the NFAS facilitated training camps as a way of intensifying the preparations. With the domestic competitions taking place, a special arrangement was made with the football clubs of the affected players in term of their availability for their club football.



Celebration: The national team players celebrating after scoring a goal against Uganda

In November 2017; the national team had two international friendly matches against Lesotho U20 Men's National Team in Maseru, Lesotho. Two international friendly matches were played. In the first match; the local side won by

3-0 whilst in the second one the Swazi side won by 2-0. In a post-match interview; the U20 National Team skipper acknowledged the NFAS for facilitating these international friendly matches as they enhanced their preparations.

"Thanks to the NFAS for these international friendly matches as we got good practise from the Basotho. These were not easy matches as we worked very hard for both wins"; he said.



U20 Men's National Team at training

The U20 National Team Head Coach, Mandla Dlamini highlighted his satisfaction on the physical fitness condition of the players before the competition in Zambia. "The Basotho were tough opposition and I am quite happy with the level of physical fitness of the players. Let me also give credit to the players for being discipline as they played according to the game plan"; the Head Coach said.



U20 Men's National Team during their send-off function before they left for the COSAFA competition in Zambia

The U20 Men's National Team was in group A of the Maponi Copper Mines COSAFA Youth Championship alongside Malawi, Zambia (host nation) and Uganda (Guest nation). During this competition, the national team was able to get a single point after playing to a 2-2 draw

against Uganda and losing their two matches against Malawi and Zambia respectively. These results were not enough to qualify the national team to the next round as they ended their group matches at the bottom of the group.



Benson Kolala of Zambia evades a challenge from Mduzuzi Mabuza from Swaziland

In this competition, the U20 Men's National Team was able to score four and considered seven goals. In as far as individual achievements were concerned; Muzi Matsenjwa was selected as the player of the match for the match against Uganda.

THE CEO COMMENTS ON THE U20 MEN'S NATIONAL TEAM'S PERFORMANCE

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the National Football Association of Swaziland (NFAS); has highlighted that even though the U20 Men's National Team was eliminated in the group stages of the Maponi Copper Mines COSAFA Cup; the future looks bright as the lads showed great signs of potential in representing the country at senior level.

"The main aim of this competition is to develop the junior players for the senior national team and some of the players have shown great potential of graduating to the senior national team"; he said. The national team was able to play a 2-2 draw against Uganda and scored a total of 4 goals in the competition which according to the CEO; these are positive signs in terms of football development taking into account that they were in a tough group with a Uganda and Zambia who are the defending champions of the competition.

PREVIEW OF THE MTN PLS 2017/2018 1ST ROUND BY THE PREMIER LEAGUE OF SWAZILAND

PREAMBLE

On Sunday, 19th November 2017 the Premier League of Swaziland (PLS) successfully hosted its final games of the first round of the MTN PLS 2017/2018 football season. This final game was played at the Somhlolo National Stadium in a form of a double -header in which Mbabane Swallows FC was presented with their first-round winners' cheque of E350 000.00.

MTN SPONSORSHIP/ PLS RELATIONSHIP

"The first round was a huge success as all the matches went according to the plan and they were played across the country"; said the PLS Chief Operations Officer (COO). The first round was very competitive and this can be attested to the increased sponsorship by MTN Swaziland. This increased sponsorship included the E350 000.00 won by the team that finished at the top of the log after the 13 first round matches per team.



The CEO of MTN presenting the sponsorship to the PLS Chairman, Mr. Victor Gamedze in the present of the NFAS President, Senator Adam Mthethwa and an MTN Swaziland Senior Officer

Besides the increased sponsorship package, there had been new fan engagement initiatives which includes the MTN/PLS promotional data bundles, ticketing, airtime and merchandise just to mention a few which has enrich fans attendance in football matches.

As an addition to this, the sponsor has also come up with the hat trick incentive to be won by players as a way of raising the standard of

play that will also motivate the fans to attend these matches.



Sihlangu SeMnikati and Mbabane Swallows FC striker, Sandile Hlatjwako receiving a player of the month award for October 2017

PROGRESS OF THE GAMES AND STADIUMS AVAILABILITY

The games started and progressed very well without any negativity that could have derailed the fixtures. "We managed to spread the league games countrywide"; said the PLS COO. The stadiums that were used are Somhlolo National Stadium, Mavuso Sports Centre, Tabankulu Stadium, King Sobhuza II Stadium and Killerny Stadium. "The good progress was made possible by all the involved stakeholders.



Mandla Palma of Mbabane Swallows FC and Menzi Sithole of Mbabane Highlanders FC during the 1st round derby match at Somhlolo National Stadium

SPECTATORSHIP

As highlighted earlier, the increased sponsorship package enriched the competitiveness of the league thus raising the standard of play. The numbers have been impressive since the league kicked-off. Huge collections have been witnessed from some of the high profile fixtures involving the traditional big football clubs in the country either against themselves or any potential good rivalry.



Football fans enjoying football match during on of the 1st round games.

NEW TEAMS ARRIVAL

The PLS welcomed three new elite football clubs in the elite league which are; Matsapha United FC, Malanti chiefs FC and Vovovo FC. "All these football clubs have added value to the MTN Premier League"; said the COO of the PLS. With the increased tight schedule of the football calendar; some of the matches had been implemented mid-week which is also an indication of growth for the PLS.



Matsapha United FC

Disciplinary Cases

All football clubs that were found to be on the wrong side of the rules and regulations; were duly punished according to the rules and regulations of the MTN Premier League. " Credit must be given to the football clubs as they follow this rules and regulations and also football fans are improving in terms of behaviour during matches"; said the PLS COO.

AFFIRMATIONS

As the first round was concluded; Mbabane Swallows FC who are the defending champions of the MTN Premier League won the E350 000.00 first round incentive which was presented to the football club on the 18th November 2017 at the Somhlolo National Stadium. "The PLS and the sponsor congratulate Mbabane Swallows FC for winning the first-round incentive and the individual players who won the Player of the Month

Awards”; said the PLS COO. These Player of the Month Awards were for the month of September and October respectively.

WORLD AIDS DAY CAMPAIGN

On the 1st December 2017 the whole world commemorated the World AIDS Day. The Football Family also joined the campaign by utilizing the tenacious power of football in raising awareness and fostering a positive living with HIV/AIDS; thus she implemented a one minute silence before kick-off in all Premier League of Swaziland (PLS) matches as a way of remembering our brothers and sisters who passed –on as a result of HIV/AIDS.

Let’s stop HIV/AIDS together



Match officials and players observing a 1-minute moment of silence during the world AIDS Day Campaign

CLOSURE OF NFAS OFFICES FOR THE FESTIVE SEASON

The National Football Association of Swaziland (NFAS) will on Friday, 15th December 2017, close for the festive period and reopen for the rest of the 2017/2018 season on Monday, 8th January 2018. The NFAS exclusively appreciates the collaboration and good rapport evidenced throughout the first half of the football season, which has seen improvements in the prospects of the development of the organisation and hereby take this prospect to wish her Members and their staff, clubs, officials, players and stakeholders in the beautiful game of football, a Merry Christmas and affluence in 2018



WHAT’S ON THE NEXT ISSUE

- The Chairman of the Medical Committee talks about medical issues in relation to football.
- Preview of the Ingwenyama SMVAF Cup.
- What to expect from the TD’s office in 2018.

UPCOMING FOOTBALL EVENTS

- Second Window Registration Period
- MVA Ingwenyama Cup Competition