



ESWATINI FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

APRIL 2026 NEWSLETTER



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YEARS OF THE CROWN



YEARS OF FOOTBALL GROWTH

EFA PRESIDENT REFLECTS ON A LEGACY UNDER HIS MAJESTY KING MSWATI III



“ The EFA’s journey began in modest conditions, operating from a rented office near Sifundzani. Over time, the association secured its own headquarters at Sigwaca House in Mbabane’s industrial site. What was once a small office space has since been expanded into a multi-functional facility, now accommodating various businesses. This strategic development has not only

improved operations but also created a sustainable revenue stream through rental income.



EXTENSION WING



FRONT VIEW

BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE FUTURE

A major milestone in the EFA's growth has been infrastructure development. The Lobamba Technical Centre stands as a cornerstone of national team preparation, offering training grounds and accommodation for both junior and senior squads. Beyond this, the EFA embarked on an ambitious nationwide project to empower regional football through infrastructure development:



The Nhlanguano Technical Centre also known as King Sobhuza II Memorial Stadium (Shiselweni)



KaLanga Technical Centre (Lubombo)



Mkhuzweni Technical Centre (Hhohho)

Inspired by the King's vision, the EFA is working towards installing

floodlights across all centres to enable 24-hour operations, unlocking more playing time and increased revenue opportunities. The Mafutseni Technical Centre in Manzini is still under planning, which will complete the vision of regional empowerment.

A UNIQUE FOOTBALL IDENTITY

Eswatini continues to stand out globally through the Sincephetelo Motor Vehicle Accident Fund Ingwenyama Cup, which is a competition that blends football with cultural heritage. Running since 2015, the tournament remains a symbol of national pride and royal endorsement, despite a temporary pause during the COVID-19 period.



RISING COMPETITIVENESS ON THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE

Over the years, Eswatini football has made significant strides internationally: Sihlangu SeMnikati achieved three COSAFA bronze medals



HISTORIC RESULTS AGAINST STRONG NATIONS

- Victory over Guinea-Bissau (3-2)
- Draws against Senegal and DR Congo
- Win against Togo.
- Two draws against Cameroon

In 2017, Eswatini reached 88th in FIFA world rankings, marking a peak period of growth. The country also hosted major youth competitions, including U-20 TOTALENERGIES AFCON qualifiers, further showcasing its capacity on the continental stage.

DEVELOPING TALENT ON AND OFF THE FIELD

The EFA's impact extends beyond the pitch: Growth from 4 employees to a large national workforce and Development of international players.

GREAT INTERNATIONAL PLAYERS DEVELOPED OVER THE YEARS

- Absalom "Scara" Thindwa
- William "Cool Cat" Shongwe
- Abel "Chaklas" Shongwe
- Dennis "Yuki" Masina
- And Many More

A new generation of players continues to secure opportunities in Zimbabwe, South Africa, and beyond.

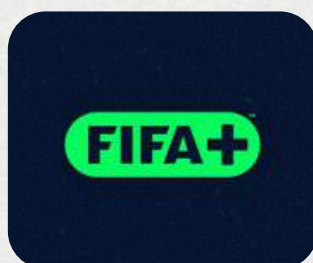
EXCELLENCE IN TECHNICAL AND MATCH OFFICIALS

Investment in human capital has seen: Coaches competing at CAF interclub level, Referees officiating internationally, including VAR official Letticia Viana at major tournaments; Safety and security experts like Xolile Vilakati gaining recognition at CAF level and she is now based in Egypt. Additionally, administrators have been trained across multiple disciplines, strengthening football governance nationwide.



EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY AND TRANSPARENCY

The introduction of the FIFA Connect system has revolutionized football administration in Eswatini. By digitizing player registration from grassroots to premier league level, the system has eliminated fraud and improved efficiency across all operations. Also local premier league games are now live streamed on FIFA Plus, which helps fans from all around the country and even outside the country to watch their favourite teams at the comfort of their homes and the implementation of eFootball.



Looking Ahead, The EFA remains committed to advancing football development in alignment with His Majesty's vision, continuing to invest in infrastructure, talent, and innovation.

BAYETHE WENA WAPHAKATHI!!

YOU CAN WATCH FULL AUDIO VISUALS OF THE INTERVIEW ON OUR SOCIALS ON THE LINKS BELOW:



[40TH CORONATION CELEBRATION VIDEO](#)



[40TH CORONATION CELEBRATION VIDEO](#)

ESWATINI U-17 GAIN CRITICAL INTERNATIONAL EXPOSURE AGAINST MOZAMBIQUE

The Eswatini Under-17 Men's National Team faced a rigorous test on Thursday, April 23, 2026, taking on Mozambique in an international friendly at the Zimpeto Stadium. The fixture was held at the invitation of the Mozambican Football Federation as part of their final preparations for the upcoming 2026 U-17 Africa Cup of Nations in Morocco. Facing a side already in peak competitive form, Eswatini's young squad endured a challenging 7-0 defeat, yet the technical bench viewed the experience as a vital building block for the future.

Despite the score line, the match served as a significant developmental milestone. The squad featured several graduates from the Under-15 side that famously secured a bronze medal at last year's CAF African Schools Football Championship. This transition highlights the EFA's commitment to a structured national development pathway. Facing an opponent gearing up for a major CAF tournament provided the Eswatini youngsters with a firsthand look at the quality required for continental success. The Coaching staff emphasized that such exposure is indispensable for long-term growth, providing lessons in resilience and tactical discipline that cannot be replicated in training.



ESWATINI U-20 VICTORIOUS OVER MOZAMBIQUE IN AN INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLY MATCH PLAYED AT KALANGA TECHNICAL CENTRE

Eswatini's Under-20 Men's National Team produced a resilient performance to claim a 1- 0 victory over Mozambique in an international friendly played on Saturday, 25 April 2026, at the Ka-Langa Technical Centre.



Under the guidance of Head Coach Mduduzi Nxumalo, the Eswatini Under-20 side started the match on the front foot, asserting control through structured play and confident ball movement. The home side dominated much of the first half, creating several attacking opportunities while maintaining an edge in possession and passing accuracy.

Their efforts paid off in the 67th minute when Phiwayinkhosi Dube broke the deadlock with a well-taken goal. After a hard-fought build-up, Dube showed composure to place the ball into the bottom left corner, giving Eswatini a deserved lead. Mozambique responded with urgency, making tactical changes and introducing quick, energetic players immediately after the goal. The visitors then increased the intensity of their attacks, repeatedly testing the Eswatini defence. However, the home side remained organised and disciplined at the back, successfully withstanding the pressure to protect their lead until the final whistle.



Speaking after the match, Head Coach Mduduzi Nxumalo described the encounter as a tough but important test for his players. "It was a tough match and I commend the great character demonstrated by the players. There is still a lot of room for improvement", Nxumalo said.

MAHWALALA LADIES CROWNED CHAMPIONS OF EFA WOMEN'S FOOTBALL CAMPAIGN HHOHHO REGION ONE-DAY TOURNAMENT

Mahwalala Ladies F.C. were crowned champions of the EFA Women's Football Campaign Hhohho Region One-Day Tournament after defeating Manganganeni Ladies F.C. in a thrilling penalty shoot-out in the final at Msunduzu Sports Ground on Wednesday, 29 April 2026.

Among the dignitaries present were HRFA Chairman Dr Comfort Shongwe, EFA Chairman of Youth Development Mr Aaron Mavimbela, Executive Member Mr Oscar Mlotshwa, EFA Technical Director Boy Mkhonta



Individual awards were won by:

- **Top Goal Scorer:** Zuzile Dlamini, Ntsetse Flyers Ladies F.C.
- **Player of the Tournament:** Sebeneme Dlamini, Manganganeni Ladies F.C.
- **Best Goalkeeper:** Nomcebo Mbuyisa, Mahwalala Ladies F.C.

Mgababa Ladies F.C. received the Young and Promising Team Award for fielding one of the youngest squads, showing great dedication throughout the day. This tournament forms part of the ongoing FIFA Women's Football Campaign aimed at increasing girls' participation and developing grassroots football in the Kingdom.

EFA BOOST SCHOOLS FOOTBALL WITH BALL DISTRIBUTION FOR CAF AFRICAN SCHOOLS NATIONAL PHASE

In a dedicated effort to support grassroots football development, the Eswatini Football Association (EFA) distributed 180 soccer balls to participating schools on Friday, 10 April 2026. The handover ceremony, held at the Lobamba Technical Centre, supports schools preparing for the CAF African Schools National Phase Championships.



To ensure adequate preparation, each school received a donation of 10 high-quality soccer balls. EFA President Peter Simelane personally handed over the equipment, highlighting the growth of the program since its inception two years ago.



“Today we are here to present these soccer balls to enhance the training sessions of our participating schools,” Simelane said. “This development program is already bearing fruit, as evidenced by our Under-15 boys’ team, who secured a historic bronze medal at the zonal phase in Stellenbosch last December.” The President further clarified the program’s long-term vision, noting that any prize money won in these championships is strictly ring-fenced for school-based infrastructure projects rather than cash payouts. This strategy aims to build a sustainable pipeline for stronger national teams by investing directly into the environments where young athletes learn and train.



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EFA EMPOWERS REFEREES WITH NEW COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS



In a significant move to modernize football officiating in the Kingdom, the Eswatini Football Association (EFA) officially presented two new communication systems to the Referees Committee at the Lobamba Technical Centre on Friday 10 April 2026.

EFA President Peter Simelane, who presided over the handover, emphasized the importance of aligning local football with global technological trends. He noted that the new equipment is designed to enhance on-field coordination and reduce officiating disputes. The President highlighted that the technology will initially be rolled out at two primary venues, and further hinted on plans to equip additional stadiums in the near future, following the successful introduction of camera devices in recent years. The referees and football fans country wide got to witness the first use of

the devices during the SMVAF Ingwenyama Cup Semi Final clashes which were played at Mavuso Trade Centre on the 19th of April. Accepting these communication systems, Referees Committee Chairperson Sicelo Nene expressed his gratitude, noting that the tools would complement ongoing efforts such as specialized training to improve elite-level officiating.



BASIC & INTERMEDIATE COACHING COURSES PROGRESS

The ongoing Basic and Intermediate Coaching Courses continue to make steady progress, with participants now having advanced to the practical phase of the programme. Launched on the 1st of March, the courses are part of a broader effort to strengthen technical capacity and develop a new generation of qualified coaches within Eswatini.



The training programme follows a structured hybrid approach, where aspiring coaches engage in online learning sessions during the week, focusing on theoretical aspects of the game. These lessons are then reinforced through practical



session planning, player development, match analysis, and modern coaching methodologies. The practical phase had been impactful by offering hands-on experience that is essential in building confidence and competence among the coaches.

assessments held over weekends, allowing participants to apply their knowledge on the field and refine their coaching techniques.

As the programme progresses, participants are being exposed to key areas such as



Looking ahead, participants will be required to sit for a formal examination, with the date to be confirmed by the Technical Director's Office. This assessment will evaluate both their theoretical understanding and practical application, ensuring that successful participants meet the required standards.

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NDUNAYITHINI GRASSROOTS COACHING COURSE

The Eswatini Football Association (EFA), in partnership with the Shiselweni Regional Football Association (SRFA), successfully concluded a five-day Grassroots Coaching Course held at Ndunayithini, which ran from 13 to 17 April 2026. The course brought together 28 coaches, both male and female, and focused on equipping them with fundamental coaching knowledge and practical skills required to develop young players at grassroots level.



Led by EFA Instructor Musa Mamba, the programme covered key aspects of player development, including basic coaching principles, creating positive learning environments, and understanding how to nurture talent from an early age. The overall objective of the course was to strengthen the foundation of football development by preparing coaches to groom young players who can progress through junior structures and eventually play for the senior national teams. The final day featured a grassroots festival, where coaches demonstrated their learning through practical sessions involving young boys and girls from the community, reflecting their readiness to apply the knowledge gained throughout the course



The certification ceremony was attended by and Sigwe Member of Parliament, Hounarable David Ngcamphalala, EFA Executive Member and SRFA Chairperson Mr. Nkosinathi Kunene, amongst other dignitaries.



The EFA General Secretary Mr. Frederick Mngomezulu, highlighted the collective commitment towards grassroots football development. During the closing proceedings, appreciation was extended to the participants for their dedication throughout the course, as well as to the Ndunayithini community and parents for supporting the initiative and allowing young players to take part in the festival. The importance of professionalism among coaches and their role in player retention and development was strongly emphasized, with a reminder that grassroots coaching is centered on development rather than competition.

The EFA further reaffirmed its commitment to continuous coach education, noting that more courses will be introduced to build on this foundation and provide pathways towards advanced coaching qualifications, including CAF coaching licensing. In addition, the introduction of a junior league initiative in the Sigwe constituency was highlighted as a key step in ensuring consistent development and competitive opportunities for young players.

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MPOFU GRASSROOTS COACHING COURSE

A new generation of football leaders emerged in the Hhohho Region when 26 local coaches officially completed the Eswatini Football Association (EFA) Grassroots Football Development Programme.



The intensive course concluded on Thursday, 23 April 2026, at the Mpofo Community Hall. The milestone was marked by a formal certificate presentation attended by high-ranking officials, including Mhlangatane Member of Parlia-

ment Honourable Madala Mhlanga and EFA General Secretary Mr. Frederick Mngomezulu. Honourable Madala Mhlanga, who represents the Mhlangatane Constituency (and serves as Deputy Speaker of the House of Assembly), pledged his ongoing support to the graduates. He challenged the coaches to look beyond technical drills and embrace their roles as life mentors. He further emphasized the importance of integrity in sports, urging coaches to instill values of dedication and hard work rather than teaching children to rely on “charms” or external enhancements.

The Vice Chairperson of the Hhohho Regional Football Association (HRFA) Mr. Donald Nkonyane, thanked the stakeholders for the programme’s success but reminded the graduates that their journey is just beginning, pushing for immediate field application of the knowledge gained.



He also encouraged coaches to view this as a foundation and to seek advanced certifications in the future. EFA General Secretary Mr. Frederick Mngomezulu congratulated the group, noting that consistent



presence and commitment on the field are the true measures of a coach's value. He highlighted that these grassroots efforts are already yielding national results, citing the U15 boys' bronze medal at the recent CAF African Schools Championship as proof of Eswatini's rising football standards. Mngomezulu reaffirmed that the EFA would continue to provide further training opportunities to strengthen the local football ecosystem.



ESWATINI WOMEN'S FOOTBALL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE INDUCTED

The Eswatini Women's Football Association (EWFA) successfully held its Executive Committee Induction from the 10th to 11th of April at the Lobamba Technical Centre, marking a significant step forward in strengthening the governance and growth of women's football in the country.



This induction followed the elections held on 31 August last year, which ushered in a new leadership structure tasked with driving the women's game to greater heights. The two-day programme was designed to officially orient and equip the newly elected committee members with the knowledge, skills, and

strategic direction required to effectively execute their roles. Throughout the induction, members were taken through key areas critical to the success of the association. These included governance and administration, effective association management, and player development structures. Emphasis was also placed on leadership accountability and the importance of creating sustainable systems that support the growth of women's football at all levels.

A major highlight of the induction was the focus on marketing and commercialization of the women's game. Committee members explored innovative strategies to increase the visibility of women's football, attract sponsorship, and build strong partnerships that will contribute to the long-term sustainability of the sport. Strengthening the brand of women's football in Eswatini was identified as a key priority in unlocking new opportunities for players and stakeholders alike. The induction further reinforced the importance of unity, professionalism, and strategic planning as the foundation for progress. With a clear mandate and renewed sense of purpose, the Executive Committee is now better positioned to lead initiatives that will enhance player welfare, improve competition structures, and elevate the overall standard of women's football in the country.



EFA FINALISES eFOOTBALL MOBILE NATIONAL TEAM SQUAD FOR THE FIFAE NATIONS LEAGUE

The Eswatini Football Association (EFA) has successfully concluded its national talent identification process for the country's eFootball Mobile National Team, marking a major step toward Eswatini's participation in the inaugural FIFAE Nations League.

The national qualifiers were hosted on the 24th of April 2026, which brought together the country's eFootball Mobile players in a highly competitive championship. The main goal of this tournament was to select the final four players who will represent Eswatini on the continental stage. Among all the players who competed on the tournament the top four best performers were Siyagcinwa Zulu, Seneme Khumalo, Cedusizi Nkambule and Mzwakhile Gujam, who impressed throughout the competition with consistent high-level performances.



FIFA e		GAMING	ESPORTS
Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D
Standings			
#	PARTICIPANT		
1	Eswatini		
1	Ghana		
1	Madagascar		
1	Tunisia		
1	Zimbabwe		

This year's FIFAE Nations League introduces a new and exciting 2v2 format, making teamwork crucial. By selecting four players, Eswatini gains a strategic advantage, allowing the formation of two competitive pairings capable of adapting to different opponents and match situations. Following the selection, the national squad has now entered a focused training phase, sharpening tactics, coordination, and in-game strategy ahead of the upcoming continental qualifiers.

Eswatini will compete in the African Qualifiers scheduled from 5 -7 May, where the nation has been drawn into a challenging Group D alongside Ghana, Madagascar, Tunisia, and Zimbabwe. The team will kick off its campaign on 5 May at 19:00 against Zimbabwe, before facing the remaining group opponents. These matches are expected to end at around 21:30 with the fourth and final group match for Eswatini set to kick off at 21:15 which will be against Mozambique. Qualification to the FIFAE Continental Championships is determined through the combined Consistency Points ranking of all three qualifying-weeks, alongside additional qualification spots awarded to the top-performing national teams in week 3. A total of 5 countries from the African Region will qualify via the consistency points ranking, and 3 more will qualify based on the performance in week 3.



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MARCH PLAYER OF THE MONTH AWARDS

Outstanding individual performances took centre stage in March, as top players across the country were recognised for their contributions in both the topflight and the National First Division leagues.

In the MTN Premier League, Philani Mkhonto of Manzini Sea Birds F.C. was named Player of the Month. Mkhonto played a pivotal role in his team's impressive run of form, helping them secure positive results and maintain their position in second place as they continue to mount a strong challenge for the league title. Meanwhile, in the Mulasport National First Division, Phiwokuhle Matsebula of Magwanyana F.C. claimed the accolade following a string of outstanding performances. Matsebula netted four goals and provided an assist in just three matches, playing a crucial role in his team's rise from 7th to 4th position on the league standings.



INGWENYAMA CUP 2026 FINALS SET FOR THRILLING SHOWDOWN



Excitement is building ahead of the SMVAF Ingwenyama Cup 2026 Finals, officially scheduled for the 10th of May at the iconic Somhlolo National Stadium. Announced by His Majesty the King Mswati III, the finals promise a spectacular celebration of football, culture, and national pride.



The men's final will see Nsingizini Hotspurs F.C. take on Green Mamba F.C. in what is shaping up to be a fiercely contested encounter. The mat-

-chup carries added intensity, as the two sides previously met in the pre-season 8Bet Cup final, where Nsingizini Hotspurs emerged victorious. This time around, Green Mamba will be driven by a desire for redemption on the grandest stage. Beyond pride, the stakes are exceptionally high. The winner will walk away with a lucrative prize of E1.45 million and, importantly, secure qualification for the CAF interclub competitions. For Green Mamba, this presents a crucial opportunity to book their place on the continental stage. Meanwhile, Nsingizini Hotspurs, despite being well-positioned in the league, will be equally motivated to claim the Ingwenyama Cup title, one of the few major trophies still missing from their cabinet.

The excitement will begin earlier in the day, with the women's final kicking off. Defending champions Young Buffaloes Ladies will face Manzini Wanderers F.C. in another highly anticipated clash. Young Buffaloes Ladies, who lifted the inaugural title last year, will be aiming to defend their crown after overcoming Nsingizini Hotspurs Ladies in a dramatic penalty shootout in the semi-finals. On the other hand, Manzini Wanderers demonstrated composure and quality in their semi-final victory, defeating AS Inter Ladies 2-0, and will be eager to claim top honours. The day promises more than just football.

Fans can look forward to vibrant cultural competitions in the morning, making it a full-day celebration of football and Swazi heritage.





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in Eswatini Football



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— PIGGS PEAK REGIONAL LEAGUE —



— SEMIFINALS & FINAL SOCIAL GAMES —

EARLY MATCHES

TIME	HOME	VS	AWAY
0900HRS	NKOMAZI UNITED	VS	LESLEY UNITED
1100HRS	NDEVA GALAXY	VS	PPK CITIZEN
1300HRS	MAGUGA COSMOS U13	VS	CITY STARS U13

SOCIAL GAMES

1400HRS	KOBWA SOCIAL	VS	HRFA SOCIAL
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FINAL

1500HRS	FINAL (Winner SF1 vs Winner SF2)		
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PRESENTATION

1700HRS	TROPHY PRESENTATION		
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**KILLARNEY
SPORTS GROUND**



02 MAY 2026



**MULTIPLE
MATCH TIMES**

WATER FOR EVER

CONDOLENCES



Mr. MBONGWA DLAMINI

The Eswatini Football Association (EFA) and the entire football household in Eswatini have learnt with great tremor about the unfortunate demise of Mr. Mbongwa Dlamini who was the former Men's U15 National Team Manager, Youth Committee Member of the Manzini Regional Football Association, and Football Coach.

At this point; EFA would like to comprehend her solemn and earnest sympathies to his Family, Relatives, Football Family, Friends and affected establishments for his passing-on.

Psalm 34:18 says; "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted".

May his soul rest in peace



**THANK YOU FOR STAYING UPDATED WITH THE LATEST
FROM THE ESWATINI FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION
WE REMAIN COMMITTED TO THE DEVELOPMENT AND
GROWTH OF FOOTBALL IN THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI**

FROM GRASSROOTS TO THE GLOBAL STAGE

UNTIL NEXT TIME

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